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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 67. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1899. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WAYSIDE, Kansas, March 17, 1899.

DAVID BARTLEY—DEAR BROTHER:—You are on my mind so much, and in order to relieve it I will write you, that you may know that I am still living, but am very weak and feeble, just recovering from a severe spell of sickness, which laid me up the latter part of November last. The doctor says I have killed myself at hard labor. It looks now like I will never be able to labor but little, if any more. But I, as you perhaps know, in my younger days was so badly afflicted that several times my life was despaired of; yet the good Lord has spared my unprofitable life until this present time, and has kept me here for some purpose, I know not what. It seems to me that I am the least and most unworthy of all God's creation. The older I grow, the greater sinner I feel myself to be. O! I feel sometimes to cry out, How can God be just in saving me, a poor, sinful wretch? I will give you a short sketch of my travels, since I first received a hope. This was in the year 1854, some time the latter part of May, or first of June. Previous to this time I cannot say I was a bad boy; that is, indulged in bad habits, as the manner of some was. I never swore but one oath, and that was when I was about ten years old. My associates often said to me, "If I was as good as you are, I would have no fears about going to heaven." This flattered me, of course, but I did not feel that I was any better than they were.

My parents, as you know, were Regular Baptists, and were very strict on us children; this is, perhaps, why my moral character and deportment were moulded as they were. Father frequently had preaching at our home, and it seemed like such curious preaching to me, so different from what we were used to hearing from the Arminian preachers, that I could not understand it. My surroundings were such that I heard at least a dozen Arminian sermons to one Baptist sermon. I was taught to read the Bible at home, but I did not understand it; yet it was quite a comfort to me afterwards.

The fear of death and hell never troubled me, as it apparently did others. I thought of death and its consequences. If I should die, where will I go? And there must be a preparation for death, but how to make that preparation I did

not know, but rested in this hope or belief, that if the Lord takes me away, he will prepare me for the change. For I was all this time doing the best I could, as I thought, to meet death and its terrors.

But at the time, as stated above, the United Brethren were holding a protracted meeting at Heth's old schoolhouse, in Harrison Co., Indiana. An Irish preacher by the name of Huston was running the meeting; he was a great revivalist; no trouble for him to create an excitement. On the way to this meeting at night, I and five of my cousins were together, and one of them proposed that if I would join the church that night, they would all follow me. "No," I said, "I am not fit to belong to a church." "If you are not fit, we would like to know who is," said they. "Well," I said, "if I shall take a notion to join, I want you all to follow me, and be as good as your word," to which they agreed. After the preaching was done, they called for mourners to come to the mourners' bench, and be prayed for. While they were singing the hymn, "Alas! and did my Savior bleed," such a feeling sense of a Savior's love for such a miserable sinner as I felt myself to be, I cannot express. The tears ran down my cheeks. I hid myself as best I could, to keep others from noticing me. I did not go to the mourners' bench, for I felt that it was no place for poor, unworthy me. But I resolved to go home and search the Scriptures, and see whether these things were so (the doctrine they preached). I slept but very little that night, imploring God to have mercy on me, a poor, helpless sinner. I am quite sure that I deserved his righteous indignation in thousands of instances, and deserved to be forever banished from his presence into that place where hope never comes. "For thy righteous law approves it well." "I am carnal, sold under sin;" and unless thou dost intercede in my behalf, there is no hope for me. O lead me in the light, as thou art in the light. The next morning I went over to the mill, (for I was tending the mill and a grocery store for my father and uncle at this time,) and got my Testament, and sat down to read, and if possible to get some comfort from the Word. I opened the book to Matthew xxvi., and read the 37th verse: "And he took with him Peter, and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." The agony and awful feelings I realized cannot be told. I could feel that there were promises there for others, but none for me. When all to me appeared most gloomy, all at once my burden was gone, and it seemed to me I was in a new world, for I was filled with the love of God. I arose from my seat and went to the door, and such a beautiful sight I never beheld before nor since. All nature seemed to be praising God; the sun shone more brilliantly than I had ever seen it before; the birds were skipping about in the timber and upon the ground, apparently praising him; the boughs of the trees seemed to be bowing in humble submission to his will. I could see how poor, lost sinners were saved; that my sins helped to bear him down in Gethsemane, and to crucify him on the cross; that he bore our sins on the tree of the cross, and put them away

from us as far as the east is from the west. He cried, "It is finished." Yes, this glorious salvation, wrought out by the glorious Son of God, was fixed and free, and all my righteousness was as filthy rags. Then I could see that salvation was all of grace, and not by anything poor sinners could do.

I wanted to go to George and Jacob Bruce, and tell them my feelings, for we so frequently would converse on religious matters, both of whom joined the Regular Baptist church after this. But I was soon filled with doubts and fears, and thought sometimes there was no reality in what I had experienced, and that all was a delusion. I thought if I only had my burden back again, I could be more certain about it; but I never could feel as I had before, but instead of a load of sin, I now had one of doubts and fears. Brethren would frequently come to my house, and O how I loved to sit and listen to their conversation, while they were talking of the things of the kingdom. It seemed to me they were christians, as their conversation was almost altogether of spiritual things, and not of things of this world; and I was led to love them above all others, but never let them know of my feelings, and kept them hid as best I could. Yet it seemed they understood my case, for when I would go to meeting, it seemed like they were preaching directly to me. They could tell my feelings, my "ups and downs," much better than I could.

I felt a great desire to unite with the church, for I believed the Primitive Baptists were the church of Christ, and felt it my duty to confess my hope; but I was so unworthy, and felt that I was not fit for a place among a people that seemed so good, and manifested so much love for each other; and fearing that I would deceive them, and maybe bring a reproach upon the church, I decided that I would not unite with them, but would go to meeting and enjoy the preaching, which, generally, was a great comfort to me.

Another stumblingblock to me was, the split or division in the church; one wing led by Elder Cornwell, (the Two-Seeders) the other, I am now satisfied, were and are the true church, which at that time were accused of holding too much to Arminianism. I was surrounded by both wings, and halted between two opinions for a long time. During this time I desired above all things to follow my Master in the ordinance of baptism, and I asked old father Lemmon if he, as a minister, could baptize a believer without his uniting with the church? He said he did not think he could administer baptism to one outside of the church. I thought a little strange of his answer, but I made the best of it I could. I could not live as I desired, for my mind was often filled with things which I knew were sinful, and I thought that a child of God could not be troubled in this way. I greatly desired to live free from sin, but alas, I could not, and up to the present time I find myself wandering from the paths of christian duty.

In November, 1857, I married a young lady, whose parents and connection were all Arminians. Everything that they could bring to bear on me was tried, to turn me from my faith and the doctrine I believed; but it all failed. Then resort was had to abusing and vilifying the Old Baptist brethren, which was very hard for me to bear or endure. When heaped on myself, I could very well endure it, but for my brethren to be misrepresented, was very hard for me to endure. Yet I could but rejoice, if I could believe I was worthy to suffer for his name's sake.

The question with me is, Do I love him? I sometimes have doubts and fears that I am not one of his little ones; but he knoweth them that are his.

Many times I found myself preaching while asleep, to large congregations; but it was only a dream. And thus I lingered on, until the fourth Saturday of September, 1886, I went to Salem church, Harrison Co., Ind., and gave a reason for my hope, and to my surprise, I was received, and on Sunday, two weeks after, I was baptized by Elder Frank Williams. I then felt that I should spend the rest of my days in more peace and happiness than I had heretofore done, for I had done my duty. But alas! Brother Short came over from Kentucky, and remained with us some three weeks, and on our meeting day at Salem church, he insisted on me getting up and opening meeting for him, as he felt very unwell. I told him he must excuse me, for I could not do it, but at some future time perhaps I would feel more like taking up my cross, and that he must excuse me this time. There was a large crowd gathered on that Sunday morning; we went into the house; the hour for services came; he called on me to pray. O, what a burden! I tried to pray, and what I said I never could tell. I felt so bad and ashamed of myself that I wanted to get away from there as soon as possible, for I felt that the brethren, too, felt ashamed of me, as I knew that I fell so far short of their expectations; and knowing as I did, that the Salem and Hopewell churches were making calculations on me to take the pastoral care of them. I felt that I never could do this, being, as I thought, so unfit and unprepared for such a high and noble calling; so little, so insignificant, nothing, and less than nothing and vanity; how lean and destitute I felt myself to be of things pertaining to God's kingdom.

Now, I thought, I will go to the west, and look out a location, and move there. So I started on Tuesday after the meeting above spoken of, hoping that by so doing my mind would be relieved of this burden. And another object I had in view was, that I could get a piece of land for each one of my children. Passing from the southeast part of Kansas to the southwest, I located two quarter sections of land, fifteen miles south of Dodge City. Returned home to Indiana; sold our property, consisting of two good homes or farms, and in the spring of 1887, moved to the State of Kansas, and settled on the land above described; erected a dwelling-house, (sod) and otherwise improved it, and from 1887 to 1890, never so much as raised the rent of any crop we planted. I soon found I was in a part of country where farming never could be made a success, and having, the greater part of the time, seventeen in family to support, in three years I was stripped of everything I possessed; even my land I was compelled to mortgage to support my family. I could neither live there, nor get away. Drouths, and the hot winds or simoons destroyed our crops every year. So to get away from there, I received means enough from my folks in Indiana, to help me get out of this drouthy country, into the southeast part of the State, (Kansas) where I now am trying to live and support my family, and to maintain my honor and integrity, and to contend for the truth, in the midst of Ishmaelites of all shades, who preach another gospel, yet not another, but a perversion of the gospel.

My home church (Salem, in Indiana,) importuned me to return there; and brother Ritter, of Kentucky, wrote me an

interesting and comforting letter, begging me to go back home, and take charge of Salem and Hopewell churches, as it was impossible for him to continue to visit them any longer regularly. But, brother Bartley, I fear it is too late now. I have had so much trouble in mind, in reference to my duty, (if it was or is my duty) that it is so shattered I can never be of any use anywhere. If I ever had any talent for this work, it has been taken from me, and given to another more worthy. I have always thought my brethren were laboring under a mistake when they would speak to me of this matter. For I have always felt that I was too little, insignificant and unworthy, and not even fit company for the saints; but if I could only set back in some secreted corner, and listen to their conversation and preaching, and be at the feet of Jesus, to honor and glorify his name, was the height of my ambition. But O, how disobedient I have been! how derelict in regard to my duties. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

During my life I have been afflicted, sometimes sorely afflicted, and at this writing am not able to walk but very little at a time. But through all these afflictions the goodness and mercy of the Lord have been with me, and his grace has sustained me. The loss of all my worldly possessions does not trouble me, for the world seems to be crucified to me, for I have no love for it or its allurements. But the loss of my two little boys, one seven and the other eleven years old, was a heavy stroke to me. Yet I was compelled to say, "Lord, not my will, but thine be done." The Lord gave, and he takes away, blessed be his name.

There are a few good Old Regular Baptists scattered around here, but no church near. What a comfort the SIGNS is to us out here, where we have no preaching, to get and read the good and precious letters written for it columns, by yourself and others. It comes to us semi-monthly, laden with good news. Write me, and pray for me when it goes well with you.

Permit me to subscribe myself your unworthy brother in afflictions, and in hope of eternal life which is in Christ Jesus our Lord,

AMOS ZENOR.

THIS letter from our deeply afflicted, yet greatly blessed brother Zenor, is so touchingly comforting, though sorrowful, that I send it to you. I knew him well from 1863 until he moved west, since which time I had not heard from him till this letter came. He was always a most excellent man, in whom was no guile. Should you give his letter to the dear brotherhood in Christ, it will soften and comfort many hearts. It is sent without his knowledge, as I have not yet written to him, for I feel that such a testimony belongs to the Lord's saved people, and will glorify him in their hearts. I trust that some who read it will feel it in their hearts to write to our sorely chastened brother, for his good cheer and comfort. The Lord sustain, strengthen and comfort him in his afflictions and sore losses, and with him all the meek and humble poor in spirit.

Your brother in tribulation,

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., March 18, 1899.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—Brother Watson, of Danville, Ill., has sent me quite unexpectedly the inclosed synopsis of a sermon preached by his pastor. I send it to you as requested. If you will at your first convenience publish this I shall be thankful.

Your brother, I trust, in sincerity,
S. B. LUCKETT.

SYNOPSIS OF A SERMON

PREACHED BY ELDER B. F. QUERRY, AT THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST HOPEWELL CHURCH, VERMILION CO., ILL., SUNDAY, FEB. 19, 1899.

"DEAR BRETHREN, SISTERS AND FRIENDS:—I will call your attention this morning for a short time to Paul's language as recorded in 1 Cor. xv. 10, which reads thus: "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain." If we would know the force of these words of Paul, we should know that he had been a vile persecutor of the saints, and had hated them with an almost unspeakable hatred. But he was not that way now, he had been changed. We will take a look at him before the time he was brought under the reign of grace; also after he was changed.

BEFORE BEING CHANGED.

1. He was mad at them. (Acts xxvi. 11.)
2. He persecuted them. (Gal. i. 13; Acts xxvi. 10, 11.)
3. He was an unbeliever in Christ. (1 Tim. i. 13.)
4. He was unwilling to serve Christ.
5. He was a rebel against God.
6. He loved that which was sinful.
7. He did all he could to destroy the church.

AFTER BEING CHANGED.

1. He now loves them. (Romans xii. 9; xiii. 8–10.)
2. He now sacrifices everything for their benefit. (Phil. iii. 7, 8; 2 Tim. ii. 10.)
3. He is now a believer. (Gal. ii. 20; Heb. x. 39.)
4. But he is now willing to be Christ's servant.
5. He is now a loyal subject.
6. He now loves righteousness.
7. He now does all he can to build it up and support it.

In fact he is now a righteous man, and no longer a wicked man, and he is now regarded by all christian people as one of the best, and most devoted to his Master of any man that lived in his day. Now if we can learn what the power or means was that changed him, then we will know how sinners are saved. But if we do not learn this, we will just keep on guessing upon this matter, and never learn the truth. We will now examine, for awhile, the supposed means of salvation, such as the Word, or Scriptures. Most of the christian professors claim that the Bible is the means of salvation or regeneration. If this be so it failed to make Paul a christian. But some may say that he did not have the advantage of reading the Scriptures before his conversion, and therefore he did not have the means of salvation. Well then let us examine this a little, and we will see that he was raised up in the school of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God. (Acts xxii. 3.) This teaches us that he had a religious education, and belonged to the sect called Pharisees. (Acts xxvi. 5; Phil. iii. 5.) These texts show that he was even a professor of religion, and that he had read the Scriptures, and therefore if the Scriptures could have made a good man of him they would have done so, but they did not. So we see reading of the Scriptures did not take the depravity out

of his heart. A man that hates Christ and his people is depraved. Thus we see no ordinary means can reach him. Paul was blinded by the god (evil spirit) of this world, and being so, the Scriptures could not reach his darkened understanding; no ordinary means could reach him. The Bible is history, prophecy, facts and arguments, and this is what we call ordinary means. No ordinary means can raise the dead, open the blind eyes and deaf ears. You cannot argue the evil spirit out of men, it will not go out by argument. To make a christian of a man that is not one, is like raising the dead, opening blind eyes and deaf ears, and casting the devil out of people, and it requires a greater power to do this than is contained in a historical statement, or an argument. Christ never tried to argue the evil spirits out, but he commanded them to go out, and he cast them out. He did not use argument against them as a means or force to drive them out, but he uses a stronger, a mightier force, to expel them. I call this force an extraordinary means, a supernatural means. This is the means that God uses in saving sinners. God must use a means in order to save that possesses greater power than sin. Sin is strong, and a great power, but grace is stronger, and a mightier power. (Romans v. 20, 21.) Sin abounded, but grace did much more abound. Sin reigns to death and kills, but grace reigns to life, and makes us alive, and saves. Grace does not wait to find merit in us before it begins to reign. Had it so waited, it never would have reigned over Paul. We see that grace overtook him while he was on his way to Damascus, with letters of authority to bind the saints, whether they be men or women, and bring them bound to Jerusalem, (Acts ix. 1, 2,) and this grace stopped him in his bloody career. No, grace did not wait until he repented, but brought him to repentance. Yes, grace was triumphant on that day. Saul heard Jesus speaking to him, and he (Jesus) called him. Saul (Paul) is now no longer the proud, hateful, unbelieving, arrogant, rebellious, stubborn, self-willed, unwilling, persecuting pharisee. Grace by one mighty stroke overthrew all these evil principles, and he could now say in the language of our text, "By the grace of God I am what I am." He thus attributes this great change to grace. The good Lord by grace had brought about this delightful change. This is the way and manner that Paul, a sinner, was saved.

We have now learned how God saved one sinner. Then Paul became a great teacher among the people, not to teach them how to be saved, but how they are saved. When this change took place with Paul we regard him, from that moment, a saint, a christian at heart, and the Lord had done it all so far. Jesus had not even waited until Paul became willing. Paul had not, until Jesus changed him, been willing to be a follower of Christ, or to be a christian. Yet many tell us that God never changes men, or makes them christians or saints, until they become willing to be such, but Paul's conversion contradicts this doctrine. What say you, friends?

We now come to examine for a short time the latter part of our text, "And his grace which was bestowed on me was not in vain." We have considered in the forepart of these remarks how wonderful is grace, and the wonderful change it made in Paul's character. It would be very strange indeed, if after being the recipient of the greatest of all blessings, if he should fail to obey his Master in all

the years remaining of his life. He did so, and herein is where Paul shows the wonderful power of grace, not only to change the vilest heart to a loving one, that delighted to follow in the footsteps of his dear Master, and so he says, Gal. i. 15, 16, "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." That is, he obeyed the gospel at the first opportunity, and thus he sets forth an example, and becomes a pattern to all them that afterwards believe on Christ. (1 Tim. ii. 16.) Paul never, no never, at any time told the believers to stay out of the church, or refuse to obey God as long as they could, but he exhorted them to obey at all times. He told them (Acts xx. 20,) that he had kept back nothing that was profitable to them. Paul was a man that believed in God's people obeying the gospel. He had been baptized at the first opportunity after he had received a good hope in grace, and he wanted all of God's children to do as he had done. (Eph. iv. 1; v. 1, 2. In these texts he exhorts them to follow after the Lord; to walk in love as dear children. I believe with every power of my heart that they should do so. In this we see that the Lord intends to govern his children largely by the use of his Word, and in doing so he thus educates them. In his Word we can learn his will toward us, and just what he would have us do. If the Bible is a true book, we can learn in it the Lord's will. In the Bible we find the Lord's commands to his children. I will call your attention to a few of them: John xiv. 15, "If ye love me keep my commandments." He did not say, merit them, but keep them. We know that keeping his commandments is obeying them. None can obey these commandments, and remain in the ranks of unbelievers. The church is the house of God, and pillar and ground of the truth. (1 Tim. iii. 15.) One of the objects of this house is to furnish a religious home for God's people. His children are required to separate themselves, and be a congregation of the Lord. This congregation is not a worldly organization, it is the church set up by our Lord, and is called the kingdom of heaven. This kingdom is not of this world, it is heaven's kingdom, and you, dear friends, must belong to it, or you will not be obedient to the gospel. All that have a good hope in our dear Lord Jesus should belong to this church, or kingdom. This kingdom is the most delightful place on earth. How can you, poor, hungry child, remain out of the church of your dear Savior? Your poor heart is now hungering for the sweet fellowship of those that are members of the church of Christ. The way to obtain fellowship in the church of our blessed Lord, is to come and confess your sins; yes, come and tell us what a poor sinner you are. We are not anxious to hear you tell of your goodness, O no. You feel that you are destitute of goodness; well then just come and tell us that you are a helpless sinner, and have nothing to trust in but the grace of our Lord Jesus. Come and tell us this, and you will gain the fellowship of God's dear children. But I fear you feel you may be deceived in what you call your poor experience, for you do feel that your experience is very poor, and you mourn because it is not a bright experience. Perhaps you weep often because your experience is not as bright as many preachers' are, that you have heard from the pulpit. If this is your condition,

come and listen to me a little time, and I trust that I will, by God's help, be able to help you to have confidence in what you call your poor little experience. Tell me, do you love those that you believe to be God's dear people? Yes, I see it in your tears. Now listen to what God says in his Word for your comfort: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."—1 John iii. 14. "Every one that loveth, is born of God."—1 John iv. 7. My dear friends, can you not believe these statements? Yes, you do believe the Bible, and hold it to be the most sacred book of all books. This Bible says, that "every one that loveth, is born of God." Again, Do you believe in Christ, that he is the only Savior of poor sinners, and is not your hope of heaven based on him? Do you not feel in your heart that it would be vain to trust any other being? Do you not sometimes ask him to pity you in your lowly condition? Now hear him in his Word again speaking to comfort the lowly: "He that believeth in me shall never die."—John xi. 26. Here, my dear, trembling brother, is a promise to you, You shall never die. John tells us, 1 John v. 1, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, [Savior] is born of God." Do you believe that statement? If so, you believe the gospel. Our Bible says, that believers have passed from death to life, that they are justified, that they are born of God, that they are the children of God, that they shall not come into condemnation, that they shall be saved, that they shall never die. O, rejoice in this, you dear, humble believers. There is a glorious rest waiting for your poor weary feet yonder, where Jesus is. His eye is on you, he will not forsake you. He died for you, yes, he suffered that awful ignominious death for you, that he might bring you to God, (1 Peter iii. 18,) and he will do so. (John vi. 37, 45.) These sayings are most precious; they are blessed promises to God's poor, hungry children; they are the true sayings of God. But I want to ask you one more question; it is this, Do you fear the Lord? Yes, you say, I fear him, and sometimes I tremble at his Word, and you would give all that you have in this world, to know that it would go well with you in that day. God speaks again to comfort you: "For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him."—Psalm ciii. 11. Again, "His mercy is on them that fear him, from generation to generation."—Luke i. 50. Again, "In every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with them."—Acts x. 35. One more, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, * * * and they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."—Malachi iii. 16, 17. This fear that you have, is only another proof that you are one of God's dear redeemed ones. His mercies are on you. You are accepted with him. He says you shall be his when he makes up his jewels. You are one of the Lord's jewels, and have cost a price of more infinite value than all the gold of earth. The cost was the heart's blood of our dear Master. Our dear Master now speaks to you as he did to the dear ones who lived when he was on earth. He says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." O, my dear brother, he means you; you that are tired of sin; you who labor so in sorrow, and that sin is such a heavy burden to. Yes, he means all such. He now tells you what to do: "Take my yoke upon

you, and learn of me; * * * and ye shall find rest unto your souls."—Matt. xi. 28, 29. That is just what you desire above all else. Jesus says come; yes, we urge you to come now. We invite all that believe, to come; all that love our dear Lord, to come; all that love his poor saints, to come; all that fear the name of the Lord, to come; all the meek, all the lowly, all the humble, all that would follow Christ, to come. Yes, come and prove your faith by your obedience. This is the way to honor that grace that has done so much for dying men and women. By joining the church of Christ, you honor God, you honor Christ, you comfort the saints; yes, you strengthen them, you show you faith, you obtain the rest that Christ promised, and you will receive an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. May God bless you all."

STARBUCK, Wash., Feb. 25, 1899.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN THE COVENANT OF GRACE:—I have a manuscript from Elder B. S. Pate, a reproduction of a discourse delivered by him at our last December meeting. It is upon the subject of the new birth. I will send it to you, and if it meets with your approval, our brethren are anxious to have it published in our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I am, as I trust, your brother in hope,

WM. B. MARTIN.

JOHN III. 3.

"JESUS answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

The kingdom here spoken of seems to me to be the kingdom of our Lord or the church militant, and in her triumphant state. Now in order to understand the lesson which our Savior designs to teach, let us examine some of the conditions. We find with regard to this matter, that according to God's decrees and purposes, there was to be a change in the order of things. There was to be a change in the priesthood, and in the administration of the kingdom. Henceforth, instead of being justified and blessed with temporal blessings, for keeping the law, men were to be blessed through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, the time had come for the fulfillment of his word, spoken through the prophet, saying, "I will make a new covenant, with the house of Israel, and the house of Judah." Now, instead of the law of God being written upon tables of stone, it must be written upon fleshly tables of the heart. Instead of its being an earthly kingdom, over which wicked kings ruled, it was to be a spiritual kingdom which is not of this world, but which is of a different and higher order of things. This is that kingdom of which Daniel prophesied that the God of heaven should set up a kingdom, and it shall stand forever. Therefore, as there was to be such a change in the order of things, from a natural state, to a spiritual and higher state of things, it was needful that there should also be a change in man. In order now, for man to see, or enter into, or know the things of this kingdom, he must be born again. He must be made partaker of the nature of the kingdom. He must possess a different mind, different affections and different qualifications, in order to prepare him for this kingdom, and for this reason he must be born again. Now this was beyond the comprehension of Nicodemus. He could not understand how a man could be born when he was old. It seems that he thought that the Jews were the only recognized people of God, and that

he would be saved by obeying the law of God which had been given to them. In this he was wrong, for there is but one way to enter the kingdom of God, and that is to be born of God. This is why the Savior said, "Ye must be born again."

In connection with this, let us examine the nature and condition of man. Man is of this world, and of the earth earthy, and by nature a sinner, possessing a natural mind which is enmity against God, and is not subject to his law, and neither indeed can be. By this mind, man reaches out for, and grasps the things of this world, its honors and glories. I sometimes think if it were possible for us to enter the kingdom of God, or heaven, as we naturally are, there could be no peace, nor happiness for us there, because we love the opposite. We love the world and its glories. Now as man is the creature of God, God having made him and pronounced him very good, how came he to be possessed of this opposite or sinful nature? In answer to this, we find that ever since our mother Eve was deceived by the devil, the serpent, in the garden of Eden, and thus conceived lust, or a desire to become as God's knowing good and evil, the same lust or desire has been in the human mind, and this mind is never satisfied. It is said that Alexander the great, after he had conquered the world, was not satisfied, but sat down and wept because there were no more worlds to conquer. And we see the same spirit or desire, manifested in the minds of rich men to-day. They are striving to own and control the world, and to bring all things in subjection to their own wishes, and thus become gods of this world. Thus we see the opposite to righteousness: enmity, made manifest in the minds of men. To my mind this evil nature or sinful mind is of that old serpent the devil, for God said, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed."

Now, dear brethren, I am far from desiring controversy upon this subject, but will merely try as best I can to set forth some of my understanding of it. I cannot find where the human family according to natural generation is of the devil. The following is proof to the contrary: Jesus said to the Jews, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do."—John viii. 44. If the devil is their father, it must be true that they are his children; yet our Savior also said, I know, "Ye are Abraham's seed." How could they be Abraham's seed, and the children of the devil at the same time, unless it is because he is the father or originator of their sinful or carnal minds? Then again the apostle Paul in speaking to the saints at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus, says they had "walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." The above shows clearly that there is no difference in man by nature. Yet we find that Paul says that these same persons of whom he said the above things, were the same of whom he said that God had chosen them in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. They were, he declares, predestinated unto the adoption of children. Thus it appears that in our relation to the world or flesh there is no difference in men. All possess the same nature with its lust and love for the world

and its glory. And it appears also that God, who is omnipotent, absolute and all-wise, has predestinated us unto the praise of his glory, and that we should be conformed to the image of his Son. Now seeing what we are by nature, in order that we may be conformed to him we find the necessity of being born again, and of being made partakers of that heavenly nature. I cannot find, dear brethren, where any part of the man is born again. Neither do I find that this fleshly man is made spiritual; but it remains flesh, and possesses a fleshly or carnal nature still. Here it seems hard for me to define myself, but it appears to me that this is a fulfillment of the prophecy where it is said, "I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." In this there is no part of our nature changed, no part of this fleshly man made spiritual, but we have the Spirit of God within us, and this is what I believe the new birth is. Paul says, it is "Christ in you, the hope of glory." It seems to me that this is what we call being born of the Spirit. It is the Spirit of the Lord within us. It is said that the Spirit is life. It is this our Savior said he would give his people. It is the Spirit of life. This, I believe, Paul meant when speaking to the saints at Ephesus he said, "You hath he quickened," thus putting his Spirit within them, which is life. How is this accomplished? Our Savior illustrated it by the figure of the wind, saying, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." We cannot see the wind, but we can both see and feel the effects of it. These are some of the effects that we see in the new birth; the same feet and limbs that took the man to dens of wickedness, now carry him to the place of worship, and the same lips and tongue that profaned the name of God, now lisp forth his praises. Why is this? Is it because any part of our nature is made spiritual? No; it is the Spirit of God working in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. This appears to be set forth by a parable spoken by the Redeemer, recorded Luke xi. 21, 22, "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." It seems to me that this strong man is our carnal nature dwelling in peace, with nothing to disturb the mind or conscience until the stronger than he comes in, which is the Spirit of God. This spirit binds, or overcomes; it does not cast out, but subdues, or brings into subjection, the strong man. Thus we see the Lord coming and taking possession of his own, that which he had purchased with his own precious blood. Thus he leads them about and instructs them, and keeps them as the apple of his eye. In all this the strong man or carnal mind is not cast out. And it appears to me that this is the reason that our bodies are still fleshly, so that their subsistance must still come from the earth, and our minds are used in making this provision for ourselves. In our experience we realize the fact that we still have a mind that is enmity against God, and from this source arises the continual warfare, and by this the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. So our nature is not changed, but only subdued. But what becomes of this body, this chosen vessel of mercy? Paul tells us that this body is sown a

natural body, and raised a spiritual body, and that this mortal shall put on immortality. Thus this body shall be born from the grave, prepared to enter the kingdom of God and enjoy its fullness.

Dear brethren, I have abbreviated to avoid making this too long, and it now appears to me that I have only given an outline of the subject. It is at your disposal.

I remain, as I hope, your brother in gospel bonds,

B. S. PATE.

[WE have carefully read the above sermon, and think that while our brother has used some forms of expression that seem different from what we have been accustomed to using when dwelling upon this subject, yet we in substance see eye to eye upon the matter. It has never been our view that any part of the flesh is made spiritual in the new birth. By the flesh we do not mean simply this body which bye and bye shall be conveyed to the grave, but the whole natural man, soul, body and spirit. But we do believe with our brother, that what the Master called "being born again," is the coming into the man of another life or spirit, taking control, and leading the man to depart from iniquity instead of running after it. We know by sorrowful experience that we still have a sinful mind and will, which sometimes carries our literal body in ways that we would not. The conflict is not between the body and the mind, but between opposing forces in the mind itself. While the man in none of his parts is as yet made spiritual, still it is the man, the whole man, who is said to be born again. And, as said before, we have understood that it is the coming in of the stronger man, the Spirit of God, to dwell in the man, so that henceforth the life of Jesus is made manifest in our mortal body, not, as our brother has well said, by changing, but subduing; so that Paul could say, henceforth sin should not have dominion over the believer. Sin indeed wages a warfare against him, but it never shall rule over him again.—ED.]

KANSAS, Ill., April 1, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I send you herewith a letter I received a day or two since from our dear brother, Elder J. G. Sawin, for your consideration, and publication if you think proper. It has been but seldom of late that we see anything from the pen of Elder J. G. Sawin, and as this letter shows so clearly the humble and meek disposition of its writer, I think your readers would enjoy reading it. I take the liberty of sending it to you without first obtaining his consent to do so. As he states in his letter, I have known him for years, (about forty) and have always admired his humble christian walk.

I remain yours in hope of eternal happiness after death,

JAMES M. TRUE.

MATTOON, Ill., March 28, 1899.

ELDER JAMES M. TRUE—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I hope it is not presumption in me in thus addressing you or others of the household of faith by the endearing term, "dear brother," yet I am made to hesitate sometimes when I attempt to do so. My unworthiness outweighs my confidence, and brings me face to face with a question difficult of an intelligible answer. Am I justifiable in calling the Lord's people *my* brethren, when there is so much in me that is at variance with what that term implies? You know me, and have known me for years, and as you have borne with me in the past, I trust you may yet continue to do so.

Yesterday and to-day have been stormy days, and I have been out but little, and I just thought that I had not written you for some time, and would now do so, and perhaps hear from you in return for my poor effort. I have been kept so close this winter, and have been out so little, that now and then I feel as if I wanted to see some of the brethren, and talk about things other than matters pertaining to the world. Were it not for brother Spitler, whom I meet often, it seems that I must surely become wretched and miserable. There are so few in this city, as elsewhere, that understand the language of Zion, or if they do, I do not, and intercourse with them, for the promotion of spiritual comfort and encouragement, is equally unproductive of good results. They do not seem to know anything of the joyful sound that I hope occasionally greets my ears, and sends joy and light into the soul. But is it possible that all the popular notions and ideas of Christ and his teachings, are after all founded on the teachings of Christ and the apostles, as is claimed by every denomination that teaches for doctrine the commandments of men? I cannot think so for a single moment. I may not be what I profess to be, I may be a stranger to the covenant of promise, without hope and without God in the world, may be forever barred from his eternal presence, but yet his doctrine, the doctrine that exalts Christ, commends him as a complete Savior, and renders undivided praise to him in all things, is the doctrine that will endure when all earthly thrones and kingdoms have crumbled into dust. His grace and power is seen in every chapter of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelations. It is felt in the experience of every one of his children. Indeed, it is so engraved on the fleshly tables of their hearts, that the least of the kingdom knows its meaning, and rejoices in the matchless sweetness of it, and if every Bible was burned up, and the ashes cast to the four winds, the Word still endures, still lives, and will continue to live in the hearts of his children. It cannot be destroyed; because it is not of this world. The saints may be persecuted by their oppressors, may be driven from pillar to post, may be thrown in prison, burned at the stake, but even in all these trials there is a sweet consolation in the very present help of the Redeemer, who drives away the sting of death, and walks with them in the midst of the fiery furnace, so that the flames cannot kindle upon them. Thus they who trust in his righteousness, and lean upon his everlasting arm, have no danger to fear, as those who trust in horses and chariots, which is nothing more or less than their own works of righteousness, that neither possesses virtue or power, and can never take away one single reproach. Now all this, my brother, I feel to know, yet I doubt my own personal interest in the Redeemer's blood; the price paid for the redemption of Israel. These doubts would be driven away if I could but do so. They are in no sense pleasant companions. But be my portion heaven or hell, God is just, and his wisdom shines in every act, while the mouths of gainsayers are forever put to silence. In my sorrow, darkness and gloom, wretchedness and woe, many and weary as the hours have been, I dare not say, "Why hast thou made me thus?" Or, "Why, Lord, doest thou so to me?" I am but as the dust of the earth, and who am I that I should cry out against my God? He who does all things well, and errs not in his counsel, sees fit to lay his hand upon me; that is enough. Let his will, not mine, prevail.

But I must stop my rambling, lest I tire you. I was sorry to learn from your last letter that brother Owens was still in poor health. Poor, dear brother, my heart goes out in love for him and his dear companion. My wife still has a severe cold. As to myself, I am about as common.

I will close for the present. With love and kind regards to all, I remain your unworthy brother,

J. G. SAWIN.

NEWARK, Delaware, March 24, 1899.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR FRIEND:—Find inclosed a selection from Hawker's "Morning and evening poor man's portion." If you think it worthy of publication, you may insert it in the SIGNS. I have the work, two volumes, containing a text for every day in the year. It is all excellent.

Yours,

G. W. LINDSAY.

"THE HIND OF THE MORNING."

(Psalm xxii.)

THE dying patriarch Jacob, under the influence of the prophetic spirit, pointed to the seed of Napthali as a hind let loose. But it is the church, which points to Jesus as the hind of the morning. For he is indeed the loving Hind, and the pleasant Roe. It is sweet and profitable to observe in what a variety of methods the Holy Spirit hath seen fit to give sketches of Jesus. My soul, look at Jesus for thy present meditation, as the hind of the morning. Was he not from the morning of eternity marked under this lovely character? Did not the church speak of him, and desire his presence under the same character, when she begged of him that until the shadows of Jewish ordinances were passed away, and the day of gospel light should break in upon her, that her beloved would be like a young hart or roe upon the mountains of Bether? And was not Jesus indeed when he did appear truly as the hind which the dogs that compassed him about, and the assembly of the wicked, inclosed? Did he not say in those unequaled moments of suffering, save me from the lion's mouth, for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorn? Yes, precious Jesus, thou are indeed the hind of the morning. In the morning of our salvation, thou camest over the hills and the mountains of our sinful nature, with the swiftness of the hind, and the loveliness and gentleness of the roe, to expose thyself to the serpent, and the whole host of foes, for the deliverance of thy people. And having trampeled upon the lion and and adder, and the young lion, and the dragon, and trampeled them under thy feet, by thy death, thou didst overcome death, and him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and hast delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. And now, precious Lord, thou art the hind slain, the food of the souls of thy redeemed by faith, until faith itself is done away in sight, and hope is swallowed up in absolute fruition. O, let the language of my heart daily and hourly correspond to that of the church of old, and during the shadows of ordinances, and all the dark clouds of unbelief and temptation, with which I am here exercised, let me still by faith behold thee as the hind of the morning, fleeing swiftly to my assistance, hearing and answering my prayers, leaping over all the mountains of distance which sin and unworthiness would throw up between thee and my soul, opposing all my enemies, and treading them under my feet, that would keep me from thee,

until that day, that glorious and everlasting day, which will have no night, shall break in upon my soul, and thou shalt then appear to my unceasing and uninterrupted joy, the hind indeed of the morning. Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like a young roe or a young hart upon the mountains of spices.

ROBERT HAWKER.

[How alike are the breathings of the hearts of believers in all ages. Such were the earnest desires of David and holy men of old, such were declared to be the desires of the church in the wilderness, such was the breathing of the writer of these meditations, and such are the desires of all who believe to-day. By these things, the friend who has forwarded this meditation for publication, is identified in spirit and experience with all who love God, though his name is not upon the church book. By what a great cloud of witnesses are the people of God surrounded, they extend from Abel down to those who are now witnesses of the power of living faith.—ED.]

DIGHTON, Kansas, Feb. 8, 1899.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—As it is time for me to remit for the SIGNS, I will also write a few lines to let you know that they are all the preaching I have, and that I do enjoy them so much. I do think the writers contend for the truth as it is taught in the Scriptures, both editors and correspondents (or the most of them). If I am not deceived in myself, I love the cause of truth, and his church, and I believe the Predestinarian Baptists are that church, and I love the Baptists. Their company and correspondence is a source of much comfort to me. Sometimes I wonder why, for I am often doubting whether I am one of the little ones or not. If I am, surely I am one of the most unworthy, sinful weaklings of all the flock. I have this evidence, if I know anything, I know that I love the brethren. I have so little faith, when I hear of one after another of the Lord's servants, either in writing or preaching for the good and edification of his people, being called home to their eternal reward, I fear that there will be a lack of witnesses. Then again, I remember his precious promise, and feel that I will never doubt again, but this feeling of confidence does not last long. I find a few Baptists are scattered in this and Scott Counties, Kansas. But as yet I have failed to see them, though I thought that before this I would try and get them to subscribe for the SIGNS.

I would like to have your views upon Acts xix. 1–6. By giving them you will confer a great favor upon me. Nothing but truth will do us any good. If it is not asking too much, will the editors also tell me if it was the custom of the Primitive Baptist church, until the last thirty or forty years, for the oldest members to decide whether or not an applicant for membership should be received? I am told by some Baptists that it was never heard of until quite recently.

Your unworthy sister,

MRS. NANCY A. McCOY.

[WITH regard to receiving those who apply for membership in the churches, by the action of the older members alone, this is the first we ever heard of such a practice or custom anywhere among our churches, and we have had a membership among Old School Baptists for about thirty-six years. We have no hesitancy in saying that such a custom, if it does exist anywhere, is totally unscriptural. In all churches, great deference ought to be shown to the aged members, and their

advice ought to have earnest consideration by the church, but when consultation is ended, and it comes to the expression of the feeling of the church toward a candidate, the youngest member must have fellowship, and ought to express that fellowship before that candidate can be rightfully received, as much as the oldest member. If any one in all the church is not satisfied with the candidate, it matters not whether that member be young or old, the candidate ought not to be received. Fellowship is not a thing to be decided by age. An experience will appeal to the heart of the youngest, as well as to the heart of the aged. Yet, as said before, great consideration should always be paid to the opinion of the aged, because it is to be supposed that by reason of experience wisdom dwells in them, and the young believer will always feel great reverence for the aged, if indeed the love of God, and true humility dwells in him. But to say that the young have no right to vote in the reception of members, is to despise their youth. Not only have the aged no right to say that the young ought not to express their mind by vote, but on the other hand, the young have no right to withhold their opinion in the matter, if indeed they have formed one.

At some future time, we will try to comply with the request regarding Acts xix. 1-6.—ED.]

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., April 16, 1899.

DEAR SISTER JENKINS:—It seems a long time since I have written to you, and I am sure the loss is mine rather than yours. For several months past I have not felt inclined to write much, and I do not know that I can even guess the reason. If it is because I have at times been led through deep waters, then do I feel to be willing to sacrifice any pleasure of my own, in the assurance that an exercise of grace is going on within me. Yet I realize, when I do not write that I do not receive letters. Yesterday and to-day my mind has gone out to you in christian love and fellowship, and I have wondered if you, too, are passing through deep waters. I have thought perhaps our exercises being similar might be a cause of my mind being drawn to you. The Lord does not require that two of his children should be together in the body, in order to walk together in the Spirit. The body of Christ is one body, having many members, yet each member acts and moves in unison with every other member of the body. But I cannot help thinking there is a similarity of experience, and a walking together in the Spirit at the same time that the minds of each should be drawn to the other. I love to write to my brethren and sisters when I feel that peculiar drawing, and a direct impression impelling me to sit down and write. As for duty letters, I am a poor hand at them, I cannot for the life of me find anything to say. What wonderful beauty Zion presents when her graces shine forth out of the suffering of her saints, whose suffering is in fellowship with the sufferings of our gracious Redeemer. Conflicts and deliverances call forth our continued praises unto the King of glory; for in our conflicts we are made aware of our insufficiency in ourselves to withstand the enemy. Therefore we look to him who hath said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." As the Captain of our salvation, Jesus fights our battles, not with carnal weapons, but by the power of his word. And when we are delivered, he having opened our prison doors, he also puts a new song in our mouth, even praises unto his holy name. You, dear sister, have felt the sweetness of his pres-

ence in your dreadful loneliness. To you he has been a husband to the widow. He has strengthened you to live on, fulfilling your allotted time, in the sweet assurance that when he has accomplished his wise purpose in you on earth, he will take you to himself, where the dear partner of your life, which he gave and has taken away, has preceded you but a short time. Only for this blessed assurance how could you bear up day after day? In addition to this, he has given you the company, the sympathy and the fellowship of your brethren, and the privilege of listening to the proclamation of his word, which things are greater riches than the world can ever give. Then out of a thankful heart you offer sacrifices of thanksgiving and praise at the altar of his grace and mercy. If the way through which we are called to pass is strewn with thorns and thistles, our bleeding and torn feet cry out for the courts of Zion, while the bruised and bleeding heart seeks after, and pants for the living God. There are no depths of suffering, or of humiliation into which we may sink, but Jesus has been there before us in suffering, in humiliation and in death, therefore is he able to succor all that are tempted. And he does deliver all who come unto God by him. God's ways are far above our ways, both in knowledge and wisdom, because his ways are perfect. With our carnal blindness, through the vail of the flesh we cannot look into the perfect law of liberty, and know how to walk uprightly before God. My carnal nature keeps telling me all the time that I must do something which I am made to think is good and acceptable in the sight of God. But when I am so divinely favored as to see Jesus as the end of the law for righteousness, and the still small voice sweetly whispers, "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him," then does the carnally built ladder, which I had reared heavenward, fall to the earth, and I find it has proved as valueless to me as did the brick and slime affair which was erected by some of old, and called the tower of Babel. When Jesus reveals his heavenly virtues, then do I find I cannot think a good thought, and certainly no good act can I perform. Saul of Tarsus verily thought he was doing a good work and serving God, until the heavenly light of divine truth flooded his presence, which light revealed to him many things, foremost of which was the voice which answered his question, "I am Jesus whom thou persecuteth," also that they whom he was pursuing to slaughter were the saints of God, and moreover that he himself was the "chief of sinners." I am made to fear and tremble when I myself think I am doing some good thing in the service of my Master, because I hope I know that in the invisible kingdom of Christ, wherein we live by the faith of the Son of God, the right hand knoweth not what the left hand doeth, and he that putteth his hand to the plow in the field of the spiritual Boaz, looketh not back to the world of carnal filthy righteousness, but with humble mien, and a contrite spirit, he presses toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. He does this with the clear knowledge that his life, his strength and every motion of his soul, and every exercise of his mind, is dependent upon Jesus, the hope of his salvation, and that without him he can do nothing. Therefore any act that is visible to his natural senses, and he thinks is good, is utterly contemned, and is not acceptable in the sight of God. It is only as little children that we can in any wise enter in the kingdom of our God. The grace of God sustains

us and builds us up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and through faith we are saved by his grace. As little children, we desire the sincere milk of the word, but like the apostle, when we have grown to be men and women, we put away childish things, and then we need stronger food, even the doctrine of the Lord, which drops as the rain, and the speech of God, which distils as the dew. A brother said to me yesterday, "I cannot receive preaching, or the reading of the Bible, with the same childish glee that I did in the first years of my pilgrimage." I asked him if he thought he could play marbles now, with the same childish innocence and glee that he did when in the first years of his natural life? There is no doubt a growth in grace, and a growth out of self, that when we do not comprehend it, we suffer and feel that our hope is vain, because we do not enjoy as we once did. Then do we moan and cry for days like the golden days of our youth, and with Job our cry ascends, "O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness; as I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle." Such reflections, too, are good for us, because they make us to realize the goodness of God, and his merciful loving-kindness to us throughout all our journey.

I have not written as I hoped I could, yet I hope, dear sister, you will receive it, not because of the value of its contents, but as a token of my esteem and fellowship for you. We all send love. All are in usual health.

Affectionately your brother, in hope of life eternal,

B. F. COULTER.

[HAVING had the privilege of reading the above letter, we have persuaded sister Jenkins to allow us to publish it. We have not obtained brother Coulter's consent, but we know him to be an honest man, and that he would not refuse to his brethren what rightfully belongs to them.—ED.]

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633 NORTH CALVERT ST., BALTIMORE, Md., }
April 18, 1899. }

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I wish to offer some thoughts upon the word "regeneration," found in Matthew xix. 27; xx. 16; Titus iii. 15. In the former connection, Peter had said, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee: what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, [kingdom] when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or land, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold and shall inherit everlasting life." The word regeneration, is a Greek term. I learn that the word as rendered in what is called the Syriac version of the New Testament is, "the new world." I learn that the same rendering is given in what is called the Persic version. In the Arabic version, I learn that the word is rendered, "The regeneration that is to come," or "the age to come." The Jews often called it, "The world to come, or the kingdom of the Messiah."

There were no divisions of chapters in the word when it was originally written, therefore the first part of the twentieth chapter of Matthew belongs in connections with the closing part of the nineteenth chapter. The word "for," at the beginning of the twentieth chapter,

clearly places it in connection, and thus shows that it is a further illustration of the same subject. The Savior uses the term "kingdom of heaven," here, meaning the same thing as the word regeneration. He compares the disciples and the kingdom of heaven to laborers in the vineyard, in the gospel dispensation, or in the new heavens.

Then ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. This he said they should have in the new kingdom. For he said, ye have followed me for about three years in preaching the gospel of the kingdom to the poor, and in publishing the news of the kingdom, even a spiritual kingdom which shall have no end. In Luke xxii. 28, the Lord said, "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." I have heard the question asked, Was his new kingdom set up then? I reply yes, for he published the laws of the kingdom, and was hailed as King when he rode into Jerusalem upon the foal of an ass. He also said that he was King at the time of his trial, and they crowned him King upon the cross. He said in Matthew vi. 33, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Then again, in Luke xvii. 21, he said, "Behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Again he said, "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you." It seems that this is proof enough that his kingdom was already set up.

Did the apostles give spiritual life to any? If not, it must have been in the setting up of his kingdom, that they had followed him. Now he says, "But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first." This he said to Peter. Then he goes on to say, "For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard." Here we see that the Lord says this is like his kingdom. And all that follows up to the sixteenth verse of the twentieth chapter is intended as an illustration by parable, of his response to the question of Peter, "What shall we have therefore?" The first laborers had agreed for a penny a day. Now when he would settle with his laborers, those who had wrought but one hour were paid the same amount as the first, and also were the first to be paid. Thus he showed that in his new kingdom all was of grace, and not of works. Then he said to the disciples, "For many be called, but few chosen," to be eye-witnesses and judges as they were. God never has called any one, and then refused him.

I will now refer to Titus iii. 5. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Now, how are we saved but by the word of the gospel kingdom, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost? See Acts xi. 13, this will apply here, "And he showed us how he [Cornelius] had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; who shall tell the words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved." He did so, and Peter came and preached the word of the kingdom, and the word was accompanied by the Holy Spirit. One was not without the other. Paul said to Timothy, that from a child he had known

the holy Scriptures, which were able to make him wise unto salvation, through the faith which was in Christ Jesus.

I will now call attention to the expression, the washing of water by the word, which I think to be the same as the washing of regeneration. And to Acts xiii. 26, which reads, "Whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent." "The Lord gave the word; great was the company of those that published it." From all this, it seems evident to me, that the Greek word regeneration, is synonymous with the new kingdom of Christ. I know that it is hard to forsake our preconceived ideas. I would, however, ask those who believe the word regeneration to be the same as the new birth, How could it read, We are saved by the washing of the new birth, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost? Is not the new birth the work of the Spirit? From every point of view the word must mean the new kingdom. The word is unintelligible from any other point of view. If the new birth is meant, why is there not some intimation of it in the context? The new kingdom is alluded to, time and again.

I remain your brother in hope,

JOHN THORNE.

[It will be remembered that in the Signs for May 1st, an article appeared written by brother Coulter, upon the same subject. Neither writer had any knowledge that the other was writing when each penned his views. We see much to commend in both letters. It had not been our own view that regeneration was the same as the new birth. It will be remembered that brother Coulter made a distinction between the two, in his letter. We do not understand that there is any difference in the substance of the views held by either of the brethren. Brother Thorne confines himself to a discussion of the literal meaning of the word regeneration itself, in the only two places where it occurs in the New Testament. Brother Coulter was not writing particularly upon that subject. Our own view had been however that the word referred to something done in the new kingdom, rather than to the new kingdom itself. We think that in the expression, "That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration," &c., the comma should precede the phrase, "in the regeneration," rather than follow it. It is good and profitable to consider the meaning of the words in which the Holy Ghost has spoken to us. We commend what both of the brethren have written, to the earnest attention of our readers.—Ed.]

Alton Station, Ky., Oct. 7, 1898.

Dear Brother Beebe:—As I have been accused of being an Arminian, I desire to state to the household of faith what I do believe. I believe that salvation is by grace, and by grace alone, and that it is wholly unmerited by the sinner. I believe that the sinner is dead in trespasses and in sins, and therefore can do nothing that is good. It is not of works, but of God that showeth mercy. I do believe that God has an elect people, and that none but the elect will be saved, whether I am one of the number or not. If I were to say positively that I am one of that number, I think that I should be a boasting pharisee. Paul says, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" Again he says, "I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." "For the children being not

yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said to her, The elder shall servé the younger." "Not of works but of him that calleth." "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." How could I believe anything else, when election is Bible doctrine. I also believe in predestination. Paul says, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Thus predestination is Bible doctrine. I believe also that the pardon of sin, and the justification of the people of God, are alone by the blood and righteousness of Christ our Redeemer, and that his righteousness is imputed to all his believing children. I believe that the calling and salvation of the people of God are alike effectual and complete, and that he saves them by his reigning grace alone. I believe that the quickening, regeneration, and second birth of the saints, are effected by the irresistible power of the Holy Spirit, and that God's people are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Now, brethren and sisters, this is my faith. If this be Arminianism, then I am one.

Brother Beebe, I would be glad for you to publish the foregoing if you deem it worthy a place in the SIGNS, but if it should be cast into the waste basket, all will be right with me.

Your brother in the Spirit, as I trust,

J. J. WATERFILL.

[THE above is certainly Bible doctrine, and it is what Old School Baptists believe. Articles of faith are not to be considered as our standard, or authority, yet we do not see how to get along without them. They are but a synopsis of what those who write them believe the Scriptures teach. Should we meet a stranger in the flesh, who should claim that he ought to be received into our fellowship, because he believed as we did, we should want to know what he did believe, and we should not deem it sufficient for him to say that he believed all that was written in the Bible. Thousands say this, who do not believe Bible doctrine at all. Therefore, we should require a synopsis of what he understood the Bible to teach. This statement would be the articles of faith, which he would profess. Therefore it seems to us essential that churches should state what they do believe the Scriptures contain, in a series of articles, more or less numerous and complete.—ED.]

ADRIAN, Michigan.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Inclosed I send you subscription price for the SIGNS another year; for we do not want you to send it to us at your expense, there are too many doing that now; after all you have written in regard to your circumstances. It seems to me I would either pay for them or stop them. I do not for a moment think of doing without the SIGNS as long as they are printed, unless we utterly fail in everything, for they are like a tried and faithful friend, they come to us just the same every time; full of beautiful things. My

dear old father was a life-long subscriber for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and we have taken them since his death. There is no time you cannot find them in our house, handy to pick up and read. I see no change in them, no departure from the old landmarks or doctrine of Christ and the apostles. The many contributors to its columns see eye to eye, and speak the same things. God's discriminating grace is their theme, they make no compromise or agreement with antichrist, but grace, free, unmerited grace, from first to last. I often think some of the letters are worth the price paid for the paper, though I can say nothing against any of them, yet sometimes one comes along that seems especially written for just such a poor creature as I am. I will speak of one written by B. F. Coulter, and published in the SIGNS of October 15th, 1898, entitled "Reveries." Indeed it was a beautiful reverie. It seems to me he was enabled by the Spirit to open the door that we might catch a glimpse of Jesus from time to time, as he traveled in sorrow and grief the weary road his Father had assigned him from his birth until his death and resurrection. First, he showed him in a lowly manger, seemingly very poor, and not where to lay his head, yet the whole world was his, the cattle on a thousand hills, and he holds in his hands the keys of death and hell, and the destiny of men and nations. Is it not wonderful that the Lord of life and glory, the God of the whole earth, should condescend to be born in that lowly place, surrounded by bleating folds and lowing herds? Again, he shows him talking with the lawyers and doctors, and telling his mother he must be about his Father's business. So he goes on, from one scene to another, in his short and sorrowful life, until it seems like one grand panorama of indescribable beauty and grandeur spread out before us.

I am glad it was put in the mind of that dear brother to write just as he did, for when I read such letters, where Jesus is the central figure, and extolled above everything else, it gives me comfort, for I sometimes have a little hope that in the great beyond I shall see that same Jesus of whom brother Coulter has so ably written, and sing his praises forever for my redemption.

MRS. H. TUTTLE.

ST. THOMAS, Ont., April 15, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is time for me to renew (and past time, for which you will please excuse) for the dear old SIGNS, which comes so regularly with good news, to me at least, and which I appreciate very much, and hope I feel thankful to God, from whom cometh all good things. Elder Durand's last two letters, with Elder Rittenhouse's in February, are, with two or three from the dear editors' pen, well worth the price charged for the whole year. I hope God will continue it, for I am sure it is a blessing wherever it goes, and it should be in every genuine Baptist home in the land. I hope God will put it in our hearts to pay up first for the SIGNS, giving it the preference over everything else, and by so doing (that only being our duty) relieve and assist those dear ones to attend to their duties more cheerfully, and strengthen their hands in the position where I firmly believe the Lord has placed them. I have also read some nice things from dear Elder Ker's pen, who, although young, seems to be well on, and the letters of late from the sisters have been truly interesting, all having the same theme; all praise to God, where it surely belongs.

Your brother in hope,

A. J. BLACK.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1899.

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OUR SINS.

WHEN men sin, is it because they *cannot*, or because they *will not*, obey God?

This question has been discussed somewhat of late in different localities through the papers, and it has rested somewhat upon our own mind. We have no question concerning the teaching of the Scriptures upon this matter. It is clear that they teach that both statements are true, as regards unregenerate men. They both *cannot*, and *will not*, cease from sin. The Scriptures are clear as to the whole bent and aim of the heart or will of man. It is declared that before the flood, God did look down from heaven to see if there were any that did good, and that did seek after God. The result of the searching of that all-seeing eye was, that he found none that did good, or that did seek after him. And he declared that every imagination of the heart of man was evil, and only evil, and that continually. Such was the condition of man. So totally depraved was he that there was nothing in him that did tend toward righteousness. The declaration just referred to says the same thing precisely as does the apostle when he declared that men were dead in trespasses and sins. The dead surely cannot be supposed to have any longing after life, because the word emphatically declares that they know not anything. Besides, it is declared in the Word, that men cannot cease from sin. The doctrine of total depravity has always been abhorrent to proud, vain man. The most grievous criminal will not admit that he is totally depraved. The vilest murderer will contend that some one else has done worse than he. But the depravity of man is not measured by what appears in the outward life. God, by his providence, and in other ways, has put restraints around his creatures, that they cannot act out all the hidden evil of the heart. Were it not so, earth would be uninhabitable. The depravity of man is stated in the Scriptures as being inherent. Man is depraved in all his parts. The earthly house of this tabernacle is not only affected with the leprosy, but it has penetrated into every stone of the structure. We cannot say of any faculty of our being that it is good. Owing to the restraints of providence which are thrown around man, no one acts as bad as he is. This is what is implied in the expression, "The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain." Some men are restrained from acting out the wrath that is in them more than are others; or at least they are not suffered to act it out in the same way. The thief on the cross was no worse a man by nature than was Saul of Tarsus. The vice and open crime of the one was no more vile in the sight of God, who searches the heart and sees not according to appearance, than was the righteousness of the other, which led to boasting in the sight of God. In his sight open crime and vice are no more to be condemned than is that religion which exalts men and sets them to boasting before God It is not

what men do, neither is it what men feel, that fixes their state in the mind of God, and before his justice, but what men are. And though one man may have been so restrained in his life by various causes, that he lives a moral and charitable life, according to the judgment of his fellow men, yet as he has not had God in all his thoughts, and he seeks not the glory of God, but his own glory, he in the sight of the Searcher of hearts is deemed no less guilty and depraved than is that man who has lived out what is in him, in the way of open vice and folly. The testimony of the apostle in the first two chapters of Romans, settles this matter with all who believe the Scriptures. Paul there makes no difference; he declares all to be vile alike. Beside this, all christian experience teaches the same thing. Isaiah said, "I am a man of unclean lips, and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." All were alike vile in his sight, when he saw the glory of the righteousness of God, as recorded in the sixth chapter of his prophecy. So Paul would not admit that any one was a greater sinner than himself. He said, "Of whom I am chief." Hundreds whom we have ourselves known, whose outward lives were such that they were regarded as models of what was desirable in men and women, have confessed that the Lord had shown them that no good thing dwelt in them by nature, and have insisted that none could be more vile than they; and christian experience does not lie. Thus it is clear from both the testimony of the Scriptures and of experience, that there is no difference, and that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Indeed, when we consider that the law of God is all summed up in the two commandments, love to God and to the neighbor, we shall find that this awful truth of total and universal depravity stands out still more clearly. Men by nature do not love God with all their powers; they do not love him at all; they do not like to retain him in their knowledge. What greater depth of depravity could be imagined than this? All men are included in this, no matter what the good morals of their outward life may be. God is not in all their thoughts. This sums it all up; this is the greatest depth of depravity. No man can be worse than this, and this is the state of all men by nature. Let us remember that the apostle said, "There is no difference." Whatever the appearance of difference may be in men, there is no difference at all. God has said so, and it must be so. Therefore men cannot cease from sin; it is in them, and what is within settles the state of men. Human depravity of nature prevents men from doing anything else but sin. Whatever they do it is a sinful nature out of which it springs. All is sin that has not the love of God as its motive or spring. A bitter fountain cannot send forth sweet waters, and the fountain is bitter in all men, by nature. The outflowing streams are also bitter, however fair they may seem to be in the sight of men. Surely this will not be disputed. What a mercy from God, then, that man is guided and controlled by his power, (not by his grace, but by his power,) so that he does not act out all that is in him. There is no praise due to men who do not do ill, but all credit and praise is due to God, who restrains the wrath that is really in him. Paul felt this when he confessed that in his flesh dwelt no good thing. If no good thing was there, then all must have been vile. Men who are in the flesh have nothing but vileness. Is not this total depravity? But when men cannot cease from sin, it is because

they will not. The fact that they will not turn from sin, is the chief factor in the fact that they cannot. How can a man who wills to continue in sin, turn from it? It is this very will that settles the matter of sin, in the outward life. The will is itself depraved. It is of course a faculty of the mind, and as the whole man, body, soul and spirit, is sold under sin, so also is this faculty of the mind or, if any choose to so speak of it, this act of the mind. The mind of the unregenerate man cannot will anything else but to sin. Because the mind cannot will to cease from sin, therefore he cannot cease. The will is not free, because it is sold under sin. It has become enslaved as completely as any other part of the man. Therefore it is true that men both *cannot* and *will not*, cease from sin. There is no need to discuss the question then, as to whether when men sin, it is because they will not, or cannot. Both are true; they cannot, and they will not, cease from sin.

It is utterly profitless to discuss the state of the will of man before the fall. We know that then sin had no dominion over man in any of his faculties, else he could not have been said to have been upright. He over whom another reigns cannot be said to be upright. He bows his head to a yoke. But since the transgression, men are slaves to sin; sin reigns, and reigns unto death. Neither is it worth while to argue that if this is true, men are not justly accountable for their sins. That is, that men are not really blameworthy. This brings us to state again what we have once before called attention to in this editorial, viz: what men are, is what the Bible testifies to. Men are condemned for what they are, rather than for what they have done. What men do is only the index of what they are. It is what men are in the sight of God, and not in their own sight, that we mean. The fair appearance cannot deceive the all-seeing eye. When it is said in the word that men cannot cease from sin, the language is used to present the exceeding guilt of men. It is not used to excuse or palliate their sin, but rather to show its exceeding enormity. The fact that the will of men is not free, but sold under the dominion of sin, is an aggravation of the guilt of men, instead of being an excuse or a plea, that men cannot be held guilty unless the will is free. we repeat that it is useless to discuss what was the state of the will of man before the fall. We are interested in knowing what its state is now, and the word tells us that it is enslaved, and is not free.

Thus far we have spoken of the unregenerate portion of mankind. Let us now call attention to the part of mankind who have been born again, and have been made free in Christ. When they sin, is it because they will not cease from sin, or because they cannot? Here again both the word of God, and the facts of personal experience, testify with no uncertain testimony. Notwithstanding the fact that admonitions are given almost without number, notwithstanding the fact that all motives are urged that divine wisdom saw needful to be presented to the believer, notwithstanding the fact that the believer himself abhors sin, and prays constantly to be given the victory over it, notwithstanding all the help which the presence and the admonitions of loving brethren can do, each believer testifies as did Paul, "I cannot do the good that I would." (Galatians v. 17; Romans vii.) We recall that when but a child, we heard men argue against this doctrine, and as they argued they would

ridicule it, and call it the "can't help it" doctrine. "Why," they said, "the believer can do good, and there is no need that he should ever do otherwise," and when some humble-hearted believer among them, who had become convinced of his weakness, and proneness to do wrong, would confess to this, he would be told that he was all wrong, and that it was folly to talk in this way. We recall how many times our own heart was distressed by such words from those around us, in whom we at the time had confidence, and we would turn away sad, convinced that we were not as they were, and wishing that we could be like them. We had learned at a very early age that notwithstanding all the earnestness of desire which filled us to do right, and to serve God, and notwithstanding all the resolutions which we made, and made in all earnestness, that we would abstain from sin, we were never able to live one day, or for that matter one moment, without the consciousness of the presence of sin in our heart, and its affecting all our words and actions in life, and we could not help it. How to do good we found not. How to abstain from sin we found not. It seems passing strange that those who do really know the plague of their own heart, and the warfare which every believer must know and feel, can adopt the arguments and assertions of open Arminians, and contend that we can do the good that we would. And especially have we felt to wonder that they should cast up the old slur against the doctrine of Paul, and the experience of all who love God, and call them "can't help its." We remember that we rejoiced as we read the language of Paul, in our youth, to find that Paul said that he could not do what he would. We have found that it was so with us, and we could but rejoice that inspiration had said the same thing of the eminent apostle. We feel the same way yet. We cannot do the good that we would. We do that which we would not, because we cannot help it. This is our experience, and we derive grief from it, and yet hope, since we find ourself in the company of the apostle. We do not rejoice that it is so, but being that it is so, we do rejoice that it was so with the apostle. But there is this difference between those who know not God, and those who do know him. Of the one it is true that they both cannot and will not serve God, and cease from sin. Of the believer it is true that he wills to serve God, and to turn from sin, but complains that he cannot do the good that he would. The one does not complain, but is satisfied to go on in sin, while the child of God groans under the burden, desiring to put it off forever, and find rest from the conflict. And what a difference is this; and grace alone has wrought it in us. But the work of grace is not completed; the period is coming when we not only shall be able to say, not only do I will to do right, but I am able to do right. That however is when the work of redemption shall be fully completed; and we shall be satisfied when we awake in his likeness. So long as we remain below we shall complain that we cannot do the good that we would. But how great is the work which has given us a will to do the will of God. For this let us be thankful, and rejoice and praise infinite mercy, while yet we mourn that all that we desire is not ours yet; but it shall be ours. Not one longing desire shall be unsatisfied. Our God opens his hand, and satisfies the desire of every living thing. If God satisfies the lesser wants of his creatures, shall he not much more satisfy the chief desire with that which is better than bread?

But why cannot we do the good that we would? There is one and only one reason that the child of God realizes as what hinders him. He says it is the flesh, the old man, the law in the members, which always is with him, and which holds him back from his joys. He blames himself, and feels condemned, because he is so slow to work righteousness. He says, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then sometimes like Paul, he rises to the height of faith, and sees Jesus as his salvation, and then exclaims, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." "I find a will to do God's will, but I find a hindrance in myself, which will not let me. I cannot help sin. Yet I want to be righteous, and to do righteousness." The more that the true light shines in the heart, and the more perfectly we realize the conformity which we desire to God's will in the Spirit, the more shall we complain that we cannot attain to what we would in righteousness. In fact this conformity to the will of God in the Spirit, is as a light which reveals to us our distance from God in the flesh.

We leave these remarks to our readers. We believe they are scriptural. May God bless them to all, if it be his will.

C.

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE.

ALTHOUGH we have not published for some time our advertisements of large Family, and Pulpit Bibles, and a number of other books, formerly advertised, yet we have them for sale, and any one wishing to purchase, can obtain full information in regard to them, by sending for one of our handsome illustrated catalogues, which we mail free.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

DIVINITY AND HUMANITY OF OUR LORD.

FRIEND BEEBE:—Will you please give your views through the SIGNS, on the divinity and humanity of Christ? Should you comply with my request, you will oblige,

AN INQUIRER AFTER TRUTH.

INDIANA CREEK, Iowa, Sept. 9, 1856.

THE terms divinity, and humanity, which are in much use among theologians, are not used in reference to Christ, by the inspired writers; we must therefore, take them in the theological sense in which they are commonly used. By the divinity of Christ, so far as we can learn, is generally intended his independent, eternal Godhead, and by his humanity, that body of flesh and blood in which he became incarnate, which was made of a woman, made under the law, &c. We have been engaged for many years in trying to exhibit our views of the blessed Redeemer, in reference to his Godhead, his manhood, and also in his mediatorial identity as the Head and Life of his body, the church. But after all that has been said and written on the subject, we have yet to say, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh," &c. So absolutely is he God, that all the angels are commanded to worship him, and so truly was he man, that he could be born of a virgin, cradled in a manger, grow in stature to manhood, hunger, thirst, be weary, and his soul could be exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death; could feel the infirmities of his people, groan in spirit, and sweat, as it were, great drops of blood; yea, he could die upon the cross, and be buried, and finally be raised again from the dead, by the glory of the Father, and ascend up into heaven. As God, he is one with the Father, independent, self-existent

and almighty. By him all things were made that were made, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. As man, he could be tempted in all points like his brethren, and yet remain uncontaminated by sin. None can deny his essential, eternal and unbegotten Godhead, and consistently hold that he is a Savior, for he says by the prophet, "I am God, and beside me there is no Savior." If, then, he is a Savior, he is also God. In his incarnation he took part of the same flesh and blood that his children are partakers of. The propriety of calling his Godhead, divinity, or his manhood, humanity, we will leave others to decide; we prefer, when treating on a subject so awfully sacred, to use only such adjectives as the Scriptures furnish. Peter speaks of the divine nature, but as he also speaks of the saints being partakers of it, we have supposed that the mediatorial fullness of which John also speaks (John i. 14, 16,) was intended. Brethren must read and judge for themselves, but we do not feel prepared to say that the life and immortality, which Christ gives to his saints, is anything short of divine nature, while the Scriptures plainly teach that the essential attributes of eternal Godhead are peculiar to the Godhead, and incommunicable to any inferior beings. On the other hand, we dare not say that that perfect, mystical body, or stature, which comprehends the Head and body of the church, was only human.

We may not have comprehended the design of "An Inquirer After Truth," but we have briefly stated some of our views on the subject, according to the very limited light we have of that Savior whom we desire to worship, adore and trust as the God of our salvation, who came in the flesh, and was found in fashion as a man, but we do most heartily say,

"Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on thee:
Leave, ah leave me not alone,
All my help must come from thee."

No couplet in the celebrated stanzas of Watts has ever afforded more sweetness to us than these,

"Jesus, my God, I know his name,
His name is all my trust."

We have neither the time nor space to extend our remarks at this time. May the subject be opened gloriously by the Holy Spirit, to the understanding, joy and rejoicing of all the saints, for the Redeemer's sake.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., September 15, 1856.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Joseph B. Turner died Nov. 3d, 1898. "Uncle Joe," as he was known by all, was born near Culpepper courthouse, in Fauquier Co., Virginia, Feb. 13th, 1803. His funeral was preached at his residence, near the town of Turner Station, (that is named after him) by Elders J. G. Eubanks and P. W. Sawin, and his remains borne by his six sons, and laid to rest in family burying-ground on home farm.

Brother Turner united with Sulphur Fork Church of Regular Old School Baptists, near Campbellsburg, Ky., on the third Saturday in January, 1829, and was baptized (with my father, W. H. Ransdell) by Elder John A. McGuire. He was one of the messengers and bearer of the letter to Sulphur Fork Association, during the split among the Baptists in Kentucky, in 1840, and he brilliantly showed his faith in doctrine and church discipline. In 1842 he was elected Clerk of the Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Baptists, and was Clerk of that body for twenty-two years, and was deacon of Sulphur Fork for many years. He lived in full fellowship with the Baptists of his faith and order, always filling his seat in church, and bearing the marks of Jesus. He was indeed a precious brother in the Lord to the humble writer. During his last days he was troubled with dropsy, but bore his affliction with christian fortitude, always reconciled to his Maker's will, and ready at all times to talk of the wonderful dealings of Christ with his people, in which he was able to rejoice, believing that a crown of righteousness was laid up for him.

Brother Farmer was married twice; his first wife was Martha Jones, and his last, Caroline B. Ringo. He was the father of thirteen children, nine boys and four girls. He was a devoted husband, a loving father, a good neighbor, and is greatly missed in his church and home; but our loss is his eternal gain, so

weep not, dear mother and children, remember that all things work together for good, to them that love God. The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord. May we all see him as he is, at the right hand of God, where all pain and trouble shall be done away, and parting shall be no more.

ERNEST F. RANSDELL.

IN the mysterious providence of God we, the members of the Middletown and Wallkill church, are again called to mourn the loss of one of our most useful and faithful members. On the morning of April 27th, 1899, our beloved brother, **Deacon William Inman**, aged 78 years, 1 month and 15 days, fell asleep in Jesus, at the home of brother John L. Hait, in this city.

Brother Inman was born in Hunter, Greene Co., N. Y., March 12th, 1821. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Lexington (N. Y.) Old School Baptist Church, by the late Elder Joseph L. Purington, in about the year 1855. He moved to Middletown, N. Y., about two years later, and united with this church by letter, July 25th, 1857, and was appointed deacon in November, 1858, the duties of which office he discharged in a most faithful way until the time of his death.

June 2d, 1845, he was united in marriage to Miss Frances H. Eggleston. Six children were born to them, of whom only one survives, Mrs. Frances Robinson, of this city. Of late years brother Inman has been a great sufferer from a number of physical afflictions, but he bore them all with christian patience and resignation. Although so sorely afflicted, he was almost always in his seat at the meetings, never being absent when he was able to meet with his brethren, which was his chief delight. As near as it is possible for finite man, he lived a bright example of what James defines as, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

His funeral was held at the meeting-house of the church he served so faithfully for many years, on Saturday, April 29th, Elders H. C. Ker, his pastor, and Wm. L. Beebe, officiating; after which his remains were laid to rest in his family lot, in Hillside Cemetery, in this city.—ED.

MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church, of Canada, will be held, the Lord willing, at the usual place, Aughrim schoolhouse, in the township of Brooke, Lambton Co., Ontario, five miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1899, and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore, Md., beginning on Wednesday before the third Sunday in May, 1899, and continuing three days.

Those coming to the above Association will call on D. J. Thorne, 633 Calvert St., Baltimore, Md., or at the church building, Madison St., near Calvert, where they will be provided with places to stop.

JOHN THORNE.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Welsh Tract church, at Newark, Del., commencing on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, (24th, 25th and 26th,) 1899, and continuing three days.

Those coming from Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore, will come via B. & O. R. R. to Newark, Del., on Wednesday. Train leaves Philadelphia, Twenty-fourth and Chestnut streets, at 8 a. m., and Baltimore, Camden station, at 7:55 a. m. Those coming via Delaware Division, from Salisbury and other points on that line, will come on Tuesday, and take the train that leaves Delmar at 2:15 p. m. Get tickets for Wilson's station, and change cars at Porter. The friends will be met and cared for.

A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth to meet with us, and especially do we desire our ministering brethren to be well represented.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Kingwood, (Locktown) N. J., commencing on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1899, and continuing three days.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, at Middletown, N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1899, and continue three days.

THE Sandusky Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Columbia church, Jackson Co., Mich., commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1899, and continuing three days.

WM. L. BROWN.

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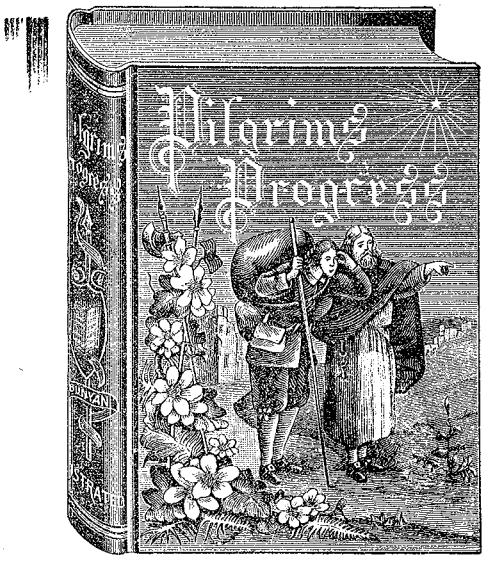

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 67. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1899. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE SIGN OF JONAH.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Sister Utterback, of Virginia, requests me to write for the SIGNS, on these words of our Lord: "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."—Matt. xii. 40.

"Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth," here teaches that the prophet Jonah was a sign or type of the Son of man and the Son of God; and the solemn and wonderful lesson of this figure or sign is, that the "wonderful" antitype of Jonah must of necessity die, be buried, and the third day rise again. Therefore, as a sign to the Hebrew nation, the people of the covenant, the Hebrew prophet Jonah was a very wonderful person, showing the infinite wisdom and immutable purpose of our covenant God, and the glorious redemption and deliverance that should be accomplished in the delivering up of both Jonah and Jesus, to which let us turn our attention.

First, the sign of Jonah. He was on board a ship, against which a great storm arose, which threatened the destruction of all on board. In the inspired history of this event we read, "But the Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken. Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them." They thus put forth their best efforts to save themselves and the ship from being lost, but it all failed. This shows the inability of men to deliver themselves from the storms of God's wrath or judgments, and it proves that his purpose shall be accomplished in his darkest providence, and his mercy shall be made known and his holy name glorified. In this fearful storm and peril Jonah said, "Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you. Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not." Let us lay this solemn lesson to our hearts. The impotent man at the pool had no man to help him, and was himself helpless, when Jesus rescued him. So deliverance to all in the ship from the

fury of the storm which was about to engulf them, should come to them through Jonah only, and this servant of God must go down into the depths of the storm-tossed sea and perish, (as it seemed to them) to give them life and peace. As they would have saved Jonah, so would the little band with Jesus have held him back from going down into the depths of death; but vain and futile were the wisdom and best efforts of men to turn away the cup which God had given, or to devise means of escape.

"Wherefore they cried unto the Lord, and said, We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee. So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea; and the sea ceased from her raging." How wonderful! The sacrifice of this servant of God stilled the fury of the sea, and saved the lives of all in the ship! Is it not strange that the Bible-taught Jews, who said to Jesus, "What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee?" did not see this sign, receive this lesson, and believe? Is it not even more strange that millions of professed christians, taught in the letter of the New Testament and the Old, do not see and believe the lesson of this sign?

Now see the result: "Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows." Thus they were not only saved through the sacrifice of Jonah from going down with him into the depths of the sea to perish, but they were also saved from idolatry, and brought to know and worship the true God, who had thus manifested his rich mercy toward them. And all this came upon them for Jonah's sake.

"Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights." "And the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land." This is the completion of the sign of Jonah, as a type of the Son of man, and, as do all of God's lessons, it teaches a wonderful truth, showing his omnipotence and mercy in salvation.

Second, "The Son of man," of whom Jonah was the "sign." "So shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." The holy Son of God spoke this long before its accomplishment, but yet he said it imperatively: "So shall the Son of man be." From this awful baptism there was no escape for him. It was God's purpose and appointment. As Jonah must be rejected and sink into the depths, that all in the storm-engulfed ship perish not, "so" must the "greater than Jonas" be delivered up and go down, *down*, DOWN into "the belly of hell," "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." As the lot fell upon Jonah, not by chance, but by the decree of the Holy One, and he said to all who were in the same peril with him, "Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you;" so did the unresisting Son of man say, "I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way." "I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." For as all in the ship were saved by casting out Jonah into the deep, deep sea, so all who were in the covenant with the Son of man were delivered from so great a wrath, and from the storm of destruction, when the devoted servant of God went down into the heart of the earth. There was no other way; hence for him there was no escape. The lot

fell on Jonah; so the decree had gone forth upon the Deliverer of Zion, saying, "In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the Lord hath spoken it." Yes, the storm ceased; the burden of sin and guilt and awful fear were cut off, and fell into oblivion, when Christ was taken down from the cross, and laid in the heart of the earth. Then were the redeemed delivered from going down into the pit, for the Lord had provided a ransom. How strange now that, after Jesus of Nazareth, "a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people," was laid in the tomb, none of the Jews, not even his disciples, remembered this "sign" of Jonas. Therefore they were as greatly astonished when the buried Redeemer came up out of the heart of the earth, "after three days," as they were overwhelmed with awe when he was "brought as a lamb to the slaughter," "and went down into death." The chosen apostles could not understand what the rising from the dead should mean, of which the devoted Jesus spoke to them, "and they were afraid to ask him." O how fearful, dark and solemn, was this time! It seemed as if all must perish. The fearful disciples lost all hope. Two of them sadly said to the now risen and living Son of man, "But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." This shows how utterly at fault are the wisdom and judgment of men, even godly men, in reference to the purpose and way and power of God. "The Lord answered Job, and said, Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it. Then Job answered the Lord, and said, Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further." We should all do well to receive the Lord's reproof of Job, and then manifest the humility and godly reverence of Job. The trial of Job was a very dark and painful providence, it is true; so was the trial of Jonah and all in the ship with him; and greater still was the trial of the Son of man and his fearful disciples, when he was "despised and rejected of men," and the rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and crucified him. For there was a fearful convulsion of nature; darkness covered the earth from midday three hours, the mountains and earth were shaken, the rocks were rent, and the graves were opened, as if the final doom had fallen upon them; yet it was all controlled by the omnipotent hand of God, and was ordained of him for the destruction of sin and death, that his people should be saved from their sins and idolatries, and death itself. For the Redeemer had said, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." In fulfillment of this, the blessed Lord said to his sorrowing disciples, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away." But O, how dreadful and dark the trial! It was expedient for those in the engulfed ship that Jonah should be cast out, to go down three days and nights in the depths of the sea. It was expedient that Joseph should be sent down into Egypt, "to save much people alive;" yet the trial and consequent sorrow, humiliation and deep repentance, were very great. The wisdom and power, goodness and mercy of God were in all these fearful and won-

derful events, and in them all his name was made known and glorified. Stormy winds and roaring tempests, warring nations and devils, yea, all creatures and things, sin, death and hell, can do no more than our God has purposed and gives them leave. His holy Son said as much to Pilate: "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." Were it not so, all things would be uncertain, liable to failure, and there could be no safety anywhere, in anything, for any one.

"Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again." It was with these glorious words the angels of God greeted the devout, sorrowing women, who hastened to the sepulchre of Jesus early the third morning after he cried, "It is finished." Finished, the storm of wrath, the powers of darkness; finished, the transgression, the warfare; finished, the cup of woe, the baptism of death; finished, the redemption-price, the justification; finished, the sting of death, the victory of the grave; finished, the captivity, the legal bondage; finished, "the sign of the prophet Jonas," the short triumph of "the last enemy." Now, to those that sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up. Jesus says, "I am the Resurrection, and the Life." "Because I live, ye shall live also." Sorrow and mourning flee away. O, with what great joy the believing women now hasten to tell the glad tidings: "Now is Christ risen from the dead!"

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind.

ROMANS VII. 13.

"WAS then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful."

The experience embodied in this text is not like the experience of one who thinks that he can keep the commandments, but to the contrary, it is the experience of one to whom it has been revealed that he cannot keep the commandments. The apostle in this chapter has set forth the experience of the people of God to their great comfort. A few days ago I was talking with a Campbellite upon the subject of salvation, occasioned by his having asked me if I did not have a hard time in preaching recently, the funeral of a man who had been a saloon keeper? I remarked that I never preached the man, but tried to preach Christ and him crucified, and that I could do so as well over a nonprofessor, as over a professor. This seemed to surprise him. I told him that he did not comprehend our doctrine, and further, that we did not have the kind of experience that the Campbellites had. Again he seemed surprised. He could not understand my meaning. I referred him to the occasion of Jesus sitting at meat in the house of the pharisee, when a woman that was a sinner came and stood behind him weeping, who had an alabaster box of ointment, and who fell at Jesus' feet, and began kissing them, and washed them with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head. And the pharisee said in his own mind, if this man were a prophet, he would have known what manner of woman this was. Jesus knowing his thoughts, said unto him, A creditor had two debtors; one owed him a large amount, and the other a small amount, and neither had anything to pay, and so

he frankly forgave them both. Jesus asked the pharisee which of the two debtors would love the creditor most? And he answered, he that was forgiven most. And Jesus said, it was even so with this woman. Her sins were many, and Jesus had forgiven her all. And he said that she loved him more than the pharisee. The evidence was that he had given Jesus no kiss, and no water to wash his feet, but this poor woman had not ceased to kiss his feet, and wash them with her tears, and to wipe them with the hairs of her head. And he said that where little was forgiven, there was little love, but where much was forgiven, there was much love. I told him also of the woman who was brought to Jesus, by the Jews, saying that Moses had commanded that such should be stoned to death. Jesus said, Let him that is without sin cast the first stone. But this was so great a rebuke that the Jews at once withdrew, and left the woman standing with Jesus alone, while he stopped down and wrote upon the ground. And when he had looked up and saw the woman standing alone he said, "Woman, where are those thine accusers?" And she said, Lord, I have none. Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." I also referred to the publican and the pharisee who went up into the temple to pray, when the pharisee thanked God that he was not as other men were, that he had prayed three times a day, that he fasted twice a week, and gave tithes of all that he possessed. But the publican could not so much as lift his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, and said, "God be merciful to me a sinner." I then cited the Campbellite to how much more merciful was our God, than men, and how much more he loved sinners, than hypocrites, and so I could preach this man's funeral just as well as I could those who looked down upon those who did not make a public profession. When I told him that our people had a different experience from his people, he asked me the difference? I replied, The apostle Paul, in the seventh chapter of Romans, told us he was alive without the law once, but when it came, sin revived, and he died. That sin without the law was dead, and that where no law is, there is no transgression, that the law was the strength of sin; that Paul taught in this Scripture that a man might be a sinner all his life, and not be troubled about it until God wrote his good, holy and just law in his heart, and that when he had done so, then the sin that had laid dormant or dead, as it were, took strength and power from the law, and did work in us to bring forth fruit unto death. The apostle asks, "Was then that which is good, made death unto me?" Or was the law made death unto me? "God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment [the law] might become exceeding sinful." For, he says, "The motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members, to bring forth fruit unto death." We thus learn from Paul that the law which was holy, just and good, put power and strength into sin, for sin was dead without the law. Paul said, "I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." "For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me, and "wrought in me all manner of concupiscence." I said to him, that he believed that he could and must live up to the commandments, and live or be saved in this way, but that our people, when God revealed this law in their

hearts, found that it set sin in motion, and that instead of obeying the commandment, they found that sin which had not given them any trouble before, now began to become exceeding sinful, and they discovered much more sin about them after the truth was revealed to them, than before, and while the Campbellites claimed to get better, our people got worse. I told him that we also were getting along all right before the law came; then our sins were not troubling us, and sin then had peaceful possession of our hearts, and no warfare was being waged in our hearts, and we were looking down on sinners as being far below us, and we rather boasted over such as confessed to being such great sinners. But, I added, as soon as that spiritual law was written in our hearts, there immediately arose a warfare between the flesh and the spirit, so that we could not do the things that we would. You say that you can do them, but we find that we cannot. We find that when we would do good, evil is present with us, for we find another law in our members, warring against the law of our mind, so that we are daily and hourly taken captive to this law of sin and death, which is in our members. If we ever do serve God, the apostle declared that it was with the mind, while with the flesh we still served the law of sin. This was strange news to this Campbellite.

I think that I have learned by experience the truth of Paul's words, that sin is dead before the law comes, or God shines in the heart. Light comprehends the darkness, and the clearer the light, the plainer is sin discovered to us. It seems that the law, when given to the sinner, is like adding yeast to the meal. The yeast sets the meal in motion, and restlessness is in the dough. So the sin which lies dormant, as soon as God writes his law in the mind and heart, gets into motion, and becomes exceeding sinful, and in our feelings we become like Paul, and say, "O wretched man that I am, whom shall deliver me from the body of this death?" The kingdom of heaven is like leaven hid in three measures of meal, until all should be leavened. We learn that when the kingdom of heaven is within us, the flesh is an opposing element. Jesus is like the housewife when she has put the leaven in the meal, she puts it there to arouse fermentation, or to get up trouble in the elements of the meal, and she watches the progress of the leaven, and would be disappointed if she did not discover action there. Light bread cannot be made without the fermentation which the leaven causes; and when the housewife discovers that it is beginning to rise, and likely to run away, she kneeds it down, and calms the elements. Even so does Jesus; he gives the law to reveal our sins, and sin begins to revive by the strength of the law, and the poor sinner begins to feel that there is a terrible commotion going on in his heart, which becomes greater and greater, until he feels that he cannot bear it any longer, and that sin has ruined him, and he cries out, Lord, save, or I perish; so sin has become exceeding sinful. The yeast sets the dough in motion; even so does the law set sin in motion. Then we die, and feel that we cannot bear up against the trouble. But Jesus is watching the progress of the battle in our hearts, between the law and sin, between the flesh and the spirit, and it must go on until it has arisen to the desired height: to crucify us. The dough is not fit for the use of the housewife until it has reached the desired state of fermentation. Even so we are not fit for the Master's

use, until the warfare between these opposing forces has reached the state of exceeding sinfulness, so that it brings forth fruit unto death. Then Jesus calms the troubled waters of the soul. Sin has got in its awful work, and brought us down unto death. It was a mighty battle; we thought it was terrible, and that we could not bear it, but when we died, we were then delivered from the bondage of sin, that being dead wherein we were held. After the battle has been waged unto death, and we thus have become fitted for the Master's use, then we hear the apostle say, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Now we are delivered from the curse of the law.

How little do these good workers know about the power of sin, or its exceeding sinfulness.

Your brother,

NEWTON PETERS.

PORTLAND, Ind., March 3, 1899.

2 TIMOTHY II. 24, 25.

"AND the servant of the Lord must not strive: but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves: if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth."

These words of Paul to Timothy, a beloved servant of the Lord Jesus, have been on my mind to day as I was working, and with some pleasant reflections. Though weary in body to-night, I feel like penning a few thoughts upon a portion of what seemed to be in the mind of the apostle when he wrote. Paul certainly was a faithful servant, and made full proof of his ministry. No doubt but the blessed Master's cause was dear at heart to him, dearer than his own life. He had witnessed many inroads made by false teachers, and by their false doctrines, and their efforts to draw away disciples, as well as contentions among the brethren. He witnessed much of the blind zeal which was not according to knowledge, and seems to have had that in view when he wrote Timothy how he ought to behave himself in the house of God. Paul earnestly contended for the faith, and shunned not to declare all the counsel, and it certainly becomes the servant of God to do so in this evil day. That there were opposers and scoffers then, we do not question; there is yet, but what of that? The blessed command is, go preach anywhere, in every place whithersoever the Spirit leads you. But take heed to thyself, (not opposers) and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseer; to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. I have to confess that in early life in the ministry, I looked at these things differently from what I do now. I must here have exhibited much of the fleshly zeal, like Peter, fought with carnal weapons, and like him, perhaps, cut off the organ of hearing, that they could not, or would not hear. It seems to me now as I look back over my own misspent time, and observe the results of my preaching, to-day, I fear there has been a great deal of carnal-weapon preaching. One thing I observe in myself, that when shut up in darkness, I can generally rally my forces and fight the opposers, cause some of the dear saints to smile, and get a great deal of vain glory to myself. That preaching that causes lightness and levity in the hearts of the dear saints, is not preaching the gospel of Christ. The servant stands as a mouthpiece between God and man,

to speak profound, sacred truths, and the faithful servant thus speaking will find, from time to time, a comfort to his soul, and the dear saints will feel a sacredness in that truth as their souls are filled to overflowing. The hungry soul feels a welling up within, and he is made like the chariots of Amminadab. It seems to me that it is a time when the sweet gospel notes should be heard throughout the borderlands of Zion, that the hungry, starving poor, may be fed. Where the hungry lambs are fed, they will come again; they long for the sincere milk of the word. Paul says, The servant should not strive, but be gentle. Perhaps the clearest insight we can get of the Spirit of truth in the text is, to look at the great example, set by the Master, in our own experience. We will find that the dear Redeemer has always exhibited more, far more mercy, love and kindness to usward, than we have to our brethren, or them that oppose us. It is right to declare all the counsel; it is right (according to the gospel) to raise our voice against the unfruitful works of darkness in the church, among the saints; to show unto Israel their sins, and if done in the gospel spirit, Israel will feel it. In the late trouble through which the churches and association passed, our brethren certainly had the principle of right, but I greatly fear, in some instances, the contending was in a bad spirit. There was not the spirit of the merciful and loving Jesus. Must be gentle, apt to teach, patient. How important it is to try the spirits in preaching, as well as elsewhere. All that is not gentle, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, (a child of God) is of the flesh, corrupt, not of divine origin, but is sensual and devilish, and will not cause an erring child to turn, or in any way be blessed to the comfort of the dear saints. O, how sweet to my soul, when I can with a hearing ear and a heart opened to understand, hear that blessed servant that comes in the fullness of the gospel of Christ, speaking in demonstration of the spirit and power the sacred and holy truth. How it turns the hearts of the children to the fathers, &c., binds up the broken-hearted, strengthens the feeble-kneed, like myself, confirms our faith, and we feel strong in the Lord. Yes, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God." I fear, in many instances, the dear saints have been scattered in the contentions, by not heeding the apostle's admonition, "In meekness instructing."

"O, may his meekness be my guide,
The pattern I pursue;
How can I bear revenge or pride,
With Jesus in my view?"

Dear brethren editors, I have written a great deal, and said but little; it is at your disposal. I would not set myself up as a standard. No, I am ever weighed in the balance and found wanting. When I dispose of all that is worthless about me, I am whittled down to the little end of nothing. But I have a hope the fear of God is in my heart.

With love to all the household of faith, I am a pilgrim and a stranger seeking, or desiring, a better country,

P. W. SAWIN.

NEWCASTLE, Ky., April 26, 1899.

BRUNSWICK, Maine, March 17, 1899.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your message of sympathy reached me in due season, and I expected to write very soon and assure you of my gladness at its coming, but the weeks and months have passed until to-day, when you have come into my mind, something like it would be to have you come into

the house, so that I could talk with you. The winter has not been such a long, sad, lonely one as I had expected, for the Lord has been mindful of me, and has led my mind into the truth, and has comforted me with the precious things of his kingdom. I have felt for years that when the time came for one of my parents to pass away from earth, the Lord would give me grace and strength to bear it, but how or in what way, I could not know until the appointed time came. His goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life. There cannot be even a shadow of turning with our Lord. His salvation has been brought very beautifully into my mind, lifting me out of earthly sorrows as it were, and causing me to rejoice that Jesus came to save sinners; that he came to save those who could do nothing to save themselves, nothing good, and who know that sin is mixed with all they do.

Mother felt during the summer and fall, that she was not going to live long. The last two weeks she was given renewed assurance that God for Christ's sake had forgiven her sins. She related much of her experience, and spoke of how much of the time she had been in darkness and mourning on account of sin. She experienced religion when eighteen years old, and united with the Second Baptist Church, in Bowdoin, Maine. That church afterward lost its visibility, as the members died and moved away. She never could find any place to call home afterwards, until she heard Elder John A. Badger preach at Bowdoinham, and then found the people that she loved, and was given a home with them. She was always present at the meetings when it was possible for her to be. She was always ready to speak of the dealings of the Lord with her. Elder Keene, at her funeral, said in his remarks, she did not keep these precious things locked up in her own breast, but was ever ready to speak of them. It was a great comfort to me to have him with us in our time of sorrow. It is then that we feel the need of the help of our brethren and sisters. When they come to us, or write assuring us of their love and fellowship, the Lord blesses it to our comfort. Mother was spared many years, and lived a useful life. She was blessed with health of body and mind. She wanted but a few days of being eighty-six years, and five months, of age. She gave up her work only two weeks before the end came. She had desired so much that her last sickness should be short, and that I should be spared as long as she should live. It was the will of God to grant these desires, and I feel that I have more reason for praising the Lord, than to be found complaining before him. There was such a victory of faith over death in her, and such a manifestation of the wonderful power of God. I felt, as I watched by her bedside, that it was holy ground where I stood. There was no gloom or darkness in her passing away, but such joy and gladness in the thought of being with her blessed Savior, never more to sin. There was no fear nor shrinking from death, but a longing to be at rest, and free from sin. I have tried many times to write an obituary of her, for the SIGNS, but I cannot seem to do it, for just putting down the dates of birth and death, and other matters, usually mentioned in such a notice, expresses so little of the wonderful power of God, while my pen longs to express more freely the wonders of his grace and power. There seems to be a spirit of exhortation in my heart, to declare to all the saints scattered abroad in the land,

that they have no cause to fear, for Jesus has died, yea rather has risen again. He has risen victorious over death, hell and the grave, and his people are risen with him. As the hymn says,

"One in the tomb, one when he rose,
One when he triumphed o'er his foes,
One when in heaven he took his seat,
While seraphs sung all hell's defeat.

This sacred tie forbids their fears,
For all he has, or is, is theirs;
With him, their Head, they stand or fall,
Their life, their surety, and their all."

After you read this letter, as you knew mother so well, will you prepare an obituary for the SIGNS? unless you think that the letter of Elder Keene which was published is sufficient.

APRIL 15.

I AM sorry to have kept you waiting so long to hear from me, but I have been hindered in many ways. You must not think that I did not appreciate your letter with its messages of love, for parts of it have been in my mind many times, and I have felt glad of your love and fellowship.

Elder Beal has been sick, so that our meetings have been few this winter. I hope that as warm weather comes we will be able to meet often, for there is such a blessing in being gathered together, and finding Jesus in the midst. I do think that I have sweetly experienced this in years past, and have been so happy in the company of the saints, in speaking of the dealings of the Lord with me, and in listening to others declaring the same things. "How good and how pleasant it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity."

Now that this change has come in my home, I shall not be able to leave father alone, and do not expect to be able to go to meeting so often, but I hope the Lord will enable me to remember the sweet and precious seasons which I have had in the past, and that he will keep my mind stayed upon him, and then I will be kept in perfect peace, and shall not be found complaining before him. He has wonderfully blessed me in the past, with a realizing sense of his goodness, and has led my mind into the truth, so that I have rejoiced in Christ Jesus. He will be my guide even unto death. I am confident in his wisdom, knowledge and power.

"The steps that I take, and the station I fill,
My father determined and wrote in his will."

But I must not make this letter too long, for I shall want you to be glad to hear from me again some time. We are in usual health, and wish to be remembered to your family, and to brother Cook, and sister Purington. I shall be very glad for you to write when you are not too busy. Sister Noble is with her daughter in Deering, and is very feeble. She is eighty-nine years of age. We must soon part from her. She has been a truly noble sister. May our God draw very near unto us, and cause us to realize that he is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind, is the desire of your loving sister,

In hope of eternal life,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

[IT does not seem needful that we should write a formal obituary notice of our dear aged sister Curtis, after what brother Keene has written, coupled with this excellent letter. What has been written is better than any formal notice could be. We do desire however to bear our personal testimony to the devoted character of the dear wife and mother who has departed. We knew her for more than thirty years intimately, Always hopeful, and helpful in her life, she was a blessing to her family, and to her brethren. The grace of God was magni-

fied in her. We spent a day and night in her family last September, it was a most comforting day. Brother Cook, of Hopewell, was with us, and he will always remember that day. Our aged sister is at rest, and we cannot grieve but for ourselves. God has blessed the bereaved husband and children greatly, in comforting them in their bereavement. He will still bless them, we are sure.—ED.]

TOUCHET, Wash., October, 1898.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—I have opened the word of inspiration with a thought to find a text suitable for a funeral occasion, (sometimes I have wondered if funeral sermons are warranted or profitable) this Monday morning, feeling perhaps my life is nearer a close than some might think. I have been thrown from a cart, and badly bruised, with no bones broken, but yet badly jolted, so that the internal injury is serious, I know. So being on my couch, I opened my Bible to read, as it is often my greatest comfort, and is my only real comfort in trouble; yes, a balm for my every wound, and a cordial for my fears. The first passage which met my eyes is in Ecclesiastes viii. 8, which reads as follows, "There is no man that hath power over the spirit, to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death; and there is no discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it." O, thought I, how true are those words. There is no man who can cancel that debt. None can avoid the last enemy. Death is the last sting which the flesh will experience, yet our nature shudders at the thought of death. How sad to stand around the dying bed of any of the children of men! What a solemn awe comes over us when we see the last breath leave the temple of clay! We pause a moment to realize that the spirit hath taken its flight. Alas! alas! whither hath it taken its flight? The Savior said to the dying thief on the cross, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." That was sufficient to make his suffering a rejoicing to him. The other had no promise, and died unconscious of his state in the future. O, to think of living for one moment without a hope. To one who has ever realized a hope of eternal life, what an awful thought. By faith alone we see the triumph from afar. Faith is the evidence of things not seen. It does appear that the nearer I come to the close of my earthly life, the more I do incline to exhort the dear household of faith to live soberly, walking worthy of the calling wherewith they are called. They are called from darkness to the marvelous light of the kingdom. If I could only speak to all the dear saints, lambs of the fold, I would exhort them to let their light shine forth, as doth a city set upon a hill, or as a candle on a candlestick, and not put under a bushel, that others seeing might take knowledge that they have been with Jesus. But will my walk compare with my speech? I would stop and ask. Let us flee from all carnalities, as much as possible; let us flee from covetousness, for we can take nothing with us beyond the world; let us be careful not to turn the orphan out into the cold world, hungry and naked, saying within ourselves, they have a rich brother, or some other friend, who are able to take care of them, or they are able to earn their living. Some have made wide mistakes in thus judging. If one has a talent to accumulate, let him be merciful to him who hath not that talent, because every gift is given of God, and what have we that we have not received?

Who hath power in the day of death? Though we ask, Will the Lord add unto our days? the bounds of our habitation are set, and our days are numbered, and we know not by what death we shall glorify our Master and Lord. By what death shall I glorify God? for there is no discharge in that war. The warrant is issued and served, and will be executed, though we know not the day nor the hour. Let not the servants say the Lord delayeth his coming. So, dear shepherds of the flocks, feed the sheep and the lambs, and watch the flock, lead the little ones, rebuke the erring, nor be of a man-fearing spirit, nor of a man-pleasing spirit, for this is also a great evil. How much we like applause; we poor mortals are so weak. Let our prayer be to go boldly forward in the Master's cause. We read of Daniel and Mordacai, who boldly worshiped their God, not fearing the laws of the Medes and Persians. We read of others who came boldly before kings, not fearing the kings' displeasure. By faith they did these things, knowing that deliverance would come in some other way, seeing the many evidences of God's power in delivering his people, which are left on record for our comfort. I am fully persuaded the saints are blessed in, not for, doing the commandments. Abraham was blessed in the act of offering up his son Isaac, as God had commanded him. There was a sacrifice which God had provided, as he lifted his hand against his son Isaac, to fulfill the command of God, and the voice said unto him, "Abraham, Abraham, stay thy hand, for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thine only son." We are commanded to crucify the old man. Is not the adversary always near, in all places and at all times, to produce spite, or revenge, or to tell us that our way or our views are correct, while others are wrong? Our dear Lord taught his disciples to pray, lest they enter into temptation. Why did he say, Lead us not into temptation, if he did not intend it so?

Now, dear household of faith, I have been prompted in some way, whether by the spirit of truth, or by the dictates of the flesh, to write these few lines for publication, that my brethren and sisters who have been acquainted with me, might learn of my spiritual welfare. As to my temporal welfare, it bothers me but little; yet by the sweat of my face have I earned my bread nearly all the days of my life, and I do believe, as near as one could, without murmuring. I have not spared my strength, though I have never been very strong physically.

I leave this with the editors, to judge whether it will be edifying.

JARED J. CUMMINS.

LEAD HILL, Ark., Oct. 16, 1898.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been desiring to write a few lines to the many readers of our glorious medium of correspondence, and to put in my feeble mite by way of indorsement of the SIGNS, as it is now conducted. The form in which it is printed is not so important as the doctrine of God our Savior, for which it so ably contends. The apostle John says, If any come to you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. I understand this to be a revealed doctrine, by grace, and it is revealed to every one of God's little children in their experience. I want to indorse brother Beebe's remarks upon the work of the ministry, in the number for October 15th. I desire also to speak of some of the good meetings which it

has been my privilege to attend of late. It seems that the Lord has wonderfully blessed this poor old sinner far beyond what I could have asked. I had the pleasure of baptizing my brother, and his wife, the first Sunday in August, at Little Hope Church, Ark. I started to Texas on Tuesday following, and reached Coleman city Saturday night. I was met there by my brother-in-law and nephew, and carried to the neighborhood of Handy Creek Church. There I met many sound Baptists, and had the privilege of baptizing my only living sister, and her husband, and two others. I then went to the New Harmony Association, in Comanchie Co., Texas, and there met many able ministers and brethren and sisters. All seemed to be sound in the faith, and in peace. I was near eight hundred miles from home. Since I returned I have baptized one sister, and one is to be baptized the first Sunday in next month. It does seem that the Lord is with us in deed and in truth.

Now a few words with regard to the two salvations spoken of in the New Testament, the eternal and the common. Some of the brethren have, as it seems to me, gone to an extreme with regard to this common salvation. I believe it is all by grace. The children of Israel, as a type, had no law to comply with in order to become the children of Israel, but became so by faith. But they received the blessings contained in the law in, and not by, obedience to the law, and in disobedience they received the penalty. So I think spiritual Israel became children by faith, and they had nothing to do in bringing it about; but after being born, and having the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, this becomes the prompting motive to obedience to the commands of God, and this obedience is acceptable service. In such service and obedience we receive blessings, or the blessing is made manifest, and the obedience is the evidence, or fruit, of the blessing bestowed upon us before. But in disobedience we receive the rod of chastisement. Some whom I have met claiming to be Primitive Baptists, have gone so far as to say, "God does the work of regeneration, giving life from the dead, and then it is left to the creature to obey and be blessed, or disobey and be beaten with many stripes." Also with regard to the ministry, they say, "God calls and qualifies, and then the man who is called can obey and be blessed, or disobey and be punished." Now, brethren, I have not so learned Christ. If this poor old sinner has ever preached the gospel to the comfort of any little ones, it was as God gave grace that enabled him to do so, and to his name be all the praise, glory and honor, for surely I do feel to be less than the least of all saints.

A little more and I will close; I desire to write many things, but I feel my weakness and unworthiness, and the SIGNS are filled with so many good things of the kingdom. Now in regard to preaching, Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." And he assigns as the reason for giving this command, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth; go ye therefore." For this cause I believe that every one to whom this command is given will obey, because it is given by one who has the power to see that it is obeyed, not by natural power, but as the two milch kine, which were unbroken, went by the unseen, irresistible power of love. With regard to the children, he said, "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will

put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." So it is all of the Lord and his grace, both time and eternal salvation. I think that Jonah was made to say, salvation is of the Lord, and it was a time salvation, too.

Do with this scribble as shall seem good to you, and all will be well with me.

Yours to serve in gospel bonds,

WM. J. CASEY.

SANFORD, Maine, April 9, 1899.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—As I am all alone to-day, my thoughts seem to turn toward you, but whether I can write anything worth your perusal seems to me doubtful. I always feel my unworthiness so much when I address a child of God, it often seems as though I were acting the hypocrite, and that I know nothing of the grace of God. I will try to write what I hope have been some of the dealings of the Lord with me. It began in the fall of 1894. A series of revival meetings were being held at our place. I thought that I would go and hear them, and I did so, but I would come home feeling worse than when I went, for all was of the works of the creature, and what they had done for the Lord, and not what the Lord had done for them. I saw myself such a vile sinner in the sight of God, it seemed there was no hope for me. I got so that my work was a burden to me, and I was no company for myself nor any one else. I would go into company to try and drown my thoughts, but I did not succeed. It seemed that my sins were ever before me. I told my husband that I should like to go down to Oak Woods, to the meeting, and he said that we would go. I never enjoyed a meeting so much as I did that, for it seemed to speak peace to my troubled soul, and I felt that I could cry to the Lord God to be merciful to me, a sinner. After that I had such a desire for the Sundays to come, for it seemed as though I should hear something that would do my soul good. Then the thought often came up, How I should like to follow our Savior in the ordinance of baptism, but I felt so unworthy, and that I was not fit to follow him in such a precious ordinance. The morning that we went before the church, when brother Keene asked my husband if he had anything to say, and he responded by telling them what he trusted the Lord had done for his soul, and they received him for baptism, I thought if he should ask me if I had anything to say, I must sink, for I could not speak. But strength was given me to say a few words. I hope that it was of the Lord, and not of myself. How the church could have fellowship for me, and receive me for baptism as they did, seems a mystery to me. I had some very trying times during the next week, before our baptism. I felt as though I was deceiving the people of God. I knew that I could not deceive our God, for he knows our every thought. When the Sunday morning of our baptism came, it seemed as if I was afraid of what the people would say, but when I got to the water's side everything looked so lovely that all fear left me. It was such a happy day to me; it seemed as though I should never have any more trials. But I have not found it so, for I have had some very trying times since. It seems at times that I know nothing of the grace of God. If I did, should I not be less cold and lifeless pertaining to the things of God? I am made to wonder that I should ever be made to hope in the salvation of the Lord; yet at times what little hope I

have is more precious than gold and silver. What a comfort it is when we can feel to rest on Jesus, and that our times are in his hands. What a precious thought! It seems that I have felt more dependent upon the Lord since my health has been so poor. I believe that when we are enjoying the pleasures of this world, we are apt to forget that there is a God, or that we have a Savior, or any need of one. I feel at times that it is for my good to be afflicted, and that it brings me nearer to my God, and to trust more in his precious promises. I have had a great desire that I might be reconciled to the will of God. I feel that it is a great mercy for us that we do not know what is in store for us. The Lord's ways are not our ways. I feel that if I ever am saved, it will be by grace, and grace alone, and not by anything that I have done.

My health has been so poor this winter that I have not been able to get to meeting since the first Sunday in January, and I miss the privilege very much. It has been a privilege that I have prized above all others. I feel to hope that as the warm weather returns my health will be better. I hope that it will be the will of God for you to come among us this fall, at the meeting.

I will bring my rambling letter to a close. Remember me to sister Purington, and all your family, and your aunt Ada.

From your unworthy sister,

MRS. ANSON QUINT.

[THE above was written as a private letter, but we feel sure that our sister will pardon the liberty which we take in publishing it, so that the family may all read it. It expresses what all the children feel. It has been a comfort to us, and will be, we doubt not, to others. Our sister speaks of being deprived of her most desired privilege of attending the meetings this winter. What a blessing after all is hers! How great is the mercy which makes such things our greatest privileges! When the Lord shuts his people in, he is with them in very deed.—ED.]

PEASTER, Texas, Nov. 1, 1898.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SON:—DEAR BROTHER:—Having been called by the church at this place, to come and assist them in a matter of grave import, upon a point of order and doctrine, which for a year or over, had been causing strife and dissatisfaction in their midst, caused by a certain Ashdod, who had come in to spy out their liberties, and to sow the seed of discord.

Therefore, at the earnest request of sound brethren, who are contending for the old landmark truths, of unconditional election, by grace alone, I came. While waiting for the time set to investigate the trouble, I wrote Elder Rutledge to come or to write to me, but the surroundings forbade his coming, and he wrote me. The inclosed is a copy of his letter. I forward it to you, requesting its publication in the SIGNS, as the sentiment set forth in the letter, exactly covered the ground of our faith, and was so strengthening to my soul, in a time of need. His letter cheered my soul, as good news from a far country. The Lord has said, "Of yourselves ye can do nothing." As to the theme of time salvation, I believe our Jesus is the author of all the salvation there is for poor sinners, in time or in eternity. He has saved his people from all their sins, whether of omission or commission. Our chastisements are for our good, in teaching us that all is by the grace of God, and that we are what we are, by his grace alone. It is by grace that we stand in this faith, and rejoice in

the hope of the glory of God. All the stripes which we bear here, are not to atone for one sin, they are for our teaching in humility. I do rejoice that our Jesus is before all things, and that by him do all things consist. I rejoice that my transgressions of the law, are his, and his obedience mine. When I see myself as I am without his grace, how I abhor myself. God forbid that I should glory, save in Jesus our Lord. But I must close.

Your brother,

ASA HOWARD.

ELDER ASA HOWARD—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS REDEEMER:—I am seated to answer your kind and welcome letter which I received yesterday. I was glad to hear from you, but sorry indeed to hear of trouble in Zion. I do hope the great Head of the church will speak peace to Zion, and rebuke the deceivers, for the sake of his inheritance. I do not think that God's children have anything to boast of. As to obedience, surely there is no believer in Jesus who can claim that he or she can obey according to their own will, while in the flesh. Obedience, to please God, must be in the Spirit, for God is a Spirit. "To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." Who can control his mind? If it was not for the quickening power of the Spirit of our God, none would ever walk in obedience. I know that our God has ordained that the path of obedience shall be the path of peace. This is the mind of a poor wearied sinner and servant, who is in great perplexity, cast down and forlorn, in this lone and distant region, mourning over leanness of soul, and the distress of afflicted Zion, in these parts. The words of God are like golden bells of eternal truth from the city of our God, which shall stand forever, and which lifts up and supports firmly the hope of a believer, who is in a strange and foreign land, giving him the sweet assurance that it shall be well with him in a coming day. They are directed by his Spirit to that building of God, that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. He leads and holds his dear children in all the vicissitudes of this mortal life, and he at last brings them into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Unworthily yours in the hope of a better country,

J. A. RUTLEDGE.

DILLEY, Oregon, April 11, 1899.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—The dear old SIGNS for April 15th, has just reached me away out here. I cannot describe the comfort which I received in perusing it, to you. I had received a letter from one who claims to be a Baptist minister, and in it he informed me that the doctrine of absolute predestination has led many into great extremes. Also, in another letter, I am told that I am a heretic, and that the doctrine of predestination is a damnable heresy. I also have received sample copies of a paper claiming to be a Baptist paper, the main object of which, to judge from its contents, is to denounce and demean those who believe and advocate the doctrine of predestination. So, dear brother, in reading those papers and letters, I was made to wonder if I was clean gone forever. I know that I am a sinner, and yet I am sick of sin, and know that I would never sin again if I could keep from it. I do not sin because I want to do so, for I desire always to do what is right, but I find that I do not

always know what is right. I find that I am like Peter, declare that I will do a thing, and then do some other thing. And again, I find myself like Paul did when he thought that he was doing God's service. I seem to be continually doing things that I do not want to do, and leaving undone the things that I want to do, and I cannot help it. Now, dear brother, I cannot think that the doctrine of predestination will lead any of God's dear people into extremes, and neither does it make God the author of sin. It pains me to hear those who claim to be Baptists, charge such a thing to the doctrine of predestination. That they call me a heretic does not worry me, for by some the apostles were called heretics. I only hope that I am counted worthy to suffer reproach for the truth's sake. I believe that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES advocates the Bible doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone, and I believe this doctrine because I cannot help it. I know that if Jesus is not my present help in every time of need, I am lost. By experience I have learned that I cannot save myself, and so I am made to continually cry unto him to lead me, and guide and guard me, and keep me in the way in which he would have me to go. I have read the SIGNS for more than twenty years, and will say that I am satisfied with their past and present management, and wish them Godspeed.

Your unworthy brother,

J. K. BOYD.

STODDARD, Nebraska, March 29, 1899.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—Through, as I hope, the mercy of our covenant-keeping God, I desire to drop you a few lines, with some verses which I have selected, and which speak the sentiments of my heart, and as an expression of my appreciation of your labors of love toward the household of faith. I bid you Godspeed in publishing the glorious tidings of salvation through the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the poor and afflicted children of God. Yes, poor and afflicted now, though they were all well off in the state of nature, and were rich in self-righteousness, and possessed all the strength that they deemed needful to make their peace with God, at any time when they should be ready to make the necessary preparations in order to gain heaven and immortal glory. O, what a terrible mistake: "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." When it pleases God to shine in the heart of a sinner, no matter how self-righteous he may be, he is then brought low, to perfect poverty. They are then made to cry, "Lord have mercy on me a sinner." Thus all their wealth and strength are taken away, and instead of wealth, poverty has seized upon them, and instead of strength, perfect weakness. They are sinsick and afflicted, and every ray and shadow of a hope is stripped from them, and they are without hope, and without God in the world. Not only that, but now they are made to see themselves justly condemned, (not that they will be condemned but that they already are condemned) and they learn that if peace and pardon ever comes, it must be freely bestowed upon them. As yet, they are without the knowledge of a Surety who stands between them and God: he "Is a Prince and a Savior for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." He stands in their law place and stead, taking their sins upon himself, and bearing them away in his own body, and then clothing the poor sinner with his

own righteousness, and setting the captive free. "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Now this soul is enabled to look to Jesus as his Savior, and counts him the chiefest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely; their burden is now gone; sorrow and sighing have now fled away, and the poor heart is filled with praise unspeakable and full of glory; old things have passed away, and all things have become new. Before, the poor soul walked by sight, now he walks by faith, that living faith which is the gift of God. "And faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." O, that God, who is rich in mercy, may ever keep us humble at the feet of Jesus, and of one another, and enable us to set forth his praise by an upright and godly conversation. May we ever be kept by the word of his power, unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. This is the desire of one who sometimes hopes that he has an interest in the covenant of grace, and has been made to rejoice in the hope of a blessed immortality beyond this vale of tears, and of sin and sorrow, through the atoning blood, and the righteousness of the Savior of sinners, of whom I am chief.

The verses which I have selected are the following:

"Ye messengers of Christ,
His sovereign voice obey,
Arise and follow where he leads,
And peace attend your way.

The Master whom you serve
Will needful strength bestow;
Depending on his sovereign aid,
With sacred courage go.

Mountains shall sink to plains,
And hell in vain oppose,
The cause is God's, and must prevail
In spite of all his foes.

Go spread the Savior's name,
And tell his matchless grace
To the most guilty and depraved
Of Adam's numerous race.

We wish you in his name
The most divine success,
Assured that he who sends you forth
Will your endeavors bless."

Your unworthy brother in hope,
JOSEPH BRUCE.

PLEASANT PLAINS, Ill., May 3, 1899.

BROTHER BEEBE:—I have never had the pleasure of meeting either you or Elder Chick, and I guess I never will. I must confess that I have been taking the SIGNS only this year, and I want to say, I am greatly pleased with it, and do not see how I got along without it. May it be the Lord's will that it may still go on, for I feel greatly encouraged, and have become satisfied and established on several doctrinal points.

May the brethren assist you so you can still go on, is the prayer of your unworthy brother,

C. H. NALL.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

PLEASE BE SURE

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur. It is a good plan to inclose in the letter, one of the little pink slips containing the name, taken either from the margin of the paper, or from the wrapper in which the paper comes.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1899.

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GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,

Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JOHN VII. 17.

"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

It was the time of the feast of the tabernacles at Jerusalem, when these words were spoken by the Master. He had sent his disciples up to Jerusalem before him, as is narrated in the former part of the chapter, and then had afterwards gone up himself secretly, because the Jews sought to kill him, and his time, as he said, verse eight, had not yet come. From this one sentence we learn two lessons. First, that all the steps that our Savior trod were appointed for him, and he went according to God's purpose in all that he said and did. Second, while his time to be betrayed and crucified, as he knew, was fixed, so it could not be otherwise, yet he exercised all human prudence in providing for his own safety, from the rage of his enemies, until the time of his crucifixion had come. From this we learn the predestination of God does not mean that men lie down and take no thought for the events of life. Jesus knew that his time of departure and the manner of it were appointed, but yet he did not make this an excuse for failure to exercise prudence in his conduct among his enemies. The same is true of us all. All our steps, whether of joy or sorrow, are appointed, yet this does not lead those who believe it to be careless or indifferent to the ordinary carefulness of life. Men say and believe that the doctrine, that all our steps are ordered beforehand, would, if believed, lead to taking no care of our conduct among men, and that men would rush recklessly into danger, and face death itself blindly. But this was not the course of the blessed Savior, and it is not the course of any who lovingly believe this doctrine. Jesus' time had not come to be betrayed, and therefore he was careful, and went not up openly to Jerusalem. We believe that every act of our life, and all the stations of joy or sorrow that we fill, were appointed of God before the world, but yet it has never hindered us from feeling that we must exercise prudence as best we could, in all our conduct. This may seem contradictory to those who do not love predestination, but it is no more contradictory than was the belief and the conduct of the blessed Redeemer as recorded here. His times were fixed, but yet he was careful and prudent. We believe that our times are fixed, but yet we try to be careful and prudent in all things.

We are told, verse fourteen, that Jesus in the midst of the feast went up into the temple and taught. This was his mission here. He was now about his Father's business, and was prepared to face all the rage of his foes, when his Father was to be glorified by his so doing. He had not ceased to be prudent or careful. When the time came he went forth boldly to do his Father's will, confident that his Father would provide for him, and keep him until all his good pleasure was accomplished. So the apostles confided their all to the keeping of God. Paul knew

what death awaited him, but yet he went on. He knew that he could not die until the will of God was accomplished in him, and yet he was careful also, and prudent in his intercourse with men. Belief in the predestination of God did not make him go forth recklessly. How contrary predestination works in the heart of those who believe and love it, from what men think.

As the Jews saw him teaching in the temple, they marveled, and said, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" Literally, verse fifteen reads, "How knoweth this man learning, having never learned?" From their point of view, this was a pertinent question. Jesus had never attended their great schools. No Gamaliel could claim him as a pupil. How can he then teach others? Natural men have always believed that human learning was needful to qualify one to teach in divine things. They knew nothing about any teaching save such as was found in the schools. It is to be feared that ninety-nine hundredths of the religious world of to-day, have no other thought concerning the knowledge of God, and divine things, than that it is to be gained from the mother's knee, from the Sunday School, or from the pulpit. They neither know, or seem to care, about any other teaching than this. How often has the question been asked in these last days, "How can this man preach, he has no learning?" And it is boldly asserted that without college training no man is fit to preach to a cultivated congregation. So they thought in the days of the Lord, "How knoweth this man learning, having never learned?" But what a difference between human teaching, and divine. Our God teaches as never man can teach. Man can teach the letter of the word, but can do no more. In the school of Christ, men are brought face to face with the Spirit of the word. The one teaches the brain, while the other writes the truth in the heart. Jesus lived with his Father, he communed with his Father; his teaching was not theory, but reality; it was not the testimony of one to another, but the testimony of an experience of divine things. In the schools of men, earthly things can be taught, but in the school of which Jesus is the Head, heavenly things are taught. The carnal Jews knew nothing of the divine teaching. True, they had the Old Testament Scriptures, and professed great zeal and reverence for them. They even thought that in them they had eternal life, but yet they were strangers to the power and spirituality of them. Had they known that which was truly spiritual, they would have known that Jesus needed not learning from the schools of men.

Now Jesus answered, "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me." That is, he would say to them, This which I am teaching did not originate in my own brain, but it is from God; I have received it from him; I have not needed to learn in the schools of men; I have been with God; he has given these things to me. In this let it be remembered Jesus spake as a man. As a man he had received his doctrine from God. Now in verse eighteen, he sets before them the test between that teaching which is of man, and that which is of God. He says, "He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him." In other words, every doctrine will glorify its author. If it be of man, it will glorify man, but if it be of God, it will glorify God. By this all doctrine may be tested; by this all our

thoughts concerning doctrine may be judged. What does not glorify God is not of God. What in any way glorifies self is of self. Thus John the baptist never more clearly gave proof that he was of God, and was filled with God's Spirit, than when he said, "He must increase, but I must decrease." Jesus makes this to be the supreme test of all doctrine: Does it glorify God? He makes it the supreme test of all who profess to be teachers in Israel: Do they seek their own glory, or the glory of God? If they have run at their own volition, then they will glorify him that sent them, namely: their own will. If they be of God, then will they give all the glory to God.

Now, in the words quoted at the head of this editorial, Jesus presents the reason why they did not know that his doctrine was from God: they had no will to do God's will. These words we feel like considering for a time. If the great question with us be, How shall we know the will of God? How shall we know the doctrine of God? we have the answer given here: "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine," &c. The carnal Jews did not desire to do the will of God, and therefore he tells them they cannot judge of his doctrine, as to whether it be of God or not. Literally this reads, If any man wills to do his will, he shall know the doctrine. There is no other way than this. His doctrine is not found out by searching. The schools of men know nothing of it, and cannot teach it. If they sought to impart it, those who loved not God, and did not desire to do his will, could not receive it. Human intellect, no matter what its powers may be, can look no further than this natural world. Let research be carried ever so far, whether along the lines of philosophy, or of any scientific investigation, it at last brings the mind of man against a wall of darkness, into which he cannot pierce one step; beyond are the things of God; beyond is the being of God. Happy is he who has by faith been given the revelation of him who cannot be approached unto, whom no man can see, or hath seen. Neither will the performance of forms and ceremonies, or religious rites, give knowledge of God to the soul. All these things, and all others which may have been invented by men, rather hide the knowledge of God, and of his doctrine, than reveal it. According to the teaching of the Savior, in the text, there is but one way in which such knowledge can be obtained, and this way is that the heart of man shall be prepared by divine grace to desire to obey God in all things. To have a will to obey God, is the only door to the knowledge of God and his doctrine. Let us repeat, Jesus says, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." There is no other way than this. The great question with all who desire to know then will be, Do I have a will to do God's will? God teaches the humble, but the proud he knoweth afar off. The humble he brings near to himself; yea, they are humble, because they are brought near to him. To them he shows his will: to them he comes in the knowledge of his work, which makes them glad. But the proud cannot come near to him, and in the sense of revealing himself, he cannot come near to them. He has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hath revealed them unto babes. It is ever so, it ever must be so. If a man loves God, he will recognize God in Christ, and in all the doctrine of God. Some man is charged with saying or

doing a certain thing, another replies, "It is impossible, I know him well, and this is not like him; he could not have said or done this thing." The believer knows God, and he therefore discerns the doctrine or teaching of God. Some things he knows cannot be of God; some things that are taught are not like God. Now Jesus says the spirit of obedience is that which can know the things of God, and which can be taught in them. Nothing is more sure than that those who are disobedient, and who have no desire to serve God, cannot grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth. Common observation, and common feeling among the people of God, shows this, as well as testimony of the Scripture. What a man sows, that shall he reap. This is the law of all being: he that sows wheat shall reap wheat; he that sows tares, shall reap tares; he that sows to the flesh, shall reap corruption; he that sows to the Spirit, shall reap life everlasting, is the law of the kingdom of our Lord, as well as it is the law of nature. He that is disobedient to God, and who has no will to do God's will, shall not know of the doctrine. It matters not what his attainments may be, this shall not be among them. While the most unlettered of men who loves God and his service, shall know of the doctrine, and shall judge doctrine, whether it be of God or not.

In the churches of the saints, Who are they with whom those of spiritual mind feel they can take sweet counsel? Who are they with whom true believers delight to be? From whom do we expect instruction and spiritual converse, when we may meet them? To whom do we go in time of trouble for comfort? Are these things to be found among those who walk far off from the sanctuary of God? Do we expect deep knowledge of the things of God from those who seldom attend upon the services of the house of God, who have no heart to render help where help is needed in the worship of God, and in the burdens of the church? Perhaps in all churches there are those who walk far off. Are they those of spiritual mind, who speak of the love of God, and the glory of his kingdom? No doubt those who may read these lines will at once in their own minds call up some with whom they can always take sweet counsel. Who are they? Without exception they are those who walk carefully in the order of the house of God; they fear to depart from the ways of the Lord. These walk softly before him. They have a heart to do his will; they have a very tender conscience in the things of God. How delightful to know such ones. These are good judges of the doctrine. They may not be able to give dissertations upon texts of Scripture, but they have the spirit of them in their hearts. By close communion with God they know whether a doctrine is according to his holy character, and love it when it is. These will have a great reverence for the word, and will receive all Scripture as given by inspiration of God, and will count it profitable. They will confess their ignorance, and their dependence upon God for all knowledge. They will not be possessed of a boastful spirit, but will confess that they are nothing, and that Jesus Christ is all in all. One of the marks of those who have a will to do God's will is, that they cannot see that they possess this lovely disposition at all as they ought, and make great complaint of failure in all that is good; yet it remains true, that those who are humble, waiting upon the Lord, do know the doctrine. If we ask how is this will to do God's will obtained? we must reply,

as all gifts are obtained, by the gift of God. This is one of the fruits of the Spirit, for which we must ever thank God; the blessings come from him, and even the desire for the blessings, comes from him. The will by nature is not to come unto the Lord, but grace confers the will to come to him. Therefore all is of grace, and boasting is excluded. If Paul labors more abundantly than all beside, after all it is not Paul, but the grace of God which is with him. "By the grace of God I am what I am." If our brother has departed, and we abide close by the fold, we have no room to boast over him, but must praise that grace that has kept us. Arminianism would say, If he is far off from the service commanded of him, and I am found in obedience, then I must be better than he, and more pleasing to God, but grace leaves all such language out, and says, "By grace I am what I am," and if I stand where others fall, it is by faith, which is the gift of God. Therefore all high mindedness is cast down, and God alone is exalted in salvation.

To those to whom God will reveal his will, he first gives a humble and teachable spirit, and this is the very spirit of obedience. Both are then his gift, and for both we ought to render thanks to him alone.

We here leave these reflections, sure that we have not brought out all the fullness of the text, yet we feel also sure that these things are in the text. May God bless them to our profit.

C.

HOW IS YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

WILL all who read this look at the date next to their name, on little pink slip, and if in arrears make us a remittance?

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

2 TIMOTHY IV. 3, 4.

"FOR the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

The apostle Paul, and all the apostles, were inspired by the Holy Ghost, and thereby duly qualified to give such instructions to Timothy, and to all other gospel ministers and gospel saints, as they were then, or ever should be in need of. Without the immediate inspiration of God, they could not have predicted the things which should come to pass in subsequent ages, both in reference to the church of God, and the development of the man of sin. In reference to the manifestation of that wicked spirit which was to be developed, Paul had already informed Timothy in the first epistle, iv. 1–3, that the Spirit had spoken expressly on that subject, saying, "Expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;" and the Spirit had with equal clearness expressly spoken of the lies they should tell, the hypocrisy they should practice, what should be the state of their consciences, what heresies they should utter, and what restrictions they should lay upon the church. Now, in closing this second and last epistle, when he was ready to be offered, and the time of his departure was at hand, in his valedictory charge, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ who shall judge the quick and the dead, repeats to him the admonition to "preach the Word," and that constantly, and the admonition is enforced by reminding him of what the Spirit had expressly said, "For the time will come when they will not endure

sound doctrine." The time specified, is the time which God had appointed, until which time the man of sin could not be manifested. "And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way: and then, [at that time] shall that wicked be revealed." The time is expressly declared by the Spirit, as the last time. All the powers of darkness could not anticipate the time which God had determined on for the fulfillment of these important events, nor could all the efforts, devices, good works or bad works, of saints or sinners, postpone that development one hour or one moment beyond the appointed time.

Some very conscientious and good brethren have seemed afraid to admit that God has set the bounds of wickedness of men and of devils, so that they have no power to change them; but we would ask such brethren whether the Spirit would speak to us of things which it would be wrong for us to believe? Would the Spirit tell us expressly, things which we ought not to know? Has not the Spirit told us expressly that that wicked shall be revealed in his time, and that God withholdeth it until its time, and has pledged his word that it shall in its time be revealed? Read the Scriptures on this subject, and then ask yourselves, Could the beast with seven heads and ten horns, have risen up out of the sea before the great red dragon had been manifested? Or could the second beast have preceded the first? Or could the image of the beast have anticipated any of its predecessors? If they could not, it was because God had ordered things as they came to pass.

Even so, likewise the apostacy predicted in our text, has its time fixed. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine." But who are they that will not endure sound doctrine? Some have supposed that this could not mean christians, and that it must mean the world or antichrist. But when, we ask, has the world or antichrist ever endured sound doctrine? Did the world, the Jews or pagans, endure the sound doctrine set forth by Christ and his apostles, in their days? Did the carnal Israelites endure the sound doctrine that was reported to them by the prophets? Which of them did they not slay? The truth has, in all times since sin entered the world, been opposed by the world, and by all unconverted men. We cannot, therefore, suppose that the Spirit spake thus expressly of a time when nothing unusual was to be revealed. These non-endurers of sound doctrine are marked as apostates, thus, "Some shall depart from the faith." We do not understand that these apostates are the children of God, born of the Spirit, or that they ever possessed the vital principles of faith in their hearts. But we do contend that they are those who have professed the faith of the gospel, and have been held in the fellowship of the church of God, otherwise they could not depart from what they never professed to hold. Christ has said, "Every plant that my Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." And again, "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away." Thus signifying that all who enter not in by the door into the sheepfold, or church, are thieves and robbers, and all who come in without his grace, shall be cast out without his favor. These things began to develop in the apostolic age, and John speaks of some who went out from us, that it might be made manifest that they were not all of

us. So in those events which are traced in the revelations made to John on Patmos, there were times signified in which the world rushed into the church nominally, but they could not endure the sound doctrine of the gospel, for they had neither ears to hear, nor hearts to understand or love it. Whatever direct allusion our text has to the times of the apocalyptic beasts, or false prophet, we feel justified by the words "last times" in the context, in applying the prophecy to the present time, including the last forty or fifty years. We do not feel sufficiently liberal to apply this subject to the various protestant or catholic denominations,* by which the church of God has been surrounded in ages past, for we do not believe they, or any of them, ever did, or ever could, depart from the faith of the gospel, for they never, any of them, strictly speaking, held it, and they could not depart from what they never professed to hold.

Within the space of the last half century, the prophecy of our text has been manifestly realized in the Baptist Church, which, as a church, is the only organization that has ever stood on the foundation of the apostles. Many in this last time have departed from the faith, and in their apostacy have demonstrated that they could not endure sound doctrine. Those who are now denominated New School, or Missionary Baptists, or at least those churches who took that ground at the time of the division, once professed to hold the faith which we now hold. The same articles, substantially, which were held by us before the separation, are held by us now, but these prominent sentiments which have distinguished the church of Christ from the apostles' days, and which they professed to hold once in common with us, they have now departed from, and do now wantonly repudiate them. They are, therefore, very manifestly embraced in the prediction of the text, as having departed from the faith. We challenge the world to point us to a single church or congregation of them who can at this day endure the sound doctrine which in all former ages characterized the Baptists, from the time of John the Baptist, until the time of their apostacy.

Neither Old School Baptists nor New School Baptists, will deny either of the following propositions, namely: first, that we were once all included in one religious denomination, and all professed the same faith and order. Second, that we are now very widely apart, that we do not all hold the same faith and order, and therefore one party or the other, or both, have departed from the faith which we all once professed to hold.

Now, as it is not very likely that either party will admit that they have so departed, but as each charges the other with having departed from the faith, we have but one alternative for the settlement of our respective claims—to the word and to the testimony. What does the Spirit expressly say, by the mouth of the inspired Paul, shall be the distinguishing

*We speak of them as denominations; Christ has but one church on the earth. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism."—Eph. iv. 4, 5. We freely admit, and fully believe that as there have been many nominally connected with the church of Christ, who were not children of God, not born of God, not taught by his Spirit, so there have been many of God's children nominally connected with the various branches of antichrist, but so long as they remain there, they are living in disobedience to their Lord and Master; and, by that order of discipline which he has established in his church, we cannot extend our fellowship to them, as long as they continue to rank and file with the enemies. "What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."—2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.

marks or characteristics of those who in the last times will not endure sound doctrine? And with which party are these marks and characteristics found? Will any sane man who has any knowledge of the Old School Baptists, say that we have, since the division, after our own lusts, heaped to ourselves teachers? Will the New School Baptists themselves so charge us? So far from it, they have continually thrown it in our teeth, that instead of having heaps of teachers, that we have but very few, and they have been predicting that in a few years we shall have none. Some of them have exultingly said they expected to live to see the last of the Old School preachers buried. If, then, we have no such heaps of teachers, it cannot be that we are the party who are advertised in the holy Scriptures as having heaped to ourselves teachers.

Again, who will charge that the Old School Baptists have itching ears, leading them to lust after heaps of teachers, and evincing such lusts and such itching, by running after all the new doctrines and institutions of the age? Is it not proverbial that the Old School Baptists are behind the age? That they are an anti-effort, unprogressive people, and more than five hundred years behind the improvements of the age in which we live?

Once more! Will any one say that what preachers we have, have been raised up by any effort of ours? That we have employed any kind of machinery to heap or to multiply the number of our ministers? Do our teachers or ministers, show so much of the wisdom and polish of this world, as to give any just grounds to suspect that they have been called, qualified or brought into the work by the agency of men? No rational man who has any knowledge of us believes any such thing. The marks, therefore, which are to identify and distinguish the class of apostates in our text, cannot apply to the Old School Baptists. Nor can it be said in truth, of Old School Baptists, that they are turned away from the truth, and turned unto fables. We have been constantly charged with obstinancy, for so pertinaciously adhering to the Scriptures, as our only standard and rule of faith and practice. Our refusal to depart from the Bible as our standard of morality and religion, and to unite in the various schemes of the age for reforming society, reclaiming drunkards, converting sinners, and evangelizing the world, has brought down on us such epithets as Hardshells, Iron Jackets, and a profusion of titles indicative of anything but a readiness to turn away from what we hold to be the truth, and of being allured by fables. Flatteries and frowns alike have failed to draw the Old School Baptists from the Bible as their standard. We could mention cases where flattering titles of presidents, vice-presidents and directorships in popular, humanly-devised religious societies, and lucrative missionary appointments, have been tendered, as a bait to draw some of our number from their steadfastness in the faith, and other instances could be particularized where proscription, reproach and calumny, have also been employed for the same purpose, but all in vain. How then can any of the marks which divine revelation has fixed on the apostates, described in our text, apply to the Old School Baptists?

As these marks cannot be found on the Old School Baptists, they cannot be the people who have departed from the faith, or who cannot endure sound doctrine. We will now proceed to show that the New School or Missionary Baptists have them all as plainly stamped on them as was the mark which was set on Cain, and as

indelibly written as were the words, "Mystery, Babylon The Great, The Mother of Harlots," &c., on the forehead of the woman that John saw sitting upon the scarlet-colored beast. (Rev. xvii. 5.)

The Mission Baptists who have gone out from us, have very clearly demonstrated that they cannot endure sound doctrine, not only by going out from us, on account of our holding sound doctrine, but also by heaping to themselves teachers. Their ears have itched for such doctrines as would make them popular in the eyes of the world, and give them a place and respectability with the worldly religionists of the age. This appears from their pleading the necessity of Theological schools, colleges and universities, for training young men for the ministry, because other religious denominations around them have such worldly institutions for that purpose, and lest they should thereby draw all the learned, wealthy, and influential, into their societies. This itching for popularity has shown a lack of confidence in God to raise up suitable teachers for them, or a sufficient supply to compete successfully with other denominations. The instruction of the King of Zion to his disciples, is, to pray the Lord of the harvest to supply laborers for the gospel ministry, but their own lusts have dictated to them to heap teachers to themselves, in defiance of the command of Christ, and in contempt of his authority. They not only prepare for themselves a number corresponding to their congregations, but they heap them, so that they have quantities of them for transportation to foreign lands, and an abundant surplus to be employed as itinerant beggars, colporters, &c., at home. Thus they not only crowd out from their pulpits all such as would offend their delicate itching ears, with sound doctrine, but have troops of them to send forth, like the frogs of Egypt, into all the land, to come up into our houses, our kneading-troughs, and our ovens. Is this picture overdrawn? Are there not hundreds of this heap now, and at all times, lounging about the cities and large towns, waiting for a call, and begging their way along, because they are too lazy to work for an honest living? Will any New School or Missionary Baptist deny that such is the case?

Who can deny that the New Order of Baptists raise up, call, educate and qualify their own teachers? For what other purpose do they organize their State Educational Societies, build their colleges, and establish their Theological schools? Their white cravated mendicants are constantly abroad in every neighborhood, soliciting funds, and their petitions are spread out before every State legislature, asking for State patronage, to aid them in their work.

Another mark of their apostacy is found upon them: They have turned away their ears from the truth, and are turned unto fables. In no part of the religious world can any be found who are more deadly set against the truth, or who manifest a greater hostility to the very doctrine which they themselves once professed to hold, than do the New Order of Baptists, who are commonly call the New School, or Mission Baptists. Their ears are turned away, and instead of listening to sound doctrine, they are turned to fables.

Webster thus defines the term fable: "1. A feigned story or tale, intended to instruct or amuse; a fictitious narration intended to enforce some useful truth or precept. 2. Fiction in general. 3. An idle story; vicious or vulgar fictions. 4. The plot or connected series of events

in an epic or dramatic poem. 5. Falsehood; a softer term for a lie."

Are the New School Baptists turned to fables, as thus defined? Read their publications and the tracts which they have turned to, which they approve, and which they circulate. Read their "Dairyman's Daughter." Their "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and a thousand more of their fabulous stories which have been manufactured to order, and then decide whether these fictitious stories are the sound doctrine of the Bible, or fables.

But, not only in the tracts which they publish and circulate, but in the general ministry of the teachers which they have heaped to themselves, a system of fiction, instead of reality prevails. The sovereignty of God, and the exclusive work of the Spirit, in the quickening and regeneration of men, is denounced, and the power, ability and will of the creature, is extolled. Salvation is by them ascribed to the will and works of men, and the heaven-taught truth of God, that salvation is alone of God by grace, through faith, and that not of the creature, but the gift of God, is by them rejected, and the fictitious doctrine of men, that salvation is effected by the use of means, instrumentalities, and that the gospel, or something else, is the means, and their heaps of teachers are the instruments of saving souls from hell, and of advancing them to heaven, is preached instead thereof. They have turned away from the truth of the gospel, to the fiction and fables of the schools; from the eternal realities which are taught by the word and Spirit of the true and living God, to the vain, delusive, fabulous fictions of their own vain imaginations, and to a teaching for doctrine, the commandments of men.

In conclusion of this long article, in which we have, as we believe, fully proved that all the marks of apostacy given in our text, are legibly written on those who have gone out from the Old School Baptists, and that none of them can be found upon the old apostolic order of Baptists which remain on the old Bible grounds, we would urge upon our brethren the solemn truth, that we have nothing wherein to boast over those who are turned unto fables. God has, as we hope, made us to differ, and all that we have, we have received of him. Let us then rejoice, not that others have fallen, but rather that our names are written in heaven. And let him that standeth take heed lest he fall. May we trust alone in him who is able to keep us from falling, and to give us an inheritance among them that are sanctified.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., October 1, 1856.

PRICE STILL FARTHER REDUCED.

ON last page of cover will be found the announcement of the closing out of the books of "Editorials" at less than cost. These books originally sold for $2.30 a volume, and thousands of copies have been sold at that price, but to close them out we now offer them at the following prices: First volume, $1.50; Second volume, $1.00; Both volumes ordered at the same time, $2.00. Each volume contains the same number of pages, and is bound in cloth, but as many have already purchased the first volume, we will supply them the second volume for $1.00.

Our supply is limited, and we advise those wishing to procure the books, to send in their order early, before they are gone.

The supply of the bound copies of the second volume is now exhausted, but we have some of the unbound sheets, which we have sent to the binder, and as soon as we can get them bound, we will fill all

orders as long as they last. The few copies left of first volume, are all bound and will be mailed as soon as ordered.

POETRY.

POWER OF GOD.

"LET the wild leopards of the wood
Put off the spots that nature gives;
Then may the wicked turn to God,
And change their tempers and their lives.

As well might Ethiopian slaves
Wash out the darkness of their skin,
The dead as well may leave their graves,
As old transgressors cease to sin.

Where vice has held its empire long,
'Twill not endure the least control;
None but a power divinely strong,
Can turn the current of a soul.

Great God, I own thy power divine,
That works to change this heart of mine,
I would be joined anew, and bless
The wonders of creating grace."

From my father's old hymn book.—England.

MRS. CHAS. SLADE.

NORTH HENDERSON, Ill.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$258 55
William Ballard, New York, $1.00; J. D. Parker, Texas, $1.00.—Total	2 00
Total to date	$260 55

MARRIAGES.

BY Elder F. A. Chick, at Hopewell, N. J., on Thursday, April 27th, 1899, Franklin S. Terry, of Montgomery Co., Pa., and Miss Mary S. Hill, of Hopewell, N. J.

By the same, at Hopewell, N. J., on Wednesday, May 3d, 1899, George D. Boice, of Princeton, N. J., and Miss Mary E. Blackwell, of Hopewell, N. J.

By W. W. Meredith, at the residence of the bride's parents, Jan. 18th, 1899, Mr. Isaac Hearn, of Sussex Co., Del., and Miss Cordelia Wilkins, of Wicomico Co., Md.

By the same, at the home of the bride's parents, near Delmar, Del., April 12th, 1899, Mr. Ralph S. Ellis and Miss Amy L. Beach.

By the same, in Delmar, Del., May 3d, 1899, Mr. Clarence P. Ellis and Miss Saphronia E. Beach.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Louisa Wilson passed away from earth, Dec. 31st, 1898, at the residence of her son, in New Rochelle, N. Y. The immediate cause of her death was apoplexy. She was born July 15th, 1837, in the vicinity of Hopewell, N. J. She was first taken ill Nov. 26th, but soon rallied, and seemed as well as ever, but at 3 o'clock, Christmas morning, she was stricken again, and from that time until her death she suffered very much. She did not know the nature of her disease, nor realize that her earthly end was so near, as her son writes me. Nov. 25th, 1858, she was married to David W. Wilson, at New Market, (now Linvale) N. J., by Elder Hartwell, who also baptized them both, about thirty years ago. Brother Wilson passed away June 25th, 1897. They leave but one child, the son at whose home the dear mother passed away. Of sister Wilson we can truly say, A faithful woman has departed to be at rest forever, as we fully believe. Brother Wilson was much afflicted for several years before his death, and a double portion of care and labor therefore fell upon her. This was borne with much cheerfulness and patience to the end, as all who knew her can bear witness. Her faith in the Redeemer was clear. Her trust in the God of salvation and providence was ever unfaltering. She did not trust in self-righteousness or in her own strength for salvation. She delighted in christian conversation, and in hearing the word of salvation through Christ. To the extent of her means she was liberal to the church at Hopewell, of which she was so long a member. Those who knew her best loved her best. Grace had wrought great things for her, and in her, the fruit of which appeared in her life.

She was buried at Harbourton, a few miles from Hopewell, at which place the funeral service was held, on Jan. 4th, 1899.

The dear son who is left alone has this consolation, he did for his mother all that a son should do, while she lived, and also the assurance that she is forever at rest. May God grant him to know the consolation of a good hope through grace, in this hour of bereavement. This alone can afford true help in the time of need.

C.

PLEASE publish the notice of the death of sister **Eliza Coleman,** which occurred late in the winter just passed. She was the second wife of Downs Coleman, of Barton, N. Y., and has been a widow for many years. I believe both she and her husband were formerly from Orange Co., N. Y. I have but little knowledge of the particulars of her life, or the details of her death, so but little need be said, and that little shall be of her as I knew her in the church. She was alive to the interests of the church at Waverly, where she was baptized during a time of refreshing with us, by brother Durand, nearly twenty-

five years ago, and she enjoyed the fellowship and love of that body all her life among them. She enjoyed the ministry of brother Durand, brother Bundy and her pastor, brother Marvin Vail, who spoke at her funeral. She was careful to fill her place at our meetings whenever it was possible to do so, even down to old age, though she complained of great heaviness of spirit, and darkness of mind, during the latter part of her life. She often spoke of loneliness in her life, but she patiently endured unto the end, and had an honorable discharge in the final summons. She was near the age of my dear mother, who is eighty-two, and whose friendship with sister Coleman was perhaps closer than my own. I believe she experienced the truth of the words,

"E'en down to old age all my people shall prove,
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love."

She was mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, yet childless; Mr. Coleman had several children. We shall miss her in her faithful walk and candid life, and her memory will be pleasant, but we feel that it is good that she is at rest, with no disturbing cares, or lonely gropings after light.

WATIE A. BEARD.

NEW YORK, N. Y., May 7, 1899.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore, Md., beginning on Wednesday before the third Sunday in May, 1899, and continuing three days.

Those coming to the above Association will call on Dr. J. Thorne, 633 N. Calvert St., Baltimore, Md., or at the church building, Madison St., near Calvert, where they will be provided with places to stop.

JOHN THORNE.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Welsh Tract church, at Newark, Del., commencing on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, (24th, 25th and 26th,) 1899, and continuing three days.

Those coming from Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore, will come via B. & O. R. R. to Newark, Del., on Wednesday. Train leaves Philadelphia, Twenty-fourth and Chestnut streets, at 8 a. m., and Baltimore, Camden station, at 7:55 a. m. Those coming via Delaware Division, from Salisbury and other points on that line, will come on Tuesday, and take the train that leaves Delmar at 2:15 p. m. Get tickets for Wilson's station, and change cars at Porter. The friends will be met and cared for.

A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth to meet with us, and especially do we desire our ministering brethren to be well represented.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Kingwood, (Locktown) N. J., commencing on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1899, and continuing three days.

Those coming from the south, by way of Philadelphia and Trenton, will be met at Stockton, on Tuesday afternoon, on the arrival of the train leaving Trenton at 5:50 p. m. Those coming from the north, by the B. D. of the Pa. R. R., can stop at Frenchtown, where they will find friends to care for them, and on Wednesday morning conveyance to the meeting.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

CYRUS RISLER, Church Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, at Middletown, N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1899, and continue three days.

Those who contemplate attending the Warwick Association can come on the Erie R. R. from the east or west, and from the north on New York, Ontario & Western R. R., directly to Middletown. Twelve passenger trains stopping at Middletown leave New York city daily, from foot of Chambers and West Twenty-third St., Erie R. R. Excursion tickets from New York to Middletown and return, good until used, can be procured at $2.75. Those coming through the city of New York can reach here at 10:41 o'clock a. m. on Wednesday, by taking train at foot of Chambers St. at 7:45 a. m. All coming by Erie R. R., either from east or west, are especially requested to come to the James St., and not the East Main St. Station.—ED.

THE Sandusky Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Columbia church, Jackson Co., Mich., commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1899, and continuing three days.

WM. L. BROWN.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Middleburg, Schoharie Co., N. Y., has appointed her yearly meeting to be held the first Saturday and Sunday in June, (3d and 4th) 1899.

A cordial invitation to ministers, and all brethren and friends who love the truth, to meet with us.

A. COOK, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church, of Canada, will be held, the Lord willing, at the usual place, Aughrim schoolhouse, in the township of Brooke, Lambton Co., Ontario, five miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1899, and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

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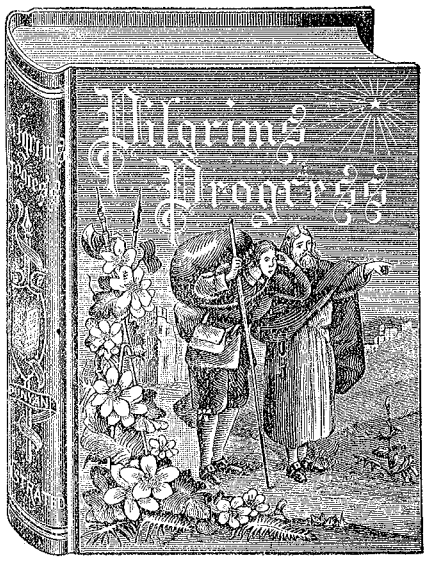

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 67. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1899. NO. 12.

POETRY.

THE WAY TO HEAVEN.

THE way to heaven, who can tell?
Inquirers wish to know,
The way to where the righteous dwell,
That thither they may go.

They think there's much that they can do,
Through prayer the way is given,
And if they faithfully pursue,
They'll surely climb to heaven.

They'll read the word, commandments keep,
And very often pray;
They'll go and be their Father's sheep,
Surely this is the way.

They think to find, if they but seek,
The way is still in view,
But darkness comes, they are too weak
Their journey to pursue.

The path, though plain, they cannot find,
The way they cannot see;
Their ears are deaf, they're dumb and blind,
And prayer a mockery.

Some tell them seek, and some believe,
Whilst others tell them pray;
Advice they eagerly receive,
But stumble by the way.

Anxiety now fills the mind,
Could they from sin depart,
But in distress alas, they find
They have a stubborn heart.

All the good works as filthy rags
Are in the sinner's view,
While all undone he starving begs,
Jesus, what shall I do?

Guilty, condemned, he dares not pray;
'Tis just, his crime he'll own,
And would from heaven hide away,
To escape the dreadful doom.

To him the holy book is sealed,
'Tis just, he feels his doom,
Till his Redeemer is revealed,
And smiling bids him come.

Jesus will all the good works do;
He teaches us to pray,
Life everlasting brings to view,
And says, "I am the Way."

Behold, what wondrous love is this
His chosen lambs have seen?
They're gathered from the wilderness,
And on his bosom lean.

He bears their burdens and distress,
They know his grace is free,
But to each mind the wonder is,
That 'twas bestowed on me.

Truly a way that they knew not,
A path they had not seen;
That's why they stumbled, now they see
How blind they once have been.

O, what a resting-place they find,
What happiness they know;
'Tis heaven to the weary mind,
A paradise below.

They now can read and understand
What promises are given:
He leads them to the happy land,
This is the way to heaven.

M. R. LAWSHE.

AUGUST 27, 1862.

[As will be seen, the above was written many years ago, by a sister of Elder Rittenhouse. He has handed it to us, and would like for it to be published.—ED.]

CORRESPONDENCE.

GALESBURG, Ill., April 27, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed is the experience of our dear sister Ross, which I send you for publication in the SIGNS. If it is as much comfort to others, as it has been to me, to read it, it will certainly give joy to some of the redeemed ones of the Lord.

Yours in gospel bonds,

S. H. HUMPHREY.

LONDON MILLS, Ill., Feb. 11, 1899.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—As you have requested me to write my experience, if the good Lord will direct my mind and pen I will try to tell you how I have been led. When a little girl, ten years old, I dreamed of a fiery furnace, and the three Hebrew children in the midst. I saw a man standing at the end of the furnace; he told me this was the lake that burneth forever and ever. I thought if I died I would be sure of this place. At this time there was a protracted meeting going on in the Methodist church, and all the little girls of my age were going to the mourners' bench and getting religion, one girl especially, I thought everything of. Father and mother came home one night, and told me she went to the mourners' bench, and got religion. O, what an effect it had on my mind! They said she shouted and praised God, and they seemed much affected over it. As I was the oldest of the family I had to stay with the younger children at night. O, I thought, if I could get to that bench I could get religion, but I did not want my parents, or any one else, to know this. Next fall my father sold out and moved to Iowa. There was but little there to enjoy only dancing, so I soon drank deep in that. I would go, and enjoy it till I would get alone, then this same trouble would come again. I would go off in a lonely place, and think what a sinner I was, and that I never could be saved. I went on in this way till in my seventeenth year, when there was a ball in town.. I was the first on the floor, and the last to leave. I thought if I ever lived to get home I never should go to another, and I kept my promise. In a few weeks I joined the Methodists on six months trial. At the end I was no better; nothing there I could enjoy. The Missionaries started up a revival meeting, which lasted six weeks, and every one around joined. They had a large church at the close of the meeting. I never was at such an exciting revival before nor since. I went to the mourners' bench every night for three weeks. The members would pray for me, and tell me how to get religion, but it all did me no good. One night going home, there was a great rejoicing all at once. I thought I never saw the moon shine so bright, and I was happy as I could be. I went home, and told mother I had religion. The next night my sister and uncle made a profession. The next night they called on all the young converts to talk. Sister and I, and a number of others got up and told that we had got religion, and asked them to pray for us, that we might hold out faithful. We then joined the church, and was baptized by immersion, and lived members till I was married. I was then nineteen years old. I married a man belonging to the New School Baptists. I got a letter and moved to Illinois. My husband and I helped constitute a church of twelve members, put our letters in, and lived there for ten years. The church all went down, and left us alone five years. His folks were Old Baptists. I had never

heard one preach, but I had an anxiety to, so we went to hear Elder I. N. Vanmeter. I thought it was the strangest preaching I ever heard, and so different to what I had ever heard. We went to Greenbush, to hear Elder Bradberry. I was brought up to hate them; I was told that they preached infants in hell; a part to be lost, and a part to be saved, let us do what we would. We attended their meetings regularly all summer. I did not hear any of this stuff preached; they seemed to have great fellowship and love for each other. I thought that was all right, for no one else had any for them. This was my experience in Babylon.

Now I will tell you my experience in Christ Jesus, my Savior, trusting he may guide my pen and mind. We attended meeting regularly till June. My husband said on the road one day, he believed they were his people, and he believed he would join them. In the evening he went forward and told his hope in Christ. O, the awful feeling I had at that moment; I thought I would just as soon bury him, as have him join that church. I was left alone. The thought came to me, Why is it he can see any good at all in them? I cannot. I went to the water next morning to see him, and one other, baptized. If I could have gotten away I never would have gone in the church that day. I was alone; I never could enjoy his church with him, I thought. We went back to the church to hear Elder John Roberts. I felt like every word he said was to me. He spoke of one that had built a house on the sand, and it fell, and great was the fall of that house. I thought that was my case, I had built my house on the sand, and it had fallen, and every prop was knocked from under me, and where to go or what to do I did not know. I saw myself the worst hypocrite and condemned sinner, that ever was on the face of the earth. Paul never was worse condemned than I was, when he was persecuting the saints of God, and the Lord let him know where he was. That was my case, I hated the name of the church, of the children of God, and would not and did not know it, till God revealed it to me. I could not pray, not even say, "Lord be merciful to me a sinner." I was in this condition for several days, and these words came to me, "Come out of Babylon, ye my people." I tried to read the Scriptures; every word condemned me; I was lost, forever lost. I was in this condition for three months, and if any one ever tried to pray and plead for mercy, it was me. The more I tried, the worse I got. I felt I was such a sinner God never could forgive me. After dinner I picked up the Testament; every word I read condemned me; I was alone, and I laid the book down, never to read it again. This was the last effort for me. I then went in the bedroom and fell on my knees to ask God to save me, for the last time I ever intended to ask. I could say nothing but, "Lord have mercy on me." I rose to my feet saying lost, I am lost, forever lost, and as I turned to go out, in this awful condition, the floor seemed to be sinking from under me. Just as I went to go in the other room, the Lord spoke peace to my troubled soul: "Thy sins are all forgiven, go and be baptized." I shouted, "Glory, glory be to God in the highest." O, the joy I had with my Savior then, my tongue never can describe on earth. My mourning was turned to rejoicing and praising his holy name, for my deliverance. I picked up the Testament and read, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." O, the beauty I saw in it! I could read

with an understanding, and praise him for his saving grace. It was through the mercy, power and grace of God, that I was delivered of my awful sins, which were without number; it was nothing that I had ever did, he done it all.

"'Tis he in trouble bears me up,
And leads me safely through;
My Jesus doth maintain my cup,
And daily strength renew."

For two weeks I thought I never could see any more trouble, all was peace and love. I could hardly wait till next meeting, to be baptized. Meeting time came, and I went, but for some cause I could not go forward. I thought I would keep all this to myself, and never join any church. Again I went to the next meeting, and when the door of the church was opened, they commenced singing, "Come humble sinners, in whose breast a thousand thoughts revolve," I could not stay away; I tried to tell them what Jesus had done for me. I was received, and baptized. This was in 1862, and it has ever since been a home for me. I love the brethren and sisters, love their company. If I am a child of God, I am the least of all. I have so many doubts and fears, trials and troubles, to pass through, sometimes I think if I was what I ought to be, I would not have such to contend with. I have been made to say, "Why art thou disquieted within me, and why am I cast down, O my soul?" I have many deep trials and afflictions to pass through, but I can say, in the very deepest of them, he has been sweet peace and comfort to my soul, and whispers, Be still and know that I am God, and beside me there is no other. O, how can I praise him for his goodness and mercy to me? I hope that I may ever be at his feet, that when I am done with the things of this world, I may see him as he is, face to face, be like him, be clothed with the Sun of righteousness, in his kingdom, ever to be with the Lord. O happy day, when saints shall meet to part no more; the thought is sweet. I hope we will live in love and fellowship with each other, and also the church of Christ, till time ends with us here on earth, and have a happy entrance in that world that has no end. If I am saved, it is through the mercy and grace of God, and nothing I have done.

Your unworthy sister, the least of all, in tribulation,

ELIZA J. ROSS.

NORTH BERWICK, Me., April 5, 1899.

MRS. REBECCA HEWITT—MY DEAR GRANDMOTHER:—The Lord God of Israel has spared your life in the earth through another year. How few now live to be as old as yourself, as you now enter upon your ninety-seventh year. But your life has been more blessed than the life of many a one that has attained to even greater age. Because it is to be feared that many who live to be over a hundred years old, live without the knowledge of God and his grace, they are enemies of God, strangers to his sweet, pardoning love, and die in their sins. But the Lord in his electing love and sovereign grace was pleased to call you unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ when young in years, and he has been the God of thy mercy ever since. I have often, dear grandmother, heard you with pleasure relate how when you were about thirteen years of age you were taught of the Lord that you were a great sinner, and the Lord in great mercy made you to rejoice in his salvation. That was a peculiarly sweet speech of our beloved Redeemer's with which he quieted the troubles of your heart, and bound up your wounds, declared his pardoning and justifying

grace, espoused you unto himself, filled you with gladness and rejoicing, and brought you into his chambers, even his royal palace, saying, "Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee." Then it was you could say, "Thou hast turned for me my mourning unto dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness." It seems wonderful and precious to my soul to think that from your girlhood days until now you have been a believer, (nearly eighty-five years) and have so signally proved the unfailing loving-kindness of the Lord. What streams of mercy have flowed unto you in the wilderness, and in the straits and trials that have been your lot through life. I have often heard you rehearse how your God was in truth a very present help. The bitterest cup that our heavenly Father gave you to drink, had his love mingled in it, so that you were able to drink from his hand every affliction. The loveliness of Christ was revealed by the Spirit, and won your heart in the days of your youth, and what beauties have been discovered to you in the house of your pilgrimage. The more our Savior is revealed unto us by the Comforter, who takes of the things of Christ and shews them unto us, the more and more lovely he is in our sight. I look back to the years that are past, when we often sang together the words,

> "Up to his throne I soon shall go,
> More of his loveliness to know,
> Where ransomed millions shall declare,
> He's altogether lovely there."

Then with immortal eyes we shall behold him without a veil between, we shall see him as he is, and we shall be like him. He will indeed be our soul's admiration. Even now, as we gaze upon him by faith, we greatly admire him, we are taken captives by his charms, no other one, no other face has beauties so divine. We see in his love, in his sufferings and death, in his glorious work for the perfecting of his body, the church, surpassing beauties. Truly he is fairer than the children of men; the chiefest among ten thousand. O, when in glory we appear, clothed in our ransomed, glorified and immortal bodies, and we shall dwell forever with our dear Lord Jesus, O then, throughout eternity he will be the everlasting admiration of all the chosen and ransomed church of God. During your long pilgrimage he has often showed himself to your soul, through the lattice, and often, dear grandmother, I have listened with delight, as you delighted to speak of the matchless excellencies of our Redeemer.

When you were a child the Lord declared his electing love to your soul, and called you out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, from under the law, into the sweet liberty and rest of the gospel of Christ. He taught you also to go, taking you by the arms. Our Lord says, "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love." (Hosea xi. 1–4.) The Holy Spirit by his gracious ministrations, by his communion with your heart, instructed you in the things of the kingdom of our Father, and as it is written, "Taught you to go," to walk by faith in the Son of God, and even to your old age our covenant-keeping God has sustained and comforted you, and in his word which is settled in heaven he says, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." "Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb; and even to your old age I am he: and even to hoary hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you."—Isaiah xlvi. 3, 4.

Old Jacob in his last days exclaimed,

"I have waited for thy salvation; O Lord." You also, dear grandmother, have been blessed with the blessed hope of God's salvation, and often its precious joys refreshed and strengthened your heart, and now without doubt you are "looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ," and all who are thus looking are not looking in vain. "For unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

During the remnant of your days here below, I wish for you all that happiness which our heavenly Father has in store for you. I have learned in my little journey that the Lord knows just when and where, and in what measure to mete out unto his sacred ones, their peace and delights, their trials and griefs, and happy indeed is that soul that is brought into acquiescence to the good pleasure of our Father in heaven.

It would afford me pleasure to see you once again, and I have no doubt it would be a pleasure to you to clasp in your arms our grandchild Florence, your first great, great grandchild. We are all glad to hear that your bodily health is so good, and that your mental faculties are preserved to you in such clearness and activity, for though but a temporal blessing, it is not a small one, considering your advanced age. How often have I heard you repeat the lines,

"To thee every mercy I owe,
Above what the fiends have in hell,
And shall I not sing as I go,
My Jesus does everything well?"

Dim-sighted as we are, we may not be able at all times to see that all God's providences with his children are in wisdom and everlasting love, but we believe he loves his own too well to suffer anything to befall them that shall not work for their good.

"E'en down to old age, all my people shall prove
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;
And when hoary hairs their temples adorn,
Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne."

We all send kind love to you. I am your affectionate grandson,

FRED. W. KEENE.

GRAND VALLEY, Oregon, April 2, 1899.

MR. BENTON BEEBE—VERY DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed I send you a sermon, or rather some thoughts upon the cross of Christ, written by Elder I. N. Newkirk, of Dayton, Washington. I send it for publication, if you shall deem best. Now, dear brother Beebe, I would like to offer a word of encouragement to you in your arduous labors in conducting the publication of the SIGNS. And especially would I be glad to offer substantial aid, were I able. It seems to me that you spare no pains or labor in making the dear old SIGNS all that could be desired in a religious publication. And for close cut, incontrovertible truth its equal cannot be found in America, or England, if I may be the judge. Although I am poor and weak, if a brother at all, yet I have an abiding love for the truth for which you so ably contend, and which is defended in the editorial columns, and by the able contributors, such as Elders Durand, Rittenhouse, Keene, Vail, Redd, brother Coulter, and in fact all who write for its columns. I especially enjoy Elders Bartley and Durand, and the editorials of Elder Chick, and of our dear departed Elder Gilbert Beebe. May it please the Lord to hold up your hands, and enable you to continue the publication of our dear old paper, for I am confident that it is a great blessing in the house of God, to the scattered little flock.

Your very unworthy brother in hope of eternal life,

J. P. ALLISON.

THE CROSS OF CHRIST.

THE cross, how wonderful! To the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness, but to them which are called, it is the wisdom of God, and the power of God. Paul makes the cross of Christ the central figure of the gazing universe, from which the divine light of the Sun of righteousness radiates through time and eternity. From the cross we look back by faith upon the records of the eternal mind, and read the ancient and fixed purpose of love and mercy. In the cross we see the harmonies of all divine revelation. The incongruous events of time all meet and are mobilized at the cross of Christ. The cross! the cross! Words of the most wonderful significance! In it we behold all the holy attributes of the Godhead shine forth with an eternal splendor. The Sun of righteousness pinioned to the cross, is the focal center of universal being, with all things hanging upon the issue. Behold, it is the throne of God upon which is sovereign power and holiness displayed, and against which is arrayed all the power of evil. We look forward from the cross of Christ to the crown of life, and the reign of righteousness. What an issue! Who can behold it without amazement? The mystery of godliness and the mystery which is engaged in an exterminating warfare against it. It is an awful conflict. The God of truth who upholds the worlds by the word of his power against the father of lies, and all the elements of destruction. "If a man die, shall he live again?" is the question to be determined. Upon the answer, yes or no, hangs the faith of God's elect, according to the hope of eternal life which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began. Michael and his angels fought, and the dragon and his angels, and the dragon was cut off, and his angels.

Jesus Christ was crucified and buried according to the Scriptures, and was raised again from the dead, according to the Scriptures. It is done; the decision is given; the ungodly are justified; the enemies are reconciled; life and immortality are brought to light through the gospel; the hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. A foundation is now laid for faith and repentance, the doctrine of baptism, and the laying on of hands, and of eternal judgment. All is now fixed and settled. There is no more offering for sin, and no more worldly administration. Of the things which we have spoken this is the sum. "We have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens." All is perfect. He is a perfect Priest upon the throne of glory. There is a perfect tabernacle, a perfect altar, a perfect sacrifice, and eternal salvation. Now if such should fall away there can be no more renewing to repentance. There is no more laying again the foundation of repentance. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." This is going on to the perfection in Christ.

These are some of the wonders of the cross in which Paul gloried. And well he might, for in it is treasured the rich endowments of God's eternal purpose, containing the choice, or election, the grace given in Christ, his predestination,

and sovereign will, and his foreknowledge. For whom he did foreknow he did predestinate, &c. The preaching of the cross contains the hidden wisdom which God, that cannot lie, ordained before the world, unto our glory, but which is now made known by the appearing of Jesus Christ. O, what a theme it opens up to the thought of poor, ignorant, fallen man, the wisdom of God in a mystery. Here carnal wisdom staggers, goes backward and falls, and is taken. And here it is written, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish, for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." And again it is written concerning this same thing, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him." The preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness, but unto us that are saved, it is the power of what? Means? No, but the power of God. Not by the power of human means at all, but by the power of God: "By means of death, [the death of the Son of God] for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." From the observatory of Mount Calvary, and through the telescope of the cross of Christ, the eye of faith gets such a view of the heavenly world, as like Stephen, sees heaven opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. And O, how wonderful are the revelations! They bring to mind the words of Isaiah, "Though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me."

The foregoing has been written to relieve my mind, with no fixed purpose in view, but, dear brother Allison, as I have thought many times of late, that I would write to you, I will send you this. I am well at present.

I remain your brother, I hope,

I. N. NEWKIRK.

SUNSET, Texas.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—If I may be permitted to so address you. For quite awhile I have been impressed to write some of my thoughts to the household of faith, but have feared, and do yet fear, that I am prompted by selfish motives, so much so that I have hesitated to comply with my desire until now. Being alone this Sunday morning the impression is with me again so strong that I cannot content myself with reading, so I have concluded to write, if only to tear it up again. Being myself a minister's wife, I feel somehow that I would like to talk a little with ministers wives in general, who are of the household of faith. I wonder how many like myself are alone caring for home, while their beloved husband is away, doing our Master's bidding, feeding the flock over which the Lord has made him overseers. Now we sometimes feel very lonely and sad, when we are thus left, but, dear sisters, we should not murmur, and thus add another burden to our husband's already many cares, but submit as humbly and as meekly as frail nature will allow, and thus prove to our loved and tried ones, that we are willing to help them bear their burdens, as much as we are able to. Now it may seem to some a very little matter for the minister's wife to say at all times, Go and do your Master's bidding, and we will do the best we can with home affairs. This is our duty, but we are poor, weak, timid beings, just as all other women are, and we love our husbands as much as other

wives love theirs, and love their presence, so that it is not so easy for us to say every time, Go, as some may think. While the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak, and sometimes there is a fearful struggle between the flesh and the spirit, before we can say go, and if left to ourselves, we could not willingly say it, but our God by his Spirit enables us to give our consent. Then, dear sisters, let us look to him for strength in every time of need, and pray that he will enable us to do our duty, yes, our whole duty, ever trusting in God, who has promised to be with his people in six troubles, and not forsake them in the seventh. So let us run with patience the race set before us, looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God, where he ever liveth to make intercessions for us, according to the will of God. May he in his goodness, dear sisters, enable us poor creatures to do our duty in helping bear our husband's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Now, before I close these thoughts, I want to say a few words to our ministering brethren, the husbands of those to whom I have been writing. I know your cares are many, and your burdens are heavy, but, dear brethren, do not forget that your wife has a heavy load to carry, and help her to carry it as much as you can. You may ask, How can I help in this matter? I reply, very easily: prove to her by your actions that you appreciate her little acts of kindness, and her willingness for you to go and do your Master's bidding. When you go, do not leave her carelessly, but speak a few words of sympathy and cheer to her. You do not know how much comfort it will afford her in your absence, and how it helps her to resist the tempter, as it were, when he comes and says to her, Your husband does not care for you, or he would not leave you alone. You need not think but that the tempter will present himself to your loved ones in your absence, for he will come in at the smallest gap, and make all manner of suggestions, and although we know it is false, still it is a torment, and makes our burdens harder to bear. He tempts us all, and if one is tempted in this manner, it will also make trouble for the rest. He tempted our Savior, and so we may not expect to escape. Then let us all unite in bearing one another's burdens.

Now I have not written this as a rebuke, but as an admonition. I have seldom seen or heard anything said about the wives of ministers, so I felt like talking to them, for they need a little special cheer on the way. I would be glad if some good writer would write upon this subject. My poor scribble is so much like myself that I hesitate to send it after writing it, but I will commit it to your judgment, hoping that you will throw the mantle of charity over it. If you do not deem this worthy a place in your dear paper, throw it in the waste basket, and all will be well with me.

With much love to all the household of faith, I remain your sister in hope of a better home beyond,

MRS. LIZZIE CAMPBELL.

OPELIKA, Ala., April 26, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—It is in my mind to write you a few lines to-day. I thought once that I would be able to visit you all in your meetings this spring, but at this time it seems to be ordained otherwise. I think of you all often, and were it not for the distance would come; but nine hundred miles is quite a little

journey to make often. I have been closely engaged this year mostly at home, have not traveled, but have preached as much as usual. But while I was writing to-day, my spirit was stirred within me, and if I could I would have written more. I will endeavor to present a few thoughts in line with what I was writing. It was upon the warfare between Zion and Babylon. This is a peculiar warfare, and has been a constant one, ever since Cain slew Abel, and I have not a doubt but that the type was then set forth. There are but two classes of worshipers in the world. Works are represented by Cain, and faith by Abel. God has stretched his line upon the earth, and here it is. As to why men can approach unto God only by faith, is one of the mysteries. But we know that God is a Spirit, and seeketh only such to worship him as worship in spirit and in truth, and such is the perfection of God, his highness, his majesty and infinite holiness, that he can only be approached unto, and worshiped in one way, and that is by faith, and faith only. This is the way of truth; it is God's prescribed way; it is high, like God, and is therefore right that it should be so. It is impossible to worship God truly unless we know him, and men in a state of nature, and in nature's night, are not qualified to approach and worship him. And as there is nothing else known that will qualify a man to approach God but faith, and the new birth, these two things bring a man into condition to approach unto God. The Lord commanded Moses to take off the shoes from off his feet, for even the ground where he appeared was holy, by virtue of his presence. Nothing can make us feel more awfully solemn than the manifest presence of God. Jacob was made to feel that the place was solemn at Bethel, which means the house of God. Jacob felt solemn, and said, "Surely the Lord was in this place, and I knew it not." This discrimination of God is the ground of the warfare, and the enmity is there between the seed of the serpent, and the seed of the woman. The apostle said, "Who maketh thee to differ, and what hast thou that thou hast not received?" There is a difference between the sons of Zion, and the sons of Greece; between the children of Zion, and Babylon; between Belial, and Christ; between the flesh, and the Spirit. The sword is here, the opposition is manifest, and Christ has opened the way, and the apostles have followed in the same, and they all suffered for the truth's sake. There is nothing more hateful to some men than the truth, and they want the truth concealed, and desire to teach and preach a system that glorifies man. Or, to put it in other words, they want a system which "manifies" God, and deifies man. They do not give a just and equal balance, but falsify the balance. As has been said, we are not to abuse, nor vilify, but use great plainness of speech. It is not right to take advantage, and bemean people, but it will always be right for Zion to speak forth the words of truth and soberness, and call things by their right names, and call hypocrites by their right names. We are to reprove and rebuke with all long-suffering and doctrine. Let us fight the good fight with spiritual weapons, not carnal, not with the fist of wickedness, not with strife, but with patience; yet we are to be faithful, as becometh the house of God. Let us use the sword of the Lord and of Gideon. Let us stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free.

Yours in hope,

WM. LIVELY.

DECATUR, Texas, April 4, 1899.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—May one so unworthy as I, address you thus? I do feel that I ought to write and tell you how I am made to rejoice and take comfort to know that the Lord of hosts has reserved to himself a few old soldiers of the cross who are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. While reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I find there is a paper which is willing to contend for the truth, regardless of what the world may say, and which is willing to suffer persecution, rather than have the applause of the world. I find there, a people who yield to God all the praise and glory for every blessing that they receive. They speak of the "great I Am," as having all power, and that his will is done in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, but he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and he has declared the end from the beginning, saying that his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. They contend that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy, and that his foreknowledge embraced all things, even every thought, and action, and all times, and events, and whatsoever takes place, and that nothing will take place except what was embraced there, nothing will be left out, but everything will come in at the appointed time. Though men and devils may rage, they cannot change the infinite wisdom of him who established and made sure all things, before anything was made, that is made. The development of creation brings all things to pass at their appointed time. His power is sufficient to hold all things to their places. Then, when afflictions, troubles, trials and difficulties arise, we know that all is best, or it would not be so; for he is just and holy in all his ways, and his ways are past finding out, by poor, finite minds. Our finite mind does not even know whether to-morrow will ever come to us, until it comes, neither can it discern what to-morrow will bring forth, neither can it act, except as it is given power from him who sits upon the throne. All the powers that be, are of God. Here, dear brethren, is my little hope. Because God changes not, therefore I am not consumed. He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever; he is without the shadow of turning.

The child of God will cry out in bitter agony because of his sins, which so beset him, and will never glory in them, but will do all in his power to shun even the appearance of evil, for he is sick on account of sin, and his cry to God is, that he would cleanse him from all sin, and enable him to praise, adore and honor his holy name, all the rest of his days. Sometimes he goes forward, trying with all his power to bring about that joy and peace which God alone can give, but he finds all his works in vain. He comes to see himself nothing but uncleanness, and all his works an abomination in the sight of God, whom his soul is thirsting for. When the Lord brings him to the end of his own strength, he is willing to cry out, "O, wretched man that I am," but the Lord, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved him through all his dark and weary travel on earth, will never forsake him, for his love is just as strong toward him when he is down in the valley of despair, as when he speaks peace to his troubled mind, and takes him to his banqueting house. Then, and not till then, can he say, "Lord thou art all in all." He

can see then that all his own efforts have been in vain. His works could not bring about that peace which his troubled soul had been thirsting for. Then he feels and says, this love and joy which is unspeakable and full of glory, is unmerited on my part.

Dear brethren, I hope that you will bear with me for troubling you with this poor scribble, for when I began, I thought I would just write a few words and let you know what a comfort the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is to me. I have not heard any preaching for about two years, as my health has been so bad that I could not leave home.

I am your unworthy brother, if one at all,

M. B. F. JONES.

KELLER, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have just read Elder Bartley's communication, for which I was glad, and if I am not deceived, I feel to say, Thank the Lord, for he has kept some valiant soldiers that will not bow the knee to the image of Baal. I feel to say that salvation is of the Lord, first, last and all the time. I will say, Elder Bartley is contending for the truth, and the Scriptures fully sustain him. I feel to say, may the Lord preserve him, with all of the able correspondents of our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I also noticed a communication from old brother Thomas Brittain, whom I knew when I was a small boy. Though we both live in Texas, we are a long way apart in person, yet in spirit I feel we are together. I was glad to hear him come out and say he indorsed the doctrine set forth in the SIGNS. I have not seen him but twice in fifty years; he visited us about ten years ago, and preached among us, to the acceptance of the brethren. Now I want to say, he has been considered a sound Baptist, both in Alabama and Texas, and he says that he has always indorsed the docrine set forth in the SIGNS, yet we have many here in Texas, that claim to be Old School Baptists, that denounce the SIGNS, and call it heresy. Brethren, this pains my heart, to see those that I have walked together with in sweet fellowship, turning from the truth. Old brother Brittain's father and mother were Old School Baptists, and took the SIGNS. I can remember them well, though it was fifty years ago, and they were firm believers in God's absolute sovereignty. I often, in my mind's eye, look back to those old people. They had no confidence in conditional theories. I was but a child, and staid with them a great deal, and many words that they spoke to me when a child, came vividly to my mind after I was a man grown, and they had passed away. O, how I desire to walk as they walked.

Dear brethren editors, I was in New Mexico, in November and December, visiting Elder Fetter and the two sisters Boggs, and the little church that is in that country. There is a precious little band of brethren out there. Elder Fetter is a sound Baptist, and is greatly loved by all the brethren. The two sisters Boggs, sisters Welborn, Vance, Dawson and Deane, are pillars in the church. How pleasant it is to meet those that are established in the doctrine. Mr. J. B. Dawson is one who spares no pains to have the brethren taken care of. He says that Elder Gilbert Beebe was one of the greatest writers since the apostles.

Dear brethren, I hope you may have God's protection to hold you up in this year's undertakings, as you have had in the past, for I believe that God has sus-

tained the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Brethren, I have scribbled this to let you know that I appreciate the SIGNS. This is the second time I have attempted to write. Your judgment will satisfy me in regard to this scribble.

As ever, your brother in hope,

A. D. BOURLAND.

WAGRAM, Ohio, March 17, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—Your favor relative to my inquiry concerning Romans vi. 5, received, and I am much pleased with it. You gave me a hint concerning a word which I had overlooked, the word "planted." I thought it was such a common word that it did not need to be studied, but your letter called my attention to it in a way that I believe will be profitable to me. It is in the Greek *sumphutos*, and this is the only place where it is used in the Scriptures. It literally means, "have become formed together." Beza has this to say of it: "By an elegant metaphor, the apostle compares Christ who died, and was buried, and rose again from the dead, to a plant, which being covered in the earth, germinates in due time, and then, because he has said that we are dead to sin, and buried with Christ, that we might rise again unto righteousness, in order to intimate that all these things take place by the grace which we derive from Christ, he says that we have grown together with him into one plant; as those things which are planted together with a tree, grow together and live by one common sap." This is about all that I know about it at present; and all this was known by those to whom it was revealed years ago. Whatever meaning the word "likeness" may have there, I am sure it does not destroy the grand truth set forth in the preceding verses, that as many as have been immersed into Christ, have been immersed into his death. We have therefore been entombed with him by the immersion into that death, that as Christ was raised from the dead (as from among the dead ones) by the glory of the Father, so also we should walk in newness of life. That if one died for all, then these all died, is the meaning there, and not as I have heard Baptists preach, water baptism. How careful we should be as to how we handle the word. It had left me after I wrote to you, but now it all comes back strong in my heart. I must wait until I am moved to study closely a subject, and have learned to let it severely alone until I get light. I am sure that we as a people do not get as deep down into the merits of Christ's death to-day, as the Spirit seems to have led the apostles. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone," is a wonderful statement, and as glorious as any other, but if it should die, it bears much fruit. Here the corn of wheat was himself, the fruit the church. As the new crop, all of it, was in the old grain or seed, so in a sublimely wonderful manner, the church was in Christ, when he died or fell into the ground.

Yours in love,

FRANK McGLADE.

[IT has long been our view of the subject presented in the above excellent letter from brother McGlade, that verses 3, 4 and 5, in the sixth chapter of Romans, includes the subject presented above. It is our view that verses three and five present the work of grace in the heart, by which believers come into an experience of the power of the divine life which is in Jesus Christ, while in verse four, the apostle declares that this is the very thing which they have set forth in the or-

dinance of baptism. Paul could not have used these words to a company who had been sprinkled or poured upon for baptism. To such a company such words could have no meaning, but his brethren had been immersed, or buried in baptism, and so the apostle appeals to this in connection with their experience, and they understand its meaning. Because of this work wrought in the heart, by which believers are baptized into Jesus Christ, they are moved to be baptized in the watery grave, in testimony of their faith, and of the work wrought in their hearts. This is the view which has commended itself to us for many years. We do not understand it to be any contradiction of what brother McGlade has so well said.—ED.]

PRATT CITY, Ala., Oct. 13, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I believe that I have stated once in the SIGNS, and for the benefit of an inquirer in the last number, I will state again, that if I have any hope of life and immortality, I received it in the year 1875. In June, 1883, I united with the church. I should not have done so then, but a feeling came over me that if I did not make my case known at the next meeting, something serious would befall me, perhaps death, and I could hold out no longer. During my wanderings in the wilderness the subject of preaching was presented to me, and finally was impressed upon me, but I contended with myself, that I was not the man for that holy work, I was not fit in my feelings for even a private church membership. I preached many long sermons to myself, and in my dreams at night I had much liberty. I finally decided that this was a sin, and that I would quit it, but I did not. One night I had a small colored audience before me, not far from this town, and since then there has been a church constituted there, and I have spoken several times for them. I remember once that I got into the water, baptizing people, in my dreams. This seemed to drive me further from the work. When I awoke I thought over the matter, and decided that I was not the man for that place, or that sacred work. I thought that I could never bear to be called a preacher, I felt too unholy and unclean. When I came to the church, the subject of preaching did not trouble me. Uniting with the church was the foremost duty at that time. Although I have often had to wonder whether I was a fit subject for the church, yet I have never regretted the act. Soon after this there seemed to be something which caused me unrest, but I kept it to myself closely. The burden would have become much heavier before I would have revealed it to the church, but I was not compelled to do so; the brethren, and especially the man who baptized me, called on me time and again before I would ever even venture. After I made the venture I was sick at heart about it, although now I wish that I could enjoy such feelings as I had that day. I thought afterward that I would do so no more, and decided that I would not go to meeting any more, but I did, and was called upon to speak more than ever. In July, 1884, my church called for my ordination; I thought that I could put that off, but I did not, and the work was performed, and ever since that time I have been trying to quit, and trying to go on. By this time I am fully convinced that a man is a poor judge of his usefulness as a minister. Although I have resolved so often to quit, yet I cannot do so as long as our people call upon me to go forward and try. Jesus said to his disciples, "Ye

are my witnesses," and if inquiry is made whether I am a minister, I would rather say, Ask my brethren, they are my witnesses. While I have received but little remuneration in the way of money, yet I have received many hearty indorsements from brethren and sisters, and with this encouragement I am constrained to go on, and do the best I can, and trust to the judgment of the church. Three members united with us at the last meeting. I am to baptize one next Sunday, unfit as I feel to be.

In conclusion I will say, I have had some persecutions for the doctrine of predestination, as set forth in the SIGNS, but I still hold on to it the best I can. The Scriptures declare that our God made all things visible, and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were made by him, and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist, and he upholds all things by the word of his power, and he works all things after the counsel of his own will, and surely he predestinated all things, and left nothing to chance.

Yours in hope and fellowship,

P. J. POWELL.

PRAIRIE PLAINS, Texas, March 22, 1899.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—If you will allow me to call you brother. It has been my privilege to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES about four or five years. I am a distance of one hundred miles from home. I once thought that surely there was no one else like me. I am surrounded by denominations who do not believe that we are saved by grace alone. God pity them is my prayer. It is so plain in the Scriptures that we are helpless creatures. I have had a desire to write you for a long time, but a feeling sense of unworthiness has kept me back. I have heard but two gospel sermons preached since 1881. There is but one Primitive Baptist church in this section, and that is fifteen miles away. I have never united with the church, and do not have the least idea that they would receive me, but if I only could hear what I call good preaching, the preaching of Christ as our only Savior, what a great consolation it would be to me. I am now taking the dear old SIGNS, and would not be without them. They contain all the preaching that I have. I often feel lonely with no one to talk with concerning the goodness and mercy of God, but God, I believe, will not leave me comfortless. I love to read the letters of the brethren and sisters, and the good editorials in the SIGNS. I have just read and article from David McNees, on salvation, with interest. I am surrounded by trials and temptations, but thanks be to God, he has given me a little light to shine on my path; sometimes it shines dimly, but Jesus is my only hope while stumbling through this dark wilderness.

I will close before I weary you. Do with this as you wish, and all will be right with me.

Yours in Christ, as I trust,

BETTIE THOMAS.

[WE have but one word of advice for all who feel as does the writer of the above letter, and that is, go home to thy friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for thee, and how he has had compassion upon thee. The above letter contains the expression of the experience of every true believer. The Lord bids all such obey and follow him.—ED.]

UPPER CLINCH, Tenn., Dec. 22, 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Please find inclosed two dollars to pay for the SIGNS, which comes to me regularly, and is always a welcome visitor. I am always glad to read the correspondents' letters, they all can beat me writing, but they cannot beat me believing what God's word teaches. I love and believe the doctrine that God rules and controls all things in heaven, and in and under the earth, for we see all things put under him, and there is nothing that is not put under him; the devil obeys him, the seas obey him, the angels are made subject to him, and the powers that be are ordained of him. Yet there is a people in this country that preach that God cannot control the sinner; they say, "God wants to save the sinner, and the sinner will not let him." Such doctrine is not the doctrine of the God of Israel. The God that I serve commands, and it is done, and he speaks, and it stands fast, he works all things after the counsel of his own will, and accomplishes all of his purposes, and of his own will begat he us, with the word of truth, and as the Father raises up the dead, and quickeneth them, so he hath given power to the Son to quicken whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth. Therefore the Father hath given all judgment into the hands of the Son, because he is the Judge of the quick and the dead, because the Son is the only begotten of the Father, and because he is the only begotten of the Father, all of the children of God were begotten in him, (Christ) therefore Christ is our life, and we become partakers of that life by the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which quickeneth us into spiritual life. Therefore he that hath the Son of God, hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life, but is dead in trespasses and in sins.

I hope you have charity in the heart sufficient to cover my imperfections manifested in this scribble.

Yours in hope,

GEORGE EDENS.

SHINER, Texas, Feb. 13, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been requested to give my views, through the SIGNS, upon the Scriptures regarding the temple of our body, recorded 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17; 2 Cor. vi. 16., and Eph. ii. 21, 22. I will try to give my views upon these Scriptures, hoping that if I am wrong, some brother will correct me. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

I do not understand this Scripture to mean eternal destruction, because the Lord has said, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. For my Father which gave them me is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hands." There are many other Scriptures to which I could refer, and from which the child of grace could take courage. Were it not for that blessed principle of grace in our hearts, which our heavenly Father has put there by his divine Spirit, we would be ready to faint and die, but he has promised us that he will never leave nor forsake us. If we could always remember these blessed promises we could meet the conflicts and trials of life, and of this unfriendly world of sin and sorrow, with more confidence and courage.

There are many ways in which we may defile these bodies of ours, in which we hope we have the love of God abiding.

It is our duty as followers of the meek and humble Jesus, to keep our bodies pure, as far as it is possible; it is our duty to search the Scriptures. "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." We should prayerfully ask the Lord to teach us how to pray, and what to pray for. In 2 Cor. vi. 16–18, the apostle says, "What agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and I will be a Father uuto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." So we can see all through the word of God, a strong exhortation to the people of God, to be separate from the corruptions of this sinful world. While we know that we cannot reach unto perfection in this present life, yet we do desire to be free from sin, and the Lord has given us many trials which tend to bring us into a closer walk with God. O, my dear brethren, when we are tried by the wiles of Satan, then we need the guidance of God's holy Spirit to keep us from defiling this temple, or personal body of ours. For as God is holy, be ye therefore holy. I do not think this means that we are, or can be holy as God is, in this life, but when we are called forth from the grave, and made immortal and spiritual, and are fully adopted into the heavenly family above, then will we be pure and holy as God himself. I will call your attention to Eph. ii. 21, 22, which reads thus: "In whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." All the foregoing Scripture to which I have referred, applies to us as believers individually, except the last verses mentioned. Here the apostle, as I understand it, closes the subject, and brings it very plainly to view, that we are called together in a church capacity by the Holy Spirit of God, and by his almighty power. This church was set up by the Lord Jesus Christ, and to this church he gave all its ordinances. I believe that the church is sufficient for the people of God to belong to. Every duty to God and man is clearly shown to us in the Scriptures. O that we could at all times feel that we really belong to the church of God, but I am so vile that it often makes me tremble and fear lest I am not really a member of that church. Like Paul, I must say that when I would do good, evil is present with me. God hath said in his blessed word that he is a Spirit, and that he seeketh such to worship him as worship in spirit and in truth. The offerings which were under the law could not put away sin, but Christ hath by one offering, perfected forever them that are sanctified, and hath forever put away their sins. He gave his life for the church. Having life in himself, he gave his people eternal life. He came under the law which they had transgressed, and complied with all its demands, and suffered, and died the shameful death of the cross, and was buried, and arose on the third triumphant morning, and ascended up into glory, to intercede for us, according to the will of God."

I submit these thoughts for your disposal. May God bless you. Pray for me, that my love may abound.

Your brother in hope,

J. G. GRANT.

"BLESS THE LORD, O MY SOUL!"

UNTO thee, O God, I look; upon thee I call; thou art the refuge of my soul, and in thee alone my soul makes her boast and trusts. Thou art the strength of my life and my hope, from my youth till my old age; for thou didst have mercy upon me, and pardon all my sins, and reveal thy Son in me as thy salvation unto his people and my Redeemer, my life, my righteousness and my glory. Thou, O God, hast given me to rejoice in his name, and he is become my salvation. Yea, I am complete in him in whom all fullness dwells, and with him thou hast freely given me all things. O, my Father, I bless thy holy name for the unspeakable gift of thy beloved Son, whom saints and angels joyfully praise, and upon whom they ascend and descend. He is the brightness of thy glory, and the express image of thy person, and he is the glory of all thy saints. My rejoicing spirit boasts in Jesus, and glorifies thee, my Father, that thou hast given me to him, and him to me, and that thou art my God and Father in him, and hast made me thy son. O goodly heritage! How infinitely blessed and holy my relation to thee, and glorious my inheritance and estate! The heirs of earth and children of pride are poor and mean in comparison, O my blessed Father. For, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his." Thy holiness, thy heaven, thy eternity of perfect beauty, glory and bliss, are mine—mine in Jesus, who is thine and mine. Holy father, I come to thee in him, I plead his righteousness as mine; his suffering and death, his rejoicing and life, his love and obedience, are mine, mine in him and with him. All he is in thy holy sight, I am this in him. Thou, my Father, hast made thy blessed and holy Son unto me wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption; therefore I glory in the Lord Jesus, and glorify thee in him. I love thee with my whole heart in him, and loving thee, I serve thee in him. He is my well of living water, springing up in my heart and adoring spirit into everlasting life. O, I praise and bless thee for him. Because he lives, I shall live also. Yea, my Father, I now live and believe in Jesus, and I shall never die. Dead indeed I am unto sin, but alive unto righteousness through my Lord Jesus Christ, who is my life, and I now live in him. My life is hid with him in thee, O God. Yet a little while, and Christ shall appear unto me in glory, and then I shall appear with him in thy presence and glory, and being conformed to his image in my whole spirit and soul and body, when I shall awake with his likeness, I shall be satisfied. Unto this inheritance of life and immortality, holiness and glory in Christ, thy firstborn from the dead, my resurrection and my life, thou hast predestinated me, my Father and God, who worketh all things after the counsel of thine own will, and for the good of them that love thee; therefore my soul makes her boast in thee, and would joyfully triumph in Christ, saying, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name."

Beloved brethren, children of the true and living God, I commit the above adoration of my soul to you as a tribute of praise to our God, so that, when I depart to be with Christ, you may be comforted in the divine assurance of faith and hope and love that through Jesus our God hath given me the victory over the last enemy and every foe, and that you may rejoice in hope and say, "Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord." Clouds are over the sun this

morning, yet the Sun of righteousness shines in my soul, and is my life and light, and I am light in the Lord.

All who have written and spoken against me reproachfully, because of the doctrine of Christ, or for any cause, may God forgive them for Christ's sake, and bless them, as he has blessed me.

Farewell.

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind.

WARRENTON, N. C., Dec. 25, 1898.

MR. BENTON L. BEEBE—KIND FRIEND:—It is with the best of feelings I write you, although I do not feel worthy, as I am such a poor sinner. If I am ever saved, it will be by grace alone, and not of anything I can do to merit salvation. I want to tell you how much I enjoy reading in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the good experiences and communications written by those I love as christians. Elder Vanmeter's daughter tells my feelings better than I could myself. I have never felt a sudden change of my sins being pardoned, but have desired to be a christian ever since I was a child. I love to hear the truth preached, and hear their experiences with it, then I love them; it builds me up and fills my soul with joy, and I long so much to feel worthy to go with them, but feel they could not fellowship me. It has been over twelve months since I heard a gospel sermon preached. There is not a Primitive Baptist church in this County. My two brothers and their wives are all the Primitive Baptists in the County. When we hear preaching we have to go twenty-five or thirty miles, down in Nash County, and it is seldom we can get there, so you may know how much comfort the SIGNS is to us. We appreciate its coming as we would a relative from afar. I do love to read Miss Bessie Durand's writings; she writes with so much feeling, also Miss Attie Curtis and Mr. Lively, they are so comforting to us, as we hear nothing preached but works and means religion here. Their soup is not good to me, so I quit going to hear them; it disturbs me so I cannot rest at night. If the Primitive Baptists are not right, they have the wrong Bible. I have always been a "Hardshell" in principle, and hope to die one, if I am ever saved. I love them above everything else I see or hear. I do miss Mary Parker's letters so much, for I did love her, though I never saw her. My father, mother and one sister, all died of dropsy. I know something of her sufferings here, but feel that all of them are now at rest with their blessed Lord, whom they all professed to love and serve.

Mr. Beebe, please excuse this scribble, and let the flames consume it soon as you read it. Remember me, a poor old sinner, in your prayers; I am almost sixty-four, and very blind and nervous, and a poor hand to write.

Yours respectfully,

MINERVA L. MARTIN.

[THE above, we are satisfied, will be received by all who have been taught in the school of Christ, as the language of one who has been with Jesus. It is not so essential that one should be able to relate a vivid account of a sudden and great change from darkness to light, but if that love is felt within the heart for the brethren, that is the infallible proof that "we have passed from death unto life." The very fact of one feeling so sensibly their unworthiness to be received in the church, only makes them the more suitable for such membership, and we feel to say to the writer of the above, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord, why tarriest thou without?"—ED.]

MARSHALL, Minnesota, Jan. 6, 1899.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—It is with fear and hesitancy I attempt to write to you. I feel my weakness and inability to say anything which will interest you. But as to-day is my birthday, I feel like writing to you. I have now entered my seventy-ninth year. I feel that my life has been a very unprofitable one, but the all-wise God still sees fit to spare me, I know not why. I know that the God who created me, is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. He has done all things well, Why should I complain? It seems to me that my life has been a failure, so far as walking in the strait and narrow way which was cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in. I know I am in the hands of God, and that I can do nothing to merit salvation. God has declared his purpose to his people, and he knows the purpose of his own will. As a sovereign he cannot be disappointed. By the prophet he said, "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." And by the apostle he says, that he works all things after the counsel of his own will, Who shall be his counselor? When, in his own time and way, he manifests himself to his own elect, they are made to adopt the language of the apostle, "O the depth of the riches, both of the knowledge and wisdom of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." When I think of the great I Am, and then of my poor, sinful self, I feel ready to give up, and cry with one of old, O, my leanness, my leanness; Lord save I perish, but notwithstanding all my doubts and fears, I cannot give up my little hope. I feel to say, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." It is a comfort to read of those, so much my superiors in spiritual things, who speak of their own strength as being weakness, and their righteousness as being filthy rags, because that is my case. The SIGNS are a great comfort to me. Two weeks seems a long time to wait for them. If one fails to reach me, which has been the case twice of late, I fear that something has happened to the editors or the press. It would go very hard for me to do without the SIGNS. It seems like an old friend, when it comes. I would live on one meal a day, rather than not pay for them. I hope that they may not fail to come to us in the future. I dislike to trouble you, for I am sure that ministers have more to contend with and more to try them, than any other class of people. Surely, if it were not for the grace of God, who has called them to stand upon the wall of Zion, they could not stand up and proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ.

I will close my disconnected scribble. I hope that you will overlook all mistakes, and that you may live long to continue to write the editorials.

With much love from,

OLIVER PATTERSON.

INEZ, Texas, April 13, 1899.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—Myself and wife have for some time been readers of the SIGNS, and prefer it to all other papers that are published among us, because the writers therein do contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, and there are no words of discord published, which is a beautiful thing to behold in this age of the world, for the world generally is in confusion in these last days. We feel blessed to have the privilege of reading the words of God's dear children, in books and papers, as we are in a desolate place, and do not get to

hear much gospel preaching. We do get to hear Elder Asa Howard sometimes, as he visits us in our loneliness, and his visits are the greatest pleasure and comfort we have. May God ever bless those who preach Christ, and him crucified, for the redemption of poor, fallen men. These preach Jesus the way, the truth and the life, and testify of a sovereign and foreknowing God, who rules the universe in righteousness, for heaven is his throne, and the earth his footstool, and he will do all his pleasure in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. We are not members of the church, but feel to have a hope, that all the riches and enticing beauties of this world cannot buy. I hope that I have an experience that teaches me to look to the Lord for all things, and that he is an absolute sovereign, and has predestinated all things which come to pass, and unto him I hope to look for sustaining grace; not to our works even for a time salvation, but to God for the one eternal salvation in time and eternity. We feel to trust in God, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. I am a poor sinner, greater it seems than all others, but in him must I trust, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." O that I could only serve him faithfully, who left his Father's house in the heavens, and came to the earth, to save and call the lost lambs of Israel, and came to be crucified and hanged on a tree, suspended between earth and heaven, that they might be accepted of the Father, not by works, but by grace. He cried on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and, "It is finished." His people seem to be forsaken many times, but then comes the precious promise, Fear not, I will be with you always, even unto the end of the world. Blessed thought. He will save without money and without price. Bless his holy name.

Brother Beebe, if I may call you thus, when I began I only intended to tell you how much we appreciate the SIGNS, but it seems that I have digressed. Please throw the mantle of charity over this, and remember me at the throne of grace. Do with this as you deem best, and all will be well with me.

I am a railroad man, and am closely confined to business all the time, and so do not get to meeting, as the nearest one is about thirty miles away. May God be with you, is the wish of an unworthy brother, if one at all,

J. F. STAGGS.

GREENSBURG, Mo., March 1, 1899.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I send you a letter from my brother-in-law, in Illinois, S. G. Frazee. It did me so much good that I want all to read it. It is just what I believe. I have always believed in the decrees of God. I am here alone, with the exception of my daughter, so far as my faith is concerned. I get all my preaching from the periodicals. I have not been able to take the SIGNS, though I would like to do so. My sister takes it, and my father always was a subscriber for it.

May the Father of all mercies direct and guide us into all truth, is the prayer of one who loves his holy name.

Unworthily,

ELIZA J. GROVE.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., Feb. 9, 1899.

MRS. ELIZA J. GROVE—MY DEAR SISTER:—I will write you a few lines, to

let you know that I am still alive, and about the good meeting which we had last first Sunday. Elder John Scott was here, and preached for us. If I am any judge, he is a powerful preacher. He believes in the predestination of all things. But there are some who claim to be Primitive Baptists who do not. They want to have it that the good acts of men are predestinated, and the rest must be by chance. But the word says, "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." They say they do not believe that God purposed any should do wrong. Now if all things are not predestinated, I confess that I cannot tell where to draw the line. I am persuaded that there is predestination all along the line. There is no man on earth who can preach a gospel sermon without the predestinating power of God. To this I pin my faith. There is nothing else that will satisfy me. I can find no comfort in anything else. When I meditate upon the goodness and wisdom of my Maker, I feel that I want to be still and know that he is God. Most of the religious world preaches that if the dead sinner will accept of the offered mercy, he will be saved, and if he does not, he will be lost, but that will never do, a dead man cannot act, yet they preach that he can; they give the creature power over the Creator; it is too absurd to think about.

Well, I am a poor writer, and so will close. I can talk better than I can write. Come over and make us a visit, and we can have a good talk. Write soon.

As ever, yours,

S. G. FRAZEE.

SODDY, Tenn., Feb. 6, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—The sample copies of the SIGNS came to hand in due time, and after hesitating for some time, I have at last decided to subscribe for it. I have been in the dark for some time, and after much complaining I seem to be more reconciled, and desire to say that having obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, desiring to testify in one voice, of the goodness and mercy of God. I said that I seemed to be more reconciled, because I trust I have learned to endure afflictions with more patience, though I am a poor judge. Satan sometimes torments me because I cannot judge between a temptation, and a fit of murmuring and complaining. Though I must say that I do not desire to be looked upon as a faultfinder and complainer, for such a temper continually manifested is very good proof, I think, of an unregenerate heart. Nicodemus came to Jesus by night. May I not hope that he will guide me over the rugged way until the day dawns? Or if he should teach me, even in my darkness of mind and blindness of heart, the necessity of reconciliation, will I not be satisfied? If he should be pleased to reveal himself to me again, even though I be in darkness, will I not rejoice in realizing for myself that in him is no darkness at all? While it is a fact, that in him is no darkness at all, if "Clouds and darkness are round about him," would I be led to him, without being led through clouds and darkness? I could not sing with any comfort, "He in the thickest darkness dwells," &c., until I found the above expression in the Psalms. Now, that hymn is sometimes my meat and my drink. But I will weary you no longer. May the God and Father of our Lord and Savior uphold you, and give you the comfort of the Holy Ghost, "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

Yours, in hope,

T. D. WALKER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1899.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

McCOMB CITY, Miss., April 28, 1899.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—As I have been thinking lately of writing to you, I will do so now. I have always looked to you to give me light upon any subject which I did not understand, so I will ask you another favor, as there seems to be some misunderstanding among the brethren everywhere. Now, brother Chick, do you not think there is some misunderstanding about "time salvation?" Please give your views upon the following Scriptures: Eph. iv. 1; Col. iii. 1; Romans viii. 13; Romans xii. 1; Deut. iv. 39, 40. Does this pertain to our "time salvation?" If so, is it on conditions? I think it is, though I may not understand what "time salvation" is. Please let me hear from you on the subject, when you have time.

As ever, yours in the love of the truth,
J. E. WILKINSON.

REPLY.

In reply to the above request, we will first of all say, it is never easier to misunderstand each other, than when a difference of opinion arises concerning a matter. We have found it much harder to come to an understanding of each other, when writing about the difference, than when speaking face to face. It is often the case that we draw a conclusion from what one may say, that he would not acknowledge as a just conclusion. It is never right to ascribe our conclusion to another, as his own. It is right to try to show him that, as we think, such conclusions would follow from his premises, but if he denies that they would, we do wrong to say that he holds our inferences as his own views. The expression, "time salvation," to which our brother refers, no doubt sounds differently to some minds from what it does to others. In our view it would involve conclusions which another might not see in it. The doctrine of unlimited predestination does not involve in the minds of those who hold to it, what it is charged with by others. Now we would not think it right to be charged with the conclusions which opponents of the doctrine think would follow from it, and neither would we ascribe to others what they deny holding, although to our mind it seems impossible to believe the one sentiment, without believing another which seems to us to necessarily follow. Opponents of predestination say it involves a denial of the accountability of man. We do not believe this, but do believe in the sinfulness of man, and his accountability. We would resent it, were we charged with denying man's accountability. Yet to him who opposes the doctrine, it seems that such conclusions must follow. So, it may be, that those brethren who use the term "time salvation," so much, and make such a broad distinction between it, and what they call "eternal salvation," may not hold some conclusions which we draw from the sentiment. Some things which have been said concerning it, have sounded to us like the Arminian idea of conditionalism, and also like claiming the possibility of perfect obedience, or sanctification in the flesh. Yet when those who use this expression deny that they mean, or that they believe any such thing, we have no right to charge this conclusion of ours, upon them, although we may with perfect propriety, charge this conclusion upon what they have said.

It should be our business, if we see such a conclusion as this from their sentiment, to strive to show them that they ought to give up the sentiment, since it does indeed involve such conclusions. If we can show them that the doctrine which they advocate is susceptible of such objections, perhaps they will then forsake the sentiment itself, in abhorrence of its proper conclusions.

Our brother has referred to several portions of the Scriptures as justifying the use of the term "conditional time salvation." We do not think it needful to take up each of these expressions, and comment upon them. There are thousands of such expressions in the word. Exhortations and commandments are scattered upon every page of the Scriptures. The real question seems to be this, Do not all such exhortations, and every commandment, involve the idea of conditions to be performed by us? There is no need to single out some one exhortation or commandment, because they all involve the same principles. Do any of them justify the use of the term "conditional time salvation?" The force of each of these exhortations and commandments, all must admit. The question is, Do they involve the idea of a salvation to be obtained through the performance of them, or conditioned upon them, here in time, or in eternity? If we should take up any one of them, and consider it, the conclusions arrived at would be applicable to all such exhortations. For this cause we will not particularly consider the special references, but try to say a few things in general upon the subject involved.

In the first place, the expression "conditional time salvation," is a modern one, and does not occur in the Scriptures. The apostles apply the term "eternal salvation," to salvation, and to things connected with the word salvation, many times. While we would not condemn a term simply because the Scriptures have not used it, yet, on the other hand, we would not insist upon its use. We use many terms to express our meaning, which while scriptural, are not used in the Scriptures. As preaching is more than simply quoting portions of the word, so in preaching, many terms must be used which are not found in the written word. Yet such terms are not to be insisted upon, if they seem susceptible of another meaning, and in fact do seem to have an unscriptural meaning, to those who listen or read. We have not felt willing to use the term "conditional time salvation," because it has seemed to us to involve more than the word of God justifies. Conditions, just as far as they go, seem to exclude grace. Still further, it does not seem to us that the Scriptures make such a broad distinction between grace here below, and glory hereafter, as these words seem to imply. One has said, "Grace is glory begun, and glory is grace finished." "The Lord will give grace and glory." It does not seem to us that there is such a broad distinction between salvation here, and hereafter, as this expression "conditional time salvation," implies. Do not the Scriptures speak of our present salvation, as an eternal salvation? Do they not speak of it as salvation begun, but still the same as shall be bestowed, only in more abundant measure, beyond? Do not they speak of eternal life as a thing already given and possessed? See John vi. 54; x. 28; xvii. 3; 1 Tim. vi. 12, 19; 1 John v. 11, 13. Eternal life and eternal salvation then are the heritage of the saints here, and now. In that salvation we

find embraced first, the giving of life to the dead in sins, the entrance into communion with God, and fellowship with those who love and serve God; repentance, which Jesus has been exalted as a Prince and a Savior to give; faith, which is the present fruit of the Spirit, and hope, and love, and all the graces of the Spirit, with a love of righteousness, and an abhorrence of sin. All this belongs to what the Scriptures call eternal life, or eternal salvation, of which Jesus is declared to be the author. Now in all this, there are no conditions left to the performance of man. All the conditions of this salvation have been performed by the Captain of salvation, our Daysman and Mediator. Believers are saved now, in the Lord, with an everlasting salvation. This salvation is all of God, and he is the author of it. Now we should be slow to believe that any Old School Baptist would deny this. If any who bear the name, do deny it, they are not Bible Baptists, and they are not Old School Baptists. We trust that none who have been writing upon this theme, and who use the term "conditional time salvation," mean by it that the new birth which is here in time; the bestowment of eternal life, which is now; the entrance of light and life, and all the spiritual fruits of this life, which are felt from time to time in the heart of the believer, and which exercise him in all godliness and righteous living, are dependent upon conditions of our performance. Yet these things are parts of that salvation which is received in time, and which take hold upon eternity. In this sense, our time salvation is but eternal salvation begun. If there be any conditions connected with the entrance of this salvation here, then it must follow that those conditions affect our destiny to all eternity, and this is Arminianism, or legalism.

The phrase "conditional time salvation," then, is somewhat misleading. But this salvation is to bear fruit in the heart and life of those who have felt it. Obedience to all gospel ordinances is enjoined. Watchfulness over ourselves, and for the good of others, is again and again enjoined. Beyond all question, believers are often found going astray, and often forsake their own mercies, in denying the word of the Lord. They are taught by these things their own weakness and inability, and their utter dependence, every day, upon the present grace of God, for the power even to obey the least of all the commandments. Their sins are their own, their obedience is the Lord's. This is expressed in the words, "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life." The one is wages, a thing earned and deserved, the other is never earned or deserved, but is always a gift, and is always, when bestowed in any of its fruits or experiences, felt to be a gift, pure and simple. We recall that many years ago a sister in writing us by private letter, said something like this, "Why is it that when I am cast down, and have no peace, and the presence of the Lord seems far from me, I always feel that if I had not done so, I should not feel so, but when I am lifted up, and light and light and peace are given, and the presence of the Lord seems near to me, I never feel that it is because I have done so, that I feel so?" We remember the letter well, and the impression which these words had upon our mind, and that we at once thought of the text just quoted, "The *wages* of sin, the *gift* of God." "Conditional time salvation" seems to say, the wages of God are eternal life, as well as the wages of sin, and to infer that all the blessings which we receive here are, in a sense, earned, or

that we at least can say to another, who has not received so much of this life as we think we have, If you had lived as well as we, you would have fared as well. This is not the work of grace; it is not the fruit of eternal life to in any way exalt ourselves over any one. Eternal life says to the soul, and in the soul, All that I have is a mercy from God, bestowed upon a hell-deserving sinner. And it says, when it beholds the failures and transgressions of others, This would be my case, but for the reigning grace of God. Thus the true believer feels that he must always magnify grace, and grace alone, even in his obedience. If he is at any time obedient, he praises grace, and not himself, but when he realizes his often unbelief and disobedience, he lays this to his own charge, and does not say there is any failure in grace.

"Grace all the work shall crown
To everlasting days;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

We have never been able to believe that the old Arminian contention was the truth, viz: "We may all have just as much religion as we live for." We have always understood them to mean that men could have all joy, peace and happiness, if they would only live with the proper amount of zeal in the service of the Lord. The hours when we have felt most earnestness, and most like being close to the way, have been the times of our greatest doubt, and depression of spirit. At such times, instead of feeling that we were really what we desired to be, we have felt that we were furthest from it. Those have often been the times when we have felt that we certainly could not be what we have professed to be. We are not able to believe that any true christian can ever feel so well satisfied with his attainments in this life, that he can once think that any joy or comfort can ever be his, because of any right living of his own. Much that has been said concerning "conditional time salvation," has seemed to leave room for men to say, because I have lived right, I shall have a blessing, instead of putting all the blessings to the credit of the grace of God. In every way we have not liked the phrase referred to, for these reasons, and also for others which we will not now speak of.

The frequent conditional promises so often referred to, quoted from the Old Testament, only prove when read in the light of the history of Israel, that all conditional promises must fail. Israel was a failure. Our God did not try an experiment with them to see what men could do in the way of gaining blessings from his hand, by obedience. He knew what was in the heart of men from the beginning, and he would show men the truth concerning themselves. "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land," if ye be disobedient, ye shall be beaten with many stripes. Thus they were tried, and always were found wanting. Why then do we seek our present blessings upon the ground of our obedience? Why do we desire to be in bondage again? "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth? * * * Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain?" It is sure that Christ is not the author of any peace or salvation which comes to us upon conditions of our performance. Christ and conditions cannot occupy the same ground. We desire to see Christ in all our obedience, and to say that it is from him that the fruit is borne, and not from us.

Exhortation is right; warning and counsel are right; they stir up the pure mind in the way, but they do not mean that our time salvation is conditional. The exhortations are themselves based upon the fact that grace reigns in us. It is true that those who can say that they love the law of God, have peace, and those who can say, It is my meat and my drink to do the will of God, as their Master did before them, do find in keeping his commandments, a great reward. Let us warn, reprove and exhort, but still reject conditions of salvation, and ascribe all salvation to grace. Let us say at all times, Grace all the work shall crown.

We leave these remarks with our brethren. They are imperfect, but yet we believe that they express the truth of salvation. We trust that we have not misrepresented any of our brethren in these remarks. C.

AN IMPARTIAL INVESTIGATION

OF

FREE WILL AND FREE MORAL AGENCY,

A pamphlet by Elder W. N. Tharp, of Liberty, Ind., a copy of which we have had the privilege of reading, is certainly a most able and conclusive refutation of the doctrine of Free Will and Free Moral Agency, which of late has been advocated by some of the periodicals claiming to be published in the interest of the Primitive Baptists. We advise our readers to send for it.

Single copy, one cent; twelve copies, ten cents. Send one or two cent stamps. Address,

ELDER W. N. THARP.

LIBERTY, Ind.

THE address of W. R. Humphreys, whose letter appears on page 193, is Tebo, Texas, not Lebo, Texas.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

1 SAMUEL VIII. 10.

SISTER Blake, of South Carolina, desires our views on the passage referred to, which reads thus: "And it came to pass on the morrow, that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of the house," &c.

It seems to be a hard matter with many to comprehend how God can govern, restrain and direct the evil spirits which are abroad in the earth, without being in some way, or to some extent, associated in his nature with them. How an evil spirit from God could operate on a wicked king, unless that wicked spirit had first existed in the being of God, and had emanated from him.

Whatever difficulty we may have in comprehending the Scriptures of truth, two things are certain. First, that no portion of the divine record is the less true because of our want of capacity to understand it; and second, that God is a Spirit of infinite and eternal purity, that nothing impure or unholy ever did belong to his nature. Yet, with these two points fully conceded, no one can reasonably doubt that the sovereign government of God extends to all beings, all worlds and all events. We are compelled to believe that God's providential government extends to the controlling of all things, or otherwise that his government is far more contracted than any of us are ready to admit. We ask, Upon what principle could he declare the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things which are not yet developed, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure, if he did not hold in his hand the controlling power to govern and direct all things? We must confess that, to us,

there is great consolation in the contemplation of the universal providential dominion of the Lord God Almighty. Were we compelled to believe that wicked men, evil spirits or devils, could possibly thwart his purpose, or devise or execute any purpose or plan without his knowledge, permission or decree, we should be unable to defend the doctrine of his omniscience. If it be admitted that God has a perfect knowledge of all that transpires in heaven, earth and hell, it must also be admitted that he always had that knowledge, as well before he created the world as at the present moment, or otherwise we must deny his immutability. If he is in possession of knowledge now that he did not always possess, that would involve a change; it therefore cannot be. Knowing all things then, by his omniscience, from everlasting, can any doubt that he had power to determine whether they should or should not transpire? To deny that he had that power, is to deny his omnipotence, it is to deny that he is truly the Almighty God. Can we, without impeaching his eternal wisdom, believe there is a single wheel in all the vast and complicated machinery of this world, or any other world, that he did not supply, or that fails to operate as he designed that it should? If so, may we not fear that all his purposes in Christ Jesus, of grace and salvation, may also fail? We may look at any piece of machinery that we do not understand, and mark the numerous wheels revolving, to our limited judgment in direct opposition to each other, it may look to the novice as though it must be destroyed as soon as it is set in motion. This only proves that we do not understand the machine. Let us see it operate, and to our astonishment the design of the machinist is carried out perfectly, and we are instructed those parts of the whole, which look to us as though they could not work in harmony with the other parts, are so essential to the whole, that the machine would be useless without them. What then? We marvel at the wisdom of the machinist. Even so we wonder, gaze and admire the supreme wisdom of God, who has displayed his handiwork in the creation of the world. But let us for a moment look at the complicated parts of this great and wonderful machinery of nature. Can any man comprehend it? Certainly not. What an endless variety of living creatures, from soaring angels near his throne, to groveling reptiles, crawling on the ground, and myriads of insects too minute in size for our perception. Which of them all could be withdrawn from the whole, without impairing the machine? The novice can perceive no use for all the little wheels and screws connected with the machine prepared by man, but let him remove any of them, and the whole is out of order. Which, then, permit us to inquire, of all the minute parts of the wonderful creation of God, has he supplied in vain? Two sparrows are sold for a farthing; can half a farthing's worth of God's creation be removed or withdrawn without impairing the whole? A lifetime of any one of us would scarcely afford opportunity to count the hairs upon our head; but can one of them fall to the ground, or change from the precise position which infinite wisdom has assigned them? This question is already settled by him who made the world, and by whom all things were made that was made. When we contemplate the wonderful works of God in the creation of the world, when we consider the heavens, the workmanship of his hands, are we not constrained to exclaim with the enraptured psalmist, "Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him?"

Having briefly glanced at the wonderful works of God in creation, let us now inquire, Is it rational for us to conclude that God is less wise or provident in governing than he was in creating? He has told us that for his pleasure all things were and are created. Is his pleasure then of so little consequence to him that he would allow causes uncontrolled by him to effect the end and design he had in its creation? Will any dare to say that men or devils have power to prevent ends which God designed, or cause that his pleasure shall not be done in heaven above and among the inhabitants of the earth? Shall we not rather say with the sublime poet,

"Chained to his throne a volume lies,
With all the fates of men;
With every angel's form and size,
Drawn by the eternal pen.

His providence unfolds the book,
And makes his counsel shine;
Each opening leaf and every stroke,
Fulfills some deep design."

To return to the inquiry of sister Blake: Saul was a king, and God claims the power and the right to turn the hearts of kings as the rivers of water are turned, and thus he dealt with Saul, with Pharaoh, with Cyrus and Nebuchadnezzar, and thus he deals with all kings and with all the other powers of the earth. In the case of Saul, none can dispute that God's design was to supersede him in the government of Israel, and to raise up David to the throne in his stead; and as in all his providential dealings with the children of men, so in this case, his footsteps are in the great deep, and his ways are past finding out. He controlled the peace or the agitation of the mind of Saul, giving him at times peace and tranquillity, and then anon he sends an evil spirit to trouble him. God could not be baffled in any of his designs or acts; all that he designed, and all that he did, had its effect just as he designed, and eventually the grand design was accomplished, and David was exalted, and Saul abased.

Whether by the evil spirit, we are to understand, a devil, or a spirit of depression, trouble, confusion or madness, we will not attempt to define; but to our mind it is clear that all spirits, good and bad, are under the control of God. He sends them where he pleases, and never fails to accomplish the very purpose for which he sends them. He commissioned a lying spirit to go and be a lying spirit in the mouths of all of Ahab's prophets. He sends strong delusions to them which perish, that they may believe a lie, that they all may be damned who receive not the love of the truth that they may be saved. His complete control over evil spirits was very clearly exemplified by our Lord when he commanded them to come out of the man that raved among the tombs, and sent them, at their request, into an herd of swine; and in many other instances which are recorded in the New Testament. But that they are subject to his government, and go where he sends them, no more proves that they have emanated from God, except as his creatures, or that they had their original existence in the purity of his divine nature, than the fiery serpents which he sent into the camp of Israel were partakers of the divine nature. David speaks of his enemies, as the Lord's hand, and his sword, and he makes use of them to chastise the wicked. So he made use of them to bring about his purpose in the case of Joseph, and so also in the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ. They came together for to do whatsoever his hand and his counsel before determined to be done. And him being delivered up by the determined counsel and

foreknowledge of God, they crucified with wicked hands.

In conclusion, permit us to say, these views of the universal government of God, over all beings and all events, afford the greatest assurance of safety to the saints who put their trust alone in God. It is their unspeakable privilege to know that he has all power, that all principalities and powers, thrones and dominions, things visible and invisible, things present or to come, all are subject to his decrees, and are all bound by an irrevokable decree to work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Let us then rejoice while we sing,

"Life, death and hell, and worlds unknown
Hang on his firm decree;
He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be."

If any child of God feels alarmed at the doctrine of God's unlimited government and universal providence, let such ask themselves how much less power they would wish for him to possess, than we have attempted to ascribe to him. Would he appear any more glorious to any heaven-born child, were he less omniscient, omnipotent, or immutable? Would it contribute to their sense of his greatness, goodness or majesty, if it could be proved that devils and wicked men were beyond his controlling power, and able to thwart his purposes, or act independent of him? However this subject may appear to others, we confess that to us there is something inexpressibly consoling in the faith and assurance that

"Death and hell can do no more,
Than what our Father please."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., October 15, 1856.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$260 55
Mrs. Flo Black Macfarlane, Mich., $1.00; R. S. Scroggins, Ill., $3.00.—Total	4 00
Total to date	$264 55

OBITUARY NOTICES.

OUR dear sister and niece, **Mattie Sykes,** was born Dec. 10th, 1864, in Smith Co., Texas; married to Eunice Sykes, Dec. 6th, 1881, and died Sept. 6th, 1898. She related her experience and humble hope in Christ as her Redeemer, to Big Spring church, Saturday before the first Sunday in July, 1895, and was warmly received by the church into our fellowship, yet she felt sensibly her unworthiness. We esteemed her a noble christian woman, charitable to a fault, (if possible) kind and considerate of the needy. She was the daughter of the late Elder F. Odom, whose obituary appeared in the SIGNS last year. Mattie died within less than a mile of where she was raised, on the farm her father gave her. A short time before she died she called her husband to her, and requested him to remain on the farm with the children. She wanted to talk more, but was too weak. She was fully conscious of approaching death, though she seemed to be perfectly reconciled to the will of the Lord. She was a firm believer in the sovereignty and predestination of God, a reader of the SIGNS for several years. Mattie was her father's pet, and he was never ashamed to acknowledge it; in fact she was universally loved by all who knew her. She was the mother of eight children, three boys and four girls living, and one little infant buried with her, in her arms. The cause of death was colic, of which she frequently had suffered for the last few years. She leaves seven children, a loving husband, an aged and afflicted mother, two brothers, two sisters, and quite a number of other relatives, and a host of friends, to mourn. All was done for her that could be, by two of the best doctors that could be had, and a kind and loving mother, relatives and friends.

She was buried at Lindale, after prayer and appropriate remarks by her pastor, Elder F. Loden.

May God grant reconciliation to his will, is our prayer.

D. ODOM.

GARDEN VALLEY, Texas, May 7, 1899.

MEETINGS.

A yearly meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the Clovesville Old School Baptist Church, of the Lexington Association, on the first Saturday and Sunday in July, (1st and 2d,) 1899.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus, to meet with us, especially brethren in the ministry.

Trains will be met at Fleischmanns station, on the Ulster & Delaware Railroad.

THE yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church, of Canada, will be held, the Lord willing, at the usual place, Aughrim schoolhouse, in the

township of Brooke, Lambton Co., Ontario, five miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1899, and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

WE, the Old School Baptist Church of Christ, known as Mill Creek, while in conference on Saturday before the third Sunday in April, 1899, agreed to the following, viz: We agree to hold a meeting on Friday, Saturday and Sunday (embracing the fifth Sunday) in July, 1899, said meeting to be composed of sound Old School Baptist ministers and messengers from different churches and associations, for the purpose of investigating our faith, doctrine and practice, and to see that we as a church or body of Old School Baptists were justifiable in what we did in protesting and withdrawing from certain doctrines and practices which were brought in among us which we thought to be heresies. We ask all sound Old School Baptists to come and take part in said meeting. Those coming by railroad come to Bells, Crockett Co., Tenn., on the L. N. R. R., on Thursday, and stop with the postmaster, brother John H. Smith, he will take care of you.

Signed by order of the church.

S. L. LOMAX, Moderator, *pro tem.*

J. B. ERZELL, Clerk, *pro tem.*

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 67. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1899. NO. 13.

CORRESPONDENCE.

50 WASHINGTON AVE., NEWARK, N. J., May 20, 1899.

WITH my kindred in Christ, and friends of the Warwick Association in particular, and my brethren elsewhere in general, I will indulge in a little friendly correspondence, subject to the approbation of my dear brethren editors of the SIGNS, Elder F. A. Chick and brother B. L. Beebe, my dear and highly favored brethren and friends.

With good care, under the smiles of a kind Providence, I have been brought safely through a six months' siege of "la grippe," and am still permitted to have a dwelling-place upon God's footstool, with a comfortable hope that when the earthly house of this tabernacle shall be dissolved, I have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal, and in the heavens. That a poor, sinful, vile worm of the dust, as I am, should be so highly favored of the Lord, calls forth from my poor, trembling heart, an inward song of gratitude and thankfulness that words but feebly express. From an infant in my dear mother's arms, to my present years of manhood, I can but say the Lord has ever been merciful and kind to me and mine, though it has been his sovereign pleasure, in days past, to bring me through very deep waters of affliction, and caused me to drink copious draughts from sorrow's grief-stricken cup. But he who gives "the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness," has caused his all-supporting hand to be felt throughout life's journey thus far, and does now afford me the sweet assurance that as my days are, so will my strength be. In view of the unmeasured mercies bestowed upon me, I feel to inscribe the following beautiful and favorite lines that I so often feel to sing with comfort, as expressive of my present feelings, so far as words can express them.

"When all thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view, I'm lost
In wonder, love and praise.

Unnumbered comforts to my soul,
Thy tender care bestowed,
Before my infant heart conceived
From whom those blessings flowed.

When in the slippery paths of youth,
With heedless steps I ran,
Thine arm, unseen, conveyed me safe,
And led me up to man.

When worn by sickness, oft hast thou
With health renewed my face,

And when in sin and sorrow sunk,
Revived my soul with grace.
Ten thousand, thousand precious gifts,
My daily thanks employ,
Nor is the least a cheerful heart,
That tastes those gifts with joy."

But I will not further indulge in personal allusions, but will come at once to what I had particularly in mind when sitting down to write, and which, I doubt not, will afford you more comfort in reading. And first, let me say that I feel it is a sweet privilege that is now afforded me, of welcoming within the bounds of the Warwick Association, my dearly beloved brother, Elder Ker, the loved pastor of Middletown & Wallkill and New Vernon churches. And while I am giving expression to my own feelings, I sincerely believe I am but expressing the warm feelings of all my brethren of the Warwick Association. I trust my brother feels at home here, with his kindred in Christ, and his friends, and that he also feels that his coming to his present field of labor was, and is, of the Lord. While his heavenly Father has been pleased in days past to bring him through many dark and mysterious places, it has also been his infinite pleasure to afford our dear brother, for his comfort, and for his encouragement, too, some very joyful seasons, wherein the Sun of righteousness has been permitted to shine upon him in all his meridian splendor. And he who in times past has enabled our brother to feel that "the Lord has at times filled him with his mighty power, and enabled him to speak to his praise," will continue to be ever near him, in the dark as well as in the sunlight places, he can well rest assured; and he who is so highly favored as to be able to "trust in the Lord forever," will find that "in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." We are informed that in olden times, "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name."

"That worms of earth should ever be
One with incarnate Deity,"

is a glorious truth so profound, and involves thoughts so deep, that our finite minds in vain attempt to explore the mysterious and hidden purposes of infinite wisdom, to see how it is possible for a holy and righteous God to have mercy upon, and therefore remember poor, vile worms of the dust, and save them with an everlasting salvation. That the great God of heaven and earth, the Creator and mighty upholder of all beings and things, he who has "declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure;" who taketh up "the isles of the sea as a very little thing," and to whom this great world of humanity "are but as grasshoppers" in his sight, should in his glorious purpose of grace towards his people, make such an exhibition of his merciful goodness, in condescending to our capacity, in that we are able to read and know that in God's great book of remembrance, such poor worms of the dust as we are, should be remembered, is a comforting truth so transcendently great that our poor, sinful hearts are made to swell with emotions of joy that words would fail to express. Each one is ready to say,

"O why was I not left behind,
With thousand others of mankind,
Who run the dangerous, sinful race,
And die, and never taste his grace?
'Tis a wonder! wonder! wonder!
No heart could think, no tongue can tell,
Why God should save my soul from hell.
'Tis a wonder! wonder! wonder!"

And will there be any failure in the carrying out of the purposes of God in the

great plan of salvation? Will one of the redeemed ever be lost? No, never. Every poor, unworthy, sinful soul, who hardly dares to so much as lift up his eyes towards heaven, but smites upon his breast, and breaks out in mournful cries, "God be merciful to me a sinner," is one for whom Jesus has shed his precious blood. And for the comfort of these tempted, tempest-tossed children, who feel that they are too sinful, and too insignificant for heaven's notice, may you each rest assured that at the end of every toil-spent day, and when about to lay your weary, aching head upon your soft pillow for repose, you have "pitched your moving tent" one day's march nearer your heavenly, your eternal home; and just so sure as Jesus "sits at the right hand of the throne of God," and is the Intercessor of his people, just so sure will every one of you, for whom he certainly shed his blood, bloom in eternal day. For the challenge has gone forth from the eternal throne, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth."

"'Twixt Jesus and the chosen race,
Subsists a bond of sovereign grace,
That hell, with its infernal train,
Shall ne'er dissolve, or rend in twain.

One in the tomb, one when he rose,
One when he triumph'd o'er his foes,
One when in heaven he took his seat,
While seraphs sung all hell's defeat."

"Then who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" No, "for in all of these things" we are counted "more than conquerors through him that loved us." "For I am persuaded," says the inspired apostle, "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Could there possibly be any more said for the comfort, safety and security of poor, sensible sinners, than this avalanche of plain, truthful words? We think not. And Jesus, the Mediator, was given "power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him." And now we will see how our heavenly Father has provided for us in his "will." "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." Then be of good cheer, ye children of the living God, you who for twenty, thirty, forty, and perhaps sixty or seventy years, have been treading the rugged paths of the christian life, and you, too, who have just begun the race, and who feel so unworthy, so sinful, so vile and so wicked, and perhaps at times feel that you have committed the "unpardonable sin." But remember, dear kindred, that it is an utter impossibility for you, or any other one of the dear children of God, to commit that sin, for the sins that are "unpardonable," are those that are "committed against the Holy Ghost," and those who commit them will receive no pardon either in this world, or the world to come. But the sins, past, present and future, of all God's people are pardonable, for they are all against the Son, and when he expired upon Calvary's cross, every sin of every one of his redeemed people was canceled; and when he went down into the grave, and rose again, you, dearly beloved, had a glorious part in that wonderful and mysterious transaction, and this very day you stand in his eyes, with all of your

feeling of sinfulness and unworthiness, as pure and free from sin as though you had never committed one sin in your life, because "he arose for your justification." You therefore stand in the presence of your King both pardoned and justified, and you are at this very moment of time just as safe as you will be when the garments of mortality shall have been taken off, and your immortal spirit has left its tenement of clay, and is safe in the eternal keeping of God, who first gave it to you. "O, for such love let rocks and hills their lasting silence break." Everything that was necessary, or did in any way contribute to the carrying into effect your salvation, both in time and in eternity, was naked and open to the all-seeing eye of Jehovah, before one of Adam's fallen sons or daughters ever had an existence upon the earth, consequently there is no circumstance, or combination of circumstances, that ever has or ever will intervene, that can or will thwart him in his purposes of love towards you, dear children of God, for he is an omnipotent, omniscient and an omnipresent God.

"There's not a tint that paints the rose,
Or decks the lily fair,
Or streaks the humblest flower that blows,
But God has placed it there.

There's not of grass a single blade,
Or leaf of loveliest green,
Where heavenly skill is not displayed,
And heavenly wisdom seen.

There's not a star whose twinkling light
Shines on the distant earth,
And cheers the silent gloom of night,
But heaven gave it birth.

There's not a space in earth's vast round,
In ocean's deep, or air,
Where skill and wisdom are not found,
For God is everywhere.

Around, beneath, below, above,
Wherever space extends,
There God displays his boundless love,
And power with mercy blends."

To feel an abiding assurance that everything is under his wise and supreme control, that he has "power over all flesh," and that he causeth "all things to work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," is a distinguished favor that this vain world can neither give, nor when given, possibly take away. This glorious doctrine is well calculated to revive our drooping spirits by the way, and is an "anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast." Then, ye children of the living God," in view of the glorious things that await you,

"Your harps, ye trembling saints,
Down from the willows take;
Loud to the praise of Christ, our Lord,
Bid every string awake.

Though in a foreign land,
We are not far from home;
And nearer to our house above
We every moment come."

Affectionately your brother, in hope of eternal life,

GEORGE D. CONKLIN.

HICKORY GROVE, Va., May 25, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—At the request of sister Utterback, I forward her subscription to the SIGNS. She wishes me to say that, although suffering greatly in body, the SIGNS have been peculiarly sweet and comforting to her, especially the past two or three months. She has been denied the privilege of getting to preaching and meeting with the brethren for several months past, and I have no doubt that her hungry soul has been ready to feed upon every morsel that has come within her reach. I also inclose a letter she received last winter from Elder L. H. Hardy, and which she, together with myself, would like to see published in the SIGNS. While she has not brother Hardy's consent to its publication, still I

do not think he can object, for it comes as one of the pleasant spices from the garden of the Lord, borne upon the refreshing breezes of the morning, to the sick, tempest-tossed and disquieted child of God, with that fragrance which nourishes and builds them up in the most holy faith, and strengthens them, as it were, for another day's journey in their weary pilgrimage. Hence it is the common property of the saints, and should not be hidden.

As ever, your brother, I hope,

G. G. GALLEHER.

ROXBORO, N. C., Dec. 8, 1898.

MRS. L. S. UTTERBACK—MY DEAR SISTER:—On last Sunday evening I came in from a short trip, and read your good letter which came in my absence. It was unexpected, but that is the way that all the blessings of God come to me. It is said that misery loves company, and really it seems to be true, for when I have been so low down, barren, distressed, almost ready to give up every glimmer of hope, some dear brother or sister sends me an epistle from the Lord, either by letter or word, and it brings to me the news that when I was so low down, a brother, a sister, a dear one in the Lord, was down there with me, and I have been made to think that one may have more, and it may be better company, low down in the valley, than elsewhere in the christian pathway.

You ask me to write on Psalms lv. 22, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." From the few hints in your letter, I feel that you could have written on this Scripture much more to my comfort than I shall be able to do for you. I have no doubt but that you have felt, as I have, to adopt the language of our blessed Lord in John v. 30, "I can of mine own self do nothing." I have often heard the expression that, "Our salvation here depends on our own conduct," but as often I have felt that expression to have no place in my heart. Can you cast your burden upon the Lord? If so, why do you mourn and weep under its weight? Indeed, it would be no burden to you after you cast it upon the Lord. When I have been very heavily burdened, I would gladly have shaken it off, and let it go where it might, but it would not be shaken off. The only true example of this is given us in the life of Christ: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered."—Heb. v. 8. In Gethsemane he prayed, "Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt." The Father would take from him the burden, but it must be borne to the greatest depth of its suffering, even unto death and the pains of hell. To be delivered from it he must pass through it, for deliverance was on the other side. It was here he made the way sure that you should cast your burden on him, for he had taken it on himself, or the Father had laid it on him, and he bore it for you, and took it away. But you must learn the fellowship of his suffering by suffering with him. Thus the Holy Spirit teaches you to trust the Lord, brings you to his feet, and causes you to lay all you have and are at his feet, for there alone is salvation found with its joys and liberties. Thus Christ for you, is you, in this blessed work, so that his fulfilling the law for you, is your fulfilling the law, and every good work he did is your good work, and you did it in him. Therefore, when he cast the burden at

the Father's feet in holy resignation, "Thy will be done," your burden was laid on him, for he carried it and bare it all the days of old, and on the tree of the cross, where he finished the work, and laid all your sins in Moses' grave, where no man can nor ever will find them. The Spirit reveals this to you by showing you some little part of the weight of your burden, that you may realize, to some extent, what the blessed Lord suffered for you, and then he points you to Christ, who bare your sins, and in sweet resignation to suffer with him, he enables you to cast your burden upon him. At once you feel his gracious hand underneath you, bearing you up, sustaining you, so that no enemy, within or without, shall prevail against you. This brings us to the saying of Paul, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is Christ that justifieth." Troubles may come, storm and tempest may howl around you, the desert may spread its broad face before you, or the wilderness threaten to swallow you up, yes, even the belly of hell may gnash upon you, but here in this sweet spirit of resignation the Lord will sustain you, and deliver you out of all your troubles. While you are a sinner, and in your nature unchanged, your mind carnal, worldly things, and seeking after the things of the world, yet there is in you a spirit that hates all this carnality, and everything that is evil, and hungers for righteousness. We cannot hunger for that of which we have never heard nor tasted, therefore hungering after righteousness is a sure sign that the Spirit of the Lord is moving and controlling us. This righteousness is given us in Christ, yes, it is Christ, for he is made unto us righteousness. Thus our hope is in him, and without him we are nothing. These are the righteous whom he will not suffer to be moved. Their strength is in him, and in him they are as strong as he, though in themselves helpless. Sister, can we not rejoice in such a Savior, Husband, as this? What if we do have times of darkness, poverty, distress, barrenness of soul here in this world, are these things worthy to be compared with the joys which are given us in the precious word of the Lord? Peter says, "Casting all your care on him who careth for you." We cannot keep any of our Lord's commandments. He never gave man a command that he could obey, for man is earthy, and the commandments of the Lord are spiritual. Therefore Christ, their spiritual Head, kept all laws, all commandments, for them. Therefore all the glory, honor, praise, might and dominion, are his forever and forever.

Dear sister, I have just hinted at this subject, but have done the best I can, hoping the Lord may give you comfort in what is written, and open much more to your understanding. The Lord bless and comfort you.

Your brother in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May 27, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you a poem written by Miss Lizzie Macallum, of Wallacetown, Ontario, Canada. She is blind physically, as will be understood upon reading the excellent lines she has written. She is, I have no doubt, also blind in the sense referred to in Isaiah xlii. 16, having been brought to Jesus by a way that she knew not, and now being led, as all the Lord's people are, in paths she has not known; also as in Isaiah xlii. 18, 19, and xliii. 8, as those who are called upon to look, and who are to be brought forth as witnesses to the truth of God's

salvation, and into the fullness of its joys; also as in John ix. 39–41, as unable to see how a sinner can be saved by any works of his own, but who shall be given eyes to see Jesus as the salvation of his people, and shall rejoice in that glorious sight with a joy that is unspeakable and full of glory. Those who are thus blind, as all of the Lord's people are blind from their spiritual birth, unable to see how a sinner can be made holy, are those for whom Jesus died, and who therefore have no sin; and to every one of them he will surely come in his own good time, and open their eyes to see him as their righteousness and salvation; while those who say they see how any one can do that which shall cause them to merit the favor of God, give no evidence that Jesus died for them. "Therefore their sin remaineth."

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

Though my years are spent in darkness,
With my earthly vision veiled;
Though I have not seen at evening
Rosy hues by shadows paled;

There is one who guards my footsteps
In the darkest paths of night,
While within my heart are shining
Rays of never fading light.

For I know God's ways are perfect,
And his hand in love I see;
For in faithfulness my Father
In this world afflicteth me.

Though I cannot see the flowers,
Or the trees in verdure clad,
Cannot see the happy warblers,
Even yet my heart is glad.

For I hope than when my spirit
From this temple soars away,
I shall view eternal glories
In that never ending day.

Where no more shall be remembered
Pain or sorrow, tears or sin,
But the light of God's own presence
Peace and love create therein.

God forbid that I should murmur,
As upon the cross I gaze,
Where for me the Lamb was smitten,
If I know the gates of "praise."

What are then these light afflictions,
Which one moment here annoy?
They shall soon all fade and vanish,
And my soul be filled with joy.

While a pilgrim here I journey
To that city clothed in light;
Christ shall be my hope of glory
Till my faith is lost in sight.

LIZZIE MACALLUM.

STARHILL, Ala., May 16, 1899.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you a letter for publication, written by brother Curry, to sister Fannie Jenkins. I think it wholesome food for those that are spiritual, and worthy of all consideration of the saints of the most high God.

Yours in hope,

J. E. FINCHER.

PLEASANT PLAINS, Ill., July 16, 1898.

MRS. FANNIE JENKINS—MY DEAR SISTER:—Your very kind letter came to hand duly. Allow me to thank you most sincerely for affording me such pleasure. You and brother Jenkins, together with others in your country, have been on my mind so often. I have lived a good part of my time in the spirit with you all down there, both in your joys and sorrows, and still feel joined in soul to the faithful in Christ, in your community. Your report of the languishing condition of Zion, pains me, but when I remember that it was said of Jesus, "He shall see of the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied," then I am satisfied. Christ is undoubtedly satisfied with the condition of things in his kingdom; if not, would he not make the necessary changes required to bring about the satisfactory condition of affairs? Has he not all power both in heaven and in earth? All things are yours, saith the holy word of God, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

"What more can he say
Than to you he hath said,
Ye who unto Jesus
For refuge have fled?"

"All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." God has ordained that the faith of his people be tried; he has also ordained those very things that are to try it. In the days of Elijah, they digged down the altars and killed the prophets, and so they do now. This discouraged Elijah, and so it discourages us. But is God discouraged at it? Nay, verily. He has reared an altar that none can dig down. This altar is in the heart, an altar of his own raising, and at which he alone presides; an altar which is his own peculiar care, and which wicked hands can never touch. He has also anointed a prophet which none can kill. Jesus, the risen Savior, is that prophet. He is far above all principality and power, and every name that is named, and he has said, "As I live, ye shall live also." Elijah was discouraged, but what did God say to him? "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." O yes, the election of grace. It is the election of grace that saves the church, that saves the individual, that raises the despairing, and cheers the desolate. Elijah, although a prophet of God, was ignorant of God's way of doing things, ignorant of the true condition of things around him. He thought that he was left alone, but he was in the midst of God's reserve. So, my dear sister, you in your loneliness and deep concern for Zion, may be in the midst of God's reserve, a hidden number, whom God has reserved to himself. In the days of the apostles there were those who said they were Jews, who were not, but did lie. So it is now, for there is nothing new; that which hath been is now, says the inspired record. Some among us of late, have set out to convert the New School Baptists, and think they are succeeding finely, but the truth is, the conversion goes the other way. They themselves are infatuated with the same craze of proselyting, that separated the Baptists in 1832, and some of them manifest a more intense hatred of the truth than many New School Baptists do. May God reconcile us to his will, and subdue us unto himself.

Give my love to brother Jenkins, and say to him that he has a half interest in this poor letter, and a warm place in the writer's heart. Remember me to all the faithful ones. Tell them I am still a stranger in this world, trying as God gives the ability to proclaim salvation by sovereign grace. Write again to me.

Yours to serve in the gospel of Christ,

H. M. CURRY.

JEFFERSON, Texas, May 15, 1899.

BROTHER BEEBE'S SON:—I feel to have some apologies to make to you for not sending my dues before this time. I have been sick since last August, and am still sick. I am very nervous at this time, but a little better. You will please excuse me, and I will try to do better, if the Lord will permit. I have had the money all the time, but illness has kept me from trying to write. I can say that I am well pleased with the SIGNS. It seems as if I could not do without it, for it, and the *Messenger*, are about all the preaching I get. We have the so-called preaching, but there is no food in it for me. There is not a Primitive Baptist church in this County, yet I surely believe there are some of God's chosen

people here, and my heart's desire and prayer to God is, that if it is his will, he will send one of his preachers into this part of the country.

Brother Beebe, if you feel to do so, you can publish this scribble, with the necessary corrections.

I remain yours in affliction,

F. M. ALSOBROOK.

STARK, Fla., May 25, 1899.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—I will try to write a few lines to you, seeing my subscription has expired. I am an old man, and can write but little, as my eyesight fails me, and my health is poor, and I am enfeebled with old age, but I would like to write you, and tell you the story of my life. My days are most over, for eighty-eight years have passed away, and now I feel the grave is near by. It is not likely, yet may be, that another year will find me on earth. I have read the SIGNS from nearly my youth, and they have ever been much company for me. Most of the old writers are gone, that used to fill its columns, yet Zion lives, for the younger brethren seem to fill the place of the old, for me. I feel that the SIGNS' correspondents agree with the Scriptures, and I wish to continue them while life lasts. Forgive my ramblings.

From your unworthy brother, if one at all,

IRA PHELPS.

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE.

ALTHOUGH we have not published for some time our advertisements of large Family, and Pulpit Bibles, and a number of other books, formerly advertised, yet we have them for sale, and any one wishing to purchase, can obtain full information in regard to them, by sending for one of our handsome illustrated catalogues, which we mail free.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, in session with our sister church, Ebenezer, in Baltimore city, Md., May 17th, 18th and 19th, 1899, to the churches composing this Association, sends greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—It is with pleasure we are again in the purpose of God assembled together, and we address another epistle of love and fellowship to you, and while we feel it is written in love, we feel the burden of the flesh. The children of God are composed of two separate and distinct lives, one after the flesh, and the other after the Spirit, and to which ever we sow, we reap. One is carnal and selfish, and has no love for others but what are selfish, and are capable of acting out that which is most gratifying and pleasing to the flesh; not considering the interest of others, only so far as will benefit themselves. This is so with all of Adam's race naturally, be they ever so good in their own or others' estimation: there is not one so good or unselfish as to act toward others in real love and kindness, without some idea of a reward, either in this, or a world to come; there is always a reward in view. This is as Adam in the garden was; the reward with him was to be as God, knowing good and evil, and by his disobedience he proved his evil nature. This is the life of Adam, the head and progenitor of the whole human family, which is governed by the head. The same nature pervades all without exception, in fact are Adam multiplied.

But now we come to contemplate another and purer life, which the saints of God are possessed of. This life is the opposite of the other; it loves, honors and obeys God, and in every act and word is perfect. God is perfection and love, and

he sheds that love abroad in the hearts of his children, his chosen, and every act of these dear chosen ones is in love, perfect, pure and unselfish love, when led by this spiritual life. Their reward is not anticipated in any way, but they have their reward. This love of God is spoken of as charity, and Paul, in 1st Corinthians, expresses it in these beautiful words: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." This fully sets forth the love of God in his saints. How opposite from the love of nature, which is always selfish. It is learned by experience that we cannot live by the law written on tables of stone, which is easily broken, or as revealed to us as a burning mount, as Mount Sinai. But on the other hand is a living law, as on Mount Zion, revealed to us on living tables of the heart, by which we live the life of Christ. The children of God, or the christian, cannot claim exemption from the wiles of Satan, or from the continued warfare of the flesh against the Spirit, or the Spirit against the flesh, and we may think we are doing God service, when we are catering to the flesh, which we are apt to do when we are not of one mind.

The apostle Paul, in 1st Corinthians, says, "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, * * * that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. * * * For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; Are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?" So then this carnal nature of ours is always ready to declare for self. Brethren, are we not carnal? Who can say he has not a Paul or Apollos? One will say, I love this preacher, or another will say, I do not like this one; so every one has his favorite. This is preferring one above another, and is carnal, and not in the same mind and judgment, and also belittleing God's gifts. "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations; but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." We are apt to speak of one as a big preacher, and another as a little one. We are not willing to admit there are any big or little preachers, or that education makes one better than another; and the Scriptures do not so say. Some of the apostles were educated, and some were not, but the gospel was preached alike by all. When God can take a poor, uneducated shoemaker, and confound the great and noble of the world, surely this is taking the foolish things of this world to confound the wise. God gives a gift to all, and to that poor, hobbling one, as good a gift as to the other. All of God's gifts are good gifts, and none to be de-

spised. We are so apt to be governed by outward appearances, which leads to carnality, but in all things we are admonished to be of one mind, and one judgment, and pray to the Lord of the harvest to send us a shepherd, to go in and out before us, and that our hearts may be opened to receive such in love and fellowship, in one mind and one judgment. The apostle admonishes his brethren in many things: "Now I beseech you, brethren." His interest in them was so strong that he exhorted them in love, knowing the tendency of their carnal minds. And do we not all need this exhortation? While we are God's dear children, and love to do his will, we have a carnal mind that is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, and so the warfare goes on in the christian, so that we cannot do the things that we would. We hear some say they can do good or evil as they please, but the child of God cannot, and we think Paul has testified to the same when he said, the good he would, he did not, and the evil he would not, that he did. And this is the experience of every child of God, manifestly, and while the children of God desire above all things to be governed or led by the Spirit of Christ which is in them, their fleshly mind is always lurking slyly, with subtilty, to draw them away from that which they so much desire, and therefore cannot do the things they would, but does that which causes him many sorrowful days and nights, and these dear ones so often think they are doing God service, when the serpent, their natural reasoning, comes forward with a nice argument, and reasons as the serpent did in the garden, (a pleasant place) and tells them there is no reward in their way, and there is no honor in trusting in the Lord, you must do something, and your brethren will applaud and heap honors on you. The children of God are the only ones that are susceptible to this warfare, and for this reason we feel impressed to remind you of these things, that when you are divided on any subject, you are led by the flesh. This serpent, Satan, self, winds its coils around us while thinking and even desiring to be led by the Spirit. When led by the Spirit, it is without thought of self, only desiring to be at the feet of the brethren, esteeming others better than ourselves. Therefore try the spirits, whether they be of God, and be of one mind, and one judgment, and let no divisions be among us, and the sweetness of humility will be the reward.

WM. GRAFTON, Moderator.
MILTON DANCE, Clerk.

To the churches represented in what is known as the Delaware Baptist Association, the following letter is addressed.

BRETHREN:—As the representatives of the churches are assembled all with one accord, in one place, it is meet and fit that we should not only endeavor to profit from the privilege of mingling together in devotional exercises, and enjoying the ministry of the word, but that we should take some interest in the matter of the health and prosperity of the several churches at home. It was not all of the apostle's work to set in order things that were wanting, but he did not hesitate to commend them when good order was observed among them. The order of a gospel church is as much a matter of revelation as the faith, and the prosperity and welfare of the church depends much on its maintenance. The church was admonished away back by the old Jewish prophet, "Put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jeru-

salem." If faith does not produce fruit that testifies of its vitality and excellency, it must be a kind of faith that is destitute of life. The original design in organizing churches was evidently that their faith might be exhibited publicly to view, as a city set upon a hill so that its light be not hidden, and that they are seen to be walking in that truth that they have professed to know and to love. The maintenance of order means discipline. It means that the body has an exalted character and calling to maintain, and a profession to adorn, the obligations of which are too sacred to be neglected or trifled with. The laws of Christ's house are laws of love, prompted by his wisdom and love to them, and designed for their profit and well being, and which they are supposed to love to obey. They always bring a reward with them. It is in the very nature of organizations that there is authority to enforce such order as was embraced in the original design. This authority is over all the membership, and equally binding upon all. In the exercise and maintenance of church discipline, difficult and perplexing cases are likely to be encountered. Delinquency on the part of members seems to be the besetting sin. They gradually become neglectful of the appointments, and ere long drift into an entire neglect of all church obligations. It is a duty that a church owes to herself, as she claims to be a church of Christ, and under law to him, to see that the obligations of her members are duly and faithfully fulfilled. Cases of negligence after long delay are more difficult to deal with, and much more likely to fail of producing any good effects. Uniformity and promptness in dealing with disorders and neglects are necessary if the discipline is to command respect. We would not suppose that those who might properly be called "fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God," would, when located within the bounds of an orderly and sound gospel church, deliberately move away from the bounds of that church, or of any other with which they could unite. If such should sometimes be the case, it would seem that church privileges, and the companionship and fellowship of the saints, had never been appreciated. If it is not a matter calling for the exercise of church discipline, it certainly shows a needs be for exhortation and admonition on the part of the pastor and officers of the church. There has perhaps been a neglect to some extent at the time when new members are received into church fellowship, to solemnly admonish them with regard to the obligations they are taking upon themselves. As they are naming the name of Christ, and henceforth to be called by his name, that it is a sacred name, and that the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain. The church has difficulties and discouragements enough to encounter in her course in the world, without having dead weights to drag along. A name to live, or among the living, is no benefit to those who are destitute of that life. And it is a serious detriment and damage to the standing and character of a gospel church, to hold as members in fellowship those who do not scarcely ever attend her appointments, or pay any attention to sharing the burden of her expenses. If a church is a kingdom, or a branch of the kingdom, it has a King, and he has laws and ordinances to be regularly observed, so that her light may always shine. The obligations of church membership are usually enumerated in a church covenant, to which the constituent members sign their names. Members re-

ceived afterward will of course come under these obligations, and they ought to be made fully acquainted with them. There will then be no excuse for a total neglect of them afterward. If a church does not respect herself, and her sacred ordinances, and maintain her order, how can she command respect from others? What will her fellowship be worth when it is seen that persons continue to be held who are treating her, and their obligations to her, with utter neglect? Members sometimes live at considerable distance, but if they love the church, and appreciate their privileges, they always manage to satisfy the church, every one knowing that they are never absent willingly. He who sang the "Song of Songs," compared them to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots. We may presume that those horses all pulled together, and delighted in the service, and that not one balky one was tolerated among them. If the garden is to be admired for its beauty and fragrance and fruitfulness, it is needful that the plants be all living and blooming, and no withered or decayed plants to mar the picturesque scene. What was a desert before is declared to be made like Eden, and so as to show that it is the garden of the Lord. Among the characteristics are, "Thanksgiving and the voice of melody." Churches ought to have system about their business matters, and the regular and prompt fulfillment of the obligation of members; and their records should show what is being done, and the order in which it is done, as a testimonial in their behalf, to those who come after. In the keeping up and maintaining of public worship, there is necessarily some expense involved. It could hardly be supposed that anybody would make a profession without knowing this, and also that the claim to meet these expenses falls equally upon every individual member. The apostle suggests a contribution every week for this purpose. But if that seems to come inconveniently frequent, let it be at such times as convenient, at least at some time during the year. If this is understood in the start, there need be no trouble in carrying it out, each member knowing that it is what every member is doing, and is expected to do. It is not the multitude of members that makes the fragrance, bloom and beauty of the garden. It is not the great numbers that would enkindle sentiments of love and fellowship. These blessed and heavenly things are fruits and effects that never come as a spontaneous growth. They are effects invariably traceable to causes that invariably produce such effects. There are many other things that it might be proper and profitable here to speak of, but this matter of bearing and sharing cheerfully every burden, and aiming always to be in their place as members, on the part of members, embraces an underlying principle that will tend to call forth many other good fruits. People are seen to love the cause, and to love each other. They are ever willing to make sacrifices to meet the requirements of church obligations. Men take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus. Churches must respect themselves, and maintain their order and discipline, if they would command the respect of others. There are sometimes members who are unfortunate, or sick, or dying, and need assistance. The most reliable and effectual way to meet such claims is to have a fund for the purpose always on hand. Then let a trustworthy member have charge of attending to the distribution of it. The Master's yoke is

easy, and the burden laid upon his people is light.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Moderator.
B. C. CUBBAGE, Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, covened with the church at Kingwood, N. J., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 31st, and June 1st and 2d, 1899, to the several churches of which she is composed, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—According to a long established custom, and also in agreement with our own desires, we again would seek to call your attention at this our annual session, to some of those things which are profitable for us to consider, and which we believe make for the comfort and peace of Zion. In these annual letters from us to you, we do not seek to write as though we had any authority over you, but as brethren met together to convey your messages each to the other, and to worship God. We are not masters, but brethren each of the other. We are together by your appointment, and for purposes which you have defined. It is not ours to act as though we were more than messengers to carry your messages each to the others. But while together, we have engaged in the worship of God, and that you may know something of how our minds and hearts have been occupied while together, we send you this letter.

Probably in past years all, or nearly all of the principles of truth, which are dear to you and to us, have been presented in this manner for your consideration at different times; yet we do not feel like ceasing to write for this reason. Should this be a reasonable excuse for ceasing to write Circular Letters, it would be an equally reasonable excuse for ceasing to preach the word, or to write it in any other way. Of some things we cannot be reminded too often. The great principles of faith upon which the hope of the believer rests, the travel of the believer as he is led into the truth, and away from all else, and the admonitions concerning a becoming walk in the house of God, are at all times important to be considered; and these things we are persuaded are always of interest to those of like precious faith. In these things rests the ground of all christian fellowship. And to help this fellowship, and cause it to abound, is the object of declaring our faith each to the other. While it should always be understood that the Bible alone is to be accepted as the revealed standard of truth, and no one is to set up any other standard, yet it is needful that where men of diverse minds all claim that they receive the Scriptures as their rule of faith, there should be statements made of what we understand the Scriptures to teach. Therefore we present in preaching, and writing, and in what are called Articles of Faith, the understanding which we have of the Scriptures. This is needful, because none in these days can know what another believes if he simply says, I believe the teachings of the Bible. Nearly all men will say this, but yet how wide is the difference between men after all. To define their faith, we doubt not, was one of the objects of those who introduced the custom of writing Circular Letters from associations to the churches. And to define our faith is as needful for us to-day, as it was for them.

One of the subjects about which the Scriptures say much, is that of fellowship; that fellowship which is in Christ, and of God. We feel to call your attention to a few thoughts concerning this great matter now. The word is easily

defined. Its prime signification is that of equality. Therefore the prophet was inspired to declare these words, concerning the God of heaven, and the Redeemer of men, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." This man, Christ Jesus, is here called the fellow of God, or the equal. To this agrees the words of the apostle, who says concerning him, "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." And if this could be said of the relation between the Son and the Father, in the great work of the redemption of the people of God, it surely must be true that believers are the equal of each other. All are redeemed in the same way, from equal sin and guilt, and are heirs to an equal inheritance. There can be no true fellowship between those who are not equals. Those who have true fellowship with each other are all brethren. But how wonderful it is that the apostle should declare that our fellowship is not only with each other, but also with the Father, and with the Lord Jesus Christ. He came into oneness with his people as a man, and they are now sons of God, through his sonship, and so have this glorious fellowship with God. While fellowship, in a certain and limited sense, belongs to men in their human relations to each other; in its supreme sense, it is found only in that relationship which exists in the kingdom of God. The contrast between that which is of the earth, even at its best, and that which is of heaven, is infinite. The one is but for time, the other is for eternity. The one is with men who die, the other is with God who hath immortality and eternal life. The one is based upon selfish motives, the other is based upon that love which is pure and unselfish. The one is natural, the other is spiritual. The one is full of anxiety and carefulness, the other is free, and full of joy. The one would demand much from those who are embraced in our regard, the other bestows all, and asks no reward, save the joy of bestowal. The origin of the one is the earthly nature, which is fallen and sold under sin, the other is of God in Christ, and is full of all holiness and good fruits.

This fellowship is not a form, but a reality. The reality must of course make itself manifest by some form of speech or some habit of life, but still it is deeper than any form. It exists not so much in the outward appearance as in the life within, it is an emotion of the heart. It, however, when felt in the heart, will fill all the life with its force and meaning. It is of God, but it shows itself in the mortal body. By word and by deed it will be known, but yet there may be deeds and words which are but vain, and hollow mockery. Therefore we say that this fellowship is not so much outward form, as it is a real feeling in the heart. We do not thus seek to limit it to the feeling of the heart, but to contend that it must be in the heart first, and then flow out to all who are embraced in it, in a thousand streams of blessing. That religion which is of the world says and feels nothing of this fellowship. It is selfish, and is based upon selfish principles. When it boasts of its great interest in the salvation of souls, and of its efforts in that direction, its object in it all is to wear a crown with many stars, in the other world. Self-exaltation is the root and fruit of it all. There can be no knowledge of fellowship for others in all

this. In this religion, self is the sun of the universe, and all the universe must revolve around it. Believers are on the other hand given a principle of pure love to God, and to the blessed Savior, and to all who bear the image of the Redeemer, and while they, too, have a selfish nature, yet they hate it, and contend against it, and possess another nature which loves God and all that are his. In this is true fellowship, such as the world cannot conceive of, such as they who possess it, once did not know of. This fellowship has its existence among the people of God, out of a oneness of experience. They possess one life, and live in the same kingdom, and eat and grow upon the same things, and have the same hope, and rejoice in the same salvation. They all confess themselves sinners, and all feel to be justly condemned, and all unite in ascribing all praise, and honor, and glory, to God. That this fellowship is based upon a oneness of experience is shown by John, when he said to his brethren, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; * * * declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." This all is but another way of saying that this fellowship is based upon a common experience. For what is experience in this life, but the tasting, seeing and handling of the things of this life? So the apostle would say to his brethren, that he had known the things of the Spirit, just as clearly, and by as intimate an acquaintance, as we know natural things; the one experience was as real as the other. And so he would write the things which he knew, that they who knew the same things might have fellowship with him.

This fellowship does not arise out of a belief in a mere theory of doctrine. It is not based upon a mere sentiment. We have all known those who believed election, and predestination, and effectual calling, and in the perfect atonement of Christ, as a sentiment or theory, toward whom our hearts would not go out in fellowship, because we could not find the sweet savor of experience, and its consequent love and life in it. There will be a belief in and an understanding of doctrine when the young believer is weaned from the breast. But before this there is that which begets this true fellowship in the heart. But this fellowship does seek expression, and our God has directed the manner of its expression. The manner of its expression is found in the doctrine and order of the house of God. The mind and will and affection of a child exists before there can be any teaching of the child in expressing that mind, will and affection. But these things being in the heart, the child needs proper teaching, in order that what is in the heart may be properly expressed. Certain forms of words and action among men are agreed upon as a proper expression of certain emotions. The child is taught in these forms of expression that it may also make itself understood among men. So the Lord has given his children a proper mode of expressing the fellowship which is in their hearts, which has been begotten there by his own Spirit. And this appointed way is, as said before, in the doctrine and order of the house of God. In baptism, in the supper, in prayer, in preaching of the word, in all confession of him as the Savior, is found in this expression which God has appointed that his name may be honored, and

that they may have fellowship one with another. This lesson may be but partly learned, while yet the sum and substance of the whole truth is in the heart. We speak at best with a stammering tongue, and with faltering speech, and we live with footsteps equally halting and weak.

This fellowship is not brought about by any act of the human will. Those who know it by experience, have not deliberated concerning the matter, and said as a result, it is best that I have fellowship with believers, and therefore I will have fellowship with them. This fellowship can be felt only where God has wrought in the heart the same things, and made it to well up in streams of love, as a living fountain wells up by the very law of its being, from the heart of the earth. We cannot will ourselves into fellowship with another, and when it is once felt, we cannot will it away. It is also true as a matter of experience, that where it is not felt no one desires it, and where it is felt no one can desire to put it away. If then any man desires this fellowship to dwell in his heart as a thing that to him seems most precious, it is sure that he already feels it. How can any one desire that which he knows nothing about? And if he knows anything about this fellowship, it is by its indwelling in his own heart.

How shall this fellowship be maintained among believers? Rather how shall this fellowship be realized, instead of maintained? It, in common with all the graces of the Spirit, does not cease to dwell in the heart where it is once implanted, but sometimes it is hidden and obscured. The flesh gets in the way, and hinders the joy of it, as it does at times all our other joys. How shall we, who trust that we have this blessing, dwell continuously in the experience or enjoyment of it? We see brethren fall out many times. They are really one in the spirit, but at times they do not realize it, and refuse to believe it. Strife arises out of the lusts which dwell in our members, and sorrow is felt instead of the peace once known. How is this to be avoided? How are we to walk together as the members of one body? These are important things. And we shall confess them to be so, when we are made to deplore confusion, and strife, and every evil work. We know that when ill will, envy, enmity and strife for the mastery dwell in the heart, the joy of this fellowship is sore broken. It cannot then be said, in our hearts, how good and pleasant is our dwelling together in unity. How shall we thus dwell together in the blessings of this fellowship? We know of but one way of securing these happy results: the peace and joy of this fellowship can be maintained only as we are found walking in all the order and ordinances of the house of God; there must be a confession of the truth with the mouth, one to another; there must be an abiding in the truth, as it has been revealed to us. How can two walk together except they be agreed? This does not mean that all shall understand all the doctrine of the Bible equally; some are weak, while some are strong, but there must be no opposition to the truth, though there may be a great failure to understand it. To this fellowship they who are weak in the faith must be received, as well as those who are strong in the faith, but not to doubtful disputations. There must also be an orderly life before men. No cheat, no liar, no drunkard, no gambler, no one who loves pleasure more than he loves God, no one who forsakes the assembling of himself together with his brethren, no profane person, no slanderer, no back-

biter, no one who loves and believes a lie, can ever enter into this fellowship, nor be retained in it, should he once have gained it. Such an one may have his name on the church book, but this does not matter. Even though it be so, he does not experience this fellowship of which we speak; he cannot experience it. It also helps maintain the joy of this fellowship, and calls it into lively exercise, when brethren meet often together, to speak of the glory of God, and of the peace of his children. Who of the brethren do not know that at these very assemblies, which are called associations, our faith, hope and love, have been strengthened, and that we have parted with a deeper assurance of this fellowship with God's children, than we had before? It is then good indeed to meet often together. A manifestation of love to God, and to his people also, is one of the things which helps much to maintain this fellowship unbroken among brethren. Loving not in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth, is that which builds us up in this grace, more than all things else. We do hold, even now, in our minds and hearts, those brethren and sisters who have departed from us, who, while they lived were loving toward their brethren, and toward all that is of God. It is not the most eloquent preacher, nor the deepest reasoner, nor the one who may understand deep mysteries, nor him who has taken a forward part in the things which pertain to the kingdom of our Lord, that we love most, but him rather who himself loved much, though he may not have had a tongue to speak, nor a mind to reason, and the gift of eloquence may have been denied him, and he may have done no great work, and may not have been careful and troubled about the things of the church, as much as some others. In his humbleness, meekness, quietness and steadfastness to the truth, we could see the marks of Christ, and our fellowship abounded toward him, and still abounds.

Brethren, we leave these things for your consideration; may God bless you in the reading of them.

F. A. CHICK, Moderator.
ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Ebenezer Church, of Baltimore city, Md., sendeth greeting to the churches and Associations with whom we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED:—We are blessed of our God to meet again to speak and hear of the good things of our heavenly Father, and we feel that his ministers have come laden with the rich dainties of his kingdom. They have all dwelt specially on those things which we feel in our every day life, which revives our hearts, and reassures us of his love to us poor, unworthy sinners, and makes us feel that it is not a vain thing to serve the Lord, but that it is good to be here, and sit under the droppings of his sanctuary. These meetings do very much encourage us, when we see the people who are scattered abroad, come together speaking the same things. May the Lord still bless us to meet in peace and love, your messengers, whose fellowship we highly esteem.

Our next session is appointed to be held at Black Rock., Md., in May, 1900, when and where we hope to again meet many of you.

Brethren, pray for us, and may the God of peace be with you. Amen.

WM. GRAFTON, Moderator.
MILTON DANCE, Clerk.

The churches composing the Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Welsh Tract, Newcastle Co., Del., May 24th, 25th and 26th, 1899, to our sister Associations and meetings with whom we correspond, sends christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—By the goodness and mercy of God we have once more been gathered together in Jesus' name, to celebrate his praise in the assembly of his saints, as we humbly believe, and to worship him as the true and living God. Your messengers have come to us richly laden with the gospel of Christ, declaring unto us the riches of his grace in the salvation of his elect. We desire a continuance of your correspondence, and ask you to receive ours in the same love and fellowship that we extended toward yours.

Our next association is appointed to be held with our sister church at Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa., to commence on Wednesday before the last Sunday in May, 1900, when and where we hope to meet your messengers again.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Moderator.
B. C. CUBBAGE, Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., May 31st, and June 1st and 2d, 1899, to the Associations and meetings with whom we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED:—Through the abounding goodness of our God we have again met in an associate capacity. The churches composing this association have been well represented, and we have the assurance that they are all walking in peace, steadfast in the truth as it is in Jesus. Ministering brethren who have been with us, have come, as it seems to us, in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, knowing nothing among us but Jesus Christ, and him crucified. We have received your Minutes and messengers gladly, and hope for a continuance of our correspondence.

Our next meeting is appointed to be held with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., commencing before the first Sunday in June, 1900, when we hope to again be favored with your ministers and messengers.

F. A. CHICK, Moderator.
ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

THE BOOKS OF EDITORIALS.

ON the last page of the cover of this number will be found an advertisement of the first and second volumes of the books of editorials. Our supply of these books is nearly exhausted, and when these are gone it will be impossible to procure the books, as we do not intend to print another edition.

To close out the stock on hand, we now offer the books at less than half the original price, as will be seen by advertisement on last page.

AN IMPARTIAL INVESTIGATION OF FREE WILL AND FREE MORAL AGENCY,

A pamphlet by Elder W. N. Tharp, of Liberty, Ind., a copy of which we have had the privilege of reading, is certainly a most able and conclusive refutation of the doctrine of Free Will and Free Moral Agency, which of late has been advocated by some of the periodicals claiming to be published in the interest of the Primitive Baptists. We advise our readers to send for it.

Single copy, one cent; twelve copies, ten cents. Send one or two cent stamps.

Address,

ELDER W. N. THARP.
LIBERTY, Ind.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1899.

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EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PHILIPPIANS I. 27.

"ONLY let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ."

How solemnly the apostles, guided by inspiration of God, admonished their brethren concerning the life they should lead as professed followers of the blessed Redeemer. All manner of admonitions are given them, and many motives are appealed to by which they might be stirred up to a remembrance of these important things. It is so clearly shown that the grace of God, when reigning in the heart, does not lead to carelessness in the outward life, but rather urges its possessor on to great carefulness in all that he says and does. Upon the foundation of salvation by grace the apostles build up the superstructure of faith, and all good works. Fully one-half of all the epistles is taken up with directions as to the manner of life which a believer ought to lead. Full directions are given as to how we ought to behave ourselves in the house of God. The obligations which rest upon us as members of the church and kingdom of Christ, as citizens of the various nationalities to which men may belong, as neighbors, as fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, husbands and wives, and children, are all set forth, so that we are not left in the dark concerning what is right and pleasing to God. It is right that these things should be set forth in our ministry, as they were set forth by inspired men. Concerning all these things the apostle Peter said, "I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance of these things." And he also said that he would endeavor that after his departure they should have these things in remembrance. These admonitions are all presented, not only as obligations resting upon believers, but as gracious privileges from God. They are not presented as conditions of life, but as the proper fruits of life. Believers are addressed not as dead men, who are bidden to arise and live, but as living men who must seek to work out the salvation wrought within them daily by the grace of God. Grace is not a thing which is once given to the believer, and then the fountains are sealed up, but to the contrary it is a thing which we need day by day, and which is given day by day. It is so at all times that the believer must say, "By the grace of God I am what I am;" and if obedient in anything, his experience is such that he will testify, It is no more I that labor, but the grace of God which is with me. Thus his song will be,

> "Grace all the work shall crown
> To everlasting days."

Thus the more obedient the believer is enabled to be, the more humbled he must become, because his obedience is but the result of this God-given grace. The carnal mind of men who are unregenerate, and the carnal mind of the true believer also, would say that the more obedient a man is to the word of God, the more credit belongs to him, and the more reward he is entitled to receive. The son who stays at home and is faithful in all

his outward conduct, is prone to think himself deserving of more credit than the wanderer, even though he may return with bitter weeping and sorrow of heart, but the Scriptures present the matter in an altogether different light. By grace the obedient one has been obedient, and realizing this, he must feel that he has no room to boast over the wanderer. But how about the wanderer? When the other confesses, By grace I am kept, and by grace alone, will he have any right to plead, I did not receive sufficient grace to keep me from wandering? God forbid. If this can be his argument he is not yet penitent, and has no heart to return to the ways of the Lord. No, he will when he is brought back confess, I have sinned. And he will never praise himself for coming back; his necessities have driven him.

The admonitions of the word of God are then intended to mark out the right way. As the believer desires to serve God, his inquiry will be, "What wilt thou have me to do?" In these admonitions he finds the answer to his earnest prayer for guidance. A traveler who desires to reach the desired haven will eagerly scan the guidepost which points the way hitherward. So pilgrims Zionward will be anxious to know what is the true way, and will therefore hail all that is given in the way of direction and counsel. They will welcome the voice which speaks behind them, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it. But hearing the voice behind them, and realizing their own weakness, they will cry to God, "Turn us again and we shall be turned." They will confess that it was only when the Lord said to their heart, seek ye my face, that their heart replied, Thy face, Lord, will I seek. Now among the thousands of admonitions recorded for our learning, is the one given in the text quoted at the head of this editorial. If the solemn inquiry be in the heart, as it will be when grace reigns, What is required of me as one who has received hope in the Lord? the answer is given, "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ." We desire to consider for a moment this part of the word.

Let us consider the letter of the text in the first place. Only. Does he not mean among other things, by this word, that this is to be the one thing which we are to strive for? Does he not mean the same as when he says in another place, "This one thing I do?" This one thing; nothing else engages his attention and his efforts. So to these brethren at Philippi he says, "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel." He urges by this word only, the truth that nothing else is to claim their attention, nothing else matters, nothing else is worth seeking for; freed from the law of a carnal commandment, they are not to seek such a walk as will become that covenant; freed from the bondage of sin, they are not any longer to live in sin or after the flesh. There remains but one thing for us who hope in grace, and believe in the gospel, and that is to walk according to the gospel. By the gospel we have been called out from the bondage of the law, we have been called unto liberty. By the same gospel we have also been delivered from sin, and all uncleanness, and from all condemnation, and therefore we are not to make provision to walk according to the flesh, but according to the gospel. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?

The word "let" in the text, has the force of "to hold," "to hold down." Its signification literally here is then, to hold

the conversation in such a way that it shall be in harmony with the gospel. Here it means more than to permit, or to suffer it to be so; it implies a struggle. It implies the same thing as when Paul says, "I keep my body under." This last text has the force of "one who beats down a foe, and so subdues it." So Paul says he beats down his body and subdues it, lest it should lead him astray from the gospel which he had preached to others, and so he should be a castaway. So the word "let," in the text, has the same force of holding down as one would use constraint to keep a thing in its place. This we are to do by the grace of God which is with us. When it is in any degree made manifest that the body is kept under, all praise must be rendered to daily grace.

The word "conversation" here does not mean what we now generally mean by conversation; that is, it does not mean interchange of ideas by means of words, but it means here the whole life which we lead, including both words and actions, and all that goes to make up our manner of life. The original word is *politeuo*, which has reference to citizenship primarily. And the apostle would here present to his brethren the truth that they are citizens of Zion shut up unto the gospel of Christ, and the exhortation is to behave as citizens of such a country should behave. The word gospel here simply means "good news," or "good tidings," which is its primary and common meaning in the Scriptures. The force of the exhortation then is that they to whom he speaks have delivered unto them the good news of complete and final salvation from all sin, sorrow and death, and that by grace they have been translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of the Son of God, and that therefore they ought to live as such a glorious hope calls for. Translated out of the world, they are not any longer citizens of the world. Translated into the kingdom of God, they are now fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of faith. The life which becomes a worldling does not become a citizen of Zion. The Lord has translated his people into a higher life. They have to do with things which are most important of all. They are sharers of the divine nature. The life of the Lord is in them. The hope which has been given them far transcends all that the earth can afford. Instead of fleeting pleasures, everlasting joys are now set before them. As the beggar raised from the dunghill and placed among princes must not live any longer as a beggar, so the people of God raised from all that once constituted their life, must not live after the low and groveling things of earth, but ought to walk along the high plane of righteousness, and seek after all that is spiritual and heavenly. What would not be thought out of place in a beggar, would not become a prince. All the people of God are princes. They are made kings and priests unto God. They are not therefore to walk as other men walk, after the vanity of the natural mind, but in lowliness, and sobriety, and meekness, and fearfulness, and with all carefulness, all the days of their life. Some things are sure in the life of the believer. It is sure that he cannot live after the flesh, and live; it is sure that if he sows to the flesh he shall reap corruption; it is sure that the blessings of the gospel are scattered all along the narrow way. Abraham's servant, when he had found Rebecca, and saw that his journey was crowned with success, said, "I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." Is there not

much involved in being found in the way? Let it not be forgotten that it is in keeping the commandments that there is great reward. It is sure that the disobedient shall receive the rod of chastisement, and that all ungodliness of life shall be judged and condemned in the believer by him who sits upon the throne, and who says to his disciples that for every idle word God shall bring you into judgment.

Some other things are sure also. God has given to his people higher privileges than all that is worldly can afford. If a man finds that he loves mirth, and folly, and dancing, and card playing, and theatre going, more than he does the house of God, it would be well for him to question his profession. If we find our tongues more ready to engage in idle gossip, in talebearing, in backbiting, in slander, in faultfinding, in foolish talking and jesting, than in speaking of the things of God, we have reason to seriously question the profession which we have made. It is sure that such things as these do not become the gospel of Christ. Instead of worldly gain, the gospel sets before us heavenly riches, and this not only in the world to come, but riches bestowed here and now, and felt and realized now. Instead of mirth, dancing and card playing, and theatre going, the Lord has bestowed upon us joys and pleasures which are unspeakable and full of glory. He has given us solid joy in the hope of everlasting life. He has given us the house of God, which is of infinite worth, and unspeakably better than all places of worldly amusement. Instead of gossip, talebearing, slander, faultfinding, and foolish talking and jesting, he has given us themes which are full of all excellency, and which satisfy the believer's heart. These things are bestowed upon us, and the gospel reveals them. Let us walk according to them.

One of the things which Paul declared distinguishes natural men, and shows the depravity of their hearts, is this, that they love pleasure more than they love God. Pleasure becomes the world; that is, it is as the world is, it is the natural tendency of the world, but it does not become those who profess to love better things. The Spirit of God dwelling in the heart forbids looking to worldly pleasure. It sets before us higher joys. The believer, when led by the Spirit of God, will find that these things pall upon his taste, he cannot enjoy them. There will be a warfare in his soul, because he is yet in the flesh, though not of the flesh. He will hate his own tastes, which are fleshly, and seek to be delivered from them, as did Paul when he cried, "O, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Carnal professors, and religionists, may go on in folly and pleasure, and be satisfied that all is well, but the true born child of gospel grace cannot rest in these things; the spirit of truth in his heart will not let him rest there.

Many times the question has been asked us by some who have professed better things, What is the harm in dancing, theatre going, card playing, and in any or all of the amusements which so many follow after? We have felt to generally reply, If you cannot feel that there is wrong in them, no one can show it to you. Believers know that when they engage in these things they cannot and do not expect to have any enjoyment of the things of God. No child of God can turn from a scene of worldly amusement, and at once enter into conversation upon the things of God, or read the Scriptures with any comfort, or en-

gage in the solemn worship of God, with a suitable frame of mind. At least this has been our own experience, and we believe it is true of all who love the Lord at all. A worldly professor finds no difficulty in going from the one to the other, because his religion is worldly, like his amusements. He sees and feels no incongruity between them. Does the child of God expect to meet his Lord at such places of amusement? If not, then he ought not to be there himself.

How solemn and far reaching the words of the text, "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ." It enters into every path that we tread, into all the thoughts of the heart, and all the relations which we fill in the world, and into every word which we utter. But who is sufficient for these things? How deep the need of daily grace. As these things are felt, how much the believer will be put upon prayer to be kept by divine power, seeing that we cannot keep ourselves. May God fulfill this word, as well as all others which he has spoken in us, that we may be to the praise of the glory of his grace. Amen. C.

DO NOT SEND CHECKS OR BANK DRAFTS.

By a new agreement entered into by all the banks throughout the country, a charge will hereafter be made on exchange for checks or drafts. This will make a cost of from ten to twenty-five cents for us to pay on every check or draft received. So please send post-office money orders, or register your letter with the money in it, or if more convenient, express money orders may be sent, as there is no charge on them for collection.

G. BEEBE'S SON.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

LUKE XXI. 24; ROMANS XI. 25.

Although deeply conscious of our inability to give a full and satisfactory solution of the subject proposed, we will not withhold from our readers such views as we have. The passages proposed read thus, "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in."

The part of the subject more particularly to be considered is, "the fullness of the Gentiles," &c. We presume that the two passages relate to the same things. The first is in the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and was spoken in connection with solemn predictions of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jews. The other is spoken by Paul in connection with his admonition to the Gentile church, in which he uses the figure of the true olive tree, as representing Abraham and his seed, and the wild olive as representing the Gentiles. The natural branches, which represent the natural or fleshly children of Abraham, were broken off, and Gentiles of the wild olive are grafted into the true olive tree. In Luke xxi. 24, our Lord predicted this breaking off of the natural branches, and intimates also the purpose of God in regard to the gathering in of the Gentiles. And in the same connection, verse 32, told them that that generation should not pass away until these things should be fulfilled. That is, as we understand, some that were then

living of that generation should live to witness the truth of his prediction, the destruction of the temple, and of Jerusalem, and the scattering of the Jews, and also the Son of man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory; and in verse 31, When ye shall see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is at hand. All these signs, or many of them, had been developed when Paul wrote his epistle to the Romans. On the day of Pentecost, Christ appeared in a cloud, with power and great glory; and immediately thereafter the gospel was preached unto the Gentiles, and Paul was himself especially commissioned to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and the church at Rome was among those Gentiles who should be taken from the wild olive, and grafted into the true olive. Hence Paul was a faithful witness of the fulfillment of the Savior's words.

As the natural branches of the true olive, or natural descendants of Abraham according to the flesh, the carnal Jews had been hitherto recognized under the old covenant dispensation, and were partakers of all the privileges of the family tree, which distinguished them nationally and ceremonially from the Gentiles, until the middle wall of partition was thrown down, their temple-worship and daily sacrifices abolished, and they, as a nation, scattered to the four winds of heaven, and intermingled with the Gentile nations of the earth. Then were they broken off from the true olive, and the Gentile converts to the christian faith were brought in. From that time, "he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."—Rom. ii. 28, 29. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. iii. 29. From what we have presented, it will be seen that Abraham, whom God has made the father of the faithful, in the figure, is brought to view by Paul, as the good olive tree, and the natural, fleshly children of Abraham are the natural branches of that tree, which were broken off. This is according to Rom. ix. 6–8, "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel which are of Israel: neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Thus we see that the children of the flesh, as natural branches of Abraham, are broken off, and the children of the promise are grafted in from among the Gentiles. As in the allegory, Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond maid, and the other by a free woman. He that was of the bond woman was born after the flesh, perfectly according to nature. But he that was born of the free woman, was by the special promise of God, and every way contrary to nature. But the son which was born after the flesh and according to the common laws of nature, was cast out, or broken off, because he could not be heir with the child of promise. Now, says Paul, the children of the promise are counted for the seed; consequently, they which are the children of the flesh, are not the children of God. The same apostle says to the Gentile saints in the churches of Galatia, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." "So then brethren, we are not children of the bond woman, but of the free."—Gal. iv. 28, 31.

We will now pass to consider that part of our subject named in Luke, "Until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled;" and in Romans, "Until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in."

As the first of these expressions relates to times, and the other to seed, we will consider them separately, and in their order. We have shown that God had a people among the Gentiles which were to be brought in; which must come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and set down in the kingdom of God, with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the natural children cast out; so for every purpose of God there is an appointed time for its fulfillment. When Isaac, the promised seed and heir of Abraham, was to supersede Ishmael in Abraham's family, this is the word of promise: "At this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son."—Rom. ix. 9. That promise could not be fulfilled before its time. The impatience of Sarah and Abraham, no more than their efforts, could hasten the fulfillment of the promise. Neither could the time of the bringing in of the Gentiles be anticipated. The law and the prophets must continue until John; and the sceptre must remain with Judah, and the lawgiver between his feet, until Shiloh came. But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, &c. This gathering of the Gentiles must be preceded by the coming of Christ; for it was unto him the gathering of the people should be. He should gather them with his arm, and carry them in his bosom. He should say unto "the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory." When Christ sent out the seventy, the time for bringing in the Gentiles was at hand, but was not yet fully come; for the natural branches were not yet broken off; the middle wall of partition was not yet thrown down; the handwriting of ordinances were not yet blotted out; the enmity, even the law of commandments, which were against the Gentiles, was not yet nailed to his cross; therefore, the seventy were forbidden to go in the way of the Gentiles, but to go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And when the commission was given to the apostles to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, they were instructed to tarry in Jerusalem until they were indued with power from on high. But when the day of Pentecost was fully come, that power for which they had been commanded to wait, came down from heaven upon them like a mighty rushing wind; and immediately they were heard in all the languages common on earth, preaching the gospel to every creature; and they of the nations of the earth did testify that they heard, in their mother tongue in which they were born, the wonderful works of God. Here commenced the times of the Gentiles; and these times must continue until all the children of promise among the Gentiles shall be gathered into the kingdom of God. "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he had purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."—Eph.

i. 9–11. The times then of the Gentiles to be fulfilled, extends to the end of the world, and to the accomplishment of his purpose and grace in their complete ingathering into the kingdom of our Lord.

The fullness in the other text has reference to the people—the children of God which are ordained unto salvation among the Gentiles. The children of promise of all nations and kindreds on the earth. "For [said Peter] the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off; even as many as the Lord our God shall call." This fullness is past the power of human computation; a company which no man can number, redeemed out of every tribe and kindred under heaven, and sealed with the seal of God. The fullness of them cannot be diminished—they must all be brought in; and the text implies that they shall all be gathered, for if but one should be left out, the fullness would not be complete. It is the will of the Father, that of all that he has given to Christ he shall lose nothing. And it is the will of Christ, that all that the Father has given him shall be with him where he is, that they may behold his glory. No less than the fullness will satisfy the Father or the Son; the fullness of him that filleth all in all; the fullness of his body, over which he presides in all things, as their Head. The fullness of his body, of course, includes all the spiritual seed, both Jews and Gentiles. That portion of them which are called from the Gentiles, were referred to by our Lord when he said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: [the Jewish fold,] them also I must bring, * * * and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd."

The apostle shows that in this display of the sovereign goodness of God, boasting is altogether excluded. Of this he would not have the Gentile converts ignorant: that blindness, in part, has happened to Israel, till the fullness of the Gentiles be come in, lest we should be wise in our own conceits. The blindness of the Jews led them to reject the Messiah, and they could not enter into the gospel rest because of unbelief; for as none but those who are born of God can possess that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit and the gift of God, so neither can any enter into his rest without that faith. All unbelievers are in a state of blindness, and are cut off; for without faith it is impossible to please God. This blindness was manifested by the Jews when Paul addressed them in these words: "Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth."—Acts xiii. 40, 41, 46, 47. And again, "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Elias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known there-

fore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it."—Acts xxviii. 25–28. Thus we see that it was the purpose of God to withhold the light of the truth from the Jews, and execute on them the judgments long foretold, and in the meantime to send the gospel to the Gentiles. Therefore the Gentiles have not whereof to boast; but they have great cause to be humble. We do not stand by our wisdom, or on the ground of any creature excellency in which we excel the Jews. Only so far as we are subjects of God's distinguishing grace are we in possession of the faith of God's elect, and grafted in the true olive; and such of the Jews as continue not in unbelief shall also be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. And all his chosen and redeemed people, both Jews and Gentiles, shall be finally brought in; and so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

Some have entertained the sentiment that after the Gentiles have been called by grace, and brought into the kingdom of Christ, the Jews are to be restored to their nationality, rebuild Jerusalem, reestablish the temple service, &c.; but we shall not attempt in this article to discuss the subject. We will only say, that we are unable to find anything in the Scriptures to sustain that opinion. As the old covenant dispensation has passed away and is forever abolished, all the Jews who are brought in must be brought in in the same way, under the same covenant, and with the same circumcision as the Gentiles. The gospel, and not the law, is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; unto the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., November 1, 1856.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, March 29th, 1899, at the home of the bride's parents, in Pocomoke City, Md., Mr. John H. Truitt and Miss Iona C. Hancock, both of the same County.

MEMORIAL.

"*Whereas*, it has pleased God to remove from his field of labor in the sheepfold of the saints, our highly esteemed and dearly beloved brother, Elder Balas Bundy, therefore

Resolved, that while we mourn our great loss in being no longer blessed with his services in the ministry, we desire to be enabled to acknowledge the goodness of our God in the bestowal of such wondrous grace upon our departed brother, whereby he was so eminently fitted to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ, to the comfort of the Lord's dear people.

Resolved, that we deeply sympathize with the churches of his immediate charge, praying that the Lord will keep them in his especial care, and in his own appointed time give them an earthly shepherd whose love for them shall equal that of the devoted servant whose loss they mourn.

Resolved, that these resolutions be spread upon the Minutes of this meeting, and a copy transmitted to our beloved sister Bundy."

A. W. RITTENHOUSE, Church Clerk.

WE, as an association, desire here to record an expression of our sorrow at the decease of our dear brother, Elder Balas Bundy, of Otego, N. Y., whose mortal remains were committed to the grave from his home on Wednesday, the first day of this session of this association. For about nineteen years he had been the faithful and beloved pastor of the church at Kingwood, in this association. We remember, with deep gratitude to God, how greatly the grace of God was magnified in him during all the years in which we knew him as a believer, and as a faithful minister of the gospel of our Lord. He was by disposition kind and gentle toward all men. He was of good report of them who are without, as becomes a servant of God. He loved the gospel of grace. He was a lover of good men. He was peculiarly an able minister of the New Testament. His memory will long be dear to those who knew and loved him. To the churches over which God had made him overseer, and to the bereaved family of our brother, we extend our heartfelt sympathy in this hour of trial. May they find rest in him, who in the days of his flesh, also knew what sore trials mean.

It is requested by the association that the above notice should also be published in the columns of the SIGNS.

F. A. CHICK, Moderator.

ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

A. L. Melton, son of Moses and Dorothy Melton, was born in Newton Co., Ga., in 1815, died in Social Circle, Ga., April 19th, 1899, aged 83 years and 4 months. He spent about all his life near where he was raised, and was an honorable gentleman, peaceable and quiet. He never united with the church, but was firm and established in the faith that eternal salvation was by grace, through the meritorious atonement of Christ. He contended for that faith, it was the grounds of his hope of a better resurrection. In youth he obtained a hope, and desired much to unite with the church, especially of late years, but felt unworthy. He never had any family of his own, but yet he always lived with some family. He spent perhaps forty years with one or another of the family of James Williams, and when he died was at the hospitable home of Miss Letitia Williams, where no pains was spared by her and other kind friends, to render him comfortable to the last.

Funeral services conducted by Elder M. F. Hurst, who used the text, "Salvation is of the Lord," after which his body was consigned to the grave, surrounded by kind friends, there to wait till the last trump shall sound, when they that have fallen asleep in Jesus shall rise first, and meet Jesus and the heavenly host, and so ever be with the Lord. Glory to God for such a plan, and for such a blessed hope.

JOHN THORNE.

Our dear mother, **Mrs. Susan Byrd,** the widow of Jacob K. Byrd, who preceded her to the grave seventeen years ago, died at her youngest daughter's, where she called her home since the death of her husband. She was born in Accomac Co., Va., Jan. 5th, 1819, and died Dec. 31st, 1898, aged 79 years, 11 months and 26 days. She died from a cancer in the face, which broke under the right eye. She suffered very much for about nine months, but bore her sufferings patiently. She would say sometimes, that death would be a relief to her. She united with the Old School Baptist Church at Messongoes, Accomac Co., Va., Dec. 29th, 1844, and lived a worthy member until the Lord took her to the church triumphant. It was her chief joy to go to meeting, and have the brethren and sisters visit her. Their house was always open for Old School Baptist friends. She leaves four children to mourn their loss, two sons and two daughters, and nine grandchildren, but as we mourn, we feel that our loss is her eternal gain, and we hope the church, together with us, may look back over her past life and take it as an example.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder T. M. Poulson, her pastor, from 1 Thessalonians iv. 18, after which her remains were laid to rest in the family burying-ground, to await the resurrection morn.

J. F. BYRD.

Levi S. Elmendorf was born in the town of Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., Nov. 15th, 1827, was married Sept. 26th, 1850, to Miss Catharine Bogart, by whom he became the father of three sons and one daughter, all living and settled in the city of Morrison, Ill. Brother Elmendorf united with the Barren Grove Church of Old School Baptists, in October, 1873, and lived the life of a devoted christian to the day of his death, which occurred on Monday, May 8th, 1899, which was, and is, a sad reminder to his beloved companion, sister Elmendorf, and his dear family, relatives and friends, of the uncertainties of life. He had been feeling quite unwell Saturday night, and a doctor was called, and soon relieved him, and he seemed by Monday to be in his usual health, and buoyant spirits, and at about 4 p. m. or a little later went to the barn to attend to some small matters. Not returning in what sister Elmendorf thought a reasonable length of time, search was made for him, and he was found under the barn, dead. A physician decided the cause of death to be neuralgia of the heart.

The funeral occurred at the family home, in Morrison, at 2 p. m., Wednesday, May 12th, and was largely attended by relatives, neighbors and friends. The writer was in attendance, and officiated on the occasion.

May the Lord sustain our bereft sister and her family, in this sad bereavement, is the prayer of the unworthy servant of Jesus my Lord,

SMITH KETCHUM.

Elmwood, Ill., May 26, 1899.

Brother **L. D. Scarborough** was born Dec. 24th, 1837, and died Jan 22d, 1899, being 61 years and 28 days old. He was a consistent Predestinarian Baptist, sound in the faith of God's elect, and unyielding in his positions, and yet kind and generous toward those who differed with him. He received a hope, I think in 1866, and was baptized into the fellowship of Antioch church, Jasper Co., Texas, in 1874, by brother W. M. Perkins, in which connection he lived until 1883, at which time trouble arose on the question of discipline and order, and the church was divided. For several years he was not identified with any church, but lived a consistent life, contending earnestly for the faith. He was received into the fellowship of White Rock church, of The Primitive Baptist Association, several years ago, on confession of his faith. He, with the help of brethren and friends, built a commodious church building, in which a church was constituted, with but few members, but it has grown and prospered, and is in peace. His house was a home for his brethren, and many of them can testify of his generosity and kindness toward them. We greatly miss him. He was well posted in the Scriptures, and very interesting in conversation. He had accumulated a sufficiency of this world's goods to be above want. He was generous and kind to his

neighbors, a devoted husband and father. He leaves a wife, ten children, and many friends and brethren, to mourn his loss, but we mourn not as those who have no hope, believing that our loss is his eternal gain. As a business man he was highly appreciated for his honesty and integrity, as well as his business capacity; as evidence of the fact he worked for the following companies: Beaumont Lumber Co., ten years; Texas Lumber Co., fifteen years; Wm. Camren & Co., ten years, and East Texas Improvement Co., eight years, surveying and buying and selling lands for them. He was also school land classifier for a number of years, all of which is gratifying to his family and friends.

May we bow in humble submission to the mandates of our King.

J. S. MEADOWS.

LEES MILL, Texas, May 25, 1899.

DEPARTED this life, May 16th, 1899, my dear father, **Elder T. A. Thornbury,** in the 76th year of his age. Father was born May 18th, 1823, in Pike Co., Ky., and died at his home in Boyd Co., Ky. He had been in failing health for a number of years, with disease peculiar to old age, but he bore his affliction with christian fortitude, waiting till the summons came. On March 28th, 1851, he was married to America M. Hunter, who still survives him. To them were born eleven children, six of whom are still living; five preceded him to their eternal home. Father experienced a hope in Christ in 1854, and in December, 1855, he joined the Methodists, believing them to be right. He was a class leader in that denomination for awhile, but soon found out they did not believe in salvation by grace alone, which he said was all his hope. They could not agree, for he began to teach salvation by grace, which was contrary to their system. He soon discovered they were not his people. On the second Sunday in June, 1857, he joined the Middlefork church of Old School Baptists, and was baptized the first Saturday in July, 1857, by Elder Rufus Humphrey. In September, 1857, the church gave him license to preach, and in June, 1860, he was ordained by a presbytery composed of Elders Rufus Humphrey and Wm. Ferguson. He was a faithful minister as long as he was able to go to appointments. Father was a firm believer in the doctrine of predestination of all things, eternal, unconditional, personal election in Christ, special atonement, particular redemption, effectual calling, and the perseverance of all who were embraced in the covenant of redemption, and was an uncompromising defender of them, never shunning the enemy of grace to defend these truths. He greatly rejoiced in the principles of the London confession of faith, and indorsed all the proceedings of the Black Rock Convention, of 1832, when and where those humble and devoted servants of God so faithfully and fully defended the truth of Zion's God. He was a kind husband and father, and always led a very exemplary christian life, being a member of the Old School Baptist Church something over forty-one years. He served several churches as pastor during his ministry, often riding from twenty to forty miles to meet with those dear saints he loved so well. It was my privilege to visit him the first of January last. He talked a great deal about his hope of salvation, and told me that the nearer the end came, the stronger his faith was, and the more confirmed he was in the doctrine he had preached so long, and said to me, "My son, contend for it as long as you live, for it is the glorious truth of Zion's God, and will stand when error and falsehood must go down." He told those of his family who were present when he died, "Not to weep for him, for he was ready to go." He was in his right mind till the last spark of life fled. When he could not speak above a whisper, the last he was heard to say was, "I am ready." O, what a glorious comfort this should be to his aged and bereaved companion, and his children. May the God of all grace, the only Savior of sinners, comfort them with his Spirit in their afflictions.

He was brought to Elliott Co., Ky., and buried May 17th, near Union church, of which he was a member at the time of his death. But we sorrow not as others having no hope. May the Lord prepare us to meet our dear father in the realms of eternal bliss. And may his blessing rest upon the family as they have need; and may they all with Job say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

JOHN E. THORNBURY.

SANDY HOOK, Ky., May 31, 1899.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$264 55
Isaac Squires, New York	3 00
Total to date	$267 55

CHURCH NOTICES.

HAVING sold and vacated the property once owned by us on West Thirty-sixth St., New York, we are now meeting in the Hall of 226 West Fifty-eighth St., New York, where we cordially invite our brethren and friends to meet with us.

Our plans for rebuilding, or establishing a permanent home, are as yet immature, but due notice will be given in this column when change of address occurs.

EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH.

226 WEST FIFTY-EIGHTH ST., New York.

INQUIRIES AFTER TRUTH.

WHEN I wrote you last I made a request of brother Wm. L. Beebe to give his views on a portion of Scripture found in Genesis ix. 25-27. Tell us how this servant becomes to be a servant of servants unto his brethren, and then take up Shem and place him where he belongs, and how Japheth comes to dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant.

D. KENNARD.

MAXWELL, Cal., May 22, 1899.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, with the Waterford church, three miles east of Lewiston, Fulton Co., Ill., on Friday, Sept. 1st, 1899, at 10 o'clock a m.

Those coming over the C., B. & Q. R. R., from the north, will be met on Thursday evening before, and from the south on Thursday evening, and Friday morning, at 7 a. m. Those coming from north and west of Galesburg, will take Narrow Gage Railroad, at 7:40 a. m., and 1:50 p. m., on Thursday before.

A cordial invitation is extended to all, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

WE, the Old School Baptist Church of Christ, known as Mill Creek, while in conference on Saturday before the third Sunday in April, 1899, agreed to the following, viz: We agree to hold a meeting on Friday, Saturday and Sunday (embracing the fifth Sunday) in July, 1899, said meeting to be composed of sound Old School Baptist ministers and messengers from different churches and associations, for the purpose of investigating our faith, doctrine and practice, and to see that we as a church or body of Old School Baptists were justifiable in what we did in protesting and withdrawing from certain doctrines and practices which were brought in among us which we thought to be heresies. We ask all sound Old School Baptists to come and take part in said meeting. Those coming by railroad come to Bells, Crockett Co., Tenn., on the L. N. R. R., on Thursday, and stop with the postmaster, brother John H. Smith, he will take care of you.

Signed by order of the church.

S. L. LOMAX, Moderator, *pro tem.*

J. B. ERZELL, Clerk, *pro tem.*

A yearly meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the Clovesville Old School Baptist Church, of the Lexington Association, on the first Saturday and Sunday in July, (1st and 2d,) 1899.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus, to meet with us, especially brethren in the ministry.

Trains will be met at Fleischmanns station, on the Ulster & Delaware Railroad.

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1730. French Morocco, gilt edges, boards, round corners, side and back title, $1.80.
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1713. Algerian Morocco, red and gold edges, limp, round corners, leather lined, $3.50.
1791. French Morocco, red and gold edges, extended covers, round corners, leather lined to edge, $3.75.
1734. Extra Morocco, red and gold edges, flexible boards, round corners, leather lined, $4.00.
1714. Extra Morocco, red and gold edges, limp, round corners, leather lined, $4.50.
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2714. Extra Morocco, red and gold edges, limp, round corners, leather lined, $6.50.
2793. Algerian Morocco, red and gold edges, extended covers, round corners, leather lined, silk sewed, $7.50.

I HAVE some of the Mary Parker books yet on hand which I will send by mail for 55 cents each. I have about two hundred, and wish to save myself from much loss if I can. I also have some of my Meditations, which I will send for $1.00.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTAMPTON, Pa.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 67. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1899. NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, Feb. 7, 1899.

MY DEAR SISTER IN THE HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS:—I received your kind letters, and my spirit was refreshed and comforted in reading them. Our God has designed that the communion of his children shall be to their mutual benefit. By the excellency of the power and blessing of the Holy Spirit one may edify another, and the body of Christ is unto the edifying of itself in love. The apostle Paul writing to the saints at Rome says, "I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; that is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me."—Romans i. 11, 12. This mutual, like precious faith, (2 Peter i. 1,) God has given and wrought in us, and the fruit of this faith is that we have fellowship and spiritual companionship one with another in our pilgrimage. When I contemplate the glory and blessedness that this faith in us embraces, there is one thing that stands out very prominent to my view, and which I hope I shall never forget, that is, that it is God who maketh us to differ from the world that lieth in wickedness; that it is of his everlasting love, and sovereign, electing grace, that we are made to taste that the Lord is gracious. We see continually that there is nothing meritorious in us. We are a mass of imperfections, and we need just such treatment at the hands of the Lord as the apostle Paul received. "The grace of the Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."—1 Tim. i. 14. Exceeding, abundant grace! This is what I need, and hitherto, I must, I will tell it, God hath not forsaken me, but exceeding riches of grace, a never-failing stream, has flowed from the fountain, the throne of grace, and thus I continue to this day. I am a miracle of grace! My infirmities of soul are many, and left to myself they crush me down into a pit of horrors, and here I am buffeted, and held fast a prisoner. But the grace of God abounding toward me is my sufficiency, (2 Cor. ix. 8,) and the power of Christ resting upon me I can then glory in my infirmities, triumph over them, run through a troop of evil imaginations, unbelieving thoughts and hellish suggestions, lay them low, trample them under

my feet, and with eyes of faith, and my heart trusting alone in our dear Savior, I pursue my way again for a little while in the sweet hope that Jesus loved me, and gave himself for me.

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." Sinner, that name seems to embrace, and to be related to everything that constitutes the tribulation of God's elect; that is their portion while in the world. If sin had not entered into the world there had been no pain, no grief, no sickness, no death. "Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?"—Lam. iii. 39. But our Redeemer hath redeemed us from all evil unto God, and when that which we have the blissful foretaste of by faith shall be consummated, and its fullness we shall prove, then shall we know indeed that there is no more curse, no night, no more death, neither sorrow no crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away. Our hope extends beyond this mortal vale into that sacred and glorious eternity, where in holiness, conformed to the image of the Son of God, we shall be with our God and Redeemer who hath loved us, and we shall serve him forever and ever.

You have your own peculiar cares and perplexities, so, dear sister, in some measure all the dear family of God must have tribulation. It was only the other day I thought, Well, if it were not for this thing that is a trial to me, I should as far as outward things are concerned, be at ease. But I have seldom, since I was first exercised in heart toward God, been free from external as well as internal trouble. I judge it is best that it is so, and I know, as a chastening rod, the Lord can make us smart under a very small thing, and he makes his gracious power so manifest when we are passing through the deeps of great and sore troubles; he in his great love and pity quickens us again, and brings us up from the depths of the earth, and his sweet comforts abound unto us on every side. I know I need something all the time as a chastening to humble me, and keep me low, and to remind me of my dependence for all comfort and strength, upon that sustenance which only our heavenly Father's hand can bestow. Vexations and trials when sanctified by the Lord are profitable to our souls; but without his grace under the pressure of the troubles of our sinful life we become fretful, rebellious, devilish; at least I do. Sometimes when I feel this horrible state of mind taking me captive, I cry out, O Lord have mercy upon me, and deliver me; give me not up as a prey to my own vile nature. Ah, my beloved sister, we need more and more grace, or else we are utterly worthless, ungrateful, forgetful, and only as our kind God pours down upon us his blessings, exercising our hearts in supplications to the throne of grace, and shedding abroad his love and mercy in our souls, and causing us by his sweet constraining tuition to worship and trust in him, are we in truth found walking in peace and reconciliation with the Lord.

Oft my way is so perplexing,
Sin and Satan sorely vexing,
  Ah, Lord, have I lost thy esteem?
Speak, O Savior, to my heart,
One sweet smile of thine impart,
  Then I'll bear all and say, Amen.

When assailed with sore temptations,
And through seas of deep affliction
  My pathway doth lie, What then?
Grant me, Jesus, thine own presence,
Give to me sweet acquiescence,
  Even then shall my heart say, Amen.

You mentioned some verses that were sent you by mail. I have no remembrance of having sent any such, so there is some other one beside myself that has kind thoughts toward you, and as the reading of those verses were some comfort to your heart, I am satisfied that the first sender of them was the Lord, whose thoughts are precious toward you, and he says, "I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end."—Jer. xxix. 11. Our distrustful hearts sometimes surmise that he has evil thoughts concerning us, but he ever rests in his love, (Zeph. iii. 17,) and that dear love is like himself, immutable and eternal. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee."

You mention our state as a church. We are in a languid condition, in a low place. Perhaps we shall have to smart under some severe discipline before we see prosperity again. I could desire that the Lord's hand might rest upon us, that we might be humble and contrite because of our condition; as it is written, "The city shall be low, in a low place."—Isaiah xxxi. 19. Then should we soon taste again the blessedness of dwelling in a peaceable habitation, in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places.

At times I am much tried because of the apparent unfruitfulness of my ministry. If at any time my ministry has been profitable to any, it has been in such a way that it has been clearly manifest that the excellency of the power was of the Lord alone, and my grateful soul has readily yielded all the praise to his precious name. Indeed, instead of self-glorification, when any dear child of God has been comforted and edified by my ministry, and it has come to my knowledge, it has had an abasing effect upon me. I have been at times as one dazed, astonished. How can it be that God should employ one like me to speak a word that should be a blessing to any of his chosen ones? Yet amidst this humbled state of soul I have felt, O, this is what I desire, to have a ministry to the edification of the household of God, a faithful ministry. Often when I am so discouraged, (for I can tell you, dear sister, I do get disheartened,) there comes to me some assuring word, as there did a few days ago. "Be thou faithful unto death." I told our dear God that I would, if he would give me abundance of grace, without which he himself knew I should be faithless, and his word very blessedly speaks, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Christ's love to his people is an inexpressible comfort to them, and the love of the members of Christ's body one for another is a comfort also. (Phil. ii. 1, 2.) The apostle speaks of, "For love's sake I rather beseech thee."—Philemon vii. 9. When love rules our intercourse with each other, we shall not do one another any evil. While in my flesh I know there is all evil, yet in opposition to all this I trust I have felt, and still feel, that divine love in my soul to the Holy One of Israel, to the glorious gospel of Christ, and to his people.

I have you, dear sister, in remembrance in my heart in my prayers to the Lord. I know you need the continual gracious ministration of the Holy Spirit to instruct and support you, and to shew you the things of Christ, and there is no one needing to be upheld by divine sustenance more than one who is your brother in Christ Jesus,

FRED. W. KEENE.

OPELIKA, Ala., May 8, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Brother O. B. Hickerson, of Nashville, Tenn., desires my views, through the SIGNS, upon Romans viii. 28. Perhaps this passage has been as often a comfort to the true pilgrim as any passage in the writings of Paul. By experience we are made to feel the force and power of the truth contained therein, as well as to draw comfort from the same. There have been many constructions placed upon it, and it has been limited, as some are disposed to limit other portions of the word. I do not know that brother Hickerson is after what is theologically called an exegesis of the text, but he wants the views that I may have as to its significance or meaning. I have perhaps often preached the doctrine contained in it, in his hearing. Paul speaks of something that we know. I believe that the word we, embraces all the election of grace, of whom he so often writes, and with whom he was connected, and for whose sake he was willing and ready to suffer. He embraced the prophets, apostles, ministers and saints, and they surely must be taught this, or they would not know it. It is elsewhere stated, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." This corroborates the declaration that they know. For, says the apostle, "We know that all things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." We believe that a knowledge by revelation is the highest and surest and purest knowledge which a man can have, and such knowledge is a gift from God, which is brought about by the operation of the Spirit, and none can have it but those who are born of God. The fact that a man loves God, is an evidence that he is born of God, "For he that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love." The text declares that all things work together for good. The all things, as is agreed by scholars, and the ablest men, and perhaps the most devout, simply means "all things," without any exception whatever. Dr. Gill has been often referred to, and he is quoted often as authority, and he says it means all good things and all bad things. He says it means all the perfections of God, and all the imperfections of man and Satan. This is not the exact language, but the substance. Here is a part of his language: "Sin is the evil of evils. Original sin, or the fall of Adam, which contains all other sins in it, was attended with aggravating circumstances, and followed with dismal consequences, and yet has been overruled for good. Hereby a Savior became necessary, who was sent, who came, and wrought out a better righteousness than Adam lost." Here is enough to show where he stood, and this is what I believe the text really teaches. This is what I understand is meant by "all things." I do not claim, nor shall I argue that there was virtue in sin itself, for it is opposed to law and order, and therefore is said to be hated of God. It was not the cause of grace by any means, yet grace the more abounds because of it. The subject of sin, and its entrance into the world, and the creation of evil, has been a subject which I have not been able to fully understand. But I am bound to believe that it was in the deep and inscrutable purpose of God, or it never would have existed. But God's dealings, and his rulings in his people, have enabled them to see, and also to know, that God would never have permitted sin to exist, but for some deep and holy design known to himself, which seems to be one of the hidden things of

his counsel, and concerning it I have, like Paul, to say, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." We may see a machine operate, and yet we may not be acquainted with all the principles connected with its operation; and yet it moves, and we know it moves, and we see its products, and so we know that all is working together for the good result. We know that light and darkness are opposite, yet we do not understand either the one or the other fully. Yet we know that they exist. We further know that they are both needful for the development of certain things. Were it all sunshine, plants would die, and so we see that darkness is needful as well as the light. Were it all darkness plants would die also. We read of "balancings," and such, in the great economy of wisdom, is the purpose of God in all things. If we wish to know how these things are wrought, we read in Ephesians that, "He works all things after the counsel of his own will." To work all things God must be boundless in power, and infinite in wisdom. No God but the God of Israel is charged with it, nor capable of accomplishing it. He is God, and beside him there is none else. "The thoughts of his heart stand to all generations." "He is in one mind, and none can turn him." "Whatsoever his soul desireth that he doeth." Adversity as well as prosperity, death as well as life, are embraced in his working. Elder Gold once said, After all that has been said and written, sin had to be. Some have said that sin was a necessity. It is sure that it is here, and being here, we rejoice that grace has more abounded. And while we strive against and grieve over it, and worry about it, and suffer on account of it, we cannot get rid of it, but we hope to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, and then be free from sin. This is our hope, even the salvation of our souls, and it is of God, and we wait for it. Our God controls all things that are in heaven, and earth, and hell, and while many sit in judgment on the ways of the Almighty, his subjects are assured it shall be well with them. Jacob wept for Joseph, and also for Benjamin, but God ordained that he should go into Egypt, and he went. All these ills were working for good to Jacob, yet he could not see it at the time. But when he did see it he said, It is enough.

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

His purposes shall ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet shall be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain."

Those who love God, I have already mentioned as the special characters mentioned in the text. The called, of the text, are the same characters as those whom God has called according to his purpose. God is a God of purpose, and does nothing but by purpose. And as he has a purpose concerning his people, so he has a purpose in all things connected with his people. As a brother said to me once, "I believe that everything concerning the church, and the salvation of the church, was predestinated of God." I replied to him thus: Yes, and do you see how the church could be developed and manifested in the earth outside of the fall of Adam? Then he admitted that the fall of Adam was also purposed. It is then in this sense that I believe that

"all things work together for good to them that love God." Without sin, no death; without death, no life from the dead; without sin, no condemnation; without condemnation, no justification from sin; without the first Adam, no second Adam; without Eve, no temptation, and no bride, either for the first or second Adam. This is the sense in which I have understood this glorious declaration of Scripture. It is one of the breasts of consolation to me. We can say as we see the development or fulfillment of God's will, "Thy will, not mine, be done." The Lord lead us, and guide us, and help us to walk tremblingly before him, and to wait for his Son from heaven.

Yours in such a hope,

WM. LIVELY.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., June 16, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have written for the obituary department of the SIGNS, a notice of the departure of our dear brother, Elder Balas Bundy, with some account of his life copied from a local paper. I will now write a little of what I know personally of his life and experience.

My personal acquaintance with him began Friday, January 27th, 1871, when I first visited the church at Otego, by his invitation. He had seen me and heard me speak a little at the Lexington Association, at Roxbury, N. Y., in September, 1864, but I had not met him. He told me afterward that he asked the church to invite me, with the hope that I would become pastor, which they had been without for seven years, and that then the trouble about preaching, which had been upon his own mind for nine years, would leave him, and he would have some rest. It was his last resort. I found the church in a very warm state. The meetings showed great earnestness and deep interest, and the conversation was upon spiritual things, at the homes of the brethren, as well as in the meeting-house. All, or nearly all, took some part in the conference meetings. I could not but be touched by the speaking of brother Bundy, and by the attitude of the brethren towards him. He was very much broken down, and I could see a struggle on his part, pressed in his soul to speak of what he felt with power, and yet fearing lest he should say more than he had a right to, and lest he should give the idea to some that he was preaching. Also, I felt that the church were unconsciously looking to him as their undershepherd.

Two were baptized during that visit. At the close of the last meeting, on Sunday night, which was at his house, about midnight, as he and I sat alone, I said, "Brother Bundy, did you ever have any thought that you would have to preach?" He started, and looked at me with that indescribable expression which those who knew him will remember, when his whole soul was wrought upon with heavenly power, and replied, "Preach! That is an awful word." Then he told me something of his nine years' struggle against that impression, and how it had persistently followed him during all those years, both at home and on his journeys. His only comfort was when he was with the church, and he loved to talk to them of this great salvation, but he knew he could not preach, and that it was wrong for such a poor creature as he to allow such thoughts to enter his mind. Once he took a journey west, hoping to run away from such thoughts; but they followed him, and the church kept with him night and day, and finally he was forced to return. A dear old brother

who knew what was in his mind went with him on this journey, well knowing that he would not be allowed to stay away from Otego.

But brother Bundy still insisted that he could not, and must not think of such a thing as preaching. Sister French, who was as a mother in the church, had told me that they felt that he must preach, and after hearing him speak of his exercises I felt assured of it. I accepted the unanimous call of the church to become the pastor, and for two years and six months I visited them each month, with few exceptions, during which time thirty-five were baptized in the fellowship of that church. I felt that brother Bundy was doing pastoral work there all of this time. They had frequent meetings for conference and singing, and spiritual interest and life were most wonderfully manifest.

I will here give a portion of the second letter I received from him before my first visit.

DECEMBER 2, 1870.

"WE were permitted to enjoy a heavenly place in Christ during our meeting. Elders Gass, Beebe and St. John were present, and seemed to be filled with the heavenly treasure, and were enabled with power from on high to declare unto Zion, 'Thy God reigneth,' to the comfort of the saints. We greatly wished for you to be there, although we had the evidence that a greater that Solomon was there. O that I may sink into the will of the Lord, and when his predestination is not as I would, may I be saved from asking, 'Are not Abana and Pharpa, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?' I am aware that it is only by the power of faith that we acquiesce in the divine plan, and this is alone the gift of God. Yes, he giveth, and he taketh away, and blessed be the name of the Lord. Dear brother, there is a little flock of the free woman's children here of about twenty, who have not bowed the knee to the image of the modern Baal, nor to any of the gods that the nations have set up. We think we have fellowship one with another, have peace within our borders, and are highly blessed of the God of Israel. We have had monthly preaching by Elder L. Gass until recently. Have just finished our house of worship in Otego village. Last Sunday we received a sister by baptism, and hope for better days in the future. Our church meetings are interesting and solemn, so as to cause us to say, 'How dreadful is this place!' I close, hoping ere long to see you face to face, and converse on this glorious theme."

After my first visit he wrote as follows:

FEBRUARY 8, 1871.

"WE feel sure that your coming among us was not in vain. I believe it was one of those seasons of refreshing which come from the presence of the Lord. I think sister Martha Bundy is one of the most happy, heavenly-minded, rejoicing christians that I ever saw. I much doubt if the eunuch was enabled to enjoy more perfect peace of mind. I saw Peter soon after your departure. He seems to be strongly inclined to obey his Lord. [He was baptized at the next meeting, after having had a hope thirty-nine years, and was at the funeral of brother Balas Bundy.] I know the Lord can make the wrath of man to praise him, and it may be so now. It is the lot of Old School Baptists to both labor and suffer reproach because they trust in the living God.

As to my own state of mind, I have to say that my way is hedged up, and I cannot, and dare not, go forward, lest I go wrong. Since you were here my mind

has been so pressed that I have tried again to tell Elder Staton some of my conflicts. But O, with all my trying I utterly fail to express the real, deep soul trouble that is mine to endure. When you spoke, in preaching, of the children of Israel coming to the Red Sea, and that they could go no farther until the rod of God in the hand of Moses was reached out over it, O, surely, thought I, that is just where I am. To go forward I cannot, and if this strange exercise of mind has been rightly interpreted by you and other good brethren, O tell me why I should not have better satisfaction of it myself. But the ways of the Lord are in the mighty deep; yes, they are past finding out. The forty-second Psalm expresses the state of my mind much of the time. I often find myself desiring wings like a dove; then would I fly away and be at rest. Sometimes I think I could give up my dearest earthly comforts, and part with all the world calls good and great; yes, I could be cast away on some far off island in the unknown sea, and suffer all the privations of such a life, if I could be allowed rest and deliverance from these harrassing conflicts of mine. But this train of thought is always hushed in the following language: 'In sacrifices and offerings God has no pleasure.' There seems continually a secret something within that whispers to me, 'Up and away, for this is not your rest.' But where shall I go, and what shall I do? If I take the wings of the morning, and fly to the uttermost parts of the earth, even there the eternal God doth dwell, and there he would seek and search me out. I must close my complaints, as I see I shall never tell them all. We are much pleased that there is a prospect of your coming again to see us. Hope it is the Lord's appointment."

We had three days of very pleasant meetings early in April, but while he enjoyed them he spoke but little, and declined to go forward in prayer. A few days after that, as he was working in the field, a soft and tender feeling came over him, and he was made to feel a willingness to do whatever the Lord required of him. The letter in which he expressed that feeling is lost sight of, but I hope yet to find it. Another very rich and interesting letter, written near the same time, I will send for publication, and expect to follow that with extracts from many letters written during the last twenty-seven years. On Saturday, July 15th, 1871, I accepted the call to take the pastoral care of the church, and at the same time spoke to the church of the evident gift in brother Bundy, and suggested that the church request him to exercise that gift the following Sunday, which they did. Brother Bundy, after communicating to me the call of the church, in a letter dated July 1st, 1871, said, "One more item of news and I will close. Our brethren also made choice to-day of one man that is a sinner to fill the place of deacon. I have read of a building fitly framed, but this seems like a very loose joint in the frame. If it is of man it will surely come to naught." It was in this self-depreciating way that he always spoke of himself to the last, for so he felt. There was never any light or trifling tone in his conversation or his letters.

Some time in that summer I learned that he was not satisfied with his baptism. I said to him one day, "Have you been satisfied with your baptism?" "No," he replied with his peculiar emphasis, "but I never intended to say anything about it. I have been trouble enough to the church." I learned that the church

from which the little company had separated some fourteen years before, had been an orderly church, having a sound confession of faith, and a sound gospel preacher, up to about 1850. That then, a year or two before brother Bundy united with it, the Articles of Faith had been changed, and they had called an unsound minister. After he come to understand the condition of the church he found he had no fellowship for her, and could not feel satisfied with the ordinance administered by an unsound minister, in the fellowship of a church which had clearly departed from the faith. In October, 4th and 5th, Elders Gilbert Beebe, Jaries Smith, and Moore, with other brethren, met with the church at Otego, and agreed with her in granting the privilege asked for by brother Bundy, and three others in the same condition, to be baptized in order, which was done on Thursday, Oct. 5th, 1871. It was a very precious and solemn meeting.

Upon my return home from that meeting I received a letter from which I quote.

OCTOBER 8.

"YOU may think it silly for me to write so soon after seeing you, but I did want to say to you, 'Tidings!' We did not feel like stopping our protracted meeting too soon, so to-day we met at the schoolhouse, and if ever we witnessed the sensible presence of the Lord, it was there. The brethren and sisters all seemed to have a double portion of the Spirit. It was surprising to hear them. Sisters Amanda and Polly Ann are made to soar very high in view of their present standing in the church compared with their former position. O, it works like leaven. Brother Edgar was present, and came out with a clear confession as to the course he has taken, and asked the brethren to forgive him, which you know we were glad to do. He thinks he will never let so trifling a matter keep him from the assembly of his brethren again. He told of many Scriptures that the Spirit of truth had conveyed to and applied to his mind. After meeting all met at brother French's, when E. and E. had an interview, and a final settlement. So 'in spite of foes the cause goes on.' We have great cause to bless the name of the Lord for his benefits to us as a church. I am heart sick of myself, and do feel as though it would be better for this church if I were not one of them. If they have not seen already, I am sure the time is not far off when they must see, that they are awfully mistaken in their decision in regard to my gift, for I never was more fearful of it than at the present time. The awfully solemn place to stand as a watchman in Zion is more than I feel can ever be filled by me. But I will say no more of this at present, as I do not wish to be tedious. I do hope the good Shepherd will be with you, and sustain you by his grace in all your labors, as he has heretofore, that your interview with the saints may be for your mutual good."

On Wednesday, May 7th and 8th, 1873, brother Bundy was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry. For two years he had been having regular appointments at Otego, and at various other places, wherever he found lovers of the truth, and had clearly manifested a most wonderful gift as a hunter and fisher of men, and as a bountiful feeder of sheep. But he still kept very backward about preaching whenever there was any one else he could persuade to go forward. In November, 1873, I resigned the care of that church, and he was at once called to be their pastor. He protested earnestly, but could not deny the correctness of either step.

And now the events of his life as a preacher, the few of them that I know, crowd upon my mind, enough to fill a volume. I would love to write of them. It is a comfort and consolation for me to write of him, who was so dear to me in the gospel, and to copy from his letters. But I must not write much more now. In the future, as I send portions of his letters for publication, I may refer to some things of special interest. The prosperity of the church continued and increased after he became pastor. In June, 1874, I was present when he baptized four, one of whom was his cousin, James Bundy, who had been baptized by the same one who had immersed brother Balas the first time. He told the church he had become convinced that to make the ordinance valid the candidate should be in fellowship with the administrator. "I," he said, "was not in fellowship with Mr.———, when he baptized me, and I ask for the ordinance of baptism in the fellowship of this church." It was a time and occasion of great interest to me and to the church. I was also present some time after, when Mrs. McGregor was baptized, a woman eighty years old, who made the number of members one hundred. She was a relative of Elder Thomas McColl, of Canada, and the one through whom he first learned of the Old Baptist Church in the United States.

Of the sweetness and richness of his gift to instruct and comfort the poor of the flock, of his clearness in doctrine, of his faithfulness in declaring and acting according to his understanding of the truth, of his great regard for the order of the church, of his deep and constant exercise of soul upon spiritual things, of his wonderful gift in prayer, of his many and deep conflicts within and without, I cannot speak, for I do not know where to begin or where to leave off. His life was in and with the church, and it was a life of faith.

He for some years could not be persuaded to go as a preacher to distant places, but visited only among the churches of the Chemung and Lexington associations. But after a long and very serious illness, his recovery from which the physicians regarded as a miracle, and during which he had great soul-conflicts, it was evident that he had been brought into greater liberty, and he became an occasional visitor to sister associations, and very welcome he was wherever he went among the living in Jerusalem. Speaking of that time of soul trouble on one occasion he said, "After that I was made willing to preach as with the ability that God gave me. Before that I wanted to preach as with the ability that God gave somebody else."

I was with him a great deal in the early years of his work in the service of churches, and for some time we served the same church, Utica, each visiting her once in two months. There was never a jar between us. For many years he and brother D. M. Vail have been much together, and have been true yokefellows. I know that brother Vail counts him to have been a great blessing and comfort to him, and I hope he will write concerning him as his mind may be led. It will be good for the saints to read.

I will close with some extracts from his last letters to me.

MAY 25, 1898.

"I WILL not enter into a minute detail of my long illness, but just say, I was taken in February with severe heart trouble, which has continued days and nights till now, so work I cannot. Have not been able to go abroad to any appointments. The first of March I spoke

here at Otego, which was my last public speaking. I have a good doctor, with the best of nursing by my wife, and other dear, good friends. Scarcely a day passes but I see the faces of some of God's dear ones. I do not feel as I would, but will say I am not left comfortless, but have now and then a taste of that great and pure river of the water of life. I cannot read, write, talk or hear talking, only a few minutes at a time. I am aware that my ailments are incurable, and that my stay here may be very brief; and while I say this, I will say that I am not terrified or horrified with tormenting doubts and fears, but have some evidence that 'born I am, and born of God.' If so, all is well. We all as one ask you to be with us on the first Saturday and Sunday in July. Brother Vail is to be here the second Sunday in June. If it was the will of God I should be much gratified to meet you at the Delaware Association, but as I cannot, please give my best wishes to them all. Also tell them, wretched and sinful as I am, that I have not forgotten to love and greatly esteem Old School Baptists."

AUGUST 9, 1898.

"MY old title is the same as it ever has been, 'less than nothing, and vanity.' I am in better health than when you were here, but whether it will prove to be anything lasting or not remains to be told. My appetite is good, and I sleep well, but O, so very weak. I went to hear brother Vail, who was with us Saturday and Sunday, and as it pleased the Lord to fill the earthen vessel, it was a rich feast to my soul, so I could well afford to bear the much weariness to the flesh that I felt. I feel a great anxiety as to the churches I have been serving. Foolish thing that I am, to thus worry, just as though the great God who rules all things would fail to see all their needs supplied without my help. I hope you can go to Kingwood soon, as they are very anxious to keep up their meetings. It was a blessed season with us all when you and sister Durand were with us the first Saturday and Sunday in July. I hope you can do so again."

NOVEMBER 25, 1898.

"MY hand is so unsteady I can only write a few minutes, and then rest. I am a poor, useless thing, and wonder that I am spared till now, for 'with me 'tis little else but night,' and I spend my years as a tale that is told. But I am not left altogether desolate. I try to read a little, and a few days ago as I was reading the second chapter of Hosea, I could call each promise mine. Please read it and preach about it.

Brother Vail comes here first Sundays, and will do so till my health is better. I am glad you and brother Vail can go everywhere preaching the word."

The last time I saw brother Bundy in life was at the two days meeting the last of September. He was present all of the time, and took the lead in singing, and greatly enjoyed the occasion. My last letter from him is dated,

DECEMBER 24, 1898.

VERY DEAR BROTHER:—For a long time I have thought I would write you, but can only write a few lines, and then stop on account of the weakness of my nerves. I am dragging around about as usual, except that I cough and raise wonderfully, so that I can sleep but little. I have come to believe that the Lord has no more use for me as a preacher. I feel quite sure this is my last illness. How soon the scene will close the Lord only can tell. I do not talk much about my afflictions to any one, for I know they cannot bear them for me, nor die in my

stead. But to think my going around among the churches as formerly is done with, I do feel very sad. And as I hear of yourself and others going as I once did, I think surely you are favored of the Lord, and I hope you may by grace appreciate the blessing more than I did.

I have from my first meeting with you felt an unbroken fellowship with you, and many times I have wondered you ever could take me in your heart, as one born of God. But I will ask this favor, that I may love you still during the remnant of my days. Brother Vail has arranged to meet with us the first Sunday, so we have service as usual. When I go it is very little I say. My wife and sister Emily Brown are in good health, with plenty to do. How are all your family? Does sister Durand intend going south? How is sister Bessie and the dear girls? Give them a Christmas kiss for me. All send love in the Lord. Send me a line when you can.

Yours in steadfast fellowship,

BALAS.

Here I close these reminiscences for the present.

So softly and quietly his breathing failed that it could hardly be known when he passed away. As he lay ready for burial how like one asleep he appeared. "Blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep."

SILAS H. DURAND.

MARSHALL, Minn., May 11, 1899.

JAMES M. TRUE—DEAR BROTHER:—It is with fear and trembling I make the attempt to write you, but the love I have for the truth's sake gives me courage to make the attempt. I well know that I cannot say the least thing that will interest you, but I have had a desire to write to you ever since you spoke of meeting us in Iowa, that I cannot get rid of. Why is it? One thing, I found you firm in Bible truth; you feared not man, but God. When you came into the house you took a back seat. I asked a lady who that was, and said, He looks like a minister. She said she did not know. Soon Mr. Patterson came in, and I asked him, and he said, "It is Elder True." Then I knew you could preach, for I had read your writings, and you did preach, and I felt with one of old, I could not say if I was in the body or out of the body, for I had left a land of famine; not of bread or of water, but of the preaching of the word of God, and I enjoyed the feast.

JUNE 5, 1899.

Dear brother, you will see by dates that it is a long time since I commenced this letter, but I feel very sad, and must speak to some one, and my heart seems to turn to you. The 28th of May a messenger from God came and called our dear little grandson, Charles H. Patterson, home. He would have been five years old the 21st of August, if he had lived, but he sleeps in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep. It is the first death that has been in the house where we lived since 1841. We lost a son, our first born, which left an aching void this world can never fill.

We have no preaching only the SIGNS, which is good, and we enjoy it very much. I think if we could hear such a sermon as was preached when our babe died, my heart would have been comforted. That was a gospel sermon, from a Baptist, and the text was, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" It was a powerful sermon. It come from the heart, and reached the heart, and made me feel to say, Keep still, and know that the Lord is God, and will do all things well. Dear

brother, I feel that if I am a child of God, I am the least of all, and as I grow old I get no better. Now I will ask a favor of you, Will you write your views on Isaiah xxxiii. 20, and send it by putting it in the SIGNS?

I will close my poor letter by asking you to remember us at the throne of grace when it is well with you. I have not written as I intended to.

From a poor sinner, saved by grace, if saved. Mr. Patterson joins me in sending love to you and yours.

PARTHENIA PATTERSON.

N. B.—I would not try to write, but I love a letter from others.

REPLY.

"LOOK upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken."—Isaiah xxxiii. 20.

Having had the privilege of meeting brother and sister Patterson, some years since, it seems that the sister still holds me in memory, and has now made a very reasonable request for some of the views entertained on the above language of the great prophet Isaiah. I can in truth say to our dear sister that I fully realize the fact that I "only see through a glass darkly," but "such as I have give unto thee."

This wonderful prophet has spoken, it seems to us, more clearly than most of the others, of coming events. Here it has seemed to my mind he is calling attention to what John saw coming down out of heaven, and styles it "The bride, the Lamb's wife." The first of this chapter is speaking of God's judgments against the enemies of his church, then turning to the believers asks the question, "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire?" He then proceeds to tell who shall: "He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly," &c. Coming on down a little further he says, "Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty: * * * Thou shalt not see a fierce people; a people of deeper speech than thou canst perceive."

It seems to us that our sister has clearly set forth in her letter that she is one that has seen "the King in his beauty," and that she can understand the speech of the ones that make up this city that the prophet says, "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken." This comports with what Daniel said about this kingdom, that the God of heaven should set up, and that should stand forever, and is the same kingdom of which Jesus spake when he said to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." After the new birth, or when one has been born again, they can understand the words of Isaiah, and can thenceforth "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities," and can rest in that city, and realize that "there the glorious Lord is unto us a place of broad rivers and streams." They can also say, "The Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King, he will save us." With the poet they can then sing,

"I love thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of thine abode;
The church our blest Redeemer saved
With his own precious blood."

David said, "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following."

Our sister has spoken of not hearing the truth proclaimed of late, yet she gives evidence of what Isaiah said in the the thirty-fifth chapter, "The wilderness, and the solitary place, shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose." She is enabled by her writing to "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees." She is thus seeing "Jerusalem a quiet habitation."

These are some of my notions of this city. It is here we enjoy what the prophet spoke of about this city, but the fullness of all awaits the redeemed of the Lord when life's turmoils are over, and you, my sister, shall see the King in his beauty.

Kindly submitted by

JAMES M. TRUE.

KANSAS, Ill., June 13, 1899.

WOODSTOCK, Mich., January 9, 1899.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS, AND TO THE SCATTERED OF THE FLOCK WHEREVER THEY MAY BE, BELOVED FOR THE TRUTH'S SAKE:—This afternoon I am reminded that one more year has passed into the great unknown since I last sent you my little list and remittance, together with a few lines to the kindred in a blessed hope. Dear brethren and sisters, I hope that God, who is great and terrible, will remember his dear ones in mercy, and shed abroad his love and boundless grace in our cold and lifeless hearts, and that I may for a short space of time forget the weakness of the flesh, and have a little talk with those who are dear in the kingdom and patience of the dear Savior, even Jesus, the sinner's friend. It seems to me a great thing for such an one as I, in my great weakness, to call such dear precious ones, brother or sister in Christ, and it is still greater to be called such by them. But, dear ones, we read in the will and testament of the dear Savior, that "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." It also says, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God." So, dear, tried, poor, weak and halting ones, if we love it is of God. And because of this I do hope for life and salvation beyond this sorrowing vale of tears, hoping that Jesus, the Son of God, did love poor unworthy me everlastingly, or ever the earth was, even before the foundation of the world. We read that he should be called by the name Jesus, because he should save his people from their sins. Dearly beloved, my only hope is in this, that Jesus did bear the sins of his people, his bride, in his own body on the tree. And when he gave me the evidence that this was done for me, and that my sins were pardoned, he at the same time, as I do hope, implanted the love of the called of my heavenly Father in my heart, and caused me to desire like Ruth, to live and to die with them; and it is the same at this present time. It is now more than forty-two years since I followed my dear Savior in the ordinance of baptism, in the month of November. O, what love did then possess my very being. Truly, "Jesus all the day long was my joy and my song," and love seemed to take the uppermost seat in my heart for a time, but alas, it was not for me to dwell in that wonderful light a great while. But in all my wanderings, trials, afflictions, sorrows and the evils of my wretched, wandering heart, he as I hope, has been my support. Dear ones, I pray that I may love such a dear and abiding friend as Jesus has been to me. As dear Elder True says, May he cause that the dear brethren shall not fall out by the way.

It is a rugged way, and sin is in the world, and we have to do with the world, therefore let us be forbearing, let us not make a brother an offender for a word, but love one another as he has loved us, and live in hope of a better home beyond this vale of tears, where we shall unite in one grand and unbroken strain, saying, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory forever." We shall there cast all our crowns at his feet, and be forever with the Lord. May this be my happy lot, and may I ever while I live contend earnestly for the faith, that he alone is the Savior, and that he alone gives the faith that saves in this sin-cursed world. May I ever look unto Jesus the great and eternal author of our faith.

"Keep me from a proud appearance
In whate'er I say or do,
Fill me with divine forbearance,
Then how happy I shall be."

I am less than the least of all,

M. P. LEWIS.

OXFORD, N. Y., May 14, 1899.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I feel that I am hardly worthy to call you by that name, but O, how good that name, brother or sister, sounds to me. It means so much. How hard it has been in years past for me to keep from saying brother or sister to some dear old Baptists when I would meet them. I had such a feeling of love for them in years before it was my privilege to unite with the church. None but those who have felt the same can understand it.

I have felt so many times that I would like to write to you again, but when I would sit down to do so, it seemed that I could not think of what I wanted to say. I do so much enjoy reading in the SIGNS your writings, as well as all the rest. The communications in the SIGNS contain all the preaching I have heard since I came from Hopewell, N. J., last September. There are times when I get very hungry, and it seems that I can hardly wait for a way to be opened for me to hear the gospel preached again, but the time will come when the Lord sees fit. Just as our heavenly Father has ordered it, so shall it be, and I must wait. How can any one say there is no God? But he has not yet shown them what vile, wicked sinners they are. No one could say there is no God, had they seen that, and felt the burden of sin. I would so much like to be with you all, this summer, but I do not expect to, but then I did not expect to go when I did last summer, and was baptized. I had hoped that when the time came, if it ever did, that I could unite with any church, it might be the church at Hopewell, where I first listened to the gospel, or that which I believed to be true preaching. I wish that I could write to you and express my feelings, but it seems when I get a letter finished, it is not at all as I wanted to write. I hope that you will pardon all mistakes. I write in my own feeble way. It seems that if I could see you, I should have so much to say to you. I think of so many of you who meet together on Sunday morning, and wonder why I am deprived of meeting with you so long. Then I think that I am too unworthy, too wicked and hardened a sinner to be among you, whom I esteem so highly. Then again, I feel that the Lord is good, and has bestowed so many good things upon me, and then I find myself singing, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

If you feel like writing to me some time, I would so much like to receive a letter. The one I received from you before, was such a comfort to me. I often read it again. I ought not to bur-

den you with my trials, as you have enough to do. I had hoped to have gotten to Otego ere this, to the meeting, but it is a long distance, and my health would not permit of my going this past winter, but I hope to get there this summer, if the Lord will. How much I turn to hymns numbers 691 and 692. Many times they are comforting to me. In this world we must have trials, temptations, doubts and fears, wants and losses, crosses, groans and tears, but these will, through the grace of God our friend, in everlasting triumphs end.

If I have written anything amiss please tell me. Please remember me to all the household of faith, they are with me in my thoughts, if not in person. This beautiful world has lost its charms for me long ago.

With love to all the brethren and sisters, I remain your unworthy sister,

MRS. E. S. BREWSTER.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1899, to the associations and meetings with which we are in correspondence.

According to the will and pleasure of God, it is our privilege to once more address you in annual greeting, with assurances of unabated love and fellowship. Our Association has been well attended. Not only has there been large representation by the churches composing the Association, but many of your ministers and messengers it has been our pleasure to meet again.

Peace and prosperity reigns in all our churches, to the praise of the glory of God's grace.

The preaching has been rich and profitable; your ministers proclaiming in certain sound the unsearchable riches of grace in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

We appreciate the coming of your messengers, and earnestly desire, and request, the continuance of your correspondence, both by letter and messengers.

The proceedings of this meeting are related in our Minutes, of which we send you copies.

Our next annual meeting is appointed with the church at Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1900, when we hope to again receive your messages of love and fellowship.

WM. L. BEEBE, Moderator.
JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

PRICE STILL FARTHER REDUCED.

ON last page of cover will be found the announcement of the closing out of the books of "Editorials" at less than cost. These books originally sold for $2.30 a volume, and thousands of copies have been sold at that price, but to close them out we now offer them at the following prices: First volume, $1.50; Second volume, $1.00; Both volumes ordered at the same time, $2.00. Each volume contains the same number of pages, and is bound in cloth, but as many have already purchased the first volume, we will supply them the second volume for $1.00.

Our supply is limited, and we advise those wishing to procure the books, to send in their order early, before they are gone.

HOW IS YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

WILL all who read this look at the date next to their name, on little pink slip, and if in arrears make us a remittance?

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1899, to the churches of which this meeting is composed, sends salutation with love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED FELLOW-PILGRIMS:—Since the privilege of meeting together, according to our annual appointment, has been once more afforded us, we would express our appreciation of the great favor, by complying with the custom established by our fathers, of addressing you in an epistle of love and fellowship.

No more important subject can engage our attention than the consideration of the commandments of the Lord, as left on record for the guidance of his followers in their pilgrimage through this wilderness. While the law of his divine kingdom is not like that of Sinai, graven on tables of stone, but written in the fleshly tables of the heart, so deceitful are the devices of the adversary, that the followers of Jesus continually need the guidance of inspired testimony, to save them from mistaking the suggestions of their own carnal wisdom for the direction of their infallible Teacher, the Spirit of truth. For their benefit God has given the record of his revealed word. The saints can never find any other safe rule for their faith and practice. They are perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works in the Scriptures, which are given by inspiration of God; they are never safe in following any other guide. The commandments of their King are the perfect law of liberty to them, because God works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. This law can be appropriated by no other people; nor can its precepts be obeyed by any others except such as are led by the love of holiness, which is wrought in the saints by the Spirit of truth. None can even desire to be guided by this divine rule unless they are led by the Spirit of God. All such are the sons of God. They are not of the world, even as their Lord and King is not of the world. Therefore, they have need of a law which is adapted to their peculiar character, and to the relation which they bear to their King and to each other. Such a law is given them; and it is not only recorded in the Scriptures of revealed truth, but it is indelibly written by the Spirit of God in the heart of every subject of electing love. They have no more delightful privilege than obedience to this divine law. This is the seal of the Spirit by which the children of this kingdom are identified. If any man have not this Spirit he is not one of the manifested children of God. If he hungers and thirsts after that perfect righteousness which is seen in Christ Jesus, then it is certain that he is led by the Spirit of God; and all such are already sons of God. But while they continue in this earthly state they can never attain strength to withstand the temptations with which their cunning adversary challenges the reality of the evidence which sustains their hope. No age and no amount of experience can develop such ability in those who must ever be "little children" until they are released from the body of this death. The grace of our Lord has provided for his little ones the record of inspiration, by which they are to try every suggestion of their own hearts; they are always safe in accepting anything which is in accordance with this test; and they are never at liberty to yield obedience to any other rule. However innocent may be the appearance of any departure from this guide, it is re-

bellion against their Lord when the saints forsake his law. Only in keeping his commandments can they manifest their love to him. Every departure from this law is a declaration that they will not have him to rule over them. When they keep his commandments they declare their love to him more emphatically than words can express it. This is not more manifest testimony to others than it is to themselves. No evidence can so effectually silence the accusations of the adversary as that perfect love which casts out fear, and which is the fulfilling of the law. This is the witness which abides in those who are sealed by the Spirit of truth as heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. It is therefore of the utmost importance to every one who hopes in the salvation of God to examine himself carefully for the assurance of this unmistakable evidence

It is common for the adversary to accuse those whom he would annoy, suggesting that it cannot be that the saints find anything in them to attract the holy love, which is the fruit of the Spirit in those who are born of God. They are ready to confess that this is true; and then they are easily persuaded that they have no right to hope in Christ. But the Spirit of truth delivers them from the power of their accuser, showing them that they are not manifested as children of God by the love which others may have for them, but by the love which flows out from their own hearts to those in whom they see the image of Christ. That divine fruit of the Spirit can never be produced by the carnal mind, which is enmity against God; neither can it spring from the natural heart, which is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Hence, the Lord says, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all (men) know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."—John xiii. 34, 35. This truth is of infinite importance to the saints. Nothing can be compared to it. The supplied word (men) does not belong in the text; neither do all men know the saints as the disciples of Jesus; but the evidence is precious to the tried subjects of divine grace, because they are often brought so low that they can claim no other satisfactory ground of hope. Then it is certain that wherever this holy principle is found, it must be the fruit of the Spirit, by which every heir of salvation is sealed. None can counterfeit this divine seal; neither is it possible that there is any mistake in the application of it to those who are chosen of God unto eternal glory by the grace which is revealed through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Every one of them is called with a holy calling, which is always effectual; and that calling is definite and exclusive as that word which brought the dead Lazarus from the grave. The only voice which can speak that life-giving word, is the same omnipotent voice of Jesus, which commanded the light to shine out of darkness, and by which the universe is still sustained. This is indeed a holy calling.

The effect of this truth upon those who hear it makes manifest their true character and condition before God. While those who are destitute of the Spirit of holiness, and who love not the truth, profess to find in it encouragement to continue in sin, to those who have received the love of the truth it is the highest and strongest motive for endeavoring to attain unto righteousness. Instead of their seeking encouragement for continuing in sin, they long to be free

from its hated power, under which they constantly groan as unwilling captives. They have had more than their fill of sin, and need not the terror of a fiery law to constrain them to flee from its dreadful dominion. To those who love righteousness, the service of sin is itself torment and death. They know by experience the terrible power of the sorrows of death and the pains of hell, which they have endured from the oppression of sin dwelling in their members. Every sinner who has this knowledge, must long for deliverance from the bondage of corruption; and this is inseparable from the hunger and thirst after righteousness, which identifies those whom our Lord has pronounced already blessed. This is the mark which seals those who are called with a holy calling, and "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." Until that power shall fail not one of them can be destroyed. To them Jesus says, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

These chosen subjects of electing love are not immediately translated into the perfect glory of that inheritance which is reserved in heaven for them. As joint-heirs with Christ it is given them to know the fellowship of his sufferings in this present world. So he assures them, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." This is the earnest of their inheritance with him in that glory which he had with the Father before the world was. If they suffer with him they shall certainly also reign with him. Not only must they reign with him in eternal glory, but in every conflict during their sojourn in this world of sin and sorrow they must receive the victory from their victorious Leader. This is the present help which they find in every trouble. Their salvation in eternal glory is secured in Christ Jesus without any aid from their own sufferings or works of righteousness. That salvation was complete when Jesus said, "It is finished; and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." Nothing can ever be added to that perfect work of the Redeemer. But it is given to the subjects of his grace to know by personal experience the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ through which he was made perfect as their Redeemer. In this experience they must feel the pain of the exceeding sinfulness of sin in themselves. This they could not feel while enjoying the light of the presence of their Lord. They must endure this dreadful agony while he hides his face from them. Yet the loving Jesus has provided comfort for the tried ones even in their darkness and desolation. He has prayed for them, and he never prayed in vain. In that wonderful prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, there is provision of strong consolation for them that are in any trouble. They have ample compensation for all their afflictions in this sweet assurance of the unfailing consolations of the gospel of peace. Their very sufferings are more precious than all the best joys the world can give. Even the pain of mourning the absence of the light of the countenance of their Lord must confirm their love to him. This can only originate in the eternal fountain of that great love with which he loved his people before the worlds were made. Hence the conclusion is unavoidable that this very mourning on account of the hiding of the face of the Redeemer gives the most perfect proof that the mourner is led by the Spirit of God, and is born of God. In this manner the afflicted and poor people of God are made to find comfort in their deepest trials. Their mourning is not

taken away to give place to joy, but their Lord has turned their mourning into joy. He comforts them, and makes them rejoice in the enduring of all their sorrow. Thus he gives the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, and comforts all that mourn.

The most serious question for each of us to consider is, Am I a mourner in the sense of the inspired testimony? Certainly none can claim this character unless they have found themselves poor and needy. Those who have all the righteousness they desire are not interested in the assurance of comfort to the destitute. They are not mourners. They have no occasion to mourn, since they are not conscious of the need of more righteousness than they have power to render. But those who have found all their own righteousnesses to be but filthy rags, who have labored in vain to clothe themselves with a righteousness which will endure the searching scrutiny of divine justice, must recognize in the description given by inspiration that their own name is written in unmistakable and definite terms. Each of them knows himself to be the chief of sinners in the sight of the law of God, and this consciousness makes him most bitterly to mourn in utter hopelessness. This is the character to whom the gospel of the grace of God brings salvation.

Since it is manifest that to such helpless sinners there can be no salvation but in the sovereign grace of God, it becomes those who hope in that grace to remember that they are not their own, but are bought with the unspeakable price of the precious blood of the Son of God. This is the principle upon which they are exhorted to walk in newness of life. The Spirit of Christ dwells in them, and they can never be satisfied in any other walk but that which is following Jesus. Their carnal mind often beguiles them into walking after the flesh, but they never fail to find in that path the thorns and thistles which are the fruit of the ground which was cursed for the sake of the man who had sinned. To them this is tribulation and sorrow, because they are sick of the working of that same principle of sin in their members. Only in denying the ungodliness which they find working in their members, can they have any hope of comfort. Hence, their peace results from constant wrestling against the evil of their own hearts; their joy is found in sorrow for sin; their victory in being completely overcome by the power of Christ reigning in them, and their only perfect rest in constant warfare against the combined powers of the world, and the flesh, and the devil. In this way only do they follow their Lord whithersoever he goes. It is not wonderful that carnal selfishness never can choose to follow Jesus in this cross bearing way. To the chosen disciples of our Lord it appears that there must be an easier way of following him. Yet when they have suffered according to the will of God, they are always made to acknowledge that the Lord has brought them by the right way.

Brethren, the time is short; the Lord is at hand; it is of little moment what may be our condition here in this transitory world. May we have grace that we may pass the time of our sojourning here in the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom, and to hate evil; denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, let us live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world. "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one an-

other with a pure heart fervently." "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

WM. L. BEEBE, Moderator.
JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

POETRY.

TEACH ME HOW TO LIVE.

TEACH me that difficult lesson, how to live,
To serve thee in the darkest paths of life;
Arm me for the conflict now, fresh vigor give,
And make me more than conqueror in the strife.

Teach me that I live thy purpose to fulfill,
Bright to thy glory let my taper shine.
Each day renew and remold this stubborn will,
And close around thee my heart's affections twine.

Teach me to live for self and sin no more,
But to redeem the time remaining to me yet,
And not my own pleasure seek as once before,
Wasting precious hours to my vain regret.

Teach me to live; no idler let me be,
But in thy service, my heart and hand employ,
Prepared to do thy bidding cheerfully,
Be this my highest and my holiest joy.

Teach me to live, my daily cross to bear;
Not murmuring, though I bend beneath the load;
Only be near me, let me feel thee near,
Thy smile sheds gladness on the darkest road.

Teach me to live and lose myself in thee,
Looking from earth and earthly things away;
Let me not falter, but untiringly
Press on, and find new strength each day.

Teach me to live with kindly words for all,
Wearing no cold repulsive brow of gloom;
Waiting with cheerful patience, till thy call
Summons my spirit to its heavenly home.

SODDY, Tenn., March 26, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER:—Recently I found the inclosed lines, when I was disposed to murmur, they came as a support to me. I do not know who wrote them, but I will send them to the SIGNS, hoping that others may find comfort in an experience of their desires put in rhyme, as I did, under trying circumstances. I leave these lines for you to make the disposition of that you deem best.

I remain, as I trust, your brother,
T. D. WALKER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1899.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 TIMOTHY IV. 12; TITUS II. 15.

"LET no man despise thy youth." "Let no man despise thee."

These words, together with the character and work of those who are called to the ministry of the word, have been much in our mind of late. Together with these reflections we have also had our attention called to the relation which in general exists between the church, and those whom she has called to fill any office of usefulness and trust, in her borders. These are certainly important things to consider, and in suggesting some thoughts for the readers of the SIGNS, concerning them, we do not feel at all qualified to thus speak, because we can do no more than to put the brethren in remembrance of the things which seem so important. Not very much has been said of late in our pages upon these important things, and so it may be well to now call attention to them. While we desire to speak especially of the ministry of the word, yet we desire also to present some things which are as applicable to deacons and all other offices in the house of God, as to the ministry.

First, it does not need any argument to prove that the first and the great qualification for any office in the church is, that

those who are called thereto shall be gracious men. They must be possessed of the Spirit, and show the work of the Spirit, to become members of the church at all. This they must possess in common with all who become members of the church. But while this is so, we are led to conclude from the narrative given in the Acts, when seven men were chosen to serve tables, or to look out for the temporal interests of the church, and from the description of bishops and deacons, given in the epistles of Timothy, and the epistle of Titus, that those who fill these offices must possess a special measure of devotedness to the cause, and must be in a special sense examples in all that pertains to the followers of the Lord. In a special sense they must be full of the Holy Ghost. Special interests are committed to them, and it is theirs to care for the well being of their brethren. To the Elders is committed the word of God for instruction and counsel, while to the deacons is committed the care of the temporal things, which must be attended to in all churches of the Lord. These things are all of great importance. They ought to be used wisely, to avoid scandal or reproach from any source.

While it is true of all who are members of the church, that they ought to be spiritually minded, having the welfare of the cause in general, and of their brethren in particular, at heart, and that they all "Must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word," which they have been taught, that thus gainsayers may be convinced, yet the apostle speaks of these things as being essential to those who are to be Elders and deacons in the churches. We know of no Bible rule which will allow of any departure from any or all these things by any one, but yet departure from them in those who occupy public positions in the church, will be fraught with more evil, and will bring greater reproach upon the cause of God and truth. The Elders are exhorted to be ensamples to the flock. It is a solemn truth, that to preach or teach the word of truth will have but little weight if there be not a corresponding soberness and gravity of life in him who preaches the word. It is a shame, when it can be said of any man, as it has been said of some, "When he is in the pulpit he ought never to come out of it, and when he is out of the pulpit he ought never to go in." A man cannot become a good minister of Jesus Christ unless his manner of life be such as will show that he has been with the Lord, and has learned his meekness and lowliness of life in such a way as to show the fruit of it in his own daily conversation. Those who are chosen to the offices of the church are men of like passions with others, and all have their weaknesses and faults, and none are, or can be perfect, any more than can the rest of the church, yet if the word of God dwell in them richly, there will be a solemnity in their hearts, and the greatness of the work will have an effect upon them to cause sobriety of life, and manner, and speech, so that others seeing the fruit of their faith in them, will be glad to listen to them, and to commit to them the things which need attention in the kingdom of God. If any are made to feel their littleness, and insufficiency, and lack of all good, it will be those who are set apart to any office in the church, by the Spirit of God. If such are to serve the church, the Lord will first give them

the spirit of a servant, and that is most surely not a spirit of boasting, or self exaltation. No man can truly serve his brethren if in any way he thinks himself better than they. It is only as one gets down at the feet of his brethren in spirit, that he can wash their feet. A spirit of lordship, or of ruling, will cut one off always from rendering any true service. The spirit of service is the one thing needful. If this spirit be in the heart, it will show itself in some way. To be an Elder or a deacon, in any true sense of the words, means the putting away of all pride and vain glory, and the possession of a meek, quiet and humble spirit. No wonder the apostle asks, "And who is sufficient for these things?" The Spirit of God alone can bestow these essential qualifications, and cause them to appear in the words and deeds of any one. The true servant of God will have an anxiety concerning what manner of spirit he is of, that will be equal, at least, to the anxiety which he will feel concerning the truth which he shall preach, or the performance of any duty which may devolve upon him. Emphatically, we cannot agree with the assertion of one who was once with us, but who has long since gone out from us, that we are to be concerned only with the truth that we preach, and that we need not be primarily anxious about the spirit in which it is preached. It seems equally as important that there be no dead flies in the ointment of the apothecary, as that the ointment be properly compounded, since the dead flies will spoil the ointment, be it never so carefully compounded. In the word not only are the servants of God commanded to serve, but the spirit of the service is made equally prominent. The service may be arduous and long, and yet he who has thus served may be last in the judgment of the spirit, because of his self-seeking, or pride, or desire for reward, or vain glory. The spirit of lordship, no matter how long or hard the service may have been, ruins it all, and makes the doer of small account in the kingdom, while some who have been in the vineyard but for a short time, and who have seemed to themselves to be of but little use, by their humility and lowliness of heart and mind, are counted first in the kingdom.

From these considerations it will be apparent that the apostle in thus addressing Timothy and Titus, "Let no man despise thy youth." "Let no man despise thee," does not mean it in any personal sense. That is, he does not mean anything contrary to the meekness and lowliness enjoined, as has been seen elsewhere. He is here, as it seems to us, not speaking of the personal esteem of men to these servants of God as men, but of the office to which God has called them, and which had been recognized by their brethren as belonging to them. There is a difference in the manner in which we should regard the aged and the young, considered as the members of the body, which is recognized elsewhere by the apostles. There is a difference in the treatment which we should show to those of different ages. While the young are to be rebuked as brethren, the aged are to be entreated as fathers. But here the apostle considers the office of a bishop or Elder, to which these young men had been called of God. The office is to be regarded for its own sake. The men who are called to it may possess weaknesses which all their brethren may be cognizant of, just as they are aware of the weaknesses of other brethren, but yet this does not detract from the obligation of the church to respect the dignity which God has placed upon the office itself.

It is in regard to the office of an Elder, and pastor, that the words are used, "Let no man despise thee," or thy youth. There were no doubt in the churches then, members who were aged, and who were deeply taught in the truth, and who were to be regarded with warm affection and reverence, as humble followers of the Lamb, yet these were not to be allowed to look down upon the office to which Timothy and Titus had been called. The word "despise" has the signification of "looking down upon." God had called these men to the ministry; he had conferred upon them the gifts needful to this work; they had made proof of their ministry. This had received the official approval and sanction of the apostles, and of the church itself. These men were not in the office because they had thrust themselves into it, and had urged themselves upon their brethren, as pastors or teachers. They were men like other men, and yet God had seen fit to commit the word of God to them, and to call them to be overseers of the flock. This must now be recognized by all. God had committed to them interests and responsibilities which no one must seek to belittle or despise, and which they themselves must not forsake or lay down. In their work as pastors, or teachers, or undershepherds, presenting the word of God, and calling attention to the order of the church, they must not yield one jot or tittle of the authority conferred upon them. They have no right to do so. To do so would be to sin against God; it would be to be traitor to their high calling, and to the kingdom of God. If any should say, O, these men are but young, and we who are older have the right to refuse to receive their teachings, and to rebel at their rule as overseers, and to not regard their presentation of the word of God, then Paul says plainly that they are not to yield at all upon any such ground.

This does not mean that they are to be heady and high minded, or to seek to be lords over the flock; they are but helpers, and comforters, and ensamples, but it does mean that the church is to give them due reverence as the ministers of God, whom God has sealed as such. If the servant of God thus called to the work realizes its great responsibility, it will make him sober, and thoughtful, and will put away lightness from his heart and life. He will study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. As he presents the doctrine and order of the house, as he uses the admonitions of the word, as he ministers the word of consolation to the afflicted and distressed, he speaks not as a young man, or an old man, but as the servant of God called to this work. He is the minister of God to such as need the word which he brings. As he contends for the faith, though it be in weakness, and with feebleness, in the eyes of men, yet he is strong in the Lord. He may be weak in many ways, but the word which is committed unto him is not weak.

The church should never call one to the work of the ministry in any direction whatever, unless she is prepared to honor the gift, and respect him who bears it, as one called of God, and set apart to serve in his house. She should stay up his hands, which often grow weak and hang down in discouragement. Each and every member of the church has a deep responsibility in this matter. Each and every member may hurt the cause to some extent by the neglect of their duty in this matter. All sympathy should be shown to him who labors among them in

word and doctrine. He should be made to feel that each and every member has the good of the cause at heart. If he be the right kind of a servant he will not regard this as a personal compliment to him, but rather be strengthened by being made to feel that the cause which is so dear to him, and which has been committed to him, is also dear to his brethren. He will feel that they are anxious as well as he to see the doctrine and order of the house maintained. What a help such a state of things is to any servant of God, who is given to the work. As he labors faithfully among them, often he will see but little if any fruit of his labors, and he will perhaps feel that he has not been faithful to the interests committed to him. This will be all the more the case should it be true that he sees indifference toward the word of truth, and carelessness in the walk of his brethren. He will be apt to blame himself with it all, and to have great searchings of heart as to whether he has himself been faithful. Much of this he will feel in any event, but when any walk not close to the church he will feel this all the more. It is needful then that pastor and church walk hand in hand. It is needful not only that he give himself to them as their servant, but that they give themselves to each other, and to him as well. It is his, if he be a faithful pastor, to visit the afflicted and the sick, because they will want him as the bearer of heavenly messages to be with them, and it is theirs to also be careful at all other times, to show him that they love the word which he brings.

We do not know of any relation quite so near and dear as that which exists between a faithful pastor, and a spiritual and faithful people. Brethren do not, and cannot know, how anxiously one who loves his people to whom he ministers, watches for evidence that his ministry is of benefit to them. Those seeking the way are upon his heart and mind, and he desires with great desire to see evidences that they are being led into light. If any are unruly, such a pastor will watch earnestly to obtain some signs that they are returning to the right way. He will yearn over them as a mother over her wandering child. Paul expresses all this and more when he says, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you," the hope of glory. No church can possibly know how deep and earnest are the desires of a pastor for them in every way. It is as Paul has expressed it, a kind of travailing in birth, that they may be delivered from all evil, and every false way. This experience the Lord has given him as a part of the qualification needful for him as a pastor. Let all the brethren then respect the office to which the Lord has called him. They are not respecting the man, but the office, and the Lord, who has appointed the office for their benefit. C.

AN IMPARTIAL INVESTIGATION

OF

FREE WILL AND FREE MORAL AGENCY,

A pamphlet by Elder W. N. Tharp, of Liberty, Ind., a copy of which we have had the privilege of reading, is certainly a most able and conclusive refutation of the doctrine of Free Will and Free Moral Agency, which of late has been advocated by some of the periodicals claiming to be published in the interest of the Primitive Baptists. We advise our readers to send for it.

Single copy, one cent; twelve copies, ten cents. Send one or two cent stamps.

Address,

ELDER W. N. THARP.

LIBERTY, Ind.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

GALATIANS VI. 16.

"AND as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."

Christians are not to be indolent or inactive. God has called them by his grace, quickened them by his Spirit, written his law in their hearts, and translated them from the power of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son; and all this is done for them, not only to secure their ultimate happiness in the world of glory to which they are destined, but also that they should shew forth the praises of him who has loved them and given himself for them. To this end God has blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. The apostolic benediction in our text is not pronounced on as many as stand still, but as many as walk according to a certain rule, to which we propose to call the attention of our readers presently.

The frequent admonitions addressed to the saints, in the New Testament, to be vigilant and active, plainly show that the saints of our God have a race set before them, which they are called upon to run, a warfare in which they are to fight, hardness which they are to endure as good soldiers, burdens to bear, and offices of love and kindness to perform in the house of God, all of which demand constant diligence and activity. It is certainly to be lamented that at this day many who seem to entertain a hope in Christ, who love God and who delight in the society of his people, relish the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, who mourn when Zion mourns, and rejoice in her prosperity, and yet seem to feel but little if any conviction of the importance of the Savior's command, to take up their cross and follow him. It is true they are ready, in theory, to admit that it is both the duty and privilege of all heaven-born children, to walk in all the ordinances of the house of God, blamelessly, and to follow the footsteps of their Lord and Master in all his ordinances, but still indulge the idea that it is proper for them to remain inactive, because they feel impressed with a sense of their unworthiness, and because they are sometimes oppressed with gloomy doubts and dismal fears, in relation to their hope. Should all of the redeemed family of our God, who are subject to the like doubts and fears in relation to their personal interest in the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, take the same position, there would be very few, if any, left to walk according to the rule of our apostle. Those timid, tried, tempted children of God, who are thus excusing themselves from taking an active part with the saints, because of their sense of unworthiness, would not hesitate a moment to recognize all others who relate to them the same exercises, as the children of God. Indeed nothing short of these very exercises would be by them received in evidence. Should any, for instance, relate to them the very experience which they are so anxious to obtain for themselves, they could not fellowship it. Suppose one should come forward and say, "I have no doubts, no fears, I have no sense of unworthiness, I feel perfectly satisfied that I am worthy, and that all is right on my part;" the poor, self-abased, trembling lamb of the flock of Christ would reject such an experience as delusive and vain. And yet many of

them will excuse themselves from bearing the yoke of their dear Lord, because they have not the same exercises. It is certainly the case that many if not all of God's children will recognize in others, evidences which they condemn in themselves, and ask for themselves such evidences as they would at once condemn in others.

But, to return to the consideration of our text, "As many as walk." Although many may seem to stand still, our text implies that there are some that walk, and on them the peace and mercy of God is pronounced. But it is not only necessary that God's living children should walk, but it is still more important that they should walk correctly, uprightly, or according to the apostolic rule. Many may have a zeal which is not according to godliness. And the saints are commanded to withdraw themselves or turn away from every brother that walks disorderly. Not because they do not walk at all, but because they do not walk orderly. The feet of the ungodly are swift to shed blood, and many walk in forbidden paths, in a way that seems right unto a man, but the end of which are the ways of death. Some, in walking as described in the Scriptures, walk as those who go to the correction of the stocks, or as the young man of whom we read in the seventh chapter of Proverbs, who walked after the strange woman, not knowing that her house is the way to hell, leading down to the chambers of death. Some walk in the light of their own eyes, and of the sparks which they have themselves kindled, but from the hand of the Lord they shall lie down in sorrow.

As the apostle speaks of a rule by which the saints are to walk, how important it is that we search diligently for that rule. Where shall we find it? Whatever may be said in favor or against the rules of morality or religion, which have been adopted by good men or bad men, we certainly have a right to consider all rules unsafe for us, which are not clearly laid down in the Scriptures of truth by divine authority. The Old School Baptists profess to take the New Testament as our only infallible rule of faith and practice in all matters relating to the kingdom of Christ. Of the correctness and infallibility of this rule there can be no doubt. "To the word and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, [which is our rule] it is because there is no light in them." "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." And as the Scriptures thoroughly furnish the man of God with a rule for every good work, no other rule can be required, as he has no other than good works to be engaged in, and it follows also that all works performed by any other rule, or not by the Scriptures, must be evil, as they cannot be good works. Many works of a religious pretention are reputed good by men of the present degenerate age, for which the Scriptures furnish neither rule nor authority. But the Scriptures reject all such as the works of darkness, the hidden things of dishonesty. How important it is that we work, as well as walk, according to the divine rule, since every man's work shall be tried so as by fire, and our God is a consuming fire. Nothing unauthorized by him will be accepted as obedience, or regarded as works of righteouness.

(Concluded next number.)

ORDINATION.

MINUTES

Of the council called by the Ebenezer Baptist church, of New York city, for the purpose of examining Deacon John McConnell, with a view to ordaining him to the full work of the gospel ministry.

The council convened Tuesday morning, 10 o'clock, June 6th, 1899, at the meeting place of the church, No. 226 West Fifty-eighth St., New York city.

Singing, hymn 855, (Beebe's Collection.)

Prayer by Elder Wm. Grafton, of Maryland.

Preaching by Elder E. Rittenhouse, of Delaware, from Acts xx. 28.

Elder Wm. L. Beebe was chosen Moderator, A. W. Rittenhouse, Clerk.

Churches and ministers invited to meet with the church in council responded as follows:

Middletown & Wallkill—Elder H. C. Ker, pastor, brother Alfred Horton.

New Vernon—Elder H. C. Ker, pastor.

Warwick—Elder Wm. L. Beebe, pastor.

Salem (Philadelphia)—Elder Jos. N. Badger, pastor, deacons B. F. Coulter and Franklin Terry.

Southampton—Elder S. H. Durand, pastor, deacons Geo. W. Lefferts and C. B. Reeves, brethren Wm. Hobensack and Casper G. Fetter.

Kingwood—Brother O. R. Kugler.

Hopewell—Elder F. A. Chick, pastor, deacons Elijah Leigh and J. Blackwell, brethren A. S. Cook and Eugene Drake.

Elder D. M. Vail, Waverly, Pa.

Elder A. B. Francis, Delmar, Del.

Elder E. Rittenhouse, State Road, Del.

The Moderator extended a cordial invitation to the following ministers and brethren to seats with the council, which was accepted:

Elder Wm. Grafton, of Maryland.

Elder T. M. Poulson, of Virginia.

Elder L. H. Hardy, of North Carolina.

Elder John Clark and brother D. M. Leonard, of Gilboa church.

Brother P. M. Sherwood, of Welsh Tract church.

The Minutes of the regular church meeting, held May 7th, 1899, calling for the assembly of this council, were called for and read.

Moved and seconded, that the council proceed to examine the candidate. (Before putting the question the Moderator invited all brethren present, members of sister churches of our faith and order, to act with the council.) Question put, and carried affirmatively, without a dissenting vote.

Brother McConnell then related his experience as a subject of grace, and his exercises respecting the work of the ministry.

The examination proving satisfactory, it was moved and seconded that the council proceed with the ordination. Carried unanimously.

After an intermission of one hour the council reassembled, and a hymn was sung. The candidate was then presented, and ordination was imposed by the laying on of hands by the ministers present, Elder H. C. Ker speaking in prayer.

A solemn and impressive charge was delivered by Elder S. H. Durand, and the Moderator on behalf of the churches gave the right hand of fellowship to brother McConnell.

Hymn 613, (Beebe's Collection,) was sung, after which Elder S. H. Durand made some appropriate remarks, and the meeting closed with benediction by brother McConnell.

WM. L. BEEBE, Moderator.

A. W. RITTENHOUSE, Clerk.

MEMORIAL.

(Warwick Association.)

WE, as an Association, desire to record upon our Minutes this expression of esteem for our departed brother, Elder Balas Bundy, of Otego, N. Y., and of our sorrow at our great loss. He has for many years been well known in all the churches of this Association, having often visited them all as churches, and also having attended several sessions of this Association. No one has ever been held in higher esteem by us as a loving, tender brother, and as a faithful minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ. He was a lover of good men, and a humble follower of his Master. His ministry was clear and experimental, and for the comfort and upbuilding of the churches in their most holy faith. The grace of God was magnified in him in his daily life, and in all his ministry. We sorrow that we shall see his face no more among us. To the churches of his care, and to his bereaved family, we desire to extend our deepest sympathy, praying that the God of peace and grace may be their help and strength in this hour of sorrow.

WM. L. BEEBE, Moderator.

JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

As it has been the will of God to remove from us the two deacons of our church, Hiram Horton, and Wm. Inman, and call them home to that eternal rest, it becomes us to bow in humble submission to his will, and may we acknowledge his right in all things.

Hiram Horton was appointed deacon Nov. 3d, 1845, and up to the time of his failing strength, which was due to his age, his desire was to always be present when the church met at her regular appointments, consequently he served them for nearly fifty-four years. And Wm. Inman, in the year of 1858, was also appointed deacon, and for forty years he served us as a faithful brother, and highly esteemed officer, desiring to perform that which the church seemed to require of him, with all patience and fidelity. And while it has been our privilege to meet with them so

many years, and enjoy their company and accept of their services, which we believe the Lord required of them, it becomes us now to be still and know that he is God. And may the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, richly abide in our hearts.

Done in behalf of the Middletown & Wallkill church, and of the Warwick Association, June 8th, 1899, at Middletown, N. Y.

WM. L. BEEBE, Moderator.

JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Balas Bundy departed this life at his home in Otego, N. Y., at 4:30 a. m., May 29th, 1899, aged 71 years.

It was his request that I should prepare an obituary notice, but that I should not eulogize him. It is a sad task for me to undertake, but a work I could not do without speaking of him personally in the highest terms as a man in all the relations of this life, and as a brother in the church and a minister of the gospel, whose life from the time he received a hope was a life of deep and earnest devotion to the cause of truth. He was widely known by the brethren generally in the east, and in some parts of the west, where he went two or three times. There was but one opinion and one voice among all lovers of the truth who knew him, concerning the gift that was in him, that it was most rich and precious and valuable, and that it was constantly stirred up and in exercise for the comfort of the Lord's poor and afflicted people. He seldom wrote for publication, and but little privately, but most precious fruit was constantly falling from his lips, not alone when in the pulpit, but wherever and whenever he spoke, and it was evident to spiritual hearers that it was that fruit "of the lips" which the Lord creates. (Isa. lvii. 19.) Very many will read with deep interest what may be said concerning his life and experience. I will inclose a notice which appeared in the local paper of his town, in connection with what I have here written, in the obituary columns of the SIGNS, and I will write some by way of reminiscence for the other department as soon as I can.

The funeral was on Wednesday, May 31st, at 2 p. m. It was our dear brother's request that brother D. M. Vail, who has been serving the Otego church during his illness, should conduct the exercises, and preach, and that brother Wm. L. Beebe and myself should also be sent for to take part. The congregation was large and solemn. Brother Vail read the tenth chapter of 2d Corinthians, and spoke very feelingly, and with marked discrimination, rightly dividing between the measure of the world, and the measure of the rule which God hath given, which was so manifest in brother Bundy, reaching to every poor, hungry soul in his preaching of the gospel of Christ. Brother Beebe and I also spoke some, and we all were present in the Bundy Cemetery, with our dear, bereaved sister, the daughter-in-law and granddaughter, the one remaining brother, and the dear little band of brethren and sisters with whom he had always lived, and who have loved him so well, while his body was laid in the grave. We felt that death had no sting for him, and the grave had won no victory, for Jesus destroyed them when he died and rose again.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., June 13, 1899.

"THE subject of this notice was born in this town April 15th, 1828, and was one of the family of nine children of Moses and Prudence Gager Bundy, and is survived by one only of the family, Jerome Bundy, of Bainbridge, N. Y.

Early in life he had many serious thoughts and impressions of divine and spiritual things, and showed by the choice of those he esteemed as christian men and women for companions that his tastes were for something better than the light, frivolous things of life, and realized that this life was only the door to another.

During the early part of 1852, Elder Bundy was made a clear believer in the mighty power of God, in the salvation of sinners, of whom he ever felt that he was one of the greatest, and it never ceased to be a matter of gratitude and rejoicing with him, that Christ did come into the world to save sinners. Soon after his time of joy in the full pardon of his sins, he felt a desire to publicly acknowledge his faith and belief by baptism, and with others he was received by the Baptist church of Otego, and baptized in May, 1852, and is survived by only one person, Miss P. A. French, who was a member of the church at that time. He was married in December, 1857, to Eliza A. St. John, and one son, the late Clifford Bundy, was born to them. Mr. Bundy followed farming for many years as his business.

In May, 1873, he was ordained to the gospel ministry, at the Old School Baptist Church in this place, (Otego, N. Y.,) and in November of that year was called to be the pastor of the church. He has faithfully performed his duties in the church and out. Many years ago the church at Locktown, N. J., called him to be their pastor, which office he held till his death. The last twenty-five years he has traveled and preached at many different churches. He was well known in Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and Ontario, Canada, having preached at many different times and places in these States: also he has taken two long tours through the western States, preaching at places of meetings, and at associations of Old School Baptist churches, always with hearty invitations to come again. His was no ordinary gift, and was recognized and appreciated greatly by those of his faith and order.

For more than twenty years Elder Bundy has had many sick times, and several severe and seemingly fatal illnesses, yet he never felt that his work was done, till in February, 1898, Bright's disease in acute form came, and before he knew the nature of his disease he said, 'I have never felt like this before; there is no future work for me, and I am sure my work is done, that I shall not stay here long.' During the sixteen months of his last illness he never was fretful or irritable, but bore the suffering and weariness with marked patience, and always showed and often spoke of where his trust rested, how safe and secure all things were in the hands of the great Jehovah, whom to know was life eternal."—*The Rural Times.*

Mrs. Mary E. Thompson was born Jan. 30th, 1833, and died May 17th, 1899, at the home of her son, brother W. A. Thompson, near Kerneysville, W. Va. She was complaining for several weeks, but not thought seriously ill but a few days. She was the widow of David Thompson, who died June 11th, 1880. Mrs. Thompson never united with the church by baptism, but for thirty-five years was as constant an attendant as any member of the Mill Creek church, and that is saying a good deal, for they all attend, unless providentially hindered, every meeting. Her deep sense of unworthiness, which she seemed never able to overcome, kept her from the church. Her love for the church, and her deep interest in its welfare, was always manifest. Her hospitality and delight in serving the Baptists always abounded. She was a Martha in serving, and a Mary in loving, yet never united with the church. It is hard to tell why she did not, for none seemed more worthy. We miss her in many ways. She leaves five children and many friends to mourn their loss, a loss indeed it is.

The writer tried to preach on the occasion.

ALSO,

Sister **Sarah Ann Turner** was born August 27th, 1833, and died May 26th, 1899. She was baptized by Elder Correll, in Pennsylvania, I think during the war, about the close of which she with her husband, Thomas Turner, moved to West Virginia. She united with the Mill Creek church, and was a consistent member until her death. Her husband died May 18th, 1894. Sister Turner was a woman of more than common natural ability, and of wonderful Bible knowledge. She was in instruction, a mother and teacher in Israel, of very retentive memory and profound understanding. She was very faithful in all church matters. In her I have lost a wise counselor, and the church a great strength. Her house has been my home for the last thirty years. The blow falls heavily on us all, and we sincerely mourn our loss. She leaves nine children, one died several years ago. They all have our sympathy and our prayers. Three of these are members of the Mill Creek church.

The writer tried to preach on the occasion of her death.

ALSO,

Brother **Tunis Titus** departed this life June 12th, 1899, at his home near Hughesville, Va., and not many miles from where he was born, Oct. 25th, 1816. Sept. 17th, 1840, he married Mary Ann Hunter, to whom were born eight children, six of whom survive him. He leaves a widow, his senior by two years. Brother Titus was a man of indomitable will and perseverance, of great force of character. Beginning life a poor man, he accumulated a sufficiency. He was baptized by the writer, about, I think, seven years ago, into the fellowship of the New Valley church. His sterling qualities were known and felt in the church, hospitable, kind, with an open hand always ready to do and serve. It can be said, I think, truly of him, "An Israelite indeed in whom is no guile." Prominently frank and sincerely generous, possessing the confidence of all men, having a good reputation of them that are are without, as well as those within. His widow, our dear sister, has not only our love and sympathy, but our desire to render any assistance in our power. We pray our dear Savior to enable us to be a comfort and blessing unto her during her few remaining days.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort on the occasion of his death.

E. V. WHITE.

LEESBURG, Va., June 26, 1899.

DIED—Nov. 8th, 1898, sister **Deborah Johnston,** aged 72 years, 11 months and 4 days. Deceased was a daughter of William Meeks and Sabrina Jaycox, of Peekskill, N. Y. Nov. 5th, 1845, she was married to J. D. Johnston, M. D., who departed this life in September, 1886. Surviving her are the following children: Jelina M., wife of Geo. E. Brahams; Annie R., wife of J. W. Conkling; James D. and Chas. A., all of the city of Middletown, N. Y., where our sister lived and died. She had for many years been a sufferer of heart trouble, which at last took her away very suddenly. She had been a member of the Old School Baptist church thirty-eight years.

The funeral was held at her late residence, where the writer tried to speak words of comfort to the troubled hearts.

May God bless and sustain them in their sore affliction, is the prayer of one who wishes them well.

H. C. KER.

DIED—In Brunswick, Maine, Dec. 4th, 1898, **Mrs. Hannah Curtis,** aged 86 years and 5 months.

May 28, 1899, **Mr. Isaac Curtis,** aged 85 years and 5 months.

My dear parents experienced religion in early life, and were established in the truth. Jesus was their hope of salvation, and in their walk and conversation they exalted that name. They have had a name and place in the church at Bowdoinham, Maine, for over

fifty years, and we mourn because we shall see their faces no more.

Elder F. W. Keene was present with us on both occasions, and spoke words of comfort to us. They were loving parents, and leave three sons and two daughters to mourn their loss. The same God they trusted in has been my support, and I have found him a present help in time of trouble.

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

Attie A. Curtis having changed her residence from Brunswick, Maine, to 271 Andover St., Lawrence, Mass., desires her correspondents to address her at the latter place.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$267 55
Ralph D. Christie, Illinois	5 00
Total to date	$272 55

MEETINGS.

WE, the Old School Baptist Church of Christ, known as Mill Creek, while in conference on Saturday before the third Sunday in April, 1899, agreed to the following, viz: We agree to hold a meeting on Friday, Saturday and Sunday (embracing the fifth Sunday) in July, 1899, said meeting to be composed of sound Old School Baptist ministers and messengers from different churches and associations, for the purpose of investigating our faith, doctrine and practice, and to see that we as a church or body of Old School Baptists were justifiable in what we did in protesting and withdrawing from certain doctrines and practices which were brought in among us which we thought to be heresies. We ask all sound Old School Baptists to come and take part in said meeting. Those coming by railroad come to Bells, Crockett Co., Tenn., on the L. N. R. R., on Thursday, and stop with the postmaster, brother John H. Smith, he will take care of you.

Signed by order of the church.

S. L. LOMAX, Moderator, *pro tem.*

J. B. ERZELL, Clerk, *pro tem.*

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 67. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1899. NO. 15.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CHAMPAIGN, Ill., Jan. 10, 1899.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I trust you will bear with me if I write you again, touching some of the great and glorious treasures of eternal truth contained in the subject of one of your editorials. I would not for a moment presume to correct, nor in the least criticise, alter or amend what you have written; but I have greatly enjoyed some meditation upon this subject, and have been deeply impressed to submit some of my reflections for your consideration and disposal. The subject referred to above is contained in the Acts, iv., 32., upon the subject of "All things common."

It must be remembered that all that was said and done by the Savior and apostles was for a pattern, and while this narrative is a record of a real transaction just as narrated, it cannot be accepted as applying to the church of Christ to-day, as you have fully explained, but in a figure is still to be observed by the church; that is, they are to have all things common in doctrine, practice and experience. Neither must say that aught of all that he possesses is his own; that is, all these things are merged into one central fund for the good of the whole body. Everything was laid at the apostles' feet. Everything is to be subject to their final decision. They are the princes referred to by Isaiah xxxii. 1. These judges are, I think, the twelve apostles of the Lamb. Now, my dear brethren, Are we all ready to lay everything at the apostles' feet, who are the infallible judges? Or do we hold some views that are our own personal belongings? I have heard brethren remark in preaching, "This is my own individual notion, I represent nobody but myself," &c. Is this the pattern? Is there any Scripture that is of any private interpretation? I think that one of the most fruitful sources of coldness and strife among the churches is hobby riding. Nobody ever derives any real satisfaction from this diversion but the rider. Most likely this may be, and often is, some favorite subject which if taken in its proper place and connection, is all well and good, but singled out and harped upon, becomes irksome. Then again it may be some one of the "isms" or schisms that are disturbing the peace of Zion, and causing divisions and discords, which are a source of shame and

confusion. And sometimes all of the discord comes about because of a failure to fully and properly understand one another. Often no doubt if brethren could get together and talk over their differences in a spirit of meekness and forbearance, many of the apparent differences would vanish.

Recently I was shown some articles written upon a controverted subject, and published in a Primitive Baptist paper, in which both contestants seemed to be actuated by a spirit of bitterness and acrimony which would be a disgrace to rivals for the mastery in a political controversy. If these two brethren will sacrifice their own personal possessions and belongings, and bring the price thereof, a broken heart and a contrite spirit, and lay it at the apostles' feet, they may escape the fate of Ananias and Sapphira. Surely this will be the fate of all who keep back a part of the price, and lie to the Holy Ghost. They must die to the love and fellowship of the churches, and must and should lose their influence.

Once, when visiting at what was to me a strange church, some of the brethren remarked, "So and so were at meeting to-day, and they seemed to indorse and enjoy the preaching." This was as much as to say that this was an unusual thing. So the question came up, Who are these people? Are they not Primitive Baptists? "Well, yes, but they belong to the other side." What do you mean by the other side? "Well, you see Elder 'Blank' got to preaching on the doctrine of the———, and kept it up until Elder 'Space' took the opposite side, and then they had it up and down, each one riding his hobby, and that was all that we heard for years, until the church was split wide open, so now there is no fellowship between us, but still I love them as brethren and sisters." Brethren, we often wonder why some great prevaricator, or defaulter, or swindler, is not struck down as was Ananias and Sapphira? But just so sure as God lives and reigns in Zion, so sure will separation or death come upon us if we do not come to the feet of the Savior and the apostles with every carnal prejudice, and preconceived opinion, and everything that exalteth itself against God. Just at this time there are sharp controversies between precious brethren over the question, "Is man a free moral agent?" It seems to me that there need be no controversy among Primitive Baptists about this question. If we will bring everything to the bar appointed for the settlement of all questions, none of us will lack anything, but distribution will be made to every one as they have need. Meanwhile I would suggest a few thoughts for use in settling this difficult matter. What man is it that we are considering, the living or the dead? If the quickened or living sinner, or man, is meant, of course he can come, will come, and does come; and the reason of his coming is because the Father draws him, and because "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." This was not because we chose him, but because we were chosen in him. But is all this trouble over the man that is dead? Then there should be no difficulty at all. He has no will to come, and he cannot come. He will not come while in his dead condition. We may assign a number of reasons why he will not come, but there is but one potent reason. A number of men had been summoned to court, either to serve as jurors or to answer to charges. One of them failed to respond. His neighbor

stood up to give the reasons for his failure to answer, and he did so by assigning a whole string of reasons about as follows: His children are sick, his wife is not well, he had no wood cut, the stock broke into his crops, and he had to dig his potatoes, and he is dead and——— Hold on, said the court, Why did you not tell us that he was dead in the first place? "Well," he said, "I did not just happen to speak of it." So with all these excuses and reasons for not coming to Christ. MEN ARE DEAD. No Primitive Baptist will contend for a moment that the dead sinner is in possession of any agency, free moral or otherwise, except as specified by Paul in Ephesians ii. 2, 3; iv 22; Colossians i. 21; iii. 7. Now if these two points are settled we should not quarrel and make our brother an offender for a word.

We are taught by our blessed Master to pray on this wise, Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Now, if we forgive our erring brother as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us, we shall have but few divisions among us. Again, there is another thought connected with this idea of having all things common. When a brother has received a message from the Lord, it is not given for his own benefit alone, and therefore it should be added to the common fund. But vain speculations, together with the doctrines of men and devils, have no place here, and neither should those who would bring them have any place in the church. I am quite sure also if any have received the power of pardoning grace in their heart, this, too, is given not to be hidden under a bushel, but to be put on a candlestick, that all that are in the house, the church, may see it. So this also may be added to the store. In fact, everything pertaining to the cause should be brought into the great storehouse. See Malachi iii. 10; 2 Chronicles xxxi. 10. Our manner of life, too, should comport with our profession; that is, we should work out our salvation which God works in us. I have concluded that the life of a christian is a life of crucifixion. If he is not crucifying the lusts of the flesh which war against the soul, his sins are crucifying the Lord afresh, and putting him to an open shame. Which is the better, For the Lord to suffer unjustly, or we justly? I once heard a professed christian say, The Lord has given us our sinful desires, and he expects us to gratify them. If so, why all the solemn admonitions to keep the body in subjection? To use not our liberty as an occasion to the flesh? To watch that we enter not into temptation, and many other warnings of like nature?

May the Lord preserve us, and present us blameless before his throne.

Your unworthy brother in tribulation,

SMITH KETCHUM.

[SOME of the things to which brother Ketchum has called attention we think are all important to be heeded by us all. We are in full agreement with him that the dead in sin will not come to Christ, and that the living cannot do the good that they would. In any event free will has no place in the universe, except in Deity. Men do what they will, but this does not argue that the will is free. It does not in fact touch the question of free will at all. It is sure that the will or choice is always controlled by the strongest motive, and if controlled at all, it is not free. He who can justify his sinful actions by saying that the Lord has given us our sinful desires, does not know what true sorrow for sin means. Brother Ketchum has done well in call-

ing attention to the solemn admonitions of the word against these things. How solemn is the word of the Lord when applied to the heart and conscience by the Spirit's power, that while God means good to come out of our very wickedness, yet this does not destroy the additional fact that we meant it for evil, and so we must confess the sentence of condemnation a just one.—ED.]

"THEY WERE STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS ON THE EARTH."

BELOVED BRETHREN:—These expressive words are said of the people of God, to whom he gave the blessing of faith, as written in Heb. xi, 13 "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." The promises to which their faith pointed, embraced the Messiah, "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," the gospel of salvation and the gift of eternal life. In faith and hope they waited for these better things to come. In these things was their life and their inheritance; therefore they were not at home nor satisfied with their present environments, but were pilgrims. It is much this way now with the inheritors of the faith of God's elect, for as the called and chosen and faithful of God then waited for the Beloved to come into his vineyard and garden and gather his pleasant fruits, and say to them, "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved;" so we now to whom Jesus has come in the grace of the gospel, who yet walk by faith and are saved by hope, confess with them that we are not at home in the body, but are strangers and pilgrims on the earth, waiting for the glorious coming of our Lord to bring us home. The fact that I have been a sojourner among my Master's brethren in Indiana, Illinois, Tennessee and Kentucky, the present spring and summer, through weariness and sickness of the body, has led my mind to these reflections. Added to this is the repeated requests to write of my travels for the SIGNS, which I now do.

My first visit this spring was at the yearly meeting of the Bethlehem church, with Elder Tharp, the beloved pastor, not far from Oxford, Ohio, but in Indiana, which was a pleasant meeting. Next, I went to Nashville, Tenn., at the request of the University Street church, where the pastor, Elder J. K. Womack, was with me. There was much comfort in this meeting, as made manifest by those present. Brother Womack "speaks the word of the Lord faithfully." By request of the pastor of the College Street church, in Nashville, Elder J. B. Stephens, and other members, I held service there several times, and he warmly approved the gospel as the Lord enabled me to preach it.

In the country south of Nashville, it was my privilege to visit and speak for four other churches: Beasleys, Providence, Big Harpeth and Wilson's Creek, and then again at Big Harpeth, where I met and heard with comfort Elder Phillips; and at all the gospel of Christ was heartily received and rejoiced in.

By request of our dear brother, Elder P. W. Sawin, pastor of the Bethel church, Shelby Co., Ky., I was with him and dear brother D. G. Johnson at the very pleasant yearly meeting there, the first Sunday in June and two preceding days. The following Saturday and Sunday, after visiting my only daughter, in Olney, Ill., and her family, including my grand-

son and great-grandson, it was my privilege to speak for the Hickory Creek church, of Illinois, where I was ordained to the work of the gospel ministry Jan. 2d, 1857, and to visit my brother Joseph. On my return home on Tuesday after, a letter awaited me from Elder Sawin, asking me to return to Kentucky, and be with him the last of that week, at the Beech Creek yearly meeting in Shelby County. So I again bade farewell to my wife, and was with him and brother Ritter and the church on Saturday and Sunday, and the presence of the Lord and comfort of the Spirit was with us, and we rejoiced in Christ Jesus. The kindness and liberality of the dear kindred in Christ at this little flock, both to their pastor and myself, was fruit that abounded to their account, and it filled our hearts with thanksgiving and with the comfort of love.

Until the next Saturday I rested in the pleasant homes of sister and Mr. George Wright, and brethren Heddin and Herndon, and on the last Saturday and Sunday in June the Lord permitted me to be with Little Flock, and in great weakness I tried to minister to this church each day, for the intense heat had seriously affected me, my appetite had failed, and I was suffering from vital prostration. This church deeply feels its loss in the departure of dear brother B. Farmer, and our patient and submissive sister Farmer has the tender sympathy of all in her deep bereavement and loneliness. This church is without a pastor, but it has two worthy gifts, the young brethren Bond and Johnson, who are characterized by commendable humility and meekness.

On Monday afternoon I arrived home, finding my wife well, but greatly prostrated myself, so that I can be up but little, and can write but little at a time. My departure may be at hand. The will of the Lord in this is mine. Jesus, the risen Christ, is the resurrection and the life, my only salvation. "He will swallow up death in victory." His victory is ours.

The churches that I visited abide in the truth that "salvation is of the Lord," and by the grace of God alone, that bringeth salvation and leads to obedience. Therefore, they do not want to encourage the disturbing and confusing legal teaching of "conditionalism," so contradictory to the grace that reigns through righteousness by our Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood alone cleanseth us from all sin, and of whose "fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." Not grace or blessing for works. They believe in gospel exhortation unto obedience, which is hindered only by the sinful weakness of the flesh, and that all true obedience and every good work are the fruit of the Spirit and the result of grace, which much more abounds than sin. They understand that all good works in the sight of God are wrought in faith, which is not our act or work, and does not depend upon ourselves, but it is the gift of God, and without faith it is impossible to please him. They have witnessed with sorrow the confusion, discord and divisions which have been made by the ambitious contention for a principle of doctrine different from and antagonistic to this "obedience of faith." I was impressed with the fact that, in every church where the membership and ministry read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, there is no controversy or speculation nor any "hobby" in doctrine, but unity, peace and love, and the simple, solemn preaching of the cross of Christ, and rejoicing in him.

To all the churches of the saints among

whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, and who so kindly received me as his servant and bade me Godspeed, I would express heartfelt thanks and fellowship in the truth of Christ, and to the bereaved and sorrowing, who asked to be remembered at the throne of grace, my assurance of brotherly sympathy and prayer for the comfort of the Spirit is given. The thought is with me that I may see you all no more in the flesh, but in the image of the heavenly Man, the firstborn from the dead among the many brethren, when we shall be like him and see him as he is, we shall then see one another and know even as also we are known. This likeness and knowledge is not after the flesh, for it is heavenly and spiritual, as the One altogether holy and lovely, in whose likeness we shall be satisfied and perfect.

"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

With love to all, an affectionate farewell.

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., June 30, 1899.

ROXBORO, N. C., June 21, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Sister Bishop, of Dover, Del., requested, and received a promise from me, to write an account of my early experience, and my reason for entering the ministry, and to-day I will undertake the task, and do the best I can. I would send this directly to sister Bishop, but others have requested me to send it to the SIGNS.

I was born on March 17th, 1853. My parents were Old Baptists, as were my grandparents. My grandfather, on my mother's side, was a minister before the division, from 1827 to 1833, but I have never felt that this gave me any title to an inheritance with the church, nor made me sound in the faith. My mother had five children. I was the middle one, and by far the worst of the five. I do not know when the Old Baptists did not in their talk and preaching tell some of my feelings, but I remember very well that baptism was the first thing that ever indelibly impressed my mind. I wore little short dresses, as did my older brother, when I saw my grandfather baptize a person in the same place where I was afterwards baptized. At the age of seven years I was made to feel that I was a sinner in the sight of God, and it came in this way: In a dream I saw Christ and his apostles, and that he had come to separate his people from the wicked world; and my oldest brother and I stood and cried to be taken with him. When I awoke I saw that I was a wretched sinner before God, and I cried at times for three days because I was such a sinner. When eleven years of age this feeling got to be heavier, and became a burden to me, and caused me often to beg the Lord for mercy. In all the times of my pleading to the Lord, I do not remember that I got on my knees but twice. It appeared to me that Jesus kneeled and fell down, and I was too great a sinner to do as he did. My distress was not because I feared hell, for until this moment, if I ever had a fear of hell, I have no recollection of it, neither before nor since my deliverance. My trouble then and now was and is because of my sins. At sixteen years of age the second burden came upon me. It came in this way: In a dream, I suppose, I saw two armies drawn up in battle array, one was dressed in jet black, and they were themselves as black as their

clothes, the other was all beautifully white, and clothed in beautiful bright gray uniforms. I had on a uniform just like theirs, only I had on a belt with a socket in front, in which I held a flag-staff, at the top of which was the flag of that army in beautiful gray. One came and said to me, They are all ready for action, but can do nothing until you get there. As soon as I awoke I felt that this was the work of the ministry, and it opened up to me in this way: A minister is not the commander, but as he hears the commands and gives them out, the church knows how to act just as an army knows how to move when the flag-bearer acts faithfully as he is commanded. I believe to-day that this is the relationship of a minister in the church. This greatly increased my troubles, and I knew not what to do. At seventeen years old I determined to shake off both of these burdens, and in order to do so I commenced dancing and playing cards, two things that I had always been taught were very wrong to do, and I still am of the same opinion. I followed these two amusements for three years, and while engaged in the very acts, I enjoyed them as much as any one well could, but as soon as my amusements were over the joy was gone, and fuel had only been thrown on the fire, which burned higher and hotter in my very soul, and caused me to weep tears of bitterness, and to cry for relief. On Friday night before the third Sunday in March, 1873, I attended the last amusement of that kind that I ever did, and I do not suppose that a more wretched sinner than I ever fought against the conviction of sin, nor that any ever did it with more determination to conquer. From that time my burdens were so great that I could not pray, and felt to be tied hand and foot, so far as being able to do anything of myself to bring relief to my poor heart, which felt at times as if it would burst.

On the morning of the ninth of June, 1873, I felt that if I would cry I would find relief, but I was as dry as a bone bleached in the sun, and could not shed a tear. This continued until about half past eleven, when I loosed my horse from the plow and started for dinner. I crossed a little bridge, and came under three cherry trees, when for some cause unknown to me, I wanted to sing, "Amazing grace," &c., and I began to sing. I cannot describe the music nor its sweetness. As I sang, it appeared to me that the whole air from the heavens down, and all around me, and all within me, was one perfect charm of music. As I sang I cried freely, until my whole face was washed with tears. When this was over I was at rest. But I had no thought about my sins, nor of being delivered from them, for eight days. On that morning, as I went to plowing, this question came, "Where is your burden?" This brought me trouble, and I began to search for my burden, but could neither find nor feel it. Here I became greatly burdened because I was not as I had been. About ten o'clock I tried to ask the Lord that if he had forgiven my sins he would give me an evidence of it, for I did not feel to have any evidence that I was anything more than a dumb beast. I remember turning at the end of the row next to the house, but anything else as pertaining to this world I do not remember for a time. I had a view that I was condemned to die, and was standing on an elevated place, talking to the people who had gathered to see me executed. I remember saying to them, I am not guilty. I do not know what my accusation was, but as I spoke these words,

Christ and the two thieves on the three crosses were in full view, not more than twenty steps away. I looked on them and saw the angry, railing countenance of the one thief, and the humble, pleading countenance of the other, and the streams of love and mercy flowed from the Jesus to that one, as freely as ever water went down the fall of a river. As I saw this I stretched out my right hand to Jesus, and said, "While in the hour of his death he had power to forgive that thief all his sins, and while I have never stolen nor committed murder, yet I am just as guilty as he; and to-day Jesus is at the right hand of God, and has the same power to forgive my sins that he had to forgive those of the thief." I do not know how long I was in that condition, but when I came to know anything, I was standing at the ditch at the further end of the row, and my heart was full of joy and praise. I went to the house to tell my mother of all my joy, but just before I got there, there was a whisper in me that said, Your mother will not believe this, for she knows how bad a boy you have ever been. I went in to where she was, and I never saw her look so beautiful before, but I could not tell her anything of what I had passed through, for fear of deceiving her. On Saturday before the second Sunday in July, 1873, I went before the church at Mewborns meeting-house, in Greene County, N. C., and they received me. I do not know why, for I had not told them anything that I know of. I have never been able to remember anything that I said, but they opened their hearts, and gave me a home there, and on the fourth Sunday I was baptized, together with a cousin of mine, by Elder S. Pate, who has long since gone home.

For a few days I had rest. Then the word of the Lord was impressed upon me with the feeling that I must go forth and speak in his name. This so burdened me that I had no rest, but I did not feel that I would ever do such a thing, for I knew that I could not preach, and therefore resolved that I would die rather than try. At our March meeting, in 1874, I felt heavily burdened, and much distressed with this burden, but felt the same determination never to undertake such an impossible thing. When I left that meeting I had no thought that I would be spared to attend another, because of my sinful rebellion, but all the month that followed, my health was better than usual. At the time of our April meeting, on Saturday morning, we all got ready to go, and my wife, brother, sister and step-brother had gone out of the house, and my mother was going out, when these thoughts came, Now this is evidence that these impressions are not of the Lord, for if they were he would not let me go. Now I am well and going to our meeting, therefore this is evidence that I shall not have to preach. Just then I felt a chilly feeling run down my back, and go all over me. I turned and laid down on the bed. Mother said, Son, what is the matter? I told her that I had a chill, but that she and all the rest must go on, and let my wife remain with me. I felt that I wanted to talk to her, so that she might be prepared to receive the word of my death, for I felt sure that the Lord would not let me live. After they were gone, I talked to her freely, but she seemed unmoved and just nursed me. Monday I had a second chill, and on Wednesday a slight congestive chill, which was the second, as I had one the preceding August. On Friday I had a third one, which was very bad. My wife, mother, eldest brother and two

sisters were all rubbing me. This lasted me for more than two hours. I had no use of any part of my body but my head and neck. All at once the glory of the Lord appeared to me, with just this little thread of life separating me from it. I began to beg them to quit rubbing me, and to let me go, for then I would at once enter into the glory of God. After a little they stopped and kissed me, and, quick as thought, I was in a world of light. I saw nothing but light, with a light as a candle in a solid flame of fire, in my own heart, and in the midst of this, these words, "Now you will go and preach the gospel." I turned my head over and I was free from pain, and, except my weakness, was well. I said, "Mother, what have I been doing?" She said, "Lie in peace, my son, mother will not bother you." I shouted aloud, and then began to sing, when they all joined in the song.

At the May meeting I was present, and then in my little, weak way, tried to open the meeting. In June I tried to talk some, but was so shut up, and ashamed or myself, I had to just sit down. This was the case with me for eighteen months, and one time I got very mad with the Lord because he had required me to do a thing which he had not enabled me to do. On Saturday, before the third Sunday in January, 1876, the Lord opened to me the door of utterance, and I spoke sweetly for forty-five minutes. Since then, I have spoken many times in thick darkness, but the door of liberty has not been closed. My labors have been very burdensome, and I have labored in deep poverty, but have tried to be faithful. I have a good conscience before God, that in my pastoral service I have been faithful to the churches, and want to be, let the end be what it may. For twenty years I have spent most of my time in the ministry, and now I average nearly fifteen sermons a month. I cannot tell you in this letter, of my ups and downs in the ministry. The Lord comfort all who may read this.

From your unworthy brother in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

FORT BRANCH, Ind., June 6, 1899.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your letter to brother Thompson was received by me this morning. I like the good spirit in which you write. I feel very sure that the seeming difference that now exists among the brethren is not real, except in a few cases. As a rule there is no difference, or at least not enough that we should not go hand in hand. I think that those who believe in "time salvation," and that that salvation is conditional, mean what you do when you say in your reply to brother Wilkinson, viz: "It is true that those who can say that they love the law of God have peace, and those who can say, It is my meat and my drink to do the will of God, as their Master did before them, do find in keeping his commandments a great reward." Now, brother Chick, our Baptists here do not think they would get the reward that you speak of unless they do keep the commandments, yet they do not believe they should keep them on purpose to get it. Neither do they believe any person can keep the commandments really and truly, unless they have had the grace of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost. Yet after all of this our people here think that the Lord's dear children do many things that they should not do, and as they are chastised for those things, they think they are in some way to blame for them. Brother Durand, in the *Monitor* for June, 1899, page 257, teaches just

what our people would call "time salvation." He says, "When I have tried to debate a question in the pulpit, and give 'my views' on some point of difference, and argue the subject, as I have a few times in my life thought I must do, I felt as though I were handling dried leaves, and could almost feel them rattle in my hands and crumble to powder as I handed them out. But when I have turned resolutely away from that temptation, or, as oftener the case, I have been forced away from the subject by the Lord closing of my mind in that direction, I have found myself led into green pastures with the flock in the enjoyment of gospel fullness and rest; have felt that in preaching I was handling green leaves, fragrant flowers and luscious fruit." The punishment that brother Durand received for trying to do what he should not have done was that his preaching was to him as dry leaves. But when he turned resolutely away from that temptation, or as oftener the case, the Lord turned him, he was led into green pastures, &c. Our people here would call this "time salvation." While he turned resolutely away I do not think any of our people here would claim that he could have done that without the Lord. In the SIGNS for April 15th, 1899, brother Durand again teaches what we in this country believe. He says, "But the living soul who is moved in his conduct by the consideration of the results to himself, instead of the character of the thing to be done or avoided, will realize no spiritual commendation and comfort in his conscience as resulting from the correct course he has pursued, but will either be lifted up with pride and vanity in the flesh, or will find himself in a desert place, with terrible leanness in his soul." I feel sure our people all believe this. None of our people in this country believe we should obey in order to get the reward. That should not be the motive. The children of God should do the right things from a pure motive, and then they would not have the leanness of soul: Would they? I do not claim that they can do this without the Lord. "Without him we can do nothing." I have thought many times that one reason why so many of our people believe in "time salvation" is because of such texts as this: "And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; * * * For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall."—2 Peter i. 5–10. The adding, it seems, is what makes them not barren. It does seem, brother Chick, that they were to make their calling and election sure in some sense, "For if ye do these things, ye shall never fall." It sounds like their being saved from falling in some sense depended on their being diligent. Of course none of us believe it possible that any could make their calling or election any more sure to God than it has always been ever since he chose them to salvation; neither do any, so far as I know, think there is any danger of any of the elect of God falling eternally. Then what does it mean? It makes no difference how diligent they may be, that will not keep them from eternal ruin; Jesus Christ is the Savior of his people. So

far as I am concerned, I never want to be any other way only to have love and fellowship for all who really and truly believe in eternal salvation by grace. From first to finish Jesus Christ is the Savior of his people.

Brother Chick, I may never see you, yet I love you, and am sure we believe the same things, yet we might not use the same words to express some things.

Your brother, I hope,

ARCHIE BROWN.

[WE are greatly pleased with the whole spirit and tone of the above letter. So long as a brother speaks or writes in the manner of brother Brown, we shall have no thought of breaking fellowship with him, and we have no quarrel, so far as we can see, with the real sentiments of the above letter. We have never desired to make any brother an offender for a word. We do not like the word "conditional," as applied to salvation of any kind, because it seems to mean more than brother Brown expresses as his understanding of its meaning, and to imply a contradiction of the language of the apostle, that all the promises of God are in Christ yea and amen to the glory of God by us, and not yea and nay. And the word "conditional" seems to deny the words to which brother Brown has referred, "It is my meat and drink to do the will of my Father in heaven." We still think that it would be far better to use some other word by which to express the truth, that the people of God find peace and the answer of a good conscience in keeping the commandments of the Lord. Having read the above letter several times carefully, we have not felt that in real sentiment we differ from the writer, except that the word "conditional" itself seems to us to be unwise. We are persuaded that much difficulty and sore feeling might have been avoided if all had written and spoken in the same considerate manner, and in the same kindly language as has brother Brown. So long as any brother so carefully guards his use of the language "conditional time salvation," as it is guarded in the above letter, we shall have no dispute with him. We are persuaded that all our brethren in the east are in cordial agreement with the sentiments quoted from brother Durand, yet we understand that brother Durand objects to the word "conditional," as applied to our present salvation, just as we have done, and upon the same grounds. It is our desire that the publication of the above letter may do good, and we believe it will.—ED.]

DELMAR, Del., June 22, 1899.

BENTON BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—I am impressed with a desire to express my appreciation of your position, and responsibility, as editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It may be that we who enjoy the benefits of your labor are not always aware and thoughtful of the toil and anxiety to which you are subjected. I think sadly of the tedious perusal of manuscript, some of which no doubt is as badly composed and written as my own. Then the critical decision as to the fitness and prudence of its publication, when it may be the sensitive nature of some dear brother might be irritated. Again, I am reminded of a delinquent list of subscribers which hangs so heavily upon the shoulders of a faithful editor and proprietor, especially of a religious publication with no other source of revenue beside the subscriptions. Its cumbersome weight is a constant reminder of unrequited labor and toil. There is the consoling thought that those in arrears hon-

estly intend to pay up at some time, but good intentions deferred, are only equivalent to bad promises, where there is no unavoidable cause or just excuse for delay. But above all the temporalities of your position arises the relation you bear to the children of our heavenly King, and your responsibility to him as the Head of all principalities and powers. Considering your labor, toil, self-denial and faithfulness to your brethren in conducting the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I want to commend you, not with fulsome flattery, but with a plain, honest approval. If I was endowed with the gift to write to the edification of the brethren, and credit to your paper, I would gladly contribute to its columns. But I feel to know so little of the infinity of the kingdom of heaven, and am so little myself, as compared with my brethren, that I hesitate to contribute my childlike prattle. The spirit of wisdom tells me to go learn of the ant, the conies and other little folk, as they are called in the Scriptures, and I hope the admonition has not been in vain. I have seen the busy bee gathering honey promiscuously from flowers, bitter and sweet, wholesome and poisonous, but withal could only obtain and deposit wholesome food. I have also seen the spider crawling upon the same flowers, and could obtain only poison. The only reason I can render for the contrast between the two is, because God hath made them so. Charity, sweet charity, (the love of God shed abroad in our hearts) never faileth." "Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." Surely the word of the apostle is true, "To the pure all things are pure," enabling us to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock, and realize the truth of Scripture testimony, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

I might allude to the uncharitable who are constantly murmuring and faultfinding, but I find no pleasure in perusing the disagreeable subject. The spider is revolting to me. "But unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure." This turns my thoughts within, to see my own faults and failings, and I find reason to cry with the psalmist, "Search me, O God, and try me, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

Brother Beebe, the above scribble, hastily written, is yours to dispose of as your better judgment may dictate. I I felt that you deserve, even if you do not need, commendation.

Accept my desire to manifest love and fellowship.

W. W. MEREDITH.

[IT is indeed encouraging and strengthening to us to receive such letters as the above. We need all the words of encouragement our brethren may have it in their hearts to speak to us. While we fully realize how responsible is the position we hold, and our own weakness to discharge the duties incumbent upon us, yet there seems to be no alternative but for us to continue on with such ability as it may be the pleasure of the Lord to give us. If our feeble efforts have ever been blessed to the comfort of any of God's little ones, the praise is due the Lord.

No one, who has not had the experience, can form any idea of the embarrassing questions that are to be decided in selecting the matter for publication in the SIGNS. It is one thing to read the paper after it is printed, and quite another to select and prepare the matter to

be published. It is always our prayer that we may be given wisdom from on high to enable us to select such matter for publication as will be to the edification of the saints, and to the glory of God. Here is where we greatest feel the responsibility of our duties, and in trying to discharge them faithfully we are often obliged, from what seems to us good and sufficient reasons, to reject articles, the writers of which are very desirous to have published, and thereby wound their feelings, which makes the duty very grievous and embarrassing to us.

It is impossible for us to know how our conducting the SIGNS may appear to our brethren and friends, only as they express themselves concerning the matter. Therefore such letters as brother Meredith's are very highly appreciated, and revive our drooping spirits, for our own efforts do seem to us to be so feeble that they must appeal to the charity of the readers of the paper.

You say, brother Meredith, If you were endued with the gift to write to edification, &c., you would gladly contribute to the columns of the paper. Write on, dear brother, if we were as well gifted and qualified to write for publication as you are, we would feel less apprehensions about the office we hold on the staff of the SIGNS.—ED.]

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio, March 7, 1899.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—It has been some time since my name has appeared in the SIGNS, not through lack of interest or desire for the welfare of the brotherhood, but on account of poverty of both soul and body. Poverty has made it very needful for me to be very careful, and with that care I hope that I have not ceased to be prayerful, and honest toward the publishers. I have still an humble hope in Christ, who suffered for sinners, of whom I still feel to be chief, because the most with self, and the most acquainted there. Indeed so great appear my misdemeanors that I often long for better company, and so great has been that desire that for many years I neglected home affairs, and sought society occasionally among the professed followers of Christ. I never had reason to regret the sacrifice except when brethren would sometimes seem to forget the sacredness of their holy profession, and engage in some unprofitable jesting, which would sometimes make me feel so poor and unprofitable that my occasional visits would be more of sorrow than of joy to me. I never felt to regret the loss of earthly gain, nor the loss of misspent time in any worldly sense, but I have felt such great poverty of spirit that even earthly pleasures lost their power to charm. I have no apology nor excuse for my own wayward thoughts, and sometimes lightness of manner, but the accumulated weight of my surroundings made my soul exceeding sorrowful. To-day I feel that if I cannot to some degree honor the holy profession of faith, which I have made, when in the society of saints, I have no right to their toleration. So weighty grows this feeling upon me that in the midst of glaring giddiness I feel doubly alone. It may seem to you that I am self-righteous, or vain glorious, but I have not the least reason for losing sight of my inbred corruption and deceit. I cannot but give thanks to grace alone for the internal rebukes and self-abhorrence which I sometimes feel, and I do not think I have failed to realize also a spirit of long-suffering toward some who have seemed to show but little respect for the solemnity of their profession, and this, too, in the presence of

children who should have had better examples of conversation set before them. This has sometimes been apologized for upon the ground of "predestination" and "can't help it," but as firm a believer as I am in that blessed truth, I must say that if this doctrine with all its comforts is to be made a cover for corruption and disgrace of the christian profession, I cannot help the deep disgust which fills me, nor an expression of reproof. When faithfulness fails to discover some tokens of sincere repentance in such transgressors, I cannot feel to seek their society for christian comfort. I believe firmly in the doctrine of predestination of all things, but I rejoice only in the fruits of it as shown in the life. The fruits distinguish the trees upon which they grow, whether of obedience unto life, or of disobedience unto condemnation; or the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory, or the vessels of wrath fitted unto destruction. I must not enter into judgment (as regards eternal things) of the workers of iniquity, but it is sure that I am not to know a vessel of mercy except by the fruits of the Spirit. And these will include love, joy, peace, long-suffering, meekness, temperance, faith, honesty and virtue. Those who bear these fruits are called to glory and virtue. It is in vain that men speak of peace, when their own words and works engender strife, or reproach the lovers of disorder, when their solicitude for the disorderly and disobedient leads them to apologize for every transgressor. I cannot see any ground for a claim to fellowship where the fundamental principles of faith are discarded. A man may hold the truth in unrighteousness. He may preach predestination as strongly as I would do, but yet fail to show his calling unto glory, honor and virtue. He may show great zeal in discussion and yet be a lover of pleasure more than of God. From such let me retire, and rather seek a lodge in a desert, with a few wayfaring men.

Yours in feeble hope,

A. B. BREES.

[How important that the faith of our Lord be manifested by good works. Like all other truths recorded in the word, Satan seeks to pervert the docrine of predestination. He would make all the doctrine of God our Savior look so hideous to each and all of us as to obscure all its blessed and happy comfort in our soul's experience. He hurls no heavier charges against the blessed doctrine of the predestination of all things, than he does against election, or salvation by grace. How sad if any of the people of God have been so carried away by his cunning craftiness as to say, "If my sins are predestinated, then I am not guilty and ought not to be blamed." Such as these are guilty of replying against God, as recorded in the ninth chapter of Romans. They do not discredit the doctrine by such assertions, but they do prove that they ought not to bear the name of a believer in God, or in Christ. Those who have really believed in this doctrine, as a thing precious to their own souls, in time of need, will never be led to pervert this truth so as to shield themselves from blame for their sins.—ED.]

SODDY, Tenn., June, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—In my letter published in the SIGNS for the 15th inst., I am made to say that "Satan buffets me because I cannot always distinguish between a *temptation* and a fit of murmuring and complaining." I mean to say, if I did not, in my letter, that "Satan sometimes buffets me because I cannot

distinguish between a *lamentation* and a fit of murmuring and complaining." When we murmur against the dealings of the Lord with us, I think it can be safely asserted that we are then rebellious, and sooner or later we are sure to feel the rod; whereas, if we lament the lukewarm condition of the inmates of Zion, and the indifference shown by her watchmen, and most of all, our own leanness, Does it not show that we are given an interest in the city of our God? We trust such is the case with us, and while we are sometimes given over to temptations, we are made to lament because we cannot endure patiently, and show that resignation and trust in God, which we feel sure he perfects in the objects of his love. Do you not lament because you cannot endure, when left to yourself? And is it not written, "We count them happy which endure"? O may the Lord be pleased to bestow upon us that measure of grace that will enable us to endure temptations, and hardness, and the contradiction of sinners, as faithful ministers of Jesus Christ; showing ourselves approved unto him in all things, for he doeth all things well, and works all things together for good to them that love him, to them who are called according to his purpose. Even though men be given over to vain boasting, teaching those things which they ought not, for their own advantage, he still reigns, and takes them in their craftiness, bringing to nothing their understanding, and turning their councils up-side down. And even though much importance be attached to complying with conditions and terms, by them, his purpose toward his people remains the same, and he declares concerning them, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise."—Isaiah xliii. 21. I know the thoughts that I think concerning them; thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give them an expected end. "For surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off."—Prov. xxiii. 18. Is that not enough for you? We feel sure, if we are not mistaken in ourselves, that it is enough for you and for poor me, who am not fit to be called a saint.

If not asking too much, make the correction suggested, in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in some future issue, and let this bear to you the assurance that I am still going on at my halting gait as before, feeling that his will must be accomplished concerning me before I go hence, and be no more.

In conclusion, may the Lord uphold you, and all who love our Lord Jesus in sincerity.

Respectfully,

T. D. WALKER.

ARTHUR, Ill., June 9, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE AND CHICK:—Inclosed you will find an epistle which you can publish or not as you see fit. About seven years ago I wrote you a short account of my experience, which you saw fit to publish, but I have not written you since then. I was then a young convert, and read the SIGNS some. My membership is at Arcola, Ill., and has been ever since I joined the "Hard-shells." I first joined the Missionaries, but one time their preacher said he could not worship a God of foreordination, so I left them. In the last six years I have lost a small child, and suffered a sunstroke, but I feel the Lord has been very good to me, though at times I am chastened. I am a teacher, and I can see in matters of education, the tendency of the world. My health is not good at the present time, but I feel it is for the best.

God has chosen his people in the furnace of affliction, and he is far better to me than I deserve. I agree with you that our children should not be allowed to attend Sunday School. I believe children should be taught at least the moral truths of the Bible, but I believe the place for that is at home. God help us who believe in Christ to be examples to our children, and instruct them properly. I notice there seems to be considerable discussion of late as to our salvation in our time state, as to whether it is conditional or of grace. If I may be allowed to express my views, I believe it is of grace. It is true that we are told to maintain good works, and that we shall be punished for transgression, and that by fear of God men depart from evil, yet if we maintain good works where do we get the power to do so if not from God, who works in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure? We might say that one's eternal salvation is conditioned upon faith in Jesus Christ, yet the Bible distinctly says faith is not of ourselves, but it is the gift of God. So after all I cannot see where we escape eternal damnation or present tribulation, except by the grace and mercy of God. Personally, I have no hope in anything else. I come so far short of what I should be, if God is not merciful I cannot endure. I know by sad experience, in my flesh there is no good thing, and like Paul, I am made to cry, "O wretched man that I am!" yet what he was, he was by the grace of God. I have seen other papers of our faith, but somehow the SIGNS seems to do me more good than any other. I read it from cover to cover, and reread it. Sometimes there is something in it I do not quite understand or approve of, yet it may be my ignorance, or a misunderstanding of the writer's meaning. I believe we should be very careful not to wound the feelings of those who differ from us in certain views. There are some points which seem to me so clear as to leave no room for argument, but I consider the vital fact of our unity is that we are born again of a common Father. So if we have reason to believe one of us is unsound in doctrine, or in daily life, we should pray that such a one may be established in the truth and in godliness, considering lest we ourselves be led astray. You know if one member suffers we all suffer with it. Our hopes, our joys, are all one, and we should only sorrow if a brother or sister goes astray.

I am twelve miles from church or brethren, and would love to be where I could see and talk to them daily, and I hope soon to be so. If there is aught in this worthy, ascribe it to my Maker, and not to me.

With love to all brethren everywhere, I am yours in tribulation,

W. C. COX.

ASHLEY, Ohio, June 12, 1899.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I hesitate to say my brother, for I feel so unworthy to address some of the servants of the Lord in that way. But I do love the Lord's people. I surely cannot be mistaken in this. How beautiful are the feet upon the mountains, who publish the gospel of peace. When we are permitted to rise to the top of the mountain of the Lord, and view the beauties of the New Jerusalem, then the gospel is a joyful sound to us, and sweet peace like a river flows into our hearts as we listen to the glad tidings of great joy. O, how beautiful in our sight are the feet of the messengers of God. Language fails us here. We lay our hand upon our mouth, and are filled with solemn

awe and divine reverence. Surely this is holy ground, and a heavenly place in Christ Jesus; yes, in Christ Jesus. How sweet those words. He is the fullness that filleth all in all.

I was moved to tears this morning, as I read the editorial in the SIGNS addressed to Minerva Martin. Come in, thou blessed of the Lord, Why tarriest thou without? The thought came to me that perhaps I, too, was among those blessed of the Lord, although I felt so little, and weak, and unworthy. O, do the dear ones love me? Am I welcome to a place in their solemn feasts? Blessed thought! sacred privilege! I have been a member nearly fourteen years, but I feel more and more that I am unworthy. But how sweet to know that our Lord does not despise the broken-hearted sinner. If I may but sit at the feet of Jesus, and at the feet of my brethren, how happy am I. Yesterday, as we commemorated the death of our lovely Savior, some who were not members left the house. O, I thought, Is it my privilege to sit down to partake of these tokens in remembrance of Jesus, our dear Savior? Why did he cause me, who am no more worthy than these who are left out, to come? How I was humbled in the dust. How his loving kindness filled my heart with homage to him. How can we render praise to him for all his mercies? How great is his goodness in all things. He is good in the beauties of nature, in the temporal blessings which he gives us, and in the greater gifts in Christ Jesus. He gives us comfort by the way, and an earnest of eternal joys at God's right hand. O, that I could live to the praise of him who, as I hope, has called me out of darkness, and done all this for me.

Now I come to the object or the reason which I had in addressing you. If it meets with your approbation, I would love to read something in the SIGNS from your pen concerning this text, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."—Romans viii. 13. Please notice the last clause of the text in particular. If you do not wish to reply through the SIGNS, I would be glad of a private letter, if it should be convenient and pleasant to you. If not, all will be well. I wish to know particularly what it is to mortify the deeds of the body through the Spirit? Yet I feel unworthy of this favor; I feel that if I am a child at all, I am but a poor, unworthy one.

As ever, your sister,
JOIE ECKELBERRY WICKHAM.

(See editorial reply on page 468.)

ELGIN, Oregon, April 19, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I was with sister Edith Eckles and her husband last Sunday, and she read the following letter which she had received from her sister, Mrs. M. E. Carter. I thought it would be interesting to the brethren, and especially her many brethren in the east, so I asked her to let me have it, that I might copy what was not personal, and send it to the SIGNS. So I send the following extracts of her letter. We have not asked the privilege, but feel sure that it will be all right with sister Carter, if you see fit to publish it.

Yours in gospel bonds,
G. E. MAYFIELD.

STUCK, Oregon, April 5, 1899.

DEAR SISTER EDITH:—Your truly welcome letter was received yesterday. All things are possible with God, and we surely believe in him. He says, "Who by him do believe in God, that raised him

from the dead." Our faith and hope is in God. You quote, "As much as in you lieth, live peaceably with all men." It therefore doth not all lie in you, for the Adamic man in us, as well as in our fellow creatures, is not for peace. "I am for peace, but when I speak they are for war." Therefore the psalmist prayed, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips." His strength is your strength, and the strength of every worm, Jacob. "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength." "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." How hard it is to answer never a word. The tried know, but he is the way, and he did so. And in partaking of the same flesh of his people, he suffered all their trials, all that they are subject to, besides the weight of their sins. He was reproached more than any of them. Bitterly the psalmist laments, in personating him concerning the reproach which fell upon him; and he cried unto God, and spent whole nights in prayer. Only in this way do his members know the fellowship of his sufferings; only thus are they made conformable to his death. They die to every hope of life or good, except what they receive from him only. Yes, it is a blessed hope that we shall awake in his likeness, and those who shall thus awake look forward to it and long for it as for hidden treasure, and mourn sore like doves, because they can see no likeness to him in all their walk and conversation; nothing but sin and pollution. Who showed them this, but the light that shined in darkness? How much of our time is spent lamenting because the darkness comprehends it not. The Lord has need of what we call evil. In fact we do not know anything. Brother William says we are far on our heavenly journey when we realize that. The Lord only knows what is best for us all, and he is faithful, and will not suffer us to be tried above what we are able to bear, but will with the temptation make a way of escape, that we may be able to bear it. No affliction has overtaken us but such as is common to men. It was a chosen disciple that betrayed his Master. And Paul, in enumerating his trials, includes among them, "in perils among false brethren." So there can be no trial or temptation come to us, but what was first borne by him who hid not his face from shame and spitting, and prayed with all the weight of all the sins of all the body upon him, including the forsaking by his Father, "Father forgive them, they know not what they do." Thus it is written for us to consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest we be wearied and faint in our minds. And so the prayer of the psalmist is ours also, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips." In many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to brindle the whole body. But in the Lord have we righteousness and strength. In the Lord all the seed of Israel shall be justified, and shall glory. And so we must ever look to him, for he will be sought after, to do these things unto them. I have sorrowed over the unprofitableness of all my conversation, but I do not sorrow over being silent, for when we awake in his likeness, all but him will have passed away, and we shall behold no man but Jesus only, and there we shall have no desire but his will, and no emotion but love to him. We all have our trials. But after they had suffered according to the will of God they fell on sleep. May he ever keep it in our re-

membrance that all our trials are appointed of him, and this will quiet us as nothing else can. May he bless you both.

With much love to you all, I remain your sister,

M. E. CARTER.

WARWICK, N. Y., July 6, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BENTON L. BEEBE:—Please allow me space to reply through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to the request of brother D. Kennard, of Maxwell, Cal., as found on page 415, current volume of the SIGNS.

While it would afford me pleasure to give light to any one who seeks to know the truth as revealed in the Scriptures, the experience of a lifetime has taught me that it is unprofitable for me to attempt an explanation of any passages without the special guidance of the Spirit of truth, who alone can take of the things of Jesus, and shew them to his disciples. I would not dare to force an explanation of any passage of Scripture by the light of natural study. While it is doubtless true that important truth is contained in the passage to which my attention is called, I must confess that I have no clear view as to its application in the testimony of Jesus, which is the substance of all the word of inspiration. Brother Kennard will please understand that it is not for any lack of desire to serve him that I decline to present any comment on the record designated; I cannot give a profitable explanation of any text on which I have no light of the Spirit. Possibly he may be more competent than any other one to expound the text himself.

With love to all the saints, I am as ever, in the hope of life in Christ Jesus, less than the least of all,

WM. L. BEEBE.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

DO NOT SEND CHECKS OR BANK DRAFTS.

BY a new agreement entered into by all the banks throughout the country, a charge will hereafter be made on exchange for checks or drafts. This will make a cost of from ten to twenty-five cents for us to pay on every check or draft received. So please send post-office money orders, or register your letter with the money in it, or if more convenient, express money orders may be sent, as there is no charge on them for collection.

G. BEEBE'S SON.

AN IMPARTIAL INVESTIGATION OF FREE WILL AND FREE MORAL AGENCY,

A pamphlet by Elder W. N. Tharp, of Liberty, Ind., a copy of which we have had the privilege of reading, is certainly a most able and conclusive refutation of the doctrine of Free Will and Free Moral Agency, which of late has been advocated by some of the periodicals claiming to be published in the interest of the Primitive Baptists. We advise our readers to send for it.

Single copy, one cent; twelve copies, ten cents. Send one or two cent stamps.

Address,

ELDER W. N. THARP.

LIBERTY, Ind.

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE.

ALTHOUGH we have not published for some time our advertisements of large Family, and Pulpit Bibles, and a number of other books, formerly advertised, yet we have them for sale, and any one wishing to purchase, can obtain full information in regard to them, by sending for one of our handsome illustrated catalouges, which we mail free.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1899.

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EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REPLY TO SISTER WICKHAM.

(On page 464.)

"FOR if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."—Romans viii. 13.

There is no more solemn or important truth in the word than the truth contained in the above Scripture. Like every word of exhortation or warning in the New Testament, this language is for the people of God, and presents truth that it is needful for them to consider. It is to the believer that the apostle has said, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die," &c. The language of this text, and of all similar Scriptures, could not have been spoken of unbelievers, because they have not the Spirit at all, and therefore could not through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body. Those who are not born from above, possess only the spirit of the flesh, which is a spirit of enmity to God, and is not subject to his law, and as the apostle has testified, cannot be. Thus man, left to himself alone, cannot serve God, nor love his name or cause. To such it would imply a falsehood to say, "If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body," &c. But believers are possessed both of the flesh and the Spirit, and in them these are contrary the one to the other, so that these, and these alone, realize a warfare, and can understand warnings against the flesh, and exhortations to walk after the Spirit. All those Scriptures which relate to the old man and the new, to the flesh and the Spirit, to the law of the members, and the law of the mind, bring out this thought of the warfare; and believers are warned against the deceitfulness and enmity of the one, and bidden to follow the leadings of the other. We are not to understand by the figurative expressions, "the old man and the new man," "the flesh and the Spirit," two literal substances or persons at all, which may be said to dwell in our bodies. All these varieties of expression simply mean what we may call principles or forces, or any other name which will show that in us are two opposing elements. The old man does not mean the Adam man, and neither does the term new man mean this. But in us children of Adam, men and women who have come to believe in God and hope in his mercy, there does dwell two powers, which oppose each other, and which are called in the Scriptures by these various names. By the term "old man," is not meant a literal man, neither does it mean what we mean when in general conversation we say such a man has done such and such things. The term "flesh," does not mean, when used to describe that which is contrary to God, this form of ours which shall crumble to dust in the grave, but rather that which is the controlling motive of all who do not believe. The believer is not divided into two separate men literally, but rather in the one man who has been redeemed, dwells two opposing forces which are called by various names in the word, and sometimes by these two terms, "old and new man."

Now in the text, and in its connection, the apostle presents these two opposite forces. The one fallen, and opposed to God, and the other the Spirit which is of God. He calls the attention of his brethren to the fact that they possess both the flesh and the Spirit in their mortal bodies, and, that as they are well aware, these are in conflict. He calls up to their consideration the truth that they have been called to walk in a higher life than the life which they lived before, in the days when they knew not God. The Spirit of God dwells in them, and they are not therefore debtors to the flesh, to live after it. They have received not the spirit of bondage, but of liberty, whereby they say Abba, Father. They are now sons of God, and in their bodies dwells the Holy Spirit. They have been redeemed unto God by precious blood; they have been bought with a price, and belong to God. In addition to all this, the Holy Spirit has wrought such a work in them that they have come to love his service, and to abhor sin and self, because of sin. They desire to live in the Spirit, and to walk after the Spirit. It has become their meat and drink to do the will of their Father in heaven. The apostle appeals to the true desire of their hearts. They desire not to live in darkness. They do desire to realize the light of the Lord shining upon them as well as in them. Nothing can ever root out or destroy this abiding principle of holiness, which the Spirit has begotten within them. Yet because of the abiding of the flesh, or the law of the members, with them, they find that they are hindered greatly in the race, and are often brought into perplexities and trials of heart. In the closing portion of the seventh chapter Paul presents what this warfare means, out of the fullness of his own daily experience, and laments the presence of the body of this death, or of sin, in the body, while at the same time, through the triumph of faith, he sees plainly the final victory through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now to those living souls who have tasted the sweetness of the one life, and the bitterness of the other, he addresses the words of the text. In these words he states a fact of common knowledge among believers. And yet, although all do know these things, he deems it meet to stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance of them. He puts them in mind that as they live after the flesh they shall die, but on the other hand walking after the Spirit and crucifying, or, as the word is, mortifying the deeds of the body, they shall live. This text only says what hundreds of texts say in other words. Paul says in Galatians, If ye sow to the flesh, ye shall of the flesh reap corruption, but if ye sow to the Spirit, ye shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. In like manner Paul exhorts his brethren to put off the old man, and to put on the new man. And in another place he tells his brethren that they have put off the one, and put on the other. In all this he manifestly refers to the manner of one's life outwardly. He recognizes that his brethren are in possession of the one principle, as well as of the other. Now he says, put off in speech and deed that which is evil and contrary to God in you, and put on that other and holy life, which also dwells in you. It is manifest that a man cannot put off what does not belong to him, and it is equally true that he cannot put on what is not in his possession. The new man, the righteous principle, does dwell within him, and so does the old man, or the unrighteous principle. Both strive for the mastery. The Spirit lusts against the flesh, and the flesh

against the Spirit, after such a fashion that he cannot do the good that he would. But there is this difference between the believer and the unbeliever, the believer does have a prevailing desire to follow after the Spirit, and to depart from iniquity; he does love the one, and hate the other. Once he was a sinner running after sin with all of his might, now he is a sinner, (a sinner still) but running away from sin as hard as he can. Once when he sinned he did but the things that he would, now when he sins he does the things which he would not. Paul makes this clear in the closing portion of the seventh chapter. He says for our comfort and consolation, "If then I do that which I would not, * * * it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Paul thus shows that in speaking to his brethren in the language of warning and exhortation, he is not bidding them remember and do some uncongenial task, but rather what their souls desire to do. It is their grief when they go astray, and it is their joy when they can realize that they are walking in the narrow way after the Savior's footsteps. This is one of the blessings of the gospel commandments. They are not written upon tables of stone, or upon parchment, but upon the fleshly tables of the heart. In other words, they are not burdens hard to bear, but rather blessings which the believer loves, and of which he desires to be still more and more a partaker. Thus the people of God do not desire to die in the sense of the text; and so Paul tells them to avoid walking after the flesh, for if they do walk after the flesh, they shall die. They do desire to experience the life meant in the text, and so Paul says to them that this life can be experienced and enjoyed in no other way than in walking after the Spirit, and in mortifying the flesh. If they desire above all things the experience of spiritual blessings, they shall be found only in the way of believing obedience. This we know as believers, not only from the inspired testimony of Paul, but also from daily personal experience. There is, there can be, no sense of the love of God in the heart while walking after the flesh. Such a walk leads away from God, and from the narrow way in which the Master walked in the days of his flesh. No spiritual blessings are found in that way. It is the broad way which leads to death. All spiritual blessings are found in Christ. Away from him we find no spiritual thing, but in his way, as we are found walking therein, we do find the fullness of joy and blessings which dwell in his presence.

Let us define the terms of the text briefly. As said before, the flesh means the principle of evil, and contrariness to God, which we have in the body, soul and spirit, of the natural man. It belongs, as the term is used here, and often in the word, no more to our mortal body than it does to the mind and spirit, or the soul. The soul is as fleshly as is the body. It seems needful to us to insist upon this, because we have found some minds perplexed by the word flesh. Some have seemed disposed to locate sin in the body alone, and to think that after the new birth, at least, the soul or mind become sinless, as the body will become after, or rather in, the resurrection. Imaginations and thoughts are not acts of the body alone, neither are designs and purposes, nor are the emotions of love and hate, &c. The believer still has a fleshly mind, or rather his mind is still possessed of that which is called fleshly. The flesh then means that which is sinful, corrupt and opposed to God, in us.

To live after the flesh signifies to think,

purpose and act after the flesh. To live, here means, not the essence of life, but the result of life. If we walk, or live, in thought and deed, after that which is evil within us, is the meaning of the word live, in the text.

To die, means not eternal death, as is manifest when we read in the same Scriptures that they who are in Christ have passed from death unto life, and that they shall never die. A child disobeying his parents dies to the comfort of the family circle, to the smiles of his father, to the comfort and peace of his own heart, to the fellowship of his brothers and sisters, who while they may love him still, yet cannot while he is disobedient and willful, remove the sense of distance from him, which his transgression has caused. He cannot eat nor drink at his father's table with comfort; he cannot meet his brothers and sisters with any gladness, nor look them in the face; he cannot come near to them, nor they to him, because his sin is between them. So in like manner, believers who are the children of God, and fellow-heirs with all the people of God, when they transgress, cannot come near to the sanctuary, nor enjoy any of its privileges. His sin separates him from all this, he is dead to these things. Walking after the flesh he is walking away from all these things in which the spiritual mind delights, and in which he finds his comforts. Now to live after the flesh, is to satisfy its desires and gratify its lusts. It is to, on the one hand, become legal in spirit and thought, and so to deny Christ for self-righteousness. It is, on the other hand, to walk in outbreaking sin and folly. It is to forsake Christ either for our own goodness, or for worldly pleasure or gain. To live after the flesh is to become vain, revengeful, careless of the cause of God, or of our own interest there, to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, to pay no attention either to the teaching or the admonitions of the word of God, to withdraw from association with our brethren, and to neglect the ordinances of the word of God. Those who do these things shall surely die, in the sense of the text. There will be no growth in them, for dead things cannot grow. Their souls shall have no sense of sweetness in meditation upon the things of God, in fact they will have no such meditation. They will die to all that has been to them a source of joy and gladness in the past, and when they hear the word of God it shall have no comfort for them. And the worst is, that they become so dead that it well nigh seems that they have no desire for such things. They are sick in all the body, from the head to the soles of the feet, and like all other sick people, have no appetite. When such ones come to themselves, and begin to mourn and lament their low estate, then they have begun to live again indeed. To live after the flesh is a terrible thing, and its results are terrible beyond expression. Such ones may not be excluded from the visible church; in fact they may not have behaved themselves outwardly so as to call for such an action from the church, but they nevertheless are not able to enter into the privileges of the sanctuary. To be excluded from the church in spirit and heart is far more terrible than any formal act of exclusion of the name from the church book can be. Such a formal act is but to register the belief of the church that the one thus dealt with has become dead to all interest in the church or in divine things, beforehand.

In the last clause of the text the word "mortify," simply means death. That is,

the language simply means, if ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live. It seems to us to mean just what is meant elsewhere, when the apostle speaks of crucifying the flesh, or the deeds of the body. It means putting them off. It means not allowing them any room or breathing-place. It means that they are to be regarded as deadly enemies, which are not to be parleyed with, and with which we are to hold no truce.

Now we would call attention to what seems to us an important distinction in the two parts of the text. In the first part it is not said, if ye live after the body, but "after the flesh." The word flesh is a far broader term, and means much more than the word body, as was shown before. In the second part of the text, it is not said, if ye through the Spirit do mortify the body, but the *deeds* of the body, ye shall live. The body is not to be crucified or put to death, but the deeds of the body. There is no room here for the Romish heresy of fasting, or maceration of the body, or of scourging the body, as a means of grace, in any sense of the word. Still further, the text does not say that we are to get rid of, or destroy the principle of evil which dwells with, and in us, but only the outward act, the conduct which appears as the work of the flesh. The deeds of the body are emphatically what are signified here. There is to be a putting off of evil conduct, and a putting on of righteous conduct. This is to be done not in our own wisdom or strength, but through the Spirit alone. This Spirit dwells within, as an abiding principle, or rather, life. If then we do slay the deeds of the body, the apostle cuts off at once all room for boasting by saying that it is through the Spirit alone. Besides this, another thought is connected with these words. They do not mean simply an outward reformation, which can be wrought out of fleshly motives, and which to the gaze of men may seem in no wise different from the fruit of the Spirit, as seen in the conduct, but it means that true turning unto God, and that true hatred of the flesh, and of its deeds, which causes the believer to hate all the works of the flesh, and not only some of them. If through the Spirit we do mortify, or bring to death, the deeds of the body, all boasting is swallowed up in this, that we glorify and exalt the grace which has wrought such a great victory in us. In such a crucifixion as this is found life, true life, life which knows no end, everlasting life, spiritual life. In this life is found not always joy and comfort. Far oftener there is found as its fruit, still more shame at self, and still more bitter sorrow because of lack of conformity to the will of God. Such may have joy that their standing in Christ is secure, but great sorrow that their state is one of such great imperfection and failure. Those to whom Paul in the text spoke, had a standing in Christ which could never be shaken, but their state was not one of perfection. In Christ they could not die, neither could they lose one promise secured in him to them forever, but in outward life, and in inward knowledge and feeling, they could, and did, as we often do, live after the flesh, and die.

We leave these reflections. They are but an imperfect presentation of the text, as all that we could say must be.

C.

HOW IS YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

WILL all who read this look at the date next to their name, on little pink slip, and if in arrears make us a remittance?

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

GALATIANS VI. 16.

(Concluded from page 443.)

A rule is an exact measure; just so much and no more, therefore if we take the New Testament as our rule in religious matters, that rule requires us to observe all things whatsoever our Lord Jesus Christ has commanded, and as we are not allowed to do less, so we are equally reprehensible if we attempt to do more. To suppose that we can please God by doing what he has not commanded, or by leaving undone what he has commanded, is to set up our own wisdom above his, and thereby insult his divine majesty. The Judaizing teachers pretended to aim at a higher standard of holiness than that which was held forth in the gospel, but they entangled the saints with the yoke of bondage, and sadly bewitched some of them. When Israel of old had no king, every man did that which was good in his own eyes; but the spiritual Israel has a King, and if we were capable of judging for ourselves, we would need no rule. Inasmuch, therefore, as God has given a rule, it becomes us to walk according to it.

But it was our design to call the attention of our readers more particularly to the rule for the christian walk, as stated in the chapter which contains our text, and its connection. The New Testament rule is introduced by Paul, in settling the disorders which disturbed the churches of Galatia; and having so applied the rule as to detect and expose the wickedness of the doctrines and commandments of men in religious matters, he proceeds to admonish the saints to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. That liberty he shows to be ofa spiritual nature, and only to exist where the Spirit of the Lord is. He draws the contrast between the fruits of the Spirit and the lusts of the flesh, and presents the rule which requires the crucifixion of the flesh with the affections and lusts; "For," says he, "if we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." Walk after this rule and we shall not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another. This rule is to be faithfully adhered to in our relative duties one with another. It reads thus: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one." Here is the conmand. It is not given to the carnal, or to those christians who have not, or do not, crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts, but it is given to them which are spiritual. The rule will not allow any but the spiritual to be engaged in the restoration of erring saints. But not even the spiritual are to act, only in strict accordance with the rule. How then shall they restore such an one? Suppose they could restore the delinquent in any other way than that commanded, would that answer? Certainly not. The rule requires that it shall be done in the spirit of meekness. Why should this be so essential, seeing the erring brother is restored? Because the spiritual brother or brethren are liable also to be tempted, and there is no other safe course but strict adherence to the rule. Again, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." All this is to be done according to the rule; for he says, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." How fearful the admonition! By labor-

ing with carnal or fleshly motive, even in our professed labor to restore an erring brother or sister, although our brethren may be mocked, and think we have done our duty to the rule, according to the letter and spirit of the gospel, God is not mocked. His piercing eye detects the lack of humility in us, and the fleshly, selfish motives in our hearts, secreted from our brethren, and will assuredly turn on us a harvest of corruption. Well might the apostle say, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." This is the rule on which the holy apostle insists, that outward circumcision, which is in the flesh, availeth nothing. He is not a Jew now, who is one outwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart in the Spirit, whose praise is not of men but of God. We are the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Here we see the spiritual and antitypical circumcision is the manifestation of the new creature, or the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness, and hence it is said, "If any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature." While, then, the new creature and the old creature both exist in us, there is strife, and the rule for our christian walk must be brought to bear, and that rule demands that the old man be put off, and the new man be put on, and in this spiritual frame, with the flesh and its affections crucified, the world crucified to us, and we to the world, we are to walk in all the ordinances, laws and institutions of the house of our God. This is our rule, and the only divinely authorized rule for us. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

But in Paul's day there were "Many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: whose mouths must be stopped; who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake."—Titus i. 10, 11. They are all unruly who walk not according to this rule, and who depart from this rule, whatever they may substitute for it, are vain talkers and deceivers, and their influence has been sadly felt in the church at a much later date than that in which Paul wrote to Titus.

In conclusion, we will remark, "this rule," is in perfect harmony with the whole letter and spirit of the gospel of God our Savior. While the doctrine of the gospel teaches that salvation is wholly by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast, this rule is applied only to them who are already saved, quickened and born of the Spirit. It excludes all the fruits of the flesh, and until we are born again we can bear no other than fruits of the flesh. First make the tree good, and its fruits will be good. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that comprehends all that we are or can be, or can produce until born again; and after the new birth, this rule excludes all the lusts of the flesh, and approves only of the fruits of the Spirit. This rule, therefore, calls for none of the works referred to as a means of procuring a new birth, but directs their manifestation as the evidence that they who are capable of walking according to this rule are certainly born of God, and led by his Spirit.

The unregenerate, and more particular-

ly among them, the Arminian work-mongers and will-worshipers, can see no reason why, if our doctrine be true, christians should work at all. They tell us that if they believed our doctrine, they would live as they list; they would take their fill of sin, and live upon the theory, once in grace always in grace. We are not at all surprised to hear them belch forth such doctrines, for these sentiments are the natural productions of the flesh, and show plainly that those who hold them have never been born again, and consequently possess within them no fountain that can send forth any other streams than those selfish, muddy and polluted waters. The rule cannot apply to them, for if they should crucify their flesh with the affections and lusts thereof, there would be nothing of them left, it would use them up. But where God has implanted the spirit of immortality, the fruits of the Spirit will be produced in evidence thereof. Again, it is often slanderously reported that the doctrine of the gospel, as held by us, leads to inertness, if not to licentiousness. But those who are instructed in the school of Christ, know that the truth of the gospel and the practice of the gospel go harmoniously together; and the rule securing peace and blessedness to the Israel of God, unites the doctrine and practice of the gospel together. The immortal and incorruptible seed implanted in them, is born of God and loves holiness, loves truth, loves righteousness and loves all that is approved and lovely in the sight of God.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., November 15, 1856.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$272 55
A friend, Pennsylvania	10 00
Total to date	$282 55

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his former home, Delmar, Del., April 27th, 1898, John W. Hancock and Rosa C. Phippin, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

By the same, at his home in Middletown, N. Y., August 24th, 1898, Ira L. Harding and Mrs. Fannie D. Crist, both of Middletown, N. Y.

By the same, at No. 99 Prospect Ave., Middletown, N. Y., Jan. 4th, 1899, Frank S. Hobart, of Liberty, N. Y., and Electa A. Scovill, of Hancock, N. Y.

By the same, at the home of the bride, Butler, Baltimore Co., Md., July 5th, 1899, Wilbur Fawble and Sallie Cole, both of Baltimore Co., Md.

By Elder D. M. Vail, Jan. 21st, 1898, John H. Kerr, Jr., of Sullivan Co., N. Y., and Katie E. Greening, of Pike Co., Pa.

By the same, June 27th, 1899, Charles W. Johnson, of Waverly, Pa., and Bina M. Goodrich, of Edella, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—Jan. 22d, 1899, at her brother's home, near Duart, Ont., Canada, **Miss Effie Campbell,** daughter of the late Deacon A. Campbell. She and her sister Jane lived in London for many years, Jane dying Jan. 10th, 1892. She broke up housekeeping and went to live with her brother Archie, near Duart. Her mother being then living, but advanced in years, she waited on her during her last illness. Although she was not a member of the visible church, yet she was a lover of the truth, and her house was always open to the visiting brethren who would lay off at London. In the fall of 1898 she was taken with a severe pain in her heel, which increased in violence. Medical aid was summoned, but to no purpose, the pain still continuing to increase and ascending the limb, causing it to swell to an unusually large size. Her sufferings were great, and baffled the skill of her attending physician to alleviate, only through the use of opiates. She bore her sufferings patiently, without a murmur. She could be heard imploring God for mercy as she realized that her days on earth were about numbered. She felt a great darkness come over her mind, and felt as if she had come to the ends of the earth, and could go no farther. This caused her great distress, which continued for some time. She talked of it to those around her, but she could get no comfort. One day this Scripture came to her: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint." This relieved her in a measure. After this these other Scriptures were given her, viz: "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

She continued gradually to sink, notwithstanding all that kind sisters and her physician could do, when on the 22d of January she peacefully and quietly fell asleep in Jesus, as we hope. So quietly did she pass away, had it not been that her friends were at her bedside, they would think her to be asleep naturally.

She was buried at Duart, at her own request, near her brother Alexander, who died some years ago. Elder Pollard preached on the occasion to a large number of sympathizing relatives and friends who came to pay their last tribute of respect to the departed. She leaves one brother and four sisters to mourn their loss: Archie, at whose home she died; sister McIntyre, of Poplar Hill, Lobo; Mrs. Dodgson, of Toronto; Mrs. Lampman, of Palmyra, and Ann, at home.

D. M. CAMPBELL.

KOMOKA, Ontario, Canada, May 25, 1899.

James M. Martin departed this life June 13th, 1899, at the home of his only son, T. D. Martin, near New Church, Va. He was born Nov. 10th, 1828, so he was 70 years, 7 months and 3 days old. He was married to Miss Louisia Daviec, January, 1852. Seven children were the fruit of this union, two of them, with his companion, preceded him to the grave. Brother Martin was baptized in fellowship with the Predestinarian Baptist church at Messongoes, Va., by the writer of this notice, Jan. 26th, 1873, and was afterwards chosen deacon, which office he filled to full satisfaction until he became an invalid. Some three or four years ago he was taken very bad with what was termed dropsy. He was a dreadful sufferer at times, being confined to his bed about one year at a time, and then get up and around again. So he continued, first up and then to his bed, and his death was like a lamp blown out; no one know when he breathed his last, Our dear brother had a clear view of the depravity of his nature, which caused him to weep many a bitter tear. We were closely bound together for many years, and he revealed to me much of his troubles, which kept us very close together. He often said, Without grace and mercy there was no hope for him. He said to me, "I fear that mine is a vain religion." He did dearly love, until he he became disabled, to go to meeting and listen to the preaching, which seemed to be his meat and drink.

I was in Philadelphia at the time of his death, and though I received a telegram, I could not reach home before he was laid away, so one week later I tried to preach to his memory, using as a text Job xiv. 14, "If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." And now the change has come, and our hope is that sorrow and pain is gone, and he now sleeps in Jesus. May God give grace to the surviving children and the church, for his blessed name's sake.

T. M. POULSON.

ANOTHER valiant soldier of the cross has received his discharge. Our beloved brother, **Deacon Hiram Horton,** fell asleep in Jesus, May 17th, 1899, at his home near Howell's Depot, where he had resided for fifty years. He was born in Circleville, N. Y., April 30th, 1817. His parents were Hiram and Rhoda Celinda Horton. He married Elmira Hawkins. Three children were born to them, all of whom preceded him to the grave. He lived to the ripe old age of 82 years, 1 month and 17 days. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Middletown & Wallkill church, Jan. 21st, 1844, and appointed deacon, Nov. 30th, 1845, and served this church faithfully until the time of his death, a period of over fifty-three years. Brother Horton was sweetly gifted in exhortation, and for years after his natural faculties were impaired by old age his gift in speaking on spiritual subjects, and his memory of the Scriptures, amazed all who had the privilege of hearing him. He leaves a widow, one half brother, two half sisters and one granddaughter, Miss Addie May Derby, with the church and many friends, to mourn their loss.

His funeral services were held at his residence, Elder H. C. Ker, his pastor, officiating, after which his mortal remains were laid to rest in his family plot in New Vernon Cemetery.—ED.

DIED—April 4th, 1899, **Mr. Willis B. Hilton,** of Sanitaria Springs, Broome Co., N. Y., aged 75 years. His disease was neuralgia of the heart. He was sick but a short time. Mr. Hilton was born in Bovina, N. Y., and married to sister Susan A. Reynolds, in 1860, living nearly all, or quite, of his married life in Broome Co., N. Y. He was the son of Wm. P. and Nancy Hilton. He was a lover of the doctrine of the Bible, as advocated by the Old School Baptists, but never could unite with the church. The SIGNS was the paper of papers to him, but he has gone to his eternal home, and we believe is in the likeness of Jesus, and is satisfied. He leaves his dear wife, sister Susie Hilton, and his sister, sister Andress, of Binghamton, and others, to mourn, but not without hope. May the God of all grace bless them with his grace in their great sorrow.

Elder Charles Bogardus officiated at the funeral, and greatly comforted the mourning friends.

ALSO,

APRIL 11th, 1899, **Mrs. Henrietta Croft,** wife of Obadiah Croft, of Binghamton, N. Y., aged 65 years. Her maiden name was Vandevort. She was born near Warwick, N. Y., and was baptized by Elder J. N. Badger, in fellowship of the Old School Baptist church at Warwick, twenty or more years ago, of which church she remained a member in good standing until removed by death. She was thoroughly established in the doctrine of sovereign grace, and was a careful reader of the SIGNS, and enjoyed them much. I have visited at her home many times the

past twenty years, and have always found her ready to acknowledge that her only hope of salvation was in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. She felt that she was nothing, but Christ was all in all. She is at rest. She leaves a husband, sons, daughters, brother and sisters, with the church and friends, to mourn her absence, which to them is loss, but to her is gain. May the dear Lord comfort the mourning ones in their affliction.

Elder Chas. Bogardus spoke to the comfort of the friends at the funeral. Her favorite hymn was 341, (Beebe's Collection). She had been in feeble health for twenty-five years.

D. M. VAIL.

SISTER **Mary J. Bevers,** after suffering a long time with dropsy, on the 17th day of September, 1898, quietly breathed her last. She often expressed a desire to go. Just before the breath left her she said, "I can read my title clear." She, with her husband, united with the church some years ago, in Van Zandt Co., Texas, and was baptized by Elder Sorrels. She was a faithful wife, a kind stepmother, and manifested a great love for the cause she espoused. She is gone, and all the days of her life were 59 years 2 months and 20 days, and she died.

ALSO,

HER husband, **A. K. Bevers,** after suffering from what was thought to be Bright's disease for some months, on the 29th of May, 1899, fell into that sleep which he often spoke of as a peaceful slumber. He was in my house with my family when he died. He had been with us three months and five days. We all took a delight in waiting on him. His father was a preacher of our order. In 1866 he married Mary. J. Nickols, and in 1878 I found them in Cherokee Co. They had letters from the church in Van Zandt Co. We got together then, and have been together most of the time since. He has proved faithful. He has been perfectly blind since 1878. He bore everything, blindness and all, so patiently. He was good company to me. He delighted in talking of the great and good works of God, and of the little and sorry works of man. He often, during his sickness, would tell us, I want to depart and be with Christ, for that will be better. We watched him close, to see how it would be with him in his last moments, and we found it all bright and clear. I said to him awhile before he died, "Is there anything after death that bothers you?" He said, "No, nothing." He knew us as long as he had life. We found a little before he died, he did not know each by the voice, so we went to him, one by one giving him our hand. Telling the name he would say, "Farewell, brother Bell; farewell, sister Bell; good by, brother Tommy." Telling all the boys good by, and calling their names. A loving husband, kind father and faithful brother, is gone. We sorrow, as I told him, because we would be deprived of his good company and counsel. He lived 74 years, 5 months, lacking 1 day, and he died.

This is for those that have lost sight of him, to know that he is gone to that bourn from whence no traveler returns. May we all try to imitate our dear, departed brother in our walk and conversation.

U. J. BELL.

PALESTINE, Texas, June 29th, 1899.

GOD in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to again bereave us by removing by death one of our dear sisters on the morning of June 9th, 1899, **Mrs. Mary Poteett,** aged 52 years and 18 days, the beloved wife of T. Howard Poteett. In so doing he has bereft us of a devoted wife, mother and sister. While we feel to mourn our loss, we feel to rejoice, though she is dead to us, she only sleepeth, for she left sufficient evidence that death had lost its sting. She bade her dear husband farewell, and told him she had to leave him. Her disease was pneumonia, which carried her away in the short space of one week. She was a member of the Old Harford church, being baptized by Elder Wm. Grafton, about six years ago. One of her greatest pleasures was to meet with her brethren.

Elder Grafton being away at the time of the funeral, brother Milton Dance read the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians, and sang the hymns 1257 and 807, (Beebe's Collection,) "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep," and "O land of rest," after which, all that was mortal was laid to rest in the old Harford churchyard, to await the morning of the resurrection, for, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's, at his coming." She left four children, all grown, one son and one daughter married, also three sisters and one brother, together with her devoted husband, whom she had lived happily with for nearly thirty-six years. May the God of all grace give them strength sufficient for their day of trouble, and enable them to say, It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth good in his sight.

Blessed be the name of the Lord.

SALLIE LOWE.

ROCK SPRINGS, Md., July 9, 1899.

DIED—Suddenly, June 11th, 1899, at the residence of her son, in Hulmeville, Pa., my sister-in-law, **Mary H.,** widow of J. Warner **Martindell.** She had been a member of the church at Southampton for more than fifty-four years, being at the time of uniting only a little over fourteen years of age. Her health being poor, and living a long distance off, she was deprived of meeting with the church often, which was a great trial to her. She has left seven children to mourn the loss of a kind and affectionate mother, grandchildren and other relatives, together with the church of which she had so long been a worthy member, but we

have the blessed assurance that she is now enjoying that sweet rest that remaineth to the people of God. May the Lord comfort all that mourn.

The funeral was held June 14th, 1899, at Southampton, Elder Durand conducting the services.

A. H. ADDIS.

POETRY.

THE MYSTIC RIVER.

[COMPOSED after passing through a severe paroxysm of physical suffering, and groping as it were in utter darkness.]

There's a grim and mystic river,
Over which we all must go,
And this river, deep and restless,
Never ceases in its flow.

Old and young alike must cross it,
None can e'er this river shun;
But unto its dark, cold waters,
Time is bringing every one.

Those who've crossed this mystic river,
Never have come back again;
Come to tell what they have entered,
Whether joy or endless pain.

We have seen this mystic river
Bear our loved ones from the shore,
And until we, too, pass over,
We can see them nevermore.

Yet it seems that we have often
Felt their presence near our side;
But alas! 'twas only fancy,
For this river's deep and wide.

We have felt its waters splashing,
For we've stood upon the brink,
And it seemed so deep and restless,
That in fear we'd often shrink.

But at times we've longed to cross it,
When we felt the Boatman near,
For we knew that this dear Pilot
Could our frail bark safely steer.

We are told beyond this river
Lies a city fair and bright,
But to enter through its portals,
All must have their garments white.

O! this grim, this mystic river,
Over which we all must go;
It is deep, and cold, and restless,
Never ceasing in its flow.

NANNIE B. EDWARDS.

OWENSBYVILLE, Ga., Feb. 23, 1899.

THE following verses were written by the late Elder F. Odom more than forty years ago, on the occasion of the deaths of a little son and daughter.

Richer gems than earth can give,
Who once with me and mine did live,
Has gone the way of all the earth;
I hope they're born a nobler birth.

A little son and daughter dear
Will with Christ in heaven appear;
In robes of white they will outshine
The noonday light with Christ divine.

Although we mourn and are distressed,
Christ has said that such are blessed;
In heaven with them I hope we'll meet,
With Christ and God in one, complete.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, with the Waterford church, three miles east of Lewiston, Fulton Co., Ill., on Friday, Sept. 1st, 1899, at 10 o'clock a m.

Those coming over the C., B. & Q. R. R., from the north, will be met on Thursday evening before, and from the south on Thursday evening, and Friday morning, at 7 a. m. Those coming from north and west of Galesburg, will take Narrow Gage Railroad, at 7:40 a. m., and 1:50 p. m., on Thursday before.

A cordial invitation is extended to all, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

THE Lime Creek Regular Predestinarian or Old School Baptist church, of Floyd Co., Iowa, will, for the convenience of the Lord's children, hold a meeting at Garden City, Minn., commencing August 4th, 1899, and continuing the two following days. The scattered sheep of our Master's fold, who desire to walk in his commandments, and all ministers and brethren of our faith and order, are invited to be with us.

GARRETT MURPHY, Moderator.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine, will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist church, in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing on Friday, Sept. 1st, 1899, and continuing three days. We shall gladly welcome all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and especially brethren in the ministry who feel it in their hearts to visit us.

Those coming will be met at North Berwick railroad depot, on Thursday before the time appointed for our yearly conference.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 67. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1899. NO. 16.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"THE ETERNAL PURPOSE."

BELOVED BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—The only true God is the God of purpose, as he has so fully revealed in the Scriptures, and it is impressed upon me to write to you upon this sublime theme, in humble dependence upon him.

Text: "The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."—Isaiah xiv. 24. Now, the fulfillment of this solemn oath of Jehovah depends upon his attributes of omniscience, omnipotence and immutability, all of which are fully declared in his sacred oracles, and to deny these absolute attributes is to deny his Godhead, which is open infidelity. The Almighty cannot be limited in any attribute or perfection of his divine nature or Being, but he is infinite in them all, as abundantly revealed in the Holy Bible. His omniscience includes absolute knowledge of all things and infinite wisdom; his omnipotence includes universal authority and dominion and almighty power; and his immutability includes his "eternal purpose," and crowns him with eternity. These are self-evident truths, and no believer in God will have the presumption to deny them. "With God is no variableness, neither shadow of turning," says the Scripture. This is not true of any other being. Therefore, if angel or man had "sworn," as in the text, it might fail to come to pass, or stand, as is true in the purposes of the best men. "I am the Lord, (Jehovah) I change not," is the voice of the Almighty. This makes it evident that there is nothing new and nothing old with him; that all creatures, things and events are ever present before him and known unto him, from everlasting to everlasting, as the Scriptures fully declare. The four and twenty elders cast their crowns before his holy throne, saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."—Rev. iv. 11. The Lord's dominion is universal and unlimited, then, and his government and control is over all things, because he alone is the Creator and supreme Ruler of all worlds and things, and they are all known unto him and subject to his omnipotent power. "For by him were all things created, that are

in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist."—Col. i. 16, 17.

Now then, it is most clear that "the only blessed God," is not only the God of purpose, but that his purpose is eternal, like himself, and that his "eternal purpose" is at once immutable or cannot change, and it extends to and embraces all things which he has created. For God did not create anything in vain, or without a wise purpose. To say he did, is to impeach his wisdom and deny his Godhead; and to say that his eternal purpose does not include all things that exist, is to both deny and frustrate his purpose, and to disappoint him and overthrow his government and control of all things, or dethrone and undeify him. Or to say that God has more than one purpose, involves the same awful consequence; for to impute purposes to him, is to say that he has changed his purpose, just as imperfect men change from one purpose to other purposes; therefore there cannot be an eternal purpose with any creature. This infinite perfection belongs to God only, "whose name alone is Jehovah," whose thought is one, and his purpose one, reaching from everlasting to everlasting, extending to all things in heaven and in earth, who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast. This is the God of the Bible, the Creator of all things, the God of "the eternal purpose," and the Bible declares this of him. "The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."

Purpose means, a fixed determination to do or attain an end or object; to intend, resolve, design, as the eternal purpose of God.—Standard Dictionary. Hence, every intelligent being has a purpose in all things he does, or in everything subject to his control, or else folly would be charged to him. Outside of purpose, then, there could be nothing but blind fate, or uncertain chance in the universe, and this would be ruinous and destructive. How good and excellent, therefore, that the Lord of hosts, in his infinite compassion to his people, "hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." In his thought and purpose there is an absolute certainty, and according thereto everything shall so come to pass and stand. If not so, then both his wisdom and power would be at fault and fail, and he would be disappointed and defeated. What a dreadful consequence! From this every rational mind must shrink with horror. For then it would be as "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."

But one thing now remains to be known: Is there any creature and event and thing in all the universe beyond and outside of the thought and purpose of God? To say there is, at once limits the omnipresent One, and wrests the crown of universal dominion and sovereignty from him. It is worse than folly to limit his thought and purpose, therefore, because it denies his infiniteness and eternity, and puts a limit upon his omniscience and omnipotence and omnipresence. These are the essential attributes of his essence and nature or being and Godhead, and to deny them is to deny God. Holy Scripture abounds with testimony to all these perfections of our holy God, and they also show that in these very perfections of the everlasting and unlimited and unchangeable Almighty Father, is the security and salva-

tion and blessedness of all his chosen, called and justified people.

"I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country; Yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it. Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness: I bring near my righteousness; It shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry; and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory."—Isaiah xlvi. 9–13. The execution of this purpose of God included the awful calamity of war and the overthrow of a powerful nation, by other nations. All this was true also of the long bondage of Israel in Egypt, the final destruction of Pharaoh and his hosts, and of the warring nations in the wilderness and in the land of Canaan; for God had purposed and foretold all those awful calamities and righteous judgments, concerning the afflictions and deliverance of Israel his people.

Now, as to the thought and purpose of God in the text, if the kind reader will please read both the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of Isaiah, that he may see the entire connection of the text, it will be understood that this was determined in regard to the utter downfall of Babylon, and the deliverance of the children of Israel from their long captivity in Babylon, of which the prophet herein gives a grand and awful history. "The Lord of hosts mustereth the host of the battle. They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, even the Lord, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land. Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. * * * Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it. * * * For I will rise up against them, saith the Lord of hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant, and son, and nephew, saith the Lord. I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water; and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of hosts. The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand: that I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth; and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" Who can read all these solemn declarations of the Lord of hosts, and then say that his purpose does not cover the whole universe, and extend to all nations, peoples and things? Why, all history is but a fulfillment of the word of the Lord by his inspired prophets, as the text and context and the whole Bible show; and the counsel, thought and purpose of the Lord of hosts run through it all, and chain every event to his eternal throne, so that nothing can frustrate his counsel and thought, or overthrow and defeat his "eternal purpose." We should be glad and rejoice that it is so, my dear brethren, for herein (in the eternal God) is our refuge and strength, and our everlasting

safety. It was this divine assurance that enabled Paul to say, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." For Paul had been made to understand that God, "who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were," had, "according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord," ordained his people unto eternal life, through the redemption that is in him; and he therefore says, "In whom we also have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated [foreordained] according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."—Eph. i. 11. Paul again says of God, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace; which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9. All this Scripture testimony, and much more, clearly establish the fact that the foreknown and foreordained people of God in all ages and places are connected with the nations of the earth, and history of the world, and with all things in time, either directly or indirectly; that therefore, "for the elect's sake," he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," and for the ultimate good of "the called according to his purpose." Thus it is shown in the divine record that the counsel, thought and purpose of the Lord of hosts comprehends, reaches to and controls all nations, creatures and things, and fixes limits and bounds to them, which they cannot pass. For this cause the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church, nor any creature separate his people from his love in Christ. Knowing this, David said to God, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath thou shalt restrain." It requires omniscience, omnipotence and "eternal purpose" to accomplish all this, but our God has these and is this, for he is God alone, the Almighty. "See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand. For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live forever. * * * There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, [Israel] who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them. Israel then shall dwell in safety alone. * * * Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." These wonderful words did God declare to his people by his servant Moses. But the Lord again says, "Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."—Isa. liv. 15–17. O Lord, thou Most High, my spirit rejoices in thee for this, and I adore thy Majesty, power and glory; for thou canst do all things, and cause me to triumph in thy might and salvation. Glory be unto thy holy name. The Lord's own declaration here to his people is, first, that he has created the smith, the fire, and the waster to destroy; and, second, that, according to his unchanging purpose, he has laid his restraining hand

upon every weapon of destruction, and has put a bridle upon every accusing tongue, so that wicked men, warring nations, persecuting foes, false friends and raving devils are firmly held in and controlled by his almighty hand of power. It is in this fact alone, my brethren, that Job did not curse God, perish in his affliction, and die; that the hosts of Israel did not perish in Egypt, nor in the Red Sea, nor in the terrible wilderness, nor at the fiery Sinai, nor in cruel Babylon; that neither the fiery furnace nor the den of lions could destroy the tried servants of God who were thrown in them, but did devour their enemies. It was for this cause that Joseph (type of Jesus) did not perish in the pit, nor in the prison; that his father's house (the people of the covenant, according to the purpose of God,) did not perish by the famine; "For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" Omniscience directs his purpose in all things unto eternal ages, and Omnipotence executes his unlimited, "eternal purpose," so there is never a failure—"So shall it stand." O, brethren, let us trust in the Lord of hosts, and give him the glory due to his name. It is the most awful presumption for a poor creature, sinful and ignorant, to prescribe rules and set limits for the eternal one, "the only wise God," or to try to beg the question, apologize and make excuses for him, of whom Jesus said, "There is none good, but one, that is God." For a sinful man, therefore, to be so puffed up in his vain and fleshly mind as to assert that he is both wiser and better than the Holy One, is very wickedness and a dreadful sin. Therefore, every one should put his shoes off his feet when he treads upon this holy ground, and speaks of God, for deep reverence and lowly humility should fill us with solemn awe, and we should say, with the meek Moses, "I exceedingly fear and tremble." It is exceedingly presuming and shocking when any poor mortal, whose very breath God gives him, will flippantly fly in the face of the Lord God Omnipotent, whose name is holiness, deny his very perfections and essential attributes, by limiting him by the finite line of his own little mind, and say, if God goes beyond or does more than this, he would be unjust, rob his creature man of his accountability, and himself be the author or perpetrator of all the sin and wickedness in his universe. This is the most revolting and blasphemous folly, than which the blatant and disgusting Ingersol has not uttered worse, and God will rebuke it. He said to Job, "Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it. * * * Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?"—See Job xl.

"And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him [Moses] there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty."—Exodus xxxiv. 5–7. Thus does our holy and blessed God declare that he will maintain the purity and righteousness of his own "great white throne," and that his holiness will vindicate his judgments and his mercy.

Now, let us a little further consider the unfailing purpose of God. "The Lord of hosts hath purposed it, to stain the

pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the honorable of the earth."—Isa. xxiii. 9. Having purposed this, he will certainly bring it to pass; "and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble."—Mal. iv. 1. "For every purpose of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant."—Jer. li. 29. This is also true of the purpose of the Lord as it regards all lands and peoples and nations and kingdoms of the world, as declared above, "to stain the pride of all glory." "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"—Dan. iv. 35. For the Lord had sent Daniel the prophet to declare his purpose to the proud king, to whom he said, "This is the decree of the Most High, which is come upon my lord the king: That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will." We, as well as this king, should know this, and give honor and glory to God, as he then did. "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. * * * The great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter."—Dan. ii. 44, 45. These are most wonderful declarations, spoken with absolute certainty, and they clearly show the immutable purpose of God, not only as it regards his own kingdom and people, but also concerning "all these kingdoms," which should be broken in pieces and destroyed, as a potter's vessel is dashed in pieces, and his people should be separated from the kingdoms of the world. In this the infinite purpose and omnipotent power of God are made known. All came to pass, just as decreed and foretold. There is a positiveness in the purpose of the Lord of hosts which will not admit of contingency or conditions; therefore, "the kingdom shall not be left to other people." It is folly, then, to try to bring "other people" into the kingdom. The kingdoms that should be broken in pieces are no more, but the people of the Most High were gathered out of them by his own right hand, and his kingdom still stands, as the house built on the rock, and it is given to his saints. And now, because his people are to be redeemed "out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation," among whom they are scattered as sheep gone astray, therefore "the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth," reaches also to "every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation," under heaven, as certainly as it did to Egypt, and Babylon, and Persia, and Asia, and Rome, and all the ancient kingdoms which the Lord of hosts judged, punished and overthrew. For some of his people are connected in some sense to all the peoples and events and kingdoms of the earth; therefore the inheritance of the saints in Christ is "according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." If it were not thus, but the purpose and counsel of the Lord were limited, then his decree and control would also be limited to the

extent of his purpose and counsel, because his controlling power cannot go beyond his purpose and act without purpose, and there could be no security or safety for his people, who are surrounded by "all things," not merely by all good things, but often by the worst things. Read of the dreadful things, dangers and perils by land and sea, which Paul recounts that he was in, out of which the Lord delivered him. Surely the counsel and purpose of God extended to all these things, and equally, therefore, to all other things; for the God of purpose does not put forth his hand of power without any design or counsel or purpose. A fool might do so, but not "the only wise God our Savior." Among the many all things which are subjected to the purpose or decree of God, "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," Paul names "tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword; death, life, angels, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height, depth, nor any other creature." Many of these things are the most terrible, and all "who are the called according to his purpose," certainly have to encounter some of these all things, as did Paul and thousands of his martyred brethren, and all the called of God have to antagonize a sinful life, and the monster death. If the purpose and decree of God had not included all these direful things, and destroyed them, then they must have destroyed all his foreordained people. But how could his people be ordained to eternal life, and yet these destructive things not also be ordained to be put under their feet and destroyed? For the almighty power of our God is never exerted only according to his "eternal purpose," and his purpose places an absolute limit upon sin and death and all other things, as positively as does his ordination or decree; for nothing whatever can take place outside of the infinite foreknowledge of God, and his immutable and "eternal purpose" is certainly as unlimited as is his foreknowledge. To say it is not, is to put some things outside of God's wisdom, counsel and purpose, and so outside of or beyond his power and control, unless it is said that he controls some things without any purpose, which is to charge him with weakness and folly. In fact, a denial of the unlimited purpose of God, is to deny his unlimited foreknowledge, which is equal to a denial of his perfections or infinite fullness and changeless attributes. The purpose of God, then, is defined by his infinite wisdom, and both run parallel with his prescience or foreknowledge of all things, and all three are sanctified by his absolute holiness, and sustained by his omnipotent and eternal power and Godhead.

A reverential and solemn awe has possessed my spirit while I have thus written upon these most sublime realities, for such they are, and I verily realize that the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, and moved me to thus write. It will glorify God, therefore, and he will sanctify it to his humble children, who have grace whereby they serve him with reverence and godly fear. In this divine assurance it is sent forth to all to whom it may come, with the prayer that all may speak and write of the God of all goodness and holiness and power with the sacred reverence and honor that should characterize all who believe in God and worship him.

It will not be long, dear brethren, till many of us shall enter into that within the veil, and appear in the holy presence of God; so we should no more presume to speak a word against his infinite perfections now, nor criticise his acts, than we

would then. This sorrowful admonition is needful, and it is given in love.

"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace."

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., July 11, 1899.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

BELOVED ONE IN CHRIST JESUS:—Though you have very lowly thoughts of yourself, and "dust and ashes" is thy name, and many conflicts are your lot, yet thou surely art "greatly beloved" (Dan. x. 11,) of the Lord, for he teacheth thee, and in all thy distresses thou art constrained, drawn, enticed to flee for refuge to that hope set before thee in the gospel. Thou art indeed beloved of God, even though thy foolish, unbelieving heart sometimes questions this. Had he not loved thee, dear brother, you had never been drawn to Jesus; he would not be thine heart's attraction. But though a vile sinner, to whom all the world can afford no shelter, yet thy God, and I would fain say, our God, loves thee, pities thee, and though thy sins and the devil would chase thee to hell, the blessed God sets the hope before thee. If he loved thee not, the Hope, even Jesus, had never been set before thee; but to Jesus and his precious blood and righteousness you have fled for refuge, and your heart lays hold (yes, it is dear to your heart,) upon the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. To you I can speak freely, to many if I did so they would not understand me. The sea on which they sail is far smoother than mine. My own soul's affairs are full of changes. Oft I am constrained to groan beneath the vileness that infests my life, Surely no one can be more vile. O, the self-loathing and abasement that is mine, and yet I feel I do not loathe myself as I should. I am astonished at the continued scenes of deep, dark depravity that I am made to see, and to feel, too. Ah, it is not as a mere onlooker that I see the pride, the lust and the hellish blackness of my nature. O, the stench of my carnal heart! O, the horrors that creep over my soul as this pit of corruption closes in upon me, and I feel to sink in the deep mire! Ah, those sunnied-faced professors who can always testify of their delight in the things of Jesus can have no use for me. I suppose I should be a nuisance in the presence of these satisfied ones. Nevertheless I had rather have my griefs than their joy, my dark hours than their sunshine. Ah, yes, I would sooner have my rugged, tried pathway, than their easy going, smooth way. But there is a state that I dread more than all, that is, when notwithstanding all of my sinfulness, I find I am so hardened, there is not a sigh escapes me, I am as one dead in all the filth and abominations of my flesh. Then before long that questioner and accuser puts in his appearance on the field, and I am stricken and thrust through on every hand. Then, as it were, I awaken as one on the brink of a precipice. Ah, I am too far gone, and down; down I am, plunged into the abyss of corruption. Surely this is the belly of hell to my soul, and here the enemy presseth me sore. Ah, those easy going christians will no doubt think of me, He must be a great sinner, or he would not be punished like that. I am indeed a great sinner, and my punishment is less than my iniquities deserve, yet perhaps in my outward walk I am

not much inferior unto you. Perhaps the outside of my cup and platter is almost as clean as yours. But to my grief and anguish of heart I find all uncleanness within, and such uncleanness as I am not able to subdue and exterminate. If sighs and tears would wash me white as snow, then surely I should find by this time some spots cleansed away, but no, year by year I am more unholy, so vile. O, when I think upon my God, so infinite, so high and holy, what am I? so impure. I shrink away, no, no. I sigh, I mourn, and O such yearnings that his almighty grace would make me holy, even as he is holy. Can God save a wretch like me? Ah, when I have been plunged into the deep, and distracted by the insinuations of the devil, my God does not utterly cast off a worthless wretch; O no! It is wonderful. He turns my thoughts unto himself, I remember former mercies, so amidst my stinking wounds I sigh, I cry, O Lord look down from heaven and behold a poor and sinful worm. I tell him I am vexed and tried with this unclean heart of mine, that questionings and fears roll in upon my soul, and that I sink beneath the waves. O Lord, dost thou not know my troubled state? Wilt thou not have compassion on me? Forsake me not utterly, O God, though base and vile thou knowest I am. O, break through this gloom, O Jesus, and give my soul one glance of pity, one ray of sunshine from thy face, O fair Redeemer. O, for a word of thy tender mercy, O for a thrill of life and peace from thee. This would heal all the maladies of my soul, and I should come forth and live in thy sight to praise thee, my God and my Redeemer. O, the matchless reigning grace of God! Even this day (Nov. 18th,) I was full of cares, tossed about, craving, craving something, I hardly knew what. But that precious something that I needed the Lord knew, and he had the answer ready before I called. I took up a hymn book and read,

"When rocks and mountains rent with dread,
And gaping graves gave up their dead,
When the fair sun withdrew his light,
And hid his head to shun the sight,

Then stood the wretch of human race,
And raised his head, and showed his face;
Gazed unconcerned when nature failed,
And scoffed, and sneered, and cursed, and railed!

Harder than rocks and mountains are,
More dull than dirt and earth by far,
Man viewed unmoved thy blood's rich stream,
Nor ever dreampt it flowed for him.

Such was that race of sinful men,
That gained that great salvation then!
Such, and such only, still we see:
Such were they all, and such are we.

The Jews with thorns his temples crowned,
And lashed him when his hands were bound:
But thorns, and knotted whips and bands,
By us were furnished to their hands.

They nailed him to the accursed tree;
They did, my brethren, so did we.
The soldier pierced his side, 'tis true,
But we have pierced him through and through."

I could read no more; I was filled with emotions. I saw myself so vile, such grief I felt as I gazed upon the man of sorrows, and such desires flowed forth unto the dear Savior, I wanted to clasp him in my arms and call him mine. O, he was mine, I felt he was mine, and I said, "I will creep beside him like a worm, and see him die for me." O, what I need is the voice of thy precious blood, dear Lamb of God, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. Some whose lives appear to be calm and holy, who appear to always have peace and gladness within their reach in the doctrine of salvation by grace, do not seem to appreciate such language as a hell-deserving sinner, a vile, abominable wretch. I do not care for the words myself, but what

words can a sinner like me make use of? They all appear too tame to describe what I am in such distress over, when God gives me a sight of myself. I would I were pure and holy even as my God. For this I sigh, for this I pant. O, when shall that hope for which I wait, be consummated? that hope of righteousness in the obedience and blood of the Lamb? In eternal glory. When thou, my God, at death shall receive my spirit to thyself, when at the last day, at the last trump thou shalt come, O Redeemer, the Resurrection and the Life, to call forth the ransomed bodies of thy people from the dead, thou shalt change our vile bodies, and in immortality, in incorruption and in glory they shall rise. Then body, soul and spirit, we shall be holy and without blame before thee in love. Till then grant me the portion of those that fear thee, that through the Spirit I may wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. O, I love to see thee, Jesus, crowned with glory and honor; thou art the same dear Jesus who wast made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death. As I muse upon thy obedience, sufferings and death, thy burial, resurrection and ascension to glory, I feel thou, my lovely One, art my hope, yes, dear Savior, my hope springs up in thee that I, too, shall triumph, that I, too, shall rise again from the grave, that I shall ascend and be crowned through thy matchless grace with glory and honor. Surely even now I have a sip of the blessedness, the earnest of the Spirit in my poor heart. O, that I could but love thee and serve thee forever.

Well, my dear brother, dear and precious as the Son of God is unto us; and times, little moments are given me of joy unspeakable and full of glory in our hope in him, yet sometimes I groan under my vileness, and have to confess before the Lord, "My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness."—Psalm xxxviii. 5. As a very leper I am made to cry Unclean, unclean, I see that "from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in me, but wounds and bruises, and putrefying sores; they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment." And I loathe myself because of the abominable filth that is in me. (Ezek. vi. 9.) There was a time in my life, and perhaps only that once, a time when it seemed to me I tasted the depths of misery, and then such a sip of heaven, so sweet, Can I ever forget it? I so loathed myself that I think I could enter into the meaning of the one who wrote,

> "Vain toad, too filthy to be damned,
> Else in his face the Judge had slammed
> The door of darksome hell.
> He feared the vile, infernal crew,
> Back to the earth the wretch would spue,
> Too black with them to dwell."

O, the exceeding riches of that grace that saveth a sinner like me!

Perhaps even you will think this is a strange mixture of a letter. It is, and it is just like one who is, I hope, your brother,

FRED. W. KEENE.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., April 25, 1899.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—I feel lost without the SIGNS, as they are filled up with so many able communications, and with able editorials, all written in the right spirit, with meekness and humility of heart, and with no confidence in the flesh, but in God, who is our salvation first, last and all the time. It is so interesting to read them. They are so full of good things out of God's unwasting fullness. Why should not the poor of the flock, God's little ones, be content

with such truths? They are established in the sacred volume of the word of God. In this section there are some differences among Baptists. Some claim what is called "conditional time salvation." I am sorry to see it, but such is the case. It is the invention of men, for popularity, and it is the manifestation of wickedness in high places. It is causing division, and we are commanded to mark those who cause division. "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace." Thank God this is our only hope beyond this vale of tears. We have no righteousness of our own to offer, as it is nothing but filthy rags in the sight of God. "Conditional time salvation" is something new among Baptists, and it mars the feelings of the poor of the flock of God. The Savior says, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." These promises should encourage the faithful in Christ who have no confidence in the flesh. These are established in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Captain of our salvation, who has gone before us, and sits upon the throne at the right hand of God, making intercession for us. This is too deep for our mortal minds to understand. It is far above human wisdom. Tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. And if we do not have tribulation we are bastards, and not sons. How often we have been brought down in despair, with no one to help in the time of darkness and the gloom which overshadows us. Our arms are too short to take hold of the promises, and our cry often is, "O, God, why hast thou forsaken us?" Then the words may come with so much love, "Be not afraid, it is I." How glorious to be made to feel his goodness and mercy in time of despair. When the light of his countenance appears, the gloom passes away. Then is the word fulfilled, that his people shall be willing in the day of his power; not man's power, but the power of God. God is a Spirit, and seeks such to worship him as worship him in Spirit and in truth. God has all power, both in heaven and upon earth; and man must not ask, What doest thou? He has promised to be with us in six troubles, and that in the seventh he will not forsake us. With such precious promises of our Father we ought to be content, and not try to pervert the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, which has been delivered unto the saints. "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

Dear brethren editors, the doctrine of predestination and election is the sure foundation for salvation. Had it not been for the everlasting love of God for his bride, he would not have chosen her in his Son, before the foundation of the world. This is why I have a hope in the Savior, and nothing but this will do us good. But for his electing love and mercy we should have come short of his glory. It is not in man to direct his steps. There are many devices in man's

heart, nevertheless the counsel of the Lord shall stand. The works of man are the works of the law, and they are dead works, with no life in them. Those who go about to establish their own works, to be honored of men, and trying to deceive the very elect, if possible, are guilty of wickedness in high places. Yet these things fulfill the Scriptures, and are some of the all things which work together for good to his people. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Let us trust in the true and living God, who can save, and who is faithful. By him ye have been called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ. And thus we are admonished to "Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way: but let it rather be healed."

Let us, dear kindred in Christ, trust in that God who is able to give life, and to save. He is the Giver of every good and perfect gift. There is no other name under heaven, or upon earth given, whereby we must be saved. Dear editors, I feel my nothingness and unworthiness so much that I often ask, "Am I his, or am I not?" I often refer to the following precious verse, which is my whole desire.

"In thy fair book of life and grace,
O, may I find my name
Recorded in some humble place,
Beneath my Lord, the Lamb."

All will be well if we are what we hope we are. What a victory it will be when we are gathered together in that great company, which no man can number, who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. O, what a blessed hope to have an interest in that world beyond this vale of tears.

Salvation by the grace of God alone, is my theme and hope. Nothing but his grace and mercy can save us. I desire to die in that hope. None are saved who seek salvation by the works of the law, and not by faith. Had the first covenant been faultless, then had no place been found for the second. The Lord said, "The days come when I make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers," "which my covenant they break." How plainly the failure of man is exposed, and their nothingness in this will-worship. It was impossible for man to keep the law in this imperfect state. Knowing this, God sent his only begotten Son, born under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. And he says, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days. I will put my laws into their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. It is not left to the poor finite creature to have his will. So God says, "They shall be willing in the day of his power." If the decision were left to man, he would never choose God and salvation, but thank God, election and predestination have obtained it for us, and the rest are blinded. "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus," and let us press toward the mark for the prize of our high calling, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

This is a wonderful subject indeed, and nothing but the revelation of God can unfold it to our minds. Dear brethren, we are passing through trying times, and like the psalmist, I feel sometimes to pray, "Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy. Hide me from the secret counsel

of the wicked." "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." In him do I trust, and not in man.

In weakness, fear and much trembling, I have written these scattered remarks, to give you a few of my thoughts upon the subject of salvation by grace. I am but a poor worm of the dust. I am groveling along as best I can, and that is but poor. In writing now, I hope my mind has been directed upon things unseen. I would trust in God, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift. I hope that I have not wounded the feelings of any of the flock of God. I desire to know nothing save Christ and him crucified. "Let us have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them, submitting ourselves to one another in the fear of God. What precious admonitions are given. Who can cast the first stone? We are not our own, but are bought with the precious blood of Christ. And now, in Christ Jesus we who were sometimes far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. He is our peace, having abolished the enmity. By him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. We are now no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and are built upon a sure foundation, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. In him all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord. This foundation is a rock, and not sand. The work is finished, as the Lord in his dying hour said. Therefore we must put no confidence in the flesh, or in man. My prayer to God is, that he will keep me humble, and submissive to his will, for he is all and in all. I hope that I may be found among the chosen ones. I trust that he will direct my steps in the right path.

Please throw the mantle of charity over this.

Will brother Chick please, at some convenient time, give his views through the SIGNS upon Ezekiel xxxvii. 11, 12?

Dispose of this as you deem best, and all will be well.

Your brother in hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

[WE will try to comply with the above request ere long.—C.]

FRAGMENTS.

THE love of God in the heart is pure and true, and is ever fixed upon that which is pure and true, and never can rejoice in iniquity, "but rejoiceth in the truth." When it has once been drawn out to another in whom it sees the same love of God, it can never be withdrawn. We ourselves may be deceived, but that love never is deceived. If the fellowship which we thought we felt toward one has been utterly broken and destroyed, then it was not that fellowship which is founded on the love of God; for that charity is the bond of perfectness, (Col. iii. 14,) and the bond of perfectness cannot be severed. The one whom we love in the truth may have many faults, but that does not destroy our love and fellowship, for they are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. In that sense charity covereth the multitude of sins. (1 Peter iv. 8.) But true charity does not excuse or justify sins or faults in one's self or in a brother, nor does it cause us to withhold any needed exhortation, admonition or reproof, but rather the contrary. The good and comfort of the one we love is our chief desire, for "love seeketh not her own;" and we cannot see one we love in a dangerous place without a desire to extend such help as we can. That love also seeks the honor of God's house, and

so directs us to that which is according to his commands.

WHO showed to Abel the way of salvation? Who told him what to do to please the Lord, and comforted him when alone and in distress? Does not the same Teacher and Comforter have the charge over his people to-day?

Who gave Noah that faith by which he built the ark, and by which he preached righteousness? There was no man to tell him how to build or how to preach, for he was the only righteous man in that generation. The preacher of the gospel to-day, and the gospel builders, must receive their faith and instruction alone from the Teacher of Noah. He will teach them to profit, and lead them surely in the right way, and uphold them by his arm. All men who assume to tell them how and when and where to preach, are vain teachers.

CAN it be that everything pertaining to the salvation of the Lord's people was predestinated, but that their need of that salvation was not embraced in the purpose of God, but left uncertain?

LOVE caused Jesus to say to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan," because he savoured not of the things that be of God, but those that be of men. (Matt. xvi. 23.) But it is not our province to call a brother Satan because he speaks erroneously. We ought, however, to sternly recognize in our own words and actions, and in those of another, that which is from the wisdom of the world, which is earthly, sensual, devilish, and rigidly oppose it. But we need be careful that we oppose it with the spirit of that pure and peaceable wisdom which is from above.

ACCORDING as one regards his own word, so will it be regarded by others. If one occasionally fails to respect his own word, others will soon fail to respect it at all. If one does not value his own word, what right has he to complain because others do not value it? He who breaks his word cannot expect others to trust it. Brother A is kind-hearted and impulsive, and makes promises very readily; but he forgets them just as readily, and will surely disregard them if at the time he does not think his own interest demands their fulfillment. His nearest relatives and closest friends, therefore, have come to regard his promises as entirely untrustworthy.

Brother B is good and kind, and does not intend to be untruthful; but he has fallen into the habit of answering questions concerning which he has a very imperfect knowledge, if any at all, and of making statements which prove to be inaccurate; therefore those who know him best, and love him most, are sadly compelled to discount his word largely.

THE Savior gave thanks openly before eating. Is it not proper that his professed followers should follow this example? We may reason with ourselves that it is not needful, because the Lord does not need spoken words to tell him what is in the heart, and that, also, words of thanksgiving may be spoken when the heart does not feel thankful. It is true that the Lord knows what is in man, and needs not that any should tell him; yet the Savior prayed and gave thanks, and commanded it as a blessed privilege upon his people. It is true that we cannot produce gratitude in our own hearts, nor bring into our minds spiritual light and warmth; but shall the Savior's example be slighted for this reason? For this

reason may the preacher remain silent before a waiting congregation, or the people forsake the assembling of themselves together? There undoubtedly are those who feel it impossible to speak in prayer or thanksgiving in the presence and hearing of others, and so do not feel it laid as a duty upon their consciences. I know also, that those who do exercise gifts openly are often so sorely tried concerning this thing of giving thanks at the table, feeling often that it is only form with them, that they are tempted to neglect it, and even to doubt whether they are right in openly asking a blessing upon food and giving thanks for it. Yet there remains the Savior's example, and also that of Paul.

One temptation to discontinue this practice undoubtedly is with some, because of the sameness there must necessarily be in the form of the petitions and thanksgiving, which makes us fear that it is only a form without any spiritual power or value. I have felt that often, yet have been withheld from trying to seek for new forms of expression so as to have a variety, for I have known that such an effort could only be before men, and therefore vanity. In the sight of God there is no need of variety of language or ability to speak with clearness and power. Our needs do not change, but are the same to-day as yesterday.

I feel it to be my duty to try to follow, as I am enabled, the example of Jesus, though so infinitely far behind and below him, and though the temptations to fear that there is no spirituality in my exercises makes it at times the hardest and most trying of all my acts in the public exercise of gifts. But at times the duty becomes a holy and blessed privilege, when faith prevails over fear, and the dear Savior's felt presence in the soul awakens feelings of praise and gratitude within us, and a sense of our poverty and unworthiness and of the Lord's goodness makes us desire to openly praise his dear name. But our words seem poor at best, and we can only follow as we may be enabled in our stammering way. When we cannot run we may walk, and when we cannot walk we may creep, and when we cannot move at all we may look with our eyes right onward "toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., July 19, 1899.

OTEGO, N. Y., July 13, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN CHICK AND BEEBE:—I have desired to write a little for the SIGNS, if the Lord shall enable me. In myself I feel unable, but the Lord can speak through a worm; yes, he can trash mountains; may it redound to his glory. I was able to attend the association at Middletown, after a long season of poor health. I thought when I moved to Otego, my time was short upon the earth, little thinking my dear brother would go first. I have cause for gratitude that I was permitted to visit the dear people of God; truly it was a feast of fat things. I sat under his banner with great delight, and the fruit was sweet to my taste. The silver trumpet was sounded, no jarring notes, but all was harmony. The sinner was laid low and Christ was extolled; my soul was fed with the corn of the kingdom; it was heaven to my soul. The ground was prepared to receive it with joy. How blessed when the speaker and hearer are under the influence of the Holy Spirit; then we can say, "My willing soul could stay in such a frame as this, and sit and sing herself away to everlasting bliss."

The sweet Savior is not gone, (blessed be his name). Strength has been given me since I returned, to visit Albany church. Elder Bogardus preached, and we had conference meeting on Saturday evening. I was tired, but enjoyed the communion of saints. Sunday morning I attended service; it was well attended; the Holy Spirit was in our midst; our brother was at liberty. A number of young people attended, and I think the Lord is moving upon the waters there, as a number are deeply exercised about baptism, that will shortly come forward. They are sound in the faith, their experience is good. I am glad that I went. Our dear, departed brother Balas was very anxious I should go with him, but I was not able at that time. When I view the good hand of my God in bringing me to Otego, how wonderful appear his ways. I must be bereaved of my only prop, my dear daughter. Dear brother Bundy wrote for me to come and live with them. There was a difficulty in the way, but the dear Lord removed it. With what pleasure I look back and see the sweet communion we have had together. The Lord was ripening him for glory. In conversation he asked, "Do you think the moment the soul leaves the body it enters into the full presence of its God?" Yes, I do, I said, Do you? He replied, "Yes, I am glad you do. O, it is too much for such a sinful worm to think of." Five weeks before he departed, he came to my room trembling. "Sister," he said, "I have got something to read to you." It was the second chapter of Hosea. As he read it I was melted down. We both sat and wept for some time. He then spoke beautifully upon it; it was a season never to be forgotten by me. But he is gone never to return, and when we remember our loss is his gain, we are enabled to say, "Thy will be done." How delightful the voice that welcomed him: Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord. I must say, I never met one meeker and more humbly feeling his own unworthiness. His life was walked with God. He walked his religion as well as talked it. Though he felt he was nothing, in Christ he was a jewel in the crown of his Redeemer. He was richly led into the deep things of God, and in the kingdom of grace. He was a sweet instructor by the fireside; he shrank from the applause of men. He said, I hope when I am gone but little will be said about me. O, may we bow before our God and say, "Thy will be done." He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. The Lord has put me in the crucible, and has said, When I have tried thee, thou shalt come forth as gold. It is my desire that he may do with me as seemeth him good. I long to be more like my blessed Lord and Master, and am looking for the time when I shall drop this sinful clay. "O, happy day, O blessed abode, I shall be near and like my God," to join in the blessed anthems unto him who hath loved us, and washed us in his own blood. Glory be to him forever and ever.

Since I came to Otego to live, I have been brought very low, and thought death was near, but he hath restored my life. I hope to glorify his great name.

I must insert this, it was the last words our dear brother spoke so we could understand him. I was sitting by his bed; he took my hand and said, "Name written in the Lamb's book of life." I replied, Yes, before the foundation of the world your name was written there. He squeezed my hand and said, "Yes."

I will close. I have not satisfied myself, but hope I have not taken up the

room of some one who would be more able. Please rectify all mistakes. May the best of blessings rest on the church of the living God, and especially on the editors of the SIGNS, and may the Lord enable you by his grace to continue it for the comfort of his poor children who are deprived of the preached word. I may never write again for the SIGNS, as I am in my eighty-second year.

Farewell. Yours in the path of tribulation,

ELIZABETH BEESLEY.

FARMINGTON, Ill., July 17, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN CHICK AND BEEBE:—I inclose an anonymous letter that I received the other day. It is a very good letter, and if you will publish it in the SIGNS, I think that perhaps the sender will see it, for I think him to be a reader of the SIGNS, as he must have obtained my address from them. The letter was mailed in Iowa, on the train. I have no idea from whom it came. If published in the SIGNS, I thought that perhaps I might find out who the writer is. From the reading of the letter I think the writer is acquainted with me, as he asks me to come and visit him. I would like very much to find out who he is.

From your unworthy brother,

E. D. VARNES.

TO E. D. VARNES—DEAR BROTHER:—It has been a long time since I have heard from you, and you have been so much on my mind of late, that I feel strongly impressed with a wish to speak to you, even in the unsatisfactory way of pen and ink. I feel as though I must speak to some one of the household of faith, and as, for some reason, you seem to be my choice, I venture to address you.

Dear brother, I often wonder if you have not lost fellowship for me, and should not wonder if you had. It is a mystery to me how you could do otherwise. I will give you a short sketch of my past life in this vale of tears. Sixty-three years ago, at this time, I was attending an eight months' term in the school of Moses, or the law, (Gal. iii. 24,) where I learned some very bitter lessons. The wormwood and the gall; my soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me, therefore have I hope. I learned there that I was a poor, lost sinner, without hope and without God in the world. I can call to mind now, after this lapse of time, that my anguish of soul was not that I dreaded the consequences of sin, but because I was a sinner, and as it seemed to me, could do nothing but sin. My teacher said that though I obeyed all his rules, and yet offended in one point, I was guilty of the whole. In this awfully severe course of instruction I was not taught how to pray, and yet thought that I knew how, and for a time would try, but finally concluded that my prayer, or what I thought was prayer, was an abomination to God, and only added to the already numberless list of my sins. All this time I was unconsciously wrestling with the almighty God, and then he touched me, and ever since I have been a cripple, unable to stand or go, without my crutches of faith and hope, which sometimes seem too weak to support me, and I sit down in sorrow and anguish of soul, and bemoan my helpless condition.

But to hasten. The lessons I learned in the school of Moses remain with me yet. I learned that the law was holy, spiritual and good, but that I was carnal, sold under sin, and that the commandment which I thought to be unto life, was really unto death. After being some

eight months in this school of rigid and unflinching discipline, a greater than Moses came and transferred me to his school, and, as I trust, taught my heart to pray. I do think the first prayer I ever offered, audible or inaudible, was, "Lord, do with me as seemeth good in thy sight; make me anything or nothing, but let me not sin against thee or against thy holy name, any more." This new Teacher, like Moses, required strict obedience to his precepts, (you know Moses said he was to be like unto him, and that we should hear him in all things,) but his precepts are mild, his yoke easy, and his burden light. But O what a dull pupil I have been, and so disobedient to his precepts; so often playing truant, and so regardless of his instructions. I am led to wonder at the mildness of his chastisements. He has taught me that denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, I should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world. He has taught me, as I hope, the truth, and to love it, and to love his church and his people, and taught my heart to sing, "I love thy kingdom, Lord, the place of thine abode." "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts."

"My soul would pray for Zion still,
While life and breath remains;
There my best friends, my kindred dwell,
There God my Savior reigns."

It was said of our Savior, that though he was a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things that he suffered. O, if I only could learn obedience by the things that I suffer, how glad I think I would be, for obedience has its reward in (not for) the deed. To sum it all up, my only satisfaction in a retrospective view of my past life is in contemplating the goodness of God to me, and what he has done for me, but even that joy is sometimes marred by the rising up before me my own disobedience, unbelief and ingratitude to him, for all his mercies. And now, although well advanced in four score years, I still find a warfare between the old and the new man, and that it is just as fierce as ever. But I am so glad that this will some time be over. I am made glad by the thought that death hath lost its sting, and the grave its terrors.

"I would not live alway—no, welcome the tomb,
Since Jesus hath lain there I dread not its gloom."

As I said in the beginning, I have had to walk on crutches for sixty-three years, in a spiritual sense. I have two pairs of them, faith and hope, and his rod and his staff, and they comfort me in the valley and the shadow of death.

We are both of us well as usual, save our old complaints. I am quite lame from rheumatism, and at times it is a severe task for me to walk a half mile and back. We should enjoy a visit from you very much. I have not been to an Old School Baptist meeting for nearly two years, and doubt very much whether I shall ever enjoy that privilege again.

Love to sister Varnes, and to all who know and love the truth. Farewell.

***

[It is a pleasure to receive and publish such letters as the above good, comforting and suggestive letter, sent us by brother Varnes. The aged pilgrim is traveling on, pilgrim fashion, leaning on his crutches as he goes. They will not fail him. The lessons that he learned sixty-three years ago, in the school of Moses, are the same that we hope we learned some forty years ago, though we were several years learning in that school, before we came into the school of Christ, as we have hope that after a time we did. We are persuaded that our brother is learning yet, and we are sure that we shall always be learners while we live

below. The letter of our unknown brother will doubtless be read with heart-felt interest by all who have traveled the same road described by him.—ED.]

KELLEY'S CORNERS, N. Y., July 15, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE, AND BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN GENERAL:—I desire to express my appreciation of the SIGNS of July 15th, especially some things therein bringing before me, or stirring up my pure mind (if I have such) by way of remembrance. And so I desire to say a few things about what is contained in the fourth verse of the fourteenth chapter of the Romans: "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand."

Paul, in presenting this language, shows conclusively that God, as manifest in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, has made no mistakes in regard to tempering the body, or with regard to establishing its gifts, or in its belief, or in its practice. All is in his hand. So the editorial comes in place in the number referred to. And Elder Durand telling us something with regard to the late lamented and dear Elder Bundy, tells us again something of God's wonderful work and way in preparing one to serve him in faithfulness and truth. How apt we are to misjudge, and how little dispassionate judgment there is regarding divine things. How inconsiderate it would be for me to judge my neighbor's servant, as to his interest in him, or his requirements of him. The master's judgment alone is final; or, to him the servant must stand or fall; that is, he must continue in his service or be rejected by him. Paul does not present this subject as though the Lord began a work and was unsuccessful. Paul would show by this the nature of the calling and trial of the faith of one whom the Lord has purposed shall stand or fill a certain place. I feel sure from the testimony of the word, and from observation, and from personal experience, that notwithstanding all the events of time, pertaining to the one whom the Lord desires to serve him, that one will be made willing and ready to act from a prompting within, even though it be to his own shame and downfall. For as servants of his, no one but the Lord who is in the heavens, and who hath done what hath pleased him, knows why he should let a servant of his destroy himself; yet many a one has done so. The king's heart is in his hand, and he turneth it whithersoever he will. There is a difference between service and worship. There may be service which may be honest in heart and purpose, and yet guided by that wisdom which is from beneath. By this wisdom man is easily deceived. This may be so much so that a man may think he is serving God in killing his people. Such was the service of King Saul in hunting David as a partridge on the mountain. Yet it was needful to try the faith of David, and show the character of Saul. So the carnal-mindedness of man subserves a wonderful purpose. But so far as God is worshiped in spirit and in truth, it is a matter of faith. The carnal mind has nothing to do about it, only as it is brought into subjection to serve. Then is there service in the worship of God. And it is in this sense that Paul speaks when he says, "He shall be holden up, for God is able to make him stand." He is able to make him stand in the truth and in spirit, and to fill the place he designs he shall fill.

We read that another heart was given to Saul, the son of Cis, and he prophesies

with the others. The Lord will give to Israel a king, and things pertaining to the kingdom must interest him. So it is another heart. He feels little. So the man or woman who has begun in their own righteousness may appear to be little or humble. But how different with David, against whom Saul would avenge himself without a cause. And he in his jealous rage disregards his own family interests. No doubt but that he is serving God, or filling up the purpose of God to show the weakness of the flesh, even in David, whom he hates without cause. But David has a new heart given to him. It is not the theocracy or worldly kingdom alone that he looks to, but the glory of God concerning his people. This is the result of the new heart.

I do not need to repeat a word of the editorial, "Let no man despise thee," because of thinking to add or improve; but I would say that I am in harmony with it. While we cannot help the despicable look or act of an opponent, though it be a professed brother or sister in the church, yet the admonition is imperative. And he who holds us up will not see anything to hinder the onward march of his people. The Captain of their salvation says to them in this new heart-work, Follow me. He requires holiness in the inward parts. And no fear of Goliath or rage of King Saul can do more than make the servant of God seek a safe retreat, feeling where his strength lies. And so I must believe that as God works all things after the counsel of his own will, and all things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose, he alone will see to it that there is time, opportunity and place, for every one of his truly called servants. And not one will in this sense be affected by the fact that men despise them.

Your brother,

J. D. HUBBELL.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER WRITTEN BY BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

"You will see in this my notion of good works, that I am far from expecting (as you suppose) that I shall ever merit heaven by them. By heaven we understand a state of happiness infinite in degree, and eternal in duration. I can do nothing to deserve such a reward. He that for giving a draught of water to a thirsty person should expect to be paid with a good plantation, would be modest in his demands, compared with those who think that they deserve heaven for the little good that they do on earth. Even the mixed imperfect pleasures we enjoy in this world, are rather from God's goodness than our merit; how much more such happiness in heaven. For my own part, I have not the vanity to think I deserve it, the folly to expect it, nor the ambition to desire it, but content myself in submitting to the will and pleasure of that God who made me, who hitherto preserved and blessed me, and in whose fatherly goodness I may well confide, that he will never make me miserable, and that even the afflictions I may at any time suffer shall be to my benefit."

[We do not give this extract because the sentiment will be new to our readers, but because the truth of salvation without human merit is so well stated. The least heavenly blessing is greater than the richest earthly treasure. How vain glorious must he be who expects the least heavenly thing as a reward for all that he may do in serving God. We do most blessedly find the blessings in the way of obedience, but never as payment for obedience. This is as true of that portion of blessing which is bestowed upon us here, as it is with regard to final glory. The writer of the above extract saw this clearly, and has expressed it well.—Ed.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1899.

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EDITORS:

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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
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A NUMBER of different writers have made requests for our views upon a variety of Scriptures. Many more such requests are received than can possibly be complied with, unless we possessed far more understanding of the Scriptures, and were willing to almost wholly fill the SIGNS with replies. The Scriptures are the only true rule of faith and practice to the children of God. It is therefore most important that their meaning should be known. Nothing is to be believed or practiced religiously that they do not teach, and all that they do teach for our faith or practice ought to be sought out and followed carefully, and reverently, by all who love the truth of God. But it is not given to us, any more than it is to any one else, to understand or expound all that they contain. There is now on hand quite a number of such requests, and if they should remain unanswered we trust that the writers will not suppose that we are unmindful of them, but rather that we do not understand those Scriptures, or else that we have not time to reply. In this editorial we wish to give some brief replies to several requests.

Brother B. S. Pate, of Dayton, Wash., asks concerning Ezekiel xvi. 60, 61.

The connection shows that the Lord declares unto Israel that while he will chastise them for their wickedness and their abominations, and for having despised the oath, in breaking the covenant which he had made with them, yet he would remember his covenant after all, and would establish it with them. And this should be when they should remember their ways and be ashamed of them. There is, as we understand here, a reference to the times of the gospel, when the borders of Zion should be enlarged, and when the old covenant, which was legal, should pass away. Not only should Israel be blessed under this covenant, but those whom they had despised, but who yet were sisters to her, Sodom and Samaria, should also be remembered, and be given in this covenant of grace to her for daughters. The whole connection teaches the wonders of grace, and that under the covenant of grace all nations should be included, even those which were noted for wickedness, and were, as the Samaritans, entirely outside of the old covenant. And in this time they should be ashamed for all their wickedness which they had done. It seems to us that a gospel salvation and a gospel experience are here presented.

SISTER Nancy McCoy, of Dighton, Kansas, asks concerning Acts xix. 1–6.

These verses record the coming of Paul from Corinth to Ephesus, and that he there found certain disciples, to whom he said, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" They responded that they had not so much as heard whether there were any Holy Ghost. And when he had asked them, "Unto what then were ye baptized? they said, Unto John's baptism." He then told them of the design of the baptism of

John, that they should believe on him shat should come, that is, on Christ Jesus. And when they had heard this they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And Paul laid his hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost. This is the narrative of these six verses. We have long believed that one lesson at least is taught here, viz: Orderly gospel baptism was insisted upon by Paul. It seems clear that John did not baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. His baptism was simply unto repentance, that they should believe on him that should come. His baptism was all that was required, and was valid, until the commission given to the disciples when Jesus was about to depart out of the world. After that his baptism was obsolete, and must be laid one side. It had accomplished its purpose. Another design in baptism was now to be presented, and those who were the recipients of this other baptism, occupied somewhat different ground from John's disciples. It is evident to us these disciples at Ephesus had received John's baptism after the commission was given to baptize in the name of Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Before this that baptism was valid, being all that heaven required, but after this it was invalid. Therefore these disciples had not received real gospel baptism, and must be baptized in order before they could be recognized as a church of believers in order. We have always understood that they were really baptized again. The lesson which we ought to derive from this, is that no baptism can be received as gospel baptism, or as that which fills all the requirements of the law of Zion, save that which is according to that law. Three things are requisite to valid gospel baptism now. If one of the three is lacking, the baptism is invalid. The three things are, first, a gospel subject or a real believer. Second, dipping in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Third, the administrator shall himself be one who has been authorized to administer the ordinance. Upon these grounds, as well as in harmony with the teachings of this Scripture, we cannot receive members who have been dipped by those who have been sprinkled or poured upon, and so have not been baptized themselves, and who therefore are not connected with the church of Christ. None who are not members of the church of Christ, and acting as ministers of that church, have any right to administer any ordinance of the church. Therefore their baptism is invalid, and those who come to the church with no better baptism must receive proper baptism under the law of Zion in the church of God.

BROTHER Joseph Denny, of New London, Iowa, asks for views upon Luke xiv. 26. Jesus said, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

It is manifest that there can be no contradiction here, of the teachings of the Scripture which show how we ought to love and care for those who bear a natural relationship to us in this life. We need not call up the many portions of the word where love to parents, and children, and brothers, and sisters, and husbands, and wives, is enjoined upon all who believe. This Scripture does not in any sense contradict these admonitions. To admit that there is a contradiction would be to upset the faith of all who believe in the infallible teaching of the

Holy Ghost, in the Scriptures. The word hate, does not in the original Greek, in which the New Testament Scriptures were written, always mean ill will, or a wish to destroy, but often signifies a less degree of love, or that something else is preferred. We have no question that this is the meaning of the word here. In Matthew x. 37, the same thought is presented when the Savior forbids that we should love father, or mother, more than himself. In Matt. xix. 29, the word used to present the same thing is "forsaken." A man must forsake father and mother, &c. Most certainly the Savior does not mean to urge upon his disciples what he did not himself practice, for even in the hour of his expiring agony he recognized the claims of natural affection, in committing his mother to the care of the beloved disciple, but he does mean that none of these earthly ties must be preferred for a moment to his service. If these things come up as hindrances to our service to him, they are to be dealt with as one would deal with an enemy. They are to be put one side. They are always to be held in subordination to his will and his service. It was in the same spirit that Jesus rebuked one who would be his disciple, but who desired to first bury his father. Emphatically he teaches that no earthly tie must come in between the soul and himself. The grace of God so works in the heart as to produce this denial of self. The Redeemer speaks of this as being the bearing of the cross for his sake. Natural hatred finds no cross in hating. But the hatred of which the Savior speaks, and which he here enjoins, is a heavy cross to him who is called upon to walk in this way. Only grace can thus conquer all natural affection, and make all things subject to the dominion of Christ.

We will add that E. Johnson, of Morrison, Ill., has asked that we write upon the words recorded in Matt. x. 38. This is in substance the same request as the above. The cross referred to in this last text is this forsaking of all that is earthly, for the cause of Christ. It is crossing to the flesh. In this comes to view the crucifying of the flesh. These are the fruits of this crucifixion. Unless such a work has been wrought in the soul, as causes one to forsake all for Christ's sake, he says, We are not worthy of him. This is the work which makes men meet to be his disciples.

MRS. A. Busenback, of Mt. Vernon, Iowa, asks us to write upon the question, Why was not the offering of Cain acceptable?

All that can be known of the reason why Abel's offering was accepted, while that of Cain was not, is found in the testimony of the Scriptures. It is said, Cain brought of the fruits of the earth, of which he was a tiller, while Abel brought of the firstlings of the flock, and God had respect to Abel and his offering, while to Cain and his offering, he had not respect. Paul in Hebrews tells us, that it was by faith that Abel offered a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain. From this we learn that Cain had not faith. The testimony is that without faith it is impossible to please God. The evidence that he did not possess faith, is found in the character of the offering which he brought. Faith always looks to Christ, and presents him before God, whenever the soul comes into his presence. No sacrifice can be accepted before God save, as first of all, Christ is recognized as the Savior and Redeemer of the soul. If there be a consciousness of sin, and a confession of it before God, then Christ must

be brought as the salvation from sin. Cain offered a sacrifice which did not acknowledge sin, or the need of an atonement, before God, and therefore it could not be accepted. The world is full, it is to be feared, of Cain-worshipers to-day. Thousands who are full of good deeds, and who are examples of strict moral rectitude in the sight of men, and in their own sight, and who are full of all kindly works toward their fellow men, seek to come to God with this alone, and, like Cain, they are not accepted, and their offering is rejected.

On the other hand, the faith of Abel brought that offering which would best typify the atonement of the Lord, to which he by faith looked for acceptance, and on account of the faith which God had given him, God had respect to him, (as he afterwards had to Abraham) and to his offering, and he obtained the testimony that he was righteous; God testifying of his gifts. This is the only way in which God testifies to any man now that he is righteous. Man testifies to himself that he is righteous, when he performs just works, and good deeds of kindness, but God gives this testimony only by faith in the crucified and risen Lord. Considered aside from Christ, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. And Paul expressly declares concerning all natural men, that there is no difference. In the faith of Abel, and in the offering of his faith, we see a confession of his own sin, and of the fact that he could not come unto God except in the merit of another. Abel was, as a man, no better than was Cain, but Abel came to God under the shelter of the blood of the atonement, while Cain came without blood. So one was accepted, while the other was rejected.

In these two men, and in their sacrifices, we see presented the two systems of religion which have always divided mankind from the beginning. The one seeks to come to God with all the fruits of his toil, while the other brings only the name of Jesus. The one with all his good works is rejected, while the other with all his sins is accepted through Christ. The religious world is divided between the publicans and the Pharisees, between the Cains and the Abels, to-day. All who think that their own works recommend them to God, are brethren of Cain; while all who come sheltered alone by the blood of the atonement, are brethren of Abel.

C.

A FORGERY.

A LETTER has been received from an unknown correspondent, sending us a copy of a letter which it is desired should be published with some editorial comments. The letter is one which has been going the rounds of the press for some years. It purports to be a letter written by our Savior, and found many years after his crucifixion, under a stone, under peculiar circumstances. It is said that upon the stone was written these words, "Blessed is he that shall turn me over." The time after the crucifixion was said to have been sixty-five years.

If we knew who our correspondent was we would reply by private letter, but as we do not, we will say here that it has been proved again and again, that the letter is a puerile forgery, and we do not have room in the SIGNS for the publication of such stuff as is found in it. The circumstances under which it was said to have been found were childish in the extreme. Its contents are as unlike the teaching of the Savior as recorded in the gospels, as the utterances of a child are unlike those of a man. The inventor of

it did not know the truth of the gospel, and beside was a child in knowledge and understanding. It is noteworthy solely as a specimen of the superstition of the early ages.

We would not trouble the readers of the SIGNS with this notice, did we know who wrote us about it. We trust that the writer will not give it a moment's credence.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE SALVATION OF INFANTS.

THE doctrine of salvation by grace alone, as held by all consistent Old School Baptists, is the only doctrine ever published in the world that affords the least hope for the salvation of those who die in infancy. This we propose to prove by the most clear and positive testimony. All other doctrines represent salvation to be conditional; but the theories of men vary much in regard to what the conditions are on which salvation is to be secured, but all conditionalists agree that something is to be done by the sinner, in order to secure salvation. Some assert that the condition is faith and repentance; some that it is the giving up of our hearts to God, while others contend that a law of righteousness must be worked out, and "except we be circumcised and keep the law, we cannot be saved." Some again represent the salvation of infants to rest upon the piety of their parents, and their work in having them rantized, or sprinkled into the pale of the church. Perhaps the most common theory among the Arminians is, that infants are not sinners, consequently are not lost, do not require to be saved. This last position is generally taken by conditionalists, to avoid the inconvenience and impractibility of showing how any infants can be saved on their conditional plans. Hence they set forth one way for adults, and another for infants. But if infants were not sinners, they could not die. "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law." "Death has passed on all men, because all have sinned." As Adam embodied all his posterity when he transgressed the law of God, all the human family sinned in that transgression. "By one man's offense death reigned by one." "Therefore as by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation."—Rom. v. 18. The Scriptures fully demonstrate the fact that all infants and all adults have sinned, and as sinners judgment has come upon all unto condemnation, and it is therefore "appointed unto them all once to die." And the fact that some infants do die, corroborates the testimony of the Scriptures, that all have sinned and are sinners. By these two witnesses the solemn fact is so clearly demonstrated as to defy successful contradiction. Certainly if it were not so, they could have neither part nor lot in that redemption and salvation which is by and through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Admitting, then, what cannot be denied, that all infants are conceived in sin, shapen in iniquity, and that they all go astray from the womb, speaking lies, the question arises, How can they be saved from sin, and the consequences of sin? Divine revelation declares positively that there is but one way. Our Lord Jesus Christ has said, "No man can come unto the Father but by me." "There is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved." If then there is but one way whereby a sinner can be saved, and that one way is Christ, then the notion that infants are saved by the piety, faith or works of

their parents, is swept by the board. How strange the infatuation, that the piety and works of parents can save their infants, when neither can avail anything in their own salvation. For salvation is "Not of works, lest any man should boast." As parents, therefore, cannot save their children, and God has said, If Noah, Daniel and Job stood before him, they could neither save son nor daughter, let us examine the conditional plan. Supposing salvation were offered to all sinners, on condition of something to be by them performed, could the infant perform it? Tell them that they must believe a preached gospel, repent of their sins, make themselves a new heart and a right spirit, that they must love God, reverence, obey and worship him, that they must give up their hearts, and that if they fail to do so, they must be damned, (for in this kind of language all conditionalists talk and preach to adult sinners,) On that plan who could hope for the salvation of a single infant? Very few, if any, even of the Arminians, will claim that infants can be saved by their own compliance with terms and acceptance of overtures, or even use of means.

Some contend that infants come into the world pure and sinless, and go so far as to fix for them a period in life at which they become accountable to God for their conduct; previous to which, they affirm, the infant is not accountable. To fix the precise time at which they cross the line, and become responsible beings, has been a matter of grave and perplexing deliberation among them. But in direct contradiction to this theory, the Scriptures of truth declare that they are conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity, and all infants and adults became accountable beings to God, as soon as God breathed into Adam's nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. To deny this, is an attempt to impeach the justice of God himself; for if in their creation in Adam they were not accountable to God, what right had God in justice to pass on them the judgment to condemnation, of which we read in Romans v. 18? Did the holy and righteous God enter judgment on any that were not accountable beings? Did, or did not death reign by one man, and from Adam to Moses, over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression? Most certainly it did; see Rom. v. 14. And could it have so reigned in justice over unaccountable beings? What daring impiety! What blasphemy then, to say that children come into the world holy and sinless, when the Scriptures, which are inspired by God himself, declare the very reverse.

Perhaps we have written enough for this time, in defense of our position that all infants and all adults are sinners, and by nature children of wrath. The object of this article is to give our views on the subject of their salvation. We have already said, and proved, too, that there is but one way of salvation for any of the posterity of Adam. To show then, that this one only way of salvation is perfectly adapted to the condition of infants, let us examine the doctrine of salvation by grace, and that in the light of what God has revealed in his word on the subject.

First. The doctrine of eternal and personal election is essential to salvation. We must admit this, or charge God with doing that which was not necessary to secure the salvation of his people. For the apostle has said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him

before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."—Eph. i. 3, 4. This was God's method of securing his object, namely, that we should be holy and without blame. Arminians may think election unnecessary to secure our holiness and blamelessness before God, but it is enough for us to know that "So it seemed good in his sight." And whether men like it or not, God hath chosen us (his people) in Christ, before the foundation of the world.

Second. As we have proven that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and that the chosen people of God were all by nature the children of wrath, even as others, and all were under condemnation by the law, as sinners, therefore redemption was also indispensably necessary to our salvation. And we are happy to find the testimony, "engraved as in eternal brass," that, "By one offering Christ has perfected forever them that are sanctified." That he has carried their sorrows, borne their griefs, and the chastisement of their peace was upon him, and with his stripes they are healed.

Thirdly. Regeneration is indispensable to our salvation. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."—John iii. 3. And that birth must be "Not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man; but of God." —John i. 13.

Election, redemption and regeneration, and every other requisite brought to view in the gospel of our salvation, are so essential to our salvation that in their absence, all, whether infant or adult, must forever perish in their sins. Now let us inquire if it was or is any more difficult for God to elect, redeem or regenerate infants than adults? Election being before the foundation of the world, must have been wholly of God, and in that matter the people chosen must have been perfectly passive, "Ye have not chosen me; but I have chosen you."—John xv. 16. Adults then could have no more to do in effecting their election, than infants, for it is all of God, "Who hath saved us, and called us, with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9.

Redemption also was a work in which all infants and adults were equally passive. "For our Lord Jesus Christ, is of God, (not of us) made unto us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." We had no hand in this work. He, Christ, gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Can there then be anything in redemption better adapted to adults than infants? Neither adults nor infants could have any agency, directly nor indirectly in their regeneration. None are so silly as to pretend that they were the agents of their own natural generation, and if that was impossible, is it not a still greater impossibility that an earthly, fleshly being could beget, conceive and bring forth immortality? That which is born of the flesh is flesh, nothing more, but that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. "It is," says Jesus, "the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words which I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are life." But generation and regeneration imply a prior existence in a progenitor. Levi was in the loins of his great grandfather, Abraham, when Melchisedec met him and blessed him. And all the saints were in Christ Jesus, their spiritual

immortal progenitor, when the eternal Father blessed him, and all his saints in him, with all spiritual blessings, according as he had chosen them in him before the foundation of the world. What agency could infants or adults, or adults more than infants, have had in that before the foundation of the world? But the inspired testimony of God allows no room for caviling on this subject, for, as we have already quoted, "They were born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God," "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man; but of God."

From what we have said and proved, it appears that in all that is essential to salvation, the subjects of it are as passive in the hands of God as is the clay in the hands of the potter. The mightiest man that ever trod upon the earth, is just as powerless and helpless in the matter of salvation, as the feeblest infant that was ever inspired with human life, and neither the one nor the other can possibly be saved by any other than by the power of God. To all who are saved it is said, "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast; for ye are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that ye should walk in them." The hope and prospect of the application of this salvation which is altogether of God, in regard to its application to any of the children of men, is founded on the eternal purpose purposed in himself before the world began, and not on anything to be done by us, after the world began; and on the faithful pledge which God has graciously given. Hence Paul says, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."—Titus i. 2. "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Can any child of grace ask for more?

> "Enough, my gracious God,
> Let faith triumphant cry;
> My heart can on this promise live,
> Can on this promise die."

We have redeemed our pledge, and proved that the doctrine of salvation alone by grace, as held by all consistent Old School Baptists, is the only doctrine that can possibly save infants. But still the question returns, Are all infants saved? The answer to this inquiry God has seen proper to withhold from us, it is not our privilege therefore to answer it. Why he has not told us plainly, may be that from necessity on our part, we should trust the whole matter to him. The trial of our faith is very precious, and when we are called to give up unto his hands our little ones, our faith and confidence in him is put to a trying test. Job said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; and blessed be the name of the Lord." David said, "I was dumb, because thou didst it." And our God has said, "Be still, and know that I am God." Are we afraid to resign our infants to his hand? Why should we be? We know that he is too wise to err, and too gracious to be unkind.

We may take another view of this subject. Had the Lord plainly told us that all who should die in infancy should certainly be saved, would we not beg of him to take all our infants away in that state? But there is no saving virtue in their early death, for in their death, as in their birth, they are passive. The bounds of their habitation, as well as the number of their days, are with the Lord. It is infinitely better for us, better for our in-

fants, and more sure to promote the glory of God, that it should be even so. The writer of this article has been called in the inscrutable providence of God to surrender four lovely babes to him who gave them, but he has never felt in the least uneasy about their future state. They are taken from the evils of this mortal state. And we do believe that God can and does regenerate infants as well as adults. That quickening power and grace which could reach the thief on the cross, in his expiring moments, or could impart spiritual life to John the Baptist even before he was born, can and does reach the dying infant. Without being born of the Spirit no infant or adult can enter into the kingdom of God, but that preparation being wholly of God, will never be withheld where its bestowment would be for the glory of God, or the best good of his saints. How ready Abraham was, when exercised by that faith which God had given him, to offer up his only son to God, and if we have that faith which Abraham had, will it not subdue our fears, and lead us to yield up our children, in death and in life, into his gracious hands? Living or dying, may God direct their course, and ours, and may his will be done on earth as in heaven. Be it our prayer that he may reconcile us to his will, conform us to the image of his Son, and save us with an everlasting salvation. Amen.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., December 1, 1856.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$282 55
A friend, Kentucky	5 00
Total to date	$287 55

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At 8:15 o'clock, Saturday morning, May 6th, 1899, at the family residence in Ball township, **James B. Stout,** aged 41 years. Mr. Stout's death was due to nervous prostration. Some four years ago he was stricken with the malady and never recovered. He spent several years away from home, and returned a year ago last January. Last Wednesday he was stricken with nervous prostration, and was very ill until death relieved him. Mr. Stout was born in Ball township, Oct. 19th, 1857, and had claimed Sangamon County as his residence all through life. From 1881 to 1895 he was employed at the Farmers' National Bank, in this city, but was compelled to resign on account of ill health. He was a son of Mr. and Mrs. Philemon Stout, two of the oldest residents of the County. His parents survive, together with two brothers, Samuel J. and Joab P. Stout, residing in Ball township, and one sister, Mrs. William T. Lewis, residing in this city.

The above, clipped from an Illinois State journal, will be read, if published in the SIGNS, by many of the deceased, with sadness of heart, at the thought of his being cut down in the very midst of a life of promise and hope. The aged parents, brother Philemon and sister Stout, and the surviving brothers and sister, all have the sympathy of friends, far and near, that knew and loved Mr. Stout, who was a genial, kind-hearted, well informed and was possessed of good and noble impulses, such as are always attractive in a young man. He had never made any public profession of religion, but his thoughts were much on the subject. No one probably read the Bible more than he, as is verified by the hundreds of marked texts which occur in every book in the Bible, which he always had at hand.

The funeral was held at the Sugar Creek Baptist church, on Monday, May 8th, and was attended by one of the largest funeral assemblies ever seen in that section. The funeral services was conducted by Elder C. Purvines and the writer, after which interment took place in the Stout Cemetery.

ALSO,

DIED—At her home near Pawnee, Ill., July 24th, 1899, **Mrs. Lillie Molohan,** aged about 31 years. The deceased was a daughter of brother and sister C. Purvines, of Cotton Hill, Ill., who mourn not as those without hope, and unto whom the Lord gave a spirit of resignation to the divine will in the trying ordeal, seldom seen on similar sad occasions. Her sufferings, though her last illness was brief, could not be easily described, her disease being cerebro spinal meningitis. Having never made a public profession of religion, yet she left evidence of acceptance with him who called her away from her earthly sorrows. She left a husband and two little children, (the youngest born only a day or two before the death of the mother) who will know her no more as wife and mother.

The funeral, which was characterized by a very large attendance, was held at the Sugar Creek church, near Cotton Hill, on the 25th inst., and was attended by Elders John Conley, W. A. Thompson and the writer, who tried to preach from the words recorded in 1 Cor. xv. 19.

J. G. SAWIN.

MATTOON, Ill., July 29, 1899.

OUR beloved father, **Hugh Caldwell,** was born Feb. 22d, 1818, and died June 23d, 1899, aged 81 years, 4 months and 1 day. During a long and protracted illness he was very patient, hopeful and cheerful, always easy to please, and so grateful for all the attention and kindness shown him by neighbors, friends, children or grandchildren. He was married in the spring of 1845, to Rhoby Remington, in Ohio. To them were born five children, two sons and three daughters. The three daughters are still living, the two sons having preceded him to their eternal home. Our dear mother died in March, 1881, since which time he has lived on the old home place with one of his daughters. All the days of his appointed time has he waited till his change came. Father was a firm believer in the doctrine of predestination of all things. He put his entire trust in Jesus, fully believing in salvation by grace alone.

In 1849 he went to California. During his absence his first born son died, and in the letter he wrote home to our mother, in referring to the loss of their darling boy, he asked her to read Psalm cxxi., for comfort and consolation. "The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand." "The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul."

He leaves three daughters, together with their husbands, and five grandsons, to mourn their loss; but we feel that our loss is his eternal gain, and that, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

NANCY CALDWELL BRENT.

KIBBIE, Ill., July 24, 1899.

Albert G. Venable was born in Virginia, April 11th, 1811, and died in Logan Co., Ky., July 6th, 1899. He was married in 1836, to Miss Susan Ogden, with whom he lived happily for sixty-three years. With the weight of eighty-eight years pressing upon him he was stricken down with flux. In this condition he lingered twelve days. The final moment came, "The weary wheels of life stood still," and a long and useful life peacefully ended. It is but a just tribute to say that in all the relations of life he was a man of integrity and uprightness. He was quiet and unobtrusive, kind and considerate. His hospitality was elegant and cordial, and dispensed in that easy, unpretentious style which characterizes the cultivated gentleman. His piety and devotion to God and the church were most ardent and untiring. It is useless to expect the void made by his death to be filled, for it cannot. None will feel their loss more keenly than his aged widow, whose feeble form and trembling step indicates plainly that she, too, will soon be called home.

May great grace rest upon her in the decline of life, and may her sun go down without a dimming cloud.

ANYE D. MIZE.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine, wil be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist church, in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing on Friday, Sept. 1st, 1899, and continuing three days. We shall gladly welcome all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and especially brethren in the ministry who feel it in their hearts to visit us.

Those coming will be met at North Berwick railroad depot, on Thursday before the time appointed for our yearly conference.

FRED. W. KEENE.

THE Old School Baptist church of Albany & Troy have arranged to hold a two days meeting, Thursday and Friday, Sept. 28th and 29th, 1899. Ticket to Albany, N. Y., then take Belt Line steam cars to Bath, five miles from Albany, where there will be conveyances Wednesday afternoon, to convey friends three miles in country, to place of meeting. Should any come Thursday morning, they will please send line to brother Chas. Shade, 415 Canal St., Albany, N. Y., or Mr. Delos Becker, Defreestville, N. Y. Meeting Saturday and Sunday following, at Troy and Sand Lake.

We will gladly welcome all that can come, and hope to see many.

D. M. VAIL.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, with the Waterford church, three miles east of Lewiston, Fulton Co., Ill., on Friday, Sept. 1st, 1899, at 10 o'clock a m.

Those coming over the C., B. & Q. R. R., from the north, will be met on Thursday evening before, and from the south on Thursday evening, and Friday morning, at 7 a. m. Those coming from north and west of Galesburg, will take Narrow Gage Railroad, at 7:40 a. m., and 1:50 p. m., on Thursday before.

A cordial invitation is extended to all, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the church in Whitefield, Maine, to commence on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1899, and continue three days.

Those coming from the south, on the Wiscasset & Quebec Railroad, will be met at the Depot in Whitefield, at the afternoon train on Thursday, and conveyed to places of entertainment, and from there to the meeting. We will be glad to meet all lovers of the truth who feel to come.

J. H. LOWELL, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the First Church of Roxbury, on the second Wednesday and Thursday in September, (13th and 14th,) 1899, to begin at 10 o'clock a. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all, especially ministering brethren.

Those coming by rail will be met at Roxbury on Tuesday, the day before the meeting.

WILLIAM BALLARD, Church Clerk.

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2714. Extra Morocco, red and gold edges, limp, round corners, leather lined, $6.50.

2793. Algerian Morocco, red and gold edges, extended covers, round corners, leather lined, silk sewed, $7.50.

THE

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AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 67. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1899. NO. 17.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LOVE AND OBEDIENCE.

BRETHREN BELOVED:—It is in my heart to write to you of love and obedience, that we may see the relation between them, and so the better appreciate the love of God in Christ, and magnify his holy name for his love bestowed upon us.

Text: "If a man love me, he will keep my words."—John xiv. 23. The Son of God, who loved us, and gave himself for us, thus spoke to the apostles. It was when they were separated from all the multitudes of men, the dark night of his betrayal, in his last discourse with his loving disciples before his death on the Roman cross for their sins the next day. He had just given them his new commandment of love to one another, and had said to them, "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me."

Our blessed Lord in these brief words (the Father's word) which they heard or received, blessedly enlightens and instructs his disciples; and that they might understand the true and spiritual meaning of this word, he adds, "But the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." This should be fulfilled to them in and "at that day," after the Lord should come up out of the legal night, the dark wilderness of sin and death, with his bride leaning upon him. Hence, says the beloved John, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." In this "glorious day" the resurrected Son of God is "the Sun of righteousness," "the life and the light" of all his disciples, in whom he is, and they are in him. This is a

most sacred union, holy and everlasting and blessed. The Son, now risen from the dead, to die no more, is in the Father, and the living and loving disciples are in the Son, and he is in them. Herein is the source, the origin and fountain of all divine life and love and obedience to the commandments of Jesus. In this is found the nature and the fulfillment of his new commandment to his disciples. Divine love is the foundation, the springing fountain, the "good ground," the constraining power and holy motive, which underlies and prepares the obedient heart and active life unto keeping the commandments of Jesus. Nothing else is pleasing to God, nor accepted of him, but is only "a form of godliness, but denies the power thereof." It is drawing nigh unto God with the mouth, and honoring him with the lips, while the heart is far from him. Such professed service and formal obedience is selfish, self-honoring and self-pleasing, and its prompting motive and incentive is the reward to be received for such work and service. Jesus says of all such workers, "Verily, they have their reward." For they serve for the reward, the pay, the good they shall receive for their good service. This reward or pay they call "time salvation," which, they say, is a conditional reward for conditional obedience or service, which they either voluntarily perform, or let alone. Who cannot see that all this is of self, and for self? Remove this actuating motive of conditional reward, and deny this selfish, legal principle, and those who hold to it will at once say that your doctrine leads to saying, "Let us do evil, that good may come;" and, "Let us sin, that grace may abound." For they seem to see and feel no sufficient motive and incentive in the grace of God's love shed abroad in the heart, the powerful motive that Paul felt, saying, "For the love of Christ constraineth us," to constrain them to obey from the heart, or keep the commandments of Jesus *because* they love him. So they labor to establish another principle as a motive to prompt to religious service, and this thing they have named, "conditional time salvation," which "depends upon themselves," and which salvation consists in "conditional rewards," or payment for conditional works of obedience. That this is the underlying principle and actuating motive of the entire religious world in their professed service and formal obedience to God, from the pope of Rome to Brigham Young and the Mormons, there can be no question; but for any of the Old Baptists to teach and try to enforce this slavish or servile, legal and selfish principle, is passing strange, and its very nature and only tendency is to undervalue and deny the power and sufficiency of the grace of God, and the efficiency of the constraining love of Christ. This legal principle of conditionalism in salvation, whether it be everlasting or time salvation, turns away from the divine love and grace as not sufficiently powerful to save and lead to righteous and godly living in this present world, and substitutes the creature-pleasing motive of conditional rewards, and the creature-terrorizing goad or spur of punishments, as more successful in "winning souls to Christ," or causing christians to keep his commandments. It is a snare and a cheating delusion, which, while it may honor and please the self-serving sinner, dishonors the Savior and his grace and love. His true and precious word is, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Thus he teaches that keeping his commandments springs out of love to him, as the pure water from its living foun-

tain, and the good fruit from the good tree. This is the principle and law of God in grace as in nature. "God is love." "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God: for God is love. * * * We love him, because he first loved us." (1 John iv.) Our love, then, is of God, and he is the fullness and cause of our divine love: "Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." (Rom. v.) So then, any religious work or service which does not spring from this divine love, as the manifest effect and fruit of love, is not obedience to the commandments of our loving Lord, though it may be immersion and joining a church, praying and preaching. On the other hand, Jesus says, "If a man love me, he will keep my words." This is the certain fruit of love to him; this love inspires and moves that man or one to keep his words, and this willing keeping of his words is the active power and expression of love to the Lord Jesus. How shameful and slanderous to charge that this heart-given obedience and service of love, which is the reigning grace of God, reduces the loving servant of Christ to a mere irresponsible and passive machine. So far from it, the most sacred responsibility, the dearest obligations and the most self-sacrificing, consecrated and devoted obedience known to angels or men, in heaven or on earth, arise from and exist in LOVE. Without this, all religious sacrifice, service and work is merely a heartless, hollow form, a mocking hypocrisy, and so far from being pleasing to the Lord and rewarded by him, he says, "He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings." However zealous he may be in religious work, he does not keep the commandments of Jesus, only as he yields the self-denying and true obedience of love. And this unbribed, unbought service of love finds its blessed and full recompense and reward in thus laying the heart's best devotions upon the altar of love. And with such sacrifices God is well pleased. The sacrifice of a broken heart and contrite spirit is honoring to him, and to this one he hath respect.

"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous," says the loving John. This is like the word of Jesus in the text, showing that keeping his commandments cannot be separated from the love of God, and they bear the close relation to each other of *cause* and *effect*.

It is regarded by all good people naturally and morally, that the self-sacrificing service of human love, which makes willing martyrs of thousands of mothers especially, and of fathers and children, wives and husbands, who do all and suffer all for love's sake, is the most beautiful and potent and sacred sentiment and motive in human life, compared with which any service or obedience which is prompted by the hope of self-reward, or the fear of punishment, is unworthy, sordid and mean. A service that is bought, or done for hire or reward, is servile and selfish, for the one who performs such service does so for the benefit he shall receive, and the reward is the motive and impelling cause. This principle makes the world extremely selfish and sordid. It has corrupted and blighted the best governments of men, and it has vitiated all the religions of the entire religious world. It entered the temple of God itself, polluted and debased it, so that his holy Son told this very religious

people, who professed to be serving God in their devotions, that they had made his Father's house a den of thieves. More lamentable still, this principle and motive for religious service and formal obedience to the Lord's commandments has crept into the church of God. So that even here, where the new commandment of love should be the only law, the one sweetly constraining motive, wherein the loving voice of him who "loved the church and gave himself for it," should be lovingly heeded, saying, "If ye love me, keep my commandments;" alas! in this sacred sanctuary of loving worship to the God of love, this corrupting principle of serving for reward has entered, and makes its appeals to the selfishness of man, saying, Come and join the church and serve the Lord, for the reward you shall receive. The fruit of this is, just as it was in the church at Antioch, and the churches of Galatia, confusion and trouble. It is nothing more nor less than sowing to the flesh, and of the flesh reaping corruption. This principle of conditional rewards for conditional obedience and service, as a motive and incentive in religious service and worship, is displeasing to the holy God, who looks not at the outward appearance, but sees the heart as it is, and it is corrupting to those who thus serve. They serve not the Lord, but themselves. The children of the loving Father in heaven should never be tempted by this flesh-pleasing motive, as the devil thus tempted the holy Son of God, holding out to him a big reward. It is an appeal to selfishness and self love; therefore it is worldly and legal in its nature, and it is the motive principle in all worldly or carnal religion and service.

"If a man love me, he will keep my words," is the infallible doctrine of the loving and obedient Son of God. Love to the adored Savior gives the loving soul the good will to keep his words, and it is the divine power and pure motive which causes him to believe in the Lord with the heart, and to obey him from the heart. By the Holy Ghost is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, and out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, and so with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Thus and in this way do the loving and willing and obedient children of God worship him in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. There is nothing in true worship and service which love will not sweetly move the loving heart to do; no sacrifice too hard or great for pure love to make. Even "faith worketh by love and purifieth the heart." Remember, "love is of God," and the love of God is the most holy and powerful and active of all powers and principles and motives. The faith that is born of love is the only principle and motive by which it is possible to truly obey and please God. It is this that is dearer than life, and stronger than death. It made Abraham willing to quit his kindred and become a stranger in a strange land. It led his willing feet up Mount Moriah, to offer up his son, whom he loved more than his own life. It led the obedient feet of the suffering Son of God up Mount Calvary, to give himself a willing and all-sufficient sacrifice of compassionate and devoted love. O blessed obedience of all-consuming, holy, deathless love! May I thus love and obey, serve and please God. The meek and lowly service of one such loving heart, though it be given in tears and self-sacrifice and suffering, is infinitely more pleasing and glorifying to God, who is rich in mercy and great in love,

than all that has ever been offered in formal worship to him by countless human souls from any other principle or motive.

In conclusion, then, if we keep the commandments of God, it is his love in our hearts as the single and sacred cause and motive by which we do so. If any other principle or persuasion actuates our obedience or service, we are not keeping the commandments of God, which can only be kept in the singleness of the pure love of God in the heart. The hope of reward as an incentive to keeping his commandments, has no place in the service of love. Neither is the fear of punishment an incentive in keeping the loving Father's commandments, and such a notion is slavish and a reproach to love. "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love," is the lovely sentiment of the loving John. The love of the Father and Son and Spirit is the blessed and infinite motive and active cause of all the great and infinite sacrifice and obedience and service of the holy Three-One for us; and all the blessings and joys of salvation which we receive, on earth and in heaven, are the unmerited and unbought rewards of the love of God, the riches of his grace. Now, the love of God is not conditional love, neither is his grace conditional. So, then, salvation from sin, from any sin or all sin, is not conditional, for the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin, and his atoning blood is not conditional. It is grace, then, that saves us from all sin. Our entire service of obedience is the service of love, and "love is of God;" it is the gift or grace of God, and he has bestowed it upon us so richly as to call us his children. So our obedience is neither the bought service of a hired servant, nor the coerced service of a slave, but it is the heart-given service of a loving child. The motive in keeping the Lord's commandments, therefore, is neither the hope of reward, nor the fear of punishment, but *because we love him.* This, dear brethren, is like his obedient and self-sacrificing service for us, for it was because he loved us that he gave his obedient life of suffering for us.

"If a man love me, he will keep my words." "Love is the fulfilling of the law." "Love is the fountain whence all true obedience flows." "The christian loves the God he knows, and serves the God he loves." Love sanctifies and beautifies all devotional service, and makes it acceptable, honoring and pleasing. No other principle or motive can. God will accept no other. "If ye love me," is the only fitting or qualifying principle, the only "wedding garment" in which we can enter into our Lord's holy service and keep his commandments. Unless his love is the consecrating motive and prompting principle or sentiment in the heart of the worshiper, he does not, he cannot enter here, but is an intruder in this sacred place, and has no right to the holy commandments of the blessed Lord. His commandments are kept and done in love to him. Nothing else but love will keep them. O, that we all more perfectly knew and realized this sacred truth.

"Do not *I* love thee, O my Lord?
Behold my heart and see,
And turn each cursed idol out
That dares to rival thee."

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., July 28, 1899.

OPELIKA, Ala., June 6, 1899.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I feel this morning, after days of trial and of grief, a kind of refreshing. I hope

that it is from the Lord. I have been lately cast about here and there, and could hardly locate myself, and have gone on and filled my appointments regularly in this frame of mind. I am filling about fifteen appointments per month in my field of labor, trying as I have ability to preach to six churches. I feel wholly inadequate and insufficient. On my return from Andersonville, Ga., a church which I have been serving for about ten years, I stopped last night at Phœnix city, Ala., and an arrangement was made for preaching after six o'clock, and I used as a subject, "Upon what does the salvation of a sinner depend?" And somehow or other it is so upon my mind still that I cannot help writing you. The question is of importance to all the heirs of grace and mercy. There are but three positions to be taken with regard to the matter. One is, that it must depend alone upon man; another is, that it must depend alone upon God; the third is, that it depends both upon God and man. Now one or the other of these positions must be correct. Our opinions are worth nothing unless proved by, and in harmony with, the testimony of God, which is truth.

If I had an opinion that a sack of flour weighed 150 pounds, and another man had an opinion that it weighed 175 pounds, one or the other must be wrong; and we can settle the question only by bringing the sack to the standard scales. On the standard scales we put it after they are balanced, and we find the exact weight, and the question is settled, and the dispute ended. So in religious weights or questions they must all be settled by the standard scales, the everlasting balances of God, the Bible, the testimony of inspiration. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

We will now bring this question, and see what divine revelation says. It first settles the question of the origin, and the nature and extent of sin. It settles the condition of man as a sinner, that he is lost. A man is not lost so long as he can locate himself. Adam was once innocent, and in communion with God. He was upright and good, yea, very good. He was perfect in a sense, as a man is perfect; perfect in his organic construction as a man, but not as God is perfect. He was a creature, and not a reproduction. He was under a law which was a transcript of the divine mind, and this law was holy, just and good. All was accomplished which it was designed that the law should accomplish, which was to measure and manifest the shortness of man, and the length of God. And when it was applied to man, and the test was made, he was found unequal to the holy law of God. God placed man in the garden, and told him that of every tree he could freely eat, but that of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he should not eat, for he said, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Some say it was an apple tree, but how the tree of knowledge of good and evil could be an apple tree, I cannot see. But we are informed that Eve, being tempted by Satan, did eat, and gave to Adam and he ate also. And upon himself, and Eve, and all their posterity, came the penalty, which was death, separation from God, alienation, blindness, misery and sorrow, woe and death, as the just penalty of the infinite law, which was the commandment of an infinite God. Hence, when he violated the law, the penalty was inflicted, and Adam was lost, completely lost, and became unable to

restore himself, even to his former state, much less to fit himself for heaven. Lost and ruined in the fall, as we generally style it. Judas is said to have fallen from his estate, and we can with propriety say that Adam fell also. Now all his posterity are born in his image, which is sin and death. In this condition the question is, Can he save himself? The standard scales say, No. When weighed in the scales he is found wanting, and in the word there is, line upon line, to teach us this. If he could not stand with all the elements which he possessed in an upright state, is it all reasonable to suppose that now that he has fallen, he can bring himself back again? Let us note what is said of him. "He is full of wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores." "There is no soundness in him." "He is as grass." He is, in his best estate, "altogether vanity." "He is filled with all unrighteousness, and cannot cast it out." "His heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," and it is said, "Who can know it?" It is a "cage of unclean birds, and all hateful things." "He is dead in trespasses and sins." Paul has analyzed him, and dissected him in his letter to the Romans (iii. 10–18.) This is enough to show his state. Can he save himself then? No! never! never! Jesus came to save him. I heard of a man who was completely lost and bewildered in the prairie of Texas; he had exhausted all his strength, and had given up in despair; he was completely lost, and would have perished but for a man who found him and brought him out. So as long as a man can locate himself he is not lost. So the doctrine of modern evangelists about the one road, and that all that the sinner has to do is to turn right round in that one road, and take the opposite end, is a lie, and it was instituted by the father of lies, to exclude and hide the glory of the salvation which is in Christ Jesus. I suppose that the Gadarene turned around in the cemetery a hundred times, but he never came out until Jesus came that way, and brought him out. So his salvation depended upon Jesus, and upon Jesus only. And he was so badly off as not to have a will to be delivered from Satan, but Jesus had the will, and exercised it, and brought him out. So we clearly see that the salvation of the Gadarene rested upon Jesus only, and he had a Savior. And the salvation of all the race of Adam must rest upon the same base. He could say, like the prophet and the psalmist, "The Lord has become my light and my salvation." The children of Israel at the Red Sea sang the song of deliverance, and ascribed all their salvation to God. They had no will to leave Egypt, nor desire, until God wrought it in them. They are God's witnesses that salvation is no co-operative business, but it is all of the Lord. God had instituted it, and had wrought it out for them, and to him belonged all the praise. David said that God had taken his feet out of the miry clay, and had placed them upon a rock, and had put a new song in his mouth, even praise to his name. No co-operation here. God is the author of this salvation, and David the subject and witness. Jonah said the same, Salvation is of the Lord; Daniel said the same, and Jesus settles forever the doctrine when he said, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him," and "except it were given unto him of my Father." He said, Ye cannot believe my word, because ye are not of my sheep. Yet the miserable liars and blasphemers have the effrontery to contradict the word of God. Job said they were

forgers of lies, and physicians of no value. And Paul said, "Rebuke such," and the word of God is an everlasting rebuke to these miserable thieves and liars. They go in the name of Jesus, and would destroy his glory. If the thief on the cross said his condemnation was just for robbing and pilfering the goods of men, what shall be done with those who attempt to steal the laurels of glory from the brow of the dying Son of God? O, horror of horrors! spiritual wickedness in high places! Are we wrestling against these things? Or has the devil got us under the garb of a pretended christian spirit? Think on these things. If we really did our duty, would we not be more hated and persecuted? Are we sailing on flowery beds of ease, or are we willing to suffer for the truth's sake?

I heard of a man who was quite ill; he was in such a dangerous condition, as he thought, that he sent for a physician. The physician told him that it would be impossible for him to recover unless he had a certain remedy. He had two of the ingredients, but the third he had not. The sick man asked what it was? and was told, and he said that he had the third ingredient, so the doctor compounded them, and gave them to him, and he recovered. Now the question is, Who cured the man? The doctor furnished two-thirds, and the sick man one; so the doctor had two-thirds of the credit, and the sick man one. But mark this, the doctor could have been of no use at all without the one ingredient which the man alone had; then the man was entitled to the more glory. These modern evangelists, so called, tell the sinner that he has the main ingredient, which is free will, and if he will use it he can be saved, but the work of God and the atonement is of no value without this ingredient, his own free will. What a lie! God furnishes all the ingredients, and is entitled to all the praise. For it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. The sum of the whole matter is salvation by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves. For it is written, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

May the Lord make us brave, willing soldiers of Christ, to fight the good fight, to testify the truth at all times, is my sincere prayer to God.

Yours in hope,

WM. LIVELY.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., July 22, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I inclose a letter, look it over, and if you think it will be of interest to the readers of the SIGNS, make use of it. There is so much defection from the doctrine in some sections, that it is refreshing to hear the right sound.

Your brother in Christ,

S. H. DURAND.

PINE GROVE, Ark., April 13, 1899.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Yours of the seventh of April is just received, and I can say to you that it is sweet to be remembered by one of those whom I love for the truth's sake. Your letter, though short, was comforting to me, and caused my mind to contemplate the blessedness and the wisdom of God, both in natural and spiritual

things. We know not our needs, but the Lord knows what is best for us, yet I must acknowledge that I am often a complainer, and worry because things are not my way. Dear brother, it is only when I can feel reconciled to his will, that I can rest in his love. And I often feel that there is none like me, a poor, weak, worthless, vile worm of the dust, I go mourning over my imperfections, trying to live as I would wish to, but I fall far short. I can say with the apostle, The will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. And I feel to sympathize with, rather than to blame, the religious workers of the day. The difference is, they work until they think that they have done many wonderful and good works, and I work until I become ashamed of my works, and they become so hateful to me I am forced to look from self to him who is able to cleanse from all sin, and O, what a beauty in God's works. Yes, there remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God, and they can rest only in Christ, their Redeemer.

Well, if words could express it, I would like to tell you of the comfort your letter in the SIGNS was to me, on the words, "In the clefts of the Rock." Dear brother, I felt when I got through reading it that I had nothing to fear, and how thankful we should be to God for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men, for, "Every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights."

I do not think I told you of our association. It is the South Arkansas. We have but four preachers, but are always blest at our sessions with a number of ministers from other associations. Elder P. H. James was with us last September, and I never heard a more gifted preacher. He wrote some letters to you, which you sent on to the SIGNS some time ago. If I am not mistaken, it was to you he wrote them. We would be glad for any of the Primitive Baptists to visit us. We are poor people, but we know that the Primitive Baptists do not love each other for their worldly possessions, but for the love in their hearts which flows from one to another, and it is so different from natural love, that it is past our understanding. Sometimes, even with a stranger, some words spoken causes the heart to bound with love, and we feel a union together. Sometimes I meet with one of another denomination, and we get to talking upon experience, or some expression of love and trust in God will be made, and love flows out, and it is as two drops of water when they touch each other; there is a oneness that we never felt before. It is the commandment, to love one another, and when evidence is given that Christ is in them, their hope and trust, we will love them, for it is a given love, and flows from heart to heart, and first of all from the great Giver.

I will inclose a minute of our Association. It will tell you more than I can write about the churches. Surely I never saw so much love and good fellowship manifested in all who were present. It seems to me, if I know anything about it, that it was a spiritual blessing, and a heavenly place in Christ Jesus. O, how I love the assembly of the saints. I have thought, and when invited to visit some church, also said, that it would not do for me to be free and loosed from the cares of this world, and of my little family, for the Primitive Baptists would get tired of me, and would find out what a fool I was. I love to meet them, and I love to hear them talk and sing, and it is such a blessing to have the privilege of meeting and worshiping together, and

for such a poor and unworthy one as I am to be counted worthy by them to live with them, I prize above every earthly blessing. Our church is in peace one with another, and as far as I know, with all the churches. How I do crave to see the dear Old Baptists laying down everything, and coming together as one people, and when I read the good articles in the SIGNS, they are so plain and good and so tender, it does my heart good. Nearly all the differences are only misunderstandings, and I am so glad that the SIGNS does not enter into arguments. When there seems a little difference, and some one expresses with such kind words such kind, tender feelings, it shows so plainly the Spirit of Christ, and that is what we all love. The SIGNS seems to me a peacemaker, and it is good for us all to read it. It is like the new song which none could learn but the redeemed. It is new every time. When we have ourselves travailed in mind upon some certain expression of Scripture, and some one gifted in expression writes the very same thoughts, what a consolation. The Bible is first, of course; it is the book of books, and I do not believe that with all the world's revising, they will ever succeed in covering or changing God's word. It is a gift to his people, and he will preserve both it and them through all time.

Well, this is the fourteenth. I have been passing through a drought season, and it has been only under the sound of the preaching, or while writing, that I could feel any comfort or assurance. I have received no letters of late, only yours, but this morning my heart seems stirred with a sweetness which causes me to go about my work singing the dear old hymns, and hope has revived. You may think strange, but for some one to come in with a letter, and then to see it is from a Primitive Baptist, sends a thrill of gladness through my whole being. This seems strange to me. I am no talker, only sometimes when I as I say at times, I am as one who has indulged too much in a dram, and my tongue is loosed, and then I talk without thinking who I am or what I am. But I have never been so filled or so overflowed as to shout aloud, but oftentimes as I go about my work, I find myself clasping my hands softly together with a thankful feeling to God for his goodness and mercy to poor sinners.

Well, I never do write as I think I will; I started to tell you how blessed we are as a family. My father was a Primitive Baptist. His obituary was in the SIGNS last year, Deacon Thomas Peterson. My mother, brothers and sisters, are all members of Chapel Hill church. I have four sisters and three brothers. A great many of our connection are also members. I used to feel as though I knew that I never could be saved. I was the wolf in the family, and I feared that I only loved the church (for all the Baptists were dear to me) because I was raised by them, but I now believe that I loved them with a given love. And all who love the church do love them for Christ's sake; they may not think so, but it is true. There is a drawing which is a cord of love. One says, "Draw me, and I will run after thee." And Christ says, No man can come to me except the Father draw him. It is this drawing which causes them to love his people. Right at this point my mind is caught back to my experience, and to where the sound of a christian's voice became sacred to me. How I longed to be fit to call them brother and sister. But two days after, when my burden was removed, I did not talk, it was so calm and

deep; it seemed that my breathing was for my Father's children. Yes, I could claim them now, and I loved to call them brother and sister, unworthy though I am. I do not expect you to reply to all my poor scribbles; I know that your time is all taken up, but I can assure you that your letters are appreciated. I have often felt when reading of your travels, how glad I would be could you come this way sometimes, but we are all poor, and unless I could offer to bear yours, or any other minister's expenses here, I do not feel that I have the right to request them to come, so I can only say, when you feel impressed, write for the SIGNS. If you do not write to me I will not think hard of it, but if you do write, you know that I love to reply.

I will close; cast the mantle of charity over this.

Yours in the bonds of love,

LUCY A. SEALE.

WHITEFIELD, Maine, March 6, 1899.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —I have a letter written to me by sister Nellie Moody, (now Palmer) which I will inclose in this, for you to forward to the SIGNS, if in your judgment it will be best. It has been very sweet to me, and I feel that I should like for it to appear in the SIGNS, our dear family paper, so that others of our dear kindred in Christ can share with me the truth it contains. It seemed a great letter to me, coming from one so young. How true it is that out of the mouths of babes and sucklings is perfected praise. It was like a message sent from God to me. I felt to give him all the glory, for surely it seemed to me that he indited the words in her heart, and directed her hand to write them out for my comfort and edification, and at the same time it made me feel small and insignificant. I was unworthy to receive such a letter from one of the little ones of the flock, telling me of my own feelings so much better than I can, or ever could, express them. It brought tears of gladness to my eyes, and as I read the letter, and drank in its precious truths into my heart, I was filled with love to God, and to all his little ones, and felt to praise him for all the rich blessings which have been bestowed upon me from his bountiful hand, while I am so unworthy and undeserving of them all. O, my brother, how far behind all the rest of the children of God I am. I am so different from what I thought I should be, when I was first delivered into hope. I thought I should grow in grace, and the knowledge of the truth. I thought to grow in grace was to be able to speak and to pray as my brethren and sisters did, but I have never yet attained to the state where I could talk out my feelings easily and smoothly as others can. But I trust that my growth has been altogether different; I seem to grow less and less, in myself, as I am made to see the hidden evils of my heart. I learn more and more of myself daily, as I travel on. The corruption of the heart cannot be told by these polluted lips of mine. But there is one who is higher than I, and he knows me altogether; he knows me better than I know myself. I am so glad that he does. He knows my frame, and remembers that I am dust. Although I am in myself black, I am, I trust, comely in his sight; for what he has cleansed we cannot call common or unclean. This is my hope to-day, that he has washed me in his precious blood, and made me pure and spotless in his sight, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. What a wonder that such a poor worm as I

should have a hope through the mercy of God that I am one of his chosen ones; that I am a vessel of mercy, a temple for the Holy Spirit to dwell in, and that my heart has been touched and filled with his love, so that I enjoy a hope through grace all the time. Yet I often question,

"If I am, why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame?
Surely they cannot be worse
Who have never heard his name."

But notwithstanding all this, I do feel that I do know something of the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ, and that I have been made to drink deeply of that bitter cup of the wormwood and the gall, and that I have traveled that same thorny road, and with him have been made to know sorrow, and to become acquainted with grief. Sometimes I ask that the cup might pass by. Then again I know that it cannot pass by, except I drink it. And though my flesh is weak, and I shrink at times, yet I have been made to see and acknowledge, time after time, that all of these afflictions have worked for my good, and to the glory of God, though the way may have been never so dark. All our times are in his hand; he knows the way that I take, and at times speaks peace to my soul, and then my murmurings are stilled, and I am made to praise him with my whole heart. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."

I will now close, hoping that this may find you and yours all well, and enjoying the presence of the dear Redeemer.

My husband joins in love to you and yours.

ELLA E. PULSIFER.

EAST PITTSTON, Maine, March 9, 1899.

MRS. ELLA PULSIFER—MY DEAR SISTER:—While sitting at my work this morning my thoughts turned to you, and your absence from the conference. You were not there to sing with us as usual, but the thought came that you would sing the Lord's song just the same. How delightful to be able to sing in hours of distress and darkness, when these frail bodies languish with pain and agony, and it almost seems that our little bark will founder. How sweet to know that there are no breakers unknown to our God. He tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, and the child of God is indeed shorn of everything that he can do, of his own self, for support and comfort. He stands utterly stripped of all goodness, and is a target for every dart of the enemy, and a prey to his own lusts, which at times seem ready to engulf him. At times he is carried down into the depths, where he lies utterly helpless, with the weeds wrapped around his head, with hardly strength enough to utter a cry, and surely not a cry that man could hear. But our Lord, who is infinite in goodness and mercy, does not intend that we shall remain there always. If it were to be so we could not praise him with a loud voice. All his works shall praise him. So he comes bringing strength and deliverance, and we are revived again, and then we mount up on wings as eagles, and outsoar every earthly thing. We at such times soar even to the very throne of God. We, as it were, go home for a short season; and the blessedness of that season is known only by the believer. How refreshing, dear sister, when we are given to taste of the bread of life, and sometimes not only to taste, but to eat, and eat abundantly. At such times I have felt that I wished that I could open my mouth and pour out my soul, for it seemed that its fullness could hardly be

contained. And why should it be to me that the Lord should be so gracious? The only answer that I have ever been able to receive is, "Because it seemed good in his sight." Yes, my sister, this is the only answer that any of Adam's race shall ever be able to receive. There is no good in me, that is, in my flesh; no! no! a thousand times no! Sin hangs about me heavily; it weighs me down, it holds me with its chains. It has seemed to me that if I could cast it from me as a garment, I should be free. I know that the time will come when I shall lay it aside, and go in unto the mansion of God's holiness, to go out no more forever; it will be sweet indeed. I have almost longed to go, but my flesh says, "Stay, and still suffer from foes within and without, live and be hated." Yes, we are hated for the truth's sake, and this the flesh does not like. What a mixture we are. It is well for us to talk with our brethren and sisters, mostly, for the world cannot understand us. Does it not seem strange to think that we can talk with any one and not be understood? Then again it is not one bit strange, and we are glad that they do not, because it shows that we have been separated from them by experience; it gives evidence that we are the elect people. At times it seems to me that I ought to know that I am numbered among them, for God has revealed himself to me so plainly that I cannot seem to doubt. Even when he hides his face for a season, and there seems to be no joy in the soul, yet my hope is good. It almost seems when one is left to doubt so much, that they are looking to the flesh, but we shall never be able to find any goodness there, nor do we want to do so. We want it just where it is, in God alone. Then we shall always feel to give him all the praise, when we feel like praise at all. When one is in doubt, what a dark, hard place, and I do not know how soon I may be there. It must be a weary waiting time. O, we need to be renewed again and again. How good the Lord is to be ever mindful of us, and never tire of us, and will not even remember our sins and transgressions any more. We cannot conceive of anything more lovely than our God is to us, after seeing him by an eye of faith.

Well, I will close my letter. May the Lord bless it to your good, and give him all the praise. I trust that I was directed to write to you as I have. If you are still suffering, I hope that the Lord is with you.

I remain your sister in hope,

NELLIE M. PALMER.

NEW YORK, N. Y., July 24, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER JAMES H. HILL:—Your letter of the 19th inst. is at hand, and it was a welcome surprise. I have felt that my recent appointment at Hopewell was most unprofitable to the church, and while I was assured by many of their enjoyment of my visit, I have been unable to accept their assurance as more than kindly meant encouragement.

From your letter I can see you were with me in the spirit of the subject I tried to speak of, and I can see also that your discernment was far deeper than mine. You preached the substance of the gospel of Jesus Christ more in the few lines of your letter than I did in all my discourse. And what a wonderful, glorious gospel it is—Love—for that is the whole of it, root, branch and fruit.

God is love. That which is begotten of him is the image of that invisible God —Love. That is the river, the streams whereof make glad the city of our God.

It is the tree of life, whereof if a man eat he shall never die. It is truth, resurrection and life eternal. Show me where the love of God is, and I will show you in that habitation the life of Jesus made manifest in mortal flesh. Love is the word of God, the overcoming power of a conqueror that destroys him that hath the power of death; and in whom this love dwells, there is manifest the working of this mighty power.

"Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness," but it is given unto the children of the resurrection to know this mystery. There is no speculation, no reasoning, no theorizing about it. To love the brethren is to know we have passed from death unto life. To love the brethren is to know God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, and this is life eternal. In fact, all that may be known of God is in this revelation of love in us. He is that God who redeemeth our life from destruction, and where love is not, there is no coming unto the Father by Jesus Christ. It is the working of that mighty power in us that causes us to confess our sins and to forsake them, as the only fruits meet for repentance. It is by that power we are enabled to deny self, and take up a daily cross in following Jesus. Impure and selfish motives are crucified by that love, for to them that love is the promise, "The pure in heart shall see God." "Without holiness no man shall see God," and as he that loveth knoweth God, so the never-failing accompaniment of love is holiness.

Though we understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and though we have all faith, so that we could remove mountains, and have not love—that love which enables us to keep the commandments of God, and purifies the heart, we are nothing. And all gifts, given of God for the time being, may and must fail, however great and powerful these gifts may be; but "love faileth not." "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." "Love is the fulfilling of the law." In love is hope, and every man that hath this hope in him purifies himself, even as Jesus Christ is pure.

Love is the vital living and moving principle of the brethren. In love their interests "are all one." In love they see "eye to eye;" are of "one heart and of one soul;" are "redeemed from among men," and their "conversation is in heaven." In this state they experience the enjoyment of peace and acceptance with God. This is the true condition of all who possess the gospel of Jesus Christ. In this blessed experience they have the assurance that God, according to his promise, has placed salvation in the Zion of his glory or likeness; that "Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ;" that the time of the "marriage of the Lamb" with his bride has actually come, as promised.

If the following Scriptures are true, then it must be that no sin is imputed to them that love, and they are "presented faultless in the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." "Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." "Whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him." If we love, then we are born of God, and cannot sin. Herein is holiness. (See Eph. i. 3, 4.) If love dwelleth in us, then God is manifest in the flesh. Jesus Christ hath appeared, and we are new creatures in him. And when he appears we are like him; his life is made manifest in our mortal flesh. And as we grow in his likeness, we grow in sorrow, for we are

baptized with the same baptism wherewith he was baptized, we drink the same cup that he drank. We are crucified with him through weakness of the flesh; it is given unto us to suffer with him, that we may also reign with him. By fiery trial love is always proved more than conqueror. "Love never faileth." Jesus Christ (the love of God manifest in the flesh) is the only name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. But time would fail me to tell the wondrous story of redeeming love. It is the "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, which is, and which was, and which is to come," the Almighty God of our salvation.

I enjoyed meeting with the church at Hopewell. It was like returning home after long absence, for it was by that church I was first called brother, and as there always seems to be a peculiar warmth of affection for the church of our first membership, so it is with me toward Hopewell. Your members are a lovely people, and your pastor one whom the Lord has indeed sent and qualified to preach his everlasting gospel. May love abound in your midst, and may your pastor be strengthened and confirmed in his work by your united and faithful upholding of his hands.

Affectionately your brother in hope of life in Jesus,

JOHN McCONNELL.

KANSAS, Ill., July 27, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I send herewith a copy of a letter received a few days since, from sister Petty, who lost her husband a few years since, who was also a member with her of Concord church. My wife and I felt that her letter was too precious to be kept entirely to ourselves, so we send it to you for publication, believing it will be of interest to your readers.

JAMES M. TRUE.

WESTFIELD, Ill., July 23, 1899.

ELDER JAMES M. AND SISTER TRUE—VERY PRECIOUS BROTHER AND SISTER:—If you will permit one so sinful as I am, to thus address you. I feel to be one of the most sinful creatures of all the earth, and can I call such dear ones as you are by such dear names as brother and sister?

I am alone to-day, and thought it would be pleasant to me to spend a portion of the time in writing you some of my thoughts, as it seems it is the only way we have of speaking together. I wrote to my sister a few days ago that I was so desirous to see you, and have a good talk with you, but it seems that I am deprived of that pleasure. It is ordered otherwise by our heavenly Father than that I should have a visit from you, that I might enjoy your sweet conversation on spiritual things. I have this spring and summer been much like Martha: "troubled about many things." O, that I could be more like Mary was, to "choose that better part." But old nature has seemed to predominate, and I feel that I am not a free agent, but a slave to sin, cast upon the tempestuous sea, feeling almost ready to sink beneath the waves, yet there is an unseen hand that bears me up, so I do not get entirely beneath the waves of sin. To-day I have been reading in the Psalms of dear old David, and as I read, my heart was moved to praise our dear heavenly Father for his goodness and mercy to poor, sinful me. I was also reading Elder Durand's letter, and extracts from Elder Bundy's letters, which filled my heart with joy, and also sadness. Sad that Elder Bundy should be taken away, but it is

joyous to read after such humble lambs of God that are placed upon the walls of Zion. It was my privilege to meet Elders Bundy and D. M. Vail, at my dear old father's house in Indiana, some years ago, and also to be with them at the Lebanon Association. I think every sentence brother Durand has written, is just as I thought brother Bundy was, so meek, so humble. O, how I wish I could have the same humbleness, but I fear and tremble that there seems to be nothing good in me. I cannot even think a good thought. Yet, brother True, I feel like saying as David did, "O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles."

I do not think I ever had any more pleasure reading anything than the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, outside of the Bible itself, and I shall ever remember your kindness in sending the SIGNS to me, they are so full of such precious gospel truth.

I was out to meeting at Concord yesterday. Elder Kemper preached a very good sermon. W. E. Gill spoke a short time. I did not go to-day, as I got up with a terrible headache, but I have spent much of the day reading the word, and SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and enjoyed the sacred privilege. Brother True, I enjoyed reading your remarks in reply to sister Patterson, in regard to looking upon Zion, the city of our solemnities; they were very appropriate. O, that we could all study to shew ourselves approved unto God, so that we could rightly divide the word of truth. I fear I do not understand it to profit at all times, I am so often found doing the things I ought not, and leaving undone the things I ought to do. But may I say with Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am." I know of but one kind of salvation, and that is by grace.

When I take my pen to address any of the saints of God, I feel that I am not worthy to even speak to them, but to be in company with them is my chief joy, so I can communicate to them some of my trials and tribulations while journeying through this wilderness of sin. I have so much trouble, and so much sadness to endure, I sometimes feel to sink beneath my burden.

But I must bring my imperfect letter to a close, or I shall weary you.

May God's choicest blessings rest upon you both, is the earnest prayer of your unworthy friend and sister, as I sometimes hope,

MARY J. PETTY.

ST. LOUIS, Mich., April 23, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—In the SIGNS of April 15th, is a communication from Topaz, Texas, and in this is an expression that deserves more than a passing notice, where the writer says, "I seem to both love and hate sin." There has, as it seems to me, been a disposition on the part of some, who would claim to be overmuch righteous, to ignore this. (See Eccl. vii. 16.) These seem to forget that the spirit of flesh, or carnal mind, lusteth to envy. But those who are born again have the Spirit of Christ, which lusteth to holiness. These two are contrary one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. If this is not a warfare, then I do not know what is. But the Spirit of God will not allow us to take pleasure in unrighteousness, and all unrighteousness is sin, and the carnal mind is filled with vanity. See the apostle's description of the works of the flesh, which are the same everywhere, and for all time. None but God are good, whether it be in a religious sense, or in any other sense. If this

scribble is dictated by the carnal mind, I cannot help it, and if otherwise, I cannot help it.

Do with this as you think best, and all will be right with me.

Your brother,

DAVID TITMUS.

[THERE can be nothing better said concerning the christian warfare than is written by Paul, in Romans, chapter seven. This is a description of his experience at the very time when he penned that chapter. He was inspired then, by the Spirit of God, to write out of his own experience, just what is true of all experience of believers in every age, and all the days of their life. Within the believer are two opposing forces. This not only is declared in the word, but also he is himself made painfully aware of it. One's own experience is the best explanation of what Paul wrote out of his experience, and wrote without any mistake, since the Holy Ghost dictated his thoughts, and his words in writing. The believer finds in himself just what is meant by the "law of the members," or the "old man," or the "flesh," on the one hand, and on the other hand, he finds just what is meant by "the law of the mind, or "the Spirit," or "the new man," also, in himself. For want of a better form of expression we sometimes say that these are two principles dwelling in the believer, and warring against each other, so that the believer cannot do the things that he would. This, each child of God knows for himself to be true. Thanks be unto God, the believer shall one day be delivered from this warfare.—ED.]

FERNWOOD, Pa., July 23, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER:—I have anticipated writing you for a long time, but I get so little time, beside my mind has not been as I would have it, and I do not know that it is now, only I have a desire to write you.

It is twenty-one years to-day since my baptism, and I do not feel as though I can say they have been well spent, for I look and behold so much vanity, unthankfulness, forgetfulness and negligence, thereby making the time very unprofitable. In these years I have been wonderfully blessed in hearing the word, and in having been privileged to be with the church at her meetings nearly every time, and I cannot remember having been absent at but one of her conferences. How the Lord has blessed me in presenting my body, which is one of his commands. I cannot write of many glorious seasons in hearing the word expounded, yet so often I have gathered the crumbs, and have been given a feeling of submission to be thus fed, knowing or feeling that they were crumbs from the Master's table. A few times I remember being carried away from earthly thoughts as I have listened, and when again I would find that I was upon earth and with earthly things, I would feel if such the sweetness of the taste, what must the reality be? I pray to God that it may be his holy will for me to know the reality, yet I know that I am so unworthy of such blessedness. One time in particular comes to my mind, as being a wonderful manifestation of God's love to me. I was on a visit and went with a friend to a Presbyterian meeting, and a feeling of unwillingness to go was with me. After being seated in the edifice, I looked about to see what there was in the place that I might enjoy. It was a great structure, with stained glass windows, handsomely carved woodwork, extra nice furnishings, and the thought came to me of the plain house at Hopewell, and with

it a wish that I was there. Presently a hymn was read to be sung, the organ began to play, the choir arose, and they all joined in singing. I did not know the hymn or tune. But there came the strange and beautiful experience to me, right while they were singing, I felt that I could hear the Hopewell Church singing, "Jesus, lover of my soul." It was so sweet, it did seem to me heavenly. I did not hear what the man preached, but seemed to hear Elder Purington. I cannot now call to mind his subject, but only the beauty and sweetness comes to me. The strangest part to me is, the Hopewell Church did sing that hymn that very day, as I afterward learned. If I could take the time I could write of many instances of enjoyment of God's mercy, for he surely has been merciful to me all of my life, and I have been made to dwell in his tents. I do not know as it is right to feel a sureness of one's birth spiritually, but at times I do feel it thus. For why should I be seeking and longing for the love of God, and a knowledge of it, and be so turned from the lo heres, and lo theres, if God had not called me from darkness? I do feel that I am a sojourner here, a wanderer in a strange land, and one who desires to fully realize that nothing but the grace of God can save. By experience do I know this, and have full trust in his divine mercy and grace. I have dark seasons when I seem like one alone, and mourn an absent God, and desire to know where to find him. Only yesterday I was in this sadness and darkness. I could not keep the tears from flowing down my cheeks. I felt as though I was the most miserable creature on earth, but I felt that it was just for me to be deprived of his precious light, for I did not appreciate it when I had it. Now I could see what a blessing it was to dwell in peace, yes, spiritual peace of soul. I took up the hymn book, not expecting to find any comfort there, but opened to one of the hymns where a corner of the leaf was turned, and sweet peace came over me, and it still remains. It seems to me that nothing earthly can disturb this feeling. The hymn was 881, Beebe's collection. As I read these lines, there comes a beauty in the prayer or desire expressed in the sweet words, and a sense of humility comes to me, that one so vile as I, and so worthless, should have such a rich foretaste of his remembrance. I read over other hymns, and they were all so sweet, and with it all I could but feel that it was from God; nothing else could give me such peace. I know he has said that he will not leave us comfortless, and I realize his precious presence. I am so far from what I desire to be, I get provoked too easily, and want to say things that seem devilish to me, and that could only cause hard feeling. I do desire to read the blessed word more, and search it, and have a knowledge of it, but much of the time I am as though I did not care for its teachings, and it is usually a sealed book to me, but with all that I have a love for it above any other book, and seldom read anything only it, my hymn book and the SIGNS. Sometimes I feel some little comfort that my desires do not go beyond these. I do desire to have greater liberty in speaking and writing about these things, but God once spoke to me bidding me be content with the things that I have, and I do desire to be This brings to my mind one expression of dear Elder Bundy, he said, Once he desired to preach with the ability which God had given to some one else, but that he had been made willing to preach with the ability which God had given him. And may I feel willing to be content with

the many blessings which God has continually bestowed upon me.

Yours in deep love and fellowship,

MARY HILL TERRY.

OCTOBER 6, 1898.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel a desire to write what I hope the Lord has done for me. Ever since I can remember I have believed that it was by the blood of Christ I must be saved, and not by my own good works. When a small child I would grieve over my sins, and would try to pray for forgiveness, but it seemed that my prayers would rise no higher than my head. As I grew older I would go to meeting, and when there was a call for mourners, I would go to the mourners' seat to be prayed for. They seemed to think that if I would join their church, then I would be saved, but I could not believe that this was the way to heaven. I remember once that a Missionary preacher came to me and held out his hands and said, "Now is the accepted time, come, or you will be lost." I was so disgusted that I did not want to hear him preach again. I attended the Sunday School, and they called me a model scholar, and gave me a class to teach, but something seemed to say there is no religion in this. Time passed on until I was about twenty-five years of age, when my companion was taken violently ill. I tried to pray to God that if one of us must be taken, it might be me. I mourned over my condition, and was certain that I would go to torment. I was working in the garden at one time, when I felt so badly that I had to quit, and went to the house and laid down upon the couch. Perhaps I went to sleep, but it does not seem to me like a sleep. I thought that I should perish. Then it seemed that some one told me to call upon Christ, and I prayed to him to save me. Immediately there was a hand extended to me, and the vapor which enveloped me was pushed away, and I came to myself, rejoicing. I was so happy that I scarcely seemed to touch the ground. My burden was gone. But in a short time I wished that I could get it back, so that I could tell how and where it went. Some time after this I was sick for about five months, and lay on the bed, and then I tried to engage in prayer. I began soon to think that if I was baptized I would feel better, but as I did not live close to any Old School Baptist church, I did not have the opportunity for four years. After I was baptized I felt happy for a short time, and then I began to think that I had done wrong, and that I had no right to unite with the church, and my troubles began again. Sometimes I think I know I am not one of God's chosen ones, but at other times, what little hope I have, I would not part with for worlds.

I do not know what causes it to be impressed upon my mind to write you this evening. I would like you to give your opinion upon my condition. If I am a child of God it is by grace, and is of nothing that I have done. For if I look back over my past life, it seems a blank, as to all that is good. I ask your prayers, and the prayers of all the Lord's children. If I am a child of God, I am the least of all. Farewell.

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[OUR correspondent asks for our opinion of what is written above. We do not hesitate to say that these are some of the exercises of a child of God. Furthermore we believe that none others have such exercises as these. The writer speaks of being made a teacher in a Sunday School.

One of the many evils which are connected with the modern Sunday Schools, is the fact that men and women who do not even make any pretense of knowing the Lord by an experience of his grace, are put in the position of teaching to others what they themselves do not profess to know. Graceless men and women fill the places of instructors of others in the things of the kingdom. The modern Sunday School system is one of the greatest enemies to true religion that we know anything about. Young men and young women graduate from the Sunday School into the church, as they would from class to class in an academy.—ED.]

PINE BLUFF, Ark., May 23, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel like dropping you a few lines for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. In Matthew xix. 16, it is recorded of the young man who came to Jesus, that he said, "What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" This is just what nearly all people believe now. They think that they can do something to obtain eternal life. They are ignorant of God's righteousness, and go about to establish their own righteousness. Eternal life is the gift of God. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, for my Father which gave them me is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." So many are just like the young man. But eternal life is not earned, for it is the gift of God. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. God hath saved and called us, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, and this is not according to works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy. This salvation is by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he has shed on us abundantly through Christ. It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.

Dear brethren, whether you see fit to publish this or to throw it aside, all will be well.

I remain as ever your brother in hope,

D. WESTALL.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

DO NOT SEND CHECKS OR BANK DRAFTS.

BY a new agreement entered into by all the banks throughout the country, a charge will hereafter be made on exchange for checks or drafts. This will make a cost of from ten to twenty-five cents for us to pay on every check or draft received. So please send post-office money orders, or register your letter with the money in it, or if more convenient, express money orders may be sent, as there is no charge on them for collection.

G. BEEBE'S SON.

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE.

ALTHOUGH we have not published for some time our advertisements of large Family, and Pulpit Bibles, and a number of other books, formerly advertised, yet we have them for sale, and any one wishing to purchase, can obtain full information in regard to them, by sending for one of our handsome illustrated catalogues, which we mail free.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1899.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JAMES III. 17, 18.

"BUT the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."

Brother G. W. Nesbitt, of St. Joseph, Mo., has requested our views on the above text.

In this epistle the inspired apostle is showing the fact that faith, when possessed and reigning in the heart, will show itself in the outward life, by the works which it produces, and in the heart, by the new desires which will be found there. This faith is declared in different portions of the New Testament to work by love, and to overcome the world, and to be the medium by which God purifies the heart. By it the just are also said to live. It is also the testimony, that believers walk by faith, and not by sight. It is then a most important thing, and like all spiritual blessings, it is the gift of God, and a fruit of the Spirit. While the apostle Paul seemed to meet often with those who while professing to be followers of Christ yet practically rejected him, by urging upon those who believed that they, after all that Christ had done for them, could not be saved without the deeds of the law being performed by them, and he therefore was much engaged in showing that in Christ alone is salvation, without human obedience, on the other hand, James seems to have found among the churches an element that claimed that if a man possessed faith, this was all that there was to a christian life, and that such need not concern themselves about the manner of their outward life. So he fights against this falsehood, as Paul does against the other falsehood of justification through the deeds of the law. On the one hand the man who says that salvation is not alone because of what Christ has done, but that our obedience has something to do with it, by so saying rejects Christ as his salvation, on the other hand, the man who says that since Christ and his atonement alone are the ground of salvation, it therefore does not matter how a man shall live, also rejects Christ in an equally unchristianlike spirit. The one would put our works before Christ in salvation, thus destroying Christ as a Savior altogether, while the other would just as effectually destroy Christ, by saying that he has no power to mould the affections and the outward life of a believer. One would reject faith in Christ for his own good works, the other would reject good works altogether. The one would destroy the root of the tree, while the other would destroy the fruit. Both are to be condemned; both would dishonor the holy name by which we are called. Paul insists upon faith in its proper place. James insists upon good works in their proper place. Paul contends that our works do not justify a man in the sense of merit, and James does not claim anything contrary to this, but does contend that our works do justify us in the sense that they, and they alone, prove that we have faith.

Paul, no less than James, urges that faith is a living principle, and that it works. James draws the contrast between the fruit of faith, and the works of the flesh, and in like manner Paul also does this, making the contrast very clear and sharply defined. Paul, no less than James, does insist that if the life of Christ be in a man, it will make itself manifest in his mortal body, or in his flesh. It is utterly useless, according to both, for a man to say that he has life, and at the same time to act as a dead man. Faith when dwelling in the heart will show a result in the whole life and feeling of the possessor. If a man has not works how are we to know he has faith? So James utters the challenge, "Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." This will be joyful, willing fruit-bearing, and not slavish works. Now, based upon these underlying principles, James as well as Paul proceeds to present the things which become sound doctrine, to his brethren. He presents to them the manner of life becoming the house of God. It is to be understood in the first place that if a man really has faith, it is so working in him that there will be constant and supreme desires to live as God would have him. His first and prevailing inquiry will be, "What wilt thou have me to do?" If such a desire be not in the heart first, in vain will be every appeal made to him in exhortation to walk becomingly, but now feeling this intense longing in the heart to obey and glorify God, the humble follower of the Lamb will be anxious to know what the will of God is. Such ones realizing their great proneness to forget the way of the Lord, even where it has been made known to them, will welcome that writing or preaching which serves to stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance of what their God has commanded them. A brother used to say to us many times, "I like to hear preaching that tells me my faults." David under the power of the same spirit, prayed that God might search him, and know him, and see if there were any wicked way in him, and lead him in the way everlasting.

Now James, in the connection of the text, presents the matter under the two opposites, human and heavenly wisdom. In verse thirteen he introduces the subject by asking, "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom." This is the truly wise man. There is another wisdom which has works, but they are not out of a good conversation, and they are not done in meekness. Where bitter envying and strife exist in the heart, a wisdom exists which is earthly, sensual and devilish, and produces confusion and every evil work. Men may boast of this wisdom, and in fact they will boast, because it always puffs up its possessor, but yet its fruits are always harmful and evil. The wisdom of the scribes, and lawyers, and Pharisees in the old time, wrought pride and vain glory, and a despising of the people. The same wisdom produces the same fruits now. The reasonings of man may always be known, whether in our own hearts or in the lives of others, by the fact that it lifts up the heart with pride when possessed, and so produces strife against one another, while the wisdom which is from above, is in its very nature, and in the way in which it enters the heart, calculated to humble and abase its possessor. James is not here uttering any objection to the acquirement of true knowledge of any kind, for true knowledge of any sort does

not puff up him who has it, but the vain glorious religious wisdom which seeks its own advancement, and wants to have the highest seat in heaven, and the highest honors on earth, is the subject of his condemnation. This wisdom may have a show of piety and humbleness; nay, it may claim especial humility, and may indulge in fastings, and deprivations, and macerations, and flagellations of the body, and give great gifts ostentatiously to be seen of man, while at the same time the heart is swelling with pride and boasting. Such ones expect to receive a reward either here or beyond for what they have done, and daily they pretend to thank God that they are not like others. This wisdom, which is from above, is first pure. It is from above first, and because of this it is pure. Whatever arises out of the earth is impure, because here all is impure. It is a gift and a revelation from God. It is not the possession of the wise and prudent, but of babes. Not many wise men of the world have it, but many of the unlearned have in all ages possessed it. In fact a man must become a fool in order to possess it. It is a wisdom which shows us to ourselves, and tells us just what we are, and the man who knows himself does possess the highest wisdom. This wisdom shows us nothing contrary to the written word of God, but when a man is led into it, it becomes a testimony in him that the word of God is indeed his word. It makes a man recognize that from God all his righteousness and salvation must come, and so the saved man cannot become a proud man, seeing that this wisdom keeps before him all the time how great is the mercy which has saved him. Its first and chief characteristic is its pureness, and its second is its peaceableness. It is not pure without being peaceable, and it is not peaceable without being pure. These two things go together in the experience of this wisdom in the heart. True wisdom, that which comes down from the Father of lights then, is not that which produces strife. Whenever there is any root of bitterness rising up in the heart of a believer, anything that savors of confusion, and that would produce strife; anything that tends to produce a vain glorious spirit, or which will cause him to think, I know more than my brethren, or I live better than my brethren, or I ought to have more blessedness than they, in any way, we may then know that we are not actuated by the wisdom which is from above. The wisdom which is from above seeks that which is heavenly, and which is free from earthly dross; it desires pure doctrine, the doctrine of God our Savior; it seeks for pure motives in the heart, and produces them; it seeks also after a pure life, that is, a life conformed to the teachings of the Spirit; it seeks peace with all men; it provokes no strife, but rather seeks to allay it; it suffers wrong rather than use carnal weapons of offense, or defense; it seeks to do right by all men, and to deal kindly by all men, and so takes away occasions for strife. The peace of God, which passes all understanding, dwells with this wisdom, in the heart, and this is the very ground of a peaceable life outwardly. It could not be peaceable without being first pure. That which is pure has no element of strife in it; it has an eye single to the glory of God; it minds not earthly things, but minds the things of the Spirit.

Another mark of the indwelling of this pure and peaceable spirit of wisdom from above, is that it is gentle. The only way by which it can be known whether any

heavenly gift dwells in us, is by the fruits, which can only appear through the flesh, in our whole conversation. So if this wisdom which is gentle dwells in us it will be known by producing gentleness in us, and the people of God are exhorted to be gentle. The servant of God must not strive, but be gentle to all men, he ought to be gentle because his Master was before him. He ought to be gentle to all men, even to his enemies and persecutors, because thus did his Master. The Spirit of Christ, as exemplified in his whole life, is a spirit of gentleness. When he dwells in our hearts by faith and love, there will be no room for fighting and wars among us, but these things arise out of the flesh, and like the flesh are hateful, horrible, despicable. When a child of God forgets to be gentle in all his intercourse with his fellow men, as well as with his brethren, he is not under the influence of the wisdom which is from above. Earthly wisdom seeks its own, while heavenly wisdom seeks not its own, but the things of others. That is, one seeks its own glory, and honor, and welfare, while the other seeks the good of others. Therefore the one is full of strife, while the other is gentle. Heavenly wisdom seeks to win a brother rather than to destroy him. Earthly wisdom would destroy in order to build up one's own self upon the ruins of another, and therefore is not gentle, and cannot really be. Heavenly wisdom, because it seeks the good of others, is gentle.

Another mark of its indwelling is, that it will make its possessor easy to be entreated. Pride will not listen to any opposition, nor allow any entreaty against its decisions. But this humble wisdom brings a man to distrust himself, and will make him easy of approach; it leads to forbearance and a readiness to forgive wrongs; its anger is soon turned away; it is always angry with sin, but soon leads its possessor to pity the sinner; it harbors not revenge; it would rather see penitence in an offender than to suspect him of continued evil design. It is therefore easy to be entreated. How lovely is such a spirit in any one. We surely know that where this spirit is seen, there Christ dwells.

Another mark of this wisdom is said to be that it is full of mercy and good fruits. Even where there has been real wrong, purposed wrong, it does not harbor revenge, nor glory in the trouble which that wrong has brought upon the offender, but it pities, and would hold out a helping hand; it would not have the heart of such an offender burdened with overmuch sorrow; it will seek to do him all good. By this mercy, and by all good fruits, we know that heavenly wisdom dwells within. And the child of God may know whether this wisdom be in his heart, by the sorrow that he feels, because it does not reign at all times, and because many things contrary to it are found within him. Pure and peaceable wisdom says, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Earthly wisdom has no such complaint to make of itself. It is also said to be without partiality, and without hypocrisy. Partiality belongs to this evil nature of ours; it is born and bred in it. We are partial to all that ministers to us, first of all. We set the rich on high, and place the lowly at our feet. These very brethren to whom James was writing were guilty of this very thing. This was not the fruit of heavenly wisdom. This wisdom sees beneath a poor and ragged garb, an heir of God and glory, and counts him richer and nobler than a prince of earth, en-

dowed with all its riches. This heavenly wisdom takes no cognizance of earthly distinctions, counting them of no account in the sight of God, and when seen in the light of eternity; it sees the image of the Master in the beggar as well as in the prince, and it loves it in the one as well as in the other. Paul exhorts his brethren to do nothing by partiality. It is most unbecoming in the house of God; it says that one is not as dear to God as another; it would deny that Jesus Christ is as much to one as to another of his redeemed. But this heavenly wisdom is honest, speaking the truth in love, and making its possessor open and truthful in all his relations. When led by this wisdom he has no need to be otherwise. It will lead a man to be very humble, and slow to claim to be even what he is; it will not handle the word of God deceitfully; it wants the truth, and nothing but the truth.

The closing mark of this wisdom is that, "The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." That is, all that can proceed from this wisdom, and the peace which it gives, is, and must be, righteous and peaceable. The life which is filled with this wisdom will have fruit. This a precious assurance to every humble soul who sees so much to deplore in his life. The people of God often look for fruit, and find none, so far as they can see, in all that they have done. One of the most loving, humble and faithful servants of God that we have ever known, said, when called suddenly to his reward, as he was about to pass away, "This is the end of an unprofitable life." Those of us who knew him well, knew that if any man had borne righteous fruit, he had also. Yet it did not so appear to him. This very humility of feeling, and inability to see that which was good in himself, was one of the fruits of peace in him. This very humility made him gentle, and easy to be entreated, and full of mercy to all. But what this dear brother did not see, others did. While the Savior has taught us that we must not say that the life of any man, even he whose service is most abundant, is profitable, yet we may say, for so the Master has said himself, that some are faithful, and the dear brother referred to was faithful. According to the closing words of the text, this fruit of righteousness is sown within, and its fruit appears in the outward life. This is in full agreement with the words of Paul, "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

We leave these reflections with the brother at whose request they have been written, and with our readers.

C.

PLEASE BE SURE

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur. It is a good plan to inclose in the letter, one of the little pink slips containing the name, taken either from the margin of the paper, or from the wrapper in which the paper comes.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

REVELATION II. 17.

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."

This text contains a part of the message which John was commanded to send to the angel of the church of Pergamos, one of the seven churches of Asia. This church had her dwelling, or location, where Satan's seat was, consequently was exposed to many temptations and much persecution. She is commended for holding fast the name of him that hath the sharp sword with two edges, and for not denying the faith, in the trying hour in which one of their number had suffered martyrdom. Still there were some things in this church reproved; the doctrine of Balaam, and the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes was held by some who were in some way connected with the church. Under these circumstances the church is addressed and encouraged to hold fast that which is approved of God, and to still stem the torrent of persecution, and admonished most solemnly to put away from them those things which the Lord hates. This message is addressed, like all other divine communications, to all who have an ear to hear. No man in an unregenerated state ever had an ear to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." These words were used by our Lord, (Matt. xi. 15,) and they are prefixed to several important communications addressed to the churches in this book, from which we learn, first, that all the communications of the Spirit of God, in the gospel, or under the dispensation of the gospel, are addressed to the church, or body of our Lord Jesus Christ, and not to the world at large, and secondly, that all who have an ear to hear the communications of the Spirit, are born of God, and have a vital interest in the kingdom of Christ, and are subject to the reproofs, and made welcome to the consolations thereof. What the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law; but what the Spirit saith unto the churches, or what the ministration of the Spirit addresses to the body of Christ, is addressed to all who have ears to hear. The communication of the Spirit to the church of Pergamos, in this case is, "To him that overcometh, will I give," &c. These words imply a conflict, a warfare, a struggle; and the connection explains the nature of the strife, the parties engaged, and the matter in dispute. The parties are the church on the one side, and Satan and his legions on the other; the war is between truth and error; the doctrine and order of the gospel contended for by the church and saints of God on the one hand, opposed by the doctrines of Balaam and the Nicolaitanes on the other. The doctrine of Balaam was that in which he taught Balac, the king of the Midianites, to cast a stumbling-block before Israel, to cause the Israelites to sin.

The doctrine of the Nicolaitanes is supposed, by Dr. Gill and others, to have reference to heresies in the church of Rome, in which they forbid their priests to marry, and recommend celibacy to virgins, which led to the most extravagant licentiousness, and for which pardons and indulgences were given by the Romish church. This doctrine, it seems, had been insinuated to some extent in the

church of Pergamos, and of this church was admonished to repent.

"To him that overcometh" these temptations, heresies and abominations, and bare with patience the persecution to which they were exposed, by their steadfastness in the truth, should be given to eat of the hidden manna. Allusion is here made evidently to the manna on which Israel was fed in the wilderness, and which was laid up in the golden pot, and kept in the most holy place. As when God brought out his chosen tribes from the abominations of Egypt, and fed them on manna sent down to them from heaven, so those who should be delivered from the idolatry, heresy and abomination set forth in the doctrines of Balaam and the Nicolaitanes, shall be fed on the pure gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Instead of eating the things offered to idols, they should eat that bread which comes down from heaven, live by faith upon the Son of God, who is the true and living bread. This is truly a hidden manna; a food of which all are strangers until they are born of God.

"And I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." White stones, it is said, were given to the conquerors in the Olympic games, with their names written upon them, and the value of their prize. As the apostles have sometimes borrowed figures from the usages at the Olympic games, it has been thought that this figure is thus appropriated in this case to show that the conquerors in this spiritual conflict with the man of sin, shall after that similitude receive expressions of the divine approbation.

Whatever period or state of the christian church may have been especially designed by the Pergamos church, we cannot flatter ourselves that the present state of the church is perfectly free from the corruptions set forth as staining the fair reputation of the church of Pergamos. Jude speaks of those characters as having crept into the christian profession and become associated with the saints, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into licentiousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. These, he says, are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear. He calls them clouds without water, carried about of winds, trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots, raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shape, wandering stars to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever. Of these he says, "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for a reward, and perished in the gainsayings of Core." Balaam seems to be a striking type of those hireling prophets and false teachers who have ever been seeking for the patronage of earthly potentates and human governments, and goaded on by excessive love of princely honors and emolument, have always been ready to betray the cause of truth, and lay plans for seducing the saints of God from the pure doctrine, practice and order of the church of the living God. The Baptist church has been beset with these lovers of the wages of unrighteousness for the last half century. And although by their counsel, many have gone out from us, yet it is to be feared there are still some remaining, if not in direct communication with the church of God, who are at least permitted to spot, stain and pollute, our feasts of charity. By the counsel of these Balaams, the fair daughters of Midian flourish their gaudy

dresses of Benevolence, Temperance, Missionism, to allure, decoy and seduce, if possible, the sons of Zion. And if there are none of these Midianish women brought into our camp, entailing plagues and judgments upon us, we have much cause to rejoice. To oppose these and to keep from being contaminated by them, requires a constant vigilance and much hard fighting, (but not with carnal weapons). And have not those who have overcome in these conflicts truly been fed on heavenly manna, such as the world and antichrist know not of? Have they not received divine manifestations of the approbation of their Lord and Master?

From our subject, let us be admonished to depart from all iniquity, to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, to fight the good fight, and confidentially look for that final victory, in which our God will make us more than conquerors through him that loved us.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., December 15, 1856.

AN IMPARTIAL INVESTIGATION OF FREE WILL AND FREE MORAL AGENCY,

A pamphlet by Elder W. N. Tharp, of Liberty, Ind., a copy of which we have had the privilege of reading, is certainly a most able and conclusive refutation of the doctrine of Free Will and Free Moral Agency, which of late has been advocated by some of the periodicals claiming to be published in the interest of the Primitive Baptists. We advise our readers to send for it.

Single copy, one cent; twelve copies, ten cents. Send one or two cent stamps.

Address,

ELDER W. N. THARP.

LIBERTY, Ind.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$287 55
Jennie Power, Ill., $1.00; W. W. Mooney, Ill., $3.00.—Total	4 00
Total to date	$291 55

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Cornelia Search Linton, wife of John Linton, and daughter of the late Christopher Search, of Baltimore, Md., died at her late residence, 715 N. Fulton Ave., Baltimore, Md., on Thursday, May 11th, 1899, at 6 o'clock p. m. Dear brother Chick, you knew much of her journey through life during the time that you lived near Baltimore, and of her last long and painful illness you have no doubt heard a great deal. She bore it all with wonderful patience, though her sufferings were intense. She never murmured, saying so often to the dear, patient sisters who were constantly at her bedside, "It is all right." She had not been feeling well all summer, but when on October 29th, she gave up, and took her bed, she was hopeful that she might still recover. While the doctor gave no hope, she did not know that her case was hopeless, and all the time of her suffering she hoped for recovery, until the last day she gave up hope. It was my privilege to visit her but once, which was in December last, when she seemed wonderfully cheerful, though very weak, and she said to me, If it was to be her last illness it was all right. Her sisters tell me that at one time she became very despondent, as she did not improve, and seemed to cling to life, and was not yet reconciled to go. They asked Elder Rowe to see her, and he came and talked with her for a time. Among other things she told him that at times Jesus seemed so near to her that she could almost reach out and touch his hand, and her mind became more composed.

She was a member of the Primitive Baptist church in Baltimore; she and I were baptized on the same day by dear Elder Purington. It was August 24th, 1868. That was a happy day to both of us. During her life she had many severe trials, and often said during her sickness, that life seemed hardly worth the struggle, and that if she recovered this time, something else would soon overtake her, and it seemed as though she might as well give up the struggle. She left three sisters and four brothers to mourn their sad loss, but they have good hope that she is resting from all her trials and cares. Her husband who has been afflicted with paralysis, and whom she has nursed with unceasing care for the last seven years, is left alone in his old age and helplessness. She was a devoted and faithful wife to him. Her walk in life in every way was that of a meek and humble follower of Jesus. I have been closely associated with her, and I feel that I have indeed lost a sister and friend. About one year ago she visited us for two weeks, and seemed to enjoy her visit, although not feeling well. She had an opportunity to see Elder Waters, and hear him preach, which was an unexpected pleasure to her, and she spoke so many times of how kind every one was, and of how much she appreciated the privilege of visiting her old home

neighborhood again. But now all is over, and the dear wasted frame is laid peacefully to rest. This was on May 14th, under the grand old oaks at Greenmount, and the happy spirit freed from all pain is, we hope and trust, resting in the dear Savior's arms, there to join in songs of praise forever to the dear Jesus that she loved and trusted. Father, Corrie and myself attended the funeral. Elder Rowe made a few remarks. I hoped that you, brother Chick, could be there, as you knew so much more of her life.

IDA SEARCH.

[WE can but add an expression of our sorrow at the death of the dear sister, as here recorded by her cousin. We knew her intimately for thirty-two years. There never was a more devoted member of the church, nor one with whom there was a more abiding desire to do the things which are pleasing to God. Amid many cares, disappointments and crosses, she maintained an unwavering trust in God. In all the years when we constantly visited her and her family, we always found her ready and anxious to converse upon the theme of reigning grace. We have no doubt that she is at rest with her Lord.—ED.]

IT becomes my mournful duty, but in great weakness, to pay my last earthly tribute to the memory of my beloved brother, **Frederick Stipp**, according to the flesh, and if my own unworthiness, unprofitableness and unfruitfulness did not stand as an insurmountable barrier in the way, I might joyfully claim him as my beloved brother in the sufferings and triumphs of the Lord Jesus Christ. The subject of this sketch was born near the village of Lebanon, Warren Co., Ohio, in the year 1815, and would, had he lived until Nov. 13th, 1899, have been 84 years old. My brother died suddenly and alone, at his home at Birnamwood, Wis., of heart disease, on the 14th day of July, 1899, his youngest son, who was living with him, being in the meadow at work at the time. Frederick Stipp confessed faith in the cleansing blood of the Lord Jesus Christ in the year of 1840, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Danville, Ill., Old School Baptist church, by Elder R. M. Newport, in which our beloved father and mother held their membership from 1831 until they were called to their final and eternal rest. A short time before his death, my brother requested me to write his obituary for the SIGNS, and I feel that I can do no better than to close this by copying a few lines of his last letter to me on the 22d of last May.

"I am feeling very badly this spring, my health is very poor. I am failing very fast, and can hardly walk around any more. I know the end with me is near. I look for it at any time. I have heart trouble, and am liable to drop dead at any time. I feel sometimes that it would be a relief if I could lie down never to rise again till the last day, yet I feel willing to await the Lord's time, believing his is the right time. I know I cannot go until he calls me. Sometimes I feel that I would be glad to leave this wicked world and be at rest. But I will await all my appointed time till my change come."

Amid all my sorrow and grief over the death of my lamented brother, I feel the great consolation that he has departed to be with Christ, which is far better, and "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

HENRY S. STIPP.

LOS GATOS, California.

DIED—April 30th, 1899, of pneumonia, **Mrs. Elizabeth C. Hellings**, wife of Thomas J. Hellings, and daughter of the late Isaac and Emily Hobensack. Sister Hellings was a firm believer of the doctrine of salvation by grace, having felt the power of that salvation in her own heart. We have not known much of the early experience by which she was led into the truth, and came to rest in it as her comfort and joy, but we knew her as one who had no place in her heart for the doctrine of human merit. She was a member of the church at Southampton, and was baptized by Elder Daniel L. Harding, on the first Sunday in March, 1856. When she was going down into the water the hymn, "Humble souls who seek salvation," was sung. That day Elder Harding preached from the words in 1 Tim. ii. 6. Her health was always poor, and she could not attend her meeting as often as she desired, but that was the last place she was at before she died. She attended meeting on Sunday, April 23d, and was brought home from there very sick. This was the last time she was out, and about the same time the next Sunday she passed away. Her daughter informs us that the expression upon her face was one of peculiar happiness, and their faith and assurance is that she has gone to be with him whom she loved. She leaves a husband and three children, who mourn their loss greatly, but believe that their loss is her gain. Three sisters and a brother also remain.

She was buried at Southampton, Pa., on May 3d, where the sorrowing friends gathered to pay their last testimony of love to the mortal remains of the dear wife, mother and sister. Elder Durand, the pastor of that church, being absent, we were sent for, and tried to speak to the comfort of the friends. All regreted that her pastor could not have been present.

By request of the family we have prepared this obituary.

C.

"WHAT man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah."—Psalms lxxxix. 48.

DIED—At his residence near Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa., **Mr. Dans Scott**, May 25th, 1899, in the 67th year of his age, after a long continued illness, which was supposed to be paralysis, affecting his

limbs, and at times his speech, shortly bringing him to death, the house appointed for all living. He was a man widely known. His house was ever open, day or night, to the friends visiting Rock Springs church. He was a business man, and prosperous in the world, having a very comfortable home and surroundings, a home much enjoyed by others, and a resting-place for the traveler. But he is gone, and is in the hand of the Lord, who giveth life and breath to all, and who taketh away the breath and we die and return to dust. The deceased made no public profession of faith in Christ, but like many others kept concealed what travel of mind he may have had in the things of the gospel. I had known him for forty years, visiting the church at that place all these years once a month, and was so often at his house, that I need but little information in regard to the history and life of the man who will be much missed in his neighborhood. He was a regular attendant at Rock Springs, before his affliction of body. He leaves a widow and a daughter, the only remaining members of his family. I am sure they have the sympathy of the entire neighborhood, also three sisters are bereaved of their only brother, out of four. But the Lord knows best. Also there are a number of nieces and nephews that will see Uncle Dans no more in the flesh, neither will you see him an afflicted man. You could not relieve and cure him while here, and the Lord has taken him away. Can you say, Blessed be the name of the Lord?

His funeral was largely attended, at which the writer made some remarks. Interment at Penn Hill.

May the Lord bless the remaining ones.

WM. GRAFTON.

SISTER **Mary Boggs** was born May 14th, 1833, and died July 11th, 1899. She was baptized nearly forty years ago. Her father was Elder John Boggs, who was pastor at Hopewell, N. J., for forty years or more. She was the youngest of nine children, only one of whom, myself, survives. We have been intimately associated all our lives. Brother Fetter read at the funeral hymn 651, (Beebe's Collection,) and spoke most consolingly from Matthew xii. 46-50.

Sister was taken with "la grippe" about Christmas last. She was never out of our yard after New Year's day. We had preaching that day at the house of sister Vance, a few squares away from our home, and she went to the meeting, and it was the last time that she was out. She was not confined to her bed, but was poorly. About the first of March she was seized with pleurisy, and for eight weeks suffered very much from it. When the pleurisy gave way a complication of stomach and heart trouble followed. From the first of March to the close of her life my sister was a great sufferer, but she never murmured or repined. She told me that all was right. A few days before death came relief was given her, and from that time her sufferings were comparatively light. Heart failure closed the scene, and she slept herself away as calmly as an infant on its mother's breast. We mourn our loss. She was our wise counselor, our competent adviser, our devoted and loving one, and was esteemed and beloved by all who were conversant with her. We cannot mourn for her, for we have an abiding trust that our loss is her eternal gain. Thus has the Lord strengthened us to say, "Not my will, but thine be done." We laid the lovely remains (for she seemed as if sleeping the sweetest sleep) in the beautiful cemetery at Maxwell City. She always admired the place, and it seemed fitting to lay her remains there. And I am fully satisfied that the archangel's trump will waken those who sleep in Jesus, it matters not where they lie, only how they sleep. Some of the friends in writing us seem to feel that we are alone in a strange land, but it is not so. I asked sister more than once if she was tired of Maxwell, and wanted to return home? "Why no," she said, "we are in the midst of friends here." We had the kindest physician, the most attentive friends and the most merciful heavenly Father.

"Keep silence, all created things,
And wait thy Maker's nod."

I might write you all day, and not begin to tell you of the mercies of a covenant-keeping God. It will require an eternity to sound forth the praises of God. And if we are permitted to join in the song of that great multitude, redeemed from among men, we shall never be able to sing the whole, nor become weary of the same.

I remain your unworthy sister,

ELIZABETH H. BOGGS.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Licking Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, will convene, the Lord willing, with the Bald Eagle church, at Mt. Sterling, Montgomery Co., Ky., on Friday, Sept. 8th, and continue three days.

Those coming from the east or west will be met Thursday and Friday, and conveyed to places of entertainment.

J. W. RATLIFF, Clerk.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the church in Whitefield, Maine, to commence on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1899, and continue three days.

Those coming from the south, on the Wiscasset & Quebec Railroad, will be met at the Depot in Whitefield, at the afternoon train on Thursday, and conveyed to places of entertainment, and from there to the meeting. We will be glad to meet all lovers of the truth who feel to come.

J. H. LOWELL, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the First Church of Roxbury, on the second Wednesday and Thursday in September, (13th and 14th,) 1899, to begin at 10 o'clock a. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all, especially ministering brethren.

Those coming by rail will be met at Roxbury on Tuesday, the day before the meeting.

WILLIAM BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Old School Baptist Association will meet with the Springfield church, in Huntingdon Co., Pa., the second Sunday in October, and Friday and Saturday before.

Those coming by railroad will come on the Pennsylvania road to Mount Union, and there take the East Broadtop road to Three Springs. Come on Thursday. The trains leave Mount Union at 9:15 a. m. and 4 p. m., arriving at Three Springs about 10:30 a. m. and 5:30 p. m. There will be some one there to see that all are cared for.

We hope our ministering brethren, and all that love the truth, will remember us.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

MEETINGS.

A GREAT MISTAKE!

I made it. The two days meeting in Albany & Troy, N. Y., is to be held Sept. 21st and 22d, Thursday and Friday before the fourth Sunday, instead of the 28th and 29th, as I wrote you. Hope the friends will bear it in mind.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Old School Baptist church of Albany & Troy have arranged to hold a two days meeting, Thursday and Friday, Sept. 21st and 22d, 1899. Ticket to Albany, N. Y., then take Belt Line steam cars to Bath, five miles from Albany, where there will be conveyances Wednesday afternoon, to convey friends three miles in country, to place of meeting. Should any come Thursday morning, they will please send line to brother Chas. Shade, 415 Canal St., Albany, N. Y., or Mr. Delos Becker, Defreestville, N. Y. Meeting Saturday and Sunday following, at Troy and Sand Lake.

We will gladly welcome all that can come, and hope to see many.

THE annual meeting at Cow Marsh, Kent Co., Del., is appointed for the fourth Sunday in September, Saturday and Monday included.

Friends coming by rail will take the morning train from either north or south to Woodside, where they will be met. Saturday meeting 2 o'clock p. m.

A cordial invitation is extended.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Pastor.

A yearly meeting is appointed to be held with the Harford church, Harford Co., Md., commencing at 10 a. m., on Saturday before the first Sunday in Sept., 1899, and continuing two days. A cordial invitation is extended.

Those coming by way of Baltimore will take train at 4 p. m., at North Avenue Station, Baltimore, Lehigh, or (Narrow Gauge R. R.) for Long Green, or Forest Hill, from where they will be conveyed to places of entertainment.

NATHAN GRAFTON, Church Clerk.

AT their regular meeting of business, August 5th, 1899, the Lime Creek church, Regular Predestinarian Baptists, of Floyd Co., Iowa, voted unanimously to hold the future meetings of said church at Garden City, at the usual time, the first Sunday in each month and Saturday preceding.

GARRETT MURPHY, Moderator.

WM. C. BROWN, Church Clerk.

N. B.—A meeting was appointed at Nora Springs, Iowa, October 1st and Saturday before.

G. M.

THE yearly two days meeting of the Otego Old School Baptist church, has been appointed to be held at Otego, N. Y., the last Wednesday and Thursday in September, (27th and 28th,) 1899. The regular monthly meeting for October is to be on Saturday afternoon and Sunday following the yearly meeting. We hope our kindred in Christ will remember us, and try and attend our meetings. All will be cared for who come.

Done for and in behalf of the church.

S. C. F. GUERNSEY, Church Clerk.

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IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday, at the Hall,

226 West 58th Street,

10:30 A. M. **3 P. M.**

To them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ, is extended a most cordial invitation to meet with us.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 67. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1899. NO. 18.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JONATHAN AND DAVID.

THE history of Jonathan and David in their relation to each other has a very peculiar interest. Even to the natural mind it is a wonderful and touching story; but, as is the case with all the Scriptures, its far deeper, its real and true interest and value, lie in its spiritual meaning. All that was written aforetime was written for our learning in spiritual things in this gospel dispensation. (Romans xv. 4.) This history has a striking gospel significance, which I wish to speak of briefly.

It is undoubtedly true that David was an eminent type of Christ, and that in most if not all of the incidents of his life recorded in the Scriptures there is set forth in a figure some truth concerning Jesus in his work of salvation. Jonathan appears to represent the Lord's spiritual people as they appeared under the law, while Saul as the anointed king represents Israel after the flesh, with the authority of the worldly sanctuary and carnal ordinances, and all that pertained to the first covenant. Saul and Jonathan were related in the flesh, and were both under that legal covenant, as the carnal Israelites and those who had divine life were all together under that law, and under its carnal service, and could not be distinguished from each other by anything peculiar to either in that legal work. But when David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Saul hated him from that time, while from that same time "Jonathan's soul was knit to the soul of David, and he loved him as his own soul." So when Jesus appeared, even in the prophecies of the Old Testament, as the conqueror of death, the enmity of the carnal mind was ever excited against him, and those who testified of him were persecuted.

I will dwell somewhat upon this battle of David. He was in the house of Saul after he had been anointed king, of which fact Saul was ignorant. Although anointed to be king, the kingdom was not to be given to David until Saul's death, then it was to be established to him and his seed forever. It was probably to signify the permanence of the kingdom to him and his seed that he was anointed out of a horn, while Saul was anointed out of a vial for the opposite reason. David always acknowledged Saul as king

while he lived. Jesus was in the legal house, and subject to both parental and legal authority, but was not known as the anointed King by the legal rulers and princes of this world. He was not under their displeasure as a man, but only when by act or word he declared his sovereign power, and the work of salvation which he came to do.

When David was sent by his father to see his brethren, who were in the army of Saul fighting the Philistines, a champion of great size had come out of the camp of the Philistines forty days in succession, and each day had challenged Israel to choose a man to fight him. Upon his appearance all Israel were dismayed at the sight of him, and fled from him. Nevertheless Israel each morning, seeming to forget their fear of the previous day, went forth to the fight again, in the same armor, and again shouted for the battle, as though confident of the victory. But again they were afraid at the sight of Goliath, and fled from him.

The Philistines were gathered at Shochoh, (a thicket) which belonged to Judah, and pitched between that and Azekah (a cultivated ground). To my mind they, who were the great and constant enemies of Israel, represent our sins, and all the vileness of our fleshly nature, and it is in the wilderness of the flesh, between the flesh and the cultivated soil where grace reigns, the battle is waged. The great and fearful champion that comes forth from that camp of our enemies is death. Of him the Lord's quickened people must be afraid, for in the armor of the law they cannot overcome him, but must fall before him. Sin reigns unto death.

It was on the fortieth day of the champion's appearance that David appeared and accepted the challenge. So on the fortieth day Jesus overcame the devil in the wilderness. David could not go to fight Goliath without the authority of Saul, so Jesus must be recognized by the law as having the right to go into the conflict with death. He was authorized by the law, and put forward by the legal authorities as the one man who "ought to die for the people, that the whole nation perish not," though the hight priest who uttered that prophecy by the Spirit did not himself know the power of the words he uttered. (John xi. 50-52.)

Saul armed David with his own armor, but David put it off. The law armed Jesus with the flesh. By being made flesh he came under the law. He could not meet and overcome death until he had taken upon himself and put off again that flesh in which sin had been committed, and thus had condemned sin in the flesh. It was only by first being overcome himself that he could overcome the great enemy. He must first die in order to abolish death. The law must first be satisfied by his death, which makes an end of sin, and then death has lost its power. "He that is dead is freed from sin." Then the Son of God, who took upon himself the likeness of sinful flesh, in order to die the death due for the transgressions of his people, can no longer be holden of death, but comes forth victorious over him. "Death hath no more dominion over him."

All this must be shown in a figure by the action of David, while David must remain alive. So having put off Saul's armor, he chose five smooth stones from the valley. These stones represent an accursed death inflicted upon an Israelite. When a man became accursed he must be stoned to death. David threw one of these stones and brought down the giant. Jesus by his own death under the curse of the law, represented in this figure by

the smooth (perfect) stones with which David armed himself, brought death down at his feet, and "destroyed him that had the power of death." He must first die, and then meet death with his own death, and thus overcome him so thoroughly that he can never make any one for whom Jesus died his captive any more. Jesus fought the battle so effectually in the valley of Elah, the bitter valley of death, that when he came forth out of that valley he even "carried captivity captive."

To make the figure more complete David took the champion's own sword to cut off his head. It was the sword of justice which death held over all who were under the curse of the law. But when Jesus through his own death "finished transgression, made an end of sin," and so laid death low, deprived of all his power, then that sword of justice was taken from death and turned against himself to bring his existence to an end. It was not simply absolute power, as abstractly considered, by which Jesus overcame death, but the power that justice and judgment give, for they are the habitation of God's throne, or the foundation of his power as against death. His people are not simply snatched from death, as a stronger man may take away a lawful captive from a weaker, but they are legally delivered. They are justified. No charge can ever be brought against them, for God has justified them. "It was Christ that died, yea, rather, is risen again, and is now at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for them." His intercession is felt to be effectual, for with the sword of justice justly taken from his conquered enemy he has destroyed him forever.

"The Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side, and there was a valley between them." "And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead they fled. And the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines until thou come to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron." And when the Lord's people see the victory of Jesus over death they arise, and shout, and pursue their enemies, and rejoice in the victory that is given unto them through Jesus Christ our Lord.

When David went forth to fight the Philistine Saul inquired who he was. No one seemed to know. Upon his return Saul sent for him and asked him, "Whose son art thou, thou young man?" David with modesty and meekness answered, "I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Bethlehemite." When he had thus spoken to Saul, "the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David; and he loved him as his own soul." "Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle."

What can this act of Jonathan signify unless it be the fact that all of the Lord's people in all dispensations do ever ascribe their robe of righteousness, and all their garments of salvation, and all their weapons of war and their strength, to Jesus? They recognize and testify that all they have belongs to him, and is his gift to them. This is as clearly declared by the holy men in the legal dispensation as by those now in the gospel day.

To the sight of men, Jonathan and Saul were alike as warriors. They fought with carnal weapons, and must both fall upon that same battlefield, overcome by the Philistines. That is the end of all

who are under that dispensation. It is the end of all flesh. It is only by faith that a future is seen for Jonathan which is not seen for Saul, in which he and his seed shall be remembered in covenant love and salvation by David. Upon this earthly battlefield he and his fathers fight side by side with equal courage and zeal. David classes them as equals, and speaks of them with equal praise. "From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty. Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions." "How are the mighty fallen." That legal covenant could not furnish any weapon to those under it whereby they could overcome their enemies. "How are the weapons of war perished!"

For Jonathan, David had some words of love and tenderness which he had not for Saul. "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan. Very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." The love of the Lord's people to Jesus is wonderfully described in those few words. In all ages, in all dispensations, in all lands and among all people, it is the same. It is indeed wonderful, a "love that passeth knowledge."

"Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father," and defended him at the risk of his own life, and saved him out of his father's hand, who sought to kill even Jonathan his son because of his defense of David. In this Jonathan may well represent the prophets and holy men of old, who testified of Jesus, and declared his coming and kingdom, and who were hated by the carnal Israelites and their rulers, and were persecuted and killed, because they spake good concerning the spiritual David who was to be the Ruler over Israel.

And Jonathan said to David, "And thou shalt not only while yet I live shew me the kindness of the Lord, that I die not: but also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house forever: no, not when the Lord hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth. So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, Let the Lord even require it at the hand of David's enemies. And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him; for he loved him as his own soul."

This promise was not literally fulfilled to Jonathan, for he died with Saul in battle with the Philistines on Mount Gilboa. Nor were the promises which were given to the prophets to declare among the people literally fulfilled to them. They, with all the Lord's spiritual Israel under the old dispensation, "having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."—Heb. xi. 39, 40. The "everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure," which was made with them, and which was all their salvation and all their desire, (2 Sam. xxiii. 5,) was not made to grow or be fulfilled in their flesh, nor in the sight of men. Its fulfillment was experienced then in the manifestation of Christ to them through the Spirit, who has now appeared in the flesh, and has openly fulfilled all that they spoke of him, revealing himself to his people among all nations by faith, and showing unto us that his people both under the old and the new dispensations are made perfect only in him.

As we see the heart of Jonathan turned

toward his children far in the future, with a longing desire that David would show the kindness of the Lord to them, so we see the hearts of the fathers (the prophets) turned unto their children in the gospel dispensation, and rejoicing when it was made known unto them that the things they declared were to be fulfilled unto us. (Luke i. 17; 1 Peter i. 12.)

Our next inquiry will be concerning the seed of Jonathan.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., August 18, 1899.

1 CORINTHIANS VI. 17.

"HE that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit."

BELOVED IN THE BONDS OF THE COVENANT OF GRACE:—It is only as my heart is exercised with the things of God that I find any satisfaction in either speaking or writing. When it is otherwise how mechanical, what a task to attempt to utter anything relating to God. It seems to me that I am a mass of contradictions. In my flesh there dwells no good thing, yet I, a very worm, love the Lord, and have affection for those who fear his dear name. It seems incredible that such opposite emotions should exercise the same person. But the mystery is declared in the Scriptures as being the two natures in the child of God. The old man and the new man, the flesh and the Spirit, and these are contrary the one to the other; as diverse as light and darkness. The vile and sinful nature is derived from our natural head and progenitor, and the pure and incorruptible nature, which is the source of all our yearnings after the living God, is derived from our divine Head and Husband, the Son of God, the Lord from heaven, the last Adam. That I am related to the first man Adam, (1 Cor. xv. 45,) by whom sin entered the world, and death by sin, I feel I have every evidence. I am a sinner, and the life derived from Adam is unholy and sinful and mortal: in Adam we all die. But that I am related to the Incarnate Word, the last Adam, is not always so evident. The natural, vain, sinful life is so uppermost, so thrusts itself into the moments of my sojourn here, that I go about with a sort of despairing cry, sighing for some evidence of divine life. O, where art thou, my love, my dove, thou sweet communion with the Lord, thou fountain of life, Hast thou deserted me? Art thou gone? Hast thou failed? Wilt thou not spring up again? O well, I thirst, I pant, I pine to prove, to taste the life of Christ in my soul. Ah, though I know it not at the time, these very yearnings, sighs and supplications are evidences of the very life of God in the soul, bubbling up, and overflowing, rising above all the oppression of the world, the flesh and the devil. It is written, "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." Am I then joined to the Lord? Am I in oneness of spirit with him? Am I married to Jesus Christ? Is he my Husband, am I his bride? Am I included among those who are said to be members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones? (Eph. v. 30.) These are vital, important questions, and it is only under the assuring power of the Comforter that they can be answered in the affirmative. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." If we have the Spirit of Christ we are his. (Romans viii. 9.) We are joined unto him by such ties that all the powers of sin and Satan can never sunder. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" You know how blessedly the apostle Paul declares that nothing shall separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Let us bear in mind that our

Savior is both God and man; the Word made flesh. In his eternal Godhead he is the fellow of the Lord of hosts, and in his holy manhood he is one with, and the fellow of all his chosen people. (Zech. xiii. 7; Psalm xlv. 7.) Christ Jesus the Son of God, is God. (John i. 1.) The equal with God, (Phil. ii. 6,) and the image of God. (2 Cor. iv. 4.) The express image of the Father, and brightness of his glory. (Heb. i. 3.) He who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, was made in the likeness of sinful flesh; he took into union with himself our manhood, for it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren (the elect, whom the Father predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will). Our Redeemer then is truly man, the seed of Abraham, the firstborn child of the Virgin Mary. (Luke i. 31–35.)

It is very precious to contemplate that our Lord Jesus Christ is in his person verily God and verily man. "Thou shalt call me Ishi." [my husband]—Hosea ii. 16. The Spirit of Christ was in the saints before the coming of our Redeemer in the flesh, and from the testimony of the Scriptures we learn they were deeply exercised concerning Christ. They yearned to know the signification of Christ's sufferings and the glory that should follow. Their yearning hearts reached forward to the time when he should come and fulfill that which the Spirit testified in them he should accomplish. That is, their emancipation from sin and the curse, from hell and the grave, and present them in perfection of beauty, in justification of life, in eternal glory, before the throne of God, with exceeding joy. (1 Peter i. 11.) The saints then of old times were joined unto the Lord, and this union was very comfortingly declared unto them as being a marriage union. Truly, "This is a great mystery."—Eph. v. 32. "For thy Maker is thine Husband; The Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called."—Isaiah liv. 5. "I am married unto you."—Jer. iii. 14. Thus the Lord testified unto his people that he was joined unto them, and they unto him, and he put a new spirit within them. (Ezek. xi. 19.) This was his Spirit, the Spirit of Christ. (Joel ii. 28; Acts ii. 17, 18.) If then we are joined unto the Lord, married to him in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten, as in the marriage of husband and wife they are no more twain but one flesh, so he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Let us consider this one Spirit that is in Christ and his own, and which evidences the union of Christ and his church. In him love, meekness and truth were ever exemplified. Are we joined in this selfsame spirit of love and meekness and truth unto Jesus? Vain are all our religious pretensions if we have not the Spirit of Christ, we are none of his. Jesus our Savior loved God, and loved his people. If therefore we are joined in bands of life, knit unto the Son of God in life eternal, if he, the last Adam, a quickening Spirit, hath quickened us that were dead in trespasses and sins, and has thus joined us unto himself, this life that is in him, and is derived from him, will (as the sap in the branches of the vine) spring up in us, and animate our souls. Paul says, "Christ liveth in me." His love we shall feel, we shall love what Jesus loved. He loved the Father, loved the church, loved all the attributes of God, his holiness, wisdom and power, he rejoiced in the sovereignty and mercy of God to the lowly and helpless, as it is

written, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." If we are one spirit with our Lord, we will love the truth of the gospel, and that truth, though humbling to the flesh, will be precious, and held fast in our affections. We receive from him the love of the truth that we might be saved. In this love we have the witness and knowledge that we are of God, born of God, that we know God; there is a divine intimacy between our souls and God, and we are passed from death unto life. Christ Jesus was full of tenderness and forgiveness. What a cry was that, how dear! "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."—Luke xxiii. 34. And that martyr Stephen was evidently joined unto the Lord when he cried aloud with his dying breath, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep."—Acts vii. 60. What exalted, lovely teaching flows from the lips of our Beloved. "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children [evidentially] of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Is there not within us that which falls in love with this, and we inwardly say, I want in my heart to so live and walk before the Lord? Another token that we have the Spirit of Christ is, that sin is our grief. Jesus was grieved in Spirit, (Mark iii. 5,) and he was put to grief when he bare our sins, and all that are led by the Spirit of God, mourn over their iniquities. (Ezek. vii. 16.) Every one shall know his own sore, and his own grief. (2 Chron. vi. 29.) The high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity dwells with the humble and contrite in spirit to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. I will not attempt to present all the features of the one spirit which believers have in union with the Lord, but one more thought let me set before you. "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."—Gal. iv. 6. "And I said, Thou shalt call me, my Father; and shalt not turn away from me."—Jer. iii. 19. This is wonderful, that a creature, a sinful creature, should have such favor bestowed upon him to have the power to call the everlasting God, "My Father."

"As many as received him, [the only begotten Son of God] to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." However easily religionists may utter the language, "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name," those who are in truth born of God, feel that they need a continual supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ to say from their hearts, My Father. How near we are to the Holy One of Israel, when in our hearts we cry, Abba, Father! Sometimes I have been afraid to call God my Father. I felt I was so far off from him, so carnal, it seemed as though it would be wicked to thrust myself into the inner chambers of the palace of the Most High, claiming by such language recognition and acceptance in his sight as his child. O, the relationship has appeared too sacred and near for me to claim. So, poor and miserable sinner that I am, I have as it were stood afar off, outside the gate, my unbelief has wasted my courage, and timid

and trembling I have addressed the Lord calling him God. O, I have wanted to call him my Father, but have felt I am in my secret life living so far from God, how dare I lift up my face and say, My Father? I feel because of my worldliness and carnality, too ashamed to do so, and yet though I cannot frame the words and speak them, I feel I have that hope that I am his child, till at length after much inward conflicts in humility, and love and grief, there has burst forth from my heart the cry, O, my Father, have pity upon me. Many times, since I first believed on his name, has my experience been such as I have attempted to portray, and I find it is only by the power of the Spirit of Christ the Son of God, that I can feelingly say, "Our Father who art in heaven," and in this spirit I have hope that I am joined unto the Lord. I feel this is a great thing to say, but at present I can say no less.

I am, I hope, your brother in Jesus,

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

STATE ROAD, Del., August, 1899.

BROTHER BEEBE:—I feel disposed to offer some reflections this morning on a paragraph of Scripture, but I doubt whether I should have attempted it if I had not been requested to do so.

The Scripture to which I propose to refer more particularly is Psalms lxviii. 18: "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them."

We are not left to conjecture what these gifts were, or to whom they were given, as the apostle has fully informed us as he cites the passage and comments upon it. There appears to be a diversity in these gifts, as different terms are used to designate them, but all to one end, and the accomplishing of one and the same grand purpose. In regard to the ascension of Christ, the apostle says, "He ascended far above all heavens that he might fill all things." These expressions, "on high," and "far above," are not to be understood of locality, as in infinite space one place is not higher than another. But he is invested with the prerogative and authority; all the powers of heaven and earth being in and with him. I think we are safe in assuming that the apostle's list embraces all the gifts that the Redeemer received in his ascension, and all that the church would ever need, or that would ever be recognized. The apostle in his letter to the Ephesians names, apostles and prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers. In his letter to the church at Corinth he adds to this list, "After that miracles, the gift of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." But he bases all these gifts upon the fact of their being the body of Christ, and members in particular. It should especially claim our attention that these gifts are all of heavenly origin, and heavenly excellency, and that nothing above them is to be found even in the heavens. The angel that John saw having the everlasting gospel to preach, was seen soaring in the midst of heaven. The best gifts that men may acquire on earth by human teaching, or creature effort, are not to be compared with these gifts of which the psalmist speaks. As to the recipients of these gifts the apostle does not leave any of the saints out. But he says to every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Those to whom it is not given to speak, it is given to hear and to under-

stand to profit. The purpose for which all these gifts are conferred upon men is a point about which men differ. Yet the psalmist and the apostle both tell us in plain, unequivocal terms, and leave no room for doubt or uncertainty as to the grand design of them, and work to be accomplished by them. If these gifts were designed, any single one of them, or all combined, for the conversion of sinners, or the salvation of souls that would otherwise be lost, would it not have been so said? Here we have a definite statement of the grand object in bestowing all these gifts upon men. "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." There are three different expressions here, but in substance the same, and covering all the ground. As the saints are spoken of as being born, and as lambs and little children, and new born babes, it follows of course that they can be ministered unto for their profit and growth. As in nature all children coming into the world need nursing and caring for and ministering unto, so in the spiritual birth. The life is there, but is not fully developed. There is room to grow in the knowledge of that great salvation. The subjects of the kingdom are compared to the mustard seed, which is so very small, and yet capable of such wonderful growth. The grace itself does not grow, but there is a growth in the knowledge and experience of it. The apostle says, "That ye be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine." This is plain enough, and it gives us to understand that young believers are learners, and that they are not perfect in knowledge. They are being led in a new and strange pathway, many things in their experience seeming to be against them, and causing them to stumble. For this cause no doubt many remain a long time out of the church. They do not have the knowledge of what a work of grace really is, to be satisfied for themselves, and so like timid, weakly lambs, have need to be led, or carried, to the company and privileges that they are longing to enjoy. The kind of perfection the apostle talks about cannot be attained to outside of the church. It is in the church where they are builded together for an habitation of the Spirit, and grow to an holy temple in the Lord. We cannot minister unless there are those who can be ministered unto, and if it is a ministration of spiritual things, they can only be ministered to those who can receive the things of the Spirit. "No man knoweth the things of God save the Spirit of God." In order to edify the body of Christ it must first be that body and members of that body that are ministered unto. And these ministrations will tend more and more to make manifest the Spirit of Christ which is in them. The faith of God's people although a unit, covers much ground, and though in the start we may be believers in Christ, yet there is a growth afterward, when we can be said to have grown up in all things into him who is the Head, even Christ. It is indeed a blessed ministry that results in all those ministered unto being found to be subjects of one and the same faith. That their knowledge of the Son of God recognizes in him a complete salvation, and that they all have the same faith in him and love to him. There is a perfection in this, when all the members of any church are fully established in the truth, and are living examples and illustrations of the fullness and perfection there is in Christ. These for whom all this provision and ministration is made

are saints in the first place, before they are ministered unto by men, even good preachers, and there are no gifts conferred upon men to convert sinners, or to provide saints. If it was not thought incredible with King Agrippa that God should raise the dead, why should it be thought incredible with us, or why should we not recognize that God-given life that constitutes the saints? The perfection is in the life, only it has need to be developed. The unity is in the faith, but the young believer has need to grow up into it. Under that gospel ministry, that the Lord has provided, the knowledge of salvation will be increased, but whatever that salvation is, is found in the life and experience of the believer, so as witness is borne to and with their experience, there results an interesting knowledge of the salvation that is in Christ, as wrought in their own heart. We do not have knowledge of the Son of God as a Savior only in what is revealed in our personal experience. The Savior spoke of giving living water, and that it would ever after have an abiding place in the recipient. "It shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." This life then is a flowing fountain. It wells up, and drawing from it does not exhaust or diminish it. So it ministers to the growth and health of others. But spiritual life can only be ministered unto with spiritual things. The natural man receiveth them not. And natural men do not and cannot provide for the children of the kingdom. If this consummation is to be reached, that "We all come to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ," it is certainly an attainment worthy of a God-given ministry that was from far above all heavens. A ministry of this kind is easily distinguishable from anything and everything that men have devised, or that their zeal has accomplished. No man knoweth the Son but the Father, and if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his.

I submit these reflections as about as clear as I am able to make them at this time.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

ROMANS V. 14.

"WHO is the figure of him that was to come."

We know that Paul was not mistaken in this, for like other holy men of God, he spake as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, and therefore the mind of God is here expressed by him. It could not be that Adam is the figure in the sense that he was made in the shape of God, for God's shape is not known. (Deut. iv. 12; 1 Tim. vi. 16.) The Holy Ghost appeared to John the Baptist, in bodily shape as a dove, at the baptism of our Lord. The Lord appeared to Abraham as a man, and Christ was manifest in the flesh, and after his resurrection he appeared to many of his disciples, in the same form. In all these instances of his bodily appearance, it was for a witness unto his people, and not to show them his heavenly shape was like that of Adam, or that Adam was his image in that sense. Adam was material, but God is a Spirit. (John iv. 24.) We do not, as men and women, (that is Adam) worship God, for they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in truth.

When God made man, the woman was not in the man as a woman, but as a rib. She was in this invisible and undeveloped form when man received the law, but yet she received the law in him. As he was material and earthy, so was she. Her life was in him. We do not read that when God had made the woman he gave her another life separate from that which

was in the man. When the rib was made a woman, and brought to the man, he recognized her as a part of himself. She still was not separated from him, but he testified that a man should leave his father and his mother, and should cleave unto his wife. They are no more twain, but one flesh. He is flesh, and she is that same flesh, or one flesh.

Then again, the woman goes down in sin, under temptation, being deceived. The man is not deceived, but goes with his wife, down into the transgression and dies. They were one in their first state, and they are one in death. Death does not separate them. God, in the sense of being his originator, is his Father, and he must leave his Father, and cleave unto his wife, even though she go down into death. Thus Adam falls into the ground and dies, both male and female, and from thence is the multiplication of the Adamic race, and the replenishing of the earth. This man, Adam, is of the earth earthy, and as the earthy so are they also that are earthy. Now the second man is the Lord from heaven. And as the heavenly so must they be who are heavenly, or who are his. They who now bear the image of the earthy, shall also bear the image of the heavenly. This wonderfully glorious change comes from a certain beginning. We could not have an individual existence or being in Christ, for he was not an individual, but he was the eternal life of his people, and then, just as much as now. Therefore our names were given in the Father's will, as those who should afterward be manifested in that eternal life, and by it developed, and made the recipients of the life unity with their husband, Jesus. When John saw the holy city, she was coming down from God out of heaven. This was the bride, the Lamb's wife, who, as we are told, is the mother of all (all the saints). From her we all are born and developed into spiritual existence, and the sacred unity is made manifest. Now, if she in some sense, had not been in him, she could not have been developed out of him, and would have been of a different nature or spirit from him. But to appear with him, and that she should be accepted with him, she must be one with him, and clothed with his own raiment. Otherwise he could not present her in those blessed words, "Behold I, and the children which thou hast given me." Thus he presents them in himself, or in his righteousness.

It is, it must be, in this sacred relationship of life unity, that Adam is the figure of him that was to come (Christ), and Eve, the figure of the church; and also in this, that neither could bring forth fruit without falling into the ground and dying, and in that both times the two brides were deceived, and went into the transgression, but the husbands were not deceived. But in the first instance, Adam went down to die with his bride, and in the second, Christ died that she might have life; his life, which was given her in him before the foundation of the world.

The first husband had no existence prior to his creation, nor any life prior to the moment when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, but the second husband was the Creator of the first, and had his existence with the Father forever. Therefore his life was of the same duration, and his life is the life of the bride, and therefore her life is eternal. His life is like himself spiritual, therefore her life is spiritual, and she like her life must be spiritual. In a covenant sense we were Christ's before we were Adam's children, for we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. (Eph. i. iv; 1 Peter i. 2.) We were given to him

in God's will, to be saved, and he to us as our Savior. (John vi. 39.) And in the end he declared it is finished; the work was done.

The first woman was developed like the first man, for she was of him. The second woman is developing, and shall be developed like Christ, for she is of him. To-day when we look upon man or woman, we see nothing more or less than Adam. These we see with the natural eye, for they are natural, and like all things in nature, they must pass away. But with the children of God there is a spiritual eye, which by the Spirit of God has been opened to spiritual things, and by that eye we see the children of God, as Christ Jesus shines in them. I do not believe that the development of the church can be seen with the natural eye, any more than the Jews could understand that Jesus was the Christ, without a revelation from heaven.

Here is one evidence that we are the Lord's. We are developing in him by being made conformable unto him, both in his life and in his suffering, and in his death, and his life from the dead. As Christ is revealed in us in the new birth, so are we developed, and so do we grow up in him, in fiery trials that purge and cleanse us from all the dross of sin. Were it not for these we would have no evidence that we are, or ever were in Christ in any sense of the word. Every time that we hear his voice speaking peace in times of trouble, calming the tempest, shadowing us from the parching heat of the sun; every time his mercies flow out to us, and we feel the forgiveness of sins, that often do we have the renewed assurance that we are the members of his body in particular, and members one of another, and that the life which is in the head, is also our life, making us abhor ourselves, and hunger for Christ and his glory. Thus we wait for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body, which shall be sown in weakness, but shall be raised in power, (Christ) for it shall be changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body. In death it will lose every particle of Adam, but in the resurrection it shall put on all or the full appearance of Christ. Lord, when I awake with thy likeness, then I shall be satisfied.

I have said more than I expected, but do not know as you will be able to get out of it what you hungered for. The Lord bless it to your comfort.

Your brother in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

ROXBORO, N. C., June 13, 1899.

[THE above letter has been handed us by sister John Hough. Though not written for publication, yet we do not doubt that brother Hardy will pardon its use in that way. It will doubtless be read with deep interest by many of the brethren and sisters. The subject is one of deep importance, as all the words of inspiration are. Much has been said and written upon it in past years, and there have been some differences of opinion among brethren. It is certainly true, that as Eve derived her life naturally from Adam, so the people of God derive all their spiritual life from Christ. Christ is himself our life. What a mercy that to fallen sinners such a boon has been given. The Savior said, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." As he bestows this life upon them, he himself comes and dwells in them, the hope of glory. They can have no acceptance with God except as they are found in him as believers and partakers of his grace.—ED.]

2 CORINTHIANS X. 3.

"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh."

Paul, here in the preface of his argument, sets forth the spiritual might and authority with which he is armed against all adverse powers, assuring the Corinthian brethren that the "weapons of warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." To the subversion of the works of the flesh, and the subduing of envy, and all unrighteous aspirations.

Weapon, means an instrument of offense or defense, as used in time of war against the invasion of a foreign power, to protect or shield one's self or nation against the inroads and ravages of a foe. However, Paul did "not war after the flesh," neither were the weapons of his warfare carnal, "but mighty through God."

A soldier is a military man or warrior, and we notice they have on a uniform which distinguishes them from the enemy, and is a perfect sign by which to recognize the friend from the foe, the true from the false. A soldier must only act when commanded by his superior officer, and is never allowed to take or select his own position on the battle field, but this is absolutely the work of his commanding officer. The soldier does not have to even furnish himself, but is equipped and provided with all needed supplies, from the great commissary department of an efficient government or kingdom.

So it is in the church or kingdom of heaven; they are provided for by the great Captain of their salvation, clothed in the uniform of the righteousness of Christ, the great commanding Officer of heaven and earth, who speaks, and it is done, commands, and it stands fast. He has set every member in the body just as it hath pleased him, giving them every good and perfect gift, and securing to them an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them. They are shielded and supported by his power, the great King in Zion, the Governor among the nations, that will do all his pleasure. The administration of this service not only supplieth the wants of the saints, but is abundant also, by many thanksgivings unto God. The gospel is the power of God, the word of truth, the sword of the spirit, the armor of God on the right hand and on the left, quick and powerful, piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

This was Paul's weapon, his sure defense, and by it he was enabled to withstand all the fiery darts of Satan, and stand before kings and rulers, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. And by the same weapon to comfort, enlighten and confirm the church in the principles of the true faith, and at the same time bore down all opposition and every false way. "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." Here is presented the true trumpet that is blown in Zion, and it ever gives the certain sound of the voice of the great Shepherd, that saith, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

This is a time of trouble and great commotion throughout christendom, and I fear to the annoyance and confusion of the true church, as the howl of the wolf, like an angry cloud, is coming up from all the precincts of idolatry and false worship to dupe the children of men;

deceiving and being deceived. "For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise and garments rolled in blood." —Isa. ix. 5. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Though we live in the flesh we do not war after the flesh, because "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." All the schemes and weapons of the world shall come to naught, and perish forever, but the truth as it is in Jesus, the great Judge of quick and dead, shall prosper, and finally consume all the inventions and abominations of men, casting down every imagination, remain firm as the Rock of our salvation, and shall triumph gloriously.

My sheet is full. God bless you forever.

ASA HOWARD.

SNYDER, Texas.

HUNTSVILLE, Ark., May 20, 1899.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—I desire to write you an account of my travel from nature to grace, if indeed I have ever traveled that road. Some years ago I got into trouble concerning my condition, and sometimes I was in more trouble than at other times. At times my trouble would leave me, and I would get along very well, then again it would return, and it would be worse than ever. It was this way with me for some time, and it finally appeared to me that if something was not done for me I was lost. I thought that I would go to work, which I did, but instead of getting relieved of my trouble, it got worse all the time. I was trying to sing and pray all the time, and I got no better. One day I had been to town, and on my way home I got into an awful condition; it appeared to me that I could not live, unless some relief was given me, and that quickly. I had done all in my power, but to no effect; I seemed to have come to the end of my own strength, and if anything was done to save me it must be in some other way.

We read of the children of Israel crossing the Red Sea, which is a type of spiritual Israel, the church. Thus all the children of God have to cross the Red Sea. I was going down a mountain, and it appeared to me that I had done all that I could do, and something had to be done for me or I would perish, and so I prayed to God, "Thou art all-wise, and hast all power in heaven and in earth, now take me and deal with me as seemeth good in thy sight, if I am saved it is just, and if I am damned it is just." Then it was that my burden left me, and I believe and hope it was then, that like Israel, I crossed over the Red Sea. I felt that all was well for a time, but soon began to doubt and think I was deceived. I would go back and travel over the road again, from the time when I hoped that the Lord appeared to me and showed me that I was a sinner, and then come on down to the time when I trust, as said before, that I crossed over the Red Sea, where I had been brought to a standstill place and saw, as I hope, the salvation of God. Then it would seem as though I could not be mistaken. Then I felt that I wanted to follow my Savior; I felt that I loved him, and he says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." I desired to go home to the church of God and tell what the Lord had done for me, and be baptized, and live with his people. There were no Old School Baptists in my neighborhood, and I went

to some meetings of some who went by the name of Old School Baptists; but the bell did not ring to suit me, altogether. They would mix and mingle with other people, and a great many of them belonged to secret societies, and would preach with other people, and would call upon them to take part in their meetings. This did not seem right to me. I went on for some time, when I heard of some brethren living at some distance, and I wrote to them, and in correspondence with them I found them to be sound. By this time, one or two more Baptists had moved in the little settlement where I lived, enough to organize a church, so I wrote to Elder C. W. Hudson, and Elder A. A. Edwards, and sister Reynolds wrote to Elder J. D. Miracle and Elder C. W. Anderson, and they came and constituted a church at a meeting-house called Shiloh, and the church was called by that name also. It belongs to the New Hope Association.

This is some of my travel, as I hope, from nature to grace. Now for fear I may be too lengthy, unless it were better, I will close. I leave it with you to do with as you deem best, if you deem it worthy of a place in your paper you may publish it, and if not, it will be all right with me.

May God bless and direct you in the way of truth, and cause you to stand firm on the Rock of eternal ages.

Yours in hope of life eternal,

AMBROSE PARKS.

WOODLAND, Cal., Sept. 23, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I hope that you will pardon me for my neglect in sending my remittance. I feel so poor and needy, so vile, so prone to sin, that I often fear that I have not been born again. I have been so low down in the valley for the greater part of the past year, that I hardly felt that I should survive, but I will say that thus far the Lord has led me on, and thus far his power prolongs my days, but I am so lifeless that I seem to have lost all feeling. I seem to be spiritually dead, and to have wandered away from my Father's house. "So far from God I seem to be, O, is there any one like me?"

Jesus says, "A man's foes shall be they of his own household." When I turn my eyes within I discover them. For when I would do good, evil is present with me, so that the good I would I do not, and the evil that I would not, that I do. I feel sometimes that God has withdrawn his Holy Spirit from me, and that I am left to grope in the dark. Then a ray of light will break in again, and I am made to cry, "O Lord, still support and comfort me," and again I cry, "Leave, ah leave me not alone." I go here and go there to get a crumb, but there is nothing but husks that the swine do eat. At times when I am trying to listen to them, I do cry out in my heart, O, that the good Lord would only send some one to preach the gospel to us poor, hungry, starving souls, away out in this country that is seemingly God forsaken. But the Lord has said, "I will send a famine in the land; not a famine for bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. * * * They shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it."—Amos viii. 11, 12. Did I not say before, I have experienced this same truth? Did I not say I have run here and there to hear the word of the Lord, but I cannot find it? What I hear is that other gospel which Paul speaks of. (2 Cor. xi. 4; Gal. i. 6, 7.) Paul says,

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable," &c. Now I want to ask of brother Durand, and brother Keene, if they will please write upon some Scriptures which I shall name: Gen. iii. 15; Matt. i. 21–23; Matt. xiii. 38; John viii. 44; John xii. 38; Luke i. 35; 1 Peter i. 23; Gal. iii. 16–29.

I have a few words more that I wish to say. I heard a Campbellite preacher this summer say, The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed, and the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed. Will some of the Old School Baptists tell me what they think of this? Will brother Durand, brother Keene or brother Chick do this? Will brother Keene tell us about Acts vii. 38? Who was it that was with the church in the wilderness, with the angel which spake to us in the Mount Sinai, and our fathers who received the lively oracles to give them unto us? I think that it was Jesus. Am I right or wrong? Please give your views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for the benefit of a poor old sinner like me.

Your unworthy sister in hope,
MRS. E. M. HOLLINGSWORTH.

MOODY, Ark., June 25, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Accept my thanks for the sample copy of the SIGNS of June 15th, which came duly to hand. I feel to thank God that it is "The sword of Gideon," boldly contending for the truth as revealed in the Scriptures, and taught by the Holy Spirit, and witnessed to by every child of grace. I do believe the doctrine of predestination, and that any appellation, as for instance, Absolute, adds nothing to its force or meaning. I believe that our God is confined to no boundary, and circumscribed by no line. Heaven is his throne and the earth is his footstool. He rules in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. He knows the end from the beginning, from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. To circumscribe his omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence is to my mind, to snatch from his hand the balance and the rod, rejudge his justice, and deny the God of gods, and that he is all-wise and omniscient, knowing the end from the beginning. The good and the bad are all known to him in every creature on earth. "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. * * * The darkness and the light are both alike to thee."—Psalm cxxxix. 7–12. These things teach his omnipresence.

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God."—Romans xiii. 1, 2. This teaches his omnipotence, and anything short of this trinity of attributes is not God.

If found worthy in your judgment, I feel as though I would like sometimes to contribute to your columns. I have been made to feel the power of the beast, and to praise God for deliverance from him.

Yours in hope of life in Christ,
J. P. BAKER.

[WRITE on, brother Baker, our columns are open for articles containing such truths.—ED.]

BETHAYRES, Pa., June 28, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I take the liberty to drop you a few lines, hoping that you will excuse me. I feel as though I would like to say something to God's dear children about his love, his unspeakable love, love that comes to one not by works, but by gift from God. He makes me love the things that I once hated, and love the church and people that I once despised. I could not do this if left to the flesh, but I feel that the Spirit of the Savior has fought against the flesh until it has made me love these things, and say thy will be done, and not mine. Then I think, Can it be that God so loved me, one so vile and sinful as I, and that the Savior died for me? O, what love. Tongue cannot express my feelings upon this matter; tears will come when I am made to think about it. I would rather have a back seat in the house of God, than be clothed with the riches of the world. I am made at times to feel as helpless as clay in the hands of the potter. I cannot do the things that I would, and I am all the time doing the things that I would not. The world says, "You must work," Jesus says, Salvation is by grace, and not by works, lest man should boast. The world says, We have a will to do, while Jesus says, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." When the light was revealed to me, if it ever was, it was not by anything that I did. I was in my stable about two years ago, and there was no earthly ear to hear my cry, and there for the first time I saw that I was a lost and helpless sinner, as helpless as a babe, and it was there Jesus appeared in a cloud, and assured me that he was the only Savior to depend upon. Since then I have had trials and sufferings, but I have a desire to look to the hills of Zion, from whence comes all my strength and help. If I was left alone I know that I would fall. I love to be with all the saints who give all the glory and praise to God, and none to man. I know there is nothing good in me; my thoughts are evil, and I have nothing good, only as my Father in heaven has seen fit to give it to me through his Son Jesus Christ. O, how helpless, how unworthy, how ungrateful I am; I am not fit to receive the smallest blessing from him. I teach my children to love me, and how they shall talk. It is Jesus that teaches his children to pray, and he tells them what to say, and what to ask for; he knows our need before we ask him. It seems to me that we cannot desire a thing until we feel the need of it. If we desire the love of God and his righteousness, he must first put that desire in our hearts, and it can never come there by our works, any more than we can get into the world by works.

Please excuse my letter. If not worth reading, my mind is relieved.

From your brother in hope,

CHARLES S. BOND.

HOPEWELL, N. J., June 26, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—I would like to say a few words to you all this morning, if I could, through our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I feel very unworthy to thus address you, knowing that the flesh is weak, but I feel that in the Lord Jesus we are rich beyond measure. If we love one another we will desire each other's company, that we may speak often one to another, telling of our welfare, and desiring to know of the other's also. Thus we may encourage each other by the way. Sometimes we pass through dark trials and know not what to do, and then we are

made to cry to our heavenly Father to deliver us once more out of this trouble, and then before we are aware, the trouble is gone and we are so glad, and feel to praise our heavenly Father for his great and wonderful mercy unto us. Then we can say the tempest is hushed and all is well once more, and go on our way rejoicing again, but O how careful we are, and how desirous that he would not leave us to ourselves, but would keep us from all evil, for we fear our own hearts above all things. We know if left to ourselves, we shall sow to the flesh, and of the flesh shall reap corruption, and that in our carnal nature.

AUGUST 11, 1899.

AFTER having had quite a little interruption, I will try to write a little more, as I am sick and cannot do much else. It seems, dear ones, that as soon as we are delivered from one trouble and feel so glad, that we are soon engulfed in another, and then we have to beg again for mercy and deliverance. We are ready to cry what miserable creatures we are. Why is all this trouble and perplexity of mind, which causes us so much daily sorrow? Is it not because our heavenly Father has said it should be so? While in this world we must have tribulation and trials, for so he himself was acquainted with grief while in the days of his flesh, and it was on account of our sins that he suffered and died in our stead. When we are given to see how very sinful we are, and that these very sins nailed him to the cross, and we see the agonizing Savior suffering for us, how it does humble us in the dust before him. But just now comes a comfort to me in this very thing, for it is in knowing that we are sinful (in knowing, I say) that we have the assurance that we are his. For if our cruel sins nailed him to the cross, then surely we are his forever, and he is ours, bless his holy name. What sweet comfort and what assurance is in this. So let us try to fill our place in duty, as unto the Lord, whether they be spiritual duties relating to our privileges in the church, or whether they be our temporal duties at home, in our families, let us do these things with the ability which he has seen fit to give us, while we stay here below, and when he is done serving himself with us here, may he receive us unto himself in glory, where there will be no more sorrows, perplexities and anxious cares belonging to this life, and all will be sweet peace for evermore.

As you see by the date of this letter, I began it some time ago, and then laid it one side, thinking I would never finish it, but while sick, I picked it up and read it over, and concluded to finish it, and submit it to the editors' better judgment, whether to publish it or not. All will be right with me in any event.

Affectionately yours,

MRS. GEORGE YARD.

RUCKER, Tenn., Sept. 2, 1899.

BROTHER BEEBE:—As my subscription to the SIGNS has about expired, I inclose five dollars, for which give me credit. My renewal for that length of time is but a feeble expression of my appreciation of the paper. I wish I could express the comfort and edification I receive from the able editorials and communications. When any are taken away, like brethren Jenkins, Cox and others, the paper still continues the same able and sound exponent of Bible truths. I thank the Lord I have been made to appreciate these truths.

I am better pleased than I expected to be, if possible, with the two "Books of Editorials."

In a blessed hope, I am your brother,

WM. P. TOLLEY.

EDITORIAL.

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THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER.

(Matt. xiii; Mark iv; Luke viii.)

THIS parable has been resting with some force upon our mind of late, and therefore we feel like presenting some of the reflections which have occurred to us, for the consideration of our readers.

Like all the parables, the meaning of this parable must be largely determined by the connection. At the close of the parable the Savior said to his disciples, "Take heed how ye hear," and one of the evangelists adds that he said, "Take heed what ye hear." It is evident from these expressions that this parable was intended to warn the disciples of danger as regards how and what they should hear. It seems clear that the Savior intended to teach that disciples themselves might hear in all these ways.

First, the seed does not seem to be the essential word written in the heart; that is, it does not appear to be that divine life which is communicated to the sinner in the new birth. It is the word preached, whether by the Savior when in the days of his flesh he spoke forth his own gospel, or by the apostles who heard his gracious words, and saw his gracious deeds of mercy, which they afterwards declared in their public ministry, and in their writings, or by those who are called in every age to preach the truth.

Second, the sowing is not that experience of the power of God in regeneration, which is never resisted, and which always accomplishes its work, and which is always the special work of God. It is the setting forth of the doctrine of the gospel, wherever it is preached. This sowing is not that experience which John declares when he said, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." This anointing or unction always produces fruit. This seed, no matter upon what sort of ground it falls, always prepares the ground by its omnipotent power, and so none of it is ever wasted, or fails to accomplish its purpose. The ground where this all-powerful word falls, is always bad ground, and is very dry, as the prophet Isaiah declares, and the seed has power over the ground, rather than the ground over it. It never owes the ground anything, but the transformed ground owes all things spiritual to it. Where this seed falls, the wonderful power in it transforms the wayside, the stony ground, and the ground infested with thorns and briars, into good ground. Its power can never fail. This work is always the work of the Spirit of God. This is the fulfillment of the Savior's words, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." The coming of the life of Jesus into the heart is never in vain. The seed and the sowing then is the preaching of the word, wherever it may be proclaimed.

While there may be a sense in which natural men may receive the word preached with some apparent approval for a time, yet some expressions in the parable, and connected with it, seem to

forbid that the parable can relate to unregenerate men in any way. For instance, it is said that the word was sown in their hearts. It does not seem scriptural that unregenerate men can receive the word spoken, in the heart. Also, the Master afterward said to his disciples, as recorded by one of the evangelists, "Take heed how ye hear," and as recorded by another he said, "Take heed what ye hear." It seems most certain that had there been no danger that his disciples might hear in all three of these unprofitable ways, he would not have deemed it needful to utter this warning for them. If it be true that the world of mankind may hear at all, it must be of course in a merely outward sense. The preaching of the word can have no true spiritual effect upon them, nor can they have a love for it, and so the word preached has no result in their lives, so as to bring forth any fruit. Let this be as it may, in the parable the Savior thought it needful to warn his own disciples against the danger of hearing in all these ways. "Take heed how ye hear," "Take heed what ye hear."

We are told in the third place that Jesus afterwards explained to his disciples, and some others, the meaning of the parable. But the multitude had departed. A dividing line was drawn here. Those who had no place in their hearts for these things of which Jesus spoke, went away. That which had been to them a mere matter of passing curiosity, called forth no inquiry as to what it might mean. But there were some whose hearts were opened to hear, and to them was given a desire to understand what he had been saying unto them. It is a good thing when any heart is drawn to ask, What does this or that word of Scripture mean? Thus the eunuch desired to be instructed, and thus Lydia attended to the things which were spoken by Paul, and thus the Bereans were more noble than others, because they searched daily the Scriptures, to see if these things were so. When a desire exists in the heart to know the meaning of the Scripture, the conversation of those who meet together is likely to be profitable to all who engage in it, and such an inquiring spirit is evidence of the indwelling and work of the Holy Spirit. Where the Spirit does not dwell, what fleshly interest may be felt, soon dies down, and they go away. Thus it was with this multitude, but some remained to inquire, and to them Jesus gave the meaning of the parable, and added the warning to take heed how and what they heard. How important the injunction then, whether we regard how we hear, or what we hear. These two words are not the same in the original, and do not mean the same thing. Neither is there a contradiction in the narrative. It need not be doubted that the Master used in his discourse both words. How important that we consider them for a time at least.

"Take heed what ye hear." We do not always realize the importance of this. What we hear has more or less effect upon us. No man can habitually allow himself to hear what is evil or false without becoming corrupted by it. Evil communications corrupt good manners," is the inspired declaration. Believers cannot allow themselves to sit under the sound of falsehood willingly, without imbibing more or less of the poisonous thing. If by the providence of God we are placed where we must hear what is false in doctrine, or evil in any other way, grace will be given us as our day. But to willingly place one's self where the truth is assailed, or where vile speech

is used, cannot fail to defile the conscience. Believers have a sensitive conscience given them, and it is a grief when they come in contact with evil in any form. What believer does not know the effect of being compelled to listen for a little time even, to vain, ribald conversation? We are made to realize that it is easy for us to be defiled by contact with evil in any form. By sore experience then believers learn that it will not do for them to addict themselves to hearing all things. It shows a bad state of heart and conscience to even be willing to hear falsehood, and to thus willingly hear cannot but leave a bitter taste. The foul thing will leave an evil remembrance with us. How many things would believers be glad to utterly forget. Even though what we might hear should leave no vile stain upon us, yet what true child of God could desire to hear the truth which he loves blasphemed or ridiculed? Who that has felt the power of Jesus' blood applied to cleanse his soul from guilt would be willing to hear the name of that Savior made light of? Let us then take heed what we hear. Said the Savior, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees." What disciple would be willing to listen to their hypocritical prayers, their vain professions of piety, their loud claims to charity and good will? Paul was very anxious that his brethren should be delivered from legal teachers, and the word of those who denied the resurrection of the dead, saying that it was past already. It is not a light thing to hear falsehood then. When falsehood has no charms for the mind, and the true believer has turned away from it with horror and fear, there yet remains another danger: even the truth may not be heard aright; even the truth may fail of having its proper effect, because of something unspiritual in our way of hearing. "Take heed how ye hear."

This brings us to consider the things said in the parable, and in the explanation given by the Savior. Some seed fell by the wayside, and the fowls of the air came and gathered it up. This was declared to be the coming of the devil and catching away the word, so that it did not abide with those where it was sown. The wayside does not mean just what we now would understand by the word. In the text it means a narrow path where men and beasts tread as they go on their way. The ground might be naturally good, but it is trodden down of men so that the seed could not enter and be covered by it. How often is the heart hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Once the word found a ready entrance, and seemed to abide and produce results in the heart and life, but now there seems to be no effect, and what is heard does not remain with us at all. The devil did not catch the word away from the good ground in the parable, because the seed had entered into the soft ground, but here he can catch the word away, because the ground is trodden down and is hard. Who is there among the children of God that at some time in his life has not been made aware that his contact with the world and worldly things which throng and press upon him has hardened his heart so that there seems to be no place for the word to abide? The enemy of souls is ever ready to catch away the word, lest it should be to the comfort or instruction of the people of God, and the disciples are warned to be aware of the danger of becoming thus hardened, so that the word does not abide with them, even when they hear it. The paths where the world and its traffic go should not be in the good ground of the

believer's heart. If the procession of these things must go on, this is not the place for it. The believer has been prepared for better things. God's people have been called unto liberty, the liberty of Christ and of the gospel, and not to the bondage of the world or of legality. Yet, like the brethren at Galatia, they may be ensnared, and become hardened so that the word of truth may fail to do them any good. The Savior said this was because the devil came and caught away the word which fell by the wayside upon hard ground.

Some seed fell upon stony ground. This does not mean what we would now understand by stony ground, but rather ground where a solid ledge comes near to the surface. It is said that here the seed sprang up quickly, because it had no depth of earth. There was some soil, but it had no depth. Every farmer knows that seed sown here will spring up quickly, more so than seed sown on deep soil. But it withered away as quickly when the sun was up. The Savior declares that this represents one who receives the word with joy, but because he has no depth of earth, when persecution shall come he becomes offended, and so falls away. It seemed that Peter heard in this way at the time when he denied his Lord. He had said he would go with him to prison and to death, and would never leave nor forsake him. He received the message of his Master with joy, and was full of life, and of ready desire to serve him, but soon, when he was subjected to temptation and trial, he failed, and denied his Lord with cursing and swearing. Indeed, how seldom we are able to endure persecution and reproach. How often we deny the Lord in our daily life, in failing to testify of him, because of the reproach of men. The sun of persecution arises with its burning heat of affliction, and we find the word which we have heard with joy has withered. How true it is that it is not always those who have seemed most animated and overjoyed at the word which has been preached, that endure, and are steadfast. It is not always those who have the most to say about what they have heard, that reveal the fruits of it in daily life, when its trials are upon them. The plant withers for the same reason that it sprang up quickly, it has no depth of earth.

Some seed fell among thorns, and when it was sprung up the thorns choked it, so that it brought no fruit to perfection. This the Savior says represents those who have received the word with joy, but the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lust of other things spring up and choke the word. They do not take the word away as in the first case, with the wayside hearers, nor does the word wither and die under persecution, but its power and strength are hindered by all the things named, and the stalk is frail, and the grain in the head shriveled and few in number. It brings fruit, but no fruit to perfection. This is the most common hindrance to the word that is preached. Who does not know the temptation resulting from the care of this world, and the hope of riches, and the deceitful promise of happiness in riches, and the desire or lust of other things? These things are in the way of every one. As we look back over the life that we have lived in the past, do we not all know that we have often neglected the things of the kingdom for some worldly gain? The word of truth has made its presence felt at times, and we cannot say that we are altogether dead to spiritual things, or to the obligations resting upon us as the subjects of

the kingdom of grace, but still we so often have brought no fruit to perfection. We frankly confess that it seems our chief hindrance has been in this last part of the parable. We do know something of the first two hindrances, to our shame and sorrow, but the last seems to be constantly in the way. If we go where saints congregate, and carry along with us the care of the world, and are making plans for the increase of riches, and the heart and mind are full of unholy desires for other things, none of us can hear to profit, even when the word is most plainly preached. And then when the next day with it labors has come, how often we have to lament that what we have heard does not show itself in our thoughts, words and conduct, as we have hoped and thought it would. What a hindrance have we all found the cares and riches and lusts of the world. Like Esau we sell our birthright for a mess of pottage. We labor for the meat that perishes, rather than that which endures to everlasting life. We seek first the things of the world, rather than the kingdom of God and his righteousness. This may be true while the outward conduct is above reproach, and even while there seems to be a reasonable diligence in attending upon the services of the sanctuary, and a willingness to bear our share of the financial burdens of the church. While each believer looking into his own heart will say that he is guilty of these things, no matter how closely he may have walked with God in the sight of his brethren, yet we believe that this does apply to some who never do seem to put the things of the kingdom first, but who are all the time striving for temporal things. They may strive honestly before men, but yet the whole spirit of their life and conduct is contrary to the profession which they have made. They are filled with worldly mindedness. Their pastor does not look to them for help and counsel and comfort in his trials. Their brethren do not think of broaching the subject of their trials and temptations to them, neither when glad in the Lord do they go to them with the glad story, with assurance that they will also rejoice. They themselves never seem to feel any need of the companionship of their kindred in Christ. They are sound in the letter of the doctrine perhaps, but its fragrance does not appear in them. They may continue to make a good profession, and in outward life appear to live, but there is no perfect fruit. How sad when christians fall into such a condition as this, yet we are all liable to thus fall, else why should the Savior say, "Take heed how ye hear?"

The seed falling upon the good ground are they who receive the word in good and honest hearts, and bring forth fruit, some thirty, some sixty and some an hundred fold. In these the ground is not trodden underfoot of men and beasts; of them it cannot be said that they have no depth of earth, and they are not occupied with thorns, or the cares and riches and lusts of the world. The soil is deep and soft. But yet it is of different quality, as the different results in the harvest show. These bring forth the proper fruit; these addict themselves to the word; they attend to what they hear, their hearts being opened, as was the heart of Lydia. The fruit we understand to be the living out the word truth, the conformity of the life to the gospel, and the walk which is in Christ Jesus, of which the apostle speaks when he enjoins upon his brethren to walk in Christ Jesus the Lord as they have received him. We see this fruit manifested in the apostles themselves afterward when they went

everywhere preaching the word, giving freely as they had received freely. We see it in the early saints of whom Paul in Hebrews speaks saying, that the world was not worthy of them. This fruit appears in hundreds of humble lowly lives who live unknown to all save God. They hear and read the word with care. This fruit is not born with a sound of trumpets, or with great professions of love and service, but it appears in the quiet, steadfast adherence to truth, and to what is right, which is so lovely in the sight of God, and of all who really know the truth. This fruit means all love, all fear, all humility, all hope, all tenderness and forbearance, and all straightforward adherence to the truth. These take heed how they hear, and these take heed also as to what they hear.

In conclusion we will say, it has been and is our view, that each and every child of God may hear in all these different ways, at different times in his experience. God's free mercy may bring the one who is walking furthest away from the truth to repentance, and to an humble reception of the word. Such an one when thus dealt with will confess with bitter shame his past folly, and will with earnest longing desire that he may be kept from going any longer astray. The best evidence that one is hearing profitably, as the good ground, is that there exists great fear in the heart, of his own weakness and treacherous nature, and a great desire that what he hears from the word may abide with him as his daily food. His daily prayer will be, Do thou give me an honest and good heart. And if there be any glad abiding of the word in his memory and heart, he will see daily cause to bless and praise God for it.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MARK X. 14; LUKE XVIII. 16.

"SUFFER little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God."

We are unable to discover anything in this passage inharmonious with the views expressed in the twenty-third number of our last volume, on the subject of the salvation of infants. To our mind this text, when properly understood, will confirm the sentiments therein expressed. The occasion on which these words were spoken by our lord, was not one in which he was setting forth the way of salvation. The people which gathered around our Lord, were bringing their little children or infants to Christ, not to have them baptized nor rantized, but we are informed in the context that the object of those who brought their children to him was that he would touch them. Who they were who brought their children, or what benefit they hoped to secure for their little ones, from his touching them, we are not informed; but we presume that, like the diseased woman who sought to touch the hem of his garment that she might be healed of her infirmity, they believed that a virtue would be communicated by the touch which would secure to them some blessing either temporal or spiritual. But the disciples rebuked them. From this circumstance it would seem that those who brought their children were not disciples, but whether they were or not, they were rebuked by the disciples, who seemed to regard it as an annoyance, and rebuked them. Mark says, "When Jesus saw it," (that is, when he saw the conduct of the disciples,) "he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer little children to come unto me." It was somewhat presuming in the disciples, in the presence

of the Master, without any authority from him, to rebuke those who brought their children to him. This may serve as an admonition to us all as disciples of the Redeemer, to avoid the assumption of authority which he has not vested in us. It becomes us as his disciples to always remember that it is his to command, and ours to obey. In the text we have two express and positive commands laid down for the government of the disciples of Christ, for unto them as such the text is addressed. Both of these commands enjoin the duty on the disciples to be passive, in regard to children's coming to Christ; and the reason why they should be passive is given also, namely: "For of such is the kingdom of God." It would be exceedingly difficult to infer from these words a duty to interfere in the matter of bringing or preventing them from coming, much less to infer an obligation to baptize or rantize them. Christ has informed us that no man can come unto him except the Father, which sent him, draw them; and all such as are drawn to him by the Father, he will raise up at the last day. Hence it is a matter over which his disciples have no power or control. They can neither facilitate nor hinder any from coming to Christ, either infants or adults, who are drawn to him by the Father, for the same power is displayed in drawing them to him that was displayed in sending the Savior into the world. As none but God the Father had the power and the right to send his Son into the world to save sinners, so none but God has the power or right to draw sinners, old or young, unto him. And as they have no power to draw them, they are equally destitute of power to oppose their coming to him, when drawn or brought to him. It is indeed a matter in which they are not allowed to interfere. There can be no danger that any of God's chosen people should fail to come to Christ, for he has positively assured us, that "All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." The work of salvation is so ordered and established in the counsel and decree of God, that neither men nor angels shall share with God in the work, nor divide with him the glory resulting from it. He will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one of them that is called by my name, for I have created him for my glory; I have formed him, yea, I have made him.

The reason assigned by our Lord for commanding them to be passive is, when duly understood, a very weighty one. "For of such is the kingdom of God." If he had said to them, For of such shall be the kingdom of God, they might have inferred that the kingdom of God was not yet established, that the subjects of it were not yet known, and that there was some blank in regard to its establishment, yet to be filled up. But the kingdom of God was prepared from the foundation of the world. God's King is set upon his holy hill of Zion. His throne is forever and ever. It is from everlasting to everlasting. All his subjects were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." And as he only, knoweth them that are his, or them that are of this spiritual kingdom, none others are qualified to decide who shall or who shall not come to the Redeemer. The disciples can only know who they are as he makes them

manifest. They could not therefore be competent to supervise the matter by forbidding any, whether old or young, to come unto him. But as the words of our Lord are full of wisdom and instruction, we may learn that besides impressing the disciples with a sense of their incompetency to judge and decide who may or may not come to Christ, or who are and who are not of the kingdom of God, we learn two other important truths:

First, that there are some such children in the kingdom of God, as those whom he had taken in his arms, laid his hands upon, and blessed. "For of such is the kingdom of God." Those whom he has blessed are blessed for evermore; and, on this occasion at least, he blessed some who were literally little children. As in the article in the twenty-third number of the last volume, we proved by the testimony of the Scriptures, that all the human family, young and old, are by nature children of wrath; that all have sinned, and are therefore mortal; that if they were not sinners they could not die, neither could they be saved by the mediation of Christ, if they were not sinners, for he came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. His name is called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins; it is therefore fully demonstrated that infants, in order to be saved, must be redeemed by Christ, and born again of an incorruptible seed, by the word of the Lord, which liveth and abideth forever. And we now reiterate the declaration we before made, and which cannot be successfully contradicted, that the doctrine held by the Old School Baptists is the only doctrine preached among men that can possibly embrace the salvation of infants, or of any others.

Second, "Of such is the kingdom of God." All who belong to the kingdom of God, are brought experimentally into it by being born again, in which birth they are converted and become as little children. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." And in connection with our text Christ said, "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."—Mark x. 15. "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein."—John xiii. 17. Let us seriously consider this important asseveration of our Lord Jesus Christ. What awful considerations hang upon these words. No man can enter the kingdom of God in any other way than as a little child. Then, instead of infants being debarred from salvation because they are infants, and unable to do anything to procure salvation, all adults, in order to be saved, must become as little children. What is there then peculiar to little children, which is so very important to qualify us for a reception of the kingdom, that none without it can in any wise enter without it? Is it free will, free agency, or human ability to comply with tems, conditions and overtures? We think there are none who will take that position. Little children are helpless, artless, dependent, without wisdom or ability to help themselves, and therefore entirely dependent on protectors for support and safety; let it be remembered that all who are born of God, taught by his Spirit, and brought by grace into the experimental enjoyment of the kingdom of God, must be reduced to a sense of their entire inability and helplessness, with no more power or wisdom of their own to rely upon, than the little child has for its own protection or support. As we are all by nature under the infatuation that we have sufficient power to determine our own destiny,

we must be converted from that delusion; be slain to all our confidence in the flesh, and taught of God to know that we are poor, guilty, condemned sinners, totally destitute of ability to will or to do anything towards our own deliverance. They are made to feel, to know, and to confess that if they are not saved by a strong, sovereign and almighty power, they are lost forever. When born of God, that meek, quiet, confiding, childlike spirit, which is peculiar to all the saints of God, is implanted in them, and under its benign influence they seek for a lowly place in the kingdom of God. They do not feel to enter the place of broad rivers and streams as a galley with oars, propelling themselves along by works, nor as the gallant ship in full trim, with canvas all spread out to the breeze; but stripped completely of its canvas, spars and rigging, of all its oars and self-propelling instruments, as the little, passive, helpless, dependent child enters into natural life, so enters the heaven-born child of God into the kingdom which is, and was, prepared for him from the foundation of the world. Now we ask, Is not this method of salvation alone by grace, perfectly adapted to all the redeemed family of God, whether infants or adults? The tall, the wise, the noble and the mighty men of this world, are quite as helpless and dependent for their salvation as the infant, the heathen, or the idot. What other doctrine except that held by the old fashioned Baptists, and advocated in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, presents any hope for the helpless, the lost and the ruined of mankind? This childlike condition not only qualifies Zion's converts to enter, but also to dwell in the kingdom. "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."

When the disciples of our Lord were at one time inflated with vain ambition, and inquired which of them was to be greatest in the kingdom of heaven, our Lord set a little child in their midst, "And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."—Matt. 3–6.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., January 15, 1857.

CHURCH LETTER.

PROCEEDINGS of the council called by the minority part of the church at Mill Creek, M. H., Crockett Co., Tenn., which met on Friday, July 28th, 1899, when and where they organized by choosing Elder J. W. Kerby, Moderator, and T. H. Marshall Clerk, then adjourned until next day (Saturday) 10 a. m.

Saturday, met pursuant to adjournment, were called together by the Moderator.

First.—Read the charge brought against the majority part, by the minority part, with all the proofs, then called for the standing of the minority part in doctrine, faith and practice. After reading and carefully examining their declarations of belief, they come to the following agreement:

We, the undersigned Elders and members of the Old School Baptist church of Christ, believing in the doctrine of predestination, election and salvation by grace and grace alone, both in time and eternity, from first to finish, being present at a meeting held by the minority part of Mill Creek church of Primitive Baptists, at Edward's schoolhouse, Crockett Co., Tenn., on July 28th, 29th and 30th, 1899, and being invited by them, did enter into an investigating council, for the purpose of investigating their faith and practice. After due investigation and prayerful consideration of all the charges and proofs to same, together with their faith and practice,

We do unanimously agree that the minority part of

the church at Mill Creek, is the church, and we are sound in doctrine, faith and practice, and that we recommend them to all sound Primitive Baptists everywhere.

COMMITTEE.

S. B. Forrest, H. H. Lanier, H. H. Parker, J. M. Newman, A. E. Cox, J. E. Lowery, R. H. Boaz, John Price, W. M. Jones, Jabob Glenn and G. W. Ingram.

J. W. KERBY, Moderator.

T. H. MARSHALL, Clerk.

We had a good meeting, and the preaching was encouraging, consoling and comforting to us. It was the old bell, salvation by grace and grace alone from first to finish, in time and in eternity.

May the Lord bless his Zion everywhere, is our prayer for Christ's sake. Amen.

J. M. WHITENTON, Moderator.

S. L. LOMAX, Church Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

OUR venerable brother, **Elder W. B. Stringer,** of Mt. Vernon, Texas, departed this life at his home, July 17th, 1899, at the advanced age of 87 years, 2 months and 4 days, having been born in Pike Co., Ala., May 13th, 1812. He joined the church called Hopewell, in the same County, and was baptized by Elder Moses Helms, and was ordained deacon, and afterwards minister, at the same church. All this occurred many years ago, but I have not been able to get exact dates. During his time in Alabama, I am told that he held for a time both the position of County Commissioner and Legislator. He moved to Texas, I am informed, about the year 1867, first stopping in Harrison Co., after one year he moved to Titus Co. Shortly afterward Franklin County was organized, and he was elected County Treasurer, which position he held continuously until last November. He was first married in Alabama, to Miss Margaret Williamson, Feb. 6th, 1834, who died August 24th, 1868. To them were born five children, four boys and one girl, only two of whom survived him, a son and a daughter. He was married the second time to Martha A. Long, in 1873, who died Oct. 3d, 1889. He was married the third time to Mrs. M. A. Thomas, April 27th, 1892, who is still living. Brother Stringer was in many respects a remarkable man; sociable, kind and generous-hearted, he made many strong friends, conscientious and honest. Those who were acquainted with him had the utmost confidence in him as an honest and an upright man. He was a devoted Primitive Baptist, and his house was ever the home of his brethren, sisters and friends. We shall greatly miss his presence in our meetings, but as it was the will of his Master to call him home, we desire to be submissive. May the God of all comfort be with his bereft companion, and sustain her through her remaining days by his grace, is my prayer.

He was laid away in the Providence graveyard, on July 18th, where was gathered a large concourse of relatives and friends. The writer tried to speak to the comfort of the bereaved.

H. B. JONES.

MT. VERNON, Texas, August 7, 1899.

DIED—**Mrs. Rachel Dance,** in the 70th year of her age. She was the loving companion of Alexander Dance, of Long Green, Baltimore Co., Md. We have known the deceased from early life. She was a daughter of the late John B. Ensor, of Black Rock, Md., a family well known throughout that neighborhood. Those who were not members of that church seemed friendly, and were in their place together on meeting days. The deceased made no public profession of her faith in Christ, but gave clear evidence of an undying interest in her Redeemer. Her disease was called asthma, which developed many years previous to her death, causing great oppression and difficult breathing, but a few months previous to her death a new symptom appeared, of a dropsical nature, swelling her limbs, and causing distress to the extent that has not often been witnessed, yet all the while she was of a patient and resigned disposition to the will of the Lord, often expressing herself as having a desire to depart. Death had lost its sting, and in the end she quietly passed away. She leaves no immediate family, except a bereaved husband, whose loss is great, they having lived forty-one years lovingly together. May the Lord make a way for him in his affliction.

The meeting at the house was appointed for 9 o'clock, Monday after the third Sunday in August, 1899. After some remarks by the writer, her remains were taken to Black Rock, a distance of sixteen miles, where Elder Ker met them, and made some appropriate remarks, after which her body was laid near her people, in the presence of a large collection of people. The Lord bless the sorrowing ones.

WM. GRAFTON.

DIED—March 12th, 1899, **Jesse Vannetta,** in his 85th year. Uncle Jesse, as he was generally known, was born Feb. 5th, 1815, near Warrenton, Fauquier Co., Va., and came with his parents to Shelby Co., Ky., when but a child. Uncle Jesse was never married, but had made his home for more than forty-five years with brother Sleadd, whose wife is his only sister, and only surviving member of the family. He never made a profession of his hope of salvation, to the church, but was a regular attendant at the Old Bethel church since I have known him. He was a true believer in Jesus, his only hope of salvation. He told the writer several years ago, when interrogated as to his hope, that if he knew anything about the matter at all, that he had experienced a hope in 1843, but a sense of his unworthiness, and of so many

wicked thoughts, kept him from the church. He said on his death bed, he would have been glad of a membership, and to have been baptized, if they could have received him. (The church would have gladly received him.) He is now joined unto that heavenly band, that congregation that never breaks up. He had been quite feeble for some time, when he was quite severely hurt by a fall, from which he never recovered. He had been a subscriber to the SIGNS for many years.

His funeral was largely attended at the cemetery chapel, at Shelbyville, Ky., where all that is mortal was committed to the dust, to await the resurrection.

May the Lord in his love and mercy remember the surviving ones.

P. W. SAWIN.

NEWCASTLE, Ky.

MY dear mother, **Mrs. E. J. Sloan,** was born in Shelby Co., Ky., Oct. 16th, 1827, and died near Delano, Cal., June 13th, 1899. She was therefore 71 years, 9 months and 17 days of age. She leaves two sons and one daughter, and fifteen grandchildren, to mourn their loss. Five of her children preceded her to the grave. For more than thirty years mother's hope and trust was in the widow's God, the God of Jacob. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, as set forth by the great apostle to the Gentiles, "For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast." It was mother's desire to depart and be at rest, and she said that she wanted to die, if it was the Lord's will. So we sorrow not as those who have no hope, for death is but a sweet release to the christian, from sorrow and pain, and entering into endless joy, peace and happiness, to those who know the plague of their own heart. It is not death to die, to leave this weary road, to be released from this prison-house of clay, it is but going home to the realm of immortality; it is only entering into paradise, to dwell forever with the Lord.

WM. F. SLOAN.

HEMPRIDGE, Ky., July 8, 1899.

MY dear husband, **Orange Gaylord,** passed away from earth, and I think left evidence that he was going to be with Jesus. He had not joined the church on earth, but I believe he has joined the church above. He often would say he believed the Old School Baptist church was the true church of Christ, but there was none near here but those that claim to be helping the Lord, and we were poor help. He passed away April 27th, 1899, so peaceful, without a struggle or a groan, putting his hand on his breast saying, "My breath is getting short," and shut his eyes, and such a peaceful, pleasant look I never saw before in death. He would have been 76 the fourteenth of June. We had six children born to us, two sons and four daughters, two of the daughters have been called away from earth. We were married in Illinois, in 1843. My father was Elder Ezra Stout, of Morgan Co., Ill.

SARAH E. GAYLORD.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday, at the Hall,
226 West 58th Street,

10:30 A. M. **3 P. M.**

To them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ, is extended a most cordial invitation to meet with us.

THE Corresponding Meeting of Virginia will be held with the Ebenezer church, Loudoun Co., Va., commencing on Wednesday after the second Sunday in October, 1899, and continuing three days.

Friends coming to the meeting by railroad will take the train for Round Hill, at Sixth St. station, Washington, D. C., at 9 o'clock a. m., on Tuesday before the meeting, where they will be met and cared for. Round Hill is on the Washington & Ohio branch of the Southern Railroad.

An earnest invitation is extended to all who may wish to meet with us on the occasion.

J. N. BADGER.

A GREAT MISTAKE!

I made it. The two days meeting in Albany & Troy, N. Y., is to be held Sept. 21st and 22d, Thursday and Friday before the fourth Sunday, instead of the 28th and 29th, as I wrote you. Hope the friends will bear it in mind.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Old School Baptist church of Albany & Troy have arranged to hold a two days meeting, Thursday and Friday, Sept. 21st and 22d, 1899. Ticket to Albany, N. Y., then take Belt Line steam cars to Bath, five miles from Albany, where there will be

conveyances Wednesday afternoon, to convey friends three miles in country, to place of meeting. Should any come Thursday morning, they will please send line to brother Chas. Shade, 415 Canal St., Albany, N. Y., or Mr. Delos Becker, Defreestville, N. Y. Meeting Saturday and Sunday following, at Troy and Sand Lake.

We will gladly welcome all that can come, and hope to see many.

THE annual meeting at Cow Marsh, Kent Co., Del., is appointed for the fourth Sunday in September, Saturday and Monday included.

Friends coming by rail will take the morning train from either north or south to Woodside, where they will be met. Saturday meeting 2 o'clock p. m.

A cordial invitation is extended.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Pastor.

THE Little Zion church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, will hold, if the Lord will, a visitation meeting in Osborne Co., Kansas, four and one-half miles west of Bloomington, to commence 4 o'clock p. m., Friday before the third Sunday in October, 1899.

The passenger train will be met Thursday evening about 7:30, at Bloomington, also the freight train on Friday. All lovers of the truth are invited.

By order of the church,

W. S. AYDELOTT, Church Clerk.

THE yearly two days meeting of the Otego Old School Baptist church, has been appointed to be held at Otego, N. Y., the last Wednesday and Thursday in September, (27th and 28th,) 1899. The regular monthly meeting for October is to be on Saturday afternoon and Sunday following the yearly meeting. We hope our kindred in Christ will remember us, and try and attend our meetings. All will be cared for who come.

Done for and in behalf of the church.

S. C. F. GUERNSEY, Church Clerk.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Jefferson Old School Baptist church, on the 16th and 17th of September, 1899.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, especially brethren in the ministry.

THE Abbington Old School Baptist church, of Justus, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting to be held Wednesday and Thursday, October 18th and 19th, 1899.

Those coming on the Delaware & Hudson R. R., and New York, Ontario & Western, will meet at Olyphant Tuesday afternoon. Those coming on the D., L. & W. R. R., will stop at Clark's Summit.

A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth.

G. W. GOODRICH, Church Clerk.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Juniata Old School Baptist Association will meet with the Springfield church, in Huntingdon Co., Pa., the second Sunday in October, and Friday and Saturday before.

Those coming by railroad will come on the Pennsylvania road to Mount Union, and there take the East Broadtop road to Three Springs. Come on Thursday. The trains leave Mount Union at 9:15 a. m. and 4 p. m., arriving at Three Springs about 10:30 a. m. and 5:30 p. m. There will be some one there to see that all are cared for.

We hope our ministering brethren, and all that love the truth, will remember us.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Baptists will convene with the Mt. Pleasant Regular Baptist church at Pleasureville, Henry Co., Ky., on Wednesday, Sept. 13th, and two following days.

Pleasureville is on L. & L. division of L. & Nashville R. R., forty-four miles from Louisville, Ky., and fifty miles from Lexington, Ky. Two trains each way daily.

Brethren in fellowship with us and the doctrine we hold, are cordially invited to be with us at that time.

C. F. DUDLEY, Church Clerk.

THE Lexington Association of Old School or Primitive Baptists, have appointed their association to be held with the Lexington church, at Lexington, Greene Co., N. Y., on the first Wednesday and Thursday (4th and 5th) of October, 1899, when and where we hope to see our brethren and sisters, and ministers of our faith and order that are in fellowship with us.

Those coming on the Ulster & Delaware R. R. will get off at Shandaken, where the stage meets the forenoon trains each day, and will also meet the afternoon trains on Tuesday, to convey any and all to Lexington, at our expense. As we are eleven miles from Shandaken, it would be well for those that intend to come, to write me so that we may send teams to carry all that come.

FLETCHER MACKEY, Church Clerk.

LEXINGTON, Greene Co., N. Y.

ERRATA.

I WISH to have some mistakes corrected in a notice of Davis Scott's obituary notice, in the last issue of the SIGNS. His name was Davis, not Dans. Again, it should read, slowly bringing him to death, and not shortly.

WM. GRAFTON.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$291 55
Dr. E. T. Cooper, Pa	1 00
Total to date	$292 55

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By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition, which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at the following rates, viz: a single copy for 10 cents; 12 copies for $1.00; 25 copies for $2.00; 50 copies for $3.00; 100 copies for $5.00. Address,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

MEPHIBOSHETH AND DAVID.

(2 Samuel ix.)

AFTER David had become fully established upon the throne of Israel he said, "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" Thus he remembered his covenant of love made with Jonathan to which he swear twice, (1 Sam. xx. 17,) that he would show the kindness of the Lord to his seed. And thus is shown in a figure, the covenant of love and mercy made by the dear Savior, the Son of David, with his people, and declared unto them by the prophets under that old dispensation, which was to be fulfilled "after those days" unto their children. This is that covenant which was confirmed unto the heirs of promise by the oath and promise of God, that they might have that strong consolation which they shall so much need. (Heb. vi. 18.) After David was exalted upon the throne he could shew mercy. Jesus was exalted for that very purpose, that he might have mercy upon the heirs of promise. (Isa. xxx. 18; Acts v. 31.)

Jonathan was the son of a king, and himself, to all human appearance, the heir of the kingdom. He was undoubtedly of a kingly character and appearance, and David compared him to a lion for strength, and to an eagle for swiftness. Now when a search is made for his descendants what kind of men shall we expect to find? Certainly those of like kingly appearance, those who shall shew their noble descent. But no, this is not to be the case. When the son of Jonathan is discovered we see a poor man, destitute, lame on both his feet, helpless, living upon bounty, who describes himself with apparent fitness as "a dead dog" when he comes into the presence of David. His name has in it an element which signifies shame, but also shows that there is a contention against that shameful condition. He is found in the house of Machir, which signifies sold, or brought to ruin, and yet the name of Machir's father Ammiel intimates a kinship to God. The name of the place where he is found is Lodebar, which means "no pasture."

When Jesus, exalted upon the throne of his kingdom, remembers his covenant, "to perform the mercy promised unto our fathers," (Luke i. 72,) and calls for

the heirs of promise, this is the way and manner of their appearance. Though of kinship to God, as every quickened sinner is, there is nothing in their appearance to indicate it. They are found in ruin, "sold under sin," in a desolate, pastureless land, and lame on both their feet. They have not only lost all of their former riches of righteousness, but they are in a helpless condition, so that they can never do any work to earn any more. When they are brought into the presence of the King they are lost in astonishment that he should look upon such as they, much more that he should shew such unexpected kindness. "What is thy servant, that thou shouldst look upon such a dead dog as I am?" This suits the feelings of a poor sinner well when the strange, surprising grace and mercy of the Lord are made known to him.

Let us consider this lameness. "He was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan out of Jezreel, and his nurse took him up, and fled: and it came to pass, as she made haste to flee, that he fell, and became lame."—2 Sam. iv. 4. All of the Lord's people become lame. This is one thing by which they are designated. The accident to the child, Mephibosheth, may well be regarded as one of the figurative presentations in the Old Testament of that lameness and its cause. Jacob became lame while wrestling with the angel of God's presence in the law, by the angel's touch. He must become lame before he can receive the blessing. Mephibosheth became lame while fleeing in the arms of his nurse, when news came that the last battle was lost, and his father and grandfather were dead. If Mephibosheth represents the Lord's people as they are brought to Jesus, he well shows in this how early in their experience of divine life they become lame on their feet, finding their utter inability to contend with the power of the law, or to flee from the destruction and desolation that must come upon all who are under its curse. It is always while under the care of the legal nurse that they become lame. The lameness is not partial, but complete. Whenever they undertake to stand on their feet, and to walk in their own strength, this lameness is manifested. He was lame on both his feet.

This is the condition of each one of the redeemed family when the covenant of promise is manifested to him, that he may be a witness that the salvation of God is not because of any works of righteousness which we have done, but all of his mercy and grace. Because of the everlasting covenant of grace they are now remembered in love, and are given a seat at the table of the King, there to eat bread all the days of their life.

Here are the gospel characters, and the gospel blessings. To sit continually at the King's table eating bread would seem to the natural view somewhat monotonous and tiresome, and especially to be compelled to sit there all the time because of that lameness. But the spiritual mind is instructed to regard this position as representing the child of God not only in the enjoyment of gospel promises, but in all the labors, cares, trials and afflictions of the gospel. Although seated at the table of the Lord's bounteous provisions of grace, it is not to represent him as idle, or as merely gratifying a carnal appetite, but as depending alone upon the grace and bounty of the Lord, being helpless in himself. It is only at this gospel table that any one can count afflictions a joy and trials most nourishing food. It is only here that the child of God feels that it is his meat and his

drink to do the will of the Father. This table is not one where surfeiting and selfish ease are encouraged. While at this table every spiritual "Mephibosheth," though unable to take one step, or even to stand a moment on his feet in his own strength and righteousness, is walking in the order and ordinances of the gospel, and running in the gospel race. It is here we find the lame man who has been made by the grace of God to "leap like the hart," though still remaining lame. It is here that he who has a measure of Hezekiah's deep afflictions of soul can say with Hezekiah, "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit."—Isa. xxxviii. 16. Here the children of God learn the healing and nourishing value of "the bread of tears," (Psalm lxxx. 5,) and experience the sweet and wholesome effect of "sorrowful meat." (Job vi. 7.) Here they are fed with the Lord's rod, and greatly comforted by the fruit of the vineyards given them from the wilderness of trouble. (Micah vii. 14; Hosea ii. 15.) On this table of our King are all the duties and privileges of the gospel, and these poor, lame Mephibosheths are eating most excellent food when walking in them. Not only the promises and privileges are food, but the exhortations and reproofs also. Not only the Pascal Lamb is to be eaten, but with it always the bitter herbs.

While Mephibosheth was told that he should eat meat continually at David's table all the days of his life, the King also told him that all of the land of Saul his father should be restored unto him. In pursuance of this promise David put Ziba, Saul's servant, in charge of all that pertained to Saul and to all his house, and commanded him, with his fifteen sons and twenty servants, to till the land for Mephibosheth, "and bring in the fruits, that thy master's son may have food to eat: but Mephibosheth, thy master's son, shall eat bread alway at my table."

What can be the need of this latter promise while the former is in force? If the lame man is to eat alway at David's table, why command the fruits of Saul's land to be brought to him that he may have food to eat? The gospel only shows the meaning of this, and makes it clear that the two promises are not in conflict with each other. The Lord's promise to his people not only covers the ground of all their spiritual needs, but also secures to them the supply for all their temporal needs as well, while they shall remain in the flesh. To them who are called into the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ it is said, "All things are yours;" and again, Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be clothed? for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (Matt. vi. 25–34; 1 Cor. iii. 21.)

How clearly and sweetly does the promise of David to Mephibosheth, and his command to Ziba, set forth the abundant fullness and absolute sufficiency of the Lord's provisions for his people, in both temporal and spiritual things. No indolence or lack of care in regard to our worldly duties, and the responsibilities of our earthly relationships, are taught or encouraged; but the absolute trust in and reliance upon our God, which he enjoins upon those who are called by grace. It is not taught them that they shall neglect their houses or lands or wives or children, but that when the Lord calls them into his kingdom they are to learn of him, and not from the world, their duties in these

respects, and that when he calls them to any work in his kingdom nothing is to stand in the way of that work. They are to go forward in the work to which he has called them, trusting and knowing that he will supply all the lack which their absence occasions; he, and not they, being the Judge, and "will supply all their need, according to his riches in glory, by Christ Jesus." It means that they are henceforth to live, not unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again. (2 Cor. v.) It means that while engaged in the work whereunto God has called one, he has no need to take thought for the things of to-morrow to the hindrance of his work, but may rest in the promise of God that all that he needs of temporal things will be given him. While one is walking in the ordinances and commandments of God, the fruits of the earth are his to the extent of his need, and cannot be withheld.

Mephibosheth and Ziba afterward had some kind of a contention about the inheritance, in which the former was probably to blame in thinking too much about the inheritance of Saul, and became slack in his ways during David's absence, on account of Absalom's rebellion. Ziba also appeared to be very zealous for David. When the king questioned Mephibosheth about his apparent backwardness, he tried to explain, but evidently was complaining of Ziba's conduct, and wanting something arranged differently. Then the king said, "Why speakest thou any more of thy matters? I have said, Thou and Ziba divide the land."—2 Sam. xix. 29. Then Mephibosheth seems to remember himself, and is willing that Ziba shall take all the land, "Forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace to his own house."

Too much anxiety about our worldly inheritance, houses and lands, and money, which is apt to come over us in the absence of our dear Lord, makes us trouble, but it brings us to see that that kind of inheritance we share with the world, and the tenants whom the Lord has appointed to work the land for his servants who sit at his table and eat bread there continually, will be sure to come off best in any conflict they may have with them. If we begin to try to collect the rents ourselves, and call upon Ziba for the fruits, we shall fail, and fall short, and get into trouble. Better let the Lord do the collecting for us. It is a good deal better than the result of our own undertaking, for that is merely that we and Ziba divide the land, and then our part of the land must remain uncultivated.

But when the Lord again returns, we can easily give up trying to make provisions for the flesh, but do what our hands find to do, being diligent in business, but seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. So again we sit in humility and contentment at the table of our King, eating our bread with gladness, and trusting in him for everything. "So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: for he did eat continually at the king's table; and was lame on both his feet."

So that is the sad but sweet story to the last, "lame on both his feet." By faith he has leaped for joy, and has run victoriously in the gospel race, but lame he is still; still held down by infirmities. By faith he has gone forth in joy, and been led forth in peace, while the trees clapped their hands before him, and has joined with the great multitude of the redeemed in songs of praise; but he is still in the bondage of corruption, longing to be delivered, unable to do the good that he would, because lame on both his feet.

But how sweet it is when he remembers that thus he is kept at this table, unable to get away from it, as he would do if his lame feet were whole; also how sweet to remember that thus he is made to keep in view the wonderful works of his King, who has done all for him, and prepared all blessings for him, and has placed him where he shall ever have in view those wonderful works, and feast upon the precious things "which God has prepared for all them that love him."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., September, 1899.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, August 19, 1899.

BELOVED IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD:—You are all pursuing that path that leads to eternal glory. It is a path which none know but the ransomed of the Lord, and they only walk therein by faith, and not by sight. That faith which worketh by love, and which is of the operation of God, clings to, rests upon and walks in the new and living way which Jesus has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. The obedience and atoning sacrifice of the Lamb is the glorious highway through this wilderness to the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. "I, saith Jesus, am the Way." As I contemplate the lot of the righteous, and muse upon their blissful end and eternal inheritance of glory with Christ the Head of the church, I find longings flowing forth from my soul, and I join with one of old saying, "Remember me, O Lord, with the favor that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation; that I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance." I gladly admit that our God grants me seasons when I sing with gladness of heart for Jacob. "For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he." But O, at other times I am so beset with enemies, so tossed with internal conflicts, and my sins as a very plague seem to isolate me from the commonwealth of Israel. I am as one thrust forth from thy tents, O happy Israel! The fretting leprosy of mine iniquities causes me to wander as an outcast from the holy people. Ah, well I know my uncleanness unfits me to associate with the clean. I feel my presence would defile the tents of the beloved nation. Therefore when any of the family of God would draw nigh to recognize and to embrace me as a brother, I inwardly cry out as if to forbid their drawing nigh. I am unclean, unclean, I am not fit to be taken into fellowship and companionship with the ransomed of the Lord. And when, notwithstanding my inward protestations, tokens of fellowship have been bestowed upon me by God's dear children, this so humbles me, I feel so contemptibly mean, so vile, so unworthy of their esteem that I have gone before now in secret to sigh and to weep. I need thy precious blood, O Lamb of God, to cleanse my guilt away. If thou wilt thou canst make me clean. The blood of thine atonement apply to my diseased soul. O give me the evidences that thou didst die for me, and then I shall be clean in thy sight. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquities, and cleanse me from my sin. Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. This shall raise me up from the dust to rejoice in thy salvation. "He sent his word and healed them." This is what I need, not the bare theory of doctrine, with its proof texts set in array in my natural understanding, but the glorious truth sent by the Lord's gracious

power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. When the Lord sends the word it prospers in the thing whereunto he sends it. This I know, for then his speech distills as the dew upon my soul, and I am refreshed. His doctrine sent to my heart calms all the tumult that my sins and the devil create, and I have peace through the blood of Emmanuel's cross. Sometimes I am as one famishing, and I pine away for want of the fruits of the field. My soul craveth Jehovah's sweet mercy, I yearn to taste again his pardoning love, but the Bible cannot afford it, the letter of the Scriptures cannot bestow it. I have no power to suck honey out of them. Those who can go to the Scriptures and always get what they need, and can close the book well satisfied with what they have got, are altogether different from poor, sinful, helpless me. I find I can no more help myself to food out of the Bible than a very babe could feed itself at a well laden table spread with all manner of sweet tasting and nourishing food. I well know that the concentration of the natural intellect upon the Scriptures cannot gather food therefrom. Mere natural study yields no sustenance to the quickened soul. By our natural powers we may acquire a natural knowledge that the Bible teaches the doctrine of predestination, election, salvation by grace, &c., and by the application of the natural mind to these subjects in the perusal of the Bible, a person may be well versed, as the saying is, and be able to prove his points, to preach the doctrine in the letter. He may be quite competent to debate with the opponents of the doctrine, and secretly, if not openly, pride himself on his ability in this line. But what of it all? It may all be, and that man's soul be utterly destitute of the grace of God that bringeth salvation. I have been harrassed with thoughts that I was just such an one, that all I know is the result of natural study of the Scriptures, and fears have invaded my heart that after all I know nothing of the anointing of the Spirit. I have been brought low, and with great searchings of heart, I have fallen at the feet of the Lord so troubled, so weakened, so dismayed at the thought that the secret of the Lord was not with me. Perhaps some one who is fully six feet tall according to his own measurement, may hold one like me in very contempt, and think by this time I should be a man, and no more a child. Well, perhaps there are times when I am a man, strong indeed in Christ Jesus. I grow up by faith, by the abundant ministrations of the Spirit of truth into Jesus Christ in all things. I am strong then in the strength of our Redeemer, and the arms of my hands are made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob. Then I can vanquish the foe, and tread down my enemies as the mire of the streets, but my triumphing and all these exploits are altogether by faith, which is the fruit of the Spirit, in the love, and mercy, and faithfulness of God, in the blood and righteousness of Jesus. These are rare times when I can in truth experimentally triumph and glory in Christ Jesus. But I am as a sickly babe sometimes, so weak, defenseless, I feel as it were to be dying for the need of some one to care for me, feed me and clothe me, and that one, that only One that can do these things unto me is the glorious and everlasting God. "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." Sickly and faint and ready to die in the filth of my own vile heart, the Lord in his tender pity has placed me in the arms of Zion, she has borne me upon

her sides, and carried me in her bosom. I have been dandled upon her knees, and she has drawn out the breasts of her consolations to me; there I have been suckled, and have been satisfied with the abundance of her glory.

They have breasts in some places that they call "conditional time salvation," but from the description that some give of them I am fully satisfied they are not the breasts of the free woman, but the breasts of Hagar the bond woman. However well the children of the bond woman may thrive upon Hagar's breasts, Isaac will only do well by being suckled at the breasts of the everlasting covenant of grace, even the sure mercies of David. Those who want to suck at the breasts of "conditional happiness, of conditional time salvation," can do so, and they are welcome to all the happiness that they derive therefrom. There is a vast amount of fleshly religious happiness in the world that is of no kin to the joy of the Lord. People may perform their supposed duties, and render their supposed obedience unto God, and compass themselves about with their sparks, and walk in the light of their fire, and in the sparks that they have kindled, but I had rather walk in the dark with God than walk in their light. (Isaiah l. 10, 11.) I am pained to think that such teachings are being taught among our people, teachings wherein the precious precepts of the law of liberty are mingled and confounded with the precepts of the covenant that gendereth to bondage. The obedience of faith, and commandments of Christ's gospel, are handled in such a way that the joyous, captivating sound of them cannot be heard as they come from the lips of conditionalists. Their sweetness, freshness and beauty is departed, and grace, the grace of God, cannot be discerned in the obedience required, and the gracious and almighty operations of the Holy Ghost exercising the hearts of the elect to the obedience of faith is altogether in the background, in the doctrines that are being promulgated under this distasteful phraseology, "conditional time salvation." True gospel obedience flows from the constraining love of Christ. Apart from the love of God in the soul there is no obedience in the gospel. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." The Lord delights in that which his own Spirit inspires. In order to the true worship of God we need the ministrations, the communion of the Holy Ghost to revive our faith, and hope, and love, praises and supplications, then obedience to God will be the fruit. "I will run in the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart."—Psalm cxix. 32. O, what are all the best services that we have ever rendered unto the God of our salvation? To this day I have to say to Jehovah's sovereign grace every mercy I owe above what the fiends have in hell. I desire from my very soul to walk holily, justly and unblameably before the Lord and his people, but I have not attained unto this. I see very plainly that vanity is stamped upon all that I engage in, the vileness of my flesh is so manifest to me, it intrudes itself, mixes itself with and defiles all that I put my hands unto. That others may not be so beset with sinfulness and so polluted I allow, for I see it is only by a miracle of grace that I can be saved, and grace is the only fountain that yields supplies to one like me. I can with all my heart join with Hart, who sings,

"Jesus gives us pure affections,
Wills to do what he requires,
Makes us follow his directions,
And what he commands, inspires.

All our prayers, and all our praises,
Rightly offered in his name;
He that dictates them is Jesus,
He that answers is the same."

"Love is the fulfilling of the law."

Thus that dear child of God, that helpless invalid, that deaf and dumb paralytic, who by the sweet communion of the Holy Ghost is instructed and comforted, and filled with love to the Redeemer, is as much obedient unto Christ as any of the ransomed family. That strength and grace by which the believer walks in the commandments of the Lord our Redeemer, is not an ability that we have inherent in us as subjects of the new birth, which it is in our power according to our will to put into exercise, and thus, apart from the ministrations of the Holy Spirit, walk obediently. When the child of God walks obediently, it is the obedience of faith, and this comprehends that God's grace is made to abound unto us, and this is our sufficiency. (2 Cor. ix. 8.) "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Thus the apostle knowing that believers have no stored up, inherent ability, in themselves, to do the will of their God says, "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."—Heb. xiii. 20, 21.

Though I am, I hope, a subject of Jehovah's grace, and born of the Spirit, and if so, ever such an one, yet with me there are many times when I have no strength, I am as it were dead, I have not the power to put forth a sigh or groan; to cry, to pray to God, seems impossible. I am so hardened, so frozen up, so stiffened and numbed by the deceitfulness of my sins, and an evil heart of unbelief, that I find it beyond all my power to think a thought. Ah, I know by humbling, bitter experiences, that apart from the unremitting ministry of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, that I have no might to worship God. Those who can always sigh over their sins, and pray unto the Lord for his pardoning love, those who can praise God any hour of the day that they appoint to do so, are not like me. But I have proved that our God is very pitiful, and his long-suffering with such a miserable, unprofitable worm like me is a wonder of wonders. "He giveth power unto the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength." He visits my soul in his love, he chastens me with his rod, he shews me when I am smarting under his reproofs, that mine iniquities have exceeded all his chastenings. (Job xxxvi. 9.) He maketh my heart soft, he gives me under this discipline, a humble and contrite heart, he smiles with pardoning grace upon me, he speaks kind promises to my soul, he gives me glimpses of the riches of his grace, displayed in the works and merits of Jesus, our covenant Head. O, then I sigh, then I weep, then I pray, then I praise, then I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me. "I can do nothing without thee, my strength is wholly thine; withered and barren should I be if severed from the vine." I find, dear children of God, that I have to be learning over and over again that, "Christ is all and in all."—Col. iii. 11. O, that name Jesus, the Savior, is so sweet! In him are such transcendent excellencies, and so suitable to a needy sinner like me that at every view that is given me by the Spirit of truth, I fall deeper and deeper in love with our altogether lovely Savior,

And when his love is shed abroad in my heart, I find myself saying within me, He loveth me, he loveth even me, and what proofs of his love I see in his fulfilling all the gracious relations that he sustains to his people, as the loving Kinsman, our Brother, our tender, faithful Husband, our almighty Friend and Redeemer. When the Holy Spirit who takes of the things of Jesus, and shews them unto the elect, shews them unto me, how can I help loving him, and praising and adoring the King in his beauty? Ah, it is then I would not in word only, but in deed and in truth, love him who hath loved me with an everlasting love.

"Love moved him to die, on this I rely;
My Savior hath loved me, I cannot tell why;
But this I can tell, he loved me so well,
As to lay down his life, to redeem me from hell."

FRED. W. KEENE.

DELMAR, Del., August 15, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER LIVELY:—Your esteemed favor of the tenth inst. was received yesterday, and I have read it carefully and noted its contents. I do not feel competent to write anything for publication on the sublime subject under discussion. I feel when good, able and spiritually minded brethren, who no doubt express the honest convictions of their hearts, so widely differ in the presentation of their views, that my poor, weak pen should lie idle, and that I should sit at the feet of my brethren and learn, rather than aspire to be a teacher. However I will reply to your letter, giving you liberty to have it published if you think it will subserve the cause of truth. I have no idea that anything that I may write will have the least tendency to reconcile the differences which seem to exist among brethren on this subject; only our God can do that. As we believe that he has a purpose in allowing those things which seem to us to be arrayed against him, and that all things work together for good to them that love him, and are the called according to his purpose, we must believe that some good will result, even from the contention of those who profess to be brethren. John records Rev. xii. 7, 8, "And there was war in heaven: [the church] Michael and his angels [servants, ministers,] fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not." It really seems to me that we have fallen upon the time of the fulfillment of this prophecy, but the saints need not fear, for the dragon cannot prevail; if God be for us he is more than all they that are against us, and "he that is in you is greater than he that is in the world." Those who speak or write against the predestination of all things do not succeed in making those who believe the doctrine ridiculous, but they only succeed in making themselves so, for their contention is not against men but against God, and he says that "he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision." I have not seen the article to which you refer, but have heard something of it, but your article published in the SIGNS of July 15th, I have read with great pleasure, and I trust profit. I heartily subscribe to, and indorse every sentiment contained therein, and would be willing to put my name to the article as published. I have the charity for those brethren who oppose the doctrine, to think that they are not really opposing the doctrine itself, but their opposition is to something which they have in their imagination which does not really belong to the doctrine. The most of them will admit that God permitted sin to be in the world, and that it does subserve his purpose, but they do not be-

lieve that God from all eternity predestinated the sinful acts of his children. I do not know that even the most ultra advocates of the doctrine believe that. All that is needful for God to do, if he wills to teach one of his children a lesson concerning his own helplessness, is to leave him to himself, and he will soon learn the lesson. It was so with Peter, and it has been so with you and me. An aged sister once told me that she asked Elder Samuel Trott, "What is God's predestination concerning the wicked?" His answer was, "God decreed to leave man to himself to work out his own wickedness." I have not been able to see the difference between God's decreeing to permit a thing, and a straight out decree that the thing be done. If in one case God is responsible, he is also in the other, for we know that he could prevent everything that takes place, and that he does not do so is conclusive evidence that he does not want to prevent it. He "Shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, * * * and said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed."

About four years ago I visited a brother in Ohio who claimed that he could not believe the predestination of all things, I replied, "I think that you do, and if you will answer a few questions I will show to you in five minutes that you do."

"Well," he replied, "I do not see how."

"Very well," I said, "Do you believe in the absolute sovereignty of God?"

"Yes," he replied.

"How long has God been an absolute Sovereign?"

"Always."

"Has he ever vacated his sovereignty at any time?"

"No."

"Do you believe that he works all things after the counsel of his own will?"

"Yes."

"How long has he been doing that?"

"From eternity."

"Has he ever altered his will?"

"I should say not."

"Do you believe that he works all things together for good to them that love him?"

"Yes."

"Well," I replied, "you do believe in the absolute predestination of all things, for this is inseparable from his absolute sovereignty, and the unchangeableness of his mind, and the immutability of his will."

The brother then made no further objections. Whether I converted the brother from the error of his way I do not know, as I have not met him since that day.

I have thought that one difficulty in the minds of those brethren is, that they have too superficial a view of the matter. They say we must not try to look too deep into things. Is it too deep for us to look into the things which God has revealed? Has he not revealed deep things to his people? Has he not answered them by terrible things in righteousness? Then it is right for us to look into these things. Surely God has declared his purpose, and that purpose was fixed and fully determined before ever there was a man upon the earth, or even before there was any earth, before the world began. That purpose was the salvation of his people, and more, he also absolutely determined how and by whom they should be saved. Surely every honest Bible reader must believe that. What was there then (that is, before the world was,) from which man should be saved? There was no sin then, so it must have been something which was yet to be manifested. When Jesus Christ came in

the flesh, it was by divine appointment, and at the time appointed to redeem his people, to save them from their sins. John at Jordan said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." By man came sin and death, and God decreed to make an end of sin and death by man, that man whom he had ordained, and that by him also should come the resurrection from the dead. I will not say that God predestinated that man should sin, because the Scriptures do not say so, but I will ask the question, If man had not sinned what would have become of all the arrangements which God had made to meet the exigences and consequences of sin? They must certainly have proved of no avail. God's chosen people, the bride of the Lamb, must have yet remained in the world in the flesh, and in the likeness of the earthly Adam, and Christ would have been dwelling alone. Yes, I believe that all things work together to the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose of love and mercy toward his children, to conform them to the image of his dear Son, that he should be the firstborn among many brethren. He was the first to arise from that death to which sin, the sin of his people, had surely consigned him, as it had them, and in which he became identified with them manifestly when he took part of their flesh and blood. As Adam must partake of the forbidden fruit with his bride or forever be separated from her, so Jesus must partake with his bride, the church, or be forever separated from her. But this could not be, because his life and her life were bound together, and his love for her was such that it was a joy for him to suffer for her. Because of the joy of having her forever at his side, a helpmeet for him, he gave himself up a willing sacrifice, as the law required, in order to answer all the claims of law and justice upon her, and that he might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, and present her unto himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blame before him in love. This was the joy that was set before him, for which he endured the cross, despising the shame, &c. All things must surely embrace everything, without exception, and if so it must also embrace sin. So then the good and the bad by the hand of God are so wrought together as to fulfill the eternal purpose of the eternal, immortal, invisible and all-wise God. And I must conclude that all are but necessary parts of that purpose, and that it would not be complete without all. Even the least thing could not be left out. God never has by his Holy Spirit wrought in any man to cause him to commit iniquity, but all the work of his Spirit in man has been to cause him to hate evil, and abhor himself, and despise himself, because of the corruptions which he sees and feels within, and also to mourn and grieve on account of sin. It occurs to me that God created man and placed him under such conditions that when the temptation was presented to him he was not able to withstand, and so fell; that is, the condition and circumstances were such that he must yield to them, a helpless victim, and he was thus placed in the very situation contemplated in the eternal wisdom of Jehovah, and so the foundation of salvation was laid whereby God should be glorified.

When I united with the church, in 1865, there was not a question, so far as I had ever heard, of the truth of the doctrine of God's absolute predestination of all things, among the Old School Baptists

east, west, north or south, and I am sure that if one had offered himself to the church where I was received, and had declared that he was opposed to that doctrine, he would not have been received. And so in 1899 as well. I will here say that I could not conscientiously baptize such a person, nor would I sit and listen to a tirade against the doctrine from one claiming to be an Old School Baptist, and I would not enter a pulpit knowingly with such. I do not mean by this that I require that all should fully understand or subscribe to the expression, for we are commanded to receive him that is weak in the faith, but not to doubtful disputations. Weakness in the faith and in understanding the doctrine is one thing, and hatred and ridicule of the doctrine is another. I have been a consistent adherent of the principles adopted by the brethren at their meeting at Black Rock, Md., in 1832, in which the line was drawn that separated the Old and the New School Baptists from each other, and I neither know nor desire a middle ground now. No compromise has ever been enstamped upon the banner under which I have heretofore fought, and by the help of God have continued to this day, and hope to continue until my warfare is ended. Jesus said, "He that is not with me, is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." Those who would make a compromise are not the friends of Jesus.

Yours in the persecutions and afflictions of the gospel,

A. B. FRANCIS.

PRATT CITY, Alabama.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—There has been no controversy in these parts for some time about the doctrine of predestination of all things, but from what I can hear one way and another, there seems to be still some dispute in some places about the matter. The dispute here never did any good that I know of, except to cause some to read after it more, and to believe in it stronger. Those that ridiculed it never gained anything. The dispute and controversy about predestination must not be very old among the old order of Baptists; I never heard such a thing here till about fifteen or sixteen years ago. Elder Beebe referred to it in 1880, but if we are to believe all that we read on the subject in this day and time, there are many of our ministers that never did believe it, and have always preached against it, but I am loath to believe such statements. It does seem to me that if there had been any controversy upon the subject among our people, that the historians would have given some more attention to it. I have read Dr. Watson's book, Burkett's history, and William Jones' history of the church, and two books of editorials of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and in all these I find nothing of a debate among the Old Baptists about predestination. I have before me the latest history, giving an account of predestinarian churches in England, Canada and the United States, and a full copy of the old London confession of faith, which states that, "God hath decreed in himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably [absolutely] all things whatsoever comes to pass, yet so as thereby God is not the author of sin." This seems to me to be strong language upon the subject, in my estimation equivalent to the phrase, "absolute predestination of all things," yet so as thereby God is not the author of sin. This historian shows that the London confession was adopted by some Baptists of the

United States, and he has copied one of the ablest editorials of Elder Gilbert Beebe, and extracts from other eminent writers upon the subject.

On one page he says, "Every article written on the subject but convinces me the more, that on the great Bible doctrine of predestination, Primitive Baptists everywhere are essentially, if not verbally, agreed." Taking into consideration all history, together with this later statement by the historian, helps to confirm my opinion that all this dispute and debate upon the subject is a new thing among our people. I was surprised when I first heard it, and I am still being surprised to hear of it still in progress, and doing more harm than good. I have seen one or two instances referred to where one professing to be an Old Baptist tried to shield themselves in some transgressions behind predestination, but if it is true, they are only professors, and not possessors. They do not understand the doctrine, nor do they believe the doctrine, and such could just as easily seek to justify themselves, and say, God did not predestinate any such, and I am a free agent, was never in bondage to any man, and what I do is nobody's business but my own.

On another page, this latest historian has wisely and truthfully said, "Christian predestinarianism far surpasses arminianism in its moral results, as history abundantly demonstrates, as may be seen by comparing the Waldenses with the Italians, the Huguenots with the other French, the Jansemist with the Jesuits, the Puritans with the Cavileirs, and the Scotch with the Europeans. Predestinarianism is highly promotive of both civil and religious liberty. It represents God as absolute and supreme, and makes all men equal before him; it develops the power of self-government and manly spirit of independence, which fears no man, though seated on a throne, because it fears God, the only real Sovereign."

On another page he says, "If God is omniscient and omnipotent, and existed alone from eternity, and created all things out of nothing, and disposed of all things in his providence with all the surrounding circumstances, exactly foreknowing all the results, then certainly in one sense his foreknowledge of all things is equivalent to his foreordination of all things, including the volitions of his creatures, yet without the slightest degree of sin on his part, as the most holy God tempts no one to sin."

This is the doctrine in a nutshell. The volitions of all the creatures of God were most assuredly embraced in his foreknowledge, and he knew full well what all would do, and all events in time must have been settled or determined in his mind. So when all things are done in time there will be nothing new or old to him.

This historian goes on to say that, "The sinful, carnal mind of fallen, darkened rationalism, paints this curtain truth of nature and Scripture in the most revolting colors, preferring that senseless and heartless fate, or chance, should sit at the helm of the universe, but the regenerated, enlightened and spiritual mind of the child of God, incomparably prefers that his holy heavenly Father should sit at the helm, and direct and work all things according to the counsel of his own will."

This is the truth, and when I first read it I considered it a timely rebuke to all who were contending against the doctrine, and I hoped then that the dispute would soon end, but I was disappointed. There may be some extremists among our

people somewhere. If there is, I would not defend them.

I will bring this to a close; I shall take too much space if you should deem it fit to print. I hope if it is printed it will do no harm if it does no good. I should be so glad to hear that all debates and controversies had ceased among our people, and that all could see eye to eye, and speak the same thing.

Yours in hope of life,

P. J. POWELL.

LUKE XXIII. 34.

"FATHER, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

How sublime and wonderful the language; amazing in pathos, and boundless in its scope, as with unlimited power it reaches to the depths of the inner consciousness of those who love the appearing of Jesus. It is not the prayer of a king, the King of Israel, neither the petitions of the High Priest of our profession, but the simple, prayerful pleading of the man Christ Jesus. He that was "made of a woman, made under the law," to fulfill the law. The Son of God pleading with the Father for righteousness' sake. The manifest humility of the possessor of all worlds, in the interest of misguided humanity. Let us look upon the scene: An angry tumultuous mob, seeking and wrecking vengeance upon an innocent victim, subjecting him to the basest ignominy, giving him the place of a seditious man and a murderer, and placing him between two thieves, to crucify him in their cruel, spiteful violence. Call to your mind of imagination a face belonging to a soul filled with hatred, and envy, and malice, and murder, and out of such imagery, behold the faces of whom the prophet spake in the days of old, "And they looked upon him whom they had pierced," and listen to the dreadful cursings and ravings which proceed out of their mouth. Then with an upward glance view the serene and lovely countenance of him who hung upon the cross, and who suffered as no man could suffer, and hear the gracious words which ascended to the throne of the Father's grace in a rainbow of perfect love, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." How great the contrast, and how bottomless the chasm which separated them. With wicked and blinded zeal, they treacherously crucified the Lord of glory. Can we stand up with clean hands, in a transparent, sunlit cloud of virtue and offended dignity, and say to that swaying multitude, For shame, for shame? As sinners, conscious of our sin and its exceeding sinfulness, do we not know that we ourselves have also crucified the Lord of glory with the same venomous hatred which characterized that fitful, dreadful morning? Hath not our very own flesh cried out (as did they), "Away with him, away with him, we will not have this man to reign over us?" Let us search our hearts, and discover if we were not among those who turned away from Jesus when he said, "He that is without sin first cast a stone." In our moments of deep contrition, does not our heart confess and say, "It was my cruel sins that drove the nails through his unresisting, innocent hands, and that drove the spear far into his dear side, drawing therefrom the precious life-blood of a gracious Redeemer? How shall we stand in the great and terrible day of the vengeance of our God? How shall we stand in the face of the justice of an outraged and violated law? How shall we approach unto the mercy-seat of him whom we have murdered, when we view him in his mediatorship as the ladder which

reaches from the heaven to the earth, from God to man? How does our heart burn within us, when by faith we see his bowed head and trembling form yielding obedience to the will of his Father, and as he talked with us by the way? And how precious is the wondrous truth, which takes root in our breast, and bearing fruit amid the whispers which say, "God commended his love unto us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." Then as the spirit of humility moves us, (as in the case of the poor publican) we approach unto a throne of grace with fear and trembling, "standing afar off" not so much as raising our eyes to heaven, but prostrate in dust and ashes, crying out of a burdened and broken heart and a contrite spirit, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." How blessed is the heart that is filled with the spirit of forgiveness. Only the broken heart and the contrite spirit is able to forgive the enemies that seek to take away our life. In his ministry Jesus taught his disciples to pray for forgiveness in proportion as we forgive them that trespass against us. Therefore only as the spirit of forgiveness exercises us to forgive our debtors, shall we receive forgiveness of the Lord. Because only that spirit of forgiveness can antagonize and deliver us from those that conspire against our liberty in the gospel of Christ. May we as lowly followers of Jesus be blest with that spirit which Stephen possessed while being stoned to death. "He kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," and the same spirit in the Master which said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Aug. 29, 1899.

LONGVIEW, Texas, May 7, 1899.

G. BEEBE'S SON:—Dear friend, and as I hope brother, in spirit and in truth, but I feel so ignorant and sinful that I fear it is a trespass to call you, or any of those that know the truth, as you and all the household of truth do, by that name. Still I cling to the doctrine with all the power that is within me. Yet I know there is not a good thought nor act that emanates from old Adam. All my own righteousness is as filthy rags. I go mourning all the days of this vain life, seeking for rest and often finding none. The Savior said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace." So we see it is useless for the children to hope to find peace in and through this old body. We are like the troubled sea. Jeremiah said, "Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" Yet we all grumble and complain at our lot, or at least that is the way with me. I am a rebellious mortal, but I hope that there is a mind about me which is not according to the prince of the power of the air, which still worketh in the children of disobedience. We are told that godliness with contentment is great gain. Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and all that are without chastisement are bastards and not sons, for the Lord scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. They are all mourners in these low grounds of sorrow, as long as they bear about with them the Adamic body. They are of the class to whom the Savior said in the mount, "Blessed are they which mourn, for they shall be comforted." They are already blessed with an everlasting blessing, which was treasured up in Christ for them before the foundation of the world. This sometimes causes me to rejoice, and hope that I am one of the class that was

there addressed by the Savior, for I have had to pass through many conflicts in many ways. Four years ago I was visited by a mighty wind, called a cyclone, which completely demolished my house, and very nearly killed me and my companion, but we were spared.

I wish you success in going forward bearing the "Sword of the Lord and of Gideon." Please remember me at the throne of grace.

Your brother in hope,

W. H. SHADDOCK.

KANSAS, Ill., August 29, 1899.

ELDER DAVID BARTLEY—ESTEEMED BROTHER IN CHRIST:—It has been some time since I last wrote you, and also since receiving a letter from you. As Elder Lively says in his article in the SIGNS of September 1st, I also "have been lately cast about here and there, and could hardly locate myself," but when reading yesterday your article published in the same number of the SIGNS, I seemed to find some moorings, and felt that I still had an anchor that took fast hold of the truth. How beautifully you handled the words of our dear Master, "If a man love me, he will keep my words."—John xiv. 23.

How passing strange that some that claim the name Old Baptist, should contradict these lovingly and gloriously spoken words of the Savior of sinners, and say, "If you want to be saved you must keep his words," thereby claiming your own "time salvation" as merit, not by grace, but by human works. What more can the greatest Arminian claim? It is the very ground upon which all theorists and Arminians stand, advocating the freedom of the will, and saying, "If the sinner is lost, it is his own fault." O, what theories to be by some set forth in Baptist pulpits, and yet not rebuked by churches that have been sound in doctrine. How true it is that false teachers lead God's people astray. In former times there was a woe pronounced upon such teachers. Will it be so again? Judging from the zeal and effrontery of some amongst us, they do not now feel any woe, or even any fear of the sad consequences of these new theories they are introducing. But, my dear brother, I am glad to know the words of Jesus are true, "None can pluck them out of my hand." Dear old Job had many false reports taken to him while he was allowed to be tempted, but his life was not given into the hands of Satan. So now the eternal life of God's people is not in the hands of these modern Judaizing teachers. Job was afflicted, and doubtless believed the reports that were taken to him by the messengers, and was upbraided by his "miserable comforters," and told, like these modern teachers tell the Lord's afflicted and tried ones, "It is all in your own hands, and if you will save yourselves you can do so." Job said to them, "Miserable comforters are you." So you and I know by experience these teachers of "conditional time salvation" are, for us, "miserable comforters." If I am saved at all, either in time or eternity, it is by grace alone, and not by any of my good deeds.

"Grace first ordained the way
To save rebellious man,
And all the steps that grace display
Which drew the wondrous plan."

With the poet I hope I know,

"Grace all the work shall crown
Through everlasting days;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

I feel that you have heeded the solemn charge of Paul, as given to Timothy, and have in letter, as well as other times,

"preached the word," and have in a meek spirit "reproved and rebuked" the teachers that do not "endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. And they shall [have] turn away their ears from the truth, and shall [have] be turned unto fables." It seems the time may now be that we shall "shun profane and vain babblings, for they will increase unto more ungodliness." Is it not now true that "their word will [does] eat as doth a canker?" This being the case, it behooves you and I to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free."

I have written more than I thought when I commenced, but I felt to open my mind. Please accept my kindest and most heartfelt love. Remember my wife and self to sister Bartley, and any other lover of the truth.

Yours to serve,

JAMES M. TRUE.

[THAT there are many dear saints whose minds have been confused by this new theory of "conditional time salvation," of late advocated by some who still cling to the name of Old School or Primitive Baptists, we do not doubt, and to such the above letter, written by brother True, may seem rather severe. To all such we would say, Search the Scriptures, and see if these things are true. If they are sustained by the divine word, then receive them, but "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." It matters not how plainly the arguments may be reasoned out, the question with us should be, Does the word of God set it forth? Does it give all the glory to God? If not, rest assured, dear saints, it is error. Philosophy, or carnal reasoning, has nothing to do with preaching the truth of Christ, and Paul says, "Beware" of it.—ED.]

GLENMORE, N. J., May 30, 1899.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—It has been upon my mind since our church meeting on Saturday to write you a few lines. You said that you often wondered whether the brethren felt that you had crowded them out from speaking because you had spoken so long. Now, my dear brother, I have never felt that way about it. I often feel that I would be glad to say something about the goodness and mercy of God to a poor worm like me, but I so often feel that I am not what I profess to be, and that I have deceived the church, and that they can so plainly see by my walk and conversation that I have deceived them, I often wonder how they can fellowship me any longer, and more especially my own people, for they surely must know how far short I come of walking in the strait and narrow way. I believe that the Lord is able to make even the very stones to cry out, and if I am a child of God, and I many times fear greatly that I am not, I believe that when he shall open my mouth, no man can shut, and that we must know no man after the flesh. I have learned by bitter experience that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. He holds the destiny of all men in the hollow of his hand: he rideth upon the storm, and thundereth when he please. Palsied be the arm that undertakes to stay the power of God, for he possesses all power both in heaven and in earth. O, for a heart to praise him who has kept me as the apple of his eye. He has kept me from my youth. He called me out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Dear brother, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God as it is revealed in the face of Jesus Christ, the carnal mind knows nothing of, and we cannot learn it, except as God reveals it unto us through his Son Jesus Christ. The carnal mind is enmity against God, and knows not the things of God, because they are spiritually discerned. If we could find out God by searching, then Jesus need not have laid down his life for us, for the God of heaven has said that he gave his only begotten Son to redeem his people from their sins. If any one gives us anything, we do not search for it, or find it by searching, if we did it would not be a gift. But because God has already placed the blessed Spirit of Jesus in our hearts, we search for him. For this reason we are not satisfied with the things of this world any more. He will make manifest to every member of that mystical body that he is their salvation, and that he laid down his life that we might live. Jesus himself said, "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick;" and again he said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Does not this plainly tell us who it was that he came to seek and to save? Are not all these precious declarations? He died to redeem his people from the law, the law of sin and death. He died and rose again, and became a conqueror over death, hell and the grave, and therefore the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife, stands without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

My dear pastor, if I have written anything that does not savor of Jesus and his truth, please tell me so, because I am poor, weak and sinful, and easily deceived. Satan is always ready to lead me astray.

DAVID W. SHEPHERD.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the First Church of Roxbury, at Vega, Delaware Co., N. Y., September 13th and 14th, 1899, to the several churches of which she is composed, sends christian love and fellowship.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Once more in the good will of our covenant God we are privileged to meet on the shore of time to render homage to the Lord, and show that as we believe the apostolic doctrine to be the doctrine of God our Savior, we hope and believe our fellowship is with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ. So we are reminded of the fact. "If any will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution." Having been brought to know him whom to know is life eternal, we ought always to remember that he kills and also makes alive, and that he that wounds also heals, for when he opens no man can shut, and when he shuts no man can open. And furthermore, when the Lord makes straight, none can make crooked, and when the Lord makes crooked, who can make straight? Yet his saints are in their experience of his grace brought to know and feel that it is given them not only to believe on his name, but also to suffer for his sake. And as they are made willing in the day of his power, one would be loth to think they would ever forget this wonderful lesson; yet as we are dealing with members of churches, men and women who profess faith in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, it is no small matter that we refer to the importance of their standing, and of the certainty of the faithful dealings of God with them. Of course a Circular Letter to this, or any other number of churches as an association, will be of no use to them by way of stirring up their pure

minds, only as the Lord by his Spirit applies it in their personal interest, yet remembering that the Lord speaks and sends by whom he will for the comfort of his people when in trouble, to point them to the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world, and to turn them as prisoners of hope to their stronghold. This the view by faith of life hidden with Christ in God, prepares the tried child of God to rest with sweet confidence in the Captain of their salvation, who hath loved them, and has given himself for them. Then, like the faithful Moses of old, they "choose rather to suffer afflictions with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season." For time with all the saints on earth is but a short season compared with eternal glory and blessedness in the presence of Jesus, as the only wise God our Savior, and Jesus Christ our Lord. For he is God over all, and blessed for evermore, and the momentary trial here is not worthy to be compared with that glory that shall be revealed in us. And this is not to be waited for until we are literally dead, and our spirit gone to God who gave it, but here in our mortal pilgrimage, wherein we have the world, the flesh and the devil to contend with, wherein our Savior has called us as heavy laden with sin, and laboring under the law of sin and death, to himself for rest. And now we believe the same rest remains to the people of God in all ages. And now we know there is joy in believing, for unto them that believe, the name of Jesus is precious, for there is no other name given under heaven whereby they must be saved, so they that believe according to the working of his (God's) mighty power in them, do enter into rest; they cease from their own works as God did from his, by entering the antitypical Sabbath, the gospel day of rest. And all real believers born of God are alike in spirit. And as born of the water and Spirit, or established in the truth by knowing something of the suffering of Jesus, all have Christ formed in the soul (life) the hope of glory; and of such it can be said truly, spiritually, in him (Christ) they live, move and have their being. The love of God has been shed abroad in the heart of such, and they love him because he first loved them, and gave himself for them. But many who feel this wonderful love, and feel his free Spirit, are loth to undergo the trial that is in store, with the brilliancy of peace in obeying his holy command, yet there will be no mistake with the Captain of our salvation, whose Father has said to him, If thy children forsake my law, and keep not my statutes, I will visit their iniquity with a rod, and their transgression with stripes, nevertheless my loving-kindness I will not utterly take from him, (Jesus) nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. So those of his children who live in disobedience, and under the rod, have their own burden to bear. But God will have manifest witnesses on earth among the people, who will believe, and preach, and practice the truth. Though they be but two or three in a place, they will be acknowledged by him, when gathered in his name. And they shall be hated of all men because they are not of the world, although in it. When they as believers in Jesus, follow where he leads, or puts them forth, they love not the world that lies in wickedness, or unbelief. They as witnesses loving the truth as it is in Jesus, love them that are begotten of him, and love works no ill to its neighbor; it is with them a fulfilling the law. Such, in the trial of their faith, are prepared to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus

Christ, for his sake alone; such fight manfully the good fight of faith, and quit themselves as men. Living godly in Christ Jesus is in the measure manifest by the persecution borne or chastisement endured, for if ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as sons, so "tribulation worketh patience," &c. And the poet is right.

"He that would to Jesus press,
Must fix this firm and sure:
Tribulation more or less,
He must and shall endure."

The furnace is set in Zion; it is the lot of the Lord's afflicted and poor people in their profession of faith in Jesus, as they find rest to their souls by obeying, and learn of Jesus to soon find that in the world they shall have tribulation. And one particularly living and bright example was the apostle Paul, who in his description of his life and fare, as God dealt graciously with him as a subject of his heavenly grace, letting Satan and false brethren work intrigue and unbelieving men condemn, yet holding Paul as in the hollow of his hand, and raising him to heaven's height, in mind, to behold the glory of God and hear words unlawful to utter, and then to feel the pricking sensation of the thorn in the flesh, all showing that the godly life of Paul was most fully set forth in the things he suffered. Thus in conformity to the will of God, we best prove, that if the will of God be so, it is better to suffer for well doing than for wrong doing. Proving also as Jesus learned obedience by the things he suffered, becoming an ensample to his people to witness the truth in their one heart, and judgment in the things of the kingdom, which is not of this world. So, my dear brethren, may we prove our interest in Jesus Christ, and in the fellowship in his church on earth, by being followers of God as dear children, walking in love, seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, with the view of tribulations and all other things being added to us, being persuaded with Paul, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

J. D. HUBBELL, Moderator.
WILLIAM BALLARD, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the First Roxbury Church, Delaware Co., N. Y., September 13th and 14th, 1899, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, send christian love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the unchanging goodness of our God to usward, we are permitted to meet again as an association of churches in brotherly love and fellowship. Our faith embraces the doctrine of the predestination of all things, and salvation by grace, for by grace ye are saved, through faith, which is the gift of God. Your ministers that have come to visit us have been received with joy and gladness of heart, and have been enabled by grace given to them to preach the truth with power and demonstration of the Spirit, and we feel to say that we have been made, as it were, to sit together in an heavenly place. We ask a continuation of your christian correspondence.

Our next meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the Second Roxbury Church, Delaware Co., N. Y., on the second Wednesday in September, 1900, commencing at 10 o'clock, the first day.

J. D. HUBBELL, Moderator.
WILLIAM BALLARD, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1899.

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ROMANS VI. 14.

"SIN shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."

A fact is stated in this text, and a reason for this fact. The fact is that sin shall not have dominion over the believer, and the reason is, he is under grace, and not under the law. The text implies two things: first, that he who is under the law is also under the dominion of sin, and second, that all deliverance from sin must be by grace. The awakened sinner has come to feel that subjection to sin is a bondage, and when the bondage is felt there must needs arise at once a desire for deliverance from that bondage. As the desire for this deliverance arises in the heart there will also be begun a struggle against sin, which will continue until the soul finds its own impotency in this struggle, and comes to the place in its experience when grace will be welcome, as he will see in it his only deliverance. The uppermost desire of such an one will be that sin shall no longer reign in his mortal body. And every such one will rejoice at any promise of deliverance which may be afforded him. To such ones the words of the text will come as the most joyful news possible. His one desire is that sin shall not reign over him, or in his mortal body, and here is the promise of God that his desire shall be gratified, "Sin shall not have dominion over you."

We wish to notice the immediate reading of the text, laying especial emphasis upon each word and thought in it. First, the text deals with sin. Sin is the most terrible thing in the universe. To him who feels its presence and power it is as a dead body, to which he is fastened, and with which he is compelled to live; it is a dead body, and all the accompaniments of death are with it to him; all foulness and corruption and decay are in it, and such an one has found that he has been under the dominion of all these things. Now he has come to loathe it, and to hate even the garment spotted with it. Sin it is which has condemned him, it is this foul thing which separates him from all that is holy and undefiled, and all happiness and heaven, it is loathesome in itself, and its results are fearful. It is not some special sin, some bad habit merely of which the apostle speaks, but of sin, as to its essence in the very heart and life of the man. It is sin which fills every imagination, so that all is evil, and only evil, and that continually. It is sin which has taken possession of every thought, and every desire, and every power and faculty of the being. It reigns in head, heart and body. Spirit, soul and body are all under its dominion. It so completely reigns that man does not know that it does reign in him until enlightened to see the truth by the Spirit of truth. It dominates every purpose, and every word and act is tainted by it. In the expressive words of inspiration, "the whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint." And "from the head to the sole of the feet, all is wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores." It is the evil na-

ture which reigns, and not some bad or evil habits. Though all evil habits may be broken one by one, and a man may conquer debased appetites again and again, yet the reign of sin has not been at all broken thereby. Sin has but shifted its ground, and shows itself in some other form. It has a thousand ways in which to deceive men, and so we read of the deceitfulness of sin. This sin of heart and life is sweet to the natural man; he rolls it as a sweet morsel under his tongue; he loves it so that he runs greedily after it; his feet are swift to shed blood; his feet are swift to do all manner of evil; thus the complete dominion of sin is seen. This is over the natural man.

But to the believer there is another promise, "Sin shall not have dominion over you." Here is a positive promise. The word "shall," settles its certainty. Sin which rules over all mankind does not and shall not reign over the redeemed child of God. Some poor soul who has come to feel what an awful burden sin is, and who loathes it as a man would loathe the contact with a dead and putrefying body to which he might be fastened hand and foot, the very presence of which would dominate his every thought, and cause that his every breathing should be for deliverance from the foul thing, comes to the apostle and says, Is there any hope of deliverance from my sins? And the apostle replies, "Sin shall not have dominion over you." "What," says the trembling sinner, "do you mean that this is positive?" "Yes," says the apostle, "it SHALL not have dominion." But do you mean that there are no conditions for me to perform in order to attain to this glorious end? Must I not struggle hard to attain to this? Do you mean that the promise is without conditions? How important these questions to the mind of such an one. I mean, says the apostle, that you have become dead to sin by the body of Christ, and you who are dead to sin cannot live in it any longer; sin shall not have dominion. What blessed news to such an one these words must be. We confess that it is a blessed message to us, and we are persuaded that it is also to many who may read these words. But, says the halting, stumbling traveler along the pilgrim way, I find that sin does still live in me; I find that when I would do good sin is present also; I find that I cannot do the good that I would, and that I do the evil which I would not; I find that if I pray, or hear, or read, sin is mixed with all I do. To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. Surely then what is here said cannot apply to me. If sin did not have dominion over me, should I feel these conflicts? To this the apostle might reply that if sin were indeed reigning, there would be no complaint of its reign. If sin does reign in any heart, that heart is satisfied with its reign, and makes no complaint. It is when one would do good that sin is present. Before the soul had come to desire to do good it felt no hindrance in anything from sin. Now the power of sin to reign has been broken, and instead of desiring to sin, the desire is to do good. The soul is no longer in bondage to sin. Beside it is not said that sin shall not dwell in you, but only that it shall not reign over you. The fact that you abhor its presence, proves that its reign is broken. The very moment when you cease to love it, its reign is over. It is not said that it shall cease to annoy or perplex you, but only that it can no longer control. It means that your attitude toward it has changed. You are no longer its willing

subject, but are armed against it. You are in full rebellion against its unlawful reign. The unlawful king is not cast out of the land yet, but he is no longer openly upon the throne, but lurks in hiding-places, and seeks to harm where he can no longer hold undisputed sway.

But, inquires the fearful-hearted child of God, Does this mean that now sin does not reign? May it not mean that in some future day perhaps when I have gotten a great deal better in heart than I am now, perhaps when I shall have reached the consummation of my desires beyond this life, that then sin shall not have dominion over me, or in me? No; Paul here shows that it is now and here that sin does not reign, for he says, "How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" It is a state then to which the believer has already attained through grace, and it is a state in which he shall continue until the perfect day shall dawn. Furthermore Paul says, upon this very ground, viz: that the dominion of sin has been broken over us, that those who have by faith come into the realization of this happy state should also not let sin reign in their mortal bodies. "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies." In other words, believers have redemption through the blood of the Redeemer from all sin, so that it shall not be laid to their charge any more. Now, therefore, they are not debtors to live after the flesh, but debtors to the Spirit, to live after it. Realizing his freedom from the curse and dominion of sin, the pure mind will be stirred up and is stirred up by these and similar considerations, so that he wrestles against sin, and desires that it shall not be obeyed in his mortal flesh. This truth, instead of putting those who have felt its power down upon the stool of do nothing, as it is sometimes said, is on the other hand the strongest motive that can possibly be appealed to to stir us up to all right living in the sight of God. So that now, today, the glad assurance is ours, as believers, that sin does not reign. No matter how much it plagues us and grieves us, it still does not reign. The glorious truth is now that grace reigns instead of sin. What a glorious change of masters has taken place. Before grace came, sin reigned unhindered and unquestioned; now grace reigns, but not unquestioned. Sin wars in the shape of fleshly lusts against the soul, but it shall not conquer, and in the end shall be utterly cast out. For this very purpose was Christ manifested to destroy the works of the devil.

Why shall not sin reign any longer over us? Human reason teaches us that it must be because the force of the law has been so felt in the soul that man by a supreme effort has broken the power and bondage of sin. Human reason knows of no way of salvation from death and sin except by human effort, and it is the mind of the natural man that if the threatenings of the law be done away with there will be henceforth no inducement against sin, and for holiness. It is claimed to be a dangerous thing to teach, that any man is no longer under the law, and such as have boldly asserted it have been called Antinomians and other hard names. Yet it is a fact of holy writ, that the people of God are not under the law, and it is also another fact that those who are not under the law are also not under sin. How contrary is the revelation of grace from what men judge needful to salvation. But does not the law curse all who do not fulfill it, with death? Most certainly it does. How then shall a man be saved who does not keep the law? So it is argued that obedience is possible,

and that by it alone men must be saved. But Paul here teaches to the contrary, that believers are not under the law, and that this does not lead men to enter into a still closer compact to serve sin, but rather that it puts a veto upon the service of sin. It is because a man is *not under the law*, that sin does not reign over him. There is a better way. "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." The law could not break the dominion of sin in any sinner's heart, but the grace of God through Jesus Christ does. The law can only point out sin, and reveal the penalty. The law cannot compel any heartfelt obedience to itself. It can and does say what men ought to do, but gives no strength to the sinner by which he may do its requirements. The weakness of the law, and the strength of the grace that saves, is well presented when we read, "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." There was no life-giving power in Moses, he could only point out the will of God to those who were already transgressors, and could afford no spirit of obedience, but Christ, as a Son, not only reveals his word, but lives in his people, and fulfills his own word in them with power. Moses can only demand all, but Christ gives all. The law cannot therefore break the dominion of sin, it can only reveal that dominion, but grace, the grace of God, comes and takes up its abode in the heart, and at once there is love there, that love which is the fulfilling of the law. Where love is, there is true obedience. In other words, the dominion of sin is broken.

When the sinner comes to realize that he is under the law, he finds the yoke heavy and the burden great. When he comes to know what it is to be under grace, he finds no heavy yoke, but rather what is a joy and delight to his soul. Grace has so wrought in him that it is his meat and drink to do the will of God. The very moment that this state of things prevails in the heart, that moment is the dominion of sin a thing of the past. The law could not take away the love of sin, and give the love of holiness in its stead. Grace does create in the heart, love to God, and hatred of sin, and so grace now reigns instead of sin, through righteousness unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

From these considerations can we not begin to see how the apostle could say to those who were under grace, that sin shall not have dominion over you? Thus it is grace which has put our feet in the way of righteousness in the first place, and it is grace which must be depended upon to keep them there all the way along. Every one who has experienced these things at all, will feel like thanking God for whatever of obedience there may be in his heart and life. He will say, "By the grace of God I am what I am." "'Tis grace has kept me to this day, and grace shall guide me home." The believer will feel to give all heed to every commandment of the Lord, but yet he will rejoice that love is the fulfilling of the law, and that if he loves, it is because God has given him this love, and keeps it alive in his breast. Such humble, fearful-hearted ones will welcome everything which will remind them of their position as the redeemed sons and daughters of the Lord. They will love all that serves to stir up their pure minds to their obligations to love and serve God. These

will feel that they need daily exhortation and admonition, and will welcome it, because they do want to be found walking in the strait and narrow way. Such as these will not feel that their service is upon the old legal ground of serving for some future reward. They will rejoice that they serve lovingly, willingly and freely, and because they love the service itself. They may become tired in the work, but they will not become tired of it. The body may and will ofttimes grow weary, but the spirit will be ready, being renewed day by day through grace. How free are all the gracious affections of such as believe. The worth of the object loved calls out their love, and not some hope of personal reward. To be allowed to love God is reward unspeakable in itself. Where sin has dominion, men serve for reward, or for fear of punishment. Where grace reigns men do not serve for reward, but do find a blessed reward, which is of grace, in the service itself. To have the privilege of this service of love is a wonderful grace in itself, and to have the accompanying peace and rest is but added grace bestowed upon us, who are all unworthy to hold a place in the house of God as servants at all. Thus all is of grace, and of grace we, therefore, we will loudly sing as long as we have breath.

C.

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE.

ALTHOUGH we have not published for some time our advertisements of large Family, and Pulpit Bibles, and a number of other books, formerly advertised, yet we have them for sale, and any one wishing to purchase, can obtain full information in regard to them, by sending for one of our handsome illustrated catalogues, which we mail free.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MATTHEW X. 27.

"WHAT I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in the light; and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops."

These, with other instructions, were given by our Lord Jesus Christ to the twelve apostles when about sending them out to preach in the cities of Judea to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. He gave them to understand that they had nothing of friendship or favor to expect from those among whom they were to sojourn, or unto whom they were to preach. Behold, said he, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Their mission was to men who would deliver them up to councils who would scourge them in their synagogues, and they should be brought before governors and kings.

Such being the nature of their mission, and circumstances attending the execution of it; we may safely conclude, if there ever was a time when Christ's ministers would have occasion to be well equipped with defensive armor and weapons, with swords, spears or Sharp's rifles, it would have been when going in the midst of enemies as hostile and as deadly as wolves are to sheep. But no such warlike instruments, nor even staves, by which they might keep the very dogs at bay, were allowed them. Human wisdom would suggest, at least, as they were going into the midst of such implacable enemies, they should be able to fall back on their own resources, and to enable them to do so they should be well provided with a generous outfit of food, apparel, of purse and scrip, that they might know what they were to eat and drink, and wherewithal they were to be clothed.

But nothing of this was allowed; all this human economy was strictly forbidden; not a purse, or scrip, or second garment, or money, or anything else that human prudence could suggest, was allowed. All these provisions were evidently denied them, that from necessity their trust and confidence should be alone in God for all these things.

There was also another consideration; they were to be brought before councils, governors and kings, and those, all of them, of the most hostile temper and disposition. Would it not be well for the apostles to take some lessons on the subject of parliamentary usages and military tactics, that they should be well versed in legal matters that they might know how to plead their own and their Master's cause, when before the potentates of the earth? Human wisdom would readily assent to this. But that wisdom which cometh from above will not allow it. Completely cut off from all self-dependence, Christ sent his ministers forth at that time, and thus he sends them still. And by this manifest dependence on God for safety and success, the ministers of Christ shall be distinguished from the ministers of antichrist, down to the end of the world. Perfectly harmonious with these regulations and restrictions, is the instruction given for the composition of their sermons. They were not to cull out from the sayings of men such passages as suited their fancy, and compile their discourses according to the rules of the schoolmen of the age, nor even to premeditate what they should say, but rely alone on the ever-constant providence of God, and in the same hour in which they were to speak, it should be given them what they should say. To this day there is no preaching that so comforts, warms and cheers the hearts of God's people as that which comes fresh from heaven. In the same hour in which it is received, it is handed out; it has no time to get cold nor stale.

"What I tell you in darkness." Instead of going to some popular seminary to learn what, and how, and when, and where to preach, the disciples of Christ receive their message from the same Master who gives their commission. Not what others tell you, but what I tell you. This would be enough for them to preach, and they may well leave all other preaching to the ministers of men, and the emissaries of Satan. The ministers of Jesus should always be prepared to preach, saying, Thus saith the Lord. But there is an intimation here expressed of the manner in which Christ instructs his ministers how and what they shall preach.

"What I tell you in darkness." There is a two-fold sense in which we may understand that Christ instructs his ministers what to publish in his name, in darkness. These instructions are given them out of the sight of all others, when secluded and alone, the matter is between the servant of the living God and his divine Master and Lord: hence in this sense it is told them in darkness. How frequently in ancient and modern times has this distinguishing peculiarity identified the Lord's ministers in distinction from all others. An instance of this is given in Acts iv. 13: Two of the disciples, to whom the words of our text were immediately addressed, Peter and John, were brought before the rulers and examined, and the result was, "When they," the rulers, "saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned men," that is, that they had not the embellishment of the schools, that they had not learned their theology at the feet of Gamaliel, "they marveled; and they

took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." Where else could they have learned to preach that gospel which is not a science, but a direct revelation, by the Spirit, from God? So it is also at this day a mystery how God qualifies his ministers to declare among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. To speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory, which none of the princes of this world knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. Truly the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show unto him his covenant.

The quickened and guilt-stricken sinner wonders, when hearing his case described by the minister, how the preacher came to know all about his situation; and the joyful convert and the aged pilgrim all are surprised when they hear, perhaps from one who in the flesh is a stranger, the very exercises of their own mind. The truth is, they have been told these things in darkness, or in those spiritual revelations which are out of the sight of human reason.

But there is another sense in which the ministers of Christ receive their instructions in darkness. This is in regard to their own peculiar exercises and experience. When God communicated to Abraham the things that should befall his progeny in the land of Egypt, he caused a horror of darkness to fall upon him, and it is generally, if not uniformly the case, that the most important communications of the Spirit are made to the people of God, especially to his ministers, when clouds and darkness seem to us to be round about his throne, when he keepeth back the face thereof and spreadeth his cloud upon it. He answered Job out of the whirlwind, and good old Elijah had stretched himself out to die, when God told him of more than seven thousand reserved ones who had not bowed the knee to Baal. The ground is barren and the pasture is dry indeed, where no clouds or darkness are ever known. "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in the light." Be that your theme to preach, and that your message to the people. God's people, especially his ministers, are to have no secrets in religion. Although all the things of the Spirit are a hidden mystery to every natural man, yet, so far as the minister is concerned, he is not to shun to declare the whole counsel of God. He is to speak in the light; that is, openly, undisguisedly, and without reserve, what he has been divinely commissioned to proclaim. Freely they receive and as freely should they communicate.

"And what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops." Of course we are to understand that what they hear in the ear, has reference to spiritual and divine things. Hence, in giving instructions to his disciples, Christ said to them, "Blessed are your ears, for they hear; and blessed are your eyes, for they see." And again, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." And in the letters to the seven churches, the language frequently occurs, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." The hearing ear, and the understanding heart, are the special gifts of God, and the evidence of spiritual life. In the quickening of God's people, the first operation is to make them hear the voice of the Son of God. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, and the saints receive the Spirit by the hearing of faith, and not by the works of the law. And the good Shepherd says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know

them, and they follow me, and I give to them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and none shall pluck them out of my hands." With these qualifications to hear the voice of the Redeemer, the word of the Lord comes to his people, and especially to those who are by him called, qualified and sent forth to preach his gospel, and all the communications made to them by the Spirit, are made through the circumcised ear, by which they hear and know the joyful sound. But the idea of words spoken in the ear, seems in this case to signify the things which Christ in his word, and by his Spirit, has communicated to them. These communications are made to them for the general edification of all the saints, and are therefore to be openly proclaimed. "That preach ye upon the housetops." As a housetop is a conspicuous place, so the preacher of the gospel is not to put his light under a bushel, or under the bed, but to proclaim, as from the housetops, the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ.

This admonition to the primitive disciples, who were certain, from what had just been told them, that they were soon to encounter great opposition and severe persecution for the testimony of the truth, was calculated to impress on them the importance of faithfulness in the discharge of their duty, even when scourging, imprisonment and death, stared them in the face. To avoid the violence of persecution, or to save their lives, they are not allowed to keep back any part of the testimony, or shun to declare the whole counsel of God. Nor were they at liberty, in order to avoid the consequences, to seek retirement, or less public places, for proclaiming the truth. As the housetops were the most public places, so, in the most public manner, and in the face of the most violent opposition, were they to expose themselves to the storm, not counting their own lives dear unto themselves, so that they might finish their course with joy, and the ministry which they had received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. For unto them it was given, on the behalf of Christ, not only that they shold believe on him, but also that they should suffer for his sake.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., January 15, 1857.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—April 8th, 1899, **Mrs. Virginia Miller,** wife of George Miller. Her maiden name was Hostsander. Her age was 38 years. She was born in Cammal, Pa., where she lived and died. Heart failure was the cause of her death. She was a lover and believer of the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone. She leaves a husband, brothers, sisters and friends, to mourn. May the dear Lord give all needed grace to all the mourning ones.

The writer officiated at the services in the meeting-house in Cammal, Pa.

D. M. VAIL.

DIED—At her residence in Wicomico Co., Md., Sept. 9th, 1899, **Mrs. Hester E. Majors,** wife of Capt. Wm. G. Majors, in the 59th year of her age. Sister Majors had been an esteemed member of Rewastico church for the past twelve or fifteen years, having been baptized by Elder E. Rittenhouse. We all regarded her as a true, faithful woman in all the relations of life. She leaves her husband, several sons and daughters, and two sisters, with numerous other relatives and friends, and the church, to mourn, but not as those who have no hope.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DIED—At her late residence in Wilmington, Del., August 30th, 1899, **Mrs. Sarah Simpers,** in the 72d year of her age. Sister Simpers has been a faithful and devoted member of the church at London Tract, for a number of years, having been baptized in the fellowship of that church the first of June, 1890, but she was believed to be a subject of christian experience long before that. She evidently belonged to that company that are without fault before the throne of God. For the last thirteen years the family residence has been in Wilmington, and while she evidently enjoyed meeting regularly with us, we also enjoyed her presence and attendance. She had been confined for twelve weeks to her room, suffering with Bright's disease, most of the time anticipating her

final release with steadfast faith and calm delight. Still mourners go about the streets.

On Saturday, Sept. 2d, she was taken to her church-home at London Tract, Elder Francis officiating at the funeral. A mother in Israel has gone from us, but, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

May heaven's blessing rest upon the bereaved children.

ALSO,

After a long and distressing illness, **C. Sidney Johnson** died at his late residence, Raven Rock, Hunterdon Co., N. J., April 8th, 1899, in the 60th year of his age. He was not a professor, but an honorable and upright man, highly respected by all who knew him. His bereaved companion has long been a devoted member of the church at Kingwood, and he was regarded as a friend. His companion, and a son and daughter, are left to mourn.

The Lord is gracious to comfort the sorrowing.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

STATE ROAD, Del.

DIED—June 24th, 1899, at the residence of his son, John Frazier, near Newark, Del., brother **John M. Frazier,** in the 70th year of his age. Brother Frazier was baptized by the writer of this notice, in fellowship with the church at Welsh Tract, a number of years ago, where he lived in fellowship and confidence of the brethren there, and wherever known among the Baptists, until he received his discharge from the conflict in this tabernacle, in which he groaned, being burdened. The Lord was pleased to remove from him a faithful companion, a few years previous to his death, which fell with such weight on him, being so broken up and bereaved by his loss that he seemed never to recover from it, but from the time of this sad dispensation of Providence to linger but a short time after her death. He was at last afflicted with paralysis, which rendered him speechless for some time previous to his death. He was a man sound in the faith, and enjoyed good preaching, and attentive to his meetings when in reach, and served the church as deacon for a number of years to the entire satisfaction of the church. But he is gone to rest from his labors, leaving one daughter and several sons, all of which are settled in life, and are orderly and reliable. May the Lord give them an interest in the inheritance which is heavenly and fadeth not away.

His funeral was largely attended, and from the house of his son, and interment at Welsh Tract. Elder Rittenhouse being present made appropriate remarks on the occasion, with the writer, after which he was laid beside his beloved companion.

May the Lord bless those who remain, and prepare us all for that day.

WM. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md.

SISTER **M. E. Girard,** wife of Elder G. R. Girard, was born in Seneca Falls, N. Y., on the 6th day of October, 1843. She joined the M. E. church when she was thirteen years old. She was married to Geo. R. Girard, in the State of Michigan, Sept. 27th, 1868. They came to Oregon in 1881, and both of them were baptized into the Scio Church of Regular Primitive Baptists, in Scio, Linn Co., Ore., by Elder A. Shanks, on the first Sunday in July, 1881. She died on the 8th day of August, 1899, being 55 years, 9 months and 28 days old. Her disease was cancer, and her sufferings were great for ten weeks, but she bore them with patience and meekness. She said her Savior was made perfect through suffering, and she prayed the Lord to give her grace to bear her afflictions without murmuring, which he did, for she was perfectly resigned to his will. She bade her husband and their three sons an affectionate farewell, telling them not to grieve for her, for she was going home.

The writer of this saw her baptized, and has been acquainted with her ever since, and can say that she was a meek and lowly follower of Jesus, and an active and faithful member of the church, a loving wife, a kind mother, a good neighbor, and had a pleasant word for every one. She died so easy that I thought when the spirit left her,

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are;
While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

The writer, with Elder V. J. Turnige, tried to speak words of comfort to the bereft family and sorrowing friends, at the Calvary church, near Monmouth, in Polk Co., Ore., on the 9th day of August, 1899, after which she was laid to rest in the Monmouth Cemetery, to await the resurrection morn.

May the Lord bless the bereft husband and children.

W. S. MATTHEWS.

LINCOLN, Oregon, Sept. 1, 1899.

ORDINATION.

MOUNT Olive Primitive Baptist Church, situated near Philippi, W. Va., convened by special call, on August 24th, 1899, to set apart her beloved brother, J. R. Dennison, to the work of the ministry, by ordination according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God.

The church after hearing a sermon by the candidate, proceeded to organize, by electing Elder J. S. Corder, Moderator, and W. C. Thompson, Clerk.

The church then voted that Elders J. S. Corder and J. N. Bartlett officiate in the ordination.

A hymn was then sung, and the candidate called upon by Elder J. N. Bartlett to relate his christian experience, and his call to the ministry, also his views on the cardinal points of Bible doctrine.

The presbytery, with the church, being fully satis-

fied, the ordination prayer, and charge was given, by Elder J. S. Corder. Hands laid on by the presbytery, and the right hand of fellowship given by the same, after which two verses of the hymn sung, "Blow ye the trumpet blow."

Done by order of the church, date above written.

J. S. CORDER, Moderator.

W. C. THOMPSON, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$292 55
Roxbury Association, $13.00; John C. McAlpine, Ont., $1.50; Mrs. Fannie J. George, N. Y., $2.00; A friend, at Roxbury Association, $1.00; Mrs. B. M. Bouton, N. Y., $2.00.—Total	19 50
Total to date	$312 05

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday, at the Hall,

226 West 58th Street,

10:30 A. M. **3 P. M.**

To them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ, is extended a most cordial invitation to meet with us.

THE Corresponding Meeting of Virginia will be held with the Ebenezer church, Loudoun Co., Va., commencing on Wednesday after the second Sunday in October, 1899, and continuing three days.

Friends coming to the meeting by railroad will take the train for Round Hill, at Sixth St. station, Washington, D. C., at 9 o'clock a. m., on Tuesday before the meeting, where they will be met and cared for. Round Hill is on the Washington & Ohio branch of the Southern Railroad.

An earnest invitation is extended to all who may wish to meet with us on the occasion.

J. N. BADGER.

THE Little Zion church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, will hold, if the Lord will, a visitation meeting in Osborne Co., Kansas, four and one-half miles west of Bloomington, to commence 4 o'clock p. m., Friday before the third Sunday in October, 1899.

The passenger train will be met Thursday evening about 7:30, at Bloomington, also the freight train on Friday. All lovers of the truth are invited.

By order of the church,

W. S. AYDELOTT, Church Clerk.

THE Abbington Old School Baptist church, of Justus, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting to be held Wednesday and Thursday, October 18th and 19th, 1899.

Those coming on the Delaware & Hudson R. R., and New York, Ontario & Western, will meet at Olyphant Tuesday afternoon. Those coming on the D., L. & W. R. R., will stop at Clark's Summit.

A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth.

G. W. GOODRICH, Church Clerk.

THE Gilboa church has appointed a two days meeting to be held in their church on the second Sunday, and Saturday previous, in October, 1899. We desire our brethren and friends, especially ministering brethren, to meet with us.

Those that come on the U. & D. R. R., if not met at the depot, will take stage and stop at the Gilboa House, Charles Tuttle, proprietor.

By order of the church, September 10th, 1899.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

A TWO days meeting is appointed to be held with the Shohola Creek church, Pike Co., Pa., October 25th and 26th, 1899. Friends will be met at Shohola station, Erie R. R., Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning. Hope to see a large company.

D. M. VAIL.

THE yearly two days meeting of the Olive & Hurley Old School Baptist church, of the Roxbury Association, has been appointed to be held at Olive, N. Y., on the 15th and 16th of November, 1899. The regular monthly meeting is to be on Saturday afternoon and Sunday following.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, especially brethren in the ministry.

Done for and in behalf of the church.

A. BOGART, Church Clerk.

AT their regular meeting of business, August 5th, 1899, the Lime Creek church, Regular Predestinarian Baptists, of Floyd Co., Iowa, voted unanimously to hold the future meetings of said church at Garden City, at the usual time, the first Sunday in each month and Saturday preceding.

GARRETT MURPHY, Moderator.

WM. C. BROWN, Church Clerk.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to convene with the Forest Grove church, eight miles east of Salisbury, Wicomico Co., Md., October 18th, 19th and 20th, 1899.

Those coming by public conveyance, will come to Salisbury in time to take an early afternoon train on the B., C. & A. R. R., to Parsonsburg on Tuesday, 17th, where they will be met and cared for.

All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

A. B. FRANCIS, Pastor.

THE Juniata Old School Baptist Association will meet with the Springfield church, in Huntingdon Co., Pa., the second Sunday in October, and Friday and Saturday before.

Those coming by railroad will come on the Pennsylvania road to Mount Union, and there take the East Broadtop road to Three Springs. Come on Thursday. The trains leave Mount Union at 9:15 a. m. and 4 p. m., arriving at Three Springs about 10:30 a. m. and 5:30 p. m. There will be some one there to see that all are cared for.

We hope our ministering brethren, and all that love the truth, will remember us.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Lexington Association of Old School or Primitive Baptists, have appointed their association to be held with the Lexington church, at Lexington, Greene Co., N. Y., on the first Wednesday and Thursday (4th and 5th) of October, 1899, when and where we hope to see our brethren and sisters, and ministers of our faith and order that are in fellowship with us.

Those coming on the Ulster & Delaware R. R. will get off at Shandaken, where the stage meets the forenoon trains each day, and will also meet the afternoon trains on Tuesday, to convey any and all to Lexington, at our expense. As we are eleven miles from Shandaken, it would be well for those that intend to come, to write me so that we may send teams to carry all that come.

FLETCHER MACKEY, Church Clerk.

LEXINGTON, Greene Co., N. Y.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 67. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1899. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

51 MARKET ST., MEMPHIS, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Inclosed I send a letter from our highly esteemed brother, Elder J. K. Womack, which I would be glad to see in the SIGNS, if convenient. It comforted myself and others. It shows the importance of each one examining for himself.

I am entirely deaf, but have a strong imagination, and when I look at the picture of Elder Gilbert Beebe, in my mind I put him up in one of those old fashioned pulpits, and then read his editorials, and I feel almost as though I had heard him preach. I do the same with Elder Bartley and Elder F. W. Keene. I have been deaf only thirteen years, so that my ability to hear preaching in years gone by enables me to thus imagine. I wish that all those who love the truth would procure for themselves, and especially for their children, those precious editorials and other writings of our ancient brethren, that future generations may know that our forefathers believed the Bible doctrine. I feel that no amount of filthy lucre would purchase or deprive me of those old time books, and I would advise those who do not have them to obtain them. We can do nothing better for our children than supply them with such literature.

Brother Chick, it is now time to be ever so careful regarding our words. Let us pray God to "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," so that we be not tempted by a fleshly desire to conquer, or to defeat our opponent in argument. Our effort to do so may cause us to pervert and misapply the Scriptures, or not to round up our points as we should do, and thus leave room for our opponents to reproach us with our own unfinished words or sentences. For instance, if we unqualifiedly say, "God's regenerated people cannot obey God," would it not be an error, and would it not confuse? Those on the day of Pentecost said, "Men and brethren what shall we do?" Peter replied, "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you." Now had Peter said, God commands you to repent and be baptized, and says that you shall do so, yet you cannot obey him in this, would not that have left those who had said, "What shall we do?" in a confused state of mind? This very confusion has seemed to me to be produced by some ministers.

There is also another expression which we should do well to avoid. "O well, God will do thus and so anyhow." Or, "God's will will be done, anyway." Once when I had told some brethren that we ought to urge negligent ones to obey, to take up their cross and follow the Lord, they replied, "O well, if God wanted them to obey he would cause them to do so, anyhow, without our admonition," thus completely doing away with all exhortation, and with all second causes and effects which God has established. This "anyhow" theory does away with all need of the Scripture, "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." This theory would say, it was not needful for Ananias to go and tell Paul what the Lord would have him to do. It was the Spirit of God in Ananias that spoke to Paul, and where God has established such means by which to communicate the truth written in the Scriptures, to certain ends, we do wrong to ignore the importance of them. Thus when God had told one of old that fifteen years were added to his days, the old servant knew that he would live the fifteen years, yet he did not shut himself up without food and water, and say, "I have no need of food, for God has decreed that I shall live fifteen years anyhow. No, he knew that these things were the means which God had ordained to sustain his life until the end. He knew that while he lived to eat, he must necessarily eat to live. Thus it is with the regenerated people of God; they "live not by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord." It is with them as with Jesus, it is their meat and drink to do the will of their Father, and when they do thus hunger and thirst for righteousness they shall be filled. And then, through the preaching, God tells them what they shall do. The child of God does not inquire, What shall I do at my own option? but only as God has worked in me to will and to do of his own good pleasure. Then the preacher, not at his own option, but as God also works in him, speaks as the Holy Ghost gives him utterance, and tells the inquirer that which he shall do. In thus being guided by the Spirit the preacher is a humble means in God's hand, and as such the preacher will not dare to speak of anything save what Christ has wrought by him, to make any one obedient by word or deed. We cannot, according to revealed truth, accept conditionalism, nor do away with God's established means. God has revealed to us a part of the way in which he uses means, as well as that it is the Spirit that quickens, and we should condemn every way and everything not found in the strait and narrow way. We are commanded to repent, believe and be baptized. These things with many others, pertain to life and godliness, and are given unto us by his divine power. These things we have done, yet it is by his divine power. It is not you that have done it, but the grace of God that was with you. Thus in the state of grace you have done his commandments, and your doing them is an evidence that you, by grace, could do them. Now, instead of telling the poor, trembling child that he cannot do God's commandments, it seems to me that we should say to him, My dear brother, your question, What shall I do? is indicative of the fact that the grace of God is with you, and therefore this grace will sustain you, and by it you are constrained to ask, What shall I do? and the same grace in me causes me to tell you, that by grace you shall repent and believe and be baptized.

Now this is the working of God in my brother, and in me also. And God does thus by grace add daily to his church such as shall be saved. I, thus being guided by God's unerring grace and by his Spirit, do take heed to myself and to the doctrine, which is ordered in all things and sure, and by grace I continue in them, and in so doing, still by grace, I both save myself and them that hear me. God has previously given to these, and to these only, a hearing ear, who are moved by his quickening power to hear.

I believe that I will close now. I trust that you who can do the subject justice, will write upon it, and admonish our brethren not to accept the appellation of "Can't Help Its," as being an appropriate name for us to bear, for while in our natures, or in ourselves, we can do nothing, ye we can and do obey that portion of God's commandments which he in wisdom has enjoined upon us as individuals to do. If I have here written anything that is profitable, do as you think best with it. When at school we used to make a straight mark on the floor with chalk, and then say no one can walk that straight mark, and when some one who was steady enough of nerve to walk it would succeed, others who could not thus walk would try to throw him off the mark, and would sometimes succeed. Now may God by Christ Jesus keep those who would push us off the truth from doing so, on either side.

I like brother Tharp's pamphlet, and think it very kind of him to charge only the postage, taking the cost of printing on himself. May the SIGNS prosper. I send Elder Womack's letter by his permission.

DAVID L. McNEES.

KIRKLAND, Tenn., April 11, 1899.

DAVID L. McNEES—DEAR BROTHER:—Though you are a stranger to me in the flesh, I hope that we are not in the Spirit. I have just read an article from you, in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, upon the subject of "What shall we do?" I wish to say to this, my dear brother, that such men as you and those of like precious faith, are very dear to me. This difference among those called Primitive Baptists is no surprise to me. When I united with them I found but few that were not prejudiced against the truth of predestination. Somehow they had been taught in the past that Elder Gilbert Beebe, of Middletown, N. Y., was a heretic upon this subject. I examined his writings, and found them to be the truth as it is in Jesus; God's truth, holy truth; truth that could not be overthrown by all the powers of earth and hell. I had been a Missionary Baptist for about fifteen years, and had preached all the truth that I saw. When it pleased the Lord to show me the truth, as I hope, I was overwhelmed at seeing my own weakness, and I felt that I had been lost to the truth all these years, and had been teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. I saw that God had hid these things from the wise and prudent, and had revealed them unto babes, and that he had done this because it seemed good in his sight. I felt myself to be a great sinner, unworthy of the least of all the blessings which God in mercy had bestowed upon me. I saw that the election had obtained it, and the rest were blinded. I saw also that God had mercy upon whom he would have mercy, and whom he would he hardened. I saw that he worked all things (not some of them, but all,) after the counsel of his own will. There is no warfare in God's revelation, and no contradiction, but all is yea and amen in Christ Jesus. God in his own time and way is going to sepa-

rate his people who see the truth, from those who do not see it. That will be a happy day for the church, for she is the only one of her mother. Before I united with the Primitive Baptists I saw the church, and with humility I say it, as the true church, and the only church set off from all other so called churches, and I saw her clear as the sun, fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners. I saw the church as safe and as distinct from all the doctrines of men, as the ark of Noah was distinct from the unbelief and sin of the antediluvian world. The church has a revelation of faith. She is saved by grace through faith, and that not of herself, it is the gift of God. It is of faith, that it might be by grace. She walks by faith, and not by sight.

I will close by saying that God is bringing to pass just what I saw would come to pass. I told a brother over ten years ago of the things of which I have spoken, and he will testify to the same.

I am very feeble to-day, and scarcely able to sit up. I have been afflicted with catarrh of the stomach for thirty years. I felt that I wanted to say these things to my brethren in the Lord, for if I know myself, I do love them very much.

I am glad to know that there is a church in Memphis which is contending earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. I was privileged last fall with being among the people of God in Bethel and Soldier Creek Associations, in western Kentucky, near Fulton, and Mayfield. Such love and fellowship I have never before seen; they all saw eye to eye, and spoke the same things. I was with Elder Bartley, of Indiana, about two weeks. I do not think that I could express on paper how much I do love this dear brother. His writings in the SIGNS are so rich and full of the marrow of the gospel. I saw many precious brethren. I do feel to thank God for raising up these brethren, and others of like precious faith. I indorse the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and those who write for it. Dear brother, if I never see you, and others of like faith, in this world, I hope to meet you where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

Yours in hope of a better life,

J. K. WOMACK.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., September 12, 1899.

DEAR EDITORS:—The lines inclosed express tender and touching thoughts that I think worthy of consideration, and I am inclined to share them with your readers. They were sent me by an invalid sister, Mrs. Nannie B. Edwards, whose cottage home nestles among "the old red hills of Georgia." Some articles from her pen have already appeared in your columns. Though not yet passed the meridian of life, she has for years been on a bed of languishing. In addition to physical suffering, she has tasted the waters of Marah, in sorrow, bereavement and adversity. She has also been permitted to eat of the bread of heaven, and drink from the fountain of life, to partake of the choice wine of that kingdom which is not of this world. "Through great tribulation" she has come into a place of broad rivers and streams, and the "peace that passeth all understanding." During these years of prostration it has been thought a number of times that she was passing beyond these fading scenes, her feet on the brink of the unseen river, while she, by faith, caught glimpses of that region of light where clouds never lower, and sickness and sorrow are unknown, into that blissful home where joy eternal reigns. Again, and again, has she been brought back, and spared to her

devoted husband and precious little daughter, and also to continue a blessing to the church. Although not able to meet in its solemn assemblies, her words of comfort to her kindred in Christ, and her messages to the saints scattered abroad, have been as "bread cast upon the waters," for responses have returned to her with consoling power and sweetness, from those who have never looked upon her face, or heard her voice. Some dear, afflicted ones there may be to whom her words have been as "apples of gold in pictures of silver," who are unable to respond only in the silent channels of the soul. How mysterious are these hidden avenues through which flows such heavenly fellowship from heart to heart, however great the distance, even to the farthest islands of the sea. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes. He it is who satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.

At a very early age this dear, stricken sister experienced a hope in the Savior of sinners, who revealed himself to her as the "chiefest among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely." When a mere child she was gathered into the fold of Christ. In speaking of this solemn, happy season she says, "While reading your letter, dear sister, my mind went back to the springtime of life, when flowers bloomed in rich profusion, and I gazed upon their beauties with delight. But like all things earthly, it was only the beauties of a fleeting show, for scarcely had my thirteenth birthday dawned, when I saw myself a lost sinner, and for four months the sharpest arrows of conviction penetrated my poor soul. But at a time unexpected, when I thought that death and eternal punishment my doom, my burden of guilt was removed, and with hands uplifted, and in outward exclamations of praise to him who died for me, I arose, went to my dear father and mother, and told them how I felt. Never shall I forget the expressions of gratitude that fell from their precious lips, as they embraced me. It was at the close of a winter's day; the last rays of the setting sun had just disappeared, when the Sun of righteousness arose with healing in his wings. In about six months after this I united with the Lord's little flock, and have had a name among them over twenty-three years. But O, the darkness I have passed through since then! It was, as you say, darkness that could be felt, and like you I would rather suffer pain at any time, than to be shut out from the presence of him who is our life. While I have suffered inexpressible pain for nine long years, it seems that the darkness through which I have passed was heavier than my physical suffering. Wish I could see you, and tell you all the way the Lord has led me. None but God could ever have taught me the beautiful lessons I have learned during my illness. There has been a pride in my heart that revolted at adversity, but afflictions have leveled it in the dust. My poor heart often yearns for the welfare of my dear husband and child, and though we may never see any brighter days in this life, I hope that,

> 'Somewhere dim in the days to follow,
> And far away in the life to be,
> Passing sweet is a song of gladness,
> The spirit chant of the soul set free.'"

This portion is from a letter received nearly two years ago. Every page from this dear sister, prostrated on her bed of pain, is rich with spiritual meaning, and manifesting close communion with that "Friend that sticketh closer than a brother." She writes in great weakness, and only with pencil.

At a later date she says, "In your letter to Vera you said you were thinking of a passage of Scripture for me: 'When he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold.' How I do long to know that such is being verified in my case. The crucible is indeed hot, through which I am passing, But is it possible that such as I shall come forth as gold? That beautiful passage was a comfort, and remained with me for several days.

Now I wish to tell you of a most delightful dream I had after reading your last letter. It was late in the afternoon when it reached me, and after reading it several times I slipped it under my pillow, to read again the next day before it was put away. That night I dreamed I was at the best meeting that I ever attended. The minister's discourse was on the resurrection. After the preaching the saints were so overpowered by the Holy Spirit that every heart seemed to be in a flame of heavenly love. While I stood drinking in the delightful scene, and rejoicing in thoughts of the glorious resurrection, I extended my hands and commenced singing, 'That happy day will soon appear,' and with the beautiful chorus, 'Sweet morning,' still resting upon my lips, I awoke greatly exhausted. I tried to tell it to my husband, but was so deeply affected I could hardly speak. The song is an old one, and I had not heard it sung for years, nor even thought of it. While it was only a dream, it seemed such a sweet reality that it was a great feast to my hungry soul.

I wish you could know how much I enjoy reading the SIGNS. Your brother's letter, 'In the clefts of the Rock,' was full of sweetness for me. I do not know when I have read anything more comforting. How I do love to read or listen to that which magnifies our blessed Savior."

In a more recent letter she writes: "For the last few months I have felt more forcibly the words of the apostle than ever before, that 'Though the outward man perish, the inner man is renewed day by day.' And while I deeply realize that I am nothing but a frail worm of the dust, still I feel a closer drawing to the blessed Savior, and a greater desire to know more of him every day of my life; and I sometimes think it was very little I knew of him before I was afflicted. But O, you do not know the long, long years of suffering it has taken to bring me into closer communion with him. For the past few days it has come to me with much assurance that, here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come. How I do love to think of this city, where no sin can entrance gain, nor once intrude a single pain. In thinking of these things I do not wonder at the apostle saying, 'Our light afflictions,' and though they seem almost unbearable at times, yet they are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us. Then, believing this, it is with patience we wait for it.

When you spoke in your letter of that poor and afflicted people who were chosen in the furnace of affliction, it was then that I was made to 'drink by the brook in the way,' and I longed to tell you more of our afflictions. I hope it is with me as you say, 'The Lord sometimes causes his glory to pass by, transforming a sick room into a palace of celestial joy.'"

I trust these fragments from the letters of one so long "shut in" by affliction, may give cheer and encouragement to others who are walking a weary way, always remembering, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy."

In love to all our kindred in hope, unworthily your sister,

BESSIE DURAND.

WHY WAIT?

WHY should we wait till one is dead,
Our love to show? We might have said
So many things their heart to cheer,
While they were living with us here.

Why should we wait their name to sing
In eulogies? and then to bring
The flowers sweet in rich perfume,
To lay upon the silent tomb?

Why should we wait? 'tis too late then
To praise their deeds by tongue or pen;
For words of praise can never fall
Upon the ear now deaf to all.

We should not wait sweet flowers to place
Upon the form in death's embrace,
For to that heart, oft filled with grief,
Such tokens might have brought relief.

We should not wait their name to breathe
In eulogies, but we should wreathe
The fairest garlands for their brow,
While they are living with us now.

NANNIE B. EDWARDS.

SEPTEMBER, 1897.

GOD IS LOVE.

WE wander about in the half lights and shadows of this life, with its few gleams of joy, and its long nights of shadow and sorrow, vainly trying to climb over the mountains of doubt and unbelief, until the Sun of righteousness arises above the mountain tops, then even these dark terrors, where the wild things roam, are clothed in glory, and we find that they are but curtains of mist which melt away when the light of his love warms the cold earth. At such times we get a foretaste of what it will be to see his face, and learn the wonderful force of the words, "God is love." We understand so little of it all now. For instance, one takes a stand upon some one point of doctrine, and a church is divided; then in his bigotry, he thinks that unless he throws into this breach all his brains and strong arguments, the Lord's people will be scattered. Remember it is his stand that has caused the breach in the first place, and in the next place his strong arguments and brains only widen the breach. But love moves the lively stones, and cements them together in such a way that we see the temple of the Lord a fit house of worship, in which we hear continually that God is love, and that he has appointed salvation for walls and bulwarks. When we first fight the good fight of faith, the weapons of our warfare, our armor, our strength and life, is love, and he alone triumphs who is found fighting under the banner of love. It may be that some have left the ranks, and are vainly trying to fight the fight of faith with carnal weapons. Remember what Christ said to Peter, when with the sword he cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest. He who fights without love in his heart does nothing for the cause of his master, unless his master be the devil. Also, he who does feel this love in his heart will manifest it in his walk and conversation. The greatest and strongest power on earth is love, and one who speaks in love, or acts because of love in his heart, wields a power greater than the sceptre of a king, yet often does not know his power and influence for good. A word or deed of love, like a pebble dropped in the ocean, sends its waves of impulse and power to the most distant lands, because it is of God. Satan is powerless before this love, and a kind word will often disarm his servants. Even when the Lord's people take up carnal weapons, the best way to disarm them is with words and deeds of love. It can but make us sad to see one serving the devil, who once, as we believe, served the Lord, but he who created the wicked

for the day of evil, and who turned one over to Satan that he might learn not to blaspheme, and another that he might be sifted as wheat, can and does make all things work together for good to them that love God. In the furnace even the blows of the devil wield the people of God together in the most perfect way, for God makes the wrath of man to praise him. It is in the furnace of affliction that the gold is tried, and though we may find but little gold, and much dross, yet it is pure gold that we want, and the dross amounts to nothing. There is a true color, a brilliancy, a beauty, about one who has been tried in the furnace, which would not have been seen had he not passed through the furnace. God has decreed that his faithful servants shall be manifested to his loved ones. So the furnace is heated, one seven times hotter than it is wont to be heated, and we find that servant in the midst, and we rejoice that one is found worthy to suffer, and is given strength to pass through all trials by the power of this God of love. Do not think that you pass through these trials so willingly because of your love to him. It is because of his love for you that you are given this great blessing in your own heart, this rich treasure is in an earthen vessel, this love to God, truth, and to your fellow man. This love being in exercise, you are using the power which God has graciously given you, hence the triumph over your foes without and within. The next best thing to the love of God to us, is our love to him, and to his people, and this will give you more real comfort than the love of his people for you, for this might exist without your knowledge. I know of no greater blessing than for the love which we feel for his people to well up in our hearts, except the love of God which produces it. It is only when love is manifest in the heart that we can truly say that God is love. When it dwells in the heart we are ruled by him, and the beasts of darkness which prevail by night are quiet, for he is in his holy mountain. When this love is not in the heart, we are not ruled by him, except in the sense that all things are ruled by him, and we are not fit to rule. In that case all things will truly continue to work together for good to them who love God, but it will not seem so to you. On the contrary you will think that you are in much trouble because of the wrong doing of others. Yet if you are of his, all will work together for good to you.

Jonah in one sense, was not ruled by him when he turned aside from what God commanded, but in the true sense he was doing God's purpose, because it was only from the deep that he could most feelingly say that salvation is of the Lord. It was a most perfect way of teaching him the power of God. Disobedient children must be chastized, and we need not look for peace, contentment, or the answer of a good conscience toward God while we live knowingly and willfully in disobedience, for every transgression must receive a just recompense of reward. Why? Because transgressions lead us in the road of destruction, and God, because of his great love, brings us back. Thus we are made to cry, "Turn us and we shall be turned." Then we can say, "Before I was afflicted I went astray."

The son who has wandered long on the mountains of sin and doubt, can appreciate his father's fireside, and will be glad to meet with his brethren and friends. On the other hand, can we say feelingly that God is love, or that we love him, when we do not care enough for the

household of faith to meet with his people? Can we say, I know I have passed from death unto life, because I love the brethren, when we let worldly things keep us from the place where prayer is wont to be made? We may rest assured that trouble and chastisement will surely be our lot if we continue to run after the flesh. I am glad all is fixed by him; his rod and his staff comfort me.

The servant of God who can truly say that God is love, is one in whom love rules, one who manifests that love in all his ways, in words and deeds, and in love of the truth. This will make him turn his back upon the comforts and allurements of the world. The carnal mind, worldly pleasure, worldly friends, natural talents and vain ambition, all say, "Come to us, love us, strive for us, and your lot will be one of comfort and ease," but the love of God, and to his people, which is planted in the heart, keeps pressing forward for the prize of our high calling of God. Thus it is that we can sometimes say in the midst of the sorest afflictions and trials, let every kind of affliction come, neglect of friends, loss of worldly wealth, loss of dear friends by death, and the carelessness of his children even, only let this love be continually in my heart, and I can still say from the depths of affliction, "Salvation is of the Lord." Then we can say that strength is given us as our days demand, and we hear the loving voice say, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid, ye believe in God, believe also in me." With these words of my loving Savior in my heart, I can say with feeling, and knowledge, and truth, that which all things in earth and heaven proclaim, "God is love."

Yours in love,

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.

LAWRENCEBURG, Ky., August, 1899.

NEWCASTLE, Ky., August 16, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS, AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—I sometimes feel like adding my mite to the already full and complete pages of our paper, but one look at myself banishes the thought. It seems to me of late that its columns have been more than full, and I have often been filled as I have read page after page of precious, God-honoring truth. In this day of darkness there is to me at least, and I believe also to others, a deeper sense of sacredness in, and reverence for, the foundation and certainty upon which every gospel truth and promise is based. While on the other hand there seems to be a disposition upon the part of some of our brethren to so pervert the Scriptures, or to expound them in such a way as to lessen the difference between the church, the election of grace, and the modern religionists of the day. There are to me new theories or doctrines being advocated as principles of faith, as held by Old School Baptists, that I cannot think is a Bible truth, which has been reserved to be made known just now, in this nineteenth century. There is something about it that does not seem to me to be in accord with an experience of grace, if indeed I have such. It also seems to me contrary to the faith of the apostles. Forty years ago, the third Saturday in September, I went tremblingly to the old Lewis Creek church, Shelby Co., Ind., which has long since dissolved, and was received. Since then I have made many resolutions, but never to my knowledge have I kept one. So with Paul I must say, My desires are unto good, but how to perform that which is good I have not found. For more than thirty-five years I have been trying to preach Jesus and the riches of his grace, as the only salvation from death under the law, and from

temptation from sin, death and the grave. Have I been mistaken? Is it all a delusion? No! The apostle comes forward with unmistakable testimony, "Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us."—2 Cor. i. 10. Paul also says in the ninth verse, "But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead." And in verse eleven he says, "Ye also helping together by prayer for us." This certainly is right. And every humble, God-fearing believer knows that of himself he cannot pray; therefore the Lord must teach us how to pray. Hence Paul says, "Not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward." The question which arises in the minds of many precious brethren is, If it be all of grace, why rebuke, exhort and admonish? The Lord hath commanded it, and grace teaches it. But one important truth is often lost sight of, and this is that the Spirit takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us. We preach the gospel. The Lord prepares us often in a mysterious way to do this; he also prepares the heart to receive it, and he must apply it. I certainly believe it is right in a gospel sense, and in gospel order, to encourage the dear child, the believer to come, or rather to go among his friends. But who can touch the heart? We can say, Why tarriest thou? but who can apply it to the heart, save Jesus? I do not believe the most favored servant can reach the heart at will, that is on all occasions, and at all times, as he would. I will here relate an incident, as it seems to the point: I was serving a church; it was in a low state, yet it was in peace. I desired her prosperity, and the extending of her borders; I tried to pray for this, but there was no Spirit, no unction, no sweet balm in the prayer; often there were no words expressive of the desire. For nearly four years I went on in this way, cold and formal. Finally there came a time when I think I felt the unction in prayer, and with it a sweet assurance that the Lord was about to gather some of his dear ones into the fold. I could pray fervently that it might be done, and that in such a way that it should not bear the imprint of my sinful hands; I desired that no flesh should glory in his presence. In a few months several were gladly received, and it was said by saint and sinner it was surely of the Lord. The Lord's time to favor Zion had come.

Now, my dear brethren, we need not fear being too trustful in the Lord, he will maintain his cause, he will give you the kingdom. Preach the old time doctrine of grace, from first to last; I have need of it every moment, and believe in the time manifestation of it.

I have not written what I intended when I sat down to write. In reading Elder Durand's article upon, "The Savior gave thanks," I was much comforted, edified and encouraged. I had been troubled about that, and did not know that any one was like me, or felt as I did. I took up my pen to write some reflections upon that subject. I submit what I have written to the editors. If it should be of comfort to some of the dear ones of the fold, it will be all of grace. I would commend you to God and the word of his grace.

With much love in the Lord, and best wishes to all the household of faith, I am the least of all,

P. W. SAWIN.

JAMESTOWN, Ohio, August 7, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed is a sketch of my dear son's experience, whom I believe has been taught by the Lord, which by your permission I would like to have published in the SIGNS, as it is the special request of the grandmother Hatch spoken of in the letter, who is also a dear mother in Israel. I have been a reader of the SIGNS almost from its first publication, and still enjoy reading them.

MARY R. STEPHENS.

NORTH STAR, Ohio, Nov. 27, 1898.

DEAR MOTHER:—You wrote to me last fall, and asked me to write you a sketch of my experience. I did not do so then, and have thought sometimes that I should have done it. It is now in my mind to give you a little sketch of the way in which I have been led. I do not know that I can remember the time that I did not, at times, think upon religion, but I do remember that I once looked at it differently from the way I now see it. As you know, when I was young I once went to Carmel, to protracted meetings, and thought the way was as I heard it preached there, and I thought that I would be religious, as they called it, but as I grew up, instead of that, I was a wild boy. Still I thought I could do as I had before thought I could. Sometimes when I was at some of the meetings, I would feel that I ought to be better, but it seemed as though something would say, Keep away from that altar. I did think that if I should go I would be a worker, as they said, but that is the way the carnal mind looks at it. "To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." When, as I hope, I began to see things differently, I not only saw that the way was different, but I also saw myself a sinner, and there was nothing I could do to help myself. When I had a chance, and no one would see me, I would read the Bible, but I never found anything there which showed me that I could work my way to heaven. It does tell of a better way. Christ's own word is, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me, and this is the will of the Father which sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." On the cross he cried out, "It is finished." So there is nothing left for man to do in this matter. At times when I would go and hear some Old Baptist preach, I would enjoy it, but I felt as though I did not want any one to see me there. When I read the book of Ruth, I felt toward the Old School Baptists as Ruth said she did toward her mother-in-law, "Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee," but still it seemed that I was in darkness, and bowed down with a heavy load. One day when I was in the field planting corn, this came to my mind, "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." It seemed as though I could see how safe his people were, and I thought, If I could know that I was one of them, when it seemed as if there was a voice from the Lord, "Thou art one of mine." I cannot describe the light and joy I saw there. I felt as though I would like to talk to some Old School Baptist, but somehow I did not

want to tell you or father. I wished that grandma Hatch would come, but when she would come I could not tell her what I wanted to. I would sit and listen to you and her until I would get so full I would feel as though you could see it in my face, and I would get up and go out of the house. Sometimes when I would go to the meetings, and an opportunity was given for any one who wished to join the church, I would feel as though I could not stay away, but yet could not say one word. So I moved to this County, and at the time of the accident to my team, it seemed to me that it was to show me that I ought to do my duty in being baptized, for it seemed to me that I heard a voice from the Lord saying, "Go back to that little church, and tell them what you know." One quotation from the prophet Jeremiah seems to cover the whole ground. "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed." I did go down with the intention of telling the church how, as I hope, I had been exercised, but when I got there I did not do so, and came back with my burden heavier than before. So I began to go over to Providence church, and it seemed as though I could not get away from the burden until I was baptized, yet I put it off until I could not stand it any longer. When I look back and see how, as I hope, I have been led along, these words seem to fit me, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." While I have some bright seasons, I have also some dark ones; yet were it not for the dark seasons, I should not appreciate the light ones.

I cannot find words to express what I desire without being tedious.

L. E. STEPHENS.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Licking Association of Primitive Baptists, in session with the church at Bald Eagle, Mt. Sterling, Ky., Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 8th, 9th and 10th, 1899, to the churches of which she is composed, sends greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Time in its noiseless, tireless flight, has brought us to this moment, to the close of another associate year, which with all its events has rolled into eternity.

Eighty-seven such years have passed since this Association had its first session. Think of it, dear brethren, almost a century ago. It is a long way back to look, and the conditions of things are wonderfully changed. Then they came on horseback, over rough roads, through thinly settled neighborhoods, long distances to these meetings. Now we come in a whirl with lightning speed, almost eliminating distance.

Their faith was truly wonderful, and at times we thoughtlessly feel we need less, and of a newer kind, but really we must be exercised by the same kind, and if possible, greater in degree and of the same wonderful character, to sustain us in this electrical world of to-day.

It is indeed something wonderful to see such meetings as ours, holding up Jesus, talking of the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering, which leadeth unto repentance. Where in the land do you find such? Speaking in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in the heart to the Lord. "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ."

Then indeed must our faith be strong, and of a wonderful kind, for through all these decades the churches in their sepa-

rate organizations have sent up their letters through their brethren, telling to this body, doubtless, as you have heard to-day, of their trials and afflictions, their joys and sorrows, their comforts and their hopes. Now, as then, our hope is in "thee, O God;" their cry, our cry, is hear us, O God, attend unto our prayer. They knew, we know, that "all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God, and shall wisely consider of his doing." "The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him, and all the upright in heart shall glory."

The association in its delegated authority has been answering back to the churches, telling them on what solid foundation we rest, not merely in a form of words, but as we trust and believe, in brotherly love, which is of God, and not of man. Now, as then, desiring and hoping that God who is the author of all good, and the only source of light and life, may be one in our midst, guiding and controlling us, that all we do or say may be in accordance with the divine inspiration of God, by which the Scriptures are given, and with which the experience of all the children of God are in accord. We must confess we can only speak, write or think the truth as it is in Jesus, except God be with us. Continuously we need the Holy Spirit to teach us what we are, to teach us more and more of Jesus, for without him all we do and say is vanity, and less than nothing. It is in this way, they that fear the Lord speak to one another; in this way they think upon his name; in this way they dwell in the unity of the Spirit, and the bond of peace, for he is our peace. It is by the blood of Christ we are made nigh. "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolations aboundeth by Christ." This dwelling in unity, this communion of the spirit, is a profound mystery, not known by secret knocks and hidden sounds of voices, or written words from unseen hands, traced on paper from our fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, or friends. No! no! It is by a deeper mystery; it is concerning Christ and his church: it is in Christ by our faith given us by God: we dwell together, we commune together. In this way we were with our fathers in their association, and they are with us to-day in ours; we as old as they, they as young as we. Thus have we unction from the Holy One, and know all things, know the Spirit of God, know that Christ is come in the flesh, and is of God, not come eighteen hundred years ago, now come in the hearts of his believing children, Christ in them the hope of glory. God in him and he in God, too much for human reason and sight, and beyond utterance. Yet we believe it. Strengthen our faith, O God; then let Christ be magnified in our bodies, whether it be life or by death, so have our fathers, so have all the saints. How little of our time are we in this state. Look at Peter, John and James, in Christ's transfiguration in the presence of Moses and Elias, how quickly even amidst this transcendent glory were they ready to build tabernacles for the flesh. May we as they be overshadowed by a cloud, and may we hear the voice saying, "This is my beloved Son, hear him." This was not after the flesh, nor shall we know him after the flesh.

Now mainly we have been talking of the fixed and eternal existence of things, the church in the absolute sense, the hidden body of the Redeemer, but in the sense of our manifest existence, organized according to gospel rule, and continuing steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of

bread and in prayers, we are by divine authority a church, and often spoken of as churches, and are in this sense the manifestation of God's children in the flesh, hence "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Now in this sense we need some conveniences and comforts for our mortal bodies, we need houses for worship, and pastors, and we have our poor, and in this way some needed weight falls upon the churches. It ought to be given by the entire membership of the churches, from the mite to what we in our weakness call the liberal gift, that none may feel burdened, and that it may be said, "Ye have done well." We must not hide behind, "the Lord will provide," nor the weaker thought of doing as Arminians, that we will not do what is plainly taught us in the Scriptures as what is right to be done. Not that we by our liberality want to make "idle persons" of our pastors, or foster in their families idle waiting to the hurt of making good neighbors and useful citizens, but would have them humble and appreciative of the love that prompts the churches, and Paul like, be willing tent-makers, that thereby we may feel that they do not desire to be chargeable, and of our poor let us be considerate, and in love be mindful of their needs; this we know is plainly taught. We merely make these suggestive admonitions. "Let all things be done decently and in order." Prayerfully consider it, and may the Lord add his blessing.

During the past year this Association has lost one of its most useful and active members, liberal-spirited, spiritual-minded, Christlike, dying in the triumphs of that faith that long had sustained him, entering into that rest that remaineth for the people of God, for him to live was Christ, to die was gain. Now how few among us to-day who ever knew any that were in the organization of this Association. Some of us here in the afternoon of life, some in midday, some in the morning, and we know not who among us may be called away before our next meeting, or what great sorrow may sweep on rushing and overpowering, except for the loving presence of Jesus to comfort and sustain, making us know that we are under his care and keeping.

We now bid you farewell. May we join in our united testimony, and in our personal experience, in the psalmist's words in his song about our loving God and Father, who "maketh the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice." God be thanked.

SMITH HAWKINS, Mod.
J. T. McCoun, Clerk.
T. J. Ratliff, Assistant Clerk.

The Old School Baptist Conference of Maine, assembled with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, Maine, to the associations with whom she corresponds.

Beloved in the Lord:—Being gathered in our annual assembly, we send you christian salutation. May grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. It is our consolation to know that Christ, the Head of the church, is our inexhaustible storehouse from whom we derive all that is needful for time and eternity. God's riches in glory, is the inheritance of the elect, and our beloved Redeemer is the channel through whom they flow unto his people. It pleased the Father that in Christ should all fullness dwell, and how blessed are we that we are made partakers of his fullness. Our life and salvation, our righteousness and strength, all the sweet mercy and forgiveness of sins that we taste so freely, is found in

Jesus. He "of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. The riches of Christ are so unsearchable we shall not want. The church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood finds in her Almighty and glorious Redeemer that he is not something unto her, but Christ is all, and in all. We are nothing, but Christ our Head and Husband is everything.

"A fullness resides in Jesus our Head,
And ever abides to answer our need.
The Father's good pleasure has laid up in store
A plentiful treasure to give to the poor.

Whate'er be our wants, we need not to fear,
Our numerous complaints his mercy will hear;
His fullness shall yield us abundant supplies,
His power shall shield us when dangers arise."

The consideration, beloved brethren, of the fullness of Christ, and of our relations to him, affords us sweet encouragement. The world, the flesh and the devil, are arrayed against us, but in our glorious Head we have every provision supplied for the conflict, and with our hearts confiding in his righteousness and blood, our battle song shall be, "We shall be more than conquerors through him that loved us."

As members of the body of Christ let us hold fast the precious truth that as he is, so are we in this word. (1 John iv. 17.) We cannot see too clearly the eternal standing of the church in the Son of God, her glorious, living and ascended Head. "Once in him, in him forever." Thus the eternal covenant stands. We cannot hold fast too tenaciously that the church, in oneness with her Beloved, is predestinated to immortal glory; all is eternally secured in the good pleasure of the everlasting God. But the pathway to the predestined inheritance, and the eternal bliss of God's elect, is strewn with conflicts and tears, wrestlings and fightings. Yes, tribulations more or less we must and shall endure, and in all these things is the life of our spirit, but the grace of our Lord is exceeding abundant toward us with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. Thus

"We to the end shall endure,
As sure as the earnest is given;
More happy, but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven."

May the Lord increase our faith, even that faith which seeketh for and feedeth upon the precious promises which like manna are scattered throughout the Scriptures. "That thou givest them, they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good." But whence is this faith that embraces and feeds upon the truth? It is the gift of God, our faith is of the operation of God. This in our times of pressing need we learn, with our natural eyes we may read the precious promises exactly suited to our distresses, but we have not the strength to embrace them, to repose upon them, to draw nourishment from them. God is our life, and therefore the life of our faith and love and every grace. The blessedness and power of the things of Christ felt in the soul, is not of us, as saith the apostle. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

May the Lord who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, fulfill in us all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith power. Amen.

We desire, dear brethren, a continuance of your correspondence, and hope to see your messengers with us at our next yearly conference, which we have appointed to be held, the Lord willing, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, before the first Monday in September, 1900.

FRED. W. KEENE, Moderator.
JOSEPH F. HALL, Clerk.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Old School Baptist Church, Sept. 8th, 9th and 10th, 1899, to the churches of which she is composed, and the associations and meetings with whom she corresponds, Greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is with pleasure we are again in the purpose of God assembled in our annual session, for our mutual comfort and edification in Zion. It is a long established custom in our annual letter of love and fellowship to you, to call your attention to some particular portion of Scripture, as a basis of our communication.

At this time we desire, the Lord enabling us, to write of some things contained in the thirteenth chapter of Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, and especially the twelfth verse, which reads as follows: "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."

In the former part of the chapter the inspired penman has plainly shown that if the professed follower of Christ has all the graces of the christian, and yet hath not charity, or the love of God combined with them, he becomes as "sounding brass and tinkling cymbal." The church of God is sometimes called upon to pass through severe trials, which are for a trial of the faith of the professed followers of Christ, to see whether it consists in word and tongue, or in deed and truth. When such times of trial and distress come upon the church, be the cause what it may, a test is made of the charity of the individual members of that church, and if the charity is the effect of living faith, a manifestation of it will be made by freely forgiving one another, "Even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us;" "Bearing each other's burdens, and so fulfilling the law of Christ." "For living faith works by love, purifies the heart and overcomes the world." "Put on therefore as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful."

"For now we see through a glass darkly." In the time of the apostle, we are told that the glasses or mirrors were in some cases made of polished steel. The reflection must at best be very dim and imperfect in this kind of a mirror, and the apostle forcibly illustrates the imperfect light in which christians view their own hearts and their obligations to each other, also their liability to misjudge each other's motives, and of God's mysterious and wonderful dealings with them. And thus throughout the sojourn of the people of God here on earth they "see but in part, and know but in part." There are times when they are permitted to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and for a time to forget their natural surroundings, under the glorious manifestations of the Holy Spirit.

"But then face to face." When the saints are free from this house of clay, they will be brought into the presence of him whom they adore, and there their trials and troubles all cease. Sin and Satan will never more annoy them, but an eternity of bliss will be their portion.

It is the prevailing idea in the religious world, that we shall know our friends there as we know them here. It is, how-

ever, without scriptural authority. The relation of the saints here has nothing to do with their natural ties. The one is fed by spiritual or heavenly food, the other by natural or fleshly food. They are as widely separated as the east from the west. In seasons of enjoyment in each other's presence, the saints see in each other faintly the image of their Redeemer, and in that sense know each other as brethren of one family, heirs to one inheritance.

"Now I know in part." The apostle seems to be setting forth in this clause the imperfect knowledge that christians have here of the joys of the world to come. It does not mean that he, Paul or others, knew only part of the glorious plan of salvation and redemption, neither does it mean as the religious world would have it, that the Methodists know part of it, the Baptists part, and so on, and one is as likely to be right as another. As to the plan of salvation, as made manifest through the life, death and resurrection of Christ, and what was accomplished by that, Paul says in his letter to the Galatians, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

"But then shall I know even as also I am known." Our finite minds cannot comprehend what it will be like when we awake in the glorious likeness of our Redeemer, but we know that when we do awake in that likeness, we shall be satisfied, "for we shall see him as he is." Then will faith be changed to sight, and prayer to praise.

Through the goodness and mercy of our God, we have been permitted to meet again in an associate capacity. The churches composing this association were well represented, and they all brought a good report, and we believe that they are established in the truth. Your messengers have come to us in the fullness of the glorious gospel of Christ, and their preaching has all been of a kind, viz: Jesus Christ, and him crucified, as the only way of life and salvation for his people, and we feel that it is good for us to be here.

We desire a continuance of your correspondence. Our next meeting is appointed to be held with the church at South Gardiner, Maine, to commence on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1900, when and where we hope to receive your messengers and tokens of love, again.

Z. M. BEAL, Moderator.

J. H. LOWELL, Clerk.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

AN IMPARTIAL INVESTIGATION OF FREE WILL AND FREE MORAL AGENCY,

A pamphlet by Elder W. N. Tharp, of Liberty, Ind., a copy of which we have had the privilege of reading, is certainly a most able and conclusive refutation of the doctrine of Free Will and Free Moral Agency, which of late has been advocated by some of the periodicals claiming to be published in the interest of the Primitive Baptists. We advise our readers to send for it.

Single copy, one cent; twelve copies, ten cents. Send one or two cent stamps. Address,

ELDER W. N. THARP.

LIBERTY, Ind.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1899.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

EIGHT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A DEAR brother in the ministry has written, proposing several questions for consideration, and asking an editorial reply. Doubtless he himself could present these things far more clearly and acceptably than we can, nevertheless we feel willing to comply with the request, both because the questions are timely, and because there is no manner of doubt in our mind concerning them.

First, Does God reward his servants for obedience to him? We have no hesitancy in replying, not in any sense which would imply indebtedness. Whatever rewards the servants of God receive are rewards of grace, and not of debt. The Savior himself clearly teaches this when he says to his disciples, So likewise ye, after that ye have done all, count yourselves unprofitable servants. Say we have done only what was our duty to do. Our God sometimes calls his servants faithful, but never profitable. If they ever are obedient it is a mercy from God to them, and instead of calling for a reward from him, it calls for praise and thanksgiving from them to him. An entire ignorance of the relation of creatures to their Creator is manifested when men can think that they can by any work of obedience put God under obligations to them, so that some blessings may come to them as their due. So far as this view is accepted, it destroys all thankfulness, and serves to exalt the creature, and to put ourselves on a level with our Creator. The reward of a good tree is that it bears good fruit, and is praised as a good tree; yet it did not make itself good, neither does it create its own fruit. We must say of it, It praises its Creator, and him alone. In wisdom did God make it what it is. In like manner when there is any good fruit in our hearts and lives, we ought to praise not ourselves, but the author and giver of this better life which produces this better fruit.

There is a reward in obedience which is very precious to the believer, but the believer must not make the reward the motive of his obedience. If he does, he will miss not only the reward, but also he will not be really obedient. The true obedience is in the heart, and the motive counts in the sight of God for more than the act, and he who makes the reward his motive, is not really serving God, but himself. God's people do find a reward in obedience, and they do find stripes and sorrow in their disobedience. There is a vast difference in the two little words *for*, and *in*. A studious child who loves his work at school, finds a great pleasure or reward in the sense of acquiring knowledge, and does not need that the teacher should hold out prizes to stir him up to all diligence in his work. So he who truly loves the Lord will so love his service that he will not need the promise of some future reward, either in this life or the life to come, to stir him up to walk in all the ways of the Lord. When such an one fails to thus walk, he grieves, not because he has missed some reward in the future, but because he has missed the

obedience itself, which is his one great desire. The service of the people of God, and that which his Spirit produces in the heart, and that which is pleasing in his sight, is the service of love, and not that of a selfish desire to escape punishment or reap a reward. God's people have been called unto liberty. They have received not the spirit of bondage, but the spirit of adoption. They are called to higher and holier service than that of legal bondage. Their service is its own reward; their service is the product of grace, and the reward is therefore of grace. Not *for*, but *in*, keeping the commandments there is great reward. There is a reward *in* obedience, but not *for* it. And since the reward is in the service, it is not of debt, but of grace.

Second, Does conditional service bring spiritual rewards? This question is practically answered in replying to the former one. Spiritual blessings do not come as the payment for what we do. Under the old covenant there was a system of rewards and punishments meted out to the obedient and the disobedient, but those rewards were not of a spiritual nature. In obedience the people were to be blessed in basket and store. In disobedience temporal judgments fell upon them. No spiritual blessing came to them as the result of obedience, that is, in the sense of a reward for so doing, and even the temporal blessings failed because they were not obedient. By these dealings of God with his people then, he taught the folly of looking to our obedience for any blessing. The people failed all the time. The law could not confer blessings upon them, because it was weak through the flesh. Even when they did obey for a time in some imperfect manner, and outwardly, no spiritual blessing was promised or conferred. God would show thus, that he must bless us with all spiritual blessings in Christ, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and according as we were chosen in him, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Spiritual blessings must come to us as a gift, if we receive them at all. They come to us through the obedience of Christ for us, and not through our obedience to him. Conditional service is legal service; spiritual blessings are gospel blessings. The law required all, and gave nothing. The gospel shows us that all is furnished, even the good works of the believer, and only that is required which is given first. The law furnished no good works, but only required them, while the gospel furnishes all things. It is sure that we should receive no spiritual blessings if they depended upon conditions given for our compliance. Christ has fulfilled all the conditions of them, and having ascended on high, he has received all spiritual blessings for men. And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. Our obedience is from him, and our disobedience is from the flesh. The warfare is between self and the spirit. Out of self proceeds no good thing. All good things come from the spirit of goodness and grace. The promises of the gospel are all yea and amen to the glory of God by us. None of them are yea and nay.

Third, Are hearing, receiving and obeying the means or the steps by which believers come into Christ? Rather, we should reply, being in Christ is the means by which we come to hear, receive and obey. It is more in accordance with the whole tenor of the gospel to say the latter thing, than the former. We would not

be understood as underestimating the obligation of the believer to hear the word of God, and receive it and obey it. But to come into Christ requires the possession of a life that is divine, which can only come from God. Through a careful walk believers come into the joy of this salvation. David did not pray, restore unto me this salvation, but restore the joy of it. Even the joy of this salvation which he had lost by his carnal, evil conduct, he did not expect to regain by future obedience, but he confessed his sin, and prayed for mercy. It was in his view, from the free mercy of God that he should once more obtain this joy. The salvation itself was of God, and he had not lost it by his transgression, but only the joy of it. As we, being in Christ first, walk with Christ, we shall come to know more and more of him, and to know him is joy and blessedness itself. The Lord puts us in the way, and in following in this way we always come to him who is both the beginning and the end of it. It is a continued growing out of self, and into Christ. The same life which produces hearing, receiving and obeying, leads direct to Christ who is the life itself. It is a growing up in Christ, and not into Christ, as though one was outside of him, and by obedience came into him, but it is a growing up in Christ as the whole ground and support of this life, and who is also the bread which nourishes all spiritual desires, and all spiritual obedience. The unregenerate do not come into Christ by hearing, &c. They cannot hear until they are in Christ by possessing his life. The regenerate do not come into Christ by hearing and obedience, seeing, as said before, they are already in Christ before these fruits can appear. The root produces the fruit, and not the fruit the root.

Fourth, Are all the rewards given to believers, of grace and not of debt? Most emphatically they are. That man who says the contrary is not an Old School Baptist in reality, no matter what his name may be. One text of the Scripture settles this matter once for all. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."—Romans iv. 4. This is our daily righteousness, and our daily experience. Believers have no rewards of debt to boast of; all with them is of grace. That peace of conscience which they have, is first wrought in them by the Spirit, which shows them the things of Christ. Christ's righteousness it is which always brings to them peace of conscience. Their own obedience never can bring this peace, because they all the time see its weakness and imperfectness. In vain we seek for peace with God by methods of our own. While it is true in the fullest sense of the word that living after the flesh brings death, and living after the Spirit brings with it peace of mind and joy in the Lord, yet still this peace and joy are not rewards of debt, but like the spiritual life itself, they are gifts of grace. We must bring everything back to the work of grace through faith. We must not think that God is in our debt in any sense of the word at any time. It is a wonder to the believer that he ever is the recipient of any blessing from the Lord. Every act of obedience, and every joy resulting therefrom, but puts him under greater obligations to utter the praises of grace. It is faith which works in him by love.

Fifth, Did Paul preach the gospel willingly or of necessity? Paul most certainly did not preach the gospel of his

own will, but rather of his own will persecuted it. Speaking of himself as a believer and a minister of the gospel he said, "By the grace of God I am what I am." Whatever willingness he felt to go forth preaching the word, it was a willingness wrought in him by grace divine. The necessity which Paul felt in preaching was such as constrained his will first of all. It was with him as was said hundreds of years before, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Paul could at the end of his life say, "I am ready to be offered," but he said it because the Lord had made him ready, or willing. He said, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." This he could not say by any device or choice of the flesh, but the grace of God which was sufficient for him, enabled and constrained him to say it. So Paul could say, "that he was willing to preach the gospel to others also," not because he was that way inclined in the flesh, but because he was possessed of the grace which could make him willing to spend and be spent in his Master's service. Neither the willingness nor the necessity which Paul felt in preaching was of the flesh, or of himself, and therefore it was to the praise of grace divine. Grace constrained him to preach because he had felt its power in his own case. Paul was not a volunteer in the ministry, but he was called of God, who set him apart to this work. God who had called him did prepare him and make him ready and glad to spend his life in this service. Therefore we do not hear Paul taking any credit to himself for preaching and laboring more abundantly than all the other apostles, but he says, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." This sums the matter all up. Paul preached the gospel both willingly and of necessity, but neither was of the flesh, but by grace.

Sixth, Is it true under the gospel, as it was under the law, that the man who does these things shall live by them, or in them? Just the opposite is the case. Under the law, where all was failure on man's part, it was so said, but under the gospel it is live and do, instead of do and live. If Israel could have kept the law, then would they have lived in so doing, in a temporal sense, and in a temporal sense only, but Israel which strove after the law of righteousness, did not attain to the law of righteousness; only the election obtained righteousness, and so Israel perished. Whenever salvation or righteousness depends upon the creature, their destruction is sure. If the promises of the gospel depended upon our faithfulness for their bestowal, then we should fail under the gospel as they did under the law. Just so far as conditions of our performance go, that far the gospel does not come. The gospel is simply the glad tidings that all is done for us, and that all is done in us, needful for salvation. The law calls for our obedience, the gospel preaches the obedience of our Lord. Christ has done all the things that the law demanded for us, and we live now because he, having done all, lives forever. Now having this life within, we do the things commanded. As said before, we live and do, not do and live.

Seventh, Is it consistent with the gospel, and with christian experience, to say, "We can have all the religion we live for?" We recall hearing this expression from the lips of Arminians, ever since we can remember, and it was always meant by it that we could always have joy and gladness in our religious profession, if we would only live near enough to the Lord,

and if we had any darkness and doubts regarding our acceptance with the Lord, and any gloomy forebodings, it was full evidence that we were not living as God would have us. The remedy always held out was the old one of Job's friends, "Acquaint now thyself with him, [God] and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee." If this theory of will worship be what is meant by the question above named, we have no hesitancy at all in pronouncing it an unmitigated falsehood. It is contrary both to the teaching of the Scriptures, and all christian experience. Job, more greatly afflicted than any man of his time, had not sinned in the sense in which his friends accused him. On the other hand, God himself pronounced him a just man, one who feared God and eschewed evil. How often David lamented and was cast down, and yet not on account of having departed from the way of the Lord. When he did depart he was chastised, but with many of his afflictions, and in many of his hours of darkness, he was conscious of his integrity. Often trials and afflictions and darkness of mind, and gloomy doubts and fears, and depression of spirit, are given us of God, as a trial of faith, that it may be found at last unto praise, and honor, and glory, at the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is true that all sorrow, and pain, and death, with every disappointment, are all together the result of sin, but it is also sure that we must not claim any individual sorrow, or loss, or affliction, is the result of individual sin. God's people are afflicted, but the ungodly prosper in the world, was what the inspired psalmist saw to be true. In our own observation it has been true that some of those whose walk in life was most correct and careful in every direction, were among the most fearful and doubting ones, and lived with less of joy than many others whose outward life was very far from being as correct as theirs. We do not desire to gainsay the truth that obedience is better than disobedience, but the gladness of the heart is no index of careful obedience at all times, and sadness of the heart is no evidence of a life especially ungodly. No one could be more joyful than the pharisee, and no one could be farther from God, while no one could be more lowly and sad in feeling than the publican, and yet no one was walking nearer to God than he. The only perfect man that the world ever saw, was all his life long a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Men thought him smitten of God and afflicted, and hid their faces from him. Let us beware lest we judge his followers after the same mistaken and unjust measure.

Eighth, Have we any right under any circumstances to say that the Author of the world would be a cruel being? We have heard injustice ascribed to God many times in the past, if such and such doctrine was claimed to be truth. This is bold replying against God. We must not meet any doctrine which men might advance, absurd and fraught with terrible consequences, though it might seem to us to be, with such an objection. God cannot be unjust toward man or any of his creatures, simply because no creature of God has any claim against him. Injustice is simply to reject a just claim. How can any creature have such a claim against God? Under no conceivable circumstances can God work injustice toward any one. To use this argument against any position is then perfect folly. When in Paul's day men urged this objection to some of his doctrine, he said it was a replying against God, and he solved every difficulty by this rebuke. Our God

must not be judged by our finite standards. We are guilty of presumption when we seek to thus judge him. All such expressions savor of proud Arminianism. It is a manifestation of that spirit which would exalt itself against God. The truly humble heart would shrink from all such expressions.

Thus we have as briefly as possible tried to reply to the questions of our dear brother. We trust that we have been plain, and yet not in any way harsh, in our expressions. We have no controversy with men, but with doctrine. We would use not carnal weapons, but the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. These reflections we leave for the consideration of our readers, and the brother especially at whose request they have been written.

C.

FACTS WITH FIGURES.

FROM time to time we have made appeals to our delinquents to relieve us of the financial embarrassment caused by their tardiness in sending their remittances due on back subscriptions, but always with lamentably small results, but never so much so as within the last year. To give some idea of the extent to which we are inconvenienced by this neglect of duty, we will give the actual figures.

Last October we sent statements to all our delinquent subscribers who were one year or more in arrears on their subscription, then after waiting three months, we discontinued all from whom we received no response, who were two years or more in arrears, and again sent them a statement of their accounts, and requested them to make a special effort to send us a remittance. The aggregate amount of all these bills sent out the first of January, 1899, was $2,266.63. Now, after waiting nine months more, since sending out these bills for the second time, all we have received on the $2,266.63 is $103.85.

We cannot believe this neglect is altogether due to dishonesty, but in most cases is caused by procrastination. But be that as it may, the loss is very serious to us. Experience has taught us that what we do not receive within thirty days after sending a bill to a delinquent, we are not likely to receive it at all. We now, once more, make an appeal to those who are behind with their accounts, to make a special effort to send us an immediate payment. If you have not the means at hand, we would suggest that you borrow the money, and make the payment so long due us, and then you will not be so likely to neglect the one from whom you borrow the money.

The question may arise with some: Why continue the paper after the time paid for has expired? In answer we will say, we never knowingly continue the paper to any one longer than they desire to have it, but it is impossible for us to know who wish their paper discontinued unless they so inform us.

It is no excuse for one to say, "I never ordered the paper continued longer than the time paid for, and they had no right to send it." If you receive a paper from the office, it is your duty to pay for it, even though you never ordered it at all. This has been decided time and again. With every paper you receive, the date to which your subscription is paid is printed next to your name on the little slip pasted either on your paper or on the wrapper in which it comes, and if you do not wish it continued longer than that date, it is your duty to notify us to stop it, and if you neglect to do so, it is your own fault, and it is not right to make us suffer for your neglect.

Please, brethren and friends, give this matter immediate attention.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE TEMPTATIONS OF CHRIST.

In the epistle addressed to the Hebrews, the holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, are exhorted to consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. In obedience to this injunction, we propose to call the attention of our readers to a few considerations in regard to his perfect qualification to succor his tempted people.

Well did the inspired writer say, "Such an High Priest becomes us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens."—Heb. vii. 26. "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession; for we have not an high priest that cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities; but was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin."—Heb. iv. 14, 15. "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham; wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people; for, in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."—Heb. ii. 16–18.

What amazing condescension is here presented in our holy and immaculate Redeemer, who, being in possession of all riches, for our sake became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich. (2 Cor. viii. 9.) We can conceive of no other reason why he should suffer temptation, or in any other respect; nor does the record of heaven furnish us with any other than that given in these words, "For your sakes." That is, for the sake of his people, he laid aside, as it were, the bright majesty and transcendent glory which he had with the Father before the world was, and took on him the form of a servant, humbled himself and learned obedience, and in his astonishing humiliation endured the cross, carried our sorrows, and the chastisement of our peace which was laid on him, that with his stripes we should be healed. But in all that he has done or suffered for us, there is nothing that strikes our mind with more surprise and astonishment than that he should have become a subject of temptation, and be made to witness in his own person the very feelings of our infirmities, and under their weight pour out "strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death."—Heb. v. 7.

> "The Son of God in tears,
> Angels with wonder see;
> Be thou astonished, O my soul,
> He shed those tears for thee!"

He who had control of the angels of glory, at whose call legions of the heavenly hosts would have descended to execute his orders; he who could dash ten thousand worlds to dust, or speak them into existence at pleasure, pours out his cries, his tears, his blood, and even his soul is poured out unto death, that he might see his seed, prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand, that he might see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied.

But we designed to notice more particularly in this article, some of the temptations which he endured, and to show the tempted saints that the temptations by him endured, were in all points like those which they so often feel. As an example, we will compare the account given in Matthew iv. 1–10, with those to which all

the saints are subject. Immediately after the baptism of our Redeemer, in Jordan, on which occasion all reasonable doubts which any intelligent beings might have entertained of the Messiahship and Sonship of Christ, must have been obliterated by the most clear and irrefragable testimony from heaven, the descent of the Holy Ghost in form like a dove, the voice of the Father, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," testimony which we would suppose would settle the question of his Sonship, effectually and forever. Yet the very next account given is that "Then," at that very time, "was Jesus led up of the Spirit, into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil." The same blessed Spirit which like a dove had descended from heaven to identify him, and bear testimony that he was the Son of God, now leads him up into the wilderness to encounter the tempter. Jesus was never led by any other spirit than the Holy Ghost. Here let us pause, and inquire whether the saints are not in their experience called to trace the footsteps of their divine Leader, which are here so clearly marked? When God, by his Holy Spirit, has given us the most clear and soul-satisfying evidence of our acceptance in the Beloved, so that we have been made with joy to cry Abba Father, when we have felt that the testimony that we were born of God was so convincing to our mind that we thought we should never doubt it, have we not been led in many instances into a dreary wilderness where we have felt the powerful temptation of the old adversary? As he was thus led by the Spirit, is it not evident that God has appointed for us those trials which are to try our faith? Should we then count it strange when we fall into divers temptations, as though some strange thing had happened to us? Should we not rather conclude that this is the common lot of all the saints? God has chosen us in a furnace of affliction, he will try us as gold is tried, and when he has tried us, we shall come forth from the furnace like the gold that is seven times tried in the fire. Let us then remember that the same Spirit that witnesses with our spirit, that we are the children of God, bears this testimony not only in its pleasing descent, and doubt-subduing manifestations of our relationship to God, but also in leading us to the battle-ground, where under the banner of our King, we must fight the good fight of faith, and learn experimentally to know the use of the whole armor of God.

After Jesus had been led into the wilderness, he fasted forty days and forty nights. We presume that for this great length of time our Lord abstained from temporal food, and at the expiration of the forty days and nights, was literally hungry. But may we not also understand that the children of God are sometimes made to fast for many tedious days and nights, when the refreshing manifestations of joy and comfort are withheld, and when the bread of life, which came down from heaven, to satisfy their spiritual hungerings, is withheld from them? And when, like Paul in his perilous voyage, we can say we have neither seen the sun nor stars for many days. Does not this long and tedious abstinence make us to feel afterwards an hungered? Isaiah, in the spirit, said, "Verily, thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior." When, like poor old Job, we have been made to cry out in bitterness of spirit, "O that I knew where I might find him; or like David, to exclaim, "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after

the living God." When many days and nights of abstinence have passed, and we have experienced no banqueting seasons with our Lord, is it not common with us that the tempter takes advantage of our destitution and of our famishing state, to attack our faith and confidence in God, and question the reality of our being his children? How striking is the similarity of his present mode of attack, and the manner in which he assailed our Lord and Master. "If thou be the Son of God!" What an *if* was here! That very devil who so often disputes our evidences that we are the children of God, that God is our Father, dared to question the Sonship of our dear Redeemer. But that was not all, he suggested to him what he so often intimates to us: If ye are really the children of God, why suffer hunger? Use the means, be up and doing? Do you not see the religionists of the world all around you? they have revivals just when they please, they do not suffer hunger; their eyes stand out with fatness, and they have more than heart can wish. Can you believe that you are children of God when so poor, so weak, so hungry and so destitute? If you are sons or christians, command the stones to be made bread. Christ was able to vanquish the tempter, though he felt the full force of the temptation, but it is not always the case with his children, they will sometimes fall into the temptation of attempting to convert stones into food, they will sometimes try hard to feast on their own works, and to fill themselves with the husks which the swine feed upon, and the prophet says they are like hungry men who dream of feasting, but awake and behold their souls are empty. God will not suffer that which is born of him to be fed or sustained on earthly things. The doctrines of men, and the excitement of animal feelings, will not satisfy the spiritual appetite of the new man, any more than our spiritual enjoyments will satisfy the cravings of the carnal appetite. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; it is earthly, and requires earthly food to sustain it, but that which is born of the Spirit is spiritual, and must have spiritual food; nothing short of the bread that came down from heaven can sustain them; they must eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ, and live by faith on him. But it is Satan's masterpiece of imposition to tempt God's dear children to try their hand at converting stones into bread, and to rely on their own works and inventions; instead of looking alone to God, to give them day by day, and hour by hour, their daily and hourly bread. They must live on every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Not only those words of consolation and comfort which proceed from the mouth of God, to strengthen and invigorate the inner man, but every word that proceedeth thence. Some words proceed from the mouth of God for the support of his children, for our admonition, reproof and instruction in righteousness, all of which are as essential to our vitality, as those words of comfort and joy which we feast upon when he brings us to the banqueting-house, where his banner over us is love.

How very apt we are to forget, in the hour of temptation, that we are to live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. We must eat our honeycomb with our honey, and drink our wine with our milk; we must eat our bitter herbs with our passover Lamb, and always bear in mind that the words which our Lord speaks unto us, they are spirit and they are life, and when we find them, we are to eat them up, for they are all

fitly spoken, and like apples of gold in pictures of silver.

But Satan has other temptations for the saints besides those which relate to our food and sustenance. He sometimes puts us upon the pinnacles of the temple, exalts us in the church, or so inflates our old nature with pride, as to lead us to feel that we occupy a place in the temple or church of God, high above our brethren, and then he will tempt us to presumption by so construing the gracious promises of our covenant God, as to tempt us to rashness and presumption: "If thou be the Son of God cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." Or, as the temptation is presented to the child of God, If thou be indeed a christian, unbridle the carnal propensities of nature, gratify the desires of the flesh, and rest assured that thou shalt never perish, neither shalt thou be plucked out of the hand of thy God and Savior. Have not christians who have a strong propensity for some practice which is incompatible with the christian profession, such, for instance, as that of indulging too freely in the use of intoxicating liquors, or intemperate habits of over-eating, or the gratification of their pride and vanity, by extravagant waste of the bounties of a kind providence, had this satanic construction of the assurances of the gospel, whispered in the ear, in such a manner as to tempt them to give loose (to some extent) their carnal lusts? Jesus was in all points tempted as we are, but never was he overcome by the temptation, although tempted as we are, and that, too, in all points; he was yet without sin. But O! how different with us. How often are we prostrated by the tempter; how often do we "tempt the Lord our God."

Another powerful machination of Satan is, to present to the eye of the saints the glories of the world, to tempt them from the pathway of righteousness. "All these will I give thee, if thou wilt worship me." And although our Lord did resist and vanquish the tempter, we certainly have cause to acknowledge that the glories of this world present attractions too strong for us to resist successfully without the special interposition of divine power in our behalf. Can the most devout and consistent christian on earth say in truth that the honors, riches, popularity and splendor of this world has no captivating charms for him, or that he has at no time been tempted to omit some christian duty, or neglect some exposure of his sentiments from fear of reproach, or loss of some share in the glories of this vain world? Ask the delinquent who has long entertained a hope in Christ, why he has, from year to year, deferred what has been solemnly impressed on his mind as a duty? Why he has not followed his Lord in the ordinance of baptism? Why he has withheld his name, and place, and gifts from the church of Christ? Are there none of all the long list of such who would be constrained to confess that the fear of sacrificing the glories of this world in some way, or to some extent, has had too much influence over them? Are there no ministers in our ranks, of whom it is to be feared, for the sake of popularity or wealth, have shunned to declare the whole counsel of God? These temptations are common to us all, because we are all in the flesh, and all our fleshly powers are in love with the glories of this world. The temptations of the adversary, when he is permitted to present the glories of the world to allure us, are powerful, and we

need to be always on guard, to watch and pray lest we enter into, and lest we be overcome by temptations. To escape the presentation of temptations is impossible, for they are suffered to come upon us, as we have said, for the trial of our faith, and to teach us the inbred corruption of our nature, and to keep us humble before the Lord. But when we are tempted, we are instructed to resist the tempter, and mark the example of our divine Leader, who yielded not to the tempter, either in relinquishing his claim to the relationship of the Son of God, or when that body of flesh in which he vailed his Godhead, was faint or hungry, he could not be drawn by Satan's temptation to gratify his appetite, with food contrary to the express instructions of the written word. When tempted to cast himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, he remembered that it was written, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." And when all the glories of this world were presented, he could not be allured. What a lesson is this for our encouragement! He endured all this for us; for us he was hungry, and refused to relieve his own sufferings at the expense of that work which he was then prosecuting for us; for us he made himself personally familiar with all the diversified temptations to which we are exposed. He is therefore easily touched with the feelings of our infirmities:

> "He knows what sore temptations mean,
> For he has felt the same."

Let the example and triumph of our Lord inspire us with zeal and confidence to fight the good fight, and in our trying conflicts remember that, weak as we are in ourselves considered, all the power by which our Lord triumphed over the tempter is engaged in our behalf, and he will certainly make us more than conquerors at last.

When sorely tempted, how apt we are to conclude that no real christian was ever so severely tempted! But the conclusion is far from being right. It is the common lot of all the saints, and not only the lot of all the saints, but our dear Redeemer was also tempted in all points as we are. Count it all joy then, when ye fall into divers temptations. Consider into what company it puts you, and you will be inclined rather to sing,

> "Thou givest me the lot
> Of those who fear thy name;
> If endless life be their reward,
> I shall possess the same."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., February 1, 1857.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Licking or Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Bald Eagle church, Mount Sterling, Montgomery Co., Ky., Sept. 8th, 9th and 10th, 1899, to the several meetings and associations with which we correspond, sends her annual greeting.

WE have once more been permitted to meet together to speak and to hear from one another of those precious truths, having been blessed in hearing the everlasting salvation, a finished salvation, in time and for eternity. We feel to be thankful that your messengers and ministers have come to us from year to year, making us feel to be strengthened in the Lord. Our meeting has been a comfort and a joy to us. We desire to still be remembered by you, and that a continued correspondence will be kept up.

We have appointed our next session to be held with the church at Little Flock, Anderson Co., Ky., commencing Friday before the second Saturday and Sunday in September, 1900, when we hope to be favored by your ministers and messengers.

SMITH HAWKINS, Mod.
J. T. MCCOUN, Clerk.
T. J. RATLIFF, Assistant Clerk.

CHURCH NEWS.

PURSUANT to a call made by Mount Olive Church, of Old School or Predestinarian Baptists, near Sweet Home, Texas, I met the church on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1899, to hold a three days union meeting, which was well attended, and a deep abiding interest manifested by the church and congregation. We had "all things common," and our theme was, "Jesus and the resurrection, the eternal foundation of Zion; the immutable purposes of God and his righteous decrees." I came a distance of over six hundred miles to be present on the above occasion. Here I met Elder Buntyn, of Hillsboro, Texas, who assisted me, and preached ably and to the satisfaction and comfort of the church, together with Elder J. A. Kinsel, pastor of Mt. Olive church, in connection with Elder R. M. Pate.

Sunday the church communed, and washed each other's feet, which closed the exercises of this meeting, with demonstrations of joy inexpressible, and full of glory. Our souls feasted on "the sincere milk of the word," and our poor hearts were made glad in the Lord, and to take courage, and press toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

I wish to state that previous to this, I gave notice to Mr. J. F. Staggs and wife, of Inez, Texas, to meet me at Mt. Olive, which they did, although they were not members, but had a great desire to join the church, and be baptized; to discharge their duty when it should be the Lord's will. Notwithstanding their business connection with the railroad company, when the Lord's time had come, all things were made ready, and every obstacle removed, and a leave of absence of fifteen days was granted them. They came and were with us through the meeting of Mt. Olive church, but could not join us at that time. They journeyed with us to Martindale, Texas, a distance of forty miles, to meet the church there, where this young brother and wife came forward on Sunday, and gave to the Bethlehem church a relation of their hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, and were received, and I baptized them in the San Marcos River. It seems the Lord will do his work, his strange work, and bring to pass his act, his strange act, to the praise and exaltation of his great name. So closed our meeting with the Bethlehem church, and I went in company with young brother Jimmie and sister Susie Staggs, to their kind home, at Inez, Texas, where I shall remain for some time.

Dear brethren, I feel that the Lord has been gracious to us, and more than compensated me a thousand times over for all my trouble and long journey to the coast country.

May the Lord add his blessing, and help us to serve him faithfully.

ASA HOWARD.

INEZ, Texas.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$312 05
Mrs. Drucilla Wheeler, N. Y.,	5 00
Total to date	$317 05

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. G. Sawin, at the residence of the bride's parents, Springfield, Ill., Sept. 26th, 1899, Mr. Harvey Elder, of Deer Park, Ill., and Miss Mary E. Thompson.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At the residence of his daughter and son-in-law, in Smyrna, Del., Sept. 13th, 1899, **William E. Riggs,** aged 82 years. He had long been in declining health, but was taken with his last sickness Sept. 1st, which was called malarial fever.

Brother Riggs was baptized in the fellowship of the church at Bryn Zion, I think about 1848, and continued with that church to the end. His companion passed away about ten years ago, and she was truly a mother in Israel. Since then the family home has been broken up, and he had resided among his children. For more than a quarter of a century his home was one of abounding hospitality, and no kinder or more generous-hearted man lived in that community. He had outlived all the members of his time some years, and but few of the companions of his youth remained in the community. I have seldom known of such self-sacrificing devotion to the interests and welfare of others, as was shown throughout his long life. Out of a large family three children survive him to mourn the loss of a kind and loving father.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

MEETINGS.

THE Welsh Tract yearly meeting is appointed to begin on Saturday, Oct. 14th, 1899, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue for two days.

Those coming from Wilmington and Philadelphia, will take the train that leaves Philadelphia, Twenty-fourth and Chestnut Sts., Saturday morning at 7:30, for Newark, Del. Those coming from Baltimore will come via B. & O., leaving Camden station at 7:55 a. m., for Newark, Del., where all will be met and conveyed to the place of meeting.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth to meet with us. The ministering brethren on their way from the Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, to the Salisbury Association, are especially invited to meet with us.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

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226 West 58th Street,

10:30 A. M. **3 P. M.**

To them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ, is extended a most cordial invitation to meet with us.

THE Old School Baptist church of Schoharie, N. Y., has appointed her yearly meeting to held, if the Lord will, on Wednesday and Thursday after the fourth Sunday in October, 1899, at the meeting-house on Schoharie Hill, at 10 a. m. each day.

A cordial invitation to ministers, brethren of other churches of our faith, and all who love the truth, to meet with us.

Those who come by rail will be met at Howe's Cave or at Cobbleskill, on Tuesday before the meeting.

Those coming to Cobbleskill will call for brother Jas. E. Livingston.

In behalf of the church,

G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

THE Little Zion church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, will hold, if the Lord will, a visitation meeting in Osborne Co., Kansas, four and one-half miles west of Bloomington, to commence 4 o'clock p. m., Friday before the third Sunday in October, 1899.

The passenger train will be met Thursday evening about 7:30, at Bloomington, also the freight train on Friday. All lovers of the truth are invited.

By order of the church,

W. S. AYDELOTT, Church Clerk.

THE Abbington Old School Baptist church, of Justus, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting to be held Wednesday and Thursday, October 18th and 19th, 1899.

Those coming on the Delaware & Hudson R. R., and New York, Ontario & Western, will meet at Olyphant Tuesday afternoon. Those coming on the D., L. & W. R. R., will stop at Clark's Summit.

A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth.

G. W. GOODRICH, Church Clerk.

THE Gilboa church has appointed a two days meeting to be held in their church on the second Sunday, and Saturday previous, in October, 1899. We desire our brethren and friends, especially ministering brethren, to meet with us.

Those that come on the U. & D. R. R., if not met at the depot, will take stage and stop at the Gilboa House, Charles Tuttle, proprietor.

By order of the church, September 10th, 1899.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

A TWO days meeting is appointed to be held with the Shohola Creek church, Pike Co., Pa., October 25th and 26th, 1899. Friends will be met at Shohola station, Erie R. R., Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning. Hope to see a large company.

D. M. VAIL.

THE yearly two days meeting of the Olive & Hurley Old School Baptist church, of the Roxbury Association, has been appointed to be held at Olive, N. Y., on the 15th and 16th of November, 1899. The regular monthly meeting is to be on Saturday afternoon and Sunday following.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, especially brethren in the ministry.

Done for and in behalf of the church.

A. BOGART, Church Clerk.

THE Corresponding Meeting of Virginia will be held with the Ebenezer church, Loudoun Co., Va., commencing on Wednesday after the second Sunday in October, 1899, and continuing three days.

Friends coming to the meeting by railroad will take the train for Round Hill, at Sixth St. station, Washington, D. C., at 9 o'clock a. m., on Tuesday before the meeting, where they will be met and cared for. Round Hill is on the Washington & Ohio branch of the Southern Railroad.

An earnest invitation is extended to all who may wish to meet with us on the occasion.

J. N. BADGER.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to convene with the Forest Grove church, eight miles east of Salisbury, Wicomico Co., Md., October 18th, 19th and 20th, 1899.

Those coming by public conveyance, will come to Salisbury in time to take an early afternoon train on the B., C. & A. R. R., to Parsonsburg on Tuesday, 17th, where they will be met and cared for.

All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

A. B. FRANCIS, Pastor.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

313 HYMAN ST., LONDON, Ontario, July 25, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I inclose you the experience of a dear young sister, written in the form of letters, at a time when it seemed that she was forced to write for relief to a burdened heart. To me they have been especially sweet and comforting, as they express so much of my own experience and hope, and if published they may be of comfort to many. Like her I have often felt, and do yet, that there is no one like me, so full of pride and vanity, and so ignorant of spiritual things, and so much of my time is spent in darkness, darkness that may be felt, and then I am so ready to run after the vanities of the world, and am so worldly minded, and give so little evidence that I have been with Jesus, and have learned of him any of the graces of the spirit. How little love shines forth in my conduct and conversation before the subjects of God's grace. In fact I often do feel that there is no love of God in me, but only hatred and strife. Why am I not more kind and forbearing, and why so ready to make a brother an offender for a word or a trifle?

I have thought, knowing as I do the character of our dear sister, that she is of a very humble and lovable disposition, loved and respected by all who know her, that the power of God's grace to humble and bring to naught all the goodliness of man, is in her wonderfully displayed, through her experience, thus proving the truth of the Scripture that no flesh should glory in his presence, and also that in the flesh, even of God's dear children, (apart from the Spirit) there dwells no good thing. I can well understand how the Spirit of God can reveal all kinds of sin and iniquity in a wretched creature like me, who feels that he is such a hateful being, but when a lovable character like the young sister whose experience is inclosed, is made to see herself in such a wretched condition as a sinner before a just and holy God, I am made to realize the truth of what is written, "That there is none that doeth good, no, not one," and that the hearts of all are deceitful and desperately wicked, and that none but God can know it, and when men talk of goodness in any one, it is God's goodness, or the controlling of his hand, that subdues our evil passions, the evil passions of even natural men, and brings out

the good qualities, but when God lays judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, he makes all the goodness of man to wither like the grass, and the hail of his justice sweeps away every refuge of lies under which men have endeavored to hide. I believe that even the children of God make lies their refuge many times. How often do they feel, as did this sister, If I do thus and so God will bless me for it? but the hail of God's judgment in sore trials and tribulations sweeps it away. I think sometimes of what is called "time salvation" being the result of man's own efforts, but I tell you, dear brethren, it is a refuge of lies, and the hail will, sooner or later, sweep it away. There is no salvation either for time or eternity, only the salvation of God, and even under the old covenant of works there was no salvation by the people. (Truth, brethren editors.) Men may talk as they like, and say that the nation of Israel had the power to serve God ceremonially, and that God expected it of them, but if we read the nineteenth verse of the last chapter of Joshua, we will find that Joshua distinctly told them that they could not serve God, and we find that their whole history confirms it. It was when in trouble that they called upon God for deliverance. God was not disappointed in Israel, for he told them before they came into the land that they were a stiffnecked and rebellious people, and Moses said to them by the spirit of prophecy, that after his death they should utterly corrupt themselves, and like the children of God to-day, they had no power in themselves to serve the Lord. No one can serve the Lord except as he leads and guides them by his Spirit, and if they think that they can, they are making lies their refuge, and are not like the apostle Paul, who said that the good that he would he did not, and the evil that he would not that he did. It may be said, Where do the exhortations to good works come in? My reply is this, that they come into the heart only with the grace of God, and that it is this grace in the working of its power that teaches us to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world. It teaches us, not tries to teach, let us remember. It is a sad mistake to think that God by his grace only tries to teach his people, and that sometimes it is a failure, and the teaching does not effect the purpose designed. Whenever and wherever God has left his people to themselves, they have invariably turned to evil and destruction. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help." Everything that is evil and wicked belongs to man; everything that is good belongs to God.

I had no intention of writing as I have, so please forgive me. I would like to write if I could, and if I could I would be proud of it I suppose.

Unworthily your brother for the truth's sake,

R. SCATES.

WALLACETOWN, Ontario, Canada, Feb. 9, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER SCATES:—I feel impressed to write and tell you some of my feelings, and I hope that you will pardon me for anything that you may see that is not according to truth as it is in Jesus. My mind is burdened at present with more than it seems possible for me to bear. O, what kind of a creature am I? When I go with the dear children of God to hear the truth preached in its purity, and with a hope of being edified and comforted, praying to the Lord to give me an understanding heart, and a humble mind,

which I feel that I need more than any one else in the world, how very disappointed I am when I hear nothing with any comfort, and doubts and darkness prevail. I enjoyed the preaching on Saturday, and quiet and peaceful my mind seemed turned away from self. On Sunday, and still more so on Monday, O, the anguish of soul, and darkness of heart, that I felt. I felt that I could hardly look up, so guilty, so proud and so condemned did I feel. I thought if I could only get away from the meeting I would never go again. My brother, What do you think of such an one? I want you to tell me plainly. After making a profession, and telling the church an experience, or what they thought was an experience, of what the Lord had done for me, and now for two meetings to feel that I was the only one unfit to belong to them, and unfit to partake of the Lord's supper, and I felt as though they all could see in my face that I had no right to belong there, and that they shunned me. O, how sad I felt. I could not feel angry or hurt, as I was so condemned in my own heart.

Dear brother, I have felt from a child that I was a guilty and condemned sinner, and when I would go to any place of amusement I could not enjoy myself as did others. I have told my sister when getting ready to go that I hated my life. This was eight years ago. About a year after father died, when my sisters and I were preparing for our spring meeting, I felt so terribly in my mind that I went to a room alone and took up the Bible and read from Job, nineteenth chapter, and felt that his case was just like mine, but when I read the twenty-fifth verse, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," I could not feel like him. I had no thought that all my exercises of mind were the result of the Spirit of God working in me, but thought it was all the imaginations of my own heart. I was in this state of mind from a child, but would be free from it at times. About four years ago I was feeling terribly burdened and cast down, and wondering why I was such a poor, wretched creature, when the words came, "Plucked as a brand from the burning," and they eased my burdened heart for a time, but soon after the words came, "Tried as gold is tried," and this, too, gave me comfort. But soon, like the restless sea, I was again tossed up and down. Some time after this, one night after going to bed (and I am sure I was not asleep, for I looked at the window to see,) it seemed as if the world was on fire, and I thought we were about to be burned up, when the bed upon which I lay seemed to be raised up, and the words came to my mind, "The flame I will quench, I only design thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine." This comforted and quieted me at that time, but as time went on my feelings were as the poet expresses it:

> "I am a stranger here below,
> And what I am 'tis hard to know."

About a year or more ago I felt that surely my troubles were not like those of a child of God, and yet I felt that it was not about worldly things that I was troubled. I began to think that it would lighten my burden to tell my exercises to the church, and so I talked to a dear christian about it, and told her that I desired to do something to get out of this wretched state of mind, and that the words would come to me, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." This encouraged me to go to the church, and tell my feelings. About two weeks before meet-

ing I was sitting thinking of my troubles, when the words came to my mind, "Why stand we in jeopardy every hour," and in a few moments after the words, "Awake to righteousness, and sin not." These words encouraged me to tell my mind to the church, but I was not able to go to that meeting, as you know, and then I thought that perhaps I was not what I ought to be, and that all was imagination. So I went to Aunt Sarah McColl's and told her how I felt, and we rejoiced together, and she was made glad to learn that my mind was exercised upon these things. I was most of the time in darkness, until the next quarterly meeting, and did not feel fit to mingle with the people of God, yet felt that I did not want it to pass without telling my mind to the church. You know, dear brother, of our conversation on our way to the church meeting, and when you told me to come forward, you will remember that I told you I was not fit, and was afraid that I should not come. But I was enabled to say a few words, and was received, as you know. I felt a peace that I cannot express, and was lifted above my sinful self, and for a few weeks felt joy and comfort, and when I would open my Bible to read it seemed there was a beauty in it there never was before. Shortly after this I was taken sick, and then I had such distress of soul. I had professed to be one of the Lord's people, but O, I was so sinful and not fit to die. I cannot say it was so much the fear of future punishment, but a dread of death itself, and of parting forever from those near and dear to me. But the words all through my sickness would come to me, "Not unto death." Before my sickness the words, "nigh unto death," were much on my mind. As you know, I was not baptized for some time after I was received. As the time of my baptism drew near, doubts and fears took hold upon me, and I thought, Surely it cannot be right, or I would not feel such awful depravity of heart, and I felt sure that I was not like one of God's children, but when the time did arrive, I must say it was a time of rejoicing. I felt such peace of mind at the water as they sang, "I'm not ashamed to own my Lord," and truly I could say, I was not ashamed if all the world were looking on. My thoughts were not on them. The quarterly meeting at Ekfred was shortly after, and I must say that I never enjoyed another meeting so well. The preaching was indeed food to my soul. I felt so lifted up above the world and worldly things that I lost sight of them for a time. But the two last quarterly meetings have not been so with me. O, I do not know what to make of myself sometimes; pride and vanity are my close companions, and I feel that all the dear people of God see it in my eyes. The poet says,

> "'Tis self, that legal thing and base,
> That keeps me from my rest;
> Me from myself let Christ release,
> And I shall soon be blessed."

All through the last quarterly meeting at Duart, the words, "A vessel of wrath, fitted to destruction," were on my mind, and it seemed to me that my very expression showed wrath. Sunday night I felt that I was no company for any one, and after I went to bed I think if I ever prayed I did then, that God would show mercy to me. While lying thinking of my wretched state the words, "Ye must be born again," came to my mind. This seemed to settle my case, and there seemed no room for doubt in my mind that all I had experienced was a delusion and but vain imagination. O, what misery my poor soul endured. I thought,

Well, if I do not stand up in the church meeting, I will write to brother Scates and ask him to have my name taken off the church book. Then my very heart ached for you, to think that you encouraged me to talk to the church, and then talked in my behalf, and now how badly you would feel to think that you had been deceived in me, as had all the rest of the dear people in the church. What I endured no one can know only those who have passed through the same experience. The next day I felt that the people shunned me, and did not want to say farewell to me, and yet I did not feel hurt or angry with them, neither could I shed a tear, but my heart felt like bursting with anguish. I did not know what dear Elder Durand would think of me. All eyes seemed upon me. I felt willing to have my name taken off the church book, but I thought, O, can it be that my name is not written in the Lamb's book of life, from the foundation of the world? I do feel to hope that I am one of that number, but the vanity and pride that is so close to me. I have never heard or read of one like me.

There was a woman's experience published about four years ago, that seemed a little like mine. I remember she said that she thought that she would go away from her home, to a far off country, and see if she could feel better in mind.

FEBRUARY 20.

Dear brother, I wrote the foregoing soon after the Duart meeting, when burdened with great trouble of mind. Perhaps it is too simple, but I will confide it to you. Do not show it to any one else, but please reply soon. A dear sister in the church was here and said to me, "You have all things of this world that you could wish, but do you set your mind on worldly things, and take pride in them? If so, perhaps your pride must be humbled." I did not feel at all hurt, but often think that I do not take the interest that I should in my home. I have felt like writing my experience to Elder Durand. I have written to you as to a brother, feeling that you will overlook all mistakes. I felt that I must write, as the awful burden that pressed me down to the earth forced me to do it. Now what do you think of such an one as I? I think, and have strong reasons for thinking, that I have never been enlightened or experienced a change of heart, yet I cannot question the peace of mind that I felt after telling my exercises of mind to the church, and at my baptism. One day I opened my Bible and read Job xxxiv. 26, 27, which seemed to describe my case, and to condemn me. Also, Isaiah xlv. 16, was another portion that condemned me. My heart and my flesh cry out, O God, for thee. I cannot tell what I am, and can only say with a dear christian, "Here I am, behold who will; sure I am a poor sinner still." I can say with Job, "Behold I am vile." "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." I fear sometimes that I am cast down, never to rise again. Dear brother, what makes me to be thus? I know that Christ has said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation," but mine seems an outside case. I am so vile, so destitute of any spiritual understanding, and since I came home from the meeting, as well as while there, I have felt almost destitute of natural understanding. O, I have felt if I could only go away where no one would know me. But it is self that I have to get away from to be at rest. It seems to me that I cannot go to another quarterly meeting feeling as I did at the last, and sit among the people of God.

MRS. JOHN McPHAIL.

[BROTHER Scates has forwarded other letters from this dear sister for publication, but as the one written above is lengthy, we have reserved the rest for a later number. We have no doubt that many of our readers will recognize the above narrative as the story of conflicts which are also familiar to them. At different times we have, as we trust, known something of this way of trial. It is a marked peculiarity of the christian experience, that each one feels that their's is an isolated case, and the most desperate of all, and to say as does sister McPhail, "I have never heard or read of any one like me." But we hope it is our great privilege to have fellowship for those who travel in this way, for this is the way the Lord leads his "little children." —ED.]

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., July 7, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send the two letters of sister Attie A. Curtis for publication in the SIGNS, because I think they express exercises of mind, desires of the Lord, and sentiments which will be read with comfort and profit by those of the scattered family of God who may see them. It will be remembered that between the time of writing the first letter and the second, her father passed away.

Yours in gospel fellowship,

SILAS H. DURAND.

BRUNSWICK, Maine, March 5, 1899.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—MY DEAR BROTHER:—When I receive a few lines from you I appreciate it very much, and always feel like taking my pen, and having a good long talk with you. In this last letter you have spoken of my letters being "good reading for the SIGNS." I wonder, my dear brother, if you realize how much you have brought me to the notice of the lovers of truth since you sent my letters to the SIGNS. The many letters I have received from almost every State, witnessing to the truth I expressed, have made me deeply realize it was the Lord's work. He surely sent you here with a sweet message to deliver me out of trouble, which could not in any way be called a natural trouble, for it concerned the Zion of our God, where I had been so happy many years. Never can I forget how sweet the joy of his salvation was when he restored it to me again, and how easy it has been to tell you about it. The works of our God are very wonderful, very mysterious, and past finding out. It is and has been such a comfort to me to just rest in his love. I enjoyed reading "In the clefts of the Rock," and hope your mind will be led to write often of the precious truth. Since my dear mother's happy release I have felt a great desire to boldly declare the reality there is in the religion of Jesus Christ. The power of God was so plainly manifested I want to mention that power every time I speak or write. I would like to say to every brother and sister, "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." Jesus came to save sinners, those who could not save themselves, and his salvation is for those who groan, being burdened; who mourn for sin, and cannot do the things they would; who walk in the valley, and are down in the depths, where the waves and billows go over them, where the sea weed is wrapped about their heads; those who feel they are in a solitary place, and reel to and fro and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits end; "no one else so sinful as I." How such ones are blessed forever in having this salvation "brought" to them. What a perfect sacrifice has been offered, justice satisfied, and now there is

no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, and we must remember it is the one who has been made to see his sinfulness that is in this safe place of refuge. This is the Lord's work, and it is marvelous in our eyes. The Lord is our strength and our song, and only the sinner taught of the Lord can sing this new song, "even praise unto God," because the Lord puts it in his mouth, and "the power of his might" enables them to sweetly sing the praises of the Most High. O, the power of God, who can tell it? The gospel which has been so sweetly eaten, when handed out to me by those called of God, is, the apostle tells us, "the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth." I have received letters from brother Vail and brother Badger, and they both tell the same story: "I feel to be the most sinful." I am hoping when I write to them that the Lord will enable me to speak confidently of the evidence they have of their sinfulness, is not their own work, but they have been taught of Jesus, "who taught as never man taught." We need not fear, for our God has all power in heaven and earth. We can come into no place where his power will fail. How good it is we do not have to look to ourselves for anything to trust in. All we need is treasured up in Jesus. Our cry will be "unto the Lord," and he will deliver us.

I intended to try and tell you how glad I was when you wrote to me, for I know every minute of your time is spent in the service of the Master, and I am glad to be in your mind, but my pen has followed my mind, and I have expressed but very little. Some other time the Lord may enable me to write more clearly of the precious truth he reveals unto me.

Father and I are well, and we desire to be made thankful for all the blessings bestowed upon us.

May God enable us to look unto him while traveling here, and make us trust in him so we cannot be moved.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

LAWRENCE, Mass., July 4, 1899.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I have been in my new home almost three weeks, and it is very pleasant here, and all do everything to make me happy and contented. I feel I should be very unkind to give way to my sorrowful feelings, and make them unhappy around me.

The last seven months seem like a troubled dream, and I could not have escaped the sad and lonely feelings, no matter where I had been. I surely know I have been upheld and sustained by the power of God. His grace has been sufficient for me. "I will fear no evil, for thou art with me." The future is all known to our God, so I need not fear whether length of days be given me, or death releases me from this life. When he enables me to trust in him I cannot be moved. He has been good to lead my mind into the truth, and my meditation has been sweet. I had the privilege of being present at the two meetings in June, at Bowdoinham, and although sad feelings could not all be laid aside, there was a comfort and consolation in being with those I love, and hearing the truth in its purity. Their expressions of love and sympathy I seemed to treasure up more carefully as I was going to be farther away from them. North Berwick is just about half way to Bowdoinham, so I am hoping I can get down there to meeting when I cannot go any farther. I shall miss my home I have had so many years

to invite the loved ones to, and where it was convenient for them to come, and it was such a pleasure to entertain them. But I must remember the goodness of the Lord to me all the days of my life, and I desire to thank him for past blessings, and be made to trust in him. This seems to be my place at present, and surely "He knoweth the way that I take," and when he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold. I hope he will lead my mind into the truth, and make me desire the company of my kindred in Christ, and that it will be his will for me to mingle with them often. There is one desire above all others, and that is to be made reconciled to the Lord's will, so in whatever state I am, therewith to be content. If it is his will that I shall not mingle with them as much as I have, I do not wish to act like a naughty, rebellious child, but be made to remember how richly he has blessed me in the past, and what precious seasons I have had with them when Jesus has been in our midst. Nothing in this world can ever give the sweet peace and joy which has filled my heart when Jesus has manifested himself unto me, and I have sat at the table he prepared before me in the presence of my enemies, when I have eaten his flesh and drank his blood with such sweet assurance that "my Beloved is mine, and I am his." No sin, no stain, but his precious blood can cleanse. I cannot seem to feel that the Lord has afflicted me in taking my parents, for he was good to spare them to me in such good health so many years, grant them a short sickness at the last, and was good to take them to himself to be "forever with the Lord." I do not mean that I do not mourn and feel their loss deeply, for I should be without natural affection if I did not, but it seems more of a blessing than an affliction. I am so glad he spared me to care for them, and enabled me to do everything for their comfort and pleasure, so I know if I had them back again there is not one thing more I could do for them than I did. It was a comfort to have them conscious until the last, and have them declare this precious truth they had been made to know in their early life, and see a gladness and willingness to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. I think, my dear brother, you will understand what I mean about its not being an affliction. Our God is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. I received your welcome letter before I left Brunswick, and it seemed to have lost none of its sweetness and comfort as I read it to-day, but filled my mind with the precious things I have been trying to write to you. My pure mind was stirred by way of remembrance. I was sorry to hear of Elder Bundy's death, for I have always had a hope I should meet him, and hear him preach. I knew from the way you have spoken of him that he was a dear brother to you.

I may spend the coming winter in Florida, and if I should, the time of my returning home would take in two or three associations, which would be very, very pleasant for me. If it is the Lord's will for me to have such a privilege he will surely bring it around in his own time and way.

In the last few weeks there has been a strong desire in my heart for the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. I know if it is the spirit of prayer given in my heart, the desire will be granted.

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Unuttered or expressed;
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast."

The same God watches over me here, and his faithfulness will not fail. He

will not change in his love towards me, but will make me know that my steps are all known to him, and nothing can come in my path contrary to his will.

I find it is hard work to close my letter, as I have not said all I would like to. I hope my mind will still be led into the truth, and no worldly cares or joys be allowed to come between me and the precious truth. I hope you will write me again soon, if you think you can survive another letter like this in length, and so little expressed. Love to all.

Your sister in hope of eternal life,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

MOUNTAINS AND VALLEYS.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST JESUS—BELOVED OF GOD:—I see by your last letter you dwell in various parts of our land, sometimes in wilderness places, where straits attend you, and tempted and tried by vexing cares, your sinfulness and Satan's darts, your soul becomes much discouraged because of the way. (Numbers xxi. 4.) But God knoweth your soul even there. (Hosea xiii. 5.) Jesus was acquainted with grief, and he does not disown his own in the waste places through which their pathway lies. He makes known himself to us in the midst of the dry, parched land, where fiery flying serpents and wild beasts abound. (Deut. viii. 15.) Christ was tempted, and he is able to succor them that are tempted, and as we muse upon this revelation of the Son of God, our wearied, stricken hearts incline unto him, the thought of his mercifulness invites our trust in him, and we feel to cast ourselves upon him, to lean upon our Beloved. (Yes, he is our Love, our arms of love, our warm desires would clasp him and say, O Savior, thou art mine.) As a weary sinner we lean upon him, on him alone, and the language of the burdened heart is, O, bring me forth from this vile, wretched land, or I shall die. Then supported by our Beloved we begin our ascent from the wilderness of temptation. We have thoughts given us, healing thoughts, quieting thoughts, thoughts that strengthen us, thoughts that impart hope, that pierce the clouds, that drive them from our sky, thoughts of Jesus, of his obedience, of his sufferings and blood, thoughts upon his unchanging love, thoughts upon his dear words, his precious promises, and in these precious thoughts (Psalm cxxxix. 17,) we come up from the wilderness for "a little space," (Ezra ix. 8,) leaning upon our Beloved. (Song viii. 5.) How came we to have a thought, such precious, comforting thoughts? It all proceeds from the love of the Comforter; he testifies of Jesus. It is the communion of the Holy Ghost. (2 Cor. xiii. 14.)

Well, dear sister, here a little while we roam upon the mountains of Israel; the mountains of God's electing love, his unchangeable mercy, so rich, so sweet, the mountains of Zion drop new wine. Here we have a feast of fat things, delicious fare, sweet, nourishing food so suited to poor sinners, and we say, Dear Savior, without thy sweet mercy I could not live here. And then perhaps in the communion of the Holy Ghost we so ascend above all fears and temptations, and the noise of Satan's accusations, that we mount to the hill of the Lord, and sing a few notes of grateful, triumphant praise in the heights of Zion, and with the beloved sons of God we flow to the goodness of the Lord. Ah yes, we cannot but feel we are in the stream with them, they are our people, and we are one in heart with the loved and ransomed of the Lord. We flow together in one life, in those things that pertain to the hidden man of

the heart. Yes, we feel to be in endearing oneness with Zion. Her mourning, sighs and tears are ours, and now a little while we taste the hope and comforts that are peculiar to the saved of the Lord, a people near unto him. (Psalm cxlviii. 14; Deut. iv. 7.) Ah, notwithstanding we are the least, the most insignificant ones, our hope through the Spirit abounds, and we dare hope that we are near unto the Lord. In relationships so near, so dear, that God is our Father, and we are his children. He is our God, and we are his people. Christ Jesus is our Husband and everlasting Friend. Truly this is a high place for a sinner like me to ascend, but on the wings of his love to my soul I have my moments when my heart is not rebuked when it says within me, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his."

"Christ and my soul are now entire,
I'm smoking flax, his love's the fire;
Our firm, united souls entwine;
Thus I am his, and he is mine.

From me he never will remove,
He's mine by faith, I'm his by love;
By oath and vow our hearts conjoin;
Thus I am his, and he is mine."

Our stay with the Lamb and his fair army upon Mount Zion, is very pleasant, for in the mount of the Lord so much is to be seen. (Gen. xxii. 14.) But though it is so blessed to dwell in the mount of the assurance of faith in Christ Jesus, yet there is knowledge to be gained, and very precious fruits to be gathered in the valley. (Song vi. 11.) It is true some of the valleys are very deep, so narrow, so shut in by exceeding high mountains on either hand, so little sunlight penetrates these deep ravines, yet even here there flows a stream of the compassion of our God. The presence of the Lord flows down these mountains, and in the dark, deep valley, though it be as the valley of the shadow of death unto us, the Lord is the water of life unto us. Even that life which is derived from him, his own divine life which Christ hath given us. We slake our thirst of him, his presence is the fountain of living waters to us, no matter how deep the vale through which we are passing. We are supported by the compassion of our merciful High Priest in the tiresome valley, and by faith we are enabled to say, "I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Some of the valleys are well watered, and are very pleasant. Here flourishes the Lily of the valley, our dear Redeemer, and here also the church in her spotless beauty thrives. It is true when we see her she is often surrounded with thorns, but they cannot choke her and smother her growth, or hide her surpassing beauty. Though mere professors reach their heads ever so high, though hypocrites shine in their hypocrisies, and environ believers in Jesus on every hand, they are but thorns, they cannot compare with the elect of God. The chosen of God put on, and by the gracious working of the Spirit in them are found arrayed, in bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering. Beautiful garments! The lily, the King's daughter, is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold. Her beauty is such as Christ, her Head and Husband, hath put upon her. (Ezek. xvi.) O, the beauty of poor sinners saved by grace, is the very loveliness of Jesus, which he hath put upon them. "Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Is he the One altogether lovely, and fairer than the children of men? so she is altogether lovely, the fairest among women. (Psalm xlv. 2; Song i. 8; v. 16.) You often, my dear sister, walk in the valley of humiliation. There is so much

felt and seen to humble us, and while humbled under our felt unlikeness to Christ we are sad, and in due season, under the gracious work of the Spirit in our souls, we are contrite before the Lord. When the Lord causes us to feel our vileness, ah, then we are bruised beneath its cruel weight. Sin's defilements bring grief to the heart of those who are born of the Spirit, and in this, as in other particulars, they are distinct from the rest of mankind. Like doves of the valleys they mourn. Smiting upon their breasts saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The cares attending our natural life, bereavements, temporal afflictions, all such things we have to walk in, and amidst such trials we are sometimes brought low. This you have in some degree found out. We learn in the valley how unsatisfying are all things pertaining to the earth, but being enabled to look up unto the God of our mercy we realize by faith that all the comforting, satisfying and glorifying realities, are found where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. The things that are eternal, brought to light in the gospel of Christ, are the river of his pleasures, (Psalm xxxvi. 8,) which refresh and make glad the city of God. In all these things that we have been together in, I feel there can be traced that way that those walk in who are led by the Spirit of God. If then we are included among the elect number of those who are led by the Spirit, what does this declare? They, saith the word, are the sons of God, (Romans viii. 14,) "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."

This is truly a glorious hope. May the consolations thereof be your portion, is my heart's desire.

I am, I hope, your brother and servant in the gospel,

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

BLAIR, Neb., July 26, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—When I received the following letter from dear sister Coddington I intended to send it to you right away, but it passed from my mind. To-night I was looking over my letters and came across it again. It did me so much good when I first received it, and again as I read it to-night. I am a poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all. I have read the SIGNS for forty-three years, and they are a great comfort to me. I like to read all of it, and especially the letters from Elder Durand, as I am acquainted with him. Love to all the dear people of God.

Your sister,

MRS. ALBERT PARKER.

APRIL 9, 1899.

DEAR SISTER PARKER:—I received your good letter yesterday. I am always glad to hear from you, as I am always in need of something to encourage and build me up. You always appear so hopeful and faithful in your writings. A feeling is with me that almost forbids me to attempt a reply to you, lest I be led to all the more expose my sinfulness, and thereby destroy what confidence you may have in me, for, Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? How often are we led to question the sincerity of our own experience, and to search our own heart as with a lighted candle, in the hope that one good seed at least may be found, which perchance may spring up and bear fruit. But alas, so much evil is concealed within, and at times shows itself so strongly to my own condemna-

tion, I conclude with Paul, "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." But why should we be discouraged, when we know that every scriptural expression relating to the warfare presents a double experience? This is calculated to strengthen the weak ones, and to build up the children in their most holy faith. This does not make them to be children, but it does feed, strengthen and nourish them. Christ's charge to Peter was, "Feed my sheep, feed my lambs." Then, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God."

What is life? "It is not all of life to live." My own sinfulness makes life burdensome to me, but sometimes I say I loathe it; "I would not live alway." "Life is but a vapor." Paul said, "I die daily." And again he said, "As dying, and behold we live." Do we bear about in our bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus, and are we delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that his life might be made manifest in us? Then happy are we, though we are killed all the day long. The death of the Savior was needful, nor was one drop of that precious blood shed in vain. He said to his disciples, "It is expedient for you that I go away. If I go not away, the Comforter will not come. If I go away I will send the Comforter, who will lead you into all truth." While his soul was being tried, how considerate we find him for the disciples. "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" The spirit indeed is ready, but the flesh is weak. And when their eyes were heavy that they could not behold the dreadful sight, he said, "Sleep on now, and take your rest." "The hour is come: behold the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners." Through all this he was not unmindful of his disciples. He comes to them and comforts them with sleep in his last hours, and upon the cross we hear him say to the dying thief, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." This dear sister, is all our hope, and all our salvation, that his love and mercy does extend to us, the chief of sinners. Though crucified with Christ, nevertheless we live.

Concerning salvation, it has been a long, dreary winter with me, on account of my short comings and sinfulness, yet amidst it all I have sometimes been glad when I have remembered that the sun shines alike on the just and the unjust, and that it was the sinner that the Son of God came to save. "He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." "By grace are we saved through faith." And faith is the gift of God. If it be a gift, then we do not labor for it, then it would be reckoned as a debt. Therefore it is by faith, that it might be by grace, that the promise might be sure to all the seed. "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." The Savior said, "All that the Father giveth unto me shall come unto me, and he that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." There are many things which he said in this connection concerning the completeness, and the time of the consummation of all things, as I have understood them, but it has not been my privilege to be able to commit to paper these things with the same satisfaction as has been given me in seeing them.

I hope that I have not tired you with my scribble. I thought when I sat down to write, that I had many things to say

which would interest you, but I can never say anything as I want to. I hope that you will pardon this miserable failure. O, sister Parker, Why is it that I am so weak in faith, when I know so well that God is good to Israel? and he will withhold no good thing from them that love him. My every day prayer is that I may be reconciled to his will, and that he will guide me by his counsel. O that I might at all times lean upon his everlasting arms and say, He is my strength, and my salvation, and my shield. But O, I am so prone to sin, so forgetful of all his mercies toward me, who am so little worthy of any good thing from his hand.

I would like to visit sister McGarland. I feel so sorry for them, and yet there is a lesson to learn from her in seeing her so resigned to her situation; what a blessing it is. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." I do feel sometimes to envy such as she is. God bless her! Is it a sin to envy such as she? Surely she is not so great a sinner as I am, and I have felt to say, nor has she a greater Savior. Give my love and fellowship to all the brotherhood. May God bless you. Now good bye.

Your unworthy sister,

ABBIE CODDINGTON.

OPELIKA, Ala., August 24, 1899.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—Sister Lizzie Gregory, of Andersonville, Ga., asks my views upon Matthew vi. 33, through the SIGNS: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

This is found in the sermon on the mount, and they are the words of the Lord Jesus, and are therefore full of meaning. They were spoken to the apostles, and are needful instruction. The words are still to believers and the saints of God, and to all those who have not fully found the kingdom, in all its infinite perfection. Until we thus find it there will be a seeking, a desiring, and an asking about these things. But to my mind the word "first," seems to be a sort of key to the text. The Savior teaches us by this word "first," that the kingdom and the righteousness of God are paramount to everything else. It is strictly first, and more important than all things besides. When Jesus called one, and he said, Let me go first and bury my father, Jesus did not excuse him, but said, Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. The true desire of the true subject of the kingdom of God is this kingdom. The people who were carried captive into Babylon said, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning," &c. The church, the cause of Christ, and this kingdom, should be first and before all else. It is more important than all else. Mary did this when she sat at the feet of Jesus to hear his words; she neglected her household affairs to look after the kingdom, and the things of the kingdom. When we see professed followers of Jesus engrossed with the world, and the things of the world, and the cares of this life, and thinking more of themselves and their families, and their property, than they do of the church, and their conduct will always show it, you may rest assured that they are not seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. When we see brethren completely absorbed in politics, we may know that they are after the kingdoms of this world and its wickedness, rather than the kingdom of God. There are so many ways to show the want of faith among professors of religion; many of them, alas, are after

riches and wealth, and are careless about the things of Christ. They are then looking at the things that are seen, and not to the unseen things; they are then laying up treasures upon this earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. All this conduct stands in contrast with the teaching of this text. This text teaches the same as the words, "Strive to enter into the strait gate, for narrow is the way, and strait is the gate which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it, because broad is the way and wide is the gate that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat." It comprehends the true obligation of every heaven-born soul to show that he is called from death unto life, and to exhibit it by setting our hearts on things above, and not on things on the earth. If we be risen with Christ, we are to seek the things which are above, where Jesus sitteth at the right hand of God. It means all this, and embodies the principal object of a christian life. It teaches us that it is better, far better, to find the heavenly things, and lose the natural, than to find all carnal things, and lose sight of the spiritual. The Lord help us to lay hold upon eternal life, that better life, that upper life, the real life, and show forth his praise.

Yours in hope,

WM. LIVELY.

[It has been said that believers in sovereign grace do not believe in or use exhortation. All who know brother Lively, know that he believes in grace, and nothing but grace, in the salvation of the sinner, whether here or hereafter, and yet he sees no inconsistency in using exhortation notwithstanding. We certainly do believe in all exhortation to live as becometh those called of God, and this they should do, not for reward, but of a willing mind, with a heart that loves the service, and that finds it a great reward to be able to love and serve God. To this we have always desired to attain, and when we have detected some selfish hope of reward, or some slavish fear of punishment, we have found nothing but that which has made us ashamed, and filled us with confusion of face. It has been at such times a great grief that our motives should be so unworthy of grace, and of the God of grace. Rewards truly come to the believer, but they come in such a way that he knows that they are rewards of grace, and not of debt. We dislike to see things said by Old School Baptists that sound like appealing to a hope of reward of debt, and not of grace. —Ed.]

Alexandria, Va., May, 1899.

Dear Brethren Beebe and Chick:—I will present a few thoughts as they have been presented to my mind upon the words of Jesus in regard to the new birth. What I shall present seems to me experimentally true in the spiritual experience. The apostles testified of the things that they had seen and heard. They testified of the things of the kingdom as they were experimentally taught by the Spirit of God. We who are believers in the doctrine of salvation by grace through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, are willing to accept the words of Jesus as the doctrine which we believe, without any addition of our own. The subject upon my mind is the spiritual birth, as recorded in the third chapter of John. We there find the following narrative: "There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: the same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that

thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus said unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

We have also in the same chapter the narrative of the woman of Samaria who met Jesus at the well. In their conversation Jesus answered and said unto her, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Jesus always spoke in parables, and used natural figures to set forth spiritual things. In this case he used the water to represent the gifts of the Spirit, to men, the same as when he said to Nicodemus, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. Natural water is one of the elements which is indispensable to the life of man. Without water all creation would wither and die. Therefore water as a substance forms all plants, and ministers life to all living things. It is just so in spiritual things, the water of life which Jesus gives, brings forth the seed which is sown in the heavenly kingdom. If that spiritual water be given to a man, and he drinks it, it will be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life. The reason is that the giver is God himself, who has all power in heaven and in earth, and none can resist his will. The man to whom this water is given, is a chosen vessel of mercy, in whom the water of life given him by Jesus brings forth spiritual seed. Therefore the man is born again. In the man are two separate and distinct lives, one natural, and the other spiritual, and both dwelling in one body, each one having its own separate and distinct nature, the first natural, the second spiritual. The birth develops the nature which has been conceived in the body, and the child will now manifest what manner of spirit he is of, as he matures in age.

Jesus in another parable says, The strong man armed keepeth his palace. * * * But when a stronger than he enters he binds the strong man, and taketh away his armor in which he trusted, and spoils his goods. Just so in the heavenly birth. The Adamic man keepeth his palace and his goods in peace, but when Jesus desires the palace for a dwelling-place, he binds the old man, and spoils his goods, making now two men in the palace. Another parable Jesus uses to illustrate the kingdom of heaven, the leaven which a woman hid in three measures of meal. My view is, that the three measures of meal represents the natural man. This is only my view. A man is made up of three distinct parts, according to the testimony of the apostle, body, soul and spirit. In this parable instead of the water which Jesus gives unto the man, we have the leaven hid in three measures of meal. Here also we have the same truth set forth which is recorded

in the stronger man binding the strong man, for the leaven goes to work in the man. It reaches every avenue of the man's being, until the whole is leavened. The Adamic man is now a subject of adoption into the household of faith, or the kingdom of heaven. By nature he had no inheritance there, but having passed through the experience of the work of God in his heart, he becomes meet for the Master's use. Jesus says, "Except ye eat my flesh, and drink my blood, ye have no life in you." The bread that ye eat, is his flesh, and the water that ye drink is his blood. This water, he says, "Shall be in you a well of water springing up into everlasting life." This is the food upon which the followers of Jesus live. It is that spiritual bread, of which if a man eat he shall live forever. There is no death for the spiritual man, because he is born again, not of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. How can he die? It is God that has justified him and given him this life. The Adamic man will die, for this is the decree of God. Yet having drunken of the water of life, and having eaten of the leaven of the sufferings of Christ, who bore his sins in his own body upon the tree of the cross, the Adamic man must be raised from the dead, in the image of his Redeemer. And it will not be in a natural body, but a spiritual body, for God has said so. "I will ransom them from the grave, I will redeem them from death." Jesus was the pattern of all his saints. He was, like them, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and like them he died, and his body was laid in the grave, but God raised it up again that it should not see corruption, because he was without sin. But while we shall see corruption, because we are sinners, yet the water and the leaven have sanctified the body, and set it apart as a relic of his love. And when he shall come to make up his jewels it shall not be lost, but will be gathered as wheat into the garner. The straw and the chaff will go back to the earth, but the man will arise in newness of life, freed from sin, death, hell and the grave. What a glorious doctrine to contemplate. It is the joy of them who believe it, and their meat and their drink, in this low ground of sorrow.

Dear brethren, I have sketched over this subject as my mind has been led. It is seldom that I feel like writing, but there seemed to be a beauty in this subject that made it pleasant to talk about. When you get short of matter to fill up the paper, if you think it proper to publish it you may do so. When I began I only intended to write you a private letter in the way of personal correspondence, upon the much mooted question of the new birth.

Affectionately,

JOSEPH BRODERS.

PURDY, Indian Ter., May 24, 1899.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—My mind has been so clouded of late that it has seemed that I have had no life about me in a spiritual sense, until a few days back, when the SIGNS for May 15th came to hand. In it I saw an editorial entitled, "Our sins." My dear brother, I would not in any way puff you up, but I do believe that the Lord gave you every word that you penned in that editorial, and I further believe that the Lord prepared my heart for receiving the same. If you only knew how poor and destitute I am, in the way of comfort, and how I am made to mourn on account of darkness, you could but shudder; yet I am sometimes made glad, and that is when my blessed Savior visits me. But I

feel that I am shut up in prison most of the time. When I read your editorial I could not keep the tears from flowing from my eyes. I thought, here is one poor soul who sees things as I do. As said before, I believe that the Lord prepared my heart to understand as it was read to me. O, the comfort that it brings to my tried and wearied soul. My brother, I have had in the last seven months enough to endure; it has been almost more than I could bear. If the blessed Master had not held me up I should have been cast down forever. On the second of last September I lost a son by death, who was sick but two days. On January 3d, my companion died, and left me with five little children, and on the eighteenth of the month we all took the measles, and on the sixth I lost a daughter. I myself became very low, and am not able to sit up all day at this writing. Now, although all this has happened to me, yet I have been able to say, "Thy will be done, O God." I feel to thank my heavenly Master that it has been so. I feel that I have deserved it all, else I would not have received it; and what is it compared to the suffering which the blessed Savior endured for me, a poor sinner? I do not murmur at the stroke, but O, how it grieves me to see how deceitful my heart is.

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

I have no one to converse with upon the love of Jesus. All, or most of the people in this country, are professed christians, but there is not one to talk with me of the blessed Jesus. I had the editorial (our sins) read to me by my youngest sister, at my bedside, and there were several Missionaries sitting around me, to hear it read. As my sister began to read, I began to fill up with joy, but to my surprise there was not one who stayed to hear it finished; they all got up and left the house. How terrible the thought that entered my mind: Do they not see what the love of Jesus is? Surely not. I have not heard a sermon in three years the second Sunday in next July, and have in that time seen but one old brother, and three sisters, so you must know that my road is a lonely one. But the Lord does visit me once in awhile, and some good brother or sister will write to me now and then, which, with the SIGNS, keeps me from losing sight of my hope in the Savior. Elder P. H. James, of Arkansas, has comforted me mightily when I have been cast down in despair and darkness. I have also found at times great comfort from reading after Elder A. J. Gilbreath, of Oklahoma, and from Elder Jones, of Mount Vernon, Texas, and a sister at Chargress, Ind. Ter., who is a bold soldier in defense of the truth. It seems to me sometimes that she does write the best sermons that I ever read. She is alone; all her family are against the Old School Baptists. We used to go seventy or eighty miles to hear preaching. O, how I do love to meet the dear ones of the Master's house; it is a feast to my soul. It would be a feast to me to meet one now who had any travel of mind in the kingdom. I do not hear or see anything here but good works, Sunday Schools, or something similar. They all think hard of me because I will not allow my children to join them in their Sunday Schools. I would rather they would go to a dance, because a dance does not profess to be anything but worldly, but a Sunday School is of the devil, for the devil is a mocker, and that is what a Sunday School does; it makes a mock of true worship.

I will add nothing more. I hope that I am your brother in the best of bonds,

WM. A. BURNS.

[BROTHER Burns has our heartfelt sympathy in all his sore trials. The God in whom he has trusted has not failed him. As his days so has his strength been. It will be so in the future trials of his life. We fully indorse his course in keeping his children from Sunday Schools. There are all reasons why Old School Baptists should not allow their children to attend such places, and there is absolutely no reason that will justify sending their children to be taught by the deadly enemies of truth. Many parents have lived to rue the day when they yielded to the temptation and allowed their children to attend the Sunday Schools of their enemies, and the enemies of their Lord.—ED.]

ARKVILLE, N. Y., Oct. 13, 1899

BROTHER BENTON L. BEEBE:—Inclosed you will find two dollars for renewal of my subscription to the SIGNS. I do not feel as though I could do without them. I have been a reader of them for fifty years, and a subscriber for about forty years, and in that time I have seen many things among the Old School Baptists that has grieved me, and a few things in the SIGNS that I did not like, but in the main I am satisfied with the SIGNS, and expect to take them as long as I live, if they continue in the future as they have in the past. I have taken other Baptist papers, but I like the SIGNS the best.

I have never had a desire to write for publication, for I know that others are better able, but often when I have read the communications of others, I have had a great desire to write to them, but a feeling of littleness and unworthiness has kept me from it.

I have been greatly grieved at the indifference of your delinquent subscribers. If the love of God dwells in their heart, how can they be so careless? If a brother or sister does not want to take the SIGNS, that is all right, but if they take them they should pay for them; common honesty would do that, let alone brotherly love. I do not wish to hurt the feelings of a brother; I am a plain spoken man, and sometimes speak too quick, but I feel sorry for you, and think you are more patient than I could be.

But I will close as I do not wish to scold, though sometimes I feel like it.

Your brother, though unworthy to call you brother,

JOHN A. MORSE.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

PLEASE BE SURE

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur. It is a good plan to inclose in the letter, one of the little pink slips containing the name, taken either from the margin of the paper, or from the wrapper in which the paper comes.

By observing the above instructions our subscribers will enable us to more conveniently keep their accounts.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1899.

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EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

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GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ROMANS IX. 14.

"WHAT shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid."

Perhaps no portion of the word has seemed more offensive to Arminians of all grades and classes than has this ninth chapter of Romans. Indeed, it must appear hateful to all who deny the right of Jehovah to do with all his creatures as he will, and to all who claim salvation through human merit. Were it not that the human heart has been the same in all ages, and the objections of men to grace have always been the same, we would say that Paul, when he wrote this chapter, must have looked forward, and have seen the thoughts of natural men in this and in all past ages since his day. But, as human nature has not changed, we know that in his own day he met with the same opposition to the doctrine of the divine sovereignty in the creation of men, in appointing their bounds, and in ordering their steps, and in the election of some to life and salvation, and the rejection of others, and in their condemnation to final destruction and endless punishment. Certainly he in this chapter does meet and stamp with the seal of falsehood, all the objections of men to these solemn truths, and so long as the inspired words remain, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" will those who truly believe shrink from any thought which would imply any question of his right to do with all his creatures as he will. Paul had heard, and he knew that men would continue to urge the objection named here, to the doctrine of the divine sovereignty, and so he says, "Is their unrighteousness with God?" and then, with the strongest language possible to be used, he denies that this doctrine is subject to any such conclusion. We are to learn therefore from this language that if any plainly stated truth of the Scriptures seems to us to imply unrighteousness with God, our feeble reason is at fault, and not the doctrine itself. What a world of blasphemy and impiety has been uttered by word of mouth and by the pen, in all past ages, and in our own time, against the clearly stated truths of this chapter. Men have even gone so far as to say that this chapter ought not to have a place in the Scriptures, and the very mildest form of opposition from the carnal heart has shown itself in some, who have said when they could not gainsay what Paul here said and intended, "Well, I do not understand it." If by this they mean that they do not understand the meaning of the language, we would reply that the language is just as plainly written as is the language of any other portion of the word of God. There is no more difficulty in learning the meaning of this chapter than there is with regard to any other part of the Bible. The literal word is as plainly written as any other Scripture, and the spiritual force and meaning of this is also just as apparent as any other. The objection, "I cannot understand it," has generally when we have heard it used, simply covered a disposition to oppose the truth of

the chapter itself. The truth is, the teachings of the Scriptures are in general hateful to the natural mind. It is the declaration, They are foolishness to the carnal mind. There is not a sentiment of the word but what seems foolish to men; total depravity, or that men are dead in sin; their just condemnation, so that all might have been left to perish without remedy, and no injustice done to any one; the doctrine of personal election of certain individuals of Adam's race to eternal life, while all others are passed by and left to perish in their sins; the doctrine of the atonement for the elect, by Jesus Christ, so that nothing is left for them to do to secure salvation and final glory; the doctrine that these elect sinners are effectually called by grace, without the use of human means, because to give life to the dead must ever be the work of the life-giving Spirit of God; the doctrine that such called vessels of mercy are then kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation to the last; the doctrine that in this present life they can only work out their salvation as God has first wrought within them, and that they cannot so sin as to incur the danger of eternal death; all these, and other principles of the doctrine of grace, always have, and always will, seem hateful to unrenewed men, because they are thus abased, and the grace and power and sovereignty of God is exalted. And thus the teaching of this chapter that the rest of mankind are also in the hand of God, who works among them as the potter works in his clay, to fashion it as he pleases, is opposed by those who are unreconciled to God.

The teaching of this chapter is subject to careful investigation by all who read. It, like all other Scriptures, should be carefully read and considered, with prayer to God to show us its meaning, but when the plain letter is read and understood, only opposers of God will reject its teachings. The teachings of this chapter do not stand out as something new and strange, or that are not found in other portions of the word. They who would reject the doctrine of this chapter must also make up their minds to reject the Scriptures in general, and especially those which present the omnipotence, omnipresence and omniscience of God, and those which teach his foreknowledge and unchangeability, and that all things were made by him. These principles of the doctrine of God our Savior all stand inseparably connected with the teaching of this chapter, and the text which stands at the head of this editorial says, that in all these things there is no room to say that there is unrighteousness with God. Men with their false reasonings, which set themselves in opposition to the word, shall ever be found liars, and God will be true. May we sit at the feet of that God who gave his apostle to write such things, and humbly ask his mind as we read each sentence. We have felt to write about this chapter of late more than ever before, because there has seemed to be a disposition among some of our own brethren to pass its lessons by. If any say that they cannot reconcile the teachings of this chapter with man's accountability to God, and that therefore they prefer to let it alone, we can only reply that Paul did not attempt to reason out the harmony between the two, but when men said, If what you teach be true, Why doth he find fault? for who hath resisted his will, he simply replied that such men were replying against God, who had revealed this truth to him by the Spirit, and not against him. Paul himself taught that man was held to be blameworthy

before God for his transgressions, and yet taught that the divine purpose, sovereignty and wisdom, was to be seen even in the sins of men. We have not felt therefore afraid to believe and teach both these truths. We have never attempted to reconcile them, and have felt that there was good reason for not making the attempt. We have felt that if the inspired Paul did not have a mind to show how reason could come to see a harmony between these things, we at least were not called upon to do any more than just to believe them as God had revealed them.

Now let us as briefly and plainly as possible state the teaching of this chapter.

First, verse eleven, we have the statement of the doctrine of election, and that without regard to any human works. Contrary to nature, God chose Jacob the younger to receive the blessing, rather than Esau. This was done before the children were born, and before they therefore could have done any good or evil. Jacob was not chosen because he had done good, neither was Esau rejected because he had done evil. Furthermore, had the election depended, as some teach, upon foreseen good and evil works of each, it would seem from what we read of the lives and characters of the two men, as they appear upon the record, that Esau would have been chosen, and Jacob rejected. But we need not speculate upon this matter, the plain statement is, that the choice of Jacob was not upon the ground of foreseen good works. This choice was personal in the first place, and then it extended to the nations which should descend from them, as we learn from Malachi i. 2, 3. And now Paul uses it to present the doctrine of election to eternal life and glory. In this God is not unrighteous, according to Paul. As the choice of Jacob, rather than Esau, was before either had done good or evil, so also was the choice of God of men to salvation in eternity before any man had done any good or any evil. It is simply the purpose of God according to election, that some should be saved out of the mass of mankind, and others passed by. This is the plain language of verses eleven, twelve and thirteen. This is also enforced by verses fifteen and sixteen. In these verses Paul quotes from the writings of Moses, who records God's own words, saying that he has mercy and compassion upon whom he will. Thus he puts the exhibition of mercy and grace upon the absolute will of God, without regard to any creature's good or bad works. It is not because a man has willed to be saved, or run in the way of righteousness, that God has chosen him to salvation, but rather the teaching is that his willingness to be saved, and to run in the way of righteousness, is but the fruit of salvation, rather than its cause, and that God's mercy and compassion is the cause of these things, rather than the result of them.

As Paul teaches in Ephesians, men are chosen unto good works, instead of because of them. Thus Jacob was raised up that mercy and compassion might appear in him, while Esau was raised up that justice and God's indignation against sin and sinners might appear in him. This last truth is enforced by a reference to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. Paul quotes from Exodus ix. 14; xiv. 17, and says that the Scriptures declare that God had raised up Pharaoh for the very purpose which was accomplished in him, viz: to show forth the power of God, and to declare his name through all the earth. Paul presents this language concerning Pharaoh, in order to show that what he had stated concerning Esau was accord-

ing to the Scriptures, which they all acknowledged to be true, and which they all professed to reverence. So far as the doctrine contained in this language is concerned, it does not matter whether the raising up of Pharaoh means his birth into the world, or his being placed upon the throne of Egypt. The point of the question is, that it was for this determinate purpose that Pharaoh was appointed. That this is the meaning of the words in verse seventeen, is shown in verse eighteen, where Paul repeats again the words of verse fifteen, I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy, and whom I will I harden. The doctrine is not only that God has mercy upon some, but also that he hardens others. Let this hardening be in whatsoever manner it may, still the language is that "God hardens men." Thus Pharaoh was hardened. Our own belief is, that men are hardened by the withdrawal of God's judgments from them, and leaving them to the dictates of their own fallen hearts. But to withdraw his judgments is as much an act of purpose as is anything else. At all events, it is of such a sort that when the doctrine is stated, at once unregenerate men begin to cavil, and to reply against God. Let the sovereignty of God in hardening some men, while he has compassion upon others, be stated in any manner that it may, still it remains that it is of such a kind as to look hateful and unjust to carnal minds. Any interpretation of the language under consideration which would make the doctrine look pleasing to natural minds, is necessarily a false one. For then men would be pleased with it, and would not say what Paul proceeds to present.

To-day, as then, men say, "If this be true, Why does God find fault? Who hath resisted his will, if your doctrine be true?" The same things are said to-day in opposition to the predestination of God. One would think that Paul's stern condemnation of such objectors, in the next verse, would silence all who have any reverence for the truth, and any desire to bow before God as loyal and obedient subjects. "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" The point now is, that Paul says that the spirit which urges the above objection is a spirit not of humble inquiry, not of one who is willing to hear what God will say, and then at once reverently accept it, but of one who is a caviler, and who is not reconciled to God at all. God always hears those who come asking wisdom from him; but here is a question asked, not for information concerning God and his ways, but to confound a doctrine which he has by his inspired apostle stated. Let it be ours to accept every word of God, even though our reason must be crucified in its acceptance. Let us not forget that our reason is not "right reason," but that it is fallen, perverted and depraved, as well as every other faculty of our being. God's word is true, and our reason a liar, when it opposes his word. How familiar the above objection sounds in our ears, we have been hearing it ever since we began to know the truth. It does not disturb us to hear it from open enemies of grace, election and predestination, but it does greatly disturb us when we hear it from the lips of those who know the grace of God in truth. Let the motive of the objection be what it may, Paul says it is a replying against God. It is a denial that he has a right to do with his creatures as he will. One may urge the objection because he would deny the divine sover-

eignty; another may urge the objection because he would deny man's accountability. One would say, God's predestination of men to some evil thing destroys the accountability of man in that thing, and therefore predestination cannot be true. Another says from the same premises, Man cannot be accountable to God. In either case it is a replying against God, according to the apostle. The fact is, let man cavil as he will, both things are true. God has raised up all men as he did Pharaoh for a certain purpose, and yet though this be true, man is justly accountable to God. If any man objects to this double truth, let us appeal to Paul's language, "Who art thou that repliest against God?" What right have we to say in any event, Why hast thou made us to be as we are? It is becoming that we should keep silence before the Lord when he speaks.

Paul uses the figure of the potter and the clay, and the vessels formed from the clay. This he also quotes from the prophet Jeremiah xviii. 6. A careful reading of this chapter will show that the God of Israel there, is showing his divine sovereignty, and his power to do as he will with the nation of Israel. When he sends forth his decree to build or to destroy a nation there are none who can stay his hand. Nations are as pliant in his hand as the clay is in the hand of the potter.

The word "power," as Paul uses it here, signifies what we mean by the word "right." That is, God has a right to do as he will with the people that he has made. It is his right to show mercy, and it is his right to harden the heart of men already sinful, and enemies to him by wicked works. This seems to us to be the simple teaching of this portion of the word.

We do not think that we have at all perverted the simple testimony of the apostle in this chapter. It has not been our object to do more than simply to call out the force and meaning of this portion of the word. Many objections may be urged, as they have been in the past, but no objections can avail, unless it can be shown that we have misinterpreted these words themselves. Any objection that avails anything must be confined to these words, and show that their plain and simple meaning is not what appears on the surface of them. In all the past we have not heard any objector undertake to show that these words would bear any other interpretation than what we have here glanced at. All with whom we have conversed, who objected to this doctrine, have done so upon the ground that it did not seem to them consistent with their ideas of right and justice, but this is but an appeal to carnal reason, and not to the plain word of God. Let us come to this, and let us believe what is here written, regardless of what may appear consistent and reasonable to us. The one thing needful is to ascertain just what the Scriptures do teach, and then submit ourselves to their teaching. The teaching of this chapter is that God raised up Pharaoh to do the very things which he did do, and yet condemned him for doing them, and God is not unrighteous in this. Thus he raises up all other men to do what they do, and yet he condemns men for what they do, and he is not unrighteous in so doing. The man who says he is, replies against God. "Man resists God's will in the act of doing his will," is what Paul teaches concerning Pharaoh. Human reason says it cannot be so, but God says by the pen of Paul, that it is so.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

LUKE XIV. 26.

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

Much complaint is made in our day against our Old School Baptist ministers preaching a doctrine which is discouraging to sinners, and calculated to repulse those who are religiously inclined; and we are very justly charged with being behind the times in our doctrine, and especially in our manner of preaching to sinners. We are enabled, by the faithful record of inspired truth, to ascertain our exact whereabouts, and find that we are full eighteen hundred years behind the speculative theories of the new divinity schools. When a vast assemblage pressed to hear Christ, on one occasion, he retired to the mountains, and there delivered to his disciples alone that memorable sermon on the Mount. On another occasion, when one volunteered to become his constant follower, he informed him that the foxes had holes, and the birds had nests, but the Son of man had not where to lay his head. How discouraging!

On another occasion, when preaching to the people from a passage in Isaiah, which he declared was that day fulfilled in their ears; as soon as the assembly began to feel deeply interested in his preaching, and to wonder at the gracious words that he uttered, instead of seizing upon so favorable an opportunity to secure their good opinion of him, he referred them to some instances of the special sovereignty of God in his distinguishing favor to Naaman, the Syrian, and to the widow of Sarepta, when all the lepers and widows of Israel were passed by without favor. He certainly knew that this would fill the whole assembly with wrath, which it did, and they rose up and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon the city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. The connection of our text shows that on this occasion was presented another most favorable opportunity, speaking after the manner of the new school, to greatly increase the company of his disciples, but instead of using it for that purpose, when a great company came out to him, he turned and said to them, in the language of our text, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and his mother," &c., "he cannot be my disciple." This was truly discouraging to them. How little do men seem to know that our Lord had and still has power over all flesh, to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. (John xvii. 2.)

But as we were desired to give our understanding of the meaning of this text, we will proceed to do so in as brief a manner as possible.

Whatever obscurity may seem to involve the words of our text, we may safely conclude that the hatred of parents and other relatives, does not mean to conflict with the express requisition of the law to love and honor our father and our mother, or the doctrine taught by Paul, that as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, even so ought men to love their own wives. The relative obligations of parents and children, husbands and wives, and masters and servants, in all cases bind them to love and not hate one another. And Paul, when describing the excessive wickedness of the last days, speaks, among other things, of men being without natural affection, as the very extreme of depravity and wickedness. So

far was our Lord Jesus Christ from encouraging that kind of hatred, he commanded his disciples to love even their enemies. His gospel is a gospel of peace on earth and good will towards men. But still there is a sense in which all who are truly disciples of our Lord and Master, do hate father, mother, wife and children, and their own lives also; and that is the same sense in which they hate the world. For if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

This hatred of kindred is not a malicious hatred, but a hatred perfectly compatible with the strictest injunctions to love all, both friends and enemies, to do good to them that despitefully use and persecute us. However paradoxical this may seem, when viewed only in the light of human reason, every true disciple of Christ will find in their own experience, in what they feel, and the emotions of their hearts, that while they tenderly love their parents, wives, children, and their own lives, as the gifts and blessings which God has bestowed, they hate that earthly, depraved, sinful nature that they find in father, mother, wife and child, and also, and more abundantly, they find and hate it in themselves. This is what occasions the warfare in all the saints. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit; and the flesh warreth against the Spirit, and the Spirit warreth against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other. The spirit which is born of the Spirit is the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. But the flesh which is born of the flesh is depraved, earthly, sensual and devilish. If, therefore, the incorruptible seed be implanted in us, it comes in competition with our human depravity, and there is unavoidably a conflict. That life which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, can no more love the corruptions of that life which was given us in the earthly Adam, after it is implanted in us, than before it was so implanted in us. That spiritual life is after God, and God hates sin; hence, when this is implanted in us, we possess in our heart a principle that hates the flesh, because of its pollution and opposition to all that is pure and holy, spiritual and heavenly; not only that of our own individual bodies, but all flesh, father, mother, wife and offspring.

This hatred is manifested in the saints by their loathing and abhorring themselves in dust and ashes. And it makes them at times long and pray to be delivered from the body of this death. This being the case with all who are born of God, they are all so far qualified to be disciples of Christ, but without that heavenly birth, which brings forth in us this new and spiritual life, which hates the flesh, crucifies it with its affections and lusts, none can be truly Christ's disciples. That new and spiritual birth is indispensable to discipleship.

This birth manifests the subjects of it as the children of God and heirs of immortal glory. But discipleship signifies not only that we are born of God, but also that we are taught and led by his Spirit, that we are not only children, but obedient children. Hence Christ adds, "And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., February 15, 1857.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denotes the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Elders and messengers of the Lexington Association, in session with the church of Lexington, October 4th and 5th, 1899, to the churches composing the same, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—According to former custom we send you our annual epistle of love and fellowship. Through the goodness and mercy of God we are still spared a name, and rejoice that union and fellowship still exist among the churches. We desire to exhort you to be watchful over each other in the spirit of humility and brotherly love. Paul writes to the Colossian brethren, As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Let us not be found having on our own righteousness, but be clothed with the righteousness of him who has redeemed, washed and cleansed us with his own blood. Self-examination is safe and profitable. By it we are called to our first exercises when we were quickened from death to life, and to behold the kingdom of heaven, and given knowledge of sin and God's power. You were made to call upon him for mercy, and made to hope in his righteousness with childlike simplicity, to know and do his will; to you he was all in all. To follow him and to walk in his ordinances was your chief desire; you searched his word with delight; your meditations upon heaven, and heavenly things, were sweet; you then felt to say with David, "For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Your hope and trust was all in him. How easy it was to get to the meetings of the church, while a feeling of love and forbearance for the brotherhood filled your mind. To hear God's name extolled and exalted was your rejoicing. If you so received Christ Jesus the Lord, should you not so continue to walk in him? Brethren, let us not be found doubting his word. Have you not been taught in your experience to know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose? Has his word not been fulfilled? Has he not given grace equal to your day? You cannot experience one more conflict or trial than he endured for you. "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them."—Isaiah lxiii. 9. Then it is not possible that you will have to experience one more trial than he has endured for you. Christ said to his disciples, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake."—Matt. v. 11. For his bride's (the church) sake he endured all things, and suffered all things, even death. By his atonement you were freed from under the power of sin and death, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. (Eph. ii.) Has not the church been to you an heavenly place? May we so strive to walk as we have received and been taught by him.

Though many of our members by infirmity and age have nearly completed their labors, and others gone to rest, and their places not at present filled, the great Shepherd has not forgotten his fold. To forget her would be to forget himself. As you trusted in him, (or taught by him) see that ye be found

walking in him, forgetting not the assembling of yourselves together, striving to comfort one another with the comfort wherewith you yourselves have been comforted of him; be watchful over one another for good, for in such things God is well pleased; whatever you do, let it be in the Master's name, and in his strength, being careful not to be found walking in your own wisdom and strength; all our works should be in the same spirit that we received Christ Jesus, in patience and humility. Christ told his apostles, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves."—Matt. x. 16. Which is true even now; you are surrounded as they with "lo heres, and lo theres." False christs, or false doctrines, are looming up on every hand. Go not after them, receive them not in your houses, (churches) nor bid them God-speed. Follow no man only as he follows Christ. Walk as you have been taught, (or received Christ) "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. ii. 8–10. Let our walk be as becometh the profession we have made; go to him for wisdom, to his word for instruction. "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord of hosts."

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

R. W. SANFORD, Moderator.
FLETCHER MACKEY, Clerk.
B. F. BARTLEY, Assistant Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Lexington Church, Greene Co., N. Y., October 4th and 5th, 1899, to the associations with which we correspond, sends christian love and fellowship.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God we again assembled together as an association in christian love. Although we were not blessed with any ministers from abroad, yet we heard the everlasting truth proclaimed as it is in Jesus, for he is the way, the truth and the life. Whenever we take the word of God as the man of our counsel, and rely upon Jesus' teachings to guide us, we are upon that sure foundation, for every man's work shall be tried of what sort it is, for our God is a consuming fire. To trust in our own works is to trust, as it were, in hay, wood and stubble, and the hay, wood and stubble shall be burned to ashes, but Christ's teachings are sure and steadfast. The message from heaven to Mary was, Thou shall conceive and bear a child, and thou shall call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. This was done through the shedding of his blood upon Calvary, for the remission of the sins of his people, and all that are under this atonement are saved with an everlasting salvation, for Christ never shed a drop of blood in vain. When Jesus cried with a loud voice, "It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost," the great work of

salvation was finished forever. Dear brethren, let our trust be in Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our salvation.

In conclusion, we will say, we received Minutes from our sister associations.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Middleburgh Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, 1900, where we hope to meet your messengers and ministers.

R. W. SANFORD, Moderator.

FLETCHER MACKEY, Clerk.

B. F. BARTLEY, Ass't Clerk.

The Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Baptists, now in session with the Mount Pleasant Church, at Pleasureville, Henry Co., Ky., September 13th, 14th and 15th, 1899, to the several associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greetings in the Lord.

WE have been favored to meet again and welcome your ministers and messengers to seats with us. Our session has been one of peace, love and harmony. The preaching has been in demonstration and power of the Spirit, rightly dividing the word, and our souls have been comforted.

We desire a continuance of your correspondence.

Our next association is appointed to meet with our sister church at Beech Creek, Shelby Co., Ky., beginning on Wednesday before the third Saturday in September, 1900, when and where we hope to meet you again. Till then farewell.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.

E. F. RANSDELL, Clerk.

P. S.—We request Elders J. G. Eubanks, P. W. Sawin, David Bartley and licentiate Dudley G. Johnson, to act as messengers to corresponding associations.

POETRY.

AT MERCY'S GATE.

THOU wonderful, triumphant God,
Who art enthroned on high,
All-wise, compassionate and good,
Doth know my secret sigh.

Out of the depths I cry to thee,
Lift up my head in fear;
In mercy's way O lead thou me,
Where rivers broad appear.

Alas, I'm full of bruises sore;
My bleeding wounds are deep;
My leanness, leanness, I deplore,
I loathe myself and weep.

My story sad, O do not tire,
And turn a deafening ear;
My powers all to thee aspire,
My cry for mercy hear.

'Tis through the bleeding sacrifice
On Calvary's noted brow,
Alone I can before thee rise,
Most High, eternal thou.

I dare not my complaints relate,
And pour them out to thee,
If there was not an Advocate
To intercede for me.

No earthly hand, nor mortal eye,
Can reach my sinsick case;
I can but look to thee on high
For pardon, peace and grace.

Vain to the help of man I've sought,
'Tis nothing more than dross;
My help must come through wonders wrought
Upon the rugged cross.

At mercy's gate then would I stay,
Until relief appears;
With thine own hand O wipe away
My penitential tears.

I can but perish here aside,
From vanities that be;
Through him who once was crucified,
Sweet mercy show to me.

Whate'er is done at thy command,
I know is just and right;
The moving of thy mighty hand
Is marvelous in my sight.

But what my troubled heart would trace,
My weeping eyes would see,
Is in the wonders of thy grace,
Hast thou a thought for me?

SEMMA CORDER.

PHILIPPI, West Va.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder W. W. Meredith, at his residence in Delmar, Del., August 5th, 1899, Isaac D. Mitchell and Miss Anna Plummer, both of Sussex Co., Del.

By the same, at his residence in Delmar, Del., August 8th, 1899, Forest Messick and Miss Bertha Tindall, both of Sussex Co., Del.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

My dear father, **Thomas G. Flanary,** was born in Cape Girardeau Co., Mo., April 3d, 1828, and died at his home in Goldendale, Wash., on the morning of June 29th, 1899, aged 71 years, 2 months and 26 days. He lived in different parts of Missouri until 1851, when he crossed the plains to Oregon, and settled in Marion Co. From there he moved to Washington Co., where he lived until the fall of 1878, when he came to Klickitat Co., Wash. He was married to Miss Emily J. Chamberlain, (a daughter of Elder Paul P. Chamberlain) Feb. 28th, 1850. To them were born eight children, five of whom are left to mourn. He received a hope in Christ two or three years before his marriage, but did not unite with the church until the summer of 1853. He united with the Hillsboro church of Old School Baptists, and was baptized the third Sunday in July, by Elder Wm. Simpson. In 1864 he and mother, and brother J. L. Chamberlain and wife, were constituted into the New Hope church, in Washington Co., Ore. He served that church as clerk continuously for fourteen years, when he came to this County, and with eleven others was constituted into the Pleasant Grove church, where he lived a consistent and exemplary life until he passed from earth. He served the church as clerk from its organization until the fall of 1895, when a severe spell of sickness so enfeebled him that he requested the brethren to release him from the duties devolving upon him as clerk. His place in church was always filled when he was able to attend. The last few years he became more and more weaned from the things of this life, but his interest in the welfare of Zion never lessened. He was firm in his convictions of right, and in his death we as a church, as well as a family, have lost a valued counselor and able defender of the truth. He has been a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES many years, having taken them during Elder Gilbert Beebe's lifetime. His last illness was of short duration, being an abcess on the side of his head, and only two days did we realize the seriousness of his malady. On Tuesday evening he took his bed, and passed away Thursday morning. While he was yet able to go down to the doctor's office he seemed to realize his time was short, as he said he felt some way as if it was his last sickness, and said he was ready to go any time. His last hours were mostly spent in prayer. The last sentence we could understand was, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly," and his prayer was soon answered, for, "A death like sleep, a gentle wafting to immortal life," and our home was left desolate.

One daughter, sister Susan Shearer, together with her husband, and brother J. L. Chamberlain and wife, living seventy-five miles away, started in their carriages in response to a telegram, but only reached the house of mourning in time for the funeral, which took place at his late home, where words of comfort were spoken by his son-in-law, Elder W. J. Hess, to whom he was warmly attached. His favorite hymn, "Jesus, lover of my soul," was used on the occasion.

Dear brethren, an obituary notice seems so formal, and language cannot express our sense of loss and desolation, yet we feel grateful that he was here to comfort us so long, that his last suffering was short, and his end so peaceful.

About ten days after father's death our dear mother was taken seriously ill with bronchial pneumonia, and after eleven weeks of severe suffering is improving slowly, and we hope it will please the dear Lord to restore her to health again, to be a comfort to her children, who all live near her excepting the eldest daughter.

Yours in sorrow,

SONORA HESS.

SISTER **Margaret Morgret** was born August 17th, 1799, in Fulton Co., Pa., and died in the same County, at the home of her stepdaughter, sister Thos. R. Palmer, July 27th, 1899, at the advanced age of 99 years, 11 months and 20 days. She was the daughter of Jacob Bishop, the tenth child of fifteen, and the last to depart this life. She was united in marriage to Job Morgret, in 1843. They lived on his farm, near Needmore, Pa., until separated by death, in the fall of 1875. She continued on the farm until the fall of 1890, making her home after this until her death, with her step-children, sister Thos. R. Palmer and Dennis Morgret, she never having children of her own. No step-mother was ever more fortunate in step-children. I visited our aged sister a few days before she died. I was given a solemn pleasure as I witnessed the devoted, tender care of sister Palmer. How sweet and bright is life when seen in loving devotion! She allowed no one to help her; the service was too precious, and the care too sacred. No one could do for her as she. The scene still lingers in my memory, and my heart is softened within me. As I sat by her bedside she turned her poor wasted face to me and said, "You will please preach my funeral if you think me worthy." I have been accustomed to meeting and conversing with her three or four times a year for the last twenty years, and always found her in this same feeling of unworthiness. Great is this mystery when seen in such an one as sister Morgret. While she was firm and unyielding in everything pertaining to God and godliness, she was a silent listener, and respectful

to others, so that I never heard an unkind word about her from the lips of any one. Not being at home when the message came, I was not privileged to attend her funeral. I am informed Elder Ahimaaz Mellott read a hymn, and spoke in prayer. I feel that I want to carry out my promise to her if I live. She was a lovely, precious old sister to me. Her sufferings, I am told, before she died were very intense, which she bore with christian fortitude and patience, frequently quoting some passage of Scripture, and saying in tender voice to those loving friends around, "May God's will be done." She has told me often, If the Lord ever (she would always use the word ever) began a good work in her heart, it was when she was fifteen years old. She was, I am told, baptized in her twenty-seventh year, and united with the Tonoloway church, Pa., but afterward removed her membership to the Fairview church, at Needmore, where I first become acquainted with her, and where she continued a faithful member until death, loving and beloved by all who knew her. She was a constant reader of the SIGNS up to three years prior to her death, when her eyesight failed her. She also read several other religious periodicals. Having a retentive memory her mind was well stored with useful information. A short while before her death she quoted the hymn, "Sovereign Ruler of the skies, ever gracious, ever wise," throughout without a mistake, (Beebe's Collection, No. 239.) She often expressed to me her feelings through some words of the poet.

Poor, dear old saint, she has gone home to glory after living a useful life to the world and to the church.

E. V. WHITE.

Clyde L. Hastings, first born child of Theodore H. and Maud H. Hastings, was born June 23d, 1899, and died August 6th, 1899. The dear little soul was a precious gift to its young parents, around which their mutual affections were entwined, and they were loth to give him up. The grandparents, Deacon Levin and sister Olevia Hastings, shared the grief with the parents, and quite a number of relatives and friends manifested much sympathy at the burial. The writer of this memento tried to comfort them with the assurance that little children are as dear and important in the sight of God, as the most conspicuous sons of men; that Jesus said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Again, our Savior gives us an object lesson, both by precept and example, by placing a little child in the presence of his ambitious disciples, and saying unto them, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." That the quickening power of the Son of God is not limited or confined to age. When Mary, the mother of Jesus, visited her cousin Elizabeth, the mother of John, the children were not yet born, but when Mary saluted her cousin Elizabeth, John the Baptist leaped in his mother's womb for joy. Thus the quickening, regenerating power of God is manifested in all ages, and the words of Jesus verified, "For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." Thus in faith we consign our dear little ones to the loving, saving care of our dear Redeemer, in hope believing, all is well.

W. W. MEREDITH.

DELMAR, Del.

MEETINGS.

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MEETING POSTPONED.

THE two days meeting appointed to be held with the Shohola Creek church, Pike Co., Pa., Oct. 25th and 26th, 1899, has been indefinitely postponed, on account of the lateness of the season.

GYPSON McKEAN, Church Clerk.

OUR yearly meeting will be held, if nothing in Providence prevents, the last Saturday and Sunday in this month, October 28th and 29th, 1899.

By request of the brethren and sisters.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist church at Cammal, Pa., have appointed a two days meeting for November 8th and 9th, 1899. We hope to see a goodly number of brethren and friends. Ticket to Cammal, Pa., on Fall Brook R. R. Brethren live near the depot.

D. M. VAIL.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition, which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at the following rates, viz: a single copy for 10 cents; 12 copies for $1.00; 25 copies for $2.00; 50 copies for $3.00; 100 copies for $5.00. Address,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 67. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1899. NO. 22.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SALVATION.

SALVATION is a comprehensive word, and of wide application, both in the Bible and elsewhere. It means the act or state of being saved, whether from temporal danger, or in that higher and more glorious sense, from the bondage and ruin of sin—a salvation that was accomplished by him who said, "I am God, and beside me there is no Savior." Our Redeemer says by the prophet, "I have trodden the wine-press alone; and of the people there was none with me * * * and I looked and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me." So it is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost. Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved. Thus, over and over in many ways it is told how we are saved by him who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, yet it has pleased the Lord that there shall be in his word, as Peter declares, some things hard to be understood. We read in that wonderful book of some who were begotten through the gospel, and James told the twelve tribes that the engrafted word was able to save their souls. An angel told Cornelius to find Peter, who would tell him words whereby he and all his house should be saved. We also read that it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe, and Paul declared that he was made all things to all men, that is, all classes of men, that he might save some. He also advised Timothy how he should save himself and them that heard him. Another apostle declared that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way should save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins.

This class of Scriptures *seem* to oppose those first named, and to indicate different methods of salvation, and we are brought to where two ways meet. When the Bible says that believers are saved by preaching, and that one may convert a sinner and save a soul from death, we know it is teaching what is called "human instrumentality" in salvation, and we must accept that doctrine as true, or find

another salvation besides the new birth: a salvation that men may accomplish for themselves and others. We well know, however, in what light the religious world regards these Scriptures, and others of like import. That God has committed the salvation of our perishing race to "the church" and her ministers, is an almost universal belief wherever man exists. As at present maintained, it arose about a century ago, as Elijah's "little cloud out of the sea like a man's hand." Like a man's hand it has ever been, though it has spread from the rising to the setting of the sun. The dread that laid heavy on Paul's heart, has after many centuries been realized. His fear was that by some means their minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. He spoke of a preacher in the future that would bring another Jesus, and preach another gospel. Paul was determined to know nothing among them but a crucified Redeemer who loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might cleanse it, and make it without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. But another gospel has come into the world, which has changed "the church" from being itself an object of salvation, into a savior of others, and her ministers to be mediators between God and men. It has filled the earth with agencies and devices to save men, unthought of for many centuries. It has planted authoritative missionary boards where thousands of millions of "corruptible things as silver and gold," have been expended to give salvation, which God alone can do. It has dotted the land with vast Theological Schools, and added a hundred auxiliary societies, unions and leagues, to reinforce "the church" in helping men to eternal life. It has sent out the gospel car and the gospel ship, the salvation army and the holiness band, the sensational preacher and the captivating singer. It looks to a sick bed or other affliction, to a financial loss or a windfall of prosperity, to a sermon, a book, a stray leaf of some religious tract, a question or some fortunate word, to bring salvation, and even a little child may lead its father or mother to the fold of Christ. I have just read the statement of a famous representative man, (Ira D. Sankey) saying that a certain hymn had converted "untold numbers," that millions had been converted by another, while he said he "knew that hundreds of thousands, aye, millions of souls, had been won to the Savior by the hymn, 'Ninety and nine.'" In truth the modern gospel finds salvation in almost everything but the quickening power of God. The precious blood of Christ, though of more value than ten million worlds, fails in its purpose only as man conveys its saving power to a perishing race. It says not with Paul, "We rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh." It has all confidence in man. H. W. Warren, D. D., LL. D., in the *Biblical Recorder* for April, as quoted by Elder Gold, says, "Conversion is to result in something higher than God himself can create, something as great as God and man together can make."

These delusions are no doubt the result (so far as the Bible has anything to do with it) of not rightly dividing the word of truth, of not perceiving that there is a salvation pertaining to the living in Zion, as well as a salvation in a far different sense from endless ruin. Failing to see this, millions of our fellow men believe that the work of the ministry is to bring the world to Christ, and fit men for heaven. As well might they try to place another planet in the sky, or to call our sleeping dust from the grave, as

to attempt the salvation of a single soul. But there is a proper sense in which they do save *believers* in this present life. The Lord has an important use for his ministering servants. He set them in the church for "the perfecting of the saints," that they be not carried about by winds of doctrine, or lost to the church by disobedience. Many brethren call this *time salvation*, simply because the Bible calls it salvation, and it refers to our state in time, and not to the heavenly inheritance. "Be thou," said Paul, "an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. * * * Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." Not save them for heaven, but here in time. Save them by what the apostle calls the exhortations of a father, and as a nurse cherisheth her children, and by shewing himself a pattern of good works, an ensample to the flock. God's grace by them teaches us that, "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world." Paul in this place almost calls a correct life "time salvation." He does call it, referring to their obedience, "your own salvation," that is, your own to be worked out by obedience with fear and trembling; and then follows the encouraging words, "For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." We gladly believe this. God is the author of every holy desire, and he our strength to do. "For it is God that worketh in you," is but half the sentence. They must work out these sweet plantings of God's grace, nor quench the spirit. The "doing" remains for them. Though Joseph's garners were ever so full from the seven years of plenty, there must be a flowing out of the grain to save much people alive. Though all was laid at the apostle's feet, daily distribution must be made to the needy. When we say with kind desire, "Be ye warmed and filled," we must also give the things needful for the body. "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?" James asks these questions, and John says, "My little children, [and I would say, my great and strong brethren,] let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." A cup of cold water to a thirsty brother is better than an eloquent essay on love, where its fruits are wanting. The term "time salvation," is not used as a rival, or to disparage the doctrine of grace, but to harmonize, or rather to acknowledge the teaching of God's word concerning the work of the ministry. The Bible says that some of that work is *to save*. We cannot throw the word away, nor can we allow that it refers to the inheritance of the saints in light. Paul labored, he says, "that he might by all means save some." "And this I do," he said, "for the gospel's sake." And he strove to keep his own body under, lest when he had preached to others he himself should be a castaway. If it pleased God to save believers by preaching; if Timothy saved himself and others by continuing in the precepts and doctrine of the gospel; if the erring brother was saved from death by the one who converted him; if Cornelius was saved by Peter telling him what he ought to do; if Paul was sent to the Gentiles to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light; if some were saved with fear pulling them out of the fire, and if brethren were to work out their own salvation, these can be nothing less, nor more, than a present

salvation, that is, an obedient life "in this present world." So it seems appropriate to speak of the salvation here meant as a salvation in time, and not a preparation for eternity. We all know that as to the curse of the law no flesh shall be justified by the deeds of the law. Were our obedience a thousand times greater than it is, it would avail nothing. If we think it does we make it a rival of grace, and heaven would be ours in payment of a debt, and "grace would be no more grace." The blessings of eternity are for "the election of grace." The Galatians were bewitched by false teachers, and made to believe that they could not be saved without circumcision, and keeping the law of Moses. How foolish they were to turn to a hope so false and vain; they before whose eyes Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth crucified among them. Paul endeavored to turn them from the law to the covenant of grace, and told them that if the inheritance come by the law, it is no more of promise, which he showed them was a false position. He showed them that if they trusted circumcision to save them, Christ would profit them nothing; they would be fallen from grace. If any think that a salvation or happiness that comes of obedience, and is forfeited by disobedience, seems conditional, being a reward for one and a chastisement for the other, the answer would be that the Lord so deals with his children in this world only, and it is immaterial whether we call the first *time* or *temporal* or *present*, or *your own salvation*, or the salvation of *obedience*, but it is important to know if the Bible teaches this sentiment, and whether God's children are chastized for disobedience. As to the last question, the experience of every child witnesses to a knowledge of chastisement for wrong doing, and Paul, that great instructor, declares that the Lord chasteneth every son whom he receiveth, and that if we are without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are we bastards and not sons. The apostle shows that chastisement is a grand proof of sonship, and asks, "What son is he which the Father chasteneth not?" The eighty-ninth Psalm, speaking of him whom God would make his first-born, higher than the kings of the earth, says, "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their transgressions with the rod and their iniquities with stripes." To save his brethren from these stripes was an object dear to Paul's heart. He begged them to remember how he had warned them day and night with tears, and his fatherly and solemn exhortations have come down to us in this latest age having the seal of inspiration on them. He told them to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling; to be ready to every good work; to maintain good works as being profitable unto men; to give the more earnest heed to the things they had heard, lest at any time they should let them slip, and asks, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" "See," said he, "that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven." Paul often referred to what Israel under the law suffered for being disobedient. He even named many of their sins and the penalty inflicted for them, and says, "Now these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall," or as said in another place, "lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief," (in the margin, "disobedience.") Jesus himself taught that his children should be rewarded for right doing. "Do good," he said in his first sermon, "and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be called the children of the Highest." And how sweet was the reward when he said, "Come unto me and I will give you rest," and, "Take my yoke upon you, and ye shall find rest to your souls." He also declares, "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." He must have spoken in sincerity, and that to encourage his children to walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing. He also warned them against wrong doing by saying, "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Paul teaches this when he says in Romans, that God "will render to every man according to his deeds: * * * to them who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile." It is the "doers,' he says, and not the "hearers," that shall be justified. Since the Bible says God will render "glory and honor and peace" to every man that worketh good, we must say that he gives a reward for working good, and the same sentiment runs through those solemn words to the Galatians: Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth that also shall he reap. If he soweth to the wind, the reaping will not be a refreshing rain, but the whirlwind. "He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." Paul declares that "God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may obound to every good work." So it is that whatever may be the gift or the sufficiency to serve God in any way, his children know that it is of the selfsame Spirit dividing to every man severally as he will. Let us ever remember that we bear the relation of sons, that we are not under a judicial but a parental government; a government that has no revolvers, no capital punishment, but simply the Father's rod wherewith to chasten his unruly children. As a Father, too, he bestows his approving smiles, his pity, his sweet words, "Well done." We do not occupy a commercial field or trading post, or seek for selfish advantages. As a father pitieth his children, he pities us, and as a father he encourages his children (often cast down and tried) with promises of good, and they may come boldly and petition him for help in every time of need. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." If a son ask for bread or a fish,

his father will give it. "How much more will your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him." Shall we "despise the riches of his goodness," and think it unworthy to be stimulated in the path of duty by the promise of a blessing in every act of obedience? It is said in God's word that in coming to God we must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. We must believe that he is a rewarder, just as Abraham believed the same. When God told Abraham to leave his father's house and he would make of him a great nation, and bless him and make his name great, he promised a reward, and Abraham believed God and obeyed, not knowing whither he went. Paul had no word of reproach, but commended Abraham for his obedience under this promise which seemed almost enough to "stagger" his belief. Paul did not hesitate to tell his brethren of the prize connected with the race, but told them to so run that they might obtain, and he said that he himself was reaching unto the things which are before, and that he pressed toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. He would suffer all that he might win Christ. It is even said of our great Redeemer that his reward was with him; he saw it in anticipation, and for the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame. May we, as Abraham was, be fully persuaded that what God has promised he is able also and will perform. And let us not judge the Lord by our own standard. We may have seen some, even the best and most God-fearing, overwhelmed with affliction, tormented and destitute, but let us not say that God's promise has failed until we look into their hearts. If ease of conscience is there, if the peace and presence of Jehovah is within, they are worth more to God's tried and obedient child than a mountain of gold.

Two cardinal truths should be remembered. The first is that, "Without me ye can do nothing." The other is, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." One will show the poor pilgrim his nothingness, the other will make him that he shall neither be barren nor unfruitful. It must be forever true that all spiritual strength comes alone from God, and it is also true that whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world.

The kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods, to one five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; so that it is our Master's goods that we have, and not our own. We are to occupy till he comes. Every one should so use these goods that the returning Lord will say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." "He that knoweth his Master's will and doeth it not shall be beaten with many stripes," and shall say with the fleeing Jonah, "Thy billows and thy waves passed over me."

As a prominent writer for the SIGNS has well said, all such "Should learn from my painful afflictions and merited chastisements, that to obey is better than sacrifice, and in keeping the Lord's loving commandments there is a blessed reward of comfort and peace and rest to the soul."

It is gratifying to know that Primitive Baptists so uniformly believe that the christian's obedience follows the gift of eternal life, and is in no sense the cause of it, and yet they understand that obedience is essential to the enjoyment and

peace of all who are risen with Christ. They are no longer to let sin reign in their mortal bodies, that they should obey it in the lusts thereof. They once did this, but now, being alive unto God, they are to mortify these fleshly affections. "For which things sake the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience." There may be shades of difference in *expressions* among us, but in the fundamental doctrine of salvation by free and unmerited grace they are one. If some are weak and others strong, let us not, as Paul so lovingly warns, put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall, in our brother's way. It was of little moment which of the patriarchs best understood the great things that were happening to their father's house, but it was of supreme importance that they "fall not out by the way." The Lord's people should be at peace among themselves. If they have God's true charity it is enough; other things are of less consequence. Tongues shall cease, and knowledge vanish away, but God's love, though it be with some only as "smoking flax," shall abide forever.

Dear brother Chick, I send you this article, hoping you will find it acceptable for the SIGNS. I have written it with the sincere desire that our brethren may be one in the Lord, and not to disturb the feelings of any. It does not seem that the grace given to unworthy sinners should be a subject of dispute or strife, and I have only endeavored to get the mind of the Scriptures, which as a whole address us in a plain, simple, I might say, reasonable and natural way. The child of God is dependent upon the same language, the same faculties and perceptions to understand it. He has the same sinful body, and the hopes and fears that spring from his nature still cling to him. It seems to me a difficult task to properly draw the line of distinction between what is natural and what is spiritual in the renewed, regenerated man. I confess myself to a great weakness or inability to comprehend much that is written. I am sure I do not think this of your style of writing, and I believe that you are a lover and promoter of peace. I believe that the great body of our dear people are sufficiently uniform in doctrine to be one, as our dear Savior prayed the Father they should so be. The best we can expect however, and what perhaps our Savior meant, is that there will be a moderate, temperate, middle course for believers with divergences on either side, according to temperament and surroundings. While I have not written as many others would, I trust I have said nothing offensive wherein I may seem to differ. For myself, I feel far more the sentiment that, "Without me ye can do nothing." I feel dependent on God's grace even for gratitude to his holy name for the blessings and feeble hope I have.

With assurances of kind regard and christian love I remain your unworthy brother,

S. B. LUCKETT.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Sept. 15, 1899.

[IT is far from our desire to make a brother an offender for a word, or a phrase. Neither do we wish to attribute to a brother, conclusions which he disclaims, from things which he may have said. We should claim the right to interpret our own words, and should think it very unjust in others if they persisted in crediting us with sentiments which we had denied holding, and do not desire to be unjust in that direction ourselves.

In the controversy which has been going on in some sections, which we have before alluded to, concerning the phrase,

"conditional time salvation," while we have held, and do still hold, decided views concerning the phrase, and think it unwise, and when given its full meaning, unscriptural, yet we do not wish to cast unjust reflections upon those who do use it, perhaps not seeing in it what we do. It does to us imply a right to self praise, and to glorying over others, and as far as it goes, to exclude praise to grace. Yet we can see how it might be used by many who do not feel like boasting or self praise, and who do believe in almighty grace. But we must frankly say that when this phrase is found to be distasteful to those who do believe in exhortation, and that there is life and comfort in walking in obedience, while there is death and sorrow in walking in disobedience, it had far better be laid one side. If those who use it only mean by it that if we live after the flesh we shall die, and if we through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body we shall live, and that they who sow to the flesh reap corruption, while those who sow to the Spirit reap life everlasting, we certainly believe these things also. Why then seek to force the use of terms which seem to say something far more and different. Do any of the brethren in the west deny the duty of exhortation of each other, and through the ministry? That they who have believed in Jesus should be careful to maintain good works? Why then make them offenders because they reject a form of words not found in the Scriptures, and which seems to them to be unscriptural.

Brother Luckett, in a private letter to us, says that this expression is very seldom indeed used in his part of the west. We are glad that it is so, and hope that it may not spread. The above article from him is written in a very kindly spirit. The argument against the Arminian use of the commandments of the word, which were addressed to the believers only, but which they have, ever since we can remember, given indiscriminately to the world, is certainly clear and convincing. We have all our life contended for the same thing, viz: all the exhortations were to the living, and not to the dead. We think so still, therefore we can indorse with all cordiality the main portion of his article. But we still must object to the use of the phrase, "conditional time salvation," as being misleading, even when guarded most cautiously. In the private letter from brother Luckett, which he has consented for us to publish, he has expressed all that we desire to contend for when he says, "*For myself, I feel far more the sentiment that, 'Without me ye can do nothing.' I feel dependent on God's grace even for gratitude to his holy name for the blessings and feeble hope I have.*"

We ask that his article, and what we have here written, may be read in the light of his expression of dependence upon the grace of God for all things, and hope that it may do good. We at first thought to call especial attention to some expressions in the above letter, to which we object, but will let these general remarks suffice. The tone and spirit of the article are excellent, and is quite in contrast with some things that are being published in papers claiming to be Old School or Primitive Baptist publications, which not only assert their own legal views, but insist on misrepresenting those who believe that all is of grace, by implying that they have no use for the exhortation of the Scripture, &c., which all who are acquainted with them know is false. —ED.]

PLEASANT PLAINS, Ill., Oct. 15, 1899.

B. L. BEEBE—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I have just read the last number of the SIGNS, which has awakened within me many thoughts concerning the children of God in their journey here; some are walking by faith, others by the light of sparks of their own kindling; some are satisfied with the goodness of the Lord's house, while others are desiring the flesh-pots of Egypt; some are standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, while others are entangled in the yoke of bondage.

Why are these things so, or why does this state of affairs exist? I can find but one answer that can solve the perplexing problem, and that is, "Even so, Father, for so it seems good in thy sight." In the days of Elijah, when there was a great apostacy in Israel, when the altars were digged down and the prophets were slain, so that Elijah thought he was left alone, God had a special reserve, who had not bowed the knee to Baal; even so at this time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. It was election that saved men from bowing the knee to Baal in Elijah's time, and it is election that saves them from idolatry and every false way now.

God has not only elected an innumerable company to eternal salvation, but out of this company he has chosen a special people to gospel obedience and order, to be faithful witnesses of the truth. The truth of this is established by the word of God and by the history both of the Jews and the church, as well as by the experience of those who have been called to be witnesses, and to walk in the doctrine and order of the house of God. If I am obedient and faithful, I can no more take this to myself than I can take my redemption and calling to myself. Jesus the Son of God learned obedience by the things which he suffered, and his children are brought into obedience in exactly the same way; if the Son learned obedience by suffering, how else can we expect his poor, weak and sinful brethren to learn it? I have never experienced but one kind of deliverance, and that is the deliverance that grace brings; let men theorize as they may, yet I know that it is by the grace of God I am what I am. I cannot preach conditionalism, either for time or eternity; I know of but one salvation, and that is that everlasting salvation with which Israel is saved in the Lord.

My travel in the things of grace, if so be that I have traveled there at all, has been as the travel of one who is blind; I have never been able to find my way, but I trust the Lord has led me in the way that I knew not; he has often made darkness light before me, and rough places smooth and crooked places straight. This he has done for me, and has not forsaken me. I am as dependent upon him for all the things that pertain to life to godliness, as I am for the sunshine and the rain. It is in him I live and move and have my being. It is from the fountain of his constraining love that all my soul's obedience flows.

I know that sin dwells in me, and that within myself my works are no more acceptable with God than the works of the man who has never known grace; my flesh is the dwelling-place of sin, yet by faith I know that sin is condemned there, and that it can never go any farther. I cannot preach the law. I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came sin revived and I died. I am crucified with Christ, yet nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, so the life I now live in the flesh, I live by

faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

I am the prisoner of Jesus, I cannot run at large; I am in no sense of the word a free agent, as some who have risen up among us vainly teach. I am not at liberty to preach what my carnal mind or depraved judgment might dictate or suggest; I cannot but preach the things which I have seen and heard; the things which the God of heaven has thundered in my soul, and written in my conscience. I am not to be the judge as to what should be preached, but I must declare faithfully God's word.

The school of Christ is a school of experience; it is only as the preacher has experienced the deep things of God that he can declare them, and it is only as the people are taught in experience that they can believe the doctrine of God's word. The novice may speak against God's predestination with the greatest self-complacency, but the man of God, whose heart and conscience are filled with an experimental sense of the majesty, power, might and dominion of the God of the whole earth, in humble awe and reverence trembles at his word, and is constrained to declare that the "Potter has power over the clay of the same lump, to make one vessel unto honor, another unto dishonor;" that, "He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."

I am yours in fellowship and friendship,

H. M. CURRY.

PROPHETSTOWN, Ill., Aug. 26, 1899.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—Thinking that it might do some of the weary travelers good on their pilgrimage through this vale of tears, I cheerfully add what we call an experience, and it is my desire that whatever I may write may be edifying to the church, and glorifying to God.

I have wanted for a long time to write what I believe a kind and loving Friend, the Lord and Savior, has done for me, but did not have the language to express it, and do not know as I have now. But can say that I have a different idea of the truth of the gospel from what I had ever heard preached, being brought up under the influence of the Arminian doctrine, where they preached salvation by works; that the Lord had done his part, and man could accept or reject Christ, and if he accepted him, there remained a work which he must do, which of course meant good works, and his good works meant good fruit, and that we would be known by our fruits hereafter, and the consequences were punishment through all eternity to those who neglected to accept Christ, and to do the good works, and to those who accepted, and did these good works, would be given a crown, and a seat on the right hand of God, where they could sing songs of joy and everlasting praise with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the holy angels, to God who gave them a chance to earn their way into heaven, but if the devil tempted them too hard, his grace would not be sufficient for them. They also taught that preaching was for saving souls, and for the want of the gospel many souls were daily going down to hell; that salvation was unto all, and that all might be saved if they would. They preached a conditional salvation. I never heard any preacher preach that salvation was by grace, or that it was of the Lord, or that the children were kept by the power of God. I had never heard the true gospel preached until about three and one-half years ago, when Elder O. H. Reaves

preached in the West school-house. Though I had heard those who preached salvation by grace about two years before, and could not understand until the time appointed of the Father, when mine eyes were opened, and mine ears were unstopped, and I saw things as they were revealed through Christ. My wife being an Old School Baptist of course desired to be with them, and I felt it a duty, and not a pleasure, to take her to these meetings, which were seldom.

I remember one day in harvest time we got to talking on foot-washing, in the morning before I went to work in the harvest field for a neighbor, and this brought up other subjects pertaining to the Scripture, and our ideas differed greatly on many points of Scripture, though we had no contending words. I went away with my mind pretty well wrought up against the then ridiculous arguments, that both she and those of like faith produced, for it did seem to me the most ridiculous and unreasonable thing to allow one's mind to be led in such a way. But here is where I was deceived, for the foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of man. Then again, I was using the weapons of the natural mind, and comprehended not the things of the Spirit, for Paul says, "I, with the mind, serve the law of God, but with the flesh, the law of sin." Also, Jeremiah says, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." The knowledge of truth began to be made plain to me about three years ago. The first I can call to mind was when my wife was about her housework, and we were talking on the Scripture, she said, "Leonard, do not you believe when God said he saved his children with an everlasting salvation, that he will do it? Do you suppose if you are saved with an everlasting salvation that God cannot keep you from being tempted beyond what you are able to bear, when he said, 'My grace is sufficient for you'?" I could not answer, for I began to realize that Jesus was putting his fingers upon my infirmities, and now I saw men as trees walking, but when my eyes were fully opened, I could see things as they are, and thanks be to Jesus who when he heals our infirmities, leaves us with a clear case of healing, though we cannot always tell how and when he did it, nor for what purpose his all-wise counsel has withholden it from us.

Soon after the above questions from my wife concerning the power of God, my mind turned back to an old question with me, that was, Who is preaching the truth? I now had it in my mind that the Old Baptists were very near right, and on the second Sunday in September, 1895, with my wife, her sister and her father, drove down to the first association I ever attended. It was held in the Hope Church, about seventy miles from here, in Lasalle County. Elder John Downey is pastor. Elders Montgomery, Bradbeard, Ketchum and Varnes, conducted the services. I well remember brother Montgomery, for he told me to watch closely, and I would see that money was the main object of the Arminian preaching, take the money away and there would not be much left. I have remembered with pleasure the time when he told me these things, and felt to praise the Lord for it, though at the time I thought he was a pretty rough sort of a preacher. Brother Smith Ketchum, with whom my wife and her parents have been acquainted since she was a little girl, has been a father in Israel indeed to us, a poor, hungry, little flock, without any shepherd, only as Elders Downey, O. H. Reaves and

he, have ministered to our wants, which we hope we have appreciated, for it has been a great feast to our souls.

Brother O. H. Reaves was made known to us by brother Ketchum. He lives north of Walnut, Bureau Co., Ill., about eighteen miles from our home. There and then we made arrangements for him to come down to a schoolhouse three miles east of us and preach, and we soon became very much attached to him, and sister Reaves who generally accompanied him, and assisted him in the singing. It was during these meetings that I learned the difference between working to get life, and working because of life. They were many times at our house, and when the association was next held at Sandy Creek, brother Reaves and I drove down. On arriving there we found Elders Ketchum, Downey, Bartley and Sanders, defending the cause in good earnest. It was at this meeting two others with myself presented ourselves to the church for acceptance, and after due consideration we were received, after which Elder Sanders preached in substance about that lofty bird which built her nest in the cleft of the rock, high over the sea, and when the young began to be strong enough, the old bird began to pull the nest from under them, stick by stick, the little birds clinging to the remainder of the nest, and felt safe enough as long as anything remained of the nest. When all was gone they commenced to slide, and they saw their helpless condition. So it was with me, when the sticks of self-righteousness were being taken from under me, I saw my helplessness and inability to save myself, but the mighty arm of God was under me, and raised me up, and spoke peace to my soul. There were only brothers Ketchum and Reaves that were acquainted with me. They were much surprised, in fact I did not know I would join until I did. It was good news to my dear wife who could not attend the association; she was so surprised she could hardly believe it. Elder Smith Ketchum came up, and I was baptized in Coon Creek. I will say here, I once believed in enlisted soldiers, but now believe that real true soldiers of the cross are drafted, they do not go until they have to. My mind seems barren and unfruitful, so disconnected on spiritual things at the present, yet I feel resigned to the will of God, and feel to praise him who has blessed us with that peace that passeth all understanding, and has given us eyes that we may see, and ears that we may hear, and hearts that we may understand. I have a desire to tell what the Lord has done for my poor soul. It is a continual source of trouble to me, that to will is present, but how to perform I find not. Who am I, that the Lord should talk to me thus, if indeed it is him? In short, my spiritual travels have been up and down. My mother was, I believe, a close walking christian, and loved the cause of Christ dearly. She was a Methodist, but my father did not belong to any denomination. He believed in an all-wise God and a loving Savior. They were both highly pleased when I joined the Methodists, where I belonged till 1893, when I took a letter and went to Iowa, after my mother's death. Here is where my real trouble began. My letter read, "The bearer of this, Mr.———, has been a member in good standing." I thought, If I am what they call a member in good standing, and they were like myself, the quicker I get out the better. I now went hither and thither, until I became acquainted with the Old Baptists.

This is much longer than I intended it

should be. Extract from this anything you in your judgment may consider of benefit to the readers of the SIGNS and lovers of the truth. If you see fit put any or all of this in the waste-basket, and all will be well with me.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

LEONARD H. HOPKINS.

WORTHINGTON, Minn., Aug. 23, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I feel as though I should like to thank the many writers of the SIGNS for writing of the feelings which they have in their hearts, it is such a comfort to me to read them. I have just read Elder S. H. Durand's Reminiscences, and he tells my feelings so well. I often feel when I give thanks at the table that I have only used a form of words. These things, and many others of the same kind, run through my mind, and I then feel ashamed. Dear brother Beebe, you cannot tell how comforting it is to one who is out here alone, to hear you and Elder Chick, and Elder Durand, tell of the feelings which are in your hearts. My dear brother, these things are sweet to us, who are scattered, and hear nothing only "You can if you will, and if you do not you will be damned." Such is not the doctrine of gospel grace, and is not that salvation which Jesus taught his disciples. Is it not the same Spirit that was in Jesus when he said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you?" That Spirit which testifies of Jesus himself, rests in his chosen people to-day, and it shows his work to man. I feel as though I would like to talk with all my old friends back there, about Jesus and him crucified. I want to tell you that I was at the Minnesota meeting. We had a glorious time; some came hundreds of miles; Elder Elmore came three hundred miles. I mention this to show how the scattered sheep will run to hear the voice of the Shepherd, which is the Savior. I also want to mention the article from Elder Durand about the "Clefts in the Rock." I could go with him into the clefts of the rock, and through that great city, the New Jerusalem, which John saw descending from God out of heaven. It is sweet to hear these blessed truths from those who can write so plainly of them. I will close, if you can see anything worthy in this, you may use it, if not, all will be well with me.

Your brother in hope of eternal life through Christ,

HENRY JAMES.

LIBERTY, Ind., Oct. 16, 1899.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I write to thank you very much for the interest you have taken in the circulation of my pamphlet. I have received orders for about two thousand copies as a result of your advertisement and recommendation, for which I feel truly thankful, although it has not been financially profitable to me. If it shall do any good toward counteracting the tendency to legalism among Baptists I shall be abundantly paid. I have a few hundred copies left which I desire to place where they will do the most good. There is one thing I am getting for my trouble, and that is, persecution.

May the Lord save us from the inventions and persecutions of men, is my prayer.

Your brother in Christ,

W. N. THARP.

[THE advertisement referred to above, is of the pamphlet entitled "An Impartial Investigation of Free Will, and Free Moral Agency," which will be found on page 703, and we advise all who have not a copy to procure one before they are all gone.—ED.]

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, in session with the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun Co., Va., Oct. 11th, 12th and 13th, 1899, to the churches composing her membership, and to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Since the organization of this meeting it has been our custom annually to adopt and send out to its own members and correspondents a letter embodying our views upon some subject of importance or interest to the brethren. It may be true that scant attention is paid to a Circular Letter after its adoption by the meeting or association, still we feel like continuing the custom, for it is a way of expressing the unity and fellowship of the Lord's people in the doctrine and order of his house. We think it a matter of congratulation and thankfulness at this time that peace and quietness are manifest in and among the churches of this meeting; we believe it to be the peace of God. Jerusalem presents that "quiet habitation" for her people which is characteristic of her; a home for the pilgrim and stranger, who in this broad world has not where to lay his head. The visible church is the assembly of those whom the Lord has gathered together in his name, and he is in their midst, as Jesus said, "When two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Hence we see that multitudes are not necessary to an orderly church, but "two or three" gathered together in his name are sufficient. No higher privilege can be given the sons of men in this world, than a worthy membership in the church of Christ.

The laws of Zion are the laws of life and liberty to her children, and are fulfilled in them. It is this that manifests them as the children of God. It is as natural for them to obey the law of Christ as it is for a tree to bear fruit, if it is a fruit tree. Christ is in them the true Vine, and his Father is the Husbandman, and their fruit is unto holiness. So we conclude that obedience to the law of Christ is the fruit of the Spirit, of the true vine, of the tree of life which is in the paradise of God. It may be well to consider briefly some of this fruit. The Savior says, "He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." Again, "If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love." An orderly church, a church walking in the commandments of her Lord blamelessly, is one wherein the love of God abounds without hindrance. The love of God is the law, and the rule of life. The love of the creature, the love of self, is the rule of death. Except a man deny himself he cannot be a disciple of Jesus. When brethren get at variance the cause is not far to seek, nor is there any occasion for surprise. Indeed it is a continual miracle when brethren dwell together in unity. The way wherein they walk, and the place wherein they dwell, are not seen by mortal eyes, nor can the unclean pass over that way. It is true there is an outward conduct observable by the world, and becoming the saints; indeed, we may say, necessary to them as obedient children, not conforming themselves to this world, but which may be observed by the hypocrite as well as by the faithful child of God. But a hypocrite cannot obey the law of Christ. Our Savior says, "He that hath my commandments and doeth them, he it is that loveth me." The natural man hath not the commandments of Christ, therefore he

cannot keep them. The law of Christ is written upon the heart, and printed in the mind of his people. It is the law of life in them, the law of liberty and freedom; they delight in that law "after the inward man." Wherever the Spirit of Christ is, this sentiment is always felt, "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." Hence it is that that law, instead of being a grievous burden hard to bear, is a joy and a delight to those who have it. As God looks at the heart he sees his own work in the willing and the doing his own good pleasure. In their intercourse one with another in the church, God's people work out or manifest the power of this divine law. It is the law of this mortal life that the mother shall love her child, so is it the law of the new Jerusalem that she, the mother of us all, should love her children. "God is love," his children partake of his nature, they are born of love; this is the law of their being. Hence we see how easy it is to observe the order of God's house. His children are commanded to live together just as they love to live together. They are commanded to do nothing they do not love to do. As we have said, when brethren are at variance the cause is not far to seek: the prince of this world, who has nothing in Christ, has deceived them, or led them astray. The controversy between the disciples of our Lord illustrates what is in our flesh. That controversy to which we allude was touching who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Now the law says, "Let each esteem others better than themselves." This is not an admonition, but an authoritative statement of the law of Christ in the heart and mind, and is found there when the Spirit leads. But the fleshly pride of the heart of even the Lord's dear people repudiates this law, and seeks pre-eminence among the brethren, and if that pre-eminence is not accorded, straightway offense is taken. This pride will not allow its possessor to feel that his brethren are better, more worthy than he is, and in a matter of controversy between him and them, he inevitably seeks to justify himself. This selfishness seems to be the law of our natural being. Hence we say an orderly church, walking in the commandments of her Lord, presents a continual miracle. Christ reigns in that church in the heart of its members, his law is fulfilled in them first, hence it is an easy matter for them to work it out, it is joy for them to do so. They have a record of this law in the holy Scriptures as a guide, a rule to work by. To illustrate, "If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother," &c. "Gained thy brother" is the word. It seems in such case something is lost, and indeed there is; perfect fellowship is marred, and walking lovingly together is hindered. The one against whom the trespass is committed, yearns in his heart towards the trespasser; he feels to say, "I will go to him alone; if possible this matter must be kept between us two." If he goes alone he goes with the knowledge of his own shortcomings and infirmities, and with the feeling that his brother is better than himself, realizing his own great need of continued forbearance and forgiveness, and with forgiveness of his brother in his heart; his love embraces him, and dictates every word he says, and inspires his very manner towards him, and shows he is far more ready to condemn himself than his brother. He does feel all this if Christ is with him. His brother is far

out of the way indeed if he is not gained. One has not triumphed over another, but the love of God has triumphed over both. Again, if reproof and rebuke is merited and administered in the Spirit, "Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head." And so all through the ministrations of the law of Christ, it is a necessity that "each esteem others better than themselves," for each one can see his own heart, but cannot see another's. Love always exalts the beloved object. "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," and loving them we exalt them; we are very jealous for them, for their well being in every respect; the multitude of faults is covered by that love. "Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord!"

In administering the word in admonition, in exhortation, great care should be observed that the tender conscience be not burdened and oppressed. The gospel is always "glad tidings," "good news." If we bind heavy burdens, and place them upon men's shoulders, it is not the gospel; Christ's burden is always light, his yoke easy. In admonition, in exhortation, in reproof or rebuke, the pure mind is stirred up by way of remembrance; remembrance of the high and holy calling; the flesh is necessarily crucified and put off, but the spirit is saved, and rejoices in the love and power of God. The most upright and godly walk is seen in the humble and contrite soul, in him who really feels he is not worthy a name and a place among the Lord's dear people; words of commendation from his brethren humble him in the dust, for he feels all unworthy of them; he does not easily take offense for himself, but is very sensitive for his brethren; it is not easy for him to think evil of any one, especially of his brethren; he is a "little child" indeed, and of such is the kingdom of heaven; it does not enter his mind to do anything unbecoming his profession; he needs not to be watched by his brethren to keep him from evil; he is a more jealous watchman of himself than they possibly can be of him; if fault is found in him he is far more distressed than any one else can be; the love and confidence of his brethren is to him more than his daily bread; Christ reigns in that man, though it be hard for him to think it, for he knows that no good thing dwells in his flesh, and he is very prone to look at that. Indeed, it is this knowledge that makes him meek and lowly, and keeps him at the feet of his brethren. This man walks in the law of his God, hence that walk is manifest outwardly in his life and conduct.

"O how I love thy holy law,
'Tis daily my delight,
And hence my meditations draw,
Divine advice by night."

"To this man will I look," saith the Lord, and with this man will I dwell, saith the "high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, and whose name is holy."

Thus, dear brethren, we only endeavor to present a glimpse of the divine law of our Redeemer, and the manner of its fulfillment in and by his people. We love it, we rejoice in it, we live in it, its divine majesty is around us and above us, whether in our weakness we recognize it or not. Our God is a wall of fire round about his people, and the glory in their midst, to whom be glory, honor and dominion forever. Amen.

J. N. BADGER, Mod.

G. G. GALLEHER, Clerk.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Forest Grove Church, Md., October, 1899, to the several churches composing this association. Mercy unto you and peace and love be multiplied.

In this, our annual letter, we desire to express our unfeigned gratitude to our God and Savior for his loving kindness and tender mercies bestowed upon all the churches within the bounds of our association. Truly "he that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps." It is a source of comfort and encouragement to contemplate and meditate upon the sure mercies of David, and to walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that we may tell it to the generation following. It is a source of rejoicing in all our churches, that since our last letter to you, no schism, dogma or root of bitterness has sprung up among us to disturb the peace, harmony and fellowship that abounds in our association. While there appears to be a disposition upon the part of some excellent brethren of our faith and order in the gospel, in distant or different parts of the country, to denounce and ignore the association of churches, we of the Salisbury Association would say to them, it is not so with us. We appreciate and rejoice in the privilege of thus meeting together, not as a superior body having jurisdiction over the several churches, either in spiritual or temporal affairs, but as an assembly of the saints for the service and worship of God, and our mutual spiritual edification. Not as a means of grace, but as the work and result of grace, whereby we are enabled in our intercourse to manifest our christian love and fellowship, and realize the assurance of the Spirit. "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren."—1 John iii. 14.

We are impressed with the belief that in the very early meetings of the saints, there was some kind or manner of intercourse and association among the churches in Asia. Paul the apostle in writing the affectionate warning epistle to the church at Colosse, urgently requests the church to associate themselves with the church at Laodicea, so as to have them cause a certain thing to be done in the church of the Laodiceans. "And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea."—Col. iv. 16. Here then we see that the churches in the days of the apostles were mutually associated in their intercourse and welfare.

Brethren, we refer and call attention to these things, not because of any lack of appreciation of our association, but with a desire to express our gratitude for the privilege afforded us in thus meeting together, and to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance. Including all the church of God we are admonished by the Spirit of the Lord to "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem," with the sweet assurance that "They shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces."—Psalm cxxii.

The church or Christ in its visible order is a wonder to the world, in that it is kept intact, separate and distinct from all the nations or religious denominations by which it is surrounded, without the means and appliances of modern improvements and scientific inventions in religion, to which antichrist resorts to prop the tottering edifice which they so gorgeously decorate, including means of grace (so called) and filthy lucre. Considering the subject from a natural standpoint, truly

it would be a wonder to us how our several churches have been preserved and sustained all these years until the present time. But the children of the heavenly King have all been taught of God. They have been with Christ and learned of him, and been assured by the Spirit that takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us, that we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

In all ages of the world the visible true church of God has been a chosen few. Israel was told of God that they were not chosen because of their great number, but that they were few and the least of the nations. The people of God have always been described as a remnant, and their churches as little, and as long as there remains a church, and assemblies of the saints, the living promise and sweet assurance of our Savior will have a practical application, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Therefore we can rejoice that even the visible status of our churches witnesseth to the truth that the Old School Baptist church is founded upon an abiding foundation. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." "The tried stone." "The chief corner-stone."

Brethren, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, in whom ye are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. Regardless of the suggestions of Satan and taunts of our enemies, in patience may we possess our souls, remembering he who is the foundation and builder of the church has declared, "Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Of all the institutions of men, of every name and character, based upon human agency, we can say of them, "Their rock is not as our Rock, our enemies themselves being judges." "The Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our Judge, he will save us."

However small the nation of Israel may have appeared to the populous and proud nations around them, so small that even the prophet of the Lord at one time thought he was left all alone, but the Lord assured him that he was mistaken. And when the Baptists were so cruelly persecuted during the past centuries when they were compelled to seek refuge in caves and rocks in the mountains truly they seemed to be a little flock. In these days of religious pride and wickedness in high places, the little companies of Primitive Baptists scattered among the hills and valleys of the world, O how few they seem to be, compared with the vast hordes of antichrist. But when the whole church of God in all its beauty was revealed to the beloved apostle John in prophetic vision, what a numerous company appeared. From the little nation of Israel he beheld the elect, perfect, cubical number, one hundred and forty-four thousand of the tribes of Israel sealed with the cygnet of everlasting life. Then these little companies of Gentile saints appear to his view so numerous in the aggregate they exceed computation. A great company which no man could number. All singing a new song which no man could learn, save he who was redeemed out of the earth.

May we of this association, with all the redeemed of the Lord, ever sing that new song of Moses the servant of God and of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just

and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.

A. B. FRANCIS, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Springfield church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., October 6th, 7th and 8th, 1899, to the churches and associations with which we correspond, sends greeting.

As it is a long standing custom among us at our associations to write what we call a Circular Letter, to be published in our Minutes, we will call your attention to the subject, "The end to which God has appointed his people." For a foundation we will use a portion of Scripture found in 1 Thessalonians v. 9, "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." The subject of salvation is one of the greatest subjects that ever engaged the mind of the human family, and there are many devices and inventions of men to obtain that salvation. Salvation means deliverance from a state of bondage or trouble, in which all God's children find themselves when the Lord writes his law in their hearts. By the light of that law they are enabled to see all the corruption that dwells in the carnal heart, and are made to confess the justice of God in their condemnation. But God, in his abounding mercy, has not appointed them to wrath, but to obtain salvation. He has not left us to any uncertainty as to how we obtain that salvation: by our Lord Jesus Christ. We have learned that a controversy has risen among our western brethren in regard to this great salvation, and they say there are two salvations, "A time salvation and an eternal salvation;" that our eternal salvation rests entirely with God, but our present or time salvation is hinged upon our obedience. The Bible teaches but one salvation for the child of God, and that is always found in Jesus Christ. Our obedience is the fruits of that salvation that Jesus has wrought in us. For a proof we will appeal to our experience when the Lord is pleased to hide himself for a little moment, and let all the vileness of our carnal nature rise up in judgment against us, and say to us, Where is your God? If you were a child of God you would not have these troubles. What distress the child of God feels, and how freely would they deliver themselves if they could find a remedy, but all efforts on their part fails, then Jesus comes to their deliverance. This is time salvation. We will not fully realize our eternal salvation while in this body of flesh, but we are appointed to that end, and it is alone through Jesus Christ that we obtain salvation. Let us consider the authority of him who has appointed us to this salvation, and assures us that he has not appointed us to wrath. He is King of kings, and Lord of lords; all power in heaven and earth is given into his hands; he holds the keys of death and hell in his own hands; death could not hold him; he destroyed the powers of the grave, and forever released those that were given him by his heavenly Father. The president of our United States may appoint a man to a certain position, and equip him with everything necessary to accomplish everything pertaining to that appointment, but death or some other disaster may occur, so that the duties to which he has been appointed may be all made void, but not so with our God, for what he purposes, even that he doeth. One of the old prophets has said, "He leadeth me into darkness, and not into light." Darkness is just as necessary for our

good as the light. Let us keep in mind the end to which we are appointed. The apostle has told us to look to Jesus, who is the author and the finisher of our faith. Faith is the gift of God, and without faith it is impossible to please God, so we walk by faith, and not by sight. Paul to the Philippians says, "As ye have obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." We see by all the teaching of the Scriptures, and by our experience, that God hath wrought all our works in us. Job in his afflictions says, God performeth the thing that was appointed for him, and many such things are with us.

Dear brethren, all our trials, and all our joys, as well as our eternal salvation, were all given us in Jesus Christ. Dear brethren, let us strive for the things that make for peace, whereby one may edify another.

Our association has been crowned with much enjoyment amongst the saints of God. Love and harmony prevailed.

D. M. VAIL, Moderator.
AHIMAAZ MELLOTT, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Forest Grove Church, October 18th, 19th and 20th, 1899, to the churches and associations with which we correspond.

BELOVED OF THE LORD:—It is with gratitude and thanksgiving to God our Savior, for his loving-kindness and tender mercies to us, that we greet you.

The churches composing our association have been well represented in attendance. The letters from the several churches have been expressive of a living fellowship in the Spirit, and manifest the evidence of a sound and faithful ministry. We have been made glad by the coming of beloved members, and able ministers of other associations. The power of God unto salvation has been sweetly proclaimed, joyfully received, and all mutually edified together in the unity of the Spirit and bond of peace. We feel encouraged, and desire to continue our correspondence with you in love and fellowship, and extend a cordial invitation to you to meet with us at our next annual meeting, which is appointed to meet with the Nassaongo church, in Wicomico Co., Md., at our usual time of meeting, in the year 1900, where your continued correspondence will be gladly received, and where your ministers, messengers and those who visit us, will receive a cordial welcome.

A. B. FRANCIS, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Springfield church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., sendeth greeting to the churches and associations with whom we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED:—It is alone through God's mercy we are again permitted to meet, and greet you all once more in an associate capacity. In a world of trials and tribulations God in his mercy has not left us without a shepherd, Elders Vail and Meredith have come knowing nothing but Jesus and him crucified, which seems to reassure us that they have all been taught of the Lord, which is a source of much comfort unto us.

Notwithstanding a gloom having settled over us of the illness of our beloved brother, Elder E. V. White, preventing him being present with us in the body,

that same spirit of comfort is presented through our beloved brethren, Elders Vail and Meredith.

May the Lord bless us to again meet you in peace, love and fellowship.

Brethren, pray for the peace, prosperity and comfort of Zion, that the Spirit of Jesus may ever rest with us.

Our next session will be held, the Lord willing, with the Fairview church, Fulton Co., Pa., commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1900, when and where we would love to meet you all again if it be the will of the Lord. Farewell.

May love without alloy, charity without an end, and the Spirit of Jesus be with you all. May the good Lord bless the people for their kindness shown us during our stay with them.

D. M. VAIL, Moderator.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT, Clerk.

CHURCH LETTER.

The Whitefield Old School Baptist Church, to the churches composing the Maine Old School Baptist Association, of which she is a member, convened with us in September, 1899. Greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We are once more assembled to offer up praise and thanksgiving to the dear Lord, who is plentiful in mercy, for his kind and loving care which has cheered all our pathway. Our whole number is but seventeen. One has been added by baptism during the past year. We are but a handful when compared with the religious denominations of the present day, but we would not exchange our little despised company for all the worldly religion; no, we certainly would not. Give us the God of Israel, and the sweet blessings of his presence, and we are more than content. On the wings of his love we are carried above, and the trivial things of earth are lost to our view. None but those to whom the arm of the Lord has been revealed can comprehend these divine things. Sometimes when our frail bark seems to be resting in placid waters, we do not think so much of the helmsman, but when the storms arise how quickly do we flee to him, and our whole heart is with him, and we come to realize again that in his dear arm alone is our refuge and strength, and we are brought low at the feet of Jesus, and how sweetly we rest. O, what a firm foundation is that on which the child of God stands. We are cheered by the way, and are given views of the promised land, and have assurance within our own breast, and can then withstand the assaults of the religious world. What a great blessing to be one of the despised few. We cannot describe the blessings which we receive even when there is but a rift in the cloud that shuts us out from the Lord. Sometimes the clouds grow dark and heavy, and we wonder when the sun will pierce the blackness. We look to the right hand and to the left, but all is dark. Still in his own good time the clouds are cleft in twain by the same hand that divided the Red Sea, and we behold the same Deliverer that they beheld, the only Deliverer that the child of God will ever behold. There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and his wonderful works to the children of men. But in order to declare his work with rejoicing, the spirit of praise must be given by the Giver of every good and perfect gift. O, how very helpless we are in and of our own selves. We can but cry out, Unclean, unclean. But in Christ we are perfection; he paid our

debt; he completed all the work; he declared with his last breath that it was finished. He says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." How utterly foolish are the "ifs" of the present day, since our redemption was completed upon Calvary. Did our Savior die in vain? Would he be a Savior had he not saved his people? And what was the work that his Father gave him to do? We feel to bless the God of Israel that the work was given to one who was able to perform it to the end, in every jot and tittle. And we, by the revelation of Jesus Christ, know it is all perfect. There is no spot to be found in his work, and we are altogether fair. Neither the vine nor its branches will ever languish and die. These frail bodies, one by one will be consigned to their mother earth, but even they will not sleep forever. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, they will be changed. We shall rise to meet the Lord in the air, and so be forever with the Lord. There will be no more sinful flesh to carry around, but perfect freedom. How these fleshly chains do gall us; they do bind us down; they keep us sorrowful, but we know it is but for a season. We desire to run with patience the race set before us, but find that the flesh is weak, but the Lord is our helper, and his strength is sufficient.

In conclusion we will say that peace reigns within our borders. We that can, meet in conference once in a month, and try not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together. We have had preaching during the past year only by our beloved Elder Keene, who has visited us during the past year.

Finally, brethren, farewell.

Done by order of the church, August, 1899.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1899.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SECRET SOCIETIES.

A BROTHER recently asked the question, Why we as a people do not think it right for our members to belong to secret societies? and requested a reply through the SIGNS.

We have no wish to make any sweeping denunciations of any societies of this kind, but we do feel that it will be right, and we hope profitable, to present some considerations which have weight with us regarding this matter. We do not know all the reasons which may actuate the brethren in this matter, still we suppose that our views will, in the main, be in harmony with the general feeling among us. A few brethren have not been able to look at such societies as most of us have. We do not feel to denounce as heretics those who do not feel about these societies as we do, or as being unworthy of our fellowship. Still we feel it is right, and our duty to speak faithfully what appears to us right concerning them. We have known of now and then one who belonged to some secret society, having a name among us, but this has not been general. We have not been willing to say to them that they could not be retained in the church because of this. It seems to us that the

Scriptures condemn some things in believers, which yet do not call for discipline or exclusion from the church. We find many things spoken of in the word as being wrong, in which believers were involved, but which at the same time did not seem to call for exclusion from the church. In the few cases which have come to our knowledge where brethren were members of some secret lodges, we have felt like bearing with them, while at the same time faithfully speaking of what seemed right to us, until they should be shown by the Spirit of God their error, and the inconsistency of their course in the matter. There have been one or two instances which have come under our observation, where those who were members of some secret lodge were borne with by their brethren, and after a little time they saw for themselves that it was best to withdraw from such societies, and did so. We believe all true believers will come to see the inconsistency of belonging to such societies for themselves, as they are led into the truth by the Spirit. In this matter, as well as in all that pertains to the discipline of the church, great care, and kindness, and patience should be shown, in all that we do or say. In what we may now say, we desire to show the same spirit of kindness and good will to all who may be interested in inquiring what is right, and at the same time utter faithfully what seems to us in accordance with the Scriptures.

First, it seems to us that the fact that the great body of the people of God regard such societies as contrary to the teachings of the Scriptures, and believe that it is wrong to belong to them, at least for those who are believers, ought to be sufficient to induce even those who cannot see wrong in them, and who yet love the cause of God above all things else, to withdraw from them, if connected with them, and to abstain from uniting with them if not now members of lodges. Peace and fellowship in the house of God, and membership with the church, is infinitely to be preferred to all things of the earth, even of the best things of earth. This has been our feeling ever since we trust that the love of the brethren was shed abroad in our hearts. Even had we thought it lawful to belong to some such order, we have felt that we would sacrifice what at best was but worldly, for the great privilege of being numbered with God's people. The question is a solemn and pertinent one, Which do we choose, membership in the church of God with his dear people, or membership with what at best is but a worldly society? It seems that if a child of God should ask himself this question before God, in the solitude of his communion with his own thoughts, he could not hesitate as to the answer. Even though he might think the church prejudiced, and that it was urging what the Scriptures did not demand of him, yet he would say if brought face to face with this question in the presence of God, I must go with those who love and serve God.

Second, such societies seem contrary to the spirit and tenor of such Scriptures as these: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."—2 Cor. vi. 14, and to the end of the chapter; Eph. v. 7, 11; Romans xiii. 12, and all those Scriptures which command believers to be separate from the world, and to have as little to do with worldly things as possible. And they seem contrary to the express command to Israel of old, to withdraw from all nations around them, and not to intermarry with them. It may be said that these Scriptures do not expressly forbid believers uniting with such so-

cieties as are of the world, whether secret or otherwise. But it does seem to us that they do expressly forbid such a spirit of worldliness as would lead to such societies. If one thing is sure more than another, it is that the whole life of the believer ought to be open to the inspection of all who may care to observe, as the light of day. He ought to have nothing to conceal from his fellow men. We remember that it was said by one who took part in the funeral services of the late Elder Wm. J. Purington, that he had lived before his fellow men in the light of day. We thought then that no greater commendation of him could have been spoken. He had nothing to conceal. Is it not scriptural that he that doeth truth should come to the light of day? The very name "secret society," must ever lead the mind at once to the thought of something that needs to be hidden or that fears to be seen. A believer should not desire to occupy such a position among men, and especially among his brethren.

Third, no one ought to take an oath to maintain anything before he knows what that thing is. To do so is to forswear onesself, which is forbidden in the word. (Matt. v. 33.) How can any man know but that the thing which he is beforehand sworn to keep, is a thing which ought to be told for the good of his fellow men, and for the glory of God. We are informed that all such societies require of all that they shall make oath not to reveal what they shall learn when they have become members. Thus one, for aught he knows beforehand, has bound himself to keep secret what duty would require him to tell. We can but think this is wrong in itself. The secret thing which he is sworn not to reveal may be perfectly innocent in itself, but our argument is that no man can know this beforehand, and therefore he ought not to swear beforehand at all.

Fourth. Above and beyond all these things is this one thing, all such societies have religious observances and rituals connected with them. The very fact that written prayers and other services are used, ought to be abhorrent to all our brethren, for we all believe that such religious observances are unscriptural. Written prayers and written thanksgivings have always been considered an abomination by our brethren in years past, and are so considered now. How then can any of the brethren join in such rituals as these? Yet they do, and must, when they belong to them, even though they might not take any active part in such observances, yet the fact that their names are with such society makes them responsible for all that goes on in the society as much as though they took an active part in such things. This we think all must admit. But the chief thing with such religious prayers and observances is that all their prayers are forbidden in the word of God, and by the express language of the Lord himself. When believers pray, they are bidden to ask all in the name of the Lord Jesus. This contains a prohibition against asking any other way. The prayers of all secret societies with which we have ever been acquainted, are Christless. No mention is made of the name of Christ. It has been our lot to attend several funerals where honors were paid to the dead by some secret societies, and we have listened closely with regard to this one matter, and in no case was there any mention of the name of Christ. A christian yields his faith as a christian when he joins in such prayers. He occupies the ground which a Jew could occupy, or a Unitarian

who denies the divinity and atonement of Christ. How can a humble believer consent to do such a thing? It is a shame, but it is true that we have heard men who professed to be christian ministers, read the ritual which rejected the name of Christ, at the grave, and so violate the express word of him whom they professed to serve. A brother whose name we will not give here, but who will pardon our allusion to him if he shall see this, once told us about uniting many years ago with the Odd Fellows. He was then preaching as a minister among the New School Baptists. After uniting with the lodge he was soon made chaplain. The first evening that he officiated in the lodge in that capacity, he prayed extemporaneously instead of using the prescribed ritual, and closed as he was wont to do, by saying, "We ask all in the name of the Lord Jesus." After the meeting closed, one of the members took him one side, and told him that he needed some instruction in the matter; that he must not use the name of Christ in his prayers, because they had members who did not believe in Christ, such as Jews and Unitarians, and that they must not shock the prejudices of others. At once the brother replied, "My Bible tells me to ask all in the name of Christ, and if I cannot pray in his name I cannot pray at all." Then the thought came, The Savior is the best friend that I have, and I cannot do without him anywhere. If I cannot take him with me to the lodge, I cannot go myself. And this was the last of his attendance, as we understood. We have told this to enforce the statement that the prayers of all these societies are a denial of Christ. Can a christian thus willfully deny his Savior? If he does, like Peter, he shall surely like Peter, weep. And when a believer joins in such prayers he does deny his Redeemer. God is not pleased; he hears no prayer offered without the name of Christ; he will have his Son to be honored. They who do not honor the Son do not honor him. Does a believer desire to abide where the Son of peace is not? yea, where the Son of peace is forbidden to enter. When the Master sent forth his disciples, he sent them to abide where they should find the Son of peace. From what has been said, it is plain that he could not become a member of any lodge of any secret society on earth. Will a christian go where his Master cannot go? Whatever good thing may be in such societies, it is plain that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ. Of course we do not mean that individually all members design te be enemies of the Lord Jesus, but in their constitution as societies they are his enemies. His name is not allowed in their religious observances. They are emphatically Christless societies. Again we say, that whatever good they may do, a christian cannot belong to them without denying his faith in Christ practically, or so far as his associations go. Can a believer willingly do such a thing as this? The Savior said to his disciples, When ye be come into a house salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city shake off the dust of your feet. When a believer enters a lodge of any secret society, and finds that the Son of peace is not there, and that they will not receive him as a disciple of Jesus, let him go out from hence, and shake off the dust of his feet against them. Thus will he fulfill the Savior's words.

We feel like exhorting all who love the

truth, not to let any worldly organization whatever come in between them and the church of Christ. Such ones by so doing will bring sorrow both to themselves and to all the church for them.

C.

JOHN III. 6.

"THAT which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

The language of the above text is too plain to admit of any misunderstanding, and every subject of grace has a full knowledge of its meaning. But often in their christian experience they are troubled to discern whether their emotions and the exercises of their mind are of the Spirit, or only prompted by the selfish, carnal motives of the flesh. No amount of carnal reasoning can give them the comforting assurance that their desires are of the Spirit, and they know that zeal prompted by the flesh is not pleasing in the sight of God, and if it is without charity it availeth nothing.

When left to ourselves to "kindle fires," we may be able to build up very plausible theories, which are such deceptive counterfeits, that we ourselves may be deceived by them. The flesh always appeals to "philosophy and vain reasoning" to establish itself, but the Spirit is made manifest through faith and love: "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." "Love is the fulfilling of the law."

We have been made to feel sad in witnessing the tendency to legality that has of late appeared among the brethren, for we know they shall of the Lord's hand be made to lie down in sorrow. We are told that in order to obtain the blessings we must obey the commandments.

What are the commandments? We will not stop here to numerate them. All can read them for themselves; whatever they are and however numerous they are, they are all summed up in the one word *love.*

The young man that came to the Savior thought he had kept all the commandments from his youth up, but when the Savior told him to "sell all he had and give to the poor," he found he was only actuated by a hope of reward, and a selfish motive all the time, and proved he had not obeyed in the spirit but only in the letter of the law. (Matt. xix. 19; xxii. 39; Mark xii. 33; Luke x. 27; Rom. xiii. 10; Gal. v. 14; James ii. 8.) These Scriptures are conclusive proof that all outward forms, mental resolutions, however strictly observed, if they are not of the Spirit, they are of the flesh, and the flesh can never sanctify itself. It can never think a holy thought or do a righteous act, or in any way commend itself to God. Now if it is impossible for us to obey with our carnal powers, it must be by the Spirit that we serve God. If this be so, how can we of our own volition earn the favor of God? Can we command love to God and the brethren at will? We are certain we cannot, or we would not pass so much of our time in a cold and lifeless condition. Every emotion, every thought, and every act, is either of the flesh or of the Spirit; there is no blending of flesh and Spirit: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." We cannot serve God in the flesh, for "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Then if we serve God, or keep his commandments, it must be in the Spirit, and if we can of our own volition obey or disobey, we must be able to command the Spirit or reject it at our

own option. Can anything but the Spirit of God cause our hearts to burn with love to God and to the brethren? Can anything short of the Spirit produce that faith, without which, everything is sin? How then are we of our own will to earn the favor of God, or merit his blessings?

What are the blessings we are to receive for keeping the commandments? Is it escaping the trials and afflictions such as Paul suffered, when he cried out, "O, wretched man that I am"? Why these very afflictions are the inheritance of the saints, and they are for the trial of their faith, and that we may know the fellowship of the sufferings of our blessed Savior. To say that we can work ourselves so in the favor of the Lord as to escape these sufferings, is to say we can work ourselves out of the fellowship of the suffering of Christ.

This legal idea that we can merit the blessings of the Lord, is in opposition to every principle of grace, for there is no more blending of works and grace than there is of flesh and Spirit.

Isaiah says, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow."—Isaiah l. 10, 11. If there is any "Conditional time salvation" in this Scripture we are not able to see it.

The question has been asked by some, "If you do not believe we can of ourselves keep the commandments, why do you exhort, admonish or rebuke the brethren?" The first and principle reason is, because the Scriptures instruct us to do so. The word says, "If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye that are spiritual restore such an one." The work of restoring one that has been overtaken in a fault must be done by those that are spiritual, or moved or controlled by the Spirit. If the Spirit does not indite the labors, as well as prepare the hearts of those exhorted, all labor will be in vain. The same may be said of prayer, if God does not indite our prayer to ask for what he has in store for us, we will ask amiss, and will not receive what we ask for, because our petition is of the flesh and not of the Spirit: "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

With all the "philosophy and vain reasoning" finite man can invent, he can never change the eternal truth: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

B.

PROTEST.

In the issue of the Signs of the Times for October 15th, 1899, under the head of "Church News" we published an account of a church constituted, of which we have since received a protest, claiming that the proceedings were irregular. Of course we know nothing personally about the matter, and cannot therefore pronounce judgment, or take sides. We have now published the notice and announced the protest, and hope the brethren will not ask us to publish anything further on the subject. It is neither scriptural or consistent for us to interfere in the matter.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

LUKE X. 38—42.

THIS Scripture presents a plain statement of our Lord Jesus having entered the house of Martha, and of her troubles, and of her complaint against her sister Mary, who had taken her position at the feet of Jesus to hear his word, leaving Martha to serve alone, and the reply of Jesus to Martha.

Whatever instruction we may receive from the record of this incident in the history of our Lord in the days of his incarnation, in reproving us as his disciples for worldly mindedness, or sacrificing our spiritual privileges to our worldly cares and labors, we will venture to give, as our view of the subject, that this case and circumstance bears a striking analogy to the two branches of the Redeemer's church, under the two covenants. Martha representing the people of God under the old, and Mary representing the church in her gospel organization under the new covenant.

1. It was Martha's house into which Christ had entered, and in which this incident occurred. If then, Martha represented the church under the law, or legal covenants, it was into her house that he entered, for in his advent to our world, he was made under the law, came under its obligations, was circumcised and assumed the obligation to do the whole law, and declared that he had not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill it; and that heaven and earth should pass away, but not one jot or tittle of the law should pass away until all was fulfilled.

2. Martha had a sister Mary in the house. So it was said by the people of God under the old dispensation, "We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts," &c.—Songs xiii. 8. The people of God were all under the law, and all required to be redeemed therefrom, that they might receive the adoption of sons, and the original constituents of the church in her gospel organization were found in Judea and Jerusalem, and in the regions round about Jordan. Lost sheep of the house of Israel.

3. Martha was careful and cumbered with much serving; so were all the Old Testament saints under that testament or covenant; for it was a covenant of works, and allowed no time to rest, or to sit down at the feet of Jesus to feast on his words. The rigid demands of the law called for all their mind, might and strength; nothing less than a perfect and perpetual obedience would suffice, and therefore Martha had no leisure.

4. Mary, or the gospel church, under the new covenant, has entered into rest. As all who possess a vital faith in Christ, do cease from their own works, as God did from his. They are redeemed from under the law, and delivered from the works thereof, and are no more under the law but under the grace. The Son has made them free, and they are free indeed. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to all them that believe; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile. They sit down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit is sweet to their taste. They live on every word that proceedeth out of his mouth, for his words are spirit and they are life. Therefore the disciples could well say, "Unto whom shall we go, thou hast the words of eternal life." To them his words are like apples of gold in pictures of silver. He stays them with flagons, and comforts them with apples, or with his words.

5. Martha complained that Mary had left her to serve alone, and desired the

Master to bid her to help her serve. This was the case with the legalists, at that time, and all legalists from that day to this, have been fretting and worrying because those "Do Nothings," as the new covenant saints are reproachfully called, are seated at the feet of Christ, where they can receive his word. Great and bitter complaints were at that day made against the disciples of Jesus because they adhered not to the traditions of the fathers, because they kept not the law. The same complaints are still made by the children of the bond woman, against the children of the free woman, unto this day.

6. Martha seemed honestly to believe that Christ would disapprove of Mary's indolence, if his attention was called to it, and therefore she suggested that he should reprove her. Just so the Arminians of our day seem soberly to believe that there is something wrong in depending alone for salvation on the Lord Jesus Christ. And they sometimes go as far as Martha did, in praying our Lord to set his people to work.

But our Lord's words are full of consolation to the weary and heavy laden saints. While Martha's mind was divided in the drudgery of many things, One thing only was needful. That one thing was worth more than Martha's many things; and Mary had chosen it, and it should never be taken from her. It is the choice of all who are experimentally delivered from the works of the law, and brought to the feet of Jesus to learn of him, and they do find rest to their soul who retire from the thunders of the law, and rest at the feet of the blessed Redeemer.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 1, 1857.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$317 05
Wm. Darby Sellman, Maryland	2 00
Total to date	$319 05

MARRIAGES.

By Elder John McConnell, of Ebenezer church, New York city, Oct. 29th, 1899, in the meeting-house of the Old School Baptist church in Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., John Winton Clark of Muirkirk, Ontario, Canada, to Miss Eliza Larue, daughter of Elder Wm. L. Beebe, of Warwick.

By Elder S. H. Durand, Oct. 17th, 1899, at the house of Wm. C. Michell, Spring Hill, Md., Elisha W. Parker, of Forest Grove, Md., and Miss Lizzie Reed, of Spring Hill, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Thomas Hall departed this life Sept. 26th, 1899, after a whole year of suffering. Brother Hall was born May 9th, 1830, and was married to Miss Esther Martin, Dec. 25th, 1853. Fifteen children are the fruits of this union; twelve are living, and were all at his funeral. He was baptized into the fellowship of the Old School Baptist church at Messongo, Accomac Co., Va., Sept. 19th, 1880. Brother Hall was a very industrious man, and had arrived to a standard much to his credit. They raised a large family of honorable children, which speaks well for him, and while he was careful in financial matters, he was very zealous in spiritual things, and thought much of his meetings with the church, and was always ready to share the burdens of the church. He demonstrated clearly that what he knew of God and godliness was by revelation, and not by tradition. He was very interesting in conversation on the subject of religion, which was of a plain, childlike manner. His life was an exhibition of the saving grace of God. I think he purified his soul in obeying the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren. We shall miss him very much. He was paralyzed about one year before he died, and suffered internally. Although all was done for him that loving hands could do, they could not prolong his days when the summons came. We are now mourning for ourselves, because we fully believe that he is at rest. He leaves one sister, his heartbroken companion, twelve children, six sons and six daughters, with the church, to mourn. May the Lord give grace for our day and trial.

The writer tried to comfort the mourning ones from the text in 1 John iii. 2, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." His remains were then laid away in his new selected spot, to quietly rest until the trump of God shall sound. Sleep on, dear brother, and take thy rest.

ALSO,

Martha J. Parsons, daughter of Mary J. and John W. Parsons, departed this life near Salisbury, Md., Sept. 18th, 1899, aged 23 years, 2 months and 22 days. Her disease was typhoid fever, with which she was sick five weeks. Martha was a dutiful, loving girl,

She was not a member of the church, but had shown a deep interest in the great matter of salvation. For a long time I thought that she had a hope, but the reason for that hope was not as clear as she supposed it ought to be, which kept her back. She was a great satisfaction to her parents, and the testimony that she left gave great reason to hope she now sleeps in Jesus. The Lord is good in all of the judgments that he executes. While he has removed the object of a mother's affection, he has given a precious hope that they will meet again where parting will be no more.

The writer tried to preach on the occasion, using as a text Romans xvi. 27, "To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen." The father and mother have our sympathy.

T. M. POULSON.

"THE righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come."—Isaiah lvii. 1.

DIED—**Mrs. Sarah A. Wilson,** wife of Humphrey Wilson, of Forest Hill, in the 77th year of her age. Our esteemed sister was baptized by the late Elder Francis Thorne, in fellowship with the church at Harford, in 1854, he being at that time pastor of that church. She departed this life Sept. 2d, 1899. Sister Wilson was not one who traveled to any great distance from her home churches, but was well known among the churches here, and especially in the old home church at Harford, where she first expressed a willingness to take up her cross and follow her Redeemer in the ordinances of his house. In all these fifty years she was a most steadfast, consistent and orderly member, sound in the faith, and exemplary in her life. She leaves but one remaining who composed the membership of that church at the time of my ordination, forty years ago. This church I have been trying to serve since that time. Our departed sister was much esteemed by the church as a mother in Israel, and her loss to the church is very great. She has left an aged and sorely bereaved husband, having lived in the marriage relation for about sixty years; also one daughter, who is following in the footsteps of her mother, and is a member of the same church, and three sons. They are all comfortably situated in homes of their own.

The funeral took place during a yearly meeting at Harford, having in attendance, Elders Francis, Rowe and McConnell. Elder Francis, with the writer, on the occasion tried to comfort those who remained, after which her body was laid to rest with her people who have gone before, in the presence of a large and solemn audience, to await that hour when all they that are in their graves shall come forth.

WM. GRAFTON.

SISTER **Rebecca Cushwa** died in Roanoke, Va., at her son-in-law's, Walter Macdowell, August 22d, 1899, in her 75th year. She was the third daughter of the late Judge Abram Martin, of Bedford Co., Pa., and widow of the late John S. Cushwa, of Washington Co., Md., in Clear Spring neighborhood. She remained on the farm for several years, and then moved to Hagarstown, Md., where she lived until about twelve years ago, and from there to Roanoke, Va. A few years before she left Hagarstown, she was taken with something like rheumatism, from which she suffered much, getting worse all the time, and the last four or five years of her life her suffering was beyond description, notwithstanding she tried all medical skill she could hear of, but all to no effect.

Sister Cushwa united with the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, in Loudoun Co., Va., the second Sunday in October, 1887, and was baptized by Elder J. N. Badger. Owing to her physical infirmities she was not able to attend meetings after her baptism, but sent many letters of remembrance. She was a strong supporter of the Old Baptist doctrine from her youth up, but never was so situated as to unite with them until the above time named. She had three children, two girls and one boy; the latter died in infancy. She was a devoted wife and mother, also a never-failing sister, and a "widow of the widows," and it is our hope that it is the good Lord's will that she is now resting from all her pain and sorrows. She was my sister in the flesh, and I believe in Spirit, as far as she was concerned, but as for myself, I have doubts and fears, yet one thing I am sure of: the Lord knows all things, and rules all things.

W. A. MARTIN.

DELAPLANE, Va.

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Friends are welcome, and ministering brethren are especially invited.

J. D. HUBBELL.

The Old School Baptist Church at Caroline, Tompkins Co., N. Y., will hold a two days meeting at White church, on Saturday and Sunday, November 11th and 12th, 1899, if the Lord wills. We welcome all lovers of the truth.

By order of the church,

WM. M. HART, Church Clerk.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Oct. 27, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The following is a private letter to a ministering brother in a distant State. As it expresses my views on an important subject, I send a copy for publication in the SIGNS.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Oct. 6, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER:—I have received your letter replying to my inquiry concerning your published statement that "both Adam and Christ were put on probation or trial; each had freedom of will, acted voluntarily, and each was biased to that which is good." You express the hope that if I should not approve of your position I will yet regard you as a brother. If I did not regard you as a brother I should not be corresponding with you upon spiritual things. If I am qualified to judge of a work of grace, I think I have seen evidences of it in your writings. But those evidences do not clearly appear in the letter which I have just received, nor in some argumentative articles I have read of late from your pen. You seem to have been so intent upon proving the existence of free agency on the part of the Lord's people, that you have overlooked your own daily experience of helplessness on account of a sinful nature, "a deceitful heart and wretched, wandering mind," your inward groanings and cries unto God to deliver you from your own corrupt will, and enable you to do his will, "working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight," and your prayers that the Lord would rule in and reign over you, enabling you to deny yourself.

One who did not know that you have an experience of grace would think from this letter and your published article in reply to me, that you were relying upon your own power, freedom of will, faithfulness and diligence, for daily salvation and spiritual benefit and comfort, and that you were not one of those poor, weak, halting, stumbling creatures who are daily "beggars poor at mercy's door," and who daily and hourly feel their need of Jesus to uphold and lead them, and of his Spirit to guide them in the truth, and to restore their souls.

Such forgetfulness of the most important things in our life and walk before God will occur when we engage exten-

sively in arguments upon the letter of some point of doctrine, especially in trying to reconcile the wisdom of God with the wisdom of men. I think it is on this account that you have failed of late, at least in some of the articles I have read from your pen, to bring forth the riches of that doctrine of grace which is the only hope and comfort of those poor souls who "*cannot* do the things that they would," because of the lusting of the flesh against the Spirit, and of the Spirit against the flesh. (Gal. v. 16–18.) You seem to insist that they *can* do the things that they would, and that God has left all spiritual advantage and comfort dependent upon their own will and work, and thus you have bound burdens upon them "which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear." I do not think you have intended to bind burdens upon those who are without strength, and you may not be conscious of having done so. But some of them feel it, and complain of it, and suffer under it. You cannot have meant to discourage the helpless, but how could it be otherwise than discouraging to them to insist that they are not helpless, but are given freedom of will, and are left dependent upon themselves whether they will be happy or miserable, when they dare not trust their own will for a moment? "If ye walk in the Spirit," says the apostle, "ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh."—Gal. v. 16. They feel a longing for this, but their own will and work will not lead them into that holy walk. It can only be as they "are led by the Spirit," (Gal. v. 18,) and as Jesus walks in them, as he said, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them."

You must remember that whenever you have felt that you were walking in the Spirit, and were dwelling in the favor of God, with his light and life and blessedness in your soul, all your heart has gone out in praise to Jesus for the unspeakable blessing, and you have had no thought, at the time, of taking any part of the credit to yourself. You cannot, I am sure, have ever thought that any favor you experienced from God had been earned in any part or degree by your own meritorious work. You cannot ever have asked for his favor upon such a ground. To the extent that there is an expectation of, or request for, favors upon the ground that we have performed some conditional work, to the same extent the name of Jesus is not needed by us. As in your own case the Lord alone can restore your soul, and lead you in the paths of righteousness, you ought to present the Lord alone to his people as their only hope and confidence. "He is the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea."—Psalm lxv.

The few that I have known of preachers who have been left for a time to believe that their meritorious work in the performance of conditions had secured their daily or "time salvation," and had gained them favors in the house of God, have been, while under the power of that delusion, a hindrance instead of a benefit to the Lord's afflicted and poor people. For the daily experience of the saints, as well as the Scriptures of truth, teaches them that salvation is *all* of grace from first to last; that "grace *all* the work shall crown." They do not find, in either the Bible or their experience, that it takes less of grace to keep them in the way than was needed to bring them there, because of part of the work of keeping them being now left for themselves to do; but that it is the same grace all the way through, and always sufficient for

them. (2 Cor. xii. 9.) "By the grace of God I am what I am," said the apostle. While he could claim for himself and the other apostles a blameless and holy life and walk among the saints, he ascribed all to the grace of God. In regard to his own work, he never suggests a freedom of will, or an ability on his own part, but always speaks of the will and grace of God as the moving power, and declares that his labor and striving are "according to the working of Jesus, which worketh in me mightily."—Col. i. 29.

While obedient saints rejoice in the commendation of their own consciences in the sight of God, and in the commendation of the brethren and churches, they would, when spiritually minded, shrink from the use of the word praise as applicable to them in the other sense, implying any merit in themselves; for they know and feel that Jesus has wrought all their works in them, (Isa. xxvi. 12,) and that to him belongs all the praise, while theirs are the blessing and benefit. To me it is a new and strange thing to find Old Baptists claiming praise for works of obedience, and insisting that the favor of God is conditional, depending upon their will and choice, and therefore uncertain, and that when it comes to them it comes as a reward for their obedience. I have heard that kind of talk all my life from Arminians, but never before from Old Baptists.

The Lord's people cannot eat their own flesh, cannot live upon their own works. The doctrine of a conditional salvation, a salvation depending upon their own will and power to perform some meritorious work, will not feed any "who have seen the plague of their own hearts," for they cannot trust in themselves. "We have the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raiseth the dead." Such as these must have the flesh of Jesus to eat; upon his works alone can they live. If you preach anything but Jesus your preaching will not satisfy the soul that hungers and thirsts after righteousness. A conditional salvation will be of no use to them who "cannot do the things that they would;" who cannot direct their own steps; (Jer. x. 25,) who cannot walk, but have to be carried. "Even to hoar hairs will I carry you," is one of the many sweet promises for such, but while you are urging upon them the system of conditions, and of dependence upon themselves, you cannot minister such precious promises to them. I do not see them referred to by you, though they are probably often in your heart in secret before God. It is better to try to minister to others only what we have ourselves tasted and handled.

In my letter to you I referred to the words of Jesus, "I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me;" and also, "Not my will, but thine, be done," as my reason for not agreeing with you that Christ was put upon probation or trial, and that he was left free to do his own will. In your reply you have not referred to those expressions of Jesus, but have written in such a way that a stranger to your profession might easily regard your letter as a careful argument in refutation of the Savior's declaration that he did not come to do his own will. It is in sincerity and kindness, and not in a captious spirit, that I call your attention to these things.

You say that Jesus was given liberty of choice, and did as he pleased, but he himself says he did not come to do his own will, though his was the will of a sinless man; and the apostle says, "Even Jesus pleased not himself."—Romans xv. 3. His will as a man could be affected

by the wants and infirmities of our nature which he had taken upon him; by sorrow, pain, hunger, weariness; so that the doing of this will would not have accomplished the work of salvation he came to do. He was not at any time left alone to himself until the last hour. His Father was always with him, and did his work in him, as he does the work of his people in them. "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself, but my Father which dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."—John xiv. 10. "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise."—John v. 19. This is why he always pleased the Father, and not because of himself he had done some work. He did not work alone in this sense. Even in the terrible struggle in the garden an angel was sent from heaven to strengthen him, so that he should not fail.

As it was with the dear Savior, so it is with his people; only as God works in them can they ever do that which is well pleasing in his sight. Therefore the apostle says, "For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure;" and he expresses his desire that "God, even our Father," would "make them perfect to do his will, working in them that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Christ Jesus."—Heb. xiii. 20, 21; and they who dwell in the land of Judah, the gospel land, say, "Thou, Lord, wilt ordain peace for us, for thou also has wrought all our works in us."—Isa. xxvi. 12.

One brother says of the words in Phil. ii. 13, just quoted, that, "Whatever they may mean, he is sure that the brethren were called upon to do something more, about which they exercised choice, and in which they were voluntary." And he says concerning such Scriptures, that they must not be interpreted so as to make it unnecessary to exhort one another to love and good works, and to "persuade men." The language of those Scriptures concerning the working of God in us, is not dark or equivocal, but clear as noonday, and needs no interpreting. The teaching of the apostles will never make any gospel work unnecessary. We need not concern ourselves about the result of the plain teaching of the Scriptures concerning the sovereignty of God, nor try to harmonize the doctrine and things of God with the thoughts and ways of men, for they are not alike, and never will be. (Isa. lv. 8; 1 Cor. 2.)

But what that "more" could be which the brethren were called upon to do, besides what the Lord worked in them to will and to do of his good pleasure, about which they exercised choice, and in which they were voluntary, I cannot understand. If the Lord works in them that which is well pleasing in his sight, and if they declare by inspiration that he has wrought *all* their works in them, what more outside works can there be? I do not suppose such thoughts would occur to one except upon the supposed necessity in order to defend a conditional salvation.

In the first part of your letter you have acknowledged and clearly proved that everything in the life of Jesus had been determined before, and was certain. Why then should you need to speak of him as put upon probation? All that you refer to in the Scriptures concerning his temptations, or trials, does not, in my view, warrant that declaration. That form of language appears to imply some kind or degree of uncertainty, and you evidently have that in view in speaking

of him as put upon probation, for you say that being subject to the commands of God "proves that he was situated to do as he pleased;" and referring to his words, "I lay down my life of myself," you say, "While his death was certain, it was not so with such a certainty as would interfere with his liberty of doing as he pleased." It seems to me that the terrible scene of suffering in the garden, and his words of pleading to the Father that the cup might pass from him, if it were possible, might have made you hesitate about writing that sentence.

You say again, "While his obedience was predestinated, it was not predestinated like our regeneration and resurrection were predestinated." I do not find two kinds or degrees of certainty, nor two kinds of predestination spoken of in the Bible or elsewhere.

I do not understand that the difference you refer to between physical and moral government and necessity applies to this subject. The government of Jesus is a spiritual government, and does not come within the observation of men, (Luke xvii. 20,) and the obedience of his people is a spiritual necessity. The Father worked in Jesus, and he works in his people. If he works in them that which is well pleasing in his sight, can there be any uncertainty as to whether they will all please him in his own time? "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."

Both in this letter, and in your published article, you insist that the grace by which we are born of God is not the same as that by which we obey the commands of Jesus afterward. Where do we read in the Scriptures of different kinds of grace? We were raised up together with Christ, "that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus." The "exceeding riches of his grace" cannot be exceeded, and that is shown in all his kindness toward us. "For by grace ARE ye saved." Now look along that road and see the same grace reaching through and manifested in all the good works unto which they were created, and in which it was before ordained that they should walk. (Eph. ii. 1.)

You say that an unconditional salvation makes exhortations and the like unnecessary, while to my mind it is that system alone which shows them in their true character and right place. They belong to that new and everlasting covenant "which is ordered in all things and sure," and in which repentance and mercy are provided for, as they cannot be under a conditional system.

Will the gifts which Jesus gave to men fail till all the saints come, in the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ? (Eph. iv. 7–10.) The Lord "hath set the members in the body as it pleased him," and "the Spirit divides to every man of his gifts severally as he will." If a different measure of grace is given at any time it is not that less is needed in some cases because part of the work is to be done by the will of the man, without grace, or that less grace is needed where the man voluntarily chooses to be obedient. But in this way only can I attach any meaning to your expressions about different kinds of grace. In every case just the measure of grace is given that is needed to be sufficient for us. I do not myself find in my experience, nor in the Bible, a distinction as to kinds or amounts of grace. It seems to me that I need more grace than any other poor sinner, and my judgment tells me that if ever I

need more at one time than another it is when I am most lifted up in the joy of God's salvation, for after such exaltation I am most liable to be deceived and hurt by the evil propensities of this deceitful heart, which "is still deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked."

A brother, one of the most spiritual and tender-hearted, said at our prayer meeting yesterday, "Some talk about free will, but it seems to me that my will is only free to do evil, so that sometimes I seem to be all sin. But," he said, "when I do feel some holy desires, and love to the brethren, and some liberty of soul in spiritual things, I feel sure it is all of grace. It is not of myself, but of the grace of God which is given me." And I could join and say truly, "Amazing grace."

> "Grace taught my soul to pray,
> And pardoning love to know;
> 'Twas grace that kept me to this day,
> And will not let me go."

Speaking of Christ with reference to rewards, we must remember that his reward was with him while his work was before him. (Isa. xl. 10.) You say it is right to have a reward in view, and that we gain nothing by saying that the reward is *in* the work, not *for* it. You say if we know that precious fruits grow along a certain road, we understand that we must go along that road in order to get the fruits. And still I hold to the Bible expressions: IN the keeping of them is great reward. The other view is natural, as sure as salvation by grace is true. I find enough of that system of selfishness in my flesh, but I hate it in myself and others. It has never brought me any real comfort, but has given me great disturbance and pain. It is not for some precious fruits that we go along that road, because we cannot have them unless we do go there, but for the beauty and goodness and preciousness of the road itself. Jesus is the road, and we never knew or desired that way till we were brought into it, and then we are filled with wonder and love that we are there. And when a living soul is out of that road he never has any real comfort till the Lord restores his soul, and brings him back again, for he can never get back by himself.

There seems to prevail in the mind of some brethren, the worldly view that a hope of reward or a fear of punishment is necessary to compel obedience. They forget or overlook in their own experience, and in the Bible, that the Lord has used other and far different motive powers. Will any offered reward cause one to seek righteousness as he does who hungers for it? Will any fear of punishment turn one away from evil as effectually as a hatred of evil felt in the heart? "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil," and that is what the Lord puts in the hearts of his people, "*that they shall not* depart from him."—Jer. xxxii. 40.

"Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men."—2 Cor. v. The apostle is not here speaking of terror of some punishment which is threatened if men sin, but of the terror of the Lord's presence to the one who loves him, but is found in transgression; the terror of sin itself to those who have a spirit which causes them to love purity, and to desire "rather to be absent from the body and present with the Lord." It is the terror of being found of the Lord in a fleshly, sinful walk, which he hates, and which his Spirit causes us to hate. The terror of being found in crime by one dearly loved would be greater than to be thus found by one who could punish us. Those who are here persuaded are those

whose exercises and desires are described in this chapter, whose only delight is the felt favor of the Lord, and whose greatest terror is the withdrawal of his face. These are they whom "the love of Christ constraineth" in all their work, whose desire is to "live not unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again." These are not seeking in what they do, their own peace and comfort, as a reward, but the honor of God. Their reward is *in* the work. The principle now so much advocated of doing works of obedience for the reward which shall be given them, I decidedly distrust and oppose in myself or another. It is of the flesh. It is not spiritual nor true. In such a case the worker may not love the work, nor care to obey, but only does it because the reward of peace and joy lies in that direction. If they could not get the reward would they still do the work? If they were to go into darkness and distress as a consequence of the obedience, would they obey? The principle which God gives as the true incentive to obedience is his own love. Do the good work because it is right, no matter what follows, and avoid the evil because it is wrong, and not because it will subject us to punishment. The true principle says, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." I am tired and sick of this self, self; this seeking something for self in all we do. My nature is full of it, but I hate it. I do not want to be controlled by it, nor do I want to see it taught as the right principle by yourself and so many others. I know it is all wrong. Gospel rewards are of grace, not of debt, and do not pander to that selfish principle of the flesh. They are infinitely higher and holier. They are the honor and glory of God. When we are spiritually led his glory is what we seek. "Do all to the glory of God." He himself is our "exceeding great reward."

I do not understand, as you assert, that the word "if," as used in the New Testament, implies a condition. It is never used as expressing a dependence upon the will of the creature, as it is in the Old Testament. The Savior and his apostles do not say, "If you *will*," but "If you *do*," "If you *are*," expressing not an act that may or may not be done, but a state or condition of mind. The Savior never said, "If you *will* believe," but, If you *do* believe." He did not say, "If a man *will* keep my commandments he shall abide in my love," but, "If a man keep my commandments." The form of expression in the New Testament never leaves the result as depending upon the will and choice of man, but on the will and power of God. The form of new covenant expressions always is such as shows that man can do nothing of himself toward his own salvation; that "without God he can do nothing."

The Savior did not say, "If you *will* come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, I will give you rest. If you *will* take my yoke upon you and learn of me, you shall find rest to your souls." In commenting on this you say the Savior addresses his people as parents say to their children, "If you will obey me in this matter I will give you a toy, or give you my approval." Again you say, "He presents motives, as if he would say, You need rest, you are laboring and heavy laden, and need rest. He plainly encourages them to obedience by promising rest in case they obey." I do not understand it so at all. There would be no power in such entreaties. "Where the word of a king is there is power." This Scripture has been very precious to me for thirty-five years, but I never under-

stood it in that way. It is not an invitation nor an encouragement. The Savior's words are more and better than that. He never invites. The word "invite" is never used by him, nor concerning him, in the Scriptures. He calls, and his call is always obeyed. He speaks, not to the ear, but to the heart, and his word never returns to him void, but accomplishes his will. (Isa. lv. 11.) He describes those whom he calls as they are, "laboring and heavy laden," unable to do any part of the work of satisfying the law, which presses them down under its condemning power, while they struggle under it, unable to rise. They cannot go from sin to holiness, from the powers of darkness to him. But his call brings them. As Lazarus did not know that Jesus had called him till he stood at the mouth of the grave alive, so no laboring and heavy laden soul can know that Jesus has called him till he feels that sacred rest. The peace of God which he feels passeth understanding. This call of the Son is the revelation of the Father by him. He has just said, "No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."—Matt. xi. 27. Then he reveals him. In his own good time these words, which "are spirit and life," reach every soul that has labored in vain to fulfill the law, and has fallen down helpless under its righteous power, and brings that soul away from the law, freed from every demand, washed from all sin, into his own gospel rest, where they are enabled to say, "Abba, Father," through the name of Jesus, his only begotten Son. Yes, when Jesus calls they come. No one ever failed to come whom Jesus called. "My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me."

It is thought by some that if one cannot do good he is not to blame for not doing it. This would remove blame from those to whom the Lord says, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil."—Jer. xiii. 23. We must remember that the cause of blame was before we were born. We were children of wrath by nature, dead in sins. (Eph. ii. 1–5.) When made alive it was not in Adam, but in Christ, and only in him can we live before God, or do good works. It is by his life, and his will, and by his grace, not of ourselves, that we obey the Lord. When Paul speaks of himself as laboring more abundantly than all the others, he says, apparently correcting any wrong impression his words might give, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." —1 Cor. xv. 10.

I exhort to obedience, and admonish those liable to wander, and warn the unruly, when I feel it needed, though feeling to need the exhortations and admonitions so much myself, and feeling unworthy to admonish others, but it is never with the thought that the desired effect will depend upon the faithfulness, wisdom and power of my work. It all depends upon the faithfulness, wisdom and power of God. I do, or wish to do, what the Lord directs me to do, because he commands it. It is for him to make the work effectual. I could neither preach or exhort if I thought the benefit depended upon my ability; I am too weak. "The lot is cast into the lap; the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."—

Eccl. xi. 6. The faith of those ministered unto "shall stand, not in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God."—1 Cor. ii. 5.

I can say to any living soul, "Your peace of mind, and the manifest favor of God, depend upon your obedience, or at least you cannot have them while walking in disobedience." But how can I say, "They depend upon your own choice and will?" That would be telling them that they are their own keepers, and are able to direct their own steps, which is contrary to the Scriptures and to their own experience. When I have given the urgent exhortation, admonition or reproof, in love and with tender anxiety, I must remind them, and must myself remember, that the Lord only can work in them the needed will, give them his Holy Spirit to lead them, and restore their souls. We all agree that he only can give us the spirit of prayer and lead us in the paths of righteousness. He only can give us true obedience in our hearts. Could you say to the Lord in prayer, "We know our obedience and our comfort are left to ourselves, and are not brought about by the same grace which brought us from death to life?" No, before you were half through with such a prayer you would be choked up with the surging cry, "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

The prayer of our hearts, when wrought upon by the Spirit, is, "Keep me from evil that it may not grieve me," (not that I may not suffer punishment.) "Lead me in the paths of righteousness for thy name's sake."

The word "if" does not in my view imply anywhere in the new covenant a condition which may or may not be performed, and upon the performance of which by us according to our will, depends our experience of the favors and blessings of God. That was the form of the legal covenant, and the conditional expressions made under that covenant are correctly quoted by you and others, but I have wondered why spiritually instructed men should try to apply them to gospel things, which are all made new. The conditional system never availed for salvation. That was not its use and purpose, but to show that salvation was beyond the sinner's power, and to stop every mouth. In the gospel salvation stands "from all conditions clear." Those who live after the flesh shall die, and those who through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, shall live. But only through the Spirit can a spiritual work of any kind be done by any man.

Believing that God works all things after the counsel of his own will, we can with confidence do each his portion of work, as the Lord directs to it, and in it, knowing that he "will perfect that which concerneth us," and will cause his own gifts to his church to result in her good and his own glory.

In 1 Peter iii. 10, I do not see that conditional salvation and comfort are any more taught than in any other of this and the other apostles' sweet and tender exhortations. He appeals to that holy delight in spiritual things which is in the soul of every one who has been born of God, and which is the only true incentive to self-denial and a holy life. Paul appeals to the same spiritual fountain and source of right action when he says, If there be any consolation in Christ, any comfort of love, any fellowship of the Spirit, &c., fulfill ye my joy, &c. (Phil ii. 1.) But neither of the apostles present these exhortations as conditions uncertain of fulfillment, unsettling the sure

covenant of grace. None of them ever flatter the vanity of the flesh by intimating that the Lord depends upon the will of the flesh for the fulfillment of his wishes. No! As Peter said on the day of Pentecost that they who crucified Jesus with wicked hands, had not prevented, but fulfilled "the determinate counsel of God," so he and all the other inspired men assure us that no one can by any act of his change or affect the counsel of God's will, only to fulfill it.

Faith will enable the child of God to say, in the Lord's time, "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him."—Job xxiii. 13, 14.

What has our will to do with our love, or with our belief? We cannot of ourselves will to do either, neither is it of our will that we keep the commandments. "He that believeth *hath* everlasting life," not "If you will believe you shall have everlasting life." "He that loveth *hath* fulfilled the law." What comfort to the poor and helpless there is in the teachings of Jesus and the apostles upon this subject of the commandments and how they are kept. Suppose they had said, "Do you not want to abide in the love of God? Well, if you will keep his commandments you may. It depends upon yourself." How the natural man, who neither knows nor cares for the love of God, would have been inflated with pride and self-confidence, while the spiritual man would sink down to the borders of despair, realizing how unable he is to keep one commandment. But in the Lord's own time this poor soul will be made to know that the sweet love which he feels in his heart, and which is his only comfort, is a sure evidence that the righteousness of the law has been fulfilled IN him, and that this love is itself the keeping of the commandments. He is taught that by the token of this love he is in Christ, and Christ in him. The commandments have been written in his heart. Love to God is there, and love to his brethren, and a strong desire and earnest prayer that the Lord would enable him to ever walk in that love, and to work it out in his life and conversation.

Your brother in the love of the gospel,

SILAS H. DURAND.

THE HAND OF GOD IN HISTORY.

THE Lord rules in the army of heaven among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? Dan. 4. 35

To the greater number of readers history presents nothing more than a series of disjointed events, having no connection with each other, no dependence upon each other and no relation to each other. But to the truly thoughtful mind the history of this world presents itself as a unit, as one grand whole, as a series of events mutually dependent and interdependent upon each other. The mind which views history in this its true nature is driven to one of two ways of accounting for it: events either come by an inexorable chain of inevitability, or they come as directed by the hand of the God of the whole earth.

The atheist who cannot see the hand of God will ascribe all to an inevitable necessity, but he whose eyes are enlightened by faith can see the hand of God ruling not only in heaven, but in earth as well; he can see the answer to the prayer taught by the Son of God: "Thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven." He who has not seen predestination in history, has not seen the philosophy of history; he who has not seen predestination in his own life, has not seen the

secret springs of his being. Predestination is the soul of history. God is in history. All history is but the exponent of Providence.

John saw in the hand of him that sat upon the throne a book written within, and on the back side sealed with seven seals. He was permitted to witness the opening of these seals, and has left upon record the things that he saw. When the first seal was opened, a white horse appeared, and he that sat on him had a bow, and a crown was given unto him; and he went forth conquering and to conquer. This was undoubtedly a view of Christ in his risen power and eternal authority, Christ going forth in the execution of the divine will both in heaven and in earth.

But when the second seal was opened, a similar yet very different symbol appeared. And when he had opened the second seal there went out another horse that was red; and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another; and there was given unto him a great sword. A horse, in the Scriptures, is the emblem of power and of battle; red is a symbol of war, carnage and bloodshed. The history of this world is the history of wars. Horrible as war is, it is the most potent factor of civilization and progress; reformations have never accomplished much in the world; they are good as far as they go, but they have never hurried the race onward; it takes revolutions to do this. As the terrific earthquakes, prodigious upheavals, the great subsidences, the alternate sway of scorching heat and frigid cold, all constituted God's process of fitting this earth for the habitation of man, so wars are ordained the great process of regulating human society and of forwarding civilization. Every event that has put the world forward by a great stride, has been an event of war.

But where did the red horse and his ominous rider come from? They came out of the book that was held in the right hand of him that sat upon the throne; they came from the same place from which the white horse and his rider came, from the book of God's decrees. And power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another. Who gave him this power? Who else but the God of the whole earth? Did not the Son say, "All power is given unto me both in heaven and in earth"? Does not God's word declare that there is no power but of God? Is not God the God of battles?

Let us now turn to history, let us go into the great decisive contests and find God there. Begin with Marathon; in the year 490, B. C., a handful of Greek patriots met hordes of Persian invaders upon the plain of Marathon; a determined struggle ensued; the Persians were repulsed, the Greeks were victorious. By this Greek victory the long spell of Persian invincibility was forever broken, and the intellectual treasures of Athens, the growth of free principles, and the enlightenment of what was then the western world, were saved. If the influence exerted on the world by Greece can be estimated, then the results of the battle of Marathon may be measured. Where the destinies of nations are at stake, can any who believe in God say he is not there? The influence of this victory of the Greeks, over two thousand years ago, is inseparably connected with the condition of our nation to-day.

The defeat of Athens before Syracuse, was a decisive blow; this was a contest between Athens and the western col-

onies. Athens was defeated; had Syracuse been defeated, the energy of Athens would have found a field in the west for the next century, and Rome would not have conquered Carthage, and Greek, not Latin, would have been the essential element in the language of Spain, Italy and France, and the laws of Athens, and not of Rome, would now have been the foundation of the laws of the civilized world. Is it not clearly evident here that the Lord rules in the kingdoms of men, and gives to whom he will?

Go now to the battle of Arbela, which occurred in 331, B. C. This decisive encounter so far reaching in its results, was between the Greeks under Alexander the Great, and the Persians under Darius. By Alexander's victory at Arbela, Greek customs, the Greek language and Greek civilization were established in all western and southwestern Asia, and northern Africa, to exist nearly a thousand years, and to endure in their effects forever. This planted the Greek language in Judea and Palestine, and thus it became the language of the New Testament. So the results of this battle are far reaching, not only in political affairs, but in the affairs of the church of Christ, and are as real and present as if the battle occurred but half a century ago. Alexander was the hammer in the hand of God to break in pieces the great Persian Empire.

The battle of Metaurus was conspicuous in directing the course of empire, and deciding the destinies of nations. Two hundred and seven years before Christ, the Romans and Carthaginians engaged in this decisive contest. This battle decided the great question whether the Semitic family of nations, which includes the Arabs, Jews, Phoenicians and Carthaginians, should rule the world, or whether the Germanic family, which includes the Greeks, Romans, Germans and those from whom the English speaking people have descended, should continue their course. The results of the Roman victory stand in the present condition of the nations, and shall continue to enlarge and exist while the world shall stand.

The battle of Chalons deserves mention here. This encounter came to pass in 451, A. D., between the Romans and their allies, and the dreaded Huns under Attila, their king, who was called the scourge of God. Roman arms were victorious, and Attila was defeated in his plans to establish a dynasty upon the ruins of the Roman Empire. All Europe was thus freed from the devastating ravages of the destructive Huns. The mind that can see the first letter of the alphabet of God's providence, can see the finger of God in this, as he rules in the kingdom of men.

The battle of Tours has left its imprint upon the world's history for all time to come. Here in 732, A. D., a small body of troops under Charles Martell, encountered and put to rout a great body of invading Mohammedans. The mussulmans were beaten back in this their last attempt to conquer Europe, thus rendering it possible for the development and progress of European civilization to go on, not uninterruptedly, but in its ultimate career.

By the great battle of Blenheim, in 1704, the almost universal dominion of France and Spain, was broken by the armies of England and Austria. If this had not occurred, the destinies of nations would have been altogether different. Europe, instead of being a variety of independent states, where mutual hostilities keep courage alive, and national rivalry stimulates talent, would have been sunk into the slumber attendant

upon universal dominion. The Roman Catholic power would have been reestablished in England, the Anglo-Saxon race would have been arrested in its career, and the condition of the United States would be much like that of Mexico and the rest of Spanish America. But God ordered that the power of France and Spain should be broken, and the battle of Blenheim fulfilled the decree.

At the battle of Pultowa, in 1709, the power of Sweden, which at that time was very great, was forever broken, and the ascendancy of Russia established until now she stands a giant among the nations. This battle is no less important for what it broke down than for what it established. Many more examples might be cited, but these are sufficient.

What more is needed to show those who believe in God how his predestination is exemplified in the history of nations; to show that in the great battles and revolutions in this world that God's purpose is accomplished; that the red horse and his rider came from the book of God's decrees, and that the power possessed by these, is the power which God has given for the accomplishment of his own purposes.

"See the mystic weaver sitting
High in heaven, his loom below;
Up and down the treadles go;
Takes for web the world's dark ages,
Takes for woof the kings and sages,
Takes the nobles and their pages,
Takes all stations and all stages.
Thrones are bobbins in his shuttle,
Armies make them scud and scuttle,
Web into the woof must flow;
Up and down the nations go,
At the weaver's will they go."

We should not look at the battles cited above as isolated events, but each has its place in a great war, and is inseparably connected with other great conflicts.

The opening of the second seal, revealing the red horse and his rider, is a prophecy in symbol of what the Savior prophesied in word as recorded in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, when he said, "For nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom." When the Son of God uttered this prophecy he was not predicting something that might come to pass, or something likely to come; he was not even foretelling what he foresaw coming into the world, but on the contrary he was declaring the immutable decree of the Father. When God says a thing shall be, his word has gone forth as a pledge that he will bring it to pass. The word "shall" in the text, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me," no more expresses a decree than the word "shall" expresses a decree in the text, "For nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom."

Although every land and every age have been invaded by the red horse and his rider, and war has been the chief business of men, there are other fields of activity in which the providence of God is clearly traceable. When the third seal was opened a black horse appeared, and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. This was a symbol of famine; great scarcity is signified by the balances. The seven year's famine in Egypt was done by God. (Gen. xli. 28, 32.) These are the words of Scripture, "What the God is about to do, he showeth unto Pharaoh, and for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice, it is because the thing is established with God, and God will shortly bring it to pass." One would say famines are the result of physical causes; so they are; this fact only broadens the field of providence. What controls physical causes? Natural laws. Who established natural laws? God. Who executes natural laws? God.

Of what force would natural laws be without the perpetual execution of them? Who ever knew a law of any kind to enforce itself?

At the opening of the fourth seal, the pale horse and his rider come forth. The name of the rider was Death, and Hell followed with him. Power was given unto them to kill with the sword, and with hunger and with death, and with the beasts of the earth. This is a symbol of pestilence, which usually follows in the wake of famine. Pestilence has done its part in human history, and dark and woeful are its footsteps. The pale horse and his ominous rider must run their course, because they proceed from the book held in the right hand of him who sits upon the throne. The Savior himself said in the wonderful prophecy recorded in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, There shall be pestilences. So the Scriptures undoubtedly teach that pestilences are controlled, directed and administered by God.

In his history of epidemics in Britain, Dr. Creighton designates as the two greatest pestilences in all history, the great plague in the reign of Justinian, in 543, and the Black death in 1347. Both of these had a worldwide sweep, from country to country, and from generation to generation, changing the face of the world through the vast destruction of population which they effected. The first of these brought to an end the old civilization, and the second terminated the dark ages of Europe, and opened the way for modern civilization and progress. Who can tell how many evils were swept away by these prodigious marches of death, and how many obstacles to human progress were removed, and in how many ways they answered God's purposes?

When the fifth seal was opened there was revealed the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus. This presents to us the awful picture of christian martyrdom. The Savior told his disciples, They shall deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you.

In this company of souls under the altar, was righteous Abel, prophets of God, slain in every age, the little children, slain by the decree of Herod, Stephen and countless others. This company received daily additions; Peter was crucified, Paul was beheaded, and all the other apostles with one exception, died at the hand of wicked persecuters. But did they thus perish without God's decree? No, in no wise. Listen to the answer given to those under the altar, when they in their impatience cried for vengeance. It was said unto them that they should rest yet for a little season until their fellow servants and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled. From this record we see that they had brethren that should be killed as they were, and that this had to be fulfilled. As Christ was delivered to death by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, so all of his brethren that have been put to death by wicked hands, have been delivered by the same determinate counsel; Christ said to Pilate, Thou couldst have no power at all against me if it were not given thee from above. It may be said as truthfully of his brethren, that wicked men can have no power at all against them except it were given them from above.

Wonderful, awful and appalling were the scenes presented at the successive opening of the remaining seals. Whatever these awe-inspiring imageries are intended to symbolize, they are undoubtedly events which were to transpire in

this world. They constitute an amazing vitascope of universal history. The rise and fall of nations, religious and political revolutions, civil and international wars, teriffic convulsions of nature, events of every genus and every species are here presented in the boldest, most impressive and most convincing imagery and symbols.

The one thing that I would impress upon the mind of the reader is, that these things all proceeded from the book held in God's right hand, and which was opened by Jesus himself. One would say, that would make God the author of sin. With such an one I shall not stop to argue, for one who would seek to evade the doctrine of God's predestination by resorting to such a subterfuge as that old threadbare fallacy, is joined to some idol, and for my part I shall let him alone, at least for the present.

"Glorious wonder, what a weaving,
To the dull beyond believing;
Such no fabled ages know.
Only faith can see the mystery,
How along the aisles of history,
Where the feet of sages go,
Loveliest to the fairest eyes,
Grand the mystic tapet lies.
'Tis believed by all believing,
That great God himself is weaving,
Bringing out the world's dark mystery,
In the light of faith and history;
And as web and woof diminish,
Comes the grand and glorious finish,
When begin the golden ages,
Long foretold by seers and sages."

O the depth both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out.

H. M. CURRY.

PLEASANT PLAINS, Ill.

THE CHILD JESUS.

OUT of the mists of the morning comes the light of the natural day. There is a glory of the sun from which the light cometh. As it ascendeth into the zenith of the heavens, its midday brightness gives glory to the earth and to the inhabitants thereof. Its rays descend upon the earth, giving light and warmth and brightness, causing the seed therein to bring forth and bud, to grow, to flourish and to mature, from the seed time to the harvest. The sun receiveth its glory from its Creator. For, "God commanded the light to shine out of darkness." Therefore the light of the sun is the glory of it. While the life-giving principle in the light makes manifest the glory in the rich, varied and beautiful productions of the earth, it also manifests the glory of God, not only in the creation and its subsequent results, but also in its perfect obedience to the law which governs it, and under which it is placed. Again, the glory of the sun is apparent to the church of Christ in the sense that it is typical of a greater and far more glorious Sun than itself, the "Sun of righteousness," which is Jesus Christ the Lord. We hear the psalmist say, "For the Lord God is a sun and a shield. The Lord will give grace and glory." But we would consider him in the morning of his incarnation, as out of the mist of the morning comes the light of the natural day, so also out of the mists and fog of the night dispensation, out of darkness and cold of the long, dark, cheerless night under the law, comes the Sun of righteousness with healing in his wings, bringing warmth and good cheer to the sons of men. In the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, in the land of Judea, was born the child of promise, which should be called "the Son of the Highest." He was born a

King. As King of Israel he came into the world, as an evidence of which came wise men from the east, and finding the young child with his mother they fell down and worshiped him, spreading their trophies before him, and presenting "unto him gifts, gold, frankincense and myrrh." As a babe also he was "the King of glory." Unto the shepherds the angels said, "Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Kingly power was already manifest in the young child. The thoughts of many hearts were turned toward the mountains round about Judea, and the babe in the midst of them. "The generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob," shall cry out of the full treasure of their hearts, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. * * * Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory." When Simeon, (a just and devout man of Jerusalem) looked by faith upon the little child in its mother's arms, he blessed them, "And said unto Mary his mother, Behold this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel." While yet a child he set up his throne in the hearts of his people Israel, and his reign continues from everlasting to everlasting in the righteousness of God. "He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment, a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." The wisdom and knowledge of this child depended not upon that which he might acquire in maturer years; for he was the living personification and possessor of all the treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of God. He was "appointed heir of all things," and in his own person he upheld all things by the word of his power. When he was but twelve years old he was found in Jerusalem "sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions, and all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers." We know that in all his life in the flesh he was not contaminated by contact with the world, although as a babe helpless and dependent upon his mother, yet possessing all power, and the strength of all worlds, he appeals to our hearts as little children of his kingdom. We grow up to be men and women in the course of nature, as Jesus grew up to be a man in his incarnation, yet in the kingdom of heaven we are little children in the spirit, bearing the honest simplicity of the gospel of Christ, which always designates the child from the grown man. Neither do we grow out of childhood in our life unity with the holy child Jesus. The prophet declares, "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days, for the child shall die an hundred years old," &c. How wonderful is the childish innocence yet profound wisdom of this glorious kingdom. Again, the prophet says, "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them." The disciples of Jesus at one time asked him, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? and Jesus called a little child unto him and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted and become as little children ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever there-

fore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven, and whoso receiveth one such little child in my name receiveth me." The marvelous perfection of beauty in Zion is due to the sweet simplicity and childlike innocence of the inhabitants thereof, as they are moved by the love of God which flows from heart to heart. The carnal mind is ashamed of the gospel of Christ, because it detracts from his exalted manhood. He could not for a moment think of condescending in his independent free will to become subject to a higher power or authority, for he accepts nothing greater than himself. This is because they are blind to their own frailty. The beauty of Zion and the perfumes of Jerusalem are hidden from the wise and carnal-minded of this world, and revealed unto the children of the kingdom, whose eyes are opened, and whose hearts are enlightened by the spirit of truth in Christ Jesus. Therefore it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man (rich in this world's wisdom) to enter the kingdom of heaven. To become as a little child is to have no confidence in the flesh, and to know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified. Jesus as a babe came into the world under the law, and subject to all its requirements, and in order to render perfect obedience to the law, he became weak as we also are weak, that we might be made strong in him. He took upon himself every infirmity of the flesh, and the consequences of sin, bearing all our sins in his own body, yet "himself without sin." Therefore "he learned obedience by the things which he suffered."

Now how do these things present themselves to our mind? We view the church as secure in Christ. We feel fully assured for those whom we love for the truth's sake. But the despairing cry of our heart is, Have I ever become as a little child? Have I tasted that the Lord is gracious? Have I passed through the gates and entered into the city? Have I seen the Lord of life and glory? Happy is the heart that can sing, "O for a glance of heavenly day," for that heart is already in the holy city. May we all ask to be humbled, and to be filled with the simplicity of the holy child Jesus.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 1, 1899.

OXFORD, N. Y., Sept. 7, 1899.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—In my meditations this morning I had some comfort thinking of that river the streams whereof make glad the city of our God. I do not know that I am right, but it seems to me the city means the dear saints here on earth, and the streams are the heavenly joys bestowed upon them here. These are sweet enjoyments known only by the Lord's people. The word further says, I will be unto you a place of broad rivers and streams. Dear brethren, is not that the time when Jesus is our all and in all, and when we hear him say, Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away, for lo the winter is gone, and the flowers appear on the earth, and the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. And in this place of broad rivers and streams there shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. Here is no work nor gallant ship, but the Lord leads into green pastures, and maketh us to lie down by the still waters, and restores our souls. What a blessed time. Sweet Jesus, that name which is above every name. "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's

ear." "We fall at his feet, and the story repeat, and the Savior of sinners adore." And it is as the poet says, Our heart dissolves in thankfulness, and our eyes melt in tears. O blessed hope, and precious faith which was once delivered to the saints. When we enjoy this peace which is like a river, like an overflowing stream, how we enjoy the sweet company of the saints, for if we love him that begat, we shall love also him that is begotten of him. Then how our hearts burn within us, and we run together like drops of water, that cannot be separated. "O for such love let rocks and hills their lasting silence break." But the thought comes to me, Why are you writing of the Lord's own peculiar people, a people saved by the Lord with an everlasting salvation? You are such a poor, sinful creature, full of wounds and bruises and putrefying sores, from the head to the soles of the feet. There is is no soundness in me; there is only evil, and that continually. I am possessed of unclean lips like Isaiah, and in my heart I am saying daily, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But I sometimes have a faint hope that even I, as vile as I am, can say that, I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that I shall see him in that day when death is swallowed up in victory.

With much love to all the household of faith, I am your sister in affliction,

LUCINDA B. BREWSTER.

KANSAS, Ill., Sept. 14, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I send a letter inclosed from Elder J. H. Ring, of Nebraska, for your perusal, and for publication if you think proper to do so.

Your brother in hope,

JAMES M. TRUE.

CHENEY, Neb., August 22, 1899.

ELDER JAMES M. TRUE—Dear brother in the bonds of the gospel, and in hope of a glorious resurrection:—It has been some time since I received your kind and comforting letter. I always love to hear from you, but when the very sentiment of my heart is reflected in your letters they are still more interesting. There are ties which grow up unknown to us until they become so strong as to bind our souls together indissolubly, and when we begin to look over the past, their existence may be traced from the very first. So it has been with my feeling toward you. You do not know how much good it does me to hear from you in the strain in which you wrote last. As this is a day of great events in the world, so it must be in the history of the church. It was not said in vain, "Men of your own selves shall arise, speaking great things," so we need not be surprised if in our day such things occur as we have seen and heard, and perverse things are said by many to draw away disciples after them. But I am fully persuaded that our God has a purpose in it all. If I did not feel such trust in him miserable would be my life indeed. The wrath of man shall praise him. Let us be reconciled then to him. But O that Zion's watchmen may see eye to eye.

Now, for fear that I will weary you, I will quit for this time.

With love to your companion and family, I am yours in a small hope,

J. H. RING.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denotes the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

EDITORIAL.

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ROMANS VIII. 28.

"AND we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Perhaps no portion of the written word has proved of more comfort to the afflicted and tried ones of the Father's kingdom, than have these words. In the midst of special things of which the apostle has been speaking as tokens of the Father's care and love toward his children, he, in the text, comes to state a general truth for their help, as he often does when speaking of some special things. From special things he often goes to general principles, showing that what is true in the things of which he may have been speaking, is also true in all things as well. The special things of which he speaks are but samples of the whole. So that when he speaks of some particular sorrow, or trial, or temptation, as having been blessed to him, or to the people of God, he means us to understand that all sorrow, and trial, and temptation, are also working for our good. This has been the faith of humble-hearted believers in every age. When passing through the bitter waters or the fiery flames, when tried with temptation, when sorrowful over the missteps of the way, it has been a solid comfort to believe that in some way, inscrutable no doubt to finite minds or mortal vision, but plain and clear to the infinite mind, all these things have been and are working for good to those who love God. In this Paul again agrees with himself when in another place he says, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen." And still further down in this eighth chapter of Romans, Paul again says in substance the same thing. After speaking of all kinds of tribulation he says, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us." What is it to be more than conquerors, if it be not that even the things which oppose us are made to minister unto us, instead of harming us? If a man destroys his enemy he is a conqueror, but if he can turn that enemy into a friend, to minister to him, he is more than a conqueror. And our God makes us thus more than conquerors. The things which set upon us to harm us, only work out the more good for us. The trial may be what we call a temporal one, but through it our God develops that faith and hope and patience which so adorn the doctrine of God our Savior, when manifest in the inward and outward life of believers. Thus what seemed to be for evil only glorifies God, and comforts his people with the comforts that are of God, and which are felt in the heart. The experience of Old Testament saints is in full agreement with this faith of the apostle. David spoke in full harmony with all this when he said, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes." And again he said, "Before I was afflict-

ed I went astray, but now have I kept thy word." And Jeremiah out of his own bitter experience said, "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth." And by the yoke he meant the burden of sorrow and affliction, as will be seen by the connection. Paul again said, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." This he said not only that he was glad that the grace of God might be manifest to others through him, but also because he himself could not so well realize the power of that grace when all was well with him temporally. It was a comfort to Paul to know how strong was the right arm of him who saves; and this he learned in his infirmities. Therefore he could glory or rejoice in his very weaknesses, and in every hour of trial. In one of the sorest straits of his life, when a prisoner at Rome, he rejoiced that his afflictions were the means of strengthening his brethren, and of making them more bold in defense of the truth. And of our blessed Lord and Master it is said, "That he learned obedience by the things that he suffered." His sufferings were blessed to him. Shall not our sufferings then be blessed to us? We have referred to these things from the Scriptures because they are in full harmony with the text, and in other language testify to the same things. Indeed, to refer to all in the word of God that says the same thing, would be to transcribe a goodly portion of it. And this is the common testimony of all today who have had any length of experience in the things of God. This very morning before beginning this editorial a dear sister in conversation said, "It is my experience that the things which at the time seemed hardest, have been my greatest blessings. They did not seem so at the time, but afterward I could see the good that was in them."

Paul had been, in the verses preceding, saying to his brethren, that while we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, yet the Holy Spirit itself made intercession for us with groanings which could not be uttered, and that God knew what was the mind of the Spirit, because his intercession was for the saints, and according to the will of God. This was one of the precious things provided for the good of those who love God. This was a blessing that was working for their good continually. The voice of this supplication arose unto God in the midst of all their need. How blessed it is that we, in our ignorance, have an intercessor who knows just what we need, though we may ask for things which we do not need. Affliction puts us upon prayer, and in it the earnest pleadings of that spirit of love and dependence, which God has given us, rises toward God, and it always says, "Thy will be done, and not mine." We pray for other things which are contrary to the will of God, but the spirit within us will in the end make itself heard in the soul, and its pleading is always, "Thy will, O God, be done." What peace accompanies this silent prayer in the soul. We know that this pleading is not of the flesh, and we recognize that to have such a prayer in the heart is from the great grace and mercy of God, and that it is an unspeakable blessing. This then is one of the things which work together, with all things else, for good. And out of this consideration Paul goes right on to state that what is true of this spirit of true prayer wrought in us by the Spirit of God, is also true of all that is appointed for us. He says all things do work thus together for good to them that love God.

Paul after this goes on to state why he can be so sure in this matter. He says not only that it is so, but he proceeds to state reasons why it is so, and why it must be so. He says that God has foreknown, predestinated, called, justified and glorified this people. He has done all these wonderful things for them; he has spared not his own Son for them, now will he withhold any lesser good, or allow that anything shall harm them? Truly, as Paul says again, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" He certainly will not suffer anything to harm us. He will not withhold any good thing. Whatever then befalls the believer, though it be as he says just below, tribulation, or famine, or distress, or persecution, or nakedness, or peril, or sword, in all they shall be more than conquerors. God has said it. He loves his people and will keep them, and all his providences shall not distress them to their harm, but shall only bring them to a more abiding sense of dependence upon him, and to a deeper knowledge of self and sin, and of that grace which can save such a sinner. These are the good things which the apostle especially names, and then out of these considerations he breaks out into the expression of the truth that all things are united in this work of blessing to those who love him, and are among his called ones.

Instead of the "all things" of the text referring especially to what he has named, viz: the Spirit's intercession, and the foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification and glorification of believers, they rather are brought in as things in addition to what he has named before, and which he proceeds to name. Indeed, it would not have been needful to say to his brethren, all these things did work together for your good, seeing that this truth would be apparent to them all, but it is not so apparent that trials and afflictions, and even the very slips and falls of the believer, were among the things which should be for their good, and so the apostle includes this in his writing to them, that they may not be overburdened by their trials, nor be in despair when they shall feel their failures and denials of the Lord. It would be needless to say that all good things were working for their good, but many things which are really for their good, do not seem good to them, and so the apostle uses the term, "all things."

Paul says, "We know" this. The children of God are ignorant of many things which they would like to know, but the Lord gives them a knowledge of all that it is good for them to know. They have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things, says John. They so know these things that they need not that any man teach them. They are taught of the Lord, and do not teach every man his neighbor and his brother, saying, Know the Lord. While they feel ignorant, yet they know many things. The one who feels most ignorant, knows that he is a sinner, and that he is poor and weak and dependent, and that he cannot do the good that he would, and that his heart is deceitful, and that there is no soundness in him. Also he knows that only the grace that is in Christ Jesus can save him, and that he must be kept by the power of God, if kept at all. The world of ungodly men, and the sore temptations of Satan, cannot convince him that these things are not so. He knows them. And here the apostle says that we know this other truth. The word "know," here means such knowledge as can be arrived at only by experience. It is the knowledge which we have by tast-

ing, feeling and seeing. Paul here then says in substance to his brethren, We, that is, you and I, have had an experience which has shown us that all things do work for our good; we know this. Believers may not be able to reason about it; they may not be able to reply to the arguments by which it may be sought to prove that all things cannot so work, but yet in their hearts they do know that God reigns, and that therefore nothing can set upon them to harm them, but that what God suffers to befall them must be for their welfare and for his glory. Whatever is for the glory of God must be for the good of his people; even the wrath of man shall praise him, while he will restrain the remainder. Therefore the wrath of man must work for the good of his people whom he loves. Signally the wrath of man worked out the glory of God and the everlasting good of his people, when the Son of God was delivered of God into the hands of men to be crucified. If this crowning crime did so work, who shall deny that the lesser crimes of men, against God and his people, shall be also overruled to his glory and their blessing? It still remains true that all things are included in this wonderful working.

All things do not so work to all men, but only to those who love God, and are among the called of God. Being called according to his purpose, and being given the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, God will see to it that all other things shall work in harmony with his purpose in their calling. He has called them to salvation, and now he sees to it that nothing befalls them that shall not further that glorious end. All good things work to that end; that is, all things which pertain to the mystery of redemption. None can deny this; none do deny this, therefore this need not be dwelt upon. But all affliction does so work, as we have seen from David's testimony, and from the testimony of Paul elsewhere, even the slips and falls of believers also are overruled to their good. It was so with Peter, when he denied his Lord. Our slips and falls work for good in that they show us our own weakness and vileness, so that we learn the truth about ourselves, that in our flesh dwells no good thing, and they work for good in that they do but drive us nearer to the Lord for grace and strength to overcome. The persecutions and hatred of men also are among these things which work for good. Thus Satan and satanic men do but overreach themselves in their blind hatred to God, and to those who follow him.

Some one in his hour of trial may say, "I cannot see how all this can be for my good." We are not called upon to see. One said, when speaking out of a life of multiplied trials through sickness, poverty and loss, with all the consequent hardships of life, "I have found it good to trust God, though I could not trace him." We do not need to trace him. It is enough that he reigns, and that he is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. If we have become as little children, we shall not want to see the way ahead. "It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows, [anxieties in the margin] for so he giveth his beloved sleep." We shall be content not to know, since he knows. It is enough that we have his sure word of promise. It, we know, cannot fail. All does work together for our good; let us be content with this. If the Holy Spirit applies this word to the heart, we shall be content.

These things work together, not sepa-

rately, as of things which have no common purpose. These things are not accidents, falling into our pathway, as things which were unforseen and unexpected, and which no provision has been made for, and which could not be avoided, but they are things embraced in an eternal counsel of an eternal will. Therefore they work in harmony, as the various wheels of a delicately wrought machine, but they are wheels that move, they move within other wheels. Does not the vision of Ezekiel, when he saw the wheels moving forward, set before us the combined purpose of God in his plan of redemption, and in all his dealings with his people providentially? Does not God's providence and grace work and walk together hand in hand, to the accomplishment of the good of his chosen?

Affliction and trouble are in the hands of God, and not of Satan, except so far as God puts them into his hands. The first chapter of Job proves this. Who that loves and trusts God would have it otherwise? Job rejoiced that it was so. Never once did he credit the devil with his afflictions. It was the testimony of his lips that the Lord gave and the Lord took away, that the same God who gave good to man, also gave evil to him, that these were parts of his ways, that the Lord was but performing the thing which he had appointed for him. Job's friends said these things were the product of his sins. Some in more modern days would say that they proceeded from the devil, but Job with clear faith said, It is the Lord. It is sure that our God bestows nothing upon us that shall work us harm. Therefore affliction of all kinds are among these all things working for good.

We trust that we shall be pardoned if, for the sake of illustration, we use the name of that dear sister Mary Parker. How often she said in writing, and by word of mouth, that she felt to be reconciled to the will of God, in all her sufferings of mind and body. She felt, as does every afflicted believer, that all was of God, and that all was in some way working out good to her. Suppose that some one had visited her, and in the conversation she had said the same things, and that one had said to her, You are mistaken, these afflictions are not of the Lord, they are the work of Satan, and you have no right to be reconciled to his work; Satan is your enemy, and this he means for your hurt, and you ought not to say, "I am reconciled," but strive against him, with prayer to God that he would deliver you. Suppose that such an one had said the Lord does not bring his people into affliction, but rather desires their comfort, while Satan strives to harm you, and to cause you suffering. If this could have been believed by her, would she not have said at once, Thus far Satan has proved himself conqueror in the strife, and the Lord, who is my trust, has been overcome? Where then would have been her hope and trust and comfort? Would she not have said, "You are a miserable comforter, a physician of no value?" She knew that such teaching was false, and that all things were working for her good, and bliss therefore attended the rod.

C.

WANTED.

ANY one having a copy of Hassell's leather bound church history to sell will please write Sam. N. Hurst, Pulaski City, Va., and J. Satterwhite, Landis, Searcy Co., Ark., as they each wish to purchase the book.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

COLOSSIANS II. 6.

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him."

This important admonition is not restricted to the saints and faithful brethren at Colossa, unto whom it was addressed, but it is equally applicable to the saints in all places and throughout all time. And as it relates to the walk of the children of God, and their reception of Christ Jesus the Lord, it is full of interest and instruction as well as admonition. Three leading propositions are suggested for our special and prayerful consideration, from the reading of our text, viz:

1. The person and perfections of Christ Jesus the Lord.

2. Our reception of him: When and how?

3. The admonition to so walk in him.

On our first proposition the inspired apostle has given some plain and positive declarations in the preceding connection. In the thirteenth verse of chapter one, he sets him forth as the Son of God, in the fourteenth as possessing in himself the redemption of his church; in the fifteenth as the image of the invisible God, and as such, the firstborn of every creature. In the sixteenth he is declared to be the Creator of all things, visible and invisible, thrones, dominions, principalities and powers, all were created by him and for him; in the seventeenth verse his priorty and sustaining power is declared. "And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." The eighteenth verse asserts that he is the head of the body, the church, and that he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, and that in all things he has the pre-eminence. And it then follows, "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell." His complete success in the work of redemption, making peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven, and the saints to whom our text is addressed, are an exemplification of his glorious triumph. "And you who were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh, through death, to present you holy and unblamable and unreprovable in his sight. In this second chapter the apostle expresses his anxious solicitude for the saints, that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto the riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. These all being hid in God, and in the Father, and in Christ, and Christ the only image of the invisible God, inasmuch as he is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person. (Hebrews i. 3.) By the term image, we understand is signified that there is no revelation made to men of the eternal Godhead, only in and through our Lord Jesus Christ. But in this divine mystery of God, and the Father and of Christ, God is manifest in the flesh. They that have seen the Son have seen the Father also, for the Father is in him, and he is in the Father, and in Jesus Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and the saints are complete in him, which is the Head of all principality and power.

Second. Our reception of him. The Scriptures, to our mind at least, most clearly teach that Christ was given to be

the Head over all things to his church, as anciently as were his people given to him as his body, and the fullness of that body. Christ acknowledges the receipt of his people as a gift from his Father, in these words, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." "My Father which gave them me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."—John xvii. 6; x. 29. And that Christ had this gift in possession before the world began is abundantly proved by Ephesians i. 4, and 2 Tim. i. 9. But in the sense of the text under consideration, the time of our receiving him, was when he was manifestly presented to us as our Savior, in delivering us from bondage, guilt and condemnation, when by faith we were enabled to lay hold on him, as our full and complete Savior. Then, and not until then, did we receive him in an experimental sense of the word. Till then we were living without hope and without God in the world. Although in the depravity of our nature we were enemies to him by wicked works, and under the delusion that we had power to secure his favor by our own works whenever it should please us to do so, we were brought by his quickening power to see and feel and confess that we were poor, lost, guilty and helpless sinners against a good, just and holy God, and that we justly deserved to bear the awful penalties of his holy law. How were we then suffered to exert all our fancied powers, to try all our imaginary plans, schemes, instrumentalities and means, and to find them all delusive and vain. Yielding ourselves to hopeless despair, our prayers unheard and unanswered, our cries for mercy shut out, our best performances to which we had attached so much virtue in commending us to God, we now in astonishment discovered were only the polluted streams from a corrupt and filthy fountain. Relinquishing the very last glimmering hope that God could save us without doing violence to his eternal perfections, all, all was gone, and we were sinking down to meet our dreadful fate, when Christ Jesus the Lord was presented to us in all the irresistible charms of his eternal excellency, as the One altogether lovely, and the chiefest among ten thousand. A full and all-sufficient Savior, in every respect suited to our hopeless case. With what rapture, joy and gratitude, we then received him. His blood was applied for the cleansing of us from all iniquity, and his righteousness for our full, free and everlasting justification before God. All our capacious souls could wish, in him did richly meet, and unworthy as we felt ourselves to be of him we were constrained to receive him.

How did we receive him? Was it as a conditional Savior, or one who would meet us on some conditional ground? Alas! we had never performed a meritorious act in all our life. We received him in his full character, as a whole and all-sufficient Savior, on whom we could safely rely as our Prophet, Priest and King, our Shepherd, and the Bishop of our souls, our Leader and Commander, the Captain of our salvation. We received him in all the attributes and perfections set forth in the connection of our text, as our strength, being by him strengthened with all might according to his glorious power, giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in glory; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son, in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness

of sins. We received him as the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature. We received him as the Creator and upholder of all things. We received him as the Head of the body, the church, as the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, and as in all things having the pre-eminence. We received him as possessing all fullness; as having made peace by the blood of his cross, and able to reconcile such enemies as we were, to himself, and to shed his love abroad in us that we should love him supremely, love his people, his cause, his doctrine, and all his laws, and ordinances, and institutions. We received him as the embodiment of all the fullness of the Godhead, and therefore all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in him. We received him as the Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God and everlasting Father; as the first and the last, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the Almighty. We receive him as our Life, our Resurrection, our Advocate with the Father, and our only and blessed Potentate. This being the way the saints have received Christ Jesus the Lord, let us attend to the apostle's injunction.

Third. So walk ye in him. In all our walk and deportment we are admonished to walk in him as we have received him. As the names and titles which he bears, Christ Jesus, signify the anointed Savior, in all our walk and conversation we should so regard him, and as the Lord, we are to revere, honor, praise and obey him. As the Lord our God, we should worship him, and trust in him. As we have redemption in him, we should look for redemption and justifying righteousness nowhere else, for so we received him. As we received him as possessing all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, so in our constant walk should we look to him for all the wisdom and knowledge that we need. "And this," says Paul, "I say lest any man should beguile you with enticing words." Well the apostle knew that great deception would be used by the enemies, to entice the saints to seek for wisdom and knowledge in relation to spiritual things, in the schools of men. But to guard them from imposition, he tells them that all wisdom and knowledge is hid in God, and the Father and Christ. And he has hidden it from the wise and prudent of this world, and revealed it unto the babes. He has made foolish the wisdom of the world, and determined that no man by searching shall find him out, to the end that no man shall be allowed to glory in the flesh. He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. None of the children of God have ever received a particle of the treasure of wisdom and knowledge of divine and spiritual things only as they have been taught of God, and every one that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh to Christ. Not only is all wisdom and knowledge hid in him, as we received him, but in him all fullness dwells; he is full of grace and truth, and of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace.

As we received him as our life, it is in him as our life we are to walk. We are dead to the flesh, dead to the law, and dead to sin, and the life we now live in the flesh, we live not by the life of the flesh, but by the faith of the Son of God. We are baptized into Jesus Christ, and have put on Christ, therefore our life is hid with Christ in God. For us to live is Christ. "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead, because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." Thus circumcised, and the flesh cut off, slain and crucified, we live unto God, in the spirit, and all our walk, spiritually speaking, is in the Spirit, and therefore in Christ.

We received Christ Jesus the Lord as our Light. All other lights were extinguished, and to him we are consequently to look for instruction, wisdom and deliverance from all our clouds of darkness. To so walk in him is to live by faith upon him, discarding all the boasted light of human wisdom and science, knowing that in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. We received him, when we were perfectly helpless, as our strength, so are we to walk in him, having no confidence in the flesh. We received him as the consummate fullness of all we desired, and so let us walk, having Christ all things are ours. We received him as our Leader and example; then let us deny ourselves of all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and take up our cross and follow the Lamb wherever he leads the way, through evil as well as through good report. We received him as our Lord and Master, our King and Commander, and so it becomes us as his saints, to walk in him in cheerful and willing obedience to all his commands and ordinances.

In our reception of Christ Jesus our Lord, we were willing to forsake all things else, turn our back upon the world with all its vanities, and find our home, our joy, our treasure and all our desires in him; even so let us walk in him. When we received Christ Jesus our Lord, we received his mystical body, the church; that love of God which was then shed abroad in us centered in him, and embraced all his members. We saw his image enstamped on them, and loved that image whenever we saw it. So then ought we to walk in him in love, in fellowship with him and in fellowship and union one with another. When we received Christ Jesus the Lord we loved the assemblies of the saints, and were glad when they said unto us, "Come, let us go into the house of the Lord, our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem." Should we not so walk in him now, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together?

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 15, 1857.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at the residence of the bride, on Wednesday, Nov. 8th, 1899, John H. Drake, of Pennington, N. J., and Mary E. Shepherd, of Stoutsburg, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MY dear mother, **Mrs. Emily J. Flanary,** after more than fifteen weeks of intense suffering, has entered that home "where pain and sorrow cannot come." She departed this life on the morning of Oct. 24th, 1899, aged 66 years, 6 months and 3 days. She was born in Mead Co., Ky., and when ten years old went with her father to Missouri. Was married to Thos. G. Flanary, Feb. 28th, 1850, after which time until his death their life history is so blended that by referring to his obituary notice in the November 1st issue of the SIGNS, the chief events of her temporal life will be found. She received a hope in Christ in the spring of 1853, and united with the Hillsboro Old School Baptist church, and was baptized by Elder Wm. Simpson, in July of that year, remaining a devoted member of our faith until death. She was ever ready to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. As many brethren and sisters know, there was always a warm welcome for them at the "Old Home." The day she was taken sick she went to the home of her youngest daughter, Mrs. Lettitia Bonebrake, who with her husband was untiring in their efforts to relieve

her and make her comfortable. "Her children arise and call her blessed," and if she ever had an enemy I do not know it. After she had the bronchial pneumonia she became well enough to go into the dining room two days to dinner, then was not so well for three days, when she had an attack of heart failure, and after that could scarcely get any rest except when under the influence of opiates. She suffered much with shortness of breath and weakness. Often her anguish for breath was distressing to see, yet she bore all this with remarkable fortitude, and left many assurances that all was well with her. Said her "only hope of salvation was in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ; she had no merit or righteousness of her own to plead." One day I said to her, "It is so hard to see you suffer such agony." She replied, "Yes, dear child, but it has to be. It is nothing to what my dear Savior suffered on the cross, he sweat great drops of blood." One time she said, "I sometimes think my cup of suffering must be an awful large one, it takes so much suffering, and so long to fill it." Sometimes she felt that she was in the dark, and would say, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" One time she said, as if it was an after thought that comforted her, "The Savior said that too, did he not?" Once she said in the assurance of faith, "I feel that underneath are the everlasting arms," then added, "I cannot sink with such a prop." One day she told me to hold her in my arms. I did so; presently she said, "O to rest in the arms of my Savior." She said she could never forget the expression on old brother Hess' face (just before he died, and in the midst of great suffering,) when he looked up and said,

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are."

One time she said, "Maybe if we would all pray together the Lord will give relief," and during the silence that followed she prayed God to relieve her of her sufferings, or give her patience and resignation to his will. Several times she expressed her gratitude for help given her, in nursing her, by kind friends who she said had been so faithful to her during her long sickness. Her chief earthly desire was to have her children all near her and present when the end should come. She was delirious or unconscious much of the time during the last twenty-four hours, but the last morning, in a lucid moment, she looked up at Letitia and said, "My work is done." She passed away without a struggle or a groan, and the next day, after brief services at the house by Elder W. J. Hess, her frail casket was laid to rest beside father's to await the resurrection morning, and we returned to our homes with a sense of desolation never felt before. May each of us be enabled to say,

"Though cast down, we're not forsaken,
Though afflicted, not alone;
Thou didst give, and thou hast taken,
Blessed Lord, 'Thy will be done.'"

It had been mother's custom for several years when reading the SIGNS, to mark the pieces she especially liked, and give the papers to us to read. There were many pieces marked, and on the margin we would find, "Just my feelings," "I cannot keep the tears back," and other expressions which makes me feel to say when reading them now, "Though dead, she yet speaketh." It has been my blessed privilege to be where I could visit my dear parents often, and for years I seldom failed to go and see them at least once a week, which was a mutual comfort to them and me, and though I have neglected my work at home many times to visit them, I have a sweet memory I would keep, and to you, dear readers, who still have your parents near you, do not neglect this great privilege and duty to visit them often, for you will never regret it when they have passed from your sight.

SONORA HESS.

Abram Cole Scott was born June 11th, 1819, and died Feb. 24th, 1899. The deceased was a son of the late Elder Eli Scott, who was a minister of the Old School Baptist faith many years ago, in Baltimore Co., Md., and who was also a member of the church at Black Rock, in that County. The subject of this notice was well and widely known in the County of his home as a good citizen and an honest and reliable man, wholly upright in all his dealings. No man bore a greater share of the respect of the whole community than he. He was also well known by many of our brethren and friends, who had partaken of his liberal hospitality when attending associations at Black Rock, and upon many other occasions. He had never connected himself with the church, owing to that fear which so many feel, and which is a mark of the work of the Spirit in the heart, the fear that he was unworthy of so great a privilege. He never failed to fill his place in the meetings of the church, and though not a member, was a willing contributor to all the expenses of the church, and to the support of the pastor. He was taken suddenly ill at the house of a cousin on Sunday afternoon, where he had gone after attending the service at Black Rock, where he heard Elder J. T. Rowe preach that morning. He lingered but a short time and passed away. The disease was paralysis.

It was our sad privilege, in company with Elder Rowe, to attend his funeral at Black Rock, where he was interred by the side of many of his family. A large outpouring of his neighbors, and of the citizens of the County, testified to the deep respect in which he was held by all. A good man has passed away. He belonged to a large family. Two sisters are now left, to whom he was deeply attached. One son and three daughters mourn the loss of an ever kind and thoughtful father. His companion passed away many years ago. His house was a home to us during all the twenty-eight years of our service with the Black Rock

church, and we have lost a warm personal friend. We doubt not that to him was given a knowledge of saving grace, and that Christ was his hope for many years. Therefore the dear friends do not sorrow as those who have no hope for their dead. May God bless and comfort them in all their grief.

ALSO,

Abram Loring Scott, son of Frank G. and Rebecca Scott, and grandson of the above, was born Oct. 14th, 1886, and died July 24th, 1899. He was thrown from a horse, and found unconscious beside the road a few moments afterward, by his father, and lived but a short time afterward. The blow fell with fearful severity upon his parents and friends, yet his father writes us that they have been sustained, and enabled to say, The will of the Lord be done. The deceased child was bright and affectionate, and his dear parents have sad but pleasant recollections of him. May God comfort them and bless them with abounding hope in his grace and mercy. C.

DIED—At the home of his daughter and son-in-law, Warren W. Scudder, Feb. 24th, 1899, **Eroney Hewitt,** in the 87th year of his age. The subject of this notice was born July 29th, 1812, and united with the Second Church of Roxbury, August 17th, 1828. He was united in marriage to Rhoda Patterson, July 19th, 1832. There were born to them eight children, six of whom survive them. Brother Hewitt was a brother to Elder Isaac Hewitt, who also united with the church about the same time. I became acquainted with brother Hewitt over forty years ago, when I first united with the church. In all these years he has lived a consistent, orderly, industrious christian, a kind husband and father, and a good neighbor. He retained his mind until the last, and we believe he died in the triumph of his faith, and we are consoled with the thought that he is happy with his Lord, the author of his faith.

ALSO,

DIED—April 21st, 1896, at her home at Griffin's Corners, N. Y., **Rhoda Patterson Hewitt,** wife of Eroney Hewitt, in the 82d year of her age. Rhoda Patterson was born Nov. 3d, 1814; baptized July, 1828, and lived and died in the triumph of the faith which she professed, a good christian, a kind and affectionate wife and mother. May her memory stay long like sweet incense in the hearts of her children, and also with the church and friends. We sorrow not for our dear brother and sister as for those for whom we have no hope, for we believe if Jesus died and rose again, them also which believe in Jesus, will God bring with him.

May God conduct the children in the faith of their parents, and his name shall have the glory.

M.

HALCOTTSVILLE, N. Y.

John R. Duncan departed this life Jan. 26th, 1899, at his home near Wagram, Accomac Co., Va. Our brother had been suffering with supposed catarrh for several years, but more intensely for several months, and his sufferings increased so rapidly that he finally concluded it might be better for him to visit a hospital, which he did about the middle of last September, where an operation was performed, but proved to be of no benefit. After he came home a cancer soon made its appearance on the left side of his face, and grew rapidly, from which he suffered greatly until the Lord took him from this world of suffering to himself, to enjoy the smiles of a loving Savior, who gave himself a ransom for his chosen people. He bore his sufferings with christian fortitude, saying, "The Lord is good to me, and comforts me in my great affliction."

He was born April 5th, 1835, in Accomac Co. Va. His age was 63 years, 9 months and 21 days. He leaves a widow, six children, nine grandchildren, one brother and four sisters, and the church, to mourn their loss. I have known him from my earliest recollection, and he appeared to be a moderate and straightforward man. He was kind and pleasant in his family, and lived in this way until the Lord's time came to show him his lost and helpless condition, then he began to go from one place of meeting to another, to see if there was any other people being led in the way that he was, until he found a people that spoke the same language that he loved, and felt in his heart to be true. He came to the old Messongo church, and cast in his lot with them, and was baptized Nov 15th, 1874. He lived a worthy and consistent member until death.

He was laid to rest in the family burying-ground. Elder A. B. Francis being away from home at the time of his death, there was no funeral, but on Sept. 13th he preached to a concourse of friends from 1 Thess. iv. 13-18.

J. F. BYRD.

POCOMOKE CITY, Md.

DIED—Near Hot Springs, Ark., June 11th, 1899, our dear old mother, **Mrs. Anna P. Deets,** in the 88th year of her age. Some years ago when I visited her she told me it was her wish that I should write her obituary, and send it to the dear old SIGNS for publication, when she passed away. She said, Let it be plain and simple, just give facts. I am sorry that I have not a full history of her early life, but suffice it to say, that she was born in North Carolina, in 1812, and moved with her parents to the State of Tennessee when a child. She married B. I. Rogers, in 1832, had three children by this union, two of them died in infancy. The oldest, Dr. W. I. Rogers, is now living. Mother lived a widow five years, when she married, Nov. 24th, 1840, Y. W. Deets. Five children blessed this union, two died in infancy, three are still living.

She left four children, sixteen grandchildren, twenty-five great-grandchildren and one sister. Mother joined the Primitive Baptist church in 1840, I think, and remained a consistent member of that church until she went to join the blood-washed saints above. She read the dear old SIGNS as long as she could see to read. She was a woman of fine constitution, strong in intellect. She was called to pass through many trials and sorrows of life, and yet in all these things her faith in God was strong. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace. Her health had been failing for some years. When the writer saw her last, five years ago, she said she felt she would not be with us long. Her faith was growing stronger, and her resignation more beautiful. The immediate cause of her death was a fall, in which her hip was broken. She was confined to her bed a month to the day, and her sufferings were so great she could not be turned in her bed. Jesus was precious to her soul, and she had many seasons of rejoicing. She could say with the great apostle, she desired to depart and be with Christ. She was patient to the end. Her children were all around her bedside except the writer. The telegram failed to reach me until dear mother was dead. She was conscious almost to the last, singing to the praise of God as her spirit was taking its flight to her home above.

ROBERT I. DEETS.

BRUCEVILLE, Texas, Sept. 23, 1899.

DIED—August 1st, 1899, brother **J. M. Webb,** who was born June 14th, 1830, making his age at the time of his death, 69 years, 1 month and 17 days. He had been in feeble health for a long while, but he being a man of great energy, and strong resolution, kept up most of the time, until a few weeks before he died, when he had to take his bed. I went to see him a short while before his death, and I saw that the end was near at hand. He seemed to be well aware of his condition, and in answer to some questions I asked him, he said he was perfectly reconciled for the Lord to do his will in his case, and that he did not fear to die. When the time did come, he seemed without a pain or struggle, to pass away as peaceful as a child would in sleep. "Blessed are they that die in the Lord." Brother Webb united with the Primitive Baptist church at Smyrna, Monroe, Co., Ga., Sept 23d, 1876, and was baptized by Elder W. C. Cleveland. He was a man of strong convictions, and truly a firm Primitive Baptist. His whole theme was salvation by grace, and to give God all the praise and glory in the salvation of his people. The church has lost a precious member, but we try to be reconciled to his holy and righteous will, believing that he is now at rest with God, where there will be no more trials to mar his peace.

The body was laid to rest by the side of his dear companion, who preceded him to the grave a few years, where the writer of this notice stood near the same spot that he did when his wife was buried, and tried to speak a few words of comfort to the large congregation of relatives and friends who had assembled to pay their last respects to a beloved one. This was his request of me at the burial of sister Webb, if I should outlive him. Brother Webb leaves one brother, two sisters and nine children, four boys and five girls, to mourn their loss. A word to them: Father and mother now rest side by side on a little mound in a beautiful grove near their old home, waiting the resurrection morn, when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and they live forever with the Lord. Remember the good counsel and advice they have often given you. Try to live as they have lived. May God in his infinite mercy sustain you by his grace, that you may live quiet and peaceable lives, and finally save you in his upper and better kingdom, is my desire.

D. G. McCOWEN.

FORSYTH, Ga.

"MAN that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble."

Mrs. Sarah J. Morrison, the wife of Jacob Morrison, died Sept. 9th, 1899, aged 66 years. The deceased was a great sufferer. For over twenty-one years she was sick and much afflicted. Some nine years ago, being unable any longer to care for herself, her husband removed her to the home of their daughter, Mrs. George Grover, and here she remained until she died. Only those who witnessed her helplessness and sufferings could understand the constant care and labor that day and night was bestowed upon her by her patient and devoted husband, and her daughter, Mrs. Grover. Whenever I called to see her she ever took interest in my speaking to her of the compassion of the Friend of sinners, and in my reading to her the Scriptures, and in speaking in prayer to the Lord.

At her funeral the writer preached from the words, "O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbor! When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return."—Job xvi. 21.

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 67. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1899. NO. 24.

POETRY.

THY WILL BE DONE.

I CANNOT tell from day to day,
What grief may meet me on life's way,
Yet still my spirit makes its moan
As Jesus did, "Thy will be done."

But while the words are in my mouth,
My senses feed on nature's drought;
Still shrinking from thy narrow way,
Not thine, but ours, tumultuous pray.

O, can it be a wretch like I,
A breathing, walking, talking lie,
In my old self shall reach thy bliss,
And feel what thy perfection is?

MRS. J. STREET.

BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD.

As the substance to the shadow,
As the dawning to the day,
Or the warbler's tuning whistle
Ushering in his sweeter lay,
So the law gave perfect measure,
Just and holy every weight,
And that meek old patriarch, Moses,
In his day was truly great.

But our Jesus, marred and lowly,
Covenanted Son of God,
Ushers in the purer glory,
Bids life's blossoms clothe death's rod.
On his cross his children dying
Gasp 'neath sin's devouring weight;
From his tomb his children rising
Throb with heaven-born joy and might.

So the sprinkling and the washing,
Set before us in their play,
How the sealing and the cleansing
Bind us through time's shadows gray.
Lamb of God, on thee all glorious,
Every line of truth is shed;
Thou our sacrifice, yea rather,
Thou our ever living Head.

MRS. J. STREET.

BRANTFORD, Ontario, Sept. 11, 1899.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DECATUR, Texas, Sept. 15, 1899.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—If it is the Lord's will to direct my mind, I will try to write a few lines for the household of faith, but I am such a worm of the dust that I am made to wonder why my mind is so impressed to write to the Lord's humble poor. I do feel very barren of spiritual things about which to write. If I know myself my greatest desire is to talk about the goodness of God, and his mercies toward the children of men. But I feel to be so unlearned in the wisdom and knowledge of him who sits upon the throne, and from whom all blessings flow, both spiritual and temporal, that I hesitate, and write with a trembling hand, for fear that the Spirit may not direct my mind. I know that if left to myself I can say nothing that will comfort one of

the little ones, but dear brethren and sisters, it is a great comfort to me while traveling here in this unfriendly world, that the Lord of hosts allows me to think upon his holy name, and to trust in him as my God and my Redeemer. O for a tongue to praise him for the little hope that never leaves me. When the walls of darkness close me around, and clouds of gloom hover over me, and I am almost ready to give up in despair, at such times I am enabled by an eye of faith to look back yonder to the waste howling wilderness, where I trust the Lord spake peace to my troubled soul. I love to dwell on those visions of brightness which have been given me all along the rugged road. Yet the older I get, the farther apart they seem to be, and were it not that the great God of heaven and earth permits me to view him as my all and in all, I would give up in despair. But he has allowed me, even me, to look to him as the author and finisher of our faith, and the author of eternal redemption, and to see that he has made complete atonement for every sin that his children ever have or ever will commit. O, what a glorious thought, that there is nothing under the sun which can alienate his children from him. They may be overwhelmed with adversity, yet his all-seeing eye is watching over them, and his power upholds them through all their dark and weary travels in this unfriendly world. Blessed be his holy name for causing poor me to trust in him as my guide and my shield, and for enabling me to believe that he has set the bounds of the wicked, and though their arrows may pierce me sore, yet will I trust in him as my deliverer from all the fiery darts of Satan. I know that I cannot even call upon his name unless he bids me call, for I cannot even think a good thought unless he gives me power. When the believer is left to himself, his thoughts are of the flesh, and all his works to please God, unless they be moved by his Spirit, come to naught. The thoughts of the natural mind are evil, and that continually, and neither can he bring about in himself a spiritual mind. Such blessings are the gifts of God, and are unmerited upon the part of the receiver. But the Lord puts his Spirit in the heart of his children, causing them to cry, Abba, Father. Unless he gives them the spirit of praise, they cannot praise him. Dear brethren and sisters, I feel that it is a time of mourning with Zion, on account of false doctrines which have been brought into her borders. We hear some saying that the peace of Zion while on this low ground of sin and sorrow, depends upon conditions which have to be complied with on the part of the poor, trembling child of God, and which must be performed before they can receive the blessing, but dear companions in tribulation, follow not after these things, for they are strange, and make not for the peace of Zion. All blessings come down from the Father of lights, and are unmerited upon our part. Grace is without works, for if it be by works, it is no more of grace. The Lord works in his people to will and to do of his own good pleasure. Then again I hear it said that if the great Jehovah brings all things to pass, which are embraced in his infinite wisdom, he would be an unjust God. I have not so learned him: "Just and holy are all thy ways, O God." By him were all things created, and through him do all things exist, and in his infinite wisdom he fixed and established and made sure all his creation before it was created, and at the appointed time all along the line, according to his foreknowledge, he develops his

creation. Men and devils cannot add to nor subtract from his wisdom, neither does he change within himself. He is God, and changes not. He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever; he is without the shadow of a turning. O, what a comfort is this, dear companions in Christ. The Lord, who is the only hope of glory, gives assurance that there is no other power, and that he alone sits upon the throne, and that he works all things after the counsel of his own will, and when he speaks it is done, when he commands it stands fast; even wicked men and devils come and go at his bidding, and they cannot act unless he gives them power, as the Lord said to Pilate. And all things work together for good to them who love God. This does not mean all good things alone, as some would have it, but all things whatsoever comes to pass. He says, "There is no God beside me, I have made the earth and created man to dwell upon it, and my hands have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded." With the assurance of such a God as this, I am made to take courage and press on through gloom and darkness, and hope and trust in him who is able to save to the uttermost parts of the earth, as my shield and deliverer from all the snares which are set for the entanglement of our feet. O, if I could only praise him for that little hope which causes me to look beyond the grave for a home of rest, where I shall chant the song of deliverance forever and forever. What a blessed thought! O, if he would drive the blackness from me, and make me worthy to praise him all the rest of my days, but I feel to be as a putrefying sore from my head to the soles of my feet; I am all vileness within, and there is no soundness in me. O, that he would cleanse me, and make me whole, and give me knowledge and wisdom, that I might speak in praise of his holy name all the rest of my days. Some of the greatest comforts and joys that have ever been given me have been in my dreams, while trying to talk to a congregation of people about the goodness and mercy of God toward the children of men. I feel to be a great mystery to myself. Sometimes when mingling with the people of God in praise to his holy name, I have been made to feel as though I were a goat among the sheep. Their countenances seemed to be lit up with the love of God, and it appeared to me that they could see what a hypocrite I was. When I search among the various narrations of experience of the Lord's people, their hope seems to far outshine mine. I have been made to turn among the legions of devils, to see if I could find one there like me, but they all seemed to be contented, and I was not. They rested in their own righteousness. I found none there trusting in God's righteousness as I was. So I go on, feeling assured that if I am not embraced in that glorious covenant of redemption, all my cries will be in vain. [Only those who are embraced in the covenant of redemption ever do cry.—Ed.] But, dear friends, as small as my hope is, it is worth ten thousands of worlds like this to me.

Dear brethren, were it not for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I do not know how I could get along; there is not an Old Baptist that I know of within ten miles of me, and my health is so bad that I can hardly ever go to preaching, and I am getting so deaf that I can hardly hear when I do go, so, the SIGNS are a great comfort to me. I love to read after such writers as Elders Chick, and Bartley, and Keene, and Lively, and others who write the truth, if I know what the truth is.

The SIGNS is worth more to me than all others combined. The SIGNS have the same old sound which I used to hear back yonder forty years ago. Then all Old Baptists that I knew, believed in unlimited predestination, and preached but one salvation, and that by grace alone, both for time and eternity.

Dear editors, I leave these remarks to your better judgment.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

M. B. F. JONES.

[THIS letter gives forth no uncertain sound. The writer is not afraid of ascribing too much to grace. Above all things let grace be magnified. Such experiences of darkness and vileness in self will never lead to self-exaltation. As we have read the above letter, we do not wonder that our correspondent delights to magnify grace. Such experiences shut us up to grace, and shut us out from everything else in salvation.—ED.]

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Nov. 1, 1899.

BELOVED EDITORS:—In compliance with numerous requests to send a report to the SIGNS of my recent visit to churches in Ohio and West Virginia, this is written. By request of Elder J. G. Ford and other members of the Sugar Creek church in Ohio, to attend their meeting on Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 7th and 8th, it was my privilege to be with them, and to participate with them in the blessed spiritual feast that the Lord gave us the two days and nights. Monday morning the company of believers in Christ repaired to the river side, and by the requests of sister Post and her father, Elder Ford, it was my sacred privilege to bury her with Christ in baptism, she having given a touching evidence of her saving faith in him. After an early dinner, she and brother and sister Ford and old brother Rymer went with me to Celina, Ohio, forty miles, where we were pleasantly met by a goodly band of the followers of Jesus at the commodious home of Elder Henry and sister Hole, near the town, including the church in their house, (for the church meets in it) Elder Newton Peters, their pastor, with them; and that night and Tuesday morning we had truly heavenly meetings, and realized that the Lord was in our midst, so that our joy was full. That afternoon Elders Hole and Peters, brother Rymer and myself, went twenty miles in buggies, to the home of old brother and sister York, and had meeting in their village at night. The next day our company drove on through rain twelve miles to the home of dear old Elder John Peters, who resides with brother and sister Light, (his daughter) where we had a double happy surprise and a night meeting, for just at dark a company of brethren whom we did not expect, came in, among them dear Elder Ford and sisters Post and Hole, and after the preaching by myself and brother Ford, brother Henry Peters talked to the church, and was joyfully received, and baptized by brother Hole the next morning. His dear wife, a sister, was almost overcome with joy, and his aged father, with all of us, rejoiced to receive his last child into the church, so that his is a believing household.

The next morning (Thursday) I left for Grafton, W. Va., by request of Elder J. S. Corder and the brethren with him, to be with them at their two three days meetings, ending with the third and fourth Sundays in October, where I arrived at break of day Friday, and he came up on a train from Philippi at nine o'clock that morning, and we rode out in a carriage five miles to the Amnon church-house, on top of a high hill, for the con-

venience of the membership, who reside on each side of the high divide. This meeting of three days was largely attended, and deep was the interest, for the presence and power of the Lord were joyfully realized. Elders Bartlett, Gainer and Cross, and brother Cleavenger, a licentiate, were with Elder Corder and myself, and took a part in the ministry. An aged sister, eighty-one, and two brothers, gave a relation of their hope in Christ, and brother Cross baptized them.

Monday, brother Corder took me to his pleasant valley home, a hospitable Virginia home, and dear sister Corder and their daughter at home, sister Semma Corder, are meek and excellent Baptists. Wednesday night Elder Corder and I held a meeting in the Philippi courthouse, and were warmly entertained by the two brethren Thompson and the dear family of Deacon Thompson.

The next Friday to Sunday night a host of dear Old School Baptists were gathered with the Clear Creek church, far up the Tygart's Valley River, which was like another associational meeting in numbers, and the blessed Lord again poured out the spirit of grace and love and gladness upon us. Here dear Elder Murphy, the pastor, Elders Corder, Bartlett, Cole and brother Cleavenger were with me, and very many visiting brethren and sisters, and we all felt that it was good to be there, and to join in praising him who saved us and called us with an holy calling, that we should glorify the riches of his grace. Elder Bartlett is Elder Corder's son-in-law, and the youthful Elder Cole is his grandson, and the beloved old Elder is blessed in these two sons in the ministry, as fellow-helpers.

Our last meeting was with the home church of brother Corder, Mt. Olive, on the next Wednesday, near his home, where brethren Bartlett and Cleavenger again met us, sister Bartlett and her dear mother and sister, with many of the Corder family, including a younger and older brother of the old Elder, the elder one eighty-six, who rode nine miles on horseback, making a triplet of good old soldiers of the cross, and a goodly company of dear kindred in Christ besides, with Christ in our midst, who came down and blessed us, and we rejoiced in his salvation. Here we all bade each other farewell, hoping to meet again. At all those three churches the members and visitors and friends, with the ministers, are sound in the faith of God's elect, and they rejoice in Christ and in the truth as it is in him. They are very hospitable, sincere and kind, and their liberality abounded. While it was my first visit to them, and not one of them had I ever met, it was among the dearest and best in all my extended ministry, and they all are very dear to me in the Lord, and with tender love and sadness I left.

The next evening I arrived again at the home of dear brother and sister Hole, on the western side of Ohio, where I enjoyed a needed rest. On Friday the visiting brethren and sisters began to arrive, not a few from long distances, from Ohio and Indiana, among them Elder and sisters Ford and Post, brother Rymer, brother and sister Benjamin Ford and her father, brother Myers, and more came on Saturday, including Elder Newton Peters. And in this dear Baptist home we had good and pleasant meetings Friday night, twice Saturday and three times Sunday, and comfort and love and peace abounded. The interest here in the cause of Christ is very comforting, and believers will be added to the church, no doubt. These also are kind and liberal and good Baptists, as in Virginia, and I was closely

drawn to them in love. Our meetings were seasoned with very much singing of spiritual songs, and making melody in our hearts unto the Lord.

Sunset Monday, Oct. 30th, I was thankful to be at home again, finding my lonely wife well and glad for my safe return. She joins in love to all our dear, loving kindred in Christ in Ohio, and Virginia, and everywhere.

The sufficient grace of the precious Christ be with you all.

D. BARTLEY.

DELMAR, Del., Oct. 20, 1899.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have it in my mind to pen a few thoughts upon a portion of the word recorded in Hebrews xi. 24, 25, "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward."

I feel my weakness and inability in attempting to write anything concerning the Lord's kingdom, but when any one feels that he is moved by the Holy Spirit to write as he is given ability, shall he withhold, or shall he write for the consideration of those whom he believes are brethren in Christ? I desire not to write anything that is not in accordance with the doctrine of God our Savior.

All Bible readers are acquainted with the peculiar circumstances under which Moses was brought up, and as to how he was saved alive. We are told in the verse preceding, that it was by faith that he was hidden, when it had been commanded that every man-child of Hebrew mother born, should be slain. Whence did his parents obtain this faith? Are we not told that faith is the gift of God? Thus it was not of his parents, or of the ark in which his mother laid him, nor was it of Pharaoh's daughter alone that he was saved alive, but the hand of God was in it all. Cannot many look back over their past life, and see that it is the hand of God which has been leading them? I will attempt to write something of the Lord's dealings, as I hope, with me. I do not remember the time when I did not have serious thoughts about heavenly things. My father was a member of the Old School Baptist church before I was born, but mother's people were Methodists, and they would tell me that if I would be good, the Lord would love me. Was not this the way that Moses was taught by the world? Well, my mind would wonder at what these things meant, as they would tell me of the wonderful things that I must do in order for the Lord to love me, and that if I did not do them I would be lost. Yet my father did not tell me any such things, but he would simply correct me in things that were wrong, for which I feel thankful to God. He did not teach me any such false doctrines as did the others. Well, as time went on my mind would wander over the things that I was told, being accustomed to going to both of the Baptists, and also to the Methodist church. But with all these teachings I did not have any love for any but the Old Baptists, whom I loved, I knew not why, only that God was leading me by his own hand, but as yet it had not pleased him to make it manifest to me. When I was about twelve years of age, I learned to read vocal music, and soon took part in singing school, and being very apt to learn music, I was thrown much into young company.

Of course the worldly religionists were very ready to take hold of such an one, and they invited me to help them sing, and would urge me on to commit pieces to speak at their festivals, and children's entertainments, which I did a few times. But the question would come up, Is this right? Of course they would offer many inducements. To my mind Pharaoh's daughter would represent the church of the world, because Moses was but an adopted son, and as long as he was in accord with her teaching, she owned him as her son, but as soon as he refused to be called her son, or refused to worship in accord with her views, he was recognized no longer as her son. At once she was in opposition to him. Is not this the way with worldly churches? They take the child from the cradle and put him into the hands of a nurse, or teacher, and seek to bring them up in the way in which they would have them to go, but when they are come to years, and refuse to be called their sons, or to be taught any longer by them, then at once they are in opposition to them.

I will return to my own experience. When about fourteen years of age, the Lord, as I hope, spoke to me, showing me what a sinner I was. I was stricken down in my youth, with all the pleasures of the world in view. I would try to cheer up, but I saw that these things were all corrupt like myself, and so when I was asked to take part in them, I would refuse. I looked forward to the time when I hoped the Lord would deliver me out of bondage, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Was not this refusing to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter? Was it not rather choosing to suffer afflictions with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season?

Now a few thoughts about his coming to years. We are told that we must come to the years of accountability before we can be accounted as sinners. What is that time? We are told in the Scriptures of divine truth, that we are shapen in iniquity, and conceived in sin. To my mind we come to these years when the Lord calls us by his grace, let that be at what time it may, when a youth of fourteen, as I myself was, or in middle age, or when come to gray hairs. Then we are given the faith to refuse to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Here is where the choice is made; here is where the affliction begins. A man in health does not know what the pain of sickness means. Therefore we must know something about these things before we can choose them. In my own experience I think that I have realized this as a truth. While I was troubled and distressed, and all the treasures of Egypt were set before me, I at times would look at them with a little pleasure, but when it came to the test, I esteemed the reproaches of Christ greater riches than all these things. My schoolmates would make game of, and accuse the people whom I then loved, and have never ceased to love. I would then, though nothing but a boy, fight for the cause, taking the Scriptures of divine truth as a weapon to fight with. His people do not need the sword literally, but he says his word is sharper than any two-edged sword. I had many things to encounter, which are too numerous to mention, but in the nineteenth year of my age I went before the church, and told my story. I do not know what I said, but I said but very little, and was received and baptized. It was a very cold day, but I was made to experience the words of the poet, "Christians, if your hearts be warm, ice and snow can

do no harm." I cared not for what all my schoolmates, or kindred in the flesh, or the world might say. I felt that all the reproaches which they might bring against me, were greater riches than all their treasures.

Now the last clause of the text says, "For he had respect unto the recompense of the reward." This reward is the love and mercy of God to his people, and not some great crown, or some great mansion which he will give when we leave this world. But we do have this reward even while here. Do we not enjoy his presence many times at our work, or at our homes, or in the midnight hour? We do not have to be in any certain place that he may manifest his love to us, but when it comes do we not feel that it is worth more than all the treasures of the world? When we are fed with that bread of life which is ministered to us through the preaching of the gospel, and when we are permitted to meet together in love and fellowship, these are all the rewards we need. Let us remember that we are not given this reward because we refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, nor because we chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, for we would have never chosen these things for ourselves, but they are all the gift of God. He is the author as well as the finisher of all our desires and choice of these things. When I had followed my Lord and Master in the ordinance of baptism, and had refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and had chosen rather affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproaches of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt, I felt that my troubles were over. When I was raised from the liquid grave I felt that my troubles were left behind. Had this have been so, I would not be in fellowship with Christ, for we are told that he was led away of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, and he was afterward an hungered. Is not this true of all his followers? Were they not led into the wilderness and tempted, they would not hunger. They now feel that all their wants are supplied, and that they will never hunger nor thirst again. I have learned by experience that all my ways and thoughts are sinful, while God's ways and thoughts are just and holy. I have learned that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, and that it is by the grace of God that I am what I am, and that I have ever been made willing to do what seemeth good in his sight. I am but a poor sinner, not able of myself to even think one good thought. I am dependent upon him who spoke the worlds into existence, for life and strength, both temporal and spiritual.

I have presented such thoughts as have been presented to my mind. May the God of all grace have all praise now and ever. Amen.

JOHN T. HASTINGS.

[OUR brother, near the beginning of this letter, speaks of the allurements held out to the young in all the churches of the world. By all the fairs, and festivals, and Sunday School entertainments, which are engaged in, they confess that their gospel is a failure. They acknowledge the shameful truth that their followers do no care for the faith, but only for the amusements which they furnish. By these very things they admit that their religion is a total failure, and what is termed, the world, is not slow to discover the deception, and thereby are made to discredit the sincerity of all religious organizations.—ED.]

ON THE LORD'S SIDE.

It is quite evident generally that those who talk the loudest about coming out on the Lord's side, are the furthest from it when the facts are brought out. They are instead, on man's side, and talk about the works and doings of man, and not the works and doings of God. It also must be noted that God has given man knowledge and power to do certain things, yet even this is for his own glory. But alas, fallen man forgets this, and vaunts himself, and thinks that he is something when he is nothing, and in and of himself, less than nothing and vanity, when once compared to infinite perfection, which is in God only. Jesus manifested the side of the Lord, or the Lord's side, when he said, "I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." This shows the Lord's side is not the will of man. Jesus forever silenced the doctrine of free will then and there. A brother once remarked that Adam spoiled the free will church when he fell, and I also wrote once that he spoiled all the ground so badly that there has not been found a place to build such a church since, except upon the sand, and that shall fall, and great will be the fall thereof. Jesus only shewed the fallacy of the systems founded upon the rickety, hazardous, uncertain basis of man's will. This is the fallible side, and it was evinced both by Adam, and by the Jews under the law. But Jesus came and shewed the Lord's side, and said, "I thank thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." What an expression. Let men wonder, and angels admire, and saints rejoice in the voice of the Lamb upon Mt. Zion. Jesus the Master we see. O Lord, "I know it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." All things are ordered and sure. "Thy counsel shall stand, and thou wilt do all thy pleasure." "Thou art of one mind, and none can turn thee." "Whatsoever thy soul desireth that thou doest." This is the Lord's side. He gives no account of his matters. He doeth his will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. "None can stay his hand, or say, What doest thou?" "His hand hath formed the crooked serpent." "These are parts of his ways, but the thunder of his power who can understand?" He separates between the precious and the vile; he has stretched the line upon the earth; he has divided with his line between the dead and the living; his power, wisdom and sovereignty are infinitely commensurate, and eternally sublime. This is the Lord's side. "He declares the end from the beginning, from ancient times the things which are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Jesus thanked the Father that it was so. He had hidden these things from some who were the most seemly, and had revealed them to others the most unseemly. He hath chosen the weak things, and base things, and things that are not, yea, things that are despised, and has brought to naught things that are, to the end that his people who see this should only glory in the Lord, and come to say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength. "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." This also is the Lord's side. God esteems his little ones highly, and says, It is not the will of your heavenly Father that one of these little ones shall perish, who believe in me. O, how God loves the little. ones who are babes in his kingdom. "The angels of these little ones do always behold the face of the Father which

is in heaven." "Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered," and he says, "I will turn my hand upon the little ones." It were better that a millstone were hanged about one's neck, and he cast into the midst of the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones who believe in him. This is the Lord's side also. "The lame take the prey." So much is said of God's remnant whom he esteems, while men place less value upon remnants. The wonders of our God are unspeakable. He is God in the full, absolute sense of the word. Shall we not then stand on this side all the time, and proclaim all his wonders which are done in heaven and on earth, and in all seas, and in all deep places, and praise his wonderful work, which is not yet comprehended or understood, and shall we not acquiesce in the proclamation of Isaiah, "I form the light, I create the darkness, I make peace, I create evil, I the Lord do all these things"? "There is none beside me." Rather than cavil, and strive to find an explanation which shall satisfy carnal reason, and which smacks of human philosophy and the vain traditions of men, and of the devilish wisdom of human things, which arises out of the bottomless pit of Satanic deception, let us, being liberated from such fumes, stand in the clear light of divine truth and wisdom, and say, "God doeth all things well." And like David say, "Let him alone, the Lord bade him." But human wisdom would rather apologize for her god, but the God of divine wisdom needs no such apologies, but says that he speaks and it is done. God help us from saying, O God, thou shouldest have not allowed sin to enter into this world, thou shouldest not have done as thou hast. O horrible thought, poor, feeble man daring to direct, or to suggest to the infinitely wise God the order of his course. It is preposterous and ridiculous to think of. Far be it from us to entertain such thoughts. I would only use such thoughts to contrast them for the sake of truth, that the truth may shine more brightly, and the Lord's side might be the more clearly seen. God commanded that the asses, the beasts of burden, should be fed with clean provinder. God forbid that those who publish the gospel, should ever hand out any of the chaff of free will, moral agency, human effort, conditionalism, philosophic husks, which the swine do eat, to the servants of the house of our God. God grant that the Lord's side may be seen in the plaited thongs of the truth of the gospel, and that they may be wisely used in expelling from the sacred temple of the Lord, the money changers, and those who buy and sell doves for sacrifice, for the reward. This has already been done, and God will continue the doing of it until the temple is cleansed, and God is glorified, and is seen by his rejoicing subjects in his own light, as opposed to the light of earthly wisdom and human love, and the false traditions of vain man, whose breath is in his nostrils, and who is but the creature of a day.

I will here close. May God lead us by his Spirit, and in all the way of truth.

Yours in such a hope,

WM. LIVELY.

OPELIKA, Ala., Sept. 13, 1899.

KANSAS, Ill., Nov. 22, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Having some reflections of late on the wonderful and profound things as recorded in the ninth chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans, I feel a little like sending some of my thoughts to you, and if they are found in accord with the teachings of the

Holy Spirit, you can send them to the dear children of God for their inspection.

There are so many clear declarations made by the apostle in this chapter, of God's purposes, and so clearly fixing the sovereignty of God, that I scarcely know what special verse or verses to call attention to, but as reading it over just now this language come with considerable force to me, "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."—Verses 15, 16.

I hope with Paul I can "say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness, and continual sorrow in my heart * * * for my brethren my kinsmen" in Christ. Having of late read so many things that seems to me very strange as set forth by persons claiming the name Old School Baptists, that I have thought of the language of Jeremiah, "O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night, for the slain of the daughter of my people! O that I had in the wilderness a lodging-place of wayfaring men, that I might leave my people, and go from them! for they be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men. And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies; but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me saith the Lord."—Jeremiah ix. 1–3. Yet again with Ruth I must say, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." I have been nearly fifty-seven years following, as I hope, the people of God, and when now just at the end of my earthly pilgrimage I see some turning aside from the truth as Paul so clearly states it in this ninth chapter of Romans, it causes me to weep. I am made to put my hand on my mouth, and my face in the dust, and say, O what mercy it was that the dear Lord could have compassion on me, and has so forcibly shown me that it is not of me that I can run, "but of God that sheweth mercy." I hope it is by divine grace that I can say, and realize that it is "by the grace of God I am what I am." It seems to me that every child of grace has been brought to know by experience that they have no power to even think a good thought, except as the mercy of God enables them, and therefore ought too see that "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." If this is true, how can they by doing good procure or obtain a "time salvation," as is by some claimed they can? If the will is free, as some also teach, what did Christ mean when he said, "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just: because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father, which hath sent me"?—John v. 30. It seems that the dear Savior himself did not claim that his will was free, but that he did not seek his own will. But some that Elder H. M. Curry has alluded to in an article published in the *Gospel News* of November 15th is, as he truly terms them, "novices and strikers." He also says in the same article, "Some are getting too wise; they, like the Jews of old, are forsaking the fountain of living waters, and are hewing out broken fountains that can hold no water. They seem to trust more in their own presumed shrewdness than

in the wisdom and power of God."—Page 2, *Gospel News*, Nov. 15th, 1899. While reading this article of Elder Curry's I felt thankful that I had found one so like myself. With him, I am certain that I would never have found God's people if he had not led me to them. So with him, and all truly taught sinners, I hope I, too, have been made to say with Jonah, "Salvation is of the Lord." This surely was a temporal salvation that Jonah was then delivered from, and certainly it was altogether of the Lord. I am so like Paul when he said, "The good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do." I can further join him in his prayer and say, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

This is probably my last effort at writing, as age warns me the end is near; so I desire to leave a weak effort of my faith still being unchanged, and that my trust for life and salvation of every kind, is alone in Jesus Christ.

JAMES M. TRUE.

LAWRENCE, Mass., July 14, 1899.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER:—I received your welcome letter yesterday, and would thank you for the love, fellowship and sympathy which you have expressed for me, but the whole tone of your letter forbids it, and my experience agrees with it. The Lord was good to put it into your heart to write and comfort me with what you expressed. He leads us, so we know that all the praise, thanks, honor and glory, belong to him. Can you think of any blessing greater than this? The change in the home circle, which I have known must take place, has come. I have often been fearful that I should be overcome with the sorrow, but the Lord has not left me comfortless. He has helped and sustained me in such a way that I know it has been by his power. He has given me the rich consolations of the gospel, and has made the truth as precious to me as when no natural sorrow was present. It was his will to cause me to know the truth when I was eighteen years old, and many precious seasons has he given me since. The promises in which I rejoiced when walking in the light of his countenance have been brought to my mind, and have lifted me out of this natural sorrow, and have made the goodness and tender mercies of the Lord to shine more clearly. He was good to spare my parents so many years; good to give me health and strength to care for them in their declining years, and good to take them to himself to be forever with him. He is good to enable me to believe that the future is all known to him, and that not a single event can take place contrary to his will, and that we cannot flee from his presence; it is that faith, which is the gift of God, which enables us to trust in the living God, so that we cannot be moved, no matter how severe the storms of sorrow may be.

My steadfast heart shall know no fear,
That heart will rest on thee.

How glad we are that though our poor, weak, sinful flesh, cannot say this, the faith that overcomes the world, and purifies the heart, can. It looks unto Jesus, its author and finisher, and we eat his flesh, and drink his blood, and rejoice in his pardoning love. I shall never be able to tell the great and wonderful things that the Lord has done for me, but I have this comforting thought, that when I write or speak to those of like precious faith, although I can say but little of what he has done, yet he can bring to their remembrance what he has said to them, and then they will know how won-

derful his works are, and will say with me, I can never tell it. How many times I have experienced this in the conference meetings, when a brother or sister has said a few words, and the pure mind has been stirred up by way of remembrance, and then how sweet and precious my thoughts were. I have felt that I could not help trying to express them, no matter if I had already spoken more times than any one else. The witness within sweetly compels me to testify of the things which I have seen and heard of Jesus. It has been the Lord's will to make me at times feel very keenly that I have blundered and mixed up what I have said in a terrible manner, so that I have felt that those present were ashamed of me, and I have wished I could go through the floor out of sight. I am reminded that you have expressed something like this in your letter to me, saying that you were good for nothing, and ashamed of yourself. So you will understand me when I say this is the way the Lord teaches us that in our flesh dwells no good thing. All spiritual gifts are for the edification of the church. How such things humble us, so that we desire to sit at his feet and know no will but his. You have been made willing to speak with the gift that he has given you, and I have been made to be glad to speak of the precious things of the kingdom of God, feeling and knowing that he is able to do all things, and could use even me, sinful and weak as I am, to show forth his praise. Sometimes I feel so glad the Lord leads us in this way, and thus makes us lose confidence in the flesh. I would like to spend every second of time in praising him. None but the inhabitants of Zion sing praise unto God, and it is in Zion that praise waiteth for the Lord. This is the city which he hath blessed, and glorious things are spoken of it. He has appointed salvation for walls and bulwarks, and its gates shall be called praise. It is in this city that we find the Lord a place of broad rivers and streams; its inhabitants are sinners who have been washed in the blood of the Lamb. How glad we should be that Jesus has been wrought in our hearts the hope of glory. We never could have accomplished it by any power of our own, and so in all ways we are brought to confess this truth: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." My parents rejoiced in and loved this truth for many years, and it was their comfort in death. It enabled them to say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" I believe the same God has been my strength and support.

"In each event of life how clear
Thy ruling hand I see;
Each blessing to my heart more dear,
Because conferred by thee."

I expect to be at several meetings in Maine during July and August. We shall have pleasant and profitable seasons if Jesus manifests himself unto us as he does not unto the world, and so leads our minds that our conversation will be of the precious things of the kingdom. I am glad that I know we are dependent upon God for all things. I am glad also that I can come unto him, pleading the merits of his Son. Jesus makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God, and when we are made to say, "Thy will be done," it is enough; we cannot ask for anything more than this.

I hope that you will be always kept as humble as your letter shows you to be. I should not know how to answer your letter had you told me that you did not see how any one could help enjoying your preaching, for you could see that

you improved every time that you spoke. What do you suppose the expression of my face must be should I read anything like this from your pen? You would also lose the sweet comfort of knowing that your sufferings were of God.

I will close now; love to all the saints.

Your sister in hope,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

PETTIGREW, Ark., Nov. 20, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Anything that I can do for the dear old SIGNS will be cheerfully done. Our association, and most of those with whom we correspond, are established on the predestination of all things, and the new birth, as set forth in the SIGNS. I hope that the sample copies may do good, and disabuse the minds of many brethren to whom the SIGNS has been so badly misrepresented. It is so exceedingly sad to see the Baptists wrangling and disputing about this and that point of doctrine. I fear it forebodes evil. A house divided against itself cannot stand. Jerusalem just preceding its destruction was divided and torn by factions. "Before destruction the spirit of man is haughty." This has been observed by thinking men of the world, natural, unregenerate men, until it has become a proverb among men that, "Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad."

I have noticed many articles of late in so called Baptist papers that denounce the fundamental points of doctrine of the Primitive Baptists, in terms that show an utter lack of the Spirit of Christ. The writers manifest an angry, contentious spirit, a spirit of railing, which the Archangel dared not do when disputing with the devil. The ancient doctrine and order of the Baptists is denounced as new things among us, and many good brethren are being deceived. But such things are foretold in the Scriptures, and *must needs be.* But Jehovah still reigns omnipotent, and without him not even a sparrow can fall to the ground. His omnipotent decree numbers even so small a thing as a hair of the head. "The very hairs of your heads are all numbered." They are only "gathered together to do whatsoever his hand and counsel has determined before to be done." Let us be still therefore, and know that he is God.

May God bless you, as well as all who love and know the truth.

In affliction your brother, I hope,

C. W. ANDERSON.

WAGRAM, Ohio, Nov. 27, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—We have just returned from our trip in the east. We had a most unusually pleasant trip among the churches in the east. To one situated as I am, and holding the views I do on God's sovereignty, it is hard to express the pleasure of associating with those of like faith on that subject. There seems to be an unusual antipathy in the breasts of those whose hopes of eternal life all hinge on predestination, against that subject, which seems to be something akin to the hatred manifested toward the truth by those who crucified him. I am sure that many would accept that doctrine were it not so grossly misrepresented by preachers who should know better. That they are being suffered to go in their own ways for some wise purpose, I have no doubt, but I get like Elijah in the cave, I worry about it; not about myself, but the glory of my God. I do not like to see the altars digged down. Why should such a glorious truth be so assailed? It is so hard for me to get used to the Lord's ways, I fear I never shall in this life, for just when I think the

tangle is all out, and I think I can see ahead, and say to myself, that is the way, now, why he turns me aside into another way which I had not seen, and it is different from any I have ever traveled. O, I must have his eternal purpose, his inimitable will, his omnipotent power all the time, or I have no hope.

Yours in love,

FRANK McGLADE.

MOTTVILLE, Ohio, August, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have thought at times that I would never try to write more for the SIGNS, and leave the space for more excellent brethren, but there is something that causes me to desire to speak and praise my Redeemer's name. O, if I could but find language to express myself, but the flesh is so weak that the tongue cannot express that soul-cheering love, nor tell of its beauties to others, as we would. Sometimes I feel cast out by the world for Christ's sake, and it causes me sadness and loneliness, but the world hated him, and we are not greater than our Master, we must also suffer with him, yet I count it all joy, and have no ill will, but feel rather to pity them. I used to have a great hatred for Old School Baptists, myself. It was not anything that they had done, but what I had heard spoken against them, but when I went and beheld and heard for myself, I saw it was my own interests which I was trampling underfoot. When I was without a home they took me in, and when I was hungry they fed me, and now how many times do we sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. O, if I could but tell what Jesus has done for my soul. He found me in the wilderness of sin, and he lead me about and instructed me, and established my goings, and bid me lean on and look to him who is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him. I have found him to be the One altogether lovely, and an abiding place and shelter in the time of storm. We are not our own, we are bought with a price, and are the Lord's, therefore we should love the chastening rod. He is my comfort in sorrow, he is my stay in trouble; he bids me roll my every care on him. He is the Lily of the valley and the bright and morning Star, and he is the chiefest of ten thousand to my soul. When I look to myself, and in the flesh see so much sin, and so many faults, how cheering to believe that Christ has come into this house, this heart of mine, and he will reign there until every enemy is destroyed. When in death our eyes shall close to all that is mortal, and be opened to see him as he is, we shall be like him, and then we shall be satisfied, and without a discord will we shout victory, victory, through the blood of the Lamb. How precious is this faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. But while in the flesh we groan, being burdened, for we only know in part, and see in part.

If you have fellowship for this, do with it as you will.

In christian love,

MRS. FRANCIS FULLER.

GALESBURG, Ill., November, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—In this section the Baptists are quite well agreed; they are well satisfied with the simplicity of the gospel, and therefore rest in the promise of our Savior, "If the Son make you free ye shall be free indeed;" hence endless genealogies and the striving in regard to questions of no profit are avoided. It seems to me that no good can come to the upbuilding of the church in the most holy faith by gratifying our pride or ambition by trying to dig too

deep in the profound mysteries that belong to our God; we must rest, wait, for the revelation. The Spirit must reveal to us the things of the Spirit, then we can witness with John, "For we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given to us an understanding." The knowledge of the things that pertain to the kingdom of God can only come to any this way. Then would it not be better to avoid laying so much stress on the "absolute predestination of all things," or talking too much about "time salvation?" It is plain to understand, however, that God, the Creator, predetermined all things in the very ancients of eternity. Even when the earth was without form and void, all that exists, both animate and inanimate, was created by him, and exists for his own pleasure. It pleased him to make man, and also gave man a law, knowing all the results that would follow the giving of that law. He predestinated that all should die in Adam; he also predestinated that many should be made alive in Christ, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven. The last Adam was given absolute power to quicken and give a new life to whom he would. This "new life" is called a birth, born again, born of an incorruptible seed, the word of God, which was and is the everlasting Father of all the children of regeneration. These children were to inherit a kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. This king was alluded to by the prophets, Behold, a King shall reign. Behold, I and the children, &c. Then the advent of this King into the world must be in harmony with God's predetermination, for the prophet declared, saying, Behold, I send my messenger before my face, to prepare the way before me. So John the Baptist came preaching, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." Then we hear the heavenly convoy of angels announcing his advent, and commanding the shepherds to go and worship him.

I am using too much of your valuable time, but beg a word more, "As ye [we] have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." If Jesus has borne our sins in his own body on the cross, and the Holy Spirit has applied mystically his blood to our consciences, purging our consciences from dead works, ought we not as our reasonable service present our bodies a living sacrifice to him? For we that have put on Christ by baptism, have celebrated the marriage rights. Now the blessings which are to follow in time, so far as our joy and happiness are concerned, must come as a result of walking in him as a faithful, obedient wife. Then will he, as our loving Husband, cherish and love his wife. Paul speaking along these lines said he had reference to Christ and the church. Then as I suggested the nearer we, his children, walk as well pleasing in his sight, and try to be obedient to his will, in walking in all of the ordinances of the Lord's house blameless, we have the promise that his blessing shall follow, "for they shall go in and out and find pasture." The river of water of life that flows from the throne of God, will quench our thirst, for we are beside these clear waters, instead of being led captive by the devil at his will, or being in Babylonian captivity, where we would have to set down and weep. I understand time salvation to mean the condition of the child of God as regards his walk in this world. If I am a liar or a drunkard, or disobedient, the sweet influences of the Holy Spirit is withdrawn from me, then I mourn like the captives, my harp is hung upon the willows; but how different

does the dear child of God feel when he is walking in obedience. "Jesus [then] all the day long, is his joy and his song." But what do I see in the Shulamite? A company of two armies. The elder must serve the younger.

May we all overcome, and live as becometh those who have named the name of Christ.

B. F. BUTLER.

(See editorial remarks on page 754.)

PIERCE, Texas, Nov. 11, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am glad to help you to spread the truth among the Baptists, for it seems to me there is a great many deviating from the old landmarks, but yet I am willing to look unto God for all things, and believe in the doctrine of predestination of all things, from the depths of my heart, God being my helper. Myself and wife joined Bethlehem church, the second Sunday in September, as brother Howard wrote you. They are a lovely band of brethren and sisters, and sound in the faith. We feel so very thankful to our God for this blessed privilege, we can only praise his holy name, for it is his work, we do hope. We have not been permitted to visit the church since we joined, but hope to soon. We feel unworthy to bear the name among the children of God.

God has visited us in our sorrows, and in our afflictions, and has led us in ways we have not known, for man's ways are not God's ways. He has enabled us, I hope, to look unto him for every good and perfect gift, and in our transgressions and in our sins, we have been made to cry unto him for mercy, for there is no other way under heaven, or among men, whereby we must be saved, save through the name of the blessed Jesus.

We are subscribing to two or three other Baptist periodicals, but none are as sound as the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have not words to tell how I have feasted on brethren Chick and Durand's articles, as well as many others. It almost seems to me that I can hear their voice, while reading. While they are strangers in the flesh, I hope they are not in the Spirit.

J. F. STAGGS.

WALNUT, Ohio, Dec. 3, 1899.

G. BEEBE'S SON—VERY DEAR BROTHER:—The following is written at the request of my mother, Minerva Dunnick, who is now past eighty years old. She has been a member of the Turkey Run church, Fairfield Co., Ohio, for more than forty years, and she fully realizes that her earthly pilgrimage is well nigh run. She wishes to record her profound faith in her God and Savior, and to indorse the precious truths and doctrine advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Words fail her to express the comfort she experiences in reading, and the fellowship she retains for the able writers, such as brethren Coulter, Bartley, Durand, Chick and many others she might mention, often saying it seems as though she must see them face to face, and only reconciling herself with the hope that ere long she will experience her desire, in the world to come.

Yours in humble hope,

H. M. DUNNICK.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denotes the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1899.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REMARKS ON BROTHER BUTLER'S LETTER, PAGE 751.

FEELING certain that brother Butler does not mean all that certain expressions in his letter would imply to us, we take the liberty of expressing a few thoughts, which we trust he will receive in the same spirit in which they are written. His letter affords an opportunity for us to disabuse the minds of some in regard to the belief of those who object to the term, "conditional time salvation." It does not follow that if we cannot assent to the idea that "*for* keeping the commandments there is great reward," that we must necessarily believe that *in disobedience* we receive these blessings. We never knew of an Old School or Primitive Baptist who would say that he could live as he listed, and still have the answer of a good conscience toward God. No indeed, his every day, and every hour's experience is directly opposite to such a thought. He would with Paul be relieved of this "thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him," but he finds he is not to be permitted to rid himself of "this body of death" at will, and bask in the full light of the Sun of Righteousness. He must, like his blessed Savior, learn obedience by the things that he suffers, and depend for strength wholly upon the answer that Paul received to his thrice repeated prayer: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." This answer made Paul exclaim, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest on me." Paul says, "therefore," that the grace of God might be sufficient, and that the *power of Christ* may rest upon him; he most gladly gloried in his infirmities; that is, he was glad that his strength was all in Christ, and that in himself he had no strength, for when he was utterly without strength within himself, then was he strong in the Lord. (2 Cor. xii. 9, 10.)

This answer that Paul received, is the answer every child of God will always receive to their prayers to be relieved from their carnally mindedness, and their mourning on account of a cold, lifeless state spiritually. "My grace is sufficient for thee," is the promise, and upon this rests all our hope. If we believed that christians could work themselves out the low grounds of sorrow, or by their own efforts escape the sore trials and temptations that afflict the saints, we should be utterly discouraged, for we have ever found that when we would do good, evil was present with us, and how to perform that which was good we found not.

Brother Butler says, "If I am a liar, or drunkard, or disobedient, the sweet influences of the Holy Spirit are withdrawn, and I mourn like the captives," &c. To our mind the "if" is in the wrong place, and the sentence should be transposed so that it would read, If "the sweet influences of the Holy Spirit are withdrawn," then all these "hidden" evils of our car-

nal nature creep forth. They are in our nature all the time, but restraining grace keeps them hid, but when that grace is withdrawn, we but prove what we are by nature. As it requires the restraining power of the Spirit to keep us from evil, so it is only by the operation of the Spirit that we are enabled to manifest the fruits of the Spirit in "keeping the commandments." We must be in a "blessed" condition to be able to keep the commandments. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

It has not been our observation that those that have been the most exemplary in their walk and conversation have had the most spiritual joy, and been enabled to shout the most in praise to the Lord. Rather to the contrary, those that have been the most afflicted, both temporally and spiritually, have been the most spiritually minded, and demonstrated that like their Lord, "They learned obedience by the things that they suffered." We are "chosen in a furnace of affliction." Not that we were in a furnace, and chosen while there, but it was the choice of God that we should be in the furnace. The Savior said of Paul, "I will shew him how great things he shall suffer for my sake." Then are not these very trials and temptations, that nearly drive us to despair, in the overruling providence of God, among the greatest blessings of our inheritance? for they "work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

The greatest mental or physical suffering ever endured by a child of God, could he but surely know it was in the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ, would be more precious to him than anything nature can afford. All of God's children that have been long on their pilgrimage, can call to mind times in their experience, when it seemed that all things were against them, and that they were forsaken by their God, and were utterly dead to everything spiritual. But after being delivered by the grace of God from their trials, they look back to those seasons of their deepest anguish, as the most precious in their christian experience, and can now see that at that time they were in a closer walk with God than when they are not so keenly feeling their utter helplessness, and entire dependence upon God "to will and to do of his good pleasure" with them. Think back to those times, dear child of God, and ask yourself if you worked yourself out of your despondent condition? Did you receive deliverance as a result of something you had done? No, you were utterly without strength, and if your salvation depended upon your works, you would have remained in darkness till the day of your death. Your salvation from that carnally-minded death, was all of grace, from first to last. And if you have ever been enabled to think a good thought, or experience a spiritual emotion, or to perform a righteous or obedient act, it has all been by the grace of God, and to him all the glory belongs, "For in him we live, and move, and have our being." "Are ye so foolish, having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" Can language be any clearer than these last two quotations of Scripture in proving our dependence wholly upon grace?

Brethren, let us "Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the pharisees," for anything that leans towards creature efforts, tends to phariseeism.

May God give us all grace to know and do his will, and keep us from error, and his name shall have all the glory.

B.

CLOSE OF VOLUME SIXTY-SEVEN.

OVER two-thirds of a century ago the SIGNS OF THE TIMES was first issued. It was then, and for the next forty years, practically the only paper "Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause." The fundamental principles set forth in the first number have ever been declared, and until recent years unchallenged by any claiming the name of Old School or Primitive Baptists. Whatever may be the truth or fallacy of these Articles of faith, they were maintained by the brethren that were first called Old School or Primitive Baptists, at Black Rock, Md., in 1832. Now if these principles were what constituted an Old School or Primitive Baptist when they assumed that name, what right have those who refute these principles, to claim the name of those who first published these Articles of Faith, to distinguish them from the Missionary or Free Will Baptists that had brought their new inventions into the church?

For about fifty years the truth advocated by the SIGNS was received and indorsed by the Old School Baptists generally throughout the whole country, but of late, factions have sprung up among us in different sections, bringing in new issues, and tests of fellowship, and causing confusion and distress among the brotherhood. Now if the principles advocated by the SIGNS to-day are the same as those upon which the paper was founded, certainly those who have turned from the SIGNS must be the ones who are bringing in the strange doctrine. That our readers may judge for themselves whether or not the SIGNS still maintains the sacred truths upon which they were established, we herewith append the articles published in the first number, viz:

1st. The extensive sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence, and eternal perfection of the great Jehovah, the revelation which God has given of himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one."—1 John v. 8.

2d. The absolute predestination of all things.

3d. Eternal and unconditional election.

4th. The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

5th. That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

6th. The sovereign, irresistible, and (in all cases) effectual work of the Holy Ghost, in quickening and regenerating the elect of God.

7th. The final perseverance and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

8th. The resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.

9th. That the Church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers, that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the Scriptures are the only rule of faith and practice to the saints of God.

10th. That there is no connection between Church and State; and as touching the proposition of a marriage between them, the Hon. R. M. Johnson, in his report on the Sabbath Mail question, has amply revealed our faith.

"*The Signs of the Times*" will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath School Unions, &c., &c., waging war with the mother Arminianism, and her entire brood of institutions.

Belief in the above principles is what constituted an Old School or Primitive Baptist in 1832, and is what constitutes one to-day, and those that refute these principles have no right to the name.

Never within our recollection has there been a time that the SIGNS has been more needed among the brethren, to defend the truth once delivered to the saints, than at the present day, and never have we felt more keenly our own inability to conduct the publication of the paper, and know that unless we are sustained by the Lord, all our labors will be vain.

The past year has been a peculiarly trying one, but again the Lord has been better to us than all our fears. We have doubtless made mistakes, and appreciate the forbearance of our brethren. Thanking them for their kind aid afforded us in contributing to our columns, and in assuring us of their approval of the conduct of the paper, as well as for their kind support financially, we close our editorial labors for volume sixty-seven.

B.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

HEBREWS VII. 28.

"FOR the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore."

This whole epistle appears to be devoted to an exhibition of the mediatorial relations which our Redeemer bears to his Father and his church, prominent among which his priesthood is the peculiar theme of the inspired writer. The epistle begins with the testimony of his sonship, and as the medium of divine revelation to the saints on earth, God who spake to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, and by whom also he made the worlds. Who being the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, &c. The Son of God thus identified, is next presented in the perfect work of purging our sins, and then sitting down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. In purging our sins, his priestly office is involved, and a comparison of him with angels and with the priests of the Levitical order, by way of contrast, is instituted; wherein his unexampled pedigree, the higher order of his priesthood, and the superiority of the testament of which he is the surety, are brought to view. The disparity between the order of Aaron's priesthood, and that of Melchisedec, is very clearly and strikingly demonstrated by several qualifications which Christ possessed over those possessed by Aaron and his sons, among which is that found in our text, namely, the oath, by which the perpetuity and immutability of his priesthood are established.

The law maketh men high priests which have infirmity. That is, the law to which the Levitical priesthood belonged, for Aaron and his sons had infirmities, were liable to diseases, like other men, and could not long fill the office by reason of death, yet the law expressly made these men high priests, and allowed no other men to hold the office. Hence we are told that there being a change of the priesthood, there must of necessity be also a change of the law. The law could not recognize any but Levites, and it is evident that our Lord sprung out of Judea, of which tribe Moses (or the law,) spake nothing concerning the priesthood. The law under which Aaron was made a priest is called the law of a carnal commandment; that is, it had reference to the fleshy persons, descent, physical and mental properties of those who were to hold the office. If a son of Aaron was blemished in his person, or unsound physically, he was disqualified, because the Levitical

law and priesthood regarded the commonwealth of Israel as the fleshly descendants of Abraham. But Christ is not made a priest after the law, but by the power of an endless life. And there was verily a disannulling of the law going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope, by the which we draw nigh unto God. The inspired writer having thus explained the distinction between the covenants, or testaments, or laws, goes on to speak of the oath which was required in the priestly office of Christ, as another essential difference between the two priesthoods and laws, and in doing so, makes use of the words of our text, before summing up the arguments.

In the foregoing references to the testimony, we see that the men which were made high priests by the law, all had infirmities, and had first to offer sacrifices for their own sins, and then for the people's; and such was their infirmity they could not continue in the office by reason of death. *But the word of the oath which was since the law, maketh the Son who is consecrated for evermore.* The word of the oath is quoted in the twenty-first verse of this chapter, from Psalm cx. 4, "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent. Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec."

The word of this oath *was since the law.* Not that the word was not spoken, or the oath taken until after the legal dispensation expired, for the law and the prophets were until John, but the inspired psalmist declares that it was in the past tense in his days, more than fifteen hundred years before the days of John the Baptist. And we understand that Christ, as signified by the peculiar order of his priesthood, was a Priest, without predecessor or successor, without descent, without father or mother, in the priesthood, and without beginning of days or end of life. Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec, was the word of the oath, and that order is expressly defined as signifying that his priesthood was without beginning or end, and after the power of immortality. So long then as Jesus has embodied in himself the immortality of his body and members, as their mediatorial Head and Life, the words of the oath by which he is made priest have been in force. But his appearance now in the end of the world to officiate in the priestly office, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, was in the order of time, subsequently to the priesthood of Aaron. In the same sense in which he is called the *second* Adam. Not that Adam existed before him in reality, for before the dust of the world, out of which Adam was formed, was made, Christ existed in his mediatorial relation to his body and members, as one brought up with the Father. In manifestation to us, Christ was the second Adam, while as the Lord from heaven, his goings forth were of old, from everlasting; so in the order of divine revelation, the types preceded their antitypes, the shadows, their substance. The word of the oath, "Thou art a Priest," not thou shalt be a Priest, the word of the oath is in the perfect tense, but this word of the oath by which he is made a Priest, involved the necessity of his advent to the world, and of his being made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. Moreover, the word of the oath consecrated him as the High Priest for evermore, and thus secures the perpetuity of his priesthood. He is not to be removed by infirmity, by death, or anything else. He is not to be superceded by any other

priests or priesthoods, sacrifices or sufferings, but to represent his people as their only dependence for acceptance before God for evermore.

In the summing up of what had been said, the amount of testimony is thus given: "We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man," who has by so much obtained a more excellent ministry, than that under the Old Covenant or Testament; by how much also he is the Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. The superior excellency of the new covenant over the old is to be estimated by the superiority of the priesthood of Christ over that of Aaron. The better promises are those which God, that cannot lie, made before the world began, and which is confirmed by oath. An oath for confirmation with men is an end of all strife, wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, by which it is impossible that God should lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us, which hope we have, as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus made an High Priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec.

Well might the inspired penman assure us that "Such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." And also that he is able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto God by him, seeing that he ever liveth to make intercession for them. One who is easily touched with the feelings of our infirmities, having been tempted in all points as we are, and yet without sin. Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., April 1, 1857.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder E. Rittenhouse, Nov. 22d, 1899, at the residence of the bride's father, Thomas J. Hastings, of Delmar, Del, and Miss Mary, daughter of Benjamin C. Cubbage, Esq., of Kent Co., Del.

By the same, Nov. 28th, 1899, at the residence of the bride's parents, in Cecil Co., Md., Abner R. Burrows, of Kent Co., Del., and Miss Mary Elizabeth Redgrave, of the former place.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

OUR dear mother, **Mrs. Eliza Ruffner,** oldest daughter of Caleb and Rebecca Coplin, wife of Jacob Ruffner, who lived near Thurston, Ohio, departed this life August 15th, 1899, in the 74th year of her age. She professed her faith in the Redeemer in 1858, and was baptized by Elder Jesse Stith, and united with the Predestinarian church called Harmony, Licking Co., Ohio. Afterward she, with her husband and family, moved to Fairfield Co., Ohio, where she and her husband united with the Pleasant Run Predestinarian Baptist church, by letter, and lived a devoted member until her death. She was truly a meek, humble and faithful follower of her Savior, and had the sincere love and fellowship of the household of faith. We children have lost a kind, gentle and loving mother, and the church a devoted member, and the community a worthy neighbor. She had been afflicted for several years with stomach and heart trouble. She bore her affliction with great patience and fortitude, many times repeating, "I will wait my appointed time," and as she neared the end of her mortal pilgrimage a brighter day seemed dawning, the Sun of righteousness arose with healing in his wings, and her tongue was loosed to speak werds of lasting comfort to her family, of her hope in the one offering made by Christ, and of her unworthiness in his sight. Not a day passed in her last sickness, it seemed, without some previous testimony that her life was hid with Christ in God. She leaves four sons and five daughters to mourn their loss, and twenty grandchildren, and numerous other relatives and friends. May each of us, her children, be led to follow the wise ex-

ample set before us, ever looking to the same pure fountain for strength and wisdom, and may the Lord give us that reconciling grace to bow submissively to his will, and with sweet satisfaction to remember her gentle passing away from a world of sorrow, to a land of pure delight and perfect bliss, there to bask in the realms of the blest.

Her funeral was preached by Elder L. E. Thomas, who spoke comforting words to the sorrowing relatives and friends, after which her body was buried by the side of her husband, in the Walnut Creek churchyard, until mortal shall put on immortality.

HER CHILDREN.

Donald McArthur, of Iowa, Station, Ontario, departed this life on the morning of Oct. 20th, 1899, at the advanced age of 84 years and 5 days. He was born in Scotland, and emigrated to Canada in 1843; united with the Covenanted Baptist Church in October, 1844, and was baptized by Elder Dougald Campbell the following June, in Ekfrid. He was the last to survive of seven who were baptized the same day. He manifested by a godly walk and conversation that he was an heir to that inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Hearing the preaching of the gospel in its purity, as well as conversing on spiritual things, was his chief delight, and he never failed to be in his seat at meeting time unless prevented by illness. He was confined to his bed about seventeen days, during which time all that loving hands and medical aid could do was done, but he frequently remarked that he did not expect or desire to get better, but, if it was the Lord's will, he was ready and willing to depart and be with Christ. Words of prayer or praise to the God of all grace and truth were constantly upon his lips The hymn commencing with the words, "Jesus, lover of my soul," seemed to be a favorite, as he would often repeat lines from it as well as many portions of Scripture, which were especially precious to him, among which were the twentieth and forty-second Psalms. He suffered no pain of consequence, but gradually sank until within about six hours of his demise, when some complication that did not previously exist, appeared to have set in, from which he suffered extremely until released by the grim messenger, which he so fearlessly and with such apparent anxiety waited. A little before he breathed his last he sat up in the bed, but feeling that he could not stay long in that position, he asked to be laid down, immediately after which he exclaimed, "Lord Jesus, I cannot bear any more," and expired the same moment, without a struggle. He prayed that the Lord would grant him possession of his senses while he lived, and although he slept scarcely any during his illness, yet all his natural faculties remained unimpaired to the last. He gave directions regarding his funeral, particularly requesting that there be no vain display.

His beloved wife and two children preceded him to the grave a number of years ago. He left surviving him two daughters, six sons and a number of grandchildren, who mourn the loss of a loving father, but they mourn not as those who have no hope.

He has been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years, probably since they were first introduced into Canada.

The services on the funeral occasion were conducted by Elder William Pollard, who took for a text Romans xiv. 7, 8.

JOHN T. KERR.

Elba Barnett Webb, the subject of this memoir, daughter of W. Lively and M. S. Lively, consort of J. P. Webb, was born July 13th, 1878, and was married Sept. 20th, 1893, and died Nov. 10th, 1899, after a lingering illness of eleven days of childbed fever and blood poison, and was unconscious most of the time. She seemed to be impressed that she would die, and told her husband that if she was spared she would offer at Smyrna Old School Baptist church, and when she died she desired to be buried at that cemetery, which request was carried out on the 11th day of November. She was a devoted mother, a kind wife, and endeavored to do her duty, and was cheerful and in fine health until two weeks after the birth of her fourth child.

Elder N. M. Cook officiated at the funeral, and spoke to the comfort of the distressed, from these words, "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Romans viii. 38.

There was a large congregation; her father made a few trembling remarks, endeavoring to control himself as best he could, and expressed satisfaction of the evidence of a hope. She said in her illness not to pray for her to live, she wanted to die, and prayed a beautiful prayer, and and sang a beautiful hymn, and composed it as she sang. While her father and sister were attempting to give her nourishment, she said she did not want anything in this world. She would raise up her feeble hands and say, "O please let me go," and crying in the meantime in a pitiful manner. She knew she was a sinner, and talked of her Jesus in whom she trusted while she lived, and trusted him in death, and called on him. She breathed gently and died easy, like a candle going out, without a struggle. She is now at rest.

"Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep,
From which none ever wake to weep."

She leaves a mourning husband and four children,

a father, mother, three brothers and four sisters, to mourn their loss. God help us and comfort us in all our bereavements and afflictions, and afford us grace to endure to the end, is the prayer and sincere desire of her father,

W. LIVELY.

OPELIKA, Alabama.

DIED—April 30th, 1899, sister **Lydia Prestler,** of Ingleside, N. Y., aged about 75 years. She had been a widow several years. She was a member of the Old School Baptist church called Riker's Hollow, for many years, and lived and died in the fellowship of her brethren. Eternal rest is hers in its fullness and perfection; no waiting there, as there can be nothing lacking.

ALSO,

Friday, Oct. 27th, 1899, **Mr. Wyman Drake,** of same place, brother of sister Prestler, aged 73 years. He had been in the mercantile business thirty-three years, at Riker's Hollow, and was considered by all that knew him to be an honorable man. He had been received for baptism by the church, but was not baptized. We believe that he is in the likeness of Jesus, which is heaven and all of the heaven, that can be desired. Relatives and many friends mourn the loss of these two friends. The Lord give all needed grace.

The writer attended both funerals.

D. M. VAIL.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1900. NO. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JOSEPH.

In the blessing which Jacob gave to his sons, he said, "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall." The character and life of Joseph is very fruitful in the many and varied presentations of his antitype, Jesus. In his experience with his brethren, and afterwards in his afflictions in Egypt, indeed his whole life presents an unlimited fullness in the hand which God outstretched to him in every trial and every necessity. While he was yet a lad, his father Jacob's heart was filled with love toward him, in evidence of which he made him "a coat of many colors," designating him from all others of his father's family, as the one who received the fullness of his father's love. As the type of Jesus he was the beloved of his father. Of Jesus God said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The many colored coat, as the vari-colored rainbow of God's promise to Israel, is evidently intended to represent Jesus as the fulfillment of God's promise to that people, as embracing all things in every shape or color, both in heaven and in earth, which were placed in his hands to the end that he should be exalted above the heavens, a Prince and a Savior of Israel. The envy and jealousy of the carnal nature is usually stirred into action according to the degree that one is elevated above his fellows. The knowledge that Jacob loved Joseph more than all his brethren, caused the brethren of Joseph to envy and hate him; and when he had told them his dream concerning them, that their sheaves made obeisance to his shief, signifying that they should at some time make obeisance to him, and also the added dream that "the sun and moon and eleven stars" should make obeisance to him, then their envy and hatred were so aroused that they were ready to kill him. Did not Israel in like manner so hate Jesus? When Joseph went down to Dothan, where he found his brethren, he went not to do his own will, but to do the will of his father. But wherever Joseph went, or whatsoever he did, God was with him; therefore was he prospered, that the purpose of God should be fulfilled concerning Israel. In presenting Joseph as a type of Christ, and a type of the fullness of the riches of grace, and also of the experience of the

saints of God, we are comforted in the blessed truth that God is the moving power in it all. As in the beginning "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," so in all time that same Spirit sways kingdoms, rules principalities, directs the thoughts and actions of every man, is above all and in us all. God wrought in the mind of Joseph's brethren that they did not kill him as their wicked hearts dictated, but sold him into Egypt instead. But my object in writing is to present Joseph as "a fruitful bough," yielding plenteous fruit, in comparison with the fullness of grace, grace without measure, which God bestowed upon Jesus in the perfection of his wondrous work of salvation. We can hardly conceive of anything that could be more discouraging to Joseph, when he was sold as a slave in a strange country, separated from home and all its comforts, but however discouraging the outlook, let us wait for the ripening of the fruit, remembering all the time that God was with him. As I write my glad heart can almost imagine that even my pen is joyfully anxious to write the hopeful and assuring words which mean so much to the weary pilgrim, "The Lord was with him." When as a slave in his master's house, Potiphar discovered that everything in Joseph's hand prospered, then did his master make him overseer of all his house, and his estate, and trusted him so implicitly that Potiphar "knew not aught he had save the bread that he did eat." But the end is not yet. God had a greater work for Joseph to accomplish than could be found in the house of Potiphar, and he must needs suffer to accomplish it. So, as Jesus was led of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, so also in the house of Joseph's prosperity he was sorely tried and tempted, and although he preserved his innocence and his integrity, and resisted the temptation offered by Potiphar's wife, yet he suffered contumely by being thrown into prison. How wonderfully secure is the tried and tempted child of God when the Lord is with him. The effect of abounding grace is to turn the heart and the eyes of the simple-hearted wanderer away from the wiles and seductions of the foolish woman, for he walks by faith, and not by sight. In his heart "wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars." Confidence in the flesh is severed. The light of truth reveals "a garden inclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." And the glory of that heart is, that the Lord is with him. Although Joseph was cast into a dungeon, yet the Lord was with him, and prospered him. He found favor with the jailer, and he gave the care of all the prisoners into the hands of Joseph. And while he was prospered of the Lord in the prison, yet he must suffer yet longer as a prisoner and in disgrace. The Lord's ways are not our ways. Ofttimes we presume to take judgment into our own hands, and murmur and complain when events prove contrary to our desire and judgment. When Joseph had interpreted the dreams of the chief butler and baker of Pharaoh, to the restoration of the one, and the destruction of the other, Joseph urged the chief butler, when he was restored to his office, that he would remember him in the prison. But contrary to the desire of Joseph, the chief butler did not remember him, so that he remained yet two years in prison. But God remembered Joseph, and in his own time and way he caused him to be released, that he might receive honor and glory from the whole nation of Egypt, to save much people alive, and to restore

Israel unto himself, that they might continue a nation which God had separated unto himself from the world as his own peculiar people.

We now begin to witness the rising of the sun of Joseph's prosperity, when as "a fruitful bough" we catch a glimpse of the profuse budding in the fullness of which it cannot be measured. The king of Egypt dreamed a dream, and when the wise men of Egypt, the soothsayers and the magicians, were called together, there were none found that could interpret the dream of Pharaoh. But God was with Joseph, and he caused the chief butler to remember the young Hebrew in prison that had interpreted the dreams of himself and the chief baker. Then was Joseph brought before the king, and made known unto him. I cite Joseph now as an example of all the Lord's people in all ages, that it is in their heart to disclaim any power or glory to be attributed to the creature, but ascribing all power and glory to the God of heaven, who is above all and in us all. When Joseph stood before Pharaoh the king said unto him, "I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, that thou canst understand a dream to interpret it. And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace." The heart of man is so deceitful, and so desperately wicked, (as for example the conduct of Joseph's brethren) that it will deceive the world, deceive its neighbors and deceive itself. But when it stands naked before the righteous Judge of all the earth, sin is condemned in the flesh, and the man is honest and trembles before his Maker, not with the abject fear of punishment, but with a realizing sense of his just condemnation, and of the glory of God. All the glory and honor which Joseph received in Egypt was not due to any merit in himself personally, but because God was with him, fulfilling his wise purposes in him to the establishment of Israel in Egypt. The interpretation by Joseph of the dreams of the king of Egypt, foretold the occurrence of events which should take place in Egypt during the next fourteen years, including seven years of great plenty, succeeded by seven years of sore famine. Although the Israelites were not counted among the nations of the earth, and especially by the Egyptians they were looked upon as a people far below them in the social scale, only fit to be slaves, or as beasts of burden, yet because of the wisdom of God as manifested in Joseph, he found favor in the sight of Pharaoh, God putting it in the heart of the king to exalt Joseph that Egypt might be preserved. Joseph therefore was made governor over all of Egypt, and all power was given into his hands to do as seemed best in his sight. His authority was second to none save the king himself. Now henceforth from this period in the life of Joseph, his whole history manifested the fruitfulness which God designed should spring forth and mature to the perpetuation of the kingdom of Egypt and the nation of Israel, typifying the fullness of grace with which Jesus was endowed of his father. Egypt represents the world of nature, and there is a sense in which the whole world is saved by the power and authority and kinship of Jesus; that is, it is preserved from day to day, to serve the glorious purpose of the salvation of God in Jesus Christ to the church of Christ, which was chosen in him before the worlds were made, until the fullness of time has come, when that perfect building of God (made of lively stones, of

which Jesus is the chief corner-stone,) shall have been completed, then time shall be no more. The continuance and preservation of Jacob and his posterity as the nation of Israel, manifested the unfailing promise of God to Abraham that his seed should become a great nation innumerable for multitude. The fruitfulness of Joseph therefore extended through all time, in which our hearts rejoice to-day that our God extendeth mercy which endureth forever; that he changeth not, and in him is neither variableness nor the shadow of turning. As "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall," so also Jesus is "the true Vine," sending his life into all the world, breaking down the middle wall of partition between the Jew and the Gentile, and putting his Spirit into the hearts of his people in every nation, kindred, tongue and people. In evidence of the fullness of the power and authority of Joseph in Egypt, he rode in a chariot next to the king. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, "Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled. Only in the throne will I be greater than thou. * * * And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck." How wonderfully precious is this simple narrative, and all it conveys to the understanding of the children of God when they have Jesus in their mind and in their heart. For as we look beyond the watchman to find him whom our soul loveth, so also as in this case we must look beyond the type, and find in our gracious Redeemer the fullness and foundation of every precious truth which our heart possesses. Joseph was a personality in Egypt. In the person of Joseph was vested all power and authority without regard to his lineage, his birth, or his right of succession, &c. His office and position was all embraced in his own personality. He had neither predecessor nor successor, therefore, like Melchizedek, he was without beginning of years or end of time. The work that was set before Joseph was all accomplished in his own person. The king had placed his ring upon the finger of Joseph. The ring of a king is the signet with which he stamps his authority upon all documents confirming his decrees. Jesus came to do the will of his Father. In him was vested all power and authority to accomplish the purpose whereunto he was sent. Jesus was God manifest in the flesh. He differed from the Father in that he was a personality. In his person was all the salvation of God accomplished. With him was not beginning of years nor end of time. As Joseph gathered the corn from every part of Egypt, so Jesus gathered his people from the four quarters of the world. He is the "Shiloh" of which was spoken by one of old, that "Unto him shall the gathering of the people be." The signet or seal with which Jesus sealed those whom he saved, and brought up out of great tribulation, and who stood with him upon the Mount Zion, engraved the Father's name upon the forehead of each one of them, by which mark they are known and recognized even unto this day; the mark of his precious grace and light of truth. Joseph was arrayed (by order of the king) in vestures of fine linen, and rode in the second chariot next to the king. So this people saved by the Lord, of whom one of the elders asked, "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" and who also answered, "These

are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." And the king put a gold chain about Joseph's neck, signifying an endless life, and the power and glory of it which encircles all the saints, preserving them forever and ever. Cannot then we echo the words of the apostle, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out"?

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Dec. 6, 1899.

STATE ROAD, Del., November, 1899.

BROTHER BEEBE:—I have a mind to write some reflections on a subject that it seems to me is involved in some confusion. Perhaps I should only say that the minds of the brethren do not appear to be entirely clear. The word "law" occupies a large place in the Scriptures, and embraces so much, and such essentially different things, that it need be no wonder that Bible readers become confused. There was a code of ceremonial law given to the Israelites that constituted a system of religious worship that the apostle characterizes as carnal ordinances and a worldly sanctuary. These ordinances were never enjoined on any other nation or people, either before their deliverance by Moses, or since the dispersion of that people. These ceremonial laws required no qualifications of the administrators of them, and they conferred none. The basest of men could serve in the most important and sacred places, the right depending alone on the natural descent. This system of legal worship, which appears to have been entirely shadowy, need not be confounded with other laws of an entirely different character. Man in his created state was in the nature of things under law to his maker. This law embraced the eternal and immutable principles of right and justice, and it had no beginning, and never can be modified or cease to be. It never required anything but right, and that it always must and always will require. It is this law of which the Savior speaks when he says, "Heaven and earth will pass before one jot or tittle pass from the law till all be fulfilled." This law looks to what the man is, and not merely what he does, or what he does not. It goes to the fountain and spring from whence all actions, words and thoughts proceed. If the fountain be corrupt, all that proceeds from that fountain must be corrupt. The judgment of God is not upon the outward appearance, but goes directly to the underlying pinciples from which all actions proceed. Without holiness no man can see the Lord. He requireth truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part does he make us to know wisdom. An outline of this law was published from Mt. Sinai, but that did not make it law, or make any change in it. And every creature of God of all the nations were amenable to their Creator under the righteous requirements of this law; and it did not wait for them to commit some crime, but found them all destitute of the love and fear of God. Men being under

law, any single precept like that regarding the tree of knowledge could be enjoined upon them. Man was not in possession of that principle of spiritual and eternal life in which love to God was paramount when he so readily yielded to temptation. I have not believed that he had eaten of the tree of life, or that he was in possession of a life that could feed upon that fruit, or that he had any appetite for it. Those of whom we read that shall eat of the tree of life in the paradise of God are evidently subjects of grace. He that eateth of this fruit hath everlasting life; that is, hath the life first, and then feeds upon the fruit of that life. As this law must ever stand, and is destined to be ultimately fulfilled in the saints, I want to examine it somewhat particularly. The Savior sums it all up in the word *love.* The new covenant provides that he would put his law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and that he would take away the stony heart out of their flesh and give them an heart of flesh. He also says he would put his fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. They not only then obey God, but they love that obedience. They not only do right, but have the principles of right. When we are thus in Christ Jesus, and his salvation in us, there is no condemnation, for there is nothing in us that the law condemns. On such the second death hath no power. This spiritual and eternal life was never hinged upon any conditions, and was never forfeited by the transgression. Nevertheless it was necessary that man should be delivered from his thralldom, in order that the law that had been violated should be honored, and that the inheritance should come to the heirs untrammelled. For this cause he is the mediator (or executor) of the New Testament, that by means of death for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which were called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

Men have been perplexed ever since the days of Job, as to how man could be just with God, or as the apostle puts it, How God could justify the believer, his faith being counted for righteousness? Religious teachers have always been taken up with the idea of actual sins, and punishment of these sins. Hence we may find men objecting to the terms mercy and pardon, as the exercise of mercy and forgiveness would leave the sinner still in all his guilt. Men, whether governors or judges, cannot put away guilt; they can only exempt from penalties, which do not reach the guilt at all. It is not in the power of human laws, nor of human judges, to justify a transgressor. The salvation that is in Christ is not merely exemption from punishment, he came to save the sinner. This salvation has to do with the sinner, who is a sinner before he commits any sins. While ever the man is alienated from the life of God, and an enemy to God and godliness, the law which requires love to God and to holiness, must condemn him, and that condition is a state of condemnation all the time. The apostle informs us that he that believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. His faith embraces a knowledge and love of that salvation that Christ is unto his people, and of the Lord's work in the experience of his children, and of the fruits of the Spirit's work, and this love of righteousness is recognized and counted for righteousness. Love to God and love to righteousness has been shed abroad in his heart. Christ says that the Father gave the people to

him. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." But that eternal life that God gave them in his Son was above the reach of the law, and above the power of death. They were under law, and involved in transgression. So we are informed he came where they were, under the law that they were under, to redeem them from their thralldom so that they might receive the adoption of sons. Now they are no mere servants, but sons, and under law to Christ, he having purchased them to himself. The universal dominion of the law of God over all the race is evident, for where there is no law, there is no transgression; sin is not imputed where there is no law. The apostle talks law to the Gentiles quite as much as he does to the Jews. That spiritual and eternal life which is given the saints in Christ is also called a law; that is, a ruling principle. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the law of sin and death." One law condemns, another law delivers from condemnation and all fear of death. One law is that over a servant being in bondage, and the other over a child; one demands everything and gives nothing; the other provides for the canceling of all claims against them, and makes them heirs to an inheritance. The prophet away back yonder in Old Testament times recognizes the principle of which I have been speaking thus: "Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord," and again, "Hearken to me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law." This blessed experience of growing up in all things into Christ, sometimes perplexes the christian, because he still has to hunger and thirst. This growth is a progressive work, but it is nevertheless a growth, growing up in all things into an experience of the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

One thing I will yet speak of, and that is the fulfillment in the believer of the righteousness of the law. As an underlying principle of love to God, and to his people, we have no control of our love. We do not love that of which we have no knowledge, nor that which has nothing lovely in or about it. "No man hath seen God at any time." "No man knoweth the Father, save the Son." We only know, and only love, what has come to us. If Christ is revealed at all to anybody, it is as a Savior. If we know him as a Savior, we love him as a Savior, because we love that salvation that has come to us. Beyond this our love cannot go. But this love has all the heart, soul, mind and strength, and there is no room for any idolatry. No other Savior but this. As we know the value of our own salvation, and love it, we love it in others, and love them because of it. All that we know and love of Christ we see in them, and we love in them, because the love of Christ constraineth us. This salvation presents us blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke. A new heart has been given them, and a right spirit renewed within them, and so no charge can ever be sustained against them; they are joint-heirs with Christ.

In gospel bonds,

E. RITTENHOUSE.

GRAFTON, West Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER BARTLEY:—You have asked me to write out a narrative of my experience, and with fear I will try to comply.

When I was about ten or twelve years of age I had sad impressions concerning myself. I would wonder if there was a God, and then I would want to live al-

ways so as to escape punishment after death. When I would do wrong, it would give me trouble, and then I would try to do right, and sometimes would try to pray. As time passed on my trouble about these things became worse; I wanted to live better, and would seek to be by myself, and try to pray. One winter as I was going to school in sadness these words came to me, as I believe, from the Lord: "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." Joy sprang up within me for a moment, and then I thought that I was not a mourner, and so I went on to school sorrowing. At school I did not want to study because of my trouble. At noon I would go into the woods to try to pray. Before that winter I was as bad as any boy, but now my sport was gone, and my trouble increased, so that I tried to pray day and night. I felt that I was not fit for heaven. When I was about nineteen years of age the Methodists had a protracted meeting going on. I heard of it and wanted to go, but my parents would hardly ever let their children go to the Methodist meetings. I got my sister to ask my mother if I could go, but I was refused. It seemed to me that I was left in my trouble to mourn over my lost condition. Time went on, another winter came, and the Methodists had another protracted meeting, and my trouble and sin was loading me down so that I would go to the woods to try to pray to God to forgive my sins, and to give me rest, but I could not obtain it. I took to my bed, and one of our friends thought that I was going to die, and they had the doctor called to see me, and he told my father to have me visit my friends. So I got some of the family to ask my father if I could go to my uncle John's. I had it in view to go to the protracted meeting, but did not say so to them. I went to my uncle's, and went to the meeting with him. The minister's text was concerning the "horrible pit and miry clay." He compared it to a pit, or well, with a man at the bottom, and some one above letting down a rope to him, and asking him to take hold of it, so he could bring him out. Then he called upon seekers to come forward. I went, and they began talking to me, but I could not understand them. They told me to believe, but I did not know what faith was, and I did not know how to love and praise the Lord. They told me when I would ask the Lord to forgive me, that I must believe he would do so. I tried to believe and failed; I tried to believe in the promises, but when I would ask to be kept, I would fail. The preacher asked me if my father had a present for me, and I would ask for it, if I might not expect to receive it? or something to this effect. I told him that I thought that I could. So he said when I asked the Lord I should believe that he would give me the favor for which I asked. Sometimes it seemed to me that I could believe the promise, and then I would doubt, and so I would leave the meeting without feeling, and cold. Then I would try again, and fail, and again, and still fail. At last it seemed to me that I could venture on the promise, and I felt something within my heart as plain as though some one had struck me, and I could believe. And I believed that it was the work of the Lord, but I was not yet satisfied. Sometimes they would ask me if I was not blessed? I would reply that it seemed that I was partly relieved from my trouble. They told me to praise the Lord for it, but I did not know how to praise him. The time came one night that such power was in the blessing which came to me, that I

arose from the bench. A time passed that I did not know what was going on, and then I found myself on the other side of the house. Then darkness and doubt took possession of me. They wanted my name, and I was not willing to give it, but they took it. O, I thought, if I only was out in the woods where no one would see me, I would try to pray to God with all my might. I arose and left the house in awful darkness, it seemed that I could almost feel it. In a few days I was in the field, I had a little book with me; I opened it and read the words, "Yield not to temptation, for yielding is sin." All at once what joy and peace filled me; it was joy and peace unspeakable. As time passed on doubts and fears returned; sometimes I would rejoice, and sometimes I would fear and tremble. My troubles were so many that it would take a week or more to write them. Once at prayer it was shown to me that when the Savior suffered on the cross, he suffered for my sins, all of them, all that I had ever committed or would ever commit. O, what peace prevailed, and what joy sprang up within me, tongue cannot express it. Once it seemed to me that I had sinned against the Holy Ghost, and then what trouble I was in, but after a little time light came. At one time I thought Christ died for all of Adam's race, and I tried to persuade some that it was so. (I was honest in it.) I tried to persuade some to turn to the Lord, but I learned afterwards that no man can come to him except the Father drawn him. But I then thought that they could turn of themselves, and then God would forgive their sins. How blind I was. I remember thinking, if I had made the Bible, election, holy calling and choice, would have been left out, for I did not want others to see these things there. I thought it would hinder them from coming to the Savior. As for me, I could endure for them to be in the Bible, though I could not understand them, and I would pass them by, and look for something which would seem to suit my belief. As time went on I began to try to find out what was right. I would go to meeting and hear things that I did not like to hear; I could not like sprinkling or pouring for baptism. I began to think that Christ had a church, and I wanted to belong to it. I began to go to hear the Baptists preach, and then I would compare them to the pharisees, for the pharisees thought they were the people of God, and it seemed that the Baptists thought that they were the only people that were right. The Scriptures began to trouble me. The Methodists did not suit me so well, but I held to them, and I was afraid for the Baptists to know what I did believe. Once in a while I would say a few words to my father-in-law upon the subject, but still did not believe all the doctrine. Election was a great trouble to me. Now I see that had it not been for election, and I had been left to my own choice, I should never have chosen the Savior; election is glorious. I went one day to hear the Baptists preach; in the sermon the truth that the people of God were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, was set forth. The power of God took hold of me, and I wondered if that was in the Scriptures. Then I began to see that the Methodist doctrine was wrong. Once I went to hear them again, and the preacher took for his text about where it is said, "It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." What he said did not suit me, but the Baptist doctrine began to suit me more and more. Before I left

the Methodists, they put me in as class leader, but it was no place for me, for I began to question who had put me into this place, man or God? I thought it was man. At home I was troubled at my life, and at their meetings was troubled as to who had put me in as a leader. I gave up the class book. I then became troubled about being baptized. I did not think that I was worthy to unite with the church, and did not like to do so, because I had been a Methodist. I thought the people around would talk about me; still I could not be satisfied. The words of Jesus came to me, Whosoever is ashamed of me before men, of him will I be ashamed before my Father, and the holy angels. Once in the field I thought, How can a thing like you think of joining the church? I stopped from my work, and stood awhile thinking about it. Once I had a dream that I was at meeting, and of how I felt, after which I went to meeting, and it seemed that I felt just as I did in my dream; it seemed that I could hardly rise from my seat. The next day Elder Cole told me that he saw how I felt, and advised me to go and do my duty. I did not think that I should do so then, but when they were singing at the close of the meeting I felt willing to go, and I said a few words, and was received, and baptized in their fellowship. Since then I have been so unworthy.

I am a poor, unworthy sinner, and if saved, it must be by grace, and not of my works.

Your unworthy brother in the Lord, if one at all,

JAMES W. LINN.

"ASK FOR THE OLD PATHS."

"THUS saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein."—Jer. vi. 16.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—It is well that we earnestly give heed to this command to Israel. First, let us be solemnly impressed that it is the Lord who thus speaks to his people, as their covenant and faithful God, and for their spiritual welfare, peace and rest.

Next, let us well consider that our best interests, safety and well being, is in asking for the old paths, and walking therein.

It was a divine command to Israel to remove not the ancient landmarks, which their fathers had set. "This is the way; walk ye in it." "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." He says, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life." Prophets of old pointed to Jesus, and apostles followed him. The divine truths which they taught are the old paths, and in the footsteps of Christ is the good way. "Follow thou me," is his word. "Created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." "This man shall be blessed in his deed." "In me ye shall have peace," says Jesus, who is our peace. He is the good way.

"God will not leave himself without witness," and since the apostles he has called faithful men, who have earnestly contended for the faith of his elect, and kept it. Loving their Lord, they kept his commandments. These have walked in the old paths, and the good way, and the Lord was with them. It will refresh, strengthen and help us, by seeing how they lived and died in the faith. Hassell's Church History is a store-house of knowledge; so let us see a few facts that he records. He says of Andrew Fuller,

(page 338): "He confesses that he was 'saved by mere grace, in spite of himself, by free grace from first to last.' He declared that he 'never had any predilection for Arminianism, which appeared to him to ascribe the difference between one sinner and another, not to the grace of God, but to the good improvement made of grace given us in common with others, and that his zeal for the doctrine of grace increased with his years;' and his dying declarations are that 'all he had done needed forgiveness; that he trusted alone in sovereign grace and mercy; that he was a poor, guilty creature, but Christ was an almighty Savior; that the doctrine of grace was all his salvation and all his desire; that he had no other hope than from salvation by mere sovereign, efficacious grace, through the atonement of his Lord and Savior; that with this hope he could go into eternity with composure.'" Elder Hassell says, "Mr. Fuller (is) the standard of the New School Baptists in England and the United States;" therefore it cannot be claimed that Mr. Fuller made too much of grace, nor too little of all that he had ever done, for this was his dying testimony. His solemn, dying words should be a warning to any of us who dwell more upon our works than upon "sovereign, efficacious grace."

Elder Hassell says, (page 327): "Old School, Primitive, or Bible Baptists, believe and rejoice in the absolute sovereignty of God, their heavenly Father—in the entire dependence of all his creatures upon him, both in nature and in grace; a doctrine that leads its adherents to abandon all confidence in creature power, and to exercise a living and a loving trust in the Most High."

He says, (page 333): Christian predestination far surpasses Arminianism in its *moral* results, as history abundantly demonstrates. * * * Predestinarianism is highly promotive of both civil and religious liberty. It represents God as absolute and supreme, and makes all men equal before him. It develops the power of self-government, and a manly spirit of independence, which fears no man, though seated on a throne, because it fears God, the only real Sovereign." Again, he says, (page 485): "If God is omniscient and omnipotent, and existed alone from eternity, and created all things out of nothing, and disposed of all things in his providence, with all the surrounding circumstances, exactly foreknowing all the results, then, certainly, in one sense, his foreknowledge of all things is equivalent to his foreordination of all things, including the volitions of his creatures, yet without the slightest degree of sin on his part, as the Most Holy God tempts no one to sin. The sinful, carnal mind of fallen, darkened rationalism, paints this certain truth of nature and Scripture in the most revolting colors, preferring that senseless and heartless fate or chance should sit at the helm of the universe; but the regenerated, enlightened, spiritual mind of the child of God incomparably prefers that his holy and heavenly Father should sit at the helm, and direct and work all things according to the counsel of his own will. The foreknowledge of God is, in one sense, so evidently identical with his foreordination that some of the most able living conditionalists propose to revolutionize the Arminian theology, and make it consistent with itself by the denial of God's foreknowledge of future contingent events." Elder Hassell again says, (page 486): "For, if the will of fallen man is inevitably restrained from spiritual good by his innate depravity, he cannot be

said to be truly free, (his fallen will always preferring evil) especially as Christ declares that the sinner is the servant *(doulos, the born slave,)* of sin, and must be made free by the Son, if he be free indeed."

Upon the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, Elder Hassell says, (page 203): "These precious declarations are precisely equivalent to the comforting assurance of the apostle Paul, 'that he who hath begun a good work in you will perform *(epiteleo, bring to an end, accomplish, perfect,)* it until the day of Jesus Christ,' (Phil. i. 6,) not only the day when he is manifested as the Sun of righteousness and the divine Savior of the trembling sinner, but as shown by the fourth verse below, (Phil. i. 10,) and by 1 Thess. v. 2, and 2 Peter iii. 10, the day at the close of this dispensation, when Christ shall come in final judgment. This one verse, (Phil. i. 6,) like Heb. xii. 2, in which Jesus is called both 'the author and finisher of our faith,' and like Isa. xxxv. 10, in which it is declared that 'the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads,' and like many other verses of Scripture, cuts up the system of conditional salvation by the roots, and incontestably and eternally establishes the system of salvation by sovereign grace, beginning and consummating the good work in the sinner's heart, so that all the glory, without the slightest reservation, shall be given by the saved to God. Every system of conditionalism represents the sinner as doing that which insures his salvation, and which should, therefore, entitle him to the chief glory. As for good works, they are, as we have shown by abundant scriptural quotations, but the fruit of divine grace implanted in the heart."

How true! These are "the old paths," and our fathers walked therein, as did "holy men of old." They unitedly testified that "Salvation is of the Lord;" "not of works." Our author states a strong truth in saying, "Every system of conditionalism represents the sinner as doing that which insures his salvation;" for this is just as true of "conditional salvation in time," as it is of every other conditional salvation, and the entire system of conditionalism entitles the one who is thus saved "to the chief glory." "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay; but by the law of faith."—Romans iii. 27. "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed."—Romans iv. 16. Nothing conditional can be sure, therefore conditional paths are both uncertain and unsafe to walk in.

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind.

[IT does not seem to us that we can add anything to what brother Bartley has so well said; we can but give it our cordial approval. We subscribe with all our heart to the sentiment of the poet, "Grace all the work shall crown." And the believer will always, when in the Spirit, join in the shoutings of grace when the topmost stone is brought forth. "Mercy shall be built up forever," and it is good to sing of the mercy of the Lord forever. Foreknowledge certainly does just as certainly fix the necessity of all events that are foreknown, as does predestination. And the fixed certainty of events is what is objected to, as we understand the matter. Ten years ago we said that those brethren who began by denying unlimited predestination, would end by the necessity of the argument in the denial of God's foreknowledge as

well. And this is not saying that the foreknowledge and predestination of God holds the same relation to evil that they do to what is good. God foreknows all things, but he foreknew his people in a special sense, or in the sense of approval. But brother Bartley's letter will speak for itself.—ED.]

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 9, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is so interesting to me to read of such meetings, and such long journeys to reach them, as are described in this letter from brother Allison, that I think it will be good reading for others. Those who love the truth must go where they can hear it preached, and where they can meet with others "of like precious faith," if they possibly can. Sometimes those who live near the place of meeting get indifferent to the privileges they have, and will let little things, or nothing, keep them at home. It ought to, and I think must, stir them up to see how far those will go, and what difficulties they will overcome, who are really hungry for gospel blessings.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

GRASS VALLEY, Ore., July 14, 1899.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—Your letter of May 12th, 1899, I have reread to-day, and as I am at home, and the day is too warm to work out doors, I will try to write in reply to same. We prize your letters very much indeed, and really do not feel worthy of your kind and brotherly notice; but let me say, my dear brother, I spoke the sentiments of my poor heart in both the letters you refer to, but as you seem to feel that the remarks are too personal, I will try and refrain somewhat in the future. But remember what I then said is still bubbling up in my heart and mind, and remains true; and your humble and christian expressions in regard to what I said only strengthens my remarks, and brings you, if possible, nearer to me in love and precious fellowship. The reason for my not writing for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, is the lack of ability to write to profit or edification of the readers of that noble medium of correspondence. My reason for not sending my last letter when I first wrote it, I was ashamed of its weakness, and concluded to try and do better, but after a trial I found I could not please myself, and concluded I would write you a short note to inform you of our welfare, but after reading the letter, at the time I mailed it, it seemed to sound a little better.

Now I will tell you something relative to a meeting my wife and I attended the first of this month. Elder G. E. Mayfield, my son in the gospel, if I may use such an expression, wrote me from Elgin, Oregon, that he would meet us at a place of meeting, or where there is a small church, near Gane, in Gilliam County. It is one hundred miles from where I live, and no railroad from here, so we had to drive it with a two-horse buggy. We had to drive fifty miles a day. In our way we had to cross the John Day River, and had some long and heavy hills to climb on either side of the river, and a good portion of the way is almost a desert and considerable sand. I write this that you may get some idea of how we pioneer Old Baptists are situated. The first day from home we missed our road, and houses on the road are very scarce. When it began to get late in the evening we saw a house off some distance in a field of wheat, and as we were tired, the day being warm, and we having driven near sixty miles, we went to the

house, and I said to the man, "We have got off our road, and wish to stay with you until morning." He said, "All right, I have never turned a man away yet that wished shelter under my roof." "Well," I said, "friend, the Lord has directed us to the right place, if we are some off the main road." This seemed to please the man, though he was not a professor. But, my brother, I felt what I said, and felt encouraged in the way which I went. It some way came to me as evidence that the Lord had arranged the meeting where we were going, and had impressed me to go, and that my labor would not be in vain. So we stayed over night, and had a pleasant time; I found him a man that was standing idle in the market place, (the world, where all kinds of religious wares are sold, and where our Lord was sold for thirty pieces of silver,) and it seemed that the reason he was standing idle was because he could not work to obtain salvation, but was waiting for the Lord to bid him go into the vineyard. When I asked what my bill was, he said, "You do not owe me anything," and further said that he would be pleased to have us call on him often. I said, "My friend, you are the possessor of a kind and generous heart, and I hope ere long the good Lord will manifest himself unto you, as he does not unto the world."

But I shall weary you. We arrived at the place of meeting, and we had good preaching by Elder G. E. Mayfield, and his brother, A. J. Mayfield, a licentiate. I was truly proud of my boy, he is an humble, but I think the ablest minister, or at least one among the ablest we have in Oregon. There was a good attendance, and much interest manifested, so I felt paid for all our labor and travel in the dust, for the Lord seemed to be with us poor little shepherds, and enabled us to feed the sheep, and we ourselves got to the feeding-place. There were two additions to that little church, and there are three more that I talked with that have a hope, so you may know we enjoyed that which the world cannot give nor take away.

We were away from our home nine days, traveled three hundred miles, and miles of it desert looking places. We now live forty-five miles from a place of meeting, and drive that once a month. At our June meeting we met an Elder from Kentucky, quite an able minister, but is on to the hobby of the "conditional time salvation." We had quite a pleasant talk on Saturday, after meeting, on the subject, and on Sunday he preached a good sermon, leaving out his conditionalism, and after meeting I gave him my hand, and remarked that he had preached the truth, allowing me to be a judge of what the truth is, and did not use conditional salvation. I said, We Old Baptists of Oregon let our Arminian friends use that word.

Dear brother, excuse this lengthy letter, and write to me when you have plenty of time. I still enjoy reading the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and of course enjoy all you write.

With, I hope, christian love and fellowship, and best wishes of myself and wife to sister Bessie and yourself, I remain your brother in hope of eternal life,

J. P. ALLISON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Oct. 4, 1899.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—I have been requested by several brethren to write for the SIGNS. Could I write anything that would be of any comfort to the readers of the SIGNS, I would gladly do so. I trust that I have no other motive in writing at this time. God forbid that

I should ever write just to see my name in the SIGNS. They still come forth richly laden with the testimony of the precious Redeemer. All hail the power of his great name; he hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad; he was delivered for our offenses, and he was raised again for our justification. This is the only thing that the dear children of God can find any comfort in. O for faith to believe on his name; his name is a strong tower, and the righteous run into it, and are safe. He has satisfied the law of God in every jot and tittle, and has raised his people up far above its power and dominion, and hence they are not under the law, but under grace. There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk in him, and look to him alone for justification. This is safe ground, all other ground is sinking sand. They who believe in him shall not come into condemnation; they shall not perish. This is the path of the just, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. We are justified by faith in him, by faith we wash our robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. But when we walk after the flesh, or look to the law, and try to satisfy it for ourselves, it always condemns us. Though we wash our hands in snow water and make them never so clean, yet again we are plunged in the ditch, and our own clothes abhor us. Lord, what can dust and ashes do? He knows our frame, and he remembers that we are dust; sin is mixed with all we do, think or say. If I try to utter a word in prayer, selfishness is mixed with it, poor, sinful creature that I am. But faith in Jesus' name made the poor crippled man, who sat at the beautiful gate of the temple, rise up and walk; it made him perfectly whole; it made him walk, and leap, and praise God, and it makes us poor cripples whole, too; it makes us mount up with wings as eagles, run and not be weary, walk and not faint. Even a glimpse of Jesus heals all our wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores. His blood cleanses the foulest stain; it cleanses his people from all sin. None but those who were bitten by the fiery flying serpents in the wilderness, could realize any benefit by looking upon the serpent of brass, which the Lord commanded Moses to make. But it was salvation to those who were bitten. It came to pass that whosoever was bitten looked upon it and lived. To all those who feel the plague of sin, there is a balm in Gilead. O, may such be enabled by faith to behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. He is the only physician who can heal the sinsick soul.

"Jesus lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly,
While the raging billows roll,
While the tempest still is nigh.
Hide me, O my Savior, hide,
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide:
O receive my soul at last."

Yours in the hope of eternal life,
EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

[How good in the time of temptation to be reminded that there is full salvation finished in the Son of God for the sinner, and how good to be reminded that there is salvation in no other. Amid all the speculations of men, into which believers are themselves sometimes drawn, it is a blessing to be reminded of the simple gospel of the grace of God. The longer we live, the more do we feel to rejoice in the plain truth, that Jesus died that sinners might live. And as our brother has called our attention to the matter, so we rejoice that all that are bitten do look and live. Thus how certain

is the salvation of all who feel the plague of their own heart. What a great thing it is to feel this plague of the heart, sin. Only in this way can any one come to appreciate what salvation in Christ means. A great sinner has need of a great Savior.—ED.]

KELLEY'S CORNERS, N. Y.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Please give this letter from our deceased sister a place in the SIGNS when you have space.

J. D. HUBBELL.

VEGA, N. Y., Nov. 27, 1898.

ELDER J. D. HUBBELL—MY DEAR PASTOR:—It has been in my mind for some time to write to you, but as I have been hoping that it might be so that I could meet you all in church capacity once more this fall, I have deferred it until now. I was very glad to be at the yearly meeting and see, if I could not hear the ministers, and brethren, and sisters. It was no doubt a feast of fat things, of wine on the lees, well refined, to you. O, what a blessing you all enjoyed in hearing from those able ministers. I have been reading some of the old numbers of the SIGNS of the fifties, and sixties, and seventies, and have derived much comfort therefrom. I could but notice the writings of Elder Gilbert Beebe, and the kind and tender language which he used toward the sheep and lambs of the Master's fold. But when he encountered the enemy he was as bold as a lion, and he gave no quarter. Surely I have thought he was a father in every sense of the word. Paul says to the Corinthian brethren, "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers?"

Yesterday morning I picked up my hymn book, and upon opening it my eyes rested first on these words, "Who is this fair one in distress?" I read the hymn all through; it is beautiful. I have read it and sung it many times, but never saw the beauty of it as I did then. I have been thinking of late of the sufferings of the dear Savior while in the garden of Gethsemane. O, my brother, what agony of soul must he there have been forced to pass through, to shed great drops of blood falling down to the ground. Yet in the midst of all his disciples slept. Is it any wonder that all his life he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief? for from the beginning he knew all that would and must take place before he would go to his Father. Sometimes I have thought the agony of soul was in the garden, while the agony of his body was upon the cross. Then again my mind gets carried to the low estate of Zion. I view her waste places, where few attend her solemn feasts, but I feel to say,

"How long, O Lord, shall I complain
Like one who seeks his God in vain?"
"Still shall my soul thine absence mourn,
And still despair of thy return?"

Then comes the soul-cheering words of the Lord to the prophet, "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal." What a comfort that must have been to the poor old prophet when he had thought that he was left alone, and his life was sought. I think, if not entirely deceived, it is a great comfort to me when I can feel assured of the fact that there is a remnant still according to the election of grace, free, unmerited grace. Seven thousand is a complete number, a particular and certain number, and to my mind it represents all or the whole church of the firstborn, who were given to Jesus in the covenant of redemption, and he

will bring them off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him that loved them and gave himself for them. Sister Martha has been over to see me. It staggers her to see one professing to be a christian, do wrong, yet she cannot live as she would like to herself. She will learn a good many things if she lives. The little child in nature knows but little of earthly things, and so it is also in spiritual things; the newborn soul knows but little, only as the Lord shall lead them and instruct them, and he will keep them as the apple of his eye.

Now, my dear brother, I will bring this writing to a close. As usual I have used many words to convey few ideas. Please read them with a spirit of charity. I hope to hear from you all before long. May you long be spared to stand on Zion's walls, proclaiming the truth as it is in Jesus, and may Israel's God be with you in all your wanderings in this sinful world. Sister Hubbell shares with you in my love and respect. I hope that this will find you enjoying the greatest of all earthly blessings, good health.

Your sister in hope,

PEACE C. BALLARD.

GOODNIGHT, Ky., Nov. 30, 1899.

KIND EDITOR:—Will you kindly publish the inclosed letter, when convenient to do so, or so much as is best? It is from the wife of Elder P. W. Sawin. I feel sure it will be read with interest by many of the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It is too good to be laid away.

LAURA M. BAIRD.

NEWCASTLE, Ky., Sept., 1899.

MRS. LAURA M. BAIRD—MY PRECIOUS SISTER:—If a poor worm may thus address you. I cannot express to you how much good your dear, comforting letter did me, especially coming as it did in the absence of my dear companion, for I always feel so unusually sad and lonely when he is away. I thought I would answer it right away, but a barren and unfruitful mind is my excuse, and even now I do not feel that I have anything worth communicating, but thought I would make the attempt. I do not see any prospect of it being any better. Dear sister, I assure you I am sorry to hear of your dear daughter's failing health, for I know this is a great cross to you, and I sincerely hope if it is the dear Lord's will she may be spared to you many years, but I hope you may be enabled by grace divine to become reconciled to his will, whatever that may be. An irreconciliation to his will I believe has given me more trouble than any other one thing, and then my daily walk is not that of a christian; the things "I would I do not, and the things I would not that I do," and my walk is so contrary to that which I desire that I reel and stagger like a drunken man, and ofttimes am ready to give up. I so often look at others that I know, and have every assurance are God's dear children, and just think I would give worlds, if I possessed them, to be like them. I often hear them talk of such bright and peaceful times, but poor, sinful me, always groping in the dark, feeling my way along without one ray of light.

> "All within is dark and wild,
> Can I deem myself a child?"

I am crying daily, O, for some evidence from a dear, loving Savior. O, for a glimpse of him whom I hope my soul loveth, that I might feel assured that I might even be a doorkeeper in the house of my God. My life is a very lonely one out in the country with my two girls, while my dear husband is gone, the most

of his time in his Master's cause, yet if I could have the assurance that I am one of his dear children, and that this is my place to fill in the church, for I believe every member has a place to fill in the church, I do not think I would murmur or complain, but would take up the cares and responsibilities that seem to be my lot, and travel on cheerfully. But O, I become so footsore and weary, and go halting all the way, and when I think of the deep responsibility I am trying to fill, that of a wife of a minister of God, I almost shudder, for I feel sure I am not capacitated in any way to fill such a position. I know, dear sister, you will weary of hearing so much about my poor self, but I have written what was uppermost in my mind.

"'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought,)
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

But I must forbear. Mr. Sawin always enjoys his visits with you all so much, he so often speaks of all of you, he has been gone now over three weeks, attending associations in Indiana and Missouri, we expect him home to-morrow, and O, how anxiously we are waiting for the time to come, for it seems months in place of weeks since he left; his health has been real poor all summer, but he writes me he is feeling some better.

I must close this poor excuse of a letter. When at a throne of grace remember poor me. Give my love to your dear children, and reserve a good share for your dear self. Please write me when you feel it in your heart to do so.

D. E. SAWIN.

RICH HILL, Mo., Oct., 1899.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Please send the SIGNS to me, I feel that I cannot do without them. Just think what a feast I have. So many able ministers write; I cannot mention them all. They all seem to be laden with brotherly love. It contains the same doctrine that I read in it years ago. It tells me just what I am, and what to do. It tells me to put my whole trust in God, for he is God, and beside him there is no Savior. I feel that God has kept me by his almighty power. I know not, if I had been left to myself, what would have become of me. I feel to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." "Hinder me not, ye much loved saints, for I must go with you." I know that the Lord knew me when as yet I was not created. He knew all his children from all eternity. He will make his people willing in the day of his power. Then, brethren and sisters, write for the edification of poor, unworthy me, and of many others that are situated like me. I fear that I am not what I profess to be. What a blessed thought that our God never slumbers nor sleeps, and his watchful eye is over us always. My sincere desire and prayer is to God for you all.

M. J. GILBERT.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

IT is with deep regret we have to acknowledge our inability, on account of a press of business, to answer the many precious personal letters we have received from our brethren and friends, indorsing our feeble efforts in defense of the truth. While it is impossible for us to reply to each one individually, we beg that this may not be attributed to indifference on our part, or a lack of appreciation of the love and fellowship expressed for us, nor let it cause any, who may feel so impressed, from writing us, for we need all the encouragement the brethren can have it in their hearts to extend to us. B.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1900.

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INTRODUCTORY.

As we stand upon the threshold of another year, and at the beginning of another volume of the SIGNS, we find a multitude of thoughts thronging upon us, and we are reminded of the language of David, "In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul." The multitude of his thoughts were not what ministered delight to him, but the comforts of the Lord. No doubt his thoughts recalled and dwelt upon his past life, with all its changes of joy and sorrow, with all its imperfections, for he said, I went astray from my youth, speaking lies in vanity. No doubt he remembered the conflicts, both within and without, which had tried him sorely; all his want of faith many times, his murmuring and questioning, his hasty words, doubting thoughts and evil deeds, for he sinned again and again outwardly, as well as in heart and spirit. No doubt he remembered and thought about the future, with all his ignorance of it, and his weakness and inability to encounter its trials. Who can tell all the dark, gloomy, questioning thoughts which made up the multitude of his reflections within him? But yet amid them all there were things which delighted him; these were the comforts of God. He means the things wherewith God had blessed and helped him in the past. Nothing but the comforts which were given of God could delight him. His own thoughts, purposes, desires, words and deeds, none of them could by any possibility delight him. On the contrary, in all these things he was made ashamed, for imperfection was written upon them all. Where in all that his thoughts could call up of his past life could he find one thing in which he could delight his soul? In all he must say, as it passed in review before him, I have sinned, and am wholly unprofitable before thee, O Lord. But when the multitude of thoughts would overwhelm him with fear and shame, through grace he was also enabled to remember God's comforts to him, a sinner, and in these things he, as a poor sinner, was delighted. He could remember that God had often heard his cry, and had delivered him, that he had been brought nigh to God by the blood of the cross, that he had been made a partaker of grace in a thousand streams of blessing, according as his need required. In his weakness it was a comfort from God that delighted his soul to remember in whom was everlasting strength. In his thoughts concerning his unfaithfulness, what a comfort to remember the faithfulness of God. In his departures what a comfort to remember the Shepherd who seeks the lost ones until he finds them. In his thoughts of his great sinfulness, what a delight to remember the atonement provided for him. In his thoughts concerning the greatness of the work to which God had called him, what a comfort to remember that God had promised to be his help, and strength, and wisdom, through it all. Such things and many others are involved in the thoughts of which David speaks, and in the comforts

which delighted his soul. In these things no doubt was fulfilled in him what Paul meant when he said of his brethren at Corinth, "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing." The multitude of thoughts bring nothing but sorrow, but yet the comforts of God bring delight and blessing. Sorrowful over self and sin, but rejoicing in Christ and salvation.

Be this as it may, concerning David and others, these words come to us now as a more appropriate expression of our own feelings than any of which we can think. As we begin this new year, with its labors and anxieties, and recall the past years, with all their failures and imperfections, we can but say that in all this multitude of thoughts we can find nothing to delight us but the abounding mercy and grace of God to us, who have been all unworthy of the least of all his favors. We would not be deceived in this matter, and claim for ourself what is not true, we would not say such things, if we know our own heart, falsely. It does seem to us that in all our past life we have been utterly profitless to God, and that we have been very unfaithful also; yet as we remember these things we do also remember all the many acts of kindness, and pity, and forbearance, from our God to us. These things are the comforts of God which delight us as we remember them. Once we said, "All of self, and none of Thee." We trust that great grace and infinite compassion has brought us at last to say, "None of self, and all of Thee." What has there been in all our life which could merit esteem, or give the Creator delight? What has there been that can give us delight? Nothing but God's comforts to us. They do delight us, as we remember them, for they speak of a faithful God, and of an almighty Friend, and of a compassionate High Priest, who lives, and reigns, and intercedes for us. So his love in the past comforts us now, because from these things we are fully persuaded that he will not now leave nor forsake us. The comforts which do delight us are his grace and work, the everlasting love wherewith he loved us, the gift of his dear Son to die for us, and to rise again for our justification, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, by which we have been quickened to know the things which are freely given to us of God, the giving us a name and place among his people on earth, the seasons of communion with him in his word, and in the spirit, the certainty of being kept through faith unto salvation, the remembrance that he also is a God of providence, and has cared for us temporally as well as spiritually; these, and a thousand other mercies and blessings, are the comforts of God, and we do believe that in them we find delight.

Especially in our connection with the SIGNS do these words come to us with great force. No one can know how unfitted we do feel for the position which has been ours for the few years past. As we recall those who formerly were associated with the SIGNS as editors, Elder Gilbert Beebe, who was so firm and faithful, and who under God fought such a great fight against the corruption of the times, by pen and by word of mouth, for half a century, and who was nevertheless such a son of consolation, and of Elder Wm. L. Beebe, his son, who still lives, and who is still dear to all who know him, and of Elder Benton Jenkins, the very springs of whose life ran to their close in the service of his Master, in connection with the SIGNS. As we recall all these we feel that our labors are but poor, and not to be compared with the labor of those whom we have named. As we

think over the place which under God the SIGNS has occupied among the people of God for nearly seventy years, we fear lest all our efforts to make it useful to the poor of the flock, should be found a failure, when compared with the labors of our fathers. As we look forward to the future also, we can but fear and tremble. Who is sufficient for these things? Multitudes of such thoughts are with us. Yet after all we do remember the grace of the past, and the covenant-keeping God who bestowed it, and we cannot quite think that we shall be left to utter failure. As we write these words we can but remember "the fear and trembling" with which Paul enjoined his brethren to work out that salvation which God had wrought in them, and which he should daily work in them. We can but fear and tremble as we enter upon this new year.

It is our desire, if God shall help us, and in this we speak for our associate editor also, to maintain those wholesome truths which have always been dear to the children of God. Grace, the grace of God, and all that belongs to grace, we desire to at all times present. The grace of God's eternal love and purpose to save, which embraced the heirs of glory from all eternity, the grace which called his people, the grace by which they were quickened from the dead, and received the atonement, the grace which keeps them unto final salvation and glory, the grace which ministers to them the daily comforts of the word, and which bestows upon them seasons of dear communion with God through the Spirit, the grace which restrains them from evil, and constrains them to that which is good, the grace by which alone God's people walk obediently, which obedience grace has made to be their desire, the grace which leads them to praise grace itself, grace, in all these forms and manifestations of itself, we desire to hold forth as that which alone can minister to sincere souls, who know their sins, and who would fain know how to be saved from their sins. Grace is the alone remedy for every ill. Grace all the work shall crown, and by the grace of God we are what we are.

It is also our desire to speak of those things which are the proper fruits of grace, and present them as that by which grace is magnified and honored. With what dear delight do the people of God witness the work of grace made manifest in a believer's life! Paul has said that we die, that the life of Christ might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. We are sure that all obedience to God but makes manifest the life of which this is the proper fruit. The obedience of the people of God is not to the praise of any human life, of any will service, or will worship, nor of any human choice, nor of self in any way whatever, but it is to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the Beloved.

If any thought arise in the mind to the exaltation of self, because one has been obedient in some way more than another has, it must be slain, as being at enmity against grace, which declares that God has wrought all our works in us, and therefore must be praised, rather than him in whom these fruits appear.

We also desire to continue to present the exhortations of the word of God, as the Scriptures present them, and warn, entreat, exhort, reprove and rebuke, as is enjoined in the word of God. The people of God have need to be reminded that they should be careful to maintain good works, and these works are such as our God has enjoined. The times are evil indeed, therefore we are enjoined to re-

deem the time. It becomes us all who love the truth to put away that which is of the flesh, and to seek after the things which edify and make for peace. There never has been a time when faithfulness was more needful than now among the servants of God; all manner of confusion is abroad in the world; allurements of all kinds spread their nets to catch the unwary; none of us are free from danger: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." False doctrine is knocking at the very door of the church, and some are too ready to welcome it; carelessness of life is too common; pleasure has many charms to those who are walking far off from God; there is danger lest we fall from our steadfastness. God's people should be warned against all that wars against the soul, and all that brings reproach upon the cause of God. Those of spiritual mind are glad to be so warned, because they do not desire to be ensnared. We are enjoined to shun the very appearance of evil. It is not for the welfare of a child of God, or for the glory of God, when any are led into even the appearance of evil. We desire to continually remember these things, and as occasion demands, set them forth in the SIGNS.

The articles of faith which were contended for from the first issue of the SIGNS, are not forsaken. When we come to deny or disbelieve any of the principles of doctrine which were from the first dear to Elder Gilbert Beebe, and those who stood by him in the inception of the publication of the SIGNS, we shall feel it our duty to plainly say so. Honesty could do no less. We realize all too well that we cannot equal him who so long stood at the head of the SIGNS, except in one thing, and that is, we do believe those things which were dear to him as unreservedly as did he. Would that we could present them as ably. Thus we do continue to believe and love the doctrine of the unlimited predestination of God, the divine sovereignty and unchangeability of God, election of grace from before the foundation of the world, in the effectual calling of the elect by grace, in their final preservation through grace, in all good works which are in the word enjoined upon all who believe, in the resurrection of the dead, and in the final glory of the redeemed, and the everlasting banishment of all who are not embraced in the atonement of Christ from the presence of God, and we believe that the limited, personal atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, is the foundation of all these glorious principles of doctrine, so that without this none of them are of any value. This is the keystone upon which all the building rests. We do believe these things, and rejoice in them, and are glad that they have been dear to the former editors, and to the readers of the SIGNS, from its inception to the present time.

These things are however of no value to any man unless they come to be sweetly realized in his own soul. They are not therefore to be presented as theories, which though true are yet but theories, but as living truths upon which believers must live, as their daily bread. The soul which feels its total depravity, must have a full atonement to rest upon. To such, Jesus and his salvation is the most delightful of all themes. He who is destitute of righteousness, and hungers for it, must have joy in beholding the full and spotless righteousness of the dear Savior, and in believing that one day he shall be with and like his Master. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

We desire for our readers, as well as

for all the Israel of God, that they may be fed from the table of the Master, and that peace may fill all our hearts, and that it may abound in all our churches, and that we preach and hear the truth in love, and grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus our Lord.

Our brethren have borne much with us in the past, and we ask their forbearance during the coming year. Mistakes we shall make; we cannot doubt this, for we have made them in all the past. We shall come short in all things, and do wrong in many things, but we desire to be led in the right way, that we may go to a city of habitation. May we be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our labor is not in vain in the Lord. C.

MEMPHIS, Tenn.

Is a man scripturally qualified to act as deacon, if his wife leaves him, and they are living separate? Does he rule his own house well in such a case? See 1 Tim. iii. 12.

D. L. McNEES.

REPLY.

We do not think the apostle meant that it was essential that either deacons or ministers should be married at all, but if married, their wives should possess certain qualifications. If such officers in the church must be married, it would follow that if either should lose his wife by death, his office would cease until he should marry again. There is no intimation of this in the Scriptures. As regards the question raised by our brother, we should think that it would be unwise to hold a brother in the office of deacon, who was living separate from his wife. The scandal which would necessarily exist would be a permanent injury to his usefulness, and a reproach to the cause itself, even though the brother might be regarded as being sinned against, rather than sinning, in the separation. We give this as our opinion. No two cases present precisely the same circumstances, and each church must decide for herself what is needful in each case. It might be that a case would occur where it would be so clear that the husband was not at all to blame, that the whole community would be convinced of this. In such a case, perhaps to retain the brother in his office would not work harm. But our opinion is that such cases are few and far between. We cannot be too careful to maintain the honor of the cause, and to put away every evil thing. Such a brother in such a case would, we think, himself feel, if he had the cause of God uppermost in his heart, that his usefulness in his office was marred by his relation to his wife, and would feel like asking to be excused from the office. C.

CAUSE OF DELAY.

IT is very unusual for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to be issued late, and it never is caused by indifference or neglect on our part, but circumstances will arise over which we have no control, and such is the case at present. Over two months ago we ordered paper which the mill promised to deliver to us in the early part of December, but it did not reach us until the 29th of the month. For more than two weeks we were kept waiting for the paper, and have been caused considerable expense in telegraphing, telephoning, &c., to say nothing of our anxiety and annoyance. We very much dislike to publish excuses, but we feel that the readers of the SIGNS will extend their usual forbearance to us on this occasion. We have now on hand several tons of paper, and therefore the same difficulty is not likely to arise again very soon. We hope to again be on date in a short time.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE RELATIVE DUTIES OF MINISTERS AND CHURCHES.

GREAT care is required in the discussion of so delicate a subject, lest on the one hand we give countenance to the popular notion of manufacturing our own ministry, and offering inducements for ungodly and covetous men to crowd themselves into the work, uncalled of the Lord, and for filthy lucre's sake. Or, on the other hand, in avoiding that disorder, we run so far into an opposite extreme as to overlook, and thereby fail to obey such instructions as are clearly laid down in the Scriptures.

We would observe first, that no man is to take this work on himself unless called thereto of God, as was Aaron to the priesthood. We can find no authority in the Word for human interference in offering inducements to draw out young or old men into the work, until such gifts are developed as afford satisfactory evidence to the church of God that they are called of God to that work. When such evidences are obtained, the church is required to consider them carefully and prayerfully, in the light of the Scriptures. Then it becomes us to inquire, first, Has God by his Spirit made them willing to serve in that calling? For they must enter the work, not for filthy lucre's sake, but of a willing mind. Paul says to Timothy, "This is a true saying, If any man desire the office of a bishop (or pastor) he desireth a good work." Finding in the church a brother entertaining this desire, we are taught to examine closely to see if he possesses the following indispensable qualifications, (for some may have a desire to render themselves conspicuous in the church, and may covet the ministerial work from very improper motives, and such have given the churches great trouble. Some have been licensed to the work to get rid of their clamor, or as the easiest way to dispose of them, instead of saying to them that the church lacks the evidence of their calling. But in all such cases the church has suffered from their disregard of the divine rule.) Let them first be proved, and here is the rule: "A bishop MUST be blameless, the husband of one wife: vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach." These are put down as indispensable qualifications, and the church of God is to be the judge whether the proposed candidate, or volunteer, for the work is in possession of them, as positive and indispensable qualifications. If in all these particulars all is satisfactory, we are next to consider the negative, or the disqualifications: not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, but patient, not a brawler, not covetous, one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity. (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. (1 Tim iii. 1–7.)

There are many other portions of the New Testament which treat upon the qualifications of the ministers of Christ, but our limits will not allow us at this time to present them. From the above established rule we learn that the brother to be recognized as a minister of Jesus Christ must sustain an unblemished reputation in the church, and his walk and conversation before the world, (those that are without) must also be irreproachable. Of course we are not to understand that the world are to speak well of his doctrine, or allow him to escape reproach

and persecution such as Christ and his apostles bore. But he is not to be known in the world as a brawler, a striker, a man given to wine, or greedy of filthy lucre, not covetous, or, like the daughters of the horse-leech, crying, Give! give!!

Next in importance to the unblemished character sustained by the candidate for the christian ministry is, Is he apt to teach? Many men of intelligence and of grace are destitute of this qualification, and the church would starve under their ministry, if they were not otherwise fed with knowledge and understanding. And if the minister cannot command intelligible language, how can he be apt to teach? We would not insist upon eloquence of speech, as these terms are used by men, for Paul, who as a learned man could have commanded it, refrained from it in his ministry, and came not in the excellency of speech, or of wisdom, but he was with them in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling, and his speech and preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that the faith of the saints should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Still there may be, and unquestionably is, a fault with at least some of our brethren in the ministry, and an inexcusable carelessness in regard to their language. If to be apt to teach requires that the instructor should, like the wise man, search out suitable words, and if, as he has by the spirit of inspiration told us, that "words fitly spoken are like apples of gold in pictures of silver," it must be proper and right that preachers of the gospel should at least make themselves familiar with their mother tongue.

To do this we presume there are very few cases, if any, where anything more is necessary than a trifling effort on the part of the preacher himself. If the church be at fault, it is that they do not urge upon their preachers who are deficient, the necessity and importance of spending some of their leisure hours in studying their grammar and dictionaries. We have known young men to enter the ministry whose opportunities had been very limited, and consequently were very deficient in their language, who have grown to be old men, without any perceptible improvement in that particular, but it would be hard to find a case where a good practical knowledge of the rules of grammar might not have been acquired by them in that time without in the least restricting their ministerial labors, or detracting from their opportunities to labor for the support of their families. There certainly can be no good reason why a young preacher should idle away time which might be employed in the attainment of profitable knowledge, and in mental improvement.

No brother is at liberty to construe our remarks as intending any reflection upon our aged brethren in the ministry, who have never been privileged with opportunities which are common in our day. Many of our aged fathers in the ministry were raised amid the turmoil and strife of the Revolutionary war, or in parts of our country where the country was new, and opportunities were very limited for mental improvement, still their usefulness has been realized very extensively, and their praise is in all the churches. We only design to call the attention of the young to this subject, and not only ministers, but all others, would realize an advantage by applying themselves as opportunity presents, to the attainment of useful knowledge.

To secure all the advantages which we recommend, we see no need of building or

establishing Theological Seminaries, or of waiting one moment after being called to the work of the ministry. The most stupidly dull and clownish preachers we ever met with have been among the students sent forth from Theological Schools. One from Hamilton Seminary, in our State, once edified the people in our vicinity, by informing them that the Ganges, where pagans sacrifice their children to its waters, was located in the Canadas. But aside from their deficiency in geography, they are uniformly, so far as our acquaintance with them extends, by no means in advance of pagans in the knowledge of divine and spiritual things. The things of the Spirit of God can only be taught by the Spirit, and all our spiritual preparations for usefulness in the church of God must come from above. Still public speaking requires the articulation of sounds, by which ideas are expressed and conveyed, in order to which our natural and physical organs are employed, and our natural understanding is brought into requisition. Hence the propriety of correct language. "How forcible are right words." Some have betrayed an unwillingness to take the trouble to learn the proper use of words, and their precise meaning, lest it should encourage pride and vanity, either in themselves or in their hearers, but that very class of speakers are more frequently than any others found straining to use highflown words that they do not understand themselves, and very incorrectly imagine that their hearers are as ignorant of as themselves.

Our impression is that the most simple language we can possibly command, if well understood by the speaker, in public preaching, is by far more suitable and instructive, and to our ear, it is the most eloquent and forcible. None but coxcombs, and vain, conceited fops, will strain to use terms in public speaking which they imagine their hearers do not generally understand.

While on this subject, the reader will permit us to say, that there are many disagreeable faults into which preachers are very liable to fall, such as speaking with a sing-song tone, or with affection, in an unusual key, with unbecoming and awkward gestures which a little care on their part with some occasional hints from faithful brethren, would serve greatly to relieve them from, and render them far more acceptable and pleasant to their hearers. But we have pursued this part of our subject as far perhaps as is profitable at this time, especially as we are conscious that the writer has very many faults to correct in himself, as well as to point out in his brethren.

The improvements suggested can be acquired without money, or exemption from labor. We know a precious brother who has attained a high elevation in literature without the aid of schools, or exemption from labor. He told us that he had often carried a book in his bosom when ploughing, and while his team were resting, he would employ the moments in study until he had acquired the education which he now finds of priceless value to him as a minister of Jesus. There are many other important requisitions for a preacher of the gospel, which we have not time nor space to dwell upon in this article; and our remarks on the duty of the church to the preachers of the word, must also be deferred for the present.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 1, 1857.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denotes the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; &c.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$319 05
C. Winter, N. Y., $1.00; Amy Shaddock, Pa., $1.00; Hiram Nichols, N. Y., $2.00; T. G. Harris, Neb., $1.00; Attie A. Curtis, Mass., $1.00; Phenia Davis, Mass., $1.00; Elder G. N. Tusing, Ohio, $1.00; A friend, D. C., $5.00; John Hobson, N. Y., $3.00; Jacob Hewitt, Ill., $2.50; T. Knight, Mo., $1.00; George Lambert, Maine, $3.00.—Total	22 50
Total to date	$341 55

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, Nov. 30th, 1899, at the home of the bride's parents, in Pickaway Co., Ohio, Luther C. Trout, of Fairfield Co., Ohio, and Miss Chloe E. Plum, of Pickaway Co., Ohio.

By the same, Nov. 29th, 1899, at the home of the bride's parents, William D. Hempy and Miss Maggie D. Holliday, both of Fairfield Co., Ohio.

By the same, Oct. 4th, 1899, James Russel Pinkerton and Miss Laura Rausch, both of Columbus, Ohio.

By the same, at his residence, Oct. 23d, 1899, Geo. Dolen Johnson and Miss Anna Jeannette Spencer, both of Franklin Co., Ohio.

By the same, Sept. 12th, 1899, at the home of the bride's parents, in Hocking Co., Ohio, Frank Hensel and Miss Kittie Harsh, both of Hocking Co., Ohio.

By Elder T. .M Poulson, Dec. 6th, 1899, at the bride's mother's, at Salisbury, Md., William A. Powell, of Philadelphia, Pa., and Mrs. Virginia E. Parrish, of Salisbury, Md.

By the same, Dec. 19th, 1899, near New Church, Va., Webster Wessels and Miss Sadia B. Gladen, both of Virginia.

By the same, Dec. 21st, 1899, at the home of the bride's brothers, in Wicomico Co., Md., John W. Watson and Miss Alice S. Kelley, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

By the same, Dec. 24th, 1899, at the Baptist meeting-house at Nassaongo, Wicomico Co., Md., Washington Jenkins and Lina A. Maddox, both of Salisbury, Md.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at his residence, Hopewell, N. J., Saturday, Dec. 23d, 1899, Thomas E. Wilson, of Linvale, N. J., and Miss Maggie A. Garner, of Lambertville, N. J.

By the same, at same place, Wednesday, Dec. 27th, 1899, Augustus Hall and Miss Matilda R. Kugler, both of Whitehouse, Hunterdon Co., N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—Dec. 4th, 1899, sister **Mary A. Hulsizer,** wife of brother Mahlon Hulsizer, of Clinton, N. J. Her maiden name was Sharp, daughter of David Sharp. She was 79 years, 1 month and 2 days old. She was married to brother Hulsizer Jan. 16th, 1834, living nearly sixty-one years together. They were united in a twofold sense, naturally and spiritually. She united with the Regular Primitive Old School Baptist church at Locktown, N. J., many years ago, and was baptized by Elder Gabriel Conklin. She was in Babylon for several years, but the Lord graciously brought her out, and gave her a home in the church of Jesus Christ, the pillar and ground of the truth, and now has taken her to her eternal home. She had been in feeble health for a good many years, and often expressed a desire for rest, and to go home. She is now at home with Jesus, and satisfied. She leaves a mourning husband, eighty-four years old, waiting for the summons to follow, also seven children to mourn the loss of a dear mother, with grandchildren and many friends, and the church also has lost a good faithful member, loved by all.

Elder Durand spoke much to the comfort of those present, after which she was buried near her home. The Lord gave, and he has taken away.

May the dear Lord give all needed grace.

D. M. VAIL.

ON April 16th, 1899, **Mrs. Priscilla F. Ivey,** widow of Charles Ivey, left us to mourn her death, while she went to receive her final reward with his saints. This is a very tardy notice, and almost too late, but we, her children, feel it as a solemn duty to let the SIGNS know of the departure of one of its oldest and most constant and devoted readers. She was in her 73d year, and the mother of three living children, J. L. Ivey, of Milledgeville, Ga., Mrs. H. K. Byington, of Ivey, Ga., and myself, of Macon, Ga. Her oldest son, Gilbert Beebe, who died some years ago, would have been now fifty-five years old. At Mount Ivey church, built by her husband, she was absent from services but twice for the last five years. On her death bed the SIGNS were read to her at her request. With a resigned and firm faith she lived, and with such faith she died. We humbly bow to the will of him "who doeth all things well," and hopefully fix our eyes on that bright future home where the dead hand points. But the SIGNS, that we have known in our household so many, many years, we cannot give up, for it seems like an older one of the family who is entitled to the easy chair. So you will please hereafter send it to Mrs. A. H. Rice, Macon Ga.

MRS. A. H. RICE.

MACON, Ga., Dec. 21, 1899.

DIED—At his home in Walton Co., Ga., of typhoid fever, August 30th, 1899, **Mr. John W. Green,** aged 30 years, 7 months and 22 days. Mr. Green was a model man in all walks of life, always dutiful and kind to his parents, a good and upright citizen, a kind and affectionate husband and father, and while he never joined the church, was a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. He leaves behind to mourn their loss, an aged father and mother, one brother, six sisters, a wife and two lovely little children, besides a host of relatives and friends, but while we feel keenly our loss, we do not grieve as those that have no hope, for we believe that our loss is his gain.

The writer preached his funeral the day after his death, to a large and attentive congregation, with desire in our heart to comfort the bereaved, and now we desire to tender our heartfelt sympathy to the beloved wife and relatives, praying God's blessing upon them, and may God's grace prepare them to meet him in that blessed home where there will be no more parting, is the desire of the writer.

M. F. HURST.

SOCIAL CIRCLE, Ga., Nov. 16, 1899.

Margaret E. Bradshaw was born Sept. 7th, 1834, died Oct. 9th, 1899. Miss Margaret never made an open profession of religion, but in all the years I have known her, twenty or more, she has been a constant attendant of the Baptist church, and a respectful, attentive and devoted listener. By word, by hand and by purse, she has shown her belief in and devotion to the cause of Christ. She was unwavering in her belief in the absolute sovereignty of God, and his final disposition of all things according to his eternal purpose, which he purposed in himself. She was candid, frank and outspoken, at all times; there was never a question what she thought, nor need be any doubt about what she would do. Whatever other faults she may have had, this was not one. She was, I think, as far as human can be, without guile or hypocrisy. I feel that the church has lost in her as true a friend as any she had, though not a member, and I know I never had a better one. She leaves a brother and two sisters, and many, many friends, to mourn their loss. Our prayer to God is, that he will soothe their sorrow, heal their wounds, and drive away their tears. I tried to speak to the comfort of the sorrowing ones on the occasion.

ALSO,

Simon Star died Dec. 2d, 1899, aged 25 years, 6 months and 10 days. He was baptized by Elder Meredith, Oct. 2d, 1899. I received a letter from him in September, asking me to come and baptize him. On account of bad health I advised him to get one of the ministers who might attend the Juniata Association, to visit and baptize him. He did so, and Elder Meredith kindly visited and baptized him. It was my privilege, however, to be with him Saturday night before the fourth Sunday in November. I found him though so low as not to be able to speak above a whisper, still anxious to know the Scripture. We spoke often one to another as best we could. We opened the Scriptures, and a solemn, sweet and precious season we had together. How much better to visit the house of mourning than the house of feasting. It was a long journey from my home, over one hundred miles, but what is physical suffering to heavenly joy? I have known this young man for many years, always of a quiet, peaceable disposition. His mother writes me, though a sufferer for four years, he never complained. He recognized that all things came from God; good and evil. He bore them alike with christian gratitude, and christian fortitude. His prayer was, "O, Father, take me to thyself." He counted the hours, and said, that much nearer to God and home. He begged his mother not to grieve over him. She writes, "But O, how can I do as he wished?" The flesh cannot, it is not subject to the law of God, neither can be. But in spirit I know she wants to be submissive. I felt very tired when I reached him Saturday night, after traveling over a hundred miles, but that poor boy filled me with joy and rest. I felt, may my last days be like his, poor, living in one room of a friend, but having all things. Yes, Jesus was there. What glory where Jesus is! This young brother was born and died in Fulton Co., Pa., spent his last days in the home of a friend, I think called "christians," seeing their generosity, kindness and loving attention. I could but wish we were all such christians as they. The mother told me they had not charged her a cent for room rent, milk nor provision, furnishing them everything, and keeping two cows for them. This is showing christianity by works, and it is lovely, and to be praised of all men. May God bless them, I beg, for Jesus' sake, and comfort the sorrowing mother.

By request of the mother, I hope to preach the funeral at Sidling Hill, Fulton Co., Pa., in May. Due notice will be given.

ALSO,

PLEASE record the death of sister **Mary A. Titus,** relict of brother Tunis Titus. She was born in Fairfax Co., Va., April 10th, 1814, died Dec. 10th, 1899. Her maiden name was Mary A. Hunter. She was married to Tunis Titus, Sept. 16th, 1840, living together faithful to their vows, and creditable to themselves, over fifty-eight years. They were lovely in their life, separated six months less two days in death. As a woman it seems to me sister Titus measured up to the full standard of a heroine, though afflicted with two cancers. One she could not keep from being known, the other was not known until her death. She seldom spoke of her sufferings, never complaining, and up to the death of her husband was cheerful, apparently happy, enduring all, being all, that she might be thought able to care for her beloved husband, who

suffered with a sore affliction months, yes years, before his death. Such sacrifice for love as was manifested (and humbly, meekly manifested) in this dear old woman, is the nearest earthly approach to that which is divine. When we see love, as it was seen in her sacrificing, willing suffering, doing, we see the reason why it is the only word in the language that expressed God to man. But not only was she faithful to her husband, but in all the relations of life, so far as I have ever seen, she was faithful. It was my privilege to baptize her and her husband, some eight or ten years ago. I only wish that I was worthy to baptize such. If I mistake not, they leave six children to mourn their loss, all being characters worthy of their noble parents. One of these, brother Sid Titus, is a beloved member of the Valley church. May God supply our needs, and reconcile us to our loss.

I tried to comfort the mourning ones at her funeral.

E. V. WHITE.

LEESBURG, Va.

Jane Gumalt, our dear sister, was a member of the Regular Predestinarian Baptist church of Christ called Salem, in Washington Co., Idaho. She was a daughter of John and Ollie Barton, deceased. Sister Gumalt was born April 19th, 1843, and died August 23d, 1899. She was a kind and loving companion, and a tender mother, always ready to administer to her husband and children. She was established in the doctrine of salvation by grace, through the Lord Jesus Christ. The writer of this notice baptized her in the year 1876, in the fellowship of the Peace Valley church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, in Howell Co., Mo., and since then she united with the church here by letter. She was a truly beloved christian member, and we greatly miss her. She leaves a husband, two daughters and one son, to mourn, but we are satisfied that her spirit is with her Savior, and we will try to be reconciled to the will of the Lord.

The writer of this notice tried to speak words of consolation to a large concourse of relatives and friends, from John xi. 25. She was laid by her father and mother, in the cemetery at Weiser, Idaho, to await the resurrection of the dead. May the Lord enable us to be reconciled to his will.

G. B. BARTON.

DIED—August 26th, 1899, our beloved sister, **Jennie Turner,** aged 35 years. Sister Turner fell a victim to that dread disease, consumption, but bore it all with patience and becoming faith in the Lord Jesus, her only hope of life and salvation. She was married August 26th, 1891, to our beloved brother, George Turner, at my home in Pleasureville. She united with the Cane Run church, and it was my privilege to baptize her, together with her dear husband and several others, in August, 1898. She lived a devoted and faithful member in the church, and loved by all who knew her. The power of God's grace and love was so richly manifest in her heart that she was made willing to resign her dear, afflicted boy, and all into the kind and loving care of her dear Father in heaven, and go to him, leaving this world of suffering. She talked freely in her last days, both of her temporal affairs and heavenly prospects, and as she drew nearer the approaching dissolution, the brighter shone the precious life of our dear Redeemer, until life in immortality was swallowed up. The closing scenes were heavenly indeed. She quoted the first verse of the familiar hymn beginning, "O land of rest, for thee I sigh," and after committing all to the care of our heavenly Father, she said, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly," and sweetly fell asleep in Jesus, as an infant falling to sleep with pleasant scenes around it.

She leaves a dear, devoted but now bereaved husband, one son, with brothers, sisters, friends and the church, who mourn their loss, yet knowing our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was largely attended, and a comforting discourse was preached by Elder Eubanks, from her last words, (I being away in Missouri at the time).

May the Lord comfort our hearts, guide us through life, and grant us his loving presence in death.

P. W. SAWIN.

NEWCASTLE, Ky., Nov., 1899.

DIED—Nov. 16th, 1899, at her home near Pugh, Parker Co., Texas, our esteemed sister, **Jennie Selvedge.** She was born Sept. 8th, 1847. Her maiden name was Hood. Was married to Samuel H. Selvedge, August 2d, 1865. About the year 1870, they emigrated to Texas, from east Tennessee, I think. I have been acquainted with the family twenty years, and have been a frequent visitor at their house for that length of time, but could not visit the dear sister but once during her illness. She suffered much for about ten months. Our dear sister Selvedge professed a hope in Christ in her young days, and has been an Old School Baptist, and has been a constant reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years. The brethren and sisters have always received a hearty welcome by brother and sister Selvedge, and it seemed to be their chief delight to entertain all that come to visit, or attend the church meeting. Our sister was a true Baptist, believing the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and her faith was sufficient for the hour of death. When the hour came for her to depart out of the world, she called all the children that were present around her bed, and bade them all farewell. Thus a dear wife, mother and sister, passed away, leaving seven children, three sons and four daughters, and a most devoted husband, and many friends, to mourn, but we feel to thank the Lord that we mourn not as those without hope.

Elder J. N. Smith spoke at the funeral to a large

congregation of sympathizing people, kindred and friends.

May God comfort the bereaved.

W. L. ROGERS.

BLUM, Texas.

Floyd W. Rhodes died Nov. 3d, 1899, of dropsy and heart failure, aged 26 years, 4 months and 24 days.

The subject of this notice was born in Jefferson Co., Iowa, June 10th, 1873, and united with the Des Moines River Predestinarian Baptist Church, near Eldon, Iowa, and was baptized the first Sunday in June, 1895. He was married to Miss Vada E. Watson, of Hillsboro, Iowa, Sept. 22d, 1897. He was the eldest child, and only son, of Aaron and Nannie Rhodes, leaving three sisters and his devoted young wife and child four and one-half months old, to mourn the loss of one so dear to all. Seldom has one been blessed with such rare discernment of spiritual things, as was this precious young brother, and being gifted with superior natural intelligence, led many of our brethren to hope a field of usefulness was before him here in the field of his Lord and Master. Kind and genial, he was held in the highest esteem by all who knew him.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder I. T. Flint, at the church to which he belonged, and his remains, in accordance with a request made by himself, were laid to rest in the churchyard cemetery. A great concourse, comprising the entire community where he lived, were in attendance, all in profound sympathy, and many weeping as none can weep except for the loss of a loved one. The church has lost a most faithful member and clerk, a position he filled four years previous to his departure. In this hour of affliction we can only say, Not my will, but thine, O Father, be done! He is gone. I. T. T.

IT becomes my painful duty to write of the death of old sister **Mary Romine,** who died June 17th, 1899. She was born in Lincoln Co., Tenn., Oct 23d, 1817, left that State when quite young, with her parents, and went to Missouri, lived there until she married brother C. Romine, and in the spring of 1892 she came across the plains to California, settled in Shasta, Co., and lived there several years, then left there and moved to Petaluma, Sonoma Co., after a short time moved to Markwert Springs, same County. She joined the Old School Baptist church at Santa Rosa, same County, then about fifteen years after she came to this town with her husband, and he died about fifteen months after they came. He was an able minister of the Old School Baptists. She remained firm to the end. She had a stroke of paralysis on Monday the 12th, and never came to, so as to speak. I do miss her so much, as she and I were together a great deal of the time. She never seemed inclined to speak of her death. I use to take the SIGNS OF THE TIMES whenever they came, and read them to her, she enjoyed them so much, as well as myself, and I am lonely without her. But I will soon be at home over there. "For there we'll meet at Jesus' feet, meet to part no more." Farewell. E. M. H.

WOODLAND, Cal., Dec. 5, 1899.

MEMORIAL.

Whereas, the great and supreme Ruler of the universe has in his infinite wisdom removed from among us our dearly beloved brother, **Elder S. L. Dark,** and

Whereas, the long and intimate relation held with him in the faithful discharge of his duties in this Association makes it befitting, that we record our appreciation of it, therefore be it

Resolved, that the wisdom and ability of his counsel and service in this Association will ever be held in grateful remembrance by us.

Resolved, that the removal of such a life from among us leaves a vacancy that has, and will be, doubly felt by all the brethren and friends of this Association, and will prove a great loss to us, yet we feel that our loss is his eternal gain; we feel that he is reaping the just reward of all God's servants. Be it further

Resolved, that with deep sympathy with the bereaved family of the deceased, we bow our heads in humble submission to the will of our heavenly Father who doeth all things well.

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be spread on our Minutes, and that a copy be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and *Messenger of Peace,* for publication.

E. D. VARNES, Moderator.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

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SILAS H. DURAND.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1900. NO. 2.

POETRY.

I INCLOSE with this letter a short selection of poetry. It is translated from the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, a Persian poet of the eleventh century. The sentiment is so in keeping with the teaching of the Scriptures, and so forcibly and sincerely expressed, that I think others might be edified by it as I have been. I think it is wonderful, and shows that,

"God sends his teachers into every age,
To every clime and race of men."

Yours in bonds,

H. M. CURRY.

PLEASANT PLAINS, Ill.

We are no other than a moving row
Of magic shadow-shapes, that come and go
Round with the sun-illumined lantern held
In midnight by the Master of the show.

But helpless pieces of the game he plays
Upon this chequer-board of nights and days:
Hither and thither moves and checks and plays,
And one by one back in the closet lays.

The ball no question makes of ayes and noes,
But here or there, as strikes the player, goes;
And he that tossed you down into the field,
He knows about it all, he knows, he knows.

The moving finger writes, and having writ,
Moves on, nor all your piety nor wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,
Nor all your tears wash out a word of it.

And that inverted bowl they call the sky,
Where under crawling cooped we live and die,
Lift not your hands to it for help, for it
As impotently moves as you or I.

With earth's first clay he did the first man knead,
And there of the last harvest sowed the seed;
And the first morning of creation wrote
What the last dawn of reckoning shall read.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 16, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER:—You say that in some things I have misrepresented you. I do not wish to do so, and do not yet see that I have. You quote some sentences from my letter which you say contain all you have contended for concerning rewards and punishments. Then I have misunderstood you, and we are agreed. But again you conclude the difference between us to be very great.

I will briefly notice some points in your letter. Referring to my suggestion that in teaching a "conditional time salvation," you appear to have bound burdens upon the helpless, you reply that unless these helpless ones are too helpless to *desire*, I am not justified in finding fault with your views, for all the liberty of will you have contended for is liberty to *desire* or to will. You say that you do not hold that they can secure the blessings at will, but only hold that they can *desire* them. I do not see how that would be the fulfillment of a condition at all, on which a salvation of any kind could be based. Paul said, "To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I

find not." And again he said, "Ye *cannot* do the things that ye would." (Romans vii. 18–25; Gal. v. 17, 18.) But until the good thing is done no salvation is experienced; so there must be, as in the case of Paul, a further revelation of Christ as the *doer* of the good things for and in us before salvation appears.

But I have understood you to attach the condition to the *act* of obedience, and not alone to the will. In a published article, after insisting upon conditionality in the words of Jesus in Matthew xi. 28, you say, "He plainly encourages them to obedience by promising them rest in case they obey. Parents do the same thing with their children: 'If you will obey me I will give you a toy, or give you my approval.'" I will also cite you to this passage, and to the whole article, in reply to your request to show a sentence where you have taught that God's favor depends upon our will and choice and work. If you do not mean by your language here and elsewhere that God's favor, and our time salvation by him, depend upon our performance of those conditions, then I have misunderstood your meaning, and also the meaning and use of the term, "conditional time salvation."

In regard to the meaning of the word "if," you have consulted authorities, and conclude that it is necessary to set aside either that word or my theory. But you have no need to do either. I do not intend to violate the meaning of any word, nor have I done so, though you, as well as I, will depart from Webster sometimes as to the scriptural meaning of a word, as, for instance, "baptize." I grant the word "if" to generally introduce a condition or a supposition, though not always. Yet you have not produced a sentence from the New Testament which disproves the truth of my position that the word "if" does not anywhere in the New Testament imply a condition upon the performance of which by the creature a promise of favor and salvation is based; that faith, belief, hope, love, and every spiritual grace, are not spoken of in the Scriptures as though their possession and experience by us were regarded as depending upon our will, but as the gifts of God. The Savior did not say, "If you *will* believe you *shall* have eternal life;" "If you *will* believe that I can heal your son, I will heal him;" "If you *will* keep my commandments you shall have my presence and favor." Such language is not used under the new covenant of grace; it belongs to the old covenant of works. I do object to the use of old covenant language in speaking of new covenant things, except in its typical meaning. The Savior's language is, "He that believeth *hath* everlasting life;" "Believest thou that I can do this? all things are possible to him that believeth." In the one form of language it is implied that the man may or may not believe, or do whatever is spoken of, according as he wills or chooses, and that the gift of life or favor is made to depend upon his performance of the condition. In the form of language used in the New Testament the state or condition of mind at the time is referred to, a condition which the power and grace of God only can produce in the mind of any one, and the proposition is presented as based upon that condition of mind.

I will notice three of the cases you refer to as showing my position to be incorrect. First, "If a man *will* come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Here there is nothing promised to a man if he will come after Jesus, as though that coming were a work of his own, decided upon by

his own will, and to be rewarded by some favor from the Lord. But the "if" supposes a man to have the will or desire to come after Jesus; then he is told in what way alone he can come; not by the exercise of any will power of his own, but by denying himself, denying his own will, and by taking up his cross; by crucifying his flesh and fleshly mind, and following Jesus. Here is the test as to whether the man really has a will to come after Jesus. To some who thought they had already come to him he said, "Ye *will* not come to me." (John vi.) The young man who offered to follow Jesus had no true will to do so, and when he found that Jesus was poorer than the foxes and the birds of the air, too poor to reward him as he desired, he disappeared. No man can of himself have a will to deny himself. God must work that will in him if he ever has it. Jesus teaches here what he teaches in our experience, that instead of coming after him by any power of our own, the will and power and work that bring about that self denial, suffering and crucifixion in which this following consists, are all, like every other good and perfect gift, "from above, and come down from the Father of lights, with whom their is no variableness neither shadow of turning." —James i. 17.

Second. Peter says, "For he that *will* love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile."—1 Peter iii. 10. There is no conditional work proposed in this text by the word "if," nor any reward offered. The "if" supposes a man to have already the love of God in his heart, and the will or desire to enjoy that holy life which no one can see in himself, and to see the good days of the Son of man. The apostle tells such a one of that same self-denial which the Savior said was necessary in order that a man should come after him, and in which alone the power and blessedness of divine life are experienced in this mortal state. "Every one who knoweth the plague of his own heart," knows that in this he "cannot do the things that he would," but will still find that evil is present with him, and like David, must cry unto God to "set a watch before his mouth, and keep the door of his lips," (Psalm cxli. 3,) or evil and guile will continually issue from them. Only as the dying of the Lord Jesus is felt in our body, can the life also of Jesus be manifested in our mortal flesh, (2 Cor. iv. 10, 11,) and this is the life which God's people *will* love and long to feel the power of; and these good days which we wish for are the days made by the light of this blessed life in our souls, while "we bear about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus." The life of suffering in the flesh and of faith in the Spirit is the life we truly live before God while in the flesh, and this the natural man cannot desire.

A man might try to curb his tongue, and refrain his lips from speaking the sin and guile which he would really delight in speaking, if he hoped to receive some reward for his self denial, but such self denial is not the Bible kind. The spiritual rewards, which I still contend for, are the experience of the things we love in the Spirit. We hate sin and guile, if we have divine life, while we feel our nature to be full of them, and it is an unspeakable blessing, the richest kind of a reward, to feel a rest from that ever present sinfulness of the fleshly mind by the power of that faith by which we are enabled to see our standing in Christ, and to "walk in him."

Third. "Whosoever *will*, let him take the water of life freely." This presents

no condition to be performed, but shows us one who longs for the water of that river which flows from the throne of God and the Lamb, the promises and grace and salvation of God. This is the one who thirsts after righteousness. He sees that every blessing represented by the water of that river of life flows alone from the power of God, without the least possible help from man. His very soul goes out in thirstings and longings for those heavenly blessings. "But," he says to himself, "I have no right to those holy things. They belong to the Lord's people, to the righteous, while I am a vile sinner." To every such poor, thirsty soul Jesus says, in his final words recorded in the book of inspiration, "Let him take of the water of life freely." That command shows him his privilege to satisfy his thirsty soul upon the promises of God; to drink the blessed truth which flows to make glad the city of God; to walk in the order and ordinances of the gospel. He is now made to realize that he is the very character for whom those blessings were ordained and prepared. He could no more have taken them to himself before the command of Jesus came to him, than the man with the withered hand could have stretched it forth before that commanding word gave him the power. Now he can no more resist or refuse the blessing than the tender grass can resist or refuse the light and healing of the rising sun.

It is necessary to define what *will* it is in both Jesus and his people which you refer to by the term "liberty of will," as necessarily exercised in what you call "conditional time salvation." There is both a human and a divine will; which of these is in exercise when righteous works are done? *The Scriptures must answer this question, and not human reason.* I will here give what I understand to be the scriptural teaching upon the subject. The Savior, in his human nature, even though it was pure and free from sin, did not do his own will in performing the work of salvation, but the Father's will which sent him. (John vi. 38.) He lived a life of self denial and suffering during his ministry in the flesh. His Father wrought all his works in him. (John v. 19; xiv. 10.) He pleased not himself. (Romans xv. 3.) Concerning him there could be nothing conditional in his work and trial, unless you change the ordinarily accepted meaning of the word conditional. In a conditional covenant or promise there is a supposed uncertainty as to whether the one party will perform the conditional work. Otherwise I can see no meaning in, or use for, the word conditional. Jesus could not disobey. The principle of disobedience was not in him. There was nothing in him for the temptations of the devil to take a vital hold of, although he was so made under the law as to suffer under those temptations. He said, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." He was not on trial to prove merely that he *would* not, but that he *could* not disobey his Father's will. It was the Father's will which was done in him, and the same will is effectually done in his people.

The will, then, by which the Lord's people desire and do spiritual works is not the natural or fleshly will, which every man has as well after as before he has been born of the Spirit, but it is the will wrought in us by the Lord. It is called in one place "the mind of Christ," and in another place "the mind of the Spirit." These two wills, the fleshly and the spiritual, are contrary the one to the other, so that we cannot do the things that we would. (Gal. v. 17.) Those who

have been born of the Spirit cannot see in their flesh any good thing. (Romans vii. 18.) There must be a righteous motive, as you have clearly demonstrated, in order that an act shall be righteous. The flesh presents to the spiritual view no such righteous principle. Jesus, even, disclaimed goodness as a man, saying, "There is none good but one, that is God," thus showing that all goodness is from God, and that Jesus would be called good only as the Son of God, and in oneness with the Father. The righteousness of a man will not do to make one acceptable before God. The Lord's people are made the righteousness of God in his Son. (2 Cor. v. 21.)

When the Lord has given us to see that he has wrought in us the desires that we have, then we can with a holy confidence work them out, yet with fear and trembling. No self confidence or fleshly zeal for the Lord in these works, but a holy fear causing us to walk softly before the Lord, desiring assurances from him that our work is not of the flesh, but of faith; "for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." I think it was for our encouragement in this respect that the apostle was inspired to say, when exhorting us to work out our own salvation, "For it is God that worketh in you, to will and to do of his own good pleasure."

All neglect of this salvation, which we could not neglect if it were not ours; all acts of disobedience on the part of a living soul, are from the fleshly will, and will surely result in sorrow, self-abhorrence and death. The transgressions of the children of the dear Savior will be visited with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes. (Psalm lxxxix.) Yet the Lord's loving kindness will not be utterly taken from the Son. When the work of correction is done, all the wanderers shall be returned to the fold. It is written, "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee."—Jer. ii. 19. In the Lord's own time each transgressor shall taste the bitter fruits of his sins, shall be humbled under the just but loving chastisements of God, and shall be amazed to find the grace of God sufficient for him.

You say, "Now please explain the reason why some are more dutiful and obedient than others, and yet all have a sufficiency of grace at all times, and not one thing is dependent on the will?" And then you tell me that my hank is tangled, and that I must straighten it out along here. If I have a hank, and am trying to twist a theory out of two or more skeins that some one else has spun, it may as well get tangled, for it will be of no use. But I am talking about the plain declarations of the Scriptures, and am insisting that human reason, and the theories of worldly wisdom, shall not set them aside, whether we can comprehend them or not.

With regard to your question I will say, first, that it seems clearly to show that you do hold that some things needful for the christian are left dependent upon his own will, and the form of that question appears to show that you regard that will as independent of grace. Second, Does not your question imply that you regard their own will, and not the grace of God, as the cause why some are more dutiful than others? Third, Does not your question imply that you do not think that the grace of God is sufficient for all his people at all times? Now, in reply to your question, I must say that I do not know. I must refer it to the infinite wisdom and mysterious purpose of God. If asked why Abel was righteous while Cain was not; why some are chosen

unto salvation and some are not; why gospel things are hid from the wise and prudent and revealed to babes, you and I would respond with one accord in the words of Jesus, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." If asked why Peter was left to deny his Lord, while John was not; why John Mark failed in what Paul thought his duty, and Paul and Barnabas had sharp contention about him; why, in short, some are more dutiful than others, I would have to give the same reason, referring it all primarily to the infinitely wise purpose of God, who was, to say the least, able to have prevented everything which he did not intend should result in final good to his chosen, and in his own glory. At the same time I feel it to be the duty of brethren to admonish and reprove me when they see a need for it, and I regard it as my duty, in my lot, to warn the unruly, reprove the erring, and exhort and persuade men, the men of God, to take up their cross daily. I can only do the work commanded me. I can only sow the seed which the Husbandman places in my hand. The result must be left with the Lord. "All my times are in thy hand."

But is not the grace of God sufficient for all his children at all times? Were not sufficient grace and all spiritual blessings given to each child of God in Christ before the world began? And will not that grace all be dispensed by him to each one just at the right time? "Of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." —John i. 16. That is, the grace we each receive is just the grace that was given each in him. The account is kept even. The grace is given according to the Lord's knowledge of our needs, not according to our knowledge and will. It is when sorrow and death come upon us, as the necessary consequence of our sin, that we are prepared to receive and appreciate the wonderful grace of God. It was when Paul was suffering under the rankling pain of the thorn in his flesh, the messenger of Satan, but given by the Lord, that he was ready for the wonderful and never-to-be-forgotten words of Jesus, "My grace is sufficient for thee." It was his weakness, his infirmities, sorely felt and groaned under, that prepared him to rejoice in the power and grace of Christ as fully equal to all his needs. He did not know what he needed even while he was praying earnestly and repeatedly for deliverance. Neither his will, therefore, nor his prayers, would have indicated to the Lord what to do for him. But Jesus knew all the time what he needed, and Paul knew after, but not before the answer to his prayer was given.

Peter was corrected and reproved and instructed by his terrible wickedness. He was just as wicked before he fell, but he did not know it. He was not at that time prepared to realize the riches of God's grace, but depended upon his own will and power to do right. It was the same fleshly will that caused him to say, "Though all men forsake thee, yet I will never forsake thee," which afterward prompted him to say with cursings, "I know not the man." But it was the other will, the "pure mind," stirred up by the Savior's look, which caused him to go out and weep bitterly. And then was the time when the exceeding riches of God's grace appeared to him, and he was humbled under the mighty hand of God, as a little child. God had a purpose of love and mercy to be fulfilled in Peter's fall. Would any one dare to say that David's terrible sin, and Jonah's refusal to obey, and Peter's denial of his Lord,

were contrary to God's purpose and will? Great truths concerning the terrible nature of sin, the helpless state of man, and the greatness of God's salvation, were to be taught by the awful experience of each of them. Jesus did not pray that Peter might not fall into the devil's sieve, but only that his faith might not fail. That faith was all that made him please the Lord.

The teaching of such scriptural truth does not cause a living soul to say, "Let us continue in sin," but rather makes him hate and dread it more. One who has died to sin cannot live any longer therein. To live after the flesh is death, not life, to such. They learn that they can depend only upon the Lord to uphold and lead them. When he walks in them then they walk in him; when he withdraws his presence they fall. The sun by his presence makes the day. By his absence "he maketh darkness and it is night, wherein all the beasts of the forest do come forth."—Psalm civ. 20.

I think you have implied in your published articles that those who declare the doctrine of God's sovereign purpose, and his predestination of all things that come to pass, are apologizing for sin. I do not think you have a right to say so. God called Cyrus, who was a wicked man, compared to a ravenous bird, to execute his counsel, and he declared from ancient times the things that he should do. Does the statement of that scriptural truth attribute wickedness to God, or apologize for Cyrus' sins? (Isa. xlvi. 10, 11.) The wicked are God's hand and sword. (Psalm xvii. 13.) When he works his will by them is their wickedness his? Are they not justly condemned? Habakkuk declares that God has ordained the wicked for judgment, and established them for correction, in their terrible raids upon his people; yet the prophet cannot understand why a holy God, who is of purer eyes than to behold evil, can even look upon them that deal so treacherously, and be silent. He does not however question that it is so, nor the Lord's right to do so, because he cannot understand it. (Hab. i. 12, 13.)

You conclude that I do not believe that man is a moral being, but I suppose we believe about alike on that subject as to the race of mankind. Yet I do not attach the same importance to the subject of the physical and moral government that you seem to in connection with salvation, because the Bible does not speak particularly about them. All men are by nature dead in sin, and do not know God or his kingdom or laws. When his people are given divine life, and Christ is revealed as their Savior, then from thenceforth they are under law to him. I can understand and talk a little about that law of the Spirit of life which has made them free from the law of sin and death, about the new covenant which is ordered in all things and sure, and their experience of it. In this they are separate from all other people. The laws are in their new minds and new hearts, not in the flesh, nor on tables of stone. Their obedience is from within, by the impulse of that Spirit of life, IN which is their reward, not in something obtained BY the obedient work, but IN the work. This they will all learn sooner or later. They are led by the Lord as blind, (Isa. xlii. 16,) they are carried as children, even to their old age. (Isa. xlvi. 4.) They are chastened and scourged, every one of them. (Heb. xii. 6.) They cannot direct their steps. The Lord appoints their way, and sets the bounds of their habitation that they cannot pass. And in the end they

rejoice that all their times are in his hand.

The terms "free will," "free moral agency," and the like, have been so long used to mean that a man can accept or reject offers of salvation as he pleases, that they will continue to mean that in the minds of men generally. What do we want of them anyway? The Bible terms will do for us. You remind me that the will of a stone has nothing to do with its movements. But you know the Lord's people, in their experience of salvation, are spoken of under the figure of stones, "lively stones." (1 Peter ii. 5.) Again, you remind me that my "theory" strips man of will choice as fully as a tree in its bearing or not bearing fruit. That is true; that figure is also used more than once in describing the Lord's people in their gospel state. They are "trees of righteousness," and he will be glorified in the fruit they shall bear. (Isa. lxi. 3.) They are branches of Christ, the true Vine, and he says, "From me is thy fruit found." His will is effectually wrought in them. He will "make them perfect to do his will, working in them that which is well pleasing in his sight," and he shall be glorified in them. (Heb. xiii. 21.)

Your questions have not been all expressly noticed, but have all been answered. The things I have written are very sweet truths to my soul. I hope we may find ourselves none the worse for our correspondence, but more manifestly of one mind.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

"I MARVEL that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ."—Gal. i. 6, 7.

THE FULFILLMENT OF THE SCRIPTURES.

I SUPPOSE that every one who professes to believe the Bible at all, looks for the fulfillment of its prophecies. To what quarter then are we to look for this fulfillment? How can those who deny predestination, either in part or in whole, ever expect the exact, timely and certain fulfillment of any or all of the prophecies of the divine oracles? God has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. Part at least of this declaration, he has made known unto us by the mouths of his prophets as recorded in the holy Scriptures. The events thus foretold, must certainly have been foreordained or predestinated, and therefore must be fulfilled, each in its time and season. The Savior said, Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass, until all be fulfilled.

When God says a thing shall come to pass, does he not mean that he will bring it to pass? When he says a thing shall be done, does he not pledge his word for its performance? Were the prophecies of the Scriptures uttered upon any other authority than the authority of God's decree? Do they rest upon any vicissitude of time for their fulfillment, that God's decrees do not embrace? Would mere foreknowledge, or bare permission warrant or even justify the expression, It shall come to pass? or the expression, shall, in any sense of the word? In this part of the country, people read and notice Hicks' weather forecasts. When such changes come as have been prophesied, they will say, Hicks hit it this time; when the forecasts fail, they say, Hicks missed it this time. Are we to look upon God's prophecies in this way? Are we to

say, when we see the Scriptures fulfilled in this thing, God hit it this time? or when we fail to see them fulfilled in that thing, God missed it this time? Are we to treat his prophecies as mere prognostications? One would say, O no, God knew all these things would come to pass, and so he was kind enough and thoughtful enough to tell us of them beforehand. This is a very puerile makeshift ,a very fallacious and deceptive subterfuge, and involves the one accepting it, in a difficulty far more serious and ungodly than he supposes the one to be which he is trying to evade, to wit, God's decree of predestination; for if God knew that an event would transpire, that event is inevitable, that is, it cannot fail to come to pass exactly as foreknown; if inevitable, then it has been determined, and if determined, who determined it? If God did not, who did? The difficulty that I meet here, is an absolutely determined future and either no determining power, or some determining power outside of God and independent of him. This is fatalism, and the one accepting such a theory is a fatalist in the fullest sense of that word. So here he is plunged into the very thing which he flattered himself that he was avoiding. In endeavoring to shun an imaginary Scylla, he has fallen into a real Charybdis.

How often do we come upon the expression in the New Testament, This was done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. When Herod sent forth and killed the little children in Bethlehem and all the coasts thereof, it was said then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, In Ramah there was a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted because they are not. Suppose Herod had not sent forth and killed the little children, then the words of Jeremiah would not have been fulfilled; if his word should fail in one thing, what confidence would his prophecies be entitled to in anything? But it is not Jeremiah's word which is at stake here, but it is God's word that must be fulfilled. Herod's persecution also caused the flight into Egypt, and this was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled, Out of Egypt have I called my son. On the return from Egypt, notwithstanding, Joseph had been warned of God to take the young child and his mother and go into the land of Israel, he through unbelief, fearing Archelaus, turned aside and dwelt in Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene. Here not only the wicked persecution by Herod, but also the unbelief of Joseph, alike fulfilled the Scriptures.

When the time arrived that Jesus should be betrayed into the hands of wicked men, the betrayer was at hand, not as one who accidently turned up in time of the emergency, but one who had been foretold by prophecy. David had given a pen picture of him hundreds of years before. It had also been said by the Christ that one of the twelve should betray him. Not only was the man marked out by prophecy, who should do this, but it had also been foretold how much the traitor should receive for his work, and also what should be finally done with the money. The son of man truly went as it was written of him. He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and when Herod and Pilate and the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together against him, they were gathered to do whatsoever

God's hand and God's counsel determined before to be done. (Acts iv. 27, 28.)

When the Savior was crucified, he was put to death between two thieves. This was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled which saith, He was numbered with the transgressors. Suppose there had been no thieves or transgressors, how then could the Scriptures have been fulfilled? It was the custom of the Jews to break the legs of those whom they put to death by crucifixion, but on this occasion, they broke the legs of the thieves, but did not break the legs of Christ. This was done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, which said, Not a bone of him shall be broken. This prophecy was fulfilled in its reference to the literal body of Christ, but it still remains in force in its relation to his spiritual body, and must be fulfilled to the utmost in this also. So this prophecy warrants the eternal security of all the redeemed family, for we are members of his body and of his flesh and of his bones; so not a bone of him shall indeed be broken. Instead of breaking his legs according to the custom and the request of the Jews, they pierced his side with a spear. This was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled, They shall look on him whom they pierced. When in his last agony, he said, I thirst, they in their fiendish cruelty, gave him vinegar to drink. This was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled, They gave me vinegar to drink. And after all, when they came to dispose of his raiment, they gambled for that, in order to fulfill the Scripture, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vestures did they cast lots. In the most exact way, the Scriptures were fulfilled in the life and death of Christ, so that it may well be said, He died for our sins according to the Scriptures.

Men are saved to fulfill the Scriptures. "Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion," is a prophecy that must be fulfilled; but for it to be fulfilled, the redeemed of the Lord must return and come to Zion. This prophecy cannot be satisfied as long as one for whom Christ died, is away from Zion. All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me, saith the Son. The righteousness, wisdom, power and grace of God are all engaged to fulfill these words, therefore there is no power or contingency that can ever interfere with the timely and triumphant victory of all the election of grace, over every enemy. On the day of Pentocost, when that great number of people cried out, Men and brethren, what shall we do? was exemplified the fulfillment of prophecy. A great number of these men were Jews, wicked, obdurate Jews, those who only a few days before had crucified the Son of God with wicked hands; they had spit upon him, had called him Beelzebub, the prince of devils, and to express their resolution never to repent, they said, Let his blood be upon us and our children. But their obduracy could not hold out. God's prophecy must be fulfilled. The redeemed of the Lord must return and come to Zion. When Abel offered unto the Lord a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, this prophecy lay at the root of the matter. In the days of Seth, when men began to call upon the name of the Lord, the words of the prophet, Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion, was being fulfilled in them. One might say, that this prophecy had not been written in the days of Seth. It had not yet been written upon parchment, but it had been written in the book of God's decrees, and experienced in the hearts and consciences of men. All the

prophecies of Jehovah are from eternity, and are yea and amen in Christ. Every poor pilgrim, whose anxious heart and weary footsteps seek that city whose builder and maker is God, is upheld, forwarded and guided on his journey by the immutable decree, that the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion, and through the certain fulfillment of God's word he shall reach the holy city and rest forever in her sacred palaces.

Men are lost to fulfill the Scriptures. Is this a hard saying? Can you not hear it? I am not responsible for the saying, however hard it may appear to be. The Savior said to the Father, in speaking of the twelve, All of them have I kept and none of them is lost but the son of perdition that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. (John xvi. 12.) Had Judas not been lost, the Scriptures would have been broken. The thoughtless and presumptuous man would say, If Judas had to do what he did, he would have been exempt from crime, he would have had no sin. Upon what ground would he have been without sin? What law would exempt him? According to whose judgment would he be innocent? State the law and name the judge, and if it be the law of God and God himself be the judge, then I will agree that the conclusion is the correct one. Jesus, who is himself the embodiment of all law, and the judge of both living and dead, said with regard to this matter in reply to Pilate, Thou couldst have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin. Instead of the judgment of Christ in this matter concurring with the judgment of men, that under such circumstances a man would be without sin, he declared that for this very reason, he had the greater sin. Here is a question of responsibility for some of the champions of that cause to settle. And here is another one: Christ said to the Jews, Behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify: and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of the righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. (Matt. xxiii. 34, 35.) The Savior here declares that these men should fill up the measures of their fathers; he also designates the crimes that they should commit in order to do this; not only generic crime but specific crimes, and the end to be answered thereby was, that upon them might come all the righteous blood that had been shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel to the blood of their most recent victim. Now upon what principle of justice and judgment could four thousand years of crime be required at the hand of one generation? Let some of the champions of free agency solve this problem from their favorite standpoint of accountability. I have been accused of denying human accountability, but in this as in many other things, I have been willfully misrepresented. I have only denied that the atonement of Christ left any responsibility upon his people; and further, I have denied the foolish, imaginary, sentimental and ungrounded conclusion that predestination relieves men of accountability and acquits them of crime upon principles of equity and justice, and that therefore in order to be accountable, a man must be what men are pleased to call a free agent. I have here referred to these things to show, that in the fulfillment of God's decrees according to his word, a deeper

principle of justice is involved, than human standards set forth, or human pleaders comprehend.

Again it is said of some in the divine record, that they were before of old ordained to this condemnation; now if they were before of old ordained to condemnation, when the condemnation came, did it not come in fulfillment of a decree? Who made the decree? Some would say God made it, but he made it upon conditions; this they think necessary in order that the character of God stand above reproach in the judgment of men. They admit that the decree of election unto life is unconditional, but that the ordination to condemnation is conditional, and that the subjects of this decree are endowed with a free agency whereby they are permitted to work out their condemnation. This notion involves a monstrous absurdity, and that absurdity is this, That God has denied to man the freedom and ability to righteousness whereby he may be saved, but that he has endowed man with that freedom and ability whereby he may and can work out a sure and foreknown condemnation. And this is resorted to in the vain imagination that the character of God is thus vindicated from the charge of unrighteousness, and he justified in his ways to man. Peter in speaking of certain ones, says they were appointed to disobedience and to stumbling. (1 Peter ii. 8.) Now if they were appointed to disobedience, must they not fulfill the appointment? This they must do, even though God send them strong delusions to accomplish it. (2 Thess. ii. 11.) Many are ready to exclaim now, If this be true, who is to be blamed? This is an old question, and I will give an old and authoritative answer. I will first state the question in its ancient form: "Thou wilt say unto me then, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" Reader, do you recognize your question? If you have never seen it before, if you will read the ninth chapter of Romans, you will find it. I will now give the ancient, time honored answer: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" Do you recognize the answer? If not, read the ninth chapter of Romans and you will find it. This is not your question; this is not a question of this age only. This question was asked two thousand years ago. Neither is this my answer. This is God's answer, and I am satisfied with it. This question comprehends everything that the cavilers of all ages have urged against the doctrine of God's sovereign decrees. Is not the answer of inspiration plain and decisive? If the solution to this problem is to be found in exceptions to God's decrees, and in making excuses for him, would he not have put a very different answer in the mouth of his inspired apostle? Is not this the place above all places, for such an excuse to be given? Is not this question sprung here for the express purpose of giving a decisive and unequivocal answer? Is not such an answer given? Shall we receive it as final and decisive, as coming from God himself, or shall we seek another, which, although necessarily false, is more pleasing to our pride and presumption, and more acceptable to ignorance and unbelief?

The unbelief of the Jews fulfilled the Scriptures. It is recorded by John, that although he had done so many miracles, yet they believed not on him: That the

saying of Esaias, the prophet, might be fulfilled, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, that I might heal them. (John xii. 37–40.) Here it is expressly stated that the reason they could not believe was, that Esaias had foretold their blindness and hardness, and further, that this blindness and hardness of heart was given from God. The object of this blinding and hardening was to prevent them from being converted that he might heal them. This language seems to imply that there might have been a possibility of their believing and being converted, had not God's decree intercepted and cut them off.

Heaven and earth shall pass away, said Christ, but my word shall not pass away until all be fulfilled. Whatever the divine record says shall be, must be. The same authority that says, The redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion, has also said, The wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand. The same book that says, All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, has also said, Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse. The same God that opened Lydia's heart, that she attended to the things spoken by Paul, hardened Pharaoh's heart that he would not let the people go. The same God that works in his people both to will and to do of his good pleasure, has also put it in the hearts of wicked rulers to fulfill his will, and to agree and give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God be fulfilled. (Rev. xvii. 17.)

When Paul was arraigned by the Jews for preaching what was to them an obnoxious and destructive doctrine, his defense was, that he had preached nothing, but what Moses and the prophets said should come. If I am to be censured for what I have herein written, I have but one defense to make, and that is, I have only written what Moses and the prophets and Christ and the apostles have said should be.

H. M. CURRY.

PLEASANT PLAINS, Ill.

LIBERTY, Ind., Jan. 2, 1900.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—By your permission I will offer a few thoughts for the consideration of your readers, on Gal. v. 1, 2.

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I, Paul, say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing."

The Galatians were Gentiles who had not worshiped under the Jewish religion until after their conversion to the christian religion. The freedom that is spoken of in the text is not from any bondage or servitude peculiar to themselves, but from the bondage under sin which is common to all mankind, for Paul said, Christ hath made us free. Both Jews and Gentiles are alike made free. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, which is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."—Heb. ii. 14, 15. This text proves that it is one common bondage to which all are subjected and from which all must be delivered before they can enjoy the liberty of God's people.

The Galatian brethren had been delivered from the bondage of sin, and the servitude of a legal formal worship. They had become God's free men; but they were afterwards induced to imbibe judaism, which Paul called, Being again entangled with the yoke of bondage." He says to them in the third chapter, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been, evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, receive ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit are ye made perfect in the flesh?" It looks to me very much like some of the brethren are following the example of the foolish Galatians. They claim that they began in the Spirit, but that our present salvation is of works. They are certainly "bewitched;" they "are fallen from grace." Brethren, let us not be "carried about with every wind of doctrine." Remember what Paul said to the Philippians, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." This text cannot be cut off from time, or present salvation. Paul tells us here that he that began the work will perform it. Dare any one say that the work of regeneration had been begun in them but had not been completed? Paul said to the Romans viii. 2, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." This is a wonderful deliverance. We were led captive by the devil at his will. We were the children of wrath even as others; but by the wonderful work of the Mediator in his life, death and spiritual office as the Holy Ghost, the prison doors are opened and the lawful captive is led forth to life and to liberty. They are no longer the slaves of a cruel master. They need no longer to dread the judgment of a merciless law; but are brought under the sweet influence of parental love. "He brought me into his banqueting-house and his banner over me was love." "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear: but ye have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father." We are dead to the law, that we should be married to Christ. Yea, we are "under the law to Christ," but it is a law of love, and that law is put into our hearts so effectually that it makes obedience a pleasure, rather than the result of slavish fear, or the hope of reward. An obedience to a written or traditional law, a copy of which is not found in the heart, is but a legal formality, that is not acceptable to God. Herein consists our liberty—we love obedience. While serving under the law, we did, from necessity, the things we thought contained in it. How familiar the expression, "If I believed the doctrine you preach, I would take my fill of sin."

"By the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified," expresses a principle just as true of us in our relation to Christ, as in our relation to Adam. This thought is well established in the Galatian letter. The idea that we received our supply of grace in the regeneration to enable us to perform all that is required of us as christians, is absurd from any standpoint. If it is meant that it is the beginning of a new life, based on a similar law of being and government as the former, it is absurd, because the former life is a development from an embryo, and is continually drawing from its original source—the

earth; therefore if there is any analogy, our spiritual life must be continually supplied from the Spirit. Therefore the proposition cannot be true. If it is meant that when we were created in Christ we were made upright, and able to stand, (keep the law) as was Adam, then we are without any ground of hope, for Adam fell, and if the figure teaches anything, it teaches that we must also fall. But, says a hundred voices in chorus, "Adam was able to stand."

Prove it.

Then follows a judgment against God for making a man that could not stand alone. A better proof would be to stand yourself without blame in your new life. What one of you does not feel in your heart every day to say, "God be merciful to me a sinner"? But how dare we pray for mercy if we are to be rewarded in time according to our works? That our sorrows and joys to a considerable extent follow as a result of our conduct, must not be denied, but to assert that our time salvation is based on a principle of works, or is a reward for or a result of our obedience, is quite another thing, and if true, the word grace in our prayers is worse out of place than in Arminian prayer, for they profess to believe that present grace has something to do with it. I heard a Presbyterian preacher once say, "When we pray, we should pray as though all depended on God; and when we preach, we should preach as though all depended on the sinner." But will any condition Baptist be so absurd? Dare we pray for any blessing in time as though we believe our enjoyments are of grace, and then preach to the people that these same blessings are at our option, and that the price of them is obedience? How would you who believe that time salvation is based on conditions to be performed by us, like to hear quotations from Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, to comfort you every time you are suffering persecution, privation, leanness of soul, or tribulation in any of its many forms? Would you not become vexed and say, "I have heard many such things: miserable comforters are ye all"? When thus vexed with do and live comforters, it would be sweet to turn to the noble Paul and hear him say, "But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." He did not say that the things which he suffered were for disobedience, neither did he claim the power to deliver himself in these time trials, but said, "the Lord delivered me." Therefore let us obey the injunction of the text, and "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." How can we be again entangled with the yoke of bondage, except by imbibing the idea, as the Galatians did, that there is a law of commandments intervening between us and the blessings of God's grace? What one of you by works of righteousness is worthy of the blessings you receive in time?

"Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ profiteth you nothing." Certainly Paul did not mean that the literal act of circumcision would take away their inheritance in Christ, but rather as they had turned to the law of Moses, (circumcision being their pledge to keep it) they had ceased to trust in Christ. So if we trust in our free will and ability to do the commandments, we

cease to trust in Christ for time blessings, and we are not profited by him to that extent; whereas the Bible informs us that we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in him. Whatever intervenes between us and Christ tends to hide him from our view, and render him of none effect to us, whether it be the law, philosophy, human reason, excellency of speech, or the many other things that tend to lead us astray. (See 1 Cor. i. 17; ii. 4, 5; also our text.)

It is said that conditional time salvation was not denied until lately. Did you ever know a thing denied before it was affirmed? Where and when did that doctrine take form and appear under its present heading among our people? You may find it in single sentences, but when and where was it made prominent to that extent that those who do not indorse it felt a necessity to oppose it? My first objection to it is, because it is not in harmony with the general teaching of the Bible, as I have tried to show. My second objection is, its tendency. One will naturally reason that if our time salvation is of works, then we should be about it; and my observation is that those who believe it become much more concerned for the salvation of others than for their own. They set to work to build up the church. They want to save God's people from the delusions of the world. The church is built up. They "sow the wind, and reap the whirlwind," forgetting that, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." Such has been the history of all the great revivals of the church under one delusion or another.

I have before me a copy of the Minutes of the White Water Association, held with the Village Creek Church, in August, 1829, from the circular of which I will make two quotations: "Mr. George Whitefield, who had crossed over from England, and was passing through New England, preaching the gospel with unwearied exertions, was made the instrument of raising up Mr. Isaac Buchus to the gospel ministry, who soon embraced the sentiments of the Baptists, and with the zeal that characterized the ministry of Whitefield, he entered the work, traveling the country over in search of his despised brethren, who had hitherto been but little known, and seems to have been the means of stimulating them to renewed exertions and additional confidence in their prospects of success; and such were the blessings attending their labors, that in one year more than two thousand were added to the church in New England by baptism." Is it any wonder that the Missionary split came as a result of such human energy? But read again:

"When we take into consideration the situation of Roger Williams, with his little band, banished for his testimony for the Lord Jesus, as the beginning of the Baptists in America, and mark the progress of their increase to the present time, and add to the account the great number, who in the interim have been translated to the church triumphant, and consider the prospects now open in Hindoostan, and Burmah, and the isles of the sea, we are ready to ask, Where is the christian whose heart does not expand with gratitude to God?"

In the same minute from which I have made these quotations, there is listed twenty-five churches with a membership of 1,368, and 363 additions that year. Those who know the history of this association know the sad effect of this strained effort for members. They did not stand fast in their liberty, but took in those who dispoiled them of liberty. Another dangerous effect of this self-reliance is, a

tendency to resort to human reason and human authority. The words of eminent scholars and preachers are quoted by some more than the words of inspiration. I sometimes hear brethren refer to certain men as "profound thinkers and scholars," and urge for that reason we should accept their statements as true. Long articles are written to establish some peculiar idea of the author, with many quotations from uninspired men, and but few, if any, quotations from the Bible. Some have gone so far as to analyze the attributes of God, telling us with wonderful philosophical skill, what would be right, and what would be wrong for him to do.

Now unto him who hath saved us, doth now save us, and will save us, be all the glory now and in eternity.

Your brother in Christ,

W. N. THARP.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Nov. 19, 1899.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—VERY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—The shadow of night is upon our part of the earth, and also a dark mantle of sorrow has fallen upon my spirit to-night, and my heart is troubled, without my scarcely knowing why; for I still realize "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble: and he knoweth them that trust in him," and truly my soul does trust in him. "He is my soul's sweet morning star, and he my rising sun." And my sad heart would make this humble appeal to him:

"Do not I love thee, O my Lord?
Behold my heart and see,
And turn each cursed idol out,
That dares to rival thee."

I cannot believe that it is always for some known or willful neglect or disobedience that we are sorrowful and afflicted in spirit, or that felt darkness of soul is the Father's rod of chastisement, necessarily; for many other things may cause this, as so often spoken of in the experience of "holy men of old," as also in the perfectly obedient life of the holy Son of man, while in the days of his flesh. His sufferings in the flesh touch my own sorrowful heart now with a deep and tender sympathy, and with solace, as balm to my burdened spirit, while the thought arises, O! have I fellowship with Christ in his sufferings? and am I worthy to suffer for his sake? If so, then my sufferings and sorrows are sanctified of God, and I am blessed in them. This brings touchingly before me the expressive words of Jesus: "Blessed are they that mourn." To-night my heart mourns, not on account of any fleshly trouble, or natural sorrow, but because of so much imperfection and infirmity in myself, and all around me, so that my very soul cries out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" In this sorrowful state that I am in now, the deep and true meaning of the excellent editorial of brother B. L. Beebe in the last issue of the SIGNS comes with greater power and comfort to my mind than when I read it, though I felt its solemn truth then. But there are times in our experience of salvation, of salvation from all that we need to be saved from, when the dear Lord is pleased to show us our utmost weakness and greatest need, and then are we truly humbled and brought into the very realization of the words of Christ: "For without me, ye can do nothing." When Jonah confessed that "Salvation is of the Lord," his state and environment made him both know and feel this truth, even before the Lord saved him. And so in our realization of salvation in all its manifestations; we are first brought into the helplessness and utter need that Jonah felt, and then we have

the certain knowledge that personal experience only can bring, that the Lord alone can raise us up out of the pit, the deep water, the darkness, sorrow and trial, and save us. I feel this truth now, because it is brought home to my heart; and I have no power to save myself, to bid the darkness flee, to say to my soul, "Rejoice in the Lord." O that I could be glad and rejoice, as in other times, when the Lord lifted upon me the light of his countenance.

Jesus knew perfectly the sinfulness of the flesh, the weakness of man, for he was in the flesh, and to his three chief apostles he said, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." And of himself as a man he said, "I can of mine own self do nothing." Then, O how much more true this is of weak and sinful me! It is not as a dry doctrine, a mere theory, that I confess this, for I am down in the depths, and sadly, painfully do I feel its deep reality. Yea, God has caused me to feel it many times before to-night, very many; but I am so dull and weak that I forget, and seem to be walking safely and pleasantly on, above the shadows, as if my mountain stood firm and strong, when, lo it is night, and I am in trouble.

Dear brother Chick, I will now try to complete my present message to you, twenty-four hours having elapsed since I wrote last night. I hope that it was not "love's labor lost," but may meet a response in your heart, "As face answereth to face in water," and be to you a little comfort. It presents my experience by far the larger part of the time, for my spiritual walk is largely in "the valley of the shadow of death," and it is a low valley, as you yourself know; so low and so dense the shadow that from very necessity the pilgrim who sojourns in it walks by faith, not by sight. At times there are indeed rifts in the shadowy clouds, because to the trembling, weak and fearing wayfaring ones the Sun of righteousness arises with healing in his wings of light and love, and then there is peace and gladness in the soul, and thus revived and inspired we each say, "I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." The staff of the good Shepherd is to lean upon, while the rod or crook is to guide the sheep through the valley and the wilderness, that theyl ose not the safe and good way, up to the green pastures on the mountain sides, where they lie down and find rest. The Lord, the Shepherd, leads the sheep of his pasture in all this way in which the redeemed walk, and he will neither leave nor forsake them. How rich the divine mercy that we shall not always walk in the deep valley of the dismal shadow of death, but shall safely walk through it, and leave the valley, the shadow, the gloom and the sorrow, for the life and light immortal, where there is no need of any earthly light, for the glory of God shining in the face of the Lamb, who is the life and the light, giveth light to all the blest inhabitants of the holy Mount Sion. So, my brother, as certainly as we walk in the valley of the shadow of death, we shall also walk through it, and its farthest border terminates upon the "heavenly country," where there is not the fear of even the shadow of death. But how precious the divine assurance that it is only the shadow of death that pilgrims to the "better country" now walk in, and that death itself is behind them, and they have been "brought up out of this horrible pit," "quickened and raised up together with Christ; but death, the conquered monster, casts its grim shadow across this low valley where pilgrims now walk.

Plainly, my brother, we now walk in the flesh, which is as a dark vail, so dark that its chilling gloom hangs over the spirit of the sojourning child of our Father in heaven as the very shadow of death. Yet this is the way the patriarchs and prophets walked; yea, my brother, all the redeemed unto God and the Lamb, who have gone on before us, have walked down in this lowly vale, and this heavy shadow has hung over them, and it has fallen upon them "as the horror of a great darkness," causing them to mourn in sorrow and weakness, and to go tremblingly and softly on. "The children are partakers of flesh and blood;" therefore the days of the life of their pilgrimage are few and full of trouble, and to them it is given to "sow in tears," before they shall reap in joy. This is the way our God has foreordained; therefore it is through much tribulation that we must enter the heavenly and holy kingdom of God our Father. The experience of the apostle Paul, as told by himself in Romans vii., is likewise the experience of every one "saved by the Lord," an experience of utmost inability or weakness, and of sorrow and wretchedness, so that all thanksgiving to God is "through Jesus Christ our Lord." Paul would have had it otherwise, and so would we, but the Lord said to him, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." This, and only this, prepared Paul to attribute all the power and glory of his eminent service in the work of the gospel ministry to the Lord Jesus, and his sufficient grace. It is an humbling but needful lesson of experience that we be taught to rather glory in our infirmities and confess our weakness, to the end that the power of Christ may rest upon us also, than to trust in man, or depend upon ourselves in the spiritual service of our God. O, so sorrowfully do I realize the force of this in myself; therefore all that I have thus written is out of a heartfelt and sad realization that it is so, but not in the way of controversy at all. For I have the same tendencies of the fleshly mind that other brethren have, and this is ever a legal tendency, because all that pertains to ourselves as born of the flesh is legal, and ever leads us to trust in and depend upon ourselves. I find this principle in myself continually, in all my devotions, and services in the gospel ministry; and I humbly confess to you, my brother, that it has been and yet is only through a very sorrowful and suffering experience, which deeply abases me, that I am afraid to trust in myself, or rely upon any ability that I already have to obey and worship and serve God; for try as I may, I utterly fail, disappoint myself, and feel that I have deep cause for self shame at my own presuming ignorance and weakness, in supposing that I was something, and could accomplish something good and worthy, when I was nothing. Therefore I cannot believe that any moment of salvation, or any spiritual blessing, is in our own hands, or depends upon ourselves, for we ourselves are certainly as utterly without the ability to do the good that we would as Paul was, and are absolutely dependent upon the power of God to keep us unto salvation; and he does this through the faith which is his gift. So, then, we are continually dependent upon God and his grace in every act of true obedience and acceptable service to him. God has taught me this in my sorrowful and heartfelt experience, and is teaching it to me more and more, and it is my solemn

understanding of what his prophets and apostles have recorded in his holy oracles, if he has taught me any divine truth at all, and I do verily believe he has. God has taught me to realize and feel the depth of my undeservings, and that in my entire being of spirit and soul and body, I am infinitely indebted to his rich mercy and abounding grace for salvation and blessing in all their fullness and amplification, both now and forever. So, my precious brother in Christ our only Savior, should all our people believe and teach otherwise, and affirm that our salvation in time is conditional, and that our gospel or spiritual blessings depend upon ourselves, and are received as conditional rewards because of or for our obedience to God, it would not be possible for me to believe it, because the Scriptures and my own suffering experience, from November, 1846, till now, teach me that it is not true; and because it contradicts the new covenant of grace, which is unconditional, and depends entirely upon the Lord to perform and fulfill it. The perfectly obedient and holy Son of man himself said, "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." "I am in the Father, and the Father in me: the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." In harmony with this, his servant Paul says, "For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified; but he that judgeth me is the Lord." "And such trust have we through Christ to Godward: not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." These are creature-humbling truths, but they exalt God, and glorify his Son and Spirit. Deeply do I feel in my spirit the divine force of the words of Jesus: "I can of mine own self do nothing;" and thus taught, I confess my entire and unceasing dependence upon the Father Almighty for wisdom and strength to both suffer and do his will.

I remain as ever, your poor brother,

D. BARTLEY.

GENESIS I. 1.

"IN the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

In order to speak of or understand any portion of Scripture, we must first have a knowledge of it revealed in our hearts. In this way we may know what is meant by the words, "In the beginning was the Word." This Word is from everlasting to everlasting, and must be manifestly with us or we can do nothing. By it we understand something of the world, of our experience and the Alpha and Omega. If we know anything of him, our desire is to be like him, and in all our attempts to speak or hear, we want to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

In reading this first chapter of the Bible, it is natural for our minds to go back to the time when the worlds were framed by the word of God. But in the Spirit we are in the midst of an eternal now. Then there is no time, and the Bible is not a mere record of people and events, but a wonderful book of revelation to the weary pilgrim, as he plods through the wilderness in his journey to the promised land. Christ only has to water the dust of the ground and apply it to our blind eyes, for us to see the new heaven and new earth that he made.

When he sends the gospel rain in poor, dry hearts that seem so dead, hope springs up, and all things are dressed in living green, and we stand beside "the rivers of delight."

It is interesting for the natural man to contemplate the literal heavens and the earth which God created, but only the child of God, with whom is the word, can contemplate that new heaven and earth. Children of God alone see the literal heavens and earth as a beautiful figure of the spiritual kingdom. They read of the beginning as others, but by the Spirit they are brought to a knowledge of another beginning, and by the "light of the world," which is in this beginning, also they can read in the account of the creation, a beautiful record of their own experience.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep." It seems to me that the earth is ever without form, until God forms it, and it is by his light we see it as already formed. Adam was of the earth earthy, and I know I am; and darkness is often upon the face of the deep, so that I cannot know all the deep depravity and sinful things in my nature, for, as I trust, God's Spirit moves upon the face of the waters, and says, "Let there be light." By that word you know the light is good, but O the weakness and sin and creeping things it reveals every time it is given. But would the child of God ever try to walk worthy of his calling without this? The fact that you hate sin, and do not love to return to wallow in the mire, is proof that you have a life that does not like such filth, and are a child of God washed in the blood of Jesus, and that for you God has created a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. It was done in the beginning, when you felt that the earth was without form and void. Then, even then, was the word, and that word was God, and his Spirit moved upon the face of the waters, ruling and controlling all things, that you, though a worm of the dust, might be brought to a knowledge of your salvation. Mind you, the heavens and the earth were already created in the beginning. Each recurring morning was the light, and it manifested the work that God had done, even as in your experience, after a dark night of trouble, you see the work, and that God has labored in love, and by his light you see light, and pronounce all his work good, and very good. When in the Spirit it is always a new heaven and a new earth, just made, fresh from the land of your creation, and as perfect as the world was when he rested from all his labors and blessed the Sabbath day. So when after your last dark night of labor, you were made to see the new heaven and earth, you entered into the rest of God's "holy Sabbath," even unto the rest that remains for the people of God.

Now then, dear reader, if these things are sweet to you it proves that you, too, are God's work, created in Christ Jesus, chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Having realized this, you hear the commandments of God in your heart and know your duty; therefore we would exhort you in the name of Jesus, and for the love you have for his people, to tell them your trials and your doubts, and coming in manifestly among your brethren, and help them by your presence, and be helped by them. May we all be enabled to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.

LAWRENCEBURG, Ky.

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PHILIPPIANS II. 12, 13.

"WHEREFORE, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

Sometimes it has seemed to us that this one portion of Scripture sums up in itself the whole gospel of grace, and salvation by grace, with the resulting and accompanying fruits. In this Scripture the apostle states for the comfort and admonition of his brethren, just what in other places he says of himself. Here he says that all their obedience, either of heart, will or life, is of the Lord, while elsewhere, when speaking of the abundance of his labors in the gospel, he is quick to add, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." So that both as regards his own personal labor, and also the labors of his brethren in the Lord, he can see nothing but grace to praise for it all. In Ephesians i., he says the same thing in substance: "That we should be to the praise of his glory," and in the second chapter he adds that we are the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Paul in these Scriptures speaks of our present salvation as well as of the future world of glory, as being totally of grace. Paul again, and again, admonishes his brethren, and sometimes praises their obedience to the faith, but always in subjection to the praise of grace, and the God of grace. In all his writings he makes grace to be prominent, and will not allow creature works, even those which in themselves seem to be praiseworthy, to have anything to do with securing the favor of God. So, as quoted above, if he mentions his own obedience, or the obedience of others, he at once ascribes the works to the working of God in them. Paul was afraid of that tendency in human nature to self praise, and therefore he is always warning against it. He is never fearful lest grace should be exalted too much. Paul knew his own heart, and by it knew the hearts of others, and he knew how prone man is to self-exaltation, and so he was all the time putting forth the grace of God and abasing man. It is good for us to follow his example. Arminians have always professed to be the advocates of all good works, and have continually contended that to ascribe all our salvation to grace, was to deny good works, and take away all incentive to them. They have never understood the power of grace in the heart to produce good works in the outward life. It has seemed that all that they have ever known of salvation is that it means to escape punishment, and to gain happiness in the next world, and have never seen that the chief part of salvation is not the escape of the one and the gain of the other, but to come to hate sin because of its sinfulness, and to love holiness because of its beauty. He who by grace has come to really love the one, and to hate the other, has a far stronger safeguard against sin than any fear of punishment or hope of gain can ever be-

come. All this applies to our present life, as well as to that which is to come. Heaven and future glory is indeed held out before the believer, and they do animate him amidst the discouragements and toils of this life, but they are never held out as motives to obedience, but rather love to righteousness in the heart, is the constant motive to all obedience. The man who obeys for the sake of gaining heaven, or of escaping hell, is not really obedient, seeing that he lacks the first element of all true obedience, love. While on the other hand, he who loves God has already obeyed, and will continue to obey, because this love once shed abroad in the heart will always abide there. And this love felt in the heart is heaven begun. The same is true of whatever joy and comfort in the Spirit we have in our daily pilgrimage. There is peace and rest in the pathway of obedience, but these are not to be the motive, but love in the heart is here also the motive. And he who obeys here, because of the hope of present reward, and the fear of present chastisement, is not really obeying God, since love here is lacking as the motive. Love is the fountain whence all true obedience flows. When love reigns in the heart, the believer goes on his way of pilgrimage, and follows Christ for the joy of the service, and not for the hope of some comfort in the future as the price of what he does. It is right that the child should desire the smiles of the father, but it is not with a set purpose to call out those smiles that he serves, but out of love, and if love has reigned in the service he already has his reward. How delightful becomes such service. How different this service is from all Arminian service. It is the believer's high privilege to enter into this service, because grace brings him there. O, what a mercy it is to find in the heart such a spirit of free, loving service, which asks nothing but to serve, and finds no greater joy than the joy of service.

Now Paul in the text tells all this and much more. Let us turn to it and briefly strive to look into its precious treasures. Paul tells in the first chapter, and in the portion of the second preceding our text, about the work of the Lord, and the power and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. And then with the word "wherefore," he begins the exhortation of the text. The word "wherefore," of course shows us that it is out of the preceding considerations that he urges the admonition of the text upon them. It is thus seen that obedience and all admonition to it follows grace. Because grace has wrought in men, they are exhorted to work also. And it is just because grace has wrought in them, that they can also work. Their works, therefore, are to the praise of grace alone. Can a child of God, when led by the Spirit, ever feel like praising himself? Paul did indeed commend his brethren at times, and God commends men who are faithful and steadfast in believing, but still this commendation is such as the branch would receive for the cluster of rich grapes which it might bear. In such a case men would praise the vine rather than the branch. The branch would share the praise only as it stood in the vine, as a part of it. If any believer be commended of his brethren, does he not feel at once to praise God for being enabled so to live as to hold the favor and confidence of his brethren? Will he not feel, when any have been drawn to him in love, to say, "Who am I that so great a favor should be conferred upon me? Who am I that I should be selected to bear even a cup of cold water to one of the disciples of the Master?"

We do not believe that a child of God who has been obedient, really and humbly obedient, can ever feel to exalt himself over the most disobedient of all the family of God. How unlovely was the spirit of the elder brother in the parable. How unlovely is the spirit that can thank God that he is not as other men are. By the grace of God I am what I am. "I cannot praise myself, but grace, if I have lived at all obediently," will be the feeling of all who love God in deed and in truth. These considerations may serve to faintly show the force of the word "wherefore," which begins the text.

How tender is the address of the apostle, "My beloved." Admonitions, to be of any avail, must always be tender. Even reproof is sweet from one that loves us, and that we love. If we are sure that one loves us, that person can say or do almost anything to us, and we will not be offended. The mother pours bitter draughts into the mouth of her child at times, but the child is not angry, and cannot be, for he is assured that she loves him and seeks his good. Paul did love his brethren; he loved them enough to be faithful to them; he loved them enough to utter warnings, and reproofs, and admonitions, in his letters to them. There was no bitterness in the admonitions of the apostle, for love had extracted all that, and his brethren, though sometimes sorry at his letters, yet could not be hurt, but after a little must love him more, because he was so earnest in seeking their good.

Now in the next sentence he commends their past life. He says they have always obeyed while he was with them. How glad their hearts must have been to read this from the beloved apostle. His memories of them were pleasant, and his fellowship for them abounded. No doubt however they had depended much upon his advice and counsel, while he was with them, and no doubt also they had desired to please him whom they loved so well, that they might be approved of him. This we have a right to say, because it would be but natural that it should be so. But now he says that his admonition is that much more in his absence, they should continue to do the same. They had been obedient to the commandments of the Lord as they had received them, and had continued to be obedient even after he had departed from them. But he would exhort them to much more work out this salvation which was in their hearts. The exhortation was needful. Exhortation is always needful. Every child of God when in the Spirit feels the need of it. Every child of God desires to be mindful of his faults, and therefore he desires to be reminded of them. Every child of God desires to walk obediently, and therefore he desires to be reminded of his obligations. Every child of God knows that he is often forgetful of the commandments of the heavenly Father, and yet he does not desire to be so, and therefore he is glad when he is reminded of them. Here are the blessings of exhortation. It is intended to stir up the pure minds by way of remembrance, and it is meet that it should be done at all times. Exhortation is one of the things in which our heavenly Father has appointed that we should be helpful one to another. It is a good gift from God. Like all other good gifts, it is useful to us only when we are in the Spirit; and it is the pure mind always which is stirred up by it. We are prone to forget, because of the weakness and unprofitableness of the flesh. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. It seems to us that the special force of these words of

the apostle is, that not only when the faithful servant of God, whoever he may be, is among us, should we be diligent and earnest in this work of the Lord, but also there should be renewed earnestness and zeal when any church is left alone for a time. Some people will be very religious when the minister is about, but no one would ever suspect it of them when he is absent. God's people are not to be so.

Work out. This means more than simply to make a show of religion; it means more than a profession; it means that the life of Christ is to be made manifest in our mortal flesh. It can be made manifest in no other way. The living faith which the Lord works within, has no way of being made manifest, except as the fruits of that faith appear in word and deed. It means a self-denying and cross-bearing life. Jesus is the life which is to be lived out, and he is the example of a godly life, for he did always those things which were pleasing to his Father. It is only as the life of Jesus lives in us, that we can follow him; but having this divine life within, we are exhorted to live after it. This all true believers desire to do; this all true believers strive after. Because of this desire they fight in this warfare, seeking for the things which they desire. Paul said, This one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth unto the things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. This one thing I do. This, he would say, is the sole object of his life. In spirit he was joined to David when he said, Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. This seems to us in brief to be the burden of the exhortation; this should be the burden of all exhortation. Faithful gospel ministers will thus exhort and warn and rebuke. It is a needful part of their ministry, and all who desire to live the life of faith in the flesh will love and rejoice in all such exhortations.

There is also a salvation which is connected with this obedient walk. Peter tells us that baptism, which he says is a figure, saves us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God. So the people of God, walking after the Spirit, live, and walking after the flesh, they die. Yet if they do walk after the Spirit and live, they know that they so walked because of grace, and grace alone. By taking heed to himself and the doctrine, Timothy should both save himself and them that heard him. Thus he should be saved from many grievous and hurtful errors, both in faith and practice, and by faithful testimony he should also save his brethren from like errors, and from all their evil consequences. All this would be working out that salvation which God had wrought in them. This is working out their own salvation. And with it there is trial, and labor, and suffering, as the word "work" in the text signifies. Believers do not travel an easy road. They could not travel it at all were it not that they have a faithful Friend, whose grace is sufficient for them. It is not an easy thing to face the opposition of friends, or the frowns of enemies of God and truth. Perhaps it is a greater trial to oppose the wishes of those who love us naturally, than to stand up in testimony of the truth before open enemies. It is not an easy thing to hate father, and mother, and all else, with our own life also, and yet whosoever follows Jesus must do this. Sometimes there must be an actual forsaking of all these, and with

the tender conscience there will be a struggle. All this and much more the word work seems to us to imply. This salvation which God has wrought within us is thus to be wrought out in word and deed, and in the whole spirit and tenor of our life. This is the exhortation of the apostle. But how complete must all believers feel their failure to be. How true it is that we come short in all things. Each one with the apostle must ever say, "I count not myself to have apprehended, but I follow after, that I may apprehend that for which I also am apprehended of Christ Jesus." Paul, long years after he was an apostle, had not attained to what he desired. What presumption for any one to claim that they have thus attained to the perfect day; and wherein Paul had attained he could not praise himself, but grace. And he looked not to himself, but to grace, for all that he hoped to attain to. And all this is to be worked out with fear and trembling. Those engaged in this warfare can but fear and tremble. To attain to this fear and trembling is not within the will or effort of man. But God in mercy and grace gives such views of self and indwelling sin, and of the power of the world and Satan to tempt and hinder in the race, that the soul can but fear and tremble. We are so weak, and our foes are so many. This fear, thus begotten, puts us upon seeking the help and salvation of the Lord through grace daily; and if we stand we must continually say, "By the grace of God I am what I am." The emotions are not in the control of the human will in any sense whatever, so far as their existence in us is concerned. All exhortation does not imply human ability or human strength, but only such strength as God gives. God must work all fear, and all trembling, and all obedience in the heart, and in the next words we are told that he does so: "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Let it be remarked that Paul does not say that God hath worked in them, nor that he will work in them, but "worketh in you." It is a continual work. Oil pours unceasingly, and must pour unceasingly, out of the olive trees through the golden pipes, if the lamp is to continue to burn. Thank God it is true that the oil never ceases flowing. If then, according to Paul, there be any will at any moment to do God's will within us, God does that moment work that will. If there be at any moment a doing of God's will in all our outward life, then that moment God is working through us to do. How careful Paul is to ascribe all obedience to God. When he once said, "I labored more abundantly than they all," he was quick to add, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." "I labor," he would say, "yet not I, but grace." If any one shall say that this is to make the believer passive in obedience, or to say that he is a mere machine, their controversy is not with us, but with Paul and the inspired word. Of one thing we feel sure, that they who lovingly believe this doctrine cannot become careless in living. Grace will not let them be. Carnal men contend that to thus magnify grace, is to put a premium upon carelessness of conduct. But we, brethren, know that it is not so. We know that the clear apprehension of all that we owe to grace only causes greater anxiety to glorify this grace, and the God who has given it.

We leave these thoughts with our readers. We believe that they are in harmony with the word of God, and if so, then they will be found in harmony with all true christian experience. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ROMANS XI. 29.

"For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

This text, as we understand it, relates to the immutable counsel of the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, and is designed to teach us that as he is too wise to err, he never has occasion to repent, or regret any act or decision of his power and wisdom. "God is not a man that he should lie; neither the son of man that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"—Num. xxiii. 19. This principle of the divine government is clearly set forth in the dealings of God with the Jews and Gentiles, as treated upon in the chapter in which our text is found. The chapter begins with the inquiry, "Hath God cast away his people?" Was the calling of Abraham, and all his seed in him, and the gifts bestowed on him, and on them in him, subject to change of purpose on the part of God? "God forbid," says the apostle. "God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew." He has not repented that he called Abraham, and made him the father of many nations, nor that he bestowed on him and his seed special gifts. For in the promise made to Abraham, and his seed in him, as God could swear by no greater he sware by himself, saying, "Surely, blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee." In this calling, and in these gifts or blessings, repentance is hidden from his eyes. His words and oath forbid that he should fail to accomplish the things which have gone out of his mouth. So, also, in regard to the calling of the Gentiles and the gifts in store for them, nothing can prevent their fulfillment. Nor do the callings and gifts bestowed on the Gentiles, invalidate the promises made to Abraham and his seed; for they were embraced in that promise which made Abraham the Father of many nations. "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

It is thus in regard to all the gifts and callings of God. In giving the church to Christ, the covenant stands fast, according to the sure mercies of David, in which God has said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations." "Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people. I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him: with whom my hand shall be established; mine arm also shall strengthen him. The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him. And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him. But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him; and in my name shall his horn be exalted. I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers. He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation. Also I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their trans-

gression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established forever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah."—Psalm lxxxix. 3, 19–37. There is no repentance possible in regard to these provisions. God has confirmed them by his oath. He pledged his holiness, and by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, gave strong consolation to the heirs of salvation. He will not repent, or recall the gift he has made to his Son, our spiritual or antitypical David, therefore, All that the Father giveth him, shall come to him, and he that cometh unto him, he will in no wise cast out. (John vi. 37.) "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." —John xvii. 2. Neither will God repent or countermand the calling of the chosen generation in Christ, for he hath saved them and called them with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. (2 Tim. i. 9.)

Nor will our God rescind the unspeakable gift of his dear Son, whom he hath given to be the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, and the fullness of him. (Eph. i. 22, 23.) Nor any of the gifts which Christ received for them when he ascended up on high. (Psalm lxviii. 18.) Or that he gave them. (Eph. iv. 8, 11.) Thus we see that the gifts and callings of God are without repentance, without liability of failure.

Some have supposed that the text was designed to express the idea that the gifts and callings of God precede the repentance of his children, and are irrespective of it. It is undoubtedly true, that these gifts and callings of God, being given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began, according to 2 Tim. i. 9, were antecedent to our personal reception of the gift of repentance. But that repentance which is unto salvation, and which needeth not to be repented of, is among the gifts of God which are, on the part of God, never repented of, never recalled, never ineffectual. But the particular bearing of our text, in harmony with the argument of the apostle in the chapter and connection, is evidently to show the immutability of God, and consequent security of his people.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 15, 1857.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$341 55
Y. J. Wyman, Mich., $1.00; A friend, Ind., $1.00.—Total	2 00
Total to date	$343 55

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, at the residence of Miss Maggie Swope, at Cedar Hill, Dec. 26th, 1899, O. J. Waddle, of Fayette Co., Ohio, and Miss Rebecca Ann Peters, of Fairfield Co., Ohio.

By the same, at his residence, at Columbus, Dec. 31st, 1899, Cunningham Ashenhurst and Miss Clara Elnor Clickinger, of Columbus, Ohio.

By the same, at the residence of the bride's uncle, Mr. Benjamin Dunnick, of Milo, Jan. 1st, 1900, Oced Steel, of Hocking Co., Ohio, and Miss Minnie Florence Solt, of Hilliard, Ohio.

By Elder H. C. Ker, Jan. 10th, 1900, at the residence of the bride's parents, at Otisville, N. Y., Judson K. Wiggins and Miss Flora A. Harding, both of Orange Co., N. Y.

By Elder D. M. Vail, Dec. 14th, 1899, at the residence of the bride's parents, Elmer Tripp and Miss M. Augusta Johnson, both of Justus, Pa.

By the same, Dec. 21st, 1899, at the residence of the bride's parents, William E. Clark and Miss Elizabeth Fike, both of Justus, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEPARTED this life, at his residence on Schoharie Hill, Feb. 11th, 1898, after a protracted illness, **Alexander Bellinger,** in the 71st year of his age. He was born in the town of Middleburg, April 28th, 1827, and after the event of his marriage with Dollie Livingston, which occurred Nov. 26th, 1857, moved on Schoharie Hill, where he lived till the date of his death. Mr. Bellinger was not a member of any church, but was a firm advocate of the doctrine and faith as taught by the order of the Old School Baptist church, and seemed to enjoy the meetings of the church, both at home and abroad. His presence and counsel will be greatly missed among us, as his heart and hand were always open to the wants of the church, and his home in readiness to contribute to the comfort of any visitors who might be in attendance from abroad, at any meetings of the church. Why he never united with the church for which he seemed to have such a tender regard, and whose company he so much enjoyed, can only be answered by his own words, when asked if he did not feel like asking for a place and a home with the church, his answer would be that, "He did not feel worthy of a place among them." He was a patient sufferer during his protracted sickness. It was the privilege of the writer to visit him during the latter stage of his sickness. Death to him was welcome. He wished me to sing the hymn, "O land of rest, for thee I sigh," &c., and after singing till we came to the verse reading, "Weary of wandering round and round," I asked him if those words were his desire, he said, "Yes, yes." He was a lover of home, and in his death his family lose a kind husband and father, and his neighbors one of their best friends.

His funeral was largely attended by a circle of relatives and friends. Elder John Clark, of Halcottsville, N. Y., officiated, after which all that was mortal of his remains were laid at rest in the family cemetery. While we shall see his face no more on earth, we mourn not as those who have no hope, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

ALSO,

Dolly Livingston Bellinger, the subject of this notice, was born in the town of Schoharie, N. Y., Nov. 28th, 1835, and died April 8th, 1898. She was a daughter of the late John J. Livingston, a prominent member of the Old School Baptist church of Schoharie. She was married to Alexander Bellinger, Nov. 26th, 1857, and was the mother of five children, two sons and three daughters, who survive her. She united with the Schoharie church, August 23d, 1874, and was baptized by Elder Balas Bundy, and maintained to the close of her mortal life a firm and unwavering adherence to the doctrine once delivered to the saints, that salvation is of the Lord from the beginning to the end. As she ever enjoyed the visits made to churches of the same faith and order, so it always seemed a great pleasure to her to entertain all visitors of the same precious faith. Very seldom was her place vacant at the meetings of the church when it was possible for her to be there. Just eight weeks to a day previous to her funeral she followed the remains of her husband to the grave, at whose bedside she had been a devoted and constant watcher for a year and a half. It seemed that more than human strength was given her to minister to the sufferings of her beloved husband, and when they were at an end, and he lain at rest in the narrow tomb, her life's work and mission on earth was ended; death had marked her for its own, and after a few days suffering, which she bore without a murmur, her Master called her home, and her remains were placed "at rest" by the side of her late husband in the family cemetery, to await the final resurrection. A large circle of relatives and friends met at her late residence to pay their last tribute of respect to one they loved and respected.

Her pastor, Elder John Clark, of Halcottsville, N. Y., officiated at her funeral, and spoke comforting words to the family and friends. While we miss her greatly in our assembling together in church and social capacity, we would wish to bow in submission to the will of God in this peculiar and sad dispensation of Providence, and "Be still and know that he is God."

That this double affliction may be sanctified of God to the good of her family and friends, is the desire of your unworthy servant,

P. S. K.

DIED—**Mr. Barton Greenland,** of Trough Creek Valley, Huntingdon Co., Pa., Sept. 29th, 1899, of heart disease. He was baptized by Elder Joseph Correll, May 28th, 1882, and was deacon of the church at the time of his death. The papers of Altoona and Huntingdon, in several notices which are before me, speak in the highest terms of his character as a citizen, as a man of business and as a christian. His wife, who is a member of the same church, and seven children, survive him. One of the daughters, Miss Laura, is also a member. I visited once at their pleasant home, and had an appointment at their church, and I have met him and his wife and sister Laura at other churches in the Juniata Association, and enjoyed his and their society and conversation much. I regarded him as very clear and sound, though his church has not been of late years in correspondence with us. He and other members have been constant subscribers to the SIGNS.

Sister Laura writes me: "We have felt that we would like to have a notice of his death in the SIGNS, if it will not be intruding. It has been our favorite church paper, and much of the time our only one. It just seems to me often it surely cannot be that we will

never see his dear face in this life again. It is so hard to do without him. We miss him everywhere, but I think the hardest was to go to the church without him, and not to see him in his accustomed place. I had almost never gone without him."

He had had heart disease for several years, but for some weeks before his death the attacks were more frequent and severe. The last attack ended his mortal career suddenly. Sister Laura says, "He struggled a little while, and then passed quietly away. He had such a pleasant expression in death, surely it had lost its sting, and the grave won no victory. He did not fear death; he said it was only the river we dread to cross."

"Cousin Amos Greenland, who was our Clerk, died last June. We are left lonely indeed in our church, as well as in our home. But I do not wish to murmur, or utter one complaining word. The Lord knows all about it, and 'we know that all things work together for good to them who love God.' Whether we are of that number the Lord knows. He is so good to us, and so merciful. We have so many blessings, and it is only of his mercy that I, at least, have any. I do not deserve any. I have felt that we have very much to be thankful for in our sorrow. The Lord has been very good to us; he has sustained and comforted. We have felt that underneath are the everlasting arms, and though he slay us, yet will we trust in him. We have nowhere else to go, and there is no place else we want to go."

May the Lord continue his consolations to this dear family. Sister Laura was with the brethren at Welsh Tract, Philadelphia and Southampton last spring, and the many friends who enjoyed her visit among us will feel a loving sympathy with her and her mother's family in their bereavement.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 7, 1900.

Sarah Ann Strawn was born near Summerset in Perry Co., Ohio, June 20th, 1826, and died Sept. 9th, 1899, aged 73 years, 2 months and 19 days. She was united in marriage to Smith **Hartsel**, Nov. 6th, 1845. To this union were born three children, two sons and one daughter. Sister Hartsel was taken sick Nov. 29th, 1898, with heart failure and dropsy. Her suffering was intense, but she was patient, and prayed if it was the Lord's will, she might pass away and rest in the embrace of her blessed Savior, in whom she had a hope for more than thirty years past, but feeling her great unworthiness and littleness, did not unite with the church until five years ago, when she was baptized into the fellowship of the Scottscreek church, by her pastor, Elder G. N. Tusing, where she was a constant attendant, filling her seat always until sickness prevented. She never forgot her church meetings, but always looked to the next with delight. O, how we miss her in the church, also her neighbors mourn her absence. She was beloved by all whose fortune it was to know her. She was a loving and good mother, an affectionate and loving companion, but she has gone to that home she has longed and prayed for.

Her funeral was held in the Lutheran meeting-house in Ewing, on Monday, the 10th, where a very large concourse of people gathered to pay their last respects to her whom they loved. The funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder G. N. Tusing, who spoke words of comfort to the sorrowing ones, after which the remains were interred in the burying ground at Ewing, to rest until it shall come forth in the resurrection morn immortal in the image of her glorious Savior.

ALSO,

Mary Jane Harsh was born June 28th, 1843, and died April 24th, 1899, aged 55 years, 9 months and 26 days. She was the sixth child of a family of fourteen children born to David and Keziah Funk, who were faithful Primitive Baptists of Scottscreek church, both deceased. Hers was the third death in so large a family. She was united in marriage to Samuel W. Harsh, August 6th, 1861. To this union were born eight children, five daughters and three sons, all of whom survive her. The five daughters are all members of the Scottscreek church, also one son and his wife are members of the Laurel Primitive Baptist church. Our sister united with the Scottscreek church August 12th, 1866, of which she lived a worthy, consistent and devoted member until death called her hence, being 33 years. She was a kind, devoted and indulgent companion, an affectionate and loving mother, ever mindful of the welfare of her family, and a faithful and true friend and neighbor. During her last brief sickness she suffered intensely, but bore it all without a murmur or complaint, leaning on him who said, My grace is sufficient for you, and as thy day, so shall thy strength be, hence and forever.

Her funeral was largely attended by her many kind neighbors, friends and relatives, at the Scottscreek Baptist church, Elder G. N. Tusing conducting the services, after which her remains were interred in the Scottscreek burying ground, to await the order of him who has said, "I am the Resurrection and the Life."

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1 1900. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ACCOUNTABILITY TO GOD.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We cannot too well understand the relation of our God to us, out of which arises our accountability and obligation to him, for the one is defined and measured by the other. The Standard Dictionary thus defines accountable: "Liable to be called to account, as for the fulfillment of a duty or the execution of a trust; answerable, as to a superior or employer; as we are accountable to God." Accountable to him because he is God, the Almighty. If he were less than this, our obligations and accountability would be likewise less; that is, if Jehovah were only as the exalted and mighty angel Gabriel, our accountability could be no greater to the one than the other. This must be evident to all. Accountability to parents is far greater than to brothers, or sisters, or children, because the relation and resulting authority of parents is greater; for we are descended from our parents. For this reason, God says, "Honor thy father and thy mother." Dishonor to parents is the greater wrong, because we are dependent upon them for our being. This fact gives to parental authority its binding and sacred force, which none can repudiate without becoming guilty. Yet such accountability is limited, because the authority of parents is limited. So is the authority of the magistrate, the governor, the king, and every finite ruler. The nature or principle of this is easy to be understood and applied by all. The measure and extent of accountability is as the relation and authority which another sustains to us. The equity and righteousness of this is self-evident, and none can justly dispute it. The Holy One has made it thus. In this way and by this rule must we determine the extent of our accountability to the Lord God, and from this there is none exempt in heaven or in all worlds; for this is an infinite and unbounded law of righteousness, unalterably established by the God of infinite truth and holiness. Our accountability, therefore, must be determined by what God is in himself, and by the relation he sustains to us. If these are partial or limited, so likewise is our accountability, for they sink or rise together. It is in this proportion or ratio that all professed worshiping creatures regard their obligations to him whom

they profess to worship, for as their view of God ascends and expands, higher and higher, and more and more unlimited, so will it be with their reverential and adoring sense of solemn and supreme obligation and accountability; but on the other hand, should their ideas of the Most High be limited, inferior or low, so that they themselves set bounds and measures by which he should either do or not do to be worthy of their love and worship, then will they also have low notions of their just accountability to him, and so small will be their reverence that they will not be afraid to reply against God. From this source there is a shocking amount of irreverence, ungodliness and blasphemy in the religious world. But when we look in the sacred oracles of God, and behold how patriarchs and prophets, saints and angels, who do his bidding, adoringly regarded him as the Lord God Almighty, and in deepest awe and worship bowed in his majestic presence, and ascribed to his wisdom and power and goodness their all, we are then profoundly impressed with his unutterable greatness and glory, and sink down in dependence and humility before him. We cannot fail to be solemnly impressed with the instructive lesson in the Bible, that the holy men of old who were brought nearer to God, and shown more of his infinite majesty and omnipotence, were the more profoundly and solemnly affected with an adoring spirit of absolute dependence upon him and supreme accountability to him. View his servant Moses, when the Most High came down to him on the holy Mount Sinai, and showed him his glory, so that he said, "I do exceedingly fear and tremble!" It was thus to Moses that God declared he would have mercy and compassion on whom he would, and whom he would he hardened; but the mere suggestion of, "Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" would have been shocking blasphemy to the sanctified Moses, the meek man of God, but to a sanctimonious religionist, far removed from the Holy One, and puffed up with his own importance, it would seem quite reasonable. But how would such fault-finding questions appear in the lips of Gabriel, "who stands in the presence of God"? It is horrifying. Who would think of connecting such disputing questions with the holy man Christ, because God in his sovereign right hid the things of his kingdom from the wise and prudent, and revealed them to babes? Such daring words may do for Satan, but Jesus meekly said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast" done this. "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." This is the adoring spirit of meek submission in all who are raised up out of self to holy communion with God. His holy Son reveals why this is in the words, "Lord of heaven and earth." His Almighty Father is this, is Jehovah, possessor of heaven and earth, and may righteously do what seemeth him good with his own, with all worlds and creatures, because for his own purpose, pleasure and glory he created them. Thus it shines out as a clear sunbeam in the sky, that those who are nearest to God and know him best, with deepest reverence and meekness praise, honor and adore him most, solemnly and lovingly knowing their absolute dependence upon him and accountability to him, while those who are farthest removed from him in their own blinding self-importance, and are wise and right in their own eyes, are ever wont to object to, find fault with and reply against God, as his holy Son and inspired servants and saints have declared him—the Almighty.

With awe let us now speak of the attributes and perfections of our God, that we may the better understand our righteous and absolute accountability to him, arising out of our entire dependence upon him, and his supreme claim upon us and authority over us, as being all in all.

The holy Scriptures declare that God is eternal, immutable, omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent; that he is infinite in love, goodness, holiness, truth and righteousness; that he is the Creator of all things "that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist;" that he is worthy to receive glory and honor and power, for he hast created all things, and for his pleasure they are and were created. We must admit then that in the omniscience of God all things were and are ever open and naked before him; that in his omnipresence he fills limitless eternity, and ever was and is everywhere present; that in his omnipotence he therefore governs, controls and orders all things according to his infinite wisdom and own eternal purpose. His truth so declares of him, and it could not possibly be otherwise with God, for to say it might, would be to limit him in his perfections, deny his wisdom and power, and divest him of his sovereign authority and universal control. The consequence of this would be universal destruction and ruin to all, because it would both undeify and dethrone God. All must readily see that even a finite being of wisdom and power would to that extent execute his purpose in all things subject to him, and would not allow disappointment or defeat. To do so would dishonor him, because it would show that he was lacking in either wisdom or power, or in both. A loving father of children is an example of this, for his love would move him to order and control all things to the best welfare of his dependent children, but he is too finite to do so. Now shall we attribute this weakness to "the mighty God, the everlasting Father?" Who that reveres him would admit the dishonoring thought? No truth is more fully declared in the Bible than that God is "the Almighty," the Creator of all things, their Upholder, and the all-wise and absolute or unlimited Sovereign. All worlds and beings and things are absolutely dependent upon him, both for their being and well being. To the heathen at Athens Paul said, "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though he needeth anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us; for in him we live, and move, and have our being." Words could not more strongly express the absolute omnipotence of the Almighty Creator, and the entire dependence upon him of all his creatures. He made them to dwell upon the face of all the earth, not anywhere that caprice or fancy might lead them to roam, but he determined the times before appointed by him, and fixed the limits and set the bounds of their habitation: therefore not one of them can do more or go beyond. Tried Job said of man to God, "Seeing

his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass." Who will rise up and say he can? Let us add to this the testimony of James: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." How wonderful is God! How immutable his sovereign purpose and power! How infinite his wisdom and goodness! How absolutely dependent all creatures are upon him, for "life, and breath, and all things!" Who would want all things less appointed, determined and controlled by him, seeing that he is the only all-wise and almighty Holy One? Thus are we shown the true source of the supreme and perpetual obligations and righteous accountability of all men to the holy and blessed God, in the fact that he is the infinite Author of their being, their absolute Sovereign, and their merciful Preserver. "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen." "Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises unto our King, sing praises. For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding. God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness. * * * For the shields of the earth belong unto God: he is greatly exalted." For all this God is to be praised in the highest, and to him all adoration, homage and worship are due. And they are due to the Most High because of our entire and unceasing dependence upon him, as well as because of all that he is in himself, and all that he is to us. For to God we owe ourselves, with all that we have and are, (except our sins) and all that we shall ever possess. It is all this only that establishes our everlasting and absolute accountability to the almighty and eternal God. If he could possibly be less than all this in himself and to us, so would our supreme accountability to him be less to the same extent; but this can never be, for God is the same forever, and the absolute dependence of all his works and creatures remains forever the same. We should rejoice that it is so, and give him glory, for in this is our only safety and welfare, and the security of all that is.

"Life, death and hell, and worlds unknown,
Hang on his firm decree;
He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be.

Chained to his throne a volume lies,
With all the fates of men,
With every angel's form and size,
Drawn by the eternal pen."

Those that fear God thus devoutly sing in honor to his glorious name.

But it has been held that God is a moral Governor, and governs men by moral law; that, therefore, their accountability to him consists in their moral nature as his rational creatures; that is, to man belongs the attribute of freedom of will to choose or refuse, obey or disobey the commandments of God, as a free moral agent under the laws of God. As said, this is held to be the source and ground of creature accountability to the only Creator and Sustainer of all things, and upon this is based the obligations of all men to God supreme. Now this, at best, is a very superficial and partial claim, for it is taking a mere result or effect for the primary cause, or misplacing the superstructure as the foundation. For while man is an intellectual, rational being, having a mind and conscience, some perception of right and wrong, and so is voluntary in his conduct, choosing or rejecting in all he does; yet we must look beyond the mere fact of this, to the

source and cause of it all, and ask, Who gave man his rational nature, and all its faculties and capabilities? Who ordained and established all the laws, whether physical, moral or spiritual? Who made all men subject to law, and justly accountable for its violations? The one answer to all is, "The only wise God." The weighty and searching questions of faithful Paul are in point here: "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" Man, then, as man, with all his endowments, whether they be natural or moral or spiritual, having received them from the Author of every good and perfect gift, is wholly dependent upon him for them, and ever accountable to him for their lawful and right use to the glory of God. Has he the will to choose that which is good, whether it be in nature or in grace, with the power to do good? God has given them to him, and he is not his own, for he owes himself to his Sovereign. Man is not therefore in any right and true sense, a free moral agent, neither in will nor power, for not only is he under the most binding and perpetual obligations to his beneficent and merciful Maker and Sovereign, to reverence and honor and obey him, but he himself and all his faculties of mind and soul are subject to controlling environments, or circumstances and influences, which so impinge upon him that his choice and act are but the effect of those shaping causes. This obtains not only with every individual, but as well with large bodies and nations of men, and in war as in peace, as proven by both sacred and profane history. It is a vain assumption and boast, therefore, to talk of free will and free moral agency, and a misleading dogma to assert that these are the source or ground of human accountability to God. That all his rational creatures are forever accountable to him his oracles fully declare, and none can truthfully deny; and accountable by the law of their being, and his righteous and absolute claim upon them, so that if they rebel they must suffer for it; but this supreme accountability does not arise out of man to God, but it descends from the throne of "the King eternal" down to man, and binds him to the throne. If man sins he shall die; yet it is held that this servant of sin is a free moral agent! and because he is free, he is accountable to God!! In what is this supposed freedom found? In the will of man, it is held; in the fact that he acts voluntarily, as his will may choose. But who endowed him with a mind and will? with life and its powers? and what causes his will to choose one thing rather than other things? Ah! this vaunted free will is itself shaped and controlled in all its volitions or actings, and is ever subservient—a servant. The fleshly man, with his mind and will, is a servant of sin, while the spiritual man is a servant of righteousness; therefore neither of them is free, yet both are absolutely accountable to God, for he made them so. "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." This is the truthful confession of every humble and honest child of God. Neither in the mind nor in the flesh is this man free, because he himself serves in both, and the servant is not free. Moreover, this one confesses, "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." This he says of his will, and so the will is not free, because it is hampered and fettered.

Indeed, hindering restraints are everywhere and upon all men, both the servants of sin and the servants of righteousness; and the omnipotent God in his infinite wisdom has placed them there, as he has set his decree upon the raging waves of the sea. He declares that the wrath of man shall praise him, and that the remainder of wrath he shalt restrain, or hold it back, as he does the waters of the great deep. And this applies universally to all men, and all times and places. For, let it be remembered, the omnipresent God is present in all places and times, so that no creature can ever flee from or escape his presence; and always there in his omnipotence, no less than in his omniscience; therefore there is no such thing as accident or chance with God, but in his infinite wisdom, and according to his eternal purpose and counsel, all worlds, creatures and things, men, saints and angels, are placed under his omnipotent and sovereign control. When he created the earth, and man upon it, he both saw and declared the end from the beginning; and so all things which should ever arise and take place were present and open before him, as perfectly as after they occur, and they were as well foredetermined as foreknown by him; for his omnipotence would have certainly prevented or restrained anything and everything that he in his omniscience did not purpose to let it be so. To deny this is equal to a denial of the perfections and immutable attributes of the eternal One. Moreover, our blessed Majesty has fully declared himself thus in the Bible. His servant David had such knowledge of him when he was moved to exclaim, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee: but the light shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. * * * I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well." Below he says, "When I awake, I am still with thee." And above he says, "Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me." Now, all this is true of the omnipresent and Holy One from everlasting to everlasting, for eternity is his, and he changes not. "He is in one mind, and none can turn him; and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." Jehovah is forever the same.

Of the supreme and unlimited dominion of the Most High Paul says, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." Paul here speaks of the ungodly, warring powers of pagan Rome, to whom his brethren in Christ and the Jews were subject, and paid tribute, and of these oppressive and cruel powers he says, "For he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." It was for this very purpose that God was thus bringing wrath upon the rebellious nation of Jews, according to his holy decree, as declared by his prophets and Son. Yet he afterwards

executed wrath also upon the wicked Roman powers. It is thus that the righteous purpose of the Almighty is fulfilled upon all the warring nations and ungodly rulers of earth, and none shall escape the righteous retribution that he will send upon them; for "Justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne: mercy and truth shall go before his face. * * * For the Lord is our defense; and the Holy One of Israel is our King." "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate. Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength. By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth." But to the truth of all this it is objected that, if the counsel, purpose, ordering wisdom, determining decree, predestination or foreordination of the supreme Ruler of the boundless universe extends to "all things whatsoever cometh to pass," as the London Confession of Faith affirms, so that all things are so certain with the omniscient One that they shall not fail to come to pass, and that "whatever is to be will be," then is the Holy Lord God Almighty "the author of sin," and "responsible for all the wickedness and meanness in the world." For it is said that if God is absolutely the Sovereign, and has subjected all things to his own power, as stated, the accountability of man is destroyed, and he is as irresponsible as the fixed stars. If this is a just inference, then neither the brethren of Joseph, nor Pharaoh, nor Shimei, who cursed David the king, nor the wicked men of the world, who are God's sword and hand, nor Judas the traitor, nor Herod, nor Pontius Pilate, nor the Gentiles, nor the people of Israel, who "were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ," were accountable or responsible for their shocking wickedness and crimes, for they did "whatsoever the Lord's hand and his counsel determined before to be done," but they did it none the less "with wicked hands," and were the guilty enemies of God and righteousness, seeking to defeat his purpose. The secondary sinful causes and motives which hurled them on in their madness were far removed from God, and abhorrent to his holy nature, and he neither influenced nor tempted them in their monstrous crimes, yet his infinite wisdom, goodness and mercy were thus wondrously made known, his sovereign power bounded and controlled it all, to the accomplishment of his own determined purpose; for all this was but a measure of the wrath of man that he had declared should praise him, and thus were the Scriptures and their inspired prophecies fulfilled. But those wicked rulers and ungodly men, not a few of them Israelites, broke the positive laws and commandments of God, and were justly responsible and guilty, and he punished them righteously. And as the Scriptures show that all this was true, so does the same principle of righteous accountability apply to all men and nations, even though they are God's sword and hand, and he has appointed the bounds of their habitation, and either ordains their wrath to praise him, or restrains it. "I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself; that frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish; that confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusa-

lem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof: that saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers; that saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure; even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid. Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut: I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: and I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel." Thus did the Lord declare concerning Cyrus, the Persian king, who should conquer the great city of Babylon and the Chaldeans, liberate the captive Israelites, and rebuild their temple and cities, long before its fulfillment, in which prophecy the Most High affirms what he himself would do. This involved destructive wars, and the subduing of nations, yet through it all the Lord fulfilled his righteous purpose. The Bible history shows that the same righteous and determining purpose of God was accomplished through the long succession of calamitous wars, running through centuries, until the Messiah was born in troublous times, and the armies of Rome utterly destroyed the Jewish nation, and the kingdom of God was taken from them, just as his holy Son foretold it should be. Those momentous events of the rise and fall of warring nations were foretold by the Lord's inspired prophets, which infallibly proves that his determining purpose and counsel had established all those events, and that with him there was neither frustration nor disappointment. Nevertheless, the word of the Lord shows that he held those tumultuous nations guilty and accountable, and righteously visited his judgments upon them, often by bringing one nation against another more guilty one. To dispute this is to dispute the Lord's own testimony of himself in his sacred oracles. "Let God be true, but every man a liar."

Now, as to the notion that if God in his decree or foreordination or counsel or purpose has established any wicked work or conduct as certain to be, then the perpetrators thereof are neither guilty nor responsible, all the Bible instances given prove the fallacy of this assumption, and they and very many other cases show that men are guilty in God's sight, and that he will by no means clear the guilty. His suffering Lord told Peter that he should thrice deny him, and this must therefore be, yet the sin and shame of Peter were none the less, notwithstanding the wise and good purpose of the Lord was fulfilled in Peter's fall and conversion.

We do well to be reverently and humbly impressed with the Lord's word, that his thoughts and ways are not those of men, but are as much superior or higher than heaven is above earth, and that it is sinful presumption for the very finite man to set limits or bounds for the infinite One, or reply against his sovereign conduct and ways. God will not hold him guiltless who does so, as solemnly made known in his wonderful answer to humbled Job.

Those who object to the universal dominion and unlimited sovereignty of the Almighty, yet admit his unlimited presci-

ence or foreknowledge of all events and things, from eternity to eternity, and that not the least thing can possibly ever take place different from what God foreknew it, for if it could, that chance event would not only limit the infinite divine foreknowledge, but destroy it, because it would prove that he did not foreknow all things. With this admitted, all objections to God's absolute or unlimited determination and control of all things according to his "eternal purpose" and wisdom and counsel fail and fall powerless, unless both his purpose and omnipotence are denied. For it must be evident that the immutable purpose and omnipotent power of God are coextensive and parallel with his eternal knowledge of all things, and that he therefore determined, decreed or foreordained to let all things be so, and they are so, for otherwise they would not be so, because his omnipotence could and would have prevented them. So, then, whatever is in all the limitless universe, the wisdom and purpose and power of the Sovereign of all things have said, Let it be so, or it could never be. We must accept this solemn truth, or else limit the Holy One in his unchangeable wisdom and purpose and power, and say that the raging waves of the wickedness and wrath of the sinful and guilty world are outside of or beyond God's sovereign control. For when it is admitted that God foreknew all things, and permits them to be, then there is no escaping the inevitable certainty that he eternally purposed it so. For our blessed and holy God is forever in one mind, and without "the shadow of turning;" therefore whatever is he suffers it to be, and eternally decreed or purposed that he would suffer it, because he otherwise would have prevented it, his wisdom and power being infinite and omnipotent. To say, then, that God permits all things, having foreknown all things, is equal to saying that he permissively predestinated them, or eternally purposed all things, because against his predestinating purpose to permit all things it would be impossible for them to be, unless we have the folly to assert that some things are more mighty than God, and he cannot prevent them. To us he says, "Be still, and know that I am God." We are blessed in knowing this greatest truth.

Predestination simply means, "the unchangeable purpose of God." His purpose comprehends and embraces "all things," and he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," therefore "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not." "The Lord hath made all things for himself: [or for his own purpose, margin] yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps." "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." If it were not thus, then the unlimited or absolute sovereignty of God would be impinged upon, and his controlling power curtailed or weakened, which would be leaving all undetermined events to blind fate or accidental chance. It is well for all, therefore, that the dominion of the Most High is an everlasting dominion, "and his kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"

A solemn reverence should awe our

spirit and sit upon our lips when we speak of the Most High on whose footstool we stand, in whose hand is our breath and life, to whose holy throne we are every moment and forever accountable, and on whose compassionate goodness and sovereign mercy we are unceasingly and everlastingly dependent. Let us devoutly remember that "of him, and through him, and to him, are all things;" that he has numbered the very hairs of our head; that not a sparrow shall fall on the ground without him; that to him angels owe their bliss; that "Here he exalts neglected worms to sceptres and a crown, and there the following page he turns, and treads the monarch down;" that "Not Gabriel asks the reason why, nor God the reason gives;" and that the unquestioning response of his meek and lowly Son is our true and only answer: "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." All that the infinitely wise and Holy One has purposed according to his counsel, and put under his omnipotent control, is best, because his omniscience saw all that was best; therefore all things work together for good to all who love him, as well as for the manifestation of his eternal glory. "The Lord is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works. All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power."

In the kingdom of God's grace the saints are his workmanship, "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." God hath both foreordained good works, and that we should walk in them, and also created us in Christ unto them; therefore the sacred obligation is upon us to so walk, and herein we are accountable to him. So far, then, from the appointment, foreordination, predestination or purpose of God being incompatible with our accountability to him, or destroying it and making us irresponsible, the obligation upon us is thus made the more binding and sacred. So it is likewise of the afflictions, "knowing that we are appointed thereunto," and having the comforting assurance that we are walking and suffering according to his will.

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 12, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I left Southampton Sunday afternoon, Dec. 10th, and on Monday evening a little after 8 o'clock was at the pleasant home of dear brother Elder William M. Mitchell, in the town of Opelika, Ala., over nine hundred miles from here. Elder Mitchell visited some of our associations about thirty years ago, and spent a few weeks with the church at Warwick. Those who met him then and heard him preach could not easily forget him. Many of them are gone, but those who remain have him in warm and loving remembrance. I heard him only twice at that time, and each time he spoke but briefly on account of weakness, but the preaching was with wonderful power. I had long been familiar with his name.

The journey I am now writing about was undertaken in response to a very kind and cordial invitation extended to me by the church in Macon, Ga., and the Sardis church, a few miles from Macon, through sister R. Anna Phillips, now residing in that city, and also a warm invitation of brethren in and about Covington, Ga., extended to me by brother Robert L. Cook, of that town. I had long desired to see Elder Mitchell at his

home, having never met sister Mitchell or any of their children, and when I was given liberty in my mind to arrange a ten days' list of appointments, Opelika came first. My train being late, I reached the house somewhat later than I was expected, and it was past brother Mitchell's bedtime. They are both feeble, he being in the eighty-first year of his age, and she in her seventy-fourth. Her health has been such that she has been unable to be at meeting for a year. Late as it was, brother Mitchell said I must read some Scripture, and talk for them a little. His sons had been inquiring about that preaching of the gospel "of envy and strife, not sincerely," of which the apostle speaks in the first chapter of Philippians, so I read that chapter, and it furnished a sweet and profitable subject of conversation, in meditating upon which we felt the blessing of our covenant-keeping God, and weakness and weariness of body were for a little while forgotten.

On Tuesday I met Elder Lively, now well and favorably known among our churches as a good gospel preacher, who lives in Opelika, and serves three or four churches, and also Elder Satterwhite, who is Elder Mitchell's assistant pastor of Mt. Olive church, and who serves two or three other churches, and I enjoyed the company of these two brethren during the day. The meeting in the morning was at Mt. Olive church, four miles out, where brother Mitchell's membership has been since its organization, considerably more than fifty years ago. In the afternoon I spoke in his house, and he spoke a little while very clearly and feelingly, and it was a real comfort to me to hear him once more. He could not be at the night meeting, which was in their chapel in town. His health does not allow him to go out except when the weather is pleasant, and it is not often that he can speak at any great length. Whenever he can speak there appears the same glad interest in hearing him that has always been felt by the brethren whom he has served so long. Those of the brethren who were his companions in early life, of whom few remain, still hold him in dear esteem and love, as a clear and able and experimental preacher, a faithful and tender pastor, and a firm and steadfast friend; and the younger members, his children in the gospel, evidently have no lack of that warm and high regard for him. He is dearly loved and venerated by all, and that high regard for him extends throughout the community. He has been long in the field, and is evidently near the end of his useful labor here below, and is manifest as one of those followers of the Lamb who are "called and chosen and faithful." In the short time that I was in the company of sister Mitchell, I was drawn to her very warmly in love and fellowship. I bade them good bye, hoping to see them again, but realizing how uncertain it is that such a meeting shall ever be enjoyed on earth. In a letter just received from him I learn that he is hardly able to sit up to write, and that his dear wife has been seriously injured by a fall. May the Lord give them healing mercies, according to his righteous will, and show them during the remainder of their days on earth that his grace is sufficient for them.

I have now written what I especially designed to write when I began this article. It was not my intention to give a particular account of my journey, of my appointments, and of the dear brethren whom I met, for I cannot do that kind of writing in a manner satisfactory to my-

self, and however well I may succeed in writing such accounts, I still regard them as of doubtful benefit to the brethren. But I must say that while at Opelika, and at all my other places of appointment, my meetings with the brethren were very pleasant indeed, and profitable to me. I felt a good degree of liberty in preaching and in conversation, and was welcomed most kindly and cordially by all I met, and received warm expressions of fellowship for my preaching at every meeting. The churches I visited were Mt. Olive and Phenix City, in Alabama, and Mt. Moriah, Fellowship, Sardis, Macon, Holly Springs, Harris Springs and East Atlanta, churches in Georgia. The ministers I met were Elders Mitchell, Lively, Satterwhite, Bussy, Garrett, Reynolds, Childs, Moss, Hurst, West, S. H. Whatley and Matthews, and one at Phenix City whose name I do not recall just now. I would love to have heard them all preach, but it was my privilege to hear but very little from any of them. But I am thankful to say that not only did none of them find any fault with the doctrine I preached, but all expressed their fellowship for it, and for me, most kindly. I spent Friday night and Sunday night with the church in Macon, and Saturday and Sunday with the Sardis church, eight miles from there, at their regular meeting, their faithful pastor, Elder J. T. Reynolds, being present, and following very briefly.

During this time, and until Monday afternoon, I was in company with our dear sister, R. Anna Phillips.

But I must stop right here or I shall find myself trying to name all the kind brethren and friends I met, and telling all their kindnesses to me, and all my precious visits with them, and recounting the many pleasant incidents of my journey, which I must not, cannot do. I left Atlanta Friday noon on my return, and was at home Saturday evening before the fourth Sunday in December, well in body and thankful to the Lord, I hope, for his kind care over my wife and family during my absence, and over myself in all my journey.

SILAS H. DURAND.

NEW HOPE, Ark., Nov. 19, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Paul, in Romans viii. 31, says, "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

The text is the application of the discourse which he has been presenting in the former part of the chapter, and the discourse embraces a complete outline of christian experience, beginning with the time of reconciliation to God, and terminating with the triumphs of full and eternal salvation, as in the text. In the connection is a character described, a privilege illustrated, and an important question asked, "What shall we then say to these things?" That is, the things to which the apostle had just been calling attention. Paul had declared that God was for us, and that he loved the church and gave himself for it. The character is the same as is noticed through the whole chapter. They are said to be in Christ, justified, under spiritual influence, adopted into the divine family, and as being heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. Elsewhere Paul said that these characters are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Again he says, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Attention to these Scriptures, and to this description, will lead us to a right knowledge of the characters who may properly claim the language of the text.

The privilege spoken of is that God is for them. In the word we read that God goes before his people, that he leads them, that a good man's steps are ordered of the Lord, that God is their friend, that he is round about them as their defense, that he is the King in their midst, that he is their light and salvation. But the text says that God is for us. This comprehends all that is said in the preceding portion of the chapter, and includes the possession of the divine favor. God is in his people, and delights in them, and causes his face to shine upon them, and smiles upon them in the face of the anointed one. His love is shed abroad in the heart, and they enjoy the divine presence, all of which passeth all understanding. It is said, "Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound. They shall walk O Lord in the light of thy countenance, and in thy name shall they rejoice all the day long." As God is for us, it engages all his attributes on our side. His power is ours to protect and sustain us, his wisdom to guide and direct us, his goodness to supply our wants, his holiness to purify our hearts, his mercy, pity and patience to forbear and to pass by our infirmities, and to forgive all our sins, his truth to verify all his promises, in short all that the blessed Lord has and is, is for the benefit of his people. He says, "I am thy God." This includes a believing claim to all his great and blessed promises. These promises are the christian's present riches. These promises take in every conceivable state and circumstance into which the people of God can ever come, and these promises are given to us, and are yea and amen to the glory of God.

When the apostle says that if God be for us none can be against us, he does not mean that none will oppose us. This would be contrary to the Scripture, and to our own experience. Cain was against Abel. The unbeliever has always been against the believer; Satan will always be against us; the world will be against us; internal enemies are all against us. And neither does it mean that our enemies are insignificant: they are very numerous and strong. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Therefore we are told to take the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. The christian has many enemies to overcome, and his strength comes from God in believing prayer. God is the only source of help and strength, and he is the Father of all our mercies. We overcome not by might nor power, but by his Spirit; therefore we are told to pray always. Neither does the sentence, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" mean that we may not suffer, and that severely. From those who are against us we may suffer much temptation, persecution and reproach; loss of goods, and even life itself may be required, but these words do signify that if God be for us none can be against us effectually; none of them shall succeed; our souls shall not suffer final loss, for he that is for us is more than they that are against us. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things. And who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies. If he loves us who shall change his mind? Paul said, I am persuaded that neither life, nor death, nor any other thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in

Christ Jesus our Lord. If he saves who can destroy? The clouds may be dark, but they shall shed down blessings upon our heads. The bud may be bitter, but sweet shall be the flower. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. All these things shall work together for good to them that love God. His eyes watch over us; his ear is open to our cry; his hand supplies all our need. This is all true providentially. Then if God be for us in the spiritual combat, who can be against us? Men may rage, but the wrath of men shall be made to praise him, and the remainder of that wrath he says he will restrain. Satan may rage, and bring his temptations against us as a flood, but the Spirit of God shall lift up a standard against him, and if God be for us in judgment, who shall be against us then? If he says, Well done, good and faithful servant, who can condemn? If he place the crown upon our head, who can snatch it off? If he exalt to glory and eternal life, who can abase us, or mar our felicity? If we have the evidence and assurance of faith that God is for us, we need not fear nor care for all who may be against us.

Now if God be for us, ought we not also to be at all times for him? Shall we not honor and confess him before men? Shall we not be zealous for his glory? Shall we not be diligent in his service? Behold what manner of love he has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. May his fear and love abound in our hearts, and may we walk humbly and devoutly before him?

I have one request to make of all who may read this, pray for me.

I remain as ever your brother,

J. C. FOX.

NEWARK, Del., Nov. 23, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—Some years ago an aged brother related to me the following circumstance: It seems that in his younger years he had two daughters, one of whom was his special favorite. This one was taken sick, and afterwards died. All through her sickness, and after her death, he felt a sweet submission to the will and purpose of God. He could say in her case, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Not long after the other daughter was taken sick, and then his trouble began. He had just the reverse of the feeling which was his in the case of his favorite child. Now his will and purpose was that this one should not die. He could not, nor would not, have it otherwise than that she should live. So his rebellion continued through her sickness. But he found that it was the will and purpose of God that she must die. So he had this unequal contest, but a bitter one.

This circumstance was recalled to my mind while thinking of the afflictions of the righteous. We read, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous." And so also may we say of the people of this world. Christians have their troubles, sickness and death, and so also do those who never make any profession of being christians. They have their losses, crosses and trials, and so also do others. If then all are so similarly afflicted, wherein is the difference? The psalmist was envious of the wicked when he saw their prosperity, and he says, "They are not in trouble as other men." Of late I have been asking myself this question, In what do the troubles of the righteous differ from the troubles of others? In regard to persecutions I suppose that it is just as true to-day as it was in time of Paul:

"They that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." In these times they seem highly favored, for they can meet without fear, and the cruel persecutions which marked the dark ages seem not to be now a part of their experience. A good old sister once remarked to me, "I have no fear of the foes without; the foes within are the foes that trouble me." It seems to me that the fundamental difference between the troubles of the righteous and others, arises out of the fact that they have the Spirit of God. Paul writes, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." If then he have the Spirit, it follows as a matter of course, or as the day follows the night, that the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to the other. And here lies the opposition or warfare.

I have been reading lately with much interest the words of Job, found in the twenty-third chapter, verses thirteen to sixteen. Job knew that God is of one mind, and that none can turn him. He also knew that the Lord would accomplish what he had appointed for him, and the result was that he was afraid of him, and that God had made his heart soft. Job knew that he was in the hand of God, and he had that fear of him which is the beginning of wisdom. The people of this world do not have that fear, and neither do they believe that God will perform that which he has appointed for them. Their troubles they think come from their own mistakes, or the mistakes of others, and some by the common accidents of this life. The fear of God is not before their eyes, and neither do they know anything about the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit. The question is often asked, How can the valley of Achor be a door of hope? I suppose that it is well understood that the word Achor means trouble. Can the peculiar troubles of the righteous be a door of hope to them? I was once listening to a sermon preached by Elder Eubanks. I must confess that I went to the meeting feeling that we would go through the usual form of worship, but that the whole meeting would be as I felt, lifeless. The text was Lam. iii. 19-21. The subject was the peculiar trials and afflictions of the righteous. As he began to open up the subject, I began to call some of those trials to my remembrance, and as I did so my hope revived, and I could say, Surely I know something of the affliction and the misery, of the wormwood and the gall. Then I found that these peculiar trials are the evidences of spiritual life. So the meeting, instead of being a mere formality, became one long to be remembered.

The subject might be illustrated in this way. Suppose a man is traveling to a distant city. He had never traveled the road, but it had been described to him as being a very rough and difficult way, in certain parts of it. He might go on quite uncertain whether he was in the right way or not, till he should come to those troublesome places, and then his hope would revive, and he would be able to say, "Surely I am in the right way." Now just so sure as we have experienced those characteristic trials and troubles of the saints, just so sure are we born of the Spirit of God. When Jeremiah remembered his affliction and misery, the wormwood and the gall, he said, "This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope." Paul writes to the Corinthians, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." How many of

the professed followers of Christ can say with Paul, "For I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content"? Or can say, as was said of Moses, "That they choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season"?

As ever, your brother in hope,

B. F. HAMILTON.

NEWFOUNDLAND, Ky., Nov. 26, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Pardon me for asking permission to write you a few lines concerning the blessed hope which I have in Christ, whom I trust I love above all earth, or earthly things. "To him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion, forever and ever. Amen." Dear brother, I have but one salvation to write about, and that is salvation by grace, and grace alone. I feel that I can do no good thing of myself. Christ said to his disciples, "Without me ye can do nothing." Now if his disciples could do nothing without him, how much can we do? Christ our dear Savior said, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."—John xvi. 13.

Paul said, "I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Now we see that in all Paul's laboring it was Christ in him doing the work, "For without me," he said, "ye can do nothing." I know that we are all admonished to do many things. But when we have done all we have but done our duty, and it is the grace of God with us doing God's will in us, for all our works are wrought in us of God, as the word testifies. Paul again said, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure." Thus we see that it is our God who doeth the works which he hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Again, we must remember that without him we can do nothing. Paul again said, "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work. To speak evil of no man, to be no brawler, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men. For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Savior; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."—Titus iii. 1–7. Paul was here speaking of believers who had been given grace sufficient. He tells Titus to put the children in mind to do the things which were their duty. He shows them how to treat all men, since they themselves were sometimes disobedient. Then he sums up the whole matter, and shows that this is all to be done by grace alone, through the love and kindness of God. Now if these believers to whom Paul spoke could of themselves do these things, they would have whereof to glory, yet not before God. But if Christ the power of God worketh effectually the things which are

well pleasing in his sight, then they can join with those under the altar praising God, and can say Grace, grace, grace. Paul also shows that believers are not now serving these divers lusts, and that they are not now hateful and hating one another. He lets them know that grace has lifted them above these things. Thus we are saved by grace, both in time and in eternity.

When the Savior told Peter that he should deny him, Peter thought and said, that he would go to prison and to death with him, but when he was left to himself he denied the Lord, and even cursed and swore, and said, "I know not the man." This shows the total inability of man to save himself, even here in time. Again, let us remember the word of the Savior, "Without me ye can do nothing." But through Christ, is is said, we can do all things. Salvation is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God which sheweth mercy. It is through the mercy of God that we all are not consumed. Thus speaks the prophet. He knoweth our frame, that we are dust, therefore he pities us as a father his children. Dear brother, thinking of all these Scriptures, with hundreds of others, I do not see more than one salvation, and that of grace, which was given in Christ Jesus before the world began. Are you not glad, my brother, that it is in Christ that we have this grace? [We do rejoice in this very truth, and so feel to praise God for whatever of obedience we have ever rendered to him.—Ed.]

"Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah. He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death."—Psalm lxviii. 19, 20.

Dear brother, if you think that this letter might be of comfort to some of the little ones in Christ, you are at liberty to publish it. If you should do so I trust that it may be read in the same spirit in which I hope that it is written, for I do feel that I have nothing in view but the glory of God and the welfare of Zion.

Your brother,

CHARLES R. COX.

DAYTON, Wash., Nov. 11, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I herein send you the experience of sister Minerva C. Couch. It was through my request that it was written, and with the understanding that I send it to the SIGNS. I believe it will prove of interest to your readers, but use your judgment concerning it.

Yours in tribulation,

B. S. PATE.

LA GRANDE, Ore., Nov. 4, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER PATE:—I will now try to comply with my promise to write you an account of my experience. I am a sinner still, and often feel that I am the worst. It was in my fifteenth year that I became greatly distressed concerning my condition. I was at a Missionary protracted meeting. After the sermon, the preacher called for mourners. I was back some distance in the congregation. The first that I realized, I was walking over the benches, and went and gave the preacher my hand, and knelt down. Then it seemed there came to me a form dressed in a long white robe. The form was that of a man. As the robe trailed by me, I saw it as the purest of white I had ever beheld, and then in an instant it was gone, and I saw myself a mass of the blackest black. I was weeping, and it seemed that my tears were never to cease. I could not keep from crying aloud, even after the meeting was over, and all the

way home. The people told me to pray, and ask God for mercy. I did all they told me to do, and when alone I cried and begged God to relieve me of this awful feeling of woe and misery. I felt that I was a great sinner in his sight. I had been a moral girl, and the people called me good, but I knew now that I was not good. I went to the mourners' bench all through that meeting. My associates made professions, and seemed very happy. I thought, O, if I might feel that way, but relief did not come. I often went off by myself to a low thicket, where none but God could see me, and would fall on my face, and beg him whom I surely loved with all my strength, for mercy, but my prayers seemed to rise no higher than my head, and my words would return and fall to the ground. I would conclude that it was all a farce, a mere nothing, that there was no such thing as forgiveness of sin, but these feelings would not last long, and at such times I seemed turned to stone; I could not even cry. These thoughts would soon follow such feelings, There is your dear, old grandfather, a christian, you cannot doubt his religion, or faith in God. No, I could not. Year after year, rolled by, sometimes I was the most miserable wretch that could be, and then these feelings would wear off to some extent, and I would conclude that some day there might be relief for me, but by this time I had fully learned that I could not get religion, neither could man give it to me. I quit going to the mourners' bench, I think after the second year, and I supposed that every one had forgotten about my troubles, or at least I never said anything about them. About this time, the Old School Baptists began having meetings at my father's. He and mother were Old School Baptists, as were grandfather and grandmother also. I saw my parents baptized, and O, such a beautiful scene. As I stood on the bank of the stream trembling, I said, O, if I was only prepared to be baptized as they are. The Elders Stark were the only Old School Baptists I had ever heard at that time. Then Elder B. F. Querry came to preach for the little church, and when I heard him tell of the troubles of mind which he had experienced, and of others as well, I felt that I could witness with them, except that I had never felt that I was forgiven, as they would speak of. I had become a school teacher, but I had never made any progress in the way of getting any better spiritually. At one meeting, Elder Querry asked me privately to give him an account of my feelings and thoughts on religion. I began frankly and told him all up to that time. A few nights previous to this conversation I had a dream. I thought that I offered myself to the church, and began telling my experience, but just before I got to tell them that my sins were pardoned, I awoke, and I felt very happy for a moment, then all was gloom again, and I felt the same heavy burden of sin weighing me down. Elder Querry said that he believed that I had a hope but would not own it. He told father and others. Father asked me if I had a hope? I told him no, the trouble was, because I had no hope. I turned away weeping, thinking that I had only deceived Elder Querry, by speaking as I had. I wept the most of that day, although I was teaching school. It was, I think, the most desolate, gloomiest day I ever saw; I felt that I was on the verge of destruction. I thought my portion was eternal woe and misery and that it was just. Yet I knew that I loved God, and would have given the world, could it have been mine, to feel that he loved me. Talk of love, I

longed to realize and know that I was one whom he loved. That evening I went off to a lonely grove; there I fell on the ground, and, as I thought for the last time, I begged for one word, only one word, from God. If it was only sent from him I could believe; but it did not come. I went to the house and to my bed, but not to sleep. My pillow was wet with weeping. It must have been midnight, when all my sins rolled up before me like a rugged mountain. I felt them roll off, and then all was light. It seemed that Christ and his holy angels were hovering over me, and I felt so light and happy. All my tears were gone. I went to sleep, and O, such a sweet, restful sleep. I thought I would tell mother the next morning, but I had told it that night. I was too happy not to rejoice aloud. It seemed the next morning that the sun shone so brightly; the birds and the trees were all praising God. The words came to me, All your tears, prayers and cries, are all as filthy rags, thrown at the feet of Jesus. I felt so happy for days, weeks, and even months, not a tear did I shed, nothing troubled me. My hymn book went to school in my lunch basket as regularly as I did, and O, such sweet, happy days. I was so full of love for my blessed Master as I read and reread his wonderful love for poor, fallen sinners. I offered myself to the church at the next meeting, the fourth Sunday in September, 1878, and told them of the great troubles of mind which I had been in for seven long, weary years, and of the glorious change which I had felt lately, and of how I had begged to know my duty to my blessed Master. Dear ones, you who have felt his great love in the pardon of your sins, how can you stay out of your duty? How can you fail to take up your cross, and follow him in baptism? You will never regret it. I was received in fellowship, and the next morning was baptized by Elder Querry. It was a lovely day, and I felt so happy, it seemed that I was blessed beyond measure. Yet I have groped in darkness, doubt and despair much during the last few years, and have often wondered if it is possible that I have never known the power of his forgiveness, and I cry for help from above, and when I am low enough at his feet I am then made to rejoice. When I hear others tell of his great love, I can rejoice with them, and I must say, I can also witness with those who are in the valley of gloom. I feel that I am too worldly minded, and therefore I am barren and lifeless spiritually so much of my time. Then I long for the bright, happy days that once were mine.

I hope to be remembered in your prayers.

MINERVA C. COUCH.

WAVERLY, Pa.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Please publish the inclosed when you think best, or if you think best. It is clear christian experience.

D. M. VAIL.

MUIRKIRK, July, 1899.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—MY DEAR BROTHER:—May such an unworthy sinner claim fellowship with one of the blessed followers of the Lamb who was slain to redeem us from death? I wished my husband to write to you, as I very much feel my inability and unworthiness to write. As for me, I feel to be vanity and less than vanity. The things that I do, I would not, and the things that I would not do, them I do. Most of my time I am in such darkness and barrenness of mind, yes, darkness that can be felt. My

outward actions are anything but what a christian's should be, and my inward thoughts are black as midnight, and void of anything that is spiritual or good. I often feel to be the vilest hypocrite that was ever allowed to live on God's footstool. I have passed through such a trying time of much darkness and destitution. I have gone to bed with such a weight of vileness and sinfulness on my mind, and awoke again with a double weight, that seemed to crush me down in the dust, as a cart under many sheaves. Pray, I could not, only with groanings, Lord, have mercy. I would question myself, could it be possible that one in so low a state could have one spark of spiritual life? I felt so desolate, like the isles of which I heard you speak.

"So far from God I seem to be,
O is there any one like me?"

These words came to my mind, "The Lord is gracious, nor will he leave you desolate to mourn." What a mercy the smoking flax he will not quench, nor will he break the bruised reed. I have been made to cry, "Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" Though the waves seem to overwhelm, when in his own good time he says, "Peace be still," then there is a calm. To those who wait for him he will surely come. His coming shall be like the morning, and like morning songs his voice. He hedgeth our way with hewn stones; he brings the blind by a way that they know not. O, if I only knew that it was his hand that was leading me, I would not then be so repining, but it is the valley of Achor which is given for a door of hope, and when we are tried we shall come forth as gold; all self-righteousness must be burned up. Jesus is our all and in all, he will baptize us with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

I remember the first time that I heard you preach in Duart, I had been in much darkness of mind for some time before, but you told my feelings, and what a blessed privilege it is to hear and to have an appetite to receive such heavenly food; it cometh down from the giver of every good and perfect gift. The question with me is, Am I worthy of a place and name among them? How can they, who are God's peculiar care, fellowship such a worm as I? But "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." These words came with powerful sweetness to me while listening to a prayer of Elder Pollard, in my earliest exercises. I questioned why it was that I felt such a love for them, and these gracious words were given him to say. Why was it I felt such a love for these poor, despised travelers? Why was I made to hear his voice? Is there not a cause? I can only answer, that it is through his great mercy and love if I am one. We love him because he first loved us. After relating a few, as I hope, of the Lord's dealings with me before the visible church, the words came to me so forcibly as I sat down,

"See to the vilest of the vile,
A free acceptance given;
See rebels, by redeeming grace,
Sit with the heirs of heaven."

What a mercy that it is all of grace and not of man's work, which comes to naught. For I feel it to be true, there is nothing in me to merit esteem, nor give the Creator delight.

We were favored to enjoy a good meeting in Ekfried. It did seem truly to be a refreshing from the Lord. Elders Durand and Carnell preached with much liberty the precious gospel of Jesus, to the comfort of many who were prepared to receive it. They did eat of that bread and drink of the streams which make glad the

city of our God. What a glorious theme to dwell upon when preached or written about by those who are able.

I have written much more than I intended. I am often made to cry out my leanness, and yet how merciful he is to such a repining worm; he does not leave me comfortless; I sip a little of the sweetness now and then by the way. It is he alone that can change darkness into light; he can make streams of sorrow rise to rivers of delight. Being in much darkness one day last spring, I thought, Can any one of God's children have fellowship for such a wretch as me? My trouble was so great, and yet I could not speak to any one about it. I have thought since of the words of the psalmist, when he said that his trouble was so great that he could not speak: I could not write. I have written to the comfort of dear brethren and sisters before, as they said, but in this trouble I feared that I had deceived them. I said to myself, I do not think that I will ever write again, nor attempt to, upon such glorious truths, and I never would if left to myself, but now see what I am doing. After the meeting, feeling reproached in the spirit of my mind, I did write some, and received such comforting replies. How inconsistent a creature I am. I must feel that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, and what a mercy it is not. If left to myself, how sad would be my lot. O, that I could look to him more, and trust him more; he has proved to be a very present help in time of trouble. I could not refrain from shedding tears while reading dear Elder Bundy's letters in the SIGNS. With much love we will ever remember him as a most wonderfully comforting minister of the meek and lowly Jesus, whose true follower he was. Come and preach for us when the Lord will.

Your unworthy sister in a blessed hope of life and immortality beyond this abode of tears,

MRS. DAVID F. GILLIS.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

STILL DELAYED.

WE had hoped that this issue of the SIGNS would be on date, but we find that we little know what the providence of God has in store for us. Three weeks ago we were compelled to leave the office on account of on attack of what is called "la grippe," and since then have been most of the time confined to the bed. At this writing, (Jan. 30th,) we are still unable to leave the house, but hope, if it is the Lord's will, to be at the office again in a day or two. We make this statement that our readers may nnow why we are not on date with this number of the SIGNS, and as an explanation to our many business and private correspondents why they have been so neglected.

Again thanking our brethren and friends for their patience, we hope soon to catch up with our business and correspondence. B.

BACK NUMBERS.

WE have printed a few hundred extra copies of each of the numbers of this year, so that new subscribers can have the back numbers to the first of the volume as long as the supply lasts. The advantage of having the back numbers will appear when the last number for the year is received containing the index for the whole volume.

PERSONAL.

Mrs. M. J. Lee would like to correspond with Old School Baptists in good standing who may reside in the vicinity of Roseburg, Ore.

ROSEBURG, Ore., Jan. 19, 1900.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1900.

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EDITORS:

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PSALM CX. 3; JOHN V. 40.

"THY people shall be willing in the day of thy power."

"And ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life."

We have in these two portions of the word the statement of two opposite truths, concerning two opposite classes of people. In the one case it is stated that there were some who had no will to come to Christ, but on the contrary their will was to not come, and in the other statement, taken from the Psalms, it is said that some are willing, and the reason of this willingness is that the day of the power of God has come to them. This is the only reason which can be alleged for the difference between the people of God, and the others. The power of God has been exercised upon the one, and not upon the other. This presents the whole secret as to why some believe in Christ and come to him, while others will not do so. Men by nature will not come to Christ, first, because they feel no need of coming to him; second, they see no beauty in him, that they should desire him. The expression, "ye will not come to me," simply means that they see no need in themselves of what he has to give, and that they have no desire for him in any way. And when it is said that the people of God shall be willing in the day of his power, it simply means that in that day, by the power of God through the Spirit, they have been shown their need of Christ, and the excellency and beauty of his person, and so their desires go out toward him, and when he is set forth before them, they greatly desire him, and are rejoiced at his salvation thus revealed to them. To sum it all up, they are willing to be saved as God saves sinners. And from the text we must conclude that no man is ever willing to be saved until in grace he is shown his need of salvation, and the entire fitness of the salvation which is in Christ, to save him. It is not denied that man naturally wants to be happy in the next world, if indeed he does believe in a future life, but men are not willing to be saved. They are not willing in two senses of the word. Salvation, in the scriptural meaning of the term, signifies a redemption from sin itself, and natural men do not want to be saved from their sins, but on the contrary love their sins, and second, natural men do not want to be saved, even in the sense in which they understand salvation, but desire the credit of their own salvation. They want to save themselves, instead of being saved by another. The salvation which is in Christ has no charms for the ungodly; it can have no charms for the man who rolls sin as a sweet morsel under his tongue. If we should say to such a man, Here is salvation from your passions, and lusts, and desires, he delights in these very things, and therefore would regard the offer, if made to him, as a curse rather than a blessing. All natural men are thus under the dominion of sin. All would thus continue to think and feel, and all would continue to love their sins,

were it not that grace, the grace of God, interferes, and gives light to some men, enabling them to see their true condition, and bringing them to hate their sins, and to feel the bondage of their sins, and to realize that they cannot deliver themselves from the very least and weakest of their sins, and thus compelling them to cry out for help and deliverance, as did Paul when he said, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Paul never, while a pharisee, saw that he was fastened to such a dead body, and then when he did realize it, he would not cry out for help at the hands of another until in the bitter struggle to get away from this dead and loathsome body of sin, he had found that he could not. Then indeed, and not till then, did he come to want to be saved, and then, and not till then, did he cry to him who alone can deliver, and who will deliver. Then indeed was he made willing, and to him this was the day of God's power.

In the text quoted from the fifth chapter of John, Jesus was speaking to the natural, carnal Jews, who yet were very religious, and who, because of their religiousness, trusted in themselves that they were righteous. Although they were sinners of a dye as deep as were the vilest criminals in the land, yet they believed themselves to be the favorites of God because of their strict religious observances. They had no more true knowledge of sin than did the vilest of men. They felt no more need of help in the matter of salvation than did any other men. Sin so reigned in them that they did not know that they were sinners at all. Sin reigns in all men indeed, but it has long seemed to us that the completeness of its reign was more completely shown in the case of the self-righteous pharisees than in any one else. It reigns in them so completely that by its deceitfulness they are convinced that instead of being sinners they are wholly righteous. This was true then, and is equally true in their brethren now. Therefore the preaching of Jesus was distasteful to them from two points of view: first, he declared their righteousness to be of no account, and second, he preached that salvation was to be found in him alone. He put them down on a level with the vilest of sinners, and presented sovereign mercy alone as that by which they could be saved. This was distasteful to pharisees then, and it is distasteful to pharisees now. They therefore will not come to him; they have no desire to come to him; they see no need to come to him. This is true of all men by nature. One man has no desire to come to Christ because he loves his righteousness, and another man will not come because he loves his sins. And before either will come to Christ for salvation, the one must see the enormity of his sins, and sin by the law must become to him exceeding sinful, while the other must come to see the filthiness of his rags of self-righteousness, as well as the exceeding sinfulness of his sins. It has seemed to us at times that a greater work of love and mercy is done when a proud pharisee is made humble and brought to the foot of the cross, than when a dying thief, hardened as he is in his guilt, is made to call for mercy. The one must be brought to hate and loathe his sins, while the other must be brought to hate and loathe his righteousness also.

In the text quoted at the beginning, from Psalm cx., we have an explanation of why any do call upon God for salvation. It does not arise from any exercise of the human will, but from the exercise of the will of God. Such are indeed born,

not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. These must say at all times, "By the grace of God I am what I am." These unless bewitched as were the brethren at Galatia, will never ascribe their salvation to aught but grace. These will also realize the need of daily grace. They will say it is grace that begun the work, and it is grace which continues it, and grace which will complete it, and grace will be the song forever and forever.

We pause here to insist upon one thing, viz: Believers are day by day just as dependent upon the grace of God for every spiritual thought, desire and act of obedience, as they were dependent upon grace in the first place for the new birth of God. They are made alive unto God by grace, and by grace they are kept alive unto God. Grace gives the life, and grace gives the food which sustains the life thus given, and grace works in them to produce every good desire, or will or purpose which can ever arise in their heart, and grace is the very spirit and life of all their doing in the way of obedience. Each one will and ought to say each day and each instant of his life, That which I am now I am by the grace of God. What a blessing is found by all believers in living with a constant sense of dependence upon the grace of God for whatever is pure and of good report, and in a feeling of constant praise to God for all things which they enjoy, even for the obedience which is found in their daily walk. When such as these err from the way, they will cry out against themselves, and their indwelling sin, and bemoan themselves that they are tied to such a body of death, and will ascribe all that is evil in their life to the fallen, sinful nature within them, and will ascribe all that is of good report in them, or in their conduct, to the grace of God. Unregenerate men, reasoning upon these matters, have ever contended that if grace must have all the credit for our obedience, then it must be a lack of grace which causes any disobedience. They have always drawn the conclusion that this would make God himself responsible for our sins, since as they say he has not given sufficiency of grace to the disobedient, as he has to those who walk obediently. But the testimony of the spiritual and humble believer has always been, My sins are my own, while my obedience is of the grace of God. If grace has not just as much to do with our daily obedience, as it had to do with the new birth in the first place, then it has nothing to do with it, for grace will not divide the honor with man. "Grace all the work shall crown."

This has been the one chief reason why we have felt to oppose the idea of conditions in our present life as believers, just as much as in the work by which we become believers. If our present obedience, and comfort, and joy, and peace in the Lord, are conditional, then grace can have no place there at all. Nowhere along the line can grace and conditions of human performance mingle together, or join hands in partnership. There is no escaping the conclusion that our final salvation is all of conditions of our doing, or of grace alone. Just so it must be that our time salvation is all of grace, or it is all of works. Those who will contend that salvation cannot be all of grace, because that would leave men, as they say, to utter carelessness of life, seeing that they would say, What is the use of my being concerned in the matter at all, seeing that if I am to be saved, I will be anyway? show by so saying, that they have no true view of what salvation

means. This is the objection which believers have been at all times compelled to meet, when they have contended that final glory depended solely upon the grace of God. To-day the same objection is urged when we contend that our time salvation is all of grace also. It must be manifest that the objection is as futile in the one case as in the other. Grace so works in the believer, that though he utterly relies upon grace for all obedience, and though he gives by grace the praise for all his obedience to grace, yet he is also most careful and anxious lest he should be found walking in disobedience. No evil results can ever follow ascribing all our salvation, both here and hereafter, to grace, in the case of any believer. Paul met and replied to every objection that ever can be urged against grace. All these objections did not turn him one hair's breadth from the praise of grace, and from magnifying it to the utmost. Let us not fear to praise grace then, and to ascribe all to it. Grace is always the cause of all good works. Grace is the fountain, and obedience is the stream. Grace is the tree, and obedience is the fruit. Believers are said to be married to Christ, that they might bring forth fruit unto God. In all the exhortations and admonitions of the apostles, writing by inspiration of God, there can be nothing inconsistent with the praise and glory of grace.

We have ever felt to use exhortation, as those who have listened to us in the pulpit, or who have read much that we have written, know to be the case, yet we have never felt that in so doing we were taking away from the glory of grace, or putting glory upon man. We have never felt that we were in any way saying to those who have heard us, or read after us, when we have used exhortation, "Your obedience depends upon yourself," but rather we have felt that in this very thing we were magnifying grace, and grace alone. For instance, when the tender lambs of Christ come to the fold and become members of the visible church, how do all those who are concerned, both the one received, and those who receive the candidates, feel? Do they praise the candidate that he or she has now become obedient, or do they unite together in a song of praise to God who had so signally blessed and comforted them all? Is it not the deep heart feeling of all, Let us thank God? Do not all feel that grace has once more been magnified? We know that each true believer feels that way. How different this from the proud self-consciousness of a nominal professor. He indeed may be proud of his own obedience, and he indeed may congratulate another upon what he has now done, and esteem himself better than that one who out of a deep sense of his utter unworthiness holds back from making such a profession, but the true believer can never feel thus. He feels down deep in his heart to say, "O, what an unspeakable mercy is granted me, that I have a place among the children of God." Whatever place exhortation has in the ministry of the word, and it has a great place, we are sure that it does not have any such place as will tend to the praise of men, or to lift the obedient out of a sense of entire dependence upon grace. The believer begins his journey Zionward shouting grace, grace, and he goes on his way, day by day, shouting grace, and he will enter heaven at last shouting grace, and he will see the top stone brought forth with shoutings which will fill eternity itself, crying grace, grace unto it. This is all summed up in the words quoted from the Psalm, "Thy people shall be willing in

the day of thy power." This means, willing to be saved as God saves sinners, willing to suffer God's will in all of his appointments, and willing to do God's will when he shall make his will known to them. In the day of his power they are willing, and at no other time, and in no other way.

As we look over all this field, which is exceeding broad, we wonder how men who know the grace of God indeed, and who also know the plague of their own heart, can talk about the will of man being free. Have they not learned in the first place that the will of the natural man is the slave of sin, and therefore not free? Have they not learned that this slavery is so complete that they do not know their slavery until the light of the Lord shining in their heart gives them to know it? How utterly a slave must he be who does not know that he is a slave. How complete must that bondage be which leaves in the man no disposition to even protest against it. The sinner sold under sin is so completely sold in every power and faculty of his being, including the will itself, that he loves the bondage, and supposes that he is free. This is the deepest bondage of all, to be in bondage and to love the bondage. How hopeless is his case who is a slave, and yet supposes that he is free. This is the case of all men by nature. Free will has no existence then in the unregenerate man. Mental and moral necessity is as much necessity as is physical necessity. It operates in a different plain, but it is still necessity; and sin reigns in the man's whole being. It is impossible to think of any faculty of the being of man over which sin does not reign.

But how about the regenerate man? Neither is his will free. In him grace reigns unto eternal life. Sin shall not have dominion over you, says the apostle. Grace puts new desires, new affections and new motives in the heart. Here is a bondage to righteousness, and here also the power of righteousness working in the heart is such that the man who is exercised thereby is not conscious of any constraint, as though grace was compelling him to think, feel and act against his will. Grace shows the power of its reign by making the people willing first of all. Men then are not saved against their will, but in accordance with the will which has been made willing in the day of God's power. Believers are not servants to God against their will; they are made to choose the service as their greatest delight. It has become their meat and drink to do the will of God. Believers then are not free from righteousness, and they would not be, for to be free from righteousness is to be the slave of sin.

Believers, though the servants of God, yet realize that they carry about with them a body of death, from which they long to be freed, and as long as this is so they will feel that they cannot do the good that they would, as Paul says, and as each one who knows about the warfare must testify. It is the joy of the believer that with his mind he serves the law of God, but it is his grief that with his flesh he serves the law of sin, and thus though led by grace to walk obediently, he often stumbles and falls, and out of his fallings cries out to God for help and victory. And when faith, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, triumphs in him, he can say with exultation, I thank God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MATTHEW VI. 7.

"BUT when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking."

Prayer is a solemn but blessed privilege to the saints of God. It is solemn, when we duly consider the infinite disparity between the trembling petitioner, and the supreme God before whom he bows down to worship. No flesh can stand in his presence, for all flesh is corrupted, and all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; and as God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, we cannot approach him without being consumed, only as we are permitted to draw nigh by that new and living way which he has consecrated through the flesh of him who was made flesh and dwelt among us, and from whose fullness, as the only begotten of the Father, we, who have passed from death unto life, have received, and grace for grace. It is a blessed privilege, because none can pray unto God acceptably unless they are quickened by the Spirit of the Lord, for God is a Spirit, and they who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth; and as all spiritual blessings were given to the children of God, according as they were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, the indispensable qualification to pray acceptably to God is a spiritual blessing. And in the enjoyment of this privilege, the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, and maketh intercession for us. Those who are born of God are born of the Spirit, and become spiritual worshipers; not in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the Spirit. This includes all who are of the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, or in any of the powers of the flesh, physical or mental; all their confidence is in him by whom, and through whom alone, they have access by the Spirit unto God.

As the flesh profiteth nothing, and no flesh can approach unto God, prayer and all other worship of the true God being purely spiritual, they are sadly mistaken who think they are to be heard for their much speaking, or for any other fleshly exercises of their organs of speech, or the passions of their carnal nature.

"The heathen think they shall be heard for their much speaking." The term heathen applies not alone to pagans, or the barbarous tribes of mankind, but to all who are strangers to God, ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, whether they be Jews, Papists or Protestants. All who are not born of God and taught by the Spirit, are in heathen darkness, so far as the light of the knowledge of the glory of God is concerned, and they invariably think there is some virtue in their uttering solemn sounds from their unhallowed tongues. The carnal Jews relied on their long prayers, and frequent repetitions of them, and in that error they disfigured their faces, prayed often, loud and long, in corners of the streets and at the market places.

Papists and Protestants teach their unregenerated children to use vain repetitions of this kind; to repeat what is called the Lord's Prayer. A prayer which Christ taught his disciples to use, and which can be used acceptably only by the children of God, who can in spirit and in truth say, "Our Father which art in heaven." None can call Jesus, Lord, but by the Holy Ghost, and none can come unto the Father but by him. Written and printed forms of prayer are prepared

for vain repetition, to be read by the parsons and vainly repeated by their deluded hearers, after the same manner that masses are said, beads counted by Papists, or senseless mutterings are uttered by pagans who bow down to stocks or stones, and by all of them under the delusive hope that there is some merit or virtue in their performance, to please the gods before whom they bow. Without faith it is impossible to please God. Yet men who are dead in sin, and consequently destitute of the faith of the Son of God, are taught to rely upon their vain repetition of prayers and invocations to commend them to the divine favor. This is what the Scriptures pronounce impossible.

But the saints themselves are liable to err sometimes on this subject, or the admonition of our text would be inapplicable to them. Paul says, We ask and receive not, because we ask amiss; and he further testifies that we know not how to pray as we ought; we are dependent on the Spirit to make intercession for us in language which our tongues can neither utter nor repeat. If, then, the christian cannot pray acceptably to God only as the spirit of grace and of supplication is given to help his infirmities, how preposterous to contend that unregenerated men, totally destitute of spiritual life, and totally ignorant of the Spirit and of the things of the Spirit, which things are foolishness unto them, can worship God in spirit and in truth. He that cometh unto God must believe that he is, and to believe in God is a work of faith, and consequently they who have no faith cannot pray only in hypocritical forms and vain repetitions.

Christians should avoid ostentatious display in prayer, or flowery language, fluent speech or affections, to be admired of men. But as the Spirit indites the desires, so let the child of grace breathe them forth in the simplicity of the heart, knowing that the God to whom we pray knows all our necessities, and needs not to be informed of anything by us. And the

"Painted hypocrites are known,
Through the disguise they wear."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 15, 1857.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$343 55
Mrs. T. V. Richardson, Md., $4.50; John N. Berry, Neb., $1.00.—Total	5 50
Total to date	$349 05

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Sept. 26th, 1899, at Cambridge, Md., at the residence of the bride's brother, D. H. Hastings, Franklin J. Stevens, of Baltimore, Md., and Mrs. Rosa B. Bennett, of the former place.

By the same, Jan. 10th, 1900, in Sussex Co., Del., at the residence of the bride, James E. Sturgis, of Wicomico Co., Md., and Mrs. Mary J. Benson, of Sussex Co., Del.

By Elder Asa Howard, Jan. 15th, 1900, at the residence of the bride's father, A. C. Miles, of Ganado, Texas, and Miss Mary Kinsel, daughter of Elder J. A. Kinsel, of Shiner, Lavaca Co., Texas.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Matthew Duncan died June 24th, 1899, in his 82d year. He was born Sept. 3d, 1817, and lived a very energetic life, being honest and conscientious almost to a fault. He was respected by all who knew him. He was married three times, and was the father of twenty-one children. In early manhood he married Virginia Utterback, to whom were born six children. Nancy Moore was his his second wife, to whom were born two. His last wife was Mariah Reynolds, to whom were born thirteen.

In early life he received a hope in Christ, but did not unite with the church until March, 1890, when he was received and baptized into the Old School Baptist church at Salt River, Anderson Co., Ky., where he held membership until his death. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone, and considered it a sacred privilege to be able to attend his meetings, which he rarely missed. His last trip from home was to attend meeting at Little Flock to hear Elder Durand, last May. He had been in failing health for some time, and this ex-

ertion so overtaxed his strength that he was never able to be out again. His sickness was painful, but he bore it with christian patience, and often expressed a wish to be relieved by death. He was conscious most of the time, and was glad to have his brethren and friends visit him. A short while before his death, in referring to his christian life and his hope for the future, he said, "I do not know whether I can truthfully say I have fought a good fight, but I think I can truthfully say I have kept the faith," his manner indicating that he had no fears as to the "crown of life," which is laid up for the Lord's chosen ones. He leaves a widow, four sons and six daughters, besides a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren to mourn their loss, whose example is worthy of their imitation.

His funeral was preached by Elder Smith Hawkins, and he was laid to rest in the Salt River Cemetery, to await the blessed resurrection in which he hoped so earnestly.

ALSO,

Sarah T. Barnes, daughter of Matthew and Nancy Duncan, and wife of W. B. Barnes, departed this life Dec. 11th, 1899. The deceased was born March 10th, 1855, and was married August 14th, 1879. After a hard struggle between the carnal and spiritual powers, she received a bright evidence of the election of grace, and in January, 1890, offered herself to the Old School Baptist church at Salt River, Anderson Co., Ky., where she was received and baptized by Elder Smith Hawkins. She lived the life of a model christian, and was a worthy church member, never being absent from the regular services unless unavoidably hindered, and always ready to contribute by counsel or means for the benefit of the church. Her home was kept open to the Baptists, and like Martha of old, her delight was to serve them. Many visiting ministers to her church will recall her acts of kindness and godly conversation while entertained at her home. She was stricken with consumption nearly two years ago, but was confined to her room but three months. She bore her affliction with christian patience and fortitude, knowing that she was slowly but surely approaching the end, and often stated that she desired to live no longer than the Lord's time. Two days before she died she called her husband to her side, and told him she must soon pass away, and requested him not to grieve for her, for she would be better off; then advised him concerning her two children, and above all not to neglect his church duties, and for them all to meet her in the "sweet by-and-by."

Elder Smith Hawkins preached at her funeral, from Rev. xiv. 13, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." The text and songs for the occasion were selected by her. The bereaved husband, a son and a daughter, and a host of sorrowing friends and relatives mourn their loss, but not as those who have no hope. She will be greatly missed in her little family, and the church, but may it please God to enable all those who loved her to imitate her christian life, and die in the triumphs of the faith of God's elect as she did, is the prayer of one who feels her influence

C. W. BOND.

DEPARTED this life, at the residence of her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Pollie Wight, **Catherine M. Kelly,** aged 79 years, 3 months and 13 days. Mrs. Kelly was born in Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., and was the oldest child of John and Abigail Keator. She united with the Old School Baptist church in 1842, and was a firm believer in the doctrine and usages of that church as long as she lived. She was married to Eli Wight, Feb. 7th, 1847, and moved with him to Cortland Co., N. Y. Mr Wight died in 1854. She soon after, with her only child, Eli J. Wight, returned to Roxbury, the home of her childhood. In 1861 she married Cyrenus Kelly, and moved with him to Bradford Co., Pa. They bought a farm in a pleasant valley in Canton township. Mr. Kelly died in 1876, leaving our dear sister again a widow. After the death of her oldest son, Eli J. Wight, who passed away in the prime of manhood, in 1892, her interest in earthly things, except her church relations and meetings, seemed to decline. She never fully recovered from the shock this affliction caused her, nor ceased to mourn for her firstborn son, who was indeed a noble man. But through all her sufferings and trials, her abiding trust in him that doeth all things well, was ever manifested by her daily walk and conversation. It was one of the dearest privileges of her life to meet with the brethren and sisters, and listen to the preaching of the Word.

Elder Chas. Bogardus, her pastor, not being at home at the time, Mr. Ward, an aged minister of another denomination, officiated at the funeral, after which all that remained of our dear sister was tenderly laid to rest beside her loved ones, who had passsed on before.

MRS. EDWARD VERMILA.

GROVER, Pa., Jan. 1, 1900.

ON the morning of Jan. 17th, 1900, at her late residence in Sugarloaf, Orange Co., N. Y., **Mrs. Sarah Elizabeth Knapp,** daughter of the late Deacon Minard Sutton, and widow of the late John M. Knapp, was released from the bondage of mortality, after a long and painful illness of bronchial and pulmonary consumption. While her sufferings were very severe, the sweet composure and submission to the will of her Lord, by which she was enabled to quietly endure the intense pain, manifested the presence of Jesus as the only support which could give such victory over pain and death. To all who witnessed it her triumph over the last enemy was conclusive demonstration of the

power of divine grace to rob the grave of its terror, and make death itself the messenger of eternal love to call the weary pilgrim home.

Sister Libbie, as she was affectionately known to the church, was baptized in the fellowship of the church in Warwick, by Elder Joseph N. Badger, Sept. 28th, 1873, and stood high in the estimation and affection of the church until with deep sorrow for ourselves and joyful assurance for her, we were called to part with her in obedience to the word which called her to everlasting rest. Besides the church, which must mourn the loss of our dear sister, she leaves one sister in the flesh, and a devoted aunt, (now in her ninetieth year) who is also a member of the church here, and many other relatives, and a very lage circle of friends. May the Lord comfort every mourning one with the consolation of the gospel of peace, and enable each to say, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good!"

Funeral services were held at the house on Saturday, the 20th, where Elder McConnell and the writer briefly spoke of the grace of God as the victory over death; after which the mortal body of our loved one was committed to the tomb beside her husband, in the cemetery at Warwick.

WM. L. BEEBE.

WARWICK, N. Y., Jan. 24, 1900.

Mrs. Hetha C. Batten, relict of the late Eli Batten, died at her home in Annawan township, Henry Co., Ill., Jan. 11th, 1900, of old age, at the advanced age of 91 years, 9 months and 8 days. She was born in Madison Co., Va., April 3d, 1808; married Eli Batten, Dec. 26th, 1826; emigrated to Prebel Co., Ohio, in 1834, where she and her husband experienced a hope in Christ, and united with the Old School Baptist church, coming to Illinois in 1855, and settled on the farm from which they were both carried to their last resting-place in the Fairview Cemetery, near Annawan, Ill. She was the mother of thirteen children, sixty-seven grandchildren, forty-seven, great-grandchildren and four great-great-granchildren, representing five generations, something quite unusual. She was possessed of great firmness and steadfastness, never wavering in her convictions of right, maintaining to the end her confidence in the all-sufficiency of the promises of him that had blessed her with an earnest of her heavenly inheritance. Her son James, with whom she made her home, said: "Mother often spoke of her faith in her Savior. O, how often have we heard mother sing,

'When I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies,
I'll bid farewell to every fear,
And wipe my weeping eyes.'"

In her last illness she often told her children she did not fear death. Heaven, she said, would be her home. "Live near your Savior, my children, and meet me in the sweet bye-and-bye." On Christmas day she called James to her bed, and told him she would not be here much longer, and said she hoped to meet him in her heavenly home. A few days before she passed away, when her voice could scarcely be heard, she said, "Do not grieve for me, Jesus is with me all of the way." She was firm in her hope of the resurrection, and then she would enter fully into her heavenly inheritance.

The funeral occurred on Sunday, Jan. 14th, at Fairview, and was very largely attended, and after appropriate services, and a discourse by the writer, from 1 Cor. xv. 57, the remains were gently borne to the grave by six grandsons, and tenderly lowered to its last resting-place beside her husband, to await the final summons from her blessed Lord.

SMITH KETCHUM.

ELMWOOD, Ill., Jan. 20, 1900.

DIED—At the residence of Wm. B. Tawresey, in Wilmington Del., Dec. 19th, 1899, **Miss Sallie M. Frazier,** aged 58 years, 1 month and 20 days.

Miss Frazier was one of a large family, all devoted Baptists, though not all united with the church. They all evidently belonged to that class of people that the Redeemer called friends, and that when he sat on the throne of his glory he placed on his right hand. The subject of this notice had been a great sufferer from a complication of diseases for a number of years. For about the last three years she had become a burden to herself and her friend, requiring constant attendance night and day. Her relatives can have the satisfaction of remembering the untiring devotion bestowed upon an afflicted relative during many months. Are all these sorrows and sufferings for some wise purpose working out some unseen good? The youngest of four sisters is the first to be called away.

The remains of a faithful and loved one was laid to rest in the family lot in the cemetely at Cow Marsh. The relatives have not much reason to mourn.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1900. NO. 4.

POETRY.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan 25, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The inclosed stanzas were composed by brother Benjamin Cubbage, of the Cow Marsh church, Kent Co., Del., at a time when his heart was filled with sorrow and affliction. If in your judgment it would be profitable to publish them in the SIGNS, will you kindly do so?

B. F. COULTER.

LOVE.

O LOVE divine, how sweet thou art,
To all who are of contrite heart,
To all who feel their sins forgiven,
Whose hopes are centered up in heaven.

Love is of God, for God is love.
Who dwells on high in heaven above,
Who sees and knows all things below,
The source, whence living waters flow.

Love is the chord that binds and holds
Our hearts to others, and controls
Our feet, while walking in the road
That leads to yonder blest abode.

Love moves our hearts, and helps to sing
The praises of our heavenly King,
Whose power extends o'er earth and heaven,
The author of all mercies given.

He's seated on the throne of grace;
In love he shows his smiling face
To those who kneel to him in prayer,
And hope to find acceptance there.

May not I feel, dear Lord, within,
Thy love that cleanseth from all sin?
Help me thy love to magnify,
And praise thy name in worlds on high.

JESUS OUR SALVATION.

JESUS, Lord of life and glory,
Bid our grief and sorrow cease,
And in all thou art most holy;
May we all in thee find peace.

While our hearts are sad and weary,
Thou alone canst bear us up;
All around is dark and dreary,
While we drink the bitter cup.

O for grace that's all sufficient
For our day, and trial, too;
In ourselves we are deficient,
For we sure can nothing do.

Lead us gently, dearest Savior,
As the Shepherd of the fold;
Bear us in thy loving bosom,
Sheltered from the storms and cold

May we, for the mercies given,
Praise thee with our hearts and tongue;
For the hope we have of heaven;
Sing the new and living song.

May we praise thee for thy promise,
Thou wilt keep, and not forsake;
May we feel thine arms around us;
Save us for thy mercy's sake.

Guide us, O thou holy Lover,
O'er life's rough and thorny way,
So that we may praise forever
Thee in everlasting day.

O for all the mercies given
To the fallen sons of men,
Praise on earth, and praise in heaven,
In the world that has no end.

CORRESPONDENCE.

EXHORTATION.

"I CHARGE thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."—2 Tim. iv. 1-4.

In the gospel of Christ, which is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," *exhortation* occupies an important and large place; therefore let us consider it in the light of revelation, meekly and prayerfully. To do so understandingly and profitably, and to the glory of Christ, we should see the scriptural relation and place of exhortation in the gospel of salvation, that we may neither undervalue nor overvalue it, and that we may see the need and true use of it. The text plainly reveals the need and use or purpose of exhortation with all long-suffering and doctrine or teaching. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine." It was for this cause that Paul thus solemnly charged Timothy, and further commanded him: "But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." For all this was needful, because the time would come when they would not endure sound doctrine; and from them Timothy should suffer afflictions and reproaches. That time soon came, and it has ever been coming.

"They" who would not endure sound doctrine, but should "turn away their ears from the truth," were the professed disciples of Christ, who had itching ears for something more than "the word" and "sound doctrine," and desired "some new thing," something philosophical and pleasing to the mind and reason of men, as taught and accepted by scholars and doctors of theology, but called "fables" by Paul, who says that "God hath made foolish the wisdom of this world."

The text shows that the first and most important part in fulfilling the gospel ministry is to "Preach the word." This is the foundation of all exhortation in the gospel. And so Paul was "determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." And Peter says, "But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." Thus did he preach the first gospel sermon after the ascension of the risen Christ, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost; for he preached Christ, and him crucified, and risen from the dead, the only Savior. And not until the people heard the word, and cried out, "What shall we do?" were they either commanded or exhorted to do anything; but then "did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation." That is, having "gladly received the word" preached, he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, in whom they believed, and thus separate themselves from the impenitent and unbelieving generation of the Jews. So the text shows the same order later on in the gospel, when Timothy should preach the word; reprove, rebuke and exhort, for the purpose stated. Therefore the faithful preaching of the word of truth, with gospel exhortation, is the Lord's ordained way of calling out and separating his believing followers from the unbelieving world, and of maintaining the true church and the truth as it is in Christ. The recorded words of Jesus clearly establish this fact, and it is

fully confirmed by the inspired writings of his chosen apostles.

Let us then turn to their testimony, that we may see the relation of exhortation to the fundamental truth of the gospel of salvation, for there is a divine unity and harmony in the New Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and this is carried out in the gospel of his grace, as one complete and perfect system of divine truth and salvation, to the praise and glory of God in his Son Jesus Christ. And so the word says, "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." This tells it all. Let us pause here, and dwell a little on this wonderful revelation, for our instruction and reproof, exhortation and comfort. It was John the Baptist that bore this testimony of Jesus, of whom he said, "He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me." And so Jesus was before Moses, and the prophets, and the apostles, and all the ministry and church; therefore the words, "And of his fullness have all we received," apply to all these, to all the children and servants of God, and they clearly show that "all we" have received only of the fullness of Christ, and not all his fullness, but only "of his fullness." This fullness of which all we have received certainly includes all the fullness of the gospel, all the spiritual and ministerial gifts and qualifications as the members of Christ and of his gospel church, for all this is in him and of him. Hence we have nothing whatever pertaining to the gospel of salvation outside "of his fullness." And not only so, but it is just as true that all the gospel fullness of blessing and salvation that all we have received, is "grace for grace." Not grace for work, but "for grace;" that is, because of grace given us in Christ Jesus we receive grace. This then is the only gospel principle upon which "all we" receive "all spiritual blessings," and "every good gift and every perfect gift;" for God the Father gives them; they are all of Christ's fullness, "and grace for grace."

Now it will be well for us to see how this gospel doctrine and truth is carried out in the ministration of the gospel of grace, and in the churches of the saints, by the inspired apostles of the Lord Jesus, who have set in their proper place and order the things that pertain to the kingdom of God. In the epistle to the saints at Rome, Paul first very fully shows the awful guilt and condemnation of all the children of the flesh, by the disobedience of the first man, and the consequent dominion or reign of sin unto death over all the race of man, which is unconditional and absolute. He then presents the perfect obedience of Christ, the second Man, and his everlasting righteousness, as the Head of the new covenant, showing that by his obedience shall his many people be made righteous; that unto them and in them shall grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. Of Christ and us he says, "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." One surely follows the other, as cause and effect. "For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." This is the doctrine of Christ and his reigning and saving grace, the doctrine of the gospel, the sure foundation of salvation unto eternal glory, upon which the church and the ordinances of the gospel rest. Upon this doctrine of grace reigning by

our Lord Jesus Christ, and much more abounding, where sin abounded, reigning in the hearts of all who are dead with Christ unto sin, reigning through righteousness unto eternal life,—upon this doctrine of Christ is based all gospel ordinances, commandments and exhortations unto the obedience of faith and love in the gospel kingdom. "Our beloved brother Paul," therefore, goes right on and exhorts, saying, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." What is the constraining incentive thus to do? Hear Paul tell us, "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then, shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid." This is the sentiment of grace, and this its effect. What a blessed foundation is this grace to base all gospel exhortation upon, for grace secures its subjects from the dominion of sin; it qualifies them to live righteously and godly in the world, to adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things, and it is sufficient for them in their weakness to support them against the buffetings of the wicked one. There is no other foundation-principle to build gospel exhortation upon than the doctrine of God's grace that bringeth salvation; for the gospel kingdom is the kingdom of grace, and the children of the kingdom are under grace, and in this kingdom grace is the only power that reigns, for grace has no rival. The law of works has no place here, for the people of grace are not under the law; therefore exhortation in the kingdom of Christ, by whom grace reigns, cannot be upon any legal principle, which is necessarily conditional, and therefore defective and attended with failure. Not so with grace, the governing principle in the new covenant, which is unconditional, is rich in mercy, full of grace and truth, has Jesus, not Moses, for its Mediator, "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption;" and this new and better testament is ministered by the Spirit of the living and true God, who says of the people of the covenant, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Nothing doubtful, contingent "upon ourselves," conditional, uncertain here, for all the promises of God in Jesus Christ are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God by us, declares Paul. O, what a blessed ground of assurance is here furnished us in the gospel of the new covenant to build all exhortation upon unto the obedience of faith, and the work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in Christ Jesus! For thus furnished and supported, in the full assurance of faith and hope, we can with comfort take up Paul's cheering exhortation and say, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Now then it is evident that all gospel obligations flow from grace, and partake of the nature of grace; therefore every gospel exhortation is of grace, and grace gives it its force and sanction, for the gospel itself is "the gospel of the grace of God," so termed by Paul, so all that the gospel is, all that belongs to it, is of

grace; its faith and hope and love; its ordinances and commandments and exhortations; its ministration and obedience and good works; its promises and salvation and blessing—all, all are of grace, for all the fullness of the gospel of Christ is the free, unmerited, unbought bestowment and gracious gift of the "God of all grace and comfort." "To them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." All this goes before, and is the groundwork of the exhortation which follows: "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."—2 Peter i. In Gal. v., Paul shows that these christian virtues and graces are the fruit of the Spirit; not the works of the flesh, but their opposite. And he there says, "But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law." Paul therefore prayed to the Father for the brethren, "That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith: that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God."—Eph. iii. This has no reference to the power of the Holy Spirit in the impartation of spiritual life in Christ Jesus, but to the needed ministration of daily bread and strength, that the brethren might be enabled through the Lord's sufficient grace to "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called" of God, and to fulfill the work of faith in love. And so Paul said to another gospel church, "And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God."—Phil. i. And to still another church Paul says, "We [Paul and Timothy] give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints, for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth. * * * For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy

of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness."—Col. i.

Let us now pause, and behold how continually dependent are the saints in Christ upon the Father and Son and Spirit for spiritual understanding, wisdom and strength, both to prepare and enable them to "walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing," and to be "fruitful in every good work." And here we are taught, too, the great and continual necessity that is upon us to "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Yea, also, here we have strong encouragement to come to this heavenly throne. The precious Scriptures quoted point us to the blessed and only source of mercy and grace, knowledge and ability, fitness and acceptance, faith and love, that we may walk obediently as the dear children of God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is most evident, therefore, that all gospel commandments, exhortations, admonitions and reproofs have their source and strength in the continual supply of the Spirit and grace of God in the heart, and that every obedient act of faith in Christ Jesus is wrought only through this supply, and is the fruit thereof. No truth is more clearly and fully revealed in the holy Scriptures than this. This is God's most gracious work, and his blessed truth. Underlying and giving authority and efficacy to all commandment and exhortation in the gospel to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," is the all-sufficient cause; "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." So then at all times whenever we have the will and the power to thus obey, God gives both to us, and he "worketh" in us. Paul's true testimony is, "Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." He therefore says, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." All this is true of all others, in whom Christ lives. "Christ is our life." All the fruits of righteousness in us are by him, unto the praise and glory of God. This is a sure foundation for all gospel obedience, and all good works, and for all commandments and exhortations thereunto, for herein (in Zion) "the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." The Lord said of Zion, "All my springs are in thee." Both the pure river of water of life and the tree of life are in the Zion of God, and all the streams of salvation flow from the river of life. The Lord gives both grace and glory, and he freely gives them. "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." Thus it is positively established that all the bestowments of rewards and blessings in the kingdom of grace are not rewards of debt or for service, but of grace; for all service and obedience have their source in abounding grace, and flow out freely from the heart in which grace reigns; therefore to grace is all the praise due. It should not be thought, then, that any divine blessing in Zion, any comfort or joy of salvation, is a conditional reward, dependent upon our obedience to the Lord, for then "the reward is not reckoned of grace, but of debt." Grace itself is not conditional, but free, and it "much more abounds" than sin; therefore all the rewards and blessings of grace are both unconditional and free, like grace itself, for they are of

grace. This applies to all gospel salvation; yea, it applies to all service in the gospel, all its ministration, its exhortation unto good works, and its obedience of faith in Christ Jesus; for the gospel itself, and all that the gospel means and is, is "the gospel of the grace of God." So, but for grace there would be no gospel of salvation, no gospel exhortation and service, no comfort of love, no joy of salvation, no reward of grace. Hence, as obedient servants of the Lord, in the fulfillment of all gospel service, we ourselves are entirely dependent upon the "sufficient" grace of Christ, "the grace of God that bringeth salvation." For this cause Paul says, "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." This is equally true of all gospel labor in the service of the Lord, therefore every subject of grace would do well to disclaim any sufficiency of his own to perform any conditions of salvation, and thus to obtain any reward, but be lowly enough to confess with Paul, It was not I that did the service and labored, "but the grace of God which was with me." Were all thus like Paul, the effect would be unity, quietness and peace, and each would meekly endeavor to be "to the praise of the glory of God's grace." "A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." Contention would then cease about this, and that, and the other salvation; one by grace, others of works; one unconditional, others conditional; one dependent upon the Lord, others dependent upon ourselves; for all the saved in Christ Jesus would then happily unite in thankfully ascribing all salvation from all sin, and from all the sinfulness and weakness of the flesh, and unto all loving obedience in the faith of Christ, to God and his grace. Unto this end is all exhortation unto gospel obedience directed in the New Testament, wherein exhortation abounds, under which blessed obligations of loving service grace has brought the dear children of God; therefore the holy and blessed obligations of unmerited grace should not be prostituted to selfish aims and ends by degrading them to the principle of conditions of salvation, by doing which we obtain many salvations in time as conditional rewards. For this is both selfish and legal in its nature, and is antagonistic to grace, and a reproach upon it, and as different from grace as law is from gospel, or Adam from Christ, or flesh from Spirit.

"This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. And he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it."

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind.

KELLEY'S CORNERS, N. Y., October, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Below I send you the experience of a dear sister whom it was my privilege to baptize on November 3d, 1889, under very trying circumstances. A raging flood of great waters was without, but a great peace was enjoyed within. It will no doubt be read with interest by some of the Lord's little ones who may have been in a confused state of mind with regard to their belief or profession. I also wish to say that it is another exhibition of a living faith, by which the Lord works in the heart of

poor, sinful creatures for his own glory and their good. We also had a very striking development of this in the person of a man who came to the First Church of Roxbury, at their first regular church meeting after the last association, which, as you know, was a good, spiritual meeting, when the Lord was pleased to speak by his servants Vail and Ker, that many hearts were stirred as one heart, to extol the name of the Lord. This dear brother could stay back no longer, nor refrain from telling what God had done for his soul, and how good he did talk of the great mercy and abounding love of a covenant-keeping God who saves sinners by his grace, amazing and great grace.

"Not for their duties nor deserts,
But of his own abounding grace,
He works salvation in their hearts,
And forms a people for his praise."

He will not give his praise to another, nor to graven images. How willingly such bow their necks to the yoke of Jesus. Such was the case of this beloved brother referred to above. Having been buried with the baptism of the Holy Spirit, into the death of Christ, he was prepared to go down into the miniature Jordan or judgment, upon profession of faith in Jesus. But O how unworthy I did feel to lead such an one into the liquid grave to be raised up to walk in newness of life. I often ask, Can it be that the dear Lord has called such a vile, corruptible worm as I to minister in holy things? Yet I cannot stop, and neither dare I stop if I could. This is not that I fear being cast off on the left hand, or that I shall lose a reward, but in order to serve in my poor, sinful heart, a going out to my God, who has done so much for me in love, who has not coaxed me, nor threatened me, that I should preach the unsearchable riches of Jesus, but whom I believe has worked in my heart, soul and mind, to will and to do of his good pleasure. He has said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," and this is in baptism, in prayer, in praise and in preaching. Again he said, If ye did love me, ye would keep my commandments, and while I believe firmly that the child of God who lives in this sweet spiritual union knows well, if he is observing, that when he separates himself from this God to whom he is joined, that is, when he looks to an arm of flesh, the breach will widen, God separating himself from him as the branches are separated from the vine, yet still he looks to Jesus his Son, and on them in him. So his love is everlasting and unchangeable. The breach widens upon the principle presented when he said to the people, "Your sins have separated between me and you," until they come once more to the ends of the earth, or into darkness itself, yet Jesus brings us nigh by the blood of the cross, and makes us light in him, and causes us to look to him as those who have come to the ends of the earth, and they find that in keeping his commandments is great reward, and that the willing and the obedient eat the good of the land. They know that the dead are raised up and that the poor have the gospel preached unto them. So also they that go not up to Jerusalem (spiritual interest) or seek the things above (above the law and its demands against sinners) as those risen with Jesus (who is the resurrection and the life to them) on them shall come no rain. But on the mount of holiness his doctrine drops as the rain, and his speech distills as the dew, for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore. And our God works in us after the counsel of his own will, and we are fearfully and wonderfully made. Surely his work in our heart, as poor, unworthy and sinful as we are, shall praise

him, and the fear of the Lord being in our heart, a faith's view of God as our wisdom is begun. We then begin to hate evil. This is a well spring of life, to prevent the snares of death. What we really and truly know of God is in our own soul and life, and what we know of the Jerusalem which is above, and which is free, and which is the mother of us all, is in our fellowship and communion with those of like precious faith. Thus we are not only hearers but doers of the word, and this proves that we have dug deep and have found a rock to build upon, and are blessed in the deed.

Before I close this ramble, I want to show the pattern, especially to any that may feel tried, as they remember their fears and interest in Christ, upon whom they trust the chastisement of their peace was laid, and that by his stripes they were healed. For all the work which he did in the world, what did he obtain from the world? What did he obtain from his heavenly Father? From the world, and all mankind naturally, cursing and bitterness and death. From his Father he obtained the unrelenting hand of strict justice and severe judgment, even to the awakening of the sword against him, as the man that was God's equal, smiting the Shepherd and scattering the sheep. Terrible indeed is the spectacle of the Son of God among them, suffering all their malice, that he might bring relief to them, or favor from God. They did all that their darkened minds could do, all that belongs to the scheme of James Arminius in these more modern days, but which will end with the death of its author. But the Son of God came not to do his own will, and truly his reward is with him, and his work before him. This is the real condition of the people of God who are members of his body, and of his flesh, and of his bones. But here is his glory, for from this his people, though bitter the cup, shall be delivered, and the Father shall be glorified. It was his confidence that his Father always heard him in his afflictions. And all that the Father gave him shall come unto him in this work of trial, and they shall be raised up at the last day, and he will bring them off conquerors, and more than conquerors, because he has loved them, and given himself for them. And as the Father has loved him, so he loves them, and bids them continue in his love. So the work of God in the sinner's heart renders unceasing praise to him as a matter of faith. In keeping his commandments the believer is separated from all thought of power of his will save in God alone. Thus they know what the Scripture means which says, There is no power but of God, and they come to know that it is given to them in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but to suffer for his sake. Thus his stripes are for our humbling, and for our growth in grace, and in the further knowledge of the truth.

I have written with a desire to comfort. Do with this as you will or think best. Your brother,

J. D. HUBBELL.

UNION GROVE, N. Y., Nov. 27, 1890.

DEAR BROTHER HUBBELL:—May one so unworthy as I address you thus? It has been impressed upon my mind for some time to write to you some of my experience. It is with much fear and trembling that I make the attempt, and I know that unless the Lord leads my mind and directs my pen it will be all in vain, and it is unto him that I look for strength in every time of need. I cannot tell when I was first led to see myself a sinner in the sight of God; when I was a

child I used to think that I was a bad girl, and that the Lord would punish me for it, and I thought I could be good if I had a mind to be. I was taught at Sunday School that I could please the Lord, if I would be good, and I was taught that if I did anything wrong the Lord would be angry with me, and I would go to a bad place when I died. I was very much afraid to die, for I knew that I did wrong all the time. When I was about twenty years old I attended a protracted meeting; they preached that any one that wanted to be a christian could get religion if they were of a mind to, and they invited all such to come up and sit on the mourners' bench. I thought that would be doing right, so I went forward and tried to get religion, but I seemed to be so hard hearted I thought I was worse than the rest. When the meeting closed I did not seem to be any better, but I thought that if I joined the church and lived right I would be a christian. I did join the Methodist Church, and I lived with them about nine years before my mind changed, then I began to be dissatisfied, and I could not enjoy myself going to their meetings any longer, I did not like to go, the preaching seemed different, but I thought it was all in me, and I would try to pray that the Lord would show me the right way, and that he would give me a new heart. I felt that my heart was a heart of stone, and I knew that I was not a christian, and that I did wrong when I joined the church. I wished that I had not gone to that protracted meeting. I now thought that such meetings were wrong. I think that I now felt myself the worst kind of a sinner. I did not have anywhere else to go but unto Jesus. I knew that he alone could save me, and that I could not save myself. I was cut off from every prop, and had nothing to cling to. I left off going to the Methodist meeting, there was no comfort there for me. I then went to the Old School Baptist meeting. They preached that sinners were saved by grace through faith, and that not of themselves, but that it was the gift of God. This sounded good to me, for I knew this was the only way in which I could hope for mercy. I kept going to hear Baptist preaching as often as I had opportunity. I attended their association; the preaching sounded good to me. One of the ministers spoke of this passage of Scripture in his sermon, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." It seemed as though it was spoken for me. I went home rejoicing. I felt that I had been hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and now the Lord said they should be filled. I then wanted to tell some of the Lord's people how I felt, and I wanted to be with them. This was in September, and in November I offered myself to the church at Andes, and was received, yet I felt very unworthy to be called one of them. I felt a peace that passeth understanding, and that I could sing,

"'Twas a heaven below,
The Redeemer to know,
And the angels could do nothing more
Than to fall at his feet,
And the story repeat,
And the Savior of sinners adore!"

It seemed then that I should be happy, and that I never could be otherwise. But how little we know as to what trials and darkness await us in this world. May we always be enabled to say, Thy will and not mine be done. May we always look unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith. We know that he doeth all things well, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

Dear brother Hubbell, the above, as you will see, was written in 1890, I thought to send it then, but was afraid to do so, but I will send it now, as it has been a burden upon my mind. I have been much in darkness with doubts and fears of late. It seems at times as though the Lord had forsaken me, yet I feel to say with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." I know he is just, and has a right to do with his own as he will. O that I could only know that I am a child of God: I feel so unworthy and sinful. I send this hoping that it may be a relief to my mind. Please make allowances for this.

Your sister in Christ,

ELIZA MANN.

WAVERLY, Pa., Jan. 18, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE GRAND, OLD, RELIABLE, FAMILY PAPER, THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—A paper whose foundation is God's eternal truth, and that is why I love it. I remember well when I was about one-half Old Baptist, and the other half Arminian, and had not been in the school of hell and destruction very long, and not very hot at that, how I wished the ministers when they said, "election" and "predestination," would say them nice and smooth, and not very often, and O my, when they hitched on absolute or unlimited to predestination, not having been in the lowest hell, it scratched my throat terribly. But having been in the belly of hell so much of the time the past twenty-five years, I can receive the doctrine of absolute, unlimited predestination just as easy as I used to swallow false doctrine, and dear brethren, it fills me with joy and gladness when I hear it declared faithfully and plainly. I trust my throat spiritually has been prepared by grace divine to swallow the truth as it is in Jesus, and I want no galvanizing, sandpapering or lopping off corners for me. Dear brethren, one and all, cry aloud and spare not; lift up your voice like a trumpet. Say to the righteous, it shall be well with them, and the wicked, it shall be ill with them. These are the people of God, and all of the commandments, admonitions and exhortations, are for them alone. All the obedience that is acceptable unto God, is that which is wrought in the hearts of his people by his own holy Spirit, and by the same Spirit they are led to obey him. This being true, all obedience in the letter, without the Spirit and grace of God prompting, though it be ever so perfect outwardly, is of the flesh, and comes under the head of Arminianism. For one I am ready to acknowledge that my only hope of living and dying in the fellowship of the saints, is alone in, through and by the sovereign grace of God, for without it I will fall by temptation, disgrace the cause of my Redeemer, and become a castaway. If there is a time salvation separate from God's grace, or if there is a time salvation that does not need the grace of God to perform it, I have not found it in the word, neither has it been revealed to me, and until it is, I will not advocate it.

In the beginning of this scribble I mentioned a certain school called hell; a school that every heaven-born soul knows more or less about, and none but the saints have a knowledge of it. Jesus only holds the keys of hell and of death. He opens, and none can shut, shuts, and none can open. God made a hell for Jonah, commanded him to go to Nineveh, but Jonah boards a ship for Tarshish; God sends a storm, which is the real cause of Jonah being thrown overboard; hell (the fish) swallows him, and takes

him to the bottom of the sea. There he said, "In the belly of hell cried I unto the Lord." He was there three days and nights, because he had no keys to unlock the jaws of the whale, and the whale had no power to bring him forth, but when the Lord spake unto the fish, out sprang Jonah on the shores of Nineveh, right where God had use for him. In reading the Scriptures I have not as yet learned that the devil has a hell of his own, that he has the management of, but Jesus himself holds all of the keys to all of the hell there has been, is, or ever will be. Will Jesus lend his keys to the devil, to cast his people into an eternal hell of fire and brimstone, to be tormented eternally? No, no; Jesus saves his people from their sins, (not hell) and delivers them from the lowest hell. Where is the other hell we hear so much about by the Arminian world? David says, "The pains of hell gat hold upon me." In Rev. xx. 10, we read, "And the devil that deceived them was cast into a lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophets are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." Is there day and night in the beyond, or in eternity? Pass on to the thirteenth and fourteenth verses. Here we read that death and hell itself is to be cast into the lake of fire, an element of destruction, but mind you, not until they had delivered up the dead which were in them. And now, brethren, as we speak of things that we do know, and testify of things that we have seen, I will try and content myself by speaking of the death, hell and destruction that I find as I journey along in this world of tribulation and distress, and let others that profess to know about the eternal hell, fire and brimstone place, preach that.

I will drop this subject now, and answer, or try and answer, a few questions that have been propounded to me.

First. Is the pastor of a church under the same obligation to be present at the regular meetings of the church that the other members are?

He is. As servant of the church he should, if possible, be present at every meeting of the church. It makes no difference if there is corn that needs hoeing, potatoes to dig, hay to be gathered, if he has the interest and welfare of the church at heart, the church will be first, and these will be secondary matters. That man whose temporal matters are first with him and the church, is not fit to serve the church of Christ.

Second, How about the lay members?

They are in duty bound to attend the meetings of the church as fully as the pastor, upon the same principle, and for the same reason, and the law of Christ will not admit of any excuse for absence from meeting, save providential hinderances.

Third, What is the duty of members living so far away that they cannot attend the meetings of the church?

It is the duty of all such to keep the church informed of their whereabouts, and at least once a year write something of the state of their minds, and whether they continue in fellowship with the church, and should there be financial burdens to be borne, they should assist the same as though they were present at every meeting. No church should hold the name of any member that will not make some report to them at least once every two years. This is my opinion. Many churches are very slack in this respect, and will report members without having heard from them for several years.

Fourth. What is the duty of deacons?

They should pass the elements at com-

munion, assist if necessary at baptism, acquaint themselves with the circumstances of the indivual members of the church, and should any need assistance, make report to the church, and be a mouth in prayers when called upon, if thus gifted. These are a few of the duties of the deacons.

Fifth. Is it the duty of each member of the church to have family prayer?

No, not one out of twenty can speak in prayer, though all do pray in spirit at times, and I do not know of any Scripture authority for any one praying every night, though if any of my brethren desired to pray, I could not object. I have received much comfort in listening to a brother or sister speaking in prayer, but as for myself, praying is up hill business very often. No one knows but God, the suffering I have passed through trying to pray.

Sixth. Is it the duty of all professors to return thanks at the table?

No.

Why?

Because they cannot. Though all may feel thankful, at times, for the mercies bestowed upon them, what a man cannot do, it is not his duty to do. I am not sure that the Scriptures authorize the returning of thanks at the table any more than other places. The Savior returned thanks when he fed the great company with a few loaves and small fishes. If this is an example and authority for returning thanks at a natural meal, why is not the result the same; a great multiplication of the food? He took bread and break and return thanks, at the supper or communion, this is no authority for doing so at every meal. When he was revealed to his disciples, after his resurrection, it was in the breaking of bread. I am willing that brethren should do so, and I always ask brethren to do so, that I know practice it, and will do the best I can when asked.

I have done the best I could in answering these few questions, and would be glad if others would write upon these same subjects. I hope that I am willing to be instructed in all things pertaining to the duties of the saints, as well as the great plan of redemption and salvation.

I wish to say before I close that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is well filled with profitable reading matter for the living in Zion; just what they need, and I hope they will continue on the same line, while I live at least.

May the dear Lord remember his afflicted and poor people everywhere, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

Brother Beebe, this is at your disposal, to publish or not as you think best, if you have any fears that it will disturb the saints, burn it please, I do not want to mar the peace of Zion.

Your wicked brother,

D. M. VAIL.

MACOMB, Ill., Dec. 21, 1899.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have often thought of trying to write something in response to your precious, comforting letter received so long ago, but I have felt so barren of anything good or interesting to write, I have put it off till now. But after reading your communication in the SIGNS of Dec. 1st, I felt like I could not be satisfied until I had written to you. I have carefully read over every word of your article, and it so fully coincides with my belief and experience, (if I have any) that I want to express my approbation of it. I have never for a moment believed anything else, and I never knew until quite recently that any one

who claimed to be an Old School Baptist ever entertained any other thought. I have always thought that salvation by grace alone, for time and eternity, was the distinguishing difference between the Old School Baptists and the Arminian world, who believe that by grace and works, or a mixture in which works seem to predominate, they are saved, and that their will was free to choose life or death, keep in the path of obedience by their own strength, performing good works that they may receive a reward, &c. But O, my dear brother, these letters which have of late been published in some of our papers advocating "free will," surely cannot have been written by an Old School Baptist! I am astonished at hearing such a thing, and much more of reading it in our papers. I have never heard these things discussed here, either in public or private.

I attended two associations this fall, and also two last fall, besides quite a number of church meetings, and have heard much sound, able preaching, but have not heard a word said about "time salvation," but salvation by grace, for time and eternity, was the sweet theme the ministers all proclaimed. How can it be any other way? Does it not take the same grace to keep us in the "strait and narrow way," as it did to put us there? Are we any more able to do right, or are we any less dependent? Have we any more strength than we had then? Are we not just as helpless, just as dependent on God's grace now as then? Most surely we are. As for myself, I am so weak in the faith, so doubting, so full of fears, I cannot even say, I know I have passed from death unto life, but I have only a faint hope I have, for the love I have for the brethren, and what gave me this hope. It is by grace we are saved, not only in regeneration, but every day. Yes, we need this sustaining grace every day, every hour. I am such a poor, sinful creature, I cannot trust to my own strength one hour, for if left to our strength, and were we to follow our own will, or carnal mind, we would ever go wrong and in opposition to the will of God.

If man's will was free why cannot he do the things that he would? Paul says he cannot do the things he would. He had a will to do good, but how to perform it he found not. So his will was not free, and he also says, "By the grace of God I am what I am." Must we not all say this, that we would love to live more holy, more humble, more submissive to the will of God in all things, to walk more worthy of our vocation? but we cannot do the things we would, for the sin that dwelleth in us, and we are made to groan, being burdened with this weight of sin and corruption, and we sink in deep mire where is no standing, and we cry for help. Can we help ourselves? Where is man's boasted strength now, when thick darkness closes round? We must and do cry for strength, and if we are saved from, or brought out of these dark places, it is by grace, not by our own strength. It is a daily crying. It is only by a renewal of mercy day by day that the child of God is ever enabled to keep on his way. Did it not take the same power to keep the children of Israel in the way, that brought them out of the land of Egypt? Did God forsake them then, leaving them to depend on their own strength? Not at all. He was their Protector and Deliverer all along the way. He brought them safely through the Red Sea, when they praised God for their deliverance. Day by day they were fed with the heavenly manna, bread from

heaven, the gift of God. And this came down fresh each day, and none was saved for the morrow. Is not this a lively type of a child of God? Must he not have grace for each day's trial? Did not our Savior say he came not to do his own will? Did he not cry and pray for strength, saying, "If it be possible let this cup pass by"? It was not his will as a man to suffer, but to do his Father's will, which was the salvation of his people, he must suffer, and was made submissive. An angel stood by to strengthen him. Then how infinitely more do we, poor, weak, sinful, ignorant, helpless creatures, need the help of God, need his saving grace and strength. We are commanded to "pray without ceasing," to "pray evermore." Not that I believe we receive a reward for praying, or obedience, or any good works, for when we have done all we are unprofitable, and we deserve nothing, but if we ever follow in the path of obedience it is not in our strength, but it is all of grace. "It is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his own good pleasure." The man of God delighteth in the law of the Lord. If we perform any act acceptable to God it is by his grace, and we feel an answer of a good conscience, not for the performance, but in doing our duty. If we love our Savior, we want to honor, obey and follow him; but we cannot do this of ourselves, but God first gives us the will, then the grace and strength, for of ourselves we can do nothing. So we see that we owe our salvation, obedience and good works all to grace, and grace alone.

"Grace led my roving feet
To tread the heavenly road,
And new supplies each day I meet,
While pressing on to God."

Now I feel I must stop. I hardly know why I have written all this to you. But your letter was such a comfort to me. I was so glad to read the articles from Elders Curry, True, Lively and brother Beebe. I have not seen Elder Curry this year, but met him several times during last year. He lives over a hundred miles from me. Our church is in peace; Elder S. Ketchum is our pastor. He is sound in the faith, and greatly beloved by the brethren.

Will you forgive me for writing at such length, and pardon all amiss? I fear you will tire reading this, but I trust I have the interest of the cause at heart. I will ever appreciate a line from you. O, may we ever pray for Zion, and that God may keep us from every false way, but may we be kept in the old paths, for his name's sake.

I am, I trust, your sister in Christ,
SARAH E. RUNKLE.

UPPER CHURCH, Tenn., August 17, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS, AND ALL THE DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS SCATTERED ABROAD:—I am, if not deceived, a sinner saved by grace, and if not saved by grace, I am lost. There is no other way of salvation but by grace, for it is said in the Bible, There is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. I have felt like writing a few thoughts, and you can dispose of them as you think best. It is written, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."—1 Cor. xv. 22. Now, brethren, it is evident that all means all, that is, all the different characters named. There is no question as to the all who died in Adam; it was doubtless all of his race. There is no dispute about this that I am aware of. The Lord made Adam, and created in him his seed or posterity, and God gave him a law of generation, by which every child of Adam should be

developed, and every child of Adam has come into the world by that same law, and in the same manner, and all who are born into the world are born to die. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," and Paul has said that flesh and blood cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified, because the law is holy, just and good, and Adam's posterity are dead. They are dead in sins, dead to righteousness. Therefore Paul says, "When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness." And "you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." "By the disobedience of Adam sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all, for that all have sinned." "But now by the obedience of one, that is Christ, the free gift came upon all men to justification unto life." This is not all of Adam's generation, but all of Christ's generation. The first Adam was of the earth earthy, and the second Adam was the Lord from heaven. The first Adam was natural, and the second spiritual. The one represented a natural generation, and the other a spiritual generation. Therefore Christ said to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again." The natural man cannot see the things of the kingdom, for they are spiritually discerned. As the natural man was created in Adam, and received his existence in him, his literal head, so the spiritual man receives his being in Christ, his spiritual Head and representative. Therefore Paul says, "We are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." And these works are of God. They are such as repentance, faith, baptism, and to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth, and to walk in newness of life, and to grow up into a holy temple in the Lord. Therefore the apostle says, "Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge," &c., for if these things be in you and abound, they shall make you that ye be not barren or unfruitful in the knowledge of God. But if ye lack these things, ye cannot see afar off, and have forgotten that ye were purged from your old sins. These things are the work of faith and of love. And "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Herein is the love of God manifest, that ye love one another; and love worketh no ill to his neighbor. Therefore we are not to be conformed to this world, but to be transformed. Paul said, "What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch." "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." "Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." He does not always appear in a form of wickedness, but oftener in a form of religion, and even in the form of a preacher, or in the likeness of an angel of light. He thinks it a great victory when he can sow the seeds of discord among the brethren. By his means there are lords many, and gods many, set up, and so there are churches many also. But the Lord says, "Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The true church was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and she is the beloved of the Father, and she is the light of the world. Therefore Christ said, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." This we do by obeying his commandments, and walking in all his ordinances blameless. "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so

walk ye in him." "Walk after the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." And if sons, then are they heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. They have a kingdom which hath foundations, and whose maker and builder is God. Christ is the foundation of the church, and other foundation can no man lay. It is "in him we live, move and have our being." "He is the way, the truth and the life." "He is all and in all." His promises are sure and steadfast, and he says that he will stick closer than a brother. Again he says, "I will never leave nor forsake you." Brethren, stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free. Dispose of this as you may see fit.

Your brother in the Lord,

GEORGE EDENS.

DAYTON, Wash., Oct. 20, 1899.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—I will try to write some thoughts upon temporal or time salvation. What is it that produces good works? Is it the outward man, or is it the inward man? The Lord says by the mouth of Ezekiel, "A new heart also will I give you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." In this God has made known what he will do for his people: a new heart also will he give them. As the heart is the seat of the affections, this signifies that God will give to his people new affections and new desires. It is not a renewal of the old desires or affections, but a new one. Jeremiah said, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?" This we understand to be the nature, or disposition of man, or of the carnal mind of man. It is against God, and is not subject to his law, and neither indeed can be. By this we can see the nature or disposition of man in his fallen state, but the Lord says, "A new heart will I put within you;" that is, he will put within them a new nature, new affections and new desires. And he also says, A new spirit will I put within you; that is, a new life, new principles. This life is that which quickens and brings to light the hidden things of darkness within us. Dear brethren, in our experience do we not witness this? Do we not know that in our former life we loved this world, and that our joys and comforts were in the world? But at some time in our life that love which we had for the world, and the joy which we received in it, and from its alluring amusements, was overcome by another, or a new love and affection. This was something that we never had before. By this we were enabled to see and realize our sinful condition. By the Spirit we were made to hate the ways of sin, and to love the way of righteousness. This love for righteousness then creates a will to be righteous, and in this we have the will to obey our heavenly Father in all that he has commanded us. But in attempting to carry out the desires of this will we find obstacles in the way, and these are our own carnal nature and disposition, which are not changed or made new. Now we desire to do good, but evil is present with us. Thus we come to realize that the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that we cannot do the things that we would. Now, dear brethren, what is it that you would do? Why you would do righteously, and be wholly without sin. Then this desire and will to do good is of the Spirit, and is of God. Every good thought and desire is of God. The blessed Lord has not

only saved his people from their sins, but he has given them his Spirit to guide them through this life, thus working in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Thus we realize that our righteousness is of him, as he has said.

This being led by the Spirit of God does not exempt us from duty, but as we know that we are subject to the carnal mind, and are yet in the flesh, and that the flesh is not yet made perfect, but is still liable to do wrong, and to wander from the strait and narrow path, therefore it is the duty of every child of God to crucify the lusts of the flesh, and to put on the whole armor of God, that they may fight the good fight of faith. Thus we should strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace, and to let brotherly love continue. This is to be done by living in obedience to the commands of our Lord and Master. Where we see brethren neglecting to obey their Lord, giving away to the lusts of the flesh and of the mind, and running greedily after the things of the world, we may be sure that brotherly love does not abound. "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live." We shall live in them, and not by them. Dear brethren, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race set before us, ever looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Summing the matter all up, it is true that without him we can do nothing. My experience teaches me that I have no righteousness of myself.

Brethren editors, this is yours to do with as you think best.

Yours to serve in the bonds of the gospel,

B. S. PATE.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

PLEASE BE SURE

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur. It is a good plan to inclose in the letter, one of the little pink slips containing the name, taken either from the margin of the paper, or from the wrapper in which the paper comes.

By observing the above instructions our subscribers will enable us to more conveniently keep their accounts.

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EDITORIAL.

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JAMES II. 26.

"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

These solemn words of the apostle James have been much in our mind of late, and we feel to speak of some of the things which seem to us connected with them. These words, as well as all other Bible testimony, are good for the brotherhood to consider. Concerning these words, as well as concerning most other Scriptures, false views have been held. Arminians, and all who hold to salvation by works in any form, have always misinterpreted the meaning of James. Sometimes the minds of some who believe in the saving grace of God, and who confess that it is grace that has redeemed them, and given the quickening spirit to them, and that it is also grace which has kept them to this day, have been confused with the plausible arguments of the opponents of salvation by grace, and have been led into bondage, as were the brethren at Galatia, and the countries round about, by the Judaizing teachers who had come among them, professing to be preachers of Christ, but really being teachers of the law. Because of this it seems to us well that at times such expressions as the above text, and other portions of this chapter, and other exhortations of the apostles, should be considered, and the true meaning presented. For when these expressions are truly understood, they teach salvation by grace just as effectually as do any other portions of the word. And faith, which is at all times, and in all cases, the gift of God, is shown to be the true source of all good works in these places, just as clearly as in any other portion of the word. All things magnify grace and faith. Exhortations, warnings and reproofs, magnify the faith of God as effectually as do any direct statements as to its power to justify the sinner.

It is in our mind to speak first of three ways in which men are said in the Scriptures to be justified, and in doing so we think that the true and real harmony of these three statements will appear. And then we desire to speak of that faith which is full of good fruits, and with reference to that which James calls dead faith, or faith destitute of works.

First, Paul testifies that Jesus was put to death for our sins, and was raised again for our justification. Second, he repeatedly declares that justification is by faith. Third, James declares that a man is justified by works, as well as by faith.

Now unless we are prepared to believe that the Scriptures contradict themselves, and that therefore they are not an infallible standard of truth, we must believe that these three statements concerning justification are all true, and that in some way they are in full harmony, and it has long been clear to our mind that they are in full harmony. There is no contradiction between Paul and himself, neither is there any disagreement between Paul and James.

First, a man is justified really, and in

the sight of the law of God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, so that never again can he come into condemnation before God. Second, he is justified by faith in the sense that faith assures him of his justification in Christ from all things from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses. Faith is not the cause of his justification, but the evidence of it to his own soul. Third, a man is justified by works in the sense that his works prove that that faith which declares his justification in Christ, dwells in him. Faith, in other words, like every other principle of grace, is full of life and power, and does produce corresponding fruits in the heart and life. Justification through the resurrection of Christ is the first and foundation truth upon which all else is built. Justification by faith rests upon this finished work of the Lord in our behalf, and assures us of that justification, and our works are the evidence that we have been justified from our sins, and that faith does in reality abide in us. Thus it is seen that there is no controversy in the Scriptures over the doctrine of justification, but rather that full and perfect harmony exists in all their testimony concerning it. The resurrection of Christ from the dead, faith and works, each has its own province in justification; the first, the prime cause of justification; the second, the witness in our own souls of that great work; the third, the witness which makes manifest to all of spiritual mind, that we are justified in Christ, and that true faith dwells within us. All this is needful for the glory of God in salvation. Faith, in our own hearts, resting in this finished work of Jesus, who by the resurrection secured to us the evidence of the full efficacy and sufficiency of the atonement, glorifies God always, and our good works glorify God also, as they show the power of this full salvation.

We have dwelt upon this at some length, because there have not been wanting those who have sought to throw discredit upon some portions of the Scripture out of these very truths, by striving to show that the Bible contradicted itself. How precious the harmony between the resurrection of Christ, and faith and works. Let us rejoice that these things are so inseparably linked together in the word of God, and in the experience of his people.

Paul does not by any means ignore the especial truth which James enforces, and James does not by any means deny the truth of justification by faith, upon which Paul insists. These two apostles, inspired of God to write just those things which are needful in the churches at all times and in all places, were led to present and enforce truth according to the needs which they, or rather the Holy Ghost, saw existing in the churches at that time. Paul found in the churches a tendency to Judaism, or to that doctrine which seeks to ascribe a part, at least, of our salvation to works of our own. There were those who sought to fasten upon the churches the false idea that after all that Christ had done, something yet remained for men to do in order to reap the benefits of salvation. Mostly they taught in that day that the law of Moses, with its circumcision and other rites, must be observed. Paul saw clearly that this would subvert all the doctrine of Christ, and make his work of none effect in itself, so he said, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." That is, the grace of Christ which had been their trust, was no longer their trust, if they were now to be perfected by the deeds of the law. They had departed from grace to the weak and beggarly el-

ements of the law. Paul fights this monstrous heresy with all the power of the spirit which was in him. He will have no other way of salvation but Christ and his finished work. Yet he also urges with all variety of argument a godly life upon all who believe. But he will not have it that men are justified and saved by this obedience; with him grace crowns all the work.

On the other hand, James seems to have found among the churches, a theory which seemed plausible, and which in fact has been urged against the doctrine of grace by all its opposers in every age, viz: If a man be justified by faith only, then nothing else matters; he need not be at all anxious about his daily life before either God or man. Paul had in the epistle to the Romans, met this very objection, and answered it, expressing the utmost abhorrence at such a conclusion. Paul had replied to the assaults of open enemies of grace. Now James finds this leaven in the churches themselves. Certain men seem to have come to the conclusion that since we are justified by faith in Christ, we need not care about how we live, since we are saved, and nothing can ever condemn us. Now James meets this with some stern assertions. He says, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?" Mark the peculiar expression. He does not say, if a man *have* faith, but, "if a man *say* he hath faith." And again, he says of this profession of faith, "Faith without works is dead, being alone." And again, "Shew me thy faith without thy works, [a thing impossible] and I will shew thee my faith by my works." He again declares that devils have the sort of faith which has not works: "They believe and tremble." And he says, "Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he had offered Isaac?" "Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?" Here the word perfect does not mean that something was lacking in his faith, which works supplied to it, but the original word signifies that the end or completion of the work of faith was to produce the works which did follow. The apostle adds to this, that thus was the Scripture fulfilled which said, "Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness." In other words, Abraham had such faith as did produce its proper results. He had not a mere assent to some dogma, or some theory, but he had the possession of the truth in his heart, and in his experience, and that truth had become a part of his very being. It was the bread of heaven to him, and it gave him strength to run in the way of the commandments of God. Thus his faith was shown to be true faith, and not a mere assent or a mere pretense. So he adds, "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." Also, Rahab the harlot was justified by works when she concealed the spies. Of what avail would any profession on her part that she believed in the God of Israel have been had she not proved her faith by her works? By what she did all Israel knew that she was a true believer. God did not need her works; he knew what was in her heart before. Just the same things which have here been presented by James, are also said by Paul in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. By faith men did all that they did, as there recorded. Not only by faith were they justified, but by the same faith they obeyed, and did, and suffered, in all the history of the past. There is, according

to the testimony of both these apostles, or rather according to the testimony of the Holy Spirit by both apostles, no such thing as an inactive faith among all the gifts of the Spirit of God. Faith may be weak in its manifestation, but if it exist the cry of those who have it will be, "Lord, increase our faith." "Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief." It must not be forgotten that this faith dwells in poor, fallen but redeemed men; men who yet have the weakness and the deadly unbelief of the flesh to fight against. So in the experience of the fruit of this faith, either in joy or in obedience, the possessor is hindered, and his joy marred by the flesh, and by his unbelief, but still his faith does not fail, and when he by bitter experience, and the power of the Spirit of God, is converted, he can and does strengthen his brethren. We cannot maintain our own faith any more than we can manufacture it in the first place. Faith is not only the gift of God, but it is also kept alive by the same power that conferred it. Therefore Jesus prayed for his disciples, that their faith fail not, and therefore the experience of those who for themselves prayed that their unbelief might be helped and their faith increased. If the disciple can maintain his own faith, then Jesus would not have prayed to the Giver of it to see that this faith did not fail, but would rather have exhorted his disciples to that effect. And when men besought him to help their unbelief, he would have said, This is not my work, it is rather yours.

In the text James says, "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." The word spirit used here, is the same as is used in Romans viii. 11, where Paul speaks of the spirit quickening the mortal body in which it dwells. It is the Spirit of God which is given to those who believe, and are born again, that is meant. How powerful in this view does the argument of James become. As the body is absolutely dead to God, and to all that is godlike and heavenly, without the indwelling Spirit of God, which alone can quicken it into any good works, or lead it in the way of obedience, so faith is absolutely dead without works. Taking this in connection with all that James and Paul have said concerning the matter, it is plain that what is intended is this, that if a man does not exhibit the fruit of faith, it is evident that all the faith that he professes to have does not exist in his heart, and all that he really has is but at best a mere assent to some statement of truth, as a mere theory. This will avail a man nothing before God; it is powerless to produce any heavenly fruit. Now the argument of all those who would contend that since a man is justified by faith, he does not need to care about good works, thus falls to the ground. Faith will work, it cannot be idle; from its very nature it must be active. If, therefore, a man profess it, and at the same time does not manifest any anxiety to live it out, the evidence is clear that he does not really possess it. James does not mean that faith comes into a man's heart as a dormant thing, and lies there without the breath of life until the possessor of it infuses into it life by beginning to work. It is not a thing of which the man takes possession, but it is that which takes possession of him. It is not an instrument in his hand, but he is an instrument in its hand. Faith in its exercise does not praise the man, but the man praises it. It does not glorify man, but it does glorify God. From the whole argument it is clear then that James means by dead faith, faith that does not

really exist. If a man has not faith he has not works, and if he has not works, then it is clear that he has not faith.

The argument here is parallel with that of John in his first epistle, concerning love, or charity. "Hereby," he says, "perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"—John iii. 16, 17. It is clear that John means here, that the love of God does not dwell at all in that man who can see his brother have need, and not seek to help him. If love indeed did dwell in that man, it would lead him to do as God had himself done, lay down his life for him. If a man has no heart to help his needy brethren, then he does not love his brother, and he does not love God, and if he professes to do so, his profession is vain. Now this is perfectly parallel to the argument of James concerning faith and works. Where there is no loving deed, there dwells no love, says John. Where there is no faithful work, there is no faith, says James. John could say, Love is dead, being alone, if there be no loving deeds, just as James says concerning faith. But neither the one nor the other can be alone, both will have their fruit. As said before, this fruit may be often marred and hindered by the flesh, and the true believer will deeply sorrow over this failure to attain to that purity of motive which he desires. He will also deplore the paucity and scarcity of the fruits which do appear. He will be driven to humble confession before God, and to prayer for help against his infirmities, and he will never be able to rest satisfied with what he has attained to.

How entirely are believers dependent upon faith and grace for their daily obedience. Without faith, and without love, it is impossible to please God. Without these divine principles there cannot be even a desire to obey him. With these divine principles God is well pleased, and with the indwelling of them will appear fruit in the heart, and life, which is pleasing to God. To those who saw nothing but failure in their lives, the blessed Master is represented as saying, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." To those who, by the clear vision of faith and love dwelling within them, say, When did we ever serve thee in any way? he says, Ye have done these things.

How sorrowful to hear those who ought to know better, because they have been taught the power grace, and the weakness of the flesh, claiming some power in themselves to do good works. The Galatians made the same mistake when they gave heed to Judaizing teachers, and were led into believing, to their own hurt, that though they had begun in the Spirit, now they must be made perfect through the flesh. "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?" we fear might be said to some dear brethren to-day.

We cannot go wrong when we ascribe all our salvation to God, through faith. If any say, Then we may be utterly careless of our life, one of two conclusions is clear concerning them, either they have never known the power of faith, or else they have been perverted by modern Judaizing teachers. James presents the first conclusion, and Paul the latter one. In the one case, men have never known the truth at all, by any experience of it, and in the other case, they have known the truth, but have departed from it through false teaching.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

2 CORINTHIANS XIII. 5.

"EXAMINE yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"

This important admonition is to the saints generally, as well as to the church at Corinth, unto which it was originally addressed. All the saints feel more or less inclined to examine themselves in regard to their hope, their experience, and the reality of their interest in the cleansing blood and justifying righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ; and in this self-examination they are generally led to review their first religious exercises, what they experienced in their translation from darkness into the light, liberty and joy of the gospel; and this is right, and has often served to renew their strength and confidence in the assurance that what they have experienced was certainly the work of God. But it is also important that we should have the witness that we are in the faith, as well as in hope of the gospel. For now abideth faith, hope and charity, &c. So far as faith is considered a vital principle, or fruit of the Spirit, we cannot entertain a genuine gospel hope in its absence, for both faith and hope are the fruits of that same Spirit which is born of God. But we presume the apostle in this admonition has reference to the doctrine or principles of the faith which was once delivered to the saints, and for which they are commanded to contend earnestly. As these disciples possessed Christ in them, they could not possibly be destitute of the grace of faith; but from the many severe reproofs which he dealt out to them in both epistles, it appears evident that they were faulty in regard to the doctrine of faith and the practice corresponding thereto. It is equally certain that God's dear children in the present day are liable to fall into the same faults, or faults equally incompatible with the high vocation wherewith they are called of the Lord. The term faith is often used by Paul to signify the gospel, in distinction from the law, or legal dispensation. For the law is not of faith; but the gospel is a dispensation of promises and provisions of grace and salvation, which, in order for us to enjoy, we must have faith to lay hold of them. Thus, "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast." It is altogether opposed to the doctrine of salvation by works, for the apostle says it is of faith that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all."—Rom. iv. 16. Paul had told the Corinthians of some who concerning the faith had made shipwreck, and others whose heresy in denying the resurrection of the dead had overturned the faith of some. The grace of faith cannot be wrecked nor overturned, for it is the faith of Jesus Christ, and it overcomes the world; but in regard to the doctrine of the gospel, as a system purely of grace, the saints are liable to depart, at least to some extent from it, and thereby suffer loss. How important then, that they should examine themselves in regard to what they hold or countenance as the doctrine of Christ. In this self-examination they require a more reliable standard to judge by than the decisions of learned doctors of divinity, creeds or commentaries written by uninspired men. Each of the members of Christ being personally inter-

ested for himself in the matter, instead of submitting to the judgment of another, must himself make the examination in the fear of God. We, as Old School Baptists, hold that the last will and testament of our Lord Jesus Christ is the divinely authorized standard of our faith. Whatever we believe religiously, or in regard to the gospel, must be tested by what is written in the New Testament. However popular or palatable a sentiment may be, if it is not sustained by that standard, it is to be rejected. Whatever that standard sustains, however unpopular and unpalatable to the flesh, must be regarded as the faith of God's elect—the faith which was once delivered to the saints, and the faith for which the saints are required to contend earnestly.

The Spirit also which God has implanted in his saints, searches all things, even the deep things of God, and is also a witness in point to establish the fact of our being in the faith; but we must try the spirits, because many false prophets have gone out in the world. If the spirit we possess be of God, it will perfectly accord with the testimony of the Scriptures, and thus afford us two witnesses, by which every word shall be established; and by these two witnesses, the word and the Spirit, we shall be able to prove our own selves, whether we be in the faith. Having this proof we have nothing to fear on the subject of our orthodoxy, or soundness in the faith.

Frames and feelings are a very unsafe guide, and carnal reason is still more treacherous and unreliable in the matter of self-examination. Our feelings are always varying, and carnal reason is blind, neither should be trusted to decide our faith or hope in God, but the word and Spirit of our God is immutable. The natural man may read the letter of the Scripture, but he cannot perceive its spirituality, because it is spiritually discerned. The spirit which Christ has given to his saints is the "Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye [the disciples of Christ] know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."—John xiv. 17.

"Know ye not your own selves that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" A reprobate is one that is rejected. And this faith in which the christian church stands, rejects all in whom Jesus Christ is not; for "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Manifestly none are known to the faith or fellowship of the saints until they can give evidence that they are born of the Spirit, for all such, and none but such, have Christ in them the hope of glory, all others are rejected, or reprobates. But what an astonishing revelation is this that the saints know, that Jesus Christ is in them. He whom the boundless heavens adore, the Son of God, the Lord from heaven, the Resurrection and the Life, the only and blessed Potentate, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light, dwells in all his children, and gives them the evidence that he has taken his abode in them. This above all things is worth knowing. And hence the necessity of the self-examination enjoined by the apostle. Ascertaining by divinely approved testimony, that we are in the faith, and that our faith and hope are in God, we have the assurance, yea the knowledge, that Jesus Christ is in us, and that we are in him, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. To secure us from error, from heresy and from imposition, we should pursue the examination in the light of the un-

erring standard, and having the assurance that our faith is sustained by the standard of divine revelation, we not only enjoy the consolation of the assurance our own selves, but are thereby qualified to minister consolation to those who with us are of the household of faith, as well as by our walk and conversation as by speaking to them of the glory of our Redeemer's kingdom, and talking of his power.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 1, 1857.

PERSONAL.

REEDVILLE, Texas, Dec. 30th, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I wish to say that on account of the cold weather in north Texas, I am here on the coast, among the churches of the San Marcos Association. These brethren are sound in faith and doctrine, and stand united on the principles of Bible truth, as taught by apostles and prophets.

Any of the brethren who may wish to write me can address me at Reedville, Caldwell Co., Texas. I certainly would be grateful to get a letter from any of the household.

Your humble brother, I hope, in love of the truth,

ASA HOWARD.

NOTICES.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Please publish in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for information to the Old Baptists everywhere, that the Little Hope church, of Mates Creek Association, at her February meeting, the first Saturday, (three days) by unanimous voice did exclude Elder R. T. Hackney from her fellowship, and he holds his credentials and claims to be an Old Baptist preacher. Therefore beware.

By order of the church.

W. J. MAY, Church Clerk.

CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

ELDER W. W. Meredith having removed from Delmar, Del., to Petersburg, Kent Co., Del., requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$349 05
H. J. O'Bannon, Va., $1.00; Wm. F. Sloan, Ky., $1.00.—Total	2 00
Total to date	**$351 05**

MARRIAGES.

By Elder W. W. Meredith, Nov. 15th, 1899, at the residence of the bride's father, John W. Hearn and E. May Bethards, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

By the same, Dec. 6th, 1899, at his residence in Delmar, Del., Smiley M. Brittingham, of Salisbury, Md., and Hannah D. Hearn, of Sussex Co., Del.

By the same, Dec. 7th, 1899, in Delmar, Del., Wm. Davis and Anna Brittingham, both of Delmar, Del.

By the same, Dec. 21st, 1899, at the residence of the bride's father, E. Frank Lecates, of Sussex Co., Del., and Hulda J. Nichols, of Wicomico Co., Md.

By the same, at the residence of the bride's grandfather, Arthur W. Ellis and May E. Hastings, both of Sussex Co., Del.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At her home in Little Britain, Orange Co., N. Y., Dec. 13th, 1899, **Mrs. Phebe E. Carmichael,** aged 49 years, 8 months and 19 days. Sister Carmichael was the fifth child of James and Mary Jane Halstead Linkletter. She was married Nov. 21st, 1866, to Decator Carmichael, by Elder Wilson Housell. Her husband and six children survive her, five daughters and one son, also one brother, Charles H. Linkletter, and one sister, Mrs. James C. Siely. She had been a great sufferer for years, but pneumonia took her away after six days of illness. She united with the Middletown Old School Baptist church, June 8th, 1895; was baptized by the late Elder Benton Jenkins. She was a kind and devoted wife and mother, always studying for the comfort and happiness of those around her. She was a faithful member in the church, and we shall miss her, but our loss is her gain; she has only crossed the river a little before us, her toil and pain is over, but we are still here where pain, sickness and death is our lot, so we desire not to mourn for her, believing she is at rest, but we feel to weep for ourselves. May the God of all grace and comfort sustain each member of her family in their deep affliction.

The writer was present at the funeral, and tried to speak to the comfort of the troubled hearts. She was buried in Warwick, N. Y., where Elder Wm. L. Beebe concluded the services.

H. C. KER.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

MY father, **J. J. Ferguson,** departed this life on the night of March 11th, 1898. We were sorry to give him up. He was a sound Old School Baptist, and dearly loved to read the SIGNS. He was 82 years old. He leaves two children, six grandchildren, two brothers, both in feeble health, one bedridden, and has been for two years.

MARANDA MILNER.

DIED—Feb. 9th, 1899, **Mrs. Caroline Stephens Simonson,** aged 64 years. Our sister came to the Otego Old School Baptist church, August 5th, 1876, an entire stranger to nearly every one present. When asked to speak she said, "The Lord told me to come to this church, and ask to become a member of it, and she gave a very satisfactory evidence of her right to be one of the number. Her's was a very bright, clear experience of the way the Lord redeems lost sinners, and she was not as doubtful of her acceptance in the Beloved as many of God's poor children are, yet she always would say, "It does not seem possible that the Lord ever could look upon me in pity, yet I have an assurance that it is so; but I am so unworthy of the least notice from him." She was faithful in her duties to the church, coming to the meetings when very difficult for her to do so. Our sister was left a widow during the war, and came back from the west with her two little children, to her father's home at Gilboa, N. Y., in 1865. Her health was very poor the last year or more of her life; her disease seemed like consumption of the bowels. She is survived by her daughter, with whom she lived, and her son, and their families, and one sister, and other relatives.

Her funeral was attended by Elder D. M. Vail, Feb. 13th, at her home in Oneonta, N. Y. The text used was, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me," &c., which was so true in our dear sister's case. She is much missed by the few who remain at the Otego church, but we know she is at rest, and at home.

ALSO,

DIED—At Otego, N. Y., July 17th, 1899, **Miss Polly Ann French,** aged 77 years and 7 months. Our sister had been in feeble health for many years, and suffered much with various bodily afflictions. She was nearly blind for a long time, but always was at the meetings of the church when able to get there, and was one of those whom the Lord makes rich in spiritual things. She had a good gift in speaking of the goodness of God to her, a poor sinner, and saw clearly the doctrine and order of God's house. She united with the church in May, 1852, and was baptized at the same time that Elder B Bundy was. Three of those baptized that day, died so near each other, one in February, one in May, and one in July, 1899. Sister French was the last one of her generation, though the feeblest one, she survived the rest; six nieces are left of that once large family. She felt lonely indeed, and after Elder Bundy's death, in May, she felt that the last lifelong tie was severed. She fell and broke her left hip June 12th, and suffered greatly much of the time during the five weeks that she lived. She died at the home of her niece, Susie C. F. Guernsey, where the funeral services were held the afternoon of July 20th, attended by Elder Vail, who spoke from the words selected by our dear sister long ago, found in 1 Thess. iv. 17. After the close of the services she was laid beside those she had so dearly loved, in the Bundy Cemetery, at Otego.

ALSO,

DIED—At her home in Otego, N. Y., Sept. 30th, 1899, **Mrs. Jane Smith Arnold,** aged 68 years. Our dear and gentle sister had been a lonely widow since November, 1874, when her loved husband, brother Wm. Arnold, died. She was left with her three children in her very pleasant and hospitable home, very lonely, and with earthly hopes and pleasures blasted, yet she was given reconciling grace to that extent that she could not grieve at the time of her deepest sorrows, but could from her heart say, "Not my will, but thine, O God, be done." Afterwards the clouds and darkness came, but never was she left to murmur at God's dealings with her. She would often say, "It is all right. Why should I be left without afflictions and crosses, one so ungrateful as I know myself to be, and God so good to me?" Brother and sister Arnold united with the Otego church many years ago, and were baptized by Elder A. St. John, in the river here. Sister Arnold was the youngest daughter of Deacon John Smith, and the loved sister of several brothers, four of whom survived her, all older than she except one, who has died since she departed. Our sister was very much loved by the church here, and her death is deeply deplored. Though she had endured very severe illnesses and accidents, she would come to meetings so bright and animated, and have such good things to say in thanksgiving to God for his tender mercies, that we seemed to expect her to always be able to come. She was anticipating much enjoyment in attending the last yearly meeting, (Sept. 27th and 28th,) but Friday before, when busy at some work, she was taken suddenly with paralysis, and scarcely spoke a word after the attack, but lingered over a week, appearing to be conscious some of the time. She was lovingly attended by her dear daughter and youngest son, and others of the relatives and friends, as long as life remained.

The funeral services were held at her residence Oct. 3d, and her pastor, Elder Vail, spoke from, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God," &c., or the last four verses of Romans xi. After close of services her remains were borne to the family plot in Evergreen Cemetery, at Otego, where several of her family are buried.

Thus in the year 1899, four of the members of Otego church (among them our loved and revered pastor, Elder Bundy) have been called home, and have entered completely into the joy of the Lord. We who remain must mourn our loss and loneliness; yet our trust is alone in the Lord, who never forgets to be gracious, and never leaves those who mourn, comfortless, but sustains with the power of his love, through all sorrows and troubles of this life.

SUSIE C. F. GUERNSEY.

OTEGO, N. Y., Feb. 5, 1900.

DIED—Oct. 14th, 1899, sister **Elizabeth Thompson,** in her 78th year. Our dear, afflicted sister was a great sufferer the last years of her life. Some six years before her demise, she fell and received almost fatal injuries, leaving her entirely helpless, yet bore all with that becoming patience and cheerfulness that always made it pleasant for her many devoted friends to visit her. "Aunt Lizzie," as she was so familiarly called, was a mother unto many, in kind attention in need. She had every care and attention from her devoted son and wife, and attendant, yet her suffering was great. She peacefully fell asleep in Jesus, whence all pain and suffering ceases. She was an esteemed member of the Bethel church, where she was missed when her affliction kept her away. She had been a widow for many years. She leaves four sons, three of whom live in the far west, one brother, with many friends, who loved her dearly.

Her funeral was largely attended on Monday, the 16th, when we tried to preach Jesus, the only hope of salvation for poor sinners; after which she was laid to rest in the family burying-ground near her home.

P. W. SAWIN.

DIED—At their home near LaGrande, Oregon, Dec. 11th, 1899, **Edith H.,** beloved wife of George **Ackles.** She was the daughter of James and Esther Hanna, of Rock Springs, Pa., and was baptized in fellowship with the Old School Baptist Church at that place in early life. After marriage she removed her name to a church of like precious faith, called Big Spring, in Union Co., Oregon.

"No strength of mine can keep me in time, nor after it, vile, helpless, often with a heart of stone. Would it be so if I could help it? May he plunge me into the pit of my own corruption, when I get big. O that I knew he had thoughts of love and mercy for one so vile. If I am saved from my sins, [I have no wish to be saved in them] the glory and power is God's. None but God can save a wretch so vile. God will enable me to glory only in his matchless strength." Copied from a letter written by her after reading Elder Durand's communication in the SIGNS of Dec. 1st, 1899, in which God gave him to write what we both so desired and felt on the subject.

Her taking away was very gentle, and the dear Lord so comforted her that the spirit's joy left its impress on the clay. She delighted to minister to the temporal needs of the characters whom Amelek slew, and in their hearts she reared for herself a monument of love. Her love for the assemblies of the saints was shown by many a trip of forty miles in one day to meet with them, and hear Christ preached by our pastor, Elder G. E. Mayfield. Her kind husband was ever ready to take her to her loved meetings. Now she is ever with the Lord.

M. E. CARTER.

STUCK, Washington.

DIED—At the residence of her husband, Newark, Del., Oct. 17th, 1899, **Mrs. Ella Hossinger,** aged 59 years. It is but fitting that a tribute of respect should be paid to the memory of this dear sister who for so many years adorned her christian profession. She was baptized into the fellowship of the church where she had always attended, by Elder Bartley, about twenty-five years ago. This was at London Tract. From that time until she was called away it was evident that she lived not to herself, but unto him who died for her and rose again. Her experience presents a full proof of the divine promise, the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever. The holy influence shed upon her home circle will ever remain. God has taken her, and left with them all a sweet memory, and the comforting assurance that she passed away rejoicing in hope of a blessed immortality. Her kindness to the poor, and her love to the ministry, and her every day practical and christian life, have endeared her memory to a large circle of bereaved friends. She was well versed in gospel truth, mature in christian experience and genuine piety, ever rejoicing in the prosperity of Zion. Her last sickness was painful, but not protracted. The end came suddenly, but her life needed no dying testimony. Falling asleep she entered her eternal home.

She hath passed away
From her cheerful home, from her wonted place,
That keeps of the loved one full many a trace;
The vacant chair and the silent room,
Gather around them a deepening gloom,
And the memory of accents once uttered there,
Is clothed in a mantle of dark despair.

She hath passed away
From the heart whose affections seem ever hid
Neath the quiet hush of the coffin lid,
Who mourneth the life of the household gone,
And wildly longeth to look upon
The silent lips, and the changeless brow,
Darkened forever in shadows now.

She hath passed away
From every sorrow and wearisome pain,
And her soul shall know no fetter again.
Care shall not darken her cloudless brow,
It gleameth in light with the angels now,
To the light and life of a cloudless day,
She hath passed away, she hath passed away.

FROM A FRIEND.

DIED—At her home near Locktown, N. J., Nov. 21st, 1899, **Mrs. Amy A. Stenabaugh,** wife of John Stenabaugh, and daughter of the late Wm. B. Sutton and Hannah Sutton, in the 50th year of her age. The deceased was for a little more than fourteen years a faithful member of the Old School Baptist church at Kingwood. It was her delight to meet with the

church whenever she could, and she was ever ready to bear her share of the burdens of the church, or elsewhere, as far as she was able. Her life was one of affliction and trial. She was sick much of the time during her whole life, and for the last few years she had lung trouble, which terminated in consumption. It was my privilege to be with her for nearly three weeks before her death. During this time she seemed very patient, and resigned to the will of God. I will give some extracts from a letter written by her to my sister, dated Dec. 13th, 1898. She says: "I suppose that on Saturday and Sunday Elder Durand will be with the church. I hope that you have so far recovered as to be able to go. That privilege seems to be denied me the most of the time, but I suppose it is all right. I have often thought it would have been better if I had never had a home with the church. I have come so far short of what a professor ought to be, that it almost makes me shudder to think of it; yet I cannot say that I would be willing to give up the hope that I have. I sometimes think if I can never be any better, death would be a blessed change. I cannot say that I really fear death, and I feel that I would be better off. Your letter seems to express my feelings much better than I can myself. If I could sit down and talk like a great many it would be a great satisfaction to me. There have been a great many times during my sickness in which Christ's presence seemed very near to me, and often in my wakeful hours I have had some sweet communions with my Savior, but to tell it would be impossible. It all seems to leave me then, but I can give no reason. My nerves are better, and I can read with better understanding than I have done. For a long time these things have seemed to be sealed to me. There was a great deal in Elder Keene's last letter in the SIGNS for me."

She leaves a husband, mother, one brother and four sisters, besides the church and many friends, to mourn her departure; but we have good reason to hope that for her to die has been gain.

Elder Chick preached a very appropriate and comforting discourse from Psalm xxv. 10, after which she was interred in the cemetery at Rosemont.

AMY C. RITTENHOUSE.

LOCKTOWN, N. Y., Jan. 10, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—It becomes my sorrowful duty to write for publication notices of the death of three highly esteemed and lovely saints who have been called from the labors and sufferings of this evil world, to the joys of everlasting peace and rest.

Mrs. Ella Hossinger, wife of James Hossinger, died quite suddenly at the residence of her husband, in Newark, Del., Oct. 17th, 1899. Her health had not been good for some time, her complaint being something like neuralgia of the chest. She was able to attend the yearly meeting at Welsh Tract on Sunday, the 15th, and also at the hall, in the village of Newark, in the evening, but took cold, which induced a renewal of the attacks of neuralgia, increasing in violence until about 9 o'clock Tuesday evening, it was thought advisable to call in the physician, but before his arrival she peacefully expired in the arms of her daughter.

The funeral was largely attended on Friday, the 20th, Elder Wm. Grafton, and the writer, both taking part in the services, after which all that was mortal was conveyed to the cemetery at London Tract, and there laid to rest to await the resurrection at the last trump.

Her age was about 55 years. She leaves her husband, one son and two daughters, who mourn the loss of a most devoted wife and mother, also other relatives, and the church, of which she was a devoted member for more than a quarter of a century. She was baptized in the year 1874, in the fellowship of the church at London Tract, Chester Co., Pa., by Elder David Bartley, of Indiana, who was visiting the church at that time. She was a very spiritually minded woman, delighting to converse on the things of the kingdom.

ALSO,

ON Dec. 10th, 1899, at his residence in New Castle Co., Del., **Samuel Dennison,** in the 88th year of his age. He was born August 16th, 1812, was baptized by Elder Geo. W. Staton, some time about the year 1871, at London Tract, Pa., where he continued a true and faithful member until called from the church militant to the church triumphant.

His funeral was largely attended at his late home, on the 13th, when the writer endeavored to speak for the comfort of the bereaved ones, on the sublime subject of the resurrection, after which his mortal remains were interred by the side of his wife, in the London Tract Cemetery.

He leaves four sons, with a number of other relatives, by all of whom he was held in very high esteem. Brother Dennison was held in very high regard by all who knew him, for his faithful devotion to all the duties devolving on him in all the relations of life. He was for many years deacon of the church, which office he certainly filled well. His entire life was an example to all, and certainly as a member he set an example that might well be followed by all who profess godliness. He has now entered into rest.

ALSO,

Mrs. Margaret Holloway died at her late residence in Worcester Co., Md., Dec. 30th, 1899, aged 61 years. I cannot do better than to transcribe the following tribute of love from her daughter-in-law, sister Martha E. Holloway, as descriptive of a lovely and truly noble specimen of womanhood.

Sister Holloway writes: "Fifteen years ago I was brought into the family, and mother and I became fast friends at once, and that friendship has strength-

ened, if possible, as the years rolled by. Not many days passed during the fifteen years, that I did not see her lovely face, except in extreme cold weather, and now to think she will never more enter our door, causes sadness in the extreme. It is with sweet sorrow that I go back and think of the many pleasant, cheering words she has spoken to me, she was so kind and sympathetic. In kindness and forbearance I think she was surpassed by none, and equalled by few. While I looked upon her as superior to myself in every respect, she seemed to appreciate my company, and I was always glad to be with her, for her conversation was such as suited me. I have often wished I was as spiritually minded as she, and as worthy a name and place in the church as I felt her to be, though she never made a public profession. She once had a time set in her mind, and made preparations to go before the church, but something occurred to prevent her going, which she no doubt took as an evidence that she was not worthy, and which feeling ever afterwards kept her away. But O, how glad the church would have been to have received her, but being outside did not hinder her from being alive to the interests of the church, and she was ever ready to lend a helping hand. None could be with her long without feeling that she had been with Jesus and learned of him. The morning the second doctor was called to see her, he told her to cheer up, that her case was not serious, but she told him that she was not alarmed about death, and gave us to understand that she was ready when her time should come. A few days later, when the doctor was trying to cheer her up with the thought that she was having the best of medical aid and treatment, she replied, 'You doctors are only weak instruments in the hands of the great Physician.' She was made to trust and praise him, even in the agony of death. Once when suffering seemingly all that she could bear, she repeated twice aloud, 'Just and holy art thou, Lord.' At another time she said she was glad Jesus came to save sinners, if he had not, she never could be saved. Later she said to me, 'I do not feel like I can lie down in green pastures to-day,' which evidently meant there had been times in her sickness when she could eat and drink beside the still waters, and find rest to her soul. I think that Psalm has been a great comfort to her much of the time during her widowhood. She told me a few days after father's death that the words, 'The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want,' had come to her with much assurance, and I think she realized that goodness and mercy followed her all the days of her life. Sometimes we would have to wake her to give her medicine, and she would beg not to be disturbed any more; said she wanted to sleep and never wake up again. Thus we feel that she had her wish, not being able to rouse her for a week before she died. Though we believe she sleeps that "blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep,' we can but mourn the loss of one so dear."

She was born Jan. 2d, 1839; was married to Daniel Holloway, Oct. 10th, 1861, coming into a large family, and taking charge of his six motherless children, and was a good, kind stepmother to them, and was herself the mother of eight children, all of whom are grown up, and survive her. She also leaves three sisters and two brothers, and twelve grandchildren. She was a daughter of the late Elijah Laws, who was for many years a faithful member of the Indiantown church. The family is well known and highly esteemed throughout the Salisbury Association, and also by many brethren elsewhere.

Thus have gone out from our ranks three more truly noble and lovely ones. "Not lost, but gone before."

Yours in affliction,

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., Jan. 15, 1900.

Prudence Teague, wife of the late Elder James Teague, was born in Davidson Co., N. C., July 17th, 1810. Her maiden name was Prudence Davis. She was married to James Teague, Feb. 2d, 1837; moved to Pettis Co., Mo., in 1845; joined Virginia Grove Predestinarian Baptist church in July, 1850; departed this life Sept. 6th, 1899. She was the mother of six children, five surviving her, one dying in infancy. I know I cannot say too much for dear mother, and if I should attempt to portray her faithfulness as wife, mother, neighbor and member of the church, I certainly would fail, and when I had said all I was capable of saying, like the queen of Shebia, in seeing the wisdom of Solomon, would be bound to say the half is not yet told. I can well remember, though but a child, how before her children was full help to her, she struggled to keep her family in respectability, my father being gone almost one-fourth of his time preaching. Let us think of this in looking after the needs of the ministry. No words of praise of mine can add one thing where she is known, for her life has been an open book. The SIGNS, next to her Bible, has been her favorite reading. She has been a reader of the SIGNS for over forty years. Her home has ever been a home for the Baptists, esteeming the peace, company and fellowship, and the sweet communion of the saints of Christ, as the chiefest earthly joys. Her sweetest conversation was of heaven and heavenly things, believing that Christ's righteousness was the sinner's only hope. She often spoke of her unfruitfulness, and lamented her inability to live nearer her God than she did. She has one daughter that has been afflicted for nearly fifty years, the greater part of that time not able to walk or hear. She herself has been a sufferer and cripple from rheumatism for fifteen years. Often in extreme suffering she would say, if she only knew she was fit to die it would be so much better for her if her time was wound up here. Her last illness was extreme in suffering, till within

an hour or two before going she seemed to get easy, and went off as in a sweet sleep. She was conscious until the last. I am not able to tell the love we had for our dear mother, or how much we miss her. Take your own dear mother and convert her into your child also, then you can know something about it, for the last several years I have lifted her as a child; but I cannot wish to see her suffer again. She is still the same sweet mother, joined in that happy home above with her dear old companion and her Savior, freed from earthly sorrow and pain, and forever praising her Maker with unwearied lungs in chanting that sweet song, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name give all the glory; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us out of every nation, kindred and tongue, and made us kings and priests unto God.

J. A. TEAGUE.

LAMONTE, Mo., Dec. 10, 1899.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1900. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MACOMB, Ill., December, 1899.

TO THE EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—MY DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I feel too unworthy to thus address you, yet my heart goes out in love to you this morning; to all the poor and afflicted ones of the kingdom of our God; to all those of the household of faith. Though you may be widely separated, and be strangers in the flesh, yet in the Spirit "Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." But am I one of that family? Am I included among the children of God? Many, many times I am made to pause and ask myself this question, and am often left in doubt, and can find no answer. It is then I am made to see my sinfulness, my unworthiness, my short comings, my wanderings from God, my proneness to evil, and am cast down in doubts and fears. At such times I have no hope that I am included in the covenant of grace, and cannot claim any kinship to the children of God. But sometimes, for a short space, I am made to look away from self, to cast aside the world and all its allurements, the temptings of Satan, to look above trials, troubles and sorrows, and rejoice for a season, and praise fills my heart to him who hath thus delivered me. It is then, my dear kindred, that I love to write and sing his praise. It is through the atoning blood and righteousness of Christ, and in the fellowship of his sufferings, that we are brought nigh to each other, have a love and fellowship for the tried and afflicted, our hope is renewed, our faith is increased, and we see our Savior high and lifted up. I would tell of his goodness and mercy, I would thank him for all his benefits. He hath been mindful of me all along the journey of my life, surrounded me with many blessings and favors. But above all earthly blessings, I have a hope that he hath bestowed upon me the riches of his grace, and caused me to rejoice in his salvation. He has given me a heart to love the truth, to love the brethren, to love to meet with them, and I hope have a place in their hearts, to love the sweet sound of the gospel, and a desire for the welfare of Zion. Then if we are the recipients of such heavenly blessings, should we not praise the name of the Lord? for it is from his hand alone that

we enjoy these rich bounties. These things are of more value to us than the gold of Ophir, or the cattle of a thousand hills, or all this vain world can give. "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men." It is here we raise our ebenezer, or song of praise. Hitherto hath the Lord helped me, and we think we can ever trust him. O, could we always stay in a frame like this. But how short the stay on Pisgah's mount. How soon we are brought down into the valley of Baca, (weeping) into the valley of humiliation, where we are made to drink of the waters of Marah (bitterness). My dear kindred in Christ, you have journeyed this way. Have you not often realized that the christian's pathway is beset with many sore trials and afflictions? That the cup given you is full of bitterness? That your way is often hedged in, and you can go no farther, only a few moments of peace and light and enjoyment, followed by gloom and darkness? O, then we are made to cry from the depths, "O Lord, save or I perish." "Is thy mercy clean gone forever?" "Wilt thou remember mercy no more?" We feel as one alone, surely no one was ever so tried as I am. How soon we forget the peaceful hours we once enjoyed. We are so unmindful of all the mercies of our Lord. We cannot sing the Lord's song now; we seem in a strange land, and go mourning on account of sins, which as a thick cloud have come between us and the Sun of righteousness, and God alone can dispel the clouds, and cause the light to shine once more in our hearts. It is by his grace alone we are enabled to keep on. We have no strength, but in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength; he hath the words of eternal life, and nothing else will do helpless sinners good; and are we not helpless, dependent creatures? We are poor and needy, poor in spirit, and in need of God's grace every day and hour. For myself, I feel so weak, so dependent, so helpless, I must cry for daily strength and grace. The grace given me in Christ years ago, (if indeed I have ever received it) must be renewed day by day. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." The sins and shortcomings of each day are enough to leave me without hope were it not for God's sustaining grace. "Give us this day our daily bread." When reviewing the day that has passed, I realize that barely enough manna has been given to sustain me through the day. I have none left for the morrow, and I must ask again for a new supply, and I have been lifted up a little at the thought, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." If we are enabled to perform any service acceptable to God, it is not of ourselves, but of his grace alone, for it is "God that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure. I think to-day of the many dear kindred in Christ who are suffering on beds of affliction, and of the many precious, comforting letters they have written for our papers: sisters Kate Swartout, Lizzie Himes, Nannie Edwards and others, who I believe are upheld and strengthened by God's sustaining grace given and renewed day by day, and dear Mary Parker, whose life for many years was one of agonizing suffering, was compelled to cry for help and grace. The sweet, sad story of her afflicted life is told in the most touching and eloquent language in her book of Reminiscences, and it seems would touch the heart of adamant. O, how many lessons of patience and resignation we can learn from reading this book. I wish all could read it, and now while Elder Durand offers

them so cheap, would be a good time to obtain one, and also do this much for him who was ever so kind in word and deed to this poor, afflicted one. When I think of them I feel that the grace of God shines more brightly in their lives than in others, and their every day life is a living epistle, their writings are so highly prized by us, and are such a comfort. The people of God are an afflicted and poor people, who love to read and hear and talk of the things near and dear to them. What a blessed privilege when those of like precious faith meet often together, recount their joys and sorrows, and thus encourage each to press on the way. But how discouraged we sometimes become when we are deprived of this high privilege. I have met with my church but three times this year, the distance and other things preventing me. O, how I have longed for the courts of Zion, and the crumbs that fall from the Master's table. I was permitted to attend two associations this fall, where we had two precious meetings. There were seven ministers present at one, and fifteen at the other, coming from several States, but all came filled with the blessing of the gospel of Christ, for not a jar or word of discord was heard, no "time salvation," or striving about words to no profit. But the sweet, unadulterated food of the kingdom was handed out to us by these faithful undershepherds. All came together as one, and peace and harmony prevailed. Surely the truth was preached, and with much ability and power. Brother Chick, I feel we as Primitive Baptists in this part of Illinois, should be thankful that no trouble has been caused here over things that have made trouble and sorrow elsewhere. Our churches are in peace, and have a sound ministry. O, may we be watchful and prayerful, lest we, thinking we stand, should fall. May we be kept from error, may God keep us faithful, humble, ever at his feet and at the feet of our brethren, and may we never bring reproach upon the cause of Christ.

Dear kindred, I send this as my annual letter of remembrance and christian greeting. In looking it over I see little of comfort in it. It is not as I would wish it, but should any glean a crumb, I am satisfied. I leave it to the editors to do with as they think best, for I do not wish to write merely for the purpose of filling up the paper, for each number comes to me richly laden with good things, much better than I am able to write.

Your unworthy sister,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Dec. 29, 1899.

DEAR SISTER HELLINGS:—I received your letter this morning, and was very glad to hear from you. I have been desiring ever since to write you some lines of comfort, but you know that I am so entirely of the flesh, and can write of the good things that comfort only as the Father of mercies sees fit to enlighten me with a spiritual mind, and guides my pen. I do sincerely desire for it to be his will at this time, for if I can give one of the poor, tried, doubting, trembling ones of his kingdom, comfort by writing, I desire that it may be so. Now I will try to answer you, as you have expressed your feelings.

You speak of having a desire to write, but that there would be no comfort in your letter to me. The word says, "Quench not the Spirit." Not long ago I read these words, and felt that I knew something of their meaning. I asked a brother to tell me what he thought the

words meant, and he gave me a beautiful sermon from them. He thought that they meant that when we were impressed to do a good thing, we should not quench the spirit of it. For instance, we may be impressed to write to some one of the children, and when the impression first comes we are ready to comply at the very first opportunity, but in the meantime we are asked by Satan, who always stands near to advise us, Will it be of any profit? Are we really capable of writing? Do we feel worthy to do such a thing? And after all of this questioning we make up our minds not to write. Thus the spirit is quenched, and we have not obeyed the command, and have left undone what we felt to be good. How often I do this very thing, and sometimes bitterly repent of it.

I know that you felt it to be a great blessing to be able to be present at the supper. What a very great privilege it is when we can see it, but many times I have gone there when my mind was so far from it, I could but feel that I was eating and drinking unworthily. Then again it has seemed to me as though it was a heaven below. How saintly the dear ones looked to me, and the ordinance so sacred. I have felt at such times that I could see Jesus there, and when we can feel this, what do we want beside? We then are trusting in God, and feel that it would take mountains to move us; then we feel so strong, so built up in faith; our hope now is large, and we have no fears. We do not now feel like asking the church to take our names from the church book, for there is nothing else that we want. Our desire is right with the church, and we have no sorrow, for we are then looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God.

You speak of asking the church to take your name from the church book. I do know something about your feeling from experience. But when you meet the dear ones, and could feel and see their love for you, then you said if you should go away from them, to whom could you go? and you found the words of Ruth ready written for your feelings: "Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee." One time after I had united with the church, dear brother Zephaniah Stout wanted to know how my mind was, and had I regretted uniting with the church? I told him that when I was baptized I thought I would have no more trouble of mind, but that all would be peace, but I had found it so different, and felt that it would have been better had I not have come yet. Dear child, he said, you are walking with the rest of us.

To-day when I came down to the church meeting, I felt constrained to ask the church to take my name from their church book, because I felt that I was deceiving them, I was so sinful, and so prone to go astray, but when I came in and saw the dear ones assembled, and heard the Elder proclaim salvation is of the Lord, and that it was for poor, vile sinners who need this salvation; when I heard this from the dear brother to whom I had so often looked, and envied him his trust, and faith, and goodness, and heard him also express these same fears and doubts which had beset me so much, I was strengthened for a little. It is well to walk softly before the Lord, for even then we stumble, and ofttimes our feet slip. What could we do without his forgiving, loving kindness and tender mercies? For of ourselves we cannot do one

good thing, nor have one good thought, much less save ourselves, for if we cannot do the less, how can we do the greater thing?

Our God commands us to love one another, to be forgiving one to another, and not to speak evil one of another, and to abstain from all appearance of evil. The church of God is built up in love, and if we be of the building we must have the spirit of love in us, and no hatred, for that is of the flesh. Love always belongs to the Spirit, but hatred to this old nature, which contains all evil things. If we be followers of Christ, we should be forgiving one toward another, and not be holding enmity against one another. Envy and all such sins are spoken of so plainly in the third chapter of Titus. We are commanded to abstain from all appearance of evil, and this command is not confined to some one especial evil, but every evil is meant. It is just as great an evil for a brother or sister to be unloving, unforgiving, envious, speaking evil one of another, as it would be to be found doing some outward crime, which they would blush to have known. When such evil things reign in us, the Spirit does not, for both cannot reign at the same time. Look at this prison-house, this tabernacle in which we groan being burdened. When the flesh reigns all these enemies are found walking about in greatest strength. Then we can backbite and speak all manner of evil falsely, but when the Spirit comes and fills us, how he melts us down to humbleness. Now all the old tenants are subdued; the Spirit has put them out of sight. Matt. vi. 24, tells of this.

Dear sister, you speak of your heart going out to me when you read a letter in the SIGNS from me. I am glad if you received any comfort from it. I was hurt when I first saw it there, but after learning of its comforting some, I was made humble, and willing to let others judge, and to give God all the glory, for it was not of myself, for only by the Spirit can any one give comfort. I do feel humbled when any one tells me that I am dear to the Lord's children, for I am so uncertain about being one at all. It seems often that I have no proof of it, but I do desire to be one of them, but I know that God's plans cannot be changed. He knows whose names are written in the book of life of the Lamb. Not one name can be added to them, nor one taken from them, so I feel to leave it, saying, "Not my will, but thy will be done." I do feel to-night to say this from my heart; I cannot at all times; it is only as the Spirit works in me to do of his good pleasure. How I would like for the Spirit to dwell in me at all times, and rule, but it is not so, but I am much of the time serving mammon; my thoughts are worldly, imaginative, looking, or trying to, far into the future, and bringing some trouble out of it, if I possibly can.

> "Creatures of fear we drag along,
> And fear where no fear is;
> Our griefs we labor to prolong,
> Our joys in haste dismiss."

This verse describes me far better than I can possibly do. When I do know some of the right ways of the Lord, and yet depart from them, my pride is often too great for me to turn and say, I was wrong, and I have to suffer a guilty conscience, and repent, and ask forgiveness, and then murmur because it is not granted me instantly. How good it is for us to be chastised; it does make us walk more humbly before God.

The word says, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together." It is a command, and I do try and desire to live up to it. May you be able to attend

upon the sanctuary often. It often gives us a ray of light and comfort just to see the dear ones, and still more comfort is there to sit and hear of his love and mercy. We may sit right by one whom we believe has put on a cloak to cover up many evil doings, and yet even then forget them, and enjoy the feast set before us in the sermon. We know not when we are to receive the blessing. So let us ever be at our post, so that we may receive.

In deep, sympathetic and sisterly love,
MARY HILL TERRY.

[THE exhortation not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, we heartily indorse. The wrong conduct which we may think we see in some other one cannot at all excuse us before God, in any neglect to fill our place in the house of God. Where is the command to be found that bids us forsake the house of God because some Judas may be there? How much Thomas missed by being absent when the Lord after his resurrection first appeared to the disciples as they were gathered together. As sister Terry says, "Let us be present that we may be blessed." The servant of Abraham when he had found Rebecca said, "I being in the way, came to the house of my Master's brethren." How much there is in his expression, "being in the way."—ED.]

ROXBORO, N. C., Jan. 15, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I want to give you a little sketch of my experience for the year 1899. If you think it would reach the case of any of the little ones of the household of faith, you may give it to the SIGNS.

This last year has been one of very peculiar and trying visitations to me. Some things have been opened up to me which had been a sealed mystery, and under which I had labored as a burden from the Lord. For two years I had been heavily burdened with an almost continual prayer to know what the Lord would have me to do. The burden was so great that I often wept and walked the woods alone, and at night while others were resting in sweet sleep, I was weeping, and sometimes upon my knees trying to know the will of God concerning me. When I left home to visit your section last spring, I was laboring under that burden, and hoped to find some relief; but only once did I realize any comfort. On the morning of June 5th, as I sat all alone at sister Hootens, there was a sweet whisper in my soul that caused the tears of joy to flow sweetly for a time; but it appears that this was only to prepare me for the ordination meeting the next day, and for the Warwick Association, for the same burden came back, and with heavier weight. When I got home I found my son-in-law very sick with consumption, which added greatly to my sorrow, until the eighth of September, when he sweetly passed into the heaven of rest. Then my daughter and her three little children became a part of my family, which made me feel that I wanted to live to help raise them. Before this I had almost despaired of life, and like Elijah had begged the Lord that I might die and be relieved of my troubles.

Things continued in this way until I heard of the death of Elder John R. Rowe. This seemed to turn the world around to me, and the cloud which came with the news of his death appeared to settle into and burst the thick darkness which had for so long hovered over my poor, burdened heart. My mind at once became directed to my old home, and

those for whom I labored for twenty years, and whom now more than ever I felt to be my children in the faith of our Lord Jesus. I could see them as my own dear children crying for bread, while there was not one to speak to them of Jesus and his love. I wept for them, and with all my heart I desired to go to them in the spirit of the gospel, and to impart unto them some spiritual gift from the Lord. In a few weeks I received a notice from one of the churches that a meeting had been held, and that the church had extended to me a unanimous call as their pastor. Therefore on Saturday and the fourth Sunday in December, I visited them, and accepted the call. The meeting was one of great joy. I felt much refreshed, and so did the church seem to be. There were in the communion about twenty brethren and sixty sisters. I had served that church eighteen years in succession, and we needed no introduction. Thus I feel that the Lord has led me by my right hand. Many times I have quoted, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not, and lead them in paths that they have not known," but now there was in these words a beautiful opening up that I had never seen before. It now appeared in my own heart, and as though the Lord was speaking these words directly to me. On Saturday, at that church meeting, I spoke from this same Scripture, and related some of my experience since my sixteenth year. The liberty which I enjoyed was sweet, and I could see the joy which the Lord gave to the church.

While I was there we had a cold wave, and the sound was partly frozen over, so that I could not get away for a week. I spoke to them several times.

While on this little trip we were called to pass through a very trying bereavement. Our little granddaughter, four years, six months and twenty days old, was taken from us. She was one of the brightest children that I ever saw, and large enough to go with me to my appointments. She was very lively, and was either talking to me, or singing all the way as we went. I had promised myself much comfort in her, but it appears that whatever on earth we look to for comfort, proves to be but a shipwreck, and leaves us in the troubled waters. On December 15th, she was taken with congestion of the brain, lost consciousness in two days, and on the evening of the 20th, she passed out of her dreadful suffering. All that afternoon I had walked the woods, and cried to God for reconciliation to his holy will, and when she died I could not shed a tear, but said to my weeping family, "It is the Lord; he has done what was good in his sight, and we must be still and know that he is God." But on the next morning my head seemed to be a fountain of tears. We laid her to rest by her father, who had passed away just two months and twelve days before. From this trouble I found no relief until something seemed to say in my heart, "All flesh is grass, and the godliness thereof is as the flower of the grass." Never before did I see such beauty in the various texts which refer to that matter. I saw that all flesh, whether beautiful, and possessed of a lovely character, or homely and disagreeable, had to return to dust. I saw my beautiful flower fade away, and was made to contrast this with the everlasting mercies of God, which flow so freely from our blessed Jesus, to the hearts of his people, giving them life, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, and a blessed assurance of the presence of Jesus our Lord, and that we shall dwell

with him forever. I hope to have an interest in the prayers of the Lord's children.

Yours in tribulation,

L. H. HARDY.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 1, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I send you a letter of brother James', which you may use when you have space. I think it is good to hear in this way from faithful servants scattered far and wide through the earth. The Lord has them in his keeping, and places their lot according to his own will, and tries them as gold is tried, and prepares them by afflictions, and by the riches of his grace, to feed his scattered flock.

Your brother,

SILAS H. DURAND.

PRESCOTT, Ark., March 23, 1898.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND—VERY DEAR BROTHER:—Since I last wrote you I have passed through mixtures of joy and sorrow. The unabating care and responsibility of my little family, and more so the churches I try to serve, besides being assailed on every side by enemies, (enemies without and within) has kept me engaged in a constant conflict. I have at times almost despaired, and yielded up the ground, but the valiant Captain of our salvation is a "God of war," and has never deserted us, but will "redeem us from the hand of the enemy." Then can we not exclaim as did Paul, "Thanks be to God that giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ"? Then we are "more than conquerors through him that loved us." Blessed conqueror! Here I could dwell at some length, but will pass on. So through all the way the dear Lord leads us in this life, is light and darkness, through fertile plains with beautiful, sweet-scented flowers on every side, and sparkling springs of pure water from which the thirsty soul drinks and sits down under the shade of the Tree of this oft sought for, oft visited oasis, and is there fanned by the cool and refreshing breezes of his love; here he forgets his misery and fatigue of his journey, and presumes to remain in such a pleasant place. But alas, his gourd is soon withered and blasted, and he sadly learns by experience, as did Paul, when he thought peace and safety, sudden destruction came. Then in sadness and sorrow he pursues his journey over rugged, bleak and barren wastes. Thus the Lord leads us on through joys and sorrows. "Shall we receive good at the Lord's hands, and shall we not receive evil?" Every stroke we receive we deserve, for he doth not willingly afflict. We cannot see the good in strokes while receiving them, but the Lord shows us the good of them afterward. But amidst all my sorrows, trials and afflictions, I hope I can claim the promise of Jesus to his apostles, "I will not leave you comfortless." And again, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth give I unto you." So I have every reason to be thankful to the Giver of all good for the manifestation of his goodness and mercy to such a poor worm as I am.

On several occasions last year I saw and felt the demonstration of his power, and was made to rejoice in the inner man with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Our little church had been cold and dormant for a long time, but last July a time of refreshing came from the presence of the Lord, and at our July and August meetings four willing souls were added to our church. There are several more I believe will be added to us of the Lord before a great while. The Lord adds to

his church now as he did in the days of the apostles. I have been impatient, and very anxious for those to join us, who have given evidence of a hope in Christ, but have learned by experience it is best and very safe to wait on the Lord. It seems to do some good to encourage and admonish to duty, while it does not seem to have much effect on others. There is another thing I have noticed: churches whose ministers have experimental gifts, increase faster in number than those whose ministers have doctrinal gifts. Those that join the church whose pastor has a doctrinal gift, know beforehand what the church believes, therefore are not deceived, and will not say, "These are hard sayings, who can hear them?"

The SIGNS comes to me regularly, and I am well pleased with it in pamphlet form; each number can be laid away so easily, and preserved much better, and reread in after months or years, but best of all is the contents of the SIGNS. Each number has afforded me much comfort in reading it, but since January 1st, it has been to me better than ever before. Your continued piece on "The city that John saw," is indeed comforting to read, and should be included in brother Beebe's collection entitled, "Feast of Fat Things." Then again I have read with much comfort and satisfaction pieces written by Elders Chick, True, Lively, Jones, Redd and others, who are earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. Dear brother, I do not want to speak disparagingly of you or any other dear brother, but will say, there are no more Gilbert Beebes, though I never knew him only from or by his writings. He was an able and forcible writer, yet so simple and demonstrative that babes could understand him. Some of our brethren are prejudiced at his writings, and accuse him of holding to or believing things unwarranted by the Scriptures. One point they object to is, predestination of all things. This he believed and contended for, and numbers of others no doubt stood with him then, and numbers yet believe and contend for this point of doctrine. If the majority of Old School or Primitive Baptists believe this an untruth, such is no proof that they are right. The sentiment or doctrine advocated by the greater majority is very apt to be wrong. That which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God. I am one among the minority that believes in predestination of all things, (if indeed the majority do not believe in it) and intend sending before a great while for publication some of my thoughts on the subject.

Excuse me, dear brother, I have written more than I intended. Hope you will overlook my blunders and mistakes, for I am subject to such, and am often ashamed of myself for making them. I want to again thank you for your kindness to me. I thank you so much for the SIGNS. I am not able to renew my subscription, and will be at a loss without them, but do not want to be burdensome to my brethren. Write to me as soon as you can, and remember me and mine in your prayers.

Yours in much love,

P. H. JAMES.

RIVER VIEW, Ala., Jan. 7, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I received the SIGNS for January 1st, yesterday, and read it this morning with peculiar comfort. For the past three months I have been in such a strain of worldly cares I have had but little time to read, (not being able to read much at night) and I have been out among the brethren

but little, and I have been worried no little with the fleeting things of this life. I find that the "way of the transgressor is hard," and that "no man can serve two masters," and that "he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption."

I began last winter to make preparations for a crop, and worked hard all the year on a rented place; as soon as through with my crop, went to work at the carpenter's trade, to help pay rents, debts, &c., and for the past three months have been in a mental and physical strain; also had to tear up and move where my rents are higher, and but little prospect of employment. I felt and still feel, that my ministerial labors are at an end in this part of the country, and that the Lord had a work for me in the locality of Birmingham, Ala., and I wanted to move to Bessemer, Ala., and still feel that way. My health has been very poor all the year, which I have rendered as an excuse for not going and preaching more than I have, but it does seem that if I can work hard and eat hearty, I ought to be able to go and preach, and while I have made a living this year, I have almost starved for spiritual food, and I have realized the insignificance and inferiority of worldly comforts as compared with the sweet seasons of soul realized in preaching the blessed "truth of the gospel," and when I read such communications as I read in the SIGNS this morning, I feel, "Yea, woe unto me if I preach not the gospel." Though it seems that of late I have been swallowed up in the things of this life, I love the truth when I hear it or read it. The doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God over all things, beings and events; salvation by grace, from first to finish, and the resurrection of the bodies of the saints "to an inheritance that is undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time," is still precious to my soul.

It is strange to me that some Baptists cannot see that the free will and conditional theories that are being promulgated among us in some places, are new among us, and that such theories never were, and never will be, the docrine of Christ and his apostles. Whenever "free will" and "conditional time salvation" becomes true, or is found to be true, we shall have no further use for "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!" "Grace, 'tis a charming sound," nor for, "By the grace of God I am what I am," and hundreds of other Scriptures and spiritual hymns. But though "darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people," the light of God shall rise upon Zion, and his glory shall be seen upon her, and "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation, she shall not be ashamed nor confounded, world without end." "I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even very one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory." "This people have I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise." "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." "This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." So, dear brethren, I feel encouraged to say, "Fear not;" "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." The "old ship of Zion" will triumphantly "stem the storm," because the "Captain of our salvation" is at the helm, and he has

said, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

"Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

In conclusion, I wish to say to the brethren and sisters who read the SIGNS, I am now in charge of the post-office at River View, Ala., and will be glad to hear from any of them through the mails. I received several letters last year from different brethren that I failed to answer for want of time, and lack of spiritual knowledge. I hope all such will pardon me for seeming negligence. My daily prayer is, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and I trust that if the good Lord has a work for me to do in other fields, he will open the door, and provide a way for me to go and do his bidding.

May the choice blessings of Jesus rest upon you all.

Your brother, I hope, in Christ,

H. J. REDD.

DAYTON, Wash., Nov. 3, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—In the first of November issue of the SIGNS, I see a letter signed Mrs. John McPhail, upon which you have also commented nicely, and to my approval. This sister has had an exercise of mind very much like my own. I wish to say of experience in general, that a true, scriptural, christian experience is not in my weak opinion always in the depth of the exercises in detail, which may vary owing to the differences of temperament, and the surroundings, and the previous training, together with the station which the subject of grace is designed to fill in life and in the church. What I wish to say in general is, that any experience of a professor of the faith of Jesus, which has its rise in true repentance toward God, which always leads up to faith in Christ, is an exercise of grace, and nothing can produce it but the Holy Spirit; and we shall find that such an experience, and such a faith, is without exception, as in the case of the thief on the cross, always attended afterwards by the appropriate fruits of faith in the Spirit. The obedience of faith consists in the acknowledgment by the subject of it, of the authority of the author of faith. To obey Christ therefore is the evidence or testimony of faith, to the truth of the gospel of Christ in the world. Therefore it is written in the apostolic commission, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved." This saying is in line with James when he says, "I will show you my faith by my works." It is also in this line that disciples are to be known by the church, producing fellowship in full, and it is in accord with the saying of Jesus, "If any man love me he will keep my sayings." This clears up all obscurity as to what causes christian obedience, which is not a condition of either justification before God, or of salvation from sin. All this rests upon the blood and righteousness of Christ. But the manifestation of the principles of the religion of Jesus Christ rests upon the good works of the subjects of grace. It is said, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness before God." It was by the offering of Isaac that he was justified before men, that is, by his works. Hence the obedience of faith, which is always after faith, cannot be held to be the condition of justification or salvation, but as being only the proper evidences of a state of grace and salvation established permanently in the heart of the justified person. This Paul establishes when he says, "Now to him that worketh not, but

believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted unto him for righteousness." Not that faith itself is that righteousness, but it attains to the righteousness of God which is in Christ Jesus, who is the hope of glory. The principle of the law still remains unimpaired. "He that doeth the law shall be justified by the law." Christ obeyed the law, and was justified, and was thus God's righteous servant, but no other man was, or ever can be, thus justified. Therefore to us it is by faith, and not by the deeds of the law, that it might be by grace, and not of works before God intrinsically and essentially, but through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Therefore any experience that leads to the doctrine of faith in Christ alone, is substantially christian experience.

Brother Beebe, I would like to add to the foregoing remarks a few words addressed to sister McPhail. I feel much interest in her spiritual welfare, having read some of her trials in the SIGNS. I seem to know every foot of ground over which she has traveled, and therefore can sympathize with her. In the varied conditions and circumstances through which the Lord leads his people from the city of destruction, there is but one point to be established, and that is faith in the heart toward the Lord Jesus Christ. "If thou believest thou mayest," and "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." This is the direct testimony of the Holy Ghost to the heart of the dear sister. Her experiences, be they as intense and as unusual as they may, lead to this point of desperation and hopelessness. The testimony of the inspired apostle in the sixteenth chapter of the Acts, is the desired answer to all her questions, as regards the matter of her final and eternal salvation by grace alone, to which nothing need or can be added. "Thou shalt be saved," and what God has promised he is able to perform. And in this is answered all other questions concerning her election, and calling of God, and preservation to eternal glory. Sin is all that separates between God and his chosen people. If this be removed all is well. Concerning this Peter said to Cornelius, "To him [Christ] give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Here it is, and nothing must be added to it. "All that believe are justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses." Anything added to this is but the conjecture of men. By faith, the accuser's "ifs" and "buts" are quenched.

Your brother,

I. N. NEWKIRK.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Jan. 5, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Your letter has been received, and I am glad that you can be with the church here on the fourth Sunday evening. The church will gladly welcome the appointment. The Lord willing, I will be with the church at Hopewell on the first Sunday in February. I know that I shall enjoy my visit with the friends there, but it will be mixed with regret that I can so unprofitably return their kindness. I can travel with you in all that you wrote concerning your exercises of mind. There are none more destitute of the sensible enjoyment of spiritual things than I. I seem to have lost all hope that joy and gladness, as experienced by me in the past, will ever again be heard by me. If there be any hope, desire or longing in my heart, I cannot resolve it into any tangible

shape. I do not know what I want, only that it is something very different from what I have. It seems to me there would be hope in my end if I could only return again to the worriment and trouble which I once felt concerning my travel, but I seem to have no more tears to weep, no more voice to cry, and there appears to be only an apathetic waiting for the execution of the sentence already passed upon me. It is with me as though I have been dreaming dreams, and that I have now awoke to find it all a delusion. This groping in the dark, this slipping away from you of all that once was something to rest upon, is a most unpleasant experience, but it is about all that I can subscribe to. This waiting and longing for something that seems to be slipping away from me more and more, makes me question as to whether I ever knew the truth at all. If by its fruit the tree is known, surely I have no part in this work of speaking in the name of the Lord. Instead of growth there is wasting, and why brethren continue to bear with me is a mystery which I cannot fathom, for my unprofitableness must be as apparent to them as to myself. The long-suffering and forbearance of the brethren toward me I cannot understand. I have never had any occasion to exercise any forbearance toward them, for there has been no call for it, so that I do not know the grace which works in them so manifestly. With respect to them, I stand all alone, for they minister nothing but good to me, whereas I have nothing to return for all their benefits. But I love them, I am sure, and though I am keenly alive to all my unworthiness of a name among them, there is in my heart the cry of Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee," &c.

With love to you and yours, I am, I hope, your brother in the hope of life through Jesus,

JOHN McCONNELL.

[WE have taken the liberty of publishing these extracts from the excellent letter of brother McConnell to us. If he blames us, we are sure that all the rest of the brethren will approve. The letter was of great comfort and encouragement to us. At the end our brother speaks of being sure that he loves the brethren, and that the desire of his heart is expressed in the words of Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee," &c. Here are two infallible evidences that he is a child of God. As we read his letter at the first, we thought, Why cannot brother McConnell be comforted in these evidences? And then the thought came, Why cannot we ourself be comforted in them? And we were comforted. We want our brethren to share in this comfort. How frequent the question is with us, "Do I love the Lord or no? am I his, or am I not?" But in the light of divine testimony, the question expressed in the hymn referred to is its own answer. The question itself shows that the heart which feels it does love the Lord.—ED.]

PRENTICE, Ill., January, 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—For some time I have thought I would try to write to the precious SIGNS, and this evening something seems to tell me to write, although the flesh is weak, and I cannot express myself as I would like to do. I enjoy reading your dear paper, there are so many able writers, all expressing the one glorious truth. Two years ago last December death entered our humble home, taking away my father, leaving me the care of a home and mother. I could never tell the sadness and gloom that was cast over us by his departure.

His kind words of good cheer, and sweet smile, we shall never more know in this life. It seemed that the sorrow was almost unbearable, yet I know the Lord would not put upon me more than I could bear. With my present position in life I have so many worldly things with which to contend, that I feel that this life is hardly worth the living; but we know there is a place where "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain."

Elder John L. Scott is our pastor here at Union church, and he never disappoints us except when sickness prevents. He comes to us through rain and mud, snow and cold, ever looking after his church as the shepherd looks after his flock. During the past year, which has just closed, we had the pleasure of hearing many able visiting ministers.

Elder H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio, who has concluded to locate permanently in Illinois, united by letter with the church here at our last meeting. James Dobbs, son of Elder J. B. Dobbs, also united with the church at the last meeting, the first Saturday in January. How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. As small as my hope is, it is worth more than "all the world" to me. Blessed be his holy name for causing me to trust in the Lord as my guide and my shield, my present help in every time of need. Without his help we can do nothing.

"How lost was my condition,
Till Jesus made me whole;
There is but one Physician
Can cure the sin-sick soul.

Next door to death he found me,
And snatched me from the grave,
To tell to all around me,
His wondrous power to save."

I know thus far the Lord has led me, and his grace is sufficient for me. He hath loved and watched over me when I indeed cared not for myself. O, if I could but tell to those around me of his tender love and mercy, of his goodness as it is, but only those of like precious faith can know what it means, or understand it. I have suffered persons to make sport of me for trusting in the Baptist faith, and for using the term "brother or sister," in speaking with regard to the dear ones of Christ. It matters not what the world says, I humbly trust that God knows my heart, and I pray that he may lead me in the way of truth and light, that I may adore him, the One altogether lovely, the chief among ten thousand. It is a comfort to know that all things work together for good to them that love God.

On the second Sunday in January, Elder Scott preached at the home of brother John McDaniel, for the benefit of sister Levicy Flinn, better known as "Grandma" Flinn. This worthy, aged sister has been a member of the Primitive Baptist church here for fifty-two years. She is afflicted with rheumatism, and has not walked for over eighteen years. During this time she has read a great deal, and it is pleasant to visit and talk with her. A few days ago while in conversation with her, among other things she said, "I am patiently awaiting the appointed time when the Lord will call me home."

"There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign,
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.

There everlasting spring abides,
And never-withering flowers:
Death, like a narrow sea, divides
This heavenly land from ours."

Yours in hope,

FRANKIE S. McDANIEL.

HOPEWELL, Pa., Nov. 1, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—It has been a long time since I troubled you with one of my tiresome letters. This is not because I have not written any, for I have written several, and as often as I have written, so often have the flames devoured them. To-day I am no more worthy to be a child of God than when I awoke from my dark hours of spiritual blindness to find how wretched I was. When I thought I was good, lo, how evil I was. My desire constantly is, O, that I could be good, that I could walk constant. As I lay down upon my bed I think that on the morrow, by the help of the Lord, I shall live better, but instead, I feel to grow worse, until I feel that I am no more worthy to be with those who love the Lord. Yet I love the courts of the Lord, I love his children, too. Though trials come and go, I know that he trod there also. Though weary and heavy laden I may be, I know that his promises are sure. He said, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." What a great promise that is to me. "I do not fear what time may bring, since I am safe in the shelter of his wing." Clouds and pain overshadow the future, yet I know that strength shall be given. As the trials of life go by, he lives, and he is my strength. He says, "Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." His covenant and mercies are everlasting, for as it was declared in the beginning, so shall it be. Religionists of the world teach that ere this covenant will be made with us, we must go to work for the Lord, and then he will make his mercies known, but it is not so, God reigns, and his love knows no beginning nor ending, it is from everlasting to everlasting. Let us sing together, "For the Lord reigneth," and he comforts his people. He hath redeemed Jerusalem. "The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of the Lord." He holds all hearts, he puts his Spirit within, and leads us by the still waters; he gave us life and all things; he has declared that all have sinned and all must die, and we daily see this coming to pass. When I am alone I often sit and meditate upon the love of the great Shepherd. He knows his sheep, and gives them eternal life, and they know his voice, and the voice of a stranger will they not follow. I think of modern revivals which are gotten up of men. The door into the church is opened but once a year, only once a year is the invitation given to come now and be saved, and if you will not you will be damned. Such a religion is not found between the lids of God's holy book. Some get so good that they will go to their meeting every night, and in the daytime pass their neighbors and toss their heads, and not recognize them. Then they get up in class, and tell what great things they have done for the Lord, and that all their regret is that they did not start out earlier to serve the Lord. This I have seen and heard, and in talking with them I have had to turn the other way, and say, "The Lord hath done great things for me." "He has brought me by a way I knew not, he has made darkness light before me, and crooked things straight." O, that love of God which forgiveth my sins, and the sins of all his believing children. He never puts enmity in any man's heart, and where enmity dwells, there love has gone out. How good it is to dwell together in love and peace. When we come to cross the dark river of death we shall say, All is

love. What a sweet union it will be when we are gathered home on the other shore, the shore of the bright crystal sea. Of a truth I can say that I hate no one; yet for the truth's sake we are hated, and for that which is right do they seek to hurt me, but I am glad to know that it can go no further. My peace and happiness cannot be marred in this way, but the opposers of the truth are only heaping upon themselves coals of fire. "I know that I am weak and sinful, yet Jesus can forgive."

I have written more than I thought to do when I sat down; I thought to only send my remittance for the SIGNS. I hope that you will pardon what is amiss. Pray for me, I am so weak and sinful.

Unworthily your sister,

MRS. LIZZIE HIMES.

NEEL, W. Va., Dec. 3, 1899.

ELDER D. BARTLEY:—I will now try to comply with your request, to write some of my trials and troubles in this life, but my little hope is so small in comparison to many others, that I fear to make the attempt.

My first impression of my lost and ruined condition was at the age of about ten years. I remember one lovely morning in July of such an awful feeling coming over me, that I cannot describe, and I could not keep from weeping. Everything looked sad to me, and I thought I must be sick, and tried to rid myself of such gloomy feelings. My mother and sister wanted to know what was the matter with me, but I would not tell them. This soon wore off, and I thought, "I will try and be a better girl," but instead of doing better, I grew worse; and many times I was made to cry unto the Lord for mercy, but it seemed there was no mercy for me, and as I grew older I lost all hope of ever being saved in the world to come. I had such a dread of torment, and would be afraid sometimes that Satan would come and carry me off, for some wicked things I had said or done.

My dear sister died when I was thirteen years old, and I remember her talking to sister Rosa and I, a few days before her death, and she said, "I hope we will all meet in heaven. I do believe that we three will dwell together there; for you are both good children." I could not keep from weeping, and thought how little she knew of my condition, for I felt that heaven was forever closed against me. I went on in this condition until nineteen years of age, when, I hope, Jesus was revealed to me as my Savior. I retired one night with such a burden upon my mind, and felt to know, "If my soul was sent to hell, God's righteous law approved it well," and these words came to me so very plain, "Be still, and know that I am God." My trouble all left me, and I felt calm. Next morning I felt light and happy, and everything seemed bright and lovely, and I thought my troubles were at an end.

Not long after this I was taken sick with diptheria, and my friends thought I would die, but the thought of death was terrible to me, and I would weep and moan for fear that all would not be well. It seemed to me that Jesus was just above me; I could feel his presence, but could not see him. And it was made plain to me that Jesus will never do his work but once, and that when he came again it would be to take me unto himself, that where he is there I may be also. I then thought that I would get well, and the words, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God," came to me so plain that I asked mother if they were in the Bible. She said, "Yes;" and then

got the book and read them for me. O how happy I then felt! to think what a precious Savior was mine, and that I was one of his little ones.

From my earliest recollection I thought the Baptist doctrine was right, but felt that I was left outside. I viewed them as such a happy people, and how I longed to be one of them, and still that same desire is with me, but I fear my unworthiness is too great to be among them. If ever I am saved, it will be nothing that I have done, but all of Jesus.

May the God in whom you trust be with you now and for evermore.

Yours unworthily,

MRS. M. STELLA POE.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—It was my privilege to converse with this deeply afflicted, meek and sorrowful young lady in October, at the yearly meeting near Grafton, W. Va. Last August her young husband was suddenly killed in a collision of trains, and her father died about the same time, but she bears her bereavement with christian patience. She told me she was greatly comforted under the preaching of the gospel at that meeting, and I hoped to see her baptized, but she was hindered. She is truly a mourner in Zion, and shall be comforted. "They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy."

In the afflictions of the gospel, and the faith of Jesus, your brother,

D. BARTLEY.

OPELIKA, Ala., Jan. 25, 1900.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—While at home to-day it has occurred to me to write a few lines for the SIGNS. I feel that it is a source of pleasure as well as profit to read its interesting and instructive pages. How any one who is really an Old School Baptist, can object to the SIGNS I cannot see. It is bold and outspoken upon the principles of salvation alone by grace, which is a doctrine near and dear to the true pilgrim, who seeks a city out of sight, whose builder and maker is God. It is useless for me to attempt to bring out the characteristics which make it beautiful and lovely to the saints, for its own pages cause it to be commended. Some have slandered it, and misrepresented it, and some preachers under the name of Old School Baptist, have called it heretical, and said that they would not have their children to read it, but if all my children would read it, and tell me they loved its pages and the matter which it contains, I would feel blessed indeed. I do believe those who talk about it as they do, do not read it themselves, and it is a kind of prejudice they have against it, not founded on knowledge, but rather, an ignorance of what it does publish and contend for. I do not mean that they are ignorant, except in some things. Sometimes it may be still the case that the herdsmen of Lot, strive with the herdsmen of Abraham, but it must be remembered that Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom, and the fertile plain, but Abraham went toward the mountains, the high places, and abode there. He dwelt with the high rock doctrine, while Lot was on the free will line of "time salvation." This is the most popular course, I admit, but the sequel teaches us a lesson which we will do well to remember. Finally, after Abraham had plead with the Lord for Lot, an angel was sent to bring him out of the city, and God destroyed it. Popular, smooth things, are not best for us. We should never recede from the mountain life, nor from the high doctrine of the deep and holy principles of salvation by grace, and grace alone.

I hope that the Lord may afford both editors and contributors ability to continue to bear testimony to the truth of our God, both experimental and doctrinal, and to set forth the practice of godliness as well. These are the fruits of the life which is manifested in the believer in Jesus our Savior. May God bless us, and cause his face to shine upon us.

Yours in hope,

WM. LIVELY.

STARBUCK, Wash., Dec. 6, 1899.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Inasmuch as the time is about expired for me to renew my subscription for another year, I desire to write you a few lines to express my feelings. I have been reading carefully, and comparing with the light of revelation, so far as the Lord has granted me discernment to see, and I am so well pleased with the manner in which our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, is conducted, that I have no hesitancy in renewing my subscription. I fully indorse the doctrine it advocates, believing it is the doctrine of the Bible salvation by grace, the doctrine of election and predestination, is as clearly set forth in the Bible as any other point of doctrine in it, and is the foundation of our holy religion, and it does seem to me that those who oppose predestination, are seeking an undue advantage in the arguments they use. They insist that it takes away the responsibility of the creature, and makes God the author of sin, which I have never believed, neither do my brethren who believe in absolute predestination of all things, neither do I understand that God influences any one to do evil, neither can any shield themselves under the plea of predestination, in wrong doing. I am glad, dear brother, and desire to thank the Lord that he has given you grace and strength to use such carefulness and moderation in commenting upon and criticising those of an opposite opinion, for I consider it a serious error, and it seems those who oppose predestination, invariably advocate a conditional time salvation, which the whole Arminian world will accept as the truth. But, dear brother, I have not so learned Christ, if I have ever been taught in that school. I sometimes fear I never have, but God knoweth. I know I am a sinner unable to extricate myself from this dilemma, so if ever saved it will be by grace, and for our encouragement I find upon record that where sin abounded grace did much more abound; "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord."—Romans v. 21. It says nothing here about the good works of the creature, but all abounding grace through the righteousness of our blessed Lord, "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."—1 Cor. i. 30. I believe in good works, dear brother, but not in order to be saved, but they make manifest that we are saved. "Created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. ii. 10.

But I will stop. I am, I hope, your brother in the faith of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,

WM. B. MARTIN.

KIRKLAND, Tenn., Jan. 26, 1900.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I have been thinking for some time about writing to you, to find out if the SIGNS are still published, and what the price is per year. My grandmother, Susan Covington, took them as long as

she could see to read at all, but since 1894 she has been so blind that she could not read. She is still living, but is as helpless as a babe. Her greatest desire is to depart and be at rest. My mother is also confined at home with grandmother, and does not get to church at all, and she says that she likes the SIGNS better than any other paper that she ever saw, and I like it, too, so if I possibly can, I want to take it this year. I have been a member of the Primitive Baptist church two years, and am nineteen years of age. I feel to be the weakest of all, if indeed I am one for whom Christ suffered, bled and died. It is the blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God which cleanseth us from all sin, and I know that if I am ever saved it will be all of free grace, and not mother's prayers, nor some good work of my own; it will be all of grace.

I must close, as I have written more than I intended. I hope to hear from you real soon. Remember me at the throne of grace.

I am your little sister,

ELLIS PETTUS.

[WE take the liberty to publish this letter, because it is the free expression of one who evidently has been given to know the truth as it is in Jesus. Clear testimony to grace is always good to hear. All who believe are glad to hear the name of the Lord magnified. May the Lord keep this young sister as the apple of his eye, and enable her to bear clear testimony to grace all her life.—ED.]

ETHEL, Ala., Feb. 8, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I will send you my renewal for the SIGNS after two months delay, and also for sister Emma Edwards, who is a great lover of the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS. She says there is always a communication in every copy of your paper that is worth the price of a year's subscription. There are but few of our church here who believe the doctrine of the unlimited sovereignty of God, which makes us appreciate the SIGNS more highly than we otherwise would. I hope you will long be spared to uphold the truth as it is in Jesus.

Please excuse this poor attempt at an indorsement of your most worthy periodical. I will close this scribble.

Your brother, as I hope,

J. F. HIXON, JR.

ILLNESS OF ELDER WM. L. BEEBE.

HAVING received numerous anxious inquiries in regard to the illness of our brother William, we give below an extract of a letter from his daughter, sister Kate, conveying the glad intelligence that her father, though still quite sick, is steadily improving. B.

WARWICK, N. Y., Feb. 19, 1900.

DEAR UNCLE BENTON:—You will be glad to know that our dear father continues to improve. We can see each day that his strength increases. He is still confined to his bed, though the doctor lets him sit up twice every day until he feels tired. His fever is entirely gone. I never saw pa so extremely weak as he was at first. He has been confined now to the bed for about two weeks. The doctor says his trouble was malarial fever and a severe cold that has settled in the upper passages of his throat. Pa wants you to please put a little notice in the SIGNS, stating that he has been so seriously sick, and that he is now improving.

Wednesday a. m.—Pa had a fair night last night.

Lovingly yours, KATE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1900.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ANSWERS TO VIEWS WANTED.

BROTHER T. E. Cole, of Astor, W. Va., desires our views of the new birth. He asks, "Is it the sinner that is born again?" And he says he only desires to know the truth for his own personal satisfaction.

In giving our views on this subject we can only state what the Scriptures testify concerning it. The Savior declared to Nicodemus that a man must be born again, else he could not see the kingdom of heaven. Men are all sinners; therefore he said in reality that a sinner must be born again. In John i. 13, it is testified that those who received the Son of God were born not of man, but of God. These were certainly men and women, and they, as said before, were all sinners. In 1 John iv. 7, it is testified that every one that loveth is born of God. Men are brought to love God, therefore it is true that men are born of him. In 1 Peter i. 23, it is said of those to whom the apostle was writing, that they were born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God. In 1 Cor. xv. 8, Paul speaks of himself as one born out of due time. In 1 Peter ii. 2, believers are called new born babes. All these expressions show, if anything can be shown by language, that sinners are the subjects of the new birth. In fact, we know of no beings of any sort who need the new birth but sinners. And it is testified that this birth is not of man, nor of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; it is of the Spirit, and by the word of God; it is the bringing forth of the subject of it, as the very word birth signifies, into a new state or kingdom. As the first birth brings its subject forth into the realm of this natural world, so the new birth of the Spirit brings its subject forth into the realm of the Spirit, or into the kingdom of God. In the new birth, or the birth from above, as the marginal reading of John iii. 3, is, its subjects are translated out of the kingdom of darkness, into the kingdom of God's dear Son. In it they are made partakers of the divine nature; through it they who were dead to God, become dead to sin, and alive unto God. Sinners alone need such a salvation, and sinners alone receive this salvation. We trust that this brief reply will prove satisfactory to our brother.

BROTHER A. J. Doggette, of Womack Hill, Alabama, asks whether the law of Moses was one thing, and the ten commandments another? He says that some at his home had so contended.

We suppose that the assertion of which our brother speaks was this, that the ceremonial law was what was called the law of Moses, while the ten commandments were never called the law of Moses. There is no doubt a distinction between that which was purely ceremonial and typical, and that which related purely to what is essentially right. That which was typical could and did pass away, while that which is in itself right, and in accord with the character of God, cannot pass away. The sacrifices, and the offerings, and the priests, and in short every

ritual of outward formal worship, was ordained only for a time, to teach the people of other and better things, and when its work was fulfilled all must forever pass away. When the true spiritual kingdom was come, there was no more use for the temporal, legal, formal ceremonies, which all pointed to Christ, and which contained no saving virtue in themselves. On the other hand, the perfect law of love to God, and to the neighbor, could not pass away. It must be fulfilled in Jesus, and is fulfilled in all them who possess the Spirit of Jesus, and who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. To lie, to kill, to steal, to bear false witness, to commit adultery, and all that can injure our fellow man, or to take the name of God in vain, to worship idols, with all that dishonors the holy name of the Lord, must be forever evil, and the law against these things can never be abrogated. This law, Jesus said, was all summed up in love. And this law Jesus fulfilled in his righteous life and death. From this law we are by his righteousness justified freely and fully, and this law of love is written forever in the hearts of his people, and not any longer, so far as they are concerned, upon tables of stone. It is not over them, but in them. They are not under it any more, but have it in their hearts. Certainly here is a vast difference. It is the difference between free loving service, and bondage.

While this distinction must be kept in mind, between that which was temporary, and must pass away, and that which could not pass away, but is eternal in its very nature, yet both are called the law of the Lord, and both are in the Scriptures called the law of Moses. They are called the law of the Lord because he ordained them; and they are called the law of Moses because they were given to the people by his hand. The ten commandments were written by the hand of Moses, and so were all other commands given to that people. The ritual also was ordained of God, and was written by the hand of Moses. In the many places in which the term, "the law of Moses," is written in the word, the distinction suggested above is not made, and so with all the places in which the term, "the law of the Lord," is used, both expressions are used of the same thing, yet, as said before, there is a great difference between the purely ritual law, and that which is eternal in its very nature, and which cannot pass away, but which must be fulfilled in us as it was fulfilled in our blessed Lord.

SISTER Minerva T. Martin, of Warrenton, N. C., desires our views upon the expression, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man," and adds that some think that it means that God is striving to save some, but is not able to do so.

This language is found in Genesis vi. 3, and refers to the dealings of God with the inhabitants of the antediluvian world, who shortly perished according to his just judgments, in the flood. It should not be forgotten that God deals with men in providence, as well as with his people in grace. In the beginning it was so, and it is so yet. As nations are honest, humble, frugal, industrious, regardful of the rights of all men, enacting and enforcing just laws, protecting all in their just rights, suffering none to defraud his neighbor, with impunity, they, in God's providence, prosper. While it is true that if they yield to luxury, effeminacy, injustice, oppression and wrong generally, they, in the same providence, are chastised with the unavoidable results of such wicked and godless habits. God dealt thus with men at that time. The people before the flood are de-

clared to have been wholly evil in their lives. Noah vexed his righteous soul at their unrighteousness, as we are told. He preached righteousness, but the people did not heed his preaching, but were bent to evil. Now, in the text, God said that he would not always bear with them; they should yet continue upon the earth an hundred and twenty years, then he would visit upon them the just vengeance due to their ungodliness. During that hundred and twenty years Noah was moved by his spirit to prepare an ark, to the saving of himself and his house. It was only for their salvation, no command was given to leave room for any others who might want to get on board at the last minute, the decree was fixed that all should perish but the one family of Noah. Here was a type of the election of grace; God had kept Noah and his family from yielding to the idolatry of the times, and now prepares the way for their salvation from the judgments which must come upon the earth. The text does not mean that the Spirit of God was striving to make believers out of the ungodly people of that time, but it means that they in their wickedness were contending against his law, and against him, and that he would not always bear or thus strive with them, but would at the end of an hundred and twenty years cut them off from the earth. After this command was given, several generations of men saw the light of day, and several generations had passed away from the earth in their wickedness, but men continued in their wickedness, as they always will, unless stopped by sovereign grace. In the same sense, when the wickedness of the inhabitants of Canaan was filled up, God destroyed them at the hand of the Israelites. So, in like manner, was Israel itself as a nation destroyed by the Romans, that all the wickedness of their past generations might be chastised in them. All of it, as the Savior said, should come upon them. So, in like manner, when the wickedness of any nation is filled up, God puts in motion the forces of his judgment against them, and destroys them; it may be by gradual decay, or it may be by the hand of other nations. It matters not how or by what means his will is accomplished, it is still his will that it is done, even though by the hand of an ungodly Cyrus. In like manner, at the last, all nations having filled up their wickedness, shall perish at the hand of the Lord, while the remnant of grace, as Noah and his family, and the disciples who were warned to flee from the destruction of Jerusalem, shall be finally saved. This striving does not relate at all to the effectual work of grace by which men are brought to love and serve God, but to the providential dealings of God with men, and with nations. Our God is thus the God of providence, as well as the God of grace. But men will continue on in wickedness, according to the testimony of the word, and will perish at the last; total depravity insures this, and grace alone can save any man from such an end.

BROTHER L. D. Gurley, of Maples, Texas, desires our views through the SIGNS upon the Scripture found in 2 Thessalonians ii. 11, 12. They read as follows: "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

It has seemed to us for many years that there is a contrast drawn here between those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, and

those who know not God, however much they have professed to love and serve him. The contrast is between mere will worshipers, and the true worshipers, who worship in spirit and in truth, for immediately following the words to which our attention is called, the apostle says to his brethren at Thessalonica, "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." This certainly shows a contrast between the characters spoken of in the text, and the persons spoken of in the verses following. The very word "but," which begins the next verse, shows that the apostle intends a contrast. The characters spoken of in the text are not the people of God, and never were. The Lord never sends his people strong delusions, but warns them against such things, and saves them when they are tempted. The Lord's people do believe the truth, and not a lie. They may be perverted as were the brethren in Galatia, so as to give heed to legalism, but still the Lord will lead them out from their delusions, and they shall not perish with the ungodly. The Lord chastises his people, but he will never destroy them. It is true that they err and go astray, but this is a constant grief to them, and they do not have pleasure in unrighteousness; on the contrary they hate their sins, and love righteousness, and grieve constantly that they cannot do the good that they would.

In the beginning of the chapter, the apostle beseeches his brethren not to be shaken in mind, nor troubled either by any false spirit, nor false word, nor by any report that he had written to them an epistle, saying that the day of Christ was at hand. In these modern times he would have said, Be not disturbed by second adventism, or Millerism, as it is sometimes called; fixing dates and times has been their chief business ever since we can remember. The people of God are not to be disturbed by any such teaching. Then he says that day shall not come until there be a falling away, and then the man of sin shall be revealed, sitting in the temple of God, and showing himself that he is God, and he exalteth himself above all that is worshiped or called God. This he had told them before, but there had been a hindrance, and there was still a hindrance, for this is what the word "let" means here. The mystery was already working however, that is, the mystery of this iniquity, professing christianity, and having the form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. It is this sort of spurious christianity which puts human effort in place of Christ, and glorifies self rather than God. This sort of christianity in substance says that men have more power to save themselves and others, than the God of heaven has. Is not this exalting itself above all that is called God, or worshiped? This wicked power, or spirit, is thus revealed, and is accompanied with lying signs and wonders, but shall be destroyed by the Lord, with the Spirit of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming. In the personal experience of many this has been verified, as in the instance of Saul of Tarsus, who saw all his righteousness, wherein he boasted, destroyed by the Spirit of the Lord. And it shall be fulfilled at the end finally, and God shall be glorified in it. This spirit works with all deceivableness or unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the

love of the truth, that they might be saved. In this we have a description of all who believe not, and it is set in exact contrast to the brethren of whom he speaks in verse thirteen, who are said to be saved through the belief of the truth. God's people are brought to believe the truth, while unregenerate men do not believe the truth.

The text says that God sends this evil generation, who have pleasure in unrighteousness, strong delusion, that they should believe a lie. We do not understand that any particular falsehood is meant here, but that which is false and contrary to God in general, and by the truth which these believe not, we understand truth in general. God chooses the delusions of men, and they fall into them because they walk in darkness and love iniquity. This has been true ever since the first transgression. Men are dead in sin; men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil; men eschew good, and cleave to evil; they seek not peace, but are willingly at enmity against God; men are dead in sin, and all the evil that they do, and all the falsehood that they believe, is but the result of this death; they are dead, and their works must be dead also, but the people of God are redeemed from dead works, to serve God. Because they love this unrighteousness, or in other words, because they are by nature enemies to God and truth, God sends them strong delusion. He does not send strong delusion to those who seek after him, or who tremblingly love him, and who hate their sins, and bemoan their unlikeness to him, but to those who are lost, or who delight in falsehood and evil, he sends this delusion; they are already deluded, and love the delusion, and when he sends strong delusion, he but gives them up to their heart's desire; they continue to love the delusion, and finally they perish in their delusion. How many of those who have rejoiced in their own righteousness, have gone out of the world rejoicing in this delusion, that they had merited salvation. They had been given up to it, and they perished in it. How many have loved the ways of outward evil all their days, and continued to love them in death, and had no knowledge of sin or condemnation, and so were confident in death. They still were under the power of strong delusion.

If any shall choose to quarrel with the statement that God sends strong delusion to those who love unrighteousness, their quarrel is not with us, but with God and the inspired apostle. God does send strong delusion to those who love such things, but to his people he promises a revelation and knowledge of the truth, and he saves them, according to verse thirteen, through the belief of the truth. He does not send delusion to the weakest and humblest child who desires to know the truth. These humble and trembling ones have nothing in all this chapter to fear. C.

OUR VISIT.

It was our privilege to attend the quarterly meeting at Duart, Ontario, near Muirkirk station, on the Michigan Central R. R., on the first Sunday in February, and Saturday preceding, and Monday following, and as we cannot find the time to write to all who showed us kindness while there, we feel like saying a few things through the Signs about the visit and meeting; and we hope that the many friends whose hospitality we enjoyed, will accept this in place of private letters to them. We left home on the afternoon of the fourth Sunday in Janu-

ary, and filled an appointment with the Ebenezer church in New York city, at half past four that afternoon, where we met many friends, and had a most pleasant interview. Leaving New York that night we reached St. Thomas at nine the next night. We had a delay in Buffalo of five hours, waiting for a train. We went to the home of brother A. J. Black, in St. Thomas, and from the time that we entered his door, until we said good-bye to the friends the next Monday, we were at home. In saying this we say all that can be said in the way of expressing comfort and fellowship. It is not our purpose to give the details of our visit through the week before the quarterly meeting, and during the meeting at Duart, to do so would make this account too lengthy, and we cannot name all the dear ones who received us, and showed us such kindness. Brother Robert Scates came to St. Thomas and met us on Tuesday, and remained with us to the end of our trip, showing us every attention in his power. His companionship did much to add to the pleasure of the visit. During the week we were at Dunwich, and Ekfrid, where we held meetings at night. Large congregations were present at both meetings, though the weather was very cold and unpleasant. We spent one night and part of a day in the home of Elder Pollard. Many in the States will be glad to hear from him again. In years past he visited here several times, and lived at Warwick, N. Y., we think some three years, at one time. He is now becoming aged, but still has the cause at heart, and fills many appointments regularly, not sparing labor in the cause of his Master. We had a most pleasant visit at his home, and we felt glad to find him in such pleasant surroundings. He is appreciated by his brethren in Canada. He has been their faithful pastor many years. May the Lord bless both him and his companion in their declining years. Salvation by grace is precious to them both.

At Duart we met Elder J. G. Eubanks, and we were with him all through the meeting. Large congregations were in attendance all the time, and we never saw people more attentive to the word preached. We found the brethren alive, and willing and able to converse about the things of the kingdom, which were dear to them. The supper, which according to their custom, was administered at the close of the meeting on Sunday morning, was a most solemn season to us. It seemed so to all who were present also. Before this service a dear sister came forward, and after speaking very touchingly of the way in which the Lord had led her, she was received for baptism. Thus many things combined to manifest that the meeting was owned and blessed by the presence of the Lord. We were given liberty in hearing the word, and some comfort in preaching also.

We cannot close this brief account of our visit without asking all the dear ones who showed us such kind attentions, to accept this expression of our thanks, and of the love which sprang up in our heart toward them. We would be glad could we mention them all by name; they are in our hearts. As we said, from the time when we entered the door of brother Black, at St. Thomas, until we bade them all good-bye, we were at home. May God bless them all, and give them much spiritual comfort and prosperity. As they love the truth, so may the truth make them glad. We felt unworthy of all the kindness and fellowship shown us, and this feeling of unworthiness was all that in any way marred the peace and

joy of our visit there. It was our first visit to Canada. We found that grace could reign there as well as anywhere else, and though of different nationalities, yet we were one in the kingdom of our Lord. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

1 CORINTHIANS X. 13.

"THERE hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

We have no special light to impart on the above text, beyond the plain and obvious import of the words in which it is presented, when taken in their connection with the epistle, and the common experience of the children of God, while here in the flesh. From the many disorders which Paul had occasion to reprove in the Corinthian church, it is very evident that the members thereof had not escaped a liberal share of temptations. Temptations arising from their own carnal nature, from the world and from their adversary, the devil, had been many, and quite apparent among them, and they, perhaps, like many a tempted, tried saint of God at this day, may have been ready to conclude that no real christian could be so tempted, or so frequently overcome by temptation as they were, and that if they were what they professed to be, they would not be so tempted. Temptations to do wrong, to please the flesh, and grieve the spirit, which in the saints is born of the Spirit, or to murmur or to fail to appreciate the mercies of our God, are of themselves very trying to God's people, but how greatly is the trial aggravated when the cruel tempter insinuates that these temptations are evidences that we are not the children of God, or that God will leave us in the power of the tempter, and that we shall never be released from them, that in judgment against us, the way of deliverance shall be closed, and we must perish. To meet and silence all these suggestions, the inspired apostle cheers us with the blessed declarations of the text, which, in its obvious sense, presents the following assurances, viz:

1st. Our case is not as it has appeared to us, peculiar or uncommon, all the saints are subject to the very same, and it cannot by any righteous inference be construed that we are the less interested in the saving grace of God because we are so sorely tempted.

2d. Our faithful God has his eye in love and compassion on us while we are tempted. However unfaithful we have proven ourselves to be to God, God is faithful, and his faithfulness is as enduring as his throne. He will never leave thee nor forsake thee. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shall not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee; for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior." Our God who has promised all this is faithful, and he will certainly accomplish all that he has promised, and make you more than conquerors through him that hath loved you and given himself for you.

3d. The cheering truth is implied in the text that all the temptations which have overtaken us are working for our good and God's glory; for he is as able, were it for the best, to secure us from the power of temptations, as to make a way for our escape from them, when we have felt sufficiently their power. Our gracious

Redeemer, our faithful High Priest, was tempted in all points as we are. Yes, in *all points!* Think of that, thou tried and tempest-tossed child. There is not a point in which it is possible for thee to feel the tempter's power, but what the blessed Savior has felt in his own person, when here in the flesh, and he therefore knoweth how to succor thee when thou art tempted. In all thy affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved thee: in his love and in his pity he redeemed thee, and he carried thee, and bore thee all the days of old.

4th. The text assures us that neither the world, the flesh or the devil, has power to tempt a child of God only by the permission of God himself. The exact amount of our temptations, their number, weight, measure, severity and duration, are dependent on his permission. God's government extends to devils as well as to men, to sin as well as holiness, and none can go beyond the limits which his decree has fixed, to annoy or tempt his children.

> "Pains and death around thee fly;
> Till he bids thou canst not die;
> Not a single shaft can hit,
> Till the God of love sees fit."

Neither tribulation, nor distress, nor angels, nor life, nor death, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present nor to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus; not because they lack the disposition to do so, but because the God of unbounded power, love and wisdom, will not suffer it. God will indeed, and does suffer his children to be tempted, but not to an unlimited extent. Satan went as far in tempting Job as God would suffer him, but he could go no further. He had no power to drown even the swine, without the express permission of our Lord. A sparrow cannot fall, nor even a hair of our head, without an order from the throne of God.

Our text also suggests to our minds the order and exact equality of God's ways. When he issues the permissive order for a saint to be tempted, he metes out the exact amount of grace required to sustain that saint, and bear him safely through the trial. The tempter cannot be in advance of God's faithful providence; with the temptation, the way of escape is made. Pharaoh with all his mighty army could by no possibility reach the encampment of Israel at the Red Sea before the Lord was there in his cloud to make a way for their escape across the channel of the deep. The three Hebrews could not be cast into the burning furnace, until the form of the fourth, whose form was like the Son of God, was there to protect them and make a way for their escape, nor could Daniel reach the bottom of the den until God's angel had been sent to shut the mouths of the lions. God is never behind time in the protection of his children; he will help Zion, and that right early.

6th. On these glorious promises the apostle predicates the admonition, "Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry." Why should we bow to any other god, or look to men, or angels, or to our own wisdom or works for protection or deliverance, and thus depart from the Lord our God? To distrust him, is in itself idolatry. Let us own no other god, trust in no other power or wisdom, but rely alone on his faithfulness.

7th. Patience, in tribulation, is taught. Our Father and our God is at the helm. Though fiercely beats the storm, the tempest, though our foundering bark begins to sink, though the surging billows roll, and all the elements be fearfully

charged with flashing thunder-bolts of wrath, what of all this? Can nature lashed to fury transcend his power, or go beyond his firm decree? He who taketh up the islands as a very little thing, who toucheth the mountains and they smoke, rideth upon the heavens in thy help, and in his excellency upon the sky,

"He that can dash whole worlds to death,
Or make them when he please;
He speaks, and his almighty breath
Fulfills his great decrees."

"Then let the loudest storms arise,
Let tempests mingle earth and skies;
No fatal shipwreck need we fear,
But all our treasures with us bear."

Then count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations, for they are appointed for good, and when sufficiently tried, all the dear, tried saints shall come forth from the furnace, like gold seven times tried in the fire; and remember that although sorrow may endure for a night, joy cometh in the morning.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 15, 1857.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denotes the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

NOTICES.

FOR the benefit of our people who may be visiting Washington, D. C., please insert the following in the SIGNS:

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., have preaching by their pastor, Elder J. T. Rowe, on the third and fourth Sundays in each month, in Wonn's Hall, (second floor) 721 Sixth St., N. W., between G and H Sts. Hour of meeting, 3:30 p. m. each day.

By request of the church.

J. T. ROWE.

ROLAND PARK, BALTIMORE, Md., Feb. 21, 1900.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Feb. 7th, 1900, Dr. M. James Galloway, of Philadelphia, and Miss Myra B. Nivin, of Chester Co., Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—**Franklin Brehm,** oldest son of G. W. Brehm, of pneumonia, at Columbus Hospital, after an illness of two weeks, aged 34 years and nearly 8 months.

His stepmother,

MRS. M. J. BREHM

DIED—Jan. 29th, 1900, of pneumonia, **Alfred James,** son of Henry James, of Worthington, Minn., aged 29 years and 9 months, after an illness of twenty-five days. Deceased was not a member of the church militant, but his sympathies were with the Old School Baptists, and we trust that he had more than a legal knowledge of the truth. When he had occasion to attend meetings of other denominations, he seemed to be able to discern the fallacy of their theories. He frequently remarked to his father, "They do not talk like you do, father, I can see the difference."—ED.

I. D. McAdams departed this life August 19th, 1899, at the age of 68 years, 8 months and 12 days. He was born in Shelby Co., Ala., and emigrated to Atala Co., Miss , in 1851, where he married Elizabeth Turnee, in 1853, and united with the Hopewell church of Primitive Baptists, in 1864. He leaves a wife, four children, a number of grandchildren, the church and many friends, to mourn their loss, but they mourn not as those that have no hope. He manifested by a godly walk and conversation that he was an heir of that inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. He had been a reader of the SIGNS for many years, and was a firm believer in the doctrine it advocated, to the close of his mortal life; a firm and unwavering adherent to the doctrine once delivered to the saints, that salvation is of the Lord, from the beginning to the end. We would wish to bow in submission to the will of God in this peculiar and sad dispensation of providence, and be still and know that he is God.

ALSO,

Elizabeth P. McKinnon, sister of I. D. McAdams, died July 4th, 1896, aged 51 years and 7 days. She was united in marriage to S. T. McKinnon, in October, 1865. To this union were born eight children, five of whom survive her. She never united with any church, but was a firm advocate of the doctrine and faith as taught by the order of the Old School Baptist church, and seemed to enjoy the company of the

Old Baptists. She was a kind, devoted and indulgent companion, an affectionate and loving mother, ever mindful of the welfare of her family, and a faithful and true friend and neighbor, and loved and respected by all who knew her. That this affliction may be sanctified of God to the good of her family and friends, is our sincere desire.

A. J. RICHARDSON.

EDINBURG, Miss., Feb. 12, 1900.

DIED—At her home in Marshall Co., Ill., Feb. 4th, 1900, of measles and capillary bronchitis, **Florence Elizabeth Jordan,** being in her 18th year. This is the first time the messenger of death has visited our family, and he selected for his subject our oldest daughter, a precious, lovely and obedient child, just passing from childhood to womanhood years. Florence was a good, industrious and energetic child, her ways and actions always being in advance of her years. Being sick only about one week, she was snatched away from us before we could scarcely realize she was going, but each succeeding day brings a realizing sense that she is gone We think she scarcely realized herself that she was so very near the brink of death, she grew worse so rapidly, and during the last eighteen hours of her sickness she was delirious. Had we realized her end was so near, we believe it would have been a great satisfaction to us to have talked with her in regard to the future. She had been very restless and fretful until about noon the day before she died, when there came a very great change over her. Her fretfulness was all changed to reconciliation; she seemed so calm and at rest, she thought she was getting better. She asked if her papa was not glad she was that way. She began to get delirious soon after. This change, in connection with certain peculiar evidences experienced by her mother in regard to her being one of the Lord's children when she was very young, has made us very hopeful in regard to her "acceptance in the Beloved," had she retained her reason to have spoken to us more about it. She had a most beautiful, calm and heavenly expression on her face, as her fair form lay cold in death. With all Florence's lovable traits of character, we recognize but one salvation, that which is alone in an through the Lord Jesus Christ. We have been made to hope she is clothed in his righteousness. Although we were vainly proud of her, we have been wonderfully sustained in giving her up. We recognize that he who gave the precious flower has a perfect right to pluck the same at the sweetest time of opening bloom. She leaves her bereaved parents, two brothers, two sisters, numerous relatives and companions, to mourn her departure.

On account of other sickness in the family at the time, there were no exercises held at the time of burial.

G. C. JORDAN.

DIED—At her late residence about five miles from Bryn Zion, Del., Feb. 6th, 1900, **Mrs. Rachel Adaline Short,** in the 70th year of her age. Sister Short was baptized when I think about fourteen years old, and united with one of those small branches in Sussex Co., Del. I have not access to any record of her baptism, but her mother was baptized at the same time. The place was, I think, called Harris' Mills, and has long since ceased to be a church. She afterwards married, and moved far away, and for a time mingled with another denomination. Before I knew her she had become unhappy and burnt out, as we say sometimes. After being shut up alone for some time she found us almost by accident as it appeared, but she was at home and happy at once. Personally we were strangers, but she was ready and glad to ask for admission with us. It is within a few days of thirty years since her admission, but what her soul had longed for she found, and continued to the last in the full measure of spiritual enjoyment She has long been a widow, and in the domestic circle she was burdened beyond any case that I have ever known. Nobody else but a mother would or could ever have gone through what sister Short has, but she was always patient and uncomplaining. She has left sons and daughters grown and settled in life who no doubt appreciate the faith and gracious character of their sainted mother, and their sorrow will be relieved by rays of a blessed hope. The Bryn Zion church has met with the loss of a highly esteemed and faithful member. Though quite feeble for years, her last sickness was of short duration, and her faith was unshaken and triumphant at the last.

E. KITTENHOUSE.

STATE ROAD, Delaware.

William Hall was born at North Berwick, Maine, Nov. 3d, 1805, and died Nov. 28th, 1899, aged 94 years and 25 days. He was married to Eunice Hutchins in the year 1829, to whom were born nine children, five sons and four daughters, of whom but two survive him, a son and daughter, brother Joseph F. Hall and Mrs. Amanda Goodwin. Our aged brother in many respects was a remarkable man. He was highly respected for his integrity and undissembled conversation among his fellow men, and some years ago was chosen to serve in the Maine Legislature. He was noted for his industry. He could not be idle, and until a few days before his death he was found employed doing what he could in connection with the farm. It pleased the Lord to call him by his grace when he was thirteen years of age, and under the instruction of this precious grace he was convinced of his condition as a guilty sinner. He was arrested in the thought of the brevity of time, and eternity inspired his spirit with sacred awe. Thus he was brought to the footstool of mercy, and in due time was enabled to rejoice in the Rock of our salvation.

He was a man that never wavered in what he undertook, and in his religious principles unmovable. He was baptized by Elder Philander Hartwell, April 9th, 1840, uniting with the church in North Berwick. Our aged brother in conference meetings, and in private conversation, would often make use of the expressions, "It is a great thing to be a believer. It is a great thing to be a follower" Such he was through the riches of God's grace, a believer with all his heart in Jesus Christ, holding fast his glorious doctrine and following him by faith. On Friday, Nov. 24th, he came into the house and remarked that he felt weak, saying, "I do not know how it is going to turn, but it does not make any difference." I visited him on Sunday; he was quite weak, but talked freely about God's salvation. On the day that he died his son asked him if he thought he had got about through? He replied, "O yes, I am willing to wait God's appointed time." Thus he died in faith.

At his funeral the words in Rev. xiv. 4, were used as a text: "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth."

ALSO,

Calvin Roberts, of North Berwick, Maine, died Dec. 3d, 1899, aged 62 years, 5 months and 29 days. Our brother was brought by divine grace to the knowledge of his perishing condition as a sinner, and was given to experience a hope in Christ's righteousness and blood. He related his experience to the church, and was received for membership, and baptized by Elder William Quint, Nov. 20th, 1864. Our brother's last illness was not of long duration, he was sick about two weeks, during which he endured much suffering, and at the Lord's appointed time fell asleep, as we hope, in Jesus. He leaves especially to mourn their loss, his wife, sister Elmira Roberts, four brothers and one sister. The last time our brother was assembled with the church was a season of spiritual profit to his soul, and immediately after preaching he expressed the pleasure that had been his in listening to the gospel proclaimed that day. I answered him that it was a very great mercy to us poor sinners when the word preached comes unto us not in word only, but in power and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, and he replied, "I think so, too." Little did I think these would be the last words that would be exchanged between us in this world, upon divine things. In a few short days his soul, at the command of our Lord, put off this tabernacle, and absent from the body, he is present with the Lord.

At the funeral of our brother, the writer preached from the words, "So foolish was I and ignorant, I was as a beast before thee. Nevertheless, I am continually with thee; thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."—Psalm lxxiii. 22–24.

ALSO,

Deacon Ivory Libbey, of Berwick, Maine, died Dec. 11th, 1899, aged 92 years, 11 months and 21 days.

This dear, aged saint was one whom to know was to love, because of his humbleness of soul, and his cleaving fast to the simplicity of Christ. O, what a lovely, gladdening sight, to behold one walking humbly with God. Our brother professed a hope in Christ, and was baptized, uniting with the church in Sanford, Maine, in the year 1854, June 6th. He united with the church in North Berwick, and was chosen to the office of deacon, March 5th, 1863. During the last two years of his earthly sojourn our brother was quite feeble, and mostly confined to the house, where he was affectionately cared for in the home of his daughter, Mrs. Toothacher. When visiting our brother he was always ready to converse upon spiritual themes, and though absent from the assemblies of the saints, his inquiries after their welfare was expressive of his heart's desire that peace might reign within the walls of Zion, and prosperity within her palaces. A few days before his death, I conversed with him upon the comfort of his hope in Jesus, and he said he was waiting for the Lord to take him home to glory.

At his funeral I tried to speak from the words, "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?"—Rev. vii. 13.

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

MEETINGS.

THE church at Forest Grove, Wicomico Co., Md., has decided to hold a two days (yearly) meeting on Wednesday and Thursday, the 28th and 29th days of March, 1900, at their meeting-house near Parsonsburg. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. We expect Elders Durand and Poulson to be with us, and hope for the the sweet presence of the Lord and a good meeting.

A. B. FRANCIS, Pastor.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1900. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Feb. 27, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have been requested by our dear brother, Elder D. M. Vail, to write for publication upon a portion of the word as found in Matt. xxiii. 37, 38: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."

I feel that brother Vail could write upon the subject much more to the comfort and instruction of the dear saints of God, than it will be possible for me to. Many times I have been requested to write for the SIGNS, by lovers of the truth, but if I have any gift at all, it is not to write for publication, yet if I am to serve the brethren, I suppose it must be as they wish, and not as I desire. We should not forget that we are members one of another, and are helpers of each other's joy. None of us have anything that we did not receive, and nothing we have belongs to us individually, but to one another. In this sense we have all things common.

The Scripture named above has for many years been a mystery to me, and to this day I do not feel that I have any special light upon it, yet I cannot say I have never had any thought in reference to it. In reading the word it is always profitable to know who is speaking, and to whom the address is made, also at what time and under what circumstances, and when we are asked our views upon Scripture, it is not safe to give any until these things have been considered; for instance, we are told the kingdom of God is like unto leaven that the woman hid in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened. Now in the writings of the apostle he says, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Should we be asked the meaning of the last quotation, knowing something of the first, and not fully acquainted with the latter, we would be apt to give a wrong interpretation, as the meanings are altogether different. Hence, let us consider by whom the words of the text were spoken, to whom, and at what time. We often make mistakes in applying the Scripture of the first four books of the New Testament, thinking

that the gospel dispensation began with the preaching of John the Baptist, and Jesus, who followed, or came after him: such is not the case. If the gospel day began with the preaching of the gospel, we will have to go back to the time when God preached the gospel unto Abraham. There was no overlapping, no mixture of legality and grace, hence the gospel dispensation did not begin until after the death and resurrection of Jesus. In his death the demands of the law were satisfied, and an end of all rights and ceremonies under the law as service to God, the last offering for sin having been sacrificed: Jesus Christ, whose blood cleanseth us from all sin. So it is clear to see that as Jesus was made under the law, he lived in the flesh during that dispensation, and the law was in full force while he lived.

It pleased God to promise Abraham that in his seed all nations of the earth should be blessed. Christ was the seed, and all the blessings of life and salvation were and are in him. God chose the Israelites, who were the offsprings of Abraham, as a people for himself, and when in Egyptian bondage, he delivered them by his servant Moses, to whom his brethren said, years before, "Who hath made thee a ruler and a judge over us?" God gave this people a law, but they were stiff-necked and rebellious, yet God was merciful to them, supplying their needs, and giving to them the promised land, Canaan.

Jerusalem was the holy city of the Jews, or the church under the law. From time to time, God raised up prophets, and sent them unto this people with messages, such as, "Return unto me, and I will return unto you." Let us bear in mind this was all under the covenant of works. The Jews, because of their hardness of heart and unbelief, refused to hearken unto the messages of God unto them. They did not believe God had sent them, and instead of listening to them, and living in obedience to the law given them, they killed the prophets of God. Now, according to the promise of God, he sends his Son, as the apostle says, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."—Heb. i. 1, 2. But while this declaration is made, let us remember that it was the Spirit of Christ in the prophets that caused them to prophesy, hence it was God speaking to his people, the Jews, all the time, whether in the prophets, or by his Son in the flesh. When Jesus came to his own (nation) his own received him not, and as was said to Moses, We will not have this man to rule over us. Though Jesus had said unto them he was the Son of God, and had sent his disciples to preach unto them saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand, they believed not. We would understand from this twenty-third chapter of Matthew, that Jesus was at Jerusalem preaching in the temple to his disciples and multitude, in the presence of the scribes and pharisees. These were the teachers and rulers of the nation. In those respects they sat in Moses' seat, because they were teachers of the law of Moses, and enforced obedience to it, and Jesus said, "Therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not." Here we find Jesus telling his disciples to keep the law of Moses, but not to do the works of the scribes and pharisees. We are taught here that none are justifiable in doing beyond what the word teaches; we should not follow those who teach for doctrine

the commandments of men. The worship of the Jews was in ordinances and ceremonies, and not in spirit and truth, therefore their righteousness was only in the law, and the Savior said to his disciples, If their righteousness did not exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, they could in no wise enter into the kingdom of God. After addressing the disciples the Savior directs his words to the scribes and pharisees; he calls them hypocrites, and tells them of all their evil doings, devouring widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers, and that they compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and that when he was made, he is made two-fold more a child of hell than they themselves.

These scribes and pharisees said, If they had been in the days of their fathers, they would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets, and Jesus said, "Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers! how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"—Matt. xxiii. 31–33. In the thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth verses of this chapter, Jesus speaks prophetically to the same people, saying, "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar."

The same God who had sent prophets unto this people during the legal dispensation, was now promising to send others under the gospel, and said this people would treat them in the same way as their fathers had in all the years past, that upon them should be all the righteous blood shed. This was only a few days before Jesus was crucified, the last time he would ever be in that temple, and speak to this still stiff-necked and rebellious nation. He says to them, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem," &c. As we said in the beginning, let us see who speaks, and who is addressed. Jesus speaks, that great Prophet. It was his Spirit in all the prophets that had spoken, and not the man, so now it is the same Spirit, and not the flesh, that speaks to the same national Israel, under the same covenant of works they had been under since the days of Moses. The blessings of life and the salvation of these people were temporal, and not eternal. They were a type of the spiritual Israel of God, whose blessings of life and salvation are both temporal and eternal. Jesus says in the text to the carnal Jews, or Jerusalem, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." The Savior did not mean to say, while I have been with you in the flesh I would have gathered thy children, but in all the years past; he, as the God of heaven and earth, would have blessed them, and saved them from harm, danger and captivity, but they would not hear the words of the Lord. (See Jer. xiii. 9–14.)

He presents the emblem of a hen gathering her chickens under her wings. Does she gather them under her wings in order to make them chickens? No, but because they are chickens, and belong to her; they are gathered at times to protect them from danger, and at other times to protect them from the cold and

from the rain, to keep them warm and comfortable. The chickens know the voice of the mother, and are not stiff-necked and rebellious like the Jewish nation was, but at the voice of the hen they make haste to obey. Jesus did not mean in the text, as the world thinks, that he desired these people at Jerusalem to be christians, but had not the power to accomplish his will unless they would surrender themselves. He had no reference whatever to eternal salvation, but all time and temporal, and under that covenant of, "If you will I will." Now, as that covenant was about to end, and the gospel dispensation to be ushered in, he says to them, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." This was the house of Israel, or Jewish kingdom, and desolate because God would no more dwell among them as a nation, and where God is not, there is nothing but desolation and destruction. To-day we are not under law, but under grace, under the new covenant God has made with his spiritual Israel, as is recorded in Jer. xxxi. 31–33. In this dispensation God has not sent his prophets and servants to us saying, "If you will I will," but "I will and you shall," is the message to-day to the Israel of God. And how thankful we should be that it is so, knowing we are weak, and prone to sin, and cannot keep his righteous law except he works in us, "Both to will and to do of his good pleasure." I say keep his law, not the law of Moses, but the law of grace, that which is written in the heart.

We know that Jerusalem was destroyed by fire not many years after the death of Christ, because their house had been left unto them desolate, and as Jesus said, not one stone was left upon another, but total destruction of that temple, and of all their ordinances and ceremonies. But now the new Jerusalem, which is from above, and the mother of us all, stands forever; here God reigns, "Here our best friends and kindred dwell." This is a tabernacle that shall never be taken down; not one of her stakes removed, nor one of her cords be broken.

I have tried to present such thoughts as I have upon the subject, hoping brother Vail and others may at least be given a travel of mind upon the subject. I would be glad if others would write upon the same text.

H. C. KER.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

MRS. MARY J. COX—DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD:—It is very agreeable as we are journeying in our pilgrimage to the city that hath foundations whose builder and maker is God, to fall in with those of like precious faith. We may for a time have been plodding along in a solitary way, and have become so isolated in our soul's feelings that we could scarcely conclude we were in the true, right way, but must surely have been turned aside from the flocks of the companions of him who is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. When therefore in our lonely way we find another wayfaring one, and discover in the exchange of our communications that we have journeyed over the same path, and are bound for the same destination, we take courage, and are strengthened and comforted in our companionship. This in a measure I felt in the perusal of your kind letter.

You have I suppose just recently in attending the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, and elsewhere, met with a goodly number of Zion's pilgrims, some old in the ways, others youthful. There we find the woman with her little one, and she

which travaileth with child, and in the way we find also the blind and the lame whom the Lord would not leave behind in captivity, for they were his, his loved and chosen, and he ransomed them from the hand of him that was stronger than they. (Jer. xxxi. 7–14.) As we are journeying in the ways, I have pleasure given me in all the flock, the sheep and the lambs, the young and the old. I love to talk with children in grace, and you will not think it strange if I say I have peculiar pleasure in dandling babes upon my knees. Knowledge, and growth in knowledge in the kingdom of Christ, is not like the attainment of earthly knowledge. A child of God may have obtained a hope in God's salvation many years ago, and may now be an old man according to the years of his natural life, and yet still may be but a child in experience and knowledge of divine things. There are those who presumptuously imagine that to be a man in Christ consists in being so well versed in the Scriptures, especially upon the subjects of predestination, election and reprobation, so that if you met an opponent you could cut his head off in the twinkling of an eye. But a person may have the bare letter of the doctrine of Christ in his natural intellect, and instead of being a man, a father, an old man in Israel, he is not even a babe, for he has not been born again. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." If we are born again, born of the Spirit, then we shall know what it is to sigh over our sins, to thirst after righteousness, to love God, there will be desires after him, and we shall be drawn to him with longings to know him, to taste his mercy; there will be yearnings within us to be holy and pure, yes, to be holy even as God is holy, that we might dwell with the Lord. These things you are not a stranger to, and I feel I can say there is some such life in me in which these things are found. The saints often talk to one another about what it is to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and it never yet has all been told to one another. Sometimes the presentation of the subject is, "Ye shall grow up as calves of the stall."—Mal. iv. 2. Then it is said, Israel "shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon."—Hosea xiv. 5. Many other similitudes are employed, such as the vine, the palm tree, children, and a building, to set forth the growth of the church, and of the children of God. There are many things to learn, and many branches of knowledge in the kingdom of grace. Then also there is both downward and upward growth. As a tree we grow at the root, and are rooted and grounded in Christ, and we also grow up into him in all things. The Lord can impart such knowledge to one child of his in a little while, what he is pleased to take years to impart to another of his dear children. He has his own purposes to fulfill in this. I think I can say I have experienced days in which it was as if the experience of years were crowded into them, and out of the experience of those days has come the knowledge of what I am, and a deeper knowledge of the excellencies of Christ Jesus my Lord, and there has been an unfolding, and knowledge given me of the signification of the Spirit in many portions of the Scriptures. I can well remember some such days as I have alluded to. Such a mixture, such changes, alternate joy and grief, weakness and strength, doleful forebodings and moments of victory. Dark, dense night, and then a glimpse of the clear, blue sky in which shone our dear, our glorious Sun of

Righteousness, our precious, risen and ascended Savior, who smiled upon even me. O, how happy I felt in those sweet, fair moments. Dark moments soon intervened, and devils and sin seemed to be raging above me, about me and within me. I have felt to be the very prey of manifold, hateful, vile emotions, then to be filled with love and tenderness toward our God and Savior Jesus Christ, and to all the flock of God, and while in this tender mood one might think, How could it be possible to have an unkind thought toward any one, an unkind word or act, how could it be possible? Erskin writes, "I'm both a devil and a saint." Well, I have to confess, (and it is with heaviness of heart I do it) there is in me, in my flesh, that which is earthly, sensual, devilish. I painfully know it is so, I have tasted it, and it is bitter, and the stench of it is exceeding vile. O, sin makes the heart ache, and none but God's sacred ones know what a fearful, crushing thing sin is. The natural heart is desperately wicked, and if the fountain be thus vile, all the streams are filthy. Christ says, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: these are the things which defile a man." O God, have mercy upon me, wash me in the fountain of Jesus' blood, and then I shall be pure in thy sight. One thing I find comes out of all the humiliating knowledge of my depravity, the pressure of afflictions and hellish temptations, I am instructed to look unto, I am driven and drawn unto Christ, as my all. In him there is no lack, all I need in him I find, and much sweet peace and comfort is given me by the Spirit in him. But I am a mystery to myself, and if my life, my secret life pertaining to divine things, were portrayed, it seems to me others would think so, too. Not long ago, one night I retired to rest, and while lying upon my bed I began musing upon the things of God, and as I was musing desires were springing up within my heart to know more of Christ, to grow in the knowledge of God. I began with fervent longings to ask of the Lord that I might be more deeply taught of him. I felt to be very near to the Lord, and as a little child to be quite intimate with our heavenly Father in my supplications. But while I was thus before our Father's throne pouring forth my soul's desires, there came a voice, a thought into my mind, "Do you know what you are asking for? You are asking for trials and suffering." My prayers were suspended, ceased. The memories of past trials appalled me, I shrank from the touch of them; I contemplated what was involved in asking to grow in the knowledge of God, and I was so chilled under the suggestions that were poured into my soul, that I could not utter another word before the throne of God. When I came to myself where was I? Ah, I was no longer in the palace of the King, no more within the holy of holies, no more in happy intimacy before the throne of our dear God, our heavenly Father, our Savior. No, I was hardened, clothed with shame, I had all the miserable feelings of a coward; I felt I must be despised, that God must be ashamed of me; I felt, How could I venture near to God again after such shameful behavior in his presence? O, I was no longer as a child in the house of the Lord, but a miserable outcast, and I think I had a taste of outer darkness. You see what a weak, contemptible worm I am, frightened by a messenger of Satan, from the throne of God. If salvation were not of grace, absolute grace, what hope could there be for one like me? I

could tell of many seasons when amidst sore temptations and assaults of Satan, I have been able to stand. The Holy Spirit has so sustained me that with invincible faith I have been enabled to surmount every obstacle, and to cleave to my God through all oppositions.

"O, I have seen the day,
When, with a single word,
God helping me to say,
My trust is in the Lord,
My soul has quelled a thousand foes,
Fearless of all that could oppose.

But unbelief, self-will,
Self-righteousness and pride,
How often do they steal
My weapons from my side!
Yet David's Lord, and Gideon's Friend,
Will help his servant to the end."

In spite of my sinfulness, and all my unbelief and wretched behavior before the Lord, I believe he will help me to the end, for I have so often had such signal proofs of his tender compassion that I cannot, I must not, think he will cease to love me. Though it may appear very inconsistent with what I have written, yet I feel there is an abiding longing in my heart to know more of Christ, to be indulged with communion with him, and to be conformed to his likeness. I think I have entered a little into the feelings of Peter's aching heart, when he said, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." He knoweth all things, he knoweth all my weaknesses, and all the wrestlings and conflicts of my soul. When he called me by his grace he knew that left to myself I should deal very treacherously, and that I have been a transgressor from the womb. (Isaiah xlviii. 8.) He knows how my fleshly nature is a perpetual clog, and much interferes with my walking with him. He knows my sighs and tears because of my sinfulness, and unspiritual-mindedness. He knows the way I take, and he knows that I love him, and greatly long for such supplies of grace that I may offer up continually unto him the sacrifices of prayer and praise, and serve him with reverence and godly fear.

I altogether agree with you, dear sister, when you say, "Trials of every kind may be ours, but there is no sorrow like the hidings of our Father's face, and we are left to grovel in the darkness of our own vile hearts." What does this peculiar sorrow indicate? It reveals the living union between us and our God. He that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God, and I would hope that we are included among those of whom the Lord says, "It is my people, and they shall say, The Lord is my God."—Zech. xiii. 9.

I have met your brother, Elder Joseph N. Badger, several times, and feel an attachment to him because his ministry, the few times I have heard him preach, has been of comfort to me. There is something very precious in the love that cements together those of like precious faith. This love, wherever it dwells, will actuate that one to seek the good of Zion, to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and even in times of Zion's desolations, we shall be found taking pleasure in her stones, and favoring the dust thereof.

I am your brother in the hope of immortality in Christ Jesus,

FRED. W. KEENE.

ROXBORO, N. C., Jan. 29, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have closely read the SIGNS for January 15th, and am satisfied that I have never read a paper that was more interesting to me. From start to finish it sets forth the work of grace in a sinner's heart as the way and the only way of salvation, both for time and eternity. It does appear to me that the arguments used are so plain and

conclusive that those of the most tender mind upon the subject of God's absolute sovereignty, could see and be convinced of this blessed truth, but I know by experience that it is not in man to convince one of any point of scriptural truth. The spirit in the heart is the only power by which revelation can come, and until a matter is revealed in our own heartfelt experience, we cannot know of its truth. There are things which I have believed and followed with my might, which I can now see were not taught in the Scriptures, but as recorded in the Bible alone, I could not know them, as I now see and know them, because revealed in my own experience; and now I see the Scriptures in a different light, so that all seems new to me. The precious doctrine of predestination was once hidden from me, and in an argument with a New School Baptist minister, I found him stronger in the doctrine than I was. He believed what many of our people are now contending for, permissive decrees in all things not pertaining to salvation, and all wicked things in that connection. I had never had the matter opened up to me at all. This was several years after I was an ordained minister. I know that no church can ever become established in the truth under the teaching of a minister who has no more experience than I then had, unless taught it directly in their own experience. It is only as I have been led into, through and out of deep places, that I have realized the truth of God's predestination and purpose in all my life. The Lord brings the blind by a way that they knew not, and every one who has been brought from death in sin unto life in Christ, knows that it was a way of trouble and sore conflict, but it was the way that God had ordained to bring them, just as much as the wanderings of the wilderness were ordained as the way that the Israelites should go from Egypt to Canaan, or that the anger of Joseph's brethren was the way that he had ordained for Joseph to go before them to preserve much people alive. Then after he has brought them into the way of life, it is just as much his to lead them in the way that they should go, for it is no more in them to direct their steps than it was before. David could see the hand of God in establishing his goings, just as much as he could in bringing him up out of the horrible pit, and he could not sing only as God put the new song in his mouth. Our lives are a very crooked way when we view them from the standpoint of our having directed them, but when we see that the Lord has directed, and led us all this way, then is the crooked made straight. This is the only way in which I have ever been led out of difficulty. If the wilderness was about to swallow me up, I found deliverance only in the fact that the wilderness is the Lord's. If a mountain was about to fall upon me, my deliverance was that the mountain was also the Lord's. All deep places are his, as well as all darkness. Jesus has been in all these places, and the north wind and the tempest have blown upon him also, and have well nigh gone over him. This had to be true of him for our salvation, for he must be be made perfect through sufferings, and he must learn obedience by the things that he suffered. Now we are told that his people are predestinated to be conformed to his image. Must we lose sight of the fact that his image in this world was one of suffering? Are we not as much predestinated to that part of his image, as we are predestinated to the image of his glory? He said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." He said he would show

Paul what great things he must suffer for his sake. He told Peter, when he should be old another should gird him, and carry him whither he would not. He told his disciples that they should be hated of all men for his name's sake. All this shows the decree of God, and not something brought on them by their evil deeds. God has ordained the good works of his people, and he leads them in the way that he has ordained that they should go. He works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. He has wrought all our works in us, and as he works in us, so has he ordained that we should work them out. God has commanded all this, and his word shall not return unto him void. It must surely be done just as he has commanded, or his word will not have accomplished just what he pleased. Which side of this will we take? We never hear the Lord commanding the devils, and they not obeying him. The winds and the sea marvelously obey him. The devils could not enter the herd of swine until he said, "Go." He is the potter, who when he made man, made one vessel to honor, and another to dishonor. He endures the vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction, and looks with loving pity on the vessels of mercy. He has said, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness," &c. God does not love their sins, their waywardness, their corruption, and therefore he gave his Son to take these away. This is the way that he has ordained for their salvation. Thus it is all in him, and by him, and through him. He works also by the wicked to the fulfilling of his purpose. It was by wicked hands that Jesus was betrayed, crucified and slain, and they acted by his decree. David declares them to be God's hand and sword. Shall we say that our God is half paralyzed, and cannot control the hand of wickedness, as well as the hand of righteousness? It was to those who crucified the Savior that he gave the commandment, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord, smite the Shepherd," &c. The wicked are here spoken to, and when Jesus was on the cross the commandment was fulfilled, and salvation completed, or the fountain opened to the house of Israel, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for their sins and uncleanness. If this black crime was decreed, or predestinated, and in it the purpose of God was fulfilled, and the anger of the wicked was overcome, why should this not be done in everything else? Who of all the household of faith would so dare to limit God, or dare to say what is his purpose in anything that comes to pass, whether in our eyes it be good or evil? God grant that we may accept all his works with reverence and holy fear.

Your brother in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

ROMANS VIII. 10.

"AND if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."

There has seemed to me to be much need of a proper understanding of the frequent allusions of Paul to death. It seems that a man can hardly take a position that does not lead into some inquiry. The question suggests itself, How could the body be dead when Christ dwelt within it? What kind of a death does Paul mean, and what words will best convey his meaning? This has been the great inquiry in my mind which has been perplexed by these words.

He has said that to be carnally minded is death, and that if we live after the flesh we shall die. He also said to his brethren that they were to reckon them-

selves dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, and that they had become dead to the law by the body of Christ, and that as sin had reigned unto death, even so grace had reigned unto life. Again he said, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" He said that sin had revived and therefore he had died, and that he died daily. Also he said, "How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" And, "If we be dead with Christ, we shall also live with him." How then is the body dead when Christ dwells within? The apostle has said sin entered into the world by one man's transgression, and death by sin, and that the wages of sin is death. Must we not conclude that the apostle in the text, had reference to that death which is the wages of sin? The apostle does not mean a corporeal death or a dissolution of the body, but a falling into a miserable, corrupt condition, which has all the fruits of death. This is death because of sin, or as the wages of sin. The apostle says that when one is dead he is freed from sin. Sin has brought death as the consummation, and can do no more. He that sins could only reap the wages of sin, which is death. The body then is dead because of sin, and hence could not be counted as being in a condition to obey after it was dead. Thus the saints, having Christ in them, have death also in the body, which state of death renders them helpless to comply with the commandments of God. Thus the body is dead, and if Christ be in them, the Spirit only is life because of righteousness. Obedience therefore would necessarily come from the Spirit, for it is life. As the body is dead, while the Spirit is life, if conditions are to be complied with, which complies, the body, which is dead, or the Spirit which is life? So if our time salvation is conditional, upon what is it conditioned? Is it upon the body, which is dead because of sin, or upon the Spirit, which is life because of righteousness? To which would the reward go, the body or the Spirit? to that which is dead, or to that which is life? If to the life, Christ is our life, and the Spirit, or Christ, would receive the reward. If to that which is dead, what for? Not for obedience, for they are dead because of disobedience. Their being dead is an evidence that obedience has not been rendered. Hence no reward can be to us, for we are dead in sin, and because of sin. The Spirit only is life.

The apostle says, "To be carnally minded is death." From this may we not get some idea of what Paul means? To be carnally minded is to be sinfully minded, and this is called death. "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die." "The carnal mind is enmity against God." It ever has been and ever will be enmity against him. And then Paul said, "So with the mind I serve the law of God, and with the flesh the law of sin." The apostle was doing all this, after he had Christ in him the hope of glory. One might think that if Christ was in him, his body could not serve sin. But he affirms that he did with the flesh serve the law of sin. But as Christ was in him, he had the mind of Christ, and with that mind he served God. This service in the flesh of sin made him die daily. The commandment came, and as soon as it came, sin revived and he died. Before this he was alive without the law, but after Christ was within, the body was dead because of sin, and was still carnal and corrupt. The apostle called it a body of death, and desired to be delivered from it. Thus results a warfare between the flesh and the Spirit. And to the be-

lievers it is said, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God, and when Christ who is your life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

In all this it seems to me that we have found an explanation as to what kind of death Paul meant in the text. If Christ be in us, the body is seen to be very corrupt. To look at Jesus within, who is all life and virtue, and then to turn to our body, and look at it, the contrast is so great. Our bodies are horrible to see, when compared with Christ. When one is given a view of Jesus, by an eye of faith, self never looks beautiful again. We did not know but what self was all right until Jesus revealed himself to us by his Spirit, then we came to deny self, and to confess Jesus. One glimpse of Jesus, and to have his love shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, settles the matter for all time; no other love can be like that; no other will ever satisfy after this has come. The bride of Christ can love no other but Jesus, everything else is death.

When a poor, guilty, condemned sinner, gets one taste of Jesus' love, and feels the power of his grace, everything else comes to be abhorred. The body is then dead indeed, and it appears so far as self is concerned, it can furnish no more joy. It has come to appear a dead weight. It is like being chained to a dead carcass. The apostle wanted to be delivered from it, but felt himself chained to it, and served sin with it, while with the mind he served God. He bore about in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus. He wanted to do good, but evil was present with him, so that he could not do the things that he would. He always delighted in the law of God, after the inward man, but he saw another law in his members, warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin, which was in his members.

Some think that the sinner is not changed, but Paul says he dies. I think that is a marked change. The law of sin and death wars against the law of his mind, the flesh lusts against the Spirit. This, I think, is an awful change. To have Christ in us, and the body dead, is certainly quite a change from what was before the case. Of these dead, it is said that their life is hid with Christ in God; none can pluck them out of the Father's hand. The life that the saints live in the flesh, they live by the faith of the Son of God. Paul said, "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God." There is a death unto sin. The saints also become dead to the law by the body of Christ. When one is dead to a thing, that thing has no more dominion over him. The law has no more dominion over us, for we are not under the law but under grace, and sin shall not have dominion over us, for the same reason. Ye are dead to sin, and to the law, and so sin and the law have no more dominion over you. So, while with the flesh we serve sin, with the mind we serve God, for the law is written in the mind. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? We die to sin, and cannot live in sin, because sin brings death and not life. If we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. No law, nor sin, can have dominion over a dead man. If one is dead because of sin, he is freed from sin. Sin loses its dominion as soon as it has brought death. The Spirit is then our life. Sin ruled in us until Christ came. Sin still dwells within, but Christ has overthrown its dominion, he has set up the kingdom of grace instead. Thus the saints are all like Paul, "With the mind,

they serve the law of God, but with the flesh, the law of sin." There is a death to sin, and a death because of sin, and a death by sin, a daily death, or rather a dwelling in death. When Christ is within us, we see our carnal mindedness, our living after the flesh, and that there is nothing about self but what has a tendency to bring death. We then see within self, a proud, vain heart, corrupt thoughts, and no good thing. There is a will to do good, but always evil is present with us. Thus as Paul again says, If we do that we would not, it is no more we that do it, but sin that dwelleth in us. Being dead to sin, and to the law, by the body of Christ, does not then mean that we can do the things that we want to do, but rather, it means that we cannot do the things that we would. We find that we are void of strength within ourselves to do the good that we would. The Spirit is life, but the flesh remains dead, death remains death, flesh remains flesh. God is the only strength of Israel, and will not lie. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the law of sin and death."

Your brother,

NEWTON PETERS.

PORTLAND, Ind., Jan. 13, 1900.

[WE understand our brother to present in the above letter just what we have thought for a long time was the meaning of Paul in the text, viz: that the body was dead before Christ came, and still is dead after he has come to us, and that now we experience this death, and come to know what was true all the time. This experience, as our brother says, is a continual experience, and so we die daily. It is a painful and self-abasing experience, but in it Christ is exalted, and so we come to take no praise to self, but to praise him at all times, and for all things.—ED.]

STATE ROAD, Del., February, 1900.

BROTHER BEEBE:—I have been looking over Elder Vail's letter in your last issue, and I see that he says he would be glad if others would write on the subject. I suppose he means it conditional that they write as well, or better, than he has. Brother Vail is conscientious; I would like to feel that I was as much so. It has been a kind of necessity with me to have a good deal of sympathy with preachers. I cannot feel to blame them when they suffer serious doubts and misgivings about their calling; indeed, it seems to me it is one of the marks they all bear, whom God has called to preach his gospel. Most of our preachers unite in censuring Jonah. I question whether they would not all have acted just as Jonah did. I do not suppose he saw any vision, or heard any audible voice; I presume he was called just as gospel preachers are called now. He would naturally feel a reluctance to go, but the more serious question undoubtedly was whether the impression could be from the Lord. If he could get rid of the impression he could give it up, satisfied that it was not of the Lord. I think that schooling was necessary for him; he was a better preacher after that, and it was just the time for him to go when he went. He would not fear the face of man now. I think if brother Vail will look over the record he will see that where Jonah was landed on dry land, instead of being on the shores of Nineveh, it was three days journey for Jonah to travel. But he was satisfied now that it was of the Lord that he should go to Nineveh and preach. I think it was best so. In regard to those questions and answers, I have not got along without some perplexity in my own mind, not only on the subjects named, but some others also. We are accus-

tomed, as far as my acquaintance extends, to opening all our meetings for preaching the word with singing and prayer. I see no grounds to object to this solemn order as becoming, yet we have neither precept nor example in the New Testament for it. It is so uniformly observed now that a minister would not feel at liberty at any time to omit it. It was not impropriety or unfitness in this order that raised a question in my mind, but the being confined to it. However one might feel, or circumstances might differ, the man is expected to pray, whether he had the spirit of prayer about him or not. I talked with some ministering brethren on the subject, and so far as I ascertained their minds, they seemed to prefer that we should continue in the practice that seemed to be generally approved. I have never discussed the matter publicly, but I have known several preachers who found opening their meetings with prayer the greatest trial of their lives. With regard to other occasions, I will give what has been my own experience, and follow it with some reflections as I gather from the Scriptures.

In my early life I was surrounded with several different orders of professors, and they all were making much ado about prayer. It did not seem to be a cry from a heart in distress, a real condition of helplessness, but merely saying prayers at stated times as a religious duty. I was oftentimes shocked at the lightheartedness and utter lack of solemnity there was about it. Although I knew that the vail was rent, that under the old covenant shut out from the sanctuary all but the High Priest, yet to me it was an awfully solemn thing to approach the holy One. After uniting with the church I would be to lodge in different homes, and always sit down at other people's tables, as I had no home of my own. I would of course be liable to be called upon at the first table I would sit down to. However much people differed in their religious faith or practice, when there would be a mixed company together at the same table, if there was an Old School Baptist present, he would be the one almost invariably to be called upon to ask a blessing at the table. I do not call to mind an instance of any one refusing. People seemed to have confidence in my profession. If they did not have full confidence they never allowed me to know it. I knew I would be called upon, and not alone among brethren, but quite as certain among others, oftentimes with those making no profession. What am I to do? They are not asking for me only to do as well as I can. They do not think of criticising, but they know that I have made a profession that they have the utmost confidence in, and it is out of respect to me, and they are asking for what they feel that they have a right to ask. I may say I have little or no gift; they only ask for what I have. Not only at the table, but in the evening the family Bible would at sometimes be brought out to have family worship. They would feel hurt if I should refuse. I almost envied the sisters whose privilege it was to escape the duties and responsibilities that I felt devolving on me. I knew that the Old School Baptists were subjects of criticism, and their walk was closely watched. I could not bear the idea of giving occasion to religious opponents to speak reproachfully. I have never found but one answer to the questions presented, and so, having as I trust obtained divine help, I have continued to this day, in obedience to the promptings that weighed upon me in that hour of sore trial. On every occasion that I call

to mind, where we have account of Christ being seated at the table, it states that he blessed. It has been my impression that it was his uniform practice, and that in this he set an example for us. The apostle says that we should in everything give thanks, and we have on record in the confusion of a shipwreck, and he a prisoner in the presence of two hundred and seventy-six people, many of them heathen, he took bread and gave thanks in the presence of them all. I believe that there are brethren that are not gifted in utterance, even of what they feel. I believe also that gifts may be improved, and those who have the most trouble on the subject, generally come out the most gifted. It is the spirit we want, and not a mere flow of words. The tendency to mere formality, or running into the same track, will be overcome at length by continual struggling against it. I do not know that I can do better here in closing on these points than to quote a sentence from the apostle: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things." It is all very well to have thankful hearts, but we may not always know if nothing is ever uttered. How shall there be a response of amen at our giving thanks if nothing is uttered? I had things on my mind in regard to the work and duties of deacons, but I will not take that subject up now. I would prefer for my part that brethren would continue to walk in the old paths, and not try to remove the landmarks that the fathers have set.

Hoping that grace may abound to you all, I remain in love and fellowship,

E. RITTENHOUSE.

KANSAS, Ill., Dec. 1, 1899.

ELDER D. BARTLEY—DEAR BROTHER:—As we have just finished reading through the entire contents of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of December 1st, and as we lay them aside you come into our mind, and it occurred to me that to-morrow and next day is the time of your meeting at Crawfordsville, Ind., so I feel like writing and giving you some of our feelings as to the teachings in this issue of the SIGNS.

First. Elder Durand's complete uptripal of Arminianism in all its bearings. Surely, surely, the eyes of any child of God ought to be "turned from darkness to light" by such unanswerable defense of the truth as Elder Durand has made.

Then Elder Chick's editorial on all things working together for good to them that love God, was to my mind, "wine on the lees, well refined." I was enabled to see that these workers of iniquity, are only doing that that God permits, and that good will come out of it to the Zion of our God. You call to mind that national Israel had disturbers of the peace of the children of Israel among them, and that they had to be sifted, that Israel might travel on to the promised land. So it will be in this case. I do not expect to live to see the end of this beginning to lead astray by would be leaders, but with full confidence of a God of all power being the Leader of spiritual Israel, I have no doubt of the final result. Yea, with Paul I can say, "We hope for that we see not." It will come. Then, my brother, let you and I "with patience wait for it." Further on in this same chapter the apostle says, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" You and I may be killed for the testimony of Christ; if so, is it not a comfort to know that our great Master said, "The disciple is not

above his Master"? and goes on to say, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." These modern teachers may in a measure kill our standing, but they cannot kill God's truth; they may hate us for Christ's name's sake, but the Savior has said, "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." Let us then obey our Lord where he said, "Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, Shake off the dust of your feet." If it were not for the hope that we have in the perfect and finished work of Christ, how could we live? But Paul says, "We know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." This sometimes gives me great comfort, for I feel to know so little about what to pray for as I ought. A little over fifty-six years ago, I hope the Spirit made me utter an acceptable prayer, when I was made to say, "Lord, save, I perish." I am no more able to save myself now than I was then, but still am made to realize that if saved in time, or to eternity, it is solely by the grace of God, and I am glad it is so for I cannot of myself even think a good thought. I am constantly compelled to say, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But if Christ has ransomed me from the curse of the law, I am made to feel with the apostle, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Then comes the blessed thought, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

JAMES M. TRUE.

WAGRAM, Ohio, Jan., 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN:—A few weeks ago I received a letter from a sister in Ohio, in which she said, "I was so glad when I read your letter in the SIGNS to-day, about your enjoying your trip among those who believe in the same kind of predestination that you do. So many of our ministers are so different, and believe so much in their own works. But I long to hear some who preach all of God and nothing of ourselves, for our time salvation."

The above expresses one of the greatest objections that I have to the idea of "conditional time salvation." The way it is presented, and the way that I have heard it preached, they leave the Lord out of it, and put the sinner into it too much, or in a way which seems to me to give the sinner more power than I in my experience realize that I have. They seem to me to go beyond my experience, and the Scriptures also. Such preaching does not satisfy the souls of those who have been taught that salvation is of the Lord, and all of him who is all things to them. They may listen to it for want of a better thing, but they cannot feel that it is right, and they cannot help it. They want in preaching to hear Christ and him crucified, the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning of their experience, and the ending of the same. They love to hear about the mighty power of God not only in their salvation, but in all things, at all times, and under all circumstances. They want to hear that he is in the storm, in cold, famine, war and darkness, as well as in the spiritual joy, or in the renewing of their hearts and churches. They do not believe in a lame God, and neither do they want him preached as though he was lame, which is done whenever they preach that all things pertaining to the salvation of the church are predestinated,

but the rest of the things in the world are not, or that they come by chance. His people do not believe that God wants his people, or men, or devils, to do certain things and cannot get them to do them, for lack of power. They do not believe that anything comes to pass, God not willing it. "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commanded it not?"—Lam. iii. 37. Do I see affliction, it is by the rod of his wrath. Am I in darkness, he bringeth me into darkness. Am I shut up, he hath hedged me about, so that I cannot get out until his own good time comes, and then he will bring me out by his own almighty power, and according to his eternal purpose, and not according to our will, or works.

The way this conditional salvation is sometimes preached, it has the same effect upon those who are like the sister who wrote me, that the words of Bildad had upon Job. His words, instead of converting Job, or making him feel good, only made him miserable, and through their comfort (?) they rendered only miserable comfort to him. They in effect said to Job, "You have brought this upon yourself by some secret sin which you have kept hidden from us, but which you cannot hide from God." But Job did not believe them, nor their words, not because he felt that in and of himself he was righteous or perfect, or not a sinner, but because he had an understanding of God's ways which they did not have. Job knew, yes, *knew*, that the Lord was in the fire, and wind, and death, and even in his bodily affliction. All these things were evil to him, and were regarded so by men, but he said, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" It all shows us his faith in an overruling providence, which reached to all things at all times; that is, God is in all things. This gives me more real comfort and joy in my life than all things else, and when I can hear it preached in its unlimited fullness, and the Lord gives me an ear to hear, (he must and does do even that) I want to glorify his name, and shout his praises from the tops of the mountains. There are numbers of his children like this sister, so situated that they rarely hear the kind of preaching which gives, as they think, all the glory to God. They are in existence like the seven thousand in Elijah's day; Elijah did not know who nor where they were; he thought that he was left all alone, the last one, all the rest gone; they were hidden to him. So, to-day, they are hidden to us, until the Lord directs us to them, to feed them So also the Lord hid Elijah by the brook Cherith, and commanded the ravens as his servants to feed him. "And I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there," he said. Notice it reads, "feed thee there." So he had to go there to be fed, he could not help it, he was in the hand of God.

To me it seems the way some preach this so-called "conditional time salvation," they separate the child from the power of God, and say that there are some things it can do without the aid of the Holy Spirit. Now, if there be one thing that I can do without the aid of the Holy Spirit, then I am to that extent independent of God, which I cannot believe. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," says the apostle, Phil. iv. 13. This means just as much to-day as when it was spoken; it is as true of the saint to-day as it was of Paul. To say that the Holy Ghost gives us strength to do certain things, and then leaves it optional with us to do

or not to do, will not do for me, because then it would be uncertain whether it would be done, which might make some of the work of the Spirit to be a failure. It seems to me that when the Spirit gives me strength to do a thing, it indicates that it is the will of the Spirit that I should do this thing. It seems to me that it was just as much the will of the Spirit that the thing should be done, as it was the will of the Spirit to give me the strength to do it. It is God which worketh in me both to will and to do of his good pleasure. He inclines me in the good way, as the rushes are inclined by the wind. The strength to do, comes from him as much as the command, the one follows the other, and both are from the same source. Here is where those who see as our sister, fail to find comfort in the "conditional time salvation" preaching: to them it detracts from the power of God, and adds to the creature's power; it lacks that good old fashioned ring of God's ability, and man's inability, which was so sweet and precious to our souls when first we heard it. He puts it into our hearts to do his will, and the word of God is fulfilled, that word which never has returned unto him void, because he has power over men, as the potter has power over the clay. "But now, O Lord, thou art our Father: we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand."—Isaiah lxiv. 8. This is as true to-day as it ever was, and it will always be true.

Your brother,

FRANK McGLADE.

[In the above is stated better than we can, some of the objections which we have seen against the term, "conditional time salvation." We are far from attributing to many who use the term, the meaning which it conveys to us, but we think that the term is misleading. It does seem to put grace entirely out of the question. Indeed we have seen the statement from at least one writer, that grace does not have anything to do with our time salvation, and neither does faith. This is startling, and we shall never accept it so long as we believe in grace at all.—Ed.]

EXPERIENCE.

For some time I have had a desire to write some of my travels and exercises of mind, but always feared it was a fleshly inclination, and never made the attempt. But since the Lord has laid his afflicting hand so heavily upon me, and has again been pleased to give me a little strength, I feel the impression still with me to speak of the loving kindness and tender mercy of the Lord to me, for surely he has watched over and cared for me all along my afflicted life, yet I have been so unmindful and unthankful of his goodness that I am made to wonder at his long-suffering. I do not remember the time when I did not feel and know I was a sinner, and would try and ask the Lord to have mercy on me. I never was taught prayers to repeat, but was told there was a God who saw and knew all we did, and would punish us for our sins, but if we was sorry for our wicked thoughts and actions, and would ask him, he would forgive us. This I tried to do. I formed the habit when young of praying at nights after going to bed, for I did not want any one to see me on my knees. Sometimes this was only a form of words, at other times I felt in need of help. It always seemed there was something to keep me from enjoying myself in young company as others did, although I would appear as lively as any one. I never could do as I wished, but was continual-

ly doing something wrong, which gave me a great deal of trouble. I went on in this way until I was about fifteen years of age. I had never been very strong, and now my health got worse, and I became sick both in body and mind. Such distress of mind I shall never be able to describe with my tongue or pen. I would try sometimes to tell how bad I was feeling, but it seemed I could not make any one understand me, so I came to the conclusion no one ever felt as I did. Such gloom settled down upon me, and such a fear came over me, that the name of Jesus would make me tremble. Truly I felt it was a fearful thing to fall in the hands of the living God, and I could see no way of escape, for it was written, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." I dared not look in the Bible, for everything there reproached and condemned me. I would shun all religious company and conversation. O, how I dreaded the Old Baptist preachers, for I always thought them to be good people, and just their appearance made me feel sad. I would make some excuse and leave the room when they went to prayer. I have hoped this "fear of the Lord" was the "beginning of wisdom" with me, but with my weak constitution trouble at times seems almost unbearable. Many bitter tears have I shed on account of my sad condition, and many promises did I make to the Lord, if he would spare my life I would try and live better, I would watch everything I did and said, and surely I could keep from sinning, but instead of getting better I seemed to get worse. I could not live one hour without doing something wrong. I continued in this condition until the spring before I was eighteen. The fourth Saturday and Sunday in April there was Baptist meeting at the Union meeting-house. I had not been to Baptist meeting for a long time, but for some cause, on Sunday morning I felt like going. It was a beautiful spring morning, as we were on our way everything looked so lovely, the birds sang so sweetly, the wild flowers were blooming, and everything seemed to be praising God. Then the thought came, What makes you feel so well this morning? and I thought, it must be because we were all going to church together, for grandfather, grandma, papa, ma and us children, and the preacher, were all together. Could this be the cause of that peaceful feeling? But all the while I was dreading the long sermon, and thought if I got to feeling too bad I would just get up and go out. But O, how different from what I expected, the appearance of the minister before the people was beautiful to me this morning, and his voice as music to my ear. Although I do not remember a word he said, yet it surely had the joyful sound, and if ever I have been given ears to hear, and a heart to understand these things, it was that day, for what I had so feared was now both meat and drink to me. I now felt a hungering and thirsting for something I had never felt before, and O, how short the sermon, I was sorry when he closed, for I could have listened all day. I came home that day a hungry child, not for natural food, O no, I wanted to read the Bible, and everything on the subject of religion, all the time. I was very careful that no one would take notice, or suspicion my being interested in these things, for I thought I would never say anything to any one about my feelings. It might just be impressions of a weak mind. I had been sick so much, I thought that the cause of all my trouble, and yet I felt to hope it was the Lord that was leading me in this "way that I

knew not," for he wounds and he heals, he kills and he makes alive. About this time these words rested for several weeks on my mind, "Unto you this day is born in the city of David, a Savior." I lost all interest in worldly amusements, and found no pleasure in gay company. I have been blessed with the kindest and best of friends, but felt lonely and sad most of my time. I enjoyed going to Old Baptist meeting, and hearing them talk; they could tell my feelings so much better than I could. The Savior they spoke of was the one I needed, a whole and complete Savior. This Scripture has been of great encouragement to me, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Now, if I am not deceived, I do love the people of God. Again, we read, Every one that loveth is born of God, but the question with me is, Is this of God? Am I one he died for? If so I am safe, but I am so doubtful, and my faith so weak, yet there is a little hope I cannot entirely give up. O, that the Lord would give me strength to bear patiently anything he may see fit to bring on me. My desire is to walk humbly before him all the days of my life.

ALICE J. BARB.

FLICKERSVILLE, W. Va., Nov., 1898.

(See obituary notice on page 190.)

DANSVILLE, N. Y., Jan. 2, 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—While renewing my subscription once more, I wish to express my gratitude to God for his preserving care another year, and to assure you and the readers of the SIGNS, (if you see fit to publish my scribble) that I still take comfort in reading your editorials, and the communications contributed to its columns by the many able and spiritual brethren and sisters. Indeed it is like news from a far country, and like the experience of my own soul, when I read of the joys and the sorrows, the hopes and the fears, and the spiritual exercises of those who predicate their hopes of salvation upon the merits of Christ, and have no confidence in the flesh.

I inclose a scrap cut from the "Notes and Queries" column of *The Outlook*, edited by Lyman Abbott, viz:

"Does the final destiny, the eternal destiny, of man pivot upon the will and ability of God, or does it pivot upon the will and ability of each individual person?
C. P.

To affirm the former seems to impair human responsibility; to affirm the latter seems to limit God's infinitude. The classic statement, in which the best philosophy concurs with Scripture, is in Philippians ii. 12, 13. According to this the human and the divine are concurrent factors; each is effective, neither excludes or overbears the other. The problem is mysterious, because the finite is in the infinite and the infinite in the finite, so that it cannot be said where one ends and the other begins."

How ingeniously he tries to get around the sovereignty of God! The passage he refers to in Philippians reads, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

This Scripture was the last, and overwhelming onslaught against my advocacy of man's free will, and it all seems so simple now, and plain, that I wonder at the blindness of such learned men as he, and can account for it only upon the principle that God has given men understanding according to his own will and purpose, and quickens whom he will with the life-giving energy of his holy Spirit, to hear, and see, and understand the glorious beauties of his grace.

I would like to read what you think of his doubtful issue between the "finite in the infinite and the infinite in the finite," as he puts it. He admits the problem to

be mysterious, but hesitates to solve it by acknowledging that God is supreme. For myself I can find no consolation in any other theory than that God is a sovereign over all his works, and will do all his pleasure, and that he will cause his enemies to serve him, and sometimes I feel that he has subdued my rebellious heart, and made me willing to suffer reproach for Christ's sake.

I have lived in this town nearly fifty years without a sympathizing neighbor in my religious views. I have asked God why it is so? and have only been quieted because it seemed good in his sight, that it should be. Religion (?) religious privileges (?) abundance of both! such as they are, but my soul takes no delight in the God-dishonoring doctrines they preach, nor in their abominable idolatry of worshiping their golden calves, their festivals and lotteries, and other schemes. All for money and pleasure! I love to see people cheerful and happy, but I think sometimes, how poor and insipid all these enjoyments would appear to them, if they could have a taste of the sweet blessedness of a soul saved by grace.

Having read the SIGNS over sixty years, I rejoice that it has been preserved from falling into the false ways of the multitude, and that the doctrine of grace is just as precious to it now as when I first began to derive comfort from reading it.

But to relieve your patience I will close, with love to all who believe in salvation by grace, and have no confidence in the flesh.

P. WEST.

[IT does indeed seem strange, as brother West has said, that a man of Mr. Abbott's education could be so blind to the literal reading of the Scripture cited by him. He says, "According to this, the human and the divine are concurrent factors." Or in other words, man is a co-worker with God. Can language more clearly state the *cause and effect*, than the words of the thirteenth verse, "For it is God which worketh in you [the cause] both to will and to do [the effect] of his good pleasure"?

To accept the clear declaration of this Scripture detracts too much from the ability of man, and gives the entire power and glory to God, in the salvation of man, so not to give offense to either party, a compromise is made, and they become "concurrent factors." How amazing strange it is to those that have been enlightened by the Spirit to see their own depravity, to think that impious man would ever dare to claim that he was a "concurrent factor" with the infinite God, in his own salvation.—ED.]

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

PLEASE BE SURE

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur. It is a good plan to inclose in the letter, one of the little pink slips containing the name, taken either from the margin of the paper, or from the wrapper in which the paper comes.

By observing the above instructions our subscribers will enable us to more conveniently keep their accounts.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1900.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

In the discipline of the church, is there a difference between classes of offenses? If so, should there be a difference in dealing with them?

There is clearly to our mind a difference between what might be called public offenses, and what might be called private offenses, and it is equally clear that there ought to be a difference in the treatment of them by the churches. In Matthew xviii., personal offenses, or differences between brethren, are treated upon, while in 1 Timothy v. 20, which reads, "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear," it seems to us that offenses which are public, that are generally known, are meant. A difference in dealing with these two classes of offenses is shown in what is said about them. In Matthew xviii., the expression, "If thy brother shall trespass against thee," does not mean such things as would constitute a crime against the law of the land, or that would subject one to any legal penalty, but only some personal slight or wrong treatment. Especially as the connection seems to show the offense spoken of is a manifestation of a spirit of lordship, a claim to superiority over another. Arrogant words or deeds would be the expression of this; it would show itself in an entire disregard of the feelings or rights of others. This, we gather from the words which introduce the chapter, and out of which the whole discourse of the Savior, recorded in the chapter, grew. The disciples disputed which should be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. This spirit is the cause of every evil spoken of in the chapter, and against which the disciples were warned. With the spirit of a little child in full possession, there could never arise any personal offenses, or any infringement on the feelings or rights of another, but if one is possessed of the spirit of desiring the precedence, he will be sure to pay little regard to others, and will override their wishes whenever it suits him. Here comes what we will call personal offenses, unkind words, unkind deeds, overbearing conduct, which will wound and grieve the truly spiritual, will flow out of this spirit of ruling. This may show itself in the personal relations of brethren; one may thus wound and grieve some brother, when he has done nothing which can be known publicly, or subject him to the censure of any law of any land. Now this is a matter which must be kept secret between the offended and the offender. It is not good from any point of view to spread such a thing abroad. It must be remembered that the offender is also a believer and a disciple. The Savior says, It is not the will of our heavenly Father that he should perish. It ought therefore to be our will and our effort to save him from the danger to which he has subjected himself by his conduct, and especially by the spirit which he has manifested. In the whole of the chapter, the concern of the Savior is not for the one offended, but for the offender. The offended one is small and humble, and is

not self-seeking in disposition, but the offender seeks his own advantage, and such a spirit is contrary to the Spirit of the Master, and constitutes an offense against the meek and humble teachings of the Savior. Pride and self-seeking, is in itself an offense against the Spirit of Christ in the believer. This evil spirit will bring its possessor into trouble, and if he be a child of God at all, it were better for him to be drowned without remedy, than to fall under the dominion of such a spirit. He is in danger, and therefore all who love the Savior, and love those whom he loves, will feel like trying to save him from his danger. If offended, it is not at the brother, but at the spirit of evil which has taken possession of him. We are to hate the garment spotted by the flesh, but not the one who wears it. We are to hate the sin, but not the sinner. We are to seek to save the sinner from his sins, and so save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins. If personally offended, the object to be sought is not revenge, or the humiliation of the offender, or that he should get down at our feet and make confession to us of his wrong, for our glorification, as though we are more holy than he, but the object to be sought is, that he may be restored to a sound mind and an humble walk, for his own advantage and the glory of God, and our mutual comfort and joy. The whole spirit of the teaching in this eighteenth chapter of Matthew, is that such as err must if possible be saved. Jesus, as said before, is concerned for the offender, rather than for the one offended. This should be the spirit which governs all that we do. Therefore, if our brother offend us by manifesting such a spirit as the disciples were actuated by in disputing which should be the greatest in his kingdom, we are to go to him and tell him his fault between ourself and him alone. It should be remembered that the fault is not so much some particular act, but rather the spirit of lordship and self-seeking which is back of this particular deed or word. Seeing such spirit manifest in one, let us seek him alone, and in the spirit of the Master, whose will is that not one of these should perish, and let us labor to gain him, let us remind him that we are all brethren, and have but one Master, that is Christ. Let us set before him that the only path of peace, and that by which our Savior may be glorified, is the path of humility of spirit, and all humbleness of behavior toward all our brethren; let us remind the erring one that he is wronging his own soul, and shutting himself out from the blessed communion with the Redeemer in the spirit, which he desires so much; let us confess our own failures with him, and acknowledge that all the seeds of all the ills that grow, are also sown in our own nature, and that multitudes of them have sprung up to our own hurt and shame; let us get down and wash the very feet of the brother. If the spirit of humility and love be in him, and in us, and reign there, we shall both find ourselves together at the foot of the cross, mutually confessing our sins, and shall be brethren indeed; we have gained our brother.

But suppose he does not hear us, and still persists in this proud and self-seeking spirit, and shows a disposition to dictate still, rather than the spirit of brotherly love and humility, what then? Shall we give him up in despair, and say, "Let him go, he is joined to his idols"? The Savior says, no. To say this would be to claim that we were better than he, and to subject us to the guilt which he has incurred. Saying and feeling thus, we

should be as far from the spirit of the Master as is he; we should be walking far from the Master, as much so as is the case with him. Neither do we understand that the Savior meant to say that we should go to him alone but once; if there be any hope of gaining him, let us go to him many times before we take the second step enjoined, and when we do find that all our efforts are unavailing to save him from his error, then the object of taking one or two more is not to have witnesses against him, but still to strive together to win him; we ask other brethren to join with us in this attempt to save him. Let us take therefore, brethren who love God and the erring brother, with us, and who are willing out of this love, to spend and be spent for him. Then let us urge all the spiritual considerations that have weight with us, and that may be given us to present, upon him, to show him the better way, and let those who have gone with us join in this presentation, and strive to show what is the true spirit, the Spirit of Jesus, and what will result from a persistence in his course of fleshly pride and ambition. As a mother weeps over her erring child, and longs for him, and with all loving accents warns that child of the results of his folly, so let us do in such a case; no exact form of words can be laid down as proper to be used, love will supply the words and the arguments, if love be indeed in our hearts, and if love be indeed in the heart of the erring one, that love will supply in his own heart the strongest of all arguments; it will make an appeal in his heart, beside which our appeal will be but feeble, yet the words which our love urges will approve themselves to the arguments of the same love in his heart, and so our brother will have been gained, and we shall together thank God who has willed that he should not perish.

But if he shall be so much under this wrong spirit that he shall neglect even then to hear, then, in order to save him, not to destroy him, let us tell it to the church, and this means the whole body of the church. It is to be supposed that the erring one will love the church of the Redeemer, who have been redeemed as he hopes that he has been. If he have somewhat against us, and against the one or two whom we have taken to see him, it is not to be supposed that he can be angry with all his brethren in the church. Now let us appeal to them to strive with him, and to warn him of the consequences of his folly. In this the church will feel their own weakness, and remember their own shortcomings, and knowing the terror of the Lord, they will be exceeding anxious to restore him to the right way, they will not want to have an arm cut off, or an eye plucked out, if they can prevent it. They will strive if possible to heal in the hand, or that in the eye which offends, in order to save to themselves a useful member, which they cherish as man does his own flesh. Thus far there is no talk of exclusion, and no accent is to be heard but love. If the Spirit of Christ be in him, then he will hear the voice of the church as a child will hear the voice of a loving mother; her cry to him will be one of entreaty for his own sake, and for her joy also. Paul expresses what will be the burden of her entreaty to him: "I beseech you therefore, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Surely he that remembers the mercy of God toward him, and in whose heart love for the blessed Redeemer exists, must hear the voice of the

church of God; surely he must remember these are they whom my Savior loves, and who have his presence and spirit, and who are the very pillar and ground of the truth, which is also precious to me; he must remember these are my kindred, my best friends, and to them my heart must turn; they are more worthy than I, and I am favored if to me is given to untie their shoelatchet; I cannot fail to hear them; if they have seen such a wrong spirit in me, surely it must be that I am wrong. Then will come confession and sweet unity, like the oil poured upon the head of Aaron, which ran down to the skirts of his garments, and like the dew of Hermon, where the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore. Then the brother is gained and saved from his error, and there will be joy in all that know it.

But if so little of the Spirit of the Master be in him, that the entreaty of the whole church is to him but an idle tale, then but one thing remains: if the eye or the hand cannot be healed of the festering sore, let it be cut off, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican, let him be cast into outer darkness, deliver him to Satan that he may learn not to blaspheme. For his own sake, and for the sake of the cause, and for the glory of God, in the church, he must be set aside. Not to set him aside, is to condone his fault; it is to say that it matters but little what manner of spirit and life is manifested in him; it is of but small concern whether the church be clean and healthy, or have a disease eating at her vitals, and the glory of God is but a trifle. Such things we must not say. For his good, for the good of the cause, and of each brother and sister, and for the declarative glory of God, he must be set aside from the fellowship of the church. For his sake, and for our good, and for the glory of God, we have followed him as has been directed, to save him if possible; now that the disease has been shown to be incurable, for the same all-important objects, we are to separate ourselves from him, and we neglect this at our peril, for the disease will eat, slowly it may be, but surely. All this belongs, as we believe, to personal offenses, it does not include crimes or things which violate every law, human or divine.

There is also a sin which must be rebuked before all, there is a sin unto death, and for which the apostle does not say that we should pray. There are sins not unto death, and for these we should pray, and from these we should strive long to save the offender. Perhaps it is impossible to exactly divide in all cases the two classes of offenses, but the two classes exist, and are not to be regarded in the same light, or to be dealt with in the same way. Such things as violate the law of the land, and are a stench in the nostrils of all decent men, are not to be borne with at all. When such things are in the life of any man, that man in the sight of all men, is but a dead body. Theft, murder, adultery, fornication, lying, cheating, deceitfulness, covetousness, which the apostle says is idolatry, perjury, drunkenness, riotous living, wantonness, chambering, these are things which are known, and are not against any individual particularly. These things are sins which bring discredit upon the whole church, and reproach upon the holy name by which we are called; these are crimes which are a stench in the nostrils of all men, how much more are they a reproach to him who has professed better things. A black spot upon muddy ground may not look so black, but how black does it

appear when cast upon a white ground. If these things be a reproach to a man of the world, how much more of a reproach are they to a professed follower of Christ. These things must not be borne with. Let those who are guilty of such things be rebuked before all. In these things personal labor is not enjoined, as we understand, but these things are unto death. Even prayer is not enjoined for such things. It is our judgment that where such things are found in one who belongs to the church, at once he should be set aside. We do not say but that in the future such fruits of repentance may appear in that man that it will become both a privilege and a duty to restore him to the church, but now, that others may fear, let him be set aside. We do not mean that one may not be overcome by sudden stress of temptation, and do wrong, who at once will abhor himself, and repent sorely for that wrong. Such an one is not guilty as though he were habitually following the evil thing. The church will judge with regard to these things, and must show her condemnation of these things at once, when they are proved. If one who has the Spirit of Christ, learns that such things are said against him, and that even the world believes them, he has but one duty before him, and that is to demand a full investigation, that his innocence may be made manifest, and this not so much for his own vindication, as for the vindication of the holy religion which he has professed, and for the honor of the blessed name of the Master. We cannot conceive how any one who loves God and his cause, and who is conscious of innocence, can rest under such charges, or even a whisper of such wrongs. The garments of the church should be kept unspotted from the world. Offenses which are patent before the world, ought not to be borne with at all, yet even here the church is not to act in any anger, but in deep sorrow; she is to act in sorrow for the offender, and for the cause which is thus reproached.

There are also some things which are of a public nature, and which yet do not seem to us to come under the head of crimes, which should be rebuked. The attitude of the church in obedience to the word of God should in no case be doubtful. Such things as gambling, betting, horseracing, card playing, dancing, theatre going, are wholly unworthy of a believer, and will, when indulged in, wrong his own soul, and bring reproach upon the cause of God and truth. A man cannot indulge in any of these things and remain of a spiritual mind. Thoughts of Christ, and seasons of communion with him, cannot go with indulgence in such things. Those who do such things, wrong their own souls, and when believers are led into them, they for the time do not have the glory of God in view. These things should be rebuked, and all should be warned against them.

It has seemed to us well to present these things, for we always need to be forewarned and exhorted, lest we be led astray by the snare of the devil. The spirit of Christ leads not into these things, but the spirit of the flesh does. The flesh must be crucified with the affections and lusts thereof, if we would be followers of Christ indeed. We are persuaded that those of spiritual mind will welcome all such admonitions, and will be glad to have their minds stirred up by way of remembrance of them.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ISAIAH XL. 11.

"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."

This fortieth chapter of the prophet Isaiah begins with a commission from the God of Israel to comfort his people, and proclaim to them the accomplishment of their warfare, and the full remission of their iniquities; and to cry unto Jerusalem the important message of comfort, which the declaration from such authority is calculated to inspire. A proclamation of what she has received at the Lord's hands. The prophet is instructed to show the disparity between the two fountains or sources from whence emanates our natural and spiritual life. Christ has said, That which is born of the flesh, is flesh. And the prophet is instructed to proclaim, "All flesh is grass, and all the godliness thereof is as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it; surely the people is grass." Such is the fleshly nature of man, frail and withering, depraved and mortal, transient and passing away. All the glory of man, his goodliness, his best performances, his brightest hopes and purest actions, like the grass which beautifies, must also perish and fade away. But the word of our God shall stand forever. Peter, in his commentary on the passage, testifies that the spiritual birth of God's children, is "not of corruptible seed," like that which produces grass and flowers, which must soon fade and perish, "But of incorruptible seed, by the word of the Lord, which liveth and abideth forever." Christ himself has also said, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing: the words which I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life." And Peter and his disciples said, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish."

In this connection Zion is discovered bearing good tidings, and Jerusalem lifting up her voice with strength, calling on the cities of Judah to behold their God. "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold his reward is with him, and his work before him." Then the text follows, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd," &c. Behold your God, ye cities of Judah, ye churches of the saints, in the person of the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls. There can be no doubt that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Shepherd here spoken of; he himself declares it, saying, I am the good Shepherd, and certain it is that he is the Shepherd that has laid down his life for the sheep; it is equally certain that he is the Lord God that should come with strong hand, and whose arm should rule for him. He is the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne, who shall feed his flock, and lead them to living fountains. Here then, we have a clear, full and unequivocal testimony of the absolute deity, and eternal Godhead of Jesus Christ our Lord. It is consoling to all the saints, as it was to the psalmist, to know that "the Lord is their Shepherd, and they shall not want." He is the Lord, or Jehovah; and he is God over all, and blessed for evermore. Truly our second Adam is the Lord from heaven, and the God of the whole earth shall he be called.

He is the mighty God and the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace. This Maker and Husband of the church is the Lord of hosts, and our Redeemer is the holy One of Israel; and he has come, according to the prediction of the text, to feed his flock like a shepherd, and to gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and he will gently lead those that are with young.

Having established the identity of the Shepherd, and proved his absolute deity, we will next observe that he has a flock, which belongs to him; and briefly show the righteousness of his claim as the proprietor. We are not informed that he was coming to procure a title to a flock, or to obtain a flock, or to see how large a flock he could procure. The possessive case is used by the Holy Ghost in the prediction, *his flock.* He came not to feed or gather the flock of some other shepherd, for he is the Shepherd whose own the sheep are. And he says, "He that entereth in by the door is the Shepherd of the sheep; to him the porter openeth, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them."—John x. 2–4. It is true Paul charged the Elders of Ephesus to feed the flock of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood; but this has reference to a redemption purchase, not a purchase of an original title to them. If he had held no title to them which was older than the claim of the law, the right of redemption would not be in him. The prophet Isaiah says, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."—Isaiah liii. 6. And Peter testifies that they "were as sheep going astray; but are now returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls."—1 Peter ii. 25. From these portions of Scripture we prove that the redeemed of the Lord were sheep before they strayed, sheep when they were astray, sheep when redeemed or brought back, and continue to be sheep when returned to the fold. It was then because they were his sheep by a prior title, that the Lord in justice could lay on him the iniquity of them all, and command the slumbering sword of justice to "Awake against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, smite the Shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn my hand upon the little ones."—Zech. xiii. 7. If the sheep of some other shepherd, or owner, should go astray and commit trespass, could the damage be charged to any other than the original owner, by any principle of equity and justice? This flock belonged to Christ before their iniquities were laid on him, before they went astray, and therefore when they had strayed they were held by the porter until their owner should come, prove his property, pay charges and take them away. According to the text, he, whose own the sheep were, came, and, as we have seen, to him the porter opened; for he entered legally, by the door, the iniquity of all the flock was laid on him, and he made full payment, and brought them back from their captivity with his own blood. For ye are not redeemed with such corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was foreordained, before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who by him do believe in God that raised him from the dead. (1 Peter i. 18–21.) Now if this precious blood of Christ was appropriated by foreordination, before the beginning of

the world, for the redemption of those who ultimately by him do believe in God, does it not prove that Christ sustained the relationship of Head over all things to them, so when he come and paid the ransom price for their redemption, he could call his own sheep by name, and lead them out? But our Shepherd has not only laid down his life for the sheep, and called his own sheep by name, and led them out of bondage, out from wrath and condemnation, and into the rich pasture beside the still water, but our text assures us that he shall feed his flock. They require nourishment, and they are not able to provide it for themselves, nor can it be furnished by any other shepherd than their own good Shepherd. God's people being born of God, possess a life in them that is not of the earth, and cannot feed on earthly food. That which we received of the productions of earth for the sustenance of our fleshly bodies, will not feed the inner man, or the new man which is born of the Spirit, and therefore all that come before Christ, or who attempt to supercede him in feeding his flock, are thieves and robbers. His being a spiritual flock, must have spiritual food, and the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne, himself shall feed them. He spreadeth their table in the midst of their enemies, and he maketh them to lie down in green pastures, beside the still waters, and he maketh their cup to run over. But how shall he feed them? "As a shepherd." As one who is perfectly acquainted with all their wants. He will deal out to them just at the right times, and in the exact quantities, so that they shall not want. He being the Lord God, can never be impoverished, can never be surprised by famine, he has ample supplies for them, and they shall, under his care and protection, go in and out and find pasture.

But there are times when the flock requires something besides food. The chilling blasts of winter would be too severe for the tender and unfleeced lambs, were it not that their good Shepherd bestows on them his unremitting care. He has pledged himself that they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand. Notwithstanding their strong propensity to stray, although like sheep they have strayed, he shall gather them with his arm; and having gathered them with that strong almighty arm, which shall rule for him, and which he has raised for their defense, he will carry them in his bosom, where they shall be warmed, succored and protected by his own vitality. The pulsations of his own heart they shall feel, and the affection which burns in his bosom shall comfort and cheer them. And he will bestow his tender care on such of the flock as are burdened It is said of this flock, as they *go up from the washing*, every one of them beareth twins; and there is not one barren among them. (Cant. vi. 6.) Whatever this figure may be designed to illustrate in regard to the sheep of Christ, we know that the children of God, as they go up from the washing of regeneration, feel within them a strife between the flesh and the Spirit which burdens them sorely, and makes them groan being burdened; and in this case, they like Jacob's flocks, will not bear over-driving one day. (Gen. xxxiii. 13.) But our Shepherd knoweth all our infirmities, and instead of driving, he gently leadeth them. He knoweth our feeble frame, and he remembereth that we are but dust. How gently doth he succor them when tempted, tried and distressed. Yea, though they pass though the valley and the shadow of death, he

will still be with them, and lead them through, for he will never leave nor forsake them. This message belongs to God's people; the commission is to comfort them; may we be found among them; and may we with them, share in the consolation.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., July 1, 1857.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$351 05
Mrs. John Muir, N. Y., $2.00; Mrs. Chas. Slade, Ill., $1.00.—Total	3 00
Total to date	$354 05

PERSONAL.

ANY one knowing the address of Elder R. M. Thomas, will confer a favor by sending it to B. S. Pate, Dayton, Washington.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

GARDEN CITY, Minn., Feb. 5, 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please publish the appended account of the organization of the first church of our faith and order, organized in the State of Minnesota, and oblige your unworthy brother and fellow-servant in the bonds and afflictions of the gospel,

GARRETT MURPHY.

SATURDAY, Feb. 3, 1900.

IN response to a call of brother Deacon Abram B. Lester and sister S. A. Lester, brother Henry James and sister E. James, sister Elizabeth A. Murphy and sister Irene Murphy, for the constitution of a church at Garden City, Minnesota, the brethren and sisters met pursuant to call, at the day and date above named, with Elder Wm. Morphew and Elder Garrett Murphy, of Lime Creek church, Regular Predestinarian Baptists, who proceeded to examine the Constitution, Articles of Faith and Rules of Decorum, offered by the above named brethren, and finding them satisfactory, proceeded with the Constitution of said church, and declared them a church of Jesus Christ in order.

1st. Singing, and prayer by Elder Wm. Morphew.
2d. Charge to the church by Elder Garrett Murphy.
3d. Right hand of fellowship by the members.

ELDER WM. MORPHEW.
ELDER GARRETT MURPHY.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at the bride's residence, near Titusville, N. J., Feb. 14th, 1900, Joseph H. Philips, of Harbourton, and Miss Anna M. Hixon, of Titusville.

By the same, at his residence in Hopewell, N. J., Feb. 21st, 1900, Price S. Henderson and Miss Mary Belle Leigh, both of Cedar Grove, N. J.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, at his residence, in Columbus, Ohio, March 7th, 1900, Jesse Mason, of Truro, Ohio, and Miss Amelia Miller, of Reynoldsburg, Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At her home near Unionville, Feb. 3d, 1900, **Amelia Ann Sayer,** daughter of the late Wm. A. and Sally Murray Sayer, aged 76 years and 7 months. She became a member of the Middletown & Wallkill church in 1869. Her chief delight was to meet with the church, although her health was very delicate all her life.

Elder Ker met with us Feb. 6th, and spoke words of comfort to us from John v. 25.

"It is not death to die,
To leave this weary load,
And, 'midst the brotherhood on high,
To be at home with God."

Her sister,

SARAH E. SAYER.

DIED—At the home of brother Joshua Hume, Nov. 14th, 1899, **Elder J. D. Jones.** Brother Jones fell sick away from home, and died among his brethren and sisters in the Lord. He was well cared for by brother and sister Hume and others. Medical aid was administered, but to no avail, his time had come, and he was ready to go. His home was in Nashville, Tenn., where his family now reside. They were notified of his illness, but did not get here in time to see him alive, on account of failure in connection of trains. He died without a relative near, but loving hands administered to his wants, and Jesus the Savior of sinners, in whom he trusted, was with him to banish the tears from his eyes, and to soften the pillow of death. He said, "Tell my companion and children, who are most dear to me, not to weep for me though I am gone. The same hand that led me safely through scenes dark and drear, has kindly conducted me home." His daughter and her husband and one child arrived in time for the funeral, which took place at Hickory Creek Old School Baptist meeting-house, with interment at Brock Hill Cemetery, Jasper Co., Ill. Services were conducted by Elder J. C. Biggs.

Brother Jones was born in east Tennessee, August 14th, 1830; he moved with his father to Edwards Co., Ill., when four years of age, and there grew to manhood. Oct. 31st, 1849, he was married to Nancy Jane

Linchon; to this union were born eight children, of whom but two survive, a son and daughter. His wife, two children, grandchildren, friends, with his brethren and sisters, mourn for him, but not as those who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again, and therefore those who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. I have met with our dear brother, and heard him tell of his hope, and talk of the goodness of God, many times in the past. He had but one doctrine to preach, and that was the doctrine of God our Savior. He told me, when near his death, that he believed the same old doctrine that he had always preached, without any change. He was sound in doctrine, and steadfast and unmovable. We all extend our sympathy to the afflicted wife and children. He and his wife united with the church called Long Prairie, in 1854; they were baptized by Elder Jerry Doty. He was called to the work of the ministry soon after he united with the church. They afterwards moved their membership to Cannon Co., Tenn.

He was conscious to the last. The day he died they told him that his daughter would be there the next day; he shook his head, and said they would be too late. He realized that the time of his departure was at hand. He often expressed a desire to pass away, and be done with suffering; to be absent from this poor tenement of clay, and be ever with the Lord. He said that the little hope that he had was worth ten thousand worlds like this. We only knew him to love and respect him. Just before he passed away he reached out his hand to brother Hume and bade him farewell. He then straightened himself in the bed, folded his hands across his breast, closed his eyes, and died without a struggle. O, the peaceful death of a believer! He fought the good fight of faith, and the crown of righteousness awaited him.

MARY A. BIGGS.

OBLONG, Ill., Jan. 1, 1900.

Miss Alice J., daughter of Elza and Nancy **Barb,** was born June 30th, 1868, died Feb. 10th, 1900, aged 31 years, 7 months and 10 days. Though she never joined the church, she was a warm friend of the Old School Baptists, and a strong believer in salvation by grace. She had been an invalid for many years, and had not been able to walk for seventeen months before she died. She died of a complication of diseases, with heart trouble the leading cause. She had been a great sufferer, but bore all of her suffering with great patience. She was very lovely in disposition, and it gave her great pleasure to hear the gospel preached, and to talk and to hear others talk on religious experience. I visited her at the time of the meeting of the Redstone Association, and had meeting twice at her father's house, and to see her delight in the gospel, and to witness her suffering and resignation to the will of God in it all, and hear her speak of her trust in God, was wonderful to behold. When I got home I wrote her a letter; in reply she wrote me: "Your words of comfort and encouragement have helped and strengthened me, yet I am so undeserving of it all. I do feel that these are all great blessings for which I can never be thankful enough for, and while the past year has been one of the deepest sorrow and affliction of my life, it also has been one of the most pleasant. I have enjoyed a peace and contentment of mind that I did not have when in better health. I have never yet felt to ask the Lord to restore me to health, but feel willing for his will to be done concerning me."

She died without a struggle or a groan, as if she was going to sleep. The writer of this was called by telegraph about fifty miles to attend the funeral, which was held on Monday, Feb. 12th, 1900, where we tried to comfort those in distress, from Rev. xiv. 13; after which she was conveyed to the silent grave to await the resurrection morning, when her body will be resurrected an incorruptible, immortal body, to dwell with Christ forever in that heaven of bliss prepared for all that love him.

This was the third and only remaining daughter, her sister Olgy, who was a member of the Indian Creek church, having died a few months before her.

May the Lord comfort the father, mother and the four brothers, also her aged grandfathers, who are both still living, and worthy members of the church. Her father is not a member of the church, but is a good friend of the Old School Baptists. Her mother is a member of the Indian Creek Old School Baptist church.

(See relation of christian experience on page 177.)

ALSO,

Mrs. Eleanor Barb, wife of William Barb, mother of Elza Barb, and grandmother of Alice J. Barb, was born Oct. 20th, 1824, married May 21st, 1844, died Feb. 15th, 1900, aged 75 years, 3 months and 25 days. She joined the Indian Creek Old School Baptist church, Jan. 27th, 1849. She has been a faithful member of the church fifty-one years and eighteen days. At the time of her death, she was one of the oldest members. She had always been very faithful in her attendance of the meetings of the church as long as she was able. Meetings were frequently held at her house, where she was always ready to entertain those who would come. She was well informed in the Bible, which she read a great deal. She had also been a reader of the SIGNS for many years, which were very interesting to her. While attending the Redstone Association I visited her at her home, and found her going about bright and cheerful, and ready to talk on things pertaining to the kingdom of heaven. When I attended the funeral of Alice J. Barb, I found the dear old grandmother very low, and not expected to live many days. She was suffering with kidney trouble and paralysis, and was so weak she could not talk much, but she said to me, she wanted to go, she did not want to live; she said she would soon follow

Alice, and she trusted in the Lord, and when I would speak words for her comfort she would say yes. So I bid her a last farewell, and went home. In three days I received a telephone message to return, the dear old sister was gone. We gathered in the old home on Saturday, Feb 17th. There were many there who had met a few days before at Alice's funeral. There was the dear old brother, the husband of the deceased, so lonely and heartbroken, and the only son, Elza, and his wife and remaining children, whom we had tried to comfort a few days before, also a number of the members of the Indian Creek church, and many relatives and friends, and we have every evidence to believe that Jesus was there to strengthen and comfort us. We spoke from 1 Cor. xv. 22. Many hearts were sad as we again went to the old family graveyard, where we laid the remains of the dear sister in the cold grave, until "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first."

May the Lord comfort our dear brother Barb, the sorrowing husband, and all the relatives and friends, according to his will.

J. N. BARTLETT.

ASTOR, W. Va., Feb. 20, 1900.

MEETINGS.

THE church at Forest Grove, Wicomico Co., Md., has decided to hold a two days (yearly) meeting on Wednesday and Thursday, the 28th and 29th days of March, 1900, at their meeting-house near Parsonsburg. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. We expect Elders Durand and Poulson to be with us, and hope for the the sweet presence of the Lord and a good meeting.

A. B. FRANCIS, Pastor.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1900. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CHRISTIAN OBEDIENCE.

OBEDIENCE is an obligation arising from existing relationship, and the nature of the relationship establishes the extent of the obedience. If a very limited relationship only exists, the obligation of obedience must be equally limited. This is a natural law in equity, immutable and abiding. Mosaic obedience was entirely different from christian obedience, and they cannot be joined together or united, because Christ is distinct from Moses. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Moses, therefore, was the minister of justice, which was always unto condemnation, because his people failed in their obedience to the law. Paul therefore says, "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." This is an unchanging principle and abiding truth, both then and now and ever. He gives the righteous reason, saying, "For it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Christ was the only one that ever thus perfectly obeyed the law. He as a righteous Man under the law kept it, fulfilled it, and took it out of the way forever. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," says Paul. Again he says, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." His redeemed people, therefore, are free from the law, from its obligations and its curse, and it has no demands against them, no claims upon them. "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." So taught faithful Paul.

"Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." How different he is from Moses! The law of justice and condemnation came by Moses, and it thunders a righteous curse against all who are of the works of the law, because they woefully fail in their works of obedience to it. Being conditional in its nature and provisions, both its blessings and curses were also conditional. It was a fearful failure, therefore, because all the conditional workers who thus claim to serve God conditionally have miserably failed to render perfect obedience to its righteous conditions and obligations, and it will not accept anything less than perfection;

indeed, it cannot. A half-way or faulty compliance with its righteous conditions would both violate and dishonor the law of God, and so bring down its curse upon every one who failed to render perfect obedience to it. This is the awful defect and failure in any and every conditional covenant and law which offers blessings for conditional obedience, which must necessarily be perfect or it is not obedience, but denounces curses against the disobedient; for no sinful being can ever perfectly obey the righteous obligations of God which rest upon him, because of the depravity and weakness of his sinful nature in the flesh. But a holy law or commandment cannot accept and reward a faulty conditional obedience, because to do so would be an outrage upon righteousness, which no holy commandment will permit. It is impossible, therefore, for any conditional obedience toward God to receive his blessing as a conditional reward, if imperfection or fault attaches to such obedience. This is a self-evident truth; for a conditional reward from God, if bestowed upon imperfect obedience, and for it, would be the same as rewarding imperfection or sin. From this inevitable consequence there is no escape. All men, even the most zealous for God's conditional rewards, freely confess this solemn truth in prayer to him, for they will confess their sinful failures in all their righteous obligations to him, and that in no respect are they perfect in their love and service, but continually need his forgiving mercy. Why, then, will not men be consistent, by teaching according to their prayers? Either the confession of sinful failure and the need of mercy is insincere and mockery, or else the doctrine of conditional rewards is not true, but a delusive snare and cheat. Religious teachers should either quit teaching the people according to the old conditional covenant of rewards for works of obedience, or else they should cease to mock God in their prayers, by asking him to be merciful to their unrighteousness, and to remember their sins against them no more, which is according to the new covenant of mercy and grace; for either their prayers are a mockery and hypocritical, or their conditional teachings are basely false, because it is absurd to profess to be under the new covenant only during prayer, and then to pass out and go under the old covenant of conditions as soon as the prayer is ended. Men are self-deceived, and deceiving the people, if they flatter themselves that they are honoring and serving and pleasing God, who changes not, by such inconsistencies, contradictions and shams.

A dear brother, now deceased, told an aged minister and me during our last visit at his home, that he said to his pastor, "Brother———, you pray all right, but when you get up to preach you contradict your prayers." This one stubborn fact condemns all the teachings of conditional salvation, or else it fastens upon all conditionalists the awful sin of mocking God in prayer; for there can be no such thing as the mercifulness of God to our unrighteousness, according to conditional salvation, for this bestows rewards or blessings for righteousness or obedience only, and its rewards are never of grace and mercy, but alone of debt. Mercy and grace, therefore, are banished from every form or kind of conditional salvation, and it becomes purely a matter of reward for service performed. So, then, the moment the worker under the principle of conditional salvation does the work as the required condition, he is righteously entitled to such salvation, not

as a beggar at mercy's door for grace, but as his just due. God himself has so decided this principle, by his inspired servant Paul, and no man can change it from law to gospel; for the sentence of God is, "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." It is clearly evident that all conditional salvation is contingent and dependent upon works of righteousness or right obedience, which the conditionalist must first comply with and do before he can receive the reward of conditional salvation; but then, when he has performed the conditional works, he is lawfully entitled to the stipulated reward of salvation, and it is justly due to him as a debt. It is positively so, and cannot be otherwise, for principles cannot change, and this principle of conditional salvation for conditional obedience is strictly a principle in law, in which the conditional worker becomes the creditor and the Lord the debtor. Boasting on the part of the obedient conditionalist is at once admitted and encouraged, yea, and justified, by every sort of conditional salvation, and the truth of this is confirmed in all the religious world, by the loud claims and boastings of all conditionalists, Conditional Baptists not excepted. This may do for the natural, fleshly, self-willed, legal and worldly religion of the world, who work and serve religiously, not because they love God and delight to show forth his praise, but their works of formal obedience are prompted by the conditional salvation that they expect to obtain by their works. This fact attaches to every feature of conditional salvation, and to all conditional obedience, for the reward necessarily becomes the incentive and the object sought for in all works and services performed as conditional obedience, upon the performance of which depends conditional salvation of some sort. The whole thing from first to last is wholly worldly and fleshly, legal and selfish, and while it may please and praise the pride of the flesh, it dishonors the rich mercy of God, and reproaches his saving grace. This is very far from christian obedience. Christ is the fullness of salvation from all sin, past and present and to come. "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." In Christ is infinite and exhaustless fullness of righteousness and salvation and blessing, therefore, and all his fullness is grace. And it is of his saving fullness only that all we who are his have received; yea, all that we have received or ever shall receive of his divine fullness, on earth and in heaven, is "grace," and not only grace, but "grace for grace." This one blessed truth as it is in Christ, bars out and excludes forever all conditional rewards for works of conditional obedience, because here grace is the only reward. The christian receives only of Christ's fullness, and every gift and blessing of salvation that he ever receives is a blessing both *of* grace and *for* grace. All Christ's fullness of blessing is thus. No other principle of reward and blessing in christian obedience can obtain, therefore, only "grace for grace." And all this riches and blessing of surprising grace is "of his fullness." Not all of it, to be sure, but sufficient for us, for Jesus is ever "full of grace and truth." So, then, if any advocate any conditional system or notion of salvation, and hold to rewards of debt for works of obedience, such cannot find this principle in Christ or in his obedience, but must turn away from him to Moses, and from the grace of the new covenant to the works of the old covenant, for here in Christ and all his heavenly fullness grace only abounds, and grace is all. The gospel of Christ is

the gospel of the grace of God, and the fullness of salvation in the gospel is salvation by grace, and all obedience unto Christ and in the gospel is the obedience of grace, for all the obedience of the saved in Christ is only because they have received of his fullness, and grace for grace. Certainly it must be conceded, and no one will presume to deny it, that there can be no christian obedience out of Christ or without him, and only as we have received of his fullness, and grace for grace. Now this settles it conclusively, that all christian obedience is the result and fruit of Christ's fullness and grace, of which we must receive, and it must abide and abound in us. "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," and he is the Mediator of the new covenant, the Surety of the better testament, which was established upon better promises than the first and old testament or covenant; therefore all obedience to Christ is under the new covenant, and according to it. It is clearly evident, then, that christian obedience cannot be under the legal or old covenant, nor according to it, therefore the obedience unto Christ cannot be conditional, for then it would necessarily be under the old covenant and according to it, because it was conditional. So, before it can be proven that christian obedience is conditional, it must first be shown that Christ reigns upon Mount Sinai, where the conditional covenant of works was given, and not upon the holy Mount Sion in Jerusalem, where the holy Lamb of God, our precious Redeemer was crucified. The two mountains are far apart, both literally and spiritually, far Sinai is far off in the wilderness of Arabia, and when any one comes to it, behold, he meets, not Jesus, but Moses upon its summit, from whence comes fire and smoke, voices and thunderings, so terrible that even Moses himself was made to exceedingly fear and tremble. Yet, though strange the infatuation, some who claim to be preachers of salvation and teachers of obedience to Jesus the Savior, will travel away back to Sinai, in their efforts to prove conditional obedience under the new covenant, and will quote liberally from Moses, the mediator of the conditional covenant, which made nothing perfect. Paul would say to all such brethren, "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" But it is a significant fact, that all classes and schools of conditional religion do always fly to the law of Moses, the ever-failing covenant of works, in their efforts to support some sort of conditional salvation. And then, after they have done the best they can in this way and by such means of proof, as they think, they will try to patch up this old and worn out and ragged garment or system with cloth from the new covenant of mercy and grace, to hide its defects. So, at best it is a patched up sort of religion, a motley mixture of the new covenant with the old, the works of Moses with the grace of Jesus; yet this is called the gospel of Christ (?) and a recent and self-pleasing term for it is, "Conditional Time Salvation." The evident and only meaning of this term squarely contradicts every part of the new covenant, which has not a condition in it, and it is contrary to the gospel of Christ, "for it is the power of God unto salvation," and it also denies that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ saves us now in time. It is not, therefore, the doctrine of the new covenant, nor the gospel of Christ, nor is it "the grace of God that bringeth salvation;" for there is no salvation in this new gospel of conditionalism, but only damna-

tion, unless every one righteously performs the works which its conditions require; therefore it all "depends upon themselves," but not upon the grace of God, if any one obtains any salvation whatever conditionally. Who, then, can receive any salvation or divine blessing in this way? For, ask the best of its advocates, Do you perfectly fulfill either all or any of the commandments of God? and he must confess that he does not, unless he is a blinded pharisee, wrapped up in a cloak of self-righteousness. How, then, is he going to receive anything but condemnation, according to his new-fledged conditional salvation? For he must righteously do the conditions, which no sinful man can do, or else his conditional gospel (?) curses him, and sends him away with the foolish virgins to buy oil for himself. What a miserable fraud and failure must everything be that is conditional on our part, and therefore necessarily depends upon our ever-failing and imperfect selves. How painfully amazing that the children of the new covenant will be deluded and drawn away by such perverse things and chaffy stuff! Let us rejoice that this is not the gospel. Christian obedience is the obedience of love, and "love is of God," says John. And Paul says, "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." This has no reference to what God did for us in regeneration, because it is spoken to baptized believers in Christ, and Paul here testifies to what is wrought in our hearts now. All obedience springs up from this love of God which *is* thus graciously and freely shed abroad in our hearts, not conditionally if we will do something in order to get it, but by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. How positive and clear it is, therefore, that all obedience unto Christ is from the believing and loving heart of the child of God, and has its *active* source in the Father's love, and that this love *is* ministered in our hearts by the Spirit of love and truth which God *gives* unto us. To his own loving disciples does Jesus say, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." That is, because ye love me. So, only those who do love can keep his commandments, because this is the obedience of love, and none but the loving disciples of Christ are under this sweet and sacred obligation of obedience to him. John says, "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." No, because it is his love in our hearts that qualifies and sweetly constrains and enables us to keep them. "We love God," which is the essential cause, "and keep his commandments," as the inseparable and unfailing effect.

Our adorable Savior and Master says, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me. * * * If a man love me, he will keep my words. * * * He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings." He states this as an infallible cause and effect, and a positive test. He shows most clearly and certainly that love to him is the root and efficient power and source of all obedience to him, and that keeping his commandments is the certain result, the active outflowing and delightful fruit of this love. "If a man love me, he will keep my words." The last is just as certain as the first, because our perfect Teacher made no mistakes, and never guessed at what he declared. He said that heaven and earth should pass away, but his words should not. Love to Christ produces

obedience to him, therefore, and keeping his words is the manifested power and heavenly outgrowth of this operative or active, sanctifying and glorifying love. This obedience of love to Jesus the Savior is no more unwilling or coerced or passive or inactive than it is mercenary or selfish, contingent or conditional, for it is none of these. Until it can be shown that one who does not love the Lord may keep his commandments, or that obedience to him can be performed without love to him; or if this point is given up, then unless it can be proven that the Holy Ghost is given unto us conditionally, and that the love of God is also conditionally shed abroad in our hearts by him, our obedience to Christ cannot truthfully be held to be conditional and dependent upon ourselves. Neither of these things will be attempted to be shown by conditionalist Baptists, because it would be so evidently unscriptural and absurd. For the Holy Spirit is freely and sovereignly given to us of God, and the love of God is freely and graciously shed abroad in our hearts by the sovereign operation of the Spirit. To deny this evident truth would be the same as to affirm that the unchangeable God is acted upon and influenced and controlled conditionally by man, which is really a denial of God. We do not act upon God, neither can we turn him, nor influence, direct and control the Holy Spirit, but all this is true of him toward us. Surely the brethren can all see this, and should admit it. That the dear children of the loving God and Father of his people are brought into the sacred bond of the new covenant, and are under the most blessed and divine obligations to keep the commandments of Jesus in the loyal and loving obedience of their hearts to him, all freely agree. That the precious Christ is the Mediator of the new and everlasting covenant, and fulfilled all its provisions, in which there are no contingencies or conditions on our part, or nothing that depends upon us to fulfill it and make it good and sure, but it consists of the "wills" and "shalls" of the Lord, who absolutely makes it with his people, in which he is merciful to their unrighteousness, which is not possible in any conditional covenant; that the gospel of Christ is the gospel of salvation, but not of condemnation, and therefore belongs to the new covenant exclusively, but not to the old covenant in any respect; that in the new covenant grace only reigns through righteousness by our Lord Jesus Christ, and all his saved and obedient followers are under this reign of grace; that all obedience unto Christ is in the gospel of salvation, which is "the gospel of the grace of God;" and that therefore all christian obedience and all salvation in the gospel of Christ is by grace, "not of works," is certainly most clearly established, and all who are saved by grace should freely agree here also. This would both establish fellowship in the gospel and restore peace. Nothing but this ever has made gospel fellowship and peace, or ever can. All the divisions that have ever troubled the people of the Lord's new covenant of grace, have been brought upon them by teachers among them of perverse things, who have denied and opposed these divine truths of the gospel of Christ, and those perverters of the gospel are responsible for such hurtful things, as the Scriptures show, and the Lord judges them and pronounces a woe upon them.

From the apostles of the Lord until now, the entire history of his new covenant people shows the same lamentable fact, that whenever any would-be leaders have risen up among them who have am-

bitiously labored to make some innovation upon the gospel of salvation by grace alone from first to last, and have opposed the sufficiency of our Lord's grace in all the work and way of salvation, they have always sowed discord and made confusion and trouble among the people of God; and always those leaders in some new thing have in the end of their heady and high-minded career left or gone out from the people of grace, and have "fallen from grace," as Paul said of them. That is, they have left the covenant of grace, have fallen away from the doctrine of grace, and have invariably turned aside to some sort of conditional doctrines. All of these conditional doctrines, from the largest to the smallest, are opposed to grace and deny its power to save *in some way.* For it is a significant fact in all the parties who have gone away from the people of the new covenant into any principle or teaching of conditionalism in salvation, that, in some way or other, they deny the power and efficacy and sufficiency of the grace of God, and hence they never fail to introduce and urge upon the people some other principle and way of salvation besides grace; and it is sure to be something of themselves, or that "depends upon themselves," which they in their ideas of self-ability persuade themselves, and as many more as they can, is a safer and better way of salvation, in some sort or part, than to rely on and trust in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ to save them. This is a fair statement of "conditional time salvation," as also of every other principle of conditional salvation from sin and all else that we need to be saved from. To one who believes and trusts in and looks to grace alone for all salvation, yea, salvation unto righteousness and obedience and every good work, the belief in this conditional salvation, which "depends upon ourselves," seems incredible and astounding; and so it is to one who truly realizes his sinful infirmities and weakness and failures, as Paul confesses with deep emotion in the seventh chapter of Romans. And though Paul labored more abundantly in the gospel than all the other apostles, he humbly says, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Now, therefore, since the inspired apostle denied that his faithful and devoted obedience to Christ and more abundant labors in preaching the gospel "depended upon himself," but attributed it all to the grace of God which was with him, and says, "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain," we are safe in holding fast to the grace of God in Christ as the successful power that leads to all loyal and loving and acceptable obedience unto Christ, and in refusing to accept any other doctrine, which denies this sufficiency of grace, as every kind of conditionalism does. To his brethren in Christ Paul says, ("For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." This is the true source of obedient power in all who are thus disarmed of everything that exalteth itself, and are thus through the mighty power of God happily brought to the obedience of Christ. And this "mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds" of error and opposition is infinitely better and more blessed in securing obedience to Christ than it is possible for any conditions of dependence upon ourselves to be. And so the one

and only sufficient cause for the exhortation to obedience to Christ in the gospel, in showing forth or working out our own salvation with fear and trembling, is given in the wonderful and blessed words, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." So all the salvation that is ever worked out in all gospel obedience, and by all the saved in Christ Jesus, is because of the power and grace of God in the heart, working in us both the willing mind and the might or power to do. This is present salvation, and it is of God through his Spirit and by his grace. Therefore it is not dependent upon conditions to be performed by our own will and power, but we ourselves are ever dependent upon God. It does seem that all who know the grace of God in truth would agree upon this, and have no controversy, but it is sadly evident that all Baptists do not. If they did, then none would derisively speak of grace as not sufficient to make us obedient to Christ, neither would they presume to say there is another principle and way of salvation than the grace of God, as James Arminius and all his followers since have urged, a way which they call "conditional salvation." This conditional salvation, whether applied to present or future salvation, denies that grace itself saves us, as to that part of salvation which is conditional, for it is clearly evident that so far as the grace of God saves us, our salvation is not conditional upon our part, and cannot "depend upon ourselves," as all conditionalism holds; for the moment we admit that we are saved by grace, we must also confess that, so far from salvation depending upon us, we are dependent upon grace for salvation. It is passing strange that any believer in Christ will deny this, and contend for a principle of salvation which is an enemy to grace, as is all conditionalism in salvation. Have our conditional Baptists paused long enough to see the unavoidable sequence of denying that our salvation now in time is by grace? for when they make this denial, and say it is conditional upon our part, and depends upon ourselves, they thereby deny that the Lord Jesus Christ saves us in time, for it is by him that grace reigns, and reigns through righteousness, and this is unto obedience to Christ most surely, because righteousness is obedience. It is a shocking and fearful thing, therefore, to deny that the reigning and righteous grace of Christ saves us in time, for it is equal to saying that it is safer and better to depend upon ourselves and our optionary conditional works to save us from all the consequences that we need to be saved from all the days of our lives, than it is to look to and rely upon Christ and his grace to save us. *Conditionalism denies Christ.* Faithful Paul would say to brethren who hold to a conditional and therefore legal principle of salvation, "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love." That is, in Christ neither the Jew availeth anything, nor the Gentile, "but a new creature," says Paul again. So here in Christ is a new creation, corresponding to the Lord's new covenant, in which Christ and his grace reign supreme, and is all in all. Therefore, says Paul, "Not of works, lest any man should

boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Here then is the source and only enabling cause of spiritual good works, for those who perform them are God's workmanship, and he hath new-created them in Christ unto this very end, good works, and foreordained that we should walk in them; and it is so, for God worketh in them by his Spirit of grace and love, making them willing in the day of Christ's power, and strengthening them with might by his Spirit in the inner and new man, so that they do testify of and work out and walk in their own salvation, which is in Christ and of him, and they do so with fear and trembling, which is not voluntary or self-caused. For salvation is their own, their gracious inheritance in Christ, with whom they are joint-heirs as his brethren and the children of God in his Son. All this new and spiritual creation and salvation and good works of faith and love is in Christ Jesus, and it actively springs up in his members, and brethren from the Spirit of life in him; therefore it is of the operation of God, and is by his free favor or grace, "according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." Thus the infallible oracles of God most clearly show that all goodness and righteousness, in the children of God, as manifested or worked out by them, in their obedience to Christ, are by the effective reign of grace in them, the active springing up in them of Christ's life and love and obedience to God the Father, and all this is the blessed effect and fruit and manifestation of salvation. Salvation, therefore, in all that salvation means and is, is of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the grace of God, and it all is the fruit of the Spirit, as Paul testifies in Gal. v. Therefore it is neither legal nor conditional, nor of works, nor does it "depend upon us," as conditionalism teaches, but we ourselves are continually dependent upon "the grace of God that bringeth salvation." So, being thus saved by grace, we are prepared and ordained unto good works, and savingly and lovingly and actively and willingly brought into heart-given obedience to Christ. Now, therefore, this is the obedience of both love to God and faith in Jesus, in whom only is salvation; and Paul calls this obedience the work of faith and labor of love in Christ Jesus. He speaks of all goodness and righteousness, faith and love, patience and hope, as *in* Christ Jesus. Without these gifts of God in his Son, and inwrought fruit of the Spirit in our new heart, there is not and cannot be any true obedience to Christ, for all else is carnal and unclean, selfish and unholy, and not pleasing to God. "For whatsoever is not of faith is sin," and without faith it is impossible to please God. Well, the faith of the Son of God is not conditional on our part, for "it is the gift of God;" therefore the obedience of faith, which worketh by love and purifieth the heart, cannot be conditional, but it is the springing up of the water of life in us which Christ gives us, flowing out in delightful service to the Lord, the gracious Giver of all our salvation and blessings. He gave us the new heart to love the Lord, also the power of faith to believe on Christ unto salvation, out of which arises all christian obedience. And since neither love nor faith are conditional, but free bestowments of God's grace, so neither is the loving service and obedience of faith conditional, but it is the free tribute of the heart in the unselfish sacri-

fice of honor and praise to the God of all grace and comfort. In Romans iv., Paul speaks of the righteousness of faith, and testifies that faith is one with grace, saying, "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." He thus shows that all the righteousness and blessing of faith is by grace, and that it is grace only that makes the promise and blessing of God sure to the heirs of salvation All know that whatever is conditional is not sure, but very uncertain or insecure, because it depends upon weak and fallible man. But faith belongs to the sure mercy and grace of God in Christ, and out of faith in the believer arises the only true obedience to Christ.

Christian obedience, therefore, is the obedience of reigning grace and faith and love in the heart of the child of God, and these are the unconditional gifts and blessings of the Lord's new covenant; therefore all the spiritual blessings of God flow to his covenant children from the divine fountain of his abounding grace, and are as unmerited and free as grace itself. And so all the rewards and blessings that the children of God ever receive in their loving service and obedience of faith are the rewards of grace. In view of this precious truth, Paul testifies that God hath blessed all the chosen and called and faithful in Christ with all spiritual blessings in Christ before the world was, unto the God-glorifying end that they should be holy and blameless before him in love. This makes all spiritual blessings as free and unconditional as Christ himself, and therefore absolutely the blessings of saving grace.

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., March 6, 1900.

THE COMMON SALVATION.

THIS expression is used by Jude, and does not occur elsewhere in the Scriptures. This inspired writer addresses his epistle "to them that are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." To them he says, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." There is but one salvation that can be called common, that is, common to all the sanctified, or elect, of God, and that is the salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ, that salvation from sin and death unto eternal life, which is the theme of all the inspired writers. That this is that salvation which the apostle designates as "the common salvation," is clearly evident by the reason which he gives for the necessity of writing to them about it.

"The faith which was once delivered unto the saints," is not that grace of faith which "is the fruit of the Spirit," but that doctrine and order of the gospel in which the salvation of God is made known to the saints in the world. This is that "mystery which was hid from ages and generations, but is now made known unto the saints," and this mystery "is Christ in them the hope of glory." (Eph. iii. 5; Col. i. 26, 27.) This doctrine of salvation by grace, and the order of the gospel, was delivered unto the saints on the day of Pentecost, when the gospel church was established. The apostles were charged with the authority to teach it to the saints, and to set all the commands of Jesus concerning the church in order, as judges sitting upon thrones, to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. All this gospel system is made known to the

faith of God's people. It is not understood by the natural mind, but by an understanding especially given for this purpose. (1 John v. 20; Eph. i. 17–23.) This doctrine of God is spoken of as "the faith of the gospel." Paul uses the word faith in this sense, as a system of faith, in Romans i. 5; xvi. 26; Gal. i. 23, and in other places. This faith, or doctrine, in which the eternal salvation of the saints is declared and made manifest in the world, is of the utmost importance and value to the saints. It is more than all the world to them. It sets forth and declares "the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory." —1 Cor. ii. 7. It declares the ways and wisdom of God in salvation, as contrasted with the ways and wisdom of men. It was once delivered unto the saints in the morning of the gospel dispensation, and it is needful that they earnestly contend for it, for the whole world, and all the influences of the world, are opposed to it.

I have said that there is no other salvation which is common, either to all men naturally or to the saints. Natural salvation, as salvation from wounds or death in battle, from shipwreck, from loss or destruction by earthquake, fire, flood or disease, from misfortune or affliction of any kind, cannot be called a common salvation, for all are not saved from these things. Nor can that salvation of the Lord's people from error, from a fleshly walk and the loss or death that results from it, from stripes on account of transgression, which may be called a time salvation, be called common, for all are not saved in this sense. Some do walk after the flesh and die; some do transgress, and are visited with the rod. This liability to wander from the right way, and yield to temptation in some of its many forms, and so suffer, is referred to by all the apostles, and is made the subject of faithful, earnest and tender admonition and exhortation. But some do yield to the temptation for a time, and suffer the sad consequences. There is an experience of the weakness of the flesh on the part of all of the saints in some measure, so that every one who is received is scourged and chastised. (Heb. xii. 6.) All must learn that they are dependent entirely upon the care and grace of God for the orderly walk which shall secure to them this time salvation, so that they shall not depend upon themselves, as Peter did, but upon the Lord. They must learn that "we have the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raiseth the dead." Some, through the faithful labors of brethren, are saved from death. (James v. 19, 20.) Ministers, by faithful labor in the gospel, save themselves and them that hear them, from false doctrine and practice. (1 Tim. iv. 16.) All this is the work of grace. But some are left to see more fully, and experience more deeply, the corruption, depravity and untrustworthiness of the flesh, even going so far in an ungodly walk that they are "delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

All for whom Jesus died are saved with an everlasting salvation, and shall finally be restored from all their wanderings, healed from all their backslidings, and brought home to glory, to the praise of the riches of God's grace. This everlasting salvation is common to all those who are sanctified, set apart, chosen, by God the Father. These who are the elect are preserved or saved in Jesus Christ, as the eight souls were saved in the ark. In him they were buried by baptism into

death, and so satisfied the law. In him they were raised up from death, and so death has no more dominion over them. In God's own appointed time each one of them is called by grace to a knowledge of this salvation, which is wrought in them.

A common inheritance, or an inheritance in common, is one in which each heir has an undivided part of the whole. It cannot be divided; it all belongs to each one. It may be illustrated by the light in a room full of people; the whole light belongs to each one in the room. No one can have a right to more than another, though one may be in a condition to enjoy more than another. So with this salvation, each one of those who are called has a right to all of it. It is the common salvation, common to the whole family of God. They are joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ to this inheritance, and shall finally, all of them, be conformed to his image, and enter upon the full realization of this common inheritance in glory.

But the enjoyment of this common light, this common salvation, while here in the flesh, is more in some than in others. To enjoy an inheritance which cannot be divided the heirs must be as one, must be of one mind and one soul. And so it is with the Lord's people when they are in the Spirit. Then they dwell together in unity, the unity of the Spirit, and find how good and how pleasant it is. (Psalm cxxxiii.) But when the flesh prevails in the case of any, and they strive to walk by sight instead of faith, then their right to that salvation is not fully enjoyed. Sometimes their birthright is sold for some fleshly good, and they are deprived for a season of the light and comfort. But they cannot dispose of their inheritance, though they suffer loss in their daily experience. It was needful for them, therefore, that the apostle should exhort them to contend earnestly in their daily life, in their walk and conversation, for that faith, that doctrine and order of the gospel church, unto the obedience of which they have been called, and that they attend with care to all that pertains to the church of the living God, seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, above all worldly things. The grace which brought them salvation taught them all this proper gospel walk. (Titus ii. 11, 12.)

The salvation which is eternal, and the salvations of various kinds which are experienced by the saints in time, bear the same relation to each other which the sun in the heavens and his beams upon the earth bear to each other. We know nothing of the Sun till his light falls upon us; we know nothing of Jesus, who is our salvation, and the Sun of Righteousness to us, till his healing beams are felt in our souls. "In thy light shall we see light." It is by and in our daily experience that we learn all that we can know here in time of our eternal salvation. In every experience of suffering, of tribulation, of stripes, and of salvation from these evils, we learn more of this salvation, and only in tribulation do we learn anything concerning it. Whatever Jesus tells us is told us in the darkness, but we speak it in the light. Jesus is our salvation here in time, and to eternal days.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

CAMMAL, Pa., Dec. 25, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I hesitate to call you brother, but as the time has expired for the SIGNS, I inclose two dollars which will pay for them another year.

They come to me regularly, and sometimes I read them with comfort, then again they are a blank to me, I cannot read them with the Spirit, and then again I pick them up and read the same article with comfort to my soul. I feel like trying to tell you how it has been with me.

My parents were New School Baptists, and I was brought up in the Sunday School. When I was a small boy I was troubled about my sins; I always feared the Lord, and thought when I got a little older I would join the church, and be a christian, but the time never came that I thought that I was good enough, and I did not think that I would prove faithful. I went on in this way, promising myself that I would do better, but found that I failed in this also. When I was twenty-three years of age, a revival meeting was being held at Jersey Shore, where I was living at that time, and I attended it until I got so worked up that I could not sleep nights. I would go to bed and lie in trouble; the cold drops of sweat would stand out on my head with the thought that if I died I would go straight to hell, and I would pray to God in my mind to "be merciful to me a sinner." I suffered in this way for some time. There was a good Old School Baptist woman lived in the town, a sister Fackenthall, with whom my intended lived, and I had reason to go there quite often, and they noticed that I was worried about something. They soon found out what the trouble was, and began to quote the Scriptures to me, and some that I never knew were in the Bible. It proved to be a comfort to me. Then I began to read the Bible, and then I began to hear a gospel sermon once in a while. Elder Vail, and Elder Wm. Campbell, would hold meetings at sister Fackenthall's and I enjoyed them very much. In a short time I was married, and moved to Cammal; there they had preaching every month, by our pastor, Elder Vail. I attended regularly, and I do believe that I was fed on that manna which comes down from heaven, at least it was a comfort to me. I was led along in this way until time for the Association, when I heard dear brother Bundy preach. His text was, "Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound," and something said to me, You know that sound; then how happy I was; I drank from that fountain which never goes dry. I went on until about a year ago, Elder Vail asked me to go to the church; I told him that if my wife was ready I would go; she was ready, and we were called on the next day, in the meeting, to tell the reason of our hope. I was all broken up, and could not say much, but they received me, and I was baptized by Elder Vail. Then I had a calm and peaceful mind for a long time, but since I find myself often doubting whether the Lord had anything to do with my case or not. Do you think that I might be one of that number which were chosen in him before the foundation of the world? Now, dear brother, what gives me much trouble is this, I never can tell the time when I met with a change, but I just seemed to glide along in the way that I have narrated, but the trouble of doing, and of fear, and of hell, left me, though I had no bright evidence, as some have. I cannot tell when there was a change with me as some do. This often makes me doubt, yet I cannot say that I have no hope; I still hope that I may be one of that number for whom Christ died. This letter is like the writer, full of imperfections.

I close, wishing you a happy new year.

SAMUEL C. MOFFIT.

[OUR brother speaks of not being able

to tell the time when a deliverance was given him, yet his story tells of a deliverance. What then does it matter about telling the time? We recall that once when we were ourself troubled concerning this very thing, we heard Elder Hartwell in the pulpit speak in this way; he said, that two men might be traveling the same road, both heavily burdened, each having a heavy bag of sand upon his shoulder, from which he was weary, and longed to be relieved. The whole load might be taken from the shoulder of the one at a moment, and he would fully realize it, and ever after be able to tell just when it was done, and how he felt as the burden was removed; the other might insensibly lose his load, a grain of sand at a time, bye and bye, the load would be all gone, but he never would be able to tell just when it went, of his peculiar feelings as it went, as the other could, yet his load was gone just as completely and effectually as the other's was. The difference in the manner of the going was not the important thing, but the fact of the burden being gone was important. We remember what a comfort this was to us, and we tell it for the comfort of our brother.—ED.]

ELGIN, Ore., Jan. 1, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I wish to send you a copy of a letter that I received from our beloved sister Ackles a short time before her death. We believe that it will be read with interest by her brethren in the east, as well as by those who knew her in the west. She was a dearly beloved Baptist wherever known. She was sound in the faith, and faithful in the discharge of every duty. In the language of David she could say, "I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way." Whatever duty demanded, her willing hands performed. She was given to hospitality. I never, in these things, saw any one more mindful than she; she did not forget those in bonds; the needy were not forgotten, and I feel it but a duty to say that she was mindful of her duty to those who ministered unto her in spiritual things; she was faithful to minister to them in carnal things. I never knew one who felt more deeply unworthy, or who had less confidence in the flesh, or who hated their own life more. She was one who walked in darkness, and had no light. She was one in whom the poor and needy could find a companion and fellowship, though she was a very pillar in our little church. We shall miss her so much. But we feel to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away," and may we be enabled to say, "Blessed be the name of the Lord." She was spiritually minded, and a great Bible student, and much of her conversation was upon spiritual things. This is but a weak effort to show our sister's worth, she needs no eulogy of mine.

Brother Beebe, I wish to say that I am pleased with the SIGNS, and the glorious doctrine of salvation contended for in its pages; I believe that salvation both for time and eternity are from the Lord. Jonah who had some experience in a time salvation, was wont to say, "Salvation is of the Lord." If there was some good thing in the flesh upon which good fruit could grow, then we might do good and merit salvation, but as says Paul, "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing." "The evil that I would not, that I do." So my mouth is shut, and with David I must say, "Hold thou me up, and I shall stand."

May the Lord keep us in the way of

truth, and preserve us from evil.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

NOVEMBER 28, 1899.

ELDER G. E. MAYFIELD—MY DEAR PASTOR:—Your note came to-day, and I was very glad to get it. I intended to write to you and to sister Peggy, on Sunday. You said I was to write, if I had anything good to send. And I had the inclosed most excellent letter to send. I had read all but the last page of the letter Saturday night, when I became so weary. I wonder why Paul wrote those words which have comforted the Lord's poor and afflicted people? Indeed if so much power is in their hands, why do they submit to being poor and afflicted? "When I would do good, evil is present with me." Did he do the good? Why not? "The good that I would, I do not, and the evil I would not, that I do." Why? Because sin is yet in our members, and with the natural powers we can do no good. It is the spiritual mind that is enabled to do all that God commands, when he gives the strength. Saved by the foolishness of preaching. Who called the preacher and qualified him to preach? Who gave the heart to understand, and the ear to hear? "Grace all the work shall crown." Who saves his brother and covers a multitude of sins? Not the one who in his own strength goes to the erring. "Without me ye can do nothing." And even the apostles, having done all, were unprofitable servants. "Who is sufficient for these things?"

The reason that I could not write last Sunday afternoon, was that in opening my Bible, my eyes fell upon Ecclesiastes v. 2: I read on down the chapter. I could not write after, I had such a crushing sense of my vileness and unprofitableness, writing was impossible then. This forenoon, though very weary with a large ironing, my mind was more comfortable with many Scriptures passing through it.

Now, my dear brother, you see in the members over which the Lord has made you overseer, the needs be for stirring up their pure minds by way of remembrance, rebuking their worldliness, reproving their lack of interest, with all long-suffering and doctrine, and if it be in accordance with the will of God, you will thus save them from their errors. I know that I am only weakness, and I would shout for joy if I only knew that Christ's strength is made perfect in my weakness. If it were not that God's mercy endureth forever we could not be spared to cumber the earth. Lord, teach us how to pray. We join in love to each and all.

Unworthily, but as I trust, a sister,

E. H. ACKLES.

[WE well remember the dear sister, Edith Hanna, as we all here in the east used to know her. Though for many years far removed from us in location, yet we have always remembered her with fellowship and love. Her death brought sorrow to many here, as well as among her western brethren. We are glad indeed to publish both the tribute of her pastor, and the letter which she sent to him. The testimony is good for us all to read and heed. How good when such things can be said concerning one who has departed. What a noble record to leave behind. It was our privilege many years ago to receive many letters from her, and they were all spiritual, and to the glory of the Savior. Personally, we sorrow that we shall see her no more. We extend sympathy to her friends in the west, who feel heavily bereaved, and also to her friends in the east.—ED.]

61 TRACY ST., UTICA, N. Y., }
Dec. 10, 1899. }

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—Brother Robert Alexander wishes me to say that he has been taking the SIGNS steadily from the spring of 1852, and that he is by no means tired of them yet, for by the blessing of God they have never failed to bring refreshing comfort to his thirsty soul, and have been as good news from a far country, which has many times given him to feel that he wants to grasp the hand of the writer, and thank the Lord that he has spoken comfort to him through their writing. He says, "I know that they are my people, and I hope they will never have any occasion to advise me to return from following after them; they are my people, and I must say, their God is my God; he has led me these many years, and instructed me in many things, and has led me in ways that I knew not, so that I am compelled to acknowledge him in all my ways; he has enabled me to say at times, at least, that it is by the grace of God I am what I am. It is by the help of the Lord that I continue unto this present time, and I must confess that it is by the power of God that I am kept from day to day, for daily experience teaches me that if left to myself I am sure to fall. The enemies in my carnal mind are as strong as ever they were, too strong for me, and I find that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing, and that my worst foes are they of my own household. and they cause me to cry daily, Lord, help me, and lead me in a plain path wherein I shall not stumble. I hope the dear brethren and sisters will continue to write as the Lord may enable them, seeing that so many of the children are so situated that they are depending on the SIGNS for their preaching." He prays that the editors may be strengthened in their labors, both temporal and spiritual, and that they may remember the poor and afflicted of the family, when they go to a throne of grace. This is the desire of Robert Alexander, who is in his eighty-fourth year, written by Christian Winter.

Now, dear brethren, I would like to add a few lines for myself, but feel my own inability and ignorance in spiritual things. I have from day to day delayed, thinking the next will be the best. I can never write or speak as I wish to, beside I am a German, and a very poor scholar in the English language. I hope therefore that the brethren will pardon and overlook mistakes, and my poor writing. O, that the Lord would give me more strength to look unto him instead of looking to myself, then how much better progress I would make in my journey. I would also just say that I have been a reader of the SIGNS for nearly twenty-seven years, and I feel at present that I cannot do without them; I shall try to take them as long as I am able to read, and to pay for them. It is all the preaching I have. I hope that the dear brethren and sisters, and all the readers of the SIGNS, will try to encourage the editors by sending in their remittances as early as possible, so as to enable them to carry on their work in defending the truth as it is in Jesus, and to blow the gospel trumpet. I, for one, sometimes feel as if an article in the dear old SIGNS, written by some brother or sister, is worth all the money that we pay for the SIGNS. But I am satisfied that the Lord reigns, and that he knows what is best for us. This world is full of religion, such as Roman Catholicism, and various other kinds similiar to it, and errors of every shape and name are preached with boldness, and received by the multitudes with greediness and de-

light, but I trust that the Lord has kept me by his grace, so that I have no desire to mingle with them. We are three of us here, myself and wife, and brother Alexander, and we try to meet often, and I must say that in times past we have had many precious hours together, and sometimes I think, if not altogether mistaken, the form of the fourth has been with us. It melts my heart sometimes when I remember the wondrous love that was displayed toward me, who am so utterly unworthy and worthless. But what a foolish creature I am, after years experience in a life of faith, I have a revolting heart still, I would turn away from and live without Christ if I could. I am plagued with a body of sin and death, and am tried so much with unbelief and fears, and what is worse, at times I have not a heart for God; I know not how to pray, nor what to pray for; I cannot control my own heart; sin is mixed with all I do; I often fear that my religion is nothing worth, and that Christ is not formed in me, the hope of glory. Whither then must I go? My hope rests on Christ and Christ alone, and I have nowhere else to go. By the grace of God I have been upheld till now. I sometimes have been enabled to cry out for God, even for the living God, and to say, "Lord, have mercy upon me." He knows what a miserable creature I am, but if I am one of his children, he will never leave nor forsake me; he will take care of his own. I have to confess that if I am saved at all, it is by grace, from first to last.

But I must conclude, or I shall weary you. I did not intend to write so much when I began. May the Lord pardon what may be amiss in this, to his name be all the glory.

I remain your brother,

CHRISTIAN WINTER.

WAVERLY, Pa., Feb. 13, 1900.

BROTHER BENTON:—As brother Beard never writes for publication, I thought it would do no harm to publish this short line; it just expresses what I have felt, O, so many times, yes, most of the time. You better leave out my first letter, and publish this one, it is so much better. I will not feel hurt, no indeed I will not.

Yours in love of the truth,

D. M. VAIL.

NEW HAVEN, Conn., Feb. 6, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER MARVIN:—Ever since I received your last letter asking me to write to you, I have been trying to find an opportunity to do as you requested, though I confess I cannot write anything to comfort or encourage you, unless it is to say that I know I am a poor, weak, justly condemned sinner, and it seems to me no one else can be half as bad as I feel myself to be. It always makes me feel like a culprit when I hear others, like yourself, tell of their feeling of unworthiness, for it seems to me you could not know how great a sinner I am, or you would not say you was the greatest sinner. I have often gone to church meeting with a determination to ask the church to cut me off, remove my name from among theirs, and let me go out from among them as an alien and stranger, for I felt that I could not walk as becomes a follower of the meek and lowly One, and I would rather die than bring reproach upon the name and cause, and I daily feel my inability to walk as becomes a "follower of the Lamb," with an "upright walk and godly conversation." I am too worldly-minded, too much given to levity and the pasttimes of the world. Yet with all these feelings, when I meet with the brethren, those whom I esteem as so much better than I know myself to

be, there is such a drawing toward them that I can only tell them that I love them and the "assembly of the saints" above all things else, and for the time I forget my resolutions to ask them to cast me out, and I feel as did Ruth, and with her I feel to say, "Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee." While I know I am not worthy of a name and place among the dear children of God, I am so selfish I do not want to be cast off, though I feel that it would be but just if I was cast into outer darkness. I believe I have always felt that if I should be cast out, I yet would say, "God is just," and, "Though my soul were sent to hell, God's righteous law approves it well," and yet I should praise him.

Now, dear brother, I have told you how I feel, and what I am, and I hope you will receive a crumb of comfort. I fear it will not be from this, however, for I feel that I am nothing, and less than that. I hope this finds you and your family well. I will be glad to hear from you when you care to write, and am looking to your coming this month with anticipations of a pleasant visit, if you will do the talking. You know I am of "slow speech and a stammering tongue," except when talking on worldly things.

With much love to you and yours, I remain as ever, your very unworthy brother,

JAMES BEARD.

STAMFORD, N. Y., Dec. 13, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As the time is near at hand to renew my subscription, I will write a few lines in the way of approval and of appreciation of the excellent way in which our dear family paper is conducted. I feel that it is a duty to be prompt in my remittance, and wish that it might be so with all, and so lighten the hearts of those that labor to make it such an excellent medium of correspondence to the household of faith. I would feel lonely without it, as in my afflictions I but seldom hear the word proclaimed in its purity. If I know my own heart I do love the assembly of the saints, and my chief joy is to meet with them. I have almost felt to question why I was denied this privilege, while others enjoy it, but on a moment's reflection I realize that it is because it so seems good in the sight of the Lord. I wish to be reconciled to his holy and righteous will. Afflictions spring not from the dust; they are dealt out to us in wisdom, and do work for our good, if we are the called according to his purpose. How good the editorial in the number for December 1st, upon that subject! This Scripture has been comforting to me in my affliction. Surely it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Should we not be thankful that it is so? I have seen the time when I felt that affliction brought me to the feet of Jesus to ask help, and to take away my heart of stone, and to give me an heart of flesh, and I think that he heard my cry, and enabled me to trust in the sure mercies of David. I have no confidence in the flesh, that I can do one acceptable act of myself; my righteousness is all as filthy rags. No offering can I bring, but simply to his cross must I cling. I do rejoice in the finished work of the Redeemer, for it is by grace that we are saved through faith, and that not of ourselves, for it is the gift of God; it is not of works, lest any man should boast. My dear kindred, stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints; take the Scriptures as your only rule and

guide, the gospel therein revealed is the power of God unto salvation; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile. I would be glad to write something that would be of comfort to the poor and afflicted people of God, for I feel truly to love them for the truth's sake; my language then must be that of Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee," &c.

Dear brethren editors, may the Lord sustain you in your labors, and guide you into all truth, and enable you to long feed the flock of the fold; may we all be enabled to serve him acceptably, with reverence and godly fear.

Yours unworthily,

MRS. H. HOWARD

LONGVIEW, Texas, Dec. 15, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have just finished reading the dear old SIGNS for December 15th, and I feel somewhat impressed to write you a few lines as an expression of the love that I have for you and the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and the brethren in general. I have not been taking the SIGNS very long, but do not see how I could do without it now. It advocates the doctrine on which my little hope is hinged; that little hope which I would not give in exchange for all the riches in this world; that hope which is an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast; that hope that maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our heart. "For we are saved by hope, but hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for it?" I hear some professed followers of our Lord make a great deal of fun of this hope religion, but take that little hope away from me, and you take my all. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." It is that hope of the life beyond this vale of tears that we cherish above all things on this earth, that eternal life, that was treasured up in Christ, and that before the foundation of the world. "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus," who came down in these low grounds of sorrow and died the ignominious death of the cross, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, who his ownself bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes ye were healed. "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God," ever adorning the doctrine of God our Savior with an orderly walk and godly conversation. "For our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." Therefore, my dearly beloved, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." But ever look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God, there to make intercession for the saints of God, to whom be glory forever, amen.

Do as you please with these imperfect lines.

Your little brother in hope of life eternal,

T. P. SHADDOCK.

ARENA, N. Y., Jan. 15, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—The time having arrived for me to renew my subscription for our family paper, I would like to express my appreciation of the same, and would also extend a few words of encouragement to the editors, if anything I can say might be encouraging. I am well pleased with the contents of the SIGNS, according to my understanding they advocate the same principles they did in the beginning, more than a half century ago. I have received a number of different Baptist papers within the past two years, but would not exchange the SIGNS for any or all of them. I hope the dear brethren and sisters will continue to speak often to each other through its columns, as God shall give them liberty, for we read, where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

I hope if there are any in arrears, they will make a strong effort to forward their subscription, that our editors may not be annoyed by the tardiness of their patrons.

This theory about "conditional time salvation," is something new to me; I do not remember of hearing the term until the past season. I am of the opinion we Primitive Baptists have no use for it. I think as brother Allison said in the last number, "better leave that term for the Arminians." It seems to me the closer we adhere to the apostolic doctrine, and apostolic simplicity, the safer we are.

I have a desire that Elder Chick may feel constrained to meet with us at our next Association, if he can make it convenient. I have never had the pleasure of seeing him, nor hearing him preach, but have enjoyed reading his writings very much.

With love to all the household of faith, I am your unworthy sister,

J. H. DICKSON.

WELCOME, N. C., Oct. 29, 1899.

ELDER D. BARTLEY:—I have often desired to write to you, when reading your pieces, for you write just what I believe, and that makes me love you; yet I am so vile, I feel like my scribble will annoy you. But somehow I cannot help writing how I love the doctrine of an all-wise, all-powerful God. If I go to torment, I want to go believing in God having all power in heaven and earth.

I cannot write anything interesting, but I just wanted to tell you how I love the doctrine of election and predestination of all things; it is my greatest enjoyment to read it, or hear it preached, and I do love the people that believe in it, whether I have seen them or not. I do not know from what source this is, but I hope the Lord will show you, for I do not want you to be deceived in me, for I am so vile, so fearful. O, how wretched I am!

May the good Lord bless you, and enable you to write much more of that glorious doctrine.

J. A. PARDEW.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—This expressive little letter is submitted to you. The meek and lowly writer has truly been taught of God, whom he adores with humble reverence, for neither the flesh nor the devil ever taught man to "love the doctrine of an all-wise, all-powerful God," but these opposing powers do teach men to hate, and heap reproaches upon it, and to "reply against God." "God, who is rich in mercy," will not suffer one to "go to torment" who believes and trusts in and loves him, as our humble brother does. "The devil and his angels" could not endure his presence among them.

D. BARTLEY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1900.

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EDITORS:

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GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MATTHEW XXII; LUKE XIV.

PERHAPS as much has been written and said concerning this parable of the marriage supper as any portion of the word, and we cannot hope to suggest anything new, but can only hope to bring out again the truths which are presented in it, and which have been often spoken of by those who have treated upon it before. We will refer to the parable as narrated in Luke especially, because there we have a more full narrative of the things which led up to it, and a more full statement also of the parable itself. From verse seven to verse eleven, it is recorded that the Savior rebuked those who sought out the highest seats at the feasts, saying at the end, "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." The spirit which should characterize the subjects of the kingdom of our Lord is here set forth. It is not a spirit of self-seeking and self-exaltation in any sense of the word, but rather a spirit to feel little and insignificant and unworthy, and that if entitled to a place in the feasts of the kingdom at all, it must be the very lowest place. The thought expressed in what in verse seven is called a parable, is not that of calculation, as though one should say in himself, I want the highest place, and I want the guests to see that I have honor in the opinion of the master of the feast, and therefore in order to attract attention to my exaltation, I will purposely and ostentatiously take the lowest seat, so that afterward all shall see that I am judged worthy of a higher seat, but the thought is that he who really feels least of all, and who has taken the lowest seat because he believes that this is the only place for him, is the one whom the Lord delights to honor, because a meek and humble spirit is, in the sight of the Lord, of great price. Put on humility, is not humility at all. He who takes the lowest seat in heart, is meant; him the Lord exalteth, as the Savior said.

Then, from verse twelve to verse fourteen, he sets forth the characters who are entitled to the feast, and to whom the hearts of all who love the Lord will go out in loving service and fellowship. When thou makest a feast, call not the rich, but the poor, and lame, and halt, and blind. The servant is to be of the spirit of his Master. If the Master seeks out and bids to the feast those of lowly spirit, so must they of his household. If Jesus speaks his words of life and comfort to the lowly and needy, who can never recompense him for it, so all his servants are to minister to the same humble souls, poor, and afflicted, and needy, and they are to do this not expecting any return. Both these parables set forth the same truth. The first, regarding the guests who are bidden; the second, regarding those who minister and show kindness to the others. Humility is the peculiar grace which beautifies the Lord's people. As the Master regarded not the rich and the noble, so let us also show no partiality to them. It is a sin to say to the man in fine raiment, Come up

hither, and to the poor brother, Sit down there. As the Master had respect unto the lowly, so are we to regard them also.

These brief thoughts must suffice for these two opening parables. We have called attention to them because they are connected with the one which follows, and lead up to it.

Then said one of them that sat at meat with him, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." Whoever this may be, evidently he had sufficient discernment to see that the former parables related to spiritual, rather than natural things, and the language to which he gave utterance would seem to imply that he was one of those who was a true disciple, although seeming to need instruction concerning the things of which he thought and spoke.

Then follows the parable of the marriage supper.

Some things seem clear in this parable.

First, it is intended to bring to view the gospel day, and the gospel news, which are as bread to the hungry.

Second, the marriage supper continues from the dawn of the gospel day, to the gathering of the last vessel of mercy; it is a feast, in other words, which is going on all the time.

Third, the gathering is also going on all the time. All through the gospel dispensation there are poor, and maimed, and halt, and blind, in the streets and lanes, and in the highways and hedges. All through the gospel day there are those who have bought farms, and oxen, and married wives, and who prefer these things to the supper of the great king, and as these in the parable claimed to be the bidden and honored guests, while yet they did not esteem the supper, nor honor the king, so all through the time since, the same dispositions have existed in the same class of men. These claimed to be invited, and had no relish for the feast, but those in the streets, lanes, highways and hedges, were not invited, and did not suppose that they had any right to the feast, if indeed they ever heard of it, until the compelling power of gospel truth brought them in, where they did not feel worthy to be. It is still true that those who make great claims do not enter the feast, and really have no relish for it, and love other things better, while those who feel that they have no right there, are those who desire it, because they are poor and needy and hungry, and these are compelled to come in at the bidding of the Master. It is all a matter of experience and feeling. It is true to-day, as then, that if any man feel poor, lame, halt and blind, to him is the assurance given, that all this gospel feast is for him, and unworthy though he may and must feel, yet he is brought in, and thus the house of God is full.

We do not think that the first ones who were bidden, who began to make excuses, were intended to represent the Jews, and the last who were compelled to come in, the Gentiles; because some Jews did come in, and many Gentiles did not come. In the parable all of the one class did not come, and all of the other class did come, and in the understanding which we have of the application of the parable, the same is true now. All of the one class do not come, and love other things better, while all of the other class do come, and find rest, and a full supply for their need. As said before, this dividing line is still being drawn; still, some are making excuses, and some are compelled to come in. The first are left to their own choice, the second really have their choice also, although they are compelled to come in; to each man is given that which he chooses.

It is so still in the kingdom of God, but the choice of the former, who made excuses, could not have been different, unless they themselves had first been made different, and the choice of the latter also could not have been different, unless they themselves had been different. Our choice proceeds out of ourselves, and proves what sort of men we are; our choice is always decided by what we are, and before any of us will choose God and righteousness, we must have had a miracle of grace wrought in our hearts; before we can choose spiritual things we must become spiritual men.

It seems evident that those who made excuses were religious characters. This is implied in the words with which the parable opens. He sent his servants to call them that had been bidden, but the call was nothing to them; they felt that the king would have been honored by their presence; they sought their own advantage, instead of his glory; they would exalt themselves, instead of the king; they thought more of themselves than they did of the king. This is the very spirit of all worldly religion; men whose hearts are filled with this religion do not recognize any obligation to serve God only as their own interests may be affected by it; they would therefore make a bargain with the Almighty, and say we have only what we have earned and deserved. Here was a gift of a feast; they despise a gift from God; we will not come as beggars, they say, we pay our own way, we will receive nothing except on the ground that it is the profit of our own labor. Here are the products of our own labor, a farm, oxen, a wife; here are the evidences of our merit. In the feast which the king has provided there is no reward for us, but simply the bounty of the king; no one in that feast is honored more than another, and the king is honored alone; with this we will have nothing to do. Shall we sit down with the beggar, with the poor and lame, and the dwellers in the streets and lanes, and highways and hedges, as though we are no better than they? Here is no room for any high seats; it is too humiliating, we are not like others, even these poor publicans, we can gaze with self-complacency upon the farm, the oxen, and the wife which we have married, because they testify to our industry and diligence and business ability. In the feast of the king we see nothing but the bounty of the king, and this is to all alike; we want high seats, we want rewards of merit, we desire it to be understood that we are more obedient than others, and therefore have a higher seat. This is the spirit of all worldly and fleshly religion; it is the spirit of the flesh in God's own people. It is as natural as it is to breathe, for us all to think that because we live better than others, therefore we are better and shall have more than they. But the Savior will put the seal of condemnation upon all this, he will cast out of his kingdom all things that offend, and we know of nothing more offensive in his kingdom than this very spirit of boasting and vain glorying. He will have his disciple to know that all the blessings of his kingdom are free, and that not the righteous but the sinful, the poor, lame, halt and blind, are the favored guests there. Now among these there can be no rivalry, unless it be indeed the rivalry of seeing who shall praise the free bounty of the king the most. Not one in all this miserable company deserved anything at the hand of the king, and not one expected anything from his hand.

The question may occur to the minds of those who read this parable, What is

the difference between those in the streets and lanes, and those in the highways and hedges? We do not think that Jews and Gentiles are signified here. There are those of both classes, as it seems to us, among both Jews and Gentiles, nationally. It has seemed to us that the chief design of this part of the parable is to set forth the exceeding and far reaching mercy of the king. There are those who feel to be the furthest off of any; his grace can reach to even these. At times, all feel to be outside cases, but the parable says to them that no case is too far away for his arm of mercy to reach, he can reach a Saul of Tarsus, or a thief on the cross, he brings the very poorest, and vilest, and ignorant, as freely and as sovereignly as the most moral and upright. The motley crew of outlaws who came to David at the cave Adullam, are fit representatives of the characters named in the parable, not one had any claim, not one could be of any profit in the kingdom, by any natural powers that they possessed, they were not only in the streets and lanes, and in the highways and hedges, but they were lame, and halt, and poor, and blind, they not only must receive all as a mercy, but they never could render any payment, they could not be profitable to him. It was pure grace that brought them to the feast, and it was pure grace that feasted them after they were gathered. All that they could ever do would be to receive his bounty, and still be dependent for more. So long as the feast should last, grace all the work would crown, and they, with ever increasing wonder and joy, must ever confess it to be so. Far off from God, they are brought nigh; destitute, they are fed and clothed. No case is so far off, nor so destitute, nor so lame, nor blind, that his mercy cannot reach them. It seems to us that this is what is specially taught by including those in the highways and hedges, as well as those in the streets and lanes.

The gathering is brought about by the sweetness of the gospel news. In preaching the word of life, they who are outcasts of Israel, hear that which is just suited to their need, and are sweetly drawn to it. The message is for the poor, and the lame, and the blind. This is the announcement of all who really preach the gospel, and the message in itself commends itself to such ones as these. The preaching describes the characters who have a right to the tree of life, and the Spirit applies it with comfort to the soul, and then that one who lay in the lane, or street, or who wandered in the highways, or lay down under the hedges, is found, and finds himself, with sweet and glad surprise, at the table in the palace of the King. No journey measured by earthly miles has been taken, and yet a journey has been gone over, from the blackness of despair and a condition without hope, into the light of good hope, and into the joys of the Lord. It is with such souls as was with the disciples, who after a long night of toiling, at a word from the Master, immediately find themselves at the port, whither they went. No toiling now, but rest has been given, and with it, all the blessings of the new covenant of grace. When this message comes to any, at once they are at the table. The Lord has spread it before them in the very presence of their enemies, and now they fill the house. Not one who really desired the heavenly feast is left out, and not one who desired it not is forced in. How free is the place; what liberty do these chosen ones enjoy; all the hungry are fed, all the lost are found, all the poor are made rich, all the lame are made well, all the blind

see, and the desire of each poor, seeking soul is satisfied. "We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple." They are where they with great desire wanted to be, but still they could not have believed in such mercy to sinners such as they. How wonderful it all is, every joy he sends or gives, comes as a sweet and glad surprise. I am not worthy, must be the first thought in every such heart, whenever any blessing from the Lord is experienced.

But how about the compelling them to come in? It is the command of the Master of the feast, "Compel them to come in." How sweetly all this appeals to all christian experience, when understood. In the first place, here is the word of a King; it is the word of a kind, loving and compassionate King. To his loved ones he always speaks with power, and in the preaching of the word, by his servants, there is to the needy heart, a wondrous power. This is not in the servant who preaches the glad tidings, but in the glad tidings themselves. The gospel itself, is the power of God unto salvation to all that believe. This is so, because the word of a king is in it. So, in the parable, the word compel is used as the word of one having authority, but in the gospel, the compulsion is not that one is forced in, who is not willing, this is the false conclusion, drawn by those who neither know the grace of God, nor feel their need of it. They say, "You preach that God saves men against their will," but it is not so, this compulsion is the power that brings the soul into the very place where he longs with great longing to be, but where he feels that he must not come, because he is so sinful and unworthy. Our own poverty, blindness and lameness, would always hinder us from daring to claim any place in the feast, and because of these things we draw back, while yet we desire nothing so much as to come. Now the word of the Master of the feast goes sweetly forth, and overcomes our fears, and brings us in. What a sweet compelling! Compelled to go where we want to go, compelled to stay where we want to stay, compelled to eat and drink just what we desire and must have, to satisfy our hunger. Here is a people made willing in the day of God's power, and now brought in according to God's will, and now according to their own will also. This is the wonderful working of that God who saves his people, and they shall confess that mighty grace has won their hearts, and made them come. So in every christian experience the words are realized, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God, that showeth mercy." In the parable, those who willed, and did their own will, came not to the feast, but those upon whom mercy was shown, receive it according to God's will, and God's work was, in them, glorified.

We have but suggested some special things which have seemed to us to be set forth in the parable. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE next editorial in order, of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, is dated July 1st, 1857, and is an account of a trip attending associations and other meetings, including his first visit to the brethren of the Covenanted Baptists of Canada, but as it was of transient interest we omit publishing it, but our readers may expect a continuance of these editorials in the order in which they were originally published.

[THE following is the "Introductory" to the article written by Elder David Bartley on "The Priesthood of the Son of God," to be published in book form. A notice of which will be found on last page of cover of this number.—ED.]

THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD.

INTRODUCTION.

"JESUS THE CHRIST" is as well the High Priest of all the true worshipers of the true and living God as he is their Prophet and King, and his priesthood is absolutely essential to his success in his prophetic and kingly offices. As their Prophet, he must open their blind eyes, turn them from darkness to light, and make them wise unto salvation; and as their King, he shall reign over them in righteousness; but he does both only because he has made reconciliation for their sins, and thus brings them nigh unto God as the holy people. And so God has said to his holy Son, "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water."—Zech. ix. 11. The blood of his covenant belongs to his priestly office; therefore without the shedding of his blood their sins could not have been remitted, but his prisoners must have remained in the prison-house, the pit of iniquity, and perished in their sins, as guilty, and separated from God and holiness. So the streams of mercy, the wells of salvation, and the river of life flow out from the smitten Rock, "the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus," to all who worship God the Father in spirit and in truth.

Thus may be seen the great and vital necessity of the abiding priesthood of the holy Son of God, and the deep importance to us of a true understanding of it, as the Holy Spirit has revealed it in the Scriptures, which are able to make the spiritual and true worshipers wise unto salvation. This divinely given and gracious knowledge is essential to our comfort and peace, and to the establishment of our hearts in the full assurance of faith and hope in Jesus, who is our salvation.

In view of all this my mind has been long exercised about the sacred work of writing upon this heavenly and sublime theme, as a work of faith and a labor of love, if our divine Prophet will graciously open my understanding in the Scriptures, and give me a commandment to write "the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ;" for without this preparation and unction from the holy One the attempt must be futile, but with it the labor will be made a blessing to the household of God, and to all who may read it who feel too sinful to draw near unto him, and know not how to order their cause before him, yet desire to find favor and acceptance with him.

To me it has been a surprise or wonder that the priesthood of Christ has been so little dwelt upon by the able ministers of the New Testament, either in preaching or writing; for in my extended ministry of forty-five years, having heard thousands of sermons, very many of them good gospel sermons, yet in none of them was there more than an incidental allusion to our Lord's priesthood; neither has it been my privilege to read but little upon it from the pens of our ready writers, with the exception of an able editorial by our beloved Elder Gilbert Beebe, which was recently republished in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. My spirit has yearned for a more perfect understanding of this glorious mystery of the acceptance with God of a sinful people as spotless and holy. For this underlies the entire work of salvation, and

without it no sinful being could be sanctified unto the acceptable service of the blessed and Holy Father, nor worship him in the beauty of holiness; for without holiness no one shall see the Lord.

It will not be regarded, therefore, as either needless or presumptuous that now at last, though late in life, my seeking spirit is led to enter into an investigation of the eternal priesthood of the beloved and holy Son of God. Yet it is with profound reverence, fear and trembling that I approach upon this holy ground, and write of those things "which the angels desire to look into." For the subject includes the fearful temptation in the wilderness, the infinite suffering in the garden, and the awful scene on Calvary. It leads us down to the mournful sepulcher, where they laid the crucified Son of man, "a man of sorrows," thence up to the peaceful Olivet, where stood the Living Son of God! and still up and away into the glory of "the world to come," the blessed realm of immortality, the eternal home of the Father Almighty, who is love. O how may one so low rise to a theme so lofty and divine!

It is cause for abounding gratitude to God that, though the priesthood of Christ has not received very special attention from the ministry of our own time, yet in the book of remembrance that was written before the Lord for them that fear him, and them that think upon his name, he has given us the Hebrew epistle, which is largely devoted to the priesthood of our great High Priest, in contrast with the typical Levitical priesthood of Aaron, who stood at the head of that priesthood as the first high priest. Therefore in entering upon this solemnly wonderful part of revealed truth, it will be in order to first briefly consider the priesthood of Aaron under the old covenant, the dispensation of the law given upon Sinai, before specially dwelling upon the priesthood of Christ under the new and better testament, established upon Sion the mountain of God's holiness, and upon better promises. God himself has, in his infinite wisdom and purpose, given to his people the dispensation of the law and its ministration first, to convince us of the absolute necessity of a better and perfect way, and to prepare us for it, unto the end that we may offer unto him an offering in righteousness, by faith in Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant.

May the Spirit of revelation and truth guide both the writer and reader, in this humble effort to look into the everlasting priesthood of our Lord.

NOTICES.

LOCATION DESIRED.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I desire to form a law partnership with an attorney of the Primitive Baptist faith, at some place reasonably accessible to weekly or monthly meetings of the church. I am thirty-three years old, married, and have been at the bar eleven years. During this time I have also written and published the following law works: a "Guide Manual for Magistrates and Attorneys" (816 pages); an "Annotaled Pocket Code of Virginia" (513 pages, minion type,) lawyers' edition, and an "Annotaled Digest of the Supreme Court Decisions of Virginia" (to be complete in seven volumes of 875 pages each), which books are in general use among the profession of the two Virginias (except the Code, which is limited to this State). My membership is with the brethren at Bethel church, (Radford Furnace, or Allisonia, Va.,) to whom (and the attorneys and business men at my address below) I refer. Or, I would be pleased to correspond with some brethren as to locating among them as an attorney, regardless of partnership. I fervently desire the sweet fellowship of the saints.

With gospel greetings,

SAM. N. HURST.

PULASKI CITY, Virginia.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at his residence, Hopewell, N. J., on Wednesday evening, March 14th, 1900, Nelson L. Smith, of Pennington, and Georgia B. Hoagland, of Hopewell.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, Feb. 21st, 1900, at the residence of David Harkless, in the city of Columbus, Charles Rauch and Miss Ida R. Walter, both of Columbus Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

William Waller Mooney, the eldest son of Edmund and Mary Mooney, was born in Woodford Co., Ky., May 7th, 1819, and, after a brief sickness, in which he was conscious to the last, he peacefully fell asleep in Jesus, "the Resurrection, and the life," at 2:20 p. m., March 7th, 1900, at his home in the city of Columbus, Indiana, at the ripe age of 81 years, lacking 2 months, where he had resided a great many years. His beloved wife was called away to the spirit world two years before him. Their three sons, Edmund, Thomas and William, and three daughters, Mrs. Lizzie Keyes, Mrs. Mary Montgomery and Mrs. Nannie Weiser, and his remaining brother, James Edmund, of Cincinnati, with a very large attendance of other relatives and sympathizing friends, were present at the funeral. But his only remaining sister, Mrs. Sophia Lewis, of Decatur, Ala., could not be present. These all sorrow for their own great loss, but not for their beloved one, who has gone from the land of the dying to the land of the living, to abide forever in the perfect home immortal.

Brother Mooney had never united with the church visible, their being no Old School Baptist church near his home, and also feeling his own unworthiness of so sacred a profession; yet in heart he was a true believer in Christ, and was deeply experienced in the rich mercy and saving grace of God. Many years ago, when visiting him, he freely and feelingly related to me his christian experience, and his faith and hope in the precious Savior in whom alone he trusted for salvation. To him Christ was all in all. In this divine and saving faith and hope and love he ever abided firm and steadfast, meek and trusting, God-fearing and reverential, until the Master came and called for him, and he was ready to go. So the faith that was in his father and mother, and was their solace in life and death, and also in his grandmother and mine, the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us, was as well his support and comfort. In this faith and trust in Jesus he calmly waited until he was gathered unto our fathers, as a full ripe sheaf ready for the heavenly harvest. Even in his boyhood and youth, when our parents lived within calling distance, William Mooney was always civil, sedate and moral, honest and reliable, and so remained through his long and useful life. Added to all this, the grace and love of God in his heart, and the faith of Christ in his soul, made his life and old age an ornament and a benediction, and his death blessed, for he died in the Lord, and rests from his labors. He was a devoted reader of the Bible, and for a great many years of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. As a business man he was remarkably successful, and always upright and honorable, so that he and his three sons have built up in Columbus a large harness leather tannery. But his richest heritage, and the greatest honor and crown of glory to his old age, as a father, is his esteemed and noble family of children, all of whom are worthy of such a father, and they were tenderly devoted to him and his comfort. One of his widowed daughters, Mrs. Mary Montgomery, has long resided with her parents, and with faithful devotion she and her lovely young daughter comforted them until the Lord took them.

Funeral service was held at the family residence, at 2 p. m. Friday the 9th, at which it was my sorrowful privilege to speak some words of comfort to the bereaved family and large assemblage of sympathizing friends, in which I was comfortingly assisted by Mr. Hood, the Presbyterian minister of the city. Never have I witnessed greater respect shown by the people in general at the funeral of a private citizen. The very large company of employees filed in and took a tender look at the noble and peaceful form of their beloved employer, many with tearful eyes, then they all formed in line and marched at the head of the long funeral procession to the city cemetery, where the sleeping form was gently laid to rest, reconciliation to the Father's will and his benediction invoked, and with chastened sorrow all turned back to again take up the burdens of mortal life, until we too shall be called to rest from our labors.

D. BARTLEY.

IT becomes our painful duty to prepare for the SIGNS the obituary of **Mrs. Catherine E. Hill,** wife of J. Britton Hill, who died at her home in Hopewell, N. J., March 17th, 1899, aged about 56 years. She was married to brother Hill about 1862, by Elder Hartwell. She was baptized by Elder Hartwell about twenty-five years ago, into the fellowship of the church in Hopewell. For many years she was one of the most active members in the church, ready to take her part in all that concerned the interests of the church. There never was one who possessed a more cheerful spirit, and who was more willing to spend and be spent in the service of the Redeemer whom she loved. About eight years ago she began to be afflicted with rheumatism, and this gradually extended its ravages until she became perfectly helpless, in which condition she remained for perhaps five years before death came to her relief. How many that have visited their home in Hopewell, have wondered at the unfailingly cheerful countenance of sister Hill. Great grace was manifest in her all the days of her membership in the church. Her whole walk was sober and orderly in the sight of her brethren, and in the sight of all men. Though of a cheerful disposition, and loving the society of her friends, yet she had no place for unseemly mirth, or for such worldly pleasures as are unbecoming the believer in Christ. Grace had wrought in her a higher life, and caused her to rejoice in higher pleasures. This was true in the days of her active life. When disease had laid his hand upon her she

was enabled still to magnify the grace of God by patience and unfaltering submission to the will of God. We felt that she glorified God while helpless, even more than in the time of her active usefulness. She could not get out to her meeting, and often it was her wish to have preaching at her home, which wish was often gratified. Though saying little, yet it was manifest how much she rejoiced in these seasons, and we all felt glad to be with her at such times. She failed rapidly during the last few months of her life, and suffered greatly. Near the last she longed to go home, and wished for the hour of discharge to come.

She was interred in the yard adjoining the house of worship at Hopewell, and services were held at the meeting-house. It was our privilege, though a sorrowful one, to speak upon the occasion as best we could, for the comfort of the friends. She left a kind and devoted husband, four sons, two sisters, and many other friends and relatives, to mourn their loss.

ALSO,

OUR brother, **J. Britton Hill,** the husband of the above, died Feb. 2d, 1900, aged about 63 years. Unlike his dear companion, this dear brother passed away instantly, while at his work in Trenton, in the factory of his son, falling dead in the presence of his son and others, without a struggle or a groan, as it is supposed, from heart disease. This death was a terrible shock to the whole community. He had seemingly been in perfect health, and had said to us several times of late, that he had never been better in health in his life. He was baptized by Elder Hartwell about thirty years ago, in the fellowship of the Hopewell church, and had all his life been one of those who were evidently united with the church in heart as well as by profession. He was a lover of sound doctrine, and of good men. He believed in salvation by grace, and also the necessity of maintaining good works for necessary uses. He for a number of years was the treasurer of the church, and from time he was chosen to fill public offices, by the community. No man, as a man, ever commanded the respect of all who knew him more than did he. He was a real help to his brethren and his pastor. Grace wrought all this in him, and he loved to magnify grace, but like all who love to praise the grace of God, he had a very humble opinion of himself. Very often have we heard him bemoan his own unprofitableness. Like the Roman centurion, he said, "I am not worthy," but as was said of the same centurion, so it was said of him by others, "He is worthy." His steadfastness to what he believed was his duty was manifest among us. During all the years of care and loss of rest, caused by the long illness of his dear companion, no one ever heard a murmuring word from his lips, nor ever saw any diminution in the devotion with which he cared for her. A noble man has fallen asleep in Jesus.

The funeral service was held in the Hopewell meeting-house, and a very large concourse of friends testified to the respect and grief of the community. Two brothers and one sister survive him, all older than he. All of us mourn greatly, and feel that we shall continue to miss him more and more. We subjoin some extracts from a letter written by him to his niece a short time ago, which is expressive of what appeared in his daily life at all times. He wrote as follows:

"My dear niece and sister in Christ, I have been thinking so much about you for the past week or two that I have concluded to pen you a few lines to let you know that I have not forgotten you, though I have not been down to see you. I have been very lonely this summer, like the sparrow on the housetop, but I must not murmur nor complain, but rather be thankful for the blessings that I am permitted to enjoy. I enjoy going to the meeting on Sundays, but so much of the time it is like the seed that fell by the wayside, or on stony ground, which brings forth no fruit. I feel to be so lifeless spiritually that I am made to question whether I ever had any life. At times I do feel to exclaim, 'O, that it were with me as in days past, when the candle of the Lord shone round about me.' Some of the happiest periods of my life have been when I was alone in the field meditating upon the way in which I had been led, or when I had some portion of Scripture opened up to my understanding; then I could shed tears of joy, and did not feel lonely. When I have been so low in the valley, and had no hope, I have been led to remember the wormwood and the gall. For a starting point, away back yonder in my teens, I passed a period of about three years under a load of sin, and without hope, and justly convicted. At times I had so much trouble that I despaired of life, but at an unexpected time, when in the field ploughing, this load was taken away, and joy, praise and love, beyond description, was given me in its place. But like Thomas, I soon doubted, and have been doubting and hoping ever since. In those days I enjoyed going to meeting. There are many things which come up in my mind in connection with those things, that I have not time nor space to tell, and they would not be interesting to you, as they are to me to meditate upon. Respectfully,

J. BRITTON HILL."

The above extracts speak for themselves; they tell the daily experience of the children of God. And the more upright in desire and manner of life the children of God are, the more will they feel, as did brother Hill, how far short they come, and the more will they wonder at any blessing from God which may come to them. The nearer one is brought to love to God, the more he will feel his distance from him. This seems a paradox, but it is true. Brother Hill lived in that way.

C.

DIED—March 4th, 1900, **Mary**, daughter of Robert and Lucinda **Anderson**, was born Jan. 20th, 1835, in Fulton Co., Ill., came with her parents to Iowa, Nov., 1853, was married to Thompson Bridges, April 2, 1854. To them were born eleven children, seven of whom are living, and were present at her death, with her aged husband and her youngest sister. She had been a great sufferer for four years with bronchial difficulty, and the last sixteen months was confined to her bed. On the second Sunday in March, 1868, she, with her husband, united with the Regular Predestinarian Baptist church called Little Flock, in Marion Co., Iowa, and was baptized by Elder J. A. Whitley. She lived a consistent christian life, and died in the full triumph of a living faith. She was perfectly resigned to the will of her heavenly Father, who works all things after the counsel of his own will.

Elder J. M. Arledge preached the funeral discourse from Job xix. 25, 26. She chose the hymns to be sung: "My latest sun is sinking fast," and, "My days are gliding swiftly by."

May the Lord bless and comfort the aged husband in his sad bereavement. Her daughter,

Z. I. JONES.

DIED—Jan. 29th, 1899, at her home in the village of Roxbury, N. Y., my dear sister, **Laura M. Underwood**, daughter of Oliver Underwood, who was one of the pioneer physicians of Delaware Co., N. Y. She was born Dec. 18th, 1815. From early youth she had enjoyed a hope in Christ, and for nearly half a century had been a consistent member of the Roxbury Baptist church. The Bible was her constant companion, and her love for the people of God, and for spiritual things, was such that she would often rise from her bed at night to read the letters of the dear brethren and sisters written to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. During her last sickness, when almost unconscious of earthly surroundings, she praised God for his goodness, and quietly passed from earth saying, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name." She was one of thirteen children, of whom the writer of this is the only one living.

On Feb. 1st, we laid her body to rest in the burial ground of the Baptist church, beside the friends whom she had loved so well.

LUCY A. HUMPHREY.

ROXBURY, N. Y., March 10, 1900.

DIED—At her home in Leadville, Col., Dec. 9th, 1899, sister **Elma M. E. Clark.** She was born March 16th, 1866. She was received into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist church at Scottscreek, Hocking Co., Ohio, May 18th, 1884, and baptized by Elder G. N. Tusing, to which faith she remained a worthy and consistent member until death. In her last sickness her daily prayer was, "Lord, not my will, but thine be done," repeating, "I am ready when my Lord and Master calls me." She was united in marriage to Lewis H. McClosky, of Leadville, Colo., Sept., 1890. One daughter, Dorothy, was born to gladden their hearts. Husband and daughter survive her.

Her remains were interred in the Leadville Cemetery, Colo., to await the coming of him who was her hope and her resurrection to come.

By her pastor,

G. N. TUSING.

DIED—Feb. 9th, 1900, **Mrs. Sallie Every**, widow of brother Jacob Every. She was born in Ulster Co., and was baptized by the late Elder Isaac Hewitt. She lacked but fourteen days of being 88 years old. Sister Every lived and died strong in the faith of the Old School Baptists. She was a reader of the SIGNS for more than forty years, and was a member of the Primitive Baptist church for nearly the same length of time.

At her funeral Elders Clark and Sanford spoke words of comfort from the text selected by sister Every to be used at her funeral, which reads, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," after which the hymn was sung, "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep." We believe her blessed Jesus called, "Child come home!" and we feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

MRS. N. B. CRESPELL.

DIED—At her home, Jan. 5th, 1900, **Mrs. Nancy C. Long** (nee Coberly). She was taken very suddenly, and was sick only two or three days. Her death was a great shock to all her friends. She leaves a husband, one daughter, a baby boy, (her elder son died four years ago) a mother and brother, to mourn their loss, but we feel our loss is her eternal gain. She told me that she thought she had a hope. Dearest daughter thou hast left us, and none but God can heal our wound.

Her mother,

MARY FURGUSON.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist church called Sidling Hill, situated in Fulton Co., Pa., will hold a three days meeting, if the Lord will, to commence on Friday before the first Sunday in May, 1900. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

Those coming by railroad will come on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to Hancock, Md., and cross over the bridge to the Hancock side. Come on Thursday, as early in the day as possible; conveyances will be there by the middle of the day; distance twenty miles to place of meeting.

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SILAS H. DURAND.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1900. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE TRUTH OF THINGS.

To find out the truth of things should be the object in all conference and argument. Most especially should this be our object in the discussion of scriptural subjects. What do the Scriptures teach concerning the subject under consideration? To discover this should be our object in all our research and conference.

At quite an early age I became deeply interested in the doctrine of election and of predestination, and had much conversation and correspondence upon these subjects with friends of various denominations. I observed then that those who opposed these points of doctrine did not give scriptural testimony as their primary reason for not believing them, but their own judgment that "the Lord would not do that way." Almost invariably the inconsistency of these doctrines with what they understood to be right and good and wise, would be the first thing presented, and then would follow the argument that God is wise, and good, and will do right, and therefore he would not elect some unto salvation and leave others to perish in sin; that he would not predestinate anything beforehand, and thus fix it unchangeably, and especially that he would not predestinate the existence or performance of anything wicked. With their minds thus settled as to what would and what would not be right for the Lord to do, they would come to the Scriptures, not to find out what they do teach, and so establish their belief upon that sure testimony, but to seek for something to support them in their own preconceived ideas and natural judgment concerning the Lord.

Of course with this determined end in view in appealing to the Scriptures, the word of God could not be handled truthfully even by those who are honest as natural men, for the wisdom of the world is utterly opposed to the truth of God, and "the carnal mind is enmity against him, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." So with this mind acting according to the dictates of earthly wisdom, the word of God must be handled deceitfully.

At that time I could not claim a hope, but I was deeply concerned, and the Scriptures were of the utmost importance to me. What they actually taught was what I wanted to know, not what men

thought they ought to teach, and I would often call the attention of my friends to their careless, inattentive way of dealing with the words of inspiration, and how wrong and injurious it seemed to me to try to avoid, or cover up, or misconstrue, the plain statements found therein, which, in clear, distinct and unmistakable terms declared the doctrine they opposed. Sometimes a sentence would be taken from its place, and a different meaning would be attached to it from that which it would plainly express when read in the connection where it belongs. Sometimes a word would be omitted or exchanged for another, which would materially affect the meaning. Once, after I had received a hope, and was a member of the Old Baptist church, but before I thought I would have to preach, in conversation with a highly valued friend, a Methodist preacher, and a man of superior mental powers and thorough learning, I repeated to him the words of Paul to Timothy: "Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." He replied with some vexation of manner, "It don't mean so. If I thought it meant so I would not believe the Bible."

Those who have been born of God have still a carnal or fleshly mind which is contrary to the Spirit, contrary to the ways and teachings of the Lord, and which can only be brought "into captivity to the obedience of Christ," by the mighty, spiritual weapons of our warfare. (2 Cor. x. 5; Gal. v. 17; Romans viii. 6, 7.) This mind, which is opposed to the ways of God, is the source of great trouble and sorrow to the Lord's people, causing them to feel often unreconciled to his dealings with them, and often rising up in opposition to his works and ways. What terrible seasons of darkness and affliction are often upon our souls because of this rebellious nature of ours. We have to cry with David, "My soul cleaveth to the dust: quicken thou me according to thy word." Indeed, there is no living soul but that sometimes feels the wearing effects of this warfare between the flesh and Spirit, and what great need there is to watch and pray on account of that heart which "is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked."

This natural mind of the saints would lead them away from the simplicity of the gospel, and away from the doctrine which the world hates, if it were not for the great tribulations and the fiery trials which the Lord brings us through from time to time, in order to keep us in his truth. That doctrine of the gospel which the world most hates, the doctrine of God's electing love and predestinating power, of his absolute sovereignty, his omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence, is that which in our extremity becomes our only refuge, and shows us our only hope of salvation.

It is evidence of this carnal mind when the saints take the same course in opposing any plain expression of Scripture which those take who give no evidence of an experience of grace. I have noticed this same manner of argument I have spoken of in some, if not most, of those who write against the doctrine of the predestination of all things. The main consideration relied upon by most of those I have talked with and read after, who oppose this doctrine, is that it is contrary to their idea of the character of God as a good and holy being. This is always brought forward as a first ground of opposing it, and then it follows that as a matter of course it is not taught in the

Bible; that those Scriptures which appear to teach it must mean something else. How much time is occupied in writing, and in conversation, in showing why the Lord would not predestinate evil or wicked things; in multiplying cases of terrible crime and atrocity, and then asking, "Do you mean to say that the Lord would predestinate such a thing as that? Of course not, and therefore you must be mistaken in thinking it is taught in the Bible." Over and over again the natural feelings are appealed to by such descriptions, the wisdom of the world is referred to as bitterly opposed to such a thought, while hardly a reference will be made to the Bible, and no attempt to explain those plain Scriptures which declare the doctrine, except to say, "It don't mean so;" "Why, that would make God the author of sin." "Do you really think that God would predestinate the doing of a wicked act, and then punish the one who does it? Of course he would not." "Why, if the Lord purposes the doing of a thing, then he is the doer of it." Again and again will such things be repeated to the poor soul who just simply wants to "hear what God the Lord hath spoken," and does not value in the least the wisdom and judgment of men when it is, even apparently, in opposition to the inspired Scriptures of truth.

To such an inquirer it is sometimes said, "Of course the Lord knew everything from the beginning, and he decreed to permit sin and wickedness to be in the world, and he overrules it for good." Others will not allow this, because they will not allow that wicked things can work for good. By most of those who argue against this doctrine it is implied, if not stated, that the existence of evil and sinful things was contrary to the desire or mind of the Lord. And curious and very various ideas are given as to how and why things could be that the Lord did not intend or desire should be. And all this time there is this inquiring soul, who has a feeling of solemn reverence for the Lord and for his written word, waiting to hear it explained how the Lord should create the world without a purpose, or how that purpose should not embrace everything, or how things should take place that he did not purpose, or how a purpose to permit a thing would not be just as much a purpose concerning it as though it were directly decreed.

I will here repeat a few of those Scriptures which, when it is insisted that they must be noticed, are replied to in effect by saying, "They don't mean so; there must be some other explanation of them." "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up."—Romans ix. 17; Exodus ix. 16. "The Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy prophets." —1 Kings xxii. 23. "So let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David."—2 Sam. xvi. 10, 11. "The king [Solomon] said moreover to Shimei, Thou knowest all the wickedness which thy heart is privy to, which thou didst to David my father: therefore the Lord shall return thy wickedness upon thine own head."—1 Kings ii. 44. "And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them, to say, Go number Israel and Judah."—2 Sam. xxiv. 1. "And David spake and said unto the Lord, Lo! I have sinned, and I have done wickedly."—2 Sam. xxiv. 17. (In 1 Chron. xxi. 1, it is stated that Satan provoked David to do this; yet it was of the Lord. So Job's afflictions came by the hand of Satan, but it was by the Lord's word that Satan did the evil to him, and Job recognizes only the

Ezek. 32 Jer. 32-42
" 33 " 33-5
" 31-16

Lord's hand in it. Job ii. 10.) "The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Prov. xvi. 4. "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done; saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isaiah xlvi. 9, 10. "I have created the waster to destroy."—Isaiah liv. 16. "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above."—John xix. 11. "And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto they also were appointed."—1 Peter ii. 8. "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation."—Jude 4.

These and many other like things are in the Bible, and though they are too deep and profound for us to understand, we must not receive a doctrine that denies them. They show us that our God is a God of purpose, and that he does not allow men to try him and his ways by their wisdom..

Many, even of those who are naturally candid and honest, when opposing this doctrine of the predestination of all things, will seem to try to present it in the form most offensive to the natural mind, and in a way calculated to stir up the natural feelings against it. They will often use terms and expressions in speaking of our belief, and even when professing to quote from us, which we do not ourselves use, nor acknowledge as expressing our belief. Some will assert, and some will only imply, that we believe and teach that God compells men to sin; that he holds the same attitude toward sin as toward holiness; that he is the efficient cause of sin; that he is the author of all the wickedness in the world; that those who transgress can and do say, "I am not to blame, it was predestinated that I should do it, and I could not help it;" and some have in ridicule spoken of those to whom they falsely ascribe such a belief as the "Can't Help Its." These, however, are of those to whom coarse, low, harsh and offensive language comes naturally. I do not make account of them.

But I am thinking of those men who are of sober mind, who feel something of the solemnity of the subject, and desire to treat it in a becoming manner, and to deal fairly and honestly with those whose belief they oppose. I am sorry to find such men insisting on a belief for us that we do not have. They draw conclusions such as I have stated above from the doctrine, and then insist that we must adopt them, which we will not do, for they are not just conclusions.

In opposing a doctrine so clearly presented in the Bible as is the predestination of all things, there is danger, even on the part of men naturally fair and honest, of yielding to the temptation to handle a portion of the word deceitfully in order to *appear* to prove a point. One writer asserts that God did not predestinate war, and refers for proof to James iv. 1: "From whence come wars and fightings?" and then says that the apostle does not answer that they come from the decrees of God, but, "Come they not hence from your lusts which war in your members?" Now why did this writer fail to quote the proof text *in full?* "From whence come wars and fightings *among you?*" If asked directly, he would have said that the apostle was talking to the church of God, and was referring to the dissensions which often take place among them, and that he had no refer-

ence to the conflicts of armies in the fields of battle, in which human life is sought to be destroyed. He would have said that the apostle did not mean that the brethren were engaged in physical conflict, wounding and killing each other.

This writer describes the terrible and cruel consequences of war, and the kind and merciful character of the Lord, and then expresses wonder that any one should entertain the thought that he would decree that there should be wars, when they cause destruction of life, which, he says, is in opposition to God's holy character, and cannot be harmonized with any of his attributes. But he makes no reference to the terrible wars in the land of Canaan, in which the *man* who appeared to Joshua was the Captain of the Lord's hosts, and in which whole cities and nations, men, women and children, were put to the sword by the command of God. It is in many places declared that these wars were of God, as in 1 Chron. v. 22: "And there fell down many slain, because the war was of God." Also the Lord brought other nations against Israel to fight, and carry them into captivity. (1 Chron. v. 26; Isa. lvi. 11.) Also wars between other nations were of God. The Lord sent the blast of war upon the king of Assyria, and he had to fight the king of Ethiopia, and so Rabshakeh was recalled from Hezekiah. (Isa. xxxvi. 7, 9.) "The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth over it the basest of men."—Dan. iv. 17.

The Lord's ways are so wonderful, so unsearchable and past finding out, that we may well be silent before him, and hear what he says of himself. Our ways are not his ways, neither are his thoughts our thoughts. (Isa. lv. 8.) We can only know of his ways by his own words. He cannot sin, nor be the author or doer of sin, whatever he may do. What he does we know to be infinitely wise and right in him, because he does it. We have no other criterion by which to judge of what is right and wise in him to do, but what he has declared he has done. And his command to any man is the only criterion by which to judge of what is right or wrong for that man to do.

Those who try to influence the minds of men by specious arguments should remember that living souls, who are hungering for the truth, cannot be put off with less than the real truth of God's word. They need for food every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. They cannot be satisfied to hear of a God who is limited. If the evils, the darkness, the wicked things, the wiles of Satan, the wastings of the waster, which arise in such awful variety in the world, are not embraced in God's purpose, but exist against his will, and contrary to his intention, then what an awful, despairing condition we would be in. "But our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased." "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deep places." We may trust in him and not be afraid. The wickedest of men and devils could not, and cannot, do anything but what "God's hand and counsel determined before to be done."

The London confession of faith says: "God hath decreed in himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever come to pass; yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin, nor hath fellowship with any therein; nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor yet is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken

away, but rather established, in which appears his wisdom in disposing all things, and power and faithfulness in accomplishing his decree." This is a very good expression of what I understand to be the truth concerning this subject. But there are some who say this is their belief, and yet who positively deny what is plainly expressed in the first part of this sentence. They say positively that they do not believe that God did decree from all eternity, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever come to pass. They seem to imply that this positive language in the confession of faith stands for nothing because the second part of the sentence was written. They appear to me to take it for granted that the second part being true the first part cannot be true; that in some way those men wrote the strong language of the first part, and then wrote the second part in order to deny what that language asserts. But we must give those men credit for honesty. They assert God's positive and eternal decree concerning all things, and they do not deny, nor in any degree weaken that assertion when they say that he is not the author of sin, nor does violence to the will of the creature. Instead of implying that the truth of the second part of the sentence contradicts or denies the truth of the first part, they say that this shows his wisdom, power and faithfulness in disposing all things and accomplishing his decree. Because we cannot understand how he can accomplish his decree concerning the wicked acts of wicked men, using them as his sword and his hand, and yet not be the author of sin, nor do violence to the will of the creature, we have no right or reason therefore to deny it. Why should any one insist that this article in the London confession of faith expresses his belief, and then deny that God has from all eternity decreed whatsoever comes to pass? Is it because he cannot understand how the Lord can have done that, and yet not be the author of sin? Why should he expect to understand God's ways, when they are past finding out?

That God predestinated whatsoever comes to pass, both good and evil, while he hates sin, presents a doctrine too profound for men to fathom and explain, but not too profound for the faith of God's people to receive, since the Bible teaches it. But that evil and sinful things occur contrary to the wish and purpose which the Lord had when he created the world, faith cannot receive, for then God would not be omnipotent nor all-wise. One wrote that it was not necessary for a thing to be certain in order that God should foreknow it. But that anything could be foreknown, the existence of which was uncertain, is simply a contradiction in terms.

The truth that God inhabits eternity, and that with him a thousand years are as one day, involves the truth of predestination.

Those who are born of God hate sin. It is by the Spirit of Christ within them that they hate sin. By the same Spirit they cry, Abba, Father. By the same Spirit they loathe themselves on account of sin; by the same Spirit they trust in the Lord to subdue their sins, and finally to bring them off conquerors. While they can never cease to hate sin, and deplore its power in them, they know that out of that terrible evil God has brought forth to them infinite good; that it is as redeemed sinners that they are enabled to sing praises unto God; that this new song is only put in the mouths of those who have been brought up out of the horrible pit of total depravity; that it is

only those who have had weeping and sorrow in this dark and fearful night of sin and death to whom that glorious morning shall come which brings eternal joy.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 14, 1900.

PINE GROVE, Ark., Jan. 8, 1900.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—I have been importuned by several of my correspondents who are readers of the SIGNS, to respond to them through its columns, but I feel my inability to write a comforting word, or to think a good thought of myself; and when I think of writing for publication, my nothingness and my great imperfection arise before me, and but for the forbearance of both editors and readers, I could not make the attempt. Except the Lord lead my mind, my attempt will be worthless. I am nothing but a poor sinner, yet I hope I am one that is saved by grace, and my whole trust is in the crucified and risen Redeemer; he is able to cleanse from all sin, and he is all my hope, and all my trust, and all my salvation; there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved.

Now, my dear brethren and sisters, if I were to tell you that I believed in a "conditional time salvation," you would be afraid of me, but I do believe that we all believe with Jonah, that "salvation is of the Lord." If we perform a good deed, or if we think a good thought, it is all of him, for he is our righteousness, our salvation and our redemption. But, dear brethren, though Joseph's brethren fulfilled the purpose of God in selling him into Egypt, they were none the less guilty. All I desire is to claim my own meanness, and I believe that you all feel the same. Dear ones, I have been disobedient and rebellious, I have been trying ever since I can remember to do right, and yet I have always done wrong, but one thing stood out before me when I did wrong, knowing it was wrong. I understood Primitive Baptists to preach that what we did or did not do made no difference, if we were to be saved we would be saved anyhow, and if we were to be lost what we did would not make the matter any worse. Have you understood them in this way? Now, not to excuse myself for my evil deeds, but just to show you how I did, under this thought, I will say that for years I had felt that I was not one embraced in the covenant of grace, and it seemed so plain to me that I thought all could see it; I felt that my parents looked upon me with sorrow, feeling that all the rest of their children were saved, and I lost; I believed that if they thought that I was a christian they would be satisfied, so I went to the church and told an experience, but the joys of which I spoke were false, and I knew it. I was received cordially, and for a few days I enjoyed my deceit, thinking that my parents were glad, and that they would love me as they did my brothers and sisters. Before the day set for my baptism my sin found me out, but I had begun it, and I resolved to go on through life acting the hypocrite; I expected to keep my secret, and bury it with me in the grave. When the time for the supper came in the church, Elder Thomas Peterson quoted, "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself." O, how mean I felt; I did not have to eat and drink this damnation, I was damned already. I left the house. So I lived until the church got into trouble, then I thought that the Lord was chastising them on my

account; I was the wolf that had scattered the sheep. No pen nor tongue can describe my sufferings, surely it was my just punishment. At last I told them to take my name from the church book, for I had deceived them. This only strengthened their confidence, for they said that they often felt the same.

One night I dreamed of a loom being at the church with the warp put in, and all the members must walk on that warp, and the wrong one would break through. I knew that I could not walk over it, but would fall through, and I wanted them to know that it was me. I felt that I could not bear it, but I walked over it, and fell through, and they excluded me, and then they were all in peace. After this dream it seemed that I would lose my reason. At last the church was brought into peace. After my frequent requests the church released me, but this brought no relief, except for the church. If they had turned me out, not at my request, but because they had no confidence in me, it seemed that this would have relieved my mind. I thought that they would soon see what I was; I would not go to meeting any more; I thought that I would show them that I had no interest in spiritual things, but when the meeting times came I could not stay away; I loved them and their preaching, and singing, and prayers. For six years I would not read my Bible, nor the SIGNS. I thought that I loved them because I was raised by Primitive Baptists, and that this was the cause of all the love that I had for them. I tried not to show my love, but somehow I could not help it, and how it grieved me. The harder I tried to throw these things away the closer they held me. The association was soon to be at Chapel Hill, and we were all preparing for company. I thought that I wanted them all to go somewhere else, but the night before the meeting arrived, and no one had come, and O, how I wanted to see them. My sister lived near us; I thought I would go over there and see if she had company. When I got there it seemed that the house was full; I could not turn back, I went in and shook hands with them, but I felt so mean; it seemed to me afterwards that I was a hypocrite. But I must pass on; I had company, and went to the meeting every day, and how good, pure and happy they all looked; I feared to join my voice in singing with such a people, lest the Lord should strike me down in his anger. On Monday, either just before I awoke or just after, I saw the same loom that I saw in my dream; some one was explaining to me that the loom was the church, and the warp the members, that the Lord had prepared them and fitted them, every one in his proper place. This seemed to explain the first dream, and then the explanation went on that love was the filling, and that Christ was the weaver, and that when he wove his love in, it was neither warp nor filling, but was all one solid body. If a thread was broken, it was not thrown away, but was mended, and put back into its place. I awoke, and O, how beautiful! The greatest wonder was that such a being as I should have such a dream of Christ, and his church. I went to the meeting again, but it all seemed as a dream, for I could not get the dream off my mind, and could not remember anything else.

One day while mourning over my hard heart, and wondering if anything could make me shed a tear, I felt that I was like a stone, and these words came to my mind, "God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham," but in all these things I could claim no hope,

and I could not tell any one my feelings. There was one minister at the association with whom I had a desire to talk; while he was preaching it seemed to me that he had the kindest voice I had ever heard. I wanted to tell him what I was, and ask him to pray for me. Through the summer I was so weighted down that it seemed that I could not breathe, and I felt that I should be on my knees all the time, but still I could not pray. The minister of whom I spoke visited us several times, but I could never gain courage to talk with him. At last sleep was taken from me, I had no rest day nor night. I arose one night and wrote to him; I told him with my pen what I was too weak to tell in words. He came to see me after reading the letter, and I tried to tell him all; I told him about a short time before, when I had given up, and could not work, read nor rest, and my strength seemed all gone, and I thought I was sick, and lay down, but could not be still, when this verse of a hymn came to me:

"Afflicted saint, to Christ draw near,
Thy Savior's gracious promise hear;
His faithful word declares to thee,
That as thy days, thy strength shall be."

My daughter brought the hymn book and we sang the entire hymn. A calm came over me, and I was well again; a little hope sprang up, but still I was afraid to claim it, yet I could never forget it. The next morning after I tried to tell this to the minister I awoke with another dream: I dreamed I was in so much trouble that I could not speak, or even raise my eyes, and I went to my parents to ask them to pray for me, and they were asleep, and I could not speak to them; then some one came before me and laid a piece of paper folded, with this written on it, "If this be not prayer, I know not what prayer is." By the paper was a glass of wine, and by the wine was a glass of sweet milk. It seemed to me that it all represented spiritual things; the wine was to strengthen me, the milk was for food. Then I awoke with a feeling that words cannot express. It was all new to me, and how I longed to call the dear minister, who was there, brother, but I could not, for I was not fit. I told him my dream, and that I had a weight that I could not express, but it did not seem to me to be a weight of trouble. His parting words sunk into my heart with a sweetness that I could not express. After he was gone it all opened to my mind; the weight was not of trouble, but the weight of the love of God, and his people, and how I loved them. It was a day of questioning. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," was presented to me, and my answer was, "How can I come?" Then this, "No one can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Now the question was, "Is this the weight of this drawing?" Then this came, "I cannot satisfy the law, nor hope nor comfort from it draw." Then the answer, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." In the evening the question came, "Why do you not go to the church with that love?" Then the answer, "I have been there once and deceived them, and I cannot go." And as firm a resolve as I ever made, I made then, that I would not go. If I went and told them of the deceit which I had practiced I should lose their love, and I craved that above all things. I knew that they would be willing to receive me on my first baptism, as I had often been admonished to come back to the church, but I felt that I must be baptized again, for although it was done by a proper administrator, I was not a fit subject, and therefore it was not

baptism really. My Father's children, was there ever such an one as I? I then began to try to throw it all away, as an imagination of the mind, but when I lay down that night these words came, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they that testify of me." Then I thought that I would never look into the Bible again, for all that I had passed through was but an imagination. I could not sleep until just a few moments before day. I thought first when I awoke that I would search the Scriptures; I arose and got my Testament; I opened at some of the writings of Paul to the saints, and read several chapters, and how sweet it all was to me. I turned down a leaf, and hurried to get through with my morning work, so that I could read again, but when I was ready it did not read the same; none of it seemed as if for me save the portion of the hypocrite. I laid up my book, and tried to work, but could not; at last I decided to get some old novels, and read them, and I would forget it all. Just before I got my hands on them it came to me, "They are just like you, full of deceit, lies and hypocrisy," and I turned from them in disgust, with the question, If I am cut off from the church, and cannot go there, and have no love for the world, what must I do? Where am I? This was the answer, "I am dead, struck dead, as was Annanias and Sapphira for trying to keep back a part of the Lord's purchase money." I sunk down into a chair, I was cut off on every side, and I never expected to see one moment's peace of mind while I lived; it was just, and I could not murmur. My little children came running in and told me that my mother was coming. I thought, What must I do? I am not fit for her to come under my roof. I knew that I could not talk with her, yet I must meet her and treat her with due respect, for I would not hurt her feelings, nor cause her one moment's sorrow for anything. With these thoughts and feelings I met and welcomed her in. I do not know how the day passed; I would go in with her for a few moments, and then back to the kitchen, and writing every moment that I could to the dear brother with whom I had talked in the first place. I thought mother would think strange of me, and that she must know what was the matter with me, so I carried what I had written in to her to read. I went off and fell upon my knees, and then with my face upon the ground, but all I could say was, "Lord, what shall I do?" I felt that I had no right to beg for mercy, yet my very soul was crying for mercy. When I went back into the house mother handed me the letter and said cheerfully, "When the Lord begins a good work, he will perform it to the day of Jesus Christ." I thought, "I have deceived my mother, this is not the work of the Lord, but my own meanness." I could not undeceive her.

My sick sister sent for me late that evening; I said at first I could not go, neither could I stay at home, I was not fit for either. The thought came into my mind, if I was sick and should send for her, she would come if she could not speak a word. I decided to go. After supper I talked with them of my troubles nearly all night. My sister seemed to wonder at me for not claiming a hope. I told her that I did not have anything to base a hope upon, and that there was a wall between me and the church which I could never cross. The next morning I got to talking of church troubles, and of one church in particular, which had been in confusion so long. Sister remarked

that she feared that the church was gone. Before I knew it I replied that I had not one fear for the church, for it was in the hands of the Lord, and he would sustain it and straighten it when the time came. In the evening I became restless again; I wondered if it was just getting away from home that had brought the restful feeling of the day. When I got home I could not find the old troubles, and as my head touched my pillow that night I realized a full relief, and then how my heart welled up in thankfulness to God. Here was the first time in my experience that I had laid down without a care or a trouble on my mind, and I felt that I was telling every one of the Lord's goodness, his mercy, his cleansing power. One breath was, "I thank thee, O Father," the next was, "My Father's children, dear ones." For four days and nights I was neither tired, hungry nor sleepy. I can never tell you of that joy and peace. "It was a heaven below my Redeemer to know." I was made to realize that the Lord's people are a willing people in the day of his power. God will be glorified, for he has said, "My glory will I not give to another." He brings his children in at the strait gate, confessing all, and acknowledging his great power, his wonderful love and mercy; he is just, let him do what he will; his justice is beyond all question.

Now, in conclusion I must say, for over sixteen years I bore the burden of guilt and deceit, but at last I was made willing to go to the church, confessing all; I was not only willing, but glad. I was received, and baptized by the same dear brother who administered the ordinance the first time. The strong man had overcome me, and taken away all my armor in which I trusted; he had given me to trust in him, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. My Father's children, when we do wrong knowingly, be sure our sin shall find us out.

I do not now understand, as I did at first, Primitive Baptists to preach that it makes no difference what we do, we cannot make any difference, either for better or worse. When we have done the very best, we have done only what is our duty; we deserve no praise for it, all praise is due to him in whom we live, move and have our being, for of him, and through him, and to him, are all things. And, "All things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." He is the Sovereign, and he alone rules. O, that he may give us the earnest of his Spirit, to inquire what is his will, and enable us to walk humbly and circumspectly before him in love, adorning the doctrine of God our Savior in all things. Shall we do evil that good may come? God forbid. O, that he would bless us with that charity which suffereth long and is kind, which is not puffed up, which envieth not, and which covereth a multitude of sins.

May God bless the dear editors and readers of the SIGNS. I do feel that he has blessed the dear editors, enabling them to speak the words of truth and soberness, together with all the writers.

Your little sister in love and fellowship,

LUCY A. SEARLE.

[EVER since the days when Paul magnified grace in the sinner's salvation, it has been the constant charge of its enemies, and of all who are self-righteous, that if Paul's doctrine be true, then it makes no difference how a man lives. This is but the conclusion of the carnal mind, which perverts all truth, and turns even grace into lasciviousness, but it

never has been the conclusion of the gracious mind and heart. By the work of grace in the heart God has indeed, as Paul said, forbidden such a conclusion. The people of God need not be afraid to preach sovereign grace. When it is preached, and believed in the heart, there is no danger that any such soul will take license from it to do evil. How often shall we have to repeat that those who say such things, by so doing show that they know not what grace means, nor what it can do, nor what victories it has wrought. Our sister's own experience has taught her this lesson.—ED.]

BELMONT, Ohio, Nov. 12, 1899.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find a letter written to me by a dear cousin, and sister in hope. It was precious to me, and I feel sure it will be of interest to others. I would be glad to have it published in the SIGNS, if you deem it worthy.

Yours unworthily,

ADA HATCH.

MARENGO, Ohio, Oct. 22, 1899.

MISS ADA HATCH:—My dear and beloved sister in the precious hope of our blessed Redeemer. I do not know why I should address you thus, but somehow I feel lonely this beautiful morning, and my mind is with those whom I love, and who are more dear to me than all the world. It seems so long since I have tried to write to you, and I feel as helpless and dependent as ever before to write anything of interest to you, whom I believe the Lord has so graciously blessed with so many precious evidences of his loving mercy and grace. On Saturday morning, when doing up the work, preparing to go to meeting, the thought came to me, For what am I going to the meeting? I am but a bundle of deceit and hypocrisy, and not worthy to meet with the dear people of God. I had been cast down and full of trouble for a long time, but that morning I felt so sad and heart-sick, I could not help doubt the reality of the little hope I had, and O, how unworthy I felt of the loving confidence, and sweet fellowship of my dear brethren. But somehow, I found myself ready for meeting, and when we got there we found the brethren gathering, and how little and insignificant I felt, and how good they all looked to me. Elder Pritchard began the service by reading and singing that old hymn, "I am a stranger here below," and then that other expressive old hymn, "Show pity Lord, O, Lord forgive." How expressive of my feelings. If I had selected them myself, I could not have selected words more expressive of my mind. It seemed that I could sing with the spirit and with the understanding then, and as the meeting continued I felt comforted by the many precious words that were spoken by our beloved pastor and brethren. The meeting was one of love and peace, and I shall never forget the union, love and sweet fellowship manifested among the brethren that day, in the choosing of brother John Ulery as a deacon. If our meetings could all be such, how pleasant would they be. After service we all went to the waterside to witness the ordinance of baptism, administered to our dear sister, Jennie Cubbage, who came forward one month ago. It was a beautiful sight to me. O, how happy, how calm, and how bright she looked as she came up from the sacred wave. What a sweet reward there is in the path of duty. Blessed are they who keep the commandments of the Lord. As I witnessed this beautiful ordinance of God's house, administered at the same place where I had been buried beneath the sacred wave, it brought to my re-

membrance many things of my own experience, and my poor, tempest-tossed soul was filled with peace and calmness, I felt to praise and thank God for this, another token of his continued loving-kindness and grace, in renewing my strength and brightening my little hope in Jesus, which only that morning I had felt like casting away. How precious are these little seasons of love and peace after we have felt so utterly cast down, and as though it was presumptuous in us to claim to be one of the children of God. Surely if it were not sometimes the case that we were made to feel the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, and could claim some of the promises, we would give up in despair. What a kind, merciful and loving God is ours, dear Ada. He knows our every care, trial and temptation, and he will not suffer one of his little ones to be tempted above what they are able to bear, or will be for their good. He is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind, and he doeth all things well. He knows them that put their trust in him, and says, They that keep his commandments shall abide in his love.

This is what grieves me : I know and realize that I am prone to sin, and to wander in bye and forbidden paths. How forgetful and ungrateful I am, and how unmindful of his loving-kindness, and protecting care to me, a poor sinner, yet he remaineth the same watchful and indulgent parent of mercy and love. O, that I could so live that my daily walk and conversation would be to the praise, honor and glory of his name. O, for his sustaining mercy and grace to guide us, that we may adorn our profession and the doctrine of God our Savior in all things, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the the appearing of the great God and Savior, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify us unto himself, a peculiar people, zealous of good works. May we ever remember that the trials and conflicts, which we meet along the way, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, if it so be that we are of that ransomed throng who have felt the dear Savior's pardoning love, and have been made to rejoice in his pardoning blood and righteousness. Then, when our conflicts here shall have ended, we shall appear in glory, clothed in our immortal bodies, see Jesus as he is and be like him, then we shall be satisfied, then we shall praise him, and sing the song of redeeming love forever. O, precious thought, Can it be that I shall be found among that happy number? My dear cousin, I do love to think about these things, unworthy as I am. I sometimes hope that I have felt and realized some of the precious things which pertain to the blessed kingdom of God, and to our everlasting happiness. But I will not wrong you with my imperfect thoughts any further. I sometimes think it is wrong for one so vile and sinful as myself, to speak of things so sacred and holy, much less to claim an interest in them. Forgive me, and pardon all that is amiss, and remember me as one who loves you, as I humbly trust, with the love I have for all who have been taught the lesson of grace.

As ever, yours unworthily,

BELLE GORSUCH.

COLLINGWOOD, Ontario, Canada, Dec. 20, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—As it is once more time to remit, and I have felt at times a strong desire to write a few lines to those whom through the mercy of God I am favored to love, I will now make the at-

tempt to do so. The thought has sometimes occurred, Why do I love the Old Baptists, or the SIGNS OF THE TIMES? and the answer comes, that it is because they love, and therefore speak well of my dear Friend, the Friend of sinners. I do love the dear brethren, preachers and writers, who declare the whole counsel of God, and who rightly divide the word of truth, giving to each their portion in due season, and they themselves willing to be nothing, that God may be all in all; and feelings of gratitude well up in my heart when I read that which comes from your own pen, and the pens of brethren Bartley, Durand, Cox, Coulter, and I may say all, sisters as well as brethren, and I would say, write on in that blessed strain which is edifying and comforting to the dear children of God. I make bold to mention a few names, feeling that you all are in the hand of God, who caused Paul to say, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." When we think of that being whom the religious world holds forth as God, can we dare compare him to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who leads Joseph like a flock, and not one of them shall be left behind?

"Dear, dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved to sin no more."

Did not Joseph declare the glory of God when he told his brethren not to be grieved nor angry with themselves because they had sold him hither, for God had sent him before them to preserve life, and that it was not them who sent him hither, but God? Surely he had the same faith that every Spirit-taught child of God has, and it did not prevent Joseph from loving his brethren dearly, and from saying unto them, "I am Joseph, doth my father yet live?" And like our heavenly Joseph, he cannot refrain himself; he longed to declare his relationship to them; he said, Cause every man to go out from before me. No man beheld when Joseph made himself known to his brethren. Was it not so with us all? Our vile passions, and everything that would mar, or that maketh a lie, was cast out, and scattered to the winds, while Jesus made himself known to us. He says, "My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled." "Ye believe in God, believe also in me."

At the early age of twelve years he said, Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? And O, what a business. I stood amazed, and wondered why or whence this ocean rose, that wafts salvation down to men, his traitors and his foes. He said, "I came down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me; and this is the will of him that sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." If he had failed in doing the will of his Father, could it or would it have been said that he for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame? He would not then have been exalted a Prince and a Savior to give repentance unto Israel, and the remission of sins. He said again, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give [not offer] unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." And all our sins and ingratitude cannot separate us from him.

"Oft have we seen the tempest rise,
The world and Satan, hell and sin,

Like mountains seemed to reach the skies,
With scarce a gleam of hope between."

Yes, so far down in that pit where there is no standing and no water, have we sunk, that it seemed just as likely that the dead would praise the Lord, as that we would do so. But just then Jesus has revealed himself as our hope, our life and our all, and has given us to rejoice in him as the one that has loved us with an everlasting love, and who therefore with loving kindness has drawn us; yes, loved even us, poor, vile worms of the dust, with an everlasting love, and has drawn out our souls toward himself, and we say, "Lord, it is enough." Again, Jesus said, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." And yet vile man, with the wisdom of this world, which is foolishness with God, rises up and insists that the Son of God did not finish the work, but that he only placed man in a savable condition. But the ransom has been paid, and the debt canceled, and he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. Therefore what more can we need? May we one and all love him more and more.

Your brother in the hope of the gospel,

R. CASE.

EAST DIXFIELD, Maine, Feb. 25, 1900.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—It has not been so long since I wrote you, but as I so often meet you through the pages of our dear family paper, and as you so kindly invited me to write, I avail myself of the privilege. It has seemed to me often when I have written to you, that I almost entirely ignored your writing to me, and crowded my own reflections upon you. But I cannot let your last of December 5th, pass without again alluding to it. The appreciation which you express of myself surprises me. You have expressed what is my earnest desire, and it expresses but a small part of my feeling to say that I thank you, for it also raises my heart in thanksgiving to God for this union and fellowship in the gospel of Christ. So many times I have felt that I was running without a message, for I was so poor and needy. The words in 1 Peter i. 24, 25, have consoled me in part. I think that I can testify to what is there with no feeble speech nor stammering tongue. Many times since our correspondence began, I have feared that I was a burden and hindrance to you. Again I thank you for all your kind interest, for indeed I often feel myself afar off from the brotherhood of saints, but to the praise of infinite grace, I can say that oftener I feel that I am brought nigh by the blood and righteousness of Christ, and am led forth into green pastures, and beside still waters.

I much enjoyed the two editorials in the fourth number of the SIGNS, present volume, and the writing of Elder Bartley on exhortation; indeed I always enjoy them, but these in a greater degree. The first chapter of the second epistle of Peter has dwelt upon my mind very much of late, in connection with what has been written upon what is termed "time salvation." In the years past I have so often heard the exhortation included in the fifth, sixth and seventh verses, distorted by the advocates of works as a means of salvation, that I felt glad to read the summing up of the whole first part in these words, "All this goes before, and is the groundwork of the exhortation which fol-

lows." Those verses have been a vast comfort and guide to myself, and I have often meditated on the division which was drawn between what seemed to me the "indwelling" and the "outgoing" fruits of faith, brotherly kindness and charity. "If these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." What a code to reflect upon. I have heard professors of religion say that they were brought to Mt. Sinai from time to time. For myself I will say, it has been years since I felt myself in any way connected with Mt. Sinai; but to the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus I feel myself delinquent; but here I am consoled by the truth that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin, and though this gospel rest is sweet, I still feel,

"This is not my place of resting,
There's a city yet to come;
Onward to it I am hasting,
On to my celestial home."

A foretaste of this helps us under many a weary load, which sin binds upon us.

Sister Hubbard and her son were with me one day week before last. I feel it a great privilege to meet with one who has been called to separate himself from the world. As you so truly remarked, the world knows nothing of this salvation wrought out by Christ, and neither do they desire it, because they feel no need of it. May the Lord keep each one who has named the name of Christ, from all iniquity, and enable them to ever ascribe salvation to Jesus our King.

In reading your editorial upon the parable of the sower, in a late number of the SIGNS, it almost seemed like a letter to myself, and I included likewise every believer; and it came to my mind forcibly the words of Jesus, "What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch." O, my brother, I feel that you will pray for me, with all the scattered of the flock, even if I do not ask it. There is joy and peace in believing, but the way is sometimes dark and thorny. I feel to say, God has been and is good to me, and I desire not to be unthankful.

"And when that parent hand sends joys,
We bless the joys the more,
For rainbows never span the skies,
But clouds have gone before."

I hope that you may be blessed in your connection with our precious paper, with your associate editor, and the dear kindred who so ably fill its columns.

With love to the household of faith, I remain your sister in hope of life eternal,

ELIZA WHEELWRIGHT.

HERNDON, Va., Jan. 1, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I feel sometimes too unworthy to take such a precious medium of correspondence as the SIGNS in my polluted hands. I read your letter remarking on the letter of brother Butler, in the number for December 15th, and was made again to hope that some of my brethren could still fellowship me in my weakness in not being able of myself at any time to think one good thought, or to perform one good act. When I hear a brother or sister say that they are up and doing, and gliding along smoothly in this present world, I feel to be left out. Right here I must say, if my salvation for time or eternity depends upon any good thing that I must perform, then indeed I am lost to all hope, and am without God in this world, or that which is to come. I cannot think for a moment of any good thing in all my past life that I have ever done worthy

to merit the favor of God to me. As you said in your letter referred to above, "If we believed that christians could work themselves out of the low grounds of sorrow, or by their own efforts escape the sore trials and temptations that afflict the saints, we should be utterly discouraged, for we have ever found that when we would do good, evil was present with us, and how to perform that which is good we find not." I do believe that all of God's dear children must be brought very low indeed before they can feel their need of him. It is in time of sore temptation, darkness and gloom, that they need him most. Like one of old each little one feels to say, "Before I was afflicted I went astray." "I was brought low, and he helped me." And again, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes." This law is written in the heart, teaching us that by the deeds of the law, written on tables of stone, shall no flesh be justified in his presence. He takes away the stony heart, and gives us a heart of flesh, so that we may worship him in spirit and in truth. Every dark season, every trial, affliction and sorrow that we have in this world, is for our own good. "They work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Thus we see that all our trials work for our good, and when we are delivered from them for a little season, we are made to cry out from the depths of our heart, "Salvation is of the Lord." There are no conditions now, but the glory is all to him. "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." Now we cannot feel to exalt self. "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased." "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Dear brother Beebe, language fails me to tell you how much pleasure your letter gave me. I felt while reading it that the Lord was inditing the matter in your heart, to feed the poor of the flock. Such letters as yours will never fail to reach the hearts of the little lambs. "Feed my sheep, feed my lambs," is the command of our God to every shepherd of the flock.

I will bring this letter to a close by wishing that your life may long be spared to wield the "Sword of the Lord and of Gideon."

I am your brother in hope of salvation by grace only,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

NORTH YAKIMA, Wash., Feb. 11, 1900.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I am aware that my subscription has expired to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but you have kindly favored me by sending the paper until the present date, for which I am very thankful, and I was highly favored by receiving some money yesterday, and I gladly send another year's subscription. I do not want to miss a copy of the dear old paper, for its editors and contributors teach and contend for the doctrine that I believe. This morning while reading February 1st, current volume, I was made to feel thankful (as I have at many other times) that the good Lord has called and qualified good and able servants to contend earnestly for the faith and doctrine that Christ and the apostles taught, viz: the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace only, both for time and eternity. Able brethren have shown by scriptural proof, that man at no time is free from God's sovereign vigilance. This truth is fully set forth by the apostle James, iv. 12–14. It occurs to me, brother Beebe, if we are in any sense free agents, just to that extent are we freed from obligations of obedi-

ence to God, but as I cannot conceive how that God as the all-wise Creator could create a man, or power, independent and free from himself, I take it for granted that the whole free agency theory is an absurdity, as brethren Chick, Durand, Bartley, and many other able writers in our family paper, have fully shown. May the God of all grace support you and all of them, and raise up others after you to contend for the good old doctrine that extols the God of heaven as the only Savior of sinners; who died in consequence of his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, and hath quickened us together with Christ. (By grace ye are saved.) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Then here is the testimony of an inspired apostle of a great blessing that was performed upon humble believers at that time. But these precious blessings were not to stop there, for what was written aforetime, was written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope, and that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus.

I see no conditions imposed on this class of believers, and the reason is I think because they are not under law, but under grace. The Galatian brethren were called foolish, because having begun in the Spirit, they afterwards sought to be made perfect by the flesh. This I fear is what some dear brethren are trying to do at the present time, bringing in the old law conditions, and placing them upon the subjects of the new covenant, who are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

But I will bring this very imperfect letter to a close, lest I tire you. When I commenced I only intended to tell you that I appreciate your labors very much, in the able manner in which you conduct the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and if my poor heart does not deceive me, I feel like using Paul's language to the brethren at Colosse, since we see the way you commend yourselves to the brethren: "Do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding."

W. H. GILMORE.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

AGAIN AFFLICTED.

IT is very unpleasant to us to be obliged to be making or publishing excuses for neglected duties, but we are painfully aware that it is not in man to direct his steps. We know not what an hour may bring forth. For several weeks we have been able to get to the office but part of the time on account of physical disability, and Monday, March 19th, we were taken with neuralgia in the back of the neck and head, and for about two weeks we suffered most of the time about as severe pain as we have ever experienced. We do not wish to murmur or complain, but mention these facts that our brethren, friends and business correspondents, will extend to us forbearance for our seeming neglect in answering their communications. We are now feeling better than for some weeks, and if it is the Lord's will we hope to be able to attend more promptly to business than it has been possible for us to do of late. One thing we have learned in our affliction, if nothing else, that is to appreciate the kind forbearance of our brethren.

B.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1900.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

BRIEF REPLIES.

WE have many requests on hand for replies through the SIGNS, to which we cannot find time to respond, and many upon which we have no understanding. We hope that any who do not find answers to their requests, will not therefore conclude that we are unmindful of them, but that, either we have not time nor space, or that we do not have light upon the subjects named. We have now several such requests by us, and we desire to notice a few of them, in a brief way, in this editorial.

A brother at Woodsville, Texas, asks "upon whom the blame ought to rest for the fall of Adam?" He says some say it is the Lord, and some the devil.

There is but one reply to be given to this question, if we consult the Scriptures, and that is, that Adam himself was the criminal. Upon him the curse fell. There was sin in Satan when he tempted Eve, and his sentence was that he should crawl upon his belly all his days, because of his tempting our first parents. But for the fall itself, no one received censure but guilty man. "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." We have no right to seek any further back than this for the origin of evil. This is the first account of it. It entered into the world by Adam's transgression. As to how our first parents came to transgress, we are not informed in any sentence in the word, except that they were tempted of the devil. All attempts to look further back into the mysteries of sin and evil than this are merely human speculation, and lead to reasonings which are entirely vain and foolish. We have ever steadfastly refused to even question, what was before sin entered into the world by the transgression of Adam. Sin is a transgression of the law. And all sin is against God. God hates it, and denounces it, and punishes it. He is not the author of it. These things we know. Is not this enough to know? All beyond is vain philosophy. It is clear that the word holds man responsible for his sins. A convicted sinner does not blame either God or the devil for his sins. But he acknowledges the justice of his own condemnation. That is enough for us to know. Brethren, when they discuss where blame falls for Adam's sin, outside of Adam himself, are not in the spirit of a convicted sinner.

BROTHER Jackson Cox, of Bentley, Ill., asks if it is not the doctrine of the SIGNS, "That everybody has to do just as they do, both good and bad?"

It is the doctrine of the SIGNS, and has been ever since it had existence as a paper, that the predestination of God is unlimited. And also it is the doctrine of the SIGNS that whatever God has appointed, must take place as he has appointed it. That is, it is the doctrine of the SIGNS, that all his appointments are absolute, and not doubtful, but we have never heard any who believe this, say that

everybody has to do just as they do, both good and bad. This has been an objection urged against the doctrine of predestination ever since we can recall anything. And it was evidently urged against the doctrine in Paul's day, for he states this objection in Romans ix. in these words, "Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" The predestination of God does not at all justify man in his sin. And so, in the word we find the record that God condemned men for doing the very things which he had declared should be done. Paul, in Romans ix., had been declaring that God had raised up Pharaoh for the very purpose which he fulfilled. And now, some one said, Why then does God find fault with Pharaoh? How did Pharaoh resist the will of God if he but did what God had decreed that he should do? So that the objection is not new. Paul simply says, It is a replying against God. We would say no more than this at any time. We hope that we shall not be allowed to say more than this in all we may say about the matter. We freely admit that a child can ask questions concerning this matter which we cannot answer. But we are not under any obligations to do more than what Paul did, viz: leave the objector to the charge of replying against God. It is sure, that whatever takes place is embraced in the predestination of God, and it is equally sure, that men do the wickedness that they do with wicked hands. This is true of all wickedness, as well as of the betrayal of the Savior and his crucifixion.

Brother Cox asks, Have we not power to do some things of ourselves? If not, what is the use of telling anybody to do anything? This also we have heard urged ever since we can remember, by Methodists and others. In reply to this we have ever felt that it was sufficient to refer to Paul's testimony concerning himself, in Romans vii. We would say what he says, and no more than this. We do not understand the writers in the SIGNS to say more than Paul here says. We cannot do the good that we would, and the evil that we would not, that we do. And the flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, so that we cannot do the things that we would. This is true, whether we can reconcile it with exhortation and the commandments of the Lord or not. We will say that we understand all exhortation to be one of the things ordained of God, by which to stir up the pure minds of the people of God to a remembrance of their obligations to him under the gospel. Exhortation is to be used as it is used in the Scriptures, but like all preaching, it will be of no avail unless applied by the Spirit to the heart. It is of use to tell men who believe, to do God's will when, and only when, the preaching is applied by the Spirit. Further, we do believe that God does make it of use, again and again, and so we are to keep on warning, exhorting and rebuking with all long-suffering and doctrine.

SISTER Mary Sutton, of College Corner, Ohio, asks our understanding of Matthew ix. 16, 17, which reads as follows, "No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment; for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. Neither do men put new wine into old bottles, else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish; but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved."

In verse fourteen it is recorded that the disciples of John came to Jesus, asking why it was that they and the Pharisees

fasted oft, while his disciples fasted not? Jesus answered them, That children of the bride-chamber could not mourn so long as the Bridegroom was with them, but the days should come when the Bridegroom should be taken away from them, and then should they fast. He was the Bridegroom and his disciples were the children of the bride-chamber. A new dispensation had been thus ushered in by his coming. The marriage supper was prepared, and the marriage festivities were now going on. The old fast days were now past. That which they signified was past, and now they could have no proper place in the new kingdom. To fast now would be like putting a new piece of cloth on an old garment, or new wine in old bottles. To do so, would not only be out of place, but it would do harm. The garment would not be improved, but would be made worse. The bottle, which it should be remembered was then made of skins, would, by the fermentation of the wine, burst, and so both bottle and wine would be lost. So to bring the fasts and ceremonies of the old dispensation which were purely legal, into the new covenant, would be to the utter destruction of all that the new covenant meant, and it would also be to entirely obscure all that the old covenant signified. To suffer the introduction of the old covenant ceremonies, would be to say that the work of Christ was not sufficient, and on the other hand, it would also declare that in reality the old covenant had not passed away, and that the redeemed people of God were still in bondage. But Jesus brings liberty to the captive, and while he is in view they must rejoice, and they cannot fast.

BROTHER Christian Winter, of Utica, N. Y., asks what Isaiah xxii. 23, signifies.

We have no question that Eliakim, who is referred to in the text named, and in the connection, was intended to be a striking and lively type of Christ. It is said of him that God should call him, and clothe him with his robe, and strengthen him with his girdle, and commit the government into his hand, and that he should be a father unto Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah, and that the key of the house of David should be laid upon his shoulder, so that he should open and none should shut, and shut and none should open. Then comes the especial verse to which our attention is called, which reads as follows, "And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house." Then it is added that all the glory of his father's house should be hung upon him, with all the issues and offspring, and all the vessels which belonged there. Then comes a verse which points unmistakably to the atonement of our Lord, when he was cut off for sins not his own.

All this, as we have said, presents a very lively type of the blessed Lord, of whom alone these things, in their full spiritual meaning, could be true. Our Lord, according to the text named especially, is fastened as a nail in a sure place. This most evidently signifies that his work of redemption and salvation is a finished and fixed work, and that it is so sure that all the glory and every vessel of mercy, which belong to the house of God, may safely hang upon him. This can be true of no one else but the blessed Lord, who died and rose again, and who lives for evermore, and who says unto his poor, and tried, and sinful people, "Because I live, ye shall live also." And this blessed nail thus fastened is our hope and our joy to-day. Being hung upon him, we may defy all the assaults and temptations

of the evil one. And here also we must render worship and obedience, for he is also a glorious throne to his Father's house. This signifies that he shall reign, as he does reign in our hearts and lives, and none can dispute his sway. He is a throne, and a glorious throne, in the view of his Father's house, that is of all who are of faith. How blessed it is to have such a King and such a sure Savior to lean upon.

SISTER Frances Fuller, of Mattville, Ohio, asks as to the meaning of the words in Matthew vii. 6, which reads, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you."

As we understand these words, the simple meaning is, that our Lord commands that the precious doctrine, and promises, and admonitions of his kingdom, are intended solely for those who can understand and appreciate them. In other words, gospel promises are for the needy, gospel riches are for the poor, gospel favors are for those who count such things privileges. No doubt the Savior, and those also who heard him, would have in mind that in the typical sanctuary, bread and meat which was offered in sacrifice to God, and intended for the support of the priests who served in sanctuary, must not be given to base uses, such as throwing it to the dogs would be. Having been offered to God in the sanctuary, it was regarded as sacred or holy, and it would have been the height of impiety to throw it to unclean dogs afterwards. So in the gospel, the things of which this bread and meat were types, are intended for the priests of God alone, which are all his believing people, and they must not be offered to the unclean. Natural men do not appreciate gospel privileges any more than a dog would understand the sacred nature of the bread and meat of the sanctuary. So also, these precious things are compared by the Savior to pearls which are greatly prized by all those who understand their value, but which would have no value in the eyes of the swine. Indeed the swine are hungry for swine's food alone, and if pearls are thrown to them they are disappointed, and in their anger may turn and rend those who offer to them such things. Thus the carnal Jews turned and rent those who first preached the gospel among them, as is recorded again and again in the gospel, and in the Acts. To-day the same thing is true. The world does not appreciate the promises and privileges of the gospel any more than dogs would prize the bread of the sanctuary, or swine the pearls which might be thrown before them. There is a suitableness in all that our God does. He brings his bread to the hungry, and not to the full. He saves the lost, and not those who are satisfied with their righteousness. His disciples are to remember that they must feed the sheep and lambs, and that their mission is to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Gospel blessings are not to be offered to the world, but given to the souls who feel their need of them and who are asking for them.

ELDER Asa Howard writes from Thomastown, Texas, asking that we shall make some brief comment upon Acts ix. 7; xxii. 9. The first reads as follows, "And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man." The second reads as follows, "And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me."

We suppose that what is in our brother's mind, is that there is an apparent contradiction between the narrative recorded by Luke, and the testimony of Paul himself. But it must be remembered that Luke records this whole book of Acts. It is evident that he saw no contradiction in the two narratives, else he would have written differently. Our mind, concerning these two texts, is that those who were with Paul saw the intense light which blinded Paul, but did not see the form of him who spake to Paul, as Paul saw it. And when it is said by one narrative that they heard the voice, and in the other that they did not hear the voice, our judgment is that it is meant that they heard the sound of the voice, but did not understand the words which were spoken. There was to them a light and a sound only, while to Paul there was a form and words, which he saw, and heard, and understood. We do not know that we can say anything further in explanation of these two narratives. We are sure, that whatever the explanation may be, whether that which seems to us the right one or some other, there is no real contradiction in the two narratives.

Brother A. A. Bloomfield, of St. Joseph, Mo., calls attention to Mark xi. 25, 26, "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses."

The same language of the blessed Redeemer is recorded in substance in other portions of the word, and enjoined by his apostles also. See Matthew vi. 14; xviii. 35; Col. iii. 13. It seems to us that the Savior taught here that so long as a spirit of hatred, or hardness, or ill will, should exist in our heart toward any one who may have injured us, it is impossible that we should have in our own souls any experience of the forgiveness of God. So long as we feel unforgiving toward another, we do not occupy that place of self-loathing and self-abasement, in which alone we ever do experience any token of blessing from God. If we have a spirit of hardness toward any, it must be that we think ourself better than that one; and so long as this is the case, we do not feel to be the chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints. In such a state of mind, though we may stand praying, we do not really pray. If we ask God to forgive us our sins outwardly, we do not mean it, because we do not feel to be so vile as that other man, and instead have a spirit to thank God that we are not as he is, and this is the spirit of a pharisee, which is an abomination to God. Unless there be a real heartfelt confession of sin, our words of confession are as nothing in the sight of God, and as our words mean nothing but empty form, so we cannot have the favor of him who judges the heart. To have no spirit of forgiveness toward others, shows that we have no spirit to feel the need of forgiveness for ourselves, and at such times all our prayers are formal and vain.

The Savior speaks a fact of experience here. He does not say here how this spirit of forgiveness is to be obtained, but only of the fact; elsewhere we are taught that all such blessings are the fruit of the spirit, and good gifts from God. But still it is true that if we do not have a spirit to forgive, we have no spirit to feel our own need of forgiveness. It seems to us that this is the teaching of the Savior in these words. How heart-searching are these words of the Master! How they are calculated to humble us, and break our

hearts, as we realize our lack of all that is holy and good! But how great is the mercy which can and does grant unto us to have hearts to forgive, and how infinite the mercy which forgives us.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

"QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT."

1 THESS. V. 19.

A YOUNG brother of Mississippi has desired us to give our views on the above text, and as it is a subject which has been much perverted by the enemies of the truth, the minds of some young christians have been perplexed to know its true meaning. As these words were addressed in admonition to the church of God, they must have a definite and important signification. The Holy Ghost has never inspired the apostles to write in ambiguous terms, nor to enjoin rules or restrictions upon the church of God which are unimportant. The text on which our views are desired has been claimed by the Arminians as being addressed to the world of mankind in general, and to the unregenerated portion of the fallen race more particularly. They say, God, who is a Spirit, is desirous of converting all men, and that the Holy Ghost sues for admission into every sinner's heart, knocks at every door, and makes proffers of mercy and grace to all the unconverted, on the simple condition that they accept of the terms and admit the Spirit into their hearts. And they pretend to understand this text as a warning to sinners to quench not the Spirit; that is, the Holy Ghost, which they say is wooing and striving, and endeavoring to gain admission into their hearts.

Such we understand to be in substance, the doctrine and language of all carnal, graceless, work-mongrel professors of christianity, and during the almost six thousand years in which this blasphemous heresy has been promulgated on earth, the ingenuity of man and the subtlety of Satan has been exerted to the utmost to give the delusion a plausible appearance, and to transform its deformity into a resemblance of truth. The natural mind of men, in their depraved state, being enmity against God, is predisposed to favor the heresy, for they love darkness rather than light, and error rather than truth; hence their susceptibility to the imposition, and the readiness of ungodly men to favor any sentiments which are derogatory to the character and truth of God.

Those, however, who are born of God, and taught by his Spirit, have the witness in themselves that the above described heresy is false, for they are brought to an experimental knowledge of him. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."—John xvii. 3. And God has provided in the new covenant, that those with whom this covenant is made, "Shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." —Heb. viii. 11; Jer. xxxi. 34. "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children."—Isa. liv. 13. Being divinely taught to know God, they have the witness in themselves that he is not a being who can be quenched, baffled, thwarted, or successfully resisted, by any of his creatures in heaven, earth or hell. They know that he does not labor and strive to gain admittance to the sinner's heart, and they know that the sinner has no power

to prevent the execution of the will of God. They know that their Savior has power over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. (John xvii. 2.) And that all that the Father has given him shall come unto him, and they that come to him he will in no wise cast out; and that no man can come unto him, except the Father which sent him draw him; and Christ is pledged to raise up all such at the last day. (John vi. 37, 44.) They know by their own experience, as also by the Scriptures of truth, that all their own efforts at reformation, their resolutions to get religion, &c., were abortive and vain; that they could no more accomplish the work than the Ethiopean can change his complexion, or the leopard his spots. (Jer. xiii. 13.) Their own experimental knowledge of God, and the testimony of his written word, compel the saints to reject the interpretation which will-worshipers and Arminians give to our text, and it is unquestionably much easier for them to detect the absurdity and blasphemy of the heresy of the enemies of the truth on this subject, than to fully comprehend the precise meaning of the admonition, "Quench not the Spirit."

All who are taught of God, know that he is a Spirit, but they also know that he is infinite, eternal, immutable, omnipotent, all-wise, of one mind, and none can turn him, that with him there is no variableness nor shadow of turning, that he doeth his pleasure in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of earth, that none can stay or resist his hand, that he speaks the word and it stands fast, he commands and it is done. And knowing this, they know that he does not stand wooing and beseeching the sinner for permission to do his pleasure, for he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and he hath compassion on whom he will have compassion, and whom he will he hardeneth. (Rom. ix. 15–18.) They cannot, therefore, regard God as a Spirit liable to be quenched, put out or subdued, by saints or sinners, angels or devils. Those admonitions, therefore, which warn the saints against grieving the Spirit whereby they are sealed, and to quench not the Spirit, cannot be so construed as to signify that God is a being subject to passions like us; that he can be grieved and extinguished by his creatures.

Let us then examine carefully and prayerfully, that we may learn what spirit it is that the saints are not to grieve or quench. While we adore and worship that God who is a Spirit, we are to remember that all of God's manifested children are born of the Spirit of God, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, as that which is born of the flesh is flesh. This spirit which is born of the Spirit is not God, but it is of God, and is called the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. (Eph. iv. 24.) This spirit which is born of the Spirit, being of God, is a holy spirit, and is called the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. (Rom. viii. 15.) It is called the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead. (Rom. viii. 11.) It is called "the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."—Eph. iv. 30. It is distinguised from the Holy Ghost, which is God, as an emanation from God. The Holy Ghost is not said to be born of God—it being God—but the spirit which the saints have received, and whereby they are sealed, is born of God, born of the Spirit, and is spirit and life in all the saints. This spirit which is born of the Spirit, is that by which the saints are sealed, marked, and are distinguished

from all other men and women, until "the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." "But if the Spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."—Rom. viii. 11. "But ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption, to wit. the redemption of our body."—Rom. viii. 23. This spirit which is born of the Spirit, which dwells in us, and is called the spiritual man, the new man, the inner man, and which is called the spirit of Christ, the spirit of adoption, and the spirit whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption, is susceptible of grief, of sorrow, conflict, elevation and depression, which changes, conflicts, depressions and triumphs, are totally inapplicable to God, the eternal Spirit, from whom it proceeds, and of whom it is born.

This spirit, born of God, in the antediluvian saints, was grieved with the abominations which prevailed in their day, and in Noah, it was resisted by the wicked antediluvians, until the flood came and swept them away; was resisted in all the prophets, by the carnal Israelites; in the apostles, by Jews and Romans; in Stephen, by his murderers, and is still resisted, not only by the unconverted world, but also by the fleshly powers and passions of the saints themselves. Thus Paul himself found a law in his members, warring against the law of his mind, and he assures us that the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that we cannot do the things that we would.

How this holy Spirit of Christ in us can be grieved, and how it is grieved by opposition, reproach, persecution and malice, from foes without, and more especially it is grieved by the inbred corruptions of our own fleshly nature, our doubts, our fears, our short-coming, our wicked thoughts, unholy propensities, ingratitude, sluggishness in the cause of Christ, greediness after the vanities of the world, unreconciliation to God, and the rebellion of our nature against the God we love and adore, all this the christian can sensibly feel, and measurably know, and of how it can be resisted by the world, the flesh and the devil, they are fully aware. But how the admonition of our text, "Quench not the Spirit," is to be understood, still may require some explanation. Let us look to it.

This admonition is connected with many others, and addressed to the brethren exclusively, and cannot without perverting the Scriptures be applied to any but brethren. Thus it is presented by the inspired apostle to the church of the Thessalonians, which are in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thess. i. 1.) "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all. See that none render evil for evil unto any; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves and to all. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things, hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you; who also will do it. Brethren, pray for us," &c.—1 Thess. v. 14–25.

By carefully observing the connection of these exhortations, we perceive that the apostle presents them as the will of God in Christ Jesus, concerning the saints, which are in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ. But how is this the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning us? We possess the spirit of Christ. "For if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his."—Rom. viii. 9. The law, or will, of God is in the heart, or spirit of Christ, and Christ by his spirit dwells in his saints, therefore we find the New Covenant promise fulfilled in the saints. I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts."—Heb. viii. 10. This law of the spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. (Rom. viii. 2, 4.) These faithful admonitions, being embraced in the spirit of Christ which he has implanted in our hearts, are to be cherished, revered, regarded and obeyed. But while this spirit which embodies them as the will of God concerning his children, is opposed by the fleshly nature and corrupt propensities which are opposed to the law of the spirit of our mind, we are to quench not the spirit, but crucify its opposite, the old man with its affections and lusts, and put on the new man. Or, in other words, to walk after the spirit, and not after the flesh. The flesh and the spirit in the christian are antagonistic to each other; both cannot at the same time predominate in us. To gratify the one is, on our part, to quench, suppress or repel the other. "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit. For to be carnally minded is death: but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."—Rom. viii. 5–8. To *quench* or repress the spirit, in the sense of our text, is to walk after the flesh. Study the inclinations of our carnal and depraved minds, attend to whatever will gratify our fleshly propensities, make our religion conform to our feelings, attend to the things of the spirit only when convenient and agreeable to our fleshly feelings and interests, lose no opportunity to amass the treasures of this world, or to gratify our lust for worldly fame, honor or applause, for the sake of bearing the cross of the dear Redeemer, never offend visitors, nor neglect your worldly interest, to attend on the solemn assemblies of Zion, or to mingle with the despised followers of the Lamb. Do not follow the Master in baptism, or in any of his ordinances, until your carnal mind is satisfied with the hope which God has given you, nor so long as it will subject you to some inconvenience or mortification of the flesh, pay no attention to such brethren as are unruly, or feeble, or weak, render evil for evil, pray only when you feel like it, and consider what you have as your own, without thanksgiving. Pursue this course, and if you do not quench the spirit of christianity, so far as its comfort and consolation, and benign influence is concerned, we have failed to comprehend the meaning of the text. We appeal to the experience of every saint, for confirmation of the words of the apostle, "to be carnally minded is death." Is it not so? Death to our enjoyments, to our usefulness in the house of God, to ourselves and to all the saints. "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead, because of sin." Bury then yourselves in the body in the affections and lusts thereof, and are you not buried in death? The body is dead. There is no spiritual life in it; therefore, when christians are looking to find something good, spiritual or comforting in their carnal nature, they are seek-

ing the living among the dead; and they will seek in vain. "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."—Rom. viii. 13. By dying in this case, we are not to understand that the child of God can possibly lose his immortality, or fail of his inheritance of glory; but of his comfort and living enjoyment of his salvation. He that knows his Master's will and does it not, shall be beaten with many stripes. The Lord has said he would visit the transgressions of his people with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes; but his loving kindness he will not utterly take away from him, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. May it be our privilege, as the followers of our Redeemer, to put on the new man, to crucify the old man; to walk after the spirit, and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh, to mortify the deeds of the flesh, and quench not the spirit; and may we deny ourselves of all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. To this end let us pray without ceasing, that we may rejoice evermore.

Greatly as we have extended this article, much more might be said on this important subject; for it is certainly no less important that the children of God should walk worthy of their high and holy calling, than that they should hold sound and scriptural views of the doctrine of the gospel.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., August 1, 1857.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denotes the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, at his residence, March 28th, 1900, Jesse Wolf and Miss Kate Phaler, both of Reynoldsburg, Franklin Co., Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ON Sunday morning, March 18th, 1900, in Warwick, N. Y., **Deacon Samuel Brook** was released from the bondage of mortality, after a few days of suffering from "la grippe," lacking two weeks of being 89 years of age. He was born in England in 1811, and with his father and family came to America in 1820. Since 1836 he had resided in the township of Warwick, commanding a high place in the estimation of the community by his quiet and honest deportment.

Brother Brook was baptized by the late Elder Hartwell, in June, 1845, and was chosen as a deacon in May, 1849, in which office he served faithfully until disabled by failure of his natural powers from extreme age. He was firm in the faith of the gospel of Christ even after his mind had failed to remember things of time. The church deeply feel their loss in his departure, but would bow submissively to the will of the Lord who gave the blessing of our dear brother's usefulness, and who has called him to sleep in Jesus. May divine grace enable us to say, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good!"

The funeral services were held in the meeting-house of the church of his membership March 21st, where a large number of his old neighbors met to honor his memory. After a brief discourse from 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14, by his pastor, the body was committed to the tomb in the Warwick cemetery.

WM. L. BEEBE.

WARWICK, N. Y., March 27, 1900.

DIED—At the residence of David Heyd, near State Road, Del., March 1st, 1900, **Mrs. Ann Frazier**, in the 71st year of her age. She had been in a decline for nearly two years, not suffering much, but growing weaker, yet retaining her faculties not much impaired unto the last. She was baptized in the fellowship of the church at Cow Marsh, Oct. 16th, 1864, so she was a member with us, faithful and devoted, for more than thirty-five years. She was a widow, and has left quite a large family, one daughter being a member, and the rest all friendly. They need not sorrow as do those who have no hope.

ALSO,

AT the residence of her son-in-law, near Houston, Del., on Thursday evening, March 8th, 1900, **Mrs. Mary Frazier**, widow of Ezekiel C. Frazier, aged I suppose about 70 years. Sister Frazier's death was very sudden, it was supposed from heart disease. She also was baptized at Cow Marsh, March 18th, 1860, and continued in the love and fellowship of that

church to the end. Thus within a single week two of our highly esteemed mothers in Israel have been called away. Sister Frazier was a member with us forty years, lacking ten days. These have been such mothers as the churches have need of, and their places are not readily filled. After enjoying many seasons of rejoicing with that people as one after another has been gathered into the fold, now it comes to be saddened again and again as the Master is calling them home. Fourteen of the number that it was my privilege to give welcome to the sanctuary at that place, have gone to their reward. They adorned their profession while they lived, and all died in faith. The Lord comfort the sorrowing.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

STATE ROAD, Delaware.

DIED—On Friday morning, March 17th, of pneumonia, at the residence of her daughter, Mrs. Stiers, of Wayland, Iowa, **Mrs. Elizabeth Yount,** in the 68th year of her age. Miss Elizabeth Farmer was born in Sangamon Co., Ill., Sept. 26th, 1833, and came with her parents to Henry Co., Iowa, in October, 1837, where she grew to womanhood, and was married to Benjamin F. Yount, August 5th, 1858. To this union eight children were born, three sons and five daughters, all of whom are yet living. Although her husband united with the Primitive Baptist church when a young man, she never made a profession. About twenty-five years ago she expressed a hope, but the church near them, (the Lynn Creek Oak Grove) being thrown into confusion by some Arminian practices, she could not be induced to unite with it then, and ever since she lived a quiet, patient christian life, to all outward appearances, faithful to attend church services when assured of sound doctrine being preached. She displayed that deep affection for all God's people that made them always welcome guests at her home. Ever devoted and loving to her children, she had been called to the bedside of Mrs. Stiers' two sick children, at Wayland, when stricken down with pneumonia, where she died nine days afterwards and was brought home for burial.

The services were conducted at the church near her home, by Elder I. T. Flint; text, John xi. 25, 26, when her remains were laid away in the churchyard cemetery.

Although without the kingdom here,
Among the saints there is a place,
'Mid heaven's glory bright and fair,
Prepared for every child of grace.

I. T. F.

DIED—March 13th, 1900, **Mrs. Frances A. Campbell,** wife of S. P. Campbell, of Hoytville, Pa., to whom she was married in 1878. She was born at Slate Run, Pa., July 13th, 1856; her complaint was internal cancer, from which she suffered very much at times for nearly or quite two years. She experienced a hope about twenty years ago, but never united with the church, but she saw baptism clearly, and was made willing to follow her Savior, and in her heart did; the Lord had not designed for her to follow him in the liquid grave. A Methodist minister called to see her not long before her death, and wanted to sprinkle her. She told him that she did not believe in his doctrine, nor in his order, and would not make mockery of the sacred ordinance of baptism. He said to her, "I should not think you would dare die without baptism." She answered, "I have a hope that I have been baptized in the precious blood of Jesus Christ, which is essential to eternal salvation, while water baptism is not essential to my eternal salvation." I have visited at their home several times the past eighteen years, and found from her manner of conversation that her great desire or anxiety was to know whether her exercises were like those of God's children, and when I would relate anything concerning my own trials and temptations, she would speak out, "Is that so? I did not know that any one had such thoughts and feelings but me; that does me good, I am glad you come." But, she would say, "The preachers in our town do not do one any good, if anything you feel worse after they have visited you." She had such a feeling of disgust with those preachers and their doctrine that she requested her family not to have them called to officiate in any way at her funeral, neither did she want her body carried into one of their church-houses, and if they could not get a gospel minister, she wanted to be buried without religious services, and I for one say that is consistent. She was sound in the faith of the gospel, having a clear christian experience. She is now at rest, leaving a lonely, sad husband and two young daughters, with other near relatives, to mourn what is to them a great loss, but to her great gain.

I was called upon to officiate at the funeral, where a large company had assembled. May God bless the sorrowing husband, children and friends, with reconciled spirits to his all-wise providence, for Jesus' sake.

D. M. VAIL.

James B. Simmons, son of Deacon Alfred Simmons, was born June 30th, 1856, died Feb. 1st, 1900. The subject of this notice was an exemplary young man, beloved by all who knew him. He was married to Margie Holeman, Jan. 16th, 1880, which union was blessed by two lovely girls, one of which preceded him in death Oct. 10th, 1889, the other one, with the widow, is left to mourn the loss of a kind and affectionate husband and father. James B., as he was universally called, professed a hope in Christ about fifteen years ago, but never united with the church. He was aware of his approaching demise, and made requests that the families carried out as far as possible to do so. The esteem in which he was held, was

verified by his funeral being one of the largest ever held in Greenbush. The large house would not seat near all the congregation, many were not able to get in the house. The writer tried to speak upon the subject of death and the resurrection to the attentive audience.

May the Lord sustain his aged mother, wife and child, with his brothers, sisters and many friends, while his body is waiting the morn of gladness, when it will come forth.

S. H. HUMPHREY.

GALESBURG, Ill.

DIED—Dec. 29th, 1899, at her home in Dorchester, Westmoreland Co., N. B., **Mrs. Sarah Buck**, wife of the late Deacon Gideon Buck, aged 73 years. She was the mother of thirteen children, ten surviving her, six sons and four daughters; they feel deeply the sad loss of their kind, loving and saintly mother. She was a firm believer that salvation was wholly of the Lord, and in the final perseverance of the saints, and believing that it is God which worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure.

At her funeral the writer tried to speak a few words of comfort to the large congregation of relatives and friends who had assembled to pay their last respects to a beloved one, from the words found in 2 Timothy iv. 8.

ALEX. BARNETT.

NOTICES.

LOCATION DESIRED.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I desire to form a law partnership with an attorney of the Primitive Baptist faith, at some place reasonably accessible to weekly or monthly meetings of the church. I am thirty-three years old, married, and have been at the bar eleven years. During this time I have also written and published the following law works: a "Guide Manual for Magistrates and Attorneys" (816 pages); an "Annotated Pocket Code of Virginia" (513 pages, minion type,) lawyers' edition, and an "Annotated Digest of the Supreme Court Decisions of Virginia" (to be complete in seven volumes of 875 pages each), which books are in general use among the profession of the two Virginias (except the Code, which is limited to this State). My membership is with the brethren at Bethel church, (Radford Furnace, or Allisonia, Va.,) to whom (and the attorneys and business men at my address below) I refer. Or, I would be pleased to correspond with some brethren as to locating among them as an attorney, regardless of partnership. I fervently desire the sweet fellowship of the saints.

With gospel greetings,

SAM. N. HURST.

PULASKI CITY, Virginia.

BRETHREN that are contemplating changing their residence, I hope will come this way, and stop off at Garden City, Minn. Inquire for Dr. Murphy, who is also our pastor, also his father, Elder Willam Murphy, of southern Iowa, that has lately come among us, that are well known to many of the old servants of our Master's kingdom. We hold our meetings in Garden City, on Saturday before the first Sunday in each month. Our numbers are small, yet we are at peace with one another, and we feel to believe that God will remember Zion in this part of his vineyard.

At our August meeting a dear young sister united by experience and baptism, and if I am permitted to judge, there are many more inquiring their way to Zion. Sometimes we feel lonely and cast down, and are ready to say with the old prophet that we are left alone, and they seek our life, but when we hear the lambs bleating around the fold, we take courage, remembering the promise of God to Elias, that he had reserved unto himself seven thousand men who had not bowed their knee to the image of Baal. And as Paul affirms, "Even so then at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace." And we feel to believe there will be an ingathering of the elect by the grace of God alone, at this place.

I also wish to say that this part of southern Minnesota is very desirable for all kinds of agriculture, stock-raising and dairying. Land ranging all the way from $10 to $50 per acre, according to quality and location. Not near so tedious in winter as many seem to think, on account of the dry atmosphere. Seldom have frost to do any hurt till September 15th.

But I must forbear saying any more, as I will be taking up too much room in our family paper.

Yours in the hope of eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ,

A. B. LESTER.

GARDEN CITY, Minn., Nov. 11, 1899.

"PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD."

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

Introduction.
Chapter 1.—The Necessity of a Priesthood.
Chapter 2.—The Priesthood of Aaron.
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Chapter 6.—Christ's Intercession within the veil.
Chapter 7.—The Order of Christ's Priesthood.
Chapter 8.—Christ's Better Testament.
Chapter 9.—Christ the Prophet-Priest-King.
Chapter 10.—The People of Christ's Priesthood.
Chapter 11.—Kings and Priests unto God.
Chapter 12.—The Glorified Saints.
Conclusion.—The Sacrifices of the Royal Priesthood.

The above "Table of Contents" is from the book the manuscript of which is now in this office, for further description of which see last page of cover.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist church called Sidling Hill, situated in Fulton Co., Pa., will hold a three days meeting, if the Lord will, to commence on Friday before the first Sunday in May, 1900. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

Those coming by railroad will come on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to Hancock, Md., and cross over the bridge to the Hancock side. Come on Thursday, as early in the day as possible; conveyances will be there by the middle of the day; distance twenty miles to place of meeting.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

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226 West 58th Street,

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Pettigrew, Madison Co., Ark.

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I HAVE probably a hundred of the books on hand yet called "Reminiscences of Mary Parker," which since her death have been reduced to fifty cents. Also my book, Meditations on Portions of the Word, one dollar. Also Hymn and Tune Book, both round and shape notes, always on hand; price one dollar, sent by mail, postpaid; nine dollars per dozen, sent at expense of purchaser.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1900. NO. 9.

POETRY.

LET ME.

O THOU meek and lowly Jesus,
Let me find a friend in thee;
Let me realize more sweetly
Thou becamest poor for me.

Thou hast hungered, precious Savior,
And I've given thee no meat;
O, my guilty heart is bleeding,
Fall I humbled at thy feet.

'Twas my sins that helped to slay thee,
My contrition thou dost know;
I am black, but thou art comely,
Wash me, Savior, white as snow.

Bless me, I am poor in spirit,
Thou who ever succoreth me;
During wild and fierce temptations,
Let me not lose sight of thee.

Thou was scourged, and mocked, and smitten,
O rebuke and chasten me;
Of thy sufferings let me sweetly
Fellowship them all with thee.

Let me share the shame thou borest,
Thine afflictions all be mine,
Then I'll realize more sweetly
That I am an heir divine.

Let me follow thee, dear Jesus,
To the sepulchre and all;
Let me, like the weeping Mary,
Hear thy sweet and gentle call.

When my transient life is ended,
And from earth I am set free,
Through the portals into glory,
Let me, Savior, follow thee.

SEMMA E. CORDER.

PHILIPPI, W. Va.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HEBREWS XI. 6.

"BUT without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

The apostle as it were, prefaces his remarks on faith in this chapter by telling us what faith is. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." What is it then that we hope for? To aswer in short, it is Jesus. He is the author and finisher of our faith; it is his substance. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."—1 John v. 4. We are plainly told that all men have not faith, (2 Thess. iii. 2,) and in our text we are told that without it, "it is impossible to please God." Now, as it is said, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God."—1 John v. 1. And, "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"—1 John v. 5. "And this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God

hath not life."—1 John v. 11, 12. And as it is said Jesus dwells in his people, and they in him, we conclude that none but those who are born of God can perform spiritual service, and they only as he works in them both "to will and to do of his good pleasure." In other words, every spiritual emotion of love, joy, peace, or of whatever nature, is the product of the Spirit of Christ in believers.

Paul in all this chapter is recounting the victories and power of faith, and gives us plainly to understand that by it all the ancient patriarchs, prophets and elders, were enabled to serve God acceptably, and not that they exercised faith, but that faith was the sole propelling power in them. By it they were enabled to "come to God believing that he is," not that he once was, or that he would or might be at some future time, but that now at this very time he is God. Hence the patriarchs could worship God by faith in Jesus Christ, believing that at the appointed time he would be manifested in the world as the great Prophet, Priest and King, as also the Sin-bearer, the acceptable Sacrifice, well pleasing unto God, of God "made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Also of God "made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." This faith in them received Jesus as the only and the full and complete Savior, our exemption from sin and all its consequences. They were enabled to believe not only that God was faithful to carry out all his promises if circumstances did not prevent, but that he had both the will and the power to fulfill all of his promises. Having God-given confidence in the perfection of all the attributes of God, they could come to him in worship acceptably. The prophets could with confidence record all that was revealed to and commanded them. They believed that God's wisdom and knowledge and power was perfect. His wisdom was sufficient to arrange all systems and worlds, and all things so that nothing could ever come in contact with his own eternal purpose so as to frustrate or in any way disappoint him. His knowledge embraced all causes and effects, and all circumstances from eternity to eternity; his power set them all in motion, and at his command they exist or cease to exist. All worlds, creatures and things, are his by right of creation. He is the possessor of all, as he is the sole Creator of all. "For his pleasure they were and are created." Hence he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." He has (not only known, but) "declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." "He doeth his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth." "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places." The prophets believed all this, and their testimony abundantly proves it. Their prophesies were such parts of God's eternal purpose as by the Spirit was revealed to them. With God's eternal purpose back of it, their prophecies could be relied on as certain to come to pass; without any purpose behind it all would have been uncertain. The prophets came to God believing that he is; they had full confidence in his purpose, and his power to accomplish that purpose; hence they could foretell future events whether, with men, good or evil, knowing that they were certain to come to pass. They not only told that Jesus was anointed of the Father "to preach the gospel to the poor,

to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord," &c., but they also foretold how that he should be evil entreated of the people, and even counted the number of pieces of silver for which he should be sold. In the culmination of all the wicked actions of wicked men toward him, that only was fulfilled which the prophets had foretold should come to pass. For the inspired apostles say plainly, "For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Like Joseph's brethren, "the betrayers and murderers" of Jesus meant (purposed) it for evil, but God meant (purposed) it for good.

It will be seen from the foregoing remarks and Scripture quotations that I understand that to come unto God, in the sense of the text, one must believe in the absolute perfection of all the attributes of God. When one comes to God in this way it is a necessity on his part, he cannot do otherwise; being moved by a felt sense of necessity, and having that faith that comes from God, he believes that "God is." I think many of God's children come to him in prayer having this faith, "believing that he is," and yet not altogether conscious of all that is involved in their belief that "God is," for this expression involves every doctrinal principle set forth in the Scriptures. God is immutable. "I am God, and change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." He is infinite, he is holy, perfectly wise and just, and is a God of purpose. God's children sometimes in theory oppose the very essence of their own experience, and of that grace which brings them to God. This they do when they deny the revelation that God has given us of himself, both in Scripture and in nature's record. This to my mind necessarily involves the doctrine of predestination, or "the purpose of God respecting all events," as also every other doctrinal principle set forth in the Scriptures, but as in our day the doctrine of predestination is made a special target by many professed Primitive Baptists, it is but natural that our minds who believe it should be more particularly inclined to defend it. I found this question in an article on the subjects of foreknowledge and predestination, in a Primitive Baptist paper not long since: "Does God's foreknowledge and predestination sustain precisely the same relation to evil that they sustain to good? If any one thinks they do, let him plainly state the difference between right and wrong." If reference is had to the moral good and evil of the children of men, viz: if it is claimed that "foreknowledge and predestination" sustains a different relation to one to what it does to the other, that difference should be shown and proved by the Scriptures before we are required to believe it. Did God predestinate and foreknow that Judas would sell his Master for thirty pieces of silver, and that "Herod, and Pontius Pilate, and the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, should be gathered together," to do all those wicked things that they did to the Savior? (See Acts iv. 28.) Would any deny that it was "predestinated and foreknown" that Joseph of Arimathæa should go and beseech Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and that Nicodemus should bring a mixture of myrrh and aloes, and that they should bury Jesus in

the garden, in a new sepulchre, wherein was man never yet laid? If all these things, both the evil and the good, were embraced in the predestination and foreknowledge of God, where is the difference predestination and foreknowledge sustains to the one that it does to the other? It is true that those men were moved to acts they did by different spirits. In the order and establishment of things, and the laws by which they are governed, the Creator has arranged for everything to bring forth after its kind; so the sweet apple tree brings sweet apples, the sour apple tree brings sour apples; pumpkin vines do not produce corn, nor cornstalks pumpkins. In nature everybody recognizes the immutable laws of God in nature. Why God saw proper to give a holy law to his creature man, one that he knew that he was not capable of keeping, or one that he had not seen proper to create him capable of keeping, is a mystery, yet how can we read the Scriptures and believe that it is otherwise, that is, if we believe the Scriptures? God saw proper to make his creature man a creature of law, and it is said in the Scriptures that "Sin is a transgression of the law." Hence he has taught us that it is wrong to violate his law, (notwithstanding it is his purpose that law should be violated). Hence *vice versa* it is right to keep law, because God has made it so. Men purpose evil things with evil intent, and the same things God has purposed for good, viz: God has purposed that men should commit these very acts that is evil in them, (has not purposed that they be as a result of his Spirit's work in the hearts of men) that good should result. A case exactly in point is Genesis l. 20. Joseph's brethren had thought (or purposed evil against him in all that they had done unto him, but God had meant (purposed) it for good. The wrath of man praised him, and the remainder he restrained; so we understand it is from the beginning to the end of time. God bid Shimei curse David, although the law of God said, "Thou shalt not curse the ruler of thy people."—2 Sam. xvi. 11. Who will presume to say it was wrong in God to thus bid the man? and who can say that the man did what he did with any regard for God or truth? We read in 2 Sam. xxiv., that the anger of the Lord was kindled against David, and he moved him to go and number Israel and Judah. And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people, and he prayed to the Lord and confessed that he had sinned and done very foolishly, &c., and the prophet Gad was sent to him with an offer of three ways of punishment to chose from: a seven years of famine, to be chased three months by his enemies, or a three days pestilence, and his choice was to fall into the hands of the Lord, and not of man. So the pestilence came, and there died of the people seventy thousand men. When we get in a condition of mind that we want some one to tell us the difference between right and wrong, if such and such things be true, then we should search the Scriptures to see if such things be so, and if we find it true, "Let God be true, and every man a liar." If we conclude that there are some things God did not create, and does not control, then we must necessarily conclude that there are some things uncreated, and hence co-existent with God, or we must have another creative power outside of Jehovah, who created and controls what Jehovah did not create. Which shall we take, the position that Jehovah was before all things, created all things and possesses all things, or shall we take the position that there is a rival,

co-existing power, who created, possesses, rules or controls some things? As for my part, I am forced to believe from the testimony of the Scripture that "God is" sole Creator, Owner and Ruler, and "reigns without a rival," "working all things after the counsel of his own will." This I love to believe; it does me good to believe in a God independent, while I am the poor, dependent creature. He is able and faithful to fulfill all of his promises; he is righteous and just in all his ways, and if I cannot understand them now, they will all be made plain in his own good time. I love to lean upon such a God, I love to trust in him; in such a condition I feel safe. It is evident that many who bear the name Old School or Primitive Baptists, do not believe in predestination at all, while it was once the case that this was a distinguishing mark that designated this people from other professed churches. A few years ago you could scarcely find one among us who did claim to believe that all the good works of the children of God was predestinated, but other works was not, but now it is said by many that the obedience of the children of God is optionary, he can if he will, and if he wishes he can let it alone. He is given power in the spiritual birth to keep the commandments, and his salvation in time is conditional upon his obedience. This renders everything uncertain, hence nothing predestinated, or at least uncertain if it is predestinated, and so if this be true, God is either lacking in power, or he is mutable. Hence, philosophise, twist and squirm, as we may, a denial of predestination must be Arminianism. When one begins to deny predestination, we may look for him soon to deny the immutability of God, and his foreknowledge, and all this denies the perfection of any of his attributes. I will close my remarks on this part of the subject with a quotation from the apostle Paul to Timothy: "Be not therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God, who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Let men scoff, ridicule and defame, but let us not be ashamed of the truth; it is so good to live with, and it certainly will be good to die with. We must believe that God "is the rewarder of those that diligently seek him," and certainly all those to whom he has given the diligence, diligently seek him.

As we have already been lengthy, we will but briefly notice the difference between the scriptural idea of rewards under the new covenant, and the common idea of rewards among men. The idea among mankind of a reward, is the bestowal of a gift upon the deserving. God's gifts are to the undeserving, hence are all of grace. If salvation comes to the deserving, either for eternity or for time, it is not of grace, and to say that it comes to the deserving, is to deny that salvation is by grace, and to that extent that we deny that salvation is of grace, we must be Arminian. Our Lord was sent, "To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."—Isa. lxi. 3. Again, "For your shame ye shall have double, and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion; therefore in their land they shall possess the double, everlasting joy shall be unto them."—Isa. lxi. 7. So the way the Lord rewards is to

take away all our sin and filth, and consequent evils, and give us the blessed righteousness of Jesus instead. All that renders any poor sinner acceptable in the sight of God the Father at any time, is found in Jesus. Believing this we may truly sing with the poet,

"Plenteous grace with thee is found,
Grace to cover all my sin:
Let the healing streams abound;
Make and keep me pure within:
Thou of life the fountain art!
Freely let me take of thee!
Spring thou up within my heart.
Rise to all eternity!"

H. B. JONES.

MT. VERNON, Texas, March 24, 1900.

RIVER VIEW, Ala., April 5, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I am in receipt of a letter from A. J. Doggette, of Womack Hill, Choctaw Co., Ala., requesting me to answer through the SIGNS, or otherwise, the following questions:

First, "Can it be found anywhere in the Bible, Old or New Testament, that God predestinated all things?"

Second, "Did sin have to be?"

Third, "Did God make the devil, and give him his power?"

The writer states that there is but one Old Baptist church in that County, and that it is in a bad condition, bordering on a "split." He further states that he has recently talked with a minister who denies the questions here propounded, and that he (the minister) once believed the predestination of all things, but that recently his eyes have been opened, and that it would make God a sinner to preach it, and says Doggette believes in the predestination of all things because "Old Beebe" did, and because the SIGNS OF THE TIMES teaches it.

Doggette seems to be sincere, and says he has confidence in me, and loves to read my letters in the SIGNS, and asks the questions for his own good, and not for argument.

Such is the substance of the letter, and while the writer is an utter stranger to me, I feel like trying to comply with his request as best I can.

First question, "Can it be found in the Bible that God predestinated all things?"

Before attempting to answer the question I will say that it seems to me that the term "Old Beebe," does not sound very christian like, especially when applied to one of the ablest writers and preachers that the church of Christ has ever been blessed with. If we have no higher authority for the doctrine of the predestination of all things, than Elder G. Beebe, and SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the sooner such a doctrine is abandoned, the better for all concerned. It is well known however that the "London confession of faith," published over two hundred years ago, has this same doctrine embodied in it. All Old School or Primitive Baptists accept the "London confession," but they differ as to the construction of it. Missionary Baptists say they believe in the doctrine of election, but they construe it to mean that God purposed to elect all those *who will believe*, &c.

I will now say that the term or expression, "predestination of all things," does not occur in the Bible at all. The word "absolute" does not occur in the Bible at all. Such expressions as "total depravity," "effectual calling," "final perseverance of the saints in grace," "general judgment," and many other expressions that Baptists use, (and some of them incorporated in their Articles of Faith) are totally unknown either in the Old or New Testament, but Baptists believe that these points of truth are taught in the Scriptures, and therefore believe them and express them in those terms.

So while the expression, "predestination of all things," does not occur in the Bible, and while the Bible does not say in so many words that God did predestinate all things, yet there are numbers of expressions in the Bible that seem to teach it, and this has been the understanding of the church in all the past ages. For my own part I confess that I am unable to comprehend how God could absolutely predestinate, prepare or decree that a certain event should take place at a certain time, unless he had the power to absolutely control all intervening events, and it does seem to me that in order for him to be able to control all events, that he must also fix, determine or predestinate them. I may purpose or determine to be in the city of New York at a certain time, but how can I know whether I shall be there or not, unless I can also determine every event and circumstance connected with the trip, and also be able to control them? To my mind, to admit God's foreknowledge of all things is to admit God's predestination of all things. One cannot exist without the other, both stand or fall together. But I think a distinction should be made between the effective operation of the Spirit of God in the hearts of men, "working in them to will and to do of his good pleasure," and his outward government and *control over men.* I do not understand that sin or wickedness of any kind is in any sense the result of God's teaching, because God's teaching always leads to holiness and righteousness. Neither does God force or coerce men to do wrong. In doing wickedly men act from choice; they do wickedly because they *are* wicked, and love wickedness; so that no man can make God's purposes or predestination an excuse for his sins or wrong doing. He cannot say when having done wrong, "God made me do it." To do so is blasphemy of the deepest die.

It seems to me that there is a difference between the work of God, and the works of men; God works, and works *in men,* and brings good to pass; God permits evil men and devils to work, and bring to pass evil things, yet God controls evil men and devils, and in this way effectually carries out each and every one of his everlasting purposes. So that it can be truthfully said, "He works all things according to the counsel of his own will." I do not know that I can illustrate my position better than to relate the substance of a conversation between my wife and myself a few days since. We were talking about a brother preacher who is running for an office, and who has the care of four large churches, a good farm, &c. I said I thought he was doing wrong to seek the office, that he ought to serve those churches, and to be satisfied with his surroundings. My wife, willing to justify his course, said, "O you don't know, perhaps the Lord is in this matter; perhaps he is going to remove the brother from those churches, and give them to some one else." "O well," said I, "I am not talking about what the Lord is going to do, I am talking about what the brother is doing." Let us fix the responsibility where the responsibility belongs. If this brother is doing wrong, the responsibility rests upon *him,* not upon God. If any good results from his wayward course, this honor belongs alone to God. Let us not imbibe the idea that we must "do evil that good may come."

I will now quote a few Scriptures that seem to me to prove the doctrine of the predestination of all things: "I am God, and beside me there is none else, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are

not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." "I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil; I the Lord do all these things." "He doeth his will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth." "The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." (It seems to me that this would include the devil.) "But these as natural brute beasts, speak evil of the things they understand not, and shall utterly perish in their own corruption." "Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

The foregoing are only a few of the many passages in that Bible that seems to my weak mind to prove the hated predestination of all things. As to this doctrine making God the author of sin, I have nothing to say about that, except to my mind it *does not* make God the author of sin. All spiritually-minded people are bound to admit that what God has told us in his word is being fulfilled every day, both the good and the evil.

The great efforts that are being made to-day to overthrow the truth, and the work of grace in the salvation of sinners, and to substitute falsehood and the works of men in the place thereof, "deceiving and being deceived," is but the fulfillment of the Scriptures of eternal truth, and the eternal and unchangeable purposes of Almighty God are being rapidly fulfilled.

In answer to Mr. Doggette's second and third questions, I think it unnecessary to say much, as the first question embraces about all that is included in the second and third.

Second question, "Did sin have to be?"

Whether sin had to be or not, I cannot say, one thing certain it is here. If there had been no sin, there had been no sinners, hence no need of a Savior to save from sin. I will leave those who deny that the entrance of sin into the world was embraced in the purpose of God, to say what would have been the result if sin had not entered, since the promise of eternal life, the conception of the plan of salvation, existed before the foundation of the world. Not only this, but the saints were chosen in Christ, and grace given to them in him before the world began." From all this it does look a little like *sin had to be.*

But God did not create sin. Sin is not a creature, it is the *act* of a creature. "Sin is the transgression of the law." "All unrighteousness is sin." "The law entered, that the offense [or sin] might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

Third question, "Did God make the devil and give him his power?"

I think he did. Whether he made him a devil or not I cannot say. God made all things, and the devil is a "thing," besides the "serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made." Paul says, "There is no power but God: the powers that be are ordained of God." If God did not give the devil his power, then there is a power that is not of God. The denial that God made the devil and gave him his power, involves the theory of an eternal, self-existent devil, which involves the "two seed" theory, as taught by Daniel Parker.

I must now close, I have written in suffering. I have been confined to the room seventeen days, was taken very suddenly, and thought my time was up. My trouble is stomach and heart disorder, together with spinal affections and vertigo. I am still in a bad fix, writing and reading affects my head, and whole nervous system. I have written what I believe to be the truth; I want to be right.

May God Almighty teach his people the truth, and save them from every false way.

In afflictions,

H. J. REDD.

PINE GROVE, Ark., July 27, 1899.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—Yours of the 22d inst. came to hand yesterday. I was glad indeed to be remembered by you in christian love and fellowship. I have been passing through sore trials since I last wrote you. It has been a drought season in which I laid down my pen. During this time my mother was taken from me by death, and it seemed more than I could bear; I felt as though I was ruined, and that I had no one to look to, and nowhere to go, but I was brought to a halt by the Scripture, "My people doth not consider." When I found it, it read thus, "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, my people do not consider." Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory, I was brought to consider the wonderful works of God, and his goodness and mercy to us poor, vile creatures. I once more took up my pen to tell of my rebellion, and that I had forgotten that there was a balm in Gilead, and a physician there. I hope that I was made to realize by an almighty hand something of my nothingness, and of the fullness of him who filleth all in all. I was brought low, and he helped me. Last Friday, Saturday and Sunday was our district and union meeting. Elder James, of Prescott, Ark., and a young minister who is not ordained, were present with us, and we had a good meeting with many visiting brethren with us. As I have written you, there has been some disorders among some of the churches here, but now it is hoped that all will again be brought into peace and order. The tree is known by its fruit, and when love is manifested it is the fruit of the Spirit, and it yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

You spoke of those who seemed to be wandering in the direction of "conditional time salvation." Yes, there have been seeming differences, which have led to extreme expressions. You remember my dream of the church having to be sifted to find who was the wrong one, who had caused the confusion, when I thought it was me, and of the loom with the warp in it, and of all the members having to walk on the thread, and that I broke through? This was in the time of the confusion concerning these things. There has, I think, been a sifting, and the flesh has been sifted out, and Christ has come in weaving in his love, as I saw in my second dream, and when he wove in his love it was neither warp nor filling, but one solid body. Dear brother, a church in peace is all one. There is union and love. "Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." The differences among the brotherhood are only seeming, as I hope and believe. The flesh or old man gets stirred up, and there has to be a sifting, and then they come together purified and rejoicing in Christ, and having no confidence in the flesh. Some have said that they used the word absolute in connection with predestina-

tion, to strengthen it, or to show how strong they believed it, but to me God's predestination is strong enough; it is as strong as he is, and he is our strength and Redeemer, and no word supplied can make it any stronger; but I do not fall out with any one for using the word, and those in this section, who say "time, or common salvation," do not mean by it that they do anything of themselves, when they admonish to christian duty, or say that the brethren should work out what God works in. You know that the Scriptures say, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure." He gives us the will, and the strength to do his will, and not unto us, but unto him, be all the glory given. As the expression, "time salvation," is not used in the Scriptures, it is not needful to use it either, for salvation is of the Lord. But I would not fall out with those who do use it, so long as they give all the glory to God. I do love the preaching of admonitions, it stirs up the pure mind to love and good works. Paul says, "For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

Dear brother, I am a poor, weak, little, insignificant thing, but I love to write you of these things, and I love to read your writings, for you can express so fully what I believe, while it seems that I can only hint at it.

The editorial of Elder Gilbert Beebe in July 15th number of the SIGNS, is just the kind of preaching I love to hear, and it is full proof that there is no difference between the Old School Baptists here and there. What he wrote is what is called "conditional time salvation" here, and yet he believed in absolute predestination of all things. The writers of the SIGNS all hold what we as a people believe. I have correspondents in Texas, and they find no difference only in the case of a few extreme expressions and words. But, dear brother, all things must work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose, and these things of which I have been speaking, are among the all things, and they will work for good, and it teaches us not to make a brother an offender for a word, and that instead of getting stirred up by an expression, we should seek for the true meaning of the speaker. Thus it brings about greater carefulness, yea, every trial is for some good and wise purpose. Some needed lesson must be thus learned. He is a God of wisdom, of power, of love and of mercy; he is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. O, that we, by his grace, might be able to trust him in all things; cursed is man that trusteth in man, or maketh flesh his arm; when we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption. I have found this to be true, but he has said by the prophet, "Trust ye in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." I have never, of myself, been able to do these things, but must confess with the apostle that without him I can do nothing, but like the apostle can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me; it is of his fullness that we have all received, and grace for grace.

"Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days:
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

"Self-righteous souls on works rely,
And boast their moral dignity:
But when I lisp a song of praise,
Each note shall echo, Grace, free grace."

Remember me at a throne of grace. May God bless you, and enable you to continue to write to the comfort of the children.

Yours in hope of a blessed rest, and a home beyond the grave,

LUCY A. SEARLE.

[It has never been our wish to make a brother an offender for the use of a word, neither would we seek to force the use of a word upon any one else. We are glad that the brethren, in the section where our sister resides, have found that in reality they are all one. We do not doubt that in many cases where differences exist, they are more seeming than real. How careful we should be, as our sister says, in treating of what seems to be a difference, lest we hurt where there is no need of hurting, and divide where there is no need of division. Our contention is like that of our sister, that grace should not be dethroned. Like Elder Gilbert Beebe, we believe in exhortation, and like him we believe in unlimited predestination. We have been told that the last sermon that he ever preached was from the text, "Be ye reconciled to God," and that it was a most solemn admonition to his brethren. We do not use the word absolute, because that would imply that God's predestination needs strengthening, and as our sister says, absolute adds nothing to the word. What God predestinates must from his very nature and attributes be absolute, and therefore there is no need of using the word. On the other hand, the minds of the people of God ought to be stirred up by exhortation, according to the pattern of the apostles. Our sister says that she loves that sort of preaching, so do we. We feel as a brother in Black Rock, Md., once said to us, "I love that sort of preaching that tells me my faults." He did not of course mean that he wanted the preacher to stand up in the pulpit and say in so many words, Brother B. is guilty of such and such things, but that the word itself should search him, and show him his faults. We love this, and we believe that all the people of God love it also. We shall never have any quarrel with those who speak or write as the sister has done above.—Ed.]

Kansas, Ill., Jan. 22, 1900.

Dear Brother Beebe:—I send herewith a letter from Elder J. G. Sawin, for your consideration, and publication if you think proper. I feel that it is so good that some others that are like myself, needing admonition, will be profited in reading it.

JAMES M. TRUE.

Mattoon, Ill., Jan. 17, 1900.

Dear Brother True:—Brother Spitler showed me a letter from you to-day, and also one you had received from Elder Bartley. It was with many thoughts and reflections that I read them both. Though I had written you some time ago, yet I am prompted to address you a few lines this afternoon, albeit I hardly know on what line to write you, or what to say that would interest, comfort or encourage you midst the strange environments that now seem to confront you, as well as ourselves. What are we to do? What can we do? Shall we not stand still and see the salvation of the Lord? He only can deliver the righteous from the snares of them that would rend asunder the gates of Zion. In doing this, that is, standing still, &c., we do not cease to be true Israelites, if we ever were, in a spiritual sense, members of the holy priesthood. If we, my brother, have a mission to preach Christ and him crucified, let us try to

do so in the name of the Lord, and with the strength he gives us. The Lord does not require us to modify or compromise the doctrine of free, sovereign, unfrustrable grace, in order to gain the patronage and respect of the surrounding religious bodies and professions. If for what we teach and preach we have "a thus saith the Lord," we need have no fear that men can harm us in the least. They may revile and say many evil things against the truth, but the truth will stand against the combined assaults of men and devils. If our enemies cannot endure sound doctrine, and persist in teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, if they will join themselves to their idols, and thunder forth great swelling words against the sovereignty of God, why even that is no more than they have always done. The church will never be rid of these pestilent and turbulent spirits. He who was cradled in Bethlehem's manger was also persecuted, reviled and forsaken of men. Shall we expect less? Are we to ascend to the portals of glory "on flowery beds of ease?" They that rise up in our own midst and scoff at the comforting doctrine of God's predestinating grace, were foretold to us by Paul. The time has come when they will not endure sound doctrine. They seek to soften, modify and make "smoother than butter" the foreknowledge of God and his predestinating power and wisdom. They want to make it so plain that the wisdom of the world, and the carnal mind may comprehend the wonderful mystery. They, as well as we, are in the hands of the Lord. They will not take one step farther than he wills. When the limit of man's wrath is reached, it will be turned unto praise, for "he maketh the wrath of man to praise him." His power has been supreme in all ages, and his faithfulness has never yet failed. But we are not to think lightly of cankerous words that are being said and written about the sovereignty of God, nor yet the railings and abuse that is being heaped upon those who contend fearlessly and earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. We are to beware of false teachers, and their pernicious, God-dishonoring doctrines. But in doing so it is well that the flesh should be kept in subjection, that the Spirit of Christ should rule all our actions. Such being the case, charity, that vaunteth not itself, will ever help us to succor those who are being confused and led astray by the wily advocates of a "conditional time salvation and free moral agency." In meekness, in fear, and though it be in weakness and much trembling, let us hew to the line in defense of the truth, that truth that has stood and will continue to stand against the combined efforts of her foes. The saddest part of all this controversy is the fact that so many good brethren all over the country are becoming bewildered through the sophistry of those who "teach for doctrine the commandments of men." You note as well as I, that they have no charity for those who disagree with them. In their discussions they seem entirely void of any christian spirit. I am glad brother Durand and others have, in their utterances, displayed such a meek, brotherly spirit, and it was in thought of this that I feel to write as I have done. My sympathies go out for those brethren who are being led astray; I feel that we should deal tenderly with them, but at all times using great plainness of speech in our efforts to affirm the doctrine that has been our hope and comfort for so many years. If for it we are persecuted, reviled and slandered, we will remember that in like manner they persecuted the Savior.

I appreciate your surroundings. The ordeal is a trying one, but your condition might have been tenfold worse. You are separated from those who disbelieve the plain teachings of the Bible, and you are in a position as opportunity offers, to lift up a standard unto the people, without fear of what men can do unto you.

But I must close. What I have hurriedly written is submitted for your comfort. My mind is so wandering that I have little knowledge of what to write to interest you in this hour of distress.

Love to sister True and your daughter and family.

Your brother, I trust, in hope,

J. G. SAWIN.

BROOME CENTRE, N. Y., March 16, 1900.

DEAR AND PRECIOUS BROTHER BEEBE:—I have just received the SIGNS, and read Elder Ker's remarks on Matthew xxiii. 37, 38: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." I feel to indorse all that Elder Ker has said in the matter, or on the subject, but as he said, "I would be glad if others would write upon the same text," I feel a desire to write you some of my thoughts for your opinion, not for publication, as I do not wish to crowd out better matter.

These are the words of the Savior, and he repeats the word "Jerusalem" twice, giving us to understand that it is of importance, and that we should be particular to notice it. What does "Jerusalem" mean? It must mean something. Does it not have reference to the law? Surely the law kills. Christ had not yet died, and the law was in full force. It would not consent to have the "children" gathered by Christ Jesus; they looked on him as a man, saying, Is not this the carpenter's son? surely we know him, he is of very poor or low origin. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and became the first-fruits of them that slept." "For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Here now is freedom, the law has been satisfied and made honorable. Now the children are no more under the law, it having no dominion over them, there is nothing to hinder their being gathered. He gathers them because they are children, not to make them children; they were his in the ancients of eternity. In fact they have always been his, he is their life and their all. "And ye would not." Who would not? "Jerusalem" would not (the law). When Christ satisfied the law there was nothing to hinder the gathering, but as long as the law holds dominion over them there could be no gathering until that was satisfied. We must remember this is the old "Jerusalem." In my early experience I thought this "Jerusalem" had reference to that "holy Jerusalem" that came down from God out of heaven, but I find it is the one (the law) that killed and stoned the prophets (heirs of his kingdom). Children, do you not feel them? Are you not stoned, yea, killed, as it were, very often? Again, do you not occasionally get a glimpse of that heavenly Jerusalem, and eat of the goodly land? This new Jerusalem is protected by a wall of fire (the Lord God). The old one by a wall of stones built by men's hands, which must be thrown down completely. Methinks I can see a little, in fact all is conditionalism in this old law of works, but when he writes his law in

our minds and prints it in our hearts, and makes us heirs and kings and priests unto God, we feel to rejoice and give God all the glory, and sing that it is all of grace, and grace only.

I do not know as I have made it plain to you, so you can view the matter as I do; I would like your opinion of my views.

Brother Beebe, I feel you will pardon me for writing you my foolish thoughts, but I felt so impressed that I have shot at a venture. I have written hurriedly, and as thoughts came in my mind.

We are quite well at present, I hope to be able to be at your meeting next June. When well with you remember poor me.

Your most unworthy brother, if one at all,

D. M. LEONARD.

[BROTHER Leonard says the foregoing letter is not written for publication, but we feel it is too good to be withheld from our readers, and we feel that we are sufficiently acquainted with him to know that he will pardon our disobedience. As to our personal opinion of his views, the foregoing attests our hearty approval.—ED.]

MONTGOMERY, Ala , Dec. 23, 1899.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I will herewith inclose a letter received from Elder H. M. Curry, whom we all in this part of the country esteem very highly in the faith of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. I have received from this letter comfort and strength in the firm standing upon that Rock which is God. By the prophet Isaiah he says, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a chief cornerstone, a tried stone; he that believeth shall not make haste. Yes, our God leads by the still waters and green pastures, and causes us to "rise up and sit down," and hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, (as some say) but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. It is this salvation our dear Elder Curry came among us preaching, when he came first to this part of the country, which is like oil from the flinty Rock, that causes the face to shine, and wine from the cluster, or on the lees, that cheers the heart of every child of grace. And also it is the bread of the body, or church, of our dear Lord. We have no doubt of one that brings this doctrine.

Yours in hope,

W. P. BURKS.

PLEASANT PLAINS, Ill., Oct. 29, 1899.

MR. W. P. BURKS—MY DEAR BROTHER:—Your kind answer to my letter was duly received. I need not tell you, my dear brother, that I was glad to hear from you. It seems like old times, good old times, to receive a letter from you. It brings to my recollection many pleasant reminiscences of the times when I used to see you often, and oft partake of your kind hospitality. Those were pleasant days to me I assure you, and anything that recalls them, recalls with them many precious things.

I am about as when you saw me last; if you should meet me never so unexpectedly, you would know me, for I have changed so little. I am still living in the same doctrine and hope, and endeavoring in the same weakness to preach Christ and him crucified, for the salvation of sinners, both for time and eternity. My labors are in weakness and much fear and trembling. I still realize daily that in my flesh dwells no good thing. I am

still in such a condition that "when I would do good, evil is present with me." I sometimes have the will, but to perform that which is good I find not.

The doctrine of the total depravity, both of saint and sinner, is a fixed thing with me; it is indelibly written in my heart and in my conscience; I behold it upon all sides in the conduct of others, and it is abundantly taught in the word of God; so from these concurring witnesses, I cannot escape it, no matter how hateful it may appear either to me or to others; there is no way to avoid it but to deny the truth, and God so far has prevented me from doing that. It is not because there is in me no enmity to this truth, but because God constrains me to tell it.

I suppose there have been many changes in Montgomery since I saw you. Time will bring changes, though sad they may be, but we are journeying to a country, my dear brother, where changes never come, where sin cannot disturb, and where life instead of being one continual conflict, will be a treasure sublime. We shall some time realize that for which we hope here; we shall arise in the image and likeness of Christ, because God in his grace has ordained it so. He hath predestinated us unto the adoption of children, and hath wrought in us a hope of that adoption, and all the powers of hell can never come between us and that to which God has ordained us. The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our King, the Lord is our Lawgiver; he will save us.

Give my kindest regards to all your family and all the friends.

Yours as ever,

H. M. CURRY.

OXFORD, N. Y., Feb. 28, 1900.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I want to send a very dear letter for you to publish, if you think best. I found so much to comfort me in it that I want others to read it. The dear sister is willing, if you think best.

From a very poor little sister,

MRS. E. S. BREWSTER.

PENNINGTON, N. J., Dec. 2, 1899.

MY DEAR LITTLE SISTER:—You asked me to write you about my experience. I have not felt that I could, but will try to write you a little. It seems impossible to write or tell it, as it seems no words can express such things. As I look back now, it seems that I can hardly remember the time when I did not love the people at the old brick meeting-house, and wish that I might understand the love that I saw among them, but it was not until I was taken sick with the fever that I felt my sins were forgiven. Suddenly the room was filled with light, and a voice spoke to me telling me not to be afraid, it would be all right with me. I cannot tell you the joy and peace that came to me. It was not that I would not die, for that had not troubled me, but that if Jesus loved me then my sins were forgiven, and I surely knew the peace that passeth all understanding. This feeling never left me for weeks, and I had perfect faith in it until after the fever left me, and I was so weak and lower than at any time, I think that I seemed to sink down until I stood in a dark, cold valley, and could feel my limbs growing cold; then the doubt came, and I thought it was all a mistake, and that I must pass through that lonely place, for I thought, This is surely the valley of the shadow of death. But instantly again the Savior was with me, and I seemed to lean on him. My shrinking was all gone, and I could say, "I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they

comfort me." It no longer looked lonely or dark, and it seemed harder to come back again to the world with all its cares. For about four months this peace never left me, and as I look back, instead of a time of suffering, it seems like the happiest time of my whole life. After this I began to be troubled, and to think that I might have imagined it all, as I had been delirious the most of the time. Then I saw that if it had been real, I had no right to hide it, but I felt that the church would never believe it, even if I could tell them, and this seemed to me the hardest thing that I could be called upon to do. I thought that I would ask some one about it, but saw even then that the church was all one, and that I had as well talk to all as to one. Then I searched the SIGNS, hoping to find some one like me, but they all talked about such deep conviction of sin, and I could not tell of that. During this time I had not felt free to go to the Bible; I thought it was written for the elect, and if I was not one of them I had no right to it, but this feeling passed away, and I read Paul's experience, Acts ix. 3-6, and I cannot tell you what a comfort it was to me. About this time Elder White came to Hopewell, and preached about the sheepfold, and I felt that certainly I was outside. I could no longer keep it to myself, but felt that I must ask some one if I had any right to hope? I received a letter a short time before from one who had told me some of her experience, and as she was not a member I felt more free to ask her, and I received such a comforting answer, but still could not feel that the church would receive such an one as I, for I saw myself now a greater sinner than ever before.

Two weeks before the church meeting Elder Chick spoke of it in this way: first the world, then the law, then the gospel. Now I felt that I could not ask them to receive me, for I did not think that I had felt the law as so many seemed to, but this did not kill my hope, but rather it grew stronger, and I found that no man could take it from me. I hoped that the impression to go to the church would leave me, as it had twice before, and especially as we had a house full of company all that week, and I could not see my way clear to go to the meeting. But I found when the time came that these things could not stand in the way. Finally, while they were at dinner, I went away by myself, and if I ever prayed I did then, that I might know if this was my duty, and that I would do it. Just for an instant I saw what was before me if I did not obey, and I hesitated no longer, but felt satisfied to do what was required of me, even if they did not receive me. I felt that I was stripped nearer naked of all thought of self than I have ever been. All the way there, and all through the service, which I do not think that I heard, I seemed to hear over and over again, "My grace is sufficient for you." I have never felt that I had anything to do with that day. It certainly was not in my own strength that I went. Surely this is free grace and election. If it had depended upon anything that I had to do, I would never have had a name among you.

Sunday evening.—I will begin my interrupted writing again. I have not told you anything but a few outlines. There is one thing more of which I wish to speak. After the association at Hopewell, I went to my work Friday afternoon feeling troubled about many things. A dear old sister came to the place where I was working. When she came in I thought, Why do I feel like this toward her? I then saw what fellowship really

meant; it was not her, but Christ in her, that I saw. It came to me with such beauty as I never saw before.

I have been blessed in being able to get to meeting for some time, but expect the roads will be bad now.

I must close now, hoping to hear from you soon.

Your unworthy sister,

ALTHA DRAKE.

WEST RUSHVILLE, Ohio, April 11, 1900.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SON:—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I received a copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, dated November 15th, 1899, being busy at the time, it was mislaid, and when I wanted to look at it I could not find it, until just recently. I have read it carefully, and while there seems to be a difference in the way of expressing ourselves, I fail to see any difference in the fundamental principles of the doctrine of God our Savior. If the Circular Letter of the Juniata Old School Baptist Association, on page 691, of November 15th, 1899, contains what the brethren of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES believe, they certainly believe in a, I will call it, a common salvation, for that is the scriptural term, and I like to use scriptural language. Conditional, or time salvation, absolute predestination of all things, cannot be found within the lids of the Holy Bible, and therefore have been added to it. There has been a loud controversy on these two subjects, that I have been eyewitness to, and if there has been brought about anything in the way of uniting the two contending parties, I have failed to see it. There has been too much said on both sides, both sides have been calling each other hard names, which is contrary to the teaching of God's word, and is all of the flesh.

There is certainly no child of God that has been brought to see himself a poor, lost, helpless, ruined sinner in the sight of a just and holy God, that could claim that he could do anything to merit the least of God's favors. If I knew how to get out of darkness I would do it, and forever remain in the sunlight of my blessed Redeemer. But Solomon the wise man says, "There is no man that hath power over the spirit, to retain the spirit." —Eccl. viii. 8. Here is proof of our weakness. Every heaven-born soul was brought to know that in and of himself he could do nothing, the last vistage of hope was taken from him, and he was made to fall helplessly on the Lord for every needed blessing. We find a fleshly disposition in the disciples of Jesus to become greater than their brethren, but the Savior taught them that they had fallen into an error that they would have to be converted from, and become as a little child, that they might enter into the kingdom of heaven. Now what are we to learn from this? Does it not teach our helplessness and dependence on the Lord? The little child is dependent on its father and mother for every needed blessing that it receives. Now I do not think that any of our brethren would claim any more than this. Then why contend about words to no profit? It looks to me that the most of this controversy about common salvation, spoken of in God's word, is, as I have said heretofore, in the way the brethren have expressed themselves. The language of some conveys the idea that the common salvation spoken of is left for us to work out in and of ourselves. Now, while some of the Scriptures seem to bear out this idea, there are other Scriptures that are not in harmony with that rendering, and therefore are calculated to confuse

the mind of good brethren. I will give one or two instances to prove this: "Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself."—John v. 19. Here we find Jesus as the Son of man destitute of all power in and of himself. Again, he said to his disciples, "For without me ye can do nothing."—John xv. 5. Hence we find it is all of the Lord, from first to last; there is nothing left for the poor, puny arm of man to do. If it is all of the Lord from first to last, why call it two salvations? Why not say that it commences in time and ends in eternity? I certainly think that none of our brethren would object to this rendering. Paul speaks of another gospel, but I know of nowhere that he speaks of another salvation. May all heed the admonition of the apostle Paul, "Let us therefore follow after the things that make for peace, and the things wherewith one may edify another."—Romans xiv. 19. If we fail to do these things, I do not know where charity will come in, or love to one another. I have, or want to have, love for all my brethren, whether they can see with me or not.

May love flow from heart to heart, is the prayer of your unworthy brother, I hope,

JOS. A. RUFFNER.

[BROTHER Ruffner says, "Both sides have been calling each other hard names." We are indeed sorry to hear of any who contend for salvation by grace alone, descending to "calling hard names," or attempting to ridicule or deride those with whom they cannot agree. While we have read in some of the publications contending for conditional time salvation, a number of uncouth and slang names applied to those with whom they disagreed, yet we are not aware of a single vulgar or rowdy appellation having appeared in the SIGNS, and we hope that none of our brethren may be so left to the carnal passions of their flesh as to retaliate with revilings for revilings. If you are right, and they are in the wrong, remember who revealed the truth to you, and that you have nothing but what you have received, and have nothing wherewith to boast.—ED.]

ST. THOMAS, Ontario, Dec. 23, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN:—One more year has rolled around and has brought us that much nearer to our eternal home, and it also admonishes me that it is time to renew my subscription to the dear old SIGNS, which come to me regularly well filled with good news from far and near. Some have long articles, others not so long, but all having the same theme, "salvation by grace and grace alone." That is the theme I love, the theme that gives God all the glory in the salvation of his people from the first struggle to the last. This is what I have to say about it, if I know anything, or if indeed I have begun the christian race.

Many a time I wonder why the dear Lord ever thought of me, so careless and unconcerned as I was at the time when, as I hope, the Lord showed me that I was a great sinner, and I would have remained so if left to myself. Any salvation for time and for eternity that is not of the Lord, is of no use to me. I for one, have no claims nor merit to offer whatever, I seem so far behind all the rest, if indeed I am in the way at all. But I love the Lord's people, and love to be with them, and love to hear them tell or Jesus and his love; his love is more to me than anything here below. O, that we could love the dear Lord more, and serve him better, and be kept more in the strait and narrow

way which few find, and which leads to eternal life. O, that we could have more love to each other as the children of God, who are of one family, which is a strong evidence of our inheritance, or that we have passed from death unto life. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another, said our blessed Savior. I am sure that the readers of the SIGNS have no reason to complain from any standpoint, they have come to us well laden with excellent articles this year. I hail their appearance with as much relish as I did thirty years ago. I trust that the friends and patrons will make an extra effort this year to pay promptly, if such be the case, the dear ones, who do so much for us, will be greatly relieved, and I think we will feel much better also, and that we have done our duty.

Yours in hope,

A. J. BLACK.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—This brief letter from dear Elder Thomas Jones, of the united and strong Antioch church, of which he and his older brother, Elder Wm. P. Jones, are the highly esteemed pastors, is so clear and expressive that I take the liberty of submitting it to you, with a brief one also just received from our very worthy brother, Judge Palmer. They will kindly pardon this liberty, I am sure; for their fitly spoken words of divine wisdom and truth are like apples of gold in pictures of silver, and too precious to be concealed. You and your dear readers will feel as I do in this, and will be strengthened and comforted in reading the letters of these two aged and strong men.

D. BARTLEY.

SHERIDAN, Ind., Feb. 27, 1900.

ELDER D. BARTLEY—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—You spoke in your letter of things that have recently appeared in some of our religious periodicals on the subject of the common salvation of christians. They admit that eternal salvation is the work of God, and they affirm that their time salvation is conditional; and some have said that it is of works. Grace is put as the cause of one, and works as the cause of the other; so that I cannot see any relation between them.

I understand the Scriptures to teach that salvation, from first to last, is of God and by grace, whether it be from death in sin, or from error, or delusion, or darkness, or it may be from trusting in ourselves, or even from trusting in others; it is all of grace through our Lord Jesus Christ. I hope that I have had some sweet realization of this blessed truth in my experience. There is no danger of us ascribing too much to the grace of God; for all our salvation is of him.

Your brother, I hope,

T. J. JONES.

FRANKFORT, Ind., March 2, 1900.

ELDER DAVID BARTLEY—DEAR SIR AND BROTHER:—I am pleased to see in the February SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that you have written an article on the subject of which we talked.

I regard your article able, sound and well timed. Well timed because man's self-esteem and pride has so developed that he cannot acknowledge the sovereignty of God without detracting from his own imaginary greatness. I hope that many persons may read your article, and may be led thereby to reflect upon the greatness, the infinity, of God, the Creator of the universe, and upon the littleness, the infinitesimal smallness of man, a creature and an inhabitant of the molecule of matter called earth,

I thank you for the article, and for the January and February numbers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Very truly your friend,

T. H. PALMER.

QUINCY, Ill., April 11, 1900.

BRETHREN:—I feel constrained to say a few words in commendation and indorsement of the SIGNS. I am well aware that it does not need my approval. All my criticisms are friendly, loving ones. When I read the many sound, able, instructive and comforting articles that appear in all its numbers, I am richly repaid, yes, cheered, comforted and delighted. It does seem to me that the declaration of Jesus to his disciples, that "Without me ye can do nothing," does forever settle the matter of creature ability. Those whom he addressed were his chosen, elect of God and precious, especially favored it occurs to me. It proves how utterly helpless they were without Christ. Then if it is impossible for the regenerated person to perform good works without God working in them, how utterly impossible it is for an unregenerated person to do so; so it is all of grace. Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him," and, "No man can come unto the Father but by me," and, "Ye must be born again," and, "This is the work of God, that ye believe in him whom he hath sent." Jesus is the author and finisher of our salvation, he is the author of our faith; he is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Christ is the elder Brother, so all the redeemed, the regenerated, have the same Father, so it is as certain that all the children are saved, as that Christ was begotten of God, and came to seek and to save his brethren. The promises are sure and certain of fulfillment as that God is. I am so glad that our salvation is not contingent or conditional. It is a blessed thing that it is not left contingent, for we would all fail.

Yours in the best of bonds, yes, I say the best of bonds, for it is a blessed tie that binds us in sweet fellowship and communion.

J. G. WILLIAMS.

BIRDVILLE, Texas, March 10, 1900.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed find two dollars to place to my credit for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the only paper I have read that has never varied from sound doctrine. This may be the last remittance to you, as I am so blind I cannot write only when I have all advantage of the sunshine, and before this year is out, if alive, I will be blind. But I want your good work to go on, whether I read or not. I have not heard "time salvation" preached for a year, or the predestination of all things denied. I know one brother that received a copy of the SIGNS for Dec. 1st, 1899, that never could understand the doctrine before, but that paper removed the scales from his eyes, and he can now understand as you do. May the SIGNS continue to publish the letters of her many able writers.

J. D. PARKER.

JOHNSONS GROVE, Tenn., March 13, 1900.

G. BEEBE'S SON—VERY DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—Inclosed you will find post-office order for two dollars to pay my subscription for this year, 1900. I indorse your paper, the SIGNS, in full so far, on exhortation and present salvation, that it is all of grace from first to finish, both for time and eternity.

May God bless you in your labors of love, is my prayer.

J. M. WHITENTON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1900.

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EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PSALM XXIII. 4.

DEAR BROTHER:—Will you at some time convenient write through the SIGNS upon Psalm xxiii. 4? I have long desired to read a sermon, or hear one from that beautiful text. Can you oblige a very little sister? if one at all, I know that I am the least of all.

BESSIE BATEMAN.

ST. THOMAS, Ontario.

When such requests come to us we always feel as though we would be glad to write something that would prove of comfort or edification to those who make the requests, but yet we do often feel like shrinking from the work, because of the fact that we can see so little of the great things contained in the subject that may be presented. This is especially so with regard to the Scripture named by sister Bateman. This verse named, and the whole Psalm, have many times seemed full of meaning, and the assurances contained in the Psalm have sometimes come to our own heart as a gift from the Holy Spirit to us. But if we should hesitate to write because of the fullness and sweetness of the subject, which we have no language to properly express, then we might also refuse to speak or write concerning any portion of the word of God, for all is far beyond the grasp of finite minds. At the best we can only speak of what we have ourselves found in the word, and that with stammering tongue. We also know that this is as true of all our brethren as it is of us. It is true of us all that we can speak on the housetop only that which we have heard in secret. It is also true that experiences of the goodness, mercy and grace of God, are often given to the children when they do not know the meaning of that which they do feel, and when that Scripture which declares the same thing is not opened to their understanding; but when that Scripture is opened to them, then it appears wonderful indeed, and it becomes a witness to them that the exercises of their heart are truly of the Lord.

In this Psalm one of the sheep speaks of the goodness of the Shepherd. With grateful words he tells of the mercy, faithfulness, long-suffering and power of the Shepherd, and with what tender, grateful and joyful language is the bounty of the Shepherd described. In the tenth chapter of John, the Shepherd speaks, and it is wonderful to see how the voice of the Shepherd, and the voice of the sheep agree. Jesus said, "I am the good Shepherd." David speaks of goodness and mercy following him all the days of his life. "Surely," he says, it shall be so. The Shepherd speaks of the fold, and of the gathering in of the sheep. David speaks of dwelling in the house of the Lord forever. Jesus says that by him the sheep shall go in and out and find pasture. David says, He leadeth me beside the still waters, he maketh me to lie down in green pastures. Jesus says, The hireling, whose own the sheep are not, fleeth when the wolf cometh, but that the good shepherd will lay down his life for the sheep. The wolf cannot touch them save over his dead body. David said in the text named, "Though I walk through the

valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." David said, "He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." Jesus said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." David said, "Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." How blessedly does the faithful word of the Shepherd, and the word of faith of the sheep agree. With David the Lord had fulfilled his promise, and this twenty-third Psalm is the record of that fulfillment, and the mercy shown to the sheep in the past forbids any question concerning the future. What the Shepherd has done he will continue to do, is the confidence of the sheep, and this confidence continues because the Shepherd never ceases to be the Shepherd. The Lord is my Shepherd.

We do not forget that in the highest sense of all, David in the Psalm personifies the blessed Redeemer, whose Shepherd was the Father. Every word of this wonderful Psalm was most blessedly true of the Son of man and the Son of God. In all the weary, toil-worn journey of his earthly pilgrimage, he could say, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." And all the precious promises and assurances of this Psalm come to the children because their elder Brother receives them for them. Of his fullness do they all receive, and grace for grace. The holy anointing oil of these precious words of assurance come down to the sheep through the Shepherd, as the oil upon the head of Aaron came from his head down even to the skirts of his garments. It should never be forgotten that all the comfort and blessedness of every word of God comes to us only as they are poured out in him for us. If we receive of the oil of gladness and joy, it is because God, his God has anointed him with it above his fellows. But Jesus is recognized in all the word as the chief Shepherd of the true Israel, and so we cannot go astray when we thus apply this Psalm.

David was but the inspired mouthpiece of all the sheep, and by the sheep, we here mean all who believe in Jesus, and have come to be his followers. The feeblest, humblest, most sinful and unbelieving, are not presumptuous when they receive the comfort of this Psalm. The Lord is not only the Shepherd of the sheep when they do not stray, and when they do stray then ceases to be their Shepherd; indeed, the office of the shepherd finds especial prominence and is greatly magnified when the sheep do stray. Witness the parable of the lost sheep, and the words in the Psalm, "He restoreth my soul." Naturally the shepherd may be somewhat at ease when the sheep are in sight, feeding in the green pastures, or lying down by still waters, but when one has gone out of sight, how he bestirs himself till he finds it again.

If any one who may read these words feels that surely it is too much to claim that the Lord is my Shepherd, because I am so full of wandering, so silly and so unprofitable, that one also may be sure that he or she is included in the Shepherd's care. If the affections of the soul have wandered, be sure, doubting one, that the Lord will restore thy soul. He has done it, and he will do it again and again. "He restoreth my soul." The

word restoreth implies continuance of action; it is a constant experience; it is a constant need also.

How personal is the Psalm. It is *I*, and *my*, and *me*, all the way through the Psalm. It would be true to say the Lord is *our* Shepherd, but David speaks from personal feeling, he is communing personally with the great Shepherd. How closely he comes in this Psalm, to the words of the spouse in the song of songs, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." No human tongue can ever tell all that this brief sentence of the spouse of Christ means; by every day experience glimpses of its meaning are revealed to the members of Christ. So the personal words of the Psalm reveal a closeness and sweetness and power of communion with the Lord, that cannot be expressed. All love, and longing, and gladness, and trust, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, are in these simple personal pronouns with which this short Psalm is filled.

Again, every word in the Psalm which expresses the work of the Lord toward the sheep, implies continuance. He does such things not only once or twice, but all through their pilgrimage. This is the daily life of the sheep. Such words as maketh, leadeth, restoreth, preparest, anointest, imply a continuation of all this work of the Lord. In all the Psalm there is not a condition even implied; he does not say, or seem to think, that any of these faithful things of God depend upon his faithfulness. Suppose some one says to David, How will it be should you wander astray? He says, He restoreth my soul. Suppose some one says, How will it be should you prove ungrateful and forgetful? David says, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." But will not God cast you out if you do not in all things honor and obey him? David says, "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." There is no element of doubt in the mind of the psalmist at all. Yet we know that David sinned, and knew and confessed that he was a sinner, but grace reigned, and in this was his trust, and here in grace, the grace of the Shepherd, was all his anticipation.

In the verse especially presented by our sister, he speaks of all the dangers of the way: "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." In the green pastures, and beside the still waters, were comforts and joys beyond expression; the Shepherd made him to dwell there; in these places there is no sign or anticipation of danger, every foe is far away, the sheep dwell in safety alone, and their fountain is upon a land of corn and wine, they lie down and are quiet, they feed and are satisfied, and they owe all to the Shepherd, he is with them, and all is well. But suppose they are led in dark and gloomy defiles; suppose they are in the presence of enemies; suppose wild beasts, as the lion, and the bear, and the wolf, are roaring against them, and gaping upon them; suppose that robbers are only waiting to steal them away, how then will it be with them? David says, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." It is not death itself that is here passed through, but the shadow of it. If we keep close to the figure of the Shepherd and the sheep, all will be plain. The sheep says, "I will not be afraid, even though I am not led in green pastures, and by the still waters, but am called to pass along dangerous ways; death may seem near at hand; I may be passing under the very shadow of it, but it shall not come nigh me; the pestilence shall not touch me,

and ten thousand foes shall not have power to harm me." By my God, I will run through a troop, and leap over a wall, says David elsewhere, and this is the feeling here. What implicit confidence the sheep have in the Shepherd. No matter where I go, he leads me, and if he lead it is enough, I am sure that all is well where he guides me. So Job was led in troubled places, and saw deep sorrow, but still he trusted in God. He said, When he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold. Paul, one of the sheep, said, We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. And once again David said, Though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, yet will not we fear. The God of Jacob is with us. No doubt David remembered that he once had been a keeper of sheep. Even now he was the shepherd of all Israel. Perhaps while he was penning these very words he remembered how he had watched for the sheep, and how he had slain the lion and the bear, and delivered the lambs from their rage, and how afterwards he had slain the giant of Gath for the deliverance of the flock of God. And now, as he had stood between the flock and all danger, and had wrought deliverance for them, so he rested in the chief Shepherd, as his faithful deliverer. He knew that the Shepherd would lead his flock only where they best and safest might abide. The timid sheep, looking on in the way, might see dark and gloomy places, and might hear just before the roar of the lion and the howl of the wolf, and these things were well calculated to fill him with dread, but one look at the Shepherd drives all these gloomy fears away, and he says, "I will fear no evil; my Shepherd is before me, and he cannot lead me into danger, or leave me to perish; and I have had full proof of his power, for I have seen him a risen conqueror over the last of foes; what should I fear beside?" Thus the sheep follows the good Shepherd, and danger ceases to affright; he fears no evil. But why? Just simply because the Shepherd is with him. If the Shepherd had departed then might he well fear, but the Shepherd has not gone away, and he never will leave his flock, he is with them; this is true all the time. It may be that the sheep does not at all times see the Shepherd, but the Shepherd sees him. It may be that the Shepherd is not at all times in the mind of the sheep, but the sheep are at all times in the mind of the Shepherd. The sheep may become utterly thoughtless of all danger, and cease to anticipate any foe, but the Shepherd of Israel never slumbers nor sleeps. Their safety does not depend upon their remembrance of him, or their keeping close to him, or their always watching to see the approach of enemies, but upon his remembrance of them, and his watchfulness for them. They can quietly rest and feed; they need no other guide or guard than the good Shepherd. It is all summed up in the words, "Thou art with me." This confidence comes through experience, he has been with them when they have needed him always before; no danger has ever come near to them to hurt them; out of what seemed to them most difficult places, they have always been delivered; they have had evidences as did Peter, that the Lord has prayed for them that their faith fail not, and to them has been given faith, which is that victory which overcometh the world. There are times when the much tried sheep of the flock feel that their burden is great, they have

no might against the great company which has come against them; inward foes and outward temptations assail them, they cannot make headway against the least and weakest of their foes; I shall one day fall by the hand of Saul they may cry, as did David once before, but one glimpse of the precious truth that the Shepherd is with them, serves to dispel all fear, and then, like the army of Jehoshaphat, they go out with the singers, and players upon instruments, in the forefront, and they sing and bless the Lord, as though the foes were already destroyed, and indeed, in the view of faith, the victory is already won. The Lord is with us, and we shall not need to fight. What safety, and peace, and rest, his presence affords.

"Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." The rod and staff are the emblems of the shepherd's calling. We have not been able to see this as has appeared to some; we have heard the thought advanced that the staff meant the support of the sheep, and the rod was the instrument of chastisement, but the sheep literally are not chastised by the rod, the rod is for an altogether different purpose. We read elsewhere about the sheep passing under the rod, by this they were numbered when they were led forth, and when they were brought into the fold. The rod was used to see that none were absent or lost. If one was astray, then that one was sought out, and the shepherd leaning upon his staff brought him home when he was found. The thought involved in the rod is not primarily affliction or chastisement, but security that none should ever be lost, or suffered to go finally astray. We have no fault to find with the sentiment of that beautiful song which was so common a few years ago, entitled, "Pass under the rod," but still the sentiment of the text upon which that song was founded was not the sentiment of the song. Rather the text signifies that all the people of God are numbered. The doctrine of election, and the final preservation of the saints to glory, is in it. So this same truth is in the rod as spoken of in the Psalm. David would say, I have been numbered among the sheep of the pasture; the rod has passed over me; I am in the fold, and I shall not perish.

The staff does present the thought of support. As the shepherd carries the lambs in his bosom he leans upon his staff. As he leads them out and into green pastures, or to rest in the fold at night, he leans upon his staff. Thus the staff became the emblem of support and help. If one should say, I have leaned upon the staff, it would be the same as though he said, I am carried by the shepherd. When David here says, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me," it is only another way of saying that the presence of the Shepherd was his stay and comfort. If any man come near to the sheep, and have not the rod and staff, the sheep will not recognize the shepherd, but the rod and staff when seen, say to them, the shepherd is near. "Thy rod and staff they comfort me." How sweet the seasons when the tried soul passes under the rod at the bidding of the Shepherd, and so comes to rest in the fold as one whom the Lord confesses for his own. How sweet to be borne upon the staff of the Shepherd, as the lambs are gently carried in his bosom. These are experiences which are sweet indeed.

We do not think that David here had any special reference to what we call death, and yet, to the believer, it is true that death is but a shadow, in which he having the presence of the Shepherd,

fears no evil. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Believers fall on sleep, and we do not fear sleep. O that it may be ours to say, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MARK XIII. 32.

"BUT of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."

As we do not feel competent, we shall not attempt to explain what seems to be hidden in the remarkable declaration of the text, but we will simply give such views as we have upon the subject, which if not satisfactory in settling all the queries which may be suggested, we hope may be edifying as far as they go.

The first inquiry suggested to our mind by the text, is the day and the hour alluded to. By comparing the thirteenth chapter of Mark with the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, we learn that three questions had been submitted by the disciples to our Lord, immediately after he had predicted the destruction of the buildings of the temple in Jerusalem, which were thus presented privately to Christ, as he sat upon the Mount of Olives. "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" The version of Mark reads, "Tell us when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?" The latter version seems to comprise the last two questions, as stated by Matthew in one, and make the coming of Christ which is alluded to, and the fulfillment of all things spoken of, as meaning precisely the same thing, and the same hour.

Whether the design of the disciples was to ask concerning the coming of Christ in the display of his power to overthrow the buildings of the temple, destroy Jerusalem, and execute the righteous judgments of God upon that devoted city, or to inquire of him concerning his second coming in all the power and glory of the Father, personally, to raise the dead and judge the world at the last day, has been a matter of some serious doubt with many of the Lord's people. From the statement of the two evangelists, we are inclined to consider the signs of Christ's coming, to extend from the period of Christ's resurrection from the dead and ascension in heaven, throughout the gospel dispensation, and until his final coming in the clouds of heaven, at the last day. The signs of his coming are like the signs of the approach of summer, when we see the trees in blossom, with such other indications as are usual to usher in that season of the year. And when the disciples should see the predictions of their Savior being fulfilled, in the destruction of Jerusalem, and in the development of the abomination that maketh desolate, standing in the holy, or once consecrated place, as in all other evidences which he would give them of his exaltation and power, both in the days of the primitive saints, and down to the end of time, every manifestation shall be to them a sign in conformation of the assurance which he has given them that he will surely come, according to his word, and receive them to himself to dwell with him in glory, forever and ever. If any object to this application of the subject, let such inform us, what less than this can be implied in the fulfillment of all these things? We admit the words, "these things," restrict the inquiry to the things of which they were speaking;

and if it can be satisfactorily established that the questions proposed by the disciples only referred to the literal destruction of Jerusalem, then we are not at liberty to apply it to the final consummation of all things. But if the end of the world, in their inquiry, means the same end, which is mentioned in 1 Corinthians xv. 24, and elsewhere in the word, we are right in our application of it to Christ's final coming, when he shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on the ungodly, and to be admired of all who love his appearing.

"But of that day and that hour knoweth no man." No man can calculate by any data within their reach, when it shall come. Whether the subject related to the end of the Jerusalem which then was, or to the end of this world, no man was able to tell the day nor hour, in either case. Had the intelligent Jews been able, by observation or calculation, to have determined the time and circumstances of their destruction, they would not have flattered themselves, as Josephus informs us they did, that God would deliver them, until the very last. When famine and pestilence raged within their walls, when the Roman army surrounded their city, when devouring flames enveloped their temple, and when reduced to the necessity of eating the flesh of one another, no terms of capitulation offered by Titus, the Roman Commander who was desirous to save the city, would be accepted by the infatuated Jews. If no man knew or could tell the hour of the overthrow of Jerusalem, is it reasonable to believe that any man can tell when the end of the world shall come? Yet there are many who have attempted to fix upon the day and the hour, and to demonstrate by mathematical calculation when the end shall come. But the charge which Christ on this occasion gave to the disciples is still applicable to the saints, "Take heed lest any man deceive you." False prophets, like Miller, and others, may attempt to demonstrate by scripture references, or rather by their construction of the Scriptures, when that day and hour shall come; but believe them not. Your Lord and Master assures you that they do not know. Astronomers may also try their skill, to demonstrate by the fixed laws of nature, when the end shall be, but no man knoweth, neither is it known by the angels in heaven, however superior they may be in intelligence to the sons of men, and whatever may have been confided to them; this mystery they cannot solve.

But the most remarkable expression of our text is the declaration, "*neither the Son, but the Father.*" Or as stated by Matthew, "*but my Father only.*" By this declaration, we simply understand that the precise time appointed in the counsel and purpose of God for the execution of what was alluded to in our subject, was not a matter of revelation; and as there is no medium of revelation from God to us, of the things which concern the spiritual kingdom but Jesus Christ, who is the Head in all things to his church, it is not committed as yet to the church, even in her Head, but held as a profound secret in the mind of the Father only. But because Christ is one with his church, as her Mediatorial Head, and in that character could say that the day and hour was not known to him, we do not infer that he is in anywise less or inferior to the Father in his eternal Godhead, or in his perfect knowledge of all things. For in him are "hid *all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*" —Col. ii. 3. We should remember that he not only sustains the relation of identity with the church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all,

but he is also one with the Father, and identified in the eternal, uncreated and self-existent Godhead. In his Godhead all things are naked and open to his eye, and he declares the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure, while as the Days-Man, or Mediator between God and men, he can say as recorded, Rev. i. 1–3, "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: who bear record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ and of all things that he saw."

In conclusion, we will call attention to the words of the apostles to the church of the Thessalonians, in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ, "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son or perdition."—2 Thess. ii. 1.–3. "And to you who are troubled, rest with us; when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe."—2 Thess. i. 7–10.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., August 1, 1857.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Feb. 28th, 1900, James M. Parker and Christiana Hall, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

By the same, March 13th, 1900, Edward E. Shriner and Lucy Alexander, both of the city of Wilmington, Del.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Jane Titus died Feb. 26th, 1900, in the 80th year of her age. She was baptized August 17th, 1884, into the fellowship of the New Valley church, by the writer. She was indeed a meek and lowly christian, one beloved by us all; against whom there never was an unkind word spoken of her, within nor without the church, so far as I know and believe. She attended her meeting regularly as long as able, which was up to a short time before her death. She died of cancer. In company with my wife I visited her a short time before her death. She was to my mind a beautiful example of the death of the righteous. Not a word of complaint, nor a fault to find, of man or God; all were good and kind to her, she had so much to be thankful for, so kind and loving was everybody. The meek shall inherit the earth.

Her funeral, I am told, was very largely attended. I was prevented from being present on account of my appointment in West Virginia. The Valley church has of late suffered the loss of several good and precious members. May we who are left remember we, too, must soon follow. May God remember in mercy and compassion the children, relatives and friends of the deceased. We do believe our loss is her gain, therefore we sorrow not as those who have no hope.

E. V. WHITE.

SISTER **Phebe Northrup** died in the city of Adrian, Mich., Nov. 15th, 1899, at the home of her son-in-law, Charles Vandoren, aged 79 years. She had been in very poor health for a year or two, gradually going down until she was suddenly stricken with paralysis, which soon ended in death. She was born in Chemung Co., N. Y., in 1820, and came to Michigan with her parents in 1831. She was married to Nathan Northrup in 1841. Her husband died in 1846, leaving her a widow with one child, a daughter, now Mrs. Charles Vandoren, with whom she has since lived. She united with the Baptist church at the early age of eighteen years, before the separation of the Old and New School Baptists took place. After that she united with the Old School Baptist church at Fairfield, where she remained a worthy and beloved member till the day of her death, always meeting with the church whenever it was possible to do so, and her health would permit. She was ever ready to stand as a witness in defense of the truth, and was a firm be-

liever in salvation by grace, free, unmerited grace. She chose the words to be used as a text at her funeral which reads, "Now Lord what wait I for? my hope is in thee." Also the hymns beginning, "Asleep in Jesus," and "Nearer my God to Thee," which was sweetly rendered. It was my privilege to see her often in the last few days she lived, and not a murmur was heard, but she was patient and loving to the end. Should I write volumes, I could not tell of her many noble traits of character, and the beautiful christian life she lived.

She leaves three sisters, a daughter and family, together with all that knew her, to mourn her departure, but we cannot wish her back, believing

"The Lord will watch over her dust,
Most precious it is in his sight,
And when for his jewels shall come,
Will take her to mansions of light."

MRS. H. TUTTLE.

ADRIAN, Michigan.

SISTER **Elvina Stout** died at her home near Ashland, Ill., March 20th, 1900, aged 82 years, 1 month and 2 days. She leaves a husband over ninety years of age, eight children, twenty-six grandchildren and twenty-one great-grandchildren, to mourn their loss. Sister Stout first united with the Indian Creek church, in Morgan Co., Ill. In 1843 she united with Union church, in Morgan Co., Ill., and has ever been a most faithful and devoted member. Her counsel was always sought, and her judgment was wise. She will be sadly missed by her church, but we realize that God's ways are just, and humbly bow to his will.

The following was written by sister Stout about two years before her death:

"I was born in Butler Co , Ohio, Feb. 18th, 1818, and came to Illinois in the fall of 1832 with my parents, Joseph C. and Phebe Denny; was married to Emley Stout, Feb. 27th, 1836. I was baptized in the Old School Baptist church in 1835, by Elder John Ray, and all these long years I have had a desire to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple, looking for the occupant of that temple, the only true and living God, infinitely good, holy, wise, just and almighty; the Sovereign of the universe, whose power is as boundless as his love; the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the author of our being, the preserver of our lives and the Savior of our souls. O, may I feel more thankful and more humble! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. How sweet to have a hope in Christ, and leave it all with him. He is all in all to me."

So our mother in Israel has died in this precious faith.

The funeral services were held at her home, conducted by her pastor, assisted by Elder J. B. Dobbs, of Pleasant Plains, Ill.

Thus one by one God's children are gathered home.

DIED—At her home in Miami Co., near Piqua, Ohio, April 2d, 1900, dear sister **Mahala Line,** (nee McKinley) aged 75 years, 6 months and 1 day. She was born Oct. 1st, 1824, and was married to Jesse Line, August 11th, 1850. They had five children, two boys and three girls, and three grandchildren. The two boys died in infancy; Sarah died at the age of eighteen. The other two survive her. The subject of this notice was baptized into the fellowship of the Harmony Old School Baptist church, October, 1874, and was a consistent member up to her death, and was a great lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. She was a kind and affectionate companion, and a loving mother.

Some of the brethren and friends met at her house at 10 o'clock a. m., on April 4th, and a comfortable discourse was preached by Elder Newton Peters, from 1 Cor. xv. 19, to a very attentive congregation; after which her remains were laid away in the Harmony church cemetery to await the resurrection morn, when she, with all the redeemed of the Lord, will be raised incorruptible, and fashioned like the glorious body of her blessed Redeemer.

J. G. FORD.

DEPARTED this life, after a gradual failing from paralysis, Oct. 14th, 1899, **Mrs. Wm. Place.** She was upwards of 70 years of age. Sister Place united with the Middletown Old School Baptist church when quite young, and remained a devoted member to the end. She came to meeting after she was unable to converse much, preferring to hear rather than be heard. She leaves a husband and three sons, one of which has died since her burial, three brothers, one sister and other earthly relatives, beside the church, to mourn, yet we trust we mourn not as those without hope, for she was an old fashioned, God-fearing woman, and is at rest.

May our God comfort us all in our tribulation, and his name be blessed to us.

ALSO,

DEC. 3d, 1899, at the residence of his son, in Boiceville, N. Y., after a short illness, **Lemuel Boice,** in the 82d year of his age. Mr. Boice was not a professor, but yet a believer in the apostolic doctrine of saving and unmerited grace, and was a friend to the Old School Baptists. He was twice left a widower. He leaves four sons and three daughters by his first wife, with their families, and two brothers and one sister, and other friends to mourn. He had no issue by his second wife, who preceded him to the grave. Mr. Boice was a man of sterling integrity in business, if not always prosperous, having been engaged in various kinds of business, but he has now left all the anxiety in the mortal sphere for a higher plane of delight.

ALSO,

APRIL 13th, 1900, at Boiceville, N. Y., **William Boice,** in the 85th year of his age. Mr. Boice had been gradually declining in health for several years, yet was zealous and untiring in business, not willing

to give up. His last sickness was not lengthy, being from old age. He was a believer, but not a professor. He seemed to enjoy our meetings, and was generally there when he was able. He leaves an aged widow, with whom he had lived over sixty years, and two sons and their families, one brother, one sister, and other relatives to mourn.

May the Lord sustain the widow, and comfort all.

ALSO,

APRIL 13th, 1900, at the residence of her son-in-law, Nathan North, at Honeoye Falls, N. Y., **Mrs. Charlotte North**, in the 85th year of her age. Sister North had known what it was to be of a sorrowful spirit, yet she was of a cheerful nature, and generally looked at the bright side for a cure in all her trials. She united with the Old School Baptist church of Olive, many years ago, of which she was a living member at death, and her one wish, if age and distance had not hindered, was to be at all the meetings of the church. She believed in the doctrine of God her Savior, and rejoiced in the gospel of his Son Jesus Christ. She had been twice widowed; she leaves two sons, one daughter and their families, together with a large circle of friends, and the church, to mourn.

ALSO,

AT Beaverkill, N. Y., after a general decline, **Joseph Tompkins**, upwards of 80 years of age. Brother Tompkins was for a number of years a Methodist in belief, but after a term of years became convinced that the doctrine of free grace was not on the plane of being free for any one to get, but free and unmerited to the sinner, because Jesus had died for the sins of the body. He was received in the church of Andes, N. Y., and baptized in their fellowship by Elder Buel Maben, in 1874, I think. He took great delight in going to meeting, and was though old, and poor in this world's goods, a peacemaker, and we believe rich in faith, and an heir of the kingdom, and is at rest. Peace to his ashes.

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLEY'S CORNERS, N. Y.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

PLEASE give notice that my address is changed from Newcastle, to Shelbyville, Ky., where my correspondents will address me. This is also a telegraph and long distance telephone station, where messages of either will reach me.

P. W. SAWIN.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denotes the year to which your subscribtion is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$354 05
D. M. Thomas, Maryland	1 00
Total to date	$355 05

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Black Rock church, Baltimore Co., Md., beginning on Wednesday betore the third Sunday in May, (16th) 1900, and continuing three days.

All friends coming by railroad will take the 3:30 p. m. train Tuesday, of Northern Central Railroad, from Calvert St. station, Baltimore, to Cockeysville, where they will be met and cared for.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Rock Springs church, Lancaster Co., Pa., commencing on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, (23d) 1900, at 10 o'clock a. m.

All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

The friends will take trains in Philadelphia and Baltimore, over the P., W. & B. R. R., to connect with the 4. p. m. train at Perryville, over the Columbia & Port Deposit R. R., for Conowingo, on Tuesday, where they will be met, arriving about 4:30 p. m.

D. M. THOMAS, Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Southampton church, at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., commencing on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (May 30th) 1900, and continuing three days.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Warwick church, at Warwick, N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, (6th) 1900, and continue three days.

THE Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon and Washington, will hold their forty-ninth annual meeting at or near Elder W. S. Matthews' residence, near Lincoln, Polk Co., Oregon, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in June, 1900.

Those coming by boat, from both north and south, will be met at Lincoln. Those coming by railroad will be met at Salem, and conveyed to the place of meeting. All are requested to come so as to be met on Thursday before the meeting.

N. J. SHANKS, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

A THREE days meeting is appointed to be held at Hughesville, Va., commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in May, 1900, at 2 p. m., and continuing over Sunday. All friends coming will be met at Hamilton depot, Friday morning.

We invite all who love the truth, and especially do we ask our ministering brethren to come and preach for us.

E. V. WHITE.

THE Old School Baptist church called Sidling Hill, situated in Fulton Co., Pa., will hold a three days meeting, if the Lord will, to commence on Friday before the first Sunday in May, 1900. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

Those coming by railroad will come on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to Hancock, Md., and cross over the bridge to the Hancock side. Come on Thursday, as early in the day as possible; conveyances will be there by the middle of the day; distance twenty miles to place of meeting.

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CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind.

NOTICES.

LOCATION DESIRED.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I desire to form a law partnership with an attorney of the Primitive Baptist faith, at some place reasonably accessible to weekly or monthly meetings of the church. I am thirty-three years old, married, and have been at the bar eleven years. During this time I have also written and published the following law works: a "Guide Manual for Magistrates and Attorneys" (816 pages); an "Annotaled Pocket Code of Virginia" (513 pages, minion type,) lawyers' edition, and an "Annotaled Digest of the Supreme Court Decisions of Virginia" (to be complete in seven volumes of 875 pages each), which books are in general use among the profession of the two Virginias (except the Code, which is limited to this State). My membership is with the brethren at Bethel church, (Radford Furnace, or Allisonia, Va.,) to whom (and the attorneys and business men at my address below) I refer. Or, I would be pleased to correspond with some brethren as to locating among them as an attorney, regardless of partnership. I fervently desire the sweet fellowship of the saints.

With gospel greetings,

SAM. N. HURST.

PULASKI CITY, Virginia.

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GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,

Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

BY GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,

MIDDLETOWN, ORANGE CO., NEW YORK.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1900. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BALTIMORE, Md., Feb., 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I wish to write of some things concerning which there seems to be a difference between brethren of like precious faith, for I believe that an impartial investigation of the subject would remove seeming difference.

As an introduction I will cite some texts which bear upon the subject in hand. "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life."—Romans vi. 23. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."—Gal. vi. 7–9. All these texts apply now, and all the admonitions are for time. I wish to speak of the admonitions in connection with the texts above quoted. I wish also to allude to some writings which have seemed to me to leave out the obligation of the man born of God, and to refer all to the work of the Spirit. I will not call it "time salvation," but "time obedience or disobedience," though both seem to me to mean the same thing as "time salvation."

I cannot see that there is any self-praise in obedience; all believe that there is life and comfort in obedience, as well as sorrow and darkness in disobedience. Have we not all known the truth of this? and have we not all also reaped the joys of this salvation in attending to the things that accompany salvation? The word salvation, and the word saved, do not always mean the work of Christ on the cross, but other things are sometimes meant, as for instance, "The word is able to make thee wise unto salvation." The angel said to Cornelius that Peter should tell him words that should save him and his house. Peter preached to him Christ, and that gave to him the knowledge of salvation. How can we obey if we do not know how, nor what is truth? Truly his word and his spirit are both parts of one whole, for we are saved here in time by his word, and by his spirit, or by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. I believe that the word "regeneration" here, means the "word of his kingdom." Is it not so?

We must attend to his word, his laws, his instructions, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. For through faith the Scriptures are able to make thee wise unto salvation. We are admonished to seek to know his will concerning us in his kingdom. Shall we not heed it? Christ said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." Now shall we not heed this? It is said that the flood saved Noah and his family. How? By separating them from the wicked world. And Peter said that the like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, and this is by separating us from the world by a public profession. Is not this true also? And surely no boasting or self-praise can be found here, save by faultfinders. We are in the word instructed how we should walk while carrying this dead body of sin upon our souls, like a heavy load upon our shoulders. Paul complained of this load, and asked its removal, but he received for an answer, My grace is sufficient for you, that is, to bear thine infirmities.

I never use the term "conditional time salvation." Grace is not conditional truly, but the man who does not improve his talent does not receive any interest on his talent; neither are we promised the reaping of the spirit in our disobedience. It is evident that Paul was addressing brethren of like precious faith, and therefore he teaches that living saints are capable of sowing both to the flesh and to the spirit. A writer in the SIGNS for September, 1899, seemed to me to be unmindful of these Scriptures when he wrote as follows: "So they labor to establish another principle, as a motive prompting to religious service, and this they call 'conditional time salvation.' Its very nature and its only tendency is to undervalue and deny the power and sufficiency of the grace of God, and turn away from the divine love and grace as not sufficiently powerful to save and lead to righteousness and godly living in this present world, and substitute the creature-pleasing notion of conditional rewards." Now are not ministers directed to warn and reprove? This is the whole question, as it seems to me. If so, is not this in order to turn man from the wrong, and to the right? Surely it is not to save their souls, but that they walk as becometh those who are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. The Scriptures are consistent throughout in promising blessings in obedience, and sorrow in disobedience. In Hebrews ii. 1–3, it is said, "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." Again we read, "If my children transgress my laws, I will visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes." What does it mean when it is said that we should labor with a brother, and so "save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins"? And again it is said by the apostle to the Corinthians, that they should deliver one unto Satan that he should learn not to blaspheme, and for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of Christ. Then it is also written that God shall judge his people, and again, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hand of the living God." Read carefully the second and

third chapters of Revelation, and let us all not seek to parry the truth in them. He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches. Compare Psalm xxxii. 8, 9, "I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding; whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near thee." Now does not this teach obedience to the living man in Christ? Is this a new way? No, it is the old way, and not Bunyan's by path meadow. It is said, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Again we read, "Awake thou that sleepeth, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Now to whom are these things addressed, and what for? It would seem that some do not recognize living saints who are capable of obedience or disobedience. There are two extremes, both of which are wrong. One extreme is that of calling upon dead men to act for life, and the other is that living men cannot obey God's word, and charging those who believe that the scriptural admonitions could or should be heeded, with being pharisees, and that they have found a new way of salvation.

It has been said that the word of admonition is only descriptive of a condition. Then why did Paul say, If we live after the flesh we shall die, and not if ye live after the flesh ye are dead, and if ye live after the spirit, ye are alive? But his words are, If ye live after the flesh ye shall die, and if ye live after the spirit ye shall live. I have quoted the substance of the language. The apostle did not mean eternal death, nor eternal life, but a life and death felt here in time, and in the present experience of the children of God. Why did Christ say, "Learn of me," if we are incapable of learning? Jesus said, "Let your light shine." Was he not addressing living men capable of obeying him? They do not all learn obedience like Jonah, but they learn and have been delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. It seems to me that some would make us machines, and not living men, having understanding. "The life that we now live in the flesh, we live by the faith of the Son of God," and in this life we surely are capable of obeying the laws of the kingdom. Paul feared lest he should be a castaway in disobedience. Consider the ten virgins, five were wise, and five were foolish. Were not the foolish, citizens of the kingdom just as really as the wise? They had not been instructed in the things of the kingdom, and our Lord here likens knowledge to oil in their lamps. This is a figure of things which we see in the church to-day. "They could not speak of the things which they did not know, and were scarcely able to speak of the things which they did know." Peter said of some that they were blind, and could not see afar off, and that they had forgotten that they were purged from their old sins. They had forgotten their own experience; they had not met with the brethren, nor attended to the things of the kingdom, nor heeded the admonitions. Read all that he said, and especially what he said about adding to their faith, virtue, &c. And then he said, "For so an abundant entrance shall be ministered unto you into the everlasting kingdom."

Some have written as if they thought that every act of obedience is the direct act of the Spirit. The admonitions are not to the spirit. It is the man that asks for strength to do his will; it is not for reward he does this, but to obey the King

of Zion, and in obeying him there is great reward. The word should be properly divided, and one truth should not be dwelt upon to drown another truth until it becomes a wind of doctrine to the confusion of the hearers. Did Paul glory that he had infirmities? No, but he gloried in his infirmities, that the power of Christ might rest upon him, and that the strength of the Lord might be made perfect in his weakness. He did not mean that he gloried in disobedience, that he might be chastised, but he had a body of sin and death, and was willing to bear it, that the power of Christ might rest upon him.

The saints cannot escape sore trials from their evil hearts and thoughts, but they are commanded to resist Satan, calling upon the Lord for strength to gain the victory. The child of grace receives reproofs best when he most needs them, and takes all the shame of his sins to himself, giving all the glory for his service to God. Our duties can never have too much attention paid to them, nor can we have too little confidence in them. Good works may be likened to Jacob's staff, to walk with on earth, yet they can never be Jacob's ladder, upon which to climb to heaven. But, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

To live a life of gospel obedience is the liberty of God's children, but to give to our fleshly lusts the reins, is to be under the bondage of Satan. Therefore, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." The precious promises which are given, and insure our happiness, do not supercede the directions which are laid down for the saints to seek after happiness, in sowing to the spirit. Shall we not heed the admonitions because we are saved by grace? Or shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Christ said, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Here is something for the man to do, learn of him, and he shall make thee wise unto salvation. He said again, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, but treasures in heaven." According to some this would be Arminianism. Again he said, "He that heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will liken him to a man who built his house upon a rock," &c. And he likened the man who heard and did not, to one who built upon a foundation of sand. But some say, "We are saved by grace, and to talk of sowing to the spirit, or giving heed to God's word, is to be pharisees, and to undervalue and deny the sufficiency of the grace of God." But the man who built upon a sandy foundation lost all, for he followed his own inclination; he was at sea without chart and compass; he lost his all, and yet he will be saved, yet so as by fire; his works shall all be burned up. Let us keep the compass and chart in sight, which are the word of God.

I am sorry to see so much strife and doting about words to no profit. We do not imply or believe that a proper walk in obedience takes anything away from the work of the Lord, or adds to the work of Christ in any way, but simply that it is the will of God that we walk orderly, letting our light shine as we are told. There is a great reward in learning of and knowing of Christ's kingdom, and thus being made wise unto salvation. Independent of the grace of God, I have no hope nor hiding-place. Grace is not conditional, but I believe that Christ has somewhat to say to his children often in

the still small voice, making his written word a living word. His written words are for his children here in time, and stand at the crossways, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Worldly mindedness is not the way, neither is it the way when we do not take heed to his word in reading the Scriptures, and in not assembling together except some orator is to speak; it is not the way when we do not help bear the burdens of the church as we ought, nor converse upon the things of the kingdom, and live a worldly life, keeping worldly company, giving away to temptation, and not heeding the admonitions of the Scriptures, nor of the church, only carelessly, until sin becomes an enjoyment, and the wrong doer is given full reign in his sins, and delivered unto Satan at last, that he may learn not to transgress, and that his soul may be saved in the day of the Lord. This is reaping corruption, yes, reaping it in the belly of hell. Truly here is grace, but with vengeance upon his ungodliness. Take heed, brethren, lest there be in you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the only living and true God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

A living man can do some things which cannot be called the direct act of the spirit; hence the admonition, Let your light shine. If the love of God be shed abroad in your hearts, show it forth in your walk and conversation. But a man dead in sin cannot do anything aright, it is the living who are his witnesses. The exhortations are not for the dead in sin, neither are they given in vain. They may clash with some men's theories which are dear to them. There is a harmony in the Scriptures, and whatever theory is not in harmony is false. Obedience flows from the living fountain of love: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Would that be acting the pharisee, or finding out another way to heaven, or another principle? One writer says that, "The greater the departure, the greater the joys of the salvation." Would any of us commit David's sin for David's joy? Would we be like the mule, or the man with one talent, or the blind man of which Peter speaks, or the foolish virgins, or the man delivered unto Satan, or the man who did not heed Christ's sayings, and built his house on the sand? It seems to me that this is what is indirectly taught. Christ said, I will give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and beside he has given unto them his word, and his ministers to teach the knowledge of salvation, and feed his children with the revealed word of God in all things. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Your brother,

JOHN THORNE.

(See editorial remarks in this number.)

FARMINGTON, Ill.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have felt impressed to write to you for some time, and yet I hesitate for fear of hurting your feelings, which I would not do. I have been much cast down and confused with the contention amongst our people in regard to many things, and particularly "conditional time salvation." It has seemed to me that the brethren are trying to make the difference as wide as possible. It seems to me that it is a striving about words to no profit; it surely is a great hurt to the Baptists. "How

has the fine gold become dim." "For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt." "O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people."

I have been taking five different papers, and have now dropped them all except the SIGNS, and I sometimes feel like dropping them, but out of respect to your dear old father I do not feel like giving them up. I do think that so many papers have been rather a curse to the Baptist cause, instead of a blessing. The have, it seems to me, been the cause of much strife and confusion. Why not strive for those things by which we may edify one another? I think that the Scriptures are given to the man of God as a thorough furnisher to every good work, and I had thought that the heaven-born children were they who were exhorted to good works alone.

Now, can the children of God do wrong and sin? Are they not as was Israel of old, to whom Jeremiah was sent, prone to sin as the sparks to fly upward? "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," and is sinful, and if we live after the flesh we shall die to the things of the spirit, but if we through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live. We should shun the very appearance of evil. "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" We know that many whom we have believed to be born of God, and some who have preached the gospel, even down to old age, have not after a time taken heed to their walk, and have been cast out of the church. Paul said, "By the grace of God I am what I am;" but if he did not keep his body under, and so became a castaway, that would not be by the grace of God certainly. It is said, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." Now do we not believe that the children should walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called? And I do think there is room for much improvement with many of us, and after we have done the best that we can, we have but done our duty, and are still unprofitable servants. Doing all that is our duty does not hinder the flesh from warring against the Spirit. The warfare still shall exist, of the flesh against the Spirit. We shall still have to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" That law is still in our members warring against the law of our mind, and bringing us into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members.

Surely there is more than one salvation taught in the Scriptures. If we are born of God, then Christ is in us the hope of glory, but we often are ignorant of our duty until our pure mind is stirred up. We may have an experience of grace, and yet not know it; it is gone from us, and seems like a dream, till we may be led to hear some servant of God proclaiming experience. Paul said he saved some, of course this was not with an eternal salvation; some he turned from darkness to light, and from the power of sin and Satan unto God, yet all this also was by the grace of God, but it is the purpose of God that his people shall be warned, and if his children transgress his law, he will visit them with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes, and if they sin, there is a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." "If ye be without chastisements, whereof

all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons." Yet at best we are all poor sinners.

It has been asked, "What are the blessings which are to be bestowed upon us for keeping the commandments? Is it to escape the trials and afflictions such as Paul suffered when he cried out, 'O wretched man that I am'"? By no means. But it is said, "If ye love me keep my commandments;" and, "If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love." "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." "These things I command you, that ye love one another." "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, and ye shall find rest to your souls." "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." And he that prepareth not himself to do his Master's will shall be beaten with many stripes. If my children forsake my law, I will visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes. Nevertheless my loving-kindness I will not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. It seems to me that we may speak of conditions here. Surely there are obedient and disobedient children, and the obedient are blessed not *for*, but *in* keeping the commandments. We are not to neglect the assembling of ourselves together, when we do so how lean we get. O, what a comfort it is to meet together in love and fellowship, and how often our hearts do burn as the dear Savior converses with us by the way; when he gives us a feast we are made to rejoice; we hear the golden bells, so that we know that our High Priest lives above. But if we obey the old man, and stay away from our privileges, we receive our request, and then comes from the Lord leanness of soul. I am a poor, unworthy, sinful worm, yet I do feel to desire peace and love in the Zion of our God. Do as you think best with this, and all will be well with me.

Your brother,

E. D. VARNES.

(See editorial remarks in this number.)

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Jan., 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Since reading the correspondence in the last number of the SIGNS for 1899, and finding so much in defense of the truth established in the word of God, together with your good editorial, which is in the right spirit, as a child of God desires that all should be, I feel to thank God we have some true and tried followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God, who can go forth in defense of the truth, and proclaim salvation by grace alone. The psalmist David says, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." Thank God he is the Shepherd, and his is the pasture, he will lead his flock like a shepherd, and gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom. He is the good Shepherd, and the good Shepherd, he says, will lay down his life for the sheep. A hireling will flee, because he is an hireling, and he careth not for the sheep. One of the prophets was commanded to prophesy against them after this manner, Woe to the shepherds that do feed themselves. The shepherds then should feed the flock of God, and not themselves. The sheep are wandering through all the lands because of false teaching. Men try to establish their own righteousness. God's people are a poor and afflicted people, they must pass through fiery trials, and are chosen in the furnace of affliction,

but the Lord says, "My grace is sufficient for thee." We must stand still and see his salvation, and he promises that in six troubles he will deliver us, and in the seventh he will not forsake us; what a loving Father. We should trust in his promises, knowing our own weakness and inability to even think a good thought. The good Shepherd knows his sheep; he giveth his life for the sheep; he has sealed them with his blood, and there is nothing that can separate them from his love, his yoke upon them is easy, and his burden is light. Will worshipers put heavy burdens upon them, which they are not able to bear, but it is not so with the yoke of Christ, Christ puts no conditions in his gospel, but says, "My grace is sufficient for thee." He is the door himself, and he says, "If ye love me keep my commandments." In doing this they will not follow strangers, for they teach the will of the creature instead of the will of God, in salvation. There is but one salvation, and that is the salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is a Spirit, and those that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth, the will to serve him is the gift of God, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.

Christ is truly the bread of life, of which if a man eat he shall never die; but many of his own disciples when they had heard this, said, "These are hard sayings, who can hear them?" Jesus knew their minds, that they were fleshly, and they are just as much so now as they were then, it is still the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. His words alone are spirit and life. Of all that God gave him, he says he will lose nothing, but will raise it up again in the last day. He says to his disciples, "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." The Old Baptists are persecuted because they try to declare the gospel of Christ; contending that all is of the grace of God, and not of works, but thank God, the Lord is our Shepherd, and we shall not want. He has promised that he will not forsake us. We must pass through many trials to enter into the rest prepared for those that love him. May we be delivered from all Arminian shackles; there is no soundness in them. God is able to make all grace abound towards us, that we may always, having sufficiency in all things, abound to every good work. God has given to the poor his righteousness, it remains forever. He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Then let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for he is faithful that promised. We are also commanded to not be unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. I pray God that I may have the spirit to do his will. I know that only by the Spirit of God can I know or do his will. His words are spirit and life, and they are given to a poor, weak creature who could not of himself do aught that is pleasing to God. We cannot help ourselves, and nothing but the saving grace of God will do us good in this life. It was not in the power of man to keep the law, and neither can he keep it yet. Our righteousness is nothing but filthy rags, in the sight of God, all the hope that we can have is in the blood of the Lamb. If we have righteousness, it is in Christ, and if we have not his righteousness, we are enemies, and our end is destruction. Of such it is said, that their god is their belly, and that they glory in their shame, and they mind earthly things. Let us

draw near to a throne of grace, and lay aside all self-righteousness, and put no confidence in the flesh. I desire to be thankful to God for all such blessings. I do not know that I have ever done a good thing in return for all his goodness toward me. O, how true I know it to be, that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. May I be found at the feet of Jesus, trusting in him as my all and in all. I hope that God for Christ's sake has forgiven my sins; he has, as I hope, brought me to know no man after the flesh; I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing; it is God that works in me, if there be any good, and he has all power in heaven and in earth. I am a poor sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all. I live much in doubts and fears, but I do trust in God for all things; he is such a loving Father. There is no other name in heaven, or on earth, by which any can be saved. It is with fear and trembling that I express myself in this way; I know that I can do nothing in myself to bring myself into the favor of God.

In what I have written, I have tried to lay off the old man, and to ask the dear Lord to direct my mind in the way that he would have me to write, and believe me, my dear brother, my desire is to know the truth as it is in Jesus. I hope that nothing else prompts me to write, it is but for the love that I have for the cause, and for Christ and the church, and the poor in spirit, and I do believe that the Old School Baptists are the true church of God, and he will build them up in the most holy faith. That this may be so, is the prayer of yours unworthily,

S. B. HICKERSON.

[It seems clear to us that the above excellent letter expresses the spirit of Paul in the epistle to the Galatians. It is all for the magnifying of the grace of God, and as our brother says in substance, it should be our constant endeavor to magnify that grace in all our daily life. All the admonitions of the word go hand in hand with grace in the heart. May we all feel the force of the apostle's admonition to work out that which God has wrought within. "I beseech you," he said, "that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." Those in whom grace does really dwell and reign, will most solemnly feel these things.—Ed.]

"BE YE KIND ONE TO ANOTHER."

O what to a child of God can be bitterer than to be given over to be chastened by his own iniquities? "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee."—Jer. ii. 19. I ask again, What is more aggravating, what can inflict more cruel torture to those who are born of God, than to be for a time as it were, given up as a prey to the vilenesses of our flesh; when sinful thoughts as ravaging beasts of prey rove through the land, biting and devouring, and laying waste every pleasant thing? Ah, then my vineyard is eaten up and trodden down. (Isaiah v. 5.) "Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone." When God saith this it is to chasten Ephraim, and in the end he will make him heartily sick of idols, and Ephraim shall cry, "What have I to do any more with idols?"—Hosea xiv. 8. O, the deceitfulness of sin! Have you ever been in that wretched place where you have brooded over some injury or fancied injury that you have received at the hands of some one, and have found yourself indulging hard, bitter thoughts? Do we forgive them their trespasses? O no, we are deceived by our vile hearts (which are deceitful above all things and des-

perately wicked) to think that we are justified in harboring and nursing our injured feelings, and vile, unforgiving spirit that has taken possession of us. So from morn till eve we brood over the wrongs that have been inflicted upon us till the sunlight and blessedness of our life is gone. O, an unforgiving spirit is a fretting sore that as it were eats out our very life; it will so torture and vex the soul till at length it will bring us into the depths of hell. O, beloved of God, I know it is so, for my soul has bitterly proved it. If captivated with an unforgiving spirit, we shall be driven by it into realms far off from God. The Lord delighteth in mercy, he abundantly pardons, (Micah vii. 18,) and he says by the mouth of the apostle Paul, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice, and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children." O, how blissful are the realms of forgiveness! When God has sore chastened us beneath our own unforgiving spirit, when he has shewn us how unlike Jesus we have been, then he has brought us to loathe ourselves, and we have cried unto him to deliver us from our hard feelings, to quench and quell our unchristlike spirit, and we have implored him to give us a kind and tender heart, that compassion and love might rule in us. Ah, when we have with shame and grief confessed our guilt before the Lord, and his own pardoning love again we have felt, then by faith we know that in God's presence is fullness of joy and pleasures for evermore. O, the blessedness of the man whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are covered, and a kindred blessedness is also our pleasant portion when we feel in our very heart we forgive every one his trespasses against us. Sometimes the voice of our God I hear saying, "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." Those precious words have been to me as the light of God's eyes penetrating my wayward, dark path, and I have felt, "Thou God seest me." One glance of thine, eternal God, pierces all nature through. There is no creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. O, dear kindred in Christ, I am not able to tell you fully how this glorious truth affects me, when with divine power it falls upon my spirit, a sacred awe possesses me; I have trembled at the presence of the Lord, and have felt how dreadful is this place. "His eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men."

> "Great God, thy penetrating eye
> Pervades my inmost powers;
> With awe profound my wondering soul
> Falls prostrate and adores."

In the light of God's countenance I have seen that I was out of the ways of pleasantness, and the paths of peace; I have felt that his reproofs were in love, and that he was full of tender mercy toward a poor sinner, and I have mourned before him and cried, I have gone astray like a lost sheep; take me out of all the entanglements of my iniquities, and let me not forget thy commandments. My way, since first with affection I thought upon the Lord, has been so intricate, such a riddle, blessedness and sorrow have been my heritage, my attainments have been few, and my non-attainments are ever before me; sweet peace I have known, victory I have tasted, but at times I have such a bleared view of it all, that my

whole life appears as a succession of defeats, failure after failure, an utter failure am I. Yet in the midst of these failures and defeats I have been taught by the Comforter to look with all my heart to our dear Savior, to the fountain of his precious blood shed for the remission of sins, then thus believing, strength has been given me, and in my heart has been the song, "We shall be more than conquerors through him that loved us." It is written, "I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings."—Jer. xvii. 10. This essential attribute of Deity is ascribed to our Lord Jesus Christ, (Rev. ii. 23,) declaring his own essential Deity. When I have contemplated this I have felt to rejoice with trembling before him; yes, I have supplicated our glorious Mediator, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." I believe he answers my prayers, shewing me often that I am a poor, sinful worm, yes, and I believe he leads me in the way everlasting. This precious and divine way is indeed the path of life, (Psalm xvi. 11,) the highway of holiness, (Isaiah xxxv. 3,) the new and living way, (Heb. x. 20,) wherein by faith we walk in peace with God. See the vast multitudes chasing after very soap-bubbles, religious myths, fine spun theories, heartless, hair-splitting metaphysics, which they vainly believe, and would have others accept as the religion of Jesus Christ. Ah, my Savior and Friend, the Author and Finisher of the faith of all the elect, let me live by faith in simplicity on Thee, that precious faith may be in my mouth and in my heart saying, Christ descended and is risen from the dead, and hath ascended on high, the first-fruits of them that slept. (Romans x. 8.) This is the everlasting way from sin to holiness, from the curse to blessedness, from death to life, from earth to heaven, from Satan to God, and those who are sanctified by the Spirit walk therein in faith and love to God and to the way everlasting. The gracious and efficacious work of the Holy Ghost in the hearts of the redeemed is far beyond bare theories of doctrine in our natural intellect. By his almighty power there is wrought in us the fear of the Lord. (Jer. xxxii. 40.) And what is this precious fear of the Lord? It is a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death. This fear of the Lord is to love him, to hate all evil; yes, this fear is such that the Lord and every revelation of his will is held fast in our hearts in holy and affectionate reverence.

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

UTICA, Ohio, April 18, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—In a pleasant rural district in central Ohio I was born; born in sin, as are all of Adam's race, and I lived in sin and enjoyed its pleasures for thirteen years. Then, as I humbly hope, it pleased the Lord to open my blind eyes, and enable me to see the vileness and the corruptness of my nature. Mine was not so sudden an awakening, although the first thought of my being a sinner came as a thunder-bolt to me, but the burden of sin would wear off at times, yet only to return with redoubled severity. I fled to the law, and made great fair promises to the Lord of what I would do if he would spare my life, but all those promises were only made to be broken, and by and by I began to despair. It occurred to me that I had already committed sin sufficient to

banish me forever from the peaceful presence of the Lord, and if I could quit sinning even then, I was already beyond the reach of hope and mercy. I concluded from the teaching of the Scriptures that Jesus had came to this world and died to save a people, but the idea of me being one of that people, was foreign to me. I was too wicked, too low down in sin to even hope that my sins were washed away by the blood of the sinless Son of God. I traveled on with this burden of sin and sorrow for several months, my condition all the time getting worse and more hopeless. I could not enjoy the society of my young friends, but would leave them at the intermissions in school, and seek some secluded spot, and brood over my sinful, lost condition, and beg for mercy. I well remember three particular spots where I often withdrew myself to pray, and frequently when I would get there I dared not open my lips to ask for mercy. One spot was in a hidden corner of a rail fence, on my road to school; another in a deep, dark ravine, near our farm house, and the other was in a dark shed some distance from the house. After some time I was alone with my baby sister one day, and was reading a religious periodical, and looking up references in the Bible, when my burden of sin and guilt became unbearable I thought. I leaned back in my chair, and a small, sweet voice seemed to tell me that Jesus died for me, and my debt of sin was satisfied by his death. My joy knew no bounds; I began singing, and arose and went into the yard. All nature seemed to be praising God, I saw new beauty in everything. Almost immediately came a desire to follow the Savior in the ordinance of baptism, and I thought then I would relate my travels to the church at their next session, and if they received me for baptism, to be baptized, but alas! before that opportunity came I began to fear I was mistaken, and doubt that being the work of the Lord. I waited some time, hoping to receive a clearer evidence of my acceptance with God, and finally on Saturday before the first Sunday in May, 1891, I then being in my sixteenth year, went before the church and told them what I hoped the Lord had done for me. They heard me gladly, and voted to receive me for baptism, and when baptized, into full fellowship of the church. Next morning we went to the water, and I was buried with the Savior in the liquid grave, as I hope, and raised to walk in newness of life. The rite of baptism was performed by Elder Z. K. Holliday, of Thurston, Ohio, in the presence of a number of the dear kindred in Christ. Since then I have had many trials and conflicts, but I still cling to that hope of pardon, and of heaven and immortal glory. It is all the hope I could have, for without free pardon and grace I never could be saved, for there is nothing good that I can do to merit salvation.

I have now married and left the dear parental roof, and am away from my home church, but the kind, heavenly parent is everywhere.

Your sister in hope,

AMANDA P. MORGAN.

KIRKLAND, Tennessee.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed find two dollars for SIGNS. I love the way that your paper is conducted; I have for years believed it to be the best religious paper in the world; it certainly feeds the children of God; honey seems to come out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock. May it seem good to the people of God to sustain you in your work of love.

Inclosed find letter addressed to me by H. M. Curry, of Pleasant Plains, Ill. What he says must be the truth. I hope if you see proper to publish it that it will comfort and strengthen the household of faith.

Your brother in love of the truth,

J. K. WOMACK.

PLEASANT PLAINS, Ill., Oct. 12, 1899.

ELDER J. K. WOMACK—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I have just read your letter in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and it made me glad indeed. In these days of apostacy from the truth on the part of many who have recently professed to hold it, admonishes me that perilous times have come. It is not every one who says "Lord, Lord," that shall enter into the kingdom, but he that doeth the will of the Father, so it is not every one that pretends to preach, that is called of God as was Aaron. There are many false preachers among us, men who have called themselves, and for a show pretend to preach grace, when inwardly they know nothing about it at all. It is a fine point, my brother, to discern a false minister from a true one; Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light, then it is no wonder if his ministers be transformed as ministers of righteousness.

Experience is the only thing that can bring God's children to a knowledge of the truth, experience of the deep things of God. When God leads us into deep soul troubles, and we expend all our strength to no avail, then he comes and delivers us, and makes us know that he is God, and beside him there is no other. It was in the belly of hell that Jonah learned the fruitlessness of human effort, and through his deliverance from this hopeless grave he learned that salvation is of the Lord. This deliverance is what men would now call time salvation, and which they now ascribe to works, but Jonah, the man who experienced it, ascribes it to the Lord without reserve. Those men who preach time salvation, as they call it, by works, have never yet experienced deliverance from the belly of hell; the whale has never swallowed them, consequently they are not qualified to declare that salvation is of the Lord. I have never yet been guilty of preaching salvation through any other than the Lord Jesus Christ, either for time or for eternity. I cannot preach the law, for the very things which I have not, are the things which the law demands, and the things which I must have, the law cannot give. I trust that I have become dead to the law by the body of Christ, I am crucified with Christ, yet nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Yours in love of truth and righteousness,

H. M. CURRY.

RO ELLEN, Tenn., April 10, 1900.

ELDER BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—The time is past due that I should remit for the thirty-fourth year to your paper. I have read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES almost regularly since early in the forties, and constant since April 1st, 1866, and I want to bear witness that there has been no change in the doctrine advocated in all these years, the sovereignty of God, election, foreknowledge and predestination, Jesus the only Savior of poor, lost sinners. I never heard of two salvations and two Saviors until I came to west Tennessee; here it was incubated and hatched four or five years ago, and I am sorry to say that it has drawn off

many dearly beloved Baptists. I try to thank and praise the Lord that he has kept me from following such false and God-dishonoring doctrine. How thankful we should be that God has given us such gifts and under-shepherds as Elders Bartley, Durand, Chick, and many others whom he has qualified to defend the true and only gospel as taught by Christ and his faithful apostles. I am nearly seventy-five years old, and have been a sort of a Baptist for thirty-four years, and in all those years I have not had one good thought, or done one good act, unless it was promoted by the holy Spirit of God, for "It is God that worketh in you to will and to do his good pleasure." In the early days of my pilgrimage I several times met and held sweet communion with Elder Durand, and his sweet and loving counsel is still dear, and his tender encouragement is still fresh in my memory, and dear to my heart, and I try to thank and praise the goodness and mercy of the Lord in calling such able, spiritual gifts. O, how could it be otherwise, when I remember the soul-cheering messages that I have heard and read from not only those I have named, but memory calls to mind Elders Beebe, Trott, Montgomery, J. A. Johnson, Dudley, Badger, Wilson Thompson, Worl, Little, Perkins, Fulkerson, Neil, and so many more, all dear to memory. Sometimes my hope is bright that by and by I, poor, sin-stained worm, will meet them on that beautiful shore, and Jesus will be there. If so, I know it will be all of grace, free grace. Jesus is all the Savior I read of in my precious Bible, either in time or eternity. O, may the holy Spirit guide and direct the editors and contributors to our dear family paper, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

Your brother in hope,

M. A. WELBORN.

LOUISBURG, Kansas, April 4, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—The good I would do I find no way of doing, and the evil I would not do, is always so easy to do, that it is in nearly all cases done. We hear so much discussion upon the subject of "time salvation," which by the way is of late origin, as I have known the Old School Baptists nearly all my life, and never heard one express a thought, until late years, that salvation, time or eternal, depended one particle on our walk or obedience here, as every step in time was marked out for us, and I can see no other way. If our eternal salvation was foreordained, our time salvation also was, and every act, every step, was known to the Father beforehand, so where are we left to do anything that was not foreordained for us to do? For me, I must believe in all things forcordained, or none, and there are things happening each day that if I thought I could have helped or changed it, I would be of all persons most miserable. If it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, why are such things as time salvation ever thought of, much less mentioned to confuse the minds of the weak, such as I am?

I am so far from our church that I seldom get to meeting, and there is not one of our faith anywhere near me; I am one alone, and the way gets very dark and lonely, but it must be the road for me to travel or I would be led in some other.

Dear brother, I had thought to write a long letter, and tell of the many trials of which I have been called upon to bear, but I feel so barren this morning, so poor, weak and blind, that I will take no more of your time. I do not write this for publication, but as this "time salvation" comes so many times in our good paper, and to me is such a strange thing for Old

School Baptists to cavil over, I could not refrain from speaking of it, and if my views in your opinion are wrong, and you can give me a better understanding of it, please at some time write me, and I will be very glad to have the right way shown me, if I am in the wrong.

In much sorrow and weakness, I am a very unworthy sister, if one at all,

JULIA E. BROWN.

BURDETT, N. Y., Nov. 15, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—It is but a short time before my subscription for the SIGNS expires, and I will send a renewal. The SIGNS are good company for me, by them I hear from many good brethren with whom I am acquainted personally, and from many with whom I have never met. The language is, salvation by grace. I am often cast down, and feel to say they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him; O, that I knew where I might find him whom my soul loveth. Then perhaps I take up the SIGNS and read some sweet communication from some dear child of God, away off in Texas, or away up in Maine, and my doubting spirit is revived again. I saw not long since, in the SIGNS, that you had many delinquent subscribers, it grieved me that any brother or sister could let their subscription run behind. I thought, Can it be possible that there are any Old School Baptists that are not honest? I hope I may never be left to bring a reproach upon the church, or upon the cause of Christ. Let me live the life of the righteous, that my last days may be like his.

There are a few members left here in Burdett, that meet on the first Sunday of each month to hear our brother, Elder Charles Bogardus, preach, and if he is not called of God to preach, I must confess that I do not know anything about the unsearchable riches of Christ. We are few in number, and we are told that the Lord's people have always been few, and that they shall trust in the name of the Lord. What a sure foundation, it can never be moved, all the ingenuity of man can never come near it, for it is hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes.

I should like to see you, as I have a desire to meet all of God's little ones here on earth. I sometimes say, "Blessed be the tie that binds our hearts in christian love." We are made heirs to an inheritance which is heavenly, and which cannot be mortgaged nor sold. Then we are rich in Christ, let us therefore press forward to the mark of the prize.

But I will close, lest I weary your patience. May God bless you, and all the household of faith, is my prayer. Continue to send me the SIGNS as long as I live, and I will try to pay you.

Your brother in Christ,

H. B. ELLIOTT.

HALLWOOD, Va., Nov. 23, 1899.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel somewhat impressed of late to write, but why it is that such an one as I should thus feel, I know not; I realize my unfitness, when in myself considered, to attempt such a thing, but I feel assured that if such an impression is from the Lord, all is well; he is indeed the strength of his people, and he can cause the feeblest of his flock to lisp his praise. Of late the SIGNS OF THE TIMES have seemed to be of peculiar interest to me; I have just read and reread several of the communications and editorials in the last number, Nov. 15th, and all seemed good to me. Brother Beebe's editorial is plain, pointed and discrimina-

ting. Truly that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Brother Chick's views upon secret societies are in accord with mine exactly. I have never felt since the Lord, as I trust, revealed himself to me and in me, to have any inclination to connect myself with any secret order, but I have rather felt it to be wrong for me to do so, for I humbly trust that I am a member of the only true secret organization on earth, and that is all that I desire. If I really have the secret of the Lord with me, and he has shown me his covenant, ought I not to be satisfied? Yes, any Old School Baptist ought to be satisfied with the goodness of his house, and my desire is that I may continually be satisfied with it, and kept from all the inventions and institutions of men.

I was well pleased with Elder Curry's communication, for it does me much good to read after one who possesses, as I suppose he does, more than the ordinary natural advantages of learning, and worldly wisdom, yet with all this, acknowledging and confessing that in himself he is nothing, and that he is insufficient to think any good thing as of himself, but that his sufficiency is of the Lord, and that by the grace of God he is what he is. It appears to me that the contrast is so striking in his case, for if any have cause to glory in natural advantages, he has more. But God is glorified in all his works; let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord. If space would admit, I might go on and make mention of others; suffice it to say that they were all good to me. Go on, brethren editors and correspondents, in your labor of love, for thereby are God's humble poor edified, encouraged and built up in the most holy faith. Yours unworthily,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

MERRIFIELD, Va., Dec. 12, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed find the amount named on your very convenient blank for the SIGNS for one more year. The time has been with me when to write to the saints was such a pleasant employment that I was almost constantly talking with them in that way, and I was so much comforted by their letters to me, but alas for me, while my desire is the same, I am shut up so much of the time that I cannot write, and very often have concluded that all I have written or said, was a delusion and mistake. If this could be fully established with me, I should be of all men most miserable, but I trust the Lord still watches over me for his own purpose, and by his grace I am what I am. Sure I know not yet what I am, only in one certain point, and that is that I am a poor sinner of Adam's race, and saved, if saved at all, by the grace of God. Whether I am predestinated as his child, in the purpose of his love and mercy, I do not know as I desire to know; I do not know as I am patient enough in waiting to possess my longing soul in that respect, or to pray the Lord's will be done. I do love the doctrine of predestination in its broadest sense, for it is absolute, and his purposes are all good and holy, and his mercy endureth forever. I want to hear it preached in every sermon, and do not think that the doctrine of God our Savior can be preached without it.

Dear brother, write more for our paper, I love your writing. Please think of this little note and the writer when it is well with you.

I remain your brother,

ELI KIDWELL.

ILLNESS OF ELDER S. H. DURAND.

"A MAN'S heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps."—Prov. xvi. 9.

I was ready on Friday noon to start on a journey to visit the Salisbury Church, Maryland, which I have served as pastor for thirty-four years, and to visit churches in Kentucky, all of which, with one exception, I have visited almost yearly, for the same time. These churches have been very dear to me, and my visits among them have always been very much enjoyed. My health has not been good for some time past, but I had no doubt of my ability to make the journey, which would cause me to be absent from home for two weeks; yet during all the time of my correspondence concerning the appointments, and my preparation for the journey, the words at the head of this note would often come to my mind with peculiar force: "A man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps."

On Friday afternoon I saw my doctor, and by his direction took my bed, and am not able to leave it yet. Serious relapse of "la grippe," complicated with erysipelas in the throat and neck, which is very painful and weakening. I am writing this by the hand of my daughter.

Those words that have come to my mind so often, returned with quieting, subduing, soothing power, and instead of feeling a rebellious spirit, my soul is melted under a sense of the goodness of the Lord to me, the least and most unworthy of his servants, and to all his little ones scattered throughout the earth. Although previously I could hardly endure the thought of being disappointed in my desire to visit those who have shown such kindness to me, and have expressed to me so often their earnest desire that I should not fail to visit them once a year, yet when the time came that I saw I could not go, I was at once reconciled to that, and even to the pain and weakness that has detained me.

I thought my will to go was spiritual, and my desire was for their spiritual benefit, and for the glory of God, but I could not be sure, as I seldom have been absolutely sure beforehand on such occasions that my will was in accordance with the will of the Lord, but when this barrier was interposed I knew at once that my will was not his, and I am thankful that he has given me a will to say, "Thy will, not mine, be done." And I hope it will be so in the future.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April 30, 1900.

POETRY.

NEVER PERISH.

HARK! it is the Bridegroom speaking,
To the bride, his wedded wife,
Saying, Thou shalt never perish,
I for thee laid down my life.

Never perish! spoke with power,
From the grave I'll ransom thee,
I will be its plague forever,
Its destruction I will be.

Never perish! sweetly whispered,
I will cut and loose thy bands;
Be thou hopeful, never fearing,
None shall pluck thee from my hands.

Never perish! God hath sworn it,
I eternal life will give;
In my house are many mansions,
Where I am they all shall live.

Never perish: though afflicted,
And distressed on every side,
Tempest-tossed, sin-sick and weary,
While the foes your hope deride.

Never perish; no, no, never,
God as soon shall be dethroned,
As that one of those should perish,
One for whom our Lord atoned.

MRS. H. TUTTLE.

ADRIAN, Mich.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1900.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

COMMENTS UPON THE ARTICLE OF BROTHER THORNE.

(On page 289.)

WE publish the above named article both because of the high regard which we have for brother Thorne as one who has had the cause of God near at heart for many years, and who has always been ready to do for it ever since we have known him, and also because we desire to call attention to a few things which he has presented. It will be noticed that he thinks that the differences which have appeared during the past few years are only seeming, and we would fain hope that it is so. Indeed, we do not doubt that in many cases it is so, and we would be sorry to seek to magnify any difference which may exist, beyond what is true. Rather we would seek to find wherein we do agree, than search out differences and make them prominent. We have known (as most of our readers are aware) brother Thorne for many years, intimately, and his house has been our home time after time, and we have spoken together of almost all subjects which have arisen among our brethren for the past thirty years, and he has been always faithful in presenting what seemed to him to be right. We have not always agreed upon all subjects, but we have differed in all kindness when we must, and have not thought any the less of each other therefore. In his old age we know that the cause is none the less dear to him, and we feel like giving careful consideration to what he may have to say concerning all matters in Zion. We ask our readers to read carefully his article with kindly judgment. The article is written certainly in a kindly spirit. Still we feel like calling attention to some things of which he has spoken.

First, brother Thorne seems to think that some of us who have been insisting upon making prominent the grace of God in all our obedience, have left the man out entirely, and have referred all to the spirit as though we thought that the spirit did all the work without the man, where he dwells. If we have ever said anything that was really susceptible of that conclusion, we are truly sorry. We certainly have not meant to imply any such thing, and we are persuaded that none who have written in our columns have intended to present any such idea. We have insisted that all our obedience was to be referred to the constant indwelling and work of the spirit in our hearts; and we have felt to insist that without him we can do nothing, but with him, we can do all things. This we know that brother Thorne believes. Of course when the Savior said, "Without me ye can do nothing," he was addressing living disciples, and intended to show them that as they went forth, they should remember that in him was the source of all their strength. And he said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Second, there is truly an obedience in time, and a salvation in time. So far as we know, no one denies this. What we

have all along objected to is the view that our present salvation depends upon ourselves, and not upon the grace of God. This last would of course infer that we should praise self and not grace for it. It is not true, as a matter of fact, that those who walk most obediently, are the happiest. Of Job, the perfect and upright man, we read that to him were given greater sorrows than to his friends for whom he was commanded to make an atonement at the last, because they had not spoken the thing that was right concerning God, as Job had. And David said, These are the wicked that prosper, and increase in riches, and have no bands in their death, and are not plagued, nor in trouble as other men, while his people return hither, and waters of a full cup are wrung out of them. And Jeremiah had the same trouble to understand God's ways. It is a false motive to hold out to believers that if they walk obediently, they shall always have happiness. The most sorrowful men that we have ever known, were they who walked most carefully. There is a reward in keeping the commandments, truly, but this reward is very far from joy or happiness, many times at least.

Brother Thorne has well said that there is no self-praise in obedience. This is just what we have always contended for. We have seen and heard some things of late, however, which sounded to us very much like self-praise for obedience. Paul praised his brethren at times, but he never felt like praising himself. When he said that he labored more abundantly than they all, he was quick to add, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." He said, "I labored," truly, and so he did, but lest some one should think that he would praise himself he is quick to say, yet not I, but grace. He emphasized not his work, but grace in it. This is what we like to see or hear at all times. We have not at all objected to saying that we obey, but we have objected to leaving grace out; yea, we have desired to give it the glory altogether, as did the apostle.

Third, we should certainly heed the admonitions, all of them, and we trust that we have never said anything which could be charged with denying this. We do believe in exhortation to all who believe, but we have objected to basing the exhortation upon the ground that we shall be rewarded for what we do. It has seemed to us that this was the spirit in Peter which was rebuked by the Savior when that disciple had said, "Lord, we have left all, and followed thee, what shall we have therefore?" The whole response of the Redeemer to him, embracing the parable of the laborers in the vineyard, was a rebuke to that disposition, which is only carnal and selfish, and which asks, What shall I have for what I have done? This spirit looks upon all service to God as entitling the doer to payment, and regards all the rewards which he receives, as rewards of debt, and not of grace. What a difference there is between the service of a child, and the service of a slave. Jesus said it was his meat and drink to do the will of him that sent him. He that is hungry needs no offer of payment to entice him to eat and drink, and he that feels as did the Master, needs no promise of any payment to entice him to seek to do God's will. To do God's will is to him as his daily bread, and this sort of daily bread he feels to thank God for, as well as all other blessings and privileges bestowed upon him. An illustration occurs to our mind: it is said that the Lord loves a cheerful giver. What is it to give cheerfully? Is it not

to give just for the joy of the giving, and because one finds his delight in so doing? But suppose that a man gives because he hopes for a reward as the result of it, is that to give cheerfully? One said to us years ago, I would not give to the poor, and to help the cause of my church along, if I did not expect to reap a reward in heaven for it. We replied, "You do not know the first letter of the alphabet of grace." This lady was not a cheerful giver, in the sense of the text, she knew no joy in giving, and she had no knowledge of the fact that the Lord loves such cheerful givers. Striving to purchase a reward is not giving. Now we know that brother Thorne fully believes this, and we hope that we have made our meaning clear. Truly we should give heed to all the admonitions, and among them we should give heed to all the warnings against that spirit which seeks payment for what we do, upon the ground of indebtedness.

Brother Thorne says that he never uses the term "conditional time salvation." Now it is the term to which we have objected all the time, because it seemed to us to say the least about it, misleading. It does seem to us to in itself imply that we are rewarded for what we do, as though we were entitled to a reward. We do not say that all of the brethren who use the terms do mean what we see in the expression. We have only been trying to show that the term implies what they would themselves reject as false teaching, and we believe that if they could see what is really implied in the use of the expression, "conditional time salvation," they would freely and gladly give it up.

Brother Thorne says that the whole question is, "Are not ministers to warn and reprove?" As we understand the matter, this is not the question at all; so far as we know, no one denies that this is a part of their work; the only question is, as said before, Upon what ground shall we base our exhortations, and warnings, and reproofs? Is our own happiness and peace to be the motive? We do fully believe that he that in his service seeks his own happiness and peace, shall find neither happiness nor peace, and has not really served God at all, but only his own self. On the other hand, he who thinks not of his own gain, and does not move by the hope of his own happiness and peace, but who thinks only of the glory of God in his service, shall find in such service both happiness and peace. Is there not a vast difference between seeking our own happiness, and seeking the glory of God? What a difference between the spirit of true service and the spirit that says, What shall we have therefore? This is the whole question, as we understand it. If any brother is agreed with us in this, we have no controversy with him. And we shall insist upon the obligation of every one who is called of God, to obey him in all things, just as strongly as the subject can be placed before us, but do not let us hold forth a selfish motive, let our eye be single to the glory of God, and not partly our own glory or advantage. We feel sure that here also we are in full agreement with what brother Thorne believes. From our long acquaintance with him we know that he seeks not his own glory, but the glory of God.

It seems to us that some things which have been written of late have had a tendency to put our obedience upon this selfish ground, and this is certainly a new principle to introduce into the exhortations of the gospel. Truly God's children may disobey, and the *wages* of their

disobedience is death, but never do they receive wages for obedience. It always remains true that eternal life, in all its forms of manifestation, and in all its exercises, is the gift of God. It was not without meaning that the Holy Ghost said, not the *wages* of God, is eternal life, but the *gift* of God. Sin has wages, we earn the wages, but God has only gifts, and never wages, in the gospel, and gifts we do not earn. Let us exhort, and rebuke, and warn, with all long-suffering, but in it all let us emphasize grace. O, do not be afraid of preaching sovereign grace; grace abounding all the way along to the chief of sinners. As said before, we should be indeed sorry if any one should gather from anything we have written that we do not acknowledge the obligation of each believer to take all heed to his walk, and we are sure that none of the brethren would seek to parry the truth found in any of the exhortations or warnings in the Scriptures. To teach obedience, is not a new way, but a way as old as the revelation of Jesus Christ, and as old in each individual experience as is the indwelling of the Spirit, which produces faith, the source of all good works in heart and life.

If any one says that living men cannot obey God's word, we have no fellowship with that assertion; it is not a Bible assertion. It is not such an assertion as our own experience teaches us, but it is a Bible assertion, and also what we each must daily feel to be true, that sin so dwells in us, that we cannot do the good that we would. If I pray, or hear, or read, sin is mixed with all I do. So far as we are concerned, it is our experience daily, that when we do that which is in itself right, we find so much of wrong in the motive which actuates us, that we cannot feel that we have even done right in the sight of him who searches the heart, and sees its remotest springs. After preaching the best we can, and seeking in it to have a pure motive, we are compelled to sit down almost always with the feeling that we need forgiveness for the wrong in our heart, while we have been preaching. Can we do the good that we would? If any can, they have attained to that which we have never yet attained, but to which we desire with all our heart to attain, viz: an eye single to the glory of God. Even if we could do all, we should still, according to the Savior, be unprofitable servants. The truth is, no man who ever lived, save the man Christ Jesus, ever did all that was his duty to do, and therefore we all are not only unprofitable, but unfaithful servants. At least for our own self we must confess this. We daily feel the need of special grace to enable us to will and to do in the service of God, and so if at any moment there be in us a will to do God's will, it is something for which we must thank God, and if any strength be given us, so that we do deny self at all, this strength is also of the Lord. Why should we be charged with denying that living men can do God's will, or obey his commandments, because we insist upon our own experience, and because we say just what Paul said in Romans, seventh chapter? Truly let us give heed to all the admonitions of the word, and strive to keep our body under, but yet how comforting it is to read that Paul found that he could not do the good that he would. In saying such things Paul did not make void the admonitions, and neither shall we if we say the same things, and far be it from us to charge those who admonish their brethren, with being pharisees, but it is the doctrine of the pharisees, if we say that what we do de-

serves a reward; it is the doctrine of the pharisees, if we urge admonition upon the ground of selfish advantage. Phariseeism says, "I have more than you, because I have lived better than you." This is, as we understand the matter, just what all our brethren desire to oppose, and not the duty of presenting the admonitions addressed to the living in Zion. We have known brother Thorne too long, and have heard him lament too often that he could not do the things that he would, to question his cordial assent to what we have here said.

As far as "every act of obedience being the direct act of the spirit" is concerned, we do not recall ever seeing the matter stated in just this way, yet, after all, it does seem to us that if we ever are conscious of any holy desire, of any time of communion with God, or of any spirit to obey, and serve him in any way, we have felt that it did not arise out of our natural powers, but out of the spirit, which we have hoped, dwelt within us. We cry, Abba, Father, by the spirit; we desire to obey God, by the spirit; we love him through the indwelling of the spirit, and we trust that when we labor in word and doctrine, it is also by the Spirit of God. We do not think this is unscriptural. We recall that in former years, when we would contend that we could not of ourselves love God, some Methodist friends would reply, "O, then you believe that God loves himself in us, and for us, do you?" But this saying of theirs always seemed to us too feeble for an answer. We do indeed love and obey God, but we do this through the Spirit of God enabling us to do so, and are not all special exercises of this love (which is all the obedience there is in substance) the result of special workings of the spirit within us? This is what is meant by the saying, "Without me ye can do nothing." Those who feel most their dependence upon the Spirit of God daily, and momentarily, will be the ones to feel most anxiety to obey, and who will strive to that end most earnestly.

Brother Thorne has well stated that we obey not for reward, but for the sake of obeying. In this one saying of his the whole matter is summed up. Right here is the fellowship of that experience which is brought to light in the gospel, it is the experience of love to God, and to all that he commands, so that his commandments are not grievous, but easy and delightful. The christian truly does not labor down in a dark mine now, for the sake of riches bye and bye, but he labors in the light of the Lord, and this is his soul-satisfying reward, to know that he is permitted to serve God; this is all that he wants. The trouble is, he can never feel that he has served God at all as he ought. No! no! we do not serve for reward, but delight in serving. Brother Thorne has stated the matter clearly in this expression.

Again and again has brother Thorne used the term, "In keeping his commandments there is great reward," or words similar to this, and if love be the motive which leads to outward acts of obedience, the reward must be in the service, but how different this is from serving for reward. There is no love if we serve for reward, except for the reward, but the believer serves the God he loves, and loves the God he serves.

C.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denotes the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

REPLY TO BROTHER VARNES' LETTER.

(On page 293.)

In this number will be found a letter from brother John Thorne, of Baltimore, Md., and one from brother E. D. Varnes, of Farmington, Ill., both taking exceptions to the late conduct of the Signs. As brother Chick has replied to brother Thorne's letter, we will notice more particularly the letter of brother Varnes.

In the first place we will say in answer to the complaint that there is too much strife on the subject of "conditional time salvation," that the Signs of the Times is only contending for the doctrine it has always advocated, and until within the last few years has been accepted by its readers in general, as the truth, but within the last decade there has rose up some among us who have brought in "another gospel, which is not another," and now because these principles of truth have been attacked, do our brethren think we should cease to advocate them? If there is any *strife*, who has caused it? It was not counted strife for the Signs to contend for salvation by grace, and grace alone, until of late years. We do not wish to make a "hobby" of any point of doctrine, but when certain fundamental principles are attacked by those claiming to be Old School or Primitive Baptists, it seems right that the alarm should be given, and the trumpet sounded to call the faithful to battle.

It is not so much the direct attack on the truth itself, as it is in the misrepresentations and false accusations against those who contend for the old doctrine, that causes the confusion and suffering.

In all the years of our connection with the Signs, we have never had an experience that has so disheartened and discouraged us, as the witnessing of the influence these false charges against the Signs, have had on some who have been warm supporters of it from its earliest publication. That some who have but recently become acquainted with the Signs, might be deceived by the persistent slanderous misrepresentations by those opposed to the doctrine to which the Signs has been devoted for more than two-thirds of a century, is not so surprising, but when such old veterans as brother Thorne, and brother Varnes, write to persuade us that we should contend for an orderly walk in the christian, and that it is our duty to exhort one another to good works, it is truly discouraging, and it is alarming to think that the misrepresentation of our opponents could so deceive brethren who have been so long acquainted with the Signs.

We have said time and again, that the Signs now, and ever has, contended for exhortations, and we challenge any one to produce a single sentence from its columns to the contrary. It has ever been the practice of the brethren with whom we have been personally acquainted, to admonish and exhort one another. The church at this place has within the last year lost a deacon by death, who had the most wonderful gift in exhortation it has ever been our privilege to listen to, and the sweet influence of his gift is still with us, although he has been called home to the full realization of those glories to which he so lovingly cited his brethren. It was in meekness, and in no strength of his own, that the power of his gift was made manifest. In his weakness the power of Christ was made known.

The implication that those that believe in salvation by grace alone, and in the unlimited predestination of God, do not exhort one another to good works, or take heed to their walk, is as false as the

doctrine held by those who make these deductions from the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, and unlimited predestination. There is not an argument put forth by our opponents, against these principles of truth, but what we have heard thousands of times, whispered within, by our own old Arminian nature. The carnal mind insists on reason being convinced; a "thus saith the Lord," only has a tendency to excite it to anger, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, for it is enmity against him. If we are led by the Spirit of God, we shall accept the plain and positive declarations of the Scripture, whether or not we can make them harmonize with, or appear consistent, to our carnal reason. Can reason explain the following inspired declarations: "These three are one," "When I am weak, then am I strong," "I, yet not I," and many others with which the Scripture abounds? While these are direct contradictions to the natural mind, yet every heaven-taught child of God has an experimental knowledge of their truth.

We had no idea of writing in the strain we have, when we commenced this article, but thought to write more in direct answer to brother Varnes' letter.

How any one that has been a reader of the SIGNS as long as brother Varnes has, can use such arguments, and quote such passages of Scripture to us, is a mystery. It would appear that he considers that the SIGNS negatives his views, when the fact is, he has covered the whole ground when he says, "Yet all this was by the grace of God."

The SIGNS has been so maligned and misrepresented, we will now once again state, as clearly as the Lord may give us ability, its position in regard to what is termed, "conditional time salvation," and we ask our friends to accept as our belief, what we say we believe, rather than what some others may tell them is our belief. Compare what we say we believe, as far as you have opportunity, with what we preach, practice and publish, and if these confirm it, let not the false accusation of our opponent deceive you.

In the first place we object to the expression, "conditional time salvation," because it is misleading and confusing, and because the authors of the expression certainly have and do contend for the Arminian theory that "we can have all the religion we will live for," or that it is in our own power, in and of ourselves, to work out our own salvation.

That we have to be in a certain condition to enjoy the salvation of the Lord, we firmly believe, but that we can, like a clairvoyant, throw ourselves into the desired condition, or of our own volition work ourselves into this blessed condition, both the Scriptures and christian experience deny. We are as much dependent upon the grace of God for this condition, as we are for the blessing that attends it. Paul said, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

We believe that the obedient are blessed in their obedience, but we believe that it is only by the power of the Spirit that we can keep the commandments. Love is the fulfilling of the gospel law, and when God sheds his love abroad in our hearts, then we keep the law, and in this condition we are indeed blessed. But without this love, all forms and ceremonies are but an empty show. Paul says, "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." Then the first essential in keeping the commandments is the love of God in our hearts, and who will say they

can possess this love at will? With this love of God in our hearts faith springs forth, and without this faith it is impossible to please God, "for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Then how vain for man to talk of exercising these precious operations of the Spirit so as to merit a blessing of the Lord. "Well," say some, "if these things are not within our control, what is the use of exhortations, admonitions or rebukes?" In reply we will say, as we have said in a former article, we exhort, admonish or rebuke, as the case may be, because we are instructed in the Scriptures so to do, and if it is the pleasure of the Lord to indite our labors, he will also prepare those with whom we labor, to receive the exhortations, admonitions or rebukes, and thereby they will be saved, but the brother to whom the Lord gives the true spirit of labor, has nothing wherewith to boast. "If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye that are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself lest thou also be tempted."

The same line of reasoning that would argue, if all our good works depend wholly upon grace, then there is no need of exhortation, &c., would argue that there is no use for prayer, if God is immutable. There is no limit to the depths of infidelity into which vain reasoning, on the things of the Spirit, will lead us.

Brethren, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."

B.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

EPHESIANS I. 13.

"In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise."

The first chapter of Ephesians is among the very last chapters on which we would suppose the Arminians would feel disposed to speculate. Not because other portions of the inspired Scripture are less antagonistical to Arminianism, but because this chapter presents the doctrine of God's sovereignty in the election and salvation of his chosen people, in such language as to defy the ingenuity of men or devils to make it appear to say anything favorable to the doctrine of salvation by works. First, in this chapter we are assured that all spiritual blessings were bestowed upon the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus according as God has chosen them in him before the foundation of the world. Consequently no spiritual blessings have ever been, ever will be, or ever can be added to those with which God has already blessed them in him; and this blessing, including all spiritual blessings, could not possibly have been given on the ground of any merit or goodness in them, because they were blessed according to quite a different standard; according as he hath chosen us in him, Christ, before the foundation of the world. The date of this blessing, including all spiritual blessings, is as ancient, as absolute, as creature-humbling, and as God-honoring, as their election, and both were before the foundation of the world. The Arminians will find it rather a difficult matter to make themselves believe, predisposed as they are to error, that they had done anything to bring God under obligation to bless them, before the foundation of the

world. Instead of their having been so blessed in consequence of holiness in them, the blessing in Christ Jesus was that we should be holy, and without blame before God in love. If therefore, eternal election, and the security of all spiritual blessings to the saints in Christ Jesus before the world began, does not tend to holiness, and absolutely secure, beyond the possibility of a failure, the ultimate holiness and blameless state of all the elect, it will not answer the design which God had in so blessing them. We are therefore compelled to conclude that a blameless state of holiness by the blessing of God, wherewith he blessed his people in Christ, their Head, before the foundation of the world, must certainly follow as a consequence, or else that God was himself mistaken, and failed to secure to them what he intended to. If any are sufficiently heaven-daring to take the position that God's wisdom and omniscience were at fault, and that he was mistaken, and did fail to secure what was his intention in blessing them before the foundation of the world, we ask them what assurance they pretend to have that any blessing of God since the foundation of the world, will be likely to prove any more effectual? If he has failed in one case, may he not in another?

Again, we are in this chapter assured that God has predestinated us, (those whom he has blessed with all spiritual blessings, and chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world,) to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, unto himself. And this predestination and adoption is not according as our works may be, but according to the good pleasure of his will. God's own immutable will is the standard of this predestination, and indeed he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. And we are expressly informed that he is without variableness or the shadow of turning. Still farther, we are assured in this chapter that the adoption of those who are thereunto by him predestinated, shall be to the praise of the glory of God's grace. Should this predestination and this adoption fail, must there not also be a failure of that revenue of praise unto the glory of God's grace, which was contemplated by him, in so predestinating them? Do any inquire, what grace this predestinated adoption is to be to the praise of the glory of? The answer is given, it is that grace wherein he, God, has made us accepted in the Beloved. Not that in which we have made ourselves accepted by our works, or in our Adamic nature. Nor is it a kind of grace wherein God proposes or intends to make the adopted accepted or acceptable; but that grace wherein he has made us accepted, out of ourselves and in the Beloved. But in what Beloved has God made his blessed and chosen and predestinated children accepted? In that very Beloved in whom we have (not in whom we are going to have, or may have) redemption through his blood; the forgiveness of sins. And all this according to what? Not according to the poverty of our good works, but according to the riches of his grace. Not a grace wherein we have commended ourselves to his favor, but that grace wherein he, God, hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence.

This *all wisdom and prudence* is exemplified in God's having made known to the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus, the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together all things, in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in

him; in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. That is, that *we*, who first trusted in Christ, namely, the apostles and primitive saints, unto whom Christ was first revealed, should be to the praise of the glory of Christ; and not only those who first trusted, but the Gentiles also, who also trusted in Christ. after that they heard the word of truth But as the Hebrew disciples first heard the words of truth, the gospel of their salvation, and were first called by grace, born of God, and taught by the Spirit, they first trusted in him in whom the saints which were at Ephesus and the faithful in Christ Jesus, among the Gentiles, also trusted at a later period. For as the first or primitive disciples did not trust in Christ until they had a knowledge of him, (and to know him is eternal life,) so neither did the Gentile believers at Ephesus trust in him until he was revealed unto them. So far is this from giving any countenance to Arminianism, it completely demolishes their favorite heresy, namely, that faith is a condition or means by which sinners are to be made alive; that God offers us life on condition of our believing. But our text holds the doctrine that faith to trust in God is a fruit of the Spirit, a gift of God, and a consequence, not a cause, of our being quickened and born of God. When did the saints trust in Christ, before they heard the word of truth, or afterwards? After that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. This is, in substance, what Jesus himself affirmed: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words which I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." Not the words spoken to everybody, by anybody, but the immediate communication of Christ the Life, the Head and Fountain of Immortality; in whom life was given to them with all other spiritual blessings before the foundation of the world. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. His sheep hear his voice, he knows them, and he gives to them eternal life, and they shall never perish. The dead hear his voice, and they that hear shall live; and all because the words which he speaks to them, are spirit and life. Therefore it is that they are born again of an incorruptible seed, by the word of the Lord, (his word, which is spirit and life,) which liveth and abideth forever. After they hear this, his life-giving word, which is to them the gospel of their salvation, and are by it made alive, then, but not till then, do they trust in him. Then they are effectually delivered from all confidence in the flesh, from all dependence on free-will, free-agency, human power and ability, and every other Arminian refuge of lies; then, stripped of every other dependence, they trust in him alone. They do not drag out a miserable existence, under the fearful apprehension that they may fall from grace and sink down to hell at last; for they are made savingly acquainted with Christ, and they know that he is able to keep that which they have committed to him against that day. They know that he (and not themselves) hath begun the good work, and that he (and not they) will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy spirit of promise. All *is in him*. In him they are blessed of the Father with all spiritual blessings; in him chosen or elected before the foundation of the world; in him predestinated to the adoption of children; in him accepted; in

him they receive the aboundings of widsom and prudence; in him they are, in the fullness of the dispensations of times, all gathered together in him; in him have obtained an inheritance according to the purpose of God. The holy spirit of promise, that spirit which was promised, is sent down from heaven to them who are thus quickened, and do thus believe and trust in Christ, and who are partakers of this grace, and it bears witness with their spirit that they are born of God; as a seal is used in testimony, and as the witness of a covenant, a pledge, a promise, &c. So the spirit of adoption which is given them, makes them, in the fullness of the assurance of faith and trust in God, to cry, Abba, Father. Until we believe, or until faith is given us in Christ to trust in him, we cannot cry, Abba, Father; we lack the sealing evidence. A seal makes an impression also on the wax, or on that which is sealed; so those who believe and trust in the Lord Jesus, are prominently marked, and have the seal of God in their foreheads, as John saw and testified in his vision on the isle of Patmos; and they bear the image of their Redeemer, which is by the spirit enstamped on them.

But the spirit of promise particularly designed in this text, is that which is said to be an earnest of their inheritance; and the spirit whereby they are sealed unto the day of redemption, or until the final resurrection of our bodies, which shall by it be made spiritual and incorruptible, when God shall raise them up, and change and fashion them, and make them like the glorious body of their risen Redeemer. "But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." This spirit of adoption in us is therefore a seal and earnest of the promise of a glorious resurrection and immortality beyond the grave, although we who have it, do now groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. Not before we were quickened, born of God, and made the recipients experimentally of the faith of God's elect; but after this development and manifestation is made, we exhibit the impress of this seal, and thereby are enabled to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. This seal is defined by the inspired writer of our text, as the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession. The bodies of the saints are bought with a price, and are spoken of as a purchased possession; the price has already been paid, but the redemption of them includes their deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Hence the spirit of adoption, when given to us, is a sealing assurance of that final deliverance from corruption, which we shall realize when the promise shall be fulfilled in the resurrection of our bodies from the dead; for then they shall put on incorruption, and be clothed in immortality, and by adoption take their place among the children. Now we are informed, Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom, neither can corruption inherit incorruption; but the spirit with which we are sealed, promises that they shall be changed, and made like unto Christ's glorious body; all impediments will then be removed, death will be swallowed up of life, and the bodies quickened with spiritual and immortal life; and so prepared to dispense with the earthly sustenance which they now require, and to live on spiritual and immortal food, and suited to the heavenly element; they will be capacitated to en-

joy the glories of that immortal state which God has prepared for them. Seeing, then, that we are bought with a price, and consequently are not our own, let us endeavor to glorify God, in our bodies and in our spirits which are his.

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Total to date	$356 05

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, April 23d, 1900, at the residence of L. B. Tusings, in the city of Columbus, Charles H. Wells, of Etna, and Miss Cheddie May White, of Pataskald, both of Licking Co., Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

IT becomes my painful duty to write an obituary for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of our well beloved brother, **Deacon Joseph Broders,** of Alexandria, Va. Brother Broders was born in Fairfax Co, Va., Sept. 27th, 1828, and died at his residence in the city of Alexandria, Va., March 22d, 1900. Within those dates was passed a noble, useful life, successful in the sense that the world calls such. From a small beginning he had accumulated a large property, and was identified with many of the interests of his adopted city. Without wishing to be considered a public man, he was chosen, and at the urgent request of his fellow citizens, served a number of years on the board of aldermen, and was president of the city council. For a number of years he had served as president of the First National Bank of Alexandria, also conducted a large wholesale grocery and provision business. But it was in other respects that the life of brother Broders was a success; as a Primitive Baptist, sound in the faith of God's elect; as a faithful member of the church in Alexandria, for about forty years, having been baptized by the late lamented Elder Wm. J. Purington, about 1860, and was not long after chosen deacon, which office he filled well. At the time of his uniting with the church they had no fixed place of meeting, and a few years later he erected a building on Fairfax St., the second story of which was made a hall, in which the church has met for thirty-one years free of charge, and which became historical as the scene of the sickness and death, from paralysis, of Elder Joseph L. Purington, in November, 1874, at the time serving that church, and four others in that section of the State, as pastor.

On the 10th of last January, brother Broders was stricken with paralysis, but rallied, and so far recovered as to be able to attend to business, but about a month after he had another, from which he rallied more slowly than the first, but did so far recover as to be able to go to the store, several squares from his residence, and on the morning of March 21st, after he had taken breakfast with the family, he started to the store, seeming more bright and well than for some time, when about a square from home he received another stroke, and fell on the sidewalk, and was carried home in an unconscious state, from which he did not rally, but gently breathed his last about 2 o'clock on the morning of the 22d.

"We watched him breathing through the night,
His breathing soft and low,
And in his breast a wave of life
Went ebbing to and fro.

So silently we seemed to speak,
So silent moved about,
As we had lent him half our powers,
To eke his being out.

Our very hope belied our fears,
Our hopes our tears belied;
We thought him dying when he slept,
And sleeping when he died.

But when the sun in all his state,
Illumined the eastern skies,
He'd passed through glory's morning gate,
And walked in paradise."

"He finished his course, and kept the faith, and died with glory full in view."

Brother Broders in 1856 was married to Miss E. A. Monroe, of Loudoun Co., Va., who was a true and noble helpmeet, and a faithful member of the church in Alexandria for many years before her death, which occurred in 1885. There were five children, one son and four daughters, the son and one daughter preceded him to the better land, each leaving one child. Three daughters survive him; their loss is irreparable, but is his eternal gain. We sorrow not without hope, for we believe that when Jesus shall appear, he will also appear with him in glory. Brother Broders loved to have his house full of the brethren, and he made no difference, rich and poor alike were always welcome at his fireside and table. One said on the day of his funeral, "To be an Old School Baptist was all the recommendation he required."

His funeral was largely attended on the 24th, Elder J. T. Rowe, his pastor, speaking very comfortingly to the sorrowing ones, the writer taking part in the services, after which the remains were laid away to

await the last trump. May God comfort the bereaved with the consolation of the everlasting gospel.

Brother Beebe, I have written this poor tribute to the memory of one I loved devotedly, and who proved himself a warm, kind-hearted friend through the more than thirty years of our acquaintance, about a third of which time I served the church in Alexandria as pastor. My sympathies are with that devoted little band, for they have lost one who was ever devoted to the interests of the church, following after the things that make for peace, and in all things seeking the welfare of Zion. But though earthly props and supports may be taken from us, our Jesus still lives, and though we be not aware of it, he ever is careful of the welfare of his people, and will suffer no evil to come near them. He "ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Yours in sorrow,

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., April 19, 1900.

DIED—At the residence of his son-in-law, near Flemington, N. J., March 10th, 1900, **Mrs. Hannah Sutton**, aged within a few days of 72 years. Her maiden name was Rittenhouse, and she was the daughter of that excellent brother and former deacon of the Kingwood church, brother James Rittenhouse. I am requested by the family to write this notice for the reason that I was better acquainted with her early experience than any one else. It is nearing fifty years ago when she made known to me her wish to be admitted to the Kingwood church. With choking utterance, and amid tears and sobs, she told me her exercises, leaving it to my judgment whether she could give them satisfaction. If she went I must attend that meeting to help her out in case she should not be able to tell all what she wished to, and hoped she had experienced. I do not recall an instance of more evident contrition of spirit, and sense of weakness. She was baptized in the fellowship of Kingwood church by Elder Gabriel Conklin, during his pastoral care of that church. I have now been away from that church for many years, but while I remained there she was among the most faithful and devoted members that I knew there. A knowledge of that early experience has remained bright and fresh in my mind, and through whatever changes and trying seasons that church has since passed, my faith and confidence in that early experience has been steadfast. She knew and loved the truth unto the end. One brother and three sisters have also been worthy members of that church. One brother, two sisters and five children, are left to mourn this bereavement. May the Lord comfort them and give them to taste for themselves that he is gracious. The death was sudden and unexpected.

Elder Chick attended the funeral.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

STATE ROAD, Del.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Black Rock church, Baltimore Co., Md., beginning on Wednesday before the third Sunday in May, (16th) 1900, and continuing three days.

All friends coming by railroad will take the 3:30 p. m. train Tuesday, of Northern Central Railroad, from Calvert St. station, Baltimore, to Cockeysville, where they will be met and cared for.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Rock Springs church, Lancaster Co., Pa., commencing on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, (23d) 1900, at 10 o'clock a. m.

All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

The friends will take trains in Philadelphia and Baltimore, over the P., W. & B. R. R., to connect with the 4. p. m. train at Perryville, over the Columbia & Port Deposit R. R., for Conowingo, on Tuesday, where they will be met, arriving about 4:30 p. m.

D. M. THOMAS, Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Southampton church, at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., commencing on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (May 30th) 1900, and continuing three days.

Those coming from Philadelphia to Southampton, take the train leaving Reading Terminal at 4:23 Tuesday afternoon, May 29th. Those coming by way of the D., L. & W., leave train at Lambertville, cross the river to New Hope, and take the train for Ivyland, ask for Wm. Hobensack. Coming on the Bound Brook from the east, the friends will be met at Bethayres on any train, Tuesday afternoon, by brother Charles Bond, entertained, and conveyed to the Association.

WM. HOBENSACK.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Warwick church, at Warwick, N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, (6th) 1900, and continue three days.

Those coming from the east or west should take the Erie Railroad to Greycourt, where they will change to the Lehigh & Hudson for Warwick. In New York city return tickets for Warwick can be bought for $2.75, thus saving more than one dollar on each ticket. Trains will be met on Tuesday afternoon, and friends will be cared for. The first train Wednesday morning arrives at about 9 o'clock, by which those coming from the west on the Erie R. R., can get to the meeting in ample time, as the meeting-house is but a short distance from the railroad station.

WM. L. BEEBE, Pastor.

THE Sandusky Primitive Baptist Association will convene with the Thompson church, near Kalida, Putnam Co., Ohio, June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1900. All trains will be met at Columbus Grove, on C., H. & D. R. R., on Thursday before.

A cordial invitation is extended to all, especially ministering brethren.

THE Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon and Washington, will hold their forty-ninth annual meeting at or near Elder W. S. Matthews' residence, near Lincoln, Polk Co., Oregon, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in June, 1900.

Those coming by boat, from both north and south, will be met at Lincoln. Those coming by railroad will be met at Salem, and conveyed to the place of meeting. All are requested to come so as to be met on Thursday before the meeting.

N. J. SHANKS, Clerk.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1900. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"IS ANYTHING TOO HARD FOR THE LORD?"

GENESIS XVIII. 14.

WHAT are we but creatures of his unlimited wisdom? When "deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts," and we are overwhelmed, should we cry unto God and say, What doest thou? The mystery of a thousand worlds are as an open book before the Lord, for his mind conceived them all, and his hand created them. He spake, and touched the springs of life, and myriads of created things sprang into harmonious action, all to act in perfect obedience, through every cycle of time, to his divine and sovereign will. The earth's rotation, and the mysterious movements of the solar system as studied by natural minds, is but a single instance of the infinitude of the inconceivable power and wisdom and greatness of the God of heaven and earth. The finite mind of man reaches not beyond the scope of finite things. "Sarah laughed within herself" when the Lord told her husband Abraham, saying, "Sarah thy wife shall have a son." For it is declared, "Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age, and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women." She could not believe things beyond that which was natural until the voice of him that spake to her pierced her very soul, saying, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" The ingenuity of the mind of man leads him to various heights and stages of ambition. By finite means he strives to reach the infinite, not perceiving or admitting the unwritten and unalterable law of nature, that the stream can never rise above its source, nor the thing of nature ascend beyond its elementary surroundings. Neither does he see the handwriting of the finger of God walled up against the background of his highest aspirations, which reads, "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther." To this aspiring, puny creature we might ask with him who spake to one of old out of the whirlwind, saying, "Where is the way where light dwelleth? and as for darkness, where is the place thereof?" "Hast thou entered into the treasure of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of

battle and war?" "Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee? Canst thou send lightnings that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are? Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? or who hath given understanding to the heart?" And again, when thou art cast down from thine imaginative height, and repliest against God, shalt thou not be made to see in a rainbow of power and glory, the words of inspiration, "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" By faith alone can we believe the infinitude of God; only by faith can we understand with the apostle, "That the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen, were not made of things which do appear." Through the same faith can we know that God is above all law. He is above impeachment, because the thing created cannot say aught to him that created it. The countless posterity of Adam are but as grasshoppers in the mind and contemplation of the God and Creator of heaven and earth. He that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Jehovah, gave to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Word, (which is Jesus) of whom it is declared, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." This precious Word illumines the soul of each one of the election of grace, causing him to become conscious that he is a sinner, justly condemned under the violated law of God, and also conscious of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, of the depravity of his carnal mind, and the vileness of his Adamic nature. To these chosen ones in Christ Jesus (the Word) is given life eternal; Jesus in them the hope of glory. And this life "is the light of men," by which they discover their death under the law, and their life by the body of Christ, who died and gave himself for them. None of these things are too hard for the Lord, for by him are all things. The question asked by the angel, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" is asked and answered by every one of God's children when they have been delivered out of nature's darkness into the light and liberty of the kingdom of Christ, and also many times along the pathway of their experience, when grace has surprised them by bringing them up out of all their troubles. O, that I could make a pen picture of all that is experienced by the child of God, which leadeth him step by step to that place in his journey where with humble boldness he can throw off the fears and doubts which have well nigh overwhelmed him, and say out of a full heart, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" Every man believes himself strong and sufficient in himself until he is brought low, by reason of the force of a chain of circumstances and things which control him, and over which he discovers he has no power. The Lord found Jacob in a wilderness, he was alone, and at the mercy of venomous reptiles, and howling, savage beasts; a waste wilderness. Hungry and thirsty was he, weary and footsore, but alas, no food was there, neither water to cool his parched lips, no place upon which to lie, save the damp and dangerous ground, but when exhausted from fatigue and weariness, after having tried every means within his power to extricate himself from the howling, barren waste, and failed, he "lay down in that place to sleep," and there the Lord found him, or in other words, he opened Jacob's eyes to

the wondrous truth that the Lord was in that place, and that the Lord was with him. More astonishing still, right in that desolate, howling, noxious, foodless, waterless place, all things were added unto him, all his needs were supplied, and precious promises given. He said unto Jacob, "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." Surely Jacob could then say in truth and soberness, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" Thomas refused to believe that Jesus had risen from the dead, or that it was he that had appeared unto his brethren, but the moment Jesus spake unto Thomas, the vail from his eyes was lifted, and he cried, "My Lord and my God." Faith in Jesus could make Thomas ask, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" When the subject of God's boundless grace is first brought to see himself a sinner in the sight of God, and see his condemnation just, he truly feels that no salvation is possible for him, and God remain just and holy. He is Jacob in that wilderness, where whatever way he may turn, all ways point to death and destruction. Yet while he is treading that dark and terrible way, a voice from behind (or from above) surprises him, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it," and when he has been turned about, Jesus is revealed to him as the ladder reaching from the earth to heaven, and now it is made plain to him how salvation can and does come to the ungodly: that "of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," depending in no sense upon any merit in the creature, and when the sunlight of God's glory illumines the soul with this glorious truth, he discovers the door of his prison-house unbarred and open; his blind eyes are opened to the revelation of Jesus as his life; his deaf ears are unstopped, and he hears the voice of his suffering, dying Lord, saying, "It is finished." Then his glad soul mounting higher echoes the words of the angel to Abraham, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?"

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., May 8, 1900.

STATE ROAD, Del., April, 1900.

BROTHER BEEBE:—The Master said that every scribe that was instructed in the things of the kingdom was like an householder, &c. I suppose that we are to understand by this that he had enough in store to not only supply every want, but to keep up a continual variety. If gospel preachers and writers had a full comprehension of the needs of the people, the many mourners to be comforted, the hungry to be fed, inquirers to be instructed, the sad and desponding to be encouraged, and the weak and tempted to be strengthened, it seems to me there would be no time nor room for debate and strife. It has long been annoying to me, and especially so as the time might be so much better employed. I do not know why people should be fond of debate, as it always tends to alienation and division, and never brings contending parties together. I have been acquainted with

quite a number of these debates, have seen them all the way through until they were finally abandoned to take up something else. The one that prevailed in my early life was on what was called the doctrine of the "Trinity." It became a kind of test of orthodoxy; it was the one fundamental doctrine, upon which everything else was hinged, and not only phrases adopted and put forward that were unscriptural, but utterly extravagant and absurd. It seemed to add to a person's reputation and notoriety to utter very extreme and original views. Not many now living will remember what an absorbing topic this was, and how much time and labor and talent were wasted upon it. Where is it now? And what did all the arguments and disputes amount to? Will anybody contend now for the various phrases and extravagant sentiments that were contended for then? It will be conceded that it brought forth no good fruit. Other topics have followed in rapid succession. The word of God liveth and abideth forever, but these hobbies, or topics, die out, and leave no trace. I could name a half dozen or more that have been, and have ceased to be, since the one above alluded to, but I will pass them by now to notice some that are now being agitated.

Predestination is quite prominent now as a subject of debate. I have believed what the Scriptures teach on the subject about as far back as I can recollect. I believe the doctrine would continue to stand as set forth in the Scriptures without all these strenuous efforts to prop it up. The Scriptures are strong enough for me, so I do not care to insist on phraseology that is never used by inspired writers. I do not find the word in any recorded sermon of Christ, or of any of the apostles. Never once does the term occur in all the Old Testament. Peter and James and John and Jude, all of them writing to the churches, neither of them ever use the word. Yet some of our people seem to want to be called predestinarians, as though this word embraced all that they were as believers. Predestination of course has to do with the future; the arranging and foreordaining, or foreproviding, has to do with events in the future. The apostle argues at length from the work of creation that nothing was left unfinished. The Creator declared the work finished, and he continues to rest from creation work; nothing more needed, nothing more to ever be created. He goes on from this to argue that redemption is also a finished work. The Savior said it was finished; he was given to be the covenant, and embodied in himself all its provisions. It was everlasting, and ordered in all things and sure. The apostle John, in his apocalyptic visions, heard the Savior declare that he was the Alpha and the Omega, and that the great work that the Father gave him to do, was all done. What then remains to be prearranged or predestinated? Just the carrying out, in the personal experience of the election of grace, of this redemption work. They must be called to be saints, and must be subjects of the adoption of children and heirs. Everything must be fulfilled that was embraced in the original counsel of his will. While there have been some extravagant expressions indulged in, and some application of passages of Scripture that I could not indorse, yet I have not been objecting to what I understand our brethren to believe and advocate. But we have had so much of this, as though there was nothing else of any importance. Some three or four years ago most of those who wrote for the SIGNS wrote on

this subject, some of them taking very questionable ground. Now all the old ground is being gone over and over again, the same arguments that have been ventilated scores of times. It is the sameness and reiterating the same things continually when no new light is thrown upon the subject, that I am calling attention to. The gospel mines are certainly not so nearly exhausted yet.

By the psalmist, the Lord charges somebody with thinking that he was altogether such an one as themselves. I am reminded of this by the reckless manner in which some writers speak of the holy One. God is a Spirit, a quickening, or life-giving Spirit. Nothing can emanate from him but what is pure and holy. He is separate from all the base and wicked passions that are common to depraved men.

A haughty and ambitious monarch might do many things to further his lust for dominion, and his power to oppress; he might love or hate without reason or principle, but the object of our worship and adoration is not a corporeal being as we are, neither is he a subject of the unhallowed passions that belong to human depravity. He is one Spirit, without variableness or shadow of turning, and there is no clashing or conflict in any of the divine perfections. As to his power, light is destined to prevail over darkness, truth over error, holiness over sin, life over death, and where sin has reigned, grace must and will reign, and death itself must die. All the powers and workings of darkness, sin and death, must be consumed with the Spirit of Jehovah's mouth, and destroyed with the brightness of his coming.

I will notice one other matter, and then stop for this time. The apostle in one single instance speaks of the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit as something that caused him trouble, but he at the same time exhorted his brethren, "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." I do not see in looking over the apostle's life and ministry, where he failed to do the things that he should. At the close of his pilgrimage we hear him saying, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." He never apostatized, he never shunned to declare all the counsel of God, not counting even his life dear unto himself. When he admonished, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean," he never told them that they could not do it. I do not find myself reiterating continually to my hearers that they cannot do what they ought to. I believe that admonitions have a place in the gospel ministry, and that these things were not spoken in vain. The expression I have referred to is never used by any other inspired writer, and but once by Paul. We need not infer from this that it covers all the ground of the christian's life and experience. I do not think it was intended as an excuse for wrong doing.

The SIGNS have been in my family from their commencement, and with regard to the great theme of salvation by grace, as the Rock on which they are built, they have received my uniform and hearty support. I have occasionally indulged, as I am doing now, in some suggestions that have borne upon my own mind, but as I trust with an abiding faith in and love of the truth.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

MISPAH, Ky., March 12, 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been thinking

for some time that I would like to write you some account of my experience, or what I hope have been the dealings of the Lord with me. I have been reading some of the back numbers of the SIGNS to-day, and have been much comforted with them, my hope is renewed, and a voice seems to say write.

I do not remember when I was first shown that I was a sinner in the sight of God, who is just and holy, but I do remember that when I was about ten years of age I used bad language, which made me shudder and cry. I felt that I had done wrong, and that God heard me, and I was made to fear; I cried bitterly, and wished that I had not said it, I then thought that I would never do so again. I remember that my brother said that I ought to be whipped; I thought to myself, If you only knew it, I have been whipped already. After awhile I was left, as it seemed, alone. I thought each day that I would be a better boy, but the longer I thought on these things the worse I seemed to become. One day when I was musing on these things, it came to my mind that I must preach. I worked on, and it seemed to me that I preached to a large company, when quick as thought something said, "You are a vile sinner yourself." My thoughts troubled me greatly, I tried to pray, but I could not say anything; then I remembered my first trouble, and the promise that I had made. I saw that I had broken all my promises to do better, and had only grown worse all the time. I tried to pray again, but my prayers seemed to fall to the ground. I made many promises to do better, but that did not relieve my mind. Then after a time I forgot all about my trouble. At a very early age I was led to read the Bible. One night after all the family had retired but myself, I was reading about the crucifixion of Christ, and it all seemed as a natural historical event to me until I came to where the Savior said, "It is finished." Here my mind was filled with thoughts. By this time I had begun to shed tears. I was made to weep and cry bitterly; it seemed as though I could see him hanging there, and hear him cry, "It is finished," then the thought came, All this suffering was for your sins. I closed the Bible, and you can hardly imagine the dreadful condition I was in; those who have passed through the same know what it means. Here I tried to pray again, and thought within myself, I will always be good after this. I went to bed with a heavy heart, but with the resolution, I will be good from now on, but how little was the good that I did; by morning all was gone like a shadow. I went on until I was about twenty years of age; I then attended a protracted meeting; they called for mourners; at first I would not go, for I had bitterly opposed that way. Finally they asked me if I did not want to be a christian? I replied that I did; they said, Come on then, let us pray for you. I told them they could do me no good; they said that I must give myself to God, and that he was willing to save me if I would only let him. Well, at last I went forward; they pretended to pray, and told me to pray; I tried to pray, but I do not know now what I said, but I do know that the longer I remained there the worse I felt. They closed the meeting that night, and I was not "saved," as they called it. Finally they persuaded me to join the church; they said that was one step toward God. I united with them, and went into Babylon as far as any one ever did. I soon left them, for I found no salvation there; the longer I stayed with

them the greater my trouble became. I do not know why I did all this, but one thing I do know, I have seen more trouble over being deluded by these people than by all else that I have ever done. It seemed all the time that I knew better, and that I was deceiving them. I did not feel at home with them, yet I took an active part with them for some time. My greatest trouble about this was that I thought I had fallen from grace. The short time I was with them I appeared very religious, being puffed up in my fleshly mind; I had quit, or thought I had quit, all my old habits, but soon I was a "backslider," as they called it, and was deceived myself as well as they. Of course I did not see those things then as I do now.

Upon one occasion I had an experience which I wish to relate here. I was called to the death of my father. When I got near to the old homestead I met a man in the road and asked him how my father was? He said, "He is dead." I do not think it excited me, but I never had such feelings in my life. I went on to the house and went in, and as I looked on his form I remembered how he used to tell me about divine grace; he was one who believed in salvation by grace, and grace alone. An Arminian minister living near by was called in to attend the funeral; he sang and prayed, and in his prayer he asked God to bind up the broken hearts of the bereaved family, and to take their minds from earthly things, and place them upon heavenly things. During this night and day I had gotten into trouble again on account of sin. I was shown again that I was a sinner, and my sins seemed like mountains, it seemed that they would crush me down to hell. I felt that hell was justly my portion, but I could not bear the thought of going down to destruction. I tried to pray again, and to ask God to forgive my sins, but still my sins bore me down. Just when I had done all that I could, and thought I was surely sinking, I was made to cry out and say, "Lord, save or I perish; forgive all my sins, for I am a sinner, and thou canst if thou wilt." Just then all my troubles left me, I felt as light as a feather, indeed I was happy, I cannot express my feelings, it seemed that I loved everybody and everything; I thought that I would tell my mother about it, but I did not tell all that I had passed through, I only told her that I had a hope in Christ. As I went back home that evening the world and all things else seemed to be changed, all things wore a different aspect. I thought that I would never see any more trouble, but how different I have found it to be; I thought that now I could do all those good things which I had been promising to do, but I have not. I must say like Paul, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the good that ye would."

I now felt that I wanted to be baptized and unite with the church, but I had not yet learned all. I went and joined with that Arminian of whom I spoke before, thinking that he preached the doctrine of Christ; his preaching seemed to suit me at the time. I then began to read the Bible in order to uphold freewillism. I was honest in this also, I thought that this doctrine was true, I had forgotten my own experience. I had been reading about five months, when one day in the month of August I was reading the fifth

chapter of Romans, I came to where it reads, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." When I read that, some unseen power seemed to change me right around. It was all at once made plain to me that it is through the righteousness of Christ that I should be made righteous. There seemed to be a great field of thought opened up to me just then; I saw that salvation is of the Lord; I saw that it is not by our good works that we bring salvation; I saw that I was shapen in iniquity, and that I was conceived in sin; I saw that it required the blood of the dear Savior to save an infant, as much as to save an adult; I saw that grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. The very doctrine which I had sought to destroy was now made precious to me; that which I had sought to uphold, I found to be but death, like the wild gourds in the pot. Now, it seemed that I wanted to go and tell everybody that salvation is of the Lord. I began to tell of Christ as the way, and the truth, and the life. It was such good news to me that I could not help telling it to others. Then persecution arose, the world began to mock; some said if they believed what I did they would not care what they did; that they would take their fill of sin; some said they were sorry for me; some said, What will he do next? some said, He will join the old Hardshells next; others said, He is a strange fellow; he has been first a Methodist, then a Freewill Baptist, and now a Hardshell; others said, He seems to be losing his mind. But God delivered me out of their hands, and I hope that he will yet deliver me, for he is the deliverer of his people. He has delivered them out of the fiery furnace, and out of the lion's mouth, ahd he will yet deliver them. Let all the earth praise the Lord, for he is good; let us trust in him, and cast all our care upon him, for he careth for us.

After God had opened the eyes of my understanding I began to seek for a people who had experienced the same, and I was led to a place one day, where it was said that one of that sect which is everywhere spoken against, was to preach. The old minister began to preach Christ crucified as the way, the truth and the life; he began to magnify grace, and he told me more about my experience than I could tell myself; indeed, the discourse was a feast to my soul. I continued hearing this sect until July, 1899, when I went to the church and told in part what I have here written; I was received, and baptized in August, 1899, by Elder A. J. Lewis, a minister of the Old School Baptist church. This is a part of what I hope I have experienced of grace, and if you think it will be of any comfort to any of the Lord's people, you may publish it. My mind is now relieved. I feel that I have obeyed the voice which said write. I feel to say with the prophet, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him." To whom else can we go? He alone has the words of eternal life.

I sometimes doubt still whether I have an experience of grace, yet I am sometimes made to rejoice and hope in Christ. Sometimes I think that I am deceived, and that I have deceived the church. I feel that I am not worthy of a name or place among the children of God; I am made to abhor myself, and to put my hand upon my mouth crying unclean; at other times I feel an assurance that God has, for Christ's sake, forgiven my sins, and that God has revealed his Son in me, and opened the eyes of my understanding. One of the sacred writers said, "By this we know that we have passed from

death unto life, because we love the brethren." Sometimes when I read this my hope is renewed, for I do feel that I love the children of God, there is something, if I am not deceived, that binds me closer to them than any other people on earth.

Dear brethren, pray for me and mine. May God bless you all is my prayer.

Your unworthy brother, if indeed one at all,

CHARLES R. COX.

WALLACETOWN, Ontario, March 6, 1899.

MR. ROBERT SCATES—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I will try to answer your most welcome letter, but I feel destitute of any spiritual power to enable me to write concerning spiritual things. I must tell you that your second letter brought tears to my eyes while reading it. I do not know how it is with others, but it is to me a comfort to shed tears. While at the Duart meeting I thought that if I could only shed tears at my awful condition it would relieve my burdened heart. Sunday afternoon and Monday I felt that my heart was hard as stone. As Elder Durand was speaking on Monday, if you remember, about different characters in the Bible, about casting out devils, and the thief on the cross, and others which I cannot remember, I thought, He sees what a doubting child I am, and I thought he could see distress was written on my countenance. Though he spoke comfort to the doubting child of God, it seemed that the longer he spoke the harder I got. O, if I could only shed a tear. I often think to myself, I do not know what kind of a creature Elder Durand will think I am, for I could not talk to him without filling up. It does not seem to me that there was ever a creature on earth with such an experience as mine. As far back in my childhood as I can remember, I felt to be different from others, and so different in my feelings. Go when and where I would, I could not get rid of that almost constant warfare within. I did not then know what it was, or why it was thus with me, but felt to be getting worse all the time. I could not then answer for my strange condition, but sometimes think that I can answer for it now. I was guilty, guilty, in the sight of God, and O, so guilty still. When listening to preaching, or at funerals, or talking about sickness or death, my mind would feel easier; this was when a child. I did not seem to fear death nor future punishment so much, but felt so torn to pieces and crushed to the earth, and for years feared I would lose my reason. I had felt that way for years, but at times since uniting with the church, it has seemed heavier; I mean, I feared that my religion was only imagination, and as brother Ker said in his experience, my natural reason would forsake me. I have not felt so much that way of late, but crushed under a weight of sorrow. When the words came to me so powerfully, "Ye must be born again," I was so condemned in my feelings I felt I could not be one of the Lord's children. After making a profession that I hoped I had been born again of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever, the burden seemed terrible to me. But I am glad to say this burden has been removed to a great degree, but the words, "who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage," have been much on my mind of late. What does it mean? Do you think it means natural death?

I will try to explain my feelings by a natural comparison. I compare myself to a little child too weak to walk or stand

without the help of a parent, and after learning to walk, growing up a stubborn and disobedient child. I feel that I am a very disobedient child, and that I have to be brought down to the borders of despair, and kept there so much of my time, that I may learn obedience by the things that I suffer. When I am made to feel so destitute of spiritual life, O what a tottering creature I am.

I read the articles which you marked. Brother Weedon's and brother Chick's and sister House's articles were all a comfort to me; she told some of my feelings so clearly. I have, as I thought, felt even my breath leaving me, and thought I was dying, and then afterward I would have a great peace of mind, and I have asked myself the question, Can it be the peace of God which passeth all understanding? Sometimes I hope that it is, though at other times I could not feel so, or think that my trouble was the dealing of the Lord with me. What a mystery I have been to myself, and I believe to others also. I feel to say as dear cousin Esther McColl wrote: "Lord was there ever such a blind and ignorant creature as myself?"

One year ago last June I was not feeling very well, and one night I awoke my husband and said to him, "I do not know what is coming over me, but I feel that I am sinking, and am so weak." I thought surely that something told me that I was about to die, and what anguish of soul I felt. I said to him, "I am not ready to die, but I feel that I am not going to live long, or be with you," and I believe that he also thought so. The very thought of death seemed such a terror to me, and it seemed close at hand, and I was unprepared for it. When morning came I felt some better, but still death seemed to stare me in the face, and I can never tell you the anguish of soul that I endured, and though the words of the poet, "Jesus can make a dying bed feel soft as downy pillows are," were much on my mind, yet they did not give me peace, nor reconcile me to death. I am so hard-hearted, and often feel that it is needful for me to be brought through sore trials to bring me down, and often wonder what is in store for me before I leave the world. I cannot hide from the eye of God, but if I could only hide from myself. "'Tis self, that legal thing and base, that keeps me from my rest." How shut up I feel.

You said you would like to write something for my comfort. I want to say that your letter was a comfort to me; I felt thankful to receive it, coming as it did from one whom I feel to be of humble mind, but the heart knoweth its own bitterness. I believe it is well to speak and write one to another, though I have always tried to keep my feelings to myself, and have been told that I was too much so. I have been forced to open my heart to some one, and felt that I could write to you as well as any one, but I would rather talk than write. My great burden has in some measure gone since I opened my feelings, and I have been made to hope that I am one of the Lord's children for whom Jesus died, and when called to part from this world, and all that I hold near and dear, I hope I can say, "I would not live alway, I ask not to stay," &c. When in darkness, doubt and fears, the words have come to me, "'Tis all for the lifting of Jesus on high." But the flesh shrinks from such suffering, and if we were left to ourselves, what would be the consequences? Truly we are rebellious, murmuring and unthankful creatures. I often think of the words, "Lord, what is man that thou art mind-

ful of him?" and also the words, "I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up: while I suffer thy terrors I am distracted." I have felt that I could go with the psalmist in these feelings. Dear brother, when I say this am I going too far? Is it only my imagination? The enemy of souls is busy with me.

You say that you are not like me, as you have been fond of worldly amusements, and have run after them in your youth. I will tell you the reason that I did not: I would say that I would go and be cheerful like others, but when I would get to such places I would feel so dumbfounded and confused in mind, I was no company for any one, and at last I said, "I will go no more," and now I have no wish to go only among the people of God, and I am willing to be accounted with them, as the offscouring of the earth.

I hope you will overlook anything I may have said amiss, I have written as my mind was led. Please tell me if I ought to write my experience to Elder Durand, as he requested. I have written it to you, or a part of it; sometimes it seems to me to be unlike the experience of the children of God, or at least some of it. I will close for this time, hoping that you will answer soon. Give my love to Mrs. Scates.

From your unworthy sister in Christ,
MRS. J. McPHAIL.

[WE have greatly enjoyed reading the above letter. Many things in it commend the dear sister to us. Of one thing especially we wish to speak. She speaks of being cut off from worldly amusements. We can understand this. From the time when we were a child, such places were productive of no rest or comfort to us. We loved our friends, and were glad to meet them, but in engaging in trifling amusements we were always made to see trouble, and afterwards we would feel that we had sinned against God and our own conscience. How could we return from such places and read the Bible with any comfort, or converse with those of spiritual mind, or kneel down before God in prayer? And to-day it is our firm conviction that those who love better things only wrong their own souls when they allow themselves to take part with the worldly in dancing, card playing, and many other amusements with which those of worldly mind are pleased and delighted. It is sure that a believer has no right to do what his Savior would not do, nor to go where they cannot expect his presence. And who, that has once felt his presence, wants to go where they cannot expect to find him? If we cannot kneel down before God and ask his blessing upon anything that we do, we had better avoid that thing. Can a christian ask God to bless him in such things as are named above?—ED.]

DECATUR, Texas, March 7, 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST THE LORD:—When I read the SIGNS, and find there the names of the many writers who are contending for the faith of the Primitive saints, it does my poor soul good. I am glad to know that there are some who are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, and who had rather suffer affliction with the people of God, than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, and who would rather suffer persecution for the truth's sake, than have the applause of the whole world by trying to please men in advocating a doctrine which is in line with that which is popular in the world. The scribes and pharisees opposed the teachings of Christ and the apostles, by trying

to establish their own righteousness, but they were rebuked on every hand by the Savior and the apostles. They tried to mix works with grace, but Paul testified to them that this was impossible. He said, "If it be of grace, it is no more of works, and if by works, then it is no more of groce." Again he said, "By the grace of God I am what I am." As it was with Paul, it is with all the kindred of Christ, they have no righteous works of their own to plead, for there is none that doeth good, no, not one. If an Ethiopian can change his skin, or a leopard his spots, then a man can turn from evil and learn to do well. The carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to his law, and indeed cannot be. It is therefore impossible to please God without a spiritual mind. It is just as easy for one to bring about the new birth, as it is to bring about a spiritual mind; both are, and must be, of God. There are those here who tell the poor, trembling child of God, that he has a work to do in order for the blessing of God to rest upon him, but David says that the servants of God are warned by his judgments, and in (not for) keeping of them there is a great reward. (Psalm xix. 11.) The power to obey is the blessing in itself, and the blessing of God always precedes the obedience which he renders. In other words, God's blessing brings the obedience.

Dear kindred in Christ, I feel that it is of the Lord's mercies that I am not consumed, because his compassions fail not. "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him." "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." "Who is he that sayeth, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?"

Dear companions in tribulation, did you ever try to bring about that peace for which your soul was thirsting, with pleadings and groanings? Was it not the case that the more you tried, the darker grew the clouds, and were you not made to give up in despair and say all your works were vanity, and that you were not fit to call upon the name of the Lord? Then your cry is, "Lord cleanse me, and make me worthy to call on thy holy name." Then you were made to cry with bitter anguish of soul, because you could do nothing to bring him to your relief. Then you are made to quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord, and you, like Jeremiah, find that it is good. All your works are discovered to be an abomination in the sight of the Lord, and you are made to feel that if the Lord ever smiles upon you any more, it will be of free grace, and unmerited favor. Sometimes these thoughts come to my mind, I am not one of the redeemed of the Lord, for if I am, why am I so cold and lifeless, while others are praising him? I cannot even give any evidence of a hope. O, was there ever any one like me, hoping and trusting upon such a small evidence as mine is? When I look on my leanness and weakness, I am made to wonder why it is that my mind is so impressed to speak to the dear saints of the Most High? It seems to me that if I could tell what I want to tell, my joy would be full. O, if I could only tell about the fullness of the great I Am.

Fear not, dear brethren, to declare the whole counsel of God. When I read dear old Elder Gilbert Beebe's writings, my love is made to go out toward him for contending for the truth. Hold fast the sovereignty of God. If we recede from predestination, and salvation by grace, we will then have to give up the

wisdom and power of the Most High, and mingle with the world in their idolatry. But I feel well assured that the Lord will reserve a few faithful witnesses to declare his name from generation to generation, until the end of the world, for the comfort and edifying of the saints who trust in him as their all and in all. Where could the dear, trembling child of God base his hope, if God's decrees and predestination did not cover all his foreknowledge? For his wisdom sought out and made sure all things before the creation, and he spoke all his creation into place, as he did when he said, "Let there be light, and there was light." Our very breathing is measured out to us by his almighty power; every step that we will take was embraced in his wisdom; every grain of corn or wheat that ever grew, or ever will be, was embraced in his all-embracing knowledge; he fixed all things that come to pass for his own glory; all things serve the purpose designed by their Creator. O for a tongue to praise him for the assurance that nothing can transpire contrary to his will, for as was his foreknowledge, so will all things be in his creation. When troubles and sorrows encompass us, we know that it is best, or it would not be so. We look to him who is all wisdom and power, to make a way for our escape, for there is nothing hid from his all-seeing eye. What a comfort it is to me to feel assured that there is nothing that can change his designs, or alter his decrees. O, that I could praise him for his goodness and mercies to the children of men. Sometimes I am made to cry out in bitter anguish because I am unworthy to praise him for his mercies and goodness to me all the days of my life. I have been unmindful of him while he has been mindful of me. Sometimes when I try to meditate upon his holy name, worldly thoughts will flit through my mind, and cause confusion; I cannot even think upon his name, saying nothing about praising him.

If I could write like the other brethren and sisters, it seems to me that I would write all the time. I do not know why my mind is so impressed to write, when I cannot write as I would. Sometimes I think that I will wear the impression off, or wait until I am given more liberty to write. I will send you this poor scribble, and if it is cast aside, all will be right with me.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

M. B. F. JONES.

"I AM COME INTO MY GARDEN."

When the restful thought comes that God cares for us, and rules all things, it does not matter for the moment what our surroundings are; we draw a long breath of relief and rejoice in the truth. A word, a sentence that we have heard or read, it may be many times, seems to sound in our hearts as if spoken with power to make us feel its truth. Then how sweetly we realize that for us Christ prayed, "I will that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am," and we see it is answered, and we are with him in very truth, forever. At times each member, and each branch of the church, feels discouraged, helpless, lost, but we are not, for he that saved that which was lost, knows that each one that the Father gave him, is safe in his hands, for he finished the work, and now they are forever safe within the walls of salvation. "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse," and what a soul-cheering sight is this garden of the Lord. The children of Israel, after being brought out of the land of Egypt, and on their

journey to the promised land, were told that it was a land of milk and honey; not like the land of Egypt from whence they came. (Deut. xi. 10–12.) Spiritual Israel was made to see, when Christ came and set up the kingdom, that she had been brought out of darkness, and a land of bondage, to eat the milk and honey of a new land that spiritually "drinketh in the rain from heaven," forever to enjoy the favor and rest in the sight of the Lord. Each child of God at the appointed time also sees he has been brought from a state wherein he labored in darkness, to a land, a garden, "which the Lord his God careth for."

The first man Adam (which was the figure of him that was to come) was not able to care for his Eden, even as the children of Israel could not keep their land of promise, but the second man Adam, the Lord from heaven, keepeth this garden forever protected by the bulwarks and walls of salvation. "The eyes of the Lord are upon it from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year;" the garden inclosed, the church, the kingdom of our Lord.

If you are a "tree of righteousness," planted by his hand, you may rest assured that his eyes are upon you, his ear open to your cry, and that some time you will be given that great pleasure, that great gift of hearing the Master's voice as Solomon must have heard it, saying, "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse."

You must be where he is to hear his voice, in the garden, and when you hear it you enjoy the fruits of this chosen garden of the great Husbandman. In the dark we wonder if we ever heard the Master's voice, or have known anything of this garden, or have had evidence of his calling. But do we not find evidence in the word of comfort and encouragement that falls from the lips of his servants or ministers, members of his body? Are not these words of comfort like the myrrh, the sweet-smelling myrrh, that fell upon the handle of the lock, when she arose to open to the Beloved? (Sol. Song v. 5.)

You may be made to say, "My soul failed me when he spake," I sought him, but could not find him, but the desire to find him is proof that you have love for him and his company, and wish and mourn for him as the church does for her Beloved.

The language of the text must refer to the coming of Christ on earth, when spiritual Israel, the church, was saying, "Let my beloved come into his garden and eat his pleasant fruits, (Cant. iv. 16,) as it is written, "While they are yet speaking I will hear."—Isaiah lxv. 24. So Christ answered the church, "I am come into my gorden." As the text refers to the coming of Christ in the church, and the setting up of the kingdom, God manifest in the flesh, it also fitly applies to every manifest coming of Christ in the church of to-day, also his coming in the heart of the child of God to show him his unworthiness, satisfying his need, and in answer to his prayer for a deliverer from the sins, temptations and trials of his world and the world about him. As the kingdom of God is within you, and you in it, you feel to hope that you are in and of this garden.

The spirit in the heart of Solomon made him speak of the coming of Christ, long, long before the same spirit caused John to "make ready a people prepared of the Lord." The spirit in you, like a messenger, comes and makes you ready for the coming of Christ. The days of the coming of Christ, and John the Bap-

tist, seem to have been the time for the north wind to wake with its biting frosts and death-dealing power. Then also the time when the words spoken by the prophet so long before were to be fulfilled, and "He who speaks and it is done," said, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd." The north wind hardened the cruel hearts of men, and power was given that Christ should be crucified, and die for the sins of his people. Our sins nailed him to the cross, and killed him, and we learn of and taste of his death in our experience, and we could not believe that he died for us in any other way. The sword smote the Shepherd, and the sheep were scattered; his hand was turned upon the little ones. Christ died, was raised from the dead, the kingdom manifestly set up, the south wind (Holy Ghost) came and blew upon the garden, and the church heard him say, "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey: I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." Then they feasted together, and to-day the church collectively, and each child of God individually, feasts, and hope is alive in their hearts, all rejoicing because "he is come into his garden."

Since the coming of Christ his chosen ones have by faith feasted on the fatness of their promised land, and whenever the south wind blows, or the holy Spirit comes and blows upon his garden, Christ our life speaks to us, or in us, saying, "I am come into my garden." "Then eat, O friends," and may God give us grace to serve him acceptably.

In conclusion let me say, "Fear God and keep his commandments." Do your duty, if you love Zion's streets and her inhabitants, tell them so, for they are often lonely and sad, bowed down with burdens, and hungry for company. Clasp our hands in the dark, long nights, and speak, that we may know you are our friends.

May the great truth that God reigns and rules in all things, comfort you as it does your unworthy brother,

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.

LAWRENCEBURG, Ky., March 20, 1900.

ADRIAN, Mich., Jan., 1900.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—As it is time for me to renew my subscription for our dear family paper, inclosed find the money for the same. Were it possible to do so, I would be glad to send you a goodly number of subscribers, but it would be hard to find one in this city who would subscribe for such a paper as the SIGNS; they do not believe the doctrine, nor see the beauty in it, which is set forth and so ably defended in the SIGNS. I am surrounded with Arminian religion, and am forcibly reminded of Nathaniel Hawthorne's dream. They are all going to the celestial city by rail. It is now soul-saving season with them, the whole people are aroused and active, preparatory to making a great and grand effort to save souls. All denominations have joined together, and are holding prayer meetings at their churches, and private houses, day and night. We have often been invited to attend, but feel to give it all a wide berth, and stand aloof from this false religion, this vile woman, who is arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones, and who sits upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy. When I see them working with such zeal, trying to put themselves in the place of a wonder-working God, who first spoke the world

into existence, and who sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are grasshoppers, and the nations are as a drop in the bucket, who separated light from darkness, and gave the seas their bound that they cannot pass, who is able to do all things, and who, most wonderful of all, gave his Son to come down from heaven, not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him, and of whom the angel said unto Mary, Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins; when I think of all this I say, I wonder how they can think to render any assistance to such a being. But they are poor, deluded creatures, "They know not what they do." They surely do not feel as I do, I know that I cannot do one thing that will merit the favor of God, I do not even know how to pray, or what to pray for. It is said, "The spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." I often try to find some evidence in myself that the Lord has called me from darkness unto light, but I am not able to find it, because in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. The words, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," give me hope sometimes, although it is like the pale light of a far away star, so dim that it can hardly be discerned. O, could I but believe, then all would be easy, but doubts and fears, and the accursed sin of unbelief, obscures the light and makes the way look dark and gloomy. I would fain inquire of the watchmen that go about the city, What of the night, and what of the dawning of the day? O, could I but see the Sun of righteousness arise, and with his radiant light dispel the dark clouds that enshroud everything, like a funeral pall. But it matters not how I may feel as to my personal interest in this great salvation, or how dark the way may look to me, there is still one source of comfort left, arising out of the darkness and gloom, and that is Mt. Zion, a glorious sight, looking forth as the morning. This is the church of the living God in all her grandeur and loveliness, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. She is beautiful for situation; Christ is her Rock and Cornerstone. "Let the inhabitants of the Rock sing," let them sing and shout for joy. Surely no other people have so great cause to rejoice as they, surrounded as they are on all sides by the impenetrable walls of salvation, and guarded and defended by him who has all power in heaven and on earth, and who never slumbers nor sleeps, and who is able to do whatsoever he will.

Strong to defend, though hell engage,
And all the hosts inflamed with rage,
Not more secure Jehovah's throne,
Than Zion stands in Christ his Son.

Built on his Godhead and his blood,
She stands, and shall forever stand;
Nor hell, nor sin, so firm the base,
Shall e'er the christian hope erase.

While I am fearful that I know nothing as it should be known, and am ignorant and blind, yet I can say of a truth, I love the people of God, although they are despised by the world, and are not counted among the nations of the earth. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of God, than to sit upon any earthly throne, with the world at my command.

"My heart shall pray for Zion still,
While life and breath remains;
There my best friends, my kindred, dwell,
There God my Savior reigns."

From your sister,

MRS. H. TUTTLE.

EDITORIAL.

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2 CORINTHIANS VII. 10.

"For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death."

What a contrast exists between all that is of the world, and all that belongs to the kingdom of heaven. What a difference between the best worldly thing, and the least exhibition of godliness. Even in the sorrow for wrong doing which a man of the world may feel, there is no resemblance to that sorrow which belongs to godliness. By the fruit every tree is known, and the fruit of godly sorrow is repentance unto life, while the fruit of the sorrow of the world is death. This the apostle clearly states in the text quoted at the head of this editorial. It is in our mind to call attention to the contrast here presented for the help of those who may be of doubtful mind concerning their own sorrow, of what sort it may be.

There are two examples given in the word which stand prominently forth, in each of which the statement of the apostle here is clearly set forth and exemplified. The one case is recorded in the Old Testament, and the other in the New. That in the Old Testament is the contrast between Saul and David when, as it is recorded of them, they had sinned grievously against God. In 1 Sam. xv., the sin of Saul is recorded in sparing King Agag, and the best of the flocks and herds, against the command of God to destroy them all. Samuel came to him and told him of his sin, and Saul said, "I have sinned." But what was the result? His confession of sin was not because he felt any real sorrow that he had violated the command of God, but because Samuel stood high as a prophet with the people, and it would be much to his own hurt should the prophet turn away from him, and so he besought Samuel that he would honor him before the elders of his people; and, as all who have read the after life of Saul know, the final result was that he went on desperately in his evil course. His sorrow that he had thus sinned was very real and sincere, but it was not godly sorrow which worketh life, but that sorrow which wrought death. There was no real humbling of himself before God with broken heart and contrite spirit.

Now let us see the contrast. David had sinned in the case of Uriah and Bathsheba; his sin was also most grievous, and for some time he seems to have gone on without any realization of his sin, but at last Nathan the prophet is sent of God to him, and under his faithful words David is given to see, in its true colors, his fault, and he also said, "I have sinned." But see how differently he said it, as manifested by the results; it wrought true repentance in him, of which he did not need to repent. Saul repented, but the motive of his repentance itself needed to be repented of, but the motive of David's repentance was godly sorrow, and the fruit was also godly repentance.

In the New Testament we have the cases of Judas and Peter. We need not

go into any detail here, all Bible readers know the result of the sorrow of Judas, when he had betrayed his Master, that it led him literally to death, for he went out and hanged himself, while on the other hand, when Peter had denied his Master grievously three times over, and with the added guilt of cursing and swearing, he was brought to weep bitterly, and his course afterward was a testimony to the fact that his sorrow for his sin was godly, and led to a godly repentance.

Now this same theme and contrast the apostle states here in the text and connection. Paul (verse 8) speaks of having made them sorry with a letter. He refers to the first epistle to them. In that, as all who have carefully read it know, he chides them for many things; there were divisions among them; they denied the resurrection, saying that it was past already, that is, some of them did this; they had among them some who had been guilty of fornication; they went to law with one another before the world; they had regard to meats, and days, and times, and seasons; they had turned the supper, with all its solemn meaning, into a semblance of the old feasts, which as heathens, they had been accustomed to observe. These, and many other things, he had censured them for. These things he had not failed to warn them of, and they had been made sorry. This he tells them he had heard, and because of this he had been sorry that he had thus written them, but now he says, he is no longer sorry, because he learned they had sorrowed to repentance; that is, their sorrow had worked out its proper fruit, and they had turned away from their sins and wrong doing. When Paul says that he was sorry at first that he had thus written them in his first letter, we are not to at all understand him as meaning that he would not write to them the truth at all times, but that he had such love for them that to know that they were sad, grieved him to the heart also; he sorrowed with them as the children whom he loved; when they wept, he could but weep with them, and when they were glad, he must be glad also. How tender and near was the apostle in his sympathy with them. What loving father does not know a little, at least, of what Paul felt as he knew of the tears and grief of his beloved Corinthians? Nothing can so appeal to a father's heart as the grief of a child, even though that child has done wrong, and now grieves over chastisement or rebuke, the father feels all the grief with them. So Paul, as their father in the gospel, felt toward them, and so when he knew of their sorrow he was grieved, and even repented that he had written them so sharply. Perhaps he had done harm rather than good, he would think, but afterward he learned how their sorrow had resulted, it had not driven them to despair, but it had caused that they sought with great earnestness to clear themselves as a church, and as individuals, from the evils of which he had spoken, and now indeed he was glad, because this was their salvation, and would be to their lasting good, and to the glory of God and of grace. Where is there a faithful pastor who has not passed through all these various feelings, after having spoken in the way of rebuke? Paul had his trials of the weakness of the flesh as well as do we; he could and did fear that his words would do harm rather than good, just as do we, and when he had seen good result from his words, he was glad, as are we. Paul is a true brother and yokefellow to all who serve faithfully in the house of God; he knew all their weaknesses, fearfulness and questionings,

and he also knew how much they need evidences that their labor is not in vain, for he was a man of like passions with us all.

Before speaking of the evidences of true repentance which he had heard to be in them, we will call attention to the difference between sorrow and repentance. If we speak of the sorrow of the world, or of the sorrow that is godly, the same law holds good; each produces a repentance after its kind; the sorrow of the world is in itself selfish and evil, its repentance is not a turning really away from the sin which has been done, but a shrinking from the shame and punishment attached to it; it will even drive men to suicide, as in the case of Judas, it will drive men to beseech good men not to forsake them, because this will bring reproach upon themselves, but there is no thought of God in this sort of repentance, or this sort of sorrow. This sorrow works death, that is, it works out more evil and more sin. The man who has for the first time robbed his employer, is sorry no doubt, but if his sorrow be of the world, and not the sorrow which God gives for sin, he will rob his employer yet again, in the attempt to conceal his crime. The impenitent thief was no doubt sorry that he had done what had brought him to such a painful death, because it had wrought such a result, while yet he loved the same sins still, and felt no stirrings of godly sorrow. There is a sorrow, and there is a fruit of that sorrow; these are two things, and must not be confounded. Even so, godly sorrow is one thing, while its repentance is another. They, Paul said, had sorrowed after a godly sort, and they had repented after a godly sort. The point which we wish to insist upon is, sorrow in the heart, and repentance, are two things. Sorrow is that feeling which the Spirit of God begets in the heart of the transgressor, repentance is the fruit of that sorrow, in the outward manner of life. A man may be a drunkard, and may cease to be so, but if we could look into his heart we should perhaps see that he had ceased from that vice because it was an injury to his own good name, and to his prosperity, and to his health; God is not in his thoughts, and neither is it the sin of it what has troubled him; he reforms, and is proud of his reformation; his sorrow has been of the world, and it has wrought a certain kind of repentance, but if ever God gives him his Spirit, he will see that this repentance itself needs to be repented of, because it utterly lacked the one needful thing, the love and fear of God.

Godly sorrow is one thing, and its repentance is another. The reason we insist particularly here upon this difference is, that as a general thing men do not make a distinction between them. Professed ministers stand up in the pulpit and exhort men to repent, and they mean by it that men should be both sorry for their sins, and turn from them. They confound the two words, and make them mean the same thing. Moreover, by their exhortation they say, practically, to men that sorrow and repentance are within their own control. If the distinction which has been here presented is carefully noted, the folly of all such exhortations will be seen. It is of no use to exhort men to be sorry for sin after a godly sort. If they are thus sorry at all, it must be because God by his Spirit so reveals to them their guilt and sin that they are made sorry. It is not an act of the will, but an act of God subduing and controlling the will. But if there be godly sorrow in the heart, then comes in

the blessed work, and the blessed fruit of exhortation to act out that sorrow, that is, to repent. But even here we are met with the blessed news that to those who are full of sorrow for their sins, and who feel at the same time that they cannot turn away from their sins, there has arisen one who gives repentance and the forgiveness of sins to Israel. God's people are indeed exhorted, and warned, and entreated to turn from all their ungodliness, but this exhortation presupposes that there is godly sorrow in their hearts, and that they do desire to be freed from all their sins. Now such troubled souls as this will welcome all such exhortation; it will chime in with the very desire of the heart, a desire begotten by the godly sorrow which God has given. Each will feel that he cannot do the good that he would.

"The more I strove against its power,
I sinned and stumbled but the more,
Till late I heard the Savior say,
'Come hither, soul, I am the way.'"

How gladly comes the gospel news to such an one, that that which he cannot attain to, viz: repentance, although he is exhorted and commanded to repent, and that which he has striven to gain, all in vain, and that which the commandment but shows the impossibility of gaining, is provided for him out of the fullness of Christ. He has godly sorrow as a gift of God through grace, and now he must come to the same fountain of all fullness and ask for that other thing which God has commanded, repentance. Blessed news indeed, that Jesus holds in his own hands all the repentance that he needs, and is exalted as a prince to bestow it upon him. He strives to repent, and then when he attains to it, he knows that the Master has given it to his longing and striving servant. The gift of God does not stop the striving of soul, and neither does the striving of the soul prevent the gift of God. Repentance simply means a turning away from a former course of life, and the motive of that turning fixes the fact as to whether it be true or false repentance. The one God gives, the other simply arises out of the fleshly mind. God's own people are not free from this warfare, and often must grieve over the unworthy motive which they detect in their best repentance; the motive is everything indeed; if the motive be fleshly, all will be fleshly; if the motive be godly, then the repentance will be godly as well. How well was Paul calculated to write of these things; he not only wrote by inspiration of God, but he also wrote out of his personal experience. The experience recorded in the seventh chapter of Romans fitted him to speak of godly sorrow, and godly repentance, and he learned by such experience that the sorrow, and the resulting repentance, were both the gift of the blessed Lord. He said, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Who shall give me repentance, or the turning away from my sins?

Paul had full evidence that the brethren at Corinth had sorrowed after a godly sort, by the fruit in heart and life among them. Read verse eleven: "For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter." Godly sorrow, when felt in the soul, still produces these fruits. We may know to whom Jesus the exalted Prince has given repentance, by these fruits; there will be, according

to the testimony of the apostle, first, great carefulness wrought in them, and appearing in all they do. This will arise out of a great fear of doing wrong again; there will be a clearing of themselves, that is, there will be a putting away of the evils already existing, because they will be ashamed of them, and will come to hate them as dishonoring to God, and the destroyers of that communion with God which every spiritual heart desires. There will be indignation, not against some other brother, but against one's own self, and against one's own sins; there will be fear lest we fall again into evil, realizing our own weakness and folly, and this will put the soul upon prayer for divine keeping; there will be vehement desire or prayer to God, as has been just said; there will be great zeal after that which is right, instead of the folly past. This zeal will arise out of that great sense of the worth of these right things, and the harm in the things that are evil. The things of God will seem all and in all to that soul. There will be also what the apostle calls revenge. Not revenge against another whom we may blame for our wrong doing, and the harm resulting, but revenge against our own selves, because we have listened so readily to the voice of temptation; we shall be angry with ourselves.

These things will prove that godly sorrow has been granted us, and that repentance has followed, and this repentance needs not to be repented of, it is of God, and is holy as is its giver. All that proceeds out of the flesh is corrupt, and cannot be approved, but whatever is approved is not corrupt, and therefore does not proceed out of ourselves. How blessed it is when one who has sinned, is given such repentance that it is plain that he is clear in the matter. All the past wrong is forgotten in the joy over this sinner which has repented, and for him the fatted calf is killed, and the best robe brought forth, and the ring is put upon his hand. So Paul was glad for the brethren at Corinth, and in the fullness of his gladness, he must tell them of it, and commend what he had heard of them. And as they would read what he here says, how would their hearts arise in gratitude and praise to God that he had so blessed them with sorrow and repentance, and now, the loving and joyful approval of their beloved apostle.

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

REGENERATION AND THE NEW BIRTH.

On this subject an esteemed brother in Georgia, has desired us to give our views; and although we have frequently dwelt upon this interesting and important subject, in the pulpit and through the press, for the last twenty-five years, we have no apprehension of overtaxing the patience of our readers by too frequently calling their attention to the consideration of a subject of so much vital importance. To the children of God the subject is as interesting as it is important. It can never become stale with them. Our Redeemer has given to it paramount prominence in the doctrine of the New Testament, in his declaration, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Whatever excellence of character, amiability of disposition, or circumspection of deportment, the sons of men may attain to by all the efforts they can make at

reformation, they are still in nature's darkness, and unable to see the kingdom of God, or to perceive the things of the Spirit of God except as they be born again. Nothing then can be of more vital importance to us than to have the evidence that we have passed from death unto life; and as there is no such passage from one state to the other but by the regeneration and the new birth, it is highly important that we should inquire into the nature of that generation and birth, by which alone we are delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. "Marvel not," said our Redeemer, "that I said unto thee, ye must be born again." By our natural birth we are brought forth and manifested as the children of a fallen Adam, in a nature which is depraved and sinful, having only a carnal mind which is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; having neither capacity or disposition to understand or enjoy anything of a spiritual nature. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." No course of discipline, no educational improvement, no reformation of the natural man, can elevate that nature above the level of a natural man. And the apostle assures us that the children of the flesh are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. (Rom. ix. 8.) Hence the necessity of a generation and birth of a higher order than that which makes us the children of the flesh. Of this higher order of generation and birth we are requested to express our views.

John says, "But as many as received him [Christ], to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." —John i. 12, 13. This appears to us to be very clear; for if a fleshly birth was necessary to manifest us as children of the flesh, so a spiritual birth is necessary to make us manifest as children of the Spirit; if our first or natural generation and birth was required to bring us forth in our earthly relation to the first Adam, so we must be born of God to bring us forth as the children of God. As Jesus said to Nicodemus, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."—John iii. 6. That life which God gave us in our creation in Adam is by natural or fleshly generation developed in us when we are born of the flesh, so that spiritual, immortal and eternal life which is brought forth in our regeneration is a life which was with the Father, and was manifested to us, according to 1 John i. 2.

This spiritual, immortal and eternal life, we are informed is hid with Christ in God; and the record, or testimony of it, by the three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and the three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, the water and the blood, is thus stated by divine revelation to us. "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life."—1 John v. 7, 8, 11, 12. This record is clear, positive and emphatic; and it cannot be disputed without involving blasphemy, for "he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son."—1 John v. 10. As Christ is one with the Father, so this life is one with Christ. He that hath not the Son

of God hath not life; as he that hath the Son, hath the Father also; even so he that hath the Son, hath that eternal life which is hid with Christ in God. As the Father and Christ are so inseparably identified that they cannot be divided, so is this life which God has given us in his Son, so identified with Christ that we cannot have the life only as we have Christ, for Christ is the life of the church, as Christ God. All the fullness of the Godhead dwells in him bodily, (Col. ii. 9,) and he is the only and blessed potentate, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light, which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting, Amen. (1 Tim. vi. 15, 16.) As Christ is the life, and as he only hath it, we can only possess it as we possess him. He that hath the Son, hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life, so in the revelation of Christ in his incarnation. The Word, which was with God, and which was God, was made flesh and dwelt among us. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. (John i. 1–4, 14.)

We have presented the two headships, from whence we receive natural and spiritual life, the head and source of our natural life is called the first Adam, and we are informed that he is of the earth, earthy; that he was not spiritual, but natural, and "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy." By virtue of our relationship to the first Adam, we are earthy, natural, but not spiritual, in the sense in which the saints are made spiritual by their relation to God in Christ. Although Adam was made a living soul, and possessed the spirit of a man, and all his posterity possess souls, and spirits adapted to their nature, the first Adam was not the head of that spiritual and immortal life which our only and blessed Potentate only has. As our earthly head or progenitor is of the earth, so our spiritual, immortal and eternal Progenitor, is the Lord from heaven, the Head of life, and the embodiment of all the spiritual life of his posterity or seed. From these two heads, Adam, who was of the earth, and Christ, who is the Lord from heaven, proceeds all that is developed by ordinary generation or regeneration. In the book of the generations of Adam, (Adam the first, who is the figure of him that was to come, which is Christ, Rom. v. 14,) it is thus written, "In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created. And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth. And the days of Adam, after he had begotten Seth, were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters. And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begat Enos."—Gen. v. 1–6. And thus the command of God to Adam to be fruitful and to multiply, began to be carried into effect, not by addition, but by multiplication, and the work of multiplication is still progressing to the present hour, and must continue until all the natural posterity of which Adam was the seminal head shall be developed.

The book also of the generation of Jesus Christ, is also written, see Matthew i. 1, compared with Psalm cxxxix. 15, 16, in which we have the record of the three in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, as corroborated by the three that bear record in earth, as stated 1 John v. 7, 8, 11, 12. Showing in this family record, that Christ's substance was not

hid from the omniscient eye of the Father. "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book, all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." It is also recorded, "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation."—Psalm xxii. 30. The prophet Isaiah, when viewing him in his humiliation, led as a lamb to the slaughter, taken from prison and from judgment, was led to inquire, "And who shall declare his generation?"—Isaiah liii. 8. But the response is given in the same chapter, "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands. He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied."—Isaiah liii. 10, 11.

In the gospel, the sealed book is opened by the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and the Lamb's book of life contains the registry of all his members which were chosen in him before the foundation of the world.

Regeneration, as we understand it, like generation, involves the begetting, conception and birth, of that which is generated, and in both cases, implies that that which is so generated had a seminal existence in its progenitor before its manifestation by generation; as Levi was in the loins of Abraham when Melchizedek met him, and as we all as natural men were in Adam the day he was created, and as the spiritual seed was chosen and preserved in Christ Jesus before the world began. In the order of regeneration, or the development of the children of God, no intermediate agencies are employed, no system of means can bring forth the promised seed, as was demonstrated in the case of Hagar and Ishmael; it is the immediate work of God himself. "Of his own will begat he us, with the word of truth."—James i. 18. How, by the word of truth? Jesus saith, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life."—John vi. 63. In the preceding chapter Christ testified of the power of that word which is spirit and life, by which the children of God are begotten, quickened and born; saying, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live."—John v. 25. But will all the dead be thus quickened by his words which are spirit and life? No, for he says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." "And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice."—John x. 4, 27–30. He who saith, "For I am the Lord, thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior," says, "Fear not, for I am with thee, I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him, yea, I have made him."—Isa. xliii. 5–7. The word of the Lord, which is Spirit, and which is life, which liveth and abideth forever, is that by which regeneration is affected; not merely by the Scriptures in their letter, nor reading or preaching them, but the words which

Jesus himself speaks to the individual persons who are made to hear and live. Hence Peter could say, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."—John vi. 68, 69. Until this word, which is spirit and life, is spoken by Christ himself, who is the quickening Spirit, or life-giving Spirit, to an individual, that individual is in a state of alienation from God, dead in trespasses and sins, and utterly beyond the reach of any power, short of that which is in Christ, to quicken him. "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." When a sinner is thus quickened, the incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, is implanted in his heart, and the evidence of this implantation is first given by a sense of the purity and holiness of God, and the spirituality of his law, contrasted with a sense of guilt, pollution and just condemnation of the person to whom this communication is made, and consequently a struggle for deliverance. The ear is now opened to hear the thunders of Sinai, and the eye is made to see the justice of God as a sin avenger; a brokenness of heart that he or she, as the case may be, has been all their lifetime in open rebellion against so holy, just and righteous a God, who has followed them with his mercies all their days. A sense of his goodness leads them to repentance, contrition and humble acknowledgment of their guilt. Now the quickened and awakened sinner becomes burdened with the load of depravity, which they vainly try to put away from them; an effort is made to reform; a resolution is formed to sin no more; tears flow in anguish of spirit, and prayers are offered for pardon; the sinner is pricked in the heart, and cries out, Men and brethren, what shall I do? But all that he can do for himself, and all that kind, sympathizing friends can do for him, does not ease his pain or lighten his burden. At length he concludes there is no hope in his case, he sees that all his efforts, cries and tears, have been unavailing, and all hope of salvation seems to be shut out from his view.

Now all this conviction, contrition, lamentation and distress, is the legitimate consequence resulting from life implanted, and indicates to all who know experimentally the way of life, that the poor sin-burdened soul is drawing near to the time of his birth, or deliverance. He who has thus arrested him, and brought him to a sense of his lost and helpless estate, will perform the work in his own time, but the burdened soul must wait until "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shines *in* [not *into*] his heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. iv. 6. Or, as Paul relates his own experience, "When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me."—Gal. i. 15. Then by the revelation of Christ in us the hope of glory, the way of salvation through him is brought to view, the burden of guilt is removed, the blood of Christ is applied, the demands of the law are canceled, the curse is removed, the prison doors are opened, the captive is delivered, the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, old things are passed away; behold all things have become new; a new song is put in his mouth, even praise unto God, the gospel pours its joyful sound into his quickened ears, his goings are established and he is a new creature, the *old man* of his corrupt

nature is subdued, not dead, that which is born of the flesh continues to be flesh, and only that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. (John iii. 6.) And, as in the flesh there is nothing good, so in the spirit, there is nothing evil. That which is born of the flesh is corruptible, because it is born of corruptible seed, but whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. Here then the christian finds in him, two men, which are called the *old man* and the *new man.* (Eph. iv. 22–24; Col. iii. 9, 10.) Outward man, and inward man, (2 Cor. iv. 16,) and the hidden man of the heart. (1 Peter iii. 4.) The old, outward man, is called the flesh, because it is born of the flesh; but the new, inward, and hidden man of the heart, is called spirit; because it is born of the Spirit. The works of the flesh are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies. But the fruits of the spirit are, love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law. (Gal. v. 19–23.) These two *men,* or opposing principles in the christian, occasion a warfare and make him groan being burdened. "For the flesh, [that which is born of the flesh] lusteth against the spirit, [that which is born of the Spirit] and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye (christians) cannot do the things that ye would." —Gal. v. 17.

Finally, we see from the testimony of the Scriptures, as we also learn by our experience, all that is corrupt, carnal, and opposed to the law of our mind, is born of the flesh, and all that we possess that delights in the law of God, that loves holiness and hates sin, is that which belongs to our new and heavenly birth, and while we remain in this earthly tabernacle, the warfare will continue, and we are admonished to crucify the old man with his affections and lusts, and to deny ourselves, keep the body under, and to put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness, to walk after the Spirit, and we shall not fulfill the desires of the flesh. The new man being born of God, must live on that bread which comes down from heaven, but the old man being of the earth earthy, must have its sustenance from the earth, until it returns to the dust of the ground from whence it was taken; for dust it is, and to the dust it shall return. But we have the blessed assurance that in the resurrection, these vile bodies of the saints, which now occasion us so much trouble, shall be changed, and made like unto the glorious body of our risen Redeemer, and then, but not till then, shall they be made spiritual and immortal.

We have endeavored to give our views on the subject proposed by our brother, and in doing so, to trace the generation of the children of God, as a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation; which are born, not of a corruptible seed, but of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. What we have written are our views, and what we have understood to be the views of the Old order of Baptists, from the days of John; but if we are mistaken in our views, (and we are liable to be) or in any part of them, we hope that our brethren will in all christian kindness point out to us the more excellent way.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., September 1, 1857.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Wm. R. Welborn, at his residence in Mecca, N. C., April 29th, 1900, E. T. Cockerham and Miss Lelia Cockerham, both of Surry Co., N. C.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

My dear father, **W. J. Whitcker,** was born Oct. 23d, 1816, departed this life March 20th, 1899. Father had always enjoyed good health; being industrious, he accumulated plenty in this world to raise his family on. He was a kind, good neighbor, and took great interest in entertaining company. He was strictly honest in all his dealings, and all his neighbors put great confidence in him. Though he never joined any church, he always liked to have the preachers visit him, and they seemed to enjoy his hospitality very much. As father grew old he became more and more concerned about his future state, and took great interest in reading the Bible. He lost his companion about three years before his death, and broke up housekeeping and lived with his son. All this seemed to mar his happiness, and cause him to fail fast. About a year before he died he received a hope in Christ, and was received by the church, and was baptized. He was so feeble he had to be led into the water by the preacher and one of his grandsons.

When on his death-bed, he called me to him and told me to tell the boys to read and pray. My brother got the Bible and read the twenty-third Psalm. The next day he asked us to sing. He was conscious to the last, but was too weak and feeble to talk much. May his children be comforted in their bereavement, feeling that their loss is his eternal gain.

ALSO,

Died—**Joe J. Hicks,** son of R. S. and M. E. Hicks, of Johnson City, Tenn. Joe was born June 10th, 1881, and died at his home Feb. 26th, 1900, making his stay on earth 18 years, 8 months and 16 days. Joe was subject to rheumatism when small, and finally when he grew up to be a young man, and his prospects for the future seemed to be very flattering, the dreadful disease manifested that it was still in his system, and he was finally stricken down in January, and suffered untold misery for nearly two months before death came to his relief. He was the only son, and a noble boy in every respect, and his father and mother and five sisters were very much devoted to him. He was attended by two of the best physicians, and he had the very best nursing, but rheumatism settled in his heart, and they had to give their darling son up. He was conscious to the last; called the family to his bed, and asked them all to pray with him, and told his mother that he prayed last night, and that he prayed this morning, and said that he was prepared to die. He told his father the night before he died that he could not stand his sufferings much longer, that he would have to die. He then had a sinking spell, but rallied again, and said he would like to talk more, but could not for coughing, then he asked his mother to put her arm around him and hold him up; those were the last words he ever spoke. He died as if going to sleep. He leaves a kind and devoted father and mother, five sisters, and many other relatives and friends to mourn their loss. May the Lord bless the bereaved family, and enable them to say, "The Lord's will be done.

JENNIE HURST.

Died—On the night of April 9th, 1900, **Joshua Reeder,** who was the eldest son of Obed and Sarah Reeder, and was born in Allen Co., Ky., May 27th, 1818, being 81 years, 10 months and 13 days old. He was taken with something like "la grippe," or pneumonia, about Jan. 5th, and dropsy set in, which terminated in death. His parents emigrated to Wayne Co., Ill., about 1831 or 1832, where he grew up to manhood. Owing to the disadvantages of a new country, and his parents being poor, he was deprived of an education, but in after years, having become interested in the Scriptures, he learned to read, and became well read in the Bible. He went from Illinois to Indiana, and was married to Mary Gwaltney, March 21st, 1841, with whom he lived until her death, about fourteen years ago. Deceased joined the Primitive Baptist church about the year 1842, and was baptized by Elder Joel Hume. He moved his membership to Little Flock church, Wayne Co., Ill., from there to Wolf Creek church, Saline Co., after which he went into the organization of Bethlehem church, about the year 1865, and was by that church chosen to the office of deacon, which office he filled until old age disabled him, which was only a short time before his demise. He was a consistent member, and highly esteemed among his brethren, and of good report among them without.

He had a family of thirteen children, four boys and nine girls. Two of the girls and three of the boys were members of the Old Baptist church. All of the boys, except the youngest, who died at 17 years of age, have been ordained to preach the gospel of Christ. The oldest, Elder Thos. Reeder, died last March, a year ago. Elder John Reeder lives and preaches in Illinois.

Father lived most of the time with the writer of this notice, and died at my house; he suffered more than tongue can tell, and often expressed a fear that he was not as patient as he would like to be, and prayed God for grace to sustain him in his afflictions. He often said, "O, that I could fall asleep in Jesus."

When death came it was lovely indeed; his mind for some weeks had been very much impaired from extreme weakness and suffering, but he now asked us to help him into the rocker, that he might rest, and when we had helped him into the chair, in about five

or eight short minutes he breathed slowly into that blessed sleep from which Jesus will awake him in the resurrection.

His body was laid beside his dear wife. Brother T. R. Pitman conducted the solemn service.

NATHAN REEDER.

BROTHER **William Brown**, of Woodstock, Mich, was born Feb. 3d, 1823, in Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y.; he was married to Miss Sarah Winchel, August 17th, 1843. To this union seven children were born, four boys and three girls. Three boys preceded him in death; one dear son and three loving daughters, with his dear companion, with the church of Columbia, of which he was a living and loving member, are left to mourn. If his place in church was not filled when we met, we all would ask, Is brother Brown sick? As he had not met with the church for one year, he sent word the month before he died, that it had been a long year, but his faith was the same, the loving words, salvation by grace and grace alone, was always his theme. The last talk he had with a dear brother, he repeated the twenty-first chapter of Revelation, and O, what a gift he had in expressing his mind, and we all loved to hear him, although he had no confidence in the flesh. He was taken with "la grippe" over one year ago, and nervous prostration followed, and he has been a very great sufferer ever since. At the last he went very suddenly. He always spoke of the dear church of Olive, and to them his death will be sad news. He was baptized in the fellowship of Olive & Hurley church, by Elder I. Hewit, in August, 1852. He came to Michigan twenty-two years ago, and united with the Primitive Baptist church of Columbia, Jackson Co., by letter, and, as has been said, was a dear, loving brother. At the very last he said, he wanted Christ, and him crucified, preached at his funeral. His request was granted; Elder Swartout took 1 Cor. i. 23, 24, for his text, and was followed by Elder Taylor, of Ind. The hymn 1252 (Beebe's Collection) was used. A loving companion, affectionate father, and a dear brother in Christ, has fallen. God help us.

MARY P. LEWIS.

WOODSTOCK, Mich., May 8, 1900.

Matilda West, daughter of John and Lettitia Mills Wilson, died April 30th, 1900. She was born June 4th, 1803, so had she lived one more month she would have been 97 years old. She belonged to a long lived family, her grandmother living 99 years.

The subject of this notice was truly a mother in Israel, her conversation was of heaven and divine things, and her christian experience was indeed remarkable. I wrote her experience for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which was published in the number for January 22d, 1896. She joined the Regular Predestinarian Baptist church in Ohio at the age of sixteen, was married to Jeremiah West, when twenty years old, and came to Montgomery Co., Ind., in 1826. They put their letters in Sugar Creek church, in Crawfordsville, and remained here until a church was constituted, called Walnut Creek, near their farm home, and they were in that constitution. When her husband died, in 1858, she having moved to Crawfordsville, returned to our old church, where she tried to attend in her old age at least once a year, and seemed to enjoy meeting with the saints, although she was so deaf she could not hear the preaching. Jerusalem was her chief joy, and her countenance shone while assembled with the saints. She was bedfast and a great sufferer for fifteen months before her departure, part of the time unconscious. The last time I sat beside her when she knew me, and called me by name, she said, "I am here yet, so long, so long! O, wonder of wonders, that Jesus suffered and died for poor sinners! I am a sinner poor and needy, weak and wounded, sick and sore." Happy soul; now she has gone where sickness, sorrow, pain and death, are felt and feared no more. There God the Son forever reigns, and scatters night away.

"The time of love has come,
When she will clearly see
Not only that he shed his blood,
But she shall say, 'for me.'"

The funeral was conducted by Elder Oliphant, from the home of her faithful daughter, Mrs. Lee. He read from Rev. vii., commencing at the 9th verse, and said many comforting words to the mourning son and daughter, and other sorrowing friends. Then we took her precious remains to a country woodland cemetery, and laid her where all nature seemed praising God. The trees and grass were so beautiful in their new spring robe, and the birds warbled their song of praise.

"Who, who would live alway, away from his God,
Away from that heaven, that blissful abode?"

LINA W. BECK.

Abraham Cole, son of the late Lewis and Sallie Cole, of Black Rock, Baltimore Co., Md., died at his home in Waverly, near Baltimore city, March 16th, 1900. He was stricken with paralysis on the preceding Thursday evening, and soon became unconscious, and passed away without any apparent suffering. He was in the 79th year of his age. He was baptized by the late Elder Wm. J. Purington, in the fellowship of the church at Black Rock, about the year 1862, as we are informed by his family. He remained a member of that church until about a year ago, when he moved his membership to the Ebenezer church, in Baltimore city. He had been an attendant of the last named church for perhaps the past fifteen or twenty years. His affections still clung around the church where he became a member, and in the vicinity of which much

of his life was spent. He leaves a dear companion and three children, to mourn the loss of a kind husband and father.

The funeral service was held at Black Rock on Sunday following his death, and was largely attended by many friends and relatives. Elder Rowe, his pastor, preached upon the sad occasion from the words found in 1 John v. first clause of 10th verse. Brother Cole was well and widely known in the County in which he spent all his life. He had filled several positions of honor and trust in the County. He was a man of gentle and lovable disposition, and kindly manners. We have known him well for more than thirty years, and have always found him ready to converse upon the things which he loved more than all else, the doctrine of grace, and the hope of salvation through Christ. He confessed himself a sinner saved by grace. He was faithful to attend upon the services of the sanctuary whenever it was possible for him to do so. This was especially the case in the latter years of his life. We have enjoyed many conversations with him. Often he would come to the meeting at an early hour, while we were pastor in Baltimore city, and we would hold a little conversation before the rest of the friends had arrived. It was always helpful to us to meet him at those times. And now his family and friends and the church will not mourn as those who have no hope; they believe that for him to die was gain. Not long before his death he said to a member of his family, he had no fears of death, and when it was the Lord's will, he was ready to go. May God comfort every mourning heart.

C.

DIED—April 19th, 1900, at his old home in Fairfield Co., Ohio, **Joseph Burgner**, aged 88 years, 7 months and 22 days. He was born in Lebanon Co., Pa., in 1811, came to Ohio in 1828, and was married to Julia A. Bailor, in 1838. In early life he was a member of the U. B. church, but for the last thirty or more years he had a standing in good fellowship with the Old School Baptists. Two daughters, three sons and fourteen grandchildren, survive him. He was the first born of his parents, and the last one to die, a brother William, of Illinois, having died twenty-four hours before. Such has been his life that pleasant memories will be associated with his name. He reared a family who are adorned with the virtues of honesty and industry, pearls of great value.

A large number of people attested their regard for his sterling character by their presence at his funeral, in the presence of whom the religious services were conducted by the writer, speaking from Psalm viii. 4, "What is man?"

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

THOMAS COLE.

AMANDA, Ohio.

Henry S. Stipp was born in Lebanon, Ohio, May 13th, 1828. While quite young his family moved to Illinois, and engaged in farming. As a young man he was enthused with gold fever, and started for California, via Oregon route. He was six months making the journey with ox teams, and suffered untold hardships. He reached Oregon in the early fifties. He was there married to Caroline Warren, of New York State. He shortly after went to California, and engaged in mining at Downieville, Cal. Later he published a paper at Treka, Cal., then an important mining center of northern California. He has since resided mostly in California, spending some time however in the mining camps of Nevada in their prime. He lived for many years in San Francisco and vicinity. Later at Watsonville, Cal., and spent his remaining days in Los Gatos, Cal., where he was for some years engaged in the grocery business. He died at his residence on "Glen Ridge," Los Gatos, Thursday, April 19th, 1900, after a brief illness lasting hardly twenty-four hours, of bronchial pneumonia and heart failure. He had almost reached the age of 72 years. He leaves a widow, a son and a daughter, and three grandchildren. He was faithful and affectionate to his family, and had strong sympathies for the weak and distressed.

He was buried Sunday, April 22d, in Los Gatos cemetery.

GEO. H. STIPP.

IT becomes my painful duty to write the obituary notice of sister **Susan Covington.** The writer has been intimately acquainted for several years, and knew her to be well versed in the Scriptures, and indeed it was pleasant to be with her, and hear her tell of the goodness of God and his wonderful works among the children of men. Our dear sister was born June 25th, 1822, and lived and died in Tennessee, and was baptized into full fellowship of the Primitive Baptist church, October, 1887, and departed this life March 17th, 1900. We have been told by her granddaughter, sister Pettus, that she would repeat in her last hours, "I would not live alway, I ask not to stay." David has said, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." And we would say to all of the children and grandchildren, Be of good cheer, and hold up the heads that hang down, and hope to the end.

E. L. ANDERSON.

CANE SPRING, Ky.

DIED—April 7th, 1900, **Mrs. Lucinda Jenkins**, of Ingleside, Steuben Co., N. Y., aged 72 years or more. She had some difficulty of the stomach for a long time, which proved fatal. She was a member of the Old School Baptist church at Riker's Hollow, N. Y., united about the year 1878. She leaves one sister and one brother; neither were present, as they are old and

a long way off. She was the first one that I baptized at that place. She was sound in the faith, clear in experience, and was a great benefit to the church in many ways. The Bible and SIGNS were her library. She would often speak of the good solid reading in the old SIGNS, and how much she enjoyed reading them, but she now has no need of any of those things that were a comfort to her while in the flesh, she is with her best friend, Jesus. She often in the last two years expressed a desire to depart and be with Christ. She was with brother Edward Drake two or three months before she died, who, with his wife and other friends, done all that could be done to make her comfortable. She will be missed much by the church.

The funeral was at the meeting-house, April 12th, where the writer spoke to a large congregation, after which the clay or dust was laid in the ground, near the meeting-house.

I have lost a dear friend and sister.

D. M. VAIL.

DIED—At her home in Calcasieu Parish, La., **Mrs. Nancy Hinson,** wife of D. Hinson, aged 70 years, 9 months and 24 days. She was born in Dale Co., Ala. She was the mother of twelve children, eleven surviving her. She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for eighteen years, and was true and faithful, attending church when permitted; was ever ready to talk of the pleasure it was to visit neighboring churches, and meet with the members of the same order, in christian love, and talk with them of their blessed hope.

D. HINSON.

ERRATA.

IN the last issue of the SIGNS the article from Nashville, Tenn., signed S. B. Hickerson, should be O. B. Hickerson.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Warwick church, at Warwick, N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, (6th) 1900, and continue three days.

Those coming from the east or west should take the Erie Railroad to Greycourt, where they will change to the Lehigh & Hudson for Warwick. In New York city return tickets for Warwick can be bought for $2.75, thus saving more than one dollar on each ticket. Trains will be met on Tuesday afternoon, and friends will be cared for. The first train Wednesday morning arrives at about 9 o'clock, by which those coming from the west on the Erie R. R., can get to the meeting in ample time, as the meeting-house is but a short distance from the railroad station.

WM. L. BEEBE, Pastor.

THE Sandusky Primitive Baptist Association will convene with the Thompson church, near Kalida, Putnam Co., Ohio, June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1900. All trains will be met at Columbus Grove, on C., H. & D. R. R., on Thursday before.

A cordial invitation is extended to all, especially ministering brethren.

THE Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon and Washington, will hold their forty-ninth annual meeting at or near Elder W. S. Matthews' residence, near Lincoln, Polk Co., Oregon, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in June, 1900.

Those coming by boat, from both north and south, will be met at Lincoln. Those coming by railroad will be met at Salem, and conveyed to the place of meeting. All are requested to come so as to be met on Thursday before the meeting.

N. J. SHANKS, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

A YEARLY meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the Clovesville Old School Baptist church, of the Lexington Association, on the first Saturday and Sunday in July, (7th and 8th) 1900.

Those coming by rail will be met at Fleischmann's, on the Ulster & Delaware Railroad.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, to meet with us.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist church, of Canada, will be held, the Lord willing, at the usual place, Aughrim schoolhouse, in the township of Brooke, Lambton Co., Ontario, five miles from Alvinston station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1900, and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

THE Middleburg Old School Baptist Church has appointed her yearly meeting to be held as usual the first Saturday and Sunday in June, 1900, and extend a cordial invitation to ministers, brethren and friends, to meet with us.

By order of the church.

A. COOK, Clerk.

THE annual two days meeting with the Bethel church, Shelby Co., Ky., will begin June 2d, Saturday and Sunday, commencing at 10 a. m.

With the Cane Run church, at Turners, Henry Co., Ky., commencing Friday, June 8th, at 3 p. m., and continue three days.

With the Beech Creek church, Shelby Co., Ky., Friday, June 15th, to continue three days.

My brothers, J. G. Sawin, of Illinois, and I. Sawin, of Iowa, will be with us during these meetings. We hope to be favored with a good attendance of brethren and friends from abroad, as in years past.

May the Lord favor us with his gracious presence, break these hearts of stone, revive his work, cause our hearts to rejoice, and enable us to worship him with reverential fear.

P. W. SAWIN, Pastor.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1900. NO. 12.

POETRY.

TOPLADY'S CHAMBER HYMN.

WHAT though my frail eyelids refuse
  Continual watching to keep;
And, punctual as midnight renews,
  Demand the refreshment of sleep;
A Sovereign Protector I have,
  Unseen, yet for ever at hand;
Unchangeably faithful to save,
  Almighty to rule and command.

From evil secure and its dread,
  I rest if my Savior is nigh;
And songs his kind presence indeed
  Shall in the night season supply.
He smiles, and my comforts abound;
  His grace as the dew shall descend,
And walls of salvation surround
  The soul he delights to defend.

Kind Author and Ground of my hope,
  Thee, thee for my God I avow,
My glad "Ebenezer" set up,
  And own thou hast help'd me till now:
I muse on the years that are past,
  Wherein my defence thou hast proved,
Nor wilt thou relinquish at last
  A sinner so signally loved.

Inspirer and Hearer of prayer,
  Thou Feeder and Guardian of thine,
My all to thy covenant care
  I, sleeping and waking, resign;
If thou art my Shield and my Sun,
  The night is no darkness to me,
And fast as my moments roll on,
  They bring me but nearer to thee.

Thy ministering spirits descend,
  To watch while thy saints are asleep,
By day and by night they attend,
  The heirs of salvation to keep;
Bright seraphs, dispatch'd from the throne,
  Repair to the stations assign'd,
And angels elect are sent down,
  To guard elect of mankind.

Thy worship no interval knows,
  Their fervor is still on the wing;
And while they protect my repose,
  They chant to the praise of my King.
I, too, at the season ordain'd,
  Their chorus for ever will join,
And love and adore, without end,
  Their faithful Creator, and mine!

CORRESPONDENCE.

THOUGHTS IN SICKNESS.

WHEN I wrote my note, April 30th, 1900, I thought I should be at meeting the next Sunday. I was there in spirit, I hope, but not in body. After twenty-six days of sickness I am just able to sit up a little. Compared with many, my sufferings have not been long nor severe. It is of some exercises of mind under them that I wish to write a little to the readers of the SIGNS, to whom I have communicated freely for thirty-six years. I know I can tell but little of what I have experienced, but I write to those of like precious faith, who will understand more than I can tell.

After seventeen days of painful suffering a surgical operation was performed for an erysipelas swelling in the neck. There was relief, but with great weakness. Until the operation there had appeared no favorable prospect, but when the surgeon had done his work a cure seemed assured. My quiet of mind had continued, but there was a feeling of unspeakable solemnity as I appeared to be in the presence of the Lord, in a special sense, and great were the searchings of heart that I experienced. Every apparent ground of my hope seemed to be subjected to great searchings, and to almost disappear, yet my hope remained. My heart was filled with the constant prayer, "O God, be merciful to me." When there was hope of recovery, I felt a gladness with my quietude, and then the searchings became deeper and sterner, for I feared my gladness was only natural, and not true thankfulness to the Lord, nor submission to his will. Do I really desire and seek the glory of God? This was the burden of my anxious inquiry.

After preparing, the surgeon said, "Now I am going to hurt you." My strength to bear would have been the strength of an infant, but the greater strength was at hand. When his work was done I said, "How can you bear it, doctor?" "It is you that bear it," he replied, "not I; I would not have borne it as well." "Not that," I said, "I mean how can you bear to see the suffering in the faces of those you must hurt daily and hourly, to do them good?" All that night I seemed to see the great Physician, the dear Savior, bending over his dear ones, with his tender, pitying, but firm expression, hurting them deeply, even to the piercing of their hearts, and causing them to feel the pains of death, thus bringing them to know the fellowhip of his sufferings, that they may know the fellowship of his joy.

"For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart." The tribe of Reuben dwelt on the opposite side of Jordan from Canaan, but fought with the tribes that had their inheritance in Canaan. So in a sense we dwell in the world, for flesh and blood cannot enter into the kingdom of God, but we fight the fight of faith in the gospel land. This is the division of Reuben, the division between the flesh and the Spirit, which are contrary the one to the other, and this causes the Lord's people to have such great thoughts and searchings of heart. (Judges v. 15, 16.)

While thus in the felt presence of the great Searcher of hearts, in my pain and weakness of body, I was shown more clearly than ever before how far short I have come in everything I have thought or said or done, how far short of that holiness which God justly requires. My best works have been contaminated by my nature's vileness, so that I can see no merit of my own in them. If accepted it was to the wonder and praise of grace. I was baptized in the fellowship of the church. It was a privilege and blessing unspeakable, but my own part was all so full of self and sin I wondered the saints could have me with them. I remember the sweet and solemn occasion with thankfulness for the unspeakable grace. I have preached the gospel sometimes, I am sure, and have felt great sweetness and comfort in it. But how could it be that the Lord would call me to such a holy work, or allow me to enter upon it? I never could understand it. And so much of vile self in all my attempts to preach, so much of vanity, so much of

seeking great things for myself. I loathe myself as I think of it now, and feel shame and pain before God. What can I say to him but the same old cry, "God be merciful to me, a sinner"? And I am asking now, Am I sincere even in that? Yet my hope remains, and my mind is held quiet. How is this?

Have I denied myself? Have I crucified the flesh, with its affections and lusts? O, how I have tried to think that I have. Sometimes it has seemed that I have tried to deny myself, and that I have succeeded. But now in the felt presence of God, and seeing the end of this life apparently not far away, I am looking, it seems in vain, for true self denial in my life and walk. I look over all that I could call self denial, and I find the thought of self benefit is in it all. If I have denied myself of any one thing it has been with the thought of a greater good to myself. Denied the lesser, lower, baser, it may be, for the more exalted, nobler, purer, but still for self. What do I know of denying self and taking up my cross? My own self-righteous reasoning and exaltation of self will not avail me here, for the Lord is searching me, and the Lord's line and plummit are not swerved a hair's breadth by my thoughts of my own works.

But here the Lord breaks in upon my soul with a precious revelation, a new revelation, of Christ as my righteousness, as the only doer of good works, for me and for every redeemed soul. Christ denied himself, and he is the only one under heaven who ever did; therefore his name "is the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." A man cannot by his own will deny that same will. "A house divided against itself cannot stand." A man cannot of himself deny himself. His own will cannot lead to works contrary to that will, therefore he cannot of his own will do works of righteousness. It must be by another will, of another nature, that his own will is denied. Only one ever lived on earth who could and did deny himself, and he not by his own will as a man, though that will was pure, for he was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, but by his Father's will which he came in the flesh to do. It was the Father's will wrought in the Son. This turned him away from "all created good," from seeking gratification of his needs as a man, and of his pure and right earthly desires, and caused him to deny himself of his just rights, and from claiming the true judgment given in his favor by Pilate, and made him yield to unjust oppression when he could have had power to resist it, and allow himself to be numbered with the transgressors, and to die an accursed death. This all was not according to his will as a man, but was according to the Father's will, to fulfill in and through the Son the Father's eternal purpose. That will of the Father by which the dear Son denied himself, is the only will by which any man can ever deny himself, take up his cross and follow Jesus.

Then how sharply came to my waiting, anxious soul the question, "Where is the evidence that this will has ever been wrought in you? How does it appear that you have ever experienced this work of self denial? that you have ever truly denied yourself?" But I remembered that it is said of the Lord's people by an inspired apostle, "We have the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raiseth the dead." I have felt this sentence of death in myself. By this I have been prevented from trusting in myself. I

have sought in vain to find any good thing dwelling in me, that is, in my flesh. I have seen and felt a blight upon all earthly things for myself, so that I could not base any substantial hope of happiness upon them. Whenever true and real comfort has come to me it has been, not because of any good discovered in myself, nor because of any merit in anything done by me, but because of some blessed revelation of Jesus to my soul; because of some sweet truth brought to my mind, some precious word of promise dropped into my heart, which made me forget myself and my depravity for the time, and rejoice in the Lord, and feel strong in him, "and in the power of his might." It was always God's work, not mine, that made me rejoice. But before long a sense of my unworthiness has often made me question how these blessed things could be mine, until again they were revealed by his own glorious power, and again sealed unto me as mine.

I am writing in bed, as I am able, from time to time, but I can tell only a little of what passes in my mind. The church of God has been fair and beautiful to me, and her work and service have been mostly a delight, though I can truly say I have never felt worthy to have a part in it, but sometimes so unworthy and unfit as to go to the work greatly burdened and oppressed. I have seen so much of my own vain and sinful self in my work that I have been kept much in the dark, and have traveled much in low grounds of sorrow. In the meetings of the saints, where I dearly love to be, how much my comfort has been marred by my worldliness of mind, and the vanity of my thoughts. Yet I have loved the meetings well, though falling so far short of their best goodness because of my carnality of mind. Preaching has always been a solemn work to me, and my levity of nature has been mostly hushed when trying to preach. But still so much of self, of vanity, of worldly thoughts, would crowd in view that I have often become sick of self and almost weary of the work. Vexation of mind at annoyances of the moment, and at my vain efforts to seek suitable expression, and impatience because I cannot preach better, because I cannot preach as well as my brethren, though at the same time inwardly glad that they can preach better than I. But I must confess with thankfulness that sometimes I am happy as a little child while made to forget myself and remember only the Lord's name, and his hungry poor while preaching the gospel of his grace. I love to hear the gospel preached, and yet often some tone or manner of the preacher will attract my attention away from the truth he proclaims, and oftener some frivolous thought in my own vain mind.

What contradictions! what conflicts! what contrariness between flesh and Spirit, and all most apparent in the holiest places and work. How often I say, "Is there any Spirit of Christ in me? If not, I am none of his." I remember the wormwood and the gall of such experiences, and recall to mind that my soul is humbled within me at the thought of those distressing views of my vain self, therefore I am comforted and have hope. (Lam. iii. 19–21.) Have I ever received any comfort which appeared to me as a reward for any act of obedience of mine? So far from it that the very thought is revolting to my soul. In my experience every token of God's love and favor, and he has given me many, notwithstanding my unworthiness, every act of obedience, and every sweet comfort and assurance of hope, have

been alike from God through rich and abounding grace in Christ, and my thanksgivings have abounded to his dear name as much for the gift of an obedient spirit and walk as for the precious words that have shown my sins forgiven.

How much I have sown to the flesh, in thought and word and deed, and as must necessarily follow, I have of the flesh reaped corruption. Why has the Lord made me to feel the bitterness of sin instead of leaving me dead in it, or allowing me to rest in carnal security? Why has he in mercy restored my soul? Why has he given me repentance unto life, and the feeling of the Publican's prayer in my heart? Why has he brought me in spirit to his dear feet, and favored me to feel his wonderful love in my soul? Why has he given me this submission to his will at this time, so contrary to my natural disposition? I cannot tell, only that it is for some wise and gracious purpose of his own. But what wonderful love and mercy and grace to poor, unworthy me. If he shall restore me to a measure of health and strength so that I may stand before his people again, I desire and pray that I may preach Christ, and only Christ, wasting no time or words on useless things; that I may have no divided mind, but a mind single to the glory of God, and to the good of his hungry poor.

Only by the Spirit of Christ working in me mightily can I deny myself. It is the cutting off of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, so that we have no confidence in the flesh. To deny not only the carnal, gross appetite, the lustful desire, the anger and hatred and envy that are clamoring for expression, but also the most noble and exalted impulses of our human nature; to deny not only the claims of worldly ambition, but also our just rights, and allow ourselves to be taken from judgment, as Jesus did, and to appear vile in the sight of men, if need be; to deny not only the cruel impulse to hurt another by the "words that are spears and arrows," but also to deny the generous impulse to speak kindly, flesh-pleasing words, when only self, not truth, would be favored by them; to please not ourselves, but others; to turn the other cheek to the smiter; to give the cloak also; to turn not away from him that would borrow of us. But this no man can do; no, all these things are among those that are impossible with men; but there are no impossibilities with God; he can do all things, but he does them in his own way.

This is dying daily; this is denying self. As we come before God in the Spirit, whether in immediate prospect of the great change or not, how he removes our trust in a moment from all our own works, from all fleshly goodness, from all created things, and shows us how far our trust has been in the Lord. Then "we are open and naked before him with whom we have to do."

O, the sharp pain of that surgeon's knife, as in his tender but firm hand it cut down through the swollen and hardened flesh. But it reached and brought out that poisonous mass of corruption that had gathered and secreted itself there, near the springs of life, and made way for a permanent cure. O, the piercing stroke of the word of God, sharper than surgeon's knife, as it has divided between soul and Spirit, showing the soul ever cleaving to the dust, (Psalm cxix. 25,) until quickened by the Spirit, according to the Lord's word, that we may run in the way of his commands. Did we think there was goodness in the flesh? that piercing word has shown us

our delusion; it is corrupt. But the Lord will bring health and cure. Here is the perishing of the outer man day by day; here is the bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus. No comfort to the flesh in this experience except the sweet hope of the great change that shall come to us in the resurrection, when we shall be conformed to the image of Jesus. In this hope the flesh of Jesus rested; in this hope we rest. (Psalm xvi. 9.) In this denying of self and following Jesus we find no earthly pillow for the head, no rest for the flesh. O, the pain of this daily crucifixion, this cutting off of all trust in the flesh. O, the hurt of this piercing word! But through it all comes the promise, and the experience by faith, of true healing; through the suffering comes the unspeakable fragrance and glorious beauty of the life of Jesus made manifest even in our mortal body. This is our true life, the life that we now live in the flesh, by the faith of the Son of God. Now, through this painful experience of the circumcision of Christ, we know what it is to deny ourselves. We follow Christ in suffering in the flesh, but also, blessedly, we follow him in spiritual life and holy joy. His works are now our works; he works them in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. And by his rich grace this inward work is wrought out in our life here. From this sorrowing, yet rejoicing, inward life of faith come all the sweet amenities of the social life of the saints on earth; brethren dwelling together in unity; caring for each other; thinking of each other's welfare; "thinking not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others;" denying oneself for others good; meeting together with love and joy; forbearing one another in love, forgiving one another; using the mantle of charity for each other's faults: tenderly washing one another's feet. Blessed family of God; blessed people that are in such a case. Glorious city of God, "beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth." There let me dwell in their fellowship while I remain on earth, not in crowded temples made with hands, but where the twos and threes are gathered together in Jesus' name, who "shall speak of the glory of his kingdom and talk of his power."

What the Spirit quickens or moves me to do, though done in the weakness of the flesh, is accepted of God; it is a work of faith. Grace wrought in us the holy desire, the holy will, and grace has enabled us to work it out with fear and trembling. We mourn for the weakness of the flesh, but in that weakness the strength of Jesus is made perfect, and as his power rests upon us we are strong. In our felt weakness is our strength. Soon all the fancied strength and all the real weakness of the flesh shall be gone in a moment, and we shall appear with Christ, who is our life, in glory.

I have written in great weakness of body. My love to all the dear brethren. I have now been more than four weeks sick. I hope in a few days, if the Lord will, to go out again, and to meet with brethren at our association part of the time.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May 25, 1900.

ASHLEY, Ohio, May 15, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—As I am about to remit for the SIGNS, I feel like sending you a loving greeting in christian fellowship. I feel to thank God that he has sustained you and dear Elder Chick, causing you to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified. It is to me

glad tidings of great joy; it delivers me from slavish fears. When we are just ready to sink from gazing and meditating upon our vile sins, how sweet to be reminded, your warfare is accomplished, your iniquity is pardoned, and you have received at the Lord's hand, double for all your sins.

I cannot tell you how well I love the SIGNS; I find in it just what my soul hungers and thirsts after; it is in full accord with the Scriptures, and bears witness with my experience.

My case is such a desperate one that I dare not trust at all in myself. "Naked, I came to thee for dress, helpless, I look to thee for grace." O, what sweet rest we find in him, when we say from the heart, "He is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." There is nothing left out; yea, "Your righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Yes, when we find this treasure, we sell all that we have. We had thought we were rich, but now we know that we are poor, and wretched, and blind, and naked, so naked that we have no dress of our own, but we are abundantly dressed in the righteousness of Christ.

About a year ago I had a dream which I love to recall. I saw myself dressed in this robe, which was O, so bright. There is nothing in earth like it. O, how happy I was! I dare not despise it, and again put on my own filthy rags." How filthy my own works appear to me, I long to get away from them all. Sometimes I have rejoiced to know that in that other world I shall be freed from the body of this death. Sometimes, though only for a moment, we feel free from it now when we see Jesus only. Much of my time is passed in clouds, but he says, "He maketh the clouds his chariot." It is when we go down into the the deep that we learn the power and salvation of God. I have had great afflictions, but I trust Jesus bore them all. He sometimes has made me feel that his arm is underneath, that he loves me still. How very unworthy I am of the least of his blessings! I abhor myself; surely if I am saved it will be as a monument of amazing grace. I desire to walk worthy of this high calling, but though I have besought the Lord, with tears, to keep me from bringing reproach upon his dear name, that I might live godly, and glorify his cause, I feel that I have made a failure. I am so full of sin that sometimes I fear I have been deceived in thinking that I have seen his salvation, but I cannot forget all the glory and brightness of some days I have seen; I can but say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him," for I can do nothing else, and I cannot doubt his promise. You may know that ye have passed from death unto life, because ye love the brethren; yes, surely I love them.

Dear brother, in this time of contention, may God give you boldness coupled with gentleness and charity, that you may not publish anything which needlessly offends. I believe the Lord has been with you thus far, I trust that you will be as a chosen vessel to contend for the faith. May he cause you to keep the flesh in subjection, that you may speak the truth in love. I thank God for you that he has enabled you to proclaim his gospel of grace. Paul says, "And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."

Now, have we began under this principle, and then find later on that a part of our salvation is of works, or of both grace and works? Paul says this latter

cannot be. "To him that worketh the reward is not reckoned of grace, but of debt." I do not believe that many of the dear brethren really believe that any salvation is of works; I do not see how they can believe it, if their eyes are opened to see their own hearts. If they who see their vileness really believed that their blessing, either in time or eternity, depends upon their own works, that they must earn them by obedience, surely they would despair of ever receiving anything. I believe the Baptists are but few who would say, "I deserve to be blessed, for I have done God's will, and therefore I will surely be blessed." When a blessing comes, how it sinks us down into the very dust, and we say, What am I, that I should be thus blessed? We give God the glory then, do we not? How we abhor ourselves for our ingratitude for such unmerited favors. We even feel unworthy, sometimes, to appear in the presence of the brethren. When at such times we hear the promise, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," do we feel to have whereof to boast? "Where is boasting then? It is excluded," we bow our heads in the dust and say it is the free grace of God. Surely all heaven-born souls have learned this. If they could lay down the spirit of envy and contention, all would agree that, "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." Even though we go, and we do, it is because "he works in us" not only to will, but to do his will; yet we do it. But it is not voluntary humility and will-worship, but it is given us in Christ. He hath ordained that his people should walk in good works. Did God know whether this or that one would walk in them or not? Would he before ordain that they should walk in good works when he knew that they would not, or might not, do so? Surely it is "ordered in all things and sure." The mercies of David are sure mercies. Though we are blessed in obedience, it is the gift of God. "Not of works, lest any man should boast." Our sins are our own, but every good thing is of God.

Now, brother Beebe, I did not expect, when I began, to say all this, and I wish to add that if you publish this, I wish to ask pardon for presenting the arguments above; I love the brethren who express themselves differently, and if they could understand me I do not think they could object.

May God help us to add to our faith, kindness and charity. We can do nothing of ourselves, but through Christ we can do all things. We cannot lead the Spirit, but we are led by the Spirit, if so be that we are children of God. We do at times live after the flesh, indeed, we would live that way always if the Spirit did not lead us. If it leads us, we do not go of ourselves. Although we obey we must say, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which is in me." Now let us strive to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace. There may be of course, there always are, false teachers, but there are many mistaken ones who would agree if they understood each other. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." Charity suffereth long and is kind; it never faileth, but prophecies fail, tongues cease, and knowledge also vanisheth away.

May God give wisdom to rebuke and

exhort, that with meekness you may instruct those who err in understanding. But I pray that God's teachers might ever be in the love of God, when contending for the faith, considering themselves lest they might be tempted. If those who oppose us in some point, are children of God, though they are mistaken, God loves them, so should we.

Please pardon me, I fear I should not have written so much, but I did want to say that I appreciate the dear SIGNS.

I trust I am yours in gospel love and fellowship,

JOIE EKELBERRY WICKHAM.

MARION CO., W. VA., April 4, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I will try to write you a few lines. I would like to speak with regard to duty and practice, to the children of God. We live in a world where there are many troubles and trials, and much opposition, and Baptists ought to be on their guard against all evil. We claim to be the church of Christ which the gates of hell shall not prevail against. Brethren, let us prove that we are the church of God, by our daily life and walk, we are born of God, born of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. How careful then ought we to be, watching unto prayer as did Daniel, who entered into his chamber, and prayed toward Jerusalem three times a day. We ought to ask ourselves the question plainly, Do we prove to the world that we are his people? Do our lives agree with the word of God? By our fruits shall we be known. We ought to be humble and shun the very appearance of evil, but we are weak, and therefore must look to the Lord for support and help in the time of need. The Lord said to his disciples, If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. Happiness lies in the doing and not in the hearing and knowing only. "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."—James i. 22–25. How many of us desire to do our duty as we should? We cannot be too careful in what we do; let the mind of Christ be in us, let us follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God," is the admonition of the apostle. If the Scriptures teach these things, let all follow them who love God. We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, and are not to walk in craftiness, handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. Paul beseeches us that we receive not the grace of God in vain. He says, "Giving no offense in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed: but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor

and dishonor, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live: as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing: as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." This was spoken to the Corinthian brethren, but does it not mean all the children of God now as well as then? We are not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers, because righteousness and unrighteousness have no fellowship, and light and darkness have no communion. We are to come out from among them, and be separate, and not touch the unclean thing, then, God says he will receive us, and will be a Father unto us, and we shall be his sons and daughters. We are commanded to come out from all who will not walk according to the gospel rule. Then follows the verse, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Some may think that I believe in holiness, or what is called sanctification. Yes, I do, but not as some people claim, that we can become so perfect that we can live without sin. Jesus is our sanctification, according as it is written, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." Then let us walk as the children of the light, and not of the darkness; the things that are vain and foolish are the enemies of our souls, and war against them; they are of the world, and not of God. Some may say, You believe in good works, by the way you write. Yes, I do believe in good works, I do believe in the grace of God producing good works. Is there not much more danger in failing to do our duty than many think? Is there not danger also that some will go too far? We ought to be careful as to how we walk, we should be careful to come up to the rule, and we should be careful also to see that we do not cross the rule, and then we shall have praise of God and not of the world. Some may say this is too strict. No, I am not strict enough myself. We cannot serve God and mammon, compare this with what the word of God says, and see if it is right; if not according to the word, reject it. Let us prove by our walk that the grace of God is within us. Now you must not understand me to mean that we will never do anything wrong, but let us fight the good fight of faith. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man." "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

Let us remember that we cannot do all this of our own selves, God only, can keep us in our duty, and cause that we be not neglectful. Let us not give place to the devil. I am writing upon the duty and practice of the children of God, these things will not give them grace or life, but they are the duty of believers, if we love the Lord, we are told to keep his commandments. We are, as much as in us lies, to live peaceably with all men, we are to do good to all men, especially to the household of faith. Doctrine and practice go together, so also do experience and repentance. Christ is exalted to give repentance to Israel, and the forgiveness of sins, God has exalted him with his right hand to give these things. Experience begins when God first shows us our helpless condition by nature, and that we are unable to deliver ourselves

from the danger that we are in, and our insufficiency to deliver ourselves from bondage, and our need of Christ's righteousness to be imputed to us. "By grace we are saved through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God." How much we need him to keep us from the foolishness and the evil of this world, and from the flesh. God chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. He has predestinated us unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. They are elect according to the foreknowledge of God unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.

Please rectify all mistakes. I have but hinted at these things.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,
JAMES W. LINN.

REXFORD, Kansas, Feb. 28, 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I will try to give you a little sketch of my experience.

I was born in West Virginia, in 1836, and lived in that State until 1885, when we moved to Thomas Co., Kansas. When I was twelve years of age my mother died, and I was left one of six boys. My father broke up housekeeping, and I worked for my board for a distiller.

The first time that I thought of the Lord's dealings with me was one night when I went to sleep crying for my mother. I dreamed that I saw the most beautiful cloud, and I thought that my mother was there, and that I could go to her, but she could not come back to me. I then awoke, and I never cried any more for my mother. My parents were both Old School Baptists when I was born; my father was a minister. They always taught me to be truthful and honest, and that I would be punished for every wrong that I did, and when I did wrong, and they knew it, they chastized me for it. My father married again shortly after my mother's death, and then he took me home again. His second wife was an Old School Baptist, and a mother to me, and I loved her as a mother. She nor my father ever told me anything to take me to heaven, but I thought when I got what pleasure I wanted in this world, I would turn and be a christian; I thought that I could become one whenever I wanted to do so; I lived in pleasure, rolling sin as a sweet morsel under my tongue, and did not know what I was doing.

In January, 1856, I was married; we were both poor, but I thought I was the happiest man that ever lived. Soon a child was born to us, and now I thought that I had everything that I wanted, except riches; then there came such a feeling over me, if everybody in the world had been dead, I could not have felt worse. What was the matter I did not know; I did everything I could to shake this oppression off, but could not; I would take my babe and sing to it, and try to teach it to dance. In 1857 the little one died; I then thought that I never would make use of another bad word, and did not for some time, and then one day I was riding, and got off my horse to walk, and soon came to a stream, when I thought I would ride again, but the horse ran, and I could hardly catch it, and when I did, I began to curse it. Then it came to me that I had lied, for I had promised the Lord that I would never do so again. I said, O Lord, if thou wilt keep me from it, I will never swear again, and I thank God he has kept me from it,

yet my burden remained upon me, and I could not put it off. I thought that I would live a christian, and never let anybody know my feelings. I knew that I was a sinner, and could not see how God could be just and save me. I went to all kinds of meetings, but could not find any peace. In July, 1858, I was at an Old Baptist meeting, and Elder Thomas Collet preached the first sermon that I ever understood, and when he got through I went home. The Lord had shown me how he could be just and save me: when Jesus died he paid the debt of every saint that will ever sit around his throne, but I thought that I would keep it a secret, and never let any one know it. In 1859 I was away from home, and was taken sick, and thought I would die. Then I wanted to tell some one my trouble, and I started home, and on the way came across a friend camping in the woods, and I remained all night with him. I told him how I felt, and found that he was in the same state of mind that I was. I went home the next day, and thought that I would never tell any one else, but I got sick again, and then I told my wife. I went to church as I had been going, but I did not want to tell the church. Soon after I thought that I would tell the church at their next meeting, but when that day came, I could not, as I thought I was not fit to be with them, so I did not tell them about my experience till the next meeting, then I went forward and told my experience, and was received, and baptized the next day. Then I thought I would never see any more trouble, but the next day as I was at work, the enemy said to me, "You are not a christian, and you have deceived the church." I said, "Thank God he has a people, whether I am one or not." Then the temptation left me, but I have traveled an up and down road ever since; when the Lord is with me, Satan is away from me. 1861 I was taken with typhoid fever, and I thought that I was dying. I had heard of Satan coming with his chains to take men to torment, and I told my father that I was going to torment. Then the sweetest voice that I ever heard whispered in my soul, "He that believeth in me shall never die, believest thou this?" I have never feared death since. The Lord showed me there that he would take care of me, and that he always had done so.

In 1882 I was taken sick again, on New Year's night, and I did not close my eyes in sleep for a week, but during that time I saw more pleasure than I ever had before. I saw my Savior, and I thought that he was barefooted, and I was also, and I was following him over a rugged mountain, and it was full of snags and rocks, and that if I slipped the least bit one side, it would ruin my feet, but to step in his tracks was soft as down. I had never spoken his name in public then, but the Lord showed me what preaching was; it seemed to me to be the key of the kingdom in the Spirit of God. The Spirit puts it into the heart of the preacher, and he speaks it forth, and that is all there is to preaching, as to its source. It became impressed upon my mind, and so I asked liberty, and it was granted, and I tried to preach, but I thought I was not fit. I tried to preach, and I tried to quit. In 1892 I went back to West Virginia, to an association, and there tried to preach, and was there ordained, and came home and had meeting at home. I am having meetings at our schoolhouse on first Sunday, and Saturday before, in each month. The nearest meeting that I know of is sixty-five miles

away. I have gone to hear them, they are all that in this section believe and preach the truth. I would to God that he would send some Old Baptists here, so that I could hear preaching. If there are any who believe as I do, I would love to have them come and see me, as I am almost alone. I live six miles southwest of Rexford, Kansas. I am well pleased with the SIGNS, it is all the preaching I hear, unless I travel from seventy-five to a hundred miles.

Do with this as you think best, and all will be right with me.

I am as ever your unworthy brother, if one at all,

STEPHEN MURPHY.

RATON, N. M., Jan. 7, 1900.

MRS. SILENA HOUGH—MY DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—Your long ago letter has not been answered, not because it was not appreciated, neither because you have been forgotten, nor our very pleasant visits in the past obliterated from my memory. Your letter came in a time when our feelings were very tender, and it brought up the time when you were a member of our household, and a most intimate acquaintance of our dear, departen one. She is gone, and the vacancy is still as keenly felt as when she first passed away.

Our lives are compared to a vapor, and how striking the figure. God's mercies are the only staple things of which we can think. I have been thinking that a birth manifests the natural, and that birth also is all that there is in the spiritual. In the natural I can see, but how short is the vision. Faith, which is given of God, lays hold on the unseen, which is revealed to us. By faith we know that Christ is the Son of God, and that he came out from God, and that he works righteousness in us through the Spirit of truth. We know it to be revealed by the light of the glory of his wisdom which is in us, contrasted with the darkness of our own wisdom, and we see even this as through a glass darkly, because the evil of the flesh is not yet taken away. Faith lays hold on this truth, and a glorious hope is set before us, fixed in him who has entered within the vail. He is risen from the dead, and we are the children of that light which is brought to view through the gospel. This gospel is the gospel of peace; the wall of partition, made up of wicked works, between us and him, is broken down. He is our light, because he came out from God who is light, and declared the end from the beginning. Wisdom is indeed justified of her children, though the whole world lieth in darkness, and blinded to the love of God, and at enmity in that darkness to God. But we are told that charity never faileth, because God is love, and his love perfects us so that we shall show forth his praise, being brought out of darkness into his marvelous light, so that we see him as the author and finisher of our faith. We grope in darkness when we cannot see him. His work is shown through our works. They are good works, when he works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. But this is not to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us when death is abolished, and its sentence is no more written in us. The voice of the Son of God and the trump of God shall quicken this mortal body, and it shall be made like unto his glorious body. His body ascended up on high, thus he led captivity captive. Hence we look for the redemption of the body; then no more tribulation shall await us, and we shall be with and like his glorious body.

These things we cannot see without the gift of wisdom, which is faith in us; then we hope or wait to the end for his glorious appearing.

That woman who is clothed with the sun has a glorious apparel, for it is not woven of the darkness of this world, but of the light of the eternal ages, the revelation of which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began. Christ our Lord was in him, and with him, and beheld his glory, which was not revealed aforetime to men; but the gospel has revealed it through him in all ages, and will continue to reveal it until the leaven shall have leavened the whole body. He is a quickening Spirit, for the life of the woman, his bride, was in him, and through the sleep of his death the rib was taken from him, and she was manifested as bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. She suffers with him, and shall she not reign with him? In his book all his members were written, when as yet there was none of them; and he is now her Head, and must reign until all enemies are subdued under her in the earth. Enemies may destroy the natural body, but the true spiritual body is beyond their reach. Thus she fears God alone, knowing that he hath power to destroy both soul and body in hell. They have a glorious hope, they have a glorious body; God the Father has made it so through the death of his Son, and has revealed it to us by his Spirit, which he has sent as a Comforter, and what God has sent shall never fail. He is in one mind and none can turn him, none can deliver out of his hand, he lifts up his hand to heaven and says, I live forever, and so shall the church reign with him in righteousness forever.

Remember me to all the brethren and friends, and consider this a general letter. I often think of you, and of the kindness shown me in my visit at Hopewell, and Trenton, and elsewhere, and hope for the time to come when I can again see you all, and talk of the things which are above the world and natural things.

Affectionately your brother,

G. M. FETTER.

OTTERVILLE, Mo., May 20, 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN IN HOPE:—I feel a desire to try to express my thankfulness to you in sending me some sample copies of your paper, especially the 15th of May number, that had your well explained position. While reading carefully your views on the great fundamental principles of the hope of every heaven-born soul, it did not change my mind, but I feel strengthened; neither did it change my mind in regard to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have had the pleasure of reading that paper for twelve years, although I have not been a subscriber, and in examining some of the old numbers which were published in your father's life, I can see no change in the doctrine set forth then by him, and now by its present editors.

I have been a close observer of the questions of the day, that is, time salvation and predestination of all things, and being fully established in my own mind in the latter, I have ever felt it my duty to present the same to the hearts and understanding of the children of God. If I am not deceived in my call, it is to preach the word, exhort, reprove and rebuke, with all longsuffering. In as short a way as I can I wish to let you know how I understand the above charge. While all who have been permitted to hear me know my position, yet you have never met me, nor have I ever written on this subject before, as I felt there were others more able than I to handle the

subject. Preach the Word, I understand, to be the same Word spoken of in another place, which is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, the same that John's record says was in the beginning with God, and was God, and was made flesh and dwelt among us, which is Jesus, the Savior of his people. The apostle says, We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. The question is, Why preach him? Because in him all fullness dwells, because God has exalted him at his right hand to give repentance and remission of sins. Now if he is Prince, Savior, High Priest, and all fullness is in him, he is all his people need in time or eternity; we find salvation in none other; he died to save his people from their sins, or died for our sins, and was raised for our justification. If we are justified in him, shall he (God) not freely give us all things? Jesus is the store-house of God; all his wisdom, counsel and power is treasured in him, our redemption, preservation, resurrection, in fact all that we need here in this world, and in the blessed world to come, is and ever was in him, and as time rolls on we see the purposes of God developed. The choice was made in Christ before the world was, and in the same Jesus grace was given us. We all acknowledge the choice in Christ before the foundation of the world, and that is that we should be holy. If God has chosen his people, and declared he will perform the work, or perfect their redemption in the resurrection, please tell me if the same God that made this choice, did not see all the obstacles that would spring up here to thwart him in this glorious work? Yes, my dear brethren, that unlimited wisdom saw it, for inspiration says he saw it all, that is, just what he suffered for his seed, and was satisfied, and his unlimited counsel or predestination declared he would do all his pleasure, and his unlimited power upholds all his wonderful work. This is the word Timothy was to preach.

How weak it is to say, If God predestinated all things, what use is there for us to preach, pray, exhort or rebuke? Let me tell you my reason, it is to fulfill that same wise counsel. It seems to me I sometimes get a glimpse of just such a God as I have here tried to declare, and when I do, the burden is light, the yoke is easy, and I feel a relation with David, and I call on all that is within me to praise the name of the Lord. Then I can exhort my dear, downcast brethren to a steadfastness in the faith, for it is all fixed and sure. It is God's work, and in the same spirit I can reprove or rebuke my brother, and in that spirit we can restore those that go astray. In all we suffer for Jesus' sake there is a blessing, but it is not a debt, as I would do my neighbor a day's work, and he would promise me a dollar at the end of the day, but the blessing is, being made worthy to follow Jesus, and this is by that grace that was given us in Christ.

Brethren, this is not as clear as I would love to present it, but it is the best I can do without making my letter too lengthy. If I know my own poor heart, it is to pray God's blessings on all his dear people, and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. May its editors be supplied with grace to still continue its publication on the old principles, and when the present ones are called, may he fill the agency with others that will continue to set forth the same to the rising generations.

Inclosed find post-office order for two dollars, for which send me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

J. T. BARNES.

SANFORD, Maine, March 9, 1899.

ELDER F. W. KEENE—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—It has been on my mind much of late to write to you; whether I can write anything worth your perusal seems doubtful. I will write you some of my past experience, and I hope it is of the Lord, and not of self.

In the fall of 1894 they were holding revival meetings at the Baptist church in this place, and my husband went a few nights, and then I thought I would go. I went to these meetings feeling I was a sinner, and would come home feeling nothing bettered, but rather worse. I went, but there was not any food there for my hungry soul, I saw myself such a vile sinner, and they all talked as though they were sure of heaven. I got so that I could not sleep at night, and my daily work became a burden to me. Then I would go into company to try and drown my thoughts, but I could not. I was poor company for myself or for any one else. At length I told my husband that I would like to go down to the Oak Woods church, and he said, "We will go." And the first Sunday that we went, as I listened to your preaching, it seems that I heard what I had been wanting to hear for a long time, and I felt to cry unto the Lord, "God be merciful to me a sinner." But after this Sunday I looked forward to the Sundays with great anxiety to go to the gathering at Oak Woods, for it seemed to me I felt I should get food for my soul. The first time you came and spoke to me, and asked me how I enjoyed the meeting, I could not tell you how much I had enjoyed it, it seemed such a privilege to be there and hear our Savior exalted above all others. How blessed it was to me! I had thought for some time that I would like to have a home with the people of God, and follow our Savior in the ordinance of baptism, but I felt myself so unworthy there could be no hope for me, for I was a poor, lost, undone sinner. The Sunday morning that we went into the conference meeting that was held before the services for preaching, sister Roberts, at whose house we stayed the night before, asked me if I would like to go to the conference meeting? I told her that I should, and I enjoyed hearing the brethren talk very much. When you asked my husband if he felt like speaking to the church, and the church received him for baptism, I thought I must sink, for I thought if you should ask me to speak of the Lord's dealings with me I could not, but it seems that I had strength given me to say a few words, I hope it was of the Lord, and not of myself. But how could the church have fellowship for me and receive me for baptism, seemed a mystery. The next Tuesday when you called at our house you asked me if I was sorry for the step I had taken last Sunday? I replied, I did not know, I felt as if I was acting the hypocrite, and deceiving the people of God; but O, I cannot deceive him who knows all our thoughts. It did seem to me when next Sunday came that I was afraid of what the people were going to say about my being baptized, and thus making a profession of the name of Christ. But when I got to the water's side that fear all left me, and everything looked lovely; it was such a happy day to me, and when the brethren and sisters came along and shook hands with me, calling me their sister, I thought, How can they fellowship such a poor, unworthy creature like me? But since I have been one of your number I have had some very trying times. It seems at times that I know nothing of the grace of God, and what

little hope I have is about extinguished, and then this passage of Scripture will come to my mind, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," and that gives me a little hope. There is no place I enjoy myself as I do meeting with the people of God; I have not had that privilege the past year because of my sickness. It seemed to be very hard at first to be thus deprived of this privilege, but the Lord knows what is for our good, he will not put upon us anything but what we are able to bear. Pray for me that I may be reconciled to the Lord's will.

I will bring my scribble to a close, as I think it will try your patience to read it. Please do not let any one see this.

From your unworthy sister,

MRS. ANSON QUINT.

SANFORD, Maine, April 26, 1899.

ELDER F. W. KEENE—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have been so sad and gloomy for the past two weeks, it seems as though I must write you a few lines to let you know the state of my mind. It seemed last Sunday morning as though I could not be reconciled to not have the privilege of meeting with the dear saints of God. O, I felt so rebellious against God, indeed, I could hardly realize that there was a God. My husband said he thought I was one that used to have good courage, but it seemed to me now to be all gone. It is such a great blessing when we can put all our trust in our Savior, and feel to lie passive in his hands. There is no company that I enjoy so much as I do the people of God, and hear them talk of Jesus and the blessed things of his kingdom, yet how ignorant I am of any spiritual knowledge of these things. I find myself so cold and lifeless, pertaining to the things of God, that I wonder I have ever been made to hope in the salvation of the Lord, yet at other times that hope is so precious to my soul. It seems that I have felt more dependent upon the Lord since my health has been so poor. I feel at times it is for my good to be afflicted, that it brings me nearer to my God. I have had a great desire that I might be reconciled to the Lord's will concerning me. I feel it is a great mercy that we do not know what is in store for us, the Lord's ways are not our ways. If I am ever saved, it will be by grace, and grace alone, not by anything that I have done.

I did not sit up last week, as my health is so poor, but I suppose it is all for the best, that is the way I feel now. Come and see me when you can, it is such a great blessing to hear you talk of spiritual things, and the preciousness of our Savior.

From your unworthy sister,

MRS. ANSON QUINT.

(See obituary notice on page 382.)

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

PLEASE BE SURE

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1900.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REPLIES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A FRIEND, Geo. W. Jones, of Norton, Va., writes, asking some questions concerning the shedding of the blood of Christ, and concerning his reviving and living again on earth before his ascension. We put what he has said in the form of questions, and try to pen a brief reply.

First, "Must every drop of the blood of Jesus be shed in order to complete the atonement for our sins?"

It is written that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. It is also written that Jesus laid down his life for the sheep. It seems clear, from all that the Scriptures testify concerning redemption, that the one thing demanded by the law of God was the life of the offender. In the Old Testament it is again and again stated that the blood is the life. Therefore when it is said that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins, precisely the same thing is meant, as though it were written that our life must be laid down for sin. Indeed, the curse pronounced against transgression and sin in the first place said nothing about the shedding of the blood of Adam, but, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The real demand of the law is the death of the transgressor. It is also a fact that when the blood has gone out from the body, the body is dead; but the blood is also dead. We speak here of the death which we see around us every day. Literally the blood of one that is dead is just as dead as is the rest of the body. There is no more life in the literal substance of the blood, than there is in any other part of the body of man; yet we speak of the life-blood of man or beast, because when the blood has gone, the creature from whose body it has departed is dead.

In the case of the crucifixion of the blessed Lord and Master, all that was called for by the law was his death. Life was demanded for transgression. Adam had no life but his natural life when he transgressed, and of course no other life could be demanded of him save that which he possessed. It was the same life demanded of Adam, which Jesus laid down; it could have been no other, because no other was demanded. As the late Elder Wm. J. Purington used to say, "Eternal life could not die." Adam did not originally possess eternal life, and therefore it could not have been demanded of him, and beside, to those who have eternal life Jesus said, they should never perish. Jesus did not lay down eternal life, simply because it was not demanded by the law, and because eternal life cannot die; if it could die, it would not be eternal life at all.

That blood which Jesus shed was in itself but blood. While he said, Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, yet had any one eaten of the literal body, and drunken of the literal blood of Christ, he would not have possessed eternal life. Jesus did not mean that his body, if eaten by cannibals, or his blood, if drunken by men, would

impart to them eternal life. His body and blood, literally considered, would not have availed any man any more than to eat the body and drink the blood of any other man. Had those who crucified him torn pieces from his body and eaten them, they would not have had eternal life any the more. We speak of this to show that it was not the blood, as such, that washed away sin, but the laying down of the life of the Master. When it is said that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin, it is the same as saying that without the laying down of life there is no remission. Indeed, in crucifixion, and death by it, comparatively but a small portion of the blood in the body flows out. From the narrative in the Scriptures we know that from the hands and feet of the dear Redeemer but a small portion of his blood had fallen. After his death, when his side was pierced by the spear, blood and water came out.

It was not the pouring out of his blood literally which made the atonement, but the laying down of his life; that he poured out to the limit; he died that we might live. We speak and sing of the virtue of the blood of Christ, and the Scriptures say much about it, but it should always be remembered that after all it is the life that the law of God demanded, and all that is said of the blood is but figurative, meaning the life of the Lord. It is not possible that all the blood shall flow out from the veins without death ensuing. If it could be possible that all the blood could be shed, and the sacrifice remain alive, the atonement would not be complete. We say this to emphasize the idea that it is the life simply that is demanded. We have no objection to the expression, "It took every drop of the blood of Christ to atone for our sins," if we do not look at the matter wrongfully. If we mean by it that Jesus must die to atone for our sins, the expression is right and true, but literally Jesus was dead, and the atonement completed, before his side was pierced, when blood and water came out, so that it is evident that his life was the atonement. The blood is but a synonym for the life, therefore.

Second, Did Jesus have the same blood when he arose, and moved among men, that he shed upon Calvary?

We do not know, and we do not think it important that we should know. One thing is sure, he did arise from the dead, thus proving that his atonement was complete, and that the law of God was fully satisfied, and sinners justified. We know that his body arose, and appeared to his disciples, and after his resurrection he did eat as any other man would eat, though it is not said that any man touched him after his resurrection, yet what is said, shows that he could be touched, for he said to Thomas, "Reach forth thy hand, and put thy finger in the print of the nails." And he said to Mary at the sepulchre, "Touch me not," when she would have embraced his feet. All that is needful, or that would be for our comfort to know, is that he did arise from the dead. The mystery of his resurrected body is incomprehensible to our finite understanding, and so is the mystery of our own resurrection, at the last day, incomprehensible. We do not yet know what a spiritual body will be. It is enough to know that these bodies shall be raised up; it is enough to know that Jesus laid down his life that he might take it again, and after his resurrection he was glorified. One day believers shall know what his glorification means, but not now.

BROTHER G. R. Johnson of Rosswell,

Ga., asks for some thoughts upon the Scripture found in Jer. xiii. 23, which reads as follows, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil."

The language seems plain, and we will say but little with regard to it. The whole chapter is a presentation of the pride, rebellion, wickedness and stubborn ungodliness of Israel as a nation, under the old, conditional covenant. The law demanded obedience of them, but gave no grace to secure that obedience. Because no grace was in the law of that conditional covenant, the people continually went astray in heart, in that they did not obey the commandments, to love God with all their heart, and mind, and strength, and their neighbor as themselves. This sum and substance of the law they never did obey, and never could without grace bestowed upon them, and working out this obedience in them. And as regards those portions of the commandments of the Lord, which related simply to an outward, formal obedience, to which they could be constrained through fear, they were also continually disobeying. Even when they did render some obedience to these outward, formal requirements, in most cases, and with most of the people, they did not do these things through love to God, and so this obedience was not acceptable to God. It was thus made clearly manifest that unless grace should reign, in writing the law in the heart, and putting it into the inward parts, they would err without remedy. Thus the old covenant was meant to show the utter failure of fallen man to love God and the neighbor, in which two commandments, the word informs us, all the law is summed up. Thus the law was the schoolmaster to Christ. It showed to those who felt its power, the utter failure of man, and of all conditional salvation, conditioned upon man, and thus brought them to see that help must be laid upon one that was mightier than they. Thus that conditional covenant teaches, as well as the gospel covenant, the necessity of Jesus, and his finished and perfect work, to save. Man is nothing, and Jesus is all. Work is a failure, and grace reigns alone. Say what we may about the goodness and ability of man, the fact still remains that under all the various periods of time in which man was tested after the fall, he has proven a total failure, so far as righteousness is concerned. He is depraved in heart and life; he is evil, and does evil continually. The law of threatening cannot restrain him, because sin is stronger even than his fears of judgment. God was not disappointed in him. The law was not given that man should be proved for the information of the Almighty concerning him, but man was proved in every way by teachings, and warnings, and mercies, and judgments, in order that man might himself know how vile, and how sold under sin he is. In the gospel, even Paul, who had a large measure of the Spirit and grace of God, complained that he could not perfectly obey; evil was always present with him. Sin is mixed with all I do, each one must say. It is utterly impossible that any one should live a perfect life on earth, since sin still lives, and strives in the whole heart of man. God's dealings with us in every way but bring this out, and cause us to rest more entirely upon the finished work of Christ. O, what debtors we must be to grace every day!

In the text to which our attention has been called, we are taught that such was the deep depravity of man, and such the

natural opposition of the human heart to God and to all that he commands, that Israel could no more cease to do evil, than an Ethiopian could change his skin, or a leopard his spots. It is the nature of the Ethiopian to be black; it is the nature of the leopard to have spots; it is the nature of man to accustom himself to do evil, and not good. A man can no more change his nature than an Ethiopian or a leopard can change theirs. Sin flows out from the nature of fallen man, just as the color of black flows out from the very nature of the African, or the spots flow out from the nature of the leopard. It must be remembered that we are called here to contemplate *fallen* nature. Let it be also remembered that we are called to contemplate *fallen* nature under the *most favorable* circumstances. If it could ever learn to do good, surely this was the place. God was dealing with them as he never did deal with any other nation; all his dealings with them but developed the fact that they were the most stiff-necked and rebellious of all people. There is not a child of God to-day on earth who does not confess that all the dealings of God with him have but revealed to him all the more his great perverseness, so that he finds out that in him, that is, in his flesh, there dwells no good thing. But God can change the skin of the Ethiopian, and he can take away the spots of the leopard, so he can hold in restraint the nature of fallen man, and cause that he shall do good, rather than evil. He did hold in restraint the lions, so that they could not harm Daniel; he did quench the violence of the fire, so that it could not consume the bush that Moses saw, and so, at another time, it did not kindle upon the three Hebrews in the furnace. Thus he can and does hold in check all men, so that their inbred nature does not fully appear. He in a richer, higher sense, so lives in his people that their tendencies to evil are restrained, but each one must say it is grace, and grace only, that separates me from the vilest of the vile. A sinner saved by grace, sums our whole experience up.

God, in the text, spoke of Israel unrestrained by grace; they were under the dominion of their sins; an evil heart of unbelief controlled them; they were dead in trespasses and in sins; they could not perform any other than dead works. The impossibility of the natural man loving holiness, and hating sin, is here set forth more clearly and strongly than any uninspired words can convey it, and just this very thing we learn to be true of ourselves when we are awakened to see the truth concerning ourselves. This Scripture abases man and exalts grace. In fact every Scripture that exalts grace, abases man, and every Scripture that abases man, exalts grace. As one of the old hymn writers has well said, "It is all for the lifting of Jesus on high."

A BROTHER has asked the question, "Is the child of God as passive in obedience, as in regeneration?"

We hardly know what such an expression can mean. If it means, Is the child of God as dependent upon grace, in order to be obedient to God, as he was in his regeneration? we should have no hesitancy in replying in the affirmative, but if it means that the child of God has no desire to obey, and finds no love and joy in it, and does not have his mind stirred up to run in the way of the Lord, and does not strive to obey, any more than these things were with him in his regeneration, we should answer in the negative. We know that we desire to obey,

and that we do strive to obey; we know also that we did not desire regeneration, nor strive after it. It is certain that believers do serve God, but it is equally certain, that after all, we must ascribe to grace all our obedience all the time. We should not think of using the expression, "We are as passive in obedience as we were in regeneration." It is not a Bible expression, and neither do we understand the Bible to teach this. If it be charged against those who believe in sovereign and reigning grace, that they believe that this makes the believer passive in his obedience, in the sense that he does not desire nor strive to obey, it is a base slander against grace, and against those who ascribe all their salvation to it. The poet never sung a truer lay than when he said, "Grace all the work shall crown." It is all summed up in Paul's language, "I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Paul was not passive, for he labored, but still he says it was grace after all that did all the work. Grace worked in him, and then through him. We can have no mind to obey except as grace confers that mind, and then with the mind to obey, we learn that our doing what we desire to do, is also of grace. It is grace that makes us active in all obedience. In this part of the country we have never heard the expression above named, used by any of the brethren; but we do feel to ascribe all to the grace of God. C.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denotes the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MATTHEW XXV. 25, 26.

"AND I was afraid, and went, and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed."

It would afford us pleasure to be able to explain all difficult passages on which we are called upon to give our views, if we were in possession of the requisite knowledge and aptness to teach, and if we were confident that what we write would be for the edification of the saints, and the glory of God. We have often had occasion to acknowledge that we feel more embarrassment in writing our views on the parables and metaphors used, than on other portions of the Scriptures, not because we have no views, but principally because the same metaphor or the same parable may illustrate more than one subject, and therefore brethren may apply them differently, and it is hard sometimes to determine which, if either of us, has the primary design of them.

This parable of the talents has been variously understood and interpreted by different commentators, and that, too, in some cases where there is unison of sentiment in the doctrine of the Bible, generally. To our mind there appears to be a connection, or continuation of the subject embraced in the twenty-fourth chapter, extended through the twenty-fifth.

The discourse of our Lord to his disciples, of which the parable under consideration is a part, took place in the vicinity of the temple at Jerusalem, immediately after the disciples had been showing him the buildings of the temple, and Jesus had predicted the final overthrow and utter ruin of all these splendid buildings, whereupon they asked him to tell them,

"When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming? and of the end of the world?" In connection with his answers to these three questions, our Lord gave some must solemn and impressive admonitions to the disciples, which he enforced by the use of a number of parables, all of which were calculated to show the propriety and necessity of their faithful attention to the charge which he had given them, and vigilant watchfulness in regard to the signs which were to indicate his coming. Their Lord was soon to go away for a season and then return again, and it was needful for them that he should go away, for he was going to his Father and to their Father, and when he should thus personally be absent, they would be exposed to strong temptations, both from enemies without, and fears arising from their own carnal and unrenewed natures. "Take heed," said he, "that no man deceive you; for many shall come in my name saying, I am christ, and shall deceive many." They would also be tempted to say within themselves, "My Lord delayeth his coming," and to begin to smite their fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken. To warn them against these deceptions of the enemy, and corruptions of their flesh, he made use of the parables. "Two shall be in the field, the one shall be taken, the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill, the one shall be taken and the other left. Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh." From all these parables, it is clearly seen, that the disciples were admonished to watch for the coming of the Son of Man; that is, the coming of which they had inquired, and which is more clearly indicated by the parables of the virgins, the talents, and of the sheep and goats, in the following chapter; when he should come as the bridegroom long expected, to receive the bride and consummate the marriage; as the Lord to reckon with his servants; and as the crowned king to divide the nations of the earth as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.

"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins." Then, at that time, when the Son of Man, as a Bridegroom, should thus suddenly be announced, then those faithful servants or disciples, like the wise virgins, should be manifestly distinguished from the foolish virgins. And why? The reason is thus given in the following parable: "For the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants." As Christ was now about to go away, he had called his own servants, or disciples, and taught them privately on this subject. "And delivered unto them his goods. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey." Here, if we rightly understand the application of the parable, is described the manner in which God has set the members in the mystical body of Christ, even as it hath pleased him, and bestowed a measure of the Spirit to qualify each member for usefulness in the body, and all the gifts for the benefit of all the members, to profit with all, or for the profit of all. "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for

the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry." "But to every one is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." These gifts in the church are not bestowed to suit the ambitious feelings or desires of the servants, but they are distributed according to the wisdom of the Lord, and according to the several ability of the disciples. In all this arrangement the Lord, and not the servant is magnified. It is the province of our Lord Jesus Christ to call, qualify and command the service of all his servants, and to furnish each servant with the exact amount of gift or talent that he pleases. And Timothy has not the right to say, Because I am not endowed with apostolic gifts and authority, my Lord is austere and unjust, or that he claims the right to reap where he has not sown, for the Lord does not require of Timothy a harvest of apostolic labors. Each disciple is required to be diligent in the exercise of such gifts as the Lord has bestowed on him.

Although Timothy cannot sit on one of the twelve thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel, still he can be equally useful, according to the measure of the gift of Christ, in holding fast to the form of sound words, in committing the same that he had heard of the apostle, to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also, and in warring a good warfare. And so even in the present day, though some of us, as ministers of Jesus, may not have as great gifts as some others, or as our proud natures would desire, we are under the same obligation to improve such as we have, as though we were apostles or prophets. The same may be said of all the children of God, whether called to labor in the public administration of the word, to speak in exhortation, in prayer, in attending to the discipline and order of the church, or in whatever way God has graciously qualified us to be useful in the house of God. And still further we will say, that the child of God, though but a very child, weak and trembling, has no just cause to say, Because my Lord has not given me the amount of assurance that I think others possess, because he has not enabled me to triumph over all my fears and doubts, in regard to my hope in Christ, he is therefore an austere Master if he requires me to own his name in the ordinance of baptism, in taking a seat with his people in the church of God, and I shall be excused if I wrap up carefully in a napkin what little hope I have, and bury it in the earth. For every one who is born of God, in whose heart God has shed abroad his love, has a measure of the gift of Christ, and a capacity to be, to some extent, useful in the body. The hand cannot say to the foot, I have no need of thee, nor can the foot say, Because I am not the hand, therefore I am not of the body. The language of the slothful servant, it is to be feared is found in too many mouths at the present day. Preachers excuse themselves from devoting their time to their calling, on the plea that their gifts are so small when compared with the gifts of others, saying, We will hardly be missed if we apply ourselves to our farms, our shops or our worldly business, and thus hide what gift we have, in the earth; if God designed us for usefulness in the ministry, he would give us greater gifts, and not reap where he has not sown. To carry this short, simple, plain but emphatic message, "Yet forty days and Nineveh should be destroyed," seemed quite unpleasant to the fretful prophet. But it was, nevertheless, a message from God, and quite as important that he should bear it, as any message that was ever sent to Israel by Isaiah or Jeremiah.

"I was afraid," said the slothful servant. Afraid of what? Had not his Lord said, Occupy till I come? But he lacked confidence in his Lord; feared that he would require a greater amount of harvest than in proportion to what he had sown. And being afraid, he went and hid the talent in the earth. Will this be the language of any of us? Will the tardy convert say in extenuation of his disobedience to the commands of Christ, I was afraid thy grace would not be equal to my day, and so I declined to own thee in thy ordinances? Will the reluctant minister say, I was afraid that I should fail to make a creditable appearance, and my pride would be mortified, so I buried my gift in the earth? May the Lord deliver his dear children from such slothfulness, and constrain them all to obey him.

"His Lord answered and said, Thou wicked and slothful servant!" The excuse is insulting to the Master or Lord who supplied the talent. "Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury." Thus in the use of money, if it be not invested as capital for business, it may be so applied as at least to gain ordinary usury. But in regard to the gifts bestowed on the saints, we cannot let them out on usury; but still the figure is well calculated to admonish the slothful servants of Christ, that they are amenable to their divine Lord for their disobedience to his commands, and for their neglect of such gifts as he has bestowed on them.

The order given to take from him the one talent, and give it to him that has the ten, shows that the church of God must be supplied with edifying gifts; and if some, through sloth and disobedience, wickedly withhold their share of the service, those who are more faithful, shall supply the lack, and in doing so they shall learn that the willing and the obedient shall eat the good of the land, while the slothful and disobedient shall be cast into outer darkness, where many a disobedient child of God has been, and where they have found weeping and gnashing of teeth. This is strong language, but we believe it to be applicable to God's children, who are delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. (1 Cor. v. 5.)

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., September 15, 1857.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, in session with our sister church, Black Rock, in Baltimore County, Md., May 16th, 17th and 18th, 1900, to the churches composing this Association, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We feel at present to call your attention to Psalm cxxxix., in which David declares to us that the eye of the Lord is all-seeing, and his knowledge too wonderful for him. He tells us how it is impossible to hide from the Lord, saying, "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." And this omnipresence of God he says, "is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." And do we not, dear brethren, find ourselves lost in perfect wonder and admiration, when we think of a Being, who is personal in his promises, and in the manifestations of his love to poor, vile sinners? And yet he is everywhere at the same time, and *all* the time. He

can and does hear the cry of his needy ones in the heights, and in the depths, and throughout the broad expanse of the earth. He is present with equal power, love and mercy, to protect, nourish and cherish, each of his humble poor. How wonderful his existence! when we remember that he is without beginning of days, or end of life, and that he knows all things before they exist. This is what the apostle Paul is pleased to call foreknowledge: so we see that it is not necessary for a thing to really exist for our God to know it, and in purpose accomplish it, or defeat it: "For naked and open to the view of him are all things, with whom we have to do." We will come more particularly to the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth verses, which read, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." In this we see Jesus, the blessed Lamb of God, who came, being sent of his Father, begotten of the Holy Ghost, as it was prophesied, "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." O, how wonderful! that God dwells with men, and that, in the fashion of a man. How it calls for admiration and praise from our poor hearts, and how strange, that a virgin should bring forth a son. It is the wonder of the world, and no human reasoning can fathom it; even so, the salvation of poor, lost and ruined sinners, without the aid or instrumentalities of men, is wonderful. The carnal minds of men cannot understand, and to the child of grace, the work is marvelous, and that his soul knoweth right well. Yes, how perfectly wonderful is the truth that God, who is holy, just and good, should, without being asked, send his holy Spirit into the hearts of poor, dead sinners, quicken them into divine life, and tell them the wonderful news of salvation. Mary said, "How can these things be, seeing I know not a man." And so the sinner wonders, How it is possible for me to be saved; since I have done nothing to merit the loving favor of God? How can I bear the image of the lovely Jesus? But the Lord tells us, as he told Mary, that it is alone by the power of the Holy Ghost. And this Son of Mary, or Jesus, the Son of God is not alone, but has a body or substance, which the all-seeing eye of his Father saw when he was made in secret, (without the knowledge of man) and thus curiously wrought or made in the lowest parts of the earth, cast out from men, cradled in a manger, and poorer than the birds or foxes, having nowhere to lay his head. Yet the attention of those, who looked for redemption in Jerusalem, is called to him. And he was ever with the Father, but there was a time when Mary had no son, and so we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. In God's purpose we were in him, sons and daughters of Zion, and this to my mind is the substance which God saw, when as yet there was none of them. For the substance, or body of Christ, is the church, composed of the sons and daughters of Adam, who in no sense had an actual existence prior to Adam, yet it is not hid from God, but his eye sees the substance of his Son, which was yet unperfect. None of the work of God is im-

perfect, but at a time unperfect, or unfinished. The Lord's work in his people is progressive. While he sees all things, "He speaks of things that be not, as though they were." And all his work is not done at once, his work is before him. The Father creates, and after creation the Son redeems, and because of this redemption the Spirit makes alive. This work of the Son, and that also of the Spirit, is a work done in *time*, not before the foundation of the world. Bear in mind that the Father purposed this work in eternity, but accomplishes it in time, by his Son, who is also the Son of Mary, and by his holy Spirit, which he has given unto us since we had an existence, and were manifested as sinners. Not to spirits, but to men and women of Adam's fallen race. Therefore we hear Paul say to Timothy, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," or before we had an actual existence. Paul does not mean that we were saved or called before the world began, for there was no one to save or call. The lesson taught is clearly this, that we, who are sinners, and have felt the power of sin; because we have an actual existence, which is quickened by the Spirit of God, have salvation manifested to us now, through, or "by the appearing of Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light, through the gospel," and by this salvation, or gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth, he has called us from dead works to serve the living God. This service of the living God is the good works which God before ordained, that we should walk in them; our God being a living God, and Jesus, our Savior, a living Stone. He says, Ye also as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, to offer up spiritual, not carnal; living, not dead works, or sacrifices, which are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. This Jesus says, "As I live, ye shall live also," and he tells us not only in his written word, but in our heart-felt experience, that "without me ye can do nothing." Yes, he hath wrought all our works in us, and notwithstanding our feeling sense of weakness, and inability to do good, all the work which he has wrought in us, or given us strength to do, is good. He assures us that it shall not lose its reward, even to the gift of a cup of cold water to a disciple, in the name of a disciple. We see that it is not the greatness of the work, as it appears to men, but the spirit in which it is done. How our hearts do desire, and are sometimes permitted, to praise his blessed name, for such mercy shown. His greatness is a continual source of admiration, when we remember that when we were *not*, he made all this glorious arrangement for us. The joy received in the manifestation of his purpose to save, and comfort, is unspeakable and full of glory. Although scattered over all the face of the earth, the substance, or body of Jesus, is seen and known of God, and also, "that every imagination of the thoughts of the heart are only evil continually." We often read of his rebuking his disciples for their thoughts before they had expressed them. So in our hearts we feel his rebuke when no mortal being knows our thoughts.

Now in conclusion we will say with the apostle, that "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." I would here ask, How did you receive him? Was it in pride, or was it when

all your pride was humbled? Was it in boasting over others, or turning the cold shoulder to any one who had an experience of grace, even though they had been weak in the faith? Or was it in love to Jesus, the great head, and to every member of *his* body, no matter how small, and did you feel that there was any smaller than yourself? Or did you feel like Paul, to be the least of all saints? If then, you received him in humility, then walk humbly with thy God. If in love and fellowship with him, and with the poorest of the poor of his flock, then let that spirit in which you received him, characterize your life in the church of God. "For he that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him." John says, "If we love not our brother whom we have seen, how can we love God, whom we have not seen?"

May God enable us so to walk that his name shall be glorified among men, and our souls divinely benefited, and ever give us to remember that all good things are of him. Then it shall be truly said, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." And his name shall have all the glory.

WM. GRAFTON, Moderator.
MILTON DANCE, Clerk.

The annual letter of the Delaware Association, addressed to the several churches of which it is composed, in session with the Rock Springs Church, at Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa., May 23d, 24th and 25th, 1900.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—The letter addressed to you last year was in the character of gentle admonition, reminding you of the necessity of watchfulness and faithfulness in all matters pertaining to the church. Such notes of warning produce a healthful effect upon all who desire the welfare of Zion, and they are needful, inasmuch as the enemy is ever on the alert to take advantage of the weakness and infirmities of the flesh. This year we desire to address you in the same spirit of love, with the end in view that you may be strengthened and encouraged in your labors of love. If we are enabled by the spirit of comfort to confirm your feeble knees, it will be by reason of him, "Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." The knowledge that sin abounds in our mortal flesh is often sufficient to start an inquiry in our hearts, whether at the same time "grace doth much more abound." And we can only determine this by the fruit that is yielded as a result of our labor. If sin reigns in us, and we are willing subjects, seeking the pleasures of it, rolling it as a sweet morsel under our tongue, we are pretty sure to reap confusion and the whirlwind. But if grace reigns, then the reigning power of Satan is broken. The Spirit of Christ actuates us, and we hate that which we so lately loved and reveled in. And now our desire is for heavenly things. The product therefore of our labor is peace, sweet peace in the Lord. So we find it necessary to often examine ourselves to ascertain or determine by what manner of spirit we are moved. If we are in the midst of confusion, then we may know that sin doth abound; but when peace and gentleness fill our soul, then doth grace much more abound. Let us contemplate for a few moments the relationship between the MEMBERS of the body of Christ, and the body itself (the church). Surely the relationship which we bear to the church (our mother) is a filial one. From the time we came into

the church as an infant in arms, we became conscious that we were nourished from the breasts of our mother; it is our pleasant home. Every artifice of the mother's watchful care, incited by her unselfish love, is brought to bear that will conduce to our happiness, our comfort and our welfare. Thus we grow up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, for it is the Spirit of the Lord that worketh obedience in us. The law of the Lord becomes our meditation day and night. We are surrounded by an influence born of the Spirit, which leads us into the inner temple of that clear consciousness which excludes all fleshly merit, and ascribes all power and glory to the grace of God in Christ Jesus, by which we are made wise unto salvation. In these exalted surroundings where grace continually reigns, and sin hath no more dominion over us, we do not think of doing something in return by way of payment for the inestimable favor which grace hath bestowed upon us; for we feel all unworthy even so much as to raise our eyes to heaven. But a constant desire is in our heart to glorify him who hath exalted us. In our flesh we are weak and "unstable as water," while in Christ Jesus our Lord we are strong to the pulling down the bulwarks of the enemy, and to the lifting of Jesus on high. For where the treasure is, there will our heart be also. The affairs of the church will be our first desire and delight in the morning. All the day long we will toil while it is yet light, and in the evening will be yielded the pleasant fruit of a well spent day in the vineyard of our gracious Master. All the while our left hand has not known what the right hand has been doing; for all unconscious of good works, we do the Master's will in working out that which has been already wrought in us by the grace of God, which worketh mightily in our hearts to will and to do of his good pleasure. When we have both the temporal and spiritual welfare of the church at heart, we fear and tremble because of the weighty responsibility that is upon us. We see ourselves as beggars raised from the dunghill to sit among priests and princes in the kingdom of our God. For this cause the assemblies of the saints are solemn and awe-inspiring in our contemplative view. As we look into the faces of the saints of God gathered here to-day from far and from near, we behold a sight that we see not anywhere except in the assemblies of the saints. How plain is the certain mark of the chosen of the Lord: a family of souls that are in the world, but not of the world; a peculiar people, that esteem not themselves as worthy a place at the Master's table, yet with a longing desire for the company and conversation of the saints, pleading for the privilege of sitting upon the threshold to keep watch at the gates of the city in Jerusalem. Here too are the ministers, (travel-stained it is true) yet wearing an apparel which designates them as servants of the Most High God. Such times and places as this are feeding times and resting-places in Zion, where the weary pilgrims take sweet counsel together, pointing out to each other the obstacles that have hindered them in the way they have come, and also calling to mind the precious moments spent with Jesus in the way, and how at such times the little hills and the mountains leaped for joy. It is natural to desire to serve a KIND master; it is spiritual to desire to follow in the footsteps of him who is our Master, King, Brother, Friend, our all in all in every time and circumstance of need. Jesus came to do the will of the

Father, and as humble followers of him, our simple prayer is for the Spirit of Christ to do the Father's will also. Having that Spirit in constant exercise, we will all work together, in the unity of the faith, in perfect harmony, fulfilling the law of life in Christ Jesus in a godly walk and holy conversation, to the building up of the waste places in Zion, not forgetting at any time to hold aloft the standard of truth and equity and justice, which is Christ the Lord. In the willing service of our gracious Master we find his yoke is easy and his burden light, which he so sweetly told us with his gracious lips. We believe it is the desire of every heaven-born soul that his brethren shall appear in the guest-chamber of his Lord with habiliments acceptable and in keeping with so solemn a place. He is desirous that they be clothed with the garments of humility and self-abasement, with prayer in their heart and praise upon their lips. While all unconscious of it, having such desires, he himself is necessarily clothed with the same robe of the righteousness of Christ. It is to this end that we nurse the sick ones, and woo them back to health. That we bear one another's burdens, hold up the weak hands till the sun is set, that they may appear before the judgment-seat of God in the strength of Israel's King. The Lord's people are jealous one of another with a godly jealousy. We would have our brethren as fair as the morning, and as a bride adorned for her husband. We would have their lamps ever burning, for our Master has declared he will come as a thief in the night, and we shall not know the day or the hour of his coming. May we then abide in his love, and watch, and therefore pray.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Mod.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., May 22, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Please note in the SIGNS that my present address is 320½ North Twentieth St., Birmingham, Ala.

Yours in hope,

W. LIVELY.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, at his residence, May 22d, 1900, Charles D. Stith and Miss Nora Platt, both of Columbus, Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Olive S. Quint, beloved wife of brother Anson Quint, daughter of Henry G. and Vienna Quint, departed this life April 25th, 1900, aged 38 years and 13 days. Our sister for about three years before she died was in declining health, in consequence of this much of the time she was too unwell to attend the assemblies of the church of God. Indeed, many times when quite weak she and her husband have come over six miles to our place of meeting, such was her ardent desire to hear the gospel preached. Think of this, you that have professed the dear name of the Redeemer, who sometimes are found neglecting your privileges in assembling with those who fear the Lord, and can assign no reason for your neglect but that which is trifling and carnal. Our sister was married to brother Anson Quint, Dec. 23d, 1882, the fruit of this union being one son and two daughters, and in her departure the husband has lost a loving and faithful wife, and the children an affectionate and watchful mother. On Sunday, June 23d, 1895, our sister and her husband were baptized by the writer, in the fellowship of the church at North Berwick, Maine, and in her the church has lost a faithful and humble member, but we have that hope she fell asleep in Jesus, and this sweetens our bereavement. Being so much deprived, in her last days, of attending the public worship of God, she greatly appreciated the visits of the saints, and her comfort was in that spiritual communion in the things of Christ that is so dear to all who have tasted its blessedness.

At her funeral the writer preached from the words, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness leaning upon her Beloved?"—Solomon's Song viii. 5.

F. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

(See letters on page 368.)

MEETINGS.

A YEARLY meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the Clovesville Old School Baptist church, of the Lexington Association, on the first Saturday and Sunday in July, (7th and 8th) 1900.

Those coming by rail will be met at Fleischmann's, on the Ulster & Delaware Railroad.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, to meet with us.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist church, of Canada, will be held, the Lord willing, at the usual place, Aughrim schoolhouse, in the township of Brooke, Lambton Co., Ontario, five miles from Alvinston station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1900, and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1900. NO. 13.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PSALM CVII.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I received a few days ago, (through sister Susie Woolford,) a very precious message from our dear brother Dobler, of Woolford, Maryland, saying, "Give my love to him, and tell him for forty-one years I have found my experience in the one hundred and seventh Psalm," and requested that I write some of my thoughts and experience connected with that Psalm, for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. While I am gratified to receive a message of love, fellowship and confidence from the dear brother, yet I feel that the task he has imposed upon me is very great, and also a difficult one, because I truly feel that his experience is so rich and varied, while mine, alas, is so barren a field, so filled with thorns, ill weeds and thistles, that even the appearance of a fruitfulness in grace is so overgrown and covered up that it would be hard to discover it.

Comparing my own walk with that of many precious brethren whom I know, I feel chagrined and ashamed, O, so little, and less than nothing; falling so far short of what (when I first started on the christian journey) I had fondly hoped my life would be. Sometimes I am made to feel glad that I have been disappointed, because these very disappointments have been conducive to my well being, that through them my gracious Redeemer has been exalted in my love and esteem, while my own self-esteem has proportionately decreased in the knowledge that selfish conceits and vain desires were the foundation of my hopes and aspirations, rather than having an eye single to the glory of God. I do not mean to convey the idea that I am now delivered from my selfishness; by no means, but the afflictions which have brought me low, have merely shown me more and more my selfish, carnal nature, so that the experiences which I have called disappointments are in reality deliverances, by which Jesus is glorified, and the creature abased. The growth in the knowledge of self seems to show me more and more the riches of the treasure of the gift of the grace of God in Christ Jesus, and every one who hath this grace abounding does echo out of a full heart the words of the psalmist in the first verse of the Psalm under consideration, "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for

his mercy endureth forever." It is very encouraging to us when we find that our own experience agrees with the experience of the psalmist, and also that the experience of this sweet singer of Israel is in accordance and in sweet harmony with the life and the sufferings of Jesus, while he was in the world. Clearly applicable to Jesus, as well as every one of the pilgrims of Zion, are the words of inspiration recorded by the psalmist, (verses 4-7,) "They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way: they found no city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses, and he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation." He that walketh by faith must needs travel in the wilderness, for it is the earthly inheritance of the saints, in which they continually seek the rich treasure hidden therein, to wit, the Savior of sinners, who also is in the same wilderness seeking them. In the wilderness are they led about and instructed. There they learn of him who leadeth them, and their souls cry out in praise to God, "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men." (Verse 8.) For they have realized to its fullness how that "he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness," (verse 9.) The goodness of the Lord as manifested in the deliverance from all our trouble, his loving-kindness, long forbearance and tender mercy, causeth us to rejoice in a complete Savior, and a full and free salvation. As little children we walk before the Lord, filled with the loving remembrance that in every step of our pilgrimage journey, his dear hand hath led us, and his wisdom directed us. By the searching and discriminating power of faith we discover our insufficiency, our frailty, and our absolute dependence upon him whose strength was made perfect in weakness. We glorify God not in our own strength, but by faith, walking not after the flesh, going down, down, down, till we get to the ends of the earth, and our cry goes up out of the depths, declaring salvation is of the Lord. For in their downward descent, "They cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses. He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder." (Verses 13, 14.) And again they cried, "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men." (Verse 15.)

Brother Dobler knows better than any words of mine can tell him, what soul-sickness is, and also sorrow for sin. We can all remember when like sheep we went astray, and because of our transgressions and our iniquities we were afflicted; how our soul abhorred all manner of meat, and how we drew near unto the gates of death; (see verses 17, 18,) how our feet had well nigh slipped, and destruction loomed up before us; how Satan in fiendish glee did blind our eyes; how heartsick we became when the Spirit of Christ stirred our souls, and how the very things of the flesh, after which we had wandered, now became a stench in our nostrils, and how with joy we remember that the Lord "sent his word and healed [us] and delivered [us] from [our] destructions," (verse 20.) Surely then, with the psalmist could we "Sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing," (verse 22.) Deeply and clearly are the Lord's children instructed when they are brought low,

when all hope seems to have fled, when all manner of sin doth so easily beset them, when they are swallowed up in the vortex of the apparent abyss which must inevitably carry them to death and destruction. They learn lessons in these blackest of dark seasons which are indelibly recorded on the pages of their memory, by which lessons we enter into the spirit and fellowship of the psalmist when he says, "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths; their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits end." (Verses 23–27.) When they have cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he has delivered them, "Then he maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven." (Verses 29, 30.) The whole christian experience is a wonder, and especially so inasmuch (says the little tried one) as it has embraced me, who am the least of all saints, and altogether unworthy. Is it any wonder then that brother Dobler could say that lo these many years he has found his own experience in this sweet song of David? In every point and turn of the christian travel we find an answer in this precious and wondrous 107th Psalm. Sometimes we become so filled with the knowledge of the goodness of God that we feel we must find some one of like precious faith to whom we can tell what great things the Lord has done for our soul, and to be convinced of the purity and holiness of our desire, we read in this sacred Psalm, "Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders." (Verse 32.) Should one in derision ask, What does the Lord do for you people anyhow, that so belittle yourselves, and moan and groan, and say there is no good thing in you, you that say you are vile sinners, yet hope in God? we could only answer to such a question, What does he not do for us? "He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the watersprings into dry ground; a fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein. He turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into watersprings, and there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city for habitation; and sow the fields, and plant vineyards, which may yield fruits of increase. He blesseth them also, so that they are multiplied greatly, and suffereth not their cattle to decrease." (Verses 33–38.) I would ask again, What does he not do for this happy yet afflicted people? Afflicted that they may be healed; brought low that they may be exalted; that the Lord may be glorified, and that the people may know that the lowly Nazarene, that ignominiously died upon Calvary, is the strength of Israel, the joy of Israel, Israel's King. So furthermore the psalmist says, "Again they are minished, and brought low through oppression, affliction and sorrow. He poureth contempt upon princes, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness, where there is no way. Yet setteth he the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock. The righteous shall see it, and rejoice; and all iniquity shall stop her mouth." (Verses 39–42.) What is all the wisdom of the world, as compared to the wisdom of our

God? Unto his people, the only begotten Son of God is made wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. They walk by faith in wisdom's way, and so fulfill the law of God. And so the psalmist closes this beautiful song by saying, "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord." (Verse 43.)

May our hearts ever be attuned to the praise of him who hath called us out of darkness into the light and liberty of this glorious gospel.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., June 9, 1900.

ROXBORO, N. C., May 24, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—One year ago I was with you all at the spring associations. I remember that you are now in session with the Delaware, and am thinking of how sweet it would be for me to be there and partake of the sweetness of the gospel fountain as it opens to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, showing in the heart of each inhabitant that they are cleansed from sin and from their uncleanness. O, how mindful of us was, and is, our heavenly Father, to thus provide for us his glorious salvation, and the joys thereof, which he gives us here in our time state as an earnest of our eternal inheritance.

It also occurs to me that there is a vast difference in my own feelings now, and one year ago; then I was laboring under one of the heaviest burdens of my life, and was so much in doubt as to my call to the ministry that each day I wanted to return home. Little did I know that this great burden was to make me willing, and even anxious, to return to my old field of labor to which I had said I would never return. I know that when the burden of the word of the Lord is sent on one he can neither escape nor resist it, for it is his commandment to the accomplishing of his holy purpose. This commandment overcomes all our disobedience, and evercomes our will, which is contrary to his holiness, and makes us willing and obedient in the day of his power. Thus am I convinced of his absolute sovereignty over all things, places and circumstances. It seems to be true that the only door of hope is in the valley of Achor, and there all who enter into rest must enter, not only into rest from our first burden of sins, but from every distress in our pilgrimage as well. I feel safe to say this, for it is so in my experience, which is the book of my instruction.

The past three months has been a new page in my experience, a page I had not expected to read. How good it is that we cannot look ahead to see the days of darkness nor the days of joy and peace. Just as the Lord will he gives us the cold north wind and the south wind, to blow upon all the plants of his garden. This garden must abound with fruit; God is the Husbandman, he knows both how to fertilize and cultivate the plants thereof, and how to prune them, that they may bear precious fruit, fit for the use of the Bridegroom, when he comes into his garden seeking delight with his love. If there must be a hardening of the parts, that we may learn to endure as good soldiers in this blessed army, he gives the north wind; if the dead and fungus growth must be broken off, and the different parts loosened up ready to receive spring nourishments, he gives the severe, whirling, twisting, shifting winds of March, to prepare them for foliage and bloom, to his glory, and sweet perfume. If a bringing forth of young fruit is his will, the warm sun of the day, heating

the earth, and the cool, refreshing dews of night, toughening the fruit, are given, and if the time of the harvest has come, the bright rays of the summer's sun, making a cooling shade under the "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord," where the Groom and the bride come together in the garden of the Lord. It is a time of love. O, how sweet to thus dwell in his holy presence; there is no fast there, for the Bridegroom is with the children of the bride-chamber, and they are nourished under the shadow of his wing. How sweet the name of Jesus is to one who is thus dwelling in his holy presence, and how delightful to declare that precious name unto his children. Surely the messenger goes forth in the strength of him who sent him, and the message is sweet to both giver and receiver. It is such a sweet thing to preach Jesus Christ, and him crucified. Surely the yoke is easy, and the burden is light.

For three months I have felt I wanted to preach Jesus, an unspeakable number of times, greater than I ever have in all my ministry. When I have had good liberty in preaching, and have gotten through, I look over and see how faint has been my every expression in my effort to declare this precious name, and sometimes I almost weep because I could not have spoken with more power. It looks as if we should speak with more power as the subject is stronger about which we are speaking, and with sweetness as the subject is sweet, but how great a failure I am, none know better than myself. I had rather preach Jesus than to have the world for a possession with the knowledge that I should possess it eternally. Well do I know the truth of both the expressions of our Lord, "In me you shall have peace." "In the world you shall have tribulation." And how sweet to have the assurance that he has overcome the world. Were it not for this assurance we would sink in our weakness, and the vail of the flesh would eclipse the sun of our sky, but having this blessed promise, our glorious sun drives away the clouds, and as they are receding we see the blessed bow of promise stretching across the face of the cloud, and remember that he has said, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities I will remember no more." How sweet is this blessed word in which we see our sins forgiven, our iniquities pardoned, and ourselves justified in Jesus Christ our Lord. We can feel the power of that holy intercession, "Behold I and the children thou hast given me." This sweet word comes into our hearts, and the sceptre of mercy and peace is held out to us, and we see the smiling countenance of the King, as he sits on the throne of his glorious, eternal judgment, clothed in his royal apparel, and speaking words of acquittal to us, thus: "Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee."

What a glorious victory our Lord won when he died for us! He gave himself for us, that he might present us unto the Father not having spot or wrinkle, nor any such thing, and that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

With these blessed assurances let us go on in the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, in this eternal salvation which is common to all the saints.

The Lord strengthen us to follow him, and walk forever in his love.

Your brother in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

MUIRKIRK, Ontario, Sept. 29, 1899.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have, as you will see by the inclosed, the consent of Elder Vail to have this good letter published. Please do so and oblige

Yours unworthily,

JESSIE GILLIS.

WAVERLY, Pa., July 8, 1899.

DEAR SISTER GILLIS:—Your excellent letter came all right. And what shall I say? I will say what a poor Dane said in relating his experience. When asked how the gospel sounded to him? he said, "It hits me right where I want to be hit," pointing to his heart. I could not tell my thoughts and feelings as well as you have done, and it does me so much good. How is it that you could write the experience of my wife? You never saw her, nor received a letter from her. Ah, I see, there is a God who fashions the hearts of his people alike, he gives them one heart and one way, and that is why they think, feel and talk, alike. Do you not think so? I know you do. When I think of you it does not seem possible you should get so low down, and feel so wretched and miserable as I do. I often think that there is none like me, and I feel all alone, sad and wretched indeed do I feel, and here I remain; I can only sigh and mourn, like the poor dove without a mate, until the good Samaritan journeys my way, and gives me the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; then I can go on my way rejoicing, and this your letter was to me. Yes, I fully believe the good Samaritan moved you to write out of your own experience just what I needed, and I cannot tell you how it built me up, and encouraged such a poor, weak sinner as I. How strange, and yet how true; out of the bitter and sorrowful experience of one poor sinner, another poor, weak and helpless sinner, is made strong, and sometimes happy. How deep and mysterious are God's ways and dealings with his people, he brings one down to build another up, and kills one to manifest his life in another.

Dear sister, we must be crucified, and die daily, to be of any use to the saints. As the outer man perishes daily, the inner man is renewed day by day, and the life of Christ is more fully manifested to the dear saints. While we go mourning all the day long, let us think of the dear Savior, who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. In all of his life in the flesh, we have no account that he rejoiced in spirit but once. Now, if we are the true followers of Jesus, we are living the life of Jesus in the sense that we are still in the flesh, and Jesus is in us manifested as we go mourning long weeks, months and years, without more than an occasional glimpse of him, or a little ray of sweet, spiritual light and sunshine, to cheer the gloomy, lonely, wayfarer. We are like Jesus, who though he was in the world and in the flesh, yet was not of the world, but was afflicted, persecuted and sorrowful. Though he was the Son of God, he said, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. When this is your experience, dear child, think of Jesus. When your trials are greater than you can bear, and in your distress you feel to say, "Let this cup pass from me," think of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, for you are with him. Again I here you cry, "My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me?" Where, poor soul, are you now? At the cross of Christ. You are uttering the very language of Jesus upon the cross. Thus far

in your experience you have followed him. Now he dies, is buried, and rises again from the dead. Being in the actual life of his people, having all their sins in his body when he died, in a sense, they died with him, and when he burst the bars of death, and ascended from the tomb, they all came forth with him and in him. We too, as we have been killed and made alive, rise by faith with Jesus, and in him, to see the King in his beauty, and to behold the land that is far off, but a little glimpse of this beautiful land of rest, and down again we come to the earth, and go on our mournful, lonely, journey. Let us remember it is in this present life that we are followers of Jesus, in bearing about in our bodies the sorrowing, suffering and dying, of our Lord Jesus Christ. We will not, we could not, be eternally happy, while bearing about in the body the sin and corruption of the flesh, but all of this is left behind, when we fall asleep in Jesus, to awaken in his perfect glorious likeness.

I had a dream a few weeks ago, I dreamed I wanted to soar away from this world of sorrow and sin, and was given wings, I began to rise, and when I had risen to a great height, I met some beautiful spirits or angels, I felt like shouting, and said, "I want to go with you." They answered, "You cannot now, you are not clothed." I looked at myself, and saw that I was in a sinful body, and sank down to earth to wait a little longer. I could not go in my present life and condition; nothing corrupt or sinful can ever come into the presence of the Lord God Almighty, all must wait his time, and be clothed in his righteousness.

I will close this poor, imperfect scribble, cast the mantle of charity over all its imperfections, and remember me, a poor sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all. May I send your letter to the SIGNS? I will give you the same privilege with this, if you think it will help any poor soul.

D. M. VAIL.

STACY, Texas, April 29, 1900.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—The same feeling of unworthiness to say brother, still abides with me, which alone keeps me from thus addressing you. Your highly prized letter of February 16th, came to hand but a short time before I was stricken with "la grippe," from which I am just now recovering, and am still quite feeble. I judged from the doctor's manner, he considered me critically ill. I felt for a moment like clapping my hands and praising God that I should soon be released from this body of death, but this was only for a moment, for the question arose, What evidence have I that rest awaits me? I must confess that I could find none, which plunged me into darkness which still remains. Elder Chick, you can have but a faint idea, if any, how your letters, and especially the last one, affect me when you speak of my growing in grace, when I think that every one can see that just the opposite is true. That I grow worse every day seems to be the case. I have been rereading last year's SIGNS, and while I heartily indorse the doctrine advocated, both by editors and correspondents, I fear that I have never realized it experimentally, and only know the letter, but nothing of the power of it. I frequently think mine is an outside case, and that no one else travels the same dark and gloomy road that I do. I mourn because my heart is too hardened to mourn; every thought and action is mixed with sin. Another thing which gives me much trouble is the fear that you and others have been deceived in me, and that I have

been deceived in myself, by thinking that I have experienced a true hope in Christ. I have thought many times that I should have my name stricken from the church book, to relieve them of such an unworthy one, but when I have been permitted to meet with them, it seems so good to be there, that I still cling to them, as Ruth did to Naomi. "Thy God shall be my God." Was there ever such a contradiction? Why do I love the assembly of the saints, if I have never been born again, and why do I loathe and abhor myself as I do, if the love of God has not been shed abroad in my heart? These, and many other conflicting thoughts, annoy me. Still, I desire above all else, to bear what the Lord lays upon me, without a murmur, and to wait patiently until my change comes. Can you find it in your heart to pray for such a sinner? I remember seeing in your writings once, "A great sinner needs a great Savior." Surely I come under that head, and am saved by grace only, if saved at all. I cannot ask a reply, knowing so well that your time is fully occupied with more important matters.

JULIA N. TROTT.

[WE have no doubt the above letter will appeal to the hearts of many who may read it. It expresses the daily travel of one who is aged in this life. How comforting to those young in the way, when those who are aged speak of the same conflicts that they feel. Many remember with affection Elder Samuel Trott, and his faithful ministry, the writer is the widow of his eldest son. Many, especially in Virginia, will be glad to read this letter from her. Every word of it bears the marks of Christ. Let our sister be comforted, the desire for righteousness and communion with God is not natural, and the blessed Master's own words were that the hungry should be filled.—ED.]

LEXINGTON, Ky., May, 1900.

BROTHER CHARLEY STEWART:—I write again, I am disposed to be social, and my feverish thoughts spur me to a duty enjoined of the Lord Jesus on those that feared the Lord. I have of late had additional evidence of my acceptance in the Beloved, causing me to mark well his sayings and doings, as well as the apostles'. I read the Bible to be instructed and comforted. The question in my mind was, Are you one of his people; what evidence have you? This was when I was on my bed after a night's sleep. If ye believe not my words, believe the works that I do in my Father's name. Jesus had wrought righteousness in many, and promised to carry it on through the Holy Ghost, which he would send them after his departure from the world, which would reprove of sin. Now the saints are reproved by a holy Spirit continually, to say nothing of our first awakening or regeneration, and these are works in us, that is, those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, or that have received the spirit of adoption, and are awaiting the redemption of the body, therefore they do not fear death, as formerly, for they are looking for a city which hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God. Having received a spirit in this body of flesh, which teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lust, and gives us a strong desire to live righteously and godly. This is diverse to the spirit which actuated me up to my nineteenth year, when death and hell were a terror to me when wickedness was not running riot. Both of these have ceased to trouble me, and I long for a heart from sin set free, and for the quickening Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, to revive us, and cause us to sit with him in an heavenly place, awakening the heavenly anthem,

"He has done great things for us, whereof we are glad." It matters little whether it be a quickening spirit, or a quickened spirit, if Christ be in us the hope of glory, as we live on hope, a strong desire at times, and weak at times, because we are continually looking for additional evidences. Sin is so intrusive of benefits to be derived from other sources, David himself said, his feet had well nigh slipped, when he considered the ways of the wicked, how they prospered, but we recollect we are clothed with a body of flesh, and under the bonds of sin and death. But the apostle assures us the resurrection is a certainty, if the Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead dwell in you, or your mortal bodies, being sealed by the holy Spirit of promise, to the day of redemption, and having the fruit of the Spirit developed in you, which is love, joy, peace, gentleness, meekness, temperance, &c. For God has appointed a channel of grace through preaching, to reconcile you to his doings and sayings, until that eventful day comes when he will return in clouds of great glory, to take his ransomed home, whom he foreknew, being sealed to that day by his Spirit that is in you.

Your brother,

J. W. ROYSTER.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., April 7, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Sister Poast is the esteemed daughter of Elder J. G. Ford, of Rushmore, Ohio, and in his house the church received her, last fall, and it was my sacred privilege to baptize her, and she went on her way rejoicing in her Lord and Savior. She is an ornament to the church. Her father is still active in the ministry, though past four score years. She has sent me this letter at my request, briefly giving the reason of her hope, which is clear and comforting. Christ is her hope, and this hope is the anchor of her soul. He is also our hope.

As ever your unworthy brother, in the faith and hope of Christ,

D. BARTLEY.

OTTAWA, Ohio, March 6, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BARTLEY:—This is the second time that I have began writing to you. I cannot write satisfactorily to myself, and I fear that I can say nothing that will be a comfort to you, and to the praise and glory of God, for in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing Then I must depend on the Lord to direct me. I find, dear brother, that I can do nothing of myself, not even think one good thought, less yet do a good act; all, all must come from him who careth for me, even me. And, looking back over my past life, I realize that the Lord has been with and blessed me every day and every hour; has never left nor forsaken me, while I have been so sinful and unworthy. Then how can I praise him as I ought?

There was a time when I was without hope, and knew not God. I was made to see my lost condition, and that without a hope in Christ I would be forever lost. In God's own good time he made me to see that Christ died for me; he gave me a heart to believe, and put a new song in my mouth. Then I could sing praises to his name, sing as I never sang before. My song was, "I must, I can, I do believe." Until the Lord's time came I could not believe on him, although I had tried, and prayed, and plead in my weak way, yet I could not believe; but in his own time and way I was made to believe. Dear brother, I have been made to walk in paths that I knew not, and I hope the

Lord is leading me in the new and living way.

"His hand divine shall lead us on
Through all the blissful road,
Till to the sacred mount we rise,
And see our gracious God."

May you live long to preach the glad news to poor sinners. It seems to me they must understand, and be comforted, you make it so plain. May the Lord bless you with his choicest blessings.

Father has been quite poorly most of the winter. I hope and trust that he will be spared long to us, and I know the Lord doeth all things well.

Excuse this poor letter, it is like the writer. Let us hear from you often through the SIGNS.

I hope I am your sister in Christ,

MRS. J. W. POAST.

BINGHAMTON, N. Y., March 21, 1900.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—Hoping the mantle of charity may be cast over the imperfections of this letter, I wish to say to my dearly beloved kindred in Christ, that through many years of doubting and deep affliction, I have been brought to feel and know that the works of the Lord are great and marvelous, that vain is the help of man, and that every man that trusteth in man, or maketh flesh his arm, is cursed. O, give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, and he has given me strength to trust in his holy name. Our dear pastor, Elder Balas Bundy, once said to me, years ago, that he was sorry to always see me filling a Martha's place, and would gladly see me filling a Mary's place. This morning, as I feel the sweet abiding of faith, and feel to trust my Savior for all things, I am made to glory in tribulation. Ought I not to suffer with him, if I expect to reign with him in glory? "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and his wonderful works to the children of men." I am a dull scholar in the school of Christ, and so slow to do the things that I ought, yet still I feel that the Lord is leading me, and that he maketh me to lie down in green pastures, and leadeth me beside the still waters, and that his banner over me is love. I am well assured that nothing less than the power of an almighty God could conquer this proud, rebellious heart of mine, for my heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. If I am a child of God at all, it is only by the grace of God that I am what I am.

I wish to be remembered at a throne of grace by those whose hearts are Zionward, that this body may be kept a fit temple for the Holy Ghost to dwell in. Pray for the peace of Zion, and for the prosperity of Jerusalem. In the highest sense her warfare is accomplished, and she has received double at the Lord's hand, for all her sins. As I have not language to express the beauty that I see in the all-wise judgments of our God, I will just say that I am glad that the Lord overrules all things.

With love to the household of faith, I am your sister in hope,

MELISSA CATOR.

CENTERBURG, Ohio, March 28, 1900.

BROTHER BEEBE:—I will inclose two dollars for the SIGNS, hoping to hear from you soon. I do not hear any preaching, as they exclude me for believing in the absolute predestination of all things. I see by your paper you believe it strong, and I love to read your paper, it is a great comfort to me.

I remain as ever your sister in Christ,

JULIA BOID.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Elders and messengers composing the Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Southampton, Pa., to the churches whose messengers we are: sends greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We do not write to you as a council, or as a religious body having any authority over the churches we represent, but as brethren from neighboring churches of the same faith and order, gathered together to greet each other in gospel love and fellowship, to hear of each other's welfare as sister churches, and to unite in the public worship of God, and in attending upon the administration of the word. We feel that there is a good and a benefit to the churches in thus coming together from time to time. We do not name ourselves delegates, as though we were invested with any power or authority to legislate for, or give judgment to the churches. We do not come as a certain equal number sent from each church, but all the members who may be present from any church are equally messengers.

We confer freely with each other regarding any point of order or of doctrine, and concerning any erroneous doctrine that may be showing itself in any quarter of Zion. Our business and our delight at this associational meeting, and at any other meeting, is to speak of the doctrine of God our Savior, of his gracious dealings with his children, and of the order of the church.

It is our privilege and duty as individual churches, or as representatives of several sister churches assembled together, to consider the claims of any body of people to be recognized as a church of God, and to judge as to the validity of those claims. If we do not believe such a church to be sound in doctrine or in order, we have a right to express our lack of fellowship for it. This expression from us as an association has no authority except such as is shown in the scriptural reasons we are able to give. If called for, such an expression would have to be given by us with reference to many churches around us of various denominations. This, or any other expression, is not binding upon any church merely because given by the association. Whatever binding and authoritative power it has is because of its intrinsic, gospel truthfulness.

"Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." All that constitutes the church, and all that pertains to it, is the work of God. His wisdom and power, and every one of his glorious perfections, are seen in it. He shines forth in the doctrine of the church, which declares the salvation of poor sinners by the grace and power of God through the perfect work of our Lord Jesus Christ. He shines forth in the ordinances of the gospel, which show forth in blessed figures the death and resurrection of Jesus, through whom life and immortality were brought to light in the gospel. He shines forth to the spiritual sight, and to the believing, tender hearts of the Lord's people, in every meeting together of the dear saints, the blessed "twos and threes," the "little flock," to greet each other in love, and to join in prayer and in songs of praise to his dear and blessed name. God shines forth sweetly in all these gospel things. Jesus says, "In the midst of the church will I sing praises unto thee." How gloriously he shines forth to us when we are spiritually minded, for at such times we are hungering and seeking for him.

"We love her gates, we love the road,
The church adorned with grace,
Stands like a palace built for God,
To show his milder face."

We do not always feel the light and warmth of spiritual things, but still our only true comfort is in following after them. We ought to attend to the duties and privileges of the church whether we are in the dark or in the light. That is our duty and our true work. The Lord says, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord and obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." This is a blessed promise to those who obey the voice of Jesus. But to those who are in disobedience it is a fearful time when they walk in darkness and have no light.

It is needful that we observe the laws of Christ under which we live. It is the law of the Spirit of life. If the law of any life is broken, there will be the sad consequences felt. Under Moses' law every transgression received a just recompense of reward, and "he that despised that law died without mercy under two or three witnesses." What then will be the result if one despises Jesus' law—which only his people who are under it can do—and treads under foot the Son of God, and does despite to the Spirit of grace. The apostle gives this fearful warning to the Hebrews, and speaks of "forsaking the assembling of yourselves together" as one of those terrible transgressions. (Heb. x. 24–29.) Why! the saints know that when they are in their right mind their truest comfort is in the assembly of the saints, when it is the proper time for that assembly. If we do not love to meet them now how can it be that we shall rejoice in being forever with Jesus in the great and glorious "assembly and church of the First-born"?

"Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." May we, brethren, be careful and watch well in the sowing time. Once sown the seed cannot be gathered up again, and the dreaded crop avoided. If we sow we shall inevitably reap. We do not make a thing ours by reaping it, we must reap it because it is ours. It seems easy, at times, to sow to the flesh, all the world is smiling upon us, the sun is bright and the sky cloudless, pleasant rewards appear in sight, but as sure as we are living souls, there will be sad and doleful hours of reaping, and the smiling, approving world will not be at hand then, but dark and cold and rainy will be the night of sorrow when we are called out of our pleasant beds to reap the shame and sorrow before God. Blessed be his name the sad reaping work will finally come to an end, and we shall be found humbled in the dust, low at his dear feet, saved at last, "yet so as by fire."

But how sad often appears the scene, how hopeless the work, when we are sowing to the Spirit. The world scoffs; our names are cast out as evil; we are called foolish and vile; and in our own souls arise oppressing doubts and fears. But the Spirit sweetly prevails. "He that is in us is greater than he that is in the world." We feel a blessed power of faith in our hearts, and we know in whom we have believed, and are enabled to say in the name of Jesus, "Get thee behind me Satan." Then the clouds roll back, the Sun appears, the world is under our feet, and we are, in God's own time, reaping life everlasting. That life was ours all

the time, and now we reap and sweetly taste its fruits. Let the world scoff and frown and even persecute and kill; this life everlasting is beyond its harmful reach. This we have, and we want no more.

"If Christ be mine, let friends forsake,
Let wealth and honors flee;
Sure he who giveth me himself,
Gives more than these to me."

SILAS H. DURAND, Mod.

ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Warwick Church, Orange Co., N. Y., June 6th, 7th and 8th, 1900, to the churches of which this meeting is composed, sends salutation with love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN AND FELLOW-SOLDIERS OF THE CROSS:—Through the abounding mercy of our God, our unprofitable lives are spared, and we are blessed with the great privilege of meeting once more in an associate capacity, to mingle our voices in praise to him who loved us, and gave himself for us, and as is our custom, established by our fathers in Israel, we will endeavor to address you in an epistle of love and fellowship. We feel at present no subject can be of more interest than the inspired word of God, and its great importance. We will call your attention to 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." The apostle, at the time these words were written, was ready to be offered, and the time of his departure was at hand, and knowing the time would come when they would not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts would heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, instructs Timothy, and charges him before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, to preach the word, to be instant in season, out of season; to reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. And the Scriptures were to be his guide; they were given by inspiration of God, holy men speaking as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, hence they are the work of God, and are infallible; finite man can add nothing to, nor can anything be taken from them; they are the standard of truth, the scales in which everything concerning the salvation of the sinner, must be weighed; all points of doctrine, and christian experience, are therein set forth. But let us remember we are told no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation, it was written by holy men moved by the Holy Ghost, hence it is only understood by the Spirit. It is the Spirit that searches the deep things of God. First, the Scripture is profitable for doctrine, and it becomes us to adhere closely to its teachings, both in word and practice, in presenting the doctrine of Christ and his apostles and prophets. We should take heed not to advance a single word or idea unless we can bring forth a "thus saith the Lord" for it. In hearing we should never have a man's person in admiration, but give all attention to the word spoken, and should anything be set forth that we cannot in our own soul's experience say amen to, let us take it to the scales and weigh it, if found wanting, let us follow the example of Aquila and Priscilla, and go and tell the speaker we fail to find a thus saith the Lord for such expression or expressions, as the case may be, and it becomes any servant of the meek and lowly Jesus to receive such reproof and correction in the spirit of humility, and thereby be profited, all men are fallible,

and in haste or excitement are liable to mistakes. Moses spoke unadvisedly with his lips, and David says, "In my haste I said all men are liars." Faithfulness to God, and each other, is the work of the Spirit, man has sought out many inventions, but not one will stand the test, hence Jesus says, When they say lo here, or lo there, go not after them. This is not an admonition, but a command, and while we are surrounded by delusion and error, we are not suffered to be carried away by it, but are kept by the power of God, and except the admonitions are applied to us by the Spirit, we cannot heed them. So with preaching, unless given the hearing ear, there is no comfort for us in it, although we may know it is truth. We have no strength of our own to boast of, Jesus said, "The Son of himself can do nothing, but the Father in me, he doeth the works." Hence, we see the flesh of itself is, and always has been weak. Our Savior presented the figure of the vine, and branches, and as all life and fruit of the branch is of the vine, literally, so all spiritual life, and fruits of righteousness, are of him who said, "Without me ye can do nothing."

The Scriptures are of such profit that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works; that is he, the man of God, by reading the Scriptures may be "made wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus," beginning with the choice of God of his people in his Son before the world began, to the cross, to the tomb, the resurrection, and the work of the Holy Ghost, which followed, teaching the children all things; faithfulness and obedience, verily, are included. Jude, because certain men had crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ, exhorted the sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ and called, to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

Dearly beloved brethren, our desire and prayer for Zion is, that God will give us grace to contend for this faith. May we in all things say, Salvation is of the Lord, and we fully realize where we will be taught this, like Jonah, in the belly of hell, at the bottom of the mountains, with sea-weeds wrapped about our heads, separated from self, and all fleshly powers, at the end of the earth, with no standing, no refuge, there we look unto the Lord and are saved. How can we do the works of God with the flesh when the flesh is continually warring against the Spirit? the carnal mind being enmity against God, not subject to his law, neither indeed can be, how can we with such a mind have one good thought? Hence, if we cannot have one good thought except it be of God, how shall we act godly out of a corrupt mind?

May we who are servants be enabled by the Spirit of God, to take heed unto ourselves, and to the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made us overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. May his flesh be presented as meat indeed, and his blood as drink indeed, Jesus Christ and him crucified. May the oil and the wine not be hurt. Let all theories of man be put away, and may we be kept in his love and fear, and truly walk according to the gospel of Christ, living soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, ever watching in

our journey for the old landmarks by the way, desiring nothing new, but be perfectly satisfied with the goodness of his house, heeding no notion, idea or theory, of man, but search the Scriptures which are able to make us wise unto salvation, and thoroughly furnish us unto all good works, which teach us we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Hence, God is our all in all, in him we live, move and have our being, and each godly act of the redeemed here in time, was before ordained of God. "Therefore brethren, stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." As we have begun in the Spirit, let us not look to the flesh for perfection, which is only sin and pollution, but rather look unto him who hath begun a good work in us and will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

WM. L. BEEBE, Mod.

JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the Black Rock Church, Baltimore Co., Md., sendeth love and fellowship to the churches and associations with whom she corresponds.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—We have again been blessed in meeting your messengers, and hearing them tell what they have seen, heard and felt, of the things of Jesus, and we feel and believe that the Lord put it in your hearts to come and tell us you stand by the old landmarks, that salvation is entirely of the Lord, and is everlasting and complete, and love is the foundation of that salvation, and without this great love, wherewith God loved his people, none can be saved either in time or eternity.

Love has abounded throughout our meeting, and may it continue to abound in the churches, that life, light and joy may also abound.

We were glad to receive your messengers and messages, and hope you will continue to come in the spirit of love and fellowship, that God may be honored and glorified in all things. We miss many familiar and loved faces, but God's will be done.

Our next meeting is appointed to meet with our sister church at Tuscarora, Pa., at the usual time next year.

WM. GRAFTON, Mod.

MILTON DANCE, Clerk.

The Delaware Association, session of 1900, Rock Springs Church, Lancaster Co., Pa., to the several associations with whom we correspond, Greeting.

BELOVED:—We address you this, our letter of correspondence, to inform you that in the good providence of God we have been favored with another opportunity of assembling ourselves together, and have enjoyed a feast of fat things, truly, which our heavenly Father spread before us of his rich bounty. The preaching has been good, from beginning to ending, declaring to us that there is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, being made free from the law of sin and death, by the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, and not by the performance of conditions by ourselves, or according to our works, a

blessed revelation of his will, as purposed and bestowed upon us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

The attendance has not been as large as in former sessions, many of our own members being prevented from meeting with us on account of the distance from their homes, and sickness, or other infirmity. We have had a goodly attendance of ministers, who have all come to us in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, and not with enticing words of man's wisdom.

You will see by reference to our Minutes, that there are several of the associations with whom we correspond, from whom we have not received communications, much to our regret, as our wish is to maintain the correspondence, not as a mere form, but in reality, and whenever convenient, would be greatly pleased to welcome messengers from you among us, and always are glad to receive your Minutes. We hope that your withholding your Minutes from us is not an indication of a desire on your part to withdraw your correspondence. We would earnestly call the attention of the brethren of those associations to the omission, and direct the publisher of our Minutes to forward a bundle to each of the associations named therein.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the church at Cow Marsh, Kent Co., Delaware, to begin on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, 1901, when and where we hope to greet and welcome your messengers, and receive communications from each of you.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Southampton Church, to the Associations, Corresponding Meetings and Churches with which we correspond, sends greeting in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—The infinite wisdom and unfailing love of God has brought us together in this appointed meeting, to unite in praise and thanksgiving for the riches of his grace, and abundant blessings bestowed on us all, enabling your messengers to come to us laden with the precious fruits of the Spirit, and bringing to us your Minutes, containing expressions of love and fellowship, and evidences that you continue steadfast in the truth, and are proclaiming the gospel of the Son of God, for the comfort and edification of his children while they sojourn in this vale of tears.

Our meetings are not called to legislate for the churches, or enact laws for their government. The highest tribunal before which any of the Lord's people can be brought, is the New Testament of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and the precepts and examples of the apostles, and their admonitions and instructions to the churches, which they had established, and ministered unto while here, and if we follow them it will tend to our peace, and mutual love and fellowship in the gospel, which we trust has been demonstrated in this meeting. Ministers from several States have preached the unsearchable riches of Christ, giving God the glory of that salvation that by grace alone makes us heirs to eternal glory. Our pure minds have been stirred up, and we have set together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

We desire a continuance of your correspondence, and hope to receive your messengers and Minutes, with tokens of love and fellowship, at our next meeting, which is appointed to be held with the First Hopewell Church, Hopewell, Mercer

County, New Jersey, commencing on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1901.

SILAS H. DURAND, Mod.
ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Warwick, N. Y., June 6th, 7th and 8th, 1900, to the associations with whom we correspond, greeting.

WE hope that we feel truly thankful to God once more that it has been our privilege to meet again upon this occasion with God's dear ministers and messengers, that have visited us from far, and that have brought sweet messages of peace and joy to our souls. Their only theme has been salvation by grace, and grace alone, and God exalted high above all principality and power. It has been a season of refreshing, and we have been made to lie down in green pastures, and his banner over us has been love.

We desire a continuance of correspondence, both by messengers and Minutes, and if it is the Lord's will to meet with you at our next association, which will be held with the church at New Vernon, N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1901.

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."

WM. L. BEEBE, Mod.
JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

POETRY.

COMFORT.

COME unto me, ye heavy laden,
Bowed with sin and sore oppressed,
My burden's light, my yoke is easy,
Come unto me, I'll give you rest.

My Father's house has many mansions,
For the weak and weary child,
For mourning ones the oil of gladness,
And grace for those with sin defiled.

Let not your heart be sorely troubled,
Ye believe in God, believe in me;
A heavenly place I will prepare you,
There my glory ye shall see.

If 'twere not so I would have told you,
But I shall surely come again,
For where I am ye shall be also,
And with me ye shall ever reign.

Our Savior speaks these words to cheer us
Through life's dark and cloudy day;
O, may we honor, love and trust him,
Our Strength, our Life, our Light, our Way.

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

MACOMB, Ill.

THE EXCELLENT NAME.

O LORD, how excellent is thy name,
From all eternity the same.
It far exceeds all earthly things,
The Lord of lords, and King of kings.

And all the schemes which men devise,
The great, the noble, or the wise,
The world, and all that is therein,
Are shadows when compared with him.

To think that Christ should stoop so low,
And his dear, sovereign head should bow,
To bring poor rebels, such as we,
That we might his salvation see.

He makes our hearts to sing with joy,
All earthly things seem but a toy;
We sing the song of grace below,
Which none but God's redeemed can know.

The thief that hung upon the cross,
Chosen in Christ, could not be lost,
But with his last expiring breath,
Redeeming grace he sung in death.

Could we but have the smallest place
Within the covenant of God's grace,
This were worth more than treasures told
In rubies, or in crowns of gold.

O wondrous grace that could bestow
Such love on mortals here below.
May we all sing in sweet accord,
How excellent is thy name, O Lord.

MRS. WILLIAM POLARD.

IONA, Ontario.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1900.

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EDITORS:

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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PSALM LXXIII. 25.

"WHOM have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."

The prominent theme of this Psalm is the mystery of God's dealings with the children of men, and David speaks of it as a mystery which he could not fathom, and from which at last he must turn to the great Ruler of all himself, and say that there is none in heaven or upon earth who could fill his desire but him. It is in our mind at this time to speak of some of the things which the Psalm contains. In Jeremiah xii., we find the same perplexities expressed. He says, "Why do the wicked prosper?" &c. The language of this Psalm is common among all who are thoughtful at all. It is a common question in all hearts that fear and love God, "Why do the wicked prosper?" Perhaps there is not a child of God, who may read these words, who has not sometimes been driven to talk with the Lord of his judgments, and to ask the same question as was in the heart of Jeremiah. This was the question in the heart of David as he penned this Psalm, and he goes on to state the conflicts of mind which he felt, as he witnessed, what to him and what to us, seems so strange, viz: that the wicked prosper, while the righteous are so oppressed.

Let us consider the conflict of soul through which he had passed (as spoken in the Psalm) until at last he was brought to the state of mind recorded in the words at the head of this editorial. He said, "Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart." Thus at the very beginning of his confession of human weakness and human questioning, he states what to him had become a sure and precious truth. It is as though he would say, "I must state my faith in God and his goodness to his people, at the beginning. What I am about to say is but a confession of my great ignorance and rebellion. From all that I shall say, no one must conclude that I have any question of the goodness and faithfulness of my God. I would say that, notwithstanding all appearances to the contrary, God is good." If we do not see it so, it is not because of failure in him, but because of our finite knowledge. God is good to Israel, to those of a clean heart, notwithstanding all appearances to the contrary. He does make all things work for their good, even though we cannot see how. Our doubting does not prove anything but our great weakness of faith, and the evil heart of unbelief that dwells within us. As he said in another Psalm, This was his infirmity. It has seemed wonderful to us at times, that such should be the beginning of this wonderful Psalm of confession. As he enters upon this account of his experience, he must state the truth into which his soul had come to rest with unshaken faith. Then follows the narration of all the conflict through which he had passed, before coming out into this large place of absolute trust in God, and all this recorded conflict was needful for him, and is needful for us. If the

anchor is not tried, we cannot know that it is secure, or that its holding ground is good. There can be no victory of faith without conflict. Soul conflict proves the truth and faithfulness of God. Through the conflict we come at last up out of the great tribulation, and find our robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. The outward circumstances of the people of God, as contrasted with ungodly men in the world, provokes questioning which no human reasoning can satisfy or drive away. Can it be true that God does love his people? Can it be true that he cares for them at all? Surely love would seek out better things for them. Surely God would not suffer his enemies to receive good things, while his people receive nothing but oppression and affliction. Thus the soul comes at last, through its questioning, to wonder if indeed there be a God at all, or at least, the thought is suggested, "It is vain to be righteous, and no good comes out of it in any event." This is the reasoning of the soul while looking at the things that are seen. It is not to be wondered at; still it is the expression of that unbelief which dwells in all our hearts, and which is ready to make itself known at any opportunity that presents itself. How often we are compelled to learn our own weakness, and proneness to sin against God; how often we learn that we cannot be what we would, nor believe as we would, nor do as we would.

He says, God is good, "but as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped." That is, "I had well nigh come to losing my faith in his goodness and care toward his people that love him. I was taken up in beholding the prosperity of the wicked, and the desolation of the righteous, and my faith was faltering." He was judging after the sight of his eyes, and not according to the judgment of faith. He was looking at what the natural sense can behold, and not at the unseen things. He, therefore, was envious at the foolish, when he saw the prosperity of the wicked. Why should the righteous suffer? Why should they not be prosperous? Mark, this was all worldly prosperity. How strongly these things strike the sense. How much, to our shame, do we prize the things that perish. Crucifixion alone can separate us from these things, and fix our love, our hope and our delight upon things which cannot perish, things which are above. He saw the wicked that they had no bands in their death, but their strength was firm, that they were not in trouble as other men, nor plagued as other men, that pride compassed them about, that violence covered them, that their eyes stood out with fatness, and they had more than heart could wish. Yet they were corrupt, and spoke forth oppression wickedly, they spoke loftily, they set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walked through the earth. This was their state of character, and yet prosperity was theirs. God seemed to bless them more than the righteous. This was so to human vision, it is so yet, it has been so in all ages; his people are chosen in the furnace of affliction, but to the ungodly is given all that his heart can wish. This seems so to the tried servant of God, and his heart asks to know, why? Why do the wicked prosper? Why does not God blast them with the breath of his mouth?

Then his people return hither, and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them. They not only are not blessed with the honor, wealth and applause of the world, but they suffer positive distress, and loss, and persecution. The

waters of a full cup are wrung out to them, bitter waters they are, and of full measure; the cup of the wicked runs over with blessing, and pride, and pleasure, and joy, while their cup runs over with trial, and shame, and sorrow. To the wicked is given all earthly crowns, while to them is given but the cross. It is not true that the better a man lives, the more of joy and gladness he shall have. It is true far oftener that the better he lives, the more sorrow shall be his portion. Is it of any use then to live right? And the righteous say so. Their cry is, Doth God know? and is there knowledge with the Most High? Behold these who prosper in the world are the ungodly, they increase in riches. But even here, in all the questioning of the tried and doubting soul, he does not say that the ungodly increase in any spiritual thing. It means all the riches of gold, honor, fame, friendship, which the world bestows. Why are the righteous deprived of these things? is the question, all the spiritual blessings are for the time lost sight of. How common is this experience. The soul experimentally is not now in the sanctuary, but grovels below, it has forgotten for the time that there are higher blessings, it is now swallowed up in that which is of the world, it sees things from a purely worldly standpoint, therefore it reasons, and its reasoning is the reasoning of unbelief, and of the flesh. The ungodly prosper and increase in riches, this sums the matter all up, this is all that the flesh can see. So Job's friends knew nothing of any blessings to the righteous but temporal and earthly ones, therefore they concluded that Job must have done that which was evil in the sight of God, and was cursed. Job himself did not understand the mystery of God's dealings with him, but his faith refused to acknowledge the righteousness of the fleshly reasonings of his friends.

And now David says, voicing the thoughts of the righteous man in the temptation which is oppressing him, "Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning." Judging after the flesh, the righteous could think nothing else but that it is utterly vain to live uprightly, to deny one's ownself, and to serve God. It is the language of that fleshly religion, which believers have still in their nature, which labors for a reward, and which cannot see any use in service that is not paid for. And the rewards of such a religion are such as appeal to the sight of the eyes. Sects, which number their millions in membership, and whose riches are almost untold, which worship in gilded temples, and with ornate rituals, after whom the multitudes rush and wonder, must be the favored of God, is the language of all fleshly religion. Surely the poor, despised company who walk unknown and unnoticed in the world, or if known and noticed, are the objects of the scorn and hatred of the prosperous religious orders of the day, cannot be the favorites of God. How often this bitter doubt enters into fervent souls like David's, and produces torturing doubts, and sad reasonings. It is vain that I have striven to uphold truth, to live godly in the world. And when they say to this oppressed one, Where is thy God? he knows not how to answer. His soul is bowed down within him, as they say to him, Where is thy God?

To understand this was too painful for him, he could not comprehend it, the mystery of God's ways was too deep for him, and his finite reason never did comprehend it, but at last he came into the

sanctuary of God, there where faith reigns, and gains its victories, he saw their end; he saw that their prosperity must perish with the world where it lay; they were worldly, and their prosperity was but worldly; the Lord had set them in slippery places; he would cast them down to destruction, yea, they were already cast down to destruction; their prosperity was their destruction, it was a curse, and not a blessing; they were not possessed with the true riches, but with false; they stood not upon the Rock of Ages, but upon slippery places; there was no sure abiding for their feet; the Lord had placed them here; they were already cast down. Though his carnal mind thought them prosperous, in reality they were poor; though they seemed exalted to crowns of glory, they had been really cast down to earth, and groveled in the earth, the curse abided upon them, as it did on all the earth; already they were doomed to destruction, and to the vision of faith already destroyed; they are brought to desolation in a moment, and consumed with terrors, and though glorious in the eyes of men of the world, and in their own eyes, and in the carnal reasonings of even the people of God, yet despised of God, and despised of that wisdom which is godly, and which is gained in the sanctuary. How good it is when God brings his people close to himself. How differently all things appear, the contrast between him who serves God, and him who serves him not, stands out clear then. The wicked are not envied then by the soul, better things are in view, the world with all its allurements fades away, and the wicked are seen as the enemies of God, and their prosperity is but a false one. Then, one moment with God in the sanctuary is more than all the happiness of the wicked. The soul can say, I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of God, than dwell in the tents of wickedness. It is then felt to be better to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

This is the substance of this wonderful conflict as described in the Psalm. Now, as said at the beginning, David has come to see the vanity of all his fleshly reasonings, he is brought back to the one who is to him all things that he needs. The God whom he serves is more to him than friends, riches, health, or all things else. Let the wicked be prosperous, why should I care, or be troubled? God is mine, and if he is mine, then all things are mine, and I am rich indeed, and have friends indeed. He is the health of my countenance, and my God. He is my all, and in all. And so, at last, he says, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." He is experimentally redeemed unto God. He has experienced what Philip meant when he said, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us."

Two or three things are in the subject, to which we desire briefly to call attention.

First. It is no evidence that one is not a child of God, if in death he is not happy. The wicked may be bold as a lion, not knowing his own wickedness, and supposing that he has done all that could be pleasing to God, and now he shall go to his well earned reward, he has no bands of fear, of doubt, or of unworthiness to disturb him. On the other hand, many of the humble-hearted children of God have come to the brink of the shore of death, as did "Mr. Fearing," in Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. The true evidence that one is prepared for the great change, which we call death, is not the degree of

happiness or of doubt which they may feel at the time of dying, but simple faith in the righteousness of Christ to save and justify an unrighteous sinner. The soul that confesses indeed and in truth, "I am a sinner, saved alone by grace, if saved at all," is the one who is prepared; prepared by grace to go into the presence of the Lord, and to go out no more forever.

Second. To the soul which feels as did David, there is no added joy in the thought of meeting friends who have gone before. The blessed Lord is their all on earth, and in heaven. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." While God is not in all the thoughts of the wicked, he is in all the thoughts and desires of the righteous. Then shall I awake in thy likeness, sums up all that such a soul believes, or hopes for. I shall be like him, for I shall see him as he is, is the exultant cry of the redeemed soul. All the appeals of religionists to people, to seek religion because they desire to meet their friends in heaven, is based upon false premises, and reduces religion to a level with some worldly society; it dethrones Christ, and puts some earthly friends upon the throne of the heart. In that world they are neither married nor given in marriage, sums the matter all up. Jesus only is the true hope and joy. Jesus here and Jesus there, is all the reward. Without him is hell; with him is heaven. What a blessed testimony is this of David, left by inspiration for us. How blessed the experience which led him up to it. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

PROVERBS XXVI. 4, 5.

(Reply to Enquirer from the Regions of Doubt.)

In this text we have two rules given for the treatment of fools, which although at first glance may seem rather paradoxical, yet on a close examination will be found perfectly harmonious, and each of equal importance. God's people, though in themselves fools, being altogether destitute of that wisdom which cometh down from heaven, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, without partiality and without hypocrisy, until they are born of God and taught by his Spirit, and thereby made wise unto salvation through faith that is in Jesus Christ, are by vital union with Jesus Christ elevated above the character of fools, as our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the widsom of God, is of God made unto them wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption; and then they find by revelation of God made to them, "unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ: in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."—Col. ii. 2, 3. They have received the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom, and there is treasured up for them in Christ, an inexhaustible fullness, so that if any of them lack wisdom at any time, or under any circumstances, they know where it is hidden, and it is their privilege to ask of God who giveth lberailly unto all men, and upbraideth not. Though they are all taught of God, and all know him, from the least of them to the greatest, and all have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things, and need not that any man should teach them, but as the same anoint-

ing teacheth them of all things, (See 1 John ii. 20, 29) still they have to deal with those who, however wise and prudent they may be in the wisdom and prudence of this world, are fools, or perfect idiots in regard to the things of the kingdom of God, which kingdom no man can see except he be born again; and the things of the kingdom being spiritual, the natural man receiveth them not, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Having briefly noticed the parties implied in our text, the children of wisdom, to whom the Proverbs are addressed, and the fool, or fools, with whom they have to associate while here in the flesh, we will attempt to explain the use of the two rules laid down for the instruction of the wise.

Rule 1. "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him."

Should the wise man give a foolish answer to the foolish question of the fool, he would thereby degrade himself, and the answer and the question both being foolish, would place the parties on the same footing; both would be alike degraded, so far as the question and the answer are concerned. In that sense therefore the wise man is not to answer the fool according to his folly, lest he should be like him. But he is nevertheless, according to

Rule 2. "Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit." When a wise man answers a fool, he must bear in mind that he is dealing with a fool, and not with an equal in intelligence, and his answer must be given accordingly. According to an approved adage in use "A word to the wise is sufficient." But in the Proverbs of inspired wisdom we are told that if we should bray a fool in the mortar with a pestle, still his folly would not depart from him. If a fool who has said in his heart, "There is no God," should ask of one who knows the Lord, to demonstrate the existence of Jehovah, it would not be wise in the christian to attempt to demonstrate his position, by what he has experienced of the indwelling of the Spirit of God in his own heart, for he must recollect that the fool has no knowledge of spiritual things, and such an answer would be unintelligible to the fool, and would only inflate his vain conceit that he had embarrassed his antagonist with a question that was unanswerable. But in answering him, use such arguments if possible as he can understand, point him to the evidences of the handiwork of God in the natural world, to the shining sun, the paler moon, the twinkling stars, the teeming earth and rolling seas; things which natural men can contemplate as well as christians.

In short, we should not answer a fool according to his folly, by condescending to be as foolish as he is, or by giving him a foolish answer, for then we should be like him, but we should observe the admonition of our Lord, to be as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves. If a fool, to provoke us, should ask us an insulting question, and we to retaliate give him an insulting answer, then what advantage would we have, or could we claim over him? In that case we would be truly like him. But should we in meekness endeavor to instruct such as oppose themselves, hoping that peradventure the Lord may give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth, this would have a tendency to humble his pride and prevent his being wise in his own conceit. We have many examples in the New Testament. The old Scribes and Pharisees often tried to entangle our Lord and Master with their foolish questions, but he answered them wisely, and in that sense not according to their folly, and yet he answered them in the other sense according to their folly,

by stopping their mouths by his well timed and pertinent replies. Much more might be said on this subject, but as we have quoted the adage, "A word to the wise is sufficient," and although Enquirer hails us from the unpleasant regions of doubt, we hope, from the nature of his enquiries, that he is searching for light, and we pray that he may be delivered from doubts in due time, and know the joyful triumphs of the faith of God's elect.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., October 1, 1857.

THE SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST.

THIS subject is regarded by many of our most enlightened brethren as one of the most obscure and inexplicable subjects contained in the sacred volume. The enemy has taken advantage of our inability to comprehend the true meaning of the words of our Lord, Matt. xii. 31, 32, and suggested such interpretations as have driven many of God's dear children almost to despair. In the early experience of quickened persons, while deeply burdened with a sense of their guilt, Satan has not unfrequently suggested to them that they have committed sin against the Holy Ghost, and therefore cannot be pardoned, and christians of long experience have also been frequently harrassed by the tempter with the same cruel suggestions. The commentaries of the learned divines have almost universally had the same tendency to darken counsel by words without knowledge, on the subject. They generally decide that the sin consists in speaking or acting wickedly with light in the head, and malice in the heart, and this explanation is directly calculated to drive the children of God to despair. Who among them have not so sinned against God? The carnal mind is itself enmity against God, and as all sins are committed against God by the dictation of the carnal mind, this theory would place every sinner of Adam's family in an unpardonable state. But if they mean that a person must be enlightened by the Holy Spirit, and have the light of divine revelation to qualify them to commit the unpardonable sin, then they involve the unscriptural heresy of falling from grace, for none can know the things of the Spirit of God, until born again, and taught of God. Whereas Christ has assured us that "Every one that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me," and again, "He that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." We therefore reject the explanations of the learned commentators, because they conflict with the testimony of the holy Scriptures.

But it may be easier for us to discover error in the views of others, than to give an explanation that is clear and satisfactory. Such views as we have however, we will submit for the consideration of all who may feel interested. The text referred to is Matt. xii. 31, 32: "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whomsoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."

We are informed that sin is a transgression of the law, and all who have transgressed the law of God, have sinned against God; and in the dispensation of the law, Moses has said, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one LORD, or one Jehovah."—Deut. vi. 4. In reference therefore to the ministration of that law there is no sin which is against the Fath-

er, Son, or Holy Ghost, severally or separately considered, as all violations of the law are against the One LORD, but when we consider the Mediatorial relationship of Christ to his church, we find him, in that character and relationship, occupying the place of surety for all his members. "The LORD hath laid on him the iniquities of them all." As therefore all the sins and blasphemies of his people were charged to him, as their surety, they were committed against him in a special sense, and as he has borne the penalty due to their transgressions, in his own body on the tree, and having put away their sins, he has arisen from the dead for their justification, and is now exalted to a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins, and all their sins shall be forgiven them.

Our sins included all manner of sins and blasphemy. There was therefore no manner of sins which others could commit, that were not embraced in the manner of sins which his people have committed, and these shall all be forgiven unto men, not because they were less in magnitude than those committed by others of mankind, but because they stood legally against him, and he has put them away by the sacrifice of himself. The Scriptures, to our mind at least, forbids the idea that God's people were in any wise better than others. Paul says, "No, in no wise," and he also affirms that we were by nature children of wrath even as others, and for himself he claims, that he was the very chief of sinners. In the remission then of the sins of his redeemed people, all manner of sins are forgiven unto men, that is, to all the elect of God. Hence it is written, "Speak ye comfortably unto Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquities are pardoned, for she has received of the Lord's hand, double for all her sins."

But all other sins, from the speaking a word against, to the revolting crime of blasphemy, is unpardonable, not because the sins of the non-elect are in the nature or enormity greater than those sins which Christ has put away from his redeemed people, but because they were not laid on Christ, as he was not a surety for them, and they did not stand in that relation to him. Instead of being against God, as a Spirit, infinite and holy, they having no Daysman, no Redeemer, no Surety to answer for them, they have therefore no redemption through his blood, and consequently no forgiveness, neither in this world, neither in that which is to come. All the sins therefore of all the members of Christ, of all the elect of God, heinous as they are, are canceled, and shall be forgiven them. But all the sins of the human family which were not put away by the one offering of the Lord Jesus Christ, shall forever stand unremitted, and never be forgiven, neither in this world, neither in that which is to come. By the term Holy Ghost, as used in this text, in distinction from the term Son of man, we understand that the invisible Jehovah, as a holy, infinite Spirit, and as he is set forth in the law, is intended in distinction from the revelation of God as manifested in the flesh. A spirit hath not flesh and bones, said the Redeemer, as ye see me have. And aside from a revelation of God in the Mediatorial personification of the Man Christ Jesus, God is only known as an infinite and invisible Spirit, which no man can see without being consumed. No man, said Jesus, can come unto the Father but by me.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., October 1, 1857.

ILLNESS OF ELDER H. C. KER.

It has been the pleasure of the Lord to lay the hand of affliction heavily upon our beloved pastor for nearly three weeks. On the night of the 9th of June he was taken with what is commonly known as "an attack of gall stones," from which he has suffered most excruciatingly.

The above facts are known to many of our brethren, and as both brother Ker, and ourself, are receiving so many more inquiries from anxious friends as to the state of his health, than we can answer personally, we make the following general announcement:

At the time of this writing (June 25th) our dear brother is much improved in health, and although he has not been able to sit up but a few minutes at a time, his physician gives him every encouragement that in a short time he will be again restored to health. He wishes us to express his love and thanks to the brethren, and his high appreciation of their solicitude for his speedy recovery, and to assure them that his physical inability is all that prevents his personally answering their letters of love and sympathy. B.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$356 05
Mrs. Drucilla Wheeler, N. Y., $5.00; Mrs. C. Barlow, N. Y., $1.00; Mary A. Deffenbaugh, Ohio, $3.00; Mrs. A. C. Hull, N. Y., $1.00; S. S. Ward, Ohio, $1.00.—Total	11 00
Total to date	$367 05

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at his residence, Hopewell, N. J., on Tuesday p. m., May 29th, 1900, Wm. F. Haines and Miss Mary A. Johnson, both of Union, Union Co., N. J.

By Elder A. B. Francis, June 6th, 1900, at the residence of the bride's mother, in Mardela Springs, Md., Cyrus Risler, Jr., of the city of New York, and Miss Edith Brattan, of the former place.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Louisa C. Peterson, daughter of Thomas and Amy Mahan, died June 22d, 1899, after a twelve days illness with typhoid flux. Our mother was born in Kentucky, Jan. 25th, 1821, and moved to Jackson Co., Ala., in 1826, then to Coosa Co. She was married to Thomas Peterson, Dec. 23d, 1841. They moved to Dallas Co., Ark., in 1849. She professed a hope in Christ at the age of thirteen years. While alone in the woods, where she had gone to pray for mercy, the first words she remembered saying were, Glory and honor to Jesus Christ, for he has brought me through. Grandmother heard her praising God, and went to her. When she saw her coming she ran to her, threw her arms around her and said, "My mother and my sister too," and told her she never knew how to love her before, as this was a twofold love. Mother first joined the Presbyterians, but in a short time having the privilege of attending the Primitive Baptist Church, and beholding their love and order, she could not stay away from them, so she united with them. When the division came between the Primitive Baptists and the Missionaries, she stood firm. After coming to Arkansas, she united with the Chapel Hill church, being in the constitution of that church. She was a loving, humble, consistent member, a pattern of good works, showing faith out of an humble walk and godly conversation, that she was taught of the Lord. Every one who knew her, loved her. She was ever ready to give the reason of her hope, giving all glory to God in all things. Nothing but sickness ever hindered her and father from going to preaching. She spent most of her time reading her Bible and the Signs, often remarking that one good letter was worth more than the subscription price of the Signs. She seemed to feel a short time before her death that the end was near, once speaking of it to me, and then said, "I ought not to have said that, it will trouble you." She was taken ill on Sunday morning, feeling dull and sleepy. About 1 o'clock I went to her bed and spoke to her, and asked if she wanted anything? She replied, "Some water." She then passed into a stupor from which we could not arouse her. Late in the evening she commenced talking, looking up, but we could not understand all she said, but often she said, "A beautiful view of heaven, beautiful, beautiful." After she quit talking she roused, and knew every one, and had a kind word for all. Sometimes she would think she was at an association enjoying preaching, and the brethren and sisters. One time she roused up and said, I have lived a pleasant life, and told her experience, saying the Lord had been with her and blessed her all through life, and he would be with her to the end. On the last morning she spoke, saying, "It is all in the Lord's hands, yes, it is all in his hands, and has been all the time, if we could only see it." She then

went to sleep, from which she never woke, but ceased to breathe near sunset. "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep." She leaves eight children and fifty-four grandchildren, and many great-grandchildren, in all, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, about one hundred, and O, what an example she has left for us all, but I for one fall so far short.

LUCY A. SEALE.

BROTHER **Henry J. Martin**, of Oberlin, Ohio, died suddenly, Jan. 25th, 1900. He was born in Wantage, Berkshire, England, April 11th, 1811. He is survived by one son, Henry J. Martin, and two daughters, Mary and Ellen. He was in his usual health on the morning of the 25th, and accompanied his daughter-in-law to the corner near his home to see her safely on the electric car, as was his custom, after which he went to call on an old friend, Mr. Bunell, who lay at the point of death, made a short call, and started home, stopping at the home of Mr. F. Brice. He remarked as he came in, "Mr. Bunell has always said he should outlive me, but he will not." But he added, "Who can tell?" Mrs. Brice remarked, "This has quite unnerved you." He replied, "No, I do not look upon death in that way; we have to pass through death before we can have perfect happiness; the moment the breath leaves the body, that moment the soul goes to glory." He had just finished speaking when his head fell forward. Mr. and Mrs. Brice laid him on a couch near by; he looked up and smiled, and passed away without a struggle, we have no doubt, to enjoy in full fruition the fulfillment of his last words. His remains were interred beside those of his wife, in North Royalton, Ohio. I would add, Mr. Bunell outlived him about twelve hours.

The writer had known brother Martin since March, 1899, when he first came to attend our meeting in Cleveland; he led our meetings until his death, a period of ten months, and we learned to love him dearly for the truth's sake. He had been deeply taught of the Lord, and believed himself to be alone (for a time) in believing in free and unmerited grace, but did find and united with the Baptist church before the division. His brethren, as he expressed himself to the writer, "thought they saw a gift in me, and appointed a meeting for me to speak, much against my wishes, as I was a stammerer, and it was with great difficulty I could make myself understood." He went, however, and much to his astonishment, he spoke without stammering, and was free from stammering ever after they liberated him, and he continued speaking for them until the division. He with some eight others stood firm in the truth, but as time passed, some moved away, and others died, and he soon was left alone, and he remained alone, as he could not join with the nations of the earth, in worshiping the beast. He very anxiously asked us at one time, If we considered him sound in doctrine? We told him we did, if we ourself knew the truth. He met with us for the last time, Jan 21st. As we came in and greeted him with a warm handclasp we remarked, "I am glad to see you here," he replied, "I am sorry I am here, I am so dark in my mind I fear I can say nothing to-day." We replied, "If you have nothing to say, we will know for a certainty that what you say is given of the Lord," and he never talked better, or with greater liberty, and we little thought, as we bade him good bye, it would be for the last time. We were not at the funeral, as word did not reach us in time to attend.

JENNIE CROSS.

EUCLID, Ohio.

Enos Titus passed away from earth, at his residence near Lambertville, N. J., March 31st, 1900, in the 68th year of his age. He had been sick and failing for about ten months. Much of that time he had suffered greatly, but yet was most patient and submissive, and at all times spoke of a desire to be submissive to the will of God, and again and again said that all was right. He was married to Mary A. Dalrymple, Jan. 27th, 1858, by Elder Gabriel Conkling, then pastor of the church at Kingwood, N. J. Our brother was baptized into the fellowship of the First Hopewell church, the last Saturday in August, 1869, by Elder P. H. Hartwell. He remained a faithful and steadfast member of this church until he was called to the better world. We had known him but a few years personally, but had learned to hold him in high regard for the truth's sake. He and his dear companion, though living a long distance from the church, were yet always present, when it was at all possible, at their meetings. They loved the courts of the Lord's house, and were glad when it was said unto them, Come, let us go into the house of the Lord. Brother Titus was a man of few words, but still a most pleasant companion. While saying little himself, he loved the conversation of his brethren concerning the things of the kingdom of God. A good and faithful man has passed away; we shall all greatly miss him from our assemblies, and from our homes. He leaves the companion of many years, who is herself in feeble health, two children, and brothers and sisters, to mourn their loss.

The funeral services were held at his residence, on Tuesday, April 3d, and were conducted by the writer. A large concourse of friends were present, testifying to the esteem and regard in which he was held by all. We can but pray the blessing of God upon all who are bereft, and especially upon the bereaved companion.

ALSO,

ON May 27th, 1900, **Harriet Ives**, daughter of the late Elias H. and J. Minton Vanwinkle, of Newark, N. J., at the residence of Dr. John Thorne, Baltimore city, Md., aged 68 years. Her death was very sudden

and unexpected to all. A gastric trouble was the cause. She leaves one sister, who feels bereft and lonely.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder J. T. Rowe, her pastor, on Tuesday morning, May 29th, from the home of brother Thorne. We have known sister Vanwinkle for many years, and knew her to be a lover of the truth, and of true men. She was decided in her views concerning all things. She was a warm and faithful friend to all those whom she loved. We have in the past years had many pleasant hours in her company, conversing of the things which were dear to her. We can but say that we feel to have lost a personal friend. She had the interest of the church at heart, and loved to hear the word faithfully and clearly presented. We can feel no doubt that she is at rest. We think she leaves no other near relatives beside the sister to whom we have referred, but she had many friends in Hopewell, where she was a member for many years, and in Baltimore, where a few years since she became a member. She was baptized by Elder Hartwell many years ago, into the fellowship of the church at Hopewell. For the past fifteen years she has most of the time been a member of the family of brother Thorne, where many of our brethren came to know her intimately. And many will be grieved to hear of her sudden death. C.

PLEASE publish in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the death of our lovely and precious daughter, **Mrs. Mattie V. Evans.** She was born in Monroe Co., Ga., June 27th, 1875, and departed this life June 6th, 1900, making her age 24 years, 11 months and 9 days. She was married to J. M. Evans, March 17th, 1896, and moved to the city of Macon, where they were living at the time of her death. She was in feeble health, and brother Evans decided to take her to his father's, out in the country, to stay awhile, and then spend some time with us at her old home. We went to Mr. Evans' to see them, and found them improving. We returned home, and brother Evans returned to his work in Macon, which was on Saturday. In the evening of the same day she was taken very violently with something like congestion, or inflammation of the bowels, from which she suffered beyond expression for twenty-four hours. We went to see her again on Tuesday morning, and found her seemingly better, but alas, it was only in appearance, the dreadful disease had done its work, and she passed away about 3 o'clock Wednesday morning, the 6th inst. She was conscious to the last, and was enabled to bear her sickness with great courage and fortitude; she seemed to be perfectly resigned to the will of the Lord. I do not think that the thoughts of death was any terror to her, she was so quiet and pleasant all the while. I believe she was fully aware of her condition, and perfectly reconciled to it. She leaves a kind husband, two little children of her own, a little girl, and infant boy, and also two little boys, children of her husband by his first wife, with father, mother, one sister and five brothers, together with a host of friends, to mourn their loss. "Bunch," as we always called her, was a good and model woman, and the better known the more loved. She never made an open profession of Christ, but we believe she had a good hope in him as her Savior. The evidence she has left gives us the happy assurance that she now rests with him in glory, and that our precious child is not dead, and her change was only from a world of sorrow and affliction, to one of peace and eternal happiness. These manifestations are a source of great comfort and consolation to the dear husband, and relatives, in their sad condition. The day she set to come and stay with us we brought her, but she was cold in death. After resting awhile in her old home with the grief-stricken ones, her mortal body was laid away in the family cemetery, in the presence of a large congregation of sympathizing relatives and friends, there to await the resurrection morn, when the graves shall give up their dead, and this mortal shall put on immortality, and forever be with Christ. The flesh is very weak, and we feel almost heartbroken at the loss of such a dear and dutiful child as she was, but we believe what God does is right, and we try not to be rebellious. May he remember the dear husband, and little children, together with us all, in much mercy, and give us supporting grace in all of our trials, bless us with his holy Spirit, that we may walk in obedience to all his commandments, and finally meet the loved ones that have gone before, in that sweet bye and bye, where there will be no more parting, and sorrow will not be known.

D. G. McCOWEN.

FORSYTH, Ga., June 15, 1900.

AGAIN we are called upon to record the death of another one of the dear, old, faithful followers of Jesus, a mother in Israel, sister **Caroline B. Turner,** who departed this life March 23d, 1900. She was the daughter of George and Sarah Ringo, and was born Feb. 12th, 1826. She was married to the late Joseph B. Turner, Oct. 7th, 1851, and entered upon the duties of wife and stepmother. No mother was ever more honored and beloved than she was by her stepchildren. She was the mother of eight children, four sons and four daughters; seven of the latter, and three of her stepchildren, survive her; she leaves two sisters, sister Archer, of Indianapolis, Ind., and sister Ransdell, of Missouri, and I think one or two brothers, in the west. In early life she experienced a good hope through grace, and was ever after a firm believer in that all-absorbing theme. She gave abundant evidence of the effectual calling, by her orderly walk and humility of soul. While she was a firm believer in the doctrine advocated in the SIGNS, she honored it by her walk and conversation; she received

it and believed it with all her heart. She united with the Sulphur Fork church, many years ago, and lived a faithful, devoted member. Their home had ever been a home for her brethren and friends. She, as well as the late brother Turner, was given to hospitality, an example worthy of all lovers of truth. Since the death of her husband she only seemed to stay, and not live. While she was loved, and had every care by her children, she was lonely, and had only one thought: to leave this world of sin; to leave this tenement of clay. She was taken with a chill, and only lingered two or three days, when her great desire was granted; she fell asleep in Jesus.

Her funeral was largely attended at her home, near Turners, Ky., and a comforting discourse was preached by her pastor, Elder J. G. Eubanks, with some brief closing remarks by the writer, when the casket was borne by six of her children, to the family burying-ground near by, and the mortal committed to the dust, to await the resurrection.

May the dear children be enabled by grace to live as she lived, and to die as she died, in the full triumphs of a living faith in Jesus.

P. W. SAWIN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky.

MY dear uncle, **Roland M. Burbridge**, departed this life at his home in Mt. Sterling, Ky., Feb. 24th, 1900. He was born in Bath Co., Ky., in 1837. His death was from heart trouble, produced by "la grippe," which he had about one year ago, most all of the time he was confined to his house. He bore his sufferings with great patience, and had a strong desire to get well, to be with his family, but often said if it was the Lord's will to take him, it was all right. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist church at Bald Eagle, Bath Co., Ky., twenty years ago, and remained a faithful and steadfast member up to the time of his death. He was united in marriage to Elizabeth Jones, daughter of the late Elder Samuel Jones, of Bath Co., Ky., in the year 1867, His wife, three daughters and one son, survive him.

Elder J. G. Eubanks spoke to the bereaved family and friends at his residence, after which his remains were conveyed to the Owingsville Cemetery, there to await the resurrection morn.

Truly a good man has passed away. He was always of a cheerful disposition, and was a good man, a kind neighbor, a true husband and loving father. He always filled his place in the church; how sadly he will be missed. His family and friends did all that could be done for his comfort. It was the will of the Lord for me to be present when he breathed his last. He sweetly and calmly passed away, ever to be with his Maker and Lord.

May the Lord comfort the bereaved family, is our desire.

T. J. RATLIFF.

MT. STERLING, Ky., June 11, 1900.

DIED—At her late residence, Kingwood, N. J., **Sarah P.** wife of Cyrus **Risler.** Brother Risler has for many years been a deacon of the Kingwood church, and his home has been a prominent place of entertainment, and of unbounded hospitality. Sister Risler was a faithful companion and helpmeet, and her cheerful presence and kindness will be remembered by many who have enjoyed the hospitality of this Baptist home. She was baptized in company with her husband, by Elder Gabriel Conkling, May 25th, 1861, remaining in the fellowship of the Kingwood church for thirty-nine years. She had been in feeble health for some months, and finally passed away May 31st, 1900, aged 66 years, 1 month and 7 days. That meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price, shone conspicuously in all her life, and the doctrine of God her Savior was exemplified in all its blessed fruits. The breach in the family, and the loss to the church, will long be felt as breaches never more to be healed.

The husband, four children and several grandchildren, are left to mourn this sad bereavement. May the Lord comfort them.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

STATE ROAD, Delaware.

SISTER **Sarah Holbert**, widow of the late James Holbert, died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. H. E. Bradtke, in Deposit, N. Y., last Thursday afternoon, aged 85 years and nineteen days. Death was chiefly the result of gradual decay of the physical powers incident to advanced years, though a contributing cause was doubtless an unfortunate accident a few weeks ago, when she slipped and fell upon the ice, breaking the bone of one of her hips. She was born in Florida, Orange County, but has been a resident of Deposit for the past fourteen years. Sister Holbert united with the New Vernon church, and was baptized by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, Sept. 6th, 1874, and remained a faithful member until called home. She was a woman patient under affliction, and of a kindly nature, best known in her home, but wherever known, highly respected.

She is survived by two sisters and one brother: Mrs. Julia Finch, of Warwick, N. Y., Mrs. Mary Hunt, of Fort Dodge, Iowa, and Jesse Randall, of Chester, N. Y.; also four sons and one daughter: Aaron Lawrence, of Seattle, Wash., Frank Lawrence, of Missouri, William Lawrence, of Chester, N. Y., Richard Lawrence, of Warwick, N. Y., and Mrs. H. E. Bradtke, of Deposit, N. Y.

The funeral was held at the home of her daughter, Monday, at 12:30 p. m., and the remains were taken to Chester, Monday afternoon, on train 2, for burial.

DIED—At her home in Loami, Ill., April 8th, 1900, sister **Rachel Alice Gardner.** Her maiden name was Pyatt. She was born in Fayette Co., Ill., July 25th, 1862, and was the youngest of a family of four broth-

ers and six sisters. She was married to Dr. N. B. Gardner, Sept. 29th, 1899, and settling at Stonington, Ill., but afterward selecting for their field of labor Loami, Ill. She has followed her Master in a life of self-sacrifice, which was her greatest joy, truly having a conscience void of offense. She passed quietly away at 10 o'clock on Sunday morning. She joined the Old School Baptist church in Christian Co., Ill., when quite young, and was baptized by Elder J. H. Ring. She lived a life of faith, always ready to give a reason of the hope within her. She was a christian wife, and was always ready to welcome her brethren and sisters to her home. She leaves one sister, and a husband, upon whom the hand of the Lord falls most heavily, while her many relatives and friends feel the loss to be irreparable.

Her precious remains were followed by her singing class in Loami, to a Baptist church in Christian Co., a distance of thirty miles, where they were met by their old schoolmates and friends, where, after a discourse delivered by the writer, from a text chosen by herself, Revelation vii. 13-17, and the singing of her favorite hymns, "A little while to wait," "From over the sea," "The home beyond," and "In that city," her body was consigned to the earth, in the beautiful burying-ground, to await the second coming of her blessed Jesus, in whom she had so great faith.

It was said that her funeral was the largest that had ever occurred in Christian Co.

W. A. THOMPSON.

SPRINGFIELD, Ill.

BROTHER **William R. Morris** was born in Wicomico Co., Md., the 14th day of February, 1830, and died in the same County, (having spent the most of his three score years and ten in his native County) the 17th day of March, 1900, being 70 years and 31 days old. He was a faithful and consistent member of the Nassaongo church for thirty-two years, having been baptized in the year 1868, I suppose by Elder George W. Staton. He leaves a widow, our highly esteemed sister Morris, also a member of the Nassaongo church, two sons and four daughters, besides a large connection, and a host of friends, and the church, to mourn, but not as those who are without hope, for we believe our brother has been called to an heavenly home, where he shall be forever at rest. His death came without the least warning; he had been a healthy, strong man all his life, and at the time of his death was at work hauling wood, and died on the way from the woods to the house, where he had gone for a load of wood. It was a severe shock to his family, and they are deeply grieved, but it is a mercy thus to be spared a long term of painful illness, that falls to the lot of many.

The funeral was largely attended on the 19th, when the writer tried to minister the consolations of the gospel of Christ to the sorrowing ones. They have my sympathy in this sad bereavement.

May God sustain and support them in this hour of trial.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., June 15, 1900.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED AND ORDINATION OF DEACON.

IN compliance with a request of the brethren and sisters located near the lower Dublin schoolhouse, in Hardin Co., Ohio, Elders G. N. Tusing, Adam Shoemake and L. E. Thomas, with the deacons and brethren of the Rockey Fork church, of Marion Co., Ohio, and of the Eagle Creek church, of Hancock Co., Ohio, assembled at the lower Dublin schoolhouse, on June 2d, 1900, and proceeded to organize as a body, to examine the Articles of Faith and Rules of Decorum, presented to them, to ascertain our standing, as to being in order to keep house.

Elder L. E. Thomas was chosen Moderator, and G. W. Hissong, Clerk.

The Articles of Faith were then presented, read and accepted by the body as being fully warranted of being Primitive Baptist doctrine.

The Elders, deacons and brethren, then extended the right hand of fellowship, and we were duly constituted as a church.

The name of Fairview, was given to our church.

The council then adjourned.

After intermission of one hour for dinner, the Elders and deacons proceeded to organize for the purpose of ordaining our deacon.

Elder L. E. Thomas was chosen Moderator, and H. O. Blue, Clerk.

Brother Silas Buckingham was chosen our deacon, came forward, and ordination prayer was by Elder Adam Shoemaker, and the laying on of hands by the Elders and deacons, after which Elder G. N. Tusing gave the charge.

Council then adjourned.

The Elders and brethren met again the next day, and had an all day meeting, which was one long to be remembered by all present.

Brethren, pray for this little band, and when convenient, come our way. H. O. BLUE.

PATTERSON, Ohio, June 5, 1900.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Spoon River Association will convene (the Lord willing) in her sixty-ninth session, three and one-half miles southeast of Farmington, at or near the residence of brother C. E. Prior, on Friday, August 31st, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continuing over Sunday. All trains will be met on Thursday evening, at Farmington. None will be met on Friday, except the early train on the C., B. & Q., from the south.

All are invited, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

A YEARLY meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the Clovesville Old School Baptist church, of the Lexington Association, on the first Saturday and Sunday in July, (7th and 8th) 1900.

Those coming by rail will be met at Fleischmann's, on the Ulster & Delaware Railroad.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, to meet with us.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

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Meetings every Sunday, at the Hall,
226 West 58th Street,

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Who will write me, giving name and address, with symptoms, I will send

A TRIAL PACKAGE FREE

Of what I consider the greatest remedy ever discovered. Will remove two gallons in a day. Relieves the worst forms of heart dropsy in a few days. Inclose ten one cent stamps. Address,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1900. NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WONDERS DONE BY FAITH.

I AWOKE from troubled sleep in the midst of most peculiar and terrible weakness. I was not conscious of any affright, as though, like Job, I had been scared through dreams, and terrified through visions, but as I awoke my whole life seemed to lie spread out before me as in the sight of God, and in it all I saw nothing but sin and evil, with not one redeeming, meritorious feature. I was as one brought before his king, in whose service he had been specially engaged in important matters of trust, and whom he had professed to love and honor, charged with unworthy motives and traitorous acts, which he could not deny, and yet who was himself the most utterly surprised by his own guilt, having been unconscious of any crime, or even of any evil intent, but on the contrary who had thought he loved his king so much that he would have given his life in his service.

This but imperfectly intimates the kind of weakness which possessed my soul as I awoke that Sunday morning. It is impossible for me to describe the exercises of my mind in that condition; the deep sinking down of my soul under the sense of being myself what I most loathe, and of falling infinitely below what I most love and revere; the surprise at recognizing in myself the crimes I most hate, and of which I was before unconscious, and of standing under them before the Lord without defense; the sore hurt of the wounds that sin has made, and of the fiery darts of Satan, felt through all my being; the panting of my soul after God, and the hopeless cry unto him even in the shudder and tremble of death; the gathering, as it were, before me of all the elements of trouble and weakness, and all the bitter touches and tastes of sorrow that I had felt, and awaiting in the dull amazement of grief the coming of that deeper night whose darkness must soon be upon me.

How long this feeling lasted I do not know; there is no measure of time in this condition. It seemed but a moment when out of the very darkness and trouble of my soul these words seemed to come forth most mysteriously, and to place themselves before my wondering sight: "OUT OF WEAKNESS WERE MADE STRONG." It was indeed amazing. I cannot describe the wonderful appearance of the

words, my surprise that they should appear, nor their transforming power. They were inexpressibly beautiful to me, and their sweetness filled my soul with holy and wondering delight. I thought of Paul when that terrible night of sorrow and pain was lighted up by the dear Savior's words, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

These words, "Out of weakness were made strong," were my text that day, but I could tell but little of what they were to me. I had nothing to do with bringing them to my mind, nor in producing the wonderful change which they wrought in my feelings. In a moment light seemed to shine out of the very darkness I had felt, and I felt strong in the sense in which I had been weak before. I was not strong in myself, no stronger in myself than before, but "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." The strength seemed to appear out of that very weakness which had been so distressing. I had been made to feel, as I had many times before, my weakness before the Lord, being absolutely without defense in myself against the charges of sin and iniquity, and so had been brought to the end of the earth, to the end of earthly strength, when through these precious words Jesus appeared as my defense, and I was at once strong in him. He had satisfied the claim of the law, and removed it from me forever, and so in him I had "righteousness and strength." I did not make myself strong, but out of weakness was made strong, and yet it was the work of faith.

This precious sentence occurs in the midst of a rich cluster of such sentences, each giving examples of wonderful things done by faith. It had not been especially familiar to me above the other sentences, yet now it came by itself alone, as though taken out from among the others and handed to me for mine. This experience, then, of the love and grace of God, in making me strong in him, was to be shown to me as my own work by faith; for the apostle is telling of works done by the faith of the people of God, to their own wonder and amazement. The works of faith which they are thus said to have done, appear to themselves as far from being their own work as would be the opening of their eyes if they had been born blind, or as is the rising of the sun upon us in the morning.

It is of the peculiar character and mysterious work of faith that the apostle is speaking in all this connection. He points to examples and witnesses of the experience of faith as "the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen." Those things which God has provided for his people cannot be seen by the natural eye nor understood by the natural mind, as it is written, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for those that love him: but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit."—1 Cor ii. 9. These heavenly things are revealed to faith. (Romans i. 17.) It is thus that the faith which is the substance of things hoped for, is also the evidence of those same things which are not seen by the natural sight. Being thus hidden from the wise and prudent, from the natural wisdom and understanding of men, and revealed only to babes, these gospel things can only be understandingly talked about by those babes, who have mutual faith. (Matt. xi. 25.)

In all these examples which the apostle has given to illustrate the meaning and power of faith, things which are impossible with men, but which are experi-

enced by them, are said to be their own work by faith. Thus Enoch's translation that he should not see death, was the work of God, yet the apostle says that by faith he was translated. So, "By faith women received their dead raised to life again." These women did nothing by which they recovered their children from death, but the faith which God gave them, and Enoch, and all that great cloud of witnesses, laid hold upon the purposes and power of God, and caused them to see and believe and earnestly desire and pray for what the Lord purposed to do. So Jesus said to the sorely afflicted father, who besought him to heal his son, "Believest thou that I can do this? All things are possible to him that believeth." The belief has no effect upon the work, no power to produce the desired result. The purpose and work of God are not caused by the belief, but the belief is because of God's purpose and work. The women who received their dead raised to life again, and the father who received his restored son, from the hand of Jesus, did nothing to bring to themselves such unspeakable blessings, yet they were not passive in the work as a piece of wood or stone is passive under the hand of the workman. They were mightily wrought upon by the unseen power of faith. That faith given to them had power to penetrate into the mysterious purposes of God, to discover his will, to know what he had determined to do, and thus that faith, as the evidence of things not seen, caused them to believe and to pray. It was such faith that caused Elijah to pray earnestly that it might not rain, a thing he could not have desired as a man, but which he earnestly desired when it was revealed to his faith as the purpose of God to bring this judgment upon his rebellious people. He had nothing to do in causing the rain to be withheld, nor afterward in causing it to be sent upon the earth; yet he was not passive under the power of that faith to which was opened up the things of God, but urgently moved to pray for what God had designed to do. The apostle says that by faith Daniel stopped the mouths of lions, and by faith the Hebrew children quenched the violence of fire. But Daniel said the Lord sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths, and the heathen king recognized the power of God in saving those whom he had commanded to be thrown into the fiery furnace from being burned by the fire.

GREATER WORKS.

At this point I will, following out the same subject, refer to the words of the dear Savior in John xiv. 12: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." I have many times been asked for my understanding of this declaration, and have written briefly concerning it in private letters, and once or twice for publication. I think they are to be understood in the light of these examples of the character and work of faith referred to by Paul in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews.

Many have tried to discover and explain how believers in Jesus can do such works as he did, and especially how they can do greater works than he did. Those who esteem the power of men as prominent and paramount in the work of salvation, will readily indorse the sentiment that Jesus so started the work of salvation, and so laid out his plan, and so instructed his disciples, that they should continually advance in power and effectiveness, and so attain unto results far beyond what Jesus attained unto while

here. They will illustrate this view by referring to any great enterprise in worldly business, in which the one who begins and establishes the business is far outstripped by those who succeed him in prosecuting it, as each successive generation improves upon the implements, methods and power. So I heard a preacher say, years ago, "The least christian now can save more souls than Jesus did when on earth, for he only began the work, and laid out the plans, which have been improving and growing ever since."

This, of course, was consistent with the doctrine that Jesus began the work of salvation, and left it for his followers to carry on. Those who regard the subject in this way, do not know anything of a salvation begun and finished by Jesus, and revealed unto his people by his holy Spirit in this gospel dispensation. But sometimes we see those who do know the gospel of God's grace, trying to explain how his people do the same kind of works that Jesus did while he was here in the flesh, and how also they do even greater works than he did.

But the dear Savior did not say that those who believed on him should do *such* works as he did while he was in the flesh; neither did he say that they should do greater works than he did. A comparison of men and their works with Jesus and his works, in this sense of being less or greater, is never made by him or his apostles. He speaks of himself being greater than Solomon and Jonah, but only as the reality is greater than the type. He does not compare his works with men's works, nor himself with men, as in the sight and estimation of God, for no man but himself is ever regarded with favor by the Father, nor can appear commended before him; nor are the works of any man but Jesus ever accepted and approved by the Father. All that appear before God at any time must appear in the name of Jesus, and all that ever are accepted of the Father are accepted with Jesus, and in his perfect, finished work. All who come with any works but his to plead, are pronounced workers of iniquity.

Jesus said of him who believed on him that he should do the works that he did; not works like them, but the very same works. He gave his apostles power to do miracles, but those are not the works he is speaking of here. That was a special power which he gave personally to the apostles. Also there were signs that should follow them that believed upon the preaching of the apostles, which were fulfilled, and are still fulfilled in a spiritual sense. It is to be remembered that in the name of Jesus all those wonders were to be done, and in that name they are still done as signs. But that name must be, not upon the lips, but in the heart, and then the power of it will be manifest. It is not the will of the man that is wrought by the power of this name, for by that will he would, like Simon, desire the power for his own gratification; but it is the will of Jesus that is wrought by the power of his name.

The work that Jesus did, and the work that the believer did, were not two similar works, but the same work, as the work of God in closing the lions' mouths, and the work of Daniel, who "by faith stopped the mouths of lions," was the same work. It was only upon the believer that Jesus did works of healing. In one place he could do no mighty works because of their unbelief. If some should think that in some sense the faith, and the belief which results from faith, are ours to exercise according to our will,

then let him consider why only two since the world began have gone from this world without dying. Surely if faith can be exercised at the will of any man, many, very many, would have been translated like Enoch, that they should not see death. By faith the eyes of the blind were opened, the ears of the deaf were unstopped, the long sick were healed in a moment, the touch of the hem of Jesus' garment caused the issue of blood to be staunched in an instant, and all the wonderful works of Jesus were experienced by the poor and needy. It was his work in their behalf, and it was also their work by faith. He ascribes the power and salvation to their faith. "Thy faith hath saved thee," yet he gave that same faith. "He is the author and the finisher of our faith." In the case of the dead raised to life, the faith was not in the dead, but in those who mourned their death, and who received them raised to life again. Martha must acknowledge that she believed, before Lazarus could be raised. The poor souls who sought the healing power of Jesus did not know of that great riches of faith in them until Jesus told them of it, and showed them its fruit; and it is the same to-day. The poor lepers who are, in their soul's experience, at Jesus' feet, acknowledging his power, and beseeching his mercy to heal them, do not know that the blessed faith of the Son of God is in them. If they had not that faith they would not, could not, mourn on account of their sins, nor pray for mercy and healing. They may seem to hear Jesus say, "I am not sent to you," yet they will worship him, and say, "Lord, help me." They may seem to hear him say, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and give it to dogs," and they will say, That is just what I am, "But the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from the master's table. I crave a crumb, and that is all I ask." Faith was there all the time, urgent, persistent, never-failing faith, and the work is done. Jesus did the work, and the poor, believing soul has done it also by that faith which is the gift of God.

Jesus did not say, "He that believeth on me shall do greater works than I can do," but greater works than these that I am doing now. He was still in the flesh, and under the law. The works that he did then were all works that could be seen by men. They were great and wonderful, but were only figurative of the greater spiritual works which he must do before he could go unto his Father. He must die because of the sins of his people, and thus fulfill the law and destroy death; he must rise from the dead and show his risen body to witnesses chosen before, and then ascend up on high, carrying captivity captive. Then when he went unto the Father he would send forth his light and his truth, and lead his people to his holy habitation, the church of the living God. When he went unto his Father then would all his work of salvation be made manifest in his people; and how much greater are these works in bringing his people to a knowledge of himself than the works he did while in the flesh for the healing and comfort of the bodies of his people, only they who have experienced them can know.

To raise one to life again, who had died, is a great work, but how much greater the work when death itself is destroyed, and they who were under its dominion are raised up to die no more. To command the winds and waters to be still, and cause a great calm on the sea that was in terrible commotion, was the work of an infinite God, but it is a greater work to cause peace and quiet in the soul

that has been in trouble on account of the storms of wrath against sin. To open the eyes of one that was born blind, and to unstop the deaf ears, are great works, but to open the eyes of a poor sinner spiritually, and unstop his ears, so that he can see the glorious works of salvation for himself, and hear the voice of Jesus declare his sins forgiven, are infinitely greater works, greater as eternity is greater than this short life in time, and higher as the heavens are higher than the earth.

All these greater works of Jesus in his gospel, are works which his people do by faith. His works are their works. By faith in his name the lame walk and the lepers are cleansed. By faith they destroy death and overcome the world. By faith they resist the devil, and overcome the wicked one. By faith they quench his fiery darts, and gain the victory through the name of Jesus.

Those who are in the habit of thinking of the Lord's people as doing works in their own name, or as distinct from Jesus, must remember that in all that pertains to salvation they are one with him, as he became one with them in bearing their sins and suffering in the flesh. The mystery which was hid from the former ages and dispensations, but is now made manifest unto the saints in the gospel day, "Is Christ in them the hope of glory." It is his power within them by which they work. He works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. His Spirit works in them mightily when he will accomplish his will in them. Our works are not wrought by us and then submitted to him for judgment, but all our works that are acceptable are wrought in him. All other works are works of the flesh, dead works, works of iniquity, and in the judgment which is upon us when Jesus appears those works are condemned. We are condemned for fleshly works, and the fire of God's word burns them up; but we are not praised or rewarded *for* spiritual works, although there is a sweet reward felt in our souls *in* them, for to Jesus the praise is due for every good work. By his power and grace, and in his holy name alone, could we ever possibly do good works; therefore to him the thanks abound for them. But always our God is our exceeding great reward, sweetly felt when we are enabled to walk in the light of his countenance, but known and felt to be such also when we walk in darkness and have no light.

What a blessed thing it is to feel this holy oneness with Jesus; to feel that we are accepted *with* him and *in* him; to feel from time to time the victory given unto us over every enemy through his dear and blessed name; to feel that we are new creatures in him, not by any work or power of our own, but "the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

How blessed and full of delight are these "greater works" of the gospel which are now made manifest to our faith, and become ours by faith, to be done by us as the need for them comes upon us, *because Jesus went unto his Father*. It is a risen and glorified Savior who dwells in the believer, working in him "all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power." Therefore "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience

of Christ." The "greater works" of Jesus are not known by the natural man, who could see the works he did while here in the flesh, but they are only known as they are manifested in and through poor sinners redeemed by his precious blood, and given faith in his name, by which his power and salvation become experimentally theirs. They are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed to these babes. It is only by faith, and not by natural sight or wisdom, that these babes see and know these greater works, and that they know Jesus who wrought them, though he dwells in them and walks in them, and will make his strength perfect in their weakness. It is only as flesh and heart faileth them from time to time, that they are fully prepared to know and experience that the Lord is the strength of their heart, and their portion forever. (Psalm lxxiii. 26.)

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., June 16, 1900.

ZEPHANIAH III. 12.

"I WILL also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord."

These words have just come to my mind with strong force and some comfort, and are undoubtedly the words of inspiration, and words that are well calculated to comfort the poor, afflicted people, that are called the children of God.

Sometimes I wonder at God's people being called poor, for they are certainly the heirs of an inheritance that is of more value than this world with all its treasures. Ask some poor, weary, dejected, child of God, who may hardly know where the next meal will come from, what he would take for his hope in Christ? He may perhaps have been lamenting that his hope was almost gone, but this suggestion to barter it away seems to fill his heart with thoughts of the value of his little hope, and he cries out, O, I cannot part with my hope, small as it is, for all this world can offer, for Jesus is my hope, my only hope, and if Jesus leaves me I must sink, sink into endless despair; I must, he cries, cling and look to Jesus, and cry to him for mercy; O, I am the worst of sinners, but Jesus is the sinner's friend and Savior. Is this descriptive of one of this poor people, that the prophet of the Lord points out? If it is, how can such characters be called poor, when in another place they are described as possessing all things? Well, they are both rich and poor. Some one who has not this experience may say this is a direct contradiction, and so it is as far as the natural mind can understand, but this poor and afflicted people are made to realize that it is the truth. They may be poor or they may be rich in worldly possessions, but this has nothing to do with the condition of the people mentioned in this declaration of Scripture. They may be the noblest and wealthiest in the land, or the poorest beggar that wanders on this earth, it matters not, as to their condition before God and in their own experience, one is just as poor as the other, because this poor people spoken of have nothing, absolutely nothing. It is a great affliction naturally to be so poor that you have nothing to call your own, and know not how you can get your next meal, and so it is in an affliction spiritually to be made so poor that you cannot help yourself in any way, and feel that you are bound down under the holy law of God by the dreadful bondage of sin, which you have tried to break away from with all the power of your being, only to find the bondage more grinding than ever, and sin becoming more and more

sinful as you strive against its power, only to feel more and more enslaved by it till you feel all hope is about gone, poverty and distress has overtaken your soul, though you may be living in the palace of a king, and you feel that you would willingly exchange places with the poorest beggar on the earth, if you could only have this load of sin removed that is pressing you down, down, as you feel, to endless woe and perdition, so that now you can be numbered among this poor and afflicted people. It may be a long, bitter experience to bring you to absolute poverty, or it may be brought about as in the case of Paul, in an instant of time, but the result is the same, and each one is led in all these things just as God has purposed, for each has to learn that "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," or they would not travel on such a rough, thorny road, but nevertheless each one is brought to feel that all the way the Lord has led them has been the right way, and at times are made to feel they would not have it different if they could, and can say with one of old, He has led me by the right way, but they never can or do see the way ahead of them, for the Lord says he will bring this blind people by a way they knew not, so that if they could plan and carry out their own way, they would lose the evidence that they are among this poor, afflicted and blind company that God is leading through this time state, to their eternal home with him in glory. O but, says one, If I only knew that I was one of God's afflicted people, and that I was being led of him, I could bear my trials and afflictions so much better. O yes, poor, afflicted one, if you knew all this you would not have any trouble, for you would be walking in the light of God's countenance, and when that is the case, sorrow and sighing flee away. Why the three Hebrew children in the furnace had no pain or trouble, because their God was with them, and so it has been all along down the pages of time, that this poor, afflicted people could praise the Lord under any circumstances if he only lifted upon them the light of his countenance, for then as the poet beautifully expresses it, "Prisons would palaces prove, if Jesus would dwell with me there." You could not call them a poor and an afflicted people if they were always rejoicing in hope of the glory of God; O no, they must be like Jesus' people of sorrow, and acquainted with grief, and often feel they have not where to lay their head, no resting-place, and sometimes feel they have not a friend on earth or in heaven, no one to whom they can tell their sorrow and trouble, with nothing but the blackness of the deepest darkness filling their mind and soul. The poor, unworthy writer has lain on his bed many, many nights, trying to think on the name of the Lord, and have some meditations on his word, but nothing but gloom, darkness and infidelity, could I see, till I would be almost in despair of ever seeing the light of the Sun of righteousness again. And why are God's poor, afflicted people thus tried? First, because God does as seemeth good in his sight with all his creatures, and he giveth account of none of his doings to mortal man, and second, because by this experience this tried people are taught to trust in the name of the Lord, and in him alone. "And they shall trust in the name of the Lord." Can we infer from these words that they shall trust in the name of the Lord for some things, and for some things they may trust in themselves, or in some other name besides the name of the Lord? Why no, it is so plain that he

that runs may read. It is written in the experience of this poor and afflicted people, as well as in the Bible, and thus the truth is confirmed in their hearts, which Jesus told his disciples, that without him they can do nothing, and though they often feel cast down and humiliated at their failure to accomplish some good works of themselves, yet when the Lord bestows upon them the light of his countenance, enabling them to rejoice in the salvation of God, they can then sing, Not unto us, but to thy great name be all the glory. At such blessed seasons as these they do not want any of the credit for their obedience, or any of their good works, for they can say in feeling and in truth, "For thou hast wrought all our works in us," and if kept from evil and from running after the many erroneous delusions that are so prevalent in this religious age of the world, they do not claim any credit for it, but can say with the apostle that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. This is the "time salvation" that this poor, afflicted people do delight to rejoice in, and there are no conditions in it either. The covenant of grace does not say, If you do so I will reward you for it, but O, the blessed reverse of this, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sin and iniquities will I remember no more." O, how suitable such words are to one who is terribly afflicted with evil, like the unworthy writer, who is so hateful and depraved in every part of his being that were it not for the merciful intercession of our great High Priest, Jesus, I feel I could not stand a moment. O, do not give me conditions, for my soul is sick and weary, trying to live and walk as an humble follower of Jesus, in my own strength. O, the numberless resolves and reresolves my heart has made to do better, live better, and watch over my deceitful heart, but O, what has the harvest of this sowing been? It has been as one of old said, "A heap in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow." Sometimes it seems I must give up in despair, but when Jesus comes in the visits of his love, sorrow and sighing flee away, and the poor, afflicted soul is once more made to rejoice in the salvation of God, and at such times it has been my experience that I feel more unworthy than at any other time, and never dare I say, neither do I ever feel, that it is a reward for obedience. O, dear child of God, who perhaps may have been drawn aside from the truth by the specious and perhaps plausible arguments, or reasoning, of those who are claiming that time salvation is conditional on the acts of the creature, just stop for a moment and say to yourself, could I stand before God and say, I thank thee, O God, that thou has rewarded me for my obedience and good works, and has given me that peace and comfort that I have earned by fulfilling the conditions required of me? Would not such language be abhorrent, and even presumptuous, in the ears and heart of this poor and afflicted people, whose trust is in the Lord? I feel it would be as a stink in their nostrils, and little short of blasphemy, and yet would it not be consistent language in one who believes in a system of reward for obedience and good works? I cannot help but wonder how any one who has had an experience of the love and mercy of God toward them, and been made to realize their poverty and vileness, and utter helplessness, can be carried away from the doctrine of grace, but when I turn to myself, O, I know not where I would wander, if God's hand did not keep me every moment of my life,

so I have to conclude that God works in a mysterious way, and does as seemeth good in his sight, nevertheless the foundation standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.

Do as you think best with this.

I had not thought to write any more, but taking up the Bible I opened it at the sixteenth chapter of John, and read the chapter without much solemnity of mind till I came to the last verse, which reads, "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace," &c. Poor, afflicted, tried child of God, I ask you, Is there peace anywhere else but in Jesus? O, the blessed peace and rest there is in him when we are made to rest from all our own labors, and made to realize that he of God is made unto us righteousness, sanctification and redemption. It is in Jesus alone that we have peace that the world can neither give nor take away. Jesus says, My peace give I unto you, not as the world giveth, O no, but a peace that no power in heaven or earth can disturb. "That in me ye might have peace." I feel words cannot express the depth of these solemn, comforting words.

FOLLOW ME.

THESE words, both impressive and expressive, are often felt in the experience of the children of God. In his dealing with those whom he hath saved in Christ, he calls them with an holy calling, which is not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began, which purpose and grace is now made manifest, as he deals with them by the appearing of their Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Therefore the gospel is to such as he thus deals with, the power of God unto salvation, in order that all the seed of Israel should be justified, and should glory in him. If they be Christ's they be Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise, and this promise is made in Jesus, for God spake not unto Abraham of seeds, as of many, but as of one, that is Christ, saying that in him (Christ) all the kindreds of the earth should be blessed. What a revelation of this blessedness, when one is born again, or brought forth in a new life, even the life of God, or into eternal life which is the gift of God through Jesus Christ their Lord. So if one is a child spiritually, that one is an heir of God and a joint-heir with Jesus Christ, and such an one is capacitated to receive instruction from him, who teaches as never man taught. The words that he speaks unto them are Spirit and life.

Here is a reversing of the old order of things, with the heaven-born and heaven-taught, and here is a solution to the query, Why was that first which was natural, or the righteousness of the law, and afterward that which was spiritual, or the righteousness of God through Jesus Christ? The first demanded doing to live, while the second required living in order to do. So the dear Redeemer could say, "He that liveth and believeth in me, shall never die."

This was also spoken of by Paul, before King Agrippa, as a promise made to the fathers, into which promise our twelve tribes, serving God day and night, hope to come. The prophets and the law were until the spiritual Elias was come. And the law was the teacher of the spiritual Israelite until Christ came, and it was unrelenting in its demands; every jot and tittle must be paid; Jesus must magnify

and honor the law, even restoring that which he took not away. The following of Jesus by the twelve, had nothing to do with their calling. Jesus said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." Is it not wonderful that the sayings and acts of these twelve men, gathered as a flock, should be so complete a fulfilling of the Scriptures? All that he and they did, was the fulfilling of the Scriptures, even to his betrayal by Judas, the amount of money which was paid him, the use to which the money was put, and the words of him who was no longer to be known after the flesh, "I thirst." And they gave him vinegar to drink. This was all according to the Scriptures; there was a must needs be for it. Our God was doing his will, and has been doing it ever since, through Jesus and his chosen followers, and he has lost none, save him that betrayed him, and this, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled concerning him. As these first disciples followed and developed their character, so the real true condition of all who follow Jesus, has been developing ever since. Much of the fruit borne by these twelve men while with their Master, was characteristic of the natural man, called by grace to see the law's condemning power, yet led by nature, and left to themselves, that it might be proved conclusively that "that which is born of the flesh, is flesh." But the exhibition of almighty power in sovereign, reigning grace, on the day of Pentecost, both in the chosen followers of Jesus, and in those listening to their words, fulfilled the word by which he said that he would make them fishers of men. And now I come to my own personal knowledge and experience, I must speak of the liability of myself and others of the church of God, to err in judgment, as to what following Jesus means.

First. I will say that if I have any membership in Christ, it came about in a way to cause me to desire to be a burden-bearer with my brethren, in all that pertains to their needs, with my heart, and hands, and feet, and tongue, and even with my money, if I have any. But I will leave those who are best acquainted with me, to judge concerning this. I will go on to say what I intended. Being called with an holy calling, does not imply that the Spirit is striving with us to try to win us over to Christ, as a condition with which we must comply, or forfeit salvation. This is not the beginning of the dealings of God with us, except in manifestation. Salvation has been perfected before, or the death of Christ was in vain. In this holy calling, the demands of the law are made known, and the real condition of a lost sinner is brought to view first. Thus the dead are made alive, and now living they see their dead state as it is, and discover that they are hopeless and helpless, and that the preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue are both from the Lord. This every believer in Jesus must fully know before they are prepared to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, or can clearly testify that Jesus is the Son of God.

When I was awakened to a sense of my lost condition, I was led to cast about for deliverance. If my own arm could have effected this deliverance, I should have obtained this salvation, as I expected it would come, which was "by falling in with the overtures of mercy," as men say, reforming, and complying with certain conditions, or biblical requirements, and I should know that I was a christian, and I should have something of which I might

boast and be proud. I learned however that it must be by grace that salvation should come to a lost sinner, such as I felt myself to be, and the grace of God which brought this salvation to me, taught me what I know of denying ungodliness and worldly lusts. I saw that I could not hope to obtain deliverance by my own works, and could not therefore be an Arminian in faith. I learned that believers must cease from their own works, as God did from his, and I trust that I thus entered into rest, and now a new trouble began, I was restless in another and new sense, the love of God had been shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Spirit given unto me, and my love for Jesus Christ passed all my understanding; I wanted to be a follower of him, because of what he had done for me, a poor, miserable sinner; I as yet knew nothing of his commands, only as the law had made its demands against me, causing me to labor and be heavy laden, and now the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus had made me free from this law of sin and death, and I trust that I was a new creature in Christ. And many times since I have tried to impress upon the minds of the children of God that they are not new creatures in themselves, apart from Christ, and that neither have they any light or salvation separate from Jesus. It is wholly of faith, and their life is hid with Christ in God, and so every act of a true, spiritual nature, is from the promptings of the Spirit of God, and is the effect of the reign of grace, and so it is said that it is by the grace of God that they are what they are, or do what they do in following Jesus. As they love him will they keep his commandments; he is to them the chiefest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely, and in following him who was a man of sorrow, they also must be made acquainted with grief, else how shall they be healed with his stripes? In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them, and not the work of their own hands.

The performing of some condition does not save them. Thus salvation came to me. Therefore the truth which is in Jesus makes us entirely free from the just demands of the law, and as Christ is the end of it to the believer, for righteousness, conditions have no place, as though we could deserve a reward. The type is held up to our view, and we are not to cast away our confidence in God, or let slip the things which we have heard. The recompense of the reward in believing in God alone, and not neglecting the day of salvation, leads us to try the spirits, instead of believing every spirit, for there is but one Spirit that is true; by this one true Spirit God walks in his people, and it is the Spirit of his only begotten Son, and without this they are none of his. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." And he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and he that dwells in God, will not question his eternal purpose, or look for reward in keeping his commandments, or in following him; that is, they will not follow him for the reward, yet there is such heaven-felt rest in their souls, and such sweet peace in doing what he has commanded them to do, but after all they will feel that they are but unprofitable servants, having done but what was their duty to do, even if all were done. I think that I know the path, for with me every inch of the way has been contested, the flesh has lusted against the Spirit, so that I could not do the good that I would, and when I would have done good, evil has been present

with me, and the evil which I would not, that have I done. This does not mean, on the one hand, doing to some person some good thing, or doing on the other hand some evil thing to some one, by taking away that which is his, or breaking some earthly law, it has all been within me, rather than without. This is the word of Paul, and it is my experience for the past forty years that I hope God has led me, there have been varied experiences. Good active brethren, and preachers of ability, have had different views in regard to the duty and actions of christians as followers of Jesus; some have gone along very close to the Arminian border, on the conditional theory, some have claimed that preaching was the means of stirring up sinners to a sense of their lost condition, some that in the work of the new birth some part of the sinner was made sinless, some that the sinner in the new birth was the recipient of a spiritual child which came down from God, some that we would know our friends in the resurrection, and some that there would be no resurrection of the body. I do not speak of these things to occupy space, or develop my poor talents, but because it has all come under my observation in the past forty years. None of these things have any place in following Jesus, for first and last, as one has received Christ Jesus the Lord, he is to walk in him. In him that one spiritually lives, and moves, and has his being. Love is the propelling power, the drawing chord. Life that goes before action has produced faith as the fruit of the Spirit, out of which all true worship and following have come. I have known of no one yet, who began to worry over the mysteries of Christ's kingdom, who has not reaped more or less of a crop of corruption. To be an humble follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, is to be exalted with him to the right hand of God. Though sinful, weak and unworthy as they feel themselves to be, they are made willing to follow him in the day of his power, and they know that it is given them in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but to suffer for his sake, and they trust alone in him, and committing their all to him, they have abundant peace. Surely such as these, whether ministers or members, are not expecting rewards for obedience, but they feel if the will of God be so, that it is better to suffer for well doing than for wrong doing. Such look alone to Jesus, who is the author and finisher of their faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame. The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ wrought all his works in him, and so he has wrought all our works in us, and then we work them out. But how? Only by the grace of God that is in us. How wonderful is this grace; by it I am what I am; by it I keep my body under, and am light in the Lord. If hatred, or any of the vile fruits of the flesh lead me, I show the same natural man in action, and that I abide in darkness, and cannot see the way that I go, because that darkness has blinded my mind.

May the Lord ever make me a humble follower of Jesus.

Dear brethren, do with this as you like.

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLY'S CORNERS, N. Y., Jan. 31, 1900.

DOVER, Mo., April 20, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Through the care of a kind and covenant-keeping God I have been kept to the ripe old age of seventy-one years, if I live to see the 10th day of June next, and I am still enjoying many of the rich blessings of our God,

both in mind and body, for which I hope that he has given me a thankful heart. I have come through many trying seasons with doubts and fears, but often the assurance comes to me with comfort that our God is the ark of safety, and why should I doubt? But the flesh is so prone to go astray.

I inclose an article for publication in the SIGNS, written by my dear husband, several years before his death, as some of the readers of the paper in this State wish it published. Remember me in your prayers, that I may be kept low at the Master's feet.

Your sister,

ELLEN F. STARTZMAN.

THE long experience of the christian church would be pronounced upon common principles of reasoning, impossible. She finds in every man a natural and inveterate enemy. In order to encounter and overcome she boasts no political stratagems, no disciplined legions, and no outward coercion of any kind, yet her expectation is that she will live forever. To mock this hope, and to blot her memory from under heaven, the most furious efforts of fanaticism, the most ingenious arts of statesmen, the concentrated strength of empires, have been frequently and perseveringly applied. The blood of her sons and daughters has streamed like water, the smoke of the stake, where they wore the crown of martyrdom in the cause of Jesus, has ascended in thick volumes to the skies. The tribes of persecution have rejoiced over her woes, and erected monuments, as they imagined, of her perpetual ruin. But where are her tyrants, and where are their empires? The tyrants have long since gone to their own place, their names have descended upon the roll of infamy, their empires have passed like shadows over a rock, they have successively disappeared and left no trace behind them. But what has become of the church? She has risen from her ashes, fresh in beauty and might, and celestial glory has beamed around her. She has dashed down the monumental marble of her foes, and they who hated her have fled before her. She has celebrated the funeral of kings and kingdoms who plotted her destruction, and with the inscriptions of their pride has transmitted to posterity the records of their shame.

How shall this phenomenon be explained? We at this present moment are witnesses of the fact, but who can unfold the mystery? The book of truth and life has made our wonder cease: the Lord her God is in the midst of her, is mighty, his presence is a fountain of health, and his protection a wall of fire; he has betrothed her in eternal covenant with himself. Her living Head, in whom she breathes, is above, and the quickening Spirit shall never depart from her. Armed with divine virtue, his gospel secret, silent and unobserved enters into the hearts of men, and sets up an everlasting kingdom; it eludes all the vigilance, and baffles all the power of the adversary; bars, and bolts, and dungeons, are no obstacles to its approach; bonds, and tortures, and death, cannot extinguish its influence. Let no man's heart tremble nor fail him for fear, let no man despair in these days of rebuke and blasphemy against the christian cause. The ark is launched indeed upon the floods. Though the tempest sweep over the deep, and the billows break upon her on every side, yet Jehovah, Jesus, has promised to conduct her in safety to the haven of peace, she cannot be lost, unless the Pilot perish.

NATHANIEL STARTZMAN.

NEWARK, Del., May 5, 1900.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have been much comforted in reading a precious letter on the book of Ruth, published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in the year 1876, and written by brother S. B. Luckett, of Corydon, Ind. It is so beautifully written, and so full of gospel truth, and of that which comforts the Lord's people, that I have since reading it felt a great desire to speak of it, and to share my comfort with them. They are precious to me because of the truth which is with them, who are chosen of God and precious, and who through the Holy Spirit given them, testify one and all, to the same glorious truth. What a blessed people. "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places." "But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end." "Surely, shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength, even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." The language of the psalmist is, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." "O love the Lord all ye his saints: for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer. Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered."

Dear brother, how full of comforting things are the thirty-first, second and third Psalms. How clearly the sovereignty of God is shown in the thirty-third Psalm, is it not? And how comfortingly, and how wonderfully plain the precious gospel truth is shown in the forty-sixth chapter of Isaiah. May the Lord give his dear ones understanding in the precious gospel word. May he lead them in paths of safety for his dear name's sake. May he be with his dear servants, that they may be strong to proclaim the glorious truth of the word. O my brother, how great is the solemnity of the calling wherewith we are called. How much we are all in need of reading the admonitions contained in the letters of the apostles, and of being reminded of them at all times, in conversation and in letters, and especially by our ministers, according to the word of God. The apostle has said, "Walk as becometh saints." "Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called," with all lowliness, and meekness and long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and in you all. And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

As I write of these precious truths, I wonder how it is possible that there should be divisions among brethren of one faith, having fellowship one for another, and understanding in these precious gospel truths, and knowledge of the grace of God to sinners, whereby Israel is saved in the Lord, according to his great mercy. All have the same experience of hungering and thirsting for righteousness, and all are brought by the Spirit of God to the same precious Savior, who is

all and in all unto his body, the church, and who is made unto them wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. He is made known to them by one Spirit (his Spirit) and they are buried with him in one baptism, and they have one God and Father, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. All is of his grace. Surely there can be no difference in these precious things. There is union in the Spirit, which we have all found to be true in our experience, and except this Spirit, which makes us one, is manifest in what is spoken and written, it will profit us nothing. Surely that church which is walking in the order of the gospel will be found satisfied with the goodness of the Lord's house. As they walk in the unity of the Spirit, and in the love and fellowship of the gospel of Christ, there will be no striving about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers, and then in meekness will they instruct those who oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. I often think what such strivings and unprofitable discussions must be to the babes in Christ, who desire the sincere milk of the word, and who live among the churches where these divisions are. Surely there is little of Christ talked or preached at such times, or if much is said about him, it would seem to be but mockery in the face of the fleshly feelings which are manifest usually at such times. It is easy to detect the faithful follower of Christ at such times, such contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and endeavor earnestly to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, the Spirit of Christ is manifest in their walk and conversation, and these look to the Lord for guidance.

I think often of your visit to our house last spring, I was much comforted by it. The fellowship of the brethren and sisters is so precious and comforting to me. It was especially so to me at that time, as I was feeling within myself many doubts and fears of my right to a place with the dear brethren and sisters in the church. It is very easy to see the evidences of the new birth in the dear ones who come to us, but many times I am troubled, and cannot feel satisfied about myself. It is so comforting to me to think that perhaps others, and especially our dear ministers, can find evidence in me, so that they can feel to call me sister, and talk to me of the things of the kingdom, which are more precious to me than all things else. How unsearchable are the riches of Christ. I have felt a desire to write a little for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES if no more than to send a little message of love to the many dear ones, who have so greatly comforted me through its pages. They through the grace of God which is given them, are enabled to write precious words of comfort to the church. If the Lord will, I may try to write a little some time. May the grace of God be with you and all his dear ones, and especially with you in all your labors among his dear people. How can I better close, than with the words of the apostle, "But my God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus"? "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

Will you please pardon this letter? I have felt constrained to write it. It is many times, a comfort to me to write.

From a little sister, in a most precious hope,

LAURA A. HAMILTON.

April 2, 1900.

Editors of Our Dear, Family Paper, the Signs of the Times:—After a delay in remitting for the Signs, I am seated in my sitting-room, and will try to talk in my feeble way to those of like precious faith, hoping that the divine Master will guide my pen so that I shall say nothing that is not in accordance with divine truth. I have of late been in deep mire, where there is no standing. It has pleased the good Lord to afflict and bring me very near the grave, as it were, and also to remove my home to a distance. So for the past winter I have been situated so that I could not meet with the dear ones in the sanctuary, but on the second Sunday and Saturday before, I was permitted to attend once more. What pleasure it gave me to listen once more to the gospel of grace. What joy and heavenly pleasure to sit in the heavenly places, it is all the delight of my soul, to drink of the sweet streams. As we grope on our way, weary and cast down, footsore and thirsty, how pleasant to sip of the living water of God's everlasting truth, as it falls from the lips of the servant of Jesus, and also to hear from the dear kindred in Christ, by way of the dear Signs. They have been all the preaching that I have had all this past, cold, dreary winter. When the first paper came to my new home I could but shed tears to think how good the dear Lord was to me, in granting me the sweet privilege, in this distant city, of reading its dear pages. I read them with much pleasure, and watched for their coming eagerly. I have read with special pleasure the words which came from the pens of Elders Bartley, True, Durand, Keene, Ker and others, and the dear pen of brother Chick is fraught with love and sweet peace, for the beloved Zion of God. O, may I ever stand aloof from the "lo heres and lo theres," and while this poor body remains, may I ever stand for the heavenly and God-given truths of the holy Scriptures, in which I do most surely believe the God of the whole earth has taught me. Yet I am a very disobedient child, if one at all, yet I do love the truth, that King Jesus is supreme, ruling over men and devils, and unlimited in power, and ruling all, whether we can understand it or not. Let us as dear children remember to bear with the dear ones who may see otherwise, being sure that God will reveal even this unto them. God grant us to live as we should in this evil world; may we ever stand in defense of the truth, not with carnal weapons, but with the sword of the Spirit. O may he come into this poor heart of mine, and abide there.

With love, your little sister,

M. P. LEWIS.

Warwick, N. Y., July 6, 1900.

Dear Brother:—In reply to your request for a statement of my condition, I will say, I am confined to the house with an attack of jaundice, from which I have been suffering for more than three months. I have not been able to preach since April 22d. My attending physician gives no encouragement that I will be well for some time, but he thinks the disease will give way after a few weeks. To day, for the first in nearly a month, he allowed me to have a little meat and potatoes.

Thanking my many kind friends for their inquiries about me, I am unable to say more at present.

As ever, affectionately your brother,

WM. L. BEEBE.

(Written by my daughter for me.)

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March 28, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER RITTENHOUSE:—I expected to hear that you went to Cow Marsh last Saturday and Sunday, and I am glad you could go. I am sure it would have been a great disappointment both to you and to the congregation, had you not gone. The love and fellowship and church relationship between yourself and those three churches of which you have been pastor so many years, is surely all that a pastor or church could expect or hope for. Looking at it from my standpoint without the circle, I see much to admire and to rejoice over. Trees of God's right hand planting. The flock of Bozrah sheltered under their friendly branches; cooling streams and green pastures, for the sustenance and refreshing of the hungry and thirsty. A faithful under-shepherd, favored of God indeed, with a wonderful variety of rich, dainty and wholesome viands from the exhaustless store-house of the King of saints. A people "saved by the Lord," yielding the precious fruits of God's matchless love in an orderly walk and godly conversation, and of whom it can be truly said, they love their neighbor as themself. It is pleasant to me to look over the different fields of our spiritual Boaz, especially when I am given discernment to observe how that the difference in the result of the harvest is only in the amount of the fruit yielded, and not its quality, and also to observe that all that transpires in all the fields of the kingdom of God's grace is just as it was ordained of God in his secret counsel chamber, with his beloved Son, in the ancients of eternity. Those things we see, and sometimes smart under, are for a wise and useful purpose.

APRIL 2, 1900.

Nearly a week has elapsed since I tried to find time to write to you; since that time I have had another letter from you, dated March 30th. I am glad you are so much encouraged, and I sincerely hope your foot will so improve that you can visit the churches yet a long time.

We are looking forward with much pleasure to the meeting in Wilmington, next Sunday, and hope to see you there. I had a letter from brother McConnell last week; he expects to be on hand at the meeting. We expect Elder Meredith to preach for us on Wednesday evening; we will reserve the third Sunday in May for you, and hope it will be that you can come. I am still very busy, but now hope to get to Wilmington Sunday. I am sorry I cannot write you a longer or more interesting letter this time. We all send love.

Affectionately your brother,

B. F. COULTER.

1 TIMOTHY I. 15.

"THIS is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

The inspired apostle claimed to be the chief of sinners because he persecuted the church, and in his blind zeal, he no doubt thought he was doing service to God. Indeed he says, he verily thought he ought to do these things. He thought that he ought to persecute all who believed and trusted in Jesus as alone able to save all who came unto God by him. But after his conversion, he immediately preached the faith which he had once vainly endeavored to destroy. He said that he labored more abundantly than they all, and in all his labors he claims no merit on his part, but he always gloried in the grace of God which had been given to him. He desired that he might be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is of God by

faith. Christ came to save sinners, and the testimony of the Scriptures abundantly proves that he has saved all sin-sick sinners who have trusted in him for life and salvation, and who have no confidence in the flesh. Such vile sinners know that none but the great Physician can give relief; he alone can bid us live, for he alone has the words of eternal life; he fulfilled the holy law of God, in all its jots and tittles; he paid all the debt which was charged against his people, his bride, the church of God; he died, the just for the unjust, "that he might bring us to God," and all his shall be brought, they are all securely sealed as the heirs of promise. The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. This is that glorious highway which the vulture's eye hath not seen. Carnal reason is meant here, and in this way the lion's whelp hath not trodden, and there is no salvation in any other name, this is the only name given under heaven and among men whereby we must be saved; there is no other name save the name of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Our souls are weak, and helpless, and poor, in Christ alone is salvation, and the kingdom is his. May the dear Lord keep us from pitfalls and snares, from all foes of every name, and most of all from ourselves.

WM. F. SLOAN.

HEMPRIDGE, Ky., Jan. 31, 1900.

[PAUL testified that he was not fit to be called an apostle because he persecuted the church of God. When he said that he was the chief of sinners, it is not our understanding, that he referred to the past at all, for he said, I AM chief of sinners. He felt this NOW to be true. Every true child of God feels to say the same. So we are sure does our brother. —ED.]

WOODSVILLE, Texas, Feb. 2, 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been thinking for some time that I would write you a few lines and acknowledge the receipt of your kind favor, in sending me the SIGNS, for which I am thankful. I read the SIGNS when I did not know of any other paper published in the interest of the Primitive Baptists. I loved the doctrine which it set forth about the time of my first reading of it, which was twenty-seven years ago. At that time I felt to say, amen, to the doctrine which it contained. Since then I have read the first volume of Editorials with deep interest, and can say that I have read no book to which I could come nearer giving every word a hearty approval. Elder Gilbert Beebe was a man of God, and the founder of the SIGNS, but he is gone. I never had a doubt that the great God raised him up for the very purpose which he fulfilled, and when he had filled up his measure, he was taken away, but our God still takes care of the SIGNS. To me it speaks right, it declares salvation by grace. I read that all Israel shall be saved in the Lord, with an everlasting salvation, and Christ is a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance unto Israel, and the forgiveness of sins. I know of but one Savior, he was a Savior in eternity, and is manifested in time, to them who are the subjects of grace. As for me, I feel just as dependent upon the Lord for grace to keep me day by day, and to lead me in the way of truth, as I did for mercy to deliver me from the power of sin in the first place. I can do nothing of myself that would be pleasing in the sight of God.

There is an idea, in this part of the country, that after regeneration a man has the power in himself to obey. Now

I am not able to believe that. Man is just as dependent upon God to lead him in the way of truth, as he was upon the Lord for mercy, when he was under conviction, to deliver him from condemnation and sin. Therefore I believe in one salvation. It is faith that works by love, and purifies the heart, and prepares the children of God, and makes them meet for the service of God.

Now will Elder H. M. Curry give his views, through the SIGNS, upon Hebrews ii. 14, and oblige one who wants the truth, and nothing but the truth?

In hope of life beyond the grave, I remain your brother,

B. F. STEWART.

LANCASTER, Ohio, March 19, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Another year has rolled around, and I am still blessed with the privilege of writing again to send in my renewal for the SIGNS, I would also like to send some words of encouragement, if I had the ability to express myself as all the able writers do. It seemed especially so, when I read the number for March first, in which sister Runkle, sister Terry, brother James, and brother McConnell have articles, and the editorial also. I always seem to get more comfort out of what others tell, than what I feel is the case with me. It seems that I am a castaway, but the dear brethren have told my experience better than I can myself, they are nearly all perfect strangers to me, yet my love goes out to them, and I would like to meet them and take them by the hand. Whence came this love? Were it not for the love that I hope God has shed abroad in my heart, I would give up all hope of being saved. I get very fearful and think that I must be a hypocrite, and I ask myself the question, Why do the brethren care to be with me? Then, as Bunyan has it, I must go back and hunt up my roll which is lost, and which I trust Christ gave me in the revelation that he was my Savior. Then I still try to hope that I have a hope, and go hobbling along, but I am a great cripple, in the matter, and do know that if I am saved at all it is of grace, from beginning to end. I do also believe in good works, which are surely of God, for without him we can do nothing. What did Paul say? It was that he might give all gifts, and yet if he had not charity, it would profit nothing. He says in plain language, that our works, without the love of God, will be of no profit. I, for one, am so poor that I am ten thousand talents in debt, and have not one farthing to pay. My great trouble is that I cannot do the things that I wish to do. It is a source of great grief to me that I can do no better. O, I never can expect anything but the rod, for my works are all so miserably poor; the world, the flesh, and Satan, they do beset me so. I never felt in all my life that our God would or ought to reward me for anything that I have done; what I do, I feel it my duty to do, and I am an utterly unprofitable servant, if one at all. My prayer to God is to keep Zion, and build up her waste places.

Your sister in a precious hope,

SARAH B. PEARCE.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denotes the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

POETRY.

GOD IS LOVE.

THE saints of the Most High
Are often at a loss
To know the reason why
They cannot bear their cross.

The warfare seems to be
So hard to understand,
They often fail to see
The working of God's hand.

And if a glimpse is given,
Of his mysterious way
That leads our thoughts to heaven,
We then in dust do lay.

If left to self, then lo,
That which the Spirit moves,
The flesh would fail to do,
And all our weakness proves.

What poor, deluded ones,
To think that they can earn
A righteousness their own,
Such dross would surely burn.

The flesh and Spirit strives,
Each one to have its say;
The christian has two lives,
And none can change the way.

This company in one,
Vexes the christian's mind,
So that he feels undone
And good he cannot find.

The mystery is great,
And none can comprehend,
To enter the strait gate,
Or understand the end.

For God is manifest
In all his works of love,
And will not let them rest,
Who seek the home above.

And while he measures out
This love to all his saints,
He still holds back a part,
That they may feel the strait.

And often then we feel
How keen the smarting rod,
When God with us doth deal
As sons, and he our God.

When God appears to us
In revelations pure,
We see his righteousness,
And count ourselves impure.

We can but cry, forgive,
With mercy from on high,
O Lord, that I may live,
A sinner such as I.

If I am lost, 'tis just,
For I can nothing do,
And I am naught but dust,
And must for mercy sue.

Behold, he answers prayer,
Reveals himself in love,
And he appears all fair,
With graces from above.

How precious then his name,
When first his love appears,
Our thoughts are not the same,
Love moves in place of fears.

And while we are thus kept,
We only think of him
Who in the garden sweat
Great drops of blood for sin.

Our Jesus died for us
While we were not yet born;
It was for our sakes thus
His own dear flesh was torn.

The cruel nail was driven,
The spear thrust in his side,
And his dear life was given,
And we in him abide.

Thus we rejoice, and sing
His praises to the skies,
For he has died to bring
Each one that to him flies.

Rejoice, ye saints on earth,
Your Captain's entered in
Where you, through second birth,
Shall enter without sin.

Rejoice, I say, and sing,
Praise God, praise him above,
The everlasting King;
Praise God, the God of love.

While confined to the house on account of a snow storm now raging, and being in rather a dull frame of mind with regard to the things of the kingdom of God, I felt impressed to pen some thoughts as they might appear to me, and unexpectedly they ran into verse. The Lord is good, his mercy endureth forever. My wife suggests that they be published in the SIGNS, but I had no such thought. I will send them to you, and unless you see clearly some good in them, withhold them, I have no pride in the matter as I am aware, it is only the sentiment.

MILTON DANCE.

GITTINGS, Md., Feb. 17, 1900.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1900.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

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GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JOHN VIII. 36.

"IF the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

Freedom and liberty are words used often by the blessed Master, and by the apostles, in the New Testament. Paul tells the brethren at Galatia that they have been called unto liberty, and he exhorts them to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free. The prophet Isaiah declared that it was the work of Jesus to proclaim liberty to the captive, and Paul to the Corinthians says, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. James speaks of looking into the perfect law of liberty, and Peter speaks of the brethren to whom he was writing, as being free. Paul, in Romans, tells those who are justified freely by grace, that they are free from sin, and that sin shall not have dominion over them. He also says that they are free from the law of sin and death. These, with other expressions of holy writ, set forth this liberty or freedom, and inform us of what sort it is.

It is in our mind to call attention to some thoughts which seem to us to belong to this important matter. In the connection of the text quoted at the beginning of this editorial, the Savior plainly shows what the thing is from which he should deliver his people, and also the nature of the liberty which he promised, and then settles the matter that this freedom can be obtained only as he gives it: in him alone is true freedom to be found. In verse thirty-two, he said to those who as his disciples should continue in his word, that they should know the truth, and the truth should make them free. Falsehood of every sort brings the man who believes it into bondage; truth alone is free, and can confer true freedom. How important then that we should know the truth. In these days it is a common thing to speak lightly of what men believe; it is said often that it is more important that men should live right, than that they should believe right. There never was a sadder mistake, there can be no right works without right faith; what men believe in natural things always determines their life; it is so in things which are spiritual also. The daily affairs of this life go on only because of what men believe; in the spiritual life, if there be any fruit, any line of right conduct followed at all, these things are but the result of truth believed on, and loved in the heart. This truth which makes free indeed, is not the mere theory of things held by the reason to be plausible and true, but it is knowing the truth, knowing it by an experience of its power to save, and comfort, and help. We know things by experience only. And so Jesus means here, the truth known because of having been brought home to the heart and conscience in time of need, when the soul in its great straits must have a source of refuge and comfort, and has then found what it needed in the truth. The truth thus known and felt is but the revelation of Jesus himself to the soul, as a Savior,

friend, helper, sovereign, and as having in himself the fullness of him who is the God of truth. In verse thirty-two, Jesus says, The truth makes free, and in the text quoted at the first, he connects himself with the truth by saying, If the Son shall make you free, &c.

But they said in reply, "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man; how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?" If they meant simply that they had as a nation never been in bondage to any other people, they simply were guilty of falsehood, for even now they were servants of the Roman power, and once they had spent seventy years in bondage in Babylon, and in the time of the Judges, they had often been servants of the nations round about them, and needed deliverance, which had again and again been vouchsafed to them. But this was not what Jesus meant, and their reply was but a sort of willful subterfuge on their part. Now Jesus speaks plainly, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." It is with sin that Jesus had to do, and it is with sin that Jesus has to do now. He did not come to interfere with human institutions, or to change human governments, except as those who have his grace and life dwelling in them, shall become true, and upright, and just, and kindly in their relations to their fellow man. He did not sit as a judge when one came to him and said, "Speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me." He said, "Who made me a judge or divider over you?" Yet if his Spirit should enter into, and dwell in the hearts of the two brothers, both that of him who came to him, and of the other, it would cause that each would only desire justice, and right, and then at once their quarrel would be settled. So of all human bondage and government, if he dwells in the heart, men will be better masters and servants, and better governors, and better magistrates. So he did not speak here of servitude to the Roman power, but of servitude to sin. "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." The form of the word "committeth," signifies a continuance in sin, as of one who loves it, and follows it, and rolls it as a sweet morsel under the tongue. He did not mean that he that stumbles, and falls into sin, and is overtaken in a fault, as the children of God all must confess they often are, is the servant of sin. Over such, the statement of the apostle shows, sin does not reign. He said, "Sin shall not have dominion over you." Sin cannot have dominion over a man, when that man hates it, and abhors it, and cries out against it, but he that loves sin, and loves not righteousness, and the God of righteousness, is the servant (or slave, as the word means) of sin. What a man hates he is not the slave of, though it may often plague him, and distress him. Paul was not the servant of sin when it hindered him from doing the good that he would, because he cried out against it, and abhorred it at the same time. But sin reigns and enslaves a man when it so controls him that he loves it, and seeks after it, and hugs it to his bosom as his most precious treasure. When a man, in short, chooses righteousness, and yet sin hinders him from following after it as he would, he is not the slave of sin, but when a man chooses sin, then he is its slave. How many of the people of God are troubled because they cannot do the good that they would, and so are led to think they are still in bondage to sin, but they have come to realize the bondage of it, and to abhor it, and so its bondage is broken in them. The bondage of sin

shows its completeness in man, in that it so enslaves him that he does not even know that he is enslaved. It seems to him that he is walking at liberty, when he is yet bound hand, and foot, and heart, and will. How complete must be the slavery which causes a man to think himself free, when he is bound. Now to that man the first step toward liberty must be to make him feel his slavery. Then the struggle for liberty will begin in his soul, and not before; then, and then only, will he become aware of the hopelessness of his bondage; then, and then only, will he be driven to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But here are men who commit sin, that is, continue in it, who love it and delight in it, and yet do not know that this is the most hopeless of slavery. These are indeed, as Jesus said, "The servants of sin." This leads us to remark, What folly to talk of such a man being free, or having anything about him that is free. In such a man the soul, mind, spirit, will, imagination, body, in short, every power and faculty of his being, is enslaved by sin; he is a slave through and through. How utterly absurd to talk about free will, with relation to such a man, he is not free, and how then can his will be free? He thinks he is free, but God knows that he is a slave. He does what he wants to do, but this is not to be free. The servants of sin who commit sin think that they are free, but Jesus says that they are not, but in bondage instead. And the first step in the work of grace working in their hearts is to convince them of their slavery. Whether Adam was made free in the first place, it is not needful to discuss, now, at least, Adam is not free, sin is his master, and he reigns in him unto death, and it so reigns, as said before, that it has control of all his affections and desires. We may say that a man is free if he can do unhindered what he desires to do, but Jesus characterizes this as the most abject slavery.

On the other hand the apostle speaks of being the servants of righteousness. (Romans vi. 18.) Here the original Greek word is precisely the same as when he speaks of servitude to sin. It is literally "slave" to righteousness, and here also the completeness of the servitude to righteousness appears in the fact that grace has caused such servants to desire the service, and to love it, and seek it; here also the completeness of the servitude is found in the fact that those who are servants do not feel any bondage in the service; they feel at liberty, and yet God calls them slaves to himself. How perfect is the servitude of that man who thinks he is walking at liberty, even while he is a servant. And this is the liberty of the gospel, this is that liberty of which Jesus, in the text, has spoken, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Freed from the bondage of sin, and brought into service to God, and here also the service is not the service of a free man. He was a servant to sin, now he is a servant to righteousness; he was a lover of sin, now he is a lover of righteousness; then sin reigned unto death, now grace reigns, the man does not reign at all, either then or now, but is reigned over all the time.

But how shall that man who was the servant of sin come to be the servant of righteousness? How shall the slave of Satan become the servant or slave of God? If what we have before said of his bondage be true, it is at once manifest that his deliverance cannot begin of himself, for he does not want to be made

free, and does not know that he is a slave. If such a man struggles at all, it will be to continue in that state where he is. His deliverance cannot come from the deeds of the law, such as are of the deeds of the law, only confirm their bondage. Even when he has been awakened to know his true condition, he cannot free himself; this such an one comes to realize fully before the work of the law is finished in him; he cannot break one sin, and walk free from it. If in his outward life he makes a reformation, it avails not, for here on the heart, and in the very nature of the man, sin abides; he cannot dam up the fountain, though he would fain do so, and so cause that the streams shall be pure; deliverance is not of himself. It is not needful that we should urge more in this line, because we are sure that most of our readers know this for themselves. There is a bondage of sin, or to sin, and there is a bondage to the law, from both Jesus came to deliver his people. In this text and connection we understand the Master to be speaking of the bondage of sin and uncleanness which the Jews were under, notwithstanding they were the greatest sticklers for the law, and the traditions of the fathers. While professing righteousness and all godliness, they were yet but whited sepulchers, they were slaves to pride, covetousness, envy, hatred, malice, and every evil emotion and work; all their works of righteousness did not avail to make them free in the true sense of the word. They did indeed boast of their freedom from uncleanness of all kinds, and despised others who were unclean, yet they were still slaves to the vilest passions, but this they did not feel or know, therefore they did not want deliverance from these things. These were the things which Jesus came to deliver men from, and this they did not want. No wonder that they would have none of him. When the time should come that any of them should feel the burden of sin, and sin should become exceeding sinful, then they would come to him and find freedom in him, but not until then. And Jesus gives freedom, and mark, he has freedom, because he is a Son. We ought to emphasize the expression, "If the Son shall make you free." It is in the Sonship of Christ, and as in union with him, we become sons of God, and are made free. The children are free. Wherein do the children of a household differ from the servants? Is it not that they are children, and as children are united in feeling with the house? It, and all in it, belongs to them. They abide in it forever, as the Master says. The sons of God are then free from that bondage which has constraint in it, compelling a man to do things against his desire, but they are so completely the servants of righteousness, that they want to abide here forever, righteousness so reigns that they love it; Jesus loved righteousness and hated iniquity, and so do they who partake of his Sonship; he cried, Abba, Father, and so do they; he found it his meat and drink to do God's will, and so do they. They do not cry out against being bound to God, and being the servants of righteousness, but they do cry out against sin, and desire deliverance not only from the bondage, but also the presence of sin. Willing servitude is complete servitude. How many earthly masters would have rejoiced, could they have so controlled the affections of their servants, that the servants should choose the servitude, and love it better than all things else. What man cannot do, sin did at the first, and now grace does with us. Once we were willing slaves to sin,

now we are willing servants to God; we were the sons of Satan, now we are the sons of God; here is the source and unfailing fountain of loving, glad, willing service. The Son has made us free, because he has made us to be sons with him, and being sons, we love the God we serve, and serve the God we love. When the believer serves God at any time he is walking at liberty indeed, he is free indeed.

The question is not about his freedom to serve God if he desires to do so, but how comes he to want to serve God in the first place? Yesterday he did not want to love God, to-day he desires this above all things. Whence this miracle? Is it not a miracle of grace? Is not the answer found in this word of the Savior, "Whom the Son shall make free shall be free indeed"? But these Jews would not come to Christ that they might have life, or might be made free. The reason was that they did not know their death, nor the bondage. First they must be shown this, and the impossibility of making themselves free, and then they will come to Christ. None of these things are left to the choice of men, if they were, then none would ever live or be free. Men are made alive, and then are made free. What a blessed salvation! What a blessed freedom! Free from the thralldom of sin, and free from the law. They are now servants it is true, but servants as sons are servants, loving the service, because they love him whom they serve. Who but the Son could give this free service of Sonship? This is true freedom, and each believing heart feels that the more closely his heart shall be bound in the cords of love to this service, the more free he shall be. This is not that spurious freedom, of which men boast so much, which has not God, nor Christ, nor life, nor grace, nor faith in it, but only self; this is a sweet binding, because it binds the believer to what he wants above all things else, and he cannot cease to want this.

"Let me love thee more and more,
If I love at all, I pray;
If I have not loved before,
Help me to begin to-day."

How blessed this service. Who would choose the service which looks only to a reward, if he has once experienced this loving, free service, which is its own reward. Here is the reward *in*, and not *for*, obedience. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

HEBREWS VI. 4-6; JUDE 6.

(Reply to Sister Mary Poston.)

BEFORE we notice the passages on which our sister has asked our views, we will attend to a previous request in her letter, in which she has desired us to instruct her, and teach her the way. From the distinct manner in which the Lord has enabled her to pronounce the Shibboleth, we have unquestionable assurance that she is a pupil in the school of Christ, and a class-mate of those of whom it is written, "And thy people shall all be taught of the Lord," and of whom the blessed Redeemer has said, "Every one therefore which has heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me;" and again, "And he that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." Taught of God, she knows that Jesus Christ himself is the Way: no man cometh unto the Father but by him. As Jesus said to the disciples, "And whither I go, ye know, and the way ye know." But if our sister desires, in the language of the spouse, to inquire, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why

should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?" perhaps the best response will be found in the next verse, (see Cant. i. 7, 8.)

The text in Hebrews vi. 4-6, is urged by the inspired writer as a reason why the saints should leave the shadows of the old covenant, which could make nothing perfect, and go on to perfection, which is found in the new covenant, or gospel kingdom, wherein dwelleth righteousness: not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection from the dead, &c. Under the old covenant, when offerings were made for sins, there was a remembrance again made of sins, every year, and new offerings were required from time to time, under the Levitical priesthood, but now, under the superior priesthood of Christ, the one offering which he has made, presents the only foundation for the doctrine and institutions of the gospel. Instead therefore of our attempting to lay a new foundation, we are to remember, that other foundations can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ, for should this one atonement which he has made, fail us, we would be hopelessly, and forever lost. "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance," &c. That is if those who have passed from death unto life, who are born of God, and are led by the Spirit, in all the experience of the saints, if they, if christians, should fall away from their interest in the blood of Christ, no blood of beasts, offered on Jewish altars, could reclaim them, or afford for them a foundation for repentance, or faith, for they were but figures in the first place, and now even as types of good things to come, they are abolished, and to renew one for whom Christ has died and arisen from the dead, again to repentance, if it were possible they could lose that interest, or fall away from that foundation, would require that to be done which it is impossible ever to be done, namely, the crucifixion of Christ again.

There was in the first place no other way for the sinner to be justified before God, only that which is through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and if he has died for any of us, redeemed us from all sin, and freely justified us from all things, and as an evidence of having done all this for us, he has quickened us, and enlightened us, made us partakers of Christ, who is the heavenly gift, and made us partakers of the Holy Ghost, fed us on the good word of God, which is of itself both spirit and life, and given us a foretaste of heaven, now if it were possible that a saint should lose his interest in all this, would he not, in order to be saved, require the same display of matchless power and grace, as in the first instance? If in the first there was nothing short of the blood of Christ that could cleanse him from sin, nothing short of the crucifixion of Christ could satisfy for him the penal demand of the law, could anything less than the crucifixion of Christ again, the shedding of his blood anew, and the whole work of redemption again performed, renew him, or restore to him what Christ's one offering had done for him?

The impossibility then of saints falling from grace, and being restored again to a gracious state, is perfectly absurd. And the inspired writer in this text, instead of representing that a saint can or may so fall, and be again renewed, most emphatically declares that it is impossible, and as reason why he declares it is impossible, he

shows that it would require that Christ should again suffer and be put to open shame, and that can never again be done. And the holy Apostle says, in verse ninth of the same chapter, "But beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak."

"Better things."—Better things than what? Better things than they should fall away from the foundation on which God has built them. And why was he thus persuaded? Because, "When God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."

Well might these considerations persuade the apostle better things of the saints than that they could ever fall away from Christ, their foundation, for before they can fall, the two immutable things wherein it is impossible for God to lie, must both change and fail; the promise and oath of God, must fail, the strong consolation given to heirs of promise, must fail; the hope which they have as an anchor to the soul, must cease to be either sure or steadfast, and the everlasting priesthood of Christ must also fail, for these are the things which accompany salvation. But some have supposed that our text describes an almost christian. Such a thing as an almost christian never existed either in heaven or earth. We are either christians or we are not. We are either dead in sins, or quickened together with Christ; we are either born again, or we are not born again; we love God or we hate him; there is no middle ground or intermediate place. Those who were once enlightened, are made alive from the dead; for "in him [Christ] was life, and the life was the light of men." Therefore until quickened by immortal life in Jesus Christ, we are under the power of darkness, and it is impossible to see the kingdom of God, or the things of his Spirit, until we are born again. Christ is the heavenly gift; he is the unspeakable gift of God, for God has given him to be head over all things to his church. The gift of God is eternal life, and John says of Christ, "This is the true God, and eternal life." And Christ says they that eat his flesh and drink his blood, or who eat of him as the bread that came down from heaven, shall never die. None but saints are partakers of the Holy Ghost. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Again, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God." But all men have not the Spirit of God. When the promise of the Holy Ghost was made to the saints, it was in these words, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot

receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

"And have tasted the good word of God." Christ says, "The words which I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are life." "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." "Being born again, not of a corruptible seed, but of an incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." Can any but God's children taste of that word? Certainly not; neither can any others taste of the powers of the world to come. If there are now living on the earth any who have any other evidences, over and above those stated in our text, we have never met with them, and the Scriptures, unless we have sadly misread them, point out no other or stronger evidences of being in a gracious state. Let us, while we rejoice then that our God has made it as impossible that these shall fall away, as it is that Christ should be crucified afresh and put to an open shame, take heed to the admonition, to leave the rites and legal ceremonies of the old covenant, in which were embodied the principles, elementary parts, or first lessons, the types and shadows of good things which were to come, but which have now come, and go on to perfection, for the law made nothing perfect, but Christ in the gospel, or new covenant has, as our High Priest, by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified.

We would be glad to help the mind of sister Poston on the text in Jude; but have only room here to say that we understand the angels here spoken of, to be the same of whom Peter speaks in 2 Peter ii. 1–4, as false prophets or teachers, who are represented in Revelations xii., as forming the train of the great red dragon, and who made war with Michael, and prevailed not, but were displaced from the church, and cast out into the earth; these are held under chains of darkness. God has hidden from them the things of his Spirit, and though they attempt to make a science of divinity, and may be ever learning, yet shall they never be able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., October 15, 1857.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon James Thomas, in the 95th year of his age, quietly passed away from this life on June 20th, 1900. Brother Thomas has been a life-long resident of Philadelphia; he was baptized in the fellowship of the Second Baptist Church, before the division, about seventy years ago. Since that time the church has passed through many changes, and severe trials, yet the dear brother proved his faithfulness by continuing in an orderly walk, seldom absenting himself from the regular appointments of the church, except by reason of infirmity in the last few years of his life.

Thus, one by one, the followers of Jesus are gathered together as lively stones to perfect the building of God in the heavenly Jerusalem.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., July 4, 1900.

DIED—At the home of her son, in Hopewell Cape, Albert Co., N. B., April 29th, 1900, our highly esteemed sister in Christ, **Mrs. Mary Crocker,** wife of the late Hemen Crocker, aged 87 years. She professed faith in Christ over fifty years ago, and was baptized by Elder William Sears, who was pastor of the church at that time, to which faith she remained a worthy and consistent member until death. She leaves several sons and daughters to mourn their loss, but what is their loss, is her gain.

The writer attended her funeral, and spoke a few words of comfort from Psalm cxvi. 15. A large gathering of relatives and friends assembled to pay their last respects to one they esteemed so highly.

ALEX BARNETT.

EDGETTS LANDING, June 25, 1900.

Nancy Walker was born Nov. 3d, 1869, died June 23d, 1900, at home, after a lingering illness of about five months. Her conversation, as related briefly to the writer, was a comfort, and we felt that she spoke in harmony with those who declare that "they seek a better country, that is, an heavenly." She never united with the church, but received a hope about fifteen years ago. She was reserved and cautious about her words. It seemed to me that she was one

of those who are "slow to speak," and "swift to hear," catching in a measure the truthfulness of the statement that "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man." She was enabled to talk to her mother awhile before she took her departure, and said she was going to die, and begged her not to weep; she told her that she was going to heaven. To express the assurance she had received fifteen years ago, she could say nothing less. Thanks be unto God, who always causes us to triumph through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Submitted in hope by

T. D. WALKER.

DUNLAP, June 29, 1900.

CHURCH HISTORY.

THE meeting appointed for three days, at Turner's Station, Ky., commencing second Saturday in June, 1900, came off, with Elders P. W. Sawin and Isaac Sawin present. We had some excellent preaching. This church seems to be in a prosperous condition; there has been eleven additions in the last year. Two were baptized during the last meeting. They are indeed a little band knit together in a bundle of love. This church called Cane Run, is in Henry Co., Ky., situated about forty-four miles east of Louisville, and was organized by Isaac Malin and James Dupes, in 1813, and Isaac Malin became its first pastor in 1822. W. D. Ball emigrated to Henry Co., Ky., and united with this church. He was born in Fauquier Co., Va., in 1799, and baptized at seventeen years of age. He was licensed to preach, by Cane Run church, in 1832, and ordained by Hugh Montgomery and Isaac Malin, in 1835, and became their second pastor. He died in 1862. The third pastor was Elder Samuel Jones, or "Uncle Sam," as he was known and beloved by all. He was excellent company, a natural born poet, as he could readily compose on any subject you might give him. He served this County for many years as school superintendent. He died about ten years ago, aged about 80 years.

Elder N. A. Hunston moved to Henry County, and joined Cane Run church by letter from Union Forge church, Shenandoah Co., Va., second Saturday in April, 1849, and was ordained by the same church, the second Saturday in July, 1854, by Elders R. W. Ricketts and W. D. Ball. He served the church faithfully until his death, Jan. 26th, 1890.

Elder P. W. Sawin, the present pastor, was born Jan. 2d, 1844, and began preaching in 1861, ordained at Conns Creek church, Shelby Co., Ind., November, 1863, and is now living at Shelbyville, Ky., and walking in the footsteps of his blessed Master, of unwavering faith in his religious views, and guarding against dissensions among the household of faith.

Your brother in hope,

E. F. RANSDELL.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$367 05
Jennie Dunlap, Illinois	1 00
Total to date	$368 05

ORDINATION.

MOUNT OLIVE Primitive Baptist church, situated near Philippi, W. Va., convened at her regular day of meeting, June 23d, 1900, to set apart her beloved brother, F. A. Cleavenger, to the full work of the ministry, by ordination according to gospel order.

The ordination sermon was preached by Elder J. N. Bartlett, from 2 Timothy iv. 1-5.

Elders J. S. Corder and J. N. Bartlett being the only ministers present, they proceeded to the ordination.

The candidate was called upon by Elder J. N. Bartlett, to relate his christian experience, and his call to the ministry, also his views on the cardinal points of Bible doctrine and church order.

The presbytery, with the church, being fully satisfied, the ordination prayer and charge was given by Elder J. S. Corder, and the right hand of fellowship given by the same.

Done by order of the church, at her regular meeting, date above written.

J. S. CORDER, Moderator.

W. C. THOMPSON, Clerk.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Spoon River Association will convene (the Lord willing) in her sixty-ninth session, three and one-half miles southeast of Farmington, at or near the residence of brother C. E. Prior, on Friday, August 31st, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continuing over Sunday. All trains will be met on Thursday evening, at Farmington. None will be met on Friday, except the early train on the C., B. & Q., from the south.

All are invited, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1900. NO. 15.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GLENWOOD, Texas, Feb. 7, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I send you herewith a letter written by our dear sister Laura Strong, which I think will be of interest to the tried children of God. It was not written for publication, but I have her consent to send it to you, for you to examine, and if you think best, to publish.

Yours in hope,

I. M. SCARBOROUGH.

HENDERSON, Texas.

MISS MAY SCARBOROUGH—MY DEAR FRIEND AND SISTER IN CHRIST, AS I HOPE:—I feel satisfied that you are one of the redeemed of the Lord, and I sometimes feel to hope that I myself have been called out of darkness into light. If we are what we sometimes feel to hope, children of God, purchased with the precious blood of Christ, we are related in spirit, and nothing can separate the relation. If it pleases God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will, to enable me, I will now try to scribble you a few lines, but I need the guidance of the unerring Spirit of God, whether I talk or write, of the glorious things which pertain to the kingdom of God. I desire, if my treacherous heart deceives me not, to speak of the goodness and mercy of God, he has bestowed upon me great and many blessings, all the days of my life, and I am not worthy of even the least of them, he has blessed me with spiritual blessings also. When I can realize how greatly I have been blessed, and remember what great things the Lord has done for me, the thought comes into my mind, What is it all for? Is it for my righteous acts, or anything good that I have done? No! I have never done anything good. It is alone according to his goodness and mercy. You remember, we read in the prophet Jeremiah, "I loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Thus it is through his loving-kindness that he blesses us, and it is not for righteousness that we have done. I can speak for myself, and say that I have never done anything good, but have done evil continually. I have learned this by experience, and I learn more about it every day; our righteousness is in Christ. The prophet speaking of him, says, "And this is his name whereby he shall be called, The

Lord our righteousness." He is the righteousness of his people, he suffered, the just for the unjust. As to whether I am a child of God or not, I cannot tell, but it does my soul good to hear the servants of God speak comfortably unto Jerusalem, crying unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, through the suffering and death of Jesus. He came down from heaven not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him, and when he had done the will of God on earth, he was nailed to the cross, and bowed his head and cried, "It is finished." The salvation of all God's people was finished, and weak mortals can add nothing to it. O, what a consoling thought it is, to know that our eternal salvation is worked out. This is the doctrine that I love, and this is what I believe. There was once a time with me that I was blind to it, and believed there was much that I must do to be saved, and that if I did not do it, I would be lost. Isaiah said, "I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." I feel to hope, my dear sister that this is the way in which I have been led; I see things quite differently from what I once did; I have been made to see that the worldly pleasures which I once enjoyed, and desired to enjoy, are nothing, and that they will all soon vanish away. The only real enjoyment that I now have, is when I am in the Spirit, and in meditating over the glorious things of the kingdom of God, and in hearing the people of God tell of their travels, of how they were taken up out of the horrible pit, and the miry clay, and their feet set upon a rock, and of how a new song was put into their mouth, even praises to God. How greatly we can be changed! I am not writing as I thought I would.

This Scripture is on my mind now, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." Can you not look back over your life, and remember a time when you were not a mourner? I can remember that in my childhood days these things did not trouble me, and my only desire was to enjoy the things of this life. I was blessed with good health, and could walk and go where I pleased, until I was a little more than twelve years of age; I had no troubles nor trials, but enjoyed worldly pleasures. But the time came when I was made to realize that I was a sinner, I believe that it pleased God to show me my sinful condition, and I also hope that the time came when he comforted me, and this was when I was on a bed of affliction, I was as an infant, no one was in the room, and the comfort came unexpectedly to me. In this room, where I was born naturally, born in sin, and as the psalmist said, shapen in iniquity, it was here, on a bed of affliction, suffering untold misery, that I trust I was born of God spiritually; here it was that Christ was revealed to me as my Savior, if indeed I have ever seen him as such, and I was comforted and made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Ah, my sister, when we are brought down to the place where we can do nothing for ourselves, and others can do nothing for us, then we learn what weak mortals we are. I think that I have been there. Were it not for that evening, and the happiness that I felt then, it seems to me that I would be without hope in the world. When doubts and fears arise, and I am cast down, my mind runs back to that time, and I look at the spot,

and the words of the poet comes to my mind,

"Where is the blessedness I knew,
When first I saw the Lord?
Where is the soul-refreshing view,
Of Jesus and his word?"

Blessed indeed are they that mourn. I had lain upon my bed day after day, and night after night, and had often wet my pillow with tears, while mourning over my lost condition, but I believe that I was comforted, but I am a mourner yet, I mourn day and night, on account of sin within me, I desire to do what is right, but cannot find the way. I can say as did Paul, "I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil that I would not, that I do." I am as sinful as ever I was, and the longer I live, the more I see what a great sinner I am, but I do hope that there is a spirit in me that causes me to desire to know, and do the things of God, but I am so far from doing what I think a child of God would do, that I often think it is all imagination, and all of the flesh, and that I am deceived, and that others are deceived in me. O, how often am I made to ask myself the question, Am I indeed a soldier of the cross? The old soldiers know what a soldier has to pass through, but we never know anything really, except as we are taught it by experience.

I have learned that we are not to be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease. We must pass through trials and tribulations while we are in the world; in the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, Jesus has overcome the world. Thanks be unto him from whom every good and perfect gift cometh, that his people though tried, and often cast down, are not destroyed; they are not left without a remedy, Christ is their remedy, for him hath God exalted a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance unto Israel, and the forgiveness of sins.

Well, I must bring this imperfect letter to a close, it is strange that one so little and unworthy as myself should ever try to write or talk of these things, but it is as you said, they get on our mind, and we cannot help it, and we write for relief of mind. We learn obedience by the things that we suffer. I have not written what I thought I would, but have followed the dictates of my mind.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

LAURA S. STRONG.

[THE above letter though very good, was very lengthy, and we have culled extracts from it. It is, as we believe, a narrative of true christian travel. We feel to deeply sympathize with our sister in her afflictions, and feel sure that through affliction the Lord has taught her to know more of his grace, than she could otherwise have learned. May God bless and comfort her, is our desire.—ED.]

KEITH, Okla. Ter., 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I am much pleased with brother Chick's editorial upon the prophet who went back and did what the Lord told him not to do. I fear that I am very much like that yielding prophet, also I am pleased with brother Lively's article exhorting the brethren not to be afraid to preach the truth for fear of hurting the feelings of some one, for we are told that he that seeketh to please men is not the servant of Christ. My mind is on the language of David, recorded in Psalm cxxxix. 15, 16, which reads as follows: "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts

of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." We are told in Acts xv. 18, that all the works of God were known of him before the foundation of the world, and Paul, in second Timothy says, that the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. Now if the above Scripture be true, well could David say, "My substance was not hid from thee," "For known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world," and we are told in Isaiah xlvi. 10, that God had declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. This shows that God had a purpose from all eternity. Isaiah said again, xiv. 24, "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Now the purpose of God is an eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Eph. iii. 11.) When David said, "My substance was not hid from thee," I understand him to mean the whole church of Christ. Isaiah again said, lxvi. 8, "Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." I understand Isaiah and David to mean the same thing, both have the church under consideration.

"When I was made in secret." The church was made in secret, because she was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Was not that very secretly? Before all worlds were formed, she, in his purpose, was made according to the divine arrangement, and was curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. I understand yesterday, and to-day, and forever, to be one eternal now, with God. The earth had not yet been actually created, yet the church was curiously wrought in the lowest part of the earth, in the purpose of God. "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect." In Gal. iii. 8, Paul says that our God is a foreseeing God, thus he saw the church, being yet unperfect, which I understand to mean, in her undeveloped state, that is, in the eye of every one save his own. He adds, "In thy book all my members were written." When were they written in his book? John on the isle of Patmos says their names were written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. Go to most of the religious meetings of the day, and you will hear men teaching that the names of men are registered in the Lamb's book of life when they give themselves to Christ, but divine inspiration says their names were written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. Which is true? Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth unto me shall come unto me."—John vi. 37. It seems then from what our Lord said about the matter, that the Father gave them to him, instead of its being true that they gave themselves to him, as most of the modern preachers say about the matter. In John x. 29, Jesus is recorded as saying, "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Thus we see the testimony of Jesus in two places, both times affirming that the Father gave them to him, instead of their giving themselves to him. I think that the preachers of the

day ought to show at least one passage of Scripture to sustain the idea of the sinner giving himself to Christ. Jesus said again, "I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me, and this is the will of him that sent me, that of all that he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Thus in three places we see that his testimony is that the Father gave them to him. It does look that if it were true that the sinner was to give himself to Christ, he would have said so at least one time somewhere in the Bible, but the Lord did not say so, and I do not believe that the preachers are correct.

"In thy book all my members were written." This was long before the sinner had an actual existence in the world. Now these members were fashioned in continuance when as yet there was none of them; not one of the church of Christ had an actual existence when they were written in the book of God. Then, dear child of God, must it not be of grace from first to last?

"Grace first inscribed my name
In God's eternal book;
'Twas grace that gave me to the Lamb,
Who all my sorrows took."

Then after we were born according to the course of nature,

"Grace led our roving feet
To tread the heavenly road,
And new supplies each hour I meet,
While passing on to God."

How did grace first lead our feet to walk the heavenly road?

"It first gave us sight to view him,
For sin our eyes had sealed,
Then he bade us look unto him;
I looked, and I was healed."

He gave each to feel his need of a Savior, and the poor sinner instead of having anything to do with his name being registered in the book of life, is as helpless as a child; he is given to see himself undone, and that he is lost, and that God is just in his condemnation. But how plain the plan of salvation looks to them when by the eye of faith they view their blessed Advocate hanging upon the cross for their cruel sins, and hear him say, Let them go free, for I have found a ransom. This ransom was his precious blood which was shed to cover all their sins. Through Christ they see all their sins blotted out, and believe certainly that goodness and mercy shall follow them all the days of their life. They feel themselves quite free from pain and sin. They think their enemies are slain; they have no doubt that all is well, and Satan is cast down to hell.

"But 'tis not long before they feel
Their feeble souls begin to reel;
They think their former hopes were vain;
Again they're filled with grief and pain.

O foolish child, why didst thou doubt
In the enlargements of thy coast?
Why didst thou think to fly away
Before thou leavest this poor clay?"

These same people all have their trials and temptations to encounter in the world. Our blessed Master said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." Then do not think it strange if you meet with trials and tribulations here; Jesus has overcome the world, and bye and bye he he will come and take all his people home too, that where he is they may be also. It will not be long, dear brethren, before we shall be discharged from this world of sorrow, toil and pain, and shall be taken where sorrow, pain and woe, shall never be felt, but we shall be forever at rest in the bosom of our beloved Savior; then we shall see Jesus and all the holy angels; there we shall be gathered among the great multitude with Jesus at the head, he who is our Captain, Husband and elder Brother; there we shall see

with wonder that innumerable company whom no man can number; there we shall enjoy heaven with all that heaven means.

"When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise,
Than when we first begun."

Dear brethren, remember me, a poor, lone pilgrim, at a throne of grace. I am less than the least of all saints, if one at all.

Your brother in hope,

J. M. DULEY.

[THE above good letter has been mislaid in some way, and so has been delayed in publication. Only recently we have found it, and now give it to our readers. We hope that our brother will except our excuse, and not think hard of us.—ED.]

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 1, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel sure this letter of sister Attie Curtis to sister Bessie, will be refreshing and cheering to the readers of the SIGNS, and so I ask for it a place in your columns, feeling sure that sister Attie will not object. The doctrine of God our Savior is good at any time, and however presented, but it seems to come nearer to us, and have a clearer light, and a sweeter fragrance, when it comes directly from the heart, told in the exercises and experiences of the daily life, than when presented in a purely argumentative form. Lovers of the truth love to see the rock, and to hear the sound of the hammer ringing upon it, to show how firm and solid it is, but they love still more to also suck honey out of it, and oil out of the flinty rock. There are many of the dear, scattered family of God who have the same love for the church that sister Attie expresses, and the same joy in the assembly of the saints, and the same comfort in conference with them, and in joining in prayer and songs of praise to the dear Lord, and the same sweet and abiding trust in him, but not many have the gift to speak of these things, and tell these exercises so fully. Such a gift in one is for the good of all. Let them share it; nothing is sweeter than to hear one's exercises told by another, unless it may be sometimes the telling of them to those of like precious faith, who have the same.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

LAWRENCE, Mass., Feb. 23, 1900.

MY DEAR SISTER BESSIE:—I did not think so long a time would pass and my pen be silent, for you have been in my mind many, many times, and a desire to write of "thy comforts" which delight my soul. Something has seemed to prevent me each time, and it is with a sweet satisfaction, and a real pleasure, that I find the opportunity and desire present, and nothing to hinder me from having a long chat with you. I have been home two months, and have not been feeling very well; I had a cold, and it settled in my ears so I have been quite deaf, and although I am better, I cannot hear as well as I did before the attack. I hope it will be the Lord's will to give me hearing, for I should miss so much in not hearing the gospel proclaimed, and the conversation with those of like precious faith. I would like to tell you all about my visit in Maine, how pleasant and enjoyable it was. When I tell you I expected to be gone six weeks, and was away five months, and did not get all my visits made even then, you will know I must have had a delightful time. They all gave me such a warm welcome in their homes, and did so much for my

comfort and pleasure, I could not help feeling at home. I attended the associations, and enjoyed them very much. I received your welcome letter while in Whitefield Saturday evening after a conference meeting, and I read it to the loved ones, and we were all edified and comforted. I was present at every conference and meeting in Bowdoinham, and lost only one Sunday meeting, as it was such a severe snow storm. But I was at brother and sister Clough's, so our conversation part of the time was concerning spiritual things. I felt I was richly blessed in being permitted to assemble with the saints, and since I came home the memory of the meetings and visits have been so pleasant, I have had a peace of mind which the world knows not. If I could remember and write all the conversation with the saints, the theme would be Jesus, the Savior of sinners; nothing outside of Jesus, for it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell in Jesus. It has been such a sweet comfort to me in times of distress, and when mourning over my sinfulness, and unworthiness, to have my mind in an instant led to see that all I needed was treasured up in Jesus Christ. How quickly the new song was put into my mouth, "even praise unto God." He has been mindful of me every moment of my life, and his goodness and mercy have followed me all my days.

"Awake, my soul, in joyful lays,
And sing thy great Redeemer's praise;
He justly claims a song from me,
His loving-kindness, O how free!"

"When trouble, like a gloomy cloud,
Has gather'd thick, and thunder'd loud,
He near my soul has always stood,
His loving-kindness, O how good."

I am enjoying the beauty of these words of David, having them brought forcibly to my heart in a personal experience: "In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul." If I could express clearly some of these comforts which God alone gives, you would have an interesting letter to read. The sweet evidences which are mine at times that Jesus is formed in my soul the hope of glory. The love for the people of God in exercise in my soul, shows I have passed from death unto life. I mourn for sin, and realize I do the things I would not, and in the midst of it I behold Jesus "mighty to save." He is no longer as a root out of dry ground, and I never can tell how beautiful he appears as the Savior of sinners. The song of redeeming love springs up in my heart, and is sweetly sung there if not a word escapes my lips. There never could have been such a sweet strain sung by sinners, if it had not been in God's plan for sin to come into the world. He needs none of his creatures to try to vindicate him, his ways are above our ways, and his thoughts above our thoughts; he has all power in heaven and earth, he is holy, just and good, too wise to err, too good to be unkind; all things were made by him, and for his pleasure they were created. When we have a view of the Lord God omnipotent, and that he reigns, and will be our guide even unto death, what a blessed rest and peace is felt in our hearts.

"Thy ways are little known,
To my weak, erring sight;
Yet shall my soul, believing, own
That all thy ways are right."

In all my ways I must acknowledge him, and how wonderfully he has blessed me. I find his name is a strong tower, and have run into it, and experienced that safety which none can know only in that way. We cannot tell it to one who does not know it, so they can understand it, any more than we can make them see the

salvation which is of grace. It comes only by revelation. It has never entered the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. They are revealed by his Spirit. "All we can boast, till Christ we know, is vanity and toil." "Without me, ye can do nothing," is just the same to-day, as when Jesus spoke those words to his disciples. It is a sweet experience when felt in the heart, and we are filled with meekness and humility. His name is precious to those who believe, and when my heart rejoices and is glad, I find myself singing or repeating some hymn, or a verse of a hymn, which has the word Jesus in it. O, how precious God's comforts are as we travel the journey of life. He has given me the consolation of the gospel in times of sorrow; he has enabled me to see Zion, and her walls, which are salvation. He brought me to that "quiet habitation," and has been "a place of broad rivers and streams." He has given me the assurance that because I dwell in the secret place of the Most High, I shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. No evil can befall me. My flesh and carnal mind will often say, Evil has come, for they are enmity against God. If I seem to faint and fall by the way, and think I shall be overcome and perish, when it is the Lord's will, he will enable me to see that I am still abiding under the shadow of the Almighty. I shall be taught again that nothing good can be found in my flesh, and that I am dependent upon my God for everything. I feel that I am feebly expressing the comforts which have been given me, and my pen can never bring out their fullness, your own sweet experience of them will give you the fullness.

I did not get to Florida, as my friend was not able to go. I hoped to attend the associations, and meet many loved ones this spring, but no way seems open. God knows what is best for me, and does all things well. I desire above all things to be made reconciled to his will. It is pleasant here in my new home, and we have had a mild winter. I hope you and yours are all in usual health. I shall be very glad to hear from you when you have time to write. My love to you all, and perhaps it will not be long before your brother will have to read a letter from me. I hope to go to North Berwick, to meeting, soon, and see the loved ones there. Remember me to those of like precious faith when you meet with them.

Your loving sister in hope,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

GARDEN CITY, Minn., May 13, 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel this morning to say, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it [this gospel] is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;" that is, the power of God to save every believer. Believing that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," written or dictated by the Holy Ghost, I am forced to believe what I find there recorded. Jesus says, "They testify of me." I find from the declaration of John, who leaned on Jesus' breast, the loved disciple, that "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Since God is unchangeable, that Word who was in the beginning with God, and was God, has ever been, and is, and will be God, to all eternity. Hence, when I speak of the word of God, I want to be understood to mean the Lord Jesus Christ.

We learn from Paul's letter to the faithful brethren at Colosse, i. 16, 17, "By him were all things created, that

are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Now, brethren, enumerate and see what is included here. If there is anything left out, it comes under the title of nothing. Not only is this the fact of creation, but infinite wisdom knew, and hence was able to "declare the end from the beginning," with precision, thus testifying that every event, small and great, was fixed in the economy of God's providence. Creation for a purpose, every part thereof for a purpose, and God working therein "all things according to the counsel of his own will," "in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth;" "no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God." Nothing made in vain. The antidote for sin, the sinner's Savior, prepared and "stood as a lamb slain" before Adam had an existence, or the "good seed" was "sown in the field." In prophetic vision it is declared, "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord! Thy saints shall sing praises unto thee." "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good."—Gen. i. 31.

Now, brethren, I want to ask a few questions.

If God "worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will," (Eph. i. 11,) how much do men, devils or "free agents," vary from fulfilling the sovereign, eternal will of an immutable Jehovah? His law given "that the offense may abound," or be made manifest, is violated, and redemption effected, eternal redemption, according to God's own salvation plan, and the objects of his love are freely "justified from all things, from which they could not be by the law of Moses." Now, "The law of the spirit of life, which is in Christ Jesus, having made them free from the law of sin and death," the subjects of grace have a duty to perform to him "who has died for them, and rose again." Now, brethren, in the God-given light of your own experience, I ask, Does the will or power to perform these duties, or any part thereof, arise from the flesh? "The works of the flesh are manifest."—Gal. v. 19. The apostle tells you what they all are, and that "in his flesh dwells no good thing," but "it lusts against the Spirit," and *vice versa*, and that the carnal mind is enmity, and cannot be subject to the law of God, but the other kind, the fruits of the Spirit, are love, joy," &c. (Gal. v. 22.) What bears this fruit? "The Spirit." Then "His glory he will not give to another, nor his praise to graven images." (Isa. xlii. 8; xlviii. 11; Psalm cxv. 1.) No, brethren, "the talents" are the Master's goods, not ours. (Matt. xxv. 14.) The Master's portion is his "own with usury," (verse 27,) the "interest" is not ours. Jesus said that at a certain time the kingdom of heaven should be likened unto ten virgins, and declares "five were wise," and "five were foolish." I find no vessels for the foolish, and I do not see how human wisdom, or human effort, could change what Jesus has said should be. We firmly believe that the prayer Jesus taught his disciples to pray is, has been, and will be eternally answered, and surely believe God's sovereign will is done "in earth as it is in heaven." "Knowing the terrors of the Lord, we persuade men," but how often have our exhortations been unavailing, yet we must "reprove, rebuke and exhort, with all long-suffering," knowing that it is God works in the hearer, as well as the

speaker, "to will and do of his good pleasure." God knows what is best for his children, and even the worst phases of what we call evil, he assures us "work together for good to them that love him." We serve in exhortation because we feel "necessity is laid upon us," but if willingly, we have our reward. Yet the apostle says some will charge that we say, "Let us do evil, that good may come." No, my dear brethren, we only teach that our God gives the will, as well as the power, and is entitled to all the glory, and that men are no more "free agents" after the "new birth" than before. After Jacob was "turned about," the Lord "kept him as the apple of his eye," and all his little ones we learn are "kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." We learn that upon Jesus the Spirit was put "without measure," so that he fulfilled the law, every duty, every obligation, (John iii. 34,) but it pleased the Lord to afflict, to bruise him, he hath put him to grief. The servant is not greater than his Lord. Since all acceptable service of God must be in the Spirit, the fruits of the Spirit, may he who alone can give the knowledge, will or power, enable us to ask aright, for that inestimable gift, that we who have named the name of the Lord, may depart from iniquity, that living in the Spirit, we may walk in the Spirit, worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, that the Zion of our God may "arise, and shine the glory of the Lord being risen upon her."

Your brother in gospel bonds,

GARRETT MURPHY.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., Feb. 3, 1900.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—I inclose a letter to you, requesting its publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, should you deem it worthy a place in its columns. It was written to the church on Schoharie Hill, by a daughter of the late Elder Lambert Gass, and although not intended for publication in our family paper, she will not censure me very harshly for the liberty I take in forwarding it to you. So many of her brethren and sisters live so far from their home church, that they do not get to meeting very often, and being readers of the SIGNS, will by the publication of her letter be enabled to hear of one they all hold in high esteem for the truth's sake.

Yours in fellowship,

P. S. KINNEY.

EUCLID, Ohio, Jan. 25, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS AT THE DEAR HOME CHURCH:—I have been feeling for some time that I must again try and address you by letter, but if the dear Lord does not give me a word of comfort for you it is in vain I take up my pen to write. What vain and foolish creatures we are by nature! How often we feel and say, If I could talk like this one, or write like that one, it would then be a pleasure to talk and write. But should we not rather be willing to exercise the gift (be it ever so small) that the dear Lord has bestowed on us, for he is all-wise, and what to us may seem insignificant and worthless, in his sight is precious, for he has formed nothing in vain, and if we are a part of the spiritual building, we have been chosen, and prepared, and fitted, for the very place we occupy, and the building would not be complete without the smallest stone. Yes, dear ones, I do often feel how ignorant and worthless I am, if indeed I am a part of this spiritual building at all, I surely must be the most inferior part,

but should I murmur if I am? No, no, but rather thank God that he has (as I hope) chosen me at all, and I have by his grace been enabled at times to feel willing to be anything, or nothing, just as he wills. This morning, while meditating on his love and goodness, such a sweet feeling of confidence, and rest, and trust, came over me, I felt as secure as a little child in its mother's arms; I felt whether living or dying, I am the Lord's. What a glorious hope to be bestowed on such vile sinners. But we are freely justified through our Savior Jesus Christ, he has borne our sins in his own body on the tree, has satisfied the law, died, was laid in the tomb, and arose a victorious conqueror over death, hell and the grave. When he, the Head, arose, the church, the body, arose with him, so we with confidence can sing, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" With all this assurance of our eternal union with Christ, yet still we are led to mourn when we see this fleshly nature so prone to sin, daily leading us into all manner of evil, and we find ourselves doing the very things we hate, and we are made to cry over and over again, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Now if we are freely justified from all our sins, why must we still be plagued by them, and caused to stumble and fall so many times by the way, and groan and cry under the burden of them? Ah, my friends, it is a blessing in disguise, it is to teach us that our sufficiency is all in him; were it not for this thorn in the flesh, we would become puffed up, and glory in our strength, and forget to look unto the hills from whence our help cometh. We have to learn over and over again, "That which is born of the flesh, is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit." So the warfare between the flesh and Spirit will continue as long as we remain in this tabernacle. "In every believer two armies are seen; the new man of grace, and the old man of sin," but believe me, dear ones, the victory is ours, not will be, as I used to think, but is ours. Yes, thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. So with this glorious hope in view may we all be enabled to go patiently forward in the paths marked out for us, sweetly trusting in his wisdom to deal out to us our allotted portions of joy and sorrow, remembering he has said, I will never leave nor forsake thee.

"The soul that on Jesus doth lean for repose,
I will not, I will not, desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake."

Our little band still meet twice a month, and God blesses us with his presence. One of the number told me these were the best meetings they had ever had. How I felt to thank God for his goodness to us. We now expect Elder J. Eubanks, of Kentucky. I first met him last February, in Canada. He is a very tender preacher, and I hope his visit will be blessed to our spiritual comfort.

May God bless and keep you all for his name's honor and glory. I have a great desire to meet with you all once more, and join you in worshiping the only true God, but his will be done.

Farewell. Be of good cheer, the victory is ours through the blood of the Lamb.

Yours in the bonds of the gospel.

JENNIE CROSS.

EAST DIXFIELD, Maine, April 5, 1900.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Yours of March 6th was received in due time, and was gratefully

read, and I was made glad by it. At that time I was quite poorly from a severe cold, and my spirits were much depressed. Yet in a comforting way I felt the promise of our dear Redeemer, "My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." You wrote that my letter was most comforting to you in every way. How I rejoiced at that, and that I was able in any manner to comfort others with the comfort wherewith I myself am comforted of God. I have dwelt much of late upon this portion of the Scripture, "But beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." "He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever." How securely we can rest, when cast down and perplexed, having the assurance that it is all clear with him who knoweth the end from the beginning. While at Bowdoinham I remarked to Elder Keene in conversation, that it seemed to me that I had as clear views of the wisdom and holiness of God, when I was of the age of his little daughter, who was by our side, as at this time. He asked, If that did not imply predestination? It surely did, but at that early age I could only think that God was supreme.

In looking over my life I cannot recall a time when I did not believe that he had all power in heaven and in earth. You often allude in your letters to the joy of the morning with you, and in a way, it has brought to my mind some passages of my own, but I fear that I shall disconnect and omit very much, for it seems dim and a long way off. With a view of God's holiness there was also a view of my own unlikeness to him, and I tried the various ways, which the convicted sinner always does, to span the abyss. This I found I never could do of my own merits. I think I have read from your pen that you believed in the power and efficacy of Christ to save, before you felt him to be your Savior. This was my situation. If I could but touch the hem of his garments, or, as was often said, only believe. But time passed on until I was twenty-seven years of age, when at a public gathering which I attended, and which was opened by prayer, the Lord was pleased to show me the justification which is in Christ, and that I could approach him in the spirit of adoption, and could cry, Abba, Father, my Father and my God. I have heard people say that at such a time with them all nature seemed to be rejoicing and praising God. In all my previous life nature to me had seemed to be showing forth the praise of God in all his works, but man did not praise him. At the time I speak of, the manifestation to me, as I raised my eyes, was the clouds of night, with a rift in them, and a solitary star gleaming. Of late I often think of it, so unlike any one of whom I ever heard, but that star was to me as a nail in a sure place, an now, if my Father hides his face, I feel that he is my Father still. At that time I made no mention of this. About a year passed when I attended a meeting held at North Jay, by Elder Wm. J. Purington; he preached from the text, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." So I found that a believer was called to follow Christ, and come out from the world, and be separate, and I still think so. I have said that it was a matter of rejoicing that no hindrances debarred me from the church of God. There is no propitiation for sin, but the blood and righteousness of our Lord

Jesus Christ, and he will make his people willing in the day of his power.

As the years go by I feel more and more the need of the healing of the great Physician, and believe more and more firmly that his blood cleanses from all sin. This is but a meagre view of the leadings of my mind, but as I said before, it seems a long way off, and new vistas open from time to time. As peculiar as the manner of the gift of faith was to me, it yet was to me the gift of God, and when I hear brethren speak of a dim or little hope, I think at once of that scene. The High Priest who has forever perfected them that are sanctified, and has entered into the holy of holies, is my soul's bright morning star, and my rising sun.

I fear that I have written you a very unprofitable letter, but it always seems to me that in writing to me you always supply so much, and understand so much better what I mean than I do myself. I know this, that you are always generous, and I crave and need your generosity.

May God bless and keep you, with all the redeemed, is the prayer of your sister,

ELIZA WHEELWRIGHT.

MATTHEW XXIII. 9.

"CALL no man your father upon the earth."

[SOME little time since we received a request from brother Geo. N. Hartsough, of Lauraville, Ohio, for our views upon the above text. A few days later the following letter written by Elder Samuel Trott, to sister Harriet I. Vanwinkle, more than forty years ago, was handed to us by her sister, having been found among her effects after her death, which treats upon this very subject, and as it expresses in full our own views, and expresses them much better than we could possibly do ourself, we publish his letter, believing that it will prove more satisfactory to brother Hartsough than anything we could write, and beside that it will be read with deep interest by many who either knew Elder Trott, or were familiar with his writings in the SIGNS, many years ago. Elder Trott passed away more than thirty-three years ago, but the fruit of his labors in the gospel yet remains. A good portion of the letter is occupied with other matters than upon the text named, but we will transcribe it all, as it is all interesting.—ED.]

FAIRFAX Co., Va., Nov. 11, 1859.

DEAR SISTER HARRIET:—Your interesting letter of Sept. 15th, came to hand in due time, but I have been much from home since, and have really had no time to attend to correspondence. Indeed, owing to infirmities of mind incident to age, writing has become a real task to me. When I get home after my journeys I feel more like resting or being composed, than using that exertion of mind which is necessary to writing.

You address me as father, and then ask my views upon the propriety of calling any man father. I am not partial to the term in addressing any man, or in being addressed by others. There is certainly a certain sense in which we should call no man father, or our Lord would not have forbidden it. In the very sense in which I understand him to forbid it, popular preachers in every age have been ambitious in being called father. This has tended to render my mind averse to the use of the term, excepting with relation to natural parentage, but the Scriptures justify the use of the term with respect to age, as 1 John ii. 13, 14, and as perhaps in the case you quote from 1 Cor. iv., where it is used to denote the persons having been instrumental in conveying gospel truth first to our mind, but

when, by the use of the term, we would acknowledge any person or thing, such as Sunday Schools, Tracts or other things, as that which produced in us spiritual life and light, we entirely transgress our Lord's instruction, and contradict the truth of the case. For if we have ever been begotten again, begotten to a spiritual existence, our God sovereignly and independently has done it, and not any preacher. Again, if we receive and rest upon anything as religious truth, because any man has taught it, and not because we have an internal evidence that it is God's revealed truth, we acknowledge that man as our father, or the father of such truth, or rather sentiment, and thus go contrary to our Lord's instruction.

Still further, our Lord's instruction upon this point was designed to guard his disciples from looking to men, or to any man, for spiritual instruction, instead of looking to God alone, that they might be taught of him. When God teaches us, though he may make man instrumental in conveying to us the truth taught, we shall receive it, not as the word of man, but as the word of God, and shall thus rest upon it as God's truth, feeling that God has enlightened our minds to know the truth.

You complain of feeling very sinful in all your ways, and express fears on this account that you may have been deceived. If you did not feel, and thus know your entire sinfulness, you might well doubt your having been taught or enlightened of God. We know from God's word that we are altogether depraved, that the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, and if therefore God has ever taught us the knowledge of ourselves, we shall not only know this to be the truth in theory, but we shall also feel it to be so. Where there is life there is feeling, as well spiritually as naturally. If there is anything good or lovely in us, it is the spiritual man or Christ in us, and not the old or natural man changed. Love to God, love to his people and cause, love to the truth, and a desire to be holy, and live to God, these things are good, as well as faith in Christ. And it is our having this knowledge of God, and his love shed abroad in our heart, that makes us truly feel our sinfulness, and loathe it. Hence it is that we have no confidence in ourselves, nor in our doings, and that we come to trust alone in Christ for acceptance with God. These are evidences to others, and ought to be to ourselves, that we are born of God, and are therefore his children.

There are thousands of religionists about us, whose religious knowledge is derived altogether from men and from books, and who look to these to be taught, these are therefore the disciples of men, and may well call men their fathers. These do not feel themselves to be sinful and vile, but have a good deal of confidence in themselves, and in their own doings, and think that they are better and more holy than others, who do not say their prayers, &c.

There is something mysterious in the ways of God toward your family, that your grandmother, mother and yourself, should be Old School Baptists, and yet have been located so far away from all with whom you can have fellowship. It must be that God had some use for witnesses to the truth there, either for condemnation, or for good to those around you, or he would not in his providence have placed you thus far from your brethren. It is at any rate a witness to the sovereignty of God's grace, that he can by his grace constrain whom he will to profess and to contend for the truth,

how much soever alone they may be in their faith, and how much soever they may be surrounded with opposition. Surely it may be said, "what hath God wrought," in keeping your grandmother, and mother, in the faith, and in bringing you into it, under the circumstances in which you all have been placed. Had you followed the leadings of nature, or been influenced by worldly considerations, you would have embraced some of the systems of religion around you, and found plausible cause for it, rather than to have separated yourselves from all the influential and learned people around you. So God's placing you in this isolated condition, affords to you and to others, a strong testimony that your profession is not only sincere, but that you have been constrained by a higher influence than that of self, or the world, and that the love of God must have constrained you.

But I will close. Mrs. Trott wishes to be remembered to you. My love to you and the whole family. Write again when you feel like it.

Yours,

SAMUEL TROTT.

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2 TIMOTHY IV. 7.

"I HAVE kept the faith."

The faith here spoken of is the faith of God's elect, peculiar to them, and possessed only by them. Paul does not use it here in the sense that he himself had done all these things, as the world has it, but that the "faith" was still with him, for he well knew how weak he was, and the strength of faith, and how strong it had made him at times; he knew that the power was in the faith, and not in himself, which seems to be illustrated in the reference by our Savior to the meal and leaven. The leaven, which represents the Spirit, was put in the meal, so God puts his Spirit "within you." The meal does not work the leaven, but the leaven works the meal. So the power is in the faith, and not in the creature; faith works the child, instead of the child working faith. Paul does not here mean, he had treasured up faith, as though it was some little piece of treasure which he had to be careful of, and his life depended on his holding on to it, but he means, I have got it yet; I received it that day before Damascus, I have had glimpses of it, and felt the working of it in me powerfully until my hope was raised, that the whole would be leavened; and I have it yet: even now. Paul kept the faith, because he could not help it: he had to keep it. He kept it, because God who gave it to him, and put it in him, predestinated that he should keep it; it was foreordained from the foundation of the world that he should keep it. God "thought" he would keep it, therefore it was impossible for him not to keep it. God thought everything would be just as it is, because he predestinated all things to come to pass just as he thought. "As I have thought so shall it come to pass." It does not come to pass before he thinks it, but he thinks it, and it comes to pass.

But the peculiar comfort in the text to me just now, is in another line of thought, which it seems to me comforted Paul also. He knew Jesus said, "He that shall endure unto the end shall be saved."—Matt. x. 22; xxiv. 13. And he himself had told the church, "We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end."—Heb. iii. 14. Our enduring unto the end does not save us, but our being saved causes us to endure unto the end; our holding on does not make us partakers of Christ, but having been made partakers

of Christ, makes us hold on. Much importance was attatched to this by New Testament saints. Paul knew how easy it was to make a fair show in the flesh, in the vigor of youth or manhood, for selfish motive; he knew that hypocrites were described as numerous and necessary; he knew the Savior spake of the stony-ground hearer, and he had been fearful all the time that it might turn out at last that he was one of these; sometimes he was sure of it, and cried, "O wretched man that I am!" Thus he went on day by day, looking forward to the end, hopeful that it would be well with him then, yet fearful of the end; bringing his body into subjection, lest he should be a castaway. (1 Cor. ix. 27.)

The faith in him made him do this way, because it is God's wonderful way of keeping his children by his power. So it is in our daily experience, when we feel our weakness and sinfulness, and do so little like what we think a child ought to do, and so much of the things which we hate and abhor, we are afraid of the end. Paul knew it was important how one died, and he had written sweetly of the Old Testament saints, what they did by faith, and then he said with much satisfaction to himself and others, "These all died in faith." Will I die in faith? If I am in faith now, and have faith in me, I will die in it, but at times I am fearful. I fear, and this very fear is God's fear, which he puts in his children's hearts, like he does the "faith." No fear in the world like it, the world does not have it, nor have any use for it.

But now the end is near, in sight, I have kept the faith: and then what? There is a crown laid up for me. Not because I kept the faith, but my having the faith now at the end, assures me there is a crown, that that hope which I have clung to all these years has not been a delusion, it was real, and I shall depart and be with Christ forever and ever.

FRANK McGLADE.

WAGRAM, Ohio.

CUMMINSVILLE, Neb., Feb., 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST:—I will try to write a few lines for the SIGNS, but I do not know that it will be of any interest to the readers; if you think not, throw it in the waste-basket, and all will be right with me. My husband and self belong to the Old School Baptist church at Deer Creek, in Madison Co., Neb., but we now live fifty miles west of there. Elder J. S. Ham is our beloved pastor; we all love him for the truth's sake. When we go to hear him we hear the truth, he is faithful to the sheep of this place; he comes sixty or seventy miles, once a month, to preach to us; he comes rain or shine, and very seldom misses an appointment. I wonder many times how he endures going all the time, but he never complains. We feel thankful to the Lord for our worthy minister, and hope to keep him. I was down at Deer Creek church, at the January meeting, it is held on fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, in each month. We had a delightful meeting; Elder I. Wagner, from Mason City, Neb., was also there with Elder Ham. I enjoyed the meeting very much, and felt that the Lord was with us, and that it was good for us to meet together. If we could only meet oftener it would be better for us, it adds brightness to our lives, at least it does to me; I would like to be with the Baptists all the time. I have much to contend with, but perhaps I have no more than many others; I try to forget my trials all that I can, and when I can get to be with the people of God I

do not study about them so much. When the blessed word of God is preached,

"'Tis music to the sinner's ear,
'Tis life, and joy, and peace."

I feel many times that I am not worthy to be with so good a people, but whither can I go?

"There is no other pool,
Where streams of virtue flow,
To make a sinner whole."

I am too unworthy to speak his holy name; I cannot claim to serve him, but still I try in my weak and stammering way. I am so cast down at times that I cannot even sing a song and see any beauty in it; at other times, any of them seem beautiful, and speak my feelings, then I am lifted above all earthly things, and can scarcely believe that I ever shall grieve nor ever suffer again, but alas, I do not remain in this frame of mind for any length of time, then I find myself again back in the low grounds, begging for mercy, or for some evidence that I am a child of God. This comes to me with great pleasure at dark times, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," yet the experience of others seems so much brighter than mine, but our blessed Master has promised never to leave nor forsake us. But was that promise to me? Then I think, I once did not worry about the matter, why do I now? I then think the world does not have this warfare of doubts and fears. Yet often I feel as though I am deceiving God's humble poor, still I must be with them, if they can bear with me; it is hard for me now to be so far from them. We are all the Baptists, of whom I have any knowledge, for fifty miles around, and very few settlers or neighbors. I did not know how to appreciate being near to the church until we moved away. I hope that in the future my lot may be cast nearer to them, but we feel the presence of the Lord here as well as there, and we rejoice sometimes in his presence. What a happy thought it is that he will never leave us nor forsake us. But I long to hear the truth, and mingle with those whom I love, so many can tell my feelings better than I can myself, I think then that I am not alone. Dark and thorny is the desert through which the pilgrims pass, but if God be for us, who can be against us? How often we wonder if we are not left out, as we are so little; at times we can hardly lift our eyes toward heaven. I have been told by some who profess to be christians, that they have never doubted that they were saved, but I cannot say this, or I would be happy all the time. I do not expect to reach heaven and happiness by my own good doings, one so weak and sinful as I would come far short of that blessed abode if it depended upon myself, or my works; if I ever do reach that home, it will be by grace freely bestowed upon me because of his great love wherewith he loved me even while I was dead in sin. We are begotten to a lively hope, through the resurrection of the Lord and Savior, it is not then by works of righteousness which we have done, it is the gift of God; he has called us with an holy calling, and has made us free from the law of sin and death.

Now, as to our duty, I believe that there is much for us to do; we should be obedient children, but all that the Father gave him are his, and he will bring them off more than conquerors, sin shall not have dominion over them. He says, I will write my law in the heart, and put it in the inward parts. I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people.

I remain your unworthy sister, if one at all,

MRS. ANNA B. HARPER.

YEBO, Texas, May 21, 1900.

ELDER F. A. CHICK, AND THE MANY READERS OF THE SIGNS:—I am a poor, little, weak, ignorant, blind and unworthy worm of the dust, with many fears, doubts, trials, crosses and temptations, and sore conflicts to bear, and with foes within and without, until I am almost ready to sink in despair. O, how I love to hear the SIGNS read, for if not deceived, I do love to hear the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace, which is so ably advocated and defended by the editors and writers. I feel that no other theory of salvation will reach my case, only that of salvation by free, sovereign grace, which flows from the throne of God, and exalts him above all else; his everlasting love to his people, and his power, is their trust. O, dear ones, when my poor, weak mind begins to meditate upon the wondrous works of God, I often ask, Can it be that I, a poor, old sinner, can have any interest in his grace? By grace I am what I am. I know the total depravity of my heart by nature and by practice. At times I feel that I love God and his dear people; I then ask, Why is this, and what is the cause? and I begin to search for the cause. First, I search my natural and fleshly feelings, and I find that these are not the cause of my love to God and his people, my natural feelings leads me to stay at home with my dear old parents, but then a feeling of love and power, which exceeds all natural love, seems to take hold of me, and bids me go to the house of God, and meet with his people. O yes, this love far exceeds all other love, and I do firmly believe that this is the work of grace. Grace first caused me to think on my ways, and grace brought me to the throne; I was a sinner without hope and without God in the world, and grace made me weep and mourn over my sins, and grace enabled me to cry for mercy; then grace pardoned all my sins, and applied the blood of Christ to my poor, guilty soul, and gave me to hope in him as my Savior; grace showed me the church, and made me love it with a love which exceeds all other love; grace also caused me to desire a place in the church, and grace gave me the strength and courage to come and ask a home there; grace gave the Lord's dear children fellowship for me, enabling them to bid me a hearty welcome to a home with them; grace has made me to feel the sweet fellowship of the Lord's people, giving me many precious comforts, and enabling me to spend many pleasant seasons with them; grace has enabled them to always bid me a hearty welcome, and made them willing to show their love and forbearance to me. In all my travels, grace has moved my poor, hard heart, and bent my stubborn will to his, enabling me many times to bow submissively to his sovereign will, and to bow my knee, confessing my sins before him, who is a sin-pardoning God, and to beg for more grace, that I may be enabled each day of my life to thank and adore him more and more, for his many mercies so freely bestowed upon me. I am but a poor, rebellious, stubborn man, unmindful often of his love and many mercies to me.

I reflect over the past eighteen years, which have been filled with sore trials and afflictions, which only those who have traveled the same road can know; I have suffered both in body and mind, but amidst all the eternal God has been my refuge, and has imparted grace which has enabled me to trust him for all things. Grace alone can enable his children to serve him; grace can bring the high, the lofty and the rich down on a level with the poor, the halt, the lame and the

blind; grace, yes grace, enables all these characters to worship God in Spirit, reposing in Christ Jesus, and having no confidence in the flesh. Thus we ascribe the work of eternal salvation to the eternal God; he is a God of will, purpose and power, and all worlds and governments are under his control, and all is fixed and decreed by his own wisdom, and based upon his will. His wills and shalls are the irrevocable decrees of him who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast. O, what a glorious theme is free, unmerited grace, all treasured up in Christ, the Head of the church. Although blind, weak and ignorant, when I feel that he gives me grace to preach him as the way, the truth and the life, and the only salvation for his people, for time and for eternity, I feel it to be the highest, most sacred and most exalted position, that mortal man can ever occupy. May the Lord keep me by his grace, and give me the strength to bear this heavy responsibility, which at times seems more than I can bear.

Now, in conclusion I will say to all who may read this, when you bow at a throne of grace, pray for me, an unworthy servant of the Lord.

With love to all the faithful in Christ Jesus, I am, as I hope, your brother in affliction,

W. R. HUMPHREYS.

MT. ROSE, N. J., April 1, 1900.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I have been thinking of writing to you for some time, but have felt myself to be too great a sinner, but I will now try. I feel that I have been, and am, so worldly minded; I am barren and lifeless spiritually so much of the time. When I hear others tell of his great love I can rejoice with them, and I can witness with those who are in the valley of Achor, but if the Lord loves us, who can change his mind? Paul said, I am persuaded that neither life, nor death, nor any other thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. The clouds may be dark, as they seemed to me when the Lord took my loved ones away from me, but though the bud be bitter, the flower shall be sweet. How many nights I have watched by the bedside of my dear, sick children, and other friends, when my heart would be almost breaking with anxiety and grief, and then it would be such a comfort to think of Jesus knowing and sympathizing with my every sigh and groan. As my son John was having a bad hemorrhage, and I stood by him wiping the blood out of his mouth, to keep him from choking, I asked him if he feared death? He said, "No, for the Lord is my Shepherd," and then repeated the twenty-third Psalm. What a comfort that was to me, and I often heard him repeat that Psalm through the night. O, if I could but feel as he did then, how happy I should be, but I am down in the valley of gloom most of my time, I am so prone to sin, and my mind wanders to the ends of the earth. The sixth and ninth hymns suit my case better than I can write it. I often fear that I have never been born again, so many things beset my path, and it is often the language of my heart,

> "'Tis a point I long to know,
> (Oft it causes anxious thought,)
> Do I love the Lord or no?
> Am I his, or am I not?"

I go so far astray, can I deem myself a child? But what little hope I have I would not exchange for the world, nor part with for gold, if it does seem but a small spark. I feel it to be true that "There is nothing in me to merit esteem, nor give the Creator delight." I seem to be

so far from God, I often say, "O, is there any one like me?" How merciful he has been to me, such a repining worm as I am; O, that I could look to and trust him more; he has proven to be a very present help in every time of need. When my son Elijah died I did not think that I could live long without him, but I am spared yet. I thought that what you said to-day about taking care of sick children was so true; indeed, we do not demand payment, for our love itself pays us. I hope you will pardon me for writing you; I have written two letters before, but did not send them; I will however send this to let you know how my mind rambles. I am but a poor writer, but hope that you can make this out.

As ever your sister,

SARAH BLACKWELL.

[IF we know anything about the matter, the above letter speaks forth the travel of one of the pilgrims of Zion. How true it is that the more one is conformed to the image of the Redeemer, the further away from that likeness they will feel to be. There is no surer evidence of a spiritual mind than to feel that our mind is not spiritual, and to mourn over it. Growth in grace is always growth out of all self praise, or confidence. The way the Master trod was a sorrowful way, and so must it be with all who follow him. Our dear sister writes out of heartfelt experience, and it will reach heartfelt experience in others.—ED.]

WOODSTOCK, Mich., March 26, 1900.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I am reminded that my subscription to our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, is past due; many thanks for bearing with me so long. I do not know how I could do without the paper, it seems to cheer me by the way, and I feel like thanking all the dear ones who write for its pages; I feel to thank Elder H. M. Curry for his good sermon in Jan. 15th number, on "The Fulfillment of the Scriptures." O, how good that did seem to me, I read it three times over, and I thought that a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein. How many times after reading such good sermons I have a mind to write, but a feeling sense of my incapability has kept me from it. Many times I have wanted to cast in my little mite, but have feared to do so. Of late I have felt rather cold in mind; I do not like to be in those dreary places, but the dear Lord knows best, and I desire to leave it all to him. During this past week the following verse has been in my mind almost constantly.

"Do not I love thy precepts, Lord,
And long to see thy face?
And yet how slow my spirit moves
Without thy saving grace."

I will add that the SIGNS advocates just what I believe to be the truth as it is in Jesus; it is the good old way, and I love it. Praise the Lord, O my soul, praise his holy name forever. May you live long to tell the blessed news to poor sinners, is my prayer. Forgive me for taking up your precious time.

I remain your little sister, as I hope, with love to all; farewell.

MRS. NETTIE KELLEY.

[THE humble bear such testimony as this with gladness, and the humble who hear it are also glad. How often it was said in the New Testament that such and such things were done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. Mysterious as it may seem to our finite reason, many of the things concerning which this was said, were evil, and came out from an evil design in those who did them. How often do the words apply, "Ye meant it for evil,

but God meant it for good." God has so linked cause and effect in the affairs of men that one thing cannot be selected and declared to be useless. If one event be taken out from the rest, multiplied millions of events would be disarranged. How completely does the purpose of God cover and fix bounds to all events, and to all men. Like our sister, we can but rejoice that it is so.—ED.]

GROVER, Pa., Jan. 21, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I hope that I may be permitted thus to address you. It has been on my mind for some time to throw in my testimony to the editors and writers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I think I can never be able to express the comfort and consolation that they have been to me. Having read the SIGNS from my earliest recollection, which is perhaps forty years, I think that I can say that they have ever been the same, setting forth the truth as it is in Jesus. Sometimes, within the past two years, I have thought they were better than ever, then again, I have run across a copy several years old, and have found the same clear and able testimony, then I have been led to say as in the text at the head of the able article from Elder Keene, in No. 18, Vol. 67, "They that are joined to the Lord, are one spirit." Wonderful indeed it is, that writers who passed away many years ago, wrote the same beautiful truths that the younger writers now are sending forth, and some of those grown old in the service of God, are still able to send the glad message to fainting hearts eager to receive the crumbs from the Master's table.

As I read Elder Keene's article, my mind went back to my first experience, when I was anxiously asking myself all those questions, yet never finding any satisfactory answers. Then when finally I was enabled to say, "My Father, who art in heaven," with a feeling that he was my Father, and that I could go to him as a Father, how my heart was lifted up with joy and love to him, for what he had done for my soul. And now, after twenty years, I can still say that, "Like as a Father pitieth his children, so doth he pity them that trust in him." As was said in the article just mentioned, there have been many times with me when I seemed to be so far from what a dutiful child should be that I have felt as it were, separated from the Father, and hardly dared to call him by that endearing name, but then when I have been enabled to remember that he is faithful to forgive those who put their trust in him, my heart is lifted up again to him in prayer, that I might never forget that it is the blood of Christ which cleanses from all sin, and that he ever liveth to make intercession for us.

After reading this over, I can hardly think it worth sending, yet I will leave it with you, use your better judgment, and all will be right with me.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

NANCY M. OWEN.

NORTH HENDERSON, Ill., Feb. 26, 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I am reminded by the little pink slip, that it is time for me to once more renew my subscription for the SIGNS, please find inclosed three dollars, two of which credit to my subscription, and one is for a contribution for the support of the SIGNS.

Your paper is much liked by my brother in London, I often send it to him. I must thank the writers who write for its pages, they are all of so much comfort to me, as I have much to contend with.

I have met a few of those who so ably write for the SIGNS, among them, Elders Curry and Bartley. I was very much cast down this month, I felt that I was alone in that world, I felt as though I was unworthy to even read your precious paper, but God put it into the heart of dear sister Sarah E. Runkle to write me a very comforting letter, as she told of the trouble of her soul. Then I read Elder Vail's letter about Jonah, and I found out that I had been doing like Jonah, what the Lord did not bid me to do. Yes, there was where my trouble was, I was trying to serve two masters, and I am now quite sure that when we do this, we shall find ourselves in the belly of hell. I know men tell us that if they believed as we do, they would take their fill of sin, but they are blind leaders of the blind. I have read the first and second volumes of the editorials of the SIGNS, I think it would pay all who have not got them, to obtain them for their children to read when they are gone. Now, dear brethren, I think that the world is getting worse; I read to day where one "D. D." thought that every minister should have one female assistant to help him in the ministry. I am glad that you have had some little help from your readers, to assist you on your way, and may you have more to contribute as did the widow with her mite. I believe that all such help comes from the heart.

Dear brethren, I did not intend to write except to renew my subscription, please pardon me, as I am a poor writer, and unworthy of your notice.

Believe me, your unworthy sister,

MRS. CHAS. SLADE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1900.

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EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

GALATIANS IV. 3.

L. S. UTTERBACK, of Hickory Grove, Va., has requested our views upon the Scripture which reads, "Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world."

These words contain the conclusion of a comparison which the apostle has been presenting, by which he illustrates the condition of all who are under the law, in contrast with their condition under the gospel. The whole object of the apostle in the third and fourth chapters of this epistle, and indeed we may say also in the whole epistle, is to set forth the perfect freedom to which, in Christ, believers had attained from the bondage of the law. These brethren at Galatia had, after that they had believed in Jesus as a Savior, been entangled through false and legalizing teaching, in the yoke of their former bondage again, and the apostle writes this epistle to warn them of the false position which they now were occupying, and to point out again the way of life, light and liberty in Christ. The grace of Christ, and the deeds of the law could not go together; both could not be factors together in their salvation. Christ had become of no effect, or of no use, to any man who should be justified by the deeds of the law. In going back to the

weak and beggarly elements of the law, they had forsaken Christ, and were indeed as he says, fallen from grace. This is the only sense in which a believer can fall from grace; they may go back from Christ to their own deeds, they may forsake liberty for bondage.

In pursuing this argument Paul shows the true use of the law; it is not intended to save any one; it convinces of sin, but cannot wash away sin; it is a glass in which a man may be shown himself, but the glass is not the water which washes away uncleanness. Paul treats of this matter in an experimental way. In their own experience it was true that once they had felt the power of the law, and were in bondage; this they knew, and this he reminds them of; he appeals to their own heart's experience; How did they receive the Spirit? Was it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? They could make but one answer to this. Now if they had begun in the Spirit, through the hearing of faith, could the work be perfected by their works? How foolish to think so. The very moment that faith, faith in Christ he means, came, that moment they had no more to do with the law, then the law had in them fulfilled its work, it had convinced of sin, and of the righteousness and judgment of God, and now through its work they were prepared to receive and rejoice in the finished salvation revealed, and given them, in Christ. This they had already experienced; they have come to Christ. Why go back to the law in any sense whatever? "Free from the law, O happy condition."

The law had its use, as said before, but that use was all accomplished, it was a schoolmaster, it was not a father, and could not be, they could not come into the place of sons through it, this was found alone in Christ, the true Son of God, in him alone was their sonship and heirship, the law which they all had broken could confer no blessing; Jesus is the true heir, and they were joint-heirs, with him, and sons of God, in him. Faith had come, and they were no longer under a schoolmaster, that is, the law. Before faith which reveals Christ had come, they were kept under the law, as under a schoolmaster. Though heirs of glory, in this experience of the bondage of the law they differed nothing from servants, they continued under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father, this appointed time, was the time when Christ was revealed in their own experience, and this experience of deliverance into sonship is at a time appointed of God. No doubt the apostle also here presents the great fundamental truth that when Christ came in the flesh, and in the flesh fulfilled the law, and died to atone for the guilt of his transgressing people, then was the putting away of the law with its bondage, and a bringing in of the gospel with its liberty. But still it seems to us that the apostle would blend with his statement of this truth, the personal experience by which it had come to be a living power in their hearts. Personally and experimentally they had felt the curse and bondage of the one, and had now entered into the light, peace and liberty of the other. In the verse to which our special attention has been called, he speaks of the brethren as having once been children (or minors), for that is what the word children means, both in this third verse and in the first verse of this chapter. And he says that while they were heirs, then as well as afterwards, heirs of God, and of every gospel promise and privilege, yet they, like minor children, were in bondage, until

the fullness of God's appointed time had come. By the expression, "elements of the world," we understand is meant the weak and beggarly elements of days, and seasons, and circumcision, enjoined by the law. But while once in bondage to these elements, now in Christ, and by his finished work, they have been made free, they are no more minors under tutelage and government by these things, but have become free men in Christ. Paul does not mean the word "children," in the text, to apply to the idea of their having been children of God, this is not the point which he has under consideration, but, as said before, he uses it to present them as minors, who until they come to be of age, are not free.

C.

2 PETER II. 21.

BROTHER B. B. Matthews, of Cavendish, Idaho, asks for some thoughts upon the text, which reads, "For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."

We suppose the chief question in the mind of our brother is whether the characters spoken of in the text are real children of God, or whether they are only nominal professors. There is a wide divergence of view among good and thoughtful brethren, concerning this matter. The great majority of brethren of a former generation, as we think from our reading, regarded the text as relating to mere nominal professors, who did not really in heart possess and love the truth, but only had some theory of it in the head, and many good brethren still hold this view. These explain the language of the preceding verse, which speaks of their having escaped the pollutions (in doctrine and practice) of the world, through the knowledge of Jesus, our Lord and Savior, as relating to and meaning only such knowledge as the natural reason of man may attain to, by reading and hearing the letter of the word. They also think that the language in the twenty-second verse, relating to the dog and the sow, both unclean beasts, forbids that any character should be intended but unregenerate men, who have not been really washed from their sins in the blood of Christ, nor enlightened by the Holy Spirit.

Other brethren think, and we are inclined to be of their opinion, that while the teachers who speak great swelling words of vanity, are altogether false, and that they never knew the truth, yet those who are allured by them, are really children of God, who have experimentally known the truth. We have not been able to see how it can be said of natural men, dead in sins, that they have escaped the corruptions of the world, nor how they can be said to have a knowledge of the Lord and Savior, nor how it can be said of them that they have known the way of righteousness. While on the other hand, we can see how those who have truly believed on the Lord, and have really felt his life-giving power, may be allured by the great swelling words of false teachers, into the gravest errors. Indeed, this was true of the churches in Galatia, and against the deceitfulness of false faith, and false practice, true believers are often warned. When the apostle says, It would have been better had they not known the way of truth, than after they have known it, to turn from it, our view has been that the apostle meant very much what the Savior meant when he said to his disciples, that it were better that one should

have a millstone hanged about his neck, and he drowned in the depth of the sea, than to offend one of the little ones which believed in him. We have regarded the expression concerning the dog and the sow, in the twenty-second verse, as meaning simply an application of a well known proverb, to the conduct, and not to the persons of such as depart from the truth, through the allurements of proud and deceitful men.

Thus we have presented the two opposite opinions with which we have met, and have indicated the view which has commended itself to us. Let either view be correct, it does not involve the thought that those for whom Christ died shall finally perish, or that those once made alive to God, shall ever die. However much believers may draw back, it shall not be unto perdition. If they have truly believed at all, it is to the saving of the soul. Those who have once heard the voice of the Shepherd, shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand. C.

PLEASE BE SURE

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

Woodsonville, Ky., Oct. 18, 1857.

Dear Brother Beebe:—I send you a number of the *Primitive Baptist*, in which you will find a letter from G. M. Thompson. In this letter you will find some charges against you, and the brethren of your connection. These charges are going the rounds so far as the influence of some brethren are concerned. Let them be deceived or not, these charges are to your prejudice, and in my humble judgment, ought to be met promptly, yet in a meek and quiet spirit; therefore I insist you take the time and pains to meet them fully. I do not think it important you should publish this note, yet I leave it optionary with you.

Yours in Christ,

A. L. WOODSON.

REPLY.

We were aware of the charges which have been spread broadcast in certain localities against us and our brethren, but until specially called on to meet them, we had concluded to let them pass. We remember the words of the Redeemer, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."—Matt. v. 11, 12.

There is not probably in the United States, if in the world, at this day, an Old School Baptist whose religious sentiments are more thoroughly or more extensively known, than our own. Twice a month, for twenty-five years, we have published our sentiments without the least reserve, and have answered all questions which have been put to us by our brethren, with all the candor and frankness possible. We have never held any secret sentiment on any religious subject, and we have therefore no fear that *any, who do not wish to find occasion against us*, will be inclined to credit the false reports which are and have been circulated against us.

The paper which brother Woodson has sent us, was shown to us when at the Kehukee Association, in North Carolina, and by the advice of brethren of that Association, we wrote a note to brother Temple, in which we denied the charges, so far as they referred to us, and so far as they were intended to implicate any Old School Baptists that we have any knowledge of. The charges alluded to are contained in a letter over the signature of "G. M. Thompson," address to "M. V. Wilson," and published in the 18th number of the current volume of the *Primitive Baptist*, and embraced in the commencement of a paragraph at the bottom of the second column of page 279, and read as follows, viz:

"I will state to you a few things preached by Beebe, and many others who call themselves Old Baptists, and you can judge for yourself.

1st. They preach that Christ is a created Savior.

2d. They preach that the elect never sinned in Adam.

3d. They preach that Christ never came into this world to redeem his children.

4th. They deny the regeneration of the soul, or that any change is wrought in the sinner in regeneration."

These four specifications are totally false in every particular, so far as we are concerned, and if there is an Old Baptist or any other person who either holds or preaches the above heresies, we have never heard of it before.

For more than forty years we have preached constantly that Jesus Christ is the "Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace." That besides God there is no Savior; that in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, that he is uncreated, underived, self-existent, independent and eternal. There is not an attribute ascribed to the Eternal Father that we do not ascribe to Jesus Christ. In a created Savior we have neither faith nor confidence. We hold that our Savior is the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Almighty. And we also hold that he sustains the character, office and relationship of Mediator between God and men, in which he is one with the Father, and his church one with him. That he stood in this Mediatorial relation to his church, her Head, Life, and Immortality, before the world began, and even from everlasting. And farther, we believe that when he made his advent to this world, he was made of a woman—made under the law, and his children being partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same. That he was put to death in the flesh, and that he arose from the dead, the third day, according to the Scriptures, and that he ascended up into heaven in that body and flesh in which he was crucified, and which did not see corruption.

Second. We preach and believe that the elect of God did all sin in Adam, that is, that all those who were chosen and elected by God the Father, in Jesus Christ, the Son and Mediator, did sin in Adam, and in that nature derived from him were all of them, by nature, children of wrath even as others, even to the same extent, so that they have nothing wherein they can boast over the finally impenitent.

Third. We believe and preach that the express object of Christ's coming into the world was to redeem his children; and that this was the exclusive object; he came for that very purpose, and for no other.

Fourth. We believe in the regeneration of every soul that belongs to Christ in the economy of grace and salvation. Not, however, that regeneration is a new modeling of the old man, whether we call the old man soul, body or spirit, but that

it is the communication of spiritual, immortal and eternal life, to every individual person that is born again. That which is produced in us in regeneration, is not a reproduction of that which is born of the flesh, but the development in us of that life and immortality which was given to us in Jesus Christ our Lord, before the world began. We believe, and constantly preach, that a change is wrought in every sinner, by regeneration, that is born of God, but that change does not consist in changing our mortal bodies to immortal, our terrestial to celestial bodies, nor in delivering the creature from the bondage of corruption, as it shall be changed at the resurrection. The soul and body and spirit, and all the elements of our natural Adamic nature, after regeneration, as before, are subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, and consequently, from the hour of the new birth, so long as the old Adamic man remains in the same person with the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, to the time that these earthly tabernacles shall be dissolved and fall, the heaven-born child will be in a state of warfare; the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. The change effected by the new birth, as we believe and preach, is this: Before the birth, we are dead, being destitute of all spiritual, immortal and eternal life. At the birth, spiritual, immortal and eternal life is developed in us. The dead hear the voice of the Son of God, (for the incorruptible seed by which the new birth is produced, is by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. The words which Christ speaks to us, they are spirit and they are life,) and they that hear shall live. This we not only regard as a change, but a great change, in which he that was lost is found; he that was blind, sees, the deaf hears, the dead is made alive. He that hated God, hated truth, hated God's people, and hated holiness, now, by virtue of the love of God shed abroad in his heart, loves God supremely, loves his word, his ordinances, his people, and all that is lovely in the sight of God. He that is born again has the Spirit of Christ, and the mind of Christ, but still the body is dead, because of sin; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, for flesh can produce nothing else; and it is dead because of sin. Death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. But that which is born of the Spirit is spirit; and it is life because of righteousness. And while life and death continue to struggle in us, there will be a warfare; insomuch that if we live after the flesh we shall die, for nothing but death is there, when thus abstractly considered; but still, dead as it is, there is a life of immortality in it. "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved me, and given himself for me." If to be made experimentally acquainted with the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, to know the love of God which passes all knowledge; if to be brought to love holiness and hate sin; if to see the kingdom of God, and feel an interest in it; if to pass from death to life, from darkness to light, and if to be taught of Jesus, who is meek and lowly, and to feel inclined to follow him through evil as well as through good report; if to be made to prefer Jerusalem above our chief joys; if to desire the company of the saints, and feel unworthy of a place among them; if to delight in singing the

praise of God, and living by faith upon the Son of God, constitutes no change, what is the change insisted upon by our new-light reformers? Did Paul, or Peter, or any of the apostles or primitive saints, contend for any other change in regeneration than we do? Or is there an Old School Baptist on earth that contends for any change effected by the new birth, that we do not?

One word to G. M. Thompson, before we close. We do really believe that the work of regeneration fairly developed in a poor sinner, makes him tell the truth. We are slow to believe that a regenerated person will deliberately and knowingly lie, especially to slander the followers of Christ. We do believe that the life implanted to men by the new birth, makes them virtuous and honest in all their relations to the world, to their families, to their wives and children, and to the church of God; it will lead them to live soberly, righteously and godly. We hardly think it would lead a man to abandon his family for eleven months, or to walk so disorderly as to compel an Old School Baptist church to exclude him more than once or twice. But if, after being restored, on confession, such an one would give satisfactory evidence that he indeed possessed a life which was born from above; it would not be by declaring that his carnal nature was changed from its evil propensities, and had become spiritual; nor by assailing the reputation of those veterans of the cross of Christ, who have stood in the fellowship and esteem of the church of God for forty or fifty years without having ever once betrayed the confidence of their brethren. The book of Esther records an account of a very noted man, whose boundless ambition would not allow him to enjoy the favors of his king, because one who sat in the gate refused to do him reverence. He conceived the idea of hanging the innocent man who thus annoyed him; but the sequel left poor Haman dangling from the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had erected for Mordecai.

We do not intend to devote the columns of our paper to a defense of our own name and reputation from the aspersions of our personal assailants. We have scarcely replied to the constant volleys of falsehood and slander which has been heaped on us for the last three or four years, through the pages of a sheet published in Virginia, and blasphemously ycleped *Zion's Advocate*. We have preferred to allow it to bang away, as long as it can find readers sufficiently depraved to feed on its filthy productions. The Zion of our God has an Advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ, the righteous, an advocate that is not made of paper daubed with ink, or stained with falsehood; and in her Advocate she will ever confide, to manage her cause, and to dispose of her foes.

Unless, as in this case, we should be called on by our brethren, we shall probably never again allude to the falsehoods and slanders which are so unsparingly heaped on us. Our prayer is, that God may give us grace to bear patiently all the reproaches of our enemies, and keep us by his power and grace from deserving their vindictive shafts. Only when the cause of truth and righteousness demands an expose of the hidden things of darkness, do we feel disposed to crowd out more edifying matter, to refute or expose the depravity of those whose element seems to be only to bite and to devour.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., November 15, 1857.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at the bride's residence, on Thursday, June 28th, 1900, George B. Fetter and Miss Laura M. Cray, both of Hopewell, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

I WILL try to write an obituary notice of **Mrs. A. W. Bacchus,** my dear and long afflicted companion, who departed this life April 18th, 1900, in the 91st year of her age. She was born in Carabas Co., N. C., Sept. 22d, 1809. In writing of her past life, it seems that I must say something of my own, for it was surely in the providence of God that we ever met each other. I was born near Nashville, Tenn., Jan. 29th, 1809, being some eight months her senior. In 1822 or 1823, both of our parents emigrated to Henry Co., west Tennessee, then just beginning to be settled. They located within one mile of each other, and we children soon became acquainted. It was not long till a Baptist church was constituted near by, and we were very regular attendants at their meetings, with our mothers, who both became members. In after years we made it known to each other that our minds had been much exercised about death and a future life, even from childhood, but we were very moral, and thought that was quite sufficient to keep us on good terms with God, but there was an uneasiness, we felt that we were condemned, we found that all our resolutions were broken. Our trouble increased, we became burdened with sin, and made to feel the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and to cry to God for mercy. Thus we made known to each other how we were led along, until through grace we received a little hope that God for Christ's sake had pardoned our sins. On the 16th of September, 1828, we were united in marriage, neither of us being twenty years old. In 1829 we attended an association, at which time the Primitive Baptists separated from the Missionaries. There were but two members that left the church near us and went to the Missionaries.

In 1831 we united with the Primitive Baptists at a church called Barren Fork, of West Sandy, Tenn. Although the terms absolute or unlimited predestination were not used at that time, I am very much mistaken if they were not preached, and all that those terms imply, believed. We raised nine children, five sons and four daughters, and now comes our greatest trial, for we lost three of those sons in the civil war, and a fourth contracted disease, from which he never fully recovered. It was very hard for us to become reconciled to this great bereavement, and to say the will of the Lord be done. As we lived near by the meeting-house, we had the sweet pleasure of the company of the brethren and sisters at least once a month, at which time it was a great pleasure to enjoy their company and conversation, and to make them comfortable, and to feel themselves at home. It was our delighful privilege to visit the brethren and sisters at the several churches in reach of us. It was our high privilege to be able to visit all the associations in west Kentucky and Tennessee, from 1832 to 1849, and in south Arkansas, (to where we removed in 1849) from 1852 until we became too old to attend them. And all these years they had me to serve them as clerk. My dear wife enjoyed these meetings very much, and her great delight wherever we spent the night was to make herself useful. She was a loving companion, a tender mother, and charitable to all.

From what I have written, it will be seen that our experience from early childhood through life has been so much the same that I had to write of us both. It will also be seen that we lived together over seventy-one years to the time of her departure, that we had a name with the dear Old Baptists about sixty-seven years, whom we loved above all people on earth, and with whom we have at all times felt most unworthy to have a name. I have made this as short as I could. It has pleased the good Lord to give me a few more days on earth; though poor and bereaved, my trust is in the dear Savior for what he in mercy has done for poor me, awaiting his summons, fully resigned to the will of God, knowing that he doeth all things well. All his judgments are righteous.

A. W. BACCHUS.

IN memory of my beloved husband, **Joshua Hill Street,** who passed away on the morning of May 4th, 1900, after a gradual decay of years, peaceful as a whole, but the last five years were marred by blindness. His age was 72 years and 9 months. He was a native of the village of Stotfold, Bedford, England. His father was an honest man, but made no profession of religion. His mother, Mrs. Street, (Elizabeth Hill,) whom I never saw, was evidently a called subject of divine grace; her memory was fragrant to him through all his life, and he loved to recount to me her excellencies. She was the manifest introducer of the cause of the strict Baptists of her day, in Stotfold. At her house the traveling preachers of grace found a constant welcome, and the open air baptisms began to stir the rippling curiosity, and opposition of the times. She must have been a woman of faith and considerable decision of character. One afternoon my husband was at a union meeting, and they had been more flippant than usual. The superintendent prayed that if any one present had grieved the Holy Spirit, their sin might be shown him. As he prayed, my husband's knees smote together, so that he was forced to sit down on the bench, while these words came to him with great power, "I would that thou wast either cold or hot, but now because thou art neither cold or hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." The agony of this conviction remained with him some days, so that appetite and sleep left him, and nothing but hell seemed his doom. But walking one morning on the railway track to the city, where his place of business was, he suddenly saw before him, as in the foreground, the figure of Jesus, with the bleeding wounds in his body, while a sense of pardon filled his heart with the words, "There is, therefore,

now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Other passages followed from time to time, but this was his keynote of triumph, the shadow of a great Rock in a weary land. In the business world he was an upright man. One landlord refused a written note in my presence, saying to him, "Mr. Street, your word is your bond." It really was so, while his moral habits were clean, and to me as his wife he was true as steel; what more could I say? Never again shall I clasp his hand in mine, or render those little services affection prompts. As a brother in Christ, if he had a spiritual gift, it was that of prayer. What awe, and self-abasement, has stolen over me as I heard him in such nearness of communion with God, when he knew not that I was near, sometimes for the cleansing of his soul, for a blessing on me, or presenting with deep solemnity, the case of the "little flock," (his name for a few who meet under our roof) before the throne of grace. Truly this cutting off from the body of flesh has a mysterious sadness about it, for by faith I know when we meet again, it will not be as husband and wife, for in that holy state, and perfect resurrection body, they neither marry, or are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. Sincerely I am trying to say from the heart, "Thy will be done."

MARY W. STREET.

OUR beloved sister, **Mary A. Woodall,** departed this life at the home of her son, Wm. Woodall, in Harrison Co., Texas, Nov. 7th, 1899. Sister Woodall was born Jan. 30th, 1826, (I think in the State of Mississippi) and was married to B. F. Haliburton, Oct. 7th, 1845. To them were born two children when Mr. Haliburton died. She was again married, Nov. 29th, 1549, to Mr. R. B. Woodall. This union was blessed with four sons and two daughters, of whom three sons and one daughter are still living. I have not at hand dates showing when and where sister Woodall first united with the church, and by whom baptized, but she has been a member many years, and was very much devoted to the cause. I became acquainted with her about the year 1884, and from that time until a little over two years ago, visited her house many times. She was always ready to converse on spiritual subjects; she was an intelligent, sound and faithful Primitive Baptist, and was also blessed with that meek and quiet, kind and gentle disposition, that is such a beautiful mark in the followers of the blessed Jesus. "Aunt Mary," as she was familiarly called, will long be missed in the church where her membership was, for she had been a faithful attendant ever since its organization, and in the community where she lived, especially by the sick and afflicted, whose friend she was.

May the Lord comfort her children, with all that mourn, and dispose their hearts to follow her good example. Her labors are now ended, she has laid her armor by and gone to rest; soon we all shall follow her.

H. B. JONES.

MT. VERNON, Texas, July 11, 1900.

IT is with sadness that I pen a notice of the death of **Elder Neely Greenlee,** which sad event occurred April 23d, 1900. He was about 82 years of age, and had been a minister of the Primitive Baptist church, as near as I can learn, since June 18th, 1853. He leaves a widow and many friends to mourn their loss. His first wife passed away in 1883. All through life he never wavered nor lost faith in God. During his last illness I heard him say, "Thou [God] knowest that I am not one of the forsaken."

G. W. KNAPP.

LEON, W. Va., July 11, 1900.

ORDINATION.

ON the second Sunday in June, 1900, the church at Cottage Hill, Montgomery, Ala., set apart brother W. P. Burks, to the full functions of the gospel ministry, and we hereby make it known to the brotherhood.

The presbytery consisted of Elders J. A. Mills, H. H. Williamson, O. H. P. Cook and the writer.

The regular form that is common in the ordination of ministers was observed. Also, we note that brother Yarborough was ordained to the office of deacon. We had quite a good meeting, and visiting brethren were present.

I was requested by the church to send this notice. I am pastor at Montgomery, and have been since the church was constituted.

WM. LIVELY.

WADKS MILL, Ky., July 10, 1900.

MEETINGS.

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ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Spoon River Association will convene (the Lord willing) in her sixty-ninth session, three and one-half miles southeast of Farmington, at or near the residence of brother C. E. Prior, on Friday, August 31st, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continuing over Sunday. All trains will be met on Thursday evening, at Farmington. None will be met on Friday, except the early train on the C., B. & Q., from the south.

All are invited, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1900. NO. 16.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PROVIDENCE AND GRACE.

MY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Our God is the God of Providence, as he is the God of grace. His revealed word of truth in the Bible abundantly shows this, and it is also fully confirmed and clearly seen in his works of creation. For in all the universe of created existence and being infinite intelligence presides and omnipotent power controls, subjecting all to decreed orbits and limits, and directing all to ordained ends—the glory of the Creator. Were it not so, then God should be defeated, disappointed and frustrated in his infinite design and eternal purpose in his handiworks in the universe. But this cannot be. "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world."—Psalm xix. 1-4. God possessed this infinite knowledge from everlasting, before night unto night sheweth it, and his eternal power and Godhead are coeval with his unlimited knowledge and support it; so that he hath ordained the day and the night, fixed all revolving globes in their orbits, gave the sea its decree, appointed the seasons of the year, "set a tabernacle for the sun," rules the stormy wind and tempest; "He directeth it [the noise of his voice] under the whole heaven, and his lightning unto the ends of the earth;" "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Let us read Elihu's answer to Job, and be instructed. "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom. Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations." "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." All this divine truth shows the greatness and

majesty, power and wisdom and glory of the God of providence, as the supreme Ruler of all worlds and creatures and things. It denies and excludes *chance* from the universe, and proves the universal control and dominion of the Almighty. With God there is neither accident nor chance. To say there is, denies his infinite foreknowledge and universal providence, and therefore limits him in both his wisdom and dominion. If chance obtains, providence ceases; both cannot exist. The primary definition of the noun providence in the Standard Dictionary is: "The care, control and guidance exercised by the supreme Being over the universe in all its parts and contents. In its widest sense *providence* includes (1) foreknowledge, (2) foreordination, and (3) efficacious administration, including preservation and continued government, the last element being all that in ordinary usage is thought of, as, 'God's *providence* in mine inheritance.' Providence literally means foresight, and then a careful arrangement prepared beforehand for the accomplishment of predetermined ends." In proof of this the Bible says, "I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded. * * * For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited; I am the Lord, and there is none else." "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." This positively affirms the universal dominion of God's providence, and shows that not anything can ever arise by blind chance, or exist beyond or outside of his unbounded providence.

In his Church History, pages 652–3, Elder Hassell says, "As for anything occurring 'by chance,' or without a cause, no human being can possibly believe such a thing, even if his very life depended upon it; for the human mind is so constituted by the Creator as to necessarily believe that every event has a cause; and the use of the expression 'by chance,' simply means that the cause is unknown to the speaker or writer, and not at all that there is no cause. The belief in universal causation is a primitive and fundamental intuition of the human mind. All secondary causes point the thoughtful mind inevitably to the Great First Cause, Omniscient, Omnipotent and Omnipresent, and to his eternal, sovereign will, either efficient or permissive, in accordance with which all events occur." He then quotes from Elder J. R. Respess, who said, "There is one thing we all know, and that is, that nothing has happened or can happen by chance, and that smacks so much of decree that it shuts my mouth." On page 655 he quotes from Elder W. M. Mitchell, who said, "Predestination enters into every rational act of every intelligent creature, and puts them to work to carry out their predestinating plans, and it enters into every act of God, the great Fountain of intelligence. His works in nature, providence and grace, are but the development and manifestation of his predestination." On page 652 are these true remarks: "Much of the language of the inspired writers was designed to comfort and sustain the spirit of God's people in the midst of the greatest trials, by teaching them that all events are perfectly foreseen by God, and, in a sense, predetermined by him, and will be overruled for good to his afflicted

ones. His absolute and universal dominion was constantly present to the minds of the children of God in ancient days. Its effect upon the mind was solemn and impressive, and never suggested the faintest presumption of injustice in God, even when the acts that were sinful in his creatures were traced in another sense to his holy and awful will. The Scripture, accordingly, never hesitates for a moment to ascribe absolute holiness to God, and all the guilt of every sinful act to the sinner." And just as much is the same truth of the Scriptures "designed to comfort and sustain the spirit of God's people in the midst of the greatest trials" now, as well as then, and they still need the same "strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." On page 651, Elder Hassell well says, "While God does not incite sinful thoughts in any heart, he is perfectly able to bend and control every sin to the furtherance of his own glory and his people's good. His knowledge and purpose and power include all events, so that his children may, in one sense, see him in all things, and rejoice that he will make all things work together for their good." This assurance is certainly a great stay and comfort to me now in the present trial of faith. The poets wrote truly when they declared that,

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower."

"Great God of Providence! thy ways
Are hid from mortal sight;
Wrapt in impenetrable shades,
Or cloth'd with dazzling light."

God is revealed and known in his grace, and his power and glory declared, even more majestically and blessedly than in his all-wise and almighty providence. For in the manifestation of his sovereign grace, God is shown to be "rich in mercy," no less than omnipotent in power. The grace and mercy of God, who is blessed for evermore, make known his infinite goodness. His inspired oracles abundantly testify that "The Lord is good." They also reveal that he is not only the "God of love and peace," and that his love is great and everlasting, but that "God is love." The love of God is perfect, then, and this his essence or nature is perfect or infinite holiness. So inherent and immaculate is the holiness of God that he is not only the "holy One," the "most holy," but "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." It is most irreverent and awful, then, when any unholy creature will presumptuously speak of the holy Lord God Almighty as "the author of sin" in any case, or if his controlling purpose and determinate counsel extends to and includes all events. The sinful man who thus presumes, thereby assumes to be more wise and more holy than "the only wise God," who is immutably holy. God will maintain his own glorious holiness, and he needs no self-wise, sinful creature to sit in judgment against the conduct of his Maker, or lay down a line by which Jehovah should be governed in his providence and grace, neither does he need the apologies of vain and foolish man. His sentence is, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" "Let God be true, but every man a liar." "Be still, and know that I am God."

(Concluded in next number.)

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., July 19, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you a correspondence between Elder Wm. M. Mitchell and myself; I desire his letters to be published, and he has given his consent, provided mine are also published with his.

Your brother,

S. H. DURAND.

OPELIKA, Ala., July 3, 1900.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Seeing from the SIGNS that you have been sick, I have desired repeatedly that I could give you some token of christian love and sympathy, but I have not been able to do much writing, or anything else. I know that you have been deeply tried in your faith by the only One who sits as a refiner and purifier, and as a fruit of his refining work, you have been enabled to repeatedly offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. I think that I do know that much of your preaching and writing has from time to time come home to the inward experience of many of the Lord's redeemed people. I know this, if I am one of that blessed number, some of your late writings, as well as the writings of four or five brethren which have been published, whom I have never seen, have come home to my inmost soul, telling me much of my late experience, such as I knew we had never spoken together about, and though several hundred miles apart, and unknown by face, and in the flesh, to each other, they could tell me what I had thought no human tongue could tell of the deep trials of faith through which I have been passing ever since September, 1899. When you were here last winter, I was indeed in a very depressed condition mentally, but after my wife got so badly hurt by a fall, my depression and trials seemed to grow upon me, but I will not now go over those doleful things, further than to say that never in my life do I remember having seen myself a more helpless, polluted and needy sinner, and never before have I felt more powerfully the necessity of just such a Savior as Jesus, and I think that I may say, "That unto you that believe, he is precious." We will never know how precious Jesus is till we first know how vile and sinful we are, and we will never know that, until we are taught it of the Lord. I think, my dear brother, that I have a desire not only to be meek and humble, like Jesus, but I have desired to be pure and holy in heart and life as he was, but when I, and all my works of life, come to be tested by that perfect standard, I am indeed vile, and do abhor myself, and the only hope that I have on that line is, that Jesus is to me what I desire to be, and hath done that for me that I am too often trying to do for myself; he is of God made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption; he is all this to his people.

My condition is, I think, in some respects improved for the last few weeks. Mrs. Mitchell is about as when you were here. Christian regards to yourself and your household.

W. M. MITCHELL.

P. S.—Fifty-eight years ago yesterday I and my present wife were married; two months after I was received and baptized in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptists, so you see that I have for nearly fifty-eight years been a member. Fifty-seven years ago the fourth Sunday in last June, I preached my first sermon at Mt. Olive, where I am now a member.

W. M. M.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., July 14, 1900.

ELDER WM. M. MITCHELL—MY DEAR

BROTHER:—I can hardly tell you how surprised and pleased I was to get your letter. I was not looking for a letter from you, for I know that your strength is not sufficient for the work that you have to do, and beside that, it would not have occurred to me that you, with your long experience, and your spiritual gifts, could really have known such poverty of spirit and such extreme helplessness as I have. It is therefore unspeakably comforting to me to read from your pen an expression of my own sorrowful feelings, and an assurance that I have been so directed as to express what you have felt. What you say of the preciousness of the dear Savior has warmed my cold heart in some measure. How many times I have questioned whether I know him as his people do. It sometimes seems to me that they must see him in some clearer and plainer way than I do. But then I remember that we do not see him with our mortal powers of vision, but by faith, and by love alone do we apprehend him. And while I often feel myself to be like a barren and desolate wilderness, yet I remember times when I seem to have sweetly felt his dear and solemn presence, and when my poor heart has been filled to overflowing with love to him. I often feel that it is wrong for me to think that so pure and holy a thing as his love could come into this corrupt heart of mine; but I remember that the pure sunshine can rest upon a vile object without being tarnished, and so the sunshine of his love is not, cannot be, corrupted by the corrupt nature into which it comes, but rather sanctifies and seals us unto the day of redemption, when even our vile bodies shall be made as pure as Jesus is pure. And I remember that if ever I have known what it is to have a sense of purity and holiness, it is when that pure love of God is felt in my heart. It seems to have a power to separate me from all that is unholy in thought and word and deed, for the time; to separate me, indeed, from my sinful self, and cause me to realize a being in Christ, a coming experimentally into that blessed name which is pure and sweet and fragrant, "as ointment poured forth;" which "is a strong tower into which the righteous run and find safety." How hard it is to come back from such an experience of holy seclusion in that sacred name, to our own worthless names, and our vain, worldly surroundings. Sometimes I have felt the cry of the psalmist for wings like a dove, that I might fly away and be at rest. At such times I can truly say, "I hate vain thoughts," but there are other times when I cannot say so. I believe I do know that I have a nature which loves them, but that also I have a nature to which they are hateful; and it must be by that new and holy nature, the divine nature, that I hate and loathe myself. Yes, I can join with you and say, that "when I and all my works of life come to be tested by that perfect standard, I am indeed vile, and do abhor myself, and the only hope I have on that line is that Jesus is to me what I desire to be, and hath done that for me that I am too often trying to do for myself." "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear." Is it not wonderful that the dear Savior tells all his blessed secrets to his people in the darkness, in and through affliction and trial, and especially do his servants, whom he sends to preach his gospel, receive all their knowledge of the kingdom of heaven, through great tribulation. What they learn in any other way is of little or no value to the Lord's afflicted and poor people. The Savior says, "What I tell you in the darkness

that speak ye in the light." It is very hard and trying to endure the darkness, as you have experienced many a time in the years of your long and useful ministry, "but joy cometh in the morning," and I know you must many a time have felt unspeakable joy when the morning light in your soul released you from the bands of darkness, and you were enabled to deliver the message of gospel love and peace to the Lord's waiting ones.

I am glad to hear that your wife and yourself are still in so comfortable a condition of bodily health. I hope I may be enabled to see you both at your home again in November, if the Lord will. My visit there last December was, and is yet, a real comfort to me. I want to send your letter to the SIGNS, that your many friends who read it may read that which has been such a comfort to me and my wife and sister Bessie. We all join in love to you and sister Mitchell.

Your brother affectionately,

SILAS H. DURAND.

OPELIKA, Ala., July 17, 1900.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—With gladness I received yours of the 14th, yesterday evening. I do not think that I was ever more completely given over to a sense of nothingness than I had felt to be all the day previous to receiving your comforting letter. It revived me some, but I still have serious inquiries of mind before God as to whether it is my duty under all the circumstances, and the infirmities of age, to continue even nominally to be pastor of a church, when it seems to me that I know that I cannot fill the place as it ought to be done, and as the church has a right to expect it to be done. O, I could not tell you how sorely I have been tried upon various things, until it has been often suggested that I should never write another letter on any religious subject, nor attempt again to speak in the way of preaching, expounding and admonishing. My afflictions and mental depressions are many and heavy. I think that much of my mental depression has been brought upon me from severe bodily suffering. I got badly hurt in my youth more than once when engaged in heavy work; this caused a decline in general health, but I will not say more now on that line. As to the publishing of my former letter to which yours of the 14th is a reply, do as you think proper, provided yours of July 14th is also published. Love to your household.

As ever your brother,

W. M. MITCHELL.

EXPERIENCE—WHAT IS IT?

THERE is not a living being who has not an experience in worldly things, some to a greater extent than others, but all have some experience. We can have no true understanding of anything without experience; not merely a belief, but a knowledge proceeding from some tangible view by which the circumstance is firmly fixed in our mind. What I wish to write about is with regard to spiritual knowledge. This knowledge is by an experience by which the child of God realizes that he is born again. There must first of all be an experience of our sinful condition, causing us to feel lost, and that we are without hope. Here is a burden felt from which we desire release. This is not, as many say, simply a fear of punishment, but a self loathing, the poor sinner tries hard for relief from this burden which he cannot explain; he realizes that he is a sinner, and feels the sentence, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." To avoid this he goes to work to try to do

good, but in time he comes to realize that all the good which he promises to do, he does not. This is continually so, from the time of our first realization of sin, to the end. We may think that we can and are doing good, but in the end all proves worthless, instead of doing good and being good, it all proves like the morning dew when the sun rises upon it. When the truth shines upon our good works they vanish away like the grass. The child of God has an experience which by nature cannot be comprehended or even told. A feigned experience has always something lacking to one who has had this revelation of sin. All experience is by revelation, God reveals to each one his sins, so that the revelation of Jesus Christ will afterwards be appreciated.

What I desire to present is the answer of the question at the head of this article. Experience may be summed up in one sentence, as a revelation from God of spiritual things. We know nothing, and can know nothing of God but by revelation. It is written that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, and cannot know them, because they are spiritually discerned; then whatever is not revealed to us of God, spiritually speaking, is not truth, but only an idea or fancy of the brain. Paul wrote, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?" "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" "As many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse, for it is written, Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." This is all evidently addressed to the saints. The law spoken of here, is a law of works, and not of grace. If our obedience be by the law of works, I have not been able to find it, and if so, grace and faith are both left out as being of no account. If we are saved, it is by a manifestation of the grace of God, through faith, which God has given us. Paul talks about another salvation, a salvation from error, after we have received this revelation that our sins are all pardoned, yea, carried away into oblivion. We have the assurance that we are perfect in Christ Jesus, and the command comes, "Be ye holy as God is holy." Does any man obey this command by his own works? Will any child of God reply in the affirmative? Has any christian ever obeyed any command of God, except as he has been led by the Spirit, and the commandment rested upon him with sweetness and power, making him willing to obey, by love? I find that I have never obeyed one commandment written in the pages of the Bible, unless a sweet power of obedience came with the command; then the desire to obey will be above every other consideration. With my own experience before me, I cannot believe that any command is bound upon us just because we find it written in the Bible, any more than the promises written there are effectual, unless applied by the Spirit. If one obeys just because of duty, there is no harm in it, it is well if he does thus obey, but to obey in the spirit is best of all, and to obey in the spirit the desire must first be given. Formality amounts to nothing; James says, "Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works." "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Rahab, the harlot, was justified by works, but will any one say that she did this of her own will? Did not God move her to do as she did? I wish to ask two questions

of those who contend that our time salvation is the result of our own acts, and that our peace and comfort depends upon our obedience, without the leading of the Spirit of God: Can any brother say he has always been obedient to all the commandments in the Bible, and that he has accepted all the admonitions there recorded, or even any one of them, unless while under the influence of the Spirit, and while love, faith and hope were in lively exercise? While contending for conditional time salvation, and finding fault with the brother who cannot accept this, have you felt the cords of the love of God drawing you closer, and more strongly binding you to your brother? If not, then you have not been obeying the greatest of all the commandments of the Lord, the command to love one another, to let brotherly love continue. "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him." Light always makes manifest, darkness always blinds the eyes. Hope is looking to the obedience which is in our Lord Jesus in all things, and if without the Spirit we can be obedient in one single thing, why not in all?

The second question is, Have you ever failed to obey any one command of the Lord? If you have failed to obey any one, then you are guilty of all. All our works are of no avail unless perfect; when we come to the law of God all must be perfect. But O, my dear brethren, grace is the crowning theme; grace for grace, and not grace for works, neither is it works for grace. When we take, or attempt to take, one single atom from grace, we take from the glory of Jesus, and put the crown upon ourselves, and thereby we abase Jesus and exalt self. God saves his people with an everlasting salvation, from beginning to the end, he is the Alpha and the Omega. Dear brethren, do not be deceived in this matter, evil communications corrupt good manners; let us then give to God all the glory, and not try to claim part for ourselves. For my part I have never been able to do just as I would like or desire to do; if I ever have obeyed as I ought, I did not know it. But for any salvation from evil, which it has been my lot to receive or realize, knowing as I do my own ignorant and sinful self, I have been compelled to give God all the praise, and to thank him for the same. To believe on God is a great work, and who ever believed on him of himself? If I am constrained to do anything of a spiritual nature, it is of God, and thus I am constrained to believe on him. O, how little, how weak, how defiled with sin I am, and this causes me to feel the power of God in my salvation, in time as well as in eternity.

Now, my Father's little children, yes, little, examine your ownselves, and your own experience, and see if you have ever done one single thing for which you have a right to claim a blessing from God. This is the test for every one, stand firm in the revealed experience which you have received, do not get away from that, this is in harmony with the Scriptures, the only true guideboard that directs in the way. Tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope. May God grant that our hearts burn within us while we think on these things.

Your brother in weakness,

MILTON DANCE.

BALTIMORE Co., Md., May, 1900.

[NOT only as our brother has well said,

do the Scriptures forbid all boasting, save in the cross of Christ, but also all true christian experience forbids it. The believer could not boast if he would, and would not if he could. Every work that he does is crowned by grace, and crowns grace in its turn. Truly we love God, but that is to the praise of the grace which first sheds this love abroad in the heart. We desire to obey, but this is to the praise of him who begets the desire in the heart. From love alone all true obedience flows, as says the poet, and from God alone is the presence and increase of this love. The humble believer delights to praise grace for all, and is jealous of anything that would rob it of its crown.—ED.]

FOSTER, Oregon, Feb. 2, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I read the SIGNS with much interest; I hope that you may live long to advocate the grand old doctrine of grace without works, "For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast." Dear brethren, I feel like Jeremiah of old, when he was called to speak to Israel, I know not what to speak, but if the Lord will touch my lips then I can say something to the comfort of some of God's little ones. My father was a Predestinarian Baptist, and many of his brethren often came to see and talk with him, and I then thought they were a very ignorant people, and that I would hate to believe as they did. When I was twenty years of age I went to Illinois; my father then lived in Ohio; I went to see my uncle, and stayed with him one year. I married and moved to Missouri; the third year that I lived there I was taken with typhoid fever; I was very low for some time; the friends thought that I would die, but I finally recovered. As a flash the thought came to me, How very near death you have been, and what if you had died, a poor, lost and ruined sinner, without God, and without hope in the world. As the days passed by my sins rose like mountains before me; I thought that I could not live long, I thought that an all-wise and holy God would not permit so vile a rebel to live any longer; I thought that I would fix my business as well as I could, being very poor, so that my wife and little babe could live when I was gone. I had taken care of the crop, and was hauling wood; I felt as though the earth was giving away under my sin-cursed feet; I left my team and went a few rods away to a dark place in the grove, in the midst of some thick brush; I thought that I would ask God, once more, to have mercy upon me, a poor, sinful wretch. When I knelt down there, the timber seemed to be illuminated, and everything seemed so joyful; the birds sang, and the sun was shining, and I saw a shining one, then a voice seemed to say, as he came near me, "Thy sins, which are many, I freely forgive," and his loving eyes were fixed on me; then so bright and shining was the light that I could not see him any more. I cannot describe the beauty of that day. The thought came to me, There is nothing wrong, all is peace, why have I been troubled so when all is love? All creation did praise the Lord. I arose and went back to my team and drove home. I thought there is no use in worrying about dying; my family was well, and all was right. I thought I never would have any more trouble. There was a Methodist protracted meeting going on about a mile from my home; I went at night; the preacher told his hearers they must come to the mourners' bench to be prayed for,

and he called this making a start for heaven. He came to me, I told him that I could not do anything to save myself, that my trust was in God. It was not long after this before I thought that I might be mistaken, and then doubts arose in my mind that perhaps I was deceived, and, dear brethren and sisters, I feel at times yet perhaps I am deceived, but I look back to that glorious brightness where I do hope the blessed Savior spoke peace to my poor, troubled soul.

I did not think of saying so much when I began this, but O, how I do love to talk to the dear children of God, scattered over this sinful world. But the time will shortly come when we shall lay our armor by, and dwell with Christ at home, in that house not made with hands, eternal and in the heavens. The hardest task was to go to the church and tell the brethren and sisters what I hoped the Lord had done for me, but the Lord gave me the strength to talk to the church at Rich Hill, Bates Co., Mo., and I was, to my surprise, received. I am now a member of the Pleasant Hill Church, Linn Co., Oregon. I am made to wonder how the church has borne with me so long. I am a poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all. Dear brethren and sisters, remember me at a throne of grace.

I send you also a letter from brother G. O. Walker, believing that it will be read with interest by the Lord's little family.

I remain your unworthy brother,

L. McQUEEN.

WALKER, Oregon, Jan. 3, 1900.

VERY DEAR BROTHER McQUEEN:—Having thought several times of trying to write you a few lines, I will now make the attempt. Our little church is apparently prosperous, though we have not had many additions this year. I have lately met with several kinds of belief, or unbelief, as they might be called, if I am not mistaken. I have also met with what seems to me some queer doctrine among good brethren; for instance, one has been persuaded to believe that even after we have been regenerated, or born again, we may fall away into eternal punishment. Of course the motive is a fear lest we might make out that God is unjust, should we say that there is no such thing as falling away, or that we cannot believe unless it be given to us by the Lord. I find this fear is existing in many places among the Baptist people, but I have never, since I was made, as I hope, to repent with tears, and fearful trembling, been afraid of making out that the great God of the universe is too powerful, or of greater omnipotence than he is, neither am I afraid of making him out unjust, because of his doing his sovereign pleasure with all his creatures. I have been made to cry out, "Lord, save, or I perish," but if it would be to his praise that I must suffer eternal punishment, I must willingly say, "It is but meet that his will should thus be done." He assures us he does all things after the counsel of his own will, and we are told by inspiration that all things work together for good, to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose.

Dear brother, would you not trust him though he slay you? I have much less fear of making him who spoke a world into existence, unjust, than I have of underestimating his power, and his right to do all his pleasure with his own. It was necessary that the glorious Conqueror, who bore our sins on the tree, and conquered death, hell and the grave for us, should suffer these things; these of-

fenses must needs come, but woe unto him by whom they come.

Referring to Revelation xvi. 1-5, we find the white horse and his rider, and the red horse and his rider, who went forth with power to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another, both went forth from the book of God's decrees; it is all needful for his honor and glory; the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder he will restrain. I am glad that I must praise him for every blessing in this world, as well as in the world to come. Even our Lord and Master learned obedience by the things that he suffered, then is it any wonder that such as you and I must also suffer? Let us not think that he is unjust, because of any affliction which he in the infinitude of his wisdom may choose to inflict upon us, for man in his best estate is altogether vanity, being estranged from the womb. Certainly we should kiss the rod of affliction, for "whom he loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." With all the chastening which I receive, even if I am tried in the fiery furnace of affliction, I fear that I never can render the obedience and praise due unto his name. Man cannot blame the God of heaven and earth because he is lost, but he must praise him for his wisdom and power if saved, or even if lost. I have often felt, and especially when I had exhausted every means of which I had any knowledge, and when the blessed Jesus found me with a broken heart and shattered conscience, pleading for mercy, that I would only praise him even if it must be from the depths of the lowest hell. But O how lovingly and gently he can fold his little ones in his own loving arms. He carries them to his Father's bosom, and ever is at the right hand of God to make intercession for them. Precious brother, I cannot restrain the tears when I think of the wonders of his glory. His little ones never get too low for him, and the proud ones never get so high and exalted but that he can lay them low. The sweet singer sang, "If I take the wings of the morning, and fly to the uttermost parts of the earth, thou art there, and if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there." O, let us never cease to praise the name of such a God. Even the very wrath of man shall praise him, and shall not we? All things work for good to his people. Joseph's brethren thought to do evil to him, when they sold him into Egypt, but God in his wisdom meant it for good; their wrath praised God.

I much enjoy reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, with the many articles written by the brethren, contending earnestly yet meekly, for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Brother Chick writes with such a spirit of humble meekness. What a good editorial brother Beebe has in the SIGNS for December 15th. Brother McQueen, you will tire of my writing; you have experienced all these things, and have a much better understanding of them than I have.

I will close, hoping to hear from you soon.

Your unworthy brother,

G. WALKER.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., July 10, 1900.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—Your kind, welcome letter came yesterday, and I am glad to know that I am still remembered by you, and also by the other friends at Hopewell, N. J. Even in the depths of sorrow and affliction, our hearts are made glad when we have the assurance of the love and fellowship of the saints. To know in

sickness that they are praying for our recovery, and in affliction that they are praying for God's presence to be with us, and his everlasting arms underneath us, that we may be supported and sustained in the trial of our faith, which is more precious than that of gold, which perisheth not, though it be tried with fire, is truly a comfort and help. Yet at the time, our trial cannot be seen to be to this end, else it would cease to be a trial; for "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grevious: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." I feel that I do know what sorrow is, and affliction has been my lot for years. I hope that I do fully realize what the chastenings of our God are, and that they are all sent in love, that the saints may be partakers of his glory. They all are exercised thereby and come forth as gold from the furnace, which is purified and shining, and as Moses on the mount, they reflect the glory of God. The fathers and mothers in Israel behold the shining after the burning by deep affliction, and trial, and sorrow, of the babes, and are made to shout for joy, and to sing, "Glory to God in the highest," who hath ordained praise out of the mouth of babes and sucklings. How wonderful indeed are the teachings of God, what a peculiar school; one teacher, one class, and above all, the still small voice. I often doubt if indeed I know anything of these things, I go on from day to day hoping that I may grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; when night falls around I ask, Have I been taught anything to-day? and always have to say no, I am the same poor, ignorant worm of the dust that I have ever been. I am not exercised by my trials and afflictions, and if in the school at all, I am dull, slow to understand, and often do not seem to know or think that the hand of God is upon me. I have never been able to say with Job, "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." O, that I might be able to say in truth these words, but it seems that it is not for me. How different it has been with me from what I hoped or expected in my first experience, even before I had a hope, I then boasted that if ever I was a christian, I would be a model one, I would be an example for men to follow. After the hope came, I did hope soon to be better, and to go on to grow in grace, and to be a perfect man, but how short of all this I have come, I realize every day that I cannot do the things that I would; sometimes I feel that I would like for the brethren to know me just as I am, and at other times I would not have them to know me in that way for the world, for then surely I should be cut off from them, and of all things in the world, I dread that most, yet I fear that some day I shall be a castaway. My conversation does not seem to me godly, and my walk not circumspect, and my thoughts like the fool's eye, wandering to the ends of the earth, and with Paul I often say, "O, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

When I began to write, I only intended to acknowledge your letter, and state the condition of my health, but what I have written I have written. You have heard through others of my recent illness, from which I am now steadily recovering, and I think that in a few more weeks, I will be able to again meet my appointments. My sufferings were great, I never expect to suffer more when the time shall come to end the scene, it would be impossible

to describe the agony, not only of body but also of mind. You stated in your letter that you hoped that I had been made to hope during my sickness. I thought, how differently from Elder Durand, was I dealt with, while he realized the presence of God, and could feel his sustaining power, and the sweet peace of mind, which passeth all understanding, and realize that all was right, because the Lord did it, such was not the case with me. If ever, since I have been given a hope, I have been without it utterly, it was during my illness, from the first of it until now, I can hardly dare say that I have a hope in the mercy of God at all. I have often quoted the words of the Savior in his dying hour, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" but never in all my life did I know what they meant until now, when it seemed to me a few hours would end the scene with me. This was my experience; O, the darkness of mind I can never tell, it seemed my hope was gone, not one thing in the past could I find to relieve me, not the slightest evidence could I find that I was born of God, it was like taking a leap in the dark, and if ever I quote again those words of anguish, I shall know better than I did before what they mean.

Last Sunday I was able to ride down to the meeting-house, and hear Elder McConnell preach, and was comforted to find that I did know the joyful sound.

My wife joins me in love to you and family, and to all the dear friends who manifest such an interest in my welfare. I hope that I appreciate their interest in my welfare. As ever your brother I hope, in the bonds of life,

H. C. KER.

[WE have been much interested and touched by this narration of the exercises of brother Ker in his illness; we were also deeply interested in the late article from brother Durand, speaking of the spiritual exercises given him while ill; we are reminded by these two narrations that there is a diversity of operations, but the same Spirit, and the oneness of the Spirit which wrought in both, appears in that both were humbled beneath the mighty hand of God, the one by the great peace given him, and the other by the deep anguish which he was called to pass through; the joy of the one did not bring self praise to him, and the pain of the other did not lead him to rebel against God, or to charge him with folly and injustice; both experiences have led to a deeper sense of dependence upon God, and to greater self-examination, and self-distrust. While brother Ker speaks of great darkness, and of seeing no evidence of hope, yet he wanted this above all things. How blessed it is to hunger, as well as to be filled. Life is at the source of both, the hungering and the eating. Without entering into a narrative of the event, we will say that once we had a similar experience with brother Ker, in time of sickness, and it was a long time afterward, before any hope or comfort was given, and then it came with the thought that we DESIRED the presence of the Lord and communion with him, even if it were not given us, and to remember the hunger was a comfort. Brother Ker can remember the hunger.—ED.]

EUCLID, Ohio, July 9, 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN IN HOPE:—I have felt for some time an impression to write a few lines for publication in our dear family paper, but whether the desire springs from the flesh or Spirit, God knoweth. I am sure of

one thing, sin is mixed with all I do, say or think, and times when I feel sure what I have done, was done with an eye single to God's glory, alas, I find self lurking there seeking the approbation of man, and knowing this, it is with fear and trembling that I ever take up my pen to address any of the dear saints. It is only as I am called to pass through the deep waters of tribulation, I am enabled to ascribe all glory, majesty and power, to his dear name, and with Jonah declare, "Salvation is of the Lord." Yes, dear ones, the experience of my whole life has taught me that our sufficiency is in him, and if we are kept, it is by the power of God, and nowhere else can we learn this lesson but in the path of tribulation, in the furnace of affliction. Then, dearly beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial that is to try you; God has a purpose in every trial he calls you to pass through; he does not afflict you for his own pleasure, but for your good, and to teach you not to glory in self, but to glory in God, who alone is worthy to be praised.

How different my life has been in every respect, than what I desired it to be, how full of disappointments and failures, to my judgment how altogether useless has been my whole life, but I feel confident God created nothing in vain, that he is the supreme Ruler, that all events roll into effect at the appointed time without one jarring note, and our sorest conflicts and disappointments are but blessings in disguise. I feel assured his dear hand has led and kept me until the present time, and there are times when he blessed me with a thankful heart, for blessings he bestows on me, who is altogether unworthy. In the fall of 1898, we left our home in Cobleskill, N. Y., and came to Cleveland, Ohio, much against my wishes; it was a sore trial indeed for me to leave my relatives and friends, and especially the Schoharie church, where I so long had a home, and had enjoyed the love and fellowship of the saints without a single jar; it seemed almost more than I could bear, to come where I could no longer have the privilege of meeting with those who were such a comfort and support to me, but God has not left me comfortless, but has wonderfully blessed us in many ways; he has been teaching my dear husband, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little, until now, thank God, we see eye to eye in the things of the kingdom. We found a little company here who love the truth, and we have been holding conference meetings semi-monthly, and we have had some very sweet meetings. I feel God has truly been in our midst. We also have been blessed from time to time with visits from God's faithful servants, who have come to us in the fullness of the gospel of Christ, and we as a little band of hungry children have been built up and comforted, and have been made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and have felt to say with one accord, it was good for us to be there.

Brother Henry J. Martin met with us, and led our conference meetings, much to our comfort, until his death. Elder S. H. Durand was the first to come to us, stopping on his way to the Canada meeting, one year ago this June; he preached to the comfort of all who heard him. The next to visit us was Elder J. G. Eubanks, of Kentucky, who stopped on his way to the Canada meeting last February, and again we had a feast, for which we all felt truly thankful. In April, Elder L. E. Thomas, of Ashley, Ohio, came to us, and we enjoyed his preaching very much, and in May, Elder W. I. Carnell stopped

on his way to Canada, and preached, and again we were made to rejoice, and again in June he stopped with us, and my brother, W. P. Gass, from New York, brother Sohner, Mr. Cross and myself, accompanied him to the Ekfrid meeting, and our warm welcome by the brethren and sisters of Canada was truly appreciated, and we were made to feel we were one in spirit, and our hearts went out in love to those of like precious faith. It was from first to last a precious feast to us all, we were favored to hear Elders Durand, Vail, Carnell, Curry and Pollard. Elder J. G. Eubanks came to us on Friday before the first Sunday in July, and stayed until Monday, and we all truly appreciated his rare gift. Brother Stout came with him, and we were glad to see him, and hope he may come again.

I wish to say before I close, how much we appreciate the SIGNS, and feel to say it is the best old School Baptist paper in the world. Do not waver, but continue to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Those who believe in and advocate "time salvation," should be shown in a kind and brotherly manner that they are in error; the whole Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, plainly teaches that "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." I firmly believe in predestination, and all that the word implies. Now, if all events are fixed, can we in the smallest degree change anything? If we, like Peter, need a lesson to teach us the frailty of our natures, that lesson we will surely have, and how necessary it is for us to have these lessons; how vain we would become, boasting in our own strength. All that springs from nature is corrupt, and if we are kept it is by the power of God. Dear child of God, be not deceived, if you are enabled to walk in the path of obedience, the will to obey does not spring from the flesh. How clearly I can see the division between flesh and Spirit. The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, and the works of the flesh are idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, envyings, &c. Now this is all the natural man is in possession of until he is born of the Spirit, and then he finds he has two natures entirely separate; his old nature remains the same; that which is born of the flesh remains flesh to the end of time, but as it is written, the elder shall serve the younger. Do we not see in the lives of the saints, their Adamic nature subdued, when the Spirit is in operation? and I would ask, Does the flesh, or old man, exercise the Spirit, or does the Spirit exercise the man? If the man (or flesh) can exercise the Spirit, and cause it to bring forth fruit, then there surely is no excuse for our dark and sorrowful seasons, but I have learned by experience all that is necessary is the withdrawal of God's restraining power, and my evil nature at once leads me into by and forbidden paths, although my sincere desire is to be forever found walking in obedience.

May God, who is rich in mercy, cause us to look to him who is our strength and stay, and may he continue to work in us, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure, and his name shall have all the glory, for to him it belongs.

Such as I have written I submit to you; it is not as I would desire to write; I can never express my mind as I desire, either in speaking or writing. I am a poor, fallible creature at best.

Yours in love and fellowship,

JENNIE CROSS.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, July 20, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I often think of writing to you, as I do to many others, but I write it in my mind, but, as Elder Lively once said, How do you know that I did, and how do I know how you received it? I am quite well at present, I am having, as it were, an oasis in the desert, there is a lighter place in my (much of the time) dark life. It has been so very dark lately, but for a few days I have been able to see that God knows best, and that he was caring for me, though his hand was hidden from me. Franklin also has been in the dark for so long, and at times feels as though he has never known the better things, and that he ought to go to the church and ask them to take his name from the church book. A few evenings ago, I felt to question our standing, and I asked him why did we know we were in the dark, and why long for the light, and why desire an assurance and brighter hope, if we have never known of them? Why did we have a desire to meet with the brethren, and why did we not go to near by churches, instead of being so particular to go so far to meet with such a poor, despised people, if we had never known the difference? Why not mingle with any of the worldly denominations, instead of waiting to mingle with so few? Why did we feel to criticise the teachings of men, and believe it wrong to hear the word misused, and that those who thus spoke were but in nature, and knew nothing of grace? And why not welcome all the isms of the day, if we had not been taught by another teacher, one that the world knows nothing about?

Well we both had to be still and wait his time to give us light, and to see our hope, and to see the waymarks so that we could know that we were walking in the same path with other sojourners. Since then my mind has been clearer, and I can see many things now that then were unnoticed.

A few days ago, I was picking berries, I found some that were down under the row and in the dirt, but when washed they were as good and perfect as any, and the thought came to me, they were like those in the dark, they felt so far beneath the others, with hope almost out of sight, and so covered with the labor and gain of the present time (like the leaves,) and seemed to be only groveling in sin, (the dirt,) but when the light came so that the hope could be seen, and the dirt washed away, there could and would be found fruit, the fruit of the vine, of the vine that grows in the Master's vineyard. I cannot seem to write you all the beauty that I saw in it, but I did feel it to be a feast by the way, and one that could not be so enjoyed, except by those who knew what the comparison meant by experience.

A few mornings ago I had another feast, it was at the sight of the sheep coming from their place of resting for the night. I do not know how many there were, but thirty or forty, they were all walking in the same path. I thought, how like the church, they walk the same path, cross the same difficulties, eat of the same food, drink the same water, lie in the same shade, feed in the same pastures, their bleating is the same, and they all have the same protector. Now I cannot give you this as it came to me, but I did so much enjoy it, I was made to feel that once again I was to see some light. O, that I could impart it also to my companion, but for all that we are so near, we cannot do that, and how great a blessing it is that we cannot do this, for if we could, how much oftener we should

look to man than to God, and I do plead guilty of this very thing, but still my desire is to be kept at his feet, and to be taught of him, and that I may be given light to enter into the better knowledge, and to have charity, submission and reconciliation, knowing that God knows best, and that I am as clay in the hand of the potter, to be moulded as he sees fit.

I do so desire to be kept from evil, or any appearance of evil, yet my desire is not granted me. I am continually imagining, or thinking wrong, or judging some one, or am too free to give advice. I do think it is strange that the brethren do not see all this wrong with me. I am often fretful, and my mind takes up some wrong, and as Elder Keene said in the SIGNS, some time ago, "It even seems as though the devil is with me, and keeps me harrassing about things that it would be well if they were shut out, and so it seems that the spiritual mind is destroyed by it." I am grieved at it, and do try not to allow it, but my strength fails me, and I again listen to the hateful things within me, and it seems to me often that many of my good times are destroyed in just this way, and I do so often ask, If a child, would I listen to the evil spirit? For the two minds are entirely separate. I do feel as I write that I know with Paul, that the things that I once hated, I now love, and the things that I once loved, I now hate; and in this I can see there has been a separation between me and the world, and wordly people, and their isms, all of them. I do desire to walk with the dear ones of the flock, and also that they may have compassion on my many weaknesses. I do so often feel that I am but a worm, and nothing, yea, less than nothing, and vanity.

I have written so much, and not as I intended. I expected to go to Hopewell to-morrow for the meeting, and for Sunday, but thought I had better wait a little longer as my dear ones were all improving. When I was up last year, you had a baptism, I wish it might be so this year. I find my hearing failing me some, and I do so long to hear the preaching, if nothing more, but I want to be kept from murmuring, I am blessed so much more than I deserve.

With love to yourself and family, I will close.

Your sister,

MARY H. TERRY.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., March 29, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have been thinking of sending my remittance to you for some time, and as some of the dear brethren and sisters still encourage me to write for publication, and lately a very earnest request from brother and sister Bloomfield, of St. Joseph, Mo., has come to me, I will therefore now make the attempt. I trust that the blessed Lord will guide me into all truth while with a trembling hand I try to write. Always when I write, it looks so little to me that I often consign it to the flames, and think that I will never make the attempt again. In this instance I had concluded not to write, but after I received brother Bloomfield's letter, I was a little more encouraged. If it shall be but a crumb from the Master's table, I ought not to hesitate. The last few numbers of the dear old SIGNS have been so full of food for the hungry that I do not know that what I can write will do any one any good. The good book says, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good, to the use of edifying." But I feel so weak and ignorant, relative to the

things pertaining to the kingdom of God, that I fear it will fail to edify. This is a dark and cloudy day in which to write, for, as brother Bloomfield says, there are some with whom we formerly walked, now walking in strange ways, but it has been that way all along the line; the Bible says, the time is coming when they will not endure sound doctrine, and it seems that way to me now. When Christ told his disciples that he was the true bread which came down from heaven, they said, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" And they walked no more with him. To-day, as I am sorry to say, there are some who seem to want to limit the power of God, and say that he rules over some things, and lets others pass without his ruling. It seems that some do not want a God that declares the end from the beginning, and who says, his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. He has said that what he has purposed, that shall he bring to pass. Did he make anything without a purpose? He made all things that are made, and he surely had a fixed purpose in the making of it. From the beginning he knew his purpose just as well as he does now. He is not like puny man, who has to wait until time develops things before deciding what to do. He is the first and the last, the beginning and the end, and O, how glad, dear brethren and sisters, I am that he rules in the armies of heaven above, and among the inhabitants of earth beneath, and none can stay his hand. I am resting in the faith that he knows his business well. His word has gone out, and will not return to him void; he finished the work that his Father gave him to do, but vain man wants to help him do it over again, at least, he wants to do a part of the work. I have known some to stay away from their meeting because the preacher gave God all the glory, and left nothing for them to do. I am sorry to hear of such things. What chiefly distinguishes us from the Arminian world is, that we believe in the firm decrees of an all-wise and powerful God, and that the government is upon his shoulder; he is the Wonderful, the Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace. What more do we want? His sheep know his voice, and they follow him. Dear kindred, if I am one of those who follow him, it is all that I could wish or know. I am willing that the Lord shall rule. If any man can find one thing that he can do without the Lord's help, then he has found something I never have; I need him every moment of my life. It is in and by and through him that we live, move and have our being; by him all things consist. "Who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? for of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever."

Now, dear brethren editors, in conclusion I hope that the Lord may enable you to send forth the word of truth in the dear old SIGNS in the future, as you have in the past. The more I read it, the better I like it, and in reading it I am filled to overflowing sometimes. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

MRS. SAMUEL FRAZEE.

MANORKILL, N. Y., June 24, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have been for some time inclined to pen a few lines for your perusal, but could not feel it right to thus burden you, but of late, since reading the last SIGNS, I have felt

to risk it, as there was so much to be grateful for. I thought after reading Elder Durand's epistle I would write him a line, then after reading Elder J. E. Wickham's, I must testify to that, so after reading the SIGNS through I thought I would send a line to you, and tell you that I felt very grateful to Almighty God for this unspeakable gift, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and its able editors, they having grace and wisdom given them to keep it free from the evils of the day, and give its readers so good a paper to read, as the fifteenth is; I could indorse every piece therein. I want to add, as Elder Wm. L. Beebe said to me six years ago, at our association, "God bless" the editors and all its contributors. I went to bid him good by, but was too full to speak, and he said, "God bless you." He had already blessed me, my cup was full to the brim, and his face shone as it appeared to me, and I felt, as said of Paul, I should see his face no more. I had for a long time desired to hear him preach, I had read his able editorials, and had heard his venerable father so many times, now I wanted to hear his son, which I did, to the joy and rejoicing of my soul. You all know how good a meal tastes when we are hungry, so the Lord prepares us to feast on the hidden manna. Before this, that is, the twelfth number of the SIGNS, I had been so low down in the valley I could not even see to the top of the mountains, yet was desirous to be raised up again, so I could rejoice with those that rejoice, and weep with those that weep. While at our Sunday meeting I had this Scripture on my mind, "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray." So timely, yet I felt too weak to lisp it, as I did not feel I could do honor to the word, nor myself, but before I left the church I said that which caused me more grief and shame than I perhaps would have had to have made some remarks on "let us pray." Now, dear brethren, do not feel by withholding you will prosper as said, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty."—Prov. xi 24. So we see the Lord puts grace and truth in the inner parts for his servants to edify one another. If we have been raised up to the third heaven, tell of that; if cast down so we dare not look up, tell of that, for the Lord ruleth in Jacob to the ends of the earth. I feel at this time the Lord as Job said, canst do everything.

"For good is the Lord, inexpressibly good,
And we are the work of his hand;
His mercy and truth from eternity stood,
And shall to eternity stand."

Praise the Lord.

Inclosed find five dollars; send me one of your Bibles, No. 8707, two dollars, and "Feast of Fat Things," twenty-five cents, and the remainder for help on the SIGNS. I feel thankful to Almighty God for his goodness to me, the weakest of the weak, and vilest of the vile. I hope it may be his good pleasure to "revive his work in the midst of the years, in wrath remember mercy." O, that all his children might be led in the way of truth, for his name's sake, and hold up the editors' hands, and one another's, and to his name be all the glory.

D. S. ELLIOTT.

WESTON, Mich., Jan. 7, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have been negligent in sending my remittance for the SIGNS, for which please pardon me. It is only carelessness and negligence upon the part of many of your patrons who delay sending in their subscriptions, but I fear that there are some who care but little for the paper at best, but I can

truly say that I prize them very highly because of the principles which they advocate and ably support. The doctrine of election, predestination and salvation by grace, is the very life and preservation of all the saints of God, both for time and eternity. God works, and none can hinder, he will bring to pass all that he has ordered. What God orders, shall come to pass; what he commands, shall stand; thus says the prophet. So far as I am able to judge, I cannot see where the SIGNS have deviated one whit from the old landmarks which were set up in the SIGNS sixty-seven years ago. God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, he declares the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.

In Hassell's history, on page 945, near the top of the page, may be found the following words from the pen of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe upon the subject of predestination: "Can we contemplate the awful majesty, the profound wisdom, deep and unsearchable counsel, infinite goodness and unerring workmanship of God, in all that he has condescended to let us know of his great and marvelous works, from the spreading abroad and garnishing of the wide heavens, down to the formation of the crooked serpent, and still stand in doubt of his predestinating power and unrestricted government over all beings, all worlds and all events?" Then surely the salvation of a poor sinner comes from and depends upon free grace, grace that comes from free and divine wisdom and mercy. It was grace that ordained the plan; this grace is seen in the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, for "by grace are we saved." I do feel in my heart to bid the old SIGNS Godspeed, and may the dear editors be blessed with wisdom, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they may, by grace, point out the old landmarks and say, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

I will close this short and imperfect letter by requesting that all who bear the name of Primitive Baptist, will turn to page 943, "Hassell's Church History," and carefully read Elder Beebe's wonderful and profound remarks upon the subject of predestination. To me it is the most masterly piece of work upon that subject that I ever read outside of the Bible. Let it be remembered that dear old Elder Beebe was considered by Primitive Baptists to be the ablest writer and preacher since the days of the apostles. I hope that the day will soon come when all the dear children of God will observe and heed the instructions, and exhortations, and admonitions of the old soldiers of the cross. O, that we might all walk in the order of God's house, as becometh those that are saved by grace, and may we all be enabled by grace to esteem others better than ourselves. O, that peace, love and sweet fellowship through our adorable Priest and King, might abound in our hearts, and that envy, strife and highmindedness may be excluded from our hearts, at least to such an extent that the love of our Lord Jesus Christ may abound throughout all the household of the saints without dissimulation, for this is one of the admonitions which is laid down by the apostle, in the word. May we take heed to these things, remembering that God will not be mocked.

With love to all that are saved by grace,

T. J. WYMAN.

SANFORD, Maine, July 2, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I received your letter of June 16th, and was glad to

hear from you, and more than glad, because I know that you have passed through the same great trial, and I know that your words of cheer come from your heart, and I want to thank you for thinking of me in my sorrow at this time, my heart is full of sorrow, but I know that God has willed it so, and I must submit to his will. I tried, brother Chick, when I first found out that my wife must leave me, to say, "O God, thy will be done, and not mine," but it was hard for me to say it from the heart, but before she left me I think I could say it from the very depth of my heart. She was a very great sufferer, but patient with it all, she never complained, she said it was the Lord's will. I think the Lord upheld her in her sickness, and I believe that she is now with her Savior, and much better off than we are here below. It has been a great comfort to me in my loss, to think that she is much better off than she was before. I earnestly prayed to God that if this great loss must come to me, that he would give me strength to bear it, and he has been a tower of strength to me, he has upheld me all the way through, and I do not think he will desert me now, I know he will not, for does he not say, that as our day, so shall our strength be? I have thus far found it wonderfully so. It seems to me that the greater our trials are, the nearer our Savior is to us, and that he takes us up, and helps us to carry them, and is ever ready to help us when we grow faint or weary.

July 6th.—Dear brother, I believe the Lord has upheld me, and has shown me where to look for comfort. O, that I could praise him as I ought. If I could tell you the great comfort he has been to me, but I cannot, it is beyond words to express. He is present with me in my times of trouble, and it seems wonderful to have his great arm to lean upon. How wonderful that we have this great supreme Being to help bear our burdens. It is such a comfort to me to think that my companion is with her Savior, where she will know no more sorrow.

It seems a great mystery to me, why God should give a vile sinner like me such a hope as I have. I feel so vile, so full of sin, that I could cry out with anguish when I look at my heart, and see nothing but sin, not a redeeming feature. But the God of love doeth things his own way, and not as we look for them, and I am thankful that it is so. Can we be thankful enough for what the Lord has done for us? No, we cannot. It is not in human nature to be sufficiently thankful.

What a beautiful hope we feel at times that he is our Savior, and then the comfort which fills our heart is beyond any earthly thing. When this joy fills our hearts we want nothing else; none but his children know this hope and this joy; we cannot tell it to those who know it not, they cannot understand. But try to tell it to the little ones and how quickly they understand it. It is wonderful.

I have rambled on as my heart has led me, and I ask of you to overlook whatever you think should have been left out.

I remain as ever your brother in a precious hope,

ANSON QUINT.

[OUR brother has proven the truth of the precious word of promise, in the only way in which it can ever be proved to us, by bitter experience of sorrow and sin, and by obtaining help of God sufficient to his need. We are glad for him that it has been so with him. May God still be his shield and stronghold.—ED.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1900.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ARE THERE INVITATIONS IN THE GOSPEL?

THAT is, does the Lord ever invite men to come to the provisions of the gospel? Perhaps it would not be needful to call attention to this question, were it not that the word *invitation* is in such common use among the teachers and votaries of conditional salvation. And it must be said that the word is in full harmony with the whole system of what is called Arminianism. This is a scheme which represents the God of salvation as being fully dependent upon the choice of men, as to whether he succeeds in saving anybody or not. This system declares that all at last is left to the choice of men. God, according to this theory, wills to save all men, and desires to save all men, and is urging all men to consent to be saved, and yet is powerless to save any one unless that one consents to be saved. It is said that violence must not be done to the will of man, that it must be left to the will of man to decide what he will do, else what they are pleased to call man's moral dignity should suffer. This system rejects imputed righteousness, and laughs at the idea of an imparted righteousness, saying that such a thing cannot be. A caused righteousness they say is no righteousness at all. This is all in full accord of course with that system that thinks more of the glory and dignity of man, than it does of the glory of God. Man's free will, they say, must not be encroached upon, else all praise or blame is at once removed from him; therefore God is shut out from exercising any effectual power upon man, to cause him to decide for God and righteousness. He is put in the attitude of wooing, and urging, and beseeching men to cease from sin, and to come to do righteousness, and to accept of the offers of salvation made to him. It is difficult to see just what part Christ has in this scheme of salvation; his name is used, and his salvation is spoken of, but just what his name means, and just what part his salvation has in the matter, it is difficult to see. We have been reminded often of what we heard the late Elder Leachman once say, viz: "Modern religionists have just about the same use for Christ, that a dandy has for his walking cane; he carries it for show, and not for use; in fact he would feel insulted if told that he needed a cane." It is true that when the real Christ is presented, and men are told that they need just such a Savior, they are insulted. When the doctrine of total depravity is preached, men reject it, and say, "I am not as bad as that," and so have no use for that salvation which is fitted to the totally depraved. The real Christ, the Christ who furnishes all the righteousness that ever can belong to a sinner, or that can render him acceptable before God, is of small repute nowadays among ninety-nine one hundredths of professors of religion. "Being ignorant of God's righteousness, and [therefore] going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." This

Paul said was true in his day, and if possible, it is still more true in this day; creature merit and not God's mercy, creature power and not God's power, are the Shibboleths of the present age, as indeed in all ages they have been, of unregenerate religionists.

Among the catch-words of this class in common use is the word *invitation*. The word of course is used to present the idea that the God of heaven and earth is anxious that men should be saved, but yet cannot save unless with their consent. This word denies, and it is meant to deny, that God always works effectually in the salvation of men; it is intended to deny what we speak of as the effectual call of God in the experience of salvation; it is intended to present the thought that what saves a man, is his own choice, and not God's choice; it is intended to be claimed by it, that after all that God has done in sending his Son to die for sin, and in raising him up again from the dead, and in giving him to be an intercessor for the people, still no man is therefore saved, unless at the last he decides to close in with these provisions and accept them; it presents the idea that Jesus did as much for the finally lost, as he did for the finally saved, and that the difference between those who perish finally, and those who are saved finally, is that the one has done what the other has not done, so that at the last the praise of creature choice must ring through heaven, instead of the praise of Jesus; it represents things pertaining to the matter of salvation in such a way that the redeemed can exult and glory over the lost, saying to them, If you had but done what we have done you might be where we now are. One may shudder, and say such things are horrible and blasphemous, and so they are, yet all this flows out of the word *invitation* as now used. This in itself ought to be sufficient to lead all the redeemed people of God to reject and discard this word when speaking of the work of God in salvation. There are some words which are bad in themselves, and which ought to be condemned for this reason; there are some words which, though not bad in themselves, have fallen into such bad company that they ought to be rejected. The word *invitation* is bad in both senses.

It should be remembered that when God speaks to men, it is as a Sovereign, whose right it is to rule and to command; it should also be remembered that it is written that where the word of a king is, there is power. It is very fashionable nowadays to teach that he speaks, and it is not done, that he commands, and it does not stand fast, but believers know that the word of the Lord is effectual, and that it is with divine power that he speaks. A king does not invite his subjects to his banquet. If he chooses to use the word "invite," it is only as a token of condescension on his part, and he and those invited know that it is to be regarded as a word of authority, after all. Men may reject the authority of an earthly king, and may despise his provision for their pleasure, but the King of glory does not speak in vain. An invitation implies some sort of equality between the two parties, and an invitation may be rejected, and no just cause of offense be given. Those who urge the word invitation as expressing the relation of God to those to whom he speaks, are guilty of the absurdity of also contending that men are condemned for rejecting this invitation. Men have a right to reject an invitation, and no command is violated. God does not invite any one; he does not use the word invite anywhere in the

Scriptures when addressing his subjects; he does not condemn men for rejecting invitations, seeing that none are issued from the court of heaven.

The Bible word for that work which brings men to God is "call," or "called," and while men may call one another, the call of God differs from the call which men may issue, just as God himself differs from men. The call of men may or may not be effectual, the call of God must be effectual; it is not the call of Jehovah at all, if it be not effectual; where the voice of the Lord goes forth, it does wondrous things. Read the twenty-ninth Psalm for a wonderful description of the effects of the voice of the Lord. The call of God to his people is not in word, but in power. He does not speak to them with words that the ear can hear, he speaks to the heart, and in personal experience. His word contains a revelation, in it they are shown things new to them. His call to men comes to the heart as a light: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." "The entrance of his word giveth light." By the things seen in that light we may know that the true light has come to us. The light in the heart makes manifest what is in that heart. God does not tell a man that he is a sinner in the sense that he has written it upon some page of a book, and then left it there for him to read and believe, neither has he told one man this, or shown it to him, that he may tell others, and they believe it through his testimony, but he shows it to all who see it at all, just as he has shown it to a Paul or a Peter. The work of revelation is going on now just as really as in the days of prophets and apostles; he now shines in the heart, he now gives the light, he now bestows true knowledge. This is the evidence that God has called us, we see things hidden before, we see things concerning our own evil heart and nature, and we, bye and bye, see things concerning the love of God in Jesus Christ, and concerning salvation through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Thus God by the effectual shining of the light of truth in men, brings them to himself at last; thus the call is effectual in them, they are thus brought out of self, and brought to Christ, as their all, thus the call of God is a work, rather than a word; God's word is thus seen to be really a work, it is the work of God, because the word is the word of God. Men are called, and in the call they come, come to God, and to an experience of salvation. The call of God is to know what sin is, and its exceeding sinfulness, it is to know then the entire deadness and weakness of human nature, it is to know that in Jesus alone is peace and salvation, it is to rest in him, and to rejoice in him, and to worship him at last, having no confidence in the flesh. Men are not then invited to see that they are sinners, they are shown that it is so, they are not invited to repent, repentance is given them, they are not invited to come to Christ, Christ comes to them, they are not invited to the table for bread, nor to the fountain for water, but they are given the bread and water, and eat and drink and live. The dead are not invited to live, but they live, and then Christ becomes to them all and in all. Our God does not offer salvation to men who feel no need of it, and he certainly does not offer it to men who do feel their need of it, and who are already crying for it. Jesus did not offer to heal the whole, who needed no physician, and he never

once offered to heal the sick who came to him in their sickness and pain, he did not offer to heal, but he healed. He never spoke a word about healing to any one until that one had come to him in his distress for that blessed boon. He always spoke to the needs of men. Living men, in the days of his flesh, who were sick and suffering, came to him for healing, and he spake, and it was done. Living men come now to the Savior of sinners, because they are sick and burdened with their sickness, the foul leprosy of sin, and he heals them, there is no offer in it at all, there is no invitation in it at all. Men who do not confess that they are sinners, and who are not hungry for healing, would not heed the word if it were spoken to them, and those who do feel their need are already crying for relief, and so there is no room for invitations to them. If a man suffering extreme pain is already at the very side of the physician, brought there by the need, (perhaps he can hardly say by the hope of healing) that physician does not invite him to be healed. Would that physician say to that man, I invite you to come to me, and I will then heal you? No! no! the man is already at his side for that very purpose, he needs no invitation to do what his distresses have already driven him to do, there is no need either for the physician to offer to do what he is already asking at his hands. Jesus never speaks to a man until that man is in precisely this place of need, and of entreaty before the Lord, then indeed he does look upon that poor man, and speak to him with the very word of healing itself, "I will, be thou clean." "Thy sins are all forgiven thee." How sweet the words come to one in such a plight. How unmeaning to one who is not sick, and who feels no need of healing. Jesus does not waste his precious words, he does not give that which is holy to dogs, nor cast his pearls before swine. There is a fitness in all that he speaks. "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek." He sends his word into the heart, and that heart at once revives and responds, either with the cry for help, or with the voice of praise for help already given.

Such texts as, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden," "Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth," "Ho, every one that thirsteth," &c., are not then invitations. What then are they? We have not felt like calling them commands, in the ordinary sense of the word command. Consider the attitude of those who are addressed, the laboring and burdened, the ends of the earth, the thirsty. The burdened one wants relief from the burden, the laboring man needs rest, the man at the ends of the earth wants to be brought nigh, the thirsty want water, prayer is in the heart for what is wanting, already these are asking for the blessing needed. Thirst cries for water, weariness cries for rest. Now God, in these texts, and in a thousand others similar, speaks in response to the prayer already in the heart; he says, "In me is rest, in me is living water, in me is all that you need." And then the word comes to that weary one, I am thine, to give thee rest, to that thirsty one I am thine to supply living water. All these texts express a wonderful and gracious response to the cry of the heart, which is all the true prayer that there is in the universe. They are not an invitation, because the soul is already asking, they are not a command, in the ordinary sense of the word command, but they are a gracious answer to our need, and an assurance that what we need is all ours.

Is there any question about whether the soul will receive these gracious words? No! when the gracious Master thus speaks to the troubled soul, it conveys to that one what is most surprising of all to him, that there is provision for such as he.

These words do not come as a promise of what the Lord will at some future time do, but they come conveying what he has done, or what he is doing now. Where is there any room then for invitations in such precious promises? Where is there any room to reject a work already done?

C.

SERIOUS ILLNESS OF ELDER WM. L. BEEBE.

SINCE the notice of the sickness of our brother was published in the SIGNS for July 15th, he has had to undergo a very critical surgical operation. After calling in consultation a number of eminent physicians, it was decided that the only hope for his permanent relief, was in an operation, and on the 25th of July, Dr. Forbes Hawks, of New York city, performed the same. Upon reaching the gall bladder it was found to be distended to several times its normal size, caused by an obstruction of the gall duct. After removing about a quart of foul matter from the gall bladder, an incision was made in it, and another in the bowels, and they were fastened together with what is known as a Murphy button. Serious as has been the ordeal through which our brother has been called to pass, yet he has been marvelously sustained in mind and body. The only time we have been able to see him, was for about three minutes, and we then found him in a sweet state of reconciliation to the will of God.

Though there is still great anxiety as to his recovery, at this writing (August 7th) the symptoms are very favorable, for which we want to be thankful. B.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

SWITZERLAND Co., Ind., Dec. 28, 1857.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Will you do me the favor to give your views on Hebrews iv. 12, especially on that part which speaks of the dividing asunder of soul and spirit? From the little experience I have had, I have been led to believe the word is a uniter of soul and spirit, at the present time. Now if you can inform me when it was, or when it will be, or how it is at the present time, a divider of soul and spirit, you will confer a great favor on your unworthy brother, if I may be so bold as to claim kindred with those of the household of God.

WM. W. HUSTON.

REPLY.

WHETHER we shall be able to satisfy the mind of brother Huston on the subject on which he has desired us to give our views, of course we cannot tell, but such views as we have we cheerfully submit to the consideration of himself and our readers generally. We do not remember of ever hearing the views of any of our brethren on the text, and we confess that we have generally regarded it as one of the most obscure passages in the New Testament, until now that our mind has been called especially to it, it seems to be presented to our mind more clearly. Of course we hold no one responsible for our views, and only give them as what occurs to our mind on the subject; if we are correct, the Scriptures will establish our view, but if we mistake the true import of the text, we rejoice to believe we have faithful and discriminating brethren to review us. The text reads thus:

"For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

"The word of God" is a term which is sometimes applied to the Scriptures, and

sometimes to some special message from God, as when "the word of God came to the prophets, saying," &c.; but it also applies as a name and title to our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the essential Word of God. The *Logos* of the Scriptures, of whom it is said, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, the same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was nothing made that was made. (John i. 1-3.) And in Rev. xix. 13, we are expressly informed that the name of the King of kings and Lord of lords, is called THE WORD OF GOD. That this name and title belongs to Christ as the Son of God, in his mediatorial character and relationship, as the one Mediator between God and men, is abundantly evident from the fact that it is only applied to him in his manifestation, or the revelation of him as the Lord from heaven, the begotten of the Father, and in connection with his mediatorial offices and work. In John i. we read, The Word was made flesh, or was revealed in the flesh, and became identified with flesh, and in him was life, and the life was the light of men. The term quick, used in our text, as applied to the Word of God, signifies vital, living, life, &c., agreeing with the passages quoted above, and with the declaration 1 John v. 20, "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true: and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." Thus fully justifying and confirming the testimony of our text, that the Word of God is quick, or life, or vital, and in perfect harmony with other titles given to and assumed by our divine Mediator; as "I am the Resurrection and the Life." "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life."

But the Word of God is not only quick, or vital, as having life, but as having eternal life,—that life which was with the Father and was manifest as the Word of Life. (1 John i. 1, 2.) "Who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light." —1 Tim. vi. 15, 16. The life of his body, the church, according to the record borne by the three in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, which three are One, and witnessed by the Spirit, the water and the blood, in earth, and these three agree in one. (1 John v. 7, 8.) "And this is the record that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."—1 John v. 11. His Son, as the Word of life, is the repository of all the spiritual and eternal vitality of his body, the church, and as the Head and life of the church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all; his goings forth were of old, from everlasting.

Again, The Word of God is quick, as the fountain and source of spiritual, eternal life to his members, as the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, who is a quickening Spirit. (1 Cor. xv. 45.) Possessing in himself the exclusive power to quicken whomsoever he will, "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will."—John v. 21. But while we witness the abundant testimony of the Scriptures that Christ is the Life of his people, we must bear in mind what he said to some of his murmuring disciples, "What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before? It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are life."—John vi. 62, 63. The words, there-

fore, which Jesus speaks to his disciples, emanating from him as the Head and fountain and source of all spiritual life, as Adam was the head and source to us of all human life, are quickening in their nature and effects, and as direct communications from him to them; they also are the Word of God. And to the Word of God all life-giving power to quicken dead sinners, is ascribed. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth [or is quick, or life-imparting,] and abideth forever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord abideth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."—1 Peter i. 23-25. The word of God, then, having power to communicate eternal life to as many as the Father hath given to Christ, (see John xvii. 2, 3; v. 25; x. 27, 28,) "Verily verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live; for as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself, and given him power to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man." "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." Hence we perceive that the Word of God, which is both quick and powerful, is not the mere letter of the Scriptures, nor the publication by men of what God has spoken, but, as God spake by the prophets of old, so doth he now speak by his Son whom he hath appointed heir of all things, and his words come in the execution of his eternal purpose and counsel, "not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance," for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.

But we pass to speak of the peculiar qualities or attributes of the Word of God, as stated in our text. It is not only quick or vital, and life-giving, but it is powerful, or full of power, possessing no less power than that word by which the heavens and the earth were spoken into existence, with all that they contain. It is not a word which those unto which it is addressed have power to resist or gainsay, but that by which the rocks are rended, the earth is made to quake, the sun is darkened at noon, the raging tempest is instantly calmed, graves are unlocked and their doors thrown open, and the dead spring forth to life. It is his Word who hath power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life unto as many as the Father hath given him, and it cannot, therefore, be successfully resisted by men or devils.

"Sharper than any two-edged sword." It is represented in the book of Rev. i. 16, and xix. 15-21, as a sharp two-edged sword going out of his mouth; but this, like all other figures, fails to fully set forth the power of the word which goeth forth from his mouth,—for his words are sharper than any two-edged sword. Paul says the sword of the Spirit is the word of God, piercing, even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit. On this part of the text, brother Huston desires us to dwell particularly, but in order to do so, we must defer our further remarks for another number.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., January 15, 1858.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$368 05
Miss Sarah Sayer, N. Y., $1.00; D. S. Elliott, N. Y., $2.75.—Total	3 75
Total to date	$371 80

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Frank McGlade, at the residence of the bride's parents, brother E. Kagy and wife, at St. Stephens, Ohio, July 15th, 1900, at 8 o'clock p. m., Miss Mary Kagy and Robert Buchanon.

By Elder E. Rittenhouse, July 25th, 1900, at the residence of the bride's parents, Willis Michener and Miss Lucretia, daughter of Elmer Foreaker, both of Philadelphia.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEPARTED this life after a lingering illness, **Mrs. John Knickerbocker,** at the home of her son, near Dunraven, N. Y., June 21st, 1900, aged 77 years. Sister Knickerbocker made a profession of religion many years ago, uniting with the First Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, always delighting in the doctrine of God her Savior, and lived in hope of a "better resurrection" than that which raised her up from the law's condemning power, which would change her vile body, and make her like the Son of God, which glorious change she humbly hoped she was predestinated to. She was a great sufferer, yet bore her suffering with great fortitude, waiting for the summons to call her home. She left a large circle of friends to mourn, the nearest being our aged brother, her husband, one son, several daughters and several sisters.

ALSO,

AFTER a gradual wasting, at the age of 92 years, our dear sister **Evan Samuels,** at the residence of her son, in Andes, N. Y., July 4th, 1900. Sister Samuels was one of those old fashioned worshipers, having traveled many times on foot several miles to meet with the people of her choice, which were the Old School or Primitive Baptists, which she believed held to the doctrine of God her Savior in the true sense. Being a member of the church of Andes, N. Y., she earnestly sought its peace, and in old age often manifested a great desire for its welfare, though she could not attend with them. Her desire seemed to be expressed by the poet:

"E'en down to old age, all my people shall prove
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;
And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,
Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne."

Our aged sister had not so large a circle of earthly friends as some, to mourn her demise, yet while they, and we, mourn, it is not as those without hope.

ALSO,

VERY suddenly, July 15th, 1900, at the home of her son-in-law, sister **Sallie Slauson,** (widow of the late Hiram Slauson) aged 73 years. Sister Slauson had been enjoying a favorable degree of health for one of her age, and strength even the day before she died, therefore did not linger and suffer as many do, which was her desire, that her last sickness might be short. Sister Slauson was an earthly sister to sister Knickerbocker, and both daughters of Elder James Mead. Sister Slauson lived in the faith of the Son of God, who loved her and gave himself for her. Though she was a woman of a sorrowful spirit, she rejoiced in hope of the glory of God. Tribulation had wrought her patience, and she is at rest. She leaves an only daughter and three sons, with a number of step-children, and other relatives, as well as the church, to mourn, yet as mourners we have hope. May the goodness of the Lord prevail.

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLEY'S CORNERS, N. Y.

Mrs. Sarah Amos Thorne, the wife of Dr. John Thorne, died at her home, 633 N. Calvert St., Baltimore, Md., on July 12th, 1900. She was called by the Spirit fifty-three years ago, and was baptized by Elder Trott, at Harford. She had no thought of going before the church, but at the time she felt a power constraining her, and felt that she heard words urging her to go before the church. Those words came, and seemed as though some one had spoken to her, saying, "Go, for I will never leave nor forsake you." I never heard her waver, she always held that Christ would not leave her. During her sickness of five weeks, she was always the same, and often repeated these lines:

"The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to his foes."

If it is Christ to live as it was hers, then it is gain to die, for Christ said, "Because I live, ye shall live also," and "Where I am, there shall ye be also." He who notices the sparrows' fall, will receive his children when they fall, and will raise them up again by his Spirit, that dwelleth in them, as they are of more value than many sparrows.

DR. JOHN THORNE.

[IN addition to the above obituary by brother Thorne, we desire to add our testimony to the steadfastness of sister Thorne. It was our privilege to know her intimately for more than thirty years. We know that she was a full and firm believer in the grace of God, and in salvation by grace. For ourself, we have cause to grieve for the loss of a steadfast friend; for nearly twenty-eight years we had a welcome home twice every month, at the house of brother and sister Thorne. We can but grieve at what is to us a great loss. We extend to brother Thorne our deep sympathy. His brethren will all remember him with earnest desire for his comfort and welfare in his loneliness. Our comfort is that our sister is with the Lord, whose name and cause she loved.—C.]

CHURCH NOTICES.

THE Primitive Baptist Church called Salem, of the Highland Association, situated in Webster Co., Ky., at her regular meeting in April, 1900, excluded from her fellowship, by a unanimous vote, Elder L. Chandler, upon the charge of treating the church with contempt, and bearing false witness. He refused to deliver up his credentials to the church, and this is to prevent him from imposing himself upon our brethren abroad.

Done and signed by order of the church, in session at her regular meeting in June, 1900.

J. B. HARDY, Moderator and Pastor.
J. G. ASHLEY, Church Clerk.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday, at the Hall,
226 West 58th Street,

10:30 A. M. 3 P. M.

To them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ, is extended a most cordial invitation to meet with us.

THE Spoon River Association will convene (the Lord willing) in her sixty-ninth session, three and one-half miles southeast of Farmington, at or near the residence of brother C. E. Prior, on Friday, August 31st, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continuing over Sunday. All trains will be met on Thursday evening, at Farmington. None will be met on Friday, except the early train on the C., B. & Q., from the south.

All are invited, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing on Friday, August 31st, 1900, and continuing three days.

We shall gladly welcome all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and especially brethren in the ministry, who feel it in their hearts to visit us.

Those coming will be met at North Berwick railway station on Thursday before the time appointed for our yearly conference.

FRED. W. KEENE.

THE Shohola Creek Old School Baptist Church will hold a two days meeting on Thursday and Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1900, if the Lord permits. All lovers of the truth are invited.

Trains will be met at Shohola, on Wednesday and Thursday morning, and friends conveyed to place of meeting.

GIPSON McKEAN, Church Clerk.

THE Licking Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Little Flock church, Anderson Co., Ky., to begin on Friday before the second Saturday in September, (7th) 1900, and continue three days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

Those coming from the east will come via Lexington, Ky., to Frankfort, Ky. Trains will be met Thursday, Sept. 6th, morning and afternoon.

Those coming from the west and south, will come via Louisville, Ky., over Southern Railway, to Alton Station, Ky., and will be met Thursday, Sept. 6th, and Friday morning, Sept. 7th.

A. G. HERNDON, Clerk.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the South Gardiner Old School Baptist Church, South Gardiner, Maine, commencing on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1900, and continuing three days.

Those coming from the south and west will be met at the afternoon train from Boston, on the afternoon of September 6th, and conveyed to places of entertainment, and to the meeting.

J. H. LOWELL, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Second church of Roxbury, in Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., two miles below Roxbury village and railroad station, and six miles above Kelley's Corners.

Trains will be met at Kelley's Corners, and Roxbury, on Tuesday, Sept. 11th, 1900, as the meeting is to be on Wednesday and Thursday.

Our desire is toward all that have an interest in us religiously and spiritually, and all such are welcomed, especially ministers.

J. D. HUBBELL.

THE church at Cammal, Pa., have appointed a two days meeting for the fifth Saturday and Sunday in September, (29th and 30th,) 1900. We hope to have a goodly number of brethren and friends present.

Procure tickets to Cammal station, on what was formerly called the Fall Brook Railroad, but now the Pa. Div. of N. Y. Central. Inquire for James Lamison, or Sammy Moffat, who live near the depot.

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1791. French Morocco, red and gold edges, extended covers, round corners, leather lined to edge, $3.75.
1734. Extra Morocco, red and gold edges, flexible boards, round corners, leather lined, $4.00.
1714. Extra Morocco, red and gold edges, limp, round corners, leather lined, $4.50.
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2714. Extra Morocco, red and gold edges, limp, round corners, leather lined, $6.50.
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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1900. NO. 17.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PROVIDENCE AND GRACE.

(Concluded from page 483.)

THE holy oracles connect grace with God, and call him "The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." Peter then says, "I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand." Paul calls it, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation." Salvation embraces lost sinners, and they are saved from their sins. The angel said of Jesus, "He shall save his people from their sins." This is absolute: "He shall save." In what way? "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Grace is united to the reigning Christ, then, and he to the God of grace and providence. This is the glory of grace, therefore, and thus it is saving grace, and glorious grace, for the God of salvation and glory is its Author and Source, and by his all-conquering and righteous Son grace reigns. So there is neither weakness nor failure in the grace of God. "By grace are ye saved."

Having seen that this royal princess that reigns unto eternal life is the free gift of the Holy God, unmerited and unbought, and that the King who reigns in righteousness supports grace by his victory over sin and death and the devil, and by his power over all flesh, we may join with Paul in his full assurance of faith and say, "For if by one man's offense death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." And so not only does grace reign through righteousness unto and over all her favored subjects, but they shall also through the abundance of grace and righteousness reign in life eternal, by her and their Lord of glory. For although sin abounded in and over the people of grace, even unto death, and this monster had shut them up in his boasting prison-house, yet so invincible and mighty is grace that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Yea, so much more that grace saves her people from sin and death and the grave, unto righteousness and life and immortality. This is grace,

and this her power and success and glory. Grace, then, is synonomous with salvation and holiness and eternal life. Yea, grace is in everlasting union with God and Jesus and heaven. We do not wonder, therefore, that the inspired ministers of grace uniformly addressed their brethren in grace with the benediction: "Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." Neither do we feel any amazement that the victorious Christ, by whom grace reigns, assured and comforted his persecuted and buffeted servant with, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Nor are we surprised that Paul, who, as a faithful servant of Christ, said, "By the grace of God I am what I am," when writing to all the saints and faithful in Christ, and speaking of the holy purpose of God, in the blessing and choice and predestination of his people, "according to the good pleasure of his will," should proclaim that all this salvation unto holiness is that the saved should be "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved." That we should be thus in all the way of salvation, from its beginning in us to its consummation in eternal glory. Hence, says Paul, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Then it shall be perfectly performed, and the saved by grace shall "be holy and without blame before God in love." In all this good work and way of full salvation much more abounding grace reigns, and reigns through righteousness. This is ordered and sure, for the Lord hath spoken it. This is our great need, but more we do not need, and cannot receive. All the divine record concerning the salvation of sinners is summed up, therefore, in the one confession, "Salvation is of the Lord." And the way of it is, "The grace of God bringeth salvation." "For by grace are ye saved." This salvation is being manifested now, here in time, and it is the Lord's begun good work in us, by his much more abounding and reigning grace, but its fullness shall be on heaven's side of the grave, when all the saved by grace shall joyfully say, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." "And he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace, unto it." "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes."

Now, forasmuch as the God of reigning grace supremely rules in providence, so that all worlds are subject to his almighty power and control, his providence and his grace are harmonious and concurrent in the accomplishment of his counsel, "according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ." Therefore to his people he says, "Fear not; for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him. * * * Thus saith the Lord, which maketh a way in

the sea, and a path in the mighty waters; which bringeth forth the chariot and the horse, the army and the power; They shall lie down together, they shall not rise; they are extinct, they are quenched as tow. * * * I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. The beast of the field shall honor me, and dragons and the owls: because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen. This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." Thus does the Lord declare his wondrous providence in ruling the nations, his power over the whole earth, and the conquests of his irresistible grace, in gathering together his people in Christ, and saving them out of all countries. "Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself; that frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish; that confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof." Providence supreme controlled in all those wonderful and mighty events; and so it does in God's limitless universe; and parallel with his providence runs the mercy of God to all the ends of the earth, so that his providence is made subservient to his grace in all times and places, and unto all the peoples of the earth, whom he hath from the beginning chosen unto salvation. So the Lord's arm of supreme power rules for him in providence, as in grace. Knowing this, Paul wrote these wonderful words of faith: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." He knew this by revelation of the truth in the oracles of God, "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," and who "doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth." So true is this, the Son of God said of the little birds of the air, "Not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father." This is the providence of God. Providence is universal then, and there is nothing outside of it, for God is omnipresent, is everywhere, and he is the God of providence in all places. Providence does not oppose grace, therefore, but goes hand in hand with it, and both grace and providence work together in the salvation of his people and for their good. If it were not so, then many things in providence, or rather beyond the control of providence, might perchance arise to hinder or obstruct or defeat the purpose of God in his grace, so that there might be disappointment or frustration or woeful failure in the reign of grace, and in the counsel and purpose and will and wish of the God of grace and salvation. But we rejoice that there is no such thing as frustration or defeat or want with the God of providence and grace, who speaks, and it is done, commands, and its stands fast, and who says, "I will do all my pleasure."

In the manifestation and application of God's providence in grace, and grace in providence, many instructive and remarkable instances are given in the Bible, a few of which let us notice. First, follow Abraham and his sons Isaac and Jacob and his family, in all their history, from Ur to Canaan, from Canaan to Egypt, and from Egypt up into Canaan

again. Note all the mighty events in all this history, the righteous judgments of God upon the Egyptians, the nations of the wilderness, and the seven nations of Canaan; the consequent calamitous wars, until the youthful David, "a man after God's own heart," reigned upon the throne of Israel; then behold the wonderful wisdom and power, mercy and grace and love of God through it all, to the people whom he had formed for himself, that they should show forth his praise and glorify the God of their salvation, and with silent awe we must say, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." Next, single out the persecuted little Joseph, the loved of his father, and trace him from his father's bosom, on and on, till the son again wept in the father's arms down in Egypt; then recount all the overflowing goodness and surpassing compassion of God as the outcome of all the long trial and afflictions of blessed Joseph, and, with David, we shall feelingly say, "The wrath of man shall praise thee, O Lord; and the remainder of wrath thou shalt restrain." Again, from the son Joseph follow on to the Son Jesus, who was born in the city of David, where Jacob buried Rachel, the beloved mother of Prince Joseph, near where a multitude of the heavenly host sang praises to God, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men;" and consider all the intervening providence of God in his dealings with the Hebrew nation and the nations about them, from Joseph to Jesus, and from the birth of Jesus to his death on the cross, and from his resurrection to his ascension from Olivet to the right hand of his Father in glory; mark the mighty events which were inseparably connected in the providence of God through many centuries with all this most glorious redemption and salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, then you will not say that the grace of God that bringeth salvation is not interwoven with his providence, neither that the providence of God does not embrace and control all events in the universe. You will not unless you dispute the Bible history, and object to the boundless dominion of the supreme Being, "who is God over all and blessed for evermore."

The people of God's grace are everywhere, in all nations, tongues, peoples, kindreds and families; for he said to Abraham that in him and his seed should all the families of the earth be blessed, therefore some of the Lord's people are either directly or indirectly connected with all the events of time, and affected by all that transpires in the world; but wherever they are, there God is, and his hand of providence is over them. "For in him we live, and move, and have our being," and his chosen are kept by his power. Behold the uniting lines of providence and grace in the Lord sending Jonah to Nineveh, and sparing that great city; also, in the sifting and conversion of Peter; also, in the Lord sending him to the house of the Gentile Cornelius; also, in his sending Philip away to the south, just at the moment to meet the returning Ethiopian, to whom he preached Jesus. For the Lord had said that Ethiopia also should stretch out her hands to him. The history of God's people in the Bible abounds with such memorial cases, plainly showing the shaping and controlling of their lives by many combining events in his wonderful providence, which providential links unite with his grace in its glorious reign in their salvation, and in forming his people for his praise. Thus the Lord's dominion and power is manifest in both his providence and grace in his glorious work of their salvation,

Turn now to your own lives, dear brethren, and you can but set up all along the way, here and there, an Ebenezer of praise to the God of your being, because his mercy and grace have been so richly bestowed upon you in his guiding and protecting providence through which he has held you up in your pilgrimage, so that you have not perished in your afflictions, but his mercy has held you up and his grace has been sufficient for you. "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not." O why should we want to limit the holy and blessed God, or deny his dominion and omnipotent control and infinitely wise purpose, either in his limitless providence or reigning grace? Do we fear that he will blunder and make mistakes if we ascribe to him universal and absolute sovereignty? Are we wiser and holier than the Holy Father Almighty? Reverend and holy is his name. Let us reverence and adore him.

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind.

EAST PITTSTON, Maine.

DEAR SISTER ELLA:—I will try to write you a few lines, but I hardly know what to say. O, how I wish that everybody was an Old School Baptist, I have such a longing at times to be in their company, and cannot get to see any of them, and then when I do see them I cannot talk as I thought I could; I am a terribly mixed up affair. Ellen, my sister, has been here to-day; she can bear sound doctrine, and seems to love the truth, still there needs to be an ointment applied to her eyes, which none but Jesus can apply; he alone applied it to your eyes and mine, my dear sister, and none but he could have done it. How glad I am it is so, yes, his work is before him, and "He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." Dear sister, it will be a short work with you and I; soon the places that know us now, will know us no more forever, our work will be done or undone. I often fear that mine will be undone; I am a very slothful servant, and not willing to make use of my little gift, but coveting that of others, and not willing to stand up and face the enemies of the word of God; I want to say smooth things, and want the favor and friendship of the world, which is enmity with God. But what is this that I hear? What shall we see in the Shulamite but the company of two armies? Who would not be a Shulamite? Though the cross is sometimes heavy and altogether contrary to nature, yet let us run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, and despised the shame, and is forever set down at the right hand of God.

Now what was the joy set before him? Was it not the redemption of his people, and to do the will of the Father? He says, "Lo I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God." He left the courts of heaven, and came down to this sin-cursed world, and took upon him a body of flesh, and came under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law. Verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham. He came right where we were, and so you see we have not a High Priest who cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, but who was in all points tempted as we are, and yet without sin.

I have often thought that I would write a few lines to you, but you do not

know how many times the devil has tempted and distressed me, by telling me that I did not feel what I was writing, and it was all mockery, and that I did not understand it myself, and that I had better burn what I had written, &c., and you may agree with him when you read this letter. I received your letter, and enjoyed it very much. "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it." Are we not witnesses of the truth of this? O, may we be kept by the power of God from all malice, and evil speaking, esteeming each the other better than ourselves, and be kept at the feet of all the saints, realizing from whence cometh our help, and that the Lord alone can keep us; may we remember that Satan is ever near to stir up our carnal minds, and to magnify mole hills into mountains, and to thus destroy the peace of the saints, but he can go no further than he is permitted by a wise and loving Father. How glad we ought to be that it is so. I have been reading your letter again, it has brought tears to my eyes; I thought while reading it, What an understanding in one so young in experience. Thousands who were traveling Zionward before you were born, seem to know little of these great and glorious truths of which you write. Why does not God reveal these things to all his children? as none can know them but by his revelation. Have you and I had a revelation from God? If so, how great and terrible it is, yet it is true, I believe, I have no more doubt of it than I have of my existence. Sometimes I think that my faith is too strong, and that I speak too boldly upon these things, but if Christ has made us free, we are free indeed, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, so we are not only free, but have liberty of speech, and it is written, if these should hold their peace, even the stones would cry out. We sometimes feel that we cannot hold our peace, that we must see the brethren, and talk with them upon this all-important subject, and how glad we are that there are a few who can understand us. O, how little we can say concerning the great God and his wonderful works to the children of men, while we are clogged with the flesh, but soon we shall see him as he is, and know as we are known, and sing his praise forever.

You, and sister Attie, both say in your letters, "May God give you that peace that passeth all understanding." Now we read that if any two of us are agreed in what we shall ask, it shall be done unto us, and I do hope that I have that peace which the world understands not, and can neither give nor take away. Is it not strange, after experiencing what we have, and after feeding upon the word of God, and having such joyful seasons, we so soon have our minds engaged in the things of this life? It sometimes surprises me when I see how quick the change takes place, and what makes the matter worse, I feel for a time contented in that earthly place, and almost wish that I could always stay there; I feel a sort of dread when I think of spiritual things, and do not want to hear about them. O, what a strange mortal I am, but the Lord knows our frame, and as a father pitieth his children, so he pities them that fear him. It was in his love and pity he redeemed us, and bare and carried us all the days of old, and he will not forsake us now. My whole hope and trust is in the Rock that is higher than I. An apostle has said, Let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord. Now, my sister, whether or no I glory in the Lord you must judge.

There is a satisfaction in talking and writing to the Old School Baptists, for I generally feel that they understand me whether I express my thoughts to my own satisfaction or not. What a great privilege we enjoy in being numbered with the people of God, and what a favor to worship under our own vine and fig tree, with none to molest nor make us afraid.

I have now just finished supper, and as I sat at the table a feeling of praise and joy seemed to take possession of me, and as I have no one to talk with about it, I will add a few lines more to my letter; perhaps I cannot write about it. You know that Jesus comes, and talks and walks with us, for our comfort, and not always for the comfort of others, but I felt to say at the table, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty." How wonderful that he should remember me in mercy; yes, even poor me. Well do I remember in the days of my childhood, when feeling lonely and forsaken, I would take the Bible and go to some secluded place, and read in it with all the comfort and encouragement that a believer could have had. It seemed even then to touch my case, and the tears would run down my cheeks, and I felt that God was my friend. I wonder now how I could have claimed the promises, and fed upon the word of God, as I then had no evidence that I was a child of God; I never had such a thought as that I was his child, but I seemed driven to the word, for I had no other source to look to for comfort. All the way along my life I have been receiving chastisement from that dear, unseen hand. Bless his holy name forever and ever, let the whole earth say amen. Now, as I look back, I can see that it was God's own hand leading me. He said, I will bring the blind by a way they know not, and lead them in paths which they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do for them, and not forsake them. I hope that I have written nothing that would wound the feelings of any of God's little ones. He who searches the heart knows that I have no such intention, but I dare not, and neither do I desire to turn either to the right hand or the left, from the truth. I hope that you will feel to write me again.

I remain your sister in a precious hope,

ANGIE MOODY.

GARDEN CITY, Minn., July, 1900.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I have been requested by brethren and sisters, at home and abroad, to write more for the SIGNS, but every number is so ably filled, what I could write would only mar its beauty. Yet at the same time I have an impression to write, but from what motive? is the question with me; if it is to gain applause, or to have my name appear in the paper, I had better lay my pen down, and never take it up again, but I hope and pray that it is not so, but solely for the comforting of the weak lambs of the fold, and lifting of Jesus on high, exalting him above all powers in heaven or upon earth, or under the earth. Paul, in his letter to the Thessalonian brethren, after exhorting them how they should walk in the church, touches on brotherly love, and says, "Ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." And John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Paul ends the chapter to the Thessalonians by saying, "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." They were taught of God

to love one another, and that it was not necessary that they should follow the traditions of the Jews, and be circumcised and keep the law of Moses, or even to meet God on the way, O no. Paul had preached them the gospel of the Son of God, that they were saved through the suffering, death, resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, that had redeemed them, and purified unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, through reigning grace alone. The brethren at Thessalonica could testify to this, and now they were to comfort one another with these words. And as we understand this same God is without variableness or the shadow of turning, so he teaches his children to love him to-day, in the same way he did in the beginning, and for that reason I desire to comfort the scattered sheep and lambs of my Master's kingdom with these words. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." Paul could say, "By the grace of God I am what I am," for he was going with letters of authority to put to death all that called on the name of the Lord, but Jesus met him on the way, and turned him about, as he does all his Jacobs, and told him that it was hard to "kick against the pricks." Hence Paul could say, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourself; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." Then where are the boasting pharisees of to-day, boasting of how many souls they have saved, and turned to the Lord. The command is, receive them not in our house, nor bid them Godspeed, for it is not the doctrine Paul preached. Then let this be a comfort to you, to know that you have been taught of God to love one another. John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." O, says the poor little one, I fear that I do not love as I had ought, for I see so much sin and corruption in my every day life that I fear that I am not born again; I am so much of the time in darkness, surely the Son of Righteousness has never shone upon me. Dear kindred in Christ, let this be a comfort to you, to know that none but the children of God have such trials. Job says, "He hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass: and he hath set darkness in my path."—Job xix. 8. Then let us do as the children of Israel did at the Red Sea: "Stand still and see the salvation of God." We are told to wait upon the Lord, and he will renew our strength. Brethren, be not confused by the Ashdod manner of waiting upon the Lord; they gather sticks and kindle a fire of excitement to warm themselves by, and call it the working of grace in the heart. The prophet tells what shall be their lot: "They shall lie down in sorrow." David said, "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God."—Psalm xl. 1–3. You all can testify to these things, so comfort ye one another with these words at your little assemblies. One may be led to speak of the way the Lord found him in a waste howling wilderness, in a desert land, like Jacob of old, and says another little one, That is the way it has been with me; I thought I was entirely alone, that there was no one like me, with such a wicked, deceitful, wandering mind. How it comforts and cheers my drooping spirits to hear those I believe to be the true children of God,

expressing what I have passed through. Yet at the same time we have nothing wherewith to boast, it is through faith we are led to speak of the goodness and mercy of God to such poor, unworthy creatures as we feel ourselves to be, and it is through the given faith of the Son of God that the poor, doubting ones are comforted while conversing together of their trials and conflicts.

In conclusion I will say, remember what Paul says to the Hebrews: "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastisement, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."—Hebrews xii. 6–8. Peter also tells us to "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

I will just say, if this should meet the eyes of the brethren that know us, they will rejoice with us to know that God has remembered Zion in this part of his vineyard. Let the bulls of Bashan bellow, and the people imagine vain things. The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

But I must close, as I am making this scribble too long. I leave it in your hands, dear brethren editors, to do with as you think best, and all will be right with me.

As ever, yours in hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord,

A. B. LESTER.

WHITEFIELD, Maine, June 11, 1900.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have some letters which I wish to send you for publication in the SIGNS, if in your judgment it seems best. They have been very sweet to me, and I think others of like precious faith would reap a handful from them, if they should appear in the SIGNS. I have thought of you and Elder Hubbell many times since the association last September. Although I cannot bring to mind your words the morning when you both came to see me in my sickness, yet your voices were like music to my ear and melody in my heart, and they seemed not of earth, but of the Lord, and as I think of that little visit, the same sweet music sounds in my ears and comforts me still. It was a great comfort to have you all here in my home, even though I was not able to see you all. I had looked forward to the association all the year, anticipating the meeting with the dear ones, and hearing the gospel preached in its purity, but God in his wisdom ordered it otherwise, and that I should be laid upon a bed of pain and sickness, still comfort was with me, and I was made to be still and with no murmuring in my heart. Jesus was with me I feel sure, and made all my bed, and by times I was carried above it all. It was in God's plan for me to suffer much in my life. I sometimes ask the question, Why it is so? and then the words come often to me, "It pleased the Lord to bruise him," our dear Savior, and how then shall his little ones escape? In a measure we must follow his suffering; he trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him; we, too, must walk in the deep, and drink the same bitter cup, it is good for us, we are made perfect through suffering. I often feel that it is good for

me to be afflicted, it weans me from earth and worldly vanities, and brings me to the feet of Jesus, calling upon him, and shows me all my dependence upon him, and how vain is the help of man, how weak is the arm of flesh, how frail is this little bark. But our anchor, hope, is within the vail, where Jesus is, and it is sure and steadfast. Can I ever thank him enough for his goodness and mercy, which has followed me all the days of my life, and has given me a hope in his mercy, and filled my heart with love to him and all the household of God, and which keeps me that I may not depart from him?

I will close these rambling thoughts; I hope that I may be able to meet you all this coming fall, at South Gardiner, and that I may be enabled to eat and be filled with the heavenly manna which falls by the way. Love to you and family, and to all the household of faith.

Your little sister in a precious hope,
ELLA L. PULSIFER.

SOUTH GARDINER, Maine.

MY DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I have been thinking of you and the portion of Scripture upon which you wished me to write, the most of the time when I have been awake, since I reached home from Whitefield. I feel now like trying to write you a few lines as my mind may be led; I do not expect to write you all that has passed through my mind about this Scripture and its connections. You will find the Scripture of which you spoke, and about which sister Hubbard wrote, in the fortieth chapter of Isaiah and thirty-first verse, viz: "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint." You will see by reading the chapter that the Lord by the mouth of the prophet is showing his people how small all the nations are to him, and of how little value they are literally in his sight; he shows them that all nations are before him as nothing, and that they are counted to him as less than nothing and vanity; certainly this is as small as our little minds can comprehend. But he says, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength."

There are several ways of waiting; we read of waiters to wait upon tables at hotels, and upon company, and of several other ways of waiting, but this is not what is meant in the text, those here spoken of know the Lord to be the holy One of Israel, and they wait upon him as their King and Savior; they know their leanness and nothingness, and they also know that in them dwelleth no good thing, and they cry unto him as their life, their hope, their love, their righteousness, their all. They also have many trials, and temptations, and afflictions, and they glory in them. Their Lord has told them to glory in tribulation also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, for the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto them. Now, while they are thus waiting, their strength is renewed, and they mount up with wings as eagles. When I was a boy I lived near the seashore, and sometimes I have watched the eagles soaring in the air, and around and around, it seemed to me without any exertion of theirs, until finally they would ascend out of my sight, and I could see them no more. I think this is the idea intended here. When the Lord's little ones are led to wait upon him, in

his own time he will lift them up above all their worldly trials, and the eye of the flesh will not know how it is done, nor how far they go, but these times, my dear sister, are few with me, for I have to mourn my leanness and nothingness; still there are times when I think that,

"On the wings of his love
I was carried above
All sorrow, temptation and pain."

At such times God's children also run in the statutes and commandments of God, and they love all his ways, for he gives them the light to see that all his ways are just and right, and they say, The Lord has done it, and it hurts them to hear any one question any of the ways of the Lord, for they know that they are just and right. And when troubles and trials and afflictions come upon them, they can walk in them, because they can witness with one who wrote anciently, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

I have not written as I intended, but I have written as my mind has been led at this time. This letter looks just like me.

From your brother in hope,

J. H. LOWELL.

AUGUSTA, Maine, December, 1899.

MY DEAR SISTER ELLA:—I would like so much to see you all. I have been thinking of you and others this morning, and it has seemed good to shed tears. My heart is with the people of God, and though absent in body, I am with you in spirit and in truth. The Lord does indeed bless me; he gives me to think upon these divine things; he causes the clouds to be rent in twain, and then I behold the face of my Beloved. "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" the psalmist said, and I feel that I also desire none on earth but him; I desire no God but the omnipotent Savior of Israel, he is my rock and my salvation, he is the life of his people, and had I a thousand tongues I could not tell what he is to me. I would that the small, insignificant things of time might be taken from my mind, what do they matter, after all my fretting and worrying? We that have this great hope through grace know that by taking thought we cannot add one cubit to our stature, but these things are a thorn to buffet us, but when these vain things are subdued, and we behold Jesus only, we have rest for a season. The other day I experienced a feeling different from what is usual with me; I thought of my Savior, (I was, or had been, reading,) and of how much more of worldly goods I have than he had, and I felt that I wanted no more. His way was much rougher and harder than mine. Did my Lord suffer, and shall I repine? My desire for gain was gone. I cannot tell it to you so that you can feel what it was to me. These little experiences are for ourselves. When the sun breaks forth from the clouds, you have noticed that it falls in little rays, a ray here, and a ray there. It is the glorious Sun of righteousness that shines into our souls, and causes our love to flow out like a river. The world may look on and see the outward experience of it, and call it purely natural, but we to whom these things are given, know that is false. Our love is the same for one whom we have never seen before, when we hear him declare the wonderful works of God, as it is for those whom we have long known. Great and wonderful are the works of the Almighty God, how wonderfully he reveals himself to us poor, vile worms of the dust, and how great is his compassion and love for us,

and it was the same before the world was created. Just to think that I should have been embraced in that wonderful covenant. Why was it that he should have so loved any of the fallen race of Adam as to give his own Son as a ransom? We can only answer, "Because it seemed good in his sight." "Let them that make mention of the Lord keep not silence." This is just as sure to be fulfilled as when he said, "Let there be light, and there was light." All the lets, wills and shalls are sure. I am glad it is so, if it were not so, how quickly would all things be overthrown. The Lord reigns, let the people rejoice, and the Old School Baptists do rejoice, when the spirit of rejoicing is given them, with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory. I would so like to go to conference and meeting; I would not stay here always, and be away from my kindred in Christ, unless I saw more inducement than I do now; I am homesick and hungry for a sight of your dear faces, I love you all with a pure heart fervently. "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul." We find as we travel on that grace is given to us according to our need; his grace is sufficient for us; daily bread, as it were, is given to the children of Israel in all their journeyings. Of old it is said there was no lack to any, neither was any left over. I sometimes do not care if my journey should not be much longer, there is not much to live for, and there is so much to die for. To live is Christ, and to die is gain. I sometimes think that I shall not stay very long, but there may not be anything in the impression; we frequently have thoughts that come to naught. The greatest barrier in leaving the world would be my mother, and yet I know that she would be strengthened. I have kind friends who are the nearest and dearest of earth, but you know the desires these glimpses of heaven produce; it is a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Earthly love at such times dissolves like mists before the sun. I would like to appreciate my natural blessings, I know that I have many. One of the first to a wife is a kind, indulgent husband, and that I have, yet he does not understand why I should sometimes feel the earth to be a weariness.

I will close, yet I feel hardly satisfied. I wish you a happy new year; whatever the Lord sends is best, and all things do work together for your good.

Your sister in the precious hope of the Son of God,

NELLIE PALMER.

DAYTON, Wash., June 24, 1900.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF LIFE ETERNAL:—As the time is past for me to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, I send two dollars, for which please give credit, and as I have been blessed with the privilege of meeting with a goodly number of the brethren here in the far west, at the Siloam Association, and other places, and can truly say we have been blessed with the manifestation of the presence of the Lord with us, realized in the love of God flowing from heart to heart, I feel like writing a little about it. What blessed seasons these are to me.

While in conversation with the brethren, I was requested to write out my christian experience and call to the ministry, and the evidences which it has pleased the good Lord to give me in regard to that work, and send what I should write to the SIGNS for publication. Now,

brethren, I will be as brief as possible, so as not to take up too much of your time.

I united with the church when I was in my eighteenth year; I had been raised by poor parents, and so had failed to acquire an education. For several years I felt that my place in the church was at the feet of my brethren, to hear, but not to be seen nor heard. In the year 1869, I moved away from our church about one hundred miles, into a new country, where there was no church privilege of any kind. After awhile the Presbyterians came into that country and organized a church; they wanted me to join in with them; this I could not and did not do. When I heard them preach I could see that there was a difference between them and the Baptists, and my own experience. One day while reflecting on this matter, the question came to me with much force, Is it possible that all these good people are mistaken, and that I am right? I decided at once in my mind that I must be wrong, and they right, but this did not satisfy me, I wanted to know, so to decide this matter I began to read the Bible with a prayerful heart to know the truth, and in this search I found that it is by grace that we are saved, and this was strictly in harmony with my experience. My mind soon became so absorbed in this search that I could not control it, and what I had found and learned to be truth I wanted to tell to others. My mind became so absorbed in the matter that I could not think of anything else. I was working very hard improving my new farm, and I would often work hard all day, and when night had come could not tell what I had done; I would often find myself standing, in imagination, before a lot of people, telling them of the glorious plan of salvation, and of the blessed things which the good Lord had done for his people, then I would think, "How foolish I am to think of preaching, I will not think of such a thing any more," but I would soon forget, and would be led off into the same line of doctrine, telling in mind the unspeakable love of God to poor sinners. Often while talking with any one I would forget what we were talking about, and would ask some foolish question, or make some foolish answer. Then I would think that men would judge me to be crazy, and not to know any better; then I would vow that I would not be so foolish again, and that I would give up such thoughts, and not think of anything of the kind again, and then again I would forget my resolution, and be lost in thought once more. It was my thought by day and by night; often I would awaken my wife by my talking, and she would ask me what was the matter, and I would say, "Nothing, I was just dreaming," and often I could not sleep because of the great burden that was upon my mind. I would often breathe forth a deep sigh, and when my companion would ask again what was the matter, I would tell her an untruth and say, "Nothing, only that I am tired."

Thus my mind was led for about three years, until it seemed that my entire strength was gone, and that surely I would lose what little mind I had. About this time, I had a dream which I will here relate, I had moved back into the bounds of our church. I dreamed that I was at the meeting of the church, and that Elder Wm. Truman, whom I dearly loved, and who had baptized me, was the minister, and when it came time to begin the service, he selected a hymn to be sung, and no one in the house could sing it but himself. I thought it very strange that he should use a hymn that no one else could sing, but just as he be-

gan to read the hymn, I thought that an angel came to the door and beckoned him away, and as he passed out, he handed me the book, and the angel said to me, calling me by name three times, "help." So I arose to my feet and began to sing. The dream was clear to my mind, and is yet, and the words were continued with me, until I had to yield and try to speak. I felt that I was the most ignorant person on earth to attempt such a thing. After some time, the church gave me license. I went on for three or four years, trying to preach, and trying to quit, when the church called for my ordination, to which I objected, I did feel that I was too weak and ignorant ever to undertake such great responsibility as rested upon one who was an Elder, yet I felt to be reconciled to the will of the little church, although it did seem that I could not yield to have such a responsibility placed upon me. But the church urged it upon me, and I finally consented.

Now brethren, I will relate an evidence that has been a great stay and comfort to me through many trials through which I have been called to pass; it has strengthened me at such times as I have been made to feel and know my weakness and imperfections, then I am made to know that without him I can do nothing. When this evidence is brought to my mind, I cannot help believe that the Lord has something for me to do. After the church had called for helps, and set the time for my ordination, I sank down into the very depths of despair, I thought surely the church has made a mistake, and I never can submit to be ordained. While I was in this low state, I was taken with pneumonia, it was a very violent attack, my mind was that the church had made a mistake, and to save disgrace being brought upon the cause, the good Lord was pleased to now remove me out of the way. This I was willing should be done, I had no fear of death, but was perfectly happy, I was going home, and should not be left to bring any disgrace on the church. The best medical aid available was called in, but to no purpose, I grew worse until my life was despaired of, I was taken with hemorrhage of the lungs, and pleurisy set in, my suffering, for the time, was great, but yet I had no fear of death, it was all right. I became unconscious, but I do not know how long I was in this unconscious condition, but several hours, then these words were spoken to me in a plain, unmistakable voice, and as it seemed within me, "Your time is not yet come, for the Lord has a work for you to do." Now, dear brethren, I never can tell the effect that these words had upon me, but it released every burden and doubt of my mind, and gave me to plainly see my duty with regard to my ordination, and the will of the Lord in it. All that I can say is, that I was filled with unspeakable joy, I was relieved of every pain, and told my friends not to weep for me, for the Lord had a work for me to do, and that soon I would be up and well, and what seemed so strange to many, my disease was gone, and all that was to be done was to build up my strength; this soon came to me, and in a few days I was able to be out, and to go to my place of meeting, and was ordained.

I will relate one more dream and then stop. A few days before I was ordained I dreamed that I was at our meeting, and brother Schanks, who was our pastor at the time, was also at the meeting, and at about the time that service should begin, he concluded to move the place of meeting; he went across a beautiful river, upon a high mountain, under a beautiful

evergreen tree, and then I could see him preaching to a lovely congregation. I was left with two aged sisters, and could not cross yet. The day I was ordained the dear old brother did cross over the river of death.

Now, brethren, these are some of the exercises of my mind, and these are some of the evidences which the Lord has given me upon which he has caused me to hope, that he has given me a small place to fill in his kingdom.

Brother Beebe, I know that you will see much imperfection in this, but if you think it worth the trouble of preparing for print, you can do so; correct where you think best. If in your judgment you think it had best be laid aside, do so, and all will be right with me.

I remain yours in the bonds of affliction,

B. S. PATE.

CARBON, Texas, Aug. 8, 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—GENTLEMEN:—I hope I am your brother in Christ. Inclosed find money order for $2.25, for which send me the two Books of Editorials, both volumes, price two dollars, and "Feast of Fat Things," in paper cover, price twenty-five cents. Having obtained and read a few numbers of the SIGNS, from an old brother by the name of House, I am led to send after these books. I have taken a great liking to the SIGNS, and want to take it, but decided I would wait and begin the first of the year, that is, if I live, and nothing takes place more than I know of. I want to say this, while I have never joined the church, and do not really feel worthy or fit to belong to the church, yet if I know myself, there is not an Old Baptist in the world that believes what the SIGNS sets forth any stronger than I do, and that is salvation by grace from beginning to end. I am surrounded by a people, and have been all my life, that claim that the atonement of Christ only opened the way, and it was left optional with the dead sinner whether he be saved or lost, but they leave off the dead part, and claim that the sinner is not dead, but has life enough left in him that he can lay hold on eternal life, if he just will. Well, you can leave me alone in their center, and let them surround me and preach it a lifetime, and they will never make me believe it. And why? Because it is contrary to my little experience, and the teachings of the Bible. If I should give way to my mind I could write at considerable length, or I feel so at least, but I will not. Hope to receive the books soon.

From a poor old sinner, if saved it will be by grace, and grace alone.

J. W. WHATLEY.

RIDGEWOOD, N. J., Aug. 6, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER:—Please renew subscription for Etta Hoffman, Bath, Steuben Co., N. Y., for our family paper, as this is all the preaching she can get. I have reason to know both her and her mother, in their loneliness, highly appreciate and enjoy the SIGNS. Elder Bundy, when he baptized sister Etta, a few years ago, was made to rejoice, as he expressed himself, "How wonderful are the ways of the Lord, in giving her such clear views of gospel order, when she has none to converse with on these things, and never hears any preaching." Yes, truly the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the judg-

ments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. David, who had sweet seasons of communing with the Lord, when he could indite those hymns of praise, and more precious still, of supplication, says, I am as a sparrow upon the housetop, but he says also, "I watch." May we also be given this carefulness.

I am glad to learn that sister Fisher, of Allentown, has cast in her lot with us, and regret it was not my privilege to meet her at the last association meetings. It was also a mournful pleasure to learn that Elder Wm. L. Beebe is so mercifully sustained in his affliction, and we trust he may continue to realize "His mercies endure forever."

Trusting this may find you and yours in the enjoyment of his presence, and realizing in your arduous duties, "As thy days, thy strength shall be," I would humbly subscribe myself,

Yours in fellowship,

M. HILLINGS.

WAGRAM, Ohio, July 10, 1900.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—Yours received a few days ago; glad to hear from you again. Some cannot see the commands and exhortations in the Scripture as they appear to me. If a command on God's part necessarily infers a full power on our part to comply with it or fulfill it, then we must have the same power to serve him the saints in glory have, which I do not believe. To me, commands and exhortations represent our duty, not our strength, and declare God's authority and right of dominion, and not our power or ability. When Jesus said, "I can of mine own self do nothing," he said it representatively of all the saints; it must be taken in this sense, for we know literally, all power was in his hands, and he worked, and did the work of redemption, a work which could be performed by no other, and only by him; he finished the work which the Father gave him to do, yet he said he received power from on high, and the early apostles could not preach or understand the gospel until they were endued with power from on high, so I hold to-day we are as utterly dependent on the same power to enable us to do works of righteousness, and when that power comes to us, or moves in us, it is greater than the natural power of evil within us, overcomes it, and thus we are led by the Spirit of God. It seems to me that the Spirit of God is in us at all times, but is felt more at times than at others. I am pleased with your manner of conducting the SIGNS, and desire to send you a word of cheer and comfort.

I am far from well, am discouraged very much at times; I cannot find out what is the matter with me, the doctors, if they know, will not tell me. I am a little better a day at a time, then I feel like writing, but when bad, just cannot write or read.

Now, my brother, believe me sincerely yours in love,

FRANK McGLADE.

JEFFERSON, N. Y., June 28, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed you will find a letter which I think will be appreciated by the readers of the SIGNS. She is a precious niece, as well as sister in Christ, and is a daughter of brother David Hix, who has taken your paper for years.

Your sister,

ELIZABETH HIX.

RICHMONDVILLE, N. Y.

DEAR AUNT AND UNCLE:—If you remember, you asked me over three years ago to write to you, and I promised to do

so. If I remember aright it was soon after I united with the church, and I have thought of it a great many times, and when I have thought of it I have felt too weak and unworthy to even try. I find myself so often out of the way, and walking in by and forbidden paths, that it causes me a great deal of trouble. O, that I could ever be found following in the footsteps of the dear Redeemer, more loving, kind and forgiving, and walking so that the world even would say, She is a christian. At times I am almost ready to give up my little hope and say, Can it be that the Lord has had anything to do with me, who am but a poor, weak worm of the dust? and when I get so low, and all seems darkness around me, I am made to groan and cry out to him who was my comfort and stay when I felt that my friends and all the world were against me. As I write, I think of the many days and nights which I thought were my last, and of the loving-kindness and tender mercies of God to me, poor and wretched as I was, and the tears run down my face at the thought that I should ever complain, even though my friends were to be all taken from me. As I feel now I would say, "O God, thy will be done." Surely he is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind; he will never leave nor forsake me. "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." His people need fear no evil, though they be in the prison cell, the lion's den, or in the fiery furnace. I do not know that I ever felt more like praising God and the dear Savior than I do now. I would like so much to hear the church sing,

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!
That saved a wretch like me."

If I am saved it is by grace, and I know that I am the most unworthy of all the people of God. I do love them, and love to hear them talk of the great goodness of God, and hear them sing his praises. Often I repeat these words, "O for a thousand tongues," &c. O, that I could praise him more.

I must close. May God bless you and his people everywhere.

MAGGIE A. HIX.

PINE BLUFF, Ark., June 3, 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—I will write you a few lines to-day, as it is time to forward my subscription for the SIGNS, and inclosed find money order for the same. I am always glad when the papers come, for they bring to me glad tidings of great joy, concerning Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. Then let us be steadfast always, since with him there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. I feel like one alone in this country, as nearly all the preaching is salvation by man, and how glad I am when I read the SIGNS and find that there are a few who preach Christ. But this is the stone which was set at naught by the builders, and which has now become the head-stone of the corner, and the word says, Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name given under heaven and among men whereby we must be saved. Jonah said, I will pay that which I have vowed, salvation is of the Lord. We are exhorted to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, because it is God who worketh in us, to will and to do of his own good pleasure. And the apostle said, When I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. This is

just as important now, because there have come in certain men who preach two salvations. Jesus alone is the salvation of his people, and there is no other way, he has always been their salvation, he was appointed to this work before the foundation of the world, but false teachers have come in, and it is our duty to cry aloud and spare not, and earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. This we do when we preach Jesus Christ the same always. It was of Christ that all the prophets spoke, and he was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and with wicked hands was crucified and slain, and him God raised up, loosing the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of death. "For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face; for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope." I trust, dear brethren, that the Lord may keep you long to publish the SIGNS. I remain your brother in the hope of Christ,

D. WESTALL.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

ELDER DAVID BARTLEY'S NEW BOOK NOW OUT.

ON the last page of cover of this number will be found the announcement that Elder Bartley's new book, entitled the "Priesthood of the Son of God," is now ready for delivery, and all wishing a copy will please order direct of him, and not of us, and save time and expense. Owing to ill health and other hindrances, we were not able to do the work of printing the book, but we have read the manuscript, and can recommend the work to our readers, and to enable them to judge for themselves, we publish in this issue, chapter four of the book, headed, "Our Brother High Priest."

For full particulars as to price, &c., see last page of cover.

APPOINTMENTS.

ELDER John McConnell, the Lord willing, will fill the following appointments in September, viz: first Sunday, at Hopewell, N. J.; second Saturday and Sunday, Rock Springs, Md.; third Sunday, Southampton, Pa.; fourth Sunday, Spring Valley, N. Y.; fifth Saturday and Sunday, Cammal, Pa.

Brother McConnell having kindly consented to attend any business for us during his travels, all who have any business to transact can do so through him.

ELDER R. H. BOAZ'S PAMPHLET.

ON page 543 will be found an advertisement of a pamphlet by Elder R. H. Boaz, on "Conditional Time Salvation." This pamphlet is a most complete refutation of this fallacy, and we wish every lover of truth possessed a copy.

EMBRACE THE OPPORTUNITY.

AS Elder F. A. Chick will, providence permitting, be at the Mt. Pleasant and Licking Associations, those attending these meetings, wishing to transact any business with the SIGNS, will have the opportunity to do so direct with him.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denotes the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1900.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

VIEWS ON SEVERAL TEXTS.

BROTHER Newton Peters, of Portland, Ind., has written asking that we present some thoughts upon the Scriptures found in Matthew xxiv. 30, 31; Mark xiii. 26; Luke xxi. 27; Matthew xvi. 27, 28, and Luke xvii. 30. To this might be added Mark ix. 2, and Luke ix. 27. Our brother says that there are some divergencies of opinion among brethren in his section about the meaning of these Scriptures, but adds, there are no divisions growing out of this difference of understanding of these texts, or of the subject embraced in them. This is as it should be: there have at all times been divergencies of opinion concerning the subject embraced in these Scriptures, and we have no doubt that there always will be among the children of God who are equally honest, and equally desirous of knowing the truth. We often call to mind, when such differences arise, what Paul says in Philippians concerning those of diverse mind: Whereunto ye have attained, let us mind the same thing, let us follow the same rule, but if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. The last clause covers what we would call attention to: "If in anything ye be otherwise minded," that is, diverse minded. What then? Dispute and quarrel about it? No; "God shall reveal it." He will reveal it to the brethren in his own time and way. What have any of us that we have not received from God? If any one of us have only that which has been revealed to us, and we did not receive it from men, why expect that others can receive it in any other way? If God revealed it to one, he must to all. If he has revealed any truth to one, that he has not to another, that one has a right to tell it forth, but he has no right to insist that others shall receive it until God reveals it to them. Let us wait for the Lord then in all things, and so if any brother has the right view of these Scriptures, and others have not, let the one who is right wait until God shows the rest the same truth; let him speak forth what he sees, and then leave it, being well assured that he will not leave others in the dark concerning any truth that will do them any good.

Leaving these general remarks, we desire to present such views concerning these Scriptures as we have, and we trust that no one will think we design an assault upon the views of any one who may differ from us. The substance of the texts named relates to the power, kingdom and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We understand them to present precisely the same things in substance that are said in all the prophesies concerning this new kingdom, and its King. We have no new nor novel views to present from these words, but the same gospel of good news that has been preached in all ages, and will be to the end of time. The texts referred to divide themselves into two groups. One group of three texts, Matthew xvi. 27, 28, Mark ix. 2, and Luke ix. 27, refer to the transfiguration on the mount. We will quote the lan-

guage in Matthew. The other two are the same in substance: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." Now in each of the three evangelists, it immediately follows that he took the three disciples up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them. We have never questioned that here was the beginning of the fulfillment of the words of the Savior just quoted. We do not understand that in the transfiguration all that he meant by the kingdom of God coming with power was fulfilled, but here was the beginning of that which should appear in all coming ages to all who are real disciples. In this scene in the mount there was a revelation of the truth that his kingdom was not of this world. Here the man of sorrows, who was despised of his enemies, and misunderstood by his friends, was revealed to be more than a man. The divine nature was here made for a moment manifest. The disciples heard Moses and Elias talking with him of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. They, in common with all the Jews, had thought of a Messiah who should set up an earthly kingdom, greater in power and might, and in justice and righteousness, than any other kingdom had ever been, but still a kingdom which was of the earth, and here they heard of a death which he was to die, and of which both Moses and all the prophets had written, out of which death was to come a better life, and a better kingdom; a kingdom which was spiritual, and in the hearts of men. Here was a revelation of this which was new to them, but which was to continue, and be more fully revealed to them, and afterwards to all who should believe. There is in the life of every believer some moments when Christ is transfigured before them, and they come to see that the gross earthly thoughts which they have harbored and cherished are all untrue and misleading, and that they do not present Christ as he really is, and when they see some glimpses of the true glory of the King and of the kingdom of righteousness and peace. Not until such revelations are given, does any man begin to learn that his kingdom is not of this world, but that it is of heaven, and comes down from heaven; then indeed they begin to see that all the prophets and all the law, point to death, and life through death; then they begin to understand what it means when he says, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore."

The Christ who was transfigured before them was in no wise different from what he had been before, and all the time, it was simply true that the glory which had been vailed from them because they were not able to behold it, was now for a moment unvailed. The light did not shine *upon* him, but it shined *out* of him; it was in him before, and now they saw it, and here was an unvailing of the Son of man in his true kingdom and power. Here also is the rewarding of every man according to his works, for these works are the fruit and result of the life which is made manifest in Jesus, and which was glorified in the transfiguration, and which he is unto his people. The apostle says, The life of Christ is made manifest in our mortal flesh, or in our mortal body, and when disciples see something of the glory of Jesus, it is only that which Jesus is to them and in them, and all this is a present experience, that is, as

we mean it, it is an experience for which we do not wait until the final revelation of glory. While the disciples yet lived here on earth they saw these things; one of the evangelists says after eight days, and one after six days, and even if it should be disputed that the transfiguration was meant, yet it would remain true that these things should be fulfilled in the natural life of men, for the Master said that some standing there should not see death until this promise was fulfilled.

Leaving this group of texts we will call attention to the other group. This embraces Matthew xxiv. 30, 31; Mark xiii. 26; Luke xxi. 27; Luke xvii. 30. Without quoting either place we will say that they all relate, as we understand the matter, to the same thing, and that is the final destruction of Jerusalem, and with it all the temple worship, with its forms, and offerings, and priests, and the ushering in of the new dispensation of the gospel. One sentence in Matthew xxiv. 34, settles to our mind one thing, namely, that these things began at once to be fulfilled. This verse reads, "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." And they were all fulfilled in that generation. That portion of the prophecy of the Savior which related to the natural events connected with the destruction of Jerusalem was all carried out to the letter, in the time of some then living; and the spiritual things which were there presented have their fulfillment in every generation, in that generation, and in all other generations.

When we read and think of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, what is it that makes it precious and helpful to us? Is it not that he comes to us in the Spirit, and is our brother and friend, tried and tempted as we are, and knowing therefore how to save us? We would not be understood to question his second coming, at the last time, indeed we do believe in what is called his second coming, but the texts to which our attention has been called, seem to us to present a coming of the Lord that we now feel and know. We have no evidence of the second coming of the Lord at the glorious consummation of all that believers hope for and expect, except that this same Jesus comes to us and manifests himself as a living Savior now in our hearts and lives. This is an experience true in all generations. Times and seasons do not matter so much as the spirit of his coming. The times and seasons we need not question, the Father has kept them in his own hand, and of the day or hour of the coming of the Son of man, let that coming be what it may, no man knows, not even the Son, but the Father only. These are Jesus' own words; they are true not only of one of his comings, but of all his comings to us; we can never anticipate them. The power and coming of this King, and of this kingdom, is to conform us to himself, it is to the heart, and to our needs, and it is glorious. When he shall come at the last time it will be the same, it will be then to perfectly conform us to himself, and it will be such a coming as we shall long for and need, and in this shall all his glory appear. That picture of the coming of the Christ which carnal Jews had formed, and which even the disciple held until the day of pentecost had come, was an entire misconception of what was needed, and of what was most glorious in the sight of God. Not that which strikes the senses of men is truly glorious, but that which men despise. The glory of Jesus was in his patience, humility and submissiveness to the will of God. Never did his glory so truly appear as when he

gave his back to the smiters. Men indeed could not behold it, and even the minds of his disciples were blinded to it, but think of that exaltation of Spirit to the will of God which enabled him to so yield himself willingly. What glorious power to lay down his life, and to take it again. His power was as much in the one as in the other. Now, when this Savior so comes to us that we are made willing to lay down our lives as he did, for the brethren, there has been a glorious victory won over the flesh, and the world, and the devil; we are then truly conquerors, and wear in the sight of God the crowns and palms of victory. Thus Jesus comes in his true power and kingdom to the mind and heart, and to have such a spirit of victory over self and all else opposed to God, reigning in us, is more than all that men call glorious; this is to know God indeed. It has long seemed to us that the chief glory of the final state of the redeemed will be, that they are so perfectly redeemed to God they will know no will but his, and be like Jesus, seeing him as he is. He shall then deliver up the kingdom to the Father, and so shall we, with all our heart and mind, and then in the glory of the Redeemer and of God, we shall be glorified, and our glory shall be the glory of holiness. It is in his holiness that we shall be like him; there is no real glory but the glory of holiness, all else is false and fleshly; this glory is the consummation of all that Jesus bestows upon us now, it is "Christ in you the hope of glory," while we live here, and it is still Christ in us in the perfect glory.

What power there must be in his coming, to take such a poor, vile sinner, and transform him into the spotlessness of Christ. Such power and goodness pass all our powers to comprehend or describe. While in the flesh, as he was in the flesh, this true glory is hidden, but it is still true that even here in the flesh, when by faith we see Jesus in his glory, we also appear with him in that glory. At such times as we are thus favored to behold him in his glory, we forget the flesh and all sensible things, and triumph in the Lord; at such times we are caught away from self, and do rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Then is Jesus only, glorified, and self is abased. We bring forth the royal diadem, and crown him Lord of all.

What a question it is, Has he come in his power to our hearts? It seems clear to our mind that at every time when a doubting, sin-sick soul is comforted by a view of Jesus as a Savior, and as all and in all that the soul needs, there is full evidence that he has come, and come with power, with all the holy angels of mercy, and promise, and doctrine, which is according to godliness, with him. Each promise, each principle of doctrine, is of comfort when applied at his coming. He came once literally in the flesh, now he comes in the Spirit, and comes to all who have need. It was expedient for all his disciples that he should go away. In the flesh but few could reach him in bodily presence, but now in the Spirit, in all places in all the world, and in all circumstances of grief, and trial, and temptation, all his needy people find him equally near. He was then known after the flesh, but now, says an apostle, We know him thus no more.

As we before called attention to the fact that in that generation all should be fulfilled, so we desire to emphasize that language of the Master again. The literal destruction of Jerusalem, with all its attendant horrors, was fulfilled in that generation, and so all that was everlast-

ing truth was fulfilled in that generation, as it will be in all generations. The work of God repeats itself in all lands, and in all times, the work of grace is one, the glory of Jesus is the same to us as it was to Paul, and to all who then believed. These things, and things like these, seem to us the most important things. We have never felt much interest in looking up special times in the history of men, when special prophecies should be fulfilled, indeed, we do not believe that any man will ever understand what any word of prophecy means until after its fulfillment. Men did not understand the meaning of the prophecy relating to the first coming of our Lord until afterwards, when the Spirit took of these things and showed them unto men prepared of God to receive them, so will it be to the end. To endeavor to tell what shall be in the future is simply to speculate, but when God's time comes, then the vision will speak, and not lie, and we shall not need the interpretation until God's time comes. But these things of which we have been speaking we do know, as we trust, at least we know that the children of God know them and have felt their power.

We have not tried to take up each and all the various expressions connected with the texts named by our brother, we could not attempt to do so without making this editorial much longer than it ought to be. We have tried to speak in general terms of the whole matter; we shall not be offended if any brother differs from us concerning any of the texts named by brother Peters. May God bless us all with understanding in all things, and give us all patience and forbearance with each other.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

HEBREWS IV. 12.

(*Continued from page* 508.)

"THE word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Of the Word, and its quickening power and divine energy, we have already expressed our views, in the preceding number, reserving for the present article, some remarks on the peculiar power of the word of God to divide asunder the soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.

"Piercing, even to the dividing asunder." As we have considered Christ, in his title as the essential Word of God, as the Head and Fountain of all spiritual, eternal life to the church, which is his body, and the words which he speaks to his people, as spirit and life, according to his declaration, (John vi. 63,) so the entering of his word is compared to a piercing, or a sharp sword. Those who have experienced its quickening operation, are sensible that they were by nature children of wrath even as others, that they were dead in sins, and in that state continued till the Word of life was spoken to them, with the same irresistible and almighty power as when he said, Let there be light, and there was light. Then the dead heard his voice, or word, and by it were quickened into life. Or in other words, they were born again of an incorruptible seed, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. Its powerful entrance is fitly represented as a piercing, or a pricking them in the heart, as at the day of pentecost, when the Spirit was poured out in fulfillment of the prophecy

of Joel, and many were pricked in the heart and cried, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Acts ii. 37, compared with Psalm xlv. 5, "Thine arrows are sharper in the heart of the King's enemies, whereby the people fall under thee." This quickening operation of the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, has to do with the heart, and that in an experimental way. It does not merely cut to the heart, making a flesh wound which may be easily healed, as when Stephen preached, (Acts vii. 54,) but it enters the heart and makes sure work. The sword or word enters, and the dead hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. (John v. 25.)

"Dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit." Dull as we may be to comprehend the soul of man, or to define either the spirit of man that is common to all men, or that spirit which is communicated by the new and heavenly birth, the word of God can and does make the discrimination, and if we have not mistaken its revelation, it pierces to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit. The natural spirit of man, which goeth upward, is what we understand is called the soul, and we shall not attempt to distinguish between the terms spirit and soul, when thus applied. But the word of God does clearly discriminate between the soul and spirit which is natural and common to all men, and that spirit which is the production of the new birth. That which is born of the flesh is divided asunder by the word, from that which is born of the Spirit, and the one is called flesh and the other spirit; the one is of the earth and earthly, the other is of the Spirit of God, and spiritual. The one is earthy, sensual and devilish, the other is spiritual, heavenly and Christ-like. In the one there is nothing good, in the other there is nothing but that is good. The one lusts against the other, and brings the child of God into captivity to the law of sin which is in the flesh. The one is in the image of the earthy Adam, and the other is after God, created in righteousness and true holiness. The Scriptures make this discrimination in the plainest terms, but still we are dull to comprehend their testimony, until the word comes to us, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance. Then the sword of the Spirit divides, and we are taught to know that every heavenly emotion that we feel, every spiritual exercise, every divine impulse, every correct perception of God, of the way of life and salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord, every display of the love of God shed abroad in us; instead of being a natural growth of the soul, is the legitimate fruit of the spirit which is born of the Spirit, and all within us that was against the Spirit of life which God has implanted in us, is the natural production of our depraved, fallen nature. The lusts of the eye, the corruptions of the flesh, and the pride of life, these are not born of God, but they are born of the flesh and they are flesh, and as many as are led by them and walk after them, shall die; but as many as through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the flesh, shall live. As many as have the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God; but if any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. We think if our brother Huston will carefully consider this matter, he will perceive that the sword of the Spirit does not, as he had supposed, unite the soul with the spirit, that the inspired writer of our text was right, and his views were wrong. Just so far as we are led by the Spirit in our experience, we learn that there is as wide a distinction between our old man and the new,

our inner and outer man, as between sin and holiness, as wide a distance as that between heaven and hell. The spirit being born of God cannot sin, because it is born of God, and because the seed abideth. It is of heavenly origin, and has no relish for sin, no inclination to sin, but it fights against all that is carnal and opposite to holiness, while the flesh and all our fleshly powers are prone to sin, as sparks fly upward. Hence the warfare in every one that is born of the Spirit. Brother Huston, we conclude, knows something about this warfare, and in it he has what we regard a clear illustration of this part of the text on which he desires us to dwell particularly.

But while we feel the powerful and piercing effects of the word, dividing asunder, separating and discriminating between that in us which is born of the flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit, we have two most grand and glorious considerations to cheer and encourage us.

First. Although this Spirit wars against the flesh, and against all that is vile, sinful and ungodly, it never wars against holiness, against truth and righteousness, nor against the same Spirit, wherever it is found. Of the body of Christ it is said, There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are all called in one hope of your calling. As this Spirit is one Spirit, so there is a vital and heavenly union and fellowship among all who possess it. They may hate the garments spotted with the flesh, in themselves and in their brethren; they may hate father and mother, wife and children, and their own life also, but if born of God, they cannot hate the spirit of life and immortality which God has implanted in them and in all their brethren. The love of the saints is not a carnal attachment, for the saints are called to mortify the flesh with its affections and lusts, and to know no man after the flesh; the love of God shed abroad in christians by the Spirit, will commune with its kindred spirit as readily in a poor Ethiopian, as in the most renowned prince, and love the image of Jesus as dearly when found in a poor, despised outcast, as when found in our nearest or dearest earthly relative.

Second. As this spirit dwells in us now, producing a constant warfare with the flesh, the war will be over before long, and victory is certain to the new man. The opposition to holiness shall be subdued, these bodies, which to us are at present what Paul's body was to him, a body of this death, yet death itself shall be destroyed: the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. Mortality shall be swallowed up of life, and he that raiseth up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in us. The discrimination made by the quick and powerful word of God, by which the saints are born again, is a divider asunder of joints and marrow. As the church of God, in her mystical union, is the body of Christ, so it is said of the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. (Col. ii. 19.) But in order to do this, there must be a circumcision, by which our fleshly powers are cut off, for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. But this cutting off is effective, and all the saints, as the body of him in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, are complete in him which is the Head of all principality and power, in whom, also, ye are circumcised, with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circum-

cision of Christ. Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead, and you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God; (Col. ii. 9-13, and iii. 4.) Here by the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, there is a dividing of joints and marrow, so far as the old man is concerned, for Adam is the figure of him that was to come, which is Christ, and as the members of Christ are by joints and bands embodied in Christ, in our new and spiritual life, so by joints and marrow were we embodied in the earthly Adam, in our natural relation to him. But here is a cutting off, a circumcision, a dismemberment of the earthly Adam, and the members of Christ's body are brought out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people, and brought by the word of God into the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. (Eph. iv. 13.)

"And is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." That Christ who is, as we have contended, the essential Word of God, discerns the thoughts of all hearts, that he is able to search the hearts and try the reins of the children of men, was abundantly demonstrated when he was here in the flesh, and that he is still the discerner, now that he has ascended up on high, is a matter of unspeakable consolation to his people, for he knoweth how to succor them when they are tempted, which would not be the case if he could not discern the thoughts and intents of our hearts. All things are naked and open to his omniscient eye, even from everlasting to everlasting. But the words which he speaks to his people, are a transcript of himself, and they also are Spirit and they are life; they are a communication from himself to his members, in which of his fullness they all receive, and grace for grace, (John i. 16.) Therefore when he by his Spirit holds communion with his members by the way, he causes their hearts to burn within them. He works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. The preparation of their hearts and the answer of their tongues are of him, and they have his mind and his Spirit, which searches all things, even the deep things of God. How often has our brother Huston and all the saints been joyfully surprised when he has shown himself to them, as it were through the lattice, and calmed the tempest that has distressed their mind; when his word has come to them so appropriately, so suited to their peculiar straits and trials, that they have been constrained to say, He is a refuge in distress and a very present help in all our troubles. Take the striking figure which eternal wisdom has provided, he is the Head over all things to the church, which is his body; and can the natural body of a man have thoughts or intents, or pains or joys, or any other sensations or emotions, and keep them concealed from the head? Certainly not. Well, Christ as our Head knows us altogether. His communications to us prove this, for his communications to us by his written word, through all the gifts which he has bestowed are appropriate and well timed, never out of place, as they might be if he were not a discerner of the thoughts and intents of our hearts.

We will now submit what we have written to the consideration of brother Huston, and to all our readers, with our sincere desire and prayer that, so far as we have written in accordance with the word and Spirit of our divine Lord and Master, it

may be made edifying and comforting to his dear people.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., February 1, 1858.

CHAPTER FOUR.

THE following is one of the chapters of Elder Bartley's new book, the "Priesthood of the Son of God."

OUR BROTHER HIGH PRIEST.

AARON, the first and greatest high priest in the old covenant, was a type of JESUS, the great High Priest in the new covenant; and Aaron was the brother of Moses, by whom the law was given, and as well the brother of all the people of that covenant, whose high priest he was. As often as he entered within the Second veil of the holy Sanctuary with the atoning blood, to appear in the presence of the Lord, the twelve precious stones in his breastplate reflected the names of the twelve tribes of the people of Israel toward the mercy-seat before him, while the two precious stones upon his shoulders also reflected their names heavenward, and all these were his brethren, no less than his fellow-citizens in that kingdom, and it was for their sins that he made the atoning sacrifice there in the presence of their covenant-Lord, and for them only he interceded. Being their brother, they were near and dear to him, and he could be touched with the feeling of their necessities and infirmities, because he was in this close relationship and sympathy with them. Moreover, they were not only his own near kindred in the flesh, but they were the people of the Lord his God, and their merciful God had ordained him their high priest, to appear in the Holy Presence and typically put away their sins. All this appointment, and the very constitution of this brotherhood, was of the Lord, for he had ordained it thus. This is instructive and very wonderful, for our God thus teaches his spiritual Israel a divine truth. For all this pointed to and was typical of the greater High Priest than Aaron, even "Jesus of Nazareth, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write," and dimly represented his diviner priesthood and priestly people.

For, as pointed out in the last chapter, the Son of David the king, as born of his blessed mother Mary, was the Brother of all his people in the flesh, as well of the Gentiles as of the Jews; for his God and Father gave them all to him and him to them in the everlasting covenant of life, and ordained Christ and his people to be one in the covenant, one in the flesh, one in death, and one in life. Therefore, it is verily true that the holy Son of God is our Brother in the flesh on his mother's side, and we are his brethren in the Spirit of life on his Father's side. This blessed and divine reality is clearly revealed by the Spirit in the holy Scriptures, and witnessed in the hearts of the people of Christ's holy priesthood, after they are born of the Spirit. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."—Rom. viii. 16. "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."—Heb. ii. 11, 12. This is the church that Christ loved, "and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."—Eph. v. 25, 26. So at the conquered grave, the newly risen Christ said to Mary, "But go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God."—John xx. 17. Here our First-born Brother from the dead preciously owns his brotherhood with all his people, the children whom his Father gave him, and is not ashamed to call them brethren, notwithstanding he had passed through death and stood victorious on heaven's side of the grave, and they yet sorrowed on earth's side.

O how highly favored are the people of God's covenant-mercy, since his exalted and glorified Son calls them "My brethren!" "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!"—1 John iii. 1. While this sonship embraces sinful people of the Jews and Gentiles alike, it is in the Sonship of the Son of man, and in his holy life and divine nature; for the sinless Jesus is "the only begotten Son of God," and in his life and righteousness only are we the sons of the Father who is holy. That the people whom the Father gave him in the perfect covenant should be made "The holy people," the holy Son of God came to them in the flesh and under the law; and thus is he their near kinsman and beloved Brother, and in him was the right of redemption. The noble and compassionate Boaz, the near kinsman of the widowed and impoverished Naomi, who represented the state of the Jews, and as betrothing Ruth unto himself, as representing the Gentiles, thus redeemed them both and made them rich, in which he is a beautiful type of our spiritual kinsman, of whom Paul says, "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."—2 Cor. viii. 9.

It was thus, as the Son of man in the flesh of his people, that the holy Son of God was one with them under the law, and therefore lawfully and righteously represented them as in covenant and life union with them, so that their sins were righteously imputed to him, and his righteousness likewise was theirs in and with him as his brethren and members. This is divinely and wonderfully true and comforting, because in no other way could sinners be saved and made holy. It is this sacred and endeared oneness with our Beloved that makes him so unspeakably dear and precious

to every humble believer in him; for he is our All-in-all. It was in these sacred bonds that Isaiah said of the holy Lamb of God, "and he was numbered with the transgressors," and that Paul said, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."—2 Cor. v. 21.

God did this in his infinite holiness and wisdom; therefore Peter said of Christ, "Who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God."—1 Pet. i. 20, 21. So Paul also: "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him."—1 Thess. v. 9, 10. So the death of Christ for his people was according to this appointment of God, which proves that he died righteously and in his death fulfilled all righteousness, made an end of sin, abolished death in its sting and power over his people, and brought life and immortality to light in his resurrection unto God and glory. He did this as our Brother and for his brethren. The sufferings unto death of the Anointed man Christ in the flesh were because of his sacred relations to his people, whom he should save from their sins; therefore he neither represented nor died for any others. In the absence of this brotherhood that made Christ and all his people of one, as Head and body and members, his death could not have fulfilled the righteousness of the law for them, nor put away their sins; because he would not have had the just right to redeem them, neither could the righteous claims of the divine law against every transgressor have involved him with and for them. This principle is established in equity, and it obtains as well in nature as in grace, for the just God has so ordained it. And because this is true, the atonement of the holy Redeemer is necessarily special, and it could not possibly be general or universal. For, before there could be the imputation of our sins to the sinless man Christ, or the imputation of his perfect holiness to us, he must be one with us and we one with him. No truth is more clearly revealed in the inspired testimony than this, and it is only in this sacred and divine union with him who is righteousness and life that "ye are complete in him which is the head of all principality and power." It is because God ordained that "they two shall be one flesh," that the husband is justly obligated with and for the wife, in law, and his payment of her debts justifies and acquits her equally with him. Without this union and unity, he could not be justly held to satisfy any law for her. It is so with straying and trespassing sheep; for the shepherd and owner only is under a lawful obligation for them, just because they are his. "I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep," is the precious word of Jesus. For no others did he give his life, neither could he righteously do so, and for the sheep only because the Father gave them him and they were his. "My Beloved is mine, and I am his." "The one thing needful, dearest Lord, is to be one with thee."

It is most wonderful and blessed that the "One Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," is at once one with his brethren and his Father. And because he is, he raises them above sin and death and uplifts them to his Father, and to their Father. In view of this, a poet sang:

"Hail sacred union, firm and strong!
How great the grace, how sweet the song!
That worms of earth should ever be
One with incarnate Deity!"

But our present consideration is, the grace that brought Christ down to us, in touch and sympathy with us in our sinful estate of suffering and death in the flesh. In Pslam xl., David testifies that the Lord went down to him in a horrible pit, brought him up out of it, set his feet upon a rock, established his goings, and put a new song in his mouth. Of the priesthood of our compassionate Redeemer, another says, "Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."—Heb. ii. 17, 18. Thus it is shown that the people of this priestly covenant are also the brethren of their High Priest, and that, as merciful and faithful, a sacred obligation was upon him to bow the heavens and come down to them, and be made like them in all things; for otherwise he could not have suffered and died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring them to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. As distinct from his people in the flesh, who were appointed of God to be "a holy priesthood," Christ could not have suffered and died for them, neither could they have been washed and purified from their sins. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that though death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who though fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."—Heb. ii. 14. Thus and in this way only was Christ qualified, clothed and consecrated unto the office-work of the ordained High Priest of the people, for whose sins he should atone, and who should be his brethren and royal priesthood for ever. For they are the children of men in the flesh, sinful and under the sentence of death; for this cause the Redeemer must himself be a sinless and perfect man in the flesh, and as a man obey the law for them, suffer its sentence of death against them, fulfill it, redeem them from its just and

fearful curse, by being made a curse for them, then, rising up out of death, destroy it and the devil; for in no other way was it possible for him to reach them, or for them to rise up out of death, living and holy, and be with him as his sanctified and holy brethren and priesthood, to praise God for ever. O how awfully solemn and dreadful was all this on the part of the dear Son of man!

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$371 80
Elder David Bartley, Indiana	10 00
Total to date	$381 80

ORDINATION.

On Saturday before the second Sunday in May, 1900, Bethlehem Church of Regular Baptists, met at Havana, Kansas, in the old meeting-house, and after divine services, which were conducted by Elder F. W. Sutton and brother Pittman, proceeded to business according to the Rules of Decorum.

1. Invited all the brethren and sisters who were present, of our faith and order, to seats in council with us.

2. Received sister Sallie Hedges into our fellowship, by letter.

3. Took up the matter of the ordination of brother T. R. Pittman to the full work of the gospel ministry.

4. The church being of the same mind, and brother Pittman expressing a willingness to submit his cause to the judgment of the presbytery, they were then organized by choosing Elder J. T. Swiney, Moderator, and Elder F. M. Sutton, Clerk.

The presbytery was composed of the following named Elders and deacons, who were called by the church for that purpose, to wit: Elder J. T. Swiney and Deacon J. A. Hampton, from Blue Mound church; Elder F. M. Sutton, from Rich Valley church; Elder O. E. Odell and Deacon G. A. Carpenter, from Prairie Valley church; Elder Nathan Reeder and Deacon Charles James, from Bethlehem church.

Brother Pittman related his christian experience and call to the ministry, which was satisfactory to all. They then proceeded to ordain him by prayer, and the laying on of hands by the presbytery.

After singing we gave brother Pittman a hearty welcome into the gospel field, for we believed that God had called him to the solemn work.

He has since been chosen pastor of Big Hill church, Cherryvale, Kansas, and preaches three Sundays in each month. Brother Pittman is about fifty-six years of age, is a good scholar, and is an able minister of the New Testament.

NATHAN REEDER.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

The subject of this notice, **Palina Bell Killebrew**, was born April 16th, 1826, and died August 12th, 1898, making her age 72 years and 4 months, lacking four days. Her maiden name was Ridgeway. She was married to Thomas Jackson Killebrew, June 5th, 1843, and she was baptized into the fellowship of Blooming Grove Church, by Elder Reuben Ross, in 1846, in Weakley Co., Tenn. She lived a consistent and orderly member of the Baptist church all her life, holding her membership in one church in Missouri, and three different churches in Arkansas. She was a member of Little Hope church at the time of her death, and was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone. She was remarkably well versed in the Scriptures, and was ever ready to defend the doctrine, and to lend a helping hand to the needy and poor, and to do her duty as a mother in Israel; strong in the faith, never wavering in all the trials and divisions among the Baptists, but stood firm, contending for the doctrine that agrees with the experience of God's little children who are the circumcision, who worship God in spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, always adorning the doctrine by an orderly walk and godly conversation. She was a loving companion and mother, a good neighbor, none knew her but to love her. She told brother Killebrew how she wanted matters arranged after her death; she requested him to have the unworthy writer of this notice, and brother Geo. G. Davis, and brother W. E. Brumblaw, preach her funeral, which request was fulfilled the fifth Sunday in July, 1900. All her children, five daughters and two sons, with a great number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren, were present, and a large congregation who came to show their respect for her and her dear old husband, who is nearly deaf and blind, but strong in the faith, and in possession of a good hope through grace, which is anchored in heaven.

May the blessings of God rest on him, and all the children and relatives, is the prayer of the unworthy writer,

WM. J. CASEY.

Lead Hill, Ark., July 30, 1900.

Franklin Edward Aydelott, son of J. P. and H. E. Aydelott, was born March 14th, 1887, and departed this life July 22, 1900, aged 13 years, 4 months and 8 days. He was taken sick July 5th, and suffered greatly for two weeks and three days from an inflammatory trouble, also an abcess, which was operated upon, but to no avail. He bore his sufferings with patience. The doctors did all they could for him, so also did all relatives and friends, but "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord." He has gone where no sickness, sorrow, pain nor death, can enter. Friday morning

when he was so near gone, as we thought, he turned his head over on the pillow and said, "Just going home." The same forenoon he sang a verse of the prettiest hymn; we could only understand one line of the verse, which were these words, "Angels hover round me now." Then he said, "I am better." We deeply feel our loss, for he was such a good boy, ever ready to lend a helping hand or to speak words of cheer to every one. He was loved by all who knew him. We feel our loss is his eternal gain. He was the youngest of the family of eleven children, one brother having preceded him in death.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder I. A. Moore, and the remains were taken to the Gaylord Cemetery, followed by a large concourse of relatives and friends, there to await the glorious resurrection. He was laid beside his brother.

MEETINGS.

THE Licking Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Little Flock church, Anderson Co., Ky., to begin on Friday before the second Saturday in September, (7th) 1900, and continue three days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

Those coming from the east will come via Lexington, Ky., to Frankfort, Ky. Trains will be met Thursday, Sept. 6th, morning and afternoon.

Those coming from the west and south, will come via Louisville, Ky., over Southern Railway, to Alton Station, Ky., and will be met Thursday, Sept. 6th, and Friday morning, Sept. 7th.

A. G. HERNDON, Clerk.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the South Gardiner Old School Baptist Church, South Gardiner, Maine, commencing on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1900, and continuing three days.

Those coming from the south and west will be met at the afternoon train from Boston, on the afternoon of September 6th, and conveyed to places of entertainment, and to the meeting.

J. H. LOWELL, Clerk.

THE Lord willing, our yearly meeting at Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa., will commence on Saturday, Sept. 8th, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue over Sunday. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

Those coming by rail will take trains from Philadelphia, Baltimore and intermediate stations, over the P., W. & B. R. R., to connect with the 4 p. m. train at Perryville, on the Port Deposit and Columbia R. R., for Conowingo, arriving at 4:30 p. m., where they will be met and cared for.

D. M. THOMAS.

THE Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Second church of Roxbury, in Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., two miles below Roxbury village and railroad station, and six miles above Kelley's Corners.

Trains will be met at Kelley's Corners, and Roxbury, on Tuesday, Sept. 11th, 1900, as the meeting is to be on Wednesday and Thursday.

Our desire is toward all that have an interest in us religiously and spiritually, and all such are welcomed, especially ministers.

J. D. HUBBELL.

A YEARLY meeting of the Troy & Albany Old School Baptist church is appointed to be held on Thursday and Friday before the fourth Sunday fn September, (20th and 21st) 1900. All desiring to hear the truth are invited to meet with us.

Visitors will be met at Bath, opposite Albany, N. Y., on arrival of Albany & Troy Belt Line steam cars, leaving Albany at 6:30 p m., on Wednesday, the day before the meeting.

EZER LIVINGSTON, Clerk.

THE Otego Old School Baptist church, of Otego, N. Y., has appointed the time of her next yearly two days meeting to be Sept. 26th and 27th, 1900. The meeting is held in the meeting-house in the village, near the depot. Friends are invited to be present from a distance. Trains will be met Tuesday, Sept. 25th. Places of entertainment are near the depot.

Done by order of the church.

S. C. F. GUERNSEY, Church Clerk.

THE church at Cammal, Pa., have appointed a two days meeting for the fifth Saturday and Sunday in September, (29th and 30th,) 1900. We hope to have a goodly number of brethren and friends present.

Procure tickets to Cammal station, on what was formerly called the Fall Brook Railroad, but now the Pa. Div. of N. Y. Central. Inquire for James Lamison, or Sammy Moffat, who live near the depot.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association, has appointed her next session to be held with the Middleburgh church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday (3d and 4th) in October, 1900. We hope the Lord will put it in the minds and hearts of brethren and ministers of other associations to visit us.

Those coming on the cars to Middleburgh, will be met on Tuesday, and cared for. Will also state there is an express wagon leaves Gay's Hotel, Catskill, N. Y., every day at 12:45 o'clock, and is due at Preston Hollow at 6 o'clock p. m. The fare is $1.25. Any desiring to come by this route will be met at Preston Hollow and cared for. The distance from Catskill to place of meeting is about thirty-three miles.

A. COOK, Clerk.

"CONDITIONAL TIME SALVATION: IS IT THE TRUTH?"

A pamphlet of the above title has been issued by Elder R. H. Boaz, and has been selling for 25 cents a copy, but is now reduced to 15 cents per copy, or $1.50 per dozen.

This pamphlet is a very able and unanswerable refutation of the new theory, that has lately sprung up among our people, of conditional or merited salvation, and it should be read by every lover of the truth. Address,

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2714. Extra Morocco, red and gold edges, limp, round corners, leather lined, $6.50.

2793. Algerian Morocco, red and gold edges, extended covers, round corners, leather lined, silk sewed, $7.50.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

BY GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,

MIDDLETOWN, ORANGE CO., NEW YORK,

To Whom all letters should be addressed, and money orders made payable.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1900. NO. 18.

CORRESPONDENCE.

STATE ROAD, Del., August, 1900.

BROTHER BEEBE:—I saw an editorial in the SIGNS a few numbers back on the subject of people being sent strong delusions, &c., to which article I feel minded to offer some additional comments. The passage is this: "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."—2 Thess. ii. 11, 12.

In the first place we should notice particularly this class of people of whom these things are said, and then notice carefully what it is that is said to them. What we of course want to know is the righteousness of God's dealings with these people, and the reasons they are so dealt with. That Spirit that the Redeemer said to his disciples should guide them into all truth, never guides anybody into error; he is one Spirit, and is always the Spirit of truth. From the description given of these characters, there is no need of their being influenced to error, or led into delusion, for it is positively said that they received not the love of the truth. They are evidently not of those who were from the beginning chosen to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. A belief of the truth is a very solemn and sacred thing, it is never received by anybody only in the love of it. As the Spirit of God guides into it, that Spirit is the life as well as the truth, and when received it is life to them that have it, and they live that life. Where there is no love of the truth there is no knowledge or experience of it. It follows then that all these spoken of were mere nominal professors, having a name to live but destitute of the life. There are times when the Lord will purify the sons of Levi, and will purge them as gold and silver, not to make the wicked more wicked, but only to sever them from among the just. The precious are sufficiently precious that they should be separated from the vile, and purity and sincerity in the worship be secured. It would seem that these had obtained a name and a standing among real believers, and were receiving tokens of recognition that they were not entitled to, but were ready whenever opportunity should offer to join the ranks of enemies and persecutors. Are they not already

blinded by the god of this world? Wherefore should any delusion be sent to them? They are already under the power of delusion, and God does not send delusion into the hearts of anybody. These errors are in the world, and like the devils that went into the swine, they are ever ready to go; they see their opportunities, and only wait permission. A century ago, and for a few years later the Baptist churches were sound; I mean as to their standing, and the bulk of the membership. The churches stood in high credit, and it was a creditable thing to belong to a Baptist church. There were not many who would have left their places to hunt after the delusions that were floating about. Such an influence would not have been strong enough. No; let the advocates of false doctrine by some intrigue get a footing inside your door, let them captivate some of your children, let it sweep over the congregation in a mighty current, as though it will carry almost all before it, and the truth be openly ridiculed and despised, you will see ere long who they are that are elated and being carried with the current. Has anybody induced them to believe a lie, or is it that they have never really believed anything else? They had pleasure in unrighteousness. The confidence and fellowship of the Lord's people is too precious a thing to be wasted on unworthy objects, or upon whom it would not be appreciated. The Lord does not design to have pearls cast to the swine. Those who have witnessed instances of this sifting that I am speaking of, have observed that nothing else works so effectually with those who have not received the love of the truth, as a sweeping current of error. It often carries away some that had not been suspected. Is this a wise and beneficent providence? or would it be better for the cause, better for the individual churches, or even for those individuals who drink in this error as soon as it comes in their way, to have remained in nominal connection with the church? I presume that I need not answer. The arrangements of Providence are general and always the same. Everything needful was provided in the beginning, and there is a place and a use for strong delusions in the world as well as other things. I think it should read, That they all might be made manifest, &c. As that is all that the delusion does. It makes manifest those who had no love for the truth. That they all might be *damned* is a bad translation. In quite a number of places we have the word "damned," when there is no allusion to the final condemnation of the wicked. We know that here as well as in several other places where the word is used, the condemnation rests entirely on other grounds: "He that believeth not is condemned already." Condemned under that holy law under which all sinners are condemned.

Delusions are like cyclones, in their onward progress they gain strength; but they are always strong; surrounding elements add to their velocity and their force. I once knew of a church known as a Baptist church, in which the preacher who was serving them was gathering in quite a number; suddenly the preacher announced himself a Universalist. It did not appear that he originated the delusion, but rather that he was one of many victims. It swept over that section of the country like a pestilence. After the storm one hundred members were found to be swept away; less than half remained. For awhile it seemed doubtful whether a church organization could be maintained out of the fragments that remained, but a few names were found who

had not only received the truth, but loved it, and these came forth from the ordeal to shine brighter than before. I would suggest the question, whether those who had neither received nor loved the truth, did not really believe a lie, or what was false, all the time, and if so, what has been done but to make them manifest? Is it not better so, that the mask of hypocrisy and a false profession should be taken from them, and that they should be the victims of that error from which they have never been delivered. There will not be any delusion strong enough to cause them that have received a knowledge and love of the truth to ever believe a lie. These delusions (and there are many) are all under the head and inspiration of the mystery of iniquity.

In love and fellowship,

E. RITTENHOUSE.

MATTOON, Ill., June, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—The inclosed letters written some eighteen years ago by that faithful father in Israel, Wm. S. Montgomery, of Social Circle, Ga., who now rests from his labors and his works do follow him, are too full of comforting words to be committed to the flames. If you can use them, or any part of them, in the columns of the SIGNS, they are at your disposal. In looking over an accumulated stock of old correspondence I came across these letters, and have reread them with comfort, and I feel sure that they will prove of comfort to others also if published in our paper as space can be allotted from time to time.

Your brother,

J. G. SAWIN.

SOCIAL CIRCLE, Ga., Sept. 4, 1882.

ELDER J. G. SAWIN—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST JESUS:—I was so much disappointed in not meeting you and having you under our own roof, but your letter explains it all. You express a great desire to see me, and yet were you to do so you would see a poor, helpless sinner, without any worth or merit of my own, but I would while I live extol the riches of that grace that taught me long years ago that I was a sinner not in name or theory, but in deed and in truth. Since that memorable time I have tried to live without sin, and in my youth at times vainly thought that I had made some progress, but soon the light of God's countenance would reveal to me the corruption and rottenness of all my works, and not of them only, but also of my heart, the source from whence all my works flow. Then in my weakness and impotency I was drawn out to see and contemplate the full, entire and finished work of the blessed Savior, and that I was complete in him, and here for a time I could sweetly rest. O, it was a glorious and perfect rest. As age came on, I then supposed that I could look back to the experience of youth, and that their lessons would be fresh in my mind, and that I should have a stock on hand, some money in the bank, so that when temptations and trials came I should be ready and prepared to meet them, but alas, the bank is either broke or somehow the money is perished; I am to-day, dear brother, as helpless and bankrupt on my own account as I was in youth. At times, when sadness and doubts assail me, and I come for relief, the door of mercy seems closed, and my prayer shut out, and again and again I cry, "Are his mercies clean gone forever, will he be merciful no more?" This thought has sometimes almost driven me to despair, yet having received of the Lord strength, I continue unto this day.

Amid all my checkered life thus far I know that the mercy of the Lord endureth forever. O, that I could praise him in all that I do and say, and that my whole life could be spent in his service. My devotions seem so languid and dull, where all should be life and zeal. Notwithstanding all this, I do trust that he is mine and I am his. I trust Christ is in me the hope of glory, I have no other trust, he is all and in all to me, nothing but his own precious blood can wash my sins of crimson hue; others may boast that they have done some of the work, that there were instruments used, and agencies brought to bear, that Jesus came in as a kind of makeweight, to fill out what they lacked, but with me, I had no strength, no will, no ability, no merit. My sins must be put away by him, his righteousness must be made over to me by him, as my righteousness, and in it I hope that to-day I stand.

My brother, I have no idea that you wish to see me simply as a man, I do not you, but you have read some sentiments from my pen that have touched a responsive chord in your own heart, and by which you feel that we have both passed through the sea, and under the cloud and the pillar of fire, and have eaten of the same manna, and drunken from the same rock. These are things that kindle a flow of love from one true Israelite to another; these are things about which Israelites love to converse, and to which all of that favored nation have an equal right, and so when I have read from you way up in your cold, rigorous clime, my heart down here in the sunny south, runs back in greeting; I know it is an Israelite. They all have a pure language, and one inheritance, and spring from one common stock, have one life and one destination. Though there is a multitude of them whom no man can number, scattered over all the face of the earth, yet every one of them has his face set toward the new Jerusalem; the eyes of every one of them are set toward the great King, and ultimately, the last, the least one of them, will appear in Zion. O, what a happy time will it be for each of them to sing unto the Lord and say, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name, be all the glory." The thought is full of rapture, and the fruition joy for evermore. I hope that through my blessed Redeemer I shall be there, but how unworthy I feel, and what a miracle of grace it will be. The study and desire of my life is not so much as to whether I shall be there, as that I might honor and glorify my Lord in my body and my spirit which are his, while I live. I know that he will make a righteous disposition of me, and with that I am content; I am waiting the development of his will. My time is drawing near, but I do not wish the hours to move more slow, yet I am so much blessed in this life that I could not ask the Lord for more, but I feel that this is not my home, I seek a city whose Maker and Builder is God. In spirit I am drawn there, while in body I am drawn here.

My dear companion unites with me in love to you.

WM. S. MONTGOMERY.

DECEMBER 10, 1882.

BELOVED BROTHER IN CHRIST JESUS:—Some time since your truly interesting favor reached me; I was glad to find you disposed to communicate with me concerning the glorious things of Zion, the perfection of beauty, and out of which God shines, but in order to see and realize this we must be born in Zion, and be living members of the body of Christ. By nature you and I saw nothing lovely

or desirable in the church of the living God, which is the pillar and ground of the truth. As the exalted Head of the church was to us as a root out of dry ground, having neither form nor comeliness that we should desire him, so the members of his body were unlovely, an ignorant, illiberal, selfish and bigoted sect. I am ashamed to confess that these were my honest convictions of them. Now if we see Zion, the perfection of beauty, if we love her inmates unspeakably, unutterably, if we prefer Jerusalem above our chief good, then there must be a cause or reason, and that cause cannot be in us, for it is impossible for the flesh to produce anything save that which is fleshly, and the higher the perfections to which it may attain, the more bitter and implacable is its hatred to God and his people. Saul of Tarsus was an illustration of this truth, and so were the religious fanatics who were the crucifiers of Christ; none in their day were so well informed in the law, and in the traditions of their fathers, as were they, and none received such scorching denunciations for their hypocrisies and wickedness as the scribes and pharisees. You and I are no better by nature than the very vilest of them all; by the grace of God we are what we are, and not by any inherent goodness in us. It was not by our choice, nor by our willing, nor running, but according to the good pleasure of God alone. Had Moses been left to himself he would have never chosen to suffer affliction with the people of God, but would have willingly been called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, regarding that as being initiatory to the throne. So in all ages the love of God, which he alone implants, with love to his cause and people, has enabled those who were exercised thereby, to suffer the loss of all, counting it but dross; yea, they have laid down their lives willingly, in fealty to God. Now the cause for all this is in God himself, it is begotten in or communicated to us by his holy Spirit; it is the implantation of life, or Christ formed in us the hope of glory; it is not that the flesh is born over, remodeled and renewed, because the flesh is contrary to the Spirit, as Belial is to Christ. With our spiritual eyes we are enabled to see Zion the perfection of beauty, with our spiritual ears we hear the soul-inspiring joys of salvation, our spiritual appetite enjoys the manna which descends from heaven, and the living water which flows from the living Rock, which is cleft for us. How happy and secure are the inmates of Zion, God is their refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble; the mountains may be removed and cast into the sea, the sea may roar and be troubled with the swelling thereof, yet in Christ Jesus all is peace and security, all is serenity and safety. The Almighty, whom we trust, keeps us as the apple of his eye, and his hand is turned upon the little ones. But for these, and other precious promises which, as I trust, are mine, it seems to me that long since I should have been destroyed and overwhelmed. In my pilgrimage thus far, I feel that his grace has sustained me, and now what base ingratitude to question his promises; they were sufficient in the days of thoughtless youth, in busy prime and the rush of manhood, and they are sufficient as now I am gently falling to the tomb.

My brother, as I look back over my past life, full of trials, and see that I have so lived as but little to adorn the doctrine of God and my precious Savior, I am filled with fears that now I never shall, yet I think that I can in truth say, not boastingly, I do prefer Jerusalem

above my chief joy, and I am willing to suffer shame and reproach for her and with her. As the Captain of our salvation suffered without measure, he knows our frame, and that we are dust, and he only requires us to suffer by measure. Without suffering with him, without being crucified with him, we could have no hope of being raised up together with him; as his sufferings came first, so must ours; if in due time we would be exalted, we must be content to be abased now for a while at least, until we are commanded to take a higher seat; if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.

What a great contrast the true followers of Jesus present; they are a poor and afflicted people, strangers and pilgrims on earth, unknown to the world, persecuted for righteousness' sake, but the world is rich and powerful, and go in purple and fine linen; they glory in their wealth and numbers, have railroad and bank stock, and form powerful combinations, and are doing wonderful things for Jesus, who has not, according to their doctrine, all power and dominion over all creatures and worlds, but we do not envy them nor their wealth.

Your letter was a great comfort to me, and though I know that your ability to write to the comfort and edification of others is far greater than mine, yet I have written freely and without embarrassment. I do hope that some time you will come and see us at our home, and let us hear you preach to the saints in this section, you will meet with a hearty welcome. God bless and prosper you and yours. I have had but little liberty in writing this letter, but it has been a pleasure to attempt it. I cannot insist that any one shall correspond with me, but if you do feel a desire to correspond, it will be highly appreciated.

In christian love and fellowship your brother,

WM. S. MONTGOMERY.

NEEL, W. Va., July 29, 1900.

G. BEEBE'S SON:—Inclosed find a precious letter from David Bartley, hoping you will print the same in the SIGNS, and oblige,

MRS. M. STELLA POE.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., July 16, 1900.

MRS. M. STELLA POE—MY DEAR FRIEND AND SISTER:—On my return here last Thursday, after a long absence in Ohio and eastern Indiana, my wife with me, yours of the 8th inst. awaited me, with other letters, and was read with comfort. I am thankful for such letters, and have heart-felt fellowship in the love of Christ for the writers of them. You have been taught of God the Father, and have come to Jesus, in whom you now believe, trust and rejoice. I, too, have come to him, and he is all my salvation and all my desire. So we have come near to one another, in thus coming to him, and in him we are very kindred, children of the one heavenly family, and are seeking the heavenly country, our Father's home, into which our firstborn Brother from the dead has entered, and from whence we look for him to come again, according to his promise, to receive us and all his Father's children up into his glory, to be with and like him forever. In this hope we now wait, and are often lonely and sorrowful, as was our Beloved in the days of his flesh, while away from his Father's home of glory in this wilderness world of sin and suffering, as the good Shepherd of the lost sheep, the Bridegroom of the enslaved bride, the

Brother-Redeemer, and the sympathizing and faithful High Priest of all his sinful people, whom the Father gave him, and whom he came to seek and save from their sins and foes. He shall surely find them and bring them all home. He is the salvation of all his people. In this perfect work of redemption from all their iniquities and salvation from the curse of the divine and holy law, Jesus was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, for in all their afflictions he was afflicted, and he poured out his soul or life unto death. But God the Father raised him up from the dead by the glory of his power, and exalted him at his own right hand in heaven, the Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel his people, and remission of sins. It is for his sake therefore that we have repented, sorrowed and mourned, and have been forgiven and saved. And though now we see him not, yet in him believing, we rejoice with joy inexpressible, and look and hope and wait for his coming, nor shall we be disappointed in this hope. He himself said to us, "I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also." Precious Savior! O, let me be near thee! I am weak, but thou art almighty; I am poor, but thou art infinitely rich; I am sinful and dying, but thou art righteousness and life. Let me freely take of thee. Having thee, I have salvation and holiness and heaven. O, my young friend, it is impossible to set forth the fullness of Christ, our precious All in all, our loving Father's well beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased. And are not we also well pleased in him? You have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and in him you are complete. O, I know you long to own him your Lord, and come after him in his steps, nor would you blush to speak his name, his precious name, for in his name you are saved. I must tell you that I am very poor and sorrowful in spirit, and have many afflictions and trials, but these only make Christ the more needful and precious to me, and so closer and closer would I cleave to him, as my life, my way, my all. With Paul, let me be determined to know nothing among the people, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified, for in him is life and righteousness and all salvation. "Neither is there salvation in any other." Because I have earnestly contended for this precious truth and faith, I have had to endure reproaches and misrepresentations, and personal attacks have been made upon me in perverted Baptist papers. But how little all this is compared with all that the dear Man of sorrows endured and suffered for me. It is a strange thing to me that any believer in Christ will contend for salvation and the blessings of God in time as his rewards for their own personal obedience, rather than rewards of grace, freely bestowed upon us for the sake of Christ and his righteous obedience as our only righteousness and all our salvation, and all this from the fountain of God's rich mercy and much more abounding grace, where sin abounded unto death. Can such persons feel the sentiment of a poet, who said, "If I sing, or preach, or pray, sin is mixed with all I do"? One thing is most true, dear child of grace, our beloved Jesus is not a conditional Savior, and so the salvation that is in him is not conditional salvation, although we receive it in time, and it is our present salvation. I ask, therefore, Is there any salvation from any sin out of Christ? For Peter said, "Neither is there salvation in any other." He uses the word salvation in its broad and unqualified sense, meaning salvation

in all its amplification and fullness, as spanning all time and saving from all sin and its direful results, or all salvation; and all this is in Christ, but in no other. All this salvation in Christ, then, is salvation by the grace of God in Christ, by whom alone grace reigns, reigns through righteousness, and reigns unto eternal life. O, how much safer and better and more glorifying to Christ this is than any principle of conditional salvation which "depends upon ourselves," and is bestowed upon us as a reward for our works. Again, dear friend, let me kindly ask your attention to this question: Can any spiritual blessing in Christ be conditional on our part, and come to us as a reward for our obedience, seeing that God blesses us with all spiritual blessings in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world? You will say, "No." Then, can we receive a single spiritual blessing more than all spiritual blessings? Certainly not. Are not all the blessings of the gospel of Christ spiritual blessings? Most truly, because they are not earthly blessings. Well, then, what spiritual or gospel blessing is there left to be bestowed upon us as a conditional reward for our works? Can you tell? Can any one tell? John says of Christ, "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace."—John i. 16. Is it possible for any of us to receive any blessing of salvation from God more than Christ's fullness? Then all his fullness of which all we have received is "grace for grace." This settles it forever on the side of grace, and establishes the truth that all divine blessings from the God of grace and salvation are bestowed upon us in Christ and for his dear sake, and are the rewards of grace. I am thankful that you believe this truth, and look to Jesus only. So you can truly sing, "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling."

The God of all grace and blessing bless you in Christ, and for his sake. Your sweet reward is in resting in the Beloved of your soul, whom you delight in, and in whom is all your salvation and every divine blessing and comfort. Gladly will I come and see you baptized in the faith and love of this dear Lord and Master, if the Lord will. Let us leave it with him. Should the brethren desire me to attend the association at the Amnon church with them, I trust the Lord will open the way, as you request. My wife sends love.

In the afflictions of the gospel and the faith of Jesus, yours to serve,

D. BARTLEY.

SURCANOOCHEE, Miss., July 7, 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—Your favor has been received, and I return thanks for the same, and as you requested to hear from me, I will answer in my feeble way. As to your article of defense I can find no fault, too much cannot be ascribed to grace. Without the love of God in our hearts, we are nothing, and less than nothing, and we are sure of this fact, that the grace of God never directs his people to do evil, God is love, and he directs his heaven-born children in love, and every one that is born of God hates sin, and all the days of our sojourn on earth we will have to contend against sin. The world, the flesh, and the devil, are united to overwhelm us, but he who was faithful, and who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification, holds the keys of death and hell in his hand, and there is no power that can contend successfully against him, and those who believe in his lovely work, and feel

the power of his love within, find it effectual, for it subdues from time to time our evil nature, and he never fails to lead all his children in the path of peace. But let us understand what peace this is: "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace." Those who have been for any length of time in the way, can say this is truth.

My dear brother, I feel to give you a part of my experience as a minister of the free grace of the adorable Redeemer, perhaps it will satisfy you and all others, who know the Lord experimentally, as to whether he has called me by his grace to minister his words unto the blood-bought children. What a responsible place. How careful we should be to be guided by his word in all our ministration. To teach and lead his children wrong, is a fearful thing indeed. I was called into the service six years ago; as was the case then, so now, I am a poor, unprofitable servant, if one at all. If it had been left to me to serve or let it alone, I would have remained as I was, but the force of my impressions was so great that I was glad to leave home for the sake of peace of mind, and in the exercises in which I engaged, I surely found peace, previously to this I made every excuse, the most prominent one was that I had been too great a sinner for such a place, but to my surprise my soul was filled with the most glorious love, which pen or tongue cannot describe, it was so wonderful in effect, it was so holy, heavenly and divine. My soul felt to be lifted to the heavens above, and then it seemed that I saw him as the most holy, wonderful and blessed God, adored by every one, and my soul went out toward him in words too sweet to utter. This was six years ago. I thought at that time that as my troubles had been many previously, I would now be released from very many of them, I thought, How could this glorious, lovely One manifest himself to me, and them allow me again to be afflicted and bereaved? but yet it has been so. Like the poet, I must say,

> "Through many dangers, toils and snares,
> I have already come;
> 'Tis grace that brought me safe thus far,
> And grace will lead me home."

How comforting to believe that after we shall have finished our course on earth, we shall see his lovely face and behold that brow that once was crowned with thorns, and behold him the chiefest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely. In that heavenly land of glory we shall see the fullness of the love of God; here we see in part, and know in part; we see as through a glass darkly, being clothed with the darkness of sinful flesh, which causes us to cry out continually, Lord, restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and this we know we have never merited by any good thing that we have done. Though weak, in the strength of Christ we are made perfect. In due time Christ died for those without strength, we had then no strength of our own, nor any redeeming qualities, but were without hope and without God in the world, aliens from the covenant of promise, and enemies to God by wicked works; we were born so, and remained so until we were quickened in Christ, and made new creatures in him. As we have no power to give ourselves natural life, it is sure that we cannot give ourselves eternal life, it is the Lord's to give this, and it is ours to receive it, not as something conditional, but as a free gift. As said it is not conditional, if so, what are the conditions? If a man commits murder, he knows that the law pronounces death upon him, but he does not feel the force of the law until he has transgressed it; then no repentance or sorrow

will release him, he must pay the penalty with his life. To save himself from death, he must be able to raise the murdered man from death, this no man can do as we know, therefore his case is hopeless. In this condition, would not this guilty, condemned man, gladly accept pardon? Yes, none will deny this. This would be only to save the body from death naturally. Now, if eternal life is conditional, and offered to man, and all men realize the consequences of a refusal, why do not all accept it? Why do they sacrifice so much for nothing? The truth is, men have never seen the awful condition in which they are exposed to eternal judgment and death; men have not realized that now they are dead in trespasses and sins. There is no suffering so awful as to realize our death in sin, and seeing our just condemnation in the sight of God, then we come to realize that we are helpless as a babe cast out into the deep waters. What can it do? What can we do, but cry for mercy as did sinking Peter? We must say, let all the honor and glory be to that God which made heaven and earth for his own pleasure, for by him do all things consist.

Dear brother, we should of all men be most thankful to our Redeemer God, who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification; he has cleansed us from all our sins, and manifests himself unto us as he does not unto the world, showing himself unto us by revelation as a most glorious Redeemer. He has saved us from sin and death by his precious blood, which was shed for us on Calvary more than nineteen centuries ago. There did the glorious Lord Jesus fulfill all the sacred promises which our Almighty God had purposed in himself before the world began. He cleared away all the debt which was against the chosen family of God, and presented them acceptable before God, and they are before him as though they had never committed sin.

I will close my long letter. I pray that God may bless you in every condition. Will you pray for me and mine? I subscribe myself your unworthy brother in Christ,

J. J. WATSON, JR.

DELNORTE, Colo., July 8, 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—I would be glad to get rid of the burning desire which I feel to write out my experience, for I fear that I have neither part nor lot in the matter with those whom Jesus has redeemed, but I will write out a portion of my experience, so that you may know whether I am an Israelite or not.

I was born in Washington Co., Md., May 11th, 1840. My mother was a member of the Dunkard church for more than sixty years, and my father for thirty years, and a deacon for twenty-five years, so I was a Dunkard in belief, and had no use for anything else, or any other denomination. I suppose no one ever lived that believed in salvation by works any more strongly than I did, but while living in northwest Nebraska, in 1889, I was changed in a short time to just the opposite from what I had always believed, the change came without reading the Bible, or going to meeting. In the spring of 1890 I was engaged with others in sinking a shaft for gold and silver, and at that time having plenty of this world's goods I was troubled about seeking after the things of this world. So one night I asked the Lord to show me in a dream whether it was right for me to seek for gold. That night I saw heaven opened and the faithful standing in the midst, and what a beauti-

ful sight it was. The June following I went to Missouri and was baptized into the fellowship of Pleasant Gap church, by Elder J. H. Moore. In 1891, in November, my wife and I attended a three days meeting at Goshen, which we enjoyed very much, and before leaving the meeting I said to a brother that I wished that I could quit my work, and be engaged in the service of God continually. On Tuesday, after we reached home, I started to do some work, when all at once my reason left me, and for six weeks I could not labor, then one morning I started to do some work in the barn, when it seemed as though a fire in me caused me to cry to God for mercy, it seemed that I was being consumed, but O, if I could always view the Lord and all his works, as I did during those six weeks, truly this world would be a heaven to me. Soon after this event, it seemed that I was caught up from this world, and I could not tell whether I was in the body or not, and I have no recollection of anything in the world at that time, and it seemed that one moment where I was, was worth more to me than a whole lifetime would be, in this world. It seems to me that I have met with many strange experiences.

Now, dear brethren, do these things come from the God of heaven, or are they the result of a disordered brain? I have been a great sufferer mentally and physically for the past ten years, and it seems to me that I am the greatest sinner that ever lived, but of one thing I am certain, and that is that there is a merciful God and a loving Savior, who has redeemed his church, and saved them by grace, and that he will shortly come in the clouds to take his ransomed people home, and that then they will ever be with their blessed Lord. But it is the chief question, Where will my lot be cast then? Brethren, pray for me, that God may be merciful to me a poor sinner, unworthy of the least of all his blessings. These are but rambling thoughts. My wife and myself are the only Primitive Baptists here that we know of. The SIGNS are of much comfort to us. We are strong predestinarians, and we hope that there is no strange God with us. I would be thankful to you, if you would write something for the SIGNS which would fit my case, even if it should place me on the left hand.

With love to all the redeemed of the Lord, I remain yours.

J. W. WALLACE.

[THE truest evidence that one has passed from death unto life in the Lord, is not the wonderful experiences with which God is pleased to favor some, but the plain every day evidences that are afforded to all the people of God. Love to God and his cause, and his people, a sense of guilt and just condemnation before God, a knowledge that no good thing dwells in the flesh, and an humble trust in Jesus and his righteousness, a glad receiving of the word of salvation through Christ, and such want as leads to a calling upon the name of the Lord for help and salvation; these, and other similar evidences, are the constant feelings of God's people. After the wonderful vision on the mount, Peter, in one of his epistles says to his brethren, "We have a more sure word of prophecy," that is, a more abiding word of prophecy, and this more abiding word is the daily bread of the people of God. In this they all have a part, while to but few are given the vision on the holy mount. Let not those who feel that they have but small experience, be discouraged, they have the true and abiding evidences, as much as those of more wonderful experience.—ED.]

PLEASANT PLAINS, Ill., May 9, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—It has been my privilege to read your paper ever since I have believed the truths which has been contended for through its columns. I do not deem it necessary to shun to declare the eternal truths of the gospel because men take the privilege of putting their own construction upon it, and claim that if certain things are the result of God's predestination it will follow that God would be the author of sin. "Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid." Paul was not afraid to declare the unsearchable riches of the gospel, including the predestination of God, because men were inclined to contend that it would bring God into unrighteousness. We are too apt to conclude that we had better make excuses for the Lord's actions, so that we may free him from the condemnation of men. Excuses for God! Does the infinite being need that man should plead his innocence to man? Nonsense; the only reason that our God needs to assign to his children is that it seems good in his sight. We will never know the fullness of the purposes of God in time, but it will require eternity to unravel the hidden workings of the eternal hands. It is true that the Comforter takes the things of the Lord and shews them to his people, but it is equally true that the half has never been told. Why is it that men claiming to be Old School Baptist preachers are traveling everywhere, endeavoring to prove that the London Confession of Faith is false, that Baptists do not believe in predestination, that God is not in all things, and that through all the centuries of the past our people have been laboring under false doctrines? This is the work in which Methodists, Campbellites, Presbyterians, Catholics, Missionary Baptists, and many others of our conditionalists have been engaged for these long years. We have no right to conclude that God is under law, and that if he is in any way connected with what is in our judgment sin, he must be tried by an earthly tribunal, and if found guilty man must cry, Unjust, unjust. The Almighty is too wise to err, too powerful to be thwarted, too faithful not to declare the end from the beginning, and too loving to forsake his little ones. He works, and none can hinder, he commands, and it stands fast; he rules in heaven, and he controls in earth. "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" No certainty could attend a limited predestination. Let me say with the poet, "There is a hand that guides." With the everlasting arms beneath, a wall of fire about, a rock as a shelter in a weary land, God in the midst, where can Zion go that the Lord does not lead her? "Without him we can do nothing." If there were not a single proof text supporting predestination, I would believe and love the doctrine. The very thought of a Creator and Savior means all this to me. I do not know the Lord by the wisdom of this world, neither do I expect to teach others to know him. My soul longs to magnify the greatness of his matchless name, and to tell the story, saved by grace.

I trust that you, brother Beebe, will not grow weary in seeking the old paths, and in following the footsteps of the flock.

Yours in hope,

JOHN L. SCOTT.

OTTERVILLE, Mo., August 11, 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN IN HOPE:—It is hard for me to claim such near relationship with you, but as the blood runs through

this natural body of mine, and all of my members are blessed by it, so surely the grace of God that is in Christ the Head of the church, runs through the body (the church) to and in all of its members. O, the fullness of that wonderful grace that is in Jesus can never be fathomed by poor, finite mortals, for it is as full as God himself, and he has no bounds. Now, brethren, if I am not deceived, this is why I take the liberty to thus address you as brethren. Please bear with me, for it seems to me I must give vent to my feelings, and you need not bother your readers with it if you see the works of self and not grace in it.

I have been wonderfully cast down of late, and this morning especially. I have the care of a little flock in Johnson Co., and this is the day of their meeting, and I am not blessed to go and be with them, but in mind I am there, and while at work this morning it seemed to me that the long doubted question was settled with me. I have never been satisfied with my call to the oversight of the blessed flock of God. When I view myself I find none of the qualifications for the place, as I view it one of deep solemnity, and I find none of that in myself. My chief desire is and has been all along the road, to know if grace is the moving cause of all these emotions of soul, or is it through the deceitfulness of sin that I feel and realize its work in the flesh? Surely there is no good thing in the flesh. I tried my case this morning; I decided if the Lord had called me he would make a way for me to go. This you see was judging God by feeble sense. When I came in to dinner, my daughter had been to the office and brought out the SIGNS, and I began to look and read it through, poor and despondent as I felt. While reading brother Mitchell's letter to brother Durand, and his answer to brother Mitchell, I was made to feel in the very depths of my heart to cry, Bless the Lord for his grace, and the prophecy was fulfilled in me: "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that rises in judgment against thee thou shalt condemn." Surely it was proven so when those old soldiers told of the sore trials and sharp afflictions they had passed through, and how wonderfully God had done it all for their good, and how they were made to rejoice in tribulations. Now, my dear brethren, let me say to you, while you are strangers to me in the flesh, yet I feel we are one in Christ. Yes, not only the saying of the prophets, but Christ's own sayings, have been fulfilled this day, that all the saints can meet in Christ, and eat and drink of the riches of his grace. Surely I have been blessed to meet you in spirit, and not only to meet you, but to get a cup of cold water, and I feel so refreshed I felt I wanted you to know it, but my pen falls as far short of expressing my feelings as my tongue does of telling the glories of my precious Redeemer. But, dear brethren, hope tells us ere long we shall see him as he is and be like him. We will not need to write to our brethren in a distant land, to tell them what grace has done for us, and what it is still doing for us, but we will meet and join with them in that eternal praise. Amen.

Love to all the saints.

J. T. BARNES.

SHIVE, Texas, August 10, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER:—Hoping it will not worry you to read a poor scrawl from the least of all. I am greatly pleased with your hymn book, the Beebe's collection. I wish to relate what occurred with me the day before I received your book I

sent for about one year ago. I was called on by a brother Woods, at an appointment he had at a neighboring school-house, to open services for him, which I sometimes try to do. In my weakness I made the attempt to do so by singing and prayer. I selected the fifth hymn in Loyed's hymn book, which reads, "Grace, 'tis a charming sound," &c., and before giving it out I remarked that I wished to join with all who could sing and pray with the spirit, and also with the understanding. I then remarked that I thought it as important to sing the truth as it was to preach the truth, but in giving out the first verse, and for the first time in life I detected a contradiction, as I thought, and do yet think, to what I said about singing the truth; it was only one word, and the only word I could find in the hymn that did not seem right, and that word was "earth:" "All the earth shall hear." My heart condemned me, but I with a struggle finished giving out the hymn, and with about the same struggle proceeded to try to pray. After which brother Woods preached well I think, but somehow that word "earth" did not seem to be in the right place, and bothered me till I could hardly enjoy the preaching. Next day, while ploughing, I was wondering if it could be possible that I had sung that good hymn all my life, and had never before seen anything wrong in it. I decided that God was greater than my heart, and so I would not let as little thing as that bother me any more, so I went to the house at dinner, and sister Johnson had been to Goldthwaite, and brought me a new hymn book I had very recently sent for, Beebe's collection, and the first thing that occurred to me was, I will look and see if it is the same, and behold, it said, "All the saints shall hear." Then I rejoiced, because I could receive it without any doubtful disputation. Now, suffice it to say, as the Loyed hymn book is in use altogether here, I have to use it, but like yours much better, and hope to see it adopted in this part if it be the Lord's will. I am determined to try to avoid singing Arminian hymns at all intentionally, it will be my sad mistake when I do it. I have black marked several in Loyed's and will be as faithful to do the same in yours, but have not found any as yet. Pardon so much to express so little, and if you find a word of encouragement I am assured you will give the praise to him to whom it all belongs. Pray for me.

Yours in hope,

W. D. WOOD.

2 CORINTHIANS XIII. 5.

"EXAMINE yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"

If in this examination we can clasp hands with those of the household of faith, identified or not identified with the church, and together walk over the field of our experience, led by the Spirit, we may find some comfort, and it may be, some condemnation. It is pleasant to find evidence of our part in the inheritance secured to the church if it comes as an approval of our walk and conversation, but not so pleasant if it comes as a condemnation, though the one is as strong a proof of his love as the other. What we offer for the consideration of those who profess to believe, or desire to know the truth, we hope may go to the hearts of those who truly love to follow in the footsteps of the flock; to those who can honestly and earnestly say, I love and desire the welfare of the church. If we cannot say this honestly before

God alone in the quiet hours of the night, Christ is not in us, and we are reprobates. Religion to be of any lasting value must be true religion, and he who only wears it as a cloak has no manifest Savior, and we know there is no hope for him except his stony heart be taken away by him who speaks and it is done. If after examining ourselves we find we are guilty of an ungodly walk and of grievous sins, thoughtlessness and disregard of duty, without any sorrow for our shortcomings, we are indeed in a pitiful condition, and may well fear to fall into the hands of the living God. Rest assured that sin brings its own reward, and if we are children of God, he will in his own time bring us down to acknowledge our transgressions, and repent in sackcloth, and in the burnt out ashes of self-satisfaction and lust. If on the other hand we are truly sorry for our faults, and are really chafed and galled by the rough sackcloth of shame, fruit will be brought forth, and renewed evidence of an indwelling Christ, by return to duty. Then your faith will not be a dead faith, without works, but a living faith, proved by works.

Can we be sure of our calling and election, or any part or lot in these things, if there is no spirit-searching, searching all things in our hearts? God knows, and we know, whether this searching or examination brings comfort or condemnation. No other can judge you justly in this. Paul says, "Examine yourselves," &c. If you have failed you must try again, except you be reprobates. If you are fallen and wounded there is "balm in Gilead," perfect and full pardon for true repentance; peace that passeth understanding. If we know individually (no one else but God can know) that there is in our hearts an earnest desire for the truth, truly wishing for the good of the church, we can then trust that Christ is in us the hope of glory: love of righteousness, the love of God. He who has this hope in him purifyeth himself as he is pure, and can rest in the hope that he is in Christ, and Christ in him.

Can you say experimentally that God rules, if you are not walking in obedience to his commands? Of course the knowledge of God, and the fear of him implanted in your heart before you had a hope of mercy, made you believe that he rules all things, as he is Almighty, but can you feel his smile of approval while walking in disobedience and disregard of duty? We appeal to you by the love of God, walk worthy of the calling.

Is your time and money and business worth more to you than your hope, or the love of the brethren? Do we allow worldly things to keep us from our meetings? Does not God sometimes take away worldly goods, and in fact all things, that would otherwise separate us from the church, from the love of God? Nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God. Then let us follow the advice of Paul quoted in our text. "We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." For the truth many have died; for the truth we may live; for the truth we must be made willing to suffer; for the truth we must turn from the world and worldly things, earthly friends and kindred; for the truth we must be made to do our duty; for the truth, and the lovers of the truth, we must deny self, and give of our substance to help the needy, even as we give to each other the bread of comfort from the loaves of plenty, blest, broken and given by our Lord.

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.

LAWRENCEBURG, Ky.

KALAMAZOO, Michigan, Sept. 22, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The dear SIGNS comes to us regularly, and is always a welcome visitor, we are glad to read the letters of the correspondents, and we do indorse the sentiments therein, it does us good, and bears our poor souls above time-things, and leads us poor worms of the dust to look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, and to say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee." We feel blessed to have the privilege of reading the words of God's dear children in our books and papers, as we are in a desolate place. We do not get to hear much gospel preaching, but occasionally hear Elder Wm. L. Lines, as he visits us in our loneliness, and his visits are our greatest pleasure. We feel to trust in God, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. We are poor sinners, greater it seems than all others, but in him we trust, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the word began." O, dear ones, we sometimes in our home say, Behold the Lamb of God who came to be crucified, and hanged on a tree, suspended between heaven and earth, and to cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and, "It is finished." His people, it seems, are forsaken many times, but then comes the precious promise, Fear not, I will be with thee always, even to the end of the world. How sweet the name of Jesus sounds to a believer's ear, it makes us humble, it makes us poor, it makes us rejoice, it makes us happy to think that we can rejoice, and we cry out, As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O, God.

When we began this letter we only intended to tell you how much we loved the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but we have wandered away, being, as we trust, led captive at the will of the Lord, to pour forth some thoughts concerning Christ and his kindred, which theme is so precious to poor, drooping souls. Please throw the mantle of charity over this, and remember us at the throne of grace. Do with this as you deem best and all will be right with us. May God be with you is the prayer of your unworthy brother and sister,

MR. & MRS. D. D. McALPINE.

GRASS VALLEY, Ore., April 9, 1900.

MY DEAR BROTHER, BENTON L. BEEBE:—I desire to say that I am, I hope, thankful to the great Giver of all our blessings, for his continued goodness in giving you strength and christian courage to still send out the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES proclaiming the pure and unadulterated gospel of the Son of God, and I hope I am thankful to our God for the gifts he has furnished us to write for its columns. I cannot speak too highly of the editorials written by Elder Chick, he writes so plain, and is of a meek and humble spirit, yet shuns not to declare the whole counsel of God, and I could name many of the precious little army of the bold soldiers of the cross, whose articles appear in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that have been and are a great comfort to me. Their ably and lovely written articles when I am sick and in prison they visit me, and when thirsty they give me drink; when naked they bring forth the best robe, which is the imputed righteousness of Christ, and clothe me with the garment of salvation by grace, un-

merited from start to finish. When I receive the SIGNS I am anxious to see who is going to greet me this time. O yes, here is brother Durand, and I feel like I can almost feel his presence, and am wont to take him in my arms, and there is Elder Bartley, the dear old soul, I can almost see the scars he has received in battle, and if here is not brother Keene, and brother Coulter, and brother Ker, and brother Mayfield, and all the dear brethren and sisters who write for our dear old medium of correspondence. Now, my dear brother Benton, right here I enjoy the sweet communion and fellowship of my dear kindred in Christ, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. Sometimes I enjoy this meeting with my dear brethren and sisters almost as well as though we were face to face, for at such seasons it seems,

"That sweet comfort was mine
When the favor divine
I first found in the blood of the Lamb:
When my heart first believed,
O what joy I received!
What a heaven in Jesus' name!

'Twas a heaven below,
The Redeemer to know,
And the angels could do nothing more
Than to fall at his feet,
And the story repeat,
And the Savior of sinners adore!"

May grace, mercy and peace be multiplied.

Your very unworthy brother in hope of eternal life,

J. P. ALLISON.

SNYDER, Texas, May 20, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Ever since reading your precious article in the SIGNS of May 15th, I have felt impressed to write you, not that I feel in any way able to strengthen you, for God alone is able to give you strength to stand in this day of trouble. There is a little band of brethren and sisters at this place who receive and rejoice in the truth as advocated by the SIGNS. I have been acquainted with the SIGNS ever since I can remember; my grandfather took it, and rejoiced in its precious truth, and it has never changed any since then. We all believed the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty, and his unconditional salvation. The adherents of conditional time salvation cling to the phrase "conditional." They would have us believe that the promises to God's people in time are not sure, but take away our belief in the sure mercies of our God, and where could we go for comfort? I would, it seems, be left without hope in this world. Some writers express great sorrow over the condition of the church. Now, do you think we should be sad when we see the fulfillment of the Scriptures? Are we not told that these things must come to pass? And when viewed by a ray of divine light, all these things are strengthening to the poor pilgrim. I have heard some claiming to be Old Baptists say that God had nothing to do with the troubles or divisions in the church. Now if this was true we would have great cause to be alarmed, but we can afford to rest, knowing our Savior is at the helm, and the winds and seas obey him. To those who think there is only a seeming difference, I will say, if they were in the church with some of these conditionalists, and suffered their persecution and misrepresentations, I think they would change their minds. The SIGNS need not be surprised if they misrepresent it, for it will not escape the persecution of false brethren, so long as it preaches the truth. That there are some of God's people being deluded, I would not deny, but can we win them back to the truth by hugging their delusion? Better to try to show them the error of their pernicious ways, and perchance if God gives them

repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, like the prodigal son they will remember the father's house, where is bread. We need not suffer any uneasiness about the Lord's family, for there will not one of them be lost. I feel very much encouraged this morning with this precious view, but by the time you get this I may be back in the valley with many doubts and fears, where all is dark, and where I must remain until released by a loving Savior. I have received much comfort from Elder Curry's articles, as well as many others too numerous to mention. How applicable are the editorials of Elder Gilbert Beebe to this time. Surely the SIGNS will again have to fight the same battles, for limited predestination is the tree, and conditionalism is its fruit, and the next crop will be more corrupt, for a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. I have made my letter too long already, I only wanted to tell you I appreciated your article as well as many others. I trust the Lord will give you grace divine, that with holy boldness you may contend for the faith.

Your sister in hope,

M. J. JACKSON.

MT. VERNON, Texas, May 2, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—In my article for May 1st, SIGNS OF THE TIMES, on page 261, there is, I find, a sentence that does not clearly convey the idea intended. It reads: "A few years ago you could scarcely find one among us who did claim to believe that all the good works of the children of God were predestinated, but other works were not, but now it is said by many that the obedience of the children of God is optionary. He can if he will, and if he wishes he can let it alone." I meant to say that only a few years ago there could hardly one be found among us who would deny that the obedience (all good things) of God's children was predestinated, though they should deny that wicked things were, but now it seems that many are denying that the obedience (or good things) are predestinated, in that they may be done or let alone, as we choose. Dear brother, I would be glad to believe as some of our people seem to, that the difference among our people on the subject of predestination and salvation, consisted only in words, but from the evidence before me, I cannot so conclude. Some churches in Texas several years since have set up non-fellowship resolutions, and said they would not allow the doctrine as held by us, *i. e.*, unlimited predestination, preached in their stands. A preacher at the church where my membership is, after I had talked and took particular pains to show that while I believed that all things, times and events, were embraced in the predestination of God, yet I did not believe that God influenced, moved or coerced men to sin and wickedness, arose and began his talk in about this way: "We have been charged with accusing the brethren with advocating that God moves or compels men to sin and wickedness, and if the brother has not preached it, I am badly fooled." This was about two years ago.

There are two associations here, the Sulphur Fork and the Fellowship, who are almost a unit on the doctrine of unlimited predestination. Several others I know are bitterly opposed to it. So far as I know, all the non-fellowship resolutions have been passed by the limited element.

Your little brother in the fellowship of the gospel,

H. B. JONES.

(See editorial notice on page 572.)

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1900.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

COLOSSIANS III. 12, 13.

"PUT on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."

These words are among the admonitions of the apostle to the church of God at Colosse, and are to be regarded with that solemnity with which we ought to regard every word of God. Each word is full of profit to the spiritual mind, and to heed the admonitions presented here would be to glorify God, and to the welfare of all his children. Paul bases the admonitions with which this and the following chapter is filled, upon a great truth stated at the beginning of this chapter, which is that those to whom he was writing had risen with Christ above the vain philosophy of this world, which is deceitful and after the traditions of men, and not after Christ, (Col. ii. 8,) above all the shadows of meats, and drinks, and holy days, and new moons, and Sabbaths, which are not the body of Christ, but only the shadow of his body; and above all the base and fleshly pride of a voluntary religion, which puffs up the fleshly mind, not holding the true head and source of all spiritual blessing. (Col. ii. 18.) Now, having risen above all these things, and above all indeed that is earthly, he exhorts his brethren to seek the things which are above.

One of the blessed truths of which he speaks is, that they as believers in the gospel are not only risen, but risen with Christ. In his resurrection to endless life he has brought all who believe in him up into the same life, and the power of it is now within them, and remains to be made manifest in all their outward life before God, and in the world. "If," he says, "ye be risen with Christ," as I have been showing you in the preceding chapter, and as ye have also realized in your own soul's experience, do not any longer seek to the things which are behind, but to the things which belong to you, to which you are risen. Set your affections upon the things which belong to this new life which has been given you. If raised up above all philosophy, and all legal ceremonies, and above all will worship, which is but another name for all free will religion, then why look back to these things which are of no use to you? Why not look to the things of this better life? Why not set your affections upon the things which have been conferred upon you, the things to which you have come in your soul's experience through Christ? Ye, he would say, are no longer citizens of this world, ye are of the kingdom of heaven; ye have been translated out of the kingdom of darkness and death, into the kingdom of the Son of God. Why then, as did Israel in the wilderness, desire again the leeks, and the onions, and the garlics of Egypt? Henceforward the heavenly Canaan is your home; ye are to love and reign with Christ. Seek then the things which belong there, seek the wisdom, doctrine and manner of life which make up the conversation of

heaven. And now, upon this great truth of the work of God wrought in their souls, making them partakers of the divine nature, and raising them up to know and love the things of God, Paul proceeds to base all the exhortations which follow. He addresses them as living men; they are no longer dead *in* sin, but have become dead *to* sin; they are no longer dead *to* God, but alive *unto* him. To the dead none of the things of life belong. To the living none of the cerements of the grave belong. God's people are separated from the dead, and are not any longer to lie down among the dead, nor any longer find their home among the tombs. Every exhortation, not only of this chapter, but in all the word of God to believers, is based upon this fact that they are risen with Christ, and are now possessed of the divine nature. Christ, their life, is in them the hope of glory.

To the living the words of life can come. Legalists regard every word of admonition upon the ground of legalism, it is according to their life that they should. Vain philosophy would seek to reason all into a vain system, which should puff up the wisdom of man. Followers of free will worship can see nothing in the admonitions of their system but what will glorify man's free will, but the partakers of the better life which is in Christ, and which Christ is, see neither legalism, philosophy nor freewillism, in the teachings of the word which present the life which is suitable to a follower of Christ. They see grace, grace which has raised them up with Christ, and grace which bestows that conversation which is in heaven; they find in their souls a love to that which is righteous, either in the character of God, or in the life and conduct of men in this world. To such a man the absence of the exhortations and admonitions of the word of God would be an irreparable loss. To take away the law of God from him who loves that law, would be sorrow indeed. When a man lives, death and the habiliments of the grave are frightful to him. At the presence of sin in his heart and life he cries out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" What groanings fill his soul because he cannot do the things that he would. To that soul all the commandments of God are sweet. To depart from iniquity is as a fountain of joy to him. There is no threat to that man in any admonition of the word, rather there is a great delight, and a great promise.

Now to these who are in this case, and who yet are unable to do the good which they would, Paul speaks in this text and chapter. The need of admonition to the children of God arises out of the fact that they are still possessed of a nature, as we may call it, which wages ceaseless warfare against the earnest strivings of the believer. Because he is in the flesh, because the world still has charms for that flesh, and because Satan wages war against him, with fiery darts, and because all these things hinder him, the believer has need of every help which can be afforded him, and among these helps are the admonitions and exhortations of the word of God. When any of them are presented in the preaching of the word, and applied by the Spirit, they do not present some new thing, but stir up the pure mind, which has been given to him by the Spirit, to remember these things. And this "to remember," certainly implies that he has once known them. Indeed he has known them, because these things are a part of the very life which is heavenly, and which he has felt stirring within him. But we all complain

that we are so prone to forget, and it is true that when the believer is in the spirit, he will love to hear that preaching which tells him his faults.

Paul tells his brethren at Colosse what they were glad to hear; he told them about the manner of life which becomes one who possesses godliness, and this was of as much true comfort and help to them as when he told them of the life out of which all these things must flow. That believer is in a sorry condition who does not love to hear the doctrine which pertains to his walk on earth presented, as well as the doctrine which tells of the atonement, of God's election, of grace or of predestination, and the doctrine which tells of the daily exercises of his mind; the one is as precious to the spiritual mind as the other.

Now among the things which belong to the life to which believers have been raised, are the things named in the text at the head of this editorial. "Bowels of mercies." Put on this, Paul says. Surely it need not be remarked that the words "put on" implies possession. One cannot put on what he has not. Paul addresses those who have all these graces conferred upon them in the gift of the Holy Spirit through Christ. These things, he would imply, are the heritage of the children of God; these are the fruits which are indigenous to the soil of the new kingdom, they belong there. In the language used they are compared to a garment presented to them as guests at the feast, and which are suitable for them to wear, they are not presented to them as something laid up in a closet, but as something belonging to the very life given them, they are the proper motions of this new life, they are the very breathings of the renewed soul. Now Paul says these things are to be "put on." As they dwell in the heart and life, and as their power is felt within, put them on.

The expression, "bowels of mercies," means true and real pity and sympathy. Our pity and tenderness is not to be feigned, but real; we are to act in this as the heart itself moves us to do. It is an expression in harmony with the "love unfeigned," which is enjoined elsewhere. Let, he would say, the real pity and compassion of your hearts, produced there by the Spirit, appear in your conduct to all who need pity and mercy; God has shown you mercy, and how wonderful it has been and is to you; it has filled you with wonder and gladness, and has often broken and melted your heart; now as God has thus dealt with you, so vile and undeserving, so deal with all who may have need of pity from you. Put on this mercy.

Put on kindness. A mother is full of kindness toward her infant, and in every word, and thought, and act, she puts this kindness on, it clothes her every word and deed and look as with a garment. To look on the kindness of a mother to her child is a beautiful sight to every thoughtful and tender heart, how much more has been the kindness of God to his people. And in the new birth he has begotten within them his own kindness, the heart can but move with kindness to all who have need, thoughts of kindness will flow out to all when the heart is actuated by the Spirit of the God of kindness. Be kind then to each other in word and deed; be kind also even to the unthankful and the froward; it is nothing to be kind to those who are kind to us, put on kindness toward those who are unkind to us, let the robe of this kindness cover us in all places and toward all men. It is not hard to do this when the love of God reigns within, but there are crosses to

meet with even in this; hence the need of this reminder.

Put on humbleness of mind. The mind produced in a child of God by the Spirit must be one of humbleness; the humility of the believer is not a voluntary humility, it is a law of his being as a believer, but many things hinder its exercise. Paul reminds his brethren that this spirit of humility is to be put on. Walk among each other, and among all men, with lowliness of mind and of deportment; do not ape humility, but as you have a sense of your own littleness, act that way. It is a good thing to walk humbly among men, it shows forth the image of the lowly Lord as nothing else can do; it forbids boasting, and will unite the hearts of those who feel its power as nothing else can. Every believer loves an humble man. "Put on humility;" if there be no reality back of it, it will soon betray itself, and men will despise it. The word means that we should walk humbly in all the relations of life; thus the elect of God are to be distinguished.

Put on meekness. The thought involved in this as we may learn by what is said in the word of Moses, is that of bearing injury, unjust reproaches, and hard words and deeds of every kind, without replying again, and this not for some gain to be obtained, but because it shows forth the grace of the Master, which can raise the believer up above all earthly things. How lovely is this grace of meekness, it belongs to the Spirit, and is one of its fruits. Let this fruit be seen in what we do and say, in the face of any injustice or hard treatment.

Put on longsuffering. This means that we must not be quick to resent injuries, we are to be slow to turn away from him who goes astray; charity suffereth long and is kind. How longsuffering does real human love make us toward the object loved. Here is love infinitely better. How full of longsuffering has the blessed Lord been toward us. His Spirit dwells within; as we feel the power of it in the soul we shall become more and more aware of the opposition of the flesh, and then we shall welcome every such reminder as is in the text to put on this grace.

Then Paul says last, put on forbearance and forgiveness. That is, he means that we shall be slow to show any anger or displeasure at what appears to us wrong in a brother's life, and especially such things as would seem to manifest any indifference toward our own self, and then be quick to forgive where there is injury. He does not mean merely a fancied injury, but one that was really meant. This is the true force of the expression that follows: "If any man have a quarrel against any." The expression means a just occasion for offense. Indeed, if the occasion be not a just one, there is nothing in it that calls for forgiveness. If any one has not intended an offense, there is no offense at all. He who resents an unintended offense is himself an offender. The injunction is positive, "Forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any," and then the pattern is given, "Even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." This, in common with other expressions in the text and connection, settles the matter that all that is here said is limited to the children of God; others are not the elect of God; others are not risen with Christ; others are not forgiven by the Lord. Here are those who have a clear remembrance of the experience of forgiveness which was to them as real as when Jesus said to the sick, Be well, and they were well. Now as fully and as freely and as unconditional-

ally as Jesus forgave you, do you forgive those against whom you may have just cause of offense. And it is sure that when the sense of the forgiveness which we have received is clear and strong with us, we must forgive. Then from the heart we can say, Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

We have given a hasty review of the things named in the text which become sound doctrine, and which will according to the apostle be in consistency with the profession we have made. These are the fruits of life, it is good to contemplate them. How lovely they are. No one was ever troubled because he had manifested too much of any of these things, but we have all been troubled because of too little of them in our hearts and lives. The apostles often dwelt upon these things; they wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost must consider them of importance. Let us consider them often also. If we have the spirit of a disciple we shall desire to consider them, and they will be as our daily bread. C.

STILL IMPROVING IN HEALTH.

We are happy, and we hope thankful, to be able to inform our readers that the health of our brother, Elder William L. Beebe, is still improving. He is now able to be up and dressed all day, and to walk about the yard. His physician gave his consent for him to attend his meeting again Sunday, the 9th inst., if he would not attempt to preach, but we have not yet learned whether or not he was there. He wishes us to return his sincere thanks to his brethren and friends who have manifested so much solicitude for his ultimate recovery from his severe illness, and hope that at an early date we may be able to publish something direct from his own hand.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

1 CORINTHIANS VII. 16.

"For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?"

This epistle was written at a time of great affliction, distress and persecution, not only at Jerusalem, but also in the churches which were among the Gentiles, every inch of the ground occupied by the church of God was contested by the Jews, and also by the Pagans, and to add to the general distress, many false notions and corruptions had obtained among the members of the churches, as will be seen by carefully reading this epistle. Among other points on which the Corinthian saints required apostolic instruction, was that in regard to their relationship with this world, as husbands, wives, parents, children, masters, servants, espoused virgins, &c. The question seems to have been agitated among them, as to whether their calling of God, their spiritual birth which developed a new and spiritual relationship to the members of the kingdom of Christ, was to dissolve those earthly relations which previously were binding on them. The apostle very clearly shows that as the kingdom of Christ is spiritual and not of this world, it intermeddles not with the civil, social or political organizations which legitimately existed before the setting up of his kingdom in her gospel organization. On this important subject the apostle says, "Let every man abide in the same calling, wherein he was called." That is, he is to remain in the vocation which he was in when, and previously to his calling. He continues: "Art thou called, being a servant? [for there were very many of the primitive saints, who were held as the servants and chattled property of men,] care

not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's free man: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant." Therefore he enjoins with apostolic authority that every man shall abide in that relationship that he was in when called. A husband being called by grace, and his wife continuing in unbelief, a Jewish proselyte, or a Pagan worshiper, affords no reason why he should leave her, or if the wife be called, and her husband, still remaining in unbelief, gives her no liberty to leave him, nor does it in the least degree lessen her duties to him as a faithful and affectionate wife. "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife;" that is set apart legally, by marriage. "Else were your children unclean," or illegitimate; "but now are they holy," or lawful.

If the husband or wife, who have become disciples of Christ, should be forsaken on that account by their unbelieving partners, it is not their fault. If the unbelieving party will depart on that account, let him or her, as the case may be, depart, but let the forsaken party not marry again, for the marriage cannot be dissolved only by death, so as to give the surviving party liberty to marry again. "But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace." Here the text on which our views are solicited, comes in: "For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O husband, whether thou shalt save thy wife?" How save them? By a reconciliation. In verse 10, of this chapter, Paul says: "Unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband. But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband." By reconciliation with him, she retains or saves him. And however indignant, unreasonable, tyrannical, malicious or persecuting he may be in resenting her conversion to the christian faith and practice, although he may forsake her, yet she must not marry again, while he is living, for she does not know but that she may save him, by a mutual reconciliation; and the same with the husband.

The salvation here intended is not a deliverance from the curse of the law, or from the retributions of the world to come, because Christ is in that respect the only Savior, and there is salvation in no other, but the saving or retaining of the affections and companionship of a husband, or of a wife by reconciliation, is evidently what is intended in our text.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., February 1, 1858.

2 CORINTHIANS XII. 2.

WE understand the apostle to be speaking of a vision which he had received of the Lord, some fourteen years before he wrote this epistle. "I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven." Although he speaks of the man, in the third person, yet by comparing this verse with the seventh verse, we perceive that he was speaking of what he had himself experienced. And this conclusion is in harmony with the theme of his subject in the preceding chapter. His inability to say whether he was in the body or not at the time of that memorable vision, not only gives us the idea of the perfect ecstacy of his mind, but also that it was a purely spiritual exercise, which we infer from his unconsciousness of being in or

out of the body at the time. If in the body, the powers of nature were so perfectly subjected and subdued that he, for the time, felt none of its depravity, or opposition to the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, any more than the saints shall feel when perfectly liberated from the corruptions of the flesh.

Mark! He knew a man in Christ, not in Adam, for had this been a fleshly exercise, then it would have effected him as a member of the earthly Adam, but his life in Christ is not earthly nor carnal, but it is spiritual and heavenly, therefore while the new man, which is born of the Spirit, and which is spirit, enjoys the visions of eternal things, the darkness of our earthly nature comprehends them not. In his vision Paul was transported to the third heavens. By the third heavens, we understand the immediate presence of our God, or that state wherein the saints of God shall ultimately dwell. The church under the two covenants or testaments, are the first and second heaven, but the third heaven has reference to the place and condition of the church in her triumphant glory. The hope and faith of God's children looks to that which is within the veil, whither the forerunner has for us already entered. The glories of that highest heaven, which was disclosed in vision to the favored apostle of the Lamb, were beyond the power of finite beings to describe. The laws of language by which intelligent beings communicate with each other are inadequate, and utterly fail to fully describe that glory, and this is what we understand the apostle to mean when he says he heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. God has reserved to himself the power to make these unspeakable things known to his children by his Spirit, and to secure this object he has withheld from man the power to express them, so as to make the subject clear or intelligible to the natural intellect of man. Here we have an immutable law, which governs all revelation of spiritual things. As no man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man which is in him, even so, or exactly so, the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. And the apostle says we have received the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things which are freely given us of God, and which things are hidden from the wise and prudent; so that the natural man cannot know them because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things; they have an unction from the Holy One, and they know all things.

Whether these remarks have touched the particular point on which our correspondent desired to be enlightened or not, we do not know; but such views as we have we freely give. And may we remember the admonition to the saints: If any man lacketh wisdom let him ask of God, who giveth freely to all men, and upbraideth not.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y. February 1, 1858.

PLEASE BE SURE

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Old School Baptist Conference of Maine, assembled with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, Maine, to the associations with whom she corresponds.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—By the gracious providence of our God, we are once more gathered in our annual assembly, and as our thoughts are turned unto our dear kindred in Christ, with whom in this capacity we correspond, we trust we feel it in our hearts to desire your peace and prosperity in the things of Jesus Christ. The present time is a time of unrest among the nations of the earth, and even among the churches of God in some parts there is much that is disquieting. Errors creep in and spring up, gainsayers of the doctrine of Christ lift up themselves and set their mouth against the heavens, in craftiness and with great swelling words of vanity they allure with much wantonness those that were clean escaped from them that live in error.

From whatsoever source troubles arise there are times when the hearts of those who fear the Lord cannot but be pained over these things, but here are words of heavenly balm and consolation for our tried souls, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."—2 Tim. ii. 19. The gates of hell may assail, but they cannot destroy the church of God. Profane and vain babblers whose words eat as a canker, may be suffered to infest for a little moment the beloved churches of Christ, they may as Hymenæus and Philetus say the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some, or with other heresies they may entangle and bring souls into bondage. "Nevertheless," though all such things take place, the God of our mercy is unchanged, and wherein the enemies of Christ and his church deal proudly, our God is above them. (Exod. xviii. 11.)

Christ the Son of God is the foundation. In him all the church have their spiritual subsistence and foundation; and shall Christ and the church ever be confounded? Christ the Head of the church is the Rock of Ages, and in him the church which is his body has its standing and preservation: "Preserved in Jesus Christ and called." "The foundation of God standeth sure," for Christ and the church are founded in the counsel and purpose and good pleasure of the eternal God who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

The Son of God was laid for a foundation in eternity, in the unalterable decrees of God. As the foundation of the church, the election of grace, he rests in the eternal love and faithfulness of the Most High.

"The foundation of God standeth sure." It cannot be moved, it cannot be overturned, though men and devils rage, though storms assail and the floods arise, the foundation and the building of God cannot be wrecked, it standeth sure, to the everlasting praise of God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Though at times amidst the trials that the church has to encounter she appears to be moved and shaken and our frail hearts tremble on, what looks to us, the brink of disaster, may this blessed "nevertheless" allay our fears, and with affection of heart may we contemplate the faithful word, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure." O God, our God, here let our feet be set and our goings established.

Then as a farther confirmation and consolation it is declared that the foundation is sealed: "Having this seal." Not the seal of some earthly potentate, not Pilate's seal, that might be set at naught by the angels of God, but the foundation of God hath his own seal. His own gracious and almighty hand hath sealed it. The foundation of God hath the seal of the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords. (1 Tim. vi. 15.) Who would dare efface or break this seal? Beloved of God, there is no power in earth or hell can alter, remove or violate this seal. Him hath God the Father sealed. (John vi. 27.) Look at the language of this seal. "The Lord knoweth them that are his, and let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity."

"The Lord knoweth them that are his." They are the people whom he foreknew, he hath known them intimately, affectionately, from everlasting, and his chosen ones he will never disown, he will never despise them, he will never leave them nor forsake them. Hypocrites, deceivers, wolves in sheep's clothing may thrust themselves in among them, the world and Satan may cast reproaches upon them, the gates of hell, heresies, and seas of tribulation may for a moment flow over them, but they are all well known unto him. The Lord hath graven them upon the palms of his hands their walls are continually before him. He hath set them as as a seal upon his arm, as a seal upon his heart, and to his troubled ones he says, O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. God will ever pity them, he will forgive all their transgressions, and cast all their sins behind his back; he will revenge all their injuries, he will thoroughly plead their cause, and will bring forth the top stone of Zion with shoutings, Grace, grace unto it.

"Them that are his." "His," what a word! How full with meaning, "Am I his, or am I not?" Truly blessed it is to have power to say, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his." They are his by eternal election in Christ Jesus, by his predestination of them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself. (Eph. i. 4, 5.) They are his by eternal redemption, and by regeneration. (Heb. ix. 12; Titus iii. 5.) "The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."

The foundation being sealed by the King of kings denotes that it is his. The church is Christ's and Christ is God's. Putting his seal upon them the Lord says, Thou art mine, thou art sacred unto me. Having this seal declares the foundation to have his approval, that it is to remain inviolate, and it warns all principalities and powers and might and dominion and every name that is named, saying, Hands off. "Come not near any upon whom is the mark."—Ezek. ix. 6. "Touch not mine anointed and do my prophets no harm." Another glorious part of the seal that answers so well to the desire of our souls is, "And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." The foundation of God hath this seal, and if we are in union with the foundation it will be found indelibly sealed upon the fleshly tables of our hearts. Amen. The more we are enabled by the Holy Spirit to contemplate the foundation of God, the more we shall admire the riches of God's grace, and our faith in Christ will be strengthened. For in both the foundation and this seal there is a fountain of strong consolation unto every one that in sincerity nameth the name of Christ. The foundation of God being sealed declares the unalterable

purpose of the Lord our God, he hath chosen and laid and sealed the foundation, and he is not man that he should repent, he will never set aside Christ and the church, he will choose no other, Christ and his people are the election of grace, Christ the Head, and the church the members of his body. Those who in truth are one with the foundation of God name the name of Christ. This they do sincerely, affectionately declaring his name to be most precious and glorious unto them, the only name given under heaven among men whereby they must be saved. They make their boast that Christ of God is made unto them wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption, and thus they glory in the knowledge of their gracious Lord who exerciseth loving-kindness and judgment and righteousness in their behalf. Often they think upon his name, which affords them heavenly melody, and is a precious healing balm to their oft afflicted and sin-vexed souls, and every remembrance of Jesus' dear name says, "Depart from iniquity." May the God of our mercy abound unto us in such riches of grace that we may be found at all times departing from iniquity. What then is the conclusion? It is this, that upon the foundation of God everything shall flourish, for is it not written? "The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." Though in the midst of Zion there arise those who say they are Jews, and are not, though sin, men and devils combine for the overthrow of Christ and his church, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his, and let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." Then let us take courage in our God, believing he will ever take care of every one that fears his gracious name, and will bring them at last in eternal triumph, unto that eternal glory to which he hath predestinated them in his dear Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

We desire, dear brethren, a continuance of your correspondence, and hope to see your messengers with us at our next yearly conference, which we have appointed to be held, the Lord willing, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, before the first Monday in September, 1901.

FRED. W. KEENE, Mod.
JOSEPH F. HALL, Clerk.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

THE following inquiry as well as the excellent letter from brother Jones, on page 562, became buried among a number of other letters, and although we made diligent search we were unable to find it until now, which is the cause of its delay in publication.

IF there are any Old School Baptists on or near the I. & G. N. R. R., between Rockdale and Austin, Texas, or at either of those places, who read and indorse the SIGNS, I would like to have their post-office address.

H. B. JONES.

MT. VERNON, Texas.

PERSONAL.

OPELIKA, Ala., August 23, 1900.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—Please say through the SIGNS that I am now at Opelika, Ala., and am serving the church at Andersonville, Ga., and also at Montgomery, Ala., and within the last month have baptized four at Montgomery. The church seems to be in a state of prosperity.

Yours in hope,

W. LIVELY.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder James Staggs was born Oct. 30th, 1824, and died March 29th, 1900. At the age of twenty-one years he united with Turman's Creek church, Sullivan Co., Ind., and was baptized by Elder Benoni Trueblood, in June, 1845. Turman's Creek church dissolved in or about the year 1856, and in 1862 he joined Mt. Zion church, Clay Co., Ind., and feeling that a dispensation of the gospel was committed unto him, he commenced preaching in 1870, and was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry in 1872. He emigrated to Parker Co., Texas, in 1873, and joined Zion Hill church soon after. In 1898 he went to Oklahoma Ter., where he lived at the time of his death. It was the writer's pleasure to know brother Staggs since 1885, and form a strong attachment for him, as did all the brethren and sisters with whom he was associated; to know him was to love and respect him for his christian walk and deportment, and in private conversation he delighted to talk of Jesus, and his love to the children of men, and in his public ministry he was an able and fearless defender of the doctrine of the Bible, fully believing that God would fulfill all of his promises made to his people through Jesus Christ our Lord. In his pastoral labors he was kind and considerate, and ever ready to bear with the infirmities of the weak ones of the flock. He was indeed a father in Israel. Truly a great man has fallen, but we mourn not as they which have no hope, believing that Zion's loss is his eternal gain, and that he is now enjoying the rest that remains to the people of God.

Done by order of the Peace Valley Association of Predestinarian Baptists, of the Primitive order.

ELDER W. L. ROGERS, Moderator.

ELDER W. O. RUTLEDGE, Clerk.

DIED—At her residence near Shane, Baltimore Co., Md., **Mrs. Susan L. Hersey**, aged 57 years, 3 months and 7 days. Sister Hersey was a daughter of the late Elisha Reynold, of York Co., Pa. She was baptized by the writer in fellowship with the church at Harford, Md., where her father and mother and one sister were members, all of which are now gone the way of all the earth. Our sister lived remote from the church of which she was a devoted member, and was not able, owing to poor health and distance, to be regular in her attendance, but when she could be with the rest seemed pleased and happy. She had a very patient disposition, both as a member of the church, and as a mother devoted to her family and husband, who now especially feel their sad loss. The family consists of four children: two sons and two daughters, all, I believe, in homes of their own. I visited her during her sickness, and found her aware of her situation, and quite calm and unmoved by the change that must soon take place. Her disease was a lingering and distressing cough, and a wasting away until she fell asleep, August 16th, 1900. The Sunday following was appointed to bury their dear one out of their sight, for this corruptible must put on incorruption.

The church has lost a good member, the children a devoted mother, the bereaved husband a faithful wife. May the Lord bless those who remain.

WM. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md., Aug. 23, 1900.

DIED—At the residence of her son, J. H. Knifton, Parry Sound, Canada, **Susan** the dearly beloved wife of William **Knifton**, aged 71 years. She was taken with a severe attack of the "la grippe," in the early part of last fall, but after about two months was raised up again so far as to do any little trifling thing about the house until about three days before her decease. Sister Knifton was first called to know the plague of her own heart, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin, in 1848, and was baptized into the fellowship of Mount Zion Particular Baptist Church, meeting for divine worship at Hill street, Dorset Square, London, England, under the pastoral care of Mr. John Foreman, in 1860, where she remained till she came to this country, in 1868. When she found that her lot in Providence was cast to dwell in Muskoka, she united with the few Old Baptists that meet at Bala, from time to time, and remained in fellowship with them until her removal to Parry Sound. She knew in whom and what she believed, being sound in the doctrine of God our Savior, and often spoke of what a poor, utterly depraved and unworthy creature she felt herself to be, and knew what it was to be frequently in bondage through fear of death. It was at such seasons very blessed to hear her quote a verse of her favorite hymn:

"Since I myself can hardly bear
What in myself I see,
How vile and black must I appear,
Most holy God, to thee.

But since my Savior stands between,
In garments dyed with blood,
'Tis he, instead of me is seen,
When I draw nigh to God."

Her religion had taught her to "Do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." Grace, rich, sovereign and free, had done it all, to it be all the praise. Her last words in reply to a question by the unworthy writer were, "Yes, I have a hope, my anchor is cast within the vail; I am a poor sinner, and nothing but a sinner, but Christ is all in all."

She leaves behind, her husband, one son and two daughters, to mourn their loss, and I desire to say, Though painful to flesh, "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight."

WM. KNIFTON.

PARRY SOUND, Canada, Aug. 8, 1900.

BROTHER **William Snodgrass** departed this life at his residence in Linn Co., Oregon, July 9th, 1900. He was born in the State of Illinois, June 7th, 1837, and was united in marriage to Miss Eunice Williams, on August 4th, 1861, and came to Oregon in 1871, and united with the Primitive Baptist church in 1889. He professed a hope in Christ when quite young, and was a firm believer in the grand old doctrine of grace, as held by the Primitive Baptists. He was faithful, and dearly loved by all the brethren and sisters with whom he associated, and was faithful in attending his church meetings. He was afflicted for a long time with heart trouble. His death was so sudden it was a great shock to his beloved wife and children. The day he died there was none of the family at home but himself and wife; she went to the post-office to mail a letter, leaving him as well as usual; when she returned home she found her beloved husband dead. How heart-rending it was for that precious sister. But we sorrow not as those who have no hope. While the church has lost a faithful member, and our beloved sister has lost a precious husband, he has gained heaven.

The unworthy writer tried to speak words of comfort to the sorrowing friends from 1 Cor. xv. 5, after which we laid his remains in the grave to await the resurrection.

SILAS WILLIAMS.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$381 80
Mrs. S. C. Newton, Illinois	1 00
Total to date	$382 80

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Lexington, Greene Co., N. Y., have appointed a yearly meeting to be held at their meeting-house in Lexington, on the fourth Saturday and Sunday in September, (22d and 23d) 1900.

FLETCHER MACKEY, Church Clerk.

THE annual meeting of the Cow Marsh Baptist Church is appointed for Saturday and Sunday, the fourth Sunday in September. Saturday meeting 2 o'clock p. m. Those who can come to attend with us by rail, will take morning mail train from both ways to Woodside, on Del. R. R., where they will be met.

A cordial invitation is extended.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Pastor.

THE Otego Old School Baptist church, of Otego, N. Y., has appointed the time of her next yearly two days meeting to be Sept. 26th and 27th, 1900. The meeting is held in the meeting-house in the village, near the depot. Friends are invited to be present rom a distance. Trains will be met Tuesday, Sept. 25th. Places of entertainment are near the depot.

Done by order of the church.

S. C. F. GUERNSEY, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist church of Jefferson, Schoharie Co., N. Y, has appointed a two days meeting to be held on the 29th and 30th days of September, 1900. A cordial invitation is extended to all ministering brethren and friends who desire to meet with us.

J. DYER.

THE church at Cammal, Pa., have appointed a two days meeting for the fifth Saturday and Sunday in September, (29th and 30th,) 1900. We hope to have a goodly number of brethren and friends present.

Procure tickets to Cammal station, on what was formerly called the Fall Brook Railroad, but now the Pa. Div. of N. Y. Central. Inquire for James Lamison, or Sammy Moffat, who live near the depot.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association, has appointed her next session to be held with the Middleburgh church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday (3d and 4th) in October, 1900. We hope the Lord will put it in the minds and hearts of brethren and ministers of other associations to visit us.

Those coming on the cars to Middleburgh, will be met on Tuesday, and cared for. Will also state there is an express wagon leaves Gay's Hotel, Catskill, N. Y., every day at 12:45 o'clock, and is due at Preston Hollow at 6 o'clock p. m. The fare is $1.25. Any desiring to come by this route will be met at Preston Hollow and cared for. The distance from Catskill to place of meeting is about thirty-three miles.

A. COOK, Clerk.

THE Juniata Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the Fairview church, in Fulton Co., Pa., on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1900, and continue three days. We give a cordial invitation to lovers of the truth to meet with us.

Those coming by railroad will come Thursday, on the Baltimore and Ohio road, to Hancock, Md., and cross over the river, where they will be met and cared for. It is about fourteen miles to place of meeting.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting will be held, the Lord willing with the Bethlehem church, October 17th, 18th and 19th, 1900.

Friends coming to the meeting from northern points will come to Washington, D. C., on Tuesday, or in time to take the train at Sixth Street station, at or near 8 a. m. Wednesday, for Manassas, Va. Several trains a day from north and south stop at Manassas.

We earnestly invite our friends and brethren, who feel disposed, to meet with us.

J. N. BADGER.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1900. NO. 19.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NO GOOD THING IN THE FLESH.

In the Signs of June 1st, brother Rittenhouse, referring to the apostle Paul's declaration that the saints cannot do the things that they would, says, "I do not think it was intended as an excuse for wrong doing." All experienced people must certainly agree with him in this. There have undoubtedly been some who have regarded such expressions of gospel truth as that of Paul, as excusing them in doing the wrong which they love, but the intimation of such a sentiment as prevailing in the mind of any one would prove him to be only a natural man, without spiritual life. While the apostles all present clearly in various ways the truth of the christian's utter inability of himself to do any good thing, or even to think anything, as of himself, (2 Cor. iii. 5,) yet none of them teach that he is therefore justified in doing evil, or in failing to walk in obedience to the gospel rule.

The experience of a child of God is a wonderful mystery. To himself it appears full of contradictions, and therefore the expression of that experience appears as foolishness to the natural mind, and so do the Scriptures which teach that peculiar experience of the Lord's "peculiar people."

The first thing experienced by one who is taught of the Lord is that he is vile, and that he can do nothing good in the sight of God. He will strive and strive again to attain unto some goodness, and may be a long time in learning the truth that he can do no good thing, but the result of all his efforts will be that all his goodness, like the flower of the field, withers away. He may not for a long time know that it is because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon him that the flower of his goodness withers, but it is true. The blowing of this heavenly wind has made him feel the goodness of the flesh withering like the grass, but it also proves him to have been born of the Spirit. (Isa. xl. 6–8; 1 Peter i. 24, 25; John iii. 8.) When the blessed Interpreter comes to this poor soul as he thus draws near to the grave, in his sorrow and desolation, and his life to the destroyers, and shows unto him his uprightness, shows to him that Jesus is his righteousness and salvation, then he rejoices like a child, in the surprising favor of God, who

has found for him a ransom, and has delivered him from going down into the pit. (Job xxxiii. 14-30.) In this joyous season of spiritual childhood there is little or no knowledge of doctrine. He is apt to regard himself as so changed by the wonderful grace that has brought this salvation to him that he is beyond sin and out of the reach of temptation. That was my feeling the day I was baptized, and for some time after. It seemed to me that I should not be troubled by sin any more. But the truth that my flesh was still corrupt came with terrible power. When the Lord's time comes to teach his people knowledge and make them to understand doctrine, he weans them from the milk, and draws them away from the breasts, where they were having the sweet joy and comfort that belongs to the babe, (Isa. xxviii. 9,) and takes them into the wilderness, the wilderness of our old nature. There they learn that although this wilderness has "blossomed like the rose," and this desert has rejoiced for them, while the sunlight of God's love and joy filled their hearts, and faith and hope prevailed, yet it is a wilderness and a desert still, "where beasts of midnight howl" when the sun goeth down.

When the apostle says, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would,"—Gal. v. 17, he expresses a truth which is at the foundation of all true knowledge of the way of salvation, and which he carefully dwells upon in various ways in all his epistles. The natural man can easily be satisfied and pleased with what he does, but not so the spiritual man. Even in his works of true obedience he sees enough of self and sin to make him low and humble before God, and to cause him the more to abhor himself. While he is thankful to the Lord for the spirit of obedience, and for the liberty to walk in obedience, yet so far as his own work is concerned he cannot see the goodness and purity of motive which he desires. Indeed, so much of the depravity of his nature appears in all he does that he is often in doubt whether it is true obedience or not. "The sins of one most righteous day would sink us in despair." "The best obedience of my hands dare not appear before thy face." So the apostle says, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." And again, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not, but the evil that I would not, that I do."—Romans vii. 18, 19. The apostle is not, of course, excusing wrong doing in saying this, nor does he intimate that he is pursuing a wrong course of conduct, as not being able to do right. He does not here contradict what he says elsewhere, "I keep under my body and bring it into subjection;" and again, "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblamably we behaved ourselves among you that believe." In this and all similar declarations the apostle is giving explanation and instruction concerning the feeling of self-abhorrence and self-distrust which all of the saints have when they are spiritually minded, on account of the felt depravity of their hearts, and the consciousness of sin within them. Speaking of his own experience in this respect he tells that of all his brethren, who, when thus tried in their souls on account of their sinful flesh, cry out with him, "O wretched man that I am! who shall de-

liver me from the body of this death?" Then he by inspiration speaks the words which tell the only deliverance which can be had, and which does come to every one thus tried: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Then the instruction concerning this mystery is given: "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." This mind is the mind or Spirit of Christ, which Paul says we have, and without which no man can be his. (1 Cor. ii. 16; Romans viii. 9.)

In the following connection the apostle explains this more fully, saying, "If Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness." This felt deadness of the body, including the natural mind and heart, to all that is spiritual and holy, is the cause of the great afflictions of the saints; of their doubts and questionings concerning their acceptance, and their deep sorrows and self-reproaches on account of sin, and because they cannot do the things that they would. But it is also the cause of the purest of joys that can be felt in this mortal state, whenever they are made to feel that "the spirit is life because of righteousness." Then they can understand that this affliction because of "the sin that dwelleth in us," is the "bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."—2 Cor. iv.

It is hard to die in this sense, to be constantly reminded by experience that no good thing dwells in our flesh, and that therefore of ourselves we can do no good thing, "cannot do things that we would;" yet this is the daily experience of the saints. The more spiritual they are the more of this dying they feel, and the more humble and abased before God, but the more also do they rejoice in spirit because the spirit is life; because Jesus is their life, and is thus pleased to manifest that life in them. Then their trust and confidence are in him, and not in themselves. The saints cannot, except when carnally minded, have gratification and comfort in any work, even a work of obedience, considered as their own work. They are not allowed to find their true comfort in a fleshly boasting; but when they are given faith to see and feel that they have been quickened by the Spirit in doing that work, that it is a work of obedience and righteousness because the Spirit was their life in doing it, then they are glad with a pure, spiritual gladness, and the flesh is out of sight. Instead of being exalted in their mind because this is a work which *they* have done, when the Lord gives them his blessed token of acceptance, and shows them that they are "greatly beloved," they will be like Daniel lying with their face in the dust, saying, "When thou spakest unto thy servant my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength."

There have been times when the words of Paul, "In me (that is, in my flesh,) there dwelleth no good thing," have come to me in my extremity as though they were new, with a glad surprise that the inspired apostle had said just what I felt, and on account of which I was tempted to doubt whether I was a child of God.

"I hate vain thoughts," said David. Those thoughts which he hated were in his own mind. What a blessing that we can hate them. The two opposing principles must be in one who hates vain thoughts, the flesh from which the vain

thoughts come, and the spirit by which alone we can hate them. "Am I as much to blame for my bad thoughts," asked a dear child of me the other day, "as I am for bad actions? I cannot help the evil thoughts." Such questions often arise in the minds of those who are older, and who have long been in the way. The bad thoughts we truly cannot help, but the Spirit can make us hate them, and can prevent them being acted out. The blame is the blame that fell on Adam, and on all of his posterity. In the experience of the redemption of our body we shall experience deliverance from this "bondage of corruption," and then we shall be satisfied. When one is led by the Spirit there will be a struggle within him to silence and put away bad thoughts as well as to avoid evil actions, but enough of sinfulness will still be felt in thought and word and deed to give the most exemplary christian daily errands to the throne of grace.

There is no work that a child of God can do in the sight of men which a hypocrite cannot do as well, so far as the observer can judge. The difference between the true work and the false lies in the motive, which men cannot see. It is on this account that true christians are so constantly trying themselves, and watching their own works, and striving to know whether their motives are of the flesh or of the Spirit. They know that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin," and that no work is accepted of God except it is prompted by his own Spirit. There need be no fear of reiterating too often, or of dwelling too much upon the truth that no good thing dwells in our flesh, and that we cannot do the things that we would, for we cannot bring it oftener nor more fully before the children of God than they have it brought to them in their experience; and through the daily experience of this comes the experience of the glorious remedy, which fills the soul with true and unspeakable joy.

It is the saddest of all conditions for a child of God to become convinced that he *can* do the things that he would. So far as he feels this to be true, that far he is from Christ, and from a knowledge of his constant need of him, without whom he can do nothing that is good. It is a serious error in a teacher to teach that any one of the Lord's people *can* do the things that he would. It is also a serious error in any one to decide how often a gospel truth shall be repeated, and when a point of gospel doctrine shall no longer be preached or written about.

The child of God who knows his own inability, and who feels his entire dependence upon the dear Savior, will be enabled to walk in all the ordinances of the Lord's house blameless, and this gospel walk he will count as an inestimable blessing bestowed upon him, and will give God all the praise for the desire and ability so to walk, and for the peace and comfort that are found in that blessed way.

SILAS H. DURAND.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, August 29, 1900.

P. S.—Dear brethren, I am at present at the pleasant home of brother Ebenezer McColl, 621 William Ave., in the city of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. I came here to avoid hay fever, with which I have been troubled at this season for about twenty-two years, except two years ago, when I avoided it by coming here. Sister McColl has been to the home of her father, Elder Wm. L. Beebe, in Warwick, N. Y., and, with a niece of brother McColl, has returned. I was in company with them from Toronto. The ride in the steamer from Owen Sound to Fort

William, at the northwest end of Lake Superior, about 450 miles, was very pleasant. This is about 1,700 miles from my home. If a dispensation of the gospel has been committed unto me I believe that I shall be engaged about that work wherever at any time my lot in providence may be cast, here as well as elsewhere. In myself I feel no ability for so holy a work, and on that account I am still troubled with doubts. But I know that the Lord can and does give ability to whom he will, even to the weakest. I expect to be here till about September 23d, and to preach at Southampton again, if the Lord will, on the fifth Sunday in September.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

RELIGION.

As we consider the history of man from the beginning of time until now, it does appear that the worship of a God, or gods, is an inherent principle born in every man, that it is a part of his human nature, therefore it is one of the elements which surround him, which he breathes, and which shape and mould his career in this natural life. Notwithstanding the fact that there are many men with a corresponding number of minds, yet in all the world there are but two religions. One is, "Pure religion and undefiled," the other is impure and defiled. While the word "religion" means any system of worship, yet in the pure and undefiled religion there is but one system of worship, but in the other they are almost innumerable. The religion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is the only true and pure religion. It presents salvation by grace through the blood and the merits of the only Savior of mankind, the Lord Jesus Christ. While the other is a seething caldron in which is a confused mass of creature works, of gods many, through which (by vain imaginations) man obtains his own salvation by his own merit and goodness, after a way has been made possible by a God which they do not know. The Scriptures designate only "the Jews' religion," and that embraces all other religions by which man is saved by his own works. The apostle Paul said to King Agrippa, "After the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee," in which religion he persecuted and sought to destroy the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. Then he goes on to say, "And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers." He was no more a Pharisee, declaring his own works and thanking God he was not as other men, &c., but he becomes a follower of this Jesus whom he had persecuted, and now ascribes all power and glory to the "only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." He reminds his brethren of the rumors concerning him in the past, saying, "For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God and wasted it; and profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceeding zealous of the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the nations, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood," &c. This experience of the apostle (which is also the experience of all God's children) sets forth clearly the two religions in the world. The one under a law of works, and the other

under grace. The religion of creature works embracing (as before stated) every system of worship of the world, and standing in direct contrast to the religion of Jesus Christ, which is pure and undefiled and comes to us from God out of heaven, by his rich and unmerited grace. Therefore all the religion in the world is to be found in each experience of every child of God. So that we do not have to go out of our own house to find all that is embraced under the term religion. We have only to examine ourselves to find the gods many in our own household, in the lusts of our flesh, the pride of the eye, the pride of life, &c. The religion of the flesh worships the works of the flesh, because they all emanate from the natural mind. For the natural mind is the element in which they thrive and flourish, which mind is enmity to God always. He who depends upon creature works for salvation never seeks any higher for it. He does not need to, for he is rich in self-righteousness. He is the character of whom the psalmist speaks, when he says, "The fool hath said in his heart, No God." He cries out against the man Christ Jesus, saying, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live." Their religion is impure because they are impure, and defiled because they are defiled. The religion of the world wants you to seek and obtain an offered salvation. To them the death of Christ is of no avail, except you accept that which you have offered to you in the way of reward for service. The principle motive of the impure religion is to obtain release from punishment for evil doing. To secure this, they set up rules of practice, by which they not only save themselves, but will also save others, and so heap up for themselves great rewards of glory. It is a system therefore, wherein the sinner does the work of salvation, and therefore earns the glory. In this system there is no need of any other Savior except themselves. This system of religion is a kind of worship, but the devotion is to the gods of this world, and not to the God of heaven. The apostle James tells us that "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Pure religion and undefiled then is the true worship of God. A worship and devotion which is acceptable in the sight of the Father. The love of God in the heart of man turns that man from the error of his way, and causes him to desire holiness and righteousness in the Lord. The motions of sin and defilement are subdued, because the stronger power of grace exercises him to righteous and holy acts. The elements of his carnal nature cause him to die and not to live. He lives and thrives and walks by faith alone. Green pastures of God's love, and still waters of peace in Zion fan his soul into heavenly desires for the prosperity of Jerusalem. Self-righteousness and self-praise give place to spiritual and heavenly aspirations. Gracious deeds done by the right hand are secretly hidden from the knowledge of the left hand. Earnest prayer to be kept from presumptuous sin, and from exalting the creature is in his heart and in his mind. By the light of faith he sees the path of life, and to him it becomes a shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The law of God is his sweet meditation day and night. Humility of soul marks his steps in life. With fear and with trembling he beholds the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The riches and pleasures of this world sink into insignifi-

cance as he views the treasures of the kingdom of heaven in Christ Jesus his Lord. He cannot boast and thank God that he is not like other men, for he sees himself as nothing and less than nothing and vanity in the sight of a holy God, and feels to be the least of all saints, if one at all. Grace in his soul, says to the horde of enemies led by the power of darkness, which he finds in his own household, "Get thee behind me, Satan," and so he goes forth to battle led by Jesus the Captain of his salvation. Now the religion of this happy soul is pure. He seeks no honor to himself, but having an eye single to the glory of God, he is determined within himself to know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified. It is pure also in the sense that he continually seeks holiness, with a pure heart and a pure mind. He hungers and thirsts after righteousness. Like Job, he is a man that fears God and eschews evil. Like David, he exclaims, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts, my soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord." His religion is undefiled because it emanates not from a source of defilement. Its source is the pure river of the water of life. It seeks the house that is builded by wisdom. It entereth therein and receiveth the precepts of life everlasting, and it entereth not into the house of the foolish woman. When this religion makes itself manifest in the life of the children of God, grace is its beautifier. It is clothed with righteousness; wisdom is its sponsor; holiness is the way of its feet; the temple of God its dwelling-place, and it seeketh heavenly places in Christ Jesus, where God's honor dwelleth. Such religion exercises the subjects of God's grace to good deeds and to holy conversation. Their feet are directed to the house of mourning, and away from the pleasures of sin. Their love and sympathy and fellowship are with "the fatherless and the widows in their affliction." For they themselves are an afflicted and poor people. The world which they once loved has now no charms for them. Therefore are their lives spent in the house of their brethren. To visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction is the very spirit of pure and undefiled religion. In other words, charity abounds where God's love has found a resting-place. Each child of the living God becomes a nursing mother to every other afflicted one who needs a cup of cold water. The ministration of the Spirit becomes a song in the night to every one that is weary. And that which is ministered to the afflicted ones is ministered also to Jesus who is their life, and whose Spirit worketh mightily in the heart of each one, to the upbuilding and to the healing of the body which is made perfect in Christ Jesus. Pure religion and undefiled was made clearly manifest and also made beautiful in the attitude and condition of the poor publican who went up to the temple to pray, and who, with unfeigned humility and with fear and trembling, cried, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." To such an one "the fatherless and the widows in their affliction" are a source of constant solicitude. The outward act of charity emanates alone from him in whom is the life of Christ. It is the Spirit that exercises to action, "the flesh profiteth nothing." The law of life in Christ Jesus which is the spirit of wisdom and knowledge, guides and directs its subjects into all truth. Therefore the lofty aspiration of every member of the household of faith is "to keep himself unspotted from the world." As by faith he sees the contamination and degredation of his own flesh, with all

its unprofitableness, he hates its lusts thereof with perfect hatred, because his soul cries out for holiness, and because his carnal mind is enmity against God. He views his atonement through rich and reigning grace, in the blood of the holy child Jesus, shed upon the cross for him. And now that precious life-blood which flowed from his body on Calvary, courses through his veins, and in consequence, "The life that he now lives in the flesh he lives by the faith of the Son of God who loved him and gave himself for him." His life therefore is a holy life, having holy desires, that in keeping himself unspotted from the world he may honor the gracious Master whom he serves. To mortify the deeds of his flesh is his constant aim, wherein he realizes that he is "crucified with Christ, nevertheless he lives, yet not he, but Christ liveth in him." Therefore did the psalmist pray, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Such is the prayer of every conscious sinner. And this is pure and undefiled religion, for it is continually seeking the treasures of life eternal. It is exalting a risen living Savior, and worshiping the true God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Sept. 7, 1900.

ELGIN, Ore., March 3, 1900.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—In looking through a bundle of old letters from sister Edith Eckles, formerly Hanna, I found a few that I feel like sending to the SIGNS, as I think that they will be of interest to the brethren and sisters generally, and especially so to those who were favored with her acquaintance. She was a Baptist, as all who knew her will bear witness, grounded and settled in the faith. And those who knew her will see in her letters that spirit of unworthiness so prominent in all her conversation. If it meets with your approval, brother Beebe, I would like to see these letters in the SIGNS.

Yours in gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

LOVE, Oregon, Jan. 24, 1886.

DEAR BROTHER MAYFIELD:—Your most welcome and precious letter was received with, I trust, a grateful heart. I have felt sometimes since I came here that if I could meet an Old Baptist I probably should not know how to behave with propriety, yet do you know that I cannot in dark moments say with you, that I love the brethren? I fear that it is not that love which is born of the Spirit of God. This is true however, I feel differently toward them from what I do toward others; I feel that they understand me when I speak of the deep longing after purity and holiness, yet though deep in darkness and doubt, fearing every evil, yet this winter I have also felt so deeply the goodness and longsuffering of the blessed Lord. Sometimes I have turned away from all the noise and mirth, and felt that God alone was my stay and support; sometimes the words, "His mercy endureth forever," seemed my only hope. It has been a strange experience to me, and one which I hope it will not be my lot to live over, but that our God is able to succor his people under all circumstances, there rests not the shadow of a doubt upon my mind; the doubt is only this, Am I one of that number chosen before the foundation of the earth, chosen in Christ, and preserved in him? My ignorance is so great that I feel that I know nothing as I ought. Others who hope in the mercy of God know so much more than I, they seem to

have so much more of comfort, they live nearer to the Lord, but I, what am I, that such a hope should be given me? I look upon those whom I esteem in nature, who care for none of these things, and naturally they seem to have more reason to hope than I. Yet I know the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot know them, for they are spiritually discerned. Mysterious indeed are God's ways.

I often think of our old deacon who has fallen asleep since I left home; his natural mind was gone; he seemed to have lost all except his spiritual understanding, and that was as clear and bright as on the day when he first believed. Often I have listened to him with wonder that he never made a blunder even in his language when speaking of such things. Often in the darkness and stillness of the night has his voice been heard in prayer to his God, or in thanksgiving for all his manifest mercies. How often has that precious hymn been verified in others as well as in him: "E'en down to old age all my people shall prove, my sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love." Whom he loves he loves unto the end; he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. How precious those promises are to those who feel their own deep unworthiness.

I have a hope that at some future time you will come east; you are young and strong, and judging naturally, have many years of usefulness. I am so anxious that you should meet our ministers, and that they should meet you. You will find that they stand upon the same eternal foundation upon which you rest, and preach the same doctrine for which you so earnestly contend. I desire very much to hear you preach once again.

In fellowship,

EDITH HANNA.

WALLA WALLA, Washington Ter., April 2, 1886.

MY BELOVED BROTHER MAYFIELD:—Your very precious letter came yesterday, and only the poor of the flock can know how unworthy I felt of so dear a missive, for I feel so defiled with sin, full of wounds, bruises and putrefying sores. I used to think that this body was one mass of uncleanness, and wondered how I could hope. Well I know even better now the depth of depravity in the flesh, but I have a hope that God, who is infinite in mercy, has given me to see that in myself I am nothing and lost. But O, is it not hard to feel that in yourself you can do nothing right? I feel so much more sinful than I used to be, I do things that I could not have done when I first came into the church; I cannot now weep as I could then, over my wrong doing, but often do groan in spirit with the unutterable cry to be saved from myself. More to me was the expression of your fellowship in the love of the Lord, than all the learning of the wise of the land could be. What is the wisdom of this world to the soul sick of sin? I admire talent, and am acquainted with many of the educators of the east. Sisters Tollie, Annie Jenkins and I, used when we were listening to able lecturers on education, when they would make references to being christians, and how easy it was to become such, to smile, and wish that we had on the platform Elder Beebe, or some other able minister of the New Testament, that the body of teachers who were being admonished to show their pupils the way to heaven, might hear the truth once, and know the length,

and breadth, and height of that wonderful salvation, conceived and wrought by Deity. O, the beauty and glory in the redemption of Christ.

You, precious brother, who are called to speak in his name, can tell me, who am less than the least of all saints, and the vilest of all created things, that you are ashamed to write to me because you are not a scholar. Never let the thought trouble you again; your letter gave me comfort. You do not know me, I have such fierce temptations to meet from the flesh, and the devil, that I often fear that I shall one day fall.

I was struck by an expression in one of Elder Johnson's sermons, which sister read last night: "An Arminian had told him that if the devil were dead, there would be no more praying." Poor, benighted mortal, he knew not the God that we love, and fear, and praise, and he knew not his own need of that precious salvation which is the christian's hope.

I was interested, strengthened and comforted by your sermon here, though it was much too short. Then the enemy came in, telling me of my own hatefulness, and that there was no more sacrifice for sin. Another trouble to me has been the words, "One of a city, and two of a family." All my father's family are Baptists. Then came the thought, How dare I hope that we all will be saved? And I would not have one left out for me. I think that with the apostle I could wish myself accursed from Christ for the sake of my kindred according to the flesh.

But I must not burden you more, you doubtless see the strange, willful being that I am; only one who knows the hidden evils of the heart, would think me sane.

In fellowship,

EDITH HANNA.

RAUM, Ill., Feb., 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I hereby send you the money to pay for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for one year. I have been laboring with the ability which God has given me, and have tried to impress upon the minds of the brethren, not to believe anything which would seem to attach any weakness to the great God. Thus we lived in peace, until some arose preaching that the time salvation of the children of God was conditional on their part, and that a child of God could so live, and be so holy that they would never have any chastisements. They also made war on the doctrine of the predestination of all things. They have caused more trouble than anything that has taken place in my time. If I must believe their doctrine, to be an Old School Baptist, I am not one, and never have been.

Your brother,

RICHARD FULKERSON.

[IF indeed a child of God can so live as not to receive any chastisements, it does seem strange that not one of them have ever attained to that state. At least we have never yet met one of the Lord's humble poor, who would not confess that he had sinned grievously every day of his life, and that he had often been chastised. The law of God is not fulfilled until a man has come to love God with all his heart, mind and strength, and so love him all the time. The believer desires this, but he has never yet attained to it. Because of this constant failure on our part, arises the need of the pure mind being stirred up constantly to a remembrance of our sins. Hence arises the need, and the benefit of all exhortation, and reproof, and warning. And those of spiritual mind, will desire to be reminded of their sins and weaknesses.—ED.]

EDITORIAL.

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LUKE XVI. 19–31.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Will you be so kind as to give your views through the SIGNS upon the subject found in Luke xvi. 19–31? If our Savior used this as a parable, whom do the rich man and the poor man represent?

Your brother in search of truth,

CHAS. R. COX.

MIZPAH, Ky., July 4, 1900.

REPLY.

THERE have been many expositions of this portion of the words of our Savior by many writers in the past, and several different views have from time to time been presented through the SIGNS, yet we feel like responding to this request notwithstanding. While what we may be enabled to say may be of but little profit, and may not add any light to what has already been written and said about this Scripture so many times, yet to refuse to speak or write because so much has already been said about this or any portion of the word, would shut us out from speaking or writing at all. Of one thing we feel well assured concerning all the written word, viz: no portion of it has been exhausted of its meaning, and we feel well persuaded that no part of it will ever be exhausted. It has been frequently the case with us, that portions of the word about which we have thought much, and with which we have been familiar ever since we began to read the Bible, have all at once been illuminated with new light, and rich treasures of meaning have been revealed, of which we had not had the slightest glimpse in the past. So, we doubt not, it will continue to be with all who search the Scriptures, and meditate upon them, new beauty and glory will continually appear, their fullness has never been grasped by any one, save he who inspired them. These things have been in our mind, as we have hesitated about responding to the above request.

While it is not said by the Savior that he intended this as a parable, yet we believe that most who have thought or spoken of it, so understand it; therefore it is generally spoken of as the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.

As we have just said, it is not called a parable, and also there seems to be no intimation in the connection, as to what special truth the Savior designed to set forth. In the case of most of the parables, the connection shows just what their application should be. We mention as instances of this the parables of the lost sheep, the lost piece of money, and the prodigal son. These three parables occur together in the same chapter, and their meaning is plainly declared in the opening words of that chapter, where it is said that there drew near to him all the publicans and sinners to hear him, while the Pharisees and Scribes murmured at it, saying that this man receiveth sinners and eateth with them. And the three parables that follow, grew out of this, and rebuke the Pharisees, while they justify the Savior's conduct toward the publicans and sinners. But the Scripture in Luke xvi., to which our attention has been called, if it be a parable at all, does

not seem to grow out of anything in the connection. While this is true, yet it seems plain that the blessed Redeemer intended, here as well as in all his teachings, to set forth the kingdom of God in some of its relations, and it is not doubtful in our mind that he took the things which were natural, and which were also of daily occurrence, to set forth spiritual truth. The things depicted in the parable would at once commend themselves to all that heard, as being what was common among men. There were many rich men who fared sumptuously every day, and there were many beggars who lay at their gates, and toward whom the dogs of the street seemed more thoughtful and kind than the rich men at whose doors they lay. Whether the poor man's name was Lazarus or not, at least the word signifies "one without help," "one utterly destitute." The name would apply to any one who was in such a condition.

One thing must be remembered in the consideration of any of the parables of the Lord, and in fact, in considering any of the natural figures used in the Scriptures, to set forth any truth, and that is there is always one central truth, and that none of the words of the Scriptures must be distorted so as to obscure this one central truth, intended to be set forth. When we have come to see this one thing which is meant, all else must come into subordination to it. The true meaning of many parables and illustrations in the word, has often been obscured by efforts to force a meaning upon every word and sentence used in presenting the parable. For instance, the one thought uppermost in the parable of the "Prodigal son" is to rebuke the Pharisees who murmured because the Master received sinners and did eat with them. It is true other lessons may be drawn from this wonderful parable, but if so, all must be in subordination to the first and main thought, and the same is true of all other parables as well. It is right to give each word its due force, but always in harmony with the one chief thought, sought to be presented.

With these general remarks we will try to present what it seems to us is most likely to be the intent of the Savior in this parable. It seems to us that by the rich man here is meant the rich, pharisaic, self-satisfied Jewish people under the former covenant, and by the poor man is meant those among the Gentiles who were hungering after righteousness, and who sought to find that which would satisfy their hunger at the door of that Jewish house, but to whom nothing that could satisfy their desire was ministered. The poor beggar does not mean to illustrate all the Gentile peoples, because they were not all asking alms at the door of that temple, but there were some who were spiritual among them, and who could not mingle with the idolatry and human philosophy of the heathen, and who were searching for righteousness. To them there came more of pity and help from those who were accounted as dogs, by the self-righteous Jew, than from those who vaunted themselves with their privileges, and counted themselves rich and increased in goods. The rich man represents that one who was satisfied with his condition, and had no thought of pity for others who were without. The parable does not represent him as directly the enemy of Lazarus, but simply utterly careless and indifferent to him. It is written of such an one that he despised others. This rich man went forth under that old covenant rejoicing in himself, satisfied with that righteousness which was of the law, and

which was made up of the observance of rituals, and forms, and sacrifices, and days, and feasts, and the paying of tithes. What had he to be dissatisfied with? He had done all that was commanded of him in the law; but he had not learned what this meant, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." And again, he had no conception of what the words signified, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit." There was no room for understanding any of these deep, spiritual truths, while he was satisfied with himself, and as a consequence despised others. It is the picture, drawn by the hand of the Master, of this man, that he trusted in himself that he was righteous, and despised others; he trusted in himself, and not in God; he was righteous, and had no need for mercy, and pity, and forgiveness; he was proud, and looked down upon those who had not attained to such heights of goodness as himself. It could not be otherwise with him. It never can be otherwise with him whose righteousness is of himself. He who receives what he has as a tribute to his superior worth, must be proud; he will look God himself in the face and claim his reward; he will despise his fellow men who have not done the things which he has done. How cruel is this religion, it has no pity or mercy in it. He who needs no pity or mercy for himself, need not be expected to feel any toward others. If they, he says, will obtain as high a seat as I have done, in the kingdom, let them do as I have done. Even a believer who has known what it is to need mercy, and who has obtained it, if left to himself for a moment will begin to think that his faithfulness and his obedience count for something in the matter of his blessings. When this idea gets into his head and heart, he also will begin by despising others; he will say to those who are so poor that they have no abiding place, If you will only be as faithful and industrious as I have been, you will fare as well, and will no longer wear the rags of poverty; you can have all the religion that you live for. If I am now happy and possessed of a good conscience, while you are unhappy, and of a troubled conscience, it is all because I have been faithful while you have not. The dogs are more kind to this poor man than such an one. To this beggar such words are as sharp swords.

This is the rich man under the old covenant, and this is the attitude which he occupied toward all that were not righteous as himself.

But now all is changed, a new covenant has been ushered in; the Savior presents this passing away of the old, and this coming in of the new covenant, under the illustration of passing out of this natural world, into that which is beyond. Now there is nothing for the man whose whole spirit is to exalt self and be great in the kingdom. The spirit of this new kingdom is the spirit of a little child. To enter it disciples must be converted from the old legal thoughts and feelings. There is no room here for any self-righteousness, here grace, and grace alone, reigns. Under the old legal covenant these who were righteous in themselves had their good things, now the poor in spirit have theirs; here there is no room for boasting, all that a man does upon the former legal principles counts here for nothing. By all that he has done he cannot enter here, his riches will not purchase him one drop of the cooling water of spiritual blessing and life. The man who has nothing but his riches of self-righteousness, cannot here find a single blessing. Those who do enter

here and abide, find their rest solely upon the ground of the mercy of God. They found fault with the Savior because he did not make any account of their righteousness; he did eat with beggars and with sinners. To them he came, and they must so feel it as grace from him. If he had received pharisees and eaten with them, as he did the others, they at once would have claimed it as a tribute to their superior merit. In his kingdom the lame, the halt, the blind, the poor, the sick, the defiled with leprosy, are received; all these would have defiled the pharisee.

We understand the conversation recorded in the parable between the rich man in torment, and Abraham with Lazarus in his bosom, to be used to simply emphasize the contrast between that which was past, and that which is now to be seen in the spiritual kingdom of God. Truly a great gulf is fixed between him who knows no righteousness but his own, and who feels no need of any other, and him who having none of his own, rejoices in sovereign mercy. Men do not share the blessings of the new covenant because they have done good; they share these blessings because God will save beggars to the praise of his grace. Lazarus is where he is, not because he was rich in good works, but because he has been carried there by the angels of God. Here sovereign mercy reigns; Lazarus cannot boast, he does not talk with the rich man in his outcast condition, but Abraham does, and Abraham presents, as we do not doubt, the new covenant with its voice of mercy and grace, to the poor and needy, but it has no comforting word for the man who trusts in himself that he is righteous. He has had his good things, things which he counted good, and which satisfied and flattered him, and because they flattered him he thought them good. Now the things which are for the poor Lazarus are not for him, and he could not receive them, were they to be set before him. Even if the gospel were an *offer* of salvation, he has no place for it in his heart. There is a great gulf fixed, *fixed* between him who is righteous in himself, and him who is righteous in Christ alone. One cannot cross from one to the other, what will satisfy one will not satisfy the other. There is no bread in the rich man's house for Lazarus, and there is no water in the home of Lazarus for the rich man now. No rich man, rich in his righteousness, can enter here; his riches bar him out. When God shall take such an one and make him poor, then he finds a home with all who are thus poor; to them the new covenant opens wide its doors, to them it gives all its blessings.

One other great truth is taught in this parable, to which we will allude and then close. It is this, those who are satisfied with the riches of the old covenant, who are righteous in themselves, will not believe anything to the contrary, though one should rise from the dead. So, in the parable, Abraham is represented as saying this. In the case of the Jews as a nation, this was literally fulfilled when Jesus arose from the dead, they did not believe. Jesus teaches here that no miracle, no wonder, no teaching from any prophet or teacher, though his teaching be accompanied with all signs and wonders, can beget any love in an unrenewed heart for any righteousness save its own. Unregenerate religionists cannot, CANNOT, believe the gospel news of free mercy and grace, to such it must always remain a stumbling-block, they can have no desire and no use for pure, spiritual joys. Here is a gulf of unbelief which they

cannot pass. Only divine grace can beget in any heart, love for the things which that heart loves not. Yea, such as are thus dead in sin, and in love with their own righteousness, cannot even understand what imputed righteousness, and mercy, and love, and grace mean. Even the resurrection of the Savior wrought no change in the hardness and impenitence of those who had before hated him and his doctrine. That which was true then is also true now.

We have just sketched what seems to us to be the general meaning of this parable, it is but a sketch. No one can realize how inadequately we have here presented the matter, more than we do, but we will leave these reflections for the consideration of brother Cox, and of all who may read them. May God lead all our minds into the rich treasures of the truth. C.

PLEASE BE SURE

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

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EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

FAITH.

There is perhaps at the present day as much said about Faith, and the term is as frequently used in modern theology as any other word used in our version of the Scriptures, but it is generally used in a sense entirely foreign to that of its legitimate scriptural meaning. Webster, guided undoubtedly by the decisions of learned (so called) Doctors of Divinity, defines the word thus: "Belief; the assent of the mind to the truth of what is declared by another; the assent of the mind to the truth of a proposition advanced by another; belief, on probable evidence. And, in theology, the assent of the mind or understanding to the truth of what God has revealed. Evangelical, or justifying, or saving Faith, is the assent of the mind to the truth of divine revelation, on the authority of God's testimony, accompanied with a cordial assent of the will, or approbation of the heart," &c. And this is about the view which is entertained by a very large majority of the religionists of the present day. No idea seems to be entertained by Webster, nor by the learned theologians, from whom he borrows his theory, that the mind of man is a carnal or fleshly mind, that it is at enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed, can be. Indeed, the prevailing doctrine of all will-worshipers, and carnal religionists, is that regeneration, the new birth, and all that is involved in the christian experience, is only to give some new impulse to our old carnal faculties, a new direction to the old carnal mind, and a new inclination and direction to the affections and lusts of the flesh. To be

born again, in their estimation is, as Watts says, to

> "New model all the carnal mind,
> And form the man afresh."

This is a fundamental error comprising the ground of difference between the religion which is of the world, and that which is of God. The worldly system, supposing that man is a free agent, possessing all requisite power to will and to do that which is necessary and indispensable to commend him to the favor of God, and to secure immortal glory beyond the grave, labors to influence the carnal or natural mind by moral suasion, that it would be advantageous and profitable to yield assent to such theories as tradition points out as pious, and calculated to secure the favor of God. The selfish inclinations of the unrenewed heart are appealed to, and such incentives, motives and allurements are presented, as the carnal mind can appreciate, to draw the corrupt, depraved, deceitful and desperately wicked propensities and imaginations of the mind into a new channel, without any radical change or implantation of any new principle. Under this delusion, Infant and Sunday Schools, Bible classes, and all the machinery to them belonging, are employed to bend the twig the way they wish the tree to grow, without observing that the nature and character of the twig is in no wise changed by such restraints; without heeding the immutable standard set up by Christ himself: First make the tree good, and the fruit will be good. A twig growing out of a corrupt tree will partake of the corruption of that tree, incline or bend it which ever way we may. In all the Scribes, Pharisees and hypocrites detected and rebuked by our Lord, we have exemplifications of the carnal mind religionized by traditional influences. The influence may multiply converts to Judaism, or any other workmongrel religious persuasion, and it is employed with the same results at the present time, as when the self-righteous pharisees compassed sea and land to make proselytes to their faith. Now if the assent of the natural mind of man to the force of testimony is the faith which accompanies salvation, why is it so called? What new principle does such an assent develop? Had not the natural, carnal, depraved mind of man in its most degraded condition the requisite faculty to yield an assent to any demonstrated proposition, set home by the force of overwhelming testimony? This theory, if it can be established, will be of great service to the whole Arminian world, because it calls for no more grace now to make a christian, than was formerly required to make a Jewish proselyte.

But let us not be deceived, God is not mocked; however plausible or palatable this theory may be in the estimation of men, it cannot stand the test of eternal truth. The Scriptures are regarded by us as they have always been by the church of God, as an infallible standard of our faith, both as to faith as a vital principle in the hearts of God's people, and the doctrine of the gospel embraced and comprehended by that faith. Then let us turn to the law and to the testimony, for if any speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. The Scriptures instead of representing faith as a creature of ours, expressly define it to be the gift of God. Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, that we should believe on him. We are bound to give thanks unto God always for you, brethren, beloved of God, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctifica-

tion of the Spirit and belief of the truth. For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. And we are not only assured that faith is not of ourselves, but it is the gift of God, but we are also told that Jesus Christ is both the author and the finisher of faith which is unto life. Furthermore, we are informed that saving faith is the faith of the Son of God; it cannot, therefore, be an assent of the natural mind. Paul says, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved me and given himself for me." It is also distinguished from all other kinds of faith as that faith which is of the operation of God.

The inspired Paul, having analyzed poor, fallen, human nature, sums up its legitimate productions in striking contrast with the fruits of the Spirit: "Now, the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revilings, and such like." That is, all the other emanations from the flesh are like those above specified, and faith is not found among them. "But," he continues, "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."—Gal. v. 19–23. Here we find gospel faith enumerated among the fruits of the Spirit, and in direct opposition to the works of the flesh.

Another inspired apostle, treating on the origin and power of the gospel faith, informs us that it is born of God, and that it overcomes the world. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."—1 John v. 4. If a faith originating in us, or born of the flesh, could overcome the world, it would show that the world is not equal to itself, that it contained in itself, and of itself, a power superior to, and capable of overcoming itself. This faith, being born of God, must be animated by the life and immortality and power of God. It is vital, but its vitality is of God, and not of the creature, hence it can and does overcome the world. The eleventh chapter to the Hebrews presents us with many examples of its power to overcome the world. After many illustrious examples of the power of faith in the patriarchs and prophets, says, "And what shall I more say? for time would fail me to tell of Gideon and of Barak, and of Samson, and Jephthae, of David also, and Samuel, and of all the prophets, who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of the fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens, women received their dead raised to life again; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheep skins and goat skins; being destitute, afflicted and tormented. Now this faith, and all its power, is in this very connection, ascribed to our Lord Jesus Christ. (Heb. xii. 2.)

As the faith which is peculiar to the

children of God, is in all respects essentially different from the faith of men and of devils in regard to its origin, its nature, its vitality and its power, so it is equally distinct from theirs in all its workings, operations, perceptions and associations.

That of men is perfectly manageable by them, and they boast that they can exercise it at their pleasure; and why should they not? If they have given it being, they ought of course to be able to control it, and to have much, little, or none of it, as they please. But the faith of God's elect, being born of God, and his special gift, has a divine power over his children in whom its divine power is developed; they cannot exercise it, but they are exercised by it. That faith which is of the flesh, works by fear, and corrupts its possessors with all manner of delusion, causing them to believe a lie, and to suffer the consequences of their delusion, but that faith which is born of God, works by love, and purifies the soul, or him who is the happy recipient of it, for it enables him to discriminate between truth and error. Hence while the Arminian will-worshiper requires the preaching of terror, wrath, fire, brimstone, and such as is calculated to excite the carnal passions of the flesh, and produce fear and terror, the very melody of heaven, breathed forth by the Spirit of the gospel, and the melting strains of the gospel, which set forth the eternal, immutable, and transforming love of God, calls forth the active workings of the faith of the saints. And while the faith of the world inflates the pride of those who are under its influence, leading them to boast of their works, their piety, their zeal, and their benevolence, that faith which is of God, leads his children to worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Jesus Christ, and to have no confidence in the flesh. The perceptive qualities are equally dissimilar. The faith of the flesh looks for signs, like the Jews, and to seek after wisdom, like the Greeks; but that which is of God, is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, and it qualifies them to look not on the things which are seen, which are temporal, but directs them to the things which are not seen, which are eternal. It qualifies them to see the kingdom of God, and makes them experimentally familiar with the things of the Spirit, which are hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes.

The faith which is of the world has its associations with the theories, doctrines and commandments of men, the delusions, heresies, idolatry and spiritual wickedness of high places; it gives it possessors a place with the enemies of the cause of God and truth, and identifies them with those who stoned the prophets, crucified the Son of God, and slaughtered the apostles of the Lamb of God; holding then their place under the delusion that they ought to do many things contrary to Jesus of Nazareth, and that they do God service when they persecute his people and oppose his truth. On the other hand the faith of the gospel brings those who are born of God unto the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God. They have one Lord, one faith and one baptism; they are but one body, having one Spirit, even as they are all called in one hope of their calling. The faith of Christ in his people, is inseparably associated with all the other fruits of the Spirit, as love, joy, peace, long-suffering, &c., and the end of this faith is the salvation of our souls. So far is this faith from receiving any support from the flesh, it is constantly opposed by the flesh and every power and faculty of the flesh, but as it overcomes the world, it shall ultimately triumph over all our cor-

ruption, doubts, fears, unbelief, and over sin and death, and bear the saints away from every opposition, to that divine abode in glory where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., February 15, 1858.

WE are in receipt of a copy of Elder David Bartley's new book, entitled, "Priesthood of the Son of God." It is executed in handsome style, and the author's name is sufficient guarantee that it is well written, and as far as we are able to judge, it is sound and instructive reading for all who love the truth.

The subjects embraced are as follows, viz:

Introduction.

Chapter 1.—The Necessity of a Priesthood.

Chapter 2.—The Priesthood of Aaron.

Chapter 3.—"God sent forth his Son."

Chapter 4.—Our Brother High Priest.

Chapter 5.—Christ's Priestly Offering.

Chapter 6.—Christ's Intercession within the veil.

Chapter 7.—The Order of Christ's Priesthood.

Chapter 8.—Christ's Better Testament.

Chapter 9.—Christ the Prophet-Priest-King.

Chapter 10.—The People of Christ's Priesthood.

Chapter 11.—Kings and Priests unto God.

Chapter 12.—The Glorified Saints.

Conclusion.—The sacrifices of the Royal Priesthood.

The book will be sent prepaid on receipt of following prices: One copy, 60 cents; two copies, $1.00; six copies, $2.70; twelve copies, $5.00. Address,

ELDER DAVID BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Indiana.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association convened with the church at South Gardiner, Maine, Sept. 5th, 6th and 7th, 1900, to the churches composing the same.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—By the overruling hand of that God that changes not, but orders all things after the counsel of his own will, and controls the circling years, the time appointed for our association has arrived, and according to former custom we send you this our annual epistle.

We have great reason for thankfulness to Israel's God that we have been kept by his power, and preserved through another year, and that he has kept us from falling into the snares of those who lie in wait to deceive, nor left us to go in the way that seemeth right unto man, but has given unto us grace and faith by which we have been enabled to acknowledge Jesus as our King and Husband. We have no desire for any of the merchandise of Babylon, the mother of harlots, and they appear to be astonished that we do not spend our money for the beautiful things which they display, but, dear brethren, we have no desire for their merchandise, we have no use for them, there is no place for them in the kingdom of our God.

We have been taught by the law that God has put in our hearts, that the Lord our God is one God, and that he is the Creator of all things, and that he is a jealous God, and will not give his glory to another, neither his praise to graven images. He says, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Does he ask aid of any to carry on his work, and accomplish his purposes? He says, The word that goeth forth out of my mouth, it shall not return unto me void, but it

shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. Is not this the God of Israel, the Savior of his people? Has not he redeemed Israel? Has not he, by his own blood, entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for them, when there was no eye to pity, and no arm to save? His own arm brought salvation, he laid help on one that is mighty and able to save even to the uttermost. Did not he give to this mighty one power over all flesh, to give eternal life to as many as the Father gave him? My dear brethren, we have no use for the idol gods of the will-worshipers of this world. Is not our God in the heavens? Has not he done whatsoever he pleased?

The people of God are a peculiar people, and they have a peculiar mark put upon them, and that mark is a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. Are not they the sheep of God's pasture? Does not Jesus say, My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and none shall pluck them out of my hand? We thank God, and rejoice that he has a remnant according to the election of grace, who will have no other God to rule over them, who will not follow the voice of strangers. It does certainly appear in this dark and evil day that there is but a small remnant that has not bowed the knee to the image of Baal, a feeble few in themselves, but a mighty host when marshalled under the banner of the Lord of lords, and King of kings. The religionists of this world wonder, and look with contempt upon our little band, and receive our pretensions of being the church of the living God, with ridicule. Is not the church, the Zion of our God, to-day to be known by the same distinguishing features which marked her more than eighteen hundred years ago? Were not the immediate disciples of our Lord unlearned and ignorant men? Was not the church then composed of a little handful of fishermen, taxgatherers, publicans, &c., chosen by its great Head from among the multitudes of the learned ministry of the Jewish synagogues, princes, rulers and kings? and were not these same apostles of the Lamb seated upon the twelve thrones which they now occupy, judging the twelve tribes of spiritual Israel? Has not Christ, through one of these apostles declared, God has chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise? Did not our dear Redeemer thank his Father that he had hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes? Do we not find now, as then, this people a sect everywhere spoken against, whom the world knoweth not, because it knew him not, whose God is the Lord? They are strangers and pilgrims on the earth, their only trust is in the mighty God of Jacob, and they have no confidence in the flesh; they ascribe glory, and honor, and might, and dominion, unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb forever. Who contends that his is the only name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved? Who takes the word of truth as their only rule of faith and practice, and will not give place to the notions or teachings of men? Are not these the only people found contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, that salvation is of the Lord from first to last, without ifs, buts or conditions, of any sort? Are not these some of the characteristic features of the bride, the Lamb's wife? The name of her husband is to her above every name, she delights

to do him honor, she delights to sound his praise to earth's remotest bounds, the exaltation of her Lord is her only ambition, she knows that she owes everything to him. When she was ten thousand talents in debt, and had nothing to pay, he became her Surety, and paid the debt for her; he found her in a waste howling wilderness, he led her about and instructed her, and kept her as the apple of his eye; he found her clothed in filthy rags of her own righteousness, he removed them, and put upon her his own robes, clean and white, without spot or stain; he found her under the law and under its curse, deserving eternal banishment from his presence, dead in trespasses and sins, with no hope and without God in the world, he came where she was, he lifted the beggar from the dunghill, he kept the law for her, he came under its curse for her, he died for her sins, and rose again for her justification, he brought life and immortality to light for her, and is now formed in her the hope of glory; he is now on the right hand of the majesty on high, and maketh intercession for her; he has become the end of the law for righteousness to her, he has purchased her with his own blood; he calls her by his name, whereby she shall be called the Lord our righteousness. She now, through him, defies all her enemies, and demands, Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, and is seated at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for her. She also has the assurance from him that, Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate her from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus her Lord. He has treasured up in his inexhaustible storehouse of grace, ample supplies for all her needs; he also assures her that he will abundantly bless her provisions, and satisfy her poor with bread. To him she is the fairest among women, there is no spot in her; she does not need the gaudy tinselry of the daughters of Babylon to add to her charms. He has clothed her in his own robes of royalty, and has crowned her with a diadem of glory, which shall never fade away.

Again, dear brethren, we ask, Where do we find these marks of the church of the living God outside of the little handful of almost unknown Old School Baptists? We venture the assertion, nowhere. We do not write this unto you boastingly, for what have ye that ye did not receive? Were we not the children of wrath even as others, and did not the same spirit work in us that now worketh in the children of disobedience? Seeing, brethren, that these things are true, what manner of persons ought ye to be? As we have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so may we walk in him. We exhort you to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free, gird on the whole armor of God, fight manfully the good fight of faith, laying hold upon the hope which is set before you, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast.

If you are weak, and your members are few, know that he who is for you is more than all they who can be against you; endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Be of one mind, live in peace, and may the God of peace be with you, and bless you with the rich and abundant blessings of his everlasting kingdom.

Your Minutes and messengers have been received, and your ministers have come to us laden with the glorious gospel of the Son of God, and we have been made to rejoice in the truth, and also in seeing the faces of the brethren and sisters. We desire a continuance of your correspondence, and we hope to see the faces of your messengers with us again on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1901. Our Association is appointed to be held with the Bowdoinham Church, next year.

J. H. LOWELL, Clerk.

The messengers of the various churches composing the Licking Association of Primitive Baptists, in Association assembled with the Little Flock Church, Anderson County, Kentucky, to the members of said churches send greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—We do not address you as a body having authority over you, to prescribe some rule of action, or some policy of government, but only as brethren with a common hope, and like precious faith; a hope and a faith in a crucified and risen Redeemer; as brethren bound together by the strong tie of christian fellowship, which is the result of that like common hope and precious faith. We have met in association, not for the purposes of government, but for worship, praise and fellowship; to worship, adore and praise God the Father, and God the Son, for giving us, poor sinners that we are, such a precious faith, and such a glorious hope, and prompting us with a desire for the love and fellowship of the brethren.

These annual reunions are pleasant and refreshing seasons in the presence of the Lord, but as each season comes and goes, we are reminded that less of them remain for us here on earth, that soon we will be called to bid farewell to these earthly scenes, and if we are not deceived in our hope, to meet the redeemed around the throne of God, and engage in his praise forever. To the natural mind this change is a sad thought, but to the spiritual mind it is the expectation of a glorious deliverance.

We have made no new discoveries, no new progress in theology, about which to write you. We can tell you only the same old story of our own sins, and Christ's righteousness. The Holy One has said, "I am God, and change not," and as we believe, and the experience of the Lord's people and the Scriptures teach, that there is but one theological school, and that is God's, and there is but one teacher in this school, and that is God himself. And as all his children are taught in this school, no new doctrine or faith is taught or learned. But the doctrine and faith believed in by righteous Abel, the early patriarch, and the holy prophets, and which sustained them amid the trials and conflicts of their earthly pilgrimage, is precisely the same doctrine believed in by God's people today, and is the same faith which sustains them amid all their trials now. "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." And again, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." And blessed be God, he is not only the only teacher in his school, but he gives his children the desire to go, and he brings and draws them to it, for, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." So we have the comforting assu-

rance that all who are taught of God, shall hear and learn, and shall be drawn, and come to Jesus.

Still these children are so refractory and rebellious, even with the Holy One as their teacher, that he is compelled to chastise them, and strange as it may seem to the ungodly, to the so called religious world, it is mainly by chastisement, and that, too, often sore and grievous, God's children are drawn to him, and made humble and willing to be taught by him, while by experience we know it is grievous to the flesh, yet it is really the best evidence of our heavenly Father's love, though at the time we may not be able to realize it, for he says, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." And while the obedience of an orderly walk is the duty of the christian, yet so strong is this carnal nature, and so prone are we to go astray, that we are only kept in the way of the christian, and made afraid to depart from it, by the severest chastisement of God, if the child is exercised thereby.

This is one of the principal means of grace by which the erring one is brought back to the path of duty, when he has gone astray, humbled and made repentant and willing to submit to the ways of God.

Much has been said of late of obedience, and of the reward of obedience, but we believe the obedience of the christian life is as much of the grace of God, as is his hope in Christ, first given, for we are kept by the power of God, and thank God for that, for if we were not so kept, but left to ourselves, to depend upon our own power to obey, we would have a poor prospect of seeing his face in peace.

As we said in the outset, we have no new doctrine, no new theology to write, and we have written nothing new, but the same old story of our own sin, and God's love and mercy, and Christ's righteousness, the sinner's hope, which story will be told, and retold, as long as God has a people on the earth, and which will be the triumphant song of that people when they have exchanged these earthly tabernacles for mansions in their Father's house.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.
J. T. McCOUN, Clerk.
T. J. RATLIFF, Assistant Clerk.

The Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Second Church of Roxbury, Roxbury, Delaware County, New York, September 12th and 13th, 1900, to the several churches of which she is composed, sends greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED FOR THE TRUTH'S SAKE:—As we are privileged to address you with this annual epistle, or Circular Letter, we would be conscious of the fact that we owe all to the goodness and mercy of a covenant-keeping God, who has dealt so bountifully with us as an Association that we should be favored with the fellowship of the saints at large, and to enjoy a goodly degree of peace among ourselves. Therefore with a sense of where our strength lies, we will talk to you on the subject of the love of God shed abroad in the heart, and the order that grows out of it. We are informed in the Scriptures that God is love, and that he that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. This substantiates the words of Jesus, "My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." Thus

we see the glory of God centering in his Son Jesus Christ who dwelt in his bosom as Christ before the world was formed. And then his delights were with the sons of men. This was the everlasting love of God and which is bestowed on the children of men that they should be called the sons of God. And as drawn by the cords of his loving-kindness, the glory of God is reflected in the face of Jesus Christ, within the heart of poor, sinful worms of the dust, whom he has loved with an everlasting love, and must with loving-kindness draw. Thus the calling is a holy calling, and not according to the works of the creature, but according to God's own purpose and grace that was given them in Christ before the foundation of the world. For Christ was verily foreordained before the foundation of the world, but manifest in these last times for them who do believe in God, who is love, and has shed that which he is to his people abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to them. Therefore they love him because he first loved them, and gave himself for them, and because of this wonderful love, hope springs up in their hearts, and with it comes the desire to keep the commands of Jesus. Therefore out of the love of God in the heart grows every christian grace, because of its heavenly nature, proving one particular thing as to the truth, if we love him that begets we will also love them that are begotten of him. It also raises an important question. If we love not our brother whom we have seen, how can we love God whom we have not seen? And it also presents an obstacle in our way that we cannot easily overcome, by bringing to our view the fact, if we hate our brother, we are murderers, and no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. And in another sense the hating our brother shows us to be abiding in darkness, and not seeing the way we take, because the darkness hath blinded our eyes. A view of the love of God, contrasted with the fruit of the flesh, no doubt led the wise man to say proverbially, "A dinner of herbs where love is, is better than a stalled ox and hatred therewith." Remembering then our condition as sinners saved by grace, we have still a carnal or fleshly body which is unchanged by the work of the new birth. As fleshly minded we are dead, so far as possessing any power or ability to give ourselves life or activity spiritually, yet we are required to keep our body under, to put off the old man with his affections and lusts and to put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, and this is done in putting on the Lord Jesus Christ, and making no provisions for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof; in letting God be true, though every man a liar; in worshiping God who is a Spirit; in rejoicing in Jesus Christ and having no confidence in the flesh, &c., proving what we profess to believe, that if God be for us, there is none can be against us to do us harm. This, dear brethren, will naturally call forth the enmity of the world in unbelief, whose friendship we cannot enjoy to profit, because the friendship of the world is enmity with God. Therefore let us watch and be sober, knowing that our adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion goeth about seeking whom he may devour. If we are risen with Christ from the just demands of a holy law, from which there could be no escape only as he has become our hiding-place, or munition of rocks, let us seek those things that are above the law's demand upon us, which are at the right hand of God, where Christ sitteth, which is in the church of

the first born, which is the ground and pillar of the truth. If the love of God actuates us let us show our faith by our works, and let our love be without dissimulation. Abhorring that which is evil; and cleaving to that which is good; enduring hardness as good soldiers, for the sake of Jesus; fighting manfully the good fight of faith, quitting ourselves like men; proving what is that good and acceptable will of God in us, and work our own salvation as our God has wrought in us to will and do, and certainly as no lie is of the truth, we will follow after Christ by the Spirit's teaching, for it never teaches a perverse way.

May it be our ultimate object to glorify our God in our body and spirit, which are his. So as we live in the Spirit let us walk in the Spirit. For this is no new commandment, but that we heard in the beginning of our experience of this love shed abroad in our hearts, directing us to the Lamb of God that took away the sin of the world. Therefore beloved, live in peace and the God of love and peace shall be with you. Letting envy alone, which will punish itself, avenge not yourselves, dearly beloved, for vengeance belongs to me, saith the Lord; I will repay. And surely it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, for our God is a consuming fire, a fire by which all our works will be tried of what sort they are. May we therefore, dear brethren and sisters, as churches composing the Roxbury Association, who are but a feeble band at most, let our light shine by our desire to walk in the truth, and love each other for the truth's sake, knowing that we owe all to the God of our salvation, whose guardian care has been over us.

J. D. HUBBELL, Moderator.

WILLIAM BALLARD, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Licking Association of Old School Baptists, when convened with the church at Little Flock, Anderson Co., Ky., to corresponding associations.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We desire again to express our love and fellowship for you and all the household of faith and order. Almighty God, who rules over all, and who works all things together for good to them that love the Lord, has, we trust, brought us together again, and has made us feel that we sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. By the power of that love shed abroad in our hearts we are made to rejoice together when the gospel, the glad tidings, are proclaimed to the weary and heavy laden.

Your messengers and ministers have declared what we trust we have learned in our experience, that salvation is of the Lord, that there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. When his doctrine drops as the rain, and his speech distills as the dew, his people are comforted and refreshed, and learn again that we must grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. We learn again and again the truth of the Scripture, He knoweth our frame, he remembereth we are dust, and so pitying our infirmities gives us strength and comfort according to our great need. When full of doubts he speaks in our hearts saying, Be not faithless but believing. We are glad that he is the only Mediator, for man is too thoughtless and limited in knowledge to know our need. So we trust, as ever, in a covenant-keeping God, who puts his law in our hearts and blesses so abundantly.

In this, our annual meeting, the question asked by the wise men of old,

"Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" has been answered again in our hearts, as one of our ministers so beautifully expressed it, "The star of hope has led us to where the young child lay." May we and all the church of God be made willing to pour out our richest treasures, and lay all our service at the feet of him who hath called us out of darkness into his wonderful light. We still hope that he who has kept us hitherto will keep us all our journey through.

Hoping to still have a continuance of your correspondence and fellowship, and declaring again our love and fellowship for you, we desire to say that we have an abiding faith that his everlasting arms are underneath. God give us all grace to serve acceptably, and remind you and all the elect of God that nothing can separate us from that great love. We have met, yea, have been brought together, in peace, and may the God of peace keep us all, is our prayer.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.
J. T. McCOUN, Clerk.
T. J. RATLIFF, Assistant Clerk.

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Second Church of Roxbury, Delaware County, New York, September 12th and 13th, 1900, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends christian love and fellowship.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—It is through the goodness and mercy of our God that we are yet numbered with the living, and are enabled to welcome your messengers with us once more. Our hearts have been made to rejoice in hearing your ministers preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, as the way, the truth and the life. Now brethren, we desire a continuation of your correspondence by your messengers and Minutes.

Our next meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with our sister church, Olive & Hurley, at Olive, Ulster County, New York, on the second Wednesday and Thursday in September, 1901, commencing at ten o'clock the first day.

J. D. HUBBELL, Moderator.
WILLIAM BALLARD, Clerk.

POETRY.

EVER LEAD ME.

(By Mrs. Peter Allison.)

LEAD me gently, dearest Savior,
As a Shepherd of the fold,
For without thee I am helpless,
And without thee I grow cold.

For without the fold there's danger
Of being broken, and being torn,
And being shaken, with the tempest
Of the winter's chilling storm.

With the spring we feel a nearness,
And a warmth within the sun,
To our heavenly Father's blessings,
And the work that he begun.

In the summer comes the harvest,
With its sheaves of golden grain,
And we feel then to have plenty,
And that wondrous is our gain.

Autumn comes with broken tempest,
Sometimes low and sometimes high,
Sometimes doubting, sometimes fearing,
If the Lord was ever nigh.

Then if winter comes with sadness,
We are broken in despair,
Feeling that the cruel tempest
Will forever leave us bare.

Jesus comes with loving-kindness,
As a Shepherd from the fold,
Bringing in the poor and helpless
From the chilling winds and cold.

With his loving arm around us
We can bear the coldest blast,
And the chilling winds of winter
Will be echoes of the past.

He will keep his arm around us,
And his love will hold us fast,
Ever leading, ever guiding,
Ever caring to the last.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—Jan. 4th, 1900, at the home of his parents, Southampton, Pa., my dear brother, **Alfred Markley Mann**, aged 21 years. He was the only son of Isaac K. and Matilda Mann, and a grandson of the late George W. and Matilda C. Duffield.

The funeral services were held at the Southampton meeting-house on Monday, Jan. 8th. After singing by the choir, "Asleep in Jesus," Elder S. H. Durand read the twenty-third and forty-sixth Psalms, then addressed the family and friends from John iii. 16, by request. At the conclusion of the service a young friend sung, "In that city," a favorite hymn.

We believe Alfred died in the Old School Baptist faith. Although he had made no profession, he attended the services frequently, both here and in Philadelphia. We knew he had been praying and reading his Bible daily for the last two years, and during the four and one-half months of his last illness we believe our dear Lord and Savior finished the work of grace in his heart. Elder Durand, and all the members of his family, frequently called to see Alfred; he greatly enjoyed seeing them and listening to the conversation, although he could say very little because of his constant coughing. He was very patient all through his long illness. Brother thought he would recover his health until about two weeks before he passed away. Then he felt that his stay with us would soon be over. He often said he had no fear of death, and we know he was anxious to leave this world for his home on high. His prospects were of the brightest, and he had expected to be married in the spring to a very estimable young lady, yet he was so submissive to God's will he felt no regret that the ties of this world must be severed. One day he asked, "If it is God's will to take me, are all of you willing to give me up?" When his friend was crying he said, "Do not cry," and when she asked why, he replied, "Don't you know it is God's will?" The morning he died he said to my mother on awakening, "It is all right, mamma, I want to go. Do not grieve for me." Later in the morning he prayed that God might comfort us, and that we might "all meet around that great white throne." Often, when suffering intensely, he would pray, "Father, help me," and "Jesus, come take me;" then, "If it is thy will to leave me a little while longer, make me patient and willing to submit." Once mamma said, "If I only could do something to relieve you," and he answered, "None but God can do that." He was conscious and knew all to the very last. Just before the end came he looked at each one, then said, "I must be going now," just as calmly as though it were for a day or an hour. A beautiful smile rested on his face, he saw what we could not see. He went to sleep so peacefully and so sweetly we could not believe he had gone. He leaves a father, mother, sister, and a wide circle of friends and acquaintances to mourn their loss. Our dear mother has been in delicate health for years, but was enabled through the sustaining power of our Lord to be with him day and night all through his illness, and to endure the parting with a dear son whose loving care and tender thoughtfulness was ever for her. There is a void that will always remain, but we have the bright hope of meeting him some day. He goes from us so sweetly, so full of gentleness and consideration for all about him. It is a source of supreme comfort to us to know he was so ready to obey the summons to come up into the higher life. May we, when our Savior calls, be as ready and willing to go as he.

IDA V. D. MANN.

MY dear father, **Eli Bretz**, the subject of this notice, was born Sept. 29th, 1822, in Fairfield Co., Ohio, and departed this life May 6th, 1900, being nearly 78 years of age. He was a son of Conrad and Susanah Bretz, moving with his parents from Fairfield to Wyandot County in his eleventh year. In his twenty-ninth year he was married to Elizabeth Seitz, a daughter of Elder Lewis Seitz, Sr. This union was blessed with ten children, of whom seven survive him. After a hard day's work he retired April 26th, seemingly as well as usual. At 3 o'clock the next morning mother was shocked to find him on the floor, near the bedside, unconscious in a pool of blood. The family physician was summoned, who informed us it was a fatal case of paralysis. Everything was done that kind hands could do, but to no purpose. He fully realized at times, but could only utter a few words we could understand. He moaned nearly all the time, and when asked what was the trouble, he answered every time, "I want to go home." The last few days he was with us his speech seemed to be gone. He would take his left hand and point up to that home he had told us so often he wanted to go to. He entertained a hope years before offering himself to the church. When asked what hindered him? he would always plead unworthiness. He was baptized by Elder L. B. Sherwood, then pastor of the church, in the year 1881. He knew when church meeting day came, and was there if not providentially hindered.

Elder Dore preached a very comforting sermon from the words, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."—John xi. 25. After which his remains were borne to their final resting-place, by his three sons, near by the house where he loved to attend meeting. He was like Ruth, he wanted to live with and die with God's people, and be buried with them. His disposition was one worthy of example. Being meek, yet firm, honest and upright in all his dealings, he would rather suffer wrong than do wrong. He was always ready to help the poor; when he gave a helping hand it was without money and without

price. Well do I remember the last ride father and I took together. I can see now by the run of his conversation that he was longing for the summons; he seemed to be weaned from the things of this world. When I told him of two old people that had died suddenly, he said he was so glad there was a way provided for old people to leave this world. Mother is so lonely, and hopes the separation will not be long.

HATTIE BARTHOLOMEW.

DIED—May 24th, 1900, brother **J. A. Money,** in his 81st year. Brother Money was born in Clark Co., Ky., December, 1819, and was married to Sarah E. Williams, Feb. 7th, 1847. To them were born seven sons and three daughters. He united with the church called Bethel, in Shelby Co., Ky., on the first Saturday in November, 1870, and was baptized by the late Elder J. F. Johnson. Few Baptists have ever been as faithful to their profession as brother Money; living fourteen miles away, as he did, yet it was never too cold or too hot or he too busy to attend the meetings of the church, the home of his choice. He loved the company of the saints, and as evidence of that love he went far and near to be associated with them, and to enjoy their spiritual conversation, and hear the blessed gospel preached by the ministers of Jesus. It can be truly said of him, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile. Brother Money was chosen clerk soon after he united with the church, and was ever faithful to the office until released by death. He was stricken wsth paralysis last November, from which he partially rallied, and attended our May meeting. Monday, May 20th, he received another stroke, only surviving four days, when he was released from his suffering, to dwell with Jesus forever.

The funeral was largely attended at their late residence, where services were conducted by Elder J. G. Sawin and the writer. He leaves a devoted wife, six sons and one daughter, together with the church and many friends, who mourn the sad bereavement, yet we know our loss is his blessed gain. May the Lord sustain our dear sister, and enable the children by grace divine to follow the example set by a loving father, both in the church and out. His mortal remains were laid in the cemetery in Shelbyville, Ky.

P. W. SAWIN.

DIED—August 26th, 1900, at Boiceville, Ulster Co., N. Y., after a short sickness, **Mrs. Lewis Boice,** leaving her husband, four children and many relatives to mourn. Mrs. Boice was not a professor of religion, but was a firm believer in the doctrine of sovereign grace, and we believe she has left a world of sin and trouble for a better world on high. Though the loss is so great to her dear husband and family of children, and other friends, yet it is gain to her, for they cannot mourn for her as those that have no hope, for she was so lovely in her life among them.

May the dear Lord who has called her away from them resign them to his will, that they may recognize his hand and feel to say, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth good."

ALSO,

DIED—After quite a long illness, at Arkville, Delaware Co., N. Y., August 31st, 1900, **Lewis A. Fuller.** Mr. Fuller was not a professor, but a believer in the truth as it is in Jesus, and has left his wife and family to mourn, with other relatives. It is good to know that the Lord in his holy habitation is a Judge of the widow, and a Father to the fatherless, and it is his hand that wipes away the tear that secretly wets the widow's eye, and has made a record of the fact, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."

May the hand of the Lord guide the mourners.

ALSO,

DIED—Of appendicitis, after an operation, at Kingston city, Sept. 3d, 1900, **Mrs. James W. Vermilyea.** She was not a professor, but a Baptist in belief, and we think had a heart in the truth, and is at rest, though leaving her dear husband and other relatives to mourn the great loss they sustain. She was a lovely woman in life, and leaves her husband a sad and lonely man, whom none but the Lord can comfort in his loneliness.

May the gracious hand of God deal gently with the afflicted ones, and resign all to his holy will for Jesus' sake.

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLY'S CORNERS, N. Y.

DIED—At his home near Lostant, Ill., July 27th, 1900, brother **Henry H. Hiltabrand.** He had been in poor health for several years, having suffered two strokes of paralysis, from which he never fully recovered. He and wife went to Eureka Springs, Ark., last fall, hoping to be benefited by the change; he got a fall while there, which disabled him from walking, and his faithful wife in waiting on him took cold, and pneumonia set in, and in five days she died, being the 6th of May. Her remains were brought home and buried here.

They both united with the Primitive Baptist Church in 1854. He served the church as deacon about thirty years. I think I can safely say I never knew a more orderly, loving couple in my life, walking blamelessly before the Lord. To show how he was esteemed by the public, I clip the following from the *Tonica News*:

"Mr. Hiltabrand was one of our most highly respected citizens. He had served the people in some of the most important offices of the township. He was a school director in this (the Lostan) district, for thirty-five years continuously, excepting one term of three years, and superintended the building of three school-houses in the village."

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of

his saints." They both had been great sufferers for several years, but they are taken from this world of sorrow, to enjoy forever the presence of the Lord, and our loss is their eternal gain.

Each funeral was attended by a large number of neighbors and friends, the writer trying to speak words of comfort on both occasions.

JOHN DOWNEY.

DIED—At her home in Loudoun Co., Va., Sept. 5th, 1900, **Miss Mary E. Foley**, aged about 72 years. Miss Foley's disease was cancer, and as the end drew near her sufferings were intense. Those who attended her say she bore her suffering with great resignation, and without murmur or complaint. She had never made a profession of religion. For many years she was regular in her attendance at the meetings at Mt. Zion church, and I firmly believe she loved the truth, and those who follow it. She requested that I should attend her funeral, and the text she selected to be used at the occasion gives evidence of the spirit which was in Job, and in all of the Lord's afflicted and poor people. The text is, "I loathe it; I would not live alway: let me alone; for my days are vanity."—Job vii. 16. She earnestly desired to depart, and we feel assured she has entered into the joys of her Lord.

May the Lord comfort those who are left to mourn their loss.

J. N. BADGER.

ALDIE, Va., Sept. 10, 1900.

BROTHER **Colwell**, our beloved father, was born Feb. 22d, 1818, and died June 23d, 1899, aged 81 years, 11 months and 1 day. During a long illness he bore his suffering with great patience; he was always hopeful and cheerful, easy to please, and always grateful for the attention and kindness shown him by friends and neighbors, loved children and grandchildren. He was a strong believer in the doctrine of predestination and election and salvation by grace. He never united with any church, but according to the hope that I have heard him speak of so often, I have an evidence that he is a member of the church triumphant, and has gone to receive the great reward. He leaves three daughters and several grandchildren, and a great many friends, and the church that he so often attended, to mourn their loss. But we sorrow not as those who have no hope, for we truly feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

L. M. BIGGS.

DIED—Five miles north of Brunson, Kansas, Sunday morning at 4 o'clock, June 3d, 1900, of quick consumption, **Miss Lillie E. Ross**. Deceased was born in Lynn Co., Kan., May 14th, 1881, being at the time of her death 19 years and 20 days old. Although her sufferings were great, she was never heard to murmur or complain. She was loved by all who knew her. She leaves father, mother, four sisters and four brothers, together with a host of relatives and friends, to mourn their loss. Dear parents, brothers and sisters, weep not for your loved one, for she has gone to that beautiful home prepared for the pure in heart.

A very tender discourse was delivered by Elder C. R. Bixler, at Fairview Church, using for his text 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." After which the remains were laid to rest in the silent city of the dead, there to await the glorious resurrection morn.

MRS E. PRESTON.

IOLA, Kansas.

MEETINGS.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association, has appointed her next session to be held with the Middleburgh church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday (3d and 4th) in October, 1900. We hope the Lord will put it in the minds and hearts of brethren and ministers of other associations to visit us.

Those coming on the cars to Middleburgh, will be met on Tuesday, and cared for. Will also state there is an express wagon leaves Gay's Hotel, Catskill, N. Y., every day at 12:45 o'clock, and is due at Preston Hollow at 6 o'clock p. m. The fare is $1.25. Any desiring to come by this route will be met at Preston Hollow and cared for. The distance from Catskill to place of meeting is about thirty-three miles.

A. COOK, Clerk.

THE Juniata Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the Fairview church, in Fulton Co., Pa., on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1900, and continue three days. We give a cordial invitation to lovers of the truth to meet with us.

Those coming by railroad will come Thursday, on the Baltimore and Ohio road, to Hancock, Md., and cross over the river, where they will be met and cared for. It is about fourteen miles to place of meeting.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa, has appointed the second Sunday, and Saturday previous, of October, (13th and 14th) 1900, to hold their yearly meeting, and extend a cordial invitation to our brethren and friends, especially ministering brethren, to meet with us.

Any one coming on the U. & D. R. R., if not met at depot, take stage to Gilboa, and put up at the Gilboa House, where they will be cared for.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting will be held, the Lord willing with the Bethlehem church, October 17th, 18th and 19th, 1900.

Friends coming to the meeting from northern points will come to Washington, D. C., on Tuesday, or in time to take the train at Sixth Street station, at or near 8 a. m. Wednesday, for Manassas, Va. Several trains a day from north and south stop at Manassas.

We earnestly invite our friends and brethren, who feel disposed, to meet with us.

We would be glad to have any of our ministering brethren from the west, intending to attend our Virginia Corresponding Meeting, also attend the Juniata Association. Due notice of said association will be found in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We ask this because those traveling on the B. & O. R. R. will be at no additional expense, and because our prospect for ministers is very slim.

E. V. WHITE.

THE Olive & Hurley Church, of Ulster Co., N. Y., have appointed a two days meeting to be held the third Saturday and Sunday in October, (20th and 21st) 1900.

THE Welsh Tract Church has appointed a yearly meeting to commence on Saturday, Oct. 20th, 1900, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue for two days.

Those coming from Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore, will come via B. & O. R. R., Saturday morning. Trains leave Philadelphia, Twenty-Fourth and Chestnut Sts., at 7:30 a. m., and Baltimore, Camden station, at 7:55 a. m. Get tickets to Newark, Del.

Those coming on the Delaware Railroad, will come via Porter to Wilson, on Friday afternoon.

A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Any of the ministering brethren on their way to the Salisbury Association, are especially invited to attend, as we shall be glad to see them.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Association will be held this year (1900) with the church at Nassaongo, Wicomico Co., Md., commencing on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, and continuing three days. The place of meeting is about six miles southeast of Salisbury, so all coming by rail or boat will get tickets for Salisbury, where they will be met and taken care of.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth, ministering brethren especially. Hope to be strengthened and encouraged by your coming.

T. M. POULSON, Pastor.

P. H. HALL, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1900. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DECATUR, Texas, Sept. 13, 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN AND KINDRED IN CHRIST:—If one so unworthy as I should address you thus. These thoughts often come to my mind, What am I, that I should attempt to write to the Lord's humble poor, with my unworthiness and inability pressing on me, for I know if my impressions to write are of the flesh, I can say nothing that will comfort one of the saints of the Most High, but I am burdened with an unrest in trying to get the consent of my mind not to write on the account of my unworthiness. O, if I could only speak as my mind is wont to speak about the fullness of the great I AM, it seems that my joy would be full. It is a great comfort to me that the Lord of hosts has enabled me to look on him as not being slack concerning his promises, as some men count slackness, for we hear him declaring that his word "shall not return unto him void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." We hear him speaking of his people, saying, "I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people." The wills and shalls of Jehovah can never fail. Again we hear him saying, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Yes, dear brethren, his people are drawn by the gentle cords of his love. He does not drive his people to do anything, but they are made a willing people in the day of his power. O, what a great blessing it is to be drawn into obedience by his loving-kindness. Some people out here claiming to be Old Baptists, say obedience draws his loving-kindness, but that is not what the Lord says, for he says his loving-kindness draws them. One can make an outward show of obedience, but the blessing will not fall upon them, for such obedience is of the flesh, and that which is of the flesh is sin, for all flesh is sin; the thoughts of the natural mind are evil, and that continually. I would like for some of those "conditional time salvationists" to tell me how I can get rid of this natural mind, for it is impossible to please God with the natural mind, and I have never learned how to bring about a spiritual mind within myself. I feel that I have been made to mourn because I could not

put off the natural mind, and bring about a spiritual mind, but, dear brethren, I feel assured that this is the work of the Lord, for he says he works in his people both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and I do not believe he is slack in doing what he says he will do, and I do not believe men can do what the Lord says they cannot do, and he says, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Then if he cannot direct his steps, how can he direct his mind? And if he cannot direct his mind, how can he serve the Lord? for the carnal, or natural mind, is enmity to God, and until the Lord subdues the carnal mind, and gives a spiritual mind, we cannot serve the Lord. All service of the natural mind is nothing but an outward show, and an inclination to be puffed up; to be looked at by men, but when the Lord takes away the natural mind, and gives us a spiritual mind, we are then fit subjects to serve him. But this preparation is all of the Lord, for he says he will take away the stony heart and give them a heart of flesh, and again he says, "No man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him.

Dear brethren, I hope that the unlimited Predestinarian Baptists will stand aloof from all innovations of men. It seems to me that I can see them as the people that John the revelator describes in Revelation xv. 2, 3, "And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Yes, dear brethren, with all the persecutions that are heaped upon them as a sea of glass mingled with fire, still they go on singing that song, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Saying he has power over all things, even to the pulling down of strongholds. His power is over every dark pavilion of the stormy cloud; the lightnings are his messengers, the thunder his voice; his mighty tread is upon the angry ocean; even the winds obey him. All the inventions of men are only a fulfillment of his purpose; there is nothing invented but what was known unto him before creation, and they fill their place designed for them. He counsels no man, but when he says go, they go, and when he says come, they come, for he works all things after the counsel of his own will. He fulfills his purpose in using the evil spirits, for it was as much God's purpose in sending an evil spirit into the heart of Saul, the king of Israel, to have him follow after David, as it was to stop Saul of Tarsus from persecuting the saints of God. And it was as much God's purpose that Adam should violate his law, as it was that Christ should redeem his people from under the law, for Christ stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, to redeem his people from under the law. Let us notice the Scriptures, and see if Adam was able to keep the law. We will go to Genesis iii. 5: "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." We see from this Scripture that he did not know good from evil. Turn to the twenty-second verse of the same chapter, and we find there these words, "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one

of us, to know good and evil." I cannot see how he was able to stand when he did not even know good from evil until he had eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Dear brethren, the good Lord has given me the privilege of attending three associations of unlimited predestinarians in northern Texas, through the months of August and September, this year. The first one was Lake Valley Association, composed of three churches, one in Wise County and two in Montague County. Here this little band of brethren were made to rejoice in God our Savior. The under-shepherds brought no new isms among the flock, for they seemed to be led by the Spirit of the Most High God to proclaim his sovereignty over all things whatsoever comes to pass. They preached a full and complete Savior, through time to eternity, without the patchwork of poor, feeble mortals. J. A. Campbell has been preaching for these three churches over twenty years. I feel that the Lord has given him sustaining grace to fight against the new isms that have sprang up, such as limited predestination, and conditional salvation. The next association was Peace Valley, held in Parker County. Here they had ministering brethren from all over the State, all contending for the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, regardless of the persecutions they have to undergo. It seemed to cause this little flock to rejoice, and to take new courage to know that the Lord has reserved a few old faithful servants who are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for they preached the power of God and the wisdom of God; they all came with one accord ascribing greatness unto our God. Elder W. L. Rogers is an old veteran of the cross, of this association, who has been tried as by fire by the persecutions of those that have departed from sound doctrine, but the Lord has given him strength to cry aloud and spare not. The next association I visited was Trinity River, in Tarrant County. Here the under-shepherds from different portions of the State came together having the same gospel sound that I heard at the other two associations. Against some of them non-fellowship had been declared because they preached the unlimited sovereignty of the Most High God, declaring that he rules in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, but whatsoever he pleaseth that he doeth. I feel assured that the Lord is not slack concerning his promises, and he has promised his servants that they shall suffer persecution for his name's sake, and he has promised them his grace shall be sufficient for them. He never sleeps nor slumbers, but his all-seeing eye is watching over his children wherever they may be, and his power upholds them through all their weary travel through this unfriendly world. O, what a glorious thought, that he works all things after the counsel of his own will, and that all powers that be are ordained of God; there is no room for anything to come in by chance, there is no such thing as emergency with him, that he should resort to some expedient, for before the foundation of the world he fixed and made sure all things whatsoever comes to pass; there is no room for one thought or one step to come in or be left out, but what was embraced there. O, what a consoling thought it is to me that nothing can take place contrary to his will, for his wisdom comprehended the end from the beginning, and his power is sufficient to bring all his wisdom to pass.

As he purposed it, so shall it stand, and as he thought, so shall it come to pass.

Elder Bourland, of Keller, Texas, has visited all three of these associations, and preached to the comfort of God's little ones. May the Lord continue his sustaining grace to him, ever enabling him to preach the power of God, and the wisdom of God, as he did at these three associations. He is not afraid to hew to the line, let the chips fall where they may.

Dear brethren for the truth's sake, do not fear to declare the whole counsel of God. Do not try to wrap up the truth as some are wont to, for fear it will displease some. I hear some brethren saying we ought to leave off talking about unlimited predestination, and unconditional salvation; they say by this it may be that those that are opposed to it, will take down the bars of fellowship and all come together again. But, dear brethren, before I will give up these fundamental principles that were taught by the prophets of old, and by Christ and the apostles, I will stand alone, for it takes a whole God to reach my case, one that is able to do all things without my poor, feeble efforts; he is my only strength, my guide and my shield through this unfriendly world. It seems to me that my little hope would fade away if I believed anything could take place contrary to God's holy and righteous will, or that anything could have been different from what it has. I believe as his wisdom was, so will all things be.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all, in hope of eternal life,

M. B. F. JONES.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

MRS. MABEL WEEKS, GARDINER, MAINE,—DEAR SISTER IN JESUS, OUR PRECIOUS FRIEND AND REDEEMER:—I am glad once more to hear from you; I am glad to learn that you and your husband and children are enjoying comfortable health, and I am interested in the tidings about others. But I am especially interested in those things that pertain to God, and to eternity. I am pleased that since I last wrote to you that you are no longer spending your time reading that vile, religious literature. So much of it floods the land. What little time you have for reading, read the precious Scriptures, and may the Lord give you understanding therein. (Luke xxiv. 45.) You will find, my dear sister, as you journey along, that many snares and temptations are to be encountered. Satan and his ministers have their cisterns on every hand all along the path, and they seek to induce the pilgrims of Zion to turn aside and take a sip out of their cisterns. But it is not wise to be sipping this and that, and every poison, just to see how they taste. I warned you before, so again I beseech you, beware of the cisterns of antichrist, for they do not contain the precious living water; there is nothing in their doctrines but harm, there is nothing in them to refresh the weary, wayfaring children of God. Their cisterns are full of deadly poisons, vile, damnable, Christ-dishonoring doctrines. Dip not so much as the tip of your finger into their errors, taste them not, have nothing to do with them. We have our God, the fountain of living waters, whose goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our life. We have his holy Scriptures, and the promise of our Redeemer that the Spirit of truth shall guide us into all truth. (John xvi. 13.)

May your life, and mine, be spent ever imploring the sacred guidance and teaching of the Comforter. "O send out thy light and thy truth: and let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles."

You mention that you have an apprehension that "your sins have not worried you as they ought." I have at times the same feeling. Our sins against God are so "exceeding sinful." (Rom. vii. 13.) The more the spiritual requirements of the law discover in our hearts how far we have strayed, the more we see of the purity of God, of his tender mercy and infinite compassion to poor sinners; I repeat, the more we see of "the beauty of the Lord," (Psalm xxvii. 4,) the more we shall see how "exceeding sinful" it is to sin against such a beautiful God. And as our hearts are exercised over these things we shall find longings springing up within us, yes, there will be warm breathings after conformity to the likeness of Christ Jesus. Ah, instead of having to walk through the earth so black, a sinner, not fit to be seen, not fit to be known, O to be pure, to be spotless, "O let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us."—Psalm xc. 17. O, that I could be so clothed, that I could in truth ever be found arrayed in beautiful garments. (Isaiah lii. 1.) But, my sister, often I seem to see, as afar off, the daughter of Zion in her garments of glory and beauty. There she stands a perfect beauty, adorned with the comeliness of Jesus, freely pardoned and justified by his grace. I see that she loves her royal Husband, who shed his own blood to cleanse her from all her defilements. I see her pouring forth her adoring gratitude before him; I see how lowly she is in her own eyes, how she blushes beneath the tokens of his love; she is so conscious of her unworthiness, yet his words of grace touch her heart, his precious doctrine is so suitable to her, a sinner, that her soul is strengthened to believe him, and to trust in him with all her heart. I pen you a partial glimpse of the scene. Well, then as it were, my eyes are turned upon myself, and I say, Surely I cannot be that one I was looking at awhile ago, and yet as I contemplated Zion in the perfection of her loveliness, as I gazed upon the church exercised with all the graces of the Spirit, did not my heart rejoice when she rejoiced before her Redeemer and King? And when she worshiped her Husband who had ransomed her from sin and hell by his precious blood, when the church bowed at his feet and worshiped him, (Psalm xlv. 11,) who had taken her from the dunghill, who had mercy upon her, and fed her and clothed her, who woed her and won her unto himself, and cast his skirt over her, and said to her heart, Thou art mine, did I not feel to weep with humbleness of mind before his throne? Did not I feel my heart exercised in tearful gratitude unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood? And when he held out to her the golden sceptre of his everlasting love, and called her Hephzibah, and raised her, and seated her at his own right hand in heavenly places, did I not feel a thrill of rapturous admiration to thus behold the church of God, ransomed from sin and death and hell, so exalted and glorified together with our ascended Lord and Savior? Yes, I felt my soul was delighted with the abundance of her glory. (Isaiah lxvi. 11.) Yes, I have to admit I felt a oneness with her, an attachment to her, and it seemed I tasted some of her bliss as the pardoned, saved church of God. Thus sometimes I ponder of these sacred and divine mysteries,

and your heart is not an entire stranger to such musings. What do all such thoughts and exercises of soul mean? Such emotions of soul, and affectionate musings upon Christ and the church, are the revelations of faith (Romans x. 8,) in the heart. It is the evidence to us that we are not strangers to the communion of the Holy Ghost, (2 Cor. xiii. 14,) for such it is. True, as we look upon ourselves as weak, sinful creatures, yet treading our way through this world, we may well feel it doth not yet appear what we shall be. The incomparable beauty and glory of the justified ones the natural eye cannot see, "It doth not yet appear," and all we now apprehend of it is by faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Thus by the revelation of the Spirit, (1 Cor. ii. 10,) who testifies of Christ in our souls, we taste, and have the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of Christ's glory. (Eph. i. 14.)

I find that in your own estimation you judge it is only in a very small measure that you have attained unto the knowledge of divine things. How can it be otherwise when the riches of Christ are unsearchable? As a child by the seaside with a shell in its hand, saying, I will empty the ocean, and know its fullness, it toils all day, but at eventide there rolls the mighty deep, and the child sighs and says, How little I have gathered, so we as we think of God and his glory, as we muse upon his work and his ways, as we enter to explore the riches of his grace, though days and years we are thus employed we see in the everlasting gospel an infinite ocean of love, and wisdom, and power, and grace, and mercy, and truth, yea, of all the perfections of God, and in ravishing astonishment we are constrained to cry out, "Lo, these are parts of his ways, but how little a portion is heard of him, but the thunder of his power who can understand?"—Job xxvi. 14. Now, it can only be said, "We know in part."—1 Cor. xiii. 9, 10. But, my dear sister, what a blessed heritage to know truly and spiritually anything relating to the Lord of glory, and God of our salvation. Though we know ever so little, that little is infinitely precious, and it is all the gift of the Spirit of God, without whom we could know nothing of the things of God. "Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God."

Your mind may be sometimes exercised with misgivings, whether it is truly so with you or no: "Am I his, or am I not?" But inquire, Has not the glorious gospel of the grace of God won your heart, and captivated your affections? Do not thy thoughts, thy desires at times go forth unto the truth, unto the dear Savior, to his obedience and sufferings and blood, as thy only trust and refuge, the only hope of the forgiveness of thy sins? Are you attracted to Christ crucified? Then it is all because he hath drawn you to himself; because he hath loved you; because he hath compassion upon you; because he hath suffered and bled and was crucified for thee; because he hath saved thee; for thus saith our dear Savior, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die."—John xii. 32, 33. Yes, there are moments when you feel the suffering, crucified Savior, is all thine hope. Here all thy longings as a poor sinner are centered, thy hopes of pardoning mercy flow from the wounds and precious blood of the Lamb. Yes,

away from all thine own endeavors, and all creature wisdom and help, thou art drawn to look unto him that was slain on the tree, and thou reachest forth with throbbing heart to lay hold of Jesus the hope of the contrite in heart. (Heb. vi. 18.) O, what sacred moments! The world knows nothing of such moments.

"Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,
Which before the cross I spend."

May many such moments be your portion, is my heart's desire.

FRED. W. KEENE.

STANHILL, Ala., July 28, 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—Whereas I claim to have traveled for about eight years in the rugged land of christian experience, I feel to realize very forcibly at times that the kingdom of God is not of this world, for which I am glad. Paul says, If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Sometimes the cross seems so heavy, and the valley so wide, that I almost despond, yet there is a faint remembrance of the crown upon the hill. I have seen so much rioting, wrangling and striving for the mastery, as it seems to me in the spirit of antichrist, that I have endeavored to retire from the battlefield. But Jesus consoles us in this way. He says, The battle is not yours, therefore fear not, I will fight your battles. This was a comfort to Jehoshaphat, and so it is to all the people of God when they can realize it as did the king. Then they can realize to the utmost their dependent and poverty-stricken condition in self, and their unbounded riches in Christ.

Now I am not so much concerned about other denominations, for I have nothing to do with them religiously, and have no love for them. A member of the New School order came into my store to-day and asked me to serve as their organist during the meetings which had just begun near by; he seemed to doubt their success without a better organist; he said he did not think it would be of any harm. I said, It will be of no harm to you, but it will be to me, and further, I told him that I could play anywhere that was intended solely to please the ear, but I could not take part in it when used for religious purposes. Some dear brethren think I am a little on an extreme along this line, but I do not so regard it, but even if I am, I think it is better to be in the extreme against them than at all for them. I notice that some brethren will call upon Arminians to ask a blessing at the table. It seems to me as clearly wrong to affiliate with them at home religiously, as in our public worship. [Our brother is clearly right in this.—ED.] I do not mean that I oppose God's people returning thanks at meal time, if they feel so impressed by the Spirit of God, but whatsoever is not of faith is sin, and to ask without faith, is to ask that we may have to consume upon our lusts, and then we receive not, because we ask amiss. Is not this to ask contrary to God's will? If there be no efficacy in the prayer of those who have living faith, unless indited by faith, how shall we expect any in the prayers of those who do not possess faith at all? Certainly those to whom faith is given will follow Jesus according to the faith given, and the continuation of the same. It is not possible to join house to house with other people in principle, and stand aloof in name. And we are to touch not, taste not and handle not the unclean thing. I feel concerned about the people of God, these compose the city of God, where David saw strife. If David saw it, surely

we also may expect it to come. While painful to the righteous, "It must needs be that offences come; but woe to the man by whom the offense cometh."

Now to all who oppose predestination, I would say, I desire to call attention to the fact that it was he who is head over all things to the church who uttered the above quoted words. Then if it be needful that offenses come, and he possesses all power in heaven and in earth, will they not surely come? Who shall prevent it? Can that person or persons by whom they come prevent it? How long would we have to preach ability, or practical Arminianism, and call it practical godliness, to prevent God's plans, which he hath purposed with himself? If any feel to oppose the word "absolute," I will not use it at present, but will take foreknowledge instead. If David saw strife in the city in his day, that was present knowledge of a fact. Foreknowledge is used as pertaining to God only. But David was a type of Christ here, and as such could view the church all through the ages of future time, by revelation. Now if David saw it IN time, God saw it aforetime, and if he saw every event before time, did he not also see every means by which they were brought to pass? Must we not say that God saw all things that come to pass, just as they do come to pass? This seems to me the most absolute predestination that I have any knowledge of. Neither God nor man can know that anything will be, and at the same time that thing be uncertain. Now if foreknowledge shows the certainty of the thing foreseen or known, who made it certain? Did God purpose it, or did the agent or agents which brought it to pass, make it certain, or propose it? There can be but two positions to take. I am satisfied to believe that God purposed it, and this is predestination.

"The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely, as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." But what is the scope of the word it, used in the text by Isaiah? All reasonable minds must admit that it takes in the entire scope of the mind of God. Can any one find a limit to this? If so, you can find what I cannot. I do desire to hold up the standard for the people. O, my brethren, let us not limit our God. It is a great thing to magnify and exalt his holy name. "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." Now I know that many claim that the purpose of God extends only to the salvation of his people, but here I think, if they could put aside all fear of making God to be the author of sin, we should all be agreed in the belief that his decree does embrace the plan of salvation only, but that therein is embraced the sin and the remedy, the disease and the grace that heals. It seems not needful to argue that sin and wicked deeds are connected with the plan of salvation, and it must take it all to complete this plan, as it now stands. Every feature of the crucifixion of our Lord, which was done by wicked hands, was purposed by the Father, and so it could be said, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." I have not yet seen a Baptist who would deny the purpose of God in this case. If the delivery was determined of the Lord, then the wicked act of slaying him was also determined of him, and we cannot allow chance to be coupled with purpose here, because we want abso-

lute certainty. The chance system has been tried, and proved to be an absolute failure, both in christian experience and in Bible testimony. If men had had but a chance to crucify Jesus, without the purpose of God behind it, all would have been a failure. They were as much bound by the determinate counsel of God to slay Jesus, when and where they did, as they were to take him down from the cross without a broken bone. Does this make God the author of sin? By no means. If men charge that it does, they have the account to settle with the word of God, and not with us. Men may transgress law, but where is the law under which Deity is placed, that he may transgress? He is above all human law, and he is not under his law to men, and so cannot transgress as can his creatures. God is under no law, and what he does is right, however foreign it may seem to our finite carnal minds, which can never understand the glorious work of our God. It seems to be now the great stumbling-stone with men, as it was in the time of Paul, If God purposed man to sin, how shall he punish him? They say that then he is doing the will of God as much when he sins, as when he obeys the holy law of God. We would not attempt to satisfy the carnal mind of man, but will appeal to the word of God: on one occasion the Lord said to Shimei, Curse David, and yet when David turned the kingdom over to Solomon, in giving his charge he said to him that he should punish Shimei for cursing him. Yet David knew it was God's will for Shimei to curse him. This is the only defense that I would urge against those who use such arguments, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?"

I cannot believe for a moment that when a child of God is in disobedience, he has fallen clear out of the providence of God, either general or special. If so, what shall set bounds to him? Satan and all the demons of darkness are bound by the providence of our God.

"His providence unfolds the book,
And makes his counsels shine;
Each opening leaf and every stroke,
Fulfills some deep design."

Now let us hear the consummation of the whole matter, All things in time that ever have been, or that now exist, are in accord with the appointment and purpose of God, which he purposed with himself in the annals of eternity, when there was none to suggest aught to his mind.

Yours to serve in gospel bounds,

F.

[ALL the real objections to the doctrine of unlimited predestination are met, as our brother has suggested, in the ninth chapter of Romans, than which there is no more clearly written portion of the word. With this chapter before us, from a child, we have never dared to urge some objections to this doctrine, which have always rolled glibly from the tongues of Arminians, and others who abhor the sovereignty of God, and who would insist upon judging him after their own finite standard, and perverted reason.—ED.]

GAYLORD, Kan., Aug. 12, 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN, I HOPE:—My wife has the experience of old sister Mary I. Riggs, who lives, you might say, in the mountains of Colorado, which she has expressed a desire to see published in the dear old paper. She is living out there where she seldom gets to hear the preached word. She has had a great many trials incident to frontier life, yet her faith has been kept by the great "I AM."

J. P. A.

THE EXPERIENCE.

WRITTEN to the brethren, sisters and friends, or to whom it may interest, comfort or concern, from a poor sinner of Antioch Church.

Dear Sisters Adelott, as I told you in one of my letters that I would send my experience, I will try now in my awkward, poor way to give you a reason of my hope in Christ. When I was fourteen years of age I first became concerned about religion, or rather troubled or bothered about myself. At first a heavy weight or doleful feeling came over my heart, and I would try to throw it off and seek lively company, and that doleful feeling would leave me partly for awhile, and then come back worse, and kept getting worse. I tried to do better, and thought maybe I could live religious. I had been raised moral, and told that it was wrong to tell lies or steal, and was raised to live honest, truthful, virtuous, and charitable to some extent, but father said he could not teach the knowledge of God. But my good works soon failed. The more I strove against God's power, the weight and guilt the more I felt, till at last I found myself as it were in a waste howling wilderness, a wretched, ruined, lost sinner. I tried everything I could think of, but to no effect. I would hunt songs and poetry to suit me, and go to hear preaching every time I could, and would try to pray, but it did not seem that my prayers did me any good. I found several songs that I wished to hear sung, but hated to ask any one to sing, when one Sunday father decided to go to what was called the Middle Fork Church, a horse-back, and it was seven or eight miles from where we lived in Illinois, I think it was the Old School Baptist, but Mores Prairie Church was nearer us, so mother did not just care about going, and said I could go with father, so I was well pleased, and hoped they would sing some good song or the Elder would say something that I could understand. They sang, "'Tis a point I long to know." It appeared to me that they were singing the whole song for me, and it seemed to give me a little hope or pleasure, but it did not take away my burden or load of sin. I went on that way till I was, I hope, as expressed in hymn 546, Beebe's Collection, "Awak'd by Sinai's awful sound," &c.

Now this was when I was eighteen years old, during those four years I was financially in different circumstances, and different places, but while I was a mourner, I mourned whatever happened, most of the time, but when I was born again, as I hope, and received the Spirit of Christ, it was then I could sing, "How happy are they, who their Savior obey," and, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear!" It was there and then by faith that I first saw the Lord, and could sing praises to his holy name. The change was as sudden at the last and as great a contrast as the darkest time of the night and the bright morning at sunrise. I was sick at that time, and had a hard spell of fever, some of my relatives and friends that were waiting on me and caring for me, thought I was going to die, but they were mistaken. I was apparently just at the point of death, and was really worse than I realized, but I was so happy that I was praising God and giving him glory. The next spring I offered myself to the Old Baptist church the first time I got to go, I believe, and to my surprise they received me. It seemed like home to me, for I loved them and had fellowship for them, but I feared they would not receive me. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, be-

cause we love the brethren." But O how many dark places I have passed through since. Dear brethren and sisters, pray for me.

From your unworthy sister, in hope of eternal life,

MARY I. RIGGS.

"WHO MAKETH THEE TO DIFFER?"

(1 Corinthians iv. 7.)

THAT there is a difference in the condition and future prospects of men, few, if any, will deny, but in what this difference consists, and by what power it is established, is a matter of great contention and strife with the theologians of the day. That this difference does not consist in our relation to Adam, or in our creation in him, is very fully demonstrated in the Scriptures, for God "hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth; and has determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."—Acts xvii. 26. Also, that all are condemned in their relation to Adam, is plainly asserted in the words, "Death hath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Nothing is more clearly revealed in the divine revelation, than that we all are by nature on an equal footing, as to original purity, and subsequent depravity and condemnation. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."—Romans iii. 23. And every mouth is said to be stopped, and the whole world is guilty before God.

We inquire then, Where is the difference, seeing that in regard to sin and human depravity all are alike? This vast difference is with regard to the spiritual condition of mankind. Some there are who have been delivered from the curse of the law, the guilt and consequences of sin, and who have been made the subjects of regenerative grace, redeeming love and living faith. These are made to love God and holiness, and to understand, believe and rejoice in the truth as it is in Jesus; these have Christ formed in them the hope of glory; these being the sons of God, are heirs of him, and joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ, and are heirs to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, and are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Widely differing from the people of God there is another class of the human family, described in the Scriptures as vipers, a seed of evil doers, of their father the devil, cursed children that cannot cease from sin, that know not the way of peace, who neither know nor love the truth, but who delight in sin, error, delusion and falsehood, they stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto they were appointed; they shall die in their sins, and go away into everlasting punishment; they shall be turned into hell with all the nations that forget God. Now there is certainly a very wide difference between the spiritual condition, prospects, disposition and final destiny of these two classes. They are known by different names. The former are called children of God, dear children, sons, the bride, the Lamb's wife, a peculiar people, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, the elect, &c. The latter, on the other hand, are called children of the devil, cursed children, aliens, strangers, serpents, vipers, dogs, sorcerers.

The question returns, "Who maketh thee to differ?" As those who are saved are declared to be by nature, "The children of wrath even as others, we are sustained by the infallible testimony of truth in saying that every soul that is raised up from the lowest depth of sin

and depravity, is thus raised by the power and grace of God; there is salvation in no other name. Hence the true difference consists in what God has been graciously pleased to do for his people in the way of grace, for nothing but grace could rescue them from awful wrath and fiery indignation. The question as to why God has not bestowed the same grace upon all men alike, is about as reasonable as to question why all men are not angels, or angels Gods? He has been pleased to inform us that he has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. (Romans ix. 18.) The saints of God cannot believe that the difference between them and those who go down the pit, is based on works of righteousness which they have done, or that they have made themselves to differ. "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast." Hence their song of eternal worship shall be, "Not unto us, O God, but unto thy name give glory." On earth the question is agitated as to whether God did according to his own eternal counsel and immutable will, fix the destiny of beings and of worlds, according to his unchangeable wisdom and goodness, from the ancients of eternity, or was he by some law of necessity, or from unforseen events, driven to the necessity of making the children of men to differ?

Now all must be on the one side or the other, none can be neutral in this conflict. Trifling as this inquiry may seem to some, in it is involved the grand controversy between sin and holiness, truth and error, predestination and Arminianism. The word of God declares that he worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will, and challenges an infatuated world to declare, "With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding."—Isa. xl. 14. That his purpose was mature and complete, appears not only from the immutability of his nature, but also from his declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. The apostle says, "We are bound to give thanks to God alway for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."—2 Thess. ii. 13. He has chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world, and predestinated us unto the adoption of children; he "hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9.

Of the others it is written, they "were before of old ordained to this condemnation."—Jude 4. "These, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things they understand not, and shall utterly perish in their own corruption."—2 Peter ii. 12. "And for this cause shall God send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."—2 Thess. ii. 11, 12. From the Scriptures thus quoted, we prove that every link in the chain of cause and effect is placed and secured by an unerring hand, and that all the wheels of the (to us) complicated machinery of providence and grace, are wisely supplied, although their revolutions may to

us seem to be in opposition to each other, and that every movement was determined before the machinery was put in operation. He who will deny this, must deny the foreknowledge of God, his truth, holiness and immutability, and finally his very being, and at last unite with the fool, and say, There is no God.

This subject opens a wide field for our contemplation. First, that God has made mankind to differ, and that according to his eternal purpose, and though man may organize societies for the express purpose of obviating the differences which God has made, he might as well attempt to annul the everlasting decrees of God, or abolish the difference between light and darkness, cold and heat, seed time and harvest, or to change and reorganize according to his ideas of wisdom, the laws of nature. He could do all these things as well as he could alter the things which have gone out of the mouth of God. The chief design of the apostle is to humble the people of God in the dust; all they have they have received, and all that causes the saints on earth or in glory to differ from the most abandoned wretches on earth, or in hell, is alone what God has done for them.

LEMUEL H. CLARK.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., August, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The foregoing is a copy of a letter written by Lemuel H. Clark, of Clay Village, Kentucky. It contains the evidence of a living faith in a God of wisdom and power, who works, and none can let. It was found in his trunk after his demise. It must be of much comfort to the dear, bereaved ones. He was taken away from this world under trying circumstances. He had never made a public profession of faith, yet he has left unmistakable evidence of a gracious work with him, and his letter evidences a profound reverence for, and a deep searching of the word of God, to learn the truth as it is in Jesus. We do rejoice in the fixed purposes of Jehovah. How could poor, feeble worms rest in perfect security otherwise?

Yours in Christ,

P. W. SAWIN.

HALLWOOD, Va., April 4, 1900.

ELDER D. BARTLEY—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Although I often feel myself to be a poor, insignificant worm of the dust, and entirely unfit to claim a relationship with God's believing children, yet I feel that I am made to cleave to them, and like unto Ruth, to entreat them not to leave me, nor for me to return from following after them; and although I am an entire stranger to you in the flesh, yet I have met you twice several years ago, in Missouri and Illinois.

I will now try, in my weak and imperfect way, to let you know, since reading your communication in the present number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, April 1st, 1900, how very much good such communications do me, how I feel strengthened and encouraged, and how my heart is made to rejoice in the truth as set forth therein. Indeed, it does seem strange to me how any subject of God's saving grace need to be left in doubt as to the truth of the doctrine of God's free, sovereign grace; that Jesus is the only Savior of sinners; that his is the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Brother Bartley, I feel that I have no other hope of salvation, either in time or eternity, only in what I humbly trust Christ has done, and does do, and will yet do, for me; for I feel that I have lost all confidence in the flesh, and

I am glad it is so. Yes, I am made to feel thankful that the God of all grace is pleased to deliver me from the delusion of Satan, in believing that there is any worth or merit in the creature; but it is all in the Creator from first to last. Yes, he is in deed and in truth the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. And when his little ones are made to implicitly trust and confide in him, what an oasis it is in this barren, desert land!

I wanted to speak, not only of your last communication in our family paper, but others also that have preceded it, that I have had pleasure, satisfaction and comfort in reading the last few years. Also, I have read and reread your pamphlet, entitled, "Early Religious Life," with deep interest. O the trials that God's servants are called to pass through! How very exceeding low they are brought! and yet our God doth honor them, in causing them to bear humble testimony to his truth. Surely, to be able to speak or write of the exceeding riches of God's grace, to the comfort of his humble poor, and to his own name's honor and glory, is the most exalted position that mortal man did ever occupy. And yet it is all done amidst trials and afflictions, persecutions and oppositions, having to contend with foes within and without; and unless it was for God's sustaining grace, who could endure these things?

The older I become, the more I feel to be in sympathy with God's ministering servants; and if I know my own heart aright, I feel to have a fervent desire for them, that God may stand by them and enable them to faithfully declare his truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. And to do so, surely brings down upon them the hatred and indignation of a gainsaying world. Yes, all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, and no "may be" about it; but they have this consolation, that greater is he that is in them, than he that is in the world.

Your little brother, if one at all,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Aug. 26, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Inclosed find money for the renewal of the SIGNS. I find no fault with that dear old family paper, it earnestly contends for the faith once delivered to the saints. Although I do not always enjoy the reading of them, and sometimes it seems I hardly get a crumb out of them, yet again I read them all through with edification and comfort. The Shepherd of Israel has many ways of feeding his sheep, it may be in reading after the pen of some brother or sister, it may be in reading the Bible, it may be in listening to the preaching of the word, it may be in the performance of daily duty, or it may be in meditation while resting upon our beds; we can partake of the things of Jesus only when the Spirit shows them unto us. O, that I might be led by the Holy Spirit all the time, I cannot walk alone, I grope in darkness, I fall into temptations and unbelief, but when I can realize the angel of his presence, the heavens around me shine with beams of sacred bliss, and peace flows like a river. If we were not left to ourselves sometimes, like Peter, we would get to thinking that we could walk in our own strength, then we could not sympathize with those who are called to endure fiery trials. When left to ourselves we learn our weakness, and are made to say with David, "Man at his best state is altogether vanity," or with Jeremiah, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

But the Lord is rich in mercy, and strong to deliver, and mighty to save. The dear child of God may feel as though his iniquity is great, but the mercy of God is greater. His mercy reaches unto the heavens, and it descends to the lowest hell, it knows no bounds, and it endures forever. O, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and his wonderful works to the children of men. Though we are prone to wander, and leave the God we love, yet he will gather us in his bosom, and carry us safely there. One said, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want," and again, as for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness, then shall I be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness.

Yours in christian love,

EDWARD E. ROUNDS.

KALAMAZOO, Mich., Aug. 20, 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—It is time to renew for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I here inclose two dollars. Please excuse neglect on our part. We have enjoyed the SIGNS heretofore so much, that we must have it another year, it cheers us by the way, as we read of that old story, but ever new, of Jesus and his love unto sinful man. In this city we hear much about the proclamation of the gospel, and how much people and the churches are doing for the Lord. O, dear brethren, where Jesus is preached as the way, the truth and the life, we have the proclamation in loving words. Some time ago I heard a Missionary preacher use the text in Eph. i. 3, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." He began by saying in strong terms, How could we this lovely day but choose or accept the spiritual blessing with which the Lord has blessed us? He said that we had all the power to choose or refuse. It seemed to me he could not accept all the Scripture, which says that God had chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world, and that he had predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will. (Verses 4, 5.) His sermon was shallow, to the spiritually hungry. Yet I am so sinful and unworthy, so barren and void of spiritual knowledge, that I fear I know nothing of the things that pertain to God's blessed kingdom. Yet I feel, if I know my sinful heart, I love God's humble poor, and there is nothing dearer to me than to see them dwell together in love and peace, and hear them proclaim the grand and glorious truths of God our Savior.

I have struggled on with this little hope in Jesus, about thirty-five years, and he is my only hope and trust, and I do desire to praise and glorify his great and holy name. May he bless us all with the sweet smile of his loving grace, lead and guide us unto wisdom's ways, and enable you, my dear brethren, to continue sending forth the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to the comfort of God's dear children, and to the praise and glory of our blessed Redeemer.

With love to all, I remain your poor unworthy brother, if one at all,

D. D. McALPINE.

PARRY SOUND, Canada, August 8, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I perceive by the small ticket on the paper, that my subscription for the SIGNS is fully due, which I inclose herewith, and permit me to say that I was both pleased and profited, I trust, when I read in the last issue of the paper of the bold, scriptural and honorable manner in which you were enabled, in a gospel spirit, not only to an-

swer a fool according to his folly, but to so utterly refute the slanderous and injurious statements in the Thompson letter.

It is just fifty-three years ago since God, I trust, was pleased to call me by his grace, reveal his Son in me, and led me to enjoy a foretaste of that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory. Yet I am still a poor sinner, needing mercy every hour, and a very, very great deal of forbearance from others of the dear people of God. It appears to me if grace manifest in the heart does not make a man feel his own ignorance, and make him truthful and honest before God, it is a grave question whether it has done anything at all. No reader of the SIGNS, or spiritual hearer of the beloved brethren who labor in word and doctrine, can truthfully say, so far as my observation goes, that they utter error against the Lord, or make the souls of the righteous sad. I am aware, beloved, that all this may appear, and in a sense is, altogether superfluous and unnecessary, the foundation being not an arm of flesh, but eternal, immutable. Neither have I spoken on any principle but that of "honor to whom honor is due." Right here, if our beloved brethren and sisters who speak and write for the consolation of the tempest-tossed and afflicted people of God, can bear with the word of exhortation from a poor, old, blind ignoramus as I feel myself to be, a walking pest, a very sink of sin, I would say, Beloved, may you be led of the Spirit to continue in the grand and glorious work of comforting those who are troubled on every side, inside and outside, perplexed, persecuted, cast down, but not destroyed. What a mercy, not destroyed.

Do as you like with this, and with sincere sympathy, and earnest desires, God willing, for brother Beebe's recovery, I remain less than the least,

W. KNIFTON.

ASHLEY, Ohio.

DEAR BROTHER:—If you will give me the privilege, I would like to ask the readers of the SIGNS if there are any Baptists in or near Johnson Co., Kentucky? If any one will kindly send me the name and address of some Baptist or other reliable person living there, they will confer a great favor. Also, as I am thinking of making a change in order to give my little boy a good education, I would be glad to know where I could find a good location in some town or city where I could have the privilege of attending Baptist meeting. I am a music teacher, and would prefer a place where there was not too much competition. Will some brother or sister kindly inform me where I would be likely to find a place suitable for my work, and offering good educational advantages for my ten-year-old son. I think I can present satisfactory testimonials as regards my ability to teach music. Have had six years' experience.

Your unworthy sister,

JOIE EKELBERRY WICKHAM.

(Box 4,) ASHLEY, Ohio.

BANKSVILLE, Ga.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I inclose you to-day the corresponding Minutes of our Association (Oconee), directed to the Warwick, Delaware and Delaware River Associations, which I hope you will endeavor to get to each meeting in time.

If the clerks of these Associations would give their addresses in their Minutes it would be quite a favor to me, as I then could send each package direct myself. We wish to keep up our correspondence as far as we are able. I could write more if space would allow.

Yours unworthily,

J. J. MANLEY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1900.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

DO WE NEED A CONVENTION?

WE have noticed in a number of our exchanges a call for a general meeting in Fulton, Ky., November, 1900, of all claiming to be Old School or Primitive Baptists. The object of this meeting is said to be to endeavor to heal the breaches that are being made in the Old School or Primitive Baptist ranks, by the mooted questions of the day, such as limited predestination, conditional, or merited time salvation, &c. What would some of the fathers who have been called home twenty or more years ago thought to have read such a notice? Nearly seventy years ago there was a convention called at Black Rock, Md., by a few faithful brethren to protest against the inventions of men that were then being brought into the church, and at that meeting was drafted and published, certain articles as the faith of those assuming the name of Old School or Primitive Baptists, and among them were the very principles of truth now challenged by those calling for this meeting.

For nearly fifty years the doctrine upon which the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church was founded, was advocated and published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES with practically no opposition by any claiming our name, but within the last few years there have arose a number of men and publications pronouncing as heresy some of these principles of truth in which the brethren for so many years have taken sweet comfort and consolation in times of trouble. Can it be that these children are so much wiser in their day and generation, and our fathers but enjoyed a "fool's paradise"? We anticipate the answer to the above, which is, "A hoary-headed error does not become a truth." We fully admit this, but aside from the question of the truth or error of these principles, we do insist that those who maintain the principles adopted at Black Rock, Md., in 1832, where "the saints were first called" "Old School or Primitive Baptists," are the only ones that have any right to the name, and those refuting these principles should designate themselves by another name, and thereby avoid confusion. Is there confusion and are there dissensions? If so, who has caused them? Can the cause of the trouble be laid at the door of those who have all along contended for that faith which for nearly fifty years worked such sweet communion among the saints? Are not the dissensions caused by the dissenters?

While those who have brought in the new questions of the day have fallen into confusion, those who are still contending for the old doctrine are enjoying the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," and have no need of a convention "to heal the breaches." Therefore we feel that for us to join in this meeting would not be advisable, for we are if anything more firmly established in the truth of the old principles, as we read the futile efforts to refute them, and not being a "dissenter," we have nothing to adjust in the truth as it has ever been advocated in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. B.

TOTAL DEPRAVITY.

WHILE this particular expression does not occur in the Bible, yet it conveys a Bible doctrine. By various expressions the church has always presented the truth contained in these two words as her faith. What do they mean, and by what Scriptures are they supported? They mean that in the fall man became wholly alienated from God, and from good. They mean that not only in outward life and deed, but in the heart, the affections, purposes and desires, man has become altogether a stranger to all that is excellent, and an enemy to God by wicked works. They mean that if man be left to himself, with no restraining influences, either of God's providence or grace, he will always choose self instead of God, vice instead of virtue, wrath instead of love, and evil deeds instead of good works. They mean that man, left wholly to himself, will always exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped. In this let it be remembered that man is regarded as being unrestrained by any consideration, save to carry out his own desires which are of the flesh. Total depravity means that there is nothing good in man by nature, or as considered in himself.

This doctrine has always been denied by nine-tenths of the professing world; it is denied by all save believers in sovereign grace. Conditionalists of every stripe contend as they are bound to do in consistency with conditionalism, that man has not become totally depraved in the fall, that some remnants of his pristine righteousness remain with him, that he is still sufficiently godlike to discern between good and evil in his very nature, and that if man will, he can still cultivate the good, and so at last rise from the ruins of the fall, into his former state of excellency. According to their view, the only difference between a believer and an unbeliever, between one who serves God and one who does not, between a regenerate and an unregenerate man, is one of cultivation. These claim that man is only in a state of alienation from God, and that he is at enmity against God, and not enmity itself. But while denied by carnal professors, it is yet a doctrine firmly held by all who have come to know the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the plague of their own heart. Now the question is, Are they justified in holding this doctrine? Is it a doctrine found in the word of God? We do not now appeal to the conviction of this doctrine, wrought in all believers by the facts of experience, or by the revelation which the light of the Spirit of God dwelling in the heart gives of it, but will appeal to the Scriptures, by which all experience, and every sentiment is to be finally judged. Experience confirms the testimony of the word, but after all, the church of God has always required a "Thus saith the Lord" from the Scriptures, for every principle of doctrine to which she has held.

We will refer to several portions of the word as teaching this truth.

First. Paul seems to have been firmly convinced of total depravity in our fallen nature when he said, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing." If no good thing dwelt in his flesh, certainly all that was there must have been evil. This is surely then, total depravity in the flesh, and as there was nothing but flesh in the apostle before the Spirit of truth came to him, he must have had no good thing in him previous to his call by grace. The flesh, as used by Paul here, does not mean our bodies, or the members of our body, such as our

hands and feet, or tongues, which shall return to dust again, but he means the whole natural man, including all the thoughts, passions, desires and purposes, which dwelt within him. He means just what a believer means now, when he says, By nature there is no good in me.

Second. Paul says to the brethren at Ephesus, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." If death means anything, it means entire separation from the thing to which we are dead. To be dead in trespasses and sins, is to be wholly united to them, and wholly separated from righteousness and God, and that which is separated from the source of all good, must be depraved. "Death in sin" is the exact opposite of the language "dead to sin," by which the state of the redeemed is described in the word. Paul says that the people of God were by nature the children of wrath even as others, but now they have been quickened, or made alive, from the dead; they now have become alive unto God. If death in sin means anything, it means wholly swallowed up by sin, and entire separation from righteousness, or total depravity.

Third. The description given of man in the first three chapters of the letter to the Romans, settles the matter so far as this doctrine is concerned. We cannot of course quote all there written, on account of taking up too much space. We will refer to a few expressions. "There is none righteous, no, not one." Chapter third, verse ten, then read on to verse eighteen: "There is none that understandeth." "They are all gone out of the way." "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." "Their throat is an open sepulchre." "Their feet are swift to shed blood." "The way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes." In this same chapter Paul says expressly, that there is no difference, that all have come short. It might be asked very pertinently, If the first three chapters of Romans do not teach the doctrine of total depravity, how would language be so put together as to teach it? Much of all this language is quoted by Paul from the Old Testament, and thus it is shown that every age is the same. One generation is no better nor worse by nature than another.

Fourth. We read in Genesis vi. 5, that "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of the heart was only evil continually." This was in the days before the flood. This language does not relate simply to what men do, but to the source of all that they do. It is in the very nature of man to do evil, and so in the first clause of this same verse, it is said that the wickedness of man was great on the earth. It is taught here that men do wickedly because they are wicked. The Bible has to do with what men are, rather than with what they do. The doing is often restrained, but the heart is evil, and out of it proceed all evil things, such as murders, adulteries, thefts, drunkenness, blasphemies, and all other evil things. If every imagination of the thoughts of the heart are evil, and only evil, and that continually, it surely is not doing violence to the text to say that it teaches the doctrine of total depravity.

Fifth. The language in Ephesians ii. 12, teaches the same thing; of all the Gentiles Paul here says, they "were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."

This is certainly in full harmony with what he has said in verse five, concerning the death in sin, dwelt upon above. Could a darker picture of the condition of fallen and unregenerate man be drawn than this verse contains? The conclusion of this indictment, with its five counts against man, is that he is without God in the world, and that is only another way of saying man is without good in the world, seeing the Savior expressly says, "There is none good but God." Let it be remembered that these, and other Scriptures, relate to man as he is all over the world, and in every time, and under all conditions. They relate to man in the very essence of his being, when left to himself, and showing out his nature unrestrained either by providence or grace. What a soul-humbling picture is this. Paul had come to know this truth, and so he said, as quoted before, "In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing." Paul had not only come to know what the Scriptures say about it, but the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ, had shown him not only the mystery of godliness, but also the equally deep mystery of iniquity. As grace abounded in him, it revealed still more and more clearly the abounding of sin. There is but one thing, in the view of Paul, that can exceed the vastness of the world of iniquity in man, and that is the superabounding grace of God. And every child of God in daily experience goes on to know the same things, and at last comes to know that the whole matter of salvation is summed up in this, "A sinner saved by grace."

Many other Scriptures teach the same sad doctrine of total depravity, beside these which we have quoted, but we will forbear any more direct quotations. Beside these direct quotations it may be said that every other principle of doctrine is in full harmony with this doctrine, and, when understood, necessarily imply total depravity. The atonement implies it; the doctrine of the new birth, implies it; the doctrine of quickening, implies it; the need of daily grace to keep us, implies it; and so do all Bible principles of truth, when rightly understood. If there be any good in man by nature, then the atonement is not the needful thing which the Scriptures claim it to be, the new birth is not a birth at all, but only a reformation, and the keeping of the man by grace, is but the adding of a little help to him, who can do most of the work for himself. Nothing can magnify the grace of God in salvation, as does this doctrine, when understood rightly. How great the grace that can and does save from the lowest pit. David calls it "a horrible pit of miry clay." The depths of iniquity is called elsewhere in the word, a bottomless pit. Since man is such by nature, how infinite the grace that can save him.

Questions arise concerning this doctrine, in the minds of the people of God. These are not the cavilings of self-righteous men, but the sincere and honest inquiries of those who desire first of all to know the truth. These questions arise in hearts which confess this doctrine to be true with themselves, and who sadly say for themselves, as did Paul, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing." While confessing this with all their heart, yet questions come up which they do not feel able to solve. Perhaps the chief question which perplexes the mind often is this, If this doctrine be true, and that it is true, such ones do not doubt, how is it that there is so much good in the earth, even among

those who do not profess godliness? How is it that men are such good citizens, neighbors, husbands and fathers? How is it that men respond so readily to calls for help by their needy fellows? How is it that so many men who do not believe in any future life even, are yet honest, and honorable, and kindly to all? How can all these facts consist with the teachings of the Scripture, concerning the absolutely lost and ungodly conditions of man? How can a man who has been honest in all his relations with others, who has always been kind to the needy, who has always been faithful in all the relations of life which he has been called to fill, when the light of the grace of God shines in his heart, confess himself the chief of sinners, and the vilest of the vile, and acknowledge that in him is to be found no good thing? How is it that not only the thief on the cross, but also the righteous Paul, confesses himself the worst of men? How is it that in our churches all who come and find fellowship there, claim that they are the most unworthy of all, no matter how vile or how upright their former life may have been? These are the facts of Scripture testimony, and these are the facts of christian testimony as well. How then do all these things consist, with the immense amount of love, truth, honesty and kindness there is undeniably in the world?

In reply, we would say that these good things do not at all affect the doctrine of total depravity, in the nature of man, but they do magnify the kind providence and grace of God, which can and does restrain the wickedness of man from outward expression. In the case of believers, this needs no further exposition. All can see how that grace can and does restrain and constrain its subjects, so that sin is overcome, and righteousness is wrought out in the heart and lives of the subjects of grace. We will say no more about this.

Why do not unregenerate men all of them run to the same excess of evil? Why are not all men on a level in their feelings, passions and outward life, with the most debased savage? That in this there is a difference, does not, as said before, prove that some are not totally depraved in nature, but does magnify the mercy and power of God toward men. The very presence in the world of grace and righteousness, dwelling in the hearts and lives of some men, has a leavening effect among the inhabitants of earth. Beside, unknown to themselves, God restrains the hearts of men, as well as their actions. Beside this there are also the restraints of shame, and law, and custom, which are in the appointment of God, and all of which must be taken into the account. Take away from men these things, as in time of war, or in the presence of some great crime, and see how soon men become as demons in rage and malice, and how the most civilized of men will manifest all the hellish passions of the most ferocious savage. These moments when God seems for a time to leave men to themselves show what man would be and do at all times if left to himself. It is said of one servant of God that when he saw a man being led to his execution for some ferocious crime, he said, "That would be me, were it not for the grace of God." And all men, even the unregenerate, might well say, "Such would I be, were it not for the restraining providence of God." All this is fully taught in the language, "The wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."

We leave these thoughts for the con-

sideration of our readers. Of one thing we feel fully persuaded, viz: all who know the Lord indeed, will subscribe to the charge of total depravity, so far as they themselves are concerned, and that if not allowed to run to the same excess of rioting as others, it is because God has shown them special mercy, and they will feel that they desire to magnify the grace which has saved, and daily kept them. Such ones will say in their moments of devotion, "O, how great has thy mercy been to me, who am in no wise better than my fellows." Such ones feel that greater mercy has been shown to them than could possibly be shown to any one else. The blessed part of this doctrine is, it exalts the grace that saves.

C.

TRIP TO KENTUCKY.

It was our privilege to attend the sessions of the Licking and Mt. Pleasant Associations, in Kentucky, this last September, and we feel desirous of making some acknowledgment of the kindness shown us by all the dear kindred in Christ, with whom we met while there. It is impossible for us to write privately to all, for want of time, and so we desire to return our hearty acknowledgments through the Signs. Our visit of eight days among the brethren of those Associations was altogether pleasant in every way to us, and it was owing to the attention shown us in every way, that it was so enjoyable. We had long desired to visit these meetings, but until this year the way has not been opened for us to do so.

We left home on Tuesday before the commencement of the Licking Association the next Friday, and reached Cincinnati on Wednesday evening, when we were met and cared for that night in the family of the late Elder Danks, whom we once saw many years ago, at the Delaware Association. We had never met before, but we were at once fully at home. The next morning we went to Campbellsburg, where is the home of Elder Eubanks, and from that time on we were in company with the brethren of the two Associations all the time until we were compelled to bid them good bye to return home. It is not our purpose to give the details of our visit. We met Elders Eubanks, P. W. Sawin, and Ritter, who belong to those associations. Elder Hawkins we did not meet, for which we were sorry, he was detained at home by the extreme illness of his son. We also met Elder David Bartley, whom we had not seen before for twenty-six years. We were truly glad to take his hand, and look into his face again, and especially to hear the words of gospel truth which fell from his lips. His preaching was as it was twenty-six years ago, of the plain, simple, gospel truth, which always is to the comfort and edifying of the people of God. We were truly glad to meet him again, after so many years. We also met two brethren who are held in high esteem, who have been licensed to speak in the name of the Lord, one was a brother Bond, and the other Dudley G. Johnson, who is a son of the late Elder J. F. Johnson, so well known to many in the east, as well as at his home in Kentucky. We did not learn the first name of brother Bond. We heard them both speak with acceptance, and to our pleasure and satisfaction. We were favored to spend several nights at the home of the late brother Farmer, who for so many years held a large place in the affections of all who love the Baptist cause, and who was also known by many of our brethren in the east. We, as well as many others, were cared for by his be-

reaved companion, and by brother McCoun, whose companion is a daughter of brother Farmer, and who had come there to assist in the entertainment of the Association.

We would be glad to speak of all by name, from whom we received attention, but time and space forbid. We desire all to accept this expression of gratitude from us, and to believe that we shall never forget all their kindness. These brethren certainly love sound doctrine, and are faithful. During the two meetings but very little time was spent in any sort of conversation, other than concerning the things of the kingdom, and in singing. This is as it should be, when we are together as brethren of one common family. It was good to be there, and we shall desire more earnestly than ever to visit them all again. May God keep and bless the brethren and ministers of these associations, is our sincere desire and prayer for Jesus' sake.

C.

PLEASE BE SURE

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

By observing the above instructions our subscribers will enable us to more accurately keep their accounts.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

JOHN IV. 14.

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

This text presents a part of what our Lord said to the woman of Samaria, and like all the words which proceeded from his mouth, is full of interest and instruction to those who are divinely prepared to understand and appreciate the doctrine which he taught. The circumstances attending this interview are calculated to impress the mind with a sense of the perfection of the divine arrangement in the counsel of God, and the connection of his providence with the purpose of his grace. In the execution of the great work assigned our Redeemer when here in the flesh, he had occasion to go from place to place, and many circumstances which to the natural mind might seem trifling or accidental, are shown to be of vital importance, and highly essential to the accomplishment of the work which as the Mediator was given him to do. Such was the case in this instance; he had departed from Judea to go into Galilee, and he *must needs* go through Samaria. We are not informed of any other reason for this necessity or *needs-be*, but what appears in the circumstance of his meeting the woman at Jacob's well, the interview and conversation which took place, the effect produced on the woman, and also on the citizens of Samaria, who came out to see him, and who professed faith in him as the true Messiah. As he must needs go through Samaria, this woman must needs come out of the city at that very time to draw water, and every other incident recorded was equally important. And thus we believe

in every instance of the calling, quickening and conversion of the children of the kingdom, the special providence of God may be clearly traced. God has appointed the bounds of our habitation, so that we cannot pass them.

> "His decree who form'd the earth,
> Fixed our first and second birth;
> Parents, native place and time,
> All appointed were by him."

By a well directed train of providential events, we find the Redeemer in conversation with the woman of Samaria. He asks of her drink from her pitcher; she expresses her surprise that he, being a Jew, should ask drink of a woman of Samaria, as the Jews and Samaritans had no dealings together. "Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knowest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." The woman, like all the Arminian world, entertained the false impression that God is as dependent on means and instrumentalities for the accomplishment of his purposes, as we are, for she knew not the gift of God, nor the Son of God, whom to know is eternal life, therefore she betrayed her ignorance of both by saying to him, "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep." This is a prevalent delusion among all will-worshipers and work-mongrel religionists, that God is dependent on his creatures to furnish him with means and instruments with which to supply the waters of life. Sinners are now represented as sinking by thousands into hell, not because they are sinners, but for the want of means, men, money, tracts, schools, or something to draw with, and it is published far and wide that if men would be more active and liberal in supplying the Lord with something to draw with, multitudes would be converted, and the earth would soon be all evangelized. Whence, thought this ignorant woman, can he supply the water of life of which he speaks, unless he draw it from the well, and as the well is deep, how can he draw it thence without *means?* "Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever shall drink of this water shall thirst again." And it is even so with all who drink, religiously, of the religious systems, doctrines, works and inventions of men, which result from their popular means-using machinery, who for the time being feel their natural passions of fear, remorse and terror somewhat allayed, but surely as there is a God in heaven, they shall thirst again. Their hopes which are predicated on their works, and instrumentalities will fail them, when God shall execute the words recorded, Isaiah xxviii. 17, 18. Like the waters of earthly fountains, which may satisfy our natural thirst for a time, but the draught must be repeated as often as the thirst recurs; so with false religious impressions, they only satisfy a carnal, depraved propensity which will recur from time to time as their fleshly passions are excited, and their natural fears disturbed; but in all such cases a revival, through the agency of a protracted meeting, exciting preaching, or some other instrumentality to *draw with*, is required at short intervals, to prevent their falling from what they call grace, and losing their religion; for they shall thirst again.

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." On this part of the subject our views are called for; and while we cheerfully give them, we will remark that our views, or the views of any other person, are of little worth except so

far as they are sustained by the word of the Lord. Whatever views may be entertained on the Scriptures, cannot change the truth which they express. From what we have written, the reader will perceive that we understand our Lord to draw a striking contrast between the earthly fountains, which are relied upon for salvation, and which are only available by the use of humanly devised means and instrumentalities to *draw with*, and his own method of salvation by grace, which is altogether superior to and independent of the agencies, means and instrumentalities of either good or bad men.

Three propositions are suggested. First, the figurative import of the water, which Jesus gives. Second, his purpose to give it to some, but not to all of the human family. And third, the lasting and blessed effects of the water of life resulting to those unto whom Christ shall give it.

First. *The water*, and what is figuratively signfied by it. It is here called, in distinction from that drawn by instrumentalities from earthly fountains, *living water*; and it is elsewhere called the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb; and, as defined on the last day of the feast of tabernacles, it signifies that Spirit which they that believe on him shall receive, (John viii. 37-39.) Having reference to that Spirit which he promised to send after his resurrection, Even the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not neither knoweth him; but ye know him, because he dwelleth with you and shall be in you. (John xiv. 17.) Hence, when preaching the doctrine of the new and spiritual birth, he said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."—John iii. 5. Our natural birth, by which we are made manifest as the members of the old Adam, is of the flesh, and the life developed in that fleshly birth is not abiding, it is mortal and transitory, like the waters drawn from Jacob's well. But that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and it is life, and unlike our natural life, it is spiritual, immortal and eternal. Those who are born of it, receive it, are sealed by it, as the Holy Spirit of promise, and they are sealed unto the day of redemption, that is the day of the redemption of our body. (Eph. i. 13, 14; Rom. viii. 23.) This Spirit of life and immortality which is called the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, (Rom. viii. 2,) and which is not the spirit of bondage, again to fear, like the spirit of will-worship, instrumentalities, bondage and fear; but it is the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, and which shall in due time also quicken the mortal bodies of all who possess it, by the spirit that dwelleth in them. (Rom. viii. 11.) This Spirit of life and immortality is the Spirit of Christ, and if any man have it not, he is none of his; and it is Christ, as the apostle declares, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness."—Rom. viii. 8-10.

From these, with numerous other Scriptures, it is clearly demonstrated that the living water which Christ giveth, is the Spirit of life and immortality, the Spirit of holiness, the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba Father. Water is an appropriate and instructive figure of this Spirit of life, and the fitness of the emblem may be contemplated in the following particulars:

1. Water is an indispensable element; natural life cannot be sustained without it. So in the absence of this spiritual life, we were represented as being in a pit wherein is no water. (Zech. ix. 11.) And the fruitless inventions of the carnal Israelites, in looking for life and salvation by their own carnal works and instrumentalities, are charged with having committed two horrible things, for says God, They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water. (Jer. ii. 12, 13.) Likewise the presumptuous wretches who are offering salvation to sinners, and pretending to be commissioned to aid in the conversion of sinners, are by the apostle Jude denominated, "Clouds without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots."—Jude 12. Being twice dead, they cannot contain any of the water of life which they pretend to offer to their deluded hearers. Peter says of them, "These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever."—2 Peter ii. 17. When the children of Israel were in the wilderness and without water, they were in a dying condition, until God commanded, and Moses smote the rock which was in Horab; thence from the rock the water flowed in streams of salvation. In this figure, Paul says, "And that Rock was Christ." God, according to what we have quoted from Jeremiah, is the Fountain of living water, and God was manifest in the flesh of Christ, when he was smitten by the rod of Moses, and the waters of salvation broke forth, to follow all his redeemed family to their journey's end. Isaiah says of Zion, the city of our solemnities, "But there, [in Zion] the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, [or instruments to draw with,] neither shall gallant ship pass thereby."—Isaiah xxxiii. 21. This is that river of which David sung, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. (Psalm xlvi. 4.) It was seen by Ezekiel, proceeding from the threshold of the sanctuary of God, of which God said to the prophet, "And it shall come to pass that everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live."—Ezek. xlvii. 1-9. John also had a pleasing view of it: "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."—Rev. xxii. 1. Of these waters God has said, "The beasts of the field shall honor me; the dragons and the owls; because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert; to give drink to my people, my chosen." —Isaiah xliii. 20. "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water."—Isaiah xli. 17, 18. "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be."—Zech. xiv. 8.

2. We may also speak of the cleansing quality of water as applicable to the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Although the carnal, depraved nature of man remains in his flesh, and keeps up a perpetual warfare in the children of grace, between the flesh and Spirit, the old man and the

new man; yet it is certain that the grace of God, developed in his children, will produce a reformation. They cease to fight against the truth, and they no longer feel opposed to God's people, to his method of grace and salvation, but the things which they once hated they are made to love, and the society in which they had no pleasure or interest, now becomes the society of their choice.

3. The harmonizing, mingling, or unity of waters, is well calculated to set forth the unity of the Spirit as it is manifested in the saints of God. Let two who are born of the water and of the Spirit, come together, the one from Hindostan or Africa, and the other from a more refined part of the world, however hostile to each other in all their natural prejudices, as soon as they pronounce the *Shibboleth*, or manifest that they have both drank of that living water which is in them as wells of water, springing up into everlasting life, all their prejudices melt away, and they come together as two drops of water, and are of one heart and one mind.

Second. We proposed to notice the purposes of God, as implied in our text, to give this water to some, but not to all the sons of men. The words, He that drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, fully imply that there are those unto whom he will give it. But we do not depend upon any logical deductions, or mere inferences however clearly deduced, but on the most positive and emphatic declarations of the word of God. First we will present the testimony of the Redeemer himself, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live."—John v. 25. This passage most positively declares not only a fixed and irrevocable purpose, but also a pledge in which the veracity of Christ is involved, that some who are dead shall hear his voice and live; but whether all the dead or only some of the dead are included, must be ascertained from other portions of the word. To determine this matter, turn to the tenth chapter, twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth verses, and there we are informed who of the dead shall so hear and live. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." But perhaps a more direct declaration could not be expressed in our language, than that found in the appeal made by our Lord, to the Father, when he "lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."—John xvii. 1–3. But to settle the matter forever beyond all cavil, turn to his words in John vi. 37, 44, 45, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." As the water which Christ shall give, is the water of life, or living water, we see that those only are partakers of it, who are drawn by the Father, taught of God, quickened by the voice of the Son of God, and these

being quickened, are qualified to appreciate the waters of life, because they, and only they, are capable of thirsting for living water. And the thirsty only are called to the waters. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," cries the inspired Isaiah. (lv. 1.) To which Christ himself responds, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." As none but quickened sinners are thirsty, none but the thirsty are called, and as none but such as are drawn by the Father can come to the place of these "broad rivers and streams," so all who are so drawn shall come, shall live, shall in no wise be cast out, but shall be raised up at the last day. All therefore who know the gift of God, and who the Savior is, will ask of him, for they being taught of God, have learned that God alone is in Christ, and that all the waters of life are in him, therefore it is that they shall come to him, and that they shall ask for him, and he shall give, not offer, to them the waters of life freely, not conditionally, and the water which he shall give them shall be in them. We now come to our last general proposition, which is,

Thirdly. To speak of the lasting and blessed effects of this living water to all those unto whom Christ shall give it. He shall never thirst, but it shall be in him a well of living water springing up unto everlasting life. That he shall never thirst, does not mean that christians do not thirst after God, holiness, happiness, &c., in the sense in which the psalmist expressed in Psalm xlii. 12, "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God," also Psalm cxliii., "I stretch forth my hands unto thee; my soul thirsteth after thee as a thirsty land." But the peculiar sense in which the figure is employed in our text, is that they who receive from Christ the water of life which he shall give them, shall never be deprived of it, for it shall be in them a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Christ, who is the fountain, is himself in them, and from that living fountain the waters of life shall be ever springing up. Of this life which is called water, it is said, "God hath given us eternal life and the life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."—1 John v. 12. Hence Paul, in describing the difference between this living water and that which hath to be DRAWN with human instrumentalities, says, "But the righteousness which is of faith, speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend up into heaven, that is to bring Christ down from above, or who shall descend into the deep, that is to bring up Christ again from the dead. But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart, that is the word of faith which we preach."—Rom. x. 6–8. This well being in them, and the waters of life springing up in their hearts, moves their lips to proclaim his goodness, and to talk of his power. Water may be conducted by pipes to any depth and then elevated to a level with its fountain head; but, without some other power or agency, it can never rise above its own level or fountain. Hence the water, or life, which may be obtained by workmongers who fancy that they have something to draw with, will never elevate them above themselves, as the fountain from whence they draw the life of their religion, is in the passions, will, resolutions and determinations of their own carnal nature, it will rise no higher than themselves. But the water of life which Jesus gives, is clear as crystal, and proceeds forth from the throne of God and the Lamb, it therefore is springing up into everlasting life.

However dark and disconsolate the children of God may feel, all their trials are wisely appointed for the trial of their faith, and in every other respect, for their good and the glory of God, and the more they are exercised by the springing up of these living waters within them, the more they may expect to see and feel, and mourn their own carnal, depraved nature, and the more they may expect to be tempted by the adversary. But this rather proves the existence in them of the well of water, than otherwise. But it is consoling to be assured by our Lord Jesus Christ himself, that all unto whom this water is given, are secured forever, and shall never be deprived of that life which he gives to them, and which he is in them. They shall in that sense never thirst, because he has given them eternal life and they shall never perish.

What we have written we cheerfully submit to the criticism of all who wish to criticise, as we have no motive other than the advancement of the truth; if anything shall be found in our views which is not fully sustained by the Scriptures, let it be rejected. Prove all things, and hold fast only to that which is good.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 1, 1858.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

William Lucas Lee was born near Crawfordsville, Ind., Feb. 4th, 1840, and died near Grant's Pass, Oregon, May 4th, 1898, after an illness of five days. His disease was "la grippe." The third and fourth days, and part of the fifth day, he walked about the house, and sometimes joined in singing as our daughter would play familiar hymns at the organ. We were newly arrived in that part of this state, and had moved from our own to a rented house, that I might teach a term of school, while he attended a small fruit farm. I was compelled to be away during the daytime on Monday, and kept the usual night watch that fires and medicines be not neglected. The sudden change came Tuesday afternoon, when he called me with every breath, until I arrived at 4:05 p. m. A telegram and letters were sent from nearest offices and we watched each train as it glided by, but neither medicines nor physician were so prompt as the dark messenger's dart that took our loved one to his long rest. During this time he recalled the sacred memories of his sainted parentage, saying, How glorious the triumphs of grace that impelled the great grandfather to preach in the wilderness and waste places while a soldier in Washington's army. Also of grandfather Lee, who many times swam the swollen streams to pass through remote parts of the Ohio valley. These were the Elders James and John Lee. Finally the sainted father and mother, Daniel and Lottie, were mingled in fond terms with his early experience, and the sweet fellowship of kindred in Christ, that brought the church, the bride, the chosen one, in sweet fellowship. Knowing the trials and pangs his ever generous nature had experienced, I said, "Papa, do you, can you, forgive all?" He said firmly, and in a tone of strength and calmness, "Yes, I forgive all, I can do no more, I can do no less; I pray that grace be given to all the members of Christ's immaculate body." The photos of his parents were now placed in his hand; he said, "Yes, dear ones, a few moments more." He then repeated the words to a picture of our dear firstborn, adding, "I do not weep for Clem, but for you who will soon be in physical want." The alarming symptom was, two to five strong pulsations would be followed by a pallor and no indication of pulse could we detect. He called us to him, gave each a parting blessing, and spoke freely of the near approach of death. Would not see us in tears, but said, "As I have lived, so desire I to die without fear." At his request the children retired for the night, a neighbor assuring us that many hours or days were ahead. It was after a few moments' sleep that he called me to his bed to ask for nourishment and some coffee. As I returned with the cup he arose and sat upright, took the cup, and after one swallow said, "O Lord! is it possible?" The change of countenance was not mistakable. The children came immediately, and received the cordial welcome and handshake so characteristic of his generous nature, then a brief good bye, and in two or three seconds he had folded the weary hands, closed the weary eyes, and was in realization of the peace that passeth understanding.

His experience dated from his seventeenth year, when the burden of grief that had weighed his mind was lifted by the brightness and light of God's love. He was baptized soon afterwards, and lived a life of faith that God would by his mighty power and firm decree exalt every vessel of mercy to its appointed place. The sacred prayers and exclamations that were interluded in all his last conversations led me to speak of his early experience; he replied by saying that it remained as an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast, and no hour of darkness ever became so gloomy as to cause a doubt of that being a foretaste

of heaven. Also he said, "I shall only realize its fullness when I leave this mortal, to put on immortality, and see the King of glory."

The funeral was attended by a large concourse of people; a service read was the last token of respect. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord," was the text.

We ask an interest in your prayers.

MRS. M. J. LEE.

By request of her devoted, bereaved and sorrowful husband, Elder F. Loden, I attempt to prepare a brief notice of the death of his beloved companion, our highly esteemed sister in Christ, **Rebecca Frances Loden,** who departed this life at her home in Lindale, Smith Co., Texas, Sept. 6th, 1900, after twelve days of intense suffering from congestion of the stomach and bowels. She was the daughter of Isaac and Almedia H. Stone, and was born in the State of Tennessee, August 25th, 1843, and moved to Texas with her parents when six years of age, joined the old order of Baptists when young, at Concord Church, Rusk Co., Texas, and was baptized by Elder Melvin Jeter. She was married to Elder F. Loden on August 15th, 1883, in Vanzandt Co., Texas, Elder F. Odom officiating.

Elder Loden writes me: "She was buried in the Lindale cemetery, and in the absence of a minister of our order, the funeral services were conducted by James Kelly."

For seventeen years the home of our dear brother was not only rendered happy and agreeable to himself, but also to a large circle of brethren, sisters and devoted friends, by her cheerful and kind disposition and manners, when visiting her home, for at our meetings, as well as at all other times, when they desired to make it so, the home of our brother and sister was a welcome one to all Primitive Baptists and friends. But now she is gone, and will indeed be sadly missed by her devoted husband, relatives, the little church at Lindale, and the many brethren, sisters and friends of her acquaintance. I first became acquainted with sister "Fannie" in 1877, at her father's home, in Rusk Co , Texas, which was much given to hospitality. They were subscribers to and constant readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I have known our sister ever since as a devoted Primitive Baptist, going often, far and near, to our associational, union and other meetings, with her husband. She will be sadly missed at these meetings. May the Lord bless all the afflicted with the spirit of reconciliation.

H. B. JONES.

MT. VERNON, Texas.

Elizabeth M. Farguson Reed, daughter of Rice and Abigal Farguson, was born in Macomb, McDonough Co., Ill., July 30th, 1836, and died May 31st, 1900. She had been troubled all winter with water tumor in the abdomen, and it seemed to be cured, but her stomach became greatly weakened, and asthma and dropsy set in, and her circulation was so greatly impaired that she became so feeble she could not walk alone for some five weeks before the end came. She was married to Amos Reed, at Mount Carroll, Ill., Oct. 25th, 1855, and immediately moved with her husband to live on his farm in Peoria Co., Illinois; moved again to Franklin Co., Iowa, in 1865, and to Sedgewick Co., Kansas, in 1870, and then to near Haddam, Washington Co., Kansas, in 1872, where she resided until called to her rest. She was the mother of thirteen children; five preceded her to the grave; two were buried in Illinois, two in Iowa, and one in Kansas.

She became interested in religion in her youth, and tried to work out her own salvation by going to the Means Baptists, I believe it was, but did not find a home until she came with her husband to the Mill Creek Church, in Washington Co., Kansas, about the year 1892, and ever after lived a consistent life. Her home was always a home for the brethren. She leaves the husband of her youth, with eight children, to mourn the loss of a true and faithful wife, and a kind and indulgent mother, but their loss is her eternal gain. She has fought the good fight, and has entered into her rest, and her labors do follow her. They have the sympathy of a large circle of brethren, friends and neighbors.

J. P. AYDELOTT.

Mr. Morris Baldwin, having lived to number about 83 years, died at his beautiful home near Baldwin station, Baltimore Co., Md., July 27th, 1900. His disease was something in the form of cancer. One had grown to an enormous size, while others that were smaller had made their appearance. The deceased made no public profession, but for thirty years was as regular in his attendance at the Harford meetings as any member we had, and took a deep interest in the affairs of that church, but when spoken to would answer that a sense of unfitness was in the way, but by that church he was regarded as one whom the Lord had given an ear to hear the blessed things of the gospel, and he continued to come while he was able. I visited him several times after his case became serious. He followed me on leaving to the porch, and threw his arms around me, saying, "I think I will be able to get to the next meeting," but he failed to get there, and never was able to meet with us again. At my next visit he said all hope of recovery was gone, but, said he, "My hope and trust is in God." He requested me to attend his funeral, but I was in Delaware at the time of his death, and got word of it there, but too late to get there. I believe there was some service on the occasion, but by whom I know not, but I feel that a good man has fallen asleep. Aside from that fitness which nothing but sovereign grace can perform, he was highly es-

teemed in the neighborhood where he lived, as an exemplary man in his walk in life. He leaves two daughters and one son, the son and younger daughter are at home, the other daughter is married and lives near Long Green, Ala. They were very attentive to their dear father, and devoted to each other. May the Lord bless them.

From a well wisher,

WM. GRAFTON.

MEETINGS.

THE Welsh Tract Church has appointed a yearly meeting to commence on Saturday, Oct. 20th, 1900, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue for two days.

Those coming from Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore, will come via B. & O. R. R., Saturday morning. Trains leave Philadelphia, Twenty-Fourth and Chestnut Sts., at 7:30 a. m., and Baltimore, Camden station, at 7:55 a. m. Get tickets to Newark, Del.

Those coming on the Delaware Railroad, will come via Porter to Wilson, on Friday afternoon.

A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Any of the ministering brethren on their way to the Salisbury Association, are especially invited to attend, as we shall be glad to see them.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Association will be held this year (1900) with the church at Nassaongo, Wicomico Co., Md., commencing on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, and continuing three days. The place of meeting is about six miles southeast of Salisbury, so all coming by rail or boat will get tickets for Salisbury, where they will be met and taken care of.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth, ministering brethren especially. Hope to be strengthened and encouraged by your coming.

T. M. POULSON, Pastor.

P. H. HALL, Clerk.

THE First Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., have appointed a two days meeting to be held the fourth Saturday and Sunday (27th and 28th) of October, 1900.

WILLIAM BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie, N. Y., have appointed their yearly meeting to be held, if the Lord will, on the fourth Sunday and Saturday previous, in October, (27th and 28th) 1900, at 10 a. m. each day, at their meeting-house on Schoharie Hill.

We desire that ministers and brethren of other churches and associations of our faith and order, and all who love the truth, meet with us; all such are cordially invited.

Those who come to Cobbleskill will call on brother J. E. Livingston. Trains will be met at Howe's Cave, on Friday, the day before the meeting.

G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Olive & Hurley Old School Baptist Church is appointed to be held the first Saturday and Sunday in November, 1900.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Church Clerk.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1900. NO. 21.

POETRY.

A SINNER'S PLEA.

O, MY soul, why in such sadness?
  Pent up sighs are in my breast;
Dang'rous foes seem crowding round me,
  Sorely they disturb my rest.

Sin confronts me like a mountain,
  My poor heart seems black and vile;
Though I fain would live more holy,
  Still I'm sinning all the while.

Heavenly Father, canst thou heal me?
  Is there no escape for me?
Of myself I am so weary;
  O, dear Savior, rescue me.

I'm so weary of my straying,
  Wandering in forbidden ways;
O, dear Savior, lead me, keep me,
  And my heart shall sing thy praise.

Thou hast promised to deliver;
  Thine own sheep in safety keep,
But, dear Savior, dost thou love me?
  May I claim this promise sweet?

O, dear Lord, I'm such a sinner,
  Can it be that one so vile,
Still may venture on thy mercy,
  Hope to see thee on me smile?

Ah, I know I am not worthy,
  With my tears to bathe thy feet;
My poor lips are far too sinful
  To address the mercy-seat.

But, dear Lord, I am so hungry
  For one glimpse of thy dear face,
Some dear token of thy favor,
  O, dear Jesus, plead my case!

Blessed Master, canst thou heal me?
  Ease me of this bitter pain;
Fill me with thy blessed presence,
  Wash away each guilty stain.

Let me know that thou dost love me,
  O, dear Jesus, call me thine!
Then there's naught that can alarm me,
  At my lot I'll not repine.

O, dear Jesus, come thou near me,
  Lead me by thine own strong hand,
Till my trials all are over,
  Till I reach the better land.

JOIE E. WICKHAM.

ASHLEY, Ohio.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DAYTON, Washington.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—By special request of Elder I. N. Newkirk, and other brethren, I will try to reproduce a discourse delivered at our November meeting, in the Harmony Church, at Dayton, Washington. I had no thought of being called upon to reproduce the subject until after it was delivered, and I merely desire to comply with the request of the brethren. The discourse was something as follows:

Dear brethren, according to previous promise, I will try to-day to speak upon a controverted subject. I do not aim to hurt the feelings of any, but will try to

set forth the truth in harmony with the word of God. I will quote these texts as a foundation. First, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."—Rev. xxii. 17. Second, "So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."—Rom. ix. 16. Third, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him."—John vi. 44. I may not be able to change the views of any one, but I desire, if I know my own heart, above all things to set forth the gospel according to the truth of God our Savior.

First, consider the text, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

The popular idea drawn from this text is that God has set before the world life and death, and that it is left to the whole family of the Adamic race, to choose or refuse of their own free will. If they will, it is taught, they can comply with the conditions, and partake of the water of life, and be saved, but if they will not, they will be damned. Thus salvation is based upon the will of the creature. Now, dear brethren, this is a wrong conclusion, as it will not bear comparison with the second text, which declares that, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." And it is also contrary to the third, which says, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." If then the popular conclusion of the first text be right, both Paul and our Savior were wrong. But these Scriptures it is sure do not contradict each other, but a wrong application of the first causes a wrong conclusion. Now the text means just what it says, "Whosoever will, let him." This Scripture does not certainly apply to the world, or the unbeliever. Taking the water is based upon the will, as is shown in the text, and they have not this will. Our Savior said, "The world will love its own, and where the treasure is, there will your heart be also." One grievous error is this, that men can control their own wills. But the truth is that the will controls the man, and circumstances control the will.

I remember while conversing with a man some time since, he asserted that he did many things contrary to his will. I asked him to state one circumstance. "Well," said he, "it is contrary to my will to work in the wood-yard at the flume, and handle cold, wet wood from daylight to dark, for seventy-five cents." I said, "What do you do it for?" He said, "Because I have no other way to make a living?" "O well," I said, "this may be contrary to your feelings, but when you and your family grow hungry, and there is no other way to provide for them, the necessity produces a will in you to go to the yard and handle the cold, wet wood all day for seventy-five cents, thus it is evident that circumstances control the will in you to do this work, and you do it according to your will." If a man loves a certain pursuit in life, he wills to follow that pursuit, and will do so if he can. Some love one thing and some another; some love the ballroom, and their greatest delight and comfort is to be there; some love the gambling hell, and the card table, and its degrading results. And love for money causes some to sacrifice everything else to obtain it. Some frequent the saloon for the company they find there, and for intoxicating drinks, which will lead them into every excess of riot, and to sacrifice wife and children, and bring them to poverty and wretchedness. Some love

money so well that they will sacrifice the nearest and dearest friends to obtain it. Thus to gratify their wills, and the lusts of their own heart, they will give up all else.

Thus it is evident that the natural man loves the world, and will strive to obtain it, and to gratify all his desires, and the lusts of his heart. Now the one question which arises is this, How is this will, or these desires of the man, changed? It is claimed that this must be done by the man breaking from his former course, and beginning to do well, and thus become willing to do right. This cannot be true, for our Savior said, "No man can come to me except my Father draw him." And Paul said "that the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Now, how is a man to will to choose a thing of which he knows nothing?

Here is where false religion works; men and women are taught from childhood of a God, a Savior, a heaven and a hell, of rewards and punishments, and that if they will do well they will be saved, and rewarded in heaven. And some make great sacrifices here, in order to obtain greater rewards after death. Their love for vanity, and the things of the world has not lessened at all, nor are they constrained by the love of God to do this service, but they have simply the expectation of receiving a reward in heaven. But Paul tells his brethren that the things they once hated, they now love, and the things once loved they now hate. Old things are passed away, and behold all things have become new. And that now the love of Christ constraineth us.

Dear brethren, God has not left his people to surmise or guess about the way of salvation, but he has given them full instruction in his word, and the work is all of God. In Ezekiel xxxvi. 26, we read, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." This is a figurative language, and it means that he took away the love of the world, and worldly things, and gave them heavenly desires, and heavenly affections, and a love to God and his people. Now this new love produces a new will, and so old things are passed away. This is what he does for them, and not what they are required to do at all, in order to be saved. The great question is, What evidence have we that we are of this people to whom God has given such promises? The evidence is this: when you call to mind your experience, you know that the love of worldly amusements, and the pleasure you had in them, have been taken away, and in place of them you now have a love to the Lord, and his people, and righteousness, and true holiness, and a desire to be more like Jesus. Now instead of delighting in, and taking part in worldly amusements, you delight in the worship of God, and to praise God, and to be in the assembly of the saints; you desire to be free from sin, and are tired of it, and long to be perfect. Thus you can realize that your desires and affections are turned about. But, like Paul you can say, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing, for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not." Then you realize that you delight in the law of God after the inner man, but you find another law in your members, warring against the law in your mind, bring-

ing you into captivity to the law of sin, which is in your members. Thus, when you compare your experience with God's word, you find that what he has said he will do for them, that thing he has done in you, and the same mind and thoughts that are spoken of in his word, are in your heart also. Thus it is evident that you have been taught the same lesson, and have been led by the same Spirit. Again, we find that it is declared in this same chapter in Ezekiel, "I do not this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went." Then it was not for any goodness or merit which was in the people, but for his name's sake, that God did this great work.

In order to maintain his holy name, he must maintain his word, and the promises which he made with their father Abraham, to whom he said, The multitude of his seed should be as the sands of the seashore, and as the stars innumerable, and that they should inherit the land wherein they then dwelt, and that it should be theirs for an everlasting inheritance. Now in fulfillment of that promise to their father Abraham, the people multiplied until they became a great nation. But they forsook their God, and set up idols and worshiped them, and went into all manner of idolatry and sin, and for this God afflicted and punished them severely, as a nation, by delivering them into the hands of their enemies for servants and bondmen. But his loving-kindness he never withdrew from them, and he remembered the covenant which he had made with their father Abraham, and fulfilled it. Therefore he said, "I do this for mine holy name's sake." But how does this apply to us, and what comfort can we draw from it? Let us us see what Paul says: "That unto Abraham and his seed was the promise made, not unto seeds as of many, but unto one, and to thy seed, which is Christ." As Isaac was the promised heir, and all Israel received the promise through him, so Christ is the heir of all things, and as all Israel received the promise through Isaac, so do we receive the promise, and inherit the blessing throughout all time by, and through, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Brethren, it is not for your sake, nor for any goodness or merit that is in you, that God has done all this great work for you, but for his holy name's sake, in fulfillment of that holy covenant and promise which was made before the world was. It is a fulfillment of that eternal purpose which he purposed with himself before the world began. Because of this God has perfected and done this great work for you, and not because you were more righteous or better than others.

But to return to the texts named in the first place. I do not design to leave them unnoticed, but to unite them together in one solid chain of truth. "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." In order to understand what Paul is speaking about here, it is needful to notice the connection. He is here setting forth the doctrine of election and predestination, and showing how God raised the people up, and that it was according to his own purpose, as he said unto Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion upon whom I will have compassion." And then come the words of the text. Thus, dear brethren, when you compare your experience with this language, you realize that it is true that it

was not according to your will, nor according to your purpose, but according to God's own purpose and grace, which was given you in Christ before the world began. Thus it was that he took the hard and stony heart out of your flesh, that is, took away your love for and enjoyment which you had in the world, and thus you have also come to realize that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

And now, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." The chief desire is, to come and take, and the desire produces the will to come, and now that you are in possession of the will, you realize that it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. Thus your experience is in strict harmony with the texts quoted. Let us now regard the third text: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath set me draw him." Our Savior was here speaking concerning what eternal life was based upon. It is based upon his own sufferings and death in the flesh. The Jews did not understand him, and neither could they understand how he could give them his flesh to eat; they did not understand that it must be by his sufferings and death in the flesh, that they must receive eternal life. And of this the world to-day is also ignorant. It is said that the sufferings and death of Jesus only opened the way whereby men may be saved, and that now we must act and do our part, or we will be damned after all. But you, dear brethren, have not so learned Christ, you know that it is through his death and blood shed that life and immortality is brought to light in the gospel. Thus you eat his flesh, and drink his blood, and realize that he died for your sins, and rose again for your justification.

So no man can come unless the Father draw him. This is as it is written, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." And he that heareth, and is taught of God, cometh unto Christ. (John vi. 45.) In this language we learn how they come to him. They are taught of God and drawn, and your experience is in perfect harmony with this; you had no desire, inclination nor will to come to the Lord, until drawn by the Father; you were drawn by the cords of his love, and taught of the Lord; you were shown that you were lost sinners, and by this you were made willing to come, and to follow Jesus in all his ways. Then, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Now, brethren and friends, what is the conclusion? It is this, the very experience of the Lord's people proves that there is no contradiction in these Scriptures, but they are confirmed in the heart of every child of grace, as one solid chain of truth. Let us study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that rightly divide the word of truth.

May God bless you. Amen.

B. S. PATE.

GORMAN, Texas, Sept. 19, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—By request, and I hope also by impression, I again in my poor, weak, imperfect way, try to write a few lines to the SIGNS. I have had a desire for some time to write to you, but fearing it was only a fleshly desire I could not pick up courage to write. A few days ago I received a dear letter from brother Durand, with the request for me to write again; his encouraging words, together with his request, has given me hope that the desire was of the Lord, and while thinking over my littleness these words have come to

me: "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." And following this was, "If ye love me keep my commandments." Dear ones, I am made to hope this desire to write is his commandment. If he has given me the will, he will also give me the strength, and not unto me, but unto him be the glory. Were it not for these Scriptures, which speak to us as little children, I could not address you now, for surely if one at all, I am a little one, but I do love the dear ones, and often in mind and feelings am talking with them of God's goodness, and his mercy towards me, a poor sinner. Yes I love the church of God, the place of his abode. I long for the peace of Zion. Sometimes I feel the words of the prophet, "O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people." I long to see them seeing eye to eye, and speaking the some things. Since I wrote you last, I have moved to Texas, nearly five hundred miles from dear Chapel Hill Church, where my membership is, or was, but I find the truth is preached here in Texas, just the same as it was in Arkansas. The same Jesus as an all-sufficient and only Savior, and my poor heart was made to rejoice in his love, his wonderful power and goodness, and I do not feel to be a stranger in a strange land, but at home with the dear Primitive Baptists here, as well as there. Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord? Yes, blessed be his holy name, he has purified unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works; he has saved them and called them with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. O, that we may walk worthy the vocation wherein we are called; in lowliness, and meekness, in honor; preferring one another. How my heart was made to rejoice a short time ago, to hear from my old home, of a revival in the church and churches around, and of love abounding more and more. Yes,

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

When we see or hear of revivals and ingatherings of the true church, it is an evidence of Jesus working in their midst, and we are made to rejoice in the work of the Lord. When we hear of strife and confusion among God's dear children, it is an evidence of the works of the flesh, and it is very painful. But we should not despair, for the Lord brings order out of confusion, and he works all things after the counsel of his own will, and he does all his pleasure; he works and none can hinder, he hinders and none can work; he says to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back, bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth, and he works all things for the good of his people, and to his glory. Dear ones, we have nothing of our own, we are bought with a price, yes, with the precious blood of the Lamb. Let us trust in his name, for he is good, and his mercy endureth forever; let us bear our cross through life, in death it will be removed.

"Then let us own our common Lord,
And bear the easy yoke;
A band of love, a threefold cord,
Which never can be broke."

I do not know as this will be interesting or comforting to any one; it may be as I felt about one I wrote not long since, in trying to reply to a letter from

a dear sister, I had nothing but worldly things to write. Afterwards, in thinking of it, I felt her letter had not been answered at all, that what I wrote was only chaff, but it was all I had to write at the time. From this, the chaff being blown out by the wind, got on my mind with this Scripture: The wind bloweth where it listeth, and we hear the sound thereof, but canst not tell from whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit. When the breathings of the Spirit is blown into our hearts, these worldly things are as nothing. Sometimes, for a small moment, I am made to wonder if there is anything but chaff about me? There is even then a little consolation in it, for I do not love the things of the world, for when I have nothing else but worldly things to think of, I become O, so restless, and when I turn to myself I find vileness, and I find no rest there. Then where must I go? Shall I lie down in deep despair? O no, when I am brought low, and have suffered enough, the Lord lifts me up, and when he lifts me I can look up and see from whence cometh my help. We are as Peter, when he said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." Then, dear, little, doubting ones, we are not sufficient of ourselves, but the Lord is our sufficiency, he is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, sanctification and redemption; he bore our sins in his own body upon the tree of the cross; he suffered for us; he died for us, that we through him might live. It is written, Ye are dead, and your lives are hid with Christ in God. Yes, dead to the love of the world, dead to the love of sin, and alive to the love of Christ, and his righteousness. It is only in and through him that we are brought off conquerors. We will be sinners as long as life lasts, but Christ died to save sinners. Then if you feel to be a sinner, it is an evidence of your acceptance in the Beloved; a sinner saved by grace. Then let us confess him as our Savior.

May God bless you, dear brethren editors, may he uphold you, and enable you to both write and speak the truth in love.

Do with this as you think best: cast the mantle of charity over it all.

Your little, unworthy sister in bonds of love,

LUCY A. SEALE.

MEXICO, N. Y., August 20, 1899.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—It has been my privilege for several years to read the SIGNS, and I have greatly enjoyed the many able and instructive articles. There have also been several communications from those who seem much perplexed and troubled with doubts, fears and darkness, and I have sometimes felt that if I could give those sad ones a chapter from my own experience, and the way in which I was led out into a broader and richer experience, it might be of help to some one who is longing to know God, and reaching out for the light, but I realize that the blessed Holy Spirit and the precious Bible are the best teachers, and I feel that I in my weakness hardly dare to do more than exhort each hungry soul who is earnestly desiring to know the way, the truth and the life as it is revealed in the word, to read the Bible. Read the Scriptures, which with the Spirit's teaching is able to make us wise unto salvation. The psalmist exclaimed, "O, how I love thy law." The Bible becomes more precious to me the more I read it, and it is coming to be my only book. I have read it by course several times, and

I find new beauties in it the more I read. The Bible is a full storehouse, a rich mine of heavenly, divine truth. Read it, dear troubled ones. Let us read the Scriptures in all their parts. Read the gospels, the Acts, the epistles, read Proverbs, and Isaiah, and the Psalms, and especially read the twenty-third Psalm; it is a gem of poetry, it is a heart-hymn in all ages. Read the beatitudes, and concerning the christian armor, as found in Ephesians vi. 17, and other portions. In all these things are sources of comfort and strength. The child of God will want to feed upon the word of God as his daily bread, and to him the name of Jesus will be precious above every name. The natural, unregenerate heart finds no joy in communion with God, is not in harmony, and could not be happy in his presence. I believe that it is our heavenly Father's good pleasure that we may realize that we are his children, and that he gives the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba Father, and the Spirit witnesses with our spirit that we are the children of God. Many passages of the Scriptures give us this assurance. The first epistle of John gives us many texts by which we may know that we have passed from death unto life. It is written, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith." One text most commonly quoted is this, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Then, as if it might be possible that one might be self-deceived in counting mere friendship, congenialty, a fellow feeling, a sort of sympathy, as christian love, a little farther on John gives another test, "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." Let us carefully read this little book, the epistle of John, the beloved disciple of the Lord. He says again, "Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he has given us his Spirit." And except ye have the Spirit of Christ ye are none of his. "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." Again he saith, "He that saith that he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved by my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."—John xiv. 21. And he says, "I am the good Shepherd, and I know my sheep, and am known of mine."

God's covenant with his people is an everlasting covenant, but O, how weak is the believer; how our imperfection mars our best endeavors; imperfect faith, imperfect love, imperfect obedience, is ours. All my hopes centre in Christ and his perfect work. With gladness of heart I confess Christ to be the God and Rock of my salvation. He is my strength and my Redeemer. It is he in whom my soul trusteth, I have no worthiness, all dreams of that have died in me, and I can only hide in Christ for refuge and shelter to my soul. Jesus paid it all, all the debt I owe, and nothing, either great or small, remains for me to do. While this is true, as to the redemption, yet the soul redeemed, is filled with grateful love, so that his greatest desire is to do that which is well pleasing in his sight. We obey God, not that we may be saved, but because we are saved, and our greatest sorrow is that we do not more perfectly honor God, by a life of obedience to his

will. We long to live more Christlike, and we cry out in our weakness, out of our weary, selfish, struggling, sinful self, O, lift thou me up, and may we be clothed with thy righteousness, O Lord. By grace are we saved, through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. O, this wonderful redemption! Our hearts long for purity, and while free from the law, yet the law of the Lord is written in our hearts, and we desire by every word and deed to please our heavenly Father. Christ's mission was not only to redeem men, but also to reveal the Father. Of the eternal God, the sovereign Ruler of the universe, our finite minds can have but a feeble conception, but as he is revealed to us in Christ, he is a God of love and tenderness, who cares for us, and is interested in us, and loves us with an infinite love, and we love him because he first loved us, and has redeemed us from the curse of sin, and has made us heirs to an eternal salvation through Christ Jesus.

If in your judgment these lines will be of use to any one, then give them a place in the SIGNS.

A lover of the truth.

MRS. G. A. LINDSLEY.

[IT is said by the prophet, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." And they of Berea were more noble than some others, because they searched the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so. How can we find assurance to our own hearts that we have the truth, unless we have known the Scriptures, which is the standard to which we must bring every experience, every thought and every imagination? All these things are false if they do not agree with the word of God. The word witnesses to the things which we have experienced, if indeed that experience be a scriptural experience. God's people through patience and comfort of the Scriptures have hope. He who has felt the power of the truth in his or her heart, will never regard lightly the written word. We profess to be Bible Baptists, and to follow nothing unless we can find a "Thus saith the Lord" in the Scriptures for it. It is good to have our attention called to these things. Only by heartfelt experience can we come to know what the spirit of the Scriptures is, but yet our experience is not the standard by which the word is to be tried, but the word is the test by which our experience is to be tried. Let us hold in reverence the slightest word written in the Bible. If we do not understand it, still it is the word of God, who never speaks vainly. All that is written in the Scriptures is profitable to the church, and the Holy Spirit uses it for the profit of the church whenever it is needed.—ED.]

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., 1900.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—About a year ago I had a mind to write to you, but I was tempted of Satan to think that it might be only from a spirit of pride, just because I had written to some one and was told that it was a comfort, and was asked to write soon again, so I decided that it would not be profitable for me to write, and I did not make the attempt. The consequence was, for a long time it was a task for me to write even to my family. It has been a long, dark night to me, but once more I do feel a strong desire to write to the different ones, so I will make the attempt to write to all in one letter.

Dear kindred, did you ever think about the household of faith, how many it contains? I had never given it more than a

passing thought until the time of which I spoke, about a year ago. I was pondering in my mind as to how I would write, and the thought presented itself to write to the household of faith, and with the thought came this view: it seemed I was not on earth, but at some other place, looking at a gathering, and the people kept coming and coming, myriads of them, as far as I could see, and their faces were so bright and in such a beautiful light, and still coming. Such a throng and such sweetness, a sacred sweetness and beauty, and as I was being brought away from this unearthly scene, this thought came to me, This is the household of faith. I was filled with a solemnity beyond any former time in my life, and as I was trying still to see just how it was, the thought came to me that I had not recognized a face. I tried again to see if I did not remember any, but could not one. Then the thought came to me, in that household we should not know each other as we do here, but should all be in the likeness of Christ our Savior. I did feel that this was a real visit of the mercy of God to me, a poor worm of the dust. I have had many dark times since then, but I know that I need them, and when the morning comes I can see the good of the night. I would never have known the meaning of the words, "joy cometh in the morning," had it not been night just before. I used to hear that sung, and was annoyed by it, until I came to know the meaning of it, but since I have been able to sing from experience, and from my heart, I can see a very great beauty in it. When the night has been long and dark, and our very thoughts seem like moans, and there is no comfort, but a continual suggestion from Satan is heard, then when the dawn begins to come so the soul has strength to say, "Get thee behind me, Satan," then indeed we can sing truly, "Joy cometh in the morning;" then we may look back with thankfulness that there is a night as well as day.

As I read this and that name in our family paper, I have a desire to know each one in the flesh. I feel that I do know you in the Spirit. I cannot go very deep into experience, but a feeling of love goes out to the writers, so that I can say brother or sister. I would like to describe this household of faith as it comes to me. They are a poor, despised, dejected and folorn people, who have no faith nor trust in self; they feel that their arm is puny, and that in them, that is, in their flesh, dwells no good thing; they are so poor that they do not own the very breath they draw, nor one morsel that they eat, nor one drop of the water that they drink; they are all lame, halt and blind, and unbelieving; all are broken-hearted, all unclean, polluted, despised, forsaken and hated; they find sin is mixed with all they do; they are continually begging the Father of all mercies to give them the light of his countenance, and to safely guide them through; they look on all others as better than themselves, and are grieved if sadness befalls another; their love is strong for each other, and most especially when they see one in distress; they give no glory to themselves, for they feel deeply their nothingness, their short comings, their heart wanderings; the Lord finds them in a waste howling wilderness, and leads them about and instructs them, and keeps them as the apple of his eye. He gives this household of faith a home which is built on the Rock of Ages; the love of God is the wall of defense to them, and Christ is the Corner-stone of the building where they dwell. The way

of holiness leads to it, and as for the windows of this building, they are all the precious promises. I will name a few: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "As thy day, so shall thy strength be." "I will never leave nor forsake thee." "My grace is sufficient for thee." "He that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." And then right through this home of the children, is the stream of living water, and for all that thirst, full provision is made, and it is given freely to all that need. No harm can befall them, for their Father reigns over all things, and underneath them are the everlasting arms. How safe they are, and O, the peace to those who dwell there.

What is the church of God?
  Is it built up with hands?
Has it earthly foundation
  Composed of stone and sands?

Is it fitted with stained windows,
  And a painted pulpit new,
Commodious seats, well cushioned,
  And a handsome organ, too?

And has it a high tower,
  With a silver bell suspended,
Which is rung to tell the time
  When worship should be attended?

And is there a learned man, that's hired,
  One that graduated at college,
With a salary that's given him,
  Commensurate with his knowledge?

And must an organist be there,
  That the choir may be led?
And do they use a printed prayer,
  That the children may be fed?

No, the holy church of God
  Was not built with human hands;
Its Builder is its Lord,
  And by his power it stands.

Electing love is its defense,
  Christ is the Corner-stone,
The windows are the promises,
  Where Christ appears alone.

With love to one and all of the household, from one who much desires to be held in the fellowship of the people of God,

MARY HILL TERRY.

WILTON, Maine, Jan. 7, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I send you inclosed two letters from sister Nellie Palmer, which seem to me worthy a place in the SIGNS. Do with them as your judgment dictates.

Your sister in hope,

MARTHA K. HUBBARD.

AUGUSTA, Maine, Nov. 6, 1899.

MY DEAR SISTER:—"Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Is not this the experience of every child of God at times? In this dark, lonely state through which I am walking, I cannot say that I fear any evil, his rod and staff they comfort me, when I have any comfort, and when having no special comfort, I have, I know I have, been leaning on that precious staff, my dear Redeemer. Yes, he is a prop above all others. Underneath are the everlasting arms. It matters not how cold and low we are in our mind, our dear Redeemer still lives to make intercession for us, and we are perfect through his sufferings and finished work. That finished work, I am so glad it is done. The work was put upon one who was able to perform it in a perfect manner, and he declared that it was finished.

My soul has been very heavily burdened of late. In a measure as it seems I have been treading the wine-press. I have questioned if indeed it was heaviness of spirit? If so, since my Savior groaned in heaviness of spirit, am I not in fellowship with his sufferings? I hope it is indeed so. To-night finds me in this dull, lifeless mind, and so indifferent to everything; I am tired in body also. Where I am now I do not hear anything in accordance with the way in which I

trust the Lord has led me. I went yesterday, as one of my duties, to the chapel, and heard part of what they call a sermon. I tried to keep my mind from it (after I had listened for awhile). O, what stuff to be called preaching; it seemed that if the man had had common sense he could have done better. The last SIGNS have come; how good they are; I have read several articles, and all so good.

My dear sister, when I began this letter this afternoon I addressed it to no one, I felt that I wanted to write. You are with me this evening, and so I will send it to you. How lonely it is to be away from all the brethren in Christ. If I could see one dear face, and press one dear hand, it would seem so precious to me. How sad you must sometimes feel, dear sister. "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold." Yes, all the dross will be consumed. The wild beasts will no more creep forth to destroy all our comfort.

"'Tis self, that legal thing and base,
That keeps me from my rest;
Me from myself let Christ release,
And soon I shall be blest."

This is only a waiting time with us, a day of journeying, with nights of darkness, and dawnings of light. When the Sun of Righteousness arises with healing in his wings, how quickly the mists and shadows disappear. We cannot be sorrowful when the Bridegroom is with us, but O, those lonely days when he hides his face for a season; then how different, dense darkness, that which may be felt, and such heaviness of heart. I could never tell it so that any one else could know it, only those who have felt the same. My dear sister, it seems that I have been down in the deeps, my soul has been exceeding sorrowful. "Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of all their distresses." And he does deliver you and me out of our distresses. He is truly the chiefest among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely.

I would that my mind were more upon these divine things, that earthly sorrows, and joys, and pleasures, were a much smaller part of my makeup than they are. What do they all amount to? They weary us so much, and by taking thought ever so much we cannot add to our stature. I am glad that all things are known to our God, he only can wound and heal. How good it is that if we are judged ever so much by friends or foes, they cannot make nor heal one wound however slight. But this wonderful healer knows the way that we take; he knows our grief, and he only can heal. It is well that we are in the hand of an almighty God, for as a father pitieth his children, so doth the Lord pity them that fear him. He knows our inmost sorrow, and we do not need to tell it to him to receive his pity. I am glad this is so. This heartfelt love, this pure love of God, how unlike all other love; this love will still unite us through time and eternity. I hope that this letter may find you comfortable in natural, and more especially in spiritual things, for we want these rays of heavenly light, we delight in them, but our Father knows what is needful, and will bestow upon us enough for our good and his own glory.

Good bye. With love to you, such as the world knows nothing of,

NELLIE PALMER.

NOVEMBER 9, 1899.

MY DEAR SISTER:—I feel to say tonight, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." I received

the papers to-night, they did indeed bring gladness, such sweet poetry. I began to see what my darkness of mind had brought me. Now I can say, it is all of the Lord, yes, his ways are past finding out, his footsteps are indeed in the great deep. Why is it that to me such things are given? Only because it seemed good in his sight. It seems that I shall never be able to praise my God enough, even though I should be permitted to do so through all eternity. You see the darkness which caused me to write (I wrote four letters in all) was the means by which I received the papers, and was given this spirit of thanksgiving to God. Surely all his works shall praise him, but the clouds are so dark, which overshadow his coming sometimes, that we behold only the darkness and gloom. Surely that was all that the children of Israel saw when they were hard pressed by the enemy, with the Red Sea before them. But there was a way made for them to pass safely through, and there is a way for you and me at this present time also. Yes, we have just as powerful a Deliverer as they had; he is the same unchangeable God, the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and through his unchangeability the sons of Jacob are not consumed. I will not say more to-night, but will close with love to you, that passeth all understanding. I shall expect a letter when you feel to write, which I hope will be in the near future.

Affectionately,

NELLIE PALMER.

ADELL, Okla. Ter., May 18, 1900.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—If an old sinner might so speak, while I feel totally unfit, and unworthy to try to write to any of God's afflicted, poor people, and especially do I tremble and shrink with the thought of writing to any of those to whom so much grace, light and wisdom are given; yet I have a little mind to write to you, though a stranger in the flesh. I feel that you are kind and long-suffering, ready to bear the infirmities of the weak, and somehow I almost want to in the familiar phrase call you Benton. I just received the SIGNS yesterday containing your editorial remarks, and I have been impressed more than usual since reading them, on the desolation of the Zion of God, and am made at times to doubt my own interest in the blood that cleanses from all sin. I think of the near relation you sustain to the late editor, Elder Gilbert Beebe, and of the high esteem and veneration you must, with so many brethren, feel for him, together with your arduous duty as an editor, with all the perplexities, sufferings and annoyances which are so liable to worry, fret and disturb, and through the deceitfulness of sin, get one in the flesh, and so give Satan the advantage. While reflecting on your remarks, some Scriptures and some thoughts came to my little mind, viz: "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." "A soft answer turneth away wrath." "I will contend with him that contendeth with thee." Our Master when he was reviled, reviled not, neither hid his face from spitting, and suffered himself smitten. Paul could bear all things for the elect's sake. "After my departure grievous wolves shall enter in." "Of your ownselves shall men rise." Jehu according to his anointing, cut off the house of Ahab, but I am not sure his manner was pleasing; he may have been over zealous, at least he seemed to glory in self enough to say, in substance, Come and see my zeal for the Lord. Then, dear brother, I feel to pray God that he

may still give you grace for your every trial; that he may still give you the spirit of discernment, that you may never lose that spirit of meekness and humility, but ever be able (by grace) to walk worthy the high calling, and let your moderation be known to all men. I am sure you have so much to annoy you, but sin is so deceitful. Now if you should tell me you never read this scribble, and never wanted me to worry you again, I do not think I would be hurt, but I would be more ashamed of my presumption. I cannot write for publicity, but if you could have time and mind, I would love to have a few lines, words of comfort from you. I am such a sinner, and so unfit for anything only evil.

I am truly thankful that the good old SIGNS still comes. In this dark day of strife and discord, I do not know how I could get on without them, they always come laden with good things. It is comforting to know that God in his goodness and mercy, wisdom and power, has reserved to himself a few, and not suffered them to bow to the image.

Christian salutation and love to all the saints.

Your little brother in tribulation, and hope of a glorious resurrection,

W. L. STAGGS.

[IT is indeed a pleasure to receive such letters as the above, not that we feel that we enjoy flattery, for we have passed through too much suffering to be easily "puffed up," and we daily feel that thorn in the flesh, "the messenger of Satan to buffet us," that Paul said was given him lest he be exalted above measure, but when our feeble efforts to write for publication meet with the approval of the brethren, it is encouraging to have them say so. It is impossible for us to answer privately all the personal correspondence we receive, and we hope our failure to reply will not be interpreted as a lack of appreciation of these kind, brotherly messages of love and encouragement sent us.

We hope brother Staggs will banish all feelings of embarrassment, and write us often, for we know that if we are one of God's chosen vessels of mercy, we have of all men the most reason to extol amazing grace, and we hope that we may be ever kept at the feet of the dear Redeemer and his "little ones."—ED.]

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Oct. 11, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Let me ask you to please mention in the next number, that it will be a favor to us for all who sent you their orders for the book on the Priesthood of Christ, to be paid for as soon as the book was ready, by sending to me the amount of their orders at once, and the books will be mailed to them promptly, as many have not yet sent for it, although it has been ready two months. I depended much on those subscriptions to help meet the heavy expense of publishing the book, and request that all who sent their orders for one or more copies, will kindly fulfill their promise, for which I will be thankful.

And, as I still have a supply of "Early Religious Life," a *free* copy will be sent with every order for Priesthood, to all who ask it, and you may please so state.

Yours in the love of Christ,

D. BARTLEY.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denotes the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

EDITORIAL.

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WORSHIP.

No more important word occurs in the Scriptures, and no more important theme can engage our attention than that which is involved in this word. It is a word that occurs very often in the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments. That adoration, reverence, obedience, love, trust and honor, which is rendered by angels and believing men, toward God, is called worship. True worship is said to be from the heart, and to find expression in prayer, praise, adoration, confession, and finally in all obedience. It is commanded as what is required of all the creatures of God, and it is desired by all who love his name. If any heart be really attuned to worship, that heart is the dwelling-place of the Holy Spirit, who is the spirit of worship. It is the great question with all who truly reverence, and who desire to honor the God of heaven, Do I know what true worship is? The child of God is well assured that if indeed the spirit of true worship dwells in his heart, all is well with him. Not one emotion or act of true worship can be found where the Holy Spirit does not dwell. He is the sole author of all that can be called the worship of God. It is then most important for the confidence and encouragement of the people of God, that they come to know whether they be true worshipers or not, and to this end it is needful that they come to understand what true worship is. The true principle of worship was defined by the Savior when he said, They that worshiped him must worship him in spirit and in truth. That is, their worship must not be merely in form, or confined to any place, but must be real and sincere, and it must not be of the flesh, that is, moved by fleshly considerations, but of the Spirit, that is produced by the revelation and power of the Spirit in the heart. To profess therefore to worship God, and to render to him obedience, reverence, praise, honor and glory, while really the love and praise of self reigns in the heart, is but mockery. The Pharisee in the parable professed to be a worshiper of God, he professed to render thanks to him, and to acknowledge God as the author of all that he was, and that he did, yet after all, the real spirit of his heart was self-flattery, and self-praise. He verily thought that God was under obligation to him, rather than he to God. His was not true worship, and therefore neither he nor it were accepted with God. On the other hand, the whole attitude of the publican in heart and feeling, was that of true worship. It was an humble acknowledgment before God, of his own sinfulness, and entire unworthiness to receive the smallest favor from him, and this implied a confession in his heart of the holiness, justice, goodness and mercy of God, and this was true worship. One was but the outward form of worship, which was not felt in the heart, and was not sincere, and which was of the flesh, and pleasing to the fleshly mind, while the other was of the spirit and from an humble heart, and contained a confession of the worthiness

of the God of heaven to receive all praise, and honor, and glory. It was an ascription of salvation to the Lord.

It is said in the word, "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him." This sums up all vital godliness, faith in God, and the service of faith in the outward life. But what does believing in God mean? Very few of any race or profession will fail to assert a belief in a God; nearly all races of men worship something; the Scriptures of the Old Testament especially, often set this forth; the idols of the heathen are constantly referred to, so also, in the New Testament, the gods of men are set over against the true God, again and again, but to worship idols is not to worship God. The Scriptures are full also of descriptions of the character of the true God, whom men ought to worship. Is it not manifest that to form a conception of the being whom we call God, which is contrary to the revelation which he has made of himself in the word, is but to set up another false God, and so to become a follower of idolatry? What we must know in order to become a true worshiper, is not only that all idols are false and vain, but also that a false conception of the true God, is to dishonor him, and to fail to render acceptable worship. To believe then that God is, involves also a belief in his true attributes and character. There can be no coming to God, when false views of his attributes are held. In truth, if such false views prevail, we are but worshiping an idol of our own forming, and giving it the name of the true God. Millions of men, judged by this standard, are to-day idolators, who yet profess to be worshipers of the true and living God. It is certainly then, most important that we know whom we worship.

To render worship is, first of all, to ascribe to God that which belongs to him. There will be, in all true worship, an acknowledgment in the heart and in the mind, of every attribute of Deity. That which God has revealed concerning himself, the true worshiper will gladly and humbly acknowledge to be true.

First. There will be a confession that God is, and this involves not only the confession that he is now, but that he has ever been, and will never cease to be; it involves the faith that he did not begin to be, that he did not come into being, but that he always was, and that his years know no end. This is to confess that our God, in his very being, is incomprehensible. The finite mind cannot conceive of that which did not begin to be. That of which we can predict a beginning, is not the eternal God. We have to do with things that have a beginning, we ourselves had a beginning, all that we can reason from had a beginning, the thought of a beginning to all things is inseparable from our minds, we, by the very law of our minds, ask the source and cause of all that we see. Therefore finite minds cannot comprehend the being which has no beginning, yet those who come to God must believe that, and this is the work of faith, wrought in the heart of every believer.

Second. There will be an acknowledgment that this eternal God has to do with the affairs of the universe. In other words, as the text refers to reads, "He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him." This involves the thought that he regards all the thoughts, and words, and actions of men, that nothing of them all is hidden from him, and that he ever sees, knows and weighs all things, from the mote that we can see only when floating in the sunbeam, to the giant

worlds which revolve in immeasurable space; from the movement of the tiniest insect that lives its life of a few brief moments, to the service of the mightiest archangel. It also involves the truth that in wisdom has Jehovah made them all, and that all are and were created for some definite purpose, known only to their Maker, save so far as he is pleased to reveal his purpose to his creatures. All this must be involved in the truth of the words, "The rewarder of them that diligently seek him." In other words, they that worship him, must believe in a God of providence, and this providence is universal, it takes in the young lions which do lack, and suffer hunger, the sparrow which cannot fall without him, the clothing of the grass of the field with more glory than that of Solomon, the numbering of every hair of our heads, and all the daily provisions which must be supplied to all the creatures of God. This providence takes in the thought also that every thought and every imagination of the heart are known to him, it searches our down-sitting and uprising, it compasses our path continually, it sees our thought afar off. Well might the psalmist say, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain to it."

Third. In all true worship there will be a confession of the omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence, of Jehovah. The finite mind cannot grasp these words, it can only see they express things beyond its reach. Let the imagination take flight to the utmost stretch of its powers, and it has not yet taken one brief step toward the grasp of the meaning of these words, yet he that truly worships God must believe all these truths concerning him, because to deny them, or to doubt them, is to rob Deity of that which belongs to him in our thoughts of him, and worship cannot go with robbery. The worshiping soul will be in the attitude of saying before God, "Lord I cannot grasp thy fullness, but I do humbly confess, and acknowledge all that thou hast said of thyself." Such a soul will not limit Deity, but will confess at once that he is incomprehensible in all his attributes. It is the language of rebellious reason to say, "I will not believe and confess what I cannot understand." To worship God we must confess what we cannot begin to understand. We do not understand the existence of Deity, his self-existence, nor the unbounded measure of his providence, neither can we understand his omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence.

Fourth. There must be a confession of his immutability. This will involve all the attributes, and purposes, and thoughts of Deity, it will involve his knowledge, his love, and all his purposes toward men, in heaven or on earth. Immutability must belong to him, else he is wanting in wisdom, power and purpose. Mutability belongs to partial knowledge, to strength that can be measured by some finite thing, to a mind undecided in its will, but our God embraces in his knowledge all that has been, or will ever be, his power knows no limit, and his purpose is declared to be an eternal purpose, which he purposed with himself ere time began. The Scriptures abundantly declare his unchangeability; if we believe in their inspiration, we must and will accept this truth. It is a mark of all idolatry, that men believe in, and speak of a God, who is changeable, and this involves necessarily the belief that their sovereign is wanting in wisdom, power and purpose. This is not the true God, and these are not true worshipers. It is enough that Jehovah has said. "I am the Lord, I change not." And right here rests the hope and comfort of the

doubting, wandering, unbelieving children of God, because "I change not," he says, "ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

Fifth. In all true worship there will be a confession of his holiness, truth and justice; the humble heart will never accuse God with hardness or injustice; it will accept all that appears dark to the finite mind, if only God has so spoken. A believing heart will never say, when possessed of the Spirit of true worship, when the infinite purpose of God concerning the wicked is unfolded, "Why doth he yet find fault?" And again, "Who hath resisted his will?" The true worshiper will confess all the deep mystery of the will of God in all things that are done, and yet will humbly bow beneath the other and equal truth, that men are yet guilty in what they do. In believing reverence the soul will say, While men meant it for evil, God meant it for good; while men acted with wicked hands, yet they have done what was determined before to be done, and there will be then no questioning, no assertion that God has no right to find fault with men for doing what he has purposed to be done; it will be enough for such a soul to read that Paul asserts this in Romans ix., and that he, inspired to write the exact will and mind of God, would attempt no apology for Jehovah, but says to all who interpose such objections, that they arose out of a spirit to reply against God. This is the spirit of pride and rebellion itself. True worship says, "Lord I do not understand the mystery of thy ways, but I know that thou art holy, good and just." Pride, the vain glory of the flesh, would strive to bring the Most Holy God down to our fallen ideas of justice and truth, but true humility accepts what God has said about these things, and confesses that all is true, since God has said it. It is sickening to all who reverence the word of God above all else, to hear those who profess great godliness and love for righteousness and truth, saying that we are bound to judge what God has said, by the reason that he has given us, and that we have nothing else by which we can judge. Such ones deny the absolute fall of man, they deny that human REASON is depraved and fallen, as well as all other faculties of man, they would set themselves up as judges of what the God of heaven should do, and will not admit that the Judge of the whole earth can do right, unless he does as seems to them right. But where the spirit of true worship dwells, this spirit must and will be crucified, such souls will not reply against God, but will bow with reverence, as did Paul, when he rebuked such unholy reasonings in Romans ninth chapter, as said before.

Now where these things are confessed with gladness in the heart, there is true worship. How many hearts have said, "O, that I could render acceptable worship to God." "How glad I would be could I praise him as I ought, and tell the story of his mighty acts and of his holy character, and speak forth his name." Thousands have been engaged in the worship of his name, when they did not know that what they felt was true worship. Such ones have desired the gift of others, and have said in their thoughts, "O that I could pray to him, O, that my love were more fervent and pure." Such feelings are the essence of true worship. To come before God, and confess our great sinfulness, is to worship him as the God of holiness and truth, before whom all confession must be made. To acknowledge before him our poverty of spirit, and to confess that all supplies of

grace must come from him, is worship indeed. To acknowledge that he is worthy to be exalted, and to be loved supremely, is to engage in his worship. To adore him in heart, and to confess his power, truth, wisdom and love, is to engage in most acceptable worship. Worship does not consist in a multitude of words, or in many bowings and genuflections; it does not consist in great displays of devotion in the sight of men, it does not take up its abode in great temples, nor find its expression in fine oratory or music, but it does dwell in all humble hearts, and oftener than otherwise is silent, so far as any expression of human lips is concerned. When one pleads, "Lord, save or I perish," "God be merciful to me, a sinner," "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom," that is true worship. To gladly receive the word is real worship. The silent uplifting of the heart to God, when guilt and poverty is felt there, is in his sight, true worship. All these things are to the exaltation of God. Only humble and broken hearts can really worship God. O that all our hearts might be thus broken. C.

PLEASE BE SURE

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

By observing the above instructions our subscribers will enable us to more accurately keep their accounts.

CONDITIONAL, OR MERITED, TIME SALVATION, OR "STRIFE ABOUT WORDS TO NO PROFIT."

How often we meet with the expression, "Strife about words to no profit," when any discussion arises in regard to the truth or fallacy of certain points of doctrine. In fact some of our people have so fallen into the habit of using this expression, that we fear they do not always stop to consider its full import.

While we wish to be ever kept from engendering strife to no profit, or making a brother an offender for a word, yet we cannot afford to desert a single principle of truth, because some claiming our name rise up in opposition to it, lest we engender strife. Our belief in regard to natural things is not within our own control, to say nothing about revealed faith in spiritual things. What we have held as sacred truth, taught us, as we hoped, by the revealed interpretation of the Scripture, and confirmed in our experience, we cannot cast aside because it may clash with men's "philosophy and vain deceit." While we would with the ability God giveth, defend the truth, whether men will hear or forbear, yet we hope we may be kept from descending to any low, uncouth slang, in an attempt to ridicule the opinions of those who do not agree with us. The truth of God is not maintained by any such rowdyism. A "Thus saith the Lord" will put to flight volumes of such vulgar efforts at sarcasm.

With these preliminary remarks we will proceed with what we first purposed to write, and hope we shall not be left to willfully misrepresent the belief of any one.

Within a few years, two of the points of doctrine advocated by the Signs of the Times ever since its first publication,

have been assailed, both from the pulpit, and by the the press, by those claiming the name of Old School Baptists, viz: "The predestination of all things," and "Salvation by grace, and grace alone, for both time and eternity."

It is more our mind at the present time to write upon the latter subject, and if the brethren will bear with us, we will endeavor to give our opinion in this matter.

In regard to the eternal salvation of the children of God, we believe all claiming to be Old School Baptists, are agreed that it is wholly of grace, therefore there is no need of argument on that point, but if we understand the position of those contending for "conditional time salvation," they hold that in the regeneration, or new birth, the subject of grace has grace given him which enables him to at all times obey the commandments of the gospel, and if he obeys these commandments he will be rewarded for so doing, but if he is disobedient he will be punished, and that rewards and punishments are conditional.

To part of the above we can assent, with a slight change in the phraseology. That is, if we do keep the commandments, we enjoy the blessing accompanying the obedience, but if we are disobedient, we do not enjoy these blessings.

Then the whole question narrows down to whether a child of God can with the grace given in the new birth, ever after keep the law of God, or whether he needs grace given him day by day, to keep him from falling?

With the Bible, as we read it, and our daily experience before us, we feel that we must have free grace given us day by day, or as Paul told the Corinthian brethren, "The inward man renewed day by day," and if anything is left conditional on our part, that far our salvation will surely be a failure. We feel that *as our day*, our strength must be. In fact everything in a christian experience is antagonistic to the conditional theory. What was the lesson taught us in our first religious exercises under the operation of the Spirit? Did we not, when we were first quickened by the Spirit, commence to work to win the favor of the Lord? How did we succeed? It was not until we were all worked out, and at the ends of the earth, that our blessed Redeemer revealed himself to us as our SAVIOR. Is such an experience designed to teach us a conditional salvation based upon our merits or demerits? Did you feel, dear child of God, when the Lord took you up out of the horrible pit of self and sin, and placed your feet upon the Rock Christ Jesus, that it was for any merit or worthiness of your own? Did you feel that you had worked yourself out of this horrible sink of sin, that you found yourself in, or was there a *new song* in your mouth, even praise unto God? Remember, brethren, this experience was all after the Spirit was implanted, and you were born again, and were alive spiritually, for "The dead know not anything," not even that they are dead. It is not until after the implantation of the Spirit, that these groanings are made by it, in intercession for us. How any one that has had an experience of grace, can look back to their earliest exercises, and yet hold to salvation by works, either for time or eternity, is a mystery to us.

If our time salvation is conditional, or based on our obedience, what are the commandments that we are to obey? To answer this question we should have to quote a lage portion of the New Testament. But numerous as are the commandments, they all hang on two that

were given by the Savior: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."—Matthew xxii. 37–40. Then "Love is the fulfilling of the law." No matter how constant we may be in our outward acts of devotion, we must confess with Paul, "Though I bestow my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." Then if it would profit Paul nothing to make such a wonderful sacrifice, without charity, (love) how can we commend ourselves to God by any sacrifices we can make, unless they be made in love? That is, a love for the act itself, uninfluenced by hope of reward or fear of punishment.

In the gospel kingdom the saints are redeemed from under the law of the old covenant, which was a condition covenant, and they are raised to a newness of life, and are now under the "Royal law of liberty." How paradoxical to the natural mind is the expression, "law of liberty." Legalists, either in the world, or among the saints, are failing to obey this law while they are laboring under a law of *restraint*. There is but one way that we can fulfill this blessed law, and that way we are told in the Scripture, which declares, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." With this love implanted in our heart, every requirement of this law becomes a *privilege*, and then it is indeed a "law of liberty," and we are greatly blessed in keeping its commandments. But we have learned by sad experience, that we cannot of our own volition possess this heaven-born love, and without it it is impossible to please God, and therefore we know that if even temporal blessings are conditional, and we are to make the first move to merit the favor of God, our case is hopeless.

The above is a crude expression of our views in regard to conditional time salvation, and they are in unison with the sentiments advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and all the Regular Old School Baptists, and now that the sacred truth of salvation by grace, and grace alone, is assailed, shall we cease to publish it, lest we be accused of "Striving about words to no profit?" Instead of this being merely a strife over a word, it is a question that involves a vital principle as to the truth between works and grace, between Arminianism and christianity. Then we hope our brethren will not be led astray by this common expression, which is so frequently used by the enemies of truth, to shield error. There ever has been a warfare between truth and error, and there ever will be, until Christ shall give us the final victory. Then let us not shun to declare the whole counsel of God, for fear we may be accused of "Striving about words to no profit." B.

COMING HOME.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—For two dollars inclosed you will please send me your paper one year. I believe in the doctrine that is set forth in the SIGNS; I believe in giving God all the glory. I do not like to see our ministers get up in the stand and tell us that there is something enjoined upon us to do that we know we ought to do, and refuse to do it. I have tried to believe in conditions, and have looked for them, and I know my greatest desire all along down the line was to do what was right, and I have done the best I could. I have done nothing good except the Lord has been with me. He leaves his people in dark places when he pleases.

I will close for this time.

F. L. COX.

DARDANELLE, Ark., Oct. 7, 1900.

THE above is a specimen of letters we are receiving of late, which shows that many of the dear saints that have been lured away by the offer of "merited bless-

ings," are becoming starved out. While the spiritually born children may for a time be led astray by the sophistry of the carnal mind, they cannot live on theories, but will soon hunger and thirst for the sincere milk of the word. And if we read the signs of the times correctly, the Lord is bringing his spiritual Israel back from their wanderings, and may his name have all the glory. B.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ACTS XXVI. 18.

In this chapter, the apostle Paul, in making his defense before Agrippa, related his remarkable conversion to the christian faith; and in the course of that relation, mentions the words which were spoken to him by our Lord Jesus Christ, whose voice, pealing from the high throne of his supreme glory, came with almighty power and irresistible force to his heart, at once removing his violent prejudice against the truth, and making him to feel most sensibly his lost and helpless state and condition as a sinner against, and persecutor of Jesus Christ.

Elder Harding desires our views on a portion of the words which were spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ to Saul on that occasion, and by him narrated in his address before Agrippa, namely: "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."

In the context we are told that our Lord designed to make Saul a minister and a witness, both of the things which he had seen and of those things in the which he would afterward appear unto him; and that he would send him as a minister and a witness unto the Gentiles, to open their eyes, &c. Not by any means implying that Paul, even as an inspired apostle, had power to quicken the dead sinners among the Gentiles or the Jews, to see the things of the Spirit, which are foolishness unto the natural man, and which no unregenerated man can either see or know, because they are spiritually discerned, but ministerially, and as a witness of Jesus, he was to open their eyes. God had a people among the Gentiles whom he was about to call, quicken and bring to his fold. They were now afar off, and in darkness, error, idolatry, and under the power of Satan, but they were soon to be called by grace, and instructed. To qualify this witness and minister, he must, like the husbandman, first be a partaker of the fruits, and as we see in his own experience, when quickened by the life-giving voice of Jesus, he found himself in darkness, in bondage and ignorance, and instead of being led to fancy that he would be able to give eyes to the blind, by any power which he possessed, he found himself unable to open his own eyes, but remained in darkness until one of the Lord's ministers and witnesses was sent to him, as he was now about to be sent to the Gentiles, saying to him, by divine authority and in the name of Jesus, "Brother Saul, receive thy sight."

The work for which Paul was qualified, and to which he was called, was to open the eyes of God's quickened children among the Gentiles, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Certainly his ministry had this effect. God's people, to whom he was sent, had been brought up in Pagan darkness, and although quickened and prepared by a divine power for the saluta-

ry benefits of Paul's labors, had never had their sight directed to the adorable way of salvation by grace. To open their eyes, implies that they had eyes to open; not their natural eyes, for with them no man can see the kingdom of God, as it is written, "Eye hath not seen." "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." But when "God, who commanded the light to shine out of the darkness, has shined in their hearts, to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," then the ministerial labors of the servants of Christ are of service to remove from them their "grave clothes," as Christ commanded in the case of a quickened Lazarus, and to take the napkin from his eyes, as Ananias had done to Saul, and as Paul was to do to the quickened Gentiles, by preaching to them the glorious gospel of God our Savior, administering to them the ordinances of Christ, "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded them," and warning them to beware of false teachers and false doctrine. Should Paul, or any other person, open the eyes of a dead man, it would not enable the dead to see, for if dead they can see no more with their eyes than with their hands or feet, but opening the eyes of the living, removes that covering from the eyes, which prevents their seeing. Hence to open the eyes of God's quickened children ministerially, is to turn them from darkness to light. Living persons, if their eyes be shut, are in darkness, and when in darkness, as Peter said, they are blind, and cannot see afar off, and have forgotten that they have been purged from their old sins. Much may be written on the subject of that darkness to which God's living children are subject, sometimes by reason of doubts, fears, unbelief, &c., and sometimes by following their own carnal reasoning, instead of living by faith upon the Son of God. But the darkness from which the Gentile converts were to be turned, seems to have been from pagan idolatry and superstition, to the divine radiance of the glorious gospel of the blessed God. The darkness of this world is connected with the power of Satan, who is the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience, and Satan and his emissaries are spoken of as rulers of the darkness of this world. But God has delivered his children from the power of darkness, and translated them into the kidgdom of his dear Son; hence they are admonished to walk as children of the light. Perhaps there never was a time when the power of darkness was more strikingly demonstrated than at the present day, in which men put darkness for light, and light for darkness. And the power of their darkness is so great that they who are under it "Wonder and perish, while God is working a work in their day which they shall in no wise believe though a man declare it to them." Even God's people, in all their natural powers are inclined to darkness rather than light, and the constant tendency of their carnal minds is to run into it, but God has provided for the effectual turning of them from it, and from its Satanic power, unto God. And the gospel ministry, and especially the apostolic gifts and labors, are eminently calculated to secure this object. *That they may receive forgiveness of sins.* The forgiveness of sins, and the reception of that forgiveness by the sinner are very different things. "Christ is exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and the forgiveness of sins." There are many witnesses on earth who can testify

that Christ has power on earth to forgive sins. But the forgiveness of our sins cannot afford to us consolation until such evidence or assurance of their forgiveness is afforded us to enable us to receive that forgiveness by faith, then we realize a full and free discharge from the guilt and condemnation of them. Isaiah had neither power nor commission to forgive Jerusalem, but God commanded him to speak comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare was ended, and her iniquities were pardoned. They were already pardoned, but they were to be apprised of the fact, that they might receive the forgiveness, and rejoice in it. A quickened sinner, until thus enlightened, will seek for justification by the deeds of the law, and will labor and mourn in darkness where he is annoyed by the tempting power and cruel suggestions of Satan, until he is enabled by grace to see how God can be just and the justifier of a poor, guilt-burdened sinner, but when the assurance is brought home to his understanding that "he has received at the Lord's hand double for all his sins," then he receives the forgiveness of his sins. This is to them a great and glorious deliverance, and in it they rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Now they receive not only the evidence of the remission of sins, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, but they are placed experimentally among the heirs of God, and joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ, and as heirs, they receive inheritance among them which are sanctified. Not a purchased possession, or a reward for their efforts at reformation, their use of means, or payment for services rendered to the Lord, but an inheritance, the gracious patrimony of their heavenly Father.

And this inheritance, being a joint inheritance, is among them which are "Sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called." "Saved and called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began." The King who sits upon the throne of his glory, who has separated them from the goats, and put them on his right hand, says to them, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." And that faith which is in him, of which he is both the author and finisher, is given them, and by it they receive their forgiveness and inheritance among them which are set apart, separated or sanctified.

But let it not be forgotten that a part of the legacy is, that in this world the heirs of glory shall have tribulation. "If any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution." God has chosen his people is a furnace of affliction, and the saints are destined to encounter many trials, temptations, doubts, fears, reproaches and afflictions, but they have the blessed assurance that these comparatively light afflictions, which are but for a moment, do work for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while they look not on the things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. Hence, "We know that all things do work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., April 15, 1858

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS.

In our last number we promised to notice the request of brother Burson, who desired our views on the subject of the absolute predestination of all things. We have frequently given our views on this subject, and still feel willing to give such views as we have on this and all other scriptural subjects.

Although it is common for all wise men to lay out their plans and predetermine, or predestinate what they intend to do, it is exceedingly hard for men to comprehend the doctrine in its application to him who has "Declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Although our Savior has called that man a fool who without predestinating, preconcerting his arrangements, or predetermining in regard to his undertakings, would attempt to build a house, it is thought by many incompatable with the divine perfections of our Lord that he should predetermine, pre-arrange or predestinate, in the building of a world. If God has declared the end from the beginning, he has so declared on the ground of positive knowledge of the end, and if he absolutely foreknew all things, all things must have been before determined, either by himself or by some other power. If not predetermined by himself it might well be demanded, With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him, when he measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? (Isaiah xl. 12–14.) We must admit that God possessed all this knowledge of himself independently, or deny his omniscience; and we must acknowledge that his perfect knowledge rested on the counsel of his own sovereign will and pleasure, or conclude that he was instructed by some other, which conclusion we think none who know the Lord will be likely to make. But we need not speculate, nor attempt to establish this matter by inferences, however clearly drawn, for in his holy word we are informed that it is the theme of reverence and worship of the four beasts, and the four and twenty elders, who, falling down before him, and casting their crowns before his throne, continually cry, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."—Rev. iv. 10, 11. And in his word Jehovah claims that he has created all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil; and he says, in vindication of his supreme Godhead, "I form the light, and I create darkness; I make peace and I create evil; I the Lord do all these things." We cannot read these declarations from the mouth of God himself, and resist the conviction that our God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

But our brother desires us to speak more particularly on the words, "all things." There are those who profess to believe that God has predestinated some things, but they cannot comprehend the idea that he has predestinated all things. Among the things which they allow that he has predestinated, are the redemption of his people from sin, and their eternal justification and immortal glory, the unspeakable gift of his dear Son, his advent to our world, his sufferings, death, resurrection and ascension to glory; but they cannot admit that God absolutely ordained that sin should enter into the world, that there should be any sin-

ners to redeem, or that wicked men should, with wicked hands, crucify and slay the Lord of life and glory.

The Lord predestinated that Joseph should lay up corn in Egypt, but had nothing to do with his dreams, the envy of his brethren, or any of the circumstances of their projecting his murder, had no hand in sending the Ishmaelitish merchants to intercept their wicked designs, or with his being sold to Potiphar, nor the strange course of Potiphar's wife, or the dreams of the butler and baker, who were fellow prisoners with Joseph. But we confess we cannot conceive how anything can be predestinated unless all things are. In regard to both the cases referred to, we are informed that God did control all the events. Peter, being inspired by the Holy Ghost, charged upon the Jews the murder of our Redeemer, in these words: "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands, have crucified and slain." —Acts ii. 23. Again, "For of a truth, against thy holy child, Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."—Acts iv. 27, 28. In regard to the case of Joseph, God had made known to his great-grandfather Abraham, his control over this matter, and that the children of Israel should sojourn in Egypt, and be entreated evil for the space of four hundred years. (Gen. xv. 13, 14.) So also we are informed in the word that "the wrath of man shall praise God, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain."—Psalm lxxv. 10. From this last quotation we learn that God, in his providential government, according to his inscrutable wisdom and the eternal counsel of his own will, allows wicked men and devils to go just so far in wickedness as he designs to overrule for his own glory, and no farther; they would if they could, do more, but God restrains them. His providential government, which is based upon the pleasure of his own will, according to which he works all things, extends to the falling of a sparrow, and the numbering of the hairs of our heads, and it is and should be a consoling thought to all of God's dear children that

> "Death and hell can do no more
> Than what our Father please."

But it is argued by the opposers of Predestination, that if God has predestinated all things, man is not accountable; and some go so far as to say that God is the author of sin. The apostle Paul anticipates the blasphemous cavilings of the enemies of divine sovereignty. "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault?" or why doth he hold men accountable for wicked actions? "For who hath resisted his will?" It is true that God's eternal and immutable will cannot be successfully resisted or thwarted, for he doeth his pleasure in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of earth, and none can stay his hand. This the apostle does not deny nor modify to avoid their blasphemous cavils; but he says, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why has thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endureth with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on

the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."—Rom. ix. 20-23.

As it is a mercy to us when God restrains us from sinning, and "leads us not into temptation, but delivers us from evil;" so is a manifestation of his wrath, upon the vessels of wrath, when he endureth with long-suffering, or allows them to fill up the cup or allotted measure of their iniquities, and when he sends them strong delusions that they may believe a lie, that they all may be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness. (2 Thess. ii. 11, 12.) That the purpose and predestination of all things do not exculpate men from blame, nor involve the Supreme Jehovah as the author of sin, in the manner urged by the opponents of the doctrine, is very apparent from what is recorded in connection with the events to which we have made allusion. Although Christ was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; those who were charged with his crucifixion were guilty of doing it with wicked hands. They acted as voluntarily and maliciously as though no such determinate counsel had determined beforehand what they should do. Joseph told his brethren that God had, for their sakes, brought him to Egypt, and although they meant it for evil, God designed it for good; to save much people alive. Pharaoh was punished for his wickedness, although God had for that purpose raised him up, that he might make his power known in him, and from time to time harden his heart that he should not let the children of Israel go until God's wonders were displayed in Egypt.

Every intelligent being knows that in committing sin, he acts voluntarily, and follows the impulse of his own depraved nature, and every one who is born of God and taught by his Spirit, knows that sin is the opposite of holiness; that God is holy, and that sin is of the devil, and not of God. Still a consciousness of God's supreme power and wisdom, to fix its bounds, and say to it as he has said to the waters of the deep, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed," affords a strong consolation to all who look alone to God for succor, protection and support, while destined to remain as strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 1, 1858.

RELIGIOUS FANATICISM.

WE had intended to devote some portion of this number to an account of what is now, and has been for a few months past going on in most of the cities and towns of our Northern States, under the name of a religious revival, but more properly a revelation of that man of sin of which God has given due warning to his church. (2 Thess. ii. 3-12.) Whose coming is after the workings of Satan, with all power and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish. Such is truly the power of the present delusion that they who dwell upon the earth are made to cry, "Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with the beast?" The grand lever by which the world is to be moved out of its place, is a general conglomeration of the various Arminian sects with as many of the non-professing portion of the community as they can decoy into their net, under the name of Union Prayer Meetings, in theatres, and other places of the kind, where from two to three minutes only are allowed to each, to insult heaven by their mock prayers, and workmongrel harangues. In a future number we will give further particulars.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y. April 15, 1858.

SELECTED.

PLEASANT PLAINS, Ill., Oct. 7, 1900.

B. L. BEEBE—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I mail you under separate cover, a book of sermons. They were preached by a Mr. Fish, of Troy, N. Y. He was the minister of a small body of people in that vicinity who seem to be remarkably clear in the truth. These people are not Baptists, and appear not to have known the Baptists until quite recently. I spoke to a congregation of them last summer, and my preaching was most cordially received by them.

Mr. Fish died, I think, about eighteen years ago, and they have not had a preacher since, but have met regularly and listened to Mr. Fish's sermons as read by some one of the congregation. I desire you to publish some of these sermons in the SIGNS; I believe they will be highly relished by your readers, and it will certainly be of great interest to the Baptists, to know that this man stood alone for years, contending for the same faith that is so dear to us, not knowing of any others in America who believed the same things.

Yours as ever,

H. M. CURRY.

SELECTION FROM SERMONS BY MR. N. A. FISH.

"FEAR thou not: for I am with thee: be not dismayed: for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

Fears of a broken law, of coming wrath and of judgment, arise from a sense of sins committed. When God begins in mercy to teach a soul the knowledge of sin by the law, then first his danger is seen, and such fears as never entered his soul before, fill him with dismay. Nothing now can quell his fears and comfort his soul but a sight of him who magnified the broken law, appeased the wrath of God, and obtained the sentence of justification from sin. This is Christ, he says, "Fear not," and why not? "For I am with thee," I am come down to thee to be with thee, Immanuel, on thy side, made of a woman, made under the law where thou art, to keep it for thee, and to bear in my body thy sins, and thy curse, and to make an end of them, and to bring in for thee an everlasting righteousness, and to keep it for thee in my own person.

In due time the Spirit makes revelation of this to the heart through faith, fears flee away, and peace with God takes its place, and the sinner now goes on his way rejoicing in his salvation seen in Christ. How long? Until new fears begin to trouble his mind. Christ disappears, and his peace is gone, his power to believe is gone, and corruption within comes to sight in the filthiness of its nature. Unable to check the flow of depravity he is alarmed with the fear that his conversion is not genuine; his outward walk, though ever so exact, affords no hope; the more he tries to help himself out, the deeper he sinks in sin and unbelief. He knows he must come to Christ or perish, the will is there, but neither strength nor help. Then the word comes, "Fear not," and why? "I will strengthen and help thee." So the Lord is the strength of his heart to believe again, and to help to recover peace. After many such changes he learns his helplessness to keep himself in the faith, or to recover himself when he falls. He loves peace, the peace which Christ gives, but finds in himself so many fleshly lusts warring against his soul that another fear takes hold upon him, he is afraid he may fall at last never to rise again. Again

the word of promise is spoken to him in power, "I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness," and this delivers by faith in his word who is able to keep him from falling, and to present him faultless before the throne.

He is liable all the days of his pilgrimage to be plagued with fear that he is not elected; that he is not one of the redeemed; that he is not born again.

The Lord knowing this says, "Fear not." I have chosen thee, thy name is written in heaven; rejoice, I have redeemed thee, thou art mine, I have called thee, and will never forsake thee.

It is not until a child of God has suffered awhile from fears that the Lord settles, establishes and strengthens him to be steadfast in the faith through all the changes of his spiritual warfare.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At her home near Tishomingo, I. T., **Mrs. Emma Beasly**, my wife's eldest daughter. She was born June 18th, 1861, died Jan. 6th, 1900. Her maiden name was Donaldson. Her father, R. C. Donaldson, emigrated from Bowling Green, Ky., to Texas, in 1848, and settled in Hill County in 1861, and was one of the leading citizens of the County. Of the seven children born to him all are living except the subject of this notice. Emma was married to J. S. Beasly in 1872. Of this union there were born ten children. She professed a hope in Christ, and joined the Methodist Church in 1886, but becoming dissatisfied she related her experience to the Joshua Church of Old School Baptists in the summer of 1897. Owing to trouble she was never baptized. Poor Emma had her full share of trouble in this world. She wept much over her little baby girl two weeks old, just before she died. She had no fears of death, and seemed to be reconciled to God's will. The kindred and friends of dear Emma weep not as those without hope, as the general expression is that poor Emma is better off. But we grieve at the thought that we shall see dear Emma no more.

May God bless her family according to his will, is the prayer of one who loved her for the truth's sake.

ALSO,

DIED—At the residence of her son-in-law, Robert Carlock, near Joshua, Texas, July 31st, 1900, our dear sister, **Comfort Lightfoot**, of cancer of the breast. She was born in Allen Co., Ky., Feb. 25th, 1826, and was married to Simpson Lightfoot, March 15th, 1846. They raised four children, two sons and two daughters, all have families. Her son William, and her kind husband, died many years ago, which brought much sorrow to the dear wife and mother, for she was left very lonely indeed. Our sister united with the Middlefork Church of Old School Baptists, near her home in Kentucky, about the year 1850, emigrated to Texas in 1870, and was in the constitution of Joshua Church in 1878, and remained a faithful member until called away by death. In the division of Joshua Church on predestination, our dear sister stood firm on the old confession of faith adopted by the Baptists in 1689. She bore with much patience the reproach cast upon the doctrine by those who limit the holy One of Israel. She would ask the simple question: If God did not decree all things, who did? And when the doctrine of conditional time salvation was advocated by the limited Baptists, she would not receive it. She read the SIGNS many years, and came to the conclusion that she did not care to read any other paper. A true Old School Baptist is gone from our midst, whose place cannot be filled in the church (I fear) by any member now living. Three children and a number of grandchildren are left to mourn the loss of mother and grandmother. Weep not, dear ones, for your loss is her unspeakable gain.

The writer spoke to a large congregation at the Joshua church-house, in memory of our dear sister, the fourth Sunday in August. May God comfort the bereaved.

ALSO,

Eliza L. Stackpole was born in Brandon, Miss., Sept. 13th, 1831, and her father, R. G. Crazier, emigrated to Galveston, Texas, in 1844. The subject of this notice was married to Ellis M. Stackpole, who was from Portland, Maine, Feb. 6th, 1851. There were born unto them thirteen children. Her husband was Major, under the command of General Gano, in the war between the States. He died in December, 1886. Thus dear sister Eliza was left a poor, disconsolate widow. She, with her husband, first joined the Episcopalians, then the Methodists, but since she became acquainted with the Old Baptists, and heard them preach salvation by grace, she had a desire to unite with the little church at Blum, and requested baptism at the hands of the unworthy writer. But to our great grief, our dear sister, her two sons, one son's wife and three children, one daughter and husband, and three children, were all lost in the great flood which inundated Galveston, Texas, Sept. 8th, 1900. One daughter, husband and two little children, were all that were spared that were in the city at the time. Four children survive to lament their sad loss. Our greatest grief is over the fact that none of them were found but our dear aged sister Eliza, and that she of dire necessity was cast into the gulf. My wife,

Mary S. Rogers, is the only member of the Crazier family left to mourn the great loss of an only sister, but she weeps not as those without hope, for her sister Eliza left satisfactory evidence that she had long since passed from death unto life.

May God comfort the bereaved.

W. L. ROGERS.

BLUM, Texas.

DIED—July 10th, 1900, our father, **Willis Elliott**, aged 100 years, 11 months and 3 days. Father was born in North Carolina, August 7th, 1799, and moved from there to Indiana, and thence to Missouri. In 1821 he was married to Miss Polly Vanderpool; to them were born eleven children, six boys and five girls; two of the boys died when grown, nine of the children survive him; mother died ten years before him. He leaves fifty-five grandchildren, two hundred and sixty-nine great-grandchildren, and fifty-six great-great-grandchildren. At the close of the Civil War he moved to Nebraska, and in 1867 came to Oregon, where he resided up to the time of his death. Father and mother made their home with me since 1874. Father was in poor health for six years before his death, part of the time being helpless, suffering pain no pen can describe, which he stood with patience. When death came he went just as if he was asleep.

The funeral was preached at the house, by Elder V. J. Turnidge, our pastor, who visited us and father so much through his sickness. Father joined the Old School Baptist Church in the year of 1823, and was baptized by Elder Rodger, of North Blufton, Mo., and has ever since remained a consistent member of the church. He was a lover of the truth. He was laid to rest by the side of mother, in the Odd Fellows' cemetery, south of Independence. Our loss is his eternal gain.

"Jesus comes with love and kindness,
As a Shepherd from the fold,
Bringing in the poor and helpless,
From the chilling winds and cold.

With his loving arm around us,
We can bear the coldest blast,
And the chilling winds of winter
Will be echoes of the past."

MRS. SUSAN RHODES.

DALLAS, Oregon.

Elder Henry Hole was born in Dark Co., Ohio, July 2, 1847, and fell asleep in Jesus Sept. 27th, 1900, aged 53 years, 2 months and 28 days. He had long suffered from heart disease and dropsy, but was patient in affliction. He was twice married, and leaves his last wife, dear sister Hole, two sons and two daughters, besides many relatives and friends and brethren, all of whom love and esteem him, to sorrow, not for him, but themselves. He joined the Old School Baptist Church in August, 1885, and abided in the faith, a very worthy believer in Jesus, the resurrection and the life, in whom alone he trusted for righteousness and salvation. He had been ordained to the gospel ministry only a few years, but never preached much, owing to his disease and labored breathing. He dearly loved the company and assemblies of the saints, and the meetings of the church were long held in his commodious house, built for the purpose, where visiting ministers often preached, and many brethren and sisters and friends were hospitably entertained by him and his kind family, all of whom will sadly miss him. He was a good man.

His departure was truly triumphant, and most joyous and peaceful. The last night and day he spent in praying and preaching, and talked to his dear companion of the wonderful, beautiful and glorious things of the kingdom which the Lord was showing to him, and told her that the Lord had fixed it all just right, with many words of comfort. When he ceased to talk, near sunset, he drew a full breath, and fell asleep. "Blessed sleep!"

Elder Purris and myself spoke to a very large concourse of people at his late residence, near Celina, Ohio, the last Sunday in September, and Elder N. Peters also made some remarks, and a more deeply solemn and comforting funeral we never witnessed; then all followed the sleeping body to the city cemetery. The next day Elder Purris and myself held service at the residence of sister Hole, and the second day Elders Carnell, Peters and myself, and she and all were comforted in Christ and the gospel of salvation.

D. BARTLEY.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1900. NO. 22.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PREDESTINATION.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—*Predestination* is a prerogative of all intelligent beings, and God possesses it pre-eminently and infinitely, because he is infinite in all his perfections or attributes, while all others are finite and limited. But the Almighty is unlimited. These are primary and self-evident truths. It would be impious folly in a creature to try to limit the infinite Creator. Speak we of knowledge, wisdom, counsel, purpose, power, truth, holiness, goodness—God is infinite in all these, as in all else. "God is in one mind, and none can turn him." "I am the Lord, I change not." Immutability belongs to Jehovah only. This places him above and independent of all outside and creature influence and control. God knows no will except his own. The universal prayer is, "Thy will be done." His will is eternal. Eternity is his. Every event of all time and of infinite eternity as well, is forever present with him, for he is omniscient and omnipresent; that is, everywhere and always present in all eternity and time, "beholding the evil and the good." No creature or thing or event has ever been concealed in the least from the Omniscient Eyes. These are some of the perfections of the Lord God Almighty. To deny them is to deny that he is God, and to limit the Almighty. Atheists do this; God forbid that we should. To us he says, "Be still, and know that I am God."

Never having written specially on the predestination of God, now I am moved to do so, in humility and reverence, fear and trembling, desiring only his honor and glory, and that his people may love and worship him.

The accurate Standard Dictionary gives these definitions: *Foreknowledge.*—The prescience of God, by which he foresees from all eternity every being that will exist and every event in his history, as well as all other events whatsoever. *Counsel.*—Purpose as the result of careful consideration; design; as, God's counsel. *Purpose.*—Plan; design; aim; as, the eternal *purpose* of God. *Decree.*—The eternal purpose of God, whereby for his own glory he has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass; also, any specific purpose embraced in this one. *Foreordain.*—To ordain or appoint beforehand; predetermine; predestinate. *Predestina-*

tion.—The counsel of God concerning fallen men; the ordering of all things beforehand by the Creator; the eternal purpose of God.

All these defined words are Bible terms, and they are thus defined as God has revealed himself in his oracles. The definitions show that all these words of Scripture are very closely related in their meaning, so that the definition of one pervades the definition of each of the others, making the foreknowledge, counsel, purpose, decree, foreordination and predestination of God harmonious and inseparable, just as are all his attributes in all his works and ways. The counsel and purpose of the Lord run parallel with his prescience or foreknowledge, and all these are surely held firmly in his almighty decree or foreordination or predetermination or control, thereby forever excluding *chance* from the limitless dominion of God, and subjecting all creatures, things and events to his omnipotence or power, according to his eternal purpose so to do. The sovereignty of God means this, and in this is his sovereign power and control. If this limitless control and supreme majesty were not his, then chaotic chance would prevail in the universe, and destruction would run riot, defeating God's eternal purpose and overthrowing his universal dominion. To limit the Almighty in the least in his sovereign control over all worlds and beings and things according to his eternal purpose, would certainly involve this awful result of ruinous chance, and would be equal to saying, "There is no God." For to the everlasting God belongs infinite wisdom to purpose and determine, and omnipotent power to overrule and control all things in all his limitless universe. And so the word asks, "Who saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?"

What is God's predestination of all things, more than his determinate counsel and foreknowledge as embracing and controlling all things? It means no more than his eternal purpose in all things, and that he supremely rules over all things in all his unlimited universe, subjecting all to his almighty control. Were it not so, there could be no security or safety for his people and saints, and no certainty that the worlds should stand and move in their ordained orbits and order, giving fruitful seasons, perpetuating life, health and comfort, for then chance would bring anarchy, disruption and utter ruin to all. But now the counsel of the Lord standeth, and the purpose of his heart extendeth to all generations, and he is in one mind, and none can turn him. In his eternal mind all things were embraced and perfectly known forever, and no new thought or purpose has ever arisen in his infinite mind. Therefore, all things determined by him to be as they are in time, were predetermined before time or purposed in eternity. Well, God's predetermination according to his eternal purpose which he purposed in himself, as says Paul, is one and the same as his predestination, meaning only that whatever is, the infinite counsel and purpose of the omniscient and omnipotent God before determined to let it be so, because his almighty power would overrule and order it all to his own eternal glory and the good of all who love him, and are the called according to his purpose. Otherwise, not the least event could take place, because the almighty power of God could and would have prevented it, and he certainly would have done so, unless his wisdom and counsel determined beforehand to let it take place. This is predestination. God either so determined to let all things take

place just as they do, or else his knowledge, wisdom, power and control are imperfect and limited, and they take place by chance, to the confusion, disappointment and defeat of God. For we cannot for a moment think that the infinitely wise God would let some things take place in which he has no purpose at all nor takes any notice of them, for this again would make them mere chance events. The Son of God teaches us that not a sparrow can fall on the ground without the Father, and that the very hairs of our heads are numbered by him. Thus is shown the truth that God's wisdom, knowledge and controlling power extends to the smallest things, because the limitless Almighty is omnipresent: "For in him we live, and move, and have our being." God is from eternity to eternity the same, and all things were forever known and determined by him, as he has abundantly revealed and taught in the word of truth, even the most wicked deeds which guilty men have committed on earth, the betrayal and murder of the holy Son of God, the lovely Redeemer. He said, "And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!" In solemn prayer to God the apostles said, "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." This is simply the predestination or predetermination of God, his foreordained counsel and purpose, yet it embraced the blackest crime ever perpetrated, and the God-inspired Peter charged it upon those guilty men that they had been his murderers, saying, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." He again said, "But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." Yea, Christ himself said, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day." His apostles were likewise wickedly persecuted, imprisoned, and put to death, yet God appointed them unto this suffering for the truth's sake, and Christ foretold them that those things should come upon them, and that the wicked who killed them should think that they did God service. But although the Lord has thus spoken of his determinate counsel relative to the wicked, whose murderous wrath he causes to praise him, restraining and preventing the remainder of their wrath, so that neither Satan nor the murderous sons of Jacob could go no farther than to accomplish the holy purpose of God with Job and Joseph, nor the Jews and Gentiles with Jesus, (for they could not break a bone of his body, but should look on him whom they had pierced,) yet the depraved reason and carnal mind of finite and sinful man will find fault with God, and dare object to his plainly revealed word of truth, saying, "Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" This is just what all such objections mean, and is the substance of all such replies against the sovereignty of God, and thus God himself rebukes man and condemns him. To the cruel monarch Pharaoh God said,

"Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." His power and name as the God of the whole earth are so declared through his mighty and righteous dealings with the wicked tyrant ruler of the oppressed children of Israel, and their merciful and wonderful deliverance out of Egypt.

In the case of Pharaoh, Joseph's brethren, the betrayers and murderers of Jesus, though God's purpose of wisdom and power, mercy and blessing, was accomplished through their wicked hands and cruel rage, yet he was holy as well as merciful in all his righteous purpose and sovereign power thus fulfilled, and he justly visited his righteous judgments upon those wicked men, for they were most guilty in thus persecuting the righteous Son and chosen people of God. Their rebellious purpose and wicked determination were to overthrow the dominion and defeat the counsel and purpose of God; but vain was their wrath, and righteous were their calamities which he visited upon them through his wise and almighty providence.

The holy Bible history abounds with many such instances, wherein God himself declared by his inspired prophets the cruel astrocities which individuals and nations should be guilty of, in the execution of his own determined purpose, all of which he would wisely and righteously overrule to his own glory and the good of his people in the end, and for which he would then righteously judge and punish those wicked individuals and cruel nations. The answer of the hated and persecuted Joseph to his guilty and fearing brethren as truly applies to the conduct of all the wicked, saying, "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." Joseph thus spoke according to the wisdom and mind of the Lord. Finite and sin-blinded man seeth not as God seeth, and hence his judgment and reason are ever at fault, for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's thoughts and ways above and out of the sight of man's thoughts and ways. It would be well for us to read the inspired answer of Elihu to Job, and receive the truth, wherein he says, "Shall even he that hateth right govern? and wilt thou condemn him that is most just? Is it fit to say to a king, Thou art wicked, and to princes, Ye are ungodly? How much less to him that accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor? for they all are the work of his hands. * * * With God is terrible majesty. Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict. Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any that are wise of heart." The Lord also said to Job, "Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous? Hast thou an arm like God, or canst thou thunder with a voice like him? * * * Then will I confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee." These divine rebukes should correct and humble us in mute abasement of vain self, before the Holy one.

A scriptural and reverential consideration of all replies against God, who has revealed the truth that his "dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among

the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" should cure us of all our sinful replies and complaints against the Almighty, who is infinitely holy.

To what is here written, as plainly declared in the Bible, perverted natural reason objects, that it makes the Almighty the author and doer of all the sin and wickedness of the world, while it frees guilty men from all responsibility and guilt, and makes the holy God unjust in punishing them. This is most monstrous and shocking for a sinful creature to dare say in any case or event against his holy Creator, and the objector will meet his just rebuke in the answers of Elihu and the Lord to complaining Job. We all have heard such irreverent complaints and criticisms against the sovereignty of God, as revealed in his electing grace and predestinating purpose, all our lives from the self-wise and self-righteous religious world, but only in these recent fast times have we been pained with hearing and reading such replies against God from men of our own household, some of whom outdo the most vehement Arminian objector in replying against God, as holy Paul declares him in the ninth chapter of Romans, and the Bible in many other places. This is truly alarming and afflicting, and it calls for deep humiliation and supplication before the Lord. It has even been tauntingly and mockingly said by brethren to brethren, "O you can't help it, for God predestinated it." Thus God and his predestination or counsel and purpose are reproached and condemned by such replies, and he is accused of being the abettor, author and doer of the blackest crimes of rebellious and guilty men and devils, and those enemies of God and righteousness are excused and justified on the plea that God ordained that the wrath of man should praise him. The sentence of the Lord against the Satan-possessed Judas meets and condemns all those God-reviling replies and objections: "And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!" Shall we therefore reply and say, "Judas was not responsible, for God was the author of his treachery, because he "determined" it? How shocking! When betrayed, and Peter drew his sword to prevent the arrest of the holy Lamb of God, the obedient Son said, "Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father giveth me, shall I not drink it?" How this should hush all our replies against what God hath determined and ordained in his sovereign will.

An objection to the unlimited sovereignty of God as embracing all things in his predetermining counsel and eternal purpose is, that this would make him the cause or mover and doer of all wickedness, and therefore responsible for it and its author. This is based upon the supposition that whatever God has foreordained or predestinated to be, he himself is the author and doer of by his own agency and power. This is certainly a wrong conclusion, because it is not true, as positively proven in the case of the betrayers and murderers of the Son of God, to whom Peter by the Holy Ghost said, "Ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Their wicked hearts and carnal minds of enmity against God moved and impelled them to do this greatest of all crimes, and they were the responsible and guilty authors of it, yet Peter also said to them, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked

hands," &c. So it is in all other cases, for while the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God is fulfilled in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, just as he purposed it to be, so that he is never surprised, disappointed, or the least turned or changed, yet God tempteth no man, nor compelleth any one to do wickedly, but man's own lusts tempt and entice him in all his sinful ways and wicked works. It was so when by man sin entered into the world, and all wickedness and its punishment, suffering and death, as the result or wages of sin. While this is true, it is also true that the eternal purpose, determinate counsel and foreknowledge of the Lord God omnipotent and omniscient saw and determined and declared the end from the beginning, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

Of Christ and God and us Paul says, "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Thus the Spirit of truth and revelation in Paul connects all things with the counsel and purpose and will of God, who worketh or ordereth and controlleth all things, and all this in subserviency to the inheritance of his saints in Christ, which they have obtained by his predestination of them thereunto according to his holy purpose. Thus all things are unchangeably foreknown, purposed and controlled in the infinite wisdom and omnipotent power of the Almighty, whose dominion is over all worlds, beings and things, just because he is God, the omnipresent and omnipotent One, the Almighty. In this wonderful truth, that "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth," is the salvation, preservation and perpetual welfare of all his people, "who are kept by his power through faith unto salvation."

As to the mistaken inference, that whatever God has ordained or predetermined or predestinated, he is the cause and author or doer of and responsible for, the Bible instances above given positively show that it is not so, but that the righteous Judge of all the earth holds the wicked doers of crime as willfully guilty, and punishes them accordingly, notwithstanding they were gathered together with malice and guilt, "For to do whatsoever his hand and his counsel determined before to be done." This is the inspired testimony and divine record that runs through the oracles of God.

The absolute foreknowledge of God is admitted by all who admit his eternal and immutable attributes or unchangeable perfections, even though they deny that he also foreordained all things, as well as foreknew them. But every objection which is made against the foreordination of God, may with equal force be made against his foreknowledge, for this as certainly establishes all things in the universe as does his predetermination of them. One is as positive and unalterable as the other. All things which God foreknew, cannot be otherwise, but must take place precisely as foreknown. A denial of this, is also a denial of the omniscience of God, and charges imperfection and ignorance to him. But no Baptist denies the foreknowledge of God, but all admit that he certainly foreknew all things whatsoever comes to pass. This establishes the certainty of all things with God as absolutely as would his eternal purpose and decree concerning the certainty of their fulfillment. Hence, the objection to the predestination of any wicked thing or act, that it makes the Holy One the author and cause of such

predetermined act, will apply as well against his foreknowledge of such act, and charge him as being the cause and doer of it. But the criticism is not just or true, for the Holy One is not the author or doer of any sin or wickedness, neither is his determinate counsel and foreknowledge causative thereof, and such an inference and imputation is a slander upon the foreknowledge of God as well as upon his foreordination, for they alike make all things certain of fulfillment, just as God determined and foreknew them. It was foretold and determined that wicked Judas should betray the holy Son of God, yet God himself neither betrayed his Anointed nor caused Judas to do this great sin. Peter said by inspiration, that God verily foreordained before the foundation of the world that Christ should be slain as a lamb for the redemption of his people, but so far from God being his slayer or the causative author of this crime of crimes, his persecuted servant Stephen boldly said to his own and Christ's wicked murderers, "Of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers," for which the fearful judgments and wrath of God fell upon them, both Jews and Romans, to the uttermost, and most righteously, too. Yet it has been so often asserted of late that all things which God predestinated or foreordained, (for the two words mean the same) he also either does or causes to be done, and so is the author of, that not a few brethren have come to believe and accept as true, without careful scriptural examination; hence the abhorrent saying has become so common now among Baptists, that if God predestinated all things, then he is the author of all the sinful things in the world; that is, he causes them to be. But if brethren would only consider how irreverent it is to charge sin and wickedness to God, whatever his ordained purpose may be in its extent, and would not be misled by this stale old charge of rationalists or Arminians ever since they thus slanderously reported of Paul, but would reverently "search the Scriptures," to see what the Lord has said, they would learn that it is written concerning very many of the most calamitous events and enormous wickedness of men and nations, that God positively declared and decreed that they should take place, just as he foretold by his prophets, and accordingly the most wicked and ungodly men and nations were raised up and did commit all the great wickedness that God had said they should. Please take the pains to read the sacred history of the Israelites, from Moses to the end of the seventy years' captivity in Babylon, and the books of the prophets, from Isaiah to Daniel, and you will be both instructed and awed at the many mighty events, including many national calamities, wars and the destruction of cities, countries and nations, which God righteously decreed should be, ages before they came to pass, and yet those wicked men and ungodly nations, the enemies of God and righteousness, were the foretold and ordained authors and doers of all those wicked things. They were arrogant, self-willed, implacable, sensual and devilish in their wicked course and works, neither knowing nor fearing God; but his holy counsel and purpose embraced, bounded and controlled all those far-reaching and momentous events, which were to affect unborn generations and coming nations; and thus and in this way the Most High executed his firm decrees and righteous judgments in punishing the ungodly and wicked, and in chastising, correcting and humbling his own people, that they should

worship and glorify him as their God and King, their Father Almighty.

Gentle reader, please read now "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which *must* shortly come to pass," and you will be impressed with awe and godly fear at the majestic and amazing things which the Almighty therein declares shall be fulfilled, for many of those mighty events are very calamitous, yet he in wisdom and holiness has purposed and ordained them, "And he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John." Let us join with the four and twenty elders, and say, "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth." "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him." Let us join Watts on sovereignty:

"Keep silence, all created things,
And wait your Maker's nod;
My soul stands trembling while she sings,
The honors of her God.

Life, death and hell, and worlds unknown,
Hang on his firm decree;
He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be."

"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." "The eternal God is thy [and my] refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

Believing and trusting in the everlasting God and Father Almighty,

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Oct. 14, 1900.

MT. VERNON, Texas, Sept. 23, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have a mind this morning to submit a few thoughts for your consideration, and if you think them worth their room in the SIGNS, for the consideration of the brethren and sisters in general, on the important and sublime subject of love. But how shall I be able to do this with any degree of profit to myself or others, unless I am made to realize some heartfelt emotions of this love, as I attempt to write? I know that I am fully dependent for this great and grand blessing upon "The Father of lights, from whom cometh down every good and every perfect gift." I am utterly unable of myself to command it, or to control it, and however much I may desire it, "If I would give all the substance of my house for it, it would utterly be condemned." The love of the child of God to him, and to his brethren, is the result of God's love to him. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." It is "the fruit of the Spirit," and was provided for God's children "With all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, [before the world began] according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." And, "We love him because he first loved us." (Not that we love him, or act like we love him, in order to get him to love us.) When the subject of redeeming love, who has experienced his sins forgiven,

and the love of God in his heart, calls to mind his own experience, he can say with the prophet, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." The apostle Paul declares that God loved us "even when we were dead in sin." "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, *even when we were dead in sins*, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved) and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

In consideration of the eternal love of God, and his promises based thereupon, well may Israel sing, "I will mention the loving-kindness of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving-kindness. For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie; so he was their Savior. In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them and carried them all the days of old."—Isaiah lxiii. 7–9.

As his love is perfect and eternal, and like all his attributes, unchangeable, so God's children need not fear that one of his precious promises to them will fail of accomplishment. For he "is not slack concerning his promises, as some men count slackness." If his promises were based upon foreseen good dispositions or works in us, then we would all have reason to fear that we were not the subjects embraced in the blessed promises of God at all. But his love is centered in him of whom it said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," and we in him. Hence, "Of him [God the Father] are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

When one is born of the Spirit, born from above, there springs up as one of the products of the Spirit, love. Not a natural affection, such as he has known all the while before, but a higher order of love, such as he has never known or felt before, and which is given him as an unmistakable evidence of his being a child of God, "An heir of God, and joint-heir with the Lord Jesus Christ." "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." While all who are born of God must in a greater or lesser measure have this love dwelling in their hearts, and this love must have for its source and center the same, (Jesus) from the first to the last of the sons or daughters of the earthly Adam who are brought to know it, yet in no case has the nature and power of that love been exemplified in that measure that it was by the blessed Son of God, as "God manifest in the flesh." The Son of God, and our elder Brother, as a result of, or actuated by, love to his Father, was "obedient unto death," "a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief," tempted and tried in every way Satan and wicked men could devise. While as a man he would have averted it all, for while bowed down in the garden of Gethsemane, his agony being so great under a felt sense of his terrible suffering, that the sweat rolled off him as it were great drops of blood, he cried, "Father, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless not as I will but as thou wilt." So as it was the will of his Father, and to do his

Father's will he came into the world, he submitted to a shameful mock trial, and was condemned upon the testimony of false witness, and put to death, died "the just for the unjust." And herein also, "God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." As a result of God's love to his chosen people, they have in Christ Jesus life and salvation, a free, full and complete exemption from what must be the final consequences of all unpardoned sin. Not only was he their representative here on earth in a body of flesh, and as going down in death and the grave, and rising again from the dead, but he is also seated at the right hand of the majesty in the heavens, to make intercession for us according to the will of God, and "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Christ Jesus the righteous." The whole life of our Savior, as a man in the world, was one of unselfish devotion; such a course as could not have proceeded from sinful flesh, and thus we have an unadulterated example of spiritual obedience, and the source from which it springs. The glorious consideration in all this is, that his obedience is ours, all that we have, as the prophet hath said, "He shall be called the Lord our righteousness." And again, "This is the heritage of servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."

The effect of the gift of eternal life is not to destroy the natural life, or a change of the Adamic nature, from natural to spiritual. If so, then there would exist no warfare between the flesh and Spirit, and the child of grace would have no more an affection of an earthly nature, and the lusts of the flesh, unlawful desire, the love of sinful things would no more give him trouble. But the fact is the giving of spiritual life so far from destroying does not even impair the natural. But, "He that is in you, is stronger than he that is in the world." The spiritual in a measure subdues the natural. "The Spirit [not a natural spirit of man born of the Spirit of God, but that Spirit which is given in the birth from above, which dwells in you,] lusteth against the flesh, and the flesh against the Spirit, and these are contrary one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." So being a complex character, possessing two whole and distinct natures, the child of grace realizes the indwelling of two sets of faculties, so to speak. He sees, feels, hears, &c., as a natural man, and so he does as a heaven-born soul. Some of God's children, as men of the world, manifest a strong love for money, and we are told that the "love of money is the root of all evil." Some have manifested a great love for others of the creature blessings of God, even to their abuse, or unlawful use, as David in the case of Uriah's wife, and Solomon in the case of his many strange wives, who turned his heart away from the Lord, and as is shown in the cases of many patriarchs, prophets and apostles. So it is evident from experience, from observation and from the Bible, that God's children instead of possessing a set of changed Adamic faculties, as a result of the spiritual birth, still retain the old ones, yet there is existing within them an entirely new set, which are, and always were spiritual, holy and sinless. Thus they have a spiritual love, pure and holy, and centered on spiritual, pure and holy things. Being thus a character of two minds, the one carnal, and "enmity against God, not subject to his law, neither indeed can be," the other "the mind of Christ." And with this mind, or

intelligence, comprehending spiritual things, they are intelligent subjects of exhortation, and they are exhorted by the inspired servants of God to "Let brotherly love continue;" to "love one another," according to the new commandment of the heavenly Master; to be meek; to be courteous; to be gentle; to bear with one another; to live in peace; to "Walk worthy the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace."

May the Lord continue to bless both editors and correspondents of the SIGNS, is the desire of the unworthy writer,

H. B. JONES.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Elders and messengers of the Lexington Association, in session with the church at Middleburgh, October 3d and 4th, 1900, to the several churches composing the same, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—In compliance with our custom we now address you our annual epistle of love and fellowship.

We will call your attention at this time to the words of 1 Peter ii. 1: "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and evil speaking."

There is no doubt of the fact that Peter had been taught that these passions still remained in his own mind, as well as in the mind of the saints, at that day, and knew as well as the apostle James that wars and fightings came from the exercise of them, and that, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city."—Prov. xvi. 32.

This continual striving between flesh and Spirit calls for continual watching, as well against our passion, as for the coming of our Lord. Those thieves that break through and steal our peace from us, and those dogs to whom we should not give that which is holy, as well as those swine before whom we should not cast our pearls, these are the beastly names to our passions.

Paul says, "If after the manner of men, [that is, speaking after the manner of man,] I have fought with beasts at Ephesus." Now if any one would wish to know what the unrestrained passions in the saints will do, let him behold the beasts bite and devour each other. Dear brethren, shall not we with Peter say, Let us lay them aside?

"Wherefore." Why use this word "wherefore"? Because he had just reminded those to whom he was writing, of the fact that, "All flesh is as grass." This fact is the first to be discovered in the revelation of God's truth to man, "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return," and as the flower of the field we pass away. The saints should never forget this important fact. It is quite common for children of rich parents to forget their poor relation, and it is a thing not to be wondered at, that the saints while enjoying the bounties of God's grace should forget that they are still in the flesh; that they are liable to bring forth the fruits of the flesh. This was the great error which the children of Israel fell into, they wanted the world to understand that they were a distinct people, (which they were) and better by nature (which they were not). The fruit of this delusion is phariseeism. This is that which the Savior rebuked in the parable of the two going up in the temple to pray: the one looked on his own good-

ness, and the vileness of his neighbor, the other on the vileness of himself, and the goodness of God. "The goodness of God leadeth to repentance." Peter exhorted those strangers, as well as ourselves, to lay those vile passions aside. We can all see how easy it is when we feel that we are better than our neighbor, to speak evil of him, and hate him, but how hard it is when we know he is better than ourselves, to requite him thus. The Savior understood the very thought of the heart, and struck at the root of the matter, when he said, "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts." "These are the things which defile the man." These are the things to be lain aside; they are the fruit of the flesh, and shall perish like the flower of the field. Let us lay them aside, and forgetting the things which are behind, as we would an old garment, not fit to be worn, and press forward to the things before, and "As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby." Now as milk is the first desired by the babe, and is the first fruit to be given, so love is the first desire of the child of God, and is the first fruit of the Spirit, and after that, joy and peace. The work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of righteousness is quietness, and assurance forever. This is the way we shall grow in grace and knowledge of the truth. How easy it is, when we are clothed and in our right mind, to desire the fruit of the Spirit. Then love will flow out of our minds like milk from the breast, and will nourish the church, for it is the love of God.

Dear brethren, we may, like Martha, be careful and troubled about many things, and like her be taught there is one thing needful, and find like her, our sister has chosen that good part that shall not be taken from her. There is but one thing needful to nourish babes. Let us also desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby.

Finally, brethren, farewell, be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind: live in peace, and the God of love and peace be with you.

JOHN CLARK, Moderator.
G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.
FLETCHER MACKEY, Assistant Clerk.

The Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, in session with the Bethlehem Church, Prince William County, Virginia, October 17th, 18th and 19th, 1900, to the several churches and Associations with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Time in its onward march has brought us to another session of our annual meeting, and we are admonished that you will expect to hear from us, as is our custom, through the medium of a letter, whether we are walking in the precepts of the great Head of the church, being founded and established upon those fundamental doctrines of the absolute sovereignty of God, his electing love and predestinating purpose, salvation by grace, and final preservation of his saints to glory, or whether we have wandered off after the gods of this world, and are training in the schools of men to oppose these doctrines by theories concocted therein. Well has the psalmist said, "Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that has made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people and the sheep of his pasture." And the apostle Paul to the Colossians declared, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in the earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers, all things were created by him and for him:

and he is before all things and by him all things consist." This being the case then, what right have worms of the dust to rise up and call in question anything that he does, or find fault with any disposition that he may make of any of his creatures? As a Sovereign he has the supreme right to do as he pleases with his own, and, "without him there was nothing made that was made," and all to show forth his glory. Consequently he is above all, sin included, and as we are told that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin," does puny man know just where to draw the line and say that on one side of that line God as a Sovereign, decrees, or predestinates, and that on the other side his decrees or predestination does not apply, but that things are allowed to go at a kind of hap-hazard pace? "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel," and those bounds remain fixed to this day so that none can go beyond, but each and every one have to fill the place appointed for them, and all to carry out the purpose of an all-wise and ever gracious God. Jonah had to go to Nineveh to preach the preaching that God bid him, but is there one who will say that he went the way of his own choice? While fleeing to Tarshish in the face of the command of God, he is turned about and through trials, tribulations and the sorest straits through which one could be called to pass, does he have to go to Nineveh, and finding that it was impossible to thwart God's designs concerning him, we hear him declare, "I will pay that that I have vowed, Salvation is of the Lord." Can we deny that any one thing in this remarkable event was ordered or directed by the God of heaven? If we can, what becomes of our hope when we find ourselves experimentally in the same condition with Jonah when he says, "I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice, for thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me." He does not even charge this affliction through which he is passing to his own sin of disobedience: for he says, "For *thou* hadst cast me into the deep." It was necessary for Jonah to pass through this experience in order to be suitably prepared to preach to those people. Shall we say that God was disappointed in the course which Jonah pursued to go to Nineveh? We think not. We believe and are thoroughly convinced that God's blessings come to his church in a cross-handed way, entirely different, in many instances, from the way we expect them. In our poor, short-sighted minds we would think that God was able (and so he was) to have sent Jonah directly to Nineveh to preach what he had bid him, without his going in the way he did, but God had a purpose in his going that way, and how many poor souls have been made to rejoice in the experience of Jonah as left upon record? For the apostle in his letter to the Romans, says, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." While we say that Jonah did not charge this affliction to the sin of disobedience, still we doubt not that he felt that his sins had brought him here, for when questioned by the ship's crew in regard to the cause of the tempest that was upon them, he said, "Take me up and cast me into the

sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you." What a realizing sense of sin here rests upon him, a readiness to be cast overboard to perish in the sea, he feels this to be nothing but what he justly deserves, and submits to it, little thinking that God would yet bring him out of it in such manner as to make him better qualified to do his bidding. How truly he could say after this thrilling experience, "Salvation is of the Lord."

The Lord has said by the mouth of the prophet, "And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God." Thus it matters not when nor where the Lord calls his people, they are bound to come just in that way and through just such trials as he has marked out for them. As the poet has so well expressed it:

"The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
The Father determined and wrote in his will."

And while for us to travel many of the devious ways by which we are hedged about, is sin in us, yet it is just as necessary for the ultimate triumph of faith by grace, for if it were otherwise how soon would we become idol worshipers, and dancing around the golden calf and saying, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." It is not that we would say that we "should continue in sin that grace may abound," for as the apostle Paul has so well said, "How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Having realized the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and being made to abhor ourselves on account of it, and with a full sense of our inability in and of ourselves to walk aright, our prayer is that the Lord may lead us in the right way, and to his name be all the glory in a world without end. Amen.

Our meeting has been well attended. The preaching has been clear and discriminating, to the comfort and upbuilding of the saints in their most holy faith, exalting the Creator and abasing the creature.

Our next annual meeting is appointed to be held with the New Valley Church, Loudoun Co., Va., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1901, when and where we hope to meet your messengers, and receive your messages of love again.

J. N. BADGER, Moderator.
G. G. GALLEHER, Clerk.

The Elders and messengers composing the Salisbury Association of Old School, or Primitive Baptists, in session with the church at Nassaongo, October 24th, 25th and 26th, 1900, to the several churches whose messengers we are, sendeth love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—As your servants, we would not speak to you as having dominion over your faith, but as helpers of your joy, and whatever means we can use to further that end, we would gladly avail ourselves of. Exhortation is one of the ways that God has provided for his servants, the ministry, to be a help to the joy of his saints. The purpose of exhortation is not to benefit those yet in a state of nature, dead in sins, but is always addressed to believers, living persons, who have been quickened into divine life by the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of life in Christ, and have risen with Christ, who, in and by virtue of that quickening, have now a capacity to receive instruction in heavenly things, and

in the order of the house of God, and are able to attend to the affairs of that house which has been committed to their charge. The church of Christ is compared to a house, in fact is called a house, and is the home (dwelling-place) of the children, and for the honor and glory of God, and the welfare and comfort (spiritual health) of all who dwell therein. The care of the house is committed to the saints, and it is for them to take heed to the various duties that develop on them in fulfilling that whereunto they are appointed. All good house-keepers are, and have need to be, constantly on the alert, that every part of the house is kept clean, and sweet, and pure, that nothing that would give offense be permitted to remain in the house. So the exhortations of Scripture are to the end of instructing the saints in the keeping of the house in order.

Accompanying exhortation is reproof and rebuke. We understand that the church is given the watch-care over all its members, and if it becomes known to her that any are walking disorderly, it is her duty to labor with such to the end that they may be restored to the place they may have lost through their disorder. Thus we understand that the end or object of all labor is to restore, and not to destroy. However, in attending to this duty it is sometimes necessary to be very plain, and even sharp, as the apostle said to Titus, "Rebuke them sharply: that they may be sound in the faith." It may be a question, What is disorderly walk? We answer, Anything that is contrary to sound doctrine, and whatever tends to produce dissension, strife, confusion and division in the church, is disorder. We say that it behooves a church whenever such elements are discovered within her borders, for her to search out such disturbing elements and direct her labor toward their removal, and if there be no other way to remove them except by the exclusion of the offending one, then that must be done. The admonition of the apostle is to "withdraw from every brother that walketh disorderly." Disorder does not necessarily imply immorality, or dishonesty in our dealings with our fellow-men, or untruthfulness, or drunkenness and rioting, though of course such is disorder, and the church must not tolerate such conduct in one of its members, but one may be of good moral character, honest, truthful and sober, and yet be guilty of such conduct as to produce strife and confusion in the church, to the destruction of its peace and comfort. Such cases are more difficult to deal with, because there are many deceived and misled by the otherwise good character of the offender. The Savior and King of Zion instructed his disciples in the order of his kingdom (house) in the sermon on the mount, and among other things told them, "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee," or "If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." No church can tolerate an offending member, if the sore cannot be healed, and retain it in the body, even though its importance be to the body as the right eye or right hand. The rule given by the Lord in dealing with such is found in Matthew xviii. 15–17, "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault, between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother: but if he will not hear thee, take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established: and if he shall neglect to hear

them, tell it to the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be to thee as a heathen man and a publican." We understand this rule to relate to all difficulties between brethren of a strictly private character, and if any act contrary to this rule it brings confusion and strife, and often leads to the exclusion of both parties from the fellowship of the church. Besides this, there are cases of open offense against the whole church, such as refusal to listen to admonitions of the church, which is to treat the church with contempt, or censuring and criticising the church on account of its action in some case. These offenses being open, must be openly dealt with. The apostle, one of the judges appointed to sit in judgment, has given the rule: "He that sins before all, rebuke before all, that others also may fear." No one member should undertake to judge the church, when acting harmoniously and in its capacity of judge. The judgment is given to the church to act as a church, but each member must be subordinate to the whole, otherwise confusion will be the result. It should always be borne in mind that the prime object of all labor is for the purpose of restoring (healing) the offending member, and cutting off as a last resort, when all has been done that could be to heal, and has been in vain.

Now, brethren, we submit these things to you in the way of suggestions. We are glad that the letters from the several churches report peace as existing within their borders. All the reports show that there is ability in each church to attend to its own affairs, and this is as it should be. Every gospel church is an independent organization, fully qualified to attend to its own affairs, without interference from outside, otherwise it ceases to perform its functions, and is itself in a disorderly condition.

In conclusion we would commend you to God and the word of his grace, and would exhort you to carefulness in maintaining the order of the house, as essential to the comfort and well being of the family.

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

T. M. POULSON, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Fairview Church, Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa., October 12th, 13th and 14th, 1900, to the churches and associations with which we correspond, sends greeting.

IT has been, and yet is, a custom among us at our associations, to write what we call a Circular Letter, to be published in our Minutes.

Because of a controversy that has risen among us in regard to certain points of doctrine, we will, in humbleness, and in all meekness and lowliness of spirit, attempt to write on the subject of God's eternal decrees, and everlasting sovereignty. It is not with a feeling of enmity that we thus write, but humbly hope and trust that what we write may be written in spirit, truth and love, and be to our comfort, consolation and instruction. As a foundation on which to build, we invite your attention to these words, "Thy will be done."

We are not so vain as to think that we

can in this imperfect letter, introduce anything new in way of an argument on this subject, but we do hope and humbly trust that God, the Father, will direct our minds in the way of all truth; and guide our hands to pen nothing that will contain a single sentiment contrary to the truth as it is in Christ. Neither do we think that any one will, from the reading of this, be materially benefited, but we do hope that what we are lead to write will be experimentally understood, and that this, "Ye are my witnesses sayeth the Lord," will bear us witness in what we may yet write.

In our minds it seems evident that to preach the possibility of man's doing something that was not by God declared from the beginning, or the possibility of his leaving undone something that God foreknew he would do, is to not preach "Thy will be done," and God as a sovereign God. We by bitter experience have, as much as we long and will to do only that which is right, learned to say, Nevertheless not as we will, but as thou wilt. We further believe that every heaven-born child is taught to pray as were the disciples, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." We have often had, and we doubt not but that all the dear saints have had, more or less, their worldly plans and natural will crossed, sometimes through sickness or existing circumstances, but oftener through the cruelty or injustice of an enemy, or through the love and kindness of some very dear friend or brother. Here again, for what we could not help, we have said, "Thy will be done." Again, we have had hopes of improvement in ourselves, and we have made resolutions, formed plans, and even went so far as to promise our God that we would make our lives better, and not do so and so again. Our hopes are blasted, our resolutions are broken, our plans are not carried out, and our promises are not kept; again we fall down at the foot-stool of mercy, and sinking deeper and deeper in the dust of humiliation and despair, cry out, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." This was very hard for us to do, but did we not perceive in looking back over our past experience that in thus yielding to the will of our heavenly Master that there came to us, even though walking through the furnace of affliction, or the valley of the shadow of death, a sweet comfort, a great calm, and we were made to rejoice because "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."?

The very thought of God, who is recognized as a sovereign God, knowing and foreknowing all things whatsoever comes to pass, and yet not decreeing that they should come to pass, would suggest that God is not a sovereign God, and that there must be some power independent of him. But this is not in harmony with the Scriptures, "For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."

Paul in his epistle to the Romans, said, "I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, * * * that blindness in part is happened to Israel, [natural Israel] until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel [spiritual Israel] shall be saved." The Lord hath declared by the mouth of the prophet, "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation." It does not concern us about the security of this everlasting salvation, because the message is "shall be saved" both in time and eternity. The only question of concern to us is, Are we of that people who are spoken of as "Israel"? This is what causes us many anxious thoughts, and still we are made to say, If we are lost

and "sent to hell, thy righteous law approves it well.

Let us examine ourselves and see what our experiences teach us. Our experiences teach us to say as did Paul, by the grace of God we are what we are, and to believe that it is all by grace, 'Tis grace has brought us safe thus far, and grace will lead us home. We are taught that when he speaks it is done, when he commands it stands fast, and "That all things work together for good to them that love God," &c. The Scriptures also accord with what we feel and experience: "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsél shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Some will tell us that Judas could have kept from betraying the Savior, when it had been shown beforehand that he should betray him; yea, some will tell us that God did not have any purpose in having the wicked to dwell upon the earth, when Paul in writing to the Romans said, "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee [Pharaoh] up." The Scriptures declare that "The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."

The worm that creepeth upon the ground replieth not against God, neither does the bird that maketh its home in a tree, but man, who had breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and who became a living soul, does reply against God, never once thinking that we are formed of the dust of the earth, and of the declaration: "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?"

Our Association has been very pleasant to us, with good preaching. How good and pleasant for brethren to meet together and talk of the goodness and mercy of our covenant-keeping God, to such poor, unworthy creatures as we feel ourselves to be.

E. V. WHITE, Moderator.
AHIMAAZ MELLOTT, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Elders and messengers of the Lexington Association, in session with the church at Middleburgh, N. Y., October 3d and 4th, 1900, to the Associations and churches with which we are in correspondence, extend greeting in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—As we are again permitted, through the enduring mercies and goodness of our heavenly Father, to assemble in his name in this our annual gathering, we feel to render unto the giver of all good, a tribute of praise and thanksgiving for this privilege of meeting your messengers, and receiving your messages of love and fellowship.

We feel to say that our coming together has not been in vain, that the word has been ably and truthfully proclaimed to the edifying and upbuilding of the church of the living God. The desire that christian love, peace and fellowship shall abound, has been the theme of the messages from the several churches of our associate body, while your ministers have not failed to proclaim to a dying congregation, that free and unmerited salvation that was wrought out on Calvary's bloody summit, through the shed blood of the immaculate Son of God, and in accordance with the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and through the everlasting covenant of the Father and the Son is bestowed upon all whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life, and unto all

who love his appearing. But, dear brethren, we feel that we are living in perilous times, and that it becomes the watchmen on the walls to cry aloud and spare not, and all who have the cause of the truths of the gospel of Christ our Lord at heart, to take heed lest any root of bitterness spring up and mar the peace and spiritual welfare of the children of the kingdom. We desire to be in submission to the will of our heavenly Father, and that he will keep us and all the subjects of grace from every false and evil way.

Your messengers and Minutes have been gladly received, and we very much desire a continuance of your correspondence, love and fellowship.

Our next meeting is appointed to be held with the Olive & Hurley Church, on the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, 1901, at 10 o'clock a. m., where we hope, if it is the will of the Lord, to meet and greet you in his name.

JOHN CLARK, Moderator.
G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.
FLETCHER MACKEY, Assistant Clerk.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Nassaongo Church, October 24th, 25th and 26th, 1900, to the churches and Associations with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We trust that we feel under great obligation to our God that through his abounding goodness and mercy we are preserved unto the present, and we are blessed with the privilege of enjoying another precious interview, which we trust has been the ministration of great comfort to our hearts, by stirring up and calling out the evidences of our acceptance, and our fellowship one with the other. The letters from the different churches bring very cheering news, while not much addition has been reported, the health of the churches has been assured, which is very gratifying. We have gladly received your ministers and messengers in our midst, for they have brought to us the same glorious testimony that our hearts have been prepared to receive, salvation by grace through our Lord Jesus Christ; this is glad tidings from a far country; this truth makes our correspondence profitable and strengthening to our hope, we therefore desire a continuation of your correspondence, therefore we would extend to you a cordial invitation to meet with us at our next meeting, which will be held with the church at Indiantown, Wicomico County, Maryland, commencing on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1901, and continue three days.

T. M. POULSON, Moderator.
JOHN H. TRUITT, Clerk.

The Juniata Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with Fairview Church, Fulton County, Pa., sendeth greeting to the churches and Associations with whom we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED:—One year more has gone and is numbered with the past, and has taken with it many of our members. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be his holy name. We who are left to meet again are made glad with your ministers and messengers, all having an eye single to the glory of God, all speaking the same thing, of one mind and one judgment. Surely with the psalmist we can say, "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

May the Lord guide all your deliberations to the glory of his great name and to the edification of all his children. The Lord

reward the people for their great kindness shown us during our stay with them.

Our hope is again to meet you at Friends Cove Church, Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1901.

E. V. WHITE, Moderator.
AHIMAAZ MELLOTT, Clerk.

The Mt. Pleasant Association of Regular Baptists, now in session with the church at Beech Creek, Shelby Co., Ky., on the 12th, 13th and 14th of September, 1900, to the associations and churches with whom she corresponds, sends greeting.

AGAIN, dearly beloved, we have been privileged to meet together for the worship of God, and again we have had a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Your messages of love and fellowship are greatly appreciated, and your messengers, the servants of God, have proclaimed unto us the word of truth in power and demonstration of the Spirit, to our joy and comfort. We desire a continuanceof your correspondence by Minutes and messengers, realizing that we are one people, whose only hope of salvation is alone in the Lord Jesus Christ, our life.

Our next session, if the Lord will, will be held with the church at Cane Run, Henry Co., Ky., commencing at 10 o'clock on Wednesday before the first Saturday in September, 1901, when and where we hope to meet again your messengers, and receive your messages of love.

C. F. DUDLEY, Moderator.
E. F. RANSDELL, Clerk.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denotes the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

EDITORIAL.

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B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.
MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., April 15, 1858

JONAH II. 8; III. 10.

A FRIEND from Southland, Miss., who feels too unworthy to allow his name to be used, asks our views upon two portions of the word found in the prophecy of Jonah. He names chapter second, verse eight, and chapter three, verse ten.

The first text reads as follows: "They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy."

These words were extorted from Jonah out of an experience which had taught him the truth of them. He had followed false reasonings of his own mind, and had come into bitter trouble in so doing We need not dwell upon the connection, as it is familiar to all Bible readers. The Lord had bidden him go to Nineveh and cry against that wicked city, but he had turned to flee from the presence of the Lord, and had gone in another direction; he had counted himself wiser than God; he had thought himself better able to provide for his own comfort and safety, than the God whose servant he was. The vain imaginations of his own mind seemed to him better worth following than the word of the Lord. No doubt there were many suggestions and reasonings in his own mind that seemed very plausible. He

was just such a man as we are, and had the same fleshly reasonings that would occur to us under similar circumstances. The message was not a pleasant one for him to bear and deliver to the people, it was distressing, in itself, to be the bearer of evil tidings, he might well expect the illwill and enmity of the people of the city, and might well expect that his message would not be believed, and to them he would be the prophet of evil. In the message he would be accusing them of sin and evil, and this would insure their dislike. These things would all be against him, and would cause the fleshly mind to hesitate and shrink back. Still the word of the Lord was his (we might say,) and was not that sufficient? Surely it would be sufficient, but no doubt questions arose in the mind of Jonah as to whether after all it was the will of God that he should bear such a message to the city. He might say, "Is it the word of God that has come to me after all?" Satan's temptations would come in, right on the heels of his own reasonings. All these things were truly vain, that is, empty of any real good, and they all were lying vanities, but nevertheless he observed, or gave heed to them, and forsook the word of the Lord, and so came into trouble. As Jonah said in the text, he forsook his own mercy. Unbelief was at the root of all this reasoning, and the conduct that grew out of it, and unbelief is the chief and most deadly foe of all who believe. It was through unbelief, the apostle tells us, that the carcasses of Israel fell in the wilderness. It was because of unbelief the apostle tells us again, that the literal Israel were cut off (Rom. xi). As faith is the fountain and cause of all obedience to God, so unbelief is the fountain and cause of all disobedience to God. And Jonah disobeyed through unbelief. He was left to prove the truth of the words of the inspired penman, "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof is the ways of death." This way, that seems right to a man, is destitute of all that is good in any sense of the word, but yet it promises all comfort and blessing unto those who are deceived by it; it lies to its followers; it is a lying vanity. The Galatians observed lying vanities, when they were drawn by Judaizing teachers away from the simplicity of the gospel, into legality and the observance of forms and ceremonies. It seemed reasonable to them that they ought to regard the law of the old covenant with reverence, and observe it under the gospel. Surely this must be right, they would very naturally think. Their teachers had said to them, Except ye be circumcised and keep the law of Moses, ye cannot be saved. This promised much to them. Surely in this we shall be blessed. But they were giving heed to falsehood, and following that which could afford them no blessing. In following these teachings they were going away from Christ. They were forsaking the fountain of living waters, and were hewing out for themselves broken cisterns that could hold no water. Fleeing to the broken cistern, they were forsaking the fountain which never could become dry. They were indeed forsaking their own mercies.

When Esau, for one morsel of meat, sold his birthright, he was observing lying vanities and forsaking his own mercies. Afterwards he saw this, but could not undo what he had done; for so the words, "he found no place for repentance," mean. He took counsel of present hunger, and disregarded the future blessing; he forsook his own mercy.

Every time a child of God departs from the truth, either in faith or practice, he

forsakes his own mercies. All such departures are an observance of lying vanities. Jonah sought after personal ease and safety, rather than the word of the Lord, and as a result he went into trouble naturally as well as spiritually. He transgressed, and in the way of transgression, found sorrow and affliction. Out of it all he, however, learned one supreme lesson, and was constrained to say at last, "Salvation is of the Lord." His own way had not led to salvation in any sense of the word. Giving heed to the false promises which seemed so alluring to him, he had forsaken the only path of safety and blessing. And whenever we do aught else than give heed to the word of the Lord, we do still plunge ourselves into darkness and trouble. The way which we have thought best, has lied to us, and deceived us with false hopes, and we have turned away from the narrow way of life and peace. These are things which belong to us, and therefore it is said, that we have forsaken OUR OWN mercies.

It is as though children should become dissatisfied with home, and parents, and friends, and thinking that it will be best for them to go out after the pleasures of life, which are forbidden at home, depart to try these things for themselves. How often have children had cause to grieve bitterly at the folly which possessed them. They literally and naturally have taken counsel of falsehood, and have forsaken home, and all the blessings of home, which as children, belonged to them. They have given up real blessings, for what at best, can prove but a delusion and a snare, and in most cases bitter loss and sorrow has followed. The children of God are also thus foolish. For a mess of pottage, many a child has sold his birthright. Many a child of God has given heed to lying vanities, and forsaken the mercy that belongs to him in the kingdom. When the children of God for the sake of some little worldly gain, leave the privileges which are theirs in the church, and forsake the assembling of themselves together, they are forsaking their own mercies. Some of the children have, through the prospect of worldly gain, departed hundreds of miles away from all their brethren, and from all spiritual privileges, only to regret it in bitterness of spirit afterwards; they followed a lying vanity, and forsook their own mercies. When any worldly thing appeals to us more strongly than the privileges of the house of God, it is a lying vanity, and it will lead us away from our own mercy. When one finds himself by any worldly thing shut out from the companionship and comfort of his brethren he had better regard it as a lying vanity, it promises to him what it can never bestow upon him, it sets itself up to be more desirable than all his spiritual privileges, and so lies to him, and foolish is he who believes such a false thing. For a child of God to give heed to such falsehoods, is more foolish than when a child forsakes home and friends for the dissipations of this life, away from home.

But led us mark one thing especially in the text, when spiritual blessings are chosen, and we abide in them, they are still mercies, and nothing but mercies, we have not earned them, and we have not deserved them in any sense of the word. To abide in them is not to merit them. To have a mind to abide in them is the greatest of all mercies. For more than thirty-five years, it has been our privilege to dwell with the church of God as a member, and we can truly say that the continued desire to dwell in the house of the Lord is one of the things

which we have felt that we ought to thank God for above most things else. Church membership, all the ordinances of the church, its fellowship and peace, its gatherings for solemn worship, are all wonderful mercies, but to have a heart to love these things, more than all things else, is the most wonderful blessing of all. What a mercy to have such a desire abiding in us. Yet, we have forsaken our own mercies, as well as others, in regarding lying vanities. We think we know of what we are writing. All our departures, like that of Jonah, amount to denying that salvation is of the Lord, and the shame and trouble and sorrow that follow, bring us to the confession of that one great truth, that "Salvation is of the Lord." Thus God has overruled our very departures, in the end through the pathway of grief, repentance, shame and loss, to our good. It was so with Jonah. It is so with all who do indeed love God.

The second text reads as follows, "And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that he had said he would do unto them; and he did it not."

This is one of those Scriptures which have perplexed the minds of the humble believer in the power, unchangeability, and sovereignty of God, in all ages. The question is, How can that God who declares himself to be without variableness or shadow of turning, and who says, "I am God, I change not," be said to have repented, in the text to which our attention is called? Such Scriptures are also appealed to by all those who deny the immutability of Jehovah, as proof to the contrary. We will in reponse to the request of our friend, first of all say, that nothing in the Scriptures must be understood as contradicting the essential attributes of Deity. Our God must be a being beyond all our conceptions. There must not be any attempt to limit him in any direction. His wisdom and power and purpose are not limited. Any wisdom to which a bound can be set, is not divine wisdom. Any wisdom to which change can be attached, is not unlimited wisdom. Such wisdom must have bounds somewhere, and this cannot be the wisdom of him who is all-wise. His power must also be unlimited, otherwise he is not omnipotent. His purpose must take in all things, else he is the subject of change, and cannot therefore be immutable. This would be to undeify Deity, and to take away from God all that constitutes him the object of supreme worship. God cannot know anything to-day that he did not know yesterday. His power must also extend over all things in all the universe and at all times. He cannot purpose anything to day, that was not from all eternity embraced in his purpose. All this is implied in the doctrine of his unchangeability. Our prayers work no change in the divine mind or will; God has appointed certain blessings to come to his people, and we cannot increase nor decrease them. He has appointed these blessings through prayer, and so he says, I will be inquired of by the whole house of Israel for to do these things unto them. But the inquiry of the whole house of Israel, did not add to the blessings which he had purposed to convey. Prayer was itself one of the blessings which he conferred upon them. Bread and water are blessings in this natural life, but that hunger and thirst which craves these things, are also equal blessings; they prove that the body is healthy. So prayer grows out of a life that is spiritually healthy, and the provision to answer that prayer was made beforehand. "Thou openest thy hand," says the psalmist "and satisfiest the desire of every

living thing." Indeed we do not see how any child of God would dare to pray at all, if he believed that his petition had power to change the purpose of God in any way. Our knowledge is so limited that an inspired apostle was led to say, We do not know what we should pray for, as we ought. And we so often ask amiss. It is one of those things for which our praise and gratitude is due, that our petitions are not possessed of power to call down blessings which God had not designed to bestow, until his will was changed by our prayer. And so our repentance does not change him in any way, "He is of one mind, and who can turn him?" But God gives us our repentance and sorrow for sin, and then confers the further blessings, which belong to a state of repentance and godly sorrow. This text to which our friend refers, does not contradict these truths, God does not change in his wisdom or purpose, since all his purposes are eternal purposes, but he does change the outward course of events; he changes his dispensations. When he, for instance, took away the former dispensation that he might establish the latter, there was no change in the mind and purpose of God, but only in the outward appearance of things. When God brings about day and night, or the successive seasons, there are no changes in his will and purpose, yet he brings about all these apparent changes in our view. It is a change of working, but not of purpose in God. No one would think of saying concerning the day and night, that when one passed away and gave place to the other, it was because our God had changed in purpose as each day and night followed one another. The same ought not to be said concerning any of the workings of God in the events of this world. In the text to which our attention has been called, we are not to understand that God really was changed in his purpose, but only in the providence which he exercised over the Ninevites, as he does over all nations, and cities, and men. Neither was their repentance in and of themselves, any more than is the repentance of any one else. In the preaching of Jonah, their guilt was so set before them that they were convinced of it, and were made sorry for it, and then turned away from it. This was a most wonderful mercy from God, and they could not boast over other cities which had not repented. It is God's way to use preaching, often, to bring his people to repentance. It was so with David, when Nathan the prophet, went to him with a message from God, concerning his guilt in the case of Uriah and Bathsheba, it had such effect upon him that he said, "I have sinned." But it was true with him, as it was true with the Linevites, and as it is true with all who repent, that Jesus "is exalted a Prince and a Savior to give repentance unto Israel, and the forgiveness of sins."

We leave these remarks with our readers, hoping they may be of some satisfaction to our friend and to all who may read them. C.

PLEASE BE SURE

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE RELIGIOUS EXCITEMENT.

We have been prevented, by sickness and other causes, from noticing the religious panic which has for several weeks prevailed in the cities of New York, Philadelphia, Boston and elsewhere, and which, like an infectious epidemic, has found its way into the villages and rural districts of our northern states, and is hailed by the great mass of will-worshipers and Arminians generally, as the dawning of their long looked for millennium. Like every other development of the man of sin, this outburst of delusion and ranting fanaticism is strongly marked with the mystic names which were written on the forehead of her who sat upon the scarlet colored beast, Rev. xvii. 5, "Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." While this mystery of iniquity shall be clearly distinguished from the pure and undefiled religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, by all who have ears to hear what the Spirit says unto the churches, it is expressly said that they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold this beast that was, and is not, and yet is. (Rev. xvii. 8.) The peculiar development of this mystery of iniquity, is foretold by Paul, 2 Thess. ii. 3–12, as the man of sin, and son of perdition, "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." "Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." The church of God is, in the book of Revelation, represented as dwelling in heaven, and not on the earth. (Rev. xii. 12.) As standing in the sun. (Rev. xii. 1.) As standing on Mount Sion. (Rev. xiv. 1.) As standing on a sea of glass, in heaven. (Rev. xv. 2.) But the antichristian organizations are represented as dwelling upon the earth. Their origin being earthly, their doctrines, ordinances, signs and wonders, are all of earth. Their names are not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world. Their religion originates in their own earthly nature, and their revivals and excitements differ essentially from those of the saints. Seasons of refreshing descend upon the church of God from the presence of the Lord; but the revivals of antichrist have to be *got up*. And of this they seem to be aware, for they generally speak of getting up revivals, and of sustaining them by their own human exertions. The present excitement is strongly marked in all these particulars. First, a convention for the purpose is held; a committee of arrangements is appointed, and called the Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association. This Association is composed of all such sectarian denominations as can unite in the enterprise, and their committee is authorized to superintend the getting up of the revival. Meeting-houses are thrown open daily, store-houses and even public theatres are also employed for the same purpose, advertisements are published in the daily papers, and cards of invitation are issued, calling

on all who want to get religion to attend the meetings from twelve to one o'clock of each day, and three minutes are allowed for each to pray or exhort. These meetings are called Union Prayer Meetings; but what is united in them? Presbyterians, Methodists, New School Baptists, Congregationalists and the world in general. The novelty of these meetings serve as a charm to draw crowds together, and when thus assembled every human device is resorted to to excite the animal feelings and passions of the weak and nervous; for the religion engendered by them is not that connected with a faith that works by love and purifies the heart; but it is a kind of faith and religion which only works by fear, by terror and excitement, and which corrupts the heart. For it is a notorious fact, that every convert made in these hot-beds of fanaticism, in their conversion imbibe a deeper and more malignant hatred to the truth as it is in Jesus, to God's method of salvation by sovereign grace alone, to the order and ordinances of the church of God, and to the real children of God, and to God's ministers especially, than they ever possessed or evinced before. Like the proselytes made by the ancient pharisees, they make them two-fold more the children of hell.

Are not these things so? What success would be expected at any of these meetings, were the managers of them to cease their efforts to terrify and frighten the people? Nothing is found so effectual as the preaching of fire and brimstone, the death-bed scenes of impenitent sinners, and the unclapping of hell, &c., together with the declaration that this is the last opportunity the unconverted will ever have of getting religion. Hundreds, by this course of treatment, have become so much excited as to deprive them of their reason, and if they have not thereby been fitted for filling up their churches, they have been duly qualified to fill the lunatic asylums. In that salvation which is of God, it is the goodness of God that leads men to repentance; but in these exticement meetings, the terrors of hell and torments of the damned are chiefly relied upon to produce what they call repentance.

Again, the religion which is of God, produces in those who are the subjects of it, a love and reverence for the Scriptures, and a sacred regard for what God has said in his word; but it is a remarkable feature in these modern excitement meetings that the Bible is totally disregarded, so far as respects its testimony. The converters and converted, at these meetings, will laugh you to scorn if you attempt to call their attention to the word and testimony of God. Tell them that God has said in his word that sinners are saved by grace, and not by works; that the new birth is produced, not of a corruptible seed, but of an incorruptible; that it is not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, and what respect will they show to this divine testimony? We might as well read to them an almanac as an inspired message from Jehovah?

Their whole machinery moves upon the presumption that every man has the power to save himself, and that if he neglects to use his power for that purpose, God himself cannot save him. This declaration has frequently been made at these excitement meetings, and the Scripture doctrine, that salvation is of the Lord alone, has been made the theme of ridicule. At a meeting, a short time since, in Burton's Theatre, in New York, Henry Ward Beecher, of Sharpe's Rifle notoriety, openly and publicly repudiated the work

of the Spirit of God, in the experience of the new birth; and although at a union meeting, and associated with his fellow-craftsmen of the same occupation, many of whom were with him on the stage; not one word of objection or remonstrance was uttered by any of them, to his bold and blasphemous declarations, nor have we, up to this hour, heard of any one who is connected with this general excitement, either in city or country, objecting to his sentiment. We will give his own words, as published in the city papers, the *Times*, and the *Tribune*, viz:

"The Rev. Mr. Beecher then commenced his expected address. He had not come there to deliver a sermon or a speech, but to converse with the multitude before him as if he had each individual singly with him in some quiet room. It was strange that in this christian county it should seem necessary to go over the same ground as with heathens. Had they not sermons every day in the form of praying parents, the solicitude of converted wives and husbands, and what better sermons could they have? Every man in that crowd was in a position to become a true christian THAT VERY DAY. It had been imagined each individual must first pass through a few days of SERIOUSNESS, then he must be very ANXIOUS, and having passed that Hellgate, perhaps he might in due time lay hold on the christian hope. Shame on such perversions of truth. The work might be done in a moment."

In our own village, and within a few rods of where we now sit, Union Prayer Meetings, as they are called, have been held daily for several weeks, in which the Old and New School Presbyterians, New School Baptists, Methodists and Congregationalists, all profess to unite, and cards of invitation are sent to almost every family, to draw them out, (not even excepting the editor of this paper) and specially urging the young to come and participate in the performances. Morning prayer meetings have been held, as we are told, at several places; but the grand Union Prayer Meeting has been held from one to two o'clock every day; and at night all the sects who have bells begin at an early hour to ring them in earnest, as though exceedingly fearful that each sect was in danger of not securing a due share of the game. Every trap is set and baited, and every effort is made to draw men, women and children into their nets.

Such are some of the prominent signs of the times among us; how far this delusion is to extend is only known to him "Who now letteth, and who will let, until that Wicked be revealed whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 1, 1858.

CHURCH LETTER.

The Old School Baptist Church called Ebenezer, of Loudoun Co., Va., to the sister churches of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the church of Bethlehem, Prince William Co., Va.. Oct. 17th, 18th and 19th, 1900, sends love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the mercy and grace of God, our unworthy lives are spared to write you again in the way of a church letter. O how little we seem to know, when we attempt to write to a people born of the Spirit of God. We are poor, weak and helpless. We would like to write you something good, but how can sinners do anything that is good? In our flesh we find no good thing. We have nothing of which to boast in the flesh. If we have anything good of which to write, it is of Jesus and his love. We know that we are sinners, and that we are corrupt, and do not need any man to tell us so. We know this by sad experience. We know that we desire to do good, and to live uprightly, we know that we desire to be as holy as God is holy, yet we can-

not do this. We do thank God that we hate evil and sin, because it is exceeding sinful. Therefore because sin dwells in us, we hate our own selves. In all the very best actions of our lives sin is mixed. With us it is sinning and repentance every day of our lives. If our salvation depends upon one thought, word or act, of our own, we shall forever be lost. We thank God that salvation does not depend upon poor worms of the dust. If we are born of God, then Jesus is our life, Jesus is our salvation, for time and for eternity. It is Jesus who died, and it is Jesus who is risen again. Then, dear brethren, if we are the children of God, we are as safe and secure as is the eternal God, and this is not boasting without reason, for we have the word of God for it. So cheer up, poor, doubting child, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Brethren, we are as a church, living in peace; each one is able to see more faults in himself than he does in his brother; we love each other for the truth's sake. We do hope this is the love of God in our hearts. O, what a blessing to a poor child of God, when love controls the heart; love to God, love to the truth, and love of the brethren. What encouraging words the dear Lord has left on record for the weak, trembling children: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Do we know that we love the brethren? If we do, then we have the word of God for it, that we are living children. Bless the name of the Lord for his goodness and mercy to us.

Since we last wrote you we have been made to mourn the loss of a dear brother, who died soon after our meeting last year; it was brother Alexander. Also we are sad over the affliction of our brother A. J. Chamblin, who was paralyzed last July, and is yet in a very precarious condition; his very presence in the meetings of the church was a comfort to his brethren.

We have preaching every second Sunday, and Saturday preceding, by our pastor, Elder J. N. Badger, unless providentially hindered. He comes in meekness, fear and much trembling, and in that condition of mind, he can always feed the little ones. We think that he has a precious gift as a pastor, and he does not shun to declare the whole counsel of God, and at the same time he is humble as a little child. God has blessed him with much wisdom in the deep things of the kingdom of God, yet in his own experience he feels to be the least of all. We hope that we love our pastor; we know we do, for the truth's sake.

It is a custom to write in all our letters that we love our pastor, which is right, for we should love them for the truth's sake, but do we show forth that love by earnestly looking after their welfare? Is that love rooted and grounded in our hearts, so that we do not neglect our duty to our pastors? They are called of God to feed the sheep and the lambs, through them the dear children receive the very bread of heaven. Then is it not the duty of every true born child of God to see and know for himself that his pastor is well cared for? These church letters are family letters, they belong to the family of God, and in them we should stir up our pure minds by way of remembrance. Whenever our mind is stirred up to honor the name of the Lord, it is a pure mind, it is a pure mind that seeks to do the will of God. If the love of God is in our hearts, we will be willing to hear the voice of the Lord saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." O Lord, wilt thou give us grace sufficient for these things?

We know that we are neglectful, and need to have our minds stirred up to do our duty, as children of the kingdom of God. The word of the Lord is, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my disciples, ye have done it unto me." We do not mean to say here that the minister of the gospel is the least, yet they of themselves, like Paul, feel to be the least of all saints. Thus when we are doing our duty to our pastor, we are doing it as unto the Lord. If the Spirit of Jesus dwell in any child of God, (and we could not be children without the indwelling of that Spirit) that child will want to do his or her duty. He is not only willing to do all these things, but he will be humbled, so that if he has offended a brother or sister, he is willing to confess his faults, and he will desire forgiveness, and then the flesh will be overpowered, then the holy name of God will be honored and glorified.

Our mind has been led to write to you in this way, and we hope that it will work for good to them who love God, and are the called according to his purpose.

We trust that you may have a pleasant meeting, and that a goodly number of ministering brethren may be present with you. We trust that Elders Beebe, Durand and Ker have improved sufficiently to attend the meeting. May God add his blessing.

Done by order of the church.

J. N. BADGER, Moderator.

F. E. ROBEY, Clerk.

[THE above church letter was written by brother F. E. Robey, and is published by request of brethren of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, and we heartily indorse the spirit and sentiment contained therein.—ED.]

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$382 80
Elder David Bartley, Indiana, $2.00; Wm. Ballard, New York, $1.00.—Total	3 00
Total to date	$385 80

CHURCH NOTICES.

As it has been reported, and was published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for August 15th, 1900, that Elder L. Chandler was excluded from Salem Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, of Webster Co., Ky., we wish to give the facts in the case, viz:

One Joe Hardy, of Illinois, came here about one year ago, and circulated rumors about Elder L. Chandler, misrepresenting him, and said if he got the lease of that church, he would have brother Chandler excluded, and have his credentials taken from him, which he tried to do, but failed. Our church numbered about forty at that time, and only eleven knew anything about the attempt to turn him out. Brother Chandler did not know anything about it till they sent after his credentials after they done their dishonest work. When we heard of it, we called the church together, and called for the charges, which they refused to give, saying they had fixed it so we could not do anything. Then we called on brother Chandler, and he told us he did not know anything about it until they sent for his credentials. We asked the Clerk what he knew about it? He said he did not know anything about it till the day they done the work. He said they made a charge against Elder Chandler, and turned him out that day. We asked him who made the charge? He said he thought it would fall on O. P. Pool and Robert Liles. He said at least he thought they had made Hardy believe they would stand by him. We asked O. P. Pool, as he had claimed to go to see brother Chandler, before they done their work, what he told brother Chandler? He said he told him they had no charge preferred against him. Robert Liles said he had nothing against brother Chandler. Now this is what these three men have said since they claimed to have excluded brother Chandler. This is what they told us; we do not know what they have told others; we cannot give it all at this time, and we do this to show to all how our dear brother Chandler has been treated, for nothing only he tried to contend for the old landmarks.

Now we want to say, brother Chandler has been with us twelve years, and we have always found him faithful and of a godly conversation. We asked Hardy what was the charge against brother Chandler? He said he did not know; he said he stood as Moderator and saw brother Chandler excluded, and they never told him what the charge was. He also said he

knew nothing against brother Chandler, and that they had all done wrong to him and his party.

There is nothing against brother Chandler, and he is now preaching for Salem Church, and has the care of Stony Point Church, and stands high in the Highland Association.

We give below the Clerk certificate he gave us of their work.

Certificate.—Charge preferred at our conference meeting on Saturday, the twenty-second day of April, 1900.

I did not know anything against brother Chandler until this charge which was brought at our April meeting, April 22d, 1900.

J. G. ASHLY, Church Clerk.

You see they made their charge and claim to have excluded brother Chandler the same day.

Done by order of the Salem Church, at her July meeting, 1900, and signed by order of the church.

[THE above illustrates how liable we are to be imposed upon in publishing exclusions, and we hereby give notice that we do not propose to publish any more exclusions or church troubles, without the specific charges being given. In the above case there has evidently been a great wrong done Elder Chandler, which we hasten to correct so far as we are concerned.—ED.]

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Oct. 17th, 1900, near Pittsville, Md., Sewell H. Farlow and Gertie M. Timmons, only daughter of the late Elder John Timmons, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

By Elder D. M. Vail, July 28th, 1900, George Tamsett and Mrs. Lucy A. Wideman, both of Oneonta, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At her father's home in Aldie, Loudoun Co., Va., March 28, 1900, **Miss Sophia Carter**, aged about 62 years. Sister Sophia, as we all loved to call her, met with an accident in infancy by which the spine was severely injured, so that normal growth was hindered, a great affliction to herself and her parents. But God in his goodness bestowed his grace upon her in early life, calling her by rich experience into his heavenly kingdom. She was born in Prince William Co., Va., and baptized by Elder Joseph L. Purington, in the fellowship of the Bacon Race Church. The family moved to this place about twenty-four years ago, when brother and sister Carter, and sister Sophia, brought letters and were received into Mt. Zion Church, near here. The parents have often been heard to say a great blessing had come upon them through the affliction of their daughter. They retained her companionship and care in old age, whereas without the deformity, in all probability she would have left them for a home of her own. Her mother died several years ago, and since then the aged father has had the faithful care and attention of a devoted daughter. Sister Sophia was one of those faithful, humble souls we all love. Above everything else she enjoyed her privileges in the house of God, and was faithful to them. Her death from disease of the heart was sudden in the extreme; without warning to any one the light of life went out. The aged father, brother Wm. Carter, the nephew, with his wife and children, composing the immediate family, mourn their loss. My wife and myself miss her sadly, for few days passed without her welcome face enlivening our home.

May God comfort those that mourn.

J. N. BADGER.

ALDIE, Va., Nov. 1, 1900.

DIED—At his late residence near Bryn Zion, Oct. 24th, **Mr. Francis M. Burrows.** Mr. Burrows has been failing in health all the past season, but kept up, although becoming quite feeble, until the last. His disease was said to be Bright's disease, ending in a stroke of paralysis. Many people who have been kindly entertained at this hospitable Baptist home will remember him to sympathize with his family in their sad bereavement. His companion has long been a devoted and faithful member, and he, although not a member, seemed to live more in the church than in the world, serving us as faithfully as any one outside of our pales could do. We did not doubt that he had an experimental knowledge and love of the truth.

He was laid to rest on Saturday the 27th, in the churchyard at the place where he had so long and so faithfully attended with the worshipers at that place. He was one of those men that do not seem to be to spare. In the family, in the church and in the community, the loss will be long and deeply felt. I am longing to see the time come when all these waste places shall be made glad. "The memory of the just is blessed."

E. RITTENHOUSE.

STATE ROAD, Del.

Sarah A. Bethard, wife of Littleton Bethard, was born Oct. 7th, 1822, and died Sept. 23d, 1900, aged 77 years, 11 months and 16 days. She was united in marriage to Littleton Bethard, Sept. 22, 1839. To this union were born ten children, six sons and four daughters, nine children survive her. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church called Darbyville, and was baptized by Elder G. N. Tusing, fifteen years prior to her death, of which church she lived a faithful, worthy and devoted member until death. She leaves to mourn her death an aged husband, ninety-six years old, nine children, three brothers, with the church, which feels the loss of one of its faithful

members. She died as she lived, trusting in that faithful and true friend which was her hope and shield so many years.

Her funeral was largely attended, and a discourse delivered on the occasion by Elder G. N. Tusing, after which her remains were laid in the Commercial Paynt Cemetery, to await the resurrection of the blessed.

D. D. BETHARD.

WOODLAND, Iowa.

MEETINGS.

THE Caroline Old School Baptist Church has appointed a two days meeting to be held on Saturday and Sunday, November 24th and 25th, 1900.

WM. M. HART, Clerk.

THERE will be a two days meeting appointed at Burdett, Dec. 1st and 2d, meeting to commence at 10 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. each day. We expect Elders Hubbell, C. Bogardus, and as many more as can make it convenient to come and see us once more.

Done by order of the church.

H. B. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1900. NO. 23.

POETRY.

THE HARPER.

THERE is a Harper ages old,
Whose harp is of celestial gold;
He lulls my weary soul to rest;
All hail to such a welcome guest.

He wipes away my flowing tears,
He marvelously unstops my ears,
Then bids me listen to his song,
And softly leads my soul along.

His melody, redeeming love,
It lifts my powers far above
The emptiness of earthly sound,
And mists that gather thick around.

'Tis when my soul is sick of sin,
And self-dependence dies within,
This grand musician comes along,
And harps his sweet redemption song.

Then he's my music all the day,
All other tunings die away;
How charming are those strains so sweet,
Full of a Savior's love replete.

He takes away my stony heart,
He bids my deafness to depart;
Unto himself he draws me near,
The music of the word I hear.

'Tis when my heart is filled with grief,
This Harper comes to my relief,
And plays his sonnet from above,
The song of sweet redeeming love.

His notes of gladness are complete,
Reverberating low and sweet;
It is enough, my soul doth say,
He is my music all the day.

SEMMA E. CORDER.

PHILIPPI, W. Va.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., August 1, 1899.

ELDER WM. LIVELY—VERY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I feel as though I want to talk to you since reading your views upon the Scripture in Romans viii. 28, as what you said was so much in accord with the views which I have had. In writing this I trust that the Lord will direct my pen in the right way. As the text declares, and as you have presented, I do believe that all things do work together for good to them who love God, or to all his church. And this embraces all, including prophets, apostles, ministers and saints. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be their peace." "Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." "And him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." They will all come in the time appointed of God, and not before. Our God is a God of purpose, and has purposed all things that come to pass, and he is not to be brought into question, and none can say why or what doest thou. He says, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like

me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." Again, he says, "Hearken unto me ye stouthearted, that are far from righteousness: I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry; and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory." This is for the whole house of Israel, who shall be brought through great tribulation, and who have passed from death unto life. And concerning them he said, The hour cometh when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth." This is the only salvation that saves. Our God should not be limited as some are teaching. "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."

We read that God made man upright, and composed of soul, body and spirit, and possessed with a natural desire to become wise. To him was a law given which he failed to observe, and then, knowing his nakedness, he sought to hide himself, and began to make aprons of fig leaves, which represent the good works by which man tries to help the Lord save him. But Adam's work did not save him, because it was the work of man. For "by the deeds of the law shall no man be justified." The second Adam was the Lord from heaven, and he was verily God and verily man, and without sin. He is the spiritual Head of a spiritual family, and this family was chosen out of the family of the first Adam before the foundation of the world; they were to be manifested at the appointed time; their life also is hid with Christ in God, and "When Christ who is their life shall appear, then shall they also appear with him in glory." All power is in the hand of Jesus, and none can stay his hand, nor limit him, and he is the first and the last, and the beginning and the end of all things. Here is the hope of all who believe. He says by the inspired writer, Many are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to usward, they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee, they are more than can be numbered.

Now we are told that unto Abraham and his seed was the promise made, and this is the church of Christ, chosen in him before the world was, and his dealings with them are some of the "all things" which must come to pass for their good, and thus all things are to the glory of God in heaven and upon earth. It is said that he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. No one has any right to even question his doings. We should be satisfied with this, that he had a purpose in bringing all things to pass. All, in some way, work for his glory. "The Lord hath made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil." "The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain." The Lord raised up Pharaoh to show forth his glory, that he had power over all things, and that his name should be made known through all the earth. He delivered the three Hebrew children who trusted in him, and who would sooner yield their bodies to the

flames than worship any other God. Thus God rules in heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. All things which are to come to pass, were predestinated of him according to his own purpose. He has promised blessings to the church, and curses to the wicked, and he will execute his promises. He is a God of mercy, and a God of judgment as well, and he is just in all his works. May his will be done in earth and in heaven. Thank God it will be done. Were it not for his electing love and mercy we could not claim him as our Savior. We have nothing of ourselves that would please him, and were it not for Christ and his righteousness, we should be of all men most miserable. But we do feel at times that he is with us, which causes us to feel like giving praise for all that he has done for us. The way often appears dark, but thank God, we are not forsaken. He has been with us in six troubles, and in the seventh he will not forsake us. And in these precious promises of his do I trust. O, may we not forsake such precious promises, and go back to the works of the law. May it please the good Lord to give me grace that will hold me up under affliction; nothing but the grace of God can do us any good. I fear that I do not do the things that are pleasing to God; I have to say with Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" These are some of the many trials through which we pass, and nothing but his love and mercy can hold us up. This is all that will save; nothing can avail but the love and grace of Jesus our Savior. Let us then shun the inventions of men. In much fear and trembling I trust that my mind has been drawn from earthly to heavenly things, to things which pertain to eternal life beyond this vale of tears. Thus I have tried to give you some of my thoughts upon the subject of God's purpose and grace, given for the redemption of his people, and given before the foundation of the world. It is my desire to know the truth as it is in Jesus; this is all that will do us good. I love to talk of the goodness and mercy of God, and of how forbearing he is to his disobedient children.

Now, my brother, I hope that the good Lord will send you this way, as we want to see and hear you preach. May God bless you in your labors, is the prayer of your unworthy brother, if one at all,

O. B. HICKERSON.

ELGIN, Oregon, August 25, 1899.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—If I am worthy to call you brother, I will once more try to write for the SIGNS. I have so often wished that I could write in answer to the wonderful communications which are in them, but this cannot be expected of poor, unworthy me. I would that the Lord would direct my mind as I write. The Lord moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. I was reading a communication in the SIGNS from a minister some time ago, to whom I would like to speak a few words of comfort. He spoke of being too young to have charge of a church. But the Lord calls whom he will to serve him. Just think of what Paul said, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." The minister who has the charge of the

church here was, if I am not mistaken, only thirty-three years of age when he was called to take charge of it, and he has had the care of it ever since. This was in the year 1878, and I can say of a truth that he was called of God to this work, for he is so good, and has such a wonderful gift in preaching. No one has ever come to this valley who suited me any better. But what humility he displays when he arises to preach, but it is good that the Lord has called such an one to the work of serving the church which he has planted here in this little valley. We all feel that we are nothing in the sight of God, but like Paul, in the fifth chapter of Romans, we can say, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulation also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." This ought to teach us that we should look to him in every way, and in everything that we do, for he alone is our refuge in every time of need, and the time of need is always with me. It is written that we live and move and have our being in him. It is written that he came to do the will of God, and he taketh away the first, that he may establish the second, and by his will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus once for all. Notice from verse fifteen to verse seventeen in this chapter how beautifully all is explained, and he says that of this, the Holy Ghost is a witness unto us. He said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, I will put my laws in their hearts, and write them in their minds; their sins and iniquities I will remember no more. Once when I had received chastisement very hard, I took up my Testament to read. My eyes fell upon Hebrews xii. 5, which reads, "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." I would be glad if some one would feel like writing upon verses eighteen to twenty-three: "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, * * * but ye are come unto Mt. Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly of the church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." I think that my experience teaches me that when I came to that mount, the Lord brought me there, and that it was not of myself. I still fear at times that I am in the gall of bitterness, but at times feel to rejoice in the promises which the Lord has given. We know nothing of ourselves, all is of God, and we are nothing. I was at meeting yesterday, our pastor's text was John iv. 34, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." I never heard a bet-

ter sermon preached. One month ago we had a brother come to us and unite with the church, telling what the Lord had done for him; it was a season of joy to all. It is said the Lord can work, and none can hinder. These words have made my heart, when stricken with grief, leap for joy many times. We have also a dear sister in the church, who lives away down on the sound, near Stuck, Oregon, who must, as I know, be very lonely on account of there being no Baptists near her. I have seen her once since she moved there, and what a pleasure it was to be with her, she has such a good gift in explaining the Scriptures. Her name is M. E. Carter. Of course all the brethren and sisters near are dear to me, if I know my own heart. I fear so much that I know nothing rightly, for all the brethren and sisters seem so much more Christlike than I do. I see so little in me that is heavenly at all, if indeed there be anything Christlike. I so often think of the words, "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day."

I am afflicted very much with rheumatism, but I know that I have not had one pain too many. I have but little hope of living long in this world, and I hope that I shall be able to say, Thy will be done, O God, and not mine.

Please correct all mistakes if you think best to publish this; if you commit it to the flames all will be right with me.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

MARY A. STURGILL.

ATLANTA, Ga., Oct. 29, 1900.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—Inasmuch as it has pleased God, as I hope, to reveal his Son in me as my Savior, I feel interested in the welfare of others of like precious faith. The first Old School Baptist that I ever heard preach was in 1890; this was Elder H. M. Curry. I was then a member of the Methodists, having been raised with that people, but as I said, I went to hear Elder Curry preach, and I never did have any more love for the people with whom I had been connected. Although being a steward among them, and that time being the middle of the month, I went on as usual about my duty, to collect money for the preacher, but I did it very reluctantly. When my name was called for my report, I read it, and then tendered my resignation, turned over the money, and told them at that meeting that I was done with them, and so I was, and I am as firm to-day, and more so, than then.

Well, I began to go among that people who could tell me what great things the Lord had done for me, instead of what great things I had done for him; this suited me so much better that I continued to have that desire, and, my brother, I must say that I have the same or a greater love for them now than ever. I feel as though I want to write a little for the SIGNS, if you shall have no objection to it. In the twenty-first verse of Jude we read, "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." I understand that the writer here is addressing the children of God, who had made an open profession of their allegiance to the cause of Christ. These had been born again, and were engaged in the worship of God, as directed in the gospel, and were susceptible to gospel admonitions, as the enlightened children of God, therefore this is one of those portions of the Scripture which is profit-

able to us to-day as it was to them in that day.

But the question arises, How are the children of God to keep themselves in the love of God? In second Peter we read, "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." Also in our experience we find he hath given us all things, and this embraces all the promises and all the blessings that are embraced in those promises, being not forgetful hearers, but doers of the word. Jude says, "Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." O brother, is it not sweet to think about the mercy of Christ to sinners such as we, in all our pilgrimage here, and on even to eternal life? Why should we not rejoice? I can say from the depth of my heart, if not deceived in myself, all glory to God for all these great and glorious blessings received from his hand, unworthy though we be. Then we are admonished by the light which God has given, to keep ourselves in his love. May each of us have that dear and humble spirit of the dear Redeemer manifested in us; we have claimed him to be our Savior; then let us walk in the light of the children of the living God. Our conversation is in heaven, and not in this world. Let us put off the old man, and crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts, through the Spirit. Let us press to the mark of the prize of our high calling, which is in Christ Jesus, forgetting the things which are behind, and looking forward to the hope set before us, "The mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." In this way we show forth his sufferings, because we also suffer many trials and tribulations in Christ, of which we knew nothing before our hope was given us. But are we willing to suffer anything for the sake of our blessed Master? If so, then we may rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is our reward in heaven.

If what I have written be of the Lord, let him be praised; we walk by faith, and not by sight. May the love of God and his grace, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all his children, is my humble prayer.

I forgot to say that I am now a member of the East Atlanta Church.

I am, as I trust, your brother,

WALTER BARTLETT.

[JESUS said, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." It is manifest that Jesus did not mean that God had not loved him before he kept the commandments of his Father, but that in so doing he abided in the manifest love of God. So he did not mean that he would cease to love his chosen disciples if they were disobedient, but that thus they should receive the manifest tokens of his love to them. It is simply saying in other language, In keeping his commandments there is great reward. And so Jude means in the text dwelt upon by our brother.—ED.]

LAWRENCE, Mass., Oct. 31, 1900.

MY DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—It is in my mind to speak to you of the precious things of the kingdom of our God. It is pleasant to speak often one to another of the way we have been led, and the various exercises of our mind. When we are led into a knowledge of the truth our theme is Jesus Christ and him crucified, and we ascribe all glory, power, wisdom and honor to our God, who made all things for himself, and whose ways

are mysterious and past finding out. As we are made to see that Jesus came to save that which was lost, and did redeem his people from the curse of the law, we can say, "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." His blood cleanses us from all sin. When we are rejoicing in the evidence that he has been formed in our soul the hope of glory, we love to hear that name exalted above every name that is named, and in our conversation we want to be found exalting the name which is so precious to us. I love the truth as it is declared in the pages of the SIGNS, and often feel I would like to write to each one as I read their communications, and give expression to the love and fellowship felt in my heart. But oftentimes no words are given to express what is in my mind, so it must be all right for me to claim such seasons as a blessing from my God. It is also a blessing when I am made to cry out, "My leanness, my leanness;" when I am brought into captivity by the law of sin which is in my members; when darkness which can be felt overtakes me, and I am filled with fears, and see no way of escape; when doubts arise and I fear I have missed the substance and grasped the shadow, am dead, and have only a name to live. But in all the times of trial and distress we find ourselves crying unto the Lord for deliverance, and in his own time and way we are brought off more than conquerors, through him that loved us. This is the way we grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for after each trial we are made to realize our dependence upon God, and our own weakness and helplessness. We know there is no salvation outside of Jesus, that without him we can do nothing, that the name of the Lord is a strong tower, and he is our righteousness. We love to hear the truth as it is in Jesus declared boldly and with a sweet simplicity which characterizes those whom the Lord prepares to declare the unsearchable riches of Christ. Our God is a God of all power, all wisdom and all knowledge. I am always sorry when those among us arise speaking perverse things, but we must remember it is among the "All things that work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I hope the Lord will enable each one of us, whenever we write or speak to those of like precious faith, to tell what great things he has done for us, giving him all the praise. If we are found telling of the faithfulness, goodness and mercy of our God, speaking of the Word, who was in the beginning with God, and was God, and was made flesh and dwelt among us, a perfect sacrifice for his people, a Redeemer and a Savior, the way, truth, life and resurrection, our all in all, we shall not give any praise to ourselves or to any other creature. The new song will be put into our mouth, "even praise unto God."

Dear brethren editors, turn neither to the right hand or the left, but go on undismayed, studying to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. Let the pages of the SIGNS be still filled with the blessed truth that "Salvation is of the Lord;" Jesus an all-sufficient Savior, and the truth stated boldly that God rules and reigns, has all power in heaven and earth, made all things, and without him was not anything made that was made, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and

I will do all my pleasure." His people were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and nothing can separate them from him, for "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." May you and all of his little ones be made to say, "And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." His grace is sufficient for you, and he will not leave or forsake you. May he make you strong in him, and in the power of his might.

Cast this aside if it does not give all praise and power unto him who inhabiteth eternity, who speaks and it is done, who commands and its stands fast, who is too wise to err, too good to be unkind, who knows no change, not even a shadow of turning, to whom the darkness and the light are both alike.

Love and fellowship to all the household of faith.

Your unworthy sister in hope of eternal life,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

GEORGETOWN, Texas, Oct. 8, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I hope that I can call you brother from a pure heart, and out of that love which God alone can give. I hope that I love God and all his people, if I do not then I am wrong, for there is but one God and he is love, and our love is the love of God, which he has given us. "We love God because he first loved us," and we love each other with the same love with which God loved us; this love cannot be of ourselves, for we have none, naturally, to God; we, by nature, are at enmity with him, and not subject to his law, and neither indeed can be.

I am so glad when my paper comes, it gives me great comfort. I am so glad to meet with the dear people, and hear them talk of the goodness of God, who hath called us and saved us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace. I am so glad that this is left on record, it destroys the foundation for all Arminianism, or salvation by works, it establishes the doctrine of election. If it is needful for the sinner to believe, in order to his election, he must exist before the foundation of the world, for it is written, The people of God were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and they were chosen in order that they should be holy and without blame before him in love.

Now, if our God sees all things that shall be, who can change it, or deny that it is all of his decree? I trust that I am one of those who look to God and not man; man is passive in the hand of God; our God has all power both in heaven and earth.

Brother Beebe, I cannot talk to you face to face, but I am thankful that I can talk to you on paper. Though we may be many miles apart, God is there and God is here, the same Savior, ruling there and ruling here.

Will some brother write on this text, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And in connection with it also upon the text "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." If Christ was equal with God in power, why did he call upon the Father? It seems to me plain that God was in him, else he could not have forsaken him, and it seems also plain that Christ was possessed of mortality, else he could not have died and been raised again the third day. This is our hope, for, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." But God has given us

a good hope through grace, and this hope is as an anchor to the soul. We have confidence in him who died for us, and if Christ arose from the dead, so will all his people rise at his coming; we were chosen in him before time was. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." One is sinful and one is righteous.

In this letter you will find an order to pay for the paper, it comes full of good news to me, and I think well of it, for it has the right sound, and God's people know not the voice of strangers. My brother, I am a sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all, and if it be by grace, it is no more of works. It is the gift of God, and not of works, lest any man should boast. It is God who has commanded the light to shine out of darkness, and in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ. Sometimes I feel to be as one alone with no one to care for me, and almost gone, and ready to give it all up. In Joshua xxiii. 15, we read, "Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all good things are come upon you, which the Lord your God promised you; so shall the Lord bring upon you all the evil things, until he have destroyed you from off this good land which the Lord your God hath given you." Some will have part of the Bible, and seem to let the rest go. It does my soul good to read after such men as Elders Chick, Bartley and Durand, and brother Beebe.

May the glory of God be our aim for evermore.

J. J. YARBOROUGH.

[OUR Redeemer was both God and man. As he is many times called "the Son of God," in the New Testament, so many times he is called "the son of man." "God was manifest in the flesh." It is a great mystery. Were he not man, he could not have come where we were, under the law, nor could he have known our weakness, sorrows and temptations, by experience. If he were not God, he could not have risen from the dead, and so have secured our eternal redemption. He was equal with God, and thought it not robbery to be so, yet he called God his Father, and said, "My Father is greater than I." God was in him indeed; thus he overcame, but because he was a man he could cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" In all this is our redemption. It is, as said before, a great mystery; great indeed is the mystery of godliness, as said the apostle.—ED.]

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Sept. 21, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER B. L. BEEBE:—It is such a comfort to me to read such able testimonies to the truth in the SIGNS, from able brethren, who turn not to Arminianism, Fatalism nor Antinomianism. They have never construed the words, "Work out your own salvation," to mean that we work to procure salvation by our works. I have believed that this text signifies that we have already a complete salvation given us by grace, and that we, like Israel when they were at the Red Sea, being delivered from Egyptian bondage, stand still, as Moses said to them, and see the salvation of the Lord. They were to see the complete salvation of the Lord, and then walk in that salvation as Moses had commanded them. Even so in our own experience, when being delivered from nature's darkness, and from the power of sin and condemnation as the Spirit leads us, we, like Israel, came to the waters which were too deep for our own efforts to avail anything in our salvation, yet the remembrance of our sad, sad condition while under the power of

sin and its heavy servitude, caused us to be loath to turn back to surrender ourselves to the cruelty of our former taskmasters, and our sins, like mountains on either hand of us, caused us to know that all our efforts to surmount them would be in vain. We learned that our only escape was to get over on the other side of the deep sea. O, with what fear and trembling we stood there, but the Spirit spoke unto us, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." What a hard time it was to stand still, but we found that God's free salvation was complete, and there is no other than his free salvation. It was given unto us, then the Spirit caused us to walk in this salvation, as did Israel when the way was opened to them through the sea. This is working out our own salvation, it is not to produce nor obtain salvation, but to go forward, or walk in the good works, unto which we have been created in Christ Jesus. These are the good works of our Lord which he hath ordained that we should walk in them. O, how our hearts were filled with gladness, and how we did clap our hands with joy, when we were delivered from this bondage unto sin, and we sang the song of deliverance, but how soon, if left even for a moment by our leader, we transgress, even making an idol, and ascribing our salvation to it. Yet, even then, we were not utterly destroyed; for our God is faithful still, and he will not suffer his faithfulness to fail. In love to us he dissolves our idols, and casts them into the waters, and we are made to drink the bitter dregs thereof; then his own hand again heals both our backslidings, and the wounds which his own hand hath wrought as a chastisement upon us. Thus instead of being destroyed as the wicked are, the chastisements work the peaceable fruits of righteousness in all who are exercised thereby.

Thus we see it was with Israel, even under the old dispensation, salvation was then also of the Lord; it was by grace unto Israel even as unto us now. According to the law, which was a yoke that our fathers were not able to bear, a fornicator, one found in the act, was taken without the camp, and the whole congregation stoned him to death. While fornication and every transgression is now wicked as they were then, yet under grace instead of punishment unto death, as it was under the law, we see evidences of the mercy of God: Jesus said unto the woman, "Go and sin no more." Jesus did not palliate her crime, but rebuked her, as it appears to me, and the chastening rebuke caused her to repent, thus bringing forth in her the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Even so the fornicator who was among the brethren at Corinth, must be severely punished or chastised, even to being excluded from their fellowship, but God gave him repentance, and then Paul admonished the church to restore him. Thus we see that while every sin and transgression under the law did receive a just recompense of reward, now, under grace, in Christ Jesus we find a ransom for sin, and for this reason the chastisement now inflicted does bring about obedience, and therefore is unto life. Seeing the severity of the punishment under the law, and knowing that we, too, are sinners, as much so as was Israel, we might well ask the question with the apostle, How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? Yes, brother, if we neglect the salvation of God through Christ, by grace, and through faith in him, how shall we escape the punishment of death? for the law ministered death. Now this salvation is

Jesus, our hope, and those that contend that Paul had reference to a "conditional time salvation," do err and pervert the Scriptures. If any should think that God made offers conditionally unto Israel, we must remember that there is not, and never was, a man under the sun, save the man Christ Jesus, who ever lived and sinned not, for this reason we know that no one ever obtained blessings for obedience, except Jesus, and he obtained eternal redemption for us, and in this one eternal salvation we have given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness.

With christian love to you,

DAVID L. McNEES.

KANSAS, Ill., Oct. 25, 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—As I have been silent most of the year now drawing near the end, as to writing for publication, it may seem to some that I do not indorse what is being published in the SIGNS. I can indeed say such is not a fact, on the contrary I have felt much strengthened and comforted in reading both the editorials and letters of correspondents, but I have felt most of the summer past that in my desponding condition my writings would not be interesting or profitable to the readers of the SIGNS. O, how sensibly have I felt my unworthiness and weakness. Last night after retiring for rest and sleep, a feeling came over me that I desired once more before I go to my long sleep in death, to say a few words to the dear, scattered people of God, through the columns of your paper. What can I say? Paul could and did record the truth that, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Now the question occurs to me, What about my learning? Have I had this instruction by the inspiration of God? If so, what a dull scholar have I been; I have just passed my seventy-seventh year of age, and have for nearly fifty-eight years of that time been professing to be in the school of Christ, and O, how little do I now know! I believe I have learned one thing, and that is, "The good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not that I do." I have surely learned that if I am not "kept by the power of God through faith," then I am gone. If as some modern Baptists are now teaching, that faith has nothing to do with our time salvation, but that it is all in our own hands, then, if this is true, I am not kept, for I do believe I have by experience learned that "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," and that "in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." I am with Paul often made to say, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" So you see, dear reader, I am not a free-willer, or a free moral agent, but by nature totally depraved, and have been made to feel and know that "the wages of sin is death." How can the dead keep himself? But O, how comforting to be assured that "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Paul said to Timothy, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." How important is this charge, and if brethren would heed it, and not teach their own doctrines and "strive about words to no profit, to the subverting of

the hearers," there would be less confusion among the churches. Again Paul says, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Unfortunately there are Hymenæuses and Philetuses in our day, overthrowing the faith of some, but, my brethren, as perilous times are come, and men are now lovers of their own selves, and are proud boasters, aud are traitors to the truth, it is our duty from such to turn away, and let them go, "For their folly shall be manifest unto all men."

I have not written as I expected when I commenced; I only wanted to say a few words of encouragement to the dear editors of the SIGNS, and also say to all its readers, that like Paul expressed it, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." I cannot say I have fought a good fight, for I know that I am but a poor servant at best, yet I do hope that "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day."

If you never see my signature again in the SIGNS, pray for me, and trust that I have been kept through life by the power of God, and at the end of my pilgrimage taken home to eternal glory.

JAMES M. TRUE.

WHITESVILLE, Del., July 12, 1896.

ELDER A. B. FRANCIS—DEAR BROTHER:—As to-day is the day for meeting in different places, and yours is at Broad Creek, and I am at home alone, I will try to write you what I hope have been some of the Lord's dealings with me.

I was born Feb. 1st, 1838, of parents whose belief was of the Episcopalian order, and was taught to say my prayers, and I tried to be a good girl, but realized I did many things I ought not to, which caused me many wakeful hours through the night. I was called a good girl, and that was what I tried hard to be, for I believed all good people went to heaven, and all bad went to hell. Time passed on, and in my sixteenth year I was married to my present husband, who had a name among the Methodists. I thought I would be one, too, so I went to the mourners' bench and thought I got religion, but I was never satisfied with them, but tried to settle down with the thought, If I do the best I can, that is all that is required. The first of my thinking much about the Baptists was one day when at my father's, upon going out to meet a neighbor that was coming over, who was an Old School Baptist, something seemed to say, "She is far above you." Time passed on, and I gave birth to two little girls, which kept me home most of the time for several months.

One day a neighbor of mine came over, who was an Old Baptist, and I was talking about not having a chance to go to meeting; she said she did not think any one's children ought to keep them from going to meeting. I thought that a queer answer. But thank the Giver of all good, I have thought the same since then. As I did not know at that time what true preaching was, I could stay away, but it is so precious to me now, and has been for many years, that had I known at the time spoken of above, I feel that I would have managed some way to have gone. The last few times that we went to a Methodist meeting a fearful uneasy feeling would take possession of me. One Sunday we sent the children to Sunday School, and such a miserable feeling came over me that I never could send them any more. And I must say I think it wrong for Old Baptists to let their chil-

dren go to Sunday School. It does not teach them Christ, it only teaches the ways of the world. My husband becoming dissatisfied with the Methodists asked me to go to the Baptist meeting with him, so we took to going, but when their meeting day came on Monday, though I wanted to go, I felt ashamed for people to see us going, but this was a day sweetly remembered by me. I could leave the children home and be satisfied, though always anxious about them if I went anywhere else. We took to reading the Bible and some SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which had been given us, and would sit up late at night reading, and found much comfort in it. But I was still very much troubled in regard to myself, and would weep and mourn over my lonely condition. One night after retiring, I lay weeping and fell asleep. Upon waking the room seemed lighted up, and these words came as if spoken: "Unless you become as a little child, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven; as a little child is dependent on its parents, so the Lord's people are dependent on him; not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by his grace we are saved; it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." After this the Bible seemed like a new book to me; it seemed like there was a passing away of old things, and that all things were new. Now my desire was to have a name and a place with the Old School Baptists, if they would have me. So the third day of October, 1868, my husband and myself went before the church at Little Creek, were received, and baptized by Elder George Staton. It was a peaceful, happy time with me, the people looked so good, and were in tears when I came up out of the water. But I am only a poor sinner saved by grace if saved at all. I have had many dark seasons since that day, also some happy ones. Once in the night time in my affliction these words came to me, "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." All of his people were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, not one of them shall be left out. The Old Baptists are the people I love, and by this, one said, we know that we have passed from death unto life.

Do with this as you think best.

Your unworthy sister, if one all,

SARAH E. HASTING.

(See obituary notice of writer in this number.)

CHESTER, Conn., Oct. 28, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—While reading the SIGNS this morning a desire to write some of the Lord's dealings with me came into my mind. I do not know that it is of the Lord, I will leave you to judge of that. I have learned that when I have been strongly impressed to write, (although it may have been against my natural judgment and pride to do so,) when I have obeyed, I have felt a consciousness that it was what the Lord required of me, and a sweet peace has followed the act, or in other words I have felt the answer of a good conscience; when I have acted otherwise a feeling of condemnation has come to me.

To-day is Sunday, my day of rest, rest from business cares, also a day of spiritual rest, when the Lord is pleased to send me sweet peace. I cannot attend meeting as some of the Lord's people are privileged to do, but esteem it one of the greatest favors bestowed upon me by a kind Father that the way has been made possible for me to meet with my church people in New York, three or four times a year. But we lone ones are not left altogether alone, as I fully believe all who

are thus isolated can testify. We may not know why we are so far removed from those we love in the truth, and it is not necessary that we should. "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform," and we must trust him for his grace, believing that "behind a frowning providence, he hides a smiling face." The words of this hymn have been with me much of late, and the first words that came to me after awakening this morning were these, "The bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower." It is through much tribulation that we enter into the promised rest, and I feel to trust him even where I do not see or understand, knowing he has safely led me, and guarded all my way in the past, and what is there in the future that shall have any terrors for me? Nothing is impossible with my God, he can make the crooked places straight, and though gates of brass bar my way, even they cannot stand before his mighty power. I can only "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord," and believe "The battle is the Lord's." His holy will must be accomplished in earth as in heaven. When trials come which are hard to bear, we know we are not left to bear them alone; he has said, "As thy day, so shall thy strength be," and my grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

This is truly a day of rest for me; while my thoughts have been of the wonderful power and grace of God, I have been lifted above self, and the works of the flesh, but I know from past experience it cannot last; I must be left to learn my own weakness, and that I am only sinful naturally, that all my strength and spiritual life is in him.

If you see anything in this that will be of any comfort to another weak one, you can publish it if you wish.

Your sister in the truth,

(MRS.) NELLIE H. HALLOCK.

OPELIKA, Ala., Oct. 29, 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been some time since I have had either the spirit or the desire to write. To-day I have read through the last issue of the SIGNS, and having had such a time of gloom and deep distress, and such a varied experience, I feel as though I must by your permission write to those whom I esteem so dear in the faith of God's elect. I have been crushed in the depths, and it has been days it seems since I have seen sun, moon or stars, but yet, though a sinner, my trust is in the mercy of Jehovah, whom I desire to praise and worship after the manner described by brother Chick in his last editorial. I feel that I can strike hands and mingle hearts with those who write through the SIGNS; it is the truth I believe, and I believe that I have suffered persecution for the same. I have been set at naught in the counsel of some, because of my views upon the absolute sovereignty of the eternal God, who is the great author both of my time and my eternal salvation. This is salvation by grace, and as you well say, we may call it what we please, it is still of grace, from first to last, and as you say, to contend for grace in all our salvation is not striving about words to no profit. I hope to contend for the truth of God as set forth by his servants, the prophets and apostles. I believe if possible more strongly than I ever have, and sometimes I feel so strong that I am willing to die for it, being fully assured that these things are really so. I know that I have been closely watched, but my faith in

God has been so strong that I could believe that if I were slain, I should rise again. It was said of Joseph that the archers sorely grieved him, but God took care of him. I regret to use the word "I" so much, but I am writing about my own experience, and a declaration of my faith in these things. I hope that the SIGNS will go on contending for the glorious truth of God; do not give way, but continue to expose the modern innovations in our faith. I have undergone no change; whatever views I may have about the sciences of this world, as such, my view of the glorious doctrine of the cross, and the truth of God, as recorded in his word, have undergone no change. I believe, and hail with delight, and indorse with all the power of my soul, all these principles of doctrine that I have ever held to, and hope that I shall be able to contend for them, and write about them as long as God gives me life and being; I hope that that zeal which becomes his servants, may be mine, and that I may not fear those who have power to kill only the body, but rather fear him who has power to cast both soul and body into hell.

Now, brethren, I write this to you, and come to you as a brother, and as the pastor of the little flock at Montgomery, Ala., who do believe the truth as it is in Jesus. This church is much revived; I have baptized eight in this church in a little more than a year. Our church property is in bad shape, and we may lose it. We have paid out on it a little more than twenty-four hundred dollars, and there is a mortgage of eight hundred upon it. Some have helped us, we should be glad if the brethren who read the SIGNS would help us a little. We are all poor, else we would not ask for any help. If any feel like helping us, send remittances to me, and I will account for it, and acknowledge it.

I remain as ever your brother,

WM. LIVELY.

CAMMAL, Pa., Oct. 18, 1900.

DEAR ONES IN THE LORD:—Can any one feeling as I do, be of any comfort to God's dear people? When I make the attempt to write I feel my unworthiness so much that the few lines that I do scribble, looks so much as I feel, that I cast it into the flames, then I feel condemned, and wonder whether I did wrong, and sometimes I ask God to forgive me. As I write now, I wonder if it will be the same with this. O, that the Lord would guide my ways, and do with me according to his good pleasure. I know that he is good and kind to me, but how can I praise him enough for what he has done for me? When I think of my sinfulness, it makes me cry out, "O, God thou art the only one that can save, and comfort, and drive grief away," but it is good to suffer as he also did. I am glad that his people are taught these things in a way that they know not, and that they are led in paths not known to them. It is by grace alone, and not of self, if I am counted worthy. Dear ones, I tremble with much fear, and if I was not on the other hand made to rejoice at times, and feel comforted, I surely should think that I was different from all others. When I hear the people of God talk, I love what they say, and so much enjoy being with them, and if I am one of that number I must say,

"Grace first ordained the way
To save rebellious man,
And all the steps that grace display,
Which drew the wondrous plan.

Grace first inscribed my name
In God's eternal book,
'Twas grace that gave me to the Lamb,
Who all my sorrows took."

Yes, dear friends, in the midst of all my feeling so weak and sinful, there are times in which I am made to say, "I do love my God, because he first loved me." I should love to pen my feelings, but how can I find words? Is it ever to be told? There is one, above all others, who does know; I know that he leads his people in the paths of peace, and that he says, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

I feel as though I ought not to pen any more this evening, for it seems as though self is in the way, and unless the Lord leads me in writing this, it will not be of any comfort to the dear ones. I can say that I love God's children, and he says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." If I could but be near my God at all times. There are times that the name of Jesus sounds so sweet to me. It is sweet to dwell at his dear feet. O, how beautiful are the ways of God, he brings his people to himself, and when he sees fit, he raises them up and places them upon a Rock, and that Rock is Christ, who suffered and died for the sins of his people, as many as the Father had given him, and for not one more nor less. He said that his word should stand. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but his counsel shall stand, and when he calls one from darkness unto light, that one hears and obeys. He said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and none can pluck them out of my hand." But I question, Am I his or am I not? It causes me anxious thought indeed, but bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name, for

"The Lord can clear the darkest skies,
Can give us day for night,
Make drops of sacred sorrow rise
To rivers of delight.

Let those that sow in sadness wait
Till the fair harvest come,
They shall confess their sheaves are great,
And shout the blessings home."

Perhaps I should have closed this writing before, for I am such a stumbler. I fear that all will be tired of reading it. It is almost midnight, but there are nights to me so sweet, that I do not care to sleep, I often sit and look upon the mountains, and am made to see such beauty in the wonderful works of God, I often think, if I could have wings, I would fly away to everlasting rest. There is a joy that cannot be told, it is that joy that is unspeakable and full of glory, it is Jesus we sing, and salvation by grace, it is truly not of self, but of grace, the grace of God. I am willing to give God all the praise, I feel to be a sinner, and if I am a christian I am the least of all.

I remain your sister,

MARY E. OSTRANDER.

PARSONS, Texas, Nov. 5, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I send you the following letter, with a request that you give it a place in our family paper, if your judgment approves it. It is from a precious brother and sister who live near Syracuse, on the Arkansas River, in the extreme western part of Kansas, near the Colorado line. I send it without their consent, for I feel sure they will pardon the liberty I take, and will not be offended. They united with the Old School Baptist Church at Honey Creek, Vigo Co., Indiana, before they emigrated west. It was my privilege to visit them at their pleasant home three years ago, and at that time they had not heard of any Old School Baptist Church in that region. In their letter we see the power and goodness of God manifested in leading them to the house of their Master's brethren. During my

stay with them I was much comforted and refreshed by their godly conversation; their chief delight seemed to be in talking of Jesus and his fullness.. I hold them in tender and loving remembrance.

A poor sinner,

PRESTON STAGGS.

SYRACUSE, Kansas, Oct. 19, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—According to promise I will try to tell you in my poor, weak and stammering way, how rejoiced we have been in finding at last a church of our faith located about fifty miles northwest of us, in Colorado, eight miles north of a little town called Lamar. I had been corresponding with one of their members during the summer, and her letters were so precious to Mr. Hurst and I that we had a great desire to go to their meeting, and on the fourth Saturday in September we took the train and went to see them, and dear brother, we found the church was of our faith just as the dear sister had written me in her letters. Language fails me to express to you the joy that filled our poor hearts while attending that meeting. Elder W. C. Perdue is their pastor. His text on Saturday was, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." And my dear brother, if I know anything about what the truth is, he certainly did preach the truth. It was salvation by grace, from first to last, and I must tell you it was sweet manna to our poor, hungry souls, it being the first Old School Baptist sermon we had heard in twelve years. There is also another church of our faith located about sixty miles southeast of us, Elder J. J. Roland is the pastor; he is seventy-four years of age, and is a precious old brother. He and Elder Perdue held meeting in our town (Syracuse) last Friday night, which was the first Old Baptist sermon ever preached in this community, to our knowledge. The next morning Mr. Hurst and I went with the two ministers twenty miles south, to old brother Charley Mitchel's, to hold meeting at their schoolhouse, and on Sunday after preaching, we all went to the water, and old brother Mitchel and brother Holdren and wife, were baptized. They all joined the church in Colorado at their last meeting, but wished to be baptized near their home, so Elder Perdue came down here to administer the ordinance. O, what a joyful meeting we did have; if I could talk to you I could tell you so much more than I can write.

Remember us in your prayers, and may the Lord guide us all in the strait and narrow way, is the prayer of your unworthy brother and sister,

(MR. & MRS.) A. G. HURST.

HEMPRIDGE, Ky., July 22, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Paul teaches us that though we might have all knowledge, so that we could understand all mysteries, and though we could speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, we are but as sounding brass, and a tinkling cymbal, and though we might have all faith so that we could remove mountains, without charity, it is nothing, and though we should give our goods to feed the poor, and though we should be burned, to gain a martyr's name and fame, without charity it would all profit us nothing; in short, without this wonderful love of God, according to Paul, our professions of religion are but an empty dream. But whosoever loveth is born of God; this love is one of the fruits of the Spirit, it is produced among

other fruits, such as joy, meekness, long-suffering, temperance and faith, and against these fruits of the Spirit there is no law. Love and joy, with these other fruits, do not spring out of nature's barren soil; these all are of the blessed grace which God bestows upon his people, and which cannot be successfully counterfeited. None but those to whom this love is given will desire to be found with the followers of the Lamb. This is that sect that is everywhere spoken against, because of their steadfast trust in Jesus, and their refusing to trust in an arm of flesh, or in man, whose breath is in his nostrils. Yet all nations of these fleshly creatures, are but as the small dust in the balance, or as a drop in the bucket, and less than nothing, and vanity. Those who are blessed with this wonderful love, are the only ones who desire to be numbered with the "little flock," to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom. This love thinks no evil, rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; this love will not make a brother an offender for a word. Those who possess this love, realize that they all have need of forgiveness, as they have all wandered far astray. If any one has come out of the conflict victorious, then that one his brother may blame, but each one realizes that through the merits of Jesus is the victory obtained for him. So Jesus is the chiefest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely to him. To such ones, Jesus is the Rock, and his work is perfect; nothing can be added to his work, and nothing can be taken from it. Though the wheat shall be sifted, not one grain shall be destroyed, all shall be safely garnered. As the poet sings, "O, for a stronger faith, to look within the veil." And "His sovereign mercy knows no end."

WM. T. SLOAN.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Nov. 18, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Ever since reading your timely and excellent editorial on "Striving about words to no profit," the desire has been in my heart to express to you my satisfaction and comfort in it, and my gratitude to the Lord and you for it, for it will do much good, and was a word spoken in season. My wife also very much enjoyed it, and we do not think anything could be more effective and suitable for the time. The Lord says, "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." This Scripture is being fulfilled among us. It does seem to me that the SIGNS was never more needed and useful than at this time, nor more true and faithful, and the Lord is certainly with you in conducting it to his honor and glory, in faithful maintenance of his revealed truth in the salvation of his people, and in instructing and edifying them in the truth as it is in Christ. How very sad and afflicting it would be for the friends of truth and welfare of the Old School Baptist cause, if they did not have the faithful SIGNS. Yet many of the so-called Primitive Baptists would feel a fleshly triumph in seeing it fail, no doubt, and some of them near here. But may the Lord sustain both you and it, dear brother, and my faith is that he will. Brother Chick is a capable and faithful co-editor with you, and his writings are excellent and appropriate. That on Worship was truly good. Then your father's editorial on Absolute Predestination, in the same number, was as good as could be, and I am thankful it was republished just at that time.

I am thankful to see the defense of Elder Chandler in the present number of the SIGNS. I know him personally, and

he is an humble, worthy and true minister of the gospel, but has been persecuted for the truth's sake.

With thankfulness I tell you that orders for Priesthood have come in very encouragingly, with frequent expressions of approval of the work from those who have read it. So that I feel assured the cost of publication will be met in a reasonable time.

I hope you are in comfortable health now, and that the health of Elder William has been restored.

In loving fellowship your brother,

D. BARTLEY.

WARWICK, N. Y., Nov. 22, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BENTON:—Please allow me space in the columns of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to say to those who have manifested so kind an interest in my recent affliction, that through the mercy of God my health is now much better than it has been for a long time; and I am heavier than I have been in more than fifty years. My strength returns very slowly however, and I find it an effort to confine my attention to any subject for many hours. Since my recovery I have learned that there were but few of my friends who had much hope of my survival from the surgical operation to which I was necessarily subjected. While I knew that the ordeal was very critical so far as human knowledge could judge, I was favored with that quiet reconciliation to the will of the Lord in the case, which relieved me of all anxiety as to the result. My hope is that I may be so greatly favored when the time comes for my last great change. O that I might ever remember the goodness and mercy of the Lord, and be able to pray, "Thy will be done!" Those who have written me privately, asking information as to my health, will please accept this expression as an answer to their kind inquiries; and be assured that it would be a pleasure to reply to each of them personally, if it were in my power. I have been able to attend my regular appointments for the past two months. Still I am too weak to do any steady work.

Imploring the grace of God abundantly to rest upon all his people, and with special gratitude to all who have felt to sympathize with me in my recent suffering, I am in the blessed hope of life in Christ Jesus, as ever, the chief of sinners, yet hoping in infinite grace,

WM. L. BEEBE.

[THE above is an extract from a letter received from our brother William, but too late for publication in this number, but knowing the anxiety of the brethren and friends to hear from him, we make this extract, and the balance of the letter may be expected in next issue.—ED.]

WILTON, Me., Aug. 19, 1900.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I have desired much to write you of late of many things, but cares and work have forbidden, or rather prevented. I would be glad to have less domestic duties, but I should remember, "The steps that I take, and the station I fill, my Father determined, and wrote in his will." These bounds I cannot pass. Sovereign grace alone can support and strengthen. As each year passes, I feel more and more the need of divine support; I feel all the time to grow weaker. I think that I do feel some sense of gratitude for the many kind words of encouragement which you have written me from time to time during the past thirty years our correspondence has continued. How good and merciful have been the dealings of our heavenly Father

with me, while it seems as if my whole life has been one of sin, and of mourning over sins, and of murmurings because I could not cease from sin. Of late it often seems as if my life had been wasted. I am now away from the society of all those whom I love for the truth's sake. I am feeling much depressed, and cannot write anything to profit.

You may think me negligent, but you must not, for my delay in writing arises out of a sense of unfitness, more than any lack of interest, if I know my own heart. The Lord knows me altogether, and I am glad that he does. "As a Father pitieth his children, so the Lord pities them that fear him." I shall miss you much at the meeting at Gardiner. In past years, when about to attend the yearly meetings, I would think, Will there be anything given me? And the reply would come, You will have the truth, and each one will get their due portion, just as their hearts are prepared to receive it, if there are not even crumbs for me, it is just, God's eternal truth will stand. This, my brother, is now my feeling with regard to preaching, which I hope to have the privilege soon of hearing.

With most sincere regard for yourself and family,

I remain your sister in hope,

MARTHA K. HUBBARD.

TOUCHET, Wash., Nov. 14, 1900.

BENTON L. BEEBE—MY DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—One more month and my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be out; inclosed I send you a money order for two dollars to pay another year's subscription. I am now well into my seventy-first year, have been reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for over forty years, and if there has been any change in the doctrine advocated, editorially, or by the correspondence generally, in them, I am too blind to see it. I am pleased with the management of the SIGNS, and hope you may be fully sustained in their publication yet many years. Every number for some years back I have carefully preserved, and at the close of each year bound each volume into books.

Yours in hope,

R. CUMMINS, M. D.

WAGRAM, Ohio, Nov. 17, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Please find inclosed an order for two dollars, for SIGNS. It is the only paper I know of that publishes the truth about a sinner's salvation. The Lord marks out in his purposes beforehand, the particular good works, and the time, and way, which he sees best. He makes ready by his providence the opportunity for the good works, and makes us ready for the performance of them.

Yours in love,

FRANK McGLADE.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

PLEASE BE SURE

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1900.

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EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
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ACTS XIII. 27.

"FOR they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him."

This is the language of Paul to the Jews in the synagogue at Antioch, and it is in full agreement with the language of Peter in Acts iii. 17, which reads, "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." And in the next verse the apostle adds that the things which "God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." It also agrees with the prayer of the Savior for his murderers, "Forgive them, for they know not what they do," and with the Savior's language in John xvi. 3, and with Paul's language in 1 Cor. ii. 8, "Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." All these and other Scriptures show that they who crucified the Lord did not know that it was the Lord, and did not understand the Scripture testimony concerning him, nor yet his own testimony concerning his death and resurrection, and redemption of his people from their sins. The text to which especial attention is called declares, that both the people and the rulers neither knew him, nor the Scriptures which were read every Sabbath day, and, as we know, both in their synagogues, and in their homes from father to child.

Two lessons are taught in the text. First, that no amount of familiarity with the letter of the Scriptures will enable any one to know the truth which is contained in them. No people were ever more familiar with their own Scriptures than were the Jews, and yet it is the frequent testimony of Jesus and his apostles that they did not understand them, and indeed that they could not understand them. All preaching from the pulpit, even though the truth is preached concerning Jesus and his salvation; all teaching in Sunday Schools, even though the letter of the word were strictly adhered to; all parental teaching, even though strictly correct in the letter of the doctrine, will never lead any one to a true spiritual knowledge of Jesus and his salvation. If it did not then, neither will it now. The Jews held their Scriptures in great reverence, and yet they rejected him of whom the Scriptures spoke. Millions of men to-day profess, and no doubt feel, great reverence for the written word, who are yet utterly destitute, as were the Jews then, of any true understanding of them. This is the first lesson taught in the text, and from this it necessarily follows that without the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ, no man can know the word which testifies of Christ, nor the Savior of whom they testify.

The second lesson taught here is, that wicked men fulfilled the will of God ignorantly, or unwittingly, in the crucifixion of the Redeemer, and the testimony is that it was just because they were ignorant, that they did fulfill the will of God in this. God used the ignorance of

men to fulfill his purpose here. It is certain that those who loved the Lord, knowing him to be the Lord of life and glory, could not have crucified him. His loving disciples could not have driven the nails into his hands and feet, nor the spear into his side, nor pressed the crown of thorns upon his head, yet all these things were in fulfillment of the Scriptures, and they were all done, as we are told, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. What a wonderful display of the wisdom of God is here seen in ruling in the ignorance and in the evil passions of men, to accomplish his own wise and gracious purpose. Jesus must be condemned at the hands of men, otherwise there could not be any redemption for sinners, nor any completion of the purpose of God to save his people from their sins. It seems a most wonderful expression to us, that because men were ignorant of the purpose of God, ignorant of the Scriptures themselves, and ignorant that this was indeed the Christ, and ignorant that thus was salvation to be wrought out, they did fulfill all that had been determined beforehand of God to be done. They could not know these things, and God determined that they should not, because had they known them, they would not have fulfilled God's purpose in the crucifixion of the Redeemer. How true and consoling it is to all who believe, that God still rules, and that still unwittingly men, evil and ignorant men, carry out the purpose of God in all things, though they know it not. The ignorance of men therefore has a part to play in God's great designs, as well as the hidden wisdom which he bestows upon his elect. God does not bring men into ignorance of the word, but it pleases him to leave them in their ignorance, and make their ignorance fulfill his vast designs, both in providence and in grace. Even so, because the brethren of Joseph were ignorant of the purpose of God, they fulfilled that purpose by selling their brother into bondage. How wonderful is our God in wisdom, and in his rulings among the children of men. C.

ACTS XXII. 18.

"To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God."

The same thing in substance is said of John the Baptist, in Luke i. 79, "To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." Neither of these expressions mean to give life to the dead in sins. This is, and must of necessity, always be the direct work of the Spirit of God, and this work is always without means or instrumentalities of any sort or kind; it is brought about by the direct contract of the life-giving Spirit of God, with the soul to be quickened or made alive. As in the case of the literal resurrection of Lazarus, the disciples may roll away the stone, and after the resurrection they may loose from him that was dead the graveclothes which bound him, and let him go free, but it is reserved to the Son of God to speak that word which carries life to the dead. To turn men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, to give light to them that sit in darkness, and guide their feet in the way of peace, is not to give life from the dead. Living men alone can be thus dealt with. Naturally men can render no benefit to them that are dead, so spiritually no man can do the dead any spiritual good. Our preaching and teaching can neither give life to those dead in trespasses and sins, nor can it advantage them in the least degree in the knowledge of spiritual things, or guide

their feet in the way of peace; all depends upon the possession of divine life. This is the first step in the work of a sinner's redemption, so far as his experience of it is concerned, but when this work of the Spirit is once wrought in the heart, then the living may be led about and instructed and taught the way of the Lord more perfectly. They may be warned, reproved and instructed, they may be strengthened and comforted, in time of need. This is the substance of what the two Scriptures quoted at the beginning of these remarks mean. Through preaching and teaching of the truth, the subject of the grace of God may be turned from his darkness and ignorance, into light; that is, he may be instructed in the truth, and learn to turn from all error. He may be shown that evil course into which the wiles of the adversary would allure him, and the right way of the Lord, into which the Holy Spirit guides. To guide our feet in the way of peace, means to declare the only way of salvation and peace in Jesus Christ; it is to preach repentance and the forgiveness of sins in his name; it is to declare the grace of God, and the gift by grace; it is to set forth the holy commandments of the word, and to contrast them with the allurements of the world and the flesh. The quickened, living soul, is made ready to listen to such preaching, and gladly receiving the word, they are baptized, and continue in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers. There is ground in these living hearts for the seed to take root in, and spring up to the glory of God. In other words, there is a preparation wrought in the heart, through this life-giving Spirit, which causes that heart to long for the word of God, whether it be what we call doctrine, or promise, or admonition, as the parched ground longs for rain, and so the preaching is effectual, to the pulling down of strongholds, and to the casting down of imaginations, and of every high thing, that exalteth itself against God. Our God applies the word of preaching in this way, as also the direct word of the Scriptures, at different times. Yet how helpless are we to apply the word to our own souls. When we were first made alive from the dead, and conviction followed, we found ourselves fearful that our conviction was not strong enough, and yet we could not add one atom to its intensity. How often we said in our own hearts, O, if I only could repent, if I only could feel as sorry as I ought, for my sins, but we could not bring deeper conviction to our souls, and, on the other hand, we could not deliver our souls from that trouble. Men who professed to know, said to us, Pray more earnestly, unite with the church, be faithful and do good, and thereby peace and blessing shall come unto thee, but we did not find it so, the more carefully we tried to live, the greater appeared the burden of our sins, and the deeper the condemnation, we could not deliver ourselves out of the horrible pit. It was the kingdom of God coming to our souls with power, and not in word, that wrought that deep conviction and sorrow for sin, and it was also the word of the kingdom of God coming with power, that wrought deliverance to our captive feet, and put them upon a solid rock. We have never had power over the Spirit. We can never, at our will, either bring ourselves into trouble, nor deliver ourselves out of it. Sometimes this trouble and this deliverance come to us through the preaching, but we know that it is not the preacher, nor the simple word of preaching, that has wrought this great work, but the Spirit has taken the word

and written it in our hearts. As we could not convict ourselves, nor deliver ourselves in the first place, so it is true all along our travel, that we never can do these things. The preacher, even though he preaches the word which is applied by the Spirit, can take no credit to himself, neither does he who is delivered through the word spoken, find any room to thank him who has dispensed it, but rather both of them, when in the Spirit, join to thank God who has shown them such wonderful loving-kindness, both in speaking and in hearing. C.

JOHN III. 30.

"He must increase, but I must decrease."

These are the words of John the Baptist, spoken among many other things, when some had come unto him and said that Jesus was baptizing beyond Jordan, and that all men were coming unto him. John, in reply, with all humility, takes the place which belongs to him, and speaks to the exaltation of his divine Master. This was the spirit of Paul afterwards, and of all the faithful apostles, and it is the true spirit of a servant of God in all ages, and especially of those in the ministry. Without it the ministry will be of no profit to the children of God, and neither will Jesus be lifted up and exalted in our testimony. As regards John's office, it was but temporary, he was but the friend of the Bridegroom, he went before the face of the Bridegroom to announce his coming, and now when the Bridegroom has come, and his voice is heard, it was his place to retire into the background. In his work and ministry, he must decrease. Great and important as was his ministry, it must have an end. Like the morning star, when the sun rises it must cease to attract attention. And John was glad to have it so. He said, "This my joy is fulfilled." This testimony to the ministry of Jesus was the seal to the truth of his message. When the king comes, the herald must retire, his work is done. But it seems to us true that in all that pertains to the present ministry of the word, it is still true that Jesus must increase, and as he increases, we must decrease. It is, at all events, our experience that we continue to attribute less and less to our ministry, and more and more to Jesus, in all the peace, and joy, and comfort, and rebuke, and admonition which may come to any through our ministry. This is not only true of the public ministry of the word, but in all daily travel of each and every one who has been called by grace. At first, it is all of self and none of Christ, then when grace begins its work, it is less of self and more of Christ, but at the end it is all of Christ, and none of self. John rejoiced that it was so, and so when we are led of the Spirit we shall rejoice to be nothing, that Jesus may be all in all. This does not belittle our ministry, but rather exalts it, since our ministry, if it be true, is but for the lifting of Jesus on high, and if Jesus be lifted on high, our joy is fulfilled. Paul travailed in birth for his little children at Corinth, that Christ might be formed in them the hope of glory. Every true minister feels, when he has been preaching in the Spirit, that he would be glad to know that the people had not seen him, but Jesus, and that when they go away, they would not speak of him, of his earnestness, or clearness of expression, or his eloquence, but of the Savior whom he has desired to proclaim. How trying to the heart of all true ministers it is, for men to fall down at their feet, and not at the feet of the Lord, whom they serve. "Why look ye on us?" is the rebuke, and the reproach felt by

many humble servants of God, when praised or followed after by the multitude. If any would bring the blush of shame and self-reproach to the cheek of a true and humble minister of Jesus, let that one praise or flatter him, rather than glorify God on his behalf. It is good to decrease, thus only can Jesus increase; we never can be small enough, until we are nothing, and Jesus never can be exalted enough, until he is all and in all.

C.

ELDER BARTLEY'S BOOK, ENTITLED "PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD."

HAVING at last had time to read, somewhat carefully, the above named book, we desire to express our gratification in its perusal.. We have not been able to criticize it in any way to its disadvantage. It is written in a sober, reverential and devotional spirit, and it presents him who is our High Priest, in such a way as to give to him all the glory in our salvation, both here and in the world to come. We cannot speak of each of the chapters of which the work is composed, particularly, in each one, we have found that which has seemed to us, rich and good. Surely there can be no more important theme, and among all the names and offices, which belong to our Redeemer, there is none that comes nearer to our daily need, than his name and office as our Priest. The book does not contain human reasoning, but scriptural truth scripturally presented. Any who may buy it, we feel assured will not regret it. C.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denotes the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MATTHEW IX. 12, 13.

"BUT when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

The occasion on which our Lord spake these words, is stated in the preceding connection. After he had called Matthew, who was a publican, it came to pass that he sat at meat in the house, and behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, "Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?" When Jesus heard that, he said unto them, namely, to the Pharisees, "They that be whole need not a physician."

In the figurative language of our Lord, he assumes the character of a Physician, and in that character came to cure those who were diseased and unable to cure themselves, but the Pharisees of that day, like those of our times, supposed that his mission was to them that were whole: to receive the complimentary greetings of the pious, the self-righteous, and those who had never known the exceeding sinfulness of sin, nor felt themselves guilty and helpless sinners against God, and to bestow on them high encomiums for their zeal and piety. As a Physician, they felt no need of him. They were Abraham's seed, and never in bondage to any man, and indignantly spurned the idea of being made free by him. They, like their brethren of the present age, no doubt held the doctrine of *free agency*, and being totally ignorant of their leprous and diseased condition, gloried in their own conceited righteousness. But our Redeemer informed them that his object in

coming into the world was to seek and to save that which was lost. He had come to display his power and skill, and healing medicines on those who knowing their malady could appreciate them.

"They that be whole need not a physician." Jesus had come down from heaven for the benefit of the needy, and not for any who were able to dispense with his services. It would be a waste to bestow skill, labor and healing medicines on those who being whole do not need them; but the work of the Savior was not to be wasted nor misapplied. Having thus reproved their blindness and ignorance of his character, object and work, and thereby justified his course in associating with publicans and sinners, of which they had complained, he bade them "Go, and learn what that meaneth; I will have mercy, and not sacrifice; for I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Although more than eighteen hundred years have elapsed since he gave this task to the scribes and pharisees, and although they have monopolized all the Colleges and Theological Schools which have existed in the world from that day to this, for the purpose of teaching religion as a science to men, they have not to this hour found out the meaning of our Savior's words. Not because of any ambiguity or want of clearness in the words, for no language could be more plain, simple and emphatic, but because the words referred to the Mediatorial work of Christ, and therefore involved a spiritual subject, of which no natural man can possess any knowledge. Up to this day all pharisees, will-worshipers, free agents, workmongers and Arminians in general, suppose that Christ came not so much to minister, as to be ministered unto; to receive gifts, sacrifices, honor and fame, as though his object was to enrich himself. But they did not then understand his character nor his object; neither do they now, for the same description of religionists to this day prove by their doctrines and their works that although they have been "ever learning, they have never been able to come to a knowledge of the truth." In this their speech betrays them, when they talk of coming to the help of the Lord against the mighty, as though it were the Lord who stands in need of help, instead of his coming to the help of Israel, against the mighty; hence they talk of being co-workers with God, and engaged in the enterprise of converting sinners to God, in order to give Christ a kingdom, or to enlarge his dominions and add to his triumphs. Still farther, it is very common for them to represent the Lord as being bankrupt, in every sense of the word; his treasury empty, his power exhausted, and his cause languishing for the want of human aid. The people are called on to contribute funds to replenish his empty treasury, and to aid in means and instrumentalities to bring subjects under his government. Dead sinners are gravely told that he has exhausted his resources on them, that he has done all he can for them, and the next move must be made by them, or they will certainly be lost forever. They must minister to him something, if it be only to give him their deceitful and desperately wicked hearts, or his work will fail for want of such ministration. They represent him as standing and knocking at the dead sinner's heart, for liberty to come in, until his head is filled with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night, but all availing nothing until the sinner can be induced to minister to him, or offer some sacrifice to give efficiency to the Savior's blood and righteousness.

But all this Ashdod jargon would cease forever if they knew what this meaneth, He will have mercy and not sacrifice. But this is hidden from their eyes. That he will have mercy, on condition that the sinner will approach him by sacrifice or gifts, conditions and terms, they believe, but that he will have mercy, and reject all sacrifices, is a matter they have not yet learned. That he has had mercy and not sacrifice, every heaven-born sinner knows, for he has been taught it experimentally by the Spirit. When stripped of all their works, means and instruments; when naked and bare, destitute of a particle of righteousness in themselves, guilt-stricken, helpless and sinking in their sins, having nothing to offer, and deeply sensible that if they could command the cattle of a thousand hills, or ten thousand rivers of oil, the offering of all would avail them nothing, in their extremity they learned that he would have mercy and not sacrifice; mercy without an equivalent either in works or in gifts.

For I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. If men were truly righteous, they would need no repentance, or change, but there are none righteous, as the Scriptures positively testify, for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Every mouth is stopped, and all the world is guilty before God, but if we were indeed righteous, as the Pharisees of ancient and of modern times claim to be, or as they would represent to the unconverted that they must make themselves before they can become recipients of God's saving mercy, they would be beyond the reach of salvation, for Christ came not to call such, and there is salvation in none other than Christ.

This doctrine of God our Savior, while it disconcerts the proud, self-righteous pharisee, and boasting Arminian, is happily adapted to the case of the lost, the helpless, the guilt-burdened, weary and heavy ladened sinner. Here is just such a Physician as he needs to cleanse him of his leprosy. He can speak the words, "I will; be thou clean," and a perfect cure is effected. As a Physician he understands the case of all his suffering, dying patients, and he is able to cure them all. And as they are too poor to offer him a fee for his official services, how consoling to learn that he will have no sacrifices; it is without money and without price; without fee or reward. The quickened sinner who knows that he is lost, wretched and undone, rejoices in him who came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. This is not calling them to produce repentance, nor to bring him repentance as a condition or means of obtaining his saving grace, but he has repentance to give them, and with it the forgiveness of sins; for he will not be ministered to, but he will minister, because he is exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel and the remission of sins.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 15, 1858.

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at the bride's residence, Oct. 31st, 1900, Albert S. Philips, of Lambertville, N. J., and Miss Florence L. Higgins, of Linvale, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

In the notice of the death of **Mr. F. M. Burrows**, his age at the time of his death is omitted. The record of his birth is Dec. 5th, 1847, so he was in the 53d year of his age.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

I am requested to write for publication in the Signs a notice of the death of our beloved sister, **Sarah E. Hastings**, which occurred at the residence of her husband, Benj. B. Hastings, near Whitesville, Del., on the 19th day of September, 1900. I inclose herewith a letter which she wrote and addressed to me* a little over four years prior to her decease, in which she gives some account of her life, with a relation of her experience in passing from the darkness of nature into the light and liberty of a child of God. Sister Hastings was in many respects a remarkable woman, standing high in the esteem of all who enjoyed her acquaintance. She raised a large family of sons and daughters to a noble and useful manhood and womanhood, four sons and two daughters survive her, of whom three of the sons and the two daughters are esteemed members of the Old School Baptists. Also her husband, who is one of our deacons, filling the apostolic description, has obtained a good degree. She has been ailing with kidney and heart troubles for several years, but whenever able, her place was always filled at her meetings. She was regarded as one of the most worthy in a church composed of about seventy, all worthy and adorning their profession. Her age was a little over sixty-two years, and she had been a member of the Little Creek nearly thirty-two years.

May the all-wise One bless, sanctify and comfort the bereaved husband and children, as he only can.

A. B. FRANCIS.

Delmar, Del., Oct., 1900.

*(*See letter on page* 716.)

James Harvey Rockafellow, after an illness of several months, died at the family residence, Montgomery, Orange Co., N. Y., Nov. 8th, 1900, aged 67 years, 9 months and 4 days. Mr. Rockafellow was happily married Oct. 25th, 1858, to Carrie E. McEwen, who with one son and one daughter survive him. He was a devoted husband, loving father, and faithful friend, and was esteemed and respected by all who knew him as an honorable, conscientious and upright man. The sentiment of all who knew him was well expressed to the writer by his lifelong friend, brother Hait, when he said, "The world was better for his having lived in it." Though not a member of the visible church, Mr. Rockafellow was an Old School Baptist in belief. He made no profession of a hope, but in the language of those who trust in the Lord, he confessed to the coming of Christ in the flesh. The fearfulness in which he passed the time of his sojourning here, spoke more eloquently than words can of a good hope through grace.

The funeral services, Nov. 11th, at his late home, were largely attended. Interment was in the family plot in Montgomery Cemetery. The text for the remarks made during the service was 1 Cor. xv. 26.

May the God of all grace and comfort minister strength and consolation to the bereaved family and friends.

JOHN McCONNELL.

Died—Sept. 1st, 1900, sister **Helen Akerly**, wife of Loren Akerly, at Justus, Lackawanna Co., Pa. She was born in the same County, July 6th, 1842, and was married to Mr. Akerly in the year 1859, who, with one daughter, died several years ago. Two daughters remain to mourn the loss of a very kind, loving and tender mother, also one brother, Deacon A. B. Russel, also sister Mrs. Whitclock, with many relatives and friends, who feel their loss greatly. She was held in the highest esteem by all her neighbors, as a strictly straightforward, christian woman, who was always ready to lend a helping hand to those in need, as far as her strength and ability would permit. Sister Akerly was baptized by Elder Benjamin Pitcher, about the year 1865 or 1866, joining the Abbington Old School Baptist Church in Lackawanna Co., Pa., and remained a faithful, orderly, devoted member of the same until her Father called her home. She was a firm believer in the unlimited predestination of God, the eternal oneness in life of Christ and his bride, the church, and had no fellowship for the doctrine of conditional time salvation, separate from God's grace, and the leading of his Spirit. From the fact that she always felt her depravity and weakness to such an extent, she could not nor did not trust in herself, and always expressed pity for those that were blinded to their true condition as helpless sinners. She had been in Babylon (the New Light Baptist Church) several years before she was led to the Old School Baptist Church, and she said that she knew how blind they were to the truth, therefore could not help but pity them. She did not recognize any ordinance administered by them as valid, from the fact that God never gave his ordinance to Babylon to administer for his church and people, that the ordinances were absolutely in the church, and nowhere else. She was firm and unwavering in her faith or belief, and faithful in attendance to all of the appointments of the church, even up to a few weeks before she died, though she had been in poor health for over a year, suffering with inward cancer. Would to God that all of his people might be as faithful to the cause of Christ as she was; no little worldly affair could keep her from her church privileges, no indeed. She is at rest. As a church we miss her more than words can express, the savory influence of her life

and communications to the church were precious, and will be remembered by her brethren and sisters with comfort and encouragement for years to come. Her home was a welcome place for all that loved the truth, and still remains a welcome place, as their son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Antome, love the same truth and company. God bless the dear children, brother, sister, church and friends, with resigned wills to his providence, and make darkness light, and crooked things straight. Sister Akerly is in glory, and is not waiting for the resurrection morn, as there is no waiting in eternity.

The writer talked to the friends at the funeral, which was held at the church building in Justus, Pa., Sept. 5th, 1900.

D. M. VAIL.

DIED—At his home near Forsyth, Monroe Co., Ga., brother **J. W. J. Taylor**, Oct. 24th, 1898. He was born March 23d, 1824, making his age at the time of his death 74 years, 6 months and 1 day. Brother Taylor had his third wife, who is my sister, and was Mrs. Allen; they were married Nov. 4th, 1879. He had only one child living by his former wife, Mrs. Middlebrooks, and one son by his last wife; also one step-daughter by his last wife, Mrs. McKay, so he leaves a wife, two of his own children and one step-daughter, to mourn their loss. Brother Taylor was a noble man, being a good citizen and a very useful man in the community in which he lived; we cannot say too much of him in this respect; he always contended for what he believed to be honest, just and right, and would not tolerate a wrong act in any one, but above all, he was a lovely christian brother. His disease was heart failure, which he was troubled with at times for several years; he was well aware of his condition, and made every preparation for the end. He attended his meeting on Sunday, and seemed to enjoy it very much; Monday morning ate his breakfast and walked out into the yard and fell, and was dead in a few minutes. He was a useful member to the church, and in his death we are made to feel sad. He first united with the Missionary Baptists, but finding that they contended for many things that he could not see a thus saith the Lord for, he decided that he was in the wrong place, that it was no home for him, and that it was not right for him to remain with them, hence he came to the Primitive Baptist Church at Smyrna, Monroe Co., Ga., on June 24th, 1884, related his travels, and was heartily received into the fellowship of the church, and was baptized the next morning by the unworthy writer of this notice. He lived a useful and consistent member until the good Lord called him up higher. Brother Taylor was gifted in exhortation, and the church liberated him to exercise his gift when he felt to do so, which was at times very comforting. I miss him so much, he was such a great help to me when I would have to try to preach, always having some words of encouragement for me. In our travels together, and especially in our church at home, his presence and talk was so earnest and consoling. Surely a good man has gone from among the children of men.

This notice would have appeared before now had I felt competent or worthy to write in a way to do justice to the life of so good a man as he was, and now I shall fail to express what I desire to say, but ever since his death I have had a desire to write something to his memory, and I know of no way to get rid of the desire only to obey the impression. A good man is gone. I tried to preach on the occasion to a large congregation of relatives and friends, from Psalm xlvi., after which his remains were laid to rest in the family cemetery, to await the resurrection morn.

Now, dear children, a word to you and I am done. You have lost a kind and good father, one whose place can never be filled; the good Lord has seen fit to take him to his eternal home, and you are left to battle through life's uneven ways without his protection and counsel, but you have the happy assurance that he is now enjoying that rest that remains for the people of God. You will no more have the benefit of his fatherly care, but remember his good counsel to you while with you, and his great desire for your welfare, and that you should be good children and live right. Try to imitate his examples, and live to honor God. May he sustain you by his grace, that you may finally meet the dear one that is gone in that haven of rest, where there will be no more parting, sorrow or pain.

D. G. McCOWEN.

FORSYTH, Ga.

Mrs. Clarissa Steel, daughter of John and Nancy Steel, was born in the State of Pennsylvania, August 8th, 1826, and was married to Asariah **Stephens** Feb. 13th, 1845, and departed this life Oct. 25th, 1900. To them were born eight children, three boys and five girls; six children, together with her faithful husband and companion of life, still survive her, and were present at her funeral, as also all their grandchildren. Sister Stephens obtained a good hope in Christ while very young, and united with the Missionary Baptist Church. Later she joined the Meadowrun Church, in the bounds of the Redstone Association of Old School Baptists of Pennsylvania, from which she obtained a letter, and with her husband moved to the State of Iowa. In the year 1899, she put her letter in the West Union Church of Old School Baptists, situated in Nodaway Co., Mo., where she was a member at her death. The church feel that they have lost a precious sister, but bow in humble submission to the will of God, saying, "Thy will be done." Sister Stephens was a devoted wife and loving mother, as also an humble, kind and exemplary neighbor.

The writer tried to preach a discourse to her memory, to a congregation composed of her neighbors, family and relatives, from Romans v. 21. It was a solemn occasion indeed. May the Lord bless her old and faithful companion with sustaining grace; may her children emulate her good example, and heed her godly admonition. We pray that God may bless them also with dying grace, and gather them again in the world to come.

R. A. OLIPHANT.

Mr. Abner D. Simmons, son of Johnson and Margaret Simmons, was born June 4th, 1827, and was married to Miss Nancy L. Cook, March 22d, 1849, and united with the Old School Baptist Church of Jesus Christ, called Pleasant Grove, and afterwards with the West Union Church, in Atchison Co., Kansas, now in Topeka, Kansas. The deceased had not been identified with the visible church of late years, but remained steadfast in the faith he first professed, until released by death, which came about 12:30 o'clock, Thursday, Oct. 11th, 1900. He was aged 73 years, 4 months and 7 days. He leaves an aged companion, six children, two sons and four daughters, one brother and two sisters, with many friends, to mourn their loss, but we do hope our loss is his eternal gain. Father Simmons will be missed by his many friends and neighbors, who manifested their kind regards for him during his last sickness, and on the funeral occasion. His dear children and friends done all they could to relieve and comfort him in his last days, but the time of his departure had come. According to the Scriptures there is a time to be born and a time to die. We have lost a kind and loving Father, and the Baptists a firm believer in the doctrine of grace, and the neighbors a good citizen and an honorable man. But let us bow to the will of God, and ask him to sanctify this sad bereavement to our good and his glory.

Elder Joel Hammons spoke words of comfort to the bereaved on the occasion, using for a text 1 Cor. xv. 19, and the following hymns were selected and sung, 1253, 1228, 1257, (Beebe's Collection) after which the remains were followed by a long procession to its last resting-place, and deposited in the cemetery near by, to await the resurrection of the dead, when the vile bodies of all the saints shall come forth changed and fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, and forever be with the Lord, wherefore comfort one another with these words.

A. D. JONES.

NORTH TOPEKA, Kansas.

BROTHER **Joseph J. Ellis,** of Delmar, Del., was born Dec. 24th, 1852, and died Sept. 28th, 1900. On Sunday, May 20th, 1894, brother Ellis, and Elder Ker, came to the Little Creek Church, were received and baptized by Elder A. B. Francis on the same day. We who loved him as a brother can testify that in all things he showed himself a pattern of good works, in doctrine, uncorruptness, gravity and sincerity. His widow, sister Rachel E. Ellis, sadly realizes the loss of an affectionate husband, and their three sons miss their faithful, loving father, but he has left them comfortably provided for temporally, and above all they have the comforting assurance that while it was good for them to have him with them, yet for him to be absent from them, and to be present with the Lord, is far better. His departure is a sad breach in the Little Creek Church, and we feel it.

Funeral services were held in the Baptist meeting-house in Delmar, and the exceeding large attendance manifested that he was highly esteemed by all who knew him.

The writer of this memorial with an earnest desire to comfort the bereaved, preached Jesus who was sent to bind up the broken-hearted and comfort all that mourn. Sadly and gently we consigned our brother to the tomb, with the consoling hope that he has a glorious home in that better land,

"Where rivers of pleasure flow o'er the bright plains,
And the noontide of glory eternally reigns."

W. W. MEREDITH.

Miss Elizabeth C. Teague, daughter of James and Prudence Teague, was born in Davidson Co., N. C., March 1st, 1840, moved with her parents to Pettis Co., Mo., in the fall of 1845. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Virginia Grove, Lafayette Co., Mo., in May 1852, and lived a beloved, consistent member the remainder of her life. She became afflicted with scrofula at the age of ten, and lost her hearing in a very short period afterward, from either of which she never recovered. She departed this life at 7 p. m. Nov. 1st, 1900, of heart failure, aged 60 years and 8 months. Her suffering at times was so intense, from abcesses and other causes, that fragments of bones would burst loose and work to the surface through the flesh, increasing her suffering beyond description. During all her years of suffering like Job, her faith was strongly fixed in her Lord. She was an extremely active child in health, and her mind was extremely good through life. Her sweetest hours were spent in reading the many letters from her friends, her Bible and two religions periodicals, namely, SIGNS OF THE TIMES and *Messenger of Peace.* She said that morning, she was not afraid to go, and wanted to go while her way was so clear. We know our loss is her sweet gain, and while we would wish to bow in humble submission to the dear Lord's will, and say, All is well, thy will be done, the stroke is heavy, and hard to be borne.

Her brother,

J. A. TEAGUE.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 68. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1900. NO. 24.

CORRESPONDENCE.

EXPERIENCE.

WHEN a very small child I frequently heard the Old School Baptists preach, and would contend with other children, and in my own heart, that they constituted the true church. I would say, My parents and all four grandparents belonged to that denomination, and they know better than any one else in the wide world. And again, Grandpa would not preach for the Baptists if they were wrong. But little did I know then of the trouble it was to cause me in after years, for I have always been of about the same opinion, except to learn that my much honored parents and grandparents were flesh, and that it was possible indeed for them to make mistakes. As I grew older, I began to think it was partiality on my part, and I had best not mingle with them much, but go among other denominations, which I did to a great extent in my fifteenth and seventeenth years; even attending Sunday School regularly, but often found myself debating with the teacher, and declaring God to be more powerful than he seemed to admit or teach. Upon reflection when alone I would say in my heart, "There now, my partiality to Old School Baptists again; trying to be like them and do not know how."

When I finished school one of my schoolmates (a very nice girl, and a great Sunday School worker) undertook to make me "good," by talking to me, and insisting upon my reading the Bible through, which I did in less than a year, wishing to please her, and thinking to gain knowledge and really know something of the teachings of Christ. But how can one read in the dark? and I knew not then of the light that was necessary in order to understand anything pertaining to spiritual things. Even when I read 1 Cor. ii. 11, I could see nothing in that, nor understand how natural I was, though I felt very anxious to understand the teachings of the Scripture.

After my marriage, my husband and I were visiting one of his cousins, who afterward became a member of the Missionary Baptists, and we got into a discussion upon religion. I told him I firmly believed, as far as I could understand, in absolute predestination, and election, and that "By grace are ye saved through

faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."—Eph. ii. 8, 9. Still he continued to boast of "good works," and as neither of us could convince the other, and both admitted we wanted to know the truth, we concluded to drop the subject until we could each of us read through the New Testament, and as much of the rest of the Bible as we could before we should meet again, which we were permitted to do in about two months, at his house. We took up our Bibles with many leaves turned down, and passages marked, to prove the truth. So we talked, read and debated for three days, at the end of which time we were each of the same opinion as when we commenced, and concluded that neither of us could convince the other, nor see alike.

Now, all this time I was declaring God to be all-powerful and his creatures weak, it did not occur to me to pray for his light, that I might read and speak with understanding the Scriptures I so much longed to understand, though I had never felt the need of Jesus then, as afterward. About two years after this I began to be sure (as I would often say when asked what my belief was) that I scarcely knew what I did believe, and felt sorry that I was so far from being good. Then it was that I was made to feel the need of Jesus, and in trying to pray could only ask for strength, and cried, "God be merciful." I would sometimes conclude that I was not worthy of his love, and did not deserve mercy; was not even fit to be looked upon by that all-wise, all-just and holy One. At last I quit worrying and fretting about what was to become of me, and concluded that all would be well, as I had no control and God had all control of my future happiness or misery. For more than four years I was begging for mercy, and lamenting my condition at times, and again feeling at ease, thinking all would be well at last. About this time I became a great sufferer, and for almost a year spent but few days without severe pain, and almost continually. We consulted physicians, used quantities of medicine, but bye and bye gave up all hope of ever being well again, and used but little medicine. Was often begging and praying the Lord to grant me a little ease at times, and if possible to be well again. Bye and bye my health began to improve, and at last I got to be almost as well as ever, and have suffered but little pain since. Then with a grateful heart I set to reading the Bible, and SIGNS, but could find nothing, or so little that I understood, even in the Old Baptist sermons that my parents and other church members pronounced "excellent," until I felt disappointed in myself, thinking how heedless I was, but not knowing that I lacked the understanding heart. This was while at the home of my parents in Indiana, near Lebanon Church. In that state of mind I returned to my own home, in Missouri, but was permitted to make my parents another visit in less than two years. While making arrangements for my trip, I kept thinking, This is an opportunity for me to join the church, and surely while there the way will be opened up; I am older and can understand better, and I just must join before I return home, as I knew of no church near me in Missouri. This was the beginning of a desire to unite with the church, but when I heard the first sermon at Lebanon Church, it was as much a blank to me as before; nothing then for me, and I gave up all hope of ever trying to join the church. I returned to my home in Missouri, but in less than a year was called suddenly to the bedside of my dying mother, and

what I passed through none on earth can know except those who have experienced losing a kind, christian mother. I had been so rebellious at times that I was surprised how easily I could say, "Thy will be done," in this the saddest, deepest and most serious trial of my life. I surely must have been lifted up by the strong arm of Jesus, though I had no thought of it until I went to hear an Old School Baptist sermon, the fourth Saturday in March, 1887. I heard (with my spiritual ears this time) as I had never heard before, such a grand and glorious sermon. I could not keep from rejoicing to my father as we went home together, and told him I now felt that I could listen with pleasure and understanding to the preaching of the glorious gospel. But I feared the light would be gone, and I would be left in the dark when I went to hear another sermon preached, but praise be to God, I have been enabled to understand and apply to my own case some part or the most of every sermon I have been permitted to hear since, (during the spring and summer of 1887) and I feel very thankful indeed for such a privilege. The next day, March 27th, we listened to a very comforting sermon (our mother's funeral) preached by Elder G. S. Weaver, from Job xiv. 14. One hymn they sung was so beautiful and comforting to me then and ever since, 1256 (Beebe's Collection). For the first time in my life I was made to feel the difference between a funeral sermon preached by Old School Baptists, and one preached by any other denomination. The first communion services I attended I actually felt a drawing toward them that I had never experienced before; I thought, O, what would I give to be one among them, but that cannot be, I am not fit, and deserve no such privileges, and poor, greedy soul, why not be content to stand back and outside, so long as you can see such beauteous things, and hear such glorious news proclaimed by these the true servants of the living God? I told my father how much I appreciated the understanding that had surely been given me from a higher power, but that I felt it to be my lot from this time on to long for what could never be mine: a hope of eternal life, (and O, what a miserable, gloomy, terrible thought it is). He remarked, "That is very much the way we are often made to feel," and seemed to try to show me that such dark seasons were even comforting when they were passed, but I was very sorry I had told him, for now he would hope for me, and mine must be a hopeless case. I think this was the darkest hour of my life. But hope was again with me, and I kept looking to God for comfort, and prayed that he would take me out of this pit of utter despair. I had no desire to talk of my trouble, but wanted to keep it a secret from all humanity, only wanted God to know my every thought and read my heart, which I felt he could do better than I myself could do, and above all things to teach me my duty, and how to do "his will." This was on my mind continually; my first thought on waking in the morning, and my last before going to sleep at night. Gradually a feeling of calmness came over me, and I found that I surely had a little hope, which seemed to be strengthened each day by that

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see."

I felt very anxious to attend the next regular meeting at Lebanon, in April, which I was permitted to do, and derived great comfort thereby. Though some parts of the sermon seemed to condemn

me, yet other parts were very comforting and seemed directed to me alone. When the church doors were opened on Saturday, and hymn 190, (Beebe's Collection) "Children of the heavenly King," was sung, I can never describe my feelings, as I remembered that to be the first hymn I had ever admired, when quite young, and have loved ever since, beside it was a favorite with my mother, and was sung while we gazed upon her remains for the last time. I felt that I must surely go forward and tell them of my deep trouble, and how I had been freed of the burden of sin, by the kind and wonderfully powerful hand of God, as I hoped and felt it to be. Then I feared they would not understand me, and I scarcely know how to say just what I felt (but I know no better yet). Elder Hanks, of Alabama, was there, and preached a very interesting discourse each day. On Sunday, my husband who was present, thought his views on election and predestination were excellent, and different from anything of the kind he had ever heard, (but he has heard but little Old Baptist preaching). To me it was gospel truth proven by the Scriptures. For three weeks after this I was in deep distress to know the will of God, and if it were really my duty or not to be baptized, if the church would receive me. About this time I went to spend the afternoon with a Baptist friend, but she was not at home, but was expected to return soon. I was anxious to have a talk with her to try to find out if she had ever felt as I did. While waiting I picked up an old hymn book, and the first thing my eyes rested upon was fourth verse of 613, (Thompson's Collection):

"Come ye weary, heavy laden,
Bruised and mangled by the fall,
If you tarry till you're better,
You may never come at all;
Not the righteous,
Sinners Jesus came to call."

That seemed to solve the mystery, or to cause me to decide what I must do, and from that time on, I felt calm and determined to try to do what I felt to be a sacred duty, and it seemed the time would never come for the next meeting.

I felt all this time that I must tell every one of my joy, yet could not utter a word except to my father, and by letter to my husband. At times I felt that I had so much to tell the church, and again would think perhaps it was not so much, or it would be worthless to them. Saturday came, and I told the family of my intentions unless the Lord willed otherwise. When the doors were opened I went before the church, but my voice seemed hollow and uncertain, and I thought at first I could say nothing, but at last was permitted to say all that was necessary it seemed, though I felt that I had not given God the praise I intended to do, as he deserved all, and without him I could accomplish nothing. I have felt more peace of mind since I was baptized, the next day, Sunday, May 29th, 1887, than ever in my life before, and it lasted a few months even with scarcely a doubt, then I drifted west, where I lived away from any Baptists that I knew of, most always in the dark, clasping to my heart as I often felt, my only hope, this, "experience." For thirteen years I never heard an Old School Baptist preach. I have been persuaded that it might be a similar comfort to others; if you think not, destroy this. I take so much pleasure in reading the SIGNS, that it seems strange that I have seen the paper all my life, but for so long could find nothing of interest to me, for

"I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."

Surely the Old School Baptists are "A peculiar people, zealous of good works." Capable of the greatest joy, or at times of the deepest sorrow and distress, but it is a comfort to read Romans viii. 28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

In hope of eternal life,

EFFIE J. BOLTON.

1400 S. OSAGE AVE., SEDALIA, MO.

STATE ROAD, Del., Nov., 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have been considering a subject that I will call *church order*, and if I had attained to the standing and years of experience to give weight to what I might say, I might offer some reflections for the consideration of brethren. Such age and experience may never come to me, and if I make suggestions now they may not receive much attention.

The church as organized under the direction and with the sanction of the apostles is understood to be that kingdom that Christ said should come, and that he called his kingdom. The prophet said, "Upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with justice and with judgment from henceforth even for ever." So the order of his kingdom emanates from himself, and will never be modified or subjected to change. The laws and ordinances are perfect, and should command the highest respect of all those who name the name of Christ. The order that he has established will always tend to harmony and prosperity. A neglect of it, or departure from it, will involve churches in more or less discomfort and confusion. People do not love to have faults pointed out, and so it follows that writers do not like to allude to them. If the kingdom has a place in the hearts and consciences of the saints, and its laws and ordinances are loved by them, we might suppose that no admonitions would ever be required. What a blessed character was given to old Zacharias and Elizabeth, that they walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord's house blameless. We may not suppose that it can be said of all, or that it will be true of all, but it it is a blessed state to be "Blameless and harmless the sons of God, without rebuke." It amounts to little to say we are the church, and to denounce others as antichrist. But the order that Christ has himself ordained will vindicate itself, its superior excellency and heavenly origin testifying of it. The church that I see in the New Testament is composed of believers of both sexes, under a government of laws and ordinances that are fixed and unchangeable to the end of time. The whole body is many times designated in the singular as the church, while the several scattered branches are called churches, and are continually recognized as having full authority in all matters of order and discipline. There are no lords or lawgivers over the church. One is her Master, even Christ, and all are members one of another, and servants to the body. All gifts are subject to her authority. An equality of privileges implies an equality of obligations. The obligation of all members to assemble at stated times, and to share in the incidental expenses, is equally binding, and should not be excused without the consent of the body. The church is mistress in the house, and even the able and faithful minister, although sometimes called an angel, is only a minister to and servant of the church. If churches would respect themselves, and the order under which they are or-

ganized, they would not fail to command the respect of other churches, and give evidence that they were indeed "a kingdom not of this world." Churches should never admit to the sacred ordinances any but such as bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Access to the love and fellowship of the saints depends upon satisfactory evidences of the Spirit's work. That Spirit sanctifies unto obedience. Where love abides and reigns there is not likely to occur much disorder. A church respects herself in respecting the offices and services of those who serve her. If a pastor is unfaithful, he can be admonished, or censured, but if he is faithful, his official station should receive recognition and proper respect. The apostle claims for him *double honor*; that is, honor as a worthy member, and also as a faithful pastor. Instances have been known that preachers visiting a church in the absence of the pastor would make arrangements for and invite candidates for baptism, and if any offered, proceeded to baptize them without having had any previous acquaintance with them, and without the pastor having any knowledge of the transaction. The right and prerogative of a pastor to administer the ordinances is I presume generally admitted. If in extraordinary cases other ministers are called in to serve, it should be by the action of the church. A church allowing her authority to be thus trampled underfoot does herself a great wrong, dishonors her own pastor, and opens a door for the admission of trouble and sorrow. A minister who would thus disregard and set aside the right and authority of the church in such cases, must be grossly ignorant of his duty as a visiting minister, or else very much wanting in the spirit of his calling.

It may be doubted whether the churches in the apostles' days had church covenants to which members signed their names, and removals were effected by letters borne from one location to the other. All the brethren and sisters in one locality were the church in that place, and when they were all faithful and devoted nothing more would seem to be required. In regard to the duties and obligations of those making a profession of hope in Christ, it seems to me to be regretted that there should be occasion for admonition. Besides what Christ and the apostles have said, we have many preachers and religious papers, so that we might suppose that everything that was wanting would be set in order. In this direction much remains to be done. The ministry as well as all religious papers would find themselves following in the track of the apostles if they would maintain prominently and pre-eminently the obligation of all those who name the name of Christ to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of his house. If her members have been illuminated by the Spirit they should occupy that position in which the light they possess can shine, and shine where it can be seen. Instances can be found where names are retained on the list who do not attend the appointments at all, nor contribute in any way to church expenses, and this neglect goes on for years without the neglecting parties being visited or waited upon. Where discipline is thus neglected it will in time cease to command respect. Fellowship in such an organization ceases to have meaning. The apostle admonishes to shun the appearance of evil. There may be things that are not evil in themselves, but having the appearance of evil, act as a blight upon the bloom and fragrance of the garden of grace. I might suggest to churches the question of the

propriety, or sound gospel order, of admitting candidates from a distance when residing within the bounds of some other sound, orderly church, and whether they should continue to hold as members those who have removed to the bounds of another church far away, yet leaving their name in the church from which they have removed. It has the appearance of getting away from all church obligations, and in most cases of the kind seems to be without excuse. We could hardly suppose that a person of ordinary intelligence would unite with a church without knowing that obligations to the order of that church were imposed upon them; entire neglect of those obligations should not be tolerated. It is not a pleasant task to me to call attention to prevailing neglects and disorders in which members are involved, but they have not received a fair share of attention at the hands of the papers in accord with their importance to the spiritual health of the churches. The Master on one occasion said of the Jews, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." So the churches have the prophets and apostles, yet their words are not yet all heeded. There may be some that would not hear though one rose from the dead. The old apostle does not see any needs be for all the evils and wrong doing that was and that would be in the world. By the space of three years he ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. On another occasion we find him warning every man, and teaching every man that he might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. We are a good way short yet of perfection in the maintenance of gospel order, but we may press forward in that direction, looking for that ultimatum when Christ shall be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe.

Yours to serve in the gospel,

E. RITTENHOUSE.

1 JOHN III. 15.

A DEAR believer, who is not privileged to meet with the church often, has written me, asking for an explanation of 1 John iii. 15. As the adversary tries many of the saints by a misapplication of this text I desire to present a few thoughts in connection with what is here written. The text reads, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." Standing before the judgment seat of Christ, the tried believer honestly confesses that he finds the principle of hatred against his brother rankling in his carnal heart; and therefore he is ready to render judgment to condemnation against himself. Thus the tempter perverts the inspired word of truth into falsehood in wresting it to the denial of that grace which has abounded to the cleansing of the chosen people of God from all sin. The meaning of every word of inspiration must be accepted as it is defined by the Spirit of truth. If this conflicts with the interpretation given by human wisdom, the right meaning is always that which God has authorized, and the saints find trouble and sorrow when they listen to the suggestion of that wisdom which is of men. Then it must be understood that the hatred of a brother is that very principle which moved Cain to slay Abel. God sees in it all the evil which is developed when that principle has been fully exposed in outward action. Certainly that murderous spirit is not the eternal life which is given to the followers of Jesus. But while the saints have to groan, being burdened with the body of this death, that very groaning attests their desire to be free from the corruption of their carnal mind; and they are thus proved to be free from condemnation upon the very ground on which Paul could

claim freedom from sin. "Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." There can be no question as to the reality of the existence of the Holy Spirit of eternal life in Paul as a chosen vessel of divine grace, even while he thus mourned the law of sin dwelling in his members. That very consciousness of indwelling sin, on account of which he groaned, gave incontrovertible evidence of the indwelling of the principle of righteousness by which he condemned the sin which he found in his members. This principle of righteousness is itself eternal life, being "Christ in you, the hope of glory." No sinner can have this eternal life unless it is given directly by the Lord of life; and to every one to whom he has given this life he has given the assurance that not one of them shall perish. They have the infallible testimony of Jesus, that they are kept by the omnipotence of God, who gave them to him. Nothing which they can do has power to defeat that will of the Father which forbids that one of these little ones should perish. Therefore, it is evident that the text does not mean that the saint who finds this vile principle in his heart has thereby proved himself to be without hope in Christ. But it is often much easier to find what is not meant by any expression of Scripture than to see clearly just what it does mean. Comparing this expression with the context it will be seen that the apostle was giving admonition to the saints in regard to their deportment toward each other in their every day life. In this admonition he clearly shows that he is writing to just such characters as are described by Paul in the seventh chapter of his letter to the saints at Rome. None can ever attain to anything better in their own action than he did. It is all summed up in his conclusion, "So then with the mind I serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."

No subject of divine grace can be so deluded as to mistake hatred for love. In the text John has simply presented for the guidance of the little children to whom he wrote, the contrast between the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit. By reference to Gal. v. 19–23, this expression of John will be seen in perfect accord with what Paul wrote on the same subject. Paul declares all hatred to be the works of the flesh; on the other hand he says that love is the fruit of the Spirit. In the immediate connection of our text John presents the love of the brethren as conclusive evidence that we have passed from death unto life. This positive assertion is often found to be about the only remaining refuge in times of severe trial, when the saint is tempted to despair. Certainly when this evidence is hidden by carnal hatred there can be no experience of the presence of the Holy Spirit. Hence, it is very needful for the present enjoyment of the life and love of Christ, that the saints should heed the exhortation of the Spirit, and "Let brotherly love continue." In the experience of the saints love is life, and hatred is death. And it is important to remember that no one suffers that death which is inseparable from hatred but the very person who yields himself to the carnal emotion of hatred. The law of Christ is found to be positive and sure, that in living after the flesh his disciples experience the death of all spiritual comfort. Sowing to the flesh they must of the flesh reap corruption. They can never find evidence of the life of Christ abiding in them while they are cherishing hatred against one of those for whom the dear Redeemer died. Nor will there be any relief to such a transgressor in hiding this hatred in his

own breast. It is not necessary that the brother should even know that he is hated; the fact that such an emotion dwells in the secret thoughts of a subject of divine grace will destroy all that peace and joy which springs from the Spirit of Christ by which he is manifested as a chosen vessel of mercy. In this way every saint must reap just what he sows in his daily life. He cannot have the answer of a good conscience toward God while living according to the dictates of his own sinful heart. The very first step in coming after Jesus requires that he should deny himself. When this is done there will be no principle left in him by which he can hate his brother. All the works of the flesh are included in the denial of self.

Now, let the believer examine himself in the light of his own experience, and see if this is not clearly shown in his own case. Did any one ever have the sweet comfort of life in Christ Jesus while cherishing hatred against a brother? Did not every one when he first hoped in the grace of God at that moment feel not only to love the brethren, but to forget and forgive every one who had ever incurred his displeasure? There was then no room in his breast for any carnal emotion. Eternal life abiding in him left no room for the works of the flesh. He then thought himself forever free from sin, and rejoiced in the perfect love of God. When he first found the corruptions of his carnal nature still lurking in his members he was ready to perish in despair. But grace was given him to survive that trial, and so he has been compelled ever since to trust alone in that grace of God to bring salvation to him in every time of need. Yet the weakness of the saints is such that they must be taught this essential truth again and again. There is no truth which is so frequently forgotten by the saints as that in their present trials as well as in their final victory over sin, "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast."

I have written in much weakness, and at intervals. May the truth be applied to the comfort of the trembling one who made the inquiry, and any other saint who may be similarly tried.

WM. L. BEEBE.

WARWICK, N. Y., Nov. 22, 1900.

FAITHFULNESS.

DEAR BROTHER:—You said to me the other day, "I do not believe brother B. was ever called to preach." Did you ever tell that to him? If it is necessary for you to express your mind on that subject concerning one who has been ordained to the work of the ministry to me, is it right to let him remain under the mistaken belief that you have fellowship for his gift as a gospel preacher?

Not long since you remarked to me that you feared that brother C. is in the habit of making an intemperate use of intoxicating liquors. Have you ever mentioned this to him? Do you answer that you have not done so for fear of hurting his feelings? But ought you not to have more fear of hurting his character, and doing both him and yourself a great wrong and injury by speaking of this suspicion to others instead of himself? Your suspicions may be groundless; but if they are true, then by speaking to him in tenderness and brotherly love you may be favored to convert him from the error of his ways, and so "save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins."

You said in conversation with me that brother D. does not control his strong

temper as he ought to; that brother C. appeared to have acted dishonestly on one occasion, and that you feared he was liable to give way to dishonest inclinations; and that brother E. is too much addicted to levity, and to vain and foolish talking and jesting. These things may be true, but was it right and according to the gospel rule for you to speak of them to me or any one else, and not to the brethren themselves?

Do I take this course myself? Do I always speak of one's faults to himself instead of any one else, if I consider it necessary to speak of them at all? That is a very close question. I am sorry that I cannot present myself as an example of right acting in this matter on all occasions, if at all. I am so full of faults myself that it is hard for me to speak to another of his, even when circumstances make it clearly my duty to do so. Yet it is not right to neglect a duty on that account; and I fear it is selfishness and pride that would prompt me to do so instead of humility. But I try that if a brother hears at all of my disapproval of his course he shall hear it from my lips instead of those of another. I try that one shall not mistake my feelings concerning him in any important matter. I have to acknowledge, however, that I find myself lacking courage, or honesty, or both, at times, and so fail at the important moment to do what I ought to have done.

For instance, I ought to have said to you when you began to speak to me of these things that I must not hear them unless there was some special reason—gospel reason—why I should be told with a view of correcting the evil, and restoring the erring one, and vindicating the truth. I ought to have reminded you that it is a reprehensible, fleshly principle which would prompt one to speak or to hear of the faults of a brother in Christ, except with the single, unselfish desire for his good and for the glory of God. I might have said truthfully to you that the same principle which prompted you to speak to me of the supposed faults of another, would lead you to speak to another of mine.

We may, by lightly speaking of some rumored fault or sin of a brother, do him a great and widespread injury and a gross injustice, when a word to him would have made the matter plain, and shown him not at fault at all. And the one thus unjustly and unkindly dealt with may see and feel the consequences of our thoughtless and unbrotherly course in the coldness of brethren without at all knowing what the trouble is, until the injurious rumor reaches some one who will act the part of a faithful brother. How careful we should be to "strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," moved by that charity which "thinketh no evil." How careful we should be that we do not exert the evil influence of that proverbial character who "separateth chief friends."—Prov. xvi. 28.

I am satisfied that it is not true tenderness and gospel charity which makes us hesitate and fail to tell a brother his faults. It is very hard to speak to a dear brother of that in his course and conduct which we clearly see to be wrong, but can we, in the fear of God, avoid doing so? Would not the tenderest feelings of love cause us to act most firmly to turn a child from danger?

Let us read our duty in the words of the dear Savior and his apostles, and may we take up our cross daily. "Let us have grace that we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear."

Your brother affectionately,

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April 5, 1898.

REMEMBRANCES.

GLADLY we search in memory's choicest nooks for the pearls of brilliant lustre, which when brought into the light of our spiritual vision, reveal to our gladsome hearts the gracious promises of our God as he stands related to us in covenant-mercy and grace. Bethels and Ebenezers dot the pathway our feet have trodden. 'Twas night time that instruction in the Lord invaded our heart as we slept. 'Twas in the morning, when the dew and the darkness had passed, that we lifted our heads, gave thanks to the Lord of the night, and straightway raised pillars of remembrance to strengthen us anon, should we perchance pass that way again. Where are the days of our youth? And what have we accomplished in the pilgrimage that has brought us to years? wherein we look backward, rather than forward, gathering up the pebbles on the seashore of time as mementoes of moments spent in the paradise of God. The youthful days are not unto us as a dream, nor as a pathway covered with a cloud, nor as a phantasy, neither as a tale that is told and forgotten, but with memory's fondest devotion we travel o'er and o'er again the footsteps and wanderings of the past. And our wail of lament is, "O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me, when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness, as I was in the days of my youth when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle."

The reality of the first love and the first estate are unsullied and unmarred upon the tablets of memory's record. We recall the ardent spirits of youth; the delight of entering upon an untried highway; the glamour of new environments; the joy of being numbered with the saints of the most high God; the pleasure and the timidity with which our lips first framed and uttered the sweet word of relationship, brother, sister; the sense of reverence which pervaded our whole being, as we looked upon the fathers and mothers in Israel. Our unworthiness stood mountains high before us in opposition to association with such worthy people. But God is good. We stand not upon the miry foundation of earthly honors and worldly emoluments, the things which with the using perish, but with these dear old brethren and sisters whose bent forms show weary watching in a long journey. We remember also, by whom we have been taught knowledge, and by whom we have been made to understand doctrine. God knoweth all things. Blind were we and knew not anything. His Spirit taketh of the things of Jesus and reveals them unto us. Precept and experience, experience and precept, here a little, there a little, line upon line. His speech distils as the dew and falls upon the prepared soil of our heart. His doctrine drops as the rain therein, and we spring up into renewed life and vigor. With sufficient grace are we supplied by day and by night. Our heart is filled with rejoicing, because we behold the Lord in his glory, and in his right hand a finished salvation to all people. But we also remember (with one of old) "the wormwood and the gall," the long dark night in the wilderness where all hope seemed to be gone, our tongue parched for thirst, and fails for very dryness; venomous foes within, dangerous enemies without; "troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; hope deferred, the heart sick. Yet as we call to remembrance those days of darkness and dread, we also remember that

joy came in the morning, when the sun of righteousness arose (all glorious) with healing in his wings. We count it all joy that we were led (as was Jesus) into the wilderness to be tempted of Satan. For there Jesus sought us, there he found us, there also we found him. And in that same wilderness, the Lord opened "rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys." He made the "wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." We remember, too, the long and tender forbearance of our covenant-keeping God; how weak we were, and prone to wander from the path of integrity; how uncertain our temper; how unforgiving and resentful to our brethren who observed our faults and reproved us. With all our infirmities, Jesus took us under the shadow of his wing, and led us in the right way. He became our strength, he touched our heart and it became a heart of flesh. As we look back we wonder how we were sustained, and why we hung on to the plow looking not back. And our wonder turns to thankfulness when we are reminded that grace smoothed and lightened and brightened every step that we took. Faith, with unerring precision, pointed out the way, our faces being set toward Jerusalem. Hope urged us onward, and o'er many a weary mile kept us from fainting. Love, for the daughters of Jerusalem, and the King in his beauty, and the Lord of glory, gave us wings, as eagles, the strength of the unicorn, the valor to contend against a troop, or to batter down a mighty wall, the agility to run as an hart, and to skip as a deer upon the mountains. O, the sweetness and beauty of the christian travel, notwithstanding the sorrows and severe afflictions by the way. What a glorious retrospect to open to our view: a dark and stormy night, tossed to and fro upon the relentless waves of the wild waters of death and destruction, under the frown and anger of an outraged law, followed by the dawning of the gospel day; the sun of righteousness bursting forth in the full glory of the holiness and perfection of God's salvation, and the sitting down in peace and joy unspeakable, in the kingdom of heaven, with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as inhabitants of that "New Jerusalem which came down from God out of heaven." Beholding the glorious Captain of our salvation with his sword sheathed, reigning in perfect peace, and the saints of the most high God dwelling in safety, all under the beneficent eye of him who is well pleased with the finished work.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 29, 1900.

EAST DIXFIELD, Maine, August 21, 1900.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Yours of the 10th arrived in due time, for which I greatly rejoice. It is indeed with a feeling of wonder that I read your many favors. My mind has dwelt very much upon your last letter to me, and I need not reassure you that I was strengthened and comforted, for indeed I felt ready to perish, at least so far as visible companionship with the children of God was concerned. That you have so freely written to me fills me with joy. I think that the crown of my rejoicing in your last was that you withheld any expression of unworthiness, and instead wrote of the great and precious Savior. It was a joy that I especially shared, I am again and again made to feel that out of weakness we are made strong.

The glory of the covenant of grace is much in my mind, which is written in the mind and printed in the heart, which is

the seat of thought and fountain of life. It is not engraven upon the hands, and as frontlets for the eyes, but in the heart, and flows out with the new life which is implanted by him who is the light of men. As I write I think it is indeed strange that the adversary can so blind the children of God as to lead them to consider their hope in Christ as a little hope, but often the billows of unbelief dash us hither and thither, and we can see nothing by which we can identify ourselves as being bought with the precious blood of Christ.

In the editorial written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe upon the words, "Speaking the truth in love," he says, "A sense of our guilt and unworthiness is a speaking the truth in love." Indeed how can we discern our guilt but by the searching light of truth?

The meetings in Maine commenced I think to-day. I had an invitation from sister Hubbard to go to Gardiner with her, but did not dare to make the trial of strength, and my family are not quite as well as usual. The brief meeting which I had two years ago has proved a precious season for me. It is often reproduced in my mind with pleasing distinctness. He who keepeth Israel never slumbers nor sleeps, and it is of the mercy of the Lord that we are not consumed. It seems to me that through every chapter of the written word upon which my eyes rest, runs this, "Praise the Lord."

"Praise to God, immortal praise,
For the love that crowns our days;
Bounteous source of every joy,
Let thy praise our songs employ."

Your editorial upon the "Invitations of the gospel," appealed very strongly to me, but I presume no more so than to every one else who is built upon the Rock.

Not long since a friend in conversation was saying that Christ was the atonement for all his sins, past, present and future, and then in a brief space of time remarked, People were rejecting the gospel. This is a specimen of the ideas which are held by every one with whom I converse here, and so you may be assured that I do prize a letter or paper which exalts the Lord our God, and gives all praise to his holy name.

I feel as though I cannot refrain from suggesting another text which is found in Psalm xxxvii. 2. I have to repeat the first verse often, and when particularly disheartened I read the entire Psalm, because it is so precious, and I can find no place to stop. An author has written, "A glory gilds the sacred page, majestic like the sun." I often think of it, and sometimes fear that it dazzles me more than it enlightens, but still light is preferable to the darkness, and again I must repeat that I have the measure that is given me of God.

I have written in no way as I thought to write, but I hope that it may not prove altogether unprofitable; surely within it at least may be found this, "The Lord is good, and his mercy endureth forever."

Hoping that you and yours are in usual health, I remain with love, your sister,

ELIZA WHEELWRIGHT.

CHAGRIS, Ind., Nov. 10, 1900.

B. L. BEEBE—MY DEAR KINDRED IN A SAVIOR'S LOVE:—If one so unworthy as I feel myself to be should address you thus. Surely if I have any spiritual kindred on this earth it is the Old School Predestinarian Baptists. The doctrine they preach, and their faith, is my soul's delight. O, what a feast to me to get the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for it is all the preaching I hear, and what good pieces come out in it from brethren and sisters, telling me my travels. How sweet it is

to dwell in the spirit of love. The apostle Paul said the fruit of the Spirit was love, joy, peace, longsuffering, &c. Love is the fulfilling of the law of Christ, and we cannot fulfill this law by the flesh, but the Lord said that he would write the law in our hearts, and print them in our minds, and we should be his people, and he would be our God, and we should no more be termed "forsaken." By his love shed abroad in our hearts we can love one another. The love of Christ constrains us to obedience in him; it is the Spirit of our dear Lord that works in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure, that is why my dear brethren and sisters can write and testify of the Lord, because he keeps them as the apple of his eye. The Lord found them in a waste howling wilderness, he lead them about and instructed them. Hear, O Israel, and hearken. And dear friends, when they hear the word of the Lord, they will hearken; in Judah is God known, his name is great in Israel, in Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Zion. The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. Dear kindred in Christ, this is why we love the Lord and his people, this is why we hate self, and love the Lord, and trust him; that is why David said, The Lord is my portion, the Lord is before my face always. Paul said, God loved us when we were dead in sin, but God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, not by the works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us. I will mention the loving-kindness of the Lord, according to all that the Lord has bestowed on them, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel; surely they are my people, children that will not lie, so he was their Savior; in all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them and carried them all the days of old. My dear brethren and sisters, this only is my hope, what Jesus has done for me, for it was nothing I had done that caused me to love and fear the Lord, but it was his great love that he has bestowed on me; he is my salvation from time to eternity. I wait upon the Lord, for he is always before my face. O, that I could hide under the shadow of his wings, for he is a covert from the heat and the storm. The Lord by his Spirit leads his people through this wilderness, and reconciles them by his Spirit; he is their Savior, the author and finisher of their faith. It is my Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom, and none shall be able to pluck you out of my Father's hand. O, blessed hope, a hope that maketh not ashamed, for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, to all them that are born of God.

Dear friends, if you think this scribble worthy a place in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, our good paper, give it place as a token of love to the household of faith. I am a poor old sinner, saved by the grace of God, if saved at all. I just want to say, "How-dy?" through the SIGNS, to my kindred in Christ.

I hope I am your sister in the tribulations of Jesus. May the love of Christ abound in you to the upbuilding of Zion, is the desire of one that wishes to be free from the bondage of sin that dwells in the flesh,

NANCY CREEL.

GLENMORE, N. J., Oct. 14, 1900.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have had a desire to write for a long time, but more especially since I have been sick, and so to-night I will make the attempt to write a few lines, but if they shall have as little comfort to you as I feel to-night, you will wish the flames had consumed them. There have been times even this summer as well as times long ago, when I felt that it would be more pleasure to me to stay at home from the meeting than to go, although I never humored that feeling, but was always there if my health permitted, but to-day I could hardly see my people start, for I longed so much to go and meet once more with the brethren and sisters, and hear the gospel proclaimed, but my health would not permit. I have been so gloomy to-day, even darker than the day as it seemed. This afternoon we read sister Mary's birthday letters, and I felt, O, how lovely it would be could I be so ready a writer as most of the brethren and sisters were who wrote to her. Her letters must have been such a comfort to her. To be held in such high esteem by the people of God, must be such a blessing, still I am sure that these very expressions of fellowship would make her to realize her shortcomings very keenly.

I often feel as though my kindred must be tired of seeing me among them, I am so cold, lifeless and barren, but I do love to meet with them, and always feel to be the least among them; I feel to be less than nothing at times, but still I know that when I say I love the gates of Zion, and love the road, it comes from the heart. I have often thought of trials and afflictions, and must say that I believe that every trial and affliction is for our good, no matter how grievous the affliction may seem at the time. Often the benefit of the trial is shown to us in the future. So with all the darkness and gloom through which we are called to pass, all is for good; they cause us to feel humbled, and to esteem ourselves as less than the least. If we had light all the time, we would not know how to appreciate it, and would soon become haughty, and think ourself the best person that we knew, but how abased we are made to feel when our sins arise before us as the waves of the ocean, which grow larger, until at last we feel as though we shall be entirely swallowed up and lost in them. Then again when the dear Savior appears and makes bare his arm, we feel that underneath us are the everlasting arms, and that they bear us up above self and sin. How glorious this is, and we are made to cry out, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty." I feel that I must praise him for his love and tenderness to such a sinful worm of the dust. Sometimes before I am aware I am singing,

"Awake my soul in joyful lays,
And sing thy dear Redeemer's praise."

Well, I must close. May God bless you and all your family, and may it please him to make himself manifest to me as my Savior.

Very unworthily your little sister,
ELVA HILL.

ELGIN, Oregon, Nov. 7, 1900.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—As I am about to remit for your paper for my mother, I thought I would pen a few lines for you to do as you please with. I am feeling so unworthy of late that I do not know whether to call one of the household of faith, brother, or not. I often think of Thomas, in his doubting whether our Savior had risen or not, and I often ask, Has he risen in my poor,

sin-polluted soul or not? If so, why do I feel cast down in darkness? I once felt the Lord for Christ's sake had pardoned my sins, and I seemed so happy for awhile, for I thought I would never have doubts and fears any more, but soon found that I was not to be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease. I know it is written in the Scriptures, The Lord loves whom he chasteneth, and in Heb. x. 7, it reads, "Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God." I so often feel that I have a strong desire to do the will of the heavenly Father, and I know I cannot unless it is given me by him. "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." So, dear brethren, if he has pardoned my sins once, it is for all, and I need not look for a brighter evidence. You know it reads thus, "And every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." I believe these were his people he come to make perfect and set apart to do the work he gave them, for he has said, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and in their hearts will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will remember no more. O, what a blessed Savior he is. Who would have him otherwise than all-powerful, and all-wise, and all-merciful, now and for ever? He said, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, so we know that he is all and in all.

Well, dear brethren, I have written such a lengthy communication it will weary you to read it. I will close.

As ever your unworthy little sister, if one at all,

MARY A. STURGILL.

DOUBLESVILLE, Ark., June 20, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN CHICK AND BEEBE:—I received the sample copy of the SIGNS which you sent me, and should have acknowledged it ere this, but being old, and feeble at times, I neglect my duty more than in years past. Dear brethren, I hope that I have shed tears of joy at finding so many brethren and sisters scattered in different parts remote from each other, and yet all contending for the same faith. It seems useless for me to tell you mine, for I find it already told by others, better than I could tell it. And this by many whom I have never seen in the flesh. I do hope that we all are of the same family, and kindred spirits. I want to say that our little church is all in peace, although we are few in number there is not a dissenting voice among us. We believe in the doctrine of absolute predestination, and election, and that salvation is by grace, and grace alone, so we certify with the apostle that by the grace of God we are what we are. The past Sunday was our regular communion and feetwashing time, and the members were about all present with several visiting brethren. The services were conducted by our beloved pastor, Elder D. Westall, of Pine Bluff, Ark., who is a subscriber of the SIGNS, and he very often furnishes me with a copy or two. When I visit him, it is very seldom that I do not bring a copy home with me. No doubt you have al-

ready learned that he is a great advocate of your paper, and of the doctrine for which you contend.

Now dear brethren, I would subscribe for your paper were I able to do so. I would be glad to have it the remainer of my days, be they many or few. I am now nearing the sixty-ninth year of my age, and two of my members of the family are about helpless, so that it takes all that we can make to sustain us, and I try as much as in me is, to be content with whatever it may please God to give me. I do thank and praise him for giving me food and raiment, and that he has been so good as to sustain me thus far, which is more than I deserve. When I look back over the past, I have nothing good of my own to return to him. Dear brethren, I must close, I have written more now than will interest you no doubt, still I sometimes feel as though I wanted to write some of my "ups and downs," if I thought it would in the least comfort any of the little ones.

I. P. REDDINGER.

JERSEY CITY, N. J., Dec. 3, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I see it is time for me to renew for the coming year. Inclosed please find post-office order for two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. For the last year or two they have been very interesting to me; the communications, editorials, and the editorials of your father, dating back before I was a member. The SIGNS came to our house in my wife's name, sent by her father, five or six years before I embraced a hope; I would not read them at that time, they were too discriminating for me; I believed in free will. We read, That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. It is natural for the natural man to believe in free moral agency. Well, I found it a delusion. When it pleased the Lord to show me my error, then I was made to see that I could do nothing, for it is said, "Without me ye can do nothing." God never made any conditions with man, where his salvation is based upon the will of the creature; it is contrary to this, which says, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." By nature man is dead in sin, but when quickened by the Spirit, and made alive, then can he see, for he is dead to sin, and no longer wants to live therein. Peter said of the natural man, "They are blind, and cannot see afar off," and Paul said, The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. I do not see where free will comes in in that text, or any other that I have found. It is God that works in him to will and to do. The natural man is dead in sin, there is no good in him. God looked down upon the world to see if there was any that did good. He said, No, not one; they have all gone astray; they are blind. But God says he will bring the blind by a way they know not, in strange paths will he lead them; and Paul to Timothy, "God who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace." Well, brother, I hope I know something of that grace, and hope that I have not received it in vain. I am a poor, unworthy creature.

I will close, for I have rambled enough, so it seems to me. I am ashamed to send it to you.

With love to you and brother Ker, and all the church, yours affectionately,

A. D. LOUD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1900.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PROVERBS IV. 23.

"KEEP thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."

Our mind has been directed to these words of late, as the expression of what we above all things desire to do, and yet, as the expression of what we have found it impossible to do. This has connected these words in our mind with the prayer of the psalmist, "Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." We think that when any command of the Scriptures comes to the understanding of the Lord's people, it always comes bringing such a sense of insufficiency in them that they will be put upon prayer to the Author and Giver of all good (who among other perfect gifts, must and does work all our works in us) that he would fulfill all his commandments in them, and enable them to make manifest this fulfillment within, by an outward form of obedience also.

There is a vast difference between performing in the letter and form, something which has the form of godliness, and feeling the real power thereof in the heart. For instance, we read, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is." And reading this, one who professes godliness may say, This is one of the exhortations which I must heed, and he does continue steadfastly in the assemblages of the saints, while yet it is but a burden and task to him, and his real affections are set upon some other thing; perhaps he hopes to gain some reward by this, either here or in the world to come. What a difference between this and true heart obedience, which is from a love of the service, and a delight in the courts of the Lord's house There are those who look forward to the solemn assemblies of the saints with longing, who say, "I was glad when it was said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." And who exultantly say, "Our feet shall stand in thy gates, O Jerusalem." What a vast difference between the two kinds of assembling. Now the same difference exists also, as regards all that service which is required of the child of God. One may go through the form of obedience without feeling the need of divine help, but when one comes to feel the need of the heart being kept, and realizes that out of it proceed the issues of life, then that one will learn how impossible it is for him to obey the holy commandment, and there will be, as said before, an earnest turning to the source of all blessing, for his work to be made manifest within.

An outward form of obedience is one thing, and heart obedience is another. Any one who has come to see the hollowness and mockery of a mere form, which is lifeless, and who desires the better way, will directly come to see that it is not in himself to produce these right affections. It is commanded in the word, that we love God with all our heart, that we love our neighbor as ourselves, that we forgive those who have done us wrong, that we be humble, lowly and patient, that we abase ourselves, and crucify our pride,

vanity and all the evil affections of our vile nature. We read all this, and at the same time realize that all these things are right and becoming the profession which we have made, and yet, when we go about doing these things, we awaken to the fact that not one of them can we do. Our striving to do them only makes our weakness more and more apparent, until we cry out, "Lord, save, I perish." So in the Scriptures, repentance is enjoined, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and yet we learn that we cannot repent, though we desire above all things to do so, and we cannot believe, though that is the one thing which we desire above all else to do. Then, in the time when we have despaired of ever repenting or believing, it is borne in upon our minds that the testimony of the word is, that there is one, our Savior and Redeemer, who has been exalted a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance unto Israel, and the forgiveness of sins. And in him, as he dwells in us, we find faith and repentance bestowed. It is the same with all things else which are enjoined upon believers: striving to do them, we find out that we cannot, and so are prepared to welcome the glad message that our Jesus has them all for us, treasured up in himself, and that out of his divine fullness, we all do and have received, and grace for grace. The text speaks about keeping the heart. Nothing less than heart work will satisfy the truly spiritual mind.

If we my be allowed to speak for ourself in this matter for a little here, we have to say, that this we have desired at all times. It has been a sore grief to us that so many foolish and vain thoughts fill us, when we would have it otherwise. In prayer, sometimes, horrible, vile thoughts come, which we hate, and well nigh frighten us away from a throne of grace, since it seems impossible that that God who abhors all evil, can receive our petition, or suffer us, when so unclean, to come nigh to him. Then what a comfort it has been to be enabled to remember that sinners vile come to God through Jesus Christ alone, and that they may have boldness to come in his name. We cannot in this keep our heart. In preaching it is the same, instead of a pure motive which we do desire, self comes in. It is as Hart says in one of his hymns against pride:

> "Against its influence pray,
> It mingles with the prayer;
> Against it preach, it prompts the speech;
> Be silent, still 'tis there."

Sometimes the child of God cries out under the stress of these bitter things and of his great weakness, Help, Lord, for all the floods of ungodliness are ready to swallow me up. If at such an hour it be said to him, Why do you not keep your heart from the possession of these things? and you must do so and so, if you would have peace and rest, he can but cry out, "How hast thou helped him that is without power?" "Miserable comforters are ye all." "Physicians of no value." Believers feel their dependence upon God every day, to fulfill in them what he commands of them.

Here is the difference between the terms of the old covenant and the new; here is the superior glory of the gospel; the law commands all, and bestows nothing, the gospel supplies all our need, through riches of grace in Christ Jesus. The law says, "Keep thy heart," and the gospel shows the glad tidings that Jesus comes and dwells in the heart, and fulfills all that the law commands in us. The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, since he who is its righteousness abides in the heart. Here is our hope and joy. Without this, every com-

mand of the law of God but brings despair. We have read the words of the text with longing desire that it might be so with us, yet realizing that it was not so with us, as every wretched wandering thought testified daily to us. Then with what gladness have we at times turned to the precious work of Jesus, which we have hoped had been made manifest in our own heart, and we have felt like rendering all praise to God, for a present salvation, as well as for final glory.

What a blessed assurance it is with which the text closes, "For out of it are the issues of life." Life must then be in the heart, and out of the life dwelling there, proceed living things. It is a tree of life, to depart from the snares of death. Here again we are reminded that all is heart work in this matter, and the issues of life are such as glorify the living God, and make manifest that he has quickened the soul in whom such fruit is borne, into life from the dead. Religion, true religion, is not a mere code of morality, it is a life. Christ is not only the believer's example, he is the believer's life. The commandments are not simply duties enjoined, but they are the fruit of faith and life. The rewards of this service are not the rewards of debt, but of grace. Will not that one who knows these things, continually say from the heart, O Lord, keep my heart as the fountain of all that is good, that out of it may flow right things; may my heart be as a well of water, springing up into everlasting life?

In conclusion we will say, if any man has no desire to keep his heart diligently, that man will find no power in the words of the text, and they will pass him by unheeded. If, on the other hand, a man has a desire to keep his heart, that man will find that he cannot do so, and then out of grief and shame, at his vile departures of heart and life, he will cry for help and salvation to God, who alone giveth the victory. If there are any of the children of God who say that the text implies some power in man to do what is commanded, let that one test himself; let that one try to keep his heart free from evil thoughts, and desires, and motives, and see if he succeeds. We are sure that no true born child of God's grace will succeed, and if any one fancies that he has succeeded, that one is self-deceived, and a companion of pharisees. C.

CLOSE OF VOLUME SIXTY-EIGHT.

With this number we complete the sixty-eighth year of the continuous publication of the Signs of the Times, the first and oldest publication in the world "Devoted to the Old School Baptist cause." For nearly three score years and ten it has ceased not to contend for the same principles of faith advocated in its first number, and until within the last decade have been the distinguishing tenants that designated the Old School Baptists from all other denominations on earth. But of late there have sprung up some who still cling to our name, but denounce these principles, and the sad result is now being made manifest by the scattering of the sheep. Divisions and sub-divisions are rending the fold, until in alarm, lest there should be a devouring one of another, the Hymenæuses and Philetuses are gathered together to either shorten one leg, or lengthen the other, to see if they cannot make the legs of the lame equal.

The past year has been fraught with more significant events among our people, and there seems to be more of a fall-

ing away from the faith once delivered by the apostles, than any year since the meeting of our fathers at Black Rock, Md., in 1832. But we have the blessed word of inspiration that, "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Were it not for this assurance, we would oftentimes become discouraged, but relying on the promises of our God, we have been to this day kept from utter despair.

Thanking our brethren and friends for their kind support, in word and in deed, we now close our editorial remarks for the year nineteen hundred.

B.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

FRUITS OF THE REVIVAL.

THE religious excitement which has engrossed the public mind to an unusual degree for the past few months, is called a *Revival*, and we have no objection to its being so designated, if it be clearly distinguished from those seasons of refreshing which the Lord is pleased to send from time to time, from his presence, to revive his saints; causing the north wind to awake, and the south wind to blow upon his garden, or church, that the spices may flow out. To reanimate, or produce activity in anything, may be called a revival, and so the term is applied to commerce, science, agriculture, &c., and may be as properly applied to the revival of the corruptions of anti-Christ, as to the refreshing seasons which come to the Zion of God when his presence is sensibly felt and enjoyed by the saints. Paul speaks of the revival of sin, and gives solemn warnings to the saints of these latter days, of perilous times for the saints, when the revivals of the powers of darkness prevail. In the present *revival*, (for so we will call it,) there is no new life or new principle developed. Some new resolutions to give some new direction to the fleshy powers and energies before in possession are apparent. Among the great multitude recently *revived*, which are counted by thousands, we have not yet heard of a single instance of any being brought to the knowledge of the truth, or to a knowledge of the true God, much less to a love of truth, and reverence for what God has spoken. So far as our personal knowledge of the *revived* extends, they have simply been converted from the state of Gallio, who cared for none of these things, to that of bitter opposers of the gospel of Christ, the sovereignty of God, and of all who contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. This may truly be a revival, but it is nothing new; the world, the flesh and the devil were always opposed to the cause and people of the living God.

The Redeemer, when with his disciples on the Mount of Olives, admonished them to beware of false prophets, and the apostle John says that many of them had at that day gone out into the world. The Redeemer also intimates that they wear the guise of sheep, or of christians, but they are none the less savage and destructive when they, by deception, gain the confidence of the flock of the Good Shepherd. The simple rule laid down, Matthew vii. 16-20, is applicable in all cases, and throughout all time, for the detection of wolves when they come in sheep's clothing: "Ye shall know them by their fruits." It is not said, Ye shall know them by their dress, by their professions, or by their respectable standing in the world, but simply by their fruits. "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit;

neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." In attending to this admonition of our Lord, three points require special attention.

First. What are we to understand by *good* and *evil* fruits?

Second. The total inability of false prophets to produce good fruits.

Third. That the children of God shall, no others can, detect false prophets by this rule.

Good fruits in a gospel sense, are fruits of that spirit which is born, not of blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God. The fruits of that spirit are love, joy, peace, gentleness, faith, &c. On the other hand, the fruits, or works of the flesh, are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings and such like. The true prophet of the Lord cannot bring forth these, nor can the false prophets bring forth the fruits of the Spirit. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God, and produce fruits unto holiness, the end of which is everlasting life. But, "If any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his, and all the fruit he can bear is the fruit of the flesh. The good fruits of the good tree are produced as a consequence, and are an evidence that the tree has first been made good, by vital and conjugal union with Christ, as the apostle instructs us, Romans vii. 4, 5: "Wherefore, my brethren, ye are also become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin, which were by the law, did work in our members, to bring forth fruit unto death." Hence we learn the impossibility of carnal men who are in the flesh, and serving religiously only in *the oldness of the letter*, bringing forth any other fruit than that which is unto death. And as all men are by nature in the flesh, and strangers to that Spirit of which Christ said, "Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him."—John xiv. 17, they are without ability to bring forth fruit unto God. Lastly we designed to notice the qualification of those who are exclusively truly born of God, (and not of the will or works of man, or of the flesh,) and who are led by that Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, to detect false prophets, by their fruit. Unto them it is given to know the things of the Spirit, the mysteries of Christ's kingdom, but unto them which are without it is not given. To all those who only possess the wisdom of this world, all these things of the Spirit are in parables. The apostle John says concerning these false prophets, "They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God; he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error."—1 John iv. 5, 6.

The prophet Habakkuk, in his prayer expresses the desire of all who know the Lord: "O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy." But the revival of God's work is infinitely beyond the control, management or comprehension of men.

The popular revival, which is now in its full blast in many places, is only, as far as we can perceive, a revival of the works

of men. Hence the clerical engineering of its whole machinery. We use but their own language, which they publish to the world, when we say, They can get these revivals up and maintain them by their own agency, and when they contend that the number of the saved and of those who finally perish, depends upon the efforts and contributions of men. But when God quickens the dead, that birth which is by his power, is as far removed from the power, influence and agency of men, as is the blowing of the wind: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou [Nicodemus] hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."—John iii. 8. But such is very far from being the case in the revivals which are gotten up by men. This wind bloweth as they direct, and they know whence it cometh, for they can sow to the wind, and reap the whirlwind.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 1, 1858.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denotes the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

PERSONAL.

ATLANTA, Ga., Nov. 21, 1900.

OUR VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—I would be glad if you would ask brother J. J. Manley to contribute for the SIGNS; he is the strongest Baptist in our part of the country on God's unlimited predestination, and a contribution from him would be comforting to the sound Baptists.

H. H. BENTLEY.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$385 80
A subscriber, Ohio, $5.00; A friend, New York, $5.00.—Total	7 00
Total to date	$392 80

MARRIAGES.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, at the home of a friend in Worcester Co., Nov. 26th, 1900, George T. Trader and Malora A. Brumbly.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at the bride's residence, on Wednesday p. m., Nov. 28th, 1900, Forris K. Chamberlin and Miss Essie L. Stillwell, both of Linvale, Hunterdon Co., N. J.

By the same, at his residence in Hopewell, on Saturday evening, Dec. 1st, 1900, Albert M. Hill, of Trenton, N. J., and Miss Marsha H. Hutchinson, of Pennington, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. G. B. Wood died at her home in Pleasantville, Iowa, after a short illness of twenty-four hours, death resulting from hemorrhage of the brain. The subject of this sketch was the daughter of W. H. and Eleanor McQuerry. She was born Oct. 15th, 1863, and died May 2d, 1900, making her age 37 years, 5 months and 13 days. She was married to G. B. Wood, Jan. 9th, 1883. The result of this union was one son, Raymond L., who is now twelve years old. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church, and was baptized by her father-in-law, Elder Aaron Wood, on July 4th, 1886, and lived a worthy, consistent christian life. Artie was of an exceedingly lovable and thoughtful nature. Owing to poor health her circle was her home. Her cheerful disposition and thoughtfulness for every one around her endeared her to neighbors, friends and family alike, and especially to her aged mother who lived with her. Though much afflicted for twenty years she always seemed to live in the sweet hope of being better some day, which hope we feel to know has been fully realized. Her devoted husband had spared nothing to restore her to health, and we believe that the same divine hand that upheld and sustained her through these years of suffering will uphold and strengthen her bereaved family.

EMMA BURCH.

John G. Bennette, son of John and Mary Bennette, was born in Huntingdonshire, England, Jan. 7th, 1827, and died at his home near Poneta, Wells Co., Ind., Oct. 2, 1900. In May, 1851, he came to the United States, stopping first in Chester Co., Pa. In June, 1852, he went to Canada, and in the following September he returned to the States, and settled in Wells Co., Ind. In the summer of 1854 he purchased a small farm, on which he lived the remainder of his life. He continued to add to this farm from time to time, until it was increased to 204 acres.

May 19th, 1861, he was married to Emily Safferty, daughter of David and Nancy Safferty. To this union were born ten children, six of whom survive to mourn with their mother, the loss of father and husband.

He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Bluffton, and ever afterward lived consistent with his profession. He was esteemed by all who knew him. He was a loving and provident husband and father, preferring the home circle to all other earthly attractions. His disease was cancer of the stomach, with which he had suffered for about four years, and his suffering became very intense as he neared the end, but he bore them without complaint, believing that "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." His hope sustained him to the last, and he died in the triumphs of faith, at the age of 73 years, 8 months and 25 days. A widow, six children, four grandchildren and a host of friends mourn their loss.

The writer spoke to a large audience at his funeral, using as a text Job xiv. 14.

W. N. THARP.

LIBERTY, Indiana.

Mary Heckman, daughter of John and Mary Clawson, was born Sept. 28th, 1834, in Jackson township, Preble Co., Ohio, and died Nov. 23d, 1900, in Gratis township, Preble Co., Ohio, at the town of Winchester, aged 66 years, 1 month and 25 days. She was united in marriage to Henry Heckman, in Lanier township, Preble Co., Ohio, August 21st, 1855. She became a member of the Ebenezer Baptist Church, July 22d, 1865, in Jackson township, Preble Co., Ohio, being baptized by Elder D. S. Robinson. She was a worthy member of the church both by deed and example, and remained a faithful and attentive member throughout her life. She expressed herself as having no fears of death, and was reconciled to God's will. She was always a kind and affectionate companion, generous and quiet disposition, and a good neighbor. She leaves three brothers and her husband, with several nieces and nephews, to mourn her departure.

Her remains were laid to rest in Fairview Cemetery, after short services at the family homestead, at 10:30 a. m,, Nov. 26th, 1900, at Winchester, Ohio.

C. D. G.

DEPARTED this life, Nov. 21st, 1900, in the triumphs of a living faith, **Sarah E. Pemberton,** wife of George M. Pemberton, who preceded her to eternal rest twenty-seven years; both of Primitive Baptist faith. The subject of this sketch was born in Kentucky, Jan. 24th, 1828. Five years later she moved with her father, Judge Jesse Pemberton, to Missouri, her continual residence since. She joined the Primitive Baptists in 1868, since which time her love for the cause, and faithfulness, has been beyond description, so may it truly be said of her, A mother in Israel is fallen; a loved one is gone to enter into that sweet rest that remains for the people of God. I never had the happy privilege of forming the acquaintance of any one of a sweeter and more lovely disposition, always tender and sympathetic, making allowance and excuses for poor, erring mortals. She greatly loved the doctrine of salvation by grace. Her disease was consumption, from which she has been a sufferer for several years. She bore with patience her suffering, showing great fortitude, often praying, If it could be the Father's will that she might be taken to rest, but still expressing a desire to await his own good time. She leaves behind her two living children and five stepchildren, with many other relatives and friends. All was done for her that poor mortals could do to make her last moments comfortable, by both relatives and friends. I tried to comfort the many sorrowing ones at both house and grave.

Her interment took place the 23d, at the old family Pemberton burying-ground.

J. A. TEAGUE.

LAMONTE, Mo.

DIED—At her home in Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., Nov. 20th, 1900, **Miss Susan Fuller,** in the 90th year of her age, being the oldest of three natural sisters, as well as members of the Second Roxbury Church, there being but about two years difference in their ages. Sister Susan gradually declined in her ripening years, especially the past two, until her days were all numbered on earth. Often the pastime has been spent in desire for the rest in its fullness which remains to the people of God, though oft wondering about her own interest among them. Being crippled from her youth, she knew something of the trial that many do not, and being brought early in life to see her lost condition as a sinner, she was made to know her dependent condition, both natural and spiritual. But the love of God being shed abroad in her heart by the holy Spirit given her, she was made to praise God from whom all blessings flow, and love to her blessed Lord constrained her to follow him in obedience to his command, which she did by uniting with the Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, many years ago, manifesting her integrity by walk and conversation, until age and failing strength deprived her of meeting with the church, and then her desire was still for the prosperity of Zion, where she felt her best friends and kindred dwelt. Thus with her mind upon the church here, and the desire for the joy of the hereafter, she lived and died. Although her mind was weak naturally at the closing of time, she was as her mind lit upon heaven and divine things, strong in the Lord and the power of his might, and we believe she has gone to enjoy her reward in the high clime with her Lord, and when he shall descend and awake the dead, her body will be brought forth incorruptible, and with all saints that have slept, and those changed in a moment or twinkling of an eye, caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and ever be with the Lord. This is faith's view of the purchased possession.

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLY'S CORNERS, N. Y., Dec. 5, 1900.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 69. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1901. NO. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WHAT THE LORD HATH SPOKEN.

BELOVED EDITORS AND BRETHREN:—The testimony of the holy prophets of God, whom he called and inspired, is not merely the word of men, but as really the word of the Lord, which cannot be broken. All who admit the truth of revelation must admit this. For the Lord spoke by the prophets: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."—Heb. i. 1, 2. Therefore Jesus said, "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." This was true also of the words spoken by the prophets of God. For this cause it was usual for them to preface their messages with, "Thus saith the Lord." This testimony of the divine prophets is therefore infallible, as were the words of the holy Son of God, who said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away." Concerning the faithful fulfillment of his word, the Lord says it is as the rain and snow, which make the earth fruitful: "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." The "shalls" of the Lord God omnipotent cannot fail, because he is the Almighty and reigneth. This must be admitted.

With this established, let us now turn to the words of the "holy men of God (who) spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," which the apostle says is "a more sure word of prophecy;" more sure than even the heavenly vision of Christ's transfiguration upon the sacred mount, which only three of his disciples were witnesses to; but the truth of the infallible prophecies all his people shall witness to.

The testimony of the prophets of the Most High related to *future events.* Let us keep this fact in mind; for thus we must see that they spoke by revelation, and declared the infallible word of the Lord, whose faithfulness and omnipotence would surely fulfill all that he had thus spoken. To say any prophecy or foretold event might possibly fail to come to pass, would be a denial of God's revealed truth, as the so-called "higher

critics" now deny it, and desecrating the inspired oracles of God to the mere word of man. But with the inspiration of the prophecies admitted, we then must see that the holy prophets declared the things which God had before ordained should come to pass, just as he himself had thus revealed them to his servants, whom he had called for this very purpose. Surely none will call the truth of this in question, for it is certain that future events must have been unalterably fixed or determined, either by the Lord, who revealed them to the prophets, or by some other determining power, or else they must all have failed to come to pass. To see that it must be thus, we need only consider that all things which are dependent upon the wisdom and power of men are liable to fail, and that many of the mighty and far-reaching events of prophecy were hundreds of years in the future when the prophets were moved to write them. Therefore between the time of the prophecies and the times of their fulfillment, many generations of men were born and died, and countless events and changes took place, some of them involving and affecting unborn generations, and even including the rise and fall of nations and governments on earth. All this made it absolutely necessary that all the intervening circumstances and every event between the word spoken by the prophets of God and the fulfillment thereof must not only have been certainly foreknown by the Lord God, but as well determined by him. For if one link in the chain of successive events had been broken or subject to failure, all else connected with it would likewise have been liable to fail, and the purpose and end foretold must have been defeated. Hence either God or some other shaping or determining and controlling power, a power and intelligence mightier than all intervening powers and things, did sovereignly determine the end foretold from the beginning, when the prophet wrote, "Thus saith the Lord." What power is it then that subjects and controls all events and things, great and small, so definitely that they all so certainly link together and combine in the exact accomplishment of the word spoken generations and ages before? Will the candid reader candidly answer, as unto the Lord? If it is admitted that all prophetic events, with all things else, were infallibly seen and foreknown by the omniscient One, yet denied that they were also determined by him in his infinite wisdom and according to his eternal purpose, then will the reader please answer the question, What controlling wisdom and power does establish the unfailing certainty of all prophetic events, and all other things certainly foreknown unto the Lord? For just as the omniscience of the omnipresent God foresaw all creatures and things, so must they be, or else the foreknowledge of God is denied. There is then an absolute certainty in the exact fulfillment of all foretold events and foreknown things, although hundreds and thousands of years may intervene between the foreknowledge and its accomplishment, with millions of interposing people and events; yet all those must be subordinated to the performance of the far distant thing foreknown and foretold precisely at the time and place and in the way the prophets of the Most High declared that thus it shall be.

Now, therefore, it is absolutely certain that some superintending wisdom and controlling power does sovereignly preside over all creatures and things in all the universe, so that all do in the end result in the very things which God eter-

nally foresaw and foreknew should come to pass, according to his infallible word by his inspired servants the prophets, to whom he revealed those far off and momentous events. The prophets spoke and wrote them with an absolute certainty, as the historian records actual history, as though the things foretold were already done. This fact is truly wonderful. Upon the certain fulfillment of the prophecies rests the authenticity of the holy Scriptures and the infallibility of the holy One, who spake by the prophets. A sacred reverence and humility becomes us, therefore, when we speak of God and his oracles. So now shall we meekly confess that the omnipotent One holds the reins of universal dominion and controls all things, to the certain accomplishment of his eternal foreknowledge of them? or will we deny him this prerogative and controlling jurisdiction, according to his infinite wisdom and almighty power, and attribute this certain control of all things to some other being or power? For certain it is that some overruling power does control and subject all things in the universe to the accomplishment of God's absolute foreknowledge of them. Then which is wisest, safest and best, to ascribe this wisdom, dominion and controlling power to the holy God, or to wicked men and devils? But should we attribute the certainty of all things, just as God foreknew them, and as the prophets foretold many of them, to certain fixed natural forces and laws, as combining causes to produce the certain results, the question then remains to be answered, Who ordained or established and supports the fixed laws in the universe, so that they are thus unfailing in bringing to pass every foreknown event? God himself is the Lawmaker, and all his laws in his limitless dominion are ordained and maintained by his almighty power. This we must admit, or deny the God above us, and make him subject to some extraneous power and control. But his inspired prophets and apostles, who testify of him, as he revealed himself to them, ascribe to the Almighty all dominion and power, and abundantly declare that he is the omnipotent One, and all worlds, creatures and things are put under his feet, or subjected to his dominion and control. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Thus God is over all and controls all.

With these primary truths thus clearly established, we may now turn to a few of the very many solemn declarations of the Lord by his ordained prophets, by which let us be meekly instructed, while we are awed before the righteous majesty of our God:

"And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."—Hab. ii. 2, 3. This is equally true of all the visions which the Lord gave to his prophets. They are "for an appointed time, but at the end they shall speak, and not lie." "Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed them far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land."

—Isa. vi. 11, 12. This was fulfilled against the people and land of Israel, by their ungodly and warring enemies, yet the Lord declared that he would remove them far away. For their sins he did it. (Let it be understood once for all, that all the righteous judgments of God upon the world are for the sins of men, justly meted out for their transgressions, in all of which God is holy, and justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne, and mercy and truth go before his face.) "The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God. For though my people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return: the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness. For the Lord God of hosts shall make a consumption, even determined, in the midst of all the land."—Isaiah x. (Please read the chapter.) "I have commanded my sanctified ones, I have also called my mighty ones for mine anger, even them that rejoice in my highness. The noise of a multitude in the mountains, like as of a great people; a tumultous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together: the Lord of hosts mustereth the host of the battle. They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, even the Lord, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land. Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. * * * Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. * * * And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah."—Isa. xiii. (Read this solemn chapter.) "Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. * * * The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the Lord hath spoken his word."—Isaiah xxiv. "Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it. For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. * * * And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree. For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment."—Isaiah xxiv. "Thus saith the Lord, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me. Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumor, and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land. * * * Then the angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand."—Isaiah xxxvii. "Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first; and I am the last; and beside me there is no God. And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them."—Isa. xliv. Here the Lord says that he appointed the ancient people, and the things that are coming, and shall come. All the quoted

words of the Lord are plain. "I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded."—Isa. xlv. "I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them; I did them suddenly, and they came to pass. Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass; I have even from the beginning declared it to thee; before it came to pass I shewed it thee: lest thou shouldest say, Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image, hath commanded them."—Isa. xlviii. The Lord declared this to his people Israel. How it should rebuke and humble us before him.

The prophet foretold the Lord's glorious work of salvation in his reign of righteousness and mercy among the nations, saying, "So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him. And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord."—Isa. lix. "For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations."—Isa. lxi. "And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth."—Isa. lxiii. Thus did the Lord speak about seven hundred years before Christ came and redeemed his people, trod down the rebellious nation of the Jews, and then the cruel Roman nation, and caused righteousness and praise to spring forth from the Gentiles. The prophets, and they that feared the Lord in Israel, and that thought upon his name, waited long, yet in the fullness of the time appointed, and just as the Most High had decreed and declared, the vision spake, and did not tarry, for the word of the Lord cannot be broken. True, unbelieving and wicked men, actuated by the flesh and the devil, combined to defeat the accomplishment of this great and glorious work and purpose of the Lord; but he had them in derision, laughed when their fear came, and mocked at their calamity. "And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb: and the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies. For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many. * * * For I know their works and their thoughts: it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory. * * * And they shall declare my name among the Gentiles. And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations. * * * For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. * * * And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be

quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh."—Isaiah lxvi. These are the last words of the Lord by this great prophet. How full of majesty, glory and wonder they are! For just as the Lord hath spoken, so shall it come to pass. All worlds and beings cannot hinder it nor hasten it. This is the Lord God of the holy prophets. We may well adore this Jehovah of the Bible with humble reverence, while we take refuge under his almighty wing, for in him is everlasting strength, safety and salvation, and he is able to save us unto the uttermost.

"Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee that I have yet to speak on God's behalf." "Behold, God exalteth by his power; who teacheth like him? Who hath enjoined him his way? or who can say, Thou hast wrought iniquity? Remember that thou magnify his work, which men behold. Every man may see it: man may behold it afar off. Behold, God is great, and we know him not, neither can the number of his years be searched out. * * * Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict." This is the testimony of Elihu to Job. Of cloud and wind and storm he says, God turneth them about by his counsels, "that they may do whatsoever he commandeth them upon the face of the world in the earth. He causeth it to come, whether for correction, or for his land, or for mercy. Hearken unto this, O Job: stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God." Elihu thus speaks to us, too. "Then said the Lord unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people: cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth. And it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? then shalt thou answer them, Thus saith the Lord; Such as are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for the captivity, to the captivity. And I will appoint them four kinds, saith the Lord: the sword to slay, and the dogs to tear, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the earth, to devour and destroy. And I will cause them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah king of Judah, for that which he did in Jerusalem."—Jer. xv. "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel; Behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands, wherewith ye fight against the king of Babylon, and against the Chaldeans, which besiege you without the walls, and I will assemble them in the midst of this city. And I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath. And I will smite the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast: they shall die of a great pestilence."—Jer. xxi. "Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him, saith the Lord? Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord."—Jer. xxiii. "And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations. And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations." —Jer. xxv. The righteous God declared that he himself would bring those fearful

but just judgments upon all those guilty nations, including his own people of Israel, who were guilty of the grossest idolatries and backslidings. Yet he would in mercy restore his people, and bring them again to Zion and bless them for his own glory.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our righteousness."—Jer. xxxiii. The Lord Jesus was the Branch or Son of David, and he reigns in righteousness upon his throne, doing the will of God, having obtained eternal redemption for his people, and ascended on high.

All those prophetic mighty events, involving the destinies of many peoples, and nations not a few, relating to wars and famines, plagues and pestilences, no less than the peaceful reign of Immanuel in the salvation of his redeemed among all nations, most solemnly declare that "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth" in it all, and accomplished his sovereign and righteous purpose in all those awful calamities and great national events, which his mouth foretold should so come to pass, even saying that he would bring them to pass. Because the Holy One has sovereignly thus foretold those mighty events, and fulfilled them in his judgments upon the sinful nations, shall we be so foolhardy and daring in presumption as to impiously say, If God thus purposed and determined all the atrocities and cruelties of those warring and life-destroying nations, then he himself is the author and doer of all the monstrous cruelty of those wicked nations, and is responsible for it? God forbid. Are we in God's stead? Shall finite, sinful and ignorant creatures, whose very being and breath are dependent upon the infinite and holy and almighty Creator, rise up in judgment against him? What blind and stupid folly. Let vain man say what he will, the word of the Almighty by the prophets most positively declared that thus it should be, and that he would surely execute those calamitous judgments, both upon his own people and the surrounding heathen nations. It is time to call a halt, and that men professing to be the servants of God should cease from replying against the holy Lord God Almighty, as he has declared himself by his faithful prophets. For such railing against the Lord God of the prophets, as to say that if he determined such wicked acts of men and nations, as the prophesies cited clearly show and plainly declare, makes the Holy One the author of all that sin and wickedness, and responsible for it, is blaspheming and profaning the name of the Most High, and it betrays a shocking degree of vain arrogance and conceited presumption and bigoted ignorance, or else a *sinful creature* would not thus speak against the holy Creator.

(Concluded in next number.)

DELHI, N. Y., Nov. 1, 1900.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN OUR BLESSED REDEEMER:—It has been some time since I met you at Otego, at the time of the meeting, but I have often thought of you, and of things you said to my comfort.

For some time previous to the meeting at Otego, I had been much of my time in

darkness, so you may imagine the comfort I received from your words when you said, "As we naturally walked more carefully in darkness, so spiritually we walked with greater care in darkness." O how sweet were those words to me, even as rain falling on the thirsty flower. Yet I fear that even in the darkness, I do not walk as carefully as I ought, but rather go stumbling blindly forward, depending too fully in weak, sinful self. But how truly do I desire that my walk and talk be circumspect as becometh a child of God, but fear that often it comes far from it. How prone is man to put his faith in the works of his own hands, and how surely does he meet with the just judgment of an all-wise and jealous God, who hath said, "Thou shalt have no other God but me." In his presence the weak god of self is brought low, while the glory of God of heaven and earth is magnified ten thousand thousand times, till he appeareth as the one altogether lovely, as the fairest among ten thousand; the King of Zion, and Israel's stronghold.

There are times, when I am by myself, meditating on the things of the heavenly kingdom, that my mind goes back to the time several years ago when I first heard the joyful sound while listening to a sermon preached by Elder Bogardus.

My first impression of the Old Baptists was far from being a favorable one. My first knowledge of them was obtained while reading the SIGNS to my beloved mother. I used to wish she would not ask me to read, as I did not want to know anything about a people who so thoroughly ignored the pleasures of the world. Those pleasures, I reasoned with myself, were placed here for our enjoyment, and since such was the case, why should we not take advantage of them instead of casting them aside as vain and frivolous things? Why should we shut ourselves away from the world? Thus I reasoned to please myself; and much against my will continued to read the SIGNS, fearing to complain lest I should say something to cause my mother pain.

But, as I have stated before, I first heard the precious truth preached by Elder Bogardus. My first impression was that of being alone in intense darkness. This lasted but for a moment, when suddenly I was in a beautiful light, and felt so joyful that I wanted to sing; then I was alone again, and O such a terrible feeling came over me. It seemed that my life was spread out before me, and what mountains of sin I beheld, and it seemed that my face became black with the blackness of sin, insomuch that I feared those around me would see it, and I turned my head and looked out of the window. To my amazement everything shone forth in the glory of its Creator. I could see in everything, the trees, the grass and the flowers, the great handiwork of the Lord; then as I looked around again at the faces of those around me I could see there the joyful expression of those who had heard the glad tidings of great joy, and then I longed to be like them: the very people I had hated and despised because that they loved not the world. This was on the first day of one of the two days meetings at Otego. During the remainder of the meeting I enjoyed the preaching, but at the same time I felt that I was a poor, lost sinner, and that there was no hope for me. I felt that the joy had gone out of my life, for the world in which I had taken such delight seemed dark and frowning. Thus I remained for some time, until one night after I had returned to my home, it seemed that I had scarcely fallen asleep when I saw the form of one clothed in

shining robes, and before him he held an open book in which I could see my name written. Then I awoke with a sense of great relief as from a heavy burden suddenly removed from me; I felt that something was gone and that I would be happy forever. For the next few days I went about my work whistling and singing, perfectly free from care, then I began to think what I had done to merit such a great blessing, feeling as though it must be for some great good I had done, but how soon was I convinced of my error, I could see nothing but sin; I felt that my whole life had been devoted to sin, and that I had enjoyed the company of evil companions, and had taken delight in the joys of the world, but alas, they seemed to have forsaken me, and I was hedged about with sin. In vain I looked about for some way of escape, I wanted to flee from those dark mountains of sin, but the more I tried the more I found my efforts to be in vain, and at last I gave up, feeling that if I was saved, it must be by the grace of God, and not any work of my own weak, powerless hands.

For a long time I was left to wander in darkness, until it seemed I could bear it no longer, and I was made to cry out as did the jailer of old, "What shall I do to be saved?" Then came the words, "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." For a time they brought me great comfort, for I did love the people whom I knew worshiped the Lord in spirit and in truth, but soon the tempter whispered, It is only with a hypocrite's love, and amounts to nothing, and I feared that it was so. I continued thus for some time, attending the meetings at every opportunity, and enjoying each time a feast of the rich things of the kingdom, but all the while feeling my great unworthiness of such great pleasure.

I shall never forget the meeting at which I was received into the church: the sermons had seemed doubly sweet, and I longed to ask for a place with the dear people of God, but when the opportunity came, I could not rise from my seat, I felt that a great weight was holding me down, and when our dear Elder Bundy, and some of the brethren and sisters, asked me a few questions regarding my condition of mind, and of the foundation of my hope, I could only answer falteringly. But to my great surprise I was received, and baptized the following Sunday. At the water's edge I thought I had never seen the water look so calm and peaceful as it did then. After coming up out of the water, I felt such a sweet peace come over me, and again I had a season of rejoicing; I felt that all of earth's joys and peace were mine; I felt that sorrow, doubts and fears would be strangers to me for evermore, but I learned shortly that it was not so. How soon came the doubts and fears that I had done wrong. I resolved to write and tell the brethren and sisters that they had been deceived in me, that I was not what they thought me to be, but only a vile, wretched, miserable sinner, unfit to be one of them; they were so good and so pure in my sight. But I did not dare to carry my resolution into effect, lest they should turn me away, and I would have no place to go, and I was sure I loved their company. They were my dearest friends, and the world I once loved, my bitterest foe.

In my present position I am as a stranger in a strange land, there are none of the brethren near here, so I am quite alone, but I hope the time is not far distant when I shall be so situated that I

can meet more often with the saints of God. Yet I do not feel to complain, I am blessed beyond all I deserve. In me, that is, in my flesh, there is no good thing: when I would do good, evil is ever present with me, so that the good I would, that I do not, while the evil I would not do, that I do. I sometimes feel that my burden is greater than I can bear. I am often cast down and heavy-hearted, sometimes almost doubting the existence of a God, but at such times come the blessed assurances, "I will never entirely forsake thee;" "As thy days, so shall thy strength be;" "Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden and I will give you rest." He hath borne our sins in his body on the tree; he hath given his life for us that we through him might have remission of sins. I have received great comfort in times of trial and tribulation from the thought that no matter through what ways I may be lead, my Savior has been there before, to make the pathway smooth. In all things was he tried and tempted even as we, so that he knows our every weakness, and through and from him we receive that strength which enables us to come off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him who hath purchased us with his blood.

I must bring this rambling scribble to a close, fearing I have already written too much. I have often desired to tell what I have written to you, to the church at Otego, but when I attempt to speak, my tongue cleaves to the roof of my mouth, and not a word can I say. If I have written anything that is amiss, or that casts a shadow on the precious truth, please set me right. I have tried in my poor way to describe some of the Lord's dealings with me. In the midst of doubts and fears I am made to realize that if I am saved, it must be by the grace of God, "Not of works, lest any may should boast."

Hoping to hear from you soon, I remain your unworthy brother, if one at all,

WM. T. GUERNSEY.

LONDON, Ontario, Nov. 4, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your letter in reply to my last is received, and I would like to reply, and will try to do so, though I feel that it will be in much weakness. I have a sense of fear and trembling, as it seems to me, that I have nothing to write that can interest you, much less edify or instruct, and if none of these objects are accomplished, then my writing will be in vain, as far as you are concerned, though it might relieve my own mind. Your last letter was full of interest to me, and I am glad that we see so nearly eye to eye in spiritual things. I believe that there are very many, even of God's dear children, who do not have a clear understanding of the truth as it is in Jesus, and are not clear in the doctrine of God our Savior. Why this should be so it not for me to say, I can only say, "Even so, Father, for so it has seemed good in thy sight." The apostle says that there must be also heresies among you, that they also which are approved may be made manifest. This is hard doctrine to the natural mind, but the apostle by the pen of inspiration lays it down as truth. He does not say there may be heresies, or if there shall be heresies, but the positive declaration is, that there must be. Surely if there must be heresies, none can set it aside, and as we look at the matter in the light of God's word, there could be no salvation without sinners to be saved, and no sinners without sin, and so there comes to be a must needs be for the salvation, and the grace of God to be shown, because there must

needs be sin also. It is the sinner who is saved by his grace, and who is taught by daily experience that he is a sinner, and that vain is the help of man.

I often wonder how the people of God can reconcile two principles which seem diametrically opposed to each other, viz: A perfectly helpless, sinful state before God, and the idea that we are rewarded for our good deeds in any way or shape. I feel that if I am enabled to live and walk in obedience, and consistently before the world, it is an unspeakable mercy of God toward me, and it humbles me as a monument of the grace of God toward me. I am well aware how quickly the carnal mind opposes this principle of truth, and says, "Well if this be so, why find fault with any one for wrong doing?" All that I can say is that the carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to his law and neither indeed can be, therefore it cannot reason upon the subject, and there is but one declared law or authority on the subject, and that is what is recorded in the Scripture, and taught and manifested in the experience of the children of God. If it were possible for my natural faculties, or my reasoning powers to raise me up above the darkness, doubts, fears and infidel feelings, of which I am so much of my time the subject, my life would be very different from what it is, and I would not be so bowed down in my feelings, like one who seeks his God in vain. But I had no intention of writing as I have, when I started my letter.

We had Elders Eubanks and Carnell at our fall quarterly meeting, and had a good meeting, which was both pleasant and profitable to very many, I trust. Elder Eubanks was with me at my home for a day and a half, and it was a most pleasant visit. We had considerable talk upon spiritual things, and could agree upon everything. He has a deep experience of the things of the Spirit, and can express himself well. I want to speak especially of the last sermon, from Elder Carnell, at the meeting. He spoke from the words, "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore," &c. He was given wonderful liberty, and spoke with great power and ability. I had often wished to hear some minister preach from this text, but had never had the privilege before. I could say amen to every word he said. I had not thought of the first clause of the text, as being particularly interesting, but that it was intended merely as an introduction to what followed, but he spoke largely from that clause. "And Jesus came and spake unto them." O, he said, at one point in the discourse, how we desire Jesus to come and speak unto us, and how sweet and comforting it is when he speaks in our hearts, telling us that he has all power, and that therefore our salvation is all in his hands. He said, When this was our blessed experience, we had no sorrow or care, doubt or fear, and that the speaking of Jesus in our heart, was the sweetest music ever heard by mortal man. He seemed to be so taken up with his theme as to almost lose sight of this world, and to be looking on things unseen by mortal eyes. And then when he talked of all power being in the hand of God, how delightful to listen to his words. He called attention to the words, "Go ye, therefore," and said that those who did not believe that all power was in the hand of God, had no right to the words that followed, "Go ye therefore," because it was just because all power was in his hand, that they were to go, and that no one had any interest or right in that word "therefore" but those who believed that

all power was in the hand of him who sends his ministers forth as clouds, and guides their ways and words.

Dear brother, this kind of preaching is worth spending time to hear, is it not? It is what we can say amen to.

A week or so ago I felt such a strong desire to see you, that I thought that I must write at once, and if I had done so, I might have written more interestingly, but there are really no "ifs" in what we say or do, but only realities. I often think "if" I had acted differently, how much better it would have been. How hard it is for nature to feel that all things are ordered and arranged by infinite wisdom, and for the good of all the children of God. It is impossible for our nature to see all our plans frustrated, and all our anticipations blasted, and feel that it is for our good, but when the Lord and Savior speaks to us, in our hearts, and tells us of his love and mercy, then we can rejoice in tribulation. How can the natural man rejoice in tribulation? It is impossible with man, but possible with God. I could conceive of a strongminded person being patient, or bearing trouble with fortitude, but I think that the words used in the Scriptures are "glory in tribulation" instead of "rejoice," but the meaning is much the same. And I hope that I know what it is to be made to rejoice in tribulation. I well remember what was perhaps the severest worldly trouble that I ever had, and that it was completely swallowed up, as it were, by the words being spoken in my heart, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee." All trouble was gone in a moment, and then I certainly did rejoice in the furnace of tribulation. But O, how seldom have been such seasons with me, and how short they have been; they seem but a mere spot in what has been the wild wilderness and darkness of my life.

I was thinking not long ago of the words of the Savior. The "kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed," "which indeed is the least of all seeds," and I thought, It does not matter how small an amount of grace we may seem to have, if it be but as a grain, as it were, the life is in that grain. It is the life. And then I thought of the words of the apostle, (which have been so perverted, and made to feed the pride of those who desire to exalt self to a place in eternal glory,) "As one star differeth from another star in glory," &c. He is speaking of the fact that the life which runs through everything that God has created, produces its like, and then he goes on to say, so also is the resurrection. That is, he means that the life of Jesus will be the only life in that new, great and glorious state of existence. To me it was like a revelation, for while I could not believe in different degrees of happiness in glory, yet the words, "As one star differs from another star in glory," were all darkness to me. I could not understand the apostle's meaning. The life of one person, who has part in that glorious resurrection, will be the same life of which they partake here, but what our bodies will be like in that blessed state, I do not know, and neither does it concern me. If I only have part in that life and resurrection, I know that I shall be satisfied. I do not know that we need be concerned so much about the hereafter of the wicked, but it has seemed to me that the people of God have given to them here, in their experience, a knowledge of what they are saved from, when they are made to feel the bitterness of sin, and the misery of separation from God and his mercy, and it has seemed to me that it will exalt their songs of

praise, as they realize the terrible gulf of misery from which they have been saved. As I contemplate this solemn subject, I cannot but fear that I may be deluded in my hope of heaven and holiness, for I feel so full of sin, and so unworthy of the love of God.

But I must stop my scribbling, before you are completely tired out.

Your brother in Christ,

ROBERT SCATES.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Dec. 5, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER HAIT:—You have both been on my mind for several days, and I feel impressed to write to you. The Lord leads his people in a peculiar way; in a way they do not know. While I am glad to have the desire to write to you, yet I do not feel worthy of your fellowship and love. If I am in the christian journey at all, I travel so slow. I seem to go backward instead of forward, and I grow smaller all the time. If I could only be like you both, and like all the brethren and sisters whom I love so much, having the mind of Christ, manifesting holiness, but I am worldly minded, the beggarly elements of the world interest me, I search for worldly comforts, and vain desires take hold upon me, I cannot think there is any one like me. It is a very solemn and a very serious thing for one to make public profession to be a follower of the lowly Lamb of God, and to have one's name upon the church-book enrolled with the saints of God; surely it is a weighty matter, and a deep responsibility. As I see my brethren manifesting a feeling sense of the great things which they profess, thoroughly established in the doctrine of God our Savior, and fixed upon the foundation of our hope, the Rock Christ Jesus, how I desire to be like them, and how my heart longs for heavenly things. But alas, I turn my eyes within and behold mine infirmities, my weakness, my ignorance and my blindness, and indeed it makes my heart sick, and I am ready to faint by the way. My heart and my eyes (of faith) turn toward Jerusalem, and my soul's desire is for the courts of Zion. For there is my King and my Savior, the life of my delights. To behold his beauty is joy unspeakable, to recognize his name as the shadow (and the substance, too) of a great rock in a weary land, where the pilgrims of Zion are sheltered from the cold storms and bleak east winds of the world, is a pleasure for evermore. I am glad to believe that to be a member of the church of Christ, worthy and consistent, in good standing, having the fellowship of all the brethren, is greater honor than all the world can give. The lowest seat (if such can be found) in the temple of our God, is greater riches than the gold of a thousand mines. Infinitely more would we rather suffer affliction as a son, than to enjoy comforts and pleasures as a bastard. So much of my time I question my own acceptance in the Beloved. I search and search for evidences of a good hope through grace. And usually the sad result of my search is vain, because I am looking for some good thing in my flesh. I forget (for the time) that God is both the author and finisher of my faith. But when the Spirit takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto me, then is my hope strengthened that the promises of God in Christ Jesus are for me. I find I must learn the lesson over and over again, that I cannot by searching find out God, that the judgments of God are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out. Except God reveals unto us the secrets of his treasure-house, we are altogether and forever in

darkness. And how we are humbled, dear brother and sister, when we discover that as grace exercises us, so we are given light and wisdom and understanding to guide us all our journey through. You have both been long in the way, and you can call to remembrance the precious seasons when Jesus talked with you as you traveled, and your heart burned within you, and you knew not that it was Jesus, until he had blessed you and disappeared from your view. Then how you went on your way rejoicing in the assurance of everlasting life, and a good hope through grace. Jesus never leaves his followers without hope. However low down we get, or however discouraged, hope urges to "press toward the mark for the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus." We are sometimes told by the religious world that the doctrine we hold is a dangerous doctrine. I will quote from a dear sister in the west, who when told it was a dangerous doctrine, said, "The few who do believe this dangerous doctrine have much to be thankful for." It is dangerous to them that love the world, and delight to follow its dictates, because it opposes every desire of the flesh, but to the saints of God it is precious. Jesus Christ is the foundation of this doctrine, and to us it is a place of refuge, a strong tower, a comforting and a secure retreat, we lie down in green pastures, and there is none to molest or make us afraid, because he is our Shepherd, and he is with us, he watcheth over us in love, and not as an hired servant. How wonderfully secure are we in his tender embrace. He knoweth all our wants, and supplieth our necessities, he also giveth us the spirit of prayer and supplication to ask that his will be done concerning us. Merciful and divinely gracious is our God unto us. My cry out of a crushed heart is, "My leanness, my leanness." He heareth my cry and giveth me rivers of oil. Is not this your experience, dear ones? The nights of affliction are ofttimes long and dreary, and sorrow is the shroud of the darkness, but to him that "looketh for the morning, joy cometh, Jesus is the bright and morning star, his countenance lighteth all the world. He says, "My sheep hear my voice." How quickly do they flee at the voice of the stranger. When I contrast my own ugliness with the beauty of our gracious Redeemer, I hang my head in shame, I am "less than nothing and vanity," he is "the fullness of him that filleth all in all."

What a selfish letter you will find this to be, it is self, self, from beginning to end, but such as I have I give unto you, I have done the very best I can; I want to do better for your sakes, but when the Lord shuts no man can open. Please bear with me and pray for me.

My wife joins me in love to you both, and to all the dear brethren and sisters of the Middletown and New Vernon churches, with your dear pastor included. May the Lord richly bless you, that you may yet these many years continue to be a blessing to your brethren.

Affectionately your brother,

B. F. COULTER.

DECATUR, Texas, Dec. 4, 1900.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I have desired much of late to write you, for my love has gone out to you, although you are a stranger to me in the flesh, but it seems to me I have been made to love you for the truth's sake. I have just read the last number of the SIGNS, and I feel that I have been made to rejoice while reading its pages. My love has been made to go

out to its many writers for contending for the precious truth that the Old Baptists have always contended for. It seems to me they all speak in one mind, about the fullness and completeness of the great I AM, yet the writers are scattered all over the land. When I read their writings it seems to me they are bound together in one bundle of love, and that they all trust in the same God for their deliverance from all evil, through time to eternity, without the aid of poor, weak, puny man. O, what a comfort it is to me that the Lord of hosts has enabled me to view him as having all power, both in heaven and upon earth, and none can change him or say unto him, Why doest thou? He works all things after the counsel of his own will, and his will does not conflict with his purposes that he purposed before the world began, for he comprehended the end from the beginning, and his will was to bring all his wisdom to pass, for there is no other power but of God, for all powers that be are ordained of God. Wherever he sees fit to make his power known, there he sends it. He gave the devil power to afflict Job, but the devil could do no more than the Lord gave him power to do, so the Lord restrains all wickedness, only that that is for his own praise and glory, for he says, The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain. He gave wicked men the power to crucify the Lord of glory, but they had no power to break a bone of his body, because the Lord of hosts had said his bones should not be broken, but it was by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God that he should be crucified and slain by wicked hands. Yet he stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, to redeem his people from under the law, when as yet there had been no law given. O, what a glorious thought that the Lord had chosen his people in Christ before the foundation of the world; he had the sacrifice already prepared before the transgression, for the sins of his people, and when the time rolled round for the sacrifice, the blessed Redeemer was nailed upon the Roman cross, carrying the sins of his people in his own body, and by the sacrifice of himself made a full and complete atonement for the sins of his people. Can it be that he suffered that ignominious death for such a worm as me? O, if I could only praise him for allowing me to trust in him, or for bearing my sins in his own body upon the rugged cross. O, if I could only keep from sinning against his holy name, and praise him all the days of my life. I am made to wonder why he allows such a sink of sin to trust in him as my God and my Redeemer. Sometimes I get so low down, and in such darkness, and that little hope seems to get so dim, that these thoughts will crowd upon my mind and cause me to tremble for fear the little hope I have cherished above all things, these many years, will fade away when I am called hence. I used to think when I became older my hope would get brighter, and my sins would not annoy me so much, but it is right to the reverse, the older I get my sins seem to increase, so much that they almost put out that little flickering light, and if it was not that the Lord allows me to look away back yonder when he let me walk in his green pastures, and feed upon the sunshine of his joys, it seems I would have to give up in despair. If he did not let me trust in him through all this darkness, that when I have to go the way of all the world, that he will light up the dark valley, and shadow of death, that I might

pass through fearing no evil, I should be wretched.

Dear brother, I will try to quit this poor scribble, hoping you will bear with my weakness in bothering you with this, for when I commenced I thought I would only write you a few lines and tell you to send me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for another year, for I do not know how I could do without them, for they contain nearly all the preaching I hear, on account of ill health.

Dear brother, I feel that the Lord has been with you in conducting the SIGNS, and I believe he will deliver you through all trying times, and all the persecutions that are hurled against you, he will bring to naught. When I read your father's editorials, and how he suffered persecution for the truth's sake, I feel that you was raised up in his stead, to conduct it on as he had done, neither turning to the left or the right, but hewing to the line for the truth's sake, let the chips fall where they may.

Dear brother, I will send you a two dollar money order with this for the SIGNS another year.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

M. B. F. JONES.

HALLWOOD, Va., August 4, 1900.

ELDER W. W. MEREDITH—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I have felt for some days that I would like to write to you, but was not sure what your present address was, and had looked for the number of the SIGNS in which the change was published, but failed to find it, but thought it was Petersburgh. So I will attempt this morning in my weak way to let you know of the love that I have for you, and as I trust for all the faithful in Christ Jesus. The question often arises, Why is it that I, unworthy as I know myself to be, should have the feeling of love and esteem for the very people that I once had no love or fellowship for? The only reason I can give is because, as I trust, the love of God has been shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost. But what gives me much trouble at times is the poor way that I have in making that love manifest. If I know my poor heart aright, I do desire to honor my God and King, by an orderly walk and godly conversation; I do desire to be kept from every false and hateful way. But what poor, imperfect creatures we are; daily do I realize the truth of Christ's words to his disciples, "Without me ye can do nothing." I feel that I would love to show forth his praise in my daily walk, and to speak of the honors of his great name, of his matchless goodness to me, a poor sinner, in watching over and caring for me every day of my life, and in delivering me from under the curse of a just and holy law, he having been made a curse for me, for surely he who knew no sin was made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Yes, in him, not in ourselves, for we have been made to fully realize that all of our own righteousness is as filthy rags. Therefore we know that without the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, no sinner can stand justified in the sight of a just and holy God. Then what a blessing is ours, that we are made to realize this truth, and are made to hope only in the merits of God's only begotten Son, who is full of grace and truth. But to speak of these things I feel it is impossible for me, for while sometimes I am made to hope that my God has been pleased to bless me with that preparation of heart which alone is of the Lord, yet I am just as dependent upon him for the answer of the tongue,

as for the preparation of heart. While this might seem strange to some, that one can have a knowledge of the truth, and yet not be able to declare it, yet such is the case. And I often think what a high privilege those enjoy whom God has by his almighty power enabled to declare the unsearchable riches of his grace, and to talk of the glories of his kingdom, of his electing love, predestinating purpose and almighty power in the salvation and preservation of his dear people. Yes, to declare the truth as it is in Jesus, in opposition to all the theories of vain, imaginative and speculative man, is in deed and in truth a high privilege such as very few enjoy, as compared with the false teachers, yes, very few, yet just as many as our God has ordained, have the love for the truth that enables them to faithfully and boldly declare it in opposition to a gainsaying world. I feel that all such should have, at least, the sympathy of all lovers of the truth, and should have all the encouragement possible, for I am confident, while theirs is a high calling, yet it is attended with many trials, difficulties and sore afflictions, the entire Arminian world being arrayed against them, and occasionally, although such ought not to be the case, we find one of the flock finding fault with God's faithful servants for being so discriminating. But for my part I feel that it does my very soul good to hear the truth plainly and pointedly declared; "giving no uncertain sound."

But I will close this wandering scribble, for I do not want to weary you out entirely in this my first attempt of writing to you.

My wife joins in love to you and sister Meredith.

Your little brother, if one at all,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

DEL NORTE, Colo., Dec. 5, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—As my subscription has about expired, I herewith send you two dollars for another year. We feel that we cannot do without it, for it comes to us laden with much comfort in our lonely home in this far away country. I would like to write you a little of my feelings, and views I have of the great God of all created things, but when I try to contemplate his vast power, knowledge, goodness and mercy to the children of men, and when I turn and look at myself, I can well say that man is less than nothing. O, that we could understand the fullness of the great God of Israel; that is all I desire, to know and understand the Lord God. If we did, there would be no time salvation thought of, there would be no exalting of the creature, but instead, an humbling of ourselves in the dust; we could say as did Abraham, We are but dust and ashes. But the Scripture must be fulfilled, the time of our redemption is drawing near, if we be the redeemed of the Lord. Dear children of the living God, do you not see the end of all earthly things approaching? I do believe that the blessed Redeemer has shown me that there are many now living on this earth that will see him coming in the clouds to gather his redeemed church to himself. So, dear brethren, as we see the end approaching, let us try and throw away all of our idols, and try and live as becometh the children of the living God. Dear brethren, pray for me, for I am in the furnace of affliction. O, how I would like to take brother Bartley by the hand; before I read his experience I thought there was none like me on this earth. O, the fiery darts of the old adversary! I have felt like praising the blessed Lord God, my

mind at rest and at peace with all mankind, singing to the Lord, when in an instant I would be standing with clenched hands and grating teeth, lest I curse God, with the most terrible curses passing through my mind in intense hatred of God, and all of his goodness. This has never lasted more than a minute, then faith returns, and peace of mind. My life is so strange, my suffering is so great, and with all I am so sinful, and seem to be so unmindful of God's great mercy toward me, that I often fear that I am but a hypocrite. I have asked several times to have my name taken off the church book, but have failed. But there is one thing that I can say from my poor heart, that I do love the church of Christ above all else.

J. W. WALLACE.

PATTERSON, Pa., Dec. 7, 1900.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—I very often feel comforted in reading our dear family paper, the SIGNS, which I do not feel like doing without as long as I can spare enough to pay for them. As I have received so much comfort in reading the communications of others, I feel like penning a few thoughts which occurred to my mind last night as I awoke from my slumber, feeling somewhat refreshed from the few hours sleep I had taken: my mind seemed to run upon many things, as it usually does in my lonely hours of the night, but last night in particular my mind seemed to go back over my past life, which has been fraught with many ups and downs, but for the greater portion of my life I have been down, low down, as it were, in a dark valley, with now and then a little glimmer of light by which I could tread along the thorny path. Forty-three years ago I united with the church, feeling very unworthy a name or a place with the people of God, yet I loved them. Being young in years, and in experience, I looked on the older members as by far my superiors, as fathers and mothers in Israel. O, how I loved to sit and listen to them talk upon spiritual things, and when I would hear those dear old saints speak of their doubts and fears, I thought strange, for I felt then that I had no doubts, and thought as I grew older I should become more spiritually minded, and live more perfect, so that I might be useful, and a light in the church, but instead of that I fear I am more of a stumbling-block to others. I feel so cold and indifferent to the cause, and so prone to evil, my daily walk is such I often think, Surely I cannot be what I profess to be. I feel that the older I get, the more I see of my inward corruption, the more vain and sinful I am. I often fear and tremble on account of my sins, and wonder if ever there was one like me. I know if my brethren could see me as I see myself, they could have no fellowship for me. Sometimes I feel like telling the church how I feel, and then when I meet them, my lips seem to be sealed, and I feel that I cannot speak or express myself as I would wish to do. The words of the poet often come in my mind:

"'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought,)
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?

If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse
Who have never heard his name."

Dear brethren, may I ask an interest in your prayers? May you long be spared to publish the SIGNS, as a medium through which poor mourners in Zion may be comforted, is the desire of a poor sinner, saved by grace, if ever saved,

C. LONGACRE.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Oct. 22, 1900.

BELOVED BRETHREN, SISTERS AND FRIENDS:—Who favored me with words of well wishes, love and respect, for my birthday surprise. My earnest hope is that you were all blessed in so doing. It was a great treat to me. Perhaps some might think that I should become vain could they read the dear epistles; I do not feel so, but instead I am humbled, and desire more than ever to so live as to keep this great esteem which you have manifested for poor and unworthy me. I had written a number of birthday letters before, but never had I tasted the beauty that there is in receiving them. They contained, all of them, words of encouragement by the way. They also, as the apostle Peter wrote, stirred up my mind by way of remembrance, and I do desire that I may be benefited thereby. I wish to return to you, one and all, my good wishes. May it be the will of God to bless you all, both temporally and spiritually. May he keep you from yielding to temptations, of which there are so many on every hand. May he keep us all from every appearance of evil. May he give you of his wisdom and his love and his strength. May he bestow upon you eyes to see, and ears to hear, and hearts to understand. May he forgive our many sins, since while in this world we cannot be without them. May he give to us all the spirit of forgiveness, and when this life shall close, make it as a sunset without a cloud, whose rising shall be in eternity.

Unworthily yours,

MARY HILL TERRY.

[THE above short letter from our sister Terry is in reply to a birthday letter surprise, with which she was favored by her friends, most of whom are her brethren and sisters in the churches where she is known.—ED.]

LIBERTY, Ind., Dec. 17, 1900.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—It is sad to see the headlong manner in which Baptists are running after new things, but there is some comfort in Paul's language to the Corinthians: "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." So I conclude that there always has been, and always will be heresies among the people of God, while they are environed by the flesh. Jesus said, "It must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." Therefore let no man reason that if offenses "must come," and are necessary to the fulfillment of God's purpose, that therefore the one by whom they come is not guilty of sin. May the Lord keep us in the way of truth, is my prayer.

Your brother in hope of a better country,

W. N. THARP.

CARBON, Texas, Dec. 10, 1900.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Inclosed find money order for two dollars, for which send me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for twelve months, beginning January 1st, 1901. I received the two books of editorials, and have read them through. I never could have been better pleased; would not take ten dollars for them, just for the truth's sake. If the editorials from 1847 up to Elder Gilbert Beebe's death, could be compiled in a book, I for one would take a book.

J. W. WHATLEY.

[THE books of editorials are nearly all gone, and as we lost about seven hundred dollars on the second volume, we do not feel warranted in publishing the third volume, but the editorials are continued right along as they were originally published, in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.—ED.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1901.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

INTRODUCTORY TO VOLUME SIXTY-NINE.

In entering upon this volume of the Signs of the Times, we are made to feel more painfully our inability to conduct its publication than any year since we assumed the responsible position. It does seem that there has never been more need for such a publication, to point out the old landmarks, and to admonish the saints to watchfulness and prayerfulness lest they be ensnared by cunningly devised fables of men, yet we fear and tremble when we think of going forth to meet the Goliaths of the present day, armed with their sophistry, philosophy and "vain reasonings," for we know too well from our own personal experience with what power Satan can set forth these "reasonings" to the carnal minds even of the saints. In and of ourselves we cannot comprehend or believe only such things as can be made consistent to the natural mind, yet we know "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." While we know this is the truth, and that it is only by revelation we can know the things pertaining to the Spirit, yet we are still very susceptible to the plausable theories invented by men, and are too apt to forget to "try the spirits" by a "Thus saith the Lord." Nothing but the truth will do us any good. No matter how "unreasonable" it may seem to man, to accept many of the plain declarations of Scripture, yet we must not attempt to soften them, to relieve the Lord of the responsibility of being found guilty of injustice, at the bar of man's judgment.

It should ever be borne in mind that the truth of the gospel cannot be reduced to a theory, if it could, then might we teach "Every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord." No man by searching can find out God.

Within the last few years there has been a growing propensity among the saints to "reason out" certain points of doctrine, and to such an extent have some been carried away with this desire to walk by *sight*, that they have but little patience with those who grope along in darkness, and wait for the Light to give them faith to look upon the things which are not seen, which are spiritual.

The year upon which we are just entering, certainly looks portentious, and if we are able to read the signs of the times, there are perilous times just ahead of us, and it becomes the saints to watch and pray, lest they enter into temptation. That there are thousands of God's elect vessels of mercy that have been overcome by the intoxicating wine of Babylon, (man's ability) we do not doubt, and in his own time the Lord will bring them out of their delusion, which certainly will be a time salvation, but we do not believe you will ever hear one of them boasting that they were ransomed on account of their walking in obedience, or that it was by any works of their own that they were saved from the snare of

the pit. We know from divine record that there have always been delusions in the church, and that there shall come perilous times, when "Grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."

Dear brethren, we feel that these times are now upon us, and that the coming year will be fraught with momentous events to the Primitive Baptists of this country, but we are told by the apostle Paul, "There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you."

While it is painful to suffer persecutions for the truth's sake, yet the history of the church proves that those so persecuted have always been knit together in closer love and fellowship by these trials. May this be the case in our present afflictions, may we be given grace to strengthen one another, to hold up the hands one of another, and to exhort one another, and so much the more as we see the evil day approaching.

In publishing a paper the nature of the SIGNS, it would be much more agreeable to us if we did not have to be concerned about financial matters, but there are heavy liabilities that must be incurred in getting out the work, and as we have to rely solely upon the subscriptions and kind donations sent in by our patrons, to liquidate these debts, therefore we request all who approve the doctrine advocated in the SIGNS, to make a special effort to send in new subscribers, as well as to collect and forward subscriptions from old ones. Few of our brethren have any idea of the thousands of dollars that have been sacrificed by the SIGNS refusing to waver from the old principles. Brethren, please assist us all you can. B.

A NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

"AND thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee."—Deuteronomy viii. 2.

It is not our purpose now to give an exposition of this portion of the word, but to present some reflections which occur to our mind as we stand upon the threshold of a new year, and at the beginning of a new volume of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It is but natural that a traveler, when he has reached some elevation on his journey, or some waymark which speaks to him of distance journeyed over, should pause for a moment and look back over the way in which he has come, and recall some of the incidents of his journey; so there are times when we all feel like taking a retrospect of our journey, and find sometimes a sort of sad pleasure in recalling incidents which have had their effect upon our lives ever since. And the christian traveler, led of the Lord in the right way, that he might go to a city of habitation, often feels to recall the experiences of the way, and to erect an Ebenezer of praise to his Redeemer and God. Even so our mind has reverted to the past of our own life, as well as to the "ups and downs" of the SIGNS during the past sixty-eight years. For ourself, we can but say that his mercy hath endured forever, and we desire like the psalmist, to sing of the mercy of the Lord at all times; it is sure that of nothing else have we any right to boast. Mercy shall be built up forever, and in the building of our savation nothing but mercy can be seen. We are persuaded that all the dear people of God must bear the same testimony out of the experience through which they have been all led. Our mind has been led back to the years of our childhood and youth; we recall that even then the infinite mercy of God had convinced us of sin, and of our need

of a Savior; we cannot recall the time when there was not with us a consciousness of sin and condemnation, and then we remember the earnest desire that in some way we might be saved from sin and everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and we recall how after years of anxiety, and unrest, and sorrow, there came at last some assurance of the forgiveness of sin, and some light regarding the way of salvation in Christ. This came to us one September afternoon, thirty-nine years ago, in the field at work, with the words, "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." With the coming of these words there was a revelation of the way of salvation through Christ as we had never seen it before. All our previous life we had heard this same way of salvation spoken of by some who loved the grace of God, yet until that hour we had never understood it. One moment of light from the Lord gave us an understanding of the truth as it is in Jesus that all the teaching of men, though correct and true, could never reveal. We believe that this experience was in full accord with the testimony of the Lord to Peter: "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." In the words which were given us at the time, we could see how God could speak peace to a guilty, troubled soul, and how he could be just and yet the justifier of the ungodly. And perhaps some ten days later the thought occurred to us in the midst of the gladness which we felt at the wonderful work of the Lord in redemption, What is this all to us? And then we felt the assurance that here was our rest. This is our hope yet. We trust we have seen more fullness of the truth since than then, but the way has always seemed the same; we have had no other hope save the finished work of the Redeemer. The Scriptures, as we hope, have been more abundantly unfolded through the daily experience of the past forty years, but they have unfolded no contradiction of what we then saw of the way of life. Christ still is the all and in all of the believer's hope. Our need has grown all the time, and sin has more and more abounded, but the grace of Christ has still more abounded, and to-day as we write these words, we feel that we can say none other thing than we were taught then, "Salvation is of the Lord."

We recall also that with the blessed hope of salvation through Christ, there came a great desire for right living before God and his people, and that we might also have a good report of those who are without. If there was ever a true desire of any sort in our heart, it was that we might know what the Lord would have us to do; there was great searching of heart, and anxious calling upon God, and much reading of his word, that we might know and do his will. The admonitions of the word of God did not seem as burdens to us, but as most blessed and glorious privileges, and the only question concerning them was, Have we a right to share in them with the favored of the Lord's people? It seems to us as we recall those days, like this, A traveler is anxious to reach his journey's end, and before him lie many paths; he knows that but one can be right, he desires to be led in the right way, that he may reach his journey's end, and rest in the house of his friends. To this end will he not consult every guide-post, and ask advice of all who may know what is the way that he should take? And when he is told, "This is the way, walk ye in it," this word does not come to him with any other impression than one of great

folly, and never developed one good trait Godward in them, but gave occasion to show his long-suffering and his pardoning grace toward their sins, so now in all our travel as believers, we come to see but these two things every day, our sin, and his grace, our weakness, and his strength; our folly, and his patience; our constant wandering, and his constant watchfulness; until at last we are driven to fall at his feet and confess just this, "A sinner saved by grace." A dear brother wrote a few days since, that just before, he had heard a minister urging upon his hearers that believers had power to obey God, and power to disobey him, and among other things said to them, "You all could have gone to the fair to-day, if you had wanted to." We thought that no doubt this was true in a sense, but the illustration did not touch the real question at all: Could they *want* to go to the fair, rather than to the house of God? is the true question. So Paul said that if the men of faith had been mindful of the country from which they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned hither. *But they were not mindful of it*, and could they, with the faith which God had given them, be mindful of it? This is the true question, and right here we see the reigning power of grace. How foolish is the assertion, You could have gone to the fair if you had wanted to, but how great a victory it was for the grace of God that they did not want to go, and what is it that keeps the believer from wanting to run in the way of folly? What is it that keeps him, day by day, from loving all that is vile and contrary to God, as he formerly did? What is it that causes him to run in the way of God's commands? Is it not as the psalmist said, "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart"? Dear brethren, do not our hearts need constant enlarging? and must not this come from the Giver of all good? What a mercy to come to feel our need of this enlargement of heart.

We desired also to say a few things concerning the SIGNS, and the things which we trust have been precious in it to its readers. If we know our own heart, it is our desire to hold steadfastly to the truth of which we have been speaking, in all that goes into the columns of the SIGNS; to praise grace and to exalt the God of grace, has been our aim so far as we are able to judge our own motive. We have also striven to set forth the admonitions of the word, and to stir up the pure minds of the brethren to remember the things which they have been taught, both in faith and practice. The pages of the SIGNS have ever been open to narrations of the dealings of the Lord with vessels of mercy. In these narratives it has been the case, as with Paul, the doctrine of God our Savior has been magnified. It is sure that in every christian experience of the grace of God, is enfolded every principle of the doctrine of God; God's unchanging and everlasting love; his election of his people unto life and final glory; the new birth of the Spirit, and by the word of God; the utter helplessness and total depravity of the natural man; the truth that if kept unto eternal glory, it must be by grace through faith; the heavenly-mindedness and conversation which belongs to the heavenly life, and every word of encouragement and reminder recorded in the Scriptures, all are involved in the very experience of grace, which God bestows upon the believer.

We have not for years felt that there was any use in engaging in argument with any man, unless that man first can

give some evidence that he has come to know the plague of his own heart, and that he needs a Savior. If we can find that that one does know something of this, and has been troubled because of it, there is a starting point in his own soul's testimony from which to show him the doctrine more perfectly. It was thus that Aquilla and Priscilla expounded the way of the Lord more perfectly to Apollos. It is the business of preaching to show that the Scriptures are in full harmony with all true experience of grace, and to condemn and cast aside all that fancied experience which is not in harmony with the letter of the written word. It is as true of what men call experience, as it is of teaching, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

So we have not desired to make the columns of the SIGNS a platform for debate, but have and do desire still to hold forth in its columns the way of life, which embraces all the doctrine of God our Savior. We have not desired to make a hobby of any one sentiment, even though that sentiment might be true altogether. The field of truth is wide, at the best we can but glean in it. Happy are we if indeed some handfulls of purpose are let fall at the command of the Husbandman, for our gleaning.

We hope by the grace of God to keep on contending earnestly for just those things which were emblazoned upon the pages of the first number of the SIGNS ever sent forth among the people of God; we hope to oppose legalism in all its forms, and not to teach those things which the people of God do not love, but those things which they do love. The first would be legalism, the last is liberty and gospel service. Legalism says that men must be stirred up to do what they do not want to do, by some inducements, either of fear or favor, while gospel admonitions are to stir up the pure mind to do those things which it is in the heart to do. If believers are regarded as under the necessity of being urged by ulterior motives to the love and practice of obedience, that is legalism for them, while if they are stirred up to the remembrance of the things which they do not want to forget, even though they do often forget, this is the liberty to which they have been called in the gospel. They have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but they have received the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father. What a difference between a son doing that which his soul desires to do, and a servant doing what he feels compelled to do. "Conditional time salvation" means the servant doing what he is compelled to do, through hope of reward or fear of chastisement, which is putting the sons down among the servants. To him who serves, as the child, all gospel promises and blessings belong, because he is a child, but to the service which has as its motive, selfish hope of reward, there are no gospel blessings. We hope that we personally know whereof we write. We have been ashamed of our service many times, just because afterward we could discern in it some selfish fear or hope, and not pure love to God, and to his word and will. O, to be so conformed to the likeness of the dear Master, that we can say as did he, "It is my meat and drink to do the will of my Father in heaven."

For our readers during this coming year we desire all spiritual blessings, and so far as it is the will of God, all temporal blessings as well. First of all, may the truth be precious to them, for it alone can make any man free. May the peace

understand the figurative import of our text, we must inquire, What is the discernment and the natural force of the law of God which Moses represents? When the people of God, as the antitype of carnal Israel, are delivered or brought from the power of darkness, being quickened by the Spirit, they find themselves truly in a house of bondage, and under such task-masters as cause their groaning to be heard by the I AM, who appeared to Moses in the bush, and Moses, or the law of God in its spirituality, comes home to them with a display of divine omniscience. The fountain of the great deep of their hearts is broken up, the hidden recesses of their mind is laid bare and open, the secret chambers of the soul are exposed, and the quickened sinner, now in the hands of Moses, learns that the law takes cognizance of the very thoughts and intents of the heart, sin revives, appears exceeding sinful, and the subject of this work is convinced that the eye of the law of God is not dim. It calls for jots and tittles, and thunders in our guilty ears, that heaven and earth shall pass away, but these jots and tittles which all unregenerated men have always overlooked, shall not be dispensed with until all are fulfilled. Here every mouth is stopped and all the world stands guilty before God.

Two examples of the searching discernment of the law of God should be considered in connection with the death of Moses. First, in reference to its demands exacted at the hands of our adorable Redeemer, for it was by his vicarious death and sufferings that those for whom he suffered became dead to the law by the body of Christ, and the law dead to them as to its curse and dominion, that they being reckoned as dead with him, buried with him by baptism into death, and with him raised from the dead to a newness of life, and that being dead to them wherein they had been held, they are married to him that is risen from the dead, that they should henceforth bring forth fruit unto God, in serving him, not in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of that Spirit which brought again from the dead the body of our crucified Lord. In the demands of the law for satisfaction and atonement for the transgression of God's people, its eye was not dim. It was clear enough to discriminate between the blood of bulls and calves, and such other blood as had long streamed from Jewish altars, and that of the Lamb of God. It could clearly perceive in him, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Its eye was not so dim as to recognize in any other being in heaven or earth the right of redemption, based on eternal vital union and indissoluble relationship. And the law and eternal justice of God, clearly seeing in the person of Jesus, the Head of the church, the great Law-filler, the Lamb without blemish, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, for us who by him do believe in God who raised him up from the dead; and seeing all the iniquities of all his people laid by the hand of God on him, inflicted its extreme penalty, and exhausted on him all its wrath. Dim indeed must have been the eye of the law, if it had only required atonement for what the Arminians call original sin, and had overlooked the actual transgressions of his people, or any part of them. If the eye of the law had then and there been dim, divine justice would not have been satisfied. If any part of its requisitions, even one jot or one tittle had escaped the vigilance of that clear, piercing eye, all his sufferings for us would have failed to redeem us to God. Or if that eye had been

too dim to look back to the days of creation, nay, back to the very throne of God, the ancient settlements of eternity, and thence forward to the great burning day, some of the sins of some that Jesus was the surety for, might have been overlooked, and then the whole mediatorial work must have failed. But, glory to God in the highest, his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.

The natural, physical power, vigor and strength of Moses as a man, we presume, had not relaxed nor yielded to the weight of years, as the infirmities incidental to old age are generally developed, but all this was necessary in making him a proper personification of the law.

The natural force of the law which we were under, and from which Christ came to redeem us, should be carefully considered, but alas, how few there are at this day who understand it. To know the natural force of the law, we must understand its nature, and the nature of the law must be determined by its emanation. It is the law of God, it came immediately from him, and bears in it a clear transcription of his nature. As he is holy, just and good, so is the law which came from him, and its force is like that of its Author, omnipotent and irresistible. The natural force then of the law, considered in reference to its emanation, is absolute and almighty, and cannot, like things of a finite or terrestrial nature, abate from age.

Second. The natural force of the law is exemplified in the infliction of its penalties on Christ. He who had power to heal the sick, raise the dead, and cast out devils; he who had power to command all the legions of angels in glory; he who had power to create the universe, yea, to dash whole worlds to death, and make them at pleasure, is seized by the law, and by its natural force held more firmly than are the pillars of the heavens or the foundation of earth, for both of these shall fail, but the natural force of the law shall never abate or become even less potent. No abatement of its natural force was either asked or granted, when Jesus the Savior bore its full force on Mt. Calvary, and when in death he convulsed the universe. Not even in consideration of the divinity, purity and excellency of the character, person and glory of its victim, could its force abate. Were we able to watch one hour with our Lord in his suffering in the garden, or on the cross, could we witness his agonizing appeal, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass;" or writhing in the deadly pains of the cross, grappling with the weight of all the sins of all his people, could we there hear him cry, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" and see responding nature shuddering to her centre, the sun darkened in the heavens, the natural force of rocks and mountains abating, rending asunder, the startled dead leaping from their graves, then might we to some extent appreciate the natural force of the law, and what it was when it died, as to its righteous claims on Christ, by receiving at his hand an exact and perfect equivalent for the sins of all his members. Here at the cross of Jesus is laid the scenes which the death of Moses prefigured. As God had sworn with an oath, that the seed of Abraham should possess the land of Canaan, so had he sworn that the spiritual, the antitypical Israel should enter into gospel rest. But as the natural force of the law allows no rest, no intermission of labor, no respite, it was not intended that that law which was written on the tables of stone, should pass the baptismal waters of Jordan, which bounds

the gospel state and rest that remains for the people of God. Here Moses dies, and Joshua, which name is the same as Jesus, takes the lead, and brings his Israel into the gospel land which, although infested with some Canaanites which remain for a season, yet it flows richly with milk and honey.

One idea more in regard to Moses, with all his cares and responsibilities devolving on him, opposed by the almost constant murmuring of Israel, and often encountering the deadly enemies of Israel, such was his natural force, no earthly power could dispossess him of life. None but God could dissolve his dominion over his Israel. And so it truly is in the natural force of the law. If so much as a beast should touch the mountain, it must die, and the thunder of its precepts was more than Israel could endure. So none but Jesus, our God and Savior, was able to meet and receive the force of the law, and by an equitable liquidation of the last jot and tittle of its claims, redeem his people effectually from its dominion, and bring them under that law to himself, which is not written in tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of his children's heart.

As we see in the transactions on Calvary, an illustration of the figurative import of the death of Moses, so also in the personal experience of the saints, the same is made most clearly to appear. When a subject of grace is quickened, as we have stated before, he finds himself in a wilderness state and condition, and Moses, or the law having dominion, and enforcing the precepts with a rod. For the heir, so long as he is a child, or minor, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all, but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed by the father. And Moses continues with them, as a reprover, pointing out and threatening them with pains and penalties, until they reach Mount Nebo, or the place from which the goodly land may be seen. At this place in their experience, the interposition of him who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, is made manifest. By faith, which is the gift of God to them, they have a view of the atonement which was made by our Lord Jesus Christ, and his blood and righteousness is by the Spirit applied for the remission of their sins, and they are freely justified, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and thus are they released from the terrors of the law. Moses becomes dead to them; they are no more under the law, but under grace. The handwriting of ordinances is blotted out, and the law of commandments nailed to the cross. Moses is not only dead to them, but he is buried out of their sight. They, like the Israelites, spend much time in searching for his body, but they cannot find it. There is a legal Spirit in their flesh which constantly inclines them to legality, which is the body of Moses, about which Michael the Archangel disputed with Satan. (Jude 9.) And that dispute is still continued by their respective hosts, Satan and his legions still contending for salvation by works, and Michael, which is Christ, and his witnesses contending that salvation is by grace alone; Satan and his ministers urging the law as the rule of life to the Christian Church, and Christ and his followers contending that the Church is no more under the law, but under grace. God, in the gospel, now says to his redeemed people, as he said to the carnal Israelites, Joshua i. 2, "Moses, my servant, is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan." Under the guidance of Joshua, your new Leader, arise and, through this Jordan,

baptism, enter into the rest which remains for the people of God. This goodly land was seen by Moses from the top of Pisgah, as the new covenant dispensation was seen by faith, through the types, but Moses could not enter, neither can those who read Moses, or claim to be Moses' disciples; their carcasses will all most assuredly fall in the wilderness; for by the deeds of the law, none shall be justified, and as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse. Of all such, God has sworn that they shall not enter into his rest. The law is not of faith, but it calls for works continually. "So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief," or for the want of faith. "For we which have believed do enter into rest."—Heb. iii. 19; iv. 3.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 1, 1858.

PLEASE BE SURE

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

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THE large type hymn books of the genuine Turkey Morocco binding and the imitation binding are all gone. All the styles of binding we have left of the large books, are the cloth and blue marbled edge binding.

POETRY.

"FEAR NOT, IT IS I."

WHAT light is this, that o'er the sky,
A lustrous gleam of glory spreads?
It is the rainbow of God's love,
And in our heart fresh hope it sheds

It tells us though the night be long,
The morning shall most surely dawn;
Ye shall yet sing the victor's song,
All doubt and terror be withdrawn.

Though foes stand thick on every side,
Billows of sorrow dash around,
Over them all thou'lt safely ride,
And safe at last in port be found.

'Gainst you the hosts of hell in vain
May furious storms of anger wage;
He will his own in safety keep,
In every clime, through every age.

Then let naught e'er disturb your peace,
None can in earth or hell o'erwhelm;
In every storm on roughest sea,
Your Father's ever at the helm.

'Tis well in life, 'tis well in death,
'Tis well when dangers dark we stem;
All work for good to them who trust
The mighty Helmsman, God. Amen.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder E. Rittenhouse, on Wednesday evening, Dec. 12th, 1900, at the residence of the bride's parents', in Clayton, Del., Tschudy Pratt and Miss Nannie daughter of James D. and Susan Wright, all of Clayton, Kent Co., Delaware.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$392 80
Attie A. Curtis, Mass., $1.00; Eliza Mobley, Ind., $1.00; J. D. Welborn, Ind., $1.00; A friend, Pa., $2.00; Mrs. John Pettit, N. Y., $3.00; Isaac Larowe, N. J., $2.00.—Total	10 00
Total to date	$402 80

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

My address from now will be Reidsville, N. C., instead of Ravenswood. Please give notice of same in your next issue.

L. H. HARDY.

ELDER J. L. Lindsey having changed his address from Delia, to Stephensville, Bosque Co., Texas, requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 69. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1901. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WHAT THE LORD HATH SPOKEN.

(Continued from page 7.)

"THUS with your mouth ye have boasted against me, and have multiplied your words against me: I have heard them. Thus saith the Lord God; When the whole earth rejoiceth, I will make thee desolate."—Ezek. xxxv. "I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword, and have taken away your horses. * * * I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel."—Amos iv. "For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth. And the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, which say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us."—Amos ix. "The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the Lord had his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. * * * The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein. * * * The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him."—Nahum i. "Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction."—Hab. i. "The Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him."—Hab. ii. "For, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings."—Mal. iv. Just as the Lord thus declared that it should come to pass, both as to the wicked, and they that fear his name, so it was, and so it shall be.

Coming to the New Testament, the

holy Son of God said, "And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. * * * Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. * * * And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."—Matt. xxiv. Paul also foretold what should be, saying, "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."—Acts xx. He again prophesied to the brethren and said, "That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto."—1 Thess. iii. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron."—1 Tim. iv. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."—2 Tim. iv. Peter likewise prophesied, saying, "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of."—2 Peter ii. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."—2 Peter iii. "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ," said, "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. * * * But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts."

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him," will worthily conclude these very solemn and wonderful prophetic revelations from God. Of the two witnesses the angel said, "And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them." (xi.) Of the beast John says, "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written, in the book of life of the Lamb slain, from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear." (xiii.) "Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and

shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments." (xvi.) Concerning the judgment of God against Babylon, John heard a voice from heaven, saying, "Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her." (xviii.) "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." (xx.) The beloved John was then shown "a new heaven and a new earth," and he "saw the holy city, new Jerusalem. * * * And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful." (xxi.) "And they shall reign for ever and ever. And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done." (xxii.)

"What shall we then say to these things?" For all the prophetic words and sayings, truly given in this article, are alike faithful and true, the righteous judgments of God, no less than his gracious blessings, all of which were spoken with a divine positiveness, as the revealed word of God, showing that all those great and marvelous things "must" and "shall" come to pass, because God, "who cannot lie," hath spoken all those words. For if one word of all the revelation which the Lord declared by his prophets could be defeated and fail, it would impeach all his testimony. But, blessed be his holy name, this can never be; for his word is as eternal as his holy throne, and all things which his word has spoken must take place. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." —Isa. xiv. 24.

Surely it cannot be thought by us that the prophetic words of the Lord were either distinct from or opposed to his thought and purpose, for this would involve a conflict between the thought of the Lord and his prophetic word, which he inspired his prophets to write. It is infallibly certain, therefore, that all the word of the Lord by his prophets is supported by his solemn oath, that it shall thus come to pass and stand, as he hath thought and purposed and revealed. And this establishes the certain fulfillment of all the things which holy men of old, who spoke as they were moved by the Holy

Ghost, have foretold in the Bible, as unfailingly as could the decree of the Almighty, who changes not. Every fair and candid mind will see and admit this. Let the dear reader search the prophetic Scriptures, and it will amaze and awe you to find that prophecy embraced all history, including the rise and fall of nations, their wars and awful calamities, famines and plagues, as the fearful visitations of God's righteous judgments, and that the history of the Hebrew people, and the many surrounding wicked nations, which is largely a history of wars and calamities the most appalling—that history is prophecy fulfilled.

Now, therefore, the holy Lord God Almighty, who declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things which were not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure, who is in one mind, and none can turn him, certainly had a wise and holy purpose in the accomplishment of all those mighty events of peoples and nations, events both of judgment and mercy, which he called and moved the holy men of old to write, from his servant Moses to his Son Jesus. The infinite wisdom and omnipotent power and perfect holiness and rich mercy of our majestic and ever blessed God, are proclaimed and made known thus to the children of men. Shall we say, "Even so, Lord God Almighty?"

Yours to serve,

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind.

MACOMB, Ill., December, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—While sending in my subscription I have a desire to write a little to my dear kindred in Christ, but whether the desire is prompted by the right spirit I cannot tell, for many doubts come in my way, and were I to take heed or think of my unworthiness, I feel I should not take my pen to write a line, for I do feel my sinfulness and weakness so much at this time, and "Am so vile, so prone to sin, I fear that I'm not born again," and if not, and have not the Spirit of Christ, then I cannot claim a near and dear relationship to the people of God, and could write nothing of interest or comfort to them. Neither do I feel now that I can in any way comfort or encourage the least one, or tell them anything they have not experienced on the way.

I receive the SIGNS regularly, and do so highly prize and appreciate such a paper, whose columns are filled with precious gospel truths. "Salvation is of the Lord," is the theme of almost every writer, and I have a desire to add my feeble testimony to this truth, and I am made to rejoice that there is a remnant according to the election of grace who give all the honor and glory to God. God reigns, and has not forgotten his children, but still visits them in love and mercy. We cannot exalt his name too highly, nor sing his praises enough. When I think of the greatness of our God, of his wonderful works, and of his great love to his people, I am sometimes lost in wonder and amazement, and am made to say, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the Son of man, that thou visitest him?" When I think of his wonderful works, and read that "The nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance," and that "All nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing and vanity," I am brought low down, and made to look within and see the evil of my heart, my

sinful nature, my ingratitude, my rebellion, my unworthiness, and I am made to tremble at his word. How can such a sinner hope in his mercy? I see no good in myself, and can only wonder how that God, who "art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity," should ever have had a thought of mercy towards me, a poor, sinful creature. But I am made to look away from self, and I think of the sweet words of the poet,

"He took the robe the Savior wrought,
And cast it all around."

It is only when we are covered with the robe of Christ's righteousness that God can look upon us in mercy. Christ, who is our Savior, our Redeemer, wrought this robe on Calvary, by his sufferings, his groanings, sweating as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground, wearing the cruel crown of thorns, sufferings the insults of the mob, and all the shame and agony of the cross, by being forsaken of God, and drinking the bitter cup. It was then, my dear kindred, he was wearing this robe of righteousness for his people. This garment of salvation was finished when he cried out upon the cross, and when he calls a poor sinner and bestows his grace upon him, he clothes him in this beautiful garment; his sins are covered. It is written, "Blessed is he whose sin is covered," and also, "He hath covered me with the robe of his righteousness," and, "Thou hast covered all their sins." Our sins must be pardoned or put away, and Christ our Savior has done all this for us, and says, "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy sins, and as a cloud thy transgressions, and will remember them against thee no more forever." Then the poor sinner has a new and divine life implanted within him, and he has a desire for holy things; he is clothed with the righteousness of Christ, and stands justified and without spot or blemish in his sight. But our evil, sinful nature is not changed or taken away, and we are made to mourn because we cannot cease from sin, and Satan, who is transformed into an angel of light, tempts and tries us in every way, but he cannot touch the life of the saints, for that is hid in Christ, and he will not suffer his children to be tempted beyond what they are able to bear, but will visit them in love. He has not forgotten to be gracious. Only for a small moment has he hid his smiling face. He knows his sheep by name; "He leadeth them out; he maketh them to lie down in green pastures, and leadeth them beside the still waters."

While my mind is dwelling on these glorious things, and while still feasting on the heavenly food handed out to a favored few of the flock, on the day before yesterday, by that faithful servant of God, Elder J. B. Dobbs, my little hope has again been revived, and I cannot feel that I am without hope, for I feel I can say at the present time, I do love the precious truths of the Bible proclaimed by God's ministers, love to meet my dear kindred in Christ, prize their love and fellowship above anything this earth can afford. Then can you wonder, my dear kindred, that I have no desire to attend the meetings of the popular religions around me, where the sweet, precious doctrine of salvation by grace is almost entirely ignored? I could attend them, but do not except on funeral occasions.

Not long since at the funeral of an infant, (a relative of mine) the minister, who has a polished, theological education, took for his text, "Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish," making it appear all through his

discourse the "little ones" were such as the little form in the casket, not once intimating that Christ meant by "these little ones" his disciples, or all those who through his grace were made to feel little, humble and childlike, in helplessness and dependence.

In closing he said, As it is not the Father's will that infants should perish, neither is it his will that *any* should perish, infants or adults, for salvation is offered to *all*, and if you do not accept, it is your will to perish, and not the Father's will. O, what a doctrine! It seems to be almost blasphemy to say that if any perish God's will is not done, and the will of a poor mortal is stronger, as he can do as he pleases in accepting or rejecting salvation. Where is any comfort or rest in any such belief? What a sandy foundation. Surely the house built thereon will fall. Were it not better, brother Beebe, to suffer reproach for not going to hear such doctrine? Yes, even better bear the scorn and contempt of the world than by our presence, only, give them countenance or bid them God speed. Dear brethren and sisters, we have not so learned Christ; he has all power in heaven and in earth, and does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; he speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast; he chose his people from before the foundation of the world; he knows them that are his; he did not choose all nations of the world, but only Israel; he makes them willing in the day of his power. They did not choose him, but God chose his people, and saved them with an everlasting salvation; he has mercy to their unrighteousness, and remembers they are dust. Although they often wander far astray, yet his loving-kindness he never utterly takes from them, or suffers his faithfulness to fail, and when he cometh to make up his jewels, not one will be left, but all will be there to give God all the praise for their salvation. This is the God in whom the saints trust; he is their Rock, and hope built on so firm a foundation shall stand, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!
What more can he say, than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

O may we be given grace and strength to hold fast our profession without wavering, and may we pray for the peace of Jerusalem: "Peace be within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces."

Dear editors, do with this as you think best, it is not as I would like it to be, but I trust you will cast the mantle of charity over all imperfections. May you long be spared to send forth the SIGNS to comfort and encourage the people of God.

With unfeigned love to the household of faith, and a prayer that the blessings of God may rest upon you, I remain your unworthy sister,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

CLEVELAND, Miss., Nov. 21, 1898.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—It is for some purpose unknown to me that I am persuaded to write to you; may the few broken sentences which I may write prove of some comfort to some poor soul who is halting between two opinions, whether to take up his cross and follow the blessed Savior or not. Come, brethren, take courage, for our God does not draw nigh to those who are lost, but his loving-kindness, yea, his mercies, move us to please him. We find in his revealed words that he is a God of love, and that his ears are ever open to the cry of his children who fear

him with a godly fear, to them that love him, even to those who are called according to his purpose. Yea, his love is from everlasting to everlasting. And God, who cannot lie, speaks on this wise: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." But if tribulation be ours, let us glory in it, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed. Let us understand that our God has all power in heaven and in earth; all things move at his bidding. He spake to Pharaoh on this wise: "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared through all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Some one will say then, "Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" Then let us reply with the inspired Paul, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? What if God willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?" If one were to ask me whether I believed that God had a purpose in everything that has, or ever will come to pass? I would be bound to say that I do so believe. Yea, he hath given to the sea his bounds, that it can come no further; he hath fixed the bounds and movements of the earth, yea, he rules and overrules all things. God suffers none of his children to be tempted above what they are able to bear, but with every temptation he provides a way of escape that they may be able to bear it.

Now a few words upon the free will or free agency of man. I was formerly a believer in free will, but if I am not deceived by a poor and sinful heart, I hope that in the mercy of God I have been shown through the Holy Spirit, that I have nothing to do in the matter of salvation for my soul, either in time or in eternity. His people are made a willing people in the day of his power. By grace we are (not only shall be, but are,) saved, through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. In my meditation I am often made to cry, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." I understand that his benefits are both temporal and spiritual, for he sends his rain upon the just and the unjust. How blessed it is to look back to the time when the Lord began his work with us, for when we were dead in sins the Savior died for us. "He who knew no sin, became sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in him." "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." And "By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." During this time state we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. We are not our own keepers. It is by the will of him with whom we have to do that we are saved. Some believe that God gives power to them

that believe, and then leaves it to them whether they will obey or not, but this is to put man in a worse condition than before, for it says that he is stronger than the grace of God, in fact, an almighty sinner. It is not so, God does not give such liberty or power to sinners, but the law of love is stronger than the law of death. Yea, when our God shows by the Spirit his great love to us, we are constrained to praise him. O, that I had ten thousand tongues to praise his holy name, for the mercies which he has bestowed upon me.

Dear brother Beebe, if you think the above few thoughts would be of any good to some poor child of grace, you may publish them in your paper. If it be the will of God I feel sure that you will publish what is here written. I feel to say in harmony with the apostle Paul, "Knowing the terror of the Lord we persuade men." "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," for our God is a consuming fire." If it be the will of God, I hope at some future time to write you again. I desire the prayers of all the people of God, that he may continue his mercies to me and to all the saints.

I remain yours,

E. P. HORNE.

SNYDER, Texas, Oct. 4, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I send a letter for publication from our much esteemed brother Elder Asa Howard; he is a sound minister, and a very exemplary man. I received comfort in reading his letter, and feel that it is too good to cast aside, and if you deem it worthy, I would love to see it in the SIGNS. I have not his permission, but feel sure it will be all right, as the greater part of his life is spent in defense and support of the truth.

Your brother in hope,

W. J. JACKSON.

INEZ, Texas, Sept. 16, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER JACKSON:—After some delay I now proceed to write to you. I am glad to be able to say that through the goodness and mercy of God I am still the spared monument of the Father's care and amazing love. I desire to praise his matchless name above the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills; his protection has been my shield and defense through all the trials and strifes of an eventful life. When cast down, his loving-kindness has continually been my succor, and my covert from the storm. He has been unto me as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, which is full of pitfalls of sin, of unbelief and of every evil work. These things have set forward my calamity, and have hedged my way with piercing thorns, and have oppressed my soul with troubles like a gloomy cloud, so dreary, and to my view, so impenetrably deep. But O, this is my infirmity: My leanness! my leanness!

However, turning from this awful picture of oppression and dejection of soul, I see by faith, beyond is the realm of endless life, where there is light to light our pathway to heaven and immortal glory, where we shall rest under the palm trees of glory, and sweetly dwell in that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. This lifts me at times above the turbid waters of sin and vain imaginations, so that I rest for a short time, and feast upon the imperishable riches of the kingdom of God, and the exceeding great and precious promises of the Lord our God, and have no confidence in the

flesh. Then I am enabled to rejoice in Jesus, our holy Redeemer, and then can glory in my infirmities, that his power may rest upon me; then my sorrows are soothed, and my soul preserved in a dry and thirsty land, and I am delivered from the lion of self and pride and vile ingratitude, fulfilling his promise, in the midst of the church, that he would preserve all his. Thus their hopes are confirmed, and thus he fulfills his purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began. He leads them through the angry floods, and revives them and sustains them in every danger, and in every fiery trial; he reveals to us the exceeding sinfulness of our sins, showing how weak and depraved we poor mortals are; he shows us our nothingness, our imperfections, the insignificance of frail man, his impertinence, his frail judgment, by which he is so often carried headlong into evil, and all impiety, which things are the very reverse of the teaching and instructions of the Holy Spirit, which causes us to weep, and to drink the wine of astonishment, and to cry, "Help us, God our King."

I must say, Without thee I must perish, but with thy presence I shall be preserved, for thou makest my mountain to stand strong, because Christ is our life, and at his right hand are pleasures for evermore. Solomon said, The righteous shall never be moved, the integrity of the upright shall guide them, and they shall flourish as a branch. How beautifully does this branch typify the life of Christ our Redeemer, which is in the church, and the integrity, his robe of righteousness, which shall be forever to us a garment of salvation, that shall not be taken away.

O, how cheering for time and eternity to the little lambs of the fold, to realize that all their life is hid with Christ in God, and is in Jesus the true branch, the true vine, from whom emanates every virtue and peace of pure, pristine faith. He is the balm of Gilead, the true Physician; he spreads the spiritual cloud of his mercy and grace over the inhabitants of Zion to strengthen and nurture the believer, as with the sincere milk of the word. This is his everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, which so surely leads his people by the still waters, and causes them to lie down in green pastures, and so they come to know no God in all the earth, except in Israel.

May the Lord help us to praise and exalt his name above every name, and to lean upon his staff as our repose and our eternal support. May he help us to worship him, and to glorify his name, and rejoice in the courts of the city of our King.

In the fellowship of the gospel of the Son of God, I am, I hope, your little brother in Christ,

ASA HOWARD.

HERNDON, Va., Dec. 27, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed find money-order for two dollars, to pay for the SIGNS another year. Dear brother, to say I am well pleased with the SIGNS, does not half express my feelings and appreciation for it. It is the only Old School Baptist paper I take. I sometimes get a copy of other Baptist papers, hut none so good to me as the dear old SIGNS, for it sets forth the true doctrine of God our Savior, and that faith which was once delivered unto the saints: salvation by grace from first to finish, and no man's work system in it. For if it be by grace then work is no more work. But the Lord works in his people both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. "So then

it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy."

I once heard of a man trying to quote Revelations iii. 20, and he quoted it as follows, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man *will* hear my voice, and *will* open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." So you see he had it all right but the two *wills*, and he gave them to man. This is the way the Arminian world, (and some that call themselves Old School Baptists) would love to have the Bible read. Man's will first, and God's will to suit man's will. Poor, deluded creatures, they want a God to change his purpose to the will of the creature. But our God is of one mind and changes not. "He is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." "He speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast." There is no time with him (one eternal now); a day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years a day. It is said in the Scriptures, "He has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. O then, why should poor, puny, fallen man say unto him, What doest thou? when we all stand before him as nothing and less than nothing and vanity. It is a blessed thing indeed for one to be brought to this knowledge: to feel themselves nothing and less than nothing, and vanity. No doubt every tried soul when brought to a knowledge of their nothingness can cry out from the depths of their heart in the language of David of old, and say, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visiteth him?" I am often made to meditate on the things pertaining to his will, purpose and power over all things; not a part, but all things. Some men will say they believe he controls all the good things and the devil the bad things. If that should be the case, then the devil would be the stronger power, for we see that the bad things exceed the good, the world over. Hence then, it would give the devil the stronger power all the way through. But thanks be to God, the Bible does not say so, but it says, he, the devil, can go so far, and no farther. I am glad to believe that we have a God of all power, both in heaven and on earth. He is God and there is none like. He is above all laws and under no obligations to any of his creatures, and his will is to save his people from their sins. He works and none can hinder, for he has said, "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none besides me: I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things."—Isaiah xlv. 5-7. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."

But, dear brother, I am making this scribble too long, but before closing will say, I am glad that there are so many able writers for the SIGNS; it does my poor soul good to read from the pens of so many able defenders of the truth. I would say to them all, Write on in the strength of Israel's God, and be not ashamed to publish his word, "For it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

I am glad indeed to hear that dear brother Wm. L. Beebe has regained his health. I hope his life may be spared to make us many more visits in old Virginia.

With love and best wishes to you and the dear old SIGNS, I will close.

Your brother I hope,

J. F. OLIVER.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Oct. 13, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—If consistent with your feeling, I wish to write to the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, words commendatory of the book called "Priesthood of the Son of God," by Elder Bartley, for without reference to the condition of Adam previous to his transgression, we know that according to the testimony of Holy Writ, since his sin, there is none good, no, not one. The Bible testifies that man in his unregenerate condition is a most degraded, depraved, miserable wretch. It says of man that his whole head is sick, and his whole heart faint, and that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, that his feet are swift to shed blood, and that with the tongue he has used deceit, that his throat is an open sepulchre, that under his lips is the poison of asps, and that he is nothing but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores from the sole of the foot to the head, and that there is no soundness in him. Again the word testifies that the carnal mind is enmity against God, that it is not subject to his law, and neither indeed can be. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, because they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Even of the Lord's elect people, those to whom he sometimes speaks as man to man, of them it is written "They have all gone out of the way, they have altogether become unprofitable." Not a man liveth and sinneth not. With a true knowledge of ourselves, do we not have to confess that we are still sinners? Even Job, of whom the Lord spoke in praise, confessed himself vile, and asked how should man be just with God? As we realize our own vileness, and come to believe that God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and that he cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance, the all-absorbing question comes to be with us, "How should a man be just with God?"

I feel to simply refer you to that precious book, "Priesthood of the Son of God," for a clear and full elucidation of the Scriptures which relate to that important question. If I were to give my own views in response, I would only wish to transcribe nearly every word of Elder Bartley's book, although he has not quoted this exact language from Job.

His book explains also, that it is according to the order of Melchizedek, an order that is without beginning of days, or end of years. He shows that Jesus, our Mediator, was God in the flesh reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, thus showing that in Jesus all fullness dwells, and that all things which pertain to life and godliness, were treasured up in Jesus, and given us in him by his divine power. And Jesus having all spiritual blessings for us, is our precious High Priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek. Therefore all things that pertain to life and godliness, were absolutely fixed or predestinated in Christ Jesus before the world began.

This subject of the order of Melchizedek, with all that pertains to it, has engaged my mind a great deal during the past twenty years, but feeling that I might do violence to the subject, and that brother

Bartley's book does not, but rather justice, far more than my feeble pen can do, I gladly refer to his book, and would like to insist that all lovers of the truth procure one for themselves, and to keep for their children.

I remain as ever your brother,

DAVID L. McNEES.

PEASTER, Texas, Dec. 22, 1900.

BROTHER BEEBE:—As I am through with the business part of my letter, I will pen a few lines for you to dispose of as you see fit. I have been a regular subscriber of the dear old SIGNS since 1880, and I do not hesitate to say it is the paper that has never changed its sentiments in order to retain a full subscription list, but has contended all the time that salvation for time and eternity is wholly of the Lord. In my younger days, in Mississippi, I would hear the Baptists talking of the Arian two seed heresy, advocated by Gilbert Beebe, Thos. P. Dudley, J. F. Johnson and others, and I also read resolutions, and have them now, passed by Big Harpeth Church, in Tennessee, and readopted by Tombigbee Association, in Mississippi. I was not a member at that time, and had never read the SIGNS. I thought the editors and correspondents of the SIGNS were surely a terrible set of heretics, but after I got acquainted with the SIGNS, I found it suited me, and if the doctrine of the unity of Christ and the church be called heresy, I must confess I am one, for I do believe it with all my heart. As the poet says,

"In union with the Lamb,
From condemnation free,
The saints from everlasting were,
And shall forever be."

Here of late it has come to pass again that some that say they are Primitive Baptists, cannot stand sound doctrine, and they have called and held a convention, and advise a revision of the old confession of faith that the Old Baptists have held to for more than two hundred years. I have heard some of them preach and talk, and I conclude it would be more logical for them to get up a committee to revise the old Bible to suit their free willism, for they say there are many things transpiring in the world contrary to God's eternal will. That is not our God, for he works his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. There is a great deal said about the fall of Adam, his ability and liability; and they talk and write as though the creature controlled the will, and not the will the creature. One of our old poets speaks my sentiments on the fall of Adam thus:

"Here Satan was nonplussed in what he had done,
The fall wrought the channel where mercy should run
In streams of salvation that never run dry;
It was all for the lifting of Jesus on high."

O, the glorious hope that our God works all things (not a part) after the counsel of his own will and eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. Dear brethren and sisters, let us not be discouraged, for the day of our deliverance will soon come, when all the lo heres, and lo theres, will be silent. We know that our God is a great God, and that the foundation of God stands sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. The seal of God's knowledge covers all his work.

Now, dear readers of the SIGNS, there is a bitter war waged on the SIGNS, and the faith it holds to; let us all that are of this faith, stay with the editors in a substantial way, for it is the only medium we have at this time, through which unlimited predestination and the sovereignty of God can get a hearing. Let us all earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, walking worthy of

the high calling, as we hope we are called to be saints.

Brother Beebe, if you publish this, please correct, and if you think there is any part that had better not be published, leave it out. I send you thirteen dollars and four new subscribers, with my own and other renewals.

Wishing you a happy new year, I am yours,

J. A. RUTLEDGE.

BERLIN, Md., March 3, 1863.

DEAR BROTHER WOOLFORD:—I received your welcome letter this morning. I was glad to hear from you, for you are an old and valued friend, but my heart rejoiced more because you are a servant of my Master; a child of my Father. My dear brother, one of the sweetest evidences I have that God for Christ's sake has pardoned my sins, is that I love the brethren. For when I look into my own wicked, deceitful heart, how far I live from Christ! How all my best efforts to serve him fail! How I fail to find any bright and shining experience of a change of heart, or a new birth! I am often led to fear I am yet in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.

"When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark and vain and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?"

But when I am almost ready to despair, that sweet and heavenly sentence of the apostle John comes to me with a glorious hope, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." O, my brother, I cannot be deceived in this. I do love the brethren. I love, I do love all God's children, wherever I find them. I love the Lord Jesus Christ. O for grace to love him more. My greatest joy is to think and talk and write of the love of God to me and all his dear children. Christ is all my hope. And if I am ever saved, it must be by his free, sovereign grace; for I am fully persuaded that if my salvation depended on anything which I am to perform, I must be forever lost. O what a mercy for us poor, lost and ruined sinners, that Christ is a whole Savior; that in his own eternal mind, before the foundations of the earth were laid, he determined to save for himself a people. In the fullness of time he sent his own beloved Son to die the shameful, ignominious death on the cross, to pay the debt which they could never pay. And everlasting glory be to his name, he finished the work. It was Christ, the eternal God, who cried, "It is finished." Salvation was complete, justice was satisfied, the law was fulfilled and his people were saved. O, my brother, what glorious truths are these. All we poor, sinful mortals can do is to fall down before him and give him all the glory.

Again, my brother, allow me to thank you for your kind letter, and for the encouraging truth it contains. I deplore with you the low estate of Zion, but glory to God, he works all things after the counsel of his own will. His cause is in his own hand, and in his own good time he will revive his own work. He is able out of nothing to build up his church. He will hear our prayers, and, glory be to his name, he will answer prayer. Let us continue to pray that he will raise up his servants to proclaim his everlasting gospel.

You suggest in your letter that I, a poor, sinful, ignorant worm of the dust, may have the heavenly treasure of Christ's gospel in an earthen vessel, but O, my brother, Christ surely would never choose one so sinful, so ignorant, so polluted and vile a wretch as I am, to at-

tempt to proclaim his eternal truth. I am but a babe in Christ, if in Christ at all. I know he can do all things, but surely he will never call me to such a work. No, my brother, if I may but occupy the lowest place in his church on earth, and finally attain the lowest seat in his kingdom above, I will cast myself at his feet and give him all the glory. I shall be satisfied when I awake in his likeness. My brother, do you not contain this glorious treasure? Has God not called you to proclaim his eternal truth? May he raise up, fit and qualify and send forth more laborers. This shall be my prayer. O, that he would favor Zion, build up her waste places, lengthen her cords, strengthen her stakes, bring in his elect, pour out his Spirit, revive his work and do all his pleasure, for his own name's sake.

I received a letter a few days ago from my dear mother. Elder Rittenhouse is to preach at Nassaongo, on Wednesday after the third Sunday in March, (18th) and at Indiantown, on Thursday. If the Lord will, I shall try to be there, and should be delighted to meet you. Please write often, write soon, come and see me, and may the Lord bless and prosper you, for Christ's sake.

From your poor, sinful, unworthy brother in Christ,

G. W. STATON.

MARSHALL, Minn., Nov. 12, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—It has been a long time since I tried to say anything for publication, and now I feel that unless the Lord directs my pen it is useless to try, but when I read the SIGNS, there is often so much that I would like to say, that it is hard to keep still. On the other hand, when I think of my inability to write, it seems better to keep silence. If I could only write as I can think, but that seems impossible, I cannot say what I feel, still the desire that I have to write is so strong that it seems to rule. When I read Elder Beebe's remarks upon the proposed convention, I felt that I could indorse every word. The Bible Baptists do not need a convention. If those who dissent from Old Baptist doctrine do, let them have it. I felt sure that the editors of the SIGNS could not have any fellowship for such theories as limited predestination, or conditional or merited time salvation. They are new doctrines to the old readers of the SIGNS. I certainly do not enjoy such things.

Then, brother Chick, when I read about your trip to Kentucky, I felt that I was living some of my life over again. My mind went back to different places where I had heard the gospel preached by those who came from the east, west, north and south, and they were all taught by the same teacher, and all spoke the same language: salvation by grace, and grace alone, and all that had ears to hear, and hearts to understand, enjoyed those meetings. I could tell of many such, but will only speak of one, that was once when I heard Elder J. F. Johnson, of whom you spoke. He was an able and powerful preacher. At that time he preached two sermons, but was compelled to leave before the meeting closed. He asked for a few moments more to be given him before he left, which request was granted, and he arose and stood in the centre of a large room, well filled, and sang the hymn 823 (Beebe's collection). He sang beautifully. O, dear brother, could one ever forget him? The tears were running down his furrowed cheeks, dropping to the floor unheeded, and I think there was not a dry eye in the house.

When I have read the letters of D. G. Johnson, in the SIGNS, I have thought of

Elder J. F. Johnson, not knowing that they were father and son. I hope the son may be permitted to walk in his father's footsteps, and some time sing that sweet hymn when it will be as appropriate as when his father sang it. Often when my husband and I feel lonely, we sing that hymn to cheer us up.

Then I enjoyed your editorial on worship, and read it with great interest, because several things which had seemed as a mystery, was made plain to me. Then the editorial of Elder Gilbert Beebe upon John iv. 14, interested me greatly, as his writings always did. How beautifully he spoke of the travel of the blessed Lord on earth. Nothing happened only as God had appointed, and all fulfilled his appointed and predestinated purpose.

I fear that it will not do to trouble you longer with my poor scribble. Perhaps this may be the last, for I well know that my days are about numbered. Remember us at the throne of grace. Please pardon all mistakes, and put this in the waste-basket if you think best, and all will be right with me.

From your sister,

PARTHENIA PATTERSON.

KIRKLAND, Tenn., March 30, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I send you some letters written by our very dear brother, Elder E. S. Anderson, which I would like to see in the SIGNS. They were not written for publication, but I have his consent to send them to you.

ELLIS PETTUS.

CAVE SPRING, Ky., Feb. 1, 1898.

MISS ELLIS PETTUS—DEAR SISTER:—I was very glad indeed to receive a letter from you, and to read what you say of your unworthiness, for it is an evidence of Christlikeness to feel that way. If you had said you were worthy, I would doubt whether you were a true child of God or not, but as you feel little, I am bound to believe that you are taught of the Lord. One of his prophets said, All thy people shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. You spoke of my preaching. If there ever was one who doubted his call to the ministry, I certainly do. How can I preach except I be sent? It does seem to me that there are so many who could fill the place so much better than myself.

"So many things come in my way,
Which makes me often weep and say,
Like one alone I seem to be,
O, is there any one like me?"

I know if God be for me, there are none who can be against me. It is he who upholds all things by the power of his might.

When I read your letter it made me think that we had traveled the same road. We have to travel much by night. There are so many ups and downs in this life, but like Job, we will say, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change comes." I do not think that I will ever forget the time that I went to your home, it was such a pleasure to me to meet you all, and to try to lift up my feeble voice in asking the Lord to lead you all by his Spirit. For aught that I know, it may be the last time that we will ever meet in this world, but as you said, may we meet around the throne of God, there to sing redeeming love. You asked me to come and preach for you all, I am perfectly willing to come and do the best that I can, God being my helper, and if the church says come, I will come. If there be anything that I delight in, it is in trying to feed the little lambs of the flock.

Now, my dear sister, I commend you to God, and the word of his grace, which is

able to keep you from falling. I pray that God's richest blessing may rest upon you, and that you may be led to shun the very appearance of evil. I know the temptations which will befall you by the way, but the Lord will bring you out of them all; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Paul said, "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature, old things have passed away, and all things have become new." The things you once loved, now you hate, and the things you once hated, you now love. I was glad to hear that you had come home to your father, and told what great things the Lord had done for you. I ask an interest in your prayers, that I may be led by the Spirit of the living God.

From your brother,

E. S. ANDERSON.

CAVE SPRING, Ky., Sept. 19, 1898.

MISS ELLIS PETTUS—DEAR SISTER:—I received your letter some time ago, and was glad to hear from you, but sorry to hear of your sister's death. I would say to you, Sorrow not as those who have no hope. Though she has gone from us, we hope to meet her again in that happy beyond, where there will be no death. I have reason to believe that she was a true child of grace, for by their fruits shall ye know them. I know that it is hard to give up those who are near and dear to us, but we are bound to say that what the Lord does is just, for he is too good to do wrong. So be of good cheer, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. And now, my dear sister, press forward to the mark of the prize of the high calling, which is in Christ Jesus. Many temptations will come up and tell you that you have no grace, but I do believe that where God has begun a good work, he will perform it to the day of Jesus Christ. I may never see you again in this world, but I hope to meet you in heaven, that happy home which the Lord has prepared for them that love him. May it be our happy lot to sing the song of redeeming grace, where it will be said, These are they who have come up out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Now, my dear sister, farewell. May you be blessed with all spiritual blessings. My family joins in love to you. Pray for your unworthy brother, if one at all,

E. S. ANDERSON.

BLACK ROCK, Md., Dec. 27, 1900.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—As I have received the last number of the SIGNS for 1900, and my subscription having expired, I embrace this opportunity to renew for another year, for which you will find inclosed two dollars. I have been a subscriber for nearly half a century, and to the best of my remembrance have always paid in advance, this statement of facts should be a sufficient showing of an indorsement of the SIGNS. As boy and man I have been a reader of the SIGNS from its first issue, to the present time. I sometimes hope that for at least half that time I have been reading them with more or less pleasure and profit. I have been a subscriber and reader of other Primitive Baptist papers to some extent, but at present take the SIGNS only. If the majority of them entertain or publish erroneous doctrines, which no doubt they do, I feel disposed to let them alone until I am more fully convinced as to whether it is them or myself wherein lies the fault. I do not think it well to deal harshly with those whom we recognize as brethren, but admonish them in

love. And if not recognized as brethren, just let them alone. But I do not wish to intimate that erroneous views of Scripture doctrine must not be met and combatted from pulpit and press, but let it be done in gentleness and love, and if such erring one should be converted from the error of his ways, then he and the one by whom he was converted, will feel the better for it afterwards.

Brother Beebe, I sat me down to write for a renewal of subscription only, this being an after thought, dispose as you think best, and it will be all right with one who has nearly reached the end of his journey,

JOHN P. KELLEY.

UTICA, N. Y., Dec. 21, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As it is again time for me to renew my subscription for the dear old SIGNS, I will inclose money order for two dollars for the coming year, and will also try to add a few words, to say that of late I trust I can say I have enjoyed reading the SIGNS, and they have been a comfort to my poor soul, and the doctrine they advocate is my soul's delight. My heart's desire and prayer to God is, that he may enable you to set forth the unsearchable riches of Christ, to feed the hungry poor. As regards my own self, I am still a poor, helpless sinner, and in looking back over my past life, I can find nothing good of my own. I find yet that I still have to carry a body of sin and death about with me, and sin of every kind works in me. Indwelling sin is the plague of my heart, and I can never get rid of it one moment. The evils of my heart are innumerable, therefore I have to cry out daily with one of old, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But hope rests on Christ, and him alone. I would therefore ascribe unto the Lord all the glory and honor. Surely I may say, Hitherto has he helped me, and my desire and prayer is that I still may be kept and upheld by him, and strength may be given unto me according to my days, as the Lord has promised, and that he may lead me in the right path, for his own name's sake.

But I must stop, for I am not able to express my own feelings as I wish to, and I do not want to weary you, and as brother Robert Alexander wants me to write some for him, will therefore conclude by wishing you the enjoyment of every needful blessing.

I remain as ever, yours unworthily,

CHRISTIAN WINTER.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—After being a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for almost fifty years, I am by no means tired of them yet. I think if anything they grow more precious to me as I grow older, especially as I am in my isolated condition, not having heard but one short gospel sermon in the last five years, which makes me look earnestly for the coming of the SIGNS, as they have never failed to bring some sweet message from my Father's family. I have had no use for any kind of worldly reading for many years. When I have been hungry and thirsting for gospel food, the Lord has always been pleased to send me some sweet morsel by the SIGNS, so that my whole affections have been drawn toward the precious Zion of my God. Some are likely to think that I have no outward trouble, and must be a happy man as I have no child, neither property to disturb my mind. I do think the Lord has been pleased to give me a double portion of inward troubles, so that the temptations of Satan, and the uprising of my wicked heart, cause me to

cry to him on whom I have been able to rely for so long a time, and in his own time he has shed a ray of light in my heart, and a little faith, so that I have been enabled to look back to the time after I had spent seven years in the school of Moses, when I know there was a change took place, which I know nothing short of the power of God could have made. So I am enabled to this day to use the language of the poet,

"Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song,
The joy of my heart, and the boast of my tongue;
Thy free grace alone, from the first to the last,
Has won my affection, and bound my soul fast."

For truly I was made to hate those things which I had been loving, and made to love those things which I had been fighting against, and which are now the very food of my soul. I would say to my Father's children, Do not think that age will help you, for the older I get, the less I feel able to stand in the battle, but bless the Lord that he does at times send a little refreshing strength, so that I am enabled to move on, and praise the Lord for his goodness, and his tender mercies to me, so entirely unworthy. I am persuaded that the Lord has a portion of affliction for his children all the way through, for he said, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace, and truly that is the peace which passeth all understanding. It makes up double for all the sorrow and trouble which we have been called to pass through. Truly the last five years of my life have been a time to be remembered by me as long as I live; the wonderful conflicts and deliverances which I would not have been without for anything, for I do believe that the sharpest trials have their place to fill, and through these trials we learn more than we could on the mount of prosperity, so that with John Newton I have to say,

"Lord, why is this? I trembling cried;
Wilt thou pursue thy worm to death?
'Tis in this way, the Lord replied,
I answer prayer, for grace and faith.

These inward trials I employ,
From self and pride to set thee free;
And break thy schemes of earthly joy,
That thou mayest seek thy all in me."

Now I want to say just a word to the writers of the SIGNS, that you may stand fast in contending for the truth, for nothing but the truth will satisfy the hungry children. I am confident of this one thing, that the greatest gift will never exalt the Creator too high, nor lay the creature too low, for if any of the dear children have been able to draw one drop of sweet water out of nature's filthy fountain, they have done more than I can. And I want to say that all the powers of earth and hell never can make the Creator a sinner, for he has as perfect a right to make the crooked serpent, as he has to make the harmless dove. If they had no place to fill in time, they would never have been made, for he has created nothing in vain. I have been sorely troubled of late upon the admonitions and exhortations, how I could meet them. But in reading Paul's language in the seventh chapter of Romans, where he says, "For to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not," then it occurred to my mind, Who gave the will? Paul says, "We know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Does not the same Spirit meet the admonition in me? I wish that some able brother or sister would write on that subject, which would be perhaps a relief to some of the little children.

The other day I read a letter from brother True, in which he says, You must not be surprised if you do not see my

signature any more, as I am in my seventy-seventh year. Perhaps I may say the same, as I am in my eighty-fifth year.

Now with love to one and all, may the Lord bless you, and enable you to send a word of comfort to all the needy ones of the Lord's family, is my desire and prayer for his own name's sake.

ROBERT ALEXANDER.

(At the home for aged men, Utica, N. Y.)
Written by,
CHRISTIAN WINTER.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Jan. 1, 1901.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—The time has arrived for me to send my remittance, and I am very glad the dear old SIGNS is still alive to cheer us in the coming new year. A greeting to you, my long tried friends, who have been pressed down without measure the past year. May your courage be renewed, and the dear Lord support you in this trying hour, and give you grace to battle with all the delusions of this day. His promises are faithful, he will sustain you: "As thy day, thy strength shall be." The number of the SIGNS for Dec. 15th, did not reach me, and after waiting one week, I went to see Elder David Bartley, and found his SIGNS had not arrived, so we talked about how we would feel if it should never visit us again. We concluded it would be a great loss; like the death of an old tried friend. I am an old woman, but the familiar face of the SIGNS has always been in my home. There was a time when I did not understand the doctrine it advocated, but I go back fifty years, when I hope my eyes were opened to understand this glorious gospel of Jesus Christ. "By grace are ye saved, * * * not of works, lest any man should boast." Surely the same old doctrine of our fathers is still in its pages, and many are ready to say and write, "I can do nothing of myself. The flesh profiteth nothing." Good works are the fruit of the Spirit. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Yes, I do believe in good works, and see the evidence in my brother or sister, but in myself my nothingness appears, and I groan and sigh to be like the blessed Jesus, who when reviled, reviled not again; he even was spit upon. Dear Savior, can a poor worm trust in thee? May the many able writers continue to write in the coming new year, for so many are destitute of preaching, and others I know are on beds of sickness; may the good Lord help them. I have many sad hours, and find the worst enemy is of my own household, self. Pray for me, dear kindred in Christ.

Lovingly,
LINA W. BECK.

COVINGTON, Ga., Jan. 3, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed please find post-office money order for six dollars for renewal of subscription for the SIGNS, credits to be placed as given on subscription blank. I am delighted with the SIGNS, and regard it as the best and ablest exponent and defender of the Old School Baptist doctrine, of any publication that I know of. May the Lord continue to guide and direct you in the way of all truth, is the sincere wish of your brother in hope,
EDWARD HEARD.

OTEGO, N. Y., Dec. 22, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed please find check for $16.00. I wish it was much more. We are agreed here that the paper was never better, and we do not know where there is any fault in manner or matter. Your work is something of a reward for your labor and patience. May strength and comfort be given you freely, is my sincere desire.

Yours in fellowship and love,
S. C. F. GUERNSEY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1901.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to

GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,

Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 PETER II. 6-10.

BY request of sister Mary Brewster, of Oxford, New York, we will present some thoughts upon the following:

"Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient; whereunto they also were appointed: but ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."

It is not our purpose to dwell at length upon each thought presented in the text suggested. To do so would exceed the proper limits of an editorial. Yet we feel willing to present some thoughts which seem precious to us, and have been so, as we trust, for many years. The Scriptures everywhere declare wonderful things concerning Jesus, and his saved people. Among those wonderful things, none are more wonderful than the things contained in the above Scripture. The apostle, in the preceding chapter, and in the first verse of this, has been presenting some precious admonitions for the profit of the brethren to whom he was writing. These admonitions he bases upon the ground that they had tasted that the Lord is gracious. Among the gracious things of the Lord which they had tasted, were these very admonitions with which the first chapter is filled. To him they were coming as to a living stone, who, while disallowed indeed of men, was yet the elect of God and precious. This means that he was precious in the sight of God, and to those also who believed. This suggests the thought to the apostle that all his brethren were lively stones, or living stones, and as such they were built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God by Jesus Christ. By these striking figures the apostle describes the church of God, and her living Head. They, as Paul elsewhere says, are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. That is, the apostles and prophets, who are also parts of the building, and who themselves rest upon Jesus Christ as their foundation, have declared the doctrine of Christ, and by the spirit of inspiration, have laid down the order of the church of God on earth; and now the churches everywhere are to follow the same order, and maintain the same doctrine, thus resting for their order and doctrine, upon the teachings of these holy and inspired men. The object of this building is that God may be worshiped by spiritual sacrifices, offered unto him by spiritual men, in

all the ages to come. This service of sacrifice, as all service must be, is not any longer to be laid upon Jewish altars, but is the free, glad, willing service of that heart which has been filled with the love of God, in which alone true freedom is to be found. To this end God has called his people, and in the day of his power made them willing; according to the word of the Lord. All service which is prompted therefore by any motive other than the love of God, is but as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. To give the body to be burned as a sacrifice, and to give all one's goods to feed the poor, would avail nothing unless prompted by love. To those who are actuated by this love, every admonition and exhortation comes as a sweet and precious thing, pointing out the way wherein the feet of such ones delight to run. A man may do all things, in the letter of them, which are commanded of believers in the word, yet if love to these things, and love to the God who has commanded them, is not the sole motive which prompts to their performance, they are without avail in the sight of God, and bring no sense of true peace to him that does them.

Now the apostle turns to the Scriptures and shows that the coming of Jesus was according to the appointment of God, that all who believe might not be confounded. This appointment included every step that the Savior trod, even to his betrayal and crucifixion. "The Son of man goeth as was determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed." How solemn were his words. How awful to Judas who betrayed him. Before the hour came, Jesus had said that one of them should betray him. He had said, "I have chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil." And he had said, "Good were it for that man if he had never been born." It is true that Judas never was a true disciple, yet while he but acted out the hidden evil of his heart, it was according to the will and purpose of God, as was declared in the Scriptures beforehand. Certainly, from the moment when it was declared by the Savior that Judas should betray him, it could not have been avoided, neither by Judas or any other man, unless the word of the Savior could have been false. From the moment when Jesus spoke, at least, Judas must of necessity have betrayed him. All this was involved in the purpose of God to save much people eternally alive; all this was involved in the work of laying in Zion this corner stone for the whole building to rest upon. If one hour of suffering, of scorn, and spitting and reproach, had been omitted from the Savior's cup of suffering and sorrow, the stone had not been properly laid in Zion, and the hope built thereupon would not have been secure. All that was written of him in the Scriptures, must be fulfilled ere the work was finished.

Now to all them who believe, this tried, elect corner stone is precious, or, as the more literal rendering of the word is, "an honor." Thus the reproach of Christ becomes more valuable and honorable than all the riches and fame of the world; thus believers, like Moses, come to choose rather suffering with the people of God, than the pleasures of sin for a season. Paul bears testimony concerning this, saying, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." How precious is this Savior none but the sinful, weak and poor, who have been healed, strengthened and made rich, can know; and even they can never express it. What words can tell of his fullness of which we have all received, and grace for grace? The apostle does

not seek to multiply words, but just says, he is precious. A whole lifetime will not tell all that is involved in that word, and eternity alone can fully disclose it. On the other hand, to others he is vile. The apostle contrasts the words believe and disobedient, in these verses, and this is very forcible, because all obedience proceeds out of belief, and all disobedience proceeds out of unbelief. They are disobedient, because they are unbelievers. If any obey, it is because of the indwelling of living faith, and obedience is always the obedience of faith, if indeed it be true, and not legal obedience. Those who are disobedient can never know the true exaltation of the Redeemer, but even that exaltation which they do know, brings anger to their hearts, and Jesus is a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to them. To the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness, but to the saved, precious.

But how solemn and awful is one expression in this eighth verse: "Whereunto they were also appointed." On the one hand, God has chosen some to salvation, while on the other hand, others are appointed to disobedience, despair and destruction. God was willing to show his wrath, and so endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. He endured them that they might fill up the measure of iniquity, and reveal just what dwelt in the human heart. God was willing to show his wrath against sin, as well as willing to show his mercy upon the vessels of mercy, chosen to salvation. We have trembled at times, as we have gained some insight into the force of the words, "Whereunto they also were appointed," and those other words, "Fitted to destruction. O how shall we praise that mercy, which has bestowed upon any of the sons of fallen and justly condemned men, salvation unto eternal life and eternal joy. We can never forget the last sermon that we ever heard from the lips of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, from the words in Romans ix., "What if God willing to show his wrath," &c. It was at Fishing Creek, at the Salisbury Association, in Dorchester Co., Md. The righteous judgments of God were presented in that solemn and awful way, that was at times peculiarly his own. We have never forgotten it. Yet there is nothing in these words to disturb the hope of the least believer in the Lord. If to any man he is precious, to that man all the blessings of the new covenant belong, and endless life beyond. Such as these are not appointed to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, and the evidences of this grace toward them are found in the heart and life; in them the fruit of the Spirit is manifest; the life of Christ is made manifest in their mortal flesh. Now the fruit of the Spirit, says the apostle, is love, joy, peace, &c., and one of the best evidences that these fruits dwell in any man is the fact that he desires them, and yet feels that he does not possess them. He who really has the Spirit dwelling in him, by that very Spirit will feel that he lacks all things. Self-confident men have not the Spirit of God; its work is to destroy all self-confidence. The man who has most of the spirit of humility, will feel most his want of humility, and the same is true of every other grace of the Spirit. The works of the flesh puff men up, but the fruit of the Spirit abases a man. We repeat, there is no need that the weakest one should fear this condemnation, such are not appointed unto wrath. While these words are most terrible, and declare awful things concerning those who are

disobedient, and who stumble at the word, yet we would accept them in fear and trembling, and desire not to in any way weaken their force in what we say about them. Just as surely as God has appointed some men to obtain obedience and salvation, so surely has he appointed some men to disobedience and destruction. This is his right, and none shall have right to question why or what doest thou. To even say, Why doth he then find fault, for who hath resisted his will? is to reply against God.

Now, the truth stated in verses ninth and tenth, is that those who now believe, and who have obtained salvation, once had not obtained mercy but now have, once were not a people, but now are. The apostle was speaking, as we have understood the matter, to and of the Gentiles, who were outside the old Jewish covenant, but who now are embraced in the gospel covenant, but it seems to us we shall do no violence to the meaning of the apostle, if we say this truth is presented here, that believers were themselves the children of wrath even as others, and were involved in the fall and its consequences just as were all men, and would have perished finally as other men, had it not been for the election. The apostle Peter would have his brethren know that all the mercies recorded in the ninth verse, including that of being a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a chosen generation, showing forth the praise of God, and calling into the marvelous light of God, had not come to them because of anything whatever seen in them, or done by them, but solely because of the mercy of God.

"What was there in us that could merit esteem,
Or give the Creator delight?
'Twas even so, Father, we ever must say,
Because it seemed good in thy sight."

They who are saved, beholding the free mercy of God to sinners, must and will say, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Every word in the ninth verse presents a contrast: A chosen generation implies that some are not chosen; the royal priesthood implies that some are not priests unto God; the holy nation implies that there are nations which are not holy; the peculiar people implies that some are diverse from the great mass; showing forth the praises of God implies that this was not their former state, and that it is not the state of the mass of mankind. To abhor our own life, our own failures, our own lack of spirituality, is one infallible mark of the work of grace. The dead know not anything, not even that they are dead and cold, but the living man can and does know that he is cold, and laments it, and seeks after warmth, light and life. We know that the dear sister at whose request we have penned these reflections, does long for all these precious heavenly things, and mourns that she does not possess that measure of them that she desires. Therefore there is nothing here to dishearten her, or to take away the comfort of hope which has been given her in years past, and which is her sure anchor now.

It was not our purpose, as said at first, to dwell upon all that these verses contain, but to present some general thoughts in harmony with these Scriptures, and in closing will say with the apostle, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus

Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the beloved."

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ATONEMENT AND REDEMPTION.

DEAR SIR:—There are some who say that the atonement is general and that redemption is particular, and others who say that both the atonement and the redemption are general. If you will give your views, through the SIGNS, on this subject, you will very much oblige, and I hope instruct me. What I want to know is, can the two be separated? If the one is general is not the other? I hope you will give your views at some length, and oblige,

A LOVER OF THE TRUTH.

ULSTER COUNTY, N. Y., April 28, 1858.

The simple word *atonement*, or at-one-ment, signifies reconciliation, agreement, or restoration to favor, and when applied in a gospel sense, has reference to the meditorial sacrifice of the Son of God, by which his people are reconciled unto God. That mediatorial work or sacrifice involved his suffering for them the penalty of the law which they had transgressed, bearing the curse which was due to their transgressions, putting away their sins by sacrifice of himself; being delivered up for their offences, and raised again from the dead for their justification.

Redemption signifies the buying back of that which has become legally involved and is held by another in captivity. For instance, a flock of sheep which has gone astray from the premises of their owner, and committed trespass on another, may be legally held by him who has sustained the injury, until the owner of the sheep shall come forward, prove property, pay the legal charges, and take them away. This is called redemption, or buying back the flock or property which belonged to him who redeems, before the trespass was committed. In this the payment of the damages is the atonement or reconciliation, for it satisfies the party who held the legal claim upon the flock, and the price paid for the satisfaction, or reconciliation, redeems or buys them back. So that the atonement and the redemption of the sheep are one and the same thing; they cannot be separated. None but the owner of the sheep has the right to redeem them. If he fails to redeem them, and they are sold to some other person for the damages they have done, they are not redeemed at all, because they are not bought back, or restored to the former owner, but pass into the possession of a new owner. The redemption of the people of God is thus described, Isa. liii. 6, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him [Christ] the iniquity of us all." That is, the whole demand of the law and justice of God, was demanded of that Shepherd whose own the sheep were, and who says, "I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."—John x. 11, 12. If Christ had not been the owner of the flock before they strayed, or went into captivity, justice could not have demanded satisfaction at his hands, the Lord would not have laid their iniquity upon him, nor commanded, saying, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the Shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn my hand upon the little ones."—Zech. xiii. 7. Nor could Christ have claimed the right to redeem them on any other ground. He was the Shepherd whose own the sheep were, and he plead and sustained his prior claim to, and right of property in them, saying, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them

me." "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine, and all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them." And this glory he says he had with the Father before the world was. (John xviii. 5, 7, 10.) Therefore he could in coming into the world to redeem them, confidently refer to the records of eternity: "Lo! I come, in the volume of thy book [the book in which all his members are written, Psa. cxxxix. 16,] it is written of me; to do thy will, O God."—Heb. x. 7. "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he had given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."—John vi. 39. These Scriptures define very clearly the extent of redemption by Jesus Christ, and the principle of relationship and proprietorship on which that redemption is based. In this redemption he asked not or prayed not, for the world, but for them which his Father had given him out of the world. And this was the full extent of the will of the Father, according to which God worketh all things, that Jesus should redeem and save his people from their sins, and raise up again at the last day all that the Father gave him before the world was, and therefore it was that the Lord laid on him the iniquity of *us* all. That is all of *us* who like sheep have gone astray. And he has accordingly "surely borne *our* griefs, and carried our sorrows." "He was wounded for *our* transgressions, bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement our peace [or atonement] was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."—Isa. liii. 4, 5. And because "It pleased the Lord to bruise" and to "put him to grief." "He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge [shall he] justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities."—Isa. liii. 10, 11. And we know precisely what will satisfy him; for he has graciously told us. "I pray not for the world, but I pray for them which thou has given me" out of the world. "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory."—John xvii. 9, 24. This is his will, and the Father has pledged his veracity that he shall be satisfied. Nor is this any less the will of the Father than it is the will of the Son, for, "This is the Father's will which has sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

Thus we are instructed in regard to the nature and extent of the atonement and redemption which is in Christ Jesus. That it extends to all that the Father gave him, and to no others. That it embraces all that seed which Jesus should see when his soul was made an offering for sin, and which seed shall serve him, and be accounted to him for a generation, according to Psalm xxii. 30. But it extends to no other seed or people but that chosen generation, royal priesthood, holy nation, and peculiar people which shall show forth his praises. (1 Peter ii. 9.)

The atonement or reconciliation is just as extensive as the redemption, and the eternal salvation from sin, death and hell, is just as extensive in its application and its saving benefits as the atonement and redemption, and it can extend no further. All the murmuring, fault-finding and blasphemies of the children of men cannot extend it any further, nor remove one of Zion's stakes, nor break one of her cords.

After all the opposition manifested by the world to the definite extent of the atonement, there is not an individual on

earth that really desires to be embraced in it but those who are made willing in the day of our Redeemer's power. All others prefer to rely on their own fancied free will, free agency and use of means, and to rely upon a *chance* system, which would give a chance to everybody, but in reality save nobody. God's redeemed people themselves were all of them opposed to his method of salvation until they were brought to an experimental knowledge of their guilty, lost and helpless condition, then they found it to be exactly suited to their case. And then being taught of God, they could not be satisfied with any uncertain, indefinite or chance system. Knowing their own total helplessness, they bless and adore God for that covenant which is well ordered and sure, for it is all their hope, and all their salvation.

Such a system of redemption as the Arminians contend for, if they could have it, would do them no good, for it would save nobody, and they are therefore just as well off in their present delusion on the subject, as they would be with a *chance* redemption, offered grace, and conditional salvation, while they are totally depraved, and dead in trespasses and sins. They are at war with God's plan of salvation, and it is impossible for them to be saved in any other. There we must leave them to perish forever in their delusion, unless they, by a divine power, over which they nor we have any control, shall be brought to know their need of a whole Savior, a sure redemption, and to rejoice in a perfect atonement and reconciliation to God, and to his way of saving poor, lost and helpless sinners.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 1, 1858.

BACK NUMBERS.—We have a few hundred copies of back numbers of this volume to supply to new subscribers.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, Wednesday, Dec. 19th, 1900, at the residence of the bride, Harry V. Staples and Miss Clara R. Leigh, both of Hopewell, N. J.

By the same, on Monday, Dec. 24th, 1900, at the Old School Baptist meeting-house, Hopewell, N. J., Robert L. Rodgers, of Baltimore Co., Md., and Miss Adra A. Vannoy, of Hopewell, N. J.

By the same, on Thursday, Dec. 27th, 1900, at the parsonage in Hopewell, N. J., Walter S. Mount, of Dutch Neck., N. J., and Miss Mary E. Golden, of Princeton, N. J.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, Dec. 17th, 1900, at the home of the bride, in Summerset Co., Md., John G. Livingston and Miss Etha C. Hastings.

By the same, Dec. 28th, 1900, near New Church, Va., Fred Gladding and Miss Susan Northam, both of Accomac Co., Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Charlie Purdy, only beloved son of Mr. Leander L. and sister Jane Purdy, of Middletown, N. Y., and grandson of Joel and Esther Hoyt, was drowned Sept. 5th, 1899, while in bathing in the Wallkill River, near Midway Park, N. Y., aged 21 years, 4 months and 26 days. Charlie was a dutiful and good son, affectionate brother and kind friend, bright and industrious, and was making his mark in the world as a business man. He was very popular, and had many friends. His death was sad indeed. He was in the habit of bathing with his young companions every day or so during the summer months, but this time he went alone, and to the most dangerous place in the river, strange it may seem to some, yet it was in the purpose of his Creator that he should go alone, something he had never done before. It is supposed he was taken with cramps, as his limbs were very much drawn when he was found. His mother would often say, "Charlie, I am so uneasy about you when you go swimming, I fear some day you will be drowned." He would reply, "Mother, you need not be, because you know unless I am to die that way I cannot be drowned, and if so you know it must be, as it is ordained." This now is a comfort to sister Purdy, giving her hope that he was a subject of grace, and believed in the predestination of God.

His funeral was very largely attended at the Old School Baptist meeting-house, where the writer tried to speak from Job xix. 21, by request of the sorrowing mother. Charlie is survived by his father and mother and one sister. May the blessings of God's grace rest upon and comfort this heart-broken family.

ALSO,

Thomas Brewster Hulse died Nov. 17th, 1900, at his home near Howells Depot, N. Y., of pneumonia,

aged 76 years. Mr. Hulse had spent his entire life on the farm where he died, and was widely known in the County, and had many friends. His illness was short, only living five or six days after being taken. He never united with any denomination, but was an honest and upright man, a kind husband and father, and a good neighbor.

His funeral was largely attended, and many expressions exchanged among his friends with regard to his quiet and industrious life; a man of few words, never speaking ill of his neighbors. He is survived by his widow, and one son by a former wife. May they be comforted in this dark hour of sorrow. Text used, "If a man die, shall he live?"—Job xiv. 14.

ALSO,

William J. Comfort died at his home near New Vernon, Orange Co., N. Y., Nov. 21st, 1900, of dropsy, aged 59 years. Mr. Comfort had lived nearly all his life in Orange County, and was well known and respected by all who knew him for his honesty, integrity and genial disposition. He was a devoted husband, kind friend and good neighbor, never more pleased than when he could make others happy and comfortable. He never made a public profession of religion, but attended the Old Baptist meetings for years, and from his walk and conversation no one would have known he was not a member. He loved the truth in its purity. Though he suffered for months he never complained, but was patient unto the end, when he sweetly fell asleep in Jesus, where all is hushed to rest.

His funeral was one of the largest we ever attended, and was indeed a solemn occasion. Text used, Eccl. vii. 1. He is survived by his widow and two sisters, beside many friends, to mourn their loss, for surely we shall miss him. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ rest upon and abide with the sorrowing ones.

ALSO,

Mrs. Deborah Jane Pelton died at her home in Port Jervis, N. Y., Dec. 24th, 1900, of diabetes, aged 60 years and 10 months. Sister Pelton was a great sufferer for years, but was patient, and complained little of anything save the sin she realized in her nature. She was a beloved member of the New Vernon Church, with which she united about forty years ago. Often when she could not meet with us she would write a good letter to the church to be read in our church meeting.

She was buried at Howells Depot, N. Y. The writer was present, and tried to speak to the comfort of the sorrowing ones, using 1 Cor. xv. 55-57. She is survived by four sons and two daughters, all grown, also two sisters, beside the church and friends, to mourn their loss, but we have every assurance that for her to die was gain.

May the Lord have mercy upon us all.

H. C. KER.

Mrs. Elizabeth VanGorden, wife of Harry M. VanGorden, died Monday morning at their home on Pine street, after an illness of several months from a complication of diseases. The deceased was born on Talmadge Hill, a few miles from Waverly, June 8th, 1838, and later removed with her family to Dry Brook, Chemung Co., where she was subsequently married to Mr. VanGorden. About twenty-five years ago they moved to Waverly, where they since resided. She leaves of her immediate family her husband and two daughters, also one sister, Mrs. M. Mather, of Waverly, and two brothers, I. R. Carey, of Waverly, and Albert Carey, of Titusville, Pa. She was a kind-hearted, industrious, worthy christian woman, esteemed by all who knew her.

Sister VanGorden was a faithful member of the Old School Baptist Church of Waverly, N. Y. I think that she was baptized by Elder A. St. John, about the year 1860, or perhaps earlier. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of election and absolute unlimited predestination, her faith embraced only that which is found in Jesus Christ, as the salvation, resurrection and life of the saints; in this she rested; in this she is perfectly and eternally happy. The little church feels the loss very much, also the family and many friends. May the God of all grace comfort all the mourning ones for his name's sake.

The funeral was held Wednesday at 2 o'clock, at the home, Mr. D. H. Clare officiating. The interment was in the family plot in Forest Home Cemetery.

ALSO,

DIED—Dec. 25th, 1900, sister **Ann Broughton,** wife of brother Nathan Broughton, of Morris, Tioga Co., Pa. She was born Dec. 11th, 1836; she had been in bad health for some time. A short time before her death she fell on the floor, injuring one of her hips so badly that she never walked again, but lingered along for a few weeks, then entered her eternal home. Sister Broughton was baptized by Elder A. St. John, in 1870 or 1871, uniting with the Old School Baptist Church at Cherry Flats, Tioga Co., Pa. The church becoming extinct, she, with brother Broughton, united with the church at Cammal, Pa., several years ago, remaining in the love and fellowship of that church until called hence. She was a faithful, christian mother, loved by all who knew her, and was of a quiet disposition, and firm in her convictions. She contended for salvation by grace, without conditions, for time and eternity, and said many a time in my hearing, If one thing is predestinated all things are, nothing was left to chance or fatality. She will be missed by her neighbors, as she was friendly to all, and by the church, and by her dear children, of which there are ten living, one dying four or five months ago; also by her dear, lonely, sad, broken-hearted companion, brother Broughton. May God grant unto him and his dear, sorrowing family, great grace, and strengthen him and them to bear up under this severe

and heavy trial. She leaves husband, ten children, thirty-eight grandchildren, one great-grandchild, with many other relatives. She is with Jesus enjoying in all of its perfection and fullness all that her faith embraced while she tabernacled here below.

The writer was called upon to officiate at the funeral, using as a text, 1 John ii. 25-27. A large congregation of neighbors and friends were in attendance to pay the last tribute of respect to one they loved.

D. M. VAIL.

WAVERLY, Pa., Dec. 20, 1900.

DIED—Oct. 19th, 1900, **Edmond M. Burkhalter.** He was born in Marion Co., Tenn., April 25th, 1827, and joined the Old School Baptist Church in 1847, and moved to Cass Co., Texas, in 1847, and was married to S. R. Tidwell, daughter of Riley and Mary Tidwell, in October, 1854, with whom he lived lovingly until the day of his death. He was a deacon of the church for many years, which office he filled to the best of his ability. He was a loving, indulgent father, a good, honest, upright citizen, and as humble and orderly a christian as I ever met. He was familiarly known as Uncle Eben, and universally beloved by all who knew him. Our dear aged brother is missed by many, and especially by me, as his house was often my home, as it was a home for all Baptists, and all who came were welcome. He was afflicted for several years with spasmodic spells, but bore his afflictions with great patience. He was very tender-hearted, always full of sympathy for any one in distress. He leaves a wife, four sons and six daughters, to mourn his demise, but dear ones, remember the advice of your dear father, and try to follow his example, and be good to your aged mother, for whom you must care, who will soon follow father, and then you can say as he often said, Come, welcome death. I was summoned by telegram, and on the 22d, after speaking briefly to the hosts of sorrowing relatives and friends, his body was consigned to the grave, to quietly await the resurrection, the redemption from the grave. Then all that we hope for in this life will be complete.

May the God of all grace minister strength and comfort to the family.

ALSO,

SISTER **E. C. Tidwell** was born July 10th, 1819, and died Nov. 17th, 1900, and was married to Mr. E. Tidwell, Jan. 26th, 1836. They moved to Texas and settled in Bowie Co., many years ago. She joined the Old School Baptist Church in 1859, and lived a consistent christian life, being loved and highly esteemed by all who knew her. Her devoted husband preceded her to the grave many years, and she lived with one of her sons until the blessed Lord was pleased to call her home, which was her great desire: to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord. She leaves two sons and many relatives and friends, with the whole brotherhood, to mourn her demise. But we mourn not as those who have no hope, for we believe our loss is her gain, as she has gone to rest. She was firm and unwavering in her faith, and she was a firm believer in the unlimited purposes of God. She never complained of others, knowing they were blind and could not understand.

Her body was consigned to the grave after a short talk by the writer of this sketch, being surrounded by a large congregation of brethren, relatives and friends, there to await the resurrection. Then, dear children, weep not for mother, but remember her counsel, and try to follow her example, that you may be like mother when you come to die, have no regrets to leave this world, but as she did, peacefully and quietly pass away to that eternal home of the just.

May God in his goodness give you grace of consolation, and minister to all your needs.

J. E. KNIGHTEN.

NAPLES, Texas.

John Dean was born in Rio township, Knox Co., Ill., Sept. 13th, 1837, and died in Galesburg, Ill, Sept. 25th, 1900. Brother Dean was married to Miss Lucinda Pitman, Dec. 16th, 1858, by whom he became the father of two sons and three daughters, all living and settled in life. In November, 1860, he received a hope in Christ, and it was ever after a blessed hope to him, and in May following united with the Henderson Church of Old School Baptists, near his home, and was baptized by Elder I. N. Vanmeter, and remained a worthy member during the remainder of his life. It mattered little how busy or how deeply absorbed with the affairs of his business, he was never too deeply engaged to talk of his heavenly prospects. He possessed a wonderful faculty for entering into the spirit of and absorbing gospel preaching, and always came home filled full and ready to say, "Stay thy hand, for my cup runneth over." He was possessed of a spirit of meekness, and while he was well established in the doctrine of eternal and unconditional election, salvation by grace, perseverance of the saints through grace to eternal glory, he was not contentious, but always filled with a spirit of forbearance and of solicitude for the peace and prosperity of the cause of his blessed Master.

His funeral occurred at his late home in the city of Galesburg, Sept. 27th, and was attended by a large number of sympathizing neighbors, relatives and friends. The services were conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder S. H. Humphrey, after which his remains were buried in one of the beautiful cemeteries of the city, to await the pleasure of the Lord.

ALSO,

Martha J. Bloomfield was born in Indiana, August 12th, 1844, and came with her parents, brothers and sisters, to Knox Co., Ill., in 1845, where she grew to womanhood, and in 1868 was married to Michael

Hampsch. Of a family of eight children five are living, and together with the husband, mourn the loss of a loving and indulgent mother, and faithful companion. She had never united with any church, but those who were in a position to know of her desires and aspirations, have no doubt as to her being in possession of an assurance more precious than fine gold, that there was in store for her a blessed inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled and full of glory. As much as it was possible for her to, she attended the meetings of the church, and always enjoyed the ministrations of the gospel. After a protracted illness of several months duration, during which she bore her suffering without a murmur or complaint, she passed quietly and peacefully away, on the morning of Sept. 27th, 1900.

The funeral occurred on Sunday, Sept. 30th, from the Old School Baptist meeting-house, and was very largely attended. The services were conducted by the writer, assisted by brother B. F. Butler.

ALSO,

Mary A. Simmons, daughter of brother Thompson and sister Emma Simmons, of New Hope Church, Greenbush, Warren Co., Ill., was born Oct. 30th, 1877, married August 4th, 1898, to John D. Shafer, died Oct. 1st, 1900, aged 22 years and 11 months. Her disease was typhoid fever, which attacked both she and her husband, and her rather delicate constitution was not possessed of sufficient vitality to overcome the ravages of the fever, and after suffering with almost superhuman patience, possessed with a spirit of perfect reconciliation, she quietly and peacefully fell asleep.

"Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep,
From which none ever wake to weep."

She gave her little babe to her mother, and gave directions for her burial, and her friends are fully satisfied that she leaned her head on Jesus' breast, and breathed her life out sweetly there.

The funeral occurred on Oct. 2d, from the Old School Baptist meeting-house, in the village of Greenbush. The services were conducted by the writer, after which she was buried in the village cemetery, with a feeling of confidence in the promise of our blessed Lord and Master, that there is laid up for her a crown of righteousness, which that righteous Judge will give all those that look for his appearing.

SMITH KETCHUM.

ELMWOOD, Ill., Dec. 20, 1900.

SISTER **Christinie Holmes** departed this life at her home in Henry Co., Mo., Nov. 1st, 1900, in the 55th year of her age. Sister Holmes, whose maiden name was Winslor, was born in Germany, Feb. 14th, 1845, and moved with her parents to America in 1856. She was married to Daniel G. Holmes, March 1st, 1867. The fruit of this union was eight children, seven are living, three boys and four girls. Sister Holmes was raised a Catholic, and knew nothing but Catholicism until after she married brother Holmes, and moved into the neighborhood of Sardis Predestinarian Baptist Church, in Henry Co., Mo. She was not allowed the privilege while with her parents of reading the Bible, and after her marriage she borrowed a Bible and began reading it with great interest, and she joined Sardis Church in 1868 or 1869, and was baptized by Elder Joseph Warder. For this act sister Holmes was disinherited by her parents, which verified what our Savior said: I came to set at variance the father against the son, &c., and a man's foes shall be they of his own household. It could be said indeed that she left father and mother to follow her Lord. She had a bright experience, was well versed in the Scriptures, and had a great zeal for the cause she loved. She had but few that excelled her in the knowledge of our Lord and his kingdom. All that knew sister Holmes, knew her to love her. Ever since the writer knew her she has lived some twenty miles from her church, so she could not get to her meetings regularly, but she seemed to be delighted to meet with her brethren and sisters. She was a hard working woman, and it is said exposure brought on lung trouble, which ended in death, dying in the triumphs of a living faith in her Lord.

Her funeral was preached at the family residence, by Elder Joseph Clapp, after which her remains were laid away to come forth at the great sound of the trumpet, and we that knew her have evidence that she will be fashioned like unto the glorious body of her Lord.

H. W. NEWTON.

OAK GROVE, Mo., Dec., 1900.

OUR esteemed sister, **Mrs. Sarah E. Brook,** was released from the sufferings of earth on the 8th day of December, 1900, at the residence of her only child, Mrs. Wm. A. Preston, in Rutherford, N. J., after a long and severe period of suffering, in the 63d year of her age. The immediate cause of her death was a rapidly growing cancer in the breast, which soon exhausted her little strength.

In company with her late husband, Deacon David Brook, our sister was received in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church in Warwick, N. Y., and baptized in June, 1888, abiding in the love and fellowship of the church until called to her everlasting rest. Many of those who have attended the associational meetings here will remember her cordial hospitality in entertaining the saints. Even after failing health prevented her keeping house she gladly received and entertained the saints at her boarding house. Last spring she was obliged to leave Warwick, and reside with her daughter, in Rutherford, where she was separated from her church, yet she continued to correspond with those whom she loved until the very last or her earthly sojourn.

A very large circle of friends join with the daughter and other relatives in mourning her departure, but those of like precious faith feel assured that our loss is her eternal gain. May the Lord minister consolation to her aged sister, and to all who mourn her departure, and especially to the church from which she was called, and enable each one to rest in the assurance that infinite love has released our dear one from the sorrows of earth, and taken her into the glorious joy of his immediate presence.

WM. L. BEEBE.

WARWICK, N. Y., Jan. 4, 1901.

DIED—**Deacon A. C. Legg**, at his home near Elkmont, Ala., Dec. 16th, 1900, in the 81st year of his age. He was born in Madison Co., Ala., July 21th, 1820, and came with his parents to Limestone, in 1824, and continuously resided here until called away by death. Being reared on a farm, he chose farming as his occupation, and was very successful, having accumulated good property. He stood very high in the estimation of the people, of all classes, and was noted for his kindness to the poor and needy. He was a remarkable man in many respects, above the average in point of natural intelligence, physical energy, moral worth and religious zeal (of the Bible kind). He joined the Old School Baptists in early life, was soon chosen deacon of the church, and proved faithful unto death. He leaves a sorrowing widow and four children, three daughters and one son, with many other relatives and friends, together with the church, to mourn the loss of an affectionate husband, kind and indulgent father, a good neighbor, true friend and faithful brother.

He was buried in Antioch Cemetery, near Elkmont, Limestone Co., Ala.

J. M. PAYNE.

Cordelia Emily Knotts William was born Feb. 22d, 1869, near Springfield, Ill., and died Dec. 26th, 1900, of a complication of diseases. While she had been in declining health the past seven years, she was a great sufferer only the past few weeks. Sister William united with the Old School Baptist Church of Salem, in February, 1886, and was baptized by Elder W. A. Thompson.

The funeral services were conducted from the home church, Elder Thompson preaching the funeral sermon. His text was Mark xiv. 8. Sister Cordie's life was one of meekness, patience, forbearance and love. We mourn not as those without a hope, for she leaves an evidence of a strong, beautiful faith in the dear Redeemer. She leaves to mourn her loss a husband, little daughter Frankie, a mother, three sisters and a brother, and many friends. We feel our great loss is her eternal gain, and ask for submission to say, Thy will, O Father, be done.

MARY PEDDICORD BARBIE.

CHATHAM, Ill.

DIED—Of typhoid fever, Oct. 28th, 1900, our dear young friend, **James L. Wright**, late of Waddy, in the 26th year of his age. He grew up to manhood, loved and respected by all that knew him; in business he was quick, active and genial to all, always seemed to have a cheering word for every one he met; his life was one of honesty and uprightness, such as we find few of in this dark day of pride and vanity. He had never made a public profession of religion, but gave evidence of an humble hope and faith in the Lord Jesus, by the well selected hymns which seemed to be his favorites. Many acts, which often speak louder than words, indicated a circumcised heart, and we believe he died in faith, and joined with the heavenly host in sweet anthems of praise to the God of love. Many who attended the last Mt. Pleasant Association, and were entertained by his dear father and mother, will remember "Jimmie," as he was familiarly called, and will read this notice with sadness and sorrow of heart. He recently engaged in business in this place, and was taken sick at his brother Joseph's, (whose heart and his were knit together like that of Johnathan and David) only lingering eleven days, when he peacefully fell asleep in Jesus. He leaves a dear father and mother, and two devoted brothers, who were with him and did all that loving hands could do to alleviate his suffering, and who deeply mourn the loss of the loving son and brother, with many friends.

His funeral on the 30th was largely attended, and was conducted by our dear young brother, Dudley G. Johnson, assisted by the writer, when that which is mortal was laid to rest in Grove Hill Cemetery, beside a beloved and only sister, to await the resurrection morn.

How short the race our friend has run;
Cut down in all his bloom;
The course but yesterday begun,
Now finished in the tomb.

May the Lord comfort the hearts of the mourning ones.

P. W. SAWIN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Martin D. Fisher having changed his address from Hallwood, Va., to Valley Stream, Nassau Co., N. Y., requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged.....$402 80
Richard Waller, Mo., $1.00; James Bannister, Ont., $3.00; H. J. O'Bannon, Va., $1.00; H. Monroe, Ohio, $2.00; Mrs. Cynthia Barlow, N. Y., $1.00; Elder J. D. Hubbell, N. Y., $2.00; Dr. B. P. Earle, Ky., $1.00.—Total..... 11 00

Total to date.....$413 80

MEETINGS.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 69. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1901. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PLEASANT PLAINS, Ill., Jan. 1, 1901.

MY DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have just received and read the SIGNS for Jan. 1st, 1901. I believe I read it with more reverence for the truth, more thankfulness for the privilege, and more love, fellowship and sympathy for the editors, than ever before. For a number of years of my mortal pilgrimage, the SIGNS has filled a place in my life that no other paper could. If one should ask me why I love, patronize and uphold the SIGNS, I can give but one answer, and that is, because it suits me. It is in keeping with my experience, it agrees with the teaching of the Bible, and brings me into correspondence with the faithful in Christ throughout all the land.

In looking back over the achievements of the century that has just closed, we see the progress that men have made in all the spheres of human thought and action. Progress in truth, and progress in error; progress in knowledge, and progress in ignorance; progress in virtue, and progress in vice. Above all, the nations have progressed in avarice, greed, and the spirit of conquest. The progress in religion has been signal but alarming. All creeds and professions have openly departed from their ancient steadfastness, they have all caught the delusive idea of progress. The Mohammedan of to-day is not the Mohammedan of one hundred years ago, but worst of all is, he is no improvement on his brethren in the past. He is a Mussulman in name only, and cares nothing at heart for the faith in God's decrees that once pervaded Arabia as the very soul and spirit of the religion of Arabia's prophet. The Jew of to-day is entirely different in his faith from the Jew of one hundred years ago; his Sabbaths are a dead tradition, his sacrifices a conscious burden, his feasts are perpetuated through fear of reproach, if he should abandon them. The Catholic hierarchy, which has long been looked upon as the most impregnable font of conservatism, is giving way to the pressure, and is beginning to swerve from her ancient steadfastness. The Episcopalians have long since denied their thirty-nine articles of religion, especially the seventeenth, which treats of predestination. The Presbyterians have at last agreed to expunge from their confession of faith the doctrine of God's decrees, which has long since

departed from their hearts and consciences, and disappeared from their pulpits and theological schools.

All the departures mentioned, and many that are not mentioned, are moved by the same cause, and are tending in the same direction. But what pains me most is that in the midst of all this, many Old Baptists show a disposition to go with all the rest. The first step in this direction is to find fault with God's decrees, to begin to oppose predestination, to find fault with salvation by grace, and to desire to substitute free agency, conditions and works, for the efficacious and sovereign grace of God, in his daily care of his people. Every moment God waters his vineyard, lest any touch or harm it. Where is there any time or any opportunity for any agency under heaven to get in between God's momentary waterings, to bring a blessing to one of God's poor that was not given in Christ according to God's choice before the world began? God is the sole dispenser of his grace, both for time and for eternity. Christ is the servant of his people. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister; the elder shall serve the younger, is the keynote of the gospel of Christ; Christ is our elder Brother, and he serves us. When I look back over the way which I have came, I must confess that the Lord alone did lead me. When I first felt the movement of sin within me, it was Christ that moved in my heart. I knew no place to go but to my own works. I found no relief there; all was failure. I reached the end of my strength; I saw an end of perfection. I knew nothing more, and without God's almighty grace there I must have remained; but he brought salvation, unexpected salvation, unmerited salvation, a salvation unknown and incomprehensible to me: salvation by Christ.

When I afterward in my ignorance wandered in doubt and unbelief, and in false doctrine, he still kept me, guided me and preserved me; bless his holy name. When I, ignorantly, joined a false church, he still guided and blessed and led and taught me, and when the time came for me to hear the proclamation of his truth, the way was opened, the preacher there, and I was there; he preached, and my heart received it, and rejoiced. God led me out of Babylon, against all opposition; he removed all obstacles; he united me in heart and soul with his people, and then gave me a place among them in church membership. And ever since, in all my troubles, in all my sorrows, in all my confusions, he has comforted me, he has borne me and carried me, and has dispelled my confusions, and established my goings. These things, confirmed by the declarations of the holy Scriptures, have established me in the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS, which is the doctrine of God our Savior. I am glad that I have company in my pilgrimage in the doctrine of God. In the midst of all departures, God has always reserved to himself a remnant according to the election of grace. This was so in former times, and it is so now. My only hope that any shall continue steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine, is in God's election. Let the heathen rage, and the people continue to imagine vain things, the God of heaven rules, and his church is his peculiar care. The church is dead, and her life is hid with Christ in God. Even when we were dead in sins, our life was hid with Christ in God; before Adam was created, our life was there. The sin of the first man did not reach that life, and never can reach it. Sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called. Thus the record stands; thus the

record stood when we were dead in sins; thus the record stood from the ages eternal, and thus it forever shall stand. We were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and this is God's purpose of election, and must stand. This purpose stood in the case of Abel, it stood in the case of Isaac, Jacob, the prophets, and millions in every nation, kindred, tongue and people. All things are ordered to this end; nothing has ever taken place in heaven or in earth but what was ordered, that this purpose of election might stand. The subtlety of Satan, the transgression of Adam, the treachery of Judas, the blindness and hardness of pharisees, the inveterate malignity of Jewish priests and scribes, the opposition of Gentile rules, were all embraced in this eternal purpose, and ordered, restricted and disposed so that nothing of them has been done but what God's hand and God's counsel determined before to be done. I know that men hate this truth; they also hate the author of it, and of course hate those that hold it. They do not want to grant the potter power over the clay to make of the same lump one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. They would rather have God make the vessel to honor, and then the vessel make itself to dishonor. But how can a vessel be any other than the potter makes it? To deny that God makes vessels both to honor and to dishonor, is to reply against him, and this seems to be the chief business of man. The world is full of men and women professing to be lovers and worshipers of God, whose every effort and entire lives are spent in replying against him.

In the midst of all the confusion, vain jangling and desperate opposition to the truth, there are some who still declare it; some who cannot turn away from it, because it *abides* in them; it is written in their hearts; it is imprinted in their minds; it is burned into their consciences; it is a fire in their bones; it is a voice upon their lips, and it finds a vent; it makes an utterance; its proclamation is perpetuated. How beautiful upon the mountain are the feet of him that proclaims it; how gracious are the lips of him who speaks it; how blessed are the ears of him who hears it.

For my part I cannot go with nineteenth century religion, nor with twentieth century religion. Nothing will answer my case but Christ—Christ in doctrine, Christ in order, Christ in joy, Christ in sorrow, Christ in light, Christ in darkness, Christ at all times and under all circumstances. His obedience must be made my obedience, his righteousness must be my righteousness, he is my life; all my springs are in him, all my hope, all my comfort, all my salvation for time and for eternity, centers in him. If he is all this to me, how can I preach anything short of this to others? A repentance that is not wrought by him is no more than a sorrow of the world, that worketh death; a hope that he is not the substance of is vain, and shall end in disappointment; a faith that he is not the author and finisher of, is a dead faith, and is destitute both of the substance of hope, and the evidence of things not seen; a righteousness that is not in him is filthy rags, an obedience that he is not the soul and spirit of, is mockery and delusion; any works that he does not work in a man, are the works of unbelief, darkness and presumption; a wisdom that is not comprehended in him is the wisdom of the world, and is foolishness with God; it is carnal, sensual and devilish; any fruits that are not produced by his life in us, are not the fruit of the Spirit, but are ar-

tificial, vain and deceptive; a sermon that he is not the Alpha and Omega of, is false, delusive and destructive.

This is my New Year greeting to all those who know and love the truth, those who are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, to the pilgrims and strangers in this world who have here no abiding city. Go on in the name and love and strength of Israel's God; go on in the power of his might, in the strength of his Spirit fearing not man whose breath is in his nostrils; go on in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace; put on the whole armor of God; go on in the fellowship which is with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ; go on in the faith and order of the gospel; go on, looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of your faith.

To those whose lot it is to preach the word, I would say, Stand upon the walls of Zion; stand in the gaps, and remember that "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain." "Study to shew yourselves approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." "Preach the word, * * * reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine." "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves." Your inheritance in this world is tribulation, but your heritage in Jesus is peace.

And now, brother Beebe and brother Chick, may the Lord bless you both. He has blessed you and sustained you in the work whereunto he has called you. He has made you a blessing to many; you have both been a blessing to me, and I desire here to confess it.

May God sustain the SIGNS and all his faithful servants.

H. M. CURRY.

THE JEALOUSY OF THE LORD.

(Exodus xxxiv. 14.)

(NUMBER ONE.)

MY DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD:—For some days I have felt promptings within to take my pen and write you a few lines in return for your grateful letter, but the opportunity I did not find, other cares occupied me. It is written, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant." I trust we know a little of this secret, and have had some precious and comforting glimpses of his covenant. Perhaps I cannot always frame my speech to say, I fear the Lord, but since the time my heart was first divinely exercised toward him, although the affairs of my soul have been sometimes in a desperate plight, yet that word in Psalm lxxxvi. 11, has been maintained by the Spirit within me, "Unite my heart to fear thy name." However far off the child of God has declined from the ways of the Lord, there will spring up affectionate longings toward the name of the Lord. "The desire of our soul is to thy name and to the remembrance of thee."

You remember that some time ago I intimated to you that I had thoughts of writing you a series of letters upon a certain subject that was then exercising my thoughts. Well, I have not done so, and it seems far off now, the life, the beauty, the sweetness of the subject seem to have been withdrawn; indeed, I do not seem to retain in my thoughts the skeleton of the matter, but the bones lie scattered in the open valley, and are very dry. If I should gather together bone to his bone, I could hardly make my skeleton stand up, and then I could not clothe it with flesh and animate it with life; I could not set before you the church in her beauty as I then beheld her, when I first pur-

posed to write to you upon that delightful theme. The vision has gone up from me, but should the Lord open the heavens again, and repeat the sight, if it is his will I should like to tell you something about it. Since then many things have been in my thoughts, some were sweet, and others bitter; some musings made my heart ache, and then I had contemplations upon our God that gave me peace and rest, and little moments of rejoicing. Amidst my contemplations of late there has been a subject upon which a number of times I have had some thought. At first I thought it strange, but the more I mused the more I felt I knew a little something about it, and that little something I should like to tell you. The subject is, The jealousy of the Lord. I feel to approach the subject with reverence, for I felt in my musings that it was something very sacred, and upon the lines in which there has been a little opening up of the subject to me it is I feel with humility of heart, and holy fear of the great name of the Lord, that I venture to pen you some of my thoughts. I know at all times in speaking of God it should be with reverence, but to speak of the jealousy of our God is to speak of him with such intimacy that it seems to be beyond what poor, finite creatures can have knowledge of. But God, though so infinite and glorious, reveals himself by the Holy Ghost unto his own. The Holy Ghost in ages past moved men, and they spake the things which he revealed unto them, and our precious Scriptures are what they were thus inspired to write. In those Scriptures God speaks unto Israel, "Thou shalt worship no other God: for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God."—Exodus xxxiv. 14. The apostle John writes, "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God; for God is love."—1 John iv. 7, 8. The love and jealousy of God are related, as are all the attributes of God. Therefore if we know him whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God, it is our God who is love that is jealous. As the love that the children of God have unto God and to one another is of God, so there is a jealousy which they have some knowledge of, which is also of God. Thus the apostle Paul writes, "I am jealous over you with godly jealousy."—2 Cor. xi. 2. The jealousy of the Lord, and this godly jealousy of which the apostle speaks, is not to be confounded with the vile jealousy that rages sometimes in the breasts of mortals. The Lord, whose name is Jealous, is pure, and his jealousy revealed in relation to his people is as pure and sacred as his love. It is only in consideration of the relations that God is revealed as sustaining to his people that we can attain to a right apprehension of the jealousy of the Lord whose name is Jealous. He is the Creator, and they are his creatures; he is their God and Father, and they are his children. But the highest, the most sublime, the most endearing revelation of himself unto his elect, is that the Lord is the Husband of the church: "For thy Maker is thine Husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called."—Isaiah liv. 5. It is especially in connection with this relationship that my contemplations have been upon the jealousy of the Lord. As a nearer approach to the subject it is blessed to consider that God was manifest in the flesh. Our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the brightness of God, the Father's glory, and the express image of his person, is the Incarnate Son of God. "The

Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." He, our beloved Savior, equal with God, and who is of the seed of Abraham, the child of the Virgin Mary according to the flesh, is in the bosom of the Father, and declares the Father unto us. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines in the face of Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. He is very God (John i. 1–3; Heb. i. 2–8,) and verily man. (Heb. ii. 16.) Christ is the Husband and Head of the church. "This is a great mystery." The gospel tells of the Lord's great mercy to sinners, and of his salvation. Who is our Redeemer and Savior? He is, saith the apostle, the Husband and Head of the church. He is the Savior of the body. (Eph. v. 23.) Therefore in his doctrine he declares, "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin unto Christ."—2 Cor. xi. 2. To be called unto the fellowship of this mystery is an unspeakable blessing, the highest favor that can be bestowed upon a sinful creature; indeed, it is the foretaste of the blessedness of heaven. When it pleases the Lord to call his elect by his grace, they begin to feel they are sinners, and find themselves poor and needy, and in due time he gives them sweet tastes of his pardoning love that flows through the blood of the Lamb unto them. The Savior revealed to poor sinners by the Holy Spirit, is all their heart's desire, to him their longing souls flee as their sanctuary from sin and the curse of the law. Jesus is their great Deliverer, their merciful and faithful High Priest; indeed, as they grow in the knowledge of him they with unspeakable comfort realize that "Christ is all." You, dear sister, and I, acknowledge him to be such unto us. Upon his almighty arm we would lean, and from his fullness derive all our supplies, and all our fitness for time and eternity, for in ourselves we have no sufficiency, we are nothing, but Christ is all. The more and more poor sinners learn of Jesus, the more lovely and desirable he is unto them. To him our warm desires flow forth, and we love him because he first loved us. Our Savior, who is our Husband, shed his own blood to cleanse away our guilt; he poured out his soul unto death to ransom us from the power of the grave, and to redeem us from death. In his incomparable love he gave himself for his bride, a sacrifice of a sweet smelling sacrifice, to redeem her from all iniquity, "that he might sanctify and cleanse the church with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." In the time of our first thoughts and first comforts that we tasted in Jesus, we felt to say in our hearts, Jesus is dear to me. It was the time of our "first love." (Rev. ii. 4.) The love of our espousals, (Jer. ii. 2,) and in these days of spiritual youth we sang, (Hosea ii. 15,) for we were happy in the hope of the forgiveness of our sins, and our song was, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." In our knowledge of Jesus as our Savior and King, we dwell safely, secured by his atoning blood from all encroachments of the enemy; we have rest and peace in our hearts in our Beloved. In Jesus is our perfect safety. "In his days [when he reigns as our Savior and King in our sight, and with eyes of trustful love we are looking unto him,] Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteous-

ness."—Jer. xxiii. 6. It is a wondrous act of God's love that Christ's righteousness is unto and upon all that believe in him. The gospel brings us the tidings of great joy, that Christ Jesus was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. All the glorious transactions of the everlasting God, in the salvation and justification of his chosen, are brought into view in the gospel, declaring the Son of God to be the Husband of the church. And so in oneness is the church accounted to be with Christ, that she stands forth in him before the Majesty in the heavens in eternal excellency, holy, unblamable and unreprovable, and the Lord declares, "This is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our righteousness."—Jer. xxxiii. 16. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? Her Husband hath died for her, yea, rather he is risen again, and is even at the right hand of God, and maketh intercession for her. O, it is sweet to sing,

"My beloved Intercessor stands before the throne of God,
Pleading for a vile transgressor, his atoning, precious blood.
Precious Jesus, O how sweet to live on thee."

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

"Jesus loved, and loves forever,
Sion on his heart does dwell;
He will never, never, never
Leave his church a prey to hell:
All is settled, and my soul approves it well."

While I have been writing the last few minutes I have felt that the things of which we speak are in realms divine, far removed from what the depraved mind of man can attain unto. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." If it were not for the teaching of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, how could a creature, a sinful creature, dare reach unto and indulge the thought that our Maker is our Husband? There is something so very sacred in all this, that God should reveal unto his people that he has brought them into such union with himself in Christ Jesus our Lord, the Incarnate Son of God. This is the holy of holies which the uncircumcised in heart can never enter.

I have written lengthily enough for a letter, and have but penned an introduction to the subject of the jealousy of the Lord. I have just been perusing again your good letter, and I feel there is a oneness of Spirit cementing us in those things that relate to God. All the struggles and conflicts that attend our life cannot bring to naught the life of faith which we live upon the Son of God. Our sinfulness, the temptations and cares of our lives are only as a furnace for the trial of our faith, which shall be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: whom having not seen we love; in whom, though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; receiving the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls.

I am your brother in the fellowship of the gospel,

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

STATE ROAD, Del., January, 1900.

BROTHER BEEBE:—I have a mind to offer some reflections once more to your readers. If I cite a particular passage as a kind of guide let it be this:

"In the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water."—Isa. xxxv. 6, 7.

In dealing with the term "wilderness," as used in the Scripture, we should understand that it is synonymous with desert, and that it is not a thicket of bushes and brambles, or indeed of growth of any kind, but a barren, unproductive waste. Some portions of what is desert will grow some briers and thornbushes; things that are traceable to the curse. Gospel promises and blessings seem to always trace back to a desert: "In the wilderness shall waters break out," as though these water springs never break out anywhere else. I do not believe they do, or that water springs of that kind are found elsewhere. Moses tells us in his song that the Lord found them (his people) in a waste howling wilderness, and that is of course where they were, or he would not have found them there. Then they found themselves in a desert land, but they probably had never felt its desolation until the Lord found out for them where they were. This is an individual experience; each one for himself finds himself in this deathlike desert. We have no account that the Lord ever found any one in a goodly land, or in a city of habitation. This barren and desolate desert each one finds in his own heart and mind. The plants that are so frequent and fruitful in the garden of grace, and that blossom abundantly, do not grow in the desert, nor are they known there. As the Lord did not find any of his people anywhere else, so he does not have gardens or vineyards elsewhere. But men could not make the desert fruitful, nor could they procure wells or springs of water by any amount of wisdom or labor. If this waste and barren wilderness is the depraved human heart, and is realized in a personal experience, then it will be in this same human heart that waters shall break out, and streams of living waters issue forth. The Master said that to whom he should give to drink it would be in him a well of living water springing up, &c. The arrangements both of providence and grace, are to meet and supply a needs be going before. The Lord never offers things to be refused. There is something very interesting in this arrangement, the apostle declares, "My God shall supply all your need," but the need always comes first, and the supply never comes from any other quarter. When the land becomes parched and thirsty the rain comes. It does not always come as soon as we desire, but it has never failed yet to come. Does the thirsty condition of the soil have an effect upon the atmosphere, to call forth the needed showers of rain? How else is it that the call so continually repeated is so continually and promptly met? Will somebody ask then, Why does it not come sooner? This question will do to pursue farther. Most of you remember that Christ on two or three occasions fed a multitude miraculously. He never told them a word that he was going to feed them. He never fed any multitude in the cities or villages, where food was plenty, and could be purchased. It was in a desert, where it would seem that there was no food, but moreover that none could be bought, and that if it could they have not money to meet such a demand. "Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude?" They must have been well nigh famished, as they had now continued with him three days, and had nothing to eat. He had compassion on

the multitude. They have been witnessing wonderful displays of miraculous power, and have been sustained by the intense excitement, but now is their extremity; they are ready to faint, and any provision for them is out of their reach. He had the compassion before and all the time, but they had no knowledge of it, nor any expectation of such a thing. They will always know it afterward. The gospel preacher, in whose heart this well of living water is springing up out of the treasure of what may seem to himself to be but a small experience, may feed thousands, and refresh their thirsty, famishing souls, if they are all as hungry and thirsty as those were who were famishing in the wilderness of Judea, and were fed from the Redeemer's hand. The wilderness was to be like Eden. In Eden the mist that watered the whole face of the ground, went up first from the earth. So the fountain is in the garden by which it is watered. Israel was a long time in the desert, but they remembered all the way. Although it seemed like a lifetime, yet there were lessons being learned continually. They did not starve nor perish with thirst, but they came at times to the very borders of perishing. While they were fed with angels food, they could never lay up to have any store; while they were fed what they needed on any given day, they could lay up nothing to serve them even for a single day ahead. One important lesson that they learned, and that they were so long learning, was that they had been led by the right way to enter upon and enjoy all that was in store for them; they were brought to a city of habitation. Israel of old emerged at length from the desert into a land of vineyards and olive yards, a land that had always been fruitful.

But in gospel times the wilderness itself becomes fruitful. Such is the record. The wilderness shall become like Eden, and the desert become the garden of the Lord. This wonderful revulsion in the desert inspired Solomon and Isaiah with rapturous song, but the inspiration did not cease with them, nor with the age in which they lived. Men may be yet heard to sing,

> "A blooming paradise of joy
> In this wild desert springs,
> And every sense I straight employ
> On sweet, celestial things."

It seems to me that the more of a desert it has been, the more of a paradise it becomes, and the longer one has to wander amid the desolations and wastes of the desert, the more fertile will his mind be. They never cease from yielding fruit. Solomon says, "A well of living waters," and Isaiah says, "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." The apostle speaks of them as clouds filled with rain. There is never any disappointment in them, and the living water is soul-satisfying. I think I know what it is to wander in that waste howling desert, but if I wandered there for ten years, I have known of others whose wanderings went on for fifteen or twenty years. Their wells have gone deeper, the flow of living water is colder, more refreshing and abundant. I feel glad for them, for I think I know what it cost. For myself, I thought I got a crumb now and then from the Master's table, but then I had to fast afterward as long as the old prophet Elijah did, before I could get another crumb. I remember that the roll that was given to the prophet, while in his mouth was sweet as honey, developed bitterness in his stomach, but he had to eat it, and it seems to have been the gift of his prophecy.

I find people querying as to what it is to be a christian? I find myself querying

as to what is to be a gospel minister? Living water is for those who thirst for it, for the water that comes from the wells of salvation. Hence the spring is shut up in the garden, and the garden blossoms abundantly, even with joy and singing. As every man hath received the gift, even so let him minister the same to others, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. It is required of a steward that he be found faithful. The property of which he has the stewardship, is his only to minister, and not a plant in the garden but has a right to be ministered unto, for so hath the Lord ordained.

Yours to serve,

E. RITTENHOUSE.

2 PETER III. 18.

"BUT grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

No doubt this is the desire of every child of God. All the commandments, injunctions and exhortations, find a response in the hearts of God's dear people, the law of God is written in the hearts of the people of God, and they love it; they are not satisfied until it is fulfilled in its every jot and tittle. They realize that with puny man this is an utter impossibility, for sin is mixed with all that he does. "Man at his best state is altogether vanity." All that he does is only adding sin to sin. Pure water cannot flow from a corrupt fountain. The quickened soul realizes this; he realizes that there is nothing good that he can do; he is a beggar poor at mercy's door, and he can say with the poet,

"If my soul were sent to hell
God's righteous law approves it well."

He wanders about in a solitary way, having no city to dwell in; hungry and thirsty his soul faints within him; he comes to the end of the earth; he cries unto the Lord in his trouble, and the Lord hearkens unto him and hears his cry, and leads him forth by the right way, that he may go to a city of habitation. He is turned about now, he had been pursuing that way that seemeth right unto a man, but found the end to be the ways of death. Now a new and living way is opened up to him, a crucified and risen Redeemer is revealed to him, the law of divine justice satisfied. What a precious death to die in the Lord! With such an one the prophecy is fulfilled, "In that day shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing." The poor soul who has been hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and desiring to draw near unto the Lord and his people, but could not take one step in that direction, now by faith in the name of Jesus arises to his feet, he leaps for joy, he sings a song he never could sing before: "A sinner saved by grace," and he says, "It is by the grace of God I am what I am." If he sings, he sings of grace that raised him from the fall. But yet the half is not told. When we go forth to explore the grace of God, we find an infinite ocean of love, mercy and goodness, yea, of all the infinite attributes of God.

"Angelic minds cannot explore
This deep, unfathomed sea,
'Tis void of bottom, brim or shore,
And lost in Deity."

Here we see only in part, and know in part. While we are poor, sin-defiled creatures, the grace of God is sufficient for us. God is able to keep us from falling, and to present us *faultless* in his presence, with exceeding joy. Whence come our doubts and fears? Because of our unbelief. God is just as rich in grace and mercy as he ever was, but sometimes he hides his smiling face to try us, to show us our weakness and dependence on

the grace of God. David, when he was being tried, said, "Hath God forgotten to be gracious?" "Is his mercy clean gone forever?" "And will he be favorable no more?" But he said, "This is my infirmity." He found no fault with the Lord. It was not until Job had gone backward and forward, to the right hand and the left, that he gave up and said, "But he knoweth the way that I take, when he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold." David no doubt quaked with fear when he attacked the lion and the bear, but he came out safe and sound, and Jesse's flock was none the less by the visitation of the lion and the bear, but there was a lion and a bear less, and David was encouraged to face the Philistine giant. David said, "He that delivered me from the mouth of the lion, and the paw of the bear, will also deliver me from this uncircumcised Philistine." David refused Saul's armor because he had not proved it, but he had proved the armor of God. We never know the worth of a thing until it is tried, or tested. The armor of God consists of the girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the preparation of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. If there was no warfare, if there was no fighting for the christian to do, there would be no need of an armor. When the Israelites entered the land that flowed with milk and honey, they found enemies there to fight, and while they ate of the good of the land, they also tasted the wormwood and the gall, the bread of affliction. In the antitypical Canaan, the gospel land, we find hills and valleys, mingled joys and sorrows, hopes and fears. Well may the dear child of God inquire in the days of his youth,

"Shall I be carried to the skies
On flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize,
And sailed through bloody seas?"

The evil day will come, the years will draw nigh when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them. This world is not our home, we cannot expect to go through one heaven to another. Turmoil and strife attend our pathway through this vale of tears. We must endure the wiles of the devil, we must wrestle against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. This is all necessary to make us know that the grace of God is sufficient for us, and to magnify the grace of God to our feeble eyes. The Lord is a very present help in trouble. "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me." "Leave, ah, leave me not alone; still support and comfort me." O how dependent we are upon the grace of God! Surely without him we can do nothing.

"Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day,
Earth's joys grow dim, it glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see;
O thou who changest not, abide with me."

"But grow in grace." Arminianism is a part of human nature. The children of God are partakers of both the human nature and the divine nature. Being born of the flesh, they are partakers of the Adamic nature; being born of God, they are partakers of the nature of God, or the divine nature, and these are antagonistic, and this is the source of all our trouble: "The flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Naturally we look to self for something to merit the favor of God, but ah!

"When mine eyes are turned within,
All is dark and vain and wild;

Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?"

Methinks it is at such times that we grow in grace. When the sun shines it warms the atmosphere and the soil, and at night, when the heavens drop down dew, the tender plants do their growing. When the Sun of righteousness arises with healing in his wings, he disperses our darkness and dries our tears, like the morning dew before the summer sun. Were the day to always last, we would make but little growth in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; like Peter we would soon become self-confident; like the children of Israel we would soon get to making false gods, and trusting in the work of our own hands. But our God is a jealous God; he will not give his glory to another, nor his praise to graven images. David said, "It is good for me that I was afflicted," for, "Before I was afflicted I went astray." Again he said, "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am." David was really praying that he might grow in grace. It requires a whole lifetime to learn how frail we are, to learn to trust alone in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

"Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Surely this is the desire, the end, the chief aspiration of every heaven-born soul. "It is a heaven below, the Redeemer to know." To know him is to love him. He "was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto you that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation." Yes, there is salvation in his appearing; we love his appearing.

"How tedious and tiresome the hours
When Jesus no longer I see."

O, that I might see more and more of him. O, that I might sit at his feet and learn of him. All my needs are supplied by him; I eat his words, and they are sweet to my taste, they are music to my ears, and beauty to my eyes; they are a light to my path, and a lamp to my feet. Precious Savior, draw me, and I will run after thee.

EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

CAMDEN, N. J.

PRESCOTT, Ark., Dec. 10, 1899.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I feel very lean spiritually, and believe I have learned by experience that it is impossible for me to "stir myself up to take hold of the Lord." So I must do as did David, "Wait on the Lord." "Be still and know that he is God." For every spiritual aspiration, every emotion of the heart, is caused by the working of his mighty Spirit, which at his own good time "worketh in us mightily." Often the old man is puffed up, much exalted, assumes a great deal of righteousness, and will resolve to attain to a better state of righteousness, (and I fear some of God's children have drank too much of the tempter's poison, hence the advocacy of "conditional time salvation,") but about the time he thinks he is something, the light which makes manifest shines into him, and then all of his corruption is discovered, and he says with one of old, "Behold, I am vile," I am "full of wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores," and all my "righteousness is as filthy rags," am "nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity," and I am therefore powerless to render obedience to a spiritual law. Then the "new man" has spoken to the old man and said, "Without me ye can do nothing." No natural man can voluntarily render obe-

dience to the spiritual law, or "law of the Spirit of life." It takes this Spirit of life to subdue and bring him into subjection, and if he performs one good act, he does not perform it of himself, but the power within works in him to will and to do of his own good pleasure. "As he was, so are we in this world," for he plainly said, "Of mine own self I can do nothing." Then if the blessed Son of God did not do anything of himself, how dare we claim the power to do something? He as the Son of Mary, or the one anointed, could not of himself do anything, but he says, "The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." He says again, "I came not down from heaven to do mine own will, but the will of the Father that sent me." Then if he was sent of the Father, if I am his servant I must be sent; I have no desire or power to go as a man, but if I go to meeting I am constrained by a power within, hence I am sent. I am carried by the Spirit of life, the Spirit of love, and after I am there, if I offer any praise, thanksgiving or adoration, to my Lord, either in singing, prayer or preaching, it is all done by the Spirit within. I offer my body as a living sacrifice (not a dead one) unto the Lord. All true servants of God know something about the dry, formal efforts they have made in trying to preach, which is sufficient to them "that the excellency of the power is of God, and not of them." How ashamed and cast down they feel when they realize they have vainly attempted to preach without the unction from the holy One.

Brethren who contend for conditional time salvation of believers, certainly do not have the proper conception of the Scriptures relative to whom the exhortations, admonitions and warnings are addressed. I do not understand that the old man is addressed, but it is the living, enlightened principle; it is "the Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead." He only can quicken us and give the power to put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. "It is the Spirit that quickens, the flesh profiteth nothing." How often we have to be quickened, raised from the dead. The living are the only subjects susceptible of receiving spiritual admonitions. It is like "beating the air" to admonish brethren or a church that are dead. "The carnal mind is enmity against God," and the carnal mind of God's children is as much opposed to God as the most ungodly characters. Moral deportment is very commendable, but strictly moral men are very scarce. None are strictly moral but those whom God saves by his grace, and gives them his Spirit to guide, control and direct their steps. So I conclude (experience being a basis of my conclusion) that salvation is of the Lord, both timely, temporally, spiritually and everlastingly.

As to sister Lucy A. Seale's commendation of me, I feel altogether unworthy of such, but am truly glad to know she was comforted with or by what I hope and trust the Lord gave me on that occasion to speak, and must say I felt more of the force and power of his Spirit at the several meetings I attended last year than any I have attended this year. But I have wondered how any of God's children could be comforted by my preaching, for I am slow of speech, and of a stammering tongue, and what I say or deliver seems to be in an awkward and bunglesome way, therefore I often feel ashamed and humiliated. But, my brother, I have never been ashamed of the

glorious doctrine I try in my weakness to preach. Sister Seale is a precious sister in the Lord, and manifests great interest in hearing the joyful sound. Elder Thos. Peterson, a gifted brother, and a brother in the flesh of sister Seale, tells me she writes a great deal, and loves to talk about Jesus and of his goodness and mercy to the children of men.

I am still very poor and afflicted, and much of my time full of sorrows. If my bed was a flowery bed of ease, I might soon be beside myself, and forget the mercy of my God. Then it is good for me to be afflicted, and have sorrows and tribulations; by such I am humbled, and feel my dependence upon him who is able to save to the uttermost. I am becoming more reconciled to my lot in life since I have been converted to the fact "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth," in a temporal sense as well as in a spiritual. I mean I have striven hard for riches in this world, and when convinced I could not procure such, I thought I would be content with a mere competency, and this I have been denied. Hard work and exposure have brought on afflictions so I am not able to do much. But I feel that I am in the hand of the Lord, therefore "let him do unto me as it seemeth him good."

Some good brother is still sending me the SIGNS, for which I hope I do feel thankful. How I do love to read the SIGNS. And dear brother Gold is sending me the *Landmark*, which I love to read also. May the dear Lord bless them.

I have ascertained the last few months back, that there are more here that believe in "predestination of all things" than I thought. Since learning each others' position we have been drawn closer together.

Remember me and mine in your petitions at the throne of grace. Write me as soon as you have opportunity.

Yours in much love,

P. H. JAMES.

CUMMINSVILLE, Neb., Dec., 1960.

BELOVED BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have been asked by some of the brethren to write for the SIGNS, and as our subscription is about to expire, and we want to renew, I will make the attempt in my weakness, asking the Lord to direct me. I do not feel that otherwise it could comfort any one. If I could write as comforting a letter as most of them that are in the SIGNS, I would not hesitate a minute. They are so comforting to me as they are most of the preaching we get, for we are fifty miles from the church, or an Old Baptist, and the SIGNS comes laden with good news; so many sing the same song, then I am made to rejoice that God has a people, and if they are scattered, they are with each other in spirit. O, I often think, Why are we so scattered? Then I think, God knows best. As Paul would say, "Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience," &c. "Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost." God so loved us that he gave his only begotten Son to die for us. This ought to teach us that we should look to him in everything we do, for he alone is our refuge and our strength. The time of need is always with me, but sometimes I feel like he had forsaken me. But we must run this race with patience, ever looking unto Jesus for strength. O,

what a blessed thought, The God I try to serve is able to save to the uttermost, them that are his, and he will bring them off more than conquerors, with that great love wherewith he loved them, even when they were dead in sin. How glad I am that it is not left to our will to save ourselves, as thousands have it to-day: If the sinner will only except Christ and be saved. I want to tell you, my loved ones, man's arm is too short to reach my case. I tried to be good, for I was taught by so doing I could gain heaven and immortal glory, and it seemed the harder I tried the worse I got, till I was shown it just took the Lord Jesus Christ to reach my case. And now, if I thought that I would have to save myself, I would be of all the most miserable, but thanks be to God, I do not have to think that I am going to heaven on something I can do: and I know that the whole blood-washed throng of King Immanuel will be saved. They are all in the same vessel, and King Jesus is their Captain, and he is able to land the last one of them, and he will. He is not going to carry them for awhile and then throw some overboard, if they do not do so and so, neither can the devil take one away. This is the kind of a God the blood-washed throng have got, or I do not understand the Bible. He is no try-and-fail God. What he does is done forever: he speaks and it stands fast. But what troubles me many times is to know if I am one of that blessed number? At times I feel to rejoice in the promises which the Lord has given, we know nothing of ourselves, all is of God, and we are nothing. I love to go among that people that tell what great things the Lord has done for them, and not the people that tell what great things they have done for the Lord. I think their great works are a great deal like a cob house, it does not take much to bring them to naught. They say, If we just had the money, we could save hundreds of souls which we now cannot for want of means to do it with. But, precious brethren, as it has pleased God, as I hope, to reveal his Son in me as my Savior, I feel interested in the welfare of others of like precious faith.

I have been down to our little church called Deer Creek, in Madison Co., Neb., and enjoyed the meeting very much. Elder J. S. Ham is our pastor, we all love him for the truth's sake, and hope to keep him. I enjoyed the meeting with the brethren at that place ever so much, and wish we could meet oftener than we do. It had been six months since I was to our meeting, it seems to me a longer space of time than that.

Well, dear editors, you will find within two dollars for the SIGNS another year, it is next to the Bible with us. I hardly know how I could get along without it, when I go to traveling down that dark valley, I hunt up my SIGNS, and then I find somebody on the same road I am, so I know I am not alone. What a comfort sometimes to hear others tell their travels. So many times they tell mine better than I could, and then I have a love for them that cannot be severed; they feel near and dear to me, if we never meet in this world face to face. I find by the SIGNS so many scattered away from the church, and I want to say to them, I know just how to sympathize with them, but we must remember he will never leave nor forsake us, he has said, If you make your bed in hell, lo, I am there. I look ahead to the morning of the resurrection, when the vile bodies of the saints shall come forth changed and fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, and forever be with the Lord; therefore comfort one an-

other with these words. There will be no scattered flock then. What a glorious meeting never to part.

Well, do with this as you think best, and remember me at the throne of grace, and pray for our little church, that she may ever be found in peace and harmony, is the sincere desire of the writer, and may the editors of our precious paper long live to send forth good tidings to the scattered flock of our God, for in them there is food for many a weak and hungry soul that is barred from going to church, by being so far away, or by sickness. I feel that they are a blessed work for God's humble poor. May the Lord guide us all in that strait and narrow way, is the prayer of your unworthy sister, if one at all,

ANNA B. HARPER.

ARDMORE, Indian Ter., 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—Unworthy though I feel to call you brethren, yet I do know that there is a love in my heart continually that I cannot forget, and which is the testimony by which I may know that I have passed from death unto life. I often go astray, and feel as a castaway, and it seems that all hope is gone, and I fear that I am numbered among those spoken of in John x. 26, "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." So often darkness, vapor and smoke rolls up before me, and like mountains hide me from the presence of the Lord. Then again the mist is cleared away, and my little hope is brightened up, and the still small voice sings in my heart, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." At such times we are made to rejoice in a Savior's love, which is unspeakable and full of glory, and this glory does not fade away, but is reserved in heaven for you. May we not well say with Paul, "O the depth of the riches, both of the knowledge and wisdom of God. How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out?" Then let us rejoice in God our Father, and in his righteous judgments, who through persecution and affliction works righteousness to the children of God. It is good in his sight to rebuke his little ones, and chasten them with the rod, to make them humble and submissive to all that he hath foreordained for them. "It is not in man that walketh, to direct his steps."

How often are we constrained to say with Paul, "O, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But we have a hope that is sure and steadfast, and which is not only for this life, else of all men we should be most miserable. Paul said, "By the grace of God I am what I am." Yet he also said, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." I feel that it is so with me, there is sin in all that I do, I find nothing by which I can justify myself, the only hope that I can have is in the redeeming blood of Christ. He came into the world, and suffered and died, for the perfecting of the children of God, and him God raised up from the dead, and set him at his right hand in the heavenly places, to make intercession for us. Then we know of a truth, that if saved at all, we are saved by grace through faith, which is the gift of God, by Jesus Christ our Lord.

I want to say to you, dear brother, that you have borne with me with great patience, in allowing my remittance to run so long, and still sending the SIGNS, they come with food to my soul, and are as good news from a far country; I enjoy

reading them, and yet fear that I do not appreciate them as I ought. I send money for the past, and if you continue to send them, I will remit more as soon as possible. I had no thought of writing so much when I began. Excuse my imperfections, and all bad writing.

I remain your brother in hope,

G. W. HELLUM.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., Jan. 1, 1901.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —This morning I have been reading something of the dealings of the Lord with the children of Israel, and I have found this promise, "I will not drive them out from before thee in one year; lest the land become desolate, and the beasts of the field multiply against thee. By little and little will I drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased, and inherit the land."—Exodus xxiii. 29, 30.

This travel of the children of Israel is very interesting when we can have it applied to our own case. The land of Egypt is a very striking representation of the land of sin, in which we live while in the state of nature, and the land of Canaan is a beautiful figure of the land of gospel promises, into which our Lord leads us and brings us. Moses is a figure of the law, as he was the tutor and governor of Israel all through the wilderness, and Joshua was his minister.

It was not the design of the Lord that Moses should lead the people of Israel over the river Jordan into Canaan, for the figure, and the substance represented, must agree, or the substance must reflect its true likeness in the shadow. Joshua is a true figure of Jesus Christ, who must deliver his people from their sins, and who has delivered them, and has brought them into the land of gospel promises and deliverance. By the law is the knowledge of sin, but deliverance does not come by the law.

Now none of us believe that the Lord worked in Moses to do the sin for which he was not allowed to cross over the river, but we do see that it was a part of the programme which God had purposed, to the carrying out of his holy will, concerning his people. Moses smote the rock, when the Lord had told him to speak to it. Also he said, "Must we fetch you water out of this rock?" In this he did not honor God. This weakness was in the flesh, and so we are told that what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sent his only begotten Son, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

We notice that Joshua is not often brought to the front during the life of Moses. When anything especially important, such as fighting a battle, or going up into the holy mount to meet with the Lord was to be done, Joshua is seen; yet all the time he is Moses' minister. Even so from the first of our conviction, Jesus is shining in the law, and is the minister of the law. This is the light by which we are enabled to see our true image and condemnation in the law, and by which we see the true diagnosis of our case. The law cannot deliver us, for God has not so appointed it. Thus salvation by the deeds of the law is disputed, in the shadow as well as in the substance: "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified." We have our deliverance in our Lord Jesus Christ, and by him through the Spirit it is revealed in us as Christ formed in us the hope of glory. Thus God's children are made free from sin, and become the servants of righteousness.

Now how is it that they are yet subjects

to sin, and why do they suffer so many doubts and fears, and ups and downs? This the words of the text explain; the Lord has said that he would not drive out all the enemy from before them in one day or in one year. These old dwellers in Canaan are striking figures of the sin which so abundantly dwells in us while here in the flesh. The Canaanite was still in the land, was a frequent expression in the Old Testament. But the Lord had appointed a way to drive them out; he said he would send hornets before them to drive them out. The sting of the hornet is as a very burning fire. The children of Israel were not to get the land in possession by their own sword, but the Lord would give it to them. Afterwards they have to fight the enemy who would teach them to sin, but the land the Lord gave them.

Thus the land of sweet gospel promises is given to us in Jesus Christ our Lord, and it is an inheritance, but we are soldiers all the same, and have a certain armor given to us which we are to wear, and each and every piece is mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.

The prophet tells us that the Lord shall sit as a refiner's fire and as a fuller's soap. Now the question is, Where does he sit to do this special work? Is it not in this very land which he has given to us? He does not sit in Egypt or Philiatia to purge Canaan. He may put Israel in his wash pot (Moab) for a season, to purge them, but still he himself is the refiner's fire. Our Lord has promised to bless those who bless Isaac, and to curse those that curse him. Are not those curses of God against these Canaanites who hate Israel, the sting of the hornet in our own souls? What are they there for but to drive out these enemies? Is not this the refiner's fire burning up the filthiness, and purifying and refining those who shall continually dwell in the land? God commanded the enemies of Jacob to be round about him, and also the angel of the Lord encampeth round about the just. The one is to be a thorn in the flesh to buffet him, and to try his faith, while the other is to protect him, and minister unto him. Thus the same hand which wounds also makes whole; thus the Canaanite is gradually being driven out of the land. His presence here is a sore trial to the Lord's people. In this way they come to hate themselves as the Lord has said.

Conflicts are a part of the inheritance of the Lord's people, for he has told them, "In the world ye shall have tribulation," and this is just as true as the other precious words, "In me ye shall have peace." The going out of the inhabitants of the land is very gradual, and not without trouble, but it is very sure, for the Lord has so promised, and what he has said he will do. We have the promise that these enemies shall be ashes under the soles of our feet, for the fire that is kindled within shall burn them up, both root and branch, and when the root is fully destroyed, there can be no more springing up of the branches. Thus the child of God is continually dying, and being raised up. There never was a gospel sermon preached that had not been preceded by a resurrection, for we are resurrected unto the understanding of the gospel. This continuous resurrection is but the evidence in us of the final resurrection, not only from the presence and power of the Canaanite, but from the last enemy, death. We shall also conquer him, for our Jesus conquered, and he did it for us, and by his power in us we shall also come forth from the dead. Thus the enemy

shall be fully driven out, and we shall be saved in every part. How good is this hope which we now have in us, and which enters into that within the vail, whither the forerunner has for us entered, even Jesus, made our High Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. With this blessed hope we can wait for the promise by faith; we know it will be as God has said.

May the God of all grace strengthen us to wait, and to continue to persevere in the blessed and holy cause, until it pleases him to release us, is the prayer of your brother in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

KANSAS, Ill., Dec. 30, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I send herewith a letter received a short time since from Elder J. G. Sawin. I was considering the matter whether to send it to you for publication or not, when just two days after its date, while he and family were all from home, their house, and all its contents were completely destroyed by fire. I have since learned that their house had a very fair proportion of its value covered by insurance, but the loss on the household effects is very severe. As I know Elder Sawin and wife are personally known to many of your readers, I hope you will publish this note of explanation in connection with his letter.

JAMES M. TRUE.

DECEMBER 16, 1900.

ELDER JAMES M. TRUE—DEAR BROTHER:—I am probably feeling much as you were, and as you expressed yourself in your letter received yesterday.

The Scripture you quote from Proverbs, "As face answereth to face in water, so does the heart of man to man," is surely an appropriate illustration of that characteristic of the Lord's people, that causes them to see in each other so many things that are common to the whole family. Of course I mean in that spiritual relationship that binds them together in one body or family. There are natural ties that bind the human family together, but these are not nearly so strong and enduring as the ties of christian love and fellowship, which reach into eternity itself. The face we see reflected back as we look into the water is an exact figure or type of our own. There can be no mistake in this. So answers the heart of man to man, where true spiritual fellowship and brotherly affection reigns. There is so much they have in common one with another in the way of trials, temptations, deliverances, joys and rejoicings, that to see and commune with each other, there is great peace and satisfaction, because the heart's and soul's teachings are the same. The one answers to the other. One tells of the travel of his soul, another listens and it touches a responsive chord in the heart, it is his own travel of mind and soul. The uncircumcised, the wise of the world, have no part nor lot in the joint-legacy. But the sons of God are drawn closer together by the knowledge they have of each other's comforts as well as tribulations. So they can readily say, "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies; and the God of all comfort; who comforteth in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them which are in trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds in Christ."

As you will see I am writing somewhat at random, as my mind will not center upon any one thing. I trust you will

look over the imperfections of my scribble.

My wife is just recovering from another severe cold.

Brother Spitler and I spoke yesterday that we would love to get off some day while holiday rates were in force to run over and see you, but I know not how it will be. We have so much to do and see after at that time. We certainly would like to do so, and only hope we may find the way open for us.

It has been a long, dreary night with me. When shall I behold the dawn? God knows.

But I have trespassed on your patience long enough, and will close by saying, Give our love to sister True, and sister Hayes and family.

Your brother,

J. G. SAWIN.

SMITHSHIRE, Ill., Jan. 8, 1901.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—It is a little past time for me to renew my subscription, and I beg forgiveness for the delay. Those who read and indorse your magazine should surely be prompt in paying for it. We realize that these are perilous times, and we look to you for much of guidance and comfort. For this reason I hope the editors of the SIGNS will be moved to write many of their sweet and comforting exhortations during the coming year. We believe the doctrine of the absolute foreordination of all things by God, as fully as one can believe it, still life is hard, and to know what is right and what is duty is so perplexing that we always hail those articles that relate to practical godliness with more pleasure than any other, unless it is the experiences of those that hold a like precious hope in the redemption of Christ. This is the first letter I have ever written you, though from childhood I have read and enjoyed Elder Chick's writings, as well as that of many others of your contributors. Please do not think I want you to publish this. I do not think it would be of any value to any one.

Please change the address of my SIGNS from Roseville, Warren Co., Illinois, to Smithshire, Warren Co., Illinois.

Fraternally yours,

GRACE VEECH SMITH.

ROXBURY, N. Y., Jan. 15, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—It is again time for me to renew my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which has come regularly to my house for many years, and whose pages have always been filled with gospel messages of peace and good will.

As advancing years cause my meetings with the brethren and sisters to be less frequent, the written testimonies of those of like precious faith become more dear to me, and comfort me in my loneliness, and I am often reminded when reading them, of the apostle Paul's injunction to the Philippians, "Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind."

I hope that the many able writers may long be spared to write for the edification of such weak and feeble ones as I, and that you may be blest in your labor of love.

Your unworthy sister,

LUCY A. HUMPHREY.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denotes the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1901.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JUDE 3; PHILIPPIANS II. 12.

"THE common salvation." "Work out your own salvation."

A brother in Virginia, who does not wish his name to appear, asks that we write concerning these two texts, through the SIGNS. What is in his mind especially is what of late has been called "conditional time salvation," as he says, and it appears to him that these two Scriptures sustain that idea.

It is not our purpose here to enter into a further discussion of that expression, for all who have read the SIGNS for the past few years must know that we object to that form of expression, as being misleading, and seeming to put grace far away from all the present joys of salvation, in the minds of those who accept that expression. But we do desire to give a brief expression to our understanding of the two Scriptures to which the brother has referred.

We do not understand that the term "common salvation," used by the apostle Jude, means "conditional salvation" at all. Neither do we understand that it means the joy and peace and rest found in following the Lord here in time. These things are found in the way of obedience indeed, for it is true that "In keeping the commandments there is great reward." This doctrine however is not found in the term, "common salvation," but would rather be found in the closing portion of the same verse, which reads, "It was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." The doctrine of faithful service is found in the last half of this verse, while the doctrine of the salvation of God, which leads to that service, is found in the expression, "common salvation."

The word common here does not mean that which is inferior to something else which is more valuable. Its meaning is not the same as when it is said, "The common people heard him gladly." In this last text "the common people" signified those among the ordinary walks of life, in distinction from the rulers, Rabbi's, chief priests and scribes, but in Jude the word is not used in that sense; it does not mean a salvation less important than some other salvation, but rather a salvation which is shared equally by many. In the original the word *koinos*, translated common, bears both meanings. Which is the true meaning in any given place, must be determined by the connection. Here it signifies that which is shared equally by all. So it is said in the early history of the church, as recorded in the Acts, that they which believed had all things common, that is, all shared equally. So the "common salvation" means that salvation in which all the redeemed have an equal interest.

Now Jude says that when he gave all diligence to write unto them of the "common salvation," it was needful that he should also exhort them. It is so still; when we write or preach to the people of that salvation which is of God, it

is also needful that we exhort and warn those who know that salvation, that they should contend earnestly for that faith which they have received, since there are still, as was then the case, some who have crept in, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation. And now to those who had obtained this faith through the gift of God, the apostle writes with warning and admonition that they should beware of all that is contrary to the doctrine of God. And if WE have been partakers of this "common salvation," WE are also exhorted to watch and beware of evil men, and evil, God-dishonoring doctrines. But we will not pursue this line of remark any longer. It is clear that Jude here speaks of that salvation which every soul has experienced when the blessed Jesus is revealed to him as his Savior and Redeemer. Let us also speak and write of this salvation, and remember that it is also needful to exhort those who believe, lest they be led away from their steadfastness, and depart in doctrine, as did the brethren at Galatia, or in practice as did the Corinthian church, and as it would seem, those who are addressed in this epistle. Indeed, wherever there is departure in doctrine, we shall also see very soon, grievous departures in practice, and *vice versa.*

As regards the words in Philippians, "Work out your own salvation," &c., the force of the words "work out," is to work out as a result of something gone before, which is a cause of the work produced. The apostle says that God worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. This is the cause, and the working out is the result. For instance, it is God that works his love in us, and we work out this love in loving God, and his word, and his people, and all that he loves; God works faith in us, and we believe as a result of his working; God gives us to see our own vileness and entire dependence upon him for all things spiritual, and thus we are humbled and made to thus walk in daily life. The text does not mean that we have something set before us which it is desirable to obtain, and which we shall not obtain unless we perform some conditions to that end, but it does mean that we are to show forth the life which we have received in Jesus Christ. Work out what God has worked in you. Not only has God worked this work in us, but the word is *worketh*, implying continuation of that work. Just as in Hebrews the apostle said, "We receiving a kingdom," &c., that is, it is a continual receiving of the kingdom, so here it is a continual working of the God of salvation in our hearts. In connection with this text we have often thought of the fire which Bunyan describes in his Pilgrim's Progress, which the Interpreter showed to Christian, and which burned right on, though a man was all the time pouring water upon it. The secret was, that upon the other side a man was also pouring oil continually upon the fire. So God continually pours the oil of grace out of the covenant of his grace, into the heart of his child, and thus that child is enabled to show forth this salvation daily. It is working *from* life, and not *for* life. This all the children of grace desire to do; this all the children of grace feel daily unable to do, and to such as these it is a wonderful comfort to remember the assurance that God worketh in them "to will and to do of his good pleasure." Our will is often faint, and our feet drag along the way, and our hands hang heavy by our side, and we find no might against the host of mighty foes within us, we cannot animate our own will, and even when the will to

obey is strong, we faint and find not how to do what we would. But what encouragement is here, "It is God that worketh in you both to will and [then] to do." Let us thank him first then for the will to serve him, and then for the service itself, which we are enabled to render. Can any warm his heart when it is cold? Can one revive his flagging desires when they are listless? Can any one increase the desire within him, when that desire seems faint and cold? No! no! But when the Spirit of God once more favors us with some sweet sense of the things of God, and of their excellence, then we shall begin to mourn the feebleness of our desires, the coldness of our hearts and our lagging steps, and then there will be a turning of our hearts to the Lord in prayer for a revival of these things in us, and this desire for a revival when felt, proves that the desired revival is already begun, and so we shall have to praise and thank God for all his mercies, and among them will be the working within both to will what he wills, and to do what he wills. C.

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1 PETER III. 19.

SISTER Minerva L. Martin, of Warrenton, N. C., asks what is meant in 1 Peter iii. 19, which reads, "By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison."

It is not our purpose to dwell at length upon the words quoted, nor their connection, though it is very instructive and full of matter for reflection. The preceding clause declares that Jesus was put to death in the flesh, then it declares that this same Jesus was quickened, that is, made alive from the dead, by the Spirit. This must refer to his body, as the Holy Spirit could never die, and therefore could need no quickening. He was God manifest in the flesh, and in the flesh he suffered and died, and in the flesh also was he quickened or made alive. Now by this Spirit it is declared, "He went and preached unto the spirits in prison: which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water."

Now first, it is the gospel that was preached, together with the lost and depraved state of men, from which the gospel alone can show the way of salvation. It is the same gospel that is spoken of in chapter four, verse six, "For, for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead," &c. The same truth is also declared chapter one, verse twelve, with the two preceding verses. In those verses it is said that the prophets prophesied of the grace which should come unto us, and of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, and then it is declared that the same things are now declared by those who preach the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

Second, it is Christ who is preaching all the time, and he preaches through men by the Spirit now as then.

Third, the reason why the apostle especially designates those who perished in the flood, and to whom Noah testified during all the one hundred and twenty years in which the ark was being prepared, is that he would introduce the subject of baptism as a similar figure to the waters of Noah, in the sense that as the flood separated Noah and his family forever from their old life, and from the wickedness and blasphemy of those with whom they were associated on the other side of the flood, so baptism outwardly separates those who receive it from the

old life, and from their old associates, even as Noah was in heart separated before the flood from these things, and as believers also are separated in heart before they can honestly confess this separation in the ordinance of baptism. Jesus has indeed been preaching his gospel in every age, both before and since the flood, but in this one instance there is a setting forth of the same truth that the figure of baptism sets forth, viz: the separation of believers from unbelievers.

Fourth. Let special attention be given to the truth that it was by the Spirit that he is said to have preached to the disobedient in the days of Noah. And his Spirit dwells in all his chosen still, and is especially given to those who are called to the work of the ministry, for the apostle says, The gospel was preached *with the Holy Ghost* sent down from heaven, as quoted before, and this is the same Spirit of truth, the Comforter, who is sent in the name of the Lord, to take of the things of Jesus, and to show them unto us. By this Spirit Jesus is still preaching through all his disciples, either by the words of their mouth, or by the daily life which they live unto the Lord.

There is no shadow of proof here for the Romish doctrine that while Jesus' body lay in the grave, his Spirit went into the regions of departed spirits, and again preached the gospel to them, with the offer of salvation, if they would only now believe in and accept of him. This interpretation of this text proceeds out of the mistaken idea that man has some claim upon God for a chance to be saved. That is the popular carnal view of the matter taken by men generally, and so they believe in and preach a conditional salvation, or an offered salvation, and declare that God is making overtures of salvation and offers of mercy to all men. The doctrine above named by the Romish church is carried into the next world, and it is thought that God must give men still another chance to be saved, and this text is laid hold upon to bolster up that idea. It is all Arminianism from first to last, it matters not whether relating to this life or to another beyond. This view of the text, as well as all conditional systems, makes the blood of Christ of none effect, and puts him to an open shame, since it declares that no one is saved by his atonement, and that all at last hinges upon the decision of the creature. How hopeless a system this is will appear when we remember that men by nature love darkness, sin and ungodliness, rather than light, holiness and godliness. No amount of punishment will ever cause a man to hate what he loves, though it may make him say so, in the hope of escaping the punishment. In the next state of existence men can no more be brought to choose salvation from sin unto holiness, than is the case here. The wonder-working power of God can alone bring any soul to hate what he once loves, and to love what he once hated. A man may desire happiness, while yet he loves sin; his love for happiness may lead him to say that he hates sin, and loves holiness also, but it will be only a profession after all. Christ does not then offer a salvation either in this world or in the world to come, since to do so would be useless. He does not offer happiness, since that will not accomplish any change in the desires of the heart, but only at best lead to a false profession in order to gain happiness, and he does not offer holiness, the reception of which alone is salvation, since men who love unrighteousness, can never of themselves come to love righteousness. To come to love righteousness,

is then the work of God, and is a miracle of his grace and power.

The only excuse for the theory that he went and preached to the departed, while his body was in the grave, is found in this theory of offered conditional salvation. Let the true gospel of grace, and salvation by grace through the atonement of the Lord be received and accepted, and this theory at once is seen to have nothing to stand upon. But this theory is perfectly consistent with that other theory which ascribes salvation to the choice of the creature, since if God is under obligations to give men a chance for salvation once, why may it not be argued that he is under such obligation to give them two chances, yea, any number of chances, since men are not all naturally under the same surroundings, nor of the same capacity? How puerile and trivial is such a theory. How worthy of the wisdom and holiness and power of God, is the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone. Which would be the sweeter song, that which the redeemed are declared to be singing, "Not unto us," &c., or that which would exalt the redeemed themselves as having made a better choice than the rest, for which they are crowned with righteousness and salvation in the world of glory? Let us all rejoice that our salvation is to the praise of grace, and grace alone. C.

AN APPEAL FOR HELP.

OUR beloved and aged brother Ira Phelps, who is now in his ninetieth year, we learn is in very destitute circumstances. To many of our readers brother Phelps is well and favorably known, and any assistance that can be sent him will be worthily bestowed. Address,

IRA PHELPS,

STARK, Bradford Co., Fla.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

PROVERBS I. 24–26.

BROTHER BEEBE:—If it is not asking too much, I would like to have your views of Prov. i. 24–26. Perhaps you may say it merely applies to the Jews as a nation. There are many passages like it, that I would like to see quoted in the SIGNS more frequently than I do.

JULIANA TUTTLE.

MT. CARMEL, Conn., May 25, 1858.

WE have never designedly suppressed any portion of the Scriptures, nor refused to give our views on any passage when called on to do so. We do not claim to have light on every portion of the word, but so far as we have any light, we desire to declare all the counsel of God. The Scriptures are in perfect harmony with themselves, however dark our minds may be in regard to them. There can therefore be no good reason for concealing or keeping back any portion. Sister Tuttle, we presume, will admit the above, and if so, she will admit that if we have one solitary passage in all the Bible to sustain our doctrine, we have every passage. But if it be as some seem to imagine, that the Bible sustains opposite doctrine, that some portions favor Arminianism, and other portions assert the opposite doctrine of predestination, election, sovereign, saving, irresistible and almighty grace, then we must regard that blessed book as a volume of contradictions altogether unreliable as a source of infallible instructions. The text proposed for our consideration, if it has been neglected by us, certainly has not escaped the notice of the Arminians, it is among the few which they have garbled from the Scriptures, and on which they seem to confidently rely to sustain them in their warfare upon the doctrine of sovereign grace as held forth by our Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles in the New Testa-

ment. But we can discover nothing in this passage, when rightly understood, that conflicts with any other portion of the Scripture as understood by us. The words of the text proposed for investigation and comment are, "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof. I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh."

The wise man, in this proverb, represents wisdom contending with folly, and shows the natural inclination of men to folly, and their opposition to wisdom. In whatever sense we consider wisdom, this proverb holds good. We will consider wisdom first in its literal signification. That wisdom which our beneficent Creator has bestowed upon intelligent beings, has from the morning of the creation had to encounter the folly of mankind. Her voice has been lifted up, and her speech addressed to the sons of men, but how few comparatively have pursued the course of wisdom without turning aside to folly. Did not our first parents in the garden, turn a deaf ear to wisdom, and listen attentively to folly, when they transgressed the orders which they had received from the Creator? Did Cain obey the voice of wisdom when he murdered his innocent brother? And finally, in the history of the world, from age to age, have not each successive generation madly pursued a course of folly against the clearest and most rational dictates of wisdom, in the things of nature, as set forth in the connection in this chapter? We see the young man endowed with good intellectual powers of mind, he encounters the enticing allurements of the wicked. Wisdom bids him beware! Consent thou not. The proposition is made to him, "Come with us, let us lay wait for blood; let us lurk privily for the innocent." "Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse." At such a proposition, what course does wisdom dictate? She says, Consent thou not. But is her voice and dictation heard and obeyed? Not as a general thing; the foolish youth departs from a path marked out by wisdom, and is finally involved in trouble. Justice pursues the guilty, the day of retribution comes, and then these sons of folly would gladly call wisdom to their aid, but it is too late. She will laugh at their calamity and mock at their fear. The murderer on the scaffold, about to expiate his crimes, feels only taunted and mocked by wisdom when she reminds him of the folly that has sealed his doom. The drunkard, against the dictates of his better judgment, persists in his cups, and rushes on to destruction, until overwhelmed with misery. And in regard to the whole course of human action, wisdom points out the righteous course, and folly allures to an opposite direction. Sister Tuttle rightly supposes that we will apply this proverb to the Jews, for God himself has thus applied the charge. See Isaiah i.; lxv. 1, compared with Rom. x. 21. But we do not apply it to the Jews exclusively. Gentiles as well as Jews are subject to the charge of folly.

But not only do the sons of men stand condemned as transgressors of the clearest dictates of human wisdom, but equally so in regard to the wisdom of God, which wisdom Paul says we speak in a mystery. The preaching of Christ crucified is unto them that are called, the wisdom as well as the power of God; but it is nevertheless to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks folly. And in the preaching of the cross of Christ, wisdom has lifted up her voice, and proclaimed to every creature under heaven that there is salvation

for God's people in Christ Jesus, and in no other place or name. But folly has resisted the voice of wisdom, and contends that there is salvation in the will and works of men, that there is salvation in gold and silver; in rites and ordinances of human invention; in voluntary humility and worshiping of angels; in tracts and Sunday Schools; in mission and other religious societies; in the pardons of popes; the absolution of a priest, or the benefits of an anxious bench, or the virtue of an Arminian prayer. Wisdom, through the gospel ministry has certainly protested against all these delusions, for more than eighteen hundred years, and in her solemn protestations she has invariably been justified by all her children, their experience has corroborated her testimony in all ages. "But no man," by merely human sagacity has regarded her voice. All men by nature love darkness rather than light. The wisdom of God is foolishness with, or in the estimation of men. Men, in their inventions have set at naught all the counsel of God's eternal wisdom, and substituted their own wisdom, and even go so far in modern times as to ask the Lord to forego his plans and purpose and adopt theirs. They represent that God's method of salvation will not do to rely upon, and that the last hope of a sinking world is in the wisdom and works of men.

"And would none of my reproof." The voice of wisdom in the ministry has always exposed and reproved the doctrines and commandments of men, but alas, how few have heeded these reproofs! They have reproached and persecuted those whom God has made wise unto salvation, and desired their extermination from the earth, because they hate the light, neither will they come to it lest their works should be reproved.

But the awful day of retribution is at hand when he that sitteth in the heavens shall have them in derision, according to what is written in the second Psalm.

"But wisdom is justified of her children." The Lord Jesus Christ is of God made unto *them* Wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption. And as their wisdom, his goings forth have been of old from everlasting. As their wisdom, the Lord possessed him in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. And he says, "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." "Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth."—Prov. viii. 23, 25.

We submit these views to sister Tuttle, and if she will name the other passages, which she regards of the same classification, which have not been sufficiently conspicuous in our columns, we will try to make room for them, for we want a whole Bible, a whole gospel, a whole Savior and a whole salvation.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 15, 1858.

PLEASE READ.

ALL orders for the Priesthood of Christ have been promptly filled, but if any one has failed to receive the books they ordered, please report to me, and I will send again, as I wish all to receive each copy paid for. Many have ordered two copies, which I have sent under separate wrappers, but tied together, and the address on one side. Three or four single copies have found their way back to me, having no address on them save my own, and I suppose the twine which bound the two together was broken in the mails. Therefore if those who have not received both copies ordered will inform me, they shall have it. All have my fervent love and thanks for their orders.

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Jan. 15, 1901.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$413 80
Elder E. V. White, Va., $2.00; Philemon Stout, Ill., $8.00; A friend, Ill., $1.00; Mrs. T. V. Richardson, Md., $8.00; Robert Turner, Kansas, $1.00.—Total	20 00
Total to date	**$433 80**

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Wm. Grafton, January 7th, 1901, at Liberty Grove, Md., William F. Rowland and Margaret P. Starely.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, at his residence, Jan. 1st, 1901, George Schlippi and Miss Alice Clickinger, both of Franklin Co., Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

OUR beloved pastor, **Elder Alexander Barnett,** died at his home at Edgett's Landing, Albert Co., N. B., at the advanced age of 87 years and 5 months. His disease was "la grippe" of the stomach. Elder Barnett was born in Pictou, Nova Scotia, July 22d, 1813, and died Dec. 21st, 1900. He received a hope in Christ in early life, and began preaching the gospel when about thirty years of age. In 1888, by the request of the church at this place, (Dorchester) he became, and has since remained their pastor, in which capacity he endeared himself to the brethren and friends in general, and in his death the church sustains a great loss, which we believe is his eternal gain. His theme was salvation by grace, and although firm and unwavering, he was yet kind and gentle, and we shall miss him as a father, both in the church and at our homes. But we desire to be reconciled to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. May God bless this dispensation of his providence to the comfort of the family, and enable them to say with one of old, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." May that faith and peace which we are informed was his stay and comfort in his last hours, be theirs, is the desire of the unworthy writer.

"Peace!—'tis the Lord Jehovah's hand
That blasts our joys in death,
Changes the visage once so dear,
And gathers back the breath.

Peace, all our angry passions, then,
Let each rebellious sigh
Be silent at his sovereign will,
And every murmur die."

WILLIAM C. HASTINGS.

DORCHESTER, N. B.

IT is a sad duty to announce through the SIGNS, the death of our dear mother, **Mrs. Marietta L. Johnson,** wife of Wm. Harvey Johnson. She passed away at her old home, Saturday evening, Dec. 15th, 1900, in the 86th year of her age. She leaves a husband in his 96th year, and ten children, to mourn the loss of the choicest friend of earth. She had been married to our father seventy years and seven months. Our mother became a Baptist seventy-one years ago, and united soon after our father. They held meetings at that time in Academy street, Newark. My step-sister, who is now seventy-five years of age, remembers standing by the riverside and seeing our dear mother baptized. The baptism was in the Passaic River. Our parents remained with this little flock until a division came, and becoming dissatisfied they withdrew, still holding to the Old School. Thirty-four years ago mother was received, with her daughter, Rhoda L. Cooper, into the fellowship of the Hopewell Church, where she remained a consistent member. She often said to me, after she became too feeble to attend the meetings, "I suppose they have all forgotten me," but I always tried to assure her of the many kind inquiries from members she knew. On several occasions we had visits from our pastor, Elder F. A. Chick, and they are so pleasant to remember now our dear mother is gone. He was with us on this sad occasion, and spoke with much comfort to all, from John xiv. 28, "If ye loved me, ye would rejoice." Mother's last days were most peaceful, she was in bed some twelve days, and just faded away like a flower. She had endeared herself in life, and in death she was lovely. A few minutes before her death I told my father mother could not be with us very long, and we led him by the side of her bed, and he sang the hymn commencing,

"O when shall I see Jesus, and reign with him above,
And drink the flowing fountain of everlasting love?"

A sorrowing daughter,

MARY A. HAINES.

Mrs. Mary Lambert died at her home in Lebanon, Ohio, August 24th, 1900. She was the daughter of George and Sarah Longstreth, and was married to Harvey Lambert, March 22d, 1858. To them were born six children, one of whom (Sarah Beatrice) survives her. She was a member of the Old School Baptist Church, with which she united at eighteen years of age, and was a faithful and consistent member until death. She was an affectionate and devoted mother, a kind and obliging friend and neighbor, and possessed noble traits of character, which will cause her memory to be long cherished by those who knew her. But she has gone from us; she is dead to this world with all of its sorrow and care, but alive unto God; asleep in Jesus, "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of her body," when she will awake in his likeness and be satisfied. May her sorrowing friends "Weep not as others who have no hope, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

"Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep,
From which none ever wake to weep."

The funeral services were conducted by the writer, at her late residence, speaking from Romans viii. 28, to many of her sorrowing friends.

WILLIAM I. CARNELL.

DIED—Of heart failure, Jan. 9th, 1901, **Sarah Ann Bright,** daughter of Solomon and Eliza Spurgeon, and wife of K. C. Bright. The subject of this notice was born in Pettis Co., Mo., Dec. 23d, 1844, and joined the Baptist church at South Fork, Nov., 1856, and remained a Baptist till death. She was married March 17th, 1863. To this union were born six children, two sons and four daughters, three of which preceded her to that sweet home where there is no more parting or heartaches. Three of her children, together with her husband, remain to mourn their loss of one of the best of wives, and sweetest of mothers. May God strengthen them for this sore trial, and may his richest mercies comfort her dear father and sisters who still survive her. Her faith was in the grace of God, as she said, If it was not for that faith, many things would be unbearable, but through God who strengtheneth her for her trials, she was able to bear them. She will be greatly missed in this neighborhood, always ready in all times of need, especially sickness. Many more things might be said of her good qualities, but for want of room we will have to stop.

The writer was sent for, and tried to comfort the sorrowing ones from portions of Revelation. Interment took place at 12 o'clock on the 11th, at South-fork Cemetery.

J. A. TEAGUE.

DIED—On Wednesday, Dec. 26th, 1900, at the residence of her sister and brother-in-law, Mr. Calvin Larue, near Dilts Corner, Hunterdon Co., N. J., **Miss Mary L. Kise,** in the 80th year of her age. On the record of the First Hopewell Church appears the following with regard to our sister: "June 24th, 1843: Mary Kise, a member of the church at Werts Corner, having become dissatisfied with their unscriptural proceedings, applied for membership with this church. After being questioned with regard to her experience and doctrinal views, it was agreed to receive her as a member of the church." During all the years that have elapsed since then, she has walked closely with the church, and in full and hearty love and fellowship. The above record tells the story of her separation from all the practices and sentiments which then characterized those who had departed from the faith of the gospel under the name of Baptists. We have heard her personally speak of the time when she first withdrew from their communion, and then shortly came to Hopewell, recognizing in this church her people, and in the ministry of Elder John Boggs, who was then her pastor, that truth which was precious to her. From this truth she has never departed. Her life has also been exemplary, thus adorning her profession. We do not know the exact date of her baptism, but suppose it was prior to 1832, when the division took place. Of late years she has been largely deprived of the privilege of meeting with the church, partly through living some distance away, and partly through age and increasing infirmities. For the past two years she has not been able much of the time to leave her room, but her faith has remained steadfast, and when any of the brethren visited her they found her ready to converse of divine things.

We were called to attend her funeral at the residence of her brother-in-law, on Monday, the last day of the old century, and at a request made long ago by our sister, used as a text words found in Isaiah xlii., last half of the eleventh verse, from which to hold forth the truth which alone can do us good in the trying hour. She leaves one brother and two sisters to mourn their loss. She was tenderly cared for by her sister and her husband, at whose home she died.

C.

THE Lord has seen fit in his infinite wisdom to call one from our midst, sister **Caroline Collins.** She is deeply missed; she was a devoted follower of her meek and lowly Jesus, she always seemed to me so humble, and she always had such a godly appearance at all times, and may the Lord bless her faithful companion with sustaining grace, and may her children imitate her good example and heed her godly admonitions. My prayer is that the Lord may bless them, and that on the morning of the resurrection they may be gathered as an unbroken family in that world that shall never end. It seemed hard to part with our loved one, but our loss is her eternal gain. We mourn not as those who have no hope, and she is at rest. Her home was a home for the Old Baptists at all times, and she is greatly missed among them. She attended church as long as she could. Her disease was consumption, which was long and lingering.

ANNA B. HARPER.

Bertha Belle Culpepper, daughter of J. L. and Etna Culpepper, was born August 8th, 1896, and died Nov. 14th, 1900, making her sweet stay on earth 4 years, 3 months and 6 days. Little Bertha was sick only a few days, with that awful disease, croup.

"A precious one from us is gone,
A voice we loved is stilled;
A place is vacant in our home
That never can be filled.

Darling Bertha, thou hast left us,
Here thy loss we deeply feel;
But 'tis God who has bereft us;
He can all our sorrows heal."

"MOTHER."

Mary Darnall was born in Kentucky, Sept. 18th, 1820, and was married to Williamson **Spence,** June 12th, 1840; united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Indian Grove when very young, was a constant reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for fifty years, al-

ways firm in the belief that God alone had the power to save poor sinners. She was always at her meeting when able, and done all she could for the cause, and now she wears the crown of glory, in a world where sorrow and pain never come. She passed peacefully away Jan 2d, 1901, after a brief illness. Her husband preceded her to the better world four years ago. She leaves five children and many loving friends to mourn their loss, but we remember our loss is her eternal gain. May God bless and comfort those left behind, as he only can.

MRS. M. M. SPENCE.

FAIRBURY, Ill., Jan. 15, 1901.

IT is with a sad heart I write you the obituary of our dear **Artie,** daughter of Jacob A. and Elizabeth C. **Fogerson,** born March 2d, 1884, died Nov. 17th, 1900, aged 16 years, 8 months and fifteen days. Her disease at last was said to be slow fever, of which she lay eleven days. She had been afflicted with some nervous disease since she was eight years of age, which caused her great suffering at times, but in her last illness she never seemed to suffer, only grew weaker. She told us at first she would never get well, and when we tried to cheer her, she only said, "I don't see why I should ever want to get well." She professed a hope in Christ about eighteen months before she died, and said she desired to live a christian life, but she never united with the church. She was a lover of the doctrine of predestination and election. We had taken her to Mineral Wells, Texas, but the water done her no good, and brought her home lacking one day of a week before she took her bed. She seemed to sleep a deep sleep most of the time. She did not think she was at home, often saying, "This is not our home, is it?" but knew us all, calling us by name. When aroused for medicine she would say, "They do not take that here." She called her two sisters next to her in age, and said, "I want to see you before I die," and embraced and kissed them. Then slept again, and when she awoke she took the eldest by the hand, saying with a bright smile, "You will come," then said, "Mother, do not weep, I am not sick," and to her father, "O, what makes you do that?" We had a good doctor, and done all that was in our power to keep her, but all to no avail, for God had called her.

O! it was so hard to see her die,
To watch her fleeting breath,
To fold her hands and close her eyes,
And know that this is death.

Her funeral was preached by Elder Stephens, much to the comfort of all, after which we laid her to rest in the Howard Cemetery, to await the final resurrection, when we hope she will be raised, and her body fashioned like unto the body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and will forever be with the Lord. She leaves a father, mother, three brothers and eight sisters, with many kindred and friends, to mourn their loss.

May God comfort all in this their sad bereavement, is the prayer of her broken-hearted mother,

ELIZABETH C. FOGERSON.

OUR dear brother, **Robert Alexander,** has gone home; he died Sunday last, Jan. 20th, at 1 o'clock a. m. I will send in an obituary later.

As ever, unworthily yours,

C. WINTER.

UTICA, N. Y., Jan. 21, 1901.

POETRY.

A FEW THOUGHTS.

JESUS died me to redeem,
O, how precious it does seem;
Sinners of the deepest die,
Jesus came to raise on high.
He hath suffered great indeed,
Hungry, starving souls to feed.

Jesus is the Great, the King,
And of him I love to sing,
Sing of him and his decree;
He is all in all to me.
Him alone I wish to trust,
He is holy, good and just.

He was ever meek and mild,
Humble, gentle as a child.
If his footsteps I could see,
And the way was plain to me,
If into it I could stay,
I'd be happy all the day.

But the path I seldom cross,
Satan's never at a loss
How to snatch the thought away,
With my Jesus I would stay,
And the first I know I find
He has gone out of my mind.

SARAH E. MILLER.

JUSTUS, Pa.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 69. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1901. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE JEALOUSY OF THE LORD.

(Exodus xxxiv. 14.)

(NUMBER TWO.)

MY DEAR SISTER IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS:—I have been feeling, as just now I was reading your letter, that it is as we are made to taste by faith the power and blessedness of the divine life, that we are enabled to estimate and to see how insignificant are all things that pertain to our natural life. The best of what this world affords is but transient and perishing. Then there is so much care and vexation, and at times sore affliction, pain and grief springing out of and related to our natural life. But beyond all things else it is sin, our sinfulness invading and contaminating all, that brings us into weariness and loathing of our mortal life, and under the gracious inspiration of the Holy Spirit our fervent desires flow forth to prove more fully the blessedness of life eternal, which the Father hath given us in his Son. Our life is hid with Christ in God, and when he shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory. I feel I can enter into the spirit of your letter which I may describe as a reaching forth unto those things that are heavenly. The saints of old confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth, and desired and sought for a better country, that is an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city. It is God who hath wrought us for this glorious destiny, (2 Cor. v. 5,) and hath wrought in us imperishable longings to attain unto that perfection of beauty and holiness to which we are predestinated in Christ Jesus. We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. All the imperfections that are continually appearing in ourselves, all our troubles that are measured out to us, all the dissatisfactions that we meet with in the world, instruct us to know that this is not our home, this is not our rest. We cannot build our nest below the skies, our faith looks beyond this world, and reaches forth unto the glorious eternity when with all the ransomed church of God we shall reign in life and glory with our beloved Christ, and worship the Lord for ever and ever.

"Will Jesus, as my Surety, place
Before his Father's glorious throne,
Me, as an heir of sovereign grace,
Me, as his own adopted son?

He will, I read it in his word,
And in my heart the witness feel;
I shall be with and like my Lord,
Though sin oppose, in league with hell.

I shall be with him when he comes
Triumphant down the parting skies,
And when his voice breaks up the tombs,
Among his children I shall rise.

Among his children I shall stand,
When quick and dead his throne surround,
Blest with a place at his right hand,
And with immortal glory crowned."

This hope, my dear sister, is high indeed for a poor sinner to entertain, yet is this not that hope set before us in the gospel to which with fervent affections we flee? We shall not be disappointed, for had the Lord not loved us he had not drawn us, and we should not be found seeking those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.

"O that I could now adore him,
Like the heavenly host above,
Who forever bow before him,
And unceasing sing his love!
Happy songsters,
When shall I your chorus join?"

But now, dear sister, I would again take up the theme that I sought to approach in my last letter, that is, the jealousy of the Lord, whose name is Jealous. I find there is very sweet repose to my soul when I am led by the Spirit to ponder over the covenant of wedlock subsisting between Christ and the church, and upon the consideration that Christ Jesus, the Husband of the church, is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, we may take comfort in the declaration, "He will rest in his love."—Zeph. iii. 17. Here

"In heavenly love abiding,
No change my heart shall fear;
And safe in such confiding,
For nothing changes here."

Look at the words of our beloved Bridegroom in his espousal of the church unto himself: "I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies: I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the Lord."—Hosea ii. 19, 20. What could be more assuring to the banishment of every distrustful, unbelieving thought from our hearts concerning our union to the Lamb? He will never disown, he will never put away, he will never cease to love and cherish his church, which he hath loved from eternity, and hath purchased with his precious blood. In the immutable love of God is our blissful repose; here we may say, "Our bed is green," for the love of Christ never withers, never fades, nothing can blight it, it never dies. The love of Christ is ever living, ever fragrant. O Christ, thou art immortal love! There are many things of a temporal nature that are cherished in our thoughts, but when there are given us thoughts of the love of the Lord to poor sinners, such as his loved ones know, so sweet is this, so ravishing is the thought that the dear Savior loves me, that our hearts can use the language of Christ's spouse, "We will remember thy love more than wine." Not all things else are half so dear, there is nothing half so sweet as our Emmanuel's precious love. I do not feel that the Lord will rebuke us, dear sister, if we say, "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us," and yet in my own life there has so often been times when I have forgotten that the Lord has made known his love to my soul, and I have wandered desolate, unbelieving, as though I had never felt the love of God shed abroad in my heart by the power of the Holy Ghost. I find in writing this last sentence that I am nearing the subject of the jealousy of the Lord, for it seemed to me I could see the face and hear the speech of the Lord of the whole

earth, saying, "Why art thou wandering from me, what hath turned thee aside, why art thou forgetful of my love, whence are all these suspicions, this unbelief, that thou believest not my love? What hath dared to intrude, to interfere, to estrange thee from me?" O bear with me in saying that I have seen, it seems to me, in the eyes of the Lord his jealousy beam forth as devouring flames, "the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame," that burneth up his enemies round about. In my experience by faith I have a few times witnessed this, and it is this that emboldeneth me to pen you a few lines upon the jealousy of the Lord, whose name is Jealous. (Exodus xxxiv. 14.)

All experience that is the fruit of divine teaching will be found to be in exact accord with the word of God, and all experience and knowledge that is at variance with the Scriptures is spurious, and not of the Spirit of God. There is a vast amount of religious experience in the world that is of the flesh, and no matter how it may be chrished in the breast, and is called christian experience, it is not pure gold, it bears not the image and superscription of the Holy Spirit, and is utterly refused by the Lord our God. It will not be accepted to be found putting forward our experience, and saying that is my experience when a thus saith the Lord is contrary to that experience, for all true spiritual experience and knowledge will be found in exact agreement with the Scriptures of truth. I have written thus, my dear sister, because there have been those who have presumptuously endeavored to support their erroneous views, perversions of the Scriptures, by declaring that their doctrines were revealed to them in their experience. The holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, and never teaches any one anything that is contrary to the things declared in the holy Scriptures. I once imbibed certain peculiar views concerning the person of Christ. I spent much time searching up the matter, and I vainly imagined that I found many portions of the Scriptures to support my pet doctrine. Yes, it became quite a pet of mine, I was enamored with it, I considered it a veritable delight. (The Lord mercifully kept me from promulgating it, for which I have many times felt to praise him.) But one day I met with a text of Scripture which at one blow laid my idol in the dust; this was the jealousy of the Lord. I remember well how ashamed I felt, how I felt to blush before the Lord, and to this day in reading the word of God, when I come upon those passages which I vainly imagined taught the doctrine which I reared up as an idol unto myself, and had as I thought such comfort in, I feel to sigh over the matter, and I also feel what reasons I have for gratitude to the Lord that in his jealousy he took vengeance on my inventions, and yet he still had compassion upon me. Our God and Savior will not tolerate a rival. Zion, the church of God, is his own. She is his portion, the lot of his inheritance. (Deut. xxxii. 9.) His people are his by eternal election, (Eph. i. 4,) and they are his also by eternal redemption. (Heb. ix. 12.) He has written his name upon their foreheads, and they are his by the sealing of the Holy Spirit. The church belongs to Christ, (Mark ix. 41,) she is his wife, his darling, his only one; he has no other, he loves no other, as he says, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."—Amos iii. 2. His elect, whom he hath chosen, are those whom he foreknew, whom he eternally loved. His

church he hath called Hephzibah, for his delight is in her, (Isaiah lxii. 4,) and of the church he says, "Mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually."—1 Kings ix. 3. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me. If then the Lord our Savior so loveth the church, and if after he hath made known his love unto her she goeth astray from her Husband and Redeemer, if she is enticed by flatterers, if others make love to her, and she is drawn aside to follow after them, though but for a small moment, what then? Then it will be known that the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God. His jealousy shall burn like fire, nor will the fury of it abate until he hath consumed his adversaries. For who is he, and where is he that durst presume in his heart to do so (Esther vii. 5,) unto the loved and ransomed church of God? In the Scriptures we have discoveries of Jehovah's jealousy in manifold aspects; he says, "I will be jealous for my holy name."—Ezek. xxxix. 25. That is, he will vindicate his holy name from all the pollutions, dishonors and aspersions cast upon it by his enemies and the adversaries of his people. Then again it is written that he will "be jealous for his land, and pity his people."—Joel ii. 18. He will see what the enemy hath done therein, how they have trodden it underfoot, how they have devoured it and made his pleasant land desolate, and how in its desolation it mourneth unto the Lord. He will pity his people, in his jealousy he will rebuke the devourer, and under his kind protection and smile the land that was desolate shall again become as the garden of Eden, and be his delightsome land. (Ezek. xxxvi. 35; Mal. iii. 12.) Again, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with great jealousy."—Zech. i. 14. You will see, my dear sister, by these few quotations, there is a large field in which by the illumination of the Spirit we may obtain glimpses of the jealousy of the Lord, whose name is Jealous. In the contemplation of the jealousy of the Lord we shall see that the acts of the Lord in his jealousy have a twofold aspect, that is, there are the acts of his jealousy toward his enemies, and his acts in his jealousy unto his loved and chosen church. Again, let me suggest that we do not confound the jealousy of the Lord, the holy One of Israel, with those displays of jealousy that proceed from creatures, depraved mortals. In those acts of the Lord in his jealousy toward his adversaries, and toward his beloved people, we have revelations given us of his character, and this will be very plainly declared that he is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look upon iniquity. He saith, "I am the Lord; that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." Israel, that typical nation whom the Lord took unto such nearness to himself, (Deut. iv. 7,) were nevertheless a people prone to backsliding from the Lord, provoking him to jealousy with their idolatries. (Psalm lxxviii. 58.) Though the Lord so wondrously dealt with this nation, yet it was for only little periods that they abode faithful to the Lord their God. They wandered from him, they were estranged from his covenant, and went gadding about (Jer. ii. 36,) after strange gods. Ah, they were presumptuous enough to invite them in, to establish them, to seat them in the temple of the holy One of Israel, where he had recorded his name. Could the Lord tolerate this? Could he allow another to share the honor and glory and

worship that belonged to himself alone? Hear what the Lord saith, "Son of man lift up thine eyes now the way toward the north, and behold, northward at the gate of the altar, this image of jealousy in the entry." There was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy. (Ezek. viii. 3-5.) O daughter of Zion, when this usurper came to estrange thee from thy God, why didst thou not spurn him from thy threshold? But thou admittest him in, thou didst listen to his flattering suit, thou gavest him a seat in an high and eminent place, polluting with the presence of other gods the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. I will not, dear sister, enter into a narration of the treacherous departures of Israel from the Lord, how they were allured, and played the harlot with many lovers, (Jer. iii. 1,) or the particular instances of the Lord's vengeance, in the fury of his jealousy, upon the idols, and nations that drew aside his nation from their allegiance to their covenant God, the history of all this is recorded in the Scriptures. The things that transpired with typical Israel are written for our learning, some glimpses that have been given me in which I have seen how applicable are the things that transpired in former ages to our present times, and the present experience of the churches of Christ, and our own personal experiences, I should like to portray. That which provoked the Lord to jealousy was the introduction of foreign things in the worship of the Lord. Idols of other nations, or idols of their own invention, were introduced and associated with the holy One of Israel. How could the Lord endure such rivals? These rivals, who as Jezebel, (2 Kings ix. 30,) painted their eyes and faces, bewitched Israel with their deceptive charms, and thus drew aside their devotion from the Lord their God. Idolatry, false doctrines, the world, the flesh and the devil, that entice the children of God away from the Lord, appeal to the senses and passions of the flesh. The lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life are gratified in these false lovers, but in the end how repeatedly we find that all is wormwood and gall. For the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.

The apostle Paul writing to the church at Corinth saith, "I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." It is very clearly to be seen that Paul would give no countenance to vain deceivers, with their beguiling false doctrines, for he would not have believers whom he had in the gospel presented as a chaste virgin to Christ, allured away and corrupted. The world has ever been full of false lovers of the church. Yes, damnable heresies, and doctrines of devils, practice their seductive arts; they are dressed up so nicely, they use such flattering speeches, they promise such liberty, and with their much wantonness many are allured from the simplicity of Christ. "Such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." Ah, my dear sister, those errors that invade the church of Christ do not come in all their vicious ugliness, O no. Could we see

heresies with the mask torn off we should see their frightful ugliness, and discern that they were the enemies of Christ and of us. The cunning craftiness of seducing spirits is veiled beneath such assumed pretensions to captivate the dear children of God. Ah, false doctrines appear unto us appareled in blue, as captains and rulers, all of them desirable young men. (Ezek. xxiii. 6.) But though the principles of the "another gospel" (Gal. i. 5,) appear clothed most gorgeously, horsemen riding upon horses, all of them desirable young men, though at first glance they are in our sight as angels of light, let them, saith the apostle Paul, be accursed. But if we are taken with their painted faces and much fair speech, and fall to doting upon them, then ere long we shall learn that our Savior God is a jealous God. He will take vengeance upon these delusions, he will strip them bare, and discover to his people the damnable hideousness of all errors; he will pluck us from their embraces, and shame and confusion will be the portion of his people, to think that they ever took to their bosom such vile errors that were wicked rivals of the Lord our God. It is a sure sign of degeneracy when false doctrines are treated as trifles in the churches of God, when apologies are made for those who are disseminating errors, saying such an one is a good brother, anyway he believes in salvation by grace. O, let us not be deceived by winking at this and that false doctrine. He is not a good brother that is found insinuating errors among the household of God. If such a one be a brother, he is a very naughty one. It will not better the matter to say he is sincere, that he is in a good spirit. Whatever spirit it may be that actuates any one to promulgate false doctrine, we are safe in believing that it is not by the Spirit that he is led, for the Spirit of truth never guides into untruth. We are to try the spirits: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many prophets are gone out into the world." Then, though false doctrines come with soft and flattering tongues, clothed in blue, as if from the sky, yea, though they appear clothed most gorgeously, portrayed to our view with vermilion, girded with girdles upon their loins, exceeding in dyed attire upon their head, all of them princes to look to, (Ezek. xxiii. 14, 15,) they are to be refused, to be spurned from our threshold, and happy are we if found with our heart and our eyes captivated with the King in his beauty. O, it is an exceeding great mercy not to be in any way corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. I will not attempt to set forth the multitudinous false doctrines that have vexed and have turned aside at times many of the loved ones of God, but they all, as I have already intimated, appeal to the fleshly passions of our nature. It is our vile nature that goes forth a lusting after errors. O, it is a pitiable sight to see a child of God enamored with a false doctrine, for I know from experience upon this line of things that when the Lord displays his jealousy, and destroys that which we esteemed as the delight of our eyes, we shall be having a taste of grief and of desperate sorrow. (Isaiah xvii. 10, 11.) The many gods that the tribes of Israel were at divers times captivated with, were adored as the fountains of their manifold temporal blessings, or the power by which they flourished and were triumphant. Thus they attributed to their false gods all the favors which the Lord himself, their God and Husband, had in his kindness bestowed on them. (Hosea ii. 5–13.) "Be

astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate saith the Lord. For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."

In mentioning false principles as the rivals of our God, and the corrupters of his people, we find abundant proof in the Scriptures of the Lord's abhorrence of all errors, and of the destruction he will bring upon them. False doctrines may satisfy the yearning of our sinful flesh, and while the weather is fair we may be charmed with their novelty, but they all turn us aside from the Lord, and substitute in the place of the God of truth a myth, an idol. There is but one only true and living God, so all the invented gods, such as the doctrines of men and devils, are called "vanities," (Jer. xiv. 22,) and such the Israel of God find them to be in the time when the Lord pours forth his jealousy in flames of fire. Ah, we learn in times of need that false doctrines, if such we have been following after, are of no avail. Idols in affliction and trouble afford us no relief, and yield us no sustenance. In times past a child of God may have imagined that he sucked honey out of errors, but in the waste howling wilderness they are discovered to be lying vanities indeed. None but Jesus can do helpless sinners good; Christ and him crucified is a poor sinner's only hope. All carnal religious speculations are delusive cheats, and this in due season all God's chosen shall know. When we are experiencing the strokes of God's jealousy because we have gone astray in false doctrines, we shall be brought into such places that the utter worthlessness of all error will be so made known that we shall cast these idols to the moles and the bats, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. In seasons of temptation and famine, when oppressed and bowed down under guilt, when fightings without and within weaken our strength, and make us to faint and groan as a deadly wounded man, what then can save us and afford us satisfaction? Only the simplicity that is in Christ. I know from bitter experience that anything aside from the precious gospel of Christ is an idol, and that an idol is a doctrine of vanities. (Jer. x. 8.) All false doctrines are deceitful allurers from God, they promise us fair things, but treat the child of God shamefully. In fair weather they shew much love, but in our soul's adversities they are as a deceitful brook, we go to them to quench our thirst, but not a drop of living water can they afford to cool our parched tongue. There is a mighty famine in the land, and we are in want. Then does the Lord discover to us that we have been observing lying vanities, and have forsaken our own mercies, which are treasured up and flow from Christ Jesus alone. The prodigal son said, "How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father." And the language of the church in Hosea ii. 7, is, "I will go and return to my first husband; for then was it better with me than now." O, how good it is to be humbled, and to be brought to live in simplicity upon Jesus. How sweet his entertainments are to poor sinners. His blood and righteousness are meat and drink indeed, and his lips are like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh, for he knows how to speak a word in season to the sin-vexed, tried and weary in heart. False doctrines are described as antichrist, (1 John ii. 8,) and the Lord by the manifes-

tation of his truth in our hearts discovers these errors to us, and brings destruction upon them, and we are abased beneath his faithful rebukes. "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken." "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth?"

But I will not write any more; what I have written in this long letter does not satisfy me, because I have not reached and entered into that with which my soul is more intimate, in which I have learned that "The Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God."

I am your brother in the hope eternal life,

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

LONDON, Ontario, Dec. 10, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have had it in my mind many times to write some thoughts upon the various experiences of doubts and fears, joys and sorrows, trials and triumphs, cares and tribulations, of the people of God, on their journey through this time state, as well as many other questionings, which they are called upon to endure. I have tried to put these feelings away from me many times, and have succeeded only to have them return again, so I will write such thoughts as are presented to my mind, feeling my weakness and ignorance upon spiritual things. I hope that I shall write only that which I have experienced in my own heart, as I verily believe that to write, or talk, or preach, to the comfort of the Lord's afflicted people, it must be from an experimental knowledge of the same, or as the apostle says, "from faith to faith." I believe this is as true in what we may call doctrine, as in experience, because a doctrine or truth which has not been experienced in the heart, is like faith without works, dead. But when a poor sinner has learned by experience that he cannot do anything to commend himself to the favor of God, then he realizes that if saved at all, it must be by grace alone, and not by works. So also he learns by having all his plans, purposes and anticipations thwarted or turned aside, that God's purposes will stand. And this is predestination taught in his experience to be true.

The first experience of the children of God may differ in many ways: One is suddenly arrested in his full career, and is made to feel his sinful condition with great intensity of wrath and condemnation, while another may hardly know what is wrong with him. These, while they may not tell their nearest and dearest friends for a time, yet realize that something is poisoning their earthly joys. And while they may try to drown their feeling of unrest by indulging in worldly pleasure, and may succeed as far as outside appearances go, yet they well know and feel that it is but adding gall to the secret bitterness of their hearts, and though this may go on for years, yet God's love and mercy will follow them all the days of their life, and his purpose will be fulfilled which he declares saying, "I will bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth."

I have often thought that the wonders of God's grace are just as varied as his ways in nature and in providence. One is brought early to know the grace of God, and to love and trust in him, while others have an experience of trials, fightings, doubts and fears, all their life long, and are seldom, as the poet says, "Long at ease; when one fright is over, another doth him seize." One is delivered from the depths of trouble, and the bondage of sin, and the fear of death, into the glori-

ous liberty of the children of God, and is made to rejoice in his salvation in a moment of time, and from day to day afterwards is made to rejoice in the mercy of God; while others are gradually led, step by step, as it were, into a knowledge of spiritual things, and into the light and liberty of the gospel, and so slow does the growth seem to be, that it causes much questioning in their minds as to whether it is the work of the Spirit of God, or merely a natural enlightenment. This was the case with the unworthy writer, so that I often fear that mine is not a experience of grace, and I often fear that I am deceived in the evidence of my hope, but though thus cast down, I am not destroyed, and having obtained help of God, I still hope in his mercy. One of old has said, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." Truly this was spoken of the Lord Jesus Christ, but what is true of Jesus, is also true of all his people, for "In all their affliction he was afflicted," and thus the angel of his presence saves them.

I desire to write for a little time upon the afflictions of the people of God, in a spiritual sense. It is only in a spiritual sense that their afflictions are peculiar, as naturally I believe they are about as other people are. One of their greatest afflictions is the constant load of sin which they are continually compelled to bear about with them, and which makes them often fear that they have neither part nor lot in the matter. I know that there are some of the Lord's people who do not seem to be burdened and bowed down under a sense of their sinfulness as are others. Concerning those who have never felt their lost and sinful condition before a just and holy God, Jesus said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." And, "The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." When a person finds himself a poor, lost, helpless, guilty sinner before God, and can see no way whereby he can be saved, I want to say that it is to just such characters that salvation has come, though as yet it may not be manifested to them. If one begins to tell me how sinful and unworthy he is, and that he is afraid that God can never have mercy upon one so vile as he, I cannot help a feeling of fellowship for him, because that is exactly my case, and I know that none can be worse than I, and be they rich or poor, high or low, in the esteem of the world, black or white, I cannot help the fellowship and love that God has implanted in the hearts of his people to one another. This fellowship may be often covered up, and not manifested, but it is still in the heart, and will be made manifest in time or eternity, and God, who is the author of it, will own it to his own glory.

I have wandered somewhat from the afflictions of the people of God, though their afflictions and fellowship and love are so closely connected, that it is hard to separate them. Darkness of mind and soul, and ignorance of divine things, are the cause of sore trial and trouble to the children of God, and often cause them to mourn and sigh over their sad condition. O, the days and months, and I may say years, of darkness that have been my lot. I never can express how I have tried during those seasons to even think upon the name of the Lord, but alas, not a ray of light, or hope, or comfort, could I find, and so I have been made to know that I am perfectly helpless to do the least thing to release myself from darkness and trouble of mind. I was just as helpless to do this as I was to obtain divine

life when dead in trespasses and sins, and it was under these circumstances that I was made to realize that the darkness and the light are alike from the Lord; he has just as much use for the one as for the other. One can never truly appreciate the light, who has never felt the darkness. So the Lord leads his people into darkness and sorrow, that they may know more of their helplessness, and of his great mercy and power.

Again, the children of God feel their ignorance, and to them it is a source of trouble and discomfort. They had hoped to grow in knowledge and in grace, but really feel that they grow more ignorant and unfeeling. Whereas they once could read the Bible with understanding and comfort, and could often turn to its pages for solace and rest, now alas, it seems almost all the time like a sealed book, and instead of reading it with interest and pleasure, if read at all it seems like a task, and is forgotten as soon as read, and the book is laid aside with a heavy heart. O, the pain and sadness I have often felt when I have tried to find something that would cheer my weary laden heart in the record of truth, which tells of the experience of the Lord's people, and of his love and mercy to them, but could find nothing of interest to me, or to comfort me. O, I have thought, What is the matter with me? Thus I have learned by sorrowful experience that the Spirit of God alone can teach to profit, and that the letter of the word profiteth nothing. It is like the body without the spirit, it is dead, and thus again the Lord's children are taught to know assuredly that salvation is of the Lord.

One of the greatest trials to faith that this poor, unworthy writer has had, is infidelity. Only those who have been thus tried can know its force and power. To be left to doubt the very existence of God himself, and to feel that all religion and inspiration and revelation, are only a delusion or deception, is in truth a deep, miry place to be in, from which the mighty power of God alone can raise us. It is truly a pit, a bottomless pit, for there is no resting-place for a poor, hell-deserving sinner in it. The only rest is in Jesus Christ, who is the Rock of salvation, and without him what can a poor sinner do but go down to destruction? But some one may say, Surely this can never be the condition of a child of God. I will say that if a child of God cannot be thus tempted, then I can have no hope, for I have been so tried upon this point as to feel for a time that there was no God, and no reality in religion at all. I well know what a terrible condition this is, and yet I believe that many of the children of God have been in this temptation, and we read that the dear Savior himself was tempted of the devil to doubt, saying to him, "If thou be the Son of God." I do not understand that this temptation came to the Savior in the guise of some person without, talking to him, but I believe that the suggestion was within himself, but as he was perfectly holy, the temptation could not overcome him, to lead him to doubt that he was truly the Son of God, but over poor, sinful man, when left alone even for a moment, the tempter has full power to draw him down to the depths of sin and wickedness. If any of God's children who may read this be so pressed down with infidelity as to be almost in despair, let them know that God has restored such despairing characters to rejoice again in the salvation of God, and to realize that all power in heaven and on earth are in his hand, and that he has the keys of death and hell, and that he

opens and none can shut, and shuts and none can open. If some of our "conditional time salvation" brethren will tell us how they can open when God shuts, they will tell us something that God says cannot be. If they have passed through the experience that I have, I know that the conditional system would be so thoroughly shaken with them, and out of them, that there would not be a single thread of it left. Job said, "Though I wash myself never so clean, yet wilt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me." I wonder what these clothes were? I reckon that there was a little conditional clothing on Job at one time, but when God taught him the lessons recorded in the word of God, there appears to be but little of it left, and he declares, "Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in sackcloth and ashes." He had not a single good deed to plead before the Almighty, and yet I expect he had done as much or more than any of our conditional brethren of the present day. Job's friends said, "Acquaint now thyself with God, and be at peace, thereby good shall come unto thee." Why this is precisely what our conditional friends say to-day, Acquaint yourself with God and his ways, and you will be rewarded. God did not commend what these friends of Job said, but said, "Ye have not spoken the thing that was right concerning me, as my servant Job hath."

I had no intention to say one word upon this subject, but my thoughts have run away with my pen, and so I have written what I have, but I believe it to be the truth, as recorded in the word of inspiration, and in the experience of the Lord's people.

Coldness of heart is another thing that causes mourning; it may be coldness toward brethren, or toward the cause they profess to love; it may be worldly mindedness, selfishness, and want of sympathy toward their brethren, and withholding help to those they profess to love, who are poor, and needy, and afflicted. How much are they troubled with vain conversation, and how often do they feel condemned on account of it, for the word plainly forbids us to indulge in foolish talking and jesting. I must confess that I am much given to it, and it is a source of sadness and sorrow to me. It is not that I feel that christians should put on a long, sanctimonious face, when it is not felt within, but it is becoming in a subject of grace who feels what he is by nature, and what he hopes he has been saved from, to be grave, sober and seriously minded, and willing to talk of what they are, and of what they hope God has done for them, rather than to be indulging in frivolous and foolish conversation, which cannot be profitable nor pleasant to recollect afterwards. I know from many painful experiences of what I am writing.

Indifference to the things of the kingdom causes many a dear child of God much trouble of mind also. How keen they are for worldly gain; they spend their time, strength and thoughts to acquire the riches of this world, and seem to have no time for spiritual things; if they do not feel well, or it costs a little time or money to get to the place of meeting, they feel so often that they cannot afford to go, or else it is not convenient, so that a very trifling excuse will suffice to keep them away. Thus often they are left to coldness and hardness of heart, and this is not a comfortable place to be in, as I have found to my sorrow, and yet all these things are made, in some wonderful, unaccountable way, to work for the good of the children

of God, and for the glory of his great name, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

One thing more I will mention among these things which cause sorrow to the child of God. A feeling of hatred will sometimes take possession of my sinful heart, so that it seems impossible that I can have ever known what the grace of God is; if I did, surely I would not be such a hateful being. The apostle speaks of certain wicked characters who are "Hateful and hating one another," and there are times when I feel that this just describes what I feel myself to be. I wonder if ever there was a subject of God's grace who was left as I have been, in this respect. There are times in my experience when it seems that I cannot say truthfully that I love anything or anybody; I feel to hate myself, and almost everything else; what a terrible state to get into, and yet when, as I hope, I am delivered from this awful state, I can look back and see that there was a needs be for it, that I may be humbled and kept low down in the dust of abasement, and my pride humbled. I realize that I am naturally one of the proudest of mortals, and have often feared that it was nothing but pride that kept me from running into all open wickedness, rather than the love of God, or hatred of evil; because naturally I would dislike to have people point the finger of scorn at me and say, There is one who professes to know, and love, and serve God and his ways, and now see how he conducts himself; he does not give much evidence that he has the grace of God in his heart.

O, what a wonder I am to myself, and if I am a child of God, surely I am the very least of all, and a monument of his long-suffering, mercy and grace, and if I am ever so unspeakably happy as to receive that inheritance which is in Christ Jesus, even the crown of life which God shall give at last to all his people in eternal glory, I feel that in all that vast throng there will be none who will have more cause to sing unceasing praise to his great name than I.

Your unworthy brother,

R. SCATES.

[WE especially commend the above good letter to our readers. It details so much of the daily ups and downs of the life of the believer, that it cannot but be of strength and help to many. It has helped us as we have read it. We have fellowship in these things with brother Scates.—ED.]

DANSVILLE, N. Y., Dec. 30, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Whether or not I live to read another volume of the SIGNS, I remit herewith the pay for another year. In connection with the Scriptures, it is all the preaching I have, for although there is much of what is called preaching all about me, and the steeple bells regularly announce the hour of "worship," I seldom join the crowd, preferring the quiet of my own fireside, in company with those who contribute to my spiritual enjoyment through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Having read the SIGNS ever since its first publication, or nearly so, I have sometimes thought that my interest in it is only from habit, not because I could claim a vital interest in its teachings, but I so often find the names of persons in its columns for whom I have great esteem, that I involuntarily, from mere habit, look for their communications to see what they have to say, and they so frequently say things in such complete harmony with my own thoughts and feelings, that it has become a habit with me to feel a relationship to them, whether

any exists or not. But, notwithstanding the fact that I enjoy to a considerable extent the worldly blessings of this life, friends and neighbors, with their kindly offices, participating in a measure in their recreations and pleasures, and to all outward appearance just as worldly minded as any of them, still there is a something tells me the truth which I realize, that all these pleasures are but fleeting enjoyments, unsatisfying, and soon to cease. Thus involved in the vortex of sinful pleasures, it seems sometimes as though I would be swallowed up in the whirlpool of despair, but faith, or hope, or expectation, or desire, reaches beyond and above all these multitudinous worldly pleasures, to something better, more enduring; something vastly beyond the comprehension of man, or that ever entered into his heart to conceive. People frequently tell me how good the Lord is for having provided a realm of bliss beyond this vale of tears, where our departed friends are waiting to receive us, and when we "pass over" will take us into their care and tutelage, to "progress" in virtue, and all the good qualities we know and practice so little of here. They even have a telephone, or even a "wireless" telegraph, by which communication is kept up between those who have gone before, and their friends who still remain on earth.

I do not read it so in the Bible, neither do they, if they read it as printed, for Paul says, "It is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit," &c. Now I do not know but God may have revealed "the things which he hath prepared," or those things they tell of, to these people who seem to know so much about the celestial world of pleasure, and are so happy in their anticipation of its enjoyment, but it seems that if he had, he would also have revealed to them the riches of his grace, abounding to the chief of sinners, through the atoning blood of Christ, and shewn them that "There is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved." In which case they would not, as they do, repudiate the blood and sufferings of Christ, as the foundation of their right to the inheritance of the saints in glory. They seem to have no use for Christ, only as a good man to be patterned after, imitated in all the good things he did for his fellow men; and when they have done that as far as they are able, "done the best they can," God will accept them in mercy, and they will join the saints in glory when they die, or as they express it, "when they pass over," for death is not death, but merely a transition from earth to heaven, to meet their loved ones who are waiting to receive them with shouting, and joy, and to crown them with laurels of victory, and to lead them through the golden streets to receive the plaudit, "Well done, good and faithful servant," &c., &c. Paul wrote to Timothy, "And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." And all of his preaching and teaching, with his personal experience of the revelation of God to him, went to show that there is no other name under heaven whereby we must be saved, but in the name and meritorious sacrifice of Christ. Yet those people disdain to be saved by his righteousness, and claim their own as effective, and expect to occupy a position in heaven commensurate with their

good deeds. John the revelator "Saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. * * * And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." I understand that the names of those written in the book of life were written there before the foundation of the world, and in time Christ came to redeem them from the curse of the law, and gather them into his fold, and to present them blameless in the last and great day, "when the Son of man shall come in his glory." Read the sequel in Matt. xxv. 31–46, and it will appear that those who are not found written in the book of life, those who dote upon their good works, are cast into the everlasting fire, that is, probably, to continue on everlastingly, trying to obtain that degree of perfection which is impossible without the grace of God. So they do not "enter into rest" like the people of God, who have "ceased from their labors," but labor on, ever at work, never ceasing, however weary, and consumed by their desires for more happiness.

The foregoing may be incoherent to the reader, and uninteresting, but thus my thoughts wander, and you have them for want of better. I think I have a desire to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth, but like the eunuch, How shall I understand the Scriptures, "except some man should guide me?" I have lived in this goodly town over fifty years, alone, surrounded by the pious, the good and the great, of several religious denominations, but fail to find one in harmony with me. Old Baptist churches are so far off, and I carry such a load of years, it seems impossible to come within their teaching and fellowship, so I linger on, and think, *think*, THINK, and read and think, and ask, Will I be one with the saints gathered in Christ, and Christ in God, one with the Father? If so, it is all of grace, glory to his name.

With no hope but in Christ, yours truly,

P. WEST.

BINION, Ala., Nov. 4, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I will send you what I sometimes hope are the dealings of the Lord with my poor, sinful soul, and if you think it worthy a place in the SIGNS, publish it, but if not cast it aside, and all will be right with me. I was born in Tuscaloosa Co., Ala., April 8, 1851, and was brought up by Primitive Baptist parents, but I cared no more for this order of people than for any other, only as I respected my parents. I grew up a wild, mischievous boy, and did not know nor care anything about my lost and ruined condition, until some time in January, 1874. I had then left my home, and had gone to the north part of this state. One day while riding along the road alone, going from Florence, to my stopping-place, in the month above referred to, something said to me, that all was not well with me. I viewed myself to be a great sinner in the sight of a just and holy God, my eyes overflowed with grief, I tried to pray, but all that I could say was "God be merciful to me a sinner," and my words seemed to fall to the ground, they did not avail anything for my relief. For a time I was in great trouble, but this soon wore off, and I got along very well for some time. After a time my trouble came back with, it seemed, double force. This is the way I got along while in that part of the state, after returning to this part of the state, I

was not troubled for a time, so much, until March, 1875. One day I was plowing in the field, not thinking of anything special that I remember, when all at once, it seemed to me that I heard a voice say to me, "What if you were to be called to die, what would you do?" There followed a little space of time that passed I do not know how. When I came to myself, I was in a flood of tears of grief, and was trying with all my powers to beg of the Lord to have mercy upon me. Frequently after this I was troubled in this way until the fall of 1876. I was married in March, 1876, but did not mention these things to my wife until one night when she found me weeping, and asked what was the matter, I told her that I was weeping on account of my sins. Soon I got to the place where I was afraid to go out of the house at night; I thought if I did go out the Lord would send me some sudden destruction, and take my life from me on account of my wickedness. I could not see how God could be just, and let such an one as I live on the earth. I saw my condemnation, and that it was just and right. I had sinned against a just and holy God. So in the fall of 1876, one night I lay down in great trouble, and went to sleep as I suppose, and I dreamed that I was at a place of meeting, it was the most beautiful place that I ever saw, and the most people that I ever saw; they were all dressed just alike, and all looked just alike; all were seated in the form of a V, and at the small end of the V, seemed to be one who was a leader, but he looked just like the rest, yet from some cause, I knew that he was a leader. I thought that they were the most lovely people that I ever saw. I was at a little distance from them, but I had a great desire to be with them, but thought it would not do, I was too wretched to be with them. They were singing this song, "And am I born to die." But they had changed the verse a little, and sung "I'm glad I'm born to die." I thought it was the most beautiful singing that I ever heard. I awoke in a flood of tears, and I hope with praise to my great Creator; my trouble was all gone, and I was filled with joy, as I hope, in my Savior. But it was not long before other trials came, yet they were not like those through which I had passed before. I have my doubts and fears every day that I live. Now this is the reason for my little hope, as best I can tell it, if I have any at all.

I remain your brother,

S. J. NORRIS.

BERLIN, Texas, Jan. 12, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The time is past for the renewal of my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I will send you a few lines to let you know how I appreciate reading the SIGNS above all other reading matter except my Bible. It cheers me to know there are others that see as I do, and understand how worthless all human efforts are in giving one moment of true spiritual happiness, for if it could be had for earnestly asking according to our own will, I ask, Why do I languish and pine, and why art my winters so long? O yes, even waiting and watching with groans and tears, for one more glimpse of heavenly light, with wonder and longing often saying, Will he cast off forever? Has he forgotten to be kind? And to say, What have I to hope for, seeing I am cast off forever? Such unworthiness should never hope for anything better than banishment from the peaceful presence of my dear Savior for evermore. Then I can call to mind how it once was with me, that in trouble it seemed he was with me, often speaking in

my heart words unknown to human speech; drying my tears, and I felt to be leaning on his arm, and nothing could separate me from him. But if it pleases him never again to lift up the brightness of his countenance upon me, I feel it is just and right, for I cannot change his decrees, if I would. But one thing I feel to know, I have seen enough of this old troublesome world, that there is nothing abiding belonging to it, that all our brightest hopes must perish in the dust, and each new year bring the sad knowledge of failure in all my best meant resolves to live humbly and prayerfully. Yet I know full well that Jesus is my righteousness, if I have any, and O, how unlike him are all my works, which I would fain have otherwise, but must continue on in this old sinful body until death releases me, which I feel at times I could welcome and say, "I will gladly go with thee."

I have written more than I intended. Love to all the dear readers of the SIGNS. May God bless you, dear brethren editors, and sustain you in all your labors, until it is said, "Come up higher." If this is worth nothing cast it aside, if used, correct mistakes. Pray for me.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

E. C. FOGERSON.

P. S.—Will some one please give their views, How the souls of departed ones are said to enter eternity? If I understand right it has no beginning or end. This thought has caused great darkness in deep trouble.

E. C. F.

ST. THOMAS, Jan. 4, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed please find two dollars for the SIGNS for this year. I still like it and its management; the editorials of late have been excellent. I am also delighted in this day of darkness, delusion and deception, with their lo heres, and lo theres, and their saying that the Lord's treasury is overdrawn, and thousands are going to hell without a chance, (when this could be overcome by money) and having their discourses printed, and their so called sermons announced the week before, O, what delusions, enough to sicken those who love and fear the Lord. Old School Baptists, do not encourage them in their folly by your presence, if you do you will be losers. The SIGNS has stood firm in the truth, not turning to the right or the left. While so many are looking to an arm of flesh, and what they can do, deceiving themselves and others, the SIGNS goes straight along with the grand old theme that salvation is of the Lord only, without any conditions whatever. If there are any changes in it since it was started in 1832, by our respected heralds of the truth, I fail to see it. It was all of grace in the salvation of his people then, with those beloved brethren, it still holds firmly to the same truths by its present editors.

I am delighted indeed to know that our dear brother Wm. L. Beebe is recovering, and hope if it be God's will he may soon be able to go in and out regularly with his people.

God bless both editors, contributors and readers, as we hope he has hitherto done so, and also that the SIGNS may find its way into many more homes than it does now. I am quite satisfied it will be a little money well spent, and to those somewhat isolated like myself, it is doubly so.

Your brother,

A. J. BLACK.

PETERSBURG, Del., Jan. 30, 1901.

BENTON L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—I herewith remit amount for the continuance of the SIGNS. There are two copies taken in our family, but as there are five members of the Old School Baptist Church living in our house, so we deem it best to continue both, knowing that children are liable to become impatient when compelled to wait one for another. I notice that all are eager to get hold of and peruse them first. I presume it is on account of the good things they contain, and because they delight to hear from the brethren and sisters who contribute so much to our edification, encouragement and instruction, by their excellent correspondence and instructive editorials. Anxiety for the progress and welfare of our old standard Baptist periodical, sometimes almost induces me to try to contribute my mite to its columns, but my endeavors to write are like my experience in preaching. I cannot write like and equal to my corresponding brethren; I cannot preach like and equal to my ministering brethren; I cannot write or preach as I desire.

The unsearchable riches of Christ, his great work of salvation and redemption, his continued work of grace in bringing many sons unto glory manifestly, is sublime beyond description. But when he is pleased to reveal himself in us and to us, as he does not unto the world, manifesting his eternal, unchangeable love, as it is written, "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)" "Commending his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," thus giving us faith to hope in his mercy, trust in his faithfulness, and rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, then the pen falters, language fails.

"God is in heaven, but man below;
Be short our tunes, our words be few;
A sacred reverence checks our songs,
And praise sits silent on our tongues."

A sensitive appreciation of the sacred importance of things eternal and immortal, and a consciousness of my own insufficiency, renders me timid and fearful both in writing and speaking. But it is a comfort to me to realize that my doubts and fears do not lessen my desire to bear witness to the truth as it is in Jesus, and to his praise who brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Desire is so near related to hope that I am glad the Lord gives the desire to be free from the baneful effects of sin, and a desire to be clothed more and more with the graces of the Spirit, to the honor of the cause we profess, and our enjoyment of the confidence and fellowship of the saints. Heavenly desires are heavenly graces and christian service acceptable to God.

"Prayer is the saint's sincere desire,
Unuttered or expressed;
The motion of a hidden fire,
That trembles in the breast."

However dim our hope, or faint our desire may be, as long as the feeblest heavenly desire throbs in the heart, it is evidence of spiritual life observed of the Lord, who declares, "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them." "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

The psalmist David earnestly desired to build a house for the Lord, and made great preparation, but could not obtain his desire. His son must build the house, and at the dedication of the temple Solomon said, "And the Lord said unto

David my father, Whereas it was in thine heart to build a house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart." Therefore if we sincerely desire the prosperity of Zion, the welfare of the church, and the good and best interest of all the household of faith, it is well that it is in our hearts. And if our desires are crowned with sincere love for one another, then surely we have the indisputable evidence of our title to an eternal inheritance. "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." Every one that loveth is born of God, for God is love.

My wife joins me in expressions of kind regards to yourself and wife.

Yours in christian fellowship,

W. W. MEREDITH.

ASHLAND, Ill., Jan. 15, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I received the editorials in due time, and they are just splendid. I am ever so much obliged to you for being so prompt, everything that I ever sent to you for always came on time, and in good shape. They are the best books I ever read, outside of the Bible, and I would not part with them if I could not get any more. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES is the best paper printed in the United States that I have read, and I have read several others, but the SIGNS is the best of all, and I do not see why every Baptist does not take them, for they have the Bible truths in them, and that is enough, and they are well worth the price. Some Baptists, so called, say they are not like they were at the start. If they are not, I am too blind to see the difference. The SIGNS now, and your father's editorials harmonize anyhow. The change is not in the SIGNS, but the change is in the conditional time salvation Baptists. We had one of them at our church last summer, and that was enough for us; he said there are some things we can do without the aid of the Spirit, but still we must have the Spirit in us. Did you ever hear such stuff? The Bible says, Great is the mystery of godliness, and so it is. The preaching we have here at our church gives God all the praise for everything. Man is a very small thing, a whole nation of them are put down as a drop of a bucket, he is as a grasshopper, and as the small dust of the balance, and even as nothing, and less than nothing and vanity. How much lower can we get? If we can see ourselves that low, it is a good thing for us, we know then that we have no strength, and if we ever have any it is of the Lord; from him who says, I am God, and beside me there is no other; declaring the end from the beginning, and the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure; the one who rules in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; the one that has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. We love to hear the preacher give God all the praise, power and glory.

D. S. KOONTZ.

OPELIKA, Ala., Dec. 13, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BARTLEY:—I received the copy of your little book on the Priesthood some time ago, but as I was in such poor health, and my eyes were so painful and dim, I had of necessity to avoid reading and writing as much as possible. But have read enough to satisfy me of its great worth, and think it would be peculiarly useful to be read, meditated upon, and received and understood by all our people, especially at this particular time, when the main fundamental principles of

the gospel of our salvation seem to be so seldom mentioned and so little understood by many of the younger members among Primitive Baptists. An understanding of the Priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which and through which we draw nigh to God, opens up a great many other important points of gospel truth and doctrine, that are very strengthening to the faith and confidence of the Lord's poor and afflicted people. This is a theme on which I would delight to dwell, but I am too nervous to write.

I have also received the little book of Elder Harvey Wright's that you sent me, but as yet have read only about twenty pages. No doubt it contains many things of great worth to this present generation, and in which I hope they will feel much interested, as it was written by an aged minister of the gospel, who gives us a brief sketch of some of the trials and comforts of his early life. I am one year and six months older than Elder Wright, and I felt to witness to the truth of several things mentioned by him in the twenty pages that I read. I have been in the ministry ever since June, 1843, now a little more than fifty-seven years.

I feel to hope that both these little books will be blessed of the Lord, and be acceptable to his people.

Yours in love and fellowship in the truth,

W. M. MITCHELL.

MERRIFIELD, Va., Dec. 29, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I herein send my remittance for another year with many thanks for your faithfulness as a publisher, and with that full fellowship of the saints of God which is given unto them as an evidence of his love and salvation. While I as an individual often doubt as to its abounding in me, yet as the word fellowship means fellow feeling, or a sameness of feeling, experience of the same things, I do rejoice with the saints of God in the faith that the Lord knoweth them that are his. Yet I more often weep with those that weep, for in my own self I see nothing but darkness and death. But work out your own salvation, my brother, which was vouchsafed on the cross, and given unto you of the Lord, in your own experience, to will and to do of his own good pleasure, although it is with much fear that we are none of his, in view of our own unworthiness. Yet as we tremble we still hope, and we show forth in works of obedience wrought out by faith that we are his care-children. Yet by reason of the flesh we do not see this clearly. Yet as by faith afar off, and as I see these things in my dear brethren, it is my very self in experience; it is fellowship, and as no one yet hateth his own flesh, I love them for the truth's sake; their sorrows and their joys are mine, yea, indeed they are mine, they are my fellow, my very self. O, how I would love to talk about this unity of the Spirit, a one spirit, the fellowship of which is kept only in the bond of peace. Contend for this, my brother, and may the God of peace abide with you forever.

Your little brother,

ELI T. KIDWELL.

WEISER, Idaho, Dec. 8, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Please find order for two dollars for the SIGNS, as my subscription in due, and I desire it continued. I am well pleased with the doctrine it contains, and the way in which it is conducted. I have been a reader of the SIGNS for forty years, and I find that it now contends for the same truths that it did when I first began reading it. Sure-

ly the Lord has upheld it. While there have been many new things that have come up among the orders of the day, or orders of the night, perhaps I should say, which have proved them to be antichrist, yet the truth has still survived, and will live, and the more it is abused the more will it shine forth. I want to say to you and to the readers of the SIGNS, that the members of Salem Church, here in Idaho, are a unit upon the doctrine of predestination, election, and salvation by grace, in time as well as in eternity. We have no new hobby among us, and find it pleasant to dwell in peace and union. We have been enjoying the presence of the Lord for a few years, with now and then some additions to the little band of the dear children of God in this section.

I made a trip in August, to brother Isaac Irwin's, on Salmon river. This old brother and wife, and son, are members of the church. They live one hundred and thirty-five miles from the place where we hold the meeting, and I visit them once a year. While I was there we had meeting, and one of the sons of the old brother came and related the reason of his hope in Christ, and was baptized. This was one of the most pleasant meetings of my life; I was made to rejoice in the manifestation of the Lord's presence. This place is in the mountains. We went thirty miles over the mountains, along a small trail, on horseback, where if the horse had fallen, we should have been killed; in some of the places we would have fallen from forty to one hundred feet. Still this was a pleasant trip to me, and to the old brother and his family. The population in that section is scarce, but they came, and seemed interested in the meeting. This brother has two sons and two daughters who are members of the church, one of them came one hundred and thirty-five miles, in winter, and was baptized. I cut the ice when it was twelve inches thick. Thus the Lord is bringing in his dear children into the fold, by his love and grace. The prophet said, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children."

I will close, you are at liberty as regards publishing this poor scribble.

G. B. BARTON.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

BACK NUMBERS.

OUR supply of back numbers of this volume has become so nearly exhausted we shall after this number cease sending them to new subscribers, unless especially requested to do so, and we cannot fill but thirty-five of those orders.

PLEASE BE SURE

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

ALL GONE.

THE large type hymn books of the genuine Turkey Morocco binding and the imitation binding are all gone. All the styles of binding we have left of the large books, are the cloth and blue marbled edge binding.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1901.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

LUKE XVIII. 1-8.

PLEASE give your views upon the words found in Luke xviii. 1-8, "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: and there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" I have thought upon this Scripture a great deal, and it is still as obscure to me as ever it was.

Your brother,

J. J. OKES.

PROGRESS, Va., Oct. 20, 1900.

The Scripture to which brother Okes refers, is called a parable, and is said in the first verse to be designed to teach that men ought always to pray, and not to faint. Whatever may be dark in the words which follow in the parable itself, this much is at least clear, viz: Its design is to teach that God does hear and answer prayer, and that therefore men ought not to be discouraged in their petitions, but to continue in their supplications. The word "faint," simply means "disheartened" or "discouraged." The need of this parable for the encouragement of the disciples of the Lord will be more apparent if we consider what had preceded the utterance of it. The Lord has described a time of trouble, darkness and trial; at such things the hearts of men would naturally fail them for fear, and to many who trusted in God, and called upon his name, it would appear that he was unmindful of their call, and some would perhaps begin to say within themselves, "Of what use is it to pray or look to the Lord, this time of bitter trouble continues, and we are ready to perish, and God does not seem to hear us, and does not deliver us?" Thus we read in Revelation, of the souls of them which were under the altar, who had suffered martyrdom for the faith, crying out, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" And in the Psalms, we often read of the cry of one who feels that the Lord has turned away from him. And it is a common experience with the people of God in all ages, amid their trials which seem harder than they can bear, to feel as though they are not heard, and their cry becomes despairing often, and the temptation arises, "It is of no use to pray, God does not hear, he has forgotten to be gracious, he will be merciful no more." When David questioned, "Are his mercies clean gone forever?" among other complaints, he added immediately, "Then said I, this is my infirmity." How often are the children of God infirm in this one thing. Now it seems to us that this parable was designed by the Savior to meet just such times as these in the soul's experience, and when applied by the Spirit it will come with strength, assurance and comfort, and the soul will be encouraged in its crying.

We do not understand the Redeemer to mean that the voice of need can ever be hushed; where need is felt, there will be a crying all the time; though the cry be filled with despair, and unbelief seems to be conqueror in the soul. But rather the meaning of the Savior, in the parable, is to encourage that crying and needy soul as it cries, to believe that God does hear, and will not fail to respond. But this will be not in our time, but in his good time, and it will not be in our way, but in his way, at all times. David passed through just such an experience, as is recorded in the forty-second Psalm, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." Here was earnest longing of the mind, but yet in his heart was despair; there was a cry in the heart for the water brooks, which could only be found in God, but yet, where could he be found? and the enemy said, Where is thy God? And to this taunt he could make no answer, but still to cry out his distress in weeping and bitterness, yet his absence from God did not cause the cry after him to cease; it was a voice of hunger, that could not cease. But now, as in the parable to which our attention has been called, there comes a voice of encouragement to David. The time of deliverance from the trouble has not yet come, and the time of praise is not yet, but still there comes an assurance into his soul that one day he shall praise God, that one day deliverance will come, and so David is strengthened to wait, and to still cry, not any longer despairingly, but with comfortable hope. His was thus the experience taught in the parable. The people of God are said to be chosen in the furnace of affliction; this is so that they may learn to call upon God, in whom alone is help. Thus David could say, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." And again, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now have I kept thy word." And Paul found the benefit of his sore trials in this, that he was shown that the grace of God was sufficient for him, and that his strength was made perfect in weakness, and so he said, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ might rest upon me." God has good designs in all our affliction; even the tears of his people are so precious to him that he treasures them up in his bottle. Now, since all these things are so, what abundant encouragement is there for the people of God to hold fast their confidence in his word and promise, and this is true in all conditions, and in all sorts of trial, whether coming from within or without, whether in the way of temptation, or in the way of suffering in body or mind. He will not leave his people to perish under any circumstances. This is the truth, as it seems to us, that is taught in the parable in the eighteenth chapter of Luke.

The lesson of the parable gains double force when we notice the contrast implied in it. A picture of a poor widow without friends or influence, and who cannot possibly be of any use to the judge before whom she comes, and who cannot reward him in any way, or bribe him to do her justice, coming before a judge who is unjust, that is, who does not care for the law or justice, and who is moved by his own personal interests alone, to avenge her of her adversary. The very terms of the parable show that her cause is just; but he will not hear her; he has no time and no inclination to hear her cry, because of his whole mind being taken up with himself, and his own ease or gain. He would not for a while, but she con-

tinued to cry out for justice, and not because he was moved to pity or compassion, not because he wanted to hear her petition, but because his rest was broken by her importunities, and he was wearied of the crying unto him, and to get rid of her importuning, he said, "I will avenge her." This the unjust judge does as the result of continued crying on her part, because he was wearied and tired of it.

Now "The Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God," (who is just and kind and who pities the sufferings of his people) be sure to hear and reply? The unjust judge waited because he had no mind of pity for her, and cared not whether she was oppressed or not, but if God waits, and bears long the sufferings of those whom he loves as the apple of his eye, be sure that it is not because he will not hear and answer, but because he has some wise and loving purpose in it; some greater good than present deliverance to accomplish by it. If the poor widow would not be driven away from a judge whom she knew to be unjust, because of the faint hope that he would eventually hear and do her justice, shall the poor of the people of God go away because their cry seems not to be heeded by their Father in heaven, who loves them supremely? This is the force of the contrast as we understand it. It makes the lesson much stronger, and much more assuring, than though he had spoken of a kind and just judge, who secured justice for some one oppressed. If the unjust, unfeeling judge can be importuned into doing that which he has no heart to do, will not God certainly do for his people what he loves to do for them? Then, if the answer be long delayed, be sure that some good reason is in the mind and purpose of God. He has not forgotten to be gracious, he has not shut out the cry of his distressed people, he has not forgotten to be true to his word and promise. Therefore do not faint, but pray always, in the assurance that he always hears his people when they cry, and their prayers go up before him as sweet incense, or rather mingled with the incense of the Savior's intercession and merit. To Habakkuk was given this assurance, when he saw the desolation that should come upon Israel, that the promise was secure, and God said to him, If the vision tarry, wait for it, for it will surely come, it will not tarry. In view of these things the lesson is enforced, that "the just shall live by faith." So it is through faith that prayer continues to be offered before God. How good is the prayer of faith.

The Savior said at the close of this parable, "Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Thus Jesus inseparably connects the prayer of his afflicted people with living faith. He shows that prayer grows out of this faith. As it is impossible to please God without faith, so prayer cannot please him except that prayer be the product of faith. We do not understand the Savior to imply in this question, that there would be an absence of faith on the earth at any time, so long as one of his own loved ones remained upon it, but it was intended to show to the disciples how weak they were. Often faith in us is faint, and seems ready to die; often we must say, "Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief." "Lord, increase our faith." We are often compelled to confess to a faltering faith; we sink in despair in our trials; it seems to us that we must perish, and we forget the good hand of God in the past. Who is there among us all, that must not confess that all the mercies of God in the past, which would seem to

forbid us to doubt any more, are forgotten in an instant often, when face to face with another trial? If the answer seems to be delayed yet once more, in spite of all past tokens and similar experiences, we begin to doubt, and to ask, Is it of any use to pray? How often the question must come very solemnly to each of us, If the Son of man should come to me would he find faith in me? Is there any trust in my heart in him? Thus it seems to us that in these closing words of the parable, the Savior voices just our own questioning again and again.

Is it not true, that as we look abroad over the Zion of our God, we may see many forsaking her solemn feasts, and going after the world and its pleasures and vanities? Do not many sell, even now, their birthright for a mess of pottage? What are all these things, but the evidence of a faith that is very weak and small? Are we living, day by day, as we know we should were our faith strong? Did we but trust absolutely in God, and in his word, should we not be less worldly minded, and would we not be more constantly in our place as the children of God? It seems to us that these words of our blessed Redeemer are well calculated to set us upon earnest questioning of ourselves. Do we find ourselves living in daily and humble trust upon God for all things that we need? Are we continually coming to him with security, feeling that all is well, since he reigns?

These words of the Master have come to us with solemn questioning, and deep heart-searching, and by them we have been, as we hope, brought to a more solemn sense of our need of grace every hour, not only the grace that we pray for, but also the grace to keep us in prayer as well. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ROMANS VI. 9.

"For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died."

Although this apostle had been brought up by Jewish parents, and after the strictest sect of the pharisees instructed in the Jew's religion, which consisted chiefly in, that to them pertained the giving the law, &c.; and although he had been no dull scholar in their theological school, but had graduated with great honor, of having surpassed many of his equals in the attainment of religious knowledge, yet his literary attainments extended only to the letter of the law. With that he was very familiar, and none could surpass him in his knowledge of or zeal for the Jew's religion. But it was like the religion of all legalists, workmongers and Arminians of our day, it filled his heart with a zeal which was not pure, and inclined him to oppose the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to breathe out threatening and slaughter against the primitive Baptists. But the spirituality and killing power of the law of God, he had never experienced, until it pleased God, who delivered him from his mother's womb, and called him by his grace, to reveal his Son in him. Then, as in all other cases where the Spirit of God sets home the law in its exceeding broadness, he saw himself a poor, convicted, guilty and justly condemned sinner before God; and that very law, on the letter of which he had depended for life and immortality, consigned him to death and everlasting wrath, for his transgressions of its precepts.

By the law is the knowledge of sin; but until we know the law, we are ignorant of our sinful and helpless condition. And this is the reason why so many are at

this day relying on their own obedience to the law of God, for acceptance with him, and seem perfectly heedless of the express declarations, "By the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified," and "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." In this sense they are alive, as Paul had been once, not having been slain experimentally by the law.

In the illustration of this subject, Paul uses the figure of the marriage relationship, "A woman that hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband, so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law [or dominion] of her husband." So long therefore as we are legally held under the law, we are held in condemnation. "For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse." And we cannot be lawfully joined in marriage to Christ, until all the jots and tittles of the old dominion are legally canceled. This separation or deliverance could only be legally effected by death. Now to effect this release from the law, the redeemed of the Lord are buried with Christ by baptism, (or immersion) into death. (That is when Christ was buried in death, they were legally in him, so that when he died for them, they were all dead.) And hence, the apostle says, "Wherefore my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another; even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Our legal works of obedience to the letter of the law, however perfect they may have been as such, were not fruits unto God, for they were not begotten of his Spirit; they were fruits to the old husband; but in our relation to our new husband, our fruits are unto God, and not to the old husband, who is now dead to us; hence, instead of now serving in the oldness of the letter, we serve in the newness of spirit, and bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, which are these: love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith. Still because the law, as our old husband, could not beget in us such fruits of the Spirit, we are not to conclude that the law is sin. God forbid that we should say so. "Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." The law is holy, just and good, but I am carnal, sold under sin. And as Paul says in chapter viii. 2–4: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." The law is not sin. "But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, [or law] wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law, sin was dead." As sin is the transgression of the law, where there is no law there is no transgression. Hence, if we had been created free agents, or without law, we could not become transgressors or sinners. But the law being holy, the presentation of every one of its precepts detects the depravity of my sinful flesh, as exemplified in Paul's experience. "I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." As he had understood the law according to his instructions in the theological school of Gamaliel, he was blameless in regard to that precept, so long as he did not appropriate the property of another, to his own use. But when the commandment came, in its spirituality and power, he found to his

surprise, that it took cognizance of the thoughts and intents of the heart; to hate a brother constituted him a murderer, and to look upon a woman lustfully made him an adulterer. The law had not only said, "Thou shalt not steal," but it had also said, "Thou shalt not covet." Hence the exceeding purity of the law, applied to and in its action upon all those who are under it, brings forth to light all manner of sin. "The law wrought in him all manner of concupiscence." Not that the law communicated to, or implanted in him an unholy principle, but the working of the law was to expose that corruption which existed in the flesh; as the apostle says, "But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful." Every saint can use the words of the apostle as applicable to himself: "For I was alive once without the law." That is, I had not been slain, sin did not appear to me exceeding sinful; especially my own sin; I could not see much greater sin in others than in myself; I was whole, and needed no physician, and righteous, and needed no repentance. "But when the commandment came." When the righteous law of God was set home by the eternal Spirit, "Sin revived." It had been in me concealed, so that I did not believe that it was there, but the eye of the law was not dim, it detected and brought to light the hidden evils of my soul, and what I had regarded lightly before, became exceeding sinful. "And I died." Till then my strength held out, my resolutions were firm, and my fancied abilities to meet the demands of law and justice were unquestioned, but then and there the majesty of the holy law of God appeared; justice drew forth the sword of vengeance, my mouth was stopped, and I confessed the justice of my doom. The cross of Christ appeared, and I saw the gleaming blade descend in vengeful wrath to smite me; the bleeding Savior drew me to his heart, and there in him, it smote, and I died. My legal hopes gave up the ghost, and I henceforth may say, "I am crucified with him, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 15, 1858.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Mount Enon Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with Little Flock Church, sends christian love and salutation to the Associations with whom she corresponds.

DEAR BRETHREN:—By the aboundings of God's blessings we have again been permitted to hold another peaceable Association. Our churches are nearly all represented, and their epistles of love report peace and fellowship in Zion. The Lord be praised. The good news forcibly brought to our minds what the inspired penmen have recorded: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God," and "Behold how good and how pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity." Dearly beloved, let us strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace.

We regret our correspondence is not full. The servants of our Lord have preached much to the comfort and assurance of the saints.

Hoping that our lovely correspondence may continue, and that your correspondents will be with us in our next session, to convene with Bethlehem Church, Polk Co., Fla., twenty-one miles south of Plant City, and nineteen miles south-west of Bartow, Friday before the second Sunday in November, 1901, we bid you farewell until then.

J. W. FUTCH, Moderator.

M. L. GILBERT, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$433 80
Elder James M. True, Ill., $3.00; George Lambert, Maine, $3.00.—Total	6 00
Total to date	$439 80

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at the bride's residence, Thursday noon, Jan. 30th, 1901, Walter B. Atchley, of Harbourton, Mercer Co., N. J., and Miss Elizabeth T. Yard, of Hopewell, Mercer Co., N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder William Pollard is no more. He was taken suddenly ill with "la grippe" when at his appointment in Lobo, last Sunday, and died on Thursday, Jan. 24th, 1901, before getting home. The funeral was Saturday afternoon, Elder W. I. Carnell, of Carlisle, Ohio, conducting the services. A suitable obituary will doubtless be sent you by some one of the members.

Yours in sorrow,

JOHN A. LEITCH.

BRANTFORD, Ont., Jan. 26, 1901.

Mary E. Bartley Madden, our only daughter and first-born child, after a lingering pulmonary consumption of a year, at sunrise Monday, Jan. 21st, 1901, most peacefully fell asleep in Christ, like a weary child softly falls asleep, at her home in Olney, Illinois. Her father and stepmother, one brother, husband, four daughters, all grown to womanhood, one son, in his fifteenth year, one grandson and one granddaughter, remain to sorrow for their deep bereavement and great loss, besides many other relatives and a host of devoted neighbors and friends, for our good and pleasant Mary was lovely and beloved by all who came within her pure and sweet influence.

Mary was born June 15th, 1853, in Crawford Co., Ill. She was joined in marriage with Louis W. Madden, in 1872. Of their seven children two died in infancy. The other five are a crown of honor to their parents, and their ideal and precious mother was the light and joy and crown of her lovely children, who, with their father and her father, and all others who knew our Mary, will rise up and call her blessed. Of her all those will say, "Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord."

Mary was quickened from her death in sin, and given faith in Christ her Savior, in her seventeenth year, in whom believing, after deep sorrow and mourning for her sins, she happily rejoiced. Her faith and hope and trust in Jesus abided with her and supported her through all her many afflictions in her active, trying and self-sacrificing life, to its calm and peaceful close. For truly hers was a beautiful christian life, filled with love and good deeds, and because Christ lived in her, she was sweet and lovely in her long sickness and death. In all my life I have never witnessed such perfect patience and sweet peace as were given her in her last long affliction, and this was observed by all who came in her presence.

As a more perfect insight into her blessed christian graces, which so adorned her beautiful womanhood with loveliness, and made her so peaceful while passing through the valley of the shadow of death, permit me to copy some of her own dear words in her letters to me. In a letter of March 6th, 1871, relating her experience, she said: "At last it seemed to me as if I was sinking down to endless woe. I felt as if my breath was going, when, blessed be God, I beheld Jesus on the tree, and I was then and there shown that his blood was spilt for me. I was made to see that through him I might come to God, that my sins were washed away, that Jesus had made an ample atonement for me. For a minute or two I could not realize my great joy. I cauld hardly believe that God would be so good to such a poor, miserable outcast. I breathed a prayer to God to give me a little clearer evidence of my acceptance with him, when it seemed as if I could almost dip my hands in the blood of Jesus, and I knew that his blood was freely given for the remission of my sins. O, I cannot tell you anything about it. It seems to me that I have only given you a hint of what I passed through. But 'I know that my Redeemer liveth.' I know that he has brought me from nature's darkness, into the marvelous light of God's dear children."

In a letter of January 21st, 1880, she wrote:

"'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed."

"If I am saved, it will be through grace, and grace alone. I have never done anything to merit God's favor, nor could I do anything that would merit salvation. Every day I realize that were it not that Jesus died for sinners, I should be lost. But I desire a stronger faith.

'O, for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by many a foe,
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe.'"

This prayer was granted, and God gave her just such a faith, and Jesus saved her to the uttermost, and his grace was sufficient for her.

In a letter of June 9th, 1893, she said to me: "I try to leave all, big and little troubles, with the Lord, for certainly he who notes the fall of the tiny sparrow, cares for his children. Once I was going along

the street at New Castle, in such sore trouble that I was almost desperate, and I was thinking, 'Does God care for me?' Just then at my feet lay a little dead sparrow. I picked it up, and while smoothing its feathers, like a flash came the thought, 'Not a sparrow falls to the ground without the Father's notice; ye are of more value than many sparrows.' I never was so humbled in my life. It really seems to me yet that it was a lesson directly from a loving Father, and in my hours of trial and discouragement the memory of that hour is as oil on troubled waters."

It was in the hushed and balmy evening twilight of Wednesday, when at her request, we stood at the open grave in the Olney Cemetery, and tenderly laid her lovely and peaceful sleeping form to rest, and the minister softly and with comfort sang, "Rock of ages, cleft for me."

Never was a father honored and blessed with a more lovely daughter, and sorrow fills my heart that I am bereft of her, but my desire is to be still, for it pleased the Lord to call his weary child home. She once told me that she wanted to be called first. Dear Elder True wrote us, "Your departed one is now with Jesus; she cannot come back to you, but you can go to her." The words of Jesus are very much in my mind, and comfort me: "Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth."

In sorrowing faith and hope,

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Feb. 15, 1901.

DIED—At her home near Highview, Sullivan Co., N. Y., Jan. 12th, 1901, **Mrs. Maria Decker,** widow of the late Bradock Decker, aged 85 years, 6 months and 18 days. She united with the New Vernon Church, August 5th, 1885, was baptized by Elder Benton Jenkins. She had been for years a member of the Presbyterian Church, but like many others found she was in the wrong place, but was brought home to give glory to God for what he had done for her soul. She was held in high esteem by all her brethren in Christ; her walk was quiet and orderly, manifesting the fruits of the Spirit. She had been in failing health for several years, and for the past year and a half had not been able to attend her meetings. Toward the close of her life her memory failed her, and she could not remember her own name, but while the outer man perished, the inner man was renewed day by day. It was the writer's privilege to visit her several times during her last days. On one occasion her mind had so failed that she could not remember the names of her own children. We asked her if she knew or remembered her children, calling them by name? She answered, "No." We then asked her if she ever heard of one called the Lord Jesus? Her face brightened, and she answered, "Do you mean the Lord Jesus Christ?" We said yes. "O yes," she said, "I know him, and he has been here." Sweet communion with God when all else fails!

Sister Decker was the mother of six children, three sons and three daughters; the daughters preceded her to the grave; the sons, Cornelius, of Fishkill, N. Y., William and Andrew at home, with nineteen grandchildren and four great-grandchildren, survive her. She had all the attention that loving hands could minister, and while her death had been expected for days, it came with a shock, and it was hard to give up one who had been all that the word mother means. William Decker is a member with us at New Vernon, and our sympathy goes out to him and all the sorrowing ones.

She was borne to her last resting-place Tuesday afternoon, Jan. 15th, after funeral services in the New Vernon meeting-house, by six of her grandsons. The writer tried to speak to the comfort of the afflicted family.

The Lord guide us into all truth, uphold us by his might, and at last receive us in glory.

H. C. KER.

DIED—Nov. 21st, 1900, **Mrs. Sophie Sleadd,** in her 75th year. Mrs Sleadd was the last member of the Vannetta family, whose parents came to this State and County early in the beginning of the now closing century, from near Warrenton, Va. She was married to brother Sleadd, Feb. 18th, 1847. To them were born nine children, six of whom survive her. Mrs. Sleadd was one of those quiet, retiring persons, yet given to much serving. She was hospitable and kind to all. It could truly be said of her, she did the holy command, Do good unto all, especially the household of faith. She turned no needy one away empty, and always seemed ready to throw the mantle of charity over the seeming errors of others. Mrs. Sleadd never united with the church, but she lived as near the church as it was possible for any to, not in gospel order enrolled upon the church book. She loved the faith and order of the Primitive Baptists, and was in attendance when able to do so. She had been gradually going down for a year or two, and finally succumbed to a complication of diseases resulting in softening of the brain. She suffered much, yet bore all without complaint. She died at their comfortable home in this, Shelby County, where for more than fifty-three years she had spent her wedded life, and their labors had been blessed. Her devoted husband and children that survive were all gathered around her bed when she breathed her last in this mortal state, but she was beyond the aid of mortal power. He who loved and gave his life for her, took her to himself, freed her from suffering, by calling her to that home where heavenly ties can never be broken.

Her funeral was largely attended on the 23d, at the cemetery chapel, where the writer spoke to the people, of the word of life, after which her mortal remains were laid to rest in the grave, that was consecrated by the blessed Son of God, from which she will arise in the resurrection.

May the Lord comfort the dear, bereaved ones; grant unto our aged brother the consolation of the gospel.

P. W. SAWIN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky.

DIED—Jan. 6th, 1901, **Mrs. Catherine Hopper,** at St. Marys, Georgia, aged 81 years, 9 months and 16 days. We quote the following extract from a letter written by sister M. Hillings, of Ridgewood, New Jersey:

"My eldest sister was called from earth on the 6th inst., at her late home in St. Marys, Georgia. Some of our people will remember her when we lived together in this place (Ridgewood). She suffered a stroke of paralysis on the 2d inst., from which she only rallied sufficiently to say, 'It is the Master's call.' She never spoke again, but quietly breathed her life away. Dear Catherine, she was doubly a sister to me. Although she could not understand all the observances of order as I was taught, she was firmly rooted in the truth, and was so humble and exemplary in life. She had nearly ended her 82d, year, having been born March 21st, 1819. Although I feel a void that none can fill, my heart rejoices with assurance that she has entered that blest land where the inhabitants shall no more say, 'I am sick.' I could write pages of her many trials and disappointments, and I think she never questioned the will of God, knowing that he is a sovereign, unchanging God, in whom she could safely trust."

What can be added to that which our sister Hillings has written? Surely the God of comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulations, speaks in her heart and in her mouth in thus ascribing to the grace of our Lord the godly walk and conversation of her beloved sister. God is glorified in his saints, and does comfort them in every expression of his will toward them, though their consolations and joy may be neither seen nor felt.

J. McCONNELL.

OUR darling daughter, **Mrs. Fannie H. Merritt,** died at her childhood's home, Clayton, Del., at six minutes past three, Thursday a. m., Dec. 20th, 1900, aged 24 years, 6 months and 5 days. She was married to George K. Merritt, April 5th, 1900. She began to fail in health about two years ago. She suffered with indigestion and nervousness, which at the last terminated in convulsions. On Dec. 14th she was taken with neuralgia in the head, and this continued until the 17th, when she had the first convulsion. She seemed to grow no worse until the following Wednesday morning, when she became suddenly and dangerously ill. She had arisen out of the bed, and fell to the floor in a hard convulsion. From this time her suffering was intense, and was never again conscious. Between this time and the end she had sixteen hard convulsions. It was so hard for us to stand by her bedside and see her suffer, and know that we could do nothing to relieve her. It is very hard to give her up. She was a loving child to me; she had nursed me for seventeen years, through all my afflictions, and she was gentle and kind in a sick room. How I shall miss her no one knows but those who have passed through the same trial. She loved to attend the meetings of the Baptists, and especially the associations, and she would always tell me all about the good preaching. The dear saints who stopped at our house during the last association here, will remember how faithfully she waited upon them. She said it was a great pleasure to do this, and she certainly did love the brethren and sisters. I believe she had an experience; I do not believe any one can understand good sound gospel preaching without an experience of grace. She left a devoted husband, father, mother, one brother and two sisters, to mourn their loss. Many friends join with us in our grief, but we do not mourn as those who have no hope. I do not feel like murmuring, for I believe that our God does all things well. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" I have been afflicted for many years, I have lost little children, but the death of my dear Fannie has been the greatest trial of my life; it is hard to say, "Thy will be done." But she has crossed the river just a little ahead of us, and I believe she is enjoying the blessed rest which awaits all the chosen people. While lying unconscious she would say, "Lord, have mercy upon me." She clasped her hands several times, and said, "Heavenly Father." She often called upon her papa and mamma, but when we would ask her what she wanted, she did not seem to hear or understand.

Our beloved pastor, Elder E. Rittenhouse, conducted the funeral services. She was interred in the cemetery at Bryn Zion. Subdued and tender thoughts will long linger around that solemn place.

From an afflicted mother,

LETITIA B. HEARN.

BROTHER **Eli Stump** died at his home in Hocking Co., Ohio, Jan. 19th, 1901. He was born in the same County and State, Dec. 31st, 1819, making his age 81 years and 18 days. He was married to Mary Ann Notestone Dec. 2d, 1847. To this union were born ten children, three sons and seven daughters, one son and five daughters having preceded him to the grave. Brother Stump united with the Primitive Baptist Church, twenty-seven years prior to his death, of which he lived a worthy, devoted and faithful member until death, always filling his seat, and faithful to any duty to the church. His membership was with the Laurel Church. He leaves to mourn his death, an aged and devoted companion, also a faithful member of the Laurel Church. May the God of all grace sustain our sister in this great trial. The church has

lost one of its pillars in the church. He expressed himself as ready whenever it was the Lord's will to take him. Just before he passed away he remarked, "How blessed it is to trust in the Lord."

His funeral was largely attended on the 21st, at the brethren's meeting-house in the vicinity, and a discourse delivered on the occasion by the undersigned, after which the remains were laid to rest to await the resurrection of the just, when dear brother Stump will rise immortal. God bless all the dear ones that remain.

G. N. TUSING.

Thompson Bridges, son of William and Sarah Bridges, was born Feb. 23d, 1823, and departed this life Jan. 16th, 1901, aged 77 years, 10 months and 25 days. He, with his wife, united with the Baptist church in March, 1868, and lived a true christian life until death. In February, 1869, father was ordained deacon of North Cedar Church, which office he held till death; he was also Clerk of the same church for a number of years. His home was always a home for the Baptists, and as a brother in the church he was loved; as a citizen he was held in high esteem. He was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for years, and loved the doctrine it advocated, and the last day he lived he quoted Scripture, and talked about the Baptists a great deal. He believed in a full and complete Savior, and always said if he was ever saved it would be by the grace of God. He leaves eight children, three sons and five daughters, the girls all being members of the Baptist church.

His funeral was preached by Elder J. M. Arledge, from Romans viii. 10, to a large congregation of relatives and friends, after which his body was laid in the grave to await the coming of Jesus.

Written by his daughter,

MRS. Z. I. JONES.

DIED—At the home for aged men, Utica, N. Y., **Robert Alexander,** in full triumph of faith in his precious Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, on Sunday, Jan. 20th, 1901, aged nearly 85 years. Brother Robert Alexander was born in Sufolk, England, April 10th, 1816, married to Kesiah Vincent, Oct. 13th, 1839, at the same place. They came to America, and to this city, in the fall of 1851, and after awhile united by letter with the Ebenezer Baptist Church, at Utica, N. Y., Elder Thomas Hill being then pastor of that church. His wife Kesiah, died Oct. 3d, 1870. He was married again Jan. 15th, 1873, to Lydia Pridmore, from Cambridge, England, who died Feb. 2d, 1894. Brother Alexander was a member of the Utica Ebenezer Baptist Church over forty years, and deacon about thirty years.

His funeral took place Jan. 22d, from the home, where he has been an inmate for the last five years. His body was then laid at rest in the old Forest Hill Cemetery, to await the resurrection morning. He leaves two sisters, Mrs. Eli Cartwright, of Oshkosh, Wis., and Mrs. Robert Self, of Peasenhall, England.

I have lost a true friend and brother, with whom I have spent many precious hours in conversation and meditating upon the love of God towards poor, helpless sinners, such as he felt himself to be. But now he is gone to praise his Lord forever, and I miss him very much, but do not sorrow as those which have no hope, for I know my earthly loss is his eternal gain.

C. WINTER.

UTICA, N. Y., Feb. 1, 1901.

DEPARTED this life, after a gradual weakness from a paralytic stroke, at the home of her son-in-law, in Kingston city, N. Y., Jan. 29th, 1901, **Mrs. Mary A. Cudney,** in the 78th year of her age. Sister Cudney united with the Old School Baptist Church of Olive & Hurley, in 1872 or 3, being baptized by Elder John A. Badger, while on one of his visits to that church. She was a consistent believer in the doctrine of sovereign and reigning grace. By reason of nerve weakness she was deprived of meeting with the church as she would liked. I have had many precious visits with her. She was generally "sighing for home," realizing with the poet, This world to be a wilderness of woe. She was blessed to have in her old age a dutiful daughter and son-in-law to care for her, who made it as comfortable as one of her years and failing strength could be. Being of the family of Elder Jacob Winchell, she leaves three brothers and five sisters to mourn in that family, and she also leaves five sons and one daughter without a mother's love, to mourn the loss of an affectionate mother. The church also numbers one the less in membership here; but she is at rest.

Her funeral was quite generally attended by the relatives and friends, at the old churchhouse in Olive, and her mortal remains were deposited in the family cemetery on the hill her father once owned.

J. D. HUBBELL.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 69. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1901. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE JEALOUSY OF THE LORD.

(Exodus xxxiv. 14.)

(NUMBER THREE.)

MY DEAR SISTER IN THE COVENANT ORDERED IN ALL THINGS AND SURE:—It has been given us to partake of the sure mercies of David, and thus it is manifest that we belong unto the Lord, in the bonds of this covenant. God has said, "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me," and I do hope this precious fear is in our hearts. Your kind, spiritual letter tells me very plainly that you are thus sanctified by the Holy Spirit. "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death." Christ Jesus is the way to whom our hearts are turned by divine teaching; we look unto him as our all. There is within us that which reaches forth, and can only be satisfied with the experience of the very vitalities and realities of Christ's gospel. What a sweet, sweet token of the covenant is this: "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." This lifts the burden of guilt and shame off our hearts, and makes our countenance to shine. We shine upon him who in such grace and mercy shines upon us, and, dear sister, I sometimes feel if Christ will but smile upon me, I shall smile upon death when it cometh. Like yourself I am often wearied with the cares and trials that pertain to this dying life, and most of all with my inward sinfulness and the buffetings of Satan. But we are taught by the Spirit to look unto Jesus, his everlasting priesthood, his atoning sacrifice, his blood and righteousness, are our refuge and heavenly joy. Truly it is the gift of God to ponder in our hearts the glad tidings of the gospel of Christ, for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith. In Christ we are made righteous, by one offering of himself he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. O, this is blessed! Eternal perfection! Well may the apostle say, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ," for no other hope have poor sinners of being presented faultless before the throne of God, save through the perfect work of the Son of God, who hath reconciled us to God by his blood, presenting us holy and unblamable and unreprovable in his sight. The evidence of

this felt in our poor hearts puts comfort and peace there, which the world cannot understand.

And now once more I will pen you a few thoughts upon the jealousy of the Lord, whose name is Jealous. It is not in vain that it is written, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." Our corrupt affections constantly need to be curbed by God's reigning grace, or else such is the power of our indwelling lusts, that we are found roving in every field, far away from the holy Redeemer.

"While we are held in his embrace,
There's not a thought attempts to rove;
Each smile upon his beauteous face,
Fixes and charms and fires our love."

Those who are wholly in the grasp, and are the willing slaves of the world, the flesh and the devil, cannot understand the vicissitudes that belong to the life and pilgrimage of the children of God. I know from experience what it is to be enamored with earth's pleasures, and I have also felt the ensnaring power of the cares and burdens that are heaped upon us, and that the people of God sometimes heap upon themselves. "They that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." When this wretched fever, "I will be rich," eats up a man's life, he finds little time for the worship of God. The precious Scriptures become a neglected book, they cannot find one minute in the day to read a few lines, and some are so wrapped up in the world, so hot in pursuit of the things that perish, that perhaps for a whole month the Bible has been an unopened, unread book. Is this as it should be with one for whom Christ Jesus poured out his soul unto death? Sad indeed is the life of that child of God who has become so ensnared that to the utmost of their opportunity they are devoting themselves to the follies of the world. If we (yes, my dear sister, it is well for us to take the matter home to ourselves) are making provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof, we may get along as we fancy swimmingly for a time, but we shall soon find ourselves sinking in "hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition," and but for the sovereign grace of God we should drown in perdition to rise no more. In the soul's backslidings from the Lord, if only for a few hours, or for a longer period of time, when as it were our backs are turned to the Lord, (Jer. ii. 27,) and our faces are toward those things that are sinful, we shall meet with indications of the Lord's jealousy. How soon the Lord can spoil the choicest morsels that this word can yield. He can turn its honeyed sweets its wormwood and gall, what our hearts were set upon, and we anticipated would be a fountain of delight, beneath the Lord's jealousy it is dried up; instead of a pleasure, it causes grief; the Lord's blight is upon it, and it no longer flourishes, it withers and dies, and we are left desolate. I have tasted this, and I have heard a voice that I knew, that seemed to come from afar, saying, "Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? a land of darkness?"—Jer. ii. 31. Ah, in my soul's backslidings from the Lord I have suffered beneath the rebukes of his jealousy. He has pleaded with me face to face, (Ezek. xx. 35,) and O, how I have smarted beneath the words of his

injured love. Every word of the Lord, all the Scriptures, every precious hymn that might come into my thoughts, or that I might read, would cut me and pierce me, and fill me with wounds, or would be to my soul as the light in which was discovered to me how far off I had strayed from our Savior. As I look over the repeated scenes of my life in which from one cause and another I have been turned aside from following the Lord, I clearly see that the Lord our God is a jealous God, his providential dealings with me have manifested this. He reveals his displeasure against everything that ensnares us away from our allegiance to him, and he does not suffer us to harvest the pleasures that we anticipated. Then what a wilderness we discover we have been allured into by the Lord. (Hosea ii. 14.) Here we are humbled and chastened, and our hearts begin to pine after some knowledge of God's pardoning love; to taste again communion with the Lord. When I have been smarting under the shame of my vileness and wretched heart wanderings from God, unbelieving fears have also harrassed me that the Lord would not receive me and grant me the smiles of his face as he had been wont in former days. (It is a great thing, dear sister, to believe with all our heart in Christ's immutable love.

"Whate'er thou founds't him at thy best,
He's at thy worst the same;
And in his love will ever rest,
Thy Husband holds his claim.")

But at length in my sinful, folorn condition, I have been driven and drawn by a power divine to pour forth my complaints at his feet, and I have cried, O Lord, have mercy upon me, let not the lusts of the flesh, the vain delights of earth, swallow me up.

"Thy wounds Emmanuel all forbid,
That I should seek my pleasures there."

O, may I more and more be captivated and held fast by the beauty of the Lord. May thy surpassing immortal charms, dear Lamb of God, ever ravish my heart; let my ravished sight be riveted upon thee, O lovely Savior. Snatch me away from all that would entice me from thee, for there is no love like thine. O, wilt thou not forbid that my sinful lusts, this vain world or the powers of hell, should drag me from love's devotion to thee, my Lord, my heavenly Friend. O, I love thee, but thou knowest my earthly nature is so sinful, I am so weak, so wayward, my conflicts with indwelling evil are so severe, that I am overcome, thrust down, or led away sin's very slave, unless thou holdest me fast with the cords of that dear love of thine. Draw me, and I will run after thee. O that there might be a perpetual stream of the revelations of thy love and mercy, that constant discoveries of thy loveliness might chain my soul fast to thee, for well, well, I know when thou art in my view the world, the flesh and the devil, exert their powers in vain.

"One smile, one blissful smile of thine,
My dearest Lord, outweighs them all."

But O, sometimes thou hidest thyself and art gone, and dreadful night sets in, and my soul is the prey of all evils, then my flesh creepeth forth with the affections and lusts, and chaseth after lying vanities, the wilderness environs my soul, I am shut up and cannot come forth. Here O how unhappy I am without thee, O Savior of sinners, and as I call thee to mind, I reproach myself, I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise till visions of thee, O suffering Lamb of God, come before me, then my chilled heart is warmed, till inflamed with desire to thee I cry,

"Hide not thy face from the heart that adores thee,
Hast thou not sought me, and called me thy Dove?

Thus I approach thee, O fairest Redeemer,
Lured by thy beauty to dwell in thy love."

Ah, my dear sister, I find some ease when I can pour out my chastened soul before our holy and gracious God. But if a time of winter sets in, and I am held in the vice of hard heartedness, O this is a desperate condition. When we are dwelling by faith with Christ, there is holy intercourse between us; we think upon his name, we have moments of comforting meditation upon his suffering and blood, and his grace to poor sinners is very sweet, and when trials are our portion, then to the bosom of our Lord and Friend we repair, to him we tell each rising grief, and seek his aid in our difficulties.

"O for that sweet simplicity that rests alone on Christ;
Just as an helpless infancy hangs on the mother's breast."

But very trifles at times have such power that I am brought into a cold and lifeless condition. I do not know that I can portray before you my soul's condition while in this state of estrangement from the Lord. When I would see Christ Jesus in the conversation of the saints, in his doctrine that I might be hearing or reading, it was as though we carried it strangely with each other; there were no familiar glances; I have felt so unholy, so base, my backslidings were all in my view, and were reproving me. I felt I could not look the Lord in the face, I was in such shame I could not lift up my face unto our God. (Ezra ix. 6.) Though with downcast heart I was before him, I have thought his eye seeth me, and he give me no intimate salutation. Ah, he called me not his dove, and I could not call the Son of God my Beloved, my unbelieving heart said he would resent it. But notwithstanding all my crookedness, I do love him, I have loved him, and many times my heart has ached to call him mine, and to tell the Redeemer that I loved him still. O, I have been pained, my bruised heart has been inditing endearing, familiar language, but there was something that choked down these words, and instead of saying, O my God, in my prayers, I said, O God; instead of calling him Ishi (husband) I called him Baali (Lord) (Hosea ii. 16.) I felt there was a distance, that there were barriers between my soul and the holy One of Israel. Then I have felt I am before him, before his throne, not as a sin-pardoned sinner, not as a child, his love, his bride, but rather as a formal courtier, with my formal manners, and formal speech; mere words, not the language that my stricken heart wanted to use. I came unto him as though I knew (loved) him not, and that he had never known me by name, calling me Hephzibah. I felt he treated me very coolly, I was confused and cut to the heart, indeed I was, and yet not sufficiently humbled and contrite over my wandering ways and bad behavior unto him who hath loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood. Ah, nothing but God's invincible grace can give a vile sinner a contrite heart, and bring him to pour forth the confession of his sins at the feet of the Lord our Savior.

Let me present you a glimpse of another scene during a time of estrangement from the Lord, it comes all so new in my thoughts, I had been much perplexed with cares and trials, and in fretfulness and rebellion I had wandered far from God, I was a wicked backslider in heart, and filled with my ways. Times of trouble are not always times of spiritual mindedness. It is only the Lord's blessing attending them that brings forth in us those fruits of the Spirit in which

our heavenly Father is glorified. Without this grace supplied to us beneath afflictions, we prove that they crush out of us horrid vilenesses, at least so sinful is my flesh that such has been my shameful experience. At the time to which I refer, I had been a long time as the heath of the desert, and all that was visible or felt was briers and thorns, but the time drew nigh when the Lord would heal my backslidings, and shew me that he loved me most freely. I was assembled with saints at a certain place, and one was preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ; I looked upon the faces of the brethren and sisters as they listened to the joyful sound of the gospel, and as I looked upon them I saw that our dear Savior was in the gardens among the sweet lilies; I witnessed his smiles upon the daughters of Jerusalem, and his lips like lilies dropping sweet smelling myrrh, spake kind and healing words to the meek and lowly believers in him. It was as though I heard them saying in their hearts, His words are sweet and strengthening, and I saw their faces beaming with sacred pleasure, but there was no smile for me, no word for me; me he passed by. O, then was I overcome as with a maddening fever, I felt, I have no right to be in this garden, in the church, I am not a child of God: how can I think I am beloved and chosen? I am a reprobate, I am neither a rose or a lily, I am nothing but cursed thorns and thistles; how have I dared to intrude myself into Christ's garden, among the trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord? I am not fit to be seen, I am not fit to be known, I am so dark and wicked and unclean, that if I were known, I should be plucked up and cast over the garden wall to be burned. Then I felt my hardness departing, and I mourned over my sins before my God, I sighed and cried unto him for mercy, I told him that my joy was fled, and that I could no longer live beneath his frown. Frowns and rebukes I deserve, but O, thou Savior of sinners, rebuke me not in thy hot displeasure; give, O give me one glance of pity, one look of forgiveness; one smile I entreat. Hast thou not, O mighty Savior, a kind word for me? Thus my soul was exercised before him, and he comforted and restored my soul, filling me with sweet peace in the hope that he loved a poor sinner like me.

Dear sister, I have opened up to you some of that hidden life of my soul which the mere talking religionist cannot understand. If the fear of the Lord be in a man's heart, there will in some measure be felt that life that reacheth forth after the living God, after holiness, after more and more knowledge of Christ, and many a sigh will be his portion, because of his non-attainments, but he will also have many precious moments of peace and comfort in Jesus. Sometimes in our simplicity we repeat the words, "Turn each cursed idol out, that dares to rival thee;" or,

> "The dearest idol I have known,
> Whate'er that idol be,
> Help me to tear it from thy throne,
> And worship only thee."

The Lord, whose name is Jealous, will dethrone every idol, and a great stir he makes in his temple when he cometh in his jealousy saying, "Take these things hence."—John ii. 16.

There are times in the Lord's dispensations with us that cisterns break and creatures fail. The world and all things therein lose their charm, its fleeting, vain pleasures cannot satisfy, the lustings of our flesh affright us, and we cry unto our God for grace, lest we should fall beneath their power, and live in the gratification of them. The Lord in his jealousy will

put a blight upon whatsoever turns away his people from him. He only is their exceeding joy, and when this is felt, all other things are secondary. That word is sure which saith, "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death." Though those snares be manifold, the fear of the Lord fills us with ardent desires to be saved from all the wiles of sin and the devil, and if at any time we are entrapped, how restless we become. The fear of the Lord as a fountain of life will cause us to cry, Who shall deliver me from the snares of death? Our God hears the cry of the prisoners, and breaks every snare; then through his marvelous kindness we can sing, "Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken and we are escaped. Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth." I am very well satisfied that the true grace of God wherein we stand, is something more than our assent to the bare theory of gospel doctrine. God's grace in us will incite us to worship him in spirit and in truth; yes, his grace will be in us a fountain of ardent aspirations to hold communion with the Lord, to live and walk by faith in the fellowship of Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God. We need his mediation, his precious blood and righteousness, and his gracious and prevailing intercession for transgressors. This personal, spiritual knowledge of the Redeemer, is the one thing needful, and this I feel I can say my soul craveth. Ah, it is too true that I am sometimes languid, and my unbelieving heart and sin's deceitfulness draw me aside from the Lord. But though I am made to smart under the strokes of his jealousy, he has not put me away, he sheweth me mercy, and again and again quickeneth my soul's cravings after him, and I long for that divine, unspeakable privilege to have a place in the bosom of Jesus.

"Jesus, thou pleasant art,
And excellently fair,
And for a loving heart,
None can with thee compare;
Majestic on a throne, yet mild,
A King, yet lowly as a child."

The Lord has his own way with all his chosen, to cleanse them from their idols, for whatsoever we worship and look to for salvation, is an idol, an image of jealousy which the Lord will dethrone, and in his unabated, unexampled love, he will deliver us from our captors, and when from time to time he heals our backslidings, and turns again our captivity, in the eagerness of our souls we exclaim, "Behold we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God."

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

THE PROOF OF THE SPIRIT.

(Luke vi. 32-38.)

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—Having just read your editorial in the last SIGNS upon the text, "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life," and being much touched with the gracious truths contained therein, and having read it to my invalid father, Elder J. P. Peters, who enjoyed it greatly, I have felt drawn out to send you a subject which I had written upon, but had not expected to ever bring to light until I read your editorial. Now I send it, thinking perhaps that you would be led to take up the subject upon which I have written, and publish in the SIGNS, for it seems to me there is a most blessed meaning in the Savior's words, which will be to the benefit of all the children of God. Should you feel to publish this letter instead of writing yourself, I hope

that you will at least make a short comment upon the subject. You can give the Savior's blessed meaning much more fully than I have done. I believe that what is here written is the truth, but it does not set forth the meaning of the Master clearly and fully enough.

The Scripture referred to reads: "For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful. and to the evil."

In reading over this language of the Savior, and reflecting upon its meaning, I am brought low in the dust of humiliation. Have I ever done any of the things here commanded? Can I do these things? Did any one ever do these things, except when the flesh was completely crucified? It is an easy matter to love those that love us; it is the most natural thing to do; even the vilest of men do that; it is nothing more than all unregenerate men can do. But the proof of the true spirit is in this, Do we that profess a hope, love them that hate us? Do we do good to those that despitefully use us, and do we lend to those who have nothing to lend to us, hoping for nothing again in return for our kindness? As we look back over the past of our lives, we are made to confess that in the absence of the Spirit and love of God shed abroad in our hearts, we are wholly unable to do any of these things. But with the presence and power of Jesus Christ, we can do all things, even those herein commanded by the Master. If ever we have been found doing these things commanded, we must confess it is by the grace of God alone, and by grace alone, I am what I am. It is true that the people of God, when at home in the body, and absent from the Lord, are as ready to hate those that hate them, and despitefully use them, as any one can be; they love only those that love them, and will not lend except to those who can lend to them again. The same is true in any matter of difference that may arise among brethren themselves, it is only when under the abiding influence of the Spirit of God, and of that love which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which has been given us, that differences can ever be healed satisfactorily. Love alone can bring brethren together, and love only can hold them together afterwards. How often I am reminded, when meditating upon the Scriptures above cited, that I am entirely void in my flesh, of that holy principle which fits and qualifies any one to do these blessed things. I feel sure that I never have done them when left to myself, and I doubt whether I have ever been under the influence of the blessed Spirit long enough to manifest to others that I could be different and act different under trying circumstances, than the unregenerate do. I understand the Savior to mean by the term sinner, the unregenerate. It is most unnatural to love our enemies, and to be gentle and kind to those who are injuring us. Hence to do these things we must be guided by the Spirit which is not natural. We are reminded in Ephesians that nothing will so completely disarm us as for one toward whom we have felt unkindly, and have striven against, to do us a kindness in return for the injury which we have inflicted upon him. I think that the severest whipping that I have ever had, was a

whipping of this kind. I do not think that I ever felt so completely stripped of all my armor, as under this experience. Therefore I think the Savior put into the hands of his children the most powerful weapons ever known, when he declared by the word of Solomon, "A soft answer turneth away wrath." Love, pure and gentle, can soften the hardest heart. A broken heart and a contrite spirit is the Lord's offering. God resisteth the proud, but bindeth up the broken-hearted. No trouble among brethren can long withstand a strong flame of love. The best way to right any wrong is for love to have her proper course. Many times we stifle the love which is really within our bosoms, by holding out against those from whom we feel that we have received injury. The Savior in the connection of the text at the head of this article has said, "For with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again." If ye forgive ye shall be forgiven; give, and it shall be given to you again, good measure pressed down and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. Do good and lend, hoping for nothing again, and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest. Be ye merciful as your Father is merciful. Jesus again said, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and upon the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?" Let us remember that when our Lord and Master was crucified, he prayed to the Father to forgive those who did it, saying, "For they know not what they do." Did ever mortal man, left to himself, make such a prayer? And when the martyr Stephen was stoned, the true Spirit of Jesus made itself manifest in him, for he kneeled down and prayed, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." And Paul said, "Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: being defamed, we entreat." And the apostle Peter said, "For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps. * * * When he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not." And Paul has said, "Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head."

Now, from sad experience we must say, We are wholly unable to comply with these commandments of the Lord, except when his holy presence is felt within. There is one very peculiar and striking truth discovered by the children of God, which none others can know, and that is,

they cannot of themselves do the things commanded, but can do them, yea they are done in them, when the Spirit and love of God is shed abroad in their hearts. This is the reverse from what any natural man would understood. Our Lord and Master has given his children such commandments as can only be obeyed by the divine assistance, from beginning to end. He first shows that they of themselves are wholly devoid of the power to obey his commands, and shows them that there is nothing good about them in the flesh, nothing worthy of the regard of the Almighty, and then shows to them they can do all things through Christ, and that they are made clean and good only by him.

I have often noticed when matters of difference existed among brethren, that so long as they were left to themselves there could be no coming together; fallen nature will not forgive nor forbear; neither is long suffering found in it, so brethren find themselves wholly unable to adjust their differences, and will naturally hate those that hate them, and do just as the children of this world do, and the observer would not detect any difference between them and others. If left to themselves, what more do they do than others, or what praise have they more than others? Brethren sometimes wonder how they can ever forgive or forbear such and such a brother, and try within themselves to solve the problem, and are compelled to give up and say, There is nothing in us that can respond to such a command, but bye and bye a refreshing comes from the Lord, and love is shed abroad again in their hearts, like a refreshing shower after a long drought. This shower falls upon the hard and stony heart, and it is melted with divine love, and is softened into forgiveness, and forbearance, and longsuffering. Then the way to adjust all difference is seen clearly, and they love those who have wronged them, because the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts. God gives repentance, and he also gives forgiveness. Brethren must wait for this gift before they can do any different from the unregenerate among them. I have heard the remark made by brethren, They never wanted to hear some minister preach, except at such times as the Lord preached through him, and the same is true in meeting and conversing with any of the brethren; we do not want to meet brethren, unless we meet the Lord in them. So, in the adjustment of differences, when brethren meet for such purposes, if the gift of God to enable them to forgive and forbear is present, I am sure that there will be no difficulty in settling all troubles, but if left to themselves, no good can result. Thus again we are reminded that we do not differ from the wicked, if we only love those that love us; if we do not love them that despitefully use us, we do nothing more than the wicked, and have no reward. Brethren cannot *want* to cut each other off, except when left to themselves. When one brother has much fault to find with another, it is almost always proof that the fault-finding brother is void of the gift of brotherly love. If one is filled with the love of God, his brother's faults sink into obscurity, and he sees none whose faults excel his own, either in number or magnitude, and he is ready to accuse himself before any one else. Hence the ability to love those who do not love us, comes only from God, and every one of the commandments of God require the aid of his grace to enable one to keep them. None can walk this road only in him. Without him we can do nothing, no, not even love a brother.

Some might ask, Why command a thing that we cannot do? I answer that we may remember who is our strength, and that we may praise him for what we could not do without him, and that we might flee to that stronger armor which the world cannot furnish. But to love, and to forgive, and to forbear with long suffering, those who hate us, and despitefully use us, will disarm any foe, when no other weapon will. Jesus loved his people before they loved him, and when they were enemies to him he reconciled them to him by his death upon the cross. Christ died for the ungodly: this breaks the heart. Faith, belief, love, all are gifts of God. If some brother seems not to have so much of these gifts as others, shall we then cut him off as though we possessed all these qualities in and of ourselves? Let us remember that what we have, we have received from God.

I remain your brother,

NEWTON PETERS.

[BROTHER Peters asks us to write also upon the same theme, but we do not see how to add anything to what he has so well written. We are glad that the editorial of which he speaks has called out the above interesting article. Truly, if the commandments of God related only to the performance of some outward actions, there might be some excuse when men claim the power to do those things, but when we remember that obedience must be from the heart, and that without love in the heart, no outward act can be called love, the matter takes on a different light. "Thou shalt not steal," means thou shalt not covet or desire thy neighbor's goods. "Thou shalt not commit adultery," means that thou shalt not look upon thy neighbor's wife with desire. "Thou shalt not kill," means that we must not be angry with another. And thus, while in the eyes of men we may have done none of these things, yet in the sight of God we may have broken every commandment. Thus indeed the words of God convince us of our inability to obey the least of them, and this puts the soul upon humble confession and prayer to God for grace, and how gracious are the words, "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us;" not BY us, but IN us.—ED.]

PATIENT IN TRIBULATION.

"AND not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us."—Rom. v. 3-5.

Paul, the inspired, wrote wonderful truths relating to our salvation, in the fifth chapter of Romans, as also in 1 Cor. xv, the two embracing the same central truths of sin and salvation, death and life, by Adam and by Christ, as representing sinners justly condemned in Adam, and the same sinners freely justified in Christ. Herein is revealed the whole fullness of the gospel of salvation. In this gospel the man Adam is embraced as the sinner saved, and the man Christ as the Savior. "By man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." Sin brought death to men; righteousness brings life to men. Sin and death are by the one man Adam, unto all men in him; righteousness and life are by the one man Christ Jesus, unto all men in him. All who are in Adam were created in him; all who are in Christ were chosen in him, and through him foreordained to be conformed to his perfect and holy likeness. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous." Each result

follows the one disobedience, and the one obedience, with absolute certainty, unto the sinfulness of the many related to Adam, and unto the righteousness of the many related to Christ. For in both cases, the sinfulness of many, and the righteousness of many, are because of previous relationship; relationship so close and vital that all in Adam die, and all in Christ shall be made alive. To his own Christ said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." So, on the other hand, because Adam sinned and died, all his people shall sin and die also, because they are in him and of him. "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy."

Thus it is true that sin and death, with all their woe and curse, come unto the children of men through Adam; so is it alike true that righteousness and life, with all their joy and blessing, come unto the children of men through Christ. The Holy Spirit revealed it to Paul, that as all men in Adam die, even so all men in Christ shall be made alive. He speaks of the dissolution of man who is mortal, and of his resurrection out of death unto immortality. For it is a blessed mystery of godliness, that the children of men, who are only the creatures of God in Adam, were predestinated unto the adoption of children by our Lord Jesus unto God himself, and they are therefore the children of God as born again, born of the Spirit, having received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. Thus, though we were the servants of sin under the law and its curse, yet now in Christ Jesus are we no more servants, but sons; and if sons, then heirs of God through Christ.

It is as thus made and manifested that "we glory in tribulations also." In no other way could we do this. So Paul states what is true in our own experience when he says, "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." This is a mysterious union of complex natures in the people and children of God, who are both the members of Adam and the members of Christ; yet so has the God and Father of his people and children foreordained them and put them forth. Sin reigns in them unto death, therefore, and they are brought into great tribulation, distress, affliction and sorrow, and the cry is made to go up from their burdened and suffering hearts, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then, in the depth of this tribulation, they joyfully exclaim, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." It is in view of all this truth, or because of it, and in this way that "tribulation worketh patience" in those who are thus moulded and taught. Their God is thus refining them, but not with silver or riches, for he hath chosen them in the furnace of affliction, and forms them for himself, that they should show forth his praise in their salvation from all their conflicts and woes. The Lord is the refiner and purifier of his people and children, that they may bear the perfect image of the heavenly Man, and be the sons of God in the life and nature of the holy Son Jesus, who was both the Son of man and the Son of God. From having borne the image of the earthy man only, they shall bear the image of the heavenly Man only. In thus saving his people from their sins, and all that sin brings upon them, they must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of grace and glory. In this way did Christ himself go before them, through tribulation, suffering and death unto sin

in the flesh, and enter the kingdom of his Father. So must they follow him in his steps, as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, drink of his bitter cup, offer up unto God their prayers, with strong crying and tears, and be made conformable unto his death. For the suffering Christ says to his followers, "I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." So they must be made like him in his sufferings in their flesh for their sins, and die indeed unto sin, that they may live unto God in the life of Jesus. So Paul says, "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (together with him).

Now, in this hope of his glory, we rejoice in tribulations also; for it is in this consecrated way unto God the Father, the way our dear dying Redeemer went, that we are brought into patience, or submissive endurance, and experience of our need of mercy and grace, and into the abiding hope in Christ, the good hope through grace that maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

In all this way of weeping and supplications, tribulations many, and deep afflictions, grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Therefore in his infinite love and rich mercy unto his afflicted and poor people, whom he hath appointed unto these afflictions, Paul says, God graciously sanctifies their manifold temptations and great tribulations through his Spirit of love and truth, the Comforter. In this way of holiness the Father brings his dear children into the faith and hope in Christ his dear Son, in whom, believing, they rejoice on their way, and are meekly reconciled unto God, whom they love and serve in sweet submission. "We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." In this divine work and way of the Lord with his people, his word of truth is fulfilled in their experience, which says, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. * * * And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation." To his sorrowing disciples Jesus says, "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." For us he has overcome the world, and every foe, and death, the last enemy. So to his people Jesus is the resurrection and the life; he is their redemption unto full salvation. All this way unto the Father of glory his people are made to walk in, because they are all taught of God in their experience of this way of salvation unto holiness, and therefore every one of them comes unto Christ, in whom they shall be made righteous and perfect by his obedience and through his sufferings, into which they shall be brought. So they are, as he was, in this world, and they shall also be as he is in

the world to come. His sufferings unto death in the flesh shall be fulfilled in every one of his members, which brings them into tribulation and sorrow, even the exceeding sorrow of death for sin and unto sin in their flesh, and then also his resurrection unto life and holiness and glory shall be fulfilled in them and to them through him and with him, and they shall behold his glory and be like him. This shall be the full consummation of the choice and predestination of God in them, as he revealed it to his servant Paul. This is most solemnly a sorrowful way of salvation to the saved from their sins, as they find in their personal experience, causing them to cry to God in their helpless weakness, when the waves of affliction go over them and they sink in deep waters; but they are only following their dear Forerunner, and to them he blessedly says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." "And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." These are precious truths to us in our tribulation and sorrow. The sorrow and mourning, as the clouds and rain, are before the Sun of righteousness arises unto us with healing beams of peace and joy. This is the experience of the dear children of God, who are called into the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, to whom it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. Their sufferings and trials often sorely perplex them, and they fear that they are alone, and that surely none of the children of God are ever brought into such depths of affliction as they are made to experience. This was the bitter experience of my dear daughter, after the Lord called to himself her mother and youngest brother, within three days. In one of her sorrowful letters to me, about a month after this great sorrow came to us, dated May 26th, 1880, she said: "My dear father, you said in your letter, 'The hand that wounds can heal.' Unless that hand gives comfort and peace, no earthly hand can do so. I know that 'Whom he loveth he chasteneth.' But are his *children* not chastened with one hand, and comforted with the other? If I am a child of God, why can I not trust? He has promised his *children* strength for any trial. I sometimes come to the conclusion that for the past nine years I have been deceived. Can it be possible that God would permit such a thing? I try to be submissive and resigned, but it seems to me that I never can be. It is an utter impossibility for me to tell my feelings. I have suffered agony almost beyond endurance. You spoke of my 'sorely tried faith.' I have thought often, that surely no one was ever tried as I have been. For I have suffered till I felt that it would be a relief if my mind could become a blank." That was a time of overwhelming affliction to us; but the dear suffering Christ said, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you," so did he fulfill his blessed word to us in our sorrow, and my daughter was again comforted in her faith and hope in the Lord, so that her troubled questionings were answered with peace, and she did sweetly trust in him, as in the time of her first rejoicing in Christ as her Redeemer. It has never been my privilege to behold such sweet and perfect patience as was given to her in her last long affliction, so that her peaceful and lovely face

looked Christlike and heavenly. So true is it that "tribulation worketh patience," and has its heavenly fruitage in the "hope that maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us."

In tribulation and hope,

D. BARTLEY.

THE TWO SONS.

I AM the more interested in the history of the younger son, because I read in it somewhat of my own history. I think I remember when I first became dissatisfied with my condition, and felt that I must improve it, though I was at that time quite young. I did not then, nor for twenty years after, understand my situation, nor my exercises, as a sinner under the law, and trying to work myself free from its condemnation. I did not understand that my works were all legal works, by which no man can be justified. But one thing I learned again and again, and that was that my condition was not improved by any efforts I made, but rather became worse. Instead of obtaining more righteousness, and of a better quality, by my trading, I lost what I had, and became in my own sight utterly vile. I had nothing more to trade with, no legal goods left. My works were spoiled by sin, polluted, vile, and I had nothing more to offer. My hunger for righteousness was greater than ever, and there was nothing in sight to satisfy it. To me there appeared to arise all at once a mighty famine in all the land. For the first time I saw that there was no righteousness within my reach. Others appeared to have all they wanted, but I was in want, and no man gave unto me. If any was offered me it was a kind not suited to my need. When I tried to eat it I became hungrier than before.

I hired out to those who appeared rich, hoping thereby to satisfy my conscience and obtain some peace of mind with God, some feeling of righteousness, but in vain. I thought my devotion and works might help me, as those for whom I worked approved and relished them, and commended me for them; but they were husks to me, and I had to turn from it all, though my hunger consumed me. I was indeed "in a far country," "at the ends of the earth," farther off from God than any one else. All my goods, my substance, my strength, my hope, were gone, and I was left a vile, polluted sinner, "without God and without hope in the world."

But where could I go? I looked longingly toward the only righteousness I knew anything about, the righteousness of the law. Much as I had read the Scriptures which testify of Jesus, I yet knew nothing about him truly as the Savior of his people. I was totally ignorant of him as "the Way, the Truth and the Life." My former condition, which I had been so confident I could improve, now appeared good compared to my present, and I wished I could get back to it. I believed in salvation by grace, for that the Bible taught, but I thought of grace as given to show me what to do, and to enable me to do it. That one could come into God's favor without having done something to make him in some sense worthy of that favor, never had occurred to my mind. I knew I could do nothing of myself, but had till now hoped that my efforts might cause the Lord to show me what to do, and give me ability to do it. But now that hope was gone. I had been getting farther and farther away from what the law required, and now it appeared impossible that I should ever get back to where I was before. But while there is life there will be a cry

in the poor, sin-sick soul. My cry was for mercy, like the publican's cry, but it was made in the legal temple, and looking toward Abraham, or the Abrahamic covenant. The eyes could not be lifted, there was not confidence enough in myself for that. Knowing no other place of righteousness, and having forfeited all rights under that covenant which I had sinned against, I could only hope for some crumbs from that legal table. To be engaged about those holy things as the meanest servant, seemed desirable now. I think, as nearly as I can interpret my own feelings on that memorable Monday morning, more than thirty-six years ago, that my face was turned as steadfastly toward that legal covenant as the face of the prodigal was toward the house of Abraham his father, from whence he had wandered away. I was wondering what the end would be, wondering if ever I would know anything, ever be anything but a vile sinner; if ever a ray of true light or a crumb of heavenly comfort would be given to me? when something wonderful took place within my mind, and I saw that the work was already done, the atonement for my sins was already made, and they were gone. That was the wonderful but trembling hope that arose within me. The words through which the revelation was made were these: "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness." Then it appeared I was one of those for whom Jesus died, and that I was already saved. I was one of those hungry ones who are already blessed. I saw no vision, but in my soul Jesus appeared as he had never appeared before, and I was glad as I had never been glad before. I think I was received into Abraham's house, not the legal house or field from which I had gone out, but into the gospel house, into Jerusalem which is from above, to sit down among Sarah's freeborn children, where there is joy and gladness, thanksgiving and the voice of melody.

The elder son never becomes dissatisfied with his work or wages, but he is always jealous and angry when he hears music and rejoicing because a sinner has returned. The suggestion that salvation is for sinners, for those who own that they have done nothing to deserve it, excites the enmity of the legal character today the same as it did in the days of Jesus. They murmured then because he received publicans and sinners, and ate with them, and so they murmur now. It was on that account that he spake this parable, teaching thus the difference between the legal and the gospel character, (Luke xv.) and showing by what experience of sin and suffering the children of the free woman are separated from the children of the bond woman, and brought by the way of "the end of the earth" to finally experience a soul-surprising welcome among the children of the heavenly Jerusalem, "which is the mother of us all." (Gal. iv. 22–29.)

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 24, 1901.

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22 N. FOURTH ST., CAMDEN, N. J., Feb. 5, 1901.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY VERY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Ever since you visited us in December, I have felt that I ought to write to you and tell you how much I enjoyed your visit, but my pride, that evil with which all men are cursed, kept me from doing it, because it made me feel that I had nothing to write that would be of any satisfaction to the ones who read it. Now that I have begun this letter, I still feel weak, and must look to the God of our salvation to guide my pen, if I would write anything that

will be of any comfort to one of his dear children. He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of our salvation, the author and finisher of our faith. A sermon of which he is not the context, will not be blessed with the unction of the holy Spirit, and consequently will not make the deaf to hear nor the blind to see, finding no lodgment in the hearts which God has sanctified to himself. Our God is a jealous God, and will not give his glory to another. A letter of which he is not the sole theme will be but a smattering of ink upon a sheet of paper. The words will not stand forth as though written in gold; they will not rejoice the afflicted, nor lift up the heavy laden, neither will they come as a harbinger of peace with tidings of great joy to one of God's children. Thus it will be with this letter; if I talk not of Christ, and ascribe all glory and honor to his holy name, I may as well lay aside my pen, for nothing that I could write would be of any comfort to you, or any one else that belongs to our Father's family.

In the thirty-second chapter of Deuteronomy, Moses says, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness to our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he. They have corrupted themselves; their spot is not the spot of his children: they are a perverse and crooked generation." Now we see that Moses starts out by declaring that his doctrine will drop as the rain, and that his speech will distill as the dew. What does Moses mean by my doctrine? Does he mean some theory that he has worked out, some scheme which he has evolved out his brain as a result of much study and intellectual strength, by which he would teach others how to live in order to be worthy of the favor of God? It is true that the word doctrine, in English, is derived from a Latin word implying something that may be taught, but the original word in Hebrew which is translated "doctrine," in this instance, implies *something that has been received* rather than *something that may be taught*, so that Moses seems to be saying to the heavens and to the earth, "Give ear," for "I will declare what I *have received* at the hands of the Almighty, and what God himself has revealed unto me," and in doing this, "my speech shall distill as the dew." Following this he gives four reasons why his speech will distill as the dew: "Because I will publish the name of the Lord," is the first one; "Ascribe ye greatness to our God," is the second one; "He is the Rock, his work is perfect," is the third, and the fourth and last is, "They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of his children." These four constituents of Moses' doctrine are what caused it to drop as the rain and distill as the dew. Even so to this day every sermon which we hear preached must have in it these four elements in order to be called a gospel sermon, and in order to give comfort to any one of our heavenly Father's children. In other words, a sermon must publish the name of the Lord, declaring that he and he alone can save us from our sins, and that "there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Such a sermon must also ascribe greatness to our God, for he is great in truth, great in justice, great in mercy, great in works which are all wonder-working, and in short, *all* greatness must be ascribed to

him. Not only this, but every gospel sermon must say, "He is the Rock: his work is perfect." It must declare him as the only foundation upon which a poor, lost and ruined sinner can rest in security, "all other ground is sinking sand." Also, it must say the work of Christ is a perfect work. The sufferings and death of Christ are a perfect atonement for the sins of all his people. His redemption is perfect, and in that redemption man's work has no part nor parcel.

Now a sermon may do all of the above, and yet fall short of the truth unless it comes up to the fourth requirement of a gospel sermon. It must declare, "They have corrupted themselves." That is, it must preach that man is wholly and entirely corrupt, that the flesh is not and cannot be capable of any good thing; "All flesh is grass, and the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field."

A sermon that publishes the name of the Lord, ascribes greatness to our God, declares him as a Rock and his work as perfect, and declares man as corrupt, and capable of no spiritual good, is and always will be a gospel sermon. Such a sermon is the only one that God will ever bless with the unction of his holy Spirit, and such a doctrine alone will drop as the rain and distill as the dew in the hearts of God's little ones. A sermon that contains three of the above elements, and not the fourth, will always fall short of the truth, and nothing but the *whole* truth will do.

Now, my dear brother, I will not tire you any longer with my scribbling. In looking over this, I find I have not written in the strain in which I intended to write, but have written simply as my mind has been led, and such as I have, give I to thee.

And now, with love to you and all the dear kindred in Christ, I remain your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life,

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

KIRKLAND, Tenn., Jan. 20, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed you will find a letter written by our dear brother J. W. Stowers, of Kentucky. If you think it will be a comfort to other dear brethren of like precious faith you may publish it. I have not obtained his consent, but I am satisfied that it will be agreeable with him.

Your brother, I hope,

J. K. WOMACK.

STOWERS, Ky., Jan. 6, 1901.

ELDER J. K. WOMACK—DEAR BROTHER:—I fully intended to write to you after I left you at New Lebanon, Ky., but have delayed until now.

Whenever my desire is made known to God in prayer, for Zion and those upon her walls, you are specially remembered by me, and I have and do bless the Lord that he permitted me to meet you, and to gladly receive the precious truths uttered by you; how gladly I received them and how precious they were to me, how refreshing, God only knows. I really felt to bless God and take courage. I went hoping and praying that I might meet Elder Perkins, a faithful, fearless soldier, and servant of Jesus Christ, for I was really hungry for gospel truth. I quickly saw in you another and a different gift, but by the same Spirit. The precious truths spoken by you found deep lodgment in my soul. I blessed the Lord, I thanked him, and if I had had ten thousand tongues I should have used them in praising our God, the deliverer of Zion. Now it may be because I had not, I may say for two years or more, heard any real gospel truth from the mouth of one called

of God, and qualified by him, to go into his treasure-house and bring out and show to his heirs, things old and new: the deep and precious doctrinal truths that comfort and so much strengthen the poor, the weak and helpless saints. I very much needed the strong meat of the gospel, and I verily believe I got it, I feel confident I did, and I feel to bless God now for giving me the capacity to comprehend the precious doctrinal truths as uttered by you, and one other dear brother that I love for the truth's sake. I do love so much to find men nowadays who fear God and reverence him, and hold in disregard the opinion of men. I have met not a few men the past twenty-seven years, who impressed me as being men called of God and qualified of God to speak the right thing at the right place; words of truth, words of soberness, solemn, earnest men, men taught of God. Now who can be bolder, more fearless, than those fitted by the Lord and sent out? Then he gives an ear to hear, he gives a heart to understand, and how easy it is then to give all glory and honor and praise to his precious name; how humble, how glad are his poor, helpless saints. The last day (Monday) was a glorious day to me, I felt to be sitting in heavenly places, I could see Zion, its precious inhabitants. "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel." How safe; O how secure, O how blessed! Now did I not praise God? If I did not I know I felt to do so, I tried to. I left that association feeling that I was God's freeman, I thanked God for letting me, a poor, weak worm, enjoy sweet fellowship for his saints, and as I believed a conception of doctrinal truth. I did not know before that Red River Association would accept the whole truth, as so many are fighting shy of the doctrine as believed by God's people, but when you were preaching, it seemed to me the whole congregation was glad, and rejoiced in what you told them, and how it did gladden my heart to see and feel that God had kept secure those dear brethren I had met with so often and loved so much.

I now and then receive a good letter from Elder Bartley, he is a dear brother. I want you to visit us at some time soon, when you conclude to come, write to brother Wilson Baird, Stowers, Kentucky. Brother Baird is sound to the core, as are eight or ten others. I want to hear you very much, and if you do visit us at Sulphur Springs, write me, as I might not hear of the appointment as I do not live near the church.

I hope the Lord is blessing you with health, and I hope you are speaking to the comfort and edification of God's dear children. If you feel disposed, write me at any time, as I would be glad to hear from you.

May the Lord give you his dear presence in all your trials.

Your unworthy brother,

J. W. STOWERS.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 21, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—As I am not able to go to meeting, and am alone to-day, I feel like writing a few lines at home. I have been sick with "la grippe" all this new year, and have not been able to be out to the meetings since, where I love so much to be. It has also been some time since I have written anything for the SIGNS, so I have been thinking I would write again to relieve my mind. I have been a member of the church at Southampton for over fifty years, and I feel that I have come far short of my duties all the years that are

past; I have made many crooked paths. Many have fallen asleep, yes, nearly all who were members of the church when I came in, and I believe that they are at rest in heaven, the only place of true happiness, During these fifty years, at times I have been very sick, but for some reason known only to God, I am here yet. I believe that we have no right to try to pry into the future, nor to say, Why or what doest thou? All things are in the hands of God, and all events at his command. Blessed Jesus, I am glad that it is so, for I am sure that if our destiny or happiness were left to poor, sinful creatures, we must give up all hope in despair. I am alone very often, and think much of the church. We know this promise is good, "I will never leave nor forsake thee." He has told us in his word, that it is through much tribulation that we must follow our Lord, and again, he has promised that the deep waters shall not overflow us, nor the fire kindle upon us.

"When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow,
For I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress."

O, how sweet when we can take hold of such promises. Of late I have had some sweet seasons of enjoyment when alone. Sometimes in the night, I seem to be praising God for his manifold blessings toward me. We cannot impart to any one these revelations, each one must know these things for himself. I have been made to rejoice of late in seeing the young made willing to leave the world, and to take up the cross and follow the Savior in his divine commands. We hope to see more flocking in as doves to their windows.

I have been reading, as I have had leisure, in the Psalms, wherein I found much comfort; you each can read them. How sweet they are when applied to each one as it is needed. I find it so with me

"We then move cheerfully on,
The ground feels firm and good,
And lest we should mistake the way,
He lines it out with blood."

I often find myself enjoying a part of a hymn which has come into my mind. I feel that my journey is nearly at an end, but be that as it may, if I am but prepared by divine grace, then the Father will say unto me, "Child, your Father calls, come home." If I am permitted to gain such an inheritance, blessed indeed am I. I often used to hear Elder Purington read these lines at funerals,

"It is not death to die,
To leave this weary road,
And midst the brotherhood on high,
To be at home with God."

Fearing lest I make you weary I will close. Forgive all that is amiss. May we pray for each other.

As ever, in hope of life eternal beyond, your sister,

RACHEL F. HART.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I feel that I must speak with you, one and all, and let you know there is such a poor offcast in this desert land, one alone, yet not alone, for I am praising the great God that I did after years of wandering in pursuit, find the true sheep, and am once a year permitted to pasture with them, and partake of that food which is palpable to sheep alone, and nourishing to their hungry souls. Now I am often weeping over this my lonely life, no one to speak with of the great God who said, he would do all his pleasure. Who art thou that repliest against God? These people with whom I am associated believe they must be out hunting goats and all classes of wild animals. They do not know, and will not know, that the Savior said, "Feed my lambs; "Feed my sheep;"

"Feed my sheep." O, how sweet that is, and precious to my soul, and I know those to whom the command was given must feel very humble at his feet, that he should give them such a charge. Not only once, but thrice: If you love me feed my sheep. Now look at the picture: One lone sheep out on the plains with all sorts of wild animals snapping at him on all sides. I cannot half draw the picture, as I am no artist, but ask all to remember me in their prayers. I cannot tell why it is thus, only that I am such an unruly one, am not fit company to be with the flock.

When the Lord called me out of the depths of sorrow, to rejoicing and praising, had it been in my power, my voice would have reached from sea to sea in praises to his great name. I cannot describe the greatness of that God whose mercy reached me, and brought me out of the depths of sorrow of many weeks, and lifted me out of reach of all the earth, and that pertained to earth. While standing on the doorstep this beautiful Scripture was made mine: "By thee have I run through a troop: by my God I have leaped over a wall." Yes, it was a great wall which I shall never forget. The everlasting arms lifted me above all this earth, and I was carried there about two months, rejoicing that nothing of this earth could ever reach me again, but I found my mistake. How I was let down I never did know; it was so gradual; not a fall of Mephibosheth, though lame on both my feet. Yet I do not always realize that fact, and find that I will try to walk alone.

I am sorry to see that some brethren object to the term predestinate, that in which I so much rejoice, I have been for so long hearing of man's and money's power, I cannot hear too much of the predestinated and fixed purposes of the great God who said, he would do all his pleasure. I like to hear of that great God who says, "All things are ordered of the Lord and sure." That is the great and grand power we like to hear. Some of us need to have things often rehearsed, as for myself I notice after a few years I forget whether a name is Smith or Jones.

LAURELVILLE, Ohio, Jan. 21, 1901.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I have been negligent about sending my renewal for the SIGNS, as you will see by the date of the accompanying money order, for which please credit me for another year. I believe I have enjoyed many feasts from the last year's publication. Predestination, by Elder Bartley, in the November 15th issue, was a very feast; also Elder Chick's editorial in same issue; both editorials in Jan. 1st were read with great comfort; the editorial by the late Elder Beebe, of same number, was a gospel feast for me to meditate on, long after I read it and went to my work. Although Moses (the law) left the Israel of God at the verge of Jordan, they had enemies to fight all their lives in Canaan. Beautiful type of the church! Enemies beset us on every side, which requires a constant warfare. O, may we not, as did the literal Israel at times, go forth to fight in our own strength, but in the strength of Israel's God. May we ever be dwelling alone, for in this lies our safety. May we never intermarry with the nations round about us. Israel never thought as much of one another as when persecuted, or indulged in as heartfelt prayers to Jehovah as when forcibly taken captive. So it becomes meet at times that we be forcibly taken captive and persecuted by our enemies. Israel was many times taken captive (capti-

vated) by friendliness of their enemies, and did not realize it until they claimed a blessing from God. O, may we ever be on our guard against the wiles, institutions and allurements of the religious world. Those coins stamped on the face "counterfeit," we do not fear, but that counterfeit stamped "United States Money." "What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch."

I would like Elder Chick's opinion on Romans iii. 25.

Our church, called Laurel, in the Scioto Association, has enjoyed peace and fellowship ever since I have known it. Elder Tusing is our beloved under-shepherd. "Conditional time salvation" has not been mentioned but once in our pulpit, that we know of, and then by a visitor. I pray that brotherly love may continue, and that the fancied differences among Baptists may vanish away.

Excuse this rambling, unworthy scribble, as it is like myself. May the editors and readers of the SIGNS pray for one the most unworthy,

GEO. W. HARTSOUGH.

MARSHALL, Minn., Jan. 30, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I feel to say for your encouragement, that your remarks on Old School, or Primitive Baptists, in the close of volume sixty-seven, is my view, and has been for a long time. I for one have felt that those who refute the principles advocated by the SIGNS, have no right to the name, but I am only a woman, and know my inability to make remarks on things of such vital importance, but it grieves me to know of things causing confusion and distress among those that love the SIGNS, and know how long the SIGNS lived with no enemies within our ranks. I was surprised to learn how many periodicals, claiming to be devoted to the Old School Baptist cause, there were now in the States; I knew there were some, for we have been asked to take several, but refused all their liberal offers. I do not feel, as I heard a sister say when I asked her if they took the SIGNS: "No, I have the Bible, that is enough for me." I feel that I want the SIGNS too, for they go well together, in my humble opinion. But it seems to be so ordered by the all-wise God. I was reading an editorial of your father's on 2 Timothy iv. 34: "For the time will come, when they will not endure sound doctrine," &c. But if the Lord is for us, who can be against us? The SIGNS will be published just as long as the Lord sees fit to sustain them, for God has sustained the editors, and he always will, for the doctrine of the Bible is what they teach, and always have. I have read the SIGNS since 1840, and they seem to me the same now as then, and maintain the same sacred truths, and those that have left the SIGNS, and taken other periodicals opposed to the SIGNS, should leave the name Old School or Primitive Baptist, is my view in full. Am I uncharitable? Brother Beebe, tell me my fault, if I am wrong; it seems to me that if all that profess to be Old School or Primitive Baptists had stood firm, and contended earnestly for the faith that was delivered to the saints, and not for some selfish reason forsaken the old path, you might to-day be sending out more weekly papers than you are now semi-monthly, and out of debt, and O, what a comfort that would be to the poor children living far from any church privilege, as I and my husband are, and only hear from churches and brethren and sisters through the SIGNS. If we could meet with those that love the truth, it would seem a comfort.

I am nearing my eighty-first year, and shall soon leave this world of joys and sorrows, hoping to find that land of rest where all the ransomed of Christ are, to go no more out forever. You are a stranger to me, and I feel that it is presuming very much to take your time to read this poor scribble, but perhaps this will be the last I shall ever write, and I want you to know that I and my husband stand firm in the doctrine contained in the SIGNS.

A poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

(MRS.) O. PATTERSON.

[SISTER Patterson requests us to tell her if she is wrong in believing that those who oppose the doctrine advocated in the SIGNS, have no right to the name of Old School or Primitive Baptists. We fully agree with sister Patterson's views, and as stated in our article referred to by her, "Close of Volume Sixty-seven," that aside from the question of the truth or fallacy of the principles advocated by the SIGNS, they are the ones adopted by the brethren that assumed the name Old School Baptist, at Black Rock, Md., in 1832, at the time of the division (or split) from the "Missionary, or Free Will Baptists."—ED.]

SUNSET, Texas, Dec. 7, 1900.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed please find two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for another year, as we still appreciate the doctrine it contains, and do not feel willing to dispense with the paper, as we receive much comfort from reading the same. There are yet a despised few in these parts that stand firm on predestination, and salvation by grace and grace alone, both for time and eternity. When we work out our own salvation, God first works in us to will and do of his own good pleasure. So it is all of grace, and the praise and glory all belong to God, and not to poor mortals whose breath is in their nostrils. All good and perfect gifts come from above, while all evil comes from another source, and God is not the author of it, but it is of our own evil nature, which is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

With much love to the household of faith scattered abroad, I will close. As ever the least of all the little ones, yet as we sometimes hope, your sister in hope,

LIZZIE CAMPBELL.

MADISON, Ga., Nov. 25, 1900.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed you will find post-office order for two dollars to pay for the SIGNS for another year, which in all probability will be my last, as I am now in my seventy-eighth year, and quite feeble. I have been a reader of the SIGNS from my youth to old age, and if not deceived, I love the doctrine for which it contends. May God support and sustain the editors for years to come, is the sincere desire of your unworthy sister, who craves an interest in the prayers of all of God's children.

How thankful I feel that brother William L. Beebe is yet spared. How we miss him here, near his old home, in Georgia; would be glad to have a letter from him once more, as I cannot hope ever to meet him again in time. God grant we may meet in a better world, and unite with all the blood-washed throng in praising Father, Son and Holy Ghost, through a never-ending eternity.

Please excuse this, as I did not intend writing, only to order the SIGNS.

(MRS.) L. L. PERRY.

ATLANTA, Ga., Feb. 8, 1901.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am trying to act as I think all Baptists should, toward this paper, and the interest of all sound Baptists who read it, this noble paper, with its contents of sound doctrine of sovereign grace, predestination, electing power and everlasting love. I am proud of the firmness and solid comfort this paper gives. It is about all the preaching we get, who read it here, although there are plenty ordained ministers here. We have five ordained preachers in our church, the East Atlanta Primitive Baptist, but they are not much for this paper.

H. H. BENTLEY.

[BROTHER Bentley has been a kind and efficient worker for the SIGNS, and we assure him that we do appreciate his labors in behalf of the paper, for many in his section who were once warm supporters of the SIGNS, have now turned back, and walk no longer with us in maintaining the principles of truth upon which the SIGNS was founded, and for which it has contended for nearly seventy years.—ED.]

CHAMPAGNOLLE, Ark., Feb. 11, 1901.

BELOVED BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Through the goodness and mercy of our all-wise Creator, I am again permitted, although a little late, to send in my remittance. Please find two dollars for the dear old SIGNS, which I hope I love to read, yet at the same time I feel so sinful and so unworthy that the most of the time I am traveling in the dark with a sad heart, desiring to pray, yet evil is present, and I am made to mourn and cry, "Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I hope it is God's will to sustain you, brethren editors, in your good work, and that the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES may continue to live and grow, and cheer its many precious readers and correspondents.

Your brother, I hope, in love and fellowship,

JOHN D. STAPLES.

ROCKVILLE, Maryland, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed you will find post-office order for two dollars, my remittance for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for 1901. I have just returned from Washington to this home in Rockville, after an absence of four months, hence the delay. Well, it is better late than never, and I am glad to once more be able to help to support that good book of experiences of grace, to children of a covenant-keeping God of love, mercy and grace. I believe in the doctrine of the eternal decrees of our God, and not that of chance, or just as it happens, as some have it. O no, our God is a God of purpose, and he rules all things according to his will and purpose, that he purposed in his Son ere the world was made, by his power. He sheds his love abroad in our hearts, that causes us to love him, his ways and his decrees. All he does is right, and he has an an undisputed right to govern me and mine. Such is the doctrine that I have been taught by his Spirit dwelling in me in trials, troubles, losses, crosses, of more than forty years of mortal life. When he has deprived me of one joy, he has restored it by his loving presence in some other way, and made me obey his holy will. Love is the fountain whence all true obedience flows; without love to the brethren, we are as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. Love brings me to the feet of the brethren, and there I can look on their faults and failings.

RUTH ADAMSON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1901.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

LUKE XVI. 1–12.

A FRIEND in Macon, Ga., who reads the SIGNS, desires to know what the parable recorded in the sixteenth chapter of Luke, first twelve verses, signifies.

It is not our purpose to give extended views upon that parable, because in former years there have appeared in the SIGNS articles of some length regarding the same Scripture. We understand the subject matter contained in the parable to be continued on to the eighteenth verse of the chapter. "No servant can serve two masters." "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."—Verse 13. *Mammonas*, the Greek word, translated mammon, signifies wealth, riches. This is in keeping with the words of the Savior to the disciples upon the occasion of the departure of the young man who had great possessions, when he had been told to sell all that he had and give to the poor; he went away sorrowful, because he had great possessions. Then the Savior said, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter the kingdom of God!" The whole connection shows that his meaning was, How hardly shall they that set their heart upon riches, and all the gain of this world, enter the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven means, not the future world of glory, but rather the love, joy, peace, humility, spiritual mindedness and communion with God, that belong to the kingdom of God here. How often does this world's riches prove a snare to the feet of the child of God, to his sorrow and shame.

In verse fifteen it seems the Savior uses the same thought of the riches of this world, and applies it to self-righteousness. It is sure that nothing can possibly be so effectual in shutting out any child of God from all the riches of the kingdom of heaven, from its righteousness, joy and peace, as a spirit of self-righteousness. This spirit of self-righteousness is what makes the humbling doctrine of the cross so hateful to the masses of the professing world. Self-righteousness made the preaching of Jesus Christ a stumbling-block to the Jews. "Being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submit themselves unto the righteousness of God," says the apostle. This was true in his day, and it is true in our day.

It is our understanding that the Scriptures teach that all earthly riches, of whatever kind, may be a hindrance to a believer, and to his growth in the things of the kingdom of God. So Agur prayed, "Give me neither poverty nor riches." They that have riches are in more danger than they that are poor in this world's goods, of becoming heady, proud, high minded and dictatorial towards their fellows, and forgetful of their dependence upon God. Therefore Paul charged Timothy to charge them that were rich in this world, that they be not high minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth all things richly to enjoy, that they do good, that they be

rich in good works, ready to distribute, (or give where needed) willing to communicate, thus laying up for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold upon eternal life.

Now, if there be such danger in the riches of this world, or in great accumulations of wealth, it is evident that that other wealth of fancied self-righteousness, or of legal works, is infinitely more destructive, and is to be infinitely more dreaded. And as said before, it seems the Savior does introduce this sort of mammon in verse fifteen.

Still further, the parable contains a warning to disciples, as to how they are to use the goods of this world, which are committed to them as stewards of the manifold grace of God. And Paul, in the text just before quoted from 1 Timothy, urges the same thing. Both of these apostles by inspiration of God exhort to the right use of the goods of this world. So in the parable the disciples of the Lord are enjoined to a right use of what has been committed to them. Jesus said, "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." That is, they show more wisdom in the affairs of this world, according to their judgment, than the children of God do in their use of what they have. As Paul exhorted to so use this world, as to lay up a good foundation against the time to come, so the Savior here presents the same thing.

Jesus does not commend, let it be remembered, the dishonesty and greed of the unfaithful steward, but he does commend his forethought and care for the future, as the part of human wisdom. Now, while the disciples know that all earthly things are bestowed upon them, that in those things and by their use they may do good to their fellows who have need, and thereby glorify God, yet how often it is the case that they do not thus use these things, but rather strive to be rich, and trust in riches, and so pierce themselves through with many sorrows. God's people are not to seek to be rich, because they thus fall into temptation and a snare, and many hurtful and foolish lusts, which drown men in perdition and destruction. And they who covet riches err from the faith, and pierce themselves through with many sorrows. Such indeed find that they cannot serve God and mammon. The lesson is, if God confer riches, use them to his glory and the good of others, and surely this is a lesson of deep importance to us all, and they who realize these things will have deep heart searchings as to what is the prevailing motive within them, and as to the use they are making of what our God has bestowed upon them.

The other thought in the parable concerning the false and deceiving riches of self-righteousness, has been ably presented several times in the columns of the SIGNS in past years, and we do not feel like doing more than to indicate our approval of what has been so well said by others. Thus it appears that this parable is a presentation of what is elsewhere enjoined upon believers by inspired apostles. The children of this world know nothing but this world, and strive to bend all things to present or future gain and advantage in this world, but the children of light know that this world passes away, and that its riches are sure to melt away, and yet do not (often at least) use this world as though this were true. How foolish is a child of God who uses this world as the children of the world do. How foolish is that child of God who sets his affections upon things below, and not upon things above. How

solemn the admonition, "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them."

C.

ATTENDING MEETINGS OF OTHER DENOMINATIONS.

A SISTER in the west, who does not wish her name used, asks what we think about Old School Baptists attending meetings of other denominations?

First of all we will say, If any do desire to attend the religious meetings of other denominations, they can put up with hearing untruth concerning the blessed name of Jesus, better than we have ever been able to do. We suppose our sister means habitually attending those meetings. Whenever we have been present at such religious gatherings, either at funeral occasions, or at other times, we have never failed to come away feeling that we never wanted to go again. How can we bear to hear the name of our best friend belittled? How can we bear to hear salvation ascribed to the creature, and not to Jesus. We have never heard the name of Jesus exalted as the alone Savior of his people, except among those who bear the name of Old School Baptists. We have never in our life heard one reference to personal christian experience in any pulpit, but where Old School Baptists were preaching. We have heard once the name of christian experience used, but when it was described it was not experience at all of any kind, but just what we must do. There is certainly a vast difference between what we do, and what we experience. What we may experience will lead to the doing of some things no doubt, and what we do leads to some sort of experience, but the one is not the other in any case. If a man tells of what he has experienced, he will not be telling of what he has been doing, except to point out how some things which he has done, have led to certain experiences. On the other hand, what a man has experienced will lead, as said before, to works of some kind. In other pulpits we have always heard the works of men enjoined and praised, but never one word of the experience which is of God, and which leads to good works. The child of God, when led by the Spirit, will want to hear his experience spoken of, because through this experience he is led to exalt the name of his God and Savior, and is himself humbled and abased.

The one truth which all who have experienced the salvation of God must know, is that salvation is indeed of the Lord. What all trials and struggles lead to, in the mind of the child of God, is that he needs daily help, and that all that he can hope for in the future, in the way of help, hope and deliverance, must come from the will and power of God. God alone can save him; grace alone can do him any good. Therefore to hear self exalted, is miserable comfort to him. He must say to such preaching as did Job to his friends, "How hast thou helped him that is without power?" And again, "Miserable comforters are ye all," "physicians of no value." How then can a child of God want to addict himself to hearing falsehood regarding his salvation, and regarding the God who is his trust? Would a man listen with any patience to reproaches cast upon the name of a father or mother? How can a child of God listen to aspersion cast upon the name of his Father in heaven? And how can a child of God seem to approve and indorse such falsehoods concerning his heavenly Father, which he does most surely if he addicts himself to attending upon such services. How can a believer who reverences the testimony of the word, listen

without deepest grief to assertions, If the God of heaven does this or that, which seems wrong to finite, human reason, he is unjust and a tyrant? But is this not daily said, in substance, by all who contend against the doctrine of predestination, election, effectual calling and final perseverance? All these principles of truth are and must be dear to every called disciple of the Lord. Paul, in Romans ix., was provoked to stern rebuke against all who fought against the election of grace, and the predestination of God, and charged upon them that they were replying against God. Would he have been willing to hear what he there so sternly condemned, advocated in the name of the Lord? We are sure that if a man be filled with the love of the truth, he will not want to hear such things, and if he have a proper regard to the glory of God, he will not want to even seem to indorse such misrepresentations of him, by his presence at such places. C.

PLEASE BE SURE

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

The last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denotes the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

A REVIVAL CERTIFICATE.

We have been furnished with the following copy of an extraordinary certificate which has been copiously issued by a number of influential citizens of Philadelphia, who are interested in promoting the present religious revival. It bears a close resemblance to the old Papal expedient of selling indulgences:

AMERICAN SYSTEMATIC BENEFICENT SOCIETY.

Auxiliary to every Benevolent Institution in the Lard.

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This certifies that———is the holder of———shares in

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[Signed.] M. W. BALDWIN, President.
GEO. H. STUART, Vice-Pres't.
THOS. COOPER, Treasurer.
W. J. R. TAYLOR, Rec. Sec.
JOHN GULLIVER, Cor. Sec.

This certificate, with the remarks which precede it, appears to have been clipped from a Philadelphia paper; it was handed us by a friend who seemed to think it entitled to some special notice, as indicating the progressive march of antichrist. It is true the spirit of modern fanaticism assumes occasionally some new and novel phases; but the principles and policy of the powers of darkness have always been substantially the same in all ages.

Chartered companies, with titled officers, for evangelizing the world, together with numerous financiering agencies for collecting and disbursing funds, for the professed object of sustaining that kingdom which is not of this world, and that gospel which is without money and without price, have been too numerous to attract any unusual attention. But the stock-jobbing enterprise of the "American Systematic

Beneficent Society," proposes to divide the throne of the Eternal God into sixpenny shares, and sell the mansions of immortal glory for filthy lucre. Were any organized company of men to practice such frauds in regard to any earthly territory that does not belong to them, they would, on conviction of their rascality, be lodged in our State prisons. But the fraud of thus swindling the unsuspecting and credulous Sunday School victims of their toy-money, mean and unjustifiable as it is, sinks to insignificance when compared with the bold, unblushing blasphemy of offering the throne of Jehovah for sale. God, who occupies that high and exalted seat, has said, "Heaven is my throne." And this band of pious swindlers advertise that heaven for sale. And, to crown the climax of their effrontery, they forge the indorsement of him who overturned the tables of the money-changers, and scourged all manner of religious traffickers from his temple, and forbid peremptorily that his Father's House should be made a place of merchandise, or occupied as a den of thieves. To pretend that the blessed Savior, in Matt. xix. 29, gave his sanction to their swindling religious stock-jobbing operations, is handling the word of God deceitfully, and turning the truth of God into a lie. In the darkest ages of Popery, no greater abominations were practiced for swindling unconscious children of their money. Truly has the Scriptures said of these worshipers of mammon, that they subvert whole houses, and lead about the silly, for filthy lucre's sake.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 15, 1858

MATTHEW XXVI. 40.

WE have and do understand this passage to mean that the disciples—Peter, James and John—were literally asleep. Such was the weakness of their flesh, that, although they loved the Savior with the most sincere and abiding love, and were at that time willing in spirit to go with him to the prison or to death, they could not watch with him in that one hour of his dreadful agony and suffering. Peter's protestation in a preceding verse, "Though all men should be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended," and also, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee," were uttered in the sincerity of his heart; and we have no doubt that the affections of the other two disciples were equally strong. But what are our affections and resolutions, when we rely upon our fleshly powers to execute them? "The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak."

There was a special cause for the selection of Peter, James and John, from the other apostles, to experience this scene of trial and of suffering. Peter's evident confidence in his own fidelity and power of perseverance required correction. And James and John had said they were able to drink of his cup, and to be baptized with his baptism; and therefore felt themselves competent to fill distinguished places in the kingdom of their Lord; the one to sit on his right hand, and the other on his left. But Jesus had said to them, "Ye know not what ye ask." And this utter failure for want of ability to resist this lethargetic pressure upon their natural energies, taught them most effectually by experience what they were slow indeed to comprehend in any other way.

Nor was this important lesson of the weakness of human flesh alone for the benefit of these distinguished apostles of the Lamb. The saints in all subsequent time are admonished to beware of self-confidence, or of reposing confidence in the flesh. The flesh is to be denied, the

body kept under, for in the flesh dwells no good thing. The spirit within these disciples which was willing, was born of God; but the flesh which was weak, was not born of God; it was only born of the flesh, and therefore could not rise above itself; and in the most critical and important hour of trial, its weakness was developed. They could not watch one hour. Well did the inspired Paul say to those who were with himself, members of the one body of Christ, "We are the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." And why should we have? "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing."

Another important consideration bearing on the subject is, that our Redeemer was by the irrevocable decree of heaven, to tread the wine-press alone, and that of the people there should be none with him to share in the work, making reconciliation for the sins of the people. He was himself legally the embodiment of all his members; so that his death and suffering was the execution of the penal demands of law and justice which stood against them. So that when he died for his members, they were legally dead; and in his resurrection for their justification, they were released from death and delivered from all condemnation; yet the propitiatory sacrifice was made by him as their High Priest, single handed and alone. Therefore in his victory, his arm, in the achievement of their salvation, brought salvation unto him; for they are his body, his flesh and his bones.

It could not therefore be that any fleshly power should aid in the accomplishment of that work. When the Shepherd was smitten the sheep were scattered; and notwithstanding the strong inclination of these disciples to drink of his cup, and be baptized with his baptism of overwhelming sufferings, it was impossible for them to keep awake or watch with him that one hour.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 15, 1858.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$439 80
Mrs. Edward Griffin, New York	3 00
Total to date	$442 80

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—Near his home in Gosper Co., Neb., of heart failure, **Jacob Bruce**, on the evening of Nov. 11th, 1900. He was born in Harrison Co., Ind., May 3d, 1831. His wife preceded him to the grave over four years. He leaves nine children, five sons and four daughters, all married but one son. His death was very sudden; he had attended his regular meetings Saturday and Sunday. Sunday night his oldest daughter, who lived near him, went to meeting with him, it being about five miles from his home. After meeting they started home at about 9 o'clock at night, and it was very dark. About half way home they lost the road, and brother got out of his buggy to search for it, and only got a few steps from the buggy when he sank to the ground without a sign of warning; his daughter listened for him and became uneasy, and called to him several times, then got out to hunt for him, but it was so dark she could not see, and stumbled over his body. He was lying on his right side; she turned him on his back, and he gasped once. She tried to lift him in the buggy, but could not, neither could she find the way out with the buggy, as she was among the heads of large canons. After making a trial to drive out, she left the horse and buggy, and succeeded in finding their home, and told her husband and brother that her father was dead, but could not tell where his body lay, but as the horse had missed the road there before, as it was not traveled much, and went through pastures, so they found the body about 12 o'clock that night.

Brother Jacob united with the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church called Salem, in Harrison Co., Ind., in 1858, and came to Nebraska in 1881, and went into the constitution of Providence Old School Baptist Church July 2d, 1898. Elder J. H. King is the pastor of the church, and was there at the time, and officiated at the funeral services.

ALSO,

DIED—At her home in Mitchell Co., Kansas, Dec. 6th, 1900, **Mrs. Tatum**, with paralysis of the stomach.

She was sick seven weeks, with intense suffering; she was 72 years and 24 days old. Her maiden name was Brooks. She was married to H. C. Tatum, Nov. 10th, 1834, in Illinois, who preceded her to the grave five years. She leaves six children to mourn their loss, four sons and two daughters, one son and one daughter preceding her to the grave. There are thirty-two grandchildren living, and seven dead, and fourteen great-grandchildren living, and five dead.

She united with the Primitive Baptist Church in Iowa, a number of years ago; I do not know the name of the church, but she was baptized by her father-in-law, Elder James Tatum, and moved from Iowa, to Mitchell Co., Kansas, in 1879, and united with a Primitive Baptist Church in Ottawa Co., Kansas, called Mill Creek. She was a worthy member, a loving mother and kind friend, and was a reader and subscriber of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which she appreciated very much.

ALSO,

DIED—At his home in Nuckolls Co., Neb., Dec. 2d, 1900, **George T. Hutchinson,** with heart failure. He was sitting in his chair conversing with his daughter-in-law, and died instantly. He was born in Page Co., Va., April 18th, 1835, and moved from there to Ohio, and later to Illinois, where he was married to Miss Jane Martz, in Shelby Co., Ill., Dec. 26th, 1858. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church called Union, in Shelby Co., Ill., at the regular meeting in November, 1858, and was baptized by Elder Benjamin Mahon. Deceased enlisted at Peoria, Ill., in the Civil war, serving during the war in Company K, Fourteenth Regiment Illinois Calvary. He leaves a wife, four sons and one daughter, to mourn their loss, two daughters and one son preceding him to the grave. He united with Little Flock Church of Primitive Baptists, in Nuckolls Co., Neb., by relation, Oct. 22d, 1898, and remained a worthy member until he was called home.

His funeral was conducted by Elders J. H. and Joel Hammons, Dec. 4th, 1900, at his home. The text used was 1 Thessalonians iv. 14.

JOSEPH BRUCE.

ROCA, Nebraska.

MEMORIAL.

Whereas it has pleased God in his providence to remove our dear brother, George T. Hutchinson, from our midst,

Resolved, that in his death the church has lost a worthy member, his wife a dutiful husband, and his children a loving Father, who, together with the church, mourn their loss.

Resolved, that we sympathize with the bereaved family in their sad loss, but sorrow not as those without hope, for we believe our loss is his eternal gain.

Done by order of the church, January 26th, 1901.

ELDER J. H. HAMMONS, Moderator.

JOEL HAMMONS, Clerk.

IT has been the will of an all-wise and loving heavenly Father to call home to himself, on Dec. 22d, 1900, our dear sister, **Mary Jane May,** of Mays Mill, N. Y. She was born May 10th, 1826. Deceased was the widow of the late Deacon Jabez May, who died April 10th, 1896. She and her husband united with the Old School Baptist Church at Burdett, N. Y., about twenty-five years ago, and were both faithful and consistent members until death. Sister May was confined to her bed about three weeks, of a complication of diseases, before she was taken from this mortal and transitory life, during which time her family of two daughters, two sons and a niece, (who was like a daughter to her, having spent most of her girlhood in sister May's home,) were constantly around her, doing all that mortal hands could do for her comfort. Besides her family, she leaves a host of friends and relatives to mourn their loss. We feel that our loss is her eternal gain, as the Lord doeth all things well. Our sister was a good mother in Israel. Her house was always open for Old Baptists, and she is greatly missed wherever she was known.

Services were held at her late home, Mays Mill, N. Y., and she was laid at rest beside her dear husband in Penn Yan Cemetery. May the blessing of God sustain the grief-stricken family, is my prayer.

"Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep!
From which none ever wake to weep!
A calm and undisturbed repose,
Unbroken by the last of foes."

C. BOGARDUS.

WHITE CHURCH, N. Y., Feb. 6, 1901.

OUR beloved brother, **Deacon Abram E. Lester,** departed this mortal life at this place, on the morning of February 12th, 1901, from heart disease, aged 67 years, 6 months and 3 days. He was born in Smith Co., Virginia, in 1833, and in the year 1852 received the evidence of pardoned sins, and upon a profession of his faith was received in the fellowship of Marlborough Church, Old School Baptists, of Delaware Co., Ohio, being baptized by Elder John H. Biggs. For about forty-eight years he has been a lover of the doctrine of salvation by grace, and a faithful follower of the heavenly Master, and for the last several years has held the office of deacon. He was a faithful attendant at the church meetings, a good example, and apt to teach, and often spoke to the comfort of the brethren. On Thursday, Feb. 14th, at 2 o'clock, assisted by Elder Wm. Morphew, at their residence in this town, the unworthy writer hereof, tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved, from John v. 24. He leaves a widow and six grown children to mourn their loss, which surely is his eternal gain.

Brethren, pray for us, that our God may support our bereaved sister and children in their affliction.

GARRETT MURPHY.

GARDEN CITY, Minn., Feb. 15, 1901.

MEETINGS.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 69. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1901. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"APOSTOLIC HYMNS."

THIS is the title of a new song book recently published by Elders J. V. and R. S. Kirkland, of Fulton, Ky. This book has been adopted by many of the churches that have recently embraced the doctrine of free moral agency and conditional time salvation. Inasmuch as these people claim to be the original Primitive Baptists, and charge all those remaining steadfast in the ancient doctrine and order, with departures, and new things, and *fatalism*, and many other ugly things, it is but fair to bring this new song book, published and used by this party, as a witness in the case. Let all who are of an honest heart and sound mind decide for themselves whether the following songs are in keeping with Old Baptist doctrine, or whether they are such as are sung by every Arminian order.

In No. 11, page 21, we find the following:

"We'll run and never falter by the way,
For Jesus' word is true;
He's promised if we ever will obey,
To bring us safely through.

I'll stand upon his word and prove his power,
The Rock of Ages past.
I know he'll keep me trusting every hour,
While life on earth shall last."

Is not this in strict keeping with the doctrine of salvation by works? Is not the expression, "He's promised if we ever will obey, to bring us safely through," strictly Arminian? Is not this an entirely new sentiment for Baptists to sing?

No. 15, on page 25:

"Whene'er the heart is sad and drear,
Give, O, freely give;
'Twill bring the sunshine bright and clear,
Give, O, freely give.

No selfish heart can enter there,
Give, O, freely give;
Then with the poor thy blessing share,
Give, O, freely give.

'Tis Jesus speaks, O, hear his voice,
Give, O, freely give;
He bids not one, but all rejoice,
Give, O, freely give.

On peaceful shore or stormy deep,
Give, O, freely give;
In Christ a rich reward thou'lt reap,
Give, O, freely give."

The above lines are in full harmony with the mission system, and full of the spirit of salvation by works. They are appropriate for any kind of an Arminian gathering, but wholly unfit for an Old Baptist meeting.

On page 30, No. 19, is the following:

"On the distant heathen shore,
Far beyond the ocean's roar,
God has opened wide the door,
Over the sea.
Go ye christians true and brave,
Cross the blue and rolling wave,
For there are many millions saved,
Over the sea.

Bear the glad and joyful sound
That a Savior has been found,
To the souls in error bound,
Over the sea.
That the glorious gospel bright,
With its glorious power and light,
May dispel their gloom and night,
Over the sea.

Then shall dawn the happy day,
When the bright millennial ray,
Shall the darkness drive away,
Over the sea.
When the earth redeemed and free,
Shall Messiah's kingdom be,
And each soul shall bow the knee,
Over the sea."

Any one can see at a glance the sentiment of this song. The modern mission spirit has never been more enthusiastically set forth. In the original copy of this song, the next to the last line of the first verse reads, "There are many now to save over the sea," but this was a little plainer than the publishers wished to come out at present, so they garbled it, and for a blind changed it to its present reading. But the entire composition is directly opposed to every sentiment of Baptist doctrine and order, and is entirely in keeping with what Baptists have always condemned as false and deceptive.

No. 30, page 42:

"Hark! 'tis the Shepherd's voice I hear,
Out in the desert dark and drear,
Calling the lambs who have gone astray,
Far from the Shepherd's fold away.

CHORUS.

Bring them in, bring them in,
Bring them in from the paths of sin,
Bring them in, bring them in,
Bring his lambs to his service.

Who'll go obey this Shepherd kind,
Seeking the little lambs to find?
Who'll bring the wandering to the fold,
Where they'll be sheltered from the cold?

Out in the desert hear their cry,
Out in the mountains wild and high;
Hark! 'tis the Master speaks to thee,
Go find my lambs where'er they be."

No. 50, page 67:

"Soon the evening shadows falling,
Close the day of mortal strife;
Soon the hand of death appalling,
Draws thee from its weary strife.

CHORUS.

Are you ready? are you ready?
'Tis the Spirit calling, why delay?
Are you ready? are you ready?
Do not linger longer, come to-day.

Soon the awful trumpet sounding,
Calls thee to the judgment throne;
Now prepare, for love abounding,
Yet has left thee not alone.

O how fatal 'tis to linger,
Are you ready, ready now?
Ready should death's icy finger
Lay its chill upon thy brow?

Priceless love and free forgiveness,
Freely still awaiteth thee;
Yield no longer to temptation,
But from sin and sorrow flee."

No. 84, page 104:

"Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling,
Calling for you and for me;
See on the portals he's waiting and watching,
Watching for you and for me.

Why should we tarry when Jesus is pleading,
Pleading for you and for me?
Why should we linger and heed not his mercies,
Mercies for you and for me?

Time is now fleeting, the moments are passing,
Passing from you and from me;
Shadows are gathering and death-beds are coming
Coming to you and to me.

O for the wonderful love he has promised,
Promised for you and for me;
Though we have sinned he has mercy and pardon
Pardon for you and for me."

No. 92, page 112:

"Who at my door is standing,
Patiently drawing near,
Entrance within demanding,
Whose is the voice I hear?

CHORUS.

Sweetly the tones are falling,
Open the door for me;

If thou wilt heed my calling,
I will abide with thee.

Lonely without he's staying,
Lonely within am I;
While I am still delaying,
Will he not pass me by?

All through the dark hours dreary,
Knocking again is he;
Jesus, art thou not weary
Waiting so long for me?"

No. 238, page 230:

"The Lord has overcome thy heart,
And by his grace forgave your sin,
And made you love his holy name,
Then why not come in?

CHORUS.

O why not to-night? O why not to-night?
Wilt thou come home?
Then why not to-night?

To-morrow's sun may never rise,
You may not live to pay your vows;
This is the time, O then be wise,
Come home then to-night.

* * * * * * * * *

Our blessed Lord refuses none
Who by his blood have been made white;
Then as the work of grace is done,
Why not come to-night?"

The above number seems to be especially adapted to *night* meetings, and is a good one for Methodists, New School Baptists, or any other Arminian order to sing them in with.

No. 209, page 208:

"Through heat and cold I've often went,
And wandered in despair,
To call poor sinners to repent,
And seek the Savior dear.

My brother preachers, fare you well,
And stand on Zion's wall,
To revive the strong, confirm the weak,
And after sinners call."

I have given above some of the most conspicuous examples from the book under consideration, in order that the readers of this paper may know something of the sentiments of those who in many parts of the States are warring on the SIGNS, and the doctrine it sets forth. Is it any wonder that preachers and churches holding the sentiments exemplified in these songs should rail against God's truth, and persecute those who hold it? Besides the examples cited, there are a great number which are not so glaring, yet they are made up of material which is essentially carnal, and are light and flippant in music, and trashy and worthless as literature. In fact the book seems to be a gleaning from all the recent books published for Sunday School, Christian Endeavor and Epworth League use. I do not mean to say that there are *no good* songs in the book. There are many good songs both new and old, set to excellent, grave and devotional music; songs that the saints can sing with both the spirit and understanding. But this is true of almost any book published, and cannot redeem this collection from the censure which is justly due it on account of so much foreign matter contained in it.

I have given this sketch fairly and impartially, feeling pained at every line that circumstances render it necessary for me to do this. There are many good brethren who are ensnared in this delusion by first being blinded by a misrepresentation of the doctrine of predestination, and then by being made believe that this delusion is the only way out of the dreadful doctrine. If the doctrine preached by the leaders of this faction, and the songs sung by them, were preached and sung under any other name than that of Primitive Baptist, they would be ignored and renounced at once by nine-tenths of those who now tolerate them. I do not mean by these words to presume upon the ignorance of any one, but to note what influence a name has. The Romans, from the time they expelled their kings, could not endure the idea of being governed by a *king*, but submitted most willing to the tyranny of rulers, under the name of *emperors*. The Amer-

ican colonies submitted to oppressions by the mother country in the way of restrictions in commerce, amounting to many times the tax on tea, or the stamps for paper, but as soon as these exactments took the name *tax*, they at once arose in rebellion. Many other instances might be cited to show what influence a name has upon public and private opinion.

May God open our eyes to all innovations, no matter under what name, or by what church, paper or preacher they may be introduced. May God according to his will purge Zion from her superstitions, false hopes, flippant songs and carnal strifes.

If in those places where lawsuits over church property have been entered on account of divisions over free moral agency and conditional time salvation, this book should be introduced as a witness, I think it would undoubtedly decide the matter at once.

H. M. CURRY.

PLEASANT PLAINS, Ill.

FRAGMENTS.

"AND if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth."—Jer. xv. 19.

So the Lord said to the prophet. To take forth the precious from the vile is beyond the power of mortal man; his wisdom is not equal to that work. Only the holy Spirit of God can do that, therefore he who does so speak as to make manifest that line, invisible to human sight, between the precious and the vile, between the evil and the good, speaks not as the mouth of man's understanding, but as the mouth of God.

We know that there is a distinction between evil and good, between wicked works and righteous works, but what man has ever been able to declare always with truthful authority where that distinction is? Let a worldly man, the wisest and the best, undertake the task, and he will set forth as good, valuable, precious, that which pertains entirely to this world, philosophy, science, ambitions, and the worldly attainments which are their object, gold, precious stones, lands, power and authority over men, all of which are in God's sight fleeting vanities. Let a man possessed of worldly religion give his judgment as to what is precious and what is vile, and he will "turn things upside down," and "put darkness for light, and light for darkness." He will extol as precious that goodness and glory of man which fades and withers like the grass, and like the flower of the field, when the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it, (Isa. xl. 7, 8,) and that righteousness of sinful man which the Lord pronounces as filthy rags; while he will pronounce vile those soul troubles on account of sin, those humble confessions of guilt before God, and those pleadings for mercy, which are caused by the Spirit of the Lord, and which are distinguishing marks of those who are chosen and blessed of the Father.

But let a child of God try to decide where the line is that divides between the precious and the vile, and he will find perplexities and hindrances constantly in his way. When he examines his own works, the best of them, he will see so much of the evil of his nature in them that he dare not put them on that side of the line where the good and precious things are. Yet he cannot pronounce them vile altogether, for they have been approved in his conscience. He cannot say they are altogether good, nor yet can he say they are evil. He has to say, "The best obedience of my hands, dare not appear before thy face," and yet he is thankful for the spirit of obedience

which he felt, and for the work of obedience in which he was given to walk.

The Spirit of the Lord can, and does, show him that line which he could not of himself see, and clear up the perplexities that he felt. "The word of the Lord is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword," and that word "pierces even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The soul is the natural life, (the meaning of the original word is "breath," "animal life," including all the intelligence and emotions that belong to the life of man,) and "the thoughts and intents of the heart" that originate in that soul are on the one side, and those thoughts and intents which result from the work of the Spirit, with the consequent actions, are on the other side. The word of God divides between them. On the one side is all that is good, and on the other side is that which is natural and evil. Every good gift, every perfect gift, every good thing, is from above, "from the Father of lights." We look in vain in any other direction for that which is good and precious. No good thing can come from man, from the soul. Every man in his best state is altogether vanity. "There is none good but one, that is God." So said the Savior. Faith is given us as the evidence of things not seen. The things that God hath prepared for them that love him have never been seen by the eye of man, nor have they entered into the natural heart, "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit," which searcheth all things, even the deep things of God. (1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.) Those things of Jesus are precious. Faith sees them, or by faith we see them, and receive them, and realize them as ours, and rest in them. Faith is the only power we possess that does look to the things which God has prepared for us, therefore, "Without faith it is impossible to please him." The things of faith are precious; the things wrought by Jesus, and shown unto us by the Spirit, are good and precious; the experience of sorrow on account of sin, of self-abhorrence because we are vile, of the love of God shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost, of repentance, of a good hope through grace, all these are precious things. All opposite experiences are vile. All self-confidence, all complacent regard for our own works, considered as ours, all thoughts of our own fancied ability to please the Lord by our own works, all such feelings and thoughts are vile. The word of God, which is quick and powerful, divides between all these natural things, and those things which are the work of the Spirit in our hearts. We feel that all thanks are due to his blessed name that he does work in us at times, "that which is well pleasing in his sight," and at times, when we are led to cry mightily unto him in our trouble, that he does "make us perfect in every good work, to do his will," and that he does give us the grace and faith and power to work out that which he has so lovingly and graciously worked in us. (Heb. xiii. 21; Phil. ii. 13.)

THERE are dear brethren who have thought that when Paul said, "And we know that all things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," he meant only "all good things." I have always thought that he meant all the things that are connected with their experience of grace, from first to last, bitter as well as sweet, evil as well as good, as we distinguish the different things in our life and exercises, calling the afflicting

sense of sin, evil, and the pleasant emotions of love and hope, good. I have thought he included "the sufferings of this present time," and the vanity to which the new creature was made subject, not willingly, and "the bondage of corruption," under which we groan within ourselves, and the infirmities which cause our supplications, the intercessions of the Spirit within us, to be "with groanings which cannot be uttered," as well as the pleasant things that are given us by the way.

But let any candid man undertake to draw a line between those events, works, exercises, emotions, which he would name "good things," and those that he would call evil or wicked things. Then let him name those things which are on the dark side of the line, which are wicked, and which therefore he regards as outside of the purpose and predestination of God, and those things which are on the bright side, being good things, which do work together for good to them that love God. Well, does the division answer his mind? Look over the dark list. Is there no good at all mixed up with the evil in any of those wicked works? Joseph's brethren showed some good traits. Are they and their works all put on the dark side? They were kind to their father and to Benjamin, and when Joseph spoke roughly to them they felt sorry for what they had done to their brother, who was dead, as they thought. Besides, the very things in which they meant evil against Joseph, God meant unto good. Then that wicked thing worked for good, to save much people alive. Do you know just how to divide up those things so as to place them right? All through the Old Testament we find some very evil and wrong doings, which resulted in the opening of the eyes of others to the truth, and in bringing the doer of them down into depths, where he experienced true repentance and godly sorrow. Then the wicked men who with wicked hands crucified the dear Savior, who was delivered unto them by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, did "what God's hand and counsel determined before to be done." Those who have been made alive unto God hate and abhor wickedness in themselves and others. But would we dare to undertake to put this terribly wicked deed, and that of Joseph's brethren, and that of Cyrus, "the ravenous bird from the east," with many others, on that side of the line where those things are supposed to be which God did not predestinate? But some things seem to just have a little spice of wickedness in them, and it seems to be mixed up with a good deal of kindness and generosity and self-sacrifice. We would hardly know how to take forth the good from the evil in them. Sometimes the two are so mixed up and interwoven together that we cannot tell how to divide justly; we have to leave that to the Word.

But look on the good side, have we got that all right and sure? You have placed one of my works there, for you have been very kind to me, and so all the brethren have, far more so than I deserve. But if you knew how many evil thoughts I had when I was doing that work which you have placed among the good things, you would change it, I am sure. That time I was enabled to preach so that your soul was refreshed and comforted, you did not know how much of vanity, unbelief, doubt, evil thoughts, there was in my heart at that time. The work was good in itself, and was a work of obedience and of faith. The sermon was the truth, and I believe it was by the Spirit I was enabled to preach it. But what a tangle

of briers and thorns in my own heart I had to encounter and go through while preaching that truth which the carnal mind is enmity to. But you have put these things, and the kind act I did for that poor man, and the refraining from the utterance of the anger I felt once when reviled, all on the right side, and it really makes me tremble to see them there. You cannot sift the evil out of them, but I hope the blood of Jesus, that precious blood, washed them and me clean before God. I am afraid after all that you have placed a smaller proportion of your own works on the good side, among the good things, than you have of any of your brethren.

We cannot divide between soul and spirit, only as the Lord gives us that sharp, dividing word in our souls. We cannot take forth the precious from the vile, only as the Spirit makes us speak as God's mouth. Then we are always astonished to see so many things counted precious which we had thought were vile, and so many things which had appeared to us as pretty, and sweet, and good, now shown to be vile. When the King's "reign in righteousness" is felt in our hearts, then we no more call the vile person liberal, nor the churl bountiful, but we see things as they are in the sight of God. (Isa. xxxii. 1–7.)

One thing we know, that all good is from God. He gives us every good gift and every perfect gift, and with him is no variableness nor shadow of turning. (James i. 17.) He works the good pleasure of his goodness in us, if it is ever there. We know also that there would have been no evil or wicked thing in the world if God had purposed that there should not be. His purpose must have embraced whatever transpires. We believe, also, and know, that in the end of all things his wisdom and power will have been justified, the highest good for his people will have been accomplished, and the most exalted glory of his name attained. Does any christian doubt this?

One says, "If the advocates of the theory of unlimited predestination object to the application of their theory to all the acts and movements of beasts, birds and creeping things, as well as the acts of all men, as working together for good to them who love God, they should cease to misapply Scripture to brace up their dangerous doctrine." That doctrine which is founded on the Rock does not need bracing up. But does the brother forget the many instances recorded in the Scriptures, in which the acts and movements of beasts and birds and creeping things, as well as the acts of wicked men, were especially directed by the Lord to the fulfillment of his wise purposes? Does he forget that there is a special covenant made for his people in the gospel day "with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground"? (Hosea ii. 18.) What is there worthy of ridicule in the belief that even the mote which flies in the sunbeam, as well as the sparrow in the sky, is directed by the Lord? The frogs and insects were important in the execution of God's judgments upon Egypt. The frogs and flies and caterpillars filled the land of Egypt, but their movements were so directed and controlled that not one, not even one of the lice, could pass over the line that divided Egypt from Goshen. The Lord sent fiery serpents to punish Israel, ravens to feed Elijah, and two bears (only two) to vindicate the character of Elisha as a prophet. The lion must slay the disobedient prophet, but could not tear his body nor hurt the

ass, yet he must wait quietly by until the other prophet should arrive to witness the fulfillment of God's word by him. (1 Kings xiii. 14.) Also in other cases it is recorded that lions were directed and controlled by the Lord. (1 Kings xx. 36; 2 Kings xvii. 25; Daniel vi. 20.) It was not by chance that Herod was eaten by worms; the angel of the Lord was sent to smite him with that fearful judgment. Also the viper was directed to fasten upon Paul's arm, that the barbarians might know that he was an honest man. (Acts xxviii. 3–6.) The dove was returned by the Lord to Noah with the olive leaf, and the flight and time of every sparrow is so bounded and controlled that "one of them shall not fall on the ground without our Father."—Matt. x. 29.

To me this is a most precious doctrine. It is glorious to know that in all events, and over all things, "the Lord God omnipotent doth reign." As in the case of Job, so in the case of all the Lord's people, he designs all their trials, and the cause and manner of them, and no enemy can go beyond the limits of God's purpose in his power to afflict, and all the wicked designs of men and devils shall result in the final good of the Lord's people, and in his own declarative glory. Jesus said to Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." So Job recognizes only God's good hand in all the evil that came unto him through the devices of Satan, saying, "Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not also receive evil?" So Joseph said to his brethren, "But as for you, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, as it is this day, to save much people alive." "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." "For of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen."

"And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one is in bitterness for his first born."—Zech. xii. 10.

These mourners are "the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem," and these represent the Lord's people, for whose sins Jesus died. It is by the spirit of grace and of supplications, which the Lord pours upon them, that they are thus made to mourn for Jesus, who was pierced by their transgressions. It is when they feel the pain of their own sins upon their consciences that they know a measure of his pain when he bore them in his own body on the tree, and they are in bitterness for him when they feel the bitterness of their own transgressions in their souls. It is then that they can say with David, "Against thee, and thee only, have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight." Whenever one feels true sorrow before God for any sin, it is a sure evidence that this was one of those sins by which the dear Savior was pierced, and brought down into the awful depths of sorrow and death. None but those whose sins Jesus bore upon the cross, will ever feel the pain of their sins upon their consciences, and the bitterness of them in their hearts. But all of them will thus "know the fellowship of Jesus' sufferings, being made conformable unto his death," when the spirit of grace and of supplications is poured upon them. Then they shall cry unto God in their trouble, and shall realize the pardoning love of Jesus. Then shall they know what it is to mourn for him, and at the same time

to feel their hearts melted before him with unspeakable thankfulness and tender love, while they feel the sweet burden of the song,

"Was it for crimes that I have done,
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity! grace unknown!
And love beyond degree!"

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 4, 1901.

KANSAS, Ill., Jan. 21, 1901.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—At the request of some of my friends I have concluded to write a brief sketch of some of the events of my life, that it may be left to them when I have fallen asleep, and been gathered to the fathers. I fully realize the fact of having lived to little purpose, but what it is, is all I can now make of it. I shall try in simplicity to state facts as they occur to my mind, without any coloring or reservations of truth, beginning at my birth into the world, and including my second or spiritual birth, and unto the present time.

I was born in Scott County, Kentucky, and according to the record there made by my parents, in the old family Bible, it was on the 14th day of October, 1823. My father, John True, moved his family to Bourbon County, Kentucky, when I was about five years old, where he lived until the fall of 1834, when he moved to Coles County, Illinois. Here I was born the second time, which I hope and believe was the birth Christ told Nicodemus he must have to see the kingdom of heaven. This last birth was in the month of February, 1843, when I was but a few months past nineteen years old. I could give account of many of the things and feelings connected with this birth prior to and succeeding my being made, as I hope, to know the truth of it, but will only give a few of the many, and if there is evidence enough in what I here give to cause the children of God to have fellowship for me as one of the redeemed family, I shall be content, for the fellowship of the Lord's people is now my ardent desire.

As above stated, in February, 1843, I was enabled, I hope, by the grace of God as given me, to trust in the righteous life and obedient death of Christ Jesus. I had been born of and reared to manhood by christian parents, who belonged to the Predestinarian Baptist Church, but I found as years came upon me, that their christianity would not, nor could not, suffice for me. I found myself, without knowing when, or where, in an uneasy, restless frame of mind. At times I would be engaged in innocent amusements, when thoughts would come into my mind that these things would some day have an end, and that I must die and go to an unknown world. The question would come into my mind, Was I prepared for this change? During the summer of 1842, a sister, who was two years my senior, joined the church, and while standing on the bank of the creek witnessing her baptism, it seemed that my entire frame shook with despair; I felt then, and did often afterwards, that God would be entirely just in sending me to eternal woe. These feelings continued at times, and seemed occasionally to grow more severe. On one occasion, in the early part of January, following the time my sister was baptized, I was studying in my room in the house where I boarded, in Charleston, Illinois, where I was then attending school, when it seemed to me I must die before the light of another day dawned. This was about nine o'clock at night. I found I could not study, so I laid aside my books and walked listlessly around the public square, passing one of the

hotels of the town. Just in front of the doorway I met a schoolmate, and he invited me into the office of the hotel. When I had but entered the door I felt the house trembling. I stopped to know why it was, when I heard the music of fiddles, and voices calling for dancers. I felt like if I did not get out of that building the Lord would strike me down, so I immediately returned to my boarding-house and retired for the night, but not to sleep. I slept but little that night, and about daylight determined to go home, as I was doing no good with my studies. After returning home I engaged in hauling rails from where they had been prepared in the woods, out into the then open prairie, to inclose some more land that my father owned. While doing this work I often felt that surely the Lord would not suffer such a wretch as I felt myself to be, to live. One dark and gloomy day in February, I shall never forget, I had loaded on the rails, and was walking in the road behind the load, as the team (which was several yoke of oxen) was walking towards the farm. Here I was bowed down in sin and guilt, thinking whether I would ever get home or not, when I was suddenly made to feel a calm resignation to everything around me. I cannot say I felt that it was a hope in Christ, but soon after getting in that night, my mother said she saw the change in my countenance. There are times and places I cannot forget. On Saturday before the third Sunday in March, 1843, I told the church at Little Bethel, in Coles Co., Ill., some of the things here written, and was received with three others for baptism, and on the next day four of us were baptized by Elder Thomas Threlkeld, in the creek near by the meeting-house, the ice being about eighteen inches thick. In September following, I was married to my first wife, Miss Nancy B. Threlkeld. To us were born six children, five of them preceding their mother to the grave, the last one being our oldest child, a dear daughter, who had turned into her twenty-first year. She had joined the same church her mother and I were members of, and was baptized by her grandfather, Elder Threlkeld, during my absence in the army, and died and was buried before I came home from the army. I was at the time of her death in the southern part of Arkansas. I have one child, a daughter, now living, (sister Lillie Hayes) who was baptized by Elder S. H. Durand, at Utica, N. Y., while we were living at Kingston, Canada, while I was in the Consular service of U. S. She is now living near us in Edgar Co., Ill. She has four children, one daughter and three sons, also two grandchildren.

My first wife and I lived as happily together as is necessary for husband and wife, for forty-seven years and six months, she falling asleep in Jesus on the 27th day of March, 1890, in Seward, Nebraska, Elder James H. Ring preaching her funeral the next day before we buried her body.

My second experience, or call to the ministry. In a few years after I was received into the church, impressions of mind come on me that I must preach. These impressions whenever they come upon me would cause me even to doubt more and more my having a well grounded hope in Christ. I would have in mind such able defenders of the gospel truth as Elders Gilbert Beebe, Thos. Threlkeld, Thos. P. Dudley, John F. Johnson, Wilson Thompson, and others that I was accustomed to listen to, and I would think if I could preach as ably as they did, I might have such feelings. But I would always

dismiss as much as possible these feelings; they would however return unexpectedly, and often with great force, so much so that at times I was almost unfitted for any kind of business. I was teaching school when these impressions first came into my mind, and I would often leave the school-room and go out into the surrounding woods to agonize in secret prayer, beseeching God to relieve me of such thoughts. Thus I traveled for about thirty years, sometimes feeling a comparative ease of mind. At such times I would hope I would no more be troubled with such feelings as these, thinking it was even wicked in me to have such thoughts. At one time some three years after these impressions come upon me, I was so tempted by the wicked spirit that I went to the church and asked to have my name erased from the church book, telling them that I had deceived them, and was not a fit person to have a name among them. To this request the dear old Moderator modestly remarked, that the Lord would give me grace, and enable me to resist the devil, and he would yet flee from me. I then thought strange of how lightly I was answered. But my membership was retained in the church, and I still have a standing with the dear people of God, though many times since the one I have spoken of, I have had very serious doubts as to whether I ought to be held in fellowship with the people of God. But to return to the subject, I continued in these feelings for years, yet let no one know of them except my wife, until the Civil War came on. I then concluded the matter was forever settled, and that I now knew that it was only of my selfish nature that these feelings had taken root in, for I concluded that it was my duty to volunteer to serve my country. Strange as it may seem to some, these impressions were with me all the time I was in the army, which was nearly four years, and bore upon me with more weight than before leaving home. After my return home I thought to get away from any Baptist would relieve my mind, so I moved to Iowa, but I found Baptists there. I soon had an opportunity of accepting from President Grant a foreign mission, so I accepted it, and went as American Consul to Kingston, Canada. Here I remained a little over four years, as I hope and believe filling the office of U. S. Consul acceptably to my superiors. But while there, and receiving a salary equal to twenty-five hundred dollars per year, I was made willing to take up the cross, heavy as it was, and come home and preach Jesus as the way, the truth and the life, for salvation to sinners.

I was licensed by the West Liberty Church, in Des Moines Co., Iowa, at her March meeting, in 1879, and ordained to the full functions of the ministry, on October 18th of the same year, since which time I have been in great weakness trying to serve my brethren, constantly having the care of from two to four churches, until the death of my first wife. After I had seen her body laid away, I closed up all my business matters as soon as possible, and started to travel among the churches, giving up the pastoral care of all my former charges. I traveled one entire year in my lonely and distressed condition.

On the first day of June, 1891, I was married to my present wife, who was the widow of brother N. R. Kester, to whom she was married in Shelby Co., Kentucky, on March 17th, 1859. She was baptized by Elder Robert Ricketts, into the fellowship of Elk Creek Church, on September 21st, 1851. Her maiden name was C. M.

Stout, her father's name being Peter Stout. She was born on the 27th of May, 1833. She came with her first husband to his home in Edgar Co., Ill., as soon as married, and joined the Concord Church; her husband joined July following their marriage, where they retained membership and lived happily in church and family relationship until his death, which occurred Dec. 5th, 1887. They never had any children. As before stated, she and I were married on the first day of June, 1891. Our membership, as also my daughter's and her oldest son's, is now in Little Bethel Church, where I was baptized nearly fifty-eight years ago. I realize the truth of what Paul wrote to Timothy: "The time of my departure is [near] at hand." O, may I with Paul be enabled to say at the close of my life, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

Unworthily your servant,

JAMES M. TRUE.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 9, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—The brethren say to me sometimes, "I have written to you in my mind, but did not put my thoughts on paper." And I tell them I cannot see the fruitfulness of such missives. I tell you this because I have at different times lately desired to write you, and have not fulfilled my desire. In December last I wrote you a part of a letter and destroyed it when about half finished. I censured myself for that act, because my conscience told me it was no more my letter, but yours. So now I will try to clear my conscience, and write you a letter, not taking into consideration whether it is a good or a poor letter. Do you ever sit down to write without an idea in your mind what the subject of your letter will be? I do often, and it is just that way with me to-night. The hopper appears empty, and it seems useless to start the mill wheels. But sometimes the vision cometh when least expected, and indeed I think always so, for it is when we are full of vain thoughts, and our soul is empty, that the Lord performs a marvelous work in us, in turning our worldly wisdom to naught, giving us in its place, "beauty for ashes." If the Lord puts the desire in our heart to communicate with a certain brother, or to visit a sick sister, the admonition is not a vain thing with him. If we make excuse, saying, "I have not time; when it is altogether convenient then I will do so," for our disobedience he will pour out upon us leanness of soul. But in doing the commands of the Lord our reward is in the work. In telling you these things, my brother, I am writing my own condemnation, for I am very neglectful, and altogether an unprofitable servant in the Lord's vineyard. To visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, is a good thing, but to neglect to do so deserves the direst punishment. I think I hear you say, Well, we must of necessity be moved by the spirit of divine grace in order to do any good thing. Yes, that is true, for neither the power nor the inclination to do good is in the flesh, yet we are not excused for disobeying the law, even when we are too weak to keep it. Neither does divine grace make us strong enough to keep the law, but it keeps it for us. I cannot think of any greater punishment (for neglect of the Spirit's promptings) than leanness of soul. Many sad experiences have taught me this. I

have more leanness of soul than my brethren because I am more neglectful. I long so much for a meek and quiet spirit, for such a spirit is always obedient. One of the poets puts it in this way: "Love is the fountain whence all true obedience flows." Yes, and I am inclined to believe that the love of God shed abroad in the heart begets every christian grace and virtue. I so often wonder (if it is true that I have a good hope through grace, which I so fondly hope I have) why I do not walk more circumspectly? Why my mind is not always on divine and heavenly things? Why I am so weak in the faith? Yet in my abundance of infirmities I find some encouragement all through the Scriptures. I remember how Jacob after he had received the blessing, went halting all his days; he never walked upright again. Job said, "I have said to corruption, Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my mother and my sister. And where is now my hope? as for my hope who shall see it?" Yet Job maintained his integrity. The psalmist says, "Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men. They speak vanity every one with his neighbor: with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak." Is it not enough to raise my failing hope, to feel a companionship with such worthy men? Like Paul, "I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." But not always do I glory, for my sins seem to swallow me up, and carry me away as an avalanche, my hope seems to be gone, and I am in a strait. Yet I cannot say there is ever a moment that I do not desire and long for the courts of Zion.

Brother Beebe, do you sometimes feel that a desire for heavenly things is about all you can lay claim to as a foundation for your hope? It seems that way to me. I wonder if that is not what the apostle meant when he gloried in his infirmities that the power of Christ might rest on him? A knowledge of our infirmities implies the knowledge of a power which we desire shall undertake and overcome for us. For I know that when the power of God rests upon me, then am I strong when I am weak. To follow the dictates of our fleshly mind, we want to be strong, and think we *are* strong, and fully capable to undertake for ourselves. While on the other hand, in following the dictates of the spirit of Christ within us, we want to be weak, altogether helpless, and glory in it, because in our knowledge of the power of God we recognize his omnipotence. I feel that a desire to be righteous is an evidence of righteousness; that although our outward man daily perisheth in his corruption, and we are fully conscious of such daily death, yet at the same time the power of an endless life worketh mightily in our inward parts, manifesting in us the life of Jesus, by which we glorify God in a simple *desire* to worship him, having no confidence in the flesh. Do not you often find your heart saying, "O that I might love him more and serve him better?" Every one of the Lord's people will admit that they *desire* to be followers of Christ, although they may not be able to discover another ray of evidence that they are true followers. To profess religion, and have his name on some church book, does not constitute a follower of Christ, although many of my neighbors fully believe that such accomplishments are about all that is requisite. The great trouble and concern of the true followers is whether they honestly and simply possess what they confess. I am glad to know that the

truth never shines less brightly because men go about deceiving and being deceived. The beauty and glory of our gracious Redeemer is not marred by those who take his name upon their lips, while in their hearts they are far from him. "An holy nation" is none the less holy because traditions and heresies and all manner of evil imaginings have crept in among them. In and about every building in course of erection is necessarily much rubbish, which, when the building is finished, is swept away, and it is found the building is not contaminated thereby. We are glad to know that all things of time perish with the using, but the kingdom of Jesus Christ is eternal, its subjects are "an holy nation," as with one voice they proclaim the honors of their King, as with one voice they declare, "I am a worm and no man," but Jesus is all in all. He is their very life, and is declared to be "Their Sun and their Shield." They are holy because he is holy; they are alive for evermore because he is alive for evermore; they are clean every whit, because his perfect righteousness is imputed unto them.

Brother Beebe, I find myself running on about things which you know so much more about than I do. Yet your broader knowledge makes you more generous and considerate of those who swim in shallow water. This makes me bold to expose the small measure of the rich things of Christ's kingdom which has been vouchsafed unto me. Anyhow I have relieved my mind, and I sincerely hope you will not be greatly fatigued by reading this long drawn out epistle. You know it takes a great many words and many sheets of paper for some people to say a very little. So you will please accept this, not for its intrinsic value, but for the high esteem in which I hold you.

My wife joins in love to you and sister Beebe.

Affectionately your brother,

B. F. COULTER.

[ALTHOUGH the above letter is rather of a personal nature, we think it will be of general interest to our readers. We indeed have found it very comforting, especially where mention is made of our still having the desire to be more spiritually minded, for this has been for months about all we could cling to as an evidence that we had any interest in the things pertaining to the kingdom of heaven, for most of the time we are in such a cold, barren, unfruitful state, that it seems we certainly can have no knowledge of spiritual things; then comes the thought, You are not indifferent, but do desire to love and serve the Master, and your brethren, with more love and zeal. And this I cannot deny, for I know I do have the *desire*. The Savior said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." And what is this desire to be more spiritually minded, and to love and to better serve the Lord, but hungering and thirsting after righteousness? Then this very condition the Savior says is a blessed condition, and he also assures all such, "They shall be filled." Dead must be that saint who does not mourn over the lack of the fruits of the Spirit that he can see in himself. In fact those that do not so mourn, but can boast of what they have done and are doing for the Lord, give no evidence of the work of the Spirit in their hearts.

Those that are personally acquainted with brother Coulter will more fully appreciate his letter, and will doubtless feel as did we, when they read it: If such a brother has to complain of barrenness of

soul, how can we hope to be free from such trials?

If the idea of conditional, or merited time salvation, was true, we feel that he should receive the highest wages paid, for we never knew a brother more highly favored of the Lord in his walk and conversation, and we know of hundreds of others who will indorse our statement.—ED.]

FREMONT, Neb., Feb. 15, 1901.

BENTON L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed you will find draft for two dollars, for which you will continue to send the SIGNS to my address for another year, as I do not feel that I can well do without them, as they advocate that which I believe to be the truth, and that is something we seldom hear in this country. Although there are lots of good Old Baptists both in Nebraska and Iowa, I seldom get to meet with them, not as often as I would like, for they are so out of the way, and the distance is considerable. But when I do meet with them I firmly resolve in my mind that I will no more disregard the admonition, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together." I am often made to wonder that the gracious God has prospered me as he has, while my whole life is one that is prone to wander in forbidden paths. I can only wonder and thank him the more that I am not entirely cut off from his presence and mercy when I consider my own unfaithfulness and short comings. It seems that if I am a follower of the blessed Savior at all, it is only as one who follows him afar off, while in truthfulness the sincere prayer of my heart is, "Nearer my God to thee; nearer to thee." Though weak is my faith, yet to the sinner's friend I go with the prayer that he will guide me by his counsel, and lead me in the paths of righteousness, for his name's sake. O, that our God would hush every murmuring thought, and subdue in us everything that is not in accordance with the divine will, as we journey onward through this unfriendly world, which has no mercy for a poor, fallen, yet helpless sinner, a sinner saved by grace. Its commands are the same as the fountain from whence they sprang: "Pay that which thou owest." Miserable comforters indeed to one who is weary, footsore, and not a farthing to turn to the account. But of him who is our strength we would humbly plead that we may find safety under the shadow of his strong protecting arm, for we do feel that we have nowhere else to go; he is all our strength, all our hope and all our salvation, we have none of our own. This we learn more and more as the years go by, Without him we can do nothing. If we would drink to quench our thirsty souls we must go to the fountain, the living fountain, the streams whereof make glad the city of God. How often in our attempts to reach this life-giving fountain do we find the way cut off by the impenetrable darkness that surrounds us because of our failure to go up by the right way, and we are made to realize, "There is a way that seemeth right to man, but the end thereof is death." Discouraged at times in our attempts to walk as becometh the saints, we say we will return unto the house from whence we came out, only to find it empty, swept and garnished. We find no place in that which was once to us a palace whose furnishings were all that our souls desired. Earth has no resting-place for me. How strange is human life. What is it? 'Tis but a vapor that soon passes away. I loathe it; I would not live alway. The anxiety of ving is to us more than the reality some-

times, and we have to confess with the poet, "It is not all of life to live." The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, and I am glad it is so, and we are made more glad that our own daily experience can testify that it is a gift that we are unable to work out only as God works in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. This is what we understand to be time salvation. And how becoming to the children to be still and know that the Lord is God, and beside him there is no Savior, either for time or eternity. He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. Thou God all sufficient.

The last number of the SIGNS has come to us since we commenced this letter, and as our eyes looked over the different communications, our attention was especially called to one from brother Scates, of Ontario, and how glad we were that one has the courage and ability to command the soul's utterances, a thing we ourselves are so fearful of doing, lest we disturb the fellowship. He tells just what we have in our minds to tell, and it makes us ashamed of our poor effort. Truly he is our brother, our companion in tribulation. Amen and amen, say we to every utterance in that letter. How closely do we linger by his side as we follow his footsteps through the wilderness way as he journeys onward and upward. How plainly do we see our own lives reflected as we follow him in his description of the poor, tried, weary pilgrims here below. Are not these helpful communications to such as cannot do the things that they would? This one letter alone is to us the worth of the subscription price, it makes us to feel that we are not entirely alone, though ourselves the least of all, and we feel at times that we really have no part or lot in the matter. By such humble confessions as these we are not only assured again that we not only know the way, but that we ourselves are in the way.

Perhaps we have written enough for this time. With christian love and fellowship to all the household, both to the weak and the strong, your unworthy sister in hope,

ABBIE CODDINGTON.

PRESCOTT, Ark., Feb. 3, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I herewith send you a letter I received from Elder H. B. Jones, of Mt. Vernon, Texas, some time back, and if you think proper you can publish it at your convenience; I think the reading of its contents would be comforting to the "household of faith."

Yours in much love,

P. H. JAMES.

MT. VERNON, Texas, Jan. 8, 1901.

ELDER P. H. JAMES—MY DEAR BROTHER:—Yours of the 30th ult., came to hand to-day, and has been perused with much satisfaction, and I feel a desire as I sit around the fire this evening to pencil you a few lines by way of answer. If I am not sadly mistaken in my own experience, I know how to sympathize with you when you speak of being "in the depths." O, the darkness, the tribulation of such experiences surely none can know except those who have been there; the greater portion of my time since I was given a hope it seems has been spent there. I sometimes think when in this condition, If I could only know that the Lord has ever blessed me with light at all, or if I could only have satisfactory evidence that I was a child, that I had not been deceived, I could then bear all my trouble with patience. But how fearful I am that I have been mistaken, that I know nothing at all as I ought, that I have

caught the shadow and missed the substance. O, the terrors of such a condition! But blessed be God, who has said, "I am God, and beside me there is no Savior." He is not only our past, but our present and our future deliverer. For the help of the poor, tempted and tried children, the experience of many of the ancient servants of God is recorded. "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." David said at one time, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him who is the health of my countenance and my God." And again he was made to pray, "Restore unto me the joys of thy salvation." Again he testified, The Lord hath "brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." All this shows that David knew what it was to be down "in the depths," as well as what it was to experience deliverance. To this agrees the testimony of all the prophets and apostles; even our Master himself being "a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief." Were it not for such an array of Bible testimony that the people of God have ever been a "poor and afflicted people," and oppressed and persecuted in the world, together with that witness within, of which you spoke, then we might give up in despair.

I sometimes feel that it is best that I am just such a creature as I am, and that I have had just such an experience as I have, although so much of the time I am irreconciled. I believe that it is all according to the will and purpose of God. In my early experience I had some ideas that my later experience has taught me were incorrect, and that experience, I find now, accords with the testimony of the Scriptures. (I would not pretend to say that I have no incorrect ideas now.) But when I first saw the light, I verily thought I should never more have trouble, I could then no doubt have been easily persuaded that sin was eradicated from my being, that I could live obedient, and never more commit sin, that all love of sin was killed in me, &c. But experience has taught me the truth as the Scriptures teach it: "That in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not," for "When I would do good, evil is present with me," and "The good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." And as a consequence of the consciousness of indwelling sin, and a continued proneness to go from the paths of rectitude, I am with the apostle constrained to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" By experience I know that I cannot live obedient, sin is mixed with all I do. I do greatly desire to live as I think a child of God ought, but I cannot keep myself right, so I have to give all the praise to God for every act that I have any reason to think was an act of obedience. Every impulse to obedience, with every emotion of love, gratitude or praise, is of his sovereign grace, and all the praise is due him. Experience teaches me that if left to myself there is nothing that I would not do, that I would have done before I had a hope. So you see I am by my own experience forced to reject every conditional theory, and hold on tenaciously to the doctrine of salvation by grace, from the cradle to the

grave. It is the only salvation that will reach my case, or do me any good.

"I cannot satisfy the law,
Nor hope nor comfort from it draw."

I thank God from the depths of my heart that I believe the Scriptures corroborate my experience, and salvation by grace is the only salvation that will, or has, saved any poor sinner of Adam's race, for it is the salvation the Lord has ordained, and the only salvation, so none are truly saved by any other, either in time or eternity.

I heartily concur with your ideas on the two witnesses, also on the sovereignty of God.

Accept this short and imperfect scribble as a token of my love and fellowship. May the Lord continue to bless you and yours. Remember me at the throne of grace.

Your little brother in the bonds of fellowship,

H. B. JONES.

WARWICK, N. Y., Feb. 26, 1901.

MY DEAR BROTHER BENTON:—I inclose a letter from sister Attie A. Curtis, which I think would be good copy for the SIGNS, if you approve.

Very affectionately your brother,

WM. L. BEEBE.

LAWRENCE, Mass., Feb. 15, 1901.

ELDER WM. L. BEEBE—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I thought I would write you as soon as I knew you were improving in health, but have been away from home the most of the time, and could not seem to have the talk with you that I wanted. Now I am at home again, and you have come into my mind, so be ready for a long letter, as there are many precious things I want to speak of. I was very glad when the report came that you were recovering from your severe illness, and hope as long as you remain in this world you will declare the unsearchable riches of Christ. The weather was so stormy both January and February that we had no meetings at my home church, Bowdoinham, and I felt disappointed in not hearing any preaching. There is such a satisfaction in hearing the finished work of Jesus proclaimed. His life, death and resurrection all declare his power to save. His people are blessed in knowing the joyful sound of the gospel, and they shall walk in the light of his countenance. What a sweet promise this is. We cannot always behold the light while walking here below, but as our God changes not we are often given the assurance, that nothing can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. We cannot flee from his presence, and "he knoweth the way that I take." The Lord has given me much enjoyment in leading my mind to dwell upon the safety of his people, and in connection with this comes the beauty of the church; the foundation which is already laid; "the whole building fitly framed together." Not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, nor any of the cords be broken. God has appointed salvation for walls and bulwarks. When these precious truths are so sweetly felt within, I love to sing,

"Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God!
He, whose word cannot be broken,
Formed thee for his own abode:
On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
Thou mayest smile at all thy foes."

The many conflicts and trials we are called to pass through are all for our good, as they destroy our own goodness and righteousness, and we cry unto the

Lord and he delivers us out of our distresses, so we sing, "The Lord hath triumphed gloriously." Our deliverance is in such a way that we know it was the Lord's work, not ours, and we say with David, "I will make mention of the loving-kindness of the Lord." I wish I could tell, so it would be full of interest to you, how the loving-kindness of the Lord has surrounded and followed me all my life; his work in bringing me from nature's darkness into his marvelous light, and causing me to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and shedding his love abroad in my heart. The half of it can never be told with my tongue or pen, I can only speak of these things, knowing that those of like precious faith will understand by their own exercises of mind what I am trying to express. I do enjoy writing of the great things the Lord has done for me, to my kindred in Christ. I know they are taught the same things, for all of God's people are taught of him, and their peace is great. Jesus says, "My peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." We can never find words to express the peace of God, for it passeth understanding, but when it is felt in our hearts it takes only a few words for a brother or sister to know what we want to say.

But I am afraid this long letter will weary you, and I must think of drawing it to a close. All the excuse I have for writing so much is, my mind has been full of the sweetness of spiritual things, and I could not seem to express what little I have without using many words. I hope you will be able to send me a few lines, for I am always glad to hear of your temporal welfare. I hope if it is the Lord's will, that you will be spared many years yet, to go in and out before his people, declaring Jesus the Savior of his people from their sins.

Remember me to your daughter, sister McColl. I appreciate her kindness in writing to me when you were so very ill. I wish I could see you all face to face, and wish your health would be so that you could come to Maine again. It is good when we are made to trust in God and feel that what he does is all right.

Love and fellowship for you and family, and all the saints you meet. May God reconcile us to his will, and enable us to talk of his kingdom and power, his goodness and mercy, is the desire of your loving sister in hope,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Feb. 11, 1901.

BELOVED BROTHER BEEBE:—My heart prompts me to thank you for your dear letter of the 8th, received this morning, bringing words of blessed comfort in my sorrow, and they have done me much good. Dear brother Chick also sent me helpful words of comfort yesterday. As I write you now, in tears of mingled sorrow and comfort, I think of the angels of God who were sent and ministered to his Son in his trial and great sorrow, and it melts my heart that the Father thus ministers to one so poor and unworthy as myself in this time of heavy sorrow and sore trial. O, my dear brother, I cannot now tell you how deeply I am tried. The Lord knoweth it all, and he knoweth how to succor me. The blessed words of the suffering Redeemer come to me, spoken to his troubled disciples in their sorrow: "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." When the sisters of the sleeping Lazarus were in heart-breaking sorrow, and there was nothing in the law or the Jew's religion that could comfort them, Jesus himself went to them and by

his word and power he relieved and comforted them, so that their mourning was turned into joy. "The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life," he says, and we find it true. To the sisters he said, "And whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die." Their brother lived and believed in him. Therefore, Jesus said, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth." Lazarus was not dead, then; for Christ was his life, and he slept in Jesus. O how comforting! This truth consoles me in this great sorrow for my own loss. The divine assurance abides with me that my daughter, who was so lovely in spirit, lives with her Savior within the veil, and that his precious word is true of her: "Weep not; for she is not dead, but sleepeth." O, brother Beebe! in such an hour as this, how exceedingly precious is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and how empty and puerile is all else.

For the relief of my sorrowing and burdened heart, I have just finished a paper on Sin and Redemption and Salvation, which is submitted to you, and which gave me comfort as my wife read it to me. If you find comfort in it as the truth of God, you will please give it to the precious brotherhood in Christ, that they may be comforted with the same comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. It has strengthened and cheered me in my trials of faith, that many have written me of the solid comfort the SIGNS is to them, and my poor writings also—poor as compared with the riches of our Lord's grace and truth. My own spirit has so often thanked and blessed the gracious Giver of every good and perfect gift for the perpetuation and abiding faithfulness of the precious SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The Lord richly bless you and yours, my dear brother Beebe, in all your tribulations and afflictions in the gospel of his grace, and all your dear readers also, with our meek and faithful brother Chick, whom I have known and loved from his youth.

Now in closing, I am impressed that the measure of my affliction is nearly filled up, and that "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." I would not have it otherwise; for to depart, and be with Christ, is far better. It is only by the grace of God and in sorrowful humility that I may further say, with Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." The name of the Lord be praised, for his grace and glory. Please say to all the beloved in Christ for me, Be faithful unto death, and the Lord will give you the crown of life.

In fervent love and fellowship in Christ, your sorrowful brother,

D. BARTLEY.

MT. VERNON, Texas, Feb. 20, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I inclose herewith a short letter from Elder D. G. McCowen, of Forsyth, Ga., which I think breathes the same spirit of the general tenor of the SIGNS, and was comforting to me, coming from the locality it does, where there is much of conditionalism to contend with. This is one reason of my desire to send it to you for publication in the SIGNS, if you should think it suitable. I have his consent to send it.

Yours in fellowship,

H. B. JONES.

FORSYTH, Ga., Jan. 20, 1901.

ELDER H. B. JONES—MY DEAR BROTHER:—Your much appreciated letter reached me some days ago, which after some delay I now proceed to answer. I say your appreciated letter, not only be-

cause I believe you to be a child of God, but that you are a minister of God, called of him to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, though it be in opposition to a gainsaying world. None but those called of him, and upheld by his Almighty power, will ever be able, in the face of all the opposition in this day, to give him all the praise, and hold him up as the way, the truth and the life, and as the only Savior whereby we must be saved. It does look like some of our people, even Primitive Baptists, in this day are afraid to risk the whole matter of salvation to him, but seem to believe that he has done his part, and left us poor sinners to take care of ourselves in this world of sin and wretchedness. If this be true, why oppose the Arminian because he says Christ has done all he is going to do, and if you do not do the balance you are lost, and it is all your fault? O consistency, thou art a jewel. I feel sometimes that if a child of God, surely I am the least of all. I know I need his protecting grace every day I live, and hope to feel that it is his Fatherly care, love and mercy, that has kept me unto this day. When cast down by trials and troubles, he has promised to be with us, and tells us that his grace is sufficient for us. Brother Jones, he deserves all the praise, and I hope I feel a desire in my heart to give it all to him. O, that I could praise him more and more. If I preach, or pray, or bear the fruits of obedience and godliness, or serve him in any way, I am dependent upon his Spirit and grace to enable me to perform it. He has said, "Without me ye can do nothing," and I hope I know this by experience, and I hope that I do not want to try to serve him, without his Spirit and grace, because my service would be no better than I am.

But your experience and views upon these things are the same as my own, and hence have a tendency of bringing us together in love, and as brethren in the Lord, thus John helps us here when he says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Not for loving the brethren, but to love the brethren, is the evidence, or fruit, that we are passed from death unto life. Dead folks do not or cannot love life. But this old covenant of works decayeth and vanisheth away, being faulty, for had it been faultless, there would have been no use for the second, but as it was too weak to take away sin, (nor did God ever intend it should) he now says, "This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: * * * I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." What a merciful God! In this truth my hope rests.

May the Lord bless you and family with his Spirit and grace, that you may worship him in Spirit and in truth.

Yours in hope,

D. G. McCOWEN.

OPELIKA, Ala., Feb. 22, 1901.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —I feel inclined to write if I can for the edification of the saints. Brother Scates' letter in the last number of the SIGNS, so completely describes my own travels and exercises, that I feel encouraged to hope, and also to write. Such an article is apt to draw one out, and make him think he is not alone, but is in line with other pilgrims on the same journey, though severed by hundreds of miles: far apart and yet so near. All the feelings of infidelity

and skepticism, of which he speaks, have been mine also, and questionings of which he speaks. It has been a long time since I felt any inclination to write. I have felt that I would not write again, and have tried to quit preaching, and persuade myself that I had no hope, much less a call to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. I have often felt that I would give up before I should do something that would cause me to be excluded from the church, and the fellowship of saints. I feel that I am not even my own, of such no account do I feel, yet I cannot help but try to utter a word of encouragement to the tried souls. I have cried for wisdom, and understanding, and grace, to enable me to be what I profess to be, and in that my cry was not heard I thought I had evidence that I was not his; all these things seem to be against me. Tried as I have been, I wonder why yet I do know that the trial of our faith is more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, so that it might be found unto praise and honor and glory of that God who gave it.

Lately, such exercises as I have had, have given me some encouragement to hope in Jesus, the Friend of sinners. My mind for two or three days, has been taken up with the solemn, high and dignified office of the gospel ministry. I felt that I knew what was required of them, and when I saw how far short I came when judged by the perfect standard; I almost despaired. I felt that I had presumed and allowed myself to be led, where I was most unqualified to fill. Did I not know then there was such a thing as learning obedience to God, by the things which I suffered? I do feel that I know something of this. If what I have been taught is well learned it may yet be of profit to some one. I know what it is to cry out by reason of darkness, and to stumble, and to blunder along the way. I remember telling a brother, that if I was in the ministry at all, I was crawling and rolling along crossways, and nearly every other way, but the right way. A few times I have felt that I was almost up on my knees, but never upright on my feet, with a clear eye and upright walk. I fall so far short of what I see in the perfect standard laid down by the Savior, who is the true Preacher of righteousness, I wonder if I shall ever preach as I should, the glorious gospel of the blessed God. I hope on, and desire and expect it. I feel somewhat encouraged.

My mind has not been as I thought when I began to write, certain Scriptures were in my mind when I began. It shows that I cannot do as I think I can. May this, or some part of it, be sanctified to the good of some humble child of God, is my prayer.

Yours in hope,

WILLIAM LIVELY.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

PLEASE BE SURE

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1901.

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EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 TIMOTHY III. 1–7.

SISTER Rebecca Harris, of Hudsonville, Miss., desires that we present some thoughts concerning 1 Timothy iii. 1–7. This Scripture describes the character and qualifications of one who has been called to the work of a bishop, and called of God. It is not our purpose to consider each special statement of the text suggested, in detail, but will present some general thoughts concerning it. From the first verse is learned there is such a thing as a man desiring the office of a bishop. In itself there is nothing wrong in such a desire, but the apostle impresses here the truth that he that has such a desire, must remember that he is desiring a good work. When the goodness of the work comes to be realized by any man, he will feel altogether unfit for it. To have the name of bishop is one thing, to possess the qualifications, is another. To desire the name is one thing, to desire the work is another. The place of a bishop, is not a place of ease, pleasure and idleness, it is a place of care and labor. The man who desires it is desiring much of burden and responsibility. Paul would first of all call this to mind.

While there is nothing wrong in such a desire, nevertheless, the question is a very solemn one, What is my motive in this desire? Why do I desire it? Have I in view an easy life, honor among men, and a desire to be called by the title, as a mark of distinction? Then indeed it is an evil thing to possess such a desire. But is the feeling of our heart one of great desire to be of some use and comfort to the children of God in their burdens and afflictions? Is the heart stirred up to endeavor to hold out to them the blessed name of Jesus, in whom alone is strength and comfort to be found? Is it the desire of the heart to exalt before his people his blessed name, and if possible to bear their burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ? Then indeed is the desire a good one. But when the soul is actuated by such motives, there will always be a sense of the deepest unfitness and unpreparedness for such a work. The work is so good, and I am so unfit and unworthy.

The work is so great and important, that he who enters upon it must remember the word of the apostle is that he must possess the qualifications which follow, yet every one who has been really called of God to that work, will never be able to see that he possesses a single one of them. But the apostle is not setting each one to judge of his own qualifications, but rather all those who afterwards should be called to act in such matters. It is essential that a bishop, or pastor, should have these qualifications, but it is not said that he must know that he possesses them, but the church must know it. A bishop's, or pastor's, work, calls for these qualifications which follow: Blameless, that is, giving no cause of blame, one to whom exceptions cannot be taken on account of any evil doing, or any injustice toward any one; the husband of one

wife; (It is our understanding that the meaning is not that a bishop must be married, so much as it is that he be free from the polygamous habits of the time; he must not be the husband of more than one wife.) he must be vigilant; (literally wakeful, that is, awake to all the interests of the people of God, considering what is needful for them, and looking out for anything that may harm the cause, and be to the dishonor of the holy name of God) of good behavior; (that is, as the original word more properly signifies, modest) given to hospitality; apt to teach; not given to wine; no striker; (rather no reviler, as the word more properly signifies) not greedy of filthy lucre, but patient; not a brawler, not covetous; ruling well his own house; having his children in subjection with all gravity; not a novice; having good report of them which are without. It would be easy to see how the lack of these qualifications would mar the usefulness of a bishop in his work. Lacking these things he would not have the confidence of his brethren, and beside, the apostle intimates that these natural qualifications which fit a man for positions of trust among men in the relations of this life, must not be absent in those called to fill places of trust in the house of God. God qualifies men to the place which they are to fill in his house, before he calls them to that place.

When the church decides that a certain man is the pastor or bishop they ought to have, this decision does not confer any qualification, but simply recognizes what God has already given, and given to him for their benefit as the house of God. Any church sins, who confers this office where they do not see these distinctive qualifications, but this does not mean that bishops have no faults, nor that they do not err and come short; they are men of like passions with other men, but it does mean that these graces shall appear in them, and evidently be what rule in their lives. To set apart men to the office who have only the name, but who really are not pastors, is a lasting injury to the church, to the cause, and last, to the unhappy man who has been put where he does not belong, and in a place for which he is not qualified. O.

THE NAME OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST.

SISTER Eunice Lindsey, of Scioto, Ohio, asks how far back we can trace the first organization of the Old School Baptist Church? and desires a reply through the SIGNS.

The name "Old School Baptist" is but one of the many names which have been applied to the church of Christ in the ages past. That church in the first place, or those who composed it, were called christians first at Antioch, before that they were known simply as disciples, that is, disciples of Christ; this we have from the Scriptures themselves, (see Acts xi. 26; xxvi. 28; 1 Peter iv. 16,) and in some hundreds of places they were called disciples. Later they were known in different parts of the world by a variety of names which were imposed upon them mostly as terms of derision, by their enemies and the enemies of truth and God. The name Baptist, was given to them, because they believed in and practiced baptism, which for the past sixteen hundred years has been entirely discarded by the Romish church, and all protestant sects. The fact that their enemies were willing to give to them the name of Baptist, is an indirect testimony that they themselves are not Baptists, that is, that what they call baptism, is not baptism at all. John was not originally named "Baptist," but this word was connected with his name to

distinguish him from all others who might be of the same name. John, who wrote the gospel under his name, was not called the "Baptist," because all who were disciples of Jesus, as well as he, were baptized. But John the Baptist was the first to administer this ordinance in the ushering in of the gospel dispensation. Baptists are called Baptists to-day because they do baptize, and no others in the Romish or protestant orders do baptize. They only sprinkle or pour, the respective Greek words for which are not *baptizo*, but *rantizo* and *cheo*. Enemies of God and truth do not realize what unwitting testimony they are giving to us as the descendants of the first disciples, when they call us willingly Baptists. They thus declare that they are not Baptists, that is, that they do not baptize at all. This is admitting just the truth concerning themselves. The name Old School Baptists was given to us by our enemies, when the division took place nearly seventy years ago, first at Black Rock, and then through all the country at large. In the south the term "Primitive Baptist" was given us, and in England the term "Particular Baptist" is used. The name is nothing, but the question is, Who holds to the faith and practice of the apostles? these are the true disciples, whether called Baptists, Christians, Disciples, Primitive Baptists, or Old School Baptists. The first Old School Baptist Church was organized at Jerusalem upon the day of Pentecost; Old School Baptists are the only people on earth who maintain the same order that was then established; then and there was the organization of the first gospel church, and all who depart from that pattern are not churches of Christ, and the Old School Baptist churches are the only churches on earth who maintain that order. Read Acts, second chapter, from the thirty-seventh verse to the end.

Sister Lindsey also asks if there are any histories of the Baptist Church to which we can refer? The best history of the Baptist Church, or in other words, the church of Christ during the first century, is found in the New Testament itself. Most of what are called histories of the church, since, have been written by her enemies. The histories are mostly histories of the Romish Church, which never has been the church of Christ, but always has been the synagogue of Satan, and this is still true of her. There have been a number of histories of the church written of more or less value, but after all, the true evidence of being the church of God is to be found only in the faith and order which we maintain. If these things be scriptural, then we are the true church, if not scriptural, then we are not the true church of God. We do not get the name from John the Baptist, but both he and we do get the name Baptist from the ordinance of baptism, which was commanded to be observed, and which we alone do observe among all Protestants or Romanists who claim to be disciples of the Lord. Thus, as said before, our enemies have unwittingly admitted that we are the true followers of the Lamb, who was himself baptized, and who said, "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." Thus they, all unknowingly, have condemned themselves, and confessed that they are not walking in the commandments of the Lord. Thus God makes even the wrath of men to praise him, and turns the counsel of the ungodly against themselves.

C.

ELDER H. M. CURRY'S REVIEW.

In this number will be found a review, by Elder H. M. Curry, of the "Apostolic Hymns," recently compiled by the Elders Kirkland, claiming to be Old School or Primitive Baptist in sentiment, and they are now in use among some of the churches still clinging to our name. If those advocating the sentiment of these songs, did not assume our name, we should not feel called upon to sound the alarm, and caution the brethren against the pernicious influence of such songs. It is as essential that we should hold fast the form of sound words in praise, as in prayer.

But comparatively few of the readers of the Signs of the Times have an idea to what extent some have gone who claim our name in their advocacy of free will, free moral agency and salvation by works, and therefore have felt to echo the cry, "Let us cease this strife about words to no profit." If to refute such God-dishonoring, Arminian sentiment as is set forth in the songs cited, is "strife about words to no profit," then the Signs has been for nearly seventy years contending for that which is to no profit, and all those dear old soldiers of the cross, now gone to their reward, who spent their lives contending against these false doctrines, strived in vain and to no profit.

If to still continue to contend for the truth after it has been assailed, is strife to no profit, then the enemies of truth have but to make an attack, to accomplish a victory. But we have no idea that our readers would have us yield the truth in hope of securing peace, but as said before, it is more from the fact that they have not been fully aware of the innovations that have been brought into the camp, that they have felt to call for a cessation of hostilities, than from any disposition to compromise with error. It is that such may have a more complete knowledge of what is now masquerading under the name of Old School or Primitive Baptists, in some sections of the country, that we publish these productions in verse, lately offered to our people as "Apostolic Hymns," and leave our readers to judge for themselves as to their soundness.

B.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ROMANS VI. 17.

"But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."

That the children of God have ever raised their hearts and hands in rebellion against him, is most unquestionably a source of deep sorrow and regret to them when born of his Spirit; and none more sensibly felt that godly sorrow for having been in opposition to God, than did the apostle who wrote the above text. But in presenting the contrast between what the saints had been and what they now are, he attributed this change in their condition to the sovereign grace of God, and instead of accrediting the glorious change to them as having been brought about by their will or work, he thanks God for the great and marvelous display of his goodness in their salvation from sin and death and hell.

Middletown, N. Y., June 15, 1858.

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OBITUARY NOTICES.

By request of the bereaved widow, our dear aged sister Pollard, I send you for publication, notice of the death of our late beloved pastor, **Elder William Pollard,** who died Jan. 24th, 1901, aged 75 years, 11 months and 14 days. He was for thirty years pastor of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, (Primitive Baptists) and he had lived to see nearly all who were members when he took charge of the church, pass away. Out of perhaps an hundred and fifty or more, who were members when he came among them, there are now perhaps three or four living. He attended nearly all the funerals of those who have died, and has baptized as many or more than have died, seeing one generation pass away and another take its place. During all this long period of time I have never known of his missing an appointment but twice from ill health or bad weather, though he had to drive from fifteen to thirty miles to two of his four monthly appointments, and one was twenty miles away, which of late years he reached by rail mostly, and one was near his home. On fifth Sundays he had an appointment some thirteen miles away, to which he drove, and in weakness or strength, storm or calm, heat or cold, wet or dry, he never hesitated or flinched from going forth in the service of his Master, and to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, for the comfort of his people. What a wonderful record.

I have also in connection with this been requested to write a sketch of his life and ministry. It would have been a relief, and I would have been glad had some more competent pen than mine been called upon to undertake the request to write of the abounding grace of God which was manifest in this soldier of the cross, and able minister of Jesus Christ. He was indeed devoted to the welfare of the church, and the service of his Master, untiring in his labor of love for the people of God, firm, steadfast and unmovable in the principles of truth, and faithful unto death, yet he had not whereof to boast, for all his good works were but the result of the abounding grace of God toward him. They were the fruits of the Spirit, and not of himself. Surely it could be said of him, Through grace alone he had fought a good fight, and finished his course with joy, and now has received the crown of life which is given to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ, even eternal glory in that world that shall never end, where sin and sorrow cannot enter, and where never-ending songs of praise will be given to God and the Lamb.

The subject of this notice was born in Suffolk, England, Feb. 10th, 1825. His parents, John and Mary Pollard, were Baptists, and firm believers in the doctrine of sovereign grace, free and unmerited. They believed election and predestination, as held by sound Old Baptists to-day. His mother was of a very despondent mind in spiritual feelings, but a consistent christian. He came to Canada with his parents at the age of about seven years, and was married to Mary Jamison at the age of twenty-two. Of this union were born seven children, three of whom died while young. Two sons and two daughters survive him, all of whom are believers, and three are members of the church.

Soon after his marriage he saw himself a condemned, lost and ruined sinner before a holy God, and saw no way of escape from the wrath of God, until Jesus revealed himself as his Savior, then he was enabled to rejoice in the salvation of God, and to have no confidence in the flesh. At the age of twenty-four years he united with the Baptist Church. Soon after this there was a division in the church at that place, Dundas, Ontario, and a number of members, among whom were his father and mother, and my father and mother, and others withdrew from the church on account of unscriptural practices and erroneous doctrines, which had been introduced into the church at that place, and they formed a church founded on the doctrine and order of the Primitive Baptists. Among this little number Elder Pollard cast in his lot, and soon began to feel impressed to speak in the name of the Lord, and though he rebelled and struggled against it, he was compelled to preach Jesus as the way and the truth and the life, and the only way of salvation to poor, lost and ruined sinners. He was set at liberty by the church to exercise his gift, which soon became so comforting and necessary for the church that they called for his ordination, and in the year 1855, when about thirty years of age, he was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, by Elders Gilbert Beebe, J. F. Johnson and Thomas P. Dudley, and was called to the pastoral care of the little church. But by death and removals it soon became extinct. Not long after this he removed to the wilds of Michigan, and labored very hard for the support of his family, and occasionally preaching at funerals, and at other times. But the Lord had other purposes for him, and in 1867 he visited this church, which he had visited some eleven years before, and it culminated in his being called to its pastoral care. Their old pastor, Elder McColl, was getting very feeble, and much desired that he would accept the call, which he did, and moved here the following year. He has retained the pastoral office here ever since, until called to enter into his eternal rest. About ten years later he received a call from the church at Warwick, N. Y., which he felt strongly impressed to accept, and did so much to the sorrow of the church here, which could not give him up. So he retained the pastoral care, and visited them at each quarterly meeting, while at Warwick. Just before he moved was the most affecting sight that I ever witnessed in public, as almost the whole church was in tears, many weeping as if losing their dearest friend. The church refused to call any other minister, as their hearts were

bound up in Elder Pollard, and after two years stay at Warwick, he returned, as he could not feel satisfied, though being much more comfortably situated, so far as worldly affairs were concerned, than he had ever been or ever expected to be here. The church at Warwick was very anxious that he should remain, but his heart was turned to the people that he had left, and the hearts of the people here were always fixed on him, and so when he returned the church rejoiced.

I have mentioned these circumstances in his ministry, as they always seemed mysterious to me, and also to himself. He could not understand why he was impressed to go away, and also impressed and compelled to return, but God had a purpose in it, and this is enough for us to know. From this time he never had a thought of leaving us, but labored most faithfully and acceptably, ever growing in the esteem and affection of the people of God, yet having his trials both inwardly and outwardly, and even in the church. He was very patient and forbearing, yet firm, where firmness was needed, never hesitating to do what he felt was right, and for the welfare of the church, for which he had the most fatherly care and affection. The heavy burden of anxious care that he felt for the church was realized by but few. There has been a large ingathering into the church during his ministry, and yet he never urged either privately or publicly, the duty or privilege of believers to unite with the church. He firmly believed that the Lord only could add to the church of such as should be saved, and that preaching the experience of the Lord's poor, afflicted people, would compel them to come home to the church.

He was a wonderful expounder of Scripture, and to my mind had the most variety in his preaching of any one that I ever heard. During the long years of his ministry I never heard two sermons from him with any degree of sameness, and he was enabled to ever present new things, on the old theme of salvation by grace, and the election and predestination of God, which he firmly believed to its fullest extent, and from his own first experience, and this he never failed to preach. He could never accept the "conditional time salvation" theory, feeling as he would often say to me, that if God did not keep him every moment of his life, he could never keep himself. His belief was, "grace first, last, and at all times," and yet he could never excuse wrong doing on the ground of its being predestinated, but mourned over his deep depravity of heart, and the vileness of his nature. Many comforting conversations we have had, in telling over our mutual joys and sorrows, and it is a great satisfaction to me in my sorrow, that never in our long and intimate acquaintance of more than thirty years, was there a jar or discord in our spiritual or natural friendship, nor anything said or done that offended either, and yet we did not always see things alike. To me his ministry has been wonderful. He never sought popularity, but was naturally diffident in his manner, and at times seemed cold and unfeeling, and yet he grew constantly in the love and confidence of the church and people where he labored, and his congregations increased, until at three of his appointments the large houses were filled in all kinds of weather. Surely the Lord blessed him in his labors, and blessed the church and people in hearing him. He never preached to please natural people, or the natural mind, but what God gave him to speak he never held back. He was bold as a lion in defense of God's eternal truth, and I believe was entirely delivered from a man-fearing, or man-pleasing spirit, yet I do not believe that he ever willingly offended any, though accused of doing so. He often said to me, Such a thought never came to his mind while preaching, and if opposers were present he never thought of them while preaching. Often he went into the stand with a sense of utter helplessness, and his mind as empty as a broken pitcher, but at such times I believe he preached the most acceptably.

Dear editors, excuse me for writing so much and saying so little; I have not done justice to my subject, and feel like consigning it to the flames. In conclusion I will say that for the past few years Elder Pollard was failing visibly in his strength, yet his preaching seemed to get better and richer in experience, and mellowed with the ripening of age, and the nearness of eternity, still he felt more his deficiencies and the need of God's power in his last years, than he ever had in his life.

But I must hasten to the end. On Jan. 15th, he started from home to attend the funeral of an aged sister McIntyre, who lived in Lobo, about thirty miles away. He stopped with us for dinner on his way, and after seeing him to the cars, I said to my wife, "Elder Pollard will not be able to go to Lobo many more times," yet I little thought the end so near. He spoke at the funeral with nearly his usual vigor, but was quite weak afterwards. He did not go to the grave, but went to a sister McGugans, to remain until after his next Sunday appointment. Saturday he was taken quite ill with weakness and trembling, and a black spot was noticed on his great toe; on Sunday he was much worse, vomiting badly, and the toe had become all black; on Monday he felt easier, but very weak, and the gangrene, as it proved to be, was spreading into his foot; on Tuesday his son and daughter reached him, and they sent for his wife and the rest, and she reached there Wednesday evening. He was quite conscious, and seemed glad to see them all, but he talked but very little. When shown his foot, he said, "It means death." I drove to see him on Wednesday evening; he was conscious, for when I asked him if he knew me, he said, "O yes, it is Robert," but he did not seem to want to talk. When roused he would answer questions, but that

was all. He seemed to be preaching in his mind a good deal, his lips and hands moving as they did when he was preaching. Once he said quite loud the words, "We love him because he first loved us." Soon after midnight he could not be roused any more, and gently sank to rest about 11 a. m. Thursday, like one who was worn out and welcomed rest. His countenance was the least like that of a corpse that I ever saw in death; he was like one asleep, which we believe was the case: "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep." His remains were taken home the same evening, and many gathered to mourn with the family the loved one gone. The funeral was Saturday, Jan. 26th, when a very large concourse of people gathered. Elder Carnell, of Ohio, attended the funeral, and made a very impressive and solemn prayer at the home, and preached at the meeting-house with much of comfort to the large congregation, from the words, "For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God," &c. After this the mortal remains of our beloved pastor were consigned to their mother dust in hope of immortality in that life which shall never end. We mourn not as those who have no hope.

I inclose a resolution passed by the church at their quarterly meeting in February, and also some poetry composed by sister Pollard, which please publish with this.

May God comfort the bereaved widow and family, and grant us all grace to bow in humble submission to his sovereign will.

Asking your pardon for taking up so much of your space, I will close.

I remain your unworthy brother,

ROBERT SCATES.

Whereas, it has pleased Almighty God, in the infinitude of his wisdom, and according to his all-wise purpose and decree, to remove from our midst by the hand of death, our faithful and beloved pastor, Elder Wm. Pollard, who has labored for and among us as a church and people, in word and doctrine, long and faithfully, giving us the services of almost a lifetime, ever devoted to the cause of truth, and never failing to proclaim the blessed gospel of the Son of God, and salvation by the sovereign, free and unmerited grace of God, both for time and for eternity,

We, the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, being assembled together, do unanimously desire to place upon record in our church books, our appreciation of his long, arduous and untiring service, as a servant of this church, and in the cause of his Master, of that truth which he loved more dearly than life itself, and also our deep sense of the loss which we sustain in his being taken away from us. But desiring to bow in humble submission to the will of him who doeth all things well, we look to the Lord for guidance and help in this time of need. We wish also to tender our sympathy and love to his lonely companion, sister Pollard, and the family in their bereavement, desiring that the Lord would support and comfort them in their time of trial, and that a copy of this resolution be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

R. SCATES, Church Clerk.

DUART, Ontario, Feb. 2, 1901.

Composed by Mrs. Pollard, upon the death of her husband, Elder William Pollard.

A husband dear, a pastor loved,
Has gone to his long home;
Death's icy hand has laid him low,
And we are left to mourn.

No cloud shall mar his peaceful brow,
Or foes beset him sore;
He calmly sleeps in Jesus now,
On that celestial shore.

All earthly cares are at an end,
And pains forever cease;
He dwells with his eternal Friend
In perfect joy and peace.

Though sad we are, and loath to say
A long and last farewell,
Yet God who gave has taken away,
And he does all things well.

We laid him in the silent grave,
While friends stood weeping round,
But he who hath all power to save,
Can heal their every wound.

We do not wish him back again,
Though sad may seem the blow;
Our loss is his eternal gain,
For God ordained it so.

Elder W. M. Mitchell died on the evening of February 26th, 1901, at 6 o'clock, surrounded by his children and brethren, after an illness of two weeks with "la grippe." His funeral took place to-day, and he was buried at Mt. Olive, about 1 o'clock, in the presence of a large concourse of people. Elder J. T. Satterwhite opened the service with the song, (1224, in Beebe's Collection,) prayer was offered by Elder H. J. Redd, and Elder Satterwhite spoke first, and gave the dates of his birth, his marriage, the time he united with the church, the time he was set at liberty, and ordained. He was the last surviving member who was in the constitution of Mt. Olive Church, and the last member of his father's family. He was born Jan. 10th, 1819, and died Feb. 26th, 1901, in his 83d year. He had been the pastor of Mt. Olive Church for over fifty years. He was conscious most of the time of his illness, and spoke freely on the Scriptures, to the comfort of those present.

Elder Satterwhite also read portions of the Scripture which were very appropriate, and Elder Redd

also spoke of the sleep and rest which Elder Mitchell had entered into. The writer made a few remarks, referring to certain Scriptures which Elder Mitchell quoted on his dying bed, and concluded the service at the grave. He was buried in a quiet, calm manner. We doubt not that one of the ablest ministers of our day, has gone to rest. Sister Mitchell, his companion, survives him, and is very feeble at this time, but they all seem reconciled to the will of God.

W. LIVELY.

OPELIKA, Ala., Feb. 28, 1901.

Dr. Wm. Bell Slauson died at the home of Ananias Ayers, in Burdett, N. Y., Feb. 13th, 1901. He came from a sturdy Scotch ancestry, who emigrated to Lynn, Mass., in the year 1636, and whose descendants are widely dispersed over many states and territories. When brother Slauson's father, Nathan, was a lad of fifteen years, he removed to Wallkill, Orange County, where he grew to manhood and was married. As a result of this union brother Slauson was born March 1st, 1805. Arriving at maturity he was married to Miss Elizabeth Slauson, daughter of Major Ebenezer Slauson, a Revolutionary War soldier, and a distant relative. The first years of his married life were spent in teaching school. Later he studied medicine with a Middletown physician, with whom he afterward formed a co-partnership, after graduating with honors from the Herkimer Medical College. Two years after he moved to Bloomsburg, where he remained three years, from whence he went to Morganville, where he enjoyed a lucrative practice for thirteen years. From this place he came to Jefferson, now Watkins, where he practiced his profession and published for three years the *Independent Freeman*. While the Chemung canal was building, cholera broke out in that place, and in combatting that disease the doctor contracted it himself. It so weakened his physical powers that he was obliged to give up his profession.

In 1855 he moved to Batavia, N. Y., where he engaged in the hardware business until attacked with a mental disorder, and was, at his own request, placed in the Utica Asylum, where he remained six years. From Batavia he moved to Greenville, Mich., where his wife died, after which he resided in Wisconsin and Colorado, spending the three years preceding his 84th birthday with his son, then a prominent St. Louis publisher. At this advanced age he came unattended from St. Louis to the town of Hector, where he resided with a nephew until the latter's death, when he went to live with Henry Ayers, near Bennettsburg, remaining with him until he, too, passed away. Since that time he has resided, with a short intermission, with Ananias Ayers.

The end came without warning. He was sitting by the window reading, when he fell to the floor. A physician was summoned, but to no purpose; a few desultory heart beats, and he passed into his eternal rest.

The funeral was held in the Old School Baptist Church, in Burdett, of which denomination he was a faithful member, on Feb. 16th, the sermon being preached from Numbers xxiii. 10, by E. W. Abbey, pastor of the Presbyterian Church. Interment was made in the adjoining cemetery.

GEO. W. SLAUSON.

MY mother, **Nancy Jordan,** died Feb. 7th, 1901. Mother's maiden name was Downey; she was born in Noble Co., Ohio, Sept. 2d, 1827, where she was married to John Jordan, Nov. 6th, 1845. She was the mother of nine children, all living, and four of them members of the Old School Baptist Church. Some time after she was married she united with that people, and remained steadfast in the faith. As long as it was possible she traveled seven miles to her meeting, often on horseback. She shone brightly in her home, where she toiled for her children, and gladly welcomed her christian friends and kindred. She was a sister of Elder John Downey, of Illinois. For about two years she had heart trouble. Her plans and her occasional remarks led us to believe that she was conscious of the near approach of death. A few days before her death she said that she would not live long, for the beauties of another world were before her whenever she slept. It was often a remark of hers in life, that she did not wish to live after she ceased to be useful. She had made arrangements about her funeral. Elder E. Barker, her faithful pastor for many years, spoke to our comfort at the old home, after which she was lain to rest beside her husband, who preceded her.

Truly in this case it is fulfilled, "Her children arise up and call her blessed."

AUGUSTA BRETZ.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 69. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1901. NO. 7.

POETRY.

PLEASANT PLAINS, Ill., March 6, 1901.

MR. B. L. BEEBE—MY DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed find a little poem, which tenderly expresses the sentiment of my heart. I feel the sweet spirit of these lines so ardently that I would like for all the readers of the blessed SIGNS to enjoy them with me if they can. H. M. CURRY.

Brethren called by one vocation,
Members of one family,
Heirs through Christ, of one salvation,
Let us live in harmony;
Nor by strife embitter life,
Journeying to eternity.

In a land where all are strangers,
And our sojourning so short,
In the midst of common dangers,
Concord is our best support:
Heart with heart divides the smart,
Lightens grief of every sort.

Let us shun all vain contentions,
Touching words and outward things,
Whence, alas, so much contention,
And such bitter rancor springs.
Troubles cease where Christ brings peace
And sweet healing in his wings.

Judge not hastily of others,
But thine own salvation mind;
Nor be lynx-eyed to thy brother's,
To thine own offenses blind;
God alone discerns thine own,
And the hearts of all mankind.

Let it be our chief endeavor
That we may the Lord obey;
Then shall envy cease forever,
And all hate be done away.
Free from strife shall be his life
Who serves God both night and day.

SOME TIME.

SOME time, when all life's lessons have been learned,
And sun and stars for evermore have set,
The things which our weak judgment here have spurned,
The things o'er which we grieved with lashes wet,
Will flash before us out of life's dark night,
And stars shine most in deeper tints of blue;
And we shall see how all God's plans are right,
And how what seems reproof was love most true.

And we shall see how, while we frown and sigh,
God's plans go on as best for you and me;
How when we called, he heeded not our cry,
Because his wisdom to the end could see.
And e'en as prudent parents disallow
Too much of sweet to craving babyhood,
So God, perhaps is keeping from us now
Life's sweetest things, because it seemeth good.

And if sometimes, commingled with life's wine,
We find the wormwood, and rebel and shrink,
Be sure a wiser hand than yours or mine
Pours out this portion for our lips to drink.
And if some friend we love is lying low,
Where human kisses cannot reach his face,
O, do not blame the loving Father so,
But wear your sorrow with obedient grace.

And you shall shortly know that lengthened breath
Is not the sweetest gift God sends his friend,
And that, sometimes, the sable pall of death,
Conceals the fairest boon his love can send.
If we could push ajar the gates of life,
And stand within, and all God's workings see,
We could interpret all this doubt and strife,
And for each mystery could find a key.

But not to-day. Then be content, poor heart,
God's plans, like lilies pure and white, unfold.
We must not tear the close shut leaves apart,
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold.
And if, through patient trials, we reach the land
Where tired feet, with sandals loosed, may rest;
When we shall clearly know and understand,
I think that we will say, "God knew the best."

CORRESPONDENCE.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Feb. 12, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have just read your editorial in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for February 15th, on the subject of prayer, with comfort and instruction. This subject has for many years given me much comfort, as well as many doubts and fears. The question often with me is, What is prayer? and do I know anything about it as the children of God do, who often express themselves as to the comfort and sweetness of it, or in it, to them? I can remember when a mere boy I often would try to thank God for the preservation of my life, and the blessings I as a child enjoyed, also when I did wrong would ask his forgiveness. I can say, for the last thirty years I have been trying to pray, and to-day I ask solemnly, Have I ever in the Spirit approached the throne of grace? My dear brother, such questionings occupy much of my time. My doubts and fears are many, but my assurances few, as I hardly ever get above doubt and unbelief, and some of the questions I find in my mind often bring with them horror, and I am made to mourn because of my lack of faith, trust and confidence in an all-wise and gracious God, whose promises are yea and amen in Christ Jesus our Lord. I can now see that my prayers when a child were entirely selfish and without faith, and I fear they are the same to-day. When speaking publicly in the way of prayer, I often feel it is cold, lifeless and without faith, and often would rather try to preach than to try to pray. When I seem to have freedom of mind in making my wants and desires known to God, the devil comes and tells me, You are doing well to-day, the brethren will enjoy such a prayer, at once horror takes hold of me and I fear and tremble. Again, when I seem to stammer and stumble, the devil comes and says, You have not prayer in your heart, and this is only form and mockery, and my soul sinks within me. Sometimes at night in my wakeful hours, and again at my duties in the day, I try to pray, and address the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort, begin with a few words, and perhaps in a few moments I come to myself and behold I have forgotten I began to pray; my mind has been taken up with something of the world, and again I fear and quake. Do you wonder at such a poor, helpless, dependent sinner as I, having doubts, fears and sufferings of mind?

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know,
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

Lord, decide the doubtful case and give my weary conscience ease.

The few thoughts above will give you an idea of what trouble I have passed through in regard to prayer, but feel sure you cannot fellowship such an experience, and this causes me doubt also, to know I am alone in such an experience, but just so I am, and instead of growing stronger, as I hoped years ago, I am getting weaker and weaker each day of my life.

You say in your editorial, The Lord waits his own time to answer prayer, and if he wait long we should not faint or be discouraged. This I fully believe, but sometimes the request is not granted at all. Now the idea presents itself that a form of words is not always prayer, and

many times when we have thought we were praying, there was not a word of prayer in it; words without faith never reach God. You well remember when President Garfield was shot, how the different denominations of the United States set apart days to pray for his recovery, but he died, this fully demonstrates the fact that all which is called prayer is not prayer. Had one of the thousands who desired his recovery had faith to believe God would hear or grant his request, the president would have lived. James tells us, "We ask and receive not, because we ask amiss." We do not know what we need, and if all our desires were granted, we would soon be cut off from the fellowship of God's people, or would have a very different experience from what we do have. We ask to be delivered from temptation, affliction, fears, doubts, sorrows and pain, if this was granted how could we be conformed to the image of the Son of God? How could we grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? Nature and grace have their opposites, so what seems evil to us is good and to the glory of God. The sick child would prefer sweets to the bitter medicine it needs, and so with the children of God, they would have the sweets at all times, but their Father knowing what is good for them, gives affliction, sorrow and pain, not that he has pleasure in their sufferings, but that they may know more of him, and his strong arm, that they may have fellowship with the sufferings of Christ, and know the power of his resurrection. If we could feel as we would like, the time would be but short before we would be proud pharisees, and would be thanking God that we were not as other men. This is not according to the will of God, therefore we are a poor and afflicted people, yet trust in the name of the Lord. The very knowledge we have of our sinful and depraved nature is a blessing, because it brings us to God, and here we see Christ the Mediator between, in garments dyed with blood; he is seen and not us. He paid the debt and is forever at the right hand of God to make intercession for us.

Now the question comes, Who prays and whose prayer is answered always? The apostle tells us in the following language, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." —Rom. viii. 26, 27. Nothing therefore in the way of prayer is answered but that which is in accordance with the will of God, consequently such petitions are given of God, and ascend to him through the Spirit, as Jesus said, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." Hence we cannot come unto him in prayer only through or in Christ, any more than we can ascend to him when the summons comes that calls us from time to eternity, without having Christ, the truth, the way and the life. We poor worms of the dust should indeed be thankful and rejoice because we have such an High Priest, who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and who being tempted in all points like as we, is able to succor us who are tempted, and with his own blood did cleanse us from all sin. Yet we feel the leprosy remaining, and are in continual warfare, but through him the victory is ours, over death, sin and the grave. Notwithstanding all this, we find ourselves trying to pray always, and are neither

faint or discouraged though we wait, and wait again.

The prayer of the publican is in the mind of the saint more than any other, and whether a child of God or not, it suits my case: "God be merciful to me a sinner." For surely sin is mixed with all I do, and mercy and grace I need every moment of my life. Mercy because of my sin, unbelief and rebellion, and grace to keep me and sustain me in the trials and conflicts of my pilgrimage. So, because of my crippled condition, I go halting and stumbling along, finding in this life no continuing city, but I seek one to come, where prayer and desire are no more, but there the saints have fullness of joy, and pleasures for evermore.

With love and fellowship, I am your brother in hope of the gospel,

H. C. KER.

[IT affords us much pleasure that the editorial upon the subject to which brother Ker refers, has called out such an excellent letter from him. We can assure him that we are fully aware of the very conflicts of which he has spoken. In all our ministry we have found more perplexity and anxiety regarding prayer, than we ever have known concerning preaching. Perhaps we might be understood if we should express our feelings in this way: In preaching we are talking to men who are in some sense our equals; in prayer we are speaking to that God who is supreme, and who knows every thought of the heart, and who shall bring every secret thing into judgment. We do not know what to pray for as we ought, and we may add that we feel deeply that we do not know how to pray as we ought. Yet it has been our encouragement that the Holy Spirit does make intercession for us according to the will of God, and we understand that this intercession, and groaning of the Spirit which cannot be uttered, goes on in our own heart.—ED.]

CAVENDISH, Idaho, Feb. 21, 1901.

ELDER D. BARTLEY—DEAR FRIEND:—I have been reading your writings in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the past year with much comfort, also your books, Priesthood and Early Religious Life. It is all interesting and instructing.

I was born and raised in Barbour Co., W. Va. My parents were Old School Baptists, strong advocates of the doctrine of election and predestination; and I never knew until lately that any Old Baptist objected to it. At one time I could not believe it, although I never took occasion to oppose it, as my parents were Baptists. But I always thought that the Old Baptists were a good people. My father took the SIGNS a good portion of the time from my earliest recollection, and to say that he enjoyed reading it, does not express it.

After I left West Virginia I never heard but one gospel sermon preached, until a few months ago. Two young preachers moved in near where I live, and we now have meeting every month. And then the old family paper comes twice a month, ladened with the gospel. It is a paper that I love; that is, I love the doctrine that it advocates, and I also love the people that write for it, although they are strangers to me. Many lonesome hours can I pass away by perusing its columns. It does seem to me that it gets better all the time. But if we look over the old papers, we find it just the same. But some will contend that it is not as good as it used to be; but I cannot see it that way. If I have any understanding at all, it is just the same that it was years ago. It always held out a full

and complete Savior; salvation by grace alone, leaving man's ability out entirely, nothing conditional whatever. I do not know how I could content myself without the paper, and I do not calculate to do without it.

I want your views on a certain thing, if you feel like writing to one who is not a brother; if not, all will be right. Is it nothing but tradition to keep Sunday? or should we work on that day, the same as any other day, and sin not by so doing? Some claim that as the old covenant has passed away, and the old Bible is all fulfilled, and the New Testament does not say anything about keeping any day holy, that it is no more harm to work on Sunday than any other day. Now I know that the old covenant is passed away. That is what the apostle called carnal ordinances, and a worldly sanctuary—the priests, and such like. But, is there not a law in the ten commandments that will never pass away while time lasts? And, if it does not say to keep the Sabbath or Lord's day in the New Testament, is there not something that leads up to it? Now I may be wrong, but I was raised where there were a number of Baptists, and I never knew one but what kept Sunday. It is not for argument that I want this answered, but just to satisfy my own mind. I hope that I have the cause at heart.

Very truly yours,

B. B. MATHEW.

REPLY.

OUR dear friend's interesting letter is sufficient evidence of his honest sincerity, and that he both fears the Lord and loves his people in the truth and for the truth's sake. His inquiries are comprehensive and important. There is more than tradition for the general observance of Sunday as a day of rest from the business and labors of the week, for it is a legal requirement among civilized nations, and Baptists wish to be a law-abiding people; yet there is no commandment in the New Testament which requires the followers of Christ to observe one day above another; and certainly there is no evidence therein that God changed the weekly Sabbath from the seventh day to the first, or from Saturday to Sunday. "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." The law was given to the Israelites, the people of the old covenant; but grace and truth came to the brotherhood of Christ, the people of the new covenant. The first were under the law, and it was binding upon them, until Christ fulfilled it and redeemed them from it; but the last are under the reign of grace, and are free from the demands of the law, so that sin shall not have dominion over them.

To our friend it is submitted, that if there is a law in the ten commandments that will never pass away in time, and something in the New Testament that leads up to it, and this law is enforced or binding on the redeemed of the Lord, the children of God in Christ Jesus, then they must also be under its penalties if they fail to obey and fulfill it. This would indeed be a yoke which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear, as shown in Acts xv., and in Galatians. The children of Israel, whom God commanded to remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy, never so kept it in the letter and spirit of it. So neither do the Gentiles, who claim to be under it, ever thus keep it. But the man Christ Jesus did fulfill it, and he is its perfection and end, yea, the righteousness and perfect holiness of every believer in him. Laboring and heavy laden they were under the law, but Jesus calls them away from it all unto

him, and he gives them rest. "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." The old things have not passed over into the new, but they have passed away. Christ fulfilled them for his people, nailed them to his cross, and took them out of the way. And now, to his people, he is the way, the truth and the life. They need no other way or truth or life. He is above all and more than all else to them. He is greater than Moses. His life and righteousness and divine nature, which are given to and wrought in his new-born people, are far superior as the law of life, the active motive-power, to the morality and legal force of the ten commandments or the law given by Moses; and by this new law of life and love are the members of Christ quickened and raised up together with him, and made to sit and worship together in heavenly places. Paul has shown that these are infinitely higher and holier and more blessed than all the best moral attainments and excellence in the law and the flesh.

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Paul here shows us that Christ, our new Master and only Lawgiver, has not bound any heavy yoke upon his disciples, to whom he says, "For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." "My Beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle (dove) is heard in our land: the fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grapes give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away." Thus the beloved Bridegroom calls his redeemed bride away from all that was legal and worldly, fleshly and carnal, which boded only failure and blight, as the chilling winds and rains of winter, into the soul-satisfying garden of his gospel grace, to behold with joy its heavenly beauties, hear with rapture its divine melodies, and feast upon its spiritual fruits. Herein is true rest to the weary soul. The inspired John was in this heavenly place when he said, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." And Paul said, "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

To our dear friend, I would say, history shows that the first law, either ecclesiastical or civil, which ordained Sunday as a sabbath, was the edict of Constantine the Great, A. D. 321. Since then Sunday has been established by emperors and popes; hence it exists as a sabbath day by human authority only. It is true that many articles of faith, adopted by the Baptist churches, speak of "the sanctity of the first day of the week," but if we were asked to give the reason for so regarding Sunday, we could find no divine authority for it. Yet, since it exists in civil law, and custom has established it as a day of public worship, and since the seventh day sabbath of the law is not binding now upon the Jew or Gentile, it would not be commendable as a rule to work on Sunday, the same as any other day, for the Lord's people, who are under law to

Christ, desire to be subject to the powers that be, and to live peaceably with all men. But there is no sin in the sight of God in doing right and needed work on Sunday, any more than on Saturday, or Monday. To hold that Sunday has taken the place of the weekly sabbath of the law of God, and possesses its sacredness and binding force, is to make all christendom, Catholics, Protestants and Baptists, the worst of sabbath-breakers, and therefore sinners, for none observe and keep it as God commanded of all who were under it.

Dear brother Beebe, I submit the above to you first, and then to our friend, if you publish it in the SIGNS, and to all your dear readers, who have believed in Jesus, ceased from their own works, and entered into rest. Should either you or dear brother Chick feel moved to add some remarks, please do so, for the instruction and edification of us all.

Your brother in affliction and sorrow,

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., March 14, 1901.

SALVATION.

JONAH, when at the bottom of the sea, in the fish's belly, said, "Salvation is of the Lord." We may inquire with propriety, What is the definition of the word salvation? The dictionary gives several meanings of the word, and in the entire subject all tend to one end, that is, "The act of saving; preservation from destruction, danger or great calamity." It is very clear to every Bible reader who without prejudice looks at the condition Jonah was in when he used the words quoted above, that he meant a temporal salvation, as well as eternal. He surely could not then save himself alive for one moment by any of his efforts, as he was where he could not breathe the natural air into his lungs. This one case of temporal salvation it would seem ought to convince our new theory "Conditional time salvationists" that there was no condition left in the matter to Jonah, and he was compelled to say, "Salvation is of the Lord." Jonah had been trusting in himself, and was in that strength fleeing from the Lord, feeling, doubtless, much like some of our "free moral agent" friends do when they preach to the people that they "can have all the religion they will live for," and that "If the sinner is lost it is his own fault." We find that Moses, when the children of Israel were at the Red Sea, and Pharaoh was closing in on their rear, had no faith in any conditional system of salvation, but by God's direction said unto them, "Fear ye not, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord," &c.—Exodus xiv. 13. He knew they could not save themselves, and this was a temporal salvation, similar to Jonah's when he could not save himself. And the case where "all Judah stood before the Lord," and there was one Jahaziel upon whom the Spirit of the Lord came, "And he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou King Jehoshaphat; thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid or dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not your's but God's."—2 Chronicles xx. 15. This had no reference to eternal salvation, but was a time salvation without any conditions in it. David said in the third Psalm, "I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about. Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God, * * * salvation belongeth unto the Lord: thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah."—Verses 6-8. Paul said to the Corinthian brethren, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything

as of ourselves: but our sufficiency is of God.—2 Cor. iii. 5." If this great apostle felt that way, is it any wonder that such poor creatures as we are, should be so dependent as not to be able to save ourselves from the trials and conflicts that beset us all through life? But what a comfort to the helpless child of God, to feel that Jesus Christ is his sufficiency. "Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not." This kind of salvation is to the one who has tried all his powers, both in regard to eternal and time salvation, a great satisfaction, when they see all their efforts have failed, and with Paul have been made to cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" On one occasion when Christ was speaking to the people he said, "I can of mine ownself do nothing, as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just: because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." —John v. 30. Surely if Jesus of himself could do nothing, the advocates of the theory that says, "God gives the new life, and then leaves us to work out our own time salvation, and that there is no grace in it," are mistaken. Paul said, "By the grace of God I am what I am." One poet had use for grace all along the journey of life, and said,

"Grace led my roving feet
To tread the heavenly road,
And new supplies each hour I meet,
While pressing on to God."

"Grace taught my soul to pray,
And pardoning love to know;
'Twas grace that kept me to this day,
And will not let me go.

Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days:
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

These expressions of the poet suit my feelings. I think the lesson has been taught me, that if I am not kept by grace every moment of my life, I shall surely fall. Jesus in his prayer, as recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, among other things says, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." We notice he does not pray to the Father that he would let them keep themselves, but asks the Father to keep them. This does not sound like the Savior regarded them as "free moral agents," or as having power to save themselves with a "conditionl time salvation." Webster says, Salvation means to preserve, or prevent destruction, or even danger. If then the children of God are in no danger of going astray, they may with propriety claim that "grace has nothing to do with them after regeneration, and that they are really free, to live as they will, and thereby "have all the religion they live for." If this is true, O how little there is for me. I am compelled to say, as one of old, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me: but how to perform that which is good I find not," and again, "I find a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me." This entire seventh chapter of Romans tells so clearly where our help is, and must come from, if we have salvation either in time or to eternity, that it would seem strange that any redeemed sinner could claim any credit of saving himself for one hour. With the truly saved sinner he is ready with Jonah to say, "Salvation is of the Lord."

May God in infinite mercy keep us all by his grace, is the prayer of a poor old sinner,

JAMES M. TRUE.

KANSAS, Ill., Feb. 22, 1901.

JOHN XXI. 15.

"LOVEST thou me more than these?"

Peter had been fishing; he had toiled all the night and had caught nothing, but when the morning came, and Jesus told him where to cast the net, he caught a great number, and the disciples were convinced that it was the Lord, and while they were eating of the fish and bread which Jesus had on the coals of fire, as well as of that which they had just caught, the Lord said to Peter, "Lovest thou me more than these?" In other words, Which do you prize most, the gift or the giver? And Peter was grieved because the Lord repeated the question three times, and said, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee."

Peter had said, I will go with thee to prison and to death, and although Jesus had told him that he would deny him, yet he had said, "Though all men deny thee, yet will not I." But no sooner did the tempter come, than with cursings and swearing he said, "I know not the man." While he was thus engaged he gave no evidence that he loved the Master, but plainly showed the weakness of the flesh, which he had also shown but a little while before in the garden, by falling asleep while Jesus endured such great agony. But when the cock crew, and Jesus turned and looked upon him, he remembered what he had said, and being convicted of his sin he went out and wept bitterly.

Now Peter did really love Jesus, and was among the first to go to the grave when the resurrection was announced, and was with the disciples each time that Jesus showed himself to them, and in each time was glad with the rest, for in the presence of Jesus is fullness of joy. And no one seems to have enjoyed his presence more than Peter. O, what love and beauty there was to Peter in that the Master did not meet him with a charge of infidelity, but each time gave him to enjoy the glory of his appearing, never accusing him, except with a look of love and pity, and to ask of him what was the object of his greatest love. And we have no account that any of his brother disciples ever mentioned his sin to him. They no doubt had seen and known of his bitter weeping, as well as the sin, and they could sympathize with him, knowing their own weakness and liability to go astray. What could have been more effectual in the case of Peter, than for his Savior to show him and others that notwithstanding his sin he loved him still? So Jesus simply asks the question, "Lovest thou me more than these?" The rod is used in his heart, and not upon his back.

The manifestation of such love to poor, sinful man, begets love, and gives strength and courage to the hearts of such poor, penitent backsliders as Peter. Is not this a begetting again to a lively hope? This love of God, and hope of his children, is that which slew the enmity between Jews and Gentiles, and made the apostle say, "O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged." The past was nothing to them now, neither was Peter's denial of Jesus any cause of nonfellowship with him upon the part of the disciples, for Jesus had given him repentance, and so all now recognize him as a dear brother in the bonds of the gospel of Christ. So they go on rejoicing in the love of Jesus, and in the fellowship of each other.

Now, brethren, is there anything in all this for us? It seems so to me, for if we are born of God we have the mind of Christ, while if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. Jesus

is not talking to the dead, but to the living Peter, and to men and women to whom he has given eternal life, and who having life, can feel, see, hear and have some understanding of what is said to them. To such as these he has said, Forgive men their trespasses, even as your heavenly Father has forgiven you. This teaches Peter and us all, as it seems to me, that with the same forbearance and love that Jesus showed to Peter in forgiving him his sin, we should forgive our brother, when he shall sin against us; and as the Lord bore with his weaknesses and infirmities, so should he bear with the infirmities of the weak brethren, and not oppress them; and as the Lord restored to him the joys of his salvation, when overtaken in a fault, so should Peter restore his fellowship to a brother thus overtaken. This he is to do in the spirit of meekness, considering himself also lest he be tempted. All these things are of full force and effect upon us today, if we be the brethren of his sinful, yet beloved servant, Peter.

Sometimes he seems to threaten us, saying, "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." And as though he would encourage us to walk in his ways he says, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." If then I obey with the thought in my heart of the joy which is found in obedience, or of the solid comfort that grows out of it, I have only done as my blessed Savior did, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God, and upon that glorious seat is making intercession for the saints, who are all poor sinners, according to the will of God. The erring brother should be rebuked, but who can adopt a better plan than that of Jesus with Peter? If I can show my brother that I love him, notwithstanding his sin, and that in dealing with him I also remember that I too am a sinner, what can cause him to feel his guilt more fully, and bring him to repentance sooner than this manifestation of my love to him? Peter never denied his Lord in this manner any more, neither was he ashamed of his brethren. The love of the brethren manifested, is a strong incentive to proper living by the child of God. How much better it makes the christian feel to show love and sympathy for those who err in doctrine and in practice, than to be harsh and unfeeling towards them. It were better for a man that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones that believe in Jesus. This man is a believer, and it would be better that he should be drowned in the sea, than to offend one of the little ones, for then his troubles would be over, while if he should know that he had caused a child of God to offend, or in any way caused him trouble, or had driven him from those whom he loves, it would be a constant thorn in the flesh, and a weight which would hinder his patient running through all his earthly pilgrimage.

Then "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." It is hard to run while carrying a weight, and nothing so completely overthrows us as unbelief. Then, dear brethren, "be not deceived, God is not mocked; what a man soweth that shall he reap." Let us not suppose that we may treat others unkindly, and cause them trouble, and escape the righteous judgments of our God. He is no

respecter of persons, and grants to no one the privilege of disobeying his commandments. The one sheep that has strayed into the wilderness, is as dear to him as the ninety and nine who are yet in the fold. This he proves by going after the lost one, and searching until he finds it, and with joy brings it back to the fold. Should not this spirit characterize every child of God? Then let us gather rather than scatter. Suppose some have erred, shall we put them further away? No, rather let us show our love to the good shepherd and the flock, by striving to save a brother from the error of his way. What does it matter about past differences or sins, if I love my brother to-day, and he love me, because of the love of God manifest in us both?

Then should we not imitate the example of the blessed Redeemer, and not mention the past, but enjoy together the glorious present, with the presence of him who is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches. The peace of the churches is the evidence of the presence of Jesus, while we are told that wars and fightings come of our own lusts, which war against the soul. These things have certainly the appearance of evil, which we are commanded to shun, and to overcome with good. A dead Adam could not cut down the thorns and thistles which the earth brought forth to him, so that it would yield him bread, but a living Adam could and did. So a man, without Christ, can do nothing, but he can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth him. Jesus is with his people always, even unto the end of the world.

What excuse have we for constant stubbornness which is disobedience? We are plainly told that if we live after the flesh we shall die. This is not saying that we are dead to God, but that our fleshly living will result in death, that is, it will destroy our comforts in this life, while those who mortify the deeds of the body, by the Spirit, live with peace. May God give us to consider these things, to love him, to love his people, and to walk in his ways, letting our light so shine before men that they seeing our good works may glorify our Father which is in heaven. "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

Your brother,

J. T. ROWE.

ROLAND PARK, BALTIMORE, Md., March 13, 1901.

STATE ROAD, Del., March, 1901.

BROTHER BEEBE:—We have it on record that Ananias said to the apostle Paul, "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee that thou shouldest know his will, and shouldest see that just One." Paul afterwards testified that what he knew, he received not of man, neither was he taught it, but by revelation of Jesus Christ. It seems to me to be abundantly taught in the Scriptures not only in these instances, but elsewhere, that all the knowledge men have of God is just what has been revealed to them. There will certainly be no clashing in this revelation. The apostle speaks with great confidence with regard to the fact of this revelation, and also with regard to the things revealed. Not only is it declared that God is only known as revealed, but that he is revealed if at all, always in and through Christ. This is to me an important point, and as it will be the theme of my present contemplation, I will quote some other Scripture declarations. "No man hath seen God at any time. The only begotten Son that is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." "No man knoweth

the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." There is then no knowledge of God in the world only what has been revealed in and through Christ. This revelation we oft-times speak of as experience; that is, the knowledge of a Savior comes to us in a personal experience, and he is never known as a Savior in any other way. We need not wonder then that there is such confusion of tongues in the world. But God is not the author of confusion, but of peace. Sin is the same always, and the condition of the lost sinner the same, so the salvation is necessarily the same. If all true knowledge of God among men must come by revelation, it should not be thought presumptuous in any of us to claim as the apostle did that whatever knowledge we have of divine things come in that way. The apostle presents the matter as one of certainty, that what God reveals to him he knows to be true and right, and the conviction of its truth never after leaves him. If I do not feel like saying that anything has been revealed to me, I may say, and say with assurance, that the things of which I have been bearing witness now more than fifty years I did not receive of men. I was not taught it in schools, nor did I gather from authors and commentators, not on any single point. I had opportunities in abundance; standard works, as they were called, were always at hand; I was conversant with them. I cannot now trace any profitable understanding of the Scriptures to the preaching that I got to hear in my early life, though much of it was called sound, nor to any other source within my own reach. There are many portions of Scripture that I now hope I understand, and I have never hesitated to allow what light I thought I had to shine.

The point I had mainly in view to speak of was that knowledge of God which comes to us by revelation. Moses besought the Lord that he would shew him his glory. I presume that he afterward knew that he would always see his glory if he saw him at all. The Lord caused all his goodness to pass before him. So he has always done; he reveals himself through a channel of goodness and mercy, and in this revelation his glory is made to appear. I can know now that in all that I had ever read in the New Testament, and all the poetic effusions of adulation and praise to Christ that I ever met with, the Savior that I now know and love and confide in, I had no knowledge of then; I could never have known by being told. Love is an effect, and not a volition. I know what I love and why I love. That God that is revealed in and through Christ is not seen visibly any more than he was before, only in the salvation of his people. So the prophet says, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee." This is the only revelation of his glory that we have any account of, and if we see it at all, there is where it must be seen. I have never been able to fathom or comprehend that love and pity that was shown me in the revelation of redeeming grace, and though I keep talking about it I shall never get it told. The apostle John said that God was love. No other or different God has ever been revealed to anybody, and the revelation inspires love to him in our every heart. The old prophet Isaiah says, "Though thou wast angry with me thine anger is turned away." But Isaiah

perhaps knew afterward that he had been mistaken, and that the Lord had loved him all the time. The pen of inspiration has it, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love." God is a Spirit, and so is not visible to mortal eyes, but as a Spirit he is both life and righteousness. If he is revealed at all, he is seen wherever he is; if he is loved at all, he is loved wherever he is. His Spirit develops in the heart and life of the sons and daughters of men, the fruit is traceable to its source. As it is one and the selfsame Spirit, so the fruit develops in love, joy, peace, &c. The holy seed does not grow roots of bitterness. If I could by searching have found out God, I do not know why he should not have been found, for I searched diligently, and for a long time. But no salvation that I ever could read of or hear of would come to me. When salvation was revealed it was in the way of a deliverance, the measure of which depended upon the measure of the pit and the mire in which I was sinking. I never could have learned it in any other way, and ever since it has had an abiding place in my life. My faith in that deliverance was entirely from under my control. My ideas of gospel salvation were and always have been traceable to a revelation of things that my eyes had not before seen, nor my ears heard. We do not read of any revelation that God has ever made only as made in and through Christ, and Christ is revealed and known only to his people, and only as a Savior. If nothing other or further has ever been revealed to me I am content with this. There is enough in this for my faith and hope and love. His Spirit guides into all truth, receiving of Jesus, and showing unto us. He never guides into error or delusion. God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. He cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. I have this to say, after journeying for half a century, that I not only was led in a way that I knew not, but if I had known I would not have chosen. Many incidents occur that it is instructive and profitable to rehearse. The way is a straight way. The word of the Lord lives on, and the promises are being continually confirmed. Every manifestation that the Lord ever makes of himself is to the destruction of what is called the works of the devil. If Christ lives in us we ought to be living epistles known and read by all who have been taught by the Spirit. The light that has shined upon the word has never ceased to shine upon it, and that Zion in which God lives and reigns is still the perfection of beauty.

In faith and hope,

E. RITTENHOUSE.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Dec. 31, 1900.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I send you the experience of my dear daughter, who has been sorely afflicted for many years. Her lower limbs have been so drawn that she cannot walk, and living about eight miles from the church, Mt. Olive, she wrote the experience to the church, on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in September last, and was received by them. She had some drawback in her health, and has not yet been baptized. Her letter to the church will show for itself, and we think it very comforting and encouraging. If you see proper to give it a place in your valuable paper we think that it will prove of comfort to many who are afflicted. She was so comforted with the conversation of Elder David Bartley, when he was here last summer and preached for us some refreshing sermons. I would like to see our people united, and not have so

much faultfinding; we are all poor, helpless creatures, God alone is our strength and wisdom, and our all. The SIGNS holds forth the same doctrine as in days gone by. I have been a subscriber for nearly fifty years, and have always paid in advance. Dear brethren, hold up the hands of your faithful editors, by paying promptly your subscription; there is no loss in doing right.

Yours most truly,

J. S. CORDER.

ASTOR, W. Va., Sept. 1, 1900.

DEAR FATHER:—You told Furman to tell me to write you a few lines with regard to my desires concerning the church. I will first say that during the past year I have had an almost unceasing desire to follow my Lord and Master through the waters of baptism, feeling it to be my duty. I also have felt that it would be one of the sweetest privileges on earth to be enabled to do so. Why is it so, in my condition, as you all know my state of health? If it were not that I have great reasons to believe that the Lord has gently and comfortably led me through the forty years of my experience, I could not rely upon my early experience. I was about five or six years of age when I first was brought to a knowledge of my sinful condition, but I was then too young to understand my case, but I can look back now, and believe that the Lord was with me, though I knew it not. Surely he leads his people in a way that they know not. It is line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little, from youth to old age. If it were not for the inexpressible beauty that I have been enabled to see by an eye of faith in God's word, for the love of the cause, and the strong fellowship which I have for the people of God in their tribulations, in their rejoicings, in all the way that the Lord leads them in doctrine, in discipline and in their order, I could not say as I do now at times, "My Lord and my God." For years I prayed for that privilege, and I have been enabled to say it, feeling the sweet and powerful influence of the Holy Spirit constraining me to cry, "My Lord and my God." You know in part what a life I have had to endure. It comforts me to read, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth them out of them all." "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" It is all heavenly there, and what do I desire upon earth beside thee? I am cut off somewhat from everything of an earthly nature, but there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother, and Jesus is his name. Like John, at the draught of fishes, when they were hungry and had caught nothing, I was made to exclaim, "It is the Lord." Without him we can do nothing. I have been brought to see my nothingness this summer, and the glory of the Most High, and my duty is more plain before me than ever before.

It is written, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power," and again, "Be still and know that I am God." O, for that humble, childlike spirit to keep me in the right way, to bring me to his mercy-seat, to learn of him. "The Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God." My desire is "to know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." Truly "Man in his best estate is but vanity." There is nothing lasts but heaven. I thought that no one on earth had such trials as I had, until I conversed with Elder Bartley. Truly "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." It is in and through him only that we

can say, "Thy will be done." While troubled much about my condition, I was once relieved by the words which occurred to me, The holy Spirit will not lead you into temptation, but will teach you what to do. So when I can bear it no longer I will send you this, and you can read it to the church. Quietly have some four or five brethren appointed to come here and minister to my necessities, that I may die in peace. O, how I long for that sweet rest that knows no breaking, where God in his infinite wisdom, loving-kindness and tender mercies, has prepared a home for those who love him. No wonder that we can say, "Our beloved is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely;" and again, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Though the Lord suffers the devil to take away all that we have save our life, he cannot take that, for it is hid with Christ in God. This, it seems to me, is our spiritual life, of which the natural life of Job was a figure. We are told that adversity is set over against prosperity, and I have surely felt it to be so, and such has been the force of the trial that I have been made to cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The strong arm of Jehovah must sustain me or I cannot endure. There are times when I thirst for the fulfillment of all things that concern me, that I may be at rest forever. The afflictions of our bodies are great sometimes, but that is nothing to the hidings of God's face. It is my desire to be reconciled to God's will, yet I cannot be unless I can feel and see his supporting arm; like doubting Thomas, I must be enabled to see the wounds in his hands, feet and side.

"Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thrones compose so rich a crown?"

In Revelation, first chapter, we are told, "His feet were like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, and his voice as the sound of many waters."

I must here relate the wonderful sight revealed to my view this summer, August 19th. It had been very warm, and late in the evening we were visited with a very refreshing rain; about sunset my attention was called to it three times, and I was asked to draw my chair to the porch, and finally I went; there hung the most beautiful cloud, scarlet and purple, and in it set the most beautiful rainbow. I am now forty-six years of age, and this was the most beautiful sight I have ever seen in nature. I was reminded vividly in a moment of the vision in Ezekiel, first chapter; it was the glory of the Lord, and his ministry in the gospel. It is said verse 28, "As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about." Wonderful things were shown me in that chapter.

But Leviathan is suffered to put up his head in many places, to feast on these poor, sinful bodies, by tempting them in various ways, to their sorrow, but the Savior was manifest to destroy the works of the devil, and to cast him and his works down forever. Satan tempted our dear Redeemer to turn the stones into bread, but the Lord said, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." He knew how to put Satan down, for lo, he takes away a stony heart from his people, and gives them a heart of flesh. At the well in Samaria he said unto his disciple, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." His meat was to do the will of him that sent him, that is, the will of God.

O, what lovely beauties the fifty-fourth chapter of Isaiah contains; such consola-

tions for the children of God. We are commanded to stand still on our journey when the cloud is lowered, but when it is raised we can travel on. Now, if I had conferred with flesh and blood, I could not have written this letter to you, for it is contrary to the ways of the flesh, because the carnal mind does not understand these things. We are poor, sinful mortals of ourselves, and can do nothing pleasing to God, but when we are blessed with his good Spirit, we can cry, Abba, Father, and are kept unto the final consummation, when this mortal shall put on immortality, and death shall be swallowed up in victory. I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.

Perhaps you will think that I have written too much, but it is some of my travel through this wilderness life. I have written under many disadvantages, but have done the best that I could. I desire to leave this little witness with the church. If it be the will of God to take me away from this life before he leads me through the waters of baptism, you will have this witness to know whether or not I have any part or lot in the matter, and if it should be the Lord's will that I should worship on this side of Jordan, not being enabled to be baptized, and so cross over to the land of Canaan, which is the church militant, the will of the Lord be done.

Now, dear friends, one and all, whose eyes this may meet, please read carefully, and do not mistake my language. When we are left to self we are sure to err, and beside I am a poor scholar. If I am deceived I pray the Lord to set me in the right way. "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it."

From yours in hope,

B. D. COLE.

KELLER, Texas, Feb. 2, 1901.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN IN HOPE:—Since our subscription to the SIGNS has expired, I shall attempt this morning to write you a word with the renewal of our subscription for the paper we prize so highly; having read and heard read from its pages most all my life. My father, Elder A. D. Bourland, has been a subscriber to the dear old paper as far back as I can remember, and I naturally believed then that it advocated the truth, because father liked its doctrine so well. Often at night reading many pages to the family, and discoursing upon and comparing its teachings with many of the religious heralds of the day, and showing the great contrast between truth and error, between the teachings of the Scriptures and those taught by man, and after I grew to manhood and married, my wife became a member of the Old School Baptists, and liked the reading of the SIGNS so well she had them sent to her in her own name, and I up to this time, as I said, believed the doctrine advocated in them merely from tradition; believed they were right, with the head. But, dear brethren, I do hope and believe that the dear Lord did visit me in the wilderness of sin, and opened up my blind eyes, and enabled me to look away from self, and gave me a glimpse of Calvary, and shewed me that I was not the very good boy I had always thought I was, but that I was a desperate sinner, that my heart was deceitful and desperately wicked, and who could know it? Like Paul, I was made to exclaim, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" While in this condition, dear brethren, the ease of mind and the peace of conscience I had once known had flown from me, and I could only go with an aching heart and head bowed

down, praying to the Lord to have mercy on me, a sinner, carrying the load of all my guilt and mine iniquity in the sight of a pure and holy Creator. My transgressions would rise mountain high before me, and I was made to exclaim, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." Mercy then was my only hope, and yet how could I hardly dare hope for mercy, since God is holy, yea, thrice holy, and I a miserable undone wretch of an apostate Adam? There was nothing good that I had ever done, but on the other hand, evil continually. When I was driven away to some secluded spot, in secrecy to implore the mercy of the Lord upon me, and was made to bow down in humility before the King of kings and Lord of lords, to beg for mercy, I could hardly dare lisp his holy name for fear, and about all I could say was, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." I was made to feel my wretchedness so forcibly that I would sometimes indulge the thought that it had been better for me had I never been born, many times awaking at night having been pleading with the Lord for mercy in my sleep, so that my pillow was wet with tears. I believed the Lord was holy and just; but what troubled me so much was, How could he remain holy and be the justifier of, or even be merciful to such a sinner as I was? I could not see that I had ever done one single good act in all my life that would even balance against one sin: ten thousand talents in debt, and not a single farthing to pay. I was ready to give up in despair, and say, There might be hope for others, but none for me.

Dear brethren, I wandered along in this frame of mind about a year, till in the spring of 1896, and while I was at work alone in the field one morning (after sitting up all the night before with an old gentleman with whom I was very intimate, having lived close by him from childhood, and not having any hope of his recovery) I was made to feel my troubles come with renewed force, and I thought surely I must die. As I said before, I was alone in the field hoeing cotton, and the time and place is so riveted in my mind that if I were to live to be one hundred years old it would never leave my memory. After going as far as I could, I stopped hoeing and leaned over with my face on my hoe-handle, and tried once more to implore the Lord's mercy upon me, and to my surprise and delight, I was relieved of the burden I had been carrying, and my whole soul was filled with praise to the Lord. Here, my dear brethren, language fails to express my feelings, I believe right here I could have prayed for my enemies if I had any. My whole being seemed to be filled with and overshadowed by a light that made my soul leap for joy, and this old body of mine was in such a frame that I thought trouble, trials, disappointments and sorrows, were past forever. I thought the remainder of my life I could spend in praising and glorifying the name of my Master for his great love and tender mercies he had so undeservingly bestowed on me, a poor, weak worm of the dust. I cannot say the light that shined around me exceeded in brilliancy anything I had ever beheld, but there was something about it that is better felt than told; the trees seemed to have been beautified, the birds and all creation seemed alike to be rendering praises to the Lord. I wanted then to tell everybody of the loving Savior I had found, and thought I would go immediately to the church and ask for membership among a people whom I loved, whom I believed were the chosen of the Lord, but before much time had

passed there came a thought like this, You are deceived in the whole matter, it being only a delusion of the mind, and O, my dear brother, how this thought did make my poor heart ache, and for fear that I was deceived, I would not tell any one, but would go to church and listen with all the earnestness possible, and see if the preaching and experiences corresponded with the rugged road I had been traveling. With tears many times I longed to be like I thought they were; the very image of the Master seemed stamped upon their faces; they could tell my experience better than I could myself, and I was made to wonder if those dear saints of the Most High were ever such sinners as I.

There came among us one, Elder G. M. Fetter, of Raton, New Mexico, and preached for us at the Old School Baptist Church, in the little town of Keller, Texas, much to my comfort, and after preaching I went before the church, and in my weakness tried to tell some of the dealings, as I hope, of the Lord with me, the chiefest of sinners, and was received and baptized in fellowship with that little band of saints, and my prayer is that the dear Lord will keep me and uphold me by his mighty power, for I know that the weakness of the flesh so easily yields to the temptations of Satan, and if I should ever be permitted to enter into that celestial city with the redeemed of the Lord, it will be alone for what I hope the Lord has done for me, and not for anything good that I ever did or ever may do.

I hope the Lord may spare you yet many years to preach his everlasting gospel to his children. I fear I have written too lengthy, and that your patience will be wearied, but cast the mantle of charity over it, and remember me at a throne of grace, is the prayer of, I hope, your unworthy brother,

W. S. BOURLAND.

DARDANELLE, Ark., Dec. 4, 1900.

ELDER D. BARTLEY—DEAR BROTHER—Your very precious letter of November 20th was a surprise to me, but so highly appreciated I have read and re-read it many times, and each time with comfort and consolation. Dear brother, I do believe that as error and confusion increases, the fellowship of those that are earnestly contending for the faith, grows more precious. "O to grace how great a debtor daily I am constrained to be." If my daily experience did not teach me that my salvation depended entirely on the "grace of God that bringeth salvation," there is another Scripture that would make me afraid of this "conditional idea," that is so flattering and deceptive in its nature, and that is, "That which is highly esteemed among men, is an abomination in the sight of God." And we know that the conditional salvation idea, now so prevalent among Primitive Baptists, is very highly esteemed, not only in all the religious denominations of the world, but nonprofessors will accept it as the truth. So if we could accept it, there is a woe pronounced against us by the prophet Isaiah: "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!" Again, in the fifth chapter and twenty-sixth verse of Jeremiah we read, "For among my people are found wicked men: they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men." How very many are caught in their "conditional trap" to-day, among the children of spiritual Israel. It seems to me that this whole chapter, and

also the fifth chapter of Isaiah, is a very complete description of the Primitive Baptists to-day. I can say with you, If this doctrine is not verging very close to the principles held by the religious world, I am indeed dull of preception.

Yes, I received my book promptly, and read it with much comfort and satisfaction. I certainly deem it worthy of careful consideration by all lovers of grace, and will speak a good word for it whenever I can.

Dear brother, I feel that this is but a feeble expression, but please accept it as an appreciation of the warm fellowship you express for me. May you ever be sustained by the rich and abounding grace of God, in all your trials and persecutions in this conflict.

I am, I hope, your sister in precious fellowship,

(MRS.) J. F. JORDAN.

ATLANTA, Ga., March 12, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed please find two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to be sent to a new subscriber, brother John F. Greene, Atlanta, Ga. Brother Greene is a good and well-to-do free-hearted Baptist.

Brethren, please let me through our paper ask the kind brethren and sisters, or any one who may read this, to just try a little, and see how easy they can get two or three new subscribers for the SIGNS. I have been taking them nearly twenty-five years, and expect to as long as I can pay for them. Brethren, I have had to make sacrifices to get the money to pay for this paper, but then I can better enjoy its rich experiences of both brethren and sisters. They fill me so full at times I choke, and am compelled to stop for a moment, and think who I am. Is it the true spirit of holiness that I am enjoying, or is that too much for me to claim? Taking a retrospective view of my past life, I think, O, is this for me to enjoy? the heavenly blessings on earth, and all alone, too. They are just poured out to us, and we are feasting before we know it.

This paper gives God all the power, honor, glory and dominion. This paper teaches that God is infinite, and we are finite. This is the difference, God inhabits eternity, and we are travelers here; we have no stopping-place here; we bloom as in the morning, and are cut down at night.

Brethren, you may publish this if it meets with your approval.

Yours as ever, in hope of a better world,

H. H. BENTLEY.

[BROTHER Bentley has proven himself a very kind and efficient friend of the SIGNS; within the last few weeks he has sent us many new subscribers, and we assure him we appreciate such kindness, for the late new theories introduced among our people have spread to such an extent that hundreds who were once advocates of the principles contended for by the SIGNS, have withdrawn their support from the paper, because it has refused to compromise with error, or to stultify itself by a softening down on the sacred truth that "salvation is of the Lord." We are fully aware that from a financial or business point of view, if the SIGNS had been a little more conservative, it would not have suffered so severely. But thus far we have been given strength, we trust, of the Lord, to "cry aloud and spare not," and while our convictions remain as they are, God being our helper, we hope to continue to contend for salvation by grace alone, both for time and eternity, regardless of whether our subscription list in-

creases or decreases. This much we know, If the Lord has further use for the SIGNS, he will put it in the hearts of the brethren to sustain it, but if his purpose with the paper is fulfilled, it will be discontinued, and if so, may he give us grace to say, "Thy will be done."—ED.]

WEATHERFORD, Texas.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—By permission I wish to say through the SIGNS, that recently I have read the account given of "a general meeting," held with the Fulton Church, in Kentucky. Your remarks touching that matter I thought were very pertinent, and worthy of commendation by every true Old School or Predestinarian Baptist throughout the land. I desire to express my approbation of the same. What our venerable fathers did at the Black Rock Convention, in 1832, standing firm as they did, and contending for the faith and the ancient landmarks of the apostolic church, is all the general meeting that I consider expedient for the mutual welfare, peace and fellowship of our people.

It appears that history will repeat itself; that the time has come when there must be another falling away; a departure from the old path, following the ways of Balaam, who loveth the wages of unrighteousness. "The leaders of my people cause them to err," as saith the prophet. These new things and new movements cause dissension among brethren. But while I live, I pray God to keep me on the line of the Bible, and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, let come what will. Therefore you have my appreciation and best wishes for the success and continuance of the precious old SIGNS, all modern schemes of men notwithstanding.

Remember me at a throne of grace, when it is well with thee.

Affectionately your little brother in Jesus, I hope,

ASA HOWARD.

ROSEBURG, Oregon, Jan. 8, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The desire to write of the goodness and mercy of God is often with me, but the many wonderful messages contained in some of the late SIGNS seem to leave me as an unwelcome guest, or as one without preparation of heart, yet daily there is this reproof with me, To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin. It is one of the wonders of grace that it gives life and health and strength to the soul, by the might of which we walk and faint not, and run and are not weary, yet of its beauties we see as through a glass darkly. O, that I could abundantly praise the mercy that lighted a lamp to my pathway. As consolation aboundeth by Christ, so should we also rejoice that his sufferings abound in us. If God would be pleased to set a watch before the door of my mouth, and keep the door of my lips, then would I speak of the excellent things which are prepared to beautify the meek, that they may keep the path of the righteous. Thus those that are taught understand judgment and equity, and every good way. This is the bread which the Lord hath given us to eat. While walking in this path, and eating of this bread of righteousness, which is the grace of God shed abroad in our hearts, we have boldness to enter by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the vail, that is to say his flesh. In his chastenings the fruit is sweet and gives hope; if we endure these things, God dealeth with us as with sons, that we may be partakers of his holiness. Faith is made perfect by its works. These gifts are spiritually

discerned by the wisdom which is from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. How sweet to ponder these glorious promises. How they awaken new desires, and vibrate chords that seemed dead, so that we can weep with those that weep, and feel the pang of cold and hunger in the heart of the orphan, and the fatherless, and pray unceasingly for the prosperity of Zion, that her light may be as a city set on a hill, and beautiful for situation.

Your sister,

MARTHA J. DER.

CLAIRETTE, Texas, March 21, 1901.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I greatly enjoy reading your precious paper; I have been reading Baptist papers for a number of years, but never found one that exactly suited me until you sent me a couple of copies of your paper along with "Feast of Fat Things," which is properly named. I think Elder S. N. Stephens sent in my subscription. I have had a hard struggle for life here among our limited predestinarians; I felt for awhile to be alone in my section of country, and it was said they would exclude me if I still held to that doctrine. That only encouraged me to be firm and give God all the glory and power. I am not a preacher, and thought to defend my position through the papers, and brother J. H. Fisher published one, which raised a terrible howl. I said God's predestination and foreknowledge were synonymous. He being a Sovereign, what he saw was sure to come to pass as he saw it. I must say our Baptists are improving on that doctrine, they seem to turn their attention against the "can't help its.". I tell them to do all the good they can, I have no objections. They are continually lamenting over their sinfulness. I ask them, Why they do not do better? I tell them I am a poor old sinner, and "can't help it." I would like to if I could; if ever saved it will be by the mercy and grace of God. The older I get, the more dependent I feel. Brethren, cannot some of you visit our country, who hold to the original doctrine of God our Savior? We have some precious brethren here, I consider sound.

Yours in hope,

W. H. CHANEY.

NOANK, Conn., Feb. 4, 1901.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the kindness of friends I have enjoyed reading your paper for the past three or four years, but my father said if another subscriber would be any encouragement he thought we ought to do our part towards continuing such a publication, for it has been to us like springs of water in a dry and thirsty land, and the testimonies coming from so many of our Father's household make the paper almost a prayer meeting, much better than any prayer meeting we have the privilege of attending. Inclosed please find two dollars.

Respectfully yours,

EVA ASHBEY.

STARKE, Fla., Feb. 19, 1901.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR SIR:—Again I write at the request of our aged brother, Ira Phelps. He desires me to express his sincere thanks for the aid he has received. He has received eighteen dollars, accompanied with tender words of sympathy, for which he would like you to publish his thanks, so those who helped him may know of his appreciation. May our Father in heaven reward the kindness shown this aged saint.

E. M. THOMAS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1901.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

CALL TO THE WORK OF THE GOSPEL MINISTRY.

BROTHER L. V. Moon, of Covington, Ga., some time since wrote us, asking for some instruction upon the ministry of the word, saying that he had felt that he was called to that work. He did not say just what was in his mind, but we suppose that the evidences of such a call, and the special duty of those called, was what was in his mind. We do not doubt that when any one is called of God to this work, or to any other work in the kingdom of Christ, there will be special exercises of mind regarding that work. We do not see how it could be otherwise; it is a good work, and certainly most solemn; it is to publish the name of the Lord, and to ascribe greatness unto him; it is to feed the hungry, and comfort the troubled, and bind up the broken-hearted, and to give light to them that sit in darkness, and to turn the children of God from error and every false way. No one can fully realize the importance of all this, and fail to have much hesitation, and many troubled thoughts concerning it. Yet the work will be borne in upon the mind, and he that is called will not be able to withhold the testimony given him of God. There will also be a deep anxiety for the welfare of the cause of God, and for the upbuilding of his people in the most holy faith; the interests of Zion will be much in the heart of all such; the word of the Lord will be as fire shut up in the bones, and he will long to speak that his soul may be refreshed, yet he will feel entirely unworthy and unfitted to the work. So great will it appear, and so unfit will he appear to himself, that there will be deeply solemn questionings as to whether after all he be not deceived in the evidence that he is called to the work. He will not seek the office of a bishop or pastor, but will feel that it is a good work indeed, for which he is entirely unfitted; he will not feel like urging himself forward, being confident that if indeed he is thus called and qualified, the Lord will surely open the way before him; he will feel sure that there is no danger that his gift will fail to make room for itself, of whatever kind it is; he will be more intent upon doing what now is before him with his might, than in looking for more and wider fields in the future; he will be more astonished that his brethren, the children of God, should think of him in that way, than that any one should question his call to the work. When led by the Spirit of God, he will wait upon the openings of the providence of God, and upon the leadings of that Spirit in the minds and hearts of the people of God. Sometimes in his thoughts he will deem it impossible that he can have been called to this work, because he cannot discern in himself a single qualification for it, yet he will at times believe that if called, the Lord will qualify him. Among other things he will have a great anxiety to know what the word of the Lord is; his mind will turn to the Scriptures, and he will feel to study them care-

fully; he is to preach the word of the Lord, and he will realize that the word of the Lord is contained and revealed in the Scriptures; there will be borne in upon his mind the feeling that is expressed in the word itself, "To the law, and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, there is no light in them." It seems sure from scriptural testimony that if the mind be not led with great anxiety into a desire to understand the Scriptures, there is little evidence of a call to preach the word. It will be a regret to such an one when he finds any lack of zeal in the reading of the word of the Lord, yet such an one will realize that with all the reading that he may do, he cannot grow in knowledge of their true spiritual import, unless the work of the Lord be also in his own heart, opening the Scriptures to his understanding, and such as are thus called will feel deeply their lack of understanding, and with earnest desire will seek for more light. If we know anything about the matter by experience, these are some of the things which will be felt in the heart of those called to the ministry. And especially such an one will deeply realize the disparity between a holy God and himself, and will go with fear and trembling along the path marked out for him to tread; he will feel constantly the need of divine guidance and support; he will feel that he is the Lord's, and the servant of the church for the Lord's sake; he will feel to be a servant, and not a lord over God's heritage; he will love the people of God, and seek their welfare, and not his own; he will not go forth for filthy lucre's sake, but because he cares for the flock of God; he will greatly desire to be an ensample to the flock, and he will deeply deplore the stumblings and haltings of which he is guilty; he will thus realize the need of forgiveness of God, and forbearance from his brethren. While there will be a burning desire to speak in the name of the Lord, yet he will feel his inability more than any one else, and will not feel like calling himself a preacher, or a minister of the word, or a pastor, or bishop; he will shrink from all notoriety, and from all praise of men; his best work in the ministry will seem so poor to him that he will shrink from saying anything about it, and will surely feel that he must not be forward, lest he run without being sent.

The qualifications named by Paul to Timothy are not such as he can see that he possesses, but on the contrary he will feel that he greatly lacks them all. These qualifications he must possess, but he is not the judge of them, the spiritual among the Lord's people will see them if they are his, and will know to what work the Lord has called him. And lastly, the best evidence that any one is called of God to the ministry, is that the Lord has conferred upon him a ministerial gift. The best evidence that one is called to do any work, is that he does that work. If a man does preach the gospel, it is full evidence that the Lord has called him to that work, and as said before, if thus called his gift will find its place, it will make room for itself. Our judgment is that any one who desires to speak in the name of the Lord, has a right to do so in all proper times and places, but that all ought to wait for the decision of the church as to what that gift may be. If any one is called and qualified for this or any other work, they will surely find their place. The Lord does not call in vain, he will not leave his people to be blind with regard to what he has done.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

DANIEL III. 25.

"He answered and said, "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

Not only to give us an instance of the mighty power and constant faithfulness of the God of the Hebrews, in the deliverance of his confiding people from the decrees of kings, from the violence of fire, from the mouths of lions, and from the jaws of death, were the records made, in the book of the prophet Daniel, which have excited the admiration of the saints in all subsequent ages, but, as we conceive, they were also intended to set forth in metaphor, the important doctrine of the vital union of Christ and his church, and to prefigure what was in the counsel and purpose of God to be more fully developed in the fullness of the dispensation of times.

In replying to the inquiry of our dear brother Montgomery, we might say much in regard to the personal history of the three Hebrew children who were cast into the excessively heated furnace by order of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and draw from their faith and confidence in God, and their fidelity under the most trying circumstances, lessons of great importance to the tried family of God, in all after ages. The inspired writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, in the eleventh chapter, refers to this display of God's power and providence, as an example of the invincible power of the faith of God's elect, and classes it among numerous other signal displays of what God hath wrought in days of old, in the defense of his own cause and people.

But we propose briefly to trace in this article what we regard as the figurative import of the subject, and submit such views as we have to the superior judgment of brother Montgomery, and of all who may read.

These three Hebrews or Jews we regard as emblematic of the election of grace, under three dispensations of time, namely, from Adam to Moses, from Moses to the coming of Christ, and from the advent of Christ, or the setting up of his kingdom, throughout the gospel dispensation to the end of the world. While Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon, may represent the man of sin, the son of perdition, or rather the spirit which rules and presides over the kingdom of darkness, Babylon, the dominion of this king, with its numerous provinces, is used in Revelation as figurative of anti-Christ, as seated on the scarlet colored beast. At least Babylon will truly represent a place of captivity and bondage to the people of God who are Jews spiritually, and whose circumcision is not outward in the flesh, but in the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God. "For if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Compare this application of the figure under consideration, with what is signified by the three illustrious patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as embodying all the chosen people of God; or what Moses saw displayed in the bush which was, like the three Hebrews, enveloped in the fiery element and yet not consumed, because the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob dwelt with them in the burning bush, as the form of the fourth dwelt with the Hebrews in the burning fiery furnace. These, with many other striking figures of the Old Testament, exhibit what has ever been witnessed in all ages of the world, namely, that God has chosen his people in a furnace of affliction, and that he is

present always with them in all their afflictions to preserve and to deliver them.

In the New Testament we have also substantially the same presentation, in the vision which Peter saw of the sheet which contained the variety of four-footed beasts, and creeping things, which God had cleansed, and which in that case were used to signify to Peter that God had a redeemed, cleansed people in all the kingdoms, and in all the tribes of earth. And as this sheet was at first let down from heaven with all of its contents, so the provisions of grace and salvation contained all the elect of God, before any manifestation was ever made to men on earth, and as the sheet was three times displayed, so the three dispensations of time signified have witnessed the revelations of the bride, the Lamb's wife, coming down from God out of heaven, and being manifested on the earth as Christ's kingdom, which is not of this world, and which was prepared for the saints before the foundation of the world. And after the third manifestation of the sheet with the same cleansed contents, it was also received together up into heaven, nothing having been added nor aught diminished from what the sheet actually contained when first let down, so we may learn that all the church of God was chosen and sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and ultimately, in the fullness of the dispensation of times, all called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began; and being all saved and called, and brought experimentally into the faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, all are ultimately received up into heaven, as the place of their origin.

The manner in which God's people are subjected to the fiery trials which Peter says are for the trial of their faith, is well illustrated in the case of the three Hebrews. Their religion and their faith essentially differ from the religion and faith of the world, and their God is quite as distinct from the gods of this world. And while all others can accommodate themselves and their religion to suit the times and fashions of the world, God's people have always been, now are, and forever will be, a peculiar people. They shall dwell alone, (religiously) and shall not be reckoned with the nations. Because they are the sons of God, the world knows them not, for the world knew not their divine Lord and Master.

Yet unknown though they are by the world, all the religion of the world is originated, planned and designed so as to oppose them. In the getting up of old Nebuchadnezzar's religious excitement, we trace the very elements of the religious excitements which now prevail in modern anti-Christ. First a god, composed of gold, is set up and dedicated, its splendor and cost are well calculated to fascinate the worshipers of mammon, and secure the adoration of the lovers of the precious metal, who bow down before it, and ascribe to it a power to control the destiny of men, as gold and silver are deified by will-worshipers at the present time, who ascribe to such corruptible things the power of securing the salvation of the world. Then to make the golden idol still more popular with the deluded sons of men, every possible appeal is made to their carnal senses. The princes and the nobility, the aristocracy and the rulers of darkness of this world, are called together to lend their aid and

influence to the magnificence of the golden deity. All manner of musical instruments which have charms for human or carnal ears, are put in requisition to lend attractions to the scene, and for all those for whom neither the image nor the music have sufficient power to charm, the burning fiery furnace is prepared in order to awe into submission all who have conscientious scruples, and a death warrant is prepared for all dissenters, and the object is the extermination from the earth of all who will not worship the beast or its image. How well our Arminian neighbors have copied the type presented in our text, will be seen by observing the basis of their modern idolatry to be gold, or its equivalent. Money is called for and collected for the professed and undisguised object of saving souls from everlasting perdition. The image assumes the imposing form of a Mission Society, a Tract or a Bible Society, or a combination of all these humanly invented societies as so many heads or horns to the image. The great men of this world, the rich, the learned and the popular, are courted, and the most magnificent and costly temples are built and decorated with all that can charm the carnal eye. Worldly honor, fame and pecuniary emoluments are offered, and then if the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery and dulcimer, are deemed too antiquated for the progressive age, the more modern instruments of organs, bells, fiddles, and such other instruments as are used at the circus and theatre, for attracting the admiration of the thoughtless and the vain, are added.

But with all the attractions of gaudy temples, golden idols, popular and fashionable devotees, musical instruments, foppish preachers, and man-pleasing preaching, modern anti-Christ cannot well do without a large quantity of terror. The furnace must be heated, and the dissenter admonished of his doom if he still refuses to comply with the terms of peace. Fall down and worship the image, and you shall be caressed, but refuse to do so at your peril. Fire and brimstone is lavishly dealt out by modern wire-pullers, and every appeal is made to terrify into compliance the timid and the weak; but where these threats of future wrath fail to intimidate, the rulers of the darkness of this world in rage command that their furnace be heated at least seven times hotter than it is wont to be heated, and the mightiest energies of all the Babylonish agents are commissioned to cast the Hebrews, or those who trust in the living God, into the midst of the burning furnace. To let loose their slanders, reproaches, persecutions, ridicule and proscription upon all who question the real deity of their golden idols.

But thus far all the engines of destruction prepared by the powers of darkness for the extinction of the church of God, have failed, utterly failed, because God is in the midst of his Zion, therefore she shall not be moved, her God will help her, and that right early. He is in the midst of his little flock, and where two or three, as in the case of the Hebrews, are gathered together in Christ's name, though it be in the midst of a burning fiery furnace, there is he also in their midst, as he was in the midst of the three Hebrews in their fiery trial.

Before we close, we will remark that the king of Babylon is never to be trusted, his edicts commanding his subjects throughout the provinces of his vast empire to worship the God of the Jews, betrayed the same ignorance and murderous propensity as that commanding them to worship his image. All that the mon-

archs or governments of the earth are required to do for the church of God, is to let her alone. The God whom we serve is able to sustain his own cause, and to deliver his children out of the hand of the kings and potentates of the earth who shall dare to molest them.

How this heathen king knew that the form of the fourth whom he saw, was like the Son of God, we shall not attempt to explain, only that he was made to see and confess that there was a power there displayed far beyond what any being inferior to the Son of God could display, and like Balaam, he was obliged to speak the words which God put in his mouth.

One word more. These men of God are seen by their persecutors walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt. This has astonished the enemies of God's people in all ages; the bush is all on fire, but it is not consumed. The fire of opposition rages, and its wrathful flames envelop the saints, but still they walk on at large; the cords by which they were bound hand and foot are burnt off, but they have no hurt, their hair is not singed, nor has the smell of fire attached to them. Their enemies are consumed, but they are delivered and promoted, and show in the sequel of their trial what all the saints of God must witness, that "All things do work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., July 15, 1858.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. T. Rowe, at the residence of the bride's parents, Butler, Md., Nov. 6th, 1900, C. N. Wyatt, of Crisfield, Md., and Miss Louise Bond, of Baltimore Co., Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

BROTHER BEEBE:—We have just returned from laying at rest the remains of our son, **Dr. R. R. Leonard.** He passed away into his eternal rest the 16th inst., about 8 o'clock p. m. His disease was pleuro pneumonia. The whole of both lungs were involved. I was absent at the time he was taken sick, attending the funeral of my brother, Wm. H. Leonard. On my return I saw at once there was no hope. He passed away very quietly. I firmly believe he had been made alive. He has been at home three years with us. I hope to be able to write you soon. We have a sad home; a good man has fallen.

D. M. LEONARD.

BROOME CENTER, N. Y., March 20, 1901.

Benjamin Franklin Clevenger was born June 11th, 1839, and departed this life Feb. 27th, 1900, aged 60 years, 8 months and 16 days. He was united in marriage to Catharine Ann Determan, Feb. 6th, 1862. This union was blessed with six children, three sons and three daughters, three of whom survive him. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church called Thompson, near Kalida, Ohio, in the month of September, 1895, and lived an honored member until called home to his reward. He leaves a wife, three children, and many relatives and friends, to mourn their loss.

Funeral services were held at his late residence, March 1st, conducted by the writer.

May God comfort those who mourn for him, and enable us all to cherish his virtues, and emulate his example, is our prayer.

ADAM F. DOVE.

DIED—On Wednesday, March 13th, 1901, at her late residence in Smyrna, Del., **Mrs. Sarah Boyd,** aged 80 years and 21 days. Sister Boyd has for many years been one of the mothers in Israel. She was baptized in the fellowship of Bryn Zion Church, July 3d, 1875, since which time she has resided in the vicinity, and her home has been a place of hospitality, and her place in the church in every respect promptly and faithfully filled. She has had the sympathies of a kind and devoted husband fully with her in all the privileges and obligations of her church membership. Now he and a number of children are left to mourn an irreparable loss.

She was taken with pneumonia on the 29th of last November, and this was followed after some time with paralysis, but whether in health or in sickness and suffering, her faith was unwavering, and her hope strong and sustaining. She never seemed to encounter any misgivings. The family and the community, and also the church, have all sustained what they feel to be a great loss. But she had faithfully filled her mission, and borne the heat and burden of the

day. It was well that she should be released from further toiling. The family and friends should consider what they have had, and how long they have been blessed, rather than what they have lost. I feel to place her in that company who are without fault before the throne of God. May grace be with the family.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

A. W. Crooks departed this life on Feb. 16th, 1901, by accidental drowning in the Santiam River, in trying to get to higher and a safer place to where his sister lived. There was a sudden rise in the river, causing a flood, and by some means he was drowned. He lived by himself for many years, and was a bachelor 56 years, 5 months and 16 days old. Almost a native of Oregon, coming from Illinois to Missouri with the family, and on to Oregon, in 1848. He was a son of J. T. Crooks, a life-long Baptist, but he was not a member of any Baptist church, but was a firm believer in salvation by grace as preached by them, and always delighted to hear the doctrine preached in its purity. He was a constant reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and they were a comfort and consolation to him. He will be missed here, as he was well known by Baptists and other friends. He was buried beside his father and mother, in the Miller burying-ground. He leaves four brothers and two sisters to mourn their loss. May God in his goodness and mercy guide, guard and direct us on our way to that haven of eternal rest, where sighing and sorrow shall be no more, is the prayer of an unworthy worm of the dust,

S. T. CROOKS.

ALBANY, Oregon, Feb. 26, 1901.

DIED—At the home of his son, in Kaufman Co., near Stubbs, **Thomas Jefferson Tenery,** aged 87 years. He was born in Giles Co., Tenn., April 22, 1814, and lived there until twenty-one years old, then moved to Missouri, resided two years, and came to Navarro Co., Texas, where he and Nancy Cooke were married, over sixty years ago, since which time he has lived with his son, in Ellis Co., near Italy, until two months before he passed away he moved with his son to Kaufman Co. He and his wife were members of the Primitive Baptist Church since their early married-life, and he was a subscriber to the SIGNS for over fifty years. He leaves to mourn his death three sons, fourteen grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren, besides a host of friends and relatives, with the church, which feels the loss of one of its faithful members. He died as he lived, trusting in the Lord. He prayed a few hours before he died that he might die as one going to sleep, and suffer no pain, and he died as he prayed his Maker, to take him falling asleep.

His remains were laid by his departed wife's, in the Italy Cemetery, to await the resurrection of the blessed.

A granddaughter, DELLA HAWES.

DIED—At her home in Logan Co., Ky., Jan. 31st, 1901, after a short but painful illness, congestion of the liver, **Mrs. Martha James Crewdson.** She was born in Logan Co., Ky., in 1850. She was a daughter of George and F. A. Herndon, and sister of the late Elder T. C. Herndon. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church in July, 1874, and was a consistent member till called up higher. In 1876 she married Joseph Crewdson, who survives her. She talked freely about death, which had no terrors for her, but regretted to leave her husband alone. Some one said, "Poor Aunt Mattie has to suffer so much," but she replied, "I am not poor when Jesus is with me." Truly "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." She was a much loved sister of the writer, but my loss is her eternal gain.

MRS. E. C. PHELPS.

HOPKINSVILLE, Ky.

DIED—March 6th, 1901, my beloved brother, **David H. Heckard,** aged 61 years, at Astoria, Oregon, from a complication of diseases. His sickness was long, and his suffering very great, from which he prayed to the Lord to take him, but would always add, "Thy will, O Lord, not mine, be done." My brother was not a member of the church, but from the evidence he gave me on his death-bed, I feel such hopeful assurance that he was one of the redeemed of the Lord, and that he died in the triumphs of a living faith. He loved the gospel of Christ, and believed that salvation was by grace, and that Christ and him crucified is a poor sinner's only hope, and in him he put all his trust. Deceased leaves three sons, one sister, and a number of more distant relatives. His beloved companion, his only daughter and one son have gone before him to that bourne from which no traveler returns.

His remains were interred in the Lewis and Clark's cemetery, after a short service, to await the resurrection of the just. I have lost a dear, true friend in the death of my loving brother, and I shall miss him very much, but do not sorrow as those which have no hope, for I feel that my earthly loss was his eternal gain.

MRS. S. L. HECKARD STUART.

ASTORIA, Oregon, March 18, 1901.

OUR dear father, **Zedekiah Truitt,** died at his home in Snow Hill, Md., Dec. 22d, 1900, after a short but painful illness, congestion of the lungs. He was born Jan. 20th, 1829, was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church twenty-six years ago, and remained a steadfast member up to the time of his death. For several years he has held the office of deacon, from which place he will be missed. He leaves a widow, four children and a number of grandchildren, to mourn his death.

Elders Francis and Poulson were with us on the day of burial, and spoke words of comfort, after which his remains were interred in the Baptist cemetery, in

Snow Hill. There was a large number of relatives and friends to pay their last tribute of respect to the deceased. May the Lord comfort us in our sad affliction.

By his daughters.

SALISBURY, Md., March 6, 1901.

DIED—At the residence of her son, at Bound Brook, N. J., on Thursday afternoon, March 7th, 1901, **Mrs. Catherine L. Fisher**, aged 84 years and 3 months. There was no special disease, but death came as the end of some years of gradual weakening from old age. The deceased was the daughter of William and Ealinor Lane Stout, the latter of whom was for more than sixty years a member of the church at Hopewell, dying in August, 1871. The dear sister whose death we are now recording became a member of the church at Hopewell in the sixteenth year of her age, thus having at the time of her death been a member for more than sixty-eight years. She was baptized by Elder Boggs, who was then pastor of this church. We have heard her speak of that time repeatedly. She was baptized in October, and on the occasion of the first communion afterward in November, she was sixteen years of age. From what we can learn we believe that no other person has been a member of this church since its organization as many years as was the case with her.

It is difficult for us to say what we would like to say concerning the life of the aged believer who has gone from us. It is much when it can be said of any one that he or she has adorned the profession which they have made. This can be said of her ever since she became a member. She was a woman highly favored of the Lord in many ways. None ever knew her but to esteem and love her. She possessed by nature decision and strength of character, and these were manifested in the profession of her faith. She was faithful to her faith, and to the church of which she was a member. Her place in the assemblies of the church was not vacant unless she was hindered by circumstances which she could not control. She possessed intelligence of a high order, and was well read, and able to clearly state her faith, and the reason for the hope which was hers. The grace of God was magnified in all her life at home and abroad. All who knew her felt that she was the friend of all. In her death one of the pillars of the church has been removed. We have known her intimately for the past five years. Our conversations have been always much upon the things which pertain to salvation. Her hope in Christ was clear and steadfast. Yet none ever had a more lowly opinion of themselves than she. A sinner saved by grace was the burden at all times of her testimony. During the last few months of her life she felt that the end was near, yet spoke with composure of the great change. She repeatedly sent messages to the church by letter, and by word of mouth. In the last days as she felt that her strength was failing fast she said many times, "Dear Lord, how long?" On Friday before the end came, she evidently thought that the end was at hand, and said, "Into thy hand I commit my spirit, and all my dear children into thy care." The end was peaceful, though an expression of weariness lingered on her countenance, yet there was an expression of peace. We doubt not that all was peace with her. Words might be multiplied, but after all how can the things which pertain to the life and death of a believer be expressed? At our best our words falter. The church at Hopewell feel that their loss has been great indeed. Neighbors and friends all sorrow for one who was to them all a friend.

The funeral service was held at the house of worship at Hopewell, where for so many years she loved best of all to be, on Monday, March 11th. Hymn 1278 (Beebe's Collection) was read, with the Scriptures found in Job xiv. 1–14, and in Psalm xxiii., and the closing verses of 1 Cor. xv. The text used was John xi. 4. Afterwards the body was conveyed to place of burial, several miles away, and laid to rest awaiting the promised resurrection, which was to her for many years a source of joyous hope. A brother and sister and six children survive her; they all loved and cared for her most faithfully and tenderly in her declining years. They sorrow not as those who have no hope, they have full assurance that for her to die was gain. For ourself, we feel that we have lost a dear and valued friend. We would close with the expression of the desire that all who are bereaved might find the only source of all true comfort, and be enabled to rest in the same blessed hope that strengthened the loved one gone, for so many years.

ALSO,

DIED—At her late residence, in Carrol Co., Md., **Mrs. Lou. J. Fite**, formerly Odell, wife of John Fite, aged 71 years and 6 months. She was called away Feb. 10th, 1901. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Patapsco Church, Carrol Co., Md., on the fifth Sunday in September, 1860, by Elder Kidwell, of Virginia, who was then serving that church occasionally. Elder J. T. Rowe, her pastor, conducted the funeral service on the 12th, and spoke from 1 Cor. xv. 35–58. We are informed that although the day was cold, a very large attendance of friends were present, testifying to the universal esteem in which she was held. Her pastor writes us that she had become very dear to him as one who loved the truth, and was always interested in the cause of her Savior, so that he was always glad to preach the word to her. We can well understand why brother Rowe should feel as he does, for she was for many years dear to us for the truth's sake. We had known her intimately for more than thirty-two years. She has been a steadfast friend to us in all the years since we first met. As brother Rowe says, it was good to preach the word in her presence. Many times we filled our appointments at

Patapsco, with but a half dozen present, yet we never could see that her interest and zeal abated in the least, nor that she ever felt discouraged in the meetings. We could never meet her that Jesus and his salvation was not her theme. It always seemed that she lived above the world far more than is given to most. The grace of God was manifest in her not only because of the sacrifices which she made for the cause, but in her daily life, with all its conflicts and trials. In all the years of our acquaintance we never heard a murmuring word from her lips. She greatly magnified the grace of God. Her sense of unworthiness, and knowledge of the plague of her own heart, was deep. In all that came to her as a duty, "She hath done what she could," might well be said of her. Those who knew her best loved her most. More could not be said of any one. She leaves a husband, sister and many relatives, who sorrow not as those who have no hope. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." C.

Renattis T. Hastings, oldest son of Elder Lenord Hastings, was born June 2d, 1817, and departed this life Jan. 6th, 1901, aged 83 years, 7 months and 4 days. He was born in Sussex Co., Del., where he lived until he was married. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Little Creek Old School Baptist Church, in June, 1837, and was married to Nancy Hastings a short time after he united with the church, and moved to Salisbury, Md., and was received into the Salisbury Church by letter, and was a faithful member until his death. His wife became a member of the Salisbury Church too, and continued steadfast in the faith of God's elect until her pilgrimage on earth was ended, which was about nine years ago. About 1854 they moved to Somerset Co., Md., where they spent the remainder of their days. After that time they did not have an opportunity to meet with the brethren very often, but when by the will of providence they were permitted to meet with them, they esteemed it a great privilege. It has been my privilege in the past ten years to visit brother Hastings many times, and while his mortal frame was old and feeble, the inner or spiritual man seemed to grow stronger. His conversation was chiefly on spiritual things, in telling what the Lord had done for him in bringing him up out of an horrible pit, and miry clay, and placing his feet upon a rock, and putting a new song in his mouth, even praise to his holy name. He was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and they were of great comfort to him, as they set forth the sound doctrine of Christ our Savior. He was taken with "la grippe," and suffered with it for two weeks, and then fell asleep to awake in the likeness of his blessed Redeemer. They said when he was asked how he felt about dying, he said he was willing to go.

The funeral services were held in the New Light Baptist meeting-house, at Marion station, Md., the town in which he resided. There was a large attendance. He leaves one brother, two sons, three daughters, and a number of grandchildren, and many other relatives and friends to mourn their loss, but we do not sorrow as those that have no hope, for we feel that he has gone from these low grounds of sorrow, to be forever with the Lord.

JOHN L. HASTINGS.

DELMAR, Del.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

BROTHER Martin D. Fisher having changed his address from Valley Stream, N. Y., to Irving Place, near Chichester Ave., Jamaica, N. Y., desires his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

CUMMINSVILLE, Neb., March 12, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER:—I wish you would say through the SIGNS that I have changed my address from Emerson, Neb., to Cumminsville, Neb. I am with sister Anna B. Harper. We have had five good meetings. I like the country first rate.

Your brother, I hope, in Christ,

J. S. HAM.

PULASKI CITY, Va., March 13, 1901.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—Please change the address of my paper from Pulaski City, Va., to Luray, Va. I remove to Luray next week, and if you will, you might state in the SIGNS that hereafter my address will be Luray Va., and I extend a public invitation to traveling brethren to visit me in passing, and make my house their home.

Your unworthy brother,

SAM. N. HURST.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday, at the Hall,

226 West 58th Street,

10:30 A. M. **3 P. M.**

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We are expecting, the Lord willing, to hold a yearly or kind of anniversary celebration in Wilmington, as we have done for three years past, on the second Sunday in April, at our meeting-house, Tenth and King Sts., commencing Saturday, 2 p. m., and all day Sunday. We hope to have a good delegation from the churches that are within reach.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Pastor.

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G. BEEBE'S SON.

Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

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By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition, which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at the following rates, viz: a single copy for 10 cents; 12 copies for $1.00; 25 copies for $2.00; 50 copies for $3.00; 100 copies for $5.00. Address,

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 69. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1901. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SCIENCE AND PREDESTINATION.

It is the prevailing opinion that the doctrine of predestination is held only by the ignorant class of men, and that the mere elements of an education are sufficient to free one from the influence of such a baleful, absurd and unreasonable doctrine. If there is any just ground for this opinion, it can be shown that scientific truth is incompatible with the doctrine of decree, and also that no well educated person has ever believed the doctrine of predestination.

It is a well known axiom of logic that all truth harmonizes; now if it can be shown that scientific truth harmonizes with the doctrine of decree, then it must be conceded from the standpoint of science, that the doctrine of decree is true. It can not only be shown that science and decree are in perfect harmony, but it can be shown that decree is at the foundation of science, and that without decree, science could not exist.

If two times five were ten to-day, but might have been eight yesterday, might be twelve to-morrow, how could there be any possibility of the science of arithmetic? But two times five are ten to-day, two times five were ten yesterday, and two times five will be ten forever. It is this very fixedness of the relation of numbers that renders the science of arithmetic a possibility. This fixedness argues decree. So then it appears that arithmetic, the most common and elementary of all the sciences, is based upon decree, and that without decree it could not exist.

The elementary theorems of algebra, such as, The square of the sum of two quantities is equal to the square of the first plus twice the product of the first by the second plus the square of the second, and "The difference of the same powers of two quantities is always divisible by the difference of the quantities," the Binomial theorem, with its wonderful possibilities and applications, together with all the other data which form the science of algebra, are fixed and unchangeable; these things were also true before the science of algebra was evolved, they were true before there was a human mind to discover and state them.

"The sum of all the angles of a triangle is equal to two right angles," is an elementary proposition of geometry.

How long has this proposition been true? When has it ever undergone a change? When will it ever change? It was true before Euclid, before Pythagoras, before Greece, Rome, Egypt or Babylon, before Adam, before the world. The six ratios of trigonometrical functions, which lie at the bottom of the science of trigonometry, are forever and unchangeably true. All the principles that go to make up the sciences of analytics and calculus, are no exception to the rule. So then in the realm of mathematics, from the most fundamental operation in arithmetic, to the most abstruse problem in the differential calculus, all depends upon the permanent fixedness of principles, and this fixedness is the result of decree.

Leaving the abstract domain of mathematics, and coming into the more concrete natural sciences, the same fixedness of principles confronts us. What seems to be more at random than a falling body? Yet a falling body is so completely under the control of law, that although its velocity changes with every instant of time, if its time of falling be known, its velocity for any second may be computed. If the distance fallen be known, the time of falling may be readily found. The laws of falling bodies might be stated here, but space does not justify it. The swaying of the pendulum, that lazily swings to and fro in the old clock on the wall, is most accurately regulated by law; if this were not so, how could it be utilized to regulate the motion of the clock? The laws of the pendulum are such, that if the length of the pendulum is known, the time of vibration may be found, and *vice versa.*

The freezing and boiling points are marked on the thermometer; if water should freeze at one temperature to-day and at another to-morrow, this could not be done. If water should boil at one degree of heat to-day and at another to-morrow, how completely would the common industries of life be thrown into utter confusion. Experiment has revealed the laws of freezing and boiling points of liquids, also the fusing and solidifying points of metals. Each liquid has its respective boiling and freezing points, and these points remain constant under the same pressure.

The production, velocity, reflection, loudness and pitch of sound, are all controlled by law. If this were not so, there could be no science of music, either vocal or instrumental. The pitch of a tone of the violin or piano depends upon the length, diameter, tension, and the density of the material of the string. The pitch varies inversely as the length of the string; it varies inversely as the diameter; it varies directly as the square root of the tension, and inversely as the density of the material composing the string. These are the laws governing sound produced by the vibration of a string. The tones of the organ are produced by a vibrating current of air, and are controlled by laws similar to those governing sound produced by the vibrating string. Many more laws dominating in the realm of sound, might be given, but these are sufficient to show that in every sound, from the murmur of the summer breeze to the roar of the terrific hurricane, from the pattering of the rain drop to the booming of the ocean billows, from the scream of the hawk to the song of the nightingale, from the solo voice to the full chorus or the great orchestra, law transmits, modulates and governs all.

Recent discoveries have ascertained that electricity, that most subtle, mysterious and wonderful of all nature's forces, is controlled by law, in all its op-

erations. A number of these laws have been stated, and may be found in any recent treatise on electricity.

Nowhere in the operations of nature is God's power and presence so strikingly exemplified in little things, as in chemical action. The law of definite weight, which lies at the foundation of the science of chemistry, is one of the most wonderful of all the laws of nature. The law stated is as follows: "When two elements unite with each other they always unite in a fixed definite ratio by weight." As an illustration of this law, iron and sulphur unite to form iron-sulfid; in this reaction twenty-one ounces of iron will always unite with just twelve ounces of sulphur; if we should try to make twenty-two ounces of iron unite with twelve ounces of sulphur, we would have one ounce of iron left, and if we were to try to make thirteen ounces of sulphur unite with twenty-one ounces of iron, we would have one ounce of sulphur left free. In the union of hydrogen and oxygen to form water, one atom of oxygen always invariably selects two atoms of hydrogen; this is not only true in the union of hydrogen and oxygen, but the same law holds true in all chemical combinations; each element has its displacing power, that is, one of its atoms always selects a certain number of atoms of the element with which it unites. Here we see law controlling the very atoms of matter and regulating with unerring accuracy chemical affinity and all chemical reaction. The law of conservation of matter exemplifies the truth of the Scripture which says that "What the Lord does shall be forever, nothing can be put to it, and nothing can be taken from it." This law stated is as follows: "The sum of the weights of the substances before the change, is exactly equal to the sum of the weights of the new substances after the change." This proves that in chemical changes, although new substances are formed, that no matter has been created and none has been destroyed. Is it not true indeed that God hath set his ordinances in the earth, that his decrees do not only govern the planets in their orbits, but places the atoms in a chemical compound? Where could there be a science of botany, or of zoology, if everything did not bring forth after its kind? The fundamental principle of both these sciences is found in the law that everything brings forth after his kind; this law was established from the beginning, and continues universally true. Even if the Darwinian theory of the origin of species should be true, this law would neither be contradicted nor violated thereby. All those lines of demarkation which divide the animal and vegetable kingdoms into subkingdoms, orders, genera and species, remain permanent, and these could not remain so without law; the data for these sciences depend upon law, and law depends upon decree.

When the David said, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork," he spoke the very glory and embodiment of the science of astronomy. The chief glory of this science is the law of universal gravitation: "*Every particle of matter in the universe attracts every other particle with a force that varies directly as the product of the mass, and inversely as the square of the distance between them.*" This great law not only lies at the bottom of the science of astronomy, but it upholds, balances and sustains the universe; it is by this law that God hung the earth upon nothing; this law is the word of God's power, by which he upholds all his universe; this law is the bands of Orion that

cannot be loosed, and the sweet influence of the Pleiades, that cannot be stayed. This law first broke up the chaotic mass of nebula that once filled the space now occupied by the solar system, and molded it into sun, moons and planets. This law gathered fragments into worlds, worlds into systems, and systems into a universe. It guides the huge planet that sweeps through the regions of space, and balances the mote that floats in the sunbeam; it suspends the water dust that composes the clouds in mid air, and chains the mighty ocean to his destined bed. Then what is this permanent, powerful, instantaneous, universal law, but the presence, power and decree of the Almighty God, the Creator, upholder and disposer of this universe?

Kepler's laws of planetary motion might be mentioned in connection with the science of astronomy, as further exemplifying God's decrees in the heavens, but it appears entirely unnecessary to do so; enough has been cited to convince the pious that science is in harmony with decree, that it depends upon decree, and that without decree science could not exist. Now where is the disputer of this world? Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? The man who has not seen predestination in science, has not seen the soul of science. The man who would charge the belief of predestination to ignorance, is himself ignorant both of the knowledge of God and in those things of nature wherein he professes to be learned.

Some one may say that it is true that law reigns in those things which have been referred to, but man is an intelligence, and is not subject to such mechanical laws. To this objection I answer, first, that logic and psychology are recognized sciences, not natural sciences, but called mental sciences; sciences of mind, and not of matter. Since fixed and uniform operations as established by natural law, must furnish data for natural science, fixed operations established by law, must furnish data for mental sciences. Second, that the Scripture ascribes the operations of the mind to law. Does not the inspired writer say, I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind? (Romans vii. 23.) Here he speaks of the law of the mind and the law in his members; so that to deny that the mind and emotions of the human constitution are operated by law, is to deny the written word of God, also to ignore those conscious mental phenomena, which every man is subject to. To the above objection I would answer in the third place, that the wickedness and depravity of the human constitution are as universal, permanent and perpetual, as any of the laws or operations of nature; where is there a single exception? Where was there ever a single exception in the development of the human family? Induction is one of the chief methods of scientific investigation and reasoning; it is the process of reasoning from particular examples to general laws. Most of the theorems of mathematics have been discovered and proved by the method of induction. The principle of reasoning is, that if a certain thing is found to hold good in a number of cases, it is assumed that it will hold good for the next case, and then that it will hold good for any case; thus a general truth is discovered and proved from particular examples. Try the method of induction in the case of the depravity of the human family; it can be shown by example that this man is a sinner, and that that man is a sinner, and that the third man, and the fourth man, and the fifth man each is a sinner, and then it is

a truth exemplified among all people in all places and at all times, that all men are and have been sinners. There can be found no exceptions; then the general truth may be announced upon the authority of logical induction, that universal depravity is true, and no theorem in mathematics, and no recognized law in natural science, has ever been discovered and proved by a more valid process of reasoning. The scientist would not hesitate to announce a law upon the result of such an investigation as this. Then, from a scientific standpoint, there must be a law governing, not only the physical reproduction, but the moral nature of man. The man who attributes the natural depravity of the human family to the transgression of the first man, aside from decree, is a fatalist, and holds a position that science condemns. Men who hold that God created the first man holy, and that he fell either apart from the purpose of God, or contrary to that purpose, and that as a result of that haphazard fall, his posterity is necessarily sinners, have not seen very far either into the biblical or the scientific side of the subject. Is not the hand of God as directly employed in the formation of the child from the embryo to the birth as it was in the formation of the first man from the dust of the earth? Does he not form the child to-day as strictly according to his will as he formed the first man? Does he not form every germ of life that comes into existence to-day, whether it be plant, animal or man? Does he not develop into an individual every germ that reaches that state, no matter what kind of life it be? Is not his hand as actively and as particularly engaged in the formation of the chick in the shell as in the formation of men or angels? How else could he be the Creator, upholder and disposer of all things?

Although science bears witness to the doctrine of predestination, yet it can never reveal God; it honors God and proclaims his glory, but it is the man who hath an ear to hear that receives its testimony. Science proclaims the reign of law throughout the universe, and law proclaims decree. The voice of science joins the voice of inspiration in the sublime proclamation that "All his works praise him."

Only a few of the laws of the different sciences have been cited; time would fail me to tell of all of them; nowhere are we encompassed with a greater cloud of witnesses to the reign of law, than in the sciences. I do not know whether there is any spiritual comfort in what I have written or not, but I do confess that I like to see the doctrine that is dear to my heart established even by natural evidences.

H. M. CURRY.

PLEASANT PLAINS, Ill.

ACTS XXVI. 32.

"THEN said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Cæsar."

Having a desire to testify of the gospel of the grace of God, and stir up the pure minds of the afflicted people of God, I will with your permission, dear editors, pen a few thoughts upon the foregoing decision.

In the beginning I will say this language of Paul is very applicable, "O the depths of the riches both of the knowledge and wisdom of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." Here is a man falsely accused, and a judgment, or conclusion, of two prominent men after a conference between themselves regarding him. But he has appealed to Cæsar, and to Cæsar he must go. From this we may say that

God does move in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform. The importance of the word "if" (sometimes) is here made very clear. As a dear brother once said, No one can tell how a thing would be, if it was not as it is. God works all things after the counsel of his own will, and in this decision of wise men naturally, regarding this appeal of Paul to Cæsar, God had appointed or purposed his own glory. The fact and manner of Paul's arrival at Rome, shows that our God works all things together for good to them that love him, and that are the called according to his purpose. These are called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. Though Paul was not aware of all that should befall him on his journey to Rome, or after his arrival there, yet he was evidently made willing to be anything or anywhere that his Lord and Master had appointed, and this desire, coupled with a knowledge of his own past errors, and the fear of an unjust decision by those before whom he was arraigned, because they were ignorant of the Lord's dealing with him, causes him to ask that which is but the development of the will of God in the mind of Paul, and it witnesses that God works in his servant to will and to do of his good pleasure.

What could better portray the eternal will and predetermined mind of the covenant-keeping God toward his people in Rome, to whom Paul must be sent? And this is applicable to all his people all over the world, as they also receive their portion of meat in due season. This also proves that he sends and speaks by whom he will, for their edification and upbuilding in the truth. Paul's former experience with those who had bound themselves under an oath to kill him, and those who falsely accused him before the officers of the law, both go to show that God works and none can hinder. It also shows that in all his dealings with his people they fill just the place he determined that they should. Thus Paul's appeal to Cæsar, and the decision of Agrippa and Festus, show the power of God unto a hitherto unknown people, I mean unknown by Paul. Through much tribulation to the end of his mortal life he must go because it had been given him not only to believe on Christ, but also to suffer for his sake. While Paul had felt joy in believing, and peace in obeying, he could say with propriety, Neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, in righteousness, and in the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. He knew that wherever he went as a servant of the Lord, of whom he had been apprehended, and to whom he was a prisoner of hope, that bonds and imprisonment awaited him, yet none of these things moved him from testifying of the hope of the gospel, which was dearer to him than his own life. In the beginning he was shown what he must suffer for Jesus' sake. Paul's experience and teaching as a servant of the Master will be beneficial to the saints, because they are all taught in the same line of things. And while the apostles and prophets both declare that salvation, both temporally and eternally, is of the Lord, the afflictions of Joseph, and of Paul, as well as of all his servants, will be to the profit of each and every one who is grounded in the faith and in the truth as it is in Jesus. It was written that Jesus ought to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory. So also the trials of Paul, and other wit-

nesses to God, will prove that as Paul said, tribulation worketh patience, or endurance. Each one in his measure must say as did Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am." The salvation which is brought by grace includes the teaching of all that any one can know of the chastisement of their peace which was upon him, and of their own healing by his stripes. This is the experience of those who are saved by grace, and grace alone. The love of God which is shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them, leads them to take the word of God as the man of their counsel, and to be followers of him as dear children. This was the leading spirit in the heart of Paul. He felt to be what his name means, "little," from the effect of the operation of the Spirit of Christ within him. Yet as a servant of the living God he felt that he could do all things through Christ which strengthened him, and so also he could, through the same strength, suffer all things at the hands of wicked men, if it were the will of God. Having learned that he must suffer all things with Christ, to be glorified with him, he became bold and fearless, and in suffering and death he could confidently speak of the eternal purpose of God, which he purposed with himself before time began; he could also confidently speak of his everlasting love and wise choice, and the holy keeping of his own chosen ones, and of his bringing them off more than conquerors, because they were kept by his power alone unto salvation.

Why then should Paul or any other one fear what man could do unto them under such circumstances? Surely at the end either wicked or just judges can only do what God in his counsel has determined to be done before. The testimony of the word is, It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps; the way of man is not in himself; a good man's steps are ordered of the Lord. One said there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding. This may apply to many natural men with genius or talent, as regards the natural dealings of God with men and nations, yet it belongs more properly to Jesus as the sin-bearer and servant of his people, and as the Head of the church, and also to his chosen people who are princes and fellow-heirs of his amazing and great grace. In his hands are the destinies of all his creatures. When God speaks concerning a nation or kingdom, to pluck up or to plant, or concerning any man as an individual, it is done. What his soul desires that he does. All the "ifs" of Satan or men fall short of accomplishing more than to show the short-sightedness of men, and the weakness of the intrigues of Satan, but God is glorified in the fulfilling of his word. He said that Paul was a chosen vessel of his to bear his name among the Gentiles. He knew the needs be that had been declared that men should go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. The Lord had accounted him faithful, and had put him into this ministry. How different his preparation from that which men now receive from men. He was taught by revelation of the God of heaven, so he declares himself. The mind of Christ was in him, which enabled him to say to the elders at Ephesus, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." And to Timothy, his own son in the gospel, he said, "Take heed to thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing

this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." And to his son in the gospel, Titus, he said, "Speak thou the things that become sound doctrine." That is, let that which you declare, be in a manner becoming sound doctrine. Thus did Paul admonish, rebuke and exhort the dear people of God while among them and in writing to them. They with him he exhorts to work out their salvation with fear and trembling, because in him as well as in them God was working both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. Therefore his appeal to Cæsar and the decision of Agrippa and Festus were both as God would have it, and the wonderful voyage, and miraculous escape, and final arrival of Paul at Rome, and the result of his preaching to the saints at Rome, was all attended and watched over by the omniscient eye of Jehovah, who rules in heaven and in earth. How my heart bounds with gratitude to him in the beginning of this new, and as I believe, last century. I could confide in no other. As a poor, sinful worm I must, as well as Paul, ascribe all my salvation to free, unmerited grace.

Your brother,

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLEY'S CORNERS, N. Y., Jan. 10, 1901.

WAVERLY, Pa., Feb. 8, 1901.

BROTHER BEEBE:—You will find inclosed a letter from sister Fannie Cross, of Ohio. She is the daughter of the late Elder Gass, of Delaware County, New York, who died several years ago. She asked me to send my answer with hers, if hers was published. I hope you can publish hers, but sooner you would not publish mine, I send it merely to gratify her, as she returned it to me for that purpose.

Your brother in hope,

D. M. VAIL.

EUCLID, Ohio, July 18, 1900.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—Feeling sad and lonely my thoughts have turned to you, and I have a desire to hear from you, so will attempt to write a few lines, hoping it may stir up your mind to send me a few comforting words. I feel I should never ask one of God's dear ones to spend their time in writing to me, who is altogether unworthy, as I know I am.

For the past week I have felt so cold and lifeless, I feel to ask, "Do I love the Lord or no, am I his or am I not?" O my leanness! I cannot follow after the things of the world as I once could, and I am not fit to mingle with God's dear people, yet how I love their society, how I love to talk with them of the things of the kingdom, and yet how ignorant I am, and often feel that I have talked of things too great for me, far beyond my limited understanding.

I believe every child of God, if left to their own choice, would choose an easy way, a path strewn with flowers and free from tribulation; but this is not the way of the cross, the dear Savior was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, and we who desire to ever be found walking in his footsteps, will find it a rough and thorny way. Of this way that leads to the kingdom of heaven, or [an] entering into that joy and peace in the Holy Ghost, that only the redeemed of the Lord experience, it is written, "The kingdom of heaven is within you," and "It is through great tribulation ye shall enter the kingdom." The kingdom of heaven within you, must have reference to the new birth, being born of the Spirit from which flows all that is lovely in the saints of God, viz: Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, patience, temperance. And my experience has

been that every sweet season of spiritual enjoyment I have been permitted to enjoy has sprung out of some sore trial, or in other words, it has been through great tribulation I have been permitted to enter the kingdom; that joy and peace in the Holy Ghost. And this is experienced within you, and yet the saints do give an outward expression of the joy they feel within. Great is the mystery of godliness.

I am ashamed of this letter, I have written in such a dull state of mind, but I do want to hear from you, so I will venture to send it.

May God bless and keep you and give you an abundant entrance into his everlasting kingdom.

THURSDAY 24th.

As I have not yet mailed my poor scribble, I will add a few lines more. I wish to say I attended our meeting the fourth Sunday, and it was to me a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. I felt encouraged and strengthened, and some of the sweetness yet remains. O, the infinite goodness of God, to visit poor worms of the dust, lead about and instruct, and feed with the bread of heaven, Zion's pilgrims while traveling through this vale of tears. My poor heart is made to overflow with love and gratitude to him who sits upon the throne of his power, governing and controlling all events as seemeth good in his sight, never consulting vain man, as to his wishes or desires, but continues to work all things after the counsel of his own will, and I am made at times to feel thankful it is so, that his will is done in earth as well as in heaven, although I have a willful and rebellious nature that does not love restraint, but does always (if left to itself) lead me to death, and I have learned by bitter experience, "The soul that sinneth shall die." And again, I trust I have learned, "If we through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live," but all boasting here is excluded, for it is God that worketh in us, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.

I think I will add no more. I feel it is like the writer, imperfect. Answer soon, for I want to hear from you.

Yours with love and fellowship,

JENNIE O. CROSS.

WAVERLY, Pa., Aug. 15, 1900.

MRS. JENNIE CROSS—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I was much pleased to get your good letter on my return, after an absence of about four weeks, filling about thirty appointments. My wife was with me, and expects to go with me my next trip. I am away from home most of the time, am no use to my family, and often feel that I am a useless thing everywhere. I do not suppose there is any one that is of so little use in the world, and in the church, as I am. I do not enjoy the world, religiously speaking at least. The doctrine of a real Arminian is to me blasphemy. I love the truth, salvation by rich and sovereign grace, and I love those (or at least I hope I do) that love the truth, and have no christian fellowship for any other, and I "Can't help it." If it is wrong, so be it. I could make a world as easy as I could change my love and fellowship one iota; the same in regard to what I believe. I get much comfort in reading the SIGNS, I do not know of any other Old School Baptist paper that is half as clear and sound in the blessed doctrine of grace as it, that is published in the United States, the editors and correspondents are not mealy-mouthed, seeking to tickle the natural ear, or to make friends with the Edomites,

as many seem to be in advocating "conditional time salvation," and free agency. I think I can clearly see the object in turning aside from the plain testimony of the Scriptures, to the doctrines that have been advocated by the religious world ever since the devil preached to Eve in the Garden of Eden. There is the very place where all false doctrines originated, and it makes me feel sad when any of the servants of God go to antichrist to get food for the saints. I hope I am not speaking too plainly or judging too harshly. I was so many years trying to believe such stuff, and since the dear Lord did show me the falsity of all their teaching, I have had no use for anything that has the least semblance to it, and I hope I never may. I am satisfied with the old fashioned doctrine, salvation by grace, for time and eternity, first, last and all the way through. In him we live, move and have our being, and without him we can do nothing. I know this is true of myself; I would never do anything to the glory and honor of God if he did not lead and guide me by his holy Spirit. This being true in my case, I must give him all of the glory, honor and praise, for salvation from disobedience and sin, in time, and salvation in eternity

I believe I stand with a class of people who are stigmatized by some as "Can't help its." "I find a law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin in my members," and "I can't help it." I cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" and "I can't help it." "When I would do good, evil is present with me," and "I can't help it." "In me (that is, in my flesh) dwells no good thing," and "I can't help it." "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that I cannot do the things that I would," and "I can't help it." I am often walking in darkness and have no manifest light, and "I can't help it." I cry out in my trouble and sorrow, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me?" and "I can't help it." Often I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing, and "I can't help it." I have a heart that is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, but "I can't help it." The pains of hell get hold upon me, I find trouble and sorrow, and "I can't help it." These, with many, many other things, I have to trouble and perplex me, and "I can't help it." If I could I certainly would. These are things I find in my daily experience, and I would know them just as well if there had been no record of them.

I will now state some other things that "I can't help." Nearly thirty years ago I was burdened with sin, had been for many months crying to Almighty God for mercy, with no thought that mercy could ever be granted to so vile a worm as I, but wonder of wonders, the dear Savior appeared and delivered me of my heavy burden, which filled my poor heart with joy and gladness that was unspeakable and full of glory, and I could not help it. Not long after this, I was cast down by reason of my sinful, depraved nature, finding no change in my flesh, and soon began to doubt that I had known anything of the sovereign grace of God. I sank down deep, yes, almost despair, when the dear Savior appeared in a sweet promise: "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." My soul made me like the chariots of Amminadib; I mounted up with wings as eagles, run and did not weary, and I could not help it.

Another time I had been in darkness and trouble of mind for three years, and more, the Bible was a sealed book to me, although I was continually searching it every opportunity, longing to feel the sweet truth it contained, in my heart, but there was nothing for my hungry soul; I could not pray, I could not sing; no one could preach, pray or sing to comfort me. I never can tell the long, painful, dark, sad, lonely journey I traveled those years all alone. All of my past experience that I had rested in at times, as evidence of God's love to me, was a delusion, no reality in it, only a shadow. Dear sister, I know what hell is, for I was there, when a sweet promise from the throne of God dropped down in my poor heart: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Then these words followed, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts." Then I was filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory, and I could not help it. When I realize the sweet presence of my Savior, my heart is full of praise, and it will sing, and "I can't help it," and I do not want to help it; I would live continually in the sunshine of his love and favor; I never would sin in thought, word or deed; I would always be obedient to the one I love, and esteem as the chief among ten thousand and altogether lovely; it grieves my poor heart because I cannot render that service that is due such a lovely Savior, one that has done so much for me, a vile worm; I would serve him and worship him night and day, if I could, but I am compelled to confess I cannot. And I am glad for one thing at least, and that is, all the ministers of the gospel in the eastern associations, and some of the western and southern ministers, preach just what the Lord by his Spirit has taught me in my experience, and the brethren and sisters all are taught the same things, hence see eye to eye, and that is nice, Is it not?

I have read articles the past year published in some of our papers in the west and south, and from the pens of those that I believe know the truth, which to my judgment are contrary to the doctrine of grace, and therefore contrary to christian experience. I, for one, would not be willing to sit and listen to such teaching. I think the living in Zion would starve under such preaching, though it might call out a crowd, and add names to the church-book. But I suppose I would be called a peculiar and particular person concerning these points of doctrine, by nearly everybody, even some good brethren, and the whole Arminian world at large.

But I must close, or you will get disgusted with me. Remember me with love to your husband and all the saints in your section. Write again, would like to hear from Mr. Cross; glad that he had a message while in Canada. Your letter in the SIGNS was good. Brother Kinney is an excellent brother, and his wife is an excellent sister, and so are all the members of the Schoharie Church, as far as I know.

Your unworthy brother, in hope of eternal life,

D. M. VAIL.

VALLEY STREAM, N. Y., Feb. 5, 1901.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—I herewith inclose a letter from Elder W. W. Meredith, by which I felt to be much encouraged, and although I have not his consent, yet send it you, and if in your judgment you feel it to be of general interest to the readers

of our highly prized family paper, I would be pleased to share it with them.

Your little brother,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

PETERSBURG, Del., Jan. 28, 1901.

MARTIN D. FISHER—DEAR BROTHER: —The notice in the SIGNS of your change of address was the first I knew of your removal from Hallwood, Va. I felt to sympathize with Elder Poulson, and the Messongoes Church, knowing how seriously the absence of you and sister Fisher will be felt by them. But it is not on their account alone, for many of us of sister churches have enjoyed your christian hospitality in days gone by. Now when I think of going to Messongoes, and remember our intercourse in the past, I feel to miss you in anticipation, as of loved ones gone away. But be assured that our affections follow you wherever you may roam or rest, earnestly desiring your temporal welfare, and praying the Lord to bless you with all spiritual blessings even life for evermore.

I presume the nearest meeting place for you is in New York city, where a little company of saints meet every Sunday morning and afternoon in Genealogical Hall, 226 west 58th Street, where you will receive a cordial welcome. I assure you that in spirit they are the same as our loved ones in Virginia. I speak from experience, having been a member with them in years gone by. It was with them that my companion was received, and baptized by Elder Durand, about twenty years ago. Meditating upon the past, and thinking of the happy hours enjoyed in their companionship, it awakens sacred, sweet and precious memories. Now thinking of you and sister Fisher seeking the companionship of those you love for Jesus' sake, and of your anxious desire for congenial society spiritually, the language of David comes into my heart and finds an echo there, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple." This Scripture is suitably adapted to the dear soul while desiring and seeking a place and home among the children of God visibly, in their early experience. But if I know the sentiment of David's desire, it is the same now as in the days of my first love, hence I conclude it is the experience of God's people during all their pilgrimage in this mortal life. I know from experience what it is to be separated by distance and circumstances from the church of my membership, yet with all my doubts and fears, faults and failings, and unworthiness, even now while I write there is the singing of that old song in my heart:

> "Give me, O Lord, a place
> Within thy blessed abode,
> Among the children of thy grace,
> The servants of my God."

I have said, and I repeat it, "I would rather be far away from the church of my membership, and providentially prevented from meeting with my brethren, yet at the same time have a heart-felt desire to meet with them in their devotions, than to live convenient, in their midst, with no desire to meet with them; when to attend the service of the church seems a duty and worship a task." Lord, save me from even a luke-warm state. Yet in our experience it is not all sunshine, trials and tribulations abide us, of which we are warned and assured by the word of the Lord, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." Therefore much of our comfort is found in desire and hope.

David, when he had a view of the

beauty of the Lord as he inquired in the temple, could not obtain the full fruition of his desire. At one time he describes the beauty of the Lord after this manner, "And he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds, as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain. Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow."—2 Samuel xxiii. 4, 5. Within and clustering around this one desire are all the spiritual desires of the soul; we desire to know more of the things of the kingdom of Jesus; we desire to love him more and serve him better; we desire to be more thankful for blessings received from his kind hand; we desire to be a better man, a better preacher, a better member of the church, and more worthy of the love and fellowship of our brethren. But as for me, I cannot realize the full fruition of my desires, and am glad to receive comfort and encouragement from what Solomon tells us the Lord said to his father David: "And it was in the heart of David my father to build an house for the name of the Lord God of Israel. And the Lord said unto David my father, Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart."—1 Kings viii. 17, 18.

Dear brother, I am glad it is in my heart to desire that which is good, even though I cannot attain to all that I crave. May we ever be found inquiring in the temple of the Lord, at the feet of Jesus, learning of him who is meek and lowly in heart, and find rest to our souls. My wife joins me in expressions of love and fellowship to you and sister Fisher.

Your brother,

W. W. MEREDITH.

PROVIDENCE, Texas, Feb. 2, 1901.

MY DEAR BROTHER B. L. BEEBE:—As I am near the seventy-second year of my mortal pilgrimage, I concluded I would write you a sketch of my travels, as I humbly hope, from death in sin to life in Christ; however I want others to be the judges in the matter.

I was born in what was then Michigan Territory, on Fear River, up north of St. Louis. My parents moved back into Illinois while I was quite young, where they owned a farm, and in August, 1833, started to move to Texas, and settled on the Brazos River, the same fall, and when Texas declared her independence, and war broke out, we had to move around a great deal to escape the hostile Indians. I grew up to manhood under very trying conditions, with but very limited education. When near my twenty-first year I started to California, across the plains, with ox teams. I was over six months going to Sandiego, where we remained until January, 1851, and in that wild country, while living alone, five miles from any neighbor, I hope the great God arrested me in my wild career, and showed me I was an awful sinner, and rebel against a just and righteous God. My first impressions were, I was not going to live but a short while, yet I think I was in perfect health. The first question that presented itself to me was, Are you ready to come before the eternal God in judgment? I answered in secret, No, Lord. But I truly felt as Paul did, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" I felt if I but knew the Lord's will, I was willing to do it, but I was as ignorant a mortal as any other heathen, in regard to the matter; I had not heard preaching for more than six months before that time, and then it was no more to me than a political speech, so you see I must discard the Arminian

idea that through the preaching of the gospel sinners are brought from death unto life. Up to the time I speak of I had no more correct idea of what I now understand to be God's plan of salvation, than a hog. I had from my earliest recollection, the Arminian idea that a voluntary reformation would appease the wrath of God, and satisfy his righteous law, but O, my soul, I was taught a different lesson now.

But I see I am making this uninteresting scribble too lengthy, so to cut the matter short, I was in this gloomy dread of the execution of the sentence which I had already passed upon myself, and felt sure I had God's sanction to it, yet I could not help asking for mercy. I do not know how long before I was enabled to trust in the dear Redeemer as my law-satisfier and Redeemer from the curse of the law, but I had fully acknowledged that hell was my just and inevitable doom. However, finally I had, I hope, a faint view by faith of how God could be just and justify the ungodly; I think I was like the man that could see men as trees walking, and I know I could adopt the language of the leper and say, "Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me whole." I did not doubt his power, O no. I had a ten cent Testament presented me long before this, I had carried it no doubt six thousand miles, I merely prized it as a keepsake, as it was presented by a young lady cousin. I never before had interest enough in its perusal to open it, yet I understood it to be the word of God. I now began to search to try to learn the Lord's will, and felt willing now, if I knew his will, to do it, but O, how far short I have come in all my pilgrimage since. I know if I ever shall enter heaven it will be by the mercy and grace of God through Christ as my Surety and Redeemer. Though I have been afflicted over half of my life, I feel to recognize the hand of the Lord in it, and I want to say from my heart as Job did, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

Now I will say that I joined the Missionaries, together with my companion, in August, 1857. I cannot say I lived with them, I stayed with them though about eight years, there being no Primitive Baptist Church nearer than fifty miles of us, at the time, but we were not in fellowship with them, so we agreed we would come out and live alone, not hoping to belong to any other, but in 1868 there was found to be several Old Baptists around us, and a preacher from Alabama came out here and constituted a church, and my wife and I joined them. I was soon chosen their clerk, and have served in that capacity about thirty-two years, and deacon over twenty-five years, though I feel very unworthy the confidence the brethren have seemed to have in me. I feel sure if they knew me as the Lord does, they never could have the fellowship for me they seem to have. I know I am not fit for the position of deacon, for I feel that a deacon ought to have some spiritual gift, while I have none. But it is the mistake of the brethren, I asked to be excused, purely on the ground of unfitness, feeling wholly disqualified.

Now, brother Beebe, should you see fit to give any part of this a place in the SIGNS, you are at liberty to do so; should you cast all in the waste-basket, I shall not feel the least offended. I am old and nervous, do not know if you can read what I write, and I know it is very awkwardly thrown together.

I am receiving the SIGNS again, thank the good Lord. I have taken them since 1868, do not think I am behind on subscription anything; hope to be able to

pay for them while I may live, which cannot be long. It is not worth while to say I appreciate them, as actions speak for themselves.

Your brother, I trust, in the Lord,
DURHAM ODOM.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Jan. 10, 1901.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—With a sorrowful heart I will try to write you; I am so low in mind and sad on account of my great bereavement in the loss of my eldest and youngest sons. It completely crushed me, and almost laid me upon my bed, it was such a sudden shock to me. I thought of Job at once; with all the trials and afflictions through which he had passed, he still retained his integrity. My mind was pointed to what he had passed through, and like him I desire to say from my poor heart, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." I do feel so thankful to God that he has given me a heart to bless him for whatever may be my lot, be it ever so grievous. The apostle Paul has said, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." In time of separation from our dear ones it is hard to be reconciled to the will of God, but thank God he has made me willing in the day of his power, as he did when he brought me, as I trust, to see and feel my inability to obtain eternal life, and that he is the giver of every good and perfect gift. They all come from above, from the Father of lights. I feel my leanness and nothingness, I am not able to say or do anything aright, without the help of God, I need that he should direct my steps in the way that I should go. Elder David Bartley was with me in my sore trials, which comforted me. I would thank and praise God in all of his dealings with me. May I ever be kept humble and low at the feet of Jesus. I can but plead for mercy and pardon, for I am so unworthy, and have nothing to give in return for all his benefits toward me. In the midst of trials and temptations, had it not been for his loving arm, which I trust was extended around me, I should of all men have been most miserable, but I trust he has made me to say, "My Redeemer liveth." I trust that I may ever be found at his feet in humbleness and thankfulness for his great love shed abroad in my heart. Nothing but the grace of God can save a sin-sick soul. I need all the grace that it may please him to give me. May I be given humbleness of heart, and be made to trust in him at all times. It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. I know not in what way I should go, unless I am directed by his grace, and what an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast, is this hope founded in grace. He has brought me through the furnace of affliction, and has given me a new song, even praise to our God. I pray that I may be kept by his power, and be numbered with the ransomed of the Lord forever.

I have been a reader of the SIGNS for about thirty years; the more I read them the better I like them; I have seen no discord, nor any change, nor any unsound theory advanced. I am glad the SIGNS opposes the "conditional time salvation" theory, it is one of the things which would deceive the very elect if possible, but the Lord has said that he would not leave himself without witnesses, and I thank God for the editors of the SIGNS, who stand fast and wield "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." I am glad that we are established upon a better covenant than that of our obedi-

ence to the law of works. The SIGNS was established upon this better foundation about sixty-eight years ago, and the beloved editors are still proclaiming the same sound. I am now sixty-eight years of age, and it is a sweet messenger to me from a far country. Able writers fill its columns, such as Elders Bartley, Durand, Womack, Lively, and others too numerous to mention. The editorials are, it seems to me, all so good. Elder Gilbert Beebe stood firm to the last, contending for the truth as it pleased God to reveal it to him; he contended for salvation by grace. I remember far back when he was scourged upon every side by the enemies of truth who tried to draw the true followers of the lovely and meek Lamb of God away from the truth, but he stood firm as a rock upon the walls of Zion to the end, and then could say as did the apostle Paul, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." I dreamed once of talking with the dear Elder. It is of God that one of the family still is spared to stand firm, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, against all opposition to the truth. Nothing but the truth will do a hungry child good. The editorials are so filled up with truth that it does my soul good to read them.

I desire to say again, since the death of my two sons the Lord has given me a heart of reconciliation, enabling me to be submissive to his will in all things, and to trust in his saving grace, which I hope was revealed to me. It was not by anything that I had done to bring me into his favor. I do feel that I want to give him all the praise, honor and glory for his outstretched arm over one so vile as I; I have nothing in myself to offer whatever that could be acceptable to him; it is only of his great mercy and love that I have been spared to still try to praise him for his loving-kindness which he has bestowed upon me; I want to praise him all the days of my pilgrimage here, and when called away may I wear that spotless robe of righteousness, and be forever at rest with the redeemed of the Lord, and praise redeeming love forever. What a glorious hope it is that our names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Dear editors, I have taken the liberty to address you thus. I hope that it is not trespassing upon your valuable time. It was my desire to write as I have, hoping that it may prove a comfort to some of God's little ones.

I am yours, as I hope, in the bonds of eternal life,

O. B. HICKERSON.

LIBERTY, Ind., March 18, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I inclose a letter to you from our dear afflicted brother Bartley. I have his consent for its publication in the SIGNS, if you are pleased to publish it. It was written to us to comfort us in our affliction, and I think there is much in it to comfort the household of faith.

My wife slipped on the icy steps one week ago to-day, and broke her ankle, and both bones about four inches above the ankle, which has caused her a great deal of pain and general distress. It was on hearing of her mishap that he wrote this letter to us. She is getting along as well as could be expected with so bad a break.

I received a letter to-day from a brother whom I do not know, in which he said that he had heard that I had acknowledged to having made a mistake in writing my pamphlet on "Free Will and Free Moral Agency." I suppose that some one has started the report, thinking

that it would be a more successful way of lessening its influence than to attempt to meet its arguments.

Remember our affliction when at a throne of grace.

Yours in sorrow,

W. N. THARP.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., March 15, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER THARP:—Yours of the 12th came yesterday, and we are extremely sorry that sister Tharp has met with the sad affliction, but let us hope she will make a safe and rapid recovery. If she is in a good state of health, I trust she will, and we shall be anxious to hear again. Tell her not to be at all discouraged, but hopeful and cheerful, in order to favor her better recovery. Accept it in the light of Paul's saying, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." Paul was inspired to give us this comfort, and his word has been my support and solace in darkest times of danger and trial. It assures us that "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Dear brother and sister, there is another word, and it was spoken to us by him who dwelleth in the bosom of God: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father. Ye are of more value than many sparrows: fear ye not therefore." This will come nearer to you in this affliction, showing you that your Father had a loving purpose in it, for your good. With him there are no accidents.

I have a pile of letters unanswered, but felt that I must write you before retiring to-night, to express my sorrowing sympathy, with the effort to cheer you both, or at least to tell you that you are not alone, for I am with you in the furnace of affliction and your companion in tribulation, and my heart feels for you in your trial of faith. In times like this, dear brother and sister, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." His wisdom and his love are infinite, and his power is omnipotent; "He rideth upon the heavens in the help of his people, and in his excellency on the sky." Underneath them are the everlasting arms. Let us commit our way to him, and leave all our burdens with him. "Shall we receive good at the hands of the Lord? and shall we not receive evil?" When the dear Master was about to be betrayed and put to death, he said to his sorrow-burdened friends, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." You both need all his precious words now, my brother and sister, and so do I, as you know. At times greater afflictions come to us than physical suffering. Before a hand of violence was laid upon our merciful and faithful High Priest, he said to his disciples, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me." When John was shut up in the dungeon, and wickedly beheaded, his friends buried his body, "and went and told Jesus." When we are in any great sorrow and trial, our burdened soul goes out to Jesus in prayer. To encourage us he says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." So, sister Tharp, he will make your bed in all your affliction. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted. "Afflictions in mercy oft are sent." When tried Jacob said, "All these things are against me," his God was then specially dealing with him in love and mercy, and preparing him for the great favor of going to be with his lovely son Joseph. How little we know at best!

O, I could not tell you how weak I have been in my deep sorrow and sore trial, nor how dark the way has been to me. So I do know the way of man is not in himself, that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps; but the Lord knoweth the way that I take, as said Job; "And when he hath tried me, he shall bring me forth as gold." These are the lessons he is teaching you now. Cast your burdens on the Lord, for he careth for you.

The first day of this month we went over to St. Paul, Ind., and visited my nephew and family, by their request, till the 11th, hoping to feel better, as I was so low down and desolate, but found we cannot run away from affliction, for I relapsed with "la grippe" in my head while there, and could not much enjoy the visit. I am some better now, and Sallie is well and sends love and sympathy to sister Tharp and you.

My lovely granddaughter Ivy copied and sent me some verses in her last letter, as expressive of her own feelings, and they are so suitable and good I will inclose a copy to you. We have all been greatly troubled for dear Myrtle, my eldest granddaughter, who was so hopeless and helplessly crushed by our sorrowful bereavement, but she sent us a very touching letter this week, and her strength of mind is asserting itself again, so that she is beginning to take some interest in life again, greatly to my relief. She is a finely educated, bright and noble young woman, (twenty-six) but her sorrow was without hope, for she had sadly fallen into infidelity. And O, it was heart-rending to witness her blank and dark despair, when her idolized mother departed. Her despair made the trial harder for the rest of us. But dear Ivy, so much like her mother, and five years younger than Myrtle, was so heroic, quiet, patient and brave, taking the lead, doing the work, and suppressing her deep sorrow. For she trusted in her mother's God, and believed our loved one lives within the veil, and is with Christ, which is far better. I was deeply impressed with this vast difference between her and her eldest sister, and it made the faith and hope in Christ more precious and sacred to me than ever. Myrtle had been a close and untiring college student seven years, had graduated nearly three years ago with honor, while Ivy had only graduated from the Olney high school; but Ivy had been taught of God, had cried to him for mercy as a penitent sinner, and had come to Christ in faith and hope and love, while Myrtle had been led away into faithless, hopeless, dark infidelity, and this was the difference. How great it is! O, why should one repine to whom God has given faith in the behalf of Christ to believe on him, and to suffer for his sake? We know not, dear friends in Jesus, how richly we are blessed. Our dear Lord says, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me."

Out of my own affliction and sorrow I have written you, having the spirit to "weep with them that weep." Let us remember that when we have drank the cup that our Father giveth us, it shall pass away, and that "They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy."

In sorrowing sympathy farewell.

D. BARTLEY.

FARMINGTON, Ill., Jan. 22, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I feel like asking you, if you can feel so disposed, to write a long editorial upon the duties and obligations of the children of God, which rest upon them while here as his disciples,

The apostle said, "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." Israel of old were given laws, in obedience to which they were wonderfully blessed in temporal things, while in disobedience they suffered the penalty of their misdoings.

Now it seems to me that in this country God's spiritual children are sound in faith, but that many are not as careful in their daily walk as ought to be the case. Faith without works is dead, being alone. I also believe that many of the churches in the east are more clear and sound in the faith than some in this section.

I remember well, a number of years since, I was at a meeting at Middletown, N. Y., when almost every member would speak of the trials, and joys, and sorrows which they had passed through. Elder Jenkins conducted the meetings. Such meetings are, I believe, a great comfort to many. In them we hear from one another of their daily trials, and they show forth the praises of him who hath called them from darkness to light. I believe that all who have hope will be comforted and built up in hearing others tell of the way in which they have been led. Every one who is born of God, has life, and they should be as lively stones built up a spiritual house to show forth the praises of God, and to be a spiritual sacrifice unto God. How can we praise him enough for his goodness and mercy to poor sinners? I feel that I am near my journey's end, and that I have come far short of being what I desired to be; I have made but little progress in the divine life. In fact, the older I grow, the more imperfection I see in myself; I have but little fellowship for myself; there is so much about me that I hate and abhor. Can it be possible that such a mass of sin and unholiness and corruption can have any just ground for hope? I have but to stand still and realize that I am as clay in the hands of the potter; I am destitute of power to deliver myself; the Lord has so declared it; it is not in the power of mortal man to change his decrees; he upholds all things by the word of his power, and has the keys of death and hell; he shuts and none can open, and opens and none can shut.

Now, dear brother, if you shall feel to comply with my request I shall be glad, but if not, shall find no fault and shall love you all the same. I feel much indebted to you in the past for favors bestowed upon me. I know that you receive many requests, and cannot comply with them all. Now, I bid you farewell; it may be the last time that I shall ever write you.

Your brother in hope,

E. D. VARNES.

(Editorial reply on page 245.)

MORRISON, Ill., March 30, 1901.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—The time has come for the renewal of my subscription, and I will send you a few lines to let you know how I appreciate reading the SIGNS. I do not know how I could get along without them, as they are all the preaching I get, and there are so many good letters in them. It seems every number it grows better. There was a good letter in the number for February 15th, 1901, from brother Robert Scates, of Ontario. O, how I enjoyed reading it, and how many times I have read it over. It tells of so many "ups and downs" in my own life; how much it has strengthened me. I hope there will be many more good letters. I wish the SIGNS came every week instead of twice a month.

Ever yours,

(MRS.) W. S. JOHNSON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1901.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

CALLED HOME.

THURSDAY, March 28th, 1901, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, our dear brother, Elder William L. Beebe, was called to lay his armor by and receive the crown of righteousness the Lord had laid up for him, for he could truly say with Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." Indeed, it is very seldom that any have been so signally blessed of the Lord to live a life so untrammelled by the cares of this world, as was the case with our dear brother; baptized at twelve years of age, he has ever since been enabled by the grace of God to manifest that child-like trust to which the Savior cited the disciples, when he set a little child in their midst, saying, "Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom."

In July last he submitted to a very critical surgical operation, from which he seemed to completely recover, and for several months enjoyed better health than he had for thirty years, but on the second Saturday in February he was taken with severe pain in the region where the incision was made for the operation, but upon consulting the specialist that performed the operation, he was assured that it was not a serious symptom. But from that time his health began to decline, (although he was able to fill his regular appointments in New York city on the second Sundays) until the night of the 27th of March, when he was taken with an internal hemorrhage, and again the next morning with another, and at 2 o'clock he passed away.

Though the last few hours of his life was spent in intense suffering, there was not a word of murmuring, but when the pain became so severe that he could no longer endure it in silence, all the expression of the agony he was enduring that escaped his lips was, "Dear Lord!" This he repeated many times.

It was our privilege to be with him a day or two after the operation in July, when to all natural appearance there was but little hope of his recovery, and we inquired of him the condition of his mind, and never as long as our mental faculties remain, can we forget the calm, sweet reconciliation with which he replied, "I have now lived my three score years and ten, and if it is the Lord's will to take me, I am ready to go." And as we gazed upon his lifeless form these words were constantly with us, and death was robbed of its terror, and the words of the apostle were presented with demonstration and with power, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

A much better notice than we are capable of writing, giving details more fully, with dates of incidents in our brother's life, has already been prepared by brother Elder John McConnell, of New York city, and will be found in the obituary department on page 254. B.

COLOSSIANS II. 6.

(Reply to brother Varnes on page 242.)

THERE is no one among all the brethren with whose wishes we would more gladly comply than brother Varnes.' We speak without flattery when we say that we have always heard of him as a brother who so loved the cause that he was willing to spend and be spent for it. We have met him but a few times, but have had more or less frequent correspondence with him for many years, and often, while we have not wondered that we love him, have wondered how he could manifest so much kind feeling to ourself. We would gladly possess the same meek and quiet spirit that we have seen in him, and we are sure that if this spirit reigned in us all, there would be no trouble among us.

Brother Varnes has called attention especially to words found in Colossians ii. 6: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him."

These are words which have often been impressed upon our mind with solemnity and power. The word "received," signifies "receiving once for all." That is, the receiving is an accomplished fact, not to be done, or in need of being done over again. This, the form of the Greek word shows. We also call attention to the fact that it is not the doctrine of Christ, not a form of words, not a theory of Christ, but Christ himself, that they had received. This is the essence of true faith. Not faith in a system of doctrine, but faith in Christ as being himself all and in all to the believer. So in Gal. i. 16, Paul speaks of the Son being revealed, not TO him, but IN him. Ye have received once for all the Spirit of life in Christ, now carry into practice that life in your walk. So in Galatians, Paul again says, If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Paul addresses those who have Christ, who love him, and in whom are shed abroad all the graces of the Spirit, because the Spirit itself dwells in them. For these he has admonitions, and exhortations, and precious teachings and promises, to declare and urge upon them. It has seemed strange to us, that men who are accustomed to reading carefully all other writings, and especially that which relates to the business affairs of men, should read the epistles so carelessly as to think that all they contain apply to all men. The very addresses at the head of the epistles, limit their application to the spiritual, and show that they are not for all men whether regenerate or not. This very truth has made our reading of the epistles very solemn at times, because of the grievous doubt as to whether any of them belong to us. We know that if not a child of God we have no part nor lot in any of the promises, admonitions or warnings, which they present. But we have sometimes been comforted and assured by remembering that all is spiritual, and all that is recorded in the word as belonging to the things of the Spirit, are for those who desire such things. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." And it is written that our God "opens his hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing." If not altogether deceived we do desire these things.

Now, to these who in the beginning of the epistle are called saints, and faithful brethren, and who are so called because they have received Christ Jesus the Lord, Paul writes, and upon them he urges a consistent walk. They had received him, as the connection shows, as head over all, as he in whom all fullness dwelt, as the

one who was before all things, and by whom they consist, who is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, and in whom all their salvation is found. They had received him as he by whom they hoped to be presented holy and unblamable before God, and as he who dwelt in them the hope of glory. And Paul speaks earnestly of his anxiety lest by some means they should be drawn aside from Christ, through the allurements of vain philosophy, and the traditions of men, after the worldly rudiments or principles which always underlie all the reasonings of men. He was also anxious for them, lest they should allow themselves to be drawn into an observance of days, and meats, either in thinking it needful to regard days, or in thinking that meats must not be eaten, and he exhorts them to have nothing to do either with what he calls vain philosophy, or with Jewish observances, as though salvation was to be found in these things. He is anxious that they should hold the head only, which is Christ, as he from whom they are to be nourished, and by whom they are to be guided in all things. In other words, he was anxious that Christ should be all and in all to them; that Christ should be formed in them alone as the hope of glory. Thus they had received Christ, and thus he desired that they should continue in him.

That to which brother Varnes desired special attention to be given is the walk of which the apostle speaks. To this we also desire to call special attention. It seems very evident that the apostle here has more particularly in view, an adherence to the truth, that Jesus Christ is all and in all, in this matter of salvation. Thus he had preached Christ to the Colossians, and thus they had received him. Paul had taught that the wisdom of men was foolishness, and the righteousness of men was but filthy rags, and that all true wisdom, and that all true righteousness dwelt alone in this Jesus whom he preached. He had taught that in the cross alone was salvation to be found from the curse of sin, and in the indwelling of Christ alone was salvation to be found from the dominion and power of sin. This they had also found; they had begun, as had the Galatian brethren, in the Spirit, now they must not think that their perfections, or the completion of the work, was to be found either in human wisdom or righteousness. Neither philosophy nor rituals could add to this work. Indeed, Paul teaches that he who regards human philosophy or wisdom, and he who regards legal observances, alike forsake Christ, and are robbed of their best and only true heritage. So, as the connection shows, to walk in Christ, first of all, means to adhere to him, to still look for and expect all their salvation from him, and to find in him grace as each day requires. In this matter of salvation, whether for time or eternity, Christ is all in all. Walk in him as your hope of future glory, walk in him as your strength in weakness, as your comfort in trial, as your joy in affliction, as your righteousness when you err, as your only help and hope under all the circumstances of life. When Satan charges grievous faults against you, when conscience does much condemn, and you must confess that you cannot plead innocent to whatever is of evil report, and that standing alone before God you cannot answer him one of a thousand of your many sins, then plead alone that Jesus has died, and that he lives again, and that therefore none can lay anything to your charge. O, how blessed to have such living faith

as enables us to say when guilty before God, Jesus died, and to ask no more than this, and to rest in it as our all-sufficient plea.

The Galatians were not walking in him when they went back to the weak and beggarly elements of the world, and desired to be again in bondage to them. When among the Gentiles believers were drawn to human wisdom, and to a looking to their own reasonings instead of Christ, they were not walking in Christ. Some that we know have never come into the full liberty of gospel, and so do not walk in Christ. Some, who once seemed to have been led into this liberty, have been entangled again in the thought of some human effort being needful to salvation. Some whom we once knew, and who, as we still believe, are subjects of the rich and reigning grace of God, have gone into spiritualism, universalism or something else which rejects Christ as being all and in all to the soul. All these are not walking in Christ, as they received him. In their present faith they are walking out of Christ, and not in him. They are indeed still embraced in the redemption which is in him, and are saved in him, but are not now possessing the joy of that salvation. They are not walking in the fellowship, and love, and mercy of Christ. How pitiable is their condition! No wonder that Paul, who knew so well what emptiness there was in all these things, and how starving was that soul who had forsaken the bread of life for the husks of worldly wisdom and righteousness, was so anxious that they should beware of these things. Let the world call them fools, he still would have them know nothing but Christ; nothing else could save; nothing else could satisfy.

But, as brother Varnes has suggested, there is not only a walking in Christ in the faith and life of Christ, as seen in the doctrine and in holding to it, but there is a walking in him outwardly, or in the life which we live in the presence of men. This first walking is more in the heart, and in the daily exercises of that heart, but this other walking can be seen of men, and this is the walk to which he refers, when in Corinthians, he says, that the life of Christ is made manifest in our mortal flesh, or in our mortal body.

We heard that at the time of the funeral of our beloved brother Bundy, whose ministry was so dear and sweet to so many here in the east, one who lived in his village, and who was not one in faith with him, said, "I would rather have the religion of Elder Bundy, than that of any man that I ever knew." This man could only judge the outward. life of Elder Bundy; in his outward life he walked in Christ. Perhaps this neighbor did not know the Christ in whom he walked, but he saw the faithfulness to all his obligations, the honesty, and sobriety, and earnestness of faith which was in him, and this manner of life commended itself to him, as that which he would desire above all things under the name of religion, that he had ever seen. This was walking in Christ indeed.

In receiving Christ, we receive not only the assurance of complete justification in him, but we receive him as that one who through holiness, through all kindness and charity of life, through all submission to the will of God in the sorrows of the way, was altogether lovely. This in Jesus we come to love, and as this altogether lovely Savior comes to dwell in the heart, it begets a love of what he was, and of what he loved. Over such an one the dominion of sin is broken, and such an one so loves all that is holy, that he desires above all things that this holi-

ness of Spirit may also be manifest in the holiness of his outward life. But there are many temptations to wrong conduct, as well as to false doctrine, and both alike rob the believer of his true joy. So David, when he had come to realize that he had sinned, also knew that the joy of his salvation was gone, and he did desire, and so prayed, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me by thy free Spirit." This means, Do not suffer me to fall again, as I have done before. It is concerning these departures of life that the apostle said, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," and, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men."

It is declared by inspiration that the Lord requires only this of man, "To do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." But when unregenerate religionists walk with all outward correctness of life, the effect is that instead of walking humbly with God, they like the pharisee of the parable, become boastful, and in heart, and by word of mouth exalt themselves. They come to think that their superior holiness and zeal demand some reward from God himself. How differently does the true believer feel when he does justice and loves mercy. The very grace which enables him so to do, so works in him, that instead of being exalted, he is humbled, and can but say, Who or what I am, that so great mercy should be vouchsafed to me? Yea, so great is his view of the righteousness of God which he loves, that the most careful, just and merciful life, which he has been enabled to live, seems to him, as it is indeed, infinitely short of what God requires, and of what he desires to attain to. If he prays, or hears, or reads; if he shows all charity toward his fellow-men; if he sacrifices all ease, and comfort, and friends, and honor, and his good name; if indeed in the sight of men, he be without any flaw in all his life, still he realizes that he has not yet attained to the heights of righteousness which he desires, and which he must have if at last he shall bear the image of the Savior who has redeemed him. Thus Paul could say, long years after he was called to be an apostle, "I am the chief of sinners." Notice he did not say, I WAS the chief of sinners but am NOW a better man. "Of whom I AM chief," was his language. He who has by grace approached nearest to a perfect life, is the one who will feel to be furthest away from that life. He that walks most humbly before God is the one that most loves mercy, and who has come nearest to doing justice. Walking humbly before God tends to produce the other two things, and loving the other two things will cause that one to feel that he always comes short altogether of what he loves, and so in turn tends to humble him before God. These three things cannot be disjoined.

No wonder then that the apostle in the text, joins together the walking in Christ with the receiving of him. He would show his brethren that the life of a believer is something more than morality. What to a man of the world is outward morality, to the believer is a walking in Christ. That is, while both the believer and unbeliever may do precisely the same things, so far as men can judge, in the case of the one, it is unto Christ, while in the case of the other, it is unto himself. Walking in Christ means doing all to the glory of God, even as did Christ. Walking in Christ is doing the good things that we do, with the Spirit of Christ; it is walking in love to others, and not to self; it is without selfishness, and with an eye single to the glory of

God. If we have received all in receiving Christ, let us so walk as to render to Christ all the praise. This is letting the true light, which is kindled in our hearts, so shine before men, that they shall glorify, not ourselves, but God in us.

Is it our desire to so walk, as the apostle directs, in Christ? Then we shall not be found where believers do not congregate; then we shall esteem the companionship of saints more precious than all association with the great and noble of earth; then we shall choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Walking with Christ does not mean attending theaters, dance halls, gambling parties, or mingling in the gaities of earth, however innocent they may seem. Walking in Christ means walking where he walked; it means separation from the world in a very real sense; it is separation in spirit, followed by separation in our thoughts, feelings, desires, habits and associations; it means a readiness to deny ourselves and to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; it means seeking to glorify God in all things, in our bodies and our spirits which are his. Walking in Christ, living in Christ, means to be shut in from the world, and its feelings, thoughts and ways. If a believer does not so live that the world itself will say, He is not as we are, he is not walking in Christ.

O, how solemn are the words of the text; we have not begun to measure their heights and depths; what sweetness is in them, and yet what fear they produce; the sweetness of the true life, the life which we have in Christ, is in them, and the fear that through not walking in Christ, but walking after the flesh, we shall die. O, says one, "I do not want, I cannot bear to turn my back upon the King, because his countenance is glorious, and seeing him is my happiness and rest, while looking away from him is darkness and distress." God is himself our exceeding great reward. It is not a reward which he holds out in his hand, that we want, but we want him. Himself is our joy, and life, and all. Paul knew this, and so he said, "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him."

It is our hope that brother Varnes, and others also, may find some suitable word in what we have here written. We are persuaded that our brother knows more of what these words mean than we can possibly write. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

JOHN V. 40.

ELDER BEEBE:—Will you oblige a friend by giving through the columns of your paper, your views on John v. 40? which reads as follows: "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." Is not coming to Christ set forth as a condition, the fulfillment of which is requisite to the attainment of the life here mentioned? And can we not reasonably infer that by coming unto him aright, they whom he addressed might have secured this life? And lastly, does not the power of refusing to come unto Christ, herein attributed to his auditors, imply also the possession, on their part, of the power to come unto him?

ALPHA.

REPLY.

WE cannot in this number afford the amount of space which a full discussion of this subject requires, embracing as it does substantially the grand issues contested by the advocates of the truth of God on the one hand, and the champions of human power and free agency on the other. This has been the grand point of religious controversy ever since sin entered into the world. The doctrine of the ability of man to stretch forth his hands and help himself to the fruit of the tree of life, and eat and live forever, was first

insinuated in the garden of Eden by the devil, and was fully implied by his words to Eve, "Thou shalt not surely die," and that insinuation was acted out in the transgression of Adam and Eve, and still more fully exemplified by Cain, when he presented the fruits of his own labor, and production of the earth which then groaned under the curse of Jehovah, as a ground of acceptance before God. All the errors and delusions which have prevailed on the subject of religion, from that period to the present, were amply set forth in the type, as Jude declares of all who pervert the truth, "Woe unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain."—Jude 11. Cain's way was the very opposite of God's way, which was signified in the offering of a lamb, which directed the faith of Abel to the Lamb of God, as the only offering which could perfect forever them that are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called.

The carnal, unregenerate Jews, to whom Christ addressed the words of our text, were in the way of Cain, looking for acceptance with God on the grounds of their own works, while they had not the word of God abiding in them, by which all who are born again are quickened, "Of an incorruptible seed, by the word of the Lord which liveth and abideth forever." These Jesus knew had not that living word in them, therefore they were destitute of eternal life. And yet they thought they had eternal life in the Scriptures. The Scriptures which they had, and in which they believed that they had eternal life, were the Old Testament Scriptures, for the New Testament was not at that time in the hands of mortals, and as they relied on the law or Old Testament for life, they were admonished to search that record, for instead of affording assurance that they had life in the law, or in their works of obedience to the law, all that was written in the law, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, (which comprised all of their Scriptures) was written concerning Christ, as he told the two disciples immediately after his resurrection, and as he told these Jews in connection with the words of our text, "They," namely, the Scriptures in which they thought they had eternal life, "are they which testify of me." "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." Christ is life. "This is the true God and eternal life." But as Paul bore record of his kindred according to the flesh, that "they being ignorant of God's righteousness, [which is Christ] and going about to establish their own righteousness," which in another place he says is by the law, or by their own works, they thereby rejected the righteousness of God. Just so in regard to Christ, as the life and immortality of his body, the church, the Jews saw in him no attraction to draw or incline them to him; he was to them as a root out of dry ground, in whom they saw no form or comeliness. All this was, as he told them in the connection, because his word or life was not in them, and no man, either Jew or Gentile, ever had a will to come to Christ for life, until they were quickened by the indwelling of the word of God. None are willing until the day of Christ's power, for it is God that worketh in his people, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Having made these preliminary remarks we will now attend to the interrogatives stated by Alpha.

1. Is not coming to Christ set forth as a condition, the fulfillment of which is requisite to the attainment of the life here mentioned? We answer most emphatically, it is not. In the connection, as we have

already noticed, Christ is not offering to make a bargain or contract with these carnal Jews, nor is he making proposals to them, nor stating terms and conditions, overtures, nor offers of any kind whatever. But he is simply defending himself from the aspersions and blasphemies which the Jews had uttered against him, and in doing so he uncovers the hypocrisy and dishonesty of his accusers, proving that the word of life is not in them, or in other words, that they were in a carnal, unregenerate state, by two conclusive evidences, namely, their unbelief in him, and their indisposition to come to him for life. If they were truly the children of God, as they professed to be, they would believe on him. That Jesus spake of their unbelief, as a testimony that they were not what they pretended to be, is very evident from many expressions. "And ye have not his word in you; for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not."—Verse 38. This was a conclusive evidence that they were not born of God, for he said, "But ye believe not, because ye are not my sheep; as I said unto you, My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."—John x. 26, 27. The faith that accompanies salvation is a fruit of the Spirit, and is implanted in the incorruptible seed which produces a new and spiritual birth. Therefore he said, "Verily, verily I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life."—John v. 24. None therefore believe on him until they are passed from death unto life; consequently faith cannot precede life, nor be a condition on the performance of which life is to be obtained. This then, as we have said, is one conclusive evidence that the Jews, unto whom our text was addressed, were ungodly and unregenerated men.

Another evidence, equally as conclusive, is given in our text: "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." For he that cometh unto God must believe that he is, &c. And without faith it is impossible to please God. Now, as no man can have faith or believe in Christ until he has eternal life in him, and as without that faith and belief in Christ, none have any will, desire or inclination to turn away from the works of the law, to look for life in Jesus Christ, the fact that these unbelieving Jews had no will or disposition to look to Jesus Christ for life and immortality, was another evidence that they had not passed from death unto life.

In further demonstration of the correctness of our position, that coming to Christ is not set forth in our text, or anywhere else in the Scriptures, as a condition, &c., we quote the words of our Lord in this same chapter, John v. 21, "For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." This text fully defines the manner in which Christ quickens or gives life to the dead, and it is in a way just as independent of conditions, means, instrumentalities and human agencies, as is the resurrection of the dead, so that if we conclude that any willing or doing of the sinner is required as a condition, on the performance of which eternal life is to be attained, we shall be compelled to also believe that the inanimate tenents of the graves will be required to comply with some conditions, or remain in their graves unresurrected for evermore. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, &c., even so the Son quickeneth. And the manner of both is clearly stated in the same chapter, verses 25–29, "Verily, ver-

ily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth," &c. The quickening and resurrection of them who are in the graves, will be effected in the same way that the heavens and the earth were created; the voice of God, who said, Let them be made, and they were made, without any previous means-using on the part of the things which were called forth into existence by the voice of God. So in the resurrection, The Lord shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, and the voice of the archangel and the trump of God shall sound, and the dead shall be raised, and all this without any previous arrangements or agency of the dead. And the giving of spiritual life to dead sinners, and their passage from death unto life, Jesus says, is even so. But if the Father raiseth up the bodies of the dead by his own almighty power, independently of any performance on their part, and the Son of God quickeneth dead sinners, on their performance of certain conditions, then the one would not be even as the other, but there would be a very striking contrast. Still another demonstration of our position is found in the express declaration of the Holy Ghost, Romans ix. 16, "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." Now if the words of the Redeemer, "And ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life," imply that either their willing or their running or coming to Christ, were conditions, the performance of which was requisite to the attainment of that life, then Paul was mistaken, and is found a false and unreliable witness of God unto us. If life is attained by our willing and acting, why has the Holy Ghost, by Paul, told us in just so many words that it is not so?

Once more. If eternal life and salvation is obtained by anything that men can will or do to secure it, then it is by works, and if it is by works, it is no more of grace, otherwise work is no more work. But the Arminian is effectually headed off at this point, for God, by the apostle, has emphatically declared, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. ii. 8–10.

The second interrogative of Alpha seems to imply that there are more ways than one of coming to Christ. He asks, *And can we not reasonably infer that by coming to him aright, they whom he addressed might have secured this life?* We find no such discrimination in the text, nor is there anything in the book of God to favor the idea that there is a right and a wrong way. Christ has declared emphatically, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me."—John xiv. 6. It is totally impossible that this text can imply a possibility for any man in an unquickened state to come to Christ without a palpable contradiction of what he has said, John vi. 44, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." The total inability of all men to come to Christ by any

power of will or works that they possess in their lost and helpless state, or until drawn by the Father, is so plainly written that none but infidels will dare to deny it. The power to bring them to Christ is in God, even the Father, and they are unable to move towards Christ until God the Father exerts that power which is exclusively in him. And whenever and wherever God the Father exerts that sovereign power, and draws a sinner to Christ, Christ has pledged his word that he will raise up that sinner at the last day. And this drawing power shall assuredly be exerted in all who are ordained to eternal life, for Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." —John vi. 37. The apostle John testifies to the church of God, that this is the record that God hath given us (the saints) eternal life, and this life is in his Son; he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." And Paul testifies that this life is hid with Christ in God, and also that Jesus Christ, who is the only and blessed Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, only hath immortality (or eternal life) dwelling in the light, *which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen nor can see*, to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen. (1 Tim. vi. 16.)

The third and last interrogative of Alpha reads thus, *And lastly, does not the power of refusing to come unto Christ, herein attributed to his auditors, imply also the possession, on their part, of the power to come unto him?* As there is nothing either said or implied in the text about his auditors refusing to come to him, we shall only treat it as a baseless quibble. In the whole subject our Lord has denied the claims of these carnal, workmongrel Jews, to the possession of eternal life, and proved their destitution of that life by their utter destitution of either will or power to come to him for life. He neither says nor implies that that life had ever been offered to them, or that they had refused it, for it has never been offered either to them or to any other beings in earth or heaven. It is nowhere called an offer, but he says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give [not offer] to them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand."—John x. 27.

In conclusion we will say to our unknown querist, Alpha, we have complied with your request; read what we have written candidly, compare our views with the Scriptures of truth, especially those portions of the Scriptures to which we have referred, and if you can finally manage to keep the doctrine of free will and human ability upon the throne, in your judgment, we shall be compelled to regard you as occupying the same position which was occupied by the carnal, workmongrel Jews, who had neither the will nor the ability to come to Christ, that they might have life, who, in their ignorance of God's righteousness, were going about to establish their own righteousness, a righteousness from which we must be delivered or perish forever.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., August 1, 1858.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$447 80
A friend, Kentucky	2 00
Total to date	$449 80

MARRIAGES.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, March 17th, 1901, at the home of the bride, near Millsville, Worcester Co., Md., Franklin R. Jones and Della V. Shockley, both of said County.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—**Elder William L. Beebe,** at his late residence in Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., March 28th, 1901, aged 71 years, 5 months and 25 days. Decease was due to an unexpected and aggravated return of the unfavorable features in his illness of last summer.

The following data may, in some instances, be slightly inaccurate, but the facts related are reliable.

Elder Wm. L. Beebe, son of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, was born Oct. 3d, 1829, at New Vernon, Orange Co., N. Y. At the age of twelve years (January, 1842,) he was baptized by his father in the fellowship of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church. On September 16th, 1849, he was happily married to Miss Ella Welch, at Middletown, N. Y. They resided in Middletown over a year, when they moved to Lexington, Oglethorpe Co., Ga. Three children were born of this union, all of whom are living: Miss Kate V. Beebe, of Warwick, N. Y.; Mrs. Louisa Macdonald, of Ridgetown, Ontario, Canada, and Mrs Ella B. McColl, of Winnipeg, Manitoba. Upon moving to Lexington, Ga., Elder Beebe published and issued a periodical devoted to the Old School Baptist cause under the title, *Southern Baptist Messenger*. He continued to edit and publish the *Messenger* until compelled to cease in 1862 by the Civil War. When this occurred he was living in Covington, Newton Co., Ga., having moved there in 1852, and in this place his wife died, April 3d, 1857.

About the time of his marriage in 1849 he began to publicly exercise his gift of speaking comfortably to the Lord's people, and from that time to the end of his pilgrimage he faithfully dispensed the gospel committed to him wherever in Providence a door was opened. In July, 1858, he was married to Mrs. John Hawkins, the widowed daughter of Elder James Henderson. The latter was a widely known and highly esteemed Old School Baptist minister of middle Georgia, and was regarded among the churches of that section with the same respect that Elder Gilbert Beebe maintained in the north and eastern associations. Of this marriage there were born three children, two of whom are living: Mrs. Lummie Macdonald, of Muirkirk, Ontario, Canada, Mrs. Larue Clark, of the same place, and James Gilbert Beebe, deceased 1865.

In the fall of 1864 he was captured by the Union army and confined as a prisoner of war at Camp Chase, Ohio, for nine months. In that place, midst scenes of awful suffering and privation, the Lord mercifully preserved his life and continued him in the preaching of the gospel of his Master. He was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry in September, 1865, by the Hollis Spring Church, Newton Co., Ga. His residence continued at Covington, Ga., until April, 1876, when he moved to Melbourne, Ontario, Canada, to assist Elder Wm. Pollard as pastor of the Covenanted Old School Baptist Church of Ontario. During this period his wife died at Melbourne, July, 1880. In the spring of 1881 he moved to Middletown, N. Y., and in association with his brother, Benton L. Beebe, edited the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. This connection was maintained until 1896. In July succeeding his return from Canada he accepted the pastoral care of the church at Warwick, N. Y., and took up his residence there in April, 1882. On April 26th, 1883, he was married to Miss Tillie A. Scott, of Oswego, N. Y., who survives him. One daughter, Miss Florence S. Beebe, was born of this marriage. She as well as all his other children are substantial members of the Old School Baptist Church. In Georgia, from the time Elder Joseph Purington went to Virginia until 1876, Elder Beebe was pastor of the Shoal Creek and Hollis Spring churches. During the nineteen years of his pastoral care of the church at Warwick he also served the Ebenezer Church of New York city at stated intervals, where his labors were blessed to the ingathering of many members. He leaves the record of having discharged his office well wherever his lot has been cast, and intelligence of his decease will occasion grief to all who knew him, for he was beloved by all with whom he came in contact. As a devoted husband, loving father and kind friend, few there are in this world to compare with him. Considerate and tender-hearted to an eminent degree, he at all times knew how to speak a word in season to comfort others in trouble, and as a counselor in times of trial his wisdom could ever be relied on. The gospel he preached was the gospel of love. He lived it; it shone forth in his every word and deed; God was glorified in him, Jesus was revealed in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

He was an able expounder of the Scriptures, and was fearless in denouncing any qualification of God's sovereignty. "Permit" and "limit" were unintelligible words to him with reference to the good will and pleasure of God. Controversy on such subjects he would not engage in, for he walked in the apostles' doctrine, and from all deniers of the power of God he turned aside. Elder Beebe was widely known. He traveled extensively during his public life of half a century, and once met he was never forgotten. The Old School Baptists generally will mourn his decease, and the churches he served will most keenly feel their loss. May the God of all comfort make known his presence to them in this affliction.

There was a very large attendance at the funeral service held Monday, April 1st, in the meeting-house at Warwick. Many came long distances and from various States to pay their last tribute of respect to his memory, and to mourn with those that mourned.

The following ministers acted as bearers, and took part in the exercises: Elders Rittenhouse, Hubbell, Francis, Chick, Ker and McConnell. The text used was from Romans viii. 11.

The remains rest in the receiving vault of the Warwick Cemetery, whence they will shortly be removed to New Vernon and interred beside the grave of his father. In the love and esteem which all our people felt for Elder Beebe the bereaved family have the assurance of sincere sympathy, and of sorrow in a mutual loss.

JOHN McCONNELL.

MEMORIAL.

Whereas, It has proved the will of Almighty God, our heavenly Father, to remove from the field of labor as a gospel minister, our dearly loved brother, **Elder William L. Beebe**, therefore,

Resolved, That while we deeply feel and mourn the loss of a true and faithful minister of Jesus Christ, whose love for the truth and people of God, and whose consistent walk and heavenly conversation endeared him to all who knew him, we desire to acknowledge the sovereignty of God in his dealings with his people, be it in providence or in grace. We also desire to record our gratitude to the God of all grace, the Father of mercies, for the bestowal upon our departed brother of so great and so useful a gift, and that we as a people were favored to be comforted and edified under his ministration of the things of the kingdom.

Resolved, That we do deeply sympathize with our brethren and sisters constituting the church at Warwick, New York, in the loss of their dear pastor, and with the bereaved family and numerous friends.

Resolved, That these resolutions be spread upon the minutes of this meeting as a portion of our church record, and that a copy be sent to our dearly loved sister Beebe, the widow of our departed brother, and a copy to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for publication.

Adopted by the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, of New York city, at a regular church meeting held April 7th, 1901.

JOHN McCONNELL, Moderator.

A. W. RITTENHOUSE, Clerk.

Rutson Rudolph Leonard, of Bloomville, N. Y., son of Dr. D. M. Leonard and Vashtie McHench Leonard, and grandson of Henry Leonard, was born June 3d, 1868, at Broome Centre, N. Y. His preparatory education was obtained in the district schools, at a select school at Broome Centre, at Stamford, at Hartwick and at Starkey Seminaries, all of New York. He began to read medicine in 1885, with his father, at their home in Broome Centre, attended lectures at the medical department of the University of Vermont, Burlington, and at University Medical College, New York city, from which he received the degree of M. D., in March, 1890, and one post graduate course at the Medical College of the University of Vermont, at Burlington, summer session of 1890. He practiced medicine at Bloomville for eight years, having a very lucrative practice, but poor health compelled him to give it up and return to his father's home. He was a member of both the Schoharie and Delaware County medical societies. It was his chief delight to have opportunities to give relief to his suffering fellow beings. It has been said many times that he never refused to visit or comfort the poor when called upon in his profession. I have heard it remarked frequently since his death, "He was the poor man's friend." "He would go a long ways to relieve the poor when there was no money in it for him," and many more very similar expressions.

He married Oct. 12th, 1893, Miss Jessie A. Henderson, daughter of James and Nancy McNeilly Henderson, of Kortright, Delaware Co., N. Y. For seven days he suffered with pleuro pneumonia, and during the time not a groan or complaint escaped his lips, he seemed to say, "It is well." He was not a member, but had given us abundant evidence the past several years that all is well. He died March 16th, 1901, very easy, not a movement of a muscle to be seen. He leaves a wife, one child in her fourth year, his parents, three sisters. We feel our loss is his gain. A good man has fallen. We feel thankful that he could be home and have our care for the past three years, and during his last sickness.

D. M. LEONARD.

DIED—In Topsham, Maine, March 28th, 1901, **Sarah**, wife of Charles A. **Clough**, aged 66 years and 3 months. Sister Clough united with the Old School Baptist Church at Bowdoinham, Maine, thirty years ago. She was firmly established in the truth, and loved the doctrine of salvation by grace. She was a loving, faithful wife, and devoted mother. Her sufferings were great for many weeks, but she had no fear of death, was patient, reconciled to the Lord's will, and longed to be at rest. She leaves a husband, three brothers and one sister to sorrow because they will see her face no more. She was given to hospitality, and her house was a home for all lovers of the truth, "The excellent of the earth, in whom was all her delight." Our loss is great, for she loved the assemblies of the saints, and was always there unless sickness prevented. May God bless all those who mourn, and comfort their hearts, and reconcile us all to his will.

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

Charles McDonnald departed this life March 15th, 1901. He was 89 years, 6 months and 15 days old. He was born near West Milton, Miammi Co., Ohio, in the year 1811. He leaves one son, two daughters, and grandchildren to mourn their loss, but we hope their loss is his eternal gain.

The writer tried to speak a few comforting words to the mourning relatives, and a large body of friends and neighbors who had assembled to pay their last tribute of respect to the departed father and brother.

B. F. HUTCHINSON,

CELINA, Ohio.

JUST as we are about to close our forms for the press we receive the sad intelligence that our beloved brother, **Alfred S. Cook**, of Hopewell, N. J., passed away Friday, the 5th inst. We have not as yet received any of the particulars, but a suitable notice will doubtless be prepared for an early number of the SIGNS, by some of the brethren. Brother Cook has been for years very widely and favorably known among the brotherhood, and his house has ever been a home for all those who loved the truth, and the news of his death will be received with sadness by his many brethren and friends, but we have the blessed assurance that for him to die was gain. B.

MEETINGS.

THERE will be a May meeting held with the Fairview Church, Fulton Co , Pa., commencing on Friday before the first Sunday in May, lasting over Sunday. All coming will be met at Hancock station, Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, on Thursday. Would suggest that those coming write Elder Ahimaaz Mellott, Needmore, Pa. We especially ask that our brethren and sisters visit us on this occasion.

E. V. WHITE, Pastor.

THERE will be a May meeting held with Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va., commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in May, holding over Sunday. Trains from Washington city will be met at Herndon station, Southern Railroad. We hope our friends will make this a special time to visit us. We shall be glad to see all who may come. Our ministering brethren especially we hope to see.

E. V. WHITE, Pastor.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

BALTIMORE Association is appointed to be held with Tuscarora Church, in Pennsylvania, beginning Wednesday before the third Sunday in May, (15th) 1901, and continue three days.

DELAWARE Association is appointed to meet with the church at Cow Marsh, Kent Co., Delaware, beginning Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, (22d) 1901, and continue three days.

DELAWARE River Association is appointed to be held with the First Hopewell Church, at Hopewell, N. J., beginning on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (May 29th) 1901, and continue three days.

THE Warwick Association is appointed to be held with the New Vernon Church, Sullivan Co., N. Y., beginning Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, (5th) 1901, and continue three days.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 69. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1901. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ADAM-LIFE: CHRIST-LIFE.

MY BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—Christ is our life. So, naturally, Adam is our life. We were born with his breath of life. This is natural existence only. But the word says, "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." God did not give it to us in Adam. In him God gave us natural life or existence only, from which we grow up into our natural being, and derive all our natural capabilities and powers. "The first man is of the earth, earthy. * * * As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy." They are types and copies of Adam, they are born with his earthly being and nature, and they breathe his breath of life. So, also, they die his death; for the reason that when he sinned, and sinning, died, their vital being was in him. "In Adam all die." "Dying, thou shalt die." A sinful existence and being, although it may continue a hundred or a thousand years, is not life. "He that hath not the Son of God, hath not life." Wonderfully endowed in nature, and highly cultured he may be, yet he hath not life. The seal of death is impressed upon him; he is born under the law, born in sin, and born unto death, because of sin. "I am carnal, sold under sin." All in Adam are thus. "There is none righteous, no, not one." "They are all under sin." "Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "The wages of sin is death." "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." "That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." "Sin hath reigned unto death." This reign of sin is over all.

The above is the common inheritance of all who are in and of Adam, or of all earthy or natural people. Their natural life and being, which is now also sinful and corrupted, produces after its own kind. Every faculty and power of the natural man, in his whole being, springs from a corrupted life and nature, an unholy source, as unclean water from a polluted fountain, or as bad fruit from a corrupt tree. "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." Our perfect Teacher says again, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit." The word "that" is a pronoun, and it does not refer to a

property or faculty of man, but to man himself. So the next sentence says, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." The primary truth here taught is, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. * * * Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The kingdom of God is spiritual, heavenly and holy, as is God himself, and it is in unity and harmony with him. But not so is man as he is born of the flesh, as proven above. "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption," said inspired Paul. "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. * * * So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." This is a very strong denial, and shows an impossibility. The man who is born of the flesh is flesh, is in the flesh, he has not life, but only a fleshly and sinful existence; therefore he knows not God, neither does he love him, nor can he please him. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Being only natural, he has no spiritual discernment. The very highest and best that he is capable of is still natural, for it is a product of his natural life or being. All the religion and service and worship possible to the one who is born only of the flesh, is like himself, fleshly and natural. He may have a great zeal for God, and do many wonderful works in the name of Christ, and pride himself on his obedience to all gospel commandments, yet it is not according to spiritual knowledge, but all is fleshly, selfish and in the letter only. Neither he nor all his offerings and works can please God, because he is in the flesh, and all he is and does is fleshly and legal. All men who are of Adam are born in sin, and therefore born under the law; "For sin is the transgression of the law." Hence, all fleshly or natural religion and religious works and worship are legal, because they arise out of the Adamic life and nature, but not out of the Christ-life. Therefore, all the religion and service that man is capable of, naturally and morally, is tried and judged by the law of God, which, Paul says, "is holy, and just, and good." Now, the Scripture says, "There is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." "By the law is the knowledge of sin." So the holy law condemns and rejects all religious worship and work which have their source in the natural life of man, because of their fleshly and unholy nature. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Every one that is quickened by the Spirit and taught of God, experiences the truth of all this, and will confess with Paul, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." Paul wrote by inspiration, therefore the words, "my flesh," agree with the words of the Lord Jesus: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." It is the fruit of a fleshly or natural life, which is also carnal, sold under sin. Nothing holy and good, therefore, can arise from the flesh. Everything partakes of the nature of the life of which it is the offspring, and cannot be different nor more holy than the parent-life, but is like it in kind and quality. This is a universal law, ordained of God, the Creator and Law-maker.

The life of man endows him with a spirit and soul and body, mind and in-

tellect and heart; therefore he has a moral nature and is accountable to God, being under the law of God. But yet no attribute or faculty of a natural man can possibly arise higher than his life, nor become more holy, by any effort of his, nor by any cultivation it may receive. At his highest and best he "is flesh." So said the holy Son of God. Moses said, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Paul said, "That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven." Behold, how infinite the difference between the first man and the second man, the earthy and the heavenly, the natural and the spiritual. For the first is only a creature, a living soul; the second is the Lord, a quickening Spirit. The first man received natural life; the second Man gives spiritual life. The first man is corruptible; the second Man is immortal. By the first man came sin and death to all men in him; by the second Man comes righteousness and life to all men in him. By the first man came weakness and dishonor to his people; by the second Man comes power and glory to his people. Now, wherein is the secret of this wonderful difference between the two men? It is found in the *life* of each one. The first man was given the breath of life only, as a *creature* of God; the second Man inherited eternal life, as "the only begotten Son of God." Out of the life of Adam, and out of the life of Jesus, springs forth all the amazing developments and results alluded to above, as manifested unto and in all who are related to Adam, on the one hand, and unto and in all who are related to "the Lord from heaven," on the other hand. This relationship, both to the first man and to the second Man, is in the life of Adam, and in the life of Christ. As born of the flesh, we are in death union with Adam, because his is a sinful and forfeited existence; as born of the Spirit, we are in life union with Christ, because his is a righteous and eternal life. Therefore, his word to us is, "Because I live, ye shall live also." "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." This is the true life; it is the union of holiness and immortality. The Lord of life and glory, the Son of God, the second Adam, alone possesses it by inheritance from the eternal Father in its infinite fullness and power. To all the children of men who shall inherit it in Christ, it is the free gift of God, and is the expression of his everlasting love to his people, whom he hath chosen and blessed with all spiritual blessings in his beloved Son.

The creatureship of all the chosen people of God is in the life (the breath of life) of Adam. As partakers of this natural life, they are born of the flesh, and are the children and heirs of Adam, in whom they die. The sonship of all the redeemed of the Lord is in the life of Christ. As given this holy and eternal life, they are born of the Spirit, and are the children and heirs of God in Christ Jesus, in whom they live. The Scriptures fully reveal that in "the eternal purpose," God foreordained that the people of the new covenant should, at his appointed time, be born of the flesh, and should also be born of the Spirit, as Christ taught Nicodemus. The first birth manifests them as the Lord's sinful people under the law; the second birth manifests them as the children of God under grace. In both relations, therefore, they are the Lord's. The holy Son of God is

not ashamed to call them "brethren." For as the Son of man, Jesus was verily their Brother in the flesh, and as born of God, they are as truly his brethren in the Spirit. Of Jesus and his members and brethren, Paul therefore says, "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." This is a very mysterious, solemn and wonderful way of life unto holiness, for it is a continual experience of the suffering and death of Jesus unto sin in our mortal flesh, that his righteous life also might be manifested in its power over sin and death in our body, and that we should thus live unto God in Christ Jesus. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

Thus both the way and the end are feelingly presented to us, "that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope" in our tribulations in the flesh. We are taught the solemn truth of God in our twofold experience of death in Adam, and life in Christ, that we must suffer and die unto sin in the flesh, that we might rejoice and live unto righteousness in the Spirit. "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." The law of sin and death was upon the man in Adam, but Paul had become dead to this law by the crucified body of Christ, and therefore he was a new man in the risen Christ, in whom he lived a new life. He thus relates his experience of death and life: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." This is a profound and solemn way of righteousness unto life. It shows that all the life and righteousness of Paul was by the grace of God, and in the life of Christ, who lived in Paul. This is also true in all who are Christ's, and who live in him. Their faith embraces him as their life and righteousness, and in their experience they are made to know the truth that, "Neither is there salvation in any other."

The life of Christ is holy, immortal and eternal; it is spiritual, divine and of God the Father; therefore all its attributes, powers and operations are according to holiness, and are well pleasing unto God, who is infinitely holy. And it has been fully proven, and is confirmed in the experience of the children of God, that all the fruits of righteousness in them grow up out of the Christ-life in them, but never out of the Adam-life. The faith and hope and love of the children of God are in Christ, and spring forth out of his life. Of God the Father "are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." Christians, therefore, are forbidden to glory in Adam or man, or in themselves or the flesh. For out of the life of Adam in us, and out of

the spirit of the flesh or natural spirit, there cannot possibly arise any goodness or righteousness superior to or better than the corrupt fountain of the Adamic life and nature, which cannot please God, but all of which is rejected by his holy law. When we are given the mind that was in Christ, then we experience the truth of this, and desire with Paul to be found in Christ, "not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." This truly is dying, that we may live; sowing in tears, that we may reap in joy. Yet it is the way that our meek and lowly Redeemer went.

Let us consider him in the days of his flesh. He was verily a man, and the Son of man, for he was made of a woman, and made under the law, "for the suffering of death." "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." Thus and in this way only does he bring us to God; that is, in the way that he went to God before us and for us, through his death in the flesh for our sins, and by his quickening life in us. As a man in the flesh and under the law, Christ died. His death in the body of his flesh was the end of sin, and the fulfillment of the law. Likewise must we die with Christ before we shall live with him, and thus must we suffer with him before we shall reign with him. For it was in his resurrection from the dead that Christ abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, not through the law. Therefore, dear brethren, our life and righteousness and salvation is in Christ, the risen Christ, and in his life. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." How by his life? In answer, hear Paul again: "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved:) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." So we are quickened together with Christ in his risen life, and are raised up with him above the flesh and the law into heavenly places and heavenly service. Thus and in this way shall we be saved by Christ's life. With him we "pass from death unto life," and arise to "walk in newness of life," and serve God "in newness of spirit." Gospel baptism is the figure of this truth. In his new gospel kingdom, into which Christ was raised up out of death, he was a spiritual and new man, and no longer served under the law nor lived in the flesh, but in the Spirit. In his gospel kingdom, which is new, grace reigns, and all the service and worship in this kingdom is spiritual and by the grace of God. The only throne herein is the throne of grace. All the fruits herein are "the fruit of the Spirit." No works of the flesh, nor legal service, nor anything that is a fruit or product of the life of Adam, can be admitted in our risen Lord's new kingdom. For it is a holy and spiritual temple, the house of mercy, and it all goes up, even to the head-stone thereof, "with shoutings of, Grace, grace unto it." In all this wonderful way that Christ our forerunner went unto God, must we also follow him, and be made

like him, both in his death and in his life. "He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more" (after the flesh). Most clearly does Paul thus show that in entering into the kingdom of Christ, we are cut off from the fleshly life in Adam, to be henceforth known and accepted only in Christ Jesus. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Thus it is in Christ and his new kingdom. Paul again affirms this truth, saying, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."

Baptism solemnly represents a rising up out of death in Adam, into life in Christ. So the Lord's supper shows that Christ is our meat indeed, and our drink indeed; that Christ, who gives us eternal life, is also our bread of life, and our water of salvation, and that we live in him and by him, even as he liveth by the Father. All spiritual life, and all spiritual service and worship, with all righteousness and acceptable obedience unto the holy Father, arise only from the Christ-life in us, for in his life only are we righteous and obedient in the sight of God; but never do the fruits of righteousness and loving obedience to the Father in heaven spiring forth from the life and spirit of Adam in us, or from our natural spirit and volition, for all that is of Adam is fleshly and legal, selfish and sinful, and all this ends in death. "For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Such is the impassable gulf between the flesh and the Spirit.

Our life, our obedience, our righteousness, our acceptance, our love, our faith, our hope, our peace, our rejoicing, our worship, our praise, our glorying, our conquering, our triumphing, our prevalence in prayer, all our spiritual blessings, our salvation, our resurrection unto glory, our adoption unto the Father in heaven—all, all are in Christ and by him, to the praise of grace and the glory of God, who hath made us accepted in the Beloved." "The one thing needful, dearest Lord, is to be one with thee."

In the faith and hope and love of Christ, our life, your brother,

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind.

DARDANELLE, Ark., Dec. 3, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—The foregoing is the experience of sister Brinson. She is the widow of the late Elder John Q. Brinson, who was for many years a subscriber to your paper, and a warm friend to the doctrine it advocates. If you consider it worthy, please give it a place in the SIGNS. Most of it has been written fifteen or twenty years.

Affectionately,

MOLLIE JORDAN.

EXPERIENCE.

I have been requested by several brethren to write out my experience. My parents belonged to the Cumberland Presbyterian society; I cannot say Presbyterian church, for I believe there is but one church, and I am satisfied they are not it. I was taught, or believed, all that died under the age of twelve years would go to heaven, if they were good children. After they passed that age, if

they died before they got religion, they would go to torment. My father camped on a camp ground from the time I could recollect until I was ten or eleven years old. Now the time had come that I must get religion, for I did not know how soon I might die. At that time my brother and sister older than myself, went to the mourners' bench and got religion, and that made me feel very bad; I was crying, but I do not know what for, only I wanted religion. I commenced going to the mourners' bench, and went every opportunity, and would cry and pray for religion. They would tell me I must give my heart to the Lord, and say, "Here, Lord, I give myself away, 'tis all that I can do." They would tell me, "There was something I loved better than I loved Jesus; I would not give up all." Well, I did not know what it was, for I thought I would give anything in the world that I was in possession of for religion. They told me the fault was in me, and I believed it, and kept on going to the mourners' bench until I was in my seventeenth or eighteenth year. I then got religion at a Cumberland Presbyterian camp meeting, at the mourners' bench. Now some may think this is strange talk, but I do believe that right there and then I got the kind of religion that thousands are in possession of to-day. I do not want to be understood to say that no one was ever blessed at the mourners' bench, (as they call it) that is something that I cannot tell anything about. I will only tell where my religion led me: the first place it took me to was to that Presbyterian society. I had been sprinkled when a child, I only had to go there and shed some tears, and be asked a few questions. I was then equipped and ready to go on with my pharisaical religion. I thought I was just as good as anybody, and a great deal better than the ones that did not belong to any church. I was a communicant with all denominations, and would try to get some to go to the mourners' bench, and then would go and talk to them, and tell them about the same they had told me when I was there. I would then go home, and if there was a dance or play party far or near, I would go. My parents would not let me dance, and I knew if I did they would turn me out of that society. I would play cards and singing plays, and go back home and say my prayers once a day for awhile, because they said we ought to. I heard them talk about Old Hardshell Baptist preachers, how funny they would preach, and their heavenly tone. I was a grown girl before I heard one preach, I cannot tell whether it was before or after I got religion. My father moved from where we were raised to a little village, and was engaged in the mercantile business. We then started out in this proud world more than ever before. I did not care for anything on earth but to be dressed up and going somewhere. We then went to hear the Old Baptists, as they were generally called. I went to an association; there were eight or ten preachers there, they were all sitting in the pulpit. I looked at them, and thought they were the ugliest set of men that I ever saw, and if I belonged to that church I would be ashamed of such preachers, and would say they ought not to be allowed to preach. All I wanted to read was a magazine or novel. I never wanted to read the Bible, I would read it some because they said we ought to read it.

Now I have told you part of my religious life, it is something I seldom speak of, for it makes me blush to think of it. I will now begin, and try to tell

you the best I can, where and when I was changed. I was in my twenty-eighth or ninth year, thinking all this time that I had as good and as much religion as was needed to carry anybody to heaven when they died. Poor, deluded creature! I was at home when a calm feeling came on me; I felt to love everybody more than I had before, then it would pass off, and a sad, gloomy feeling would come over me. I would feel so bad I would wish it would go off, and I could feel calm and contented all the time, but could not. I would feel one way awhile and then the other, for several days. I then wanted to read the Bible, and it seemed to me I could understand every word I read. It appeared that I was learning something that I never knew before, and wanted to tell the family, but did not know how to begin to tell them. I did not want them to see me with the Bible too much, for I well knew they would laugh at me. I picked it up one evening after sunset and read until they called us in to prayer. (My father held family prayer every night.) I laid the book down and went in, but I cannot tell how that prayer sounded that night, it seemed to me that it was nothing. We all went back to our rooms, and I read until they all went to bed. I went and lay down, but not to sleep; as soon as I lay down there was an uneasiness came over me. I did not know what was the matter with me, I wanted to talk, but they were all in bed. I felt afraid; I do not know what I was afraid of; I thought maybe I was going to die, but was not sure of that. Finally I made an excuse to go to my stepmother's room for something, and when I started back I spoke to her, or my step-aunt, I cannot remember which one now, and said I wanted her to come in our room. When she came I said to her, You know they have been telling us, When the gospel was preached to all the world, then the "millennium" would come. I told her it was now. Next day I began telling them the Savior was here. It seemed to me they ought and must believe it, or they never would be saved. I told them their religion would do for them to live by, but it would not do to die by. I tried all day to get them to say yes they believed the Savior was there. At night they had all lain down but two of my sisters; I said to them, They would have to believe it. One of them said, "I believe it," and when she said that, it seemed a light from above dropped in my breast, and I cannot begin to tell how happy I felt. My first words were, "O Lord, convict sinners and convert mourners." My sister seemed to be as happy as I was. This caused my father to come to our room door. I said, "O papa, he is here and you will not acknowledge it." He spoke very ill to us and said, "We had better go to bed and stop that fuss." I then sank down, I did not seem to have much strength, though I would talk. I then told him the gospel had been preached to all the world. He said, "No, it had not; when that was preached to all the world, then Christ would come the second time and reign on earth a thousand years." That did not sound right to me. I told him he had been here the second time, he came and they crucified him, and he was buried, and he arose from the dead, and was here again on earth before he went away, and this Scripture came into my mind, "Smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered." I quoted it to him. He talked awhile and then went back to his room. I then said to my sisters, "Papa is wrong, he does not understand things right." I did not sleep any

that night. Next morning I did not know whether I was going to die or not. I commenced to tell them we were all saved. One of my sisters said to me, "You are under conviction." But I thought I had got religion several years before that. I kept on telling them that we were saved. It seemed to me that I wanted them to say yes, they believed it. I then took ma off to ourselves and asked her if she believed it? She said, "Yes." I then felt as happy as I did the night before. I said to her, Come now, and let us go and tell papa and the rest of the family. They would say, "Yes, if we would be good, and do good," but that did not sound exactly right. I told them if they believed as I did they would not have to die, and that my soul was not here, it was in heaven. I thought I never would see any more trouble, or have anything to do but talk and read the Bible. They all thought I was going crazy, and hid the Bible from me. When I was reading it seemed like there was a brighter light shining on the book than our common daylight. I told them if they did not give me that Bible I would go crazy. They gave it back to me. I then told my father I would like to be baptized. He said, "Well, the Presbyterians would baptize me if I wanted to be baptized." I had then began to feel troubled about something, I did not know what; it seemed to me that I must do something or tell something, but my folks had got so worried with me they would not listen at me talk, and would try to get me to hush, and that would make me feel worse. And I reckon if I had had an opportunity their so-called preachers would have baptized me. But I thank God they did not. I wondered if there was anybody in the world that believed like I did. I would think of an Old Baptist preacher that preached the second Sunday in each month, five miles from where we lived; I wanted to see him, but when I saw him I did not feel much like talking. I talked some to him, and he asked me who told me these things, and said, "Aggie, if you believe that, all the men and devils in the world cannot make you believe anything else." I had not been troubled about being baptized then. I thought all that professed to be christians were good people. I went about not caring much for anything. I loved everybody better than I ever did before. I had quit talking, but was in a deep study all the while. That light seemed to be going away, until it finally left me as suddenly as it came. I cannot tell the trouble I was in now; I was sure I was going to die this time, I had no idea that I would live until daylight, and when morning came I did not think I would live to see the sunset. I had never been troubled about being lost until now. I had told them before this that all of my sins were pardoned; I now felt to be the meanest person on earth; I did not feel fit to live there with the family. I thought then that the Scripture read this way, Repent, believe and be baptized. And I had believed, and now was repenting, and I thought I was lost, for nobody ever felt as happy as I once did, and feel so miserable as I do now. I thought God had cast me off, and I was lost; no hope for me now. I thought now that it was me that was wrong, and they were right, and better than I was, and I wanted them to pray for me, I could not pray I thought now that I had no soul, that when I died and was buried that would be the last of me. I told them that my soul left me, when that trouble came I was so sure that repentance was before belief that I was now gone world without end. My

step-aunt was a Methodist, and I concluded I was one, and had fallen from grace, and that was the cause of my trouble. I told her that I had. What to do or say I could not tell; I did not want to hear anything talked about but the Scriptures. There was a family lived near us who had been raised by Old Baptist parents, and they were more company and comfort to me than all my religious friends or kin folks, though none of them pretended to be religious. If I had any relatives in the world that were Baptists I did not know it. It was all over the neighborhood that I was going crazy. I went on a visit twenty-five or thirty miles from home, and was gone three months. At this time that trouble and fear had left me to some extent, and a desire to be baptized had become greater. I was with Presbyterians most of the time while on my visit. I would hear them talk of the water fowls, and say they would have to do something to put a stop to them, they were getting too numerous. If anything was said about an Old Baptist it would be some joke told on them, to put them down as low as possible. Now I thought I loved all, and such talk as that troubled me; that was not what I wanted to hear. And it was that Old Baptist preacher that I mentioned awhile ago that I wanted to see most, and to hear him preach. I said to some of them, "When I go home I am going to join the Missionaries and be baptized." I thought it never would do to say the Old Baptists, and still they were the ones I wanted to see and be with, but I had no idea I would ever join them, but I did think I would join the Missionaries. I started home on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1869. I went within ten miles of home, and stopped to hear this old preacher. I was well acquainted with him and all of the members. I went on Saturday and Sunday both. I thought it was the best preaching I ever heard; I felt like I had got just where I had wanted to be for some time; they talked about such things as I wanted to hear, and my desire to be baptized now was greater, and I did love them so well and felt so much like I was at home, that I said to some of them, "I would love to be baptized and live with them," and one old lady said, "Well, come on and go with us." I then thought of my folks and said, "What would papa say?" She then quoted to me, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." I went home on Monday. The next Sunday I went to hear the Missionaries. I never had felt a desire to hear them since my trouble, like I did the Old Baptists, and still I thought I would join them. They both preached in the same house. I did not like the preaching that day, I could not tell why, I loved them all, but that preaching did not sound like the preaching I heard the week before. On the second Sunday in September was the time for the old preacher to preach again. I was ready to go down on Saturday to hear him; I felt like I was at home again when I was there with them. I went up and sat on the front seat, never thinking of them noticing me. The first Sunday in October I went to hear the Missionary again, but I never got to the front seat, and why I cannot tell. I was as well acquainted with that congregation as I was the other. I went back home, and knowing my folks would be so bitterly opposed to me joining the Old Baptists, I thought I would pick up my magazine and papers and read and enjoy myself as I once did, but I could not. By the second Sunday in November my desire to

join the Old Baptists become greater, and I told one of my sisters I was going to join them and be baptized, and she told papa. He would not let me go on Saturday; I cried over it awhile, and thought I would content myself and live just as I was, but on Sunday he let us go. When I got there I went to the front seat, and when the door of the church was opened I went, but did not feel like talking any. I was completely in the dark, and it seems to me that I have been there ever since. They received me into the fellowship of the church. Brother Moudy asked me a few questions and I answered them. It was five weeks from the time I joined until I was baptized. I saw my brother-in-law, and told him I was going to be baptized; he said, "Well, I wish the preacher would drown you," but he did not drown me. I came out of the water feeling no better nor worse. I loved those people more than any people on earth, before I went in the water, and it was the same when I came out, and ever has been with me, I love them yet above all others. Two of my sisters went to see me baptized. I went home with my step-uncle; he and his wife were Primitive Baptists; I stayed with them a week. When I went back home they said nothing to me about being baptized, or I to them; I soon learned that they did not know anything spiritually, and it was impossible for me to teach them anything. And from that day to this I never have wanted to hear that abominable stuff preached. If there are any men on earth that preach the truth but the Primitive Baptists, I have never yet heard them, and I am inclined to the opinion that they are not here. I am now getting old, if I live until the fifth day of January I will be sixty-one years old, and according to the course of nature I will not be here a great while longer, and my desire and prayer is that my children may never be led off by false teachers, and they are numerous, compassing sea and land to make proselytes, and when they are made, they will most assuredly persecute the Primitive Baptists. I am sorry for them, they know not what they do. If it is the Lord's will he can open their blind eyes, unstop their deaf ears, and give them an understanding heart.

I am sitting here writing, feeling lonely and sad, not knowing that I know anything about spiritual things, but there is one thing I do know, and that is, the things I once loved I now hate, and the things I once hated I now love, and "We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren," and I do love them, and they do not look so ugly to me as they once did. And I do know if I am ever saved it will not be by any good work that I ever did, or can do; it will be by grace alone, and none of my works in it, and I am glad of it.

AGGIE J. BRINSON.

GREENWOOD, Colo., Dec. 28, 1900.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—You will find inclosed two dollars, for which renew my subscription to the SIGNS another year. It seems to me that I could not get along without the SIGNS, as we have but little preaching out here in this western country. I am well pleased with the paper, for it always comes to me well laden with glad tidings of great joy; I am well pleased with the editorials, as well as with the communications, they are a perfect feast to my soul often. You will find inclosed a narration of experience written by my sister; if you deem it worthy, I should like to see it printed in the SIGNS.

I united with this little church at

Greenwood, Colorado, the first Saturday in August, and was baptized in September, by brother D. W. Owens, from Illinois, who was visiting here for his health, with his wife. He came here from Colorado Springs to preach for us in last January, August and September, but has now gone home. Brother Perdue is our nearest minister. He lives over one hundred miles away. Both he and brother Owens are sound Primitive Baptist ministers; they are servants of God, and we believe them to be worthy of our praise.

I did not intend to write so much, I only intended to renew my subscription for the SIGNS. You are at liberty to publish this letter if you deem it worthy. I am a poor, unlearned and feeble worm of the dust, and not worthy to lisp the Savior's name. Now may the Lord uphold and sustain you in all your labors through this coming year, as he has in the past. Will you pray for an unworthy one like me when you come to a throne of grace?

Your little sister,

SARAH E. HIGBEE.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—For many years I have desired to tell you of my little experience and hope in the grace of God, but I have felt so unworthy that I have put it off until now, but it seems that I can put it off no longer. I feel that I have not many more days to spend upon the earth, as I am now about fifty-four years of age.

When the Lord first showed me that I was a great sinner, I was about twenty-five years of age. I then thought that I should surely die in my sinful condition. I tried to pray God to have mercy upon my sinful self, but all that I could say was, "God have mercy upon me, a sinner." "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" My prayers did not seem to go any higher than my head, rather they seemed to go right down to the earth; I studied to know whether it was the Spirit of God at work with me or not, all that I could claim was a dim hope that it was so. I desired to have some one to pray for me, yet I could not ask any one to pray for me. I saw myself to be the greatest and vilest sinner upon earth; my heart was filled with grief and sin; my sins appeared to be red before me, and they looked like mountains and clouds of darkness. I promised the Lord that if he would raise me up and spare my life, I would try to serve him in a better way, but I soon saw that my efforts were all in vain; I was made to cry out, Am I a child of God, or am I not? And it seemed to me that surely I was not. I tried to pray to God to reveal himself to me in a way that I might know and realize that I was his. All the promises that I made I broke. These words came into my mind, It was my sins that helped to nail him to the cross. I could not see how God could be just and save such a sinner as I saw myself to be. I went bowed down under a load of grief and sin, it seemed to me that there was a weight pressing down over my heart, and at times it seemed to me my mind was wandering in a wilderness of great darkness. I cannot describe the agony and misery and grief of my distressed mind.

Dear brethren, if I am saved it is all of grace, both now and hereafter. This horror of darkness and great grief continued until my sins became so grievous to me I scarcely could find any rest, day nor night. Mercy, mercy Lord, was my prayer almost continually. Many a night I lay on my bed weeping and pleading for mercy. One night it seemed to me that it was my last night upon earth, I

had lost almost all hope; it seemed to me that I should sink down in despair. Shortly after this there came into our neighborhood an Old School Baptist minister to preach the funeral of my aunt; I went to the meeting, and at the close of the service I trust that then and there I had a view of my Savior. It seemed that I could realize that his love had been shed abroad in my heart, and it was such love and peace and calmness as I never had felt before.

"Jesus paid it all,
All to him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow."

A few hours of that day were the happiest part of my life. The next morning was the most beautiful morning to me, it seemed to me that all nature was praising God, even the little birds seemed to be praising him. I then thought that I would be a happy person all the rest of the days of my life, but it was not long before I began to doubt, and fears came into my mind. I then thought that perhaps I was mistaken in my hope, and I tried to get my burden back again, but all my former troubles seemed to be gone. I felt that I wanted to live with God's dear children, so I went to Morse Prairie Old School Baptist Church, and tried to relate a portion of my experience, and the reason of my hope. I wanted to be with the Lord's little ones, to live and to die with them, and so I offered myself to them at the church above named in Illinois, and was baptized in full fellowship. This was about the year 1869.

Now, my dear brethren and sisters, one and all, if it be not asking too much of you, I would be glad to be remembered by you at a throne of grace.

Brethren editors, do with this as you deem best, and all will be right with me.

From your little sister, one of the least, if one at all,

(MRS.) M. J. DUNCAN.

ELMWOOD, Ill., Feb. 4, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I send you a letter for publication if you think it worthy a place in our family paper. The writer was baptized with two others at the Des Moines River Association, of Iowa, on the third Sunday in August, 1900, and I feel that this relation of her christian experience belongs to the things that are referred to Acts ii. 44, "All that believed had all things common." All spiritual gifts belong to the whole household or kingdom of God. I feel quite sure that very many of the children of the kingdom are suffering death (separation) to spiritual blessings because of this disposition so common among them of keeping back a part of the price. God has given all of the several gifts "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."—Eph. iv. 11-13. So every gift to any member should be brought and laid at the feet of the brethren, and thus become the "all things" that constitute the common property of the church. It may be that your gift is not that of prophesying or of teaching in word and doctrine, or that of a pastor, but there are a diversity of gifts, as there was a difference in the number of talents, and each should be employed in the service of the Master where it will bring the greatest amount of interest or profit to the cause. The small size of the gift is no excuse for its possessor to bury it, or wrap it in a napkin and keep it back from those that are justly entitled to share in it.

I have thought much of late about the (to me) newly defined idea of "time or

common salvation." I have no thought of entering into the controversy that is now engaging the minds and pens of some of our deepest thinkers, and ablest writers, but like Elihu of old, I sometimes feel that I would show mine opinion; then the thought comes up, Suppose I should, what good would it do? I will only say this, The salvation that God has revealed in his word and by his Spirit in my heart, is an eternal salvation, and is effective, and was wrought out through and by Jesus Christ, and reaches from the beginning clear through to the end, and saves from all sin, through both time and eternity; so I know of but one salvation, and can see no necessity for any other. I could multiply words on this subject, but after all this short statement embodies the substance of my views, and is respectfully submitted.

Wishing the SIGNS success, and its patrons and editors a happy and prosperous new year, I am as ever yours in the afflictions of the gospel,

S. KETCHUM.

FARMINGTON, Iowa, Oct. 4, 1900.

ELDER KETCHUM—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—If one so unworthy as I may address you thus. You requested me to write my experience; I will try to do so if the Lord will direct my mind and guide my pen.

My parents were Old School Baptists from my earliest recollection; they belonged to what was called Walnut Creek Church, in Montgomery Co., Ind. Elder John Lee was their pastor; they taught their children strict morals and obedience, but never taught them religion. I never had any very serious reflections about death or a hereafter until I was in my eleventh year; my father was a tinner by trade, and one day he was at the bench working, and asked me to hold a small ream of wire for him a few minutes, which I did very cheerfully, as I was always delighted to do what he asked of me. While holding it there was something like a dart pierced my heart, and eternity with all its vastness rose before me. I thought that I would sink through the floor, and I commenced crying. Father wanted to know what ailed me? I told him nothing, as I did not want him to know how I felt. Then he asked if I was sick? I told him I was not; he looked at me so straight, and took the wire out of my hand, and told me to go out in the open air and I would feel better. I went out into the most secrete place I could find, and there wept bitter tears until my sister, older than I, came to me, I think Father sent her to me. She wanted me to go in the house, but I thought that I could never look my father in the face again, for I thought he saw the corruptness of my heart, and he could never love me again as he had before. For several days I spent most of my time weeping, and one night I had a dream; I thought that I saw Christ suspended in the open air just before me; I thought that I started to him, but just as I got to him he began to ascend. I thought that I tried to reach him, but could not, but I thought that he looked down on me with such meekness that I have never forgotten that look. After that dream my sad and sorrowful feelings slowly wore away to some extent. I was seldom at Baptist meeting, but they would tell some of my feelings. Time passed me on to womanhood, and even to married life. I never had any desire to mingle with the so-called religionists of the world, but in these many years I well knew that I had never felt that pardoning love that I so longed and wished for. In 1873, one

day while at my work, and all alone, all of a sudden as a shock, eternity, that never, never ending eternity, in all the vastness of never ending time, come before me, and that I saw I was outside of God's righteousness, and if I died without his mercy I would forever perish. My feelings I cannot describe; I thought that I was dying, I felt my breath leaving me, and it got shorter and shorter. I started to the door, and as I stepped in the hall door there was a roll or mist came over my eyes and face, and fell at my feet; I looked down to see it, but there was nothing there, but there was a calm voice said, "Death hath no fear." I was afraid to even think that word was spoken for me, and tried to cast it away from me, but it would return. I had a feeling of rejoicing to some extent, but had not felt that saving grace that I so much longed for. At that time there was a protracted meeting going on at the M. E. Church: I had not attended it any, but felt that I would like to go that night. I went, the sermon was short and meaningless, then mourners were called for, but that meeting seemed to me nothing but mockery, and how I did want to get away. The minister's wife came to me and said she was glad to see me out, and hoped I would come again; she said, You are standing in the way of your children's salvation by staying out of the church. I never answered her. I went home and went to bed, but not to sleep, for sleep had deserted me, but I laid and wept until after midnight. I felt like I wanted to join some church, I thought perhaps it was my duty. I did not know I could not believe as those churches did, they were as bitter to me as gall. Then the Baptist Church came to my mind, it seemed so good, although I had not heard a Baptist sermon for a number of years. While I was thinking over these things there was something seemed to say, The Baptist is not the true church, if it was there would be more of them, they are but few in number, there will soon be none of them, and O, how readily I did yield to Satan's devices. Yes, he carried me down to the lowest pit of darkness; I conceived the idea that the Bible was false, and there was no God. Dear brother, I will not worry you with the next long six months, they were months of sorrow indeed, to mourn because you could not mourn, and weep because you could not weep, but the Lord in his own good time gave me tears.

Now at this time there was a revival meeting going on in the neighborhood, held by the so-called christian denomination, people seemed to be going wild over it. I went a few times to hear them, but quit going, but the last day of their meeting their minister called to see if I would go to their meeting that night and unite with them; I told him I could not, as I could not believe as they did. Then he wanted me to go out and hear them preach that night, which I did. His sermon was short, then an exhortation for all that wanted to be saved to come forward, then gave out the invitation hymn. While this was going on, I was pleading with the great I AM, to guide me and lead me in righteousness and true holiness, and I was exercised at that time on what was the true doctrine of salvation. I wanted to know it from the Lord, I did not want to be taught of man. Every breath I drew was a prayer for God to guide and direct me in what was the true doctrine of salvation. Meeting closed; there were but few words spoken on the way home. I went to bed, but not to

sleep; I laid and wept until after twelve o'clock; I then went to sleep, and slept until two o'clock, then I awoke. I had a dream, I thought I was in a wilderness all alone, and I heard a chariot coming down from heaven, it had two soldiers in it, and was drawn by two white horses, it came down close to my feet, I thought one soldier got out and came to me and put the tips of his fingers on my shoulder and turned me around, at my left side was a high wall, we went down that wall until we came to a door with a curtain hanging in it, the soldier raised the curtain and ushered me in the hall, it was lighter than the noonday sun, everything was of a dazzling brightness, I thought there was neither spot or blemish, and it was beautiful beyond description, there was a few people, not many, and they were the righteous, but Jesus was not there. I opened a door that went into another apartment which led to the outside, that room was full of briars and thorns, and in the center there was a narrow path which led to the outside, and there was a voice said, Go and read the twelfth chapter of Genesis. Then I awoke, and my room was light with that light that cometh from above. I woke my husband to tell him of my dream, and the glorious things I had seen, but all he said was that I had better lay down and go to sleep, it was only a dream, he could not see that beautiful light that shone so bright, and feel the presence of the dear Savior, that seemed so near to me. This blest season lasted about one hour, then that light gradually vanished. When morning came the first thought was to read the twelfth chapter of Genesis, I got the Bible and soon found the twelfth chapter, I wondered what my eyes would rest upon when I opened the book at that chapter, every word I read seemed to fill me with interest, I read until the children of Israel crossed the Jordan, then that beautiful lesson was folded together as a book. When I read these words, "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee," my soul was thirsting for the knowledge of God and his righteousness. My own works had all failed me, and my own righteousness as filthy rags was blown away, and I was a justly condemned sinner. One morning I felt that I must ask God once more to have mercy on me, I walked out into the garden, all I could say was, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner, if thou in justice can save such a one as I," and just as I was starting to go in the house and when everything seemed most gloomy, there was a calm still voice said, You have passed from death unto life, because you love the brethren. O, the joy, love and peace of mind, no human tongue can describe, my mourning was turned to rejoicing, and O how I wanted to praise his holy name, and all that was within me to praise him for evermore; it seemed that I was in a new world, for I was filled with the love of God, and all nature seemed to be praising his holy name, all was love, joy and peace. The Baptist church was shown to me so plain, and O, how I did want to go to that dear people and tell them of Jesus and his love. While meditating on that sweet privilege of going to church there was something seemed to say, You can deceive the church, but you cannot deceive God, then came doubts and fears lest I was deceived, my trouble and sorrow of heart increased day by day for about one week, and I felt that all was a delusion. Day and night I plead with my Lord and Master that if I was deceived to undeceive me, and the sorrow

of heart no words can tell, but blessed and holy is his righteous name, in his own good time he brought me to his banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love.

Need I tell you how little I deserve his blessings? There is nothing in me to merit esteem, and I am often filled with doubts and fears. I often had a desire to unite with the church, and I believed the Primitive Baptists were the true church of Christ, but I felt that I was unworthy of a place with so good a people, they always seemed to manifest so much love for each other. Though doubts and fears beset me, yet is my hope in thee. How often, dear Lord, have thy words revived my sinking faith and caused me to hope anew. For over thirty years I was isolated from the Baptist church, the people of my choice, only occasionally hearing a Baptist sermon when I was visiting relatives at a distance. Eleven years my home has been in Colorado, and as I was getting down late in the evening of life, I had no thought of ever meeting again with the household of faith, and the saints of the true and living God, but blessed is the name of the Lord, for his mercy endureth forever, and his ways are past finding out. A little over one year ago I was deeply impressed on baptism, so much so it was seldom out of my mind, and one day the dear Savior seemed to be near to me, and in some way there was shown me a beautiful stream of water, and I thought that I was at the edge of it almost ready to step in, and the vision vanished from my sight. Three different times there have been beautiful streams of water before me. One evening, at early twilight, I retired, I fell asleep I suppose, and these words were spoken very plainly, "Arise and go to thy kindred in Christ and testify of me." And I did long to go and meet with the dear people I loved so well, and in June, 1900, I came to eastern Iowa, to my daughter's, and to seek a home among my kindred in Christ, and in August following, I had the sweet pleasure of going to the Des Moines River Association, which met with the West Liberty Church, in Des Moines Co., Iowa, and on Sunday morning after preaching, the door of the church was opened and I went forward, and in much weakness tried to tell what I hoped were some of the Lord's dealings with me, and was received, and the same afternoon was baptized by Elder I. Y. Flint, and O, may I always be found walking worthy of the vocation wherewith I am called. Though doubts, trials and tribulations I pass through, my trust is in that God that said, "Even to your old age I am he: and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you." These are precious words.

(MRS.) V. McCOLLUM.

BIRDSALL, Mich., March 16, 1901.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Inclosed find two dollars to pay for the SIGNS another year, and I am truly glad that I have the privilege to pay for such a paper. I cannot tell you how much I have enjoyed reading them of late. When I read the lovely letters they contain I can hardly refrain from writing to the dear ones, and tell them what a pleasure and comfort their letters are to me. Especially interesting was the letter of R. Scates, of Ontario, Canada, in the last number. It does seem to me I do know something of what he has written; I thought, Surely I have traveled in the same road. Is it not wonderful, though many miles may separate the people of God, yet they all speak the

same pure language, and are taught by the same great Master? I believe the saints are taught that salvation is of the Lord, and without him they can do nothing, and that there is no other name given under heaven whereby they can be saved, and I believe all his blood-bought children want to place the crown of glory on the thorn-pierced head; on the sacred head of the Christ of God, and ascribe to him all honor, all might and dominion, and hail him King in Zion, yea, King of kings, and Lord of lords. I know for myself I cannot change my nature or blot out my sins and transgressions, no more than the leopard can change his spots. O, how utterly helpless I feel myself to be, nothing in my hands I bring, yet while I feel I am nothing, and vanity, I can boast of a God of power, and I feel to say with David, "O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honor and majesty: who coverest thyself with light as with a garment; who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain; * * * who maketh the clouds his chariot; who walketh upon the wings of the wind."

"God is a King of power unknown,
Firm are the orders of his throne;
If he resolve, who dare oppose,
Or ask him, Why, or what he does?

He wounds the heart, and he makes whole;
He calms the tempest of the soul;
When he shuts up in long despair,
Who can remove the heavy bar?"

While at this moment I feel to be the most lonely and deserted creature on the face of the earth, yet this God of whom I have tried to write, is able to do all things, even to give me

"A glance of heavenly day,
To take this stubborn stone away,
And thaw with beams of love divine,
This heart, this frozen heart of mine."

May he hold your hand, and keep you from falling, is the prayer of the weakest and poorest of all.

(MRS.) H. TUTTLE.

APRIL 14, 1901.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Again I would trouble you for three extra copies of the SIGNS, as I want others to read Elder Curry's article, and the obituary of your brother is very interesting, and much could be added if necessary, but what there is speaks volumes, and reminds me of what I have often heard him quote,

"His saints, his own peculiar care,
Though now they seem to roam uneyed,
Are led or driven only where
They best and safest shall abide."

Truly the Lord was his Shepherd.

This morning I feel such a desire to be with my people, may I not pen a few thoughts, expressing that desire, and extending my sympathy to those who, like myself, are surrounded by fashionable religionists, who possess so much "universal charity" that they look upon us as quite bigoted and narrow-minded, although we believe heirs of the kingdom do not all have their visible membership with the church militant, which I have heard them deny. Therefore we are more liberal than they. I trust also that I have been enabled to ignore many superstitions and traditions, and enter in or enjoy a foretaste of that liberty that frees us from bondage, but I dare not say I have looked into the perfect law of liberty, and continued therein, not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work. (James i. 25.) O, when I read such passages I feel so unfit to have a name with the people of God, at the same time I would so gladly hold up the hands of our ministering brethren, that they may not become weary nor discouraged. But remember, you to whom the gospel is committed, you have the burden of the word of the Lord. Is not that a precious burden? May the Lord sustain you, comfort and encourage your hearts, is my prayer for his name's sake.

M. HILLINGS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1901.

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ISAIAH XXX. 18.

"AND therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you; for the Lord is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him."

In the article from the pen of Elder Curry, published in the SIGNS for March 15th, in which he quotes several unapostolic hymns from the book called "Apostolic Hymns," we have noticed one expression particularly concerning which we desire to say a few words at this time. In hymn marked No. 84, the expression is used, "See on the portals he's waiting and watching." We have seen this language before in popular collections of revival hymns, where it was intended to convey the thought that Jesus was waiting at the portals of the sinner's heart, to see if that sinner would open the door of his heart and let the Savior in. This is a favorite plea with all those who put the sinner's salvation upon his own choice, and not upon the choice of God. Those who use such pleas of course reject election as a horrible doctrine, and mean that after all that the Lord can do or say, sinners may at last finally reject him and perish. The blessed Lord is represented as waiting helplessly outside the heart, unable to get in until the sinner graciously permits him an entrance. He is represented as wanting and waiting to do sinners good, but is prevented by the stubbornness of that heart where he seeks an entrance. This is perfectly consistent with all that doctrine which rejects total depravity, election, effectual calling, finished atonement and final perseverance. This sentiment is no worse nor better than all the rest of the teaching with which it is connected; it is all together false. Our God does not wait for the sinner's choice, his choice always prevents ours, or precedes it. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you," is the teaching of the blessed Redeemer. "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest," not because he has approached unto thee, but "whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee." Believers do indeed come to choose the Lord above all others. This is when they have been brought to feel as did the psalmist when he said, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." This is when they say of Jesus, "He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely." This they do not say until such a gracious change has been wrought in their condition as opens their blind eyes to the loveliness and the suitableness of Jesus to a poor sinner's case. Then indeed they lovingly and joyfully choose him who has already chosen them, and has brought them to behold his beauty. But this we need not now say more about. We presume the compilers of the "Apostolic Hymns" will not dispute this any more than we do, yet the hymn from which we quote speaks of the Master as waiting for some one. On the face of the hymn it would at once be thought by all who should read it, that it was meant to teach just what all revivalists mean by

it, and it would need an explanation to be printed side by side with it, for any one to read any other meaning in it than full fledged Arminianism. We have no doubt as to what the compilers would say about it, viz: It was an appeal, not to the dead to accept Christ and live, but to the living to come into the church, and into the comforts of the gospel feast prepared there. If indeed the hymn does mean this, it needs an explanation for any one to see it, and we prefer to sing hymns that need no explanation to make them convey the true meaning. Let us then consider the thought of the hymn that Jesus is waiting, watching, and as in the second verse is declared, also pleading for believers to come into the fold, standing at the portals of the church, while we linger and do not heed his call. Is this true? To this we have no hesitancy in replying, No. Jesus is not waiting, and pleading, and watching for any man, to see what his decision will be as regards following him, or obeying him in anything. It would be entirely beneath the dignity of an earthly monarch to present him as waiting to see whether his servants will obey him or not. It is not in vain that it is said, "Where the word of a king is there is power." This was spoken of the King of Zion, the Lord of hosts. Yet in a measure it is a figure drawn from what men knew to be true of the kings of earth. We must not think of the God of heaven as waiting in any such sense as this; his purposes are not delayed by the attitude of any man; his will cannot be hindered by the will, or lack of will, of any man; his great affairs go right on to their fulfillment, using even the wrath of man to his own ends, which are all-wise and pure and right.

But it may be said if this be so, what does the Scripture mean quoted at the beginning of this editorial? Is not the Lord in that Scripture said to wait? Does not he say so himself in it? We answer, not in any sense referred to above. He was not represented there as waiting for the decision of Israel to serve him, or not to serve him, to look to him, or not to look to him, to come to him, or not to come to him, as their own will might incline them to do. True it is there said that the Lord will wait that he may be gracious to Israel, but it is not a waiting for their decision in the matter at all. We desire to speak of the waiting, and the cause and effects of it, directly, but first would call attention to the fact that in no other place in the word is the word "wait" applied to the attitude of the Lord towards his people. We have looked over every place as given in Young's Analytical Concordance, where the word "wait" or "waiting" occurs, and find that in every place beside this, waiting is predicated of men, and not of God. Man is said to wait for the Lord often. In this one place take notice the Lord is said to wait, but it is not said that he is waiting for the decision of his people, but for the fulfillment of his own work, to prepare his people to exalt him. Thus under the old covenant the Lord waited for the ushering in of the appointed time, when he should come in the flesh, but it was not a waiting upon the will of man, but simply for the fulfillment of his own preparatory work. Now in our text it is said, He will wait that he may be gracious to his people. But he is not waiting for them to decide to receive his grace.

Let us now examine the text for a little; it is one in which we have in time past found much of comfort and assurance, and we will speak of it as it has come to us at times in the past. The

narrative of the whole chapter speaks of rebellious Israel, and the one thing in which their rebellion appears now is that they have in the time of distress, through their unbelief, gone to Egypt for help. (See second Kings xviii. 24, with the connection.) Against the Assyrian hosts they felt they needed help, and instead of looking to God, their true refuge, they sought an alliance with Egypt, and trusted in her chariots and horsemen. The Lord had said to them that in quietness and confidence should be their strength, (verse 15) and they would not heed. They have put their confidence in Egypt, and the Lord now says that they shall be left to fully prove how vain all such hopes are. They have made Egypt a covering, and not the Lord; they ask of Egypt, and not of the Lord; they strengthen themselves in Pharaoh, and not in the Lord. Therefore the strength of Pharaoh should be their shame, and the protection of Egypt their confusion (verses one to three). The Egyptians should help in vain; Israel should find that their strength was to sit still (verse seven). Now is it not clear that the waiting of the Lord here is that they may prove how like a broken reed is Egypt to the people of God; like a broken reed Egypt should pierce their hands, instead of proving a support. The Lord waits until they find this out, and come to be sorry for their folly. The Lord waits until an experience is wrought out in them, by which they shall be brought back to him, and look to him for all their help. The Lord pursues a certain order in dealing with his people at all times; he never reveals his power until all other power has failed; he never shows them his love until all other love is proved to be folly; he never shows his free and full salvation to any one until all other salvation has proven vain; he always waits that men may prove for themselves how weak is all other refuge, so that they may at last be brought to him, and not depart from him. He is not waiting that they may decide to serve him, but that his own purpose to prepare them for his salvation may be fulfilled. Israel must be prepared for his salvation by being left to fully prove how vain is Egypt and Pharaoh, and all their power to help them against their foes.

Thus the Lord waited in the beginning to create man until he had prepared the earth for his habitation. He waited to bring Israel into Canaan until the wickedness of the dwellers therein had culminated, and until his people were prepared by stern discipline for the goodly land. He waited until the appointed time to send his Son into the world. He waited until the appointed time to give him over into the hands of men that he should, according to the eternal will, be crucified for sin. Thus also in all our daily experience the Lord waits until we have come to see our need before he bestows his mercy upon us. In all the human life of the Redeemer he waited for the purpose of the Father in every step he trod. "The Son of man goeth as was appointed for him." "Your time is always, my time is not now." In all the miracles of healing that he wrought, he waited until men had come to see their need of healing. In some cases we read that he waited until they had proven for themselves that vain was all other help. Men came to him at times, it is recorded, as a last resort. In all our personal experience he has proven himself a jealous God and Savior. He has never revealed his love and power in salvation until we had fully learned that we could find help nowhere else. Thus in our daily experience

he waits that he may be gracious to us. He has prepared grace for his people, but also they must be prepared for his grace. He has prepared seed to be sown, but he must also prepare the earth for the sowing. He waits to prepare the earth before he sows the seed. But in all this there is not the shadow of a hint that he is waiting to see whether man will choose to come to him and serve him. The text in Isaiah contains no taint of the poison of free will whatever.

Now when the Lord is alone exalted in our view, will he have mercy upon us. When we see the Lord alone, then we shall find his power, grace and goodness sufficient to our need. As our experience of the sinfulness and weakness of self, and of all other help grows, so does the glory of the Lord increase. As Egypt fades away, and our hopes in her perish, so do the treasures which are in him become magnified. Thus the Lord is exalted, that we may receive mercy from him alone, and this mercy appears mercy indeed when we remember our shameful forgetfulness of him and his mercy, and our vile dependence upon Egypt for help. Going down to Egypt we have insulted the God of heaven, and for this must have mercy, the mercy of forgiveness and pardon. As the Lord is thus exalted that he may have mercy, we are abased that we may receive mercy. God exalted and man abased is the condition of the manifestation of his mercy always. If our obedience or our choice to be obedient was the ground of his mercy, then we should be exalted and he would be abased, and his mercy would cease to be mercy.

According to the text these are the judgments of the Lord. He is a God of judgment indeed. And here is the record of his judgment toward Israel in the time when they have departed from him as their helper and strength against their adversaries. His judgments are still the same. He will always deal with us in our unbelief, and blindness, and hardheartedness, so as to exalt his own name and abase all beside. He leaves us to prove all other things, that we may come at last to prove him. Every step of the way he will exalt himself, and we shall be abased. All is for the lifting of Jesus on high. "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."

And thus we learn how blessed are all they that wait for him. What evils fell upon Israel when they looked to Egypt and forgot God. They must be up and doing something against their foes; it would not do to sit still. They said, we must help ourselves. And the result of all this reasoning was evil. The Lord had told them to look to him for all their help. Now he will allow them to see how foolish all their reasonings are. And so they fled to enemies of God for help against other enemies of God. They themselves practically denied that God was able and willing to help them, and to give them victory over their enemies. Thus they dishonored him in the eyes of the heathen. But when the time came that they must wait, must stand still and see his salvation, then indeed they were blessed. They were blessed before in being brought into that attitude of waiting, and then blessed as the result of this waiting. When they had been brought into this attitude of waiting, then the Lord ceased to wait, and his mercy abounded toward them. Then indeed his grace abounded to them much more than their sins.

Is it not plain that in this text there is absolutely nothing to support the teaching of the hymn to which we have re-

ferred? Neither for the dead sinner's choice, nor for the choice of living sinners, is the Lord waiting. But he does wait for the fulfillment of his own work in them, and toward them, that he may be exalted in their sight, and that his grace may appear clearly shining out toward them. And thus they come to sing with full understanding,

"All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all."

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

NEW SCHOOL COURTESY.

"BUT we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest; for as concerning this sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against."—Acts xxviii. 22.

As a specimen of the manner in which the apostolic Baptists are spoken of by all the harlot daughters, of her who sat upon the scarlet colored beast, (Rev. xvii. 3,) we present our readers with the following choice scrap from the puritanic columns of the *New York Observer*, by that paper credited to "Correspondence of *New York Examiner*:"

HARD-SHELL BAPTISTS IN GEORGIA.—In ecclesiastical matters the Baptists predominate. You will find their churches everywhere. There are, however, not a few irregular churches which call themselves Baptists, that are a disgrace and a reproach. The anti-mission element in them is strong, and their predestination ideas are awful. They practice feet washing, which is an ordinance with them. Their church buildings are generally erected in the woods, and most commonly are without windows or doors. Their preachers are of the "wang-doodle" sort, and play on the "harp of a thousand strings." We call them "Hard-Shells."—*Correspondence N. Y. Examiner.*

The above squib having encountered the scrutiny of the *Examiner* and the observation of the official *Observer*, must express the sentiments and feelings of the popular religionists of our day towards the church of God which he has purchased with his own blood. It is seldom that we notice the ravings of these fanatics, but now while they are exulting in their late revival, their world-wide union, their unbounded love and charity, their "Evangelical Alliances," it may be worth our while to "show up" from their own journals, that while they with trumpet tongue proclaim their union and fellowship for almost everything else, their rankling vermon remains unabated towards those who preach and practice only what is authorized by the King of Zion, and was preached and practiced by the apostles and primitive church of the Most High God.

Their extensive vocabulary of slurring epithets has been hard run to find sufficiently reproachful invictives by which to express the excessive hatred they feel toward that sect against which they can all unite in pouring out their most malignant contempt.

Should the reader inquire what there is in this hated sect that so excites all other religious sects as to draw down their united and consolidated maledictions, the answer may be found in the extract which we have copied from their papers. Let us attend for a moment to their complaints.

First. Our shells are too hard. The precise meaning of our learned and pious assailants by these terms, may require the aid of one of their theological dictionaries to define; but as our soul has not come into their secret, and as we have no access to their lexicons, we will only give what seems to us to be most probably intended. There is no other sect in christendom against whom all other sects in all ages subsequently to the setting up of the kingdom of our Redeemer, have been so constantly at war, have fought so hard,

and have so unitedly concentrated all their efforts and with so little success as against them. Doctor Mosheim in his Ecclesiastical History, has honored them with a passing notice, as a sect against which all other religious sects had concentrated all their powers, but had failed to exterminate them; and their origin, the Doctor says, is lost in the remote depths of antiquity. Is it strange then that they should complain of our invincible shells? They have found it hard to "kick against the pricks." God has appointed salvation for walls and bulwarks. The gates of hell cannot prevail against this sect, for the God of Jeshurun rides upon the heavens in her help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is her refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms, and her enemies shall, by the decree of God, be found liars unto her, and she shall tread on their high places. Empires have arisen and fallen, thrones have sprung up and crumbled back to dust, ages have rolled on, generations have paased, and yet

"Bulwarks of mighty grace defend
The city where we dwell;
Her walls of strong salvation made,
Defy the assaults of hell."

We are not surprised then that in their stupid ignorance of Zion's impregnable battlements, her enemies should call her hard shelled. Their battering-rams can make no breach in her walls, nor can all their fawning, flattering seductions cause her to yield. Not one of her stakes shall ever be removed, nor shall one of her cords ever be broken.

"From age to age she has defied
The utmost rage of earth and hell."

But another complaint is that they are not a few. This is probably what troubles them more than the invincibility of their shells. All the Arminian workmongers have been long and confidently predicting and praying for their utter extinction, we could now refer to scores of predictions in which they have prophesied that in a few years all of them would be gone. One of their champions in this county predicted more than twenty-five years ago, in his public preaching, that he would live to preach the funeral sermon of the last one of them. But the poor infatuated man did not know how very short that sermon would have to be, even if he should live so long; for quicker than the lightning's flash the earth shall pass away when the last of that sect shall be called home to his mansion in the skies. "Not a few." Ah, that is the trouble! We have not numbered Israel, but from the statistics of our enemies a few years ago they reported upwards of twenty thousand of our order in Georgia, and we believe at this time there is nearer fifty thousand than twenty thousand of our order in that State, who have not bowed their knees to the missionary Baal, and nearly as many in several other of our southern and south-western States. This is truly appalling to our enemies. "Terrible as an army with banners."

"Irregular churches!" Wherein are they irregular? Because their shells are hard, and their enemies cannot soften them; or is it because they do not, cannot, will not, be reckoned with the nations? Irregular because they will not unite in the schemes of modern priestcraft, because they continue steadfast in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, because they contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints? Irregular because they stand aloof from and have no fellowship for the numerous voluntary religions, unscriptural associations or societies for evangelizing the heathen and converting the world, making war against the Arminian mother and her whole brood of institutions?

There is an anti-mission element, too, which disturbs the enemy. But can the *Examiner* or the *Observer* tell us of any mission element of the apostolic church in the days of the apostles, that is not retained in that church which they denounce as hard shell, irregular, a disgrace, and a reproach? We know of none. In what respect are they a disgrace and a reproach? Are they immoral in their walk and deportment? Will the *Examiner* or *Observer* dare charge them with licentiousness, or that they are behind any other sect on earth for honesty, sobriety, Bible benevolence, and a strict conformity to the laws and institutions which Christ has given to his church? We have traveled in Georgia, and have there been told by disinterested citizens who disliked their doctrine, that there were none in that state whose credit stood so fair as that of the church which these papers would stigmatize as hard shells, irregular, &c.

"The anti-mission element in them is strong." So strong that all the carnal reasoning, flattery or frowning of the missionary stock-jobbers cannot overcome it; so strong when considered in connection with their "awful predestination ideas," that it is impossible to make them believe that the eternal destiny of untold millions of the human family hangs on the amount of dollars and dimes collected by the mission societies and mission agency of modern antichrist. If their predestination ideas could be shaken, and these hard shelled Baptists made to believe the doctrines of free will, free agency and human power; that salvation is of him that willeth and of him that runneth, and not of God who sheweth mercy; and that the new birth is of blood and of the will of the flesh, and of the will of man, and not of the will of God, then perhaps their shells might be softened, and become sufficiently mellow to allow them to turn away from the truth, and be turned unto fables.

"They practice feet washing." O, horrible! Who would have thought it? In this nineteenth century, in which the fashionable religion of the world swaggers forth in golden slippers, that a sect could be found so antiquated in their faith and order as to believe the Bible doctrine of predestination, and even obey the precept and follow the example of the Son of God, in washing the saint's feet. But cannot these Georgia Baptists be enlightened on those subjects? Are their shells so adamantine that they cannot feel the force of the argument that predestination belonged to a former age, and that none but the poor, despised followers of the Nazarene, who do not count their own lives dear unto them, and who have no aspirations for the applause of the religious world, think of paying the least respect to the words of him who, when he had washed his disciples' feet, said, If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet?

And still another grievous fault is found in them: "Their church buildings are generally erected in the woods, and most commonly are without windows or doors." If these old "hard shells" had a little more ambition for show, would they not erect their church buildings with windows and doors, with towering domes and cloud-piercing spires, in the cities, villages and public places, so that they might stand at the corners of the street to pray where they might be seen of men?

In Georgia the meetings are generally very large; we have seen several thousand persons present at their stated monthly meetings, and for the benefit of shade for

horses and mules, also for the accommodation of the immense congregations, who frequently are compelled to leave the house and resort to a preaching-stand in the grove, they have found the woods preferable to other localities for their meetings. But one thing the correspondent of the *Examiner* omitted to mention, which is the well known fact, that all other religious professors also usually erect their houses in the woods, and they, too, are many of them without windows or doors. Windows and doors are of but little utility in that warm climate where, if they had them, it would afford more comfort to the audience to have them open. We hope, under all the considerations, that the Old Hard Shell Baptists have not commited an unpardonable sin in erecting their meeting houses in the woods, or in failing to make them more costly and splendid. So far as we could learn, their houses were generally paid for honestly, and without so much begging, conniving and swindling as has characterized some of those who ridicule them.

Last, but not least, their preachers are not generally manufactured to order at theological schools; hence they are to be ridiculed as of "the wang-doodle sort." By the very classic term "wang-doodle" we presume is meant that the preachers of the Old Baptist order are not graduates from charity schools of divinity, but generally, like those in the primitive church, called and qualified by the great Head of the church, from the fishing boats, from the farm or work-shop, whose speech and whose preaching is not in the wisdom of this world which cometh to naught, that the faith of their hearers should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. "Wang-doodle," as their preaching may be in the uncircumcised ears of will-worshipers, God has chosen them to bring to naught the wisdom of this world. Their preaching of Christ crucified is foolishness to them that perish; a stumbling-block to the Jew, and "wang-doodle" or foolishness to the Greek; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, it is Christ, the power and wisdom of God.

"They play on the 'harp of a thousand strings.'" There may be more truth in this assertion than our revilers intended. If by the harp, the gospel of the grace of God be intended, God has made his ministers skillful musicians to touch the strings of that heavenly harp in a manner that has frequently awakened the liveliest sensations of joy in the hearts of all who know the joyful sound. The gospel of God our Savior has many strings, but they are all in the most perfect harmony, no discordant sounds, no jargon like that produced by the Babel-builders. In Revelations we are told that they who have the seal of God, have harps in their hands, and sing a new song which none but the sealed of God can learn, and the theme of their song is, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

We have perhaps occupied too much time and space in noticing this little squib, but it is worthy of special observation that there is nothing charged in it upon the Old Order of Baptists but what will equally apply to the church of God in her primitive order, excepting, perhaps, the adjective "wang-doodle," and the place and manner of building their meeting houses. The churches of the saints were by the Jews and Pagans regarded as irregular Baptist churches. They stood aloof from and had no fellowship with the mission operations of the Jews who

compassed sea and land to make proselytes. The predestination ideas of the apostles of the Lamb were considered awful by their adversaries. They washed the saints' feet, and their preachers were of the sort which are now classified by their opponents, "wang-doodle," and they played on the same harp with its numerous strings, which still fills the kingdom of Christ with the most heavenly melody.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., September 1, 1858.

TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

OUR health, which is never very good, has of late been more feeble than common, and on the 12th ult., we had quite a severe attack, which confined us to the bed for several days. Indeed, at one time during our illness the attending physician expressed apprehension to members of our family that we might not live until morning. But the Lord for some purpose known to himself has seen fit to raise us up again so that we are able in a measure to discharge the duties incumbent upon us as publisher of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, although those duties have to be performed in much weakness, both mentally and physically.

The object of publishing the above statements is that our many dear brethren and friends who have written us such sweet and comforting words of encouragement, may know why we have not written in acknowledgment of the same, and to assure them that their kindness is most highly appreciated, but in our weak state it is impossible for us to reply to each one personally, as we would so love to do, and we ask a continued forbearance with our short comings, and an extension of that leniency which our brethren have always shown us, and not let our failure to reply be attributed to indifference on our part. B.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$449 80
First Independent Baptist Church, in Woburn, Mass., $20.93; Nancy Stathers, W. Va., $3.00.—Total	23 93
Total to date	$473 73

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at the bride's residence, on the evening of April 13th, 1901, Augustus A. Smith and Miss Florence A. Titus, both of Hopewell, N. J.

By Elder H. E. Parris, of Bloomville, Ohio, at Euclid, Ohio, Feb. 17th, 1901, Earnest J. Joy, of Akron, and Mrs. Eliza Akehurst, of Cleveland, Ohio.

By the same, at Cleveland, April 6th, 1901, Thomas Huggins and Miss Emily H. Mills, both of Cleveland.

By the same, at Celina, Ohio, April 10th, 1901, Morgan V. Purdy, of Spencerville, Ohio, to Miss Jennie Hole, daughter of the late Elder Henry Hole, of Celina, Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Alfred S. Cook departed this life at his home in Hopewell, N. J., on Friday morning, April 5th, 1901, after an illness of about ten days, from a complication of troubles, in the 75th year of his age. A brief reference to his death has already appeared in the SIGNS. Very many in many sections of the country will feel deeply grieved at the news. Few of our brethren have been more widely known among the churches and membership than was he. Very many have been entertained at his home, both since he has lived in this village, and before, and all have received a cordial welcome from him, and have carried away with them memories that were pleasant indeed of him and his kind hospitality.

Brother Cook became a member of the church at Hopewell about forty years ago. He, with some others, was baptized by the late Elder Hartwell upon profession of his faith in the Redeemer of sinners. Of late years we have heard him frequently speak of the conflicts of mind which with him preceded this profession. Brother Cook was not what might be called a great talker, but from time to time he has spoken to us of the experience by which he was led at last to a hope in Christ, and to membership in his church. His faith has remained the same, unshaken by all the temptations and modern speculations with which the people of God are tried in their pilgrimage in this world. He has been faithful to his church, and has filled his place in the meetings whenever the cares and the active business of his busy life at all permitted. For forty years he was engaged in busi-

ness in New York city, but seldom for many years missed attending the meetings at Hopewell. He has also been ready to contribute of his means to the expenses of the church. We have known him for about hirty-four years, and have counted him as our friend all that time, and have received many tokens of kindness at his hands, always finding a hearty welcome from him and his pleasant family when we could visit him. Since moving to this place, nearly five years ago, he has been a support to us, and an encouragement when we have felt to falter and grow discouraged by the way. His acts of thoughtfulness and kindness to us have been constant and unfailing. As said before, he was not a great talker, but yet his discernment of truth was clear, and often he would express in a few words his satisfaction and gladness when the truth was made, in the preaching of some one, especially plain.

Brother Cook had an acquaintance in widely separated sections of the country, among the churches of our faith. Many will be sorrowful at their loss. Yet we feel well assured that for him to depart was to be with Christ, which is far better. He leaves an aged companion, who has been also a steadfast and faithful member of the church these many years, and four children, two sons and two daughters, to mourn their loss. A brother and sister also survive him. As a church we all shall miss him more than words can tell.

The funeral was largely attended at the meeting-house on Monday morning, April 8th, at which time the words found in Job i. 21, last clause, were used as a foundation for a brief discourse. Elders Durand and Hubbell were also present, and spoke comfortingly and briefly to the friends. After the service the body was conveyed to the grave in the adjoining cemetery, and laid away in its last rest, amid many tears; yet we sorrow not as those who have no hope. May God comfort all the bereaved ones in their sorrow.

C.

John P. Peters was born in southeastern Ohio, Feb. 9th, 1822, and died Feb. 9th, 1901, aged 79 years. He moved with his parents from Franklin Co., Ohio, to Darke Co., Ohio, in the year 1846. He was married to Ruth Debolt, Jan. 25th, 1848. To this union were born five children, three sons and two daughters, one daughter died over twenty-three years ago. His companion preceded him in death over three years; since then he has made his home with his daughter, who lives adjoining his home farm, where he and his companion spent the vigor of their lives, settling in the woods and opened up a new farm by hard labor, suffering all the privations that accompany the opening up of a new country. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church over fifty-seven years ago, and lived a faithful and dutiful member until death claimed him. He was ordained to the ministry more than thirty years ago, and continued to feed the flock of God over which the Holy Ghost made him overseer, until his infirmity prevented his further labors. He was sound in the doctrine of God our Savior, believing in the predestination of all things, the eternal union with Christ and his church. He never wavered about with every wind of doctrine, such as "conditional time salvation," and the Smoot idea of the new birth, nor any of the late inventions of men that have crept in among the brethren of late years. He has always been noted for his firmness in sound doctrine. He has served many times as Moderator or Clerk of the Greenville Association, and has been for many years the pastor of the church where his membership was, as well as serving other churches as pastor. His home was a home for Baptists for a half century, where large congregations often gathered for meetings. A meeting-house was built on his farm, where brethren have met for many years. He came to visit at our home the second Sunday in September, and was taken sick a few days after coming, and never sufficiently recovered to go back to his old home. We sorrowed much to see him suffer, and had the pleasure of administering to his every want, as well as we knew how, but O how short is the puny arm of man to give the needed comfort to those who are aged and infirm, and are broken down in body and mind. The last month of his affliction he suffered much with "la grippe," which was more than his weakened condition could stand, hence in sorrow we bow in humble submission to the will of him who holds all our times in his hand, but we weep not as those who have no hope, trusting that all those that fall asleep in Christ will rise first, and we rejoice that the second death has no power on all that sleep in Jesus.

NEWTON PETERS.

PORTLAND, Indiana.

DIED—At her home near Landmark, Fauquier Co., Va., Jan. 19, 1901, **Mrs. Martha E. Gaines,** the beloved wife of Mr. P. S. Gaines. She was born Nov. 23d, 1840, and was married to Mr. Gaines Feb. 7th, 1867. Our dear sister Gaines' life for many years was one of constant suffering, and those sufferings, especially during the last few years, were often very great. It was my privilege to baptize her in the fellowship of Mt. Zion Church, near this place, Oct. 26th, 1884. I never can forget her looks and manner as I raised her up, and led her out of the water; her face shone with a heavenly light, and as she opened her lips I thought she was about to shout with joy. No doubt she did "shout from the tops of the mountains," but she gave no sound. Her life in the church was consistent with her appearance that day. Her chief delight seemed to be to attend the meetings of the church so long as failing health permitted her to do so. She possessed a gentle, loving nature, which attracted all who knew her, and that nature, sancti-

fied by the grace of God, made her a lovely christian. It seems superfluous to add she was a faithful, loving wife and mother, a constant and sincere friend, for the gifts and graces she possessed make this inevitable. It often seems a mysterious providence that calls such an one as she so greatly as sister Gaines did; for many years confined at home, away from the privileges she loved so much; often suffering great bodily pain; a cause of anxious care and trouble to her devoted husband and children; the weary months and years dragged on, but she bore it all with the meekness and resignation that God's grace alone can give. The faithful, tender care she received from husband and children must be a grateful remembrance to them now that she is at rest. Sister Gaines' maiden name was Lynn, and of her immediate family, one brother, Mr. Henry Lynn, and two sisters, sister G. G. Galleher, and Mrs. R. C. Laytham, all of Prince William Co., Va., survive her.

May God comfort the mourners, be the widow's God, and the Father of the fatherless, according to his word.

J. N. BADGER.

ALDIE, Va.

Dr. A. F. Merritt was born in Henry Co., Mo., Dec. 1st, 1856, and died at his home in Lucas, Henry Co., Mo., March 14th, 1901, aged 44 years, 3 months and 13 days. Dr. Merritt graduated from Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, Pa., March 12th, 1881, and located in the little town in which he died, in the spring of 1882, and built up quite an extensive practice, and gathered around him a host of friends. He was united in marriage to Miss Ida McDonald, Nov. 10th, 1886; of this union there were five children born, all survive him, three boys and two girls. Dr. Merritt never made a public profession of religion, but was strong in the faith of God's elect, confiding alone in the merits of Jesus. He often commented on the language of Jesus, "No man can come to me, except my Father which hath sent me draw him," and All that the Father giveth me shall come to me. He was in declining health for some two or three years, with a complication of diseases. He had some of the best physicians in the country to examine him, and no two ever agreed on his case. He seemed to realize from the first that time with him was fast drawing to a close, and began making preparations in a business way, and died at 6 p. m. on the day above mentioned, rejoicing in a Savior's love. He leaves his dear companion, five little children, aged father and mother, four sisters and one brother, besides many other relatives and friends, to mourn their great loss, but to him, we trust and believe, great gain, and we know he is done with the trials and conflicts of life.

The writer was called for, and tried in much weakness to preach a funeral discourse in memory of the deceased, to a large concourse of people, in which I tried to comfort the bereaved by pointing them to the Lamb of God, who died for sinners, and telling them not to weep for the dead, but for the living. The remains were followed to their last resting-place on earth, by a large procession, where they were left until God shall bid the sleeping dust come forth, we trust to be fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Son of God. So, dear friends, cast your care upon the Lord, for he careth for his people.

H. W. NEWTON.

MY dear grandfather, **Mastin Cox,** after a long illness departed this life Sept. 14th, 1897, at 12 o'clock m. He was born in Floyd Co., Va., and at the time of his death was 84 years and 2 months old. At the age of eighteen years he married Miss Belinda Wilson, and after making their home in Virginia for a few years, they with one child moved to Hancock Co., Ill., in 1833, where he has since resided. Nine children blessed their union, but only four are living, namely, Jackson Cox, Mrs. Eunice Ewing, Floyd and Warren Cox; one lone sister, Mrs. Eunice Wilson, residing near Plymouth, Ill., and an only brother, living in Floyd Co., Va., are left, his wife preceding him to the glory world long years ago. Grandpa Cox had lived in this country sixty-four years, and with the good gift of economy and industry had accumulated a large inheritance. He was upright and honest in all his dealings, and was ever found to be the same humble, quiet and unassuming man. Many times through his sickness he was heard to remark that he was reconciled and ready to go. He made a profession of religion about fifty-five years ago, and joined the Old School Baptist Church at Middle Creek, where he remained a worthy member until his death. His seat at church was never vacant when able to attend. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of election, predestination and salvation by grace, and lived a very exemplary life, his manner, walk and deportment were beyond question; indeed, he was a father in Israel. May the dear Lord sanctify this event of his providence to the good of the bereaved brother, sister and children, and all the glory and honor be ascribed to his great and holy name. On the day following a large company assembled at his late residence, where Elder Frazee preached a short discourse, after which his remains were followed by a large procession to the Holland Cemetery, where they were laid beside the last resting-place of his dear, departed wife, there to rest until that great day when this mortal must put on immortality, then death will be swallowed up in a glorious and never-ending victory through our glorious Lord.

A granddaughter,

L. M. COX.

BENTLEY, Ill.

Emanuel Shaffer was born in Bedford Co., Pa., March 3d, 1833, and moved to Holmes Co., Ohio, in 1856, and was married to Mercy Jane Purdy, in 1858, and moved to Allen Co., Ohio, and located on the farm on which he died, August 21st, 1900, aged 67 years, five months and 18 days. He leaves a wife, three children, two daughters and one son, and three grandchildren, and a host of relatives and friends, to mourn their loss, but our loss is his eternal gain. He never united with the church, but he was a firm believer in the doctrine of election, predestination and salvation by grace, and esteemed the SIGNS OF THE TIMES very highly.

The writer of this notice tried to speak on the occasion of the funeral, to the comfort of the friends and a large and attentive audience, from John xvii. 1-6. The subject of this notice was highly esteemed by all who knew him.

J. G. FORD.

RUSHMORE, Ohio.

Mrs. Nancy E. Challis, late of Woburn, died May 11th, 1900. She was a beloved member of the First Independent Baptist Church in Woburn, Mass. We miss her very much. She was always at our little gatherings unless prevented by sickness. Besides the church, she leaves many friends.

L. B. FORD.

MELROSE, Mass.

MEETINGS.

THERE will be a May meeting held with the Fairview Church, Fulton Co., Pa., commencing on Friday before the first Sunday in May, lasting over Sunday. All coming will be met at Hancock station, Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, on Thursday. Would suggest that those coming write Elder Ahimaaz Mellott, Needmore, Pa. We especially ask that our brethren and sisters visit us on this occasion.

E. V. WHITE, Pastor.

THERE will be a May meeting held with Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va., commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in May, holding over Sunday. Trains from Washington city will be met at Herndon station, Southern Railroad. We hope our friends will make this a special time to visit us. We shall be glad to see all who may come. Our ministering brethren especially we hope to see.

E. V. WHITE, Pastor.

BALTIMORE Association is appointed to be held with Tuscarora Church, in Pennsylvania, beginning Wednesday before the third Sunday in May, (15th) 1901, and continue three days. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth to meet with us. We hope the dear Lord will favor us with his presence, that we may be enabled to say that it was good that we were there. The Tuscarora Church is about fifty miles west of Harrisburg, Mifflin is the station to stop at. One mile to the church from the station; there will be conveyance there to places of entertainment.

Done by order of church. M. H. V.

DELAWARE Association is appointed to meet with the church at Cow Marsh, Kent Co., Delaware, beginning Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, (22d) 1901, and continue three days.

Those coming by rail from both north and south will be met at Woodside, on the Delaware Division Penn. R. R., Tuesday afternoon, May 21st. From the north, express leaving Philadelphia at 3:58, and Wilmington at 4:36 p. m. From the south, accommodation leaving Delmar at 3:30 p. m. Those who cannot come on these trains should get tickets for Felton, as there are Baptists living there who will provide for them. I expect to be able to secure excursion rates for all who wish to come.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Pastor.

DELAWARE River Association is appointed to be held with the First Hopewell Church, at Hopewell, N. J., beginning on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (May 29th) 1901, and continue three days.

THE Warwick Association is appointed to be held with the New Vernon Church, Sullivan Co., N. Y., beginning Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, (5th) 1901, and continue three days.

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A pamphlet of the above title has been issued by Elder R. H. Boaz, and has been selling for 25 cents a copy, but is now reduced to 15 cents per copy, or $1.50 per dozen.

This pamphlet is a very able and unanswerable refutation of the new theory, that has lately sprung up among our people, of conditional or merited salvation, and it should be read by every lover of the truth. Address,

ELDER R. H. BOAZ.

FULTON, Kentucky.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 69. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1901. NO. 10.

POETRY.

COURAGE.

"BECAUSE I hold it sinful to despond,
And will not let the bitterness of life
Blind me with burning tears, but look beyond
Its tumult and its strife;

Because I lift my head above the mist,
Where the sun shines and the broad breezes blow,
By every ray and every raindrop kissed
That God's love doth bestow;

Think you I find no bitterness at all,
No burden to be borne like christian's pack?
Think you there are no ready tears to fall,
Because I keep them back?

Why should I hug life's ills with cold reserve,
To curse myself and all who love me? Nay,
A thousand times more good than I deserve,
God giveth me every day.

And in each one of these rebellious tears
Kept bravely back, he makes a rainbow shine,
Grateful, I take his slightest gift; no fears,
Nor any doubts are mine.

Dark skies must clear, and when the clouds are past,
One golden day redeems the weary year.
Patient, I listen, sure that sweet at last
Will sound his voice of cheer."

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—The above lines were copied and sent to me by my dear and sorrowing third granddaughter, as expressive of her feelings, and they are comforting to me, and may be to many of your readers, so I send them. My dear Ivy is blessed with the faith and trust in Christ that dwelt in her precious mother Mary, and she is meekly courageous in her great sorrow.

Your sorrowing brother, D. BARTLEY.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ROMANS VI. 6.

"KNOWING this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

The apostle has here declared a strange thing; he says of himself and his brethren, that their old man is crucified with Christ, for the purpose and to the intent that the body of sin might be destroyed; that from that time on they should not serve sin. The question is, How is this true, and in what way is it accomplished? Paul was a living man, and so were the brethren to whom he wrote; they still had natural life, and were servants of the Most High God, yet their old man was crucified. How was this, and by what process? Some would seem to wish to convey the idea that our mortal bodies are the old man, and that to put off the old man would be to discard our mortal frames, but such could not have been Paul's meaning. They were crucified, he says, and yet they retained their mortal powers and frames.

Paul, in the preceding chapter, had said that through one man's disobedience many were made sinners, and so also by the obedience of one many were made

righteous. He means that the sin of Adam was entailed on all his posterity, and also that Christ's righteousness was entailed on all his posterity, which shows how the people of God, though vile in themselves, can be considered righteous before a just and holy God; it is by imputation. Our God in his all-wise and eternal purpose laid the sins of his people upon Christ, and his righteousness upon his people. Thus the Redeemer and his people were passive in the matter. Jesus declared repeatedly that he came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him, and once he prayed, "Not my will, but thine be done." Thus Jesus was not a free agent, in the sense that men attempt to claim free agency for themselves.

In the connection Paul also said, "Moreover the law entered, that the offense might abound," and also that by the law is the knowledge of sin. Hence the law was given solely for the purpose of bringing in man guilty, in order that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God. He who seeks to use the law for any other purpose perverts Scripture. Paul also said in this same connection, Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. To some it seems passing strange that our God should give a law to make man guilty before him of sin, and then cause grace to much more abound where sin abounds. Thus we can understand a little of Paul's meaning when he said, "For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law," meaning, as it seems to me, that where there is no commandment men are not condemned. Paul seems to mean that during the twenty-five hundred years from Adam to Moses, who gave the law, sin was in the world, but that in the absence of law sin was not imputed, and that wherever there is no law, there is no transgression. When the law did come it made sin to be a transgression, that all the world might become guilty before God, because all the world was sinning, as Paul has so forcibly declared in the third chapter of the Romans. Hence we must conclude that the purpose of the law entering as it did, was that offenses might abound. This paved the way and opened the channel for grace much more to abound. Thus the remedy is made known as much greater than the disease. This truth is again shown by the declaration of Paul, that as sin had reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life. This would seem to mean that as the law is the strength of sin, so that without the law sin is dead, therefore in the absence of the law sin could not reign unto death, and while sin remained in the world for the first twenty-five hundred years, until the law came, yet man was not considered a transgressor until the law was given.

To come directly to the text now, I will say that man has been a sinner against a just and holy God all his life, but until God writes his law in man's heart, he will not know that he is such a great sinner, so Paul said, I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived and he died. The sin which was in his heart, and under which he lived, when the commandment came, produced death. Before the commandment came he was alive, afterwards he was dead. National Israel was without the law of Moses four hundred and thirty years. They then had the promise and circumcision. After the law was given it thundered judgments upon them, and death reigned, and distress was felt

everywhere. The same is true in an experimental spiritual sense. Paul said as quoted before, "I was alive without the law once." Paul did not mean the law of Moses, for he had never been without that, and it was not that law which killed him. He was speaking of the law of God written in his heart which had caused sin to revive, the law being the strength of sin. Sin is a sweet morsel under the tongue until the law is given. Paul asks the question, "Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid." He means, Was that good law written in my heart made death unto me? No, no. "But that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good." He means, The good law written in his heart was that which gave strength to sin to work death in him. He also said that the commandment which he had thought to be unto life, he found to be unto death. Sin took occasion by the commandment written in his heart, and deceived him, and by the commandment slew him, and it also wrought in him all manner of concupiscence.

See what sin does for those in whom God has written his law; it kills them. So sin reigns unto death, and because of this sin and death grace and mercy are the only hope of the christian, and here is his crucifixion of which Paul speaks; this is the way by which we are crucified with Christ. It was sin that put Paul to death, and it was sin that put Christ to death. Christ was made sin for his people by coming under the law, the life of his people was in him, and as the law demanded the life of his people, so he must lay down that life. We were all guilty, and as he was our life, the law must take him to reach our life; he is the head, and they the body; the life is not in any member of the body, but in the head; a member may be taken away and we still live, but if the head be taken we die.

Paul asks the question in the beginning of the chapter, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" This was in reply to the assertion that if it be true that where sin abounds grace much more abounds, then let us continue in sin that grace may abound, but Paul says, "God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" If sin has reigned unto death, and if sin has killed us, how shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? How are we dead? The answer is plain. Sin which had caused us no trouble until the Lord wrote his law in our heart, has strength from the law, and has revived and deceived us, and has slain us, and has wrought in us all manner of concupiscence. "Sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful." This is just the condition every child of God finds himself in when the law of God is written in his mind and heart. Then, and then only, does the sinner think of grace and mercy as what he needs. The self-confidence old man is slain, all our first religion is shown to be false, and all our former notions about God, false. We never knew anything about the power of sin until the law came and gave it strength, and we were slain by it. What was slain? Our old man, our first trust and hope; self was laid aside, in the sense that our first strength was gone, and with it all confidence that we could do aught to save ourselves, or that we could do anything good.

Thus Paul says, "Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed." That is, that self

and all the pride, haughtiness, confidence and trust in our own strength, which once we thought to be so great, might be completely crucified as Christ was. And as Christ was freed from sin when he had been crucified, so those whose sin has been slain by the law, are forever freed from sin, and they are no more under the law, for they have been as completely crucified under the law as was the Savior. The Redeemer was literally crucified upon the cross, while we are crucified in our affections and desires. The one was a setting forth, as in a type, of the other. Paul says again, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" He, as it seems to me, means that by baptism we set forth that we have been completely crucified to the world, and the flesh, and all things that are of the world, as much so as was the blessed Lord literally, when he was crucified upon the tree of the cross.

Take the case of a poor sinner who has the work of the new law written in his heart, while his conscience bears witness and his thoughts meanwhile either excuse or accuse him, and he feels to be in the grasp of a mighty monster, viz: death, and when one has thus been crucified, he has no further use for the doctrine of free agency; he is dead, and his life is hid with Christ, and he is ready to be buried with Christ in baptism, by baptism into death, and as Christ went into the tomb, and burst the bars of death, even so have we viewed many poor sinners going down into the liquid grave, a scene as solemn as death, and when they have been buried by baptism into death with Christ, and have been raised up again, we have seen a smile of victory over death plainly visible on their countenances. They have been buried with Christ, and raised up to walk with him in newness of life; the bars of death have been broken, and the captive set free, and there is a song of praise in their mouth. It is true when one is born of the Spirit there is joy in the Lord, even as was the case when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, but when Christ was raised from the tomb, a victory over death was secured and proclaimed. In baptism, with its burial and resurrection from the watery grave, there is a setting forth of their faith and hope in the burial and resurrection of Christ, and it also sets forth our own death, burial, and the resurrection of this mortal body. Each step in the ordinance sets forth a step in the chain of events that transpire to all the people of God in their experience in this life. As Christ was dead and buried under the law, so they are crucified and raised up to walk in newness of life. No one is a proper subject for baptism, but he whose self, or old man, has been completely crucified. These have no more use for the company of those who think that salvation is by works, or that it is conditional on the part of the creature. "When we were without strength, in due time, Christ died for the ungodly." He did not die for the righteous, but for the ungodly. "If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life." It is by grace, and grace alone, through the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, that we are saved, not of works; O no! lest any man should boast. We are simply his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has ordained that we should walk in them. Chosen ages past, before the world began, that we should be holy and without blame in love before him. O, what matchless provision has been

made for us in Christ; created in him, and chosen in him, and holy in him, and without blame before him in love, and all this purposed to be done for his people, away back yonder before time began. What more can be done? All that we can do is to say, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.

Dear brother Beebe, as some of the dear brethren have asked to hear from me through the SIGNS, I submit the above for their perusal. I have been confined at home for the past five months with my sick father, and have therefore not met with many of the brethren, and now my mind reverts back to them whom I have neglected for so long. I gave my father almost all my mind, but he is now gone from us.

NEWTON PETERS.

PORTLAND, Ind., Feb. 22, 1901.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Feb. 1, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—Having read with much comfort and sweet assurance so many of the precious letters published in the SIGNS, I often feel like acknowledging the same. The greatness of the variety of gifts which the Father has bestowed upon the church is wonderful to contemplate. These gifts are for the edifying of the church, and we should labor to that end. Even in the apostles' day, and in all the Bible record, we find the same, and I do not suppose that we can find anything different in our day, so far as the church is concerned. The church existed then as believers taught in the school of Christ, and the same is true to-day; no change whatever is needed. The apostle designated the several gifts, and says they were all by the same Spirit, and for the edifying of the body of Christ, the church. Paul could not do the preaching of Peter, nor Peter that of James and John. It is possible that there might have been some contention then, as now, as to whom was the greatest, but that did not change the gifts, they were gifts to the church, and were recognized of the Lord and by the church. We find some contention in the church at Corinth. Some said, "I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, and I of Cephas." Paul would seem to settle that matter conclusively by telling them that they were neither of him, Apollos or Cephas, and that neither of these had ever been crucified among them, or for them. Therefore he would say there need be no contention among you. No doubt each one had gifts profitable to the church, each one in its place. This order was more beautifully expressed by the queen of Sheba, when she came to see the glory of Solomon, as she beheld the perfect order of the temple, and spoke of the servants and attendants; (1 Kings x. 5–8,) each served in his place, as he was fitted and qualified, and the place was fitted and appointed by the great Jehovah. So the apostle goes on to expound the more perfect way. He exhibits no fleshly ambition to become a champion, but lifts up the lowly Jesus as the standard, and center of excellence and glory. He lays the axe at the root of the trouble by telling them that God had chosen the foolish things to confound the wise and weak things, and things that are not, to bring to naught the things that are, and this was so that no flesh should glory in his presence. But he says, "Of him [not of me, or Apollos, or Cephas] are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." All gifts of God to the church are profitable; I need not say from the least of them to the greatest, for with God there is, and with

the church there should be, no difference. None of the gifts of God are little, and none of his blessings are small. As each fills his place in the body, it would seem to me that any one of the dear ones who has been made to hope in the love and mercy of God, who would not listen to any of the Lord's called servants willingly who come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of peace, would not be worthy of the favor of hearing any of them. One who would not hear any of these called servants must be possessed by a fleshly mind. I would add that the Lord has none other than his called servants, though the churches have made some in the letter who are not of the Spirit.

What a lesson was taught by the dear Redeemer when the question was asked as to whom was greatest in the kingdom of heaven? This was certainly a carnal desire in the disciples, yet one that was needful in order to bring out a forcible and needful truth and lesson, and cause the disciples to the better understand themselves and the kingdom. He took a little child and set him in the midst of them. This was the answer, the solution of the whole matter, made forcible and clear. And he said, "Except ye be converted, and become as a little child, ye can in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven." They were the true disciples of Jesus, but had false views, from which they needed to be converted, and to become as little children. Thus all the gifts and callings of God are equal. How impressive the lesson thus taught.

Prophets, apostles, evangelists, pastors, teachers, all given by the same Spirit; all for the edifying of the body, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and each one ministers severally as with the ability that God gives, and they can do no more and no less. The Lord said, "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be." Each gift is according to the labor required, and all is according to the divine arrangement; there can be no mistake, if an exhortation is needed, he will give it, and also hearts prepared to attend to the things spoken, as was the case with Lydia of old; if a doctrine is needed, that also he will give, and assuredly there will be some one who will need it; if a rebuke is needed, that also he will give; he makes no mistakes. Notwithstanding the variety of gifts, each one called of God will feel to cry, "Lord, what wilt thou have *me* to do?" Not what shall brother Vail, Carnell, or some one else do, but *me*? What wilt thou have me to do? May I, if called, do that which thou wouldest.

"No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God as was Aaron." Such an one feels a solemn and sacred obligation, and prays that he may know what to do. The poor servant feels often that he would obey if he knew what to do, and how, and often he tries, but feels, "O, what a do it is; what a failure." Can he help it? No; the Lord has withholden, and he cannot come forth. The Lord withheld from him that he might try his own strength and wisdom. With his miserable failure the poor soul is humiliated and ashamed, yet this all the more qualifies him to offer his gift. God is glorified as much in his failure as when he has liberty, and has as much to do with the one as with the other, but O, how hard to be reconciled to it. Each one must stand in his lot or place. All, by the same Spirit, flows from the one fountain-head, Christ. The one Spirit in Paul, Peter, James, Jude and John ministers through them in the

order in which the blessed Master has called them.

How often when tried we turn to the blessed revealed word and find comfort in Paul's testimony, at other times in Peter's, or James', or John's, or in the Psalms. We find that which each time is suited to our need. So also each servant of God ministers to-day according to your need, every hungry soul is fed. Each servant is raised up and qualified according to the need of those to whom he is to be sent; each gift is peculiar to itself, and when the Lord gives the word, it will assuredly go forth. If you go to the meeting to-day burdened and oppressed, just according to your condition will the Lord send the message. You cannot tell, and the servant cannot tell what is needful. Therefore the humble desire of all should be, send or speak by whom thou wilt. I think that one who is in the right spirit, and hears and sees only Jesus in his excellency, is not so much concerned as to how it is delivered. The hungry, starving soul only wants the bread, the living flesh of Jesus, with clean hands. That which fills the soul with rejoicing is Jesus Christ and his fullness. Again, no mortal can break unto you the bread of life, this Jesus only must do. He may break it unto you to-day, and to another to-morrow. Elder A may feed you to-day, you are prepared, and he is prepared with a message from God, and you rejoice; some one else may be careless and indifferent; Elder B preaches to-morrow, and he who is careless to-day is then fed; here is a sweet message and a happy soul. So each and every servant is of the Lord's choosing. Ministers of the selfsame spirit with our spirit bear witness to us that we are the children of God. Thus the church is fed, ministered unto by these little nothings, these base things, and yet gifts and callings of God. Here is no room for boasting, and no ground for pride, since all, all, is of God. And O, what a happy day it would be for our beloved Zion, if each could be found standing in his own lot and place, with no creature worship, which is idolatry. O, that each of the brotherhood could fill his place in the church faithfully, and each esteem others better than themselves. Little children, is there one of the Lord's servants, however humble and poor, that you would not hear? Dear servants of the Most High, is there one of the little ones of the flock, however poor, whom you would disdain to feed? How expressive the words,

> "Hast thou a lamb in all thy flock
> I would disdain to feed?
> Hast thou a foe before whose face
> I fear thy cause to plead?"

In conclusion let me say, it is a serious question, and a solemn consideration with me, as to whether I have been called to preach the word of God, or am what might be called a home made minister? I have not considered the home made one in what I have here written.

I submit this to your better judgment; I feel inclined to add something more with regard to calling and ordering, if the Lord will, in the future. With an abiding love and fellowship to the household of faith, I am yours in gospel bonds,

P. W. SAWIN.

WAVERLY, Pa., April 7, 1901.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST, ONE AND ALL, FAR AND NEAR:—In behalf of the churches once composing the Chemung Association, we send you this epistle, in which we desire to express our love and fellowship for you in the Lord our Savior and your Savior, hoping that you still remember us in your supplications at the

throne of grace, and that you, too, hold us in your fellowship as saints of God.

Elder Bogardus and myself are serving the churches here, of which there are twelve or thirteen, besides several places where meetings are held where there are no organized societies. A number have been added to some of the churches during the past year, and there are many others apparently listening with loving interest. With many discouragements we have also many things to encourage. The churches are at peace generally, and sound in the faith; the doctrine as set forth in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is universally indorsed as far as I know by the members of these churches. During the past year there have been held seven two days meetings among the churches in these parts, at which meetings we had as preachers, Elders Hubbell, McConnell, Ker, Chick and Bogardus. The meetings were fairly well attended and the preaching good. We hope the ministering brethren will remember us this summer and fall, at our yearly meetings, also any brethren or sisters would be gladly welcomed among us. Please do not desert us because we are not an association. Come whenever you can, we will use you just as well as we can. I love to have ministers visit and preach for the churches I am serving, it does them good, and that does me good. Whatever benefits the church benefits me.

Leaving this subject I will write a little on something else.

A brother asks, "Does the calling of the saints precede salvation?" I answer emphatically, No. Notice the Scripture which says, "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling." The whole church of God was saved by Jesus Christ on the cross, and in time they are called by the grace and Spirit of God to a knowledge of their lost and ruined condition as sinners, and of Jesus Christ as their Savior and Redeemer. In God's eternal mind salvation was complete in eternity, also the calling. In the fullness of time this salvation was manifest, and in the fullness of time the saints are called to a knowledge of it, and all of the powers of earth cannot hasten the time, nor all the powers of hell hinder or retard it one moment.

Second question. "Does repentance precede the new birth?" No. Who ever heard of a man repenting before he was born? The natural man has no desire, neither has he any power to hate sin and turn from it any more than a wild boar can desire to be a sheep, and become one. Without spiritual life there is no true repentance.

We often hear pharisees say, "I have got religion, I am a christian, and I am going to heaven when I die," but there is no confession of sin in all that they say. I ask a true subject of God's grace, "Are you a christian?" He answers, "I do not know, I hope I am, but can see no evidence in myself. I often think no one would gain any evidence for me from my walk or conversation, though I do long to be a christian." "Have you got religion?" "No, I have never got religion. I labored to that end, but all my efforts were failures. I hope that I do know something of the religion of Jesus Christ, but often feel that I have no religion, no, not one spark. I feel so dead." We do well to remember that dead men do not feel dead. How do you feel about going to heaven when you die? Are you sure of it? No, I have a hope, but much of the time it is very small. Sometimes it seems like hoping against hope, and sometimes I feel that it is all gone, and I am left all alone, a poor, miserable out-

cast, no one cares for me, and I do not blame them. If the saints really knew me as I am, they would say, "Get behind me, Satan, thou art an offense unto me." But with all these wretched feelings I do occasionally feel a little hope springing up in my poor heart. I shall be satisfied in the perfect likeness of Jesus. Mortality swallowed up of life, our vile body changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body, constitutes all the heaven I know.

I do not think the expression, "going to heaven," is found in the Scriptures, that would seem like taking a journey, instead of a change from mortality to immortality.

The doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is a grand truth; I love it, and preach it with the ability which God gives me to understand it. Many Scriptures that in years past I thought referred to the beyond, or eternity, have come to me with power and sweetness as being fulfilled in my experience, and I have seen a beauty in them, and at times have tried to present my views on these subjects to the saints, and they have been cordially received by them generally, but not always. We read that, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness, that the man of God [no one else] might be thoroughly furnished unto every good work." Amen.

I enjoy reading the SIGNS much, the article written by brother Robert Scates was complete, it hit me everywhere, and also fitted me. Also Elder Ker's article on prayer did me much good. Elder J. M. True gets inside of my feelings nicely. Elder S. H. Durand's articles are very instructive and edifying, I have had many good meals of spiritual food from them. Elder Bartley gives us good big doses of spiritual provender. Sister Attie Curtis gives us sweet and joyful messages of the blessed work of Jesus, and she tells it in such a way that you feel sure she has "been with Jesus," and almost makes one feel that they know him too. Dr. B. F. Coulter writes a lot of good things occasionally for the "poor and needy," and it seems so easy for him to write. No credit is due him for writing as he does, "he can't help it." Elder John McConnell does not write often, but what he writes is good. I think he is a little inclined to shirk. If I am wrong he will kindly inform me through the SIGNS. Elder Jones has written very excellent articles. He comes out clear, and we know where he stands, and what he believes. He knows what hell is, and that is what has made a Predestinarian Baptist preacher of him. Go on, brother Jones, what you have learned in the fire declare, and if the people in Texas do not want to hear it, come out here, we believe and love it too. Our aged brother, Elder Rittenhouse, gives us quite frequently an instructive, wholesome article. We need just such men as brother Rittenhouse in the camp of Israel. He once told me he was considered a natural "critic," and he did not know but that he was, he thought so himself, too, but I think a little criticism occasionally is good. It has a tendency to make us more careful to have a "Thus saith the Lord" for what we advance. If any of the brethren think from what brother Rittenhouse has written on the subject of predestination, that he is weak, I wish they could hear him preach on that subject. I have heard him twice, and I have to say he was as clear and strong on that subject as any man I ever heard. Elder F. A. Chick gives us from the store-

house of eternal truth, editorials rich with love, sweet fellowship, admonition, strong doctrine, and everything found in the garden of grace, for God's hungry, needy people. He is the right man in the right place, I think, and there are a whole lot of folks who think just as I do about it. Elder H. M. Curry comes in my mind as one whom God has made a sharp, threshing instrument. When he takes hold of "limited" predestination, "conditional time salvation" and "free agency," he does not leave anything of it. Preach on, brother Curry, we need you. Brother Benton Beebe gives us occasionally a short bite, but it is sweet, and it fits splendidly. Do so some more, brother Benton. I cannot forget the editorials of Elder Gilbert Beebe. What wonderful ability, what depth, what height, what expansion, how searching, how discriminating, how firm and unwavering, how bold and fearless, not willing to yield one principle of truth for the friendship of man, yet with all these gifts he was by the grace of God, sympathetic, humble, and a real father in Israel, could sympathize with the weakest, most ignorant and afflicted child of God. I loved him. Elder Wm. L. Beebe, too, was a sweet writer and preacher. His communications will long be remembered for the spirit of charity and love that shone through them all, plain, discriminating, soul-comforting truth.

I will add that the SIGNS are grand. I will mention no more names, but will say, Brethren, write on, your communications are all good. In reading your articles I get acquainted with you, and it does me good.

With love and sweet fellowship to the saints of God everywhere, I will close.

D. M. VAIL.

ROMANS VII. 24.

"O WRETCHED man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

This seems to be a very important question, a question no one would nor could be induced to ask, save one prompted alone by the Spirit of the Lord. But notice first the confession, which is the earnest confession of every child of grace, and which is the continued flow from the bosom of every poor, tempest-tossed soul, who, like Paul, have experienced something of the utter worthlessness of all the combined powers of man to bring one ray of light, sweet comfort or peace, to the poor, hungry, thirsty, persecuted, despised and forsaken pilgrim.

The apostle calls our attention here to the fact of his own wretchedness, and why? Paul had been brought up very religious, (in conditionalism) and was a pharisee by nature, (just as we all are today) and profited in the Jew's religion, not the religion of Christ. But when he was changed, or born again, he was no more a persecutor of the saints, but a defender of the doctrine. Christ was formed in him the hope of glory, and as soon as he began to live, he began to die; live in the Spirit, and die in the flesh. Therefore he could say, "O wretched man that I am!" God had shined in his heart, which gives the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

It is strange to the natural mind that the grace of God makes one feel so wretched, and miserable, and sinful, that they are forced to cry out, "O wretched man that I am!" Nothing but the grace of God that bringeth salvation can cause such a deep felt sense of humble contrition: O how wretched I am; O how worthless I am; what a sinner I am; un-

worthy, unfit for the fellowship of the saints.

Here is evidence of two principles, or warring, struggling as it was with Rebekah, (Gen. xxv. 22,) two manner of people were struggling together in nature, even before they were born, and afterward the elder was trying to kill the younger. And had you noticed, the flesh, or he that is born after the flesh, always is in the lead in persecuting him that is born after the Spirit? (Gal. iv. 29.) Now who can answer the important question, Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Our natural reasoning would say, Obey, do good, do the commandments, flee God's wrath by fleeing to the law of works for justification. Carnal reason suggests, If you will do good and live right, the Lord will bless you for your obedience in this life, and take you to heaven when you die. Dear child of God, all this is but human reasoning, which is Arminianism, and Arminianism is conditionalism, and if we could stop a moment and compare such suggestions with our experience, we would soon find that the legs of the lame are not equal. Well, then, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? As I am writing I see a Methodist preacher pass with his Bible under his arm, returning from Sunday School, where he has been teaching people (as he thinks) how to do to be saved, and of course to deliver themselves from the body of this death, which doctrine is perfectly consistent with human reasoning, and if I was to call upon him (the preacher) to tell me what to do to be delivered, or who shall deliver me, he would no doubt tell me to deliver myself by obedience, or to join the Sunday School or prayer meeting, or else the Lord would deliver me if I would let him. I heard this same man say once in commenting on the song, "Amazing grace," That grace would lead the last one of us home, if we would let it. This is no more than I expect to hear from the religious world, but O, dear brethren, do not let such a thing creep in among you in any garb. Conditionalism comes in many ways. She never makes her first appearance in her full garment, but comes just as the serpent did to our mother Eve, and acknowledges the foreknowledge of God, but denies a part of the truth.

"Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" This death here means the death of suffering here in this life. We that live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake. No mortal man on earth ever suffered more than the apostle Paul: in perils of almost every description, of hungering, thirsting, wearying, journeying among heathen, and even among false brethren, and yet all his sufferings did not deliver him from the body of this death. I believe our sufferings are good for us; I believe the Lord arranged all my suffering for me, even from eternity, and if I was to live as near the mark of full obedience as is possible for poor, sinful man to live, it would not deliver me from the body of this death. If I am one of the redeemed, (which is a question with me) I must suffer, but dear brethren, my stubborn and sinful nature complains and rebels even at the thought of suffering.

Some might conclude that I do not believe in obedience. Yes, I do, but we want obedience at the right time, and in the right place. We want obedience brought about by the promptings of the Spirit, the Spirit, or Comforter, which Jesus promised the disciples just before he was taken away from them. Read the fourteenth chapter of John. This Spirit

was to prepare and guide them, show them the things of Jesus, &c. By the direct and immediate operation of this Spirit we both learn the things of Jesus, and are brought into sweet fellowship and union, and thus it is we are through the operation of the Spirit able to rejoice in suffering. Obedience is the medium through which we show forth the praise of the Lord, but the preparation must come from the Lord at the time of the act. We have many examples of obedience both in the Old and New Testament Scriptures, and also of suffering. Job suffered not for disobedience, and this body of death no doubt was felt by him in his sufferings. The difference in Job in his sufferings, and most all people in this day is, Job realized the justice in his, while our nature calls in question the propriety of our suffering, or being persecuted. Job never charged God with folly, even if he could not understand why he was suffering. Not so with Peter; on one occasion he told the Lord, We have forsaken all and followed thee, "What shall we therefore receive?" Peter was a little tinctured with the idea of conditionalism, and that idea was never all knocked out of Peter until he saw fighting with the sword failed to accomplish his design. He must be left to himself long enough to not only deny the Savior, but to curse and swear, and after seeing the end, and his hope was gone, he could do nothing better than to go a fishing (and catch nothing).

I want to say in conclusion, I believe God from all eternity predestinated all things, and so orders and works out of the sight or comprehension of man. Yet my sinful nature has never been reconciled to the manifesting of events which come to pass as God decreed from all eternity, and controls according to his own will.

I have but hinted at the subject that is on my mind. I do rejoice in the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. May the Lord bless you, dear editors and contributors, and spare you to comfort God's dear people.

Your brother in hope, and in gospel bonds,

S. N. STEPHENS.

DE LEON, Texas.

MT. VERNON, Texas, April 1, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have just received and read a (to me) very comforting letter from our dear brother, Elder P. H. James, of Prescott, Ark. Somehow it strikes me that you would give it a welcome place in the SIGNS, feeling that it would be a comfort to others. I have often heard of those fellows who hold "absolute predestination," and therefore man in his sin and wickedness is influenced, moved or coerced by God himself, but I have never met one of them, for those who hold to the doctrine of absolute predestination with whom I have met, or had the pleasure of corresponding, do not believe that men have ever any more needed coercion, moving, influencing, &c., than water needs compulsion to run down hill.

Dear brother, I would gladly increase the circulation of the dear old SIGNS among our people if I could, for I feel sure it tends to the promotion of sound sentiment, and tends to peace and fellowship on a sound basis. It is worse than useless to "cry peace, peace," when there is no peace, or evade the doctrine, or sacrifice principle to secure peace, for peace secured at such price is not peace at last. Ishmael was son of the bond woman, and Isaac the son of the free. The son of the

bond woman could not be heir with the son of the free, and they could not reside long in the same house, although Abraham was the father of both. So with legalism and grace; although the "law of Moses," and "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," they were not intended for the rule of life in the same house, for the law of Moses pertained to that "Jerusalem which now is, [of which the apostle was speaking, Gal. iv. 25,] and is in bondage with her children," or to the house of national Israel, but the children of the "free woman" are the subjects of a different covenant. Hence their inheritance is not based upon the principles of the law of Moses, for from all of its provisions they are freed by their great Head and Law-fulfiller, King, High Priest, Husband, Elder Brother, to whom be glory and honor, power and dominion, both now and forever.

Yours in love and fellowship,

H. B. JONES.

PRESCOTT, Ark., March 19, 1901.

ELDER H. B. JONES—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I will now try to answer your last good letter. My only excuse for not answering sooner is, I have not felt like it, and I do not really know now whether I can do so or not. However I do not feel that I should be silent altogether, as I have become very much attached to you for the truth's sake, and by our correspondence have discovered such a similarity in our life, experiences, conflicts, "striving against sin," "the lusts of the flesh," and loathing ourselves because of the same. And now because of the seeming triumph of "hurtful lusts that war against the soul," I do not feel fit to pen you a word. So if I am led off by divers lusts, such is the influence wielded by this old evil nature of mine, and is not the direct coercion of the Spirit of grace. So we do not charge or blame God with our sins; we feel that we are under law, (I hope under "the law of the Spirit of life,") therefore responsible creatures. God is under no law. Some say he is under the law of justice. Why, he is very justice itself: "Justice and judgment are habitations of his throne," there to stay, or ever remain. Then, my brother, if we sin, and are made cognizant of it by the Spirit of truth, there is sorrow of soul, as it was with David when the prophet told him of what he had done. God sent his messenger to communicate to him his wickedness, and therefore wrought in him deep conviction, for his heart was susceptible of being broken, and his spirit susceptible of contrition. So now, "it is the Spirit that quickens," "A godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation." It would be and is absurd to call on a dead man to repent. As life precedes action, so life is given before we can turn away from our sinful or evil ways. How needful the chastening rod, and laid heavily upon us, but we do not realize the good of it while it is being inflicted upon us, but afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness in them that are exercised thereby. O, my proneness to wander, how easily I am led astray. David said, "Before that I was afflicted I went astray." How well my experience is told in this. But bless his holy name, "He doth not willingly afflict." How blessed and highly favored are we (if his children) to have such a merciful and loving Father. Is it not a wonder that he could be so gracious toward such sinners as we are? But his mercy endureth forever, and his long suffering waits as much as it ever did. When I see the increasing depravity of makind, I wonder that his

long suffering has waited as long as it has. Speaking after the manner of men, it looks like his patience and forbearance would have been overtaxed long ago. But "His thoughts are not our thoughts, nor his ways our ways."

I wonder that I shall not cease writing you about my waywardness and meanness. I feel that if I could write you something of the joys and sweets pertaining to the kingdom of our God, the bright and precious revelations, and the ecstacy of the soul upon the reception of such revelations, would be of far more interest and comfort to you. But, my brother, I have learned (I hope by experience) that I must wait upon the Lord, and I do hope in so waiting I "shall renew my strength."

May the blessed "Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings," that we may by the warmth and fructifying influence of the same "grow up and go forth as calves of the stall."

Excuse this poor letter. Write me as soon as you have opportunity. Remember me and mine.

Yours in love,

P. H. JAMES.

SYRACUSE, Kansas, Dec. 6, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—If I am worthy to address you in this way. Inclosed I will send you a letter which I received from a dear brother who lives near Parsons, Texas, which was written to my husband and I, in answer to our letter of October 19th, which I see you have published in the SIGNS of December 1st, if it should meet with your approval I would like for you to give it a place in your paper, that others of like precious faith may have the pleasure of reading it. I have been thinking for some time that if I could have language to express my feelings as I desire, I would love to write a few lines to the dear kindred in Christ that have been writing so many precious letters through the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and tell them what great comfort, joy and peace, they had brought to my poor, drooping soul many times during the last six months, while I have been so greatly afflicted with inflammatory rheumatism, not being able to walk alone, at times, without great pain. I have been slowly improving since September. I have tried many times in my affliction to pray to God to give me grace and strength to bear all my suffering patiently, and sometimes I have felt that if it was the Lord's will to call me from this world of sorrow and affliction that all would be well.

I will try in my poor, imperfect way to tell the dear brethren and sisters my travels from nature to grace, or in other words, what I hope the Lord has done for poor, unworthy me. My parents were Old School Baptists, and I was brought up under that belief, but it was not until I was about eighteen years of age that I became interested about my eternal salvation. But when the blessed Savior revealed to me my sinful condition, then it was that I could see what a great sinner I was in the sight of God, and would oftentimes try to pray to him to pardon my sins, but, dear kindred, I had no great long prayer to make, about all I was able to say was, Lord, be merciful to me, a poor, undone sinner. But it seemed that all the little prayers that I could offer did me no good. I continued in this condition for several months, and finally, when I had given up all hope, as a last resort I prayed God to reconcile my poor soul to his divine will. And it was then he spoke peace to my troubled soul, and placed a

new song in my mouth, and then it was that I could sing the dear old song,

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."

After I had met with this change I had a stronger desire to go to the Old School Baptist meetings than I had ever had before, and I felt in my heart that if there ever was a people on earth that I loved, it was the dear brethren and sisters at old Honey Creek Church, in Vigo Co., Indiana, at which place I lived at that time, in the spring of 1875, which was about a year after my conversion took place, if I have ever been made to know the truth. My husband and I united with the Old School Baptist church at Honey Creek, Indiana, and have held our membership there ever since, although we have been living in western Kansas for twelve years.

I have learned that while traveling through this life of sorrow and affliction, that we have many trials to pass through, but our Savior says, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. He also says he will be with us in the sixth trouble, and in the seventh he will not forsake us. Glorious thought, that we have an all-wise God that can work and none can hinder.

Dear ones, although we are many miles apart, and a great many of you are strangers to me in the flesh, yet there is a love that goes out from my poor heart to you that is inexpressible, and if I should never meet you in this life, I have a little hope within me that I may meet you all beyond this vale of tears, where all will be joy and peace. I will say this much, that if I am eternally saved, it is by the grace of God. Dear brethren and sisters, may you be blessed with the privilege of writing many more precious and comforting letters to the SIGNS. There are only a few of the brethren and sisters of our faith in this western country, but they are strong in the faith. We would rejoice to have any of the dear kindred visit us at any time convenient with you. Remember me at a throne of grace as a poor sinner, who feels the need of prayer.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

(MRS.) A. G. HURST.

PARSONS, Texas, Nov. 8, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER IN CHRIST:—Your precious and most interesting letter was received a few days ago, and was read with joy and gladness. I do feel to rejoice with you, that you have found a people who know and believe the truth. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." I hope I can understand something of your feelings when you once more heard the truth preached, for nothing else will satisfy the longings and yearnings of the poor, starving soul, but the pure unadulterated doctrine of God our Savior, for the poor child realizes that it has no righteousness, no worth or merit of its own; nothing to plead for justification. But the blessed gospel presents Christ as its wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption; its all in all, and in the preaching of the gospel all this is revealed from faith to faith, and the poor child can then embrace the promises, feel the sweet assurance that Jesus is his Savior, and rejoice with that joy that is inexpressible and full of glory. No doubt you realized all this, with its sweet assurance and comfort, during the meetings you wrote about, and if I was with you I would love to hear you talk about it, as

you say, We can talk so much better than we can write. I was at two associations in August and September, Peace Valley and Trinity River, all was peace and harmony. There were about twenty ministers at each.

The twenty-first of last month I completed my three score years, and retrospecting cannot see that I have lived to much profit, have been and am still an undeserving sinner. "Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all my days." "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not his benefits."

This leaves all well. Write when convenient. Your brother in imperfection, and also in a blessed hope,

PRESTON STAGGS.

BROOME CENTER, N. Y., March 28, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER BEEBE:—For some cause you both have been in my mind very much of late, and more especially since my son was taken sick, I feel almost ashamed to trouble you with my trouble, and of being so childish. I know "vain is the help of man," yet it truly is a comfort to a sorrowing and afflicted soul to receive such sympathetic missives as that I received from you last evening. I realize that the Lord has been good, yea, more than good to me all my days, that his loving-kindness has overshadowed me since my first existence to the present time, and I feel so unworthy of his notice, my rebellious heart is continually crying out, "We will not have this man to rule over us, away with him, crucify him, crucify him." At the same time I find in me an opposing force that draws or carries me away so that I desire to honor, obey and trust, yea, be made like "this man." O, my dear brother, I am such a complex being that I am often made to wonder at myself. Truly, so much of the time I do not know myself. But with all my short comings, dark seasons and afflictions, they do make me feel that "all is vanity and vexation of the Spirit." In all my experience I fully realize that there has been nothing that has driven me to the throne of grace equal to affliction. O is it not a comfort, a soothing influence, when you feel your very life is drawn from him as a child's from its mother's breast? when you are compelled to cry unto him for help, and you feel like Jacob when he would not let him go until he blessed him? I often think all other attempts at prayer is vain, it is only when we are in and feel the need of him that our prayers are effectual. I feel the Lord has been very merciful to me, that he has been my hiding place in all generations, that he has not left me comfortless, yet I can but feel that his afflicting hand has been laid quite heavily on me, at the same time I think, What might it have been? My parents gone, and six brothers (returning from the funeral of one, I find my boy at death's door) my wife, and now my dear boy, in whom my very soul was wrapped up. He had had our watch-care for three years, so much so that he had become a very part of our being. O, we miss him so very much, constantly looking this and that way for him, as when he was with us. With all our sorrow and mourning we feel we have the full assurance that "it is well with him." We cannot, and have no desire to call him back, his afflictions for the past four years have been such that I have no desire to see them repeated. With all his afflictions I never heard him complain but very little, if any. He often expressed a desire to pass away. O, how my poor heart has ached for him so many times.

Will brother and sister Beebe excuse me for this scribble, I feel some better by

writing, I have written as thoughts entered my mind.

Yours in affliction and christian fellowship,

D. M. LEONARD.

BOWDOINHAM, Maine, March 10, 1901.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —Inclosed find two dollars for subscription to the SIGNS, please excuse my delay in remitting. I believe all who indorse the doctrine of predestination must of necessity love the SIGNS, for it gives no uncertain sound. In these days of striving and turmoil in the so-called religious world, how restful to us to know that our feet are upon the Rock, and that though floods come, we shall not be moved. "He hath declared the end from the beginning." Nothing takes place without him; "He knoweth the way that I take." I cannot tell you just how sweet and refreshing these things seem to me at the present time, but you know that after the storm, the haven is doubly welcome, and for a long time it has seemed to me that it could not be that I was being led at all, I have just seemed to be wandering around in my own weakness, and the bitterness of it, those alone know who have tasted the wormwood and the gall. I have never felt that God could forsake his own chosen people, though despised and rejected by men, as was the lowly Jesus centuries ago, but I have felt as if I were outside; my feet slipped, and I had no standing, but in his own good time he has again established my goings, and hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise to our God. How hath he established my goings? Why, he has declared unto me that my feet are upon the Rock Christ Jesus, he hath showed me his covenant, he hath declared unto me that he will never leave nor forsake me, he has once again gathered me in his arms, and said, "Fear not, it is I."

Can any one fail to accept all the precious promises left on record for his saints, when Jehovah speaks unto them, and bids them come forth from captivity and rejoice in his love? No. His children are made willing in the day of his power; he speaks and it is done, he commands, and it stands fast. How wonderful are his judgments, and his ways past finding out. Every child of God, even when his judgments seem to crush them, feel to love them, and to cry, "How wonderful are thy judgments." They rejoice that in deed and in truth his ways are not as our ways, and that nothing can come upon us without his knowledge. We are glad his ways are in the deep, and we lift up our heads once more, and say, "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

Dear brother, as a church we are still in peace, it seems to us as the years go by, that every trial brings us into closer fellowship with each other, and with God. "Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." I have loved that verse of Scripture for a long time. Where Jesus is there must be peace. When a church is dwelling in unity, Jesus must be dwelling in the hearts of the members.

I have written this that you may know that God hath enabled us to keep ourselves from the world, and to rejoice in him who is the author and finisher of our faith; nothing can be added to his works, and nothing taken from them, he hath declared "The end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

Your sister,

ANGIE J. THOMAS.

ROCKVILLE, Md., April 18, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Our dear family paper for 15th is at hand, and my pen fails to express my grief at the sad news of the death of our beloved brother Beebe. None seemed to be so generally beloved as that dear brother. When I read of his serious illness one year ago, the tears of sorrow flowed freely, but how I did rejoice to hear of his improvement. I have been living in hope to meet him next month, as in years past. Two years ago we met at Broad Run meeting, and in company with sister La Rue and others stayed at the home of brother Benj. White. That meeting looms up before me, when love flowed in like a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God. But our dear brother is gone to his great reward, blessed be his rest. He was greatly loved in life, and in death he is not forgotten. O Daniel, greatly loved, O people of God, how greatly loved with an everlasting love.

May our loving Lord comfort his lonely, grief-stricken widow, sister Tillie Beebe, and his dear children, as no man can, is the prayer of one who has experienced such holy love.

Your sister in sorrow and hope,

RUTH ADAMSON.

PRAIRIE PLAINS, Texas, Dec. 14, 1900.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—You will find two dollars in payment for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Your writings, as well as all the other communications in the SIGNS, contain all the preaching that I have heard for several years. I have wondered why I am deprived of hearing what I call sound doctrine preached, but when the Lord sees fit the time will come just as he has ordered, so it shall be and I must wait. I am willing to wait on the Lord, for I do believe that our heavenly Father knew all things from the beginning, and just as he wills, so shall it be fulfilled; I believe that I am a "Hard-shell," as other denominations say we are, but I think that we are easy to believe the truth that the Bible and the SIGNS contain. The SIGNS is the most welcome visitor I have, I hope the good Lord will enable you to continue to publish it.

I often think of one generation following another so long as the world stands. This is but a waiting time; with us there is a day of journeying, with nights of darkness, but, dear friends, while troubles and trials and afflictions surround us, the good Lord has promised to be with us, and his promises are sure. I have not met with a Primitive Baptist for two years, I wish some brother or sister would write to me away here in Texas, I do not belong to any visible church, but I hope my name is written in the Lamb's book of life. I once united with the missionary church, but I became dissatisfied very soon and left them. I feel now that I am living on time, it is the Lord's time, his time has been always, both now and forever.

Please make allowances for this, from a friend,

(MRS.) BETTIE THOMAS.

DAVENPORT, N. Y., May 2, 1901.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars for renewal of my subscription to SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It seems to me there never was a time when such a medium was more necessary than at present, for the comfort, edification and equilibrium of God's people, for the whole earth seems shaking from center to surface, politically, religiously and morally, or immorally.

It was with feelings of great sorrow and deepest sympathy for the bereaved, that I read of the death of your dear

brother, Elder William L. Beebe, surely he has entered into rest in that house of many mansions, where our dear Savior has prepared a place for those who love him. "Precious in the sight of the Lord, is the death of his saints," saith the psalmist, and the preacher hath said, Better is the day of death, than the day of one's birth.

Yours in love of the truth,

HARRIETT N. HARKNESS.

SELECTED.

THE SCRIPTURAL THEORY OF MISSIONS.

THERE seems to prevail at present in the christian church a profound feeling of responsibility with regard to the evangelization of the heathen, coupled with a poignant sense of discouragement over the insignificance of apparent results. There is, moreover, perceptible in certain quarters a tendency to force on the work by every possible means; and a feverish anxiety exhibited in doing so which is sometimes almost melancholy to witness. The dark places of the earth are to be lit up as if by contract work, and every one is being importuned for money to aid in the enterprise. Indeed, it would almost seem as if people thought that all that was needed to accomplish the christian conquest of the earth was men and money; that the fortress of heathendom could be carried by storm if only the missionary army were sufficiently numerous; and that the world lying in pagan darkness, or subject for ages to the domination of other religious systems, had no religious rights of its own, no religious liberty, no power of choice, but was simply a field of conquest, which any one with christian knowledge and ecclesiastical sanction was justified in entering and occupying. Now, it seems to me that this is not the way our Lord looked upon the matter, nor as the matter was regarded by St. Paul.

Missionaries would sometimes seem to forget that every rational being has religious rights, and ought, in the sight of his fellow-men, to be perfectly at liberty to worship the Supreme Being as he chooses, whether under the form of a wooden image, a marble statue, or a wafer. To despise a man because his type of religion appears to be more rudimentary than our own is not only absurd, but unjust. The first lesson to be learned by the missionary is the lesson taught by Christ himself, and that is a deep respect for the intellectual rights and the personal religious ideas of the individual hearer. Our Lord always showed this respect; he forced his teaching on no one. Secondly, our Lord seems to teach us that the great power in evangelization lies not so much in human influence, or human industry, or in the lavish employment of human resources, as in the essential virtue of the word, i. e., the word of the gospel. Besides announcing these two principles of the intellectual and spiritual liberty of man and the vivifying power of the Spirit, our Lord has given practical instructions to missionaries as to their behavior and deportment in visiting strange cities which they are sent to evangelize.

They are, first of all, to consider themselves altogether dependent upon the good will, hospitality and material support of those they address. The guest relation in the ancient world was one of the most beautiful and enduring ties of social life, and the Greek language has a special word to express it. The guest relation is to come before the teaching or preaching relation. According to our Lord's teaching, where a man will not be

received as a guest, as Dionysius received Plato, as Crœsus welcomed Solon, as the widow entertained the prophet; where the christian preacher is not accepted, as a favored friend, into the bosom of the pagan family, he is to depart, shaking, it may be, the dust off his feet, or none the less plainly acknowledging that where there is no room for him in the house there can be no room in his hearers' hearts for the gospel doctrine.

Our Lord also lays down a much more important rule with regard to the conduct of missions. He says that the evangelist is not to be subsidized from without, but to be supported by the people he preaches to. The laborer is worthy of his hire, and if the hearers refuse to pay the hire, it is a plain proof that they do not wish those services of the laborer, which they are at liberty to accept or repudiate, on their own responsibility, whether to their bane or blessing. There is one more fundamental rule laid down by Christ, the hardest, perhaps, to be observed by those to whom daring and devotion, or it may be overweening pride, make defeat more difficult to endure than even martyrdom. Christ distinctly declares that in the case of persecution the post is to be abandoned. Persecution is a sign that the missionary is aggravating instead of conciliating those among whom he has come. They look upon him as an interloper; their eyes are blinded that they cannot see; to address them further is only to drive them into acts of violence and crime. To remain would make the missionary a sharer of the blood-guiltiness of the ignorant and unenlightened pagan. Both for the ultimate success of the gospel, for the sake of preserving the life and future usefulness of the preacher, and of saving the incensed pagan from incurring the guilt into which his fury is driving him, it is wise and considerate to obey the injunction, "When they persecute you in one city, flee ye into another." In fact, the whole scriptural theory of propagating the gospel is based upon the doctrine that the gospel should be made ready for those, and those only, who are ready for it. Only when "the fields are white to the harvest" is it proper to pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers; and, we may add, it is rash and presumptuous to strain and struggle after making a harvest from fields which are not yet white.—*Outlook.*

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

PLEASE BE SURE

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

ALL GONE.

The large type hymn books of the genuine Turkey Morocco binding and the imitation binding are all gone. All the styles of binding we have left of the large books, are the cloth and blue marbled edge binding.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

The last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denotes the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1901.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MATTHEW XIX. 13; MARK X. 13; LUKE XVIII. 15.

A DEAR sister has requested us to write for the SIGNS upon the subject recorded in the three places in the gospels named above. These all contain the record of how little children were brought to the Savior, that he should put his hands on them and bless them. There are some slight differences in the words used by these three evangelists in recording the narrative. Matthew says that they were brought that he should put his hands upon them and pray, Mark and Luke say that they were brought that he should touch them. All three record the objection of the disciples. Matthew says that he laid his hands upon them and departed thence. Mark says that he took them up in his arms and blessed them, putting his hands on them. Luke says nothing of this.

These differences are not contradictions at all, but are just those differences that we should expect to find in three narratives by three honest witnesses who are not in collusion to tell the same story. Similar differences occur constantly in the narratives of the four evangelists who recorded the words and deeds of the blessed Redeemer, while he tabernacled in human flesh. In no case when rightly interpreted, are there contradictions, but only the holding forth of some special thing by one, upon which the others do not touch.

Before presenting some things which seem to us to be contained in this narrative, we desire to call especial attention to one conclusion which has been drawn from this narrative by many, viz: that this supports the theory that infants are the subjects of baptism and church membership under the gospel, but there is not the slightest allusion to the subject of baptism in the narrative as given by the evangelists. They did not bring their children to the Savior for that purpose at all. It is expressly said that the purpose was that he should put his hands upon them and pray, or bless them. Their friends did not ask that they might be baptized. So far as appears from the narrative, they did not even know that baptism was required of any one, and certainly they could know of no commandment requiring the baptism of children. John had required repentance, and fruits meet for repentance, of all who were baptized of him, and in this certainly babes could have no part. It is not recorded that any were baptized of him without confessing their sins. Babes cannot confess sin. All then that they could know of baptism, either by John or the other disciples of the Lord, forbade infants should be entitled to it. As said before, they did not ask that he or his disciples should baptize their children. They did ask a blessing from him upon them. This we are entitled to do to-day also. And what believing parent is there who does not desire that he would take their children in his arms and touch them, and bless them? But this does not imply that they are to receive baptism or

any other ordinance of the church. Indeed, from all scriptural testimony, personal faith in Christ, and personal repentance of sin, must always precede baptism, the faith of the parents will not do. Still further, Jesus did not baptize them, nor command that they should be baptized. He rebuked the disciples who would have shut them out from his presence, and took them in his arms, and touched them, and blessed them. He said nothing about receiving them into his church, nor to any of the ordinances of the church. His very silence concerning all this is the strongest condemnation of the practice of most of the religious world. If then it be commanded that children who do not believe, and who cannot believe, should be baptized, the command must be found somewhere else than in this narrative. If such command and example could be found elsewhere in the Scriptures, the advocates of infant baptism would not think it so needful to urge this narrative as a justification of it. We once heard a Methodist minister urge upon his church that they ought to take into the church all their children, and all the proof that he even attempted to urge from the Scriptures was this very act of the Redeemer in blessing the little children. We could but pity the weakness of a theory which was driven for support to Scripture like this.

It may be asked, Why then has the practice of infant baptism grown up, if there be no warrant for it in the word of God? How did it originate, if not commanded in the Scriptures? Briefly we reply, It grew up in the early ages, out of the superstitious idea that regeneration took place in baptism; no one could be saved without regeneration, and so it came to be thought that no one could be saved without having been baptized. Infants needed regeneration, and so when they drew near to death it was thought that they must be baptized in order to their regeneration. Had it not been for the fiction of baptismal regeneration, infant baptism would never have been thought of. The Romish church holds to the superstitious theory still, that regeneration takes place in the ordinance of baptism, and so naturally insists that all infants must be baptized, else they cannot enter heaven at last. One of the early writers of the Romish hierarchy once said that, "The wailing cry of the souls of unbaptized infants is heard throughout the regions of darkness forever." He would not say that they must suffer among the lost, but they never could see the face of God, they must bewail their hapless fate in darkness forever. What a horrible theory. Old School Baptists are charged with holding that infants are, some of them lost. This charge rather lies against those who practice infant baptism. If not baptized, then lost, is the theory of Romanists, openly confessed and acknowledged. Most Protestants will not admit that they hold to this, but still if they did not believe that children after baptism are entitled to some advantage over those unbaptized, they would not be such earnest sticklers for it. The root of infant baptism may be lost sight of by many, but still the real root of it is the theory that in it is regeneration, without which none can be finally saved. We would further say that Old School Baptists have been charged with believing that baptism was essential to final salvation. This is false indeed, and we only wish to say that Old School Baptists are human as well as others, and as desirous that their children should be saved finally as any one else. Now if we did believe that baptism was

essential to the soul's salvation, would we not be found urging all to be baptized, and especially would not we see to it that our children were baptized? We insist upon the baptism of all believers in the only way that the Scriptures present it, and because the word of God commands it of all who believe in Jesus, but we do not believe that unbelievers are entitled to it, nor that a man shall find his salvation finally in it. On the contrary we do believe that a man must be saved indeed before he is entitled to receive it. Salvation felt and known in the heart, is a prerequisite always to the privilege and commandment of baptism.

Still further, we do not object to the children because they are children, but because they are not believers. If a child of any age brings forth the evidence to the church that they have been born again, none among the church will forbid water that they should be baptized. We do not believe in adult baptism, and reject infant baptism, but we believe in believers' baptism, and reject unbelievers' baptism. There must be fruits in the life, and in the confession of the lips, meet for repentance, before any one (child or aged man) can be entitled to the ordinance. Should a child of three years of age be able to bring forth such fruits of true repentance, we know of no Old School Baptist church that would not joyfully hail it, and welcome such child to all the privileges of the Lord's house. We have no doubt that the Lord sees good in babes, or that his work has often been wrought in the hearts of babes, as in the case of Jeremiah and Samuel, of John the Baptist, and of Timothy, but we cannot see it until outward fruit appears, and so we cannot administer the ordinance of baptism, but how gladly we welcome and rejoice over any one who is enabled to bring to view before the church the fruit of repentance and faith.

The church of God is to be separate from the world, and to be a city upon a hill, above the world. The very name church means "called out." Men of the world have no right there. She must not prostitute herself to the reception of the world into her house. To baptize infants is to fill up her ranks with unregenerate men. This largely accounts for the low state of religion in the world today. An unregenerate membership transforms the church into the world, and the house of God into a place of barter and exchange, and of thieves. Satan rejoiced when he had introduced unbelievers' baptism into the order of the church, and let it not be forgotten that infant baptism is unbelievers' baptism. Filled up with unregenerate men and women and children, how should it be otherwise than that the church should be but little different in feeling and practice from the world? Out of this grows a membership of gaming, card playing, dancing, theatre going, amusement seeking people, who show that they love pleasure more than they love God. Infant baptism is largely responsible for all this in the churches of the day, it could not be otherwise. Out of this theory of infant baptism also has grown up the state churches of the world. Those who have no grace in their own hearts, see no need of grace in the church at all, and cannot see anything in the church but a great worldly society. Not being separated in heart from the world, with its pleasure, pomp and power, they very naturally come to think that the church must and ought to be supported by the state, and must control the state. Thus they come to speak loftily, and to seek to be lords over all the earth, instead of counting themselves but pilgrims

and strangers here below. Priestcraft and kingcraft, the two greatest curses that the world has ever seen, naturally grow out of the theory of infant baptism, and baptismal regeneration. We have thought it right not only to show that there is not the shadow of proof in the word anywhere for the baptism of unbelievers, (no more of unbelieving children than of unbelieving adults) but also to show that this unscriptural practice is responsible for a large share of all the evils with which the profession of religion has ever been cursed. We will now turn from this, and say a few words as to the true lesson taught in this portion of the gospels.

We have fully realized before this that it is sometimes far easier to tell what is not meant by a text, than it is to tell what it does mean. It is sure that the text does not mean the things of which we have been speaking, but what is its signification then? First. We understand it to mean just what the following Scriptures set forth in other language. "Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven." "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength," or "perfected praise." "God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise." The whole force of these Scriptures, as well as of the text, is to show that the kingdom of heaven can be received only by those of childlike, humble spirit, that human wisdom, strength or power cannot avail any one toward entering that kingdom, and that the kingdom of heaven, unlike the kingdoms of this world, is built up of purely spiritual material, and needs not the support of the great and wise of the earth. The kingdom of heaven is not made up of those who would be sought out if the design was to build up some earthly throne, but of those who would be rejected by the world, and who thus show forth the power and grace of God, and this is so that no flesh should glory before God.

As the narrative shows, the disciples themselves had not yet learned this truth, and so when the little children were brought to him by those who asked this favor of him toward their children, the disciples thought that they would be a hindrance to him in the fulfillment of his vast designs, and that he would have no time to regard them or comply with the wish of those that brought them. Therefore they rebuked those who brought them. No doubt the rebuke was to the effect that they must not trouble the Master when he had such important concerns on hand. They had not yet learned that the most important of all concerns is to bless the lowly, and those of humble and childlike mind. In his kingdom no one else can enter. So Jesus in his turn gently rebuked the carnal-mindedness of the disciples, by saying to them that of just such as these was the kingdom of heaven. The childlike are its subjects. They spoke ignorantly when they rebuked those who brought the children, but we in this day have no room to boast over them, for we also are still largely fleshly in our view of the kingdom of the Lord, and are still more given to thinking that the kingdom of heaven is to be built up by those who possess wisdom, riches, power, and other worldly endowments, than we should be. How hard it is to get away from our carnality, notwithstanding all the teaching of the Scriptures, and all that we have learned by heartfelt experience. If ever we detect

in ourselves more gladness when some one who stands high among his fellow men, and who possesses riches, wisdom and authority, is gathered into the fold, than we feel when the lowliest one of all is gathered in, that is the same spirit which actuated the disciples when they rebuked those who brought the children to the Lord, that he should bless them. It seems to us that the whole substance of the narrative is found in the words, "Of such" is the kingdom of heaven. The very word "such," shows that the design is to show a comparison, and as said before, to declare that the disciples must themselves be as little children, to enter the kingdom.

It was not a strange thing that the children were thus brought to him for a blessing. Throughout the Old Testament we have recorded many instances of the "elder blessing the younger," "superiors blessing inferiors," and "parents blessing children;" it was a common practice, so now here were those who believed that Jesus possessed especial nearness to God, and was a holy man, if not the Lord himself, so it was but natural that they should thus come and ask his blessing upon their children. One of the evangelists says, "That he should pray." Their design was that he might ask the blessing of God upon them, and we are told that he complied with their request, after rebuking his disciples. If in this act the Lord conferred any spiritual blessing upon them as he might and could do, that is, if he in blessing them imparted the divine life to them, as was the case with those named at the beginning of this article, John the Baptist and others, then when they should be capable of showing that this was so, they would be entitled to come in by the door of baptism into the church. But whether or not spiritual life was actually conferred upon them by the Savior at this time, is a profitless question to discuss. We have understood that he blessed and prayed for the children just as in all ages patriarchs, prophets and God-fearing men have besought the blessing of God upon those who have asked it at their hands. It does not seem necessary to believe that he did then confer the blessing of eternal life upon all those children, if indeed upon any whom he blessed. But be this as it may, it is sure that nothing was said about baptism or church membership then, and it is sure that fruits meet for repentance must be shown by them, ere they could be entitled to baptism.

We leave these remarks, trusting that they may prove of satisfaction to the sister who preferred the request, and to all who may read what we have here written.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE TIME TO FAVOR ZION.

We have no reason to doubt that every incident which God in his holy providence allows to transpire, however oppositely designed by the wrath of men, or malice of devils, must ultimately, under the gracious hand of God, result in favor of Zion: "We know that all things do work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose." Nevertheless we read of a time to favor Zion; yea, a set time, as appointed and ordained by our heavenly Father, in a pecular manner to result in her favor.

Although in a general and unrestricted sense, all things do operate for her good, from the setting up of empires, to the numbering of the hairs of our heads; from

the creation of worlds to the falling of a sparrow, yet there are many things brought to pass which are particularly afflicting and trying to the saints of the Most High. God's people are chosen in the furnace of afflictions, and in the wisdom and goodness of God it is ordained that "All who will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution." And we are further informed that the redeemed, blood-washed saints shall come up out of great tribulations, and also that unto them it is given on the behalf of Christ, that they shall not only believe on his name, but also that they shall suffer for his sake. Many, says the inspired servant of God, are the afflictions of the righteous, but God delivereth him out of them all.

Among all the afflictions common to all the saints while they dwell in earthly tabernacles of mortal flesh, perhaps none are so severely felt as their own inbred corruptions, the sense of ingratitude to that God whose goodness and mercy has followed them all their days, that they come so far short of what they sincerely desire in their obedience, love and devotion to that blessed Savior who bore and carried them all the days of old, who gave himself for them, who bore their griefs, carried their sorrows, and on whom the chastisement of their peace was laid, and with whose stripes they are healed. A sense of his unparalleled love, his unexampled mercy and distinguishing grace, more than all the terrors of his judgments, leads them to mourn their depravity, and to repent in dust and ashes before him.

The world with its cares, sorrows, bereavements, fascinations and vanities, prove, as the wise man has said, a vexation of spirit to them. While in the world, they have to do with the world, but O, the thorns and thistles they have to encounter. As the disciples of Christ the world hates them, because they are not of the world, and because they are called to renounce the world, the flesh and the devil. They know that the world hates them because it hated their divine Lord and Master before it hated them. They shall be hated also of all men, for the namesake of their Redeemer. Nor is this virulence manifested alone by that portion of the world known as avowed enemies to christianity, but by far the more bitterly from those who under the guise of a profession of godliness, engage against the truth. None are so cruel, so malignant and so excessively hostile to the people of God, as those who claim to be doing God service when they stain their guilty hands with the blood of martyrs. None can so effectually plunge a dagger under the *fifth rib*, as they who conceal their weapon under a cloak, and take the saints by the beard to kiss them, saying, "Art thou in health, my brother?" "Beware of men who come unto you in sheep's clothing; but inwardly they are ravening wolves; by their fruits ye shall know them." From this warning admonition of our Lord are we not bound to scrutinize closely before we listen to those who come crying out against our brethren as heretics? Take them on their back track, and see if we can find no marks of blood produced by their scattering and devouring of the sheep and lambs which have fallen in their way. In their external appearance they may seem to be much concerned for the peace of Zion, for the purity of the faith and order of the church, and they may manifest much zeal for ferreting out heresy, and exposing the wickedness of others, and at the same time they may be inwardly ravening wolves. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Are they following the things which make for peace, and things where-

with one may edify another? Are they in meekness instructing those who oppose themselves? Do they show a consciousness that they may themselves be tempted? Are there no instances to be found of men who can hold in their fellowship those who have by the authority of Christ been put away from the church of God for crimes of adultery, of lying, of bearing false witness against a neighbor, for slander, and other kinds of immorality, and at the same time labor for years to destroy the characters, reputation and usefulness of those who have always maintained a christian walk and deportment in the sight of all men? Again, can no instances be found of a man, professing the greatest concern for the peace, prosperity and welfare of the church of God, professing to be regenerated in soul, in body and in spirit, who at the same time has been twice excluded from the church of Christ, who has abandoned for a long time his helpless wife and family, and who has advised an aged parent to quit preaching and to engage in speculating in Missouri lands? If there be any who bear this description of fruits, are they to be allowed to rend the flock of Christ, because they wear sheep's clothing, or because they make such solemn protestations of their own purity, and so loudly cry out against the imperfections of those who already feel themselves bowed down to the dust under a constant sense of their own vileness? If there are no such cases, then it is well for Zion, but if there are, let the admonition of our Lord be heeded, and beware of them.

A disregard for the instruction and admonitions of our Shepherd and Bishop, must assuredly increase the distress and affliction of the people of God.

Still another cause of affliction to Zion is found when the Lord withholds from her the outpourings of his Spirit, and such seasons of refreshing as can only come from his presence, when the ways of Zion mourn, and but few come to her solemn feasts. But still are we not warranted in the belief that all that God permits to afflict his dear saints is working under his mighty hand for good, and for his ultimate glory, since

> "Death and hell can do no more
> Than what our Father please?"

But be not discouraged, there is a brighter point at which your eyes shall yet behold Jerusalem a quiet dwelling and a secure resting place.

> "God will not always chide,
> But when his rod is felt,
> His strokes are lighter than our wrongs,
> And fewer than our guilt."

There are set times to favor Zion, and in many of her departments the set time has already come. In many of his churches great peace and harmony abounds, and God is evidently calling his own sheep by name, and delivering them from the power of darkness, and translating them into the kingdom of his dear Son. We recently attended the Lexington Association, in this State: one of her churches reported twenty-six joyful converts added within a few weeks past, by baptism, and other churches have also been greatly refreshed and favored with additions. In this vicinity we have witnessed some gracious indications of God's special favor which he bears to Zion. In the Middletown and Wallkill, and in the New Vernon Church, several have been added by baptism and on profession of faith, and others have given good evidence that they have lately experienced the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, who seem inclined to follow their Lord in obedience to his precepts and examples. In many other places, Hopewell, Kingwood, in New Jersey, as well as in other

States, the voice of the Son of God is heard, and they that hear do live.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., September 15, 1858.

BOOK NOTICES.

"LED BY A WAY I KNEW NOT."

SOME twenty-five years since I published an edition of three thousand, of a little book or pamphlet called my "Experience and Reasons for Leaving the Missionary and Uniting with the Primitive Baptists," &c. After the edition was entirely exhausted, I received many orders for it, which orders, though they gradually decreased, never entirely ceased occasionally to come in; even during the last year I received several, though from a distance, and during these years brethren and sisters who knew the edition was exhausted, have occasionally urged me to publish a second edition, but I hesitated, afraid of the flesh.

Not long since two dear brethren proposed to advance the money necessary, if I would consent. This money to me was like the wagons Joseph sent to Jacob: tangible proof of express desire, and I consented, as hoping I gathered the mind of the Lord and his people, and so have revised and condensed the first edition, while enlarging it by additional articles on our doctrine.

This book, title, "Led by a Way I Knew Not," contains over three hundred pages, in good readable type, nicely bound in silk cloth, and can be had of me at one dollar per copy, postpaid, money to accompany order.

I commit the work in secret spirit as unto the Lord in thus submitting it to the brethren and the public.

R. ANNA PHILLIPS.

RURAL MAIL DELIVERY No. 3, MACON, Georgia.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—**Mrs. Julia Randall Finch,** widow of the late John L. Finch, at her home in Warwick, N. Y., April 23d, 1901, aged 82 years and 23 days. She suffered three weeks with heart trouble, but she did not murmur, but waited patiently for her release, and when the summons came, she sweetly fell asleep in Jesus. She had a hope in Christ a long time before she united with the church at Warwick. She was baptized by Elder J. N. Badger, in November, 1868. She fully appreciated her church privileges until the end came. We looked upon her as a mother in Israel, and deeply mourn our loss, but feel for her to die was gain, for she now dwells with her Savior whom she trusted many years. She was the mother of six daughters, one preceded her to the grave a few years, and five remain, also twelve grandchildren and relatives to mourn their loss. May God be unto the children more than he has taken away.

Elder H. C. Ker preached at her funeral much to the comfort of her children and friends, April 26th, at her late home, using as a text 1 Cor. xv. 55-57.

Written by a friend, at the request of the family.

M. E. S.

George W. Conners died at his home in Cheesequake, N. J., March 19th, 1901, aged 64 years. He has lived in that place all his life, and his death is felt through all that community as a great loss. He was held in high esteem as a faithful, honest and kind-hearted man. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of grace, but was not a member of the visible church.

The church in Cheesequake has been extinct for many years, but the meeting-house still stands. It was repaired and improved by the friends in that neighborhood some years ago. I have had appointments there occasionally for the past twelve or thirteen years. He and his wife have been attentive to the meetings, and for the past five or six years he has had charge of the house and graveyard, as one of the trustees of all the property. He and his wife have also generally attended all the appointments at South River, some eight miles away. I have no doubt that he had an experience of grace, and at the last he said, "It is all right." He suffered greatly, but patiently. He leaves beside his companion, a son and a daughter, who is married. Their house will still be a home for ministers and brethren who love to attend the meeting here. I was absent at the time of his death in the south, and brother Chick was sent for to attend the funeral, and preached to a large congregation upon the occasion of his funeral, from the words, "And Martha said unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know that even now whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee." Especially the last verse. The loss is

deeply and sorely felt in his home, and in the home of his daughter. May the Lord be the comfort of the mourning ones.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April, 1901.

Jacob Witfield Bloom, son of Frederic and Lucretia Bloom, was born Feb. 25th, 1839, and departed this life of Bright's disease, March 29th, 1901, aged 62 years, 1 month and 4 days. He died at his residence at Chester, Pa. He had been in failing health for a year or more, and it was known that he could not recover, but at the last the end came suddenly. He suffered much, but bore all without murmuring or repining. He was married to Harriet Risler Dalrymple, March 19th, 1863. The deceased had never made a profession of religion, but held the faith of the Old School Baptists in great respect, and accompanied his companion to her meetings when he could do so. He lived an honorable, upright life, and was a good husband, father and friend. The deceased leaves beside his companion, one daughter, and we think four sons, besides other relatives and friends, to mourn their loss. We were called to attend his funeral service at Frenchtown, N. J., on Tuesday, April 2d. Many friends gathered to pay a last tribute of regard to their friend. By request of sister Bloom, the Scripture found in Job xix. 21, was used as a text. May the blessing of God rest upon all the bereaved family, that they may be enabled to say in their affliction, "It is the Lord, let him do as seemeth him good."

C.

"THE righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come."—Isaiah lvii. 1.

DIED—At her residence near Newark, Del., **Mrs. Mary McConaghy,** in the 57th year of her age. Our highly esteemed sister was baptized by the late Elder Thos. Barton, in the fellowship of the Welsh Tract Church, of which he was pastor at that time, and she continued a worthy member until she was delivered from this dull mortality, with the hope that this mortal shall put on immortality. Our sister was one of those decided and firm ones in the doctrine of God our Savior as a finished and glorious work, adapted to the condition of lost and ruined sinners by the fall, a lover of good people, faithful and devoted to her meetings while able to attend with the brethren at Welsh Tract, but for a long time her ill health prevented her getting out. She was, especially at times, a great sufferer, but at last, I believe, she passed away rather suddenly and unexpectedly. She was a widow, her husband having passed away a number of years ago. They left no immediate family. One brother I hear is the only one left of her family.

Her funeral was attended April 18th, 1901, the services being at the house, where some remarks were made by the writer, after which the body was laid to rest beside her husband, in the burying place at Welsh Tract. Their home has been a pleasant place to visit for many years, all met a welcome there, and it is still kept an open door by those who remain. Sister Rebecca McConaghy, who is a sister of the husband of our departed sister, still remains, and perhaps none feel the loss more than she does, for they lived as sisters in every sense of the word.

May the Lord bless them all, and fill up the vacant place in the church.

WM. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md.

MY beloved wife, **Susanah Hutton Darland,** departed this life Jan. 4th, 1901. She was born in Kentucky, Nov. 12th, 1829, and moved to Illinois with her parents when a child, and from there to Indiana, when about six years old, where she lived until we were married, in 1844, in Park Co., Ind., by Elder Aaron Harlan. One year from that fall we moved to Jefferson Co., Iowa, and the next year to Warren Co., Ill., and in February, 1854, moved to Poweshiek Co., Iowa, lived there until the spring of 1865. In April of that same year we rigged four wagons drawn with horses and cattle, and started across the plains for Oregon. (The winter before we started my wife joined the Old School Baptist church called Pleasant Grove, was baptized by Elder J. A. Bullack.) We lost all our horses on the plains, and landed in Marion Co., Oregon, Oct. 6th, with three wagons and our cattle, where we lived until September, 1876, when we moved to Goldendale, Wash., where she died. She was a loving wife and mother. Her house was always a home for her children, and the Baptists. Words cannot express my feelings at my loss, for I am alone. None knew her but to love her. She always attended meeting whenever she was able, and was at our last meeting before she died. But she is gone, and I am left O, so lonely.

I went to the barn about ten steps from the house, was gone fifteen minutes, came in, she was sitting in her arm chair, no one being present; her hands folded in her lap, her head resting on the back of the chair. I thought at first she was asleep, as there was no sign of a struggle, but when I approached her I saw it was all over with her. She left twelve children and myself to mourn our loss, but not as those who have no hope, for we all believe she is better off. She was the mother of sixteen children, two died in infancy, two after they were grown. We took her to the Spring Creek Cemetery, and buried her Jan. 7th; six of her children were here. Her funeral was preached the second Sunday in January, by Elder Wm. H. Gilmore, our son-in-law. She had heart trouble for several years, and prayed that she might go as she did. She was up talking to me when I started out of the house, she had not been confined to her bed at all in the day.

O, call it not death, 'tis life begun,
For the waters are past, and race is run;
The ransomed spirit but reached the shore,
Where they weep and suffer and sin no more.

She is in her Father's house above,
In a place prepared by her Savior's love.
To depart from this sin and strife,
And be with Jesus, yes, is life.

ALSO,

OUR daughter, **Dora D. Darland,** was born March 22d, 1870, and died Nov. 26th, 1886, being 16 years, 8 months and 4 days old. She died of dropsy of the heart. She had been ailing for three or four years. We tried everything we knew for her, for she was a favorite with all the family. She was just in the bloom of youth, and wished to live, but felt willing to die when she saw she could not get well. A short time before she died she took her mother into her room, got all her keepsakes out and told her what to do with them. Her mother told her if it was her that was to be taken, it would be so much better. She said, "O no, mother, I could not keep the family together, and you can." We are satisfied she was a child of God, and is now singing praises to her Savior in heaven. She used to sing such pretty songs, and when it tired her she would ask me to sing, "Amazing grace." I well know she knew her Savior's love, from the talk I had with her, and the song she picked out in "Thompson's Hymns," and put in print on the edge of the leaf, song 479, commencing,

"No more of works I vainly boast,
Nor so employ my tongue,
Jesus alone is all my trust,
Free grace my only song.

'Twas not in me to seek his face,
Nor did I ask his love,
Till he by his all-powerful grace
First drew my thoughts above."

"Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings."

S. R. DARLAND.

GOLDENDALE, Wash., April 14, 1901.

MEETINGS.

DELAWARE Association is appointed to meet with the church at Cow Marsh, Kent Co., Delaware, beginning Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, (22d) 1901, and continue three days.

Those coming by rail from both north and south will be met at Woodside, on the Delaware Division Penn. R. R., Tuesday afternoon, May 21st. From the north, express leaving Philadelphia at 3:58, and Wilmington at 4:36 p. m. From the south, accommodation leaving Delmar at 3:30 p. m. Those who cannot come on these trains should get tickets for Felton, as there are Baptists living there who will provide for them. I expect to be able to secure excursion rates for all who wish to come.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Pastor.

DELAWARE River Association is appointed to be held with the First Hopewell Church, at Hopewell, N. J., beginning on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (May 29th) 1901, and continue three days.

A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends to meet with us. All trains stopping at Hopewell from Philadelphia and New York on Tuesday afternoon will be met by friends and visitors cared for. Those who arrive Wednesday a. m. come direct to the meeting-house.

ELIJAH LEIGH, Church Clerk.

THE Warwick Association is appointed to be held with the New Vernon Church, Sullivan Co., N. Y., beginning Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, (5th) 1901, and continue three days.

A cordial invitation is extended to our brethren and friends. Those coming by way of the New York, Lake Erie & Western R. R. from the east, will be met at Howells, on the arrival of the Orange County Express, which leaves Chambers St., New York, at 4:30 p. m., on Tuesday, June 4th. Those coming from the west on the same road, will take the train leaving Port Jervis at 3:22 p. m., on Tuesday, and stop at Howells.

Those coming from the north, on the Ontario & Western R. R., will be met at Winterton, on the arrival of the Milk Train, at 5:34 p. m., on Tuesday. Those from the south on arrival of the train leaving Wickham Ave. depot, Middletown, N. Y., 8:45 Wednesday morning.

HIMAN S. COLLARD, Church Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 69. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1901. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 11, 1901.

DEAR KINDRED OF LIKE PRECIOUS FAITH:—A thrill passes over me as I take my pen to once more address such a blessed company. What a great household band scattered far and wide, yet dwelling together in love and holy fellowship; drawn near in heart by an unseen tie that time and distance cannot sever. But how varied are your circumstances, some in poverty, like Jesus when on earth, trusting only in him who controls all things, and whose bountiful hand often in mysterious ways supplies your wants, in answer it may be to some wordless prayer, some fervent supplication in the night of sorrow, causing your hearts to ascend in praise and adoration to his holy name. Then do you realize that you possess untold riches, and jewels of greater value than the choicest gems of earth. Others in this dear family have beautiful homes filled with every comfort, and surrounded with all that could be desired, yet ill at ease unless you sometimes seek out and share with those less favored; you feel that these things are only lent to you by him who said, "The cattle upon a thousand hills are mine," and his love within your hearts causes you to long to relieve those who are destitute, lacking the comforts you enjoy. What sweetness comes into the heart of one who bestows such benefits, even greater than comes to the one who receives it. But in thinking of this cherished household, I cannot forget those who have passed beyond our sight, for,

> "Those below, and those above,
> But one communion make."

Looking over old letters has revived the memory of some whose voices are silent, and whose faces we see no more. I have found treasures of thought and the fragrance of love and tender memories flow back from the past with invigorating power, though the hand that traced them will write no more. When I came to the package of letters from that beloved sister and mother in Israel, Mrs. M. M. Hassell, now in the realms of unfading glory, I felt that I must give some extracts for those to whom her name was so pleasantly familiar for many years, and her communications so gladly welcomed by spiritual readers. But I found I could not select without occupying too much space, for all are so good, and so

full of that Spirit which was her life, there would be little to omit. If her letters were gathered into a volume, what a choice one it would be for those who have tasted the heavenly manna. How comforting and refreshing her expressions of love and sweet fellowship, with her words of exaltation and praise to him who raised her from the depths, and filled her soul with joy unspeakable. Truly hers was a beautiful life. Received into the church at the age of twelve years, a mere child: "Gathered into the fold, with believers enrolled." A true follower of him who was meek and lowly in heart through a changeful life of many years. Filled with gratitude when the sweetest joys were bestowed upon her, feeling herself unworthy of such favors, and bearing with fortitude the numerous vicissitudes, and crushing sorrows that fell to her lot, and at last entering the heavenly courts in the triumphs of a living faith. I once was favored to hear her speak in prayer, and it was to me as "ointment poured forth," a sweet inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and it seemed that glories "eye hath not seen," were unfolded to her vision. The next day we parted to meet no more on earth, but for many days her words lingered in my heart like a benediction, permeating all my being, as the vibrations of harmonious melody. And now, after all these years, this short season with her is still in memory one of the sweetest of pleasant perfumes.

Another who has entered the gates of pearl into the city of gold, is one also greatly loved and widely known, sister Mary Parker. Sorely afflicted for many years, longing at times to depart and be with Christ. She is now in his unveiled presence, joining in praises with that innumerable throng who came out of great tribulation, clothed in white robes. It had been some time since I looked in her book of letters, but a few days ago I chanced to open it, and soon became intensely interested; indeed, it seemed quite new again. Her language is beautiful, and her varied experience so rich that really it is fascinating to one who loves the truth, and who has been taught in the school of sorrow, and chosen in the furnace of affliction. How refreshing to read one's own experience in the language of another. Every line written in pain, yet full of tender sympathy for those who suffer, a sweet manifestation of the Spirit of Christ. Then there are some most touching incidents told in her own peculiar style. Indeed, after my perusal of the book at this time it has new charms for me. I remember how I used to enjoy replying to her early letters, in our old home, and I surely embraced her in Spirit at that time, though never expecting to meet her in this life, but,

> "God moves in a mysterious way,
> His wonders to perform."

Through the kindness of a dearly beloved sister, who was to sister Mary an angel of mercy, she was greatly relieved, and brought near where we could speak face to face. She received further benefits, even so she could walk a little, after so many years being unable to take a step. She once more enjoyed the union and communion of saints, and again was blessed to hear the gospel's joyful sound, for which her heart was full of praise. I think she spoke of her delight at her improved condition in a letter published in the SIGNS at that time, and of her sweet impressions viewing the works of nature in a drive of eighteen or twenty miles, after so long being deprived of such exhilarating pleasures. But this was not for long, as disease was too firmly fixed

to be entirely eradicated. Just as we were hoping so much for her, and soon to have her visit us, she passed from earth with all its sorrows. It was in the home of this precious sister, and while under her kind ministrations, that the message came, "Child, your Father calls, Come home." How often through her weary pilgrimage she had longed for that message. How many dark, dreary days and long, lonely nights she had prayed for the merciful Father to gather her into that city "where the inhabitants shall no more say, I am sick." Yet at times she was enabled to rejoice in tribulation. One terrible night, all alone in her room, when her suffering was unusually severe, almost more than she could bear, she asked in bitterness of soul, "Why must I suffer all these things?" Entire exhaustion caused her to fall asleep, and such a sweet sleep! She then was given a view of her blissful home in the city of many mansions. Her description of what she saw in that delightful dream is most beautiful. While gazing entranced and enraptured on that unearthly scene, she heard a voice saying, "It is to make you pure, all pure within and without, like what you see, that you suffer as you do," and she answered, "I will bear it all." She awoke with these words ringing through her soul, "I will try you as gold is tried, I will refine you as silver is refined, in the furnace of affliction have I chosen you." This bright vision was soothing and restful, and filled her with a glad happiness for many days. What a "song in the night," a heavenly song in the night of suffering. Some of these things came back to me when with other loved ones I looked upon her pleasant, peaceful face, after her spirit had entered into the holy of holies, arrayed in white, being called to the marriage supper of the Lamb, where there are no more tears, neither sorrow or pain, for the former things are passed away. "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

There are others, more than we know, cut down in youth, who languish on beds of pain, and feeling that "no sorrow is like unto my sorrow." But the Lord knows all about it, and he will direct some good samaritan to pass your way, soothe your sorrows, bind up your wounds, pouring in the oil and the wine.

I wish to speak of one precious, afflicted sister, whose spiritual communications have enriched the pages of the SIGNS: Mrs. Nannie B. Edwards, of Owensbyville, Georgia. She was stricken with disease about twelve years ago, and has since been a helpless invalid. Her writing is all done with pencil, and when not able to write, we hear from her through her little daughter, and only child, who has never been to school, except by her mamma's bedside, and judging from her letters, I think she must be a great comfort to her invalid mother, and a brightness in her home. I will give a few extracts from some late letters, though I can scarcely tell how to select from such writing, so full of affliction, so grateful for the very smallest favors. But I must give her own words.

MARCH 20, 1900.

"BELOVED SISTER:—Though weak and suffering, I feel like I must speak a few words to you, if only a few, to tell you what a comfort your letters are to me, and how kind you are to write without a reply. My heart overflows with love to you this morning, and to our heavenly Father for all you have been to me. I feel that he brought us to know each

other, and that none but his Spirit could have prompted you to write to such a weak and worthless creature as I am. I think of you to-day, dear sister, as one of the Lord's chosen, casting your bread upon the waters, trusting in the sweet promise that you shall find it after many days."

In speaking of a severe attack of illness, she says: "None but our dear Lord can ever know what I suffered. My heart has been so weak and painful since then that it almost completely failed me at times. I have no idea that I will live to see the close of the present year. But O, dear sister, if I can just feel when death comes as I did at one time while so very ill, I would not dread it at all. One Sabbath morning I grew so very weak that I could scarcely raise my hands. But with this weakness my thoughts were taken from the things of earth, and I longed to depart and be at rest; I had no fear of death whatever; I felt if I could just tell my loved ones that I was going home, it would be the sweetest moment of my life. I felt nearer those who had passed over the river than ever before; death had no sting and the grave no victory; I did not feel like waiting any longer, I so wanted to behold my Savior's face. I wish I could tell you all about it, but I cannot. Since then I have passed through many dark seasons, shrinking at the thought of dying. I think sometimes, dear sister, that the sting of death is the fear of it, and it is sin that causes that fear.

The SIGNS still continue to come, and I could not express to you what a comfort they are to me, such a solace to my gloomy, shut-in life."

In a letter of later date she writes: "I have thought of you every day since I received your dear letter over two months ago, but have never felt able to answer it, and besides my own afflictions my father came to see us, and was quite sick while here. He is much better though now, and was able to return home last week. I was so sorry to hear of sickness in your family. I cannot tell you how it touches my heart to hear of suffering in any form, for surely I know what it is to be afflicted. But we read that "In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them." What a sweet comfort this is to all of his suffering children. During all of my spiritual pilgrimage I do not think I have ever realized the presence of a personal Savior more than I have for the past three months. Many times while lying here thinking of this life, and the life beyond the grave, it seems that there is only a little something, I cannot tell what, that shuts me out from beholding his precious face. It fills me with such a longing to see him that I am often made to burst forth in outward exclamations of praise to his holy name. O, it does seem so sweet at times to be afflicted, to be permitted to drink of that fountain whose streams never run dry. But, my sister, it is not always thus with me. There are times in my life, and now is one, when I feel shut in both in soul and body. For several days an intense gloom seems to have enveloped my being. All last night I could think of nothing but death and the grave, and the awful solemnity of these things filled me with terror. The stars seemed to be looking down upon a world of sin and corruption, and my own vileness and imperfections filled me with awe, so that I shrank from the thought of dying. To-day finds me still suffering and depressed. I wish you could come to my bedside now, dear sister, and tell me something to cheer my gloomy spirit.

I often think if it could have been the Lord's will to have placed us near each other, so that you could visit me in my afflictions, how glad I would be, but I thank him just the same for causing you to think of me, and putting it into your heart to send me messages of love and fellowship.

I certainly do enjoy your brother's writing in the SIGNS; it must be a great pleasure to those who have the privilege of sitting under the sound of his voice. I trust he may be spared many years to be a comfort to all who hear him, and to the readers of the SIGNS.

I am suffering too much to write more. Please cast a mantle of charity over all faults. All the family join me in love to your household. Remember me to all who love the Savior. Write soon, for I am thirsting for a letter from you.

Your suffering sister, N. B. E."

DECEMBER 31, 1900.

"MY DEAR SISTER BESSIE:—Imagine my joy when a few days ago Vera ran to my bedside saying, 'Mamma, here is a letter from Miss Bessie.' My feelings were better felt than described, for I was suffering extremely at that time. When I broke it open and saw the present it contained, my heart was so filled with thankfulness that I could find no words of expression, only in constantly repeating, 'God bless sister Bessie.' * * * Your letter was very sweet to me, but how deeply I sympathize with you in the death of your nephew. How bitter the cup when our loved ones are called away. Since the departure of my own dear mother over six years ago, the world has never seemed the same. I wish I could see you this morning, to have a talk with you. To-day is the last of the old year, and I am still here, and though I have waded through deep waters of tribulation, I feel that the mercies of the Lord have held me up, and my heart overflows with gratitude when I think of his goodness to me. O, blessed Savior, how precious thou art to me.

In your letter, my sister, you wished me a happy Christmas. It has been a long time since I had a happy Christmas. Its coming has for many years brought to me sad memories of the past, when two of our loved ones were laid to rest at this once happy season of the year, their deaths being only two years apart. I feel like I want to tell you about it."

This letter was sent unfinished, she being too ill to write more, and now, while I am writing, the mail has brought me another, and as I read it, coming fresh from a heart of love, I feel that it contains some things that seem like a witness to the Lord's goodness and tender mercy in times of trial, so I will give a portion, hoping it will not make my letter too lengthy.

FEBRUARY 8, 1901.

"MY DEAR SISTER BESSIE:—You have no idea how glad I was when on receiving our mail yesterday I found another letter from you. How unworthy I feel that you should hold me in such loving remembrance. How beautiful the words of the dear Savior, 'I was sick, and ye visited me.' While you do not visit me in person, dear sister, yet each one of your letters are a ministering angel, enabling me to wait more patiently upon the Lord. How dreary my life would be if you were to stop writing. I was so sorry to hear of the afflictions in your home; I hope all have recovered ere this, and that your brother and sister will be greatly benefited by a change of climate. My decline has been more rapid since last August than ever before, and I am more despondent. I feel all the time like

I am waiting for something, not knowing what it is. As I lie here day after day, and see nothing without, only as I look through a pane of glass, I cannot tell you how gloomy my life becomes. The verses you copied for me are very comforting, I have read and re-read them, and each time they seem more beautiful than before; I am so glad you sent them. When I wrote to you at Christmas, dear sister, my heart was deeply stirred by sad reminiscences, but I was too sick to finish my letter, and now, though I do not feel adequate, yet I will try in brief to tell you what was in my mind: Seventeen years ago my husband's brother was taken ill at Christmas with congestion, and died the next night. Though not a member of the church, he had a precious hope in Jesus, and his daily walk showed that he had tasted of the goodness of God. How often now, when thinking of that night, do I seem to behold his dear mother, as she fell prostrate by his bedside, and mourned for her darling boy. Precious soul, she too has passed over the river, and together they rest in the beautiful city of God. The night this brother died was the first time my husband ever saw himself a sinner. How mysterious are the ways of Providence! How unsearchable his judgments, and his ways past finding out! Just two years after the death of my brother-in-law, a precious sister of mine died, and was buried on Christmas eve, at twilight, leaving a husband and seven children, the youngest just seven weeks old. Previous to her illness she sent our dear mother word that she would visit her on Christmas eve, and sure enough she did, but how? Not with the lovelight in her eyes, and the blush of the rose upon her cheeks, but like a pale, white lily, clad in garments for the tomb. She was a lovely christian, and just before she expired she said in a clear, audible voice, 'I will soon be in heaven.' While I stood by her dying bed I could think of nothing but Jesus. I know not what I said, but my mother embraced me, telling me what a comfort I was to her. Mother, dear mother, you need no words of comfort now, for your happy Spirit, free from the trials of this life, has joined the blood-washed throng in adoration to our dear Redeemer. That night as I stood by my sister's open grave, these words came flowing sweetly through my mind, 'There the dear flesh of Jesus lay, and left a long perfume.' What a sweet consolation that was to me, and, sister Bessie, this perfume lingers, not only in the graves of the saints, but ofttimes when life seems dark and cheerless, it is wafted to us, and by its soothing influence we have no fear of death.

My dear sister, I commenced this letter three days ago, but suffer so much with heart weakness I can write but little at a time. I do not think I shall ever be able to write much more. When I am suffering too much to write, Vera will answer your letters. The SIGNS still continue to come, and while I love it and its writers, I am not able to contribute to its columns. I look upon each number as a casket of precious gems. I wish I could express my thanks to you for all your kindness to me. I often wish to see you and talk face to face. This letter may worry you, but if it does please look upon my weakness and imperfections with charity, and remember me as one who loves you very much. My love always to sister Mary Miles.

Your unworthy sister,

NANNIE B. EDWARDS."

I am giving these extracts without the knowledge of the writer, but as she has

formerly given her consent when asked, I do not think she would refuse at this time. I have had many letters from her in the past three years, and not one but contained some savory morsel that I feel would be received with relish, if shared with our kindred in Christ.

The afflictions of this dear family are most touching, and appeal to our sympathy. One of the inmates, a sister of brother Edwards, of mature years, has never walked. She has lately been called to mourn the departure of her devoted, widowed mother. I will give an extract from a letter written by brother E. a year ago, when his wife was unable to write. He says, "While I admit with all my heart, that whatever the Lord does is right, and for our good, yet it seems strange to us from a natural view, his dealings with us, especially in my dear companion's illness, who has suffered under the afflicting hand of God for eleven years, and not only is she suffering from one disease, but how trying to see her have to suffer from so many complaints. But when I consider the hand that brings these afflictions upon us, all natural thoughts pass away, and I feel like exclaiming, O Lord, thy will be done, and make me submissive to the same."

Should any one who reads these lines, feel a desire to help bear the weary burden of sorrow, by rendering some assistance, I am very sure it would be thankfully received.

With love to all the household, your sister affectionately,

BESSIE DURAND.

PARTAKERS OF FLESH AND BLOOD.

"FORASMUCH then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."—Heb. ii. 14, 15.

Brother Saunders, of Texas, requests me to write on this text for the SIGNS, especially on the clause, "The children are partakers of flesh and blood." There is no better way than to let Scripture explain Scripture, "comparing spiritual things with spiritual." In this chapter and epistle, the necessity that Christ should come in the flesh of his covenant people, whom God gave him, as their High Priest, atone for their sins by his own blood and death under the righteous law, then rising up out of death by the power of an endless and holy life, destroy death and the devil, and save his brethren by his life, is the one prime and blessed theme. The text before us presents this grand truth in brief. It shows that there is a unity between Christ and the people whom God gave him, so close indeed that their sins and death could not separate him from them, for it behooved him to come to them as their Brother in the flesh, their Redeemer under the law, that he might thus die for them, and by his life and grace save them from their sins and all their foes. Thus redeemed, justified, made alive and raised up in Christ Jesus, the children whom God gave him are his brethren, and one with him in his holy life and Spirit, and God is his Father and their Father. "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again,

Behold I and the children which God hath given me. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood," &c.

He speaks of the people whom God gave him, for they are also the children of the Father, and hence they are both the people and the brethren of Christ. This is shown in verse 17: "Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." So his brethren are as well the people, and Jesus shall save them from their sins. "For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Savior." "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Jesus here calls his people his sheep, saying, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." To them he says, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." "And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God." Thus it is plainly shown that the flock of Christ are at once his people and brethren, for God is his and their Father. This is the great mystery of godliness, of which Paul speaks to us in 1 Tim. iii. 16. Jesus himself, the only begotten Son of God, was "the man Christ Jesus," and he was the Son of David on his mother's side. Of him God said, "I have laid help upon One that is mighty; I have exalted One chosen out of the people. I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him." So likewise are all the children of our God and Father his people as well, for they are the sons and daughters of Abraham in the covenant that God made with him. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

The truth thus clearly revealed is, the flock and people of Christ are as well *his brethren;* they are his people in the everlasting covenant, and they are as really his brethren in the eternal life; for he is their life, and he says, "I give unto them eternal life." Their sonship, and their heirship, unto God the Father is in the holy Son of God, and it is in his life and divine nature of which they are made the gracious partakers. The life of Jesus is made manifest in their mortal bodies, and then the Son of God lives in them, and they live in him. So they are now, as thus manifested, as truly the children of God as they are his people, whom the Father gave to the Son, and for whom the Son gave himself. It was for this cause that "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." His brethren, the children whom God gave him, are partakers of flesh and blood; that is, they are the children of men, are people, "his people," and Jesus "shall save his people from their sins." This holy Son of God, who loved us, and gave himself for us, has no other brethren only his sinful people, neither has God his Father any other children. "And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God," declared Paul. This was written of the Gentile people, whom the Lord would call into the fellowship of Christ. And it was to people who believed in

Christ that John said, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." John says to them, "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." Every believer in Christ, then, is a son of God. And Paul therefore says, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." Faith in Christ is the Spirit's witness in our hearts that we are the children of God. "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." The man who was a servant under the law, is as well a son under grace. This is truly rich mercy and abounding grace to sinners, who are thus sons and heirs of God in Christ his beloved Son. The plain truth in the text is, the children of God are incarnate; that is, they are not disembodied spirits, but people, men, women and children, born of the flesh, and born also of the Spirit. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The man thus born again is himself a child of God, and he is a partaker of flesh and blood, and as such he is a sinner, a bondslave to death. All the children of God on earth are thus. As born of the flesh, they are Christ's people in the Father's covenant, whom God predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son; but as born of the Spirit, they are as truly the children of the holy Father and the brethren of his Son. All this was foreknown of God, and real and true in his infinite mind. Forasmuch then as this is true, "Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." All this was for the sake of his brethren in the flesh, the children whom God gave him, that he might deliver them from sin and death and the devil, and raise them up in his exalted life and immortality to live with him in his glory.

The children of God, then, so long as they abide in the flesh, the body of their humiliation, are complex or twofold, for they are partakers of flesh and blood, and they are also partakers of the divine nature of the holy Son of God. So, too, was the incarnate Son of God as a man, for he was our near kinsman and Brother in the flesh, and was made like his brethren, "being found in fashion as a man." At the same time God was his Father, though a woman was his mother. This is likewise true of all the children of God on earth, for as he was, so are we in this world. In the days of his flesh, the beloved Son of God bore the image of the earthy man. He sympathized with his brethren, for whom he sorrowed and wept, suffered and died. As a man, our divine Brother was a joint-heir with us in all our afflictions, weakness and death. So also shall the sorrowing children of God, who now bear the image of the earthy man, then bear the image of the heavenly Man, the glorified Son of God, who was "put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit," and raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, to die no more. "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Then, O then, we shall be the joint-heirs with Christ Jesus our divine Brother in his life and holiness, glory and bliss.

Now, dear brother Saunders and brethren, the desire of Paul to be found in Christ is in our hearts, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." These realities are divinely wonderful, and their glory is unspeakable. Now we receive them by faith, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began," and we wait for them, when the Lord himself shall come, "and we shall be changed."

"Waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body," your brother in our precious Christ,

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., March 23, 1901.

MT. BRIDGES, Ontario, Feb. 25, 1901.

ELDER S. H. DURAND:—Dear friend and I hope I can say brother. It may be a surprise to you to hear from me. It has been on my mind a long time to tell you a little of what I hope the Lord has done for me, a poor sinner, saved by grace if saved at all. If I am not one that God gave to Christ before the world began, then I am not his.

My father was an English churchman, my mother was a Methodist. I was brought up very strict to the Sabbath law. I was sent to the English church Sabbath School. I was confirmed in the English church. They did not ask me any questions. I knew there was no change of heart in me. I thought I was as good as any one. All I had to do was to say, "Lord, save me," and he would save me, because I asked him.

When I was married we emigrated to Canada and settled on a bush farm, then I had no time. I thought I would get religion when our farm was cleared up. Time passed away quickly; we had a large family; I became a profane swearer, so much so that I did not know when I did swear. Our little children said the same words after me. I whipped them for saying them. When I did swear they did seem to tremble. One day it seemed as if I heard some one whisper and say, "You put the words in their mouths then whip them for saying them." In a moment of time I saw myself the worst sinner in the world. I went outside of the door and said, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." "Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean." These words came with great power. If God had cut me off and sent me to hell, I felt that it was right and just. I felt I could look up and praise God there. I thought I would do better; I would keep the law of Moses and remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. I did try with all my might, but I did fail every time. If I picked an apple off the tree on the Sunday I seemed to break the Sabbath. I commenced reading the New Testament through many times. I could not see much for me. If you love me keep my commandments. (John xiv. 15.) I thought it meant the ten commandments in Exodus. O, how I

did try again, and failed every time. I kept all this to myself. Many times I wished I had never been born. I quit reading the book of Romans, it was such a mystery to me; now it is my delight to read it. This went on for two full years. Only once in that time I could say that Jesus is the Christ. At the end of two full years my wife was taken very sick. I lay on a bed in another room but did not sleep, my soul was poured out before the Lord all night. In the morning I said, "It is nothing but the mercies of God that we are out of hell." Even before the words were out of my mouth it seemed to me the house was filled with the glory of God as a mighty, rushing wind. I could not help praising God with all my might. If I should hold my peace the stones would immediately cry out. It was a glorious time with me. I thought I should never see any more trouble; I thought all of God's people lived happy all of their days, but I was greatly mistaken. Now I want to be with God's people (I thought God had a people with all). I went to the Methodists and told them what I hope the Lord did for me. The class leader, an old man, said to me, If you want to get religion you must be determined. I was with them for four years or more. I knew very little about the Old School Baptists. The best I heard about them they were a poor, miserable people. I got quite dissatisfied with the Methodists; I thought they did not preach as they did before. I thought they were getting out of their way. They told me, "You must love your neighbor as yourself, and do to others as you would they should do to you, and remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy; if you do not you will not be saved." I went to hear the Old School Baptists; their preaching I did love; the people I did love. Then again I went to hear the Methodists, and I thought they were getting worse and worse all the time. The last time I went to hear them I said to myself, I will keep this Sabbath day holy. I went out through the fields with my head bowed down; I had not got more than forty rods away until I forgot myself. I looked up over the field and said, "O what a beautiful field of spring wheat." Now again I have broken the Sabbath. I went to meeting; they called on me to speak, I read John x. 27, 28, I told them not one of God's people will ever perish, for Christ has said so, and I believe it. They looked at me but did not say a word. That was the last time I was at their meeting. I went to the June meeting in Ekfrid, Elder G. Beebe and Elder S. H. Durand were there. This was the first time Elder S. H. Durand was in Canada, he took his text Isaiah xxvii. 13, and showed me so plainly it was not in keeping the law Sabbath, also the difference between the law Sabbath and the gospel Sabbath. It was a good day to me, never to be forgotten. I was driven out from the Methodists, I could not stay with them any longer. Then I had a bitter time. A man's foes are they of his own household. I find my own sinful heart is the worst foe I have. I often think I am nothing but the worst hypocrite, and not fit to be numbered with God's people.

Now, baptism was often on my mind, I was feeling that I was not a fit subject for baptism. I told a dear brother it would be better for me to die in my sins than to deceive the church. I thought I could not tell the church anything so they could receive me. I wanted to go before the church but could not. Elder Wm. L. Beebe preached here in our house one night, he and Deacon J. C. Bateman

stopped with us that night. I thought I must speak about it to them, but I could not. Time passed on until the third Sunday in September, 1881, our dearly beloved Elder Pollard, now gone to a better world, said, After the congregation is dismissed, the church will remain in a little while. I could not get away, I was like a man fastened to his seat, I thought they would not receive me, but they did. The next Sunday I was baptized by our beloved Elder Wm. Pollard. That week I tried to tell Elder Pollard not to baptize me, I was afraid I was not fit for baptism, but I had no opportunity. Satan seemed to tell me that I would be drowned in the water, but I was all right. Coming up out of the water everything was calm and pleasant. My wife and some of our children were with me that evening. My soul was filled with joy and gladness for two full years. After that I was greatly troubled, thinking I was not born again. My heart's desire and prayer to God was, If I was not born again that he would make it plainly manifest to me. One day it seemed more than I could bear, and I called out from the depths of my soul, "Lord, if I never have been born again make it plainly manifest to me." The word came instantly with great power, "Wherefore didst thou doubt?" My poor soul was made happy in God my Savior. Now I thought I shall never have any more trouble; but I find the Canaanites are still in the land. I can truly say with Paul, "In me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing."

Now, dear Elder, I do think the Lord sent you here to preach, I do think he sent me there to hear what the Lord had to say through your mouth. I will say right here, One time I thought I knew all about the New Testament, but since God, as I hope, opened my understanding, it seems to me I was the most ignorant man in the world. It seems to me I did not know anything about the Scriptures. Now I will just say I went to Babylon in place of going to the church of the living and true God. I have been greatly troubled with infidelity, I thought no one was troubled with it but myself, until Elder Pollard said in his sermons, "God's people are often troubled with infidelity." It made me glad.

I have made this altogether too long, but the half has never been told. Dear Elder, you can do with this as you think best, and all will be right with me. It will not be long before I shall pass away from time. I will be seventy-four years old the twenty-third day of April, if I live until that time.

Hymns 1014 and 1022 (Beebe's Collection) just suit my case.

WM. GRIGG.

HERNDON, Va., March 3, 1901.

MY DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I herewith inclose you a letter I received from dear brother A. B. Lester a very short time before his death, which occurred on the morning of Feb. 12th, 1901. I suppose it was the last letter he ever wrote to any one on earth. I did not get the sad news of his death until I received my SIGNS of March 1st, which had his obituary in it, by Elder Garrett Murphy, of Garden City, Minn. If agreeable to you I would like to have you publish it in the SIGNS. Brother Lester was to me a dear, sweet and humble writer, although an entire stranger in the flesh; I had been in sweet correspondence with him for about eight years, and can truthfully say that his sweet epistles of love and fellowship most always brought joy and gladness to my dark and downcast soul. I know I shall greatly miss his messages of love.

O, I ask myself the question now, Why do you weep over the death of an entire stranger to you in the flesh? and the answer comes, Because "Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." And again, "You know that you have passed from death unto life because you love the brethren." I am fully convinced in my mind that there are no other people on God's green earth like the Old School Baptists, for they are the only people in deed and in truth that can weep with those that weep, and rejoice with those that do rejoice. I sit down the day I read the news of brother Lester's death, and tried in my weak way to write words of comfort to dear sister Lester, but unless my words were indited by the Spirit of the great and all-wise God, they would be to her as "sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." I do hope and trust that the good Lord will comfort sister Lester's heart, and also her children, in these dark hours of their sad bereavement, and cause them to say from their hearts, "Thy will be done." "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

Your brother in tribulation,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

GARDEN CITY, Minn., Jan. 20, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER OLIVER:—Your precious letter of Dec. 28th, 1900, came duly to hand, and has been read over, and over again. It is true I did feel afraid that my last letter was so shallow, and devoid of sound reasoning, that you thought it not worth answering; I had such thoughts the morning before your letter came to hand. But O, what joy filled my heart on reading your letter; it seemed as you say, like good news from a far country. You write that you are still in the dark, and thought that I would demand a better excuse. No, dear brother, your excuse is sufficient, for I know how to sympathize with you, for it seems to me that I am of late years more of the time in the dark valley of despair, than I am on the delectable mountain of his love. But what else can we do more than "Trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon our God"? When we look back to the rock from whence we were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence we were digged, we lose all confidence in the flesh, knowing that we can do nothing to bring us again into the light of his countenance. The time salvationist may have a way to create light, but I fear they are breaking that spiritual Sabbath day in picking up sticks to kindle a blaze of their own invention, found only in their old Adamic body. It seems to me that they are seeking to become the bride of Christ, while Moses, their old husband, is yet alive. It does seem that they have not come to the end of the law, or else their "props and stays" would be so completely swept away that they could not find any sticks to pick up that would burn. But the "woe" is pronounced upon them: "They shall lie down in sorrow." But let us trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon our God. "Looking unto Abraham our Father, and unto Sarah that bare you; for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him. For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places, and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her deserts like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody."—Isaiah li. 2, 3.

We do not do as our more religious friends accuse us of. They say we sit down on the *stool of do nothing*, and wait

for the Lord to take us by the hair of the head and drag us into obedience. Could they but know the anguish of our inmost souls, ever praying and beseeching the Lord that it might be with us as in the days that are past and gone. How often have we inquired of the watchmen, but they could give us no comfort. "I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: my soul failed when he spoke; I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer." "By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not." Thus did Solomon sing, but it is only the voice of every member of the bride of Christ. But the pexplexing question will arise, "Am I his, or am I not?" As you said, "I now tremble at the thought, lest I may be mistaken in the call." But, dear ones, did you ever hear of a pharisee having any doubts? No; they will stand up and thank their God that they are not like the Old Hardshell Baptists, and as one told me once, He wanted a religion that he knew he had got. I told him, "Happy are ye in your delusion, but I fear that you are walking by sight." I quoted Paul (Romans viii. 24,) to him, that we are "Saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" But he had "no eyes to see," and it was like "casting pearls before swine" to talk with him, and so it is with them all: "Their rock is not our Rock, themselves being judges." It shows that they are not of that chosen generation, and have never been called out of darkness into his marvelous light, for they show the praise of themselves more than the praise of God. All the old ancient saints were subject to darkness. David said, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Sometimes we are enabled to look at the rod of chastisement as being for our good, then again, Satan will suggest, "If thou be the Son of God" you would not be so carnally minded, but Christlike in all of your deportment. Paul sets forth the christian conflicts you have so ably mentioned in your letter, that it is indeed a comfort: "For if we endure chastening, God dealeth with us as with sons: for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not. But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons."

I was pleased to read your letter in the SIGNS, it has the right ring; salvation by grace alone. We are too weak to depend on man power, neither would Paul have works and grace mixed together; he said it had to be one or the other, and said positively that it was by grace alone, and cut off all possibility of man to boast in the whole matter.

I read your letter to Elder Wm. Murphy, our pastor. He is an able minister of the gospel, and has been for over forty years. He was well pleased with your letters, both to me, and the one in the SIGNS also. He is the father of Elder Garrett Murphy, M. D. You may remember reading his writings in the SIGNS, as he has written a number of letters. He is an able defender of the doctrine of God our Savior. Both the Elders told me to give you their love and fellowship. They spoke of a good old brother they once knew in Missouri, Deacon M. D. Oliver, and wondered if you were any relation. I told them I would ask you.

I have seen Elder White's name in the SIGNS a great many times; I have always had the impression that he was an able

preacher, and would like to hear him, but I never expect to.

FEBRUARY 1st.

I have just been reading over what I wrote you a short time ago, and was about ready to cast it to the flames, when my wife said, No, it was all right. Yet at the same time it seems so incoherent that you will fail, I fear, to grasp my meaning, and it will come far short of being such a letter as you requested me to write, and sister Oliver will certainly change her mind when she comes to read it. The older I get, the poorer my writings are, and it does really seem to me that the older I get, the less I know. I thought in my young days that as I grew older I would "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth," and by the time I would get to be an old man, I would have a full understanding of the truth as it is in Jesus, but now in my sixty-eighth year it seems I have gone backward instead of forward, unless it is this, I have seen the folly of putting confidence in the arm of flesh, and have "grown" to see the necessity of free grace in everything, both temporal and spiritual, for everything we have comes from God, and what have we ever given in exchange? Nothing. In the first place we had no desire for him. What if he had left us there? Well might we sing with the poet, (Beebe's Collection, 494,)

"If I must sing, I'll sing of grace
Which raised me from the fall,
And led me to a hiding place;
Jesus, my Lord, my all."

Thus, my dear kindred in Christ, I understand that we are "Growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." Light makes darkness manifest. If the Sun of Righteousness had never shone upon us, we would not now be lamenting these long, dark winter seasons, praying that the dark clouds might be driven from our sky, and cheer our drooping spirits once more with his presence. But he will surely come; he has only left us, as it were, for a short time to try our faith. He has given us the assurance that he would never leave us nor forsake us. O, what blessed knowledge is this, that our God is an all-powerful God, and none has a right to say, What doest thou? and none can stay his hand, and has promised that, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall arise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn."

But I must close these scattering reflections. Prove them by the standard of truth, and give praise to him to whom praise is due. I hope you will write again soon, for we do truly enjoy reading your letters. Wife joins in best love and fellowship.

As ever, your brother, I hope,

A. B. LESTER.

OXFORD, N. Y., Jan. 27, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER BLACKWELL:—You have been on my mind a great deal of late, and how many times I would have been glad to see you, and talk with you both, or if I could not talk, it seems to me it would have done me good to grasp your hands and look in your faces. O, I feel so far from you all, and so unfit and beneath my dear kindred in Christ, I am so unworthy of their love and fellowship, yet I do love to see them, and be with them. Of one thing I feel well assured, The Lord knows the heart, and God is a Spirit, and we must worship him in Spirit and in truth. I have been very sick of late, but am now better and at present getting better every day. I can truly say it is good to be afflicted. I never have read the Script-

ures with such interest and comfort before, never have so many portions been opened up to me so beautifully. I have been reading the tenth chapter of John, and how beautifully does the Savior speak of his sheep: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any one pluck them out of my hand." Think how safe and secure. He says also, "I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep and am known of mine. * * * Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd." Think of all the shalls; and they shall hear my voice.

Dear brother and sister, can you not think of the time when you were trying not to hear his voice, and thought that you would not? O, how we fought against his work. But they shall hear my voice, and follow me. They not only hear but they follow. Poor, little, weak, trembling ones do follow the meek and lowly Jesus, and how lovely he is, he is the lily of the valley, the one altogether lovely. This is the kind of a Savior that we need. I am so wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked, and of myself I can do nothing. There was a time long years ago when I heard my dear father say to some one, with tears in his eyes, that he saw himself a bundle of filthy rags. I thought then, that seemed strange, but since then I have learned just what he meant. Elder Bundy used to say that he was willing to be something or nothing, as the Lord willed. He was brought there when he did not want to preach.

If we are one of the little ones, all is well, but I am so far short, I am so rebellious against the will of the Lord, yet sometimes I am made to cry out, "Be still and know that I am God." When the hand of affliction has been laid heavily upon me, I have felt down deep in my heart to say, If it be thy will, let this cup pass from me; then I am made to look upon the dear Savior, and how he suffered for the sins of his people, and bled and died for them; then I think how little are my sufferings compared to his, and that he knows all our suffering and trials, and feels them. "As a father pitieth his child, so he pities them that fear him." Often I cry out, "Lord have mercy upon me, a poor sinner." He said, "I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy." I think sometimes how kind and gentle he has been to me, and how he has led me through this life so far, and kept me from outbreaking sins. It is as Elder Purington used to say that he had been kept from killing any one, or stealing, and from all those vices which are in the world, none but the Lord can keep us from all these things. The heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. I have already written too lengthily, if you find anything wrong please tell me, and if you think that I am deceiving the church of God, please tell me. I often feel so dead, and am afraid that I do not belong with them. I have read in the SIGNS of late, of so many feeling like asking to have their names taken from the church book, I have felt that way many times, and to hear those for whom I have such fellowship say this, gives me a little hope. Tell me just how bad I am, I will be glad to hear this, from any of you that know me so well. I hope that the Lord will be with you, and guide you through life, and guide us all, as he would have us go. May we walk faithfully and humbly before God, is the prayer of your unworthy sister,

MARY BREWSTER.

ATLANTA, Ga., May 5, 1901.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—After reading brother H. M. Curry's article on "Predestination and Science," which was so forcibly set forth, my mind is led to notice the laws of nature, or as I sometimes call them, the laws of lust, or that instinct of nature which our God has given to even the little birds in their nest before their eyes are open. If their nest, which by an unexplained instinct their parents have prepared for them, be shaken by their mother, every little fellow will raise its head as high as possible, and each little mouth will be thrown wide open for something to eat. They have an instinct that tells them their mother is at hand with something to eat. Though they never saw her, the utmost confidence is manifested in her. Now these little ones were hatched this way, they did not study this instinct, or learn it of their mother. She has wise judgment to select and to prescribe softness, nutritiousness, quality and amount of their food. Then think of the wonderful instinct of the carrier pigeon. All these wonderful works are to the praise of the Lord.

I will now touch upon something more sublime to us, and which reaches our case. It is said that our federal head, Adam, transgressed the law under which he was placed, for the love of his bride, but I think there was something back of that love, even lust, and a nature susceptible of begetting lust. Does not this prove there was carnality stored away to be made manifest at the first opportunity afforded? He had a sufficient amount of this nature to willingly strike hands with Satan, through Eve.

It was of necessity that this instinct of nature was given. You know the good book says, Ye shall multiply and replenish the earth. We read the plants were made and placed in the garden, grew there. They were not taught to grow and bring forth after their own kind.

What a great Lawgiver we have! He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end; he is all in all; in his fullness all things consist. When we look on him and say, God! there is nothing can be added, that name fills immensity.

I will close, my mind gets lost in the mystery of godliness.

Brethren, I will submit this to your better judgment. If you deem it worth a place in our excellent paper, do as you like with it.

H. H. BENTLEY.

P. S.—I will try and send in some more new subscribers as I can get them. I want to make this earnest appeal to all readers of the SIGNS: To try and just see how easily you can get a few new subscribers. H. H. B.

ATLANTA, Ga., May 6, 1901.

MY DEAR BRETHREN:—Your reception card at hand acknowledging money received, two dollars, for brother McCord. In same you stated that you did not know how many orders you had received from me for new subscribers, but you thought twelve or fifteen. I have not kept any account, but I will continue to try to obtain other subscribers. I now send in another new one, brother R. L. Dedge, and inclosed please find two dollars for same. Many thanks for the year's remittance; I did not get those subscribers because I expected you to pay me for them, they have cost me but little time, and it is with pleasure that I do this, knowing as I do that there is so much trash afloat throughout the country. I feel anxious that the brethren should be supplied with a paper that courts not the flesh, nor worships the

creature more than their Creator, but gives God all power, honor, glory and dominion, who is a Sovereign, and ever has been; one who changes not; yesterday, to-day and ever the same.

In the article I sent in a few days ago, I only sketched at a few of the laws of nature, or the natural instinct that our great God has given man. Adam's babies have no power nor strength to take care of themselves, but wholly depend on their parents for *all*. Just so with the spiritual children of God, they have nothing but what was given them. We are born the poorest and most helpless of God's creation, both naturally and spiritually.

Brethren, if you see anything in what I sent in a few days ago, and want to use this with it, or any part of this, or the other, you are at liberty to do so. I know I cannot write for publication, but my mind gets anxious sometimes that more good Baptists should write on, and that each subscriber would do all that they can to increase the number of subscribers to the SIGNS.

Brethren, I know it is the duty of all correspondents to write as short letters as possible and express their desires. Please excuse me this time for imposing on your valuable time.

I remain as ever, yours to serve,

H. H. BENTLEY.

ALLENTOWN, Pa.

TO MY DEAR PASTOR AND FELLOW-PILGRIMS:—Am I indeed in such choice company as pilgrims journeying to the better land? It is but recently that I came among you, and oftentimes I fear that I am an intruder. However that may be, I find it delightful company, and am never so well satisfied as when I am with this chosen band, and conversing about the country and the inhabitants thereof, to which we are traveling. I never tire of the company of the followers of the lamb, my chief trouble is that I do not see enough of them, they are very scarce where I live, I have the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and in its pages I find the conversation of sweet Canaan, which is so suited to my needs, but outside of its pages, I never hear a word of it in this place. If I broach the subject, I am thought to be queer and peculiar in my views. I presume the Lord has a people here, but I have not found them. But what am I, that I should judge them? Yet by their fruits they are known.

I am writing this at the hour when you all assemble at the meeting-house to hear the word preached in all its purity, I should like to meet with you, dear travelers, for when the Lord's people are gathered, there the mourners in Zion will find sweet sympathy. I know that the Holy Spirit is there, in the hearts of the redeemed. Each one fears that he is not one of that blessed number, and looks upon the others as being better than himself. In their faces he can see the imprint of the divine Master. Most of you are strangers to me in the flesh, but my heart goes out to you in love and sweet fellowship. I know, dear fellow pilgrims, that if I really belong to the little flock I am the most unworthy one of the number. It is most wonderful to me that I should be there at all, it is certainly the Lord's doing and wonderful in my eyes. He has opened my eyes, and led me about, and instructed me. I should never have chosen this route of my own knowledge, nor by the teachings of any human agency. In this city, at this hour, the church bells are ringing, and the streets are full of people wending their way to engage in worship, but they worship not our God,

but a god of their own imaginations; once I worshiped the same god, but thanks be to the holy name of the true and living God, he has led me, as I trust, to a city which hath foundations. I am filled with wonder and amazement that he should bring such an one as me to the place where his honor dwelleth. O, may he keep me by his grace in the place of his abode.

I have read in the SIGNS of so many of you being able to tell of a time in your experience when the Lord spoke to you, and caused you to rejoice in his love, this was not the case with me, and a feeling of discouragement often overtakes me on account of it. I still hope that he will allow me this sweet comfort before I go hence to be here no more. I have so often tried to give it all up, and worry no more about it, but I have found it impossible to do so. I have taken this as an evidence that I am a prodigal, for when I would have deserted him, he held me fast; he has kept me, with all my haltings and wandering. So I am still hobbling along, receiving many falls by the way, and it must be the Lord who still helps me up, or I never should get up again. With much love to you all, I am, I trust, a fellow pilgrim,

MARY E. FISHER.

WOODSTOCK, Mich., Dec. 12, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—How thankful I feel to the God of all grace for his watchful care over me, a poor sinner. It seems that I realize every day that I live how much I need him every hour and every moment, I have to utter the prayer, "Blessed Jesus be with me, and keep me every hour, in the right way."

To-day I have been thinking over my past life, and how dark and gloomy it has been, but if there had not been some bright days I do not think that I could have endured it. I will mention one time in particular, not long ago, I had been in the dark for a long time, doubting and thinking perhaps I never knew anything about Jesus and his love, when one night as I lay my head down to rest the thought came like a flash, and with great force in words like these, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself. Can you say that you do this?" I began to think, and the more I thought, the worse I saw myself to be. I thought, Can it be that I do not love my blessed Savior? It seemed that I must say that I did, or did not, and I could not tell, and I had to give it up and say, Lord thou knowest whether I do or not. After a long time I fell asleep, and before half past three I awoke, and before I had time to think of anything else these words came into my mind,

"Do not I love thee, O my Lord?
Behold my heart and see,
And turn each cursed idol out,
That dares to rival thee."

I never can tell what peace and joy filled this poor heart of mine then. Then I could say, "Thou knowest that I love thee." And like one of old I could say, "My Lord and my God." This poor, stammering tongue can never tell how precious the dear Savior seems to me. I thought that his presence filled the room and made all within me rejoice.

I then thought if my husband only knew these things, how glad I would be, but I knew that I could not do anything for myself in this matter, and how could I do for others. God will do what is right with us all, and I will leave it there.

I hardly know why I have written to

you to-day, when I have thought of writing before, I would say, No, I will not write this time, but just send the money for the SIGNS. I would leave the writing-desk, and before I knew it, I would be back trying to write again. I wanted to ask some one if in anything that I have written to-day, they could see anything to bid me hope on. I can say indeed, It is a point I long to know, and oft it causes anxious thought, whether I do love the Lord or not.

The dear SIGNS comes regularly. I am glad that there are those who dare stand up before men for the truth. May you have the choicest of heaven's blessings is my prayer. Please forgive all mistakes, I have never written for publication, and feel rather delicate about seeing my name in print. Love to all the household of faith.

NETTIE KELLEY.

DOUBLE WELLS, Ark., March 24, 1901.

MY VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—I hardly can express the pleasure and comfort I find in reading the different editorials contained in the precious volumes of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I cannot help saying, when looking over them and find some away up north, and some in the south, and in all the different parts of this unfriendly world, as the words of eternal truth declare, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.

Dear brethren, do not be discouraged in contending for the old landmarks. We find in 1 John ii. 18, that he, John, calls us "little children," and in other portions of Scripture that our Lord and Master takes little children up in his arms and blesses them. So do not be discouraged; "They went out from us because they were not of us."

O brethren, if any poor mortal has ever fell as hard as I have, I cannot see what purpose he can have in contending for time salvation, for all time things are vanity, and less than vanity. At one time in the year 1863, when it seemed that a sweet whisper at the side of me said, "You should praise the Lord for what he has done for you," O, the joy I felt at that time no one can understand only those that have heard the joyful sound. For some months I was impressed that I could live without sin; here is where I fell so hard, and ever since that fall my experience has been like the old darkey's, when he said, It seemed like he had two souls, when one wanted to do good the other would not let him.

Dear brethren, what I have written I did not expect to write for publication, but do as you think proper. If you should publish please correct all mistakes, for as soon as I commenced to write, my mind commenced to travel in a way I did not expect. I call you dear brethren and sisters, I feel I am assuming something I am not worthy of, nevertheless I have no other place to go. If what you are contending for is not in accordance with the words of eternal truth, then I am yet in the dark.

With love to all the dear ones, I must close.

J. P. REIDEINGER.

ROCA, Neb., March 18, 1901.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Having finished the business part of my letter, I desire to write you a few lines to let you know how much I appreciate the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have read it the most of the time since 1860, and if there is any deviation from the old landmarks from that date to the present, I am too dull of apprehension to detect it.

Now, dear brethren, I am so glad that you adopted the plan of republishing your father's editorials in succession as they were first published, that all may see for themselves that the SIGNS are still contending for the same faith and order of the Primitive Baptists that they were founded on in 1832. We have the witness in each number, to wit: Elder G. Beebe's editorials, and the present editorials.

Trusting that God will still uphold and strengthen you to stand firm, and "contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints," without wavering, and that, too, with an eye single to the glory of God, and the comfort and edifying of the household of faith, I am your unworthy brother,

JOSEPH BRUCE.

CAMAS VALLEY, Oregon, March 23, 1901.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—Your great kindness in keeping my name on your free list can never be overestimated. We feel that as a father cherishes the child, so do those who give so freely of their spiritual blessing and knowledge comfort the "little ones." How blessed to hope that as a member of one of the companies of fifty, I can sit down knowing full well that from one of the baskets will be dispensed food convenient for me, and by the hand of one appointed to that sacred duty. While the billows of affliction roll, and every earthly hope and comfort are taken, it is an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, to be renewed by the wayside, as the dear saints confess one to another, of the power and goodness of that God who works and none can hinder, and has all power both in heaven and on earth.

Yours truly,

MRS. MARTHA J. LEE.

BLUE SPRINGS, Mo., May 9, 1901.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR FRIEND:—I am very sorry to not be able to send you a large list of subscribers to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I wish every person who believes the grand and glorious truth it contends for were able and willing to take it, and pay for it. I would not do without it for three times its cost.

I extend to you my sympathy in the death of your brother, Elder Wm. L. Beeble; the church as well as yourself has lost an able counselor, comforter and advocate of the doctrine of sovereign grace, which this world cannot replace, but hope we may be made to trust in God who does all things according to his his own purpose and will, and makes All things work together for good to them that are called according to his purpose. My great desire is that you may be spared (if the Lord wills) for a long time to contend for the doctrine you so dearly love: salvation by grace.

THOS. W. RECORDS.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER W. I. Carnell, having changed his residence from Carlisle, Ohio, to Dutton, Ontario, desires his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

ALL GONE.

THE large type hymn books of the genuine Turkey Morocco binding and the imitation binding are all gone. All the styles of binding we have left of the large books, are the cloth and blue marbled edge binding.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denotes the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1901.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JOSHUA II. 21.

By request of sister Julia Bissett, and others, at South River, N. J., we will present some thoughts concerning the narrative found in the second chapter of the book of Joshua, referring especially to the last clause of the twenty-first verse, which reads, "And she bound the scarlet line in the window." Bible readers need not be told that this chapter contains the account of the sending of the spies by Joshua, to spy out the city of Jericho, and the land round about. It is not needful that we here repeat the narrative in detail. Before speaking of the special words found in the twenty-first verse, last clause, we wish to call attention to a few things which are said in the word concerning Rahab herself. First, it is said that she was a harlot, or a vile woman; this was her evil calling by nature; it is manifest that she was by nature no better than were her people generally. As all the people of God are by nature the children of wrath, so was she. Some have gone into greater excesses of evil in outward life than have others, this was the case with her, yet she was among the elect vessels of mercy, whom God would have to be saved. By nature she was a companion to the thief on the cross, upon whom the Lord poured his mercy at the last. Also some of the Corinthians were said by Paul to be adulterers and murderers, and all that is vile in life, as well as in heart; but, like them, she was washed and justified and sanctified by the Spirit of God.

Then it is said in the inspired word, that she possessed faith. This is the testimony of Paul, By faith she concealed the spies, and did not perish with the rest of her people, in the destruction of the city. She bore testimony to the spies, that she knew that her people should perish, because God was with the Israelites, and so she besought salvation from that destruction at their hands. God-given faith made all the difference between her and others, she alone seems to have known that God was with Israel, it was certainly mighty faith that could assure her of this, a poor, vile woman by nature as she was. Faith can break through, and break down all barriers, it needs no aid of human wisdom, or human righteousness. These things cannot avail or add anything to grace, and without faith they are of no avail to lead one to the knowledge of God. This woman had this faith, and she, as James also tells us, had the works which are the evidences and fruits of this faith. Further on in this book, it is said that she was dwelling among Israel to this day. This could not have been had not this faith which she had, also wrought in her obedience to the commandments of the Lord, so that she was no more a harlot. The same faith to-day works in the same way; grace says in the heart, Let him that stole, steal no more. The grace of God teaches those where it dwells, that they should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world. Grace is a good and effectual teacher, it teaches not only the

letter of the word, but the Spirit of it. It produces in the soul, love to all that the Lord commands, which love is itself declared to be the fulfilling of the law. If a man loves God, and his neighbor, and has the righteousness of the law fulfilled in him, this is the fruit of faith, and magnifies grace. Grace was magnified very greatly in this woman which had been an harlot. What consolation there is here for all poor sinners who feel as vile as she was; how it brings consolation in the time of need to a troubled heart, to know that grace is all-conquering, and that it can save to the uttermost. How this woman must have been humbled in feeling every time she remembered what she had been, and how it had come to pass that now she dwelt in Israel, as one with the Lord's chosen people. If any one be really in heart and spirit, and not in name only, among the people of God, how greatly will they be humbled at the remembrance of how it all came about; what meaning the words will take on, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name."

Second, it is said in the word that she was the wife of Solomon, and the mother of Boaz. (Matt. i. 5.) The name Rechab given in that verse is but another form for Rahab. In this genealogy three women are mentioned by name. Tamar, Bathsheba and Rahab. Bathsheba was the wife of Uriah the Hittite, and we have no doubt therefore a Gentile, and Rahab was a Gentile, and of a vile character, until faith had wrought this wonderful change in her. We think this worth referring to because it shows that our blessed Lord was naturally united, not only to the Jewish people, but also to the Gentiles. We have often thought that it would be a most interesting study, to look up the various persons named in the genealogy of our Lord after the flesh, and see of what various sorts they were. Some naturally, what men call good, some evil, some Jews and some Gentiles, some lofty and some lowly in life, some of one occupation or calling and some of another. Our Redeemer stands naturally related to all classes and conditions of men, as he does also in his spiritual kingdom. He came into relationship with all sorts of men in the flesh, that he might bring all sorts of men into relationship with him in the Spirit. And no man can say, "I am what I am, as a believer, save by the grace of God." If any should afterwards say to Rahab, How came you to conceal the spies? How came you to believe in the God of Israel? How came you to know of your need to be saved from the destruction which must fall upon your nation? She could but reply, It was all of faith and grace, and not because I was in any wise better than my companions that perished in their unbelief and sin. If she were asked, How is it that you now dwell in Israel, and are the wife of one of that favored people? she must say, Grace, grace, hath wrought it all.

But how about this scarlet thread? It seems clear that it can represent but one thing in the type: By the blood of the blessed Jesus alone is safety and protection to be found from the wrath of God, and from his judgments against sin and sinners. This scarlet thread was her only protection in the day when the walls of the city fell. Her house was upon the wall of the city and for the sake of the thread fastened in her window her house did not fall, and for the sake of the thread, the spies were told to go in and bring out this woman and her family before the work of destruction should begin within the walls. She had nothing else to rely upon but this scarlet thread.

It mattered not how full of kindness to the spies she had been, nor how much she desired to be saved in the time of destruction; it mattered not how much she might have repented of her past evil life, nor how much she was striving to live better now, all this could not save her. It was not for any of these things that her house did not fall with the rest. If any saw that she was still unharmed, and that her house had not fallen, and should ask the reason, no reason could be given that would contain the truth, unless it was ascribed to the scarlet thread. Here was a double miracle, first, a miracle was wrought in the fall of all the rest of the wall of the city, and then a second miracle was wrought in that her house did not fall. It is as wonderful that any are saved from destruction as it is that the rest are overwhelmed by the indignation of the Lord.

Here is a type of the final destruction of an ungodly world, and here it is seen that they who shall at the last be saved, are by nature no better than the rest. Here it is seen that only God-given faith leads to the only safe abiding place, and here it is seen that the blood of Christ alone will avail in that day. The scarlet thread was all that stood between her and hers, and death. Thank God it was all that she needed. The blood of Christ is all that stands between any of us, and final destruction; thank God also it is enough. One said that he had once come to the place where he felt that he could do nothing to save himself. Thank God he said, "I came to the place where I saw that nothing more needed to be done; Jesus had done it all, and his blood alone was all my plea; it was all the plea I needed."

Here is also election taught: If we ask why such faith was given to this woman, and not to others? there is no answer except God gave her this faith, and withheld it from others, as good by nature as she. If we are among those who escape the doom of the finally impenitent and unbelieving, there is no other reason than the free election of God.

This scarlet thread was to be bound in the window, not where she could see it, but where those without could see it. By faith no doubt, she rested in that thread, and by faith she saw it no doubt even when shut within the house. She and her family were bidden not to go out for any cause. There was no safety except under the shelter of the scarlet thread. If tempted to flee when she saw Israel ready to assault the city, if tempted to seek some other refuge, no other refuge could have availed, seeing that destruction was everywhere except under the shelter of the scarlet thread. So there is now no salvation except under the shelter of the blood that was shed for sin. We must not look to self in any way; good works, prayers, almsgiving, religious observances, nor anything else that partakes of human effort, will avail the soul in the day of God's judgment; the blood of Christ must always be our only plea. When the avenging Israelites saw the thread, it was all that was needful to insure her safety, with all others who were under it.

At another time, when forty years before, the judgment of God fell upon Egypt, there, too, was shelter only where the blood was sprinkled upon the doorpost of the dwellings of Israel. We need not dwell upon this at length, all Bible readers are familiar with the sacred narrative which relates how Israel came at last out of their house of bondage in Egypt, but one thing we desire to call special attention to, it was not said, When

ye shall see the blood, I will pass over in the night of destruction, but "when I shall see the blood." What a wonderful thing is this, not when you shall see, but when I shall see. Let us think of it a moment, had it been the decree of God that Israel should be safe that terrible night only while they kept their eyes upon the blood, who could have assured any of them of safety? Some would have grown heavy with sleep, unable to watch one hour, some would have had their attention distracted by what was going on around them, some would have been forgetful, and some would have fainted. Who could have felt safe for a moment? But it was said, "When I shall see the blood." There was no room for fear here, his is an all-seeing eye, he never slumbers nor sleeps. How much more safe is the babe, who watches not itself, in the watchfulness of its mother, than in after years when it seeks to discard her care, and depend upon itself. So Israel is safe because God always watches over his loved ones, so no enemy shall every harm them. Our hope and help to-day is, that God sees the blood of the Redeemer. It is not in the clear view which he may have of the doctrine of grace, and of the effectual cleansing of the blood of Christ, that our salvation is found, but in that which God sees in it; because he sees the blood, we are saved now. How often do we forget our salvation, but he never forgets. We lose sight of the cross, beneath the pressure of care, sorrow, business or pleasure, but he does not lose sight of it. How shall we find words to describe the gladness that we ought to feel that this is true? And sometimes we are glad with an inexpressible gladness.

This scarlet thread has come on down, through the generations past, the hope of poor sinners, and the safety of those who confess that they have sinned; prophets saw it, and found safety and strength in it, and wrote and testified of it. Jesus proclaimed his own doctrine, and declared that in him alone was salvation, and apostles testified of this blood which cleanses from all sin. This is the one thread which runs through all Bible history, and through all christian experience, and through every gospel sermon, and in every psalm and gospel hymn that is sung, and which binds all who believe in one bundle of love, and which "fastens our souls in such ties, as distance and time cannot remove." The experience of Rahab is ours also, her faith is our faith, the work of faith in her is the same to-day, our fellowship goes out to her, we sit down in the kingdom of heaven with her, as well as with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Jesus and his blood is our plea, Jesus and his blood is the plea of all holy men of old, who testified of God and of his grace. Moses wrote of him, prophets testified of him, apostles saw him and believed, and we not having seen, yet believe, and all believing, rejoice. How precious is the blood. How precious must that scarlet thread have been to Rahab.

In conclusion we wish to emphasize one thought more, the wonderful change which this work of faith had wrought in both the state of Rahab, and in her desires, and aspirations, and whole life; she was translated out of Jericho to dwell in Israel; she was separated from her own people to dwell among a people heretofore strange, but strange no longer; she ceased to worship idols, and came to worship the one only living and true God; she continued to dwell in Israel, and was married there, whereas she had not been married before; she no longer lived as she had lived before; she departed from

her evil life, to live as God commanded, and we know that as faith had wrought all this in her, she not only walked outwardly with obedience, but that she obeyed in heart and spirit also. This is the one difference between the obedience of faith, and that which is but formal, and in the letter. Thus Abraham obeyed the call of God to depart; thus Paul lovingly obeyed, and because of this, he could say, How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Believers want to do in outward life that which will be to the glory of God, but above all things they want their obedience should be with love. How many times, after days spent with carefulness in all that we say or do, and when perhaps the most spiritual around us see nothing to find fault with, do we feel to confess that our spirit has not been right; we have done what we have done, out of a sense of necessity, rather than freely, and from love? We know however good our life appears to our fellow-men, it has lacked the one thing needful in the sight of God, and so we feel after all, far off from God. O, we say, That we might come near to him, then would our obedience be savory, and such as would be really to the glory of his name, then, in all that we might do and say, his name would be as ointment poured forth. O, that it might be said of us, as it was of the harlot Rahab, She dwells in Israel to this day.

There are multitudes of things in this narrative that have not been touched in this article, but we trust that those who made the request to which we have responded, may be partially satisfied; at least, they will know that we have desired to present the truth, that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, and secures all who are sheltered by it, from all wrath and judgment against sin. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

WASHING THE SAINTS' FEET.

We have been called on for an expression of our views on the subject of washing the saints' feet, but we confess our inability to do justice to the subject, especially when we find a discrepance in the views of those whom we have a right to esteem much better than ourself. Our brethren in the southern and south-western States, so far as we are informed, generally practice literally the service of washing each other's feet, but do not make it a test of fellowship; while those at the north who do not practice it, do not disallow or disfellowship those who from conscientious motives do so practice.

We have thought much on the subject, and while we disclaim any desire to dictate to others, have no objection to give such views as we entertain on the subject. It is very clearly evident that our Lord on one occasion did literally wash the feet of his disciples, and on that occasion told them they ought to wash one another's feet. This example and admonition would with us forever settle the matter beyond all cavil or contradiction if nothing more had been on that occasion said by our Lord. But the matter did not rest there, for he said to Peter, in the presence of the other disciples, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."—John xiii. 7. We have many evidences in the Scriptures that as an act of humility and hospitality, the washing of feet was a common practice in that eastern country, from the days of Abraham, and very common among the Jews with whom Peter had been brought up; so that it is unnatural to think that our Lord designed to say that Peter or the other disciples did not

understand the literal service, which was so common. But there was something signified by our Lord's condescending to wash the disciples' feet, more than what was intended by the same service when performed as had been customary as an act of hospitality, for the comfort of the weary pilgrim. Whatever it was which Peter did not then comprehend, must be worthy of our devout research, as christians even in this day. Some light in regard to it may be gained from what Jesus farther said to Peter: "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me;" and again, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit; and ye are clean, but not all." Making an exception of him who was to betray him, and signifying that Judas had not been cleansed by him, as had been the other disciples. What Peter was to know subsequently was what was signified by being washed and made perfectly clean by his divine Lord and Master.

In connection with this view, remember that in the commission given to Peter and the other apostles, they were commanded to teach baptized believers "to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." That is, all that Christ had commanded the apostles, the apostles were commanded to teach those converts to observe, who should believe and be by them baptized. If only the common hospitality of washing feet literally was intended or commanded, it would seem from all that we can find in the written word, that the holy apostles of the Lamb failed to obey their commision; for not one word is recorded by any one of those whose feet were literally washed, by way of enjoining it on the disciples to observe it as an institution. The only mention subsequently made of washing the saints' feet being by Paul, who was not present when Jesus washed the disciples feet, and by him not mentioned as a church ordinance, but classified with bringing up children, entertaining strangers, &c. Now from all the foregoing considerations, it does appear to us that what was signified by Christ's washing the disciples' feet, which Peter did not then, but did afterwards understand, was what they (the apostle Peter included) were to teach, and what they did teach baptized believers to observe. This washing signified a cleansing, and as performed by Christ on all who have any part in him, is a perfect cleansing from all pollution, guilt and shame, making them clean every whit; for his blood cleanseth from all guilt, and all the saints are washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb.

But if the cleansing from sin and uncleanness by the blood of Jesus was signified by his washing their feet, how shall we understand that the saints ought to wash each other? Certainly not in a sacrificial or propitiatory sense, for there remaineth no more sacrifices for sin, and Christ alone is our Advocate with the Father, and he is the propitiation for our sins; but still there is a solemn charge given to the saints to watch over each other, and not to suffer sin to rest on each other. The feet of the saints are those members of our earthly bodies which come in connection with the earth when we travel; and in regard to our spiritual travel, we are commanded, "Keep thy feet when thou goest into the house of the Lord." And the disciples were commanded to shake off the dust of their feet as a witness against those who received them not. From all of which it does appear to us that the washing of the saints' feet, as afterwards understood by Peter, and as plainly taught to all the

saints by the apostles in the New Testament, is done by a faithful application of the discipline of the gospel, by watching over and praying for each other, by exhorting, admonishing, and if needs be, rebuking one another. As the washing of one another's feet shows humility, condescension and readiness to perform any justifiable act, however menial, for the comfort or benefit of each other, whether it be in literally washing their feet, ministering to their necessities, forbearing to eat meat if by eating we make a brother to offend, and by a careful and sacred regard for the reputation of the saints, a readiness to defend them from the unjust aspersions of professed friends or avowed enemies; in all these things we ought to wash each other's feet. As to the literal performance of washing the saints' feet, so long as the spirit of the precept and example is obeyed, we feel no disposition to dictate, but prefer that each saint and every church should search and be fully persuaded in their own mind. We see no reason why one should fall out with another on the subject.

Such was the amazing condescension of our Lord and Master, that he to wash and cleanse his people, came down from heaven, and although he thought it not robbery to be equal with God, for our sake became poor, took on him the form of a servant, and was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that he might wash and cleanse us, and that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Let that mind then which was in him be in us, and will we not be inclined to do or suffer all that in us lies for the general good of the brethren? Admonish, exhort and rebuke, with all longsuffering and doctrine; cherish a kind, constant, tender and sacred regard for the purity of ourselves and brethren, in all things; and that the feet of those who bring good tidings may appear beautiful upon the mountains of Zion, and that the feet of all the saints may be clean from the pollution of disobedience in straying into forbidden paths of sin and folly, and well shod with the preparation of the gospel of Christ. Thus shall we manifest towards each other something of what was signified by our Lord's washing his disciples' feet. If we as disciples come in contact with the earth, shall we not need that our feet should often be cleansed from the dust and filth of the world, by the faithful and brotherly watchcare and admonitions of the saints?

These views are humbly submitted for the consideration of the saints. Let them be carefully tested by the Scriptures, for we have no desire that they should be adopted any further than they are sustained by the word and Spirit of the Lord.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., October 15, 1858.

ORDINATION.

AT a yearly meeting held with the Sidling Hill Baptist Church, in Fulton Co., Pa., May 3d, 4th and 5th, 1901.

On Sunday morning the church met at the waterside, where brother Simon Deshong was baptized by Elder E. V. White.

When the meeting assembled in the meeting-house a call was announced by the brethren requesting the ordination to the ministry of brother J. Corder Mellott.

A presbytery was convened by appointing Elder E. V. White, Moderator, brother Job Mellott, Clerk, and Elder W. W. Meredith, Assistant Clerk.

Brother J. C. Mellott related his experience of grace and call to the ministry to the satisfaction and commendation of the presbytery.

Elder Charles Bogardus preached an appropriate ordination sermon, after which Elders E. V. White, Chas. Bogardus, A. Mellott and W. W. Meredith, reverently laid their hands upon the bowed head of brother J. C. Mellott during the ordination prayer offered by Elder W. W. Meredith.

An impressive pastoral charge was given by Elder E. V. White, and the hand of fellowship by Elder A.

Mellott and the brethren, thus welcoming our brother, Elder J. Corder Mellott, to our fellowship as an ordained minister of the gospel.

Brother Joshua L. Mellott, who had been chosen a deacon for the Fairview Church, came forward, and the same Elders laid their hands upon his head during an ordination prayer offered by Elder A. Mellott, thus ordaining him to the office of deacon in the Fairview Church.

After a recess the meeting assembled and listened to a pastoral sermon from Elder E. V. White. Then as a crowning glory of the day's sacred events, the brethren and sisters gathered around the Lord's table, and partook of the emblems of the broken body and shed blood in sweet remembrance of our dear Redeemer who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification. Blessed be his holy name.

E. V. WHITE, Moderator.

JOB MELLOTT, Clerk.

W. W. MEREDITH, Assistant Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mary Friend was born March 12th, 1830, and united in marriage with Allen **Strous**, March 18th, 1849, and died March 31st, 1901, aged 71 years and 19 days. To this union were born seven children, four of whom, together with one sister and two brothers, nineteen grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren, are left to mourn their loss, which is her eternal gain. She, together with her husband, who left her for that better clime Sept. 23d, 1900, at the age of 73 years, 11 months and 26 days, united with the Laurel Church, in Hocking Co., Ohio, by experience, in 1881, being baptized by Elder David Barker.

Upon the organization of the Laurelville Church, in the same County, they obtained letters and joined it, being among the principals in establishing the same. "Grandmother" was a genuine friend of all Old Baptists, and they always received a hearty welcome at her fireside. She had no tolerance for error, and the views of the religious world. She was never too busy to attend her church meetings, or the associations, no matter how far, while she and grandfather were able. She was stricken many years ago with shaking palsy, and gradually became more feeble. She was very impatient at times to leave this world of pain and sorrow, but always said, "I will await the Lord's time."

The funeral took place at the Laurelville Church, conducted by her beloved pastor, Elder R. W. Peters, who preached from John xii. 24, after which her mortal remains were laid away in the Adelphi Cemetery, to await the resurrection morn, when this mortal shall put on immortality, and death shall be swallowed up in victory.

GEO. W. HARTSOUGH.

MY dear wife, **Sarah Jane Odom**, departed this life April 17th, 1900. She was taken sick March 25th, with a severe chill, which resulted in typhoid pneumonia, but on or about the fifteenth or sixteenth day after she was taken the disease seemed to give way, and we were very hopeful she was going to get well, but about then paralysis set in, of which she had had slight symptoms some time before. She was taken sick with pneumonia, but she was taken off with paralysis. She suffered a great deal, but was very patient in all her suffering, seldom ever complained only when her suffering was very severe. In her last conscious hours she piteously prayed the Lord for mercy. Her faith in the Lord was strong, often reproving me for seeming lack of faith. She was a most noble wife, a faithful helpmate, loving and affectionate during all our married life of over forty-three years, and truly my loss is great. About the fifth day after she was taken sick, I was sitting by her; she laid her arm around my neck and said she felt confident she would never get up again, then added, "But may God bless you, I pray." She was the daughter of William and Jane Potter; she was born in Bedford Co., Tenn., July 16th, 1842, and with her parents came to Texas in the autumn of 1848. She was married to the writer on October 30th, 1856, and united with the Primitive Baptist church called Big Spring, in the year 1868, and lived a consistent member until called to the spirit world, where I feel confident she is in the peaceful presence of the Lord. She was buried in the Garden Valley Cemetery after appropriate remarks by our pastor, Elder F. Loden, and in the presence of a large concourse of sorrowing friends and relatives.

May God give me reconciling grace, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

D. ODOM.

PROVIDENCE, Texas, April 19, 1901.

DIED—At her home in Bartlesville, Cherokee Nation, Ind. Ter., April 30th, 1901, **Mary P. Hager**, wife of J. D. Hager. Deceased was born Dec. 18th, 1854. Her maiden name was Cobb. She was first married to Oliver White; to this union was born one son, Perry White, who is now living. White departed this life about the year 1876, or 1877, and the latter part of the year 1878 she was married to J. D. Hager, who survives her. The fruits of the last marriage was three boys and two girls, all living. Sister Hager united with the Old School Baptist church in her eighteenth year, and lived an humble, devoted, christian life until relieved by death caused by consumption, from which she suffered about one year. She endured her affliction with the greatest patience and christian fortitude. From the writer's first acquaintance she has been almost blind, scarcely able to tell her own children apart by sight. She was a dear lover of good singing, and was a good singer, and

loved the doctrine of salvation by grace, and had a clear knowledge of the depravity of the human heart, and rejoiced in the full salvation in Christ. She was conscious up to death, and rejoiced that the end had come, saying that her hope was brighter, and her faith stronger as she neared the end of her mortal life. Brother Hager and one daughter are members of the same church; he is old and afflicted, and we hope the dear Lord will sustain and comfort him in his trouble and affliction, and bless the children that are deprived of a tender mother's love and counsel.

The writer talked a few minutes at the grave, after other services had been held. We have no fears of her future, but believe her soul is in the paradise of God, and that her body will be raised and fashioned like unto the glorious body of our dear Lord, in the resurrection of the just in Christ.

NATHAN REEDER

DEPARTED this life, April 12th, 1901, at the residence of his daughter-in-law, in Delhi, N. Y., from paralytic stroke, **Charles C. Crosby**, in the 85th year of his age. Brother Crosby was convinced of his sinful condition when a young man, and united with the Methodists. After a time he became dissatisfied with the general atonement doctrine, and left the Methodists. About fifty years ago he united with the Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, and remained a firm and devoted member as long as he lived. The last time he visited around and attended our meeting was in June, 1898, since which time he has been more or less confined to the house or village, until his last illness of the past month. And now that his work is done, he is at rest. One brother and sister, one daughter and a daughter-in-law, and son-in-law, with their families, survive him.

His remains were brought to the old yellow meeting-house at Roxbury, for the service, and buried in the cemetery. We deeply feel our loss as a church, but the Lord reigns.

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLEY'S CORNERS, N. Y.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist church of Middleburgh, has appointed her yearly meeting to be held the first Saturday and Sunday in June, (1st and 2d) 1901.

We extend a hearty invitation to ministers, brethren and friends, to meet with us.

A. COOK, Clerk.

THE Warwick Association is appointed to be held with the New Vernon Church, Sullivan Co., N. Y., beginning Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, (5th) 1901, and continue three days.

A cordial invitation is extended to our brethren and friends. Those coming by way of the New York, Lake Erie & Western R. R. from the east, will be met at Howells, on the arrival of the Orange County Express which leaves Chambers St., New York, at 4:30 p. m., on Tuesday, June 4th. Those coming from the west on the same road, will take the train leaving Port Jervis at 3:22 p. m., on Tuesday, and stop at Howells.

Those coming from the north, on the Ontario & Western R. R., will be met at Winterton, on the arrival of the Milk Train, at 5:34 p. m., on Tuesday. Those from the south on arrival of the train leaving Wickham Ave. depot, Middletown, N. Y., 8:45 Wednesday morning.

HIMAN S. COLLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Sandusky Old School Baptist Association will meet with the Eagle Creek Church, one mile east of Beagle station, Hancock Co., Ohio, on Friday, June 7th, 1901. Those coming by rail will be met on Thursday, at Arlington, on the Northern Ohio, and at Beagle station, on the F. & O. C. railroads.

H. D. BISHOP, Clerk.

THE Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon and Washington, will be held this year with Harmony Church, of Dayton, Washington, commencing Friday before the third Sunday in June, at 10 o'clock, and continue three days. The place for the meeting is arranged to be held at brother B. B. Hubard's, six miles east of Dayton. Those coming by railroad had better arrange to get here Thursday before, and they will be met and conveyed to place of meeting.

B. S. PATE.

THE yearly meeting of the Buelah Old School Baptist Church, of Canada, will be held, the Lord willing, at the usual place, Aughrim school-house, in the township of Brooke, Lambton, Co., Ontario, five miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1901, and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

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VOL. 69. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1901. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GOD IS OMNIPOTENT AND ACTIVE.

GOD reveals himself as both omnipresent and omnipotent, the almighty, who fills immensity and inhabits eternity. So there is no fleeing from his presence or going beyond his power. His dominion is unlimited and from everlasting to everlasting. God is the supreme One. No other power is supreme. Therefore, all powers, beings and things are subject to the Almighty. If not, then God is not the supreme Ruler, and there is no sovereign power in the boundless universe. How terrible this would be! But we rejoice that our God "sits upon no precarious throne, nor borrows leave to be." He declares that what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. His wisdom, knowledge and understanding are as all-comprehensive and infinite as his purpose, dominion and control are unlimited and omnipotent. God is neither subject to influence nor to change. If he could be influenced, to that extent he would be controlled and changed. But his word says, "I am the Lord: I change not." With him there is not the shadow of turning, says James. The word again says, "He is in one mind, and none can turn him."

These are primary or first truths relative to the Most High. They enter into his very being, are essential to his infinite attributes, to the eternal qualities and perfections of his adorable Godhead. The Bible faithfully and largely records and proclaims this infinite and absolute supremacy of Jehovah. The sun and moon and stars, with all his handiworks in creation, and the fixed laws in nature, also show forth the omnipotence and ever-active power of God. To no other being, whether archangel or seraphim, cherubim or saint, prophet or apostle, belongs these crowning perfections of the eternal and Holy One. We may be awed in the presence of Moses and Elijah, Gabriel and Michael, Daniel and John, who went before Jesus; yet they were but the servants of God, and all that made them good and great was his free gift to them.

"With God is terrible majesty," said Elihu to Job. At best our thoughts of "his eternal power and Godhead" fall infinitely below his high and holy throne; and he himself says, that as heaven is higher than the earth, so are his thoughts and ways above our thoughts and ways.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." "Thus the heavens

and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." All these are the creatures of God, whether animate or inanimate. His omnipotent power ruleth over and controlleth them all, and they are all subjected to his universal dominion. God has set the bounds of all, so that no creature can go beyond or escape his almighty power. Were this possible, the sovereignty of God would be destroyed, and himself hurled from his eternal throne. The Bible overflows with the record of these sublime truths concerning the Almighty. What do they teach us? That God is highly exalted in heaven infinitely above all the universe, and that the earth and all it contains is his footstool; yea, more, that all nations are as grasshoppers, as the small dust of the balances, and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as less than nothing, before the Most High. How stupid the thought, then, that creatures thus insignificant can and do influence and move, control and defeat the Almighty; that man, who is himself "less than nothing and vanity," can and does prevent, hinder and disappoint the Lord God omnipotent. O how weak and absurd is this insolent presumption! Yet the worldly-wise and all worldly religionists thus dishonor God, and they vainly imagine that he is subject to creature influences, insomuch that he can be moved even by their prayers. The Lord says, "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself." In a sermon an aged preacher once said in my hearing, "Prayer is the lever that moves the arm that moves the world." All worldly religious teachers thus regard the relation of God toward men. They hold that he is acted upon and moved by his creatures; that he is subject to them, and may be largely influenced and moved in his conduct towards them and other sinners by their prayers and zeal and works for him in his service, as they suppose. The professed christianity of the world, no less than the Jew's religion, is based and built upon this belief. Because we serve God he is moved to reward us. Thus stands the world's religion.

But the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the true worship of God, is just the opposite of this. Our perfect Teacher thus states it: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." This cometh down from God out of heaven; the fountain of eternal life is its source; it raises up its blessed recipient into everlasting life, and all his love to God and holiness, his spiritual devotion, worship and service, are the free and fervent springing up in him of this water of life. Thus his soul is as the garden of the Lord, spontaneously sending up the incense of love and praise, saying to the Lord in prayer, "Come into thy garden and eat thy pleasant fruits." This, our Lord says, "I shall give him." When given, it shall be in him a fountain of life, and shall spring up to the glory of the Giver. What moves him to give it? Hear him in prayer to the eternal Father: "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." What moved the Father to give them to the Son? Jesus tells us in his prayer, saying, "Thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedest me before the foundation of the world." Therefore, the everlasting love of God the Father

for his Son, and for all his people, whom he gave the Son, and chose and blessed in him, moved him to send his Son into the world, to die for them, and to give unto them eternal life. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins," testifies the beloved John.

Love is the greatest of all, Paul says, and John says, "God is love." "Love is strong as death," said Solomon. Says Paul again, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Love, therefore, the love of God, is the strongest and most active power in the universe, and he bestows his love upon his people in its divine freeness and active potency. Yea, the love of God infolds them in Christ Jesus, his well beloved Son, in whom the Father has blessed them with all spiritual blessings, unto the end that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, "to the praise of the glory of his grace." "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." And so "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." It is the divine power of the love of God in the hearts of his dear children that savingly and blessedly influences and moves and controls them in all their emotions and devotions Godward. The sentiment and language of their hearts therefore is, "For the love of Christ constraineth us." "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Now, to be thus constrained by the love of Christ springing up in the heart, and divinely drawn with the loving-kindness of the Lord to run after him in the paths of holiness, is as far removed from a cold, faithless, legal, heartless, selfish and machine-like service as heaven is above earth, or as the love of God is more holy and powerful than the love of self.

In religious service and professed divine worship, there are but these two incentives or prompting motive powers: the love of God, or the love of self, and all who are religious at all, are actuated and moved by either the one or the other. They are either moved by the power of God, or they think to move him by their own power. For it must be that man is either subjected to the power of the Lord and made subservient to his will, or else the Lord is subservient to man and moved by his will and works. The enabling motive and power to desire and do, must either descend from God to man, constraining him Godward, or else it must ascend from man to God, constraining him manward. On which side are we? Shall we believe that God is omnipotent toward us, bringing us into obedience to his power of love in our hearts? or shall we hold that we are potent toward him, and that our obedience moves him toward us in bestowing his love upon us? One of these two ways it must be. Either God moves upon man, or man moves upon God. Either man or God must yield in will and power, and be brought into the passive voice or state, and say, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt," or there can be no reconciliation and communion between them. Now, therefore, who should yield and be subservient and passive, be as nothing, and let the other be all in all? For in the matter of *will* and *power*, either man or the Lord Jehovah

must surrender and yield, for the controlling power and influence of one or the other must prevail, and he must be placed upon the throne and reign supreme, but the other must be made submissive and be acted upon. This is an evident truth, and it pervades the Bible. God is in heaven, man is upon earth; God is infinite, man is finite; God is the Creator, man is the creature; God bestows all, man receives all. "For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God," declares faithful Paul.

"The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be *willing* in the day of thy *power*, in the beauties of holiness." Thus the Lord reveals to us and in us the place of power, and how it is that his people are made willing to serve him in the beauties of holiness—not their own wrought holiness, but his holiness wrought in them by his divine power. "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." This is the way of it, and thus do we receive it, my dear brethren in the Lord. "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen." "And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

Much has been published in Baptist papers in opposition to the sovereign power of God towards his people, as manifested in their obedience of faith and love in Christ Jesus, wrought in their hearts by the Spirit and grace of God; and this has been treated with derision and ridiculed, as reducing the obedient children of God to mere machines, which have neither life nor love, and they are reproached as "Can't help its," and the meek and lowly Christ is jeered as doing all the obeying for his obedient followers, who love him, and therefore keep his commandments. All this is charged against the sovereign will and power of God as wrought in his redeemed and new-born children, by the subduing, controlling and leading power of his Spirit and love in their hearts, "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;" that this makes them irresponsible, destroys their obligation unto loving obedience, and makes them as passive as unliving stones. That many dear brethren in Christ, who desire to know the truth as it is in him and walk in it, have been thus prejudiced and misled, there is no doubt, but that this opposition and accusation is either a misconception or misrepresentation of the sovereign power of God and the reign of his grace in the hearts of his dear children, is certainly true. All such captious railing and disputing is divinely met and rebuked by the word of the Lord in the ninth chapter of Romans, for all this caviling is replying against God and doing despite to his sacred truth. Brethren should pause, und solemnly consider whence they are tending and drifting, as in the presence of God, "who will by no means clear the guilty."

So far from this reigning power of the God of salvation lessening the sacred obligations of his people, whom he hath called with an holy calling, or weakening the utility of loving and faithful exhortation to their meek submission unto the will of God in a loving and heart-given service to him, it gives to these their

sacred and binding force, and is the soul and essence of all holy obligation and loving obedience; and nothing else than the true and loving service of the pure in heart will God accept. And all this is the fruit of his Spirit, the springing up of his love shed abroad in the heart. The Lord never speaks in vain to his people. "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek." It is so in every case. Omnipotence never tries. "His arm shall rule for him." When he speaks, the mad persecuter tremblingly prays, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" The will of the Lord is at once supreme.

Now, as to the objection to the omnipotent sovereignty of the Almighty over all the universe, and the active reign of his grace in the hearts and lives of his redeemed, quickened and called-out people in saving them from the dominion of sin; that this subjects their will and brings them into a passive state to the will of the Lord; in mind and heart I have been led into a prayerful and scriptural consideration of this prevailing and fault-finding complaint, and will kindly meet it in the light of revealed truth.

First, then, there is but the Lord and man, the Spirit and the flesh, the will of God and the will of man, the mind of Christ and the mind of the flesh or carnal mind. These are opposite and contrary the one to the other; therefore, before there can be harmony and peace, nearness and communion between God and man, the will of man must be subdued and brought into passive or unresisting submission to the will of God, and God must be absolutely supreme in the mind and heart of man, and his heart-given prayer to his Sovereign must be, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." In no other way than this entire surrender of man can he truly worship God.

Second, the holy Son of God taught this way and truth to his followers, and he himself perfectly lived it in all his life in the flesh, never once asserting his own will as a man, but always making the will of God his Father supreme. So when he speaks of the discrimination of God's sovereign will and grace, in hiding the blessings and glories of salvation from the wise and prudent, and revealing them to babes, who know but little, and are receptive and passive, Jesus said, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." This was enough for the loving and submissive "man Christ Jesus." His own will was entirely subdued or surrendered and swallowed up in the supreme will of God. Therefore Jesus himself was *passive*, and God was *active*. Let us hear and heed his touching prayer, saying, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." This is entire and absolute surrender. "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter." So he was passive, submissive and yielding. Shall we therefore deride him as a "Can't help it," and as a mere machine? O for shame! Is it any better to thus stigmatize his humble followers? Hear him say again, "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." "I can of mine own self do nothing; as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will,

but the will of him that sent me." This is enough, and it is pointed and positive, showing the entire abnegation or renunciation of the will of the holy Son of man, and the absolute control of the will of God in him, and that he of himself could do nothing, but the Father who dwelt in him did the works.

Third, in all things Christ is the leader, example and pattern of all who follow him, and they must follow in his steps, and be as he was. He taught his disciples that except a man deny himself, take up his cross and follow him, he cannot be his disciple. Self-denial is the sacrifice of self and of man's own will, and being made like Christ and as he was. So then to follow Christ is to have the mind of Christ, to be child-like and moulded into the will and way of God, and to say, as our Master said, "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father." "I can of mine own self do nothing: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." And while this work is manifested in us and by us, as the dear children of God who walk in love, and we work out this good work of salvation with fear and trembling, which the Lord hath begun in us, yet it will be in our hearts to ascribe to him the kingdom and the power and the glory, as did Christ and Paul, meekly saying, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Here is the enabling and moving power, and it is nothing less than the will and power of God prevailing in us, "of his good pleasure," subverting our own will, turning us unto the Lord in the day of his power, constraining us in heart and spirit to submissively and meekly pray, "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Thus Jesus taught and felt. The will of God is absolute and supreme in heaven, and we here surrender that it shall be so done in us. We should not seek to be above the meek and lowly Master, but esteem it an honor to be as he was, and his prayer was, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." So then every one in whom Christ is formed the hope of glory, must thus yield submission to the supreme will of God, for Paul says, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." This is true in every one who is Christ's. "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."

Thus clearly does the truth shine out, that in all the true worship and service of God by his children, their own will is surrendered, their fleshly powers are crucified, and the Spirit and life of the Lord Jesus moves and enables them and prevails in them; "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ," says the humbled Paul. And so the christian loses himself in Christ, or is hidden behind the cross of Christ, becomes as a cipher or naught, and Christ is all in all to him. Set down a thousand million ciphers, and they count as nothing, but let *one* be placed before them, when, lo, they are as a strong nation, an innumerable company. So it is with Christ and "the general assembly and church of the first-born." All life and authority, might and dominion, wisdom and understanding, righteousness and sanctification, will and pow-

er, grace and glory, perfection and love, are in the Head, and descend from him to all the members of his body, the church, the bride. "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." God raised Christ from the dead, "and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." So the church is in Christ and is his fullness, and Christ is in the church and is her fullness. The church has the mind of Christ, says Paul. "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." It is thus with us all. The flesh is denied and crucified, and the mind and Spirit of Christ prevail in us, in the worship of God. "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." It is a very flesh-abasing and suffering experience to be led to thus worship God, and rejoice in Christ Jesus alone as our life and salvation.

One very solemn and wonderful truth more, in closing, as written by Paul, of the completion of Christ's reign upon his Father's throne, saying, "Then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." This overwhelms me with awe and deep abasement, to be told that the all-conquering Son of the Highest, who "must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet," "the King of kings, and Lord of lords," shall then himself deliver up the kingdom and the dominion and the throne to his and our Father and God, and again make himself of no reputation, be as one with his brethren, and *himself be subject* to God. O, may I then fall down at his sacred feet, and in lowest humility be as he is! O behold! and be humbled at the lowly condescension of the highly exalted and dear Son of God, that he shall himself be subject unto him that put all things under him. O, how much more should we ourselves be subject unto God, and unto his meek and lowly Son.

"That God may be all in all." This shall be the end and crowning glory of all the dear and reigning Redeemer's work. Entire or absolute subjection unto God, whose will and power are supreme, is the sublime doctrine and truth of the Bible, and the very crowning purpose and work unto which he sent his Son into the world, and has now seated him at his own right hand in power and glory. And shall we not, therefore, as followers of Christ, meekly and humbly surrender our own will and way, and esteem it our highest honor to "be subject unto him?" "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." All our self-will, opposition and enmity to the absolute dominion and reign of our God and his Christ, therefore, must be subdued and put down, for all authority and power must be put under his feet. "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth," not only in heaven, but upon the earth, and all things shall be subdued unto him, and God shall be all in all.

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DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD:—I am glad you wrote me a few lines, for it is good and profitable for Zion's pilgrims to commune with one another by the way. As you intimate, the path in which we are journeying is one that we had not known, (Isaiah xlii. 16,) but though poor and frail, blind and sinful, we have a compassionate, faithful and almighty Guide, who will lead us on safely to everlasting glory. (Psalm lxxxviii. 53.) It was the Lord who caused us to take up this pilgrimage; his almighty grace called us and drew us forth to walk in the way of life. Abraham says, "God caused me to wander from my father's house," and by faith in the Lord his God he went forth, not knowing whither he went. (Heb. xi. 8.) He journeyed by faith, desiring a better country, that is an heavenly, and truly blessed are we if found walking in the steps of the selfsame faith of our father Abraham. (Romans iv. 12.) Christ Jesus our Lord is the hope and salvation of believers, and by faith we live and walk in him. There is no path to eternal life and glory only by Christ Jesus; so we live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us. O how unspeakably favored are we poor sinners that the Holy Spirit has wrought in our souls this faith in the incarnate Son of God. His sacrifice and precious blood is what we lean upon, for nothing else can cleanse us from our dreadful guilt, and present us faultless before the Majesty in the heavens. It is very comforting to ponder over the sufferings of Christ, to look into his pains and griefs which he endured as our covenant Head, our precious, sin-bearing Surety. Jesus descended in sufferings beneath our sins and the curse of the law, even unto the grave. He died unto sin once. Once was enough; how blessed is this. He hath full atonement made, he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. (Heb. x. 12–14.) He was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification. Truly it is blessed to contemplate that our ascended Redeemer is now crowned with glory and honor, and he that ascended is our same dear Savior that first descended into the lower parts of the earth. (Ephesians iv. 9, 10; Hebrews ii. 9.) Therefore it is that all our heart is centered upon the life, obedience, sufferings and sacrifice, the blood, the death and burial, the resurrection and ascension to glory of our precious Lord Jesus Christ. We are very dependent upon the Lord for all our spiritual consolations. The Comforter testifies of Jesus, takes of the things of Christ and shews them unto us, and beneath the gracious power of the communion of the Holy Ghost, in faith we reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God by Jesus Christ our Lord. We are dead to the law by the body of Christ, that we should be married to another, even to him that is raised from the dead. In our baptism there is the likeness, and therein it is signified that we are buried and are risen with Christ through the faith of the operation of God. (Colossians ii. 12.) Now, while we are passing through this world in our pilgrimage, all that we apprehend and experience of the life and obedience, sufferings and blood, death, resurrection and ascension of our Savior, is by faith, and our precious faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen; it is our blessed foretaste; the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts; the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of Christ's glory. As we

contemplate our present estate we have to join with the apostle John and say, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." Now we feel we are sinful; now we groan being burdened with this mortal body, but how blessed the hope of the resurrection to which we shall attain, (Phil. iii. 10–14,) and which better resurrection we shall obtain because Christ our Head has ransomed us from death and the grave. Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept, and he will raise us up again at the last day. (John vi. 40.) "We shall be changed," how blessed! We look for our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ from heaven; he will come the second time without sin unto salvation, and he shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. The Spirit of Christ in us is the divine assurance of this "better resurrection." (Heb. xi. 35.) Yes, we shall attain unto the resurrection of life, (John v. 59,) for thus the apostle Paul very blessedly declares our hope, saying, "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also [this is a very precious "also"] quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."—Romans viii. 11. "We shall not all sleep, [some of the saints will remain and be alive upon the earth when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, 1 Thess. iv. 15-18,] but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"—1 Cor. xv. 51–55. This glorious hope of the resurrection is that to which we hope to come, (Acts xxiv. 15; xxvi. 7, 8,) for then we shall bear the image of the heavenly. We shall awake in his likeness and be satisfied; we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. The Son of God hath bought us with the price of his sacred blood, and body and spirit we are his, (1 Cor. vi. 20,) and in body and spirit we shall be conformed to the image of Christ. (Romans viii. 29.) But, beloved, to this we have not already attained, but God hath wrought us for this selfsame thing. Now, in my pilgrimage I often pine as absent from my Lord; I roam, I am sinful, beset with temptations, and as I look upon myself I see such unlikeness to Christ I often sigh and groan in this frail, sinful, dying body of mine. I am glad it is a dying body, and when in all its weakness, sinfulness, mortality and dishonor, it dies and returns to the dust again, what then? God shall build it again, he shall re-erect it, he will raise it up again at the last day. (John vi. 39, 40, 44.)

"Corruption, earth and worms shall feed upon this flesh,
Till my triumphant spirit comes to put it on afresh.
God my Redeemer lives, and always from the skies,
Looks down and watches all my dust till he shall bid it rise."

Comforted in this delightful hope I am enabled at times to sing,

"No, I'll repine at death no more,
But with a cheerful gasp resign
To the cold dungeon of the grave,
These dying, withering limbs of mine.

Let worms devour my wasting flesh,
And crumble all my bones to dust,
My God shall raise my frame afresh,
At the revival of the just."

It will appear, beloved of God, from what I have attempted to present unto you, that all experience while we are in the earth is by faith and love in Christ Jesus. Thus when we are divinely exercised by faith in our hearts, to live, to eat, to drink and walk, then it is that we are enabled to reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God by Jesus Christ our Lord. Our faith even looks beyond the obedience, the sufferings and blood, the death and burial and resurrection of Christ, to behold him ascended far above all heavens, crowned with glory and honor, and glorified with the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God we can say, "Herein is our love made perfect that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is so are we in this world."—1 John iv. 17. Our faith embraces this comforting revelation; our faith looks to Christ, the ascended and glorified Head of the church, and says, So are all the members of his body. They are saved and justified and glorified in their Head. This is the hope of believers. As we look by faith at the Head of the church all is perfected, all is consummated. Christ our Head the first-fruits is risen, ascended and glorified, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Christ our Surety magnified the law, and in him all his members have magnified the law. He died unto sin once, and in him all the church are dead indeed unto sin, and dead to the law by the crucified body of Christ. Our faith looks to, clings to the Son of God who came forth from the tomb, and in his resurrection we see our dear Redeemer walking in newness of life. He is no more bowed down with our sins, no more baptized in anguish, no more is he bruised beneath the curse of the law for our sakes. O no, he has made an end of sin, he has vanquished death, he has triumphed gloriously, he has risen again from the dead for our justification, and as our hearts in faith and love are centered upon him, we also feel to have a good hope that we are freely justified from all our offenses in the sight of our God. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Thus by faith we are tasting the power of his resurrection, and are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God. This is the way of holiness, the path of life, and the foretaste and the earnest of all this blessedness which is laid up for us in heaven, is our blessed experience by faith in the Lamb. The Scriptures teach us that what we now experience in our souls as believers in Christ Jesus, is only the earnest. All our knowledge of salvation, of redemption from our guilt and the curse of the law, of righteousness and justification, of sitting together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, is by faith, and faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. How well we know that it is only while we are graciously exercised by this precious faith of the operation of God that we are experiencing the comfort and peace of the hope of salvation; (1 Thess. v. 8,) the hope of righteousness; (Gal. v. 5,) the hope of the gospel; (Col. i. 23,) the hope of the resurrection from the dead; (Acts xxiii. 6,) the hope of eternal life; (Titus i. 2,) the hope that is laid up for us in heaven. (Col. i. 4.) For all this we

have been apprehended of Christ Jesus, and unto this we shall attain. "Mortality shall be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for this selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit."—2 Cor. v. 4, 5.

I love to think of the glorified believers in Christ Jesus. When they depart this life to be with Christ their ransomed spirits are present with the Lord, and glorified. Sometimes even now I am enabled to sing,

"Yes, I to the end shall endure,
As sure as the earnest is given,
More happy, but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven."

Then not only is the sacred holy body of the Son of God that was raised from the dead, glorified in heaven, but Enoch and Elijah are there also in their glorified bodies; God graciously and sovereignly translated them that they should not see death. (Heb. xi. 5.) They were changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, when the Lord translated them from earth to heaven. In like manner the bodies of the saints that are alive and remain upon the earth when Christ shall come, shall be changed in a moment, without dying; they shall be fashioned like unto the glorious body of our glorious Lord Jesus Christ. O, my soul, ponder over the glorious hope of the gospel. "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

In this faith I live, and when I come to die, may I be accounted among those of whom it can be said, "These all died in faith."

I am, I hope, your brother and companion in the gospel of Christ,

FRED. W. KEENE.

IRWIN COLLEGE, Tenn., Dec. 25, 1900.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER AND COMPANION IN THE TRIBULATIONS OF THE GOSPEL:—To-day is the twenty-fifth, and as I have seen Christmas fifty-four times in this dull mortal life, and am sure that I shall not see that many more, I am persuaded to offer a few words, and if you think them worthy to come before the dear saints, you may publish them, if not, all will be well with this trembling one. This is surely a day of darkness and cloudiness and gloom, for it is clearly to be seen that the truth as it is in Jesus is more and more strongly opposed, but we call to mind the words recorded by Paul and John: "Am I become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" and "Because I tell you the truth, ye believe it not." The sovereignty of God, who is the eternal Father, in all his divine purposes concerning the salvation of his people, and that also by grace, seems to be altogether, to the people down here in Tennessee, obnoxious and hateful. There is no gospel truth preached nearer to me than twenty miles. The land is filled with isms of every name, rank and sort, but such a thing as any believing the truth according to the working of his mighty power, I do not find here; every one prophesies lies, and the Lord says that he has not sent them. Again, we read of such ones, "Their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men." It certainly is so to-day. All the so-called religious worship is carried on by the en-

ergy and vain work of men, and they teach for doctrine the commandments of men; they are deluded by their own fancies. But the apostle said, "We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you unto salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth; whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." This is a glorious thought and strong consolation, that we are admonished by the same eternal truth to-day, to hold fast the same traditions that were taught in that day. But alas, how changed! The truth divine has given place to gilded error and shame, in these latter days. The whole theme and theory seems to be what men are doing for the Lord; they have totally lost sight of what the Lord has done for them; their whole power is put forth to save souls by their own fleshly reasonings and power. Upon these God by the prophet, has pronounced a curse, saying, "Cursed is man that trusteth in man, or maketh flesh his arm." The whole number of carnal, worldly religionists, embracing the whole Arminian world, preach that men can repent and exercise faith, and so they call upon the dead sinner to repent and exercise faith. But the people of God are taught that the dead sinner is as powerless to repent and to exercise faith, as he is to fly from earth to heaven. Man, while in his sinful state, is without hope and without God in the world, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he hath loved us, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together with him." In that state of nature we had no hope, but now, hope is given, and this hope enters into that which is within the vail, and maketh its possessor not ashamed, and the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.

Now, dear brethren and sisters, and companions in tribulation, in conclusion let your poor, unworthy servant exhort you to be of good comfort, as did also the apostle. The apostle tells us of an inheritance in heaven, reserved for us who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready ro be revealed in the last time.

"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you," is the prayer of one who loves you in the truth. "Blessed are they who believe on him whom they have not seen."

My love to all the saints wherever they may be. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ dwell richly with you all.

D. H. CORDELL.

SEELAN, Ohio, Feb. 22, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed please find two dollars for renewal of subscription to the SIGNS another year. I love the SIGNS better every year, and yet I have been in so much darkness, yes, and unbelief, for so long that I could not read them with either comfort or interest, and yet paradoxical as this may seem, I love them, and long to able to find the comfort and consolation to me in them, I seemed to find, without interruption, for so long. This seems to me so different an experience from anything I have ever read in the SIGNS, that I am made to doubt if indeed I am one of the election of grace. Perhaps this confession is to prove to you that I have been mistaken in the thought that God has ever remembered me in mercy, and that I have been

deceiving his church. What I am I know not, but I love the doctrine of God's unlimited sovereignty over all worlds, and all my desire is to hear it preached. I care not for any other doctrine, no other can satisfy a poor, sinful worm of the dust, who has been brought to see the righteousness of him who fills all in all; then does every thought of his own righteousness vanish, and he is enabled to see only darkness and despair in everything he ever trusted in for salvation. When one has seen and felt these things, none but the God and Sovereign of all can raise him from the horrible pit and miry clay, for it is written, "I looked, and there was none to help, and mine own arm brought salvation." Yes, through the blood of Christ, that fountain opened to the house of David, whose streams make glad the city of God, where poor, perishing sinners are washed and made white, their blind eyes opened to behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, the Head of the church, which is his mystical body, the election of grace. Then salvation by grace is their song, and their desire is to be numbered among them in their meetings here.

I have felt that something of this experience was mine in times past, and sometimes am made to feel that God in his grace and mercy still knoweth the way that I take, and watches and cares for me, although the most unworthy of all his children, if I am indeed one.

The little house of the church where my membership is, has been given over into the hands of Arminians to hold Sunday School in, and children's day exercises, as the people around about wills it. One of the members, and the last minister professing to be an Old School Baptist, consented to the same, and I feel like I am an alien (almost) from the church whose doctrine I love, in whose God is my only hope for salvation here in time and in eternity. The condition of the church is not unknown to God; he neither slumbers nor sleeps. His will must be accomplished in his way and in his time, and the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain.

I know not why I have written you so long a letter; I intended to tell all about our church troubles, but have only given you a hint, but perhaps it was better not to write more fully.

I have just buried my dear father, Lewis D. Williams, who was a firm believer in the doctrine of predestination, and salvation by grace, but never was identified with the church. I cannot understand God's ways, but may he teach me to be still and know that he is God.

From a sorrowing and unworthy child, if one at all,

MRS. EVA W. MORRIS.

DELPHI, N. Y., Dec. 31, 1900.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and in doing so want to say that I feel it to be a precious privilege, a blessing from the Lord to me, a poor, unworthy sinner in and of myself. I can only plead what my Lord has done; plead his goodness, and unspeakable mercies to me, an unprofitable child, if one at all. I want the SIGNS, because I cannot do without them, they are my meat and my drink spiritually. They contain all the communication of Old School doctrine that I get at present. Things have greatly changed at Delphi. The late Elder Jairus P. Smith used to preach twice each Sunday, but now we have no preaching except that of Elder Vail, and he does not come of late as his time is taken up elsewhere. Sometimes I

feel as if the Lord had surely forsaken us, but I know that the Lord does not make any mistakes. I feel thankful that he has taught me these things; he knows what is best. O that the Lord would reconcile me to his holy will in all things, shed abroad his love in my heart, give me the true spirit of obedience to him at all times, and enable me to follow in the way of his commandments with meekness and godly fear. I am so weak and sinful that I am compelled to look to him at all times, for strength and wisdom. I know nothing good of myself; for "In me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." Without him I can do nothing. I take hope sometimes in time of trouble and distress, that I have received this knowledge of God, because man does not teach such doctrine.

I have written in my poor, weak way, hoping that you will receive this money and letter as from one who loves the SIGNS, and also those who contribute to them. May God uphold and guide you in the old paths, teaching salvation by the grace of God alone. I feel so thankful to the Lord for his saving power to you, brother Beebe. I pray that you may live a long time to the honor of his great name. And to brother Chick also, I want to say, that I get great good and comfort from your writing.

My sincere love and fellowship for you in the bonds and fellowship of the gospel of our Lord.

JAMES E. TAPNER.

OXFORD, N. Y., Dec. 2, 1900.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER AND PASTOR:—Your letter to me was a great comfort, and I read it over and over again. I often feel like writing to you, but I so much realize my unworthiness, and beside, when I do take up my pen my mind is so often in the dark. Of late, I feel somewhat brighter. Yes, I do believe that all things work together for good to those who love God, and this renews my little hope. It comforts me to hear you say that you find your heart going out to me in sympathy. When I am so low and dark I am afraid that I have done wrong in making an open profession of my faith, and I am so hard, and this heart of mine is so vile and wicked, I sometimes think the Lord must hate me, and I feel afraid I have deceived you and all the church, then again these thoughts flee away, and I am happy again. I love the church of God, and it was my wish for many years to be one with them, but for a long time my sinfulness kept me away; it was over twenty years.

How beautifully sister Mary Terry writes of the household of faith, and of their feelings, how much I feel as she has written; I do not own the breath which I draw, I also feel that all others are better than I am. When I meet with the Baptists, I feel as though I ought not to have gone among them, for they look so good, and I am so poor and evil, and not fit to be with them, and yet I feel as though I must go and be in their company whenever there is an opportunity. I was enabled to attend the yearly meeting at Otego, in September, to me it was an excellent meeting, and when it came time to say good-bye, I could not help weeping at the thought of parting from them. I had hoped to see you there again.

It does not seem that what I have written can be of any comfort to any one, but if it is, give to God all the praise. "In me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." The hymn No. 380 (Beebe's Collection) seems much on my mind this afternoon: "Jesus heals the broken-hearted."

Your sister in a precious hope,

MARY BREWSTER.

EDITORIAL.

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PSALM LXXVI. 10.

"SURELY the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath thou shalt restrain."

To the humble-hearted believer in God there is in all the Scriptures no more consoling language than this; it is the word of God; though written by the psalmist, it is not the word of the writer alone, but the word of God. It is therefore to be accepted as infallible truth. The believer who loves righteousness often looks abroad over the earth and sees it filled with violence and deceit, and all manner of evil, and it seems to him that out of it all there can no good arise, and that all must result in the overwhelming of righteousness and truth. This is because man can see but in part, and know but in part; man can see only the present, and not the future; he beholds the surface of things, and not what is hidden beneath them, thus he is distressed, and goes sorrowfully on his way; he needs some such assurance as this for his strength and comfort. As that which he desires most is the glory of God, he is told that even the things which seem to him to be only fraught with evil, and which appear to tend to the reproach of the Almighty, shall after all, praise the Lord. Then the assurance is given that nothing shall be allowed to come into action that shall not praise him. Amid all the apparent turmoil of this world, which seems to his short sight to be beyond all control and all order, he is told that this is only apparent, and not really so. He is assured that that which is opposed to God he will so overrule and direct as that it shall redound to his praise, while that malice, hatred, pride and wickedness in man, which would not be to the glory of God, he will restrain. And whatever is to the praise of God is to the good of all who love God, and *vice versa.* These two things, the praise of God, and the good of his chosen, cannot be disjoined. Therefore the wrath of man shall not only praise God, but it shall be to the good of his people.

The word "wrath" in the text, means literally "fury, rage, anger against God, and against his people." And all who do evil willingly and gladly, are in reality filled with enmity against God; this we know from the Scriptures; it is all summed up in the language of the apostle, "The carnal mind is enmity against God." Not only (let all take notice) at enmity, but enmity itself. The root of all that is evil in the conduct and purposes of man, is enmity against God. Now all this enmity of man against God shall, if these promises be true, result in the end in the glory of that God whom they hate. Men mean not to praise God, but God means his own praise, and overrules their wrath to that end.

The word "praise," signifies literally "to stretch out the hand to," "to confess." How wonderful is the mystery of that wisdom which can make that in man which is opposed to God, yet reach out to him, or confess him.

"Thy ways, O God, with wise design,
Are framed upon thy throne above,
And every dark and bending line
Meets in the centre of thy love."

Even the wrath of man, according to the meaning of the word praise in the text, confesses God. This is unwitting upon the part of those who are filled with wrath; they mean it not so, but suppose that they are doing that which shall be to their own praise, and to the reproach of all that claims to be of God. In how many cases, as recorded in the Scriptures, did men without knowing it, do the will of God, and yet were evil in the design of their hearts.

The word "restrain," in the last clause of the text, means literally "to gird about; to bind." Thus God has set bounds to the raging sea, and it is girded by his power. The raging sea of human passions is under the full control of the Almighty God, and he hath put a hook in the mouth of the leviathan of all iniquity, and the arch enemy of all hath God bound with chains, and when he is loosed, it is as God wills, and no further shall his power to deceive the nations extend than shall, in the end, be to the praise of God. Thus the words of this text are in full harmony with all other Bible testimony, concerning the wonder-working power of God, who bringeth to naught the counsel of the wicked, by his superior wisdom. Thus the full confidence of the psalmist is expressed in the word "surely," with which the text begins. In his mind there could be no doubt and no failure in the statements which followed. How completely he must have rested, no matter what the trial might have been, under this assurance.

It has been supposed by many that the special time referred to in the Psalm, is that recorded in 2 Kings xix. 35, and in Isaiah xxxvii. 36. In both of these places the destruction of the hosts of Assyria by the angel of the Lord at night, when it is declared that a hundred and fourscore and five thousand lay dead upon the field, is recorded. Be this as it may, it does not matter as regards the great truth recorded in this language. If the wrath of man praised the Lord then, it is no less sure that it shall praise him always. It is one of the precious things of the Bible, that it does not select things for record which are unlike all other things, but it selects things which we may call, for want of a better word, samples of what is true in a general sense. If God manifests his power in one recorded instance in the word, it is that we may know that his power is to be seen in all cases; if we read there of a purpose of God in some wicked act of men, it is that we may rest assured that his purpose is to be found in all that transpires in the world. If in one instance wicked men are said to have done the will of God unwittingly, it is that we may learn that all wicked men are at all times fulfilling the will of God unwittingly. If we read that one wicked act was meant for evil by the doer, while yet that same act was meant for good by the God of heaven and earth, it is that we may know that all wicked acts, by all wicked men, done with evil intent by men, were meant for good according to the purpose of that God who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. If God is not to be charged with the wickedness of those who have done the wicked acts recorded in the Scriptures, because nevertheless they were done according to his purpose, so also he is not to be charged with the wickedness of any wicked act now done, while yet it is according to his purpose.

The illustrations of this text are many in the word of God. Not only did the wrath of the Assyrian king, if this be indeed referred to in this Psalm, praise

God, while the wrath which would not have been to the praise of God, was restrained, but in how many other instances in the word the same truth is made clear. The wrath of man turned to the praise of God, and to the good of his people in many instances which are familiar to us all, and in no instance was the wrath of man allowed to go one step beyond what would be to his praise. In the beginning of these remarks we called attention to the fact that what was for the good of his chosen people was also for the glory of his name. In how many cases did the wrath or enmity of men against God, and against his people, turn to the good of those who waited upon him, and in how many instances did his people confess this, when they had seen the end of the Lord, that he was very pitiful, and of tender mercy, and a worker of wonders indeed. Now these things which did plainly appear, are but evidences of the same things being true, even where it has not yet been made to appear. A child sees his father do things which seem strange and hurtful to him, or he sees that he allows others to do things which appear to him hurtful, but in many instances he learns after awhile that his father was wiser than he, and that the things which appeared to be only fraught with evil to him, have turned out to the praise of his father, and to his own good. Will not the result of this be that he will become convinced at last that in some way even things which as yet he does not understand, will at last also be to his good, and to the praise of his father? Even so by the things which have worked out good to us, and glory to God, though they seemed to at first tend to evil, we may be convinced that all things will so result at last, and we shall come to believe what our heavenly Father has said with full confidence, even though we know not how it is all to be accomplished. All things do work for good to us, and for God's glory, although seeing but in part, it does not so appear to us. Here is the victory of faith, we come to rest upon the oath and promise of God without asking how is it all to be brought about, as did Abraham as recorded in Genesis xv. 6.

This does not argue that the wrath of man is any the less wrath because it is always overruled to the glory of God. The wickedness of the brethren of Joseph was none the less because what they had done was to the praise of God, and the good of much people in the end. The hard-heartedness and stubborness of Pharaoh was none the less evil, because by it God would take occasion to show forth his power, and make his will and glory known. Shimei was none the less evil because the Lord had bidden him to curse David. If the Psalm under consideration does refer to the Assyrian hosts, and their destruction, they were none the less evil because God had purposed that they should come against Israel to destroy their pride, and chastise them for their sin, and so they were destroyed in a night when God had accomplished his purpose in them. Those who crucified the blessed Redeemer were none the less evil in their purpose, and vile in disposition because they did what God had before determined to be done. The wickedness of their hearts (the hearts of the priests, and the people, and of Herod and Pilate, and of the Roman soldiers) was all the motive of which they were conscious, or which appeared in them, in that which they did, but nevertheless each one, priests, people, Judas, Herod, Pilate and the Roman soldiers, did just what was specifically

assigned in the purpose of God, to him to do, before the ages of time began.

One may say, How can it be that God should predestinate all this, and yet man be blameworthy in the doing of the part assigned to him in this great and awful work? Does the one who asks this question mean to deny that men have done wicked things wickedly, and for which they have been condemned before God and man, which yet were predestinated of God? Yet, if but one thing be pointed out, which was appointed of God, and therefore must be, which yet man was held guilty and blameworthy for doing, the whole force of the objection implied in this question, falls to the ground. We say, if but one such instance be found, this destroys all the objection found in the question, unless indeed the questioner means to throw himself upon the condemnation, denounced by Paul upon him, who says, "Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" It has been said that this language of Paul in ninth of Romans, applies to the Jews alone. This we see no proof of in the whole connection. But even if it does, is there one principle applying to God's dealings with the Jews, and another to his dealings with the rest of mankind? If the wrath of man among the Jews praises God, why does it not among the Gentiles also? If one work of the wrath of man praises him, why not all works of wrath also? If this principle holds good in little, will it not also in all? If the wrath of one man praises him, why not the wrath of every man? "Surely the wrath of man [man as a whole] shall praise thee."

The people of God in old times comforted themselves by this truth, why may we not also? The writer of this Psalm speaks of this as though he was glad in it. Why should he not be? To-day we see turmoil, and strife, and hate, and revenge, and selfish grasping after what does not of right belong to men and nations, all over the world. How must our hearts sink with fear, and how dark must all the future be to us, if we cannot believe, that in some way unknown to us, it is true, but not unknown to God, all is working for his praise. This does not excuse men or nations from the guilt which is within them, but still they are God's hammer to break in pieces the flinty rock, and they are the millstones which grind to powder, and so prepare the people to subserve the purpose of God, and to become the soil, out of which shall spring his praise, and the good of his chosen. Darkness may now, as of old, be upon the face of the great deep, but still the Spirit of God moves upon the face of the waters, and some day, as of old, the dry land with all its moving living things shall appear, and at the end, the perfect man, as it was at the beginning.

It is not hard to believe that what men call good things, such as love, pity, good will, mercy, gentleness, goodness, charity, shall all tend to the praise of God, these things are the direct fruit of his Spirit, and show forth his own holy character. No one questions that these things are for his praise and our good, but to believe what is evil in man, shall praise him who is all good and holy, passes all the comprehension of the mind of man. Even the child of God finds his faith sorely tried by this; again and again, he finds the need of repeated assurances from God, to strengthen his faith, and to make him calm and confident, amidst the turmoil and wrath of men, but when, by the Spirit of God, he is enabled to receive and

rest in this truth, there comes a wonderful quietness and gladness into his heart. No matter how much the storm waves may beat upon the Rock then, he who inhabits it can sing, and from the mountain of this truth of divine sovereignty even over the wrath of man, he can shout aloud, being by faith already the victor. For all such confidence and faith in the overruling providence and grace of God, let us praise God. One of the ways in which the wrath of man praises God, is that in it his people find occasion to exhibit that faith which he has bestowed upon them, and so they like Paul, most gladly glory in the very thing which oppresses them, that the power of Christ may rest upon them. C.

PLEASE BE SURE

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

ALL GONE.

The large type hymn books of the genuine Turkey Morocco binding and the imitation binding are all gone. All the styles of binding we have left of the large books, are the cloth and blue marbled edge binding.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ACTS II. 37, 38.

Brother G. Beebe—Dear Sir:—Your paper has been a welcome visitor for a number of years in my house. My papa and mamma think there is nothing in all this wide world beside it that is equal to it. I belong to, or live in the same church with them, but I cannot see things just like they do, and I would like to have your notions on Acts ii. 37, 38. You may guess that I am somewhat tinctured with what is commonly called Campbellism. Now I wish you to do your best with this text, for if you are right, you know that I am most woefully wrong; and I assure you there is nothing that you could do that would please my old pa and ma so much as for you to give me what they would term a good whipping on this subject. You can do as you like with this. Yours, as ever,

A. G. C.

Franklin, Ky., Sept. 19, 1858.

REPLY.

The propriety or impropriety of our querist holding the Campbellite doctrine and retaining a membership in a Regular Baptist church, we leave with that church to consider and decide; but it is a little remarkable for one claiming such membership to publish to the world that he is not what he professes to be; still such discrepance between profession and reality may be harmonious with Campbellism. There being no Campbellites in this section of the country, that we are aware of, we do not profess to be very well posted in regard to what they hold. Nearly all we have heard of their peculiar views has come to us from those who profess to disagree with them. We shall, therefore, in offering our "notions" on the text proposed, do so without regard to the manner in which the Campbellites, or any other ites may interpret it. And as to whipping our correspondent, we will leave his or her (as the case may be) papa and mamma to use the rod, as our calling requires that we "be no striker." The text itself is to us a precious one, and taken as it stands in connection with the wonderful

display of divine power and grace, and the outpouring of the Spirit of God on the day of Pentecost is the more interesting.

"Now when they heard this." The people addressed were from many, and perhaps all the nations and tribes at that time on the earth, many of whom being Jewish proselytes, had come up to Jerusalem, as their custom was to keep the Pentecost, and they testified that they heard the preaching of these illiterate Galilæans in their own mother tongue in which they were born, and others mocking, (for there were mockers in the apostles' days as well as at the present time,) said, "These men are full of new wine. Not a very unusual charge to be hurled against the advocates of the truth at the present time. "But Peter standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice," and repelled their slanderous charge, and preached unto the multitude, the gospel, as he was inspired to do by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and after having proved by the most unanswerable testimony, that this was in fulfillment of the Old Testament Scriptures, and especially of the prophecy of Joel, and having charged upon the Jews the crucifixion of the Son of God, and that they had done it with wicked hands, he asserted also the resurrection of Christ, and that what they then witnessed was in evidence that Christ was risen and exalted at the right hand of God, and that he having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he had shed forth this which they saw and heard. Then addressing himself to the house of Israel, proclaimed the triumph of the Redeemer, saying, "Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." These were the people addressed, and they who heard; and this was what they heard.

"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart." Men may be wounded, and survive their wounds, but no man, ever pricked in his heart, could recover from the wound. On another occasion some were cut to the heart, and it only made them gnash with their teeth. But when God had poured out his Spirit, quickened their ears, and pricked them in their heart, they cried out, or said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Here was a change wrought in them; before they were thus pricked in their heart, they mocked and slandered the apostles, but now the Holy Spirit had operated effectually, not only ON but IN their heart, sin revived, and they died; that is to their legal hopes they stood convicted of murder, of sacrilege, and of having wickedly and maliciously crucified the Lord of glory. Every filthy rag of their self-righteousness was effectually stripped off, and their lost and helpless condition was felt and confessed. But although quickened by a spirit that they were strangers to until that hour, they did not know how deliverance could reach their case unless it were by their *doing something*; and what that something was, or by what power they could perform it, they knew not, and hence the earnest inquiry, "What shall we do?"

Let our querist here observe that those guilt-stricken, heart-pricked sinners, were at this very moment of their anxious inquiry subjects of the quickening power of the Holy Ghost, and that their being quickened was the reason that they were thus affected by what they heard the apostles preach. It was not the preaching that had quickened them, and stopped their mocking, and impelled the heart-

broken cry, "What shall we do?" but it was the outpouring of the Spirit and the power of the Holy Ghost that had circumcised their ears and hearts, and prepared the apostles to preach, and them to hear, and feel, and tremble at the word which was declared unto them. This had disarmed them of their rage and malice against the apostles and their doctrine, and brought them down at the feet of the apostles as humble inquirers after the way of life and salvation through the crucified, risen and exalted Redeemer. If the preaching could of itself have quickened them, it would have also quickened all who heard the sound of the apostles' voices; but such was not the case. The exalted Jesus has himself declared, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words which I speak to you, they are spirit, and they are life." As he only hath immortality, he only can speak life to the dead. The dead shall hear the voice of (not simply the apostles' or preachers' but of) the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. I give, says Jesus, unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. No man cometh unto the Father but by him. Now these quickened sinners require living bread, as new born babes they desire the sincere milk of the word that they may grow thereby, and Peter is already commissioned and qualified to feed these lambs. They bleat for living, spiritual food, for the spirit of life which has entered their heart has given them an appetite: "What shall we do?" Peter now deals out the children's food, not to dogs, but to new born babes. "*Repent, and be baptized, every one of you,*" &c. Neither repentance nor baptism precedes life, but both follow as the genuine effects of life. If Peter had regarded repentance and baptism as conditions on which life was to be offered, he would not have confined his words to those whom the Lord our God had called, and whose hearts were pricked. But in this case he makes the exclusive application of his words to "every one of you," and gives us the reason of this special and exclusive application, "For," says he, "the promise is unto you, and unto your children, and unto all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." What promise? The promise of the outpouring of the Spirit, and its life-inspiring effects, as in Peter's text, in the prophecy of Joel, and the promise of repentance and remission of sins, for the giving of which the crucified and risen Savior is exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance unto Israel and the remission of sins.

All descriptions of Arminians and workmongers seem to regard repentance as a something preceding spiritual life, and exacted as a condition of salvation, but the Scriptures assure us that it is the gift of God, and that it is a sense of the goodness of God entertained by quickened sinners that leads them to repentance; a vital principle in them leading them to a godly sorrow, which worketh repentance unto life, which needeth not to be repented of. The repentance enjoined on these converts at Pentecost, was that they should renounce Judaism, confess their sins, and rely alone on the risen Redeemer for salvation, to take his yoke, own his name, obey his commands, follow him as their leader, and honor him as their God and Savior.

And with the presentation of these fruits meet for repentance, they were to be baptized, not to put away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good con-

science; not to procure remission of sins, but as an ordinance in which is set forth figuratively the washing away of our sins, our death to the law, our burial from the elements of this world, and our resurrection to newness of life.

"And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation." Over that generation awful judgments were impending, according to what Christ taught his disciples. (Matt. xxiii., xxiv. and xxv.) And the repentance of baptism enjoined on these disciples would effectually disconnect them from that generation and from the temporal judgments which was to be executed on Jerusalem before that generation should pass away.

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized, and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls; and they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship," &c. They were in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship before they were baptized, or they could not have continued steadfastly in it, for if baptism had initiated them into their doctrine and fellowship, it would not be mentioned as a continuance, but as an entrance into it.

We have thus stated some of our "notions." As to "our best," we always try to do as well as we can in giving our views on the Scriptures. We have made no extraordinary efforts, but such views or "notions" as we have, we have presented candidly, and if A. G. C. is benefited by what we have written, or if it shall prove edifying to any of the lambs of the Redeemer's flock, we shall have great cause to rejoice and be thankful.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., October 15, 1858.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Baltimore Association of Primitive Baptists, to convene with the church at Tuscarora, May, 1901, to the churches of which she is composed, sends greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—If by that endearing name we have a right to address you, for many times when we feel our unworthiness, we do feel that we have no right to claim that relationship to the dear people of God. The word tells us that it is an evidence that we have passed from death unto life, Because we love the brethren. Sometimes we do feel that we love them, and love to meet with them in the assemblies of the saints, but the thorn remaineth, and how often are we tempted and tried, but we have the precious promise, He will never leave nor forsake us. And in his own good time he comes with some sweet word that buoys us up, and we are made to rejoice. The dear Lord was tempted in all points like as his children are, and he knows what is best for them. He is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. "As thy day, so shall thy strength be." Though we have been called to pass through the deep waters, and feel many times that we must sink, his precious promise has been verified, and we have realized that his everlasting arms were underneath. "When the Lord is near we have nothing to fear." "Prisons would palaces prove, if Jesus would dwell with us there." O, how sweet and how precious are the moments when we are permitted to feel the presence of the dear Savior. "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." When tempted of the evil one, saying, If thou be the Christ command these stones to be made bread, this was the dear Sa-

vior's reply. As it is true that natural bread is required to sustain natural life, so it is true that spiritual bread is required to sustain spiritual life. The natural man is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. We may have in this life all that heart can wish naturally, but it will not satisfy the longings of the hungry soul that is hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and nothing but the word of the Lord can. Oftentimes when tempted and tried, and feeling to doubt as to whether we are a child of God or not, and finding there is nothing we can do to merit the favor of the Lord, and feeling to inquire with the poet, "What was there in me to merit esteem, or give the Creator delight?" there is nothing but the word of the Lord will satisfy. And blessed be his holy name, he calls them blessed that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, and says, They shall be filled. His promises are yea, yea and amen. He says of himself, that he is God, and does not change, therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed. Again he says, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

We often worry about the best means to feed our own souls, and that we may be enabled to comfort the needy. O, if we could only sit down with Jesus, and accept just such blessings as he bestows upon us, and wait his appointed time to favor Zion, for, "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

WM. GRAFTON, Moderator.

MILTON DANCE, Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association convened with the church at Hopewell, Mercer Co., N. J., May 29th, 30th and 31st, 1901, to the several churches of which she is composed, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been a good and profitable custom for many years among us, to send to the churches, whose messengers we are at these annual gatherings, an epistle in which to set forth the interest which we feel in all the churches, and to call attention to some profitable truth relating to our great salvation. While this is but a custom, yet we think that we have full warrant in the word for the custom, because we are bidden to speak of these things one to another, and to talk of them under all circumstances. The principles of doctrine to which attention might be called to the profit of us all, embrace all that is recorded in the word of God. There is nothing unprofitable there. If at any time it may seem to us that there is little to interest us in some one theme, this is not because there is nothing profitable in it, but because our minds are dull and our hearts clouded by some worldly or fleshly thing, or because we have fallen into a lukewarm state. At this time, because we cannot speak of all the many themes which are to the benefit of believers, we must limit ourselves to one, and that to which it is in our mind to call attention is embraced in the words found in the epistle of James iii. 17. It reads as follows:

"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

In the preceding portion of this chapter the apostle speaks of the necessity that

all who love God should put a bridle upon the tongue. In this he but sets forth that which the dear Redeemer also enjoined, and which appears more or less in all the writings of the inspired Paul. James declares in substance that much of the fire of strife among men, and much that is to the reproach of those who profess to follow Christ, proceeds alone from the tongue. The tongue, though a small member of the body, is yet like the little bit which turns a horse whichever way we will, or it is like the helm of a ship, turning the whole vessel at its will. It is a little fire which kindleth a great matter. It is a whole world of iniquity, it defiles the body, it sets on fire the course of nature, and is set on fire of hell, it cannot be tamed, and is an unruly evil, and full of deadly poison. The apostle means by all this, the words which proceed from it, and yet he does not mean so much the words themselves, as the disposition in man back of all that he does and says, which is evil. But the tongue is the instrument by which vile man works the most terrible things among men and against God.

Now James found among his brethren this tendency to evil speaking. They had come into the possession of the life which is immortal and pure, and they had witnessed a good confession before many witnesses, and in the time of love had engaged with the tongue in the praise and blessing of God, but he found among them another tendency, and that was to use the tongue badly. While they loved and praised God with the tongue, with the same tongue they cursed man. James says to them all this is inconsistent. There had been among them, as is evident from verse fourteen, bitter envying and strife. This was in their hearts, and had appeared in word and deed, from the warning implied in the words, and if this be so, "glory not, and lie not against the truth." It would appear from verse fourteen, they had justified themselves by claiming that what they said was from a zeal for God and truth, but the result had been confusion and every evil work.

Now James calls their attention to the fact that there are two kinds of wisdom in the world; one is from above, and one from beneath. That which did not descend from above wrought all this strife and every evil work, and appeared in the spirit of envy, and ill will, and hatred against man, and so was to the dishonor of the name which they professed to hold in reverence. Against this sort of wisdom he warns them very earnestly. This wisdom produced bigotry, and malice, and persecution. It was proud, not meek, it was full of debate and strife, and not peaceable, it hurled anathemas against men, and did not seek their good. It professed great zeal for God, but at the same time wrought evil upon those who bore the image of God. It was a wisdom which while it professed to love and serve God, yet was entirely contrary to him, and instead of showing forth the example of the meek and lowly Savior, by seeking the good, even of those who opposed themselves, it would trample them under its feet.

Then James calls attention to the peculiar characteristics of that wisdom which is from above. It is not proud, it is not selfish, it is not full of strife and debate, it is not envious, and does not glory in itself. This is all that true wisdom which a child may have, and which all the learning of all the schools will not give a man. All human wisdom, whether in the arts and sciences of men, or in the false religion of men, puffs up, and causes its possessors to be vain and proud.

It is a wisdom which can be gained by effort, and into which the keenest intellects can penetrate most deeply. It is not by revelation of God, but through the seeking of men, that this wisdom is gained. Therefore he who possesses it feels to be superior to those who do not possess it. It leads a man to say, I have been more industrious, or I possess a brighter mind than others. Therefore its possessor is proud, and exalts himself above others. So likewise that religion which is gained by the effort of men, whether it be by a vain philosophy, or by the observance of forms and rituals, or that form of it which consists in outward morality, always puffs one up, as though he were better than another. This is all held by the God of heaven in utter abhorrence. It is a curse to its possessor. It is especially a curse to that believer who is ensnared by it. James warns his brethren to beware of it. Its fruits can be only evil continually.

On the other hand, there is a wisdom which it is good for a man to have. The people of God desire to know whether they do indeed possess it. James therefore describes its nature and character. He does this in the text which we have quoted at the beginning of this letter. First, it is declared that this wisdom is from above; that is, it is of God, and by revelation, and received as such by those of childlike mind. It is a wisdom hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes. It is heavenly in its origin, and in its nature. It humbles its possessor, and is to the exaltation of its giver. By this we may know whether we have this wisdom: are we humbled by it, or are we disposed to exalt ourselves on account of it?

Now, being "from above it is first pure." Let us notice especially that the inspired apostle uses the word "first," and this he does not merely to place this word first in the order of the sentence, but to state the fact that purity is its chief qualification. The other things named, such as peaceable and gentle, are of great importance, and good to contemplate, but still the first and chief thing to be noted about this wisdom is its purity. And not only would we say this, but also would add that this wisdom is "peaceable," merciful, "and full of good fruits," only because it is pure. As stated above, earthly wisdom is like the earth, impure, and therefore full of strife, and debate, and all other evil things. Now this heavenly wisdom has no taint of earth in it, it is "pure" in every sense of the word. This wisdom is such as is free from legality, and the pharisaical pride, and self-righteousness, which goes hand in hand with legality, it is pure from all the vain glory of all earthly wisdom, as said before, it holds to the pure truth of the word, it has right views of God and of his salvation. This wisdom, if given to any man, will produce this purity of faith, and worship, and desire in him. Indeed, it is alone through the mortal flesh of its subjects that it can manifest of what sort it is. It does not tend, in that man where it dwells, to envy, and jealousy, and contention, except for the truth revealed to it, and that contention will be not in the way of debate so much as it will be in simple bearing witness to what has been revealed. In that man who possesses this pure wisdom there will be a holding fast first to that which is pure in doctrine, then in experience, and in the daily walk which should characterize the believer. Let it not be forgotten that this wisdom is first of all pure.

Then, that is after this, and as a result of this, it is "peaceable." This wisdom has revealed that peace which Jesus made

by the blood of his cross. It has wrought peace in the soul that believes in Jesus, by showing that one his justification through the blood of the cross. It has come into the soul, and subdued to itself the affections, causing its rebellion to cease, and bringing to it reconciliation to God, and to his truth, and to his way of righteousness and salvation. It has assured that soul of full forgiveness and salvation for sinners, and filled him with all joy and peace in believing, as the apostle testifies. Now all this experience in the wisdom of God works a peaceable disposition in that man. It is in him to desire to fulfill the apostolic injunction to as much as in him lies, live peaceably with all men. But still this peaceable living must be along the lines of revealed truth, and in harmony with it. That very man who is filled with this spirit of peace, and because he is filled with it, *must* contend earnestly for the faith which has been revealed to him, and in him. It is not peace with the wicked, or with wickedness, with false teachers, or with falsehood that dwells in him. This peace does not mean condoning sin, or falsehood, saying, Peace, peace, where there is no peace. Yet this peace does not seek a quarrel with any; he who possesses it, seeks the good of all; he desires that all with whom he comes in contact may prosper, if it be God's will. Such an one is not given to using hard words, when men oppose themselves, but rather entreaty. It leads its possessor to move among his fellow men as one who loves them, and who would benefit them if he could. This man will stand by the truth, but he will be kind in doing so. In the church this wisdom will lead to seeking for the things that make for peace, but it will well assure its possessor that the things which make for peace are the things which pertain to truth and righteousness. This wisdom will not call evil good, and good evil, in order to save contention; it will not leave the field when assailed, in order that the sound of warfare may not be heard; it will not indeed contend for mere words, or for vain reasonings, but it will contend for the teachings of the Bible, and for that which it has tasted and handled of the word of life, for in this is the very ground of lasting peace.

Another characteristic of this wisdom is, it is "gentle." Harshness does not become a believer. When it is exhibited it is evident that true wisdom does not at least then reign there. The gentleness of the Savior will have been so felt in that heart that it will produce there all gentleness toward all others. Paul was gentle to his brethren, as a nurse to her children. A nurse must sometimes oppose the whims and fretfulness and disobedience of her children, and will in so doing sometimes seem hard to them, but yet if she be a true nurse, all will be done in gentleness of manner and of feeling. So the true wisdom in us will produce a gentle manner, even toward offenders, and those who deny the truth. This gentleness is perfectly consistent with firmness and decision of word and deed. It grows out of the spirit to pity, rather than blame, to regard errors not so much as sins, but rather as misfortunes. Because that soul knows the exceeding gentleness of God toward itself, it can but be gentle to others also. The purity of this wisdom is set forth in its very gentleness.

It is "easy to be entreated." Of this we need only say, When offense has occurred, and one because of the offense is righteously angry, (for there is such a thing as a righteous anger, as well as anger

that is unrighteous,) yet the wisdom which is from above will cause that that one will not long resist any entreaty to forgive, and let the breach be healed. So much has been forgiven to him, that he must be ready also to forgive others. To this the wisdom of which James writes, always leads. One who when offended is stubborn in his anger, shows not this wisdom, at least it is not now reigning in his outward conduct. What a lovely description of this wisdom: "easy to be entreated."

"Full of mercy and good fruits." Because this wisdom reveals the mercy of God to a sinner, and also his great need of that mercy, it produces the grace of mercy toward others who have need. How can any one realize his own need of mercy, and then the greatness of the mercy revealed to him in his salvation, without being compelled by that very experience to feel and to exhibit mercy toward others? Therefore this divine wisdom is said to be full of mercy. The good fruits we need not now dwell upon. We will just say that they embrace all the fruits of the Spirit, which are love, with every other heavenly grace. In every respect these fruits are the opposite of that which is seen in the wisdom which is from below.

And as a conclusion of this wonderful description, the apostle adds "without partiality, and without hypocrisy." That is, it is not swayed by worldly considerations in its love to the brotherhood, and in its conduct toward them. It does not say to the man with a gold ring and broidered apparel, Come up hither, and to the man in plain apparel, Sit down there. The fellowship of this wisdom knows no poverty nor riches, no high estate nor low estate, no race, color or condition in life, and is affected by none of these things. The wisdom which is of the earth does take account of and is swayed by all these things. So far as a child of God is moved by partiality, he is under the influence of the wisdom which is earthly and not heavenly. Such an one needs rebuke, and sooner or later he shall find that the way of the transgressor is hard.

This wisdom is also sincere; it professes no more than it feels; it does not profess fellowship where it does not feel it, and it does not withhold such expression where it does feel it; it is a single minded wisdom, having no ulterior object in view. Those who are actuated by it are plain, simple in manner and in word and deed, and open and frank in all their dealings with those who are among them. True wisdom has nothing to conceal. It "is first pure." All that is contrary to this plainness and honesty is of the flesh, and partakes of the wisdom which is from below.

How heart-searching are these words, and how often the child of God will feel to greatly desire this pure wisdom, and yet fear that he does not possess it, even in a small measure. But on the other hand, he who possesses it not has no such fears, nor any such desires. He does not see the beauty of this wisdom, and has no longing for it therefore.

In conclusion we will say, we have need to put on this heavenly wisdom in all out conduct, and in all our speech, but above all, we have need of its exercise in our hearts. If it be in lively exercise within, then it will not be hard to exhibit it in what we say and do. But this wisdom cannot be put on unless it be reigning within. O, for more of its reigning power to be felt within.

F. A. CHICK, Moderator.

ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Tuscarora Church, Juniata Co., Pa., to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greetings.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We are glad to say to you that we are having a pleasant meeting, the Lord has seen fit to give us pleasant weather, and to send us a goodly number of his ministers, laden with the blessed gospel of Jesus our Savior, and we feel that he has graciously given us an ear to hear, and so our hearts are made glad by the manifestation of his goodness to us this once more, and may he give us ever to remember all his benefits, for all good things come from him.

Our next association is to be held, the Lord willing, with the Harford Church, Harford Co., Md., in May, 1902, when and where we hope to again meet your messengers, and receive your messages of love and fellowship, which we greatly appreciate.

WM. GRAFTON, Moderator.
MILTON DANCE, Clerk.

MEMORIALS.

WE desire as an Association to record upon our Minutes an expression of our sorrow at the death of our dear brother, **Elder Wm. L. Beebe.**

Though he was a member, and for many years Moderator, of the Warwick Association, yet he was a constant attendant upon the sessions of this Association for many years, and at times a visitor among our churches. All of us loved him as a good man, a loving brother in Christ, and a true minister of the gospel. Many among us have rejoiced under the presentation of the precious things of the kingdom of God which had been so richly made known to him. The Lord had been pleased to lead him deeply into the mystery of godliness, and thus he was profitable to many souls, in his ministry. Beside this, in him was fulfilled the apostolic injunction to carefulness in maintaining good works. We mourn the loss of a brother beloved, yet we cannot question that while to him to live was Christ, to die was gain. We desire to extend an expression of our sympathy to the Warwick Association, the church at Warwick, where he was for nearly twenty years pastor, and to his bereaved family.

ALSO,

WE desire to send a similar expression of regard for the memory of **Elder Wm. Pollard,** who after many years of faithful service in the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, and at times elsewhere in the cause of his Master, has during the past year been called to his reward. We feel to truly sympathize with our brethren in Canada, and with his family, in their sore loss. In former years he had visited this Association a few times, and then won a place in our regard that has never lessened. He was a firm and able preacher of the doctrine of God our Savior. The Lord had revealed his truth in him, and he spoke what he had seen and known. We sorrow that we shall see his face no more. We rejoice that with him now abides perfect rest. He has entered into the joy of his Lord.

WM. GRAFTON, Moderator.
MILTON DANCE, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

AGAIN has the hand of the Lord been laid heavily on us, and we are made to feel it very deeply. **James Leonard Best,** our daughter's little boy, 6 years old, after suffering twenty-five days, passed to his eternal rest on the 13th day of May, 1901. He had a very active mind, always appearing to be in a study, never laughing and playing like children in general.

I am reminded so much of late of an expression of my son's, made a few days before he was taken sick, after the death of an old neighbor: "Who will be the next?" Yes, who will? May the Lord have mercy and give us a heart of reconciliation to his holy and righteous will. The Lord hath given, and he hath taken to himself again. I hope and desire that we all may feel to bless his holy name and say, Thy will, not mine, be done. He knoweth all our needs, and will supply them all.

I inclose slip taken from County paper, the editor being well acquainted with him:

"The home of Dr. C. S. Best is bathed in sadness, sincerely shared in by all our people, by reason of the death of his son Leonard, a bright little fellow of six and a half years of age. Some four weeks ago he was taken sick with pneumonia, which developed into typhoid form, and latterly into peritonitis, which resulted in death at 5:15 Monday morning. All that a brave little heart could bring to assist recovery, and all that the best of medical skill could suggest and perform, was brought into requisition, but of no avail, and under the terrible strain the brave little fellow

gave up his life. Leonard's was one of the brightest minds we ever knew in a child. An old head on young shoulders, he knew and understood far beyond his years, and nothing escaped investigation by him. His ideas of even business concerns were wonderful in a child, and his generous little heart cast sunshine wherever he went. In the home he was the dispenser of love and good cheer, and his genial loving nature had become so thoroughly entwined in the heart-strings of the family circle, that memories will linger in fond reveries of the few years he was permitted to teach of love, purity and joy. Our deepest sympathy to the family in this their sore distress. The funeral was Wednesday afternoon."

Yours in bonds of christian love and fellowship,

D. M. LEONARD.

SISTER **Josephine Hays** was born in Saline Co., Mo., May 25th, 1844, and departed this life April 14th, 1901. She was the daughter of Elder James Rivis. She was married to Z. T. Hays, October, 1863. To this union eight children were born, six boys and two girls, the girls dying while small, but the boys are all grown and married but one. Sister Hays united with the Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church at Charity, in Johnson Co., Mo., in which church she remained until death; she was strong in the faith she professed, and relied solely on God for all she hoped for in this world, and in the one to come. She was gifted in singing, and she delighted in exercising that gift in praising her God. We certainly feel the loss of another loved one taken from the church below, to join the number that have gone before, and may God, who is good, fill all vacancies by his grace, and reconcile us to every dispensation of his will, is my prayer, and may his goodness and mercy be given in double portion to brother Hays and his dear children, whose loss is greater than all the rest. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

ALSO,

Miss Maggie Adams was born in Johnson Co., Mo, March 12th, 1866, and died May 15th, 1901, on the same farm where she was born. She hardly knew what it was to enjoy earth's blessings, as she was afflicted all her life. She never made a public profession of Jesus, but those that know the deep secret workings of the Spirit of God in the heart, and its influence, felt to say, surely she had been with Jesus, and learned how to possess that meek and quiet spirit that is so lovely in those that possess it. Maggie was a good girl, always ready to help the oppressed when in her power. Her life and character was such that naught could be said against it, but she was loved and esteemed by all her associates. Just one month from the day I tried to preach sister Hay's funeral, I tried to preach Maggie's, after which we laid her body in the same yard, to await the great resurrection day, when we hope to meet and praise his dear name in eternity. May the grace of God sustain the bereft family, is the prayer of the unworthy writer,

J. T. BARNES.

John Clark, my dear husband, departed this life at the Columbus hospital, Nebraska, on Friday morning, April 19th, 1901. He was born in Delaware Co., Ohio, August 28th, 1834, and lived in Ohio until 1884, when he came to Nebraska, buying a farm on which he lived till three years ago, when on account of his failing health we moved to town. He has been a member of the Predestinarian Baptist Church for the last twenty-five years. He was married to Miss Emeline Wright, about forty-five years ago. Three children blessed this union. His first wife died in 1889, and in 1891 he was married to the writer. He leaves two daughters, one son, two step-sons and one step-daughter, three brothers, three sisters, and his companion, to mourn their loss. He had been a great sufferer for over two years, and as he was getting worse, he was at last taken to the hospital in hope that some relief could be found there. After he had undergone a surgical operation, we were in hope he would get along all right, but he never got over the shock, and was unconscious most of the time, and lived but one week. His remains were brought up from Columbus, Friday afternoon; the casket was opened at the station, and many friends viewed his face for the last time, after which we followed his lifeless body to Evergreen Cemetery, where it was deposited. Mr. Clark requested that there be no services held, so we done as he wished. My loss is deeply felt.

ANNA M. CLARK.

Lucinda Campbell died May 16th, 1901, after a short spell of sickness. She was born in New York, April 21st, 1807, and lived near Columbus, Ohio, the most of her life; came to Illinois in the fall of 1862; was married in 1825, to William Campbell, who died seven years ago last January. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church early in life. Eight children survive her. She was a member of the Big Spring Church, Cumberland Co., Ill., and was a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and earnestly contended for it. Her maiden name was Lucinda Reed. She was 94 years of age the 21st day of April, 1901.

The writer was called on to preach her funeral, after which she was laid away in the cemetery near Greenup, Ill., there to await the second coming of her Savior. The writer also preached her husband's funeral, who never united with the church, but was a strong believer. They both filled the measure of their days, which were many, and have entered into their rest.

ISAAC TAYLOR.

DIED—**Jennie Hill,** in the 62d year of her age, on Friday morning, May 3d, 1901, at the residence of her brother-in-law, B. F. Coulter, 1910 N. Twenty-Second St., Philadelphia, Pa. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Welsh Tract Church, in Delaware, by Elder A. B. Francis, Dec. 19th, 1869, where she remained a consistent and faithful member until July 29th, 1893, when she was received by letter into the fellowship of the Salem Baptist Church, of Philadelphia. Her last days (although full of intense suffering) were bright with the hope of so soon entering into that haven of rest which her soul longed for. She was peacefully laid away in the old Welsh Tract Cemetery. Elder F. A. Chick preached a comforting discourse at the house, on Sunday evening, and also at the meeting-house, on Monday.

B. F. COULTER.

DIED—My wife, **Rebecca Heard,** the daughter of Page and Maler Baker. She was born Feb. 3d, 1851. We were married in 1867. She died April 1st, 1901. We moved to Marshall Co., near Hudsonville, Miss., and continued there until 1875. She united by baptism with the Baptist church called Zion's Mount. She was the oldest child of her mother. There were two sisters of them; her sister was at her bedside, and saw the end of life with her. She rejoiced much before the end came, and told me she was going home to heaven.

Elder Owing preached at her funeral, using the text, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." She left many friends to mourn their loss.

THOMAS HARRIS.

MY husband, **James W. Bowie,** died April 8th, 1901, in the 68th year of his age. He was taken with the "la grippe" in January, and grdually failed until the end. He often expressed a desire to depart and be at rest. He was a kind and loving husband, tender and faithful. He loved the doctrine of predestination, and had a good hope through grace.

His funeral services were conducted at his late home, by Elder E. V. White, after which we laid him to rest, and sang that good old hymn, "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep."

MARTHA E. BOWIE.

MEETINGS.

THE Mill Creek Church of Old School Baptists will hold their yearly meeting on Saturday before, and the third Sunday in June, (15th and 16th) 1901. Those coming will take the Traction car to New Burlington, where they will be met and conveyed to place of meeting. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of gospel truth to meet with us.

WM. V. SATER, Clerk.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, will meet, the Lord willing, with the Sugar Creek Church, on Friday, August 30th, 1901, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue three days, at Table Grove, on the St. Louis branch of the C., B. & Q. R. R. Trains will be met at the grove on Thursday. No trains will be met Friday except the early trains from Reardstown. All are invited, especially brethren in the ministry.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

A YEARLY meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the Clovesville Old School Baptist Church, of the Lexington Association, the first Saturday and Sunday in July, (7th and 8th) 1901. A cordial invitation is extended to ministers and brethren and sisters, and all lovers of the truth, to meet with us. Those coming by rail will be met at Fleischmann's, on the Ulster & Delaware R. R.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Shohola Creek Church will have a two days meeting, the Lord willing, Tuesday and Wednesday, July 16th and 17th, 1901. Trains will be met on Monday, 15th, at Shohola station, Erie R. R., with conveyances to the meeting, which is five miles from station. A cordial invitation is extended to all desiring to meet with us. Should any one desire to come Tuesday morning, drop a card to Nicholas Hess, Shohola, Pike Co., Pa.

D. M. VAIL.

THE yearly meeting of the Buelah Old School Baptist Church, of Canada, will be held, the Lord willing, at the usual place, Aughrim school-house, in the township of Brooke, Lambton, Co., Ontario, five miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1901, and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 69. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1901. NO. 13.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"IN CHRIST SHALL ALL BE MADE ALIVE."

(1 CORINTHIANS XV. 22.)

"FOR as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

Inspiration reveals the truth and the work of God. Not one word of all that he has declared shall fail. The reason is, the Holy One is the I AM, the Almighty. Both in wisdom and power the Most High is unlimited. With him is absolute sovereignty. In all his attributes God is limitless, perfect and sovereign. To deny this is a denial of both his sovereignty and his Godhead.

It is an absolute truth, therefore, that the omnipotence of the Almighty is equal to and co-extensive with his omniscience. So not one thing of all that God hath spoken shall fail to come to pass. For his power is infinitely above and greater than all other powers. His kingdom ruleth over all, and his dominion subjects all beings and things to his "eternal purpose." This was fully proved in the person of his incarnate Son, whose voice at once subdued and controlled all creatures and things to whom he spoke, whether animate or inanimate, raving devils and men, warring seas and winds, hopeless maladies and remorseless death, all yielded at once to his simple word. Jesus spoke but once, the Lord makes no efforts—never tries. Of himself he says, "I will." To his people he says, "You shall." "He speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast." "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass: and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." This is our God, the God of Israel his people, the Lord God omnipotent. He is the Rock, his work is perfect. He is our refuge, our salvation, our defense. O how safe and good it is to be sheltered under his almighty wing!

How fearful and woeful to us is our relationship in Adam! Our whole lifetime in the flesh is but the realization and experience of the solemn fact that we are in Adam. Here we sow in tears. Thorns and thistles abound. All the mighty works of merciful power which Jesus wrought, blessedly healing all the afflicted and raising up the dead, were overcoming and removing the ruin that is ours in Adam. So all these gracious miracles of the second man are typical of

his mighty work of redemption. To his wondering disciples he said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." "And thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."

Salvation, therefore, is the work of Jesus—the salvation of his people. They are his people in every dear and sacred relation and meaning of the term "his people;" yet they are sinners. The text shows that their sins and death are because they are in Adam. Therefore they are born of the flesh, and are flesh. So Jesus taught. All in Adam die. Here none are exempt. "By man came death." "Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." All sinned in the one man Adam. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." "For the wages of sin is death." "That as sin hath reigned unto death." All this solemn fact is positive and absolute, unconditional and irresistible. This is the dominion of sin by man and in Adam. "There is no discharge in that war." "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

Whence, then, cometh obedience and righteousness, salvation and life? Not from Adam, nor from any who are in Adam, nor from the flesh; for in the flesh dwelleth no good thing, said Paul. Jesus, who spake as no other man, makes a clear distinction between "that which is born of the flesh," and "that which is born of the Spirit;" for he says the one "is flesh," and the other "is spirit." Therefore, that we may have life and obedience, righteousness and salvation, we must be in Christ. It is a divine mystery, not known to the wise of the world, that we who now dwell in the flesh are in Christ Jesus and he lives in us. Paul thus states this truth: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." All this we need, and need it because "in Adam all die;" but this is all we need and shall receive. Our God has made his and our Christ all this to us, and it is of the Father that we are in Christ. Chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and blessed in him with all spiritual blessings according as we were chosen in him. This choice and these blessings are positive and sure, therefore, because they were vouchsafed to all the chosen of God in Christ before the world was. This blessed fact places all spiritual blessings infinitely above every conditional principle and basis, and secures them to us, "not according to our works" or obedience, but according to God's choice. And since all spiritual blessings were given us in Christ according as God hath chosen us in him, these blessings are no more conditional or contingent on our part than the choice itself. And more than all spiritual blessings we do not need nor shall ever receive. Where, then, is there any place or need for conditional spiritual blessings? And since all spiritual blessings are ours in Christ according to the will and choice of God, why should it be thought that God bestows them upon us according to our will and choice? In this connection Paul goes on and says, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." In all this way of life and salvation unto sinners, the sovereign

choice and pleasure and power of God supremely prevail, and all "according to the riches of his grace." In the wisdom and love of God he ordained it thus, because "so it seemed good in his sight," and he saw that there was no other way that would glorify him and bring them into the blessing of life.

"In Christ shall all be made alive." But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." The clause "in Christ," qualifies and limits the "all" that shall be made alive. It is because they are in Christ that they shall be made alive. None who are not in Christ shall be made alive. All die in Adam because they are in him. They could not die in Adam unless they first lived or had their being in him. When a living tree dies, all in it die, because the life of the tree is the life of all its members. So it is with all in Adam. "Even so shall all in Christ be made alive." In Christ is perfect obedience, holiness and life. So all in him shall be made righteous by his obedience. All sin and death shall be separated from them, and they shall be perfected in the holiness and life of Christ. His unfailing word to them is, "Because I live, ye shall live also." "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." This one falls asleep in Christ, but is not dead. For in Christ is no sin nor unrighteousness nor death, but righteousness and life and peace. The sin and curse and death are in Adam—in our mortal flesh. So for the sins of his people Christ was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, to die no more. Thus our risen Lord made an end of sin, and abolished death, for his people.

In his resurrection Christ was the first-born from the dead among many brethren. "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept." He was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Now, all that Christ is in holiness and life and power, he is all this to all in him, and they shall know the power of his resurrection, shall be perfectly conformed to his divine image, and shall know the glory of his ascension into heaven. All this is by the power of the Lord God Almighty and the riches of his grace.

The death of all in Adam is the time present—"all die;" but the text and its connection show clearly that the resurrection unto the life in Christ, of all who sleep in him, is in the future time—"shall all be made alive."

"We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." In our mortal flesh we cannot thus see the glorified man Christ Jesus. John was given a glimpse of him in his glory; but he said, "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead." Paul said, "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. * * * For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." For this the holy Son of God prayed, saying, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou

lovedst me before the foundation of the world." "Afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." When they die in Adam, at the dissolution of their mortal man or body, they fall asleep in Christ, and in him they shall be made alive when he shall come the second time without sin unto salvation. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." This will be the perfect fulfillment of the Lord's prayer for us, and we shall be with him where he is and behold his glory. "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." "Have borne," is past, "shall also bear," is to come. We now bear the image of Adam after the outward man, and the image of Jesus after the inward man; so we now, in part, bear the image of the two heads, the earthy and the heavenly. But God has predestinated his foreknown and chosen people to be entirely conformed to the image of his Son, whom he raised up from the dead. This good work of grace in us shall be gloriously finished in us when we shall receive the adoption, for which we now wait in hope, "to wit, the redemption of our body." This will be our change, of which Paul says, "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory! The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Then, O *then!* "in Christ shall all be made alive." "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." The infinite and almighty wisdom and power of God in Christ Jesus our risen and glorified Redeemer shall gloriously triumph in the fulfillment of all this great and wonderful mystery of godliness, according to his own will, notwithstanding the opposition of all the wicked, who hate God and his sovereign power, and the unbelief of some of his own people. "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself." Paul again says, "For our conversation" (our citizenship and inheritance) "is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." In the divine assurance of this faith and hope, afflicted Job said, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." And David said, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." So shall we all.

Hoping to "attain unto the resurrection of the dead," yours in Jesus,

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., March 27, 1901.

PROPHETSTOWN, Ill., Jan. 30, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have been requested by a dear sister to write you the way I was led to know that the salvation of man is of the Lord. It is written in the book of Isaiah ix. 6, 7, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."

O, how precious are the gifts of a sovereign God to fallen man. We are the creatures of his care; he sent the light to shine in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.

In beginning my story about this marvelous light shining into the heart of lost and sinful man, my mind is carried back to a scene when I was a little child not many months over three years old, it being the only thing I seem to remember at that age. It was at the meeting-house of the Old School Baptists in Olive, N. Y. I remember sitting on my mother's lap, and afterward on the seat. My eyes seemed riveted on the minister, and after the sermon he came down from the pulpit and began breaking bread, the emblem of the bruised and crushed body of the Lord Jesus; also pouring out the wine, the emblem of his blood so freely shed for the sins of his people. My parents were members at that time, and when the deacon passed the cup to mother she looked down at her child and then at the deacon, mother-like, as if asking if it would be right to give it a sip, but the deacon shook his head. Then of course it appeared it would be wrong for me to taste. That must have been the first dawn of the bright and glorious day of the Lord. I do not remember any other events connected with my early days in regard to the progress of the light growing in my heart till I was old enough to read the Bible and other books. The Bible and Pilgrim's Progress were always interesting to me, and when visiting my young friends I would hunt around the house for the last named book, although told by them that it was nothing but an old dream. To me it seemed a revelation from God, put by him in the form of a dream. Now in reading of the creation of the world, and then the destruction by flood of all but Noah and his family, because he called on the name of the Lord by reason of the sin of the people, and found favor with God, it began to be plain to me that I was always a sinner, and that I must begin to do something to gain the favor of the great God of the universe. So I read very carefully the law of Moses, and did really think I would have to live in that way to gain the favor of God. But where is the man, I would think, to teach me to do them? Surely, I thought, there must be some person somewhere, who understood these things, and then I would think I was too young to do them, and would try to put away the feeling, and think of other things, but very often my thoughts would return to God and his greatness. Then I began to fear I would not grow to be a man to do these things. So my trouble grew from day to day. My thoughts

would be on God, and I desired to become good and be found in his favor. Often when my parents and the others would go to church I would ask to stay at home alone so I might read the Bible and pray in my childish way to God, for I began to see that I was a great sinner, far from God, and no way to find favor with him but through the law of Moses. All this was yet when I was very young, under thirteen years, and attending school about six months a year. As I grew older my trouble became worse, and my sins worse. Often I thought I did not care to live, and would seek death to hide myself from God and his wrath. But I was very careful to hide all my sufferings from every one. Many mornings, after lying awake all night, thinking of my lost condition, my pillow would be wet with tears, and I would take the precaution of turning it over, so that my sister should not see it when making the bed. In about my twelfth year my trouble and exercise of mind came oftener, and I was led to read of the coming of John the Baptist; how he preached in the wilderness, "The axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast in the fire."

I remember well one day I delayed starting for school till after all had gone, for that morning I wanted to be alone to meditate of my God. It was a most lovely morning in the month of June. There was a stretch of woods on the road to school, and about half way through I had laid a flat rock on which to kneel and there try to offer up myself to God, for I thought I must have some form, like Abraham and the prophets of old. When I came to that place everything in nature was so fair and beautiful, but I was feeling in such distress of soul that I thought I would never be permitted to reach the school-house. I must stop there once more to pray God for his mercy. As I knelt on the rock it seemed that I was such an awful sinner that this would be my last, God would take no notice of me, and it seemed I would sink into the ground. I was so overcome with my dreadful condition I could say nothing. My mind was all taken away, and I became as it were dissolved in darkness. In a twinkling all things flew away, and I felt as though I were borne up from the earth, and instantly there was a brightness more than the sun, although it was shining in all its splendor. All things now seemed to be praising God. The trees, all covered with a brightness, were waving toward the tree at which I knelt. A great calmness and peace of mind settled over me, whether in myself or out I could not tell, but surely, I thought, this is the glory of God. Presently I arose and made my way into the road; as I went the great brightness seemed to pass away, but my sorrow was all gone; God was making the sufferings of Christ appear plain, for the remission of my sins; the love of God was revealed to my soul, and all things seemed new. Then a voice seemed to come with these words, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." And it surely seemed as if I was filled, for I felt so happy I could not stir from the spot, till all at once the tempter came as if from my heart, saying, "You are just imagining all this you have seen, and the voice you heard was your father's, who is behind the stone fence." I immediately got on the wall to see if any one was there, but though I saw no one, the doubt would not down, so strong was the impression that the voice was father's. I determined to satisfy myself, as I knew

where father was at work ploughing corn when I left the house. It was more than a hundred rods from where I then was, in the opposite direction from the voice I heard. I went back until I could see him at work, then I was satisfied it was not him. Then I thought it was none other than the voice of Jesus, for with the thought came again the words, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled," and now the whole sermon passed before my mind, and a great peace was with me. I thought, How can all this be: such a sinful creature as I saw myself to be a short time ago, when as it appeared I had done nothing to be worthy of all this peace and joy? I went in at the school and took my seat as usual with my back to the whole school. Joy and fear passed alternately through my mind, and I had to get away or expose myself to the school, so I got permission to go out till my mind was more settled.

Now, this was on one of the meeting days of the church, and I had a great desire to tell what the Lord had done for me, and as at noon some of the old church members passed by I thought first I would ask them if I might not go along, but something held me back, although now it seemed as if I must follow my Lord in all his commandments. It was plain to me now that Jesus had fulfilled all the law, and magnified it. The thirty-fifth chapter of Isaiah tells a great deal of my experience.

Dear brother, I have written more than I intended, perhaps some time I may again take up the narrative. I was born in Olive, N. Y., Sept. 24th, 1831, so you see my days are nearly numbered. I still feel to rejoice in the finished work of him who could look in mercy on a dying thief and say the loving words, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

Dear brother Beebe, I have written this for publication, and if it will not crowd out other matter, put it in, or if you deem it unworthy a place, destroy it. I know it is like the writer, very imperfect. The SIGNS have been a great comfort to me ever since I was old enough to read them, and now, with my Bible, are all my religious comfort, my hearing being a thing of the past.

I know I am a sinner, and if saved at all it is by the grace of God, who first loved us, and gave his Son for the ransom of his people.

Yours in hope of everlasting life,

HIRAM BOGART.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., April 12, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I herewith inclose extracts from letters received from our dear daughter Goldie, now attending school at Pleasant Plains, Ill. She has been in deep exercise of mind since she went there, and at our earnest solicitation to express her mind freely to us she has written the inclosed at intervals to us. It was a source of deep sorrow and rejoicing. A few words in a letter previous to these, told us of the awful depths of gloom and utter despair she was in. I felt assured it was of the Lord, and the end would be peace. I feel that I was given the spirit of prayer for her. As I awoke on the third Sunday morning at the home of sister Wright's, there was a prayer in my heart in her behalf, that she might know and rejoice in the truth as it is in Jesus, and the power of his love, and in that selfsame hour, though many miles away, she was truly made to rejoice in a Savior's love. Do I do wrong in speaking of this? it is surely of the Lord, and seems to us marvelous indeed, and our souls have been filled with rejoicing. How

helpless and destitute are we all, but O, how good the tender loving-kindness of the Lord. May the dear Lord lead her and all the dear ones whom he hath favored with a good hope through grace, to walk humbly before him in love and obedience to his blessed commands. I submit this as well as the others to do with as you think best.

P. W. SAWIN.

PLEASANT PLAINS, Ill., March 18, 1901.

MY DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER:—As all nature is wrapped in sunshine, and there seems to be a solemn hush all over the earth, and to my soul, I am going to try to pen a few lines to my loved ones.

This morning when I arose from my bed and looked out upon the earth, my eyes seemed drawn heavenward, and as I fastened my eyes upon the blue realms, a singular peacefulness took possession of me, and the tumult that has been tearing my very heart-strings asunder the past week, has all left me, and I feel such a joy, such a love of God and everything and everybody, that it is certainly a relief to my soul. I surely feel thankful for my calmness of soul, but how long it will last I do not know. Sometimes I am in the valley, the very depths of despair, and I feel ready to give up, then again I am lifted up to the mountain top, and I sing all the day long. All the past week I have been so discouraged with everything, and myself most of all. When I look at myself I do not see how any one can have a bit of confidence in me, such a good for nothing girl as I am. But it has always been one of my greatest desires to love and be loved, and I do really believe that my friends, or at least some of them, love me, but if they knew me as I know myself, they could not do so, such a mean, despisable creature as I. Yes, papa dear, God is very near me, and without him I know I could not do anything, in fact life would not be worth living. Sometimes I feel like an outcast, and am doing no good anywhere, but I turn to our Father in heaven for guidance and comfort, and he helps me.

Monday a. m.—I did not get to finish my letter yesterday, I went to the Methodist Church in the evening; they are holding a protracted meeting here, led by the Salvation Army; there are six of them. Of course they have a right to their belief as well as any one else, but it looks to me like a mockery. They use tambourines, guitars and banjos, for music. They do try to get up an excitement. The girls go out in the congregation and ask the people if they want to be christians. "Ensign Hale" came to me and asked several questions, and finally asked me if I did not want to be converted? I told him no, not that way. Some people go there out of curiosity, and to make fun, but as for me, I think it is too serious a matter, and although I never expect to belong to the Methodist church, yet I do respect their belief and them, as I have been taught, but I am not a believer in their doctrines, or ways of getting people in the church, all through excitement. I do not believe in salvation by works, nor by just having your name on the church book, but I do believe in salvation by grace, and it is all through the mercy of our God.

But I must close for this time. Pray for your little girl, for she is in great need of it hourly, and may God bless you, my dear parents and little sister.

Lovingly your GOLDIE.

Writing under date of March 24th, in answer to ours in reply to hers of the 18th, she writes as follows:

MY PRECIOUS FATHER AND MOTHER:—Again I will employ a few hours of the

Sabbath in writing to you, and how I wish I could talk to you instead of writing. How nice it would be to curl up in your arms and talk to you. You cannot imagine how much good your dear letters did me. I was longing for a word of comfort to my poor, worthless soul, and the good you did me you can never know. I know no one on earth could have helped me when I was brought down to the very depths of despair, and it was then I learned to pray to our Father. My first words were, "God help me," "God be merciful to me, a poor worm of the dust." Mother darling, you ask me how long I have been exercised in regard to this matter? For more than three years have I been worried in regard to it, but at times I could throw it off, and again I would be made to cry out for help. But I tried to ward it off, and although I loved to hear the word of God spoken, and loved to hear the dear children of God converse about such sweet things, yet when it came to a personal matter, I did not want any one to say anything about it to me, and when dear uncle Isaac wrote such a sweet letter to me about two years ago, I wanted to answer it, but I feared some one would find it out, and I did not want any one to know of my helpless condition. I kept going on from bad to worse, and I often felt like I must tell some one, and of course you would have been first. I remember when the time for Bethel meeting would come it was certainly a time of rejoicing, and when I was seated in the church and looked over those dear saints of God, a longing to be one of them would take possession of me, and I could scarcely refrain following in the footsteps of some of those that were buried beneath the water in baptism, and then a sense of my unworthiness and the voice of the tempter would say, "How can you deceive those people?" and I would return home, not one of those dear ones, but still clinging to that one blessed hope of God. Many hours have I lain awake at night trying to think what I should do, but I am still in the dark as much as ever, and only once in a while does a ray of light shine upon me, and then there is such a calmness of my soul. Cannot you, dear papa, tell me what to do? God only knows what I am, what my heart is. I carry all my burdens and cares to him, for I know that he alone can relieve me. Last night the girls and myself went to church, and the preacher ridiculed the Old Baptists. There arose in my heart a spirit of malice and revengefulness toward him, and I prayed, yes, I hope earnestly prayed, that it should be taken from my heart. I wish to bear hatred to no one, but I know I can do nothing without the help of God. O, it is such a comfort to take all my troubles to him who heareth all things. What a precious hope I have in Christ; without that hope life would be worth but very little. I am happy at times in the love of God, his love is very precious, and I could not do without it, but sometimes my weak, sinful self comes up before me, and I am miserable. It is comforting to know that you can sympathize with me, and I know you do, for you have experienced the same trouble.

But it is late, and I must close.

Your loving daughter, GOLDIE.

March 29th.

My Precious Father and Mother and Little Sister:—Your dear letters were received to-day, and it is needless to say I was glad to hear from you; you can never know how much good your letters do me. It is plain to be seen why your letters comfort me, but how mine comfort you I cannot understand. As I

walked home from the post-office, reading your letters on the way, I actually would stop in wonderment, and try to think how my letters could comfort you. Yes, dear father, the Old Baptist Church is the one of my choice, but I feel like it would be deceiving those dear people for me to join that church; they do not know me, I am too unworthy. I often think, "'Tis a point I long to know," &c. Indeed it is a point I long to know; I feel that I do love the Lord, but am I his, or am I not? I have already felt a desire that the Old Baptist Church would be my home, and a peaceful and happy one, but I am too unworthy, too vile and prone to sin, to belong to a church where there are such dear people.

Hoping you may always pray for your child, your loving daughter and sister,

GOLDIE.

EUCLID, Ohio, April 1, 1901.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose a letter written by dear Elder McGlade after his return home from a visit to Cleveland, Ohio. His preaching was applied to our hearts with power, and the love and fellowship that filled our hearts while listening to the precious words as they fell from his lips, will last while life remains. O, the sweetness of the love and fellowship felt in the hearts of the Lord's dear little ones, who are tried, for they come up out of great tribulation, and their robes are washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. How I love to hear the name of Jesus exalted above every other name; how I love to hear the sovereignty of God proclaimed; how it lifts my poor heart up, and makes me rejoice in his wisdom, love and power. I rejoice in the knowledge that he does work all things after the counsel of his own will, and that none can let or hinder. I cannot believe in a God who can be disappointed, but do believe that all things obey his sovereign will. I can safely say that my nature is always in opposition to, and rebellious against his most holy will, and would if left to my own choice, choose the path that leads to death. Therefore I cannot believe in nor advocate a conditional time salvation. I feel assured if left to myself one little moment, my willing feet would follow after that which is most pleasing to nature, and contrary to God. This is my experience, and the question with me is, Am I ever in the strait and narrow way? Surely never unless my feet are placed there by the God of all power and grace, and they must be kept there by that same power. He places the desire in the heart which causes us in all sincerity to cry,

"Only thou our leader be
And we still will follow thee."

If it meets with your approval, I would be glad to see Elder McGlade's letter in the SIGNS, for to us it seemed a precious letter, and these few lines are at your disposal to do with as you think best.

Your sister in hope,

JENNIE O. CROSS.

WAGRAM, Ohio, Jan. 24, 1901.

DEAR SISTER CROSS AND HUSBAND:—Thinking that you might care to know of my return home, I am impressed to write you a line to-day. I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed my visit with you all, I do not know that I ever before met such a band of the Lord's children. I never met any who showed a more real genuine affection for the word, and devotion to the cause which the good Lord has laid so near to your hearts. While with you all there in that little room I felt as though we were all there was in the

world, shut in as it were, and our minds upon spiritual things. To see you all sing so earnestly made my heart glad, and caused me to give thanks to our adorable Redeemer for the evidence of his precious work in the hearts of his called ones. I was glad that it was in the providence of God that we should come together, and I am glad that I know and love that Providence, it is over all, and unto all his creatures, and especially it is to them that believe. This is not because they believe, as though he would pay them for believing, because their believing is his gift also. Faith is the gift of God. Our believing does not save us, but our believing is an evidence or manifestation of our salvation. We do not, we cannot write our names in the Lamb's book of life; if they are not there now, we cannot put them there; if they are there, nothing can erase or blot them out. Events do not just happen so, things do not go slipshod. In all the book of God's providence there is not one "if." To God there are no surprises, no disappointments, and no accidents. I should be completely wretched if I did not believe that all the affairs of my life are in the hands of God. You may ask me a hundred questions which I cannot answer, but I shall until the day of my death believe that I am under the unerring care of God, and the heavens may fall, and the world may burn, and the judgments of God may thunder, and eternal ages may roll, but not a hair shall fall from my head, not a shadow shall drop on my path, nor a sorrow transfix my heart, without having been divinely arranged, arranged by a living, sympathetic Father, who knows all our weakness, and who loved us in our rags, not for what we do or are, but for his great name's sake, and because it is according to the good pleasure of his unchangeable will. He will love whom he will love. It was God's will to love us before we were born, before we had done either good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand. It has always stood, still stands to-day, and will still stand in the incomprehensible omnipotence of the immutable God. Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that I should be brought into the knowledge of this glorious truth? What am I? Only a sinful worm, unworthy to be fed or to be made to sit together with his chosen ones, as it was on last Sunday, and share in the devotions of his people. My poor soul had been hungering and thirsting for years to see what my eyes saw there. I saw a band of the "called out," not by the brazen tongue of man, or a love of fame, but called out by that all-powerful still small voice which Elijah heard, Moses heard, Paul heard, and which I have hoped that at one time in my life I had heard, and rejoiced in with all my heart.

But I must close, you will be tired of me. I was not well at all when with you. On Sunday it was very difficult for me to speak, but I felt to keep it all to myself and wear it off, but on my way down to town I felt a chill, and had to let them know it. They were very good to me, and did all they could for me, so that I was able to get home. Afterwards I was in bed most of two days, but am much improved at present, and hope for ultimate recovery. I hope to see you all again soon, or whenever it is the will of God. You both, and all the dear brethren whose names I cannot remember, are dear to me. May you have the manifest presence of Jesus at your meeting on Sunday; may you bear with each other, and grow in grace and knowledge.

FRANK McGLADE.

SNYDER, Texas, April 3, 1901.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—The inclosed letter written by our beloved and faithful servant, Elder Staggs, contains some of the precious things of the everlasting kingdom of our God. It has been a comfort to me, as good news from a far country, therefore I feel that it would not be right to withhold such a rich dish of gracious truths from the readers of the SIGNS. As I have his consent I send it to you for publication. He does not say in so many words that he is a preacher, but I must tell on him and say he is.

Affectionately yours in gospel bonds,
ASA HOWARD.

ADELL, Texas, March 27, 1901.

ELDER ASA HOWARD—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—It is in much weakness that I attempt to fulfill my promise, which I now remember, that I would write to you. I do not feel worthy to write to any of the saints, and it is a cross to try to write to an Elder in Israel, but as you requested it I am assured you will bear with me in my weakness. I think many times of the last time we were together, and of the parting, and to us the uncertainty of ever meeting again in this life, and I think too how much and how foolishly I talked, and how much it must have tried your patience, as it certainly was only a dull chatter. But I reckon man at his best estate is vanity, and if so, I suppose his works are as imperfect as he is. But it is written to somebody, "Ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord." And James informs us that, "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." "Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

Brother Howard, I am thinking of the "every good gift," and it seems that faith, hope, repentance, and even the desire to walk in the commandments of the Lord, are some of the good gifts which God has and does graciously give to his people, and I think a gift cannot rest on any contingency whatever. Then all things whatsoever God does, is in wisdom and righteousness, and according to his own divine will, "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things." And so our apostle says, "By the grace of God I am what I am." And so Paul evidently believed this same doctrine of grace which you preach: the eternal sovereignty of the God of all comfort and everlasting consolation; the same God who said, I will bring the blind in a way they have not known; I will make rough places smooth, and crooked places straight before them; I will cause them to pass under the rod, and bring them into the bond of the covenant. All these things will he do for them, and not forsake them. How wonderful is Israel's God, and what a great and absolute sovereign is the mighty God of Jacob. While he leaves a poor and afflicted people, he says, "They shall trust in the name of the Lord." "I have blotted out as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud, thy sins. * * * I have redeemed thee. Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it." "I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things." Here is that afflicted and poor people, in

whose heart God has written his law and in whose mouth he has perfected praise, and when we begin to meditate, as much as we can, of what God is, and the one immutable mind, our finite minds are lost in confusion, and if we have a mind to meditate upon his infinite goodness to his people, we are brought in fellowship with Paul, and cry in the very depths of soul, "O the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." How happy are the people saved by the Lord, saved by grace, saved because it seemed good to him to save them. These afflicted people are in fellowship with Paul, and they believe and love the doctrine he preached, and so they go on, sometimes in the valley, and sometimes on the high mountains of Israel. Darkly beset with the big clouds of unbelief, but alternately, when ready to faint, they are cheered by the brighter evidences of their little hope. So with the big fears and little hope, they like their master learn obedience by the things they suffer; hoping for that they see not, and with patience waiting for it; having the desire to walk softly before the Lord, to know his will, and to do it; desiring the inheritance of the saints in light, willing to suffer tribulation for his great name; exalting the name of Jesus above every name, saying, Saved by grace, if saved at all, and singing,

"Grace all the work shall crown,
To everlasting days:
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

Hoping to hear from you, I am yours in weakness; farewell.

W. LEE STAGGS.

ROELLEN, Tenn., March 6, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars, for which give credit on subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It is my thirty-sixth remittance, and to me they have the same sound of the sweet gospel of salvation by grace alone, and proclaim Jesus the only Savior of poor, lost sinners. I try to thank and praise the Lord for his goodness and mercy in giving his children such heavenly gifts as its editors and correspondents to feed the sheep and lambs of his flock. O, may the brethren sustain you in the publication of the SIGNS, is the prayer of a poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all, either in time or eternity.

Your brother in hope of a better life beyond the grave,

M. A. WELBORN.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(WRITTEN BY ELDER E. RITTENHOUSE.)

To the churches known as the Delaware Baptist Association, this letter is addressed in accordance with what will be your expectations.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In recognizing you as worshipers assembling yourselves at stated times to worship him to whom worship and praise belongeth, it may be profitable to contemplate the character and perfections of him who was, and is, and is to come: the Almighty. It will be necessary in treating of the attributes of Deity, to avoid anything that has the appearance of presumption, confining ourselves to what the Lord has been pleased to declare to us of himself. The inspiration of worship in the hearts of the children of men is undoubtedly the result of a revelation that God has made of himself so that all worshipers have received that knowledge of the object of their devotions that has qualified them to worship with reverence and godly fear. The Scriptures bear witness to all that revela-

tion that God has made in the experience of his people. To them we may go as to a man of reliable counsel, and for a confirmation of all the ground of our hope. It is clear to our minds that all experimental knowledge that we have of God has come to us in and through the person of Christ. Christ was a man, and as we are men, God has seen fit to communicate with us always by men. So the apostle calls our attention to the matter thus: "God who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son," &c. God is a Spirit, and so no man hath seen God at any time. This communicating with men in divers manners has seemed to confuse the minds of many theologians, and so we find them engaged in dividing up Deity into different persons, having different and entirely distinct offices. The revelation that was made to Moses upon the fiery mount has never been superseded, nor has any revelation conflicted with it. "Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord." All subsequent revelations then must be understood to be in accord with this, carrying out and confirming the concentration of all the divine attributes and perfections in one supreme and eternal Jehovah. While we may hold that these promises are fully sustained by the Scriptures, yet we are aware that a vast amount of labor and talent has been devoted to the establishing of a theory quite at variance with this. Terms have been coined and phrases arranged and adapted and strenuously contended for that are never used by any inspired writers. Unscriptural theories are generally contended for strenuously and in an intolerant and proscriptive spirit. Such expressions as "three equal persons," and "equal and distinct persons," and even the word "Trinity," are terms and phrases not found in the Bible at all. The plural form is sometimes used because God has made himself known through various channels and in a great diversity of ways. We read of the seven Spirits of God, and yet in the same connection are told that it is one and the selfsame Spirit. An expression that is relied upon somewhat to support the idea of a Trinity is this: "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." The closing expression at once annihilates all the trinitarian theories that have ever been invented. Though God has revealed himself through these three different channels, yet it is the one God, and no other but he. "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." Jesus is abundantly and continually set forth as a man, in both the Old and New Testaments, and his qualifications to be a Mediator, and to be a merciful and faithful High Priest, are hinged upon the fact that he was a man in all things like unto his brethren; touched with the feeling of all their infirmities, and tempted in all respects as they were. But God was with him. While all the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily in him, yet he was and remained a man in distinction from that Godhead that dwelt in him. Mighty works were done, but the Father that dwelt in him, he did the works. Jesus said he could of his own self do nothing. As these things are set forth, all Scripture testimony harmonizing in plain and explicit declarations, the infinite wisdom and fitness of the divine arrangement, continually appears. Christ as the child born and the Son given. "The Spirit of the Lord God was upon him," and thereby he was anointed to execute all the

glorious work provided in the covenant of grace. But unless he had been under the law it could not have received fulfillment at his hands. He is the Daysman betwixt God and men that can lay his hand upon both. If no man can see the face of God and live, how condescending and kind of God to communicate with men through a man like themselves, one whose presence does not forbid their approach. Nowhere in all the Scriptures is "The second person of the Trinity" spoken of, or any such phraseology ever used. "God was manifest in the flesh." The psalmist speaking of the King of saints says, "He is fairer than the children of men, grace is poured into his lips, therefore God hath blessed him for ever." God, as God, hath appointed him heir of all things, while he as man receives the appointment, and is thus empowered to execute judgment. Not the second person in the Trinity, but God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. For as the Father hath spiritual and eternal life in himself, so hath he given the Son to have life in himself. It is God-given life, but it comes to us through the Mediator. If there were three distinct beings or persons that were objects of worship, we should certainly have been so informed in the Scriptures. But instead of this we are continually informed that there is but one living and true God, and that he alone is to be adored, and had in reverence of all that are about him. "That ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Savior."—Isaiah xliii. 10, 11. Christ himself refused to receive worship at the hands of men, directing them always to worship God, and to pray to the Father in his name, and assuring them that God would give them whatever was thus sought in and through his name. When the time comes that every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that he is Lord, it will be to the glory of God the Father. Theologians have noticed that the name of Jehovah is sometimes given a plural form in the Old Testament. A reason for this may be found as we find reasons for the different names by which he has at different times made himself known. It was the same God, but he had not before made himself known by the name that he now announces unto them. A proper conception of the attributes and perfections of the divine Being, and a proper discovery of him where he has revealed himself, inspires in our hearts those sentiments of adoration that are required of us. Idolatrous worship is utterly abolished. The glory of God that was seen in the face of Jesus Christ had never been seen anywhere else, and we know of no other way in which God could be revealed to men only in the person of a man.

"God is a Spirit." By the term person, we understand something different from a Spirit. Among the ways in which God reveals himself, and makes his salvation known, is as a Spirit. This revelation comes in quickening, in teaching, in convincing of sin, and of comforting, and in witnessing to our heirship. This Spirit is called the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of Christ, and also the Spirit of truth. By this Spirit the saints are guided into all truth. The apostle speaks of different gifts, and diversities of operations, and differences of administrations, but asserts emphatically that it is one and the selfsame Spirit. Then again, after repeating the several gifts he says, It is the same God that worketh all in

all. It will not be expected of us in this place to notice the theories and the arguments that have been promulgated with a vast amount of labor to maintain the idea of a trinity of equal and distinct persons. If the Scriptures do not teach any such thing we can leave all errors of every kind to fail and come to naught of themselves. Some phrases that have been promulgated, and jealously advocated, are not only unscriptural, but utterly absurd and tending to confusion. If the infinite and incomprehensible One has seen fit to reveal himself in and through a Mediator, may we not recognize and trace the power of God, and the wisdom of God, to its source as they shine and reign in the life and immortality brought to light in the gospel? With the Spirit that God has given his people is a knowledge of those perfections that inspire spiritual devotion, so that he who is a Spirit is worshiped in Spirit and in truth.

These things are suggested with deference, and with a sense of their sacredness, to be considered and accepted only so far as in strict accord with that record in which the glory of God is revealed.

W. W. MEREDITH, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at New Vernon, Sullivan Co., N. Y., June 5th, 6th and 7th, 1901, to the churches of which this meeting is composed, sends salutation with love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED:—It has been the custom of this Association for many years to adopt and circulate among you a letter of love and fellowship, and of assurance that we still contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. With gladness we therefore welcome the privilege of again testifying to no decreased interest, or abatement in love for the doctrine of salvation by grace.

To testify in truth that God reigns, sovereign, immutable, omniscient and omnipresent, we must be witnesses to his power, unchangeableness, infinite knowledge and unbounded presence; and to the church is given this knowledge in the great mystery, "God manifest in the flesh," and the saints do declare to hearing, seeing, looking upon and handling of the word of life.

We have no desire to limit, in any sense, the infinite attributes of our God. All our comfort consists in the confidence that he has triumphed gloriously; that all his will and pleasure is done in earth as it is in heaven. We believe "there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God," and whatsoever cometh to pass the Lord hath commanded. False prophets are in the world, as was declared should be, prophesying falsely of a salvation to be attained; but our gospel is hid to them for they proclaim bondage instead of liberty to the captive; burden and labor, rather than rest; a salvation to be attained, rather than a complete and finished work. To him that hath an ear to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches there is no legal and therefore burdensome "ought," "must" or "should" in obedience, for their's is the perfect law of liberty. They serve him with free and full consent of the mind, for the power and wisdom of God has made them willing. Their's is vital unity with Christ; a unity that consists in love alone, and this life of Jesus is made manifest in them in delight to do the will of God.

The unity of Christ and his people is absolute, perfect: there is no degree; no growth in it. Growth there is in the per-

ception of it, but none in the principle; and in proportion to our perception, so also is our comfort and consolation.

If there is any one attribute of God, more than another, which the saints desire knowledge of and conformity to, it is his holiness. They know that only the pure in heart shall see God, and all their longing and hope is that they may be presented before him holy and without blame. And they know, further, that it is an imagination, begotten of the father of lies, that any one not holy in this life can enjoy the blessedness which consists in the enjoyment of God in any future state; they know it is a false notion of God and heaven.

Since the beginning of the gospel day, false prophets, having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof, have, in pretended solicitude for the welfare of the saints, been preaching that salvation is conditional upon holiness and obedience. They assert that if obedience is not meritorious, then it is useless. They fail to see that such presumption destroys the very nature of true holiness, for the strength and motive to holiness lies in the doctrine of the free, undeserved grace of God toward us by Jesus Christ.

That preaching the grace, mercy and love of God is likely to encourage those who know him to neglect obedience to him, is a false inference. To imagine that one not perfectly holy can please God and attain to the enjoyment of him, dishonors and distinctly charges him with being unholy. It is impossible for an unholy man to be accepted with God; and the preaching of any conditional acceptance is open contempt for the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Recognition of no ability or strength in ourselves causes us to depend absolutely on Christ for life and salvation; and this, the conditionalist says, tends to encourage carelessness as to what manner of men we should be. What a ridiculous inference! It implies that the putting away of sin; deliverance from its dominion, and the implantation of a love for holiness, disposes us to do what we hate. The word of God is positive, "They shall not depart from me." But the conditionalist dislikes the word of God, as he also dislikes the things of God.

Without faith it is impossible to please God. Without holiness shall no man see God. Such blessedness is only for the pure in heart. Holiness in us pleases God, and without faith it is impossible to have any interest in holiness. Holiness in us consists in a hatred of that which displeases God, and delight in that which pleases him. To hate sin and love righteousness is therefore obedience to his commaadment, and this constitutes holiness. This sanctification is by faith in Christ, and in no other way can we be sanctified and made holy but by faith that is in Jesus. There can be no holiness where there is not faith, for God purifies our heart by faith. All the letter obedience in the world cannot perfect us: all that is acceptable with God is "the obedience of faith."

The assurance most eagerly sought by the believer is that of being holy; of being a man after God's own heart, and in this search he is sorely tried by the temptations of the adversary. All division and strife among churches has arisen through falling into the temptation to interpret God's will in the light of reason. This is walking by sight and not by faith. This false preacher, the man of sin (for whatsoever is not of faith is sin), easily besets us; the law of our fleshly nature demands sight. Our body, soul and spirit naturally, is dead when deprived of sight; their

faculties have no life without it. Assurance that springs from conviction, or hope, of having obeyed the law in abstaining from evil, fulfilling vows, or in every letter of the law being blameless, is not the assurance of faith, nor the assurance of the gospel, nor the assurance of understanding. No assurance that will satisfy the natural mind is mentioned in Scripture.

The doctrine of the everlasting, eternal salvation of God's people is a rock of great offense to many. In spirit they deny that Jesus Christ is the head of the church in all things; power, rule and life. All our holiness is wrought in us by virtue of our unity with him. We are in him, and abide in him by faith: by him we are sanctified wholly; our whole spirit and soul and body is preserved blameless unto his coming. The notion that only the mind, or the affections, or the will is wrought upon, is a delusion. There is no such partial work. The whole sinner is saved: the washing by the word is applied to the whole man, body, head, hands and feet. The old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, is put off; we are renewed in the spirit of our mind, and we put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. This work is in evidence "when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the Spirit of judgment, and by the Spirit of burning." Then he that remaineth in Jerusalem shall be called holy. Being born of water and the Spirit, is being washed from filth and purged from blood; sanctified and purified. Such an one is holy: out of the new heart given him proceed the issues of the very life of Jesus. He delights in the law of God, and in his law doth he meditate day and night. He has been called to holiness; not to uncleanness, and with groanings which cannot be uttered he is continually seeking to make his calling and election sure.

Of ourselves we are unable to obey one precept of God's holy law. Duty, as the spirit of man preaches, God does not require of us. All the duty or obedience acceptable with him he works in us and by us, so that the same work is the operation of his Spirit, and our will, as controlled by it. Our whole duty is to fear God and keep his commandments, or in other words, hate evil and love holiness; and who does this with more godly sincerity than the poor, sensibly, leprous wretch who knows that no unclean person can approach God?

Let no man deceive you, brethren, with vain words. The doing of what men esteem as good works, is not holiness, it is but "the labor of the foolish which wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city;" for they are "a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness."

The secret of the Lord is with them that continue in the faith once delivered to the saints, and when he shows them his covenant the sure effect is always that they remember and are ashamed for all their ways. When they see the King in his beauty, the land seems very far off, but their very groanings and supplications, their sense of frailty and weakness, is confession that Christ is come in the flesh.

Heaviness through manifold temptations is but the trial of our faith, and is found in honor and praise at the appearing of Jesus. Our hearts are purified by faith; the evidence of things unseen is ours, even the victory of the world; for

the word is in your heart and in your mouth, this word of faith which is preached unto you. "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

There is no evidence of growth in grace when we become less anxious about our holiness and obedience than we were when we first believed. A lessening of our solicitude and diligence respecting this is not the persuasion of him who hath called us. The sanctifying work of the Spirit is in the "casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringeth into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." There is no understanding the fear of the Lord, or finding the knowledge of God, except in seeking it as for hid treasure, and they who take to themselves any assurance of having attained to such understanding and knowledge know nothing yet as they ought. As hidden treasure it remains forever undiscovered to the eye or sense of man. Understanding and knowledge is borne witness to by the saints in diligence and perseverance to examine and prove themselves whether they be in the faith. Considering themselves lest they be tempted is being spiritually minded, and this is life and peace. It is not that which goeth into a man that defiles him, but that which cometh out of his heart. Confidence in self to obey the holy law of God does not exist in them that walk uprightly. The issue of their heart is unceasing prayer for help in their ever present time of need. They swear to their own hurt and change not. They do not need the law preached to them in order to know the evil of their ways. Their fear and shame continually remind them of the guilt and filth of sin. It is the effectual work of the Spirit of God which convinces them of unrighteousness, and causes them to hate the sin which separates between them and their God. In every sight of God a sense of pollution overwhelms them, and they know that holiness alone belongeth to him, and of his righteousness only do they make mention. The effect of this knowledge is a broken and a contrite heart, holy and acceptable unto God.

Indeed, this experience is the actual communication, or application, of the blood of Christ washing us from sin and uncleanness. "He gave himself for the church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish."

In unity with Christ we are partakers of the divine nature. The spirit of holiness animates us. By faith we walk with God; by faith we sit down in the heavenly places; by faith we are translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. The cleansing, purging, purifying work of the holy Spirit in us is really and truly the life of Jesus made manifest in our mortal bodies. The life which we now live in the flesh we live by the faith of the Son of God, and by that faith our hearts are purified.

Ye need not therefore that any man teach you the way of life and salvation. Unto Jesus alone is committed the revelation of himself and the Father, and it is his word, his life and Spirit in you which teacheth you all things, even the way of holiness. You do sit down in the kingdom with the prophets and saints of all ages, testifying in all things which

they were moved to speak by the Holy Ghost.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
JOHN McCONNELL, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Cow Marsh Church, to the associations, corresponding meetings and churches with which we correspond, sends greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—According to appointment made one year ago, we have again had the precious privilege of meeting as an Association, and we are glad to mention the goodness and mercy of God in sparing our lives to meet and enjoy the preaching of the gospel.

It gives us much pleasure to know that your love and fellowship for us continues, as shown by your messengers, and expressions contained in your Minutes; all of them showing the evidence that you continue steadfast in the truth, and are still by the grace of God kept by his power and goodness.

While we have been made sad by the absence of some of the brethren in the ministry, who have long met with us, we have been glad to listen to brethren from several States, who have preached the unsearchable riches of Christ for the comfort and edification of the lovers of truth. The preaching has been of that character to give all the glory to God in the salvation of his people.

Now, brethren, we desire that the love and fellowship which has so long been manifested for us, may be continued, and we hope to receive your messengers and Minutes with the same expressions of charity at our next annual meeting, which has been appointed to be held with the Salem Church, in the city of Philadelphia, Pa., commencing on Wednesday after the third Sunday in May, 1902.

W. W. MEREDITH, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the First Hopewell Church, to the associations, corresponding meetings and churches with which we correspond, sends greeting in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—Correspondence through the published Minutes of our Association is a pleasant renewal of our love and friendship as brethren in the church of Christ; but our pleasure is enlarged, and our hearts warmed with greater love when we are permitted to receive your messengers, whose countenances beam forth the love that caused the people of old to exclaim, Behold how these christians love one another, and a feeling of thankfulness arises from our hearts to our heavenly Father for the preservation of our lives and health to attend this appointed meeting. We have sat together in a heavenly place, and been refreshed with the preached gospel of the Son of God, delivered with power and in demonstration of the Spirit.

Letters from the churches report few additions and several deaths, with peace and harmony in doctrine and order of the church. The eternal God reigns in Zion, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and is meting out to us joy and sorrow, prosperity and adversity, according to his pleasure, and he knoweth what is best for us. His wisdom and goodness directs the joy or sorrow of his people, declaring from the exalted throne of his glory, Zion shall be built up, and no weapon formed against her shall prosper.

The problem that confronts the popular religionist of to-day is, How shall we

maintain our place and add to our numbers? The evident decline in religious interest, and increased desire for recreation and pleasure, alarms the thoughtful among them, and they are now discussing the propriety of changing their creed, and have a more liberal doctrine. Salvation by grace, for infant and adult, through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ alone, and banishment from his presence for the sinner and ungodly, are not in their wisdom compatible with the character of a God who is all love, and pleading with the sinner to accept the offers of mercy from his extended hand.

The glorious doctrine of salvation by grace, through the blood and righteousness of Christ, proclaimed and established by the apostles, and contended for in our churches to the present time, has been presented to us through this meeting, to our comfort and edification.

Our next meeting is appointed to be held with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., to commence on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1902, at 10 o'clock a. m., when we hope to receive your messengers and ministers in the love and fellowship of the gospel.

F. A. CHICK, Moderator.

ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association convened with the church at New Vernon, N. Y., June 5th, 6th and 7th, 1901, to the associations with whom she corresponds, greeting.

AGAIN in the kind providence of God we have been permitted to meet together to receive your messengers, and your messages of love and fellowship, and to listen to the proclamation of the gospel by our visiting brethren in the ministry. It is indeed a great privilege, while the world is in such commotion, both politically and religiously, to be permitted to turn from it all, and spend a few hours in sweet intercourse with our Father's children, conversing one with another on the things of the kingdom.

Our meeting has been, we trust, a very profitable one, and to the strengthening of the saints. Not a jarring note has been heard, but all has been peace and harmony, and we feel that we have been fed with that bread which comes down from heaven, and have been renewed in the inner man to take courage and press forward to the mark of our high calling, ever looking to Jesus for a renewal of our faith.

We desire a continuance of your correspondence, both by Minutes and by messengers.

Our Association for next year has been appointed to convene with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, at Middletown, N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1902, when and where, if it be the will of the Lord, we hope to greet you all again.

"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace: and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

H. C. KER, Moderator.

JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

INFORMATION WANTED.

INFORMATION concerning Mrs. Ellen Vickars Carr (colored) will be gratefully received by the undersigned. Fourteen years ago she resided in Alexandria, Va. Since then all trace of her has been lost. Any one knowing her address, or aware of her decease, will please advise

JOHN MCCONNELL.

93 FRANKLIN ST., NEW YORK.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1901.

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EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MATTHEW XXVII. 9, 10.

SISTER Lucinda J. Riley, of Camp Point, Ill., asks for some thoughts concerning the Scripture found in Matthew xxvii. 9, 10.

This relates to the use to which the thirty pieces of silver, for which Judas betrayed his Master, was finally put. He, as is said in the preceding chapter, and elsewhere in the other narratives of the evangelists, had covenanted with the chief priests to sell his Master for thirty pieces of silver. This was, as is found in Exodus xxi. 32, the price fixed upon a servant, who might be accidentally slain, under the Jewish law, and is supposed to be worth something less than twenty-five dollars in our money. The meaning is that if a servant was accidentally slain by any one, his owner could recover from his slayer that sum of money. This was the price fixed upon the blessed Master. The narrative tells us that Judas was afterwards filled with remorse, not repentance unto salvation which needs not to be repented of, but with that remorse and sorrow which works death, and is of the world, and then sought to undo what he had done, and when he was spurned away from those with whom he had made this bagain, he cast the money down at their feet, and went out and hanged himself. The chief priests, saying that this was the price of blood, and therefore that it was not lawful to put it into the treasury, bought with it a potter's field to bury strangers in.

Now all this in the text is declared to be the fulfillment of prophecy. The prophecy is ascribed to Jeremiah in the text, but we find it recorded in Zechariah xi. 12, 13. It seems to be the general opinion of those who have said anything about this matter, that the reason that the name of Jeremiah is used here is, that he was regarded as the chief of the prophets, and so the whole body of prophecy is here alluded to under his name. We see no better explanation than this, and this seems reasonable to us. But let this be explained as it may, the fact remains that in this narrative we see one of the most minute prophecies concerning the betrayal and crucifixion of the Savior fulfilled to the very letter. It is a prophecy concerning the actions of men who were all enemies of God, and filled with wickedness; these events are all the works of wickedness; those who did them were only evil in the doing of them. Judas was a devil, as the Lord said, and of him it was also said, "It were good for that man if he never had been born." This can mean nothing more nor less than that he perished forever in his sin. Our God, who is wonderful in counsel and wisdom, and great in power, had need of a devil to accomplish his will in the redemption of his people, and so Judas was provided to that very end. He had need of kings, and rulers, and chief priests, and the Jewish multitude, to fulfill his will in this great work, and so he saw to it that they were in the place assigned them at the proper time. And so each event that had been prophe-

sied of was literally fulfilled. Those who fulfilled them did not know that they were doing so. How wonderfully apparent is the truth of the language recorded in Acts xiii. 27, in the discourse of Paul at Antioch; we would that all would read these words carefully: "For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him." Because they knew not what the prophets have said, they have done what the prophets said. On another occasion it was said, "Had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of life and glory." Certainly they who loved and believed in him would not have betrayed and crucified him; his enemies, who knew him not, must do this evil work, because none others could have done it. Thus the evil deeds of his foes, and the foes of God, were all set in order before time was, when all that pertained to salvation and redemption was by the eternal counsel of the Almighty predestinated to be.

The text suggested by our sister shows that in prophecy the sale of the Master, the price, and what should finally be done with the accursed money, were all appointed of God; the fulfillment could not swerve one hair's breadth from the prophecy. On one occasion we remember counting up seventeen special acts, which were undeniably evil acts, relating to the betrayal and crucifixion of the Savior, which were centuries before prophesied of by men moved by the Holy Ghost. If the Scriptures are to be fulfilled, Judas must betray his Lord, the price must be thirty pieces of silver; Judas must come back and throw the money down at the feet of those who had bargained with him; he must go out and hang himself, and the potter's field must be bought with the money; there was no escape from all these things, unless indeed the Scriptures need not be fulfilled. The text says, "Then was fulfilled this prophecy." How wonderful is the working of the counsel of God, and how sure it is that all Scripture prophecy must be fulfilled. We have long believed that men fulfill the Scriptures, because they know not the Scriptures, in all cases, just as they did when Jesus was betrayed, as testified in Acts xiii. 27. We are fulfilling the predestination of God every day, and yet do not know that we are doing so. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ROMANS VIII. 38, 39.

"For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

This chapter begins with a declaration that there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, and concludes with the assurance of our text, that there can be no separation from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. This was not only the firm conviction of the mind of the apostle, but the inspired truth of the Holy Ghost. This blessed security from condemnation, and assurance of the immutable love of God, belongs to them who are in Christ Jesus, and to none other. As we are deeply interested in the subject, it becomes us to inquire earnestly, and to search diligently whether we are in Christ Jesus, and numbered with those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. If we are not in him, we certainly have no

part or lot in these great and precious declarations. If we are in him, we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, according to Eph. i. 4, for Christ Jesus is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. (Heb. xiii. 8.) The exceeding greatness of the mighty power of God is exemplified in him; all things are put under his feet, and God has given him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. (Eph. i. 19–23.) Consequently if there ever was a period in time or eternity when any of the members of his church were not in him, then there has been a period when his body was not full. But to imagine the existence of a head without a body, or a body without a head, or a perfect and complete head, and an imperfect and deficient body, does not suit our understanding of the declaration that It pleased the Father that in him all fullness should dwell. (Col. i. 19.) Again it is written, "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and ye [the saints and faithful brethren in Christ,] are complete in him which is the Head of all principality and power."—Col. ii. 9, 10. All the members of Christ are in him, even as the eternal Father is in him. He is the dwelling place (not of one-third part of the Godhead, as some seem to understand it,) but of all the fullness of the Godhead. "That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one," &c.—John xvii. 21–23. If the church is in Christ as the eternal Father is in him, must they not have been in him from everlasting? Would Christ be complete if the Father were not in him, or if all the fullness of the Godhead were not in him? Or could the fullness of the Godhead dwell in him bodily, if any part of the Godhead did not dwell in him? Certainly not. Equally certain is it then as the church is in him as the Father is in him, and they are his body and the fullness of him, that all the members required to make his mystical body perfect and complete, must have been in him as well before the world began, as they will be when this world shall be no more.

We are not contending that our earthly, corrupt and depraved natures were in him, and were a part of his fullness before the world began; for they were not even in the earthly Adam until after the world began, nor did Christ himself come in the flesh until he was made of a woman; until his advent. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he [Christ] also himself likewise [or in like manner] took part of the same."—Heb. ii. 14. His children partaking of flesh and blood, shows that their relationship to God as *children* was perfect before they partook of flesh and blood; and that participation of flesh and blood no more constituted them children, than Christ's coming into the world, and "also himself likewise partaking of the same," constituted him the Son of God, or the Head of Immortality to his body, the church. "That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."—Rom. ix. 8. If that earthly life which was given as in the earthly Adam could be distinctly identified so as to involve us in the guilt of Adam's transgression, almost six thousand years before we were born of the flesh, is it hard to understand in the antitype Adam, that our spiritual, immortal and eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested, (1 John i. 2,) and which was given to us in the unspeakable

gift of God's dear Son, according to the record borne by the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, (1 John v. 7, 11,) should so fully identify us in Christ, that it could of truth be said of us that we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world? (Eph. i. 4.) Or as still more expressly stated, Eph. ii. 18: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." This term *created* has reference to the new or spiritual creation. It is not like the creation of the natural world, the creation of something out of nothing; but it is the giving of the members of Christ a place, a standing in, and identity with him who personifies their immortality, or their eternal life. This life instead of being called into existence after the manner of the old creation of the natural world, is the manifestation of a life which is eternal, which always was hid with Christ in God. For it was, as we have proven by 1 John i. 2: ("For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that *eternal life which was with* the Father, and was manifested unto us.") "And we know that the Son of God," (in whom the record of Father, Word and Holy Ghost declares that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son,) "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and *we are in him* that is true; even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life."—1 John v. 19, 20. Thus to be in Jesus Christ seminally, as the spiritual embodiment and progenitor of a seed that shall serve him, and be counted to the Lord for a generation, according to Psalms xxii. 30; Isaiah liii. 10–12; 1 Peter ii. 9, involves the Bible doctrine of eternal Union. A union of life, love and immortality. One with Christ even as Christ is one with the Father.

But to be in him manifestatively by a new and spiritual birth, implies that we are, or must be born again; not of a corruptible seed, but of that seed which was in Christ our spiritual progenitor, from everlasting. By the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever—not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (1 Peter i. 23; John i. 13.) A birth is not the creation or origination of life, but the manifestation of life by what is called *pro*-creation. Our earthly nature which in christians is called the *old*, or *outward* man, was created in Adam, but pro-created by natural generation. But that immortality which is in the christian, and which is denominated the *new*, or the *inward* man, was given us in Jesus Christ, and is manifested by spiritual generation when born of God. As we are, and were strangers in our earthly character, to this spiritual life which is hid with Christ in God, until he who is our life appears, or is revealed in us, so when that revelation is made, we are no more strangers, we are brought forth bearing the image of the heavenly progenitor, as we have in our flesh borne the image of the earthly Adam. Hence, if any man be in Christ Jesus, manifestatively and experimentally, he is a new creature, a subject of the new or spiritual creation, and as an evidence of this, old things have passed away, and all things have become new. His old element, which was sin, darkness and death, is passed away, he is quickened by eternal life implanted, the light of life shines in his heart to give him the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, the love of God is shed abroad in him, he is delivered from wrath, he is taken up out of a hor-

rible pit, his going is established, and a new song is in his mouth. All these things are entirely new to him, for they are not the productions of his flesh, but they are the fruits of the Spirit of which he is now born. He is delivered from the power of darkness in which he was before held, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

As the love of God, from which the members of Christ cannot be separated, is in Christ Jesus, we have dwelt the more particularly on the unity of Christ and his members; for if the love of God is in Christ Jesus, and we are not in him also, then there is no connection between us and the love of God which is in him; and it would be preposterous to talk of the impossibility of being separated from that with which we are not and never were connected.

We think it will be admitted even by those brethren who dispute the doctrine of eternal Union, that God loved his people *even when they were dead in sins.* (Eph. ii. 4, 5.) That he even loved them as he loved our Lord Jesus Christ, whom he loved before the foundation of the world. (see John xvii. 23, 24.) Admitting then the testimony of our text that this love is and eternally was in Christ Jesus, must not the objects of it also have been in him as anciently as they have been loved of God in him? So we confess it looks to us, and for this blessed assurance we are more than willing to bear all the reproach, slander, abuse and persecution to which we have been subjected for trying to set it forth.

From the foregoing considerations it strikes us that so long as God himself maintains his eternal immutability, there can be no separation of the saints from his love which is in Christ Jesus. Paul was persuaded that death could not effect a separation. Death's boasted power is impotent and weak compared with the love of God in Christ. Our death in trespasses and sins could not abate the love of God, since it is written that, "God, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins," &c. Death could enfold our earthy nature in its cold embrace, but all the dark floods of death could not quench its eternal flame. Again, death and the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, met in dreadful conflict on Mount Calvary, but death was vanquished, and immortality was brought to light in the sequel of the contest, and God commended his love, in that when we were yet sinners, in due time Christ died for us.

> "He saw us ruined in the fall,
> Yet loved us notwithstanding all."

Neither shall death in his last assault upon these mortal bodies, tend to separate us; but instead of alienating that love, it shall only remove the intervening curtain, that we may realize its eternal fullness in unclouded glory forever. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death, and then, "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit which is in us."—Romans viii. 11.

Nor life. Young christians in their early experience of this love, desire to die, to depart and be with Jesus, not only from the powerful attractions they feel drawing them to him, but from fear that their life in the flesh may bring some reproach upon the blessed cause, and that they may by some waywardness on their part lose the sweet and heavenly enjoyment of that love. But although the children of God do not always while here in the flesh enjoy the vivid evidences of the love of God, yet in Christ, where it is treasured up for them, it is immutable,

and never can abate. It is among the "All spiritual blessings with which God has blessed them, according as he hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world."—Eph. i. 3, 4. He has established our goings; and he controls all things, and causes all things to work together for the good of them that love him, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Nor angels. Holy angels have neither the disposition nor the power, for unto the angels he [God] hath not put in subjection the world to come, of which we speak. (Heb. ii. 5.) Wicked angels have tried all their power, but never have, never can possibly produce an abatement of the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

Nor principalities. Should all the governments of earth combine their forces, as many of them have, they may indeed be permitted to annoy and harrass the saints, they may, if permitted, torture these frail, dying bodies, chain them to the stake, and consume the earthly tabernacle with fire, but the love of God is in Christ Jesus, and therefore out of their reach.

Nor powers. Of whatever sort or kind, for all power both in heaven and earth, is vested in him in whom this love of God is secured, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him. There is no power but that is of God, and perfectly subject to the orders of his throne. The power of sin, the power of darkness, the power of the law, cannot effect an alienation, for Christ has redeemed his people from all these; nor are there any powers in existence that are or shall be able to succeed.

Nor things present. Although for the present, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations, though clouds may obscure our skies, tempests may beat, and thunders shake the world, there is nothing in the present tense that can lessen the love of God to his saints in Christ.

Nor things to come. The coast is clear. O, christians, look ahead. Look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith; there is nothing in the impenetrable future to fear.

> "Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
> The clouds ye so much dread,
> Are big with mercy, and shall break
> With blessings on your head."

Should the mountains be uprooted and hurled into the midst of the sea, should the waves thereof swell and roar, should death sweep over the earth, the sun forget to shine, the moon turn into blood, and the pillars of the universe totter to their fall, there is nothing in all that can come to pass that can separate you from the love of your God and Savior.

Nor height. Look upward then, and trace the fearful omens of the heavens. See blazing comets approach with sevenfold speed of lightning; if your God commands them so they may come in contact with this little dwelling-place of worms and dash this world to atoms. Pestilence, like winged warriors, may come on every wind, thunders may shake the earth, lightnings may bear the bolts of almighty vengeance far and scatter death abroad, but no heights, with their infinity of space, can possibly deprive you of the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, treasured up for you.

Nor depth. No hidden fires in secret caverns burn beneath your feet, nor volcanic terrors which may tear the earth, can change the love of God towards you; and could your eyes unbar the doors of death, gaze into the gloomy chambers of the grave, and sepulchres of the mighty, or could you even penetrate the deep

confines of hell, and scan the horrors of the damned, still undismayed let faith lay hold upon the infallible assurance, it cannot separate you from the love of God.

Nor any other creature. Death and life, angels and principalities, powers, and things present and things to come, and heights and depths, are all the creatures of God. He has created them not in vain, they shall accomplish his purpose and do his pleasure. Neither these nor any other creature is to be regarded by the saints as having power to dispossess them of what God has given them in Christ Jesus our Lord.

If then there is nothing in death nor life, nor in principalities nor powers, nothing high nor low, nothing present nor to come, that can remove the saints from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, may the Lord pity the graceless wretch who dares aver that the children of God may fall from grace, lose their interest in the love of God, and sink to hell at last.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., November 1, 1858.

MEMORIALS.

(DELAWARE ASSOCIATION.)

Whereas, God in his infinite wisdom and justice has seen fit to take from our midst, and from the evil to come, our brethren, **Elder Wm. L. Beebe** and **Elder Wm. Pollard,** therefore

Resolved, that while we do greatly miss their companionship and their labors among us, yet we desire to submit in all things to the will of him who ruleth in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. We desire to be thankful for such precious gifts in the gospel ministry, by and through which many dear brethren have received comfort and encouragement by the way.

Resolved, that we do deeply sympathize with the churches over which they had the temporary watch-care, and also with their families and many friends.

Resolved, that these resolutions be spread upon the Minutes of this Association; also that a copy be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

W. W. MEREDITH, Moderator.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

(DELAWARE RIVER ASSOCIATION.)

WE as an Association desire to record upon our Minutes an expression of the sorrow which we in common with all our brethren of other associations and churches feel at the removal from us by death of our beloved brother, **Elder Wm. L. Beebe.** It is fitting that we should do this, both because of his own worth as a brother and minister, and because of his intimate association with us for a long period of years. He has attended most of the sessions of this Association for the past thirty years, and has visited our churches often beside. Among us all he has been a loving and dearly beloved brother and friend. Our loss is great, but we remember that to the association of which he was a member, to the church of which he was the loved and honored pastor for twenty years, and to his bereaved family, the loss is felt still more keenly. We desire to extend to them all an expression of our sympathy in their bereavement. May God comfort and console them all. He was a warm friend, a pleasant companion, an earnest believer in Jesus the Savior, a true and faithful minister of Jesus Christ. Grace was magnified in his life and ministry. He has entered into his reward.

May God help us all to say, as did the Master, "Thy will be done."

ALSO,

WE as an Association desire to record upon our Minutes this expression of our affectionate regard for **Elder Wm. Pollard,** for many years the faithful pastor of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, and of our sorrow at his decease during the past year. He had in former years visited this Association several times at our annual gatherings, and had spent some time among our churches. His visits were greatly enjoyed by us all, and his preaching was sound, clear and faithful. It was to the edification of lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus. We had hoped that it might be in the providence of God that he should visit us again. We desire to bow to the will of God, knowing that he does all things well. To the church of which he was for many years pastor, and to his bereaved family, we desire to extend this expression of our heartfelt sympathy. We are reminded with comfort that our God has said, "As thy days, thy strength shall be."

F. A. CHICK, Moderator.

ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

(WARWICK ASSOCIATION.)

WE desire to place upon our Minutes an expression of our deep regard for our dear brother, **Elder Wm. L. Beebe,** and of our sorrow at his decease. Our dear brother had spent much of his life in our midst, and was known and loved by us all. During the middle portion of his life he lived in distant sections of the country, but his early days and the last twenty years of his life were spent among us. None knew him

without loving him, and because none knew him better than we, none loved him more. Elder Beebe was a true and loving friend, an upright, honest man, a sincere lover of the truth of the gospel, an able minister of the new testament, and a faithful and affectionate pastor. He was tender toward the inquiring and sin-burdened souls who came to him for help and comfort. Not only were these things known by us as an association, but they were appreciated by all among whom he had labored in the work of the ministry. We sorrow because we shall on earth see his face no more. Yet we do rejoice that we have full assurance that to him to die was gain. To his bereaved family, and to the church at Warwick, of which he had been the loved and loving pastor for nearly twenty years, we desire to extend an expression of our sympathy in their bereavement. May the God of all comfort be with and bless them.

ALSO,

In recognition of the sad loss sustained by the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, in the decease of their beloved pastor, **Elder Wm. Pollard**, we as an Association desire to assure our sister church of our sincere sympathy in their bereavement. He was loved and esteemed by us as an able minister of the gospel, and we were blessed with his membership of and ministry in this Association for several years. He was unusually gifted in discernment of spiritual things, and in ability to proclaim the truth as it is in Jesus. He declared in no uncertain sound the comforting word of an accomplished salvation. While we deplore the loss to the people he so faithfully served, we rejoice in the confidence that the fruition of all his hope and desire is accomplished; that he is with Christ, having fought a good fight, finished his course and kept the faith. In acknowledging our sympathy with the Covenanted Church of Canada, we likewise express remembrance of his family in their bereavement.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

JOHN McCONNELL, Clerk.

(WARWICK CHURCH.)

On motion and second, the following memorial was ordered spread upon the Minutes of this meeting, and the Clerk requested to send a copy for publication to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

In sorrow we, Warwick Church, have to record the decease of our beloved pastor, **Elder Wm. L. Beebe**, he having been called to everlasting rest March 28th, 1901. He was a pastor indeed to us, and faithfully labored in our midst for nearly twenty years, and the fruit of that labor has been evident in the comfort, edification and upbuilding of us all in our most holy faith. In comforting them that mourned, and in helping those who were in tribulation, he was specially gifted of the Lord. His loving ministry will never be forgotten, and we mourn his absence with sorrow inexpressible. All who knew him loved him, but we as a people under his watchcare realized more than any his loving-kindness, tender-heartedness and likeness to the great Shepherd of the sheep. We mourn our loss, but rejoice for him, for it is better to depart and be with Christ; our loss is his gain. And we wish to acknowledge our thankfulness to God for his wonderful goodness and mercy in blessing us so long with so precious a pastoral gift.

We extend to our sister church, Beulah, of Brooke, Canada, of which church Elder Wm. L. Beebe was also pastor, our heartfelt sympathy in fellowship of sorrow for our mutual loss. May the gospel of love, which our pastor so unceasingly preached both in word and deed, abide and continue with us the power of God unto salvation. Our future seems dark and discouraging, but our trust is in God, the Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who ever liveth to make intercession for us. Our God is immutable, and in that he has been good and merciful to us in the past, we are confident of his faithfulness to never forsake us.

GEORGE D. CONKLIN, Church Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

BROTHER **George Golden**, for many years a member of the church at Hopewell, N. J., departed this life on Sunday night, Dec. 16th, 1900, at his home in Princeton. He had been feeble for some time, and for two or three weeks before the end came he suffered much and failed rapidly. He was baptized by Elder Wm. J. Purington, then pastor of the church at Hopewell, about twenty years ago. He remained a member until his death. He, with his dear companion, who is a faithful member of the same church, attended the meetings of the church whenever it seemed possible for them to do so. He was a man of quiet and reserved disposition, and we believe that his departure was peace. He leaves a kind and faithful companion, and sons and daughters to mourn their loss. May God comfort them in their loneliness and sorrow. He was about 63 years of age.

The funeral service was held in the meeting-house at Hopewell, on Thursday, Dec. 20th, at which time the words found in the twenty-third Psalm were used as a text. In blessed hope of the resurrection his body was laid to rest in the cemetery adjoining.

How blessed is the hope of the believer. C.

Silvanus S. Ward was born in Champaign Co., Ohio, Dec. 12th, 1826, died Feb. 4th, 1901; was married to Pirsilla Smith, Dec. 18th, 1849; to them were born twelve children, eleven boys and one girl. He was baptized by Elder Williams, and became a member of Nettle Creek Baptist Church, in 1862. Brother Ward was a firm believer in the absolute sovereignty of God. The Lord blessed him with a spirit of reconciliation to him in all things in a wonderful way, so

that he would say, "It is never too hot; it is never too cold; it is never too wet; it is never too dry; all these things are in the Lord's hands, directed by his will, and are just exactly right." He was a great reader of the SIGNS, a lover of the sentiments it advocates, and in his quiet, mild-mannered way would talk his faith wherever he was, which caused him to be a much persecuted man. He was as the apple tree among the trees of the wood, and as the speckled bird, but through it all the Lord preserved him, blessing him with much temporal things, and making him an honorable and peaceful citizen all his days.

FRANK McGLADE.

Mrs. Almira Hoffman, of Bath, N. Y., died April 30th, 1901, in her 81st year. Her husband, Daniel Hoffman, died three years ago. Sister Etta, their daughter, has kindly cared for them in their declining years, and is now left alone, having no one of a like faith with whom she can meet. May the God of the fatherless be hers, and give her comfort in her lonely hours, for she has been faithful in her duties, practicing much self denial, that her parents might have the comforts of this life.

M. HILLINGS.

CHURCH LETTER.

The Kingwood Old School Baptist Church, to her sister churches composing the Delaware River Association.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is with a feeling of gladness that we respond to the established custom of our association in sending our church letter. The fellowship of the saints is to us a great blessing; a blessing which words fall infinitely short of expressing. We feel that this matter of annually coming together is mutually profitable, for we desire to learn of your welfare, and witness the evidences of the faithfulness of our great High Priest, manifesting his power and goodness in holding us fast in the apostles' doctrine. Our great desire to be found contending for that salvation which is found in Christ is to us evidence of our being in Christ, for alone of his Spirit do any of the sons of men ever desire these things. We know from personal experience that to all others "He is as a root out of dry ground, without form or comeliness, that men should desire him," but being found in him, and being made partakers of the divine life, he is the chief among ten thousand, the altogether lovely One.

How wonderful are the works of God set forth in the gospel! It proclaims liberty to the captives, the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound, sets his dear children, who were in death, free from the grave, liberates them from the law of Moses, in which they were held, and brings them forth in the liberty of the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty, the law satisfied and made honorable, then can we sing of justice and mercy: "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other" in him who is our Mediator.

As a church we are walking together in peace, we are few in numbers, and do not come together for worship as often as we feel we should. However, we still have confidence toward God, and know that if he is ours, and we are his, all that is needful for our good and his glory is ours.

Our pastor, Elder Vail, comes every third Sunday in each month, his preaching to us is of no uncertain sound; these meetings are well attended, considering the few we are in numbers, and the long distance some of us live from our place of meeting. We also continue our first Sunday meetings.

Our dearly beloved sister Risler, wife of Deacon Cyrus Risler, has fallen asleep, and while we miss her much in our meetings, which she so faithfully attended for so many years, and sympathize with our dear brother Risler in his great affliction, yet we would not complain, for with her the conflict is ended, and we feel that while we mourn our loss, "The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away," that his infinite wisdom is being unfolded to his dear people in the measure that shall be for our good and his glory.

We were blessed in an especial manner in having two added by baptism during the past year. While they have long had the fellowship of the church, yet we were made to rejoice in their being enabled to come in by the door into the visible church, thus openly honoring the ordinances of heaven as they are set in the church and observed by all who openly manifest their delight in the law of God.

Read and approved at our church meeting held Saturday, the eighteenth day of May, A. D., 1901.

CYRUS RISLER, Church Clerk.

MEETINGS.

AN all day meeting will be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday, July 7th, 1901, with the Andes Church, at Union Grove, Delaware Co., N. Y., commencing at half past ten o'clock. Brother John B. Stinson will be with me.

J. D. HUBBELL, Pastor.

A YEARLY meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the Clovesville Old School Baptist Church, of the Lexington Association, the first Saturday and Sunday in July, (7th and 8th) 1901. A cordial invitation is extended to ministers and brethren and sisters, and all lovers of the truth, to meet with us. Those coming by rail will be met at Fleischmann's, on the Ulster & Delaware R. R.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Shohola Creek Church will have a two days meeting, the Lord willing, Tuesday and Wednesday, July 16th and 17th, 1901. Trains will be met on Monday, 15th, at Shohola station, Erie R. R., with

conveyances to the meeting, which is five miles from station. A cordial invitation is extended to all desiring to meet with us. Should any one desire to come Tuesday morning, drop a card to Nicholas Hess, Shohola, Pike Co., Pa.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Brookdale Church, of Susquehanna Co., Pa., expect to have a two days meeting, Tuesday and Wednesday after the third Sunday in August, (20th and 21st) 1901. Trains will be met at Conklin, Pa., on D., L. & W. R. R., Monday afternoon, and at Montrose depot, Pa., Monday afternoon. All who come will be welcomed.

A TWO days meeting will be held, providence permitting, at Justus, Pa., Thursday and Friday, August 22d and 23d, 1901. Those attending Brookdale meeting can easily get to this meeting, as it is only forty miles from Montrose. All will be made welcome who may come. Trains will be met at Olyphant, Pa., Wednesday afternoon, at D. & H. depot, and the N. Y., O. & W. depot, also at Glenburn, Pa., Wednesday afternoon and evening, and friends cared for.

For further information address Geo. Goodrich, Justus, Pa.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, will meet, the Lord willing, with the Sugar Creek Church, on Friday, August 30th, 1901, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue three days, at Table Grove, on the St. Louis branch of the C., B. & Q. R. R. Trains will be met at the grove on Thursday. No trains will be met Friday except the early trains from Reardstown. All are invited, especially brethren in the ministry.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 69. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1901. NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HUMILITY.

It seems very strange to me that my mind should be impressed to write on the subject of humility, when I cannot find one particle of it in myself, and when I firmly believe we cannot tell anything to profit except we have learned it by experience, and that the revelation of Jesus Christ as our Savior comes to us through the exercise of divine grace in our hearts, which is christian experience. Yet being impressed, I feel it a solemn duty. If I have an earthly master, and he tells me to do certain things, I have no right to question, and ask the reason why, but my duty is to obey. And now as I start out in this task I am already encouraged and comforted, because as I hope my Master has at this moment caused me to perceive that he does not require humility at MY hands; that HE is my humility, and he graciously and in mercy supplies every want and deficiency in me. If I have quit the service of my former master, whose reign over me was in darkness unto death wherein sin prevailed, calling forth every lust of the flesh, and have entered the service of him who reigneth in righteousness, then would I yield my "members servants to righteousness unto holiness." For the apostle tells us, "When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness." There is no fruit yielded in our service as servants under sin. The end thereof is death. "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life." Humility is not one of the results of any of the works of the flesh. "The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings and such like." Is it any wonder then when I search in my own flesh for humility, that I find it not? Every possible emanation from the flesh is in direct opposition to an humble and contrite heart. The natural heart is filled with pride and self-esteem. It is continually in conflict and in battle for supremacy. It even presumes to say that the arm of God is shortened that he cannot save, unless mighty man humbles himself and accepts the proffered salvation. When I deplore in myself the ab-

sence of humility, and grieve and mourn because of the presence of every opposition to it, I discover I am not looking for it in the right direction. I want to do something that will ape humility, and try to deceive myself into thinking it is the real thing. In other words, I am trying all the time to get religion, and I am proud (not humble) to think how well I get along. I search out my brother's faults, and talk to others about him in an ugly way, saying, (if not in words) in my arrogance, if he would do as I do he would be above reproach. Is that humility? When the tree is corrupt, the fruit must of necessity be corrupt also. A clean thing cannot come out of an unclean. Of the olden time before the flood we read this Scripture: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." So also throughout all the Scriptures the same truth is set forth; that man is totally depraved, and in him is no good thing. Again it is written, "God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Now when the children of God look to themselves for good deeds, looking away from Christ, and depending upon the deeds done in their body, they find the filthy self-righteousness of the proud spirit of the pharisee. Hide thy drooping head, O humility, thou hast no place there. And yet it is in this very proud pharisaic heart that the sweet spirit of grace takes up its abode, and causes the lofty head to bow low, the proud body to fall prostrate in the dust in humble acknowledgment and gratitude to a covenant-keeping God for his gracious and tender mercy. When we discover the superabounding of grace where sin did abound, what a change has taken place. The poor child HAS HAD his fill of sin; that which he once loved he now abhors. He sees himself as he never saw himself before: a vile and depraved sinner. From the moment this work of grace begins, we observe the fruit that is yielded. The growth of the old, corrupt tree has ceased, its leaves faded, its beauty gone, its force abated, "a corn of wheat" has fallen into the ground, an incorruptible seed "by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever." This seed takes root in the corrupt soil of the heart. The Husbandman careth for it in such a way that soon is manifested the upward growth: "First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." The foul growths and evil weeds so conspicuous before, are cut down and dug up by the roots, by the hand of him whose Spirit worketh grace in the heart. How interesting to watch the growth of the tender plants, from the time they begin the christian journey, and how anxious we are for them, and how careful of them when they have entered the warfare. The nursing mothers in Israel bathe their scars, and pour oil into the bleeding wounds. And then we rejoice as we see tribulation working patience. The frequent conflicts cause them to endure hardness as good soldiers. Now the work of the Spirit in this earthly soil, what does it produce? The apostle tells us, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against which there is no law." But one might ask, Can a clean thing come out of an unclean? We answer, no, emphatically no. Well, that one may say, you have

been comparing this fruit-yielding work of the Spirit to natural seed sown in the earth. Has the earth been changed, that it should bring forth "bread to the eater," when before it brought forth briars and thorns? No, the earth has not been changed, but it has been subdued, and the briars and thorns have been plowed under, and they die, and the soil is prepared and made ready for the sower. So this corrupt heart of ours. The plow and harrow of divine grace is set to work by the spiritual Husbandman, causing death to the unwholesome and corrupt works of the flesh. They are trodden under foot, they die. "Our old man is crucified with him, [Christ] that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Christ died; by his death the law which condemned us was satisfied, the sword of justice was removed from the way of the "tree of life." Christ arose from the dead, and all the Father had given him arose with him to newness of life. And this is what the work of the Spirit now makes manifest. The saints of God, as such, are pure and holy, as he is pure and holy. The bodies were prepared for the sowing of the seed. The incorruptible seed has been sown; it has taken root downward, and bears fruit upward. And now we enter the vineyard of our Lord, and eat his pleasant fruits. Again the apostle tells us, "The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth." Well, what of the production? The first thing we discover in this new conception and birth is, that the Lord has fulfilled his promise that he would "take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them an heart of flesh." They manifest a broken heart, which is an humble heart and a contrite spirit. So the very first result of fruit yielding in the new born soul is humility; and what did the man do toward bringing about that result? I will tell you what he did, he fought against it with all the power of all the pride of his natural heart. But glorious news, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Ever afterward when you meet and talk with that child, you will discover the meek and humble spirit. As the garden needs the hoe to keep down the weeds of evil growth, so also there is a needs be that the spirit be in continuous exercise. The law of God is written in our heart, and when we violate that law we are chastised, which chastisements in the end "yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Each one of us remembers the humility of soul we have felt after a spiritual whipping; how we were ready to crawl in the very dust to the feet of our brethren, imploring forgiveness. O humility, thou canst now raise thy bowed head, for now thy light shineth, and the angels of God rejoice. Wisdom tells us, "Before honor is humility." Also, "By humility are riches and honor and life." And the apostle warns you to "Let no man beguile you in a voluntary humility." And he also admonishes you to "Be subject to one another, clothed with humility." How rich the clothing, wrought gold, as the clothing of the daughter of the King. If you ask me if I ever knew a time when I realized that I was truly humble, I would answer, no, and I would tell you, too, that the times when I thought I was humble, I found it to be pride of the worst sort. The natural man for his own ends will sometimes sham humility; the truly penitent child of God never. The power of God which works humility caused the persecuting Saul of Tarsus to become Paul (the little). The same power also filled the mouth of

the psalmist with these words: "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Now, O humility, blessed is thy condition; salvation has entered thy portals; thou art clothed with righteousness. The mighty man of war is brought low, behold him now, a child of peace. Jesus, clothed in thy habiliments, has set up his temple in the hearts of the inhabitants of Zion, and great is the joy and rejoicing in Jerusalem.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., June 14, 1901.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., May 10, 1901.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—While I esteem all the salutations of the apostle Paul to all the saints in every place, as being very precious and replete with comfort, I have selected his salutation to the church at Corinth which reads, "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours,"—1 Cor. i. 2, as a salutation to you and to the readers of the SIGNS. The fourth verse reads, "I thank my God always on your behalf, for [which word for means because of] the grace of God which is given you by Christ Jesus."

The reason why Paul thanks God for the grace given, is because of the result, the evidence or fruits of grace. He says, "In everything ye are enriched by him in all utterance, and in all knowledge." So when we utter words which become sound doctrine, it is not we that speak, but the grace of God which is given by Christ Jesus. Divine inspiration is essential in order that we may speak the words which become sound doctrine, and all utterance as declared by the apostle is the gift of God, the result or fruit of grace. "Ye are enriched in all knowledge, so that ye come behind in no gift." And Paul goes on to say in substance that this is in order that ye may be blameless in the day of Christ, and that ye wait for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall also confirm you unto the end. Thus he would say to them that they are not left, no, not for one moment, to themselves to save themselves, either in time or eternity, but are kept by the effectual working of grace. The gifts which are by grace are the righteous obedience of faith, and this obedience or work of faith, is our meat and drink, and as such does sustain us, that is the inner man. And thus in obedience, or in doing his commandments, there is great reward. This is because all obedience is the work of faith, not our own work, but of faith, an this work of faith, is given us by the grace of God: "By grace *are* ye saved," *now* in time, through faith. And being thus saved in time by the righteousness of God, which is by faith, and which is also the gift of God by faith, we are confirmed unto the end. Now that his will and purpose regarding these things, that is this good work might be fulfilled in all the saints, our God decreed in his own one mind (and who can turn him?) that all his saints shall work, not under the ceremonial law, as given to Israel, but by the law written in their hearts, and printed in their minds. Thus, in these gospel times, both when the apostle wrote and now also, every member of his church has his several work, a work which each man shall do, so that the hand cannot say to the foot, I have no need of thee. There is a needs be, not only for every member of his body, but also for the work of each member, by which work each other member is edified in love. All

these works, collectively and severally, redound to the glory of God, because they are the gift of God unto each member. Now that his righteousness through Jesus Christ might be fulfilled in his people, Jesus himself in the beginning of the gospel, came quickly as testified to John in the Isle of Patmos, and his reward was with him, to give to every man according as his work should be. (Rev. xxii. 12.) This Scripture testifies that there is a certain amount of work which every man should do. Therefore, upon the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost was poured out according to the promise, some came to realize in their hearts (the law having been written there) that there was a work for them to do, and cried out, "Men and brethren what shall we do?"

Now having no righteousness of their own, it was essential that every man should be rewarded with grace, and the gifts of God, which are all by grace, in order that each one should do the exact thing appointed to him to do. This work was prophesied of, and when the time appointed of God had come, he, Jesus, comes quickly and rewards them according to their work; he metes out to each one the measure of faith, and all the obedience which springs from faith, and this obedience is not their own righteousness, but the work of faith, as Paul has said, "For I say, through the grace given unto me." (Notice he did not say this of himself.) Thus the reward which the Lord gave Paul preceded his work or testimony, so that Paul spake with power, the power of the Holy Ghost. Thus it was the gift of God which was given unto Paul, which spoke in and through him, saying to every man, "Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."

All will do well to read Rom. xii. 3–8. There we see that all good works are the works of faith, and not of ourselves, and that they are done according to the proportion of faith which is given as a blessing. The work of faith is not limited to what we generally esteem as church work, such as uniting with the church, repentance, baptism, assembling ourselves together, &c., but every good work, every act of obedience done, is the work of living faith, whether done by those who are visibly members of the church or not. Obedience to the law written in the heart has merit or virtue in it, because it is the work of God in the heart. Thus the poor woman who had an issue of blood for twelve years, had a work to do and a reward was given her; the Lord came quickly and relieved her, and her reward was that she touched the hem of his garment. Thus the Lord's reward did precede the work done, that is faith preceded her work, and although the multitudes did throng Jesus, yet nothing could hinder the God-given reward, or the perfect faith, and it did its perfect work, so that Jesus said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole. Her own works had all failed, she resorted to science, (the physicians) only to find that vain is the help of man.

Thus also the Lord rewarded Peter and the other apostles with the gift of healing at his own time, and we read that as Peter and John went up together to the temple, God by them did heal the impotent man, and Peter did not say we are able, and that we have healed the impotent man at our own option, but he said, It is not by our own power or holiness that this man has been made to walk.

Dear brethren, it does seem that all

enlightened minds would accept it as truth, that both the poor woman, and the impotent man, were saved, and saved here in time from their affliction, so that if it be lawful to speak at all of a time salvation, it would include these cases. The Savior had dealt faith to them both in such proportions as resulted in the work which each did, so that the woman touched the hem of his garment, and the impotent man immediately obeyed, not Peter, but God, and walked, praising God, both doing this by faith, and Peter while standing there, declared it was Jesus, the only name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved, that had given to this man this perfect soundness, in the presence of them all. So, dear children, whose only Savior is Jesus, and whose God is the Lord, let us remember that the works embraced in the words, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation," or from the delusions which abound, are not works of righteousness which we have done or can do, but are the works or righteousness of faith, and thus faith is made perfect by works, or the exercise of faith, but it is God, who by his own power has exercised this faith and made it perfect by works, for Jesus is not only the author of faith, but also its finisher, and a finished faith is a perfect faith, and it is perfected by works, it is not, as said before, our work, but the Lord's through faith. The body is dead because of sin, and therefore cannot do good works or works of obedience. But some critic may say, "Is it not your natural body of flesh and blood that is buried in baptism?" I answer yes, but the dead body does not bury itself, in baptism the body is as passive, as I might say, as a lifeless machine, held in the power of faith, and it is the power of faith which takes the body, and buries it in baptism, in the likeness of the death of the Lord, and raises it again up out of the water.

Now, dear brethren, I commit this entirely to you, I had much rather read from others, but I have felt impressed to write this, if I am in error with regard to all good works or obedience, that they have no merit in them, I desire to be informed of my error. Obedience is as a light which shines. Jesus said to his disciples, Let your light so shine, &c. Now it is God who commands the light to shine out of darkness. He commands the obedience to shine, so therefore we do not obey at our own option, but according to his own purpose and will working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight. I cannot express just what I can see in this subject, but perhaps my feeble words may stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance of these things, and cause you to write one to another concerning these great and good things. Does not faith perfected, mean faith finished? If so it is evident that Jesus finishes this faith by works, and therefore the work, as well as the faith is his, and not ours. Thus he is the author of both faith and works, and he says that he will be with us always, even unto the end of the world.

Since writing the above, I have received the SIGNS for May 15th, and see that our beloved brother Sawin has a most estimable letter upon the same subject, and it cheers me to know that my mind has been directed along with the mind of other able writers. I am pleased with all that I see in the SIGNS. Pray for us, we are sad and lonely.

Your brother,

DAVID L. McNEES.

CAMDEN, N. J., Jan. 30, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—A few days ago I was privileged to receive two very sweet letters from brother and sister Fetter, of Trenton, N. J. I have read them many times, and always enjoy them. If not asking too much, I would like to see them in the columns of the SIGNS, peradventure some other member of the household of faith may read them and rejoice in them for the truth's sake. In your hands I leave them, to do with as you see fit.

May the heavenly Father guide and direct us each and every one, and may his grace attend all who love his appearing, is the sincere prayer of your unworthy kinsman in Christ,

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

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571 CENTRE ST., TRENTON, N. J., January, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—What a blessed relation! To think that we are heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, is a thought that I can scarcely claim for myself at times, yet I have that hope that was given me when Christ revealed himself to me as the light of my life, the chiefest among ten thousand. Dear one, I know you are passing through that part of your soul's journey that is not traveled but once; the first love; the sweet faith that follows the obedience of God's command to enter into that rest that remaineth to the people of God, "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." How true it is, we cease to work when we receive a hope. The church is the resting-place of the saints. What a glorious thought to think that Christ is the chief corner-stone of this glorious resting-place. Peter says, He is a precious stone, and the poor saints find it so. "Behold I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." Peter also says of the church, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." We are of the same people, the same nation, so we may thank God together that he has shown us the way, the church, the home of the saints, and made us of that near relation that the world knows nothing of, and is above all earthly relation.

We were glad to receive a letter from you, and we should have answered it long ago, but we have not these things in our own hands. The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away, so we cannot have the things to tell, nor the impression to tell them, only as the Lord gives them, and we must wait on the Lord, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.

"Let us love, and sing, and wonder;
Let us praise the Savior's name;
He has hushed the law's loud thunder,
He has quenched Mount Sinai's flame;
He has washed us in his blood;
He has brought us home to God."

"Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Your sister in hope,

E. P. FETTER.

TRENTON, N. J., Jan. 21, 1901.

HORACE H. LEFFERTS—MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD:—To-night I feel that I must try and write to you, although how to do this I do not now know; may the Lord help me, if so, I know all will be well, and I shall write that which will be most needful to you. I feel and know that of myself it would be utterly impossible to do this, yet if it is the Lord's will, he will give to you such things as you need. My dear brother,

many times have I wrote to you in my mind since I received your most welcome letter, but have been unable to get my thoughts down on paper for you. After I received yours, and brother Round's letters, there would be day after day that I would write to you both while at my work. Many sweet seasons I have had while alone, and yet not alone, through receiving those letters. I felt that the Lord put it into your hearts to write to me, a poor worm of the dust, who has been placed aside by himself, as if all his usefulness was done; as I feel many times that it is in this world if really he has ever been of any use at all. Yet with all this, whether I am cast aside by myself or no, one thing I feel, that is, the Lord has been good to me; he has not utterly cast me off, but has many, many times remembered me with multitudes of sweet thoughts, and sweet promises to his dear children, whether I am one or not. But I have that sweet hope yet, which I would not take worlds for in exchange. But, my dear brother, this hope is not to be exchanged for anything like this, or to be cast aside for any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. This hope cannot be discarded, for it is Christ in us the hope of glory. It is Christ which is our hope, a hope that can never fail, and one that we do not want to discard or cast aside, for in it is our life, a life to live and never die, can never die, for once he died that we might live, and now he lives for evermore the life that is eternal, and that fadeth not away as doth this carnal life here below, which we are now trying to live. My dear brother, each time I read over your letter the better it seems to me, and I am glad, and have been many times, that you wrote to poor me. I am glad that you want to call me brother, but I must say that if you knew me as I know myself, you could scarcely, it seems to me, entertain this desire, yet I am glad that you have it, for I feel that the dear Lord gave it to you, and I hope you will ever entertain it.

You speak in your letter of your heavenly Father bringing you into his banqueting-house, and his banner over you being love. My dear brother, this is that first great love, and I might say you are now in your first love.

In your letter you say that you often feel that we have more trouble than should fall to our lot, and again you say that you ought not to write this way, for our heavenly Father knoweth that we have need of all these things, and he has promised that in the world we shall have tribulation. You also speak of the angel asking John what great company it was that stood around the great white throne, and of him answering, These are they who have come through great tribulation. O, how wonderful these things are, when led in the depths of them. I feel that I know something about them, and I thank God that he has led me through great tribulations, for through them have I learned things that can be learned in no other way. In speaking of the Lord having promised that in the world we shall have tribulation, not this alone does he promise, but he also says following this, But be of good cheer, I have overcome the world, and says that these things has he spoken unto us, that in him we might have peace. We must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of God. So if we would know of these things, we must pass through tribulation, yes, to know these things we must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of God, for we cannot know them

except we enter this kingdom wherein abideth all these precious things. My dear brother, you have entered once, may you be enabled to enter into these things many, many times, but each time you will find it to be through much tribulation. You may not understand this quite now; no, you cannot while you are in your first great love, but you have many things to learn yet. We cannot always remain upon the mountain top; in the valleys below look many tempting things, and we are prone to wander there, and then do we often find a desert land, wherein dwelleth no food, and we begin to faint and thirst, and before we find this food and drink again, we pass through much tribulation, and long for the Sun of righteousness to arise with healing in his wings, to give us food to satisfy our hunger, and drink to quench our thirst. When this is done we find that we are eating and drinking in the kingdom of God, and that it was through much tribulation that we entered there. I feel at times to rejoice in tribulation and afflictions, though they are not pleasant to the flesh. The psalmist says, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word." Afflictions bring back to our minds many things that we have been unmindful of, and gives us thoughts that are sweet to our soul, for we then come near to our dear Redeemer, him who suffered upon the cross, and who died in our stead, and bore our sins in his own body, that it might be said, "In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them and carried them all the days of old." If we would follow the Lord, and desire his presence, we must go where he went; we must pass through many trials and temptations as did he, but he yielded not to the many temptations, which is better than we can do at times. These things are preciously sweet to me to think about, for I have been tempted in many things, and have gone astray many times, but I find all have been for a purpose; I find that all my trials and tribulations have worked together for good, though I many times wondered why things were so, yet all things, I believe, have turned out for my good, or are turning out for my good and God's glory.

My dear brother, write again soon, let me hear from you how you are getting along. Please excuse this scribbling. May the Lord bless you.

Your brother in hope of life eternal,

CASPER G. FETTER.

SIPE SPRINGS, Texas, Feb. 8, 1901.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I feel once more like trying to write you; whether the desire is of the Lord or of the flesh you will have to judge. I know that I am a poor, weak, worthless worm, helpless and dependent, yet I do hope that I have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and that in him is strength and wisdom. My daily prayer is, "O Lord, lead me in thy way; guide and direct my steps, that I may not go astray; keep me, O Lord, and I shall be kept." I am now situated where I cannot hear preaching for the present, but I desire in this to meekly submit to the will of God. I have always been blessed with the sweet and high privilege of meeting once a month in worship with the people of God. Since coming to Texas we have had this privilege several times, but two weeks since we moved again, and at present no way is opened to attend the meetings of the saints. I read in the SIGNS of dear brethren and

sisters who have for years been deprived of this privilege. But it has seemed to be my living, the joy of meeting with the dear ones and joining in worship with them, of hearing the gospel proclaimed in its purity, Jesus presented as the only and all-sufficient Savior, together with the exhortations to obedience, all this was so delightful to hear that I ever went away strengthened and refreshed, and to me the sweetest and most sacred part of worship was to kneel with the dear ones in prayer, and implore a merciful God to lead and direct us in wisdom's ways.

By coming to Texas I have been given health and strength, for which I hope that I feel thankful, yet I get so hungry for spiritual food, and for some dear one to talk with who can understand me. But with all this I know that the God of heaven does know and hear my feeble attempts at prayer, and his promise is, "I will never leave nor forsake thee," and "in him we live and move and have our being," and when I hear some one boast of their work religion, a kind that they can work and get, and work and keep, and not work and lose, my heart swells with gratitude that I am not left to trust in an arm of flesh for my salvation, but in that God who has all power, both in heaven and earth, and who does all his pleasure, who hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. It is he that speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast. Even the winds and the sea obey him. I love that kind of work religion where God works in the hearts of his children, and bids them work out what he has worked within. He gives them the will to do, and the strength to do his will, and unto him is all the glory due. I do love to see the tree bearing fruit, and it grieves me to see one of God's dear children sowing to the flesh, knowing that as one sows so shall he reap. Can we do these things of ourselves? No. We can only shun evil through the inner prompting of the Spirit, of ourselves we can do nothing, we learn obedience only by the things we suffer, and if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him.

March 21st.—Well, I started this letter February 8th; I do not know as I should write at all, yet my feelings will run out to the dear ones in love. While I was reading brother Chick's New Year's address, I felt to say with him, "May the peace of God rule in all our hearts; may all good will and love and fellowship in the Spirit abound among all the churches." And may we all remember that we are but fallible creatures, and so bear with one another's weakness; may we look with the mantle of charity upon their imperfections. I cannot I know write a perfect letter; my great imperfections are mixed with all that I do, think or say, they cannot possibly grieve any one more than they do me, yet the good Lord has given the dear ones charity to look over my imperfections, and to still love me, even me. O, what would be my life without their love and fellowship? Without it how could I live? May the Lord bring us all to see eye to eye, and to speak the same things, and believe, all of us, the same truth; may we not strive over words to no profit, and neither add to nor take from the word of God. It seems to me better to use only scriptural terms, and leave out words which seem to wound, and things which cause confusion. Is there any word so dear to our hearts that we will cling to it regardless of results? We all believe the truth of salvation in Jesus. We all believe that he has "predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to him-

self, according to the good pleasure of his will." And he has "blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, according as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." "He hath saved and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world." "We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." And "we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Now where is there any need for the word "absolute" to be attached to predestination? And where is the need of conditional to be attached to time salvation? I would not throw stones, dear brethren and sisters, in this, because I am guilty myself, but I feel ready to lay down a mere word if needful, if it be not found in the Bible, and I find that it brings misunderstanding.

I remember that my father and a minister in conversation many years since, spoke of predestination, and my father expressed himself as being an absolute predestinarian, and the dear brother replied to him, "I wish that the brethren would drop that word absolute." My father replied, "You preach that doctrine as firmly and as fully as I ever heard it." The brother replied, "What you mean by the word is that God exercises sovereign, overruling power over all things." And indeed that was what he meant, and what both believed fully. Now all that I had ever thought about what is called "time salvation," was fully expressed in the editorials of brother Chick and brother Beebe, in the SIGNS for January first. Their words were full of admonition to prayer and watchfulness, being careful to give God all the glory. As I heard a brother say not long since, "I love the preaching of exhortation and encouragement, which stirs up our pure minds by way of remembrance, and which as the guide-posts, of which brother Chick spoke, point us in the right way." But the expression, "conditional time salvation," does imply more than we mean or believe, and in a different way, so let us lay it aside, and so seek the things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another. When I think of God's great mercy and his loving-kindness toward the children of men, it seems that our every breath should be praise to his holy name. O, how humble and loving we should be.

I must close my letter. May God bless you all, both editors and readers, is my desire. If there is one thing in this poor scribble that could hurt or wound one of the dear ones, withhold it. Cast the mantle of charity over it. If there be anything comforting to one of the Lord's little ones, give to him all the glory.

Remember a poor little one at a throne of grace.

LUCY A. SEALE.

[THE spirit of the above interesting and good letter is commendable, and if we know our own heart, we do desire to be actuated by such a lovely spirit in all we say or do. We have never desired to insist upon the use of any one word when not written in the Scriptures, but have desired to hold fast to the form of sound words which cannot be condemned. This however means more than just words; it means truth itself. We do not use the word "absolute" annexed to the word predestination, because it is needless, ad-

ding nothing to the strength of the word at all. God's predestination must be fixed and unchangeable in itself, and there is no need of saying so by adding any other word. The word "conditional" is suggestive of that which all lovers of free grace must abhor, viz: the doctrine of a salvation which depends upon ourself alone. It either involves the idea of human merit, or of human power. God's children know that they have neither. Like our sister, we would be most glad if all would drop the word. It exalts man and not God, and we do desire that God alone should be exalted in all the salvation of his people. Let us be among those who make mention that the Lord is exalted. Let the Lord alone be exalted and praised, and let man be abased.—ED.]

JAMAICA, N. Y., June 20, 1901.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—Since my arrival from attending the meeting of the Warwick Association, which convened with the New Vernon Church, I feel that I want my brethren to know what an enjoyable time I truly did have. While it is true that I met with many that were strangers to me in the flesh, it being my first visit in that section, yet I found the same hospitality manifested there as in the west or south, and the same truth contended for there that is declared by God's faithful servants elsewhere, showing that God's people are the same everywhere, having all been taught in the same school, whether they reside in North Carolina, Kentucky, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, New York or Pennsylvania, as all these parts of the country were represented at the meeting, and I was much pleased to see the unity that existed, and was made to exclaim with the psalmist, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." I truly felt it was good to be there, as our souls were made to feast on the good things at our Master's table, dispensed unto us by his servants; "wine on the lees, and well refined." For surely they all come bearing humble testimony to the truth as it is revealed to God's people. "Salvation is of the Lord," from first to finish. Yes, of a truth Jesus Christ is not only the author, but also the finisher of our faith. Surely it is he that hath begun the work, and is carrying it on, and will also finish it. This truth each poor, halting, weak one doth well know, for each has been made to realize for themselves their own impotency, and are made to rejoice only in Jesus Christ, their only Potentate, King, Lord and Lawgiver. It is he only that has triumphed gloriously, and brought in everlasting righteousness, which is imputed to his people, the bride, the Lamb's wife, who are made up out of all kindreds, tongues, nations and people; who are by nature children of wrath even as others, there being no difference in God's chosen people from the rest of Adam's ruined race, only what grace makes. Therefore they dare not exult over their fellow creatures, or glory in anything except Christ Jesus the Lord their righteousness. What a blessed thing it is that they are made to realize their destitution, that they are naked, having no righteousness to cover themselves with; all their own righteousness has become as filthy rags in their sight, but are made to hope and rejoice only in the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, who of God is made unto them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Jesus only could redeem each and every one that was given unto the Son by God the Father in the covenant of redemption. These the

Son hath redeemed by his own precious blood, they being his, he had the right to redeem them, and no one else could, and in due time each one is made wise unto salvation, and this is done alone by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit in quickening them into divine or eternal life. They, in their natural, unregenerate state, are dead in trespasses and sins, but being quickened by the Spirit, they are made to feel, see and realize their guilt and just condemnation, and the very things that they do so sorely stand in need of, namely, the salvation that is provided for them, and they lay hold on Jesus Christ, there being salvation in no other. For they now know that his is the only name given under heaven or among men whereby any poor, guilty sinner must be saved. And what a joy pervades their soul when by faith they are enabled to receive the things of Jesus, that the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, takes and shows unto them. Then they are made to rejoice in him their all and in all, and truly worship him in Spirit and in truth, having no confidence in the flesh. Having already found that their own efforts are all vain and futile, they are now enabled to view their own righteousness as filthy rags, and not sufficient to cover their nakedness, but are enabled to hope in the perfect righteousness of their Elder Brother, which is imputed to them, their sins having been imputed to him, and forever put away by him. This produces a joy that this world can neither give nor take away, and a manifestation of such love to them causes them to desire to honor him and glorify him in their bodies and spirits, which are his. Yes, all the new covenant people of God have his law written in their hearts, and imprinted in their mind, and have no need that any man teach them to know the Lord, for it is declared that they shall all know him, from the least to the greatest of them, (what a consoling thought) and they are constrained by the love of Christ to do the things that are right and well-pleasing in his sight. This is the only impelling force which causes God's people to render unto him that service that is well-pleasing in his sight. They only work out that which is wrought within. God is only praised in his own works, and his saints do bless him; it is they who speak of the glories of his kingdom, for unto no others have these things been revealed. They only talk of his power, for unto no others does he manifest his power. The natural man boasts only in his own supposed power and goodness, and being ignorant of God's righteousness, goes about to establish his own righteousness, and glories in the works of his own hands. But not so with God's humble poor, when they glory it must always be in the Lord, who alone is omnipotent, but man is impotent, and blessed is his eyes who hath been made to see these things.

But I must close, for if you should take the time to read what I have already written you may become weary. Why I have written as I have I know not, but have hurriedly put down just such thoughts as come into my mind. Do with this as you think best, and all will be right with me, for I know that your judgment is better than mine.

Yours unworthily,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

LAWRENCE, Mass., June 5, 1901.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have a desire to write all whom I met at Hopewell and in New York city, as some expressed a wish to hear from me through the SIGNS. I had such a pleasant season with you I

feel to say with David, "My cup runneth over." It made my heart glad to see the love and fellowship you manifested for me. I do feel that this people is my people, and their God my God. I want to live, die and be buried with them. It is with you I hear the joyful sound of the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation. How beautifully each gift in the ministry set forth the power and wisdom of God, and declared the wonderful works of the Lord in saving his people from their sins. I was so richly blessed that each sermon was a feast, and although I could not write one of the sermons I heard, yet the witness within testified so clearly that it was the truth, I hope in this letter I shall be able to express the same things. It is the work of God when we believe on Jesus, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. We cannot say Jesus is the Lord only by the Holy Ghost. What a sweet song of praise rises up in our hearts as we are given the assurance that we have been taught of the Lord. It is always a new song every time we sing it. I was so happy in your company; I was lifted above the cares and worries of this life, and had no thought of time. It was another of those precious seasons which the Lord has given me from time to time since I was taught that "salvation is of the Lord." I feel that I have the most reason to praise and thank my God for all his goodness to me, and I am so glad I have not got to look to myself, for it cannot be found in the flesh. No good thing dwells there, and I have to learn this over and over again. I have to be led in a way to make me look unto Jesus, where it has pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell. If I had the ability to write all the way the Lord leads me, each one of you would find a companion. I have never been able to write easily of the deep sorrow for sin which often fills my heart, and how I long to be free from it. How full of fears I am when darkness overtakes me, and am at my wits end. There are groanings which cannot be uttered. In all my distresses my cry is unto the Lord, and in his own time and way he delivers me, and it is done in such a way my song every time is, "The Lord hath triumphed gloriously." "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth forever." I feel that I have been greatly blessed in meeting with so many of you, and could not realize how near my writings had brought me to you until I met you face to face. Another place in my experience where all praise must be given to God. He gave me the words to write, and gave you the comfort as you read. In these experiences we dwell together in unity, and how good and pleasant it is. Our hearts are knit together in love, and we prefer Jerusalem above our chief joy. We have no continuing city here, but we seek one to come. It is a great blessing when we are made to look upon Zion, that wonderful and beautiful city, whose length, breadth, depth and height are equal. We walk about her and mark well her bulwarks, for God has appointed salvation for walls and bulwarks. The righteous nation which keepeth the truth shall enter in and dwell in this strong city. We cannot help telling it to the generation following. We hope we are dwelling in this city of our God, because Jesus came to save sinners, and we know he finished the work the Father gave him to do. It was the will of the Father that of all he had given him he should lose nothing. The righteousness of Christ has been imputed to us, for he bore our sins in his

own body on the tree. It is truly a wonderful love he has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. "We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is." Christ has been wrought in our souls the hope of glory, and it purifies us from our own works, and takes away our confidence in the flesh. When my mind is led into these precious truths I often find these words springing up in my heart, "My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee. My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long." It is such a delightful theme to sing unto the Lord, and talk of his righteousness; I wish I could express what is in my heart.

I know I am writing a long letter, but I want to say I had a very pleasant journey home, and found my sister improved. I would like to have attended the Warwick Association, but still I feel it was best for me to come home. The Lord may have that in store for me another year.

This letter is for each and every one of you, and I hope I have said nothing in it which will make one of you wish I had not written. I shall be very glad to hear from you if you have it in your mind to write me. I am still enjoying the sweet season we had together, and would like to come right back and have it all over again. I would like to thank each of you who made it so pleasant in your homes for me, and bestowed so many favors upon me. Now may God bless you all, lead your minds into the truth, and enable us to walk humbly before him, in all things giving thanks unto him who is alive for evermore.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan. 23, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I inclose a letter from sister Hannah Jenkins, which seems to me worthy of publication in the SIGNS. I have not asked her permission to publish it, but she asked me to throw the mantle of charity over it, and I do not know of any better way of doing so. I am sure that she will be willing, if you judge it well to do so. I sometimes wonder if I really know what a thankful heart is, and I cannot believe that I do. I know what it is to be glad, but gladness and thankfulness are entirely different things. It seems to me that I am alone, and not one like me. I am grieved to be as I am, yet I cannot seem to change myself. I have so many inward foes, they hinder me from enjoyment. I want to see you, one and all.

With love, I remain your sister in hope,

MARY TERRY.

YORK, Pa., Dec. 30, 1900.

MY DEAR SISTER MARY:—This Sunday morning I will attempt to write something in answer to yours received almost two weeks ago, but I am fully aware that it will not be in answer to yours, still it will inform you that I hold you in sweet remembrance, and would write a good letter in return if I could. My mind does seem at times almost a blank in regard to the things which I trust I do love more than any or all things this world can afford, and these precious things seem so far off, I feel to be cut off, in a great measure, from the precious things of the gospel, and cannot read with much comfort, nor write nor hear when I do have the privilege of listening to the word preached, yet I feel to know that it is the truth, and there is still strength given to press forward, although there is a continual halting,

doubting and questioning, as to whether these things are mine. I often feel that they are for others, and not for me. This sweet hymn was in my thoughts this morning, and I found myself singing it:

"But O, I long to soar
Far from the sphere of mortal joys,
And learn to love thee more."

I often think of the words of the sweet singer of Israel: "My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord." I look back over the way and think of many times when my meditation was sweet, and "Jesus all the day long, was my joy and my song," when I loved to read my Bible, and sing songs of praise unto his holy name. Now and for several months past, almost years, it has not been as it was, and the songs of praise are hardly heard, for it seems to me that I cannot sing, for I do not feel the melody in my heart. I often think of those who were carried away captive, and the enemy it is said, required of them a song, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. And they said, How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? So I feel, dear sister, and also as they also said, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." So in all the journey along life's narrow way this dear hope in his mercy is still with me, and has proved as an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast. This inheritance cannot be mortgaged nor wasted nor sold; it cannot be forgotten nor given up. I always go back to that time when I first felt that great love shed abroad in my heart, and first tasted that his name was gracious, and I was made to hope in his mercy; I was very young, but a child in years. Now the Lord has kept me all these years, and when my feet seemed to be going in just the opposite way from the way of holiness, how gently he has drawn me back by the cords of his love, even to his feet, with the prayer to be kept there, and nearer and closer to him.

I cannot understand how any one can ever be afraid of me, as though I were in advance of them, for I am so slow to learn of these things; I seem often void of understanding, all must be so plainly set forth, and the plainest and simplest language has always seemed the most beautiful to me. I think that I understand your feelings, for I have felt the same toward others. I feel that you too have chosen the good part, and I have a fellowship for you. The expression of your desires and aspirations found an echo in my own heart. I long for the same things sometimes with a strong desire, at other times I feel more passive, and believe that whatever state I am in, it is well and right, for so he wills it, and not a single shaft can hit unless the God of love sees fit. I know much of the pride of which you speak, it troubles me in the same way, it seems to me that the word has many and different meanings, and I never could give them as I see them and feel them. You feel to be greatly troubled with pride, yet you do earnestly covet the best gifts also. It seems to me that faith is what I covet and long for; I want faith to look to him at all times, and I do desire that he will keep me near him, safe and sheltered from all harm. I want faith to look to him in the darkest hour when tossed with tempest and not comforted. I do believe that he is at the helm, and that he will at last bring me into the desired haven. I want faith to feel that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him. I want faith to believe that

he rules in heaven and in earth, and holds the winds in his hand, and that he is all-wise and omnipotent. He does in very deed dwell with men on earth, the sparrow does not fall without him, and there is no searching of his understanding. We can go to him with our trials, and tell him what we could not utter to our dearest friend, feeling that he knoweth our frame, that he remembereth that we are dust, and will not turn us away empty. O, may I ever feel an abiding trust and faith in him, and may I ever rejoice in his dear name, which is above every name given under heaven and among men. By this name we must be saved. May we ever be found watching.

I thought of you all this morning going to hear brother Badger, and desired much to be with you; I had thought perhaps that I could, but circumstances would not permit. I would love to hear brother Badger again, for his preaching has always been sweet to me. He has the gift to set forth these things in an earnest manner.

I have never got entirely weaned from the dear ones in Philadelphia; I did love to be among them, but what God wills is best, and I desire to be content. I see much of what great things are expected to be accomplished during this new century, but with all the wisdom of men they cannot even make a blade of grass, and there is nothing new under the sun, and in the hands of God must all things, great and small, ever be.

I trust you will throw the mantle of charity over this, and write again, I am always very glad to hear from you.

I remain as ever your sister,

HANNAH L. JENKINS.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., April 25, 1901.

B. L. BEEBE—VERY DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE:—I notice in the last number of the SIGNS, notice of the death of your brother, Elder Wm. L. Beebe. I am sorry to hear the sad news, but hope that your loss is his eternal gain. I was not personally acquainted with him, but reading his publications in the SIGNS had made me feel that I was really acquainted with him though not in the flesh, yet in the Spirit. His style of writing was not with man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and with power, and he felt no confidence in the flesh. The good Lord spared him long to go forth trusting in God. It was as God said to Abraham in the vision, "Fear not, Abraham, for I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." The words were put into his mouth that he should say, and in obedience to the command he was strengthened in the inner man to stand upon the walls of Zion proclaiming salvation by grace. The Lord blessed him in the discharge of his heavenly calling, in feeding the flock of the pasture, for which Jesus had shed his blood. He has finished his course, and kept the faith, and henceforth there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give him at that day. He was made a sweet singer to the soul of the people of God. But it is so hard to part from our loved ones in the flesh, and I do sympathize with you in your bereavement. It is true we will no longer read from his able writings, but we hope to remember him, as we do your dear, beloved father, who stood firm unto the end. He had put on the breastplate of righteousness, and for an helmet the hope of salvation, and the garment which the Lord had given him. He was clad with zeal as a cloak, and he stood

firm against all opposition to truth, and for the same truth the dear editors are still contending; the old landmarks are still maintained, there is no unusual sound, but a contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. I pray God, dear editors, that you may be spared to wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon. The SIGNS come to me laden with such good tidings from the Master's table, it strengthens the inner man, and builds me up in the most holy faith, which I trust has been revealed to me. I send you money for the SIGNS another year. I trust that I may be spared to read them, but if not, may the will of God be done on earth as in heaven. This is at your disposal. Remember a poor sinner at a throne of grace.

Your brother in hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

WORTHINGTON, Minn., Dec. 10, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I esteem you very highly, but not in an earthly parentage, but in a heavenly, and for Jesus' sake. It is not in body but in spirit, and his Spirit is Christ in you. I feel, dear brother, glad to own this relation because they all are taught of Jesus, and they all know that they are poor and unworthy sinners. This is a very necessary thing to know, for the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Dear brother, you know the Lord's people are all taught of him, and this makes them dear one to another. When I read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, my heart is filled with love to the writers. When I read brother Bartley's article in number twenty-two, of the present volume, I felt as though I would love to talk to him, because he so plainly described the God I love, it made my poor heart rejoice; I felt as though I would like to write to him, but I felt as though he might not be able to read my writing, for I am such a poor scribe, and especially I cannot write of the things pertaining to Jesus our Lord. Sometimes I feel as though I never knew the love of God, still I do love his people, because they are so much better than I am, and in their company is the only place on earth where I delight to be. I may have some natural partiality toward Old School Baptists, but there are no other people in this world that I love as I do them. I am placed here in a town of about twenty-five hundred inhabitants, and I am an object of pity in the eyes of the world around me. They are too wise. I get lonely, because we can take no part with any of the churches here, nor in their doings. You may judge that we are as speckled birds, this is my feeling as I write this, and so are all that are so placed in this world, but it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, and go on as he pleases; all these things are of the Lord. I do pray that the Lord Jesus will reconcile my will to his during the few years that I have to remain here. My three score years and ten are gone. Did not the Lord guide me and direct me, I should be forever lost, but what the Lord said to Paul is what holds me up. "My grace is sufficient for you." It is the power and grace of our God, and of our Savior Jesus Christ, that keeps his children, and could but one of them be lost, then I believe that hell would conquer heaven.

> "Our God might as well his being quit
> As a promise break or a word forget."

He declares the end from the beginning, and the days of man are numbered.

I should like to come east again. Elder Durand baptized me at Fishing Creek, Md.

Yours in love,

H. JAMES.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1901.

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EDITORS:

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

LUKE XIII. 6-9.

SISTER Lucinda B. Brewster, of Oxford, N. Y., has requested that we present some considerations concerning the words found in Luke xiii. 6-9. This Scripture narrates the parable of the fig tree, planted in a vineyard, which when the man who planted it came to it seeking fruit, and had found none, he commanded to be cut down as a thing which cumbered the ground, but the dresser of it entreated that it might be spared yet one year more, and if then it bore no fruit, it should be cut down. From many Scriptures we have no doubt that this relates to the Jewish nation and system. In the prophecy of Isaiah, fifth chapter, the Lord compares that nation to a vineyard, over which he had exercised great care, and upon which he had bestowed much labor, and in which he nevertheless found no fruit such as he had a right to expect to find. When he expected the ripe fruit he found only wild grapes. That is, he found perversity and rebellion, and all that was evil in his sight, rather than any good fruit. In Matthew xxi. 19, is recorded an incident in the life of our Savior, similar in its lessons to the parable of which we are especially speaking. The Lord found a fig tree on which was no fruit, when he and the disciples sought fruit, and the fig tree was cursed from that time. And so Jesus wept over Jerusalem, because of their rebellion and hardness of heart. And it is said that the gospel must first be preached unto the Jews, and then because they rejected it, the apostles were directed to turn unto the Gentiles. All these Scriptures do not at all imply that the Lord, who knows the end from the beginning, is disappointed as men are disappointed, because of their insufficient knowledge of the future, but it shows forth the mercy and long-suffering of God to the unthankful and the froward. In every way the rebellion of man is set forth in the word. By all his dealings with the Jews, our God brings to light the depravity, iniquity and opposition of the human heart, to him and his will. Men could not say that the truth had not been set forth among them, or that the God of heaven had not declared his will plainly among them, or that space had not been given them for repentance, if indeed there were any possibility of repentance in them. If they continued in their wickedness, it was plainly revealed by all these things that it was because, though light had come into the world, men loved darkness rather than light. God dealt with Israel as a nation, as men would deal with the fig tree, but still they were but the degenerate plant of a strange vine, and all the outward cultivation which they had received in all their history, only made this to appear the more plainly. Grace was not in their hearts, they were not partakers of the divine life, real sorrow for sin they had never known, and therefore all that was done to them in the providence of God only served to bring out the fact that they were wholly evil, and that continually. Our God had spared Israel unto

that generation, and in all their generations they had been filling up their cup of iniquity, that upon that generation might come all the righteous blood that they had shed in all the generations of their national history.

If indeed the grace of God had really been bestowed upon them, if his Spirit had been really in their hearts, then the warnings, reproofs, admonitions, chastisements, and, on the other hand, the long-suffering and patience of the Lord would have had some effect upon them to produce repentance and a turning with confession to God, but that they were wholly a carnal people was made apparent by all the dealings of the Lord with them as a nation. According to the parable, they had been spared not one year, but many years. Read the fifth chapter of Isaiah.

The parable speaks not of the heart-felt dealings of God with his spiritual people who know him in the pardon of their sins, but of his providential dealings in judgment, with that unregenerate and stiff-necked people, which in the end culminated in their swift destruction as a nation. When the spiritual gospel came to them they had no place for it. When Jesus came as he did, an humble man of sorrows, they could not recognize him, and preferred Barabbas to the blessed Lord. The true heart that was in them spoke when they cried, Crucify! crucify him! and release unto us Barabbas. It had done no good to dig around the fig tree, and water and manure it. Had it been the right kind of a fig tree, all this would have produced good fruit. God's word does have effect upon the spiritual, but it has no effect upon the natural man, no matter how much religion he may profess. The Jews, with all their carnality and rebellion of heart against God, yet made great profession of being his, but their profession was as the wild vine, it never could lead to spiritual fruit which should be pleasing to God, and, as said before, all the dealings of God with them only served to make this the more manifest.

Perhaps our sister has been troubled lest she should be that barren fig tree. No doubt many of the Lord's humblest ones have often feared the same thing concerning themselves. Israel naturally never had any such fears; no outward nominal professor ever knows any such fears. The very moment that one begins to fear lest he or she be but a barren fig tree, having the profession without the fruit, that moment the evidence is plain that they are not mere nominal professors. The dead have not life enough to fear that they are dead; the living fear. The dead know not anything; the living know how weak and imperfect they are, they know how precious is the fruit of the Spirit, and so they greatly desire it, and because of this great desire arises the fear that it does not appear in them. Our sister, if she has such fears, need not fear. If indeed she has no such fears, she might well fear. This seems like a paradox, but it is only one among many Bible and spiritual paradoxes, which the people of God alone know. C.

MATTHEW XII. 43-45.

A SISTER asks about Matthew xii. 43–45.

In this parable the Savior speaks of the unclean spirit going out of a man. Some two or three years since, we wrote something concerning this in connection with the binding of the strong man by the stronger, and so will just say here that we do not doubt that this parable also relates to the Jews as a people, and to their condition at that time. At one

time they had seemed ready to receive the Savior, and to crown him their King. Once they strewed his way with palm branches, and shouted "Hosanna, to the King of the Jews." In but two or three days the same people were crying, Crucify him! The unclean spirit for a time, seemed to have gone out of them; their persecution had ceased for a time, but soon, because the better spirit of grace, and fear of the Lord was not in them, the spirit of hatred and enmity came back, and asserted itself with more extreme malevolence and rage. Thus it brought with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself. And the last state of that people was worse than at first. There appears a warning against false and fleshly religion in this. Modern revivals often induce men to make a profession of godliness, who never knew its reality and power. Soon this zeal, having nothing to support it any longer, dies out, and then one of two things is apt to result, either the man becomes more careless and reckless in his life than before, or else he becomes skeptical of all religion. If, however, he continues in his zeal, it soon degenerates into a hatred and persecution of those who would exalt grace, and give all glory to God. How different with him who has really felt the power of grace; it abides with him. The unclean spirit does not go out but it is bound, and it is bound within him. It troubles him with his presence, but it is bound, it does not, and cannot reign any more. By its presence he is often made ashamed and distressed, and continually he realizes his dependence upon the power of the stronger man who has come into the house and reigns in it and over it. The coming in of this stronger man is the new birth to that man. The house has another ruler.

Our sister also asks where and when is Satan transformed into an angel of light? It has been our view that this is true all the time. Temptation would not have much effect upon the child of God if it came in its true colors. Sin would always be hateful if it appeared to them as it really is. If indeed Satan be such a looking personage as he is pictured to be, no one could be allured by him, all would start back with horror from him. Cloven hoofs, and horns, and tail, would present no attractions to any man, but he comes in appearance as an angel of light whenever he does come, and so he deceives, if possible, the very elect. No untruth could make headway among the people of God if it did not come under the garb of truth, and the avenue by which it generally enters into the church is human reason. It says, "This is reasonable." Thus the faith of the Galatians was undermined by men who taught that the law certainly must be good, and ought to be kept, and so secretly threw grace out altogether. It is the same in all cases. We trust that this may prove of some satisfaction to the sisters. C.

PLEASE BE SURE

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

JOHN X. 9.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE :—If it is not too much for me to ask, I would like to have your views through the SIGNS on John x. 9. especially on the last part of the verse, *and shall go in and out and find pasture.* Your compliance with this request will greatly oblige your brother, in hope of eternal life,

WM. P. ROBERTSON.

FRENCH'S ISLAND, Indiana, Nov. 10, 1858.

REPLY.

The text proposed for consideration reads, "I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture." Among the numerous figures employed in the inspired volume to set forth the relations of our Lord Jesus Christ to his people, and the unspeakable benefits resulting to the saints from such relations, we have the very familiar figure of a shepherd and sheep. The prophet Isaiah says, "Behold the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom." And the psalmist says, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." In the connection of our text, our Lord Jesus Christ claims that he is this Shepherd, and consequently that he is the Lord God. Divine Justice recognized him in this character, in the words of Zechariah, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn my hand upon the little ones." This prediction was fulfilled in the person and offering of our divine Redeemer. He says in our context, "I am the good Shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." Again, "I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep." The prophets assert, and the apostle repeats the declaration, that "All we, like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all," who like sheep had gone astray; and as a consequence, "We are returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls."

But the Shepherd and Bishop has not only taken on him the iniquities of all his sheep, and borne them in his own body on the tree, laid down his life for his sheep, but his work which was before him, was also to gather them with his arm, and to carry them in his bosom; and as the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, he leads them to living fountains, and into green pastures where they shall feed and lie down.

When Jesus spake the parable recorded in the first five verses of this chapter, unto the Jews, they understood not what he said unto them. Then said Jesus unto them again, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door; by me if any man enter in he shall be saved."

Three important ideas are expressed. First, Christ is the door by which all his sheep enter the spiritual sheepfold. Second, all who enter the sheepfold by him shall be saved, and all who enter by any other way are thieves and robbers, and shall perish. Third, all who enter by him shall go in and out and find pasture.

1. Christ is the door of his sheep, and the only way by which his sheep could be lawfully delivered from the bondage of the law, cleansed from guilt and pollution, and brought into the liberty of the gospel.

"All we like sheep had gone astray," had trespassed, and were lawful captives, held by a just and righteous law for the trespass committed. Divine Justice, as a porter at our prison door, refused to open the prison to us; but to him our Shepherd, the porter opened; he having laid down his life for the sheep with all their iniquities laid on him. As he had redeemed them, the porter opened the door to him, and with the door unbarred and legally opened, he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out, and having thus delivered them from bondage and wrath, he putteth forth his own sheep, and only his own, and having done this, he goeth before them, (namely, his own sheep.) And the sheep, his own sheep, follow him, and by him, as their door, they enter into his sheepfold. Led out of the Jewish sheepfold, in which they were held, by their Shepherd to whom the porter had opened, they are made experimentally familiar with their Shepherd's voice; it has strong and irresistible attractions, for hearing his voice, they follow him, and as his followers they enter by him in to the gospel fold, to which also *he must* bring all his other sheep, which were not of the Jewish fold, from the Gentile tribes and kindreds of the earth, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd. Through him, as the door of the sheep, they are led out of their prison, and into their liberty.

2. All who enter the sheepfold by him, shall be saved. This declaration is plain and positive, and securely embraces all the sheep and lambs of our Lord Jesus Christ. As he laid down his life for them, he has redeemed them from all iniquity, all their iniquities being by the Father laid on him, and he having put away their sins by the sacrifice of himself, he has risen from the dead for their justification. Has put them forth from condemnation and wrath, their life being in him, and calleth them as his own sheep by name, having a perfect knowledge of them; even as the Father knoweth me, so know I the Father, and I lay down my life for the sheep. The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." And he knoweth them as perfectly as his Father knoweth him, and as he knoweth the Father. By his knowledge, therefore shall he justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities, and "In him shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory." Not the children of the flesh, for they are not the children of God, but the children of the promise, are counted for the seed. "My sheep hear my voice, I know them and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." It follows, beyond a question, THEY SHALL BE SAVED.

3. "And shall go in and out and find pasture." Brother Robertson desires us to dwell particularly on this part of the text, but we can perhaps convey the view we entertain as well in few words. As our brother resides in a pastoral country among the flocks of Indiana, he knows that a sheepfold is a place for the sheep to be folded for safety and comfort in the winter, or when it is not safe or comfortable for them to feed in the open pasture. As their circumstances may require, the good Shepherd will lead them forth into the green pastures, by the still but living waters which John saw streaming from the throne of God and the Lamb, clear as crystal, and cause them even to lie down in green pastures in perfect safety, but

when the chilling east wind beats, and the driving tempest howls, or the winter snow and ice cover the grass, and when the ravening wolves are prowling around for prey, the careful Shepherd causes them to pass under his rod or crook, that he may see distinctly that every sheep and lamb is cared for, he brings them into the fold or shelter, where they are not to fast or starve, for there also the Shepherd has wholesome food for them, well suited to their needs. Thus they go *in* to the fold or shelter, and *out* into the green fields, and find pasture. They do not go out of Christ, or out of the bounds of his sovereign saving grace, for their life is hid with Christ in God, so that when Christ shall appear they shall appear with him in glory. But they are sometimes in the furnace of afflictions, and sometimes on the mount, sometimes in fiery trials, and sometimes in the banqueting-house, but in all their apparent vacillations they shall find pasture. The Lord is their Shepherd; they shall not want.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., November 15, 1858.

SELECTED.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May 16, 1901.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I ask you to publish the following letter written by Mr. G. Hazlerigg, to the editor of the *Gospel Standard*, London, England, and published in the number for May. Mr. Hazlerigg was editor of that magazine some years ago, and is a very clear writer of the truth of the gospel, as that truth is expressed in the inspired Scriptures, and as it appears and is witnessed to in the experience of the Lord's people. I feel glad and thankful when I see the Lord's witnesses from different and distant parts of the earth testifying to the same things, showing that those who are brought fully and clearly into the truth are, as they were of old, "of one heart and of one soul," and of one judgment.

It will be seen that the subject upon which Mr. Hazlerigg has spoken so clearly and definitely, is one upon which the SIGNS has clearly and definitely given the same testimony, declaring it to be the truth of the Scriptures, and the experience and belief of the Old School Baptists, that the obedience of the child of God to the precepts of the gospel does not depend upon his own will, but upon the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. I hope this testimony will be beneficial to those brethren who have been bewildered upon this subject.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

A PUZZLING QUESTION.

DEAR EDITOR:—My desire is, I hope, to deal fairly and kindly by my fellow men. A sinner, such as I am, ought to be very tender. Now my persuasion is that the same words may be used by different persons in different senses. Thus the psalmist's words, in Psalm xci., "Shall give his angels charge over thee," breathe a sweet promise of protection in the ways of God. As quoted by the devil they breathe temptation and presumption. So a question such as, "Has God said?" may breathe a doubt, or may express a desire to know what God has spoken. Thus the question, "If not, why not?" as applied to spiritual things, and actings of the mind, may be a question merely designed to call a person's attention to what may be stumbling-blocks in the path of a coming sinner seeking after peace. This, when accompanied with a mention of various stumbling-blocks, and a ministerial endeavor to remove them, may be very useful. Thus a poor seek-

ing sinner may be stumbled at the doctrine of election, as if it opposed the coming sinner, instead of his seeing that it is, to such an one, really an encouraging and confirming truth. But on the other hand, this question, "If not, why not?" may be designed to represent that the only hindrance is in a want of willingness. In this sense it seems to cut directly at the truth and a gracious experience. Let us consider it in this last point of view, as a question put concerning unregenerate men, and also concerning those already partakers of the grace of God. As to the former, the Scriptures give us a ready answer. Paul shall supply it from Romans vii.: "I am carnal, sold under sin." This is a description of himself, as he was born into the world, and without the grace of Christ. Now the natural man cannot see the things of the Spirit of God; they are foolishness unto him. The carnal mind, too, is in a state of enmity against God, and is utterly alienated from him. Therefore the preaching of the cross is foolishness unto a man as he is born of Adam. How then can a man, unless he is born again, have one good desire, or be able to perform one spiritually good thing? The inability is complete. He is fallen in Adam, so that he cannot possibly obey the law. He is not born again in Christ, how then can he possibly live the true life of a christian, or perform anything of a truly spiritual nature? To live and move and have his being in a new creation, he must be a new creature. Well then without multiplying words, the question seems preposterous as asked concerning the natural man. It seems sadly hurtful as asked, in the sense we are writing about concerning the child of God. This man has a new will. A principle of grace, however small, has been planted in him. Through this principle of grace there is a will in him to do good. "I would do good," says Paul. The question, "If not, why not?" in the sense we are examining, would require the following words to be, "therefore I do it." But Paul writes very differently: "Evil is present with me." "The good which I would I do not, the evil which I would not, that I do." This mortifying inability to do what he would, this painful inward working of an all-opposing evil, pressed out of his heart the groaning cry, "O wetched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "I would believe, repent and pray," says the poor, self-burdened sinner, "but I cannot. I would embrace a bleeding, risen Jesus in the arms of faith, I would stand where Simeon stood, and sing with David of forgiveness, but I cannot." All the true experienced children of God speak the same language of inability. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things which ye would." Mr. Newton in one of his hymns says,

"I would, but can't, repent,
Though I endeavor oft;
I would, but cannot love,
I would, but cannot rest
In God's most holy will."

"O, could I but believe,
Then all would easy be;
I would, but cannot—Lord relieve;
My help must come from thee."

Mr. Hart says,

"When good I would perform,
Through fear or shame I stop;
Corruption rises like a storm,
And blasts the promised crop."

We turn to the Scriptures, they are the infallible rule of judgment. Go to the poor woman in the synagogue, bowed together for eighteen years and unable to lift herself up. Had she no will? Yes, but no ability, till Christ gave it. Did

not the poor man at the pool of Bethesda want to plunge quickly in? Yes, but he was lame, and could not. These are patterns of creature helplessness and divine grace. But need we multiply words and examples? Our conclusion is that the question, "If not, why not?" if asked to stir up inquiry, and accompanied with ministerial assistance in the discovery and removal of obstacles, is all very well, but if asked as though all that was wanting was a willingness, then the question aims itself against the word of God, and the invariable experiences of the God-taught family of God.

Yours affectionately in Christ,

G. HAZLERIGG.

WILLOUGHBY HOUSE, LEICESTER, March 22, 1901.

CHURCH LETTER.

The Salem Old School Baptist Church, to the sister churches composing the Delaware Old School Baptist Association, convening with the Cow Marsh Church, May 22d, 23d and 24th, 1901, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—In this our annual message, we feel that we can come to you with abundant reason for rejoicing, because it has pleased an all-wise and omnipotent God to keep us and guide us through another year of our earthly pilgrimage. We are glad, and feel to rejoice that we have the privilege of imparting to you a message bearing the good news that we believe we have felt the power of his guiding hand and protecting arm, through every trial and every tribulation. This we do, not with boasting, but, we trust, as humble sheep, feeling grateful to their Shepherd. We realize that in this message we can only come to you with the same old story. We have nothing new to offer. We know of but one story to tell, and that the story of Jesus, as, we trust, we have seen him. He has been our comforter and our protector, our shield and our guide. In him we feel that we have a good Shepherd who comes to us in the hour of greatest need, speaking comforting words to a sorrowing heart, and applying soothing ointment to a bleeding wound. When in trouble and distress, he bids us lie down in green pastures beside still waters, and we are comforted. In him we feel that we have a good Shepherd who loves and cares for his sheep. When our sorrow is greatest, when our burdens are heaviest, when our afflictions the most trying, it is then that we feel that the greatest blessing comes to us, for the heavier the burden the greater must be the power to relieve that burden, and we are made to rejoice in the name of the Lord who hath shown us that he alone is the deliverer, and that he alone can open our eyes to the glory and majesty of his kingdom. We are ever conscious of our shortcomings and our misgivings. We realize that when we would do good, evil is present with us, so that we cannot do the things that we would. We realize that we have seen the ends of the earth, that we have no strength of our own, and that we are entirely dependent upon the merciful hand of our Lord and Master. We have been made to see our own weakness, and to feel the power of God, because we feel that we have been made to see ourselves as we really are. We hope and trust that it is so, because it is a teaching that we shall never forget, and O, what a rich blessing to be taught of the Lord! To occupy a place in the house of the Lord is to rest upon a rock. What a sweet and precious privilege! What joy and comfort there is in feeling that we have been given this privilege. It is where brethren can unite in songs of praise, the bond of union being love. A house of one faith and one hope, where love and fellowship makes peace and harmony.

Love and fellowship, peace and harmony, are with us here in our own little church. This is fully manifest in our Sunday meetings and our social gatherings as well as our every day life. We meet together every Sunday for praise and prayer, and we feel that our meetings are profitable and fruitful, and that the Lord is with us, directing our steps. It is a sweet comfort to hear the brethren tell of their experience, and how the Lord has dealt with them. Every fifth Sunday is our regular appointment, when our pastor, Elder J. N. Badger, is with us. His visits to us are seasons of love and pleasure. We enjoy his visits; we love his company. We are also often visited by ministers and brethren from sister churches, whose visits are a source of great pleasure and enjoyment to us, because they always come with the same word upon their lips, and the same song in their mouths. They bring us no new doctrine, they bring us no new theories, they come preaching Jesus, and him crucified, they come telling the old story of their weakness, their sorrows, their trials, their tribulations and afflictions, and how, as they trust, it has pleased the Lord to raise them up out of an horrible pit of miry clay, and place their feet upon a rock. How sweet and precious this doctrine is! It comes to us as glad tidings of great joy. It is food for the hungry soul, it is rest for a weary mind.

In closing we extend to the sister churches composing the Delaware Old School Baptist Association, an invitation to meet with us in Philadelphia, Pa., at the next annual meeting of the association, in 1902. We hope our invitation will be accepted, that we may have the pleasure of entertaining the brethren and sisters of the several churches of the association, together with those who may be pleased to visit us

from other churches of the same faith and order, and unite in the worship and praise of the Lord and his glorious name. It is needless to say that with this invitation goes a hearty welcome.

Done by order of the church, at our regular church meeting held March 30th, 1901.

SINCE our last yearly meeting we are called upon to mourn the great loss by death of our dearly beloved brother and faithful pastor, Elder William L. Beebe. Words are inadequate to convey the deep sorrow which we feel in our, to us, sad bereavement. Our very souls were so knit together in love to him in sweet christian fellowship, and in suffering, that it might with propriety be said of him, as by one of old, The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. The Lord in his goodness and mercy has taken him to himself, "to shine, as we firmly believe, as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars forever and ever." We desire to exclaim with Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." His obituary which appeared in the eighth number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, written by Elder John McConnell, speaks in more eloquent language than we can command the sentiments of our hearts, and the appreciation in which we held him as an able minister of the New Testament.

During the time that he labored serving the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, he held monthly meetings in the locality in which the Beulah Church is now organized, and a number was baptized by him at that time. In the year 1889 the church was organized, and called for a council to recognize them as a gospel church. The council was composed of Elder Wm. Pollard, deacons D. Campbell and D. McAlpine, of the Covenanted Church of Canada; Elder Benton Jenkins, of Middletown, and Elder Wm. L. Beebe, of Warwick, N. Y. Elder Beebe from that time until his demise continued our devoted and faithful pastor, visiting us yearly, except last year, having been prevented by sickness to attend ever since. We can truthfully say that the Lord wonderfully blessed his labors among us, having baptized seventeen candidates into our fellowship during his sojourn with us.

MEMORIAL.

Whereas, God in his infinite wisdom and providence has been pleased to remove from us by death, our dearly beloved brother and pastor, **Elder Wm. L. Beebe,** therefore

Resolved, That while we mourn the loss of his presence, of his pastoral care and wise counsel, we desire to praise our heavenly Father for the precious gifts bestowed upon him, which enabled him to speak a word in season to those who were bowed down, to comfort the mourners in Zion, to feed the hungry poor. In a word, to preach the glorious gospel of the Son of God.

Resolved, That we sincerely sympathize with our brethren and sisters of the Warwick Church in the very great loss which they have sustained, as we are sure they feel as keenly the stroke as we do.

Resolved, That these resolutions be recorded in the minutes of this meeting as a portion of our church record, and a copy sent to sister Beebe, the widow of our departed brother, and to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

Adopted by the Beulah Old School Baptist Church, at our annual meeting, held near Alvinston, Ontario, on the 15th and 16th days of June, 1901.

D. M. VAIL, Moderator.

ARCHIBALD MCALPINE, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **Sallie Towles** passed away March 5th, 1901. She died as she had lived, trusting in the Savior. She was in her 56th year. She was born in Georgia. When she was young her parents, whose name was King, moved to Alabama. There she married brother Tolliver Towles, when they moved to Texas, where they remained several years, and then came to this country, where I first met them. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and I have always found her strong in the faith of the Lord Jesus, trusting in him for all things and at all times. She was never too sick or too weak to give to God all the praise Her face was always turned Zionward. How many happy hours I have spent with her, hearing her talk and praise the goodness of the Lord. She was a light; she could not be hidden; her light so shined that every one loved her. She was afflicted for years, and since I have known her she has at times suffered untold agonies, but she never forgot to praise her Lord. Many times she has told me that she longed to be free from her suffering, and to be with the Lord, but she would say, "I am willing to suffer on for Christ's sake until my appointed time, until my change comes, then I hope to be with Christ at home." Sister Sallie united with the Old School Baptist church in Alabama. Her doors were always open for the entrance of her kindred in Christ, and she never tired in administering to their needs, and was not forgetful of the poor and afflicted, and never neglected the sick as long as she was able to go to see them. In all her trials, and sorrows, and sickness, she was reconciled to the will of God. She has left one child, a son, two sisters and two brothers, to weep for her. Her house was always a home for all lovers of the truth, in whom was her delight. I have seen her read the SIGNS when she could not be still for the suffering, and rejoice all the time, and praise the Lord. I was called to her bedside about two hours before she died, and spoke to her, and she said, "Thank the Lord, praise the Lord." This was all that she said that we could understand. She passed

away as one going to sleep. I could only weep and rejoice, for her departure was only to be with her Savior; she has entered the realms of eternal glory; she is with Jesus. May God bless all those who mourn, and comfort their hearts, and reconcile us to his will in all things, is my prayer.

NANCY CREEL.

CHAGRES, Ind. Ter., April 9, 1901.

DIED—At the residence of her son, Porter S. Parrish, Hurdland Mo., April 26th, 1901, after a lingering illness of five months, **Mrs. Martha J. Parrish,** aged 81 years, lacking one day. She was a daughter of Moses and Mary Wilson, and was born in Jessamine Co., Ky., April 27th, 1820. She was the youngest of nine children, of whom none survive her. She was taken by her parents to Marion Co., Mo., in 1825. She was married to Nathaniel H. Parrish, in 1836, and to them were born eight children, of whom one died in infancy, and the other seven, four sons and three daughters, survive her. Her husband died in 1856, and several years after that she removed to Saline Co., Mo., where she stayed the greater part of her time for about twenty-five years, living among her children, but generally making her home with her daughter, sister Nancy E. Eastin. Four of her children reside in Saline Co., Mo., two of them in the city of Marshall, hence her body was taken to the residence of her son, Mr. W. E. Parrish, in that city, where the funeral services were held, and it was buried in a cemetery near there, on the 28th of April. She leaves seven children, twenty-nine grandchildren, thirteen great-grandchildren, quite a large circle of friends and acquaintances, and the church of her membership, to mourn her departure from the shores of time, but we have not a doubt that our loss is her great and eternal gain.

Sister Parrish was manifested as a subject of grace, and received a hope in Christ when she was very young. She united with the Old School Baptist church called South River, in Marion Co., Mo., when fourteen years of age, and was baptized by Elder William Fuqua. When she went to Saline Co., Mo., she united with the Hope Primitive, or Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, then holding meetings in Miami, Saline Co., Mo., and continued an orderly, upright and consistent member during the remainder of her earthly life.

Sister Parrish was a most exemplary christian woman. She was in behavior as becometh holiness, ever maintaining a chaste conversation, coupled with fear, and her adorning was "the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." She held fast "the profession of her faith without wavering," and was "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." She endured the sufferings of her last protracted sickness with true christian fortitude, and exhibited great firmness in her hope and faith, often testifying of the goodness of God, his amazing grace and wondrous love. Hence we say to the bereaved ones, Be comforted, "She is not dead, but sleepeth." We believe "that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

"Methinks I see her now at rest,
In the bright mansion love ordained;
Her head reclines on Jesus' breast,
No more by sin or sorrow pained."

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

"She's gone to the grave, we no longer behold her,
Nor tread the rough path of the world by her side;
But God in the arms of his love did enfold her,
And mourners may hope, since the Savior hath died."

R. M. THOMAS.

ST. JOSEPH, Mo.

Eli Grove was born April 15th, 1840, and died May 25th, 1901, aged 61 years, 1 month and 10 days. He was united in marriage to Mary A. Halm, Feb. 23d, 1879. This union was blessed with six children, three sons and three daughters, one son having preceded him to the grave. Eli, as he was called, was a kind and affectionate husband, a loving and tender father. As a neighbor he was benevolent, ever ready to help those in need. He made no public profession of religion, but was a regular attendant at the Union Primitive Baptist Church, and his house was a home for the Baptists. He was a firm believer in salvation by God's grace through righteousness of Christ imputed. His life and walk was that of a christian. He leaves a kind and affectionate companion, five children, one brother, and a large circle of relatives and friends, to lament his death, but all feel that he is at rest.

His funeral was largely attended on the 27th, and an appropriate discourse delivered by Elder G. N. Tusing, after which the remains were laid to rest until the resurrection of the just. God bless the dear sorrowing ones left in sadness.

ALSO,

William Ashbrook was born Oct. 17th, 1821, and died June 18th, 1901, aged 79 years, 8 months and 1 day. He was united in marriage to Nancy Heges, August 25th, 1846. To this union were born nine children, five sons and four daughters, two daughters and one son having preceded him to the grave; four sons, two daughters, two brothers and three sisters, with a large circle of relatives and friends, remain to lament his death. Brother Ashbrook was not a member of the church, but a firm believer in the christian religion. His Bible and the SIGNS were his comfort

and solace. His life was worthy of imitation for piety, honesty and truthfulness. He was a firm believer in the sovereignty of God, his hope, and of salvation by God's grace only, merited through the blood and righteousness of Christ, which was his unshaken hope and trust. He was a kind and benevolent Father, a good neighbor, ever manifesting that spirit which sets forth the christian's life.

His funeral was held at his late residence in Ashville, on the 20th, conducted by Elder G. N. Tusing, a very large congregation of friends attending, after which his remains were interred in the Reber Cemetery, to await the resurrection of the redeemed.

DIED—At our residence in Camas Valley, Oregon, **Sarah Lottie Beatrice Lee**, aged 12 years, 4 months and 15 days. Her death occurred April 30th, 1901; her father, Wm. L. died May 4th, 1898; our eldest child, John Clement Walden Lee, died June 12th, 1888. The few short years that have thus equally divided us have been full of grief, and only the sustaining grace of God can illume their dark pages. When the dying father embraced our dear Lottie, saying, "You will come to papa soon, and the others will tarry yet awhile," I was completely overcome with the feeling that his words were prophetic. About that time she said, "I am going to love you and care for you as long as I live, and you will love me and care for me as long as you live." I assured her of the pleasure her words gave, and repeated one of her father's favorite hymns:

"Can a mother's tender care
Cease toward the child she bare?"

And she said, "O yes, every hour I think of how good it is to know that the dear Lord never forgets his promises." Her disease was inflammatory rheumatism, and she had suffered one attack before her father's death. It was during that first attack that we observed her pleading prayers for mercy, and ever afterward she would speak so understandingly of our need of a Savior, and of the riches of grace that made her willing to bear whatever pain he gave. Soon after her father's death she took measles while going to school in the city of Grant's Pass; inflammatory rheumatism set in, and after that disease began to subside, "la grippe" came on, and for seven months we never left her night or day. She began to bloat, and finally came to weigh about one hundred and fifty pounds; she rested in a wheel chair, and during that time never laid down.

In reading the letters of dear Mary Parker, I felt drawn to brother Dr. B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., and by his treatment she was restored to apparent health, but our unsettled life, and the many trials that are known only to the widow and the fatherless, were a continual tax on her dear, sweet, tender nature, and it was a joy the world cannot give that sustained the child in her troubles. The unerring kindness and punctuality of Dr. Coulter, and the beautiful letters he wrote her, were the chief theme of her last years, and when the time would seem to drag wearily she always said, "Now if we could have a letter from Dr. Coulter, it would cheer us up for many days, but he will tire of my poor work." Then she would take up her lessons and try to interest herself, and improve her mind. Her last sickness came so mild, and she so rallied that we were not alarmed, and it was only when her appetite suddenly failed, and the disease manifested itself internally, that we saw how futile our efforts to cure, or even alleviate her sufferings. An aged uncle, my mother's brother, and dear Bennie, were each at the point of death, and her great care for their welfare disguised her true condition, so that no one outside of ourselves believed her at all serious. When neighbors came to night watch her last hours, she bade Mr. Scranton sit at her back, sent me to care for Bennie, and then told him that she would soon go home. Also she said, "Do not tell them until I am gone, but it is a better home than yours, and tell mamma and all to come too." I returned, placed her pillows another way, then she said, "What would I not give for one hour's rest?" When told that the dear Lord gives his beloved rest, she answered, "Yes, and he will give me rest when it is his will." It was during the first days of her illness that I received a letter from dear Elder Keene, and as she insisted on hearing it, I read these words to her, "As thy day shall thy strength be. If the way before thee is difficult and rough, thy shoes shall be iron and brass. It is our mercy to be found giving heed to the divine counsel, casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you. May this be your portion and mine." The school bell then called me from her side, but not until I saw how it would worry her for me to remain away from my work, and she twice alluded to that letter, and the shoes I must wear, but she said no one in this world could provide such shoes if they even tried. Now that we miss the wonderful strength of her ingenuous nature life seems almost unbearable, but there is joy in the knowledge that a short season intervenes before we shall come to the joy of which she is now possessed.

Yesterday the little school observed Decoration Day, and more than fifty of her schoolmates placed their tribute of respect on the little mound where the dust is awaiting the coming of the Lord.

(MRS.) M. J. LEE.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$473 73
Mrs Joseph B. Howell, New York	2 00
Total to date	**$475 73**

Deacon David H. Boyce, of the Broad Creek Church, Sussex Co., Del., was born August 17th, 1823, and died Feb. 13th, 1901. He was baptized by Elder Thomas Waters, in the year 1855, in fellowship with the Little Creek Church. About the year 1860 he removed his membership to the Broad Creek Church, where as a worthy member and faithful deacon he was kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. His departure leaves a breach in the Broad Creek Church, which only the Lord can fill. His family, consisting of two daughters, two sons, three sisters and one brother, in their bereavement should not sorrow even as others which have no hope, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

Funeral service was held in the Broad Creek meeting-house, where a large attendance manifested the high esteem in which the deceased was held by those who knew him best. The writer of this tribute spoke of what Jesus has done, and is still doing for the everlasting salvation of brother David H. Boyce, and of all those who love God, and are the called according to his purpose. Sadly, yet hopeful, we laid him down in his silent resting-place in the Broad Creek burying grounds, feeling to say in our heart, All is well.

ALSO,

Mrs. M. Anner Gordy, wife of Benjamin G. Gordy, near Delmar, Del., was born Sept. 29th, 1851, and died Dec. 12th, 1900. As a faithful, loving wife, a devoted, affectionate mother, and a true friend, she won and deserved the respect of all who knew her. In early life she was associated with the Arminian religionists, but in the Lord's own good time he was pleased to manifest to her the vanities of a vacillating, changeable, unstable, worldly religion, and to reveal to her a good hope through grace, founded upon the sovereign, eternal and unchangeable love of a faithful covenant-keeping God and Savior. At her request I visited her a short time before her departure. I found her physically weak, but spiritually strong. She told me how she hoped the Lord had weaned her from the idolatry of the world, and made her to love the truth as preached by the Old School Baptists, and to love them beyond expression. Her name was not enrolled upon a church book, but we feel assured it was written in the Lamb's book of life. Calm and submissive to the will of her heavenly Father, all the days of her appointed time she waited till her change came, exemplifying by her deportment the heavenly graces, faith, hope, charity. The lonely bud that blooms unseen in some sequestered spot alone, beautified by the hand and presence of its Creator, and perfumed by the breath of his love, is as rich in beauty and perfume as if it mingled its bloom and fragrance with its kindred flowers.

In accordance with her request I was with the bereaved ones at her funeral and burial, which was largely attended at their home, where she was gently and hopefully laid away to rest.

At the request of the family I write this memorial in love and sympathy.

W. W. MEREDITH.

MEETINGS.

THE Brookdale Church, of Susquehanna Co., Pa., expect to have a two days meeting, Tuesday and Wednesday after the third Sunday in August, (20th and 21st) 1901. Trains will be met at Conklin, Pa., on D., L. & W. R. R., Monday afternoon, and at Montrose depot, Pa., Monday afternoon. All who come will be welcomed.

A TWO days meeting will be held, providence permitting, at Justus, Pa., Thursday and Friday, August 22d and 23d, 1901. Those attending Brookdale meeting can easily get to this meeting, as it is only forty miles from Montrose. All will be made welcome who may come. Trains will be met at Olyphant, Pa., Wednesday afternoon, at D. & H. depot, and the N. Y., O. & W. depot, also at Glenburn, Pa., Wednesday afternoon and evening, and friends cared for.

For further information address Geo. Goodrich, Justus, Pa.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, will meet, the Lord willing, with the Sugar Creek Church, on Friday, August 30th, 1901, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue three days, at Table Grove, on the St. Louis branch of the C., B. & Q. R. R. Trains will be met at the grove on Thursday. No trains will be met Friday except the early trains from Reardstown. All are invited, especially brethren in the ministry.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 69. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1901. NO. 15.

CORRESPONDENCE.

22 N. Fourth St., Camden, N. J., June 29, 1901.

Elder F. A. Chick—Dear Brother in Christ:—Feeling in the mood for writing, and my mind reverting continually to you, once more I address you as above, for what purpose I know not, only that I desire to hear from you, and take this means of getting a thought or two from your pen. Were you to meet me on the highway and greet me with the usual salutation, "How are you?" I scarcely know how I would answer you. No very deep trials, spiritually or otherwise, have stirred my mind since coming within the portals of the Zion of our God. My chief uneasiness is felt when I am brought in contact with the world around me. This hurts me. Imagine how sensitive the body would be were the outer or scarf skin removed, and you will have a very clear idea of my state of mind when in the course of my daily walk I am brought in contact with unbelievers, or what is worse, the adherents of popular religion. I think it would be more in conformity with the experience of the saints, were I to realize more intensely that my worst enemies are "those of my own household." The children of God seem to talk more of their peculiar trials of mind while I have none. Surely there is a lost chord somewhere. "If ye be without chastisements, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons." Do such Scriptures as these apply to me? Evidence seems to point that way, yet something within me thrusts them from me, and will not accept them.

Both of my parents were Old School Baptists before I was born. As soon as I knew anything at all, I was taken by them to Old Baptist meetings. Every Sunday found them in their place, and of course, I with them, for none of us children were permitted to stay away unless in the event of its being dire necessity. Now, under such training as this, how could I turn out to be anything but an Old School Baptist? I sometimes fear my knowledge of their doctrine is all in the head and not in the heart, where it ought to be. In a very weak and unsatisfactory manner I will endeavor to lay before you what I hope has been an experience of grace in me, but will leave you to decide whether such is the case, or if it be but a wild fancy of the imagination.

Born in the month of April, 1879, near the village of Southampton, Pa., and almost under the shadow of the Old Baptist meeting-house at that place, such were the circumstances that no excuse could be found permitting me to stay away from every Sunday meeting, even in infancy. What tiresome, tedious, sonorous sermons those were to my boyish mind. When during the sermon I should lose myself in slumber, how rejoiced I would be upon awaking, to find them singing the last hymn. The pleasantest part of the meeting for me then was when the minister closed the Bible. To the best of my recollection, I never heard any other than Old Baptist preaching until about fifteen years old. Naturally, having never heard any other, I thought the Old Baptists were all right, but I could not comprehend them. While I thought their religion was a mighty good thing for them, it was not for me. They seemed above me, exalted to heights that I could never reach, nor did I care to reach them at that time. I was satisfied with myself as I was. My parents being blest with the gift of hospitality, our home was always open to the brethren far and near, so that from hearing their conversation I became intellectually familiar with the various points of their belief.

Children around me attended Sunday School, yet I never asked permission to go, knowing full well I would be met with a point blank refusal if I did, and knowing this, I never had any desire to go.

Just when I began to think of eternity and the life hereafter, I cannot say. I sometimes feared that I would die in the night. At such times I would not go to sleep lying face upward, thinking this position more than any other favored death, and might tempt the "Black Angel" to visit me. Such superstitions would haunt me at times, but would all vanish with day-dawn, and not for some time later would I have such thoughts again.

Desiring from early years to become a teacher, in the fall of 1895 I began attending a normal school in my native State, to prepare myself for the work. Here the rules were such that every student must of necessity attend service in one of the many churches of that vicinity, every Sunday morning. No Old Baptist church existing in that place, I was forced to attend other denominations, and here for the first time I heard other preaching. I recognized a difference in the preaching almost as soon as I heard it, not that I thought it was contrary to Bible teaching, but that it was more interesting to listen to, and more calculated to keep one from sleeping, than what I had formerly been accustomed to.

The week just preceding Thanksgiving was always set aside at the school as a "week of prayer." During this week the Y. M. C. A. held daily meetings for the purpose of winning converts to their cause if possible. Speakers of some reputation in the religious world were procured to address these meetings, and to play upon the emotional side of every student's temperament. The "week of prayer" in 1895 slipped by without my paying any heed to it whatever. In fact, while the Y. M. C. A. held weekly meetings throughout the year, yet I very rarely attended any of them. At least it was noticeable to me that the very students who were the ringleaders in all the mischief going on, usually made the longest prayers and the longest speeches, but failed to act it out in their daily walk and conversation. This disgusting me, I was very seldom found at their meetings,

Uneventfully my student days passed on until the "week of prayer" in the fall of 1896. The cards issued as invitations to the meetings and scattered promiscuously among the students, bore this inscription at the top: "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good."—Numbers x. 29. Suddenly a determination to attend these meetings seized me. The motive that prompted me was possibly one of curiosity, as I wanted to see what effect such meetings would have upon me. Not because I realized the need of salvation did I attend these meetings, but as I have said, simply to see how such meetings were conducted, and whether I would be in any way affected by such proceedings. Thus I began attending the sessions held in the fall of 1896, of the so-called "week of prayer." At the close of the first meeting all who desired to be saved were asked to stand up. Immediately I asked myself, Shall I stand or not? Do I want to be saved or not? Why certainly, what sensible man would not want to be saved? Therefore I stood with the others. At the second meeting all who stood at the first meeting were requested to remain at the close and consult with the professor who had the matter in charge. Feeling that I now had gone too far to draw back, I remained in my place at the close of the meeting. When all who were not interested had left the room, the professor made a prayer and talked to us about what we should do to be saved. Belief, he said, was the only necessary qualification for salvation, and it was for us to say whether or not we would be saved. I was willing, I thought, to be saved, but how to make myself believe in something that I knew nothing about, I could not understand. However we were requested to sing a hymn. The one selected had for its theme the giving of one's self to Christ, inviting him to enter and make our heart his home, &c. "I believe," "I trust," "I own," "I want," and other like expressions were scattered throughout the hymn. How can I ever express my feelings while singing this selection? Here my pen fails when it attempts to portray in black and white the revelation manifested in my soul at this time. Something said to me, "You are lying, yes, lying, and that in the face of a just and mighty God. You say you trust in his name. You do not. You say you believe that Christ died for you. You do not. You are standing up boldly in the sight of God and telling a bare faced lie." Such agony as filled my soul I can never express. Hitherto my dealings had been between man and man. Now, in the twinkling of an eye, the scene was shifted, and my dealings were between God and man. He was just and mighty, true and good, holy and undefiled. But I, what was I? Alas, a poor, wretched worm of the dust, crawling on the earth, striving in vain to seek a hole to creep into away from the fierce outburst of God's righteous indignation that had suddenly engulfed me, and was sweeping me to everlasting destruction. Yet I said it was righteous and just. I was the one that was altogether out of the way.

> "And though my soul were sent to hell,
> His righteous law approves it well."

Just how long I was in this state of anguish I have never been able to remember. How I managed to get out of that meeting and to my room, I do not know, but when I did get there I threw myself upon my bed and wept long and bitterly, much to the surprise of my roommate, who became much alarmed, thinking that the meetings had worked me up to such a pitch that I was going crazy over re-

ligion. He advised me not to attend any more of the meetings, and I did not; not because I feared insanity, but because I could get no comfort there. Gradually time wore on. Instead of getting better, I got worse, and my burden was fast becoming more than I could bear. The professor before mentioned, seeing I was under conviction, kept telling me that if I would but give myself up and believe on the name of Jesus, I would be saved. He asked me what I was waiting for? I said, "A revelation. When I see Christ and know that he died for me, then I can believe, not before." He then accused me of stubbornness, and so we parted, and never again came together in any other relation save that of teacher and pupil. At last I thought, what would I not do to be rid of this burden? O, if only Christ was my Savior. O, if he only had died for me. "Lord, thou canst if thou wilt make me clean." Now, to my mind, if relief were to come, it seemed to me it must come by a revelation, and that so vivid and so startling that I never could doubt my being saved. I had come to the place where I ceased to work, or to try to rise from the depths to which I had fallen. All my efforts had availed me nothing, so I ceased to do anything, and was waiting; waiting for what? For that revelation so startling and so sure that it would dispel all my gloom and save my soul from hell. While watching for this vision, I opened the Bible, and my eye fell upon these words, "Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision: and it shall be dark unto you that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets and the day shall be dark over them." Alas, I was waiting for something that was not to come. I wanted a vision; I would have none, because the word of God coming to me with power told me I would not. Thrown down from this hope, vain as it had proved to be, I now suffered more than ever.

One night, laying upon my bed, I could not sleep. My troubles were fast getting too severe, and I verily thought they would be the death of me. They were gripping me by the throat, and I could feel my breath fast leaving me; I was dying. My mental anguish had brought on bodily suffering, and I had a raging fever. Now, surely, unless relief came, and that quickly, I should perish, and with that it seemed to me I or something within me cried, "Peace!" In the twinkling of an eye I was at rest. All my burden had gone. Hardly realizing my state, I tried to bring back my troubles, but could not. They were gone, thank God, for ever. Happy and as free as a bird, I fell asleep and slept till morning. And now again I cannot express my joy upon awaking. The sun never shone so brightly: all nature was at her best and rejoicing with me; I felt the power of the resurrection within and around me, and that the gift of eternal life was mine through the blessed sacrifice of God's only begotten Son, who was offered up for me. Shout, ye heavens, and listen, O earth, Christ died for *me.* Such were my feelings at that time. Now I was not aware that there was another being on earth that had passed through what I had. Upon going home to spend a few days at Thanksgiving, I talked all the time to my parents of my feelings, and they rejoiced to see me rejoice. I soon saw that they had experienced the same things that I had. When I returned to school, I took with me a book written by our beloved pastor, Elder S. H. Durand, entitled, "Meditations on Portions of the Word." For weeks this was all the

preaching I had. I soon saw from his writings that he knew all about my feelings from having experienced the same, and I loved him. It was in this way, through hearing them preach, and reading their writings, with the understanding that I now had given me, that I came to see the Old School Baptists as the only and true church of the living God, because it all corresponded with holy writ. Knowing this I loved them because I could not help it. No other people that I have ever met could understand my feelings. Loving them, I knew I had experienced the new birth, for "We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." I did not go before the church at this time. Had I been near them when in the first flush of love, I know not what might have been the consequence, but, as I have said, I was not near any of them, and when I did get back to where they were, doubts and fears had so assailed me that I verily thought I had been deceived, and as for being baptized, I had not thought of it. The very idea was absurd. Nevertheless I have always attended Old Baptist meetings whenever an opportunity presented itself, never having attended regular service in any other denomination since leaving school, but my unworthiness was the barrier that separated me from them. However, in the fall of 1900, while attending a yearly meeting, with the Welsh Tract Church, in Delaware, I lost sight of my unworthiness, and longed all at once to be baptized. This desire kept increasing in spite of the temptations Satan put in my way until the second Saturday in December, 1900, when at the regular church meeting at Southampton, Pa., I related my state of mind to the church. To my surprise they received me, and on the third Sunday I was baptized. Thus far the Lord hath led me on, as to the next step, I know not what it will be. I look to him to be my Guide. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

This letter is far too lengthy, and I know will sadly try your patience, so will close without more ado.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

BISMARK, Mo., May 15, 1901.

I DESIRE to write a few thoughts upon the two olive trees spoken of in Zechariah iv., in connection with the two witnesses mentioned in Revelation xi. The great question is, Who are the two olive trees, and who are the two witnesses referred to in the two Scriptures named? It seems to me that in Zechariah iv., the angel answered the question of Zechariah quite plainly: "And the angel that talked with me came again, and awaked me, as a man that wakened out of his sleep; and said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, [the church] with a bowl upon the top of it, [Christ] and his seven lamps thereon." These seven lamps give light to the church, and the Head of the church provides the lamps, and also the oil. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God. Now it was said that upon one stone should be seven eyes. The stone is Christ, and it "shall be," not "may be," for there are no maybes in the Bible. And "I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day." These "Are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth."—Zech. iii. 9; iv. 10. Now let me quote from Rev. ii. 7; iv. 5; vii. 6: "And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices,

and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God." "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb, [Christ] as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." For the type of all this see Exodus xxv. 31; Leviticus xxiv. 1–5; Hebrews ix. 1, 2.

There were seven pipes to the seven lamps, and two olive trees, one upon the right and the other upon the left side of it. And he said, "So I [Zechariah] answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these my Lord? Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Therefore it must be true, and it must also be that all human means and instrumentalities are cut off by this sweeping declaration, and the Spirit is the first witness. Does not this prove that the first witness is the Spirit? And who will dare to dispute the word of God? Now who is the second witness? "Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone [Christ] thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it." The seven eyes of the Lord were on that stone [Christ].

I will now refer to Revelation xi. "And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days [or twelve hundred and sixty years] clothed in sackcloth. It is in the body, the church, which in this world is clothed in sackcloth, that Christ and the Spirit do prophesy, and nowhere else but in the church. These are the two olive trees standing (which shows that they have all power) before the God of the earth. We also read that if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth and devoureth their enemies, and if any man will hurt them, he must in like manner be killed. Now who has this power outside of these two witnesses, the Spirit and Christ? Read 2 Thess. ii., eighth verse especially, "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume [Is there anything left of that which is consumed?] with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." Has any power like this ever been given to any others? These it is said have power in themselves (not given to them) to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy. The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven, to give rain unto the land. (Deut. xxvii. 12.) Elijah said unto Ahab, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word."—1 Kings xvii. 1. By whose power then was it sent? "And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go show thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth." It is also said that these witnesses have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will. Now where does this power come from? "Thus saith the Lord, In this thou shalt know that I am the Lord: behold I will smite with the rod that is in mine hand upon the waters which are in the river, and they shall be turned to blood."—Exodus vii. 17. Jesus

also said, "It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me." And he said, "And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." And this Spirit of truth he says shall abide with you forever. And "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." And again he said, "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." (John viii. 17; xiv. 16, 17, 26; xv. 26.)

Was not the Holy Ghost also a witness upon the day of Pentecost? Paul said, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." Again he said, "Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you." —1 Cor. i. 6. And again, "God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." (Read 1 Cor. ii. 9-12.) Again, "This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ. Not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." —1 John v. 6, 7. And also from revelations we have seen that Christ is a faithful and true witness. John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from Jesus Christ the faithful and true witness, and from the seven spirits which are before the throne. Job had said before, "Behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high." This is in Zion, the city of our God. Her two witnesses who fight all her battles, and conquer all her enemies, and put them under her feet, are eternal, invisible to the world, but are revealed unto the saints.

Now under the law we read, "And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always." If Christ, the antitype, had not been beaten with many stripes, we never could have received the oil of divine grace through the other witness, the Holy Ghost. The typical lamps must burn continually throughout the legal dispensation. And so the church of God receives continually the olive oil from the two olive trees, which in Revelation are said to be the two witnesses. These olive trees have all power in heaven and on earth, and ever have and ever will exist. They are eternal. Therefore the oil by which Zion is supplied is inexhaustible, and her lamp can never go out, but must burn eternally. Her lamp is brighter than the noonday sun, for God is her eternal light. Then "Let Zion arise and shine, for her light has come, and the glory of the Lord has arisen upon her. For behold darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people, but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." This is by the power of the two witnesses, Christ and the Holy Spirit. These two witnesses are the only ones that have power to justify them and cleanse them from all guilt. "Lift up thine eyes round

about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see and flow together, and thine heart shalt fear and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee."—Isaiah lx. 4, 5. These two witnesses are the only two who could testify from the first, from Adam and Abel through all time, even till the end of time.

Now where are these two witnesses slain? In Babylon. Where do their dead bodies lie? In Babylon. No wonder the inhabitants of Babylon stumble over them, they are in their way. No wonder they want to bury them, there are too many sheep and lambs bleating after them to suit the old lady and her daughters. To preach Christ crucified always was, and always will be, a stumbling-block and foolishness to the worshipers of Babylon. To them it is dead preaching, and there is no life in it. "Wherefore it is contained in Scripture, Behold I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious, but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed."—1 Peter ii. 4–8. Read also Psalm cxviii. 22; Isaiah viii. 14; xxviii. 16; Matt. xxi. 42; Luke ii. 34; Acts iv. 11; Romans ix. 22; 1 Cor. i. 23. Again it is said, "And he shall be for a sanctuary; [to his chosen] but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offense, to both the houses of Israel, [natural Israel] for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem [the old Jerusalem]. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken. Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples." This is the testimony of the two witnesses, and it is the spiritual law that is signified. (Isaiah viii. 14–16.)

Babylon has no use for these two witnesses in making her converts. It is all by might of men and money, and hell-fire, instead of Christ and the Spirit of God, they scare their converts into their fold, so that they can shear them. "They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag: therefore they rejoice and are glad. Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag, because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous. Shall they therefore empty their net, and not spare continually to slay the nations?"—Hab. i. 15–17. Read also the thirty-fourth chapter of Ezekiel. These two witnesses are the life of the church, they are the only people who will not suffer Babylon to put the two witnesses away. These are their witnesses who can clear them in the court of heaven, from which there is no appeal. In this court these are standing witnesses; these are prophets who have prophesied the end from the beginning; eternal prophets. "And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth." These help one another at getting up fires or revivals, to make proselytes. But the prophet has said, "Behold all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and in the

sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow."—Isaiah l. 11. The inhabitants of the earth do not want to be baptized with the Holy Ghost, for they are all afraid of it. They are afraid that it would burn their building down to ashes. They have no use for the fire of God, or his Spirit, they would sooner have their own. This they can make of themselves without the help of God. He is too slow to suit them, he is about two thousand years behind the times. His way of doing may suit the Hardshells, or Iron Jackets, for they know no better than to believe that God does all the work of eternal salvation. With this "behind the times" people, it is not God and company, but God alone, the Almighty. Say these slow ones, The last in man's judgment, shall be first, and the last or first in the world, who are so ahead of the times, shall be last. These have no oil in their vessels with their lamps. Hay, straw and stubble, and strange fire, this does finely in the world, but will not stand the test of the Judge of all the earth.

While there are many witnesses spoken of in the Scriptures, such as Enoch, Elijah, the apostles, all the saints in every age of the world, the starry heavens, the earth, and all God's works, which are witnesses of his power, and the Old and New Testaments, which contain all the records of these witnesses, yet these are not the two witnesses, or the two olive trees of which I have here spoken.

Your brother in hope,

R. S. BANKS.

WAVERLY, Pa., April 16, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—You will find inclosed two letters, not lengthy, but good in experience and doctrine, which two things are essentially one. You are at liberty to publish both at any time it comes right so to do. I leave this with you to decide. We are in usual health, and hope that this may find you and yours well and happy as you can be. I am sad and cast down most of my time, but am just as happy as I can be. You know what I mean.

Your brother, I hope,

D. M. VAIL.

DANSVILLE, N. Y., April 14, 1901.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—If I am worthy to thus address you. I have just been reading your letter to sister Cross, and I can wait no longer. I have many times thought that I would write to you, but have not been let hitherto, but now I cannot help it; yet what I shall write I do not know, but I will scribble as I go.

My mind goes back to the meetings of the conference of western New York, where I was fed and comforted by the preaching, and the friendly intercourse we had with each other, and with the brethren and sisters there convened. But now I wish to consider the present without reference to other matters.

The letter of sister Cross afforded me a sweet morsel of comfort, inasmuch as it so faithfully depicted my own experience in the daily travels of life. So many times I am wallowing in the slough of despair, and am ready to sink in despair, when lo and behold, or ever I am aware I am lifted up by some miracle, and placed upon a rock of safety, and find myself singing a new song, even praise unto our God, to him who bore my sins upon the cross of Calvary. How sweet the salvation, when delivered from what seems irretrievable ruin and despair, and how readily the child of God recognizes

the true instrumentality of his salvation. Not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory.

Sister Cross's letter stirred me up, and yours stirred my inmost soul. And I could not help it. How comprehensive is that little short passage. And why? We were born into this world, and we "can't help it." We were contaminated with sin by the disobedience of our first parents, and we could not help it. And we went on rolling sin as a sweet morsel under our tongue until the quickening power of the Holy Spirit entered into our hearts, showing us the filth and corruption, and the rebellion against a holy God dwelling there. Then we trembled as our guilty conscience accused us at the bar of divine justice, and we could not help it. O, how many things there are in the dealings of the Lord with us that we cannot help. And those dealings of God with us produce exercises in our minds that we cannot help any more than we could help Jesus save his people from their sins. Yet there are many religionists zealously engaged in this very work.

My dear brother, my pen is too slow to record the streaming thoughts which your letter calls up; it so completely covers the fact that we are helpless before God, not only in the work of salvation, both in time and eternity, but also in all our earthly interests as well. It seems so strange that those whom we have considered sound Old School Baptists, should be led astray by this will-o'-the-wisp of "time salvation" being "conditional." From the first dawning of spiritual light upon my mind, if ever it has dawned there, I have had no thoughts, no, I will not say that, but if any doubts came to my mind in the confusion of tongues about me, one look of Jesus, and one thought of his agony on the cross, has melted me to tears, and restored my confidence in the efficacy of his atoning blood.

I will not tax you further now. If you have time and inclination to write me a few lines, it will brighten my lonesome travel, and make my way brighter down the declivity which must soon end this mortal life. I was shocked upon reading the obituary of Elder Wm. L. Beebe. But our loss is his eternal gain.

Yours in the hope of that salvation which saves, P. WEST.

ALVINSTON, Ontario, March 26, 1901.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER:—I have had a desire to write to you for some time past, and have had many thoughts in my mind to say to you, but I have not put them on paper, and now I feel very reluctant to make the attempt, knowing my insufficiency to write anything to profit, but since reading brother B. F. Coulter's letter in the SIGNS for March 15th, I feel encouraged to write a letter, whether it be good or poor. He says, "If the Lord puts the desire in the heart to communicate with a certain brother, the admonition is not a vain thing with him." But the question with me is often, What is the motive of the desire? The desire to write is with me, and I cannot shake it off; if it be of the flesh, it will come to naught; the flesh profiteth nothing. Man at his best estate is altogether vanity, says the psalmist. I have read letters which have expressed my thoughts and feelings better than I think I shall ever be able to express them. So much of the time I feel as the poet has expressed it:

> "I am a stranger here below,
> And what I am 'tis hard to know."

Also,

> "Like one alone I seem to be,
> O, is there any one like me?"

Still I must say of a truth, my happiest and most sacred hours have been when alone, or under the hearing of the preached word, when I seemed to be (if I know anything of the meaning of these words) absent from the body, and present with the Lord. O, such peace it gave, the peace which passeth all understanding. "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." Like Paul, there was given me also a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me. I have had serious thoughts concerning myself, and have believed that none could do anything toward saving themselves, almost as far back as I can remember, at least I cannot remember when I believed anything else. Now is it not strange that I can say, until last June I never realized what a fearful thing it was to fall into the hands of the living God? Also I never realized until then what a depth was in the words, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." Yes, it is a secret that we cannot unfold to mortal man. May I never be found fearing them who can kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, but rather may I fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. But the flesh is weak.

"Prone to wander, Lord I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love."

Perfect love casteth out all fear. I think that I told you in a former letter that I have loved the assembly of the saints for a number of years. How I have loved to hear them talk, both upon the doctrine and upon their experience, but when any one asked me concerning myself, I could hardly speak, and felt that it would be too much to claim mine as a good hope, but the few words you spoke to me while here sank down deep into my heart. Among them were these, "Blessed are the people which know the joyful sound." The following Sunday, before going to hear preaching, I was reading an editorial of Elder Beebe's, upon the parable of the talents, when all at once I felt condemned, and that I was that wicked and slothful servant who went and hid his talent in the earth. I went to the meeting that day much cast down, but still not altogether forsaken. The preaching that day was comforting to me, and all the following week the Scriptures were upon my mind almost continually. I felt that the people of God had seen God in a plainer and clearer way than I had ever done, and with such ignorance it would or might be presumption for me to claim a home among them. But one passage rested much upon my mind: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Then following was the June meeting in Ekfrid, which was indeed a feast to my soul. I wondered during some of the discourses whether I could leave them without telling them some of the exercises of my mind, and when you spoke on Monday from the words, "And now, what wait I for?" the message seemed for me, and how could I stay out? The feelings which were mine in leaving the meeting that day I believe are more easily felt than described. My heart was almost breaking with pent up emotions. O, how weak I felt, but his strength is made perfect in weakness. There seemed to be such a fear come upon me that I might never have such longings again. Thus I went on for the next three months, sorrowful, yet rejoicing at times. For the reading of the Scriptures and the SIGNS was wonderfully blessed to me, and I

loved to meditate upon the works of God, both in the earth and on the earth, and to hear his name exalted above all other names. At the Lobo meeting, in October, I felt as the way seemed open for me to go, that I could not stay away. I went with the desire in my heart to know and to do his will. But how wavering my mind was, and full of confusion. But what a comfort to know that our God changes not. He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast.

While at the house of one of the brethren, Elder Eubanks sang, "O how happy are they who their Savior obey," &c., and I felt that if I could but burst into a flood of tears, it would relieve my burdened heart. I slept very little that night, so confused was I in my mind. Then these words came and rested much upon my mind, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." Also, "Be still, and know that I am God." And the next day I was given strength to say a few words, and was received. Nearly six months have passed since my baptism, and I have heard no preaching since, but I desire to be thankful for the blessings I have received. There seems to be more beauty in reading than ever before, and I am led to believe that in (not for) keeping his commandments there is a great reward.

Poor and afflicted are the people of God, but all is for the lifting of Jesus on high. One of my greatest trials is my inability to pray. If I could but utter a few words. One night, not long since, I opened to read in the Psalms, where I often read, and read the twenty-seventh Psalm, which at the time seemed to just express my desire, and especially the last four verses. O, how I feel the need of being led about and instructed in righteousness.

My dear brother, I have written you a long letter, and have said but little. I hope that you will bear with me, and if it be not trespassing too much on your time, I would like to hear from you. Pray for me, that my faith fail not.

I remain unworthily yours,

(MRS.) N. C. YOUNG.

PLEASANT HILL, Ky., May, 1857.

TO MT. TABOR BAPTIST CHURCH:—With a sorrowful heart and troubled mind I seat myself alone, with none but the eye of God upon me, to inform you that I have no religion, no hope of an interest in the dear Savior's blood, and I therefore wish to be excluded from among those who profess to be the children of the living God. Believing it is my duty to undeceive the church, now that I am entirely convinced that I have been deluded by Satan, and never was regenerated and born of the Spirit of God. O little did I imagine, when I joined your church, that my feelings were all a delusion of Satan, and that my heart was still a stranger to grace, rich, sovereign grace. Alas! how I was blinded! what a great sin I have committed, in uniting myself to the church and being baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. O how often is my heart wrung with grief, when these words are passing through my mind. I often think that I have committed the unpardonable sin, and that there can be no mercy for me, although I was conscientious in what I did, yet my ignorance of true grace does not justify the great sin I have committed.

I at times feel wretched, lost and undone, but what can I do? whither can I fly for hope? Alas! I have no interest in the dear Savior's blood. For a long time I have felt truly convinced of this. I now

feel that I have only been living the life of a Pharisee, seeking justification by my own works, never knowing what I was by nature. For the last three years I have felt so hopeless of being a child of God, that I have not partaken of the emblems of the Lord's supper, ever bearing in mind the dreadful curse which is to befall those who "eat and drink unworthily;" and all that time my soul has felt no solid peace nor rest. Go where I would, or do what I would, I experienced no real happiness. O, it must be very different with a true child of God. They can lay hold on all of his blessed promises, that we find recorded in his sacred word, and hear the Savior speaking to them, saying, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." And many, many others, equally encouraging to those who have the witness within their own breast that they are the children of God. This witness I know I have never felt, although I once felt in deed and in truth that I had "the pearl of greatest price." This burdens my soul all the more, for I greatly fear that I am one of those spoken of in God's holy word, who was to have strong delusions sent them, "that they should believe a lie."

I feel that my soul is invovled in sin and misery, and I know that nothing I can say or perform will cleanse it from the filthiness of sin. I now know and feel that a mere form of words is not prayer, and that "the gifts and callings of God are without repentance." If my soul is ever cleansed and made white, the blood of the Lamb must do it. Then, and not until then, can I ever hope to be a child of God.

Therefore, you will oblige me very much by excluding my name from the church. I have been deceived. "The Searcher of all hearts" knows this. I care not if all the world know it. It is not my desire to deceive saint nor sinner. Perhaps I may be a warning to some, who might be deluded, as I have been; trusting too much in good performances, and in doing what they consider right. By many, I feel that I will be looked upon with contempt; I cannot help it; I feel myself to be a great sinner in the sight of God, and if I know my heart, I desire an interest in the prayers of his people everywhere.

(MRS.) LAURA M. BAIRD.

PLEASANT HILL, Ky., Sept., 1857.

MRS. AMY PEDIGO—DEAR MADAM:—With pleasure I embrace the opportunity of devoting to you a few lines. You will, perhaps, be surprised at the reception of this letter, but from the kind sympathy and interest you have manifested in my spiritual welfare, I am made to believe that, unworthy as I am, you will not disdain my letter. I cannot tell you how often yours of last March has been read by me, and each time I have thought that I would give worlds, if I had them to bestow, if I could feel the witness within my soul that I was regenerated and born of the Holy Spirit of God, and could only feel that I was washed white in the blood of the Lamb. Then I could feel as you do, and could exclaim with you and say, "O Lord, is it possible that I am one of thine own elect, beloved before the foundation of the world!" But, alas! I have never felt such comfortable assurance. At times I feel wretched indeed; but I know that all human performances are nothing in the sight of God. For the apostle Paul says, "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified."

I look back upon my past life with horror and detestation, and wonder how I

ever could believe in the instrumentality of the creature, and think that I must do my part, before I could expect the Lord to bless me. O, when we live a life of morality, what is it? when we do all of our best deeds, what are they? nothing more than the vilest dust of earth. O, will the time ever come, when there will be no false ministers, who from the sacred desk are continually urging sinners to come and get religion; that if they die in their sins, it will be their own fault, for Christ died for all, and is not willing that any should perish, but that all should have life eternal? O, how often have I had cold chills of fear when I have heard this doctrine preached, and the awful curse which was to befall those who rejected the Savior's invitations, and would not repent and be saved. Raised up under the hearing of this doctrine, and having no loving parents to direct my mind alone to the Bible, it is not strange that the doctrine of predestination was hated by me, for in my wicked and ignorant heart I thought that God could not be just and holy without leaving a possible salvation for all mankind. Old professors ridiculed the doctrine. I, of course, thought it quite right O, what a mercy it is that my unworthy life was then spared, and is still prolonged. For I feel, dear friend, that if God were to deal with me according to my deserts, I should be swept away with the besom of destruction as a cumberer of the ground. O, that God would take away this stony heart and give me a heart of flesh, to praise his holy name for each and every blessing I enjoy. If I am not deceived, holiness of heart is what I desire above all things, and yet I know I merit it not. I have done nothing but sin against God all the days of my life, and yet his goodness and mercy have followed me.

Since I wrote to the church, and caused the members to exclude my name, I have not suffered so much in mind on the account of joining their church in ignorance, for I greatly desired to undeceive both saint and sinner. The letter that I wrote caused much talk among them, and several of the members have been to talk with me. O, I do believe that some of them are as ignorant of true grace, rich, sovereign grace, as poor, unworthy me was when I joined them. For, because I tell them that I was conscientious in all that I did, and mourned on the account of sin, and truly believed that God had pardoned my sins, they tell me that I ought to be a shouting christian, and quote many passages of Scripture to me, to try to convince me that I am a christian. But ah me, it is like the blind trying to lead the blind, both would surely fall into the ditch. O, never will I unite with any church until I feel the witness within my soul that I am born of God. I feel that my soul is involved in sin and misery, and I know that nothing I can do will cleanse me from the filthiness of sin. For the apostle says, "The gifts and callings of God are without repentance." If my soul is ever cleansed and made white, the blood of the Lamb must do it. Then, and not till then, can I ever hope to be a child of God. Yet, notwithstanding my unworthiness, I long to hear the word preached, and the despised Old Baptists are the ones I love the best. The more I hear them abused and reviled, the better I love them, for was not the blessed Savior hated by the world? Although he was as a lamb without spot and blemish, and lived up to the law, fulfilling it in every particular, was he not reviled, mocked and spat upon? and was not his precious head encircled with a crown of thorns before his

glorious body was nailed to the cross? O, if I could but feel that one drop of that precious blood was shed upon the cross for poor, guilty me, how happy I would be. But alas, the case is very different. Yet I know that if it is the will of God, I shall be saved, if not, I cannot tell what will become of me. I can only say, "Lord, save, or I perish."

Sometimes when I go to preaching, I feel like I wanted to be seated in some obscure corner, where no one would notice me at all. I long to hear every word, but feel so unworthy of the notice of christians that it is at times painful to my mind, at other times I do not feel so desponding; but then again, this grieves me all the more, for when contemplating my past life, O how humbled I ought to feel. But O, Mrs. Pedigo, unless the Lord humbles us and gives us humility, our proud and stubborn hearts possess but little.

Be assured, madam, that you do not feel like a stranger to me, and I would be glad to receive a long letter from you at any time. The one you have written shall be treasured up as a precious memento of the interest you have taken in my spiritual welfare. O, my friend, use your interest for me at the throne of grace. If you ever pass near our house, remember us, and tarry awhile with us.

Do write me, and believe me to be your sincere well wisher,

LAURA MARY BAIRD.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—While at the hospitable home of our dear sister Baird recently, she gave my wife the above two letters to read to me, and this led me to request the privilege of copying and sending them to you, believing that they will comfort the hearts of many whom the Lord brings out of Babylon to Zion. Through a painful and humbling sense of unworthiness our sister remained without until about three years ago, though beloved by her spiritual kindred, and then she most willingly followed the Lord, with her daughter and son, sister Davis and brother William Baird, and Elder P. W. Sawin baptized them. It is a household devoted to the friends of Jesus and his servants, and our now aged sister is truly a mother in Israel, and blessedly adorned with the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. She is enduring severe bodily afflictions, and has also been bereft of her believing husband and four lovely daughters, all of which she bears with patient trust in the Lord, believing that he doeth all things well. "These all died in faith."

Sister Baird's address is Goodnight, Ky.

Yours in the faith of Jesus,

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., July 3, 1901.

WASHINGTON, D. C., June 17, 1901.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—The SIGNS OF THE TIMES contain so many good things, and such good sound doctrine, that I feel like adding a word of appreciation to the good witings by the brethren and sisters from all over the country. As I read their articles they seem to me to contain the very essence of sound doctrine, giving God all the glory, power, praise, and ascribing to him omnipotence, and declaring that he is unlimited in all things. They all declare that man is just as dependent upon him for all spiritual life and blessing, as for natural life. And surely none will contend that man can do anything to give to himself natural life. This is the doctrine that I love; this is the doctrine that I was raised upon; I do not want to hear any other; in fact there

is no other for a sinner, to withdraw from it one iota, is to fall from the doctrine of God, to the theories of man. This doctrine I hear preached here in Washington, by our pastor, Elder Rowe; he preaches to us twice a month; he takes different texts, but his theme is the glory of God, and the weakness of man, whose only hope is in the mercy of God our Savior, who died that sinners might live, and of these I feel to be chief, and so I would say to those who believe and are gifted with the pen, Write on, and speak of this doctrine; let it be of no uncertain sound; let it be clear and ringing, going forth to the strength and comfort of the little ones; let it be the glad tidings that though they are in themselves undone and ready to perish, yet Christ the glorious Mediator, Creator, King, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, and is able of himself to do all things in our salvation, and that all things are done by him. He knows just the case of all his people, and in his own good time will speak comfort to their weary souls. Let the good news go forth in all your writing that Christ is our King, even the King of the Old Baptists, that despised people, that little band who claim him as their King, and want no other. And as many as believe stand secure, and their rights are secured in him. They may go mourning all the day long because of their weakness and proneness to evil, yet these same little children are secure in their Father, they are bought with a price, and all the debt is paid. They were chosen in Christ before the world was made, and in due time for them a Son was born, Jesus Christ, in the flesh. He lived in the flesh, and suffered all the ills that flesh is heir to, and was tempted in all things as we are, but yet beyond what any of us know; he kept the law perfectly, and not one sin was charged against him, save our sins. He was a perfect man, and in this is the sinner's hope. What we cannot do, Christ has done for us. He died and rose again; he laid down his life and took it up again; he came forth from the grave a triumphant and risen Savior, securing the salvation of all who were given to him. But these I feel are too deep waters for me, and so I will close.

Dear brother Chick, if you deem this worthy of publication, you may forward, if not all will be right. I send you my love. Your editorials are good. I wish also to say to those of my friends who are readers of the SIGNS, that I am the same poor, stumbling one, hoping on. I am always glad to hear from them. Love to all.

M. EDWARD FRAZIER.

ROANOKE, Texas, March 22, 1901.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have been reading the SIGNS for something more than a year, and I have never read any paper that I thought suited my experience more than the old SIGNS. Jesus said, "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick," and I have not seen many well days in my life. I feel the wounds and bruises and sores, and that there is but one physician that can heal all our backslidings, and cure all our diseases. In all my "ups and downs" in this world I have no place to which to flee, but to him who speaks and we are healed, for "He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast." "Where the word of a king is there is power." Jesus is the King of saints. "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Jesus once came into the world

a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. This is the reason that he knows so well how to administer to his poor and afflicted people in this sin-worn world. By one of the prophets he has said, "I will leave in the midst of thee a poor and afflicted people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." They cannot trust in human means, for they are taught that the man who trusts in man is cursed, with him who maketh flesh his arm. We tried this for a long time, but when God revealed his Son in us, we no longer conferred with flesh and blood. By this revelation I was made obedient to the heavenly vision, and I believe that when God calls one, he is quick to obey the voice that calls him. When the Lord thus speaks, it is done. I love the doctrine which gives God all the glory and power, for it is his due. It is written that "No flesh shall glory in his presence." "Let him that glorieth glory in the Lord." Brethren, if I have a good hope at all, it is anchored in Jesus, and if here in time I have ever received a blessing at all, it has been altogether through the meritorious work of the Lord, who bore all my sins in his body upon the tree, and put them away by the sacrifice of himself. He says, In those days I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; but then I will write my law in their hearts, and in their minds, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people, and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more forever. I believe that these sins included all that we have ever committed. God's children stand in his presence justified not for what they have done, but for what Jesus has done. He said, "It is finished," that is, the work which his Father gave him to do, and this was the will of the Father, that of all which he had given him he should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day.

My membership is with the old Denton Creek Church. We are in peace one with another. Brother A. D. Bourland, one of the Lord's under-shepherds, goes in and out before us. He is enabled to bring out of the Lord's treasure things both new and old. He is greatly loved by every one that knows him, far and near.

I must close. Do as you think best with this. If there is anything amiss with it, lay it aside, and all will be right with me.

Your unworthy brother,

C. Y. OSTEEN.

BELLMONT, Oklahoma, April 3, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—We esteem the SIGNS so much that we feel as though we can scarcely keep house without it, as it proclaims what we believe to be the truth. I have several Baptist papers, and I think the SIGNS the best of them all.

I will endeavor to write what I hope have been the Lord's dealings with me. I was born in Franklin Co., Va., in 1848; my parents were Barcley and Maria Turner. When quite young I had serious thoughts of death and judgment, still I thought that I could go on in sin and enjoy myself until I got ready to do good, but I have learned that the Lord's time was my time, and not my time his time. He works and none can hinder, and he hinders and none can work. When I was twenty-one years of age, my brother and I moved to Montgomery Co., where we bought land and settled. He was

married, and I lived with him. I had not for some time been feeling well, I was sick with sin. There is but one Physician can heal the sin-sick soul. My cousin came one evening to remain all night with me, and after we had retired for the night, all at once something came over me that made me think that I was going to die. I told my cousin to call my brother and his wife, for I was going to leave this sinful world. I turned over and began to shout and praise the Lord. I said, I know that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God. My brother and wife, and a young man who was there, came in to see what was the matter with me. I was praising God all this time. In this vision I loved the supreme power more than I ever loved father, mother, brother or sister. I think that the Scripture was also fulfilled in me then which says, "Love your enemies." It seemed to me that I loved everybody, both saint and sinner. I believe that if it had not been the work of God I could not have so loved every one. When God works in our hearts both to will and to do of his good pleasure, then we fulfill his word, and it is the Lord that works, and not ourselves. I could not have praised God as I then did, had it not been in accordance with his will, and of his power. I rejoiced to think that I was going to die and leave this sinful world. I want to say to all the Lord's dear children, that when the Lord shall call me home, if I shall be permitted to feel as I felt then, I shall rejoice to go, and say, "Come, welcome death, I'll gladly go with thee." I thought nothing about leaving home and friends, but all my desire was to be with the God whom I loved. I thought that when I got through talking I would be in another world, where joy and peace would dwell forever. But alas, I soon found myself in this same sinful world.

A short time after I passed through this experience, I dreamed that I heard the sweetest hymns sung by christians. They would sing for a time, and then they would stop and say to me, "Why will you yet doubt?" It seemed that I was close to them, but was not permitted to see them. I have at times been so happy in my dreams, that when I would awake I would still be happy. I have often wished that if it could be the will of the Lord, I could talk to the brethren and sisters as I have so often dreamed of talking to them. My parents were both Primitive Baptists, and when a child I loved to hear any one talk upon the Scripture, and when I would see any one baptized it would cause me to feel happy. Now my desire was to be baptized, but I felt that I was so unworthy that I put it off from time to time. At this time there was no organized church near me. Brother J. B. Adams, who is now pastor of our church, used to visit a church about twenty-five miles from my home. He would often ask me to go with him, but I would have some excuse, and often would not go, but when I did go I would come home feeling condemned because I had not offered myself to the church. I would think that the Savior said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." So time went on until finally New Hope Church extended an arm to our neighborhood. We have had an organized church, meeting at our schoolhouse for about three years. About three years since I went to the meeting of the church on Saturday, when several visiting brethren were present, and when the invitation was given for any who wished to unite with the church to come forward, our aged brother and sister Dalton gave in

their letter, and brother Albert Dalton and wife united by experience, and I felt that I could not stay away any longer. I offered myself to the church, telling them a part of what I have here written, and was received, and baptized with brother and sister Albert Dalton, the next day. Now when I go to the meetings, and come home, I feel much better. I do love to get down and wash the saints' feet, because the Savior said, "If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one anothers' feet." And again he said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Dear brethren, if I am not deceived, I think I can say that I have loved the Lord, and he has said, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore, with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." My companion, who then was with the Campbellites, soon left them, and united with the Primitive Baptists. We used to argue a great deal about the Scriptures, but now all is joy and peace. We have had many fiery trials and afflictions to pass through. The Lord has seen fit to take five of our darling children from us, and it has so pained our hearts to part with these precious ones, whom we loved so well, but we feel that we must be still and know that he is God. It is ours to say, Not my will but thine be done.

Brethren and sisters, pray for a poor, unworthy sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all. It gives me so much joy to read so many precious letters written by so many of the brethren and sisters scattered all over the land; it makes me feel that we are not alone. We all have to pass through the same fiery furnace of afflictions.

Let us not forget that it is through much tribulation we enter the kingdom. I do love to hear that sweet hymn sung,

"O how happy are they,
Who their Savior obey."

I believe that if I am not deceived I have sung it with the spirit, and with the understanding also.

These few poor lines may seem to you, dear brethren, as an empty blank, yet these things are my comfort, and they may comfort some poor, trembling child of God who has, like myself, passed much under the rod. I know that with most of you I shall not meet in this world, yet my desire and prayer is that our God will be with us all until we meet at the feet of the blessed Jesus.

As I said before, we have an organized church here, and if any brethren coming this way will stop and see us, they will meet with a hearty welcome.

Now if you think this worthy, you may publish, if not, all will be right.

I remain your unworthy brother,

W. A. TURNER.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., July 6, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—During my recent visit east, attending the associations and meetings, many of the dear saints with whom I met desired that I should let them hear from me through the SIGNS, on my return home. As it would be almost impossible to write each one separately, and I desiring to comply as far as I can, I submit this letter to your judgment, as to its publication.

I left Kentucky the morning of May 13th, and arrived at Mifflin, Pa., Tuesday, near where the Baltimore Association met Wednesday. The meeting was a pleasant one indeed. Evidently they were gathered together by him who has said he will gather them from all countries; all places in which they are scattered in the dark and cloudy day. The dear saints could and did say and feel, "It is good to be here," &c. Each succeeding one of

the four associations were but a duplicate of the first. There was no disturbing element, but Jesus and his salvation; Jesus first and last and all the way through. The attendance of the ministry was equal, I suppose, to former years, and all seemed to have come in the fullness of the blessings of the gospel of Christ; all vieing with each other in exalting Christ, and his power to save.

I never attended a series of meetings where the preaching was stronger or clearer, yet so rich in sweet gospel experience, such as feeds the hungry, famishing soul, strengthens the weary, and binds up the broken heart. Yes, the feeblest lamb in Jesus' fold could feed, "Satisfied with the fatness of thy house." There was no cold, lifeless letter, or argumentative preaching, to convince the unregenerate, and make them believe. I feel there was in the heart of each one of the dear saints, the humble desire in all their labors to feed the church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood. It seemed to me sometimes as I sat and listened to the sweet gospel notes, that there was a fulfillment of the Scripture, "Then shall ye discern between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not." With many it was a season of rejoicing long to be remembered.

Besides the four associations, I attended many other meetings in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey and New York, going as far north as Albany, N. Y. All were pleasant and enjoyable, to me at least, and I trust in a measure to others. As I look back over the seven weeks that I was gone, I can only think of them with a good degree of comfort of soul. There was not a thing that occurred to mar my peace and enjoyment of soul, save my own miserable self, and my failures. If I could attend such a series of meetings, and leave this poor, rebellious, sinful self entirely away, I know it would be heavenly indeed. But I have an humble hope I shall some time see my blessed Master as he is, and be like him; when life in fruition shall be swallowed up of life eternal; this mortal, put on immortality; this corruptible, incorruption. I long to be delivered from this body of sin, waiting and longing for a better resurrection.

I cannot mention the many meetings and dear saints with whom I met, but I have you all in loving remembrance, and can never forget your kind hospitality and liberality. My only wonderment is why you should have fellowship for me, and receive me into your hearts and homes. How oft I trembled lest I was fearfully deceiving you, and I felt that could you know me, you would cast me out. But remembering your loving forbearance I would say, "Entreat me not to return from following after thee. Thy people is my people; thy God, my God." I trust I do love the dear people of God, his cause and truth, and I feel that I am honored to be associated with them that come in the fullness of the blessings of the gospel of Christ, preaching the gospel and salvation without "ifs" or "ands," let or hinderances.

My last appointment was in Washington, D. C., the fifth Sunday in June. I arrived here the 2d inst., finding loved ones as well as when I left. How great the mercies of the Lord to remember me and mine. What shall I render unto him for all his benefits? I cannot thank him or praise him as I ought, though I would desire to give unceasing praise.

And now, to all the dear saints with whom I met and sojourned, I wish to say, If by word or act I offended in the least, it was not intentional. Knowing my

many, many infirmities, I often fear lest I hurt the precious fruit of the vine, for our vine has tender grapes. He that toucheth them, toucheth the apple of my eye, saith wisdom.

I shall be glad to hear from any of the household of faith of your spiritual welfare at any time. May the Lord bless and comfort you all upon the weary journey of life, fill you with wisdom from above to glorify his most holy name, save you from every false way, is the desire of one who entertains the hope that he prefers Jerusalem above his chief joy.

With an abiding love and fellowship I am, I trust, your brother and fellow-laborer in the afflictions of the gospel,

P. W. SAWIN.

P. S.—By divine favor I will try to comply with other requests made when opportunity presents. P. W. S.

HATTON, Kan., June 10, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As I am sending in our subscription to the dear old SIGNS I feel like I would like to tell you how much comfort I get from reading the many good letters and editorials printed on its pages. I feel though we are strangers in the flesh, yet in spirit we are not. All of the writers seem near to me.

Brother Beebe, I would like to tell you about our little church. My husband and myself hold our membership at Bethel Church, in Colorado, some sixty miles from us. For a long time all the preaching we had we got from the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We joined the Missionaries not long after we came to this country, but soon found that was no home for us, so we left them. Sometimes we would almost despair of ever finding our people, but finally we heard of the church at Bethel, through an enemy to the church, and in the Lord's own good time he permitted us to go there, and we found a home. I just cannot express my feelings after I was baptized, such a sweet peace and rest seemed to be with me for a long time. I was taught from a child to think the Methodists were the true church, and when I received a hope I joined them, and had a little water poured on my head for baptism, but I want to tell you, though I remained with them a long time, I was never satisfied with my so-called baptism. Finally my husband was converted and wished to join the Missionaries, so I went with him, thinking now I would get baptism, but it was not long until I was again dissatisfied, and felt that I had not been baptized. I wish to say that I had always thought the Old Baptists were a hard lot and had not the least idea that I would ever be one; but the good Lord intended I should be, and the doctrine I once hated, I was made to love, and it grows sweeter and dearer to me every day. I feel that I can never thank and praise him enough for permitting me to have a home among his people; a people that I love with a love that I cannot express, and which seems to grow stronger every day. But O, dear brethren and sisters, how unworthy I feel to be among them. I am so often made to feel that if I am a child I am the least of all. If I am a child of God, it is through his mercy, and not through anything that I may have done. How thankful I feel that in Jesus we have a full and complete Savior, and not one who just offers salvation to those who will accept it. Jesus says, "All that the Father giveth to me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the

Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day." Blessed comforting words, for if Jesus is our Advocate then we are saved. If his own precious blood was shed for my sins, then there is no power that can take me away from him. I praise God that it is thus, for I know that in my flesh there is nothing good, and when I would do good evil is present with me.

But I have digressed. I wish to say that brother Wm. Perdue is our pastor, he lives at Chivington, Colo. We have only eleven or twelve members, but we are all in harmony, and have sweet communion one with another when we meet. We have one dear old brother near us who is past his three score and ten; his name is Charlie Mitchell; he was baptized when my husband and myself were, last October, brother A. G. Hurst and wife, living twenty-five miles north-east of us, are Primitive Baptists, and expect to put their letter in with us soon, the Lord willing.

May you, dear brethren Beebe and Chick, live long to advocate the truth, with no turning to the right nor left, is the prayer of your unworthy sister,

MATTIE HOLDREN.

STEM, N. C., June 18, 1901.

MY DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE AND CHICK:—If I may claim such precious relationship. Inclosed you will find money order for two dollars for the renewal of my subscription to our most valuable paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It has been a most welcome visitor to my humble home for several years before I had a name with the Baptists, and I do humbly hope that its editors and able correspondents may be spared to earnestly contend for the faith as they have in the past. Ofttimes when thinking of the able writers that have been called home, I feel somewhat sad and discouraged, but I know that we will not be left without witnesses, and that the all-wise God will raise up others in their place, and I feel confident that when the last one that contends for the doctrine advocated by the editors and correspondents of the SIGNS are called home, that time will be no more. I am sorry to see the division that is arising between some of our good brethren, and do hope that they may express their opinion in a mild and God-like manner. I believe that there is but very little difference in our people, the difference is in the manner of expressing our views. As stated before, I do indorse the doctrine contended for by the SIGNS, and know that we will not admit to what those of a more limited predestination views, accuse us of, in that God is the author of sin, neither do I believe that those of more limited predestination views, will admit to what those of an unlimited predestination views accuse them of: that the acts of men and devils overturn and thwart or cut short God's purposes or intention. So then the main difference must be in the manner of expressing our views. So then, my dear brethren, if this be true, I do hope that you will bear with each other, so that there be no strife or division among us. Do you know, my dear brethren, that nothing would please our adversaries better than to see us divided amongst ourselves? So finally, brethren, one and all, who and wherever you are, my prayer is that you be kind and forbearing one with another.

With christian affection for one and all, I am your unworthy brother,

J. H. GOOCH.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1901.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MATTHEW XXV. 14-30.

BROTHER F. L. COX, of Dardanelle, Arkansas, desires that we shall write concerning the parable of the talents, recorded in Matthew xxv. 14-30. He says some in his section have said that they knew that to them had been committed a talent, and that they meant to so improve it that they should gain the reward promised, but his feeling about the matter is that those to whom the talents are really committed, will not see that it is so, because near the end of the chapter it is expressly said that those who had done the things named there, could not see that they ever had done them, while those who had not done them, thought that they had.

First we will say that we think that our brother is right in his view of the matter. Whatever the parable of the talents may signify, we are sure that it does not present a bargain between the master and his servants, or that the servant knows that if he uses his talent well, he shall be rewarded for it. So far as the statement of the parable itself is concerned, it is plain that when the man took his journey into a far country, and before doing so committed the various talents to his servants, he said nothing to them of any reward for good and profitable use of the talents. He promised nothing to them at all, but simply committed the talents to their charge. This is a picture of all the dealings of God with his servants. He does yet commit to all his servants some talents, but he never says to them, If you will be faithful and gain other talents, I will reward you. Indeed, according to the very terms of the parable, the master could not have offered any such reward. These were his servants, not hired, but his own bond men, belonging to him, and he had a right to all their service, and they had no claim for any reward at all from his hand, and no right to expect any. He could not be put in any debt to them, nor come under any obligation to them by all that they might do. This is fully set forth by the Master in another place where he expressly says that after the servant has done all, he is to say, I am an unprofitable servant, I have done only what was my duty to do. There also he teaches that instead of rewarding the servant who has been faithful, he still expects that servant to gird himself and wait upon him at his meal. It all sets forth the truth that we cannot put the Almighty under any obligation to us in any way. So in the parable, the servants of this man belonged to him, and all their powers were his, and he could owe them nothing, for all they might do. We may be faithful, and it may be said of us, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant," but never Well done, thou profitable servant. We can never do more than we are under obligations to do, and so can never deserve a reward.

All that was conferred upon the faithful servants in the parable was a reward of grace, and not of debt. Still further, it was not ease, or riches, or relief from

care, but added burdens and responsibility. It was said, "Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things." That is, I will commit to thee still more talents, that thou mayest occupy upon them. In this very thing is the joy of the Lord into which the servant should enter. This enlarged field of care and responsibility conferred upon him, was a mark of the favor of the Lord, and in entering upon this greater field he entered into the evidence of favor, and here was the joy. What a solemn joy this would be to that servant. There would be gladness that the field was widening, and yet what a sense of solemn responsibility would be there, so that the joy would not be a careless, light hearted, thoughtless joy, but rather a sober, thoughtful joy, which is far more abiding and satisfying than any other joy can be.

The sense in which it was said, That servant should be made ruler over many things, did not differ from his former rule over the five or two talents. What a false idea men have of what ruling must mean. To rule does not mean that one is to be ministered unto by others, but rather it means that he who rules must spend his life and every power within him serving others. It is a life of service, and not of ease, if indeed one be a true ruler. In ruling over the five, or two talents, labor and care and service were involved. Now to rule over many things, meant still more labor and care and service. It was not to places of ease or careless pleasure that these two men were promoted, but to more constant labor, and more solemn responsibilities. It was such a promotion as would cause them to shrink and hesitate, rather than feel any great elation. It was not a promotion for which they had striven, and which they had coveted. There would be in them, growing out of what they had experienced in their former care, a sense of unfitness and fear and a shrinking from it, because of the greatness of the work, and because of the true desire in them to honor their master in all that they did.

The whole spirit of the parable is that they did not do what they did as a stepping-stone to wider and more honorable things. Such a motive as this would have spoiled the service. It would not have been with an eye single to the glory of God, but would rather have been seeking their own glory. The one motive set forth in the parable was to just occupy upon what the Lord had committed to them, that he might have his own with usury. Nothing for self, but all for the Lord. O, for more of this spirit in us all. If any of the Lord's true servants have begun to think of the service as one for which a reward is offered, and which they engage in because they expect some future gladness, or some added favor, that servant has missed the true service, and misunderstood the true reward, and whatever he has, or fancies he has, comes to him not as a reward of grace, but rather of debt. That servant is getting away from grace, and sinking back into legal service and bondage.

By the talents we do not understand what men now call talents, as for instance, it is said of some person that he or she possesses great talents, meaning ability in themself. But we understand by the talents, and also in the other similar parable of the pounds, the field assigned to one for his occupancy. For instance, one is called to the ministry of the word, that one manifests that faithfulness which is becoming in that which is committed to him, and soon, without

any thought upon his part that it ought to be so, but rather while he yet feels that he has been very unfruitful and unfaithful, still larger demands are made upon him; he is called to wider fields, and soon he finds more and more responsibility thrust upon him, which he will feel very unfit for, and which will bring to him more of care and anxiety than of gladness, though there will be also a sense of gladness that he is counted worthy to serve, and to serve more and more. It is so with whatever his talent may be. They that use the office of a deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith. The same rule applies here, such a man is not seeking preferment; indeed he does not see how it can be for him at all. It is not conferred upon him as in any sense a payment for his service, but it comes by growth without his taking one thought for it. In every department of service in the house of God they that serve well shall have the honor of still more and more service. Upon the willing heart and the willing hands shall more and more demands be made, and in this wider and still wider service there will be also a growth in humility and fear, without which no service is of any value. In the parable the servants did not say, I ought to have a reward, or I ought to have a wider field, but the lord himself said that. It must always be so. Not he who commendeth himself, but whom the Lord commendeth, is approved. To commend one's self is sin, because it arises out of pride and not humility, and is of the flesh, all the thoughts of which are sinful. The service is a loving one, and therefore a willing service. The servants in the parable to whom five and two talents were committed, did not say of the master, Thou art a hard man, thou reapest where thou hast not sown, and gatherest where thou hast not strawed. No such thought had entered their mind, they did not feel so toward him, theirs was willing, loving service, they desired to honor him, and to show forth his praise. But here was one, of whom it was said that he did thus regard his Lord, there was no love in his heart, and there could be none. All who are legal in their service yet, thus regard the Lord of life and glory. They regard him as a God who exacts, and who only rewards those who are of service to him, and according to the measure of their service. No wonder that they fear, and fail to really occupy the talent committed to them. All that service that grows out of the flesh of the people of God, is of that sort, and for it there is only a curse. Gospel fields are not open to them, and there is no growth in their usefulness to the people of God, rather what has been conferred upon them in the way of a field of labor, will be removed from them, and they will cease to be known by any service which they may render. They still belong to the Master, but become of no use in his household. He calls them wicked and slothful servants, and to express the wideness of the separation between the two kinds of service, and God's approval of the one, and disapproval of the other, it is said that the one talent is taken from the slothful servant, and given to him who now has ten talents.

This servant who regarded his Lord as a hard and exacting master, and so spoke of him, no doubt, to others, might have seemed very jealous for the rights of his lord, and anxious that he should have his own, but it was not so in the eye of the master himself. It is free gospel service, and not legal, that he first begets in the soul, and then recognizes and blesses,

and so this blessing always comes as a sweet and glad surprise to the recipient of it.

Our brother was right in his reference to the closing parable of this chapter, the blessings conferred upon the true servants were not expected, and they could not see why it should be said to them that they had served at all, but how out of their humility must they have rejoiced and magnified grace, which had so dealt with them.

"Grace all the work shall crown,
To everlasting days;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

There will be a solemn fear in all those whose hearts are filled with love to God, and regard to his honor, lest they regard the Lord as a hard Master, and lest their service be of that slavish sort that knows not grace but only bondage. Between outbreaking sin and pharisaical or legal service, there is a most narrow path. Truly the vulture's eye hath not seen it, nor the lion's whelp trodden it. Human wisdom and human power, symbolized by the vulture's eye and the lion's whelp, can never enter there. In that way of life to God is given all the glory, and the creature is abased. In that way we must decrease, and Jesus must increase, and if we be in that way we shall rejoice that it is so. When Jesus is exalted our joy is fulfilled. How wonderful the grace which saves from outbreaking sin on the one hand, and then on the other hand keeps us from boasting that we are therefore better than our fellows.

We leave these somewhat scattered thoughts to the consideration of brother Cox, and our readers in general. We have not attempted to give a full explanation of the parable, but only to suggest such considerations as were called out by the questions and remarks of the brother, in his note to us. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE OLD AND THE NEW MAN.

"So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."—Rom. vii. 25.

If Paul had in him these two opposite principles, and both so identified with his person that with the one he *himself* served the law of God, and with the other at the same time *he himself* served the law of sin, was he like all other christians in these respects? Have all christians in them a mind with which they themselves serve the law of God, or can any man be a christian who has not such a mind? And have all christians, like Paul, a principle or law in their members which is at war with this law of the mind, and with which they themselves serve the law of sin? Or is the flesh of some christians so purified by regeneration that they are unlike Paul, and have no wicked propensities in their flesh whereby they serve the law of sin?

If all christians are like Paul in these particulars, and like him serve the law of their God with the mind, and with the flesh serve the law of sin, are both of these opposites born of God; Or is that flesh in them which wars against the Spirit, only born of the flesh: or has it been born over again and made holy by a spiritual birth? And if it has, why does the apostle admonish christians to crucify it with its affections and lusts, and how can the christian with it himself still serve the law of sin? If in our flesh there dwells no good thing, and in that which is born of the Spirit there dwells no evil thing, if that which is born of God cannot commit sin, because his seed abideth in him, and *he* or *it* cannot sin because he is born of God, is it heretical or wicked for a christian to believe that all the corruptions within him are born of the flesh, and none

of them are born of God, and that all that is pure and holy within him, is born of God, and no part of it is born of the flesh?

Of this mind with which the christian *himself* serves the law of God, the apostle says, "We have the mind of Christ," and another mind, or law, which he saw in his flesh he calls a *carnal* mind, which signifies a fleshly mind. With the mind of Christ he serves the law of God; but the *carnal* (or fleshly) mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. These two minds must be very opposite. One of them is not, and cannot be subject to the law of God, and with the other we serve the law of God. Are both of these minds born of God, or is that mind which cannot be subject to the law of God, born of the flesh? The carnal mind is enmity against God, while the law requires love to God, and love to our neighbor, and on these hang all the law and the prophets. Is that fleshly mind which cannot obey the law of love, born of God? Or is that mind which can and does love God, with all the heart, might and strength, born of that flesh in which there is no good thing?

We think all christians will unite in the conclusion that all within them that is carnal, earthly, depraved and vile, is born of the flesh, and will continue to annoy them until they shall be by death delivered from these bonds of corruption, until this earthly house or mortal tabernacle shall be taken down, dissolved and fall, and that our mortal bodies will not be animated with immortal life until God shall change them and fashion them like the glorious body of their risen Redeemer, and that change will not come until the resurrection, when if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in us, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken their mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwells in them. Then, and not until then, shall they be satisfied: when they awake in his likeness.

Strip the subject of all vain speculations, and all futile attempts to analyze the natural soul, body, or spirit of man, in trying to make out what we possess that is born of earth, or born from above, and it will be easy for every heaven-born child to perceive that all that we possess as identified with our persons in our present state that is born of God, bears the image of the heavenly, and all within us that does not bear the heavenly image is born of the flesh, and not of the Spirit.

With a clear understanding of their complex character, as now in an earthly body which clings to the earth, and lusts after the things of the earth, and wars against the spirit of their mind, and makes them groan, being burdened, and also clearly understanding that they also are the happy recipients, through grace, of eternal, or immortal life, that Christ is formed in them the hope of glory, that God has revealed his Son in them, that God has shined in their hearts to give them the light of the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ, they will be prepared to appreciate what the inspired apostles have said of the *old* man, and *new* man, the *outer* man, and the *inner* man, together with the admonition to put off the old man with his deeds, and to put on the new man, which after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness.

A clear scriptural understanding of this subject will serve also to obviate the difficulties which may harrass their minds in regard to the nature of the christian warfare. The saints are often tempted to doubt the reality of their own experience because they find in them so much of

what is earthly, sensual and devilish, so much unreconciliation to God, so much murmuring, such vile affection, and strong propensities to depart from the living God, and to run into forbidden paths. If, say they, we were born of God, would it be thus with us? Can a nature which is born of God, grovel in the dust, and be so opposite to the spirit and purity of God? Certainly that which is born of God cannot commit sin, cannot disbelieve or doubt what God has said, &c. But when they hear an inspired apostle declare that it is no more I that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in me, that the new man in them only, is born of God, loves God, loves holiness, loves the brethren, and serves the law of God, and that with his flesh, or earthly nature, he serves the law of sin, and does the things which he would not, and leaves undone the things which he would do, it gives them sweet relief. "From whence come wars and fightings among you?" Thus the apostle James interrogates the saints. Do they arise from that new man which is after God created in righteousness and true holiness? Certainly not. They cannot proceed from that in us which is born of God, for that cannot commit sin, for the seed abideth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. Whence are they then? "Come they not of your own lusts?" Our flesh lusts against the Spirit, and that which is born of the flesh is flesh. Here is the source of wars among christians. But as that which is assailed by the flesh is Spirit, and is born of the Spirit, it wars against the corruptions of the flesh. The life, or animation in the christian which is of the flesh, shall die, and if we walk after the flesh, as the body is death, and it is dead because of sin, ye shall die. There is nothing else in the flesh; but if ye through the Spirit (which is born of God) do mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live; for the Spirit is life, because of righteousness. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." Let us remember that if we walk after the Spirit, we shall not fulfill the desires or lusts of the flesh. If the saints could at all times walk after the Spirit, there would be no wars and fighting among them; that is, no biting and devouring of one another; they would lay aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speaking, and as new-born, heaven-born, spirit-born babes, we would desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby. This spiritual food is adapted to the child of the new birth; it will not nourish the child of the flesh. Our fleshly natures are of the earth, all their sustenance must come from the earth, and be obtained from thence by the sweat of the face. But that birth which is of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever, must be sustained by the milk of that living and abiding word.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., November 15, 1858.

ALL GONE.

THE large type hymn books of the genuine Turkey Morocco binding and the imitation binding are all gone. All the styles of binding we have left of the large books, are the cloth and blue marbled edge binding.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$475 73
Jennie Power, Illinois, $1.00: J. A. Fanning, Texas, $1.00.—Total	2 00
Total to date	$477 73

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Susan P. Majors was born in Somerset (now Wicomico) Co., Md., July 8th, 1844, and died near the place of birth, Dec. 6th, 1900, her age being 56 years, 4 months and 28 days.

ALSO,

Mrs. Sarah A. Cox, a sister of the foregoing, was born March 27th, 1838, and died May 14th, 1901, aged 63 years, 1 month and 17 days. The maiden name of these two sisters was Russell, an old family in that section of the County. They were both highly esteemed members of the little church at Rewastico, having been baptized by Elder E. Rittenhouse, at the time of a visit there, something like eighteen years ago. They were faithful members, always filling their places whenever it was possible for them to do so, and ever showing a readiness to do, as far as able, for the comfort and welfare of the brethren. We have hope for them because of the abiding faithfulness, love, tenderness and compassion of an ever merciful God. We shall miss them very greatly in our little meetings at Rewastico, particularly myself, as I was always sure that they would be present, if possible, and sure of a pleasant greeting and friendly grasp of the hand.

May the good Lord reconcile us wholly to his will, and teach us not to seek to pry too closely into the hidden things that belong to him alone.

ALSO,

I am requested to send notice of the departure from this vale of conflict, of sister **Hannah R. Parker,** an esteemed member of the Forest Grove Church, in Wicomico Co., Md. She was born July 28th, 1827, died April 1st, 1901, was baptized in the fellowship of the Forest Grove Church, by Elder E. Rittenhouse, Dec. 18th, 1888, and was a faithful member of that church to the day of her death. Her maiden name was Parsons, and she was married to Sampson A. Parker about fifty years ago, who died twenty-two years ago, leaving her with a large family, with no means of support except their labor, besides her husband was an invalid for many years before his decease, throwing the burden of the family on her. She performed her part well. Truly a good woman has departed from our midst, one who was faithful in all the relations in life. She leaves two step-sons, who honor her memory, six of her own sons, two daughters, thirty-nine grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. She was a granddaughter of Elder James Rounds, who in his day was a sound, useful Old Baptist minister, whose memory is held in great respect by the people of this section of country. Sister Parker also leaves several brothers, and one sister, with many other relatives, to mourn. The church mourns a faithful member, but we have hope for her appearance with Jesus, when he shall appear. I was away attending the funeral of Elder Wm. L. Beebe, at the time of her death, and Elder Durand was called in, and spoke very much to the comfort and satisfaction of the bereaved family. May the consolations of the gospel be ministered unto them.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., July 15, 1901.

Littleton Bethards, the oldest person in Scioto township, died June 10th, 1901, after a very short illness, aged 97 years and 26 days. The venerable man was born July 16th, 1804, and has been an extraordinarily active and robust man all of his long life. In early life he was a mason and plasterer, in his later years a farmer. He survived two wives. His first wife was Anna Gochenouer, to whom he was married March 10th, 1831. Five children, three sons and two daughters, were born of this union, and shortly after the birth of the fifth child, the mother died. Of these children, two sons and one daughter survive the father. On September 22d, 1839, he married Sarah Ann Davis, whose death occurred about one year ago. Twelve children were born to them, seven sons and five daughters, of whom one son and two daughters preceded their parents to the world beyond. Four of the eleven children surviving have their homes near where the father lived, the other seven are located in the west. The deceased united with the Primitive Baptist church nearly sixty years prior to his death, was a worthy and devoted member, and lived an exemplary life, esteemed by all.

Funeral services were held at Primitive Baptist church, Matville, on June 12th, conducted by Elders G. N. Tusing, of Columbus, and R. W. Peters, of Circleville, Ohio.

ROBT. W. PETERS.

MY father, **C. W. Smith,** died Feb. 19th, 1901, after an illness of a week with heart trouble, aged 78 years and 19 days. He was born in Tennessee, Jan. 31st, 1823. He was married to Miss Mary Dougherty, Nov. 30th, 1847. He was one of the three who laid out the town of Cuba, Mo. In January, 1867, he moved on his farm near Atwater, Ill., where he died, leaving a dear old companion and four children, (three children having gone before) six grandchildren, four granddaughters and two grandsons.

His funeral occurred Thursday, the 21st, at the family residence. Elder John Scott, of Pleasant Plains, Ill., a Primitive Baptist, conducted the services. He took for his text, "Whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's."

He never united with any church, but when told of his condition made the remark, "I would love to live, but then it is all right. He seemed to feel his unworthiness, and was heard praying. He loved the Primitive Baptists, and they were always welcome to share his hospitality. He was a strong believer in predestination. He was laid to rest in the Moor Cem-

etery until the resurrection. O, how we miss him. He died respected and honored by all who knew him. Remember us at a throne of mercy.

NANNIE SMITH.

ATWATER, Ill., June 25, 1901.

MY beloved brother in the flesh, **Samuel S. Martin,** departed this life June 29th, 1901, at 11:15 p. m. He died of yellow jaundice, at the age of 67 years, 7 months and 29 days. The subject of this notice was not identified with the Old School Baptists, but was a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and died in the triumphs of faith. He was twice married, but had no children. His last wife, who was a widow lady when he married her, Helen G. Rogers by name, survives him, with many relatives and friends, to mourn their loss, but not as those who have no hope, for their loss is his gain.

From a sorrowing brother,

WM. B. MARTIN.

STARBUCK, Wash., June 30, 1901.

INFORMATION WANTED.

GREENFIELD, Ind., July 12, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—We start, the Lord willing, for St. Ignaco, next Tuesday. It is on the Strait of Mackinac, which connects lakes Michigan and Huron. I would like to learn if there are any Baptists up there. A note in the SIGNS might find them. We intend to be gone till in September, and if we could find some of our people it would be a welcome find.

Affectionately your brother,

D. H. GOBLE.

MEETINGS.

THE Peace Valley Association will convene with Union Church, at Blum, Texas, commencing on Saturday before the third Sunday in August, 1901, at 10 o'clock a. m., and will close on Monday. All lovers of the truth are invited.

W. L. ROGERS, Pastor.

THE Brookdale Church, of Susquehanna Co., Pa., expect to have a two days meeting, Tuesday and Wednesday after the third Sunday in August, (20th and 21st) 1901. Trains will be met at Conklin, Pa., on D., L. & W. R. R., Monday afternoon, and at Montrose depot, Pa., Monday afternoon. All who come will be welcomed.

A TWO days meeting will be held, providence permitting, at Justus, Pa., Thursday and Friday, August 22d and 23d, 1901. Those attending Brookdale meeting can easily get to this meeting, as it is only forty miles from Montrose. All will be made welcome who may come. Trains will be met at Olyphant, Pa., Wednesday afternoon, at D. & H. depot, and the N. Y., O. & W. depot, also at Glenburn, Pa., Wednesday afternoon and evening, and friends cared for.

For further information address Geo. Goodrich, Justus, Pa.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, will meet, the Lord willing, with the Sugar Creek Church, on Friday, August 30th, 1901, at 10 o'clock a. m , and continue three days, at Table Grove, on the St. Louis branch of the C., B. & Q. R. R. Trains will be met at the grove on Thursday. No trains will be met Friday except the early trains from Reardstown. All are invited, especially brethren in the ministry.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE South Ouachita Association will convene with Good Hope Church, in Union Parish, La., one mile north of Oakland, commencing Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1901. An invitation is extended to all lovers of truth to meet with us.

L. C. TRULL.

THE First Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, in Vega, N. Y., has appointed a yearly or two days meeting, to be held the last Wednesday and Thursday in September, (25th and 26th) 1901.

Also a counsel at the same time to examine the gift of brother John B. Slawson, and if thought proper, to set him apart to the work of the ministry. We invite our brethren and sisters and friends, especially ministering brethren, to attend with us.

This done by order and in behalf of the church, June 29th, 1901.

Those coming by rail will be met at Roxbury, on Tuesday, the day before the meeting.

WILLIAM BALLARD, Church Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 69. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1901. NO. 16.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LIBERTY GROVE, Md., July 8, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I inclose a letter from Elder John McConnell; if it meets with your approval, please publish it, as I feel it belongs to the household of faith scattered abroad.

Your sister in hope,

CASSIE J. ROWLAND.

573 W. 146TH ST., NEW YORK, N. Y., Dec. 1, 1900.

MISS CASSIE J. ROWLAND—MY DEAR SISTER:—Your very welcome letter came to hand in due time, and should have been answered long before this, but it seems as though no favorable opportunity for writing has presented itself, and my correspondence is in consequence sadly neglected.

The opportunity to write you now arises through my confinement at home in sickness. I have not been well for some time, and hard work, insufficient rest, exposure and other evils, have resulted in laying me up for a time. I am in poor condition to write to any one, and quite incapable of properly answering your good letter, but I will at least acknowledge its receipt, and try to tell you something it suggests to me.

I am glad you wrote as you did, and I can sympathize with your feeling of hesitancy to ask questions concerning things which we believe the children of God have more light on than we. But I do not think we are justified in this hesitancy, for it is a good thing to speak often one to another concerning our hopes and fears; we are helpers of each other's joy in so doing. There is comfort to me in witnessing the groping in darkness of an afflicted and poor child of God. Their sensible ignorance, blindness and almost helpless despair, speaks more convincingly than ever lips could of their being kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. Boasting is excluded where grace reigns; the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit and contrite heart, such he will not despise. It is a good thing to realize our ignorance; when we think we know something, then know we nothing as we ought.

I would be glad indeed to answer your questions in such a way that every fear and doubt would turn to you for a testimony that your dwelling-place is the house of the Lord, a house of prayer, but this is not in my power; except the Lord give the word, none can publish it. Your

trouble, in that sin is mixed with all you do, is the common experience of all saints. No temptation hath taken you but such as is common to them all. Temptations put nothing into a man, but only draw out what was in him before. "Every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil continually." This heart of ours is the citadel where this enemy, sin, dwells and maintains rebellion against God all our day, and it is a deceitful heart, deceitful above all things, who can know it? Its deceitfulness in our dealings with others is as nothing compared to its deceitfulness toward ourselves. It abounds in contradictions, sometimes easily entreated, and again very neglectful. The frame of the heart is ready to contradict itself every moment; it is not constant to itself, and has no certain conduct that is stable. A deceiving and a deceived heart, who can deal with it? I do not understand that "The sin which doth so easily beset us," is to be regarded as some special individual weakness, nor that "a thorn in the flesh" has similar import. I do not think that Paul, who made use of these expressions, had in mind anything but a sense of the total depravity of his fleshly nature. He found it totally irreconcilably enmity against God; that in his flesh dwelt no good thing. In his letter to the Romans, seventh chapter, he declares this law of sin to be an indwelling law; it is present with me, "it is in my members." It dwells in us, it is never absent. If it were only in us at times, we might accomplish some obedience in its absence, but it is no wanderer. Whatever we are about, wherever we are, the law of sin is always present, in the best we do, or the worst. Not only does it dwell in us, but "when I would do good, it is present with me." Would I pray, would I hear, would I meditate, this hateful indweller proves itself present. "The sin that doth so easily beset us," applies itself with great ease and readiness unto its work. When I want to apply my mind or understanding to spiritual things, there it is, in ignorance, darkness and folly. When I wish for my will to be engaged, there it is also, in spiritual deadness and stubbornness. Do I want my heart and affections set on things above? there it is, in inclinations to the world and present things. It insinuates itself into all that I do, hindering good and furthering evil. Many there are who find not this law in themselves, who have no spiritual sense and experience of indwelling sin, and this is because they are wholly under its dominion. They find no darkness or folly in their minds, because they are darkness itself, and darkness will discover nothing. They are at peace with their lusts, being in bondage to them.

I think it was John Warburton who once said, "It is a great mercy to know we are sinners," and so it is. In just the measure that we find this law of sin dwelling in us, in just such measure do we abhor it and ourselves, *and no more.* And to just the extent we find it, proportionately will be our longing for deliverance, *and no more*, and our watchfulness and obedience will be accordingly. Upon this one thing of finding out and experiencing the power of this law of sin, turns the whole course of our lives. Our sinful nature is not changed in the new birth, neither does it pass under any change. The carnality and enmity of our old nature is just the same as it was before we were created anew in Christ Jesus. Our Adam nature was a body of sin and death prior to a work of grace, and it is a body of sin and death now, and will continue to be so for all time.

Our experience proves there is not a feature of the old man defaced, nor a limb of him taken away. His offensive breath and unpleasant voice is just the same; his vital powers are as strong as ever, he is not in a declining state by any means. There is not one word of authority in Scripture to support the sentiment that one born of God becomes more pure and progressively holy, and that the corruptions of our sinful nature are driven out little by little. The truth is, "Whosoever is born of God sinneth not." As members of the body of Christ there can be no growth in the principle of union; only in perception can they grow. That which God hath joined together no man can put asunder. The subjects of grace cannot be more united to the Lord than what they really are. They cannot grow in God's favor, nor can they grow in the nature or principle of sanctification and holiness. There is undoubtedly a growth in a spiritual perception of these things, and in proportion to it in experience our consolations will abound. But the principles of truth and grace in the new believing heart are immortal principles, and never can be in a declining or dying state. It is the life of Christ, which is immortality. If this life be in us, we are completely sanctified and justified in Christ Jesus our glorious Head, and are as holy as Christ is holy, by virtue of our mystical union with him. We are a part of Christ; our nature and desires are one. We delight in each other, and the Father delights in both, because he has loved the members with the same love wherewith he hath loved Christ; thus the Lord said unto his Father, "And thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." Imputed holiness and righteousness are inseparable, there cannot be one without the other. "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

What a wonderful work is this finished salvation of the Lord's people. Because they have everlasting life in Christ Jesus, they never can be in a state of condemnation, for the seed of God remaineth in them. It is not possible for them to lose their adoption or heirship. No, there is nothing present, or to come, that can separate the subjects of grace from the love of Christ, for he has given unto them eternal life, and they cannot perish. Every transgression of the Lord's people received a just recompense of reward in the person of Jesus, so there can be no such thing as God ever having any controversy with one of his children for sins which Christ died for on the cross. Neither does he remonstrate with them in displeasure, or find fault with them on account of their frames of mind. "Our times are in his hand, and he knoweth our frame." We are apt to think sometimes that afflictions and tribulations are signs of God's displeasure against us on account of sin, but if such could possibly be, just think what it would imply. It would appear that Christ's sufferings were not satisfactory, and so make that satisfaction a mere verbal shadow. I have heard it said by those whom I gave credit for knowing better, that God afflicts and tries his children because they merit it by their unfaithfulness. Such a sentiment is the rankest Arminianism. It is in fact saying that God is not a Sovereign, and that mutable creatures have it in their power to make him change.

But I am making this letter too long, and must bring it to a close. Before you have read thus far I imagine I hear you saying, Yes, all this is true, but what evidences have I of acceptance in the Beloved? Let us look for some of these evidences.

All the promises of God are yea and amen in Christ Jesus; he is the amen, the faithful witness, and it is he who testifies concerning our condition as it is indeed. So it is in the manifest life of Christ in us, whereby our consolations shall abound. We may be mistaken, and be troubling ourselves in vain, or flattering ourselves upon false grounds, but when Jesus, the faithful witness, speaks of our state and condition, that it is indeed. He judges not by outward appearance, but judges as it is indeed. As the interest we have in his salvation is given us in Jesus. Grace is *given*, never earned or merited. The Spirit is *given*, pardon is *given*; faith is the *gift* of God; the promises are *given*, exceeding great and precious promises, that by these the elect might see and experience that they are made partakers of the divine nature. (2 Peter i. 4.) Eternal life is *given*, and heaven is *given*. It is all *gift*, from first to last, in Christ Jesus our Lord. These things we seek for, as for hidden treasure, but never are they discovered except in the revelation of Jesus; he is the embodiment of all.

When the word of God speaks in us, the word is made flesh, or in other words, Christ is come in our flesh, and when God speaks it is always in the declaration of his sure covenant, and it fills us with shame for all the ways whereby we have been alienated from him. We certainly speak peace to ourselves, when our so doing is not attended with the greatest hatred of our sin. This is healing ourselves, and not being healed of God. When we do truly look upon Christ whom we have pierced, we will "mourn" for him on this account, and will detest the sin that pierced him. When we go to Christ for healing, faith views him as one pierced. It looks especially on the blood of the covenant, on his sufferings, for with his stripes are we healed, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him. When we look to him for healing, his stripes are to be seen; when we look to him for peace, his chastisement is manifest. An evidence of the Spirit's indwelling, is godly sorrow on account of sin, and of desire toward God. A sense of the vileness and poverty of human nature, causing us to sigh and groan before the Lord, demonstrates where our affections are set. And to only such is the gospel preached.

I will close with just one thought: "It is *given* unto you in behalf of Christ, to suffer for his sake." The gifts of God are without repentance, he can never turn from his purpose, so you must needs suffer. And is it not comforting to remember that our God is the giver of every good and perfect gift, and to suffer is to reign with Christ? So we do glory in tribulation, knowing this, that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost, which is *given* unto us.

No, my dear sister, while you are in time you will never be free from the hostility of the flesh against the Spirit. This is your portion, and by grace you are saved. Jesus hath a kingdom in the hearts of all his children, and his people also are his kingdom. He reigns and rules in his saints, with his sceptre of righteousness. Christ hath no kingdom in the soul of a poor sinner till he breaks into the soul with his precious love, then the redeemed and heaven-born soul says, Let Jesus be King, and none but him. He is our desire, and the desire of a soul is a demonstration of the state it is in.

Remember me in love to all the dear ones at Rock Springs, and especially re-

member me to your pastor, who is to me a father in Israel.

Forgive my wordiness, and believe me your brother in the hope of the gospel,

JOHN McCONNELL.

THE LONDON CONFESSION OF FAITH.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE FAITH OF GOD:—As the plea has been made that the meaning of English words, though plain and clear when used, yet becomes dark and obscure in later times, so it is with the declaration of the religious belief of the Baptists of the seventeenth century, in the year of our Lord, 1689, and published in the London Confession. And as this doubtful meaning of this ancient declaration of what the holy Scriptures teach was made the plea for holding what was called a "National Convention" of "leading Baptists" of the United States, last November, at Fulton, Ky., for the purpose of adding a supplement to the London Confession, to make plain and clear the meaning of some of its obscure parts, therefore it is well that we read for ourselves the words of our faithful brethren of more than two hundred years ago, upon some of the chief points said to be obscure and uncertain in meaning. So the following correct extracts from the Confession are given. In their address to the reader they say, "In those things wherein we differ from others, we have expressed ourselves with all candor and *plainness.* * * * We have also taken care to affix texts of Scripture for the confirmation of each article in our *confession,* in which *work* we have studiously endeavored to select such as are most clear and pertinent for the proof of what is asserted by us." How does this agree with the recent pretext that those devout servants of God failed to make their meaning plain to the intelligence of Baptists of this time? This is casting reproach upon those faithful men of God, as well as charging ignorance and stupidity to the Baptists of our time, for it is virtually saying that the common reader now cannot understand the real meaning of candid and plain words. It is a vaunting assumption on the part of a few self-styled "leading Baptists," and it betrays a lack of "candor and plainness" before God and men.

In chapter two, speaking of God, the Confession says, "Who is immutable, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, every way infinite, most holy, most wise, most free, most absolute, working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will, for his own glory. * * * He is the alone fountain of all being, of whom, through whom and to whom are all things; and he hath most sovereign dominion over all creatures, to do by them, for them or upon them whatsoever himself pleaseth. In his sight all things are open and manifest. His knowledge is infinite, infallible and independent upon the creature, so as nothing is to him contingent or uncertain. He is most holy in all his counsels, in all his works and in all his commands." All these statements are very candid and plain, and they need no master to explain them.

In chapter three those candid and plain men of God speak of God's decree, saying, "God hath decreed in himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever come to pass; yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin, nor hath fellowship with any therein; nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor yet is the liberty or contingency of second causes

taken away, but rather established, in which appears his wisdom in disposing all things, and power and faithfulness in accomplishing his decree." The simple meaning of this sentence is so frank, candid and plain to the mind of every reader, that it will stand against the efforts of every modern convention of "leading Baptists" to doctor and obscure it to suit modern theology. Every child in the kingdom of God's grace as well knows the clear sense of this declaration of faith in the sovereign power and wisdom and holiness of the omnipotent and unchangeable God as does any teacher in Israel, so that no recent footnotes added to it can explain it away or disguise the plain meaning of those solemn words of wisdom. They are based upon Scripture proofs, which are omitted here for brevity; and in this one sentence on the holy decree of God is most plainly declared just the candid belief of all who humbly and devoutly revere God as at once almighty and holy. These simple words of those godly men of old do most clearly repel the false accusation, that this solemn and scriptural belief in the complete sovereignty of the Holy One makes him the author of sin, and his holy decree the cause of the wicked acts of ungodly men. Arminian opposers of God's sovereignty have ever made this slanderous charge, which is nothing but replying against God and condemning the Almighty, but not till recently have professed Predestinarian Baptists joined in this slanderous report against the unlimited decree of God, that it makes him the author of and responsible for all the things he has embraced in his changeless counsel, purpose and decree. Faithful Paul has met all such false inferences when he says, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" He refutes the slander and rebukes the false accuser when he adds, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" This is just what all such "things" do say when they speak thus against God. Who are men who thus rail against the Most High? Hear the answer of God: "All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity."

In chapter five of the London Confession, upon Divine Providence, it says, "God, the Creator of all things, in his infinite power and wisdom, doth hold, direct, dispose and govern all creatures and things, from the greatest even to the least, by his most wise and holy providence, to the end for which they were created, according unto his infallible foreknowledge and the free and immutable counsel of his own will; to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, infinite goodness and mercy.

"Although in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God, the first cause, all things come to pass immutably and infallibly, so that there is not anything befalls any by chance or without his providence; yet by the same providence he ordereth them to fall out according to the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely or contingently.

"The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom and infinite goodness of God so far manifest themselves in his providence, that his determinate counsel extendeth itself even to the first fall, and all other sinful actions both of angels and men (and that not by a bare permission); which also he most wisely and powerfully boundeth, and otherwise ordereth and governeth, in a manifold dispensation to

his most holy ends; yet so as the sinfulness of their acts proceedeth only from the creatures, and not from God, who being most holy and righteous, neither is or can be the author or approver of sin."

These candid and plain words are easy to be understood, and their simple meaning is so clear and open to every fair and candid reader, that it would require several conventions to so doctor their evident teaching as to make them seem to mean something else. So far from any of the words quoted from this old Confession being obsolete or out of use, or their meaning then being different from what the same words mean now, no writer of this time could use plainer or easier words to express what he believes in regard to God. But we suspect that the real objection to these simple and strong words is not that their meaning is dark or obscure to any fair and candid mind, but that the *doctrine* thus clearly declared by those ancient Baptists is too strong for the appetite of some modern Baptists, who yet are not ready to come out candidly and plainly and say they do not accept the doctrine of the London Confession, but they will therefore labor to place a meaning on it to suit themselves, like doctors will sugarcoat their bitter pills to deceive the weak stomach of the patient. But why would some Baptists, who profess to accept the London Confession upon the sovereignty of God, as quoted above, yet persist in charging upon other Baptists, who do sincerely accept and believe it, that therefore they represent the Holy One as at once the author and cause and doer of all wickedness, and that all sin is the result of his decree? For in charging this result upon all who truly believe this doctrine set forth so carefully and plainly in the London Confession relative to the attributes of the omnipotent and immutable God, they likewise cast the same reproach upon all the Baptists who wrote and believed that Confession. Is this honest and just and of good report? Is it brotherly and kind and the way of "Peace on earth and good will toward men?" Our brethren all along the passing generations, ever since Paul said, "(As we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come," have been thus slanderously reported, because, with Paul, they have believed in the Lord God Omnipotent, "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." It was to meet and refute this "slanderous report" of them, and to show that their adoring belief in the Holy One did not make him the author of sin, that his humble and true servants of old put forth their true belief in the London Confession. Until latterly such uncharitable and reproachful accusations have come from the multiform hosts of Arminian will-worshipers, who limit the Almighty in his attributes and power, and it was not so strange that they would thus slander the doctrine of God as proclaimed by his true servants; but now, alas, Baptists themselves join in this "railing accusation" against the servants of the Most High, and flaunt forth the unblushing outcry, that to believe he predestinated all things, makes him the author of all sin, and that all wickedness is the "result" of God's unlimited decree. Yet they say *they* stand on the London Confession! That Confession honors God in his "eternal power and Godhead," as having "Decreed in himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER COME TO PASS; yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin, nor hath

fellowship with any therein." But such most unfair criticisms and slanderous reports against the unlimited decree of God do dishonor him and falsely accuse his worthy servants of old. The Lord will rebuke those who "speak evil of dignities," and despise the dominion of God, bringing railing accusation against his true and faithful servants of old, among whom was Elder Gilbert Beebe, a valiant man of God in Israel, who gave his long life in defense of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, yet he is assailed and his doctrine aspersed, long after the Lord, whom he loved and served, took him to himself, and he is charged with having proclaimed a doctrine so abominable that it made our Holy God the author and doer of all the abhorrent crimes of all wicked men, because he believed just what is declared above by those holy men of old, who adopted the London Confession. When it comes to this, dear brethren, it may well be asked, "Is there not a cause?" O, how deplorable, when Baptists will profess to publicly adopt and stand on the London Confession of Faith, then publicly reproach and denounce the very doctrine that it most solemnly and plainly sets forth pertaining to God and his holy counsel and decree. That Confession is not binding on the consciences of any, as it is only a synopsis of what the Baptists then believed the Scriptures to teach, while they accepted the Bible alone as the standard of their faith; but why should any claim to accept this Confession, when they are at war against its teaching on the Decree and Providence of God, and cruelly reproach the brethren who do honestly believe it, with making God the author and responsible cause of all wickedness and crime? Is this "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace?"

For one, I do most truly believe every word here copied from that good Confession, and I accept it as a clear, just and full refutation of the untrue charge that the Baptists who thus believe make God the author of any sin, for we revere him as most holy, and believe he will judge all liars, who reproach his holy name and slander his sovereignty and truth, with righteous judgment.

In the filial fear of God and love of his truth, yours to serve,

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind.

FRENCHTOWN, N. J., July 11, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN:—"The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done, is that which shall be done, and there is no new thing under the sun."

These words seem to form the basis of what I have in mind to write. I do not know that I shall be able to express what is in my mind, or call up what I have seen concerning this matter. If I shall not, I want to feel resigned, for I am a sinful man, a man of sinful lips, sinful propensities, wonderfully corrupt, and I feel I must of necessity look for the hiding of the face of the Lord. In the kingdom of God all things that are ever known, are revealed. So also is this true in natural things. In the beginning God gave unto man dominion over every living thing, over the earth to subdue it, when as yet Adam was not formed of the dust of the ground, or ever he had breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. Yet man had dominion then: God saw that which he had created, and pronounced it good. I understand that God pronounced that which he had made good in the sense of his being God, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end,

the one eternal now. Not as some might say, good in the sense of man not having transgressed his law and becoming a sinner, but good in that high and holy sense in which alone infinite wisdom reaches. I have thought that it is only as we see the will of God done that we say, "Thy will be done." Hence as we see the will of God done, or as we see by divine revelation that God is infinite in wisdom, and that he rules in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, we say, "Thy will be done," and all the earth praises the Lord, and we say by the Spirit of God which dwells in us, the same that God said in the beginning, we pronounce it all good. Man cannot do this in the spirit of man which is in him; by the spirit of the flesh we would change everything; by the spirit of the flesh we pronounce the creation of God an imperfect thing; finite wisdom cannot comprehend God, and in the natural life of man God is not in all his thoughts. Hence both in nature and in that which is spiritual all is revealed. To man in nature is revealed line upon line, that which God said of him in the beginning. In God it was all already accomplished or done, for he speaks and it is done. God has never spoken only that which is done, and while this is true, yet to man all that man can ever know must be revealed. So in time to man in some measure is made known that which God spoke in the beginning and was done. All that which comes to pass with man, his seeking out great inventions, his developing the resources of the earth in every branch, is but gradually bringing to man in measure the same that was known and accomplished in God before the world was made. Adam as he stood alone could not manifest all there was in him, hence God commanded him to multiply and replenish the earth, and it will take every son and daughter of Adam to manifest the dominion God declared of man in the beginning. And man stands to-day, has always and always will stand until the last or fullness of Adam is brought forth, witnessing to the word of the Lord. Man cannot create anything, he cannot destroy a single thing. All the inventions, all the great sciences only develop to man that which is. This is not only true in the developing of the resources of the earth, but it is equally true in the manifestation of the man of sin. Adam could not without multiplying according to the word of God be revealed as having dominion over the earth, neither could Adam manifest all the depravity of his flesh without also multiplying. It will take every one of all the family of Adam to reveal the dominion of man over the earth, and it will take every one of all the family of Adam to reveal all the depravity of the mortal flesh of man. Hence, should any feel so disposed, as some say, "If all things are fixed," to take their fill of sin, they will only manifest the hand of the Lord fixing the bounds of the raging waves and billows of the man of sin, saying, Here shall thy proud waves be stayed; thus far shalt thou come, but no further. Notice he does not say to the waves, only stay within certain limits, but, "Hitherto shalt thou come."

In all this matter the first Adam is a type of the second Adam, and it is equally true of those who are in him: all is accomplished in Christ; the creation in Christ Jesus is finished. The works were finished from the foundation of the world, but to them who are chosen in him, all that is accomplished in Jesus must be revealed, so when any bear testimony to the life of Jesus in their mortal flesh,

they are not creating anything, their experience of suffering for sin in the flesh is not bringing all this to pass with God in the person of Christ, but a manifesting unto those who are in Christ, that which is accomplished in him. He was with the Father before the world was; he was slain from the foundation of the world, and yet he must make known unto the heirs of glory that which he accomplished for them; they must know that in Adam they were in death; they must know the justice of God's holy law; they must know their own condemnation; they must know the wrath of God against sin, that he is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity; they must know him who is their life; they must know the fellowship of his suffering, and the power of his resurrection, and must be his witnesses, testifying to what he accomplished for them, and thus prepared to praise him who is their life. They do not accomplish anything, add to or take from this creation in Christ, as man in the natural creation has never added to the natural creation, never destroyed one single atom of matter in the creation, but goes on just according to the infinite wisdom of God. So God manifests in his children the work accomplished in Christ; line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little, revealing himself in them as their life, their righteousness, their sanctification and their redemption. Hence in all the works of God, both in nature and in grace, his glory does he not give to another, nor his praise to graven images. Men naturally think they are adding to the earth when they work out that which is in them and in the earth, but this is because their knowledge is finite, and it is sometimes true of the children of God, when they are actuated by the spirit of the flesh to praise themselves for what they feel they accomplish, but when led of the Spirit they are made to fall at his feet as nothing, ascribing all power and wisdom unto him who rules in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth.

As it was true in the beginning, it was the Spirit of God that moved upon the face of the waters, causing the dry land to appear, so in all that is revealed as we are made to see the wisdom of God in all things, the Spirit of God moves upon the darkness, on the face of the waters, causing us to see his purposes fulfilled in everything. Hence, when the Holy Ghost takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us, we can say, It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good, and when led of the Spirit of this second Adam, this new creation in Christ, we are made to say, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

Yours in hope of life in Christ,

O. R. KUGLER.

STATE ROAD, Del., July, 1901.

BROTHER BEEBE:—As the result of an accident I have been confined to the house for months, and kept home from all the spring associations. It is a new experience to me, and some lessons are learned that are not unprofitable. I have been nearly as much shut out from the world and its interests as though I had ceased to live in it. If my portion was entirely in this life and the things of this world, how sad and desolate my condition would be when these things were all taken from me. We can learn what the fellowship of the Lord's people is, and what it is worth, when all earthly interests are taken out of our sight. It seemed to me to be natural enough, and yet a necessity

in my imprisonment to go back to the beginning and travel over all the road; to gather up and profit by whatever of lessons that I might find that had been lost by the way. I was familiar with many events in connection with the division when the Primitive Baptists came out to be a separate people. Having traveled with them all the time there has not much taken place among them in this part of the country that I have not been acquainted with. Many debates and heated discussions have come up, stirred up some strife for a time, and passed away to be forgotten. I failed to see good resulting from them. There were more preachers then among us than there has been of late, but the churches do not appear to have suffered any lack of spiritual privileges from that cause. In remembering all the way, I find it strewn with the wrecks of what was at one time or another prominent preachers occupying high places among us. It has, I think, this falling away, been to a far greater extent in proportion in the ministry, than among the private members. I cannot pretend to know why this should have been. I could name at least a dozen ministers who have gone down one way or another to forfeit in some cases all standing even as subjects of grace. Some have been placed in charge as pastors who did not show qualifications for the place, and the result was an injury to both preacher and people. It seems to me now that the ministry with which the church has been blessed of late years has been in advance of any former time that I have known. It is not natural to men to serve, and we do not find them serving unless the spirit of that service has been given them. The natural disposition of men is to exercise lordship, and to usurp authority. When a flock of sheep, or other animals, are well fed and cared for, we see them healthy, happy and satisfied. The Master inquires, "Who then is that faithful and wise steward whom his Lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?" It would seem from this saying, that even among stewards there are not many who are faithful enough and wise enough to fulfill all the measure of the ministry. Where there is spiritual health, and the people enjoy their meetings, and love each other, we can count upon it with some degree of certainty that they are being well served. To devote one's whole life to the interests and welfare of others, enjoins a good deal of self-denial, and his heart must be in his work. The lessons that qualify men for this work are never taught in acadamies or seminaries. It was said of the Master that he learned obedience by the things which he suffered, and the kind of school in which we learn to be wise and faithful in this service is not a school that any of us would have chosen. The Master says, We are his witnesses, and we shall bear witness of him. It ought not to be difficult to bear witness when one is thoroughly acquainted with the case. But to know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, he must give that knowledge himself. How great and solemn is the work, to exhibit faithfully the work of redeeming grace. Christ is exalted by the right hand of God to be a Prince and Savior to give repentance to Israel? Who shall testify to the full measure of this God-given gift? Who shall trace it to its source? The glory of God is risen upon the recipient, and his glory is seen upon him. Will God be mocked by a presumptuous man who assumes to speak in his name, who has no experimental knowledge of this work?

The church in her travel of more than three score years has learned lessons that have been profitable. The Father's name on the forehead of all those who stand with him upon the Mount Zion has become more plainly seen. There has been some sifting, nevertheless the church has been growing more and more to be a holy temple in the Lord. The ministry has become refined and purified. For myself, I have been skimming upon the surface, fearing lest I should utter things too wonderful for me, things that I knew not, but I have been made glad to see the spirit of life from God in the witnesses of late, and depths reached in gospel mines that had before been hidden. Men speak that they do know, and testify that which they have seen and felt. And so things that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath ever entered the heart of man, are declared, the word going from heart to heart, dealing with things that God reveals by his Spirit; the things that God has provided for them that love him. I seem to be conscious that there are depths in the riches of God's grace that have not yet been reached, and how small and trifling, comparatively, does it appear all that I have ever yet seen with my eyes, which I have looked upon, and my hands handled of the word of life. But I trust I have learned to love the things that I have not seen, and to wait with patience, with faith and hope for their revelation.

Yours to serve in the gospel,

E. RITTENHOUSE.

CORYDON, Ind., May 5, 1901.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I feel it my duty to send you an order to pay for the SIGNS, as they continue to come to me. I did not return to Crawfordsville, but perhaps may go there this summer. All the Baptist churches in this county have gone down, and I never hear a gospel sermon. The Presbyterian minister here is not of the Predestinarian kind. If I can hear a christian preach, one who is born of the Spirit, one who gives me the evidence that he loves the dear Savior, and manifests the fruit of the Spirit of Christ by an humble walk and godly conversation, as I believe some of the dear brethren do, even those who have believed in "Conditional Time Salvation," I can rejoice, and hold them in fellowship. It seems to me at times that there is not the difference in this that some think, if brethren could only understand each other. I desire to tell you what I believe myself. I do not believe that one of the dear children of God have power to keep themselves after regeneration. I believe that they are weak and helpless and dependent upon the good Shepherd for light in darkness, for strength in weakness, for rest when heavy laden, as they were before. Yet I feel to love, honor and obey my dear suffering Savior. O, that I could love him more, and serve him better. This is my greatest trouble and anxiety; I cannot cease from sin; I never expect to in this life, but my brother, I ever want to watch and pray to my dear Savior to protect me from the many devices of Satan, who is ever trying to destroy the image of Jesus from off the face of the earth. All this biting and devouring among the people of God, what is it but seeking to destroy the image of Jesus from the earth, and manifesting a fleshly, carnal spirit. I believe that most of the brethren are contending for what they honestly believe to be truth. I know that no power but Jesus only can bring order out of confusion. The fruits of the Spirit of Christ alone can unite the living children of God to-

gether in love and fellowship. We are told to try the spirits. A persecuting spirit is of anti-Christ. Yet love to God will ever lead to faithfulness. I hope that I may never feel unkind toward a brother or sister because of an honest difference of opinion as to what the Bible teaches. I wish always to allow my dear brethren the same liberty of conscience, which I claim for myself. I want to love my dear Savior supremely above all things else. He says we are to call no man master in spiritual things. We are to ask wisdom of God, and this heavenly wisdom will ever cause the living children of God to try to urge the living to walk obediently to God, whether in baptism, or in all the walk that ought to follow. There will be an enjoyment in walking in obedience which they will desire that all shall share. But God will teach his poor little children, their dependence is upon him. This is the Spirit's work, and we cannot do the Lord's work. The under-shepherd is bidden to feed the flock, the sheep and lambs, but he is dependent upon the Lord to give the precious spiritual meat and drink. Jesus gives his dear children to hunger and thirst after this spiritual meat and drink, then they love to follow after the under-shepherds who feed them with good things from above.

The dear brethren Mitchell and Beebe are now at rest, they have no more warfare with the world, the flesh and the devil. O, what a happy exchange of worlds with them. It is but a little time when each one of us will forsake this poor world, and bid farewell to sin and sorrow. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me peace, and when Jesus gives peace, who can make trouble? O, that God's dear people might look more to Jesus in this dark and cloudy day. O, that they might pray for, and pity one another, and not be found biting and devouring one another. The Lord will bring again his loved ones. I want to see my own errors.

Your sister in Christ,

KATE BARTLEY.

[To the desire expressed above, by our dear sister, we can respond with all our heart, that love, peace and fellowship might abound among the children of God, like her, we believe that while love makes one gentle to others, it also insures faithfulness in all that we do. We ought to hold brethren who differ from us in kind regard, and have kind feelings toward them, and so also we are to love our enemies, and seek their good at all times. An unkind spirit is forbidden to the children of God toward any one; how much more toward their brethren in Christ, who may be led astray by the devil at his will, and who may see but in part the truth of God. Our sister has so well said, The children of God cannot, even after regeneration, do his will without him, any more than they could before, and yet there is a constant desire within our heart to do the will of God, and to seek the things which shall be to his praise. What we regard to be our duty toward him, we desire shall also be our highest privilege, and at times, it is so. As we have stated more than once in the SIGNS, we have not felt to charge upon all the brethren who use the words "Conditional Time Salvation," the meaning which attaches itself to them in our mind, and we have tried all along to win them from that expression because it is not in itself correct. And they themselves would not admit the falsehood that is in it, if they could be led to see it as it appears to us. The brethren here who object to this phrase are as far as we know, among the most strict in their views of the walk which should characterize a be-

liever in Jesus. They believe that love will produce an obedience, which promises of reward, or threats of chastisement, can never produce, and all that we receive is a mercy from God, a mercy which we can never be worthy of. Among our brethren in the ministry, we can bear witness that exhortation occupies a large place in their ministry.—Ed.]

OPELIKA, Ala., June 19, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Again I feel like writing to the brethren, readers of the SIGNS. My experience of late has been such that light has been afforded me, and now after much dejection, many misgivings, infidelic tossings to and fro, atheistic slidings, carnalistic rovings, severe temptations, incessant darkness, evil forebodings, unbelieving torments, great perplexities, depressing sorrows and distressing fears, I am, by the grace and mercy of God alone, brought out where I can get a short rest, and view with delight the glory of surprising, sovereign, reigning grace, and where I can say, Thank the Lord, and bless his holy sacred name, who does all things well. I owe my present joy, my peculiar delight and exquisite pleasure to him alone, who doth deliver, and who will deliver his people. I feel to take courage and thank God. I want to bless his holy name, for I know that he is God, and that he is good, and a stronghold in the day of trouble. I shall never be able here to praise him as I want to. He is good, supremely good, and kind in all his ways. He is good even to the unthankful. His goodness has overcome me, it has humbled my soul within me, it has broken my heart in deep contrition, it has melted mine eyes to tears, it has broken my heart in thankfulness. Yes, how easy it is to say, Thank the Lord, when we "can't help it," when it flows out of the soul like a strong stream. Some time since I felt as though perhaps myself and others would be better off if I could lie down and die like brother Beebe, brother Pollard, brother Jenkins, brother Cook and others, but now I feel what a blessing that I can praise the Lord. I can see him in his works and in his people. I love his courts and his people; I feel as though I want to tell them about it in his courts; the tears flow from my eyes, and my heart goes out after them; I feel as though there is nothing too great for me to forgive; my vilest enemy could now get a look of kindness, and a word of gentleness from me; I feel as though I could say, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." This state is too good for me, I do not merit it, but rather I wonder why the Lord has not cut me off as a cumberer of the ground. Just such an experience as this, such a season as this in all its bearings, I have never had before. I have been made to read closely the New Testament, and to pray to God to deliver me from my unbelief that has robbed me of joy after joy, and spoiled the sweet privileges of the gospel of Jesus, my Savior. Whether Jesus is a Savior to any one else or not, I feel that he is my Savior, I can joyfully claim him, I love to think about him, he is magnified in my eyes. Yes, he is the chief among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely, none on earth nor in heaven is like him to me; I do humbly feel that he has undertaken for me, he is a great and blessed Savior to me.

Now, brethren, these are some of the late exercises of my mind, I feel now as I look back on the trials, privations, sufferings and sorrows through which I have passed, that "Our light affliction, which

is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." May God bless all his saints.

Yours in hope,

WM. LIVELY.

[It is indeed a source of gladness to us that the comfort of the word of God has been so given to our brother, feeling that we can enter into somewhat of the fellowship of this deliverance, as also into the fellowship of the darkness which preceded it. The Lord has delivered, and in him we may confidently trust that he will yet deliver. Sore trials magnify his grace, because they are the opportunity for the display of that grace; weakness but gives occasion for the manifestation of his power. If our foes are many, yet we overcome through the blood of the Lamb; victory is sure, and it is always to the praise of the glory of his grace. It is good to tell of the conflict and our weakness, and then it is good to tell of the grace, mercy and power of him who has delivered. We are great sinners, but Jesus is a great Savior; we are very poor and weak, but he is rich and strong; our arm cannot win for us any victories in this conflict, but his strong right hand secures it. O, that sovereign grace might be always magnified by us all who profess to love and serve God. Because the above letter is a song of praise to God, we have found it very precious.—Ed.]

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515 West Biddle St., Jackson, Mich., April, 1901.

My Dearly Beloved Kindred in Christ:—Once more a poor worm of the dust will address you, as worn pilgrims scattered far and near, with whom are the cares and afflictions of the world, together with all the snares, traps and wiles of the enemy. By these things you are made to cry out to the Lord, Save me, save me from all that would hinder me from thy dear cause and people, whom thou hast loved, and with loving-kindness hast drawn. Thou hast bought them with a very great price, with thy precious blood. O, dear ones, let us take a look into Gethsemane, and behold the Son of God there in darkness. He had just told his disciples what was to befall him, but they could not believe that he was to be taken from them. They said, We will go with thee even unto prison and to death, and Peter said, Though all men forsake thee, yet will not I, I will never be offended. But the dear Redeemer said, Before the cock shall crow thou shalt deny me thrice. O, think how soon his weakness was to appear. And when the other disciples were set to watch, how they were overcome with sleep.

How many times the unworthy writer has looked with an eye of faith upon that agonizing scene, and with trembling and sorrow and tears, beheld the dear Son of God in the garden, and in prayer to his Father, saying, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." Then he found the disciples asleep. How they must have chided themselves, because they had been told to watch with him, and again the third time he came, and found them asleep, then he said, "Sleep on now and take your rest." Luke says, that he sweat as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. What could be more sad and solemn? He in his agony, and they asleep, how poor and weak. Mark records that he said to them, "The Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." The dear Redeemer well knew

this, he knew that he would be left alone, for the prophet had said before, speaking for Christ, "I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me." And here it was that his own right arm got the victory. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all the earth praise the great God of heaven. No wonder the sun refused to shine, and the earth shook, and the graves could not hold their dead. The awful scene was such that the flinty rocks were rent, yet the wicked mob tried to make it appear as though it were something natural, and were unmoved. Peter, after he had denied him, when the Lord looked upon him, went out and wept bitterly. How often has poor Peter's case been mine. How often I have denied him, and as I write I feel, How dare I pen these lines? O God, my God, have mercy. I would love him with all my soul, might and strength, but the flesh is so weak.

Then they laid the dear Son of God in the tomb, and a watch was set, lest he should be stolen by his disciples. They sealed it with a great stone, yet none of these things hindered the mighty angel, who rolled away the stone. But see, a little company have started, when it was yet dark, very early, to go to the sepulcher. There is Mary Magdalene, and Joanna and the other Mary, but they said among themselves, Who will roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulcher, for it is great? Many a time this poor worm of the dust has felt to say, How can I ever overcome this great obstacle? Certainly I can never endure this, and behold it is all rolled away, in a way that I had never thought of, and how glad I have been to prove that the God of heaven is so great a deliverer. The disciples found the stone rolled away, but they found not the body of the dear Son of God, but instead they heard the glorious news, He is risen, as he said. And they fled from the sepulcher as though they were terror stricken.

When he was soon to be taken from them, he told them to tarry at Jerusalem until they should be endued with power from on high, which should prepare them to be witnesses of him, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth, and when he had so spoken, and while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight, and as they gazed after him, an angel said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken from you, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. Then I do not believe that a maid or any one else could have compelled Peter to deny the blessed Lord again. But now he could stand up undauntedly and say, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves know: him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up." Peter has no fear now. Lord, keep me, keep me; in thee only is strength.

Dear brethren and sisters, I see that many of our correspondents are growing old, and soon we shall hear that they are passed away. O, may their places be filled with others to take up the pen in defense of the truth.

Your sister in hope, farewell.

M. P. LEWIS.

TEBO, Texas, April 23, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER B. L. BEEBE:—I send you herewith an article for the SIGNS, written by Elder Wm. R. Humphreys. This brother is blind, and has been so for many years. He says if you can read it, and think proper, put it in the SIGNS, and if you think best not to do so, all will be right with him. I hope you can make it out so that you can publish it.

Yours in affliction,

MARY E. KING.

TEBO, Texas, April 12, 1901.

EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—Though weak, ignorant and blind, I desire to express to you my hearty indorsement of the doctrine set forth in its columns; it is my meat and drink, and O, how I love to hear it read. All set forth the wondrous works of the eternal God, in the salvation of his chosen people, and all ascribe greatness unto our God. Yes, my dear kindred, I love to raise my poor, stammering tongue in praise of him who is King of kings and Lord of lords, for I believe with all my heart that he is a God of will, purpose and power, and that he holds the destiny of all things in his almighty hand, insomuch that all things, both small and great, are subjected to his eternal purpose, so that it is impossible for anything to come up that can change or turn or disappoint his purpose. When it pleases him to enable me to feel the power of his love in my heart, I can then say, Thanks be to his name for implanting that love in my poor heart, which enables me to be in sweet fellowship with his children scattered all over the world. Although strangers in the flesh and many miles apart, yet we are one in faith and doctrine. Dear ones, I am blind, and spend many lonesome and dreary hours, often desiring that some one would read and talk to me. Then my poor heart goes out in sweet meditation, believing that I have no continuing city here, but by faith am enabled to look far beyond this world of trials, crosses and disappointments. But at times my path is so dark, and I feel to be so far from the path of duty, that I fear all has been vain, and I am a poor, deluded creature, and I have deep horror of mind, and great searching for evidence to confirm me that I am a subject of grace. Yet when I review my past life, my afflictions, and trials, and troubles, I find God's grace has upheld, and been my only hope for life and salvation. Yes, my dear ones, I am so weak and sinful, poor and helpless, that aside and separate from the grace of God, I have no hope. I can say, Amen! to the doctrine of grace for time and eternity, for I realize there is nothing else will ever reach this old sinner's case. So let us stand firm, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and be not alarmed at the doctrines of the day, for the Lord tells us that heresies will come. My prayer is for grace to keep me at the foot of the cross, preaching Christ as the way, the truth and the life.

Now I kindly ask all conditionalists, If Christ is the way, the truth and the life, what is left for man to do? Again, Christ said, "Without me ye can do nothing," and Paul said, "In him we live, move and have our being." I ask again, What is left out? Often I feel that I can heartily adopt the words of Jeremiah, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." This I know experimentally is the truth.

Well, to all who may read this poor scribble, please accept this as a token of my love and fellowship. I ask you to

cast the mantle of charity over my many imperfections, and when you bow at a throne of grace, remember a poor, blind sinner, and I hope a brother in love, and a better hope,

W. R. HUMPHREYS.

FORDYCE, Arkansas, April 21, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed find money order to pay for the SIGNS, I cannot do without them. I have been numbered with the Primitive Baptists a little more than five years, and have taken the SIGNS all that time, and as long as I live, and can pay for them, I desire to continue them. The SIGNS sets forth the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. I am truly glad to see the SIGNS unwavering, standing upon the principles of truth fearlessly, especially at this day, which is so full of evil. There are some who are perverting the gospel, teaching law for life and salvation, but I have always found the SIGNS setting forth Jesus as the only salvation for poor sinners, and O, brother Beebe, how this does comfort me, that Jesus is all my salvation for time as well as for eternity, for I cannot live as I desire to, sin is mixed with all that I do, foolish thoughts are almost constantly in my mind, and I cannot get free from them, but thanks be to our Lord and loving Savior Jesus Christ, who has gained the victory for us, who put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself. Though trouble seems to encompass us around, and we mourn within ourselves, yet we are enabled, through the sweet comforting words of Jesus coming to us with assurance, to believe that he will never leave nor forsake us. Although fiery trials are heaped upon us, let us take courage in believing that all these things are only the fellowship of his sufferings, the sufferings of our blessed Lord. He tells us that in the world we shall have tribulation. Yea, all that will live godly in Jesus Christ, shall suffer persecution. He does not say they MAY but SHALL suffer these things. Then can we so live as to escape these things? Of one thing I am certain, that I would gladly live so as not to have so much trouble, but it seems that this is impossible. When I would do good, evil is present with me, and how to perform that which is good, I find not. Yet on the other hand we are told that we can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth us, but we are entirely dependent upon the Lord for the strengthening. I have to wait for the Lord's own good time. Thus I must say as did Paul, The life that I now life in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. And all this is to the end that his people might be the righteousness of God in him. So then if it is in the flesh that we live this life of faith, it surely must be in time. Then if it be conditional, must not our God, who is the author of faith, be a conditional God? But our God is a sovereign, and he says that his people shall (not may) be willing in the day of his power. He speaks, and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. I cannot believe in conditions anywhere in the work of salvation. His people were created in Christ Jesus unto good works, and I believe that these works are performed in and by his people. These works are the fruits growing out of a living and lively faith, of which Jesus Christ is the author and finisher. I do not desire to take any honor to myself, but to Jesus be all the glory, for he is the strength of my life, and all of my salvation. I have learned by experience that I am nothing but a worm of the dust, a poor begger, begging at a throne of grace every day, for mercy to me a poor sinner,

and if I possess anything above my poor depraved nature, it is as Paul has said, "By the grace of God, I am what I am."

I did not think of writing so much, but I wanted to tell you how I enjoyed the SIGNS. I hope the Lord will continue to bless the editors, and all the correspondents. My love to yourself, together with all true Old Baptists everywhere.

Yours in hope through the finished work of Jesus,

V. R. HARRIS.

WESSON, Ark., April, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Once more I will try to write a little, though I feel to be poor in spirit indeed. There are some things that the humble followers of the Master are ever clear upon: they all understand that they are sinners, as prone to evil as the sparks to fly upward. As for myself, I personally know this. One thing that I do not doubt is this, Jesus is a complete Savior. I know so little, but I would rather know still less, than to be puffed up with an ambition to be a leader, and thus bring sorrow and confusion among the scattered ones of our Father's family, if indeed I am one of that blessed number. Were not my case in other hands, in greater and stronger hands than my own, where would I be? What would I do were it not so? I sometimes feel rebellious against the Lord because he does not at all times give me the joys of his salvation; at other times I feel thankful for the least shadow of his favor. Our wisdom, our judgment, our ways, are often put to shame by the wisdom of God's plan. There was perhaps never more fervent heartfelt prayer and praise than that of Paul and Silas, at the dark hour of midnight in the inner dungeon of the Philipine jail. The more bitter and cruel was the treatment of Paul by the Jews, the more tender were his feelings and words. O, for grace to commit our way unto the Lord, and the keeping of our souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator. We are poor and short-sighted creatures, understanding at most but little of the ways of God. Ah! how often do we, like Peter, need to have a look from the Lord to soften our hearts. Sometimes we go to the house of the Lord, and the preaching is to us as the rain, reviving us and causing us to again show life in the midst of our cold, dead state; our thoughts are carried above, and we find it to be pleasant to forget ourselves for awhile.

I so much enjoyed brother Ker's letter in the last SIGNS, and while I feel that he is far my superior in spiritual knowledge, yet I believe that I can witness with him in some of the things which he has written. I often feel while reading such letters that I would like to add a word in testimony to the same precious truths, but often a feeling sense of my weakness hinders me.

I would be glad to hear from you, if not asking too much. Human friendship and sympathy is very sweet, whether in joy or sorrow. May the Lord bless you in your work.

Yours in love and fellowship,

L. C. TRULL.

[WE desire to assure brother Trull of our appreciation of the above good letter, and of the kind feeling which prompted the writing of it. Our heart is drawn out in fellowship to all who thus speak. We are no stranger to poverty of feeling, and most of the time we feel that our writing and speaking in the name of the Lord is but stammering at best. Most of the time, at the close of a letter or discourse, we are compelled to feel that we

have left the best things wholly unsaid. If we do not reply to brother Trull by private letter, we trust he will not think we are unmindful of his kind words, but that it is through want of time to write. —C.]

KINGSTON, N. Y., June 22, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—If you will bear with my imperfections, I will try to write through the SIGNS to the dear brethren in Texas. I feel deeply my inability, and have put it off from day to day. Three weeks ago this morning I started for Middletown, N. Y., looking forward with hope to meeting the dear kindred in Christ at the Warwick Association. The second night's journey found me reflecting about the fatigue of this old body, cast down and disquieted, with some doubts about my strength, when great comfort and light came to unworthy me in hymn 751 (Beebe's Collection); it all seemed so good. I then rested in a quiet habitation, thinking,

"At home, and abroad, on the land, on the sea,
As thy days may demand, shall thy strength ever be."

My heart rejoiced in God my Savior. Monday night I arrived at the home of brother B. L. Beebe, and met with a kind reception. I felt at home with his dear companion, and Tuesday called to his office, met his only son, and at their home met his dear daughter and grandchild, and also dear sister Wm. L. Beebe and daughter, the widow of William L. Beebe. Wednesday took a train to New Vernon, the place of meeting. There I met my daughter and other friends from Kingston, N. Y. And now I come to a time that I cannot describe with mortal tongue. It was sure enough a joy unspeakable and full of glory. It seemed the voice of the general assembly, This is the best meeting I ever attended; all were so nicely provided for. Elder Francis remained with them at Middletown to the covenant meeting and Sunday communion, when we heard a sermon from him and dear brother Ker. It appeared the best wine was reserved to the last of the feast. I had to exclaim, Behold how they love one another. There is such a beauty in the order of God's house I cannot express it. All who have Beebe's Collection, read hymn 831.

Dear brethren editors, please throw the mantle of charity over this imperfect letter; my proud heart forbids me sending it, but I know you will rectify all mistakes. I had the pleasure of meeting the dear ones at their meeting last Saturday and Sunday, and came down with Elder Hubbell to Kingston, N. Y., to meeting, and he spent the night with us at my daughter's.

I am sorry to take the space in your columns from those who can fill them so much better than I can. You select out what you know is proper. I send christian greeting to all who may read the SIGNS. O, how much we receive in reading them. The article on feet washing in dear father Beebe's editorial was just what I wanted my dear Texas brethren to have.

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,
(MRS.) A. D. SIMMONS.

ASHLEY, Ohio, April 22, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—This is my thirty-fourth birthday, and I hope that I have had a hope in Christ for at least twenty years. Next October it will be seventeen years since I, with my mother, was baptized. Few and evil have been the days of my pilgrimage, I get no better, but do feel to grow less and less, as the years go on. In all this time I have done nothing to merit the blessing of God, but

he continues to bless me, I hope, according to his grace in Christ Jesus. Go on, my dear brother, contending for unconditional grace. I cannot express to you the comfort your papers, the dear old SIGNS, brings to me; it gives me so much encouragement by the way. We cannot trust too much in God. I cannot trust at all in myself. Gladly would I serve God if I could. My experience teaches me that in Christ all fullness dwells, he not only saves us from final punishment after death, but he hath given us all spiritual blessings in Christ, according as he purposed before the foundation of the world.

This does not deny the truth that in keeping his commandments there is great reward, but it does deny that we are able to serve God whenever we please, or that we earn the blessing. Christ said that the work which he did, was done by the Father who dwelt in him, we are not more powerful than Christ, surely not. I too must say with Paul, "To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not."

Now may God bless and comfort you in your present trial. Your brother (I hope that he was truly mine also) is truly blessed. I often long to fly away from sinful self; to be with Christ is best. I had expected to send you some money sooner, but was hindered. My health is better than when I wrote you last. Please forgive me for saying so much, but I did desire to bid you God speed. I would be so glad could I see you and brother Chick, as well as other writers, face to face.

Your sister,

JOIE E. WICKHAM.

OAK HILL, Ill., May 21, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I feel that I have been a burden on you too long already, in that I have received the SIGNS OF THE TIMES gratuitously for six years at your hands, and must now ask you to discontinue it.

I am now in my eighty-second year, and have what is supposed to be an incurable malady: a cancer in the tongue. I had one removed from my lip last winter, and it healed, but is now developing on the back and under part of the tongue, but this does not disturb me in the least, but my beloved companion, who nursed me lovingly and tenderly in my afflictions last winter, is now a lunatic, and we had to send her to the asylum at Jacksonville, Ill.

Remember a poor old and wholly unworthy sinner at a throne of grace.

Yours in the furnace of affliction,

R. F. HAYNES.

[THE above most pathetic letter from Elder Haynes was not sent us for publication, nor have we asked his consent to publish it, yet we feel impressed that it will be read with deep interest and sympathy. We have never known of any of the afflictions of the saints to equaling it. While we know something of temporal afflictions ourself, yet when we read brother Haynes' letter, we felt that our own were but light afflictions, and not worthy to be compared with those through which he is passing. If by sending the SIGNS we can afford the slightest comfort to our brother, we are very glad to send it to him for the remainder of his days. From his extreme old age, and the nature of his disease, the conflict cannot be long, and may the grace of God sustain and comfort him in this most trying hour, is our prayer, for Jesus' sake.—ED.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1901.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to

GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,

Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

LUKE XII. 8, 9.

A SISTER in Illinois who does not wish her name used in the SIGNS, desires to know what the words found in Luke xii. 8, 9, mean. She inquires if it has reference to those who unite with the church? If so, how about those who do not unite with it? The text reads, "Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God: but he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God." The same language in substance is found in Matthew x. 32, 33, and in Mark viii. 38. The same truth is also presented in 2 Timothy ii. 12, also in other places in the New Testament.

We would call attention to the fact that in Mark viii. 38, the word is "ashamed" of me. The meaning of the whole Scripture referred to is evidently such a denial as grows out of being ashamed of him and his doctrine. The language in neither place seems to refer to that hesitancy which grows out of doubting and fearing, because of one's own unworthiness, and questioning as to whether the work of grace has been really wrought in one's heart. Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." And he said again, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Had Paul been ashamed of the gospel, then he would have denied the Lord, and his words and doctrine, but Paul was not ashamed, but rather he gloried in the cross of Christ, and in the doctrine of the cross. This was because all his salvation was in it, both for time and eternity. In the doctrine of the cross was fulfilled all his deepest desire. Salvation from sin and death and hell here, and hereafter, was secured to him through the cross of Christ. This his soul had come to long for. Nothing to him was so desirable as this. What then did it matter to him that the world, both religious and irreligious, denied and hooted at the doctrine of the cross? It, to him, was salvation from all that he had come to hate, and to all that he had come to long for. Paul could not be ashamed of the cross. God had so wrought the doctrine of the cross in him that he could not be ashamed of it. In this sense he could not deny it.

To deny Christ is to deny that he is our Savior, all-sufficient and perfect; it is to deny that he is our Judge, Lawgiver and King; it is to deny that he has a right to rule in and over us; it is to prefer the world, its pleasures, vanities and sins, to him; it is to ascribe salvation to anything, no matter what, beside him; it is to court the applause of the world, rather than his approval.

God's own children may err in all these ways, through being overcome by the weakness and desires of the flesh and natural mind. When this is the case they are also denied before God and all the holy angels; that is, as long as they are led by this spirit so contrary to Christ, there is no evidence either to themselves or to others that the Lord has owned and blessed them. While ashamed of him

and his words before men, they can feel no sweet evidence that they are his; they are denied all spiritual enjoyments in the presence of him in whose presence is fullness of joy. David experienced this when he had so grievously sinned in the case of Uriah and Bathsheba. Therefore when repentance was given him he was compelled to pray, "Restore unto me the joys of thy salvation." So also Peter when he had denied his Lord through fear, must go out and weep bitterly. But, as said before, we do not think that these solemn words belong to those who delay confessing their Lord because of a feeling of their great unfitness. In fact we have found many such ones who were more bold in confessing Christ as all and in all to them, than some who had made public profession. In conclusion we would say, if one does not unite with Christ's church on earth because they are ashamed of such humble company, or because they are ashamed of what the world says about the doctrine of Christ, or because of pride of family, or because they think that reproach will fall upon them or their families through such confession of Christ, then this solemn declaration of the Savior falls upon them. But those who steadfastly adhere to the truth, regardless of all possible consequences to themselves, are those who shall be confessed before God and the angels. To such there shall be given such sweet assurance as shall enable them to say, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." Those who confess him truly, are those who really love him, and find in him their all and in all. They live upon him, and move in him, and have their being in him. He is to them all and in all. They are often ashamed of themselves, but are not ashamed of him. Yea, the more they are ashamed of themselves, the less are they ashamed of him. C.

IS CIRCUMCISION A TYPE OF BAPTISM?

WILL Elder Chick give his views on circumcision, especially its antitype, and whether Jordan prefigures baptism? If so, why were the Israelites circumcised after crossing the Jordan under Joshua? Moses was dead, and all the circumcised in Egypt fell in the wilderness, and only the uncircumcised crossed over Jordan. Please explain, and oblige a poor sinner and fellow prisoner of hope.

GARRETT MURPHY.

MARCH 2, 1901.

REPLY.

In replying briefly to the above questions of our dear brother, we would first of all say that it is our understanding that circumcision was intended as a type of that inward work of grace by which all who feel its power are separated from the rest of mankind in heart and feeling and desire. It signified a cutting off from, and by this inward circumcision believers are cut off from all others, and united to Christ as their all. They are cut off from all help or hope of salvation save in Christ. They are by this circumcision, which is in the heart and of the Spirit, and not of the flesh, cut off from their worldly motives and desires. This inward experience is the antitype of that circumcision which was commanded by Moses. Circumcision is not a type of baptism, but of the work of grace in the heart. Baptism does not take the place of circumcision at all. Circumcision was an ordinance designed for the worldly people, and pertained to that worldly sanctuary. There was no requirement that those who received it should possess gracious dispositions at all. It was the sign of a typical people. It gave one a right to all the privileges of that worldly sanctuary. Now that which gives one a right to the privileges of that sanctuary which is heavenly, is the circumcision wrought in the heart by the Spirit.

It is manifest that circumcision cannot

mean what baptism means now, because only the male children of the Hebrews, or of the Jewish proselytes, were circumcised. On the other hand, baptism is not limited in that way. All who believe, both male and female, are to be baptized. Neither is Jordan a type of baptism. The word means "river of judgment." It is a type of that experience by which the people of God come to receive all the blessings of the gospel in Christ, having passed beyond Moses. One outward ordinance cannot be a type of another outward ordinance. Neither was Jordan a type of death. We know this is so because Canaan was not a type of heaven, seeing that it was full of enemies, and conflicts attended all the life of Israel after they entered there. Israel was all circumcised after entering the promised land, to show that they were still separate from the nations round about them, and that they were the Lord's own peculiar people still, but they never were anything but a natural people, set apart for typical purposes, that the will of God might be revealed through them. The types of things spiritual were in all their order and worship as a nation, but only the types.

Baptism was a specific command to all who love the Lord, and was ordained as a gospel ordinance. It was not an Old Testament command as an ordinance, though there were washings ordained then to those who had been circumcised, but these washings were not gospel baptism, and had no connection with baptism at all. They were types of inward washings, or in other words of the putting away of sin, and the filth of the flesh, by the blood of Christ, and of what the apostle called "The washing of water by the word." Thus the Lord said by the prophet, "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you." This is not baptism, because in baptism the Lord does not apply the water, but men, and water does not cleanse any man from sin, but the water was a symbol of the Holy Spirit, and the action of water in cleansing, was a symbol of the work of the Holy Spirit cleansing us from falsehood and evil. Baptism symbolizes to us the death, burial and resurrection of Christ; it symbolizes also our own death, through the Spirit, to sin and the law for justification, and it lastly symbolizes our own death, and the final resurrection from the dead, when we shall finally, completely and forever be conformed to the image of Christ, and reign with him forever. To repeat, we will say again that baptism does not take the place of circumcision. If it did, how was it that some who had received circumcision also received baptism? And Jordan was not a type of baptism, seeing that one outward ordinance cannot be a type of another outward ordinance. C.

WAS JOHN'S BAPTISM CHRISTIAN BAPTISM?

SISTER J. H. Blackburn, of Chattam, Ontario, asks for some thoughts upon the baptism of John. She says there are some in her vicinity who say that John's baptism was not christian baptism, and she desires to know the truth regarding the matter, both for her own sake and that of others.

Among good and clear minded brethren there has been some differences of opinion concerning this matter ever since we have thought about the question at all. In what we may say we are not disposed to enter into any disputation concerning the matter in any way, but still feel willing

to suggest some considerations which may help our sister and others to a right conclusion concerning the matter.

First, baptism was not commanded under the law, it is not therefore a legal ordinance, it does not belong to the old covenant. The baptism of John was not commanded by any law of the old covenant, and he did not seek to give it force by appealing to any command of the Mosaic law, rather he commanded it as a sign that those who received it were turned away from the old covenant, and no longer sought to say, "We have Abraham to our father." It signified not the continuance of the old covenant, but the ushering in of the new.

Second. At the very beginning of the gospel of Mark we read that what he was about to record was the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and then he says that the Scripture quoted by him from Malachi, concerning the coming and ministry of John, was a prophecy of the beginning of the gospel. Mark writing by inspiration of the Spirit of truth, calls John's ministry the beginning of the gospel. We certainly should not like to dispute with Mark upon this matter.

Third. Jesus himself received this baptism, and in doing so said, "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." And it seems clear to our mind that if the baptism of Jesus was not what our sister means by christian baptism, then we are not following after his example when we are baptized. John was the friend of the Bridegroom; he heralded the coming of the Bridegroom, but the friend of the Bridegroom was a part of the needful sharers in the marriage ceremony according to the customs of that age and place. So John was not under the law in his ministry, and in his baptism, but had a part under the gospel, as Mark testifies. Baptism under the gospel must be christian baptism; it is a following of Christ.

No doubt this was the DAWN of the gospel, but it was GOSPEL DAWNING, and not legal work and ministry. The early light of dawn is not the full rising of the sun, but it is not of the night. It is not the beginning of night, but the beginning of the day. So we have understood John's teaching and baptism to be the beginning of the gospel, and not a part of the old covenant which was passing away.

All the work and ministry of the dear Redeemer was not one of legal forms, but the works which he did, and the words which he spake, were Spirit and Life. True, he suffered under the law, and in obedience to the penalty which it commanded, and he obeyed it in its utmost jots and tittles, but still his obedience was more to the spirit of the law than to the letter of it. His was a gospel obedience, rather than a mere formal legal service. In all his life here he showed not the obedience of a legalist, but of the gospel, which declares freedom to the captive. It was his meat and drink to do his Father's will, he obeyed in the Spirit rather than in the outward form; he came to reveal the gospel, as well as to fulfill the law. Yea, it was in the revelation of the gospel that he fulfilled the law. It seems then to us that the fact that Jesus suffered under the law, does not in any way argue that the gospel did not begin when John began his ministry, as Mark testifies. Therefore John's baptism was not legal but gospel baptism.

The case recorded in the nineteenth chapter of acts does not, in our judgment, argue anything to the contrary of

this truth. Our understanding has been that these were baptized after the commission given to the disciples by the Savior, which required that afterwards all should be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Up to the time when the blessed Lord gave this great commission the baptism of John was valid. Now the more full meaning of baptism was brought out, and so to be baptized unto the baptism of John was not sufficient any more. Therefore these were required to be baptized again, as the Lord had commanded. They said that they had not heard that there was any Holy Ghost. Now the full truth was made known to them, and they were baptized again as Jesus had commanded. But this does not in any way invalidate the baptism of John as being gospel baptism up to the time, when more was required, through the gift of the Holy Ghost which was first bestowed upon the day of Pentecost. John's teaching was the dawn of day, while not the full day, so his baptism was the dawn of christian baptism, while not embracing all that baptism now means. C.

PLEASE BE SURE

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likley to occur.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

CLOSE OF THE VOLUME.

With this number we close the volume for 1858, and the twenty-sixth year of our publication; and we not only feel bound to give thanks unto God always, for all his mercies, but especially for his supporting and sustaining grace, by which we have thus far been enabled to finish our course. "Hitherto the Lord has helped us," and it is because he changes not that we are not consumed. When we retrospect the twenty-six years in which we have been engaged in this publication, we find much cause for humble gratitude to our heavenly Father, and much to deplore of human weakness on our part. Scarcely did we anticipate, when in the fall of 1831 we issued our humble sheet, as the first that was ever sent forth bearing the name of an Old School Baptist publication, that we should live to complete the twenty-sixth volume of it. Then we were almost alone in this part of the country in the doctrine and views which we held of the gospel, and the order of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. True, the Lord had reserved of his hidden ones more than seven thousand valiant men of Israel, who entertained the same views in regard to those issues which at that time were dividing the Baptist denomination; but we knew not where they were, or even of their existence. With much trembling, and a consciousness of our own weakness and want of ability to embark in the undertaking, when no other brother was found who was willing to engage in the hazardous experiment, we staked all our earthly interest in the attempt to publish a paper that should be devoted to the Old School Baptist cause, maintaining the sentiments set forth in our original pro-

spectus, and which have ever since been advocated with all the ability we could command. The struggle at the time when our publication was commenced, was fearful and trying; old associations and long standing personal bonds and ties of familiar recognition, and nominal union were to be dissolved, bitter opposition and uncompromising hostilities were to succeed. The little band with whom we stood, and for the advocacy of whose sentiments our publication was pledged, after having suffered long the innovation upon the primitive faith and order of the gospel of Christ, felt themselves solemnly called upon to not only remonstrate as they had formerly done, but to make a last, a final appeal to those of our nominal brotherhood, setting forth their departures from the doctrine and order of the gospel, and admonishing them to return to the Scriptures as the only divinely authorized rule for faith and practice to the church of God; and informing them that if they persisted in their course we should be compelled, by a sense of our obligation to God, to withdraw our fellowship from them.

The principal causes for this separation were, first, that there were many in the Baptist connection, who had embraced the heresy of Andrew Fuller, and were zealously preaching his theory of an indefinite atonement, and offered salvation. These Fullerites, as they were called, adhering to Fuller's suggestion of raising the Baptist denomination from the *dung-hill* to a respectable position among the denominations of professed christianity, had organized State and National societies, Bible, Tract, Educational, Temperance and other institutions, Sabbath School Unions, and Theological Seminaries, in all of which the world, and those professing to be of the church of Christ, were united, receiving memberships and honorary positions, for a stipulated amount of money, and not on profession of faith and fellowship, appealing to the pride of poor, depraved human nature, by offering high sounding titles, of presidents, vice-presidents, directorships, and life-directorships, memberships and life-memberships, &c., for a fixed amount of money, and these organizations were extolled as a fruitful means of salvation, in direct opposition to, and defiance of all that God has spoken in the Scriptures.

Our appeal was unheeded by them; like Ephraim, they were joined to their idols, and we were compelled to withdraw our fellowship from them. As soon as our action was published, a severe conflict ensued. We were immediately subjected to reproach, persecution, misrepresentation and abuse, more bitter than we had formerly or subsequently received from those who had never been called by our name. But the Lord has graciously sustained us in the stand then taken, and the circulation of our paper into all the States and territories of our Republic, has searched out and brought to light, as nearly as we can estimate, about one hundred and fifty thousand of our brethren and sisters in our country, who occupy the same grounds with us in all these respects, and who stand united in faith, and walk in the fellowship of the gospel.

With all the foregoing facts before our readers, it is for them to say whether the SIGNS OF THE TIMES shall still be sustained. Some few who profess to be Old School Baptists, have denounced us and our publication, and charged us with departure from the faith; and although we have repeatedly disclaimed the heresies which they have charged us with, they still persist in charging us, and appear very anxious that we should hold them;

but we are happy to know these unreasonable accusers are very few in number, compared with the thousands of our brethren who stand fully identified with us.

No one who justly appreciates the intelligence of the Old School Baptists, can believe that they could read our paper for twenty-six years, and not know what are our religious sentiments. It is presumed there is not a person in the ranks of the Old School, or Primitive Baptist communion, whose doctrinal views are better understood by the Old School Baptists generally throughout the United States, than are those of the editor and publisher of this paper; and it is arrogant and presuming in persons of but ordinary intelligence, to assume that they know more than all the church of God, are better able to judge and detect heresy, and that they are competent to search the hearts and try the reins of men, and to affirm that men do hold doctrines which they constantly disavow.

But we leave all this to be considered by our brethren, and disposed of as our God may see fit, and our assailants to enjoy all that distinction and notoriety which their efforts to injure us may entitle them to, or earn for them.

Our circulation is now between six and seven thousand, and constantly increasing; and we have the assurance of many thousands of the scattered flock that they are edified and comforted by the perusal of the communications which have appeared in the SIGNS.

We propose no change in our next volume, either in its size, quality, or terms—only that we shall, if spared, devote more undividedly our time and labor to make it more and more interesting and edifying. During the year now closing we have been compelled to somewhat neglect our editorial duties, in the time required to compile and publish the Baptist Hymn Book, which being now completed and stereotyped, we can supply any amount, without further neglecting the publication of the SIGNS.

MIDDLETOWN. N. Y., December 15, 1858.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At her home near Manassas, Va., May 21st, 1901, **Mrs. Emily E. Johnson**, aged 77 years, 7 months and 19 days. Sister Johnson's maiden name was Wheatly. She was married to Mr. Joseph Johnson, Dec. 27th, 1843, and was baptized the same year by Elder Locke. Her husband died in 1852, leaving her the mother of four children, two sons and two daughters, all of whom survive her, together with several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. No children ever had a better mother; she was eminently their guide, counsellor and friend until the last. Her death was very sudden. Though she had been in rather feeble health for some time, still she had been about her home as usual, and retired the night she died apparently in ordinary health. About midnight she was suddenly attacked with severe heart trouble, and lived about fifteen minutes. Sister Johnson was emphatically a mother in Israel. It has been my privilege to know her for the past twenty-five years, her house has been a home to me, and I loved and esteemed her as a mother. She was received by experience into the Bethlehem Church, near her home, in 1872, and her membership continued there until her death. She was wise in counsel, with the peace and welfare of the church at heart, and was dearly loved and highly esteemed by her brethren, to all of whom her house was always open in unbounded hospitality. In extending this hospitality all the members of her dear family most heartily joined; the poor were especial objects of her care and thoughtfulness. I loved her so dearly and received of her kindness so long that I may seem fulsome in my praise, but I feel sure that all who intimately knew her will indorse every word I write. There are what are called "pillars in the church," sister Johnson was one. Her meek and humble spirit, her faithful discharge of every obligation, both in her family and in the church, all done in her own quiet, unostentatious way, won the love and admiration of all who knew her, who could appreciate real worth. She lived the gospel she loved, and what more can be said? A great loss has come upon her family, and a great loss upon Bethlehem Church. We grieve not for her, but for ourselves. Like a shock of corn fully ripe she is gathered home. May the God of all consolation comfort those who mourn.

J. N. BADGER.

Mrs. Susan Matilda Hite, daughter of Elder Y. J. and M. J. Harville, was born Feb. 21st, 1864, and was married to Dr. George M. Hite, Nov. 18th, 1884. She was the mother of five children, three of whom survive her, two boys and one girl. She confessed a hope in Christ, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church, Oct. 19th, 1892, by Elder J. Bunyan Stephens. She departed this life June 25th, 1901, at 9:50 p. m.

Sister Hite was an humble believer in the Lord Jesus Christ; she firmly and calmly believed in God's unlimited power and sovereign grace; she sat at the feet of Jesus and trusted him for all things. Like one of old, he had chosen that "better part" which was not taken away from her. Few if any of the children of God had such faith that "all things worked together for good to them that loved God, to them who had been called according to his purpose." Hence her childlike trust that God was "working all things after the counsel of his own will." Therefore she was the same under all circumstances to her brethren and friends. Whether sick or well, in adversity or prosperity, she met them with the same pleasant smile. She never presented the dark side of anything, but always the bright. God had made her disposition so sunny and bright, and she felt that it would be so sweet and so pure to die in the Lord, that she requested that white be used in her funeral. She had expressed herself as willing to die, and said that she had seen Jesus with outstretched arms to receive her. Sister Hite will be missed among the faithful, but we believe that she is now in the immediate presence of him whose outstretched arms she saw while here on earth.

May the Lord comfort her mother, husband, children, brothers and sisters, and the church and friends, whom she loved so well. The writer selected this for a suitable text at the funeral: "They shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy." But I was overcome with love and emotion, and felt more like saying, Bless the Lord, O my soul, bless his holy name. Her labors are now closed, she has laid aside mortality for immortality, the light of earth for the light of heaven, the company of relatives and friends for the company of Jesus and the angels. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

J. K. WOMACK.

KIRKLAND, Tenn., July 23, 1901.

Griffith Search departed this life at his home in Montgomery Co., Md., on the morning of June 5th, 1901, aged 79 years, 2 months and 3 days. He spent his early life, as we are informed, in the vicinity of Southampton, Pa., but for fifty years he had lived where he died, respected, honored and esteemed by all who knew him. He was married to Maria Louisa Fetter, daughter of George and Cornelia Fetter, and granddaughter of Elder Thomas B. Montanye, (who was for many years pastor of the church at Southampton,) in November, 1847. They moved to Maryland in the spring of 1848, where he spent his years until he was called home. His dear companion and three children passed away in 1862, with a malignant fever, within a few weeks of each other, leaving him with three small children. He never married again, but always grieved for the companion he had lost, and devoted himself to the care of the children left to him, and it is our privilege to say of them that they also were devoted to him. Mr. Search was a faithful and earnest and hard working man. We knew him intimately for many years, and often visited his home. He loved to see all his friends at his home, and his house was always open to those who loved the Lord, and the doctrine of grace. We well recall many gatherings at his home for worship, when it was our privilege to speak, as best we could, to the people. He was grounded in the doctrine of grace, and desired not to hear the works of the creature exalted. He had a humble opinion of himself, and because of this he never made a public profession of his hope. We have heard him speak of his feelings in this respect when at his home in years past. His daughter, sister Ida Search, writes us that he suffered greatly for several months before the end came; at times the pain was excruciating, and he would be compelled to cry out in his distress. At times he seemed to be easier, and it was hoped by his family that he would rally once more, but this was not to be. Some hours before the end came he became unconscious, and so remained. We well know, as the dear daughter has written, that they will all miss him greatly. It could not be otherwise, yet we believe he is at rest.

On Friday, June 7th, a large gathering of friends and neighbors assembled at the home, where he had lived for so many years, to pay a last tribute of respect to their friend and neighbor. Elder C. H. Waters, a life-long friend of the family, who has been with them in many trying hours, with true sympathy and kindness spoke to the friends words of comfort from the text found in 2 Tim. i. 9, 10.

His daughter writes that she had often seen her father shed tears under the preaching of the word, and especially at the times of baptism. We have no doubt that he loved the courts of Zion, and desired her welfare. Now he is at rest with the redeemed who have gone before. He died as he had lived, in blessed hope of the resurrection at the last day. C.

PERSONAL.

PHILLIPI, W. Va., Route No. 1, July 29, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Please inform the brethren who read the SIGNS, that I am now located near the Mt. Olive Old School Baptist Church, and my post-office address is Philippi, Barbour Co., W. Va., Route No. 1. We have a lovely church here, all in peace and harmony. Forty-five members, five ordained preachers.

J. N. BARTLETT.

MEETINGS.

THE Peace Valley Association will convene with Union Church, at Blum, Texas, commencing on Saturday before the third Sunday in August, 1901, at 10 o'clock a. m., and will close on Monday. All lovers of the truth are invited.

W. L. ROGERS, Pastor.

THE Brookdale Church, of Susquehanna Co., Pa., expect to have a two days meeting, Tuesday and Wednesday after the third Sunday in August, (20th and 21st) 1901. Trains will be met at Conklin, Pa., on D., L. & W. R. R., Monday afternoon, and at Montrose depot, Pa., Monday afternoon. All who come will be welcomed.

A TWO days meeting will be held, providence permitting, at Justus, Pa., Thursday and Friday, August 22d and 23d, 1901. Those attending Brookdale meeting can easily get to this meeting, as it is only forty miles from Montrose. All will be made welcome who may come. Trains will be met at Olyphant, Pa., Wednesday afternoon, at D. & H. depot, and the N. Y., O. & W. depot, also at Glenburn, Pa., Wednesday afternoon and evening, and friends cared for.

For further information address Geo. Goodrich, Justus, Pa.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, to commence on Friday, August 30th, 1901, and continue three days. We shall gladly welcome all who feel it in their hearts to visit us.

Those coming will be met at North Berwick railway station, on Thursday before the time appointed for our yearly conference.

FRED. W. KEENE.

THE sixty-first annual session of the Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Baptists will be held, the Lord willing, with the Cane Run Church, at Turners Station, forty-four miles east of Louisville, on the L. & N. Railroad, commencing on Wednesday, Sept. 4th, 1901, and continuing three days.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth, especially ministering brethren.

ERNEST F. RANSDELL.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church, on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1901, and continue three days. Teams will be at the railroad station in Bowdoinham, on Thursday, Sept. 5th, to meet those who may come on the cars from east or west, and carry them to places of entertainment, and to the meetnig. All lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus are invited to attend.

J. H. LOWELL, Clerk.

THE Licking Old School Baptist Association will hold its annual session with Mt. Gilead Church, near Mayslick, Mason Co, Ky., beginning on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1901. We extend a cordial welcome to brethren and friends.

Those coming from the south, east or west, by way of Lexington, Ky., will be met at Helena station, on Thursday evening. Those coming by way of Cincinnati, or from the east, over the Cincinnati division of the C. & O., will be met at Maysville, Thursday afternoon at 1:30 and 3:25. We hope our friends will try to reach these points on Thursday, as they cannot well get out on Friday in time for the meeting.

FRANK LAYTHAM, Church Clerk.

THE South Ouachita Association will convene with Good Hope Church, in Union Parish, La., one mile north of Oakland, commencing Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1901. An invitation is extended to all lovers of truth to meet with us.

L. C. TRULL.

THE First Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, in Vega, N. Y., has appointed a yearly or two days meeting, to be held the last Wednesday and Thursday in September, (25th and 26th) 1901.

Also a counsel at the same time to examine the gift of brother John B. Slawson, and if thought proper, to set him apart to the work of the ministry. We invite our brethren and sisters and friends, especially ministering brethren, to attend with us.

This done by order and in behalf of the church, June 29th, 1901.

Those coming by rail will be met at Roxbury, on Tuesday, the day before the meeting.

WILLIAM BALLARD, Church Clerk.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 69. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1901. NO. 17.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CREATURE MADE SUBJECT TO VANITY.

(Romans viii. 20.)

WHO is this creature which "was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope?" It is the same creature spoken of in the preceding verse, whose "earnest expectation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God," and which in the following verse it is said "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." It belongs to the same spiritual creation referred to in verse 22, which in former dispensations groaned and travailed in pain together, and which now in the gospel day is manifest, as it ever was, by suffering, even in the apostles and early saints, who had the first fruits of the Spirit, "who groan within themselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their body."

This creature is the same spoken of in 2 Cor. v. 17: "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature," and also in Eph. ii. 10: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." This workmanship of God whereby we are created in Christ Jesus, is experienced by a man, a sinner of Adam's fallen race. Before that work of God was experienced this man did not know himself as a sinner, and therefore did not have that kind of suffering which comes from such knowledge. In the first verse of this chapter the apostle speaks of those who are in Christ, and in the ninth verse we learn that to be in Christ, or in the Spirit, is to have the Spirit of God, or of Christ, in him. It is not until we have this experience of Christ in us that we can know that the body, which means the natural or earthy man, is dead because of sin. (Verse 10.) Let it be here noted and remembered that when the body or flesh is spoken of by the apostles in this sense, as dead because of sin, reference is not made merely to the physical body, for that cannot sin, but to the *man*, who is "of the earth earthy," the *man* who sinned and was condemned. The sin, the sinfulness, the depravity, are felt by the christian to be in his mind, in his heart, and not in the literal flesh.

The life that is now ours is the Spirit

of Christ, "The Spirit is life because of righteousness." "Christ is our life," and that life is all the light we have by which to see the deadness of our body, or the living beauty and glory of Christ, and of the kingdom of God. (Verse 10.) "In him [the Word] was life, and the life was the light of men."—John i. 4. The giving of this divine and ever holy life to the sinner is the creative work of God. It is not that the divine life or Spirit of Christ was created, nor is it that the Adamic man is new created, or made over again, but the bringing of the man forth in this new life, the causing him to be thus born of the Spirit, the manifesting of "the life of Jesus in our mortal flesh," (2 Cor. iv. 11,) this is the workmanship of God; this is creating the man in Christ Jesus, and causing him to be a new creature.

This man who has been born again (from above), who has been brought forth in the life of Jesus, was first born of the flesh, brought forth in the life of Adam. In neither birth was any change of *nature* effected. In the first birth the life and nature of Adam were manifested. In the second birth the life and nature of Jesus were manifested. In being given the life of Jesus the life of the flesh was not changed *in its nature*, but remained a sinful life. Therefore David says, "My soul cleaveth to the dust;" and Job says, "My soul is weary of life;" and Paul says, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." And throughout the Scriptures holy men have mourned on account of the felt sinfulness of their own life, and rejoiced in the evidences that the Lord was their life, and such is the experience of saints to-day. "Except a man hate his own life," Jesus says, "he cannot be my disciple." The two natures, the two lives, the mortal and the immortal, are both in the one person, but the spiritual or immortal is the stronger, and shall control and prevail.

The creature spoken of in the text is not the spiritual life in itself considered, nor the man who has experienced the new birth in himself considered, but it is the spirit or life of Jesus as manifest in the flesh, and it is the man considered as having this divine life, the man as being thus "in Christ." The man himself, regarded in his Adamic nature, is a sinful man, and his heart is deceitful above all things, and there is not enough goodness in his nature to cause one throb of sorrow on account of sin, or to excite the least hunger after righteousness, and the Spirit of Christ, considered separately from the flesh, can have no sorrow or pain. It was in the flesh that Christ suffered. It was for the purpose of suffering that he came in the flesh, and those who have the Spirit of Christ suffer with him. It is this suffering of the people of God with Jesus that the apostle is considering in this connection. He explains to them the cause of their suffering, and enters into the depths and heights of doctrine as he traces the exercises and describes the feelings of the little children, and thus points out and designates the humble followers of Christ.

The apostle in various places speaks of the one person in his relation both to the flesh and the Spirit. While there is an essential distinction between the flesh and the spirit, and this distinction is maintained in all the teachings of the apostles, yet they are both in one person, and there is an experimental sense in which they must be considered as together, though separate. "That which

is born of the flesh is flesh," and will remain so until the change shall come, "and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit," and will ever remain in unyielding opposition to the flesh. But the christian is possessed of both of these opposing natures, the human and the divine, and the apostle uses the personal pronoun when speaking of both. "For *I* know that in *me*, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." He speaks of the flesh as "*me*." "That which *I* do *I* allow not." "The good that I would I do not; but the evil that *I* would not, that *I* do." "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."

Thus it is the same *I* who realizes death in Adam, or in the flesh, and who realizes life in Christ. It is the same *I* who may at one time be experimentally in Christ, and, sowing to the Spirit, reap life everlasting, and at another time may be living after the flesh and die to spiritual things; may be sowing to the flesh, and of the flesh reap corruption.

But the apostle is considering here the unchanging, unvarying inclinations of the Spirit or life of Christ which is in all his people, and the consequent suffering of the child of God because of the vileness that is thus discovered in us by the light of the Spirit. And he is intent upon declaring and showing the certainty of the glory that shall succeed that suffering in every one who has been born of the Spirit, and who is therefore a partaker of the divine nature. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." How wonderfully connected the apostle's argument is. How one thing follows another, just in the order that keeps along with the exercises and travail of the christian. Observe how many of these verses begin with the word "for," connecting it with what was said before.

"For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the Son of God." This earnest expectation is entirely of the Spirit. It is the view of faith, looking to things not seen by mortal powers. It is the expectation of things promised in Christ, and revealed to the faith of God's people. Faith makes no guesses, but sees eternal realities. Concerning these things it is said, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." Therefore, while there is deep suffering because of the corruptions of the flesh, there is at the same time, down in the depths of the soul, a calm and confident waiting for that which the quickened soul so earnestly desires, to see in ourselves the manifestation of that relationship as sons of God. We cannot see it in ourselves now, but we long for it, hunger for it, have been made to expect it, and quietly wait for it. We are saved by this sweet and sure hope. All this earnest expectation is in the Spirit; not in the Spirit of Christ considered in itself, but in that spirit as given unto us, and as living in our poor hearts, and as able to turn our thoughts toward

heavenly things, and to set our affections on things above.

Now the apostle shows against what great and dire obstacle the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for such a wonderful and holy manifestation. That obstacle is the vanity of our fleshly nature, which he afterward calls the bondage of corruption." This is why we do not see in ourselves evidences of sonship, such as we desire. Though to our faith may come assurances at times that "we are now the sons of God," yet "it doth not appear what we shall be;" and we are often left to doubt that we bear such a relationship because of the vanity of the flesh.

But now the apostle shows us that in the wisdom of God in creating his people in Christ, in giving them the life of his Son, he made them subject to the vanity of this nature. He could have caused them to be at once freed from sin and depravity, and to enter into a holy and sinless state. But it was his will that the new, divine life, the Spirit of Christ in them, should have this opposition to contend with, that this new creature should be subject to this vanity. "Every man in his best state is altogether vanity." "All the goodness and glory of man is as the flower of the field." As soon as the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it, it fades away. (Isa. xl. 7.) And because of this the workmanship of God is the more clearly manifest, and the power of the Spirit more clearly displayed, as the enduring quality and value of gold are shown more clearly when it comes in contact with fire.

For our comfort we are told of one thing that we would not have thought of without being told, and yet which we see at once to be true: "Not willingly." The Spirit of Christ is essentially and forever opposed to sin. That life of Christ which is within the poor sinner's heart is just as pure and as much opposed to vanity there as it is in himself; as the sunshine is just as pure when it falls into a polluted atmosphere as when it leaves the sun. We can at times see that there is a principle within us that is opposed to all the vanity and corruption of our natures, and which makes us long to be perfectly free from it. Thus with our minds we serve the law of God, (we have the mind of Christ) while with our flesh we serve the law of sin. (Romans vii. 25.) The apostle had no reference here to evil deeds, against which he would admonish his brethren, but he referred to that corruption of the flesh to which we must always be subject, feeling it as a bondage while we remain in this mortal state.

Not willingly. This is why we suffer in the flesh. This is why we can find no permanent rest in this mortal state. This is why, when we are spiritual, we hate not only evil deeds, but the vanity of even the most exalted and the purest of earthly things. This is why our days on the earth are a shadow, and there is none abiding. This is why we hate our own lives at times, and count this world a wilderness of woe. And it is because the new creature is not willingly subject to vanity, that exhortations and admonitions have a place and power. For this creature is ever seeking the honor of God, and desiring to follow Jesus, and to show forth his praises, but ever feels the hindrances of the vanity of the flesh, and so can never do the good it would do, but is always dissatisfied with even our best works. And no matter how far one may have gone astray, it is always right to exhort, when we can do it in meekness, for though *we* cannot make the word of

exhortation effectual, the Lord peradventure may give repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.

Then how sweet and comforting the assurance that this subjection of God's gracious work in us to vanity is in hope. We cannot see in ourselves now what we wish to see, (verses 24, 25,) but we are given good ground to hope for it. For the apostle by inspiration positively asserts that we, the new creature, shall be delivered from this vanity, from this "bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God." This we are given faith to believe shall be. We long for it, and in the Spirit we expect it, and thus we have that hope which saves us from being overcome and brought down to the gates of despair by this vanity. "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." No child of God can see himself as he wants to be, therefore he can never be pleased or satisfied with himself while in the flesh. He must see himself compassed with infirmities, held down by a bondage of corruption, therefore he cannot see himself as a son of God now, cannot see himself without sin, cannot see in himself, that is, in his flesh, any good thing. Therefore he is not only subject to vanity, but is subject to the temptation with which Satan tempted Jesus, "If thou be the Son of God."

But here comes into view the preciousness, and the saving power of that hope, which the Lord, who subjected the new creature to vanity, has given to light up the darkness, to cheer the heart, and to be "as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast," holding the vessel of mercy securely against all the adverse tides and terrible storms that must be met with on the ocean of time. This good hope is through grace, and does not depend for sustenance upon goodness in ourselves, or in our works, which every child of God longs for but can never see, but upon the revelation of Jesus Christ as "of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." At every new revelation of the blessed Savior to our souls, our hope seems to be renewed and strengthened. So we continue to hope for that we see not, for goodness, sinlessness, perfection; for the manifestation of the sons of God, for deliverance from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God, for "the redemption of our body," which shall be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus; and for all these blessed things so surely promised and assured unto us, we patiently wait, wait in the enduring and unfailing patience of a living faith in Christ.

"Not willingly." Still more and more blessedly does this wonderful expression shine out from the sacred page of inspiration, with assurance of hope, and with heavenly comfort, to the afflicted and poor people of God, who are still ever struggling on against barriers which present impossibilities to them, who are daily tried and are daily dying, and yet "who against hope believe in hope." What a comfort it is to see this "not willingly" in their own poor hearts. When they have to acknowledge that they do the things they would not, and do not do the things they would, how glad they are at times, in the midst of their infirmities and under the bondage of corruption, to remember that they *would not* do an evil thing, and that they *would do* good things.

"But if indeed I would,
Though I can nothing do,

Yet the desire is something good,
For which my praise is due.
By nature prone to ill,
Till thine appointed hour,
I was as destitute of will,
As now I am of power."

How comforting to find that the apostles are with us in this experience of infirmities which the Spirit only can help. How glad we are that Paul, as well as we, had to confess, "The things that I do I allow not." Not referring to a course of wrong conduct, but to the fact that sin is mixed with all we do, so that we cannot do the things we would, but feel "the sentence of death in ourselves," tainting all our works, only as we are given faith to do our works in Christ, to look to him for the goodness, and not to ourselves.

"Not willingly." This is the holy Spirit of God from which this "not willingly" comes. There is no half way will here, no uncertainty about this will that is ever and eternally against all sin. This is the will of the Father that was done in and by the Son. There is no weakness in this will. It is not even the will of Jesus, as a suffering man, which caused him to cry, "If it be possible let this cup pass from me," but it is the will of the Father which caused and enabled him to say, "Not my will but thine be done." His own will was the will of a pure and sinless man. This will he did not come to do. This will must be crossed, denied, crucified, for it would have turned from suffering. The Father's will was done in and by him, and by that will he was crucified; by that will he gave himself to the smiters, and became obedient unto death. By that will he was raised from the dead, and by that will we are saved. That is the will concerning which that Holy Spirit teaches us to pray, "Thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven." It will be done in the children of God, and through its power and exercise within them they will all eventually be brought into perfect conformity to the image of God's Son by the mighty power and working of his holy Spirit. He works in his people to will and to do of his good pleasure. In his own time, and in his own way, each of them will be made fully to know his own vanity, his own inability, "his own sore and his own plague," and will then be brought forever away from sin and weakness into the liberty of the sons of God, and will be prepared to give God all the praise of his salvation for time and for eternity.

Those who the apostle says are groaning and travailing in pain together until now, are not the natural creation, for it is not true of either man or beast. He is showing the sufferings of the Lord's people from the beginning. They were distinct from the legal worshipers, though they were among them. They all had faith in every dispensation, and by that faith they saw Christ as their Savior, and we trace them through all the Old Testament Scriptures by their groanings, complaints, self-loathings and bitter self-reproaches, as an afflicted, suffering people, whose sufferings are on account of sin in the flesh. And the apostle joins himself and all the saints under the gospel with the holy men of old, who were as much the creative workmanship of God as we, showing that although the gospel saints had received the first fruits of the Spirit, yet they groaned within themselves, looking for no comfort from the flesh, but looking for the promise of Jesus' coming, when the adoption would be fulfilled in the redemption of our body from corruption, and the inheritance into which we were adopted, (using adoption as a legal

figure) would be received, which is to become sons of God. This name, Son of God, Jesus received by inheritance in his resurrection. (Heb. i. 4, 5; Rom. i. 4; Acts xiii. 33.) We are heirs with him of this sonship, and when the manifestation of the sons of God shall be complete in the redemption of our body from corruption, and in the fashioning of it like unto the glorious body of Jesus, then we shall be manifest, not as adopted children, for the purpose of that legal figure is attained when we come into the inheritance, but as the real "children of God, being the children of the resurrection."—Luke xx. 36. This inheritance unto which we are begotten again by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, is not a corruptible, defiled and fading inheritance, as was the sonship we inherited from Adam, but it is incorruptible, and undefiled, and it fadeth not away, and it is reserved in heaven for all who have received the Spirit of adoption, for all who feel themselves to be poor, helpless sinners, who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and who long to be like Jesus; and all the heirs of this blessed inheritance are kept by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. (1 Peter i. 3–5.)

I have written upon this subject by the request of my dear brother, Elder G. E. Mayfield, of Elgin, Oregon. I wish I could do better with it, and write more clearly, but I feel more and more from day to day my ignorance and inability with regard to spiritual things. I often feel as though I ought never to try to write upon such things, or speak, either. It sometimes seems as though I know nothing as I ought to know, and it depresses me greatly. I am of late in the depths much of my time, but sometimes I hope I am enabled to cry unto God out of the depths. If it were not that those to whom I write know these things by a personal experience of them, and are therefore able to judge of what I say, I would not write. What I have written is what I have felt and tasted in my own soul, and so I feel free to submit it to the saints.

May the Lord direct our minds into all truth.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., July 15, 1901.

ROMANS VIII. 26.

"FOR we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." That is, it must be real, it must come from the heart, and the preparations of the heart and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord. The preparation being of the Lord, the prayer of the heart is in accordance with the will of the Lord. "We know not what we should pray for as we ought." The disciples of the Savior did not know how to pray, nor what to pray for, and they asked the Savior to teach them to pray. "And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven so in earth," &c. This is the way that Jesus himself prayed, Not my will, but thine, O Lord, be done. This is the way that Paul prayed, "What wilt thou have me to do?" What is thy will? Thy will, O Lord, be done. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Moses' prayers never changed the mind of the Lord, for God is in one mind, and who can turn him? The Spirit made intercession for Moses, according to the will of God. Likewise with all the praying servants of

God, "We know not what to pray for as we ought." We are little children; the kingdom of God is of such. We do not know what is best for us, we do not know what is for our good; we would deprecate the things that are for our good, and ask for the things that would be for our harm. But Christ is the "Head over *all things* to the church." He keeps her as the apple of his eye, he leads her about, he instructs her, he teaches her to pray and what to pray for. How that poor man who was journeying from Jerusalem to Jericho, who fell among thieves, and was stripped and wounded and left half dead, must have sighed and groaned, thinking there was no eye to pity, and none to lend a helping hand. Do you ever find yourself in such a condition as this, dear reader? Have you ever fallen into the clutches of Satan? Has he ever robbed you of your peace and comfort, with his fiery darts and hellish suggestions? Has he ever told you that your experience was all a phantom, that the Bible was a myth, and that there is no God? If so, are you not made to groan and pant for the Lord, as the hart panteth after the waterbrook? The Lord will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. "The prayer of the destitute." Destitute of what? O, destitute of everything that is good. When I cannot feel the presence of the Lord I am destitute. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."

"How tedious and tiresome the hours
When Jesus no longer I see;
Sweet birds, sweet prospects and sweet flowers,
Have lost all their sweetness to me."

"Destitute." I would but cannot sing, I would but cannot pray, I would but cannot read, I would but cannot talk. I am destitute, barren, lifeless, all is dark and vain and wild, so dead that I cannot feel that there is even a prayer in my heart. All the while there is an inward groaning that cannot be uttered. This is the prayer of the destitute, this is the prayer the Lord regards, this groaning is the voice of the dove calling for her mate from the cleft of the rock, and from the secret places of the stairs, which voice is sweet to the heavenly dove. He said, "O my dove that art in the cleft of the rock, and in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." He maketh darkness, and all the beasts of the forest creep forth. How is the darkness made literally? Simply by the disappearing of the sun. So the Lord makes darkness by hiding his smiling face. Then all the evils that lurk in our nature creep forth. When the Lord hides his face, and we are left to ourselves to grope in darkness, how soon Satan takes advantage. But our dear Redeemer was led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. If we follow him we must go where he went. We do not have to go very far to get into the wilderness. When left to ourselves, we find ourselves right in the wilderness, and we learn what poor, weak and dependent creatures we are. This is the way the Lord tries the faith of his people. He does not try their faith to see what it is, but it is to show them what it is, and whence it cometh. Here we learn that no man can keep alive his own soul. He that first made me must still keep me alive. Sometimes we get to feel so cold, and indifferent, and hard-hearted, we are made to question,

"Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

And we are made to cry out with the poet,

"O for a glance of heavenly day,
To turn this stubborn stone away."

And the deeper our sorrows, the louder we sing, What are these exercises but the prayers of the saints? So precious in the sight of the Lord are the prayers of his saints, that they are said to be vialed up in golden vials. His ear is ever open to their cry, yea, before they call he hears them, and answers them while they are yet speaking.

In the winter time all vegetation seems to be dead, the trees drop their foliage, the flowers disappear, and the birds cease to sing, but they are not dead, it is the time for these things. We are told that as long as time shall remain, there shall be seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter. Solomon is his Song speaks of the winter time with the soul, and also the spring time, when winter is past, and the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. All my times are in the hands of the Lord. When cold and indifferent, it is the time for it, and when full of vigor and zeal, it is the time for it. There shall be winter as well as spring, and spring as well as winter. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. The Lord keeps his people as the apple of his eye, all their steps are ordered of him. "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth even forever." We cannot thwart the purpose of God, and we do not want to, either. There may be times when we are made to cry out, "If it be possible let this cup pass from me," yet can we not say also, "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done"?

O how vain is all our work except the Lord be with us in it. "Except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city the watchmen waketh in vain: it is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows; for so he giveth his beloved sleep." Say you, When I am dead to everything, when I have no inclination to read the Bible, when I do not care whether I go to meeting or not, and if I go it is all mechanical, when I cannot see that life in the brethren that I once did, and I do not feel that love for them that I once did, the preaching does not sound so sweet as it once did, is this of the Lord? I will venture to say without the fear of successful contradiction, that it is of the Lord, "For so he giveth his beloved sleep." And though I sleep, my heart waketh. The Spirit still maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Even in the midst of our sleep we fear and tremble, and are made to cry out with the psalmist, "Consider and hear me, O Lord my God; lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of the dead." There is a continual persevering with every heaven-born soul. Sometimes we fear that the little spark of spiritual life will go out, but this can never be, it is eternal life. This life is that Spirit which maketh intercession for us, it is that Spirit that is willing, it is that Spirit against which the flesh lusteth, it is that Spirit that is opposed to and is crossed by everything that is wicked, it is the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. (Eph. iv. 30.)

"Prayer is the christian's vital breath,
The christian's native air,
The watchword at the gate of death;
He enters heaven with prayer."

The christian prays without ceasing. When in darkness he prays for the joys

of God's salvation, when in the light he prays that he may remain there.

Here we only see in part and know in part, hence we are never satisfied, for we are only satisfied with the fullness of God's salvation. "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." To whom shall we liken our Beloved? or what likeness shall we compare unto him?

"Nature to make her beauties known,
Must mingle colors not her own."

"Nor earth, nor seas, nor suns, nor stars,
Nor heaven, his full resemblance bears;
His beauties we can never trace,
Till we behold him face to face."

When we cannot see his face and feel his presence there is an aching void the world can never fill. Jesus is all the desire and all the salvation of his people, and he is their glory. The King's daughter is said to be all glorious within, but the Lord is the glory thereof. He is a wall of fire round about her, and the glory in the midst of her. Thou, O Lord, hast wrought all our works in us. "Let my Beloved come into his garden and eat his pleasant fruit."

The christian life is a peculiar life, yet it is the very book of life, recording on its every page, yea, in every paragraph, the praises of him who hath called us out of nature's darkness into his marvelous light. What a paradox is the christian experience: believing, yet full of unbelief; sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; dying daily, yet behold we live; having nothing, yet possessing all things. Happy art thou, O Israel, who is like unto thee? O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thine help, and who is the sword of thy excellency; guided by the counsel of Jehovah through this vail of tears, and afterwards received to glory.

Dear brethren, let us thank God and take courage, and press forward; all our conflicts will end in everlasting life. I have pursued the stream till it has expanded into an infinite ocean before me.

The above is submitted to your better judgment.

EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

CAMDEN, N. J., July 21, 1901.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., July 9, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Do you ever have conflicting emotions exercising you at the same time? I know you have natural desires and emotions, and also those that are spiritual, at the same time, and they always conflict, but that is not just what I mean. It is something like this: a praiseworthy desire enters your mind, and occupies your heart, and right on its heels comes opposing suggestions. My case is on this wise: I have desired for a week or two to write to you, and the desire remains with me, but opposition arises in various cunning suggestions, and they appear so plausible to me that I have to say, Yes, that is true, and so I hesitate. The first suggestion that presented itself when I sat down at this time, was after this manner: What can you say to Elder Chick that would interest him? His time is too important and valuable to be taken up and wasted with your airy nothings. How would you like it yourself to have some one write to you lengthy epistles of "great swelling words of vanity?" Do not you know there is some motive which actuates you, that some desire of your flesh may be fulfilled? you try to persuade yourself that your desire is a holy one, when you know that you breathe out selfishness with every breath. Such are a few of the suggestions which cause me to hesitate, and almost give up in despair, for I cannot contradict them. And now I ask you

again, Can it be possible that you ever have such experience? I long to be exercised like my brethren, but alas! I seem to stand alone; I seem to realize that all the imperfection and infirmity is in *me*. God is perfect in wisdom, and immaculate in holiness. I am the subject of his creation, but am I the object of his love? Zion is the perfection of beauty, God's glory shines forth out of its inhabitants. That is where I am privileged to behold it, but not in myself. It is never a question with me, whether God is *able* to shower blessings of grace on me, that I may be conformed to the image of his Son, but has he done it? That is the anxious question in my mind. When Jacob received the blessing from the angel with whom he wrestled all the night, he said to Jacob, "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel." I feel to hope that I have experienced the wrestling, and that my cry has gone out for the blessing, but when I search for evidence, I find plenty of Jacob, but dare not claim that precious title: Israel who as a prince hast power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. This appears to be the requisite with every halting Jacob, that he has power with God, and with men, and I am so far short of all that, I cannot see it in myself at all, yet I know that all power in heaven and in earth, with God and with men, is vested in Jesus, that he hath prevailed and hath conquered death, hell and the grave, and that by his appearing he "hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." Then if indeed I abide in him, he hath prevailed in me, and I am free, my name is called Israel because Jesus is the King thereof. Jacob did not prevail until he received the blessing, and the blessing was Jesus. The right of redemption existed in Jesus, in the precious truth that Israel was "bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh," That right being obtained through the gift of the Father, therefore, notwithstanding all my selfishness, my weaknesses, and my infirmities, my doubts and my fears, I cling tenaciously to the hope that Jesus has done for me that which I could never do, that he has prevailed for me, and this hope is "an anchor to [my] soul," and if I do not realize an experimental entrance into that within the vail, where Jesus my fore-runner hath entered as my High Priest, my hope hath entered there, and is both "sure and steadfast."

Sometimes, brother Chick, I feel to be thankful that I cannot say I am a christian, or that I am sure I am accepted in the beloved, because my hope is so precious to me, that I would not part with it for anything I can think or conceive of. It is my hope that causes me to go on from day to day pressing forward, looking for a country beyond the confines and environs of time. If I bear about in my body "the dying of the Lord Jesus," it is my hope that bears my body up. My hope is the Spirit of Christ which liveth and abideth in me, and it is always "Sure and steadfast." If Jesus is revealed in me as my life and my Redeemer, my hope is assured as a good hope through grace, because Jesus is my hope. He is my hope because I know I could not prevail over the powers that be, except through him. I am trying to grasp this precious truth, brother Chick, that Christ was made perfect through suffering, and obedient also, and that the suffering was not for himself or on account of himself, but for, and on account of his bride. He became the Captain of our salvation for Israel's sake, and for Israel he prevailed over every enemy, the last enemy being death. So if we behold salvation in

Israel, we behold Jesus as the Savior, having to his power and love no boundary, but extending to all worlds, and to every created thing, we know that God's perfect wisdom created nothing in vain, and we believe the end and purpose of all creation was the salvation of God in Christ Jesus, and that every created thing contributes in some way that we do not understand, to that salvation, all of which redounds to the glory and the praise of God, and the hope of every child of God embraces all this, whether he understands it or not. And I am often made to thank God that he has given me a limited understanding of the things pertaining to his kingdom, for because of that, my hope shines all the brighter in me, and springs up eternal within me, as wells of water springing up unto everlasting life. I hope also I am thankful that I am just as I am, poor, weak, ignorant, helpless and naked, for just as I am, in God's perfect wisdom he has made me, and I know I am thankful for the spark of hope he has set ablaze in my heart, and truly I desire that his praise and his glory may be wrought out and made clearly manifest in my experience, and my prayer is that every vain ambition within me, and every carnal desire, may be subdued and the remainder of my wrath may praise him, which you so clearly described in a late editorial.

Well, my brother, I think I have got the best of my three friends who would advise me not to write you, and I have learned in this overcoming that they are "miserable comforters," and like the raven that carried the food to Elijah, so they have contributed to some comfort and encouragement in this writing. And now I feel to thank the Lord that he did put you in my heart and mind.

With affectionate love to yourself and family, I am your most unworthy brother,

B. F. COULTER.

THE ORDINANCE OF BAPTISM.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Brother Gilbert Bird, of Burdette, W. Va., asks me, "What does it take to constitute valid baptism?" and to answer through the SIGNS. In the light of the New Testament and the love of its Testator, I will try to faithfully do so, seeking only the honor of Christ. The church is subject unto him, and he gave to her his doctrine and ordinances, which are two, namely, Baptism and the Supper. These our Lord set in the church. He also set the members, every one of them, in the church. Yea, Christ himself is in the church. To God he says, "In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." So all the ministerial gifts, from the first to the last, are in the church. These include the apostles and prophets, elders and deacons. Paul and Barnabas were ordained at Antioch, in and by the church, for the work whereunto the Lord had called them. This is the pattern. Only thus is any man qualified and authorized to minister in the gospel of Christ. To the church Paul said, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you." The apostles are next to Christ in the church, the gospel kingdom, and to them he delivered his doctrine and ordinances, and they delivered these to the church, to be faithfully kept in the church. So Paul himself, and all in the church, are to follow Christ. None may go before him nor depart from him. Christ alone is King in Zion. He is the Maker and Builder of the church. He said, "Upon this rock I will build my church." "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." He adds no others to it, and the saved he adds to the church only, not

to any other body of men. No others than the saved of the Lord are truly in the church, but all others are as wood, hay and stubble. Men may in a fleshly zeal gather in mere nominal members and immerse them, but this does not make them members of the church of Christ, neither is this the baptism of Christ.

"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." The Savior and crowned Head of the church thus gives the authority and command to his own servants, but to no others. And as the gospel is "of the kingdom," so also are the ordinances and members and servants all "of the kingdom." Christ said, "My kingdom is not of this world." So he hath redeemed the subjects of his kingdom out of the world, and he calls them into his kingdom. The world, therefore, hath neither part nor lot in his kingdom, nor do its ordinances belong to the world. All this is clearly set forth in the New Testament.

Our brother Bird understands all this truth, which makes it fully evident that the immersion of a believer in Christ outside of the fellowship of the one church of Christ, is not the baptism of Christ; for he gave his ordinances to his church, and all his authority is in the church, over which he is the Head.

Another truth is here very clear: the saved in the Lord were first baptized and added to the church, before they ate the Lord's supper, and before any of the members, thus added, were ordained to minister in the gospel kingdom. If a true believer even should be immersed outside of the fellowship of the true church, and should afterward be received nominally into the church, without receiving gospel baptism, and should then be ordained as a minister of the gospel, he would still be unbaptized, therefore both his ordination and his work in the ministry, though sanctioned by such an erring church, would be without the authority of Christ, and a clear violation of it. He did not enter the church by the door, or rather the Lord had not added him to the church at all, and he is not truly a member in it, but both he and the church transgressed against Christ by thus taking him in, and then ordaining him. Both should repent of this sin, therefore, for the church cannot make valid and good that which Christ has not authorized and commanded. If it claims that it can, then the spurious decrees and acts of the church of Rome might also be claimed as valid, because that church gave her sanction to such gross perversions of the gospel of Christ. Here let us with reverence say, "Let God be true, but every man a liar." For this is consecrated ground, and these are sacred things, and we do a great wrong if we at all abuse, pervert and misuse them,

It is well known to all concerned that the New School Baptists are widely apart from the Old School Baptists, and long have been, and that there is a wide gulf between the two, and no fellowship or communion between them whatever, for the New School body has greatly perverted the gospel of Christ, not only in its doctrine and ordinances, but as well in its membership and ministry, insomuch that in all these respects it has become

largely a *worldly* religious body. Now then, for a man who was immersed in the Missionary Baptist body to be allowed to creep into an Old School Baptist church unbaptized, and then to be imposed upon the church of Christ, and believers in Christ, as a divinely qualified servant of Christ, to thus officiate in administering the solemn and holy ordinances of the Lord's house to penitent believers in Christ, when he has never himself obeyed Christ in his sacred ordinances, is a grievous perversion and sin. Can we wonder that confusion, trouble and division follows such a deplorable departure from the teachings of Christ as this? Departures from the doctrine of Christ, in whatever way they may be, are dishonoring to him, and dangerous to the spiritual health and growth and peace of the church of Christ, therefore in all cases they should be turned away from. "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God." This is infallibly true. "He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." This is the inspired test and the only true measure. "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, [the church] neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." Therefore, should the church do this, it thereby becomes a partaker with him of his evil deeds, and so far from the church thus making his evil deeds valid and good, she makes herself a transgressor with him. The doctrine or the teachings of Christ are positive and faithful and true, and admits of no sort of departure or compromise. All should remember this, and touch not, taste not, handle not any unclean thing. Here Christ is all in all. The Lord has said, "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice." Jesus said, "If a man love me, he will keep my words. * * * He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings." "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me." Every other yoke must be given up, and Christ alone must be heard and followed by all who love him. The church has no more authority to depart from him in anything pertaining to his kingdom, and substitute something else, than any single member of his. To all who are Christ's the Father says, "Hear ye him."

To our faithful editors this is submitted first, then, if approved, to our dear brother Bird and all who are interested in "the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ." In love these things are commended to you all, dear brethren, with the earnest desire that you may have them in remembrance after my departure from the flesh, to be with Christ, which is far better, and for which I wait in hope. May you all keep in memory and heed the words of the beloved apostle of the precious Christ: "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." To thus walk is to walk in Christ, and to glorify him. He says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

I am your brother, I hope, and your companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind.

ATLANTA, Ga., April 18, 1901.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your kindly written and most highly appreciated letter came to hand to-day, and I was indeed glad to hear from you again, and that with so many letters to write, and so much to attend to, you could still think of one so

unworthy as I feel myself to be. Yes, my dear brother, I can give to God all the praise, and I hope sometimes that I feel to say, "Thy will be done," and I hope that I am humbled by the sweet and loving spirit which God bestows, and this at times gives me great comfort. I must say to-day has been very sweet and precious to me, although at my work, my mind has been so full of the good things which the Lord has prepared for his children, that I believe that I can claim relationship with him, for the present at least. I trust that his Spirit bears witness with mine, that I am an heir of promise, and I believe that I can say to-night, I know I have a hope.

I have been reading the SIGNS to-day, and I notice an editorial which you have written in response to a request from brother Varnes, as to your views upon these words, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." You do not know how much comfort I have received from it. I have read it and reread it, and have found good comfort and counsel through it. All the way through you have expressed my feelings exactly. I am glad that our correspondence began, because receiving letters from you naturally gives me a still greater desire to read what you write in the SIGNS. As I told you in the outset, I read the SIGNS and gather a great deal of comfort from its dear pages. I desire to read that which will give me more light upon the subject which occupies my mind most of the time. It seems to me that I do love the cause of Christ better than all else in the world. I fear sometimes that I may be compelled to take up my cross and contend for the truth of my blessed Lord. I am so weak and so poor that I cannot think of this being the case, but at times, when the brethren call upon me to open the meeting, or to exercise in any way, I find where I am weak, Christ is strong, and where I am ignorant, he is wisdom. I sometimes remember the language of Paul, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." What a grand expression this is to those who love the appearing of the Lord. I am at times, I think, glad that I can rejoice in one who knows all about me, whether I know him or not. There is sweet consolation, and comfort, and pleasure here for the dear children of God, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. I desire to be always ready to give to every man an answer, who asks a reason of the hope that is in me, as the apostle directs. I desire to sow to the Spirit, seeking after the way of righteousness. I desire to live that life which is acceptable in the sight of the Lord. I desire to sow to the Spirit, that I may reap of the Spirit life everlasting, giving to God all the glory, because he hath brought me from darkness to light, and to be zealous of good works, as the apostle Peter expresses it. I do not believe that Peter meant that to be clothed with the garment of good works, would give us whereof to boast. He had, as it seems to me, special reference to the good works wrought in us by the revelation of Christ, of which also Paul spoke when he said, "For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Peter is speaking of the obedience which we render here in time, running the race with patience, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. As you wrote, they are to be done as unto Christ, and not to ourselves, nor to men. Therefore we conclude that we are justified by faith, and not by the deeds of the law. We ought to lead godly lives, and be

very careful in our demeanor, and have a good report of them that are without, as well as of our brethren.

Brother Curry had an article in this week's paper, on science and predestination, which was very fine.

If you feel so disposed, you may publish this. I hope there may be a crumb in it for some one, but you will be the best judge of that.

I remain your brother in hope of eternal life,

W. BARTLETT.

BETHAYERES, Pa., April 19, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed find check for two dollars to pay my subscription to the SIGNS, a paper which has become very dear to me. When reading some of the letters I find that there are others among the brethren and sisters who feel like myself, to be poor sinners, unable to do anything for themselves to make them better, as Paul says, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." Of myself I can do nothing. This last week my mind has been led much to think of my dependence upon the strong arm of the Lord; it has seemed to me as I see my children depending entirely upon me, not able to do for themselves, that just so am I dependent upon the Lord for salvation. If not deceived in myself, as I sometimes think that I am, I have been made to see my sins as scarlet. I see them as in a mirror, and they appear more black and vile than the sins of any one else, and can it be that Jesus died for me, and washed me whiter than snow?

Now a thought comes to me about the will of man. If we had our will, we should desire to appear more holy than our neighbors. But I do thank God with all my heart, that he is no respecter of persons, and that his promises are always fulfilled. This we cannot say of man; "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy," and he shows mercy to whomsoever he will. Now where is the will of man? My brethren, we have not our will in natural things even, else things would be different.

In regard to the doctrine of predestination, there is not a man or woman living to-day who does not believe in and practice predestination. Men are always preparing something for the future. What would we think of a conductor on a train, if when we asked him to what place his train ran, he should say that he did not know? He would be reported to the company and discharged, because he had not predestinated, or at least did not believe in the predestination of the managers of the road. We are all planning for the future, but there is a power over us who can hinder us, but who can hinder our God? Yet I hear men say that they can prevent the Lord from coming into their hearts, and can reject him. Did not he make this earthen vessel subject to his own will? Do we not come into this world at his will, and go out again when he calls? Who can stay the hand of death? Who dare say that he has power to reject the purpose of God? when he holds all things in his hand, and at any moment can take this body as he gave it. How many people are teaching what they call the "Lord's prayer," yet it is not his prayer to God, but the prayer which he taught to his disciples, and which he teaches to them to-day. Now when he taught his disciples to pray to God to deliver them from evil, it plainly shows that they have not this power of themselves. If they had, he would have told them to do so, instead of praying to

the Father to keep them from the evil. As for me, I am more afraid of myself than of any one else. It is my prayer, that God would keep me from all evil, for if left to myself I shall fall. A house can stand only when it is upon the foundation, and every child of God has by the power of God been put upon the foundation, which is our Lord Jesus Christ.

It seems to me that the only way by which we can know anything is by experience, and we must know a thing before we can be a witness to that thing. It is not what we have heard some one else say, but what we know. I love to be with those who give to God all the power, and glory, and praise, and who abase man. Wherever the desire is, there will be the mind also. What we desire, we think about; the desire comes first. When hungry, we want bread. Can we make ourselves hungry? or can a man make us hungry by telling us that we are hungry when we are not? Men may talk about their will and power, but our God has hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes. How precious to know that it is the poor, and needy, and helpless, who receive the blessing of God. If ever I have received a good hope it was by the grace of God, and not of my works, they are all as filthy rags.

I feel as I write so much as though I would like to have a good talk with some child of God, yet now I feel like throwing this in the waste-basket.

I hope that God may still be with you. I remain your unworthy brother,

CHARLES S. BOND.

1 SAMUEL III. 1.

"AND the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision."

Samuel, the child, was ministering to the Lord before Eli. Hophni and Phinehas, Eli's two sons, had, while filling the priest's office, wickedly perverted the offerings brought by the people to be given to the Lord in the sanctuary. They had waxed fat on the meat of the sacrifices, were not obeying the laws for the sacrificial offerings that had been given their fathers from God through the medium of Moses in olden time. They listened not to the advice of Eli, their father, when he would have had them refrain from evil, but persisted in their wickedness to their own destruction purposed of God, as we afterward find recorded. We can well imagine under such circumstances what a famine of "hearing the word of the Lord" must have existed among his chosen people, Israel, at this time. No prophet was there then to tell them what God would do, or to remind them of what he had done for them. Samuel had not yet been brought forth to the people as a man sent from God to prophesy. Most certainly then must the word of the Lord have been precious in those days. We to-day have certain gems which we style "precious," because scarce, of rare beauty, and hence of great value. For the same reason was the word of the Lord precious in those days. Dearth of prophecy, the medium through which God made known himself to his people under the legal dispensation, had made the word of the Lord precious because rare, and "there was no open vision." "Open vision" signifies to me a peace and quietness of spirit which comes *in* walking in the commandments of the Lord, and *in* the meditation of his law day and night, when in the face of Jesus Christ we see revealed

the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. Israel was not at this time abiding in the law and delighting in keeping its conditions, but just as wayward and stiff-necked as ever, was going sadly astray into by and forbidden paths. Consequently the hand of the Lord had gone out against them, and "the word of the Lord was precious [scarce] in those days." The Philistines had them in their grip, men not knowing or caring for the Lord were their masters. O, how their hearts must have sighed within them to be rid of their bondage. Surrounded by the powers of darkness, their soul fainting within them, they are on the verge of annihilation, when lo, "Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground." No, indeed, they were far too precious for that. Being the words of inspired prophecy breathed into the heart of Samuel by God himself, they readily found their places in the hearts of his chosen everywhere, and from Dan even to Beersheba, Samuel was established as a prophet of the Lord. How sweet and precious (of rare beauty and value) must have been the words of his prophecy, coming as they did after such a "famine of hearing the words of the Lord."

Now all that was written aforetime, Paul says was "written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." That being the case, then the little sentence quoted at the beginning must have its counterpart in the experience of every child of God on earth to-day, else there is no comfort in it, and Paul spoke not the truth. Dear child of God, do you not know what it is to walk in darkness and have no light, to feel the hidden evils of your nature creep forth as wild beasts from the forest at nighttime? Have you not felt the hand of the Philistines upon you, and been well nigh crushed under the bondage of evil men?

"How sore a plague is sin,
To those by whom 'tis felt,
The christian cries, 'Unclean, unclean!'
E'en though released from guilt."

Our sins rising before us blot out God's face from our sight as a thick cloud obscures the light of the sun. A famine is abroad in the land, "Not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord." How we long for just one word from the lips of the divine Master to dispel our gloom and lift us from the mighty depth of woe! As men seek for precious gems of earth to hide their wretchedness and poverty, and to make themselves rich, so do we seek for the fountain of wisdom that we may hide our leanness and cover our poverty with the precious gems of truth issuing therefrom. In his own good time and way God does speak to us, not through a Samuel or one of the other prophets of old, but through his Son Jesus Christ, for "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son," and he sends to us the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, which brings to our remembrance all things whatsoever he has told us. God has opened the way of salvation for his people through the merits of Jesus. We had experienced this salvation long ago, but while in the midst of so much affliction and darkness of mind we had almost forgotten it, and our feet had well nigh slipped when the "precious word" spoken in the heart reminded us of his promise, and we are happy again, aye, the "open vision" is restored.

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.
22 N. FOURTH ST., CAMDEN, N. J., August 6, 1900.

EDITORIAL.

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LUKE X. 30–35.

MRS. T. E. Cole, of Astor, W. Va., asks for something to be said through the SIGNS concerning the parable recorded in Luke x. 30–35.

This Scripture contains what is generally known as the parable of the good Samaritan. This has been a common subject in all ages of the church; believers have delighted in all ages in tracing out the precious truths contained in this parable, and in comforting themselves with them, we can hope therefore to say nothing that has not been already said, and said better than we can say it, but we will suggest some few thoughts, and leave them with the sister who requests them, and with our readers.

Like all the parables of the Lord, this grew out of circumstances which preceded it, and which it was used to set forth. It has been more and more our conviction that all the parables were intended by the Lord to illustrate each some one special truth. Other things beside the one truth, whatever it might be in each case, might be presented, but all in subjection to the one special truth. In this case the parable was spoken in response to the question of the lawyer who had said, "And who is my neighbor?" And the Savior meant it as an exposition of the commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." It is said verse 25, "A certain lawyer stood up and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" In Matthew xxii. there is a narrative of a similar event, but which yet we think was not the same as is here recorded. And in Matthew xix. a similar question is recorded as having been asked by the young man who came to Jesus, and whom Jesus loved, and who went away sorrowful, because he had great possessions. While these narratives are of different events, yet there is a similar vein of truth running through them all. We have called attention to them because of this similar truth in them. In the words under our consideration the word "tempted," signifies "to try or prove." It was not a temptation to do that which was evil, but the lawyer would propose what he supposed would be a hard question for the Redeemer to answer. Many questions were asked of the Savior during his earthly life among men; men often sought to catch him, but his replies were with such heavenly wisdom as always to put his opposers to silence.

Here the question illustrates the conviction of all men that eternal life must be a reward given for services performed. This man had made a study of the law, and now comes to ask what is the special thing needful to do in order to secure final salvation. He would say, Thou claimest to be a teacher come from God, now tell us what is the one thing needful to be done in order that we may gain the blessing of eternal life. Jesus in substance responds, Thou art a lawyer, and familiar with the commandments; What is written there? how readest thou? This man had a far better understanding

of what the law required than do many. He did not speak of rituals or of special deeds to be performed, but came at once to the substance of every commandment, to that which Jesus once said includes them all, and said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." And Jesus said that this was right. The whole law was summed up in these two commandments. One of these two commandments is written in Lev. xix. 18, and the other in Deut. vi. 5, and in other places in the first five books of the Bible. Thus from the beginning it was plainly stated in the law that its obedience must be more than outward form. To do all the things required by the law in word or deed outwardly would avail nothing, unless it proceeded out of real love to God and to men in the heart. So Paul afterwards taught that to give one's goods to feed the poor was nothing, without love or charity.

Now Jesus coming right home to this man said, "This do, and thou shalt live." When God would kill a man to the law he sends him to the law. "I, by the law, am dead to the law," says Paul. Nothing can cut any man off from the law but the law itself. That is, when a man through a false view of the law thinks to be saved by its deeds, the Lord in mercy shows him just what the law does demand, and that all that he has thought, felt, said or done, can never measure up to its requirements, and so cuts him off from all hope that he can be saved by it. Jesus sent the young man as recorded in Matt. xix. to the law, and when he said he had kept all the special commandments from his youth up, Jesus came right down to the whole gist and substance of the law of love, or of neighborliness to his needy fellow man, and said, "Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor." But he did not love his neighbor as himself, and so he went away sorrowful. Men think that they have kept the law, when yet their whole life has been one of selfishness. Men think that they have been serving God, when all the time they have been serving themselves. They have not killed, nor stolen another's goods, they have not borne false witness, they have not committed adultery, and therefore suppose they have filled up the measure required, but still there has been no love to God, and they have not loved the neighbor as themselves. Who has fulfilled this law of supreme and exclusive love to God, and of equal love to the neighbor? Not one. Now it is the work of the law, when applied to the conscience, to show to that man how deeply he has failed in his service. We believe that very many who may read this can testify to this killing process, when their souls were sent to the law at the first. Jesus sent this man to the law for salvation, that he might be shown that there was no salvation in it to him, because it was weak through his flesh, and Jesus by the Spirit, still sends men to the law, that they by striving to fulfill it may learn that they cannot keep it, and so become dead to it. The law which says to the soul, Thou must be perfect in order to obtain life, at once cuts that soul off from life. Thus men who preach a salvation by human goodness, are miserable comforters to him that has no goodness. Such must say to that teacher, as did Job, How hast thou helped him that is without strength? Jesus then was saying to this man just what he says now in every heartfelt experience. We do not know the result in the case of this lawyer, it is not needful that we should know, it

is sufficient that in these instances of which we have spoken, we have the manner of the teaching of the Savior presented. First, the law, and then a revelation by it of the impossibility of keeping it, so that the soul may learn that no man can be justified and saved by it. All this is preparatory to the revelation of Jesus Christ as the end of the law for salvation, and justification, and righteousness, to all who believe.

This lawyer, willing to justify himself, that is, to clear himself from guilt and any charge of failure, said, "Who is my neighbor?" He asked no question concerning the first commandment, there could be none so far as that was concerned, but there might be room to question concerning the neighbor. Literally there was no doubt concerning the word, it means, "One near to, or close by." The meaning, even then, was not just the man who lives in an adjoining lot or house, but rather it meant him who was and ought to be near in the heart and love of a man. No doubt the lawyer knew this as well as any one. But the Jew was exclusive, he would have nothing to do with others, nothing, that is, which would involve the thought of equality upon their part; if he fed others, it was as one would feed a dog under his table. The Savior came to break down all such walls of partition, his teaching all through his ministry pointed to this, and even the carnal Jews caught glimpses of the meaning of that which he did and said in that direction. The question of this lawyer was then a pertinent one, "And who is my neighbor?"

To this question the Savior responded in the parable of the man who fell among thieves, and this parable is the answer to the question of the lawyer, "And who is my neighbor?" We are in full sympathy with that exposition of the parable which sees Jesus as the true neighbor of all that are truly needy, and poor, and wounded, and weak, and half dead. It has been a source of rejoicing to us when we have been enabled to have some view of the blessed Jesus as the true Samaritan to his people. Yet we feel to also insist that the Savior intended the parable to apply to the question of this lawyer, and to show him just what love to the neighbor meant, and who the neighbor was. The parable presents a man in sore distress and need; he has fallen among thieves, and has been beaten and robbed, and left half dead to perish. Now who is truly a neighbor to such a man in such a case? It is not the priest, nor the Levite who came down that way, and saw him and passed him by. This gathers force when we recall that it was the business of the priest and also of the Levite to minister in the sanctuary before God, and to the needs of the people. This was the profession of these men, and no doubt they thought that they were fulfilling their mission, yet their conduct as presented in the parable, showed that they neither loved God nor their neighbor, for it is a truth again and again stated in the word, that he who loves not his brother, loves not God either, and he who does not minister to the needs of his brother, does not really love him. It is to be supposed also that this man, now so distressed, was a Jew; he had at all events gone from Jerusalem toward Jerico, yet his fellow Jews regarded not his need, neither were they moved with compassion toward him; they were neighbors in the sense of common nationality, but they were not his neighbors in the true sense of the word, there was no nearness of heart in them toward him.

How much is added to the force of this

parable by presenting a Samaritan as he who ministered to this poor man in his need. The Jews and the Samaritans had no dealings together, each hated the other with the fiercest of all hatreds, religious hatred. From this point of view neither Jew nor Samaritan would acknowledge any relationship whatever, neither were, nor desired to be, neighbor to the other, yet here is a man of a hated race, and (what was equally true) of a race who hated the Jew also, who comes by that way and sees his fellow man in his distress, at once he finds neighborly feeling in his heart, there is in him a nearness of heart to this sufferer, and this leads to active work in his behalf; it produces a large charity toward him, it leads to instant measures of relief; there is a principle in the Samaritan that can and does overcome all that race hatred which existed toward a Jew, and leads him to regard him and do for him as for a brother in distress. Being near to this sufferer in heart, he came near to him in person, and bound up his wounds, and poured in oil and wine to mollify the pain, and stimulate his waning powers of life. More than this, he sacrifices his own ease, and sets him upon his own beast, and brings him to an inn, and there took care of him; on the morrow when he departed he gave two pence to the host, and promised more, if it were needed, when he should come that way again. Here was indeed free, full and unstinted neighborliness. Two pence would have paid ordinary wages for two days labor, and was sufficient for several days of care and attention. Jesus now appeals to this lawyer, Who was neighbor to him that fell among thieves? And the answer could be but one, "He that shewed him mercy." Now, said the Savior, "Go, and do thou likewise." In other words, he said to him, Thy neighbor is he who needs thy help, be thou a neighbor to all such. Great religious profession will not avail thee, the performance of rituals, though they be commanded in the law, will not avail thee; it is written, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice." The priest and the Levite in the parable could have known nothing of salvation and eternal life. The work of the Samaritan proved that the very principles of life eternal dwelt within him; seeing his brother have need he did not shut up his bowels of compassion from him, thus showing that the love of God dwelt in him. Love to God and to one's neighbor cannot be disjoined in any heart. If a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? Thus salvation is put before this lawyer in a manner of which he had never conceived before. We do not know whether he now understood the matter, but through him and his questioning these solemn statements of the truth have come down to us in the word. When the truth of this parable is applied to the heart by the Spirit, it becomes very solemn and heart-searching; it has been so to us. How important at times does the question seem to the spiritual mind, Have I the spirit of a neighbor to others? Am I near in heart and feeling and true sympathy to the distressed and sorrowful? Am I ready to minister to the needy even as the Son of man came, not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many?

It is most blessedly true that Jesus is the one true neighbor who ministers to all the needy and distressed. He is the holy One, the true Priest, the true Levite, and yet regarded by the world as was the Samaritan by the Jew, but he does not pass us by, as did those who professed

holiness and love, in the parable. He it is who does for every wounded soul all that it needs, and that without hope or desire of reward. He gives all, we can give him nothing. All the details of the parable but set forth the perfect completeness of his work of mercy to poor sinners. It shows that he leaves nothing wanting; he binds up the wounds, and he pours in the oil and wine of consolation and strength, and he carries the sufferer to a place of rest and shelter, and cares for him there with his own hand, and then provides for all his needs in all the future. All this Jesus does, and all this he is to his needy ones.

This is the thought with which we would conclude: It is only as this Jesus, by faith and love, dwells in our hearts, that we come to possess a neighborly heart to the distressed and needy also, and it is sure that a child of God feeling the presence of the Master, and realizing what has been done for him, has within him that which will lead as nothing else can to kindness to others, as they have need. Out of this experience of the mercy of God arises a spirit to be merciful; out of this experience of the love of a Savior arises love to God and to others. If such an experience of what Jesus is and does to our needy souls, does not produce pity, love, mercy, kindness, forbearance, long-suffering, and all true neighborliness to others, what can produce it? If these things then have any place in the heart, let God be praised, who gave his Son not only to do all for us that we need, but also to live in us, and reign in us, and bear fruit through us in our mortal flesh.

This Spirit of the Master, who has been such a neighbor to us in our need, dwelling within us, will lead not only to a disposition to minister to the temporal needs of those who are in distress around us, but also it will tend to make us pitiful and not censorious toward those who depart from Jerusalem, and fall among thieves, and who are left half dead in the sense of doing wrong. The spirit of this is expressed by the apostle when he said, "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." And also in the words, "Ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness." He that stands fast in his own fancied goodness may say to such an one, You have sinned, and deserve to suffer, and I cannot come near to you lest I partake of your uncleanness, but the Spirit of the Master in one does not think nor say such things, but comes near to him, if it may be that he may be helped and delivered out of the snare of the devil. May God give us all more of this Spirit. C.

PLEASE BE SURE

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likley to occur.

ALL GONE.

The large type hymn books of the genuine Turkey Morocco binding and the imitation binding are all gone. All the styles of binding we have left of the large books, are the cloth and blue marble dedge binding.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

As it is customary at the commencement of a new volume to greet our readers with a new year's salutation, we feel disposed to offer a few remarks in humble acknowledgement of the abounding goodness, preserving providence, loving-kindness and tender mercy of our Covenant God, whose kind and gracious hand deals all the favors, both temporal and spiritual, by which we are sustained. At the commencement of this our twenty-seventh volume of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, we feel constrained to exclaim, "What hath God wrought?" In the contemplation of the provisions of grace and mercy provided and treasured up in our Lord Jesus Christ, for the salvation of the church of God, before the world begun: the unspeakable gift of God's dear Son to the church, in all his fullness, the revelation of that eternal purpose which our God purposed in himself before he made the world, the coming of the Redeemer in the flesh, his humble birth, his holy life, his bitter death, his triumphant resurrection and ascension to glory, the sending of the Spirit down as a witness of the perfect approval of the Father, of all the mediatorial work of the Son, and the ample display of almighty power and grace in the calling, quickening and bringing to a knowledge of the truth, and to the privileges and liberty of the sons of God, those whose sins Jesus has borne in his own body on the tree, and the certain pledges of God's immutable and eternal love to all the redeemed in Christ Jesus, that they shall never perish, but have eternal life, together with all that is embraced in the purpose and work of salvation by grace, we see the wonderful work of God; what God hath wrought, and are made with ecstacy to exclaim, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty." Also in their own individual experience, every child of God is led to appreciate to some extent what God has wrought in and for them. Truly, the goodness of our God has been manifested in relation to the publication of this journal, through the medium of which the tried, tempted, poor, afflicted, despised and persecuted saints, have been led to speak often one to another, words of edification, comfort, instruction, admonition, exhortation and condolence, and to acknowledge their experience of the things of the Spirit of God. That this publication has been appreciated by many thousands of God's dear children, who have testified the comfort and edification which they have realized in the perusal of its pages, there can be no reasonable doubt, and when we remember under what trying circumstances it was commenced, and with what trembling and weakness and fear we ventured to assume the responsibility of conducting it, we can but acknowledge the hand of God in sustaining us and it for twenty-six years. That our labor has been very imperfectly performed, we freely confess, but that God has blessed the communications of the saints, which from time to time have been published in our columns, cannot be disputed. Therefore, having obtained help from God, we have continued until this time, and we feel encouraged to continue our labors as long as he is pleased to give us ability, and to labor on in the cause which is to us above all other causes, as the heavens are higher than the earth.

We are confident, too, that we shall have the concurrence and aid of our brethren in the future, as we have in the vol-

umes which are past. If some have turned their back upon us, and become bitter in denouncing us, it is no more than we had cause to expect, from the declarations of the word, That some shall depart from the faith, that men would rise up speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them, and that too of our own number. That some in departing from the truth should become *heady, high-minded,* and *lovers of their ownselves, truce-breakers,* &c., should not discourage the children of God, but they are informed in the word of truth that *they went out from us because they were not of us, that it might be made manifest that they were not all of us.* We do not charge that all who have failed to appreciate the utility of this publication are of the character described by the apostles in the Scriptures referred to, but that those who have taken on themselves to oppose the truth, misrepresent and traduce those who are contending earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, have exhibited the very characteristics named by the apostles, by which apostates from the faith shall be known and avoided by the orderly disciples of our Lord, is but too painfully manifest to be successfully controverted. It is, however, matter of gratitude and thanksgiving to God, that the number of those who have left our ranks are comparatively very small, and "growing beautifully less," while those who continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, are valiant for the truth, and count not their own lives dear unto themselves, desiring only that they may be enabled by grace divine to finish their course with joy, and the ministry which they have received, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

We commence our twenty-seventh volume with a much larger subscription, and wider circulation than we have heretofore had, and our list is still increasing, so that the efforts of our opposers have exemplified the declaration that nothing can be done against the truth, but for it; as under the mighty overruling hand and providence of God, "The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain."

Having during the past year completed the compilation and publication of our hymn book, which required much time and labor, we are now ready to dovote more undividedly our time and attention to the publication of this volume, and we shall endeavor to make it as useful as possible to those who are of the household of faith.

Our wide circulation brings us in correspondence with a large circle of brethren throughout the United States and Territories, the Canadas, &c. And as we have not room to insert all the communications, we will during the publication of this volume endeavor to make extracts from many which our limits will not allow us to publish entire. Those who send us obituary notices must restrict them to as concise a limit as possible to secure their insertion, as we cannot afford a large space for eulogizing the dead, as such eulogies are only specially interesting in the immediate localities where the subjects of them are known.

Those who have formerly contributed to our columns are requested to continue to write, and we hope the same spirit of christian love, and fraternal regard for each other's views, which have characterized their communications the past year, may still mark all their epistles of love, observing carefully the admonition to follow the things which make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another, cautiously avoiding all unprofitable

discussions of endless genealogies and questions about the law, as are only calculated to gender strife. Strive not for the mastery, but strive rather to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Discussions of important subjects will be admitted if conducted in a kind and brotherly manner, but we shall reserve the right to discontinue the publication of such discussions in our columns whenever in our judgment they cease to be edifying to the saints generally.

The same leading sentiments which we published, and to which we pledged our paper twenth-six years ago, are still nailed to our mast-head. We have found no occasion to either change or alter them. They are as follows:

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES—Devoted to the Old School Baptist cause—maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfections of the Great Jehovah, the revelation which he has made of himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, that these Three are One. (1 John v. 8.)

2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.

3. Eternal and Unconditional Election.

4. The Total Depravity and Just Condemnation of Fallen Man.

5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

6. The Sovereign, Irresistible, and, in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Ghost in Quickening and Regenerating the sons of God.

7. The final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God by Grace.

8. The Resurrection of the dead, and Eternal Judgment.

9. The church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers, that to her is given able Ministers of the New Testament, that the Scriptures are the only infallible Rule of Faith and Practice to the Saints of God.

10. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath School Unions, &c., &c., waging war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of Institutions.

With this plain statement of our sentiments, we issued our first proposals for this paper in the fall of 1831; and if at any time or under any circumstances, we have swerved from these leading sentiments, we are not conscious of it. Certainly it has never been our intention to do so. We then believed that the first and sixth articles fully involved the doctrine of the Eternal Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ, and implied his Mediatorial identity as the Head over all things to his Church, and the Eternal, vital union of Christ and his seed, which are a "Chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, and a Peculiar people. A seed that shall serve him, and be counted to him for a Generation, and a people which he has carried and borne all the days of old."

Such are still our views; and to their defence we pledge such ability as the Lord may graciously bestow on us.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., January 1, 1859.

ORDINATION.

AT the regular meeting of New Hope Church of Old School or Predestinarian Baptists, at the place of meeting in the village of Greenbush, Warren Co., Ill., on Saturday before the third Sunday in July, 1901, in response to a call for a counsel to convene for the purpose of ordaining a deacon to fill the place made vacant by the death of Deacon Isaac Holman, the following responded, viz:

From Salem church, Marshall Co., Ill., Elder John Downey; Mt. Zion, Fulton Co., deacons Wm. Stephens and Jacob S. Fisher; Friendship, Knox Co., Deacon

Ransom Brooks. These, together with Deacon A. W. Simmons, of New Hope, and the pastor, Elder S. Ketchum, were organized into a presbytery by the election of Elder John Downey as Moderator, and S. Ketchum as Clerk. The church then by a unanimous vote placed in their hands Joshua C. Ray, and his wife Eliza Ray, when the following programme was carried out:

Prayer by Elder J. Downey, imposition of hands by presbytery, charge by S. Ketchum, right hand of fellowship by council and church.

JOHN DOWNEY, Moderator.
S. KETCHUM, Clerk.

POETRY.

LAWRENCEBURG, Ky., March 10, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—The inclosed lines, or the thought contained in them, came to me in a dream, and I was singing in my sleep. I was away from home at the time, and had my satchel with writing material in it by my bed. The thoughts comforted me so I tried to write a few lines of them in the dark, and from them I wrote what you see. I cannot recall the beautiful lines nor the music of the dream, nor can I feel the glow of comfort and consolation I then felt, but the thought that faith is the substance, and the sorrows of life but a passing dream, is what I felt in them. If you think they are worth it, you may put them and this explanation in the SIGNS.

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.

A DREAM.

MY heart was so full of life's sorrows,
My soul was so burdened with pain,
That Jesus appeared in his beauty,
And then I was happy again.

Was it only a dream of beauty?
Was it only a beautiful dream?
That Jesus appeared and spoke peace to my soul,
Was this love's beautiful dream?

I slept, and from somewhere there came
A song full of glory so grand,
That my eyes seemed to open in wonder,
As if touched by his merciful hand.

Was it only a dream of beauty,
Was it only a beautiful dream?
That Jesus appeared and spoke peace to my soul,
Was this love's beautiful dream?

No my soul must rest well in the promise,
The sorrow and pain was a dream;
Christ calls unto him all the weary,
And leads them in pastures so green.

'Twas a dream or a vision of glory,
And it brought to me rest that was sweet,
And assured me that God working all things,
Brings his loved ones at last to his feet.

WAYFARERS.

(By Mrs. M. E. Langster.)

THE way is long, my darling,
The path is rough and steep,
And fast across the evening sky
I see the shadows sweep.
But O, my love, my own one,
No ill to us can come,
No terror turn us from the path,
For we are going home.

Our feet are tired, my darling,
So tired the tender feet;
But think, when we are there at last,
How sweet the rest, how sweet!
For lo, the lamps are lighted,
And yonder shining dome,
Before us gleaming like a star,
Shall guide our footsteps home.

We've lost the flowers we gathered
So early in the morn;
And on we go, with empty hands,
And garments soiled and torn.
But ah, the dear all-Father,
Will out to meet us come,
And fairer flowers and whiter robes
There wait for us at home.

Art cold, my love? art famished?
Art faint and sore athirst?
Be patient yet a little while,
Be joyous as at first;
For O, the sun sets never
Within that land of bloom,
And thou shalt eat the bread of life,
And drink life's wine at home.

The wind blows cold, my darling,
Adown the mountain steep,
And fast across the evening sky
The long grey shadows sweep.
But O, my love, press onward,
Whatever grief may come,
For in the way the Father set,
We two are going home.

SAINTS IN THE HANDS OF CHRIST.

Firm as the earth thy gospel stands,
My Lord, my hope, my trust;
If I am found in Jesus' hands
My soul can ne'er be lost.

His honor is engaged to save
The meanest of his sheep,
All that his heavenly Father gave,
His hands securely keep.

Nor death nor hell shall e'er remove
His favorites from his breast,
In the dear bosom of his love
They must for ever rest.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

John W. Armstrong was born June 20th, 1862, and departed this life March 31st, 1901, aged 38 years, 9 months and 11 days. He was married to Laura E. Alderson, March 29th, 1886. He is survived by his wife and three children, also his aged mother, two brothers and five sisters. Brother Armstrong united with the Union church, Yatesville, Ill., in April, 1896, and was baptized by the pastor, John L. Scott, who also officiated at his funeral. Brother Armstrong was a faithful and devoted member, and he is sadly missed in his church, as well as his home and neighborhood.

JOHN L. SCOTT.

PLEASANT PLAINS, Ill., July 17, 1901.

DIED—At his home in Westtown, Orange Co., N. Y., April 30th, 1901, **John B. Halsey,** aged 72 years and 6 months. He had spent his entire life in said town, and was highly respected by all who knew him. He married Harriet Sayer, daughter of Wm. Sayer, more than forty years before his death. Their married life was a happy one, each living for the other until the last. Mr. Halsey was a member of the Presbyterian church fifty years. He was kind to the Old School Baptists, and left evidence that for him to die was gain. His illness lasted nearly four years, it being softening of the brain, during which time sister Halsey rendered all the attention that loving hands could, but the end came and he fell asleep. Sister Halsey with one son and two daughters survive him: William H., Sarah, wife of Albert Cook, of Princeton, N. J., and Elizabeth, wife of D. B. Allen, of Matamoras, Pa.

His funeral was conducted by Mr. Taylor, pastor of the Westtown Presbyterian church. The writer was present and made a few remarks. May God's blessing rest upon our sister and the children in this sad hour.

ALSO,

Martha Harding, at the home of her sister, Mrs. Jeptha Crance, in Scotchtown, Orange Co., N. Y., June 30th, 1901, aged 82 years. Sister Harding was the widow of the late Elder Daniel L. Harding, who was for some years pastor of the Southampton Church, Bucks Co., Pa. She had for many years been a faithful member of the Middletown & Wallkill Church. The last five years of her life she did not enjoy good health, and was constantly wishing to go home, that she might rest from all her sorrows. We feel sure her prayer was heard, and that she is now at rest with her God.

The writer attended her funeral, in the Middletown & Wallkill Church, July 2d, at 2 o'clock p. m., and tried to speak to the comfort of the church and friends, using as a text 1 Cor. xv. 19. May the Lord bless the church, and add such as shall be saved to his glory and praise.

H. C. KER.

Issac Holman was born in Jackson Co., Ind., June 5th, 1832, and when twelve years of age came with his parents to Warren Co., Ill., and settled in Greenbush township, where he spent the remainder of his life. Dec. 30th, 1852, he was married to Miss Joanna W. Simmons, by whom he became the father of eleven children, three sons and eight daughters, one son and one daughter having died in infancy. The living children are all married and settled in life as heads of families. The sons and three of the daughters belong to the church with their father and mother. In early life he experienced a hope in Christ, but did not unite with the church for a number of years, like many others feeling it better to wait for some brighter evidence, and stronger assurance before venturing to take upon himself the responsibility of denying himself and coming after Christ. I think it was in 1886 that he and his companion were received in fellowship with the New Hope Church of Old School Baptists, and were baptized by the late Elder Vanmeter, and he was soon chosen and ordained to the office of deacon. The duties pertaining to that office were porformed by him in a most acceptable manner to the church, notwithstanding the fact that he felt his lack of qualifications. He often said if a feeling of unworthiness was a legal excuse, he could never touch the elements of the Lord's supper, much less put them to his lips. He was faithful in all of the duties and obligations of life, not only the common affairs of a business character, but his church duties were looked after with the same degree of promptness. He was never absent from his seat without the very best of an excuse. His health began to fail quite perceptibly about the middle of December, and he continued gradually but surely to waste from the effects of that insiduous destroyer of human vitality, diabetes, until Monday, May 20th, 1901, he passed quietly away surrounded by his family.

His funeral occurred on Wednesday, the 22d, from the meeting-house in Greenbush, and was very largely attended by brethren, sisters, relatives, friends and neighbors.

The services were conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder S. H. Humphrey.

MEMORIAL.

Inasmuch as it has pleased our heavenly Father to send his messenger, death, among us, and has called from his home below to his house above our well beloved brother, **Deacon Isaac Holman,** we, the New Hope Church of Old School or Predestinarian Baptists, take this means of expressing our sorrow at this, to us, sad dispensation, and of placing on record our appreciation of his christian character and deportment.

He was always at his post of duty, and though feeling his own insufficiency and unworthiness, he unhesitatingly stood in his lot, and by his hospitality and spirit of humility endeared himself to his breth-

ren, and purchased to himself a good degree and great boldness in the faith which is in Jesus Christ."

And we wish by this means to extend our condolence and heartfelt sympathy to sister Holman and to the entire family in their sad bereavement. We feel our loss deeply, but would bow in humble submission to our heavenly King who has said, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

We respectfully request that this tribute be spread on our church book, a copy given to the family, and a copy be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

Done at our regular meeting for business, on Saturday before the third Sunday in July, 1901.

SMITH KETCHUM, Moderator.

ALFRED W. SIMMONS, Church Clerk.

ALSO,

Mrs. Eleanor Vandike, relict of Charles Vandike, was born near the city of Philadelphia, Pa., Oct. 20th, 1820. Her maiden name was Slifen. She married Charles Vandike, April 21st, 1836, with whom she lived until his death, in February, 1892, and by whom she became the mother of eight children, five sons and three daughters, three sons and one daughter are still living. At the early age of fifteen years she experienced a hope in God's mercy, and soon united with the Old School Baptist church, and was baptized by Elder Joseph Kennard, of Philadelphia, and continued a loyal and faithful member of that organization to the day of her death, and so far as I can learn was the last surviving constituent member of the Spoon River Church, constituted by Elder J. B. Chenowith, in 1853. In 1841, with her husband and one child, she came to the new State of Illinois, and settled in Elmira township, Stark Co., where she lived continuously the balance of her life, and at her death was one of the oldest of the pioneers of the County. Sister Vandike was a faithful wife and a devoted mother. I think she came as near filling the description of the virtuous woman described by Solomon in Proverbs xxxi., as any one I have ever been acquainted with. Read from tenth verse to end of chapter. She had been suffering from a fatty growth around the heart, but to all appearances was in her usual health at bed time. At about 3 o'clock in the morning the family were awakened by her moving around in her room, and found her suffering from shortness of breath. This condition continued until 4:30, when she fell asleep, the sleep that knows no waking, sitting in her chair, on the morning of June 28th, at the age of 80 years, 8 months and 8 days.

The funeral services occurred at the family home, June 29th, conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder Hicks, of Toulon, and the Presbyterian minister residing in the village of Elmira.

ALSO,

Mary Ann Males was born in Cambridgeshire, England, in February, 1847, and came with her parents to the United States, and to Illinois, in 1854, and lived with them until January, 1872, when she was married to Elder Robert F. **Haynes**, and became the mother of three sons and three daughters; the sons and two daughters, together with her husband, survive her. Some ten years ago she professed a hope in Christ, and soon joined the Sandy Creek Church, at Hope, and was baptized by Elder John Downey. Some time during the latter part of last winter, she began to manifest symptoms of a shattered mind, and upon the development of dangerous tendencies, the family were obliged to send her to the insane asylum, where on July 29th she died. The cause of death assigned was congestion of the brain.

Funeral services were held at the home in Oak Hill, Peoria Co., Ill., on July 30th, conducted by the writer.

The husband, Elder Haynes, is in a very feeble condition from cancer on the neck, which appears to be developing very rapidly.

S. KETCHUM.

ELMWOOD, Ill., August 6, 1901.

MEETINGS.

THE two days meeting, held biennially, with the Harford Church, Maryland, will commence on Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1901, at 10 o'clock a. m., at which we hope to see many brethren and friends, as well as ministering brethren.

Those coming by way of Baltimore, will take train at North Avenue station, Maryland and Pennsylvania (formerly B. &. L.) R. R., at 3:30 p. m., for Long Green and Forest Hill, north, and from Delta, Pa., south, for Forest Hill, at 3:25 p. m.

NATHAN GRAFTON, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, to commence on Friday, August 30th, 1901, and continue three days. We shall gladly welcome all who feel it in their hearts to visit us.

Those coming will be met at North Berwick railway station, on Thursday before the time appointed for our yearly conference.

FRED. W. KEENE.

THE sixty-first annual session of the Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Baptists will be held, the Lord willing, with the Cane Run Church, at Turners Station, forty-four miles east of Louisville, on the L. & N. Railroad, commencing on Wednesday, Sept. 4th, 1901, and continuing three days.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth, especially ministering brethren.

ERNEST F. RANSDELL.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church, on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1901, and continue three days. Teams will be at the railroad station in Bowdoinham, on Thursday, Sept. 5th, to meet those who may come on the cars from east or west, and carry them to places of entertainment, and to the meetnig. All lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus are invited to attend.

J. H. LOWELL, Clerk.

THE Licking Old School Baptist Association will hold its annual session with Mt. Gilead Church, near Mayslick, Mason Co., Ky., beginning on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1901. We extend a cordial welcome to brethren and friends.

Those coming from the south, east or west, by way of Lexington, Ky., will be met at Helena station, on Thursday evening. Those coming by way of Cincinnati, or from the east, over the Cincinnati division of the C. & O., will be met at Maysville, Thursday afternoon at 1:30 and 3:25. We hope our friends will try to reach these points on Thursday, as they cannot well get out on Friday in time for the meeting.

FRANK LAYTHAM, Church Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the church of Olive & Hurley, in Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., the second Wednesday and Thursday in September, (11th and 12th) 1901, to begin at 10 o'clock a. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all desiring to meet with us. All will be made welcome. Trains will be met at Shokan.

A. BOGART, Clerk.

A YEARLY meeting of the Albany & Troy, N. Y., Old School Baptist Church, is appointed to be held on Thursday and Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, (19th and 20th) 1901. All desiring to hear the word of God as proclaimed by his chosen ones, are invited to meet with us. Visitors will be met at Bath, opposite Albany, N. Y., on arrival of Albany & Troy Belt Line steam cars, leaving Albany 6:30 p. m., the day before the meeting, and also Sept. 19th, train leaving Albany 7:30 a. m.

EZER LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

THE South Ouachita Association will convene with Good Hope Church, in Union Parish, La., one mile north of Oakland, commencing Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1901. An invitation is extended to all lovers of truth to meet with us.

L. C. TRULL.

THE First Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, in Vega, N. Y., has appointed a yearly or two days meeting, to be held the last Wednesday and Thursday in September, (25th and 26th) 1901.

Also a counsel at the same time to examine the gift of brother John B. Slawson, and if thought proper, to set him apart to the work of the ministry. We invite our brethren and sisters and friends, especially ministering brethren, to attend with us.

This done by order and in behalf of the church, June 29th, 1901.

Those coming by rail will be met at Roxbury, on Tuesday, the day before the meeting.

WILLIAM BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE church at Cammal, Pa., is expecting to hold a two days meeting Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 28th and 29th, 1901. All will be made welcome. The railroad station is Cammal, Pa., Pennsylvania division of New York Central R. R. Brother Sammy Moffat lives three rods from the depot.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Otego Old School Baptist church have appointed their yearly meeting to be held October 2d and 3d, 1901. Elders Durand and Ker are expected to be present, and perhaps Elder Chick and three other ministers will attend the meeting. Trains will be met Tuesday, also Wednesday morning at 9:52 o'clock.

Done in behalf of the church.

S. C. F. GUERNSEY, Church Clerk.

THE Corresponding Meeting of Virginia will meet, Providence permitting, with the New Valley church, at Hughesville, Loudoun Co., Va., commencing on Wednesday, October 16th, and continuing three days. Train leaving Washington city Tuesday at 4:35 p. m. will be met at Hamilton station, Southern Railway. Any one wishing to come on any other train Tuesday or Wednesday, notify Capt. F. Myers, Lincoln, or Levi White or John L. Ball, Woodgrove, or James Baldwin, Mt. Gilead, Va. We earnestly invite our brethren and friends to visit us, and especially ministering brethren.

Any other information desired address the writer.

E. V. WHITE, Pastor.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 69. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1901. NO. 18.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LIBERTY, Indiana.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have not yet had a desire to enter the discussion on predestination of all things, as either affirming or denying it, but now feel inclined to notice through your paper by your permission, some arguments and assumptions on the negative that to me appear illogical, and to impeach God's sovereignty, and to bring him into judgment before a modern sanhedrim, to make him the author of sin, and responsible to man for all sin. This is broad grounds, and some will say I am extravagant and misrepresenting. I do not want to be either. I do not charge that any one believes this, but that it is a logical conclusion drawn from their statements, and as those in the negative insist that those in the affirmative must accept all logical conclusions, they ought to abide the same rule.

I shall endeavor to show that the arguments to which I refer are illogical and untrue, and that the charges that I have brought against them are logical conclusions.

I will first notice the common assumption that the predestinator is the responsible doer. It is said and urged with strong emphasis that "If God predestinated all things, he is the author of sin;" by which I understand them to mean that he does what he predestinates, all other persons and things being passive in its fulfillment.

One writer goes so far as to make God and predestination one and the same. He said, "But stop Paul and hear from our unlimited predestinarian brother. This exhortation of yours is a mere empty puff of the air. Man can put on no armor till predestination puts it on him; he can fight no battle till predestination fights it for him; he cannot stand till predestination sets him on his legs and stands him." He also says, "To me the doctrine of unlimited predestination has more nonsense to the square inch than any doctrine I know of." Is it any wonder, with such a construction as the above?

According to the meaning of the word predestination, as given in our standard dictionaries, it applies only to the determination of an act. Some things God predetermined to do, while other things

he predetermined others should do. The Lord said, "I will redeem them from death," and he did it. He also said that Ahab should be slain in battle, and that the dogs should lick his blood, but men slew him, and acted voluntarily in doing so.

The same writer further makes predestination an active agent by saying, "Predestination has to redeem him [the man] by the blood of Christ. * * * Predestination has to regenerate him, born him again; predestination has to adopt him into the heavenly family." Predestination does none of these things. It is not the agent by which any deed is accomplished, either good or bad. When they can prove that God is the author and doer of all he predestinates, they have proven that he is the author of sin, and they have also proven that the saints are passive in every act that God predestinated that they should do. If God predestinated only his own acts, then no voluntary act of man, either good or bad, is predestinated. Will the opposers of unlimited predestination accept this conclusion? It is certainly a logical one.

It is immaterial for my present purpose whether God did predestinate *all* things or not. If I can show that he predestinated one sin, my point is gained, and according to their logic God is the author of sin. It has been admitted that all that was necessary to the salvation of God's people was predestinated. Of course this includes the crucifixion of Christ, and all this chain of causes that led to it, for to remove one of the causes would have changed the current of events so that the crucifixion would not have occurred. God predestinated the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, but had it not been for the wickedness of Joseph's brethren they would not have been in Egypt. Consider all the chain of events both of the acts of God and of wicked men, and see which one could have been omitted and the result the same.

Will any one deny that the crucifixion was determined by the hand and counsel of God? Peter said they had killed the Prince of peace. Was their act not embraced in predestination? It was a cruel murder, and if God did it or coerced men to do it, he is the author of sin. Therefore the assumption that he predestinates only what he does by his own hand, is illogical, unscriptural and untrue. When the Lord by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah declared, "It pleased the Lord to bruise him," he did not see fit to tell the people then how he would do it, but we know now that it was by the hand of wicked men. These men acted voluntarily, yet their act was predestinated.

"But," says the objector, "God knew what men would do, and all that was necessary was to determine what he would do." This involves us in a difficulty that no one would enjoy who believes in the omnipotence of God. It makes him dependent; that is, if God does not determine what *shall* be done to bring about an event such as the crucifixion, or the exultation of Joseph in Egypt, then it follows that he must make his arrangements according to what man will do. If man had acted differently God would have of necessity acted differently. God does as he does because men do as they do, since in many cases the wicked acts of men have direct connection with blessed events, and are causative in their production. God must have determined those wicked acts, or have made his arrangements to suit them in such a way that he could use them both as to time and place. For example, if man had not been willing to crucify

Christ, God would have known it, and would have made some other arrangements for the atonement. If Joseph's brethren had loved him God could not have sent him into Egypt through their wrath. It is folly to suppose that God's righteous purposes and man's wicked acts so coincide both as to time and place that there is never a hitch or a jar in the execution of God's purposes. One must have been arranged to suit the other. Which way is it? Did God arrange his purposes to suit man's ways, or did he arrange man's to suit his purposes? That God be an independent sovereign he must have power, not only to hinder, but to determine the wickedness that a man not merely will, but *shall* do. If he is hindered by the principles of moral government, he is not free and independent.

Did you ever notice how often the word *shall* is used in foretelling wicked acts? When Daniel wrote the eleventh chapter of his prophecy, did he use the word *shall* one hundred and twenty-seven times to foretell events that would take place according to the will and purpose of men only, or was he declaring the purpose and counsel of God? If he was writing of the future as the historian writes of the past, why did he use the word *shall*?" Or is this more than one hundred false translations in this one chapter? Baptists love to dwell on the word *shall* in Matthew i. 21. Has it a different meaning in Matthew xvii. 23? If so, why? Could Judas have done other than he did? If he could, he could have made void the word of Jesus.

I think that I have shown that for God to be an independent Sovereign he must have right and power to determine the wicked acts of men. It is charged upon those who believe in unlimited predestination that they make God responsible. To whom is he responsible? What has any one of them ever said that hints at a superior power or a covenant with any inferior power to whom he can be responsible? Is it not more logical to charge upon those who prescribe what is right and what is wrong for him to do, restricting him with a principle of moral law, with making him responsible? If God is responsible (accountable) for one thing, is he not responsible for all things? Could he not prevent any sin that might be mentioned, no matter how awful the crime, or how great the powers combined to do the deed? If he does not prevent it, it must be because for some reason in his judgment the wicked act ought to be done. What court of men can justify God for sitting an indifferent spectator at the Spanish cruelties in Cuba during the past century? Men, women and children were murdered, outraged and tortured in such an awful manner that language fails to express the depth of its horror.

One writer asks, "Where is the glory in the brutal crimes of hardened fiends in outraging virtue and blighting life and home? Is it not shame without a redeeming feature?" Do not these words hold God accountable to the judgment of the man who uttered them? On the same basis how will he excuse God for permitting such things? Suppose that I stand as an idle witness while all these wicked crimes are perpetrated on his family in his absence, when I only need to speak and let my presence be known to cause the hardened fiends to desist, yet I do not interfere because it does not hinder my purposes. Is there any justification for me? Certainly not. Then how can we justify God? If this brother's family was murdered I think he

would think in about this way, "It is awful, it breaks my heart. I wonder why God *permitted* such a wicked act, but it must be for some wise purpose known only to himself." Yet such thoughts would not harmonize with his logic. It has not pleased God to reveal his glory in each occurrence, but there is one case where one, not a "hardened fiend," outraged virtue and blighted life and home," in which it has pleased him to show the fulfillment of his purpose in the end, and yet he held the perpetrator guilty. I refer to David's sin against Uriah and his wife, and Solomon who was born as the result of David's marriage to Bathsheba.

The same writer said, "Remember too that whatever God has predestinated that any creature *shall do*, he cannot help doing, and therefore God's predestination would be the efficient cause of all crime if all is in accordance with his predestination." Do you suppose that Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, could have helped gathering together and doing what God's hand and counsel determined before to be done? If so they had it in their power to disannul God's counsel and determined will. Yet their moral inability was no excuse for their crime. If God's predestination is the efficient cause of all he predestinates, then he has predestinated nothing either good or bad that man has ever done voluntarily.

Those who oppose predestination of all things use the term as though God was a great hypnotist directing the minds of men and the inclination of all his creatures by suggestion. No man could have done what he has not, neither could any man refrain from what he has done, either good or bad, yet the cause cannot be laid to predestination, nor excuse the doer. But says a chorus of voices, "A man can help it if he will." Yes; there are many things a man could help if he had the inclination, but the inclination is one of the essential environments. This *if he will* is just the thing a man cannot do, or cannot help doing, as the case may be. The will is indispensable to action. Jesus could have called twelve legions of angels to his assistance had it not been for what was written in the Scriptures, but this one environment deterred him.

The same writer says again, "It [predestination] teaches that the holy God of heaven wanted wicked men to commit all the vile sins of which they are guilty." Will some of these philosophers and logicians tell us how it is that things are not as God wants them, and at the same time maintain his omnipotence and omniscience? If I were to tell you that I wanted to be rich, and that there was nothing to hinder me from becoming so, yet I go on in poverty, would you believe what I said?

Another writer in order to prove that God did not predestinate war, shows up its hideousness and awfulness, dwelling at length on its crimes and evil influences, and quoting from a profane General calls it "hell." If you will turn to 1 Samuel xv. and read, you will find that this brother has replied against God, for God commanded Saul to smite Amalek and *utterly* destroy all that they have and spare them not, but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass. But Saul was inclined to be more merciful and less wasteful, so he saved King Agag alive, and all that was good and fat of the cattle, but for his disobedience he lost his crown. With all the cruelty of war as described by this brother, is there a more sickening scene pictured than this battle between Saul and Agag? Would it be tolerated among

nations to-day? How would our brother excuse God for directing such a battle? If God must give account to men for his acts is he not guilty? We must submit and say, He doeth his will in heaven and on earth his footstool. We may as well say to him, "Why hast thou made me thus?" as to censure his providences.

One writer says, "God never predestinated anything that he foresaw would take place upon any supposed condition. We know the conditions upon which sin entered into the world, and God knew them before time began. So it was unnecessary to decree what he saw would take place upon such conditions." I suppose that the above was written as an exposition of the second paragraph in chapter three of the London Confession of Faith, but instead it is a perversion of it. That paragraph reads as follows: "Although God knoweth whatsoever may or can come to pass upon all [Acts xv. 18,] supposed conditions, yet hath he not decreed anything [Rom. ii. 13, 16, 18,] because he foresaw as future, or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions." Is it really true that the reason God did not predestinate sin was because he knew upon supposed conditions that it would take place without predestination?

One who would refute the charge that he denies the sovereignty of God in denying unlimited predestination says, "If this unjust charge were true, then there never would have been a sovereign ruler over any people in any earthly government. There never has been such absolute control in any government recorded in history."

This is a surprising statement coming from one who would refute the charge of denying the sovereignty of God. Is it possible that he thinks there is no distinction between the sovereignty of God and that of earthly kings? Does *the sovereignty of God* mean no more than *the sovereignty of King Edward?* All earthly sovereigns rule by permission of their subjects, differing in their power and authority according to the limitation of their several governments, but I have never before known one claiming to be an "Old Baptist" calling in question the absolute and unlimited power and authority of God. It is hard to believe that such is his meaning, yet his words forbid any other thought.

I wish now to notice one more argument used to oppose the predestination of sin. They say, "If God predestinated sin, the one doing it is not to blame; it ceases to be sin, because he is doing the will of God." Paul anticipated this argument when he said, "Thou wilt say then unto me, "Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Was not the wrath of Joseph's brethren embraced in the eternal purpose and will of God? Did they not do just what God wanted them to do? Then the pertinent question, What makes the difference between their attitude and that of God's in the matter? The answer is simple and short: *Motive.* It is motive that constitutes sin or righteousness. If God's motive had been the same as theirs he would have been partaker of their sin, but Joseph said, "As for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it for good to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." Joseph's brethren sinned in that they meant evil, to destroy life, but God did not because he meant good, to save life. When God sent the sword

against Israel for disobedience, and afterward punished those who wielded the sword, why were they sinners in the act and God righteous? *Motive.* Their motive in fighting Israel was conquest, greed and avarice; God's motive was just punishment for disobedience. Jesus said to Pilate, "He [meaning Judas] that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." Peter said, "Him [meaning Jesus] being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and with wicked hands have crucified and slain." Why was Judas wicked and God righteous in delivering Jesus into the hand of his crucifiers? *Motive:* Judas meant murder and greed, but God meant the redemption of his chosen people.

"Jesus reigns! he reigns victorious,
Over heaven and earth most glorious,
Jesus reigns!

Your brother in the love of truth,
W. N. THARP.

REVIEW OF FULTON CONVENTION WORK.

AFTER a close and careful comparison of the entire work of the Fulton "National Convention" with the text of the London Confession, as published in a booklet by the Elders Kirkland, in the spirit of godly sincerity and charity I wish to review it impartially with peace and goodwill to all lovers of truth.

As to *authority*: the confession was the work of "the ministers and messengers of upwards of one hundred baptized congregations," and so it has the sanction and authority of all those churches of the saints. But the work of the Fulton meeting has no other authority than as thus expressed: "By request of the Fulton church, we met on November 14, 1900." Hence, outside of the Fulton church, not one of those engaged in that work was an authorized messenger of his home church, but all were mere volunteers, having no authority whatever to represent and act for the general body of Old Baptist churches; therefore their work is entitled to no higher regard than their personal opinions as individuals, representing themselves only. How vast the difference! Thus it is an evident and potent fact, that the great brotherhood of Old Baptist churches of the United States neither felt the need of nor called for a "National Convention," either to settle the orthodoxy of the old confession, or any other question touching faith and practice. So the Fulton meeting was a very *local* one indeed, instead of a "National Convention;" for the self-appointed persons who ran to Fulton without being sent, as did Ahimaaz, a good man, went from only ten of the nearly fifty States and Territories. Nor is this all, for so far from having the sanction and sympathy and prayers of the thousands of gospel churches and ministers of this vast Commonwealth to support them, it was the very opposite of this, for the general sentiment and feeling was against such a convention, and all concerned knew this. And well knowing this fact, it must have been apparent to all that such a mere local, voluntary and partial convention of Baptists could not promote the fellowship and unity of the general brotherhood of saints in Christ Jesus. What this local meeting did at Fulton, as published by those who called the meeting, is in sad evidence that they failed to restore the former peace which their new issues had disturbed. They could not have expected to restore that which they had taken away. What, then, was the purpose of the convention?

The answer is found in the published

work of the Fulton meeting, as set forth in the general address, foot-notes, and appendix, to which special attention is kindly solicited. The main thing to be considered is, what the convention adopted upon the issues which had caused the "no small dissension and disputation" among the churches, where peace had prevailed before such issues were raised. Did they seek to heal the breaches in Zion, by pouring oil on the troubled waters, and extending the olive branch of peace? In sadness we fail to find any effort in this way as peace-makers. So far from it, the one principal purpose and work of that convention was but a reaffirming and trying to thus sanction those confusing and disturbing new issues, as things to be saddled upon the Old Baptist people as doctrines which they must receive and fellowship, or else they must be declared out of fellowship by the edicts of that convention, as declared in the general address, section two, page nine. In this item it is said, "We * * * beseech all our churches and people that they raise no bars of fellowship against any Primitive Baptist with whom they are agreed on fundamental principles—such as the eternal salvation of sinners, wholly by grace and entirely unconditional on the sinner's part, and who are sound and orderly in the ordinances of the church." It was well known by those brethren that this statement does not touch the disturbing doctrine at issue, which doctrine they elsewhere adopt as that which must be received as sound doctrine. The churches that will not so fellowship the new doctrine are declared against on page nine, saying, "the only course for those who want to remain in this holy church union is to discard their actions and have no connection with them, until they withdraw such bars of fellowship." Bars of fellowship against what doctrine? The foot-notes and the appendix show that the bars of fellowship spoken of were the result of the new issues raised among the Baptists, and that those disturbing doctrines were conditional salvation in time, as distinct from unconditional eternal salvation by grace, and the partial or limited sovereignty or predestination or decree of God.

So now, let us kindly consider this question of disturbance and compare the points at issue with the London Confession, which all claim to accept upon those points of difference. But why, then, the need or utility of the Fulton Convention? Why the address, the foot-notes and the appendix added to the good old Confession, which had been good enough for the Old Baptist people through the centuries, until this late upheaval? The plea for all this additional supplementary work of the recent convention has been stated in print frequently, and is thus given in the general address: "Language through the lapse of many years undergoes variations in applications and meanings, whereby certain clauses become more or less obscure in meaning. Wherever, in the opinion of this assembly, the meaning of a section was not apparent, foot-notes were added to bring out the meaning." But if such a change of meaning and obscurity of language is true of one section of the old Confession, it is also true of every section, and just as true of the whole Bible, which is older than the London Confession. In all candor, then, why were the foot-notes confined to a few sections, and these the very places which treat of the doctrines involved in this new issue? This is very strange indeed, if the old Confession has really become doubtful and dark in meaning because of its age! If this is a valid cause for call-

ing a convention of Baptists, why not bring out in easy and plain words the meaning of the entire Confession, so that all the Baptists may now understand and unite upon its meaning? Then, if the plea is a real and valid one, why not also get up a Baptist Convention to "bring out the more or less obscure meaning" of the ancient Bible? But who were the leading and active workers in the work of the Fulton Convention? With all courtesy to them, were they eminent for great learning and wisdom? And as such, were they chosen and sent to Fulton by the Old Baptist people at large? Why would they, then, take it upon themselves to put their own meaning or construction upon some of the chief doctrinal sections of the old Confession, and decree that those who want to remain in their union shall have no connection with other brethren and churches who cannot conscientiously fall in line with the new issues and decrees or work of the Fulton Convention? Brethren who deplore bars of fellowship being set up, do certainly err and far exceed their authority and right, in thus clothing this Fulton Convention with ecclesiastic authority to decide the terms of fellowship for all the Old Baptist family, then cast out all of them who cannot indorse their work, and say to all who will do so, "The only course for those who want to remain in this holy church union is, to discard their actions and have no connection with them." This is in itself a sweeping and world-wide bar of fellowship, and it is both arbitrary and without charity. For it is binding a yoke upon the consciences of thousands of the loving disciples of Christ, humble, loving and God-fearing men and women, who devoutly believe that all their salvation is by God's abounding grace in Christ Jesus, vouchsafed to them as ever sinful and unworthy in time; and who cannot believe otherwise than as simply stated in the London Confession upon "God's decree," which they accept in all its parts, without any words to explain it away. And upon these two things the issue is made, with all the resulting confusion and marring of fellowship.

The old Confession says, "God hath decreed in himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, *all things whatsoever come to pass;* yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin nor hath fellowship with any therein, nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor yet is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established, in which appears his wisdom in *disposing all things*, and power and faithfulness in *accomplishing his decree.*" This is as guarded as words can make a statement, yet most clear and plain. In this sublime belief in the dominion and sovereignty of God his servants and children have stood unitedly from of old, and will yet ever so stand as the loyal and prevailing brotherhood in Christ, though ever reproached for it.

But the Fulton convention said, "We do not believe that God unconditionally, unlimitedly and equally predestinated righteousness and unrighteousness. It is our belief that God has positively and effectually predestinated the eternal salvation of his people, which were chosen in Christ before time." This statement as a whole plainly denies the above statement of the Confession, and admits only that God predestinated or decreed the eternal salvation of his people, and to this it limits God's decree of predestination. The long foot-note on page 36 is a similar statement, and not in accord with the Confession on God's decree, to

which there is no limit, but it includes the words "freely and unchangeably all things whatsoever come to pass." The contradiction here is irreconcilable, and one or the other is erroneous. But when the convention says, "A failure to make this distinction ['between God's attitude to sin and his attitude and relation to holiness'] has been a fruitful source of division and distress of our holy cause, and a failure to so distinguish between God's permissive and overruling decree of sin and his causative decree of holiness will ever cause distress and confusion among our people." Again, page 99: "God's purpose concerning sin does not sustain the same relation to sin that it does to holiness. While we think that God's purpose concerning sin is more than *barely permissive*, it is such as to exclude all chance and uncertainty, yet we hold that God is in no sense the cause of sin." Again, page 100: "We insist that we should not use language implying that God's attitude to sin is the same as his attitude to holiness, for this tends to destroy the distinction between right and wrong. The expression, 'unlimited predestination of all things,' seems to convey the idea that God's purpose concerning sin is as unlimited and unrestricted as it is concerning holiness; and if so, then God's decree concerning sin would be causative, since it is causative concerning holiness, and this view would destroy all distinction between right and wrong." Now, sadly let me say, these statements and seeming inferences are unwarranted, uncharitable and prejudicial, calculated to mislead all who accept them as facts, for they assume that the Baptists who believe just what the old Confession most plainly and positively declares of God's decree, (his unlimited predestination of all things) make no distinction between sin and holiness, but hold that God sustains the same relation and attitude to sin that he does to holiness, and that his relation to both is causative; that is, that "God is the author of sin," if it be true that he decreed all things whatsoever come to pass. No Baptist so believes. No Baptist writer has ever written that God's decree of all things makes no distinction between sin and holiness, but is alike the cause of all sin as well as holiness. This imputation is most hurtful and lamentable, because it is neither just nor true, but a very prejudicial inference, and a violation of christian charity and brotherly kindness. For all Predestinarian Baptists have ever held on this point of doctrine, as did those ancient brethren of England and Wales, that, "yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin nor hath fellowship with any therein." Therefore, in raising this mistaken cry of alarm against the unlimited decree of God, and charging that it makes all wickedness and sin the result of his decree, and destroys the distinction between right and wrong, the brethren of the Fulton Convention have grievously put a stumbling-block in the way of unity, fellowship and peace.

That convention likewise recognized and labored to establish another new issue in doctrine, which has caused much confusion and distress, where harmony and peace prevailed before it was foisted or sprung upon the Baptists of the Old School, but a few years ago. This new doctrine is called, "Conditional Salvation in Time." And this has been the chief disturbing doctrine in the "no small dissension and disputation" which it has caused among the Baptist people. Knowing this as they did, it is sadly strange that the Fulton Convention of Baptists adopted it as an article of their faith, and

required all other Baptists, who want to remain in their union, or who may want to come into it, to accept it. Lamentably strange this is, after saying in the preface to their work as a convention, "With an earnest desire to see union and harmony prevail among us everywhere," &c. Again: "*The Importance of Fellowship* cannot be overestimated. * * * *Bars of Fellowship* set up by our local churches have been the most destructive influences against the growth and progress of the church. Traditions of men and human customs, being regarded as authority, have often given rise to bars of fellowship and resulted in the destruction of the peace of the churches." This statement will as well apply to the Fulton Convention and its work, and contains its own sentence. For here it was not even local churches making tests and setting up terms of fellowship for the Baptists at large, but only a few unauthorized brethren as individuals. Yet those brethren, when they speak of the good old doctrine of unconditional salvation of sinners being wholly by grace, they must qualify grace by saying, "eternal salvation," as much as to say our salvation in time is not by grace, but of works, and is conditional upon our part. They therefore say, page 101: "We believe the Scriptures teach that there is a time salvation received by the heirs of God distinct from eternal salvation, which does depend upon their obedience. The people of God receive their rewards for obedience in this life only." Again, page 102–3: "We hold that God's government of his people is moral. We hold, too, that conditionality is an essential element of moral government." And again, page 104: "We understand it to mean that men are capable of choosing things in harmony with their nature—things most agreeable to them. They are and must be capable of voluntary action, in order to their being accountable. Liberty of will in this sense is essential to moral government, as we believe."

Now, kindly, sincerely and faithfully do I protest that this distinction in the salvation of sinners, as both of grace and works, unconditional in part and conditional in part, is a seriously confusing and disturbing element and doctrine; a distinction and division in our salvation not made in the Bible, nor in the London Confession, nor by our faithful fathers in the gospel of the grace of God; for all these ever use the singular noun, "salvation," and never the plural, salvations; and they all attribute our entire salvation from all sin to God and Christ and grace. This gospel of full and complete salvation by grace, "not of works," the Old Baptist people have ever cherished in their hearts as divinely true and sacred; and the remnant according to the election of grace will ever do so until time shall be no longer. And in blest eternity "the general assembly and church of the Firstborn" shall ever happily be "to the praise of the glory of his grace."

Until very modernly, the principle and doctrine of conditions in salvation had no place or influence among the Old Baptists, but it prevailed among the Arminian orders, and many thousands of the children of God among them have been brought into bondage by it. It is also true of the other new and kindred issue, the mistaken and uncharitable outcry against the Predestinarian Baptists, that their doctrine makes God the author of all things whatsoever come to pass which he decreed from all eternity, as affirms the old Confession, that this charge was made only by the Arminian conditionalists until very modernly.

It should not be wondered at, therefore, that the introduction and pressure of these new issues among the Old Baptists met with opposition from many of them, whose hearts are established in the sacred belief of salvation by grace only, and in the unlimited sovereignty of God, just as declared in the London Confession; for the inevitable consequence of this innovation upon the gospel of the grace of God, by the new gospel (?) of conditional salvation in time, and of this recent war against God's decree of all things, as held through the ages past, and solemnly set forth in the good old Confession, was confusion and division among the local churches, where these new issues sprung up and were urged. It was this opposition to sovereignty and grace that led to the disturbance and, in some local churches, the breaking of fellowship, all of which is lamentable and gives us all sorrow. The responsibility rests upon the new doctrines.

It was quite natural for the leading promoters of these new and disturbing elements and issues of limited decrees and limited grace, or part grace in salvation, to feel zealous for their greatest success, and so seek to draw all the Baptists with them as far as possible. And it was this fact that led them to make effort after effort to call a Baptist convention, in which they finally succeeded. What was its aim and scope? The work of the convention, as published by them, shows that their sole object was to have the disturbing doctrines engrafted upon the Baptist articles of faith, in which they succeeded so far as the Fulton Convention could give sanction and prestige to them. Therefore, so far from it being a "National Convention" of the Old Baptists, as claimed, it was so exclusive or partial and local that none others only those who would sympathize and come in line with them in their innovations upon the old and sacred doctrine of God's sovereignty in his decree and grace was wanted or could have been an active member in that convention. For it was understood that all who could be welcomed there must fall in line. So all did who attended as volunteer messengers to that Fulton meeting. The leading spirits in the new movement virtually proclaimed abroad: We are in trouble; for we have enlisted in a war against the old doctrine of salvation only by grace, and God's unlimited decree, and unfortunately we are meeting with strong opposition from many good brethren who will not fall in with our improved and less objectionable doctrines, which, if generally accepted, will greatly elevate and enlarge the Primitive Baptist churches, so that they will become far more influential and popular than they have been. Now, therefore, come to Fulton and join with us in a "National Convention," which we intend shall eclipse the old London meeting, and help us to fix up this trouble and settle this controversy, in such a way that conditional salvation in time and limited predestination or decrees shall be made to harmonize with the long accepted London Confession of Faith and added to it as supplementary articles of the Baptist faith. This was done. Now the work of the Fulton convention is incorporated in a book with the time-honored London Confession, as a very important addition to it, explaining it and giving it prestige. And all the Old Baptists who accept the old are likewise expected and required to accept the new, or they shall be discarded as not "in this holy church union," which, it is boastingly claimed, includes perhaps nine-tenths of all the Primitive Baptists.

Now, permit me to sorrowfully and

lovingly say, How very lamentable that all this has been done! For so far from taking up the stumbling-blocks out of the way of the Lord's afflicted and poor people, in a work of peace, the effort has been thus made to divide them upon the line of eternal salvation only by grace, but salvation in time, of works, and limited predestination to holiness only. This gratified the few leaders in this new movement, who are pleased with their seeming success; but it is really lamentable for themselves in the end, no less than for the general peace and spiritual health and welfare of the dear Old Baptist brotherhood, who are thus unhappily made to suffer from those disturbing innovations upon the doctrine of God our Savior.

In conclusion, there is one alleviating and consoling fact in all this new and strange movement among Baptists; that is, the so-called "National Convention" was nothing more than a voluntary individual meeting, without any authority or jurisdiction whatever to decide upon any point of doctrine or fellowship, so none of the churches of the saints are bound by it; and the good old doctrine of the London Confession relative to the unlimited decree and universal providence of God and salvation by his sovereign grace only, remains unshaken, true and sacred as before, not in the least curtailed, modified or "explained away." And this doctrine of our forefathers and of the apostles of the Lord will stand immovable as a bulwark of God's eternal truth long after this new movement against it shall have passed away, and the people "saved by the Lord" shall on and on down through the coming ages, till the Lord shall come and bring all his saints with him, ever abide steadfastly in the unlimited sovereignty of God and the gospel of salvation by his grace.

"Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days:
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

This is submitted in brotherly kindness to all who in heart believe in Jesus as the salvation of God, as did Simeon, and for them I have fellowship and love, though they may be "entangled with the yoke of bondage," as the Galatian brethren were, through conditional teaching. For no heart-felt believer in Christ, the Redeemer and Savior of sinners, of whom the word says, "Neither is there salvation in any other," do I declare non-fellowship, but it afflicts me to know that any of the dear redeemed people of the Lord, who is all their salvation, deny the sufficiency of his grace to save them in time, but they must fall back upon conditional works of their own now in time, yet admitting that their eternal salvation is unconditional and by sovereign grace alone. To me this is a strange paradox, an irreconcilable inconsistency and contradiction; for since grace alone has power to save with everlasting salvation from sin, and all sin, it alone has power to save from sin in time, from any and every sin, whether of commission or omission. For certainly since grace is sufficient unto the greater salvation, it is no less sufficient unto the lesser salvation. But none will presume to say that the salvation by grace is conditional, for grace has no conditions in it, but it reigns in salvation as the princess of heaven. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need," says the word. And this is salvation by mercy and grace in time, and in every time of need.

O that we all, who daily need the grace of God, could thus humbly and contritely come unto the throne of grace, and be filled with grace, mercy and peace from

God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of peace; for then there would be no controversy or contention about our daily salvation not being by grace, but of works and conditional on our part.

"Savior, visit thy plantation,
Grant us, Lord, a gracious rain!
All will come to desolation,
Unless thou return again:
Lord revive us,
All our help must come from thee!"

DAVID BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Aug. 22, 1901.

PROVERBS XXV. 11.

"A WORD fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

While journeying through Samaria our Savior comes to Jacob's well. The disciples have gone for meat. Seeing a woman at the well about to draw water, Jesus asks a drink at her hands. She stands aghast at such a request, for, seeing he is a Jew, she knows it to be an unusual thing for one of that race to ask anything of a Samaritan. Thus she reminds him, but he replies, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him and he would have given thee living water." Thus begins a remarkable conversation between our Lord and this adulterous woman. In it he reveals himself to her as the Christ, the Messiah which was to come. At the close the woman runs away joyfully to her companions exclaiming, "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" Yes, this poor, miserable woman has seen the Savior, and knows that he it is who speaks to her. His words to her are "fitly spoken."

Shifting the scene, we behold the gate of the temple, Beautiful, at Jerusalem. Hither come a number of men bearing one whom they lay at the entrance. This man has been lame from his birth, and never able to walk a step, and is placed here daily to receive alms of those who pass by. Peter and John, two disciples of the Lord, approach him. He begs an alms of them. They have none, but say, "Look upon us," and then follow these remarkable words, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." Immediately he is healed, leaps up and goes with them into the temple, leaping and praising, not the disciples, but God. Their words were "fitly spoken."

Let us glance at one more scene. Before us is the road leading out of Jerusalem toward Damascus. Down it come a company of men headed by Saul of Tarsus. Look at him. He has left Jerusalem with letters admitting him into Damascus. One of the most remarkable men of his day, he is skilled in the law of his fathers and in the wisdom of the east. Dominating him is a fierce hatred of the followers of Christ. The purpose of his journey to Damascus is to persecute this people, and to bring them captives to Jerusalem. He verily believes he is doing God's service, and breathing out slaughters and threatenings against the disciples of the Lord, goes forward. Suddenly a dazzling light from heaven shines round about him. He falls to the earth, and to him a voice speaks, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Astonished, he cries, "Who art thou, Lord?" "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Humbled, ashamed and groveling in the dust, this once haughty man implores, "What wilt thou have me to do?" "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." In Damascus we find him preaching the gospel he hated to the very ones he had in-

tended to persecute. What has wrought this wondrous change? "A word fitly spoken."

In these instances which I have cited, Christ either directly or through his servants has given the fitly spoken word. "The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." It is the tidings of that salvation which God has wrought for his people in his Son Jesus Christ. These tidings may be spoken directly to us by God himself, in our sleeping or in our waking hours, while at work or at rest, while reading or while in meditation. It may come through an earthen vessel such as all of God's servants are, but not necessarily so. Most emphatically the preaching of the word is not essential to give one a knowledge of Christ or his salvation. But no matter in what way it comes, the gospel of Christ is a "word fitly spoken." In it is embraced the doctrine of God, that doctrine which Moses declares shall drop as the rain and distill as the dew upon the tender herb and upon the grass. "Upon the tender herb," which is a conscience made tender by the application of the law. To such a one the tidings of salvation are certainly words fitly spoken. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," &c. This word is Christ, the word "fitly spoken." It is "fitly spoken" because peculiarly adapted or fitted to the needs and conditions of those to whom it is declared. In your lost condition, who found you? In your blindness, who restored your sight? In your sin-sickness, who healed you? In your darkness, who brought the light? The answer is one word, Christ. That word revealed with power is our salvation from all the wretched conditions that befall us. Then is it not a word spoken with fitness? I do not hesitate to say that no other word under heaven is ever "fitly spoken" but the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

But how is the gospel like "apples of gold in pictures of silver?" A picture all one color would be a barren monotony. Picture a wide expanse of ocean in a dead calm, with not a sail or a ruffle to mar its peacefulness. What weary, monotonous waste it is! Just so would be a picture of silver. It may be valuable, but it certainly is not beautiful. One color never yet made a beautiful picture. But what a change is wrought when "apples of gold" are painted in it! How it sparkles in its lustre, and how clearly the yellowness of the gold stands forth displayed on a background of silver. Black will appear blacker if placed next to white. So will gold appear brighter when placed in contrast with silver. This picture of apples of gold in silver is a picture which typifies the lives of the saints. Take out of your experience the seasons of rejoicing you have had when in the Savior's presence, and what have you left? Only sorrow, pain, affliction, darkness and tribulations of every description. This, dear child of God, is the background of silver. The "apples of gold" are the high and bright places in your experience when you have been drawn away from the world for a time and have rested alone in the arms of the dear Redeemer. They are seasons of rejoicing and gladness you have had when the word spoken in your heart lifted you out of the horrible pit and set you upon a rock, and put a new song in your mouth, even praise to our God. "Apples" implies sweetness. Truly these are sweet times. They are also a fruit. So are these happy days the fruit or the result of many days in darkness and tribulation. Without these "apples

of gold," these "words fitly spoken," our lives would be but as trees without fruit. With them the lives of the saints are pictures beautiful, rich and rare.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

22 N. FOURTH ST., CAMDEN, N. J.

NORTH WHITEFIELD, Maine, March 31, 1901.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—How unfit I feel to call you by that endearing title. I often think if my brethren only knew me as I am, or in other words, could see me as I see myself, they would not allow me to call them by the title of brother or sister. I often feel as though I were a hypocrite; there is a great warfare at times, then at times all is still and calm. I long to see some of the saints, I have here not a soul to whom I can speak upon that theme which I love to talk about. I sometimes in my dreams have a good talk with some one. Not long since, in a dream I had a battle with some one who opposed the truth, and how clear the truth looked to me, and the Scriptures came so clear and fast, passage after passage came to my mind to prove salvation is by grace, and not by works; O, how plain it all looked to me. I sometimes dream of being in conference and talking to the brethren and sisters, and afterwards I feel better for a time. I have not been able to get to conference since last October, at that time I was down home. I wrote to sister Cunningham in December and sent her your last two letters, and I will send you hers to me. Your last, as well as all your letters are, was a great comfort to me, they have all been comforting and encouraging to me, a poor sinner. I have been very poorly this last year; I never was as well as some. I shall never forget the first association I ever attended away from home, I went with my uncle, brother Turner, to Bowdoinham, and there first saw sister Attie Curtis; how I learned to love her there, and I still love her for the truth's sake; I loved them all, but somehow she seemed at that time to come nearer.

O, how glad I am at times that the Lord knows all things, and that all are open and naked to the eyes of him with whom we have to do; how glad I am that he has declared the end from the beginning, and that not one thing is new to him, and that we cannot suffer more than what is good for us. He is a merciful God; to him alone can we go in every trouble and trial. What more should we want? He is and ever has been, showering blessings upon unworthy me. I fear that I do not appreciate those blessings as I ought, I I am so forgetful, and must be put in remembrance so often, but my times are in his hands, my salvation and my all. In and of myself I am nothing only vanity, in him is everything that we need, and all things are mine, if I am his. But the question "Am I his or am I not?" often arises in my mind. I have a hope that I am his, and one of those who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, yet I am less than the least, yet he seems very near to me at times. As I look back, I can see how differently I have been led from what I thought once would be the case, surely he has led me in paths that I have not known, he makes the crooked things straight before me, and darkness light, he has I know marked out the path of all his people, and they must and shall walk in it. Some of the way seems strange, but when it is best all will be made plain.

Now I have not written as I would like to, but you know what I am, I cannot do the things that I would, or as I would, but the things I would not, I do.

I will send you sister Cunningham's

letter, which will make up for the lack in mine.

Now with love to you all, I remain as ever your sister,

MARTHA E GLIDDEN.

WHITEFIELD, Maine, Jan., 1901.

DEAR SISTER MARTHA:—I was very glad to receive your letter and also to have the privilege of reading the letters which you inclosed from Elder Chick. I am often encouraged in the letters of the saints of God, they nearly always write something to which I can witness, something that I have passed through, something that I know for myself. The conference met here at my house, and I had all three of the letters read, and I could witness with some of your feelings I think, I believe that I know something about them. The Lord's way is a mysterious way, he leads us in paths we know not, he makes crooked things straight, he causes us to travel in these low grounds, even in the valleys where all is darkness, and it seems almost impossible for us to walk at all in the way; how often it seems to be hedged up, thorns and briars appear all around us, but how easily every obstacle is removed when the Lord appears, and the way that looked so dark and hard has become light and easy, now there are no briars in the way, but Jesus has appeared and all seems different, the way which he has cast up for the ransomed to walk in, is no longer dark; he is with us in all these dark places, and then all is light; he has promised never to leave nor forsake us; his grace is sufficient to carry all his children through, they shall overcome in every trial. If we could but know that these promises embraced ourselves, then we should not doubt so much, but this is not for us to know at present, still we have a hope, and faith to believe, which is built upon the solid Rock Christ Jesus, and if so, then we know that it is immovable, and will ever abide, both in this world and in the world to come, and then we shall see him as he is, and be fashioned like him, and be satisfied.

Your sister in hope,

M. A. CUNNINGHAM.

GROVER, Pa., April 6, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been thinking for some time of writing upon the subject of prayer, for the SIGNS. If God will direct my pen so as to make what I shall write of some comfort to others my object will have been accomplished, otherwise, I know what I may write will fail. In 1 Thess. v. 17, Paul has said to his brethren, "Pray without ceasing," and then he says, "In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit." And he prayed God their whole spirit, soul and body, might be preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. He also told them to abstain from all appearance of evil. In many different places Jesus told his disciples to pray, and he also was found praying at many different times and places. He also told his disciples that he would pray to the Father, and he would send them another Comforter, even the Spirit of truth, that he might abide with them for ever.

When I first united with the church I thought as I journeyed along the christian pathway I would be getting better and better all the time, until finally at the end I would be more like Jesus. I thought that my whole nature would be changed so that I would not be beset with so many sins and temptations; and many times in my younger days I had remarked that if I could not be a better

christian than some that I knew, I would never try to be one. But now, after twenty-two years, I can only say that I have made a sad failure, and all my own hopes and plans have come to naught. And yet how else could I be led to trust in Jesus as my only helper and comforter? If I had been able to do the good I would have done, I should have been puffed up with pride and vanity in my own works. God is not mocked, he will not give his glory to another, he will not suffer his faithfulness to fail. Several months after I united with the church I felt very much cast down and discouraged, and as if I was such a sinner that I had no right to any of the promises given to the children of God. I felt as though I had no right to pray to God, and although I tried to live more carefully every day, yet every day seemed to condemn me more and more. I read the Bible, but could find nothing to comfort me. One evening the words, "Seek and ye shall find," came to my mind, and they seemed like a command to me. I took the Bible and began reading. I came to the words in Isaiah i. 13, "Bring no more vain oblations: incense is an abomination unto me." This was just what I had been doing, bringing, or trying to bring, my own works which are only vain, and an abomination, instead of pleading Christ as my righteousness and hope. Just there I saw how I must be clothed in that best robe of righteousness which Jesus wrought out on Calvary, when we would appear before our Father's throne. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him: and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

We are to forsake even the thoughts, remembering that they are vain; they are only that incense which is an abomination to God. Let us remember that it is only the blood of Christ which cleanseth us from all sin. Art thou weary of sin? Art thou so weary at times as to almost have forgotten about the ark of Christ? It has been so with me at times, until weary and footsore like the dove, I would remember that there was a welcome resting-place in the arms of Jesus. Then the words of Isaiah liv. 7-9, came to me with great comfort, "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath have I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee." And with this, several more great and precious promises came. How sweet it is to remember that his everlasting covenant shall never fail. Then is it not our duty, and privilege as well, to go to him at all times in prayer, looking unto him who is the author and finisher of our faith?

Surely none of his children have any right to say that they cannot pray, even though they feel too unworthy to take his name upon their sinful lips. If they examine themselves they will find that there is of necessity a prayer in their hearts, that the Lord would have mercy upon them, and remove the stony heart, and give them a heart of flesh, a heart to do his will. Even in our deepest sorrow and darkness there may be in the heart just the prayer that would comfort some other weary soul.

So many burdened ones there are
Close journeying by my side,

Assist, encourage, comfort them,
Thine own deep anguish hide.

What though thy trials may seem great,
Thy strength is known to God;
And pathways, steep and rugged, lead
To pastures green and broad.

May hope, like summer rainbow bright,
Scatter thy falling tears,
And may God's precious promises
Dispel thy anxious fears.

May we all be enabled to take our cross daily, and learn of him who is meek and lowly in heart, and so shall we find rest to our souls.

Your sister in hope,

NANCY M. OWEN.

HAVANA, Kansas, Sept. 3, 1901.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—ESTEEMED BRETHREN:—I most heartily concur in your proposition to send the SIGNS to new subscribers until January 1st, 1902. My father took the paper from 1847 until his death in 1860, since that time I have been a continuous subscriber, and have during all those years from boyhood until the dawning of old age, sustained its consistent and determined defense of the gospel of God our Savior. Within the order of Old School Baptist churches there has developed for many years a disposition to criticise and reflect harshly upon the course pursued by your paper. Why this condition? Whose fault is it? Where does the offense lie? When the paper was first established, and for many years thereafter, the paper was received with commendation and support by the churches wherever they were established. The churches then were held together by that invisible, and to the world, incomprehensible cord that kept them in the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Contention, strife, divisions, jealousies, &c., were but little known. That goodly admonition that Paul wrote to his Ephesian brethren seemed to be the controlling spirit with the churches fifty years ago: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

O, how soon would contention cease if our hearts could be filled with that same joy we felt when that dark pall of sin was rolled away, and we beheld the Sun of Righteousness rising and pouring upon us the joy of salvation. When our souls are filled with joy and gladness, and with the mind we serve the law of God, there is no room for those evil forces that rend and destroy the peace of God's children. Read the earnest, pleading and pathetic language of the beloved John, in his old age, to the elect lady, the church, "And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote you a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another." And as a further incentive to duty he declares to her, "This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it."

Yes, dear saints, as ye heard in the beginning of your christian pilgrimage that sweet voice of Jesus' pardoning love come with joy that was to you unspeakable and full of glory, so continue to walk as ye journey toward that heavenly country. Walk in love, love of God's laws, his government, wisdom and judgment; walk in the path of righteousness and peace, that peace that cometh from God the Father, which the world cannot give nor take away. "Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called."

Your brother in hope,

T. R. PITTMAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1901.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 PETER III. 8, 9.

"FINALLY, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing."

This is the conclusion of a series of admonitions and exhortations, all of which the apostle urges upon his brethren as belonging to the life of Christ in a believer, and which they are to exhibit as his disciples in their outward life. These, and all the admonitions of the word addressed to the children of God, do not imply that the mere outward performance of these things is sufficient. On the contrary, they always imply a heart work back of them, wrought by the Spirit of God in the soul. It is very possible for a natural man to put on the form of the things named in this text and elsewhere, as being in harmony with the life of Christ, but if these things be only put on, without the love of them in the heart, they condemn rather than commend him that does them, in the sight of God. All these things can be put on out of some selfish motive, and it becomes a source of great anxiety to the true believer, that he may know of what motive he is possessed. The believer has come to know that the Spirit of God alone can create within him a right spirit out of which shall proceed works which shall be right in the sight of God. And this spirit he must have with him, ruling in him day by day, in order to manifest these heavenly fruits in his daily life. Therefore the true believer ascribes all his right thoughts, words and deeds, to the Spirit of grace within, and says, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

One of the things which characterizes a right and spiritual obedience will always be an earnest desire to know what is the will of God. "What wilt thou have me to do?" will be in the mind of the true child of God a most important question. And another question will be, Have I a right spirit in what I do? Indeed, it is our experience and observation that this last question at times becomes the most important of all, to such an one. For instance, it is right to give alms, but when we give alms, what is our motive? Is it to be seen of men, or to gain a high seat in heaven, or to obtain some inward satisfaction now and hereafter, or is it to glorify God and show forth his praise? Do we do this because we love the service, or because we love the reward? Beside this, the desire of every true believer, when led by the Spirit, will be to know when he reads the word and finds its admonitions enjoined upon him, just what is involved in these admonitions. For instance, if he finds the ordinance of baptism enjoined upon him, he will want to know what that ordinance is. Does it mean to be sprinkled or dipped? and so on with all the varied admonitions of the word. He will feel that each word is the word of God, and therefore is to be regarded with solemn attention and solemn questioning as to what the holy Spirit means by what it has said to him in the word. This will lead to a close question-

ing as to what each word does signify. No word in all the Scriptures will seem to that man less than the word of God. The Bereans thus regarded the Scriptures, for they searched them diligently to see if the things taught by the apostles were so.

Our mind has been led to the text at the beginning of this editorial with some sense of these things as we hope. There has been a solemn questioning, What does the Holy Ghost signify by these words? There has also been an earnest feeling of desire not only to be led into the literal meaning of the words, but also to have them applied with power, so that they shall come to us and to all as indeed the word of God. We must confess the immense disparity between that to which we have attained, and the things enjoined in these words, and yet we do believe that there is a longing within to attain to them. Perhaps it is as Paul said upon another occasion, "I count not myself to have apprehended," "but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." It is sure that we never have attained, and yet the things set before us are the things that we sometimes at least most desire. Perhaps it is still more so with most of the people of God. If so, there is a comfort in it; the desire is much. Is it not rather everything? It is a blessed thing to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and they that hunger and thirst shall be filled. Is it not written, "Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing"?

Let us turn to the text and briefly present what it says. "Finally." The word means that the things that have been written before are all in full keeping with what is to follow, and these words are a sort of conclusion of the whole matter. Because of the use of the word "finally," they take on a special and very solemn meaning. The word seems to imply that the apostle desired that they should be especially regarded by the brethren to whom he was writing, and the Spirit indited these words for us as well as for them.

"Be ye all of one mind." This was not, let us remember, addressed to men who stood upon opposite sides of a controversy, who are thus exhorted to give up their opinions and think alike, but they are addressed to those who were already of one mind in Christ, yet these brethren were still in the flesh, as well as living the life of the Spirit, and so were subject to the differences of the flesh. There were differences of temperament, of thought, of circumstances, of birth, of disposition, of surroundings, just as is the case with all men. No two men in nature are just alike, and therefore no two men can ever see things just alike. No two men naturally were ever completely united upon all things, and the chief reason is that each one thinks of self first. To the natural man self is the chief consideration, and so no two men can be one in mind and feeling absolutely. Christians still are diverse by nature, but yet there is unity in Christ. One thing they have been taught alike in: to them all has been given one supreme interest; each when under the power of the Spirit of God can say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." It is in this one chief thing that they are here exhorted to be all of one mind. Said the apostle, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus," &c. It is the mind of Christ in them of which the apostle would remind them. He means that they all should have one object in

view, and that to obey and glorify God. Whatever differences of thought, and habit, and feeling, there may be among them, let them all be swallowed up in the one thing which they have come to know. "Seek first the kingdom of God;" let the welfare of the cause of God reign uppermost in you all, subordinate all things to that. If any man have a quarrel against any, remember that there is something more important than that. No personal thing must come in to divert them from the service of God. As soldiers in the army, all personal feelings, wishes, preferences and differences, must be put out of sight in the face of the common enemy. It seems to us that this is the substance in part of what the apostle would enjoin upon them in the words, "Be ye all of one mind."

"Having compassion one of another." Surely the Spirit out of which obedience to this exhortation springs, must dwell in the heart of every one who feels himself to be weak and poor and sinful. Seeing such things manifest in others who have confessed to be the disciples of Jesus, he will remember that they also are his weaknesses and sins, and so he must be compassionate toward them. The word means "sympathy one with another." And there is no true sympathy unless we have felt just what others have felt. If we have fallen ourselves, we can understand the weakness which has led to the fall of others, and we also know the pain which follows. Thus this same Peter who wrote these words knew after he had denied his Lord three times with cursing, better than he did before what human weakness was, and was better prepared to minister strength and help to others who were weak. Out of his own experience of failure he could enter into the failures of others. He had learned just what the dear Redeemer said, that while the flesh was weak, yet the Spirit was willing. Feeling the great mercy of God to ourselves, and our need of it, we shall not judge others in the sense of condemning them; we shall truly hate the garment spotted by the flesh, but we shall not hate him who wears it; we shall pull him out of the fire if possible, and save him. But this feeling of compassion cannot be manufactured at will, we cannot exhort people into the possession of this heavenly principle, but the Spirit of God can and does bless the word of exhortation to the stirring up of the pure mind to a remembrance of these things, but they are things having place in the heart before. The flesh may and does often overbear them for a season, and so it is good to have the difference between the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit pointed out constantly. It was this that a brother meant who said to us once, "I love to hear preaching that tells me my faults."

"Love as brethren." More literally this might read, "Be brother loving." It is a word of tenderness, in it he reminds them that they are brethren, children are they of one common Father, and they are brethren by a closer, dearer and far more sacred tie than can exist upon earth among earthly people. He would call up to their minds all that was involved in their relation as the children of God. God had loved them, Jesus had redeemed them, the holy Spirit had come and dwelt in their hearts, and the fruits of the Spirit had been begotten within them, every precious promise, both for the present time, and for all the future, belonged to them alike, they were heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. In loving each other they were so one with each other and with Christ the liv-

ing Head, that each was loving his own flesh as it were. All this and much more is involved in the word "be brother loving." Why the need of the admonition? Simply because of the warfare of the flesh against the Spirit. As these fruits are begotten within you, he would say, and as so dear a relation exists among you, remember it, and do as this spirit of love bids you. Did brotherly love continue there could be no disputation, nor wrangling, nor backbiting, nor slander, nor tale bearing, nor any evil speaking one of another. The highest inducement to love as brethren must always be the memory that we are brethren. We must love those whom the Lord loves, and if the Lord loves us with all our faults surely we must confess that we cannot make a brother's faults any excuse for not loving him.

"Be pitiful." Here the word has the force of compassionate, tender hearted, and who that remembers his own imperfections and weakness, with all the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil, can fail to be compassionate and tender in his feelings toward others? How sweet and gracious were the words of the Lord by the psalmist: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." Deep experience wrought in the heart of one's own frailty, and unlikeness to God, and of the constant need of mercy and pity of that God against whom we sin, will lead to still more and more pity for others, in their trials and fallings. It is because of long experience in these things that none can have such forbearance and sympathy for those who err, as the aged. We recall that we thought when a youth that if we should grievously err and feel the need of pity and sympathy, we must go to those who were young like ourself, but how mistaken; none can pity like the aged who have had many falls, and know how weak the flesh is.

"Be courteous." This word signifies "friendly mindedness." There is much formal courtesy which is the height of selfishness among men, but the apostle does not mean this formal politeness which conceals the selfish heart within. True courtesy means to feel friendly and kindly, and to seek to make all with whom we come in contact feel at ease and at home in our presence. It will not be obtrusive, nor put itself forward, but will be quietly seeking of the welfare of others. True courtesy is hearty, and from the heart, and not formal. The only form which true courtesy will seek after is that which will minister to the comfort and happiness of others. Brethren, if they have friendly feeling, will not need much elaborate form to show it. It will shine out in all that they say and do. There is no courtesy like the courtesy of good will and a kind heart. If a man be born of God, and numbered among the brotherhood, he will love them, and be filled with bowels of kindness, and all who know him will see that it is so. Such an one will not desire to hurt or wound in any way, he will seek the good of his brethren, his coming in among them will be a welcome thing, there will be that feeling of kindness in him which will seek to smooth all rough places, and to pour oil upon any troubled waters. All this, when it appears in the conduct of a believer, is the fruit of that salvation which they have of God, and which embraces all good fruits. How must the disciples to whom Peter wrote have dwelt upon this word, since as believers the power of it already dwelt within them.

How gladly would they welcome the exhortation, since it would so completely fall in with their own desires. And what a rebuke there would be in it to any who had followed the flesh, and had not been living out these graces. How searching were these words then; how searching are they now.

"Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing." This is in direct opposition to the flesh. We surely need not dwell upon this at length. If an enemy of truth rails upon us, we must expect that, the Master suffered that before us and did not rail again, nor render evil for evil. If one whom we must regard as a child of God has been so captivated of the devil at his will as to do us any evil, and to rail upon us, let us remember that it is written, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," and so pity and pray for him, rather than rail upon him; if after all he be a child of God, God will deal with him as a son. If he be not a child of God, he knows not what he does, and if not embraced in the covenant of grace, let us remember the judgment of God which shall finally fall upon him. Rather, says the apostle, let us render blessing for railing. This is in full harmony with the fact that Jesus prayed for those who crucified him, and also with the fact that the martyr Stephen did the same for those who stoned him. Railing proceeds out of anger and revenge; blessing proceeds out of love and good will. The world renders evil for evil, and railing for railing, but the Spirit of Christ renders blessing and good deeds for evil ones. The humble believer remembers that once he was an enemy of God, and yet has obtained mercy. Being forgiven so much, how can he fail to forgive the few pence that others may owe him? This exhortation is not merely an exhortation to do this or that outwardly, or in word and deed, it takes hold upon the deepest experiences of the heart. If these things are really done, there will be no railing in the mind or heart, but the feeling to do good, even to those who despitefully use and evil entreat us. Good will will be followed by good deeds, and when this spirit reigns within, that heart will be ashamed and grieved at the very approach of the mind of the flesh within him, so that he will feel that it is he that needs forbearance and forgiveness from God, rather than he who has done evil to him, or railed upon him, he will hate and deplore the disposition to render evil for evil, and railing for railing, in his ownself; and feel so deeply his guilt before God, that the disposition to rail or render evil will be silenced. Under the influence of such an experience as this his cry will be, "God, forgive me," and then will arise the feeling that he cannot revenge himself upon his adversary, and the disposition to do so will then be put down. What a blessed state to be in! How sweetly then will such admonitions as this of which we are speaking fall upon his heart, they will be the very language of his desire, which perhaps he could not express. When tempted to render evil for evil, how good it is to be reminded of all the mercy of the Lord, and of all the weakness of the flesh, and of all the temptations which assail us. Realizing these things for ourselves, we shall know how to understand the failures of others, and that we ought to show them compassion when they err from the truth.

"Knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing." The teaching here is not that we should do these things in order to obtain a blessing, but rather because we have received the blessing, this the original force of the

language shows. The thought is, Having been blessed, and called of God to salvation, and to the obtaining of his mercy, and pity, and forgiveness, we should bless and not rail. Let us manifest the blessing with which we have been blessed of God, that blessing is life, eternal life with all its fruits. This life can be shown in no other way, than by doing as did the dear Savior toward us, that is, by showing to others all pity, love, mercy and forgiveness.

How different the motives to which the inspired apostle appeals, from that to which legalists appeal. The one says, "Ye have been blessed, therefore do right," the other says, "Do right that ye may be blessed." Herein is the very substance of the difference between gospel service and legal service. What a vast difference between doing things because we *must* do them, and because we *want* to do them. C.

PLEASE BE SURE

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likley to occur.

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The last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denotes the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

REVEALED RELIGION.

I hope, brother Beebe, you will not fail to give your views in full, as requested by brother Wilson, on Revealed Religion, for it is very strange to me that there is a Primitive Baptist who disbelieves in Revealed Religion. Be sure to write in full on the subject, if you please.

Yours truly,

E. G. CLARK.

Wilson, North Carolina, Dec. 9, 1858.

REPLY.

We cannot at this moment lay our hand on the number of the *Primitive Baptist* containing brother Wilson's request for our views, nor that containing brother Temple's remarks on the subject. But as we understand, brother Wilson does not intend to deny that every spiritual manifestation of God to us, embracing our whole christian experience, and all the teaching of the Holy Spirit, is a revelation of God by his Spirit, just as brother Temple and all sound Primitive Baptists hold it to be, but that he doubts or disputes the propriety of applying the word *religion* in the manner in which it is frequently applied by the brethren; that the word religion is used in the Bible to signify the conduct of men, rather than the spiritual state of the children of God. As we read of the Jew's *religion*, and of pure and undefiled religion, which is to visit the widow and the fatherless, and to keep unspotted from the world. The word *religion*, in our language, is applied very commonly to all sorts of religion; that of the Pagans, the Papists, the Protestants, as well as that of the Jews, and of the children of God; hence he infers that it has no necessary connection with divine revelation.

But we think that the brother will concede that the course in which the children of God are to walk, even the visiting of the widows and fatherless, and more espe-

cially the manner of keeping themselves unspotted from the world, is a revelation from God, and as such clearly marked out by the precepts and examples of our Lord in the Scriptures, and that all that the Scriptures contain for our instruction is a revelation from God. Although in the Scriptures, the word *religion* is commonly applied to such outward rites, duties, ordinances, practices or professions as men rely upon for divine approbation; still, those rites and rules for the christian's obedience are all revealed and divinely enjoined on them in the inspired Scriptures, and must therefore be regarded as revelation. Besides, the term is most commonly used in modern times, and by the children of God, to embrace the internal work of the Spirit, its teachings and manifestations to the saints, their faith, and hope, and love, as well as their obedience to the precepts of Christ, and therefore it must be a revelation. It is not a science, as the Arminian world hold their religion to be, which can be taught to unregenerated men, and children in *infant classes*, *Sabbath schools*, or theological seminaries; for except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God, nor the things of that kingdom. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. No man by searching can find out God. Therefore, to know God, which is eternal life, is a revelation from beginning to end. How would the saints know what is and what is not their duty as christians, if it were not revealed to them in the Scriptures, and these Scriptures, opened to them by the Spirit which takes the things of Jesus and reveals them unto us.

Although we do not believe that the brother intended to deny that what we call *religion* is a revelation, but rather to dispute the correctness of our general application of the word to make it embrace the things which are revealed to us; still, we would in all kindness of feeling, admonish him against such sweeping declarations as that there is no such thing as revealed religion, for we would consider any religion which is not revealed as valueless, as is a profession of godliness by those who deny the power thereof.

Such sweeping declarations have a tendency rather to alarm the saints and stir up discord than to edifying, and should therefore be avoided; besides, they give the enemy great room to exult and deride us.

As the brother appealed to us by name for our views, and his appeal was seconded by brother Clark, we hope we shall not be considered meddlesome or intrusive in these remarks, we design them in love, and write them in the best of feelings towards all parties concerned.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., January 1, 1859.

ROMANS VI. 22.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I believe all God's people are humble and forgiving—I speak from my knowledge of them. We are strangers in the flesh, but I hope not in Spirit. I believe that christians all see eye to eye, in matters of experience; and all speak the same things. I feel a desire to say something about the goodness and mercy of God to poor, perishing sinners. It seems that the Lord is in this place, and we knew it not. I often think of the precious words of the apostle, when he said, "For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." I desire that you would remember me in your prayers to God, for I feel that I am the most unworthy of all. Will it be asking too much if I request your views on Romans vi. 22? "But now being made free from sin and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end, everlasting life." This text has a great bearing on my mind. I heard an able minister preach from it, and he said that christians would bring forth good fruit. This set me to examining myself, and I could see no good in me; for in me dwells no good thing. I asked a brother his views on it, and he said

he thought it applied to the preachers. But I must close. I remain your friend. May we meet in heaven.

MARY DYER.

HENRY CO., Va., June 28, 1858.

REPLY.

We have but little space at this time for remarks on this important subject. The apostle had been speaking of our old man or fleshly nature being crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed, and that henceforth we should not serve sin. For says he, He that is dead is freed from sin. Now, if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him; knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him; for in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. He asks what were our fruits, when we were the servants of sin? He has told us what are the fruits or productions of our carnal and depraved natures, which are these: "Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like."—Gal.v. 19–21. But in our spiritual life and union with Christ, in which we are become dead to the law, by the body of Christ, and married unto him that is raised from the dead, our fruits are brought as the legitimate productions of this marriage to Christ, as the fruits of the Spirit, and not of the flesh. Now, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."—Gal. v. 22–24. *Now being made free from sin* (that is, all the family of God,) by the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, we being buried with him by baptism unto death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. And this walking in newness of life, is walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. The body, or flesh, or *old man*, being dead because of sin, can only produce dead works, such as are named in what we have quoted above from Gal. v. 19–21. But the Spirit is life, because of righteousness, its fruits are therefore spiritual and vital. Thus *we become servants of God*, for Paul says, "With my mind I myself serve the law of God, but with my flesh the law of sin." Having the Spirit of Christ in us, we learn that it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure: and consequently we work out that which his Spirit has begotten in us, which are *fruits unto holiness.* They are implanted by the Spirit of holiness, and the seed remaineth, and that seed is incorruptible, and cannot fail to produce in us the fruits of the Spirit which are named by the apostle in our quotation from Gal. v. 22–24. Sister Dyer may search in vain to find these good fruits, which are unto holiness, and which spring up into eternal life, or the end of which is eternal life, growing out of the flesh, which is carnal, depraved, dead, crucified, put off by the circumcision of Christ. And here is where many of God's dear children often become sorely tried, when we look for the fruits of the Spirit to be produced by the flesh. They seek for good fruit from a very bad tree, a tree that is dead, and poison, and only bears corrupt fruit. But when we search to see what God's

Spirit has produced in our hearts, of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, &c., we find it produced by the Spirit of life and immortality, which God has implanted in our hearts. The brother was wrong in supposing this text applied only to preachers, it applies equally to all the members of our Lord Jesus Christ.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., January 1, 1859.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Old School Baptist Conference of Maine, assembled with the church in North Berwick, sendeth greeting to the churches composing the associations with whom she corresponds.

DEAR BRETHREN, BELOVED IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST:—We much desire your peace and prosperity in the kingdom of Christ. We well know from divine teaching that our prosperity cometh only from the Lord, and the cry of the church is, "Send now prosperity." We need God's heavenly husbandry that we his garden and vineyard may flourish in his sight. We need our gracious Lord to dress and keep the plants that his own right hand hath planted, then,

"Each moment watered by his care,
And fenced with power divine,
Fruit to eternal life shall bear
The feeblest branch of thine."

Our times in this world (like all the times that the church has experienced in the preceding ages) are such that we need to be well fenced with the loving-kindness of the Lord or else all they which pass by the way will pluck the vineyard and the boar out of the wood, and the wild beast of the field will waste and devour us. (Psalm lxxx. 12, 13.) It is written for our comfort, "Thou Lord, wilt bless the righteous, with favor wilt thou compass him as with a shield."—Psalm v. 12, and, "He that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about."—Psalm xxxii. 10. Thus hedged in by our God, and nourished by his doctrine, the churches shall flourish to the praise of the Lord. There are indications that in some parts of our land inroads in the vineyard have already been made by the wild beast of the field. Perverse disputers of the doctrine of grace have risen up teaching perverse things to draw away disciples after them, and bringing into bondage some of the blood-bought saints of God.

The members of Christ's body do not thrive upon erroneous doctrines, but the pernicious effects of the entrance of that which is contrary to the gospel of Christ will in due time be manifest in the blighted and wasted condition of the church. Seeing then, beloved, that we are so dependent upon the mercies of the Lord for our health and blessedness, it becomes us to cleave unto the Lord with full purpose of heart, and to beware of every false way, and all doctrines that would ensnare us away from the gospel of the grace of God. We are assured that they that receive abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. (Rom. v. 17.) And this abundance of grace comes unto us not only when we were first called by grace and given to taste the blessedness of redemption and forgiveness of sins, (Eph. i. 7,) but every moment since then we have continued so poor and needy and unworthy that we have only continued to this day by the ministrations of the Lord's abundance of grace. "He holdeth our soul in life and suffereth not our feet to be moved." "We shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." We shall be triumphant over all adversity, for our Savior who hath loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, will not suffer us to

perish. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." We shall be more than conquerors through him that loved us.

We have appointed, the Lord willing, our next yearly conference to assemble with the church in North Berwick, Maine, to commence on Friday before the first Monday in September, 1902, and continue three days, when we hope to receive again your kind correspondence and messengers.

FRED. W. KEENE, Mod.
JOSEPH HALL, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Joanna W. Simmons was born in Madison Co., Ill., March 12th, 1833, and came with her parents to Greenbush township, Warren Co., in November of the same year, where she has lived to the day of her death, and was one of the oldest of the early pioneers of the county. Dec. 30th, 1852, she was married to **Isaac Holeman,** by whom she became the mother of eleven children, three sons and eight daughters, one son and one daughter having died in early childhood. Nine children and a large number of grandchildren are left to mourn.

At the June meeting in 1885, of the New Hope Church of Old School Baptists, she related an experience of grace, and was received into fellowship, and baptized by Elder I. N. Vanmeter, and remained a steadfast and devoted member of the church during the remainder of her life, and she and brother Holeman were always at their meetings unless providentially prevented, until prostrated by the malady that caused their death, and their brethren and sisters always met with a hearty welcome and hospitable entertainment; in fact it was a home with all the word implies, and I know of no word in the English language that means so much as that word. Many of our brethren and sisters from a distance will readily call to mind the warm and kindly greetings that bid them welcome, and made them feel at ease under their friendly roof. Soon after the death of Deacon Holeman, and probably hastened by it, sister Holeman was prostrated by a complication of disorders, dropsy and diabetes, with other troubles, which culminated in her death at 2 a. m. August 22d, 1901, at the age of 68 years, 5 months and 10 days.

Her funeral occurred on Friday, the 23d, from the Baptist meeting-house in Greenbush, and was very largely attended, and her remains were buried beside her husband's to mingle with their kindred dust until the final resurrection from the dead.

The writer was in attendance and conducted the services.

ALSO,

Elder Robert F. Haynes, of Oak Hill, Peoria Co., Ill., died of cancer, at 4 a. m., August 30th, 1901. He was born in Saratoga Co., N. Y., May 20th, 1820, and in 1839 came to Hancock Co., Ill., where on Nov. 24th, 1841, he was married to Miss Terrissa J. Bobbitt, who became the mother of four daughters and three sons, two daughters and one son passed on before, leaving two daughters, sister Cynthia Stratten, of Jasper, Mo., and Mrs. Susan Robson, of Eureka, Ill., and two sons, John W. Haynes, of Neck City, Mo., and Robert E., of Dawson, Iowa. April 12th, 1868, sister Haynes passed away, and on January 18th, 1872, he was united in marriage to Miss Mary Ann Males, who became the mother of six children, one daughter died in early childhood, leaving still living three sons and two daughters, and passed away on the 29th day of July, just thirty-one days before her husband. In early manhood brother Haynes made a public profession of his faith and hope in the mercy of God, and united with the Old School of Primitive Baptist church, (I think in Hancock County) and was soon after ordained as a minister of the gospel. I have not the date or place of his ordination, moving soon after to the vicinity of the Salem church, in Marshall Co., Ill., where he lived and preached. The greater part of his time he spent in the work of the ministry. He was possessed of a retiring and diffident disposition, but preached with the ability God gave him. He was recognized as a writer of more than ordinary ability, and his articles have appeared from time to time in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for which he felt a warm attachment, and was a life-long reader. His neighbors and fellow citizens recognized his mutual and legal abilities by electing him to the office of Magistrate for the town in which he lived, which office he filled to the satisfaction of all until the ravages of his malady admonished him that the time of his departure was at hand. Not long before his death he said to me, "Tell my brethren for me, so far as the doctrine I have believed so many years is concerned, I would not desire to alter or amend it. I still believe it is God's eternal truth, and confidently expect, as I see my end approaching, to go into the presence of my Maker, and stand justified or condemned according to the immutability of its precepts." Just before his death he directed his daughter to have his funeral preached from the book of Job, but was too weak to designate the chapter or verse, but she selected Job xiv. 14.

The funeral occurred from his late home, Saturday, August 31st, 1901, and was largely attended by relatives, friends and neighbors, and after appropriate

services he was buried beside his companion, in the South Post Cemetery. The writer of this tribute was sent for, and officiated at the obsequies.

S. KETCHUM.

ELMWOOD, Ill., Sept. 1, 1901.

DIED—At his residence, 355 Lexington Ave., New York city, on Wednesday evening, at about 10:30, July 24th, 1901, **Daniel S. Slawson,** at the age of 63 years. He had been afflicted several years with sugar diabetes, but seemed as well as usual until Sunday, July 21st, while paying a visit, in company with his wife, sister Sarah E. Slawson, to relatives at Westchester, N. Y., he had an acute attack of pain in the left lung, which eventually extended to the right lung also. On Tuesday morning they returned to their home in the city. He was not considered critically ill, but on Wednesday he gave a reluctant consent to have a physician called, apparently not considering himself in need of medical attendance. The physician discovered a tendency toward pneumonia, and danger of the lungs filling up, and requested him to lie quietly in bed, which he could not bring himself to do. At bedtime on Wednesday night, his wife bathed his face and gave him nourishment, and he said to her, "Now go and lie down, I am so comfortable." Those were his last words. In a short time he was heard breathing heavily. His wife and a maid who was near, hastened to his bedside, and found him unconscious and breathing his last. Evidently his heart was involved because of his low vitality. The shock to our dear sister, who has ever ministered faithfully to his comfort, and the affectionate children, none of whom were in the city at the time of his death, and but one of whom knew of his illness until apprised of his death, was pathetic in the extreme, and unbounded sympathy is felt for them in their deep affliction by their large circle of friends and relatives. The interested kindness of the man who has now closed his eyes to all mortal things, has been a prominent characteristic of him, as the Baptist friends can testify to, who in large numbers have partaken of the hospitality of his home. His relatives, associates and employees could truly call him "friend." His children honored his counsel, and we all shall and do miss his genial face and words of friendship. For several months past his interest in life seemed to be lessening, and those who saw most of him felt this to be true, and those who knew him best could not be mistaken in the belief that his tenderest, best impulses, he tried all his life to conceal, despising hypocrisy and affectation. Our sister has believed him to have experienced many years ago that of sinners he was chief, and later a peace and feeling sense of the remission of his sins, and she long had hoped to witness his open confession with his lips the salvation and the righteousness he had, as she trusted, with the heart believed unto. In this she was disappointed, as he never made a profession, and kept silent on the subject.

Funeral services were held at the late residence in New York, on Friday evening, the 26th, and were attended by a large number of friends and near relatives. Elder John McConnell spoke in prayer and read a hymn, and Elder D. M. Vail preached from the text, "How are the dead raised, and with what body do they come?" &c. On Saturday morning the relatives accompanied the remains to Middletown, N. Y., where the interment was made. Elder H. C. Ker, of Middletown, officiated at the interment. The attendance was large at both places, and all the services were comforting to the sorrowing family and friends. The deceased is survived by his widow and five children, three sons and two daughters; all of the children are married except the youngest son, Wallace, and all have the deepest sympathy of a very large circle of friends.

WATIE A. BEARD.

NEW YORK, N. Y., August 14, 1901.

Elder Nathan C. Yarbrough departed this life July 18th, 1901, at his residence in Columbia Co., Ark., aged 65 years and three days. His father and family moved from Tennessee to south Arkansas when he was quite young, where he grew up to manhood and was married to Miss Mary F. Bacchus, in January, 1861. To this union were born six children, four sons and two daughters, all of whom survive him, with their mother. Elder Yarbrough united with the Old School Baptist church in 1862, and some time after was liberated by the church to exercise his gift in public, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry about the year 1876, from which time he was called to serve several churches, which he did till a short time before his death, to their satisfaction and comfort, ever proclaiming a finished and complete salvation in and through the blood of Jesus Christ, unhesitatingly, not flinching nor wavering at any time in his ministry. Salvation in time and in eternity through Christ was his precious theme.

Here it seems proper to state that his son, Elder A. R. Yarbrough, united with the church a few years ago, was soon liberated by the church to exercise in public, and quite recently was ordained to the full work of the ministry. The father being present on the occasion gave the charge to his son, as Paul did to Timothy. This was the last time he ever spoke in public. Thus it seems plain the providence and purpose of God that in removing the father from time, he raised up the son to take his place, which he is now doing faithfully and acceptably.

Elder Yarbrough was a kind and devoted husband and father. It seemed to be his chief earthly care to make his home a place of delight, cheerfulness and pleasantry, and truly they all esteemed it as a very sweet home. He was ever ready to help the needy

and comfort the afflicted. Though he suffered much at intervals, he bore it with great patience and fortitude, never murmuring or complaining, and finally passed away in a calm, sweet sleep. Thus passed away a good man, greatly beloved by the brotherhood, and highly esteemed as a citizen and neighbor throughout the community in which he lived.

May the Lord comfort, guide and lead the bereaved family through the perils of this life, and finally save them, is the prayer of this unworthy writer,

A. W. BACCHUS.

STEPHENS, Ark., August 13, 1901.

DIED—After three days illness of cholera infantum, **Gorden L.**, son of George and Mildred Turner, at their home near Long Lane, Mo., July 20th, 1901, aged 1 year, 1 month and 12 days. He seemed taken for death, as he lay from the first in almost a lifeless stupor, until a few hours before he died he began to scream, and went into a spasm, from which he never revived. His father, mother, grandfather and grandmother will miss him most, with whom his dear, brief life was spent. It was often said of him, He was too bright a child to be raised, and as his poor father expressed in his sad letter to us, "I had always feared he would never be spared to manhood." But God knew best in calling him from the evil to come.

His funeral was conducted by Elder L. C. Mills, and his remains laid to rest in New Hope cemetery, to await the coming of the Lord. May God comfort the bereaved.

E. C. FOGERSON.

BERLIN, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In the obituary notice of **Mrs. Susan Matilda Hite,** it was omitted to say that her home was at Nashville, Tenn., and that her church membership was with the Primitive Baptist church, S. College St, Nashville, Tenn. Please mention this in next issue. Obituary was in number for August 1st, 1901.

GEO. M. HITE.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Aug. 14, 1901.

PERSONAL.

ANY one knowing the present address of Elder S. Busby, formerly of Mississippi, will confer a favor by sending the same to A. J. Doggett, Souwilpa, Ala.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$477 73
D. S. Elliott, N. Y., $.82; J. P. Ashcroft, W. Va., $1.00.—Total	1 82
Total to date	$479 55

MEETINGS.

A YEARLY meeting of the Albany & Troy, N. Y., Old School Baptist Church, is appointed to be held on Thursday and Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, (19th and 20th) 1901. All desiring to hear the word of God as proclaimed by his chosen ones, are invited to meet with us. Visitors will be met at Bath, opposite Albany, N. Y., on arrival of Albany & Troy Belt Line steam cars, leaving Albany 6:30 p. m., the day before the meeting, and also Sept. 19th, train leaving Albany 7:30 a. m.

EZER LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

THE South Ouachita Association will convene with Good Hope Church, in Union Parish, La., one mile north of Oakland, commencing Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1901. An invitation is extended to all lovers of truth to meet with us.

L. C. TRULL.

THE First Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, in Vega, N. Y., has appointed a yearly or two days meeting, to be held the last Wednesday and Thursday in September, (25th and 26th) 1901.

Also a counsel at the same time to examine the gift of brother John B. Slawson, and if thought proper, to set him apart to the work of the ministry. We invite our brethren and sisters and friends, especially ministering brethren, to attend with us.

This done by order and in behalf of the church, June 29th, 1901.

Those coming by rail will be met at Roxbury, on Tuesday, the day before the meeting.

WILLIAM BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE church at Cammal, Pa., is expecting to hold a two days meeting Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 28th and 29th, 1901. All will be made welcome. The railroad station is Cammal, Pa., Pennsylvania division of New York Central R. R. Brother Sammy Moffat lives three rods from the depot.

D. M. VAIL.

THE annual meeting of the Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Olive & Hurley Old School Baptist Church, the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (2d and 3d,) 1901. The church extends a cordial invitation to all members of our faith and order to attend, especially our brethren in the ministry.

Those coming by rail will be met at Shokan, on Ulster & Delaware Railroad.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

THE Otego Old School Baptist church have appointed their yearly meeting to be held October 2d and 3d, 1901. Elders Durand and Ker are expected to be present, and perhaps Elder Chick and other minis-

ters will attend the meeting. Trains will be met Tuesday, also Wednesday morning at 9:52 o'clock.

Done in behalf of the church.

S. C. F. GUERNSEY, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Old School Baptist Association will meet with the Providence church, at Rainsburg, Bedford Co., Pa., on Friday, October 11th, and continue three days.

Those coming from the east or west by way of P. R. R., will take the train at Huntington, for Bedford, and those coming from points south, will take the train at Cumberland, Md., for Bedford. These trains will be met on Thursday.

We cordially invite our brethren and friends to meet with us, and especially ministering brethren. For any other information address the writer.

J. C. MELLOTT.

RIDDLESBURG, Pa.

THE Corresponding Meeting of Virginia will meet, Providence permitting, with the New Valley church, at Hughesville, Loudoun Co., Va., commencing on Wednesday, October 16th, and continuing three days. Train leaving Washington city Tuesday at 4:35 p. m. will be met at Hamilton station, Southern Railway. Any one wishing to come on any other train Tuesday or Wednesday, notify Capt. F. Myers, Lincoln, or Levi White or John L. Ball, Woodgrove, or James Baldwin, Mt. Gilead, Va. We earnestly invite our brethren and friends to visit us, and especially ministering brethren.

Any other information desired address the writer.

E. V. WHITE, Pastor.

LEESBURG, Va.

THE Welsh Tract yearly meeting is appointed to commence on Saturday, Oct. 19th, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue two days. Those coming from Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore, will come via B. & O. to Newark, Del., Saturday morning. Trains leave Philadelphia, Chestnut St., at 7:30 a. m., and Baltimore, Camden station, at 7:55 a. m. Those coming via Delaware Division will take train leaving Delmar at 7:05 a. m. Saturday, and get tickets to Newark via Porter.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth to meet with us. Ministering brethren on their way from the Virginia Corresponding Meeting to the Salisbury Association are especially invited to meet with us.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Indiantown, Wicomico Co., near the little town of Powelville, Md., beginning Wednesday, the 23d of October, 1901, and continuing the two following days. A special invitation is given to all lovers of sound doctrine.

Those coming from the north will take cars leaving Philadelphia 7:25 a. m., arriving in Salisbury 11:55 a. m., at the junction, where the B., C. & A. train will be waiting, change cars for Pittsville, Md., where they will be met and conveyed to places of entertainment.

Those coming from the south, on the B., C. & A., from Baltimore, leave Baltimore, steamer connection, between Pier 4 and Light street, 6:30 a. m., arriving in Salisbury 11:47, where they will join those coming from the north. All will be met at Pittsville.

Those who anticipate coming should board the train on Tuesday, the 22d. Conveyances will be at Pittsville to meet you on Tuesday, Oct. 22d, the day before the meeting commences. We hope to see a goodly number; we will be ready with heart and hand to receive you.

If there is any change in trains leaving before the time arrives for friends to start, they can obtain information from any railroad official.

L. A. HALL, Church Clerk.

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10:30 A. M. **3 P. M.**

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GILBERT BEEBE'S SON.

Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

BY GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,

MIDDLETOWN, ORANGE CO., NEW YORK.

To Whom all letters should be addressed, and money orders made payable.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 69. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1901. NO. 19.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NEWARK, Del., Jan. 20, 1901.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR BROTHER IN THE MOST PRECIOUS HOPE WHICH WE HAVE IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD:—I always feel a great hesitation in addressing one of the Lord's dear ones in this way. There is a great solemnity to me in it; so much is contained in it, I have many questionings if indeed I have a part and a right in these precious things, a hope in the precious things of eternity, through Jesus Christ our Lord. While I feel a hesitation, and questionings when addressing one of the dear ones of the kingdom, yet at the same time it is a joy to me and a precious privilege, and I feel to say with dear Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee; let thy people be my people, and thy God my God." Always in addressing one of the dear ones much is presented to me of the precious kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the precious things unto which the saints are come, yet when I try to write of these things it seems to me that I can express so little of what I would say, I find it all so much better expressed in the Scriptures of truth than I can express it, and there recorded by those inspired of God, by those who were taught, not of man, neither by man, but of God, by the revelation of Jesus Christ, even as the saints to-day are taught the things of God, and will be in all ages of the world. The things of God and his kingdom are eternal, and stand sure. They change not, they endure forever. The word of the Lord is as powerful to-day as in the beginning, as before the beginning of the world. Let us read the testimony which he has given, the plain testimony of his omnipotence, recorded in Isaiah lv. 10, 11: "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it." Also Isaiah xlvi. 9–13: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else, I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from

ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executest my counsel from a far country; yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass, I have purposed it, I will also do it. Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted, that one far from righteousness: I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory." 2 Tim. ii. 19: "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Matthew viii. 11: "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." I must here add words contained in the eighth chapter of the letter of Paul to the Romans, so precious to all who know and love the truth; so full of comfort to the church, showing the certainty of the salvation of the people of God; that it is all of God, and that it is finished and complete: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." See the confidence of the apostle of our Lord in the certainty of the fulfillment of the purpose of God: "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us who can be against us?" I cannot leave this subject without quoting words brought to my mind as I write, precious words contained in the first chapter of Paul's epistle to the Ephesians: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise and glory of his grace wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved." "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." His word shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish that which he please.

Dear brother, how exceeding great is the love of God manifested in the salvation of his people. Surely the salvation of his people is in his hands, and is therefore sure and certain. All, all, is of his grace. "We have nothing we have not received from his hand." The salvation of the Lord's people is sure, is already finished, and O how thankful I am, and have been, that it is so. "For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

But I must not write more, I had not thought to write this when I took my pen to write to you.

Dear Elder Grafton was with us to-day. The prayer this morning was full of precious comfort to me, which I much needed; since I have felt refreshed, my hope renewed, and the precious things of the gospel brought with exceeding comfort to my mind, so it is hard for me to refrain from speaking or writing of them. I feel indeed thankful to the Lord for his goodness and mercy to me, I who am not deserving of the least of his mercies.

My purpose in writing to you to-day was to inclose to you two letters written to me by our dear brother, Elder Fred. W. Keene, which I would like you to publish in the SIGNS, if you think best. I have his consent to have them published if you think best. His letters are always full of comfort to the dear saints. These were of especial comfort to me, and I believe they will also be comforting to others, so I wish to share them with the dear readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. At the time the first letter was written I had received great comfort from a letter of his published in the SIGNS, and had felt drawn to write and tell him of it, as I felt it would be a comfort to him to know of it. Such little encouragements and tokens are so often a help by the way in this our pilgrimage journey. It pleased the Lord at that time to lead me through deep trials and heavy afflictions, so that from it I was brought to realize the exceeding weakness of the flesh, and that we are kept by the power of God, through his dear Son Jesus Christ, that of ourselves we can do nothing, and that it is "God who worketh in us, both to will and do of his good pleasure." I was brought to realize that God had power, and was able to save his people and keep them from the evil, and to preserve them in his kingdom; that his power is over all things, but I was in much darkness, and greatly tried and tempted with unbelief, and the question with me day and night was, Am I one of those unto whom the mercy of God is extended? It seemed to me that it could not be possible, that it was a mistake, that I had no right to hope, that I had in some way deceived the dear ones in the church, for I felt surely there could be no one like me, for my sinfulness rose up before me as mountains to a degree I had never felt it before in my experience. O, how I hated it all; how wretched I was. I felt that surely there was no one as I. I felt that I must leave the church, for I had no place with the dear ones there, yet I felt that I must still go to hear the preaching, for how could I give that up? I wondered if they would let me attend the meetings still. You can see what exceeding great darkness I was in, yet, my brother, I had desired this very experience, I had desired of the Lord that I might receive of the afflictions and sufferings of his dear people, that I might be brought more into fellowship with those who have suffered for his dear name's sake, so that if it were the Lord's will I might perhaps be able to comfort some of the dear, tried ones who are spoken of in the Scriptures as blessed; the trial of their faith as more precious than gold: who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. I have been thankful since for the experience which I had at this time. It was while passing through this experience that the Lord was pleased to give me comfort and renewed hope, to make me know that his hand was directing my experience, that my experience was like unto that of his dear people, through the letter of his dear servant, Elder Keene. I need not say my heart was filled with rejoicing and thankfulness.

The precious words given the church by the apostle James, come to me as I write, with regard to the trial of the faith of the people of God, and the afflictions which they must pass through, and I cannot refrain from writing them: "My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect

work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." Also, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." Take my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction and of patience: "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" Our Lord has said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The apostle Paul testifies, saying, "But we glory in tribulation also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." He asks, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Also how preciously comforting is the first chapter of 1 Peter, is it not? And how comforting the verse in that most beautiful hymn, "How firm a foundation," &c. Surely, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

The second letter of Elder Keene's was written to me after an attempted answer of mine to his letter. It has been very comforting to me.

I am much comforted in reading the SIGNS.

May the grace of our Lord be with you and all his dear people, to the praise and glory of his dear name, is my prayer. Peace be with you.

Your little sister, I hope, in the fellowship of the gospel,

LAURA A. HAMILTON.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, August 24, 1899.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST JESUS:—I received your letter and read it with interest. What you are learning concerning yourself, of your sinfulness and helplessness, and the conflicts you are experiencing, are all needful, or you would not be subjected to such humbling things. To humble us is part of the purpose of the Lord in all his dealings with us. There is in our flesh a perpetual tendency to arrogancy in some form or the other. Our flesh would incite us with delusive ideas of getting along religiously independently, and it is a life-long lesson that we have to be learning, that we are dependent upon the Lord for all things that pertain to the divine life. Jesus Christ is not *something* to his people, but Christ is *All* and in all. (Col. iii. 11.) Under the burden of our conflicts with the depravity of our hearts, we sensibly realize that we have no ground for vaunting ourselves; our unholiness grieves us, and makes us hang our heads, and ashamed and sad in heart we sigh unto the holy God. But

Jesus is our hope; he is not a mere theory of a Savior, ah no. In our felt need Jesus is sought for, and we look unto him as the real, living, all-glorious and desirable One. "Jesus only can do helpless sinners good." He bears a thousand sacred names, and not one of them is an empty, meaningless sound. In all ages his people have tested and proved him to be in very truth all that the Scriptures declare concerning him. In whatever circumstances we may come into, it will be found that Christ's fullness is our sufficiency. God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. It is in vain that we look to other sources for supplies, our spiritual supplies all flow from Jesus, and he is unto us the fountain of living waters. What is so desirable, is to be kept daily and hourly looking unto Jesus. (Heb. xii. 2.) He knows our buffetings with temptations and sin, he knows that the vanities of the world are enticing and vexing. All our trials, whether light or heavy, he well understands: "Thou hast known my soul in adversities." He does not stand aloof from us in our difficulties, he is the Friend that loveth at all times, and sticketh closer than a brother. Blessed are we if found casting all our care upon him, for he careth for every poor sinner that trusteth in him: "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." It is the privilege of the believer to be often found at "the throne of grace," to obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need, and as the Holy Spirit testifies unto us of the excellencies of Christ, then more and more we shall understand how Christ is all. All our salvation and righteousness, our meat and drink, and life, our Husband, Prophet, Priest and King. Christ is all. From him all grace deriving, we shall the victors be.

I will bring my little note to a close, with desire of heart for you that you may have much revelation given you of the fullness of our Redeemer, and that you may live in humble dependence upon him alone. "He is able to succor them that are tempted."

I am, I hope, your brother in Jesus,

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, August 21, 1900.

DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD:—I must pen you a few lines in return for your good letter. I feel it is a very high privilege to be able to say, "I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts."—Psalm cxix. 63. The more I contemplate the hope that God has put his fear in my heart, the more I admire the fact that it is all of his sovereign grace that it is so. Those who truly reverence the name of the Lord, are to all appearance very few. O, what vast multitudes surround us on every hand who give no indication of any desire toward the glorious and gracious God. And the vast multitudes who make a loud profession that they are worshipers of God, with them the humble sinner, the affectionate believer in Jesus, can find no agreement, oneness and companionship. If the popular worshipers are to be accounted worshipers, we may still ask the question, What God do they worship? With many it may be said, They worship they know not what, and their God is not the God of Israel. They have another Jesus. But if we have been taught of God, if we have been called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, if to our poor hearts Jesus and his blood and righteousness have been made precious, how richly favored we are. How signal is the mercy of the Lord toward us! O, I am hum-

bled to contemplate the grace and love and tender mercy of God unto me.

"O wondrous grace, and mystery profound,
In God's eternal purpose I was found;
His sovereign love, his grace, his deep decree,
In some mysterious way included me."

O for a heart filled with gratitude to the God of our salvation! I repeat, I trust I am sensible that it is the reigning grace of God that has given me the lot of them that fear his name. His name is sacred and dear to my soul. I am so sinful and needy, but I am not forgotten of God who leads me and instructs me to seek unto the treasures of the unsearchable riches of Christ. Here I have plenty, and by the fullness of our Beloved I am nourished and comforted, and so good is the Lord, that I am at times so enriched and satisfied with the fruits and excellencies of our Redeemer, that I can say indeed he maketh me to drink of the river of his pleasures. That a sinner should be so graciously treated is wonderful. The Lord has given you for a little space a reviving from out of the slough of despondency, and praise is due unto him, which I have no doubt you have felt in a degree in your heart.

I will now bring my few lines to a close, desiring you may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. May the same portion be mine also.

With regard to my former letter, do as you please with it, I have forgotten what I penned.

I am, I hope, your brother in Jesus,

FRED. W. KEENE.

IN TEXAS.

EARLY last spring my mind became strangely impressed to visit Texas, but it was not until the middle of June that the way was opened for me to go. On my way I stopped some weeks in the western portions of the States of Kentucky and Tennessee. It is in this region that the contentions over predestination and conditionalism have recently divided the Baptists. My appointments were made among those churches that remained in the ancient faith and order, refusing to follow the cunningly devised fables of certain men. I had heard and read many hard things of these people, but my visit among them disclosed the following facts: Their ministers seem to be humble, God-fearing men, walking in meekness in the commandments of Jesus. They are not boasters, not heady, not high minded, but on the contrary they are grave, sober minded men, meek and lowly in heart, speaking the truth in love. As far as I was enabled to observe, they ruled well their own house, and have good report of them that are without. The members also bear the scriptural marks of the church of God. The women are modest, grave and sedate, chaste, keepers at home, and the men provide for their households honestly in the sight of all men. They all seem to be of one mind, living in peace, and striving together for the faith of the gospel. I felt while among them that I was indeed with the Lord's portion.

This remnant that is left is not so much in the minority as some would make believe. A brother in Texas who attended the Fulton Convention went out to one of Elder Perkins' churches on Saturday, and that brother says there were more Baptists at Elder Perkins' conference meeting on Saturday than there were at the National Convention.

From Tennessee I went to Arkansas. I visited four or five churches in that State, and found them walking in the faith and order of the gospel.

My first appointment in Texas was at Big Spring Church, in the eastern part of the State. This is a large church, with a pastor who believes and loves the truth. My second appointment was at Mt. Vernon. Several hundred people met me here; the church has a membership of one hundred and thirty, and has the pastoral care of Elder H. B. Jones. There was a schism in this church a few years ago: about twenty members declared against the doctrine of predestination and all those that believe it. These were hopelessly in the minority, so they were excluded from the church. The leaders of them have about all united with the Missionary Baptists. There is no ground between Predestinarian Baptists and Arminianism for a new denomination, or a compromising body to stand.

From Mt. Vernon I pursued my journey on toward central Texas, filling appointments by the way. Everywhere I was greeted by good congregations, frequently very large ones, of whole souled lovers of the truth.

I attended the New Harmony Association, in central Texas. The place selected to hold this meeting was a beautiful Mesquite grove, near the Colorado River, about forty miles from Brownwood. My party reached the place on Thursday evening, after an all day drive from Brownwood. We found several hundred people there pitching their camps. On account of the sparse population here, it is the custom for all to camp on the grounds during these meetings. Indeed, the people seem to be just as much at home on the road or in camp as they are in their own houses. After selecting our places and striking camp we partook heartily of a well relished supper in true camp style, and then assembled under the arbor and listened to a wholesome gospel sermon. Services being ended, all repaired to their beds, for all were weary, many having driven one hundred and fifty miles, and had been on the road four or five days. Our slumbers were soon disturbed by the howling of wolves about the camp: not wolves in sheep's clothing, but real wolves, wolves in their own dress, without any attempt at disguise; they were attracted not by the scent of religious lucre, but by the scent of the beef that had been butchered for the occasion. New comers were arriving all night, and all through the forenoon of the next day. Aged women sixty, seventy, and even eighty years of age, had driven long distances, having been on the road many days, and had camped by the wayside at night, to reach this meeting; many aged men had done likewise; many of them who were readers of the SIGNS had long known me, but had never expected to see me. These aged pilgrims took me by the hand, and with tears in their eyes and thankfulness in their hearts, welcomed me in the name of the Lord. As I was received by these godly people, I thought of Abraham, the friend of God, of old Anna serving God night and day, of Simeon waiting for the consolation of Israel, of Lydia, whose heart the Lord opened, of Phebe, the servant of the church, and of many others of the cloud of witnesses with which we are compassed.

The meeting was formally opened on Friday morning by the introductory sermon. This sermon was preached by Elder Wood, a godly man who is fervent in the Spirit. In this discourse he said that he could not preach conditional time

salvation, because it falls short of his case. The preaching on Friday was acceptable, and the day was spent in the fear and service of the Lord. After the services on Friday night, a number came forward and related the Lord's dealings with them, and were heartily received into the fellowship of the saints. Saturday afternoon was the time set for the baptism. At the time appointed a large crowd repaired to the beautiful Colorado River near by, to witness the ordinance. As the people were gathered there in that wilderness place, a panorama of Bible scenes passed before me: John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and baptizing in Jordan; Christ, the Lamb of God, coming to be baptized; the Christ coming up out of the water; the heavens opening and the Spirit descending upon him. But instead of John on this occasion, it was some of his faithful brethren perpetuating the same ancient doctrine and order; instead of the Christ coming to be baptized, it was a company of his humble followers, his little children, whom he had given grace and faith to follow him. Instead of imaginary scenes of two thousand years ago, it was a real occurrence before mine own eyes. I know that heaven must have been opened in the hearts and consciences of those baptized, for I could see heaven in their faces, and felt it in my own unworthy heart. So Saturday passed away with much to praise God for.

Sunday came, which proved to be the last and great day of the feast. Elder J. C. Sikes was appointed to speak on Sunday morning. This man has suffered more persecution for the truth's sake than any other in Texas. He and I camped together during the meeting. All Saturday night he was pressed in spirit, and he wrestled with the Lord in prayers and strong supplications. If ever I prayed for another in all my life, I prayed for this poor man, who had by this time became a precious brother to me. Sunday morning as all were seated under the arbor while brother Sikes was pleading with the Lord in prayer, and my whole being was engaged for him that the Lord would open a door of utterance to him, that he might speak the wonderful works of God, I felt in my heart that the Lord had liberated him to speak the gospel that day. I felt his liberation as plainly as I ever felt anything in my life. I waited in joyful expectation for him to speak. I felt the sermon coming before a word was spoken, as one feels the grateful rain approaching even before a drop has fallen. "The coming event surely cast its shadow before." My feelings were not disappointed. The Lord filled brother Sikes with the everlasting gospel. It came not only in gentle showers, but in torrents, carrying all with it. The windows of heaven were opened, and the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and everything seemed to me to be flooded with the glorious gospel of the Son of God. Few times if ever in all my life have I been blessed with a more glorious hearing. It was a time that will long be remembered with me. May God preserve and sustain this dear minister of his gospel, and may God's people love and minister to him for the truth's sake. I feel that all that I have is his, because he ministered unto me most wonderfully spiritual things.

After Elder Sikes, Elder Harris, an aged and beloved man, spoke. He spoke fervently of the love of God, and spoke the truth in love and meekness. His words were lovely and profitable to me. I met many ministers whose names I have not mentioned, but with whom I

feel a union of soul. May God bless them all, and lead them in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

There are sharp contentions in some localities in Texas over conditional time salvation, but the great majority of Baptists there will not accept that theory. Resolutions are being passed in some localities against the doctrine of salvation wholly by grace. Novices and strikers are risen up against the ancient order and doctrine of the church, who speak evil of the way of truth, but as the test comes these men are disappointed sorely to find themselves in the minority, when they naturally expected and coveted the majority.

My tour in Texas is fraught with many sweet remembrances, because it was attended by so many mercies. God gave me favor in the eyes of his people there, and their fellowship and many kindnesses strengthen and encourage me.

H. M. CURRY.

GREENFIELD, Ind., Jan. 30, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have just read your editorial upon Jude 3, and Phil. ii. 12, and I want to talk with you for a little. I think we should return more to the apostolic practice of speaking often one to another of the rich and glorious theme of salvation by grace. This I think would be to our closer uniting in fellowship and love.

I want to say first, It should always be our desire to know the word of God, and not to endeavor to make it conform to views that we may have had concerning that matter, or to Baptist doctrine, or to anything else, but our aim should be to ascertain what does the blessed truth reveal to us. Everything falls before the sublime truths of the blessed Bible. O, that our beloved brethren everywhere, north, south, east and west, would pray the Lord to guide them in all humility and meekness into the truth as it is in Jesus.

I love the spirit in which you write. I have never seen any different spirit in any of your writings, that I have read. I do not know but you are right in your view upon the common salvation in the text in Jude. I had looked upon this expression as referring to our temporal salvation, until I read your comments upon it. Jude may have meant it as you think.

Now I want to speak about "work out your own salvation." In this Scripture, it seems to me, the apostle shows a desire to be fully understood, by the explicit way in which he exhorts the brethren at Philippi, and they no doubt did know just what he meant, whether we do or not. He here uses the word "own," to rivet or fix his desire more firmly on their minds. I do not see how he could have told those brethren more explicitly, just what he would exhort them to do. (Ye) "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." I do not understand that the word "out" here has the opposite meaning from the word "in," which is in the clause "worketh in you," but think that it modifies work in the sense of, "to an end." Then, as here used, "work out," means to attain. Thus the pupil works out his problems, the photographer works out the objectionable lines in his negative, and so on.

We ought to strive to get at the true thought of the writer. You have doubtless sometimes been at a loss to fully comprehend the true meaning of another's description of an affair, no matter how firmly you may be convinced of his habit of truthfulness. The inflections which his mind may put upon certain words and phrases, may so vary from the view which

you get of them, that if a photograph of your two minds could be taken, the two pictures would not very closely resemble.

If "the working in them" referred to, be the cause, and the "working out" the result, and the cause must inevitably produce the result, then there could have been no room for Paul to exhort the brethren in this matter. Cause and result are so indissolubly linked together, that the cause must inevitably produce the result; nothing else can produce it. Therefore in this point of view, the brethren at Philippi could have had no more to do in the matter, than the horn has to do in producing the sound, when we blow through it. It seems to me that the expression, "for it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure," is the reason and not the cause, why the Philippians should do this work required of them. The revised version reads, "to will and to work *for* his good pleasure."

The apostle's whole letter to this church is burdened with exhortations and admonitions to duty and to works, and the blessed Bible abounds with needful pleadings to the children of God, because they are his children. The most precious theme in the Bible is the theme of our eternal salvation, it comes home to us with solemn and deep concern. When we are made to feel that the Lord has been merciful to us in the forgiveness of our sins, it gives us a comfortable assurance of heaven as our home, and then how we rejoice in the blessed hope.

Concerning the expression "Conditional Time Salvation," I think it has been agitated too much. A great deal of it has come from an imperfect understanding of the thoughts intended to be conveyed by our brethren. True Primitive Baptists everywhere, believe that God's chosen people are saved alone through the workings of his Holy Spirit, and that to an eternal inheritance with God in heaven. They also believe that God's people have their trials and chastisements, their joys and triumphs here on earth, that these things are temporal, hence the term, "temporal salvation," "temporal punishments." You, no doubt will preach of this salvation, and you feel a sense of joy and thankfulness to the Lord, and like giving him praise, when you do good, and you feel a condemnation and sore punishment when you do wrong, and you cannot fail to mourn under this condemnation, nor to rejoice in the approval of God when you do that which is good.

Dear brother Chick, this is not written in the spirit of contention, but with a desire to unbosom my mind on this subject to you, for your meditation and disposal.

I have never enjoyed myself better than when east in 1899. The meetings were so sweet, and the brethren and sisters so wonderfully kind to us, that to-day I love to cherish their names and faces in my memory.

Affectionately yours,

D. H. GOBLE.

[WE are sure we should never have any controversy with brother Goble, even though we should not understand all Scriptures alike. While we would, as we are enjoined, hold fast the form of sound words, yet we do desire that the other admonition should be obeyed, "Not to make a brother an offender for a word." We have read the above letter with pleasure, and a warm feeling in our heart toward brother Goble, even though he has not the understanding of the expression, "work out your own salvation," that we have.

As brother Goble suggests, we trust we do know something of the trials and con-

flicts and failures that belong to this time state, and do go astray in motive, and in word, and deed; our love grows cold, and we are compelled to cry out for more love, and to feel how vain is any effort on our part to increase it. Therefore we must look to the great Giver of all, for this and every other blessing. We have not thought the word "punishment" was the best word to express the corrections of the Lord, when his people err, but rather, the word "chastisement," when speaking of that subject. Punishment does not seem to be the word that expresses the corrections of a father. Chastisement belongs to a father, punishment to a sovereign or master. We do know, we trust, the rebukes of the Lord, and his sore corrections. It is indeed a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. We can join hand with hand with brother Goble in such experiences, and we are glad indeed that he feels like praising the grace of God when there is any performing of that which is good with him. An humbling, rather than anything else, at any evidence that we had pleased God in any way, has been our experience. Who and what are we, that such mercy should be bestowed upon us, as that we should be enabled to do the will of God in anything? Is not all this experience summed up in the language of Paul, "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord"? Sin has wages, we earn them, we deserve death, but no amount of obedience can earn life, it is the *gift* of God. We cannot deserve that life, nor any fruit of that life. The wages of sin is death, now, when we sin, for living after the flesh we die. On the other hand, life, in the present enjoyment of it, as well as in the future glory of it, is a gift; it never can be otherwise. I am enjoying some comfort to-day one will say, but will that one ever say, I have earned it, or it is wages bestowed upon me? I am in darkness and trouble to-day, says another, and will not that one say, I feel as though I deserve nothing else, and I do deserve that?

Many years ago, before all this controversy concerning the phrase "Conditional Time Salvation" had arisen, one wrote to us, saying, "Why is it that when I am in the dark, and feel that the presence of the Lord is far from me, I always feel, if I had not done so, I should not feel so, but when I am in the light, and feel that the presence of the Lord is with me, I never feel that it is so because I have done so?" We replied that the answer was to be found in the text just quoted, "The wages of sin," &c. That is the way we feel, and we think that all christian experience leads in the same way.

While we do not see the text as brother Goble has presented it, and do not think the original force of the word "work out," will sustain brother Goble's view, yet we shall have no dispute with him about that, and we publish his letter for the true christian gentleness and love that is in it.—C.]

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22 N. Fourth St., Camden, N. J., Aug. 1, 1901.

Elder Wm. Grafton—My Dear Brother:—It is with a feeling sense of my unworthiness to write to you that I make the attempt. I hope the Giver of every good and perfect gift will strengthen me and guide my pen that I may be enabled to say a word of praise in honor of him who has done so much for me. When I look back over my past life and see how the Lord has led me through changes seen and unseen, I can but exclaim, O the goodness and mercy of God! for I know if he had dealt with me ac-

cording to crimes, I should have been cut off as a cumberer of the ground. Bless his holy name. And now my mind goes back to the fall of 1850, when I believe that God caused his light to shine in my heart, and show me what a great sinner I was, and caused me to mourn, feeling my sins were greater than I could bear. Who can tell the agony of a sin-sick soul but those who have felt the same? This agony lasted for a long time and all the time; I tried in my own strength to get away from it, and could not, but when Jesus said, "Come unto me and I will give you rest," and when I had given up all hope of self, and was made willing to trust entirely in him, it was then that his loving arms which are always underneath the truly penitent sinner, lifted me out of the mire, and put my feet upon a rock, and a new song in my mouth, such as I never had sung before, even praises to our God. Not only did I praise him, but everything seemed to be praising him. The trees of the forest, the fields, the waters in the brooks, in fact all nature appeared to be singing praises to the Giver of all gifts. Those were happy days.

"I did not believe that I ever should grieve,
That I ever should suffer again."

However, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Being in a Methodist neighborhood, I joined that body, and was very zealous, becoming a great worker with them. As superintendent of a Sunday School, I thought I had a great work to do in helping Jesus to save the souls of the dear children. How ridiculous all this seems to me now! I was with the Methodists about twenty years, but for a long time before I left them I was dissatisfied, not being able to see how they could love God and yet do as they did. Finally I became so disgusted with them that I could not hold them in fellowship, and so left them. Before this, however, I had deep troubles of soul, many times being down in the dark valley of despair, with scarce a ray of light to cheer me on my way, but the Lord had promised that, trusting in him, he would not leave nor forsake me, and I have had that promise verified in having been permitted to enjoy some very pleasant seasons of rejoicing in the Lord. At times I was led away upon the mountain side, and was permitted to look beyond the deep waters and see that beautiful city of Zion, and that great company that John saw, that had gone up out of great tribulation, and had washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Then I have rejoiced in the hope of a blissful immortality and eternal life beyond the grave. Such have been some of my feelings whilst wandering about this cold, unfriendly world without a church home; but in his own time and way the good Master brought me to the little old meeting-house at Rock Springs. You know the rest. There I heard the first gospel sermon of my life, and O, how my soul did drink it in. I could not keep my eyes off you while you were preaching. I did rejoice that God had brought me to a resting-place at last. It was the first Old School Baptist meeting that I was ever in, and I thought they were the kindest and most christian-like people that I ever saw. I longed to be one of them, but no one said a word to me, though I still attended the meetings whenever I could, and when the right time came, and the Master was ready, I was brought before the church. I had little or nothing to say, and it must have been that actions told more than words, for to the joy and comfort of my soul, I was unanimously received, and

with three others went to the water and was baptized, and taken into fellowship with the church at Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa.

Dear brother, I have not written the kind of a letter that I thought to write you, but thinking you might care to hear of some of my travels through this life, I have tried to tell you them. The prayer of my heart is that I may be kept faithful to the end, that I may not bring reproach upon the church, that I may live in the discharge of every known duty, and the desire of my heart is that I may be enabled to come humbly to a throne of grace, that I may obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need.

My health is not very good, being affected with heart trouble, and having had some very bad spells lately. I feel that my stay here is now short, and sometimes think I have almost outlived my usefulness, but do not wish to complain. I want by faith to run with patience the race set before me, and when the time of my departure comes I want by faith with Paul to say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

Your unworthy brother in Christ,

EDGAR MOON.

FRENCHTOWN, N. J., June 4, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Your editorial in the last SIGNS has been of much comfort to me, for it seemed to contain much that had been upon my mind for some time; and you gave such sweet expression to the matter that I felt to write you, especially concerning that part to which you refer, "Darkness covering the face of the great deep." As this darkness remains, we cannot see how this thing or that thing can praise God. We do not feel praise in our own hearts, and to us all seems chaos, darkness, mystery, but when the Spirit of the Lord moves upon the face of the waters, darkness is made light, and crooked things are made straight, and we are constrained to say, Not my will, but thine be done, O Lord. I have thought that all there is, whether pertaining to the natural or the spiritual kingdom, is but a revelation to man. God is one eternal now, there is no time with him, there is no revelation with him, but in his wisdom he did create, and in his wisdom and mercy he does make manifest, and all who learn anything concerning him, either in the natural or the spiritual kingdom, do confess that he is God. True it is that man in nature does not even know that he confesses God, but still he does, and God reveals this unto his children. Is it not true that when God said unto Adam that he gave him dominion over the earth and all that he had made, it was then as truly accomplished as it will be when the last of Adam shall be made manifest, and man shall have truly witnessed the fulfillment of what God said of him? Adam did not know, nor could he have comprehended the full import of the command of God, but it must be revealed, and all power in heaven and earth must make it manifest. Hence in the works of man, in searching out all the hidden treasures of the earth, in his wonderful displays of skill and knowledge in discovering great inventions, all surely manifest the power of God in manifest fulfillment of what he himself has spoken. "Have I not spoken concerning it, and shall it not come to pass?" And so it is in the new creation in Christ Jesus, the second Adam; God

has spoken concerning Jesus, and every word spoken must be fulfilled. All was fully accomplished in the presence and mind of God before the dust of the earth was formed, as much so as it will be when time shall be no more. But to his children he must be revealed, and to them his power must be made known. Hence all that his dear children have ever known of him does not make it true of him, but it reveals to them that which is. It was true of his people that they were under the law, it was true that the law which they were under was given by the God of heaven himself; it was true that God is holy, and the law which came into manifestation by Moses reveals forever to those who feel its power, the holiness and perfection of God. It also reveals the needs be for a Mediator, a Savior; it reveals the needs be for its being fulfilled. It must be fulfilled, every jot and tittle of it, and the children of God must know his justice, see his perfection, and know his power. Hence it is said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Man in Adam is a sinner, and there is no good in him. He in Adam is all defiled. He has broken the law of God, and he must forever rest under the curse, except he be made partaker of another life. This life which he has in Adam is weakness and death, and except he be born again, not of the flesh, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God, and born of the Spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Without this he cannot see the perfection of the law, or that he is by it condemned. He cannot without this know absolutely the need of a Savior. This must be so, for all these things are in the kingdom of God. All these things are required. But the child of God coming into the knowledge of these things is not that which brings them into existence, but this new birth simply reveals that which already is. Hence the salvation of God is complete in Christ. The life of Jesus in the flesh was complete, his suffering for sin, his agony, his death, his resurrection, is all complete, and all this is to his dear children, and is a revelation of what is already. It is a revelation of what he has accomplished, or of what is accomplished in him. We who are here in these low grounds of sin and sorrow, learn first of the condemnation under the law, second of the salvation in Christ, third of the suffering with Christ, or the fellowship of his sufferings, and then the power of his resurrection. All we know of God we know in Jesus, and all we know of Jesus we know by revelation of God. All we know of Jesus, is of the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. All we know of Jesus, we know of his resurrection. We know not what shall be, but we know what is.

We are groaning now in this tabernacle of flesh, waiting for the fullness of Christ. Of that fullness have we all received, and grace for grace, and to know this is to know both joy and tribulation. We rejoice, waiting for the full revelation unto us of the power of his resurrection, when we shall enter into the full experience of his glory. Mortality then shall be ended, and swallowed up of life. But this will be a revelation to us alone, and not to God.

I only drop you this imperfect scribble to ease if possible my mind, and for your judgment, which I know is charitable.

Yours in hope of life,

O. R. KUGLER.

FORT SCOTT, Kansas, April 28, 1901.

DEAR EDITORS CHICK AND BEEBE:—I owe you an apology for not renewing my subscription at the beginning of the

year as I usually do. I have begun to write several times, but unlike brother Coulter, "The hopper" was empty, and remained so clearly so I was disgusted, and gave it up, hoping to find it different at another time. Now I am confronted with the same difficulty. I find so many writers for the SIGNS express so clearly some of my feelings, which makes me desire to say to them, I am with you in darkness, afflictions and sorrow, if not in rejoicing. Brother Robert Scates, of Canada, knows what it is to have a name with the people of God, and then find he does not know that there is a God. Why, my dear brother, did I ever think this of you? Did you take the malady from me the short time you remained with me, and it has been this long breaking out? I do not think that what is said of small pox, can be truly said of this malady; the former is said to be a purifier of the system, while I think the latter is a breeder of all the ailments (mental) I can think of. As so many have alluded to brother Scates' letter, they give evidence of holding him in sweet fellowship. I once wrote to one of the editors, asking if there was any Old Baptists who did not or could not believe in a God? I find I am not entirely alone. Will some of our able physicians furnish a prescription? I have tried the "time salvation" recipe, and find that will not do. Are not we Old Baptists a queer people? I love their peculiarities in many respects. When they talk about how people are made alive spiritually, they want no Arminianism about it, no performing conditions will put one in possession of this life. "We love him because he first loved us." Then, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." In same points, as brother Durand says, who can draw the line? or where must it be drawn? While I believe firmly in the distinction between flesh and Spirit, the natural man and the spiritual man, yet I find it difficult to draw the line. Now, for instance, while we admit that he alone can give the hearing ear, &c., for we may be present, as I have been many times, when I believed one of the servants of God was preaching his gospel, but not one crumb could I get; my natural ears heard the preaching, and though I admitted it to be the truth, it was like "water on a duck's back." At another time when the same dear servant was declaring the selfsame gospel, it seemed as if every word was for poor me; it suited my very condition; I was strengthened, I was built up, I was comforted. But suppose in this condition, while the brother was yet preaching, I should stop my natural ears with my fingers, will some one tell me how much comfort I would receive from his preaching? Who can draw the line? I refer to this matter to show what to me is convincing that our natural faculties, some of them, are operated upon by the Spirit. I might mention another point where we have difficulty in drawing the line: Who of us can tell when we are being led or influenced by the Spirit? Why, my dear people, I for one would be slow to move, if I moved at all, if I waited till I was satisfied it was the divine Spirit directing. Why, I go groping in the dark continually, fearing I know not the Spirit. Who am I, what am I, where is there anything but this old, sinful *me?* I feel to be stripped of about everything but self, and that is a very poor companion.

I sometimes think of how rapidly time is calling us from this time state; how many of our dear ones have been called away; hardly a number of the SIGNS comes but brings us the news of one or

more of them having fallen asleep; we can only hope it may be a "Blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep."

Dispose of what I have written as your judgment may direct. Desiring to be led by the Prince of Peace, I am, as I hope, in those trials and afflictions through which the children of our blessed Father are called to pass, your brother,

M. B. WEEDON.

SUMERDUCK, Va., April 7, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I find that the SIGNS contends for the same doctrine that I love, it is the same doctrine that I thought the Old School Baptists held when I united with them, but since that time I have found some holding to a conditional salvation in time, which being conditional cannot be of grace. Also some are saying that the doctrine of the predestination of all things would make God the author of sin. I tried for several years to reconcile myself to these ideas, but now have come to see that I cannot, and have given them up. O, poor ignorant and deluded man, professing to know what would make God to be the author of sin. We have no right to say what would make God the author of sin. We should only bow in humble submission to his absolute sovereignty, and to his infinite wisdom in all his judgments.

The Scriptures say that God is not the author of confusion. Now according to the judgment of some concerning this Scripture, it would not do for the Almighty to come down at the tower of Babel, and confuse the language of the people so that they could not understand each other, and have to give up their work, for this, according to the judgment of some men, would be to make God the author of confusion. Still it is said that God did this, and yet he is not the author of confusion. There are in the Scriptures many similar things, but I only speak of one to prove that man's judgment is too small and weak to tell what would make God the author of confusion. If he could do this without making him the author of confusion, why could he not predestinate the acts of sin, without being the author of sin? It is ignorance in man to try to set bounds to the Almighty.

Your brother in hope,

ISAAC S. WEEDON.

[IT is very certain from the Scriptures that our God did before time was, predestinate some wicked acts of men, yet he is not the author of sin in those acts. If this be true of some, why not of all? the principle involved is the same, whether we speak of one sin, or of all sins.—ED.]

POWELLVILLE, Md., April 30, 1901.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—For many years my mind has been drawn to pen a little of my feelings and thoughts in regard to how well I appreciate the SIGNS. Those who correspond through it have written so near my experience and feeling. I feel to-day like thanking the God of all good that he has enabled me to see the plan of salvation as it is so ably set forth in the SIGNS. I have often wished that I could write something that would be of interest to those that so plainly tell my feelings.

L. A. HALL.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denotes the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1901.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ROMANS VIII. 3, 4.

"FOR what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

In full harmony with this are the following expressions of the Scriptures: "And by him, all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."—Acts xiii. 39. "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."—Romans iii. 20. "For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by which we draw nigh unto God."—Heb. vii. 18, 19. "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect." —Heb. x. 1. "For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."—Gal. iii. 10. "And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them."—Gal. iii. 12.

There is no more cheering or consoling truth in all the word of God than is contained in the Scriptures here referred to. Those who have ever known the condemning power of the law of God, and then the saving, justifying power of the gospel, find in these expressions that which they have for themselves learned to be true. These Scriptures fully present the design and work of the law of God, and thus open the way to a knowledge of the only way of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

But let us, if we may, come directly to the consideration of the words of the text at the beginning of this editorial.

It cannot surely be needful to present at any length the argument of the apostle which immediately precedes this text. In the preceding chapter Paul is not talking of the way of justification through the imputed righteousness of the Lord Jesus. This he has been fully presenting in the arguments recorded in chapters three, four, five and six. But in the seventh chapter he is not, as we understand, presenting this theme of justification over again, but rather the effectual work of grace within the heart of a sinner. At the close of the seventh chapter he describes the warfare which all in whom this work of the Spirit has been begun, must always feel within their hearts, and at the conclusion of this description of the warfare he says, "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." This is evidently not a casual temporary thing, but a warfare that is constant. The form of the word "serve" used here necessarily involves this.

Now out of this the apostle says, "There

is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Two things are said of the redeemed here, they are in Christ Jesus, and they walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; they thus walk notwithstanding their many slips and falls in the flesh; they are walking onward, though they often come short, and slip backward; they are not walking after the flesh, the flesh hinders and troubles them, but they hate it, and strive to war against it, and to run away from it. Paul had said, "Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." All the backslidings, and failures, and carnalmindedness which the child of God deplores within him, does not hinder the fact that he is still walking after the Spirit, and not after the flesh. Before redemption and the new birth he was a sinner running after sin with all of his might, now he is a sinner, running away from sin as hard as he can. Walking after the Spirit is his desire, and for this he seeks, and to have such a desire, and to earnestly seek this, is to walk after the Spirit. So that this expression, "Who walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh," is not a condition to be fulfilled, but a declaration of what is true in them, and of what they desire to be true in all their outward life as well. With all their failures, they do walk after the Spirit. Let it be remembered that the walk is not so much the words and deeds which men can hear and see, as it is the attitude of the mind toward these things. With the mind they serve the law of God; with the mind they walk after the Spirit, and it is this that we understand the apostle to mean in the expression, "Who walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh."

This walk of the mind and heart and desire has been wrought in them by the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, it is an actual work, it is not something done for them, but something done in them. What has not Jesus done for them upon the cross of Calvary? What does he not continue to do in them through his own indwelling by the Spirit? A little before they had felt the law or dominion of sin and of death, now they have come to realize the dominion or law of life, which is in Christ Jesus, and which now they have, because they have Christ formed in them. This life is said elsewhere to be Christ in them the hope of glory. The dominion of sin has been broken. Believers are freed, says the apostle, from the law of sin and death. Sin, said Paul again, shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace. They could not be justified by the deeds of the law, and they could not be sanctified by the deeds of the law. The law could do nothing for them in the one way or in the other, but grace does all. Ye are not under the law, but under grace, for justification. This Paul shows in the preceding chapters. We do not think it needful to quote, because all are familiar with the argument of the apostle concerning this great truth, and no Old School Baptist at least will dispute it. And now Paul shows that believers are not under the law for right walking, the law could not justify them, and the law cannot lead them in the way of righteousness; the law cannot break the dominion of sin and death, rather it has become the strength of sin. "The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law."—1 Cor. xv. 56. If sin does not have dominion over the believer, it is because he is not under the law. (Romans vi. 14.) Believers then are redeemed from the curse of the law, and from the law itself. "What then? shall

we sin because we are not under the law, but under grace?"—Romans vi. 15. How could this be? The dominion of sin and death has been broken, says Paul. Ye are not under the law, and ye are not under sin. What the law could not do, Jesus' has done for you. Grace has wrought for you justification, and now works in you obedience.

But is this to the discredit of the law of God? God forbid. Instead of making void the law by this doctrine, we establish the law. Since such great work must be wrought for us, and in us, by grace, it appears how holy and perfect are the demands of the law. So Paul could say of the law, "It is holy, just and good," and "I had not known sin but by the law." There is no flaw in the law of God, there cannot be, for it is the transcript of his own divine will. One jot or tittle of it cannot fail, till all be fulfilled. But it is not fulfilled by us, and it never can be fulfilled by us. Neither could it ever be fulfilled in us if left to ourselves. The law is too weak to justify, and it is equally weak to sanctify, not because it lacks anything good or holy, or because its force is at all abated, but it is weak through the flesh. We ourselves are weak, in other words Paul would say, "I am carnal, sold under sin," I cannot obey its behests. It commands me to love God with all my powers, and at all times, and my neighbor as myself, and I have never fulfilled it, and I never can fulfill it, it therefore cannot save me in any sense of the word. I cannot be justified by my deeds, the deeds of the law as they are called in the word, and I cannot be sanctified by my works.

But what the law could not do in all these things, Jesus has done in our flesh. Remember the apostle is not here speaking about justification, he is presenting the actual effectual work of Jesus within us. In our flesh which was so weak that the law could accomplish nothing good in us, could work no love to God, no hatred to sin, no holiness of spirit or life, in this same weak flesh Christ has come, and in this same weak flesh he has wrought righteousness. Jesus in his own flesh died and fully accomplished our justification, and now in our flesh he has come by the Spirit, and dwelling in us he becomes the author of all holy desires, and of all willing obedience in heart and life. First the apostle says, He in his own flesh condemned sin. This he did by his holy, self-denying, obedient life, which was a life of love to God and to his neighbor. Now, coming to us and being formed in us the hope of glory, he does the same thing in us, and the more the presence and indwelling of the Savior is realized, the more sin is condemned in us. Jesus also in his own flesh condemned sin most of all in his expiring agony upon the cross. How black and vile must sin be in the sight of a most holy God, since such a sacrifice is demanded. And when by faith we are permitted to gaze upon that dreadful scene, how black and vile do our own sins become to us, and what condemnation does the judgment of our own heart pronounce against them. The dying thief, feeling these things, said, "We are in the same condemnation, and we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds." Now when the holy Spirit presents to us this finished work of redemption, and we are given to see at what great cost we are redeemed, sin is condemned in us most deeply. Then there springs up a most deadly hatred of sin, and the deepest sorrow is aroused in the soul because of our felt unlikeness to that which is holy and spiritual.

Now with this hatred of sin, there also

springs up a love of every commandment of God. Such an one can say, "O how I love thy law." Then is experienced the words, "Great peace have they who love thy law, and nothing shall offend them." Now comes the time when that soul meditates in the law of God day and night. Now such an one confesses that the law is holy, just and good, but he says, I am carnal, sold under sin. He who loves the law is he of whom the apostle speaks when he says in the last verse of the text, "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us." And if indeed the righteousness of the law be fulfilled in us, we cannot be under it any more. No being can be said to be under what dwells in him. How blessed is the rule that is written in the heart, and not written upon tables of stone. Paul could not say, "We are not under the law but under grace," unless he had come to believe, as he had, that the love of God and of his law was begotten in his brethren. First he had felt it for himself, and therefore he knew the sweetness of it. When a child comes to fully know and altogether to be conformed to his father's will, he is not truly under his father, but with him. When his father's will has become his one only desire, then there is no felt servitude, but it is freedom to do his father's will. Thus the child of God has the mind of Christ, and is free, and not a slave. The law of God ceases to have any terror to him who loves it. In that man is the righteousness of that law fulfilled.

Mark, the apostle does not say that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled by them, but in them. Had Paul written this the other way, then indeed would it have been a sentence of cursing rather than of blessing to them. No true child of God ever has felt that the life he lived outwardly was perfect. "If I pray or hear or read," he says, "sin is mixed with all I do." I cannot do the good that I would, is his cry. While I run away from sin with all my might, yet I am a sinner still. But when by faith that soul realizes that Jesus with all his love and obedience is his, and does dwell with him, then he can rejoice that just that which Jesus did for him on Calvary, he is now doing within him, and in that work he is holy and righteous before God. But one of the marks by which he may know that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled within him, is it makes daily discoveries to him of sin. As the light of holiness and life shines more and more clearly, it reveals more and more clearly the corruption of the flesh. If the righteousness of Christ abounds within him at times, giving him the peace which passeth all understanding, it will continually bring to light the hidden things of the flesh. So such an one will go on continually sorrowing, and yet always rejoicing.

The child of God, like Paul in the text, must always look deeper than the outward life. One may do all that is required of him in regard to the ordinances of the Lord's house, and in all that pertains to what men call good, and no blemish that men can see may be upon him, and yet he has not done God's will. It is commanded that we feed the poor: one may feed the poor without yet having obeyed the command, God sees it, it may be that the motive is self, and self praise. If so, there has been no love to the poor. One may carefully do all the things commanded in the decalogue; he may, as one who professes godliness, not forsake the assembling of himself with God's people; he may walk so that none can lay aught to his charge, and yet never once have obeyed one single command of

the Lord. It is because this is so that the most orderly and humble of believers do not dare to say that they have ever done God's will, but only that they have desired to do his will. One says, "I love the commandments of God, yet I never seem to myself to have obeyed them." If he be a called minister of Jesus, and if he goes forth in all seasons, and under all circumstances, even counting not his own life dear unto himself, so far as not sparing himself is concerned, yet that most faithful servant will not dare to say more than, "I have desired to serve God in all this." And that most faithful servant will see how much of failure there has been in it all. Every child of God then must shrink from saying, "I have fulfilled in my life the righteousness of the law." But there is an inner life, and for the strength and comfort of all who write "failure" against themselves in all that they do, Paul has said this righteousness is fulfilled in and not by the believer, who walks after the Spirit and not after the flesh. Truly the outward walk is important, but how much more important is the inward walk, it is important to do right and speak right in the sight of men, but how much more important it is to be right in the sight of God. And what a wonderful consolation it is to know this inward righteousness is wrought in us by the Spirit and power of God, which sheds abroad in the heart, love and all other heavenly graces, and not by any human power. What the law could not do, and what we could not do, God has done. This is the gospel. This is present and final salvation both; this is to the praise of God, and the abasing of man; this the true believer would have to be so, and this he rejoices in. What great reason we have to praise God that such precious things have been done. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ETERNAL LIFE.

"THIS is the true God, and eternal life."—1 John v. 20.

That this testimony is given by the inspired apostle concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, we presume but few if any will dispute, since there is no other character or being found in heaven or earth to whom we can apply these titles without involving the sin of blasphemy. The whole theme of John in this epistle, as well as in all his writings, was to bear record or testimony of him, and to show by the most indisputable testimony that he is as here declared, the true God, and eternal life. It is highly important that the children of God should be instructed in regard to his being, his attributes, his fullness, and of the relationship subsisting between him and them; and to meet this necessity the Holy Ghost inspired John to write unto the scattered family of God that they may have fellowship with each other, and that their joy may be full. (1 John i. 1–4.)

As the doctrine declared in our text involves the fellowship of the saints one with another, and their fellowship also with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, how very important it is that we in striving to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace, should search diligently these Scriptures which testify of him.

Two important points are established by the declarations of our text. First, that Jesus Christ is the true God, and secondly, that he is the eternal life. On these two points we will offer a few remarks for the prayerful consideration of our readers.

First. He is *the* true God. It is not

said that he is *a* true God, as though there were a plurality of true Gods: for the Scriptures proclaim but One living and true God; and he himself has said, "I am God, and beside me there is no other." Hence the definite article is used to signify that Jesus Christ is the same God of whom Moses testified unto Israel saying, The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath thee are the everlasting arms. He is the same God who said, by Isaiah, unto the seed of Israel, Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else. Yea, he is that very God who has said he will have no other god before him. He is therefore called, The only wise God, our Savior. And in our text he is also distinguished from all false gods, or imaginary deities, the *true* God. This descriptive characteristic, implies that there are those that are called gods,and worshiped as such, that are not true. Jesus himself testified, all that ever came before him, were thieves and robbers: and he admonished his disciples that many *false* christs would come, and commanded them to beware of them.

He is the true God; all others who claim that honor, or who are revered as such, are false, delusive idols, whether they be of gold or silver, or any material substance, or existing only in the vain imagination of their worshipers. But when we claim that Jesus Christ is the only true and living God, we hold that all the fullness of the eternal Godhead dwells in him. The eternal Father is in him, and he is in the Father, and he and his Father are one. The Holy Spirit of the Lord God, in all his infinity is given to him without measure or limitation; it dwells in him, and is one with him. All that constitutes the Godhead, with all the attributes and perfections belong to him, and are essential to his nature, so that in the absence of any of them, if it were possible that any of them could be absent from him, he would be disqualified to be a *Savior*, or to be worshiped. God has declared that he is God and beside him there is no Savior, and he has forbidden his creatures to worship any but himself, therefore in worshiping Christ, we worship none other than the true God. The Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, notwithstanding these personal distinctions by which they are severally set forth in the record of truth, are but the one only living and true God, for these three are one. In his eternal Godhead we hold therefore, in distinction from the views advanced by those who lately assailed our faith on this subject, that Christ, in his Godhead, is self-existent, independent and eternal. That his Godhead in unbegotten and underived, it is the Godhead of the Father, and of the Holy Ghost, and we would as soon think of applying derivation to the Father or Spirit, as to that fullness of the Godhead which is embodied in our Lord Christ.

Although he is the true God, equally and identically with the Father and the Holy Ghost, he also sustains and most gloriously fills a mediatorial identity, in which he is as fully identified as one with his church, as in his Godhead he is one with his Father. Hence our apostle not only declares him to be the true God, but also proclaims him as the eternal life. He himself declares, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life." "I am the Resurrection and the Life." The scriptural record of this Eternal Life, as given by the apostle John, and by all inspired writers, finds its origin in the eternal Father; and hence its eternity. "That which was from the beginning, which we have looked upon, and our hands have

handled, of the Word of Life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that Eternal Life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."—1 John i. 1–3. The manifestation of this eternal life which was with the Father, is represented as a begetting, a bringing forth, a setting up, and a Sonship, while its incarnation extended the manifestation to the saints on earth, so that they could see with their eyes, and handle the Word of life. Let us not forget that this Life is eternal, the manifestation is not the origination of it; for before it was manifested, it was with the Father. The begetting, or birth, is not the origination of that life which is made manifest by a birth. This eternal Life, is the Life which our Lord Jesus Christ is unto his *body* the church, which is the fullness of him that filleth all in all. "For me to live is Christ." "When he who is our life shall appear, we shall appear with him in glory." When this eternal life was manifested, of course it appeared, and in it all the saints were and are manifested in glory, even in that glory which the divine Mediator had with the Father before the world was. This is what we understand to be the eternal vitality, or immortality of the church of God. It was with the eternal Father, hid with Christ in God, and it was given unto the saints together with all that pertains to life and godliness, in the unspeakable gift of God's dear Son, whom God has given to be the Head, Life and Immortality of the church, which is his body; all the members of which the omniscient eye of the Father did see, yet being unperfect, and in his book all its members were written, which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there were none of them.

These views, if correct, involve what is called the doctrine of Eternal Vital Union.

That is the life of all the saints of God is one life, it is Christ, and Christ is eternal, as the Immortality of his body. The manifestation of this eternal life involves a spiritual generation, proceeding from God the Father, in manifestation of the eternal Life which was with him, and all this eternal life with all spiritual blessings, was given us in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. Hence, in the Sonship of Christ is found all our vital relationship to God. This is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and the life is in his Son, so completely identified with the Sonship of Christ that he that hath the Son of God hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life. For he only hath immortality dwelling in the light. The children of God having spiritual, eternal life given them in Christ before the world began, are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; they are a seed that shall serve him, and be counted to the Lord for a generation.

This is the doctrine of the Bible on the subject of the true God, and Eternal Life, and a prominent and fundamental doctrine of the apostolic Baptists in all ages, and in all parts of the world. It sets forth Eternal, Unconditional Election, and life given to the chosen or elected people of God, before the world began. Yet there are those now, as probably there have been in past ages, who would confuse the minds of the saints, in order to rob them of the comfort which an understanding of this subject inspires. John says, These things write we unto

you, that your joy may be full. Satan and his legions oppose the doctrine, traduce, misrepresent and persecute those who hold, and proclaim this doctrine. Not because Satan has any hope of being able with all his allies on earth, in or out of the christian profession, to overturn or destroy it, but the joy of the saints cannot be full without the consolation of this doctrine, the object of the powers of darkness is to prevent the fullness of joy which the subject inspires.

May the Lord lead our minds by his Spirit into this and all truth, and deliver us from all error and delusions, for Jesus' sake, and then we can well afford to bear all the reproach which may be heaped on us for the truth's sake.

"Then let the loudest storm arise,
Let tempests mingle earth and skies,
No fatal shipwreck shall we fear,
For Christ, our life, is always near."

MIDDLETOWN N. Y. January 15, 1859.

PLEASE BE SURE

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likley to occur.

ALL GONE.

THE large type hymn books of the genuine Turkey Morocco binding and the imitation binding are all gone. All the styles of binding we have left of the large books, are the cloth and blue marble dedge binding.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Olive & Hurley Church, of Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., September 11th and 12th, 1901, to the churches composing the same, sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Once more in the good providence of our God we are favored to meet in an associate capacity, and are privileged to address you with our annual letter, hoping to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance. For all our christian interest is based on what we know of divine power and love, and as the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given us, and our pure mind is stirred up to the remembrance of former things, we are not looking back, but remembering all the way the Lord has led us, that we may press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; whereto we have already attained; let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. Love being of God, and being the evidence of the new birth, and the reason for our interest in and the cause of our association with the saints, it is (when faith is in exercise) uppermost in our minds. Therefore, we think it fitting in this short epistle to talk with you on the matter of discipline, or order of the church, and your dealings one with another, and will use as a subject Ephesians v. 1, 2, "Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor."

In all this we see the foundation on which our hope is based, and in order to

be followers of God as dear children, we must be led and governed by the Spirit of Christ, who as the Captain of our salvation has called us to himself for rest, and commanded us to take his yoke upon us, to find rest to our souls. It would seem when gathered into the fold, and with believers enrolled, it would be our privilege and desire, with believers to live and to die. But in the trial of our faith we are subjected to many changes, and when we sense our real condition, that our carnal mind is the same, and is in a cold, dark state, we are easily disturbed, and dislike to be chided for our straying, or may feel that our brother or sister does not walk correctly, as we do. Whichever way it is, the one important thing to be considered is, Are we following God as a dear child? How does a check of conscience come to a child of God? What is a good conscience toward God? These are grave questions, yet all answered in the fact that to be a follower of God as a dear child, we must know some of the sorrows of Jesus which he bore for us, being obedient unto death, even though it was a shameful as well as painful death. Humble yourselves, says the servant of God, under his mighty hand, that you may be exalted in due time. There is then very little need of discipline, or use of enforcing it, where the love of God is not the main guide. True the law is for the transgressor and lawless, but often the statue bars the action, because the action breaks the law. As in case the complaint is spread abroad instead of being kept a private matter between two in one family. If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. The law says, In the mouth of two witnesses at least, every word shall be established. What are the witnesses for in this case? To discover if the two at variance are followers of God as dear children, and walking in love. They are both sinners, and both have hope that by grace they are saved, through faith, and that not of themselves, but the gift of God. Why do they differ or do wrong one to another, they are brethren? This is the theme under consideration, not to establish a precedent, but for the benefit of those dear to us in Christ in the tie of the Spirit, admonished to be followers of God (not one another) as dear children, and to walk in love, as children of one family, to bear each other's burdens, and fulfill the law of Christ, who has made the sacrifice, who is the sweet smelling savor, and who always appears the same under all circumstances where his Spirit governs; always to save the life of his friends, while his enemies are and were always dead before him, so far as any injury could be done him or his people.

So, dearly beloved, let us look continually at the pattern, until it is unmistakably in our eye to govern us in our walk and action toward our brethren. Surely he that doeth wrong shall for the wrong receive. And there is no respector of persons with God. Let us not then think to avenge ourselves, but to continually remember that vengeance belongs to God, he will repay. Let us love not in word, but indeed with pure hearts fervently, and prove that we believe love is of God. Surely then our object is to save our erring brother for whom Christ died, knowing that if the will of God be so it is better to suffer for well doing than for wrong doing. And we only know his will as it is revealed to us in the trials we bear, and if we suffer with Christ, we shall be glorified together. Paul says, "Why do ye not rather take wrong? Why do ye not rather suffer yourselves

to be defrauded?" James says, "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts glory not; and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace. From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?" "Do you think that the Scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?" "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." In taking the yoke of Jesus upon us, that we may learn of him who is meek and lowly of heart, finding rest to our souls, because his yoke is easy and his burden light, we prove our interest in the oneness and fellowship of the saints. Delighting in the law of God after the inward man, we are enabled to forbear one another in love. And in this love that passeth our understanding, we are enabled to walk together as the heirs of the grace of life, and then we show our faith by our work, and that our labor of love is not in vain in the Lord, while on the other hand we show the truth of Solomon's words, "He that hath no rule over his own spirit, is like a city that is broken down and without walls. And he that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city." Therefore we see how important it is that we possess the childlike spirit as followers of Jesus, continually learning of him who is meek and lowly in heart, knowing that it is given us in his behalf, not only to believe on him, but to suffer for his sake. And if we suffer with him, we shall be raised up with him.

It is always the safest for the comfort of the children of God to be followers of their heavenly Father as dear children, and walk in love, for "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." "Then the willing and obedient eat the good of the land." That is, give heed to the word preached. And as each child works out their own salvation with fear and trembling, as God has worked in them to will and do, they will love as brethren, be pitiful, kind and courteous, followers of God alone, as dear children walking in love, as Christ also hath loved them and hath given himself for them, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor. So may it be.

J. D. HUBBELL, Mod.
WILLIAM BALLARD, Clerk.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association convened with the church at Bowdoinham, Maine, Sept. 6th, 7th and 8th, 1901, to the several churches of which it is composed, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As it is customary to present a Circular Letter to the associations with which we correspond, we are in hopes in this letter to present nothing but the doctrine of God our Savior.

In the creation God made the heavens and the earth, "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself."

And so we see that everything upon the earth brought forth after its own kind, for the seed was in itself. And the trees grew up, and man grew up with them, and was nothing more than the rest of God's creation, only God gave man dominion over the flesh, and the beasts, and the creeping things of the earth. Now all of this was of the earth earthy, and did not possess one particle of holiness. Because God made man it is no proof that he is holy; if so, then all the rest of God's creation is holy.

We cast our eyes around us and we see, as God commanded, everything bringing forth after its kind. Any one would think a man foolish to think of gathering grapes of thorns or figs of thistles, yet how wonderful to think men will try and believe they can gather the Spirit of Christ from the natural branches of the natural heart, which is evil, only evil, and that continually. And the question comes, Why do they do it? Because they have not known God. "For according to the number of thy cities art thy gods, O Judah." Every one has a god fashioned up in his own mind, what kind of a god he will serve, and will raise up his god before him, and that god must be just such a god as his natural mind wants to serve. He will tell his god what he ought to do, but he knows nothing about the God that made the heavens and earth, and whose right hand has gotten him the victory, who has all power, all knowledge and wisdom, who is God, and there is no other. He says he knows of no other God, doing whatsoever he pleases, and none can stay his hand or say, What doeth thou? Yea, more, who counts the people of the earth as nothing, less than nothing and vanity, and whatsoever he commands comes to pass, because he is God, and that name covers the whole universe, and all that is in it. As we understand it, it is he that rules and reigns supreme. Everything on the earth, and in the heavens, is subject to his will, and without him there is no world, no heaven, no man, no beasts or birds, nor anything, not even the deluded idea of time salvation.

And he says, "Thou hast brought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices: but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities. I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." So we can see the holiness of God, the sinfulness of man; the power of God, the weakness of man; the wisdom of God, the foolishness of man; the Spirit of Christ, and the spirit of man, and these two are different one from the other. And, brethren, we need not err in which one we are led by, we will never see the seed or spirit of man any different from what the record represented him to be. Now if you have envy against a brother, or evil surmisings, that is of the flesh, but the Spirit of Christ thinketh no evil; is love, joy and peace. We cannot have Christ without having peace, for he is the Prince of peace, and we know very well whether we are at peace, and peace is reigning over us.

Do not be deceived, my brother, and carry for a long time in your heart some little feeling against some one that you may think has not done by you as he ought. Now, if Christ's Spirit is leading you, it will make you to esteem that one, and all others, better than yourself. So we see here is the test, and this test never fails. Here now again we have the two spirits, one always evil, the other holy and righteous altogether. "Behold, the

Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear." Though men are the seed of evil, he can save to the utmost all those that call on him through Jesus Christ the Lord. There is nothing too hard for our God; he says, "I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded. I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways." This record hardly agrees with conditional time salvation, and the record also informs us, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son, and this is the record, that God has given to us eternal life: and this life is in his Son." We rejoice that this is a gift from God, and not by works of righteousness that we have done. God made all things, and without him was nothing made that was made, and what he made he reigns and rules over. So we see no choice for the creature even in this. For if one believes he can do good or evil, that also was purposed and predestinated by God. The prophet said, "O Lord, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived." As we understand the word of God there is no choice about it, even his Son said he came not to do his own will, but the will of the Father that sent him. So his own will had nothing to do with the works of salvation. But sometimes when led by the flesh we want to be above our Savior, and take the reins in our own hands, now this is the case of all conditional time salvationists. Give unto the Lord the glory, bow unto his name, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness, and in his temple doth every one speak of his glory. Sometimes we rejoice in this evil seed or spirit, and think we are living pretty good and serving God nicely. We may see some brother or sister doing or saying some things we think we would not do or say, and really think that we are better than they, and get along nicely for weeks, but soon we do or say things that bring us to doubt, then we lose our religion, and see that our brother or sister is better than we are. Now we have lost our God, and think he will cut us off forever, then we mourn like the dove; we do not pray for fear that God will not hear us, for fear our prayer is abomination in his sight. Now we are ready to think every one is better than ourselves. Now God has not changed things at all, the change is in us. We were as much of a sinner when we thought we were good, as now. Our God sees us as sinners all the time. He knows the heart of man is evil, only evil, and that continually, but we forget, and have to have line upon line, and precept on precept, here a little and there a little; we have to learn the lesson over and over all of our natural lives. How foolish we are. It seems that when we are in our right minds we would take heed to our ways, that we sin not with our tongue. But such is the seed of man, as soon as they are born they go about telling lies. But, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it."

"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

By the loving-kindness of our God we have been permitted to meet together

again as an association. Your messengers have come to us in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, and their preaching has been to his honor and glory, and to our comfort and joy, and we earnestly desire a continuance of your correspondence.

Our next association is appointed to be held with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, to commence on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1902, when and where we hope to meet your messengers again.

Z. M. BEAL, Moderator.

J. H. LOWELL, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder E. Rittenhouse, Wednesday evening, Sept. 11th, 1901, at the residence of the bride's parents, in Clayton, Del., Louis J. Lings, Jr., and Miss Lillian K., daughter of George and Letitia B. Hearn, both of Kent Co., Del.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEPARTED this life, our esteemed friend, and we hope a sister in Christ, **Miss Rebecca Sutton,** in about the 87th year of her age. It is my impression that the deceased had spent her long life in the neighborhood of Welsh Tract Church, having lived in different places, but all near by this old meeting place, and was her meeting place all her life, and at this place her body rests, and was followed by many who showed their respect for her orderly, useful and peaceable life, respected we believe by all who knew her, making no public profession of faith and hope, but in love with those who did. She finally ended her days at the old parsonage at Welsh Tract, partly from age, and something like a cancer in one of her ears, but her sufferings are ended. The most, if not all of her nephews and nieces were present at her funeral, together with many from the neighborhood. Some remarks were made by the writer on the occasion, after which she was laid to rest and to mingle her bones with thousands who have gone before her, and sleep around her.

May the Lord grant his blessing upon those who remain, and prepare us all for that important change.

ALSO,

THERE is surely sufficient proof of the decree that has gone forth from the beginning of the world, that out of the dust wert thou taken, and unto the dust shalt thou return. We come again to ask a place to note the death of another out of our midst, a very dear sister, much missed and lamented, sister **Mary Campbell,** in the 64th year of her age. She was a prominent member of the church at Welsh Tract, baptized by the late Elder Thomas Barton, who was at that time pastor of that church, in August, 1866, together with another sister at the same time. Four of these sisters having been left in possession of the home formerly occupied by their parents, a very pleasant home, not only for themselves, but for many, especially the Old School Baptists, for they are a Baptist family, the loss of their sister has been a hard stroke on them, and a loss to the church of which she was a member. She often would speak of her meeting with her brethren, during her long continued illness, and hoped to see them again. She seemed to bear with much patience and seeming calmness her afflictions; she suffered from oppression, something of a dropsical nature, but she is gone, having passed away August 29th, 1901, and the time appointed for the funeral was the following Monday. Elders Francis and Durand, with the writer, were present, and expressed their sympathy for those left. A very large gathering of her connections, which are numerous, the church, and others, were present to pay the last tribute of respect to one held in the highest esteem. After the services, which were held at the house, a long procession followed her remains to the last resting-place, and with her people who had gone before, she now lies sleeping in the burying-place at Welsh Tract. I have often thought the words of the Master are of special interest in these trying dispensations, which he said to the disciples when he returned and found them sleeping: "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

May the blessing of divine grace rest upon the sorrowing ones.

WM. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md.

DIED—At the home of her daughter, Mrs. Miller, in Magnolia, Ill., **Mrs. Jeannette Green Ranson.** She was born March 1st, 1821, and was the youngest of a large family of children. She received a hope at the early age of eleven years, and united with the church the same year. Thus began the life of a follower of the Lamb, which continued true and faithful for sixty-nine years. She was firm and decided when convinced of a truth. She loved good, sound doctrine, as taught by Christ and his followers; quick to detect error, either in preaching or practice. She was the housekeeper of the Sandy Creek Church, Putnam Co., Ill., for many years. It seemed to be her delight to keep the house comfortable for the brethren and sisters, and she always had a kind welcome for all, especially her pastor. Many are the times she has told me of her love to all the faithful, and her desire that I should preach her funeral discourse in the old house where we had so often met. The Master called her

home on the 14th day of June, at the age of 80 years, 3 months and 14 days.

The funeral services were held on the 16th, at 4 p. m., at the meeting house in Caldona, Ill., where the pastor and writer tried to preach from Psalm xxiii. 1, a text of her own choice. She also selected the hymns for the occasion. She died in the full triumphs of the faith of Jesus, bidding her friends all farewell. Her farewell to her son, Elder C. H. Ranson, who is a faithful brother in the same church, was truly a mother's, both in a natural and spiritual sense. Sister Ranson lived in Illinois from the age of twelve years, and was twice married: first to John Smith, in 1835; to this union were born two children, Mrs. James Sivelle and Mrs. Ed. Phillips, both of Magnolia. In 1839 she was left a widow, and in 1842 she was married to Wm. Ranson. To this union ten children were born, six of whom, together with their father, preceded her to the other world. During the last few years she was a constant sufferer with stomach trouble, and everything that would conduce to her comfort was done. She was a woman of strong faith, one who loved her Bible and her home. Her life was a testimony to all that is faithful and true; she was patient, loving and kind, bearing her suffering without a murmur; her departure was like the sunset, that sometimes lingers, spreading a halo and glory around the closing day. While she is missed here below, we are confident that she is happy in her new life above, where through the sovereign grace of God we hope again to meet her.

W. A. THOMPSON.

SPRINGFIELD, Ill.

MEMORIAL.

WHILE we as an association in the good providence of an all-wise God are again privileged to meet for solemn worship, we very much deplore the loss of some of our loved ones that have formerly met with us, especially that of our dearly beloved brother, **Deacon Charles C. Crosby,** of the Second Church of Roxbury, N. Y., who for so many years maintained an interest in the faith and cause of Christ, as a burden-bearer, enduring hardness as a good soldier of the cross for Jesus' sake.

And more especially our dearly beloved brother, **Elder Wm. L. Beebe,** who came in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ to preach to us, knowing only Christ and him crucified, among us. Therefore, we would as a matter of courtesy and condolence, render to the sorrowing ones of the churches and associations, our own loss, and that of the family of our dearly beloved brother Beebe, this small tribute, to have printed in our Minutes.

J. D. HUBBELL, Moderator.

WILLIAM BALLARD, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

THE Juniata Old School Baptist Association will meet with the Providence church, at Rainsburg, Bedford Co., Pa., on Friday, October 11th, and continue three days.

Those coming from the east or west by way of P. R. R., will take the train at Huntington, for Bedford, and those coming from points south, will take the train at Cumberland, Md., for Bedford. These trains will be met on Thursday.

We cordially invite our brethren and friends to meet with us, and especially ministering brethren. For any other information address the writer.

J. C. MELLOTT.

RIDDLESBURG, Pa.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa has appointed the second Sunday, and Saturday previous, in October, (12th and 13th) 1901, to hold their yearly meeting, and cordially invite our brethren, especially ministering brethren, and friends to meet with us. Those coming on cars will be met on Friday noon. If any should come later, take stage to Gilboa, and stop at the Tuttle Hotel.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

THE Corresponding Meeting of Virginia will meet, Providence permitting, with the New Valley church, at Hughesville, Loudoun Co., Va., commencing on Wednesday, October 16th, and continuing three days. Train leaving Washington city Tuesday at 4:35 p. m. will be met at Hamilton station, Southern Railway. Any one wishing to come on any other train Tuesday or Wednesday, notify Capt. F. Myers, Lincoln, or Levi White or John L. Ball, Woodgrove, or James Baldwin, Mt. Gilead, Va. We earnestly invite our brethren and friends to visit us, and especially ministering brethren.

Any other information desired address the writer.

E. V. WHITE, Pastor.

LEESBURG, Va.

THE Welsh Tract yearly meeting is appointed to commence on Saturday, Oct. 19th, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue two days. Those coming from Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore, will come via B. & O. to Newark, Del., Saturday morning. Trains leave Philadelphia, Chestnut St., at 7:30 a. m., and Baltimore, Camden station, at 7:55 a. m. Those coming via Delaware Division will take train leaving Delmar at 7:05 a. m. Saturday, and get tickets to Newark via Porter.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth to meet with us. Ministering brethren on their way from the Virginia Corresponding Meeting to the Salisbury Association are especially invited to meet with us.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Indiantown, Wicomico Co., near the little town of Powelville, Md., beginning Wednesday, the 23d of October, 1901, and continuing the two following days. A special invitation is given to all lovers of sound doctrine.

Those coming from the north will take cars leaving Philadelphia 7:25 a. m., arriving in Salisbury 11:55 a. m., at the junction, where the B., C. & A. train will be waiting, change cars for Pittsville, Md., where they will be met and conveyed to places of entertainment.

Those coming from the south, on the B., C. & A., from Baltimore, leave Baltimore, steamer connection, between Pier 4 and Light street, 6:30 a. m., arriving in Salisbury 11:47, where they will join those coming from the north. All will be met at Pittsville.

Those who anticipate coming should board the train on Tuesday, the 22d. Conveyances will be at Pittsville to meet you on Tuesday, Oct. 22d, the day before the meeting commences. We hope to see a goodly number; we will be ready with heart and hand to receive you.

If there is any change in trains leaving before the time arrives for friends to start, they can obtain information from any railroad official.

L. A. HALL, Church Clerk.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition, which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at the following rates, viz: a single copy for 10 cents; 12 copies for $1.00; 25 copies for $2.00; 50 copies for $3.00; 100 copies for $5.00. Address,

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 69. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1901. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PATROON, Texas, August 21, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS OF THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST FAITH:—I have often felt impressed to write what I hope has been the Lord's dealings with me, a poor sinner, but a feeling sense of unworthiness has kept me from writing, but knowing that I have nearly finished my course I will try to give a sketch of my travel from darkness unto light, hoping I may be guided by the Spirit which leads into all truth.

I had serious thoughts in reference to a future state, from childhood, but had no thought that I was a sinner until I was about seventeen years of age. Being at Shiloh Church, Covington Co., Ala., with my mother, who was a member, I looked at the old brethren and sisters while old brother Daniel Dozier was preaching to them, and it appeared to me that they were the happiest people I had ever seen. After the old brother had ministered the feast which the Lord had committed unto him for the brethren, he then turned to where I and a few young people sat, and said, "My young friends, what will become of you?" Here was the first time in my life I felt to be a sinner, and now feeling my sinful nature I resolved to lead a christian life, believing that God would bless me for so doing. For three years I continued to read the Scriptures, and left off what I considered bad habits, and verily believed that I was a very good christian, but all my good deeds could not keep off trouble, for I was troubled at times for several years, and in all these years had never felt the need of help, for I was living and trusting in my own performances, which I thought was enjoined upon me, but I gained nothing, and my trouble increased, and not knowing what to do I began to ask God to enable me to perform a work which would be acceptable in his sight. I continued in this condition until 1862, only my burden grew heavier. I traveled from Sabine Pass, Texas, to the mouth of the Calcasieu River, La., alone and on foot, and I sat down at the water's edge of the Gulf of Mexico to rest, and was thinking of my sinful condition, and watching the flow and ebb of the water. I was considering the things of nature, and the power and majesty of God was made manifest to my poor, benighted soul. This was the first time that his

power was ever seen by me. I could see that he only could rule and control the sea of water before me, for he had set its bounds, that it should go so far and no farther, and at the same time I saw myself a poor, helpless sinner, and my sins seemed to grow in magnitude, but there was times that I was not troubled, but would as it were awake from slumber, and my guilt would seem greater than before. I read the Scriptures nearly every night, and found many precious promises to the Lord's people, but none would fit my case, for I knew nothing of a Savior, and saw no chance for me. I could not see how God could be just and save me. I had learned that I was a sinner by nature as well as practice, and my last spark of hope was gone, and I could but fall at the feet of a just God and cry, "Lord, save, I perish." While in deep distress this Scripture was presented to my mind, "My grace is sufficient for thee," and with it the burden of sin and sorrow was gone, and in its stead a sweet peace and joy which I cannot describe. I could then sing the praises of a gracious God, and fall on my knees and give thanks to his holy name. I remained in this happy state for several days, and was singing nearly all the time, for I was so happy I thought I would see no more sorrow, but I became fearful that I was deceived, which caused me great trouble, and I began to beg the Lord to grant me light that I might know, for I had got where my whole trust was in him, for I was like Peter, I had nowhere else to go. While alone and meditating on what I had passed through, Jesus was manifested to my mind as my Savior full and complete, and the joy of that time I shall never forget. I could then use the language of Thomas and say, "My Lord, and my God." That time is sweet to my soul yet, and often when in sorrow my mind reverts to that time and place, and it is still a joy to me.

Now, my dear brethren and sisters, if what I have written is not an experience of grace, I have none, and my hope is vain, and if deceived, I am deceived indeed. After I had received a hope in our dear Savior I felt that it was my duty to be baptized, and not only a duty, but I felt a desire to walk in obedience. And here, to my sorrow, I made one great blunder, for from my boyhood I was from some cause interested in reading the Scriptures, and was well versed in the letter of the same before I had any spiritual understanding, and had heard the different religious orders. I believed the Primitive Baptist to be the church of Christ and here is where I made my blunder: there were but a few churches of Primitive Baptists in this section of country, and but one old feeble minister, by the name of Dryden, and there was no regular preaching. This was in 1871–2. At that time I lived in a settlement of a few Missionary Baptists, where they had a small church. (Speaking after the manner of men) they were a good people, and being anxious to be baptized, I united with them, and was baptized by J. G. Masterson. This was in 1872. But that rest promised the Lord's obedient children was not my lot among them, for I soon learned that somebody was wrong, either the Missionary Baptists or I had made a mistake. They soon established a Sunday School, which I opposed, and by so doing was called a "Hardshell." In the summer of the same year they held a protracted meeting of several days, and received members which I had no confidence in, and I gave my hand in fellowship, which was hypocritical, for there was no such a thing as fellowship

among us. I then began to contend against their unscriptural practice, but remained with them until the next fall. I had heard our preacher say he did not preach for money, and in August or September we called him to the care of the church, and he told us that if we did not pay him, he would not preach for us. I then knew that his ministry was not according to the ability which God giveth, but according to the dollars given. At the association the same fall the same preacher which we called, who said he would not preach for us unless we paid him, preached the introductory sermon. When he commenced he said, "He was neither Antinomian nor Arminian, but to reconcile the supremacy of God with the accountability of man, he must place man in a savable condition." Here was Fullerism in full: salvation offered, but based upon the will and action of the poor, helpless sinner, and no Christ or salvation by grace in the work. This was the last time I went to hear them, for I had not so learned Christ, for my hope of salvation was based upon what Jesus had done for me, a poor, helpless sinner.

Not long after this I went to a Primitive Baptist church and tried to give them a reason for my hope, was received, and baptized by old brother John Dryden. We then called him to the care of our church, a place which he filled until his death, and the next meeting he baptized my wife. After uniting with the Primitive Baptists I had a time of rest and joy, and thought my trouble was over, for I had not learned that there was a continual warfare. But I find that I am yet a poor, helpless sinner, that sins and begs for mercy. But thanks be to God, Jesus gives repentance unto Israel and forgiveness of sins, and God is rich in that mercy which we need.

Some time in 1873 I was ordained deacon, and while on my way home alone, and feeling too ignorant and unworthy to fill the place of deacon, it seemed that the Scriptures were opened to my understanding, and the salvation of sinners was so plain to my view that I shed tears of joy. I wanted to tell poor sinners of Jesus our salvation, and it seemed so plain to me that I thought I would not doubt any more. From that time my mind was in a travel on the Scriptures. A chain of Scriptures would get on my mind, and I wanted to be with the brethren and talk all the time on the Scriptures, and had no rest unless I was talking with the brethren and sisters. At this time I had not thought of preaching. I lived twenty-two miles from the church, and the spring of 1873 was very wet, and on account of swollen creeks I missed two meetings, and on Saturday morning of our meeting I said to my wife that I had better go to meeting or quit, and she said she thought so too. I rode very hard, and got to the church just before time for preaching, but was alone, and no one came but myself, and about the time preaching should have commenced I commenced walking the floor and singing, and was meditating on the condition of the churches, there being but one old and feeble preacher in the bounds of our association; my heart was in prayer to God for his people, and without forethought I spoke out in prayer to the Lord to enable me to comfort his people. As quick as I spoke I thought of what I asked of the Lord, which brought another question to my mind, which was this, My God, what does this mean? My beloved brethren and sisters, I thought I had seen trouble, but the trouble I had passed through was not equal to what I have felt since. The above named circum-

stance was the first time that I ever was impressed with the sacred and solemn duty of preaching. Space forbids my writing the sorrow which I passed through for about four years, for there was but few moments when awake but what I was impressed with the one solemn duty, which was to comfort the Lord's people. I begged and plead all the time for wisdom from on high, that I might know my duty, for I did not want to do wrong; I plead that I was ignorant, but the Lord had chosen the ignorant to confound the wise by nature; I was easily embarrassed, and I plead that I was of slow speech and stammering tongue, but God made man's mouth, and told one to open it and he would fill it; I plead that none of my name or family had ever been preachers, but I found that God had sent one to prophesy to Israel who said he was not a prophet, neither the son of a prophet; I would search the Scripture to try to find some relief from my sorrow, but the weight of duty grew heavier; I would plead that I was but a child in knowledge, and could not speak, but the command to Jeremiah to go lest I confound thee before thine enemies, bore so heavy on me that I saw no peace, and while in the heaviest sorrow of my life I took my Bible, praying God to teach me my duty by the first Scripture that I saw, promising to be governed by the same, and this was the Scripture which I saw: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, for the Lord has anointed me to preach." I read no further, and my dear brethren and sisters, I cannot express my feeling at that time, for I felt to be so ignorant that it did not seem possible for me to preach, but as ignorant and weak as I feel to be, I have been trying to preach a crucified, risen and glorified Savior, for over twenty years, and while I was able to travel I spent much of my time trying to preach Jesus to poor sinners. I have had many times of joy, and many of sorrow, and I am yet as dependent on the Lord for light and utterance, as I was the first time I ever tried to preach. I can only say I have done the best I could. My prayer has ever been for wisdom, that I might speak according to God's will and word. I am now old and feeble, and know that I must soon pass from time to eternity, and I sometimes feel that it would be best, for then my suffering and sorrow would be done.

In conclusion I ask an interest in the prayers of all God's dear children.

Brother Beebe, do with this as you see proper; if you think it worth a place in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, publish it, if not, cast it aside.

Your brother in affliction,

W. S. MANCILL.

BLUFF POINT, Ind., May 5, 1901.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Having to write you on business, I thought that I would also try to give you a sketch of my experience, and see if the little despised family of God could recognize me as a brother. I was born March 3, 1833, in Washington Co., Ohio, opposite the town of Lowell, on the Mushingam. My parents belonged to the regular Baptists something like two years previous to my birth. Leaving out some incidents of my father's life, I will speak of a time when I was about ten years of age. A man by the name of F. G. Baldwin was preaching regularly in my father's wheelwright shop, and one day while he was preaching, I fell under conviction, I thought that he knew all the sins that I had ever committed, and I slipped out as soon as he was done preaching and remained hidden until they went to bed, which was

about midnight. I did not know that it was the Spirit of God which had been sent into the world to convince of sin. I thought it was the minister, and that if I could hide from him, it would be all right. These convictions were with me for some time, but finally wore off. About two years later my sister older than I, was baptized, the ice being about eighteen inches thick. I thought if I could have my way, it should not be. There were eight baptized at the same time, and they had to go one mile to a house where they could dress. But when I saw that they did not seem to suffer with the cold, not half as much as I did standing and looking on, it seemed that conviction of my sins seized me again. I had awful fears of death, as I then thought, but now I can see that it was judgment for sin, which is the sting of death. But these convictions wore off, and I became harder yet.

I could not help believing that there was a reality in religion, and thought that I would like to have it after awhile when I got older, and had my wild oats sown. Then, I thought, I will go to work and get religion. I used to argue for the doctrine of predestination, but this was more to torment the Arminians than anything else, I think. Finally, when I was about nineteen years of age, one of my comrades and I were out together until about midnight playing cards for sport. I never gambled for money. When we were about to part he said we ought to reform and do better. I agreed readily, and so we made a bargain in good earnest, giving each other our hands, and promising each other to quit playing. And I think that if there was ever a good christian who was self made, I was one for a whole week. Nothing occurred to disturb me in all that time, and I would go to the woods every night to pray, and my only trouble was the fear that some one would hear me. I would pray a word or two, and then listen to see if I could hear any one walking in the leaves. I have no idea whatever became of those prayers. I never got any answer to them. On Sunday morning when the week was up I dressed and started out for a walk, for I thought I was now good enough, and I did not need to go to church. Soon I came across some men playing cards, one of them asked me to play as a partner with him. I said, "I never bet." He said, "I did not ask you to, I will furnish the money." So I sat down and went to playing. I do not think we had played more than one game, when there stood my comrade, with whom I had pledged myself only a week before, to never play again. I was ashamed, but it was not condemnation before God, and to my great relief he also sat right down and began playing too. Now being free from my righteousness I went on in my wild career until the fall of the year. In October, 1854, I believe, I with four of my comrades started to a meeting six miles away, to hear a woman preach. It was a curiosity in those parts then; I was simply going out of curiosity. Being early we delayed on the way engaged in sport. There arose a threatening cloud in the west, with lightning and thunder. I remarked, "Boys it is going to rain, let us go on, I want to join the church to-night." Those words turned and pierced my heart. I did not know what to think of it, but I tried to turn it away from my mind. I had not much more to say on the way. As I stepped into the house I felt that same feeling of condemnation. I sat down in the rear with the young people with whom I was well acquainted. They all had something to say to me as they had not seen me for some time, but I felt

that I did not want to talk, and I did not want any one to talk to me, I got up from there and went further forward among the older people. Finally the woman conducting the meeting arose and called the house to order, and said, "Brethren, I cannot preach, for I am all worn out, and so hoarse that I cannot speak to-night, but you can all preach just as well as I can, and I will open with singing and prayer, and then I will leave the meeting with you, and I want you to improve the time. She began singing, "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand," and then the chorus, "I want to go where Jesus is," &c. By the time she was done singing I was trembling like an aspen leaf. She prayed, and such power seemed to be in that prayer to me. Then the congregation began to give in their testimony. There was no disorder nor confusion, but still the meeting was very lively. After this exercise the preacher said she would have a seat vacated, and if there was any person who wanted to confess Christ, or that desired the prayers of the Lord's people, they could come forward. By this time I was shaking so that I drew the attention of all who were near me, though I strove with all my power to hide it. I thought, Shall I tell them what a terrible sinner I am? Then I thought of what I had said about joining the church to my companions, I could not but think that my comrades would have no confidence in such work, and I said, "No, I will not speak, but will put it off to some other time." Then something seemed to say to me there will be no other time, you will never live to see the sun rise again, and then it seemed to me that the lower regions were opened to me, and I thought that my doom was sealed forever. Then I thought, "O, I cannot go without confessing my sins, which were getting heavier and heavier every moment." It seemed to me that the burden was so heavy upon me that it would be almost impossible for me to rise to my feet. I finally after a struggle arose to my feet and cried out, "I am a sinner in the sight of God, I have sinned against God and against his people; pray for me." I do not think any one ought to blame me for this, for I could not help it. I am sure that nothing but the power of God, or some power higher than mine could have induced me to do as I did. I had always said in my mind, if this religion of which people speak, is such a good thing, why do they not keep still and enjoy it? I thought if ever it is mine I will not tell any one, and I now thought I will not say anything more about it, but the next day I could see my parents and sisters looking at me so strangely, I wondered if I looked any different. I knew that I felt differently, but I managed as best as I could to keep it all hid. After a day or two I went with father to work on a building. While at work there came along an old man who was present when I confessed myself a sinner. I worked on as hard as I could, and paid no attention to him, thinking he would leave without saying anything to me, but after talking with my father a few moments, he came to me and asked how it was with me, and if I was satisfied that I had been pardoned. I replied very frankly that I did feel an assurance of it. Still I thought that I could live out of the church, and I went on for two years. I associated with my old companions, and they were wild and giddy, and before I realized what I was doing, I would be taking part with them in joking and singing foolish songs. Then I would get by myself, and cry and mourn, and promise the Lord that I would do better, but then I would do the same

things over again until I got almost discouraged.

One night I had been to a neighbor's trying to learn to sing, she was a Baptist, and a very good singer. On my way home about half a mile from home, I seemed to fall into a sleep or trance, I passed along some distance almost unconsciously as it seemed to me. It seemed to me that the earth had been cut into before me, and I could see over the edge, and was trying with all my might to keep from going over, but in spite of all my efforts, I got nearer and nearer until in my fright I came to myself. I then thought, what does this mean? And then the answer was given, It means that you ought to unite with the church else you will fall into darkness.

The next Sunday I went to hear an Old School Baptist minister by the name of Debolt, thinking that I would unite with them then. I had heard him and liked him much better than some others where my father and mother belonged. I had heard some of the New School Baptists complain at my father's views of predestination, election and final perseverance. I did not want to enter into controversy. I knew that my parents did not enjoy themselves in the company of a goodly number of their own church members. After the meeting I sought a talk with the minister, but I was young and timid, and he was a very odd sort of a man, and rather abrupt in his manner, and he answered me very shortly. He said, If you receive the truth in the love of it, it is all right. Then he went on to tell how some folks abused him, so I concluded that he did not want anything to do with me. The next spring I united with the Missionary Baptists. Soon they began to divide upon various questions, and, they have long since split to death there. They opposed the doctrine of predestination, among other things. But to me it is a soul-comforting, faith-substantiating doctrine; that is, if we have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which enters within the vail. But it is impossible to teach the unregenerate these things, and those who have passed from death unto life already know them. Now I will just say that I was well pleased with the books which you sent me. I would like a Bible dictionary. Is there any better than Smith's? [We do not know of any.—Ed.]

From your brother in hope,

J. M. LAMBURN.

McEwen, Tennessee.

Elder J. M. Perkins—Dear Brother in Gospel Afflictions:—Through the mercies of my holy Redeemer I am up so I can go around on crutches, though I yet suffer many pains at times. There were ninety-eight days that I was not off the place. O, brother John, how I longed to see you, but it was so far that I said nothing about it. I have found out since I have gotten up that all my neighbors and family had given me up. They of course said nothing to me on that subject. I knew that according to nature all hope of recovery was gone. My doctor worked faithfully and tenderly with me, and so did all my neighbors. I never shall forget them for their kindness to me, while here in this world. But the most precious thing of all was that sweet hope which I felt to possess. I surely did feel that it was indeed "an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and entered into that within the veil." O, how blessedly sweet to feel in the most severe pains, a precious will to pass over the stream. I cannot afford to believe that this will was a voluntary act of mine, for

I have so often desired and tried to feel willing to die, but never could so feel. But I do believe that the eternal God does give a will. He worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Some of the conditional brethren said that my afflictions were brought on me for disobedience, which may be true, for I do possess a sinful nature, which causes me to sin daily, and must be condemned in the flesh and punished by the God of high heaven. But if my disobedience consisted in not believing in conditionalism and the practices derived therefrom, (as I suppose this is what they mean) then why was I made willing and longing at times to pass over the chilly stream? They could not think it was because I was a good man, for they have me branded as a cursed "heretic." So the only way for them to escape is to consider me a liar at this writing. I must say that "after the manner which they call heresy," I was more firm in it those last expiring moments, as I thought, than I ever was in all my life. I surely believed that all my salvation, from first to last, was of the pure, unmerited and unchanging grace of the supreme God. I most assuredly did believe that this "God-dishonoring heresy," as it is called, would stand forever. I felt that the most high God holds the issues of life and death; he openeth and none can shut; he shutteth and none can open, and that he is and ever will be the sovereign Lord of all who is blessed (by his saints) for evermore.

My dear and precious brother, when I am, as I hope, enabled by faith to view the high and lofty One, I am astonished, made to wonder, and ask, Why am I permitted to live? How can I believe that if our God does this or that, that he is the "author of sin?" Would not the very earth open her mouth and swallow me up? I know that there was a time when I thought the same, but I feel that grace caused me to investigate more closely and to see that there were no Scriptures for it. And I see that all who use such stigmas only make assertions, and they amount to nothing unless they can be proved by the good old book. I know I do not believe anything because some one else believes it; I feel that I am in earnest in the faith which I trust that my holy Redeemer dealeth by measure unto me. If indeed this is the true and living faith, then it is the gift of God, and by it "good works" are produced. The old fathers of sacred history believed this precious truth, and preached it, too, for Abel, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and others, possessed it, even in their most trying hours. Abel by faith offered an innocent lamb, a type of a "determined to be" crucified Savior, and while we believe that Abel was justified by this work, it was a product of his faith. Abraham offered up his only begotten Son. Who could produce such a volition of will? Abraham did this by that true and living faith. "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed," as saith Paul. Now, admit that if Abraham had failed, or rather that faith which God gave him had failed, the result would have been no son offered, no type of Christ, nor would he have been the "father of the faithful." Instead of being blessed with faithful Abraham, we would have been cursed with an unfaithful father. (The possibilities of all this are taught and embodied in all sorts of conditionalism.) The whole thing would have been a failure, and the Bible a falsehood, where the promise by the mouth of our God says, "Thy seed shall sojourn

in a strange land, and shall be evilly entreated for four hundred years." And there is a Scripture which says, "After this they shall come forth and serve me in this place." Here is the service of our God, and it is fenced in with a Jehovah's shall. All these prophecies did come to pass. Notwithstanding the great persecutions of Joseph by his brethren, and the oppressions of the children of Israel while under Pharaoh's cruel hand, Joseph's dreams of the seven "fat ears," and also the seven lean ones, and the "eleven stars," all had their grand meanings, and while Joseph's brethren did everything they could to keep his dreams from being fulfilled, especially the "eleven stars," which rendered obeisance unto him, for they literally seemed to understand that one, and called him a "filthy dreamer," &c., yet the eternal God meant it for good, for to preserve a seed and to preserve life, &c. Conditionalism denies all these shalls, and teaches that Abraham could have disobeyed, and thus every purpose of God, together with all these shalls, would have been perfect failures. Conditionalism teaches that Joseph's brethren, Pharaoh and all his hosts, could have been good fellows, and that they ought to have been such, and hence the evil treatment of the four hundred years would have been false. I have not time only to hint along here, but I think you can see the "h" in the word "Shibboleth." Now Abraham was a sinner by nature, just the same as we are; he was faithful because God made him so; he was just what he was by grace, as was Paul, or Paul would not have called him "father." It was his faith that was "accounted unto him for righteousness," and not what he did. What he did was unmistakable evidence of his faith in the dear Redeemer. If Abraham had been a conditionalist, I am of the opinion that he would not have offered up his only son, for they confess that their faith often fails, and this is even true; their faith fails, so does ours, when we are brought down to the spirit of service to our God. Peter's faith failed. "Faith without works is dead," is a text the "boys" claim. They perhaps work by this faith on their "can do it" doctrine, and their works are like their faith, they are "dead works." This faith is without "good works," hence it is a dead faith. No wonder they fail. Abraham possessed the "true and living faith." This faith needed no touch of life by the works of Abraham, for it was a living faith; the Lord gave it to him, and his works were a product of it. Paul called it one of the "fruits of the Spirit." Then the Spirit was the tree that bore the fruit." It was not a dead but a living tree. Had it been a dead tree it could not have borne this fruit. A tree may be living and yet not bear fruit, as was the "barren fig tree," but the Spirit is not barren. Jesus sought fruit on one barren fig tree, but found it not. This fig tree may have been a nice looking tree; it may have spread its branches far and wide; its topmost limbs may have extended themselves high towards the heavens; it may have boasted itself of its grand beauty, and it may have had the best of soil in which to spread its roots, and all the gentle showers and the sweet little zephyrs to nourish it and make it wave back and forth, making bows to those who passed by, yet it was barren. Now it will not do for us to say that this barren fig tree could not bear fruit, for some think that this would "make God the author of sin," and the conditional brethren would say on this line that Jesus cursing the fig tree for not bearing fruit,

is a proof that it could, so they have to have their "could" doctrine in spite of everything. Now it is evident that this tree was barren, and that Jesus cursed it, and the whole thing proves that God had a right to do so if he wished, though it be barren and could not bear fruit, for it was depending upon the Husbandman, which was the God of heaven. Nature's garden teaches the sovereignty of our God as plain as the heavens declare his glory. Every member of God's spiritual kingdom here on earth is dependent upon the Spirit and grace of our sovereign God. Not a single tree in this kingdom can bear good fruit unless the Spirit of God produces it, and our God has the right to withhold his manifest presence from us, thus leaving us as fruitless in the spiritual kingdom as the barren fig tree in the natural kingdom, and then curse us for being fruitless. Who but an enemy to God would dispute this right, seeing that he is God over all? Instead of the subjects of this grand doctrine railing out the wicked blasphemies that this "makes God the author of sin, and the cause of all meanness," it humiliates and brings them down to the feet of God, and like David say, "Lord, keep up my goings, that my feet slip not." David, under the power of the eternal Deity, no doubt saw his true condition, that he was not a "free will" man, but was dependent upon the God over all for his being, well being and preservation. Paul could say, "For in him we live, move and have our being." How blessedly sweet those Scriptures are to those who feel a hope that they are blessed with the fruit-bearing trees in the kingdom of our God. How sweet to look forward beyond the bitter streams of persecutions, and view Jesus as our holy Redeemer.

I will close. May God be with you and guide you all along life's journey, and in that heavenly home, beyond death, may God prepare me to meet you among that blood-washed throng in the city of our God. O Lord, keep thy tried sons and daughters from every temptation, if according to thy holy will.

Dear brother, remember me in all your sighs, groans and persecutions, to our holy God, is the prayer of one who feels to be the least of all,

J. R. HATCHER.

RIVER VIEW, Ala., August 10, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I feel inclined to write a few lines for the SIGNS in connection with this Scripture found in Hebrews: "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."

I have had much thought upon this important portion of Scripture, because it is the only place in the whole Bible where the expression, "eternal salvation," occurs, as much as has been said and written upon "eternal salvation," and here it is confined to those who "obey him." Webster's definition of the word "author," is "One who produces, creates, or brings into being." In reference to the word "eternal," he says it "occurs in *diuturnus*, and seems to denote continuance." Another definition is "perpetual, ceaseless; continued without intermission." It is in this sense that I believe the apostle uses the word here. If this be true, then the Lord Jesus Christ produces, creates and brings into being, perpetual, ceaseless, continued salvation; without intermission, to "all them that obey him," as much as if the apostle had said, "He became the author of *continual* salvation unto all them that obey him." Take this passage in connection with this one: "Wherefore he is able also to save them

to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Now I do not understand this eternal salvation to be something separate and distinct from time salvation, because this salvation is something that begins with us right here in time, and we experience it in time, and it is continual and without intermission "unto all them that obey him." Now notice it does not say, "unto all them that *will* obey him," as though it were a proposition hinged upon the will of man, but simply a statement of the fact. Now is it true that all the people of God obey him at all times? We think not. Is it not true that we are often found "walking after the flesh," and "neglecting this great salvation?" And the apostle says, "If the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" &c. Does this not show that we are liable to "neglect this great salvation," and do "despite to the Spirit of grace?" and when we are guilty of such departures from the commandments of Christ, do we not realize the absence of the "salvation which is in Christ Jesus?" All this is an actual personal experience; when walking in obedience we realize this great salvation, when walking in disobedience we do not realize it. It seems to me that this is the daily experience of all the saints. "Salvation is of the Lord," first, last and all the time. Our own works often betray us; our perils and dangers are often the result of our disobedience, but it is the Lord that saves. "O Israel, thou has destroyed thyself, but in me is thine help." "The wages of sin is death." I think there is a distinction between salvation and eternal life. We must have eternal or everlasting life before we can experience salvation. Eternal life is a prerequisite to all christian experience; without it we cannot believe in Jesus, cannot hear and believe the gospel, and before we can experience salvation, we must hear of and believe in Jesus; must "believe the gospel," and thus it is said to be "the gospel of your salvation." "How can they believe on him of whom they have not heard? and how can they hear without a preacher? and how can they preach except they be sent?" &c. Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth," (not every one that *will* believe). Again, "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Once more, "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness, but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God, because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God." Now it seems to me that Jesus gives the sinner eternal life, (call it quickening if you prefer) and he has ordained that through the gospel his redeemed people shall "hear the word of the gospel and believe," and thus realize and experience the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory, because Paul said, "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory." Then is it

not true that God has ordained that through the gospel his people shall obtain, realize and experience, not eternal life, but salvation? because when the gospel is preached, Christ is preached "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." When those who are in possession of eternal life hear the gospel, they "believe to the saving of the soul," and "thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins," and "they shall be willing in the day of his power."

Dear brethren, I dreamed of preaching the other night, and when I awoke I was saying, "I have never been able to preach Christ as I desired to," and this has been my feelings during the twenty-two years of my ministry, I cannot preach Christ as I desire to. How true it is that "Our sufficiency is of God," without him we can do nothing.

The foregoing is not written for argument, but with a desire to edify and instruct.

May the Lord give us proper conceptions of his word.

Yours in gospel bonds,

H. J. REDD.

[THE spirit manifested in the above letter we feel will commend itself to the readers of the SIGNS. There is no doubt but when we are enabled by the Lord to obey him from the heart, (which is the only true obedience) we enjoy the blessed presence of our Savior, and when it is his pleasure to withdraw his restraining grace, to show us our own weakness, as in the case of Peter, we are sure to deny him, and then we are made to "weep bitterly." But that we can of our own volition exercise the graces of the Spirit: faith, hope and charity, neither our experience nor the Scripture teach us, nor do we believe for a moment that brother Redd would be so understood. He sums it all up, as we understand him, in the closing quotation, the full verse of which reads, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything, as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God."—ED.]

BROOME CENTRE, N. Y., August 8, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—A precious brother has requested me to write my views on the strait and narrow way, and the broad way, for the SIGNS. Why he should make such a request I am unable to imagine, but hoping it may be of the Spirit I dare not refuse. I can only give such as is given me. All is left with you to decide. It is with fear and trembling that I make the attempt to comply with his request.

We find the Scripture recorded in Matthew vii. 13, 14, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it."

This same apostle has it recorded that as Jesus went about Galilee teaching, preaching and healing all manner of disease, great multitudes followed him, and he (Jesus) seeing the multitude went up into a mountain, and when he was set, his disciples came unto him, and he (this same Jesus) opened his mouth and taught them, and these different ways are among the other things that he taught them. I understand what he taught up in this mountain was taught exclusively and wholly to his disciples, and to no others, and what was taught then and there in that mountain, is also taught in the same mountain to-day, and to those, and those only, that he (Jesus) has called, and made heirs of his kingdom, and written his name in their foreheads.

I have always, until of late, believed that this Scripture applied to the two characters; those that have been brought out of nature's darkness, and to the unregenerate, but for some time in viewing myself, and my past life, I am led to believe that it has been and is spoken to me, and to every child of God. O, how often do we find ourselves walking in this broad way, there are so many branches that lead to it, and they all emanate or lead from our fleshly nature. Dear child of God, do you not find a Canaanite in the land yet? Do we not find the old man struggling for the mastery and continually crying, "We will not have this man to rule over us"? At any and all times when we are not following after the things pertaining to the kingdom, and giving God all the praise, we surely are in this broad way that leads to destruction; that which is not of faith, is sin; that which is of the carnal mind, and all fleshly desires, belongs to and is in this broad way: an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; all is in and belongs to the broad way. I fear many times that it is the only way I have ever known, and ever been made to see. This strait and narrow way is so narrow that no galley with oars or gallant ships can pass thereby; grace, and grace alone, guides the child of God into it, and keeps him there. It makes them poor, meek, humble, long-suffering with each other, yea, and with all our fellow beings. Dear child, have you often thought of the first lesson that our Savior taught his disciples, yea, taught you? "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." How poor you were made to feel! O, such love as you then felt! Words fail to express the joy you felt when given a view of him who is the Savior of all men, hanging and bleeding on the cross. Had you not a view of his awful sufferings, of his shed blood, of his meekness, humility, bearing all that was put on him patiently, no murmuring; when reviled, he reviled not again; his love so great he laid down his life for those he loved, those he called, those he chose in himself before the world began. O how I love this union with him before time began. Have I, have you, a part or lot in this great union and love, this election of grace? Dear child, when you are led to view him as the only way of salvation, have no fear, you are in the narrow way and a strait way. In walking in this strait and narrow way we eat and drink of the joys of this kingdom. It does not give life, but we walk because we have life. Neither does walking in the broad way produce eternal death, but it does bring destruction to our joys and comforts of our Redeemer and his kingdom. David felt this destruction when he cried unto the Lord, Restore unto me the joys of thy salvation. When we are walking after the flesh, or satisfying our carnal mind, we are in the broad way. When we deny self, and walk in that meek and lowly spirit, we may be very certain we are in the narrow way. When we gratify our fleshly feelings and live after the flesh, we are casting our pearls before swine. Let us not give to dogs (our flesh) that which belongs to the children (the new man).

I feel, dear brother, these two elements in myself warring against each other, causing me much grief and trouble that I am unable to do the things I most desire. If I were not held and kept by the "I AM," surely destruction would be my lot. It is only in him that I move and have a being. O, that we all might be kept in his love, (which is his power) ready to be revealed in the last time.

Hoping if this is published, some brother may find some expression that may stir up his pure mind by way of remembrance, I remain your most unworthy brother in christian fellowship,

D. W. LEONARD.

PRATT CITY, Ala., Aug. 9, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have had but little to say in the SIGNS for four or five years. I have been quietly enjoying what others have written to my comfort and edification. I have been greatly accommodated since I began to read the SIGNS. I was at the beginning much interested in reading the experiences of many writers, and I was helped much on this line. I believe by taking extracts from different writers I could frame a complete statement of the way I was led along. I was also interested in doctrine, and I found, and still find, what I understand to be the truth as set forth by the prophets and apostles. The time came that I wanted to hear something of a preacher's experience, and I have read many things that I could say amen to, but all that I have heard, read and seen, has never banished my fears, and doubts, and trembling, so far away that they would not return again. I used to find portions of Scripture I wanted more light on, and I would be thinking strong of writing to your father for information, and perhaps the next paper would contain an article from some one upon the very Scripture I wanted to hear about, and in this way I have been so accommodated that I do not remember that I have called for any other views. Then since I have been trying to fill the functions of a minister of God, I have had thoughts on certain portions of the word, and some I have tried to speak from as a text, and when I would receive the SIGNS, I would find where some brother was dwelling upon the same subject, five hundred or a thousand miles away, but always find that other writers and speakers handle a subject better and bring more out of it that I can. Not very long since I was exercised some to write an article and bring in the most pointed Scriptures bearing upon the subject of the absolute control and government of Jehovah over all things, but Elder Bartley wrote on very much the same line, and done such complete work that I quit the idea, and no no longer than last week and this, I was thinking of writing some upon the equivalence of the old London Confession, and the concise abstract, "absolute predestination of all things," but Elder Bartley has done the work more perfect than I can frame it, and I agree with him, that those old fathers are being badly misrepresented by some we ought to expect better things of.

I notice that the second article or chapter of the old London Confession says that, "God is every way infinite, most holy, most wise, most free, most absolute," and it appears to me that if these old fathers believed that God was absolute, his predestination or decrees were also absolute, and I must also believe that when Elder Gilbert Beebe set the concise abstract, "absolute predestination of all things," in the prospectus of the SIGNS, he intended to try to convey the same principles set out in the London Confession in a more concise way, that is why I call it a "concise abstract." I do not think that any of our people ought to be afraid of the word "absolute," it is not so new as some would have us to believe, and it is not used out of place when applied to God or his predestination, or his wisdom and sovereignty. If God is not absolute, and his purposes absolute, both

are precarious and uncertain, and I do not want to go even half way in such admissions, and I never expect to go so far as to deny any of his absolute decrees or predestination. We have no examples set in the Old or New Testaments by the prophets or apostles to criticise the decrees and predestination of God. These criticisms have always come from the opposite party, and those who profess to believe in God's predestination, and then criticise it, are just about in the condition those children were that Nehemiah found out at Jerusalem, that spoke half Jew and half Ashdod, and no one could tell what they were.

But I must close for the present. I hope the SIGNS may still prosper, and that I may be often accommodated by its able editors and correspondents, who write so comforting and edifying to all the household of faith.

Yours in hope of a better life,

P. J. POWELL.

HILLSBORO, Texas.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I have been thinking for some time of writing to you, but feeling my unworthiness, also my inability to write anything to the edification of the saints, I have put it off from time to time. I have been down in Lodebar for many long months, feeling like I was alone, almost forsaken of the Lord, but when the SIGNS came to-day I found if I understood him aright that brother Lively had been in the same boat with me, tossed about on the same troublesome sea, threatening every moment to be engulfed in the waves of unbelief. But the good Lord was our Helmsman, he has steered us safely so far, and I am sure he will land us (as he has brother Lively) after the storm, safe in the haven of perfect peace and content, where we will have for our companions such dear brethren as brother Lively, the dear editors of the SIGNS, and all dear ones whose letters I see so often in our good family paper.

I received a letter from my dear old sister, A. D. Simmons, not long since, telling me she had written to the SIGNS, and regretted it. She said she felt like she had disgraced herself. O, if she only knew how much good her letter did me, I felt like I had seen her dear face here in my home again; if I could only talk and write like she does, could enjoy the company of the saints as she can, I might then think that I was at least one of the least of God's little ones.

My dear husband returned a few weeks ago from a visit to the San Marcos Association; he had rich seasons of grace while gone, the dear Lord blessed him both spiritually and temporally. We were so thankful the dear brethren were good to him; he has some very dear brethren in that association, it is a good sound association, and fully indorses the SIGNS. We have had a great deal of trouble in our associations of late, but I have turned my part over to the Lord, (if indeed I have any part) and I know he has promised to care for his own; he says, We are the apple of his eye, and he will hold us in the hollow of his hand, that the waves shall not overflow us, that our enemies shall not triumph over us, that he ever worketh for our good, that the flames shall not consume us, but only purify us. I feel all this to be true, and yet at times I almost lose sight of his promises, almost forget I have a Captain at the helm, and try to steer myself, and then down goes my little boat beneath the waves of despair, and I am engulfed in an ocean of doubt, and then like Peter of old I cry, "Lord, save, I perish," and

in a moment I find myself walking on the water, holding to the hand of my dear Lord and Master. I embarked on this sea twenty-six years ago, and if it had not been for my Captain I would have been drowned long ago, cast down under the waves of two-seedism, stranded against the rocks of infidelism, and finally washed ashore on the banks of despair. But my boat has never entirely sank, my Captain has never left the helm, and at times I feel safe, and almost sure I will land at the feet of my dear Lord and Master, because he has promised never to leave or forsake me, and his promises are sure.

Dear kindred in Christ, I leave in a few days for the Peace Valley Association, to be held at Blum, Texas. I anticipate a glorious time; I have never had the privilege of attending an Old School Baptist association since I became a member. I hope to meet many dear brethren and sisters there, it is to be held at the home of dear Elder W. L. Rogers, a good sound Baptist.

Dear brother Beebe, if it was left to me I would say this was not fit for publication, but I leave you to judge. I hope some time my dear husband will be enabled to visit the brethren and associations in your part of the world, as he has long wanted to do. God bless all the saints everywhere, and may he keep us all under the shadow of his wings, is the prayer of one of the very least of his children,

(MRS.) J. B. BUNTYN.

[BROTHER Buntyn and brother Rogers are faithful and sound ministers of the gospel, and are suffering much persecution for the truth's sake, and we would be very glad to receive a visit from them. —ED.]

DEUTERONOMY XXXIII. 29.

"AND thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee."

Jesus said, "A man's foes shall be they of his own household." No doubt every child of God finds more opposition in his own breast than anywhere else. When Jacob was about to go down into Egypt, to meet his son Joseph, he said that the things that lead up to his going down into Egypt were all against him. This was a lie, they were all for his good, and he afterward found it to be so. Who told Jacob that all those things were against him? Carnal reason; the enemies of his own household. Paul said, "We know all things work together for good to them that love God." Occasionally we can see how that some things are for our good, but we often rebel against things that come to pass, saying, "All these things are against me." There is nothing against the Lord's dear people, all things are for them, all things are for their good. Their fiery trials are to bring them forth as gold. When we come forth as gold, then we can say with David, It was good for me that I was afflicted, for before I was afflicted I went astray. All those enemies that told us that the Lord had forsaken us, that his mercy was clean gone forever, and that he would be favorable no more, are now found to be liars unto us. We now say with David, "O give thanks unto the Lord, for his mercy endureth forever." We are so prone to wander and leave the God we love, our enemies tell us that the Lord will one day cut us off, and we are always ready to believe the suggestion of the enemy, but we find that his mercies are new every morning, and again our enemies are found liars unto us.

Your brother in hope,

EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

MT. VERNON, Texas, Sept. 18, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I inclose you a letter received from a friend of the SIGNS, in Louisiana. You will see that all the preaching he has had for years, comes through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. If the letter is not suitable matter for publication, it is at least additional proof to you that your labors are not in vain in sending out the good old SIGNS. You may put it in the SIGNS if you think proper, if not all will be right.

May the Lord continue to afford you sustaining grace, is the wish of your unworthy brother, if one at all,

H. B. JONES.

SPRING RIDGE, La.

ELDER H. B. JONES—DEAR SIR:—Pardon the liberty I take in writing you; I am a perfect stranger to you, but you are not so to me, which I think will be clear to you when I say I have been a close reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES about fifteen years. My object in writing is to ask a favor of you; I feel a desire which I hope is from God, to become more intimately acquainted than I have ever been, with a sound Old School Baptist minister, and my mind turns to you; I suppose because I have seen your name in the SIGNS, and you write what I believe, and you are the nearest me that I know of. I want to exchange a letter with you occasionally. I promise to try to not be burdensome. The benefit, if any, will be all on my side, I fear. If there is anything spiritual about me I am dull and dumb, so that I can neither talk or write, nearly all the time. I do not think there are any sound Old Baptists about here. I know one or two persons that I think really believe in salvation by grace, only they are not members of any church. There is a Primitive Baptist church fifteen miles from here. The last time I was there the preacher spent an hour or so trying to show that the institution of Free Masonry, to use his very words, is "a perfect type of the church." He knew that he had visitors that were Masons (I make no comments). A few months later their pastor, another man, said to me, "I confess I am a two-seeder." I do not feel drawn to them. Now about myself: theoretically, I believe as Elders Chick, Durand, Bartley, yourself, and many other writers, salvation in time and for eternity is by grace alone. I think I can at least say I have no other hope.

Perhaps I should say I never enjoyed robust health, and for a few years I have been in quite bad health. I have a disease of the liver, dispepsia and bronchitis. If you care to write to me just occasionally I will take it kindly, if not all will be well.

I am respectfully yours,

SAM. B. ANSLEY.

DAVID CITY, Nebraska, July 22, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed find two dollars which please credit for the dear old SIGNS for another year. I do not understand how any one claiming to be an Old School Baptist of the predestinarian order, can object to the SIGNS on account of the position it occupies upon the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things, and the vital unity of Christ and his church. I like the term unity better than union, because I think it is stronger, and more expressive. To my mind the word union signifies a partnership, but the word unity, means a oneness. "So we being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." May the Lord bless and comfort you and brother Chick, with all the children of God everywhere.

Your brother in hope,

J. T. SKINNER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1901.

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EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ROMANS XIV. 1.

"HIM that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations."

A brother has requested our views on the above text. We have no doubt that the simple meaning is that those of the Lord's people who are not so well settled and grounded in the truth that makes free, who yet give full evidence by lowliness and meekness of feeling, and by reverence toward God and his word, that they are his, are to be received into the fellowship of the church, and made welcome there, although they may be very far from being clear in their belief of the truth in many ways. What is intended here, seems to be exemplified by the condition of the churches to which the epistles were written. In them all, were members who were wrong in some things, and who yet were borne with and acknowledged as the children of God indeed. Among the churches of Galatia and the country round about, we know Paul found much to rebuke and censure in the weakness of their faith concerning freedom from the law, and in the churches at Rome and Corinth he found much to reprove in practice, and yet in all these cases he spoke of them all as brethren in the faith and spirit of the gospel. He did not hesitate to warn and faithfully rebuke, while at the same time he confessed them to be brethren. It seems clear that there were then, and there are now, many things which are contrary to the liberty of the gospel, either in sentiment or in conduct, among the churches, for which yet what we call discipline which may lead on to exclusion, is not to be invoked. Many things are deplorable, which yet we ought not to withdraw fellowship for. Some things must not be borne with in the churches, they bring such scandal upon the cause, or else they are so utterly subversive of the principles of the doctrine of God our Savior. Murder, theft, adultery, drunkenness, riotous living, must not be borne with. And if one who is guilty of continuing in any of these, and some like things beside, should seek membership in the church, he must be rejected at once. So likewise, if one should present himself to the church, who denies the atonement, the electing love of God, the work of grace in the soul, and others of the great principles of the doctrine of Christ, he must not be received at all. But, concerning many things, it appears that in the practice of the apostle as recorded in the New Testament, there were many things concerning which they exhorted, and reproved, and warned faithfully, and yet did not withdraw fellowship from those who were not converted from the error by their exhortations. These they regarded as being weak in the faith, but not as opposers of the doctrine and of right living among the people of God.

Yet the apostle makes one reservation to this receiving of the weak in the faith. It is not to be to doubtful disputations. We do not know how others regard this, but it has seemed clear this long time in our mind, that it simply means that if the

one weak in the faith is disposed to dispute against the truth in which he is weak, that one must not be received. The reason seems clear. To receive such an one would be to bring an element of discord into the church, and the meetings would likely become places of debate, rather than worship. Opposition to the truth, and a want of clearness of apprehension, are two things. No one ought to claim that he understands the truth in all its relations and fullness, but if one has been taught of the Spirit, he will have that in his heart which will forbid him to dispute any portion of the truth, while he may confess that some things seem dark to him. A contentious man is not only weak in the faith, but he is strong in his advocacy of the error by which he is ensnared. He will, if received into the church, become a troubler and an eating canker, to the sorrow of the true believers, and to the reproach of the name of the Lord. This general rule holds good in many things, and under all circumstances, but yet each church must decide each case upon its own merits. How greatly do the people of God need the guidance of the same holy Spirit which penned this admonition, that they do not err either in the spirit or letter of this admonition. We ought to be careful not to reject those whom the word of God directs to be received, nor to receive those whom the word of God directs should be rejected.

Two things were in the mind of the apostle in penning these words. They were the eating of meats, and the observance of days. One believed that he might eat all things without violating the law of God, or wounding his own conscience; another believed that some meats were to be avoided; both were sincere, and both thought they had good reasons on their side. Now, Paul exhorts each to bear with the other. If either regarded his brother as weak in the faith concerning this thing, still receive him, and love him as a brother in the Lord. Yet, if on the other side any one was contentious and disposed to bring heated discussion into the church, let not such an one be received. The other question concerning days was also regarded as being important by many. And indeed both were really important questions, and both did touch the very life of that liberty which is in Christ, but with regard to days, Paul teaches also that each is to be forbearing toward those whom they regard as being weak in the faith. His language is very striking and brotherly. "He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it." Both had the glory of God in view. If one observed the day it was because he thought that God required it; if, on the other hand, one did not observe the day, it was because the Lord, in his view, had forbidden it. Both had a sincere desire to glorify God; this Paul regarded as the chief thing.

These two things came up in this way in the churches, principally because they were made up of a membership from among both Jews and Gentiles. It was hard for the Jews to get rid of their reverence for days, and their abhorrence of some kinds of meats. The Jew did not readily enter into the full understanding of the liberty to which they had been called through Christ, who in himself fulfilled all typical days, and all typical observances with regard to eating and drinking. All days and distinctions of meats of a ceremonial nature were done away in Christ. BUT IT WAS IN CHRIST THAT THEY WERE DONE AWAY. Here in Christ was the liberty of the gospel. On

the other hand, the Gentile believer, who had no such prejudices to be overcome, and who naturally regarded neither days nor meats, needed little instruction with regard to these things. Yet, on the other hand, he was slow to understand the liberty which Christ came to bestow. It was not only a liberty from the bondage of the weak and beggarly elements of the law, but liberty from the bondage of the evils of that nature which is fallen, and which by nature rebels against God, in us all. While a Gentile believer might see the weakness of his Jewish brother, and wonder at it, and wonder that he could not see that he was set at liberty from these observances, yet by the uprising within him of a feeling of superior wisdom and understanding, he might show that he needed to be set at liberty also, from a still deeper, and still more fatal bondage than his Jewish brother. This Gentile brother needed liberty from that spirit which led him to feel himself superior to the other. Bondage to meats and and days is not nearly so bad a bondage as that which subdues a man under the pride and vain glory of the human heart boasting of its superior knowledge and growth in grace.

While Paul thus himself bore with the weak, and exhorted all other believers to do the same, yet he ceased not to declare the truth, which in the case of these two things was, that the days were not to be observed by any one, that is that the law of the gospel did not require it, but rather the contrary, and that meats were nothing, and all were lawful to be eaten. Paul did not pause in declaring the full truth, and yet he could be patient with those who did not see it clearly. He would bear with that humble child of God who observed days, and abstained from meats, to the end; but if any brother made these things a subject of disputation, and by this disturbed the peace of the church, and sought to pervert the minds of the brethren, him Paul would not receive. The truth of the gospel must not cease to be declared under any circumstances. Forbearance, or the receiving of the weak brother, does not and must not silence the faithful testimony of those who proclaim the truth. And this truth must be declared for two reasons. By it, first of all, the glory of God in the gospel is set forth, and second, this truth will bring freedom to him who receives and believes it. If the truth shall make you free ye shall be free indeed. For many years in the past, some of the best and most deeply spiritual of the people of God continued to regard Sunday as a sacred day above others, and thought that it took the place of the old Jewish Sabbath. In this they were sincere; they regarded the day as unto the Lord; they believed in Christ as their all and in all in the work of redemption, and were men of deep spiritual knowledge, whose religion was not of the head but of the heart. It was right for all those who saw this more clearly than they to bear with and receive them. And receiving is a stronger word than bearing with. They were received, and it was right that they should be. Yet there were, as we have been informed, instances where they were disposed to constantly argue for this practice, and to dispute the righteousness of those who had come out into liberty, in these things, and we doubt not that some who saw clearly, were not very forbearing toward them. On either side, no doubt, there were some contentious men; these ought to have been rejected. Yet all who saw the truth, were to keep on declaring it, that in Christ every yoke of bondage had been broken. Paul did

this, and his words in this very connection show that it was so. Let all read these two chapters, the fourteenth and fifteenth of Romans.

In pursuing the same subject the apostle in the beginning of the fifteenth chapter enjoins upon the strong that they should bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please themselves. This simply enforces the same thing taught in the first verse of the fourteenth chapter, and the strong are those who see clearly that all days are done away in Christ, and are all swallowed up in the great day of his salvation, so that they have no place in the kingdom of God, and that in this new kingdom all distinctions of meats are also abolished, and the weak here are those of imperfect understanding concerning these things. Infirmities are not sins. A weak understanding may be found in men of most devout spirit, and of humble mind, and who are most careful in all their conversation. These may walk lamely and weakly, and yet be walking toward God, and not away from him. To will to do God's will, and not to be able to so walk as they desire, is not sin, but infirmity. The spirit may be willing while the flesh is weak. One may desire to know, and yet be ignorant in much. It is infirmity in knowledge that the spirit helps. And while the strong in the text is him who understands the truth, yet it does not mean him "who thinks he stands," but rather him who feels most deeply his need of and dependence upon Christ for all things. And he who sees clearly has no room to boast over him who is blind. Aquilla and Priscilla did not boast over Apollos when they took him and expounded the way of the Lord to him more perfectly.

This Scripture does not mean that the strong, or those of clear understanding, are to yield up their strength, or fail to testify to the faith which is in them, and which they have of God; on the contrary they are to continue to declare the truth, if so be that they may instruct the weak in the way more perfectly, and this they are to do for the benefit of the weak, because the truth makes free, and in error is bondage. The strong are not to abuse nor censure the weak, but to hold them up. Paul was strong in the faith, and he was faithful to the weak Galatian brethren, and bore with their weakness all the while that he strove to instruct them in the way of truth more perfectly.

In conclusion we would say that one who denies the truth, must not be received if he should present himself to the church for membership, but his weakness in knowledge ought not to hinder the receiving of him to our hearty fellowship. If one should be received who denies any of the principles of truth this would be to doubtful disputations. C.

PLEASE BE SURE

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likley to occur.

ALL GONE.

The large type hymn books of the genuine Turkey Morocco binding and the imitation binding are all gone. All the styles of binding we have left of the large books, are the cloth and blue marbled edge binding.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

SANCTIFICATION.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Will you be so kind as to give your views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on 1 Thess. v. 23? The doctrine of Sanctification, or holiness, is being a subject of much discussion here, and often by opponents I am thrown into perplexity for want of a more full understanding of the subject, and I ask for your aid. Likewise, please tell me what is to be understood by the *veil* which the keepers of the walls took from the spouse? (Song v. 7.)

In christian love,

L. HUESTIS.

CATSKILL, N. Y., Jan. 19, 1859.

REPLY.

It would afford us much pleasure, were we competent to relieve the minds of all the dear children of God from their perplexities in regard to the doctrine of God our Savior, and to expound all mysteries, so far as the clear understanding of the truth as it is in Jesus would promote their happiness, and reflect honor and glory on the name of the Lord. The Scriptures of divine truth, however, can only be correctly opened and explained to the edification of the saints by that holy Spirit by which the prophets and apostles were inspired to write them. And God has wisely ordered it so, to teach our dependence on him for a knowledge of divine things, that no flesh should glory in his presence. If the religion of Jesus Christ were a *science*, to be taught and learned by men, as the arts and sciences of this world are, then might the wise men glory in their wisdom, &c. But, Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? It is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

The first text proposed for consideration, by sister Huestis, reads: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Thess. v. 23.

The New School Baptists, of Catskill and elsewhere, with nearly all the other religious organizations of the present age, have incorporated the idea of *progression* in their creed. They all point at the old-fashioned order of Baptists as being many centuries behind the age, and tauntingly tell us that our doctrine and order would do for the intelligence of the people of a thousand years ago; but now they have brought the light of science to shine on the sacred pages, and by the aid of Bible Classes, Sabbath and Theological schools, &c., they have taken the sacred Book, and opened the seals thereof, and as their progression has outstripped the sacred volume, they are now invoking "the talent of the nineteeth century" to revise the Scriptures, and bring them up to a level with their inventions. In their blind zeal for progression, the poor, deluded dupes of priestcraft are now claiming in many instances what was once only pretended by the more fanatical portion of the Wesleyan Methodists, the attainment of perfect holiness in soul, body and spirit, which they call sanctification. None but the most deluded fanatics, or the most consummate hypocrites ever have, or ever will make such pretensions; for the inspired apostle of the Lord has positively declared, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."—1 John i. 8. Yet these enthusiasts say they have no sin, and the apostle says they have not the truth in them; that they are deceived. The text on which our views are requested, is often brought forward as evidence that such a state of immaculate purity is attainable by the efforts of men, but to an

enlightened, heaven-taught child of grace, this text conveys no such doctrine. It is the prayer of the apostle in behalf of the saints, that God would sanctify them wholly, that is, as we understand the language, that God would wholly consecrate and set them apart for his glory. To sanctify, in a scriptural sense, is to set apart for a holy purpose or work, to consecrate, dedicate or devote. Under the law, the priests, the altar, the victims offered, &c., were sanctified, or set apart for the purpose to which they were devoted. The whole family of Israel was sanctified in being set apart from the rest of mankind, as the people of God, in a legal or ceremonial sense. And they were commanded to sanctify the Lord God by reverencing him as their only God, in distinction from all other gods. The temples in Jerusalem were sanctified, or set apart to a religious purpose, so wives and husbands are set apart by the ordinance of marriage, else were there children unclean, or illegitimate, but by the legal sanctification, or setting apart in marriage, their offsprings are holy or lawful children.

In a gospel sense sanctification is used to signify,

FIRSTLY. The grace of God in the predestination and election of his people, separating them from all others of his creatures in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, in this sense it is used Jude 1: "Sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus, and called." This people, saith the Lord, have I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise. This separation being in Christ, it is said of him, "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." In him they are set apart according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

SECONDLY. It is used in reference to the mediatorial work of Christ. "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren; saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."—Heb. ii. 11, 12. The mediatorial sanctification, embracing their being redeemed unto God out of every kindred, tongue and people, under heaven, and set apart by the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, presents them perfect and complete in him, before the throne in glory, and set apart as the bride, the Lamb's wife in marriage nuptials, and one with Christ, as Christ is one with the Father.

THIRDLY. Sanctification, as the work of the Spirit, is also taught in the gospel as an important and indispensable work, in bringing the chosen people of God experimentally from the power of darkness into the light and liberty of the sons of God, separating them from the world, and setting them apart as a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," &c.—1 Peter i. 2. Indeed all the work of the Spirit has the effect to sanctify, or set apart, as a consecrated people, devoted to God. All the instructions given, all the exercises and emotions produced in the people of God by the Holy Spirit, distinguishes them from the children of this world, and makes them manifest as members of a spiritual family.

Thus we see the children of God are sanctified by God the Father, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Holy Spirit, but

we have no account of their being sanctified by themselves. But if we mistake not there is another family, or fraternity described in the word as being their own sanctifiers, and the epistle of Jude is devoted principally to a description of them. He says they have crept into the church unawares, who were of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. "These," says Jude, "be they WHO SEPARATE THEMSELVES, sensual, having not the Spirit." These speak evil of those things which they know not; but what they know naturally as brute beasts, having no experimental knowledge of divine things by revelation of the Spirit; for they have not the Spirit, and all they know, or can ever learn *naturally* by searching, studying, or by any operation short of divine revelation, they only know as natural brute beasts. "Ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." "Woe unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain;" in setting up a system of religion unauthorized by the Lord, and like Cain, they are at war with the religion which God has revealed. "And ran greedily after the error of Balaam," in his missionary zeal to curse Israel for a pecuniary reward, and in teaching Balak to cast stumbling-blocks to cause the children of Israel to commit wickedness, and who have perished in the gainsayings of Core, who with his troop, in usurping the priesthood unbidden of the Lord, was swallowed up of the earth.

"*These are they.*" Can we doubt it? Do they not make themselves all that they profess to be? Do they not, like Cain, produce their offerings from the earth by their own industry? And like him would they not stain their guilty hands in the blood of God's children, who oppose their abomination? Are they not walking after their own lusts? Do not their mouths speak great swelling words of vanity, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage? "These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with the children of God, feeding themselves without fear." But by whom are these spots, these raging waves of the sea, these wandering stars, these wells without water, these clouds without rain, by whom are they set apart? Not by the Spirit, for Jude says, "These have not the Spirit;" but they separate, or dedicate, or consecrate themselves. The church of God is faithfully warned in the word to beware of these filthy dreamers, to give place to them by subjection not for an hour. Protesting, in the name of the Lord, against this whole system of self-sanctification, self-righteousness, and all humanly invented appendages to the gospel of God our Savior, the apostle prays the very God of peace, not the imaginary god of will-worshipers, who is at the best but a god of war and confusion, while the christian's God is the God of peace, of order, of salvation; and to him Paul's ardent prayer in the Spirit ascended, that he would wholly consecrate or sanctify the saints; for he alone can do it effectually, wholly and perfectly. The language of the apostle's prayer implies his conviction that they were already set apart by the forknowledge and predestination of God the Father, by their redemption in our Lord Jesus Christ, by their calling and regeneration by the Holy Ghost, but in regard to their body, spirit and soul, there was a lack of devotedness to his cause, and a lack which none but God can supply, and he prayed in faith, too, believing that God was not only able, but willing and

determined to accomplish it, for he adds, "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." Do what? Sanctify the saints wholly, in body, spirit and soul. Not only by separating them from these filthy dreamers, cleansing them from all the filthiness of the flesh and spirit, purifying their souls in believing the truth, giving them grace sufficient for their day, to keep their body under, and enabling them to present their bodies and spirits a living sacrifice, which is their reasonable service, but eventually he will change their vile body, and fashion it like the glorified body of their glorious Redeemer; for he has predestinated them to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he may be the first-born among many brethren.

The work of sanctification in all its vital bearings, is of the Lord; he has written his law in the hearts of his children, and he has commanded them to come out and be separate from anti-Christ; and I will receive you, saith the Lord, and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters saith the Lord Almighty.

The text from the Song v. 8, presents a beautiful figurative illustration of the deliverance of the church from the veil of Moses, which Paul says remains to this day untaken away from the hearts of them that read Moses, when redeemed and delivered from the law dispensation and brought into the light of the gospel, where she with open face, beholding as in a glass, or mirror, the glory of the Lord is changed to the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. The watchmen or ministers of the law, smote the spouse with a heavy hand, when requiring everything at her hand, and furnishing her with nothing wherewith to meet its stern demands. The eye of Moses was not dim, as a watchman over those who read him; he detected their short comings, nor was his natural force abated to the day of his death, to smite with killing effect. But Paul says, when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Thus under the new covenant dispensation, the apostles whom Christ stationed to keep the walls, all see eye to eye, and their charge is *to take away her veil from her.* Their principal work was to show the law by Christ fulfilled, and the veil of the Old Testament temple rent in twain, from the top to the bottom, exposing the glories of the gospel kingdom, as typified by the inner court, or the most holy place, the ark, the mercy-seat, the cherubim of glory, and showing the way opened into the immediate presence of God, by a consecrated way, through the veil, that is his flesh. As when Jesus called Lazarus from the tomb, he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot, and a napkin was about his face. Jesus said, Loose him and let him go. Thus having redeemed his people from the curse and dominion of the law, he has commissioned the keepers of the walls to loose them, and to "make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery," &c.

The individual experience of every child of God is in perfect harmony with this figure; they cease not to be smitten by the demands of the law, from the time they are quickened until the unveiled glory of the Lord in its transforming power is revealed to them in the face of Jesus Christ.

And christians, when aroused from a sleeping state, often go forth to seek their Lord by night, and fare roughly from the hands of the watchman.

For example, how long did our highly esteemed sister Huestis sleep at Catskill,

with the New School, having made every preparation for a refreshing slumber, and when the voice of her beloved Redeemer knocked, and she recognized his voice, saying unto her, Rise up, my love, my dove, my fair one, and come away! Was there not a murmuring, I have arranged matters to rest here, to enjoy pleasant dreams, I have put off my coat, ceased to be as tight-laced as I once was, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them? Was there not a lingering delay between sleep and awake? But at length when constrained to rise up, and being fully awake, did you not go forth in search of the Beloved asking for the old paths, and while thus inquiring of those who were regarded as watchmen, did they not smite you sorely, until the veil was completely removed, and then after having at length passed the watchmen, you found him whom your soul loveth?

We have mistaken your case, dear sister in Christ, if there is not a striking analogy in this beautiful figure, and the reality of your own case.

MIDDLETOWN N. Y. February 1, 1859.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Licking Old School Baptist Association convened with the church at May's Lick, Mason Co., Ky., Sept. 13th, 14th and 15th, 1901, to the several churches of which she is composed, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—After a year's pilgrimage in this wilderness world we are brought together once more, as we hope, for spiritual worship and enjoyment, as children of the heavenly King seeking, as we believe, a country beyond; the new Jerusalem; an heavenly city; a place of rest; an eternity of hallowed peace, always in the presence of Jesus. Dearly beloved brethren, having thus assembled, may we not as is our usual custom, write you a letter talking of his goodness, and speaking of his power and love? We feel it will be a comfort and profit to call to mind some of the words of the Lord Jesus, for we are told by him "that they are Spirit and they are life," and in our daily walk and in our service in the sanctuary let us like the disciple of Patmos turn to hear the voice that speaks to us, saying, "I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope."—Psalms cxxx. 5. His children are the same in all ages, and the words of "that same Jesus" are as gracious and full of comfort to us now, as they were to the men of Galilee as he walked and talked with them, or as in the beginning "when the Word was with God and the Word was God." We are fully persuaded it is only in the appearing of the Lord Jesus that we do know the meaning of his words and gather comfort from his dealings with us, and do really know what are good things and what we sometimes call bad things, but are truly only needful. "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things."—Matt. vi. 32, is another of his words, but when providences are dark and crosses are heavy, our spiritual props removed, creature comforts curtailed, gourds withered, and our human ambitions and hopes dried up as grass, we are ready to cry out, All these are against us, instead of submissively owning all are for our good, and that our heavenly Father knoweth we have need of all these things. He increases our burdens. Why? Because it is needful. He removes our idols. Why? Because they are hindering our spiritual growth. He thwarts our worldly schemes, blasts our cherished

hopes. Why? It is needed. Perhaps there are thorns in these coveted paths, and we will be made to see some higher spiritual blessing in these reversions, and made to own that he prevented us with the blessings of his goodness. Our Marahs, as well as our Elims, are appointed by him. Truly, my Father's children, we cannot say that anything is bad when we remember the sufferings of Jesus and all for us, when in that awful moment he felt the preciousness of the assurance that all were needed and all appointed. "This cup which thou gavest me to drink, shall I not drink it?" If Jesus could extract comfort in this dark hour of inconceivable agony, in the thought that the Father laid upon him the iniquities of us all, what strong consolation for us in this same truth as his suffering children. Paul must have realized this when he said, "I die daily." "I bear about in my body the dying of the Lord Jesus." "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Could he have then felt there were any bad things? My Father's children, whatever be the trial with which you are pressed down, let the words of Jesus be like oil thrown on the fretful sea; hush to silence all our murmurings and rebellions, for we have need of all these things. Again we call to mind another of the words of Jesus: "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."—John xiii. 7. This will be when all mystery shall be cleared up. Paul said, "Behold, I shew you a mystery." This will be when all shall be one vast revelation of God's wisdom and love. Here we are constantly groping about, baffled many times at the dispensations of the Lord, failing often to fathom his ways, and like the well of Sychor, they are deep, and we have nothing to draw with. In this hereafter all of this mystery is ended, all this groping and guessing at things you know not, will be opened, and their inner meaning shine forth in the light of the hereafter. In "this morning without clouds," this perfect day, the Sun of righteousness ever shining, there will be no shadow there, no mystery. We have so little faith, not willing to take on trust a little while, soon, very soon, the day of disclosures will come, when every dealing will be vindicated. Often, too, we get to exercising ourselves in things too high for us, not content that our Father wills it, but we must know how it is, why it is. O ye of little faith, how presumptuous is this. Men are not willing that their unfinished work shall be judged; how much more so with the work of God towards his children. Let us wait patiently on the Lord for his fulfillment of the hereafter promise to us, when all the stones in the temple are fit into their appointed place as ordained of God. It is Jesus that speaks these living words, "What I do." He that died for us, and who ever liveth to make intercession for us by his Spirit. Eternity will disclose to us how all, all is needful; how nothing less, nothing else could have done. "The word of the Lord is right, and all his works are done in truth."—Psalms xxxiii. 4. Let us refer to another of the words of the Lord Jesus, found in John xv. 9: "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue in my love." This is wondrous love, this, to us, is one of the most wonderful verses in the Bible. How are we to sound the depths and kind of love that dwelt with the Father from all eternity for his Son? yet we find in these words that Jesus measures his love for his children by it: "so have I loved you." How wonderful such love, and how undeserving are we of this bestowal when

we were yet sinners, how it should humble us down. What is more profoundly mysterious than to think of the intercommunings of the Father and Son before the world was? Let us look at one of the lights of revelation as regards this: "Then I was by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him."—Prov. viii. 30. Here is love that is pure and holy, existing through the measureless lapse of eternity without one shadow of turning. Yet listen to the words of Jesus: "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you." What is comparable to this love among finite beings? Long before time and worlds this love existed. We may say coeval with eternity. Jesus in his eternal rejoicing seems to group the love of his Father and his love for sinners: "Rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men."—Prov. viii. 31. In order to make this picture more complete look at the Father's love: "Therefore doth my Father love me," and in another place, "Because I lay down my life," showing he loved the Son more, if such could be, because he laid down his life for the guilty. In regard to the redeemed it is said, "He shall rest in his love, he shall rejoice over them with singing." What a wondrous specimen of love; because he laid down his life for us. We need not wonder at any expression of love after this. Our feeble efforts at praising him for his great love for us are cold indeed, and shine like a taper in contrast. Lord strengthen our faith! for "Never man spake like this man." In John xiv. 19, we find these loving and assuring words of Jesus, "Because I live, ye shall live also." How strong is this promise to his saints, even stronger than the mountains round about Jerusalem, with which God compasses his people, for it is staked upon his own existence: "Because I live, ye shall live also." Our true Joseph is alive. "What more can he say than to you he hath said?" John in his exile was made to rejoice at his appearing, and in his words, "I am he that liveth." Again, I beg you to listen to this text, for the fullness of the gospel is in it: "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."—1 John v. 11. In Romans viii. we find it begins without condemnation, and ends without separation. Then what more? we cannot perish unless Christ perisheth with us. We feel sure at times we are made to realize how sure is the word of Jesus, and that we do really love it. "I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."—John xiv. 3. Blessed hope for the church; this is heaven regardless of locality. "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching."—Luke xii. 32.

"Amen, even so, come Lord Jesus."

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.

J. T. McCOUN, Clerk.

T. J. RATLIFF, Assistant Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Olive & Hurley Church, Ulster Co., N. Y., Sept. 11th and 12th, 1901, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends christian love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the goodness of our covenant-keeping God we are once more permitted to meet as an association of churches, in brotherly love and fellowship, to listen to the word preached by the ministers who have come laden with the goods of our Master's table, and

have ably set forth the doctrine of God our Savior. Your ministers have been received with joy and gladness of heart, and we feel to say that the presence of the Lord has been in our midst. We ask a continuation of your christian correspondence.

Our next session will be held, the Lord willing, with the First Church of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., the second Wednesday and Thursday in September, 1902, commencing at 10 o'clock the first day.

J. D. HUBBELL, Moderator.
WILLIAM BALLARD, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Tunis Myers was born in New Jersey, Nov. 11th, 1807, died at his home in Waterloo, Neb., Aug. 23d, 1901, aged 93 years, 9 months and 12 days. When twenty-seven years of age he joined the Baptist church at Sandy Ridge, Hunterdon Co., N. J., and was baptized in the Delaware River, by Joseph Wright. In a short time he changed his membership to the Kingwood church, at Locktown, N. J., where he was a member at the time of the division of that church, at which time he took a firm stand with the Old School or Primitive Baptists. Of all the members of that church at the time, whether they remained with the old or departed to be with the new order, he was the last one. Father was taken sick with billious colic June 28th, 1901, but was soon relieved, but it recurred however, but by July 6th we had it under control permanently, and he suffered no more. The weather however was so extremely warm, and he so weak he could not rally. A part of the time his mind was not clear, and would wander back to his old home in New Jersey, and even back to his boyhood days. These wanderings used up his remaining strength. Two days before death released him, his mind was clear and tranquil, and thus he remained till Friday morning, when we saw the end was very near, and just before 9 o'clock, quiet and peaceful as a little child going to sleep, he passed away.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder E. Astor. The text was Psalms cxvi. 15, "Precious in the sight of the Lord, is the death of his saints." The following hymns were read and sung: 1224, "There is a land of pure delight;" 1257, "Asleep in Jesus; blessed sleep," (Beebe's Collection) and

"Come unto me when shadows darkly gather,
When the sad heart is weary and distressed,
Seeking for comfort from your heavenly Father;
Come unto me, and I will give you rest."

Deceased married Keturah Rittenhouse, sister of Elder E. Rittenhouse, of Delaware, Dec. 30th, 1846, and they lived in Hunterdon Co., N. J., until 1883, when they came to Nebraska, settling at Waterloo at that time. Their two sons, E. R. and William, with their families, had preceded them several years. These were their only children, and it is a remarkable fact that no deaths have occurred in the immediate families of Mr. Myers or his two sons up to the date of his death. Of the eleven children of which deceased was a member, only one, a sister, (Rebekah Shepherd, of Kingwood Church, N. J.,) who is now eighty-one years old, survives Mr. Myers. During his residence in Waterloo, "Grandpa Myers," as he was familiarly known, made many friends, who sincerely mourn his death. His life was exemplary in its character, and his citizenship above reproach. He was a member of the Baptist church over sixty-six years, having held his membership at Loveland, Council Bluffs church, Iowa, for a number of years past. His father, Elijah Myers, enlisted in the war of 1812, and died of fever in about 1818. His grandfather, Cornelius Myers, was a soldier in the Revolutionary war. The funeral of deceased occurred at the house, Sunday morning, the 25th, at 10:30 o'clock, and the services were interesting and impressive. Besides two sons and their families, the aged wife of deceased (aged 78) survive him, and to her especially the sympathy of the community goes out. Father was the last survivor of those who were members of the Kingwood church at the time Elder E. Rittenhouse joined that church, and mother and her sister, Mrs. Mary Lawshe, of Trenton, N. J., I believe, are the only ones living who were members there at the time of his (Elder Rittenhouse's) ordination.

E. R. MYERS.

WATERLOO, Neb., Sept. 25, 1901.

Mrs. Charlottee Truitt departed this life at her daughter's, Mrs. Rosa Timmons, in Snow Hill, Md., August 17th, 1901. The subject of this notice was born May 20th, 1830, and was married to Handy I. Truitt, Jan. 28th, 1858. There were born unto them five children, four sons and one daughter, all highly respected citizens, one, John H., a member with her. She was baptized by the writer into the fellowship of the Old School Baptist church at Indiantown, Md., in the year 1877, and lived an orderly and commendable life until death. The writer has been intimately acquainted with the deceased for about thirty years, and he can truly say she was a good and faithful burden-bearer, a companion who attended day and night for a long time, and administered to every need of an invalid husband, and was careful for the best interest of her children, and also the church. She seemed to be willing and capacitated to fill every place that the laws of nature, and also of Zion's King, assigned her in this life. How we all miss her. She seemed to think much about the welfare of the church,

as well as all other relations of life. She was just what we would suppose the grace of God would make of a woman, and surely in her that grace was magnified. Our sympathy goes out greatly for her daughter, Mrs. Rose Timmons, with whom she lived, she being a widow some years. She is gone, and we can only pray that God may give us reconciling grace, causing us to remember that the loss is only ours, for we believe for her to die is gain, and the thought of her life, experience and hope, should comfort us all. We would say to Rosey, Try and remember that the Lord has done it, and there is wisdom in all that he does. By reason of my absence from home, Elders Francis and Meredith were called to attend her funeral, I judge much to the satisfaction of the friends.

May the Lord remember the family and the little church from which she has been taken, is the prayer of one that feels his loss,

T. M. POULSON.

BROTHER **James Calvin Harvey** was born June 18th, 1857, joined the Regular Primitive Baptist Church about ten years ago, was baptized by Elder Jonas Sikes, in the State of Texas, and departed this life March 2d, 1901, aged 43 years, 8 months and 14 days. The subject of this notice had been away from home for many years, but was home at a reunion of the family last Christmas. Brother Jim visited my house two weeks before his death, and tarried with me nearly one week. He was not well when he came, but he was alive to the precious doctrine of God our Savior, and had not much to say of his sufferings. I never in all my life spent a more joyful week. We would talk on the holy Scripture. He was firm in the doctrine of salvation by grace, both in time and eternity; not a jarring note or discord between us. His sister wrote me of his great illness, and that he desired so badly to see me. I reached his bedside a short time before his last breath left him. He died, not making a single struggle, at 6:20 p. m.

ALSO,

His dear, afflicted sister, **Miss Mary Augusta Harvey**, was born Oct. 28th, 1875, died March 16th, 1901, aged 25 years, 4 months and 18 days. She left behind her many sweet evidences of her acceptance with her holy Redeemer. She tried to talk to her mother awhile before her death, but said, "Mother, I cannot tell it." She could only talk in a whisper at the time I was at the home of her father and mother, which was about two weeks before her death. Her countenance showed that her soul possessed the grace of her dear Savior. So in less than half a month dear brother and sister Harvey lost two lovely children. They were dutiful and every way worthy, through grace, to make this once happy home a comfort. But it has pleased the dear Savior to call them home to bask in the sunlight of God's presence. Dear father, mother, brothers and sisters of the departed ones, you are bereaved of two precious jewels, but may God's Spirit inspire your minds to look upward and behold your departed ones among that blood-washed throng in the city of our God, saying, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory." May your precious hope be revived through grace to look forward to the last great day when the trump of God shall sound, and our bodies shall come forth shining in the courts of our God, where sad parting will be no more.

J. R. HATCHER.

Wright Rushing was born in Trigg Co., Ky., August 25th, 1833, was married to Miss Catherine Downs, June 18th, 1857. In 1865 they moved to Missouri, and remained there until 1881, and moved to the State of Washington, where he spent the remainder of his days on earth. He leaves his wife, three sons and three daughters, while three sons have gone on before. At the age of nineteen years he was wonderfully converted, and soon was identified with the Primitive Baptist church, in which faith he ever rejoiced, and in which he triumphed at death, at 8:30 p. m., Sept. 4th, 1901, and was interred at Cheney, Wash., Sept. 6th. Yes, an honorable citizen, a true and faithful husband, and a loving father, has gone from the scenes of earth to the climes of bliss. His age was 68 years and 10 days.

G. RUSHING.

RITZVILLE, Washington.

MEETINGS.

THE Welsh Tract yearly meeting is appointed to commence on Saturday, Oct. 19th, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue two days Those coming from Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore, will come via B. & O. to Newark, Del., Saturday morning. Trains leave Philadelphia, Chestnut St., at 7:30 a. m., and Baltimore, Camden station, at 7:55 a. m. Those coming via Delaware Division will take train leaving Delmar at 7:05 a. m. Saturday, and get tickets to Newark via Porter.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth to meet with us. Ministering brethren on their way from the Virginia Corresponding Meeting to the Salisbury Association are especially invited to meet with us.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Indiantown, Wicomico Co., near the little town of Powelville, Md., beginning Wednesday, the 23d of October, 1901, and continuing the two following days. A special invitation is given to all lovers of sound doctrine.

Those coming from the north will take cars leaving Philadelphia 7:25 a. m., arriving in Salisbury 11:55 a. m., at the junction, where the B., C. & A. train will

be waiting, change cars for Pittsville, Md., where they will be met and conveyed to places of entertainment.

Those coming from the south, on the B., C. & A., from Baltimore, leave Baltimore, steamer connection, between Pier 4 and Light street, 6:30 a. m., arriving in Salisbury 11:47, where they will join those coming from the north. All will be met at Pittsville.

Those who anticipate coming should board the train on Tuesday, the 22d. Conveyances will be at Pittsville to meet you on Tuesday, Oct. 22d, the day before the meeting commences. We hope to see a goodly number; we will be ready with heart and hand to receive you.

If there is any change in trains leaving before the time arrives for friends to start, they can obtain information from any railroad official.

L. A. HALL, Church Clerk.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

WAVERLY, Pa., Sept. 18, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—When you have space please publish the inclosed letter of Miss Ruth Keene, daughter of Elder Keene. The Scripture, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings the Lord hath ordained praise," is beautifully fulfilled in the case of this child. I think she is only about fourteen years old. She certainly does know and love Jesus, for she loves the church, and Jesus dwells there.

D. M. VAIL.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, Sept. 7, 1901.

DEAR ELDER VAIL:—I am going to trouble you with another letter to-night, because I feel that I must write to you and tell you of things that have happened to me lately. But first I am going to tell you from the very beginning, if I can, all that I have felt in regard to spiritual things. I know you will not be vexed with me, even though you may be tired before you get through reading this. As soon as I could understand what papa meant in his preaching, I wanted to have an experience like the Old School Baptists have. I did not feel sinful, but still I knew that I must be, and often wished I could be shown my sins, and the way of redemption from them. At times I could see I was sinful, but I thought as I grew older that I would try to be good, and so win favor in God's eyes. I always thought that the Old School Baptists were the chosen people of God, and that what they taught was the truth, and I can remember sermons which I thought were beautiful, when the great and wonderful love of God for his people was talked about. I sometimes wondered, Shall I ever know anything about it? Am I one of his chosen people? When the thought of death came to me I would wonder whether I would go to heaven or hell, and would tremble sometimes when I thought that as I was not a believer in Christ as my Savior, I should certainly go to hell, which I imagined was something like a furnace, where miserable sinners were tortured by terrible fire-breathing devils. I kept on wanting to have an experience of grace, and one Sunday three, no, two years ago this September, Elder Chick was at the yearly meeting, and told some of his experience. When he was telling it, how I longed to have

such an experience! I thought that if I could only have a true conviction of my own sin I would be almost happy, for then I should know that I was able to see them because of the light which had been given me by God, and I had read or heard that through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom. All the following year I listened intently to papa, as he preached the gospel every Sunday. I think now that I knew myself to be a sinner then, though I at the time only mourned because I could not see myself so. I was in London, Ontario, part of the winter, you know, and went to different churches while there. I could see there was a great difference between them and the Old School Baptists, and of the two liked the latter better. I was at meeting with my aunt in the Episcopalian church one evening while a converted Hindoo was the speaker. He took as his text Romans i. 16, and spoke of the gospel of Christ, the power of God unto salvation. I was expecting to hear something very different to what I did, for if ever I heard an Old School Baptist sermon I did that night. He told his experience, and how the gospel of Christ came to him as the power of God unto salvation. He did not talk about what he had done for the Lord, but what the Lord had done for him, and I was astonished, for he said that no one had taught him this except the Lord God Almighty. How could he, I thought, have an experience identically the same as the people in the Old School Baptists have? Then how I longed for the Lord to shew me how the gospel was the power of God unto salvation. Well, the yearly meeting (1900) commenced, and on Friday morning you preached from 1 Peter ii. 1–5. From the second verse down it seemed to me that I desired the sincere milk of the word, that I might grow thereby, but the third verse nearly broke my heart: "If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." I knew that I had not. How could I when I had never mourned for my awful sins, which suddenly seemed to confront me? I wanted to pray, but could not. I dared not look to God, whom I saw plainly to be a God of holiness, a God of mercy indeed to his chosen people, but nevertheless a just and righteous God whom I had most wickedly sinned against. O, I longed to have some evidence that I was born of God. In the afternoon papa preached from the text, "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together." I could see that nearly every one seemed to enjoy his sermon, and I did not wonder at it, for if I had been in that city I should have been delighted to hear about it; he spoke of the people of God being knit together in love, telling the same story, how no member, however small, could be left out of the body of Christ. How God's people must enjoy this, I thought. In the evening you preached from the text which tells that through much tribulation must we enter the kingdom of God. There, I thought, I must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom, I then cannot be saved, else would I have this tribulation. O, how I longed for tribulation of the right sort, no tongue can tell. I lay awake at night trying to pray for mercy, but in vain. Papa once said that God is everywhere, but I could not reach God with my voice, he was away off in the great infinity. The next morning I had to go to the railroad depot so I missed your sermon. In the afternoon papa preached from, "We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." I longed to have a strong city which should have

salvation for walls and bulwarks, for if any needed one I certainly did, and do. In the evening your text was Psalms lxv. 5, and I was indeed answered in a wonderful way by God. I was made to see him as all holy, just and merciful, and myself as a vile sinner who was so wicked that I could not expect mercy, I could not ask for mercy. So great were my sins I could not even look to God, I thought of the poor publican who dared not lift up his eyes to heaven, and felt the deepest sympathy for him. I felt my sins were crushing me into hell, indeed I thought they were all the hell I could ever know. I was sitting with two of my friends in the pew, and I thought, Mollie and Grace will say, Ruth is more interested than we are, perhaps she is experiencing religion. That thought was very frightening to me, to think that I could deceive any one in that way, and I said to myself, You know you do not care anything about these things, if you did you would not have such a thought enter your mind that any one should think that you, you wretched hypocrite, should be exercised by any religious things; so I resolved to look cheerful at least, and act my true self, but I longed, with a hungry longing, to care for the things of God. I went to bed tired out in my mind. Sunday you took as your text, "He found him in a desert land." You described the condition of God's people when they are found of the Lord in the desert, in a solitary place, how they were altogether helpless, that they mourned because they could not mourn for their sins, and you went on to describe how helpless the child is, how he cannot even come to the Lord, but that the Lord must come to him, how he washes away their guilt by his death upon the cross, and carries them into his glorious kingdom of light and love, but what was the most beautiful part to me was the helplessness of the child, the inability to go to the Lord, and the marvelous grace of the Lord in coming through the desert to them, suffering, bleeding, dying for them. O, I thought, I have felt this helplessness, can it be possible that the Lord intends to come and save me? I could say with the jailor in Acts xvi. 30, What must I do to be saved? and the answer was, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." But then I felt, I cannot do this, I cannot believe on him unless I am shown how. I wanted to ask you whether you had ever felt all this, and see how you were shewn the way of life? I said to myself, If he has, how I love him; if the people of God ever feel like this, I love them, love them. Then the words came to my mind, "We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." What a wonderful text! Then I thought, O no, I do not love them, for how can I love them and not love Christ, who is the Head of his people? About this time, although I do not know whether it was from the pulpit or in conversation, I heard the text, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." It applied so sweetly to me that I held my breath, it seemed to me the voice of God. In the afternoon you preached from, "And now Lord what wait I for? my hope is in thee." Somehow it greatly comforted me in that I hoped that some day he would show compassion to me and deliver me out of the hands of Satan. But this comfort soon left me, in a few hours I was again in the dark. At night papa preached from the words, "O, that I had wings like a dove." I felt, too, that if I could but have those wings how quickly I would fly to Jesus, who should comfort and console me. At

the association held the following week, at South Gardiner, I went through such deep suffering. I felt to be a castaway, a vile sinner, a lying hypocrite, everything awful and wicked that one can think of, all my little hope was gone. I wanted to die, but was afraid to; I wanted to listen to the sermons, but trembled at the words that were preached, and the texts papa took were terrible to me; one was about David, "But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I." Another was about the four leprous men. (2 Kings vii. 3.) It seemed that I was at the gates, and could peep in at times and see how the people in the city enjoyed themselves, all healthy and clean, rejoicing in their Savior, but that I was a leper forced to cry, "Unclean, unclean." Neither could I go into the camp of the Syrians and obtain food and drink for my soul. As long as the sermons described the sinful condition of God's people I could sympathize, but the glorious redemption I could not enter into. So vile, so wicked was I, how could I? One evening, or afternoon rather, they gathered together after meeting and sang. I felt so unworthy to be among them that I kept in the other end of the room from them. Attie Curtis asked that the hymn, "Glorious things of thee are spoken, Zion, city of our God," should be sung. I thought, Now I must scream, or something, I cannot stand this. I could say certainly that I knew of glorious things about the Zion of God, but I was an outcast, a miserable hypocrite. Some people asked me, "Have you enjoyed the meetings?" and I would answer, I do not know, or turn away in tears. I loved to hear them talk even when their words cut me to the heart, yet how utterly miserable I was. Sometimes I would think perhaps God is teaching me by his grace, and then I would think, When any one is a child of God, such thoughts never come to them till they are made to hope in him, and are looking back over their experience. Sometimes this text would come to me, "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I knew I loved them, but I could not feel that I loved Christ, who is their Head, their all in all. So it went on, and gradually I lost that awful burden of sin, and became cold and indifferent. Let me say just here that it always troubled me because I could be so borne down by my own sense of sin that I could hardly keep from crying aloud, and in a moment or so be talking as merrily as possible. I was then one day in the parlor, and spied a book entitled, "The way he hath led me," by Arthur Wilcockson. This is one of the most wonderful books I ever read; he described all my feelings, and I began again to hope that my experience was of God, when this awful indifference came upon me at the association at South Gardiner. O, I was miserable enough, but when I could not feel that burden of sin so soul-crushing, I was in the depths. At rare intervals during the winter, and a good deal of the spring and summer, I felt to cry for mercy unto God. Well, I thought, if this goes on much more I shall soon be crazy. During the autumn of last year as I rode back and forth to school, I thought upon these things, sometimes with comfort. One hymn I used to sing often, it begins,

> "Ye lambs of Christ's fold, ye weaklings in faith,
> Who long to lay hold on life by his death."

What a grand hymn that is! Another was, "Does the gospel word proclaim rest for those who weary be?" Another was, "Behold the spouse oppressed with fears." I used to think of these wonder-

ful hymns when I was not singing them, but O, I got into that dreadful indifferent state. I tried to mourn for my sins, but awful to say, I could not, even when I thought of dying I could not cry for mercy. I thought I was broken-hearted before, so I was, but now I could not break or feel my heart broken. The hymn of Hart's beginning, "O for a glance of heavenly day," describes my feelings fully. Just think of that, and I need not try to tell you how I felt. During the winter I boarded in the village at Dr. Brown's. One night after having been there some three or four weeks, Mrs. Brown asked me what was taught by the Old School Baptists. I tried to tell her, and she would produce parts of Scripture which she thought denied the teachings. I was trembling all over, but tried to show her what I believed. We sat up late, and neither of us slept much that night. I prayed to God that she might know the truth and be saved. She had acknowledged that she had an altogether different opinion of the Old School Baptists than she had had, and this gave me some little encouragement. Afterwards she has told me that the saving by grace is wonderful, but that she thinks election and predestination very hard. During that winter I got worse and worse, I doubted the reality of the Bible, of God, of grace, of every true and blessed thing. I would say to myself, I do not believe in God, how then can I pray to him? But somehow at times I prayed. At length I got over that awful Atheism, these doubts went away, and I was made to pray unto God, whom I had denied in my thoughts, still I was cold. Then I resolved to try to lead a good life. I thought, While I am so wicked surely God cannot have mercy upon me, but I felt to be worse than before. Here I was really, though I knew it not, depending on myself, that helpless being that I was once shown to be, to win favor in God's eyes. Not long after I came home for the summer holidays, and I began again to see myself as a helpless sinner who if anything saved, it must be Jesus, and Jesus alone. About a month ago papa preached a sermon from Ezekiel xvi. 2–19, about a helpless, new born babe; a more wonderful sermon I had never heard. Papa was surely inspired by God in that sermon. People held their breath and wondered, and some wept; I understood it all, how utterly weak I was. The sermons in between that time and our last yearly meeting did not comfort me much; they were nearly all about doctrine, and although I knew the truth was spoken, yet I craved experience. Friday morning, Aug. 30th, Elder Chick preached a sermon which never to my dying day shall I forget; his text was Phil. ii. 1, 2. I can remember very little of the exact words of the sermon, but I can remember what he spoke about. He began by telling about the consolation in Christ, and went on through the text, telling of the comfort of love, the fellowship of the Spirit, everything he dwelt upon, and unfolded the meaning as a person takes the wrappings off a parcel, disclosing what is contained in the parcel. Then he told his experience fully, and the text, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did," applied to me then. Bit by bit, beginning at the beginning and through to the end he told my feelings, thoughts and desires, as never I could. O, can you imagine how I felt? I could not think scarcely, but wondered with an increasing wonder as he went on to the end. I felt such a boundless love for him that I could only look at him and be astonished

at this new love. All day I lived on that sermon, thinking, pondering over it; it seemed to me like a rich feast spread before me upon which I could look and enjoy even after I had satisfied my hunger. Such a wonderful love I felt to all the people of God I can never even begin to tell. In the afternoon Elder Beal preached a strong doctrinal sermon, from Romans xi. 33–36. I looked at Attie Curtis and Mrs. Butler, they were weeping gently, all around were enjoying it. I knew it was the truth, yet I did not feel comforted, or even interested; I wished I could feel interested more, but could not, I could only think of the morning. I had longed to speak to Elder Chick since the sermon, but did not get the chance to till after supper. He was feeling unwell, and had lain down on a sofa in the sitting room where we all were. At length the time for the evening meeting approached, when Attie Curtis said, "It is about time to go to meeting, are you going now, Ruth?" I said, "I think I will wait for mamma." After they had all gone out of the room except Elder Chick and myself, I hesitated as I was leaving the room, for I wanted to talk to Elder Chick, but had resolved never to speak to any one unless I was spoken to first, for I did not want to be a hypocrite. As I was standing Elder Chick said, "How have you enjoyed the meetings?" I said again, "I do not know." He said, "If I do not mistake you are interested in these things." I answered somehow in the affirmative, and he asked me several other questions, among which was, "Had I a hope?" I answered, "No." I told him how I loved the Lord's people, and did not love the Lord, of the long period of my indifference to these things, and of my desire to mourn truly for my sins. He comforted me wonderfully, telling me his own experience over again, and I telling him of my experience in regard to Hart's hymn:

"Ye lambs of Christ's fold, ye weaklings in faith,
Who long to lay hold on life by his death,
Who fain would believe him, and in your best room
Would gladly receive him, but fear to presume."

I said, "But it applies to the lambs, and I am not one." He replied, "If you can apply the last part to yourself you can the first." Through the meetings sometimes I was comforted, and sometimes not. I often thought that if I were a child of God I could not fail to be comforted, and still I did not feel that sense of Jesus being my Savior, nor did I feel that I loved him, but I loved his people. On Sunday night it rained, and we had a small meeting in our house. Elder Chick prayed, prayed for papa and his family, and then prayed for me, and said, If there was one who was feeling to be without good evidence of a hope, if that person had been caused to write bitter things concerning their ownself, to feel to love the people of God, but not the Lord, he prayed that God might reveal himself to that person, and give that person evidence of a God-given hope. I nearly broke out crying, for I am not used to being almost mentioned by name when prayed for in public. Tuesday I wrote a letter to papa and gave it to him before going to bed, telling him what I have told you in this. Wednesday morning both papa and mamma embraced me tenderly, murmuring words of love for me. I felt utterly wretched, I was afraid I had deceived them somehow, I took papa to the railroad station, and we talked all the way down; he comforting me wonderfully. I told him I hardly knew whether I had a hope, but felt that I loved his people, and that I could only be saved, if saved at all, through the blood of the crucified Lamb of God.

During the last few days I have been thinking constantly upon this, Is this a hope in Jesus as my Savior? Do I love him? I desire to love him, I want to realize that he is my all in all, and sometimes it seems to me that I do love him, that he is altogether lovely, the fairest among ten thousand.

I began this letter last night, after having read Susie Bloomfield's letter in the SIGNS of March 15th, 1887. She wrote of many things that I too have known, and I felt that I loved Christ, I loved God, I loved every one. I must write to you, and tell you of this soul-filling love. This morning I cannot see and feel this love so much, but I hope I love him, that he has died for me, that I am saved by his wonderful, wonderful grace. "'Tis a heaven below, the Redeemer to know." Is this hope? "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee."

Dear Elder Vail, I have tried to tell you what I have felt; I long to love the Lord with all my heart, my soul and my strength. If I love him it seems a very small love, when I think how God gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life. I am almost hoping, nay, I do hope that God has given me a wee bit of love for him, and to him be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Pardon me for writing such a lengthy letter, and remember me at the throne of grace.

Yours in love,

RUTH KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, Sept. 22, 1901.

DEAR PAPA:—This afternoon I will write to you again. Last Monday I received two beautiful letters, one from Elder Vail, the other from Attie Curtis. Of course he had not received my last letter, and when I wrote before I was in that indifferent state of mind that I told you of, and in his letter he tried to comfort me by saying that thus he was much of the time, and said, "I have you in my heart, and love you as one of God's dear little lambs." Dear Elder Vail, he must love me to have written me this letter, for he has so much sickness in his family, and is so busy all the time. Most of the time I have been happy in my thoughts, and feel like thanking God for the wonderful gift of his love. I can never express my praise and adoring love. Truly he has loved me with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness hath he drawn me. I feel that even if doubts and fears do come to me, I can never doubt that God does draw his people with an everlasting love to himself.

Give my love to all, and tell Elder Hubbell that what he said two years ago when I was so glad to see him here, is true. When I was crying and laughing together, and not wanting to let go of him, he said, "She is like Ruth of old, who said, 'Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee. For where thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.'"

Elder Chick has written me a very comforting letter indeed. When you get home I want you to read my letters from them. Elder Chick says concerning the way in which a poor sinner is brought to know themselves and God, "This is the way of weeping and supplications, in which the Lord said by the prophet he would bring his ransomed, and through the wilderness at last he brings his Israel to the borders of the promised

land, and then he brings them in, and they dwell there. You have entered the land, and it is your home for ever. But while in the land of goodness, and of pleasant fruits, and of streams and rivers, yet all will not be peace for ever; all the children of God, and you, my child, among them, will find that the warfare is not ended. From the bondage of Egypt you have indeed escaped. The Lord has brought you out, and you shall see that land no more. But the Canaanite dwells still in the land. The evil propensities of our nature, the temptations of the world and the enmity of Satan you will still have to meet. But, my child, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. All these inward and outward foes, though mighty, shall not prevail, your King and Redeemer has conquered all, and he is your friend," and many other beautiful things he wrote which I have not space to repeat. He, as well as Attie Curtis and Elder Vail, express a desire that I may be enabled to put on Christ by baptism. I do sincerely desire to be united with the church of God, and to follow in the footsteps of my blessed Lord and Master, but I do feel very unworthy of the rich love and fellowship of the saints of God, and fear that I can never tell them of my experience. I am so utterly unworthy of their love, yet I love them dearly, and when I began to read Attie Curtis' letter beginning, "My dear little sister Ruth," I could only read it over and over again, and felt very happy, so happy that I never can express how happy I felt, though I am unworthy to be called by that endearing name. It surprises me as I read over their letters, to see how they love me, and how they can comfort me. To-day Irene and I went into the meeting-house and sang together some beautiful hymns; then I read aloud a sermon by Philpot, from the text, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" It was so good, and stays in my memory, nearly every word being as clear as if I were reading it. Certainly, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew." I have been getting on about the same this week, sometimes fearing, most of the time in a calm state of mind, sometimes praising God in a very great joy. I will tell you more perhaps when you get back. I cannot seem to write everything, nor yet speak them. One thing I must tell you of: after I had gone upstairs one night to go to bed, (last week I think) and had undressed and blown out the light, I knelt down beside the open window and looked out. The sky was spangled with stars, the air was cool and summer like. I first thought, How beautiful all this is, how great God must be who made and sees all these wonderful stars, and everything beneath them, and what a tiny atom in all this great universe I am. How I love him and his dear people. I then thought, How do I love Christ? I, thinking how I did, seemed to see him as he is represented in pictures of him, and I thought of his pure, blameless life, and his wonderful soul-saving death. Then I thought, I love him because he was blameless and pure, but I love him only for that, I love him as I would a natural man who lived a good, gentle life here on this earth, and I have no part in his spiritual life. That thought seemed to make my very heart stop beating. I was in despair, but prayed, prayed that I might after all be mistaken in this thought, and might still have part in the spiritual salvation of his people. I at length crawled into bed and buried my face in the pillows and prayed,

prayed that Christ would be revealed to me as my dear Redeemer. I got to thinking of what I had experienced in times past of his mercy, how happy I was sometimes, and I said to myself, No, no I cannot believe that I have no part in his salvation, and I do believe in him spiritually. That hymn, which I can never remember, that has something in it like this, "His love in time past forbids me to think he will leave me at last in trouble to sink," came to my mind, and I went to sleep after some time. But I suffered more that night than I thought I could, because I was so convicted of having but a natural love for Christ Jesus. Perhaps, papa, you will think me very weak and faithless; I am, but I hope and pray that my faith may be increased so that I may never doubt in that way again. At times I am very, very happy, even while studying. I am conscious that Christ is mine and I am his, and this is a very blessed consciousness, and I would not exchange my little hope in Jesus for all the riches of this very rich world. If I have but a small hope, yet it is all I have, and without it I should be infinitely more miserable than the murderer who awaits his condemnation and execution.

I must close my letter, it is late in the evening. Mamma has come back from Sandford, and is tired, and says she will write some time when I do not, and sends love, and charges you to take care of yourself, and not take cold.

I am your loving daughter, "In hope of his calling,"

RUTH A. KEENE.

WHO ARE OUR ENEMIES?

It is very important when we enter into a conflict that we know who are our enemies; that we may recognize them in whatever garb or form they may appear, and it is equally important that we may at all times be enabled, through continual watchfulness, to recognize our friends, lest peradventure we might injure the tender branches of the spiritual vine. An avowed and open enemy is one who is arrayed against us by common consent, or by declared enmity. Such are not to be so greatly feared as the secret contriving enemy who with deceit and many wiles steals into our friendship and confidence, that he may rob us of all we hold dear and precious. Can it be said we are our own enemies? Yes, no doubt it can. Ignorance of law does not exempt from punishment. By reason of the violation of the laws of our nature, we pay the penalty in sickness and ill health. Therefore we not only become enemies to our own comfort and usefulness, but also to him who created us and placed us under law. And when we have been delivered from the power of darkness into the light and liberty of God's dear Son, then can we take sweet counsel with the apostle when to us he says, "And you that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblamable and unreprovable in his sight." Enmity to God, and self-righteousness, are the ruling principles in the creatures of Adam; the light of immortality hath never shined in their hearts. Wisdom hath not entered the portals of the natural life. The "darkness [which] was upon the face of the deep" in the beginning, continues to enshroud them. When they seek knowl-

edge, it is of the things which exist in the darkness. Their "mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace they have not known; there is no fear of God before their eyes." There is a peculiar sense in which the world is the enemy to the saints of God.

First. An enemy in the mind by wicked works; a natural enmity of the carnal mind against God.

Second. An aversion and hatred to holiness. I have sometimes said, they hate the doctrine which we profess, but it is more than that, when they come in contact with the people of God they sniff the air of holiness, which is abhorrent to them. In hating God they also hate all that love and praise him. In this age of the world's history the saints are not molested in their worship, but rather they are severely let alone. Therefore the unregenerate men and women of the world are not our open and avowed enemies even. In a worldly sense we are friendly one with another; and in a still more worldly sense, discovering whom we follow, they simply cast us to one side as a something not worth their consideration; as enemies, but not worthy of their steel. The so-called religious world are our enemies only in the sense that they desire to see us perish from off the face of the earth, hoping such a consummation will soon come to pass. An enemy is only so considered when danger is apprehended to our person or our life. Of the religious world we have no such fear, for we do know, if perchance some of our precious lambs become enticed into their pasture of weeds and husks, and dip their tongues into their foul pools of unrighteousness, they will not perish, but the Lord will deliver them out of their distresses as he has promised, so they give us no concern. We must then come closer to home in search of whom we fear with perfect fear, and hate with perfect hatred. Jesus said, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword, * * * and a man's foes shall be they of his own household." Brethren, is this a part (or indeed all) of your experience? Each one of you will say, Yea, verily, the words are prophetic, and have come to pass as I bear about in my body the dying of the Lord Jesus. The principle of evil, unbelief and sin, was at ease in the world, its seductions and wantonness ran at a rapid pace without let or hindrance, until Jesus came as the Captain of our salvation with drawn sword, and with mighty power, arraying himself in his Spirit in the habiliments of the great principle of holiness and godliness, against that other principle of sin and ungodliness. Two great mysteries at variance one with another in that complex being called the child of God. The world has been at variance with itself in all generations; there have been wars and rumors of wars in every age; internal wars and nation warring against nation, yet with all of them peace is restored from time to time, and war ceases. But from the time the wicked Cain slew his righteous brother in enmity and in bitter hatred, the sword has never been sheathed between sin on the one hand, and righteousness upon the other, in a literal sense. Away back in the olden time, there did come a time when it did look as though a cessation of hostilities would surely come, for, "It came to pass when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them

wives of all which they chose." This certainly looked auspicious. What more could be desired? But alas, the inherent wickedness of man, and the depravity of his nature, was so full and complete that the wickedness in the earth grew and increased at a more rapid pace than before. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thought of his heart was only evil continually. In consequence of which God caused the waters of destruction to cover all the earth, to destroy the life of every living thing, save the eight souls whom by the same waters he saved in the ark. And even, when only these eight souls existed on the earth, sin reigned to that extent that continual servitude was imposed upon one of the number for outward acts of shame, and all of this ceaseless antagonism continued from Cain and Abel through every age until the coming of Christ, and he comes announcing the words already quoted, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. * * * I came not to send peace, but a sword." The literal strife of which we read in all the pages of the Bible, was only typical of that ceaseless struggle now going on in the hearts of the children of the living God, and in this war the edict has gone forth that there shall be no discharge. Each and every soldier of the cross of Christ must wear the armor of his warfare both night and day through all the years of his pilgrimage, and his armor shall not be carnal weapons as in the days of old, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." So the armor shall be, the girdle of truth about the loins, the breastplate of righteousness, "the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God." "The feet also shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace," and especially, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." Then do we not perceive how important it is that we should know who are our enemies? We profess to be followers of Christ, therefore the enemies of Christ are our enemies, and he brought the sword in the earth not for peace, but for war. Manifold blessings rest upon this precious company whose God is the Lord, ("as it were the company of two armies,") and one of the rich blessings is that "They know the joyful sound." The truth is their watchword. They have also quick ears to detect error. All that is not truth is error. Truth is light, but "the light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not." So if we are deceived by carnal reasoning, we become involved in darkness, (although we are children of light) and we fall by the way, wounded by the sword of the enemy. What a subtle, treacherous enemy is our carnal reason, and we must indeed be instant in prayer and all supplication to withstand such a foe; he lurks in every by way and in every high place, lying in wait to find us off our guard, and woe unto him who watcheth not continually. The slightest deviation from the way of truth and equity is taken up by Satan in the armor of carnal reason, and he presents himself as an angel of light, and so cunningly does he reason, that we are by his craftiness led imperceptibly farther and farther from the truth until ere we are aware we are plunged into the very depths of despair and of sorrow, filled with wounds from

our hated enemy. And when the sword of the Spirit of Christ has delivered us out of our trouble, we feel that a lesson has been severely learned, and we will so profit by it that we will not fall again. But alas, we neither know our own weakness, nor have we measured the resources of our enemy. But we are fast learning who is our enemy, and that he is a formidable one. The selfish, ruling spirit of the opposing principle in our flesh is also an arm of strength in his seductions. How easily we become puffed up in our minds by flattery and deception, for that is what our flesh feeds upon. We become "heady and high minded," and so destroy the peace of our brethren, and our own usefulness. Our assemblies become a mockery, and so we remain in a troubled sea of unrest and confusion until Jesus again undertakes for us, and brings peace to the troubled soul. Every propensity of the flesh is brought into the service of sin, as our enemy to destroy our soul. Sin abounds, and is active in every conceivable shape, but always within us. Grace however doth much more abound, therefore are we secure. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." We must discover sooner or later in our journey that our enemy is our own flesh. And when the love of God reigns in our heart then do we love righteousness, desire holiness, and rejoice in the righteousness of Christ, and hate our own flesh, and our own life, for they have become our deadliest enemies. What is the ultimate end of all strife and conflict? Is it not peace? With the honorable warrior it must be an honorable peace; with the church of Christ in its internal conflict, the law must be satisfied and made honorable, the demands of justice must all be complied with, the judgments of God must be wrought out in every jot and tittle. Jesus is the life of his people. The violated law demands the life of the transgressor. Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you." What a dreadful condition was this people in; no place for them anywhere; neither hope nor God in the world, until Jesus came with his blessed word of truth, full of comfort and hope, "I go to prepare a place for you." Ye poor, wandering, lost sheep, look up; a ransom is found; your Shepherd hath declared, "I lay down my life for the sheep." Jesus died, the conflict is ended, peace is restored, and again the longing soul hears the sweet refrain from Jesus' lips, "My peace I give unto you." And now in our experience, although the conflict goes on, never ceasing, yet in the very midst of the striving between the flesh and the Spirit, we have the blessed assurance that the promise of Jesus is fulfilled in our experience, and that blessed peace which passeth understanding shall be ours for ever and ever.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Sept. 21, 1901.

BOWDOINHAM, Maine, June 10, 1901.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Inclosed I send you a letter from sister Attie Curtis, which she wrote to the church here after her visit with you. I think that it will be good for the readers of the SIGNS to peruse if you see fit to publish it. We were all so glad for her to go, and do rejoice with her. I also inclose one from sister Susie Preble, her sister. She does not write very often to us, so that we were especially glad of her letter. Yesterday I attended a meeting at the old Bowdoin meeting-house.

I will close with love to all your family.

From your sister,

ELLA RAYMOND.

LAWRENCE, Mass., June 4, 1901.

TO THE BOWDOINHAM CHURCH—DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I know that you will all rejoice with me when I tell you that it has been the will of God for me to attend the Delaware River Association, at Hopewell, N. J., and also to meet with the church in New York city, last Sunday. I wish that I could express in this letter the love and fellowship that were manifested for me by those whom I met from the different States. The thought has come, it is not necessary for me to express it for you to know what it is, for you have all felt the same. I wish I could tell you how much I enjoyed the time spent with them, but it was such an unspeakable joy, and so full of glory, that my tongue and pen fail to express it. But you will all understand me, for the Lord has given me many just such precious seasons when assembled with the saints, and you all know how great is my delight while listening to the joyful sound of the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to all who believe. I love to hear the safety of the people of God set forth by those whom he has called and qualified. It is a strong city in which the people of God do dwell. It is a quiet habitation, for there is no rushing hither and thither. Our Lord is unto us a place of broad rivers and streams. He leads us by the still waters, and makes us to lie down in green pastures.

How sweet the thought that the Lord leads us. We cannot wander here and there, and stray so far away that he cannot find us without searching, for our God has declared the end from the beginning. Our steps are all known to him. His eye is ever upon us, his watchful care around us. It is because of his mercies that we are not consumed. How good it is that we can speak of these things one to another, and how blessed we are in having the desire to meet together, and try to tell the great things which the Lord has done for us. We dwell together in unity at such times, for the theme of each is the wonderful work of the Lord. We speak of how he brought us from the darkness of nature into his marvelous light, of how he shed his love abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which he gave us, of how he revealed Jesus unto us as our all-sufficient Savior, and of how as we have received Jesus the Savior, it becomes us to walk in him. I would like to bring out the beauty which I have seen in this Scripture. We have received him as our Savior from sin, our salvation, our hope of glory, our light and our song, our Rock and our refuge, our Shepherd and our Guide, our life and our resurrection, and as our all and in all. Our walk in him will at all times show to those of like precious faith that we desire to so speak and write that we cannot possibly be misunderstood with regard to what Jesus is unto us. We bow the knee to him, and love to exalt his name. It is sweet to tell the reason why we love him, it is because he first loved us. All boasting is excluded in every place of our experience, and we lose all confidence in the flesh, and rejoice in Christ Jesus. I know that I am not able to bring out the fullness of the spiritual beauty which is in this text: "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord so walk ye in him." He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and I love to exalt and glorify his name. He it is that makes us meek and lowly, so that we can be gentle one with another, tender hearted, forgiving one another when the Spirit of Christ rules within us.

I wish that you all could have been with me, and shared the good things

which I enjoyed. I feel that I have the most reason to praise God of any one that I know. May God bless you all, and fill all our hearts with his love. May he establish us in his truth, and enable us to declare his wonderful works. May he give us to trust in him, so that we cannot be moved, is the desire of your unworthy sister in hope of eternal life,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

LAWRENCE, Mass., June 4, 1901.

MY DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—If I could write as others can, I would send you a letter every time that you meet together, but I cannot express what I feel. I am sure that I love you all, and have no desire to go anywhere else for company. This people is my people, and their God is my God. I am unworthy to be numbered with you, and I do not grow any better as the years pass on and I grow older. I thought before this there would be a growth in grace, so that I could see it, but it seems to me that instead of a growth in grace, there has been a growth in sin, and I am still the same vile, helpless sinner, no good thing can be found in my flesh. I know my God does not change, and that the blood of Christ cleanses us from all sin, but I cannot feel the assurance which I desire that my sins are washed away. I know there is no other way of salvation for myself or any one. It is as Paul said, "By grace are ye saved." I travel much of the time in darkness, and doubts and fears assail me on every hand, but at times he gives me rest from mine enemies, and makes me to know that he giveth me the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the way in which the victory comes, and I love to hear of a salvation finished and complete. I would love to hear brother Beal declare the truth every Sunday, and wish that I could meet with you often. But I cannot talk as the rest of you can. I do not seem to amount to much. I can say that I have thought upon his name, and I desire to be made thankful for that. He has been good to me all the days of my life, and I would like to feel thankful, but I am afraid that I do not know what thankfulness is. I often wonder if there is any one like me, and I feel sure that you cannot know me as I know myself, else you could have no fellowship for me. I cannot express what I would like to, and cannot say anything to interest you, and so I will not trouble you any longer.

Your unworthy, sinful sister,

SUSAN B. PREBLE.

[THERE is nothing that brings one nearer to the hearts of the people of God than the things which are in the three letters above. We remember the old meeting-house in Bowdoin, of which sister Raymond speaks. The first time that we were ever called upon to speak at an association was at this very place. Twice we attended meetings of the Maine Association there. It is a dear spot to us, as well as to others. We have solemn and pleasant memories of it. All here were glad to have sister Attie Curtis with us. We are glad that it was a season of rejoicing to her. We are sure that the brief letter of her sister, sister Preble, will prove a source of strength to some feeble ones. It must have brought her very near to the church to which it was written. She speaks as the children of God all feel, at least at times.—ED.]

EAST DIXFIELD, Maine, June 24, 1901.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Yours of late date was received in due time. It was very comforting and, to me, precious in the extreme.

I am always filled with wonder that you, with all your arduous labors, do devote a period of your time in writing to me. A great desire is with me that I might in some measure be able to write of the power of our God and of the glory of his kingdom. How securely we rest in the assurance that he doeth all things well. I am querulous and rebellious at times, but after I have conned my lesson, and am filled with obedience, I realize the gracious promise which is given that we shall glory in tribulations also; and tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope.

To serve and to wait. How it runs through the minutest details of our sin-burdened lives, but when we feel our unprofitableness to be almost overwhelming, then we leave it with God.

"Deep in unfathomable mines of never failing skill,
He treasures up his vast designs, and works his sovereign will."

Here we have no abiding city, but are pilgrims and strangers, having even no possessions here, for the things of time and sense are only loaned to us; they are to be given up at his call.

The beautiful twenty-seventh Psalm is in my mind this morning, the fourth verse has of late been applied to me with great comfort: "One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." One who is but a looker on of my place in this life, may wonder that I can derive special comfort from this Scripture, but it is to me a very precious portion of the word. I can say, "I will extol thee O Lord, for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me."

Your account of the associations was to me interesting in the extreme, and among the many speakers, I hope that each listener received a portion, and that all the sheep and lambs of the fold were fed, and much good done in the name of the holy child Jesus. As I write I recall to mind some of the thoughts which I had prior to meeting for public worship at the association where I met with you. They were like this, I had no fears but that the gospel of Christ would be preached in its purity, and in simplicity, and that nothing would be added to it, nor taken from it, and it was even so. The quiet and decorum of the meeting was pleasing to me. I enjoyed your writing of the drawing together of those who attended your associations in feeling and fellowship, and of the exclusion of all boasting. There is in my mind the belief that all who are led by the Spirit of truth in Christ, have in various ways precisely the same leadings. The operations may be different according to the life of the flesh, but there will be the same desire after the life of the Master, the same loathing of self and all its assertions, for the strong man, who is bound, is in no sense killed, but retains wonderful vitality.

In praise to our God I can say, I am not overmuch cast down, the fountains which spring up in the wilderness give me many cooling draughts, and as I journey along, the wonder is still mine, that God who is rich in mercy calls any of the guilty sons of men, and gives them to taste his redeeming love, and draws them to run after him. But of all our seasons of refreshing, we can lay up nothing in store, more than could Israel in the wilderness. We have our feasts and our fasts. And now, my brother, I hope he will abundantly bless and keep you, and give you the desire of your heart. You wrote of your desire to see fruit of your

ministry. It brought into my mind a sermon by Eld. Wm. J. Purington, at North Jay, many years ago, from 1 Cor. iii. I do not recall the exact verse, but his remarks were largely from the eleventh verse and so on. In connection he said he thought the text applicable to gospel ministers. It was a discourse that I always retained in my mind, to a great degree. In speaking of it and the text for your perusal, I do not doubt that many thoughts will arise in your mind upon the same subject. We have no desire to build wood, hay and stubble upon this firm foundation, but rather that no stake should be removed and no cord broken.

Now I will close for I am weary. I hope that you may find something in praise of the grace of God which saves, in this letter, and if it be his will to administer comfort through it, to God be all the glory.

Your sister in hope,

ELIZA WHEELWRIGHT.

PROVERBS XVII. 17.

"A FRIEND loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity."

The Proverbs of Solomon have, to an extent, become household words throughout the English speaking world. Even among worldly men they are treasured for the wealth of wisdom which they contain merely as regards the dealings of men one with another, in the every day walks of life. If then worldly men so respect these Proverbs from a natural point of view merely, how much more would the subject of grace be amazed and lost in admiration should he be given light to see beneath the mere letter of the word and behold Jesus written in every line. Every passage of Scripture from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation, when rightly understood, resolves itself into this: "Jesus Christ and him crucified." If we should interpret it to mean anything but this, we could not say with Paul, "I speak the truth in Christ and lie not." "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." No part of the Scriptures is useless. Each part has its place in the thorough furnishing of a man of God to all good works. Equally profitable is the Proverb quoted at the beginning, when taken by the Spirit and revealed, thus awakening our understanding of heavenly things and spiritual exercises. When rightly seen, it will be in harmony with christian experience, and if not harmonious therewith, cannot be received as truth by a child of God. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

"A friend loveth at all times." Behold a man surrounded by wealth, luxury and all that money can afford. To such a one come scores of his fellows cloaked in the garb of friendship. The word "friend" to them is but a tool to win his approbation, and to assist themselves to selfish ends. Now, see that man stripped of all his wealth, hurled into abject poverty. How many of his fellows come to him now? None. Why should they? No benefits can be obtained from one who himself is in need of beneficence. Are these men his friends? Surely not. "A friend loveth at all times." No matter where I am, what I am, or how I am, a *true* friend will always follow me to strengthen me when weak, to lift when fallen, to cheer when faint and to counsel

when rash. Though I be poverty-stricken, a *true* friend will never leave me. He is not expecting reward or benefits in return, but he loves me as his own soul; my interests are his, his welfare is mine. Though I go in the ways of the wicked and become as vile as the vilest criminal, he does not forsake me; no, he still loves me. Where I am, there is he to assist and lead me from evil. What say you? Was there ever such a friendship as this between man and man? Surely a *true* friend does love us at all times, but does *true* friendship exist between men? No. That between Jonathan and David in days of old comes nearer to the mark than any. Should I persist in evil doing until men thought me deranged, how many friends would I have? I can safely answer, none. Not a subject of grace but can remember a time when the world smiled blandly on them. Self-satisfaction reigned supreme, but one day, while drinking deep from the cup of sinful pleasures, a drop of bitterness entered the bowl. Your peace of mind was disturbed. It gradually increased until the poison had spread throughout the whole man; it grasped him body, soul and spirit; sin was reigning unto death; you were a reproach to yourself; your goodness, uprightness and chastity, where were they? Alas, search where you would, you could not find them, they were gone. Were there none to help, to rescue from this plague of sin? No, not one. Then surely we must die. You once had lots of friends in your own righteousness, your own strength, your own wisdom. Why do you not go to them now? Well, you would, but where are they? Gone. No help from that source can ever come. You see yourself as "having no hope and without God in the world." But hark! What heavenly sounds are these? "Come unto me and I will give you rest." Ah, here is the "friend that sticketh closer than a brother." None other than God himself who now reveals the way of salvation to the weary and helpless, ordained for such through the merits of his only begotten Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *True* friendship is found nowhere but with God himself. Where once he bestows his love, it is unto the end and throughout eternity. If I ascend to the third heaven, he is there, and if I make my bed in hell, there is he. Surely he is a friend indeed, for he "loveth at all times."

"A brother is born for adversity." "Adversity" directly implies "opposition," and subsequently "poverty," or "straitened circumstances." In reading the eventful history of national Israel, one sees "adversity" or "opposition" written in every line. They were a stiff-necked, rebellious people, continually disobeying the commandments of God. When plagued and vexed on account of disobedience, they would be brought to repentance for a season, but only for a time. They could not remain steadfast in well doing, for their feet must slip and plunge them headlong in wickedness until the hand of the Lord laid heavily upon them would cause them to turn again, for he had declared, "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." As he hath said, so brings he it to pass, and in the end, however far they may have strayed, Israel had always to appeal to him for deliverance, and to say, "Thou only art God, and beside thee there is no Savior."

All this is typical of the members of spiritual Israel. Man at his best is but vanity. Every imagination of a man's heart is only evil continually. The whole

human race is in a state of "adversity" or "opposition" to God and his laws. "The carnal mind is enmity against God." Every thought, every act, in fact all that we do, is in direct opposition ("adversity") to the ways of him whose ways are not our ways, and whose thoughts are not ours. They are as contrary as day and night. Only when the light of the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, can a sinner realize that he is in a state of "adversity" or "opposition" to God. Then he sees that obedience to God's law is necessary to effect a reconciliation between himself and God. Straightway he begins to work, but instead of becoming reconciled to God, he finds he is only drifting farther and farther away, and sees more and more clearly the opposition between sin and holiness, humanity and divinity. Eternal condemnation hovers over him unless he can obey the righteous law of holiness. This, he finds at last he cannot do. Poverty-stricken in his adversity, he comes to the end of the earth, and can only stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. In such a strait as this, and only in such, God, the Almighty Friend, reveals to us the "brother born for adversity," in the person of Christ. He becomes the Captain of our salvation. In him, "Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other." In his birth, sufferings, death and resurrection, he reconciled his people chosen in him, to God. Our adversity (opposition) is removed. No more "opposition," but unity through the blood of Christ, our elder Brother. Various are the ways by which God makes himself known to his people. It may be as a Father, Husband, Friend, Prophet, Priest or King, yet it is always the same God viewed in different relations. Christ is the firstborn among many brethren, and as their elder Brother, he leads them along through all the varying scenes of their earthly pilgrimage. Where necessary he imparts instruction to them from his infinite wisdom, administers reproof to the wayward, rebukes the evil doer, and visits chastisement upon the wicked. When he finds a little brother failing from sheer weakness, he makes him to lean upon his stronger arm, for he is touched with a sense of our very infirmities. Here another brother is becoming exalted above measure, and glories in his own fancied strength. Him the elder Brother suddenly deprives of assistance, and lo, he falls because his very mainstay is gone; he cannot stand alone. For this was the elder Brother born: that he might raise the fallen, cheer the faint, heal the sick, and lead the blind. What a wonderful gift to "adversity!"

Like looking along the path of a sunbeam until one beholds the dazzling brilliancy of the sun, so is this subject of the friendship of God and the brotherhood of Christ the more I pursue it, so I leave it. Finity can follow infinity no farther.

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

LAURELVILLE, Ohio, April 21, 1901.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—May I impose upon you for a brief period of time? You published a poor unworthy scribble from me a few months since, although after sending it I hoped that you would see fit not to do so, and yet again I hoped that you would, as it might set some of our brethren to thinking, and perhaps to writing, for I know that so many of them are much richer in faith and experience than I am. One dear sister told me that she enjoyed my letter, and encouraged me to write again, but I am sure that she could her-

self write a much better letter, for I am but a babe in Christ, if a child at all, whereas she has spent many years in communion with the Lamb, and in the fold of Christ. I feel to be so much of my time darkness, not in darkness only, but darkness itself. I can say from the heart, "In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." At times, all seems dark and vain and wild; I have no goodness of my own to recommend me to any one. I am so empty and barren of good works, and so full of worldly thoughts and actions, that I sometimes feel that I have no evidence that I am a child of God, or fit company for his children. I have often and often wished that I was as fruitful in good works as many brethren that I know, or as many seem to be, who write for the SIGNS. I enjoyed very much the letters written by Elder True and brother Coulter, and also both editorials in the SIGNS of March 15, 1901.

I wish that those who say that the SIGNS does not advocate the doctrine that it used to under the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, would read the editorial in this number. I was very much grieved to learn of the death of Elder Wm. L. Beebe. Truly a valiant soldier has fallen. May God comfort the mourners. On learning that he had passed away, the thought that the utterance of Job had a wider meaning than the one generally accepted came to my mind: The Lord gave Elder Beebe to the church, many, many years ago, and the Lord hath taken him away, and blessed be the name of the Lord. He also gives us trouble of mind and spirit, and then taketh it away, and blessed also be the name of the Lord. He gives us spiritual enjoyment and light, and then he takes it away, so that we see only the natural vileness, vanity, depravity, darkness and corruption of our hearts. Then we can the more rejoice, when he restores unto us the joys of his salvation; then we can say, as at others times, Blessed be the name of the Lord. He has said that there shall be heresies among us, that they which are approved may be made manifest, and then he takes them away, and we can say again, Blessed be the name of the Lord.

I will close, as I fear that I am imposing upon you. If you deem this worthy a place in the columns of the precious SIGNS, publish it, but if not, no harm will be done. It is very weak, just like the writer.

Yours very unworthily,

GEO. W. HARTSOUGH.

PROPHETSTOWN, Ill., May 15, 1901.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—If you will allow me to thus address you. I sometimes think that if you knew me, as God does every secret thought of my heart, and every act, you could not have any fellowship for me. I read so many sweet, comforting letters in the SIGNS this morning that I just wanted to tell you, who are so tried, and so dear, how much comfort your letters gave me. Elder Vail expressed my feelings when he said, "They are grand." We have no gospel preaching here, and how hungry and faint we become, and how we long to mingle our voices with those who exalt the blessed Savior and abase sinful man. I sometimes go to hear the preaching of different denominations, but O, how lean they are, or at least, they make me feel lean. There is very little that one so weak and sinful as I can obtain there. Then how I long to hear some of the under-shepherds preach, saying that salvation is by grace, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of

God. O, what a precious doctrine; were it not for this doctrine I would have no hope. I often tell my husband that I have many doubts about whether I am really an Old School Baptist or not, but I have no doubt at all about the Old Baptists being the true church of Christ, because they preach and believe the true doctrine of God. Jesus said, By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, because ye have love one for another. I have never seen as much love one for another in any other church as I have in the Old School Baptist church; they seem to each esteem others as better than themselves. Yet I have read and heard of strife in the churches. How sad it must be. I have never seen it, and I hope that I never shall, for how sweet it is when love flows from heart to heart.

My mind has wandered some in writing. Do with this as you deem best. If any Baptists come near here I would be glad to have them stop with me. I send kind wishes to the dear old SIGNS, may it prosper according to the will of God.

From an unworthy sister, if one at all,

ANNIE HOPKINS.

McEWEN, Tenn., May 17, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have been very much afflicted for many months, and been greatly impressed to become a subscriber for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I was looking over my old SIGNS, (for I was once a subscriber) and some sample copies sent me one year ago, and there is such union manifested. Those latest numbers I closely compared to my old numbers of 1883–4, all of one piece, teaching salvation by grace, both now and forever. I was made to think of the many in this country who once took the SIGNS, and indorsed the sweet communications of the same, and these fellows now call themselves Old Baptists, and say that we ought to quit preaching doctrine, that it was starving the churches, and giving God's children dyspepsia, &c. These grand new lights now think that the grand old doctrine that they use to see in the SIGNS, has of late got to be new, and they call it heresy.

My brother, we are strangers in the flesh, but I hope that we are one in Spirit. O, how I do enjoy the sweet editorials of your father published in the SIGNS, and on the pages of Hassell's Church History, and indorsed by Elder S. Hassell. I have been told that brother Hassell has taken a decided stand in favor of "conditional time salvation," but I hope it is not true.

Well, I have forgotten and extended this letter in writing of things I did not aim to write, but I hope you will excuse me. I do not intend this for publication, but if the Lord will, I will write some in the future.

The split is on in this country, but by the blessed gospel of grace we are desiring to stand, if all forsake us. Under the blessed banner of grace we desire to fight until our God calls us home. Dear brother, I can hardly quit, but must close.

Your much persecuted and afflicted brother,

J. R. HATCHER.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

ALL GONE.

THE large type hymn books of the genuine Turkey Morocco binding and the imitation binding are all gone. All the styles of binding we have left of the large books, are the cloth and blue marbled edge binding.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1901.

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EDITORS:

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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

2 PETER II. 12, 13.

WHAT is the meaning of the Scripture reading, "But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; and shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the daytime"?

(MRS.) E. M. NORTON.

WINNSBORO, Tenn., Aug. 30, 1901.

REPLY.

The above Scripture we understand to be a description of natural, unregenerate men, who have been left to go to all excess of wickedness and uncleanness, and who shall perish in their own corruption. The apostle draws several contrasts in this chapter between two classes of men.

First. He speaks in the closing verse of the preceding chapter of holy men of God who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, in contrast with false prophets and teachers, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and who shall swiftly be destroyed, and by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

Second. He speaks of Noah on the one side, and the world of the ungodly who were drowned in the flood, on the other.

Third. He speaks of Lot and the wicked cities of the plain, which were overthrown with fire from heaven.

These three contrasts are presented as illustrations of what he was about to declare for the comfort of those who love and serve God, and concerning that wrath which at the end should be visited upon the ungodly. As the Lord had saved Noah, while the flood destroyed all the rest of mankind, and as he had delivered Lot out of the cities which were destroyed by fire, so should it continue to be. The Lord of glory is not changeable in his dealings with his people. As he has been mindful of those who were righteous in the past, and has delivered them, so will he deliver the righteous at all times. He is faithful. And as he destroyed the world of the ungodly in the flood, and also the corrupt cities of the plain by fire, so will he oppose and destroy, at the end, all that are ungodly. The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and how to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.

As the world of the ungodly, which was destroyed in the days of Noah, did not believe in or practice righteousness, and hated and despised Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and as the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah neither knew nor cared to know the God whom Lot worshiped, but rather loved all that was vile, so these to whom the apostle refers, though they might have made all professions of godliness and of being the disciples of Jesus, so much so as to have deceived the very people of God, yet they after all were really enemies of God and truth, and unless sovereign mercy should reach them and save them, as it has reached thousands of others, they would utterly perish in their corruption. Such characters are fully described in the verses preceding and following the text. They walk in the lust of uncleanness.

Lust, here means desire. They despise government; they are presumptuous and self willed, and not afraid to speak evil of dignities; they riot in the daytime, and count it a pleasure to do so; they are spots and blemishes, and sport themselves, while they feast with the children of God. But they are not said to be the children of God. They have eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; they beguile unstable souls; they have a heart exercised with evil practices, and are cursed children. This means just what Paul means when he says that all men by nature are the children of wrath, and that God's own children were by nature the same. Cursed children, does not here mean cursed children of God, for they have been redeemed from the curse. These are wells without water; they are clouds carried about with a tempest, and to them the mist of darkness is reserved forever. In verse thirteen Peter says, "They feast with you." But they are not of those to whom have been given all things that pertain to life and godliness. The pronoun "you" marks one class, those who believe. But those who have been thus described, though they feast with God's people, are only spots and blemishes.

Everywhere two classes are spoken of in the Scriptures; they are believers and unbelievers; they are those who serve God, and those who serve him not; they are those who love God, and those who love sin and pleasure more than God; they are children of God, and the children of the wicked one; one is saved, and the other perishes; one has the promise of everlasting happiness and holiness, while the other shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of God; the one shall be holy forever, while the other shall be unholy forever. Holiness means happiness, unholiness means unhappiness.

What great blessings and mercies are secured to the elect of God, and this is not because they were any better than others, either by nature or in practice. Paul says to his brethren at Ephesus, that they were by nature the children of wrath even as others. There was nothing in the elect that could merit esteem, or give the Creator delight. But God has had mercy on whom he would have mercy, and whom he would he has hardened. This doctrine is hateful to unregenerate men and women, but the humble sinner who has felt his guilt, and must confess his sin before God, finds in it all that can assure him of salvation. In the election of God is his only hope of life forever. To this man election is a glorious doctrine indeed. If he differs at all from the rest of the ungodly world, it is grace that has made him to differ. If he has been saved from the things which belong still to the wicked, it has been grace, and grace must wear all the crown. If the believer does not at the last perish from God's presence, it is because of electing love and grace. And so he must forever sing the praises of free grace.

Peter here says the same things in substance that Jude says, in his short epistle, of these same characters. Both apostles address their brethren, encouraging the hope that was theirs, that they shall one day be entirely delivered from the reproaches and persecutions of the ungodly, though now the wicked may seem to prosper. Thus David was once brought into the sanctuary when he had become envious of the foolish, beholding the prosperity of the ungodly, and there he saw their end, which was destruction. It is all expressed most forcibly by Peter when he said that they were like natural

brute beasts, who were made for the purpose of being taken and destroyed. That is, they are by nature corrupt and brutish, and remain so, notwithstanding the vain profession that they have made. And the expression, "made to be taken and destroyed," as a close examination of the original Greek words will show, means not so much the end of their wickedness, but rather the plunging into wickedness itself. It means that they are made for corruption, and so are corrupted more and more, and their end shall be corruption. They shall perish in their own corruption, as is said at the close of verse twelve. In the third verse of the third chapter, these characters are also called "scoffers," and in the seventeenth verse of the same chapter they are called "the wicked."

We do not forget that there are some things said of this class in this second chapter that to some brethren have seemed to show that these wicked ones were also the children of God, as well as the others to whom Peter wrote these things. But one thing seems clear, viz: Peter did not say these things about those to whom he was writing, but rather bade them beware of these men, and encouraged them to believe that at the end they should escape the persecutions of these evil characters. He speaks *to* the one class, he speaks *of* the other. He addresses the saints who have precious faith, and who have received all things that pertain to life and godliness, and he warns them against this other class, who have not the truth, and assures them that they shall finally escape them. To the brethren to whom he is writing he holds out a blessed hope, but he holds out no hope to the other class. He addresses his brethren, and addresses them as brethren, but these others are not his brethren, and he does not once intimate that they hold such a relation to the saints. Peter presents just as strong a contrast between those to whom he is writing, and these false prophets, as existed between Noah, and the world of the ungodly, as existed between Lot, and the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. If the world of the ungodly who perished in the flood had not experienced the power of reigning grace in their hearts, which brings those to whom it is given, to love righteousness and hate iniquity, and if those who perished in the cities of the plain, were not the subjects of this grace, as were Noah and Lot, then it seems sure that these false prophets were not the subjects of this grace either.

The expressions in the first verse, "Even denying the Lord that bought them," and in verses twenty and twenty-first, about escaping the pollutions of the world, and knowing the better way, it appears to us only refer to the profession which these false prophets had made, by which they had crept in among the saints. They had not really and experimentally and savingly known these things, but only as those who may have a form of godliness, but who deny the power thereof. And such, though having made this profession of better things, after all have proven themselves to be lovers still of what is natural to man, as the dog and the sow return to what is natural to them, though for a time they have seemed to choose better things.

How vast is the difference between him who loves and serves God, and him who loves and serves him not. What mercy is shown to those who have come to delight in the service of God and to love him. How great and marvelous are the works of the Lord! And what a wonder that a holy God should so love polluted

and hateful men as to redeem them and make them his own. What manner of this love is this that we should be called the sons of God. By nature the children of wrath even as are the non-elect, we should have perished finally as do they, had it not been for sovereign and electing love. How wonderful that a child of wrath should become a child of God. What a difference! We were the children of wrath, but are now the sons of God, and children of wrath no longer. All this wonderful redemption is due alone to sovereign mercy. To God all the praise is due. C.

PHILIPPIANS II. 3.

"LET each esteem other better than themselves."

The question has been asked of us, How can any man fulfill this exhortation? No man can fulfill this or any other gospel exhortation of his own strength or will; it is impossible for any natural man to esteem any one as better than himself; nothing but the reigning and sovereign grace of God ever can produce such results in the heart of any man.

Let it be noticed that the text does not require a put on appearance of humility, but the experience of humility itself. Fallen man can neither obey this nor any other commandment of the Lord. Fallen man can put on the appearance of obedience, but cannot know the true spirit of obedience. Fallen man cannot love God supremely, and for him to love another man as himself is impossible. It is utterly vain to talk about what Adam in his unfallen state might have been able to do; the solemn and awful fact now is, man cannot obey one of the least of the commandments of God in reality, that is, in truth. Self, and not God, reigns in fallen man, and self is the great aim and end of all that he does, says and thinks. To serve self, and not God, fills all his thoughts. This exhortation then as well as all other things commanded of God, is impossible to man by nature. Those born of God have however been given a new nature, they have received the love of God and the neighbor shed abroad in their hearts. Out of this new nature springs up in them, and is made manifest in and through them, all holy desires, affections and motives. Out of this new nature, which is also called life, springs up all obedience in the Spirit. They who have this Spirit dwelling in them, see their own vileness of heart and life; they discern the hidden things of dishonesty which dwell in them, and become aware of the evil, corrupt passions of their nature, which taint all that they say, think or do. Seeing all this the child of God can never feel that he has obeyed perfectly one single one of all the commandments of God. The righteousness of the law fulfilled within him forever shuts him out from ever thinking that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled by him. Because the spirit of this exhortation, "Let each esteem other better than themselves," dwells in him, he can never be brought to believe that he has walked as well as others of his brethren. Because of this spirit of self-abhorrence within him, he is bound to esteem others as being better.

The exhortation is not then a task set before him, which he must fulfill by bringing himself into that state of mind and feeling, but the presentation by the apostle of that which very sweetly chimes in with the feeling already begotten in his heart. As it comes to him as being that which he already feels and desires to feel still more deeply, the exhortation seems to him as a very precious privilege accorded him; it comes to him as some-

thing descriptive of a state of mind bestowed upon him by grace, rather than as a demand with which he must comply whether he can do so or not. When such a work of grace is wrought in a man's heart as compells him to cry out against himself, and to esteem himself as less than the least of all saints, it becomes impossible not to esteem others as being better than himself. The apostle says, let it be noticed, "In lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves." "In lowliness of mind." This must precede what follows, not only in the text, but in the experience as well. Knowledge of one's own sins before God, can alone produce lowliness of mind. Out of this lowliness comes the feeling that all others must be better than himself. This language of the apostle then appeals to what is already formed in the heart by grace, and finds a response there.

In this point of view it is the easiest thing in the world for a child of God to fulfill this exhortation. He does esteem others, and himself he esteems not at all. This being the feeling wrought within, it abides and produces fruit in word and deed. Out of this will spring up consolation, comfort, fellowship, mercy, like-mindedness, oneness, care for others welfare rather than his own, service to the brethren, and all that is of good report. Out of it will spring up also patience and long-suffering, gentleness and mildness, and a striving for the things which make for peace and edification. Out of this will also spring up great anxiety that those who are better than himself shall have all blessing, and honor, and esteem, and that they shall know the truth. No one can esteem others better than himself, unless first of all he esteems the truth. Such an one will contend for the truth and against error, but not against the persons of men. Such an one will love the transgressor, while hating the transgression.

We leave these brief thoughts for the consideration of those who have asked the question at the beginning of this editorial. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ISAIAH XXXIII. 20–22.

"LOOK upon Zion, the city of our solemnities; thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our law-giver, the Lord is our King; he will save us."

The text is somewhat lengthy, and comprises a variety of metaphors and figurative expressions admirably calculated to instruct and comfort the children of God in regard to the perpetuity and perfect safety of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Zion, or the city of David, which was a type of the church in her gospel organization, was at the time of this prophecy involved in commotion, infested with hypocrites, and encumbered with sinners, or violators of the laws which God had enacted for the government of that commonwealth, and we are told in the context, of the righteous judgments of God upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem; by reason of which the sinners in Zion were afraid, and fearfulness surprised the hypocrites, and involved the whole city in consternation, and presented it in a very solemn aspect.

Zion was a city of solemnities, as the place consecrated and chosen for the performance of solemn rites and ceremonies. In Jerusalem stood the temple of the

Lord of hosts, the altar and the priesthood, and thither the chosen tribes of Israel went up to worship, as the place consecrated for their national worship, periodical feasts, sacrifices, &c. It was truly the city of the Israelite's solemnities, but from the connection of our text, we infer that it is so called in this instance on account of their depressed condition. But the prophet of the Lord, calls on Israel to look upon her in her depression, and mark the prophetic declaration of the change which should take place, when Jerusalem should be seen as a quiet, impregnable and safe abode. Whatever allusion was made to the temporal condition of the city of David, the spirit of the prediction had a very direct and obvious allusion to the antitypical Jerusalem, or Zion of our God, as displayed in the church under the gospel dispensation. Here under the immediate reign of the King of Righteousness, the Prince of Peace, a happy contrast is presented to what was seen in the depressed condition as seen at the time of the prophecy.

Prophets and kings desired to see the glory of the Redeemer's kingdom, but they saw it not, only as viewed through the type and shadows of the law. But "blessed are the eyes" of those who saw the glory of the rising kingdom of Christ; who beheld him in his incarnation; beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, and who of his fullness received and grace for grace. Their eyes beheld Jerusalem a quiet habitation. Not the old Jerusalem which was destroyed, but the Jerusalem which is above, which is free, and which is the mother of all the saints. The church of the living God, although surrounded with enemies, involved in warfare, assailed by enemies, hated of all men, traduced, persecuted, regarded by the world as the offscouring of all things; yet to the saints who view her in relation to Christ her spiritual Head, and the life hidden with Christ in God, as a kingdom not of this world, founded on Christ and built up in him, having salvation for walls and bulwarks, and the assurance that all things work together for good to all her legitimate citizens, their eyes behold her as a quiet habitation. Quietly and peacefully her inhabitants can confide in the God of their salvation, and sing, "The Lord is my refuge and strength, I will not fear what man can do." In the world, said the Redeemer to his disciples, ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. In me ye shall have peace.

Such is the peace and quietness of the church of God, as she stands in her gospel order, her watchmen see eye to eye, they lift up the voice, with the voice together do they sing; no lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast, for none shall be allowed to hurt or destroy in the holy mountain. There shall not come into her the daughters of the uncircumcised nor the unclean, for "except a man be born again he cannot see this kingdom of God." Men without the Spirit's work in the new birth may, and many of them do profess citizenship; have a name to live when they are dead, and may have a nominal standing in the visible church, but the church, as she stands in Christ, is only seen by faith, and there the eye of faith can see none but the quickened, regenerated children of God. One body, and one Spirit, even as all are called in one hope of their calling. Within her invincible walls members of Christ

"Shall find a settled rest,
While others go and come;
No more a stranger or a guest,
But like a child at home."

A tabernacle that shall not be taken down. The tabernacle in the wilderness was a portable tent to be set up or taken down as frequently as occasion might require, still it was a type of the immovable kingdom of Christ, of that church which Christ has built upon a rock, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail. The establishment of the church of the living God, in all her order and ordinances, in all her doctrine and discipline, in all her laws and government, in all her members and ministrations, is seen in the gospel as a permanent and immovable building; a building of God, a house not made with hands; eternal in the heavens. The psalmist says of her, "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God shall help her and that right early." The church of Jesus Christ, the New Jerusalem, which is the bride, the Lamb's wife, is now precisely what she was in her primitive days. She occupies the same ground which was staked out for her by Christ and the apostles in the New Testament. And no community, fraternity or religious organization in this or any other day, which occupies any other ground, can be the Jerusalem of which the prophet speaks.

Not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed. Efforts have been made to remove her stakes, from time to time. Some perhaps have thought she occupied too much ground, and have labored to contract or circumscribe her boundaries, by denying to her the rights and privileges which her God has given to her, but the general rage of her adversaries has been in modern times to extend her cords and to set out her stakes so as to make them embrace the doctrine and institutions of men. Powerful efforts have been made to extend the church of God so as to make her include the modern mission machinery of the age, Sabbath School, Theological Seminaries, Tract, and hosts of other institutions which were not embraced within the stakes as planted originally to mark the boundaries of Zion; but not one of them has in reality ever yet been removed, they all stand precisely where they were set by her maker and builder, who is God. Every religious community, society, organization or confederacy therefore which these stakes do not inclose, is clearly not of this building. No order of people whatever, which is not found within the immutable and immovable stakes which God has set for his tabernacle, has any right to claim the name, nor to assume to be the church of the living God.

Neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. The cords of a tent or tabernacle, secure the curtains to the permanent stakes and give strength and stability to the tabernacle. The cords of this tabernacle may signify the unbroken love of God, which is as a three fold cord and cannot be broken. His love shed abroad in the hearts of his saints who are component parts of the building, fasten them effectually to the stakes which God has planted; and circumscribe them to the doctrine, laws and ordinances which Christ has established. By his love in their hearts they are cemented together, and his love and fear in their hearts forbid that they should depart from him, and he will not turn away from them to do them good. The heathen may rage, and the people imagine a vain thing; the kings of the earth may set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. But he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision.

Read Psa. ii. 1–4. They shall not break the cords of Zion; nor shall they make them longer or shorter. None of them shall ever be broken.

But there, at the very place which God has chosen, which he has desired for an habitation, which he has staked out, and of which he says, Here will I dwell forever; in this consecrated spot, this place of the tabernacle of the Most High, there the glorious Lord will be unto us as a place of broad rivers and streams. Christ is the glorious Lord who dwells in this tabernacle of God which is with man.

We cannot now speak of his superlative glory, nor of his dominion as both Lord and Christ; it is sufficient to know that as the glorious Lord he shall ever be found in Zion, his dwelling place. And that too *to us* he shall be the place of broad rivers and streams. As the divine Mediator between God and his people he is the medium or channel through which that river, whose streams make glad the city of God, flows. The pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, which proceeds from the throne of God and the Lamb, is found only in him who is the place of it. This life was with the Father and was manifested. And this is the record of Father, Word and Spirit, the Three that bear record in heaven that God hath given us eternal life; and this life is in his Son. He is truly the place of it; he is the Life, and all who thirst must come to him and drink. He is the fountain of living water, and it can be found nowhere else. There he was smitten like the rock in Horeb, and the waters gushing forth in broad rivers and streams, have been ever flowing and shall ever continue to flow. So broad that Ezekiel could swim in it, and so deep that the inspired Paul exclaimed, O, the depth! He is all this to us: Life to us, Rivers of immortality to us; that is to his people. But no foreign craft shall pollute this river; no galley with oars shall paddle or row themselves along by their own power or agency. Galleys with oars are very numerous in the rivers of Pharpar and Abana, in the Euphrates, which waters Babylon, but they shall not disturb the waters which are found in him.

Neither shall gallant ships pass thereby. While all the workmongrel tribes of the earth, with their slavish galleys, are prohibited, so also are all lofty towering gallant ships, with their expanded sails. They have not so much as a passage in these waters of life. None are admitted but those who are humbled under the mighty hand of God.

For the Lord is our Judge. He knows his own sheep. His foundation has this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and he alone is competent to judge. Men shall not be allowed to judge what or who shall be admitted to these living waters.

The Lord is our Law-giver. And he has thus enacted; this is his law, and he is abundantly enabled to enforce it.

The Lord is our King. And he is able to govern, protect and secure his people, and to triumph over all his enemies.

He will save us. Us who are his subjects, who can in Spirit call him Lord; but none can call Jesus Lord but by the Holy Ghost, those who are subject to his government, who submit to his judgment, and confide in it, and who are satisfied with his laws, and delighted to obey them, and who crown him Lord of all as their King. He will save them with an everlasting salvation.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., February 15, 1859.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Licking Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Mt. Gilead Church, at May's Lick, Mason Co., Ky., to the associations with which we correspond, sends christian greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have again been permitted by the goodness and mercy of our God to assemble as an association. Peace and good will reigns among us, for which we feel to thank him who alone can give these blessings.

We are glad to receive your messengers and Minutes, and hope for the continuance of the love and fellowship that exists between us.

Our next meeting will be held with the Elk Lick Church, Scott Co., Ky., beginning on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1902, where we shall be glad to receive any messages of love you are pleased to send.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.
J. T. McCOUN, Clerk.
T. J. RATLIFF, Assistant Clerk.

The Elders and messengers of the Lexington Association, in session with the church of Olive & Hurley, Oct. 2d and 3d, 1901, to the associations and churches with which we correspond, greeting.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—Another year with all its vicissitudes has passed into the great ocean of eternity, and through the enduring mercy and forbearance of our heavenly Father, we are permitted again to come together in his name, and to sit down in peace and quietness to listen to the proclamation of gospel truths as spoken by the called servants and ministers of the New Testament of our Lord and Savior. Truly we feel that the preaching has been with power and demonstration of the Spirit, and to the confirmation of the christian experience of the brethren assembled; to the glory and honor of the great Head of the church, and to Jehovah as the great ruler and disposer of all events; to that God without whose notice not even a sparrow shall fall, and who hath numbered the very hairs of our heads.

Dear brethren, we feel to express our resignation to all the providences of that all-wise Being who has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. His judgments are unerring, his ways past finding out. So then in the language of Peter, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

Our meeting has been on the whole, harmonious, and the spirit of brotherly love and fellowship has prevailed throughout, and we feel that so long as the Lord gives us grace and strength to walk according to the good profession brethren have made through hope in his name, so long shall we, and all like minded followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, partake of the heavenly joys vouchsafed to all believers; to all who watch over each other for good; who prefer each the other to himself, joys which the world knoweth not of and cannot attain to.

Though we report few additions to our numbers, we yet feel strong in the Lord, trusting implicitly that in his own time and way he will add to the church such as should be saved, for we trust in his declared word that all things are for the elect's sake, and that of all that the Father hath given the Son, there shall none be lost, and he will raise them up at the last day.

We have been blessed with the presence and preaching of an able minister from another State, and the preaching

throughout has been edifying and consoling.

Your Minutes have been received, and we desire a continuance of your correspondence.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Second Roxbury Church, at Halcottsville, Delaware Co., N. Y., on the first Wednesday and Thursday of October, 1902, where we hope to meet your messengers again.

JOHN CLARK, Moderator.
G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.
JAMES AVERY, Assistant Clerk.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, convened with the church of Olive & Hurley, October 2d and 3d, 1901, to the churches composing the same, greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—According to the usual custom that has been practiced in the Lexington Association for a good many years, we desire to send you this our epistle of love in the form of a Circular Letter. Through the abounding goodness, mercy and loving-kindness of our covenant-keeping God, we have been preserved through another year, and favored to meet again in an associate capacity. Surely, brethren, we have great reason to be thankful to our heavenly Father that it is as well with us at this time as it is.

Now, brethren, we will mention a few verses commencing at the first of the fifth chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans, including four or five verses. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Yes, justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. The apostle Paul wished to learn one thing of the Galatian brethren: "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" If they had answered the apostle and said to him that they received the Spirit by the works of the law, he would not had fellowship for them, that Christ had redeemed them from the curse of the law. "Being made a curse for us."—Gal. iii. 2, 13. Then we read again, "If they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect." "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." But next: "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." O, dear brethren, when we are led by the Spirit to have access by faith into this grace, we can or do feel to say with Paul to the Ephesian brethren, "In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him." And not only so, brethren, but we glory in tribulation also. Why do the children of grace glory? Because Jesus said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace." "Knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience, and experience, hope." So, brethren, it is written in the sixth chapter of Hebrews, for our comfort, when he says to them, "And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." Then, "Hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us."

JOHN CLARK, Moderator.
G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.
JAMES AVERY, Assistant Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

We are told there is a time to be born, and a time to die. We that live have had our time to be born, and no one will take our turn when our time comes to die; there will be no one there or then to dispute our turn, but submit to the decree of the All-wise, whose decree it is, who gave breath to all, and who taketh away our breath and we die and return to dust.

The subject of this notice was a niece of the writer, and a daughter of brother Basil Grafton, and the first loss by death, and is sensibly felt by all that remain. She was one of five sisters, there being no male members of the family. The eldest of the family is taken in the 41st year of her age. She was much looked to for counsel, being of a very considerate disposition, and of a well balanced mind, although of a feeble frame, being of a nervous condition from her youth, but all her afflictions seemed to be borne with a degree of patience which was uncommon. She was known by the name of **Mattie Grafton** by all who knew her, and I will give that name here. In her last sickness, which was lingering, gradually growing weaker, she was heard to say, "I see the Savior, and I must go," and quietly passed away, leaving a good reason, on leaving the world, of a better inheritance. One less for the parents to leave when they come to die, and one for the sorrowing sisters to grieve after. Her body now is interred in a burying place called Emmorton, Md., with many who have gone before. May the Lord be with those who remain, and prepare them all for this important change.

WM. GRAFTON.

Forest Hill, Md., Oct. 8, 1901.

MEETINGS.

The Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie has appointed a yearly meeting to be held at the meeting-house on Schoharie Hill, on the fourth Sunday, and Saturday previous, of October, (26th and 27th) 1901. Ministers and brethren of other churches, and all who love the truth, are invited. The trains will be met at Howe's Cave on Friday before the meeting.

Those who come to Cobbleskill will call on brother J. E. Livingston.

G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 69. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1901. NO. 22.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WHY?

"O LORD, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear?"—Isa. lxiii. 17.

This question does not express a bold and arrogant inquisitiveness into the secret purposes of the Lord, but is an expression rather of deep and reverent humility. The prophet is not charging God with the transgressions and hard-heartedness of Israel, nor is he finding fault with his dealings with them, though it may appear so to the natural understanding. The natural mind cannot search out the true spiritual meaning of the inspired Scriptures of truth, nor is it to the natural understanding that their rich and important mysteries are unfolded, but to the faith of the Lord's people. The things of the Spirit are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes. The Spirit reveals them. They are first known in the experience of the soul, and then recognized and understood as they appear in the word of truth.

The poor soul who has been brought to see himself a sinner against a holy God, as he looks back over his sinful life, is brought down into the dust before the Lord in shame and self-loathing. He never feels like charging any part of his sins and wickedness upon any other than himself, not even upon those who may have induced him to do evil things, much less upon the Lord, but feels that all the blame belongs to himself. The language of his soul would be, "I am condemned, but thou art clear." Yet he knows that God has sovereign power over all men, and that if he has not been as outbreaking a sinner as some have, it is because the Lord has in mercy restrained him. He knows also that if the Lord had so willed he could have kept him from the evil that he has done, and that he could have brought him to see his sins and to cry for mercy long before he did. But it does not occur to the quickened soul to think that the Lord ought to have done so, nor to question his right and justice in leaving him to his own wicked ways. On the contrary we know that it would have been just in him to have left us to act out all the evil that is in our depraved hearts, and to go down into destruction. Our wonder is that he ever made us to see and feel the sinfulness of our hearts, and to cry for mercy at all, and that he ever purposed salvation and joy and

glory for such as we. And since we received this unexpected blessing of a good hope through grace, how often we have wandered in thought and word and deed from the Lord's ways. We know that at any time the Lord could have kept us from error and transgression, and could have kept our hearts soft and tender in his fear, if it had been his will. We know that, do we not? Does not any one know that? But what poor soul, when mourning over his sins, and experiencing the chastisement of the Lord for them, ever thought of chiding the Lord for them, or of finding fault with him because he did not keep us from thus acting out the evil that was in our hearts? We know that we have no right to complain for the punishment of our sins. (Lam. iii.) We feel rather to say, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him."

But still we are sometimes in a muse, why the Lord has thus left us to err from his ways, or, using the prophet's inspired expression, "made us to err from his ways." The disposition to err was in our hearts, and it was his purpose that we should be left to manifest it. But why? we humbly and reverently inquire, Is it that we may see that his justice requires us to be cut off from before him? We cannot complain of this, if it is so. David was left to the workings of his evil heart, and did evil in the Lord's sight, and against him, that the justice of the Lord might be manifest in his condemnation as a sinner, and that the glory of grace might be clearly displayed. (Psalm li. 4; Romans iii. 4.)

Instead of chiding the Lord, and complaining because he made his people to err from his ways, and hardened their hearts from his fear, the prophet is humbly pleading with him that he will withhold the wrath which they deserve, and that he will return unto them with mercy for his servant's sake, for the honor of his name. He would acknowledge with Jeremiah that it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. (Lam. iii. 22.)

The natural man would at once question the justice of the Lord's condemnation of a man for doing what he had purposed the man should do. We can all see in our own minds the motion of an opposition to such a thing, and therefore, when left to our natural understanding, we either boldly deny that such is the case, and say that the Scriptures which declare such things do not mean what they say, or else we take the bold ground that the Lord is really the author of sin, tempting and causing a man to sin, and then condemning him for it. But the quickened soul, taught by the Spirit, is far from ascribing sin to the Lord,or saying, when he sins, "The Lord tempted me to sin," for the Lord tempts no man, (James i. 13,) but he takes all the blame to himself, and really feels it to be his own, and yet he knows and acknowledges God's omnipotence, and knows that nothing, not even his worst sin, could have taken place contrary to God's purpose, and he knows that every manifestation of the depravity of his heart, in a sinful word or act, but the more clearly shows that the Lord is justified in his sayings, and that he will overcome when he is judged. (Romans iii. 4.) That the Lord does purpose that certain evil and wicked things shall be done by men, acting out a portion of the wrath and wickedness of their hearts, and that they shall be punished for the evil, the Scriptures clearly show by many examples. Those who crucified Jesus did what it was the determinate counsel of

God that they should do. The Lord turned the hearts of Israel's enemies to hate his people, (Psalms) he brought their enemies against them in battle that he might thus punish his people, and then that he might destroy the enemies.

This is a deep and wonderful mystery, but the quickened soul feels the truth even while the carnal mind is reasoning blindly, and trying in vain to harmonize the works and ways of God, with human reason. His judgments can never be understood by the natural mind of man, for they "are unsearchable," nor can his ways be discovered by human reason, for they "are past finding out." But the child of God, when led by the Spirit, accepts implicitly what the word of God declares, no matter how far he may be from understanding it, nor how contradictory to each other different portions of the Scripture may appear to the mind. He never ascribes sin to the Lord, for he feels that he is himself the sinner, that it is man that sins, and he feels all the blame. He knows that nothing can exist, transpire or be done that God did not purpose, for then he would not be omnipotent, and yet when the Lord says concerning the terrible wickedness of Israel in the service of Baal, "which I commanded not, neither spake it, neither came it into my mind," we understand the perfect separation of the Lord from all that is sinful. There is not, there cannot be, any sin in the Lord's purpose concerning the evil and sinful acts of men. The sin is all theirs, and always theirs. The Lord's purpose is pure and holy, and ever tends toward his own honor, holiness and glory, and the salvation of his people.

In all the transgressions of his people of old he had a wise and holy purpose. In them, and in the punishments that followed quick upon them, they were all examples for us. They "all happened unto them for ensamples," and they were written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come; the ends of the legal world, which are the aims or meaning and fulfillment of all the types and patterns of that legal dispensation. (1 Cor. x.)

Those who are exercised by the Spirit feel the importance of the sacred admonitions of the apostles. Secret things belong to God. When they are revealed to us we handle them reverently. But the assurance of our souls that the Lord has settled his word forever in heaven, that all time is before him, that a thousand years are as one day with him, that he has declared the end from the beginning, all this does not hinder us from prayer and supplication, from pleading for mercy and forgiveness for our many sins; from calling upon his blessed name and entreating him to keep our feet in the right way, and to keep us from sinning against him. All this trust and confidence in the Lord, as a God of purpose and predestination, does not make us less, but rather the more, anxious to do his commands, to walk in obedience to his will, to meekly exhort our brethren unto love and good works, to strive with them to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, to warn the unruly and to reprove and rebuke where it is needful to do so.

The good conscience does not excuse sin. We find no excuse for the indulgence of our selfishness and sinful lusts in the truth that our carnal natures are not changed in and by the new birth. If we have been born again, we have the life and Spirit of Christ, which shall henceforth rule us, and bring our Adamic nature into subjection. Here constantly

exists a warfare. It is a warfare, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. The contest goes on. We cannot rest in fleshly ease. It will not satisfy us to assert that the old man is evil, and that we cannot look for any good from him. No, but we look for his evil suggestions and selfish inclinations to be denied. And where this dying of the Lord Jesus is borne about in our body we shall feel and see suffering, and shall manifest the life of Jesus in our mortal flesh, and when we speak with our brethren, or write to them, or preach to them, our communications to them will be more than a mere repeating of the words and arguments of sound doctrine. There will be felt in what we say, a savor of what we feel and suffer and enjoy from day to day. The things by which we live will be seen; the mourning sore as a dove; the chattering like a crane or a swallow; the eyes failing with looking upward; the cry of the oppressed, "O Lord, undertake for me," the sweet answer of peace from the Lord, as in the case of Hezekiah. "What shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me and himself hath done it. I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul. O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my Spirit." —Isaiah xxxviii. 9–22.

If there is not the life of an exercised soul, the struggles, pleadings, answers, in what we preach or write, it will be dry hearing or reading for the exercised people of God. In one we know personally we must see a godly life, a showing forth in the life "the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light," or what that one says, however right in the letter, will be of no value to us. The truth of God's salvation felt in the soul, and manifested in the life, will cause the utterances of that one to have a goodly savor, and a holy power. Where there is a felt dependence upon a God of unlimited and eternal purpose and power, there will be manifested a deep and reverent humility, and a childlike confidence and trust. But a belief in a God with whom there is any degree or kind of uncertainty, any of whose favors or blessings are offered upon conditions to be performed by us, and left dependent upon our will, tends to manifest self-confidence and pride, instead of humility and godly fear, and to cause levity in speech and carelessness in act, instead of a trembling solemnity of soul, and a constant desire and prayer for the dear Savior's manifested presence and power.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Oct. 13, 1901.

RIVER VIEW, Ala., Sept. 29, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Mr. A. J. Doggett, of Souwilpa, Ala., has requested me to write through the SIGNS on the last two verses of the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, which reads, "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." The thirteenth verse of this same chapter reads, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." Also the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth verses read, "For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have

returned: but now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city."

I have quoted thus to show what "promise" the inspired writer had in view when he said they had not received the promise, &c. It is interesting to read this eleventh chapter of Hebrews, and to note what faith has accomplished in the ages past, and how faithfully and promptly all the promises of God have been fulfilled. A "promise" in the Scriptures is an assurance that God has given in his word of bestowing blessings upon his people. Some of these promises are temporal, some spiritual; some are to be fulfilled in time, some in eternity. The promise God made to Abraham that Sarah should have a son, and that his seed should inherit the land of Canaan, and that they should be as numerous as the stars of heaven, was a promise to be fulfilled in time. "By faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise." It was the "land of promise," because God had promised it to Abraham and his seed. Abraham lived to see the fulfillment of some of these promises, but there was one promise in the covenant God made with Abraham, he did not live to see, and that was, "In thee, and in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed." That was the promise of the coming of the Messiah; the coming of Christ; "God manifest in the flesh," yet he saw the fulfillment of even this promise "afar off," "by faith" was "persuaded" of its fulfillment, and "embraced" it.

God made many promises to his people before the coming of Christ; some were fulfilled during their natural lives, some have been fulfilled since they left the stage of mortal action, but there is one glorious promise still in the future which belongs alike to all the blood-bought throng, and that is the promise of eternal life, and a blissful immortality beyond this vale of tears; the resurrection from the dead, and a blessed conformity to the likeness of Christ; an eternal home in heaven; "a better country;" "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." "For he hath prepared for them a city." "I go to prepare a place for you." It is the promise of all this I think the apostle has reference to when he says, "And these all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."

This to my mind is apparent from the fact that it is said, "For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country," not a condition, but "a country." "And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned, but now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly. Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city." The only sense in which these things are fulfilled now in time, is by faith. The faith of the saints sees them "afar off;" still in the future; they "embrace them," and are "persuaded of them," though still in the future. Indeed, there is no need for faith in regard to that which is already in our possession. Faith embraces a promise, not the fulfillment of a promise. Faith lays hold of unseen things, things beyond our comprehension. Therefore "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." "For what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? but if

we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." "If the dead rise not, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."

The apostle Peter has told us that in the last days "shall come scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning," &c. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night." The heavens being on fire, shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the things that are therein shall be burned up, but "we according to his promise, look for new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." This is the "better things" that God hath provided for the "church of the firstborn," whose names are written in heaven. The apostles not only preached the resurrection of Jesus, but they preached, through Jesus, the resurrection of the dead. "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

It seems to me that God had one great purpose in view in the creation of this world, and man upon it, and that is the complete salvation and redemption of his people here in time, and their ultimate glorification in heaven, giving honor, praise and glory to him who sits upon the great white throne.

H. J. REDD.

PETERSBURG, Del., July 26, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER HAIT:—Your letter was gladly received, and perhaps more appreciated because it was so unexpected and undeserved. The Lord in his love and mercy always sends his messages of relief and encouragement just at the right time, and never sends in vain, however mysterious it may seem to us. The tone and sentiment of your letter was suited to my present experience, and it afforded me both instruction and comfort. As I advance in years the effect of age naturally admonishes me that your words are true of me as well as of yourself and dear companion, that, "Time is fast winging us away to our eternal home."

My companion and I are enjoying our usual good health, for which we desire to be thankful to the praise of our heavenly Father, from whom cometh down every good gift, and every perfect gift. Nevertheless I am not strong to run a race as in the days of my youth, my sight is not as clear to discern the beautiful works of my Creator as in my childhood days, and I often think of the expression of Job, "When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return." Let me not murmur or complain, for I know that the sun shines as brilliant, the stars twinkle as brightly, the moon reflects the light as grand, the skies are as blue, the grass just as green and the flowers as beautiful as in the bright morning of life,

"When youth passed so fleeting, yet blissful the while,
Ere the heart felt a pang from dark falsehood or guile."

Therefore if the glorious works of my Creator have lost any of their beauty to me, I am constrained to say, "This is my infirmity." That which my Creator has pronounced good, let me not condemn, lest I should be found replying against God, foolishly saying, "Why hast thou made me thus?" I hope I know what you mean when you write of your doubts and fears, and say, "I am such a sinner that I hardly know what to think of my-

self." Such expressions awaken my sympathy, and entwine themselves into my fellowship.

Thirty-eight years ago it pleased the Lord to show me what a poor sinner I am by nature, a fact which I have never doubted, and an experience which I have not forgotten. I trust and hope that he also revealed to me his salvation through Christ the Redeemer, who came to seek and to save a poor sinner like me, affording me for a season a joy unspeakable and full of glory. Then I thought my troubles over, and conflicts on account of sin were ended. How sweetly the cheering words of the apostle Paul came to me: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" In my childlike simplicity I thought he would give us freely only those good things affording a continual peace and happiness, but I had not traveled far before I was taught by a heart-searching experience the force and truth of another Scripture: "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." In the happy days of my first experience, I innocently thought if my life should be continued to this present time, I should have attained to a christian state, and condition free from the assaults of the enemy; that doubts, fears and sore temptations would cease to trouble and discourage me. Dear brother and sister, if I ever needed the sustaining grace of God, and the encouragement of my brethren, it is now in the declining years of my life. I do not doubt the power of God to save, or fear that one of his people for whom Jesus died, will ever be lost. I feel assured that all my brethren and sisters whom I love are eternally safe and secure. But is my name written in the Lamb's book of life? will he remember and own a poor sinner like me? When I get away down in the valley, and hope seems almost gone, as when your letter came, I was made to realize how our heavenly Father sends messages of comfort in the time of our need. He sends by whom he will send, but always by his Spirit, whether it be by a letter from brother Hait, or some prophet or apostle, or by all of them as it were in company together, for all the experience of God's children is the same in substance, but abounding in variety. The psalmist David, in the seventy-seventh Psalm, gets very near to me in expressing his experience, saying, "Will the Lord cast off forever? and will he be favorable no more? is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah. And I said, This is my infirmity; but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High." Let us remember that infirmity is not sin and transgression, but a sense and knowledge of it is spiritual health to the soul. In the thirty-ninth Psalm David expresses a desire to know the extremity of his infirmity, saying, "Lord make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how frail I am." It is only the enlightened sinner who knows that, "Every man at his best state is altogether vanity," that can truly say, "The Lord is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation." "My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."

"Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty,
Hold me by thy powerful hand."

To the poor sinner who by grace has been made to know how frail he is, O how sweet and precious is the heavenly doctrine of God's absolute predestination of all things pertaining to the salvation of his people, and the election of grace that securely includes every soul he loves, and for whom Jesus died, and rose again for their justification; to hope, to trust, to believe that all our interest in this present life, and the life eternal, is in the hands, and at the sovereign, righteous disposal of our Creator, preserver and Savior, and to be made willing to leave it there; to feel secure in God's eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began, so that we cannot change it if we would, and would not if we could, is to dip our morsel in the golden dish of God's everlasting love, and say with Job, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come."

My wife joins me in expressions of love and fellowship to you and sister Hait, and christian good will to all your household.

Forbear with the weakness, and remember kindly your brother, I hope, in the unity of the Spirit and bond of peace,

W. W. MEREDITH.

MACOMB, Ill., Sept. 30, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—As I was permitted to attend our association, and being requested by dear ones there to write something about it for the SIGNS, I will attempt in my weakness to do so, that others may learn of our order and welfare.

We had a very pleasant and enjoyable meeting, and it seemed to all present that it was good to be there. The preaching was harmonious, and I believe the truth was proclaimed, and the saints fed and comforted. The meeting was held at the residence of brother John McFadden, ten miles from the church where his membership is. He had ample room in house and barn, plenty to eat and plenty of water, and for three days his family took care of all who came, and did all they could to make every one comfortable and welcome, saying they did not consider it a burden to thus care for and minister to the wants of God's children. The seats were in a grove just across the road from the house. There were two sermons in the morning, two in the afternoon, and two at night, under the large tent where were the tables for eating. As all were together it was very pleasant and agreeable, and the time between the services was spent in singing and conversing one with another, and there seemed but little frivolity, but I listened to much solemn conversation, and not once during the time did I hear a word of politics, or any discussion on any new doctrine, but all seemed to have come together for one purpose. Love and peace prevailed, each seemed to esteem others better than himself, and a spirit of humility seemed to characterize all present. There were six visiting ministers present: Elders Walter Cash and Sears, of Missouri, Elders Dobbs, Frazee, Reeder and Dyer, from other associations, who all came truly in the name of Christ, preaching no other name but him crucified. They preached with power and ability, emphasizing in each sermon the one great and eternal truth which so plainly distinguishes the Old School Baptists from all the religious world, that salvation is of the Lord; salvation is of grace; that sweet theme which is ever new, yet old and firm as the everlasting hills. We never tire hearing this great truth proclaimed, and never

hear it too often. Election, predestination, total depravity, his justification through the death and sufferings of Christ, the resurrection, exhortation to duty, &c., were ably and plainly set forth, and many were the expressions of approbation, and the many tears seen coursing down the cheeks of aged fathers and mothers in Israel, told of the consolation received. No striving about words to no profit, no new or strange terms used which only confuse, but do not convince or comfort.

Brother E. D. Varnes is and has been our Moderator for years, who is wise in counsel, much beloved by the brethren. He is firm and unwavering in the faith, established in the truth, ever laboring for peace and fellowship, making not a brother an offender for a word.

We have had no trouble here in our associations, and as far as I can hear, they have met in peace. O, how sweet to thus meet together and hold converse and communion with those of like precious faith. I think that nothing of a carnal or worldly nature can compare with this blessed communion with those we love with more than a natural or earthly love. Those not taught of the Spirit know nothing of this love and fellowship, but many who make a profession of religion in these days laugh at Christian's experience, or change of heart, teaching that man is not totally depraved, but that each has a spark of grace sufficient with his help to do something to obtain salvation. But this "something," my dear kindred, I have never been able to find out or perform. But their rock is not as our Rock, and how thankful should we be that we are saved from such strong delusion, such false doctrine. My heart and affection go out to those who feel poor and needy, helpless and dependent, not only in obtaining salvation, but in keeping in the path of obedience. For by grace we are saved all along the way, from error, from giving offense, from denying the faith, from sin, which is ever present, and from the evil of our own hearts. It is through grace bestowed on poor, vile sinners, which causes them to love one another, gives them a desire to meet together and hear these precious things proclaimed. While listening to these glorious truths at our association, I could not help but rejoice in God as my Savior, for I could see I could do nothing, but was without strength, and Christ was made my righteousness. I felt that I could say, "I know the joyful sound," and I was happy to know I belonged to a people whose God is the Lord. Though the world may laugh at or scorn us, let this thought comfort us, when "God is for us, who can be against us?" But, my dear kindred, it is only at long intervals that I can speak with confidence of my hope, for much of my time is spent in darkness, and sin is mixed in all I do. I feel I am entirely unworthy of your love and esteem, yet I feel I cannot return from following after you, for your God, I trust, is my God, and I pray I may be permitted to dwell with you in love and fellowship. Once in a while I get a faint glimpse of the glories of the church of Christ, and of his love for his people, and feel that I know a little of the sweet communion of the saints, and this experience is so sweet and dear to me that I cannot but say, Why then should we spend time or mar each others peace in finding fault with our brethren or sisters, in striving about things to no profit, which confuse and divide the children of God; but rather let us meet often to-

gether, cheer, encourage and comfort each other along the way.

I met many dear friends and kindred at the association whom I knew, and formed some new acquaintances, for whom I feel a warm love. I write these scattering thoughts partly in answer to their requests, and also because I felt a desire to pen a few lines to the household of faith. I trust they, as well as the editors, will read this in a spirit of charity, and remember me who feels to be the weakest and most unworthy one of all.

Since I began this letter I have received the SIGNS for Oct. 1st. I wish to tell how much I enjoyed reading Elder Curry's account of his visit in Texas. O, how I should love to have been there. How I would have enjoyed it all; the preaching, the baptism, the meeting with those dear aged pilgrims who were so faithful in coming so far to be together. It reminds me also of John's preaching in the wilderness, and the primitive way of worship.

May God bless all his people who thus meet together to worship in his holy name.

With love to all the dear ones of the household of faith, I am your sister,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

SAMARIA, W. Va., Aug. 13, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS, AND BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST:—It is with a feeling of weakness that I try to write you, but after reading from others I will make the attempt. I have just read the experience of Elder Lively, it makes me think of my own experience, with sore trials, afflictions, temptations, troubles and darkness. It has seemed to me that all the way is dark and no light was given me. This causes me to fear that I am not born again, if so, then happy be my condition, but if not, then my condition is sad indeed. But in my sore trials I have thought that whether the Lord gave me light or no, I would still trust in him; I cannot give up trusting in him.

I was confined to my house with sickness about ninety days; the distress which I underwent in this sickness no one knows, yet I hope the Lord will save me at the last, through all the troubles that it is his will for me to endure. He said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me, peace."

Now, brethren, let us notice one thing, and that is, where brethren do not see just alike, each one on both sides, should ask himself the question, Am I writing for the glory of God, and for the peace and welfare of the church? If not, then quit writing, for this is not the way to make peace nor to settle error. Let every one aim for peace in the spirit of meekness. I do not mean to make peace with error of any kind, nor to draw men after us, whether possessors of grace or not, but let our aim be to serve God and worship him. Now when brethren write upon any disputed subject, be fair on all sides, and let us see if in reality there be any differences, and if there really be a difference, then see if we cannot come together. Let us have nothing in view but the glory of God, and the good of Zion. I, for one, would so much like to see all of one mind, and speaking the same things. Let us be very careful not to cast a stumbling-block in the way of any one; if we do, God will not hold us guiltless. The truth of God is the only thing that will stand, let us then strive for it, it is not what men commend, but what God commends: "Salvation is of the Lord." Peace is what every one should desire: "Let us in one another's peace delight,

and thus fulfill his word." If such be not our delight then let us hold our tongue. This is hard for the flesh. O that the love of God may keep and guide us in the right way. Jesus Christ is the only Savior. He is the way, the truth and the life. He is all and in all. He saves every one of his children. Then boasting is excluded, and grace reigns. None are saved but by grace. And so boasting is excluded. Now, I might come to myself. Do I do what is right at all times? No, I do not. The greatest trouble is myself to contend with. In my flesh there dwelleth no good thing. I do sin so much, and commit evil. But I do hope that the dear Lord has died for me. I do believe that I have seen my sinful condition, and I was made willing to call upon the name of the Lord to forgive my many sins, and I do believe that he heard my cry and delivered me. O what distress I was in, and then the joy and peace that I received; and since, I have had many troubles and much darkness along the way. None can know them but those who have traveled that way. But often I fear that I am deceived in the matter.

It is said that God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, so when we see backbitings, and strife, and contention about words to no profit, we may say at once that God is not the author of this confusion.

I love to read the SIGNS; I love the doctrine of the Lord; I love salvation by grace. May you all contend for the faith once delivered to the saints; may you determine to know nothing among you but Jesus Christ, and him crucified; may the grace of God be with us all. Now do not understand me to mean that none in the church need rebukes; rebuke is needed many times, but rebuke with meekness when needful, and rebuke sharply when needful. Let us take the rule of the Scriptures always, and then we will be in no danger. We can do these things only by the grace of God, we have no power to perform any of these things of ourselves. Paul said, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

If you see fit to publish this, please correct all mistakes.

Your unworthy brother, if a brother at all,

JAMES W. LINN.

[HOW good a thing is peace. First there must be peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, then peace with one another, and with all men as much as in us lieth. To contend earnestly for the doctrine of God, and against error, does not mean strife against the persons of any. We are to hate the garment spotted by the flesh, but not him upon whom it may be found. Such we are to save with fear, pulling them out of the fire. What great love is required ere one can do this, and what self-abasement must we come to feel before we can strengthen our brethren.—ED.]

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., August 20, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—The SIGNS for Sept. 1st came yesterday, and we have read it all and found much comfort in it. I greatly appreciate your father's editorial; also Elder Durand's article, as it is a clear presentation of the creature made subject to vanity, unwillingly, but in hope of deliverance. Many have applied this to Adam, strange to say; for he sinned willingly, and so do all his posterity in nature, neither are they subjected by the Lord in hope, but his dear children on earth are. I am thankful that brother Durand has showed this.

My wish is, that the brethren may

liberally respond to your very liberal offer, to send the SIGNS to five persons for one dollar to the end of the year. There are many to whom the precious SIGNS would thus come as a rich favor, freighted with the truth as it is in Christ, and they would thereby be instructed, edified and confirmed in the truth as it is in Christ, and know how unfalteringly the dear old SIGNS maintains the doctrine of God our Savior, ascribing to him the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Of this I am sure, dear brother, that, could every Baptist everywhere, who is born of God, read the SIGNS one year, it would be greatly to their good, and to the promotion among them of unity in the Spirit, and the glorifying of God and his grace in their hearts. This would be a work of righteousness, and the effect would be peace and assurance in the faith and hope and love of the Lord.

Believing this, cheerfully do I hand you one dollar, to send the SIGNS to the five persons named, who do not take it, with the request and hope that they will then subscribe for it. I wish I could have you send it to ten or twenty persons, as you propose, and that I could persuade every one of your patrons and friends in the truth, who are able, to do likewise, for they would thus do a good work. Many of them will gladly do so.

The Lord, whom you serve in his truth, sustain and bless you, in this noble cause, so that in ministering to his "little flock," you may also be ministered unto and your hands be held up. My heart assures me that it will be so. Blessed be his dear and holy name! Moreover, my heart moves me to say this to you for your cheer, my dear brother, that in all this world of sin, error and sorrow, there is not another band of dear spiritual kindred in Christ so blessedly, and truly united in heart and soul in the truth as it is in him as the loving family of God that reads the SIGNS. This is not said in any boast, nor do I guess it is so, for having traveled extensively among them, and seeing nearly all the Baptist periodicals, it has long been a joy to my heart to find that all the Baptists who read and receive the SIGNS are well established in the faith of God's elect, trusting in the Lord Jesus alone for salvation, praising his reigning grace for it all, and dwelling together in unity, love and peace. This is the very best evidence that the blessing of God rests upon the faithful and precious SIGNS, and its best vindication from all that has been said and done against it. The SIGNS is on the Lord's side. Its watchword is, "THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON." It makes mention of the Lord's righteousness, even of his only. It ascribes salvation to our God, according to the riches of his grace in Christ Jesus. It teaches the sacred obligations of the saved in Christ to "walk in love as the dear children of God." It advocates no yea and nay gospel, but the gospel of full salvation in Christ, the Mediator of the new covenant, through his abounding grace to sinners, to the praise of the glory of his grace only, now and forever.

So, my precious kindred in our most precious Christ, let us with loving hearts and willing hands help our dear brethren Beebe and Chick to send the SIGNS into the homes of many of the poor in spirit, whom God hath chosen rich in faith, and it will help them after a godly sort to the joy of their hearts. "But to do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." God bless THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

In fervent love to its loving friends, yours to serve in the truth,

D. BARTLEY.

SUMERDUCK, Va., June 9, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have received and read several numbers of the SIGNS, and they seem to give no uncertain sound, but contend for the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace only, from start to finish. I am so weak and vile that if my salvation depended upon any condition performed by me I would utterly come short of it. Some of the Old School Baptists here are preaching conditional time salvation, but my heart does not receive it. God's people are not blessed for doing good works, but are blessed in them, according as God is pleased to work in them to will and to do of his good pleasure. When God gave his law, he decreed the very ones who should do his commandments, and also when and where they should do them. No one can love his neighbor as himself unless God, of his own free will and grace, works in that one to do it. Grace must always precede the act, else it cannot be a good work.

Your brother,

ISAAC S. WEEDON.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

PLEASE BE SURE

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likley to occur.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, in session with the New Valley Church, of Loudoun Co., Va., October 16th, 17th and 18th, 1901, to the several churches and associations with which we correspond, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the mercy and goodness of the God of Zion, (he who "watching over Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps,") we are again favored with an opportunity to address to you our annual epistle of love and fellowship, that you may know that though comparatively few in numbers according to the estimate of men, and unreckoned among the nations of the earth, we are, we trust, still contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and through the grace of the great Head of the church, "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

The past year has been one of peace and quietness within our borders, and the faithful ministers of the New Testament, whom it has pleased God to appoint as under-shepherds over this portion of his flock, have been enabled to go in and out before us, ministering richly of the things of the kingdom, and "speaking comfortably to Jerusalem," to the edification and spiritual upbuilding of those hearers who, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, have been called out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light of the gospel. In the wise providence of God, to whose will we would desire to be ever reconciled, our numbers as a visible, manifest body, have not been greatly augmented, and it has pleased him in mercy to take from us by death some with whom we have long walked in love and fellowship, but we sorrow not for them, feeling that they have "fought a

good fight," and have finished their course, and though we miss them from their accustomed places, we know that they have but heard the voice of the loved One bidding them "come home."

We have been made, we trust, dear brethren, many times during the past year to rejoice in the exceeding goodness and mercy of God to usward, and yet have also been made to mourn oft over the hardness of our hearts, and to deplore our lukewarmness and the apparent absence of him who is our life, and in whose presence there is fullness of joy. When his presence is sensibly with us, and the glorious light of his countenance shines in upon our hearts, sorrow and sighing flee away, the time of the singing of birds is come, and our hearts and tongues cannot refrain from singing praises unto his matchless name for the wondrous mercy he has, in divine love and pity, bestowed upon poor worms of the dust. Naught can then come near us to molest or harm; naught can then disturb us when we feel that the everlasting arms are around us, that the Lord our God has placed our feet upon a rock, even the Rock Christ Jesus, has put a new song in our mouths, and has brought us to sweetly trust and rest in him. It is then morning with our souls; the Sun of Righteousness has arisen with healing in his wings, and the powerful radiance of heavenly love touches every fibre of our being with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

But these heavenly seasons are ours but seldom. Most of the time we go about mourning and burdened, burdened with a sense of our vileness and unlikeness to him; mourning his absence, and inquiring on every hand where he may be found. The prophet Isaiah, in the twenty-first chapter, speaks of the inquiry made of the watchman, "What of the night?" How powerfully expressive of the condition of the child of God in the flesh much of the time, is this apparently simple query: "Watchman what of the night?" The night season is upon the poor wanderer, not a pleasant summer's night, where the blazing face of nature's sun has kindly sunk behind the western hills, bringing relief from heat and suffering, and the gentle night wind softly fans the brow, while high above rides the moon, touching each object with a mellow light; O no; the night of which the prophet wrote is a night of blackness and tempest—blackness in which all is swallowed up, in which venomous reptiles and ravening beasts creep forth to slay and devour; tempest, which tosses the poor soul to and fro in agonies of despair, in which it seems that the foundations of the great deep are broken up, and nothing is before him but death and destruction. There are no moonlit views in this night, no pleasant dreams, but there is deep, painful, suffering loneliness; there is mourning that will not be comforted; there is that agony of soul which none but those who have once felt the Dayspring in their hearts, and have again been plunged into the blackness of despair by the withdrawal of their Lord, can experience and know.

"What of the night?" Will it ever be day again? Will the glorious Sun ever rise again, to drive away by his heavenly, life-giving light, the fogs and mists and vapors, the doubts, and fears, and suffering, the blackness, and tempest, and despair? Has the Lord indeed forgotten to be gracious? Ah, did I ever know him? I had thought that he had once smiled upon me, that his love had been shed abroad in my heart, that I had tasted of his delights, and that his fruit

had been sweet to my taste. But I was self-deluded. Had he ever indeed spoken peace to my troubled soul, had I ever heard his gentle voice pronouncing pardon for all my iniquities, had I ever been engraved upon the palms of his hand, this terrible night would not have come upon me. I am deceived, and I am deceiving others. I have dared to name the name of the Lord; I have gone to the church of the living God, and have been received among those who worship the Lord in Spirit and in truth, in the beauty of holiness, while I am yet an outcast, lost in my sins, and but a hissing, a byword and a reproach. Thus reasons the poor, tempest-tossed, bewildered child. Were it not for my sins, which rise mountain high before me, this black night would not have engulfed me, for to the precious sheep the dear Lord is a most tender Shepherd, leading them into green pastures and beside still waters.

Ah, these night seasons; how full the record of christian experience is of them. The prophets and patriarchs of old testified of the night, and bitter groanings have ever ascended from the hearts of the afflicted of Zion when it was night with their souls. Let those who mourn because it is darkness with them, and no ray of light penetrates the thick blackness by which they are surrounded, contemplate for one moment that dreadful night in Gethsemane, when the Lord of heaven and earth, who dwelt among men in the likeness of sinful flesh, to redeem those who suffer in the night, sweat as it were great drops of blood in the agony of soul through which he was passing. Here indeed was a night too awful to portray, suffering such as finite minds can never comprehend. The God-Man, possessing all the attributes of Deity, with all power in heaven and in earth, in his hands, yet clothed in flesh so frail that he was touched with a feeling of all our infirmities, suffering in this awful night all that the rage of hell could inflict, having heaped upon him all of the iniquities and burdens of all his people, in this bitter, terrible night underwent all the agony which all his people ever have or ever will be called to pass through. He was alone; his disciples could not watch with him one hour, but it was not their heaviness of eyes which made his awful loneliness. His Father was far from him, the full measure of the desolation which comes to each child of God when the face of the Lord is hidden from him, and he is in the night, was upon him, and beneath the crushing burden of the sins laid upon him, and the horrible agony of the night loneliness, the bloody drops feel to the ground.

Dear brethren, do you mourn in the night and earnestly inquire of the watchman? Is your soul exceeding heavy within you, and does the blackness of desolation overcome you? Herein is a fellowship of the sufferings of Christ. As the dear Redeemer passed through the bitterness and agony of Gethsemane, so must his people each pass through the same experience, each in their measure. And to none but those of the true sheepfold is this experience given. It is an evidence of their calling and election. Joy may be deceitful, rejoicing may be a delusion, but the suffering and sorrow of a child of God when it is night with his soul and his Lord has withdrawn himself, when the terrors of death have gat hold of him and he can see no way of escape, when his sins rise mountain high before him and all hope seems to have vanished, this cannot be simulated, about this there can be no deception, and to this only are the Lord's chosen brought that they may be

continually stripped of dependence upon self and their eyes turned to the hills from whence their help cometh.

And the poor soul cries to the watchman. Faithful watchman, set upon the walls of Zion to keep note of the night and to give the glad intelligence of the breaking of the day. During the night, while ravening beasts are about, while wolves in sheeps' clothing are ever around seeking for an entrance into the fold, the watchman keeps keen watch and ward that no harmful thing shall enter into Zion. But, he, too, is in the night. Though upon the walls he is not above the gloom, but his eyes are ever seeking for signs of the coming day. And when the voice, broken with weeping, falls upon his ear, "Watchman, what of the night?" his reply goes out, strong with heavenly assurance from on high, though his own heart may be wrung by sorrow, "The morning cometh." Blest intelligence to the dwellers in the night. The morning cometh. It may be night with you now, dear soul. Your way may be shrouded in thick darkness, dangers seen and unseen may be on every hand, your soul may be exceeding sad that your dear Lord has withdrawn himself and you know not where to find him; no ray from the Sun of Righteousness may touch your weary, suffering, sin-sick heart; it may seem to you that you are totally lost and cut off forever, but—"the morning cometh."

Aye, it will come. As surely as the springtime follows the winter, the harvest follows the seedtime, so will the dayspring follow the night. The time is coming, is even now at hand, when upon the mountain tops will be seen the beams of the rising Sun, and the mists and shadows and dangers and fears of the night will flee away as the glorious light of the Son of God will burst in upon the sorrowing one, lighting his pathway, pouring a flood of celestial glory and radiance into his mourning heart, and bathing him in that unspeakable beauty of holiness which proceeds from the throne of God and the Lamb. Gone are now the doubts and the fears, the moans and the groans, the suffering and the despair. He who but a short time ago was in the thick darkness and could only weep, is now basking in the refulgent glories of light, and breaking forth into songs of praise and adoration. With David of old he sings, "Praise the Lord, O, my soul," for "He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God; many shall see it and fear, and trust in the Lord."

Glorious indeed is now the condition of the rejoicing child of God, whose Lord has again come to him with peace and joy and comfort and healing. All tears have been wiped from his eyes, for how can the children of the bride chamber mourn while the Bridegroom is with them? But hearken yet more to the voice of the watchman: "The morning cometh, and also the night; if ye will inquire, inquire ye; return, come." Yes, although one night has passed away and the morning cometh, it will not, while we tabernacle here in the flesh, be always day. Another night will follow, and another day, and so on and on, until the end shall come. The night is as necessary for the child of God as the day; it is needful for him that his Lord shall ever and anon withdraw himself, and in tender mercy and compassion he will deal out to his dear children all those changes of which he knows that they have need. He has promised never to leave nor for-

sake one of his dear little ones, and whether in the night or in the day their Lord is not unmindful of them. He hears their cries, he remembereth their frame, and he will safely guard and guide them through all their mortal pilgrimage until he graciously calls them to himself, and they sweetly fall asleep, to be satisfied when they awake in his likeness.

Dear brethren, we trust that you will receive this, our epistle of love and fellowship, in the spirit in which it is penned, to give all glory and honor to him whom we trust "hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." And to his name be all the praise and honor and glory given, now and forever, world without end. Amen.

Our next annual meeting is appointed to be held, by divine permission, with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1902, when and where we hope to greet your messengers and receive your messages of love again.

E. V. WHITE, Moderator.

G. G. GALLEHER, Clerk.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association convened with the church at Indiantown, Wicomico Co., Md., Oct. 23d, 24th and 25th, 1901, to the several churches of which she is composed, sendeth christian salutation in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The time seems to have been short since we last convened in an associate capacity, but we discover that many changes have taken place since then, even in our own midst. Many dear ones have been removed from the militant to the triumphant state, but we still hold them in sweet remembrance.

The question now arises, How can we make this letter to be of the most interest to the churches and all concerned? Shall we call attention to some word of inspiration, with such comments as the Lord may enable us to make? To do this we will refer you to the words of Paul to the church at Philippi, ii. 12, 13: "Beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

It is right and proper that we should always take particular notice in the first place, who the word is addressed to, and second, what was meant. To do this we will try and show first, that the apostle was not addressing the unregenerate, or ungodly, as seems to be the popular notion, (for it is only a notion indeed) for when we glance at the first word of this paragraph we see at once that there is nothing to establish but one conclusion, and that is, that the beloved of God was who Paul was writing to, saying, "As ye have always obeyed." From this we see that he speaks to them in the way of commendation and encouragement for that life of obedience which he had discovered amongst them. This must have been very cheering to them, being found much more obedient in his absence than in his presence. Thus it would seem even to them that their obedience was the effect of the grace of God, and not the presence of Paul. This kind of obedience always glorifies God, and magnifies his grace. Not effected from an outward standpoint, but from an inward one, showing that the obedience is first wrought in the heart, then is confirmed by the words and acts of one's life. This being so gratifying to the apostle, he would not have them de-

part from this rule. So he would say to them earnestly and lovingly, nothing new, but the same, declaring what God had worked in them; that which constituted their salvation, showing forth the praises of him who had called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. Why does the inspired writer call it their salvation? Because God has revealed it to them as a free gift through Jesus Christ their Lord, and he says, "Not as the world giveth, give I unto thee." Then all that pertains to their redemption from the curse of the law, and from the power and dominion of sin, through this entire life, and their glorification for ever, is all included in their salvation, and the poor sinner has nothing to do with its security but to live it out, which is only another way of expressing, "work it out." No one can in truth, in the matter under consideration, work out that which he or she has not already felt and seen within. The subject of this salvation has many things to experience in this life, and thus they find the Scriptures being fulfilled all along down the line of life. We have no idea that the Scriptures teach but one salvation, but there is a wonderful experience in connection with it. There are times when the joys of that salvation are fully realized, and there are times also when the joys seem to take wings and fly away, where? we cannot tell. And our times of joy and times of sorrow are not under our control. It is not based upon what we do, or do not do, for, "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Darkness or light is not under the control of the subject of salvation. If so, why, when one is in darkness and cold, why is he admonished not to kindle a fire to warm himself, or to compass himself about with the sparks thereof? He that undertakes this shall lie down in sorrow. How dependent then we are upon the Lord, and we cry unto him as the psalmist did, "O Lord, restore unto me the joys of thy [our] salvation." Not the salvation that remains the same all the while. All the outlets and inlets that are experienced in this life, emanate from, and are pointers back to that salvation which is for time and to eternity, to show that the changes in the experience of this life is not altogether controlled by what one does or does not, for the question of the prophet is, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light?" Now mark, it is the one that fears God and obeys the voice of his servant, that has this experience, and all that he can do is to trust in the Lord and stay upon his God. So when God opens, none can shut, and when he shuts, none can open. We think to speak of any of these things herein mentioned as time or conditional salvation, is a wrong, or is an improper phrase or term. When Peter said on the day of Pentecost, "Save yourselves," he simply meant separate yourselves from this untoward generation, because God by his Spirit had made a separation by giving them a knowledge of that word which pricked them in the heart, while it set others to mocking. So Peter could exhort them to show forth, or work out, what God had shown them, by repentance or turning away and being baptized. And we believe that whatsoever the Holy Ghost teaches or prompts to be shown forth, is always attended with fear and trembling, because godliness is a great mystery. Even the highest order of intelligence has to move or walk by faith, and to be stayed by hope, and that not seen. Now all of this is something not

worked for, but because of the same being felt or realized within, and it cannot be worked out unless God giveth the will, and also the power to perform. So then this willing and doing according to the good pleasure of God, is not of the creature. We do not think that the people of God work in the divine life for a reward, any more than the sparks go upward by effort; notwithstanding in keeping his commandments there is great reward; not for them, but in them. Some might say, Well, therein is your time salvation; but let us take the Scriptures and our own experience, and see if there is any free agency in the matter of christian obedience: strength to obey is from the Lord, while obedience to the laws and commands of God is a glorious and an effectual work, but the Spirit of God prompts and leads and gives strength. Peter said, "Seeing ye have purified your souls [or lives] in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren." No free agency in that, for it is the Spirit's work. And Paul says, "We know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." But the Spirit taketh of the things of Jesus and shews them. While the will may be present, is it possible for the Lord's people to so live as to save themselves from all the consequences of disobedience? If so, what would distinguish them from the religious world, and how could it be true that the lusts of the flesh are so strong that the apostle could say, "That ye cannot do the things that ye would"? and it is virtually saying, that whenever ye do the things that is godly, it is by the help of God, or his grace. Says the apostle again, Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth, and if ye are without chastisements, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons. Then we see our time salvation is not with ourselves, but it is entirely with the Lord, and he will always bear the glory. Our obedience then is the work of grace in the heart first, and he giveth strength to obey. So it is of him, and to him, and by him, to whom be glory for evermore. Amen.

T. M. POULSON, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

To the churches composing the Juniata Association, convened with the Providence Church, Oct. 11th, 12th and 13th, 1901, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

The union of brethren in church relation, and the union of churches into associational capacity, is the work of the Holy Spirit, and are institutions of the gospel dispensation, and the fulfilling of the promise made unto the fathers. It is indeed the new heaven and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. These are they created in Christ Jesus, and builded together by the Spirit for a habitation of God. It is the voice that Job heard out of heaven, saying, The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and be their God. This unity of the people of God on earth, is an expression of the unity when we shall be gathered home in glory. As it is the work of the Son of God, it is the expressed revelation of the eternal purpose of the Father. Being the expression of the Father's eternal purpose, it must of necessity be a spiritual union. As flesh and blood does not inherit the kingdom, neither does flesh

and blood bring us together in the gospel kingdom, but the Spirit. The gospel church is essentially a spiritual kingdom made up of the spirits of just men made perfect. A just man is one made so by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ. The spirit in this just man is the life of Christ, the dwelling of God with us. Seeing then that the church is the home of God, the tabernacle in which he dwells, with what reverence should we look upon, and with what devotion should we serve her. What is it that we should hold from her, that we should think too valuable to bestow upon her? Can we have a proper conception of the church of God and withhold anything we are or anything we have? Brethren, remember Ananias and his wife, how they held back part of the price, for which they had to suffer death. This is to teach us so must we, and so will we, if we withhold from the church that which we profess to believe is hers when we join her. As we have received Christ Jesus, so walk in him. If we walk by sight and not by faith, we are sure to fall into the ditch. If it is ours to walk in the privileges of the church, we would urge you, our brethren, to a most careful consideration of these things. In sacrificing your privileges in the church, you are forfeiting your mercies. Remember again, it is there that God dwells; it is his antitypical tabernacle. There must ye come to worship God; there must ye bring all your tithes, that my house may be full. Neglect not, dear brethren, the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is. Let each of us ask ourselves the question, Am I neglecting the assemblies of the saints? Do not let any earthly interest or any self-gratification keep us from the assemblies of the saints. If so, may we not fear like Ananias, God will send death into our souls? Awake to righteousness and sin not. If we have departed from the right way, let us return to our first love, or else God will surely remove the candlestick from us. Think, dear brethren, what our dear Savior suffered for us. How can we be his disciples if we follow not after him? Is it indeed that we have a name to live, and are yet dead? Far better that we had never made a profession, than having made it, we show no love for the church. It may be some excuse themselves on the grounds that the preacher is not acceptable. The preacher is not the church. To the church we are to bring our all; nor is there any excuse that can justify us in failing to do so. Let the motive that prompts be in us, and no motive outside shall hinder. Look not on the things that are seen, but on the things not seen. We cannot too earnestly commend this thought, for it is the only true guide to happiness and peace, to growth and prosperity of the church. The church was not instituted to make believers, for there were believers long before there ever was a manifest church. But it is a great blessing to those who walk worthy of their high calling in Christ, in whom all are gathered together, both in heaven and in earth, even in him. Let us strive together for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Let none strive to hurt, but all strive to heal; bearing each others burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Farewell, brethren, may the God of peace unite our hearts in sublime adoration and praise.

We would say to our sister associations, that we, both weak and poor, desire their remembrance of us in their prayers and visits. Our attendance has not been large, but attentive. Our preaching has

been in demonstration of the Spirit, and with power.

E. V. WHITE, Moderator.
AHIMAAZ, MELLOTT, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association convened with the Indiantown Church, Oct. 23d, 24th and 25th, 1901, desire to greet our correspondents in christian love and fellowship.

Our meeting has been to us a season of enjoyment, because of the goodness and blessing of our loving, faithful, covenant-keeping God and Savior. The attendance has been large, and the manifest interest encouraging. The gospel has been faithfully proclaimed without a discordant note, free from the disturbing theories and abstract questions that disturb the peace and harmony of the children of the kingdom of Christ.

We earnestly desire to continue our christian correspondence according and in obedience to the Spirit of Christ, ever endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

We cordially invite you to meet with us at our next session, to be held with the Broad Creek Church, at the usual time next year.

Mercy and peace be unto you through Jesus Christ our Lord, to his praise and glory.

T. M. POULSON, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

The Juniata Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with Providence Church, Bedford Co., Pa., sendeth greeting to the churches and associations with whom we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED:—One year more has passed away, and has taken with it some of our little flock, but the Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord. We who are left to meet with you again, are made to rejoice with your ministers and messengers, all with an eye single to the glory of God. We can say as did the psalmist, "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." May our God direct all of our ways to the honor and glory of his great and good name.

We hope to meet with you again at our next session, which is to be held, the Lord willing, with the Sidling Hill Church, Fulton Co., Pa., commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1902.

E. V. WHITE, Moderator.
A. MELLOTT, Clerk.

The New Hope Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the Cane Creek Church, in Cleveland Co., Ark., to our sister associations with whom we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is through the mercy of an all-wise God that we have met together on this occasion. Our churches are all reasonably represented, and report in peace, for which we hope to feel thankful to our God, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift.

Dear brethren, we have had but little ingathering in the bounds of our association, yet we feel that we have been greatly blessed with the gospel of Christ Jesus as it was once delivered to the saints, and that there has been a manifestation of that humble and contrite Spirit dwelling among the brethren and sisters during this association.

Dear brethren, we desire the continuance of your brotherly correspondence.

T. B. LITTLE, Moderator.
WM. DAY, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

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1 COR. VI. 20; JOHN XXI. 19.

BROTHER James Jones, of Poplar Creek, Miss., requests that we write upon the Scriptures found in 1 Cor. vi. 20, and the first clause of John xxi. 19.

The first text reads as follows: "For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." The second reads, "This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God."

The theme is the same in both Scriptures, and they may well be presented at one time in the subject set before us. The glory of God manifested in the life of believers, and in their sufferings and death, is that to which our attention is called. The design of the work of grace in the hearts of men is, that in the ages to come God might show forth the riches of his grace in us, through Christ Jesus. Jesus lives in us, that his life may be made manifest in our mortal flesh. All that is done in what we speak of as the work of grace is that God may be glorified and his name exalted in us. And what a wonderful, what an astonishing thing it is, that our God should see fit to manifest his mercy and loving-kindness in such vile creatures as fallen men. The apostle said, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be of God, and not of us." What a glorious treasure! what a mean abiding place! The treasure golden, and the vessel earthen.

In the first text to which our attention is called, Paul reminds his brethren first, that they are bought with a price, and that therefore they are not their own, that they belong to God, and that therefore, as he says elsewhere, they are not to seek their own glory, but the glory of him who has bought them, and to whom they belong. Paul (verse 13) would urge upon them the truth that even their bodies are for the Lord. He has bought them, and this includes all the powers and faculties of their being. They could have no right to say therefore, We may subject our bodies to all manner of lusts, and desires, and evil deeds, because the body is evil, and only evil, and is not the Lord's, and shall never be his. On the contrary, even their bodies are said to be the members of Christ. Shall they therefore make the members of Christ the members of an harlot? His whole soul revolted at the thought, and he said, "God forbid." And if any man be indeed redeemed unto God, there will be in him such a work wrought as that he will with abhorrence against all sin in word or deed, also say, "God forbid." "He that is joined to an harlot is one body, but he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." By so much as the spirit is higher and more excellent than the body, therefore is he, who is joined to the Lord, under higher obligations to render to him all praise and glory, and to live in the Spirit, and not fulfill the desires of the flesh and the mind. While the special sin of which Paul here speaks is that of fornication, and against this he urges the relation which they occupy to God es-

pecially, yet the same reasoning applies to all sin. He that is joined to the Lord is redeemed from all sin, and is to remember that he is no longer under its dominion. Once in time past they fulfilled these evil desires and lusts, but now they have been called to a holy relationship to God. His life dwells within them, and they are to manifest this better spiritual life in all their conduct. This true light has been kindled in their heart, that it should shine out. He would say to these brethren, "Remember who you are now, and to what you have been called." "Remember the profession which you have made before God, and that you have not been called unto uncleanness, but unto holiness."

"What," he says to them, "know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own." Your body, the very body in which you live and move, is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and this holy Spirit is within you, and ye have received it of God, and ye are his, not your own. Could there be stronger reasons urged upon them, and upon us also, for careful living, for keeping our body as unto the Lord? And now still further he urges upon them this last most solemn and glorious truth, "Ye are bought with a price." He reminds them and us that all these blessed and holy privileges of which he has spoken, and which he declares have been conferred upon us, are ours simply because first, we have been redeemed, or bought with a price. This of course implies the sinful and lost estate of those who have been redeemed. It carries with it a reminder of the great unworthiness and unfitness of each and all of us to receive such immortal blessings. The fallen condition of man, his justly condemned estate, his alienation from God by wicked works, his enmity to God in his whole nature and life, in short, all that makes man a sinner, is implied by the apostle in the expression, "Ye are bought with a price." From what they were bought, and to what they have been redeemed, is all involved here. Who are we, and who has bought us, and what blessings are ours through this purchase? Who shall ever measure it all? Only the Holy Spirit, which dwells within us, can take these things and show them to us so as to melt these hearts of stone, and humble us in deep contrition, and arouse within us true praise and gratitude to God. The longer we live, and the more we meditate upon these things, and the more we come to know our own heart, the more we can see why the inspired apostle urges the things that he does as motives to stir us up to right living. If the mercy and goodness of God does not lead to repentance, to godly sorrow for sin, and to earnest strivings to overcome all that would oppose godliness, and to hatred of self and indwelling sin, then we know of nothing that will. Paul reminds his brethren of God's great mercies in these preceding verses, and these are the motives to which he appeals. Such appeals must have found in the hearts of all who knew and loved God, a chord attuned to what he was saying to them, and which must at once respond. In the hearts of his brethren would be aroused gratitude, love, and all that could stir them up to earnest desire to glorify God. "Ye are not your own." Ye are bought. What more could he say concerning the Lord's gracious work for them and in them?

Now who could remember these things which had been wrought in their own hearts, without an experience of longing to so live outwardly as would best testify

to the gracious work of the Lord. It is a fact of experience that the more we are enabled to sit at the feet of the Lord, the more we are permitted to drink in of his life, of his grace, of his divine nature, the more shall we find it to be our meat and drink to do his will in all things. And it will result that the chief sorrow of our hearts will be that we in spite of our best endeavors, are still so far short of what we desire. "I count not myself to have apprehended," will be our solemn confession to the end of this life. If indeed the things of which the apostle was speaking, had a place in the hearts of his brethren, if they have a place in our hearts, we shall welcome such exhortations as being that which is calculated to stir us up to more zeal. Our experience in preaching, and in urging such admonitions as seemed scriptural and suitable, upon those who have heard us, has been this, that those who seemed to us already walking spiritually and carefully as the spiritual always will, have often responded and said, "We felt all that to be good and true, and we feel as though we desire to be more faithful than we have ever been," while those who were in the sight of the church walking far off have not so responded, and we have seen no result of all the preaching and admonitions in them. Before any exhortation will thus stir any one up to realize the importance and sweetness of this careful walking, the spirit of truth must first soften the hard heart, and make it ready for the seed. Our observation and our experience has been that those already spiritual among ths Lord's people, have received the good seed in good and honest hearts, and have felt to respond to the word spoken with praise and gratitude to God for the word, while those who were not spiritual among them have not been made to feel their shortcomings and lack of true spirituality, by all the admonitions urged upon them, and urged with faithfulness and love. So that we say that if any to whom the apostle wrote in the text were alive to what the Lord had done for them, and to the relation which they occupied to him, these would feel how exceeding good were these words, and would rejoice and be glad to be reminded of their obligations to love and obey him.

Now Paul says to them, Glorify God, therefore, and glorify him in both body and spirit. Is not this lesson taught us here, that these two things cannot be disjoined? We cannot glorify God in spirit without this spiritual exercise also appearing in the body, and we certainly cannot really glorify him in body without this inward spiritual exercise of love, joy, faith, hope, humility and fear within. One may in the body so behave as that to men they may seem to glorify God, but still to God it is not so. On the other hand, it is vain for a man to say, I glorify God in my mind and heart and spirit, in my thoughts concerning him, and in my soul's affections toward him, while at the same time the body is found in the service of the world, sin and Satan. One may say, I rejoice in God, while he attends places of worldly amusement, while he engages in dancing, card playing or what not of those things which the world loves, and which worldly professors say there is no harm in, but when he says so he lies. He either willfully says what he knows is not true, or else he is deceived, and mistakes carnal joys for those which are heavenly and spiritual. How utterly opposed to both the letter and the spirit of the gospel of the grace of God, and how utterly contradictory of all christian experience is it to say, "My body is, as

it always was, and it never can be expected to do anything but sin, and therefore it may indulge itself in all worldliness and wickedness, while yet the Spirit within me seeks and loves the glory of God. This Spirit within to love God led this same apostle elsewhere to say, "I keep my body under." It led him to say here to these Corinthians, "Glorify God in your body," as well as in your spirit. Again we desire to say that these two things cannot be disjoined. Our experience has been that we have found those who walked most carefully before men, and who were exceeding jealous of the slightest thing in their daily conduct that might be to the reproach of the name which they had named, to also be humble and spiritual, and in feeling and thought very near to him who was meek and lowly in heart, and who did not sin, and in whose mouth no guile was ever found, and we have not found any pleasure in conversation with those who walked carelessly and indifferently before men. They who most earnestly love God, and desire that in all their thoughts he shall be uppermost, have been those who most jealously guarded their every word and act. Yet these same brethren and sisters have been those who have most bitterly complained of themselves, that they could not do the good that they would. Such as these who possess such a mind and desire will welcome all admonitions and rebukes, and will feel as a dear brother once said to us after listening to preaching, which at that time was to him heart-searching and life searching, "I love that kind of preaching which tells me my faults."

To glorify God in the spirit, is to be possessed of those things in the soul which abase self and exalt the Lord, and to glorify God in the body is not to absent ourselves from the house of worship, it is not to prefer worldly gain or pleasure to the privileges of the sanctuary, it is not to have the mouth filled with careless, light conversation, or foolish talking and jesting, or tale bearing, or slandering, or fault finding, it is not to seek first of all the riches or gain of this world, but it is to "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," it is to be sober in life and conversation, it is to prefer the companionship of the friends of God before all other, and to esteem the pleasures at the right hand of God as being more than all the light pleasures of the world, it is loving God more than pleasure, and not pleasure more than God. It is impossible to cover all the ground; we can do no more than to glean a few thoughts in this wide field. May the Master commend some handfulls to be let fall on purpose for some needy soul.

In the second text it is shown that God will be glorified in the death of his saints, as well as in their life. Peter should glorify God by the manner of his death. It is said that he was in the end crucified, as was his Master before him. We do not know that this is any more than a tradition, but be this as it may, in his death the Master promised that God should be glorified, and we desire to but call attention to the fact that all that relates to the death of all the saints is fixed, and so fixed that they all shall in death glorify God, even as did Peter. It matters not whether the believer himself knows that it is so, or whether any one else knows that it is so, God knows it, and to him all that pertains to their death is precious; it all shall glorify God; all sickness, pain, weakness in the flesh, if indeed the subject of these things be a child of God, shall glorify him. With this may we not be content? Like Peter

we know not the day, nor the hour, nor the manner in which God shall call us to glorify him in death; we do not need to know; God knows, and that is enough.

How blessed to have this hope set before: as we desire that God may be glorified in all things, so we are assured that even in death we shall glorify him, and as he is glorified in us, so shall we be in him. "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness." C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ACTS V. 38, 39.

"REFRAIN from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God."

Such was the counsel of Gamaliel to those who were madly engaged in the suppression of the truth, and persecution of the apostles and primitive saints. All their efforts thus far had failed to prevent the faithful testimony of the servants of our Lord Jesus Christ, or to intimidate them. The Redeemer has said, "Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," and his words were no less omnipotent in the utterance of these words than when he called the world into existence, or when the tempests or the seas obeyed him. Indeed his very word is sufficient indemnity for the faith of all his children under all their trials and persecutions. He speaketh the word and it stands fast; he commands and it is done. The counsel of Gamaliel was rational and consistent, whatever were the motives which led him to offer it to the Jewish Sanhedrim, and they are equally as true and appropriate now as when the apostles of the Lamb stood accused before that council.

Refrain from these men. What men? The context shows the men alluded to were the apostles and witnesses of our Lord, who had been arrested and imprisoned for the testimony of their divine Lord and Master, and liberated by the angel of the Lord, and then re-arrested and again brought before the council. These men were the constituents of the gospel church in its primitive organization, and represent the church of Christ throughout all subsequent ages; for quickened sinners after having gladly received their word, were baptized and added to them, that is, to *these men.* And they continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread and in prayer, and the Lord added unto them daily such as should be saved. The whole church is evidently included, and *these men* are still to be found on the earth, and still identified by the same discriminating characteristics: *steadfast in the apostle's doctrine.* Whatever new fashions, fancies or theories the religious world in its progression may adopt.

There was at that time, there has been ever since, and there still is a strange inclination manifested by the religious world, or the worldly religious, to oppose, annoy, perplex and persecute *these men* in a variety of ways; nor is the opposition which they encounter alone from the world. The apostle Paul in admonishing the elders of Ephesus, predicted that, "Even of your own selves shall men rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Elsewhere he warned the church of God that "perilous times should come; that many should depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." All the violent persecution the church has endured from anti-Christ, the cruel and murderous edicts, restricted liberties as

citizens of the world, the torturing racks and ingenious machines for inflicting dreadful physical sufferings, the executioner's block and axe, or the stake and fagot, have never proved so hurtful to the church of God, as internal disruptions, dissensions and disorders produced among her members; the sowing seeds of discord, scattering firebrands arrows and death, by false brethren; by men of corrupt minds, who have loved pre-eminence, and to acquire it have assailed the doctrine, character and reputation of the men of God. History informs us of no age in which the church has not been more or less infested with this description of opposition, except it has been when the fires of persecution from without have burned so violently as to render the religion of the Bible too unpopular and expensive to suit the carnal, selfish notions of nominal professors ond graceless hypocrites. The openly avowed enemies of the church with all their instruments of brutal cruelty, has proved a purgative, and the flames of persecution have had a purifying effect, while the treachery of ungodly men within her inclosure has had a corrupting tendency. But neither the one nor the other of these, however much they may harrass or perplex the saints, can ever overthrow the work of God. If the world or Satan had power to overthrow the work and counsel of God, the church would have fallen long ago. But God's counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure, and it is his good pleasure that his little flock shall inherit the kingdom; it was prepared for them from the foundation of the world, and in his own appointed time the God of heaven has set it up, and decreed that it shall stand for ever; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of her cords be broken.

"From age to age she has withstood
The utmost rage of earth and hell."

But still, unshaken as is the throne of God, and unshaken as is his oath and promise, she remains perfectly secure, for God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved, God will help her, and that right early. She has encountered the storms of persecution, and the floods and rains have assailed her ancient battlements with violence, but she fell not, because she is founded upon the Rock of Ages.

How very different are the counsels and works of men, when applied to matters of religion. Every scheme and device, however cunningly or wisely devised, and every human effort and application unauthorized by the precept of the King, shall certainly come to naught.

How many thousands of religious inventions, societies and institutions for evangelizing the world, arise with great pomp and promise, reach their climax and dwindle back to their original nothingness. Others again in turn are constantly springing up, but all embodying the certain seeds of their own inevitable decay.

All that kind of religion which is or can be produced by the will or works of men, must come to naught. The fruits of modern revivals, which have been effected by excitement and fanaticism, have been like crackling thorns in a momentary blaze, giving a glaring but transient light, only to make the gross darkness which succeeds, the more frightful and doleful. And every failure has proved the soundness of Gamaliel's counsel, as all time shall show the immutability of the decree of him who said, "Every plant that my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up."

From what is thus clearly demonstrated,

let hell despair, but all who trust in God shall rejoice, for they shall be as Mount Zion which cannot be moved; which abideth forever. What have the children of God to fear? The enemy may come in like a flood, but the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against the enemy. The heathen may rage, and men of earth imagine vain things, they may resolve to disband the saints, and cast their cords from them, but he that sitteth in the heavens shall hold them in derision, for it is written, "The enemies of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them." Nor do these fearful threatenings hang impending alone over the devoted heads of those enemies which are outside the organized boundaries of the church of Christ, for "If any man defile the temple of the Lord, him will God destroy." Then let the sinners in Zion tremble, and let fearfulness surprise the hypocrites. God will protect his little ones from all the rage of their adversaries, and avenge his own elect who cry unto him day and night. They who touch them, touch the apple of his eye, and it were better for them that a mill-stone were hanged about their necks, and that they were cast into the depths of the sea, than that they should offend any of our Lord's little ones.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 1, 1859.

CHURCH NOTICES.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Beginning with the first Sunday in December, the Sunday afternoon meetings of the Ebenezer Church, 226 W. 58th St., New York city, are appointed for two o'clock, instead of three o'clock, as heretofore. The morning service as usual at 10:30.

JOHN McCONNELL, Pastor.

573 W. 146TH ST., NEW YORK, N. Y., Nov. 5, 1901.

EXPRESSIONS OF SYMPATHY.

Extract from Minutes of Salisbury, Md., Association.

It is with sincere regret that we learn of the extreme illness of our aged and highly esteemed brother, Elder E. Rittenhouse, and would take this opportunity to bear testimony to his zeal in the cause of truth, and his faithful service of the churches. For more than forty years he has been a regular and welcome visitor to, and for several years served churches with great acceptibility in this association, and has baptized more than forty of those now living members of those churches. We extend to him and to his family, and the churches of his charge, our sincere condolence, and commend him and them to the care and grace of that God in whom he has trusted, and in whose service his long and useful life has been spent.

T. M. POULSON, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

PERSONAL.

DEAR BROTHER B. L. BEEBE:—Last Saturday, when returning from the Salisbury Association, I visited Elder E. Rittenhouse at his home, State Road, Del. I found him a very sick man. On September 28th, while attending an appointment at Snow Hill, Md., he was stricken with paralysis. His left side is seriously affected and there is little hope entertained of his ever being able to resume his labors. Age and feebleness militate much against his recovery. If he lives until December he will be eighty-two years old, more than half of his life having been spent in the work of the ministry. His ability and unfailing zeal in this work has perhaps no equal in these times, and the

Lord has wonderfully blessed his labors to the comfort and upbuilding of the churches he served. He has lived the profession he made, and the effect of his life, gift and work in the ministry has been felt by all with whom he came in contact.

At present he suffers little in body. With the exception of realizing the seriousness of his affliction his mind is as clear and active as ever. He is now at home and could not be better cared for. His daughters, both of them skillful nurses, give him undivided attention. The readers of the SIGNS and all who know our aged brother will be grieved to learn of his affliction.

Your brother in gospel bonds,

JOHN McCONNELL.

NEW YORK CITY, Oct. 29, 1901.

ORDINATION.

PURSUANT to a call by the First Church of Roxbury, N. Y., the following brethren met in council to consider the advisability of setting apart to the work of the gospel ministry, brother John B. Slauson, viz:

Elder F. W. Keene, of North Berwick, Maine; Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.; Elder D. M. Vail, Waverly, Pa.; Elder J. D. Hubbell, brethren N. J. Travis, Henry Bronson, Morris Falconer and Frank O'Connor, of Second Church of Roxbury; brethren Alonzo Jenkins, Emory Sanford, D. Jenkins and Jas. A. Huntley, of Andes church; brethren P. Elmendorf and A. Bogart, of Olive & Hurley church.

The counsel was organized by choosing Elder J. D. Hubbell, Moderator, and Wm. Ballard, Clerk.

Adjourned one hour for refreshments.

Met pursuant to adjournment.

After singing, the Moderator called on the candidate to relate his christian experience and call to the work of the ministry, which he did to the satisfaction of the council.

Adjourned until to-morrow morning at 10 o'clock.

Elder D. M. Vail preached from 1 Peter v. 7–11, and the meeting was closed.

THURSDAY, Sept. 26, 1901.

Council met pursuant to adjournment.

Opened by singing, and prayer by Elder F. W. Keene.

Ordination sermon preached by Elder H. C. Ker, from 2 Timothy ii. 20, 21.

Ordination prayer by Elder D. M. Vail.

Laying on of hands by the presbytery.

Charge given by Elder J. D. Hubbell.

Right hand of fellowship by Elder F. W. Keene.

Benediction by the candidate.

Elder F. W. Keene preached from Psalms xlvi. 4, 5; followed by some very appropriate remarks by Elder D. M. Vail and Elder J. D. Hubbell, after which the meeting was closed.

J. D. HUBBELL, Moderator.

WILLIAM BALLARD, Clerk.

MEMORIAL.

Whereas, It has pleased Almighty God in his inscrutable providence to remove from his labors on earth our venerable and highly esteemed brother, **Elder William L. Beebe**, of the Warwick Association, therefore be it

Resolved, That we as an association extend our heartfelt sympathy to our dear sister, his bereaved widow, and family, and also the churches that he so faithfully served for so long a time, and we ourselves also have sustained the loss of a wise counselor, and an humble and devoted minister of the gospel, it being that he had been a messenger and welcome visitor to this association for many years. Be it further

Resolved, That this as a memorial be printed in our Minutes, and a copy of the same be forwarded to our dear sister, his widow.

T. M. POULSON, Moderator.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

BOOK NOTICES.

I AM going to try to get up a Book of Experiences, and calls to the ministry, of quite a number of our preachers, all of this country, and I request all who read this to send me theirs, and I will send them a copy of the book for their trouble, when published. Address,

G. B. BIRD.

BURDETT, W. Va.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, Thursday noon, Oct. 17th, 1901, at the residence of the bride, H. E. Barrall, of Allentown, Pa., and Miss Elizabeth Sharp, of Bethlehem, Pa.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, Oct. 17th, 1901, Clarence W. Lions, of Montpelier, Ind., and Miss Katie J. Bostion, of Columbus, Ohio.

By the same, Nov. 5th, 1901, Dr. Walter Bowin Taylor and Miss Nellie Blanch Wolf, both of Reynoldsburg, Franklin Co., Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Susan Ann Dolson departed this life at the home of her daughter, Mary E. Hyatt, Middletown, N. Y., Sept. 22d, 1901. She was born April 22d, 1828, and had therefore completed 73 years and 5 months of life. Her maiden name was Ten Eyck, and in 1845 she was married to Jeremiah Dolson, who died August 21st, 1899. Fourteen children was the fruit of this union, twelve of whom are now living. Twenty-three grandchildren and one great-grandchild also survive her. On August 3d, 1884, she was baptized in the fellowship of the Warwick church, by the late Elder Wm. L. Beebe. To the end, her life and walk in the church was a blessing to her brethren. The things which accompany salvation were manifest in her, for she ministered to the saints in the fellowship of the patience and kingdom of Jesus Christ. Dissolution was not a door of entrance into heaven. The kingdom of heaven was hers these many years, for she was sensibly poor in spirit, a little one, and of such is the kingdom of heaven. In meekness and lowliness of heart she experimentally testified to being with Jesus and learning of him. God was glorified in her; he worked in her both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and her salvation was worked out in fear and trembling. In the riches of poverty in spirit, self-abasement, and lack of all confidence in the flesh, she worshiped God acceptably in the only prayer of faith, "Lord, help me."

She was ill about six weeks, and seemed to realize the end was near. The prospect of decease had no terrors; "The Lord's time is my time," was her repeated utterance. She suffered severely, but never murmured or complained, but would often say, in times of great agony of body, "The Lord is my refuge, praise his holy name." Near the end, while the weeping family surrounded the bed, expecting each breath to be the last, she looked at them and said, "Weep not, weep not for me." She frequently quoted Scriptures, showing she knew whom she believed, and was persuaded he was able to keep that which she had committed unto him. Hymns No. 20 and 1265 (Beebe's Collection), she also quoted as comforting and expressive of her feelings.

Elder H. C. Ker conducted the service in Middletown, preaching from the words, "Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and your children." He was given a word in season to comfort the Lord's people. At the service held in the Warwick meeting-house the following day, Sept. 25th, a very large company of relatives and friends were in attendance. Six sons of the deceased were her bearers, and laid all that was mortal of their mother in its final resting-place. She was a godly woman, an ornament to the profession she made, and therefore a loving and devoted mother, and faithful friend. We mourn her departure, though we know our loss is her gain.

JOHN McCONNELL.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., Oct. 6, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE, AND DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS WHO READ THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I began to take the dear old paper in 1867, took it many years, and wrote some few short letters and obituaries for its columns when my name was E. Adkins. After my marriage I did not take it for many years; after hearing many inquiries from honest people, "How shall we know who are God's chosen people, and where are they?" my mind began to run back, and I resolved to hunt them up again, and point them out to others. I sent a postal to know, and received a sample copy of the dear old SIGNS. I immediately sent five names and remittance for the paper, who are all well pleased as far as I know with their paper. I herein send three obituaries of near and dear relatives to me for publication. I often desire for my appointed time to come to leave this sad world of sorrow, but not now, the Lord has loved ones who are sad and weary. Wilt thou not cheer them with a kindly word? Sick ones who need me in their lonely sorrow, can I not tend them yet a little while?

A very precious aunt of mine, **Elizabeth Morrison,** wife of M. Morrison, died Oct. 28th, 1900, after four years suffering with ovarian tumor. She bore her sufferings with christian fortitude, and talked to the very last, and said Jesus was with her, and she sung while dying a few verses of, "O sing to me of heaven." It was my happy privilege to visit her three weeks before her death, I and a young niece of mine who has lately passed away. My dear old aunt was a very great favorite with me. Her age was sixty years. Very likely some friends or acquaintances will read this sketch, as she has traveled much in the western States, and had lived some years near Decatur, Ill., but died at her own home near Wayne, W. Va.

Love to her memory and peace to her ashes, prays her niece.

ALSO,

My aged grandmother, **Elizabeth Tooley,** died Dec. 4th, 1900, of paralysis, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Mary Parmenter, near the city of Decatur, Ill. She was born Jan. 7th, 1804, in Amhurst Co., Va. Her maiden name was Mitchel. She was the wife of Charles Tooley, long since deceased. They came to West Virginia when my mother was ten years old, and raised a large family, and she lived to see the fourth generation. Her youngest son was a soldier in the government service, and died in the hospital in Paducah Ky., in 1862. Her youngest daughter died in Ohio of lung fever, in 1864. She was a model christian of the Primitive order. In raising her family she clothed them by the labor of her own hands by spinning and weaving.

ALSO,

My dear young niece, **Maude Adkins,** died June 9th, 1901, of typhoid fever. Her age was 20 years and 2 months. She was born in Sumner Co., Kansas, but

her parents moved back here to their native State, West Virginia, when she was quite young. She grew up to womanhood to be loved by all who knew her. Her virtues and her usefulness in her father's family can never be estimated. The family consisted of four sisters and four brothers. Dearest Maude had a lovely and pleasant home here, but the good Lord had a better one prepared for her. When asked if she was willing to die, she said, "Yes, and I will be saved, too. I have a hope that nothing can take away from me." She was the eldest daughter of G. W. and M. Adkins.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$479 55
Eliza Newman, Ohio	3 00
Total to date	$482 55

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 69. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1901. NO. 23.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FOREKNOWLEDGE: PERMISSION.

BELOVED EDITORS AND BRETHREN:—A reverential and scriptural inquiry into the revealed attributes and purposes of the eternal God, who is at once infinitely holy and wise and almighty, is commendable, and should glorify him in our view. Unto this end, therefore, let me kindly ask a serious consideration of these solemn things, always remembering when we speak of God, that "reverend and holy is his name." That there exists a failure of a right understanding of the eternal and unchangeable perfections of the Almighty, is painfully evident from published Baptist writings, which should call for deep heart-searchings, humility and supplications before the Lord, that he will mercifully turn unto his erring people a pure language, heal their backslidings, give them the humble and contrite spirit of holy awe before him, and cause them to ever feel and adoringly say, "Hallowed be thy name." For then we should be spared the trial of seeing and hearing the shocking reproaches against the name of the Holy Lord God Almighty, because he is the Almighty Sovereign, the Controller of all things in the universe.

The foreknowledge of God is admitted by all kinds of Baptists, and many others who profess to believe in him. It is so evidently true of him who is infinitely perfect, that to deny it would be to charge ignorance and imperfection to the holy One, in whom are all the infinite treasures of wisdom and knowledge and power. Therefore as yet few among religious writers have the irreverence to do this. We know that the Bible abounds with inspired testimony to the everlasting foreknowledge of the unlimited God, who is omniscient and omnipresent, filling all eternity and time, "beholding the evil and the good," with whom all things and times and beings ever were and are present. The holy book reveals him thus. There is no lack, no ignorance, no weakness, no failure in God. In wisdom and knowledge, holiness and power, he is the unlimited and infinite One, who inhabiteth and filleth eternity. Not the least thing in unlimited space, from eternity to eternity, was ever hidden from his all-seeing eye, but all things are naked and open unto him with whom we have to do. And while known unto God are all things

from the beginning, so that his knowledge is limitless and eternal, so also are all his perfections, his attributes, his very essence and being, his counsel and "eternal purpose," his justice and truth, his wisdom and holiness, "his eternal power and Godhead." In all these God is as unlimited and perfect as in his boundless foreknowledge. To deny this is a denial of his infinite perfections and of the Bible. It is at once self-evident that any single perfection of the Almighty is no more infinitely perfect than every other perfection; therefore the wisdom and counsel, purpose and power, truth and holiness of our blessed God, are equally commensurate and extensive and limitless with his foreknowledge, so that there is not the least discrepance, confusion, conflict or lack of infinite unity in any of the changeless perfections of the Godhead. "He is in one mind, and none can turn him, and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." God is from everlasting to everlasting the same, and changes not. Any one who would dispute this, and all this, would say, "There is no God." But those who know God, and knowing him, revere and love him, will believe that he is thus perfect in all his attributes, and holy in all his way and work.

Then the foreknowledge of the Almighty is presided over by his perfect wisdom and counsel, and is harmonious with his infinite purpose, and all this according to his omnipotent power and unto his eternal glory.

Either the power and wisdom and purpose of the Lord thus stand, and are the support of his foreknowledge, and he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," as inspiration declares, or else the wisdom and power of the Lord are less than his knowledge, and too deficient to control all things. For, admitting that the everlasting God is absolutely perfect in wisdom, and almighty in power, and foreknew all things, "Declaring the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," then it is certain that his counsel and purpose and power are equal to his foreknowledge of all things, and that he purposed them no less than he foreknew them. For his wisdom and power certainly would have prevented anything and everything which was not according to his infinite purpose. The text which says that the wrath of man shall surely praise the Lord, and the remainder of wrath he shalt restrain, proves this truth, which is also self-evident.

It is true, then, that with the Almighty there is no such thing as *chance*, but all things are known to him, and subjected to his counsel and purpose, power and control. He whose word of creative power spoke all things into existence, said of all things foreknown, Let it be so. His infinite and eternal purpose bounded and ran through all his foreknowledge of all things, any and all of which he had the power to prevent, but in his perfect wisdom he saw through it all to the end, to the last thing, the last enemy, which is death, the wages of sin, and he sovereignly determined that in all things his power should be made known, in subduing all under the feet of his Son, and that his name should be declared throughout all the earth, and God himself should be glorified in the highest in his holiness and power for ever and ever.

"Foreknowledge is an act of the infinite intelligence of God, knowing from all eternity, without change, the certain futurity of all events of every class whatsoever that ever will come to pass."

"Foreordination is an act of the in-

finitely intelligent, foreknowing, righteous and benevolent will of God, from all eternity determining the certain futurition of all events of every class whatsoever that come to pass. Foreknowledge recognizes the certain futurition of events, while foreordination makes them certainly future."

"Permission. The act of permitting or allowing; license or liberty granted; authorization; consent."

These correct definitions are given in the accurate Standard Dictionary. They show the perfect concurrence between the foreknowledge and the foreordination of God, and that between these there is no collision, but harmony. And certainly there is consistency and harmony, wisdom and counsel in all the purpose and acts of the perfect and holy Almighty, in whom there is no darkness at all.

But the word *permission* is believed to better qualify and guard the foreordination or predestination, decree or determination (which mean the same) of God, relating to his "eternal purpose" in all things foreknown to him. It is admitted that the all-wise and all-powerful Jehovah was pleased to permit all things to be just as he foreknew them, for he had the power to prevent them, but it was according to his counsel and purpose to let them take place. It is thought that the idea of God's permissive decrees, or that he purposed in himself not to hinder or prevent anything from taking place which he foreknew, frees his predestination from censure, reproach and blame among men; that this view does not make his predestination of all things the responsible cause of all things, yet it admits that all things whatsoever come to pass are so certainly embraced in his permissive decree that with God there is no *chance* event.

Giving every advantage to this word that it is entitled to, yet to say that God foreordained to *permit* all things to come to pass, according to his eternal foreknowledge of them, equally establishes the certainty of all things, just as he foreknew them and consented to allow them to be. And since it is admitted that the permission of God suffers all things to take place, it must likewise be admitted that he forever purposed and determined to permit them to come to pass, for he is in one mind, and with him is not the shadow of turning. But to say that God consents to and permits all things to come to pass, yet to deny that he eternally predestinated or determined to permit them, is to impute change to the immutable One, which is not true of him. But if to escape this it should be held that the counsel, purpose and decree of the Lord do not extend to, include and control all things which are foreknown to him, then his sovereignty is impeached, his wisdom to compass and order all things, and his power to subdue and control them, are denied, and the consequence is involved that the counsel, purpose and power of the Lord God omnipotent are not equal to his knowledge, which is terribly dishonoring and untrue. Surely none who truly believe that God is, will also hold that there is either antagonism or inequality between the foreknowledge and foreordination of God, or between any of all his eternal perfections, nor affirm that his permission of all things is without his "eternal purpose" that thus should all things come to pass even as he foreknew them. For unless the infinitely wise and omnipotent Lord God of the holy prophets had eternally purposed and determined to let all things come to pass, according to his immutable counsel, just as embraced in his infallible foreknowl-

edge of them, they could not possibly exist and take place, because his wisdom and power would have ordered otherwise and prevented them. Therefore his word says, "Who saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made: and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to naught; he maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance. The Lord looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth."—Psalms xxxiii. This inspired and precious testimony proves all that has here been said of the infinite and holy perfections of the Most High, whose wisdom directs and whose power controls all worlds and all things.

Now, though the permissive predestination of all things be insisted upon, yet the predestination of all things in any sense whatever, makes all things absolutely certain, because everything that God has at all foreordained or determined is thereby made infallibly sure. If this be denied, then the Lord himself is virtually charged with fallibility and weakness, and that many things which come to pass are entirely beyond the counsel and purpose and power of the Almighty. But the holy Bible fully reveals the omnipotence, sovereignty and dominion of the Lord over all beings and things in all places. Therefore, with him there is no such thing as accident and chance, nor the least frustration, disappointment, turning about, and never an effort. "I blessed the Most High; and I praised and honored him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"

The fact that God has determined anything whatever that comes to pass, does not necessarily make him the actor or doer of all things before determined by him, neither is he the responsible author of any wicked act or sinful thing. Isaiah saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory. His people should reverently ever say the same, and will when they see him sitting upon his high throne, nor presume in their littleness and weakness to cavil at his infinite sovereignty, but adore the majesty of his power. Jesus said, "And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!" "And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me." "Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." To Peter he said again, "The cup which my Father hath

given me, shall I not drink it?" Of the death of Christ on the cross, Peter said that we were redeemed "with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you," &c. The apostles "lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is. * * * The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." All these words of the betrayed Lamb of God and his inspired apostles, most positively prove that the acts of those wicked men, in the betrayal and death of the holy Son of God, were by him before determined, according as God foreordained before the foundation of the world. Yet this was the most astounding and wicked crime of all time, and God upon his holy throne has so judged it, and visited his righteous and awful judgments upon its guilty perpetrators. How base and horrible would be the imputation of all this great wickedness and chiefest of all crimes to the holy throne of heaven and earth! May God in his rich mercy forgive such an abhorrent thought against his infinite holiness and majesty. While he before determined that Judas should betray his holy and darling Son and Lamb, whom he verily foreordained to die on the Roman cross, for the redemption of his foreordained people, and his hand and his counsel before determined whatsoever was done by the earthly kings and rulers, the high priest, Herod, Pilate, the Gentiles, and the Jews, yet they were impelled only by their own wicked hearts and Satan in doing all this monstrous crime; for God did not incite nor prompt their wickedness, neither did his ordained and holy purpose influence or cause them to betray and crucify the Lamb of God. And this is equally true in every other species of sin and all wicked works, for they neither emanate from the holy Lord God Almighty, nor are they influenced at all by his "eternal purpose" in ordaining them. The unlimited foreknowledge of God, beyond which not the least thing can ever possibly take place, just as unfailingly establishes the absolute certainty of all things, in all places of his universal dominion, as does his before determined purpose concerning all things, known as predestination or foreordination. Therefore all the objections and replies which are made against the foreordination of God, as embracing and controlling all things, may also be made against the foreknowledge of God, which equally bounds and controls all things. If this is denied, then the foreknowledge of God as including all things is also denied; for if anything may either be or not be, it is not foreknown, but a mere chance event. The admission of this denies the perfection of God's knowledge, and at once imputes ignorance to him.

Of the universal and unlimited knowledge of God, the Scriptures plainly testify, as in the following texts: "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world." "God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." "Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men." "Now we are sure that thou knowest all things." "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I

love thee." "He that is perfect in knowledge is with thee." "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." How all this truth should both humble and comfort us. "Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee: but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee." From eternity to eternity the Most High was thus infinite in knowledge, as in goodness and wisdom and power. O fear him, ye saints.

We have seen that all the perfections of God are coextensive with his eternal knowledge, and run parallel with it, and cannot conflict with it. And so Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said of Christ, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." They did this wickedly, and were the betrayers and murderers of the Lord of life and glory, and they alone were the guilty and responsible authors and doers of this crime of crimes. But we are told by the Holy Spirit that in all this most momentous event of the world, the determined counsel of the holy One united with his foreknowledge in delivering his lamb-like Son into their wicked hands. And the words of wisdom and truth place the determinate counsel of God before his foreknowledge. This is their true order, therefore, and it reveals the wisdom of the Lord in making his foreknowledge harmonious with and subservient to his foreordination, or his "determinate counsel," according to which all things are determined, and cannot be overthrown. For if they could be, then not his foreknowledge only, but his dominion, sovereignty, counsel, power and throne as well might be overthrown. But almighty majesty and eternal power belong to the infinitely wise and holy and blessed God, whose arm rules for him, and "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." His foreknowledge includes all things, and according to the counsel of his own will he worketh all things; and so his counsel and unchangeable will or "eternal purpose" are as extensive and limitless as his eternal knowledge, and all are unfailingly established and upheld by "his eternal power and Godhead." The clause, "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," affirms that God directs, determines and controls all things according to his counsel and the purpose of his sovereign will. And the word "worketh," makes it evident that the Almighty actively and sovereignly governs and controls all things. O thou infinite and blessed majesty! who that knoweth thy power and glory would not stand in awe of thee, and devoutly adore and worship thee? "Lord, thou has been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."

O, brethren, that we might all meekly and reverently ascribe all power and holiness unto the Most High. God is in heaven; we are upon the earth. We should never reply against God, nor charge unrighteousness to him. His holiness is as supreme as his omnipotence "His kingdom ruleth over all." "The

Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Let us trust in his power, and rejoice in his goodness. He is the God of salvation, the Savior of all who love him. O, who that knows anything of his power and holiness and glory, would not supremely love and praise him? "Bless the Lord, O my soul." "The Lord shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the Lord."

"Grace be with you all. Amen."

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., July 13, 1901.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., Nov. 6, 1901.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—VERY DEAR BROTHER:—I have thought very much of you all for the past year, and have desired very much to see you all and hear you speak of the goodness of the Lord, and talk of his power, but my time is so taken up in pastoral duties, and in visiting the destitute, that I have had no time for anything else.

I have been reading the Circular Letters of the different associations up there, and I want to say that I have never read more comforting letters. I hope the Lord may so bless our brethren and the associations that they may continue to send out those letters of his divine truth, that the way of Zion may so appear that the children of God may not be deceived and led in the many false ways that are now in the world.

The nearer to our home an enemy gets, the more he is to be dreaded, and the nearer one comes to telling the truth, and misses it, the more dangerous he is, and the more to be shunned.

A great many people have much to say against the Roman Catholics, but those in our own midst who do not preach the whole truth are much more to be dreaded than all the daughters of Babylon.

To rightly divide the word of truth, and to lift up the name of our precious Jesus, should be the object of every minister of God. We need not expect that we are going to receive anything at the hands of those who oppose the truth but hard sayings, loud accusations, and to have our names cast out as evil, for so did our Lord suffer. To be stigmatized as having to preach to empty benches is no new thing to Old School Baptists. They are a little flock of little children, out of whose mouths the Lord has been pleased to perfect praise. We all are aware of the fact that all the unclean beast increase faster than the clean, and that there are many more of them in the world. The great multitude is no sign of the church of the living God. He has said, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Again, we know that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, but to him to whom the Lord sheweth mercy. There is also a curse on those who go down to Egypt for help, and an evidence that one sees no balm in Gilead, when he goes to other physicians for healing. It is strange that one loves the Lord and then is not glad to have him proclaimed the eternal Sovereign, and that he has been healed of him of the plague of leprosy, and then cannot believe that he can and will heal him of all other diseases.

Jesus the Lord was and is the Head of the church, and all power was given into his hands, yet he said, "I can of mine own self do nothing." Can we do more than he could? There is not the least intimation in all the Scriptures that he had so much as a desire to do any other than the will of the Father, and this he delighted to do. It was a pleasant thing for him to die for his bride. This proves

the strength of his love for her. If one should die for his friend it would show very great love, but our Shepherd gave his life for us when we were enemies. God hath commended his love toward us in that while we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. Here is love that passeth knowledge. Such love hath no man for his fellow.

The Lord's prophet has said, "He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." Think of this: Can he be satisfied if one of those for whom he died be lost, or in any other way one of them should be cast down? Such a thing would be even beneath humanity. He came to seek and to save that which was lost. To do this he came into the very condition of the lost, and went in every place where they were lost, and found them and gave them salvation. This is why we see him in the flesh, a human being, because his children were there; he is a sin-bearer, because they are sinners; he suffers to deliver them from suffering; he is made sin, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him; he is cursed, (for cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree) that all who are represented in him should have eternal life through him; he went down into death because all his brethren were there. But what shall we now say? O glorious Lord, thou hast been in all our straits, and wast straitened for us! Thou hast found us in all the distresses of our lives, and borne all our griefs. Thanks to thy holy name for ever. Is this enough? No, our Life, our Head, cannot lay in the grave, for God had said, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy One to see corruption." On the morning of the third day the heavens are bowed, the angel of God comes down and the stone is rolled away, and he sits upon it. This is an emblem of victory. The holy Lord is no more found among the dead, but is the God of the living; he is risen from the dead. Christians, here is your life. In the midst of life he died, and though dead he lived again. In this life you live. This is eternal life, and he gives it to you. That he gives it to you is an unmistakable evidence that it is your life, for the Lord does not give to one that which belongs to another. This life was given you in him before the world began, and it is your life. Jesus lived, suffered, died, was buried and arose again, that this life should be given to those whose it was, for the Father had given it to them in glory, and the only conditions that were in the whole way of salvation was that our Jesus should die, and thus make the way sure to all the seed. This he did, and that the whole thing shall be carried out, as his will is, he has ascended up to the Father, where at his right hand he ever maketh intercession for them according to the will of God. There is not one condition left for us to comply with, the whole work is finished, and salvation sure.

Go on, brethren, in the good work of the Lord, declare his doings among the people, and the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen us unto every good work, is the prayer of the least in our Father's house.

In a blessed hope of rest in Jesus, I am your brother in the Lord,

L. H. HARDY.

LIBERTY, Ind., Nov. 7, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—While on my trip east I was frequently asked to give an account of it through the SIGNS when I returned. I was also asked by many to write them personally. It was not my

intention to write for publication concerning my tour, for several reasons, principal among them is, such letters are only of local interest except in rare instances, and then it always seems too much like writing about myself. But on my return home I find so much to be doing that I do not find time to write many letters, so by your permission I will make some brief mention of the meetings in kind remembrance to those with whom I met, and to whom I was drawn in sweet fellowship and love.

I left my home Sept. 24th, spent one day at the Pan American Exposition and Niagara Falls, and thence to Lexington, N. Y., where I was expected to attend a yearly meeting. I reached the place Saturday p. m., Sept. 28th, and was warmly received, and soon made to feel that I was at home with my brethren and sisters in Christ. I tried to preach to the people there three times, in much physical weakness, owing to a severe cold which I contracted on the road, and which almost prostrated me for a week.

I rested on Monday, and on Tuesday in company with brother Fletcher Mackey and wife, and Elder Sanford and wife, drove to the Lexington Association, a distance of twenty-five miles, which was a delightful drive indeed. It seemed to me that those who have always lived among the mountains do not appreciate their grandeur. Surely the mountains in that region do speak the praise of God by showing his handiwork.

I met at the association, brother Evert R. Kenney, a zealous Baptist of Glen Falls, through whose correspondence I was led to visit eastern New York. The preachers that I met at this association were Elders John Clark, R. M. Sanford, James Miller, and brother Eber Hix, a licentiate. The meeting was a very pleasant one, and all seemed to be glad that they were there. Abundant provision was made for the comfort and entertainment of all present, and they took special care for my comfort and welfare. Dr. Leonard, of Broome Centre, N. Y., took me to his home from the association, a distance of about fifty miles. He gathered in his neighbors, and we had a good little meeting at his house on Friday night.

First Saturday and Sunday in October I attended the regular monthly meeting of the Middleburg Church, where I met Elder Clark again, who took me in his buggy and conveyed me to Schoharie and Jefferson churches, and thence to his home at Halcottsville, where I filled my last appointment in eastern New York.

I would be glad to mention each one who so kindly ministered to my wants, but it would take too much space. I shall ever remember their manifestations of love and fellowship for me. I must mention brother and sister Mackey, of Lexington, N. Y., who kindly cared for me and spared no pains to make me comfortable while sick with cold at their house.

On Thursday morning, Oct. 10th, I boarded a train for Kingston Point, thence by day boat to New York city, and spent the night and next day forenoon with Elder John McConnell, and while with him met and dined with Elders Lively and Ker.

Friday afternoon I went to Hopewell, N. J., and was met at depot by Elder Chick, at whose house I was made comfortable by himself and family until Monday morning. We only had one meeting at Hopewell, on account of a heavy rain.

I went from Hopewell to Southampton, Pa., where I enjoyed a visit with Elder S. H. Durand, whose name is so familiar to

the readers of the SIGNS. It was still raining, and but few came out to meeting.

Tuesday, Oct. 15th, I boarded an early train for Atlantic City, intent on gratifying a desire to look on the ocean; a desire that has been with me from early childhood. After spending several hours on the beach admiring the wonderful works of God in the "great deep," I returned to fill an appointment at Dr. B. F. Coulter's, in Philadelphia, a meeting that I enjoyed as much as or more than any other meeting on my trip.

Wednesday, Oct. 16th, I went to Elder D. M. Vail's, and had meeting at his home church in the afternoon. I was made to feel sad for Elder Vail, and his churches, too. He is wearing himself out serving nine churches, besides many personal calls, and the churches are suffering for want of more service.

Friday, Oct. 18th, I spoke three times at Cammal, Pa. This is one of Elder Vail's churches, located in a lumbering and manufacturing village in a mountain gorge. I was much interested in that church, and regret that Elder Vail or some one else cannot preach there on Sundays, as the members and their families are laborers, and cannot easily get off for week day meetings.

Sunday, Oct. 20th, I filled my last appointment, at Ingleside, N. Y., another of Elder Vail's charge, where we had a pleasant meeting.

I returned home by way of Buffalo, Detroit and Hamilton, and found all well, and that I had gained ten pounds in weight, and had lost nothing financially.

I was gone from home four weeks, traveled 2,350 miles, and tried to preach twenty-four discourses. I enjoyed good liberty in speaking, except in a very few instances. My most embarrassing efforts were at Schoharie church, and at the home of Elder Durand.

I have written as briefly as I could well do, and yet I have written more than I purposed doing.

Brother Beebe, do not allow this to crowd out better matter. Abridge it, or cast it aside, if in your judgment you think proper to do so.

Your brother in hope,

W. N. THARP.

ROLAND PARK, BALTIMORE, Md., Aug. 20, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I inclose two letters from brother Walker, which myself and some others would like to see in the SIGNS, should you see fit to insert them. I have brother Walker's consent to send them to you.

Your brother in much sorrow,

J. T. ROWE.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Aug. 13, 1901.

ELDER J. T. ROWE—MY DEAR PASTOR:—This is not the letter that I spoke of writing to you, for I do not feel like writing to-night. I want to thank you for writing that letter to the *Landmark* for August 1st. What encouragement for poor, helpless sinners. If it were not for such words spoken to us from time to time by God's messengers, I feel as though my case would be a hopeless one, for evidences are against me; my own conscience accuses me, and I know that my daily walk and conversation are not what they should be. If I look back over my past life, as you mention in your letter, I can see that my only hope now is the same that I have ever had, in the power of Jesus to save the vilest of sinners, and we do know that he is able to save such; this we have felt, and can speak from experience, yet at times we doubt if we have ever felt and tasted and handled the word of life. Yes, if I look

back, and that seems the way for me to look, it is there I can see the Lord's hand in this and that affliction, blessing and cross. We have much to be thankful for in the church, in our home, in our families, in our business, and in ourselves, for truly goodness and mercy have followed us all our days.

Our church, how much that means. O, that the Lord would bless us more in our meetings. How I long to see the prosperity of Zion in this place; how often I wish that I knew what is best to be done; how often I think perhaps I am a stumbling-block in the way. I often think that if I was more consistent, more prayerful, more humble, more loving, more childlike, it would be better for the church. I am often self-condemned; but what Arminianism in me to to think that I can do or undo such matters, yet the thought clings to me that I am not doing what I ought for the church. What I have longed for, prayed for, and yet hope to see, is a shaking among the dry bones. How I would love to see many added to our little band; how I would love to see the present members more alive, and more unity shown, and more of that love which springs up from the heart when filled with his love. I feel as though I would make any sacrifice in my power if only this end could be attained, yet there is a feeling within me that tells me that, "Except the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain that build it."

I was glad that brother Frazier spoke as he did at our last meeting, it did me good to hear him. How I would love to have such meetings as he spoke of, when but little business talk is required, and we can sit and listen to the brethren tell each other of the Lord's dealings with them. I am looking forward to the next meeting when this will begin. Was it not nice to hear brother Frazier talk as he did the last two meetings? That is the kind of talk that does me good, and seems to last. I think if we have this others will want to be present more than they are now.

Give my love to the Alexandria brethren, they are very dear to me, and I should like to be with you. My wife joins me in love to sister Rowe; I hope that you and yours are all well.

Yours in hope,

JOHN T. WALKER.

Copy of a letter sent to the Grove Road Primitive Baptist Church, Eastbourne, England.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—When we left England in June, 1885, we promised our parents to pay them a visit in five years, but how little do we know the bounds of our habitation, and what is the Lord's will concerning us. Each year we have looked forward to the next, thinking that we would be able to visit the scenes of our younger years, and meet again with those whom we cannot help but love, and of whom we often speak and hold so dear, for the church at Grove Road is very dear to us.

We have been requested many times to bring our letters here, but have put it off from year to year until we now feel that it is the Lord's will that the request now be made. We have been attending the Primitive, or Old School Baptist Church, here in Washington, for about fifteen years, and have the gospel preached to us that we first heard in England, from Mr. Bradford. How sweet it is to experience in our hearts the oneness that exists in the one church of God, wherever our lot may be cast. We have been indeed blessed here in America in hearing the doctrine of free grace. How sweet it

sounds, and how precious to poor, helpless ones as we feel to be. We had thought years ago that by this time we should have gotten rid of this proneness to wander, but alas, the two armies are still present, but still we are constrained to say, Goodness and mercy doth follow us all our days.

Not many days pass but what we speak of you, and many tears we shed in grateful remembrance of the loving-kindness of the Lord to our poor souls while we were members of your congregation and church. Although absent in body, we often meet with you in spirit. How plainly can we see you in our mind's eye, and wish we could meet with you once more, and we yet hope to do so in the near future. In asking for our letters we feel that we are severing ourselves from those very dear to us, from those who took our hands in theirs when we were in deep distress on account of our sins. We shall never forget the love shown to us by the brethren when we were received into the church. It seemed too good for such as we felt to be. It has been our desire for many years to once more meet with you before asking for our letters of dismissal, but the time seems to have arrived when our membership should be here, where we have lived so long, and where the brethren have become dear to us, and the church like home. The Lord has spared us to see our children grown up; two have married, so that we feel that this is our abiding place so far as we know. Although feeling my utter unworthiness, and that I am less than the least of all saints, if one at all, (and I often question this) yet I can say that I find one day in his courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.

The church here has seen fit to make me their trustee and treasurer, and we have been allowed to sit with them at the ordinance of the Lord's supper, to attend their church meetings, and take part in their deliberations, and to vote on church matters. This we have felt to be a great privilege, and a source of comfort and pleasure, for, "How good to meet among them now, and at his gracious feet to bow, though vilest of them all." We would like to hear from you as soon as you can bring this before the church, for we would like to present our letters at the next church meeting.

With united love to all the brethren, your sister and brother in hope.

Signed,

ELIZA & JOHN T. WALKER.

1820 13TH ST., N. W., WASHINGTON, D. C., Oct. 30, 1900.

[WE desire to express our personal appreciation of the above letters. Brother Rowe, as will be noticed, has signed himself "in much sorrow." In the letter which he sent to us privately, inclosing the two above letters, he said that he had just received word of the death of his youngest brother. We are sure that all who know him will feel a deep sympathy for him, and especially so since not more than two years since he also lost another brother, Elder John Rowe, who was well and widely known as an able minister of the new testament. We have known brother and sister Walker for many years, and are glad that they have felt at last to remove their membership to the church in Washington, D. C., where they live. May God bless them and the church together.—Ed.]

KANSAS, Ill., Oct. 14, 1901.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—The year is drawing near its close, so I realize I am nearing my end. I have of late written very little for publication. There has been

two reasons for my silence: one is, I realize of late more fully than ever before my inability to write to the profit of the Lord's people. The other is, my age, and the unsteadiness of my nerves. It is now almost fifty-nine years since I was received into the Baptist church and fellowship, and when I take a retrospective view of my walk as a professed follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, I am made to shudder at the stumbling way that I have traveled. O, how often, often, have I stumbled, and my feet have gone astray, and I been made to cry with David, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." It has been specially so of late.

When I read of some of the new "isms" that have been brought in among some of the churches, I feel much like Elijah did when he hid himself away in the cave and said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I, only am left, and they seek my life to take it away." While Elijah doubtless thought he was left alone, yet the Lord let him know differently. So I know today that the Lord has a people that has not "bowed unto Baal," and that he will preserve them, and save them from their traducers.

I take great comfort in reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and seeing that in its columns are the same blessed truths that were held by our dear old Elder Gilbert Beebe, and its correspondents fifty years ago. The truth will stand when all errors and new theories have fallen.

I receive many very comforting letters from friends in many of the States, and while as I have said, I am often much cast down, the letters cheer me up. One very recently from a dear young brother in the western part of this State, also one a short time since from Elder J. K. Holcomb, of Cherokee, Texas. This last named brother I have never met, but have had sweet seasons of fellowship by our correspondence. If it were not for the evidences that I get from others that they sometimes get as low down in the "slough of despair" as I do, it would seem that I would give up indeed; yet I do hope that I have a dearer Friend than any or all earthly friends, that has been tempted in all points like unto his brethren, and that he will still be with me and save me in time, and to eternity.

This day is my seventy-eighth anniversary. Farewell.

JAMES M. TRUE.

PALESTINE, Texas, June 9, 1901.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—So many brethren tell of their darkness, deadness and dullness, that for me I think to write of this would not be even interesting to you. Yet, dear brethren, if with you the darkness is very great, then you feel it, and we trust that our darkness is of a kind which may be felt. This darkness and dullness and deadness is and has been common to the Lord's people, and these things are evidences of life, and of a life which the dead in sin know nothing of.

But I am not writing what I thought to write when I took up my pen, so I will begin again. I have been in this County, Anderson, eighteen years. In October, 1883, I was ordained to preach the gospel. Thurston Church then called me to serve them. When I united with that church there were but six members. All these have died since then except one, so I have been trying to preach to them about seventeen years. At this writing

there are but nine of us. I have baptized in this time twelve, of whom seven remain. Several have been excluded for railing against the doctrine of the universal sovereignty of God, yet I try to preach it, and at Babylon I hope I spare no arrows, and I feel that I should bend the bow and shoot the more, as I see the evil day approaching. I feel that I am responsible to God alone; to my Master I stand or fall. There is but one salvation, and that of God.

Now let me speak more particularly of myself. Sometimes I find that I am ready to do as did Peter, and sometimes I feel that if I knew that I would only get a gentle rebuke from my Master, as did Peter, I, as did Peter, would give way. Brethren, I hope that I know the truth, and it hurts and frets me to see others abusing it. Jesus is the truth, and no lie is of the truth, but those who do lie, would make Jesus of none effect. I have been for a long time in the condition of a brother who said that he feared and trembled, but could not say it was on account of his sins. I cannot tell why I fear, and with this brother I often think if the brethren could see me as I see myself, they could not fellowship me. I would be as a light in the church, but fear that I am more in the way, a sort of blunder between them and the light. Like this brother I am cold, and lifeless, and indifferent to the cause, and not at all as I once thought it would be. It seems that I was very ignorant, for I thought that the life of a believer was calm and serene; I thought it did not matter which way the wind might blow, nor how much the lightning might flash, nor the thunder roar, the believer would always be cheerful; I thought that a christian would never murmur, but if this be indeed so, then I am not one. I have been with the brethren twenty-six years, and it seems to me that the older I grow, the meaner I become. It seems to me that I had more control over myself twenty years ago, than I have now.

In the spring of 1872, I suddenly saw and felt myself to be a great sinner before God, and then I was much troubled on account of my sins, yet as far back as I can remember I knew that I was a sinner, but to know that I was a sinner in this way, did not trouble me. So far back as I can remember, I had a hope, but it was a natural and legal hope, but in 1872, I think I realized something of the dealings of God with me, and at the moment that the Lord began his dealing with me, that moment that legal hope began to give way. Then I was greatly troubled, and my sins were what troubled me; I went mourning and groaning for months under a weight and burden which it seemed would sink me down. All this time I was trying to pray, asking the Lord to have mercy upon me. I wanted relief, and would have welcomed it from any quarter, but no relief could I get. But this was no wonder, for until this I had a little strength, the remainder of my legal hope. I had not yet realized that the pains of hell had hold upon me. This was all me, not something within me that felt this, but me. I felt that I would exchange places with a brute, for it seemed to me that if God had ever known me, now he had forgotten me. My case was an outside one. I felt all this while that I must sink down under this great weight of my sins, and I must and did go down under this weight, but this was not until my strength was exhausted. Then all my legal hope perished. So down I went, without hope and without God in the world, but the next I knew, the burden was gone, and from that day to this the

burden of my sins has been gone. I think that I have realized what was said by the angel to Mary, "He shall save his people from their sins."

Brethren, I leave this with you. Do with it as you think best.

Your brother in hope,

U. J. BELL.

CLANTON, Ala., April 14, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I have often thought that I would write to the SIGNS, as I so much enjoy the writings of others, but I feel so poor and unworthy that it seems to me that to write would but put a damper upon all good people, and so I have not written. I would like to write some of my troubles and travels in the past, but they seem so bad that I fear if you read them you will lose fellowship for me, and quit sending me the SIGNS, that is, if you ever had any fellowship for me. The article from brother Rowe, published in the SIGNS for April 1st, is the best I ever saw upon brotherly love. It brought up to me so plainly a portion of my experience. It seems to me that the SIGNS gets better and better. They teach the good old doctrine of predestination and election which Christ taught. He taught his disciples so to preach, and to preach no other doctrine. If any one should preach another gospel let him be accursed. And so many are accursed in these days. The devil has called so many preachers, and sent them out, and they go so willingly. He calls any but the chosen or elect, for he knows that they will go readily at his bidding, and preach whatever he bids them. As the blessed Lord knows how to teach his servants how to preach to his children, so Satan knows how to teach his preachers to preach to his children. He knows that they cannot understand election and predestination, because he is not the author of these truths. I have a hope that I am not of his children, although I bear much evil fruit, yet this is not willingly, but through weakness.

To-day I am sixty-nine years of age, and if I am any better now than when I first began the race, I am not able to see it. I was raised a Methodist, and sometimes am afraid I am one in heart yet, though I hope that God for Christ's sake has forgiven my sins, and made me a Primitive Baptist. My parents were Methodists until God's time came, when he made a Primitive Baptist minister of my father, and he turned my mother to himself. When I was about thirteen years of age I saw myself a great sinner, and could not rest day or night. I greatly feared the devil and hell, and would dream of them night after night. I went on so, and would tell my mother that I would die at such and such days, until I was about eighteen years of age, then I went one night to stay with a neighbor, and while there I dreamed that I had come to a hole which went down into hell, and I was right over it, and was about to fall into it, and could not get away, and there was no one to take me away, and just as I began to fall in, a person appeared to me and took me away. It seemed that I loved him. Now, brethren, whether you can believe me or not, I never had any fear of hell after that time, but I do hope that I fear God; I have had this much change. Now let me tell you one of my great troubles: I united with the Missionary Baptists, and remained with them for awhile, and then left them and united with the Primitive Baptists, and was baptized by my father, before the war. When I got to the war, I found myself contending with others about the doctrine. God in his mercy brought me

home from the war, and I have been contending for the truth ever since, among all classes of people.

I have lain hundreds of nights and preached to the people at different places, either asleep or awake. Many a night, when wearied down, and all my family asleep, I would not sleep at all till midnight and after. I have never told any human being of this before. I now attend all the church meetings, but my hope is very small.

I am so feeble, and write so badly, I will close. Please correct all that is amiss in this. I have not told the half.

Yours in hope,

JOSEPH CHANDLER.

SNOW HILL, Md., April 8, 1895.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—Shall I make the attempt to write a few lines of my travel through this wilderness, in the name of my good Master? I will try, it has long been impressed on my mind to do so. I read two good experiences this morning in the SIGNS, which caused me to take up my pen.

I was born among do and live people, taught to be good when I pleased, but attended Old School Baptist meetings about as far back as I can remember, and I think I have loved them just as long, but was made to mourn on account of my many sins. I traveled along between hope and fear. I was married in 1848, to a lady of Methodist parents; emigrated to the state of Indiana; fell in with the Missionary Baptists, and thought I was all right. My wife and I united with them, we thought we were all right, we felt rich indeed, but my dear wife soon died, and I found it necessary to return to Maryland, where I was raised. Now I began to feel poor. I brought my church letter with me, thinking to be received by the Old School Baptist church, but this failed, which gave me trouble. I was so drawn to them that I attended their meetings when I could. So time passed on, when a dear man came from the west, by the name of David Bartley, and preached at Indiantown, his text was, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." This seemed to be for poor me, I had been opposed to being baptized again, as some call it, but after hearing that sermon, this was all taken away, and all my good works seemed to fail me. I now went before the church at Indiantown, and was received, and baptized by Elder T. M. Poulson. I now saw very differently. I soon married again. My father died and left me some money, I knew not what to do with it, so I went off like the prodigal son, disobeyed my father's commands, and grew so cold towards the church to which I was a member, that they excluded me for not attending the meetings. I feel that I have been beaten with many stripes. Bless the name of Jesus, he has led me along. I feel to say, Bless his holy name, for his mercy endures forever.

I am passing through bitter trials now, my last wife was taken away from me March 7th. I hope my blessed Savior is leading me to the Rock that is higher than I. My sun is nearly set, if I live till the 18th day of this month, I will enter my seventieth year, my eyesight fails me very fast, my step grows feeble, my hand is unsteady, which makes me know my end on this earth is near. I try to say, Thy will be done. not mine. Bless all the good brethren and sisters that write for the SIGNS, for they comfort me. May they continue to do so, for they strengthen me so much.

A brother, I hope,

ALBERT M. BAILEY.

(See obituary notice on page 734.)

ROCA, Neb., Oct. 27, 1901.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I desire to write a few lines for our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to obtain information with regard to Old School Predestinarian Baptists in Oregon, near Oregon City, as I have two sons there, and expect to move there myself some time in February, and I do want to find some of those poor and afflicted people whose only hope is in a crucified and risen Savior, and who hold the doctrine of election, predestination of all things, and final preservation of the saints to glory. I say predestination of all things, not of some things, and the rest simply permissive, as some would have us believe, lest otherwise we make God the author of sin.

Dear brethren, sin is the transgression of the law, and God is, as I understand, above all law, and the author of it, so that he cannot be under it, and he also has declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Peter was not ashamed or afraid of the doctrine of predestination when he said, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazereth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him, in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." Thus we see, dear brethren, that Peter with all the other inspired apostles, was not ashamed nor afraid of the doctrine of predestination, nor did he fear that somebody would think that this would make God to be the author of sin. Again I would repeat that sin is the transgression of the law, and God is above all law, and the author of it.

But I will close, hoping to hear from the brethren in Oregon soon.

Yours in hope,

JOSEPH BRUCE.

[ONE thing to which brother Bruce has referred in the above short letter cannot be too clearly presented, or too much insisted upon, viz: Our God is not under any law, and can violate no law therefore, and still another thing referred to above, must be remembered, he is not the author of sin. When man with a blow, purposely given, destroys the life of a fellow-man, it is sin and a violation of the law of God, but when our God by a lightning's flash takes away the life of another man, fulfilling an everlasting purpose to do so, he is not a transgressor, either of his own law or of any other law, and has not sinned. When our God purposes, and then fulfills his purpose that his Son should be crucified, he has not sinned, though that Son was holy, harmless and undefiled. Yet those men who did it, sinned, because they in so doing, condemned an innocent man unjustly, knowing that it was so. So likewise when God purposed that the brethren of Joseph should sell him into Egypt to save much people alive, it was not a sin in God, but it was a sin in the brethren of Joseph, because they had violated the law of God in hating him, in being envious of him, and in abusing him in shameful ways. God was not the author of this sin, though he had predestinated it to be, and it could not have been otherwise. Man did sin in this, though it was predestinated to be, and though it could not have been otherwise. So far as the principle is involved, as well may we believe that our God has predestinated all the wicked deeds, words and thoughts of

all wicked men, as to believe that he predestinated any one wicked deed or thought of any one wicked man. If this would not prove that he is the author of sin in the one case, neither would it though all things were proved to have been predestinated of him. He might have predestinated that every man, woman and child upon earth should fall by the sword, dying a violent death, and yet this all would not have been wrong in him, while yet those who used the sword, would have all been sinners, because transgressors of the law of God. Man has no right to take away what God has given to his fellow-man, but the God who gave it has a perfect right to take it all away. Thus he, without any shadow of wrong, took away the life of all infants in the flood, and of thousands in the destruction of Jerusalem, and in multiplied millions of instances infants have died violent deaths, according to his appointment, and yet he has not done that which is wrong. But the evil men who have executed these decrees of almighty God, have sinned. They have not meant to carry out the purpose of God, any more than Joseph's brethren did in selling him, or those who crucified the Savior did in his betrayal and cruel death.

Nevertheless God's will was done in all these things. The old London Confession of Faith has the matter right, when it declares God has predestinated all things whatsoever comes to pass, and yet so as that he is not the author of sin. Paul has put the whole matter plainly in the ninth chapter of Romans.—ED.]

OPELIKA, Ala., Oct. 28, 1901.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I reached home safe after an absence of two months, and found all safe and well, for which I have reason to thank God and take courage. I am now more than ever confirmed from what I have seen and heard, that God is one, and there is none beside him; there is none else. Many dear brethren have expressed to me that they have found comfort from my writings, and have asked me to write more. I will now try through the grace and mercy of our covenant-keeping God, to write out a few lines to the saints.

"Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free." O, how great is the true freedom and liberty which God hath vouchsafed to the dear saints, and how miserable must be the stealthy robber who would rob the saints of this precious boon, by teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, and by putting their false construction upon the word of our God. These disturbers of the peace of the city of our God, which is full of quietness, who scatter their false doctrine, and raise the fumes of dead works as being acceptable to God as a living sacrifice, are those of whom Paul said, "I would that they were cut off, which troubles you." These would remove the child of God from the simplicity of the gospel of Christ by their false teaching, which is seductive, to gain to themselves honor, and to be called good. But sooner or later they will become a stench in the nostrils of the heaven-taught souls, and when every paper or preacher who contends for the perfect freedom of the children of God are called heretics or heretical sheets, how can fellowship exist? How can two walk together except they be agreed? "A little morsel with quietness, is better than a stall fed ox, and contention therewith." Solomon also said, "Better dwell in the corner of a housetop alone, than in a wide house with a brawling woman."

It remains for us to set forth in plain

words, and clear terms, according to the word, the immutable principles of the perfect salvation of our God, which is by grace, and grace alone, and no legalism in it whatever. The law is under the church; she is above it, having become dead to the law by the body of Christ. "Ye are not under the law, but under grace." Grace has the pre-eminence, as it was treasured up for us and existed long before the law was ever given, and still has the pre-eminence in the wondrous gospel system.

It seems some have a perverted taste, and call bitter sweet; they must be blinded, not to see and distinguish between law and grace. Still they sit in Moses' seat, and by the transfiguration of the Lord, they have not learned that Moses and Elias have receded, and Jesus only is now seen. He alone is our watchword, and the true shibboleth of our great salvation, which is by grace from the beginning to the finish, and by grace alone. These men who speak perverse things to draw away disciples from the truth, and after themselves, should be watched and avoided, and should be squarely met and sharply rebuked as disturbers of the peace of the city of God. I will write again if the Lord will.

Yours in hope,

WM. LIVELY.

RUSHING, Texas, 1901.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I have returned from Corpus Christi, and Beeville, on the coast, where I went, as I humbly hope, to preach to the people a crucified and risen Savior. With some exceptions my visit was pleasant, and as I trust, attended by the grace and mercy of him who spake as never man spoke; therefore my poor heart feels strengthened and encouraged by the sure mercies and loving-kindness of our eternal King. I would thank and praise his great name for his unchanging love and preserving grace, which keeps a poor sinner like me not only when in the light, but also when in the darkness and depths, where I seem to be so much of the time. Also I would thank him that notwithstanding the weakness and frailty of my nature, and the vileness and rebellion of a poor, depraved man, that I can still hope to claim him as my Intercessor, my Lord and my God. If saved at all, he hath called me and hath given me the sweet assurance that he is my salvation, and the shield and hiding-place of my weary soul. I feel to repose in the comfort and consolation of his undying grace. To feel his presence, and the riches and glory of his love, even for a moment, exceeds a thousand worlds like this, even though time were to roll on for millions of years. What then will it be to be in his presence eternally? The thought of being one day transported to that glorious world, fills me with emotions of joy inexpressible. At times how the believer longs for that day when Jesus shall say, Come up hither; come home, my child; come hither, all ye ransomed of the Lord, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world. He says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, I have redeemed thee out of the nations, thou art mine." O, then may this love inspire my heart, may I be still and know that he is God. How pleasant it is to proclaim him as the way, and the truth, and the life, the only potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords. It is pleasant to reflect upon this holy and just God, and upon the power of that truth which keeps the feet of his saints firmly, and which surrounds his church with a wall of fire, while he is the

glory in their midst. This is all by faith; this all points to the Lamb of God, our covert from the storm, and our eternal home.

As a poor pensioner of sovereign grace, I feel to rejoice in his great name, and to preach him as an all-sufficient and complete Savior; I have no confidence in the flesh. He says, If we have not the Spirit of Christ, we are none of his. It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. He says, "My grace is sufficient for you."

But I must soon cease writing, lest I weary the editors and readers of the SIGNS with my feeble production. Like brother Durand has recently expressed himself, I feel daily my ignorance and inability with regard to spiritual things, so much so that I often feel that I ought never to try to speak or write upon such things. He has exactly expressed my own heart troubles, which so much depress and afflict my soul. I have long desired to see our brethren in the east, and to visit the office of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and to look upon the place where Elder Gilbert Beebe devoted his life to the cause of truth, but God alone knows whether it will ever be. I pray heaven's blessings upon his successors, and for the continuation of the SIGNS, to contend for the doctrine of God our Savior. May the God of peace guide you.

From your brother,

ASA HOWARD.

LONGVIEW, Texas, Sept. 5, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I send you the names of five subscribers to the SIGNS. All of them are members of the Primitive Baptist Church, and are not fault-finders with its doctrine. I believe that if the people would read the SIGNS more, and would go by the admonitions which are contained in its columns, there would not be so much vain jangling among us. Men differ sometimes upon very small points, and call each other unsound because they thus differ, but the difference is alone in the carnal mind. I believe that the children of God differ as much in the Adam-mind as do any others. They are actuated by the carnal mind differently, and that is why there is contention. Offenses come by the flesh, but offenses must needs be, but there is a woe pronounced against him by whom they come. If every one should study to show himself approved unto God, nothing would be said or done to cause confusion, for it is written, God is not the author of confusion, but of peace. He said, "Blessed are the peace makers." Now when brethren advance notions which they know will cause divisions among the brethren, they are peace breakers, and the woe is upon them. It seems that the most gifted are the ones that oftenest cause confusion; members more ignorant, such as myself, get confused over something that is too deep for us to comprehend.

I do not believe that any one person upon earth can comprehend all the Bible; there are many things in the Scriptures that the children of God do not understand, but God reveals to them all that they need to know, and when any one endeavors to go further than what is revealed to him, he causes confusion. It is right to hold fast to sound doctrine. The followers of Jesus are to love one another, not in word, or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

I remain your brother,

W. H. SHADDOCK.

[WHAT wisdom is required to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to he saints, and yet avoid questions about

words merely, which can never be to profit. Let us strive for the things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another. Nothing but the truth will do this. The wisdom which cometh from above is peaceable, but before that it is pure. Let us proclaim the truth, but proclaim it in love; this alone will tend to peace.—ED.]

KALAMAZOO, Mich., July 31, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The time to renew for the dear old SIGNS has come, and we think that we cannot do without it. It comes bringing the precious gospel of the meek and lowly lamb Jesus, who was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his nouth. He suffered and died for our sins; he was delivered for our offenses and was raised again for our justification. This gospel is sweet, and we love to read it. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES carries that joyful sound and should find its way into every home. O, what joy there is in doing our Master's will. I think of that little stream, where such sweetness came in my poor heart, the day I was buried with Jesus, to live and to die with him. O, it makes us poor, it makes us humble, it makes us rejoice and it makes us happy to think that we do rejoice, and cry out, As the hart panteth after the water-brooks so panteth my soul after thee, O God. O, dear ones, what a wonder of wonders, that we ever were made to love that name above every name. We are given but a foretaste here of that world to come, and what shall the substance be in its full glory?

Dear brethren, may God enable you to still send forth the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to the praise and glory of our blessed Redeemer.

(MR. & MRS.) D. D. MCALPINE.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

EXPLANATION.

ON page 623, in number for October 15th, 1901, will be found a letter from the wife of Elder J. B. Buntyn, of Hillsboro, Texas, in which she says, "We have had a great deal of trouble in our association of late," by which we supposed she had reference to the divisions that are taking place in Texas, on account of difference in views on doctrinal points, and knowing Elder Buntyn was sound on the questions at issue, we naturally inferred that whatever trouble there was, arose from the opposition of those who disagreed with him, and under this impression we added the little editorial note found at the end of the article. But since then we have been informed that the trouble referred to, had no reference whatever to doctrinal matters, but was of an entirely local nature. Therefore we hasten to make this explanation, lest our brethren might think that we were meddlesome. It has ever been our aim to avoid publishing church difficulties arising from local issues, and now that we have made the above explanation, we hope our brethren will not ask us to give any further publicity to this matter. B.

PLEASE BE SURE

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likley to occur.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1901.

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EDITORS:

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GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,

Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH IS OF THE LAW: THE RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH IS OF FAITH.

(Romans x. 5, 6.)

No more important subject ever engaged the attention of men than the difference between faith and the law, and the righteousness which is of each. This will at once appear if we remember the large space which is occupied in the Scriptures by this subject. Not only did holy men of God think it important, but the Holy Spirit by which they were moved in writing shows that it is so, because by this Spirit they were moved to say so much concerning it. It is then important that we look into this subject, and come to a right understanding of it. There can be no greater contrast between any two things, than exists between the law and the gospel. There can be no greater contrast than is found between the righteousness of the one, and that of the other. Paul in the portion of Scripture referred to above sets this difference forth very plainly and strikingly. In doing so he quotes from Moses as recorded in Deut. xxx. 11–14. We will quote that to which Paul has here referred: "For this commandment which I command thee this day, is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it."

Now Paul refers to, and in substance quotes this language, and applies it to the righteousness of faith, in distinction from the righteousness of the law. From this inspired testimony by Paul we learn two things. First, that under the law there was a foreshadowing of the gospel, and especially that the above inspired words of Moses did point forward to the gospel message which was to be received by faith. Second, we learn that as addressed to the people of Israel nationally, by Moses, these words did not mean that the commandment was written in their heart as it is now in the heart of all who love God in truth, and as it was then with a very small remnant who among carnal Israel were spiritual. To national Israel God had given the law upon tables of stone, and upon parchment. They were not without law in that sense. In that sense the word was nigh them, as it was not to the Gentiles. They could not plead that they had not known the law, so far as any natural man can know it. The law was written, and was to be read in their hearing at all times. It was also especially declared to them at Sinai by the voice of Moses. But while all this was true, yet Paul clearly shows that the Jews under the law did not really have the work of the law in their hearts. To them the law said this, "Do and live." They did not have faith, and so the word of salvation did not profit them. In all

the legal service there was a setting forth truly of the redemption that was to be revealed in Jesus. The tables of stone on which were written the ten commandments, clearly set forth the need of a redemption through the spotless righteousness of another, and all the types and ceremonies clearly testified of him that should come, and of the need of his coming, but all this did not profit them, as they had not faith. They were under the law, and their eyes were holden, that they should not behold the true salvation, which should be by faith. This is true of all who are under the law to-day. To the legal Jew, all that was written was legal. He instead of seeing a free salvation pointed out in all the types and shadows of the old covenant, only came under deeper bondage, in that he believed that these things were the conditions of his salvation; things to be done by him in order to be saved. Their very table became a trap and a snare to them. This will always be true of all who look to the deeds of the law for salvation; such neither know the law nor themselves. We need not wonder that the carnal Jews were so blinded and deceived, for at this day the great multitude of religionists see in the gospel only a modified form of the law. To the great multitude Christ is nothing but an assistant to help them do the commandments, so that by so doing they may live. Still it is the belief of most men that the man who doeth these things shall live by them, as the law saith, and the saddest part of it all is, most men are satisfied, as were the Jews, that they have done the needful things, and so are entitled to live by them. This was Paul's own belief once.

Israel did not attain to the righteousness which it sought after, because they sought it not by faith, but by the law. If true faith had been given to them, then they would have not sought salvation by the law. Israel did not attain to even the outward form of righteousness, failure was written on all their life. All have failed and come short of the glory of God. In that same thirtieth chapter of Deuteronomy, Moses said that while he set before them obedience and disobedience, with the results of temporal blessing, or temporal cursing, yet he knew them that they would depart in the future, even as they had in the past. He knew that they would not even outwardly obey these commandments; and above all he knew that they would not obey in spirit. If they did at times observe the outward forms of service, (and indeed later they became great sticklers for the forms) yet in heart they would never obey. For the Lord gave as the substance of all his law, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, soul and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself." And no man, either Jew or Gentile, ever did obey this substance of the law in his unrenewed state. God's law is impossible of fulfillment by any man when left to himself. It was impossible for the Jew to fulfill it in spirit, and in fact they never did fulfill it, even in outward form, strive as hard as they might. But when they did thus strive, it was worse than useless, because thus they became proud of their own righteousness, and so were, if possible, further away from God than ever. It is so yet with all who go about to establish their own righteousness, professing great zeal for the service of God, and thinking in fact that it is really so with them, yet they do not submit themselves to his righteousness, but are going about to establish their own. Truly the man that doeth these things shall live by them, or in

them, but no man save the man Christ Jesus, has ever done them. How impossible then, as Paul teaches, is salvation by the deeds of the law. Was it possible that the Jews should keep the law given to them? Is it possible that any man should keep the law? If it were possible, then Christ is dead in vain. If it were possible, why has not some man, at some age of the world, kept it? No man has. Some have thought that they have, but this has only proved them perverse. But if salvation cannot be attained by the deeds of the law, why was the law given to man at all? "The law," says Paul, was added because of transgression, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." "By the law is the knowledge of sin." "We should have not known lust," said Paul, "except the law had said thou shalt not covet." Since the fall man has never been able to keep one of the least commandments in substance and spirit. Who has ever been able to love God with all his powers, and his neighbor as himself? The letter then killeth; it can do nothing else but kill. The law is good and holy, but it cannot save, because it is weak through the flesh. The law is holy, and just, and good, but I am carnal, sold under sin. God knew that men would not, and that they could not, keep the law ere he gave it to them. But the law shows what sin is, and its exceeding enormity, and it shows this by revealing the righteousness of God. It is the transcript of the divine will; it reveals the vast distance of man from God. In the light of the law what a total failure has man been all the time. God has proved and tried men in many times and ways, not that he might know them, but that they might know themselves. Man failed in the garden, Israel failed all along their history, though God gave them advantages that he gave no other people, and even under the gospel men who feel the wonder-working grace of God, confess that in them, that is, in their flesh, dwells no good thing, and day by day it is their constant testimony that they cannot do the good they would, and many a time they must acknowledge that the very desire to do good is faint and cold in their hearts. Man is a failure. Nothing but the grace of God can save.

How infinitely better is the righteousness of faith. What much more excellent things it declares. What does it declare? Let us see: it does not say that the man who does these things shall live by them, for then it would have no better message than the law; a modified law is no nearer the gospel than it was before; salvation upon conditions, be the conditions ever so much reduced, is not salvation by grace. The man in whom is no strength is as bad off if his salvation depends upon taking one step, as though he must take an hundred to be saved. Job said, "How have ye helped him that is without strength?" If then any man must live by doing something required of him in the law of God, be that one of the least things, he is as hopelessly lost as though he must keep the whole law. If to-day a believer has only the salvation he lives for, he never will have any salvation at all. The law has no place as a condition of the new covenant. Grace reigns all through alike. Grace all the work shall crown. If a believer under the gospel obeys, that very obedience puts him still deeper in debt to grace. The law demanded all, and gave nothing, but the gospel gives all, and requires only what it first gives. How blessed then is he who possesses the righteousness of faith.

The righteousness which is by faith speaketh on this wise, "Say not in thine

heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above,) or, who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)" Christ has already come down from heaven, and he has already come up again from the dead. This is a finished work; the righteousness of faith declares this, and it is all done in Christ. The righteousness of faith is a finished righteousness, nothing needs to be added to it. Faith does not say something yet remains to be done. Faith says that all is done; it is finished. The law tells us of things to be done, and done by ourselves. The gospel tells us of work accomplished, of salvation completed, and of rest. The righteousness of faith says the word is not in heaven, to be brought down with labor, nor beneath, to be brought up with labor, but it is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart; it is given to us, and brought to us already; it is ours without conditions, because Jesus has done all for us, and now lives for us, and lives in us, as our immortal life, for ever. How precious is this salvation which is ours without labor or price.

Let us mark that it is not only imputed righteousness of which the apostle is speaking, but of a righteousness imparted also. The word is, "In thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart." Christ not only justifies, but he sanctifies us. He not only gave his life for them, but he lives in all his. That he lives in us, is the full proof that he died for us. We preach Christ crucified, but we also preach Christ risen and living, and living for evermore. We preach not only Christ crucified and living again, but that Christ who said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." The righteousness of the law never could give life, even though a man had been found who could and did keep it, but here we have a life given, and living in him who possesses it, and manifesting itself in his mortal flesh. Moses said that the commandment which he gave to Israel was in their mouth, and in their heart, but much more really could Paul say of it, that it was in the mouth and heart of believers. Israel did not love the law of God revealed by Moses; it was to them a law of bondage. The true Israel have the law so written in their heart that they love it, and find great peace. Because they love this law, they must complain bitterly that they come so far short of doing what is right, and so far short of doing what they do with a pure motive, or with an eye single to the glory of God. To complain of unrighteousness is the best of all evidences that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us. As the true light shines more and more, it reveals the great lack that is in us by nature. If then it be given to one to realize deeply his want of righteousness, it is because the word is nigh him, even in his heart, and in his mouth. What great things the Lord has done for such ones. How wonderful it is that any man having tasted of this present salvation within him, should still be striving to be saved. How wonderful that any should turn to the weak and beggarly elements of the law, yet some in all ages have done so. It must be true that some do so yet, and so miss the perfect freedom that is in Christ, and revealed by the righteousness of faith. Therefore the need is great that this gospel should be proclaimed with no uncertain sound. Those who rejoice in a salvation that is nigh, will be glad when they hear it, and give it their hearty approval.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I heard an Old School Baptist preach some time since, and he remarked that if sinners were lost, it was their own fault. I should like to have your views upon the subject. To me it had an awful squinting towards Arminianism. I hope you will go fully into the subject, as it is one that seems to puzzle the minds of a good many of the Baptists, even in this part of the world, though I am not of that number.

JOHN R. MARTIN.

FRANKLIN COUNTY, Va., Feb. 3, 1859.

REPLY.

Old School Baptist preachers should be exceedingly careful how they express themselves in setting forth their views, as a very considerable of the apparent difficulty which too often agitates the Zion of our God arises from a failure to understand the real meaning of each other. A loose, careless way of dashing out off-handed expressions can hardly fail to produce or promote such agitation, which, when produced, is often very hard to allay. The wise man, we are told, sought out suitable or appropriate words; and words fitly spoken are like apples of gold in pictures of silver. If we would preach, or talk, or write so as to edify the saints, and promote union, harmony and christian fellowship, we should avoid as far as possible all ambiguous expressions. We remember a short time ago a brother in the south said that he did not believe in revealed religion, and the expression startled many of his and our brethren, whereas the brother had no idea of denying what we generally mean when we use those words, but probably designed only to show that in his view the word "religion," as used in the Scriptures, has reference to the conduct and works of men, rather than to what is revealed to them. So also some expressions made by us, and others, have been so construed as to charge us with holding sentiments for which we have not the least fellowship, and although we have from time to time disclaimed the imputation, the charges are in some quarters reiterated with as much zeal as though we had never disclaimed them.

In regard to the remark which brother Martin heard an Old School Baptist make, we should be at loss to know the meaning of the brother, unless he should explain. In some respects, with brother Martin, we think the remark has a "squinting to Arminianism."

First. Because it is a favorite expression of all Arminians, and is used by them to signify that in their opinion every guilty sinner has salvation offered to him on certain conditions, which conditions they are able to perform, and that it is therefore optional with them to be saved or damned.

Second. Should we hear an Old School Baptist make the remark, we would very naturally understand him to signify that he was not in perfect unison in his views with his brethren, or that he designed to convey the idea that his brethren exonerated that class of sinners that are finally and forever lost, from blame, and thus implying a charge of unrighteousness and injustice on God. In either or any case, we think such expressions thrown out are calculated to produce jargon and discord among those who, of all men, should strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Third. The IF in the remark seems to imply a doubt whether sinners will be, and a disbelief in the scriptural doctrine that sinners are already, lost; and this we think implies an Arminian idea. The blessed Savior has informed us that he that believeth not, is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him.

From the condemnation and wrath of almighty God nothing short of the blood of Jesus Christ can possibly save any of them, and the application of that blood is by no means within the reach or power of any sinner; if it be applied at all, it must be by the sovereign grace of God.

That men are in fault for being sinners, and that they are justly and righteously condemned as guilty sinners, is taught both by the word and Spirit: by the word as recorded in the Scriptures, and by the Spirit in his work on the heart, and in the experience of all who are born of God.

We have not room to pursue the subject farther at this time, but we hope our brethren will be more careful in the selection of words, knowing that we are surrounded by enemies who watch for our halting, and who rejoice when they can, either by fair means or foul, succeed in stirring up strife and discord among us.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 15, 1859.

ORDINATION.

PURSUANT to a call made by the New Valley Church, Loudoun Co., Va., the brethren from different churches met in council, Nov. 20th, 1901, to consider the advisability of setting apart to the work of the ministry, brother John E. Gore.

The council was organized by choosing Elder J. N. Badger, Moderator.

The candidate was called upon by the Moderator to relate his experience and call to the ministry, which he did to the satisfaction of the council.

The ordination sermon was preached by Elder Lester; ordination prayer by Elder Eubanks; laying on of hands by Elders Badger, Eubanks, Lester and White; charge given by Elder Lester; right hand of fellowship by Elder White; benediction by Elder Badger.

E. V. WHITE.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, in the Old School Baptist meeting-house, in Delmar, Del., Nov. 5th, 1901, Miss Alice E. Hastings, daughter of Levin Hastings, Esq., to John G. Jones, both of Delmar.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—In New Castle, Delaware, Oct. 26th, 1901, **Edith**, daughter of Alfred and Sarah R. **Hance**, and granddaughter of Elder E. Rittenhouse, aged 9 years and 8 months.

KETURAH RITTENHOUSE.

DIED—At his home in Flanagan, Livingston Co., Ill., **John Moulds, Sr.**, Oct. 26th, 1901. The subject of this notice was born in Cambridgeshire, England, in 1808. He was 93 years, 2 months and 26 days old. He left his native country and came to America in 1853, and settled here in Illinois in 1855. They had a family of fifteen children born to them, and at the time of his death he had thirty-two grandchildren, forty-five great-grandchildren, and three great-great-grandchildren. Brother Moulds was not able to attend our church meetings his last years, the distance being over twenty miles from our place of worship. He was stricken with paralysis over two years ago, from which he never recovered. He united with the Particular Baptists in England near seventy years ago, and tried to walk in Christ Jesus the Lord, as he had received him. He served the church as deacon over forty years, and was gifted in prayer and exhortation, and was a good help to us, and not afraid to let his light shine, and confess his Lord before men. In his last days he desired to depart and be with Christ. He was conscious to the last, but unable to talk, from paralysis in his throat. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Elder S. H. Humphrey, of Galesburg, was sent for, and preached an able discourse from Job's question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" Asserting with proof that being partakers of the divine nature, they shall live again through Christ Jesus the Lord.

JOHN DOWNEY.

SISTER **May Furr**, consort of Elder Joseph Furr, departed this life Nov. 9th, 1901. She would have been 79 years old the 13th day of February, 1902. She was married to Elder Joseph Furr in March, 1854, and baptized by the writer August 18th, 1889. Sister Furr was thrown from a buggy, her head struck some hard substance and rendered her unconscious; she lingered in this condition a little over a day. Though her mind was gone, the grace of God was still in her heart, and she repeated the words,

"Alas! and did my Savior bleed,
And did my Savior die?
Would he devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?"

Just before the last spark of life fled, she said, "Come and go with me through the deep waters."

Her funeral was preached on Nov. 11th, to a large congregation of mourners and sympathizers, most of whom followed her to the Leesburg Cemetery, where

she was interred. Her whole life, so far as I remember her, was devoted to helping others; unselfish to a wonderful degree; an honor to womanhood; a credit to every station in life she occupied; to the church she was unfailing in her attendance; courteous, kind, forbearing and compassionate toward us all. We miss her much, and grieve for our loss, for it is great, but we humbly hope and believe her gain. The Valley Church, of which she was a member, will long feel a vacancy, and mourn that she is no more. She left no children, but many nephews and nieces. I think every one who knew her was her friend. But there is a hope that pierces the darkness, goes through the deep waters, anchored beyond the vale.

E. V. WHITE.

LEESBURG, Va.

Mrs. Nancy W. Records was born Oct. 3d, 1822, and died August 26th, 1901, her age being 78 years, 10 months and 23 days. Sister Records was a member of the church in Broad Creek, Delaware, for more than forty years, but for the past twelve or fifteen years had lived in Salisbury, Md. She was a faithful attendant on the meetings of the church as long as she was able. She was twice married, her first husband was a Mr. Smith, by whom she had two sons; both survive her. She was married a second time, to Wm. D. Records, Nov. 22d, 1854, by whom she had three sons, two of whom are yet living. She also has one step-son living, Mr. Thomas Records, of near Kansas City, Mo. Thus are we passing away, here to-day, and gone to-morrow, and the places that knew us know us no more for ever. Sister Records' second husband, brother Wm. D. Records, preceded her to the tomb, and we hope to a better land, a few years ago, since which time her health has been poor, and she was able to go out but little. At last came a stroke of paralysis, which caused her death. Our sympathies are with the bereaved children and grandchildren, and we would say to them, You have not occasion to sorrow as those that are without hope. May the Lord send to them the blessed consolations of his word.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., Nov. 6, 1901.

DIED—At her place of residence, about six miles south of Philippi, W. Va., **Mrs. Harriet Boyles**, on the tenth day of October, 1901, of paralysis of the stomach, in the 63d year of her age. She was born Dec. 24th, 1838. Her first husband was Thomas Sharp, by whom she had three children, only one now living. Her second husband was Daniel Boyles, by whom she had four children, two girls and two boys, whom she leaves with her husband to mourn their loss. Sister Boyles came to the Mt. Olive Church on the 29th day of June, 1874, and related her christian experience, and was received, and baptized by the unworthy writer. She came up out of the water smiling, and shook hands with the dear members. She came out of the midst of a Methodist persuasion, her husband also being a Methodist, but she never hesitated to follow her Lord and Master, realizing as she said, that he was a Baptist. She was an ornament in the church, a beautiful singer, loved to sit and sing with the assembly of the saints. She punctually filled her seat through rain and snow, when she was able, though she had to come about eight miles to her church. She was useful in her neighborhood, in visiting the sick, and in preparing the dead for burial, that died with some contagious disease, when many were afraid to go about them, such as diptheria, &c. She was well established in the doctrine of election, predestination and special atonement of Christ for his people.

I was at the funeral, and tried to talk from Psalms cxvi. 15: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." The lamentation and mourning was great by the dear children and others. She is no doubt at rest with God, and the great resurrection day her body will be raised in the likeness of her dear Master.

"True, death's cold stream is wondrous deep,
And heaven's walls are high,
But he who guards us while we sleep,
Can guide us when we die."

J. S. CORDER.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Nov. 5, 1901.

Elder Z. Wisman departed this life July 1st, 1901. The subject of this notice was born Oct. 10th, 1821, in Henry Co., Tenn., and at the age of eleven years emigrated to Missouri. I have not got the date of his conversion; he joined the United Baptists in 1847, and stayed with them a short time. He became dissatisfied with their doctrine and practice, and went to the Old School Baptists, and was received, and baptized by John Abbet, into the fellowship of Prairie Valley Church, in 1867, and was ordained to the work of the ministry. He was soon chosen pastor, and served the church faithfully, and was dearly beloved by all the Baptists that knew him. He traveled and preached among the churches of Little Pioney and Ozark associations, and Lemen and Pinifares, where he was received and beloved by the churches for the doctrine he held forth. He was united in marriage to Nancy Wade, January 27th, 1842. To this union were born four sons and three daughters; one son and two daughters died while infants. His first wife died Aug. 2d, 1860, and on June 13th, 1861, he was married to Nancy Barnett. They lived a loving husband and wife until death called her away, April 9th, 1895. He made his home among his children, though still preaching to the churches, and was pastor of Peace Valley church, of Howell Co., Mo., and Little Zion church, of Shannon Co., Mo., until his son emigrated

to Weiser, Idaho; he then gave up the care of the churches, and came with his son, and settled near Salem church, in Washington Co., and united with that church by letter. He was dearly beloved by the members, and all that knew him. The writer has lived in the church with him the most of the time for twenty-five years. He was strong in the faith of salvation by grace, and had no confidence in the flesh. The writer was with him often while he was sick, and talked to him about his near departure. He was always ready to talk on the subject, and said, "I know I cannot get well, and I am ready at any time to go." I was with him a short time before death came; I said to him, "Brother Wisman, is that little hope still with you?" He looked me in the face, and smiled, and said, "O yes, brother Barton, I know I have a building not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." These were the last words I heard him speak, and so he passed away. We miss him, but we are confident that he is at rest. The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the children and members of the church, at the September meeting, from Job xiv. 15. May the God of all grace guide and keep us from error, and finally save us all.

G. B. BARTON.

WEISER, Idaho, Oct. 24, 1901.

"IN the way of righteousness there is life; and in the pathway thereof there is no death."

The death of our dear beloved sister, **Hulda Koon**, occurred August 30th, 1900, at Morincia, Mich. The dear sister was a native of New York State, and at an early age, I think twelve years old, united with the Baptists at Pen Yan, N. Y., as the dates are not known. I have heard her say it was over sixty years since she had a standing with the Baptists, which she greatly loved. She was twice married, her first husband's name was Mead, and after his death she married Mr. Koon. At her death she had two sons living, one by the first husband, and one by the last. This dear sister was greatly favored of the Lord to express his wonderful workings in her soul. In her early life she came to Michigan, where she tried to find her people by going from church to church, but could not. She lived very lonely, often sorrowing greatly, but after a long time she heard of a kind of people called Baptists, in Fairfield, Mich. She at last got her husband's consent to start out one Sunday morning to search again, and after a half day's drive at last found her people, and what a joy it was to hear the dear old hymns she used to hear in her native State. Then she found the church of Columbia, Mich., after her husband died, and I think about twelve years ago she united with the Columbia church, and was a dear, beloved sister, coming some thirty miles or more to meeting, and O, how glad would be the dear ones to receive her warm greeting, but most of all we loved to hear her tell the precious story of the Lord's visits to her soul. It was her meat and drink to be with us. Many times she expressed a desire to die and be buried with us, if it was the Lord's will, but it was not. She died quite suddenly at her home, her youngest son living with her. She loved her Bible and hymn book, and to sing the dear old hymns, and one of her favorites was 673 (Beebe's Collection):

"Sometimes a light surprises
The christian while he sings:
It is the Lord who rises
With healing in his wings."

Dear brethren, remember us at a throne of grace, for we are few, and so many of the dear ones have gone to that bourne from which they return not.

(MRS.) M. P. LEWIS.

JACKSON CITY, Mich., Oct. 21, 1901.

Mrs. Belinda Wilson died April 23d, 1901, aged 62 years. Our sister united with the church at North Berwick, Maine, July 3d, 1851, and was baptized by Elder William Quint. During her last illness, which was extremely painful, she often exclaimed, "O for patience to endure this suffering," and down to the end of life's journey she confessed herself to be a poor sinful creature needing the blood and righteousness of the Lamb of God as her only hope of salvation. On one of the visits that I made during her illness she expressed herself very sweetly and feelingly upon Christ's sufferings for the redemption of his people, and repeated two or three times the words, "He trod the wine-press alone," and on another occasion, when speaking to her of the unsearchable riches of Christ, she exclaimed, "Christ is all." Thus,

"As they draw near their journey's end,
How precious is their heavenly Friend!
And when in death they bow their head,
He's precious on a dying bed."

At her funeral the writer preached from the words, "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness."

ALSO,

Elizabeth Abbott died June 27th, 1901, aged 87 years and 9 months. She united with the church May 1st, 1858, and was baptized by Elder William Quint. In her early girlhood the Lord was pleased to call her by his grace; the Lord taught her the need of his salvation, and brought her to hope in his mercy, but a number of years elapsed before she united with the church. During the time that she was first exercised in things pertaining to God, she would often on a Saturday afternoon, when the church meeting was held, creep along side the meeting-house and listen to the members speaking one to another upon the things of the kingdom; she felt too timid

and unworthy to go in and sit among them, but crouched down beneath the open windows in the summer time, she could hear them speak of things so precious and comforting to her soul. Our sister all her days belonged to the poor of this world, but through the electing love of God she was exalted to sit among princes, rich in faith, and an heir of the kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him. During all her long life perhaps no one was more constant in attending the assemblies of the saints, and during the last years of her life, though unable to hear the preaching, she was always found at all the gatherings of the household of faith. She loved the Zion of God, and loved to see the faces of the members of the church. We all miss her very much. The writer preached at her funeral from Job xvii. 9.

ALSO,

Betsy Ann Randall died July 15th, 1901, aged 72 years, 5 months and 15 days. When about seventeen years of age our sister was convinced by the Holy Ghost of her lost and perishing condition, and continued in trouble of soul over her sinful estate about three years. At length she was greatly comforted, and obtained a hope in the Redeemer while listening to the preaching of Elder Quint, from Isaiah xl. 1, 2. At this time also she was much helped and encouraged in the way in listening to the members of the church conversing upon their experience of the grace of God. She was received into the membership of the church Sept. 1st, 1850, and continued a worthy member until her departure. During her last long and painful illness she was graciously sustained by the Lord. At times she was much tried by the accusations of the enemy, and encountered much distress and darkness while thus buffeted. But the Lord again and again appeared to her help, and then in what affectionate praises she would speak of the Lord's everlasting kindness to her soul. How many hours during the last year of her life I have sat by her bedside conversing with her upon the deep things of God, or singing to her at her request of the exceeding riches of God's grace, and again and again she would say, "Let me hear you sing once more before I die, 'Rock of ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee.'"

The writer preached at her funeral from Psalm xcii. 13. FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

Albert H. Bailey died in Snow Hill, Md., Oct. 5th, 1901, in the 76th year of his age, after a lingering illness of paralysis. He was stricken about eleven months previous to his death. Our father came to me where I was at work about one year ago on election day, and said to me, "I have been and voted, but it is the last time I will ever vote." This was on Tuesday, and he was stricken with paralysis on the Friday following, from which he never recovered. He had been in poor health for six years, and would frequently say to us, "I will not be with you long," and would have times of rejoicing, and say, "Jesus is with me." Owing to disappointments which attend this natural life, he was unable to meet with the church of which he was a member, and grew so cold toward them that he was excluded for a short while, but he went back to the church, and there was manifested by him such a spirit of love towards them, that they gladly received him back. He moved his membership from the church at Indiantown, to Snow Hill, for convenience, where he held his membership until his death. A few days before his death I asked him if he knew me? and he said, "Of course I do," and I said, "Who is it then?" and he answered, "It is Humphrey," and then said, "Poor fellow." He did not seem to know any one else. We miss him, as he was always a loving and devoted father. He possessed a very quiet and humble disposition, which enabled him to live a peaceful life.

His funeral was preached by Elder T. M. Poulson, after which his remains were laid to rest in the Old School Baptist cemetery. We have a hope that he is at rest. HUMPHREY H. BAILEY.

(See communication on page 720.)

DIED—July 9th, 1901, at his son's home in Fairfield Co., Ohio, **Edward P. Ashbrook**, his age being 84 years, 1 month and 22 days. He was united in marriage to Margaret Redman, Nov. 28th, 1839. To this union were born four sons and one daughter, of whom three sons and one daughter survive. At his death there were one brother and three sisters living, but his brother has died since his death. He leaves behind the reputation of an honest and upright man, which will sweeten the memory of all whose fortune it was to know him. He was not a member of any religious organization, but was a regular attendant of the Primitive Baptist church, and a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace.

His funeral was largely attended on the 11th, and an appropriate discourse delivered on the occasion by Elder G. N. Tusing, after which the remains were interred in the old Turkeyrun Cemetery, to await the resurrection of the just. G. N. TUSING.

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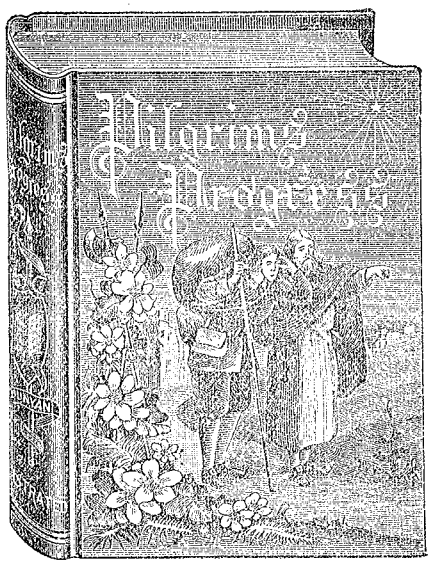

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 69. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1901. NO. 24.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LUKE XVI. 9.

"AND I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations."

"*And I say unto you.*" Jesus did not speak like other men. The officers that were sent to take him said truly, "Never man spake like this man." He taught not only in a different manner from other men, but upon a different principle. The words of his that are written by the pen of inspiration are not words by which his teaching is *to be* done, but the words which tell how his teaching has already been done. The written words tell to the enlightened understanding what the spirit and life of those words has already written in the new heart. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."—John vi. 63. When he said, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven," he said in words what his Spirit always says within his people. These words do not express a proposition on his part which may or may not be complied with by those to whom they are addressed, but they tell what has been, and is being wrought in them by his creative power. They express the same invincible power by which God commanded the light to shine out of darkness, as he now shines in their hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. iv. 6.) When Jesus says, "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you," he did not present a condition to those to whom he spake which they might or might not fulfill, but he declared what he speaks with living power in the hearts of those to whom he gives spiritual life, and which they can, in the Spirit, no more refuse to obey than Adam could refuse to breathe when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. This speaking of Jesus is not to the fleshly mind and heart, but to the new heart, and the flesh responds to these living words of Jesus as it is moved upon by the power of spiritual life. These spiritual powers are *always* inclined to perfect obedience, and when they are in exercise, by the grace of God, then they become effectual weapons of warfare, pulling down the strongholds of fleshly opposition, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bring-

ing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. (2 Cor. ix. 4)

"*And I say unto you.*" Not as one man says something to another which it will be profitable for him to hear and attend to, but as the Creator says to the creature in that creative work by which he is "created in Christ Jesus unto good works." When we come at the true meaning of the words of Jesus which are at the head of this article, we shall find in them not a recommendation of a course that will be for the benefit of his people to follow, but a command which has already been written in their hearts. Here is the difference between the legal character and the subject of gospel grace. Here is the difference in principle and action between the unjust steward, who is a pharisee and is covetous, and who sees in legal things only a chance for self-exaltation and emolument, and the gospel character, who has been given an honest spirit, and who sees in legal things the just requirements of a holy God, whose name must be glorified. Here is the difference between the teaching of this world's wisdom to "the children of this world," and the teaching of the wisdom which is from above to "the children of light."

The unjust steward made friends *with* his lord's goods, or riches, by requiring of his debtors less than they owed; and his lord (not our Lord) commended him, not for honesty, but for a wise forethought and care to provide for himself against the day of adversity. His wisdom was earthly, sensual, devilish, but it was wisdom in a worldly sense, and looked to his worldly advantage. It pertained only to worldly things, and was eminently selfish, and it was only commended in a worldly sense. It is only as using the wisdom that he thinks will best advance his interests that he is commended by our Savior to the attention of the children of light. They are not directed to do as he did only in one thing, and that is, to diligently pay attention to the dictates of the wisdom which belongs to them, as he diligently attended to the directions of the wisdom of this world. The Savior said, "Be wise *as* serpents, but he did not say, "Be wise *like* serpents." The children of this world are compared with the children of light to the disadvantage of the latter in one thing only, and that is, that they are wise in their generation, looking after what will be best for themselves in this world, while the children of light are not wise in their generation, when left to themselves to look after their own interests, but are constantly liable to turn aside from the path of true wisdom, and cannot therefore trust in themselves to guide themselves for one moment, but must be led constantly by the dear Savior.

That point in which they are liable to fail of true wisdom is their tendency to make use of the wisdom of this world, which constantly holds out allurements to them to follow its lead. And how often they follow the lead of that worldly wisdom, looking for the advantages it promises, until they are led by it into trouble, desolation, famine and death. The true wisdom of the child of God is to *always* distrust the dictates of earthly wisdom. Therefore from the beginning of his experience he is turned away from the ways of this world, and taught a different way, and a different wisdom. This is indicated here.

"And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends *of* the mammon of unrighteousness." To make friends *with* those riches was to use them unjustly, as the pharisees (the unjust steward) did; to

make friends *of* them is to experience and acknowledge the justice of their claims against us; to honestly own our full indebtedness, and to ask no reduction, even though we have nothing to pay, but must give up our own selves to satisfy the claim. For the mammon of unrighteousness undoubtedly means the things of the law. The word mammon simply means riches, wealth personified. Unrighteousness here does not mean anything evil or wrong, but the lack of righteousness or value. There is no real value in a pattern or in a type, but only a representative of value; there are no riches in an account, but only the representation of riches. The things belonging to the legal dispensation had no real righteousness in themselves, but they were important as representing the "true riches" of the gospel dispensation. And these true "riches of righteousness" brought forth in the gospel, which belong to the children of light, are only committed unto them after they have been found faithful in regard to the riches of unrighteousness, or the things of the law in which there is no righteousness, but only a typical representation of righteousness. One has made friends of those legal riches, the commands, ordinances, types, accounts of the legal dispensation, when he has acknowledged the justice of them. Under the law an Israelite had paid the debt when he had given up himself to be sold for it. Then the claim was settled, and in the year of jubilee he went free with no claim against him. No charge could be brought against him, for the law would stand his friend. So the law is the friend of the poor sinner who has acknowledged the justice of its claims against him. The moment he feels that he is justly sold under sin, that he is justly condemned, and feels that his condemnation is just, that moment for him the year of jubilee has come, and he is received by the very law which held such a claim against him, into the everlasting habitations of the gospel.

All of this chapter to the eighteenth verse confirms the view of the text which I have thus briefly suggested. The pharisees were covetous, so is every one who justifies himself before men. These are those who depend upon the works of the law for salvation. Though they appear to men, and to themselves, to be true servants of the law, yet in their hearts they are covetous, and do not really care for the honor of God, nor seek to magnify his law, but are seeking their own honor and riches. They are not faithful in that unrighteous mammon, or riches, which belonged to another man, and under which they were known as servants, because they had not faith. As soon as one is born of God he has faith to see the true requirements of the law. He feels that its clams against him are just. He can say, "The law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good, but I am carnal, sold under sin." Now he wants the law honored. He could not accept deliverance at the expense of the law, it would be no deliverance for him. He is faithful in these riches of the law, though there is no righteousness in them, yet they represent righteousness. There is no real value in the page of the account book which shows the great debt he owes, but it represents the true value, which he knows ought to be paid. It represents true riches. He could not dishonor those riches, that holy law, by accepting any release upon the payment of half or four score. He feels in his soul the truth which he does not yet understand, that every jot and tittle of the law must be fulfilled, that the whole debt

must be paid.

"That when ye fail." There is a time when every living soul must fail, and that is when he sees the amount of his indebtedness under the law of God, and the justice of it. When that is seen and acknowledged then the time of failure comes. Ten thousand talents in debt, and not a farthing to pay. Then all at once the law ceases to hold us, the soul is delivered, and we are astonished and amazed to find ourselves at liberty, freed from guilt, and rejoicing in a sense of righteousness. In his own time and way Jesus appears as having satisfied the law, and it is the riches of that legal dispensation, the accounts of that law now satisfied, which receive us into the gospel, the city of habitation. The righteousness which that law represented is now fulfilled, so that nothing can be laid to our charge, and thus the gates of the holy city are opened unto us, never to be shut any more.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 15, 1901.

ASHLAND, Ill., Sept. 23, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I have a burden upon my mind, and such a desire to write. It has just now struck the hour of midnight, and I have been lying upon my bed, wakeful and tossing, and could not sleep, so many things are in my mind.

In 1875, I believe it was, I first became so troubled about the doctrine of election and predestination. The humble hope that had been given me that I had been regenerated by the grace of God and by grace alone, had caused me to rejoice to hear the Primitive Baptists speak of just such things as I had felt. They told of how the Lord, for Christ's sake, had forgiven them, and made them to rejoice, and to trust him for his grace, and grace alone, for time and for eternity. I went to Bethel church, Indiana, often when they would preach there. Elder P. K. Parr, our beloved pastor, and Elder Isaac Sawin, and many other ministers would come, and when they would preach upon the subject of experience, O how I would long to go and bow at their feet, and say to them what Ruth said to Naomi, "Entreat me not to leave thee," &c.

But the thought that God had made only a portion of mankind to be saved eternally, I could not be reconciled to; I could read it in the Bible, but I felt sure that it must mean different from what it said. Well, a beloved and faithful servant of God came to preach at Bethel, and the first day of his preaching I wept like a child; I wanted to be one with them, but I felt to be a poor cast out; something seemed to say, You are casting yourself out; why do you not come in? And now, dear reader, if you are one who is standing out as I was, I pray God to hasten the time when you will be reconciled to God, yet I know that you cannot understand until it is the will of God to show you.

I must again refer to the preaching of dear brother Bartley, for he it was that I have been speaking of. The next day it was God's appointed time to show me, through the preaching of brother Bartley, the grace of his salvation, and I became reconciled. I saw his perfect and sovereign right to do as it pleased him, and I saw that what he had done no one had any right to question him about. The dear brother spoke two hours, and O, the beautiful wave that seemed to be floating before me, with the purposes of God upon it, as well as the plan of redemption. I could see Christ as a lamb slain, and I could see with a reconciled faith, a people

who were just as many as it was the will of God to choose before the foundation of the world. And, brethren, I saw one thing more upon that wave, and I was made to be sweetly reconciled to it also, viz: God is just and good; I felt that it all was in the purpose of God, and that in that purpose he was just and holy, and that he was a sovereign Ruler; he knows how to work all things right, and not leave any room for poor, finite mortals to charge him with sin or wrong. When I saw all this I could say, "God be thanked that I was the servant of sin, but had now obeyed that form of doctrine delivered unto me." It was through the first transgression that we now have redemption, and a blessed hope in Jesus. But who can charge God with sin, or with being the author of it? No! No! and yet I cannot but believe that it was his sovereign purpose that sin should enter the world. I have read much against this doctrine, and have myself tried to denounce it, fearing I was wrong. There is presented to my mind the words which record that he commanded Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go, but why did not Pharaoh let them go? We have the reason, and O, my dear ones, let us lay our hand upon our mouths and cry, Poor lumps of Adam's clay that we are, who murmur at what God does. Dare any man say that God was unjust in destroying Pharaoh's first-born, because Pharaoh did not let the children of Israel go, when he is said to have hardened his heart that he could not let them go? No! No! It was a sin in Pharaoh to be so cruel and hard. He was cruel and wicked before God commanded him to let the children of Israel go. But why did God raise him up for that purpose? None dare ask him. In the beginning of the creation we do not question his sovereignty.

Some have said that our God did not intend Adam and Eve to eat. Let this be so or not, I will not decide, but it does seem to me that to foreknow all this evil, and to have our Lord Jesus Christ ready provided in his mind, and to have a people chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and then through the atonement to make the people sinless, shows that his power is unlimited, and that his purpose is fully carried out. I may be wrong, but I do believe that he purposed in eternity whatever has been done. We might as well say that our God sins in not giving repentance to all, when he has all power both in heaven and in earth, as to say that he sins when his purpose is done among the ungodly of the world. He has all power and can limit the power of Satan, as he did once with Job. Could he not have limited the power of Satan with Eve and Adam? But the tree was there, and the tempter was there, and Adam and Eve were there. Our God ruled in heaven and earth, and used them all as seemed good in his sight. He makes himself a glorious name in accomplishing his purposes, and yet he does not sin. All were his, and he had a perfect right to use them as he did, and as he did Pharaoh afterwards.

Now, when we feel the blessed love of God in our hearts, we can rejoice even in affliction. Walking in the footsteps of Jesus and contemplating the joys of heaven we can say, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thee, O Lord, be all the glory. Let us lay our hands upon our mouths, and prostrate ourselves before him, and pray for grace to help us to walk worthy before him, and to thank him for the hope given unto us that we are sinners saved by grace.

Brother Beebe, I have written to relieve my mind, read it carefully, and if

there be anything in it unsound do not print it. I have tried in my mind to oppose this doctrine, and to write against it, as so many dear children of God are against it. It seemed surely that I must be wrong, but still it clings to my mind with such force that it seems that I can neither rest or sleep.

I have written what was in my mind, and I feel relieved of a burden. Do with this as shall best honor the Lord; he is a God of truth, a God that sins not, let him use his own as seems good in his sight. I love the dear saints, even those who, if they shall read this, may say I am in error. For my part I feel that it is a God-honoring truth.

Remember me at a throne of grace.

I remain yours,

S. B. THOMPSON.

CAMDEN, N. J., Oct. 27, 1901.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have had a desire to write to you since my short visit with you last Monday evening. Perhaps you had no idea how much I enjoyed it. I do love to meet often with my brethren, and talk of what I hope have been the dealings of the Lord with me, poor and unworthy as I am. I love to talk of how he goes with me, and watches over me from day to day. I used to have such sweet little talks with brother Coulter, when I was living over near him, but since I have come to Camden I do not get to see him as often as I did, but I am now, as you know, in a Baptist family, and brother Horace Lefferts is with me, and we have our little talks, and singing, and reading, nearly every evening. But still I desire to visit with other brethren also, and I am glad that I do. I find it to be the case the more I am with them the more I love them, and the more I want to be with them, and when I am with them I desire that our conversation shall be in heaven, from whence we look for the Savior. Surely our treasure is in heaven, where moth and rust do not corrupt, and thieves do not break through and steal. Here we only see in part, and know in part, but there we shall see face to face. To bask in the sunshine of the glorious Sun of righteousness is enough for me. "Were I in heaven without my God 'twould be no heaven to me." But, "Prisons would palaces prove, if Jesus would dwell with me there."

O, brother Chick, I do feel this evening that I love my blessed Savior; I know it is because he first loved me, and shed abroad his love in my heart. O, that I might be enabled to love him more and serve him better; the desire is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. I do not know this simply because I read it in the Bible, I experience it every day of my life. I am thankful for the desire and willingness to that which is good. It is not what we do, or what we know, but what we are, that the Lord looks at, and it is by the grace of God that we are what we are, as believers. We are the clay, and he is our potter, and if he has made us a vessel unto honor, how thankful we should be. When we see a good, spiritually-minded brother or sister, we love them, but we do not praise them for it, but we do praise and glorify our Father who is in heaven, because we see in them the good works which he has wrought. The poor cripple who lay so long at the gate that was called Beautiful did not praise the apostle when through his preaching to him he was enabled to walk, but he went into the temple leaping and praising God. If we receive great comfort under the preaching

of some brother, it is right that we should love that brother for the truth's sake, but it is not right to be continually praising him above all the rest of those who preach the word. Paul did not want any praise; he laid aside his worldly wisdom, his enticing words, and excellency of speech, lest the brethren should praise him and not God.

Sometimes when I have been listening to the word preached with such power and ability as I knew the Lord alone could give, I have rejoiced not only in the precious truth, but also in the manifestation of the power of God, enabling his servants to thus declare it. Then I have felt to exclaim, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." Such ministers do not proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ in their own strength, any more than David slew the lion and the bear, and the Philistine in his own strength. Perhaps David's brethren thought him forward and conceited for going forward to fight the Philistine giant, but David declared that he went forth in the name of the Lord. I have long had a desire to oppose the enemies of the Lord's people, and to defend them whenever the opportunity was presented. Somehow I almost constantly hear a voice saying, "Go, and I will be with you." In my little talks I have many times had the precious evidence that the Lord was with me, at other times I have not had that evidence. I have desired to go where brethren have wanted me to go, and where my little talks may be comforting to the brethren; I desire no more privilege than this. I am thankful for the privilege. I think I feel willing to spend and be spent for my brethren.

I did not start out to write all this to you, but have written as my mind has been led. I wanted to talk of my daily experiences, and of how good the Lord has been to me of late, in feeding me as a shepherd does his sheep.

The meeting that evening at brother Coulter's was very comforting to me. It seems to me that if we are edified and strengthened we should be satisfied, this is what preaching is for, and not simply to be stored away in our memory. If we could remember it all, what good would it do us? It would only be stored up manna. If I can feel the presence of the Lord, I am satisfied, whether I gather any points to take home with me or not. I enjoyed the SIGNS of October 1st very much. I could not read sister Ruth Keene's letters through without weeping.

Now may the Lord sustain you by the angel of his presence, is my prayer.

Your brother in hope,

EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

SODDY, Tenn., Oct. 28, 1901.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—To-day I am at home alone, and yet not alone, for that God who neither slumbers nor sleeps has been pleased to grant me a period of refreshing, a brief period in which my hope was made to abound, and I was made to delight in feeling that indeed Christ was precious. I cannot say that he granted me a season of rejoicing from his presence, as he did when I was made to rejoice in the forgiveness of my sins, but he has granted me a brief insight into the glory of the blessed truth that he will never leave nor forsake his own. Never, ah no! While his presence now seems far from me, yet I desire to thank him for the consolation which I have received in my distress and tribulation. Surely God is good to Israel, and his promise

never can fail. As for me, I must say, My feet were well nigh slipped, and I was given over to despair; I was brought into captivity to the law of sin, and surely, I thought, his mercy is clean gone forever. Then came a time for the tempter to increase his attack upon me; the densest of darkness came over me; I became indifferent, and indulged my lusts, and went on as far from God as sheep can run; if I followed at all it was afar off. I tried to pray, and my prayer was a grating noise; I tried to call to mind some passage of Scripture which had been a support in days that were gone, but I could not; I turned pharisee, and tried various maxims, forms and rules, and all these failed me. I even tried to make myself a good "mixer," which I confess with shame. some had hinted that this was all I lacked to make a success of my profession, but this only subjected me to the ridicule of those with whom I tried to mix, and like Elder Curry in the attempt to escape one thing in the imaginary heaven suggested by the Arminians, another would overtake me. So where was I to flee? How could I escape? What he saw when fancy took possession of him, was mine to encounter, to a certain extent, in reality. Beside all these things from without, the afflictions of the flesh, and a wretched wandering mind were mine. Beside all this, and I add this with fear and trembling, a care for the Primitive Baptists, with whom I had been associated, which I cannot describe to you, was with me. I imagine it would have been similar to the feelings of Peter's friends, had they, when they began to pray for him, been made to feel that they themselves were imprisoned by an invisible enemy. However, I do not believe that they would have been as indifferent as I have been, even if such a thing could have been possible. In the midst of all this a desire to be made fit to enjoy the company of the saints, and delight in the unity of the faith of the Son of God, and to be enabled to suffer for his sake, seemed to have been lost sight of for a time, and even the longing which I have at other times felt to be restored, no longer existed, or at least was not realized by me. But I received some little assurance from a letter from Elder Lively, published some little time ago, and I was made more willing to wait the Lord's time.

I leave this to your judgment as whether to publish or no, or any part of it. I dare not suggest what would be of profit, for to me, everything I do seems to be wanting; the deed is wrong, or else the motive is unworthy, so that I cannot do anything other than to leave my efforts to the brethren.

When brother Lively found it in his heart to write to the SIGNS, and not only speak of the past trial through which he had passed, but also of the deliverances which Zion's King had sent, I felt to thank God that he was indeed like-minded with me, if I am not mistaken in myself, and if this should reach him, I can but add that he has witnessed a good confession. Some magnify confession, but God alone begets a good confession, and those who are able to make it, are led to forsake their sins, and have no more fellowship for them. He who confesseth that Jesus is the Christ, God dwelleth in him and he in God. Happy, happy indeed is he who is in such a state; God will never forsake him; he may cast him down, but he will not destroy him; he will be the Friend of that man, a Friend who loveth at all times.

When I took up my pen it was my intention to write briefly about the comfort I received while reading the letter of Miss

Ruth Keene. Surely the Lord is good. I trust that you will forgive me, if you deem the above a vain repetition, for that seems to be the burden of my soul. Of his goodness and mercy will I sing, while I have my being. "Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life," and amid tears of joy I desire to express the assurance that he will be our guide even unto death; the guide of all them who are led to find in him their portion, and in the world to come they shall enjoy the fullness of his glory forever.

But I must desist. A new field is opening up, I spare you.

Elder Durand asked me about the Baptists in Tennessee. I have never answered him as I desire to, but cannot in this. By this time he knows what some are enduring for the truth's sake, which they love, and which he loves, and for which he contends with the ability which God giveth.

To brother Hatcher I must extend a word of encouragement. He speaks of his afflictions, but he will remember that it is written that we are appointed thereto. I trust it may be a comfort to him to remember that Simon helped to bear the cross: "On him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus." So this Cyrenian is an example to all those who must bear the cross after Jesus, and fill up that measure of the sufferings of Christ which is left behind for them.

Desiring to continue faithful, if not deceived, and that our God may remember the inhabitants of Zion, I remain your unworthy brother,

F. D. WALKER.

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571 CENTRE ST., TRENTON, N. J., Nov. 6, 1901.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—By the grace of God I am enabled to claim this blessed relationship, and can say,

"'Twas the same love that spread the feast,
That sweetly forced me in,
Or I, without a saving taste,
Had perished in my sin."

All my strength, my help is from him who is the altogether lovely One, and now in him do I trust for guidance both of mind and pen.

I have been impressed for some time to write to the dear ones; I do not know why, but will make the attempt, simply to relieve my mind. In a sermon recently I heard this: "When one is on the mountain there is great rejoicing; when one is in the valley, there is much mourning, but if one is traveling on the plain, he does not have much to tell." I have been traveling for a long time on the plain. I have my daily needs supplied, yet neglect to give thanks. I can see the hand of the Lord leading me in all things, yet I am not filled with praise; I am simply journeying very quietly, so much that I fear at times that I may be at ease in Zion, and grieve not for the affliction of Joseph. I once said, "If I could be free from sin one moment, I could praise God with a pure heart," but I have been made to see that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," and the only way that I can praise God is with a pure heart; a heart purified by the grace of God; one that contains the love of God. "I create in them a clean heart," therefore if I praise him it is with a pure heart, and not the sinful heart of this flesh. As I said in the beginning of this letter that it was by the grace of God that I could claim relationship with the people of God, so it is only by the grace of God that I possess the pure heart. I feel thankful that I am as nothing in his hands: "He knoweth my frame, he remembers that I am dust," yet I feel that he has had compassion on me, and led me about in the wilderness and instructed me, and like

David I can say, "In the Lord put I my trust."

I have been able this last year to hear Christ preached by different servants of God, and it is like precious food served in different ways; all the same food, but delivered in different vessels, and I feel to thank God that "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." I have not only this to be thankful for, but for the hope that vile as I am, I have been bought with a price, and it humbles me to see that instead of growing more worthy of him, I am daily sinning. Yet as I look back since I was first awakened, I am made to acknowledge the Lord in all his ways. "Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life; I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." Surely such is the house of the Lord, and a glorious dwelling-place for the child of Jehovah. The world cannot understand the church of Christ; they are a foolish set of people when seen by the world, but by Christ we are all glorious within; we are as a "spring shut up, a fountain sealed." The people of to-day cannot understand how we differ, for our difference is in Christ. We are a peculiar people; we are not of the world, therefore the world knoweth us not. We will forever remain to the world "a spring shut up, a fountain sealed," for they know not Christ, and he is the life of the fountain.

To-day I have been made to wonder why I am so much like Peter, I am ready to deny Christ, to say I do not know him, I have not been with him. Yet how compassionate is God, he does not turn me off, but makes me see that there is need of Peters, Pauls and Johns to-day, just as in the old days, and I cannot but rejoice when I see my experience is the same as the dear ones gone before.

I hope that what I have written will not seem like boasting, but it has been a relief, and I leave it to the brethren to do with as they think best.

I am your sister in hope,

E. P. FETTER.

DOT, Okla. Ter., June 29, 1901.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I herewith send you a letter from a precious brother who lives in Texas; if you think best please publish it. He is young in years, and I believe that some day it will be his to declare the unspeakable riches of Christ.

Now, dear brethren, may the God of all grace sustain and keep you in this dark and cloudy day; may you be enabled to still contend for the truth as it is in Jesus. The SIGNS still come as a welcome visitor to my home; I do love the doctrine for which it contends. I am glad that I can feel to say with the poet,

"Grace, 'tis a charming sound,
Harmonious to the ear;
It soothes our sorrows, heals our wounds,
And drives away our fears."

Your sister in hope of eternal life through grace,

R. WILSON.

KELLAR, Texas, May 17, 1901.

MRS. ROWENA WILSON—VERY DEAR SISTER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I have had a mind to write to you for some time, but have put it off from time to time, but this evening I will try to write you a word. I have desired for some time to have a word from your pen. To me there has always been a consolation attached to your letters; it seems to me that the dear Lord in his amazing mercy and goodness

has given you a greater measure of faith than to many of his little ones, so that you are enabled to many times speak by his grace to the poor, little, trembling children with comfort. Such words comfort those who feel themselves undone, and unworthy of the least blessing belonging to the house of God. These realize that in themselves dwelleth no good thing, and they find that it is with themselves as the apostle said, When they would do good, evil is present with them, and how to perform that which is good they find not. This seems to be my state of mind most of the time; I am so weak and depraved, and so dependent upon the goodness of the Lord for all the blessings which I receive, that of all men I ought to be the most grateful. From my advent into this world he has fed and clothed me all the days of my life, and then by his grace has given me to hope that he has been merciful to my unrighteousness, and that he will remember my sins no more forever. What a precious thought that the Father did so love us that he gave his only begotten Son to die, the just for the unjust. O, how my poor heart does at times leap for joy, yet I tremble when I have a ray of light, or even venture to hope that I am among the number for whom Christ shed his precious blood. What am I, a poor, sinful, weak worm of the dust, that I should meet with such boundless, unmerited favor, as to be a guest, and to dine at the King's table? and hear the welcome plaudit, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." I sometimes feel that of all Adam's apostate children, I am the most unworthy, and without unmerited and free grace treasured up in Christ Jesus before the world began, for the heirs of promise, and to be made manifest in the fullness of time, there could be no help nor hope for me. As the curse of sin has fallen upon all men by the disobedience of one, so by the obedience of one have many been made righteous. This is by the imputed righteousness of Christ. This is, my dear sister, a mystery to the carnal mind. How can one be justified by the obedience of another? But we hear the Scriptures saying to the church, that Christ is her Husband, Head and High Priest. As he was and is our Head, and our spiritual life, we can see how his righteousness could be imputed to us, and how his sacrifice on Calvary redeemed us. The bride, the church, was ten thousand talents in debt, and had not one farthing to pay; she had sold herself for naught, and all like sheep had gone astray, and all had altogether become unprofitable, but Christ in his love and pity redeemed them, and bare them and carried them all the days of old. O, is not this glad tidings to the poor, tempted, tempest-tossed child of God? In the darkness and gloom of night, how sweet to feel that we have an Advocate with the Father. He is the Redeemer, and he said that he knew that his Father always heard him; he is that one who spake as never man spake, and who declares to us by the word of inspiration that he came down from heaven not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him, and this will was, that of all that the Father had given him, he should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. Then since the beloved Son of God and Husband of the church suffered the shame of the cross, and poured out his own blood to satisfy the demands of a just and holy law, he has most surely released those who were under the condemning sentence of the law. May not those who confess

that they have no work or merit of their own, and depend upon this offering upon Calvary, and look to their High Priest as their Intercessor alone, take courage? for he has declared that he and the Father are one, and that his Father always hears him, and that his intercession is made according to the will of God, and that not for the world, but for those whom the Father had given him out of the world.

My dear sister, such loving-kindness and mercy as this sometimes seems to me too remote for me to even hope for it. But for God's own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ before the foundation of the world, we would all alike be without hope. But thanks be to his holy name, he has fed and clothed us, and watched over us all our days, and gave his only Son for our redemption, and he has promised to be merciful to our unrighteousness, and that he will remember our sins and iniquities no more for ever. I do love to extol the name of the God of Israel.

Lest I weary you with this imperfect scribble I will close. With love to you and to the household of faith, I am, as I hope, your brother,

W. S. BOURLAND.

EAST DIXFIELD, Maine, Aug. 8, 1901.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—In trying to suitably reply to your good and kind letter of August 1st, I wish first to sincerely express my heart-felt thanks that you so kindly and fraternally remember me. When I first wrote to you I did not know that you remembered me at all, but in your reply I learned that you were familiar with my situation as regards the dispensations of Providence in my family. Then I feared that your commiseration and kindliness of heart prompted you to heed my sometimes frequent letters. As from time to time I receive your replies, I am made to shrink into nothingness, that I am enabled from my isolated and tried position to give a word of consolation.

In your last you write that I have not the trial of fearing that I listen more to the voice of the people of God, than to his voice. But I do have this trial: of not being able to compare the way in which God is leading me with that of others of like precious faith. I recall when you first wrote me that you said, The people of God are one. How sweetly this does come to the heart when we are low down in the dark, with faith almost gone, and hope but dim; so dim that we wonder if indeed we do possess a hope at all.

Here I must write the saying of a so-called minister of Christ who was visiting from house to house; he met an old lady who had been a member of an Old School Baptist church, who told him she had a little hope. His reply was, "Throw it away, and we will give you a better one." She replied, "I cannot, I cannot get rid of it." It was very good evidence, as sister Hubbard who told it to me thought, that she belonged to the "can't help its." God will not leave his little ones comfortless. We read, "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse." The walls of salvation are enduring, else our hope would be in vain, for with all our willings and runnings, we are but unprofitable servants. That help has been laid upon one that is mighty and able to save, and who bore the sins of his people, and became their ransom, calls for ceaseless songs of praise. If we are bowed down with a sense of guilt and insufficiency, we are only in fellowship with the sufferings of Christ, who was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteous-

ness of God in him. Although my condition is lonely, I am at times made to mount up upon wings as eagles.

I enjoyed your account of the spring associations very much; I also enjoy, I was about to say, the writings in the SIGNS upon experience, but instead I will say the whole. They are very fruitful to me, and for this enjoyment I desire to praise God who enables me to so richly enjoy the word of truth. I desire to render thanksgiving that we have such a medium of communication. I desire that its editors may long be spared to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ, and I pray that as the aged ones are cut down as shocks of corn fully ripe for the harvest, in God's way and time, the young may be gathered into the fold of the great Shepherd. God will not leave himself without a witness.

I am rejoiced that you propose coming to Maine this fall. I do not expect to meet with you, but my prayers will be for the blessing of God upon both speakers and hearers. My health is greatly improved; I have gained in strength and vigor, and am comfortably well. My husband is comfortable, although he has many bad days. It was almost with a pang of regret that I read the notice of the meetings in Maine, but I desire not to be rebellious or unreconciled. I know that God doeth all things well.

This is a meagre reply to your good letter. I do enjoy your sermonizing, as you call it.

I remain your sister in hope,

ELIZA WHEELWRIGHT.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., August, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS OF HOPEWELL CHURCH:—I have felt an impression to write a few lines to you. We were talking about the time of my mother's baptism; it was twenty-six years ago to-day as I think, since she came before the church, and I am thinking what a number of sad changes since that time. I can look back in my mind and see her so helpless, like a little child, in the bed, but with a strong desire to be brought to the Saturday meeting, that she might ask for a home with them, and visibly cast in her lot with the church. I also remember how it was the will of God for me to be strengthened to grant her her desire, and how I dressed and made her ready, and how when I had brought her to the head of the stairs I could not see how I could get her down, and told her so, but her faith was firm, and she said, "You can do it, my child; let me put my hands upon your shoulders, and I know that you can get me down." I can recall how I felt at that time; it was so strange for her to think I had strength to do so much. But I have since been made to see that her thought of it was so different; she felt that the will of God was to strengthen me to do this work. I can recall her walk all the way, so firm and strong in the time afterwards; she never seemed to go astray.

It is now twenty-five years since I was made to come, and as I look back I behold only a crooked and broken path; in many places I have been so far astray. As the years go by it seems to me that I have less fervor in these things, I do not seem to have the hunger that I did then, my mind does not become so absorbed in a sermon as was then the case, and I do not think that I get so hungry to hear the word. I have been in the dark so much of late years; I am so very dark at times that I am humbled before God, and feel too poor to even beg for his mercy. At such times I can only groan with groanings that cannot be uttered. It has

seemed at times that there was no eye to pity, nor any arm to save; Satan is so full of suggestions and advice, and I am so poor and weak that I cannot refrain from listening to him, and cannot even so much as lift up my eyes to heaven, but yet away down below the devil's hearing I would ask God for mercy; then there has come a calmness. This was the feeling with me when I awoke from sleep with the words in my mind, "Line upon line, and precept upon precept," but then it did seem to me that I could not see the meaning of it, or why this text should come to me at that time, but now, as the day has a little more dawned, I can see that it is as we lose sight of our own strength, and feel our weakness, we learn our lessons in the school of Christ, and this is with line upon line, &c.

I am patiently waiting for noonday, but first I must see, and I desire to see, the rising of the sun. O, may I spiritually see it clear and unclouded! But the Lord knows what is best for me, and I feel submissive in waiting his most holy will; he is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. How much I do realize that he has been exceedingly merciful to me, as I look back over the past of my life, and realize his watchful care over me. Amid temptations and allurements he has been near me, and kept me from destruction, and from many of the trials of the way. I look back again, and recall that it has been his pleasure to make me to know his mercy, and give me light in some of the preaching of the word, and often he has fed my hungry soul; I have at times felt that I had a foretaste of his great love; among his people I have looked from one to another, and it seemed that I could see the love that was going out from heart to heart; to me they all looked spotless and pure; it seemed that they had none of the world's hindrances; I could look at all and did not think of their having any faults. When I would come out from such sweet visions and foretastes, it saddened me, and I was not submissive to return to grope along in the way that I go most of the time.

Dear kindred, although my name is not now upon your church book, but elsewhere, I feel as though I want to ask you, How did you come to put it there in the first place? Did I give you any evidence that I was a true child of God, or did you just have pity upon me? I have so often felt as though I ought to ask to have my name taken off the church book, but then to whom else should I go? I have no other friends, and no other fellowship do I desire but that of those whom I do believe to be the redeemed from among men, and who are of the true Vine.

Brethren and sisters, I ask if there is a response in your hearts to this? Am I in the right path, which leads to everlasting life? I send in this my good wishes to you all. May Israel's God be your God and mine.

Unworthily your sister,

MARY HILL TERRY.

DRAIN, Oregon, Oct. 18, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the tender mercies of an all-wise God we are still numbered with the living, but I often wonder whether I am numbered with that blood-washed throng for whom our Savior died. I have had a name among those whom I believe to be the true church of Christ, for more than twenty-five years. In all that time I have never doubted that Jesus was a whole and complete Savior. I have believed in the predestination and foreordination of God, and of all things. I feel that I can make

no compromise with conditional salvation either in time or eternity, yet I have nothing of which to boast. I fear and tremble lest some time I may be tempted to believe unsound doctrine.

Our dear Savior was tempted of Satan, yet he had power to resist, while we have no power at all of our own. All our power to resist temptation must come from him who speaks and it is done. I feel sad when talking with some dear brethren and sisters for whom I have fellowship, and who, as I believe, have been born of the Spirit, to hear them argue that it is in our own power to obey, and for our obedience we shall be rewarded in this life, and also that by obedience we can escape afflictions in this life. Jesus while on earth, told his disciples that in the world they should have tribulations.

Now I believe that it is the duty of all who love the truth to do all the good that they can, but their work is from that love which has been shed abroad in our hearts. Believers work from love, and not for reward. In some places there seems to be a great sifting among the churches, and so many churches seem to be in disorder. I often wonder if we shall ever have quiet and rest again, yet I believe and hope that all these afflictions shall work for our good, and for the glory of God. "Not a single shaft shall hit, except the God of love sees fit." I feel so thankful that the dear old SIGNS contends so earnestly for the true faith which was once delivered to the saints.

O, how often my dear old companion and I are melted to tears while reading the many good articles which are contained in the SIGNS. The writers all tell the same old story of Jesus and his love. Often I feel as though I would love to take them by the hand and tell them how much good I receive from their writings. But we all ought to remember that all these good feasts come from the great fountain of all good, which is the Lord Christ.

But where am I drifting? I only intended to send on a remittance, but when I get to talking or writing upon spiritual things, I never know when to stop; it is a subject which can never be exhausted. I will worry you no more with my poor scribble.

From a poor old sinner who, if saved at all, is saved in the Lord.

SARAH MORNINGSTAR.

GLENS FALLS, N. Y., June 7, 1901.

EDITORS CHICK AND BEEBE—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—Herewith please find inclosed money order for renewal of the SIGNS, and with it I bid you Godspeed, and recommend you to his grace in the future as you have enjoyed in the past, to so ably write or select matter for its instructive columns. Many times since I have been a subscriber it has found me in such darkness and distress of mind; so cast down and alone, that the sighs and tears of others have been company and comfort, and together with them I have been cheered and encouraged to get up and travel on. And in this fellowship which we enjoy in this way, there must be something beyond nature, carried on by letter by entire strangers in the flesh often, who have little or nothing in common, aside from the grace of God.

Father and mother sent me a box at my request last winter, with volumes of SIGNS in it for many years past; very few names in them appear at present, of faithful ones gone home, or simple ones carried away into Babylon. It is an honor to you and your contributors, brethren, that these old yellow pages are in fellowship with the present editions through all

these years of contention and strife, falling away and persecution, and little wonder that those whom the Lord has blessed with a knowledge of the truth, and has "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation," desire to read it, and write for it. In some of the later volumes I read articles from many still living, and have been helped over several rough places by replies from four or five brethren, whom I have never seen (for I had felt that if brethren who knew me personally, were burdened with more complaints about darkness of mind, coldness, being cast down, etc., etc., they must be nearly tired of it, and so would have no fellowship for me).

June 12th.

Dear brethren, when I began this, last week, it was in mind to write all that I have at different times felt impressed to say to you, but I have desired of the Lord, that it may please him to open the way for me to visit you some time, and be filled with your company. I have often felt curious to see your plant, and how it works, and attend church with you at Middletown, and then again, the future looks all dark and uncertain as to the return of the privileges of the past, for it is seldom now that I hear the truth, but I am hoping to get to our next meeting at Schoharie, if not, I shall be obliged to look for it in the SIGNS.

Yours in faith, hope and charity,

EVERETT R. KINNEY.

KANSAS CITY, Mo., Oct. 14, 1901.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BELOVED BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I feel this to be a great privilege to be able to pen you a few of my thoughts. Though we are strangers in the flesh, yet I feel to know you in Spirit. I have been reading your publication, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for twenty years. I feel that the Lord's time has come that I shall offer up what I have, and do all I can for its circulation. How often have I feasted on its writings; dear old SIGNS, and thought surely that was written for me. I have been a widow for twenty years, and have raised my children all to be grown. I cannot stay with them much longer according to nature. It has not pleased the Lord to reveal himself to one of them, but I put my trust in God, for he has been good to me in my dark hours, and my prayer is to be resigned to his will.

I attended Mt. Zion Association, which met with Oak Grove Church, where I met brother Teague. I will forward six new names. Can you send back numbers?

I hope, dear brother, you may be long spared to do God's work, for it reaches the poor and afflicted in depravity before a just God. If I know myself, I am only a beggar at mercy's door.

Unworthily your sister,

KATE FORBS.

MARGARETTVILLE, N. Y., Nov. 22, 1901.

VERY DEAR BROTHER BENTON BEEBE:—Inclosed you will find money order for two dollars to renew my subscription to the good old SIGNS. I have been a reader of the SIGNS from my early boyhood, and I now lack a few days of being sixty-eight years old. I united with the Old School Baptists forty-nine years ago last July, so I have been with them half a century, and have had a good chance to know the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS, and I find them the same as they were when I first read them. I expect to take them as long as I can read. Change my address from Arkville, to Margarettville, N. Y.

Your brother, I hope,

JOHN A. MORSE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1901.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

BROTHER H. C. Conway, of Canfield, Ark., asks if there is any Scripture which will justify a woman to pray or speak in public?

We all ought to appeal to the Scriptures alone for all things pertaining to the doctrine or order of the house of God. It is the glory of the church of Christ that she demands a "thus saith the Lord," for all that pertains to her faith or practice. Men's customs, in different places, may differ, but the word of God is the same at all times and everywhere. The Bereans were more noble than others, because they searched the Scriptures daily to see if the things spoken to them were so. The eunuch was reading the Scriptures with a great desire to understand their meaning, when the Spirit said to Philip, "Go and join thyself to his chariot." It is a mark of grace in the heart to hold the Scriptures in reverence, and to desire to know what they teach.

The New Testament does not say very much about the matter of which brother Conway speaks, but we do find the following things written in Luke, second chapter, that Anna, the prophetess, who was of great age and a widow, who departed not from the temple, but served God day and night there, with fastings and prayers. The prophetic office was a public one under the old covenant. It seems then that under the former legal covenant it was proper for women to serve in some public capacities, and also it appears that God vouchsafed to some women gifts which qualified them for these offices. Thus Anna was blessed of God with the gift and place of a prophetess. And now when the new covenant was ushered in, and Jesus had come in the flesh, she came in and publicly gave thanks for the Savior, and publicly spoke of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. See also Acts ii. 17, 18, where Peter quotes from the prophecy of Joel, and says that the daughters, as well as the sons of men, shall prophesy. If prophesying means public testimony in the one case, it must also mean the same in the other.

Also we read, 1 Cor. xi. 5, "But every woman that prayeth or prophesyeth with her head uncovered, dishonoreth her head." Here it is evident that some women were accustomed to pray or prophesy in the meetings of the church, and it is still further evident that Paul did not condemn it, but rather sanctioned it, by giving directions as to what was becoming in those women who did pray or prophesy. Let them do so modestly, with the head covered. In those eastern countries, even to this day, it is considered altogether immodest for a woman to appear in public with uncovered head. Paul would insist here that those women who should take part in praying or prophesying in the church, should do so in that way that would be considered modest. To do otherwise, would be to bring reproach and scandal upon the name and cause of Christ, which they desired to honor.

Likewise at this time, and in our own land, when any one of those women who

love the Lord, desire to speak publicly of what is in their hearts, or to join in prayer with their brethren, let it be done with modesty, and not in a forward or unbecoming manner. True humility felt in the heart will lead to becoming modesty of manner.

The Scriptures in 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35; 1 Tim. ii. 11, 12; Eph. v. 22; Col. iii. 18, do not in any manner contradict the other Scriptures to which we have referred. These Scriptures seem to simply teach that women are not to claim or seek to exercise authority over the people of God. The Bible assigns to woman her proper place in the family circle, and also in the spiritual family as well. She is to be reverenced as the weaker vessel, and is to be modest, and not forward in the exercise of the gifts and obligations laid upon her. It is a fact that women occupy a very prominent place in the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments. She has always been recognized among the followers of the Lamb, and has often in the Scriptures been spoken of with praise and honor, but this has all been when she has filled her place with becoming quietness and modesty. We understand that Paul does not contradict himself in his teaching; he does not regulate the exercise of a gift in one place, and then forbid its exercise in another place. It is wrong for a woman to seek to usurp authority in what she says and does, but it is not wrong for her to bear her testimony to the Savior's love and grace, in the meetings of the church, either in the way of prayer, or of what is called in the Scriptures, prophesying.

If women are positively forbidden at all times to speak in the meetings of the church, then they ought not to be called upon publicly to narrate the dealings of the Lord with them, when applying for membership, because this would be public speaking, as well as at other times. Experience does not cease to go on when one becomes a member of the church. Why may women speak of this experience once, and then be forbidden forever to do so in the meetings of the church?

C.

CLOSE OF VOLUME SIXTY-NINE.

WITH this number the SIGNS OF THE TIMES completes its sixty-nine years of continuous publication, and for about fifty years the principles advocated in their columns were accepted almost unanimously by those claiming to be Old School or Primitive Baptists, as the truth, and during that time the brethren throughout the United States were enjoying the fellowship, with few exceptions, of all bearing our name, and peace reigned throughout our borders, and to this day in the sections of the country where the SIGNS has the largest circulation, peace, brotherly love and fellowship reign supreme. But within the last few years there has a spirit of strife arose in some sections, and we are pained to say, with some, a spirit seems manifested to persecute those who still earnestly contend for the old landmarks by which the Old School Baptists have always been distinguished.

We are fully aware that a hoary-headed error is no nearer the truth, by reason of its age, than it was at its birth. But the fact we wish to emphasize is this, The articles of faith set forth in the SIGNS for the last sixty-nine years, are the original ones adopted by the brethren at the Black Rock Convention, in 1832, and which we have republished from time to time, but as we have received many new subscribers since they were last published, we trust our brethren will bear with our printing

them again. They were drafted by the brethren at Black Rock, Md., when they assumed the name of Old School or Primitive Baptists, and are as follows, viz:

1st. The extensive sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfection of the great Jehovah—the revelation which God has given of himself as the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one."—1 John v. 8.

2d. The absolute predestination of all things.

3d. Eternal and unconditional election.

4th. The total depravity, and just condemnation of fallen man.

5th. That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

6th. The sovereign, irresistible and (in all cases) effectual work of the Holy Ghost in quickening and regenerating the elect of God.

7th. The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

8th. The resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.

9th. That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers—that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament—that the Scriptures are the only rule of faith and practice to the saints of God.

10th. That there is no connection between Church and State, and as touching the proposition of a marriage between them, the Hon. R. M. Johnson, in his report on the Sabbath Mail question has amply revealed our faith.

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath School Unions, &c., &c., waging war with the mother Arminianism, and her entire brood of institutions.

Whether these principles are true or erroneous does not enter into the question of who are the Old School Baptists? Those who are still defending these principles are the genuine Old School Baptists, and those refuting them have no right to claim the name. This fact admits of no argument; it is self-evident.

As to the truth or error of the above mentioned principles, good brethren may honestly differ, but they should ever bear in mind that it is only by divine revelation that we are any of us enabled to discern the truth, and knowing this, we have no reason to boast, if the truth has been made manifest to us, and withheld from our brother. The more convinced we are that the truth has been revealed to us, the more patient we should be with our brother to whom the Lord has not been pleased to give the same light he has blessed us with.

But, says one, shall we then compromise with error for fear of wounding some brother by opposing a pet theory he may have, that we feel certain is not the truth? Not at all. We should always contend earnestly for the truth, but let us strive to do it in meekness. There is no stronger proof of one's own consciousness of the weakness of his position than his resorting to vindictive slang, and ridicule of all who do not agree with him, to defend his course. Paul tells us, "If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." It matters not whether the fault be that of disbelief of the truth or a disorderly walk, the instruction is equally applicable.

We are painfully aware of how utterly incapable we are in ourself to obey this injunction, for when we are reviled, our old nature comes to the surface, and we are ready to revile again, and if restrained from giving vent to our carnal feelings, it

is wholly by the grace of God.

Within the last five years there has appeared in print some very harsh and unbecoming expressions on the subjects of predestination, and "conditional time salvation," and while the SIGNS has, we trust, made its position clear on these subjects, we have tried to avoid all uncouth and rowdy expressions, or attempts to ridicule those who opposed us. The truth of God needs no such defense, but is rather reproached thereby.

There has of late been a decided change in the feelings of the brethren in some sections, and a returning of many who for a time have been misled by the carnal reasoning of some who have displayed a disposition to be "wise above what is written."

We think it would be well if the brethren and sisters would write more generally upon expositions of Scripture, and experimental exercises. There is nothing more generally accepted by the readers of the SIGNS than the relation of christian experiences, especially their earlier exercises in being brought from nature to grace.

The volume just closing with this number was commenced under more discouraging circumstances than any year within our knowledge, yet the Lord has been better than all our fears, and has sustained us through the year, and enabled us to conduct the publication so as to receive assurances from its thousands of readers, of their approval, and of their comfort and edification in perusing its columns, and in demonstration of their approval have interested themselves in increasing its circulation, so instead of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES "now smouldering under the debris it has caused among God's humble poor," as was published by an enemy of the paper, claiming to be an Old School Baptist minister, *its circulation and subscription receipts are both on the increase.* We do not wish to boast, but we make this statement in refutation of one of the many misrepresentations that are being published in other papers, whose editors, we fear, are only too anxious for the downfall of the SIGNS, or they would not give space in their columns for the publication of such slander.

Thanking the friends of the SIGNS for their kind support during the past year, both by their contributions to its columns, and for their financial aid, and with gratitude to the Lord, as we trust, for keeping us from falling, and enabling us to contend for the truth, we close our editorial labors for the sixty-ninth year of the oldest paper in the world, "Devoted to the Old School Baptist cause." B.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ECCLESIASTES IV. 1.

"So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and, behold, the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter."

In this book of the words of the wise man, Solomon preaches the vanity of all things under the sun; or, of all earthly things, and having considered them, one by one, has by that wisdom with which he was especially inspired by the Spirit of the Lord, pronounced them all vanity and vexation of spirit. And the truth of his preaching is witnessed by all those whom God has made wise unto salvation. No amount of earthly possessions can secure happiness, as will appear from the parable of the rich man, who proposed to pull down his barns and build larger, when on the very eve of his anticipated ease and pleasure, his soul was required of him.

Poverty also has its inconveniences and perplexities; and when all is accurately summed up, the full amount is vanity. Yet it is in the earthly nature of mankind to "Stretch their arms like seas, and grasp in all the shore." To the enlightened child of God all things below the sun are vanity; and all earthly things are a vexation to that spirit which is born of God; which is called the new or inner man; and whose conversation or citizenship is in heaven. Although the things below the sun may feed and nourish our fleshly nature, that very flesh which lives on earthly sustenance is a vanity and vexation to the heaven-born spirit. And that spiritual life which feeds on immortal bread, lives on Christ, by living faith, eats his flesh and drinks his blood, can find no comforter under the sun, no food, no consolation or spiritual enjoyment from earthly or sensual things.

"So I returned," that is from the pursuit and contemplation of other objects, "and considered the oppressions that are done under the sun." Literally the world is full of oppressions, and we see the oppressed bearing the yoke. In our favored land, where we have the most liberal and by far the best form of government under the sun, still we find oppression. The strong oppress the weak; the rich too often oppress the poor; the wise and cunning oppress the weak and simple, while the oppressors are themselves oppressed in turn, by that which inflicts on them care, toil and labor. Anti-Christ oppresses the children of God, and has drenched the earth with the blood of the saints, so that in the world, or under the sun, the saints must have tribulation. They are a poor, oppressed and afflicted people, who trust in nothing under the the sun; they trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon their God.

"And behold the tears of such as were oppressed." The bitter tears wrung from the streaming eyes of the widows, the fatherless, the poor, the injured, the robbed and the spoiled, among men in nature, as well as the peculiar trials, and flowing tears of the oppressed, persecuted and afflicted saints, are a witness of the correctness of the wise man's conclusion, that all below the sun is vanity, and vexation of spirit.

"And they [the oppressed] had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter." Can this be said of the saints of God? It is true God's people have a holy and heavenly Comforter. "Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive." But that Comforter is the Holy Ghost; is God himself, and their comforts are spiritual and divine. The wise man does not speak of things above; but of things which are under the sun. The comforts of the oppressed saints are above the sun; they are blessed with all spiritual blessings in *heavenly*, not in *earthly* places, in Christ Jesus. And as they are in him, they are not under the sun, in the sense in which the wise man speaks, for Jesus is higher than the heavens. They have no comforter in earthly things. Although in the kind and gracious providence of God they are provided with as much of the production of the teeming earth as their heavenly Father knoweth that they have need of, and which they are to receive with thanksgiving, and use as not abusing it, knowing that its fashion passeth away, yet they are not to set their hearts on earthly substance, for it is all vanity.

"What should we wait and wish for then,
From creatures, earth and dust?
They make our expectations vain,
And disappoint our trust."

With the oppressors there is power, but

not unlimited nor unrestrained; for

"Death and hell shall do no more,
Than what our Father please."

Power was given to anti-Christ to afflict the saints forty and two months, and power to make war with the saints, and to overcome them, &c., only until the purpose of God is accomplished, and the remainder of their wrath God will restrain. But the oppressed have no power to avert the oppression of earth, and of earthly things. They have no comforter in the things below the sun. God is their portion. He giveth strength and comfort to the weak and fainting, and underneath them are his everlasting arms. We should rejoice in the assurance that from all this vanity and vexation of spirit, God's children shall, in due time, be delivered, and be made more than conquerors through him that has loved us.

"Wait then, my soul, submissive wait,
Prostrate before his awful seat,
And 'midst the terrors of his rod,
Trust in your wise and gracious God."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., April 1, 1859.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Mt. Pleasant Association of Primitive Baptists, in session with the church at Cane Run, (Turner's Station,) Ky., on the 4th, 5th and 6th days of September, 1901, to the associations and churches with whom she corresponds, sends christian greetings.

DEARLY BELOVED:—By the kind providence of an all-wise God, we have again been permitted to meet according to previous arrangements, in an associated capacity, and to receive your messengers, bearing messages of love and fellowship, all of which is a source of great comfort to us, and we feel built up and strengthened thereby. Such expressions of the love and fellowship of the brethren encourages and stimulates, and dispels gloom, and casts doubts aside, and makes us strong in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone. Ministering brethren are with us preaching the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace; man's weakness, and the unbounded goodness and mercy of God to poor sinners. And while the proclamation of the gospel has been with power and the demonstration of the Spirit, it comes to us as the gentle falling of the dew, or the soothing effect of a passing zephyr.

Dear brethren, we greatly desire a continuance of your correspondence, both by Minutes and messengers, feeling assured we are one people, trusting alone for salvation in the merits of a crucified and risen Savior.

Providence permitting, our next session will be held with the church at Sulphur Fork, Henry Co., Ky., commencing on Wednesday before the first Saturday in September, 1902, and continuing three days; when we hope to again meet your messengers bearing messages of love and fellowship.

C. F. DUDLEY, Mod.
E. F. RANSDELL, Clerk.

The Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, now in session at Fox River Church, Davis Co., Iowa, to the associations with whom she corresponds, sendeth christian salutation.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—We realize it is through the tender mercies of an all-wise God that we are permitted to meet again and join in worship of that God who works all things after the counsel of his own will. We desire a continuance of your christian correspondence.

May the Lord ever bless and keep his church and people, that he may not be left without a witness, is the prayer of your sister Association.

By reference to our Minutes you will see where and when our next meeting will be held. If it is the Lord's good pleasure we hope to meet you again in an associate capacity. Farewell.

S. B. JONES, Moderator.
J. M. CATE, Clerk.

CHURCH NOTICES.

BRANTFORD, Ont., Nov. 23, 1901.

MY DEAR B. L. BEEBE :—To-day I mail you *London Advertiser*, in which you will find a short account of the New Ekfrid church opening. It being very interesting, please have it published in the SIGNS for preservation, as your readers will be pleased to see that the Old Baptists of Canada are not dead yet. It may stimulate the Baptists elsewhere. I was present at the services on a lovely day, on the spot where your dear father and other able men from the States often boldly preached the pure gospel. I would like to see it published and preserved on record in the SIGNS, but if not, kindly return me the paper.

Yours truly, JOHN A. LEITCH.

THE ACCOUNT.

After nigh half a century of dedication to the worship of God, the old meeting-house of the Ekfrid Old School Covenanted Baptists, was found insufficient to meet the demands of a growing congregation, and Nov. 10th, 1901, the fine new edifice erected this summer, was opened for worship. The new house, which is one of which any rural congregation might well be proud, is a substantial and handsome structure of red brick, fifty-five feet deep and thirty-six feet wide, with a gallery. The interior of the house is finished in white Georgia pine, and the windows are of stained glass. The circular seating arrangement is adopted, with pews of white ash. The pulpit and pulpit furniture are of antique oak, upholstered in crimson. The house is heated by a basement furnace. The total cost was about $4,200.

The opening services were marked by the attendance of large congregations from the surrounding district, while adherents of the Covenanted church were present from many parts of the province. The services were conducted by the pastor, Elder Carnell, of Dutton, assisted by Elder H. M. Curry of Illinois. In the morning the service opened with the singing of the 20th paraphrase, "How glorious are the courts of Zion." Elder Curry chose for his text, Acts ii. 41: "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Elder Carnell followed with a short discourse on Matthew xvi. 17, 18, in the course of which he gave an interesting sketch of the history of the two houses which had served the needs of the congregation prior to the erection of the new building. In the afternoon effective sermons were preached by both Elders, and so great was the crowd in attendance that many were unable to obtain admission. So generous were the offerings of the congregation that the church starts its career practically free of debt. In the words of a member of the congregation, "The plates were simply stacks of bank bills, with a handful of silver occasionally to hold the bills down."

The committee which had in charge the erection of the house was composed of the following gentlemen: George Scales, chairman; A. McTaggart, Sr., secretary-treasurer; Alex. McDonald, Philip Corneill, Malcolm Galbraith, A. McTaggart, Jr., David Cowan and Daniel McDougald.

The history of the establishment of the Covenanted Baptist Church in Ontario is one which the properly qualified historian could make as interesting reading as a chapter of romance. In the early days of the last century, Daniel McArthur, of Cowal, in the west of Scotland, was converted and baptized in the Baptist faith by an Elder in Edinburgh. Young McArthur felt called upon to preach the word of God, and he did so with such force and power that he called down upon his head the anger of the established clergy, who subjected him to persecution and hardship of many descriptions. At their instance he was seized and carried on a warship to England, where he was kept in dungeons, his captors calling him different names to deceive his friends. The latter, however, found him, and secured his removal to Edinburgh, and his trial there by the lord of session on the charge of heresy. He was found innocent, and his adversaries were fined £4,000. He then removed to New York State, where he died. Meantime others were inspired to follow in his footsteps, and one of these was Deacon Dugald Campbell, of North Knapdale, Scotland. Coming to Canada in 1818, he settled in Aldboro township, Elgin County. He was ordained a minister of the Baptist Church of Canada, but as he found that body had departed from what he held to be the faith, he withdrew from it, and founded the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church, which with the exception of the ordinance of baptism, he claimed to be identical with the faith of the martyred Covenanters of Scotland. During the ministrations of Elder Campbell, Duncan McCallum, Duncan Lamond, Neil McDonald and Thomas McColl were raised up to be witnesses to the faith. Thus before there was a single dwelling-place to mark the site of the city of London, Elder Campbell had implanted in the townships Ekfrid, Dunwich, Aldboro, Lobo and Orford, the seeds of a faith which has sprung up, and given forth many an hundredfold on the planting.

The first meeting-house of the Ekfrid connection was erected only a few rods from where the new building stands. Before the building of the house the spot was sacred ground, for there, amid the beautiful forest, there had been tenderly laid the loved ashes of those whom death had claimed from the scattered settlement. Here the little log house was built in the thirties, and here for twenty years the sturdy pioneers of the district came to praise their Maker. Not with all the comforts and conveniences of modern rural life did they come, but at the expense of bodily fatigue and deprivation. To more than one member of the congregation is the memory handed down as a sacred treasure of the ancestor, male or female, whose zeal

reckoned as naught a walk of ten or fifteen miles to church, with only a handful of chestnuts for the day's sustenance. They were none of them over rich, these pioneers, and with the noble pride of their class they would not trespass on the hospitality of those they knew to be as little able to render it as they themselves. Many of the older members of the congregation remember well when all came afoot to church.

One sturdy father in Israel, Robert Burgess, sat year after year in the same seat under the pulpit in the old log house. Feeling his time for departure approaching, he made known his fervent wish that he be buried beneath the seat which had become known as his own. His wish was respected, and he was laid away beneath the old house. Now not a vestige of the old house remains.

In 1853 the log house was replaced by a neat frame structure, which was amply sufficient for the needs of the body, as then constituted, but which was of late years found sadly inadequate to meet the requirements of a congregation which grew in proportion to the advancing prosperity and improvement of the district, until it now numbers between 400 and 500 souls.

The roll of sainted pastors who are held in affectionate remembrance by the children and grandchildren of those to whom they ministered, as well as the few survivors of the early days, are Elder Campbell, the father of the Covenanted Baptist connection; Elder McColl, upon whom his mantle fell, and Elder Pollard, who died in Lobo last year after a lifetime of faithful service. Elder Carnell, the present pastor, came from Ohio to take the pastorate, but he was no stranger to the adherents of the faith, as he had visited the church here before.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **Ann Elizabeth Williams** departed this life Nov. 27th, 1901. She was born March 8th, 1827; her maiden name was Ann Elizabeth Gunnell. She was married to Dr. Ira Williams July 4th, 1849, who died several years ago. She was baptized by Elder Trott in 1857. In her demise the Frying Pan church has lost her oldest member in point of baptism, and I believe in years as well. Not only so, but none stood higher in the confidence, esteem and affection of the Frying Pan church. In her, what Paul defines charity to be, was most strikingly and wonderfully demonstrated. She was among us both a child and a mother. The charms of amazing grace so sympathetically displayed both in compassion and in steadfastness, made her a companion with all. We feel that her place is for ever void; none will ever fill it. Words cannot express the love we had for sister Williams. One of the members said she had known her for fifty years, and had spent much of her time in her company at home, and going to and from Baptist meetings, and that she in all these long years never heard her speak unkindly of any one. Such a record surely belongs to few, living or dead, but those who knew sister Williams will have no doubt of the truth of it. It would be vain for me to attempt to tell what her brethren thought of her. No mortal words can ever express the intensity of the tenderness of that love. Dear sister Williams, precious above all we can think or say.

The writer spoke on the occasion at her home in Fairfax Co. She was buried in the family burying-ground on the farm. Wish that all could have heard, who never knew the relation that once existed between master and slave, an old colored woman tell, while the tears poured down her black and furrowed cheeks, how her dear mistress many and many times covered her at night with her own garments, and many other incidents that bound them together in ties never to be forgotten.

E. V. WHITE.

LEESBURG, Va., Dec. 2, 1901.

DIED—At her home near this place, Nov. 15th, 1901, **Mrs. Martha Silcott**, aged 71 years, 10 months and 22 days. She was the daughter of William and Ruth Ewers, and was married to James H. Silcott, in the fall of 1857. She was the mother of nine children, seven of whom survive her. Sister Silcott was baptized by Elder R. C. Leachman, in the fellowship of Mt. Zion church, and has ever been a faithful and much esteemed member. She always manifested an abiding interest in the church and its welfare, and a steadfast adherence to and love for the truth. For many years sister Silcott has been a great sufferer from a painful and lingering disease, which often kept her from the meetings of the church, which was a great privation to her. I have known her well the past twenty-five years, and can witness to her humble and kindly spirit, her generous hospitality, and also her thoughtful kindness to the poor. Death had no terrors for her, she was willing and glad to depart and be with her Redeemer in whom she trusted.

May God comfort her aged husband in his lonely widowhood, and enable him to rely upon that grace in which he has long trusted, and also the sons and daughters, for he has promised to be the widow's God and husband, and the father of the fatherless.

J. N. BADGER.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$482 55
A friend, New York, $1.00; Attie A. Curtis, Massachusetts, $1.00; M. A. McDonald, Ohio, $2.00; Chloe Russell, Pennsylvania, $1.00.—Total	5 00
Total to date	$487 55

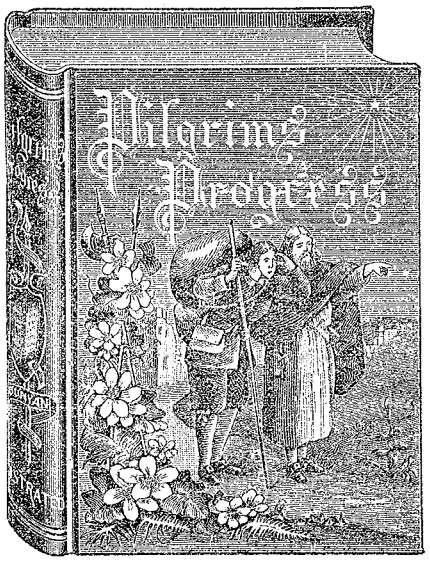

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PLEASE BE SURE

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likley to occur.

of years, and if not deceived, I fully indorse the doctrine for which it contends. I have a letter from my uncle, Elder A. R. McPherson, of Arkansas, which was very comforting to me, and I believe will also be the same to many others who are contending for the truth. I will send it to you for publication in the SIGNS, if it meets with your approval. I have not his consent, but do not doubt that it will be all right with him.

Yours in hope,

W. L. McPHERSON.

DEAR BRETHREN OF TEXAS:—The Lord being my helper, I will submit to you a few thoughts upon the Scripture found in Act xx. 28, which reads as follows: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and unto all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

This solemn charge was given by the apostle Paul to the elders of the church at Ephesus, while on his journey toward Jerusalem. His business being urgent, when he arrived at the city of Miletus, he gave the elders of the church at Ephesus this charge, which is as binding upon the ministers of the churches to-day, as it was upon those ancient brethren. It is as true in this nineteenth century that God calls his ministers, and qualifies them, and sets them as watchmen over the churches, as it was then. It is written, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion."—Isaiah lii. 7, 8.

I will now take up the first feature of the text. Paul says unto the elders, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves." That is, give strict attention to the doctrine of Christ, continue in the faith once delivered unto the saints, "For in so doing thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." That is, he would save himself from all the false doctrines which are flooding the world, and also the church. So in this twentieth century he would also caution us against all the dangers that are in the way; we should beware of evil company, and take heed to our ways, and we are cautioned not to give heed to fables, and to give the more earnest heed to the things spoken by the apostles. But Peter said, "There were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you." Brethren, we see this language of Peter fulfilled even to this day. Even under our own observation we hear men teaching that God wants to save sinners, but that they will not let him, and saying to sinners dead in sin, "You can if you will," and heaping money upon money to save the world. These rob the poor, saying, Give! give! and for the support of these false doctrines have their basket suppers, picnics, Christmas trees, card parties, and other things which are equally abominable in the sight of a holy and just God. But I feel to thank God that there is a little number who do not partake of all this wickedness, but are taking heed to themselves, and to the doctrine, and to the flock; preaching salvation by grace, and unconditional salvation through the atoning blood of Christ. It is said, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." These are

they who were given to the Son in the covenant of redemption, before the foundation of the world, being predestinated, called and quickened together with Christ. Again, it is said, "Thou wilt ordain peace for us, [the church] for thou hast wrought also all our works in us." Hence our God is first and last in the salvation of his people.

The second feature of the text is, "The flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers." What a difference we see now from the charge which Paul here gave. Now the so-called preachers seem to think that they reign over the church, instead of taking the oversight of the flock, and instead of feeding the flock they feed themselves from all the means which they can beg from the people. "Woe unto the idle shepherd that feedeth himself instead of the flock." All such watchmen are blind; they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; they lie down and love to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and can never understand. They all look to their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter.

There is no doubt in my mind that the prophet foresaw these days which we now behold, and we can witness the fulfillment of his prophecy. These do not do as Jesus commanded, Wait until they be endowed with power from on high; O no, they enter the seminaries, colleges and schools to prepare for the ministry. No doubt that many are total strangers to the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, but choose this way rather than to labor in some other calling, to make a living. Our God has no use for these deputies in his business of saving his people. These cannot feed the true believer; their fancies suit the world, and worldly professors, but they have no food for the meek and humble child. Peter said to the elders, "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." And he added, "When the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

These so-called deputies pay but little attention to this admonition of the apostle, but lord it over the heritage of God. Paul told the elders in his charge to them, that after his departure grievous wolves should enter among them, not sparing the flock. They are here, and have been for a long time. Men of your own selves, he said, shall arise speaking perverse things. In this day it is Arminian doctrine.

Now we will consider the last clause of the text: "Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." The last clause of the text excludes conditionalism in any form. Eternal salvation is through the atoning blood of Christ, and the renewing power of the Holy Spirit, for the elect of God, who by nature were the children of wrath even as others. These are called, quickened into divine life, and saved by grace from sin, and are made thus to be fit subjects to hear and feast upon the glorious truth, and the rich promises of the gospel of eternal truth. God's humble servants will feed and nourish the flock with the food which the Master gives them until they shall be called by the chief Shepherd to come up higher. These have been faithful over a few things, and they shall be made ruler over many things.

Dear brethren, I have here given you a brief outline of what I believe to be the teaching of the word of God upon this subject. If these things be not the teach-

ing of the Master, cast it aside. I feel my great imperfections, and to be the least of the flock, and desire to be at the feet of my Master and my brethren. May we all grow in the knowledge and grace of God, is my prayer.

In hope of life eternal,

A. R. McPHERSON.

FRENCHTOWN, N. J., Dec. 11, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I inclose an obituary notice of my dear aunt, Amy C. Rittenhouse, also a letter written by her evidently to the late Elder Conklin, but never forwarded, which I wish you would publish in the SIGNS.

Yours as ever,

O. R. KUGLER.

FRENCHTOWN, N. J., Sept., 1866.

ESTEEMED ELDER:—Having long had in contemplation writing you a reason of the hope that I told you I sometimes entertained, I have at length concluded to commence, but as my mind changes so often, it is quite uncertain whether I shall finish it or not.

Several years ago, I think about seven or eight, I attended a protracted meeting at the chapel, at which time several of my friends went forward and professed religion, and I became somewhat excited, and probably should have gone with them if I had felt a little better satisfied with my feelings. Previous to this time I had had serious thoughts at times on the subject of death, as I suppose every one has, but I saw little or no difference in the religious denominations, but at the time above referred to, I began to notice the difference in doctrines, and as my serious impression wore away, I became a pharisee, vainly imagining that my own righteousness was sufficient to recommend me to the favor of him who searches the hearts and tries the reins of the children of men, and my antipathy for the doctrine which you and other Old School Baptist preachers preached, became so great that I would have rejoiced in its downfall. I went frequently to hear you preach, and listened very attentively, that I might discover something so erroneous in what you said that I could convince my parents of their (as I thought) delusion, but to my mortification I never could say that anything you had said was not true. I could say I did not believe the doctrine, but could not prove its falsity. I continued to feel very well satisfied with my Arminian views until the next fall, when Elder Hartwell preached at Locktown three days in succession. His sermon on the second day interested me very much, and I could but believe he preached the truth, notwithstanding it came from a source that I was so much opposed to. The next day I was very anxious to hear him again, and when I did hear him his sermon was as interesting to me as the previous one. I went away somewhat troubled, seeing that if what he said was true, I must be a great deal out of the way. Not long afterward, however, my mind began to be quite wavering, I was unwilling to believe that the doctrine which I had been so much opposed to was true, and that all my good works were vain. But I was not left here. A few weeks afterward I heard you preach at Baptisttown, from these words, "There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing; there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches." When you described the rich man that had nothing, I thought you described my situation exactly, and I saw that the hope I had been indulging was without foundation, and I greatly desired that I might become as the poor

one who has great riches, but how to become so was the all-absorbing question. I thought, if I could become deeply convicted of sin, this would be some consolation, inasmuch as pardon is offered to such as repent. But,

> "I heard, but seemed to hear in vain,
> Insensible as steel;
> If aught was felt, 'twas only pain,
> So found I could not feel."

Sometimes I would feel like trying to banish all serious thoughts from my mind, and be more cheerful, but they would soon again return. I believed that there was a Savior, who was able and willing to save his people from their sins, but he seemed to be at so great a distance from me, and if I attempted to approach him my sins seemed as a barrier standing between us, which I could see no probability of having removed. I thought if I were indifferent on the subject there would be more reason to hope that I might some day experience that change which was necessary for a christian experience. I felt that mine was truly an outside case, that I had no companions anywhere, but yet I never experienced that deep trouble which many speak of, preventing them from sleeping and eating, and this very often causes me yet to doubt the genuineness of my hope. I went on seeking conviction I think about a year, when one day I heard Elder Harding preach from these words, "Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound, they shall dwell, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." While he was preaching I felt that I was of that number who know the joyful sound. There was a great change in my feelings, and I felt that I had been brought in a way that I knew not, and in paths that I had not known, and that he had been found of me that sought him not. My feelings at this time I cannot describe. I did not feel carried so far above the world as many speak of, neither did I feel that I should never have any more doubts, but I felt a sort of humble trust and reliance on the Savior that I had never before experienced. I thought then I should speak or write to some one soon, and tell them the state of my mind, and I did write to one of my friends, but before sending it I was so strongly impressed that it was all imagination, that I destroyed what I had written. I was then for a long time in much darkness of mind, and the language of my heart was, I am chained and cannot come forth.

Sometimes I would receive some consolation while hearing the gospel preached, at other times it would depress my spirits, and I would seek again that repentance which is not to be repented of. After awhile these chains seemed to be removed, and I was led to hope that though my evidences were not as satisfactory as I could desire, yet I might be as the poor, blind man who knew not by what means he had received his sight, yet knew that whereas he was once blind, now he saw. I think I prefer Jerusalem above my chief joy, yet many times I find my mind so much occupied by the vanities of time, that I am ready to give up all hope, and conclude that if I was after the Spirit I would be more mindful of the things of the Spirit. I have been much puzzled to know whether I loved the Lord or not, but when I heard you speak of having been similiarly troubled, and of how you had received comfort, I took courage, for I felt that, like you, I also loved the word of God, and esteemed the society of his followers above any other society.

I have written much and yet have not told what I would like to tell. The mind of man knoweth no man save the spirit of man which is in him, and I believe it is

way seems so dark, and the path is so rough, that I feel at times to say with the psalmist, "O, that I had wings like a dove, then would I fly away and be at rest." The Lord is my only hope of salvation, and in him is all my trust. He is our refuge and strength. May he ever be with you and bless and comfort you as you journey on towards life's evening, and may he be with us when called to pass through the valley of the shadow of death; then we will fear no evil; then shall we enter into that rest that remaineth to the people of God, and sing the praises of God to all eternity.

Your brother in hope,

SIDNEY WHITE.

WAGRAM, Ohio, Dec. 14, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I am led to pen you a few lines this morning for some cause, I know not what, but the hallowed peace of my soul, that passeth all understanding, surrounds me with its clear rays of gladness. It comes like a drink of clear water to a thirsty soul in the desert of despair.

I have had a home in the Old School Baptist church now for some seven years. When I was taken into the church I felt all unworthy of any such blessings as I feel now, yet I love to obey, I love to walk in the new path; for there is much peace and joy surrounding it, which the world can never give, and which is never enjoyed by the world, nor by any one while living in the world.

Earthly things come and go and fade away, but this hallowed peace remains for evermore. How great must be the folly and misery of all those who seek any other but Christ to save them. Their works of their own hands are their god. Yet I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that while this salvation is hid from others, it is revealed unto me, and that I have been enabled to receive the atonement, and to glory in thee, through Jesus Christ my Lord.

What encouragement there is to us that lie at the feet of Christ and hope in his mercy! Conceited mortals who are working out their own salvation by their own strength, cannot bear that any glory should be given to the grace of God, and therefore they are filled with hatred against the doctrine, and talk of that of which they know nothing, or have any understanding of. God is rich in mercy, and for the great love wherewith he loved us, when we were dead in sins, has quickened us, that he might show the exceeding rich mercy of his grace, "For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."

We visited a dear old sister in Israel last week, sister Lucinda Rochell, she was a native of New York State (your father married her). She is now ninety-three years old, too blind to read, but is a dear lover of the SIGNS. Her mind remains bright and active, and dwells continually on the Scriptures, and the glorious promises contained in them; she is very particular about the doctrine. She has lived and feasted on the sure mercies of God all these years, yet confesses herself the least of all in his kingdom; a sinner still, saved by grace, if saved at all. It was refreshing to us and our time spent, we have felt, was to our spiritual good, and dwells with sweetness around us still. O for more of such faithful ones; they are passing, passing, changing with the world. Poor, vain, ignorant man would dare presume to give God counsel, and dictate to him what he should do, yet will the Lord heed their counsel? Does he have any need of all their vain words? If he does,

then he is no God, for he says, I am the Lord, I change not, and there is none but me. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things, who has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. What God has joined together let not vain man pretend to put asunder; and indeed it never can or will be separated, and it seems to me that whosoever draws the absurd conclusion that if he is elected, he will be saved no matter how wickedly he does, gives the greatest ground to suspect he has never experienced the love of God, and if he belongs to the election of grace, when he is actually gathered in, he will have very different thoughts about it. We hear a great deal said now-a-days about works, yet see little improvement, if any. Let us pray that christianity among us may return to its proper channel, which is this: when men expect their whole salvation from Christ, and yet strive to be as fruitful in their lives as if they expected to be justified by their own good works. Let us stand up for the truth of the gospel. Cause holiness, O Lord, to run down our streets as a river, and righteousness to glide through our land like a beautiful stream; be thou, O Comforter, our glory and defence, that we may never weary of well doing. The more opposition we meet with as good soldiers of Christ, the more let us contend for the honor of our exalted Master, that after we have fought in the field of battle as long as he has determined, we may receive a quiet discharge that will bring us to the deathless realms of joy, where all noise and discord will cease, and we shall see our Redeemer as he is, where with angels and archangels we shall forever praise and adore him.

This leaves us both quite well, and we join in love to all the household of faith. May the Lord God keep us steadfast in the faith of his righteousness, abounding in love one for another, and may he continue to bless the dear old SIGNS and its editors; its coming each time into our house is like the welcome face of a friend in whom we can trust.

(MRS.) FRANK McGLADE.

LONDON, Ont., Nov. 29, 1901.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you the following for publication in the SIGNS, on the subject contained in Acts xix. 1–7.

Some years ago it was made clear to me that there was no re-water baptism of the twelve men mentioned here, that were baptized by John, because John's baptism was a valid baptism, is and ever will be a valid baptism, for it was done by John, who was "a man [not men] sent from God to make ready a people prepared by the Lord." No one did or could do John's baptism but John, for he was "the voice of one [not more than one] crying in the wilderness."

John was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb. His father, the old priest Zacharias, and his mother Elizabeth, were righteous before God; both well stricken in years, and had no child. "According to the custom of the priest's office his lot was to burn incense." But "the angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense," said, "Elizabeth shall bear thee a son," "and thou shalt call his name John," "for he shall be great in the sight of the Lord," "and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb," "and he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts

of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Zacharias natural enough wanted natural evidence, and he got it, and it stayed with him until the promise was fulfilled, and he wrote "his name is John," and immediately he (Zacharias) praised God. "John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." "Then went out to him all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." This is the only kind John baptized. "Prepared of the Lord," which was the fruits meet for repentance, confessing their sins, and being made ready by John baptizing them. "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear, he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire," (not some of you.) "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him." "The baptism of John whence was it from heaven or of men?" I have given the foregoing quotations to show who John was, what he was, and what he came to do. "Jesus said, Suffer it to be so now, for it becometh us [John and the Savior] to fulfill all righteousness." O glorious baptism (eternal value).

The baptism of the twelve apostles by John, was always valid, otherwise there would have been a record of a re-water baptism. All John baptized had a valid baptism for all time to come. Now to the twelve at Ephesus Paul said, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism." Paul did not say to them, John's baptism is out of date, and is no value now, neither did he say, You were baptized by impostors that had no authority to do so, such as New School isms, hence your baptism is no good, and you must be baptized by water again. No, Paul said nothing that would give a particle of a shadow to such kind of thoughts. But Paul described or defined John's baptism to them in that full and complete way that is nowhere else recorded. How did Paul know just what John's baptism was? It is not likely that he ever saw John, and if he did he was looking for stones at the same time, or ready to hold the clothes of them that would throw them, as was the case when Stephen was stoned. "Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." (Now this is all that Paul did say to them.) Now leave the word *this* out of the next sentence, for it is a supplied word, and it reads, "When they heard they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied." Just as John said, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost."

Brethren, I leave this with you. Do with it as you think best.

Your brother in hope,

JNO. A. CAMPBELL.

JAMAICA, N. Y., Dec. 16, 1901.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—As the close of the present year is drawing near I am reminded that my subscription to our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, has expired. Fifteen years ago the beginning of the coming year, I inclosed one dollar to the editors with a request that the SIGNS be sent to my address for the length of time that the dollar would pay for it, for I had been without a paper for some time, and not being satisfied with papers that I formerly had, I did not intend to risk more than one dollar at a time on another paper until I satisfied myself that it was just what I wanted, but by the time the six months had expired, I was satisfied, and renewed my subscription, and am glad to say, I have been satisfied ever since, and feel that I do not want to do without it so long as I have money to pay for it, and the editors continue to contend for the truth in the future as they have in the past.

While I do not wish to set up the SIGNS as my standard, knowing that God's people have but one safe rule to be measured by, namely, the Scriptures of divine truth, and I desire to heed the apostle's admonition to follow no man any further than he follows Christ; but according to my understanding of the Scriptures, and my own experience, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES fit the case better than any other paper. While it is true there are others which are good, yet there are others too much tinctured with Arminianism, and too much given to unprofitable disputations with unbelievers, to suit me. I have no doubt but what there are many of God's people scattered about that if they were better acquainted with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, they would be subscribers to it. No doubt but what some are prejudiced by things they have heard.

I would be glad to send you more subscriptions than my own, but I do not know of any one of the many that I am immediately surrounded by that have any knowledge of or love for the truth, and of course to any others the paper would be of no benefit.

Your brother in hope,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

PRENTICE, Ill., Dec. 9, 1901.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have received five papers, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I have appreciated them so much I would like to have you continue to send for the year.

From the kind spirit in which you write, I think you would like to hear from each one of your brethren or sisters. I want to take your paper, it is what I love to read. When I open its pages I find sweet comfort. There is not any one trying to explain something from the precious Bible, that man can do all and God is left out.

I have felt to say with Elijah, Are we left alone? But no, when I open the pages of the dear old SIGNS, there I find numbers that have not bowed the knee. If flesh and blood could have been my salvation, I would have been somewhere else to-day.

In youth I was so troubled about my sins, and before God rolled that darkness away, what did they tell me? "They were so happy; no use to mourn on account of sin." But in youth I did find it that way, and all along the journey of life I find I mourn, have doubts and fears, and I only have to open the leaves of our book of God to find there his children have known sorrow. But will tribulation separate them from his love and his peace which he gives unto them? He

said, "I give peace, not as the world gives peace." And so we find each word, from the first of the Bible to the last link, when joined together, make one complete chain, which is a sweet comfort to the believer. With this hope, when time is no more with us, Jesus will be our resting place.

My christian love to each and every one.

Your little sister who feels the least of all,

ELLA M. PARROTT.

CAMMAL, Pa., June 26, 1901.

DEAR ONES IN THE LORD:—I am but a creature, and I feel so unworthy, but may God give me strength to pen a few lines. How can I find words unless they are given? I feel willing to wait if only a crumb is given me from the Master's table, and I hope that Jesus has made me glad through suffering. Most of the time with me it is sorrow and darkness, and thorns are strewed along my path, but at times beautiful things make me glad. O, how good it is that the Lord has given me a hope, and has, as I trust, raised me up from the fall: he is our only hiding place; he is my all and in all. There is no comfort for me only in Jesus; he is the only hope for a poor sinner like me. It is through suffering that we are brought to know these things, and I do believe that every one that is born of God must know of his suffering, and must taste of his grief. We cannot teach ourselves these things, no, not one of us. God does not speak to us as man speaks. When his heavenly voice enters into the heart of a poor sinner, that sinner will be made glad and rejoice. At such times we love the dear Savior and can easily say so, but at other times we feel weak and cast down. Sometimes a sweet calm is with us, this is when we have been brought to a standstill place, and O, how good this is for us, but am I worthy of saying this? I find that I say these things quite often, and "I can't help it." I hope that it is because I love the brethren and sisters. Then these words come to my mind, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

I have been for a long time cast down; this is the brightest day for me in a long time; the beautiful mountains, hills and valleys, all seem to be clothed with brightness.

I am thinking that it is Jesus alone that can save from death; Jesus the great High Priest has full atonement made; his promises are sure, and none can change. Yes, I am glad that Jesus alone, who was God manifest in the flesh, has done so much for me. The pleasures of this world have faded away; they bloomed for a season, but soon decayed, but there is lasting pleasure in Jesus; he has given salvation on earth, and a mansion in heaven.

O, how I would like to meet with a multitude of God's dear children this bright day. It seems as though I have been through a valley, and it has been a long journey, but it is sweet to know that the Lord was with me there, all the way. There were some thorns and some roses there; they are strewed all along the way here below; in all the journey there are some sparks of light, some heavenly manna. This is the way that the good Shepherd leads his sheep. O am I one of that number?

Dear ones, I am afraid that you will feel as I do in reading this; it does seem so much like me, but I cannot help nor change it. I hope that I am thankful that Jesus has, through suffering, taught

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1902.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

INTRODUCTORY TO VOLUME SEVENTY.

AT the commencement of a new volume the duties and responsibilities before us are impressed upon us with a peculiar force, and were we dependent simply upon our own limited ability to conduct the paper so that it would be of comfort and edification to the children of God, we should feel utterly discouraged, but as our brethren and sisters have so ably assisted in the past in making the publication a source of instruction and interest to its readers, and knowing that the Lord can thrash a mountain with a worm, we enter upon the labors of a new year, asking the continued forbearance of our brethren with our shortcoming, and their prayers that the Lord will enable us to conduct the SIGNS OF THE TIMES so that they will meet the approval of all lovers of the truth, and redound to the glory of his name.

It has not been the pleasure of God to endue us with a gift to interpret the Scriptures to any degree, but in this our readers have the benefit of the able gift of our beloved brother Chick in his writings in our editorial columns.

It is not our intention to make any changes in the publication for the coming year, but with what ability God may give us we hope to contend for the same truths that the paper has ever advocated. The form and style of the paper will continue the same as it has been for the last few years. Neither will there be any change in the terms of subscription price, which is as low as we can make it, and sustain the expense of publication. While the price of the subscription is two dollars a year, we sustain such a loss from delinquent subscribers, which added to our list of indigent subscribers, brings the average of subscription actually received on the whole number of subscribers, down to about one dollar and fifty cents for each name on our subscription list. And this includes all receipts for the paper, "contributions to the indigent fund," "donations to assist in sustaining the SIGNS," and all.

The present volume in some respects is commenced under more encouraging circumstances than for a number of years; we are receiving fewer orders to discontinue the paper, and more new subscribers, than usual at the commencement of a new year, and the circulation of the SIGNS is now on the increase, and this, too, without counting the new names received at the five and ten for a dollar rate, and quite a number of these new subscribers are those who through misrepresentation of the SIGNS, have been induced to discontinue them, and have become convinced that they were deceived, and have written us to that effect.

In conclusion we extend our thanks to our patrons for their kind assistance in the past, both financially and in writing for the paper, and thereby enabling us to fill its columns with suitable matter to cheer and encourage the saints.

Remember, dear brethren, that it depends upon you to a great extent to

derstanding, and with any light at all, either in our preaching or writing. It is, we say, a continual wonder to us that so rich blessings should be bestowed upon such a great sinner. It was said under the law of ceremonies, "Ye must be clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord." And for ourself we must confess that we are not clean. This is our constant feeling. The best service that we have ever rendered has been marred by some secret selfishness. In and of ourself we could not be permitted to serve in the sanctuary, but we have hoped, and do still hope, that in the imputed righteousness of the Lord we do have a right to serve in the sanctuary. Surely it can be upon no other grounds.

One of the sweetest expressions in all the word of God to us is the sentence, "And his servants shall serve him." How much is involved in this. What a preparation through grace must be made ere any sinner can serve God. One must be cut off from the oldness of the letter, and come into the newness of the Spirit, must have that fear of the Lord, which is clean, in the heart, ere such service as will be acceptable to God can be rendered. And this cleanness in the fear of the Lord must include the cutting off of every fleshly, selfish motive. And this means the putting away of all legal service, of all thought of reward for the service, except such as is found in the service itself. How solemnly has it been borne in upon our mind, again and again in the past, that our service has been polluted many times, because afterward we could see that some self-seeking was in it, and that our eye had not been single to the glory of God. Our best work needs the cleansing of the blood of Christ to make it acceptable to God. It is recorded in Exodus xxviii. 38, that Aaron should bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel should hallow in all their holy gifts. What great reason for rejoicing we have that our spiritual High Priest has made provision for the iniquity of our holy things which we hallow before the Lord. In this provision alone can the best offerings that we bring ever be accepted. Sin is mixed with all our service. Our hope is that Jesus, our great High Priest, has borne all that iniquity, as well as all the sins of our heart and life. But as we think of the word service, a solemn feeling is with us that we have never served him at all. It seems so little and so imperfect that we cannot speak of our service, and if any one should ask, When did we begin to serve the Lord? we should have to say that we never did begin to serve him, but it has been many years since he began to serve us. Yea, we have been cast upon his care and bounty from our birth. All these years the blessed Lord has been serving us, and of this we would make mention at all times. When what he has done for us is in our heart and mind, we can never feel to even mention the best work that we ever did and dignify it with the name of service. Before the glory of the sun the light of the moon fades away, and does not appear. So before the work of the Lord, our work cannot be seen. We cannot think of it when we are given to behold all that the Lord has done for us. Yet how sweet to remember that because he lives in us, and works through us, we do bear fruit to his glory, and to his glory alone. Our names are not magnified in all the obedience that we may render, but his name is magnified in it all.

Thus far we have been speaking of the feeling of our own heart, as we stand upon the threshold of a new year. We

doubt not that to many who may read this, similiar thoughts have come. Toward us all how great have been the mercies of the Lord all our life long. How manifold have been his favors to us during the past year. Are we not all under solemn obligations to render to God some faint measure of praise for all that he has done for us? What marvelous loving-kindness, what long-suffering, what kind forbearance, what infinite compassion and what unbounded love have been poured out upon us in all the year that is past. Are we not under continually increasing and renewed obligations to call upon our souls to praise and adore the riches of his grace? Grace has truly abounded toward the chief of sinners, each one of us must say. Not one of all the blessings of God have we deserved; for not one of them have we rendered the praise we ought. We are at the close of the old year and the beginning of this new year, still cast upon the bounty of God, and must still come to him without one plea, but that his blood was shed for us. Others may talk of obedience rendered, and of blessings secured to themselves as the result of that obedience, but we are sure that all the humble-hearted followers of the Lamb will be found simply saying, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory."

Through the mercy of God also we are permitted to still send out the SIGNS to those who love the truth which has been, and is still, dear to those who have the care and labor of publishing it. God has been merciful to the editors. We have labored in weakness, and with much fear and trembling, and have not been able to set forth the truth as we could have wished to do, and in that worthy manner that it deserves, but still we have had some evidences that the Lord has owned it, even during the year just past, to the good of some of his chosen ones. Wherein it has proven a blessing to any of the people of God, we are sure that they will join in the praise of God with us that it has been so, and we trust that there may be a spirit of prayer in all our brethren that we may be sustained during the coming year, and that we may be kept from all error, and every false way, and that we may have nothing in view but the glory of God and the good of his people. If God shall be glorified in this coming year through the SIGNS, we are sure also that his people will find a blessing in it.

As regards the doctrine which we have maintained in the past we can say that we have no disposition to depart therefrom now. This we can say for both of us. And speaking for ourself personally, we desire to say that we feel great reason to thank and praise God for our association with brother Beebe in the conduct of the SIGNS. To him has come most of the burden and anxiety connected with the publication of the SIGNS, and we desire also to add, that from a most intimate acquaintance with him for the past ten years, we have learned that his chief desire has been to contend for the truth, although it might be to his great loss in a pecuniary sense. It is our testimony, which we bear with great pleasure, that he has in all our association together, shown that his chief anxiety has been to maintain the truth at all times. We are glad to say this, and trust that the spirit which has been manifest in him may also control ourself. We have both desired to strive for the things that make for peace, and for edification among the churches. But we do feel sure that nothing will tend to lasting peace but the truth as it is in Jesus. The wisdom

which is from above is first pure, and only as it is pure, can it be peaceable afterwards. We have desired to present the truth also in love. Paul had not become the enemy of his brethren, because he had told them the truth, among which were some things which were not pleasant for them to hear. Yea, he loved them, and said these things to them because he loved them. Had he been their enemy, he would not have said the things to them that he did. If one is in danger of stepping astray, and of destruction from it, he who warns him is his friend, while an enemy would rejoice to see him fall. We have no unkind words to use toward any one, and we have not been conscious of any hard feeling toward any one, even though we may have thought them mistaken in the course which they have pursued. We desire, during the coming year, that we may know nothing among the people, save Christ and him crucified. We desire that we may have an eye single to the glory of God: And we desire to keep on presenting the truth in the fear of God, and in love to the brethren.

And now, as we consider all the mercies of the past, and all the hope which is set before us in the gospel, it seems fitting that we should remember, as did the apostle, the manner of persons we ought to be in all holy conversation and godliness. We have heard it intimated that we did not any longer believe in exhortation to the people of God, in our ministry and in our writing. Concerning this, we only desire to say that we are sure that no one who has any knowledge of our ministry will assert such a thing. Much of our ministry in the pulpit has been in the way of exhortation, warning, reproof and admonition in all the years of the past, and it still continues to be so. If we have anything to change in that respect, it would be to urge the things which belong to right living upon the people of God with still stronger and more forcible language, if it were possible for us to do so. We have not changed in that regard. We still believe firmly in the use of exhortation and admonition. We do desire that we ourself, and all our brethren may know how we ought to behave ourselves in the house of God. Like the apostle, we think it meet as long as we are in this tabernacle, that we should stir up the pure minds of the children of God to a remembrance of what becomes a believer, in faith, and in all godliness. But we do not believe that it is a requirement of the gospel, or that it is in harmony with the exhortations and admonitions of the word of God, to say to the children of God, "You may have as much religion as you live for," or "Be good and you will be happy," or "If you will be obedient to all the commandments of the Lord, you shall have peace and happiness." It simply is not true that the obedient are always the happiest. Our observation is to the contrary. Some of the most careful and steadfast in all that belongs to the obedience of a believer, in our knowledge, have at the same time walked nearly all the time in the dark, and have almost constantly complained of darkness of mind, and of little enjoyment in the things of the kingdom of God. Should we promise to some humble child of God, that if he or she would take the yoke upon them, in the ordinance of baptism for instance, then that one would have joy and peace and that one, instead, be plunged into gross darkness and doubt and fear immediately afterward, what could such an one say, but that we had deceived them, or else that they were not the children of God indeed? We have

known of some who have followed their Lord, and have had no comfort or rest for months afterward. Immediately after our own baptism, the same day in fact, we fell into complete darkness, and during the most of the following year we felt that we ought to say to the church, We have been deceived our ownself, and have deceived you also.

But when the mind is stirred up to desire the ways of the Lord, there is comfort in it. To have the mind thus stirred up is a witness to the soul that the work of the Lord has been wrought there. Such desires do not grow in nature's barren soil. That man who thinks that by some work of his he has deserved the favor of God, or that by that work he has introduced himself into a happy frame of mind from the Lord, has a very unworthy idea of what the law of God does require. He who knows the true spirituality of the law of God will always feel that he has not obeyed it, only as the Lord has wrought a love to that law in his soul, and his complaint will be that he cannot do the things that he would. But what a favor from God it is to come to desire to do these things. To hunger and thirst after righteousness is the great token of the blessing of the Lord.

Brethren, is there in our hearts any earnest longing for obedience in heart and life? Then are we favored indeed, and where such longings are found, there will also be a great carefulness in speech, in conduct and in all that the hands find to do. Such as these will welcome all exhortation, and reproof, and admonition, and warning, because all these things will stir up their pure minds by way of remembering what they desire above all things to remember. If a man wants to steal, to urge upon him the sin and the results of stealing, will be to him an unwelcome effort, but if a man have an honest heart in him, and yet knows that temptation to steal will lie in his path, he will welcome all that will cause him to remember the sin of stealing, and the consequences of it. So with every other evil to which the people of God are subjected; they want to shun that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good.

It has been our experience often when speaking from the pulpit in the way of warning and admonition, that members who are already in the sight of their brethren walking blamelessly, and who do fill their place most carefully in the house of God, would come to us afterwards and say, "I was glad to hear that, and I feel as though I desire to walk more carefully, and to do still more than I have been doing, while those who were in the sight of their brethren very far in the background, would never, so far as we knew, give the slightest heed to what had been said. But when the mind was stirred up to love and desire all obedience, then the exhortation which pointed it out, was welcomed and rejoiced over, and the servants of God are to give attention to exhortation, and warning, and reproof as need may require, and as the Lord leads their minds into it.

Now in conclusion, we would say to all our readers that we desire for you, and for all who love the Lord, that you may be blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus. May the new year be fraught with tokens of the goodness of God to you all. In all the trials of this life may we all have the witness that the Lord is near, and that he sanctifies every distress to the good of his chosen. The sure and abiding hope is given that we shall be satisfied when we awake with his likeness, and we shall be like him then, for we shall see him as he is. C.

BOOK NOTICES.

A BOOK has been published by Elder J. H. Oliphant entitled, "An Investigation of Bible Truths, by Elder S. H. Durand and Elder J. H. Oliphant," and advertised by him as "The Durand Correspondence." This book was published without my knowledge. I first knew of its existence by receiving two copies from Elder Oliphant, with a postal telling me I could have all I wanted for ten cents a copy. The price is twenty-five cents. I did not order any.

My letters in the book are printed correctly, but his letters sent to me, to which my two first are replies, are not in the book, and therefore some allusions which I made to them in my letters cannot be fully understood by the reader. His letters which appear in the book alternately with mine were not sent to me, but were published in a western periodical after my first two were published in the SIGNS. I published them in the SIGNS (but without naming Elder Oliphant) because both periodicals in which his views on the subject of the will were published, declined to publish communications from me on that subject, even when I considered that personal allusions to my views required them to do so. For the same reason I published in *The Gospel News* my third letter, in which I noticed briefly some things in his letters.

My sentiments as expressed in my letters I still regard as according to the Scriptures of truth, but had I expected them to be published in book form I should have referred in my last more particularly to some of his expressed sentiments, and to some of his statements of my belief. I should also have expected that his letters printed in the book alternately with mine should be copies of those sent to me, and to which mine are replies. Then the book could correctly have been advertised, not as the "Durand Correspondence," but as "The Oliphant and Durand Correspondence."

I would not myself be willing to publish a brother's letters without his consent, and advertise them for sale.

I make this statement of facts for the information of any who may see that book, to whom it would appear without this explanation that I had joined in its publication. My sentiments as expressed in my letters I willingly submit to the judgment of the careful reader, even with whatever advantage may have been gained for Elder Oliphant by the rewriting of his part of the correspondence.

I wish never to magnify differences of views between gracious persons, much less to make differences appear where none really exist. I wish not to let brotherly love be discontinued by any correspondence concerning disputed points of doctrine which may be thought profitable. I can sincerely say that in any such correspondence I want no advantage that can appear to be derived from my manner of representing or handling a brother's sentiments. What he actually believes and expresses is what I wish to deal with in a plain, candid manner, and in brotherly love.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 6, 1901.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$487 55
Mrs. W. W. Darby, Md., $2.00; L. B. Ford, Mass., $2.00; G. B. Jones, Va., $5.00; Mrs. Lydia C. Wyman, Mich., $3.00; Philemon Stout, Ill., $2.00; Richard Waller, Mo., $1.00; James Bannister, Ont., $3.00; A friend, Ind., $1.00; Isaac Larowe, N. J., $2.00.—Total	21 00
Total to date	$508 55

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, on the evening of Nov. 27th, 1901, at the bride's residence, Leo Drake, of Cedar Grove, N. J., and Miss Carrie E. Stout, of Centreville, N. J.

By the same, on Thursday, Dec. 19th, 1901, at the bride's residence, Charles A. Durling and Miss Maude M. Lewis, both of Hopewell, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

BROTHER **Charles Kensinger** departed this life on Nov. 16th, 1901, aged 78 years. He was baptized by Elder Rittenhouse in the fellowship of the Salem church, in Philadelphia, Pa., many years ago, and during all the years of his pilgrimage he has manifested a meek and quiet spirit. His whole enjoyment was while in company with the church members in their assemblies. We do not mourn for him as though we would have him back, but rejoice that he now knows the reality of what he once hoped for.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Dec. 17, 1901.

DIED—At her home in Litchfield, Minn., Dec. 2d, 1901, sister **Angeline Cary**, after an illness of about two weeks with an abcess of the liver. If she had lived until the 7th day of January she would have been 77 years old. She was baptized in the fellowship of Concord Church of Old School Baptists, in Clark Co., Ill., about the year 1838, by the then pastor of that church, Elder R. M. Newport. She remained a firm and faithful member of the church she joined about sixty-three years ago, unto the day of her death. She, with her husband, Phenas Cary, and an only daughter, Clary Bell, moved to Minnesota about the year 1875, since which time she has been deprived of the privileges of the church only on occasional visits to her relatives and friends here at her former home. I have known her for fifty years, and always found her sound in the faith of God's elect. She was a great admirer of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

JAMES M. TRUE.

KANSAS, Ill., Dec. 17, 1901.

Floyd A. Miller was born Dec. 30th, 1874, and died Nov. 29th, 1901. He was a son of brother Charles and sister Sarah Miller. He leaves a sad, lonely widow, two little children, father, mother, brothers and sister, to mourn the loss of one much loved and respected by all that knew him. While in college, in reply to a question asked by his mother, he said, "Dear mother, I feel that I am the greatest sinner in the world; no one like me." Again, "You say if I have joy or sorrow, tell me. Dear mother, I do not have anything but sorrow. I often think of my little sister that died, how good she was, and O, how happy I would be if I could be good like her, but I cannot. I would be ready to leave this earth now, and I feel that my time is short, and it will soon be time for me to go hence. May God have mercy upon me, a poor sinner. I have often thought of the words, 'Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God,' but I cannot feel I am one of his people." While at school he always avoided the company of immoral boys, and attended strictly to his studies. He was a very industrious, honorable boy. The writer of this notice was personally acquainted with Floyd, and feels that he gave good evidence of a work of grace. The last words that his friends could hear from his lips were, "Home." Bright hope! he is with Jesus in his eternal home. May God bless all of the mourning friends with the spirit of reconciliation, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

The writer spoke on the funeral occasion to a large company of friends.

D. M. VAIL.

William B. Martin departed this life Oct. 24th, 1901, on his 71st birthday, after an illness of only a few days. Less than a month before he had removed from the home of his late brother, S. S. Martin, of Starbuck, Wash., to live with his nephew, Elder Wm. J. Hess, where he would be more convenient to church privileges than where his children lived. He had been a member of the Old School Baptist church upwards of forty years, and was an earnest christian, humble, faithful, forgiving, and no difference how disagreeable to the flesh a duty might be, he never faltered in his convictions of right. He realized that the end was near, and was ready to go. His suffering was great, but in the midst of it he would say, "O dear Lord Jesus, do come quickly." In speaking of his departure he said, "I shall be satisfied when I awake in his likeness," and that his only hope of salvation was in the blood and righteousness of Jesus. On Wednesday he said, "To-morrow I will be seventy-one years old, and I will die then." At midnight when the clock struck twelve, he said, "I am now seventy-one years old, and have been dying two hours." As daylight approached he said, "This conflict will soon be over." He made arrangements for his burial; selected "How firm a foundation" to be sung at his grave. The services were conducted by brother Alvie Hughett. He leaves five sons and one daughter, and other relatives, especially those with whom he lived, besides the church at Dayton, Wash., where his membership was, and the church here, to mourn, yet

We should not weep, for faith admits
That to our God it seemeth best
To call his faithful servant home,
And bid him enter into rest.

SONORA A. HESS.

Mrs. Sarah A. Van Cleve departed this life Nov. 29th, 1901, in the 87th year of her age. She had been a member of the Southampton Old School Baptist Church more than sixty years, and was always held in high esteem and warm love by the brethren and sisters, and was highly esteemed in the neighborhood, where she had spent her whole life. Her husband died a few years ago. Until within a few months of her death she remained in the home where they had lived, but was at a nephew's, in Foxchase, at the time of her death. A little more than a year ago, when she was very sick, and was expecting soon to pass away, she handed me a paper on which she had named the Scriptures and hymns she wished read at her funeral: Deut. xxxii. 9, 10, and Matt. xxv. 34. Hymns, "to be read, not sung," 579 and 1217 (Beebe's Collection). She was at that time, and continued, so far as I know, very cheerful in the prospect oi death, believing that the change would be a blessed one for her. I had many a pleasant conversation with her upon spiritual things within the past few years, but did not see her in her last sickness. She leaves two sisters, who are members of the church, and two brothers.

The funeral services were held at the Southampton meeting-house, Dec. 3d, 1901.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 3, 1901.

Mrs. George W. Titus (nee Miss Mary Ellen Virts) was born April 12th, 1846, and married George W. Titus Feb. 14th, 1871, and died Oct. 16th, 1901. I knew the deceased for many years, and can truly say, she was a woman of noble instincts of heart and mind; benefactress without pretense; a heart full of womanly kindness, and a hand ever open to help the poor and needy. Her physician told me no woman he ever knew was so willing and so ready to help the sick, both white and black, as Mrs. Titus. She was a devoted friend of the Old Baptists, and a constant attendant upon their meetings. Hers was a home for us all. She gave every evidence that she loved God, in that she loved God's people. We all loved her, not only for her lovely, womanly qualities, but also for her beautiful christian devotion. As a wife, she was a helpmeet in the true sense of the word; as a mother, she was kind and gentle, teaching her children by her own spotless walk. She was a constant reader of the SIGNS. We extend to the bereaved husband and children our most sincere sympathy. We shall miss her at the Valley church, but we rejoice in the belief that she has gone home to her heavenly Father.

The writer spoke on the occasion of her funeral to a very large congregation, and though it was some eight miles to where we buried her, most of them followed her to the grave, showing how truly they loved her. Truly a great and good woman has gone. Peace be to her ashes.

E. V. WHITE.

BROTHER **S. G. Clarke** was born in August, 1843, and died Sept. 3d, 1901. He was married to Malicie Youngblood, in November, 1868. Seven children were born unto them, three sons and four daughters. He experienced a change, and united with Hebron church of the Primitive faith and order, at Andersonville, Ga., in September, 1883, and was baptized by Elder Hall, and remained a faithful member until the day of his death. He served through the war between the States, and was a faithful soldier, and received a wound, and was afterwards paralyzed, and for the last six years he was confined to his room, during which time he was reconciled to the will of God. He was unwavering in his faith in God, and his mind was clear on the way of salvation. He saw no good in himself as the cause of salvation, but testified it was by the mercy and grace of God. He said on Sunday, before he died on Tuesday, when he was in a critical condition, to his daughter Gussie, who was to be baptized that day, "Yes, Gussie, go on and do your duty," which she did, and was baptized by the writer. He also said on Sunday, to the writer and the family and other visitors present, "This is the grandest day of my life." He saw death was approaching, and said he was ready for the will of God to be executed. I was associated with him, and was his pastor for about twelve years. I knew him well, and feel satisfied he sleeps that

"Blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep;
A calm and undisturbed repose,
Unbroken by the last of foes."

God grant comfort to the bereaved wife and sorrowing children, is the sincere desire of the writer,

W. LIVELY.

Bertha Viola Hicks, daughter of David Hicks, died Sept. 5th, 1899, aged 8 years, 9 months and 18 days. Sad indeed were the circumstances which took this jewel from a happy home. She was out playing with a pet dog, and in some way was thrown or pulled down, striking her head on a stone. She was at first inclined to drowsiness, but after about one hour was taken with vomiting, and suffered terribly for about five hours, until her death.

Her funeral was held on Thursday, the 7th, at 3 p. m., Elder James Miller officiating.

ALSO,

Edith M. Hicks departed this life Jan. 18th, 1901, aged 18 years, 3 months and 10 days. This daughter was also taken away very suddenly. She complained of a slight headache in the morning, but kept around the house until taken with a spasm, which lasted for a few minutes. They came for me, and when I went in the room she said, "I cannot see you, but I know it is you, Aunt Lib, come here, I want to kiss you." She told them she was not afraid to die. Then she laughed and said, "O, I am so happy," also that her little sister who had died the year before was with

her. She had her senses except when having a spasm. She kissed them all and bade them good bye, and said, "Now I am going," falling peacefully asleep. I have seen a great many die, but never witnessed such a scene before so happy.

ELIZABETH HIX.

JEFFERSON, N. Y.

IT becomes my painful duty to send the notice of the death of **Amy C. Rittenhouse,** which took place the morning of Sept. 11th, 1901, at the home of her brother, Richard M. Rittenhouse, near Locktown, N. J. She was in the 62d year of her age. For many years she suffered with stomach trouble, but was able to attend the duties devolving upon her until a few weeks before her death. She was a daughter of the late James and Abigal Rittenhouse, whose names will be familiar to those who visited the church at Kingwood in years gone by, it being a place of welcome to Old Baptists. This home has been maintained almost ever since their death by the deceased and her brother. She united with the church about thirty-five years ago, and was a great blessing in the church, being deeply exercised in spiritual things. Her walk and conversation testified continually the power of grace in salvation. During her last sickness she would say in two things she was like Job: "Behold, I am vile;" "I am weary of my life." She leaves one sister, Mrs. Wilson R. Kugler, and the brother above referred to, several nieces and nephews, together with our little church, to mourn their loss. May we all be given reconciliation to the will of our God, and feel to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

Elder D. M. Vail attended her funeral, and preached a very comforting discourse, after which her remains were brought to the family burying ground here in Frenchtown.

O. R. KUGLER.

(See relation of christian experience on page 10.)

Margaret Hite was born in the year 1818, and died Nov. 20th, 1901, aged 83 years. She was united in marriage to Andrew Hite, Jan. 16th, 1840. To this union were born nine children, four sons and five daughters, two sons and one daughter having preceded her to the grave, six children, thirty-eight grandchildren and twenty-three great-grandchildren, and a large circle of relatives and friends, survive her. Mother Hite was not a member of any religious organization, but was a devoted attendant of the Primitive Baptist Church, a firm believer in salvation from sin by God's grace through the righteousness of Christ imputed. God and his grace in mercy was her hope and trust. She expressed a great desire to go to Baptist meeting, and to die in the Baptist community.

Her funeral was largely attended, and a discourse delivered on the occasion to the comfort of the sorrowing friends left to mourn her absence, by the writer, after which the remains were laid to rest in the Union Baptist burying ground to await the resurrection of the blest.

G. N. TUSING.

Jacob Rimer was born in Fairfield Co., Ohio, on Jan. 29th, 1815, and moved with his parents to Putnam Co., Ohio, in November, 1832, and professed a hope in Christ in 1835, and was baptized in the fellowship of a few Baptists that resided near Kalida, Putnam Co., Ohio. He with others were constituted into a church called Kalida, in July, 1837. Some years after the church disbanded by giving each other letters, and afterward united with the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church called Sugar Creek, who had separated themselves from the Missionary Baptists in 1837. He died on his farm in Putnam Co., Ohio, Dec. 17th, 1901, aged 86 years, 10 months and 18 days. Brother Rimer remained firm in the doctrine of election, predestination and salvation by grace alone. He was a constant reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES almost from its commencement, and thought there was no other paper that suited him so well. He died in the full triumphs of the faith of God's elect.

The writer tried to comfort a large and very attentive audience on the 19th, by reading 1 Cor. xx. 19, after which the deceased was laid away in the Guffy Cemetery to await the summons of the Lord.

J. G. FORD.

POETRY.

SALVATION.

I AM a sinner saved by grace,
If ever saved at all,
And if I am, I'm sure of this:
From grace I'll never fall.

'Tis sure that Jesus Christ has done
All he need ever do
To save poor, fallen man from sin;
He's saved the chosen few.

Of those whom he has saved from sin,
Not one will e'er be lost;
That they might live the Lamb was slain
Upon Mount Calvary's cross.

What need that man should try to do
This work which Christ has done?
The Spirit must our souls renew,
Since we are dead in sin.

Sure man's a creature helpless, lost,
Of earthly soil his nature;
By sin and Satan driven, tossed,
He cannot change one feature.

Then fear thou not, O little flock,
Though thorny be the road,
Ye live, for your dear Savior lives,
Redeemed from sin to God.

G. B. BIRD.

FRANK, W. Va., April, 1901.

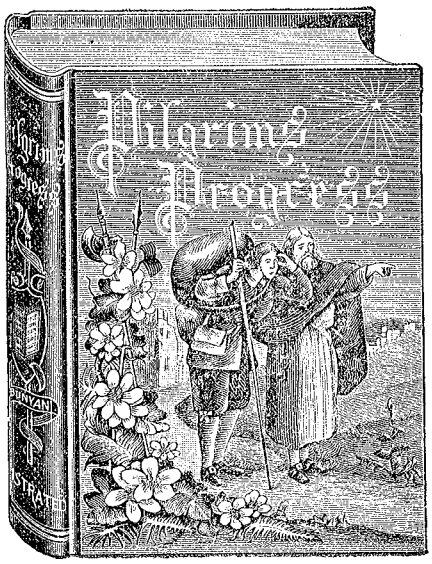

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 70. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1902. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PSALM CX. 3.

"THY people shall be willing in the day of thy power."

The Holy Ghost gave unto David glorious and comforting views of Christ. For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool."—Mark xii. 36. Our Savior in citing this portion of the holy Scriptures declared his own eternal Godhead, and that he, the Incarnate Word, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. Thus he silenced and confounded his adversaries who charged him with blasphemy in claiming to be the Son of God. From quotations made from this Psalm, in the New Testament Scriptures, it is very clearly seen that the language of this Psalm is speaking of Christ and his church. David by the Holy Ghost was enabled to "see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor." Christ is risen from the dead, and is become the first-fruits of them that slept. He ascended to heaven, and is set down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. There enthroned and crowned, reigns the Head of the church, the Incarnate Son of God.

"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Christ has a people. So it is written of old, "The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance," and when the Son of God was about to be made flesh and dwell among us, it was declared of him, "His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." Christ speaks of them saying, "Thou gavest them me," and they are described as "all which the Father hath given me."—John vi. 39. His people then are the elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, and given unto the Son of God in the covenant ordered in all things and sure, wherein Christ is the Head and Husband of his people. Our Prince and Savior having saved his people from their sins by the sacrifice of himself, is now seated upon his mediatorial throne to give unto Israel repentance and forgiveness of sins. From his glorious high throne he pours down upon the election of grace his Spirit and graces, and grants them times of refreshing from his presence, bringing to pass the fulfillment of the word, "Thy people shall be willing in

the day of thy power." The people of God in their earthly estate are far from being the friends and willing ones of Christ. In their Adamic nature they are enmity against God, enemies in their minds by wicked works, and have no disposition of soul to bow beneath the sceptre of the Son of God. So darkened are their eyes with the depravity of their flesh that they see no beauty in the King that they should desire him. But the Lord hath published the decree, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Christ hath all power in heaven and earth. He made the worlds, the winds and the waves obey him, and in the everlasting covenant the Father hath given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him. (John xvii. 2.) How strong was he when as the Captain of our salvation he vanquished Satan, made an end of sin, and triumphed over the grave. He, death's conqueror, is risen from the dead, and dieth no more. The Son of God went up with a shout, robed in his sacred, incorruptible manhood. He is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him. The Lord's Christ is not the powerless myth that people talk about. The so-called Christ proclaimed in the popular religion of the day is one whose success in saving people from their sins and bringing them to heaven depends upon the actions of frail, sinful creatures. Their doctrine is, He would save sinners if they would let him. What a worthless Christ would such a Christ be. But the Lord's Christ in the day of his power captivates his people; his love and mercy revealed in their hearts apprehends them, and holds them fast; they are called by grace, and respond to the omnipotence of his gracious work in their souls. Though in times past there was estrangement and non-intercourse, and like the Jews and Samaritans, there were no dealings with Christ. He was undesired, but in the time of love, (Ezek. xvi. 8,) in the day of his power, he came to us, he dealt with us in such a way that we were won by his kindness, and we have been friends ever since. They that are with the Lamb are called and chosen and faithful. (Rev. xvii. 14.) To be among the called of God is to experience a gracious and invincible work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, and this divine work constitutes and presents us unto Christ a people made ready for him. It is not in the first Adam nature or life that the elect are the willing ones of Christ, but in the day of his power they are quickened with eternal life, they are born of the Spirit, they are made partakers of the Spirit of Christ, and thus joined unto him they are new creatures, a new creation. The natural creation is wondrous, and glorious, but it hath no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth, for the glory of the new creation surpasses in excellence the things that are seen. All God's works in nature are temporal, and shall be dissolved, but the new creation is destined to endure eternal ages. When all the work of the everlasting God shall be consummated in the regeneration of the church of Christ, of which the crowning act is the resurrection of the mortal bodies of the elect, at the last day, to immortality, incorruption and eternal glory, then shall the members of Christ's body be conformed to the image of God's dear Son, and then shall it be seen what a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory is the portion of the new creation. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed

away, behold all things are become new." It is then this living and transforming power of the Lord, constitutes the called of God a new creation, wherein they are made and become Christ's willing ones; and I am sure that when with the eyes of our understanding enlightened by the Spirit we contemplate the amiableness of God's workmanship in his new creation, that the glories thereof will be seen to far surpass the glories of the material universe.

"Thus saith the Lord, I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, for they shall return unto me with their whole heart." "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good: but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." I will and they shall, thus the eternal covenant stands. The fear of the Lord, which is a fountain of life, works marvelous things in the poor sinner. He is born again, he was dead in trespasses and sins, but is now alive, possessing life divine in his soul; now he sees things he never saw before, and feels manifold things to which before he was insensible. By the teaching of the Holy Spirit God's chosen discover what a dreadful condition they are in, that they are vile transgressors under the curse of God's righteous law. Their consciences become burdened with guilt, and darkness, and sorrow is their portion. Guilt and its consequences may be fastened upon a man's conscience, and under Satanic power he may be driven to such desperation as to take his own life, as did Judas Iscariot, but not so with God's beloved elect. He grants to them repentance unto life. The Lord graciously humbles them under the knowledge of their iniquities, and bows their hearts in godly sorrow at his feet, and there with a contrite heart they mourn over their sins. (Ezek. vii. 16.) Blessed mourners! Under the Lord's gracious discipline the enmity of their heart is subdued, and they no longer despise Jesus Christ and his gospel. Now, in their sore need as guilty, perishing sinners, Jesus is the one sought for, and as the Holy Spirit unfolds to them the way of mercy the gospel has sacred attractions unto which their yearning hearts flow forth. O the preciousness of the gospel! All its blessedness is for the poor and needy, the hungry and thirsty, the captives, the lowly, the contrite in heart.

Then again they are made his willing people, because the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them. He creates and maintains in their souls heavenly affections, and thus with loving-kindness they are drawn to Christ. (Jer. xxxi. 3.) Who can resist the omnipotence of the love of Christ? It breaks every barrier down, conquers all opposition, and transforms a foe into an affectionate friend. Jesus said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said signifying what death he should die." In the day of his power we are drawn to the crucified One. We have eyes of faith and love given us to see him the conqueror of sin and death, how gloriously he wrought in behalf of poor sinners, traveling in the greatness of his strength, mighty to save, and when in our guilty and distressed souls hope is imparted by the Comforter that all was for our sakes, then our hearts are bowed to him. (2 Sam. xix. 14.) A vision of Jesus in his acts of love, has a power divine within us, and the gracious work of the Spirit persuading us that he gave

himself for us, then a transformation takes place within us, we are overcome in melting, wondering gratitude, as that sweet thought passes through our hearts: "He loved me, and gave himself for me." How affectionately we would hold fast this thought; yes, dear children of God, you know as more and more Christ Jesus is revealed to you, the more and more you are drawn to him. Being drawn we run after him, as the spouse says, "Draw me, we will run after thee." We are sick with sin, and are willing to be healed by the great Physician. (Exodus xv. 26.) We are lost and perishing, and in the day of his power willing to be saved, willing to be clothed, willing to come unto him that we might have life, willing to slake our thirst at the river of the water of life, (Rev. xxii. 17,) willing to take his yoke upon us, to serve him forever, willing that he should reign over us, willing to suffer for his sake, and sometimes so great and gracious is his power working in us that we are brought into sacred acquiescence to his good pleasure, and can say, even in sore tribulation, "Thy will be done." Christ is revealed by the Spirit unto us the Captain of our salvation, the King of glory, the Lord mighty in battle, and having eyes of faith and love given us to behold him, though poor and sinful, the ends of the earth, we see his ensign from afar and flock to his standard. For he will lead us on from victory to victory over the world, the flesh and the devil. We willingly follow him, having an eye to his atoning sacrifice for sin, his righteousness for our justification, and amidst our conflicts with sin and temptations we sometimes can sing the battle song of faith: "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

But our text invites us on to the contemplation of additional glories of the riches of God's grace, for it is published in the decree, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, *in the beauties of holiness.*" This is their appearance, thus the willing ones are apparelled. In their standing in relationship to the first Adam they cannot be viewed in such array. Ah no! In our earthly life all is sinful, the finest garments woven by the flesh are not fit to be worn in the presence of the King. "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." We have no holiness, no comeliness in our fleshly nature, and as we are led to know how depraved we are we see, and feel, too, with grief that we are a mass of wounds and bruises and putrefying sores, the whole head is sick and the whole heart faint. (Isaiah i. 5, 6.) "Behold, I am vile," exclaimed one, (Job xl. 5,) and "O wretched man that I am!" cries out another. (Rom. vii. 24.) The presentation of Christ's willing ones unto himself in the beauties of holiness is not that fancied holiness of the pharisee, who trusts in himself that he is righteous, and despises others. (Luke xviii. 9.) What then are the beauties of holiness in which the willing ones are so lovely in the eyes of the Lord? It is that perfection of beauty which the Lord puts upon them, as it is written, "Thy renown went forth among the heathen, for thy beauty, for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God."—Ezek. xvi. 14. Christ is the Lord our Righteousness. (Jer. xxiii. 6.) The doctrine of Christ's imputed righteousness (Rom. iv. 6,) is full of blessedness to those who feel the nakedness and shame of their unrighteousness. Grace brings a poor sinner to submit himself unto the righteousness of God. Finding he has no righteousness of his own to put on, how willing he is to be dressed in

the best robe, (Luke xv. 22,) the wedding garment. (Matt. xxii. 11.) Christ loved the church and gave himself a sacrifice for her, he hath espoused her to himself, (Hosea ii. 19,) and grants unto her that she shall be arrayed in fine linen clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints. (Rev. xix. 8.) O Zion, thou art a perfect beauty! Thine admiring Redeemer, ye willing ones, says, "Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah: comely as Jerusalem." Thy wrinkles and blemishes, blots and spots, are all removed. Our Savior hath cleansed them away in his sufferings and blood. He died to redeem thee from all iniquity. Thou art all fair, there is no spot in thee. There is no condemnation, O believer in Jesus; thy Savior's obedience and blood hide all thy transgressions from view.

There is also a marvelous work of beauty wrought in God's elect by the holy Spirit, described in the Scriptures to be the sanctification of the Spirit. This internal beauty verifies that divine word, "The King's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold." —Psalm xlv. 13. All the lustre of material adorning fades and dies, it is soon tarnished, it is corruptible. But the beauties of holiness, without which no one shall see the Lord, are immortal. Believers, after the inward man, are as a glorious palace. Indeed, the King in his beauty dwells in them amidst the loveliness of those graces which the holy Spirit has wrought in them and constantly brings forth in them. This internal loveliness of Christ's willing people is called "the hidden man of the heart, the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." (1 Peter iii. 4; Eph. iv. 24.) The Lord's willing ones are beautified with bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, love, joy and peace, gentleness, goodness, and they are kindly affectioned to God and his truth and to one another. (Col. iii. 12; Gal. v. 22; Rom. xii. 10.) O, dear children of God, thy Redeemer and King greatly desires thy beauty, he is thy Lord, and in all thy lovely graces worship thou him. (Psalm xlv. 11.) O, my heart yearneth and crieth out, "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." Ah, while we are in this world the beauties of holiness put upon and wrought in the elect are often obscured from our view by the motions of our depraved nature, then in full view we behold with grief and shame our vilenesses, or we are so languid, feelingly so dead to divine things, it seems to us impossible that there can be anything of the beauties of holiness about us. O, the icyness of my heart with its languid, frozen prayers, its dull, formal praises. It is the revelation of Jesus anew to our souls that has gracious healing efficacy, bringing us forth again in the beauties of holiness. We put on afresh, in faith and love, our beautiful garments, (Isaiah lii. 1,) and all the attributes of the new creation are called forth into fervent exercise, and as lovely, sweet-smelling flowers, our faith and love, peace and joy, and prayer and praise abound. O Jesus dear, thy word is very true, "From me is thy fruit found."—Hosea xiv. 8.

Let us still go on to consider our text; it declares, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth."

Christ is the Morning; his going forth is prepared as the morning, (Hosea vi. 3,) even a morning without clouds. (2 Sam. xxiii. 4.) He is the light of life, the bright and morning star, the Dayspring from on high, who visits his people and

scatters all the darkness of sin and death, and shines upon them in all the healing warmth of his love.

The Son of God came into the world to abolish death, and bring life and immortality to light unto his church. He gave himself a sacrifice for our sins, descending in suffering unto death, but when he arose from the tomb he unlocked the portals of death and came forth for our justification. Christ the Sun of Righteousness arose in triumphant radiance, bringing life and immortality to light. Christ is risen, the first-fruits of them that slept, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. When Jesus our King arose from the grave, all the clouds were gone, our sins and iniquities which were as a thick cloud were blotted out by his atoning sacrifice. No clouds of wrath, no frowns of displeasure, greeted our risen Redeemer, but the smiling, approving countenance of God the Father greeted the risen, Incarnate Word, and he was full of joy. "Thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance."—Acts ii. 28. Christ is our morning; from him streams forth that marvelous light of love and salvation, of justification and glory, in which believers live and rejoice. When he appears our dawning is begun, the darkness is past, and the true light shineth. When Jesus shines upon us there is no gloom, no night, no sin, no curse, no pain or sickness, these former things flee away at his presence. This willing people then are the fruit of the Morning. The morning brought them forth in the beauties of holiness; they are the children of light. Before Christ brought them forth how dark was their condition, they were captives in the kingdom of darkness. Satan, sin and death held them fast: "Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord."

"Thou hast the dew of thy youth." This is speaking of Christ. "My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand." Christ, and his church in him, hath immortal youth, they shall never grow old. In the beauties of holiness Christ and the church are one, and altogether lovely; they shall live for ever and ever. No sin, therefore no corruption, no decay, no wrinkles or blemishes or any such thing shall ever come upon Christ and his church.

"Thou hast the dew of thy youth." What sacred mysteries the gospel declares. Look at this, Christ and the church are one, (Eph. v. 31, 32,) and his body, the church, being under the guilt, the stain, the curse of their iniquities, he came in the fullness of time to save his people from their sins. Thus when in his spotless manhood he took upon himself our transgressions, to make atonement for them, he descended with all our infirmities, all our sicknesses, all our sins upon him; he made himself of no reputation; he took all our shame. He stood before his bride, and for her sake he hid not himself from shame and spitting. He was her shield from all ignominy and everlasting reproach; it fell upon him. Our Head, our Lover, our Surety, humbled himself and became obedient even unto death; he was made a curse for us. Thus he descended with all our woes, all our wrinkles, blemishes and spots upon him, but he purged them away in the shedding of his precious blood. "He died unto sin once." This was enough, for by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. And when he arose from the tomb how glorious and triumphant was he. He dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him. Never more shall Christ suffer for our

sins; he came forth in immortal youth; his visage is no longer marred, his form no more bowed down with anguish beneath the curse of our sins; the travail of his soul is over. How blessed! His eyes no longer flow with tears, his body is no more baptized with bloody sweat, all his sighs and groans are spent, for he poured out his soul unto death and redeemed his church from hell, and now by faith we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor. (Heb. ii. 9.) Then, as he is, so are we, in this world accounted unto God. (1 John iv. 17.) "Ye are complete in him." In union with Christ is all our beauty, and we shall reign in life by him. This is our destination for which we are apprehended of Christ Jesus. (Phil. iii. 12.) "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." Like him? Yes, we shall bear the image of the heavenly, we shall be glorified together with him. Now, in our earthly estate our bodies are weak, they decay, they are corruptible and die, but when the Lord shall descend with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, he will quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit that now dwelleth in us, and we shall be changed, and we shall be raised incorruptible, fashioned like unto the glorious body of our risen Savior.

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

KIRKLAND, Tenn., Dec. 7, 1900.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed find a letter from dear Elder D. Bartley, which seems to me to be according to godliness. We have the same errors to fight that the apostles fought. Their weapons were not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, so let ours be. Those things which cannot be shaken will remain, but those things that can be, will fall out in due time. God's foundation is sure, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." I thank God for the truth that is published in the SIGNS: persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in its pages the dying of the Lord Jesus; showing his resurrection from the dead; his unlimited foreknowledge and predestination. It seems to me when I cease to believe in the doctrine set forth by Elder Gilbert Beebe, who began to preach and write before I came into this world, and also that which is taught at this time in the SIGNS, by its editors and correspondents, I will cease to believe in anything. Let me have an unlimited God, or none, for there is no other.

J. K. WOMACK.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Dec. 3, 1900.

ELDER J. K. WOMACK—MY DEAR BROTHER:—When your last brotherly letter came I was very busy, and now I am bad off with bronchitis, so that I am too weary and dull to write, but will tell you that I was glad to get yours. You write sadly, much as I feel, and would give an unpromising answer if asked, "Watchman, what of the night? what of the night?" But Peter said, "Though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of

your faith, even the salvation of your souls." Is not this true in your experience? The Lord says, "I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." What a rich mercy that he hath chosen us at all! and how divine the blessing that he hath refined us, even though it be in the fiery furnace. Would those who would limit the Holy One in his counsel and purpose, admit that he foreordained the furnace of affliction in which he chose his people? If they admit this, then they must admit as well that his predetermined purpose embraced the ungodly conduct of the persecutors of his people, for they largely make up the furnace of affliction. So it is written, "The Lord hath commanded concerning Jacob, that his adversaries should be round about him." The Lord hath commanded it so. There is no escape from it, therefore. How gladly we would have it different, dear brother, for we find it very trying and humiliating to be thus surrounded, and to find ourselves in such a heated furnace. But should any deny that the God of the eternal purpose, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, has thus foreordained and commanded that our adversaries should be round about us as a furnace of affliction, for the trial of our faith, then they must also deny that the Lord hath chosen his people at all, because as certainly as he chose them it was in the furnace. Not a pleasant place, is it, to be in? Then how about always walking in the light and escaping affliction by good works of obedience? What saint has ever done so on earth? It will not do, my brother, because revelation and experience alike contradict it. This teaching is phariseeism, and it agrees with the mocking words and teachings of poor, afflicted Job's miserable comforters. The good Physician says, "For the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." So here is hope for you, and for all the poor in spirit and contrite in heart, who have no righteousness to plead, nor merit wherewith to buy the Lord's mercies and blessing, which they so much need. These must come to the throne of grace, that they may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need, which is all the time, for they can never claim the least crumb of favor and blessing as a reward for their good works in serving the Lord. But they must humbly confess with Paul and say, "For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. * * * O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Here is promise and hope for you, dear brother, for you can say again with Paul, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

"In the world ye shall have tribulation," says the Prince of peace. But to offset this he also says, "But be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." He overcame it for us, and his victory is ours in him. Yea, dear brother, "So by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Therefore, the obedience which God accepts and blesses us for is the perfect work of Christ, his beloved Son, for us. No other obedience under the shining sun is at all meritorious in God's account, but the "finished" work of the suffering and obedient Lamb of God possesses infinite merit; yea, more valuable and precious in God's esteem than all the glories and riches of the boundless universe.

O, then, why should the saints not be always swallowed up in the contemplation of our Lord's perfect work of finished re-

demption, and say, with a poet, "We only wish to speak of him who lived, and died, and reigns for us? We'll talk of all he did and said and suffered for us here below; the path he marked for us to tread, and what he's doing for us now." For if our souls were thus inspired with his love, and satisfied with his grace, there would be no desire or room in our minds and hearts to make a blowinghorn of, or sound a trumpet before us to herald what we are doing for the Lord. Far more honoring is it to him, and in line with the primitive saints, to ever be testifying, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." Thus moved and filled with the mercy and grace of God toward us, we should be "to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Thus grace is all in this full salvation of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Hence, speak we of obedience to our Lord, it is the obedience of faith and love, and these are the fruit of the Spirit, and the gift of God's grace. So, after Paul labored more abundantly than all the apostles of Christ in preaching the gospel, he disclaimed the least ability or merit of himself, and said, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." If all the preachers in your country had thus taught and preached, and ever magnified the grace of God, as did Paul, think you, brother Womack, that there would have been such a contention and distress in all that country as has confused and scattered the sheep of the good Shepherd? I tell you, nay; for it would have comforted and united in fellowship all the poor sinners saved by grace. This simple truth cannot be disguised, or denied, for all know that the gospel of the grace of God, when believed and preached and walked in, has never yet made a contention and division among the Lord's people who are saved by grace, and it never will. What, then, has made all the confusion, mourning and sorrow among you all? Read Acts xv., and Paul's letter to the churches of Galatia, and you shall plainly see that then and there the doctrine and principle of conditions was first introduced among the believers in Christ, as an addition to the grace of Christ; and it was the propagation and insistence of this principle, which denied the sufficiency of the grace of God in Christ, that made all the trouble in those churches then. In proof of this the apostles in counsel said, "But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved." Not the least intimation then about two ways or principles of salvation, or two salvations; one by grace, the other of works; one everlasting, the other in time; but the only dispute was the doctrine and principle of salvation; and the decision of all the apostles and the church was, as above. The other party were the advocates of conditional salvation in part for believers in Christ. This is the contention and the source of the trouble now, as it was then, and has been all through the history of the church. It is simply a covert denial of our dear Lord's word to his servant Paul: "My grace is sufficient for thee." For as certainly as it was sufficient for Paul in his perils, persecutions, temptations and unparalleled labors, sacrifices and hardships, so it is ever sufficient for all who are saved by his grace. Nothing else is sufficient.

Believing that through the grace of Christ we shall be saved, yours in love,

D. BARTLEY.

McEwen, Tenn., Dec. 16, 1901.

Dear Readers of the Signs of the Times:—To-day finds me at home, my health not sufficiently good enough to be out among the saints of God. While thus sheltered from the cold, my mind is wandering in far distant lands. It seems that I can feel a tender love within me for the Lord's children everywhere. I ask, Is it the "unfeigned love," spoken of in the Scripture? If so, it is the love of God. It is said in the Scriptures that "Love is of God, and whosoever loveth God loveth his brother also." And again, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." How blessed is that people who love their holy Lord! They love him because he first loved them. They love God because God gave them his love. Precious children, there was once a time with you that you did not love God. You were dead in trespasses and sins; you could not love God because you did not have this love; you did not want to love him; you perhaps thought that you would love him some time in the future, that it was an act of yours, and you could begin it at your own convenience. But ah, children, your own time was always in the future; you loved the pleasures of this world, and you had no fear of God before your eyes. You could not feel the danger awaiting you, for you were dead in sin, and loved its joys. God loved you even when ye were dead in sin. How sinful, and yet how unconcerned you were! "God is love," and it was he that kept you alive until his own appointed time to make you alive. You were enemies to God by wicked works, but Jesus died. The Lord quickened you when dead. O what a sinner you were. You now have a knowledge of what you had been all your life. Your heart was broken and you wept and mourned; you wanted to love God, but O how depraved you were; your sins like mountains arose before you, and you were lost and ruined forever; you often went to some secreted spot where no eye could see, or ear could hear but God's, and there bowed beneath a load of sin and guilt, to pour out your soul to God in prayer. Poor, sin-sick soul, condemned by God's holy law.

Precious saints, you were thus made to feel the need of God's everlasting love to save you from being forever lost. You lost your life by trying to save it. You were completely worked out of works, and gave up all for lost. How sad and awful you felt; this was the darkest hour of all your life. Did you get to this point at your own "free-will"? No, no, but grace has shown you your true condition: a lost and ruined sinner, destitute of everything good within yourself. The Lord just here sheds abroad his love in your heart, the darkness gives way, and you love your Lord. Matchless, boundless love! Jesus died for me!

O, precious children, how blessedly sweet to feel an interest in God's everlasting love bestowed on poor, hell-deserving sinners. O, that we could praise the Lord enough for his wonderful works toward poor sinners like we feel ourselves to be.

I so often feel cast down and think I have no grace, but I hope that I have realized God's love toward me. One of the best evidences I have is, I do love the poor, trembling saints. How I do love to hear them speak of their sorrow and grief. This touches my experience, for I am so much cast down, and so often feel sad and lonely. If I ever have any real joy it is when the Lord freely gives it to me. If I ever do a good work, or think

a good thought, it is when the Lord's grace and love constraineth me. "The love of God constraineth us," saith Paul.

Stop

Now, children, another year is almost gone, and we are nearing our eternal home. O for a heart to praise our God for his fatherly care and keeping through another year.

One year ago I was nearly gone on account of inflammation of the knee-joint, and I have never fully recovered, cannot work to do any good, but God has spared my unprofitable life for one more year. I feel that he has lengthened my days as he did Hezekiah's, and I feel to say, as did Hezekiah, "The Lord has done it." I cannot feel that I have merited such a favor, but it is of free and sovereign grace.

I was much comforted in reading the editorial of Elder F. A. Chick's, in the SIGNS of December 1st. I have for some time felt to see a distinction between the law and the gospel, but never could tell it so plainly as dear brother Chick has written it. O that it may please the Lord to give the knowledge of this difference to the conditional brethren. I think that they would then be truly prepared to "rightly divide the word of truth," as saith Paul, instead of dividing salvation, or making time salvation wholly of works, and depending upon poor, trembling saints, who feel that they are but "perfect weakness." I truly believe that our God will show many of them this distinction in his own time, and cause them to shed penitential tears for having left the plain and simple gospel of grace, and followed a gospel of works. I have confidence in many of them, and I believe that God will bring them back to his fold again. I hope that I can feelingly say, "The will of God be done" in this matter. I am constrained to believe that God omnipotent reigneth supremely, both in heaven and in earth.

O, what a joy I felt in reading the letter of Eliza and John T. Walker, to their church in Eastbourne, England, asking for a letter of dismission, to remove their membership to the church in Washington, D. C. I believe that the love they manifest in their letter is the love of God, which flows from the throne, and binds the hearts of God's people together, and makes them worship the one God, though in distant lands they dwell.

After having read the remarks of our beloved editor concerning the misfortune of brother J. T Rowe, in the loss of his brother, the words, "Your brother in sorrow," caused a heart-felt sympathy to arise with me, though I am a stranger in the flesh to brother Rowe.

Many times have I been comforted in bygone days in reading after dear brother Elder John Rowe. Though he is dead, yet in my memory he liveth. I never saw him, but I can tell but little difference in my love, or the love which I have for those faithful soldiers whom I have seen, and those whom I have not seen, but have read after and been comforted by them, through grace. This causes me to hope that I possess the love which is of God, and unites me in christian love and heart-felt sympathy with the saints in all the world. Yes, children, this precious love goes back and unites us with the prophets and holy apostles of Jesus, and causes us to look forward beyond the river with a longing desire to praise our dear, loving Redeemer when life's journey is over. It is there, dear, loved children, I long to meet you and be one among you in the city of God.

This is an awkwardly worded letter, but I felt that I wanted to send you a token of love at the close of 1901. It

may be the last that I will write, and this is my second article that I have written for the SIGNS, except a few obituary notices.

Yours in sweet hope,

J. R. HATCHER.

HAVANA, Kansas, Dec. 9, 1901.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I very much desire to write something that will be to your soul's spiritual comfort, but I feel my unworthiness, and fear that I am not capable of writing anything that will do you any good. Yet I am so impressed it seems I must write to get rid of the burden. Sometimes we are strengthened and blessed when reading the communications of those of like precious faith, as well as under the preached word, when our Lord manifests his love and mercy so sweetly to us. The presence of God brings with it a foretaste of heaven into the soul. I have spent many pleasant hours reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I love it with all my heart; I love the experimental truth it sets forth, for it corresponds with what I believe the Lord has taught me. I believe it to be an invaluable paper, and a blessing to the household of faith. I feel thankful that the Lord puts it into the hearts of some of our dear kindred to write for our precious family paper, I know it has gladdened many a weary heart; I speak from experience. Often I have walked in the wilderness, and my heart was burdened, and after reading the SIGNS, the darkness was made light, and crooked things straight; the burden that had been so heavy was made light, and again I rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory. I often think I would like to write to some of the correspondents whom I have never met face to face, only to tell them that I love them for the truth's sake. I have a home with the dear Old Baptists, and it seems to me it is such a sweet rest. I can never forget that perfect contentment which filled my soul the day I was received in their fellowship; every earthly care was forgotten; I felt I was "No more a stranger or a guest, but like a child at home." I was "Gathered into the fold, with believers enrolled." They were all so good and kind, and received me with such warmth and love, as the saints are capable of showing, and as if they loved me and were glad. I believe they love me still, although I am very unworthy; I am sure I love them. We learn experimentally that without Christ we can do nothing, as we are brought into deep waters where there is no standing. We are instructed to count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations. I would say to those who stand outside the fold, If you have a desire to be numbered with God's people, do not let your feeling of unworthiness keep you away. Jesus came into the world to save sinners. It is indeed a matter of great rejoicing to hear of the dear ones being gathered into the fold of the Redeemer. Will you not take up the cross and follow in the footsteps of our dear Savior? Jesus says, Take my yoke and learn of me, and ye shall find rest. The pardoning love of the Lord is very sweet.

Sometimes it seems embarrassing for the timid one to stand up and "talk to the church," and let them decide whether they can receive them or not. In nine cases out of ten the church already knows about their experience. Then if they feel that God for Christ's sake has forgiven their sins, and they do not trust in their own good deeds for salvation, and that their only hope is in Jesus, would it not be sufficient for the church to extend the hand of fellowship? In our faith

and order there are no attractions for the worldly, and when one comes to us in this way, we feel sure they have been taught of the Lord, and love to follow in his footsteps.

Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with the Son Jesus Christ. "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in christian love."

May the grace of God lead, guide and direct us all in the path of duty, and enable us to follow our Savior in humility and submission.

Dear brethren editors, I submit this to your judgment, whether you publish it or not all will be right with me, or if there is any part of it not right, please omit it. I would be glad if you would not publish my name.

Yours unworthily in hope of eternal life,

(MRS.) T. R. PITTMAN.

JOHN XIII. 14.

"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet."

In our every day life, with its trials and cares, we are called to walk the way of man's duty. Hindered by temptations we stumble over rough places, and go astray in the dark. Some of us go in forbidden places and soil our feet, figuratively speaking, with the things of the world. When we are brought together it is needful that some loving brother apply the water of the word, admonish us, that our feet may be washed, and we be made to walk more carefully. Again, a brother may have had to walk a thorny path and over rough places, so that with bleeding feet he sits among us, then the water of the word cools and cleanses his feet, he is cheered by the wine of joy, and the balm of Gilead heals the wounds of his heart. That one goes away strengthened, to bless the place where he maketh his flock to rest.

One woman washed the Savior's feet with her tears, and a like service is rendered by the humble service of the sisters and mothers of Israel to-day. Many of us feel and see the sweet but strong influence of woman as she in her love tries to cleanse from us the filth of the world. So we ought to wash one another's feet: admonish in love, comfort and serve others, in their walk through the wilderness of trouble and temptation.

Some seem to go into such filthy places, and bring into the house such loathsome things that for a time they must be set outside; to pass through the fire, or be shaken in the devil's sifter. The weary pilgrim seeks a place of rest, and it is a friend indeed who ministers to his wants, and serves him lovingly in all things. Jesus in word and in deed taught this loving service. The work he has done for us must be shown forth by our service to others, for as he works in us, so will it be manifested in our walk.

On this occasion he has appointed a place for the meeting, and sat with them as he also does with his chosen ones to-day. Then at the chosen time and place did they eat the passover with the bitter herbs of sorrow. Then he girded himself and taught them that they must be washed. At last Judas having received the sop went out, and it was night. Was it not the last night of the legal dispensation? Christ must go down into the death of the cross, and come up from the darkness of the tomb, leading his people out of darkness into the glorious liberty of the children of God, that they might be with him where he was, and behold his glory. Thus he taught that he would be with them to feed, cleanse and lead them. And as he served them, so

must they serve and love each other; put away the filth of the flesh. When in love a brother is prevailed upon to cease from that which is an injury to him, and a reproach to the cause, a sinner is converted from the error of his way; a soul saved from death (or separation from the church) and a multitude of sins hidden. Thus are the members of the body cleansed, and the prodigals brought home again, and dressed in the best clean robes of humility. To do this for a brother requires love, courage, humbleness, in fact the fruit of the Spirit, "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law." Those we love we try to save and serve.

God grant us power and guide us in the right way, that we may "Wash one another's feet." Peace be with us all.

I trust I am your brother,

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.

LAWRENCEBURG, Ky.

COVINGTON, Ga., Dec. 16, 1901.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—In renewing my subscription for the SIGNS I wish to express my appreciation of the firm and uncompromising stand it takes in defense of the truth. Occasionally I receive copies of other periodicals claiming to be Primitive Baptists, but when I begin to examine them I fear they are more inclined to assail the truth than they are to comfort and edify the saints. Their attacks seem to be directed especially against the two points of doctrine, God's predestination, and salvation by grace alone. If obedience is the price of temporal salvation, then the power that moves us to obedience must come from one of two sources: it must be either of the flesh or of the Spirit. If of the flesh, then it must partake of the source from whence it comes, for Christ said to Nicodemus, "That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit." And the inspired apostle plainly tells us that these are contrary one to the other. There is no harmony, union or peace between them; there is constant warfare, and will continue to be until we lay aside the body of this death, and awake in the likeness of our risen Redeemer. Then, and not till then, will this warfare cease with the redeemed of the Lord.

If I am not deceived, it appears to me that the most humble and faithful saints of God that I have ever known, are those who have suffered most, and who by the grace of God are enabled to see their own vileness and inability to render any obedience within themselves for which they would dare to claim any of his blessings, whether temporal or eternal, but rather with the psalmist would say, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake." Hence I conclude that if any feel or think that they are capable in and of themselves of rendering any obedience that will merit temporal salvation, they are mistaken. I believe there is but one salvation, and that is sufficient for this life, and for the life to come, and is like its author, from everlasting to everlasting, and was manifestly wrought when Christ the Son of God gave up the ghost, and said, "It is finished." Then and there he by this one offering forever perfected them that are sanctified.

I rejoice to believe that they are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

Trusting that what I have written is in harmony with the word of God, and also

with the experience of the saints, I close, with best wishes for the success of the SIGNS, and with love and fellowship for brethren and sisters who so ably contribute to its columns. I remain your brother in hope,

EDWARD HEARD.

BARTLETT, Neb., Sept. 21, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It seems to me that I am lost without the SIGNS, it is meat and drink to my soul; I love to hear from the dear kindred in Christ, although I have met but few of them. I read so many good letters that tell my own travels so much better that I can myself, that I have a love for the writers which Satan, with all his combined host, cannot drown. When it pleases the Almighty to give me an assurance that I am one of his, I can say, Thanks be to his holy name for implanting his love in my heart. This enables me to be in sweet fellowship with his dear people all over the world. Although strangers in the flesh, and separated by many miles, yet we are one in faith and doctrine. I have many dark and dreary hours. But when my poor heart goes out in sweet meditation, and I can believe that here I have no continuing city, but that by faith I am seeking one to come, and I can look beyond this world of trials and tribulations, then I can, and do at times, rejoice, but it seems like a tiresome journey, and I feel as though I am but seldom in the right road as I should be. It is but just now and then, if at all.

Sometimes I feel that I am a poor, deluded sinner, and am in much distress of mind, searching for some evidences to confirm me that I am a subject of grace, yet when I look back upon my past life with its afflictions and troubles, I find that the grace of God has upheld me, and that it is my hope and salvation. "By the grace of God I am what I am." My prayer is that God will keep me at the foot of the cross, believing in and declaring Jesus as the way and the truth and the life. He alone can reach the case of this poor, undone sinner. This arm of flesh is too weak to be a staff to me; it may do for those who never felt themselves to be sinners, but as for me the Lord Jesus Christ alone is my strength and my Redeemer.

Blessed be the name of the Lord, it is my heart's desire to do the will of the Master, but I come so far short of it many times. I ask an interest in the prayers of all those who may read this, for myself and for our little church, that she may flourish as the rose, and always be kept in peace. What a pleasure it is to meet and be with the brethren; it brings rejoicing to me. I often wish for the time to come when parting will be no more. To be with those who love God is such a blessing to me. I am not fit to be numbered with them, and I often think that I will ask them to exclude me, for I believe that if I am not a fit subject for the church, I ought not to be there. I would not harm one of the little ones, and if I were out of the church I should travel alone as I do now; I do not desire to be in the way of the people of God, but I feel alone in the world.

Now, brother Beebe and all, my prayer is that you may live long, and still continue to send forth the SIGNS, for it comes to me heavily laden with good things for the scattered flock of our God. It is next to the Bible with me. It is edifying and comforting to hear from the scattered flock, even if we have never met face to face. We do not feel to be strangers to one another, for so many sing the same song, and give to God all

the glory. Please look over my imperfections, I only intended to write a line or two when I began. May God bless all his saints, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

A. B. HARPER.

GREEN RIDGE, Mo., Dec. 24, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—You will see by the little slip how far I am in arrears with my subscription to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which I esteem next to my Bible, for I find nothing contended for in them but what is in harmony with the word of God, if I am any judge, which I often doubt, but I sometimes hope that the blessed Lord in great mercy has been pleased to give poor me a limited knowledge of the truth, for which I hope I am thankful; I desire to be. His mercies have followed me all the days of my life, wholly unmerited, for this evil heart of mine runs to evil continually, so that nothing short of the mercy of a gracious and merciful God could have reached my case. Then how can I praise him enough? I hope by his grace to be enabled to render thankful praise to some extent at least.

I am in my eightieth year since the 10th of October last, have been afflicted with rheumatism and heart failure for the last ten years so that I am a burden to my children. I gave up all my property to them. They are all Methodists and Campbellites, and it seems to me they hate the truth, hence deny me the money to pay for the SIGNS, is the reason I am in arrears with my subscription. I shall feel at a great loss without them, but you cannot afford to publish them for nothing, so you had better stop sending them to me till I am able to pay you for your labor. I shall esteem you just as highly. If I can ever get hold of the money I will send it to you. I have heard two sermons preached since last March.

With much love, truly your well wisher and brother, I hope,

B. F. CRAIG.

RICH HILL, Mo., Dec. 10, 1901.

MY DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—The time has come for me to renew my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; it comes to me laden with the gospel of Christ; it is like a good bell, it has the right sound. I thought I must add my little mite. My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me, and none shall pluck them out of my Father's hand. Is he not glorious then?

My dear brethren and sisters, let me follow after thee; if it is far away, give the bell the right sound, and if I am wandering in the dark, I will go on knowing the darkness is in me. I read the editorials in every paper, knowing they have the right sound. I can see no difference in the doctrine to-day and what it was years ago.

Brethren, you whom God has placed on the walls of Zion, cry aloud, and spare not, tell my people of their sins, give the bell the right sound, as our old fathers in Israel did, and we will follow on until we meet in that haven of rest, where we shall see God and be like him.

Yours in Christ,

MARTHA J. GILBERT.

LEAD HILL, Ark., Dec. 6, 1901.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—I want to write you a few lines to let you know how I appreciate the SIGNS.

Our country is almost ruined with the drought this year; nothing made. I thought I would try to pay up and ask you to stop my paper, but I kept trying, and finally got the money to pay up to the end of this year. I get a paper often that seems worth the subscription price.

Brother H. M. Curry's piece in regard to his trip to Texas, was worth more than the price of the SIGNS to me, as I had visited that association myself, three years ago, and found them a sound, lovely band of brethren and sisters. Then sister Sarah Runkle's letter, concerning their association, was a precious letter to me. But old brother Gilbert Beebe's editorial on the text Isaiah xxxiii. 20–22, "Look upon Zion," &c., was the most comforting piece I ever read, and many others, which space forbids me to mention.

I will say, The Baptists are in peace here, and they indorse the SIGNS.

I have had the pleasure of baptizing six of God's little ones since July 4th, in the fellowship of Enon Church, and two into the fellowship of Little Hope Church.

If you see fit to publish any part of this letter, do so, if not, all right. It is not written for that purpose.

Remember me, a poor, little, unworthy brother, if one at all,

WM. J. CASEY.

SYRACUSE, Kansas, June 9, 1901.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—Through the kindness of some dear brother or sister, I have been blessed with the privilege of reading your good paper, for the last eight months. We have never been able to learn who it was that had the SIGNS sent to us. May the Lord bless whoever it may be that has sent us such a soul-cheering present as the dear old SIGNS. We have spent many happy hours during the last eight months in reading the precious letters which have been written by our dear kindred who are scattered throughout this world of sorrow and affliction. O, how it does cheer our doubting souls when we read so many precious letters, from different ones, who can tell our experiences better than we can tell them ourselves. Many times when I have been hungry and thirsting for the bread and water of the Spirit, the blessed Savior has been pleased to send some sweet manna through the SIGNS, which was comforting to me indeed. Jesus said, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." And again he said, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." How these Scriptures do cheer my heart at times when I am low in spirit. I have so many doubts and fears, and am often made to ask, O, is there any one like me? I can but say it is by the grace of God that I am what I am. I have no righteousness of my own to plead, nor anything good in myself of which to boast. I am but a poor, weak sinner. As the Savior said in the days of his flesh, so must I say, "Of mine ownself I can do nothing." But I am willing to put all my trust in God, believing that he will do what is right, and that he works all things after the counsel of his own will.

Dear brethren, you will find inclosed one dollar for the SIGNS another six months, after which time we hope to be able to remit you yearly, for we cannot do without them, they are next to the Bible with us. Now may the Lord watch over us and guide us through this low ground of sorrow, and when we are done with this life I hope that we may meet at Jesus' feet, and there from sorrow, toil and sin we shall be free, and perfect love and friendship reign through all eternity.

From an unworthy sister if one at all,

(MRS.) A. E. HURST.

[IT is by the coming of assurances like these in the above letter that we are encouraged to go on in the work of publishing the SIGNS. Often we feel greatly discouraged because of our own unfitness

and unprofitableness, and we do not see how it is possible that the Lord can use us to the good of his people and to his declarative glory. Beside many other discouragements beset us from time to time. Such letters as the above do therefore greatly encourage us.—ED.]

DYE, Texas, Dec. 11, 1901.

G. BEEBE'S SON:—I am reminded that my subscription has expired, and I will send what little help I can, as I do not feel like I can do without them, and with it I desire to tell to the dear editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, how much I appreciate the dear old family paper, for I do feel many times in reading it that it belongs to the whole family of God, and that the dear editors are the chosen vessels in his hands, and that is one great plan in which he has ordained that his children should be comforted. Though my poor, weak mind and pen fails to tell how much comfort and encouragement I have received in reading the blessed truth contained in the SIGNS, I want to say to the dear brethren and sisters who write for its columns, to write on, for if they could know how much comfort they are to a poor, weak, ignorant mortal, as I am, they would certainly feel repaid. O, I feel if I could only write as the rest, I would spend many lonely hours in writing, but it would only be my poor complainings, which none would care to hear. But, dear brethren Beebe and Chick, I do feel that there never was a time when the truth was more needed, for there are so many that claim the name of Primitive Baptists, that cannot stand the truth; but there are yet a few names of us here who are not afraid of the doctrine of the Bible, or the "Beebeites" either, and we have been wonderfully blessed with a sound and faithful pastor, Elder J. A. Campbell, for twenty years, who has now sold out and is going to move away, and O, how it rends our hearts to think of it, for we had all learned to love him almost to idolatry. But we believe that God has a purpose in all things, and hope to be reconciled to his will in all things.

Well, I must bring this to a close, and if you see fit to publish this please correct mistakes, and forgive me for trespassing on your valuable time, and do not let it crowd out more important matter; and may the good Lord bless the dear editors and contributors to the dear old SIGNS, and keep us all from error, is the prayer of your little sister,

(MRS.) S. E. ELLIS.

PRESCOT, Wash., Dec. 14, 1901.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—By the request of many brethren I will ask for a little space in your paper. This is to all who desire to know how we are.

We left Warrensburg, Mo., November 26th, and landed here at Prescot, Wash., the 29th. We had a very pleasant trip, and were met at the train by several of our friends and brethren, and were taken out to William Hays' by himself and his wife. She is a member of the Baptists, and we stayed with them until we moved home, which was the 4th of December, and we were well cared for by them, for which I feel thankful. There are some Baptists in this neighborhood, and there are others who have a good hope. I feel to hope they, too, will go with us when opportunity is afforded. I visited a little church last Saturday and Sunday at Touchet, and met Elder Gilmore and brother Acors at this meeting. The brethren at this place have been without a pastor for some time; they requested me to serve them, which I will try to do,

if the Lord will, on the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, in each month. I also visited Elder Mayfield while I was there last fall, also brethren at Lagrande, Oregon. The Baptists in the west are all sound in the faith, as far as I have learned; all seem to be of one mind. The Elders I have met are able defenders of the doctrine of grace, and are heartily received by the brethren.

We are all very well pleased with our new home. The weather has been very damp since we landed, so we have not been round much yet.

I will close by saying to the dear ones I left behind, Be of good cheer, for it is only a few more days, or weeks, or years, at most, until we will meet to part no more. Our heavenly Father has promised his grace to us as long as we have to battle with the sorrows of this life, and you know his sweet grace has been all to us in the past. Then let us still hope in God. His blessings on all, is my prayer. Love to all the saints.

J. T. BARNES.

BROOME CENTRE, N. Y., Dec. 26, 1901.

B. L. BEEBE AND WIFE—VERY DEAR AND PRECIOUS BROTHER AND SISTER:—Feeling my unworthiness, a doubt arises in my mind, yes, a very grave and serious one, as to my using the phrase, "brother and sister." I have often had many serious reflections when writing some of the family, whether it was proper and right for me to claim this relation, and to-night it comes to me anew, and so vivid that I am made to fear and tremble. I feel in and of myself I am very, very far from being the character that should use such an expression, but bear with me this once, for some unknown hand or power has given you both a very warm place in my heart. I often, yes, very often, think of you and the sweet seasons I have had with you, and of your feelings shown my poor boy I never shall forget. Also I think of your poor health, and the care and anxiety you have over the best publication in America, my way of thinking. All of these things and circumstances pass through my mind quite often.

Well, brother Beebe, I find as one day goes, so goes another, I get no better, grow rather the worse; I am very restless and so uneven, on the mountain top or down in the valley. The Lord has been very merciful to me all my days; yea, my hiding place in all generations, and O, such an ungrateful heart as I have for all his blessings. I have hoped to see you long before this, but no way has been opened for a long time. I have had a great desire to visit you and attend your covenant meeting. This may all be of the flesh, but I know there is a drawing. May the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, sustain and keep you as seemeth good in his sight.

Yours in christian fellowship,

D. W. LEONARD.

ARENA, N. Y., Dec. 30, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—While I am writing to renew my subscription to our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I wish to express my appreciation of the same. I have been an interested reader of this paper for thirty-nine years, and to my understanding it advocates the same truths that it did then. The glad tidings it proclaims give no uncertain sound: 'tis Jesus the way, the truth and the life, the only hope of lost and ruined sinners. It is the same doctrine I have heard your venerable father proclaim with demonstration of the Spirit and with great power, and many other old veterans of the cross, who did valiant service for the

Captain of their salvation; who buckled on the whole christian armor, and made no compromise with error. I have seen a few other Baptist periodicals, but the old, reliable SIGNS is my preference.

In conclusion, I must wish the editors and contributors all a happy and prosperous new year, and may you long be spared to wield "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," is the prayer of your unworthy sister in hope of eternal life,

JULANA H. DICKSON.

DELPHI, N. Y., Dec. 27, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I again inclose two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; they are a great comfort to me, keeping me in sweet remembrance of all the way, I hope and trust, the Lord has led me. I am in full fellowship with the doctrine set forth both by the writers, and you, dear brethren. Those who write of the pleadings of the Scriptures I do not understand, for I understand the Lord commands, but does not plead. The pleading idea I fear has the "mark of the beast," but I am not a judge in the house of the Lord, but ask the Lord's mercies every day of my life, for I sin continually. O, how merciful is the Lord to me, for I still have hope in his love, all praise be to his holy name. I most earnestly desire that you may be kept by the power of God in all truth.

J. E. TAPNER.

WESTON, Mich., Dec. 22, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Please find three dollars from my mother, Lydia C. Wyman, for the indigent fund. I wish to say to you God-speed; may the God of Abraham be with you, to wield "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon;" to declare the righteousness of God which is by faith to the building up of Zion, to the strengthening of the weak and feeble, the halt, the lame, and those that are without strength. May the dear Lord put it in the hearts of all his dear children to subscribe for the dear old SIGNS. Yes, dear brethren, why be ashamed to support the ablest and best Old School Baptist paper in America; one whose principles have withstood the pelting storms of her adversaries for nearly seventy years. Let every one who bears the name of Old School Baptist subscribe for the ablest edited Old School Baptist paper in the world.

Yours in love,

T. J. WYMAN.

CLINTON, N. J., Dec. 30, 1901.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed please find two dollars for another year's subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. When I sent the last, one year ago, I thought it would be the last time, but here I am yet tugging along in my eighty-seventh year. I do not know anything, the Lord knows all. I cannot do without the SIGNS, that paper is so dear to me; it has so many able writers, and the editorials are so rich, and as I do not get to meeting very often, the most of the preaching I get is from the SIGNS. I hope you may be long spared to do your duty as a servant of God, for I believe for that purpose you are spared.

With respect to you and all the household of God,

M. HULSIZER.

HOOVERS RUN, Pa., Dec. 17, 1901.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find four dollars to pay for the SIGNS another year. I wish I could tell you how much we love the reading that the precious paper contains. It is just what my heart loves and believes, and it seems a long

time between issues. We love the doctrine that gives God all the glory, for he has all power in heaven and upon earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? I hope the Lord may be with you, and the SIGNS may still prosper.

Yours unworthily,

LOUISA M. STEWART.

TOUCHET, Wash., Dec. 14, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed you will find money order for two dollars to renew my subscription to the dear old SIGNS for another year. It is now over a half century since I commenced reading it. And if there is any change in the doctrinal sentiment in it, I am not wise enough to detect it. I hope you will be well sustained in its publication.

Yours in hope,

R. CUMMINS, M. D.

RICHMOND, Ind., Jan. 3, 1902.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—Please find inclosed two dollars for the renewal of the SIGNS another year. I am now in my eighty-first year, and have read the good old SIGNS back to the beginning, and find no change in them, or the shadow of turning. I have always sincerely desired the truth, and in them I have found it as I verily believe.

Your brother in hope,

HENRY STIGLEMAN.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Dec. 24, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—Inclosed you will find two dollars to renew my subscription to the dear old SIGNS, which I enjoy reading so very much, though I have not been reading them so very long. I was in the Methodist church for thirty-six years, and have only been with the dear Old Baptists five years. O, I thank the good Lord that he has brought me to see the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

Your sister in hope, saved by grace, if saved at all,

ANNIE M. SMITH.

MARSHALL, Ind., Dec. 31, 1901.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BROTHER:—My father, Alexander Elder, commenced taking the SIGNS sixty-seven years ago, and it has been coming to our home ever since. I have no cause to complain now, as I think your paper is just like it always was in regard to the doctrines upheld so well. Inclosed find two dollars for another year's subscription.

Your brother,

JAMES M. ELDER.

MT. VERNON, Texas, Jan. 3, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I inclose herewith post-office money order for two dollars, which please place to credit of Mrs. M. A. Stringer, Mt. Vernon, Texas. This aged sister has been for many years a subscriber of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and an admirer, too. She was left a widow some two or three years ago, when her husband, Elder W. B. Stringer, passed away. She told me that she thought as a matter of economy she would have to drop the paper, but on reading the last number before her time expired, she was so comforted she decided she could not do without it, so has continued.

Hoping that the blessing of the Lord may continue to rest on you, I remain yours unworthily,

H. B. JONES.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER J. A. Campbell and Lizzie Campbell having changed their address from Sunset, to Tolbert, Texas, request their correspondents to address them at the latter place.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1902.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED.

(Matt. xiii. 31; Mark iv. 31; Luke xiii. 19.)

IN Matthew it reads as follows: "Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest of herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof."

Brother Frank Terry, of Philadelphia, Pa., has requested us to write concerning this parable, and while we feel willing to try to comply with the wishes of brethren with regard to such requests when we can do so, yet we often hesitate because of a sense of our own lack of understanding, and because we do not always feel as though any given Scripture has been given to us as our own, so that what we might say concerning it would have the unction that comes out of a personal, experimental knowledge of the subject; and all writing or preaching without this is but dry to the spiritual hearer. And we also often hesitate because we feel sure that as a rule that one upon whom the Spirit of God has fastened some certain Scripture, has come into a far deeper understanding of its meaning than has been given to ourself. All this we feel to be true concerning this parable to which brother Terry has called our attention, yet there are some things clear in our mind, and we do not feel that it is right to withhold what does seem clear to us.

First. This parable is recorded by three of the evangelists. They do not vary essentially in the terms in which it is stated. About the only difference in the three narratives is that Luke omits the expression, "which is the least of all seeds."

Second. It occurs in the midst of a cluster of parables which according to Matthew number seven. Mark and Luke omit several of these parables in their narratives. In our own mind this parable has always stood in connection with the one which follows it, the parable of the leaven hid in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened. The latter seems to present the hidden, silent, effectual, inward work of the kingdom, in those where it has been planted, while this former parable seems to us to present rather the outward manifestation of this kingdom.

Third. Let it be remembered that it is a parable describing the kingdom of heaven, and not the visible church organization. The church in the Scriptures is always one thing, and the kingdom of heaven is another. The two words must not be confounded wherever they may be used. We will call attention to some of the differences between the two words, and the two things, "the church of God," and "the kingdom of God." A man must be born again to enter the kingdom of God at all. He cannot see nor enter that kingdom without the new birth. But many a man has become a member of the visible church without knowing

anything at all about the new birth, in the only way in which such knowledge can be attained to, viz: by experience. A man may be excluded from the visible church, but that does not exclude him from the kingdom of God. Many a man is in the kingdom who is not in the visible church, and many a man is a member of the visible church, who is not in the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of God is within men, but we cannot say this with any real meaning of the church visible. The word "churches" is frequently used, but never the word "kingdoms" of God. We read of the church at Rome, Corinth, &c., but never of the kingdom of God in any particular place. There are other differences, but these seem to be sufficient to settle the fact that the visible church organization, and the kingdom of heaven, or of God, are not the same thing at all.

Fourth. In this parable, and in many others, the kingdom of God is presented as a living power working within men, and producing results effectually. It is never presented as a form so much as a life. It is said to be within men. It is said to be righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. It is compared, as in the following parable, to hidden leaven, and as in fourth chapter of Mark, to seed which being cast into the ground springs up, first the blade, and finally the full corn in the ear. It comes not with observation. Jesus was himself set forth by John the Baptist as the embodiment of the kingdom. He said concerning the coming Jesus, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." And so Jesus commissioned the disciples whom afterward he sent forth into every city where he himself would afterward come, to say, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." The organization of the churches followed in those places where the kingdom of God was preached, and where it began to appear in the hearts and lives of men. Its beginnings are always presented as being in the hearts of men. As it worked in them the same things, so they would be drawn together in fellowship. And out of this oneness in feeling and in conduct, would come fellowship, and a desire to live together, and to mutually help and encourage each other. The church organization was therefore an outgrowth of the kingdom. The Savior spoke of the church as well as of the kingdom, and the apostles provided by inspiration for the order of the visible church, but always as the dwelling-place of those in whom the kingdom of God was manifest.

Many things are said about the coming kingdom in the Old Testament, and many things are said of it after it had come in the New Testament. Of course we cannot refer to all that is said concerning it. According to the request of brother Terry, we desire to call attention to this one parable, wherein some characteristics, among many others that belong to the kingdom, are set forth. And here, as well as in other parables, it will not do to seek too many meanings as belonging to it. As a rule, in all the parables there is one thought to be set forth, and if we can discover that, it is sufficient. The Savior's meaning is what we ought to desire to know, and not curious applications which our own fancy may present. As in the parable of the leaven, the one thought seems to be the secret, effectual working of the leaven in the meal, so in this parable the one thought seems to be the great outcome of what appeared to be a small beginning. What a miracle that so small a seed should produce such large results. How contrary to human judgment is the Lord's working. Out of

the mouth of babes and sucklings he ordains strength. Out of weakness he makes men strong. He chooses even the things which are not, to bring to naught the things that are. God works with things which men despise. There is nothing at which men might wonder in a grain of mustard seed, but yet see how large an herb, like a tree even, has grown out of it. How poor and mean did the beginning of the gospel seem to all men. Even the disciples themselves did not see what the true glory of the work of the Redeemer was. They looked to the outward appearance, and were disappointed. Yet see the mighty working of that small seed, and the wonderful outgrowth in all the ages since.

Now let us notice that a man took the seed and sowed it in the field. So our God by the Spirit plants his kingdom in the hearts of the chosen. As the man chose the field in which to sow the seed of mustard, so does our God choose all the sons of men in whom the seed of the kingdom shall be sown. It is sown in the field, and so is the kingdom sown in the heart. Man does not plant the seed of the kingdom in his own heart, neither does he sow the seed in the heart of any other man. One sower sows the kingdom in all places where it is sown. All this is true, but yet the one thought in the parable to which all others are subordinate is the smallness of the seed, and the great outcome from so small a beginning.

There has been some criticism concerning the statement that the mustard seed is the least of all seeds. It is not really so, it is urged. Some seeds are much smaller than the mustard seed. Cavilers have noted this, and have attacked the knowledge of the Savior on account of it. The word "least" is the same as that translated "smallest" or "small" in other places. It might just as well have been translated "smallest" in this parable. Our understanding is that it signifies not absolutely the smallest seed, but popularly and proverbially the smallest. And when it is said to be the greatest among herbs, it means not absolutely so, but relatively, and with relation to the smallness of the seed. When it is said that the birds lodge in the branches of it, we have understood the design to be to point out the amplitude of the tree, and so enforce the contrast between the smallness of the beginning and the greatness of the ending. The smallness of the grain of mustard seed is also presented when the dear Redeemer said, "If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed," &c. That is, as we would say, "never so little faith." It is evident that all to whom the Savior spoke, would fully understand that he spoke of the smallness of the seed in the sense in which it was commonly referred to at that time, as the smallest or least of all seeds. He would say to them in substance, You yourselves know how small a seed of mustard is, and yet you also know that the power of the Creator causes it in multitudes of instances to become like a tree in size after a little time. So shall be the kingdom of heaven which I have come to plant in the earth.

Jesus himself appeared among men as a man of sorrows, and in lowliness of appearance and manner. His earthly parentage was obscure, he lived in obscurity, subject to his reputed father, until he was about thirty years of age; he walked during his public ministry in humbleness and meekness, and of the multitudes who from time to time followed him, but few became really his disciples. At the last he was crucified in the sight of men, and what claims he had put forth were thought

by all to be brought to naught. He was crucified through weakness, as the apostle himself testifies. Afterward the great, the rich, the noble, did not believe on him, but the humble among men, such as servants and laborers who bore the burden and sorrows of life without its honors or riches. He had chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom. And it was then as it has ever been since, true that his triumphs were not such as men could either see or understand. He reigned in the hearts of men; and the fruit of his reign there was not human wisdom, or knowledge, or power of reasoning, or the power to become great in any earthly line, but the fruit was love, joy, peace, humility, forbearance, longsuffering, patience, endurance, temperance, faith, hope and charity. These fruits were the fruits of the Spirit, but they were not such as would either then or now command the attention or applause of men. And these fruits appeared then, and do yet, not among many of the great, the wise, the noble of earth, but among the unwise, the weak and the lowly of earth, that no flesh should glory in his presence.

Another thought must be made prominent here, viz: The power to thus increase is in the seed itself; it is not in the surroundings at all; the seed has life in itself alone, and this life of the seed has transforming power. This is true of all seeds, as well as of the mustard seed. We refer to this to emphasize the one thought of the parable, the largeness of the plant grown from so small a seed. The plant becomes thus large not because of any outside aid, but because of the power that is in the seed itself. The kingdom of God does not grow in a man because of any good thing in him. The root grows out of a dry ground. The root gives fatness and moisture to the ground, but the ground does not give these things to the root. (Isaiah liii. 2.) Jesus grows up as a root out of a dry ground. The ground then adds nothing to the root, but the root does add to the ground. The ground does not add to the power of the seed, but the seed does reach out and lay hold upon the dead earthly matter, and bid it live, and it lives in the plant. All is dead, and would remain dead without the seed. If then divine life exist in any man, and if any man do show forth in his body that life which is within him, the glory belongs to the life and not to him. The whole field in the parable is made up of dead earthy matter, but the seed lays hold where it will of that dead matter, and builds it up into the body of the plant, until a tree is standing forth in its beauty and glory. Every branch and every leaf and every fibre of the tree, if it could speak, would say, "I was dead until the life of the seed reached out to me and bade me live."

Every spiritual thing, such as love, joy, peace, humility, faith and hope within us, speaks forth the praises of the kingdom, and not of self. All is to the praise of the glory of his grace. Out of the small beginning within us has come up these heavenly graces, and the name of the Lord is glorified within us by them all. And out of these heavenly graces comes to exist the delightful fellowship of saints. We for ourself look back over the past of our life, and can but wonder at what has followed from our past experiences. Many of them at the time we could not think belonged to the life of the believer, but now, out of some of them have come our greatest joys and our strongest hope. Little thoughts, little experiences, that seemed so small that we could not claim them as being of the Lord at all, now

bring to us large harvests of hope and love and joy.

If it be asked to what special thing do the fowls of the air refer, we would say that we do not think that it is straining the language of the parable to say that they may represent all those who in time of weariness, need rest, and in time of darkness, desire shelter, and when the sun comes down with scorching heat, desire the coolness of the shade. The kingdom of heaven is all this to all such characters, and it is all this to these in spite of the small beginnings. God sees, and he gives those who are spiritual to see things which natural men never behold. That which is not desirable to natural men, is pleasing to God and wonderful in the eyes of his quickened children. How many who have felt themselves to be among the wandering fowls of the air, with no place of rest, and no one to care for them, have come to find shelter in the shade of this kingdom, and have rejoiced there with exceeding joy.

We have no doubt that the dear brother at whose request we have written this, can bear testimony to this experience. Once feeling to be an outcast from God and from man, there came a time when he found rest and shelter under the shadow of this kingdom of God, and after that it was his privilege to confess what this kingdom had become to him, among his brethren, and to find a home also in the visible church. How blessed it is to come to see and to enter the kingdom of God, and then how blessed afterwards to find a home visibly in the church on earth. In the time of heat and darkness and trouble what a place of rest is this kingdom to those who like the fowls of the air have no other home. Such ones the Lord sets up on high. Such ones he hides as in a pavilion from the strife of tongues. "Here the sparrow and the swallow have found their home." Whether they are ever known among the visible churches or not, still he gives them to abide in his kingdom, and to find all that they need provided there. The kingdom of God becomes to them more than meat and drink. As they have thirsted after righteousness, peace and joy in the Lord, now they have come into the possession of all these things, and their longing hearts are satisfied.

We will leave these thoughts with brother Terry, and with all who may read, having written with much of hesitancy and trembling, lest we darken counsel with words without knowledge.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

HEBREWS VII.

We have frequently been called on for our views on the subject of Melchisedec, and have published such views as we have on the subject, but as the file of our papers are not accessible to all our readers, we will remark that we do not understand the inspired writer, in Hebrews vii., to be speaking of Melchisedec as a man, but as a type of Christ, both as King of Salem (or peace); and as Priest unto the most high God. Uniting in one person the two offices of king and priest. Melchisedec, as a type, supplies what Aaron in his priesthood failed to show of the royal priesthood of the Son of God. The priesthood of Aaron was hereditary, it was vested in Levi, with whom according to the prophetic blessing, the Thummim and Urim was established. As a son of Levi, who had paid tithes when in the loins of Abraham, to Melchisedec, he received the priesthood, and transmitted it to h isde-

scendants, and it passed down from sire to son, until it expired by its own limitation. But of Melchisedec no lineage is reckoned; nothing being said of him, as to who was his father and mother. As a man we have do doubt he had both father and mother, like all other men, but as a priest he had neither, for his descent is not counted. His priesthood was immediately from God, and not to be transmitted to posterity.

All that is presented in the type is that Melchisedec met Abraham when returning from the slaughter of the kings, and that Abraham gave him a tenth part of the spoils of his victory, and that Melchisedec blessed Abraham. We are also informed that this Melchisedec was king of Salem, or king of righteousness, as the type signifies, and at the same time he was priest unto God, but not after the order of Aaron, of an order which recognized no descent, no predecessor or successor. As a type he was made like unto the Son of God, that is, as we understand it, the account given of Melchisedec embraced just enough, and no more than enough, to set forth the peculiar order of the priesthood of Christ, in distinction from the order of the Levitical priesthood. The type was made like unto, or made to resemble and clearly to set forth its antitype, as now presented in the great Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. In this type no descent or date is given, that he might more clearly typify Christ, whose goings forth are of old, from everlasting, and whose kingdom and priesthood shall have no end. As it is written, The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec. Not made or constituted a priest after the law of a carnal commandment like the sons of Levi, but with an oath and by the power of an endless life, by the which power he is able also to save them unto the uttermost who come unto God by him, seeing that he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., April 15, 1859.

LUKE XVI. 9.

WORLDLY riches are the mammon of this world. Whatever of them are possessed by christians, they hold only as stewards in trust, who are under a solemn charge to so use as not to abuse them, and they are amenable to their Lord for the manner of their stewardship. While possessing them in trust, if we impart them with a liberal hand to relieve the necessities of the poor and suffering, when we fail, or in our turn become poor and needy, we may, relying on our Lord's assurance expect to be in the same way ourselves relieved, for what measure we mete out to others, shall be meted to us again. "There is that which scattereth and yet increaseth; but to withhold more than is meet, tendeth to poverty."

Shortly after this parable was spoken, the disciples were driven from their homes, and their property was confiscated, but profiting by the instruction, those of them who had property, while they held an undisputed title, sold it, and laid the proceeds at the apostles' feet, and when they failed, they were received and supplied from the common provision thus secured. They had all things in common. (See Acts ii. 44–47.) We are not directed by our Lord to make a mammon, or god, of riches, or of what we possess of the world's goods, but make to ourselves friends of it. It can afford us friendly aid in our extremities, and so to use it as to secure the commendation of our Lord, whose stewards only we are, as acting wisely.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., April 15, 1859.

POETRY.

LEBANON, Ohio, Jan. 1, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed I send you a copy of the poem from which I quoted in an article in the SIGNS of some time ago. I have had some inquiries about it, so I will send it for publication. It is in my estimation a rare poem indeed.

Yours in the truth,

H. M. CURRY.

SEE the mystic weaver sitting
High in heaven, his loom below;
Up and down the treadles go.
Takes for web the world's dark ages,
Takes for woof the kings and sages,
Takes the nobles and their pages,
Takes all stations and all stages.
Thrones are bobbins in his shuttle,
Armies make them scud and scuttle;
Web into the woof must flow.
Up and down the nations go;
At the weaver's will they go.

Calmly see the mystic weaver
Throw his shuttle to and fro;
'Mid the noise and wild confusion,
Well the weaver seems to know
What each motion and commotion,
What each fusion and confusion
In the grand result will show.

Glorious wonder, what a weaving,
To the dull beyond believing;
Such no fabled ages know.
Only faith can see the mystery,
How along the aisles of history,
Where the feet of sages go;
Loveliest to the fairest eyes,
Grand the mystic tapet lies.
Soft and smooth and ever spreading,
As if made for angels' treading;
Tufted circles touching ever;
Every figure has it plaidings,
Brighter forms and softer shadings;
Each illumined, what a riddle,
From a cross that gems the middle.

'Tis a saying, some reject it,
That its light is all reflected,
That the tapets lines are given
By a sun that shines in heaven.
'Tis believed by all believing,
That great God himself is weaving,
Bringing out the world's dark mystery
In the light of faith and history;
And as web and woof diminish,
Comes the grand and glorious finish,
When begin the golden ages
Long foretold by seers and sages.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$508 55
H. J. O'Bannon, Va., $1.00; Mrs. John Pettit, N. Y., $3.00; John K. Yerkes, D. C., $1.00; John T. Walker, D. C., $2.00; Mrs. J. B. D., N. M., $20.00; W. O. Rathbun, Conn., $1.00.—Total	28 00
Total to date	$536 55

ORDINATION.

PURSUANT to a call of the church of God (called Thompson) near Kalida, Putnam Co., Ohio, a presbytery composed of the following named Elders, Z. K. Holliday, Lyman B. Hanover and Adam F. Dove, met Nov. 23d, 1901, and organized by choosing Elder Z. K. Holliday, Moderator, and Adam F. Dove, Clerk, for the purpose of ordaining brother Manasseh Silveus to the full work of the gospel ministry.

After examination, and full satisfaction being given, said presbytery did by solemn prayer and laying on of hands set apart brother Manasseh Silveus to the full work of the gospel ministry, whereunto God has called him. And we do recommend him as an orderly, faithful minister of the gospel, and worthy of the respect and esteem of all christian people everywhere.

Signed, Z. K. HOLLIDAY,
LYMAN B. HANOVER,
ADAM F. DOVE.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, at his residence, Dec. 24th, 1901, Howard D. Miller, of Albany, Ohio, and Miss Sadie Kleck, of the same town.

By Elder A. B. Francis, in the Old School Baptist meeting-house in Salisbury, Md., Nov. 28th, 1901, Wm. F. L. Bounds and Miss Bettina Truitt, both of Salisbury, Md.

By the same, at the residence of W. S. Parker, Esq., Delmar, Md., Dec. 25th, 1901, Wm. S. Marvel, Jr., and Miss Bertha Gertrude Sturgis, both of Delmar, Md.

By the same, at the residence of Ernest Holloway, Esq., Salisbury, Md., Dec. 26th, 1901, T. Byrd Lankford and Miss Mary Gertrude Sturgis, both of Salisbury, Md.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, at the home of the groom's father, in Worcester Co., Md., Dec. 24th, 1901, Arthur E. Shockley and Miss Alice B. Davice.

By the same, Dec. 25th, 1901, at the Old School Baptist meeting-house at Nassaongo, Wicomico Co., Md., Arlando M. Ruark and Miss Mary J. Bailey.

By Elder John McConnell, at the residente of the bride's father, Newark, N. J., Dec. 26th, 1901, John Kugler, Jr., and Miss Ida R. Bellis, both of Hunterdon Co., N. J., but their residence in future will be Fall River, Mass.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At the home of her daughter, in Jersey City, Nov. 26th, 1901, **Mrs. Hannah M. Loud**, aged 72 years. She was the daughter of Archibald and Elizabeth Hoyt, of Howells, N. Y. Was married Oct. 8th, 1851, to Alpheus D. Loud, who with four children survive her. The children are, Alice E. McDonald, of Pittsburgh, Pa.; James E. Loud, of Washingtonville, N. Y.; Libbie E. Greenleaf and Arthur D. Loud, of Jersey City. She also leaves two sisters, Mrs. Sarah E. Wheat, of Buffalo, N. Y., and Mrs. B. S. Crist, of Howells, N. Y., where the funeral was held. Mrs. Loud never made a public profession of religion, but was a believer in Jesus as the Savior of sinners, and for many years hoped in his mercy. She was a faithful wife, a loving mother, a kind sister and a true friend. Brother Loud has for many years been a member of the New Vernon Church, Orange Co., N. Y. Our sympathy goes out to him in his affliction. To lose the companion of his youth and old age is a great trial, but the God who has sustained him in days past will not forsake him now.

The writer was present at the funeral, and tried to speak to the glory of God in the salvation of his people, using as a text, "It is finished."—John xix. 30.

May the comfort of God be with our brother, together with all the family.

H. C. KER.

DIED—At her home in Manchester, Iowa, **Mary Tanquary.** She was born in Virginia, Feb. 7th, 1816, married July, 1832, to Amos McKay, whose obituary appeared in the SIGNS about twelve years ago. She received a hope in early life, which was her comfort and stay through her pilgrimage below. Came to Iowa in 1856, united with the Old School Baptist Church, where she lived in peace and union until Dec. 11th, 1901, when God called her home. They always took the SIGNS from the first number.

Elder J. C. Jones, of Missouri, selected Job xiv. 14, for a foundation of an able and comforting discourse, pointing us to that glorious morn when she shall be called from the dust.

(MRS.) C. H. GARRETT.

MY beloved husband, **John M. Burgher,** departed this life June 2d, 1901, aged 77 years and 3 months. His health had been failing for some years, and the doctors did not at first seem to understand what the cause was, but finally decided it was catarrh of the stomach. He grew weaker and weaker until he was taken from us. He leaves a widow and two children to mourn their loss: Mathias Burgher, of West Shokan, and Margaret Smith, of Dunraven, N. Y. He experienced a hope in Christ about thirty-six years ago, but never united with any church. He believed and loved the doctrine that is preached by the Old School Baptists, salvation by grace, and grace alone. He told Elder Sanford while he was sick that all other doctrines were as nothing to him. I said to him that I did not know how I could live without him. He replied, "Your loss will be my gain." He was steadfast, unmovable in the doctrine of Christ's finished work, and believed his blood cleansed from all sin.

Elder Sanford and Elder Clark spoke at the funeral, then he was borne away to his last resting-place, and I am left to mourn, but not as those that have no hope, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

ELIZABETH BURGHER.

DEPARTED this life, Dec. 8th, 1901, at her home at Griffin's Corners, Delaware Co., N. Y., in the 85th year of her age, **Mrs. Lydia Woolheater.** I do not know of her having made a profession of religion, but believe she had an ear for the truth as it is in Jesus. She lived a widow for twenty years. She leaves four children, two sons and two daughters, besides sisters and other relatives, to mourn.

ALSO,

SINCE the above death, **Mrs. Mehitable Kelly,** of Red Kill, died at the residence of her son, from the effect of a paralytic stroke a few days before, aged 83 years, Dec. 23d, 1901.

These two were daughters of the late Elder James Mead. Many years ago sister Kelly made a public profession, uniting with the Old School Baptists, and maintained by walk an honorable place among the saints, and so far as health allowed, filled her place in the church. She ignored every invention of men, preferring the doctrine of God her Savior. She lived a widow for twelve years. She leaves a son and his family, and one married daughter with one sister, beside other relatives, and the church, to mourn. May the Lord comfort the mourners.

J. D. HUBBELL.

Mrs. Gertrude E. Truitt, widow of the late Zedekiah Truitt, died at her home in Salisbury, Md., Oct. 31st, 1901, from a complication of diseases, aged 71 years. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church, in 1874, by Elder F. A. Chick, and was a consistent member up to the time of her death. She has been a great sufferer since the death of papa, a year ago, but was meek and patient through it all. Her suffering was great from Friday until the next Thursday, when she died. It was hard to sit and see her, but when she died the sweetest expression came over her face. I felt like saying, Thy will, O Lord, be done, and that I ought not to wish her back, she looked so happy and at rest. Her remains were taken to Snow Hill and put by the side of her husband, in the Old School Baptist cemetery. Elders Francis and Poulson conducted the funeral services, and spoke

words of comfort. She leaves four children and several grandchildren to mourn their loss.

Her daughter,

(MRS.) T. E. HOLLOWAY.

SALISBURY, Md., Dec. 27, 1901.

DIED—At her residence in Fairfax Co., Va., August 27th, 1900, **Mrs. Amanda M. Hogland**, aged about 71 years. She was the daughter of Jonathan Hart, of Pennsylvania, but was born and reared in Loudoun Co., Va., where she was married and raised a family of three daughters and one son, if I remember rightly. Sister Hogland was baptized by Elder R. C. Leachman, in 1871, in the fellowship of Mt. Zion church, Loudoun Co., Va., in which her membership continued until her death. She, with her family, moved to Fairfax County more than twenty years ago. Her husband died when their children were young, but they had the care and training of a faithful mother, the memory of whom will ever remain dear to them. Sister Hogland was loved and honored by all who knew her as one faithful to her trust in all the walks of life; especially was she precious to the members of Mt. Zion church; her humble and loving spirit won all hearts. Her removal to Fairfax County took her away from the neighborhood of her church meetings, and as old age and its infirmities came upon her, hindering her from meeting with the church very often, her heart and mind were with us, nor was there any abatement in her love for the truth and interest in the welfare of the church which characterized her from the beginning.

One by one are the old and tried saints being gathered home. Gradually are our numbers decreasing, so that we more and more miss those who are taken from us. The world grows more and more lonely, and we sometimes ask ourselves, Is the cause of truth to languish and go out in this eastern country?

We cannot grieve for those who go, their warfare is ended, and they are at rest. God himself only knows what are his purposes, and it becomes us to bow in humble submission to his will, knowing that not even a sparrow can fall without him. May he comfort the family of sister Hogland, sustaining them by that grace of which she was so largely a partaker, and enable us all by his Spirit to say, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."

Affectionately your brother,

J. N. BADGER.

ALDIE, Va., Jan. 7, 1902.

Mrs. Julia N. Trott died Dec. 22d, 1901, at her home in Stacy, Texas. Sister Trott was born Dec. 2d, 1827, in Alexandria, Va., and made a profession of religion early in life, but was identified with no church until some seven or eight years ago she, together with her husband, were baptized in Fellowship Church of Primitive Baptists, near Coleman, Texas, by Elder R. H. Walker and the writer. She was a devoted wife and mother, and a fervent, consistent christian. She leaves a large family of children and grandchildren to mourn after her. May God who is able to comfort the afflicted and distressed, help each one to be resigned to the will of him who doeth all things well.

T. W. GRIGG.

ERRATA.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, Jan. 6, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—On page 7 of the SIGNS occurs the word "re-created." It should read "in our re-erected bodies."

FRED. W. KEENE.

CHURCH NOTICES.

RESOLUTION.

Whereas, Through adversity our house of worship in Montgomery, Alabama, has been sold from us to secure the payment of a mortgage upon it, amounting to nearly ($1,000.00) one thousand dollars, which we are not able to pay, therefore,

Resolved, That we form ourselves into a committee of the whole church, including all friends who will assist us in that capacity, to solicit aid in money to pay this debt, and that we will all do what we can in this persevering effort to thus redeem our house, praying the Lord, who will hear the prayer of the destitute, to bless our efforts and give us favor with our kind and generous neighbors and brethren.

Adopted by the church in conference, December 31st, 1901, and officially signed.

ELD. D. BARTLEY, Mod. *pro tem.*, 755 S. Perry St.
W. H. COLEMAN, Clerk, 12 N. Perry St.

MONTGOMERY, Ala., Jan. 3, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The above Cottage Hill Old School or Primitive Baptist Church of this city requests you to publish in the SIGNS their above resolution or act, very soon. They are a lovely little band of brethren, about twenty, walking in the truth and in love, and Elder W. Lively is their beloved pastor. They have paid nearly twenty-five hundred dollars on their church property, but were absolutely unable to finish paying for it, and are in great distress that it has been sold to satisfy the mortgage. It would be lamentable for the church to lose its valuable house and lot, and be turned out, for they would have to dissolve the church, as they are entirely unable to purchase another house of worship. But we believe the beloved patrons of the SIGNS will feel it in their hearts to cheerfully and nobly come to their relief, according as the Lord has prospered them.

All donations may be sent to either brother Coleman or me, as above, and shall be faithfully applied on the debt. When the house is redeemed (and I believe it

will be), there will be happy relief and deep gratitude in the dear little church, and we will give notice of it in the SIGNS.

Your brother in tribulation.

D. BARTLEY.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 70. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1902. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FRAGMENTS.

When the sun's rays reach the earth and rest upon us, then for the first time we know that there is a sun, and know something of his character and power. It is only by himself that we can be taught of his existence and character. We can only see him by his own light. So we can know nothing of Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, except what he teaches us by revelation of himself in our experience. Till his light and truth reach us we do not know that there is such a being, however much we may have heard others speak of him. We can only know him by an experience of his presence, love and power in our souls. We can only see him in the light of his own face, as David says, "In thy light shall we see light."

When the heavens distil dew upon us at night, or manifest themselves in falling rain or snow, then we know them as we have not known them before. We learn of the clouds when their treasures of rain reach us. Then we realize vital interest in them. We cannot go up to the heavens for knowledge of them till they come down to us and furnish us a way by which to climb. When they touch us with their rain, or dew, or sunshine, or starlight, or with the vital elements of the air, then we can rise up to them.

The doctrine which drops like the rain is the only doctrine that can be of use to us, or that we can be vitally interested in. The speech that distils as the dew is that which brings true knowledge and heavenly comfort to our souls. All other doctrine and speech, however attractive to the natural mind, are too far away from the child of God to be of any real importance to him. He must have a doctrine that will touch the heart and explain the mystery of the new life within him; a doctrine, not that he can study and speculate upon, but that he can *feel*, that he has already felt. He must hear a speech that will bring refreshment to his bewildered mind and to his perplexed and wearied soul, as the dew distils from all the surrounding atmosphere and refreshes the tender herb and drooping grass.

When the Lord sends messages of love and instruction to his fainting people, those messages come thus, dropping like the rain into their souls, and distilling

upon them as the dew in their nighttime of sorrow; "as the small rain upon the tender herb and as showers upon the grass." The parched earth calls to the heavens, and the heavens call to the Lord, who answers with a full supply for all the needs of his people, as he says, "I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth."—Hosea ii. 21.

I AM sure you will be careful and guarded in your manner of dealing, and try to keep your old man from interfering in the matter, and that you will remember that the Lord rules in Zion, and that appeals to him as the sovereign Judge are never made in vain. Intrigues in the church of God will never be truly successful. If a child of God engages in underhanded work to bring about a certain thing which looks desirable to him in the church, and succeeds, his success will be to him a terrible defeat. He has sown to the flesh, and will of the flesh reap corruption. It is a terrible judgment upon Ephraim when he is left to himself, to be filled with his own ways.

There cannot be too much candor, honesty and frankness among the brethren in the church of God. There should be mutual trust and confidence. We must remember that the church, according to the perfect pattern in the Scriptures, is a unit. All are one in Christ. We are members of his body. It is by his one Spirit that the whole body is animated and moved, or should be. We look for this quickening power; we are warranted in looking for it; it is according to his doctrine and promise. We trust in him rather than in the brethren and sisters as men and women.

When as a church, gathered together in one place, we are looking unto the Lord to direct us, we shall not look in vain. He will speak through the church; he will show us who is the eye, who the hand and who the feet. The right word will be spoken, and the church as a body will feel its power. If we have arranged a course in our own minds, and now try to bring it about by influencing the brethren to agree with us, we shall bring confusion. We must wait for the Lord, and wait upon him. The one Spirit which caused them on the day of Pentecost to be of one accord in one place, will direct us, as he did them, what to say and do.

"AND all the men were about twelve." —Acts xix. 1–7.

Many years ago I expressed through the SIGNS my understanding concerning the baptism of these men. Without referring to that very brief article I will again at this time write as briefly as possible on the same subject.

It was at Ephesus that Paul found these disciples, to whom he said, "Have you received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" When they replied that they had not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost, he said unto them, "Unto what then were ye baptized?" And they said unto him, "Unto John's baptism." He did not ask who baptized them, but unto what they were baptized. That is, what name or authority did they have in view in receiving this rite of baptism? I understand their answer to be, not that John had baptized them, but that they were baptized unto his baptism, having only that baptism in their mind as their example and authority.

If John had baptized them he would have told them of Jesus and the Holy Ghost. His baptism was valid, but no one had a right to baptize unto his baptism, or in his name. It was he alone who had the right to baptize before Jesus

gave the authority and command to his disciples. John was long since dead. These disciples could not have been baptized by him. It is likely that Apollos had baptized them before he knew anything but John's baptism, as we find in the preceding chapter that he had been teaching at Ephesus, where "Aquila and Priscilla took him unto them and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly."

Paul explained John's baptism unto these twelve disciples, and told them that John had said unto the people whom he baptized that they should believe on Christ Jesus, who should come after him. This essential thing concerning John's baptism they had not before heard. They would have known it if John himself had baptized them. Some have understood the fifth verse as though it read like this: "When they heard that they had been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came upon them." But the sentence does not read so, nor can it be arranged to express that thought. If they had been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus they must have known it at the time, or it could not have been valid. But the reading is that, "When they heard this [that Paul had told them as to what John said to those whom he baptized about the necessity of a belief on the Lord Jesus, then] they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." The removal of the italicized word "this," would make no difference. The form of the sentence implies that word, and so it was placed there. But the sentence would have to be radically reconstructed before it could express that they had heard from Paul for the first time that they had some time before been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And then there would be left the unanswerable question, How any one could be baptized in his name and not know it? If infants could be scripturally baptized it would be true of them that they would have to be afterward told of it. But not so with gospel baptism. As I understand the scriptural rule, and as our brethren, so far as I know, understand it, gospel baptism can only be administered to one who is a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and who has with the mouth made confession of that belief, and it can only be administered by one who is called to preach the gospel. (Matt. xxviii. 19.) And the form of that ordinance is clearly shown in that it is a figure of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, (1 Peter iii. 21,) and that it is spoken of as a burial, (Rom. vi. 4; Col. ii. 12,) and a planting in the likeness of Jesus' death. (Rom. vi. 5.)

"He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin."—1 Peter iv. 1, 2.

Not that he hath ceased to feel sin dwelling in him. (Rom. vii. 17.) Not that he can say he hath no sin. (1 John i. 8.) Not that he has ceased to be troubled by sinful thoughts and words and acts, so as to have no more need to use the publican's prayer, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." This is not the meaning of the apostle, "For there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not."—Eccl. vii. 20; and, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

The doctrine of the apostle is that he who hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased to be under the power and dominion of sin; hath ceased from it as the controlling power and principle of his life; hath ceased to be so bound and ruled by that law of sin which the flesh serves, (Rom. vii. 25,) that he should live the rest of his

time in the flesh to the lusts of men, and not to the will of God. Since the same man who with his mind serves the law of God, with his flesh serves the law of sin, (Rom. vii. 25,) it is a wonder how it has been so brought about by the work of Jesus that he hath ceased from sin, so that he is not a debtor to the flesh to live after the flesh, (Rom. viii. 12,) but is constrained by the love of Christ to live not unto himself, but unto him who died for him and rose again. (2 Cor. v. 14, 15.)

"Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin." When the dear Savior suffered in the flesh for us he satisfied that law without which sin is dead. (Rom. vii. 8.) He did not remove sin from our flesh, but he took away its power. He died unto sin once, and by that suffering and death in the flesh he destroyed the power and dominion of sin over his people, taking them from under the law, and bringing them under grace. (Rom. vi. 14.)

When we suffer in the flesh on account of sin, we are experiencing the fellowship of Jesus' sufferings, by which he condemned sin in the flesh, and faith shows us that thus our everlasting deliverance from sin and death is assured. Through this suffering in the flesh it is made known to us that "we are dead with Christ, and if we be dead with him, we believe that we shall also live with him." "He that is dead is freed from sin." This experience of suffering in the flesh on account of sin, which causes a constant striving in the soul against it, may be, and is, I think, what the apostle speaks of as "resisting unto blood, striving against sin," which he says some had not yet done. (Heb. xii. 4.) They were still looking somewhat to the works of the law as partly the ground of hope, and as necessary in their conflict with sin, striving to overcome sin by something they could do. But when any one comes to the end of sin experimentally, he finds death, for that is the wages of sin. Those who fully resist die. All true resisting ends in death. It is with some a daily experience, "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be manifest in our body." Thus through great tribulation there is a daily entrance experimentally into the kingdom. How little one who is thus deeply exercised really cares for the sinful things of the world, though he may try to care for and enjoy them as before. He hath ceased from sin as a condemning and controlling power, so that it cannot turn him away from the precious hope of righteousness by faith, which the saints wait for. (Gal. v. 5.) While he has to confess that he is still a poor sinner, he can say by faith, "I am dead, and my life is hid with Christ in God;" "Not in my own worthless name, but in the name of Jesus, will I set up my banner." "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength."

We are to remember that the apostle does not speak of the flesh as suffering, but the saint as suffering *in* the flesh. Also, I do not understand Paul, in Heb. xii. 4, to allude to literal blood, as that shed by martyrs, but as that experimental death which they should all fully realize, though they had not yet gone fully that far. Blood flowing from a wounded body represents death. But I will not dwell longer upon this.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 7, 1902.

PINSONFORK, Ky.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—This is the tenth day of January, 1902. This is my birthday. I am to-day threescore and six years old. I have had a name and place among the Old Hardshell Baptists for a little over forty years, and have been trying to preach a little over thirty years of that time, and I can from my heart say, with Jacob of old, "Few and evil have been the days of my pilgrimage." I have not attained to the state that I have desired, nor ever shall while in this mortal state of existence. I have not been able to live as seemed to me a subject of grace could and should live. I have long since learned that when I would do good, evil is present with me, and how to perform that which is good I find not. I am entirely depending upon sovereign grace, both for eternity and time. I have been convinced, lo, these many years, that I could no more merit God's blessings while here in my time state, than I could have merited my eternal happiness. I most assuredly believe that the Scriptures teach that Christ by that one offering and meritorious intercession, not only secured the eternal happiness of all the heirs of promise, but also absolutely and forever secured all God's covenant blessings for time and eternity. Hence I can but wholly rely upon my dear Redeemer for every crumb of comfort while I sojourn here; "For I am poor and needy." "A man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."—Isaiah vi. 5.

I have been made of late to rejoice that I have been made to realize in the experience of the soul, that I am a man of unclean lips—too unclean to utter anything hastily before the Lord; too unclean to think for a moment that I can by word or deed merit the least blessing of the giver of all good; so unclean and vile that I have a morsel of hope that "mine eyes have seen the King in his beauty." I have thought that poor, mortal man could never in heart and soul realize his vileness, and abhor himself on account thereof, until God reveals Christ in him, the hope of glory. It is light that makes manifest, therefore when in the light of God's grace we can see ourselves, it is then we cry from the depths of our hearts, "Woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips," &c. Notwithstanding the Old School or Primitive Baptists, with whom I am dwelling, (living) and have been for over forty years, are God's people, the church, the pillar and ground of the truth, yet they are the people of unclean lips, they are not the people that have such clean lips that they can live without sinning. O no, they are not these sinless, sanctified fellows who make clean the outside of the cup and platter, but inwardly are full of all uncleanness. If the dear Old Baptists were not undone; were not a people of unclean lips, I could not dwell in the midst of them; I could not live with them, or rather they could not live with me, for I am undone, am of unclean lips indeed; so much so that I can hardly write a few lines to the Lord's humble poor, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

It has been a long time since I have written anything for the SIGNS, and the only reason, so far as I know, is a deep, heartfelt sense of my weakness and uncleanness of lips, although during the long period that my pen has been silent, my soul has been stirred within me when reading the many able and soul-cheering communications of brethren and sisters

who have written in the medium of our correspondence, the dear old SIGNS. I have commenced to write numbers of times in the last two years, but was so overcome with my weakness and incapability to write anything to comfort the people of God that I consumed what I had written in the fire, but have decided now, on this my sixty-sixth birthday, to write this short article and send it to the editors to dispose of as their better judgments may determine, and I have concluded to suggest a few of my thoughts on the following text of Scripture:

"Set thy house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live."—Isa. xxxviii. 1.

This is a representative narrative or shadow, and there could be no shadow at all if it were not for an existing substance. Shadows do not cause substances, but substances cause shadows. Christ was the substance of the legal types and shadows, and as a shadow is the representation which anything makes of itself, hence this shadows forth the Head Owner and Controller of a house which was out of order, and could in no wise set itself in order. But the Head and Owner of this sin-polluted house, or family, could and must set his house in order, and therefore to accomplish this eternal purpose (1 Peter i. 19, 20,) he must die, but live again; must be put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, &c., (1 Peter iii. 18,) as is so plainly shadowed forth by the two birds which were alive and clean: "And he [the High Priest] shall take to cleanse the house two birds, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop; and he shall kill the one of the birds in an earthen vessel over running water: and he shall take the cedar wood, and the hyssop, and the scarlet, and the living bird, and dip them in the blood of the slain bird, and in the running water, and sprinkle the house seven times: and he shall cleanse the house with the blood of the bird, and with the running water, and with the living bird, and with the cedar wood, and with the hyssop, and with the scarlet: but he shall let go the living bird out of the city into the open fields, and make an atonement for the house; [or family] and it shall be clean."—Lev. xiv. 49–53. Yes, in very deed, for the blood of Jesus Christ his Son, the Head and Owner of this house, or family, cleanseth them from all sin. These two birds represent to my mind the two natures of Christ, human and divine, both were alive and clean. The one represents his death and sufferings, the other his life and resurrection. The king Hezekiah was a bright and lively type of Christ, who in due time (appointed time) died for this poor, sin-ruined house, or family, and did by the sacrifice of himself put away forever the sins of this house, or family, all the elect vessels of mercy chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began. They were sanctified (set apart) by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ and called; called to be saints. (Rom. i. 7.) Then Christ as a Son over his own house, or family, whose house, or family, we are, was the only one that could, and the only one that did cleanse his people; for there was not, nor is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given or among men, whereby we must be saved. This work was alone assigned to the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, who prepared his work without, made it fit for himself in the field, and afterward built his house or church.

The Lord's family is a peculiar people; a people saved by the Lord, both for time and eternity. Therefore not unto us, but unto thy name, belongs all the praise.

Dear brethren in tribulation, I cannot for the life of me see nor say as some precious brethren do, that there are two salvations, one unconditional, the other conditional; the one we bless God for, and the other God blesses us for. I have been, and am such a poor, weak and simple creature, that I have not so learned Christ.

I know of but one salvation, and that is of the Lord, but I this day have a morsel of hope that I have daily realized, at least to some degree, that eternal salvation in my deliverance from sins, sorrows, many troubles and sore temptations and trials.

Your brother I hope,

W. J. MAY.

LAWRENCE, Mass., Dec., 1901.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—While reading the SIGNS of Dec. 15th, a desire sprung up to speak to my kindred in Christ of the same truths its pages have set forth so many years. In the sixty-nine years of its publication the religious world claims to have made great progress, and reduced religion to a science. But in looking over the pages of our dear family paper in almost the first numbers published, and all through the following years up to the present, I can see no change in the declaration of the precious truth. Every experience in its columns clearly testifies "I am a sinner, saved by grace if saved at all." The able communications from those having passed away, and those now living, give the certain sound, that there is salvation in no other name but Jesus. My heart is so full of a sweet joy I feel like using some of the expressions of David, "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together."——Psalms xxxiv. 3. "O come, let us sing unto the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation." "For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods." "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker."—Psalms xcv. We know it has been the Lord's will to have the SIGNS published to this day, and now as it comes to its seventieth year, may we still be enabled to cast in our mite, knowing if any are comforted and cheered all praise belongs to our God. There is not even a shadow of turning with our God, and his word endureth forever. It is of his mercies we are not consumed, and he has made us to dwell in his house forever. How good and pleasant it is when we dwell together in unity, speaking the things that make for peace, and to edify one another. There will be no falling out by the way if Jesus is our theme. "We only wish to speak of him who lived and died and reigns for us."

"We'll talk of all he did and said,
And suffered for us here below;
The path he marked for us to tread,
And what he's doing for us now."

In relating our exercises to one another, and speaking of the way the Lord has led us, and declaring his wonderful works, we do magnify the Lord, and together exalt his name. The work of redemption is so full of the power and glory of God, that when it is felt in our hearts the joy of his salvation is given to us, and we make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation, we worship our God in the beauty of holiness, we bow down and kneel before the Lord our Maker. It is said, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." The ways of our God are so mysterious and past finding out, we cannot tell when we are shewing forth his praise, for his power is so great he

can make his praise shine forth in our darkest hours, and amid the heaviest trials we can pass through, when we are made to say with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." When we are in darkness and have no light, and are mourning greatly on account of the sin in our members, and cannot do the things that we would, and the very evil we hate we find ourselves doing, we surely know there is nothing good dwelling in our flesh, and our theme cannot change, it must be this same Jesus, the Savior of sinners. If we are not rejoicing in the sweet assurance that "he is mine and I am his," we can still testify that Jesus came to save his people from their sins, and finished the work the Father gave him to do. All things below change, but God changes not. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable." It is good when his people are rooted and grounded and established in the truth, so no wind of doctrine can move them, no "lo heres, or lo theres," can disturb them when they have an eye single to the glory of God, for it proves they have been taught of the Lord. Jesus is the chiefest among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely, but flesh and blood does not reveal this unto them, but our Father which is in heaven.

My dear brethren and sisters, I am not able to bring out the fullness of these precious truths as it is in my mind, but I felt I wanted to speak to you all in our "family paper," as it has been rightly named. I hope our pure minds will be stirred by way of remembrance, and that we shall be found speaking often one to another. The day of Christ's birth the world celebrates soon, and may we not only rejoice in that day, but in the day of his death, and the day of his resurrection from the dead, when he forever rose victorious over death, hell and the grave; may we always give thanks unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ; may he keep us in the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace; may we be found ready and willing to sustain our brethren editors of the SIGNS in any way we can, "Bearing one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

In the beginning of the new year I wish you all a share of that happiness which God alone can give, that peace of God which passeth all understanding, that love of God shed abroad in your hearts, that desire to meet with his people and speak of the goodness, mercy and power of God. May we be made to realize that we cannot flee from the presence of God, and that the everlasting arms are underneath, and in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.

Your unworthy sister in hope of eternal life,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

KELLY'S CORNERS, N. Y., Dec. 1, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—With your approval, and not to the exclusion of better matter, I will try again to write to the dear brethren and sisters who have an interest in the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

I often reflect on the cry, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." His name implying a cutting down, makes it indeed more strange that God should use his servant in a manner so simple and strange, to the cutting down or overthrowing of the Midianitish camp. Yet God's ways with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were in their time in a great deep. So Paul could say to Timothy, a young minister, hundreds of years afterwards, "Great is the

mystery of godliness." And therefore this man who is to cut down the Midianitish host, must have his mind fixed on Israel's sad condition, and upon the enmity of their opponents who came against them at the pleasure of the Lord, in order to prove them as his people, the very people, in kind, that he had brought up out of Egypt. And so Gideon must be threshing out wheat by the wine-press to hide it from the Midianites. He must be told there, by the angel of the Lord, that he is a mighty man of valor. The effect of it was to produce in him no uncertainty as to the truth of God's word, and to show to him his own weakness and unfitness. There must also be brought out, as in many other instances, all the defects and hindrances that mortal man with the temptations of the devil can invent. Yet God's work of feeding and saving his own peculiar flock, must go on. The change of base in the request of Gideon with the fleece, or of Moses with the rod, brings out the long-suffering of the Lord, as the mighty God of Jacob prepares his servant to execute vengeance upon the enemies of his people. He continually shows by his servants Noah, Job, David, Gideon, and finally with his Son Jesus Christ, that which was declared also by inspiration of God, viz: "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord." Here we have a fac-similie of the salvation of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. The wisdom of God was manifested in the establishment of his people or church on better promises than the law could give them. Thus he proves to them, by his law being written in their hearts, that without faith it is impossible to please God. And also that without faith it is impossible that any should be found in Zion, or in the spiritual, eternal enjoyment of his presence. And although one may be a real servant of God, and a believer of the truth as it is in Jesus, yet without his Spirit in action or thought he is outside of the fullness of joy which is in him. If the child of God acts only in the letter, the most jealously guarded act of his life becomes faithless and perverse. It is better not to act at all, than to act without his fear and love.

Yet the faith of God's elect people is such in its nature that you, child of God, need not be dismayed though your mind be dark as night, and you tremble at the word of the Lord, and dare not speak, and perhaps, could not if you would. Your Father in heaven remembers them that think upon his name, and they shall be his in that day in which he makes up his jewels. All such have his holy Spirit now, and have in the earnest, entered already into the joy of their Lord. So it is said by the psalmist, "Great peace have they that love thy law, and nothing shall offend them." And so it is said in Revelation that there shall not enter into the church of God anything that defileth, or worketh abomination, or that maketh a lie, but them which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

It is said that the heart of man is deceitful above all things, and who can know it? Therefore it is not strange that out of the heart in such a condition, the evil things here spoken of should come. For it is said, Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh, but the word of God as the hammer on the rock breaks it in pieces; God takes away the hard and stony heart and gives a heart of flesh. Here is implied a sense of feeling where there was none before. This we know to be true, because it is in a measure our own experience. The cause is life, and the effect is love. It is cause and effect all along the line of our experience, as it

was in the case of Gideon. God's will and purpose is made known in the special measure suited to the time, place and season, and to the person, and his holy will is done by and in that person, or community of persons, and in the church humbly and spiritually, and there is no strange God with them. Peace and prosperity are the results.

Simply adding of members to churches does not mean prosperity, any more than the cutting off of those who are unworthy, means it. Our true prosperity is manifest in the amount and quality of that fear of God which dwells in the hearts of each and all. Nothing of carnality can enter into the spiritual conquest of the Lord, for, as he himself is a Spirit, so only those led and governed by him have access to him, and can worship him in Spirit and in truth. Here is the very approach to, and entering into the door of the kingdom, because Jesus is the very door of the sheep; the door into the sheepfold. The effect of his work is as fullers' sope, and as the purifying of silver, and it shows that all our way is indeed before the Lord, and that he does know just how filthy we are, and all our proneness to wander from him, unless constantly reminded of his love and care, not by some brother or christian friend, but by the same grace that brought deliverance in the beginning; so that he that believeth hath the witness in himself. Such ones must also of necessity be brought to know by living faith in Jesus what the church of Christ is, and where she is, as well as to know with ancient Israel, that nothing common or unclean or uncircumcised can enter there. But in that fullness which Jesus is to his people we need not fear, for Jesus Christ himself, and not poor Peter, is the Rock, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. He is Christ Jesus our Lord, and the only wise God our Savior. There is no power but that which is of him, and his eye never slumbers nor sleeps, and he will see to it that no weapon that is formed against us shall prosper, and that every tongue which rises in judgment against us shall be condemned. He has declared that this is our heritage, and that our righteousness is of the Lord.

Therefore we cannot accommodate ourselves to others, or give to others benefits with regard to church rights or privileges, but we must in all cases be governed by what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Not our will, but the Lord's will be done. Therefore all things done in connection with the church must bear the imprint of the divine Lord. His Spirit and his love must be upon it, and all that make up the compact between true spiritual believers must show a supreme faith and trust in the God of all grace. His faith in our hearts works by love and prepares each one to act in the fear of the Lord, and to fear God and keep his commandments is the whole duty of man. Therefore nothing that we do in the realm of the church, which is the pillar and ground of the truth, can be acceptable to God only as we savor of having been with Jesus, and of having gleaned of him.

He ever teaches as never man taught, and so an abundant entrance into his kingdom always shows forth the praise of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, and nothing in all that life which is carnal will avail us either for or against. These things are for those written in the book of life of the Lamb slain, before the foundation of the world.

Your brother,

J. D. HUBBELL.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Dec. 11, 1901.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—VERY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—With your permission I will try to speak, if the Lord will, through the SIGNS of some of the Lord's dealings with me. I feel to hope that I have been brought down into a feeling of great humiliation because of the great love which he bestows upon me, and I have been made to rejoice and give him all the praise who is worthy of all praise, both in heaven and upon earth. O, how loving is our Father in heaven, who takes cognizance of even such a worm of the dust as I feel myself to be. I am not able to think even a good thought, for which he should visit me with his messages of love. This has shown to me that it is according to the law of faith and love shed abroad in this poor, stony heart, and not the law of works, as was the case in time past. This I trust was revealed to me under the sweet singer in Israel, Elder Wm. J. Purington, who has been called hence to his reward, which was laid up in heaven for him before the foundation of the world. Then and there, I heard the truth preached in its purity, that salvation is of the Lord, and not by the law of works. He proclaimed that righteousness was laid up for us in Christ before the foundation of the world, and that in Christ was all the righteousness that we have.

But, dear brother, my faith and hope at times appears so small that I am made to exclaim "Hast thou forsaken me?" But Paul proclaims that he will supply all our needs through his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. What precious promises are given to the poor and needy, who are cast down, and who feel that they can do nothing in their weakness to put themselves into favor with God. "He is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in truth." He is not worshiped ed by the works of the law for righteousness, as that is the work of man, which will not stand the fire; all our own works shall be burned up as with fire; our God is a consuming fire; our works are nothing but dross in his sight. The psalmist proclaims, "I will sing of thy power, yea I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning, for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble. Unto thee, O, my strength, will I sing, for God is my defence, and the God of mercy." Let us thank his matchless name for all the goodness and mercy with which he has visited us. Not one farthing have I to return for all his goodness. We all are as dependent as little children for all things; it is in him, and through him, that we live, both spiritually and temporally.

I am now in my seventieth year, and according to nature will soon be called to try the realities of the eternal world. I feel my unworthiness, and nothingness, and inability to live up to the least of all his commandments. In this sinful flesh of mine it is impossible for me to please God, but with Paul, I thank God that with my mind I serve the law of God, though with my flesh the law of sin. So then the flesh is striving against the Spirit, and so it is impossible to please God through the law of works. Those who present the law of works, present a table and a trap, to deceive the poor of the flock. These who teach such things, are seducing spirits seeking for gain and popularity and to be seen of men for their good works. These are not of faith. And as you have said before, they are just sticklers for a form, yet in heart never obey; they try to please the world, and when they do that they become proud of their own righteousness, and are further away from God than ever. This was the

case under the old dispensation and it is still the same. They profess great zeal for God, but in truth deny him. No man has ever kept the law of God, and none ever will. Some claim to have kept the law, but really have not kept the least of all the commandments. I myself once tried it, but fell short of it, but had the glory of man. It was but a Pharisaical worship. But I trust that at last I was brought to the banqueting-house, where all was love and fellowship. Here were no conditions whatever. Man's works are a total failure from first to last. Adam was a failure, then how can his descendants be anything better? the natural man cannot please God; the will of the natural man is to become wise, to be seen and heard of men, and this is displeasing to God. Man is conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity, and therefore his deeds are evil, and he goes about speaking lies.

But Christ who is our righteousness redeemed us from the curse of the law by his precious blood, and we were given to him before the foundation of the world, we were dead in trespasses and in sins, and we had done nothing to merit his favor; all was free love from him to the bride; all was a free gift to them; the Father gave them to Jesus in the covenant of redemption to redeem and save them from all their sins, past, present and to come. All our sins were nailed to the Roman cross, that through his sufferings we might live, and now that his little ones might be fed with the sincere milk of the word, he has called and sent forth his servants to go in the strength of the Lord proclaiming salvation of God's grace and mercy alone, and in no other way. Nothing that defileth will ever be able to enter the heavenly kingdom, nor anything that worketh abominations, or maketh a lie, but those who enter there, are written in the Lamb's book of life. I am glad it is so. The chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, may enter there. Blessed are they that have his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city; without are dogs, and idolators, and they that worship falsely, and they who love and make a lie.

Jesus has chosen his ministering servants to preach the precious promises of his word to the poor in the churches, and these are all summed up in him who is the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. This is the testimony which is given, "If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophesy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." O, how wonderful are his judgments, and his ways past finding out. Thank God there are some true followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God, who put no confidence in the flesh, nor in the will-worship of man, but in God who is the author and finisher of our faith.

Our beloved Elder Bartley has been with us, he came with no strange sound, but in demonstration of the Spirit of God, he brought good news from a far country.

A dear young brother came in our midst, and was invited to speak, and his speaking was so edifying, and to the point, giving all the praise of salvation to God, that we feel to hope that God has called him to go forth and proclaim salvation, crying aloud, and sparing not. Our dear brother had been brought low on account of afflictions, and therefore was enabled to give to God all the praise, whether in adversity or prosperity, and may it please God to build him up in the most holy faith, that he may go forward

and preach Christ and him crucified.

Dear brother Chick, I felt that I wanted to write after reading your editorial in the first issue. I was much built up by it. You showed both sides of the question, natural and spiritual. The subject was so plain and good. My brother, go on, contending for the truth as you have in the past in your editorials. The Lord will bless and strengthen you.

I trust that the good old SIGNS may have a large circulation; it has no uncertain sound; it contends for the truth. I trust that you will cast the mantle of charity over this imperfect letter; I hope that it is in accord with truth; it is from one who desires to know the truth.

Your brother in hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

DANSVILLE, N. Y., Jan. 7, 1902.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—While forwarding my subscription for the seventieth volume of the SIGNS, I have a desire to bear testimony to its adherence to the principles first promulgated by its founder, the late Elder Gilbert Beebe.

Some of the earliest numbers of the SIGNS came under my notice when I was young, and I have had access to the paper ever since, having become a subscriber over sixty years ago, and continued it to the present time, and I assure you I have not at any time been a disinterested reader. From the first onslaught or disruption between those who contended for a "Thus saith the Lord," and those who imbibed the Arminian sentiment and practices of modern missionism, to the time when the contending elements resolved themselves into distinct, opposing bodies, there was much discussion in the SIGNS, somewhat obscure to my youthful understanding, but in after years, when I hope the Lord had given me a heart of spiritual discernment, those questions of vital interest to one searching for truth, were made plain to me, and I have been led, as I hope, into the mysteries of divine truth by the same Spirit that fired the hearts of those old soldiers of the cross who literally "wrought with one of his hands, and with the other hand held a weapon," as the Jews did under Nehemiah, while rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. Those old soldiers taught the people that, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it," and that salvation from first to last is wholly of the Lord. "Time salvation" is a term not then used, but we were taught by those old worthies that we were saved by grace, and not by works, "lest any man should boast," and that we are just as dependent upon God for our salvation and preservation from sin while groping our way through the darkness of this life, as we are for the crowning blessing of our eternal salvation, for without him we can do nothing, and if we have one good thought, it is by the promptings of his Spirit within us. Are not the editorials and every communication published in the SIGNS now, pregnant with the same doctrine of God's sovereign and unfrustrable grace? Yes, and they feed my hungry soul as it was fed sixty years ago, when I found the doctrine so sweet to my taste as the only hope I had of deliverance from the curse of sin which burdened my soul. One would think that a diet of one kind of food for sixty or seventy years would lose its relish, and become flat and insipid, but the doctrine of salvation by grace never palls upon the stomach of a soul saved by grace, and I venture sometimes to hope I am one of that number, because I find so many sweet morsels while reading the

SIGNS, and the Scriptures with which they so fully correspond. If there has been any change in the SIGNS since its first publication, it has not been in its principles first laid down and valiantly contended for editorially, and by its many eminent correspondents, "salvation by grace through faith," and that not of ourselves, but is the gift of God, who is supreme over all his works, and controls all things according to his own good pleasure, reveals himself to whomsoever he will, putting his law in their inward parts, and writing it in their hearts, assuring them that he will be their God, and they shall be his people, "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord, for I will forgive," &c.

Now if I have said anything amiss I hope to be pardoned, for I have intended only to speak the truth, and am ready to be cross questioned by any who think me in error.

I love the SIGNS for the comfort it affords me, and now commence another volume that I may still feast on the good things I feel sure it will bring me.

The first article on the first page of the first number of the seventieth volume expresses my "desire" so sweetly and completely that my heart went out in a suffusion of tears after the writer, as I read it. If two drops of water come in contact, how instantly they become one. And so it has ever been for about sixty-five years reading of the soul-comforting editorials and other communications in the SIGNS.

May it ever contend for the same doctrine which only can comfort the saints in their pilgrimage through this life: Salvation by grace, through faith, of which Christ is the author and finisher; not of works, lest any man should boast, with all the concomitants of that fundamental truth.

Unworthily yours,

P. WEST.

KANSAS, Ill., Jan. 6, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I send herewith a letter recently received from Elder John G. Sawin, for your consideration, and publication if you think proper. I regard it as suitable reading matter for all the dear people of God. Owing to barrenness of mind, and trembling nerves, I have written but little of late for publication, but I hope my desire for the prosperity of Zion is not lessened, and I assure your my wife and I enjoy reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as much as we ever did. They advocate the same unalterable gospel truth that they ever have, Salvation by grace alone.

JAMES M. TRUE.

MATTOON, Ill., Dec. 29, 1901.

ELDER JAMES M. TRUE—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I have thought of you frequently in the past week or two, and should have written you but have been prevented by many things, one of the principle of which was my weakness and inability to write anything of profit to yourself or any one else. Now, however, I venture a few lines by way of a holiday salutation, and to remind you that you are held in remembrance by one of the least of all if indeed I can truly be classed with the saints of God at all. They are a people, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, whose God is the Lord, and whom I have always looked upon as being very different from the nations of the earth who boast of their own righteous-

ness, and exalt themselves before men as did the Pharisees of old. They are of the household of faith, the sheep of his (Christ's) pasture, the holy nation, the peculiar people; their God is the Lord; their Redeemer is the holy one of Israel; their garments are garments of praise, and "their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Their meat and their drink all comes from his bountiful and liberal hand. If they hunger after righteousness, he will fill them; he gives them the purest and the best of waters when they are thirsty; he maketh them to lie down in green pastures; he restoreth their souls; he leadeth them beside the still waters; he prepares for them a table spread with the very best of his Father's house, even in the presence of their enemies, and though they walk through the valley of the shadow of death, no evil will befall them; his rod and staff is always a solace and comfort to them. All this is taught them in their experience. They have passed from death unto life, and they well know that "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." So when all these blessed truths can be comprehended by the heaven born soul, it is quite easy to understand how one can say as did the psalmist David, "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

But the question comes home to me at this very moment, What sayest thou of thyself? What are thy thoughts and thy prospects? What are the signs of promise? These are grave questions. How shall we answer? The subject is too deep for human conception. One thing I do know, however, and that is, without the grace of God I know nothing of the way, truth and the life, and the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. I trust sometimes that the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto me. If so, it is wholly of the Lord. Of myself I can do nothing. If ever I had any insight to these wonderful and glorious things, it was over forty years ago. Then the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty, predestinating power and grace, was made beautifully plain to my soul. I was made to rejoice in it. It has been my solace and comfort ever since.

I have passed through many dark seasons, and have been subjected to numberless harrowing disappointments, but in all of these trials my confidence in the power and wisdom of the Lord has never been shaken for a single moment. I am liable to err, and I may not be what my profession indicates, all men may be liars, yet, let God be true. For his doings no apology is called for or needed. Men of our own household may rise up and cast aspersions on his works and doings, but God is of one mind, and none can turn him.

For my life I cannot see how any one, and much less a Baptist, can find fault with the Lord because he "hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." The simple fact is they will not endure sound doctrine; they are lovers of themselves more than of Christ. Is this not the case, my brother? I have no vengeful feeling toward them, and want to say to the Lord, "Forgive them, for they know not what they do." They are in his hands, and justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne.

But, my brother, this Sunday eve I have written a number of pages, but whether to your edification or not you must be the judge.

Wishing you, one and all, a Merry

Christmas, and Happy New Year, and that the choicest blessings may be yours, and with love and regards to all, I remain your unworthy brother,

JOHN G. SAWIN.

STACY, Texas, Dec. 1, 1901.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—Can I claim such a dear relationship? I often fear that I have no right to do so. I was very glad to receive your comforting letter of Oct. 5th. I have thought many times since about writing you, but had nothing to tell only my sinfulness, doubts and fears, which still is the case, but I cannot get rid of the impression to write. You know my weakness and my shortcomings so well, too well for me to speak of them. It is truly wonderful that the blessed Lord should take cognizance of such a vile, helpless creature as I am, for I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing, and that I am prone to evil as the sparks to fly upward. I can only cry for mercy from day to day; yes, from hour to hour. Without him I can do nothing. I have lately been made to wonder at the dealings of God in the taking from us a dear great-grandchild, the only one of her parents, on the fourteenth of November, and an equally dear grandchild on the sixteenth of November, and only a few months difference in their ages, and neither of them five years old, while still sparing my life; when it looks as though my work was done, and I helpless to a great degree. I do not want to murmur, or ask what doest thou? I feel confident that they are better off than we that are left. They are free from the cares and troubles of this life, which we still have to contend with, and will as long as we are in this mortal state.

Although I cannot love, serve and praise the dear Redeemer as I wish, I am sometimes comforted with the thought that he knows my every desire, and will supply all my need, if indeed I am one of his children. He will never leave nor forsake us in time of trouble. What a blessed promise, but does it apply to me? This is the important question which presents itself often.

Last night I received a letter from one of sister Bettie Williams' nieces, who expressed in it the fear that when I should receive it, her aunt would not be with them. She has been sick for a long time, and getting weaker every day. She has been a dear friend to me for many years. I am still confined to my chair, as the swelling in my limbs decreases very slowly. It will be six months, on the tenth, since I was taken sick; I have not been out of the house in all that time, except when taken out bodily and placed in the buggy; and not once since the swelling appeared. But others have been confined much longer, and I try to bear my afflictions humbly; but fear that I do not bear them as I should.

I remain your sister in a precious hope,

JULIA N. TROTT.

[A CORRESPONDENCE with sister Trott was enjoyed by us for perhaps ten years. The above was the last before her death, notice of which was given in the SIGNS for Jan. 15th, 1902. It was written just three weeks before her departure. Her letters were always spiritual, and in them all she constantly spoke her own unworthiness, and of the hope which was based alone upon the mercy of God, through the merit of the dear Savior. We doubt not that she is in his presence to abide forever.—C.]

NEWARK, Del., Nov. 29, 1901.

DEAR SISTER TERRY:—When you wrote me that kind letter, some time ago, asking if you had the right address, you told me that you were in midnight darkness, and perhaps you will remember that when I answered I told you that the Lord had forsaken me. Thinking that you might think me in a hard and bitter mood, I feel like writing you just a few lines more, and telling you just how I did feel, and just a little of my experience will do that.

Very soon after I was baptized I had such a great longing to be a partaker of the Lord's sufferings; it seemed as though I must have it so, and that I never could realize any relationship between us unless he granted me this, and I truly believe that I prayed to the Lord regarding it. I asked him to let me know as much as he could, of what he suffered, for my heart was set on knowing, and I felt that I never could be in full fellowship with him unless I understood his sorrows as well as his joys. I was praying for trouble, awful trouble, but I little realized then how much, and if for more than one reason the Lord has granted my request, I cannot blame him for that.

After awhile it seemed as if my prayer was answered almost to the full, and strange as it may seem, there were many times when I could say with Paul, that I gloried in tribulation. But as month after month, and year after year went by, and my love, faith, hope, patience, mercy, truth, justice, grace, forgiveness and all else that was good, which I felt to have at the beginning, left me little by little; I had times of thinking it very hard, and wondered in a dumb way why things were so bad with me. And now at this late day, strange as it may also seem, there have been many times when living through troubles that I even forget that I had ever made any such prayer to the Lord, and I know that I find fault and criticise and even blame the dear Lord for the very things that I had begged him with my whole mind to send upon me. But when I come to myself again, I can always thank him from my heart that things are as they are, because they are just as I want them. I am very sure that I never had the strength of purpose even in my bravest moment, to pray that the Lord might forsake me, yet if I am to taste a little of all that he suffered, I must needs taste of that also, because he said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" This was at the close of the life he was living in this flesh, and that seems very significant.

I write partly to tell you of a dream that I once had. I awoke from it with such a sense of fear and trouble on my mind that it was some time before it wore off. I dreamed that my body was covered with sores, sores that would not heal, putrefying sores; I did not dare to move, and I was disgusting in all ways. My first thought after the fear had passed off a little, was to get a light and see if it could be so, when it came to me in an overwhelming manner that it was only too true, and I was deathly sick at the time.

Dear sister, how awful, and yet how good it is when we reach the place where we begin to know just how good for nothing, withered and polluted is the life which we live in the flesh. None can know except they have passed through it, how sickening and shocking it is to try to live with one's own self after that; it is a living death. To the discouraged, weary and homesick pilgrim, this might almost seem to be the end of all things, but only stop and think what this same

thing means in the vegetable world: there a new life is creeping up through the dark earth into the daylight. The Lord said, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone," but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. And right here comes in this language with comfort to us, "Whosoever will save his life, shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it."—Matt. xvi. 25. You may tell your best friend that at a certain time and place a plant will appear above the ground, but he never knows that it is so until he sees it. The Lord opened the eyes of the blind in the olden time, and so he does to-day. The wise shall understand. (Dan. xii. 10.)

The Lord's second coming to his people is in connection with his marriage to them, and it reads thus, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."—Rev. xix. 7. "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." "And he saith unto me, Write, blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." "And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God." The Lord's people seem to be in a sad condition, and I believe that as one person they can all truthfully say, we only wait the time when death shall be swallowed up in victory.

Yours in the love of the truth,

ELLA M. HAMILTON.

CORYDON, Ind., Dec. 29, 1901.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have returned to my dear sister's, which is my home when not at Crawfordsville, but I have no church to go to here, but I enjoy reading my papers. I wish you to send me the SIGNS, please find one dollar inclosed for the same.

Now, my dear brother, I wish to thank you for your kind christian remarks in answer to my letter to you, published in the SIGNS of August 15th, 1900.

After reading some articles in other papers I feel constrained to say, What a great difference of opinion even among the living children of God, as to what the Bible teaches. I ask myself the question, How can these things be among the all things that work together for good to those who truly love God? and am I one among that number who truly loves the dear Savior supremely above all things else? O, how I desire to follow my dear Savior. If we love Jesus, we love his dear people, but how are we to know the dear Lord's people? Jesus says, "By their fruits." The fruits of the Spirit of Christ will ever draw and unite the living children of God together in love to God and one another. But the fruits of the flesh cause them to bite and devour one another. Satan is a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. This evil spirit is ever tempting the Lord's dear people to bite and devour. I do not suppose this evil spirit of Cain cares what they fight over, just so they disobey God, and fight with carnal weapons. O, how the enemies of Jesus rejoice over confusion and strife among the dear Old Baptists, who they say claim to be the only visible church on earth. But the great and the good Shepherd is watching over the objects of his everlasting love; no weapon formed against them shall prosper. Who is able to pluck one of these loved ones out of the Father's hand? All our beloved brethren preach this doctrine, while living in these poor bodies we have a constant warfare with the world, the flesh

and Satan. Truly, who could, if left to himself, gain the final victory? My dear brother, I know you wish to obey the dear Savior, you read the Bible to find out what God requires of you, you love the dear Savior; Jesus bids you, as he did Peter, Go feed my sheep and lambs, you feel very weak and helpless, but the Savior gives you the strength to obey. Perhaps some dear child of God has been led astray, and is beating and devouring God's dear children, instead of feeding them with good things from above. Jesus says, My sheep know my voice and they follow me. The Lord's under-shepherds, when governed by the Spirit of Christ, will ever be faithful, but not abusive.

I love to read my old SIGNS, and still wish to read it.

As ever, your sister in Christ,

KATE BARTLEY.

DAWSON, N. M., Jan., 1902.

B. L. BEEBE—VERY DEAR FRIEND:—We just received your acknowledgment of the twenty dollars sent you to assist the SIGNS, and I felt as if I must reply at once. I have been reading the SIGNS for forty years, and agree with the doctrine as set forth therein, and often times have inquired, why I was so firmly of the opinion that what I see written there is the scriptural truth? I have no faith in anything else. I was led by the Spirit to believe as I do. I am confident that in all these years the correspondents to the SIGNS, and the editors, have been directed by the wisdom and power of Almighty God. I sometimes think, Why should I doubt that I was being led by the same power? When I review the ground, and see my track so crooked, I am bewildered. I have never joined the church, and do not know that I ever shall. I am getting to be an old man, am seventy-two years old, and have spent my days on the frontier.

You spoke of the contribution of twenty dollars in your letter. It was but small. It seems a pity that the Old Baptists would not help their paper more liberally. My wife and I believe and understand the teachings of the Scripture to be, that the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof, also the heart of the king is in the hands of the Lord, like the rivers of waters, he turneth them whithersoever he will, and as long as he please the SIGNS will ever live. We do not want any praise, we do not deserve any for anything we do. It is the Lord that worketh in us the will and to do of his own good pleasure. I feel like exclaiming as did David, "What is man that thou art mindful of him?"

Yes, publish the letter and donation if you think best. God will sustain the truth, do not fear, my old friend.

J. B. DAWSON.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—I thought I must write you a few lines, too. Mr. Dawson dictated the above and I wrote it for him. It was because I was fearful I might have said or done something that would deceive some dear child of God, that I requested you not to publish my letter. I am so weak and unprofitable that I hardly dare lift my pen to write to any one. Do as you think best, my dear brother, and when all is well with you remember me and mine.

Your sister in tribulation,

LAVINIA J. DAWSON.

[THE above letters are in reply to a letter from us, in which we requested permission to publish their liberal donation of twenty dollars to the support of the SIGNS, as they request in the letter containing the contribution, that it be not published.—ED.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1902.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

LUKE XII. 35.

"LET your loins be girded about, and your lights burning."

While we would not at all question the view of those brethren who regard these words as applying to the time of the end of the old or Jewish dispensation, and the ushering in of the gospel dispensation, yet we have long believed that they were just as applicable to believers in every age, and in all the world. It is in this way we desire to speak of them in what we may here write.

Beginning at the twenty-second verse, Jesus spoke many precious and important things to his disciples. Let this be noticed especially, "He said unto his disciples." They were spoken to none other than disciples. We do not doubt that many followers of the Lamb, when they have read these words have questioned very solemnly in their hearts, Did the Master speak these things to me? Am I a disciple of the Lord? Unregenerate men may read these words and not a question arise in their mind as to whether they are disciples or not, but true believers do feel such anxiety about the matter that they can but question with earnestness, Do these admonitions and precious assurances belong to me? To such, first of all we would say, No unregenerate man does thus question. Unbelievers have no doubts or fears concerning this matter. Of the wicked the psalmist testified that even in their death they had no bands. But God's humble children have such views of themselves and of God, of their own sinfulness and his holiness, of their weakness and his mighty power, that they often are deeply troubled; fearing that after all they have but grasped the shadow, and missed the substance. They often say, Could my heart be so hard, and I have so little feeling, could prayer seem so much of the time a task and burden, could every little trial distress me so much, if indeed I did know a Savior's love? This questioning is one infallible mark of a disciple of the Lord. Another is, that disciples though they feel to come so far short of what they ought to be, and of what they read in the word, yet do love that word, and do desire perfection in holiness. Let any doubting one read this very chapter, beginning at the twenty-second verse, and see if their hearts do not burn within them, and if they do not feel that these things are indeed precious. It was those who gladly received the word that were baptized upon the day of Pentecost. Lydia attended to the things which were spoken by the disciples. As we read, are our hearts open to receive the truth here spoken by the Master? Do these things seem more precious than fine gold to us? Then indeed did the blessed Redeemer speak these words to us also, and they will be found to our profit.

In the connection is the parable of the rich man, who would build greater barns and store-houses to hold his goods, but of whom his soul was required that very night. Now to the disciples the Master says, "Take no thought for your life,"

This one sentence includes all that pertains to this life. And in all that follows, down to the thirtieth verse, the Savior presents what ought to be the attitude of his disciples toward the things of this world. Then from the thirtieth verse to the thirty-third he presents the kingdom of God in contrast with the world. Some dear brethren, we know, have thought that all this was limited to those who are called to labor in the ministry alone. No doubt this does apply with especial force to them, but yet we feel persuaded that every believer, as well as those who labor in word and doctrine, will find himself or herself often at the point where two ways meet, and must follow either the gain of this world, or the riches of the kingdom of heaven, and whenever this is the case, are not the words, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," just as solemnly applicable to them as to the ministry? The temptations of the gain of this world, whether we are met by its pleasures, or its riches, or its honors, or its friendships which seem so desirable, all of which we are apt to count as gain, are just as alluring, and yet just as much the enemies of our souls, as they were to the disciples to whom Jesus then spoke. And certainly, not only ministers, but all who love the Lord, are to be warned against these things. Are the public servants of God alone to seek to avoid these snares, while all the rest need no such warning? Are not all the people of God his servants, as well as were the prophets and apostles? Are they not all his servants, as well as ministers who are called especially to preach the word, and to care for the churches, as undershepherds? Do not all disciples belong to the "little flock," to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom? (Verse 32.) Then all of them, as well as the apostles, and all the bishops, and all those who labor in word and doctrine, are admonished to not seek what they shall eat, or what they shall drink, and to sell what they have and give alms. Concerning them all alike it is true that where the treasure is, there will their hearts be also.

In all this there is nothing in contradiction to all those Scriptures which admonish to diligence in business, and to laboring with our hands that we may have to give to him that hath need. In fact, it is the whole tenor of the Scriptures that the grace of God will lead to industry, sobriety, frugality and honesty toward all men, so that it will be the desire and effort to "owe no man anything," but to love one another, as the apostle testifies. A lazy, careless, spendthrift christian would be a contradiction of terms. But the blessed Master, in all his teachings concerning the things of this world, and the place which they are to occupy with his disciples, enjoins upon them that they shall not be unduly anxious concerning them. It is all summed up when he said, "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." Believers are to remember in all their labor in the world that God has provided just the things that they need, and that he will not suffer any harm to come nigh their dwelling. Believers are enjoined, upon this ground, to be without carefulness. They are enjoined to cast all their care upon him. If then, this humble trust dwells in the heart, believers can go about their labor with cheerfulness, and can face the difficulties of their life without anxiety. How blessed a thing it is to possess an humble spirit of trust in the Lord. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." "The life is more than meat, and the body is

more than raiment." If then, our God has given us life, and has fashioned our body, shall he not much more give the bread and the clothing that is needful?

These things are all needful to be presented, because every believer will find constantly in his way what seems to be conflicting interests; on the one hand the needful things of this life, and on the other his obligations in the kingdom of heaven. What believer is there that does not almost every day of his life find his mind perplexed as to what he shall choose? On the one hand business, pleasure which in itself is lawful, the provision which seems needful for the family which God has given him, and on the other hand his obligation to attend his meeting, to contribute of his substance to the needs of the house of God, in the expenses which will arise in various ways, and which are needful. If we shall rightly apprehend the words of the Redeemer in this connection, and may but have the spirit of them dwelling in our heart, these perplexities will melt away, and the path which seemed so dark as we faced it, will become light, and at the end we shall wonder that we could ever have hesitated in the matter at all. We shall at the end learn that indeed our heavenly Father does provide, and that we need never fear to serve God, and keep his commandments. Our heavenly Father knoweth that we have need of these things.

If the spirit of these things then shall be found dwelling in our hearts, it will not be hard to decide which way we shall go. If the true spirit of a servant dwell in our hearts, we shall find all our treasure in the service of God. The things of the kingdom of God will be more to us than all the world beside. Then we shall say, as did David, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." Thou art the strength of my heart and my portion forever. Our treasure is in the kingdom of heaven, and there will our heart be. And the promise involved in the words, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," will be more precious than the promise of any earthly blessing can be. Thus the blessed Master before us was not enticed by the promise of all the kingdoms of the world. What were they compared to the promise of the kingdom of heaven? O that the Spirit of him who endureth temptation, and was not overcome by it, might dwell in and reign in all our hearts.

Now we would say that as the things embraced in the connection of the text are felt and realized in our hearts and lives, the text itself will also be found precious to us. First of all there will be a great desire that it may even be so with us. Our prayer will be, Lord, fulfill thine own word in us; thou hast wrought all our works in us, now help us to make thy work manifest in our bodies, and in all that we do and say. Outward service amounts to but little, but the spirit of that service is much. Without love in the heart as the propelling power, all our works are but as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. But if love be in the heart, the chief desire will be to know, What will the Lord have us to do? And then when he says, "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning," we shall love the words, and shall believe that they are good words and precious, and shall desire that they be fastened in our hearts, as a nail in a sure place. Then also we shall want to study the commandment to know just what it means, and in thus reading and meditating, we shall want the Spirit of truth

to show us its true meaning. What then do these words mean as the Savior used them?

It is in our mind to present a few thoughts as to their meaning in the way that has seemed true and right to us for a long time. In the parable, servants are presented as waiting in the nighttime for the coming of their absent Lord, who has gone to a wedding. They know not when he will return, but they are to be ready at any moment for his coming, that they may at once open the door to him and serve him as he may require of them. The admonition is to be ready, by having the loins girded about, and the lights burning. In those days and in that land the ordinary garment was a long, loose, flowing robe, and a girdle about the loins was needful, that when the wearer would engage in labor, or in walking, or in warfare, this loose flowing garment might be gathered up out of the way of his feet, and held there in the girdle until the warfare, labor or journey was over. The garment was right in itself, and might be worn ordinarily in the loose flowing manner of ease, but there would arise occasions in the life of all, when it would, if thus worn, be in the way, and become a hindrance to the performance of some duty or of some labor. Servants who desired to be prompt in the service which they should render would feel the need of having the garments already gathered up, and so would not lay aside the girdle.

Now the application in our mind is this, there are many things given us of God which are right in and of themselves, such as family ties, the goods of this world, friendships, social enjoyments, needful business, with its care, and other things as well. These things are to be engaged in and enjoyed, and we can never quite lay them aside, no more than the servant might lay his garments completely aside, but yet there come times when these things must not hinder us in the service of God, and therefore must be gathered up out of the way, lest we be delayed while upon the King's business. No man that warreth, cumbereth himself with the cares of this world, his one business now is warfare; all other business must now be laid aside. The kingdom of heaven is first. To be ready for the coming of the Master is the all-important thing. There must be no laying aside of the girdle, no putting out of the lights. How many of us must plead guilty to allowing the good things of this life to come in the way of our service in the kingdom of God. Have we not stayed away from our meeting for some little business or pleasure? Have we not taken our ease many times, rather than bestir ourselves to fill our place in God's house? Have we not been guilty of allowing some worldly friendship to interfere with our greater blessings? Have we not rejected and neglected the Friend of friends, for the lesser friendships of this life? Now these things when they get in the way of service which we owe to the great Master, must be gathered up out of the way, that we may run at his bidding.

The girdle which thus gathers up these garments in the needful place, is the girdle of truth. Says the apostle, "Having your loins girt about with truth." Again says the apostle, "Gird up the loins of your mind." Truth is the only thing that puts the things of this world in their proper place, and shows them in their true light. It is falsehood which leads the believer astray, which puts good for evil, and evil for good. The bondage into which we enter so much is from falsehood. If the truth dwell in the

heart it will make free, "If the truth make you free, ye shall be free indeed." It is the false glamour of this world that leads us to seek after it so much, but truth written in the heart and experience of the child of God, reveals the falsehood, and shows where solid foundations are. What a blessing then is truth, and the truth is revealed in the Scriptures; they show how false and fleeting are worldly pleasures, even those which belong to the good gifts of God, and which are to be received with thanksgiving. Truth also shows how little we need fear the cross which must be borne in serving the Lord. The way to our short sight seems dreadful, but truth shows us that the Lord is there, and then it is not dreadful. Disciples on the one hand are called upon to give up the delights of this life, and to face opposition and hardship as good soldiers, and from these things we all naturally shrink and fear, but the truth shows that we need not care for the pleasures of the world, because there are better pleasures at God's right hand, and that the clouds we so much dread are after all big with mercy, and shall break with blessings on our head.

The disciples needed all this to be spoken to them then, and disciples need that these things should be spoken to them now. O, that the girdle of truth might be always in our view, and that we might always hold the things of this life at their true worth, or rather worthlessness, when compared to the riches of the glory of the kingdom of our Lord.

We will add to this already too lengthy editorial, but a few words concerning the last clause, "And your lights burning." With it will no doubt occur to the minds of all who may read this, the other words of the Savior, "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." As truth written in the heart is a girdle, so also is it light. Now let this light, kindled of the Spirit of God within, shine forth. It can shine forth in no other way than by what we do and say. If our heart possess this heavenly light, let the conversation also be in heaven. It is summed up by the apostle, it seems to us, in the words "Be instant in season, out of season;" "Always abounding in the work of the Lord." There is no room here for slothfulness, no room to say, My Lord delayeth his coming, no room for rioting, feasting and drunkenness. It seems to us that the words, "Let your lights be burning," mean all manner of careful living before men.

C.

TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

AGAIN we feel to beg the pardon and forbearance of our brethren and friends for the seeming neglect on our part to answer their kind and encouraging letters of a personal nature. To many we fear it must seem as though we are lacking in ordinary courtesy, to say nothing of brotherly appreciation of the loving-kindness shown us by their hundreds of letters from all parts of the United States.

It is truly a source of great sorrow to us to not be able to express to each one personally our appreciation of their sweet expressions of love and fellowship, and their approval of the conduct of the SIGNS, but it is a physical impossibility for us to do so, and we ask each one to whom we are thus indebted, to appropriate this note as personal to them, and to continue their forbearance with the infirmities of their poor, weak brother.

B.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ROMANS VI. 1, 16.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Will you give your views on Romans vi. 1,-16? By so doing you will oblige me.

Yours as ever,

WILLIAM SPRINGSTEEN.

RAMAPO, N. Y., Feb. 17, 1859.

REPLY.

The first verse proposed for consideration reads thus, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?"

The apostle had been dwelling on the reign of sin and death, and the redemption of the church of God from the dominion of both by the reign of grace through righteousness by Jesus Christ our Lord. The entrance of sin into the world by Adam as the embodiment and representative of all his posterity, long before the law or the Sinia covenant was given to Israel, even as early as the transgression of Adam, and the law is a detecter of sin; moreover, the law entered that the offense might abound. That is, as we understand it, that sin might appear as it really is, exceedingly sinful. The law did not make us sinful, but showed that we were so, making our sins to abound, or exposing them to view in their true magnitude, and so far as the church of God is concerned, the manifestation by the application of the law of the total depravity and just condemnation of those whom Christ came to redeem, shows the more vividly the superabounding of the grace of God. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. Sin, enthroned in our carnal nature, reigned unto death, but now, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, the principality of sin is spoiled; the strength of sin, which is the law, can no longer sustain the empire of sin, for being dead to the law by the body of Christ, they are no more under the law, but under grace, or under law to Christ. Grace now appears in regal majesty, erects her throne in the heart, and sways her sceptre with greater might, reigns, governs and controls unto the opposite issue: life—eternal life. Sin's reign was unto death, but grace extends her reign unto eternal life, and never can possibly fall short of that result. As certainly as it is that sin is the sting of death, so certainly the gift, or grace of God, is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. None can fail of eternal life who are subjects of reigning grace, nor can any fail of the wages of sin who are subjects of its reigning power.

This being the prominent doctrine of the inspired apostles and of the primitive disciples of Christ, their workmongrel opposers slanderously reported that they held and avowed as their doctrine that they would sin, that grace might abound. But it was a false charge, and as slanderously said of the primitive saints as it is now reiterated against the old order of disciples, and upon the same ground. But the apostle pronounces it a slanderous report, and he says of those who propagate it that their damnation is just.

Again, the enemies of God and truth have always contended that the doctrine of sovereign, eternal, reigning and saving grace is exceedingly dangerous, leading to licentiousness, for they have no knowledge of that faith which works by love and purifies the heart. Their religion depends on fear, animal excitement, terror, fire and brimstone, &c. But the operative principles of love, as an incentive to holy aspirations, is only found under the reign of grace, hence all will-worshipers are ignorant of it.

Paul could and did confidently appeal

to the subjects of grace in the language of our text, "What shall we say then?" We know what our calumniators, and all Arminians say on the subject, but, "What shall we say?" Can a subject of grace be found in heaven or in earth who will say, Let us sin that grace may abound? The very thought to them is abhorrent and repulsive; God forbid, is their language, for how shall we that are dead to sin, slain to its love, dead to its dominion, and emancipated from its reign, how shall we live any longer therein? Baptized into the death of Jesus Christ, being buried with him by baptism into death, crucified with him, dead to sin by his body, we are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God, and with him we are risen to newness of life; Christ now liveth in us, and the life which we now live in the flesh, we live by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved us and given himself for us. The body, or that which is born of the flesh, is dead because of sin, circumcised, or cut off, so that we are no longer known in the flesh, or after the flesh, but the Spirit; that which is born of the Spirit, is life, because of righteousness. It is the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him," that is, with Christ who was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification. "God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with him, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Now, therefore, our element is no longer sin, but holiness. "For he that is dead is freed from sin." Now, if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him." If we were crucified with him, baptized into his death, buried with him by baptism into death, and the body of sin destroyed; if with him God has raised us up together to a newness of life, then may we reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. And then the admonition of the subject applies to us. "Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." The old mortal body is still of the earth earthy. Sin is still there striving to maintain a dominion over our members. But being legally released from his cruel dominion, we have a right to renounce his yoke, and refuse obedience to his wicked mandates. Sin will strive to reign over our members and to control them by stirring up our passions and lusts, and to press our members into its service. But here is the true ground of our confidence, that sin shall not have dominion over us, for we are not under the law, but under grace. "What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid."

We are frequently told by the votaries of free-will and human agency in salvation, that if they could be assured that they are not under the law, or exposed to its penal wrath, they would not only sin, but give a loose rein to all their lusts, and take their fill of sin, thus proving that they still love sin as well as ever. They are not yet full, they want more, and are only restrained by a selfish fear of hell. Our case is quite different, if we are under the reign of grace; we have had our fill of sin long ago, we loathe it now, we hate it, we detest it, and love holiness, for it is now our element.

We come now to the sixteenth verse of the chapter on which brother Springsteen desired us to comment, in connection with the first.

"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"

This the saints ought to know, and to thoroughly understand. Here are two opposite dominions, the one, sin; the other, righteousness; and if we are under the dominion of the first of these, we shall obey it in its lusts, yielding our members instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. But if freed from the dominion of sin, and brought under the reign of grace, we shall obey the governing principles of grace, the law of grace, which teaches us, "That denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world." This law of grace is not written on tables of stone, but written on the tables of our hearts, according to the provisions of the new covenant, or covenant of grace. "I will put my law in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people," &c. While a discrimination is here made between the slaves of sin, and the subjects of reigning grace, we are taught to regard a love of holiness, a spirit of obedience to God, and a relish for the word of truth, the doctrine and ordinances of Christ, as a reliable evidence that we have passed from death unto life, from the dominion of sin, to the reigning power of grace, and in the fullness of our hearts, in the assurance of this evidence, we join the apostle in thanksgiving to God that our service under the dominion of reigning sin, is among the things which were, that being now made free from sin, we become servants of righteousness.

The question may arise, Why, if I am thus made free from the reigning power of sin, am I so prone to wander, so full of vain and wicked thoughts? Why do I the things which I ought not, and leave undone the things which I ought to do? The answer of this inquiry will be found in the words of our Redeemer, in connection with those of Paul: "That which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit, and that which is born of the flesh, is flesh. And the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for in our flesh there dwelleth no good thing." All our disobedience and rebellion against the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, arises from the flesh, which is and always has been at war with grace. It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. With my mind I serve the law of God, but with my flesh the law of sin.

Here is the ground of the christian warfare; two opposing laws, two opposite principles dwell in us while we sojourn in the militant state. The flesh, or earthly, depraved nature will never harmonize with the aspirations of the new man after holiness. The flesh is still a servant of sin, but the new man is the servant of righteousness, and each zealous for its respective master. While the sin that dwelleth in us disputes and opposes every step of the reign of grace, so that we cannot do the things which we would, grace, on the other hand, or the immortal Spirit of life, which is denominated the new man, cannot sin, because he is born of God, and his seed remaineth, and making war, uncompromising and determined, shall crucify the old man with his affections and lusts, and shall assuredly triumph over all opposition with, "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory

through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The apostle continues to dwell on this subject throughout this and the succeeding chapter, and shows that the saints are debtors not unto the flesh, to live after the flesh; if governed by the flesh, or if we walk after the flesh, we shall die. Death hath passed on the flesh, and the flesh is dead because of sin; sin has defiled it, reigns in it, and his reign is unto death. The carnal or fleshly mind is enmity against God, and to be carnally minded is death. "But as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

Much more might be written on this subject, the importance of which is demonstrated in the experience of all the saints, but we trust that what we have written will afford brother Springsteen some idea of what are our views on the subject.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 1, 1859.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

REQUESTS TO REPUBLISH ARTICLES.

WE are in constant receipt of requests to republish articles that have appeared in former volumes of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and to each one making the request it may seem that it would not make much difference, just republishing their one article, but if we should make an exception of each one, and grant their request, we would hardly have room in the paper for the copied articles, and all original matter would be crowded out. In each number there is copied one or more editorials from the founder and former editor of the SIGNS, the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and to occupy much more space with copied matter would not be satisfactory to our readers in general.

We make this statement as an apology to our brethren and friends whose requests for the republishing of articles we have not been able to comply with, and hope it will be satisfactory, and that none will attribute our failure to comply, to a neglect of, or indifference to their wishes.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Mt. Enon Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with Bethlehem Church, Hillsboro Co., Fla., sends to the sister associations with whom she corresponds, christian love and greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We feel that it has pleased the Almighty God, who rules and super-rules in heaven and on earth, to have spared the life of our Association to meet again in a peaceable union, where fellowship, love, joy and good will abounds, all of which we feel to hope, through the Spirit, strengthens and emboldens the courage of our brethren and soldiers of the cross, to go forth to battle and face a frowning foe.

Our churches are nearly all represented, and all with one accord bring glad tidings of joy; peace at home.

Our beloved ministers, through God's grace, we believe, have been enabled to go out and in before us in an acceptable way, ever watchful and faithful, in meekness and submission.

Dearly beloved, we would ask a continuation of your correspondence with us. Let us strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of love and peace, that a chain of connection may run throughout Zion. We hope it may be the minds of many of you to visit us often, whom we believe would be received with open arms.

Our next session will be held with Corinth Church, Desoto Co., Fla., twelve

miles south-east of Fort Meade station, and on dirt road to Avon Park, on Friday before the second Sunday in November, 1902.

In conclusion, we pray that our heavenly Father may guide us all in duty's paths, bless us with wisdom and faith, that we may ever be found at each other's feet. Amen.

J. W. FUTCH, Moderator.

M. L. GILBERT, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. T. Barnes, at the residence of the bride's parents, Jan. 12th, 1902, Marion Colwell and Miss Ellen Alexander.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, at the home of the bride's parents, in Wicomico Co., Md., Dec. 31st, 1901, Henry Givens, and Miss Lee Freeny, both of Cecil Co., Md.

By the same, at his residence in New Church, Va., Jan. 15th, 1902, William E. Fox and Carrie A. Hall, both of Hancock, Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Rachel F. Hart departed this life Thursday morning, Oct. 17th, 1901. She had nearly completed her 79th year. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Southampton Baptist Church about fifty-seven years ago, and was all her life one of the very faithful members of the church. She was clear in her understanding of the doctrine, and was consistent in her walk and conversation. Her love for the church, and her constancy in attendance upon all the meetings, were noticeable by every one. Her place was never vacant when she was able to be present. The twenty-seventh Psalm was often spoken of by her as her own Psalm, being that which came to her mind with such power in her deliverance from the bondage of the law. The first verse of that Psalm was wonderfully exemplified in her life after she received a hope: "One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life; to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." She named this as one of the portions of Scripture to be read at her funeral. Her health had been feeble for many years, and several times within the past fifteen years she has been apparently at the point of death. Each time she seemed very quiet in her mind, and willing to go when the Lord's time should come. Many a time when it would seem as though she was not able to leave the house, she would be at the meeting, to the surprise of all, or would be calling on some of the feeble members.

Her mind was very quiet during her last illness. She felt sure it was her last sickness. Her voice was too weak to be heard during the past few days except by most careful attention, but she was able to express her wishes concerning her funeral, which she had told to me before, and to speak of her steadfast hope, and of her willingness to go to her dear Savior. Her two daughters, one of whom is a member of the church, were with her. One of them a trained nurse, had the especial care of her. She also leaves four sons. All of her children were attentive to her wants. She was a devoted and affectionate mother. She also leaves two brothers and two sisters, one of the latter a member in Philadelphia, sister Craven, who, as was sister Hart, is widely known among the household of saith.

Elders F. A. Chick, and G. M. Fetter, now of New Mexico, were with me at the funeral on Monday, Oct. 21st, and all took part in the exercises.

Her death is deeply felt by our church, by all the members of which she was loved dearly. We feel bereaved by the loss of this dear sister, and by the loss of sister Van Cleve, whose obituary notice appeared in the last SIGNS, and that of our dear sister Lydia Jane Fetter, whose obituary notice will undoubtedly soon be prepared by her brother, Elder Fetter.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 9, 1902.

Ralph D. Christie, son of David D. and Rachel Christie, was born in Bergen county, N. J., July 5th, 1831, and died in Paw Paw, Illinois, Dec. 18, 1901, aged 70 years, 5 months and 15 days. He was the ninth child of a family of thirteen brothers and sisters, only one now survives, viz, Mr. James Christie, of LaPlata, Mo. He came with his parents from New Jersey to this State, in 1852. His father settled on the farm just south of Paw Paw, a portion of which constitutes the cemetery where his body will sleep until the resurrection morn. His father died at this place, in July, 1868. After his father's death he removed with his mother to Mendota, where she died, in 1894, at the advanced age of nearly one hundred and one years. The deceased was never married. He was very devoted to his mother, and for many years took care of her and was very diligent and faithful in ministering to her wants as long as she lived. After the death of his mother, he came to live with his niece, Mrs. D. C. Breese, where he continued to reside until his death. Some eighteen years ago he was received in the Primitive Baptist Church of Hope, at Tonica, Illinois, and baptized by Elder W. A. Thompson. He led a quiet christian life, and was very submissive to the divine will in the midst of suffering. He never enjoyed rugged health, having been an asthmatic from childhood, and of late years

suffered from other complaints. During his last days he longed to depart and be at rest. He has heard the Master's call, and departed we trust, to be with Christ in the Father's house, which is far better than any earthly life. The funeral was preached by J. W. Mann. Interment was at the Frantz cemetery.

It becomes my painful duty to send notice of the death of my dear husband, **William A. Darby**, which took place Dec. 22d, 1901. He was born Jan. 21st, 1833. He was afflicted for over twenty years, and could not walk or go out of the house only as he was helped, until one year since, when he had a severe spell of sickness, and when he got better, found that he could stand erect and walk like other people. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and had no use for works in that respect. The day that he was taken ill, Dec. 17th, he arose from his afternoon nap and complained of feeling chilly, and went to his bookcase, got his writing material, and wrote out full instructions for his burial. He never believed in having a funeral service for himself, but wanted a prayer at the grave, and the hymn read, "Show pity, Lord, O Lord forgive." He read the hymn over to me with the tears streaming down his cheeks, and in a few moments was taken with a severe chill, and lost his strength so rapidly that he had to be carried to his bed. He suffered greatly, but was conscious to the end, but could not talk much. I never saw a more patient and resigned sufferer than he was in all his twenty years' affliction, and to the last. He was laid to rest on the twenty-fourth, in the Presbyterian cemetery, where he had selected a lot some time since. I know that my great loss is his eternal gain, and I should not wish him back, but I am too rebellious to be resigned to the will of God.

Your sister in deep sorrow,

ELLA E. DARBY.

[For many years we have known Mr. Darby, and in former years have often been a visitor at his home. No kinder, more hospitable, friendly, honest, upright, God-fearing man ever lived than he. We knew him before the twenty years' affliction to which sister Darby has referred, and saw him often for years afterward, and never heard him complain in all that time. He had a very lowly opinion of himself, and could never dare to claim that the Lord was his Savior for many years. But we have no doubt that he indeed did know the sovereign grace of God. Our dear sister has been sorely afflicted, and she has our deepest sympathy in her manifold trials. May the blessing of God support and comfort her in her loneliness and widowhood.—C.]

Our dear mother, **Mrs. Irena MacDonald**, widow of the late Elder Lewis A. MacDonald, died at her pioneer home, on Rush Run, Lewis Co., W. Va., Dec. 17th, 1901, aged 75 years, 8 months and 11 days. She was stricken down with a billious attack on the fourth of the above named month. Her suffering was very great, but she was noted by all who were with her as one of the most patient and submissive sufferers they had ever seen; she was so very thankful for every kind favor rendered in her great illness. Mother was the youngest child of James and Phebe Stout, of Harrison Co., W. Va. At the age of twenty-three she was united in marriage to Mr. Lewis A. MacDonald, of Warren Co., Va. To this union seven children were born, of which five are left to mourn our great loss, "But sorrow not as one without hope." In early life she became interested in her eternal welfare, and in 1846 was baptized in membership of the New School Baptist Church, at West Millford. Her letter was never removed by her, nor did she join any other church, but like Mary of old, sat at the feet of the Master and learned of him. She read her Bible, and took no interest in the commandments or institutions of men. She said to a neighbor, in her last illness, "The Bible tells us, There remains a rest for the people of God; to them that are called according to his purpose, and I hope to gain that rest." Again on the morning she passed away, she told me she hoped her time was not much longer here, and she prayed the Lord to come and take her home to heaven, there to sing praises for ever and ever. She was a dear, loving mother, a good neighbor, and was ever led by an unobtrusive spirit, until the angel messenger came and said, She has finished the work I gave her to do.

It was in the afternoon of December 18th when we laid her peacefully away in the home cemetery, there to await the resurrection morn, when I trust she will be made like Christ's own glorious body.

In sorrowing faith and hope,

IRENA C. MACDONALD.

Weston, W. Va., Jan. 17, 1902.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$536 55
J. D. Hubbell, N. Y., $2.00; Lewis Paddock, Ohio, $1.00; Mrs. T. V. Richardson, Md., $8.00; Mrs. John Muir, N. Y., $2.00; No name, N. Y., $2.00; Henry Heckman, Ohio, $1.00.—Total	16 00
Total to date	$552 55

VIEWS WANTED.

Will Elder Durand please give his views through the Signs of the Times on the resurrection of the bodies of the Lord's people, and especially on 1 Corinthians xv. 38?

W. J. MAY.

Pinsonfork, Ky.

PERSONAL.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I wish to learn if there are any old fashioned Predestinarian Baptists living in Eastland or Calahan Counties, Texas. If there are I would like to hear from them. Is my mind to make a trip to Calahan County, and I would be pleased to meet with those that know and love the truth. Love to all.

Yours in hope, J. A. RUTLEDGE.

PEASTER, Texas.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 70. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1902. NO. 4.

POETRY.

CHRIST IN THE GARDEN.

WHILE nature was sinking in stillness to rest,
And the last beams of daylight shone dim in the west,
O'er fields by pale moonlight to a lonely retreat,
In deep meditation I wandered to weep.

While passing a garden I paused to hear
A voice faint and faltering from one that was there;
The voice of the mourner affected my heart,
While pleading in anguish the poor sinner's part.

I listened a moment, then turned me to see
What man of compassion this stranger might be;
I saw him low kneeling upon the cold ground,
The loveliest Being that ever was found.

His mantle was wet with the dew of the night,
His locks by pale moonlight shone glittering and bright,
His eyes bright as diamonds to heaven were raised,
While angels in wonder stood around him amazed.

So deep were his sorrows, so fervent his prayer,
That down o'er his bosom rolled sweat, blood and tears;
I wept to behold him, I asked him his name,
He answered, "'Tis Jesus, from heaven I came.

I am thy Redeemer, for thee I must die;
The cup is most bitter, but cannot pass by;
Thy sins like a mountain are laid upon me,
And all this deep anguish I suffer for thee."

I heard with attention the tale of his woe,
While tears like a fountain of water did flow;
The cause of his sorrows to hear him repeat,
Affected my heart, and I fell at his feet.

I trembled with terror, and loudly did cry,
"Lord, save a poor sinner, O save, or I die!"
He cast his eyes on me, and whipered, "Live!
Thy sins, which are many, I freely forgive."

How sweet was that moment he bade me rejoice,
His smile, O how pleasant, how cheering his voice!
I flew from the garden to spread it abroad,
I shouted salvation and glory to God.

I'm now on my journey to mansions above,
My soul's full of glory, of light, peace and love;
I think of the garden, the prayers and the tears,
Of that loving stranger that banished my fears.

The day of bright glory is rolling around
When Gabriel descending the trumpet shall sound.
My soul then in raptures of glory shall rise,
To gaze on the stranger with unclouded eyes.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE LORD'S PEOPLE.

SOME OF THEIR CHARACTERISTIC MARKS, BLESSINGS, &C.

TO THE READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN, SISTERS AND FRIENDS:—That there is a people peculiarly the Lord's people, in distinction from a people that are not, is abundantly proven by the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments. That the Lord has chosen this people for himself out of all kindreds, tongues and nations, and that they should by the Holy Spirit be called out from the world and separated unto himself, and live in this world of sin and sorrow in all periods of time, to the

praise of his glorious grace, is also plainly taught. This people is also so plainly described, and the marks which characterize them, together with the forces with which they must ever be at war, are so plainly set forth in the pages of holy writ, that we need not mistake when we read. The holy Spirit has moved men to declare, "The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." "I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver, I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" "Chosen us in him [Christ] that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught the things that are." "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is Lord of lords and King of kings: and they that are with him are called and chosen and faithful." "And after this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. * * * And he said unto me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." The foregoing quotations from several different inspired writers certainly is sufficient to sustain the remarks preceding them, though only a small portion of what might be quoted. This people God has most wonderfully blessed, and it is of these blessings, as provided by God the Father in his eternal purpose, and given them in his Son before the foundation of the world, and the possession and enjoyment of them in their personal experience of them, I wish more particularly to speak in this letter. Paul the apostle said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him," &c. From this we learn that the source of all spiritual blessings is Christ, and that they are bestowed according to God's choice of the recipient in Christ before the foundation of the world. O, how manifold and wonderful are the blessings of God in Christ. They are all in Christ, not one ever came from any other source. Understanding

this we may truly sing with the poet,

"Come, thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing thy grace;
Streams of mercy never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise."

To their spiritual David and his people identified with him, the covenant promise of the Father is, "My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments, if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me."

The visitation of the rod, and the stripes due for the transgressions of his people, was brought to bear upon their blessed covenant head, Jesus Christ, when he hung upon the bloody cross. So the prophet Isaiah could say, "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." His people are called members of his body, bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. Thus identified with him each member of his body must experience in some measure the pain and suffering of the Head, and, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." And to his people it is said, "For unto you it is given in behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Also, "If we suffer we shall also reign with him." So then if we are his, every particle of suffering we endure for Jesus' sake, or on account of him, or because we are his, is a God provided and given blessing in behalf of Christ. Even the measure of chastisements that falls to our lot as a member of his body, is a covenant blessing of God, and "No chastisement for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous, but afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness in them that are exercised thereby." All his children must endure chastisement in some measure, for, "If ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons." Chastisements truly bring grief and sorrow, but who among all the saints would want to be without the evidence they afford, or without the peaceable fruits they yield? How the children sometimes complain and writhe under the rod, and when some grievous trouble comes upon them, they feel to say like Jacob of old, "All these things are against me." When in the course of time this very thing has turned their mind again to the Lord, and they are brought down at his feet in humble and loving submission. To-day it became necessary for me to chastise a little grandchild for waywardness and disobedience. The desired effect was soon realized. An expression of willingness was given to do as required, and in a short time she came into the room where I was, and putting her arms around my neck said, "Pa, I won't be bad any more." Every affliction, grief and sorrow, that comes upon his children according to God's purpose and promise, are destined to work together with all things

else for their good, and not one among all these things comes to them by chance. If his people are brought low down in grief and sorrow, the Lord in his own way and time lifts them up and comforts them. If they become idolatrous, or in any way too highly exalted, in his own way and time he brings them down, weans them from their idols, and this all according to his covenant promise in Christ. It is written, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." Jesus was ever, is now and ever will be the Savior, and the only Savior of his people. "His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." "In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them and carried them all the days of old." What a blessed people! What a wonderful Redeemer and Savior! He by whom and for whom the worlds were created, the possessor of all things, having all power in heaven and on earth, holding in his own hand even the keys of death and of hell. Well and truly was it said by one of old, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency; and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places." And again, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord: and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." This people have the promise of God that he will never leave them nor forsake them. In every sorrow, trial and temptation, though he seem to tarry long, yet will he manifest himself as their Comforter and Deliverer. "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God," &c. "He is not slack concerning his promises as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any [of us] should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Then I would say to the poor, tempted, afflicted and sorrowing one, Take courage from the foregoing considerations, no matter what the nature, or what you may consider the cause of your troubles. Your Savior is able to save you out of all your troubles, and from all your sins. All his wisdom and power and riches is engaged in your behalf, and his promise is to you. Is not the very groanings of your spirit, prayer that he will save you from your troubles, from sin, from self? And is it not a fact that languishing on the bed of affliction, or a heavy sorrow resting on your heart, or smarting under the rod, you feel welling up in your heart an earnest desire for a resigned spirit that you may be able to say, "Thy will be done"? I say again, Take courage, for no one but a heaven-born subject ever felt this longing desire towards God. You are admonished to "Look to Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith." He endured the cross, despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God. Think on him, "lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Think of the anguish of soul he endured in the garden of Gethsemane. As a consequence the sweat rolled off of him as it were great drops of blood. The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man had not where to lay his head. Although the earth and the fullness thereof was his, it was not his to use as the rich of this world, the kings and nobles did. But both the world, its wealth, and those who for the time had it

in possession, were his. So of his people the apostle encouragingly says, "All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

I have witnessed a few times in life, languishing upon beds of disease and bodily suffering some of the most humble, devoted and spiritual minded of the Lord's people. They seemed to have been brought into close fellowship with their Lord. What a contrast I have been made to see between their condition of mind and my own; quite as much apparently as between our bodily health. I have been made to realize this especially in reading the writings of the late Mary Parker. So often in the furnace of affliction God's children are enjoying the richest of his blessings. In all our doubts, perplexities, afflictions, temptations and trials, we learn by experience that our salvation is not in our own hands; that our Lord alone can save. "By grace are [not were] ye saved." So our salvation even in time is not by works of righteousness which we can do, but by grace, "through faith, and that not of ourselves, but it is the gift of God." Afflictions, sorrows, trials and temptations, go largely to make up the experience of this life, as a necessary (and I believe a purposed) preparation to enable us to sing the final song of all the redeemed, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake." Such is the condition then of the Lord's poor and afflicted in this life, by reason of foes within and without, that "If in this life only we have hope in Christ Jesus, we are of all men most miserable." But there is a time and place when and where sorrow and sighing shall be felt and known no more forever. The little foretastes of love and joy felt here, earnests of our inheritance beyond, shall burst in the full blaze of fruition beyond this vail of sorrows, perplexities, doubts and fears. Although "it doth not yet yet appear what we shall be," yet the strongest desire we have while sojourning here is to be realized, viz: to be like our blessed Lord. Our vile body is to be changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself. Yes, I do believe that there is a sphere or state of being beyond this life of turmoil, sin and sorrow, where the redeemed of the Lord shall be with and like Jesus, and shall be gathered in one great blood-washed throng, to praise their Redeemer Lord throughout the ceaseless ages of an unbounded eternity, unmolested by sin or any of its consequences.

These things, though feebly expressed, I believe to be true of the Lord and his people, whether I am one of them or not.

In the hope that I am not mistaken in my hope, I am yours in fellowship,

H. B. JONES.

MT. VERNON, Texas, Jan. 27, 1902.

LANHAM, W. Va., 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN:—By request I will try to write an account of my experience and call to the ministry.

First, I will speak of my nationality: on my father's side I am Irish, and on my mother's side Dutch, but both of my parents were American born, and I was their fourth child. At the age of ten years, it pleased God to take my mother away from me, to her long home, and although it was forty-two years ago, I have never forgotten her kind words and christian like looks. The night she died she called us children to her bedside and bid us farewell. It seemed to me that my best friend on earth was gone; I can

never describe my feelings. I had no mother to speak to, and O, how lonely I felt, yet I thought my mother had gone to rest.

Now while feeling so serious about the death of my mother, I resolved that I would try to live the life of a christian, so I set about it with all my might; I would slip off from the other children and try to pray to God to fit and prepare me for heaven, so that when I died I would meet my mother there, and after a few weeks I thought that I was getting to be a pretty good boy. Then I thought that I would try to save my sisters that were older than I was. I approached them upon the subject of religion, and told them that they must quit their laughing and joking one another so much, and quit all their bad habits, and that I had done so, and that I felt a heap better. What a poor, deceived mortal I was, not knowing that I must have the life of Christ before I could live as a christian. But as young as I was, by my natural notions I was a complete Arminian. As time passed on my sorrow and care wore away. Now mark, it was not a godly sorrow which worketh repentance. Now I concluded that I would just lay my religion aside, and that I was too young to undertake to live such a particular life, and that it would be an easy matter to get religion again. I thought that a few prayers, and some good resolutions would put me in good shape again.

At the age of twenty, I was married to my first wife. During her life we were attending a meeting which was going on in the neighborhood held by the Missionary Baptists, and I was enjoying myself finely, playing pranks with the young fellows, and having a good time, as I called it. But one day, right in the midst of my sport, a fear took hold upon me which made me tremble, it appeared to me that hell was my doom, I slipped to the side of my wife and told her that I was going home. She said, "Wait till meeting closes." When we got started for home she asked me what was the matter? I told her that I could not tell her, but that I felt that I was going to die, and that hell was my portion; I had sinned away the day of grace. This was the first time in my life that I ever felt to be a sinner in the sight of God. I was here in a sin-cursed world, without God, or any well grounded hope after death. I thought, "O, that I had died when I was young, then this trouble would have never been on me."

Like many others, I fled then to the law, thinking to obtain righteousness by it, and feeling that I must work a work which would initiate me into God's favor. I would slip away into some secret place, where I thought no one would see me, and there would try to pour out my soul in prayer to God for mercy. For four long years I labored to do right in order to be saved. I lived in a neighborhood where they were principally Missionary Baptists, and they invited me to attend their meetings, and I did so; they preached the do and live system. So, with her fair speeches and enticing words, I went the way to her house not knowing the dead was there. I went to their social meetings, and they would tell how well they were getting along, and how determined they were to make heaven their home. O, how I wished that I could feel as they claimed to feel, but instead, I felt that I was a poor sinner, and with every effort I made, I only got worse.

About this time my wife was taken sick and died, and I was left with two little children. She left a bright evidence of her acceptance with the Lord. About

twelve months after, I was married again. I was now laboring hard, clearing up my land, and nights I would read my Bible, searching for comfort to my troubled soul. In my wife's sickness I had gotten in debt, and had sold the only horse that I had, so that season I was compelled to carry everything that we had to eat on my back, a distance of seven miles. One morning I started to go after some provisions; I had to go through the wood some two miles, and as I was walking along it appeared to me that I was the greatest sinner that had ever lived on the earth, and that I was bound for torment, which would only be just. In a moment a feeling took hold upon me so that I could stand upon my feet no longer, and

> While prostrate on the ground I lay,
> Not knowing help was near me,
> A heavenly whisper seemed to say,
> "Poor sinner I have saved thee."

I sprang to my feet feeling that God for Christ's sake had forgiven my sins; I praised my blessed Lord aloud; it seemed that out of the mouths of babes and sucklings he had perfected praise. Here I saw the church of Jesus Christ saved and complete in him, and washed with the washing of regeneration. The time had come when I could say, He hath taken my feet out of the miry clay, and hath placed them on a rock, and put a new song in my mouth, even praise to my God. It seemed to me that even the twigs on the trees were wafting their praises to God. After some time I went on my journey to secure my provisions. I hurried home so that I could tell my wife that my burden of sin was gone, and when I got to the door my little children met me, and then my wife came, and I began to tell her what great things the Lord had done for me, whereof I was glad. I went about my work feeling that I would have no more trouble. The next morning, however, I was in the yard cutting wood, when all at once, darkness seemed to shut me in. O, what oppressed feelings I had; I thought that I had grasped the shadow, and missed the substance. I stood there for a while with my head down studying about the peace which I had felt the day before. Just then a voice seemed to say to me, You must cry. I said, Lord, what shall I cry? The voice said, Cry unto Jerusalem. All at once light took place of the darkness. I began talking and crying. My wife and little children came to where I was. She wanted to know what was the matter with me. I told her the Spirit of the Lord was upon me, and that I could not help talking. She said, "You are going crazy, come and go with me to the house." Here was my first impression with regard to preaching. Now I tried to beg the Lord to put this on some one else, for I could not preach. I was slow of speech, and of a stammering tongue, and had no learning. Then the inward voice would say, I have made your mouth, and I can fill it.

I then thought I would let no one know anything about my impression to preach, but it was forcibly pressed upon my mind, day and night, that I must preach. My Missionary friends soon found out that I had professed a hope, and that I was in opposition to them, that now I believed salvation was wholly of the Lord from first to last. They would gather up by the road, and wait for me, to attack me about my dangerous doctrine of election and predestination. They would say that Christ was the elect, and no one else. I would ask them if they believed that he was the head of the church? and they would confess that he was. "Well," I would say, "if the head is elect, is not the

body equally so, with him? Can they be separated?" The Lord says, "Because I live, ye shall live also." His life is their life, and their life is hid with Christ in God.

Now I wanted to hear the people preach that I had once despised and hated; they were the old order of Baptists, but there were none in my neighborhood; I mean no members of the church. One man who lived about a mile from me was contending for that doctrine, his name was Melton, he was a son of Elder William Melton. I went often to his house to hear him talk, and he was much comfort to me.

The time of the Hopewell church meeting was the First Sunday in each month, and the Saturday before. I had by this time bought me a horse, and on Sunday I started to the meeting, a distance of ten miles. On my way I had to go by Elder Melton's. He with his wife came to the road, just as I came up, and we went together. We had not gone far when Mrs. Melton asked me where I was going? I thought that she mistrusted something, but told her that I was going to the meeting. Elder Melton took for his text that day the words, "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities." O, how I was carried away in my feelings, and I went home rejoicing.

The next spring, brother Melton preached for a few members that lived at Melton Creek; I went, and at the close of his sermon he said, "O that it would please God to call some young blue eyed person to the ministry, as I am old, and feel that my time is about out." It appeared to me that he knew about my feelings, and I wondered why this was, as I had never told any one my feelings with regard to preaching. I went to dinner with a cousin who was a member of the church, and after dinner we were sitting talking of our hope in Christ, when his wife came in and joined in the conversation with us. All at once she turned to me and said, "Well, I think that the old man got close to you to-day." My blood almost run cold, I knew that I had never said anything about my impressions to any one, and wondered why she singled me out. It appeared to me that she and my cousin knew my feelings, so I soon started for home, feeling that I would wear that impression out.

One night I dreamed that I was standing in the presence of a great congregation. All at once a man came to me and handed me a chain and an ax. I thought he was the loveliest person that I ever saw. I thought he said the chain is the gospel chain, and that the ax was to score to the line, no matter where the chips may fly. After this I felt impressed to go to the church and follow my blessed Lord down into the liquid grave, if the church could fellowship me; yet I felt too unworthy to be with them. I believed that the Primitive Baptists were the church of God, yet I stayed away eight years on account of my impression about having to preach. I thought in this way to wear out the impression, but finally I was made willing to go, and to relate a part of what I have here written, and was received, and baptized by Elder Wm. L. Melton. Now, I thought, perhaps this impression would leave me, but it was not so; the impression still remained. With Charley Melton, a son of the minister, I was on my way to the Friendship church to the meeting, when I concluded to tell him my troubles about this matter. I had the utmost confidence that he was as sound in doctrine as any Baptist that I ever knew. We had been together more or less all our lives. I said to him,

"I have something that I want to tell you." He said, "Well, tell it, I want to hear it; they all know it, it is not hidden from the church." As I began to tell him my feelings, he burst into a flood of tears, and said, "You ought to confess it to the church, and not confer with flesh and blood." He asked me if I had ever said anything to his father about it? I replied that I had not. We both went on our way crying. He had a rich experience, though he never went to the church. Shortly after this he was killed.

I went to brother Melton's, and unbosomed myself to him. He said that he would attend to the matter at the next meeting. So he called the church together after preaching, and then told me to relate my call to the church. I did so, and they gave me license to exercise my gift in the bounds of the Pocatalico Association. This was done at the December meeting, and the next January I was ordained, and I have been trying to preach ever since. I travel over six or seven counties every season, and preach with the liberty that God gives me. I am now fifty-three years of age, and my health is not good. I often start away a distance of thirty or forty miles, leaving my wife and daughter by themselves. I have a feeling I cannot express; the call says, Go, while my mind says, Stay. I love to meet the dear children of God, and hear them tell what the blessed Lord has done for their souls. I love the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone. It was grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved.

From your brother,

J. W. McLANAHAN.

EXPERIENCE.

WHENCE doth arise that exercise of mind and heart which we call a christian experience, or an experience of grace in the heart? How are we to distinguish it from the daily experiences of people in the world whose course in life is moulded and directed by the circumstances and events which environ them? We hear utterances from many precious brethren of doubt as to whether their hope is based upon a true experience of grace or not. They are unable to distinguish between the exercise of the Spirit of grace, and the work of the flesh in themselves; while in those of like precious faith they can discern very clearly the fruit of the Spirit. These are vital questions with each one of us. I hope I am not foolish enough to think I can explain away these mists and cobwebs which have been a component part of the life of every heaven-born child from Abel down to the present generation, but if I can say a few things to encourage you and strengthen your hope, I shall feel my letter has not been unfruitful. "We are saved by hope." And it is this wondrous mystery of godliness that keeps the spark of hope alive within us, and by it we go on and on until "we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." He (Christ) is the perfect man. We are imperfect, and our hope leads us on to aspire to that perfect standard. Our faith (which is the gift of God) points to the object of all our spiritual desires: the man Christ Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant which embraceth us. This is a view of holiness, the essence of the perfect man, the garniture of righteousness with which we are clothed. But we turn our eyes within, and what a contrast.

How dark the scene. All we behold is dark and vain and wild; unbelief and sin with all its wretched train. Job said, "But now mine eye seeth thee [Jesus] wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." What is the matter with Job now? Why did he not abhor himself before? He was not a young man, he had attained unto years of discretion long before in a natural way. Did the sight of Jesus change him from a man of uprightness to a something to be abhorred? Yes, it did in his own eyes. To behold Jesus is to attain unto knowledge, and knowledge is experience, through the trials which bring us to the foot of the cross of Christ. To know Jesus is to be crucified with him, by which crucifixion we learn all the depravity of our heart. Therefore as did Job, so do we, abhor ourself and repent in dust and ashes. This same knowledge shows us Jesus the perfect man, and our advocate from the Father, and ourself corrupt from foot to head. In this view of faith we see clearly, for the revelation of Jesus Christ has come to us from above. But like the fleeting cloud persued and goaded by a stormy wind, it is soon gone from our vision, and doubts arise because of the sleepless activity of our fleshly lusts, and we are tossed to and fro upon the waves of despair, and say within ourselves, Surely I have been deceived. It was but a phantasy of the mind, and now it is gone, and I am stranded. Am I left as I was, before this experience? No indeed. Have the fiery trials and days of darkness and suffering on account of sin left no trace? Yes indeed. And now although doubts and fears assail me, yet hope has planted her banner within my soul, and notwithstanding my fears and doubts I press forward, eagerly catching at every straw of evidence, running the race set before me with humble boldness, holding in view always that perfect One who pleadeth for me before the throne of my Father's glory. Shall we ask then, whence ariseth this experience which causeth us to moan and groan in uncertainty and unrest? Does not the Spirit take of the things of Jesus and show them unto us? while all other objects pale before their transcendent glory. The revelation of Jesus then is the source of all our christian experience. That revelation also produces the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit. Enmity to God, hatred of righteousness, and opposition to holiness, in the flesh, is the outgrowth of that principle of unbelief in every human heart. The effect of the love of God in the hearts of his creatures, which is light in the Lord, is to drive back the black clouds of unbelief, which has held the palace and the goods in peace until the invasion by the Captain of our salvation and his glorious army. What an experience this is, when we confront Sinai's mountain of blackness and darkness, the uncompromising law which demands the death of him who has transgressed. But in this conflict our Captain leads us no more to the law, but to us he becomes "the end of the law for righteousness." He brings us "unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels." This is experience, and experience is always real, it is never imaginary. The things we experience we know of a truth, and it is in this way we handle and taste and rejoice in the word of God. If in any of us "there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies," then we may be assured they have been obtained through the school of

experience in the same things which Christ suffered for us in the flesh. It was our sins for which he suffered. He drank the cup to its very dregs, we drink according to the measure of the gift of Christ. These are blessed characters which suffer for Christ's sake. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst," &c. Do not you know, dear children of the light, that you never did hunger and thirst after righteousness until you had passed through an experience of suffering because of indwelling sin? When the light of the knowledge which God gives, enters the soul, then suffering begins. Jesus is revealed as righteous and holy. We are directly opposite to that, we are all unrighteousness, and altogether unholy. But now Jesus is revealed, we desire him above our chiefest joy, we long for righteousness, and crave holiness. Is it any wonder then we suffer, when we find ourselves shut out from all purity, with the sword of justice turning every way about us to fulfill the law with our death? And then how blessed we feel to be, when that same knowledge of a revealed Savior shows us the law fulfilled in him, and we, lawful captives set free. Do you remember how the apostle John closes his beautiful gospel? Which gospel deals with what is to be wrought out in the hearts of the children of God. He says, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." And John meant what he said to be understood literally. Just think of all the "things which Jesus did" in you and for you since you entered the pilgrim journey, and consider, should you write them all in a book, what a volume it would make. And then try to think of the innumerable company (as the stars of heaven for multitude) each one, whose life is filled with the many things which Jesus did, and you will wonder (as did John) if the world could contain the books, if all were written out. How wonderful is the christian experience, how mysterious and yet how full of precious fruit.

May we all abide in the garden of the Lord, and eat his precious fruits.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan. 18, 1902.

ISAIAH XLIII. 1.

"BUT now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine."

Is not this declaration of God, as made by the prophet Isaiah, enough to cheer and comfort the poor pilgrim of God while walking through the valley, and shadow of death? It would seem that this one sentence ought forever to silence the advocates of conditionalism, in their efforts to show that man has a work to perform to make God's blessings of any certainty to his people. Here in this forty-third chapter the prophet of God has repeated several times over, the glorious truth that God did this because he was their Savior, and that he loved them, and declares why they should rely in him, "I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Savior." The question comes to mind, If there is no other Savior, can there be but one salvation? He says, "I have declared and have saved." This is in the past tense, "have saved," so there can be no salvation left for poor, mortal man, or any other creature to perform. What did Christ say on this point? "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and

none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."—John x. 28, 29. This language certainly is in exact accord with Isaiah where he said, "Fear not; for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west: I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him."—Isaiah xliii. 5–7.

It is recorded in first chapter of Matthew, where the angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph in a dream, saying, "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins."

How comforting it is to the child of God who feels his weakness, and has been enabled by grace divine to see the exceeding sinfulness of themselves, to know from such passages as the above Scripture quoted, that they cannot save themselves with any conditionalism, but that high heaven has made a provision, and has declared by the angel that "Salvation is of the Lord," as Jonah was made to know. Isaiah in forty-second chapter says, "I, the Lord, have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee." Did not Peter find this most glorious truth fulfilled when he had thought he could in his own strength walk upon the water to the dear Jesus? but how thoroughly he was converted from time salvation when "Jesus stretched forth his hand and caught him" and kept him from sinking. (Matt. xiv. 30, 31.)

Again, about one hundred and thirty years after these words of Isaiah were spoken, we see the fulfillment of some of them, when Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury and commanded that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego should be cast into the burning fiery furnace. What was the result? Simply the fulfillment of Isaiah's words, "When thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." (See Daniel iii.) The very element that Nebuchadnezzar thought would destroy these three Hebrews was the cause of his promoting them. So it often now is the case with the Lord's people, that which is intended by their enemies for their destruction, turns to their benefit and happiness, showing them that their protection and salvation, even in time, is not in their own hands, but with him who has said, "I am the Lord, and beside me there is no Savior." Daniel found this to be true when he was in the lion's den. Surely there was time salvation, but he did not save himself. The Lord caused the lions' mouths to be closed so they could not hurt him, though he was amongst them.

Dear, trembling child of God, how sweet are the words of Jesus where he said, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them." This, in connection with his words at Lazarus' grave, ought to comfort the dear, trembling one that has hope in Jesus. Here he said, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I know that thou hearest me always." So, dear brethren and sisters, we know that his words are true, and when by grace we are given to realize that we are "one with him," then does the "eternal vital unity" come sweetly to our soul, and we can lay hold of Paul's language, and say, "I am persuaded that

neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." —Rom. viii. 38, 39.

JAMES M. TRUE.

KANSAS, Ill., Jan. 23, 1902.

MASSEY, Va., Jan. 28, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Something has seemed to prompt me to pen a few things incidental to my life, in a general way, and forward them to you for your disposal, whether to give them a place in our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, or not.

I was born in the year 1831, in the same County (Accomac, Va.,) where I have resided every since. I experienced a hope in God through his abounding grace, in August, 1851; was united in marriage with my present companion, January 21st, 1852; was received, and baptized by Elder Thomas Waters, in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Messongo, Accomac Co., Va., March, 1852. So you see that I have very few more mile posts to pass to my journey's end, as I have passed the 71st year of my natural life, and the fiftieth of my spiritual life, and also the fiftieth year of my married life.

In the year 1865 I became very much impressed in mind in regard to the things of the kingdom of God, and what constituted that kingdom. The more I thought about it, the more beautiful the subject became, and the stronger my interest grew. In my deep meditations I would find myself talking all alone, not supposing that was preaching, my ignorance would forbid it, but these things still grew more and more oppressive until it brought me into a state of questioning myself, What this all meant? and soon brought me before others also, who would inquire with reference to my exercise of mind. Thus I was lead along until I was prevailed upon to talk a little in the meetings, and I think some time in the year 1866, I was given a license to speak as I felt led, and in the year 1869 or 70, I was set apart to the full work of the gospel ministry, and immediately afterwards I accepted the care of four of the churches of the Salisbury Association, viz: Messongo, Accomac Co., Va.; Indiantown, Wicomico Co., Md.; Nassaongo, Wicomico Co., Md.; Pitt's Creek, Worcester Co., Md., and a few years later the church was organized in Snowhill, Worcester Co., Md., and they called me to the care of that also, and I have been paying my best attention to those churches ever since, traveling from twenty-two to twenty-three hundred miles each year to fill my appointments, and nearly all by private conveyance. But if you will notice the above dates you will see that my labor is nearly over. I have experienced varied seasons in the churches during this period of thirty-five years. Nearly all have passed away that composed the whole five churches when I first commenced my feeble labors among them. I have witnessed the coming in of all of the five churches at present but eighteen persons. During the thirty-five years there has not been an "ism nor schism" nor any new thing to interrupt the fellowship of those churches. There have been times when the churches were full of life and zeal, and of frequent additions, and also times of drought and coldness. Sometimes when I am looking for some evidence of my hope and call to the work of the ministry, the only evidence that I can rest upon is in the remembrance of

what the apostle Paul said referring to believers: "Ye are our epistles, written in our hearts, known and read by all men." Then my mind surveys the faithful brethren and sisters, and it brings comfort with it. But O, how wretched and miserable I do feel at times, for as much as I have witnessed and experienced during the fifty years passed, I have fallen so far short of living up to the scribe that I pictured in my mind years ago. I have been tempted to mark upon the walls where I can have it to look at, Watch your words and your thoughts, and also every evil lust, but I have failed. Finally a longing desire has been following me, that I wanted to be an angel just for the time being, so I could not be contaminated with sin in any way, but I wanted to die a sinner saved by grace, for I know that will be the theme of the heavenly host, and then I think that an angel cannot magnify the grace of God, and then I am brought to a standstill, and can only say, Keep me, O Lord, and I shall be kept; draw me, and I will run after thee. I feel and know that this tabernacle in which I now groan must soon be taken down, and one of the strongest evidences that I have to rest upon is what Paul said: "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternally in the heavens. For in this we groan," "being burdened." This is a strong evidence to me, for I know this is so. How the thought gladdens our hearts that in that building of God there will be no burden, there will be no groaning there, and all tears will be wiped from weeping faces.

I am trying to be as contented as I can, and live as much for others as I can. I sometimes get to think that my usefulness is nearly over, and then I have an unrest. I sometimes hear the brethren talk over their spiritual comforts, then I think my life and labor among them is of some profit, and then I am contented to continue on, and fill up the measure of my days. How it is that my poor labors and mingling among the Lord's people has been acceptable, I have never been able to tell, only to hope that the things to which I bear testimony, finds a witness in the hearts and lives of others. I hope that this is so.

It is more than likely this is the last time that I shall trouble you with my scribble. I thought that I wanted the brethren all to know some of my feelings and experiences before I passed away.

This from a poor old sinner whose only hope of salvation is through the blood and righteousness of a crucified and risen Savior. Farewell.

T. M. POULSON.

ALBANY, Oregon, Nov. 6, 1901.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE:—I herewith inclose two dollars in renewal of my subscription to your valuable paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It is all the preaching I have through the winter months, and if I know anything of the love of God to his people, and have ever felt the saving grace of the Lord, your paper publishes the truth. Sometimes I am, or think I am, permitted to read with a true understanding, and am given grace to drink from that water whereof if any man drink he shall never thirst. The last number, that of November 1st, is full of precious things. Those letters from that dear young sister, Ruth Keene, are full of love to God. Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled. Then if one

does hunger and thirst after righteousness, is not this caused by the love of God shed abroad in the heart? Jesus said, "I and my Father are one." "I in him and he in me." Then if we love God, we shall also love his Son.

I would like to tell the dear writer how much her experience is like mine. If I have ever been brought to the knowledge of saving grace, it was at about the age of fourteen, and I would admonish all not to do as I did, wait weary years for a better evidence of his saving grace. It then seemed such a little hope, and like the young writer, my love to Christ seemed so cold, and yet I wished to be like him, and I prayed (if I prayed at all) to be led in that strait and narrow way, and to be as an empty vessel filled with true righteousness, and if I am not greatly deceived, my prayer was answered, and in God's own good time, just when I needed his saving grace, he gave it.

I was attending an association, and at night went to stay with a niece. She put me in a room, to sleep, where a few months before I had seen a dear sister in the flesh pass away. That scene all came up before me, and my thoughts wandered back into the past, and upon the affection which I had for my kindred, and then my mind went out to my kindred in Christ. O, my brethren and sisters in Christ, I think I felt what the true meaning of that Scripture is, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I thought that I had loved them before, but those hours while my memory remains I never can forget. I went home with this love filling my heart, but it was not yet full, my Savior had something yet richer in store for me. I was sitting on my porch meditating upon why this season of rejoicing had been given me, I looked back in memory and there was nothing I had done to deserve it. Then the thought came to me, Do I love my brethren more than I do my Savior? Words fail me, and pen could not write the love that flowed into my soul for Christ. Like a mother for her child, I felt that I could take him into my arms and embrace him, or like Thomas, could cry out, "My Lord, and my God." O, the love of Christ! how deep, how unfathomable it is!

When darkness, gross darkness, gathers around me, and I almost faint by the way, my mind still goes back to that evening when I was permitted to drink at so full a fountain of love. Then is my hope renewed, and I think, Though unworthy I be, surely it was the blessed God who gave me to feel that wondrous love for his Son, and I will doubt no more. But O, how frail the flesh. Again and again I doubt my election and calling. Thus it will be, I do not doubt, to the end, or until I shall have gained the victory over death; then shall I be like him, pure and free from sin. O, happy thought, O, glorious reality for the people of God.

Brother Beebe, the above lines were written through seeing sister Keene's letter, if you think them fit for publication, you may publish them, but if not, all will be well with me.

Yours in hope,

M. C. LOGSTON.

ELGIN, Oregon, Jan. 9, 1902.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—I am a little slow in sending to you my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for another year. I wish to express to you my hearty approval of the doctrine as advocated in the SIGNS: salvation by grace. I say this from my understanding of the Scriptures, and my own per-

sonal experience. I have lived long enough to learn the truth, by my own experience, of a statement made by the apostle Paul, "In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." I do not doubt this being a truth, an experience that all God's people know, and have to confess. How true it is, "To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not." Scripture says, Draw me and I will run after thee, hold thou me up and I shall stand. So to run and stand is of grace, not of the flesh, or works. I know if time salvation was conditional, and the conditions had to be performed by me in order to receive the salvation, then I know it would never be mine to enjoy. But what a consolation it is to turn to the twenty-third Psalm: "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." Yes, for his name's sake; not for my obedience. I am glad to say, Here in the west there is no contention over the conditional time salvation question, to my knowledge. Let us be content, brethren, with, "By grace are ye saved;" it needs no qualifying terms.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn., Jan. 21, 1902.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—Please find herewith four dollars, which place to my credit on subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and oblige a poor sinner that has often been comforted by the precious, soul-cheering "solid rock" doctrine advocated so long by its editors, and the many correspondents to its columns. The defense of the foundation principles of our hope has been complete, to my understanding of the doctrine of the salvation of poor sinners, through our blessed Lord and Savior, who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification. By the one offering he perfected forever them that are sanctified, and he is alive for evermore, and has power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him, and this is eternal life, that they might know the true God, and Jesus Christ whom the Father hath sent. These know the Father, and they see Jesus exalted a Prince and Savior, to give repentance to the Israel of our God; they see him as the one that fills the measure in all the way of salvation; he is the tried Stone, not lacking in any particular; he supplieth all our needs from eternity to eternity; just suited to a poor, helpless sinner. The Lord sustain the SIGNS as in the past.

Yours in hope,

W. P. BURKS.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Jan. 1, 1902.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—The first number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the new year arrived this morning, bringing the New Year's Greeting from one of the faithful editors. The reading of every article has been sweet to my taste, yea, sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. My heart is filled with gratitude to the great Ruler of all things for this precious medium of correspondence, and I hope each writer may be sustained by grace in the future, as in the past, to speak comfortable words to mourners in Zion. If I had liberty, I would love to speak of some of the comforts gained by the reading, for my heart is very warm towards the writers, and if I am one of the redeemed of the Lord, I want to say so. The poetry by Semma Corder has an answer within my breast:

"I am wretched and poor and weak in thy sight,
In darkness I stumble and fall;
Let fall on my ear thy song in the night,
My Shepherd, my strength and my all."

Dear sister, remember me who am less than the least of all saints.

"Cave Adullam" I remember reading at its first publication, and then thought I was one of those characters that would seek that cave and the company of the poor, distressed, helpless and in debt, led by such a loving, wonderful Captain. And now, in my old age, I am still begging for mercy, and am witness of all the infirmities of the flesh, for I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing. When I first joined the church and looked on Elder M. M. Vancleave, our faithful, loving pastor, and many other old saints now gathered to a blissful home, I thought, when I am older I will be free from vanity, foolish thoughts, evil speaking and every sin that doth so easily beset me, but I find the flesh still lusting against the Spirit. Dear "Simplicity," now safely housed in the mansions of eternal bliss. How glad I am the Spirit moved him to write those truthful lines, and again the editors of the SIGNS give them to us to refresh our weary souls by the way, and help to make clear the right from the wrong. This way of republishing old editorials and other valuable matter proves where the change of doctrine lies. These old writers gone before seem standing on a solid rock, and all the storms of error could not move them.

"God is a King of powers unknown,
Firm as the orders of his throne;
If he resolves, who dare oppose,
Or ask him why or what he does?"

His train fills the temple, no room for our boasted good works coming in our own strength, for without him we can do nothing. God is our refuge and strength, he is a very present help in all our troubles. We are said to be less than nothing, or as dust in the balance.

Elder Fred. Keene's letter is like an ointment on an aching sore. I long have been familiar with his name and writings. May the dear Lord help him to write often for the comfort of Zion. "Speak ye comfortably unto Jerusalem," &c.

The sermon from a brother in Texas, from the text, "Take heed therefore to yourselves, and the flock," &c., were words fitly spoken. There are so many beautiful exhortations to the saints. Our old pastor, Elder Vancleave, was very gifted in that way, and was so loving and faithful when he would tell us our duty. I miss him very much.

There is much more I had in mind to say, but my husband has been very sick, so that he has been bedfast one month, and I have written this while he slept. He is better now.

Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Your unworthy sister,

LINA W. BECK.

NUTLEY, N. J., Jan. 17, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I have had a desire for some time to write to you through our dear paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and state what the Lord has done for me, and if it be his will to guide my hand, I will now try to satisfy my desire, for it is he who I must give all the glory for bringing me from under the law of disobedience, or the law of sin and death, into the law of obedience, or the law of Christ, for it is through him that we are saved by the grace of God through faith. It is now a little over a year since I felt condemned on account of my sins. I had wanted to be an Old School Baptist for years, because they always seemed

so happy and affectionate one to another, but they seemed so far from me and yet so dear to me. I have attended their meetings for about twenty-five years, and never desired to go to any other, and ever since I can remember I have not doubted but what they preached the truth, I really cannot tell when I first received a hope. When I was at my father's home, spending a few days, including New Year's day, 1901, I again had that desire to know the truth, which I believe was a prayer of the heart, for I feel that it has been answered. On the last Sunday of the year 1900, I was at prayer meeting at Southampton, (during this same visit) when one of the brethren gave out the hymn 804 (Beebe's collection) and it seemed to suit my experience exactly, and when we began to sing the following lines,

"Burdened with a load of sin,
Harrassed with tormenting doubts,
Hourly conflicts from within,
Hourly crosses from without,"

I was overcome with grief on account of my sins, and felt so unworthy to even sit in the meeting-house, and thought I would have to go out. The whole meeting seemed to be for me, and I did not feel any relief until the following morning, which was New Year's day, when these words came to me when I first awoke, "Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." And immediately afterwards this hymn, "Blest be the tie that bind our hearts in christian love," and the load was lifted. I enjoyed all the sermons I heard preached after that for some time. We attend meeting regularly at New York city, about two or three times a month, and heard Elders McConnell and Beebe. I had some very pleasant meetings then during the intermission, which lasts two or three hours between sermons, and tried to tell Elder McConnell and Elder Beebe some of the Lord's dealings with me, and they thought I should tell the church, but I did not feel that I could do that. I had a great deal of Scripture given to me, but did not seem to get the assurance that I was looking for. I have always gone to the Old Baptist meetings, and I would begin to doubt as soon as any Scripture came to me, and think that I had read it in the Bible or heard some Old Baptist talk about it, until one Sunday evening after I had come home from meeting, and was outdoors, these words came to me with great comfort, "This is the way, walk ye in it," "for strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life." I did not know that these first words, "This is the way, walk ye in it," were in the Bible, and could hardly get in the house soon enough to see if they were there, and to my delight found them, and then I was satisfied that I must go before the church as soon as I had an opportunity, which was two weeks later, that being the second Saturday in February, while on another visit near Southampton, when I went before the church and stated my experience, after which I was received, although I felt so unworthy, and was baptized the following day. Since that time I have been in darkness most of the time, and am always waiting for some message from the Lord. Since my condemnation before a just and holy God, I have very little desire for the things of the world, and hope the desire for the world will not get any greater. Some time ago this passage of Scripture came to me with great comfort, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." I believe that when a portion of Scripture is given to any one

of us, it is meant for that particular person, for it is through the Spirit of Christ which is given us at the new birth that we receive it, and enjoy the sweetness of it. The only way to seek things of a heavenly nature in this world, is to seek the things that are his; to associate with his children, brethren and sisters of the visible church; to hear them talk of his goodness and mercy; their joys and sorrows; to hear his servants unfold his glorious truth as it is in Jesus; to read the Bible, and such papers as the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I cannot read the daily paper without feeling it a waste of time, that I had better be doing something of more profit. He says to seek the kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto us, meaning things of a worldly nature. He knows that we have need of these things for our daily use to sustain our natural life, and not to seek for them, or set our heart upon them. Now I do not want you to understand me to mean that we should sit down and wait for our daily necessities to come to us, but we can work and earn them without having our mind only on things of this world, for the things of this world are frail and perish with the using, the same as this natural body. We die daily, and although under the law of obedience, our natural body is subject to the law of disobedience, until our last enemy shall be destroyed, which is death. Although there is no longer any condemnation on account of sin, after we are given the law of obedience, and walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, for the Spirit of Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death.

Now, dear brethren, do as you see fit with this, and may the grace of God be with all Israel.

HENRY T. LEFFERTS.

HIGHLAND STATION, Kan., Jan. 20, 1902.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed find money order for three dollars to apply on my subscription to the SIGNS. I am sorry I cannot send the full amount for the present year, but cannot do so now. We are in the district visited by the great drouth the past summer, when the temperature was 110° in the shade, for twenty-two days in succession. How any living thing existed through such intense heat is wonderful indeed, and yet through the goodness of God, which endureth forever, we raised money enough to do us until the next crop season, by living economical. How thankful we ought to be to the Father of mercies that it is as well with us as it is.

I have been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for almost fifty years, and can bear cheerful testimony to the fact that they advocate the same doctrine now that they did a half century ago.

I send you a newspaper clipping which states what one of the Generals of our army said in a speech in New York recently, that he verily believed the man who fell in defense of his country, his sins were forgiven. Those who are familiar with the only history of Mohammedanism will at once recognize the similarity between this sentiment and that held by the Mohammedian generals fifteen centuries ago, who urged their followers on to battle with the assurance that the gates of paradise stood wide open to receive all who fell in defense of Islam. So we see that the delusions which led thousands to the slaughter in remote ages, still exists on the threshold of the twentieth century, and yet we boast that this is an enlightened age of the world, when the truth of the matter is, so far as true christianity is concerned, we are living in a dark age of the world indeed. In proof

of this we now see all the so-called christian nations of the earth making such stupenduous preparations for war that we stand appalled, and all this in face of the fact that no heathen nation is threatening to invade any of them, or dispoil them of an acre of territory. The only inference then is that these christian nations fear each other, which at once pulls the mask from their pretended christianity, and shows that they are still under the power and dominion of sin.

Yours in the bonds of affliction,

PRYOR PLANK.

SUNSET, Texas, Oct. 30, 1901.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—As it is time for us to send our remittance for the SIGNS another year, we inclose the same. We do not feel willing to do without it, as we receive much comfort and consolation reading the editorials and communications from the household of faith. We also always enjoy your father's editorials very much. Surely he was a man of God, ordained of the Lord to defend the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ. May the present editors of the SIGNS be long spared to proclaim and defend the same precious truth. The Predestinarian Baptists are not all gone yet. I hope that they will stand shoulder to shoulder through all the terrible conflict that now seems to be raging in the Baptist ranks. May they earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. How distressing it is to see divisions and subdivisions of the church of the living God. Surely these are perilous times, many do not hesitate to speak evil of dignities, but our God will overrule all things for the good of his people, and to his own glory. I send love to the household of faith.

I am as ever the least of the little ones,

LIZZIE CAMPBELL.

GREENWOOD, Colorado, Jan. 6, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I do love to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I think it is just about the firmest Primitive Baptist paper now printed. I love the doctrine it advocates, if I know anything about such things at all. I sometimes hope I have some knowledge of the true doctrine of Christ, but then sometimes that little hope seems so very small I almost lose sight of it for a season. But if the night is dark and dreary, we remember that joy cometh in the morning. Sometimes it seems as though I am down in the shadows of darkness, hunting for a ray of light, so that I may see where to go, and then again for a season it seems that all is joy and peace when the dear Savior shows his smiling face.

But I see I am writing too much. Please excuse me for taking up so much of your time.

May the Lord be with you and protect and bear you up in your labors through this year, as in the past. Do with this as you think best.

From your little sister,

SARAH E. HIGBIE.

ALTOONA, Pa., Jan. 19, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed you will find money order for two dollars to renew my subscription to the dear old SIGNS for another year, for I feel that I could not get along without the SIGNS. I never get to hear a sermon, only what I read in them. We have no churches here, and I feel like a lost sheep on the mountain, but I suppose it is the Lord's will. But O, how I love the Lord's people. I feel sometimes like I cannot stay away, but it is impossible for me to go, and so I console myself, for I know if it is the Lord's will I will have the opportunity some time to hear the truth and be

with his people. I know if I am one of his children he will keep me, and care for me, for it says in his blessed word, Where he begins a good work, he will carry it on to the day of Jesus Christ.

Remember me at a throne of grace.

From an unworthy sister, if one at all,

(MRS.) BELLE RUPERT.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Dec. 1, 1901.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—If indeed I am worthy to so call you. Inclosed you will find two dollars for my subscription to the SIGNS. I feel to rejoice that the dear Lord has given to me the knowledge to read them. I feel as if I could not live without them, for I derive great comfort from them; I learn that the Lord's people are poor and afflicted, and chosen in the furnace of affliction, and come up out of great tribulation. When I was sixty years of age, I could not read nor write. How glad I am now to be able to write a little. I have never been able to tell or to write easily of the deep sorrow for sin which often fills my poor soul. In all my doubts and fears, troubles and darkness, my cry is unto the Lord. He makes darkness light, yea, brings hidden things to light. I am always judging. I awoke myself repeating the words in 1 Cor. iv. 5.

During all these long thirty-nine years, I have been feeling as a stranger here below, and that what I am it is hard to know; I am so vile and full of sin, I fear that I'm not born again. My walk is dark and gloomy, but I hope that I have a hidden treasure. Yes, it is a blessed hope that we shall awake in his likeness. How great a treasure is hidden in Christ Jesus our Lord, but how ignorant I am, I am a poor sinner, unworthy to write you, but I desire to praise the Lord for his blessings. Let his be all the glory, and all the power, and all the praise. If I could only tell how I have been led of the Lord, but I am so poor and ignorant that I cannot. I cannot make my path nor direct my goings. I hope that you will make allowance for me. May the Lord grant you all sweet peace and love. Pray for me. I am saved by grace, if saved at all.

Yours in hope,

MARTHA BAILEY.

DAYTON, Wash., Jan. 30, 1902.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—As they are expecting much emigration in this part of the country, from the east and central States, I would like to say through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if there are any of our brethren contemplating coming to the west, we would be glad to have them visit us here at Dayton. I can say that the country about Dayton, for all purposes, is as good as there is in the north-west. We have a small church here that is in peace, and sound in the faith, holding to the same faith and doctrine contended for by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Any brethren wishing information in regard to this country, if he will write to me, I will gladly give him all I can.

Yours to serve in gospel bonds,

B. S. PATE.

RIVERVIEW, Ala., Jan. 9, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I wish every Old Baptist preacher who reads this notice to mail me a postal, stating whether or not they indorse the introduction of instrumental music in Old Baptist churches, and if in their judgment such a thing is in harmony with the Scriptures, and if not, should it be made a test of fellowship?

Your brother for the welfare of Zion,

H. J. REDD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1902.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SOLOMON'S SONG V. 1, 2.

"I AM come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey: I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved. I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night."

Sister Mary Brewster, of Oxford, N. Y., has requested that we present some thoughts through the SIGNS upon the above Scripture. She also mentions the first four verses of the sixth chapter, but for the present we desire to confine what we shall say to the first named text. This song which is called Solomon's, records a conversation between one who is called the bridegroom, and another who is called the bride. It contains an expression of the love, confidence and union which exists between them. No doubt it is all intended to set forth the relation which exists between Christ and every believing soul, and the communion which every believing heart has with the dear Redeemer. In the Song, all who believe are considered as being one body, which is called the bride, and who is addressed repeatedly by the husband as My sister, my spouse. The experience of the church as a whole is but the experience of each individual member of it. We have felt in all our ministry more like speaking of individual members of the body of Christ, than of that body as a whole. The church of God, the bride of Christ, is not some intangible something which our mind cannot conceive of, but it is composed of men and women redeemed, and born of the Spirit of God, and made partakers of the divine nature. The communion of saints is the communion of these living, loving souls, with the Redeemer and Husband of their souls. Jesus speaks to each of his disciples personally, and calls each one my sister, my spouse, my love, my dove, my undefiled. In return each believing heart responds and says, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, and in the coming and presence of the Beloved, each heart rejoices and is glad.

In the closing expression of the preceding chapter it will be seen that the dear Lord is absent, and that the soul wedded to him, longs for his presence. Where true love is, there can be no gladness like the gladness produced by the presence of the one beloved. On the other hand, there can be no sadness and loneliness like that produced by the absence of the loved one. All human figures and all human language seem to be called upon to express the desolation of the child of God in the felt absence of its Redeemer. The language of the spouse, recorded at the end of the fourth chapter is, "Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits." Our God speaks of rejoicing over his people with singing, and here the bride desires that her husband may rejoice in his garden, and that he may eat the pleasant fruits thereof. As a faithful and affectionate wife rejoices in all that rejoices her husband, so the sons of God shout

for joy in the joy of the beloved of their souls. How passing wonderful it is that he who is infinitely happy and blessed, in and of himself, should yet condescend to be glad and rejoice in all that pertains to the redemption of his people. He needs nothing that we or any creature can bestow upon him, and yet he wondrously condescends to our weakness, and represents himself as being glad in all that gladdens our hearts. He also represents himself as responding to the desires and the prayers of his humble followers; and so when the bride says, "Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits," at once there is a response, "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse." There is a deep doctrinal and experimental truth, as it seems to us, involved in all this language. The cry is, "Let my beloved come," and the answer is not, I will come, but "I am come." Before the sweet spice of such a cry could flow out of the garden at all, the beloved must come there. Where a soul is crying out for God, the living God, and saying when shall I come and appear before God, there our God already dwells. Such longings can come from no other source than the Spirit of God. All prayer is a fruit of the Spirit. In every heart where Jesus dwells there is a longing for him; in no other heart are such longings found. "Behold he prayeth," is full warrant for the assurance that such an one is born of God. So the disciples felt when word was brought to them concerning Saul of Tarsus, "Behold he prayeth."

In the text the Lord says, "I am come into my garden." It is the Lord's garden, in the sense that he planted it, watered it, fenced it in, and causes it to flourish with the sunshine and the dews and rains of heaven. This garden is the planting of the Lord, and all the pleasant fruits are his, and all must redound to his glory. It is the garden of grace, and all the fruits of the Spirit grow there. In this garden our blessed Lord walks, and into it he brings his bride, and together they eat the pleasant fruits. With their Beloved, saints walk there, and as he plucks the fruits and gives to them, they eat and are refreshed. What believing, humble heart is there that cannot remember seasons when some sense of the presence of the Redeemer has been with them, and when they have had applied to their souls, with his own hand, some sweet promise, some salutary admonition, or reproof, or warning, some principle of doctrine just suited to their need, some word of consolation and strengthening, and they have not envied the happiest man on earth, or any angel in heaven. Even as the heart cries out for the Lord, he is there, and is walking in his garden with the soul, and plucks the fruits and refreshes us with them. Every such precious word is accompanied with the assurance of relationship, a relationship that cannot be severed, and the soul comes to feel, "My beloved is mine, and I am his."

There are mentioned three combinations of good things in this first verse: myrrh and spice, honeycomb and honey, wine and milk. All are pleasant things, and all are good things when mingled and presented to the believer at the hand of the dear Redeemer. We can only suggest a few thoughts with regard to the different pleasant things named here.

He had gathered his myrrh; this work was already complete. All these things were emblems of the indwelling and anointing Spirit, and were already gathered by him for the bride. He said, "I have eaten." Does not this correspond with the prayer of the bride, Let him eat

his pleasant fruits? The honey and the honeycomb seems to set forth that the doctrine and the experience must go together, and that we are strengthened and comforted with both, both are sweet, but we do not rejoice in one without the other. Does not his eating honey, both before and after his crucifixion, indicate his pure, spotless, true human nature from infancy, and also after his resurrection? The wine was a cup of wrath to him, but of mercy to us, and thus God's promises become to us as milk. And if we may speak of these things with reference to believers, would not the bitterness of the myrrh set forth repentance or godly sorrow for sin, milk the beginnings of faith and hope in Jesus, and the wine the fullness of joy in believing, which sometimes is vouchsafed to him who believes? We have just suggested these thoughts, as space forbids any extended remarks.

Now, whether we speak of the sufferings and final glory of the Redeemer, of all the precious words, whether of promise, reproof, admonition or instruction in the Scriptures, which are written there just because the blessed Lord did suffer, or whether we speak of the graces of the Spirit formed and growing in the hearts and lives of those who believe, the closing words of this first verse are most wonderful. The blessed Lord has spread the feast and it is free, free to every hungry soul, free to every one who desires to partake, and the gracious words are spoken, "Eat O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." This is not to be regarded simply as an invitation, neither is it simply a command, in the ordinary sense of either word, but it is a most gracious privilege conferred upon those who already desire such things, and whose hearts are glad when they are bidden to eat. How often does the soul desire to eat of this heavenly bread, but yet cannot. Indeed, we never can eat and drink until the blessed Savior sweetly bids us eat. Then we do indeed partake of his precious body which is broken for us, and can rejoice in his great salvation.

Now we will suggest a few words concerning the second verse. Notwithstanding all the fullness of desire expressed in the last verse of the preceding chapter, and the gracious answer of the succeeding verse, yet the bride complains of heaviness or sleep. How is it possible that one who has ever known the Lord in the pardon of sin, can become listless and dull? The bride complains of cold affections, of lukewarmness of desire, of too great inclination toward carnal ease; the heart truly wakes, but yet she sleeps. How similar to the disciples who slept during the hour of the Redeemer's agony in the garden. How gentle, and yet heart-searching the reproof, "Could not ye watch with me one hour?" The Spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak. What great promises and what small fulfillment. In the hour of the soul's first love, what animation is felt, and what zeal for the glory and service of God. The joyful believer cannot believe that he ever shall grieve, that he ever shall doubt again. And after a visit from the Beloved, when the heart has been all alive and filled with gladness, we can scarcely believe that we ever shall sink down to such a low level again. We cannot credit the thought that we shall again grow worldly minded, and seek the things of this world more than the things of the kingdom. Yet how soon has it been, many times, that we have fallen asleep, and have sought our ease, and have forgotten to render our thanks to

God for all that he has done for us.

"I sleep, but my heart waketh." Truly this condition is a sad one, but yet it is not hopeless; sleep has overpowered our senses, but yet the heart after all is not asleep, there does arise some desire after better things, after more life and joy, after more animation in the service of the Lord; the soul is not all torpid, a lethargy has come over us, but yet we are not altogether unconscious. But sleep so holds us that we cannot break our slumber and arise; we faintly hear the voice of the beloved knocking and saying, "Open to me," and we catch some faint sweetness in the gracious words with which he still addresses us, "My sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled." Alas that we should be so slow to respond. Jesus speaks thus in the order and ordinances of his house, in the fellowship and companionship of saints, in the precious words written in the Scripture. This slowness to respond, with the reasons of it, are found in the reasonings recorded in the next verse: "I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I. have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?" I have lain down to take my ease, how shall I bestir myself again? Is not this all realized when we are sluggish in attending upon the ordinance of the sanctuary, in visiting the sick, and in ministering to them, and to all the needy? Is this not the case with us when we think more of carnal pleasures than we do of the house of God, or when we easily allow some matter of worldly business to keep us from the sanctuary. How often we grow so careless and sluggish that the things of the kingdom of God make but little impression upon us, and we seek almost everything else before the things of the kingdom, and yet we are dimly aware that all is not as it ought to be, and we are conscious that some faint desire does dwell within our heart for the better way.

Yet we cannot seem to awaken ourselves out of our sleep, we are held captive so completely that even the desire for better things seems to hardly exist. What can break these shackles? Our own wills cannot; exhortation from the pulpit, from brethren in conversation, with all manner of reproof and warning, cannot arouse us and cause us to arise from the dead, where we, in our sleepiness, are lying. Yet there is something that can do the deed. And so bye and bye the Beloved puts his hand in by the door; at last the heart is reached; Jesus so speaks to the heart that the soul awakens, and there is a rising up and an opening to the Beloved.

Now when he speaks and puts his hand in by the hole of the door, what power there is to move the cold affections; faith, love, hope and every heavenly emotion is aroused, and we can rejoice and run once more, and not be weary, and walk and not faint.

We sometimes have felt that we have known something of these things; they are better felt than expressed. We leave these poorly expressed thoughts with sister Brewster, and all who may read them, and will close by saying, The whole book of this song of songs is full of rich, spiritual experience, far beyond all that any have power to express. We have but glanced even at the two verses named, and must confess that we always feel that we are unable to speak of these things as we desire to do.

C.

PSALMS CXVI. 12.

"WHAT shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord."

The above expression of David has rested upon our mind of late, and although we have no gift to expound Scripture, yet if the Lord will enable us to express the reflection we have had upon this text, so as to convey to our brethren some of the comfort it has afforded us, we shall feel that our writing has not wearied them.

The psalmist doubtless is here personating the Savior, and the primary meaning of his writing is prophetic of the suffering of Jesus in his advent to the earth, but as all his saints are to follow him in all things pertaining to their salvation, the language applies equally to the experience of every individual saint, and it is in this light we propose to treat the subject.

The question is asked, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits?" The inbred nature of man is to feel that he must either render some service to God to obtain his benefits, or to compensate him for favors past. This is perhaps one of the hardest delusions the saints have to struggle with. They seem to forget that every sin that an elect vessel of mercy has ever committed, or may ever be permitted to commit, was atoned for by Jesus upon the cross, and that in the sight of God they stand in Christ as holy as God is holy, and their heavenly Father has given them every blessing in Christ, and these blessings were all stored in Christ before the world began, so that they are not contingent, nor do they depend upon some *service* we are to render. If we are not to render service, "What shall we render?" We are not left in doubt how to answer this question, for David himself answers it. He says, "I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord."

What is this cup of salvation?

It appears to us that the Savior had reference to this cup, in his answer to James and John, when they came to him with a request to be especially favored: "Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask. Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of?" And they said, We can. "And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of." As said, this cup that Jesus speaks of is, to our mind, the cup of salvation that we are to take.

What is in this cup?

Let us go to the garden of Gethsemane, and we will see what was in this "cup of salvation" when our blessed Savior took it, and called upon the name of the Lord, saying, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." Never have any of the children of God been called to drink so bitter a cup, but they all must drink of this same cup. "The cup which our Father gives us shall we not drink it?"

Every child of God that has been long on their heavenward journey knows from their own experience what this cup contains, better than it can be expressed in words.

In our pilgrimage in this world we are daily called to pass through trials, and meet with losses and crosses of a temporal nature, and sometimes it seems that our troubles are more than we can endure, and it seems to us that these things surely can have nothing to do with our salvation in Christ. But, dear child of God, they are all in this cup. You never had one pang of physical pain, nor met with a single loss of earthly goods, nor

been bereft of a loved one, but what it was by the purpose of God placed in this cup to wean you from the world, and to bring you to "call upon the name of the Lord." These are the temporal trials and afflictions that are in this cup, but every subject of grace knows of deeper trials, which they have to endure in the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, spoken of by Paul when he says, "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members." When cast down and mourning an absent God, have you not often felt to say, All these things are against me? and has it not appeared that with his own hand he seemed intent to aggravate your woes, so that you felt hope was well nigh gone, and your faith could not lay hold upon the promises. Then what did you do? Did you not resolve to do better, be more obedient, and by this means strain some of the bitter dregs out of this cup, so that it might be more agreeable to your natural taste? This is the course carnal reason would suggest, but David said, "I will call upon the name of the Lord."

The psalmist was permitted to go as deep in sin as it is possible for man to go, and therefore knew the depravity of the human heart, and was prepared to say with the prophet, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." There does not appear to be any thought in David's mind of what he should do to court the favor of the Lord in the future, but he was wholly actuated by a spirit of gratitude, and desire to render acceptable praise to God for his benefits toward him in the past, and at the present time. This is just the difference between carnal service, and the fruit of the Spirit; the first is actuated by a selfish desire, to obtain favor, and the other by a desire to render unto the Lord the tribute of a thankful heart for the benefits already received, and when we are influenced by the Spirit, this gratitude and praise is rendered to God without any effort on our part; it flows from the heart, as the odor is emitted from the flower, and like the flower, the more bruised and crushed it is, the more fragrance it yields; so is the child of God, when the love of God is shed abroad in his heart, the more bitter and crushing trials there is in his cup, the more he "will call upon the name of the Lord."

May it be the pleasure of the Lord to pour out of his Holy Spirit upon us, that we may each take the cup he has prepared for us, "and call upon his name" for strengthening grace to enable us to say with our dear Redeemer, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." B.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

GALATIANS V. 4.

"CHRIST is become of no effect to you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."

The churches of Galatia had been assailed by Judaizing teachers, preaching to them that they could not be saved unless they were circumcised and kept the law; and some of those converts who had began in the Spirit, were so far bewitched as to entertain the idea that they were to be made perfect by the works of the law, and thus they became involved and entangled with the yoke of bondage; a yoke which neither they nor the fathers, not even the patriarchs of Israel, were able to bear. The apostle proved very conclusively in this epistle, that no man could be justified in the sight of God, by the works of the law, and because they could

not, therefore Christ had redeemed them from under the law, was delivered for their offenses, and raised from the dead for their justification, that he had set them free from the law, as a yoke of bondage, by himself becoming the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, and hence they were saved by grace, and not by works of their own. Having fully, clearly and irrefutably, established his position of justification alone, and freely, or graciously, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, he admonishes them in the beginning of this chapter, to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and be not again entangled with the yoke of bondage, and in urging this admonition he testified that if they resorted to the law for life, that was a rejection of Christ. If they were circumcised, after the manner of Moses, they thereby pledged themselves to perform the whole law themselves, and thus leaving Christ entirely out of their justification, he shall profit them nothing. Of what avail that he died for them, if their justification was established on their own works, and not in his redemption? Again, in the text under consideration, by inspiration of the Holy Ghost he testifies that whosoever of them were justified by the law, to them Christ had become of no effect: they were not saved by grace, but by works, as he had elsewhere testified, that if it were by works, then it was no more of grace. Salvation could not possibly be jointly of grace and of works, for if it were of the one then it was not of the other. We, if saved at all, must be saved either wholly of grace, or wholly of our own works, and if it were of the latter, Christ was made of no effect, and they were fallen from grace. That is, as grace is infinitely higher than legal works, so salvation by grace transcends salvation by works. Not that Paul either allowed that any could in reality be justified by the works of the law, which he plainly declared was impossible, nor that those who were saved by grace, could ever possibly lose their interest in that grace, which is equally impossible, but on the supposition that any were saved and justified by the law, then they were not subjects of grace, nor were they interested in Christ. Descending from grace to the theory of legal works, is truly a fall, and the depth of the fall is as great as is the distance of grace above works. The great design of the inspired writer is to show that we cannot consistently hold that salvation is conditional, and by the works of the law, without rejecting Christ as the Savior, and grace as the principle on which that salvation is extended to any of the fallen sons of men.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 1, 1859.

BACK NUMBERS.

ALTHOUGH we printed an unusual number of extra copies of the first numbers of this volume, an unexpected rush of new subscribers has nearly exhausted our supply, so that after this number we shall have to discontinue sending back numbers unless especially requested to do so, and we cannot even then after a short time, as we have only about twenty copies lest of number one at this writing, and we are mailing them daily.

PLEASE BE SURE

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have

no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likley to occur.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

We, the Primitive, or Old School Baptists, of the San Marcos Association, at our seventeenth annual session, convened with the church at Bethlehem, Caldwell Co., Texas, October 18th, 19th and 20th, 1901, to her sister Associations (the Fellowship and Sulphur Fork) with whom we correspond, send christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Through the goodness and mercy of our covenant-keeping God, we have been permitted to hold another session of our body in peace and harmony. We feel thankful to our God for the presence of your messengers and ministers, and do praise the Lord that we have been permitted, as we hope, to enjoy the peaceful presence of the Lord.

Our next session will be held with the church at Providence, Blanco, Texas, thirty-five miles north-west of San Marcos, to convene on Friday before the third Sunday in October, 1902, at which time and place we hope to receive your friendly correspondence again.

R. M. PATE, Moderator.

J. L. JENNINGS, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$552 55
Amy Shaddick, Pa., $1.00; Tansel F. Hahn, Kan., $2.00.—Total	3 00
Total to date	$555 55

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, at the parsonage, Jan. 30th, 1902, Robert Maxwell and Miss Maggie N. Harmon, both of Licking Co., Ohio.

By Elder W. W. Meredith, in the Nassaongo Old School Baptist meeting-house, Dec. 11th, 1901, John D. M. Collins and Miss Bertha E. J. Fooks, daughter of Sheriff George Fooks, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

By the same, in the Mt. Olive Methodist Protestant meeting-house, Jan. 8th, 1902, Henry E. Frasher and Miss M. Estella Cubbage, both of Kent Co., Del.

By the same, at the home of John W. Redgrave, in Middle Neck, Md., Jan. 21st, 1902, Roe S. Redgrave, of Bohemia Manor, Md., and Miss Elva Frazer, of Wilmington, Del.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MY brother, **Donald Blue,** died at his late residence, near Duart, Ont., July 19th, 1901, in the 74th year of his age. He was twice married. By his first wife they raised a respectable family of five sons and one daughter. By his second wife no family. She had a great charge during his last sickness, lasting over two years. He had a stroke of paralysis some time in May, 1899, followed by a severe attack of la grippe, from which he never recovered any degree of health; gradually wearing away. During last May he got to be as helpless as a child, and had to be carried back and forth from bed to couch. He lost his voice entirely, but was conscious to the last. His wife said he was the most patient person she ever saw in his affliction. He was a strong adherent of the Covenanted Baptist. He experienced a hope in April, 1878, though he never united with the church; no doubt feeling his own unworthiness. His house was a home for the Baptists, especially for the man of God. (See 2 Kings iv. 10.) His second wife being a member of the Baptists before their marriage, he was a regular attendant of most of their meetings in Duart, and elsewhere, and was very much affected by the death of Elder Pollard, especially if he heard anyone speak of him. His funeral took place on Sunday, 21st. He was followed by a large procession of friends and neighbors, to Duart cemetery, where his remains were laid to rest, after which the procession repaired to the Baptist meeting-house, where the pastor, Elder Carnell, preached a masterly and comforting discourse to an attentive audience.

NEIL BLUE.

MUIRKIRK, Ont., Jan. 12th, 1902.

DIED—At his home near Wyandot, Ohio, August 25th, 1901, **Simon Hite,** aged 50 years, 8 months and 3 days. He was born in Perry Co., Dec. 22d, 1850. Moved with his mother's family near his late home, in

October, 1864. Feb. 18th, 1875, he was married to Mariah Rosa, of Marion Co. To this union were born six children, three sons and three daughters; the three sons died in infancy, his wife died Feb. 9th, 1888. He was again married April 13th, 1890, to Rebecca T. Dove, of Seneca Co. He united with the Regular Old School Baptist Church at Rocky Fork, in June, 1888, and was baptized by Elder Lewis Seitz, and was a faithful and devoted member until death. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of predestination of all things, and salvation by grace alone, both time and eternal, ever contending for the old landmarks by which the Old School Baptists have always been distinguished. He was a kind and affectionate husband and father, an honest and obliging neighbor, strictly honorable and upright in all his dealings with his fellow men. He leaves a wife, three daughters, three brothers, two sisters and a host of relatives and friends, to mourn their loss, but we feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

His funeral was held at the Old School Baptist church at Rocky Fork, after which the remains were laid to rest in Grand Prairie Cemetery, to await the resurrection of the redeemed.

W. P. DOVE.

BLOOMVILLE, Ohio, Jan. 13, 1901.

MY dear mother, **Mrs. Elizabeth Caroline Walker,** was released from her suffering on June 30th, 1896. She was born Jan. 18th, 1827, in Autauga Co , Ala., moved to Ouachita Co., Ark., with her parents, Robert and Lucretia Warnock, when some fourteen years of age, and was married to Elder R. H. Walker, Sept. 11th, 1844. When twenty-two years old she experienced a hope in Christ. She was a Bible student all her life, but never united with any church until the second Sunday in August, 1882, when she was baptized into the membership of Fellowship church, Coleman Co., Texas, by her husband. Mother was a faithful christian, a devoted wife and an affectionate mother. Every one who knew her loved her. My sister, my father and I are left, my only brother, Wm. S. Walker, having died just one month before mother. My uncle, F. W. Grigg, conducted the funeral services, reading 1 Cor. xv. 20-22, and used the hymn, "Why should we start or fear to die?' when we laid my darling mother away to await a glorious resurrection.

MARY E. McMAHAN.

I SEND you a short account of the death of my dear wife. Her maiden name was **Lucy Ann** Watkins. She was born Nov. 6th, 1833, in Warren Co., Tenn., was married to R. S. **Banks,** July 14th, 1862. She was the mother of six children, one girl who died at eighteen years years of age; only three sons living. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church in the year 1864, and was baptized by David Workman, in Iowa. She belonged to the Baptists thirty-seven years, and was always strong and firm in the apostolic faith.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."

Your afflicted brother,

R. S. BANKS.

BISMARCK, Mo., Jan., 1902.

DIED—Dec. 26th, 1901, our babe, **Christine,** aged 13 months. She was a bright, lovely child, and the idol of our home. She had no sickness during her life except that which took her from us, which was thought to be brain fever, and lasted less than two days. This was so short that before we hardly realized that she was seriously ill, she was taken. It has now been more than a month since she left our home, still her little, patient, bright and cheerful face is missed as though it was yesterday that we saw it in the many cunning ways that delighted us. In our natural affections we grieve, but in the Spirit we are comforted by the hope of the blessed resurrection, and when by the light of the Spirit we consider the poverty of this world, and the riches of the world to come, we reverently say, "Thy will be done;" "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." May it please our merciful God to comfort us in our bereavement, and reveal to us that her condition is far better than ours, and prepare us to again meet in the joys of an endless life, where sorrow and parting never come, is the prayer of her father and mother.

C. W. & MARTHA BOND.

DIED—Nov. 30th, 1901, of typhoid fever, at his place of residence, near Edinburg, Ind., **Walter P. Snepp,** aged 33 years. Walter had never made a public profession of his faith in Christ, but gave abundant evidence of a good hope through grace. I suppose he, like many others, through a deep sense of his own vileness and unworthiness, was kept from asking a home in the church. Walter was left a motherless child of six weeks, in the care of his aged grandmother, Caroline Sawin, (now in her ninety-fourth year) by whom he was raised to manhood, and was loved and respected by all who knew him. He died an honored and respected citizen, as the largely attended funeral evidenced. He leaves a young wife, three children, four brothers, one sister, many relatives and friends, together with an aged grandma, to mourn his absence. But we are assured our loss is his eternal gain. He longed to depart and be at rest.

May the Lord bless and comfort the surviving widow, and be manifestly a Father to the fatherless.

Sincerely his UNCLE PETER.

ERRATA.

I DISCOVER an error (it may be mine) in my communication in SIGNS for Feb. 1st, 1902. I am made to say in the last full line, "Before the foundation of the world." It should read, "From the foundation of the world." J. D. HUBBELL.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 70. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1902. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SORROW UNTO DEATH.

THE loneliest thing that can be imagined in all the world was the ark as it went upon the face of the waters. Not another object to be seen on all that wide and dismal waste of water that covered the earth, not even a mountain top. "The waters prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered." Alone upon that dark and dreary expanse, tossed upon that heaving, shoreless flood, with the terrible rain still falling from the black and angry heavens, what scene of greater and more awful desolation can be pictured to the mind; what lonelier object can be imagined?

But there is a scene of greater desolation, of more utter and hopeless loneliness in sorrow and suffering, as the reality is greater than the type. It is Jesus in the wilderness, in the garden, on the cross. When the great deep of God's judgments was broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened to pour out the just wrath of God against sin, only One felt the full power of that terrible flood. It fell upon Jesus the Son of God, and he was alone in bearing it. He was appointed unto this suffering and prepared for it. The infinite wisdom and power of God in this mystery are "unsearchable and past finding out."

All flesh upon the earth died while the rain was falling, but the ark was prepared to feel the full force and terror of the storm to the end. In that was the salvation of those within the ark. So while death has passed upon all men because of sin, Jesus was prepared to feel all the terrors and pains of that death, and to bear all the curse of that law which condemns all flesh to death, until every jot and tittle of it should be fulfilled, until the last drop of the rain of God's wrath had fallen. It must all fall upon him while in our flesh. His sorrow was unto death while he was yet in this mortal life. He must taste all the bitterness of death before he died. Unconsciousness could not come to relieve him of one pang.

And he was as absolutely alone in that

suffering as the ark was alone in the flood. In a wonderful and mysterious sense the life of all his people was in him, and they were "preserved in" him, as all those who were to people the earth after the flood were preserved in the ark. But in his suffering and sorrow while under the curse of the law, he was alone. His disciples could go with him to the garden, but not to the place where extremity of sorrow brought him down to the ground. Three of them, who seemed more closely his companions on special occasions than the rest, could be with him a little farther, but could not yet follow him in his great sorrow. "Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here and watch with me." But they could not watch at that time. They slept for sorrow. The sorrow that prevents sleep was not yet upon them. That sorrow was his. He had looked forward to this hour, for he had come into the world for the suffering of this hour; yet now that it had come, "he began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy." No matter how certain our expectation of any affliction may be, yet we cannot feel it before the time, and then it will appear almost as though we had not foreseen it. This sorrow of Jesus was the greatest and most bitter sorrow and grief that ever was felt by man. It was by his Spirit, and concerning his suffering, that Jeremiah said, "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger." And again, "I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath." (Lam. i. 12; iii. 1.) Now that the hour had come, his own will as a man, weak before the law because of others' sins, full of terror of soul on account of death under the curse of the law, caused him to cry unto his Father to save him from that hour, and to cause the cup to pass from him if it were possible. So great was his suffering that "an angel appeared unto him from heaven, strengthening him." And even then, "being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." But the strength that the angel brought prevailed. He came down from heaven to do his Father's will, not his own, and his prayer was, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." He must bear the suffering alone. His people cannot share the burden of sorrow, pain and death, with him. It is their salvation that he, the pure and holy Son of God, a spotless sacrifice, bears the awful suffering alone. If that death that fell on him had touched one of them, that one must have suffered an everlasting death. If any of the water of the flood could have broken through the ark to touch one of those within, then the ark, with all it held, must have sunk forever. But it "was pitched within and without," so that it alone should bear the beating of the storm from which the eight souls within are securely shielded.

So Jesus was prepared to suffer to the full alone, and to die alone, in this sense, as a sacrifice. The part his people have in that suffering and death is not *with* him, but *in* him.

In the ark the eight souls were saved by water. (1 Peter iii. 20.) The water that drowned all flesh upon the earth lifted the ark and those within it above its own destroying power. So the death that Jesus died raised him and all who were in him above the power of death forever. Death was all that was due for their sin. When he died the wages were fully paid, and when he arose by the

power of God, the dominion of death is at an end. Death is abolished, and life and immortality brought to light.

Those who saw the rainbow on Mount Ararat had all been in the ark, and had felt the terror and buffetings of the storm which fell upon the ark, though they had not at the time known what it all was. So those who are able to see the everlasting covenant of grace are manifest as having been saved in Christ.

This wonderful story of the sufferings of the dear Savior can never be told to the understanding of any one who had not been already made to feel it in his own experience. It is not by the application of our mental powers that we come to know what Jesus suffered, but by experience. It is a revelation. The disciples, who loved him, and were near him in the garden, could not then know what he was suffering. How much less is our ability to enter into that awful and solemn mystery by our own efforts. It is one thing to have our natural sympathies stirred by reading the inspired recital of his pains and sorrows, and meditating upon them, and quite another thing to feel a measure of those same pains and sorrows within our own souls. In the latter case the poor soul that is experiencing the fellowship of Jesus' sufferings never knows at the time that it is the fellowship of his sufferings that is felt. Those who were in the ark must have been in great terror and perplexity much of the time while they felt the tossing and shaking of the ark, not knowing what was going to become of them. They could not look out around them, for there was only one window, and that was above. But after the covering was removed from the ark, and they came out on the new earth, then they understood what had been done, and knew the meaning of their strange experiences.

In coming into the knowledge of Jesus' sufferings each one is alone. It is so in the beginning of this necessary knowledge, and at every farther advance into this awful mystery the learner is alone. They are led by a solitary way. "They shall mourn apart; every family apart, and their wives apart." Each one says to himself, "No one can be as vile in heart as I." Each one feels his own to be an especial case of depravity. If he has been kept from outbreaking sins, and has not forfeited the respect of men, yet he sees that evil in his heart and in his thoughts which appears to him to set him apart as especially vile. He has to say with Job, "Behold, I am vile. I abhor myself." Yet he cannot feel that he stands where Job was when he said those words.

It is wonderful how this sense of being alone in all our troubles on account of our special sinfulness attends all of the Lord's people, and follows them in a measure all the way through. And yet how seldom it is that during the time of the especial tribulation they ever think that in this they are following the dear Savior. Just what his sufferings were they must know, though only in measure, for it was for them he suffered, and they suffer in him. As soon as the thought come to them that the great tribulation on account of sin that is pressing them down into the depths is because Jesus suffered for that very sin, and that they are mourning "for him whom they have pierced," then the trouble is lifted and they rejoice, though still mourning on account of sin, and being in bitterness because their sins caused him such awful sorrow and anguish.

What cries for mercy go up from the poor soul while being tossed as it were

on the waves of that desolate, shoreless sea. The cries may be unspoken, silent to the ear of any but the Lord, but O, how bitter, how full of anguish they are. Truly they are "groanings that cannot be uttered." What a tender, quieted feeling takes possession of our souls when we first feel a hope that peradventure the Lord hears us. And who can tell the deep joy when we first get a glimpse of the beautiful bow of promise in the cloud, the everlasting covenant of grace, and feel in our souls the blessed promise of the Lord that "the waters shall no more go over the earth," and "that the Lord will no more be wroth with us nor rebuke us." How many a time since that blessed experience we have feared his wrath and felt the rebukes of the gospel, yet that promise has held good, and will be good unto the end, for it is "Yea and amen in Christ Jesus to the glory of God by us."

"As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."—2 Cor. i. 5. So we learn that suffering is the experience of the Lord's people all through their pilgrimage. They have consolation, but it is only according to the suffering of Christ in them, and as the result of those sufferings. When they stand before the throne, beholding the power of God with praise, it is as having come out of great tribulation. When the life of Jesus is made manifest in their mortal flesh, it is because they bear about in their body the dying of the Lord Jesus. (2 Cor. iv. 10.) When they are favored to lean upon their Beloved, it is as they are "coming up out of the wilderness."

Now this suffering is not some exalted, holy feeling, such as you, my brother or sister, have imagined belongs only to those who are far above you in purity and goodness, but it is just what you feel of sorrow, shame and self-loathing while you see the evils of your corrupt nature, and the sins and sinfulness of your heart and life. This is sometimes proved to you while in humble contrition and self-abasement before God you are enabled humbly to confess them, and are given the soul-surprising assurance that these very evils and transgressions in thought and word and deed that have made you hate yourself, are the ones that were laid upon the dear Son of God, the very sins for which he died. While in the darkness, with only your sinful flesh in sight, how very much alone you felt, and how your soul was tossed about, and buffeted, and almost overwhelmed, like a ship on the stormy sea; but now as your soul gets a sweet view of Jesus, and rises to a blessed hope that you are feeling the fellowship of his sufferings, you feel like singing praises to his name, and telling to all that fear God what he has done for your soul.

At such times his service is very sweet and comforting. We count it a blessing to feel the Spirit of obedience, and to be enabled to act out that obedience. But how often we are tempted to doubt our motives in our religious works, and fear that we are prompted by the vanity of the flesh. From first to last the experience of the exercised soul leads him to doubt the movements of the flesh, and to earnestly seek unto the Lord to be led by his holy Spirit.

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." When the Spirit of the Lord is searching and probing our hearts, what anxiety, what jealousy we feel lest it be the flesh instead of the Spirit which is leading us, even when we are doing what we know it is the privilege of the Lord's people to do.

We question sharply our motives, fearing they are selfish, and that we are not doing all to the glory of God." We are sometimes told that we ought to obey in order that we may feel better, but the word of God and his Spirit do not teach us that, but that "whatsoever we do we should do all to the glory of God." The Spirit alone can lead us in that holy way. Every fleshly motive is selfish, and hence our fear and anxiety.

It does not help and encourage a poor soul who is tried in this way to say to him, "You ought to obey in order that you may feel better." The Savior's obedience did not make him feel better, but brought him into darkness and into the depths, and filled his soul with bitterness. But what he did was for the glory of God. We may say to one in whom we have seen an experience of grace, "You ought to be baptized; it is your duty. If you obey you will feel better." But his reply may be, "I fear that such a holy privilege is not for such as I. I fear it would not be obedience, but presumption in me to receive that ordinance which belongs to the Lord's people." Now it is for us not to urge such an one forward while his conscience, which is very tender in the fear of the Lord, is filled with such solemn questionings. We can show to him, as we may be enabled, the scriptural marks of those to whom that ordinance belongs, but we must all remember that the assurance in his soul that the sweet command rests upon him must come from the Lord.

Brethren in the ministry, if your obedience to the call which you have felt in your souls to preach the gospel was in order that you might feel better, how many of you would or could go on in that solemn work? Think over your experience in that business which you did not seek, but into which you were thrust. What shrinkings and sinkings of soul you have felt as you have approached the time when you must stand before the people of God, and have tried to begin to try to preach in the name of Jesus, the gospel of his grace. Sometimes your trembling sense of unworthiness, inability and unfitness for that great work have continued through the sermon, and sometimes you have been lifted above yourself, and have been filled with the sweetest, holiest joy a poor mortal can feel as you declared, in the power of the Spirit, the glad tidings of salvation. Sometimes it has been quiet work, and you have felt thankful that you were in any degree enabled to speak a word in season to him that is weary.

But O, the trials, the misgivings, the wretched, wearying doubts after your work for the time is done, and you are alone again. What heart-searchings, what questionings whether you have not been preaching yourself more than Christ, whether your glorying was not more in yourself than in the Lord. How many a time you have said to yourself, "Surely I must never undertake to preach again." Well, the Lord knows how to deal with his servants. You have not quit the work yet, nor will you until you have fulfilled the work unto which he has called you. You are not preaching in order that you may feel better, but for the glory of God. You cannot stop, though you feel as though you could not go on. There is a blessedness in the work, even in the sufferings and sinkings down, for in it all Christ is exalted.

And you, poor soul, who look with love and longing upon the ordinances and privileges of the church, and wish that they might be yours, in the Lord's own time the sweet persuasion will be yours

that they belong to all who want them. In the Lord's good time the power of his word of sweet command as written in the Scriptures will be felt in your heart: "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her." —Isa. lxvi. 10. We must all wait for the Lord, and, blessed be his name, he always comes "right early." All our times are in his hand, and they can neither be hastened or delayed.

We all see in ourselves enough of disobedience, and enough of sin in the best obedience of our hands, to give us daily errands at the throne of grace, and to bring out of our souls the publican's cry for mercy.

How many of the Lord's dear people go far in disobedience, living after the flesh until they die away from spiritual things. How often we feel that in faithfulness we ought to exhort, reprove or rebuke them, but are held back for fear we are not spiritual, and therefore are not qualified to restore such ones, or thinking that we ourselves need the reproof as much as they, if not more. But we must try to do our duty; yet if it is only as a duty we do anything it is of but little account before God; and if it is only to relieve ourselves of responsibility, and "to feel better," that we do anything, the motive is only a fleshly one.

When the love of Christ constrains us, then love to the erring or needy one will prompt what we do or say, and while we do our work faithfully, and in the fear of the Lord, we shall remember that the Lord only can give repentance. Scolding never restored a wanderer, nor ever honored the Lord. The fire which the Lord kindles on the altar of the heart will never quite go out. The Lord will brighten it in his own time. He, and not man, gives the stripes which bring back the children who forsake his law. However far they wander, he knows where they are, and is visiting their transgressions with the rod, as he said he would, and they are often feeling that rod most when to us they appear most defiant and stubborn.

The salvation of God which grace brought to us in our first experience of a hope, is the same salvation which that grace bringeth through all our earthly pilgrimage in every time of need. That grace which bringeth this salvation teaches all the various subjects of it all things in their walk and life which become sound doctrine, and in which that salvation is manifested unto them from day to day, in all the various circumstances of their life, and that grace will keep them through faith unto the full and glorious revelation of that salvation in the last time. (1 Peter i. 5.) It is that salvation which the psalmist prays may set him up on high. It is that salvation that appears in all the beautiful order of the church, and which the saints minister to each other while walking in the commands of Jesus. It is the salvation of God of which the apostle speaks when he says to Timothy, "In so doing thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee," and which appears in the faithful ministration of him who converteth a sinning brother from the error of his ways, when he thus "saves a soul from death and hides a multitude of sins." The saints have no salvation of their own to handle, and deal in, and minister, separate from the salvation of God. Jesus is our salvation, and to him the poor soul cries in times of darkness and distress, "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." Without Jesus, our salvation, we can do nothing. He is our Sun, and his salvation, like the

sunlight, reaches "to the ends of the heaven, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof." That salvation will not fail any of the saints. Who speaks of another salvation which is not of grace, but of works? That salvation, and the grace that brings it, are sufficient for us in all our times of need. They appear in the obedient walk of the faithful people of God, who walking in his fear and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost are edified and multiplied, (Acts ix. 3,) and also in the rod and the stripes with which our faithful and loving Savior visits his erring children, and restores them to the joys of his salvation. All our times are in his hand, and provisions of grace and salvation are made for each of them. The child of God who has gone farthest in rebellion and sin, when, restored to his right mind, feeble and sore broken, humble and contrite, crying bitterly, he feels the sweet and compassionate and loving beams of salvation falling softly into his sorrowing soul, has to say, "Behold, what wondrous grace and mercy that could save such a sinner as I." And the most obedient child of God, as he looks over his life, and contemplates his labors in the Lord, and the love and fellowship which the brethren have manifested to him, and then sees in his own heart and life such evidences of a depraved nature as sink him into the dust, wonders at the mercy which, like Paul, he has obtained of the Lord to be faithful, is astonished that he has been kept in the comfort of obedience while others have been suffered to wander far away, and suffer much for disobedience, and instead of feeling that any praise or reward is due to him, he says, "What have I that I did not receive? If God had dealt with me according to my deserts, I should not have stood. To him be all the praise. It was not I that did these works of obedience, 'but the grace of God which was with me.'" So the most faithful saint on earth, joins with the worst backslider when restored to the manifest favor of God, and says, "By the grace of God I am what I am," and there is no one left out of that heavenly choir when they sing in perfect accord, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 2, 1902.

NEW YORK, Nov. 18, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER SCATES:—Your letter of the 8th inst. was forwarded promptly by Elder Chick and I was glad indeed to hear from you once more. The remembrance of your visit has never faded from my mind. I think I can recall every incident and topic of conversation during your visit at our house, more clearly than any other one who was present. That was the time of my first love; the time when the company of the brethren was all the heaven I desired. Recollection of the joy and peace I then experienced are accompanied now with sad realization of a woeful change in me:

> "What happy hours I then enjoyed;
> How sweet their memory still!
> But now there is an aching void,
> The world can never fill."

I have felt like writing to you many times; especially so after your articles appeared in the SIGNS. Your last letter in the SIGNS came where I live, and I knew I ought to let you know you had saved a soul from death; that words fitly spoken was in the testimony you bore witness to, for they expressed my experience better than I could, and I was comforted in the fellowship of those words. But I never do the things I ought, and you never heard from me. I have keen

fellowship for you in all you write concerning your unprofitableness. The only spirituality I know anything about is, I fear, spiritual wickedness in high places; the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus I fear I know little if anything about. But I desire to know the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings. I have nothing to show but the desire; if that itself is not the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, then I am not spiritual. If I have been kept at all since we last met, this desire has saved me: I have never yet dared to say I know I am a christian, and much of the time I am afraid to say I hope I am a christian.

Some years ago I thought rather hardly of Peter for denying his Master, after having received so many evidences of his love. But I have found out that Peter is not to be compared with me. Every day of my life, yes I will say, every moment of my life, in some way I am saying, "I never knew him." In nothing of my life can I show that I love him; I can only say, Lord, thou knowest. Of all men under heaven I am the last one that should ever have been set apart to the work I am engaged in. That sounds like questioning the judgment of the church, does it not? And I suppose I ought not to do that, but I do just the same. I never saw the righteousness, of it and can only account for it on the ground of my deceiving them. When a man knows he is not qualified to preach the gospel he cannot very well say he hopes he is, can he? Just why I go on trying to make the brethren believe I am called to the work, I do not know. It is a mystery to me, and not in keeping with my conduct as a man; for I believe I want to be honest and in worldly affairs I would not stand a moment in such a doubtful place. But I cannot leave this people. There is no life, no heaven for me, outside their love. They minister to me the things of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, things I need so much: love, gentleness, goodness, forgiveness, tender heartedness, kindness, forbearance. How needy I am, how unworthy to be called the least one of them! And so I follow after: I want to eat and drink of their land, and I hope it is the spirit of Ruth in me crying, "Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee," &c.

I am grateful for your kind invitation to visit you in Canada. Canada is my native home, and I would like once more to see the land of my birth; and I would love to meet the brethren of whom I have heard so much. But it is not likely I shall ever get there: at all events, not until great changes take place in my circumstances. And it is as well for you that I cannot come, for I would be of no profit, but rather a disappointment to you all. I have met your pastor, Elder Carnell, several times. He is, as you say, an able preacher and a lovely brother, and I wish I could meet him often. Remember me in love to him.

[The rest was on business affairs, R. Scates.]

NOVEMBER 29, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER ROBERT SCATES:—Your letter was received in due time, but I have had no opportunity to reply until now. Further than the business part of my letter I do not now recollect what it contained. If it has drawn you closer to me in bonds of love, I am glad, but there is no credit due me as a minister of comfort. The comfort and satisfaction afforded you in reading it was not due to any power in me to convert your heaviness to praise: it was the God of all comfort who made the darkness light, and the

crooked places straight. It was the Spirit of truth which comforted you in showing you the things of Jesus as your experience. Your feeling sense of destitution and lack of any good thing in you was the prayer of faith which is always effectual. And our God, who is in secret, and heareth in secret, hath rewarded you openly in the answer of your secret prayer for the joys of his salvation.

In fellowship with that afflicted and poor people, who confess to being of unclean lips like yourself, you find an habitation, a city to dwell in, whose builder and maker is God; and the name of this city is, "The Lord is there." Your letter comforted me with the same comfort wherewith you yourself were comforted of God. "This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes."

How necessary it is that brethren dwell together in unity, that they may be helpers of each other's joy. And how clearly is set forth in our own experience that our joys and comforts are dependent upon the fellowship of the saints; for we are members one of another, and unity of the Spirit is the only bond of peace.

In saying, how necessary it is that brethren dwell together in unity, I do not mean to imply they have any ability in themselves so to do. The Lord has appointed their travel in the wilderness, in a solitary way; and for each one is prepared a mansion which he alone occupies; no one else, he feels, dwells with him there, he is a solitary one. Your experience will never be mine in exactly the same line; and mine will never be yours, but the same Jesus which prepared your mansion has, I trust, prepared mine, and our salvation is the same. Our God setteth the solitary in families; their mansions are in the Father's house; they are of the household of God, "and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom we also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

You cannot know how sweet to me was your song of the goodness and mercy of God. Your experience was the preaching of his sovereign power to save. The salvation of God is only made known to the ends of the earth; just where you were, and the Lord is the Creator of that condition, the ends of the earth. And we do obey his command, "Be ye glad and rejoice in that which I create."

In some sections of the country, I am glad it is not here, there is considerable confusion among the churches concerning a system called "conditional time salvation." I may not understand correctly just what its advocates contend for, but thus far I have failed to discover the doctrine of grace set forth in it. There is a mixing of things which to my mind savors strongly of the mystery of Babylon.

I find no record in Scripture of obedience, duties, obligations, &c., as being the foundation upon which we are to build. The only foundation, upon which the prophets, apostles, and saints of all ages have built, is Christ Jesus our Lord, the express image or manifestation of grace, mercy and forgiveness. Other foundation can no man lay than is laid, grace for grace; and all who build upon other foundation can reap nothing but fruitless labor all their days. Grace alone is the foundation upon which we build, and grace alone bringeth salvation. Grace and conditions, grace and works, will not mix. If of grace, it is not at all of works, otherwise grace is no more grace.

The wisdom of man says that the doc-

trine we rest upon relieves us of all responsibility and tends to the indulgence of lust, &c., but the wisdom of man is foolishness with God, and Jesus speaks as never man spake when he says, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Faith is the gift of God, and that which he gives he proves to be incorruptible by trial, and the trial of our faith is always found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. God is glorified in his saints, and in and to them is made known his commandments for the *obedience of faith.*

They are justified by faith, therefore are they holy; and it is by grace we are saved, *through faith.* In the light of such doctrine no man can be just in the sight of God in any obedience which the mind can conceive of. Sight is not faith, and the *just* shall *live by* his *faith.* This faith once delivered to the saints is what we contend for as the power of God unto salvation. It is the fruit of that Spirit which wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and he who walks by faith does really and truly know the power of his resurrection.

In such an one there is newness of life: he does worship God in *Spirit,* and serves him *day* and *night* in his holy temple. In our flesh we do see God, for immortality is brought to light through this wonder-working power of God. Our people do believe in good works, and in walking soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. But they believe that they were before ordained to thus walk, and that it is God which worketh in them both to will to do of his good pleasure, and that he has left no loophole for the defeating of his purpose by committing the fulfilling of his righteous will to man who cannot direct his own steps. They do not talk about conditions, or ability in themselves. Their song is, "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever." They believe it is God which worketh in us, and that he who hath wrought all our works for us and in us, also works them by us, and, therefore, that which he gives, he persuades us to receive, so that his commands and our obedience are manifested in the same thing.

But why should I write thus to you? You know all this better than I do. But some way your letter has stirred up my mind in recognition of the great difference between a people whose obedience *is love,* and those whose inspiration to obedience is fear of consequences. All the exhortation, admonitions, and threatenings, in the Bible are Scriptures of truth written in the hearts of God's people. They need not that any man teach them the way of life and holiness, and lay burdens upon them which they cannot of themselves bear. Their yoke is easy and their burden is light, in the obedience of faith. I love this doctrine, for there is no other salvation for me. If the whole theme is not a delusion and a myth I have proved there is no hope for me in anything I can do. I have searched diligently, and alas, I am still searching for something to render unto God for all his benefits; but the search is fruitless of even one good thought, or holy aspiration in myself. Further, I do not know how to pray. Sometimes I thought I did, and that I was in the spirit of prayer; but the fact that I thought so was afterwards evidence to me that no mixture of faith was there, and that I was asking amiss to consume it on my lusts, the gratification of my own desires. No, I cannot lay claim to any obedience such as the system of conditional time salvation preaches. If my

obedience is not entirely of faith I am lost.

It is kind of you to say what you did about my call to preach, but instead of assuring me in the matter it burdens my heart in the conviction that I have deceived another of God's little ones. I am not discontented with the work, ah no, no greater joy could be mine than to know that in deed and in truth I could preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, but no such assurance has been vouchsafed me, and the only reason I can account for continuing before the people is that I like to remind them that all their weakness and sufferings are heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord. I love to talk of the goodness and mercy of God, and to say to the mournful and fearful ones, Be of good courage: ye need not to fight in this battle: the Lord hath triumphed gloriously: your warfare *is* accomplished; your iniquity is pardoned, and you *have* received double for all your sins. Salvation is in the appearing of Jesus, and when he is revealed there is time no longer; it is an everlasting salvation brought to light, without beginning or ending of days.

I need not to tell you that in all your doubts and fears you are sitting in the heavenly places, for Jesus is come again and received you unto himself, that where he is you may be also. You are confessing that Christ is come in your flesh, and in the fellowship of his sufferings you are led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And herein is your title to an inheritance with the saints in light, for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Most gladly therefore do we glory in our infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon us.

How thankful you ought to be that you do not get many letters from me; I am ashamed of myself for trying your patience thus long.

As to publishing the letter I wrote you, you may do as you please, it is yours. But frankly, I will tell you, I am never gratified in seeing my name in the SIGNS. The least able of all its writers speak my mind better than I can express it. I am affliction enough to those who have to bear with me here, and I am not anxious to try the forbearance of others with my unprofitableness.

Concerning your invitation to visit Canada, I will promise that if a way is ever opened to accept it, I will certainly come. But the prospect of such a possibility I cannot see. I am serving and supplying four churches in this State, and am also engaged in a mercantile business, which allows me no leisure further than the filling of these appointments. When the churches here more fully realize my unprofitableness, then I may have more leisure when they do not want me; but then you won't want me. I wish you would come on here and visit us.

We have not many preachers in this neighborhood, but with the exception of one they are able men, and beyond question called of the Lord to speak comfortably to Jerusalem. Remember me in love to your family, and especially to sister Brawley, when you meet her.

Affectionately your brother in the best of bonds,

JOHN McCONNELL.

[THE above excellent letters were forwarded to us by brother Scates. They describe our own travel of mind much of the time, and we feel assured will come closely home to the hearts of others also, and will doubtless be read with deep interest and comfort by the brethren generally.—ED.]

BLUM, Texas, Jan. 28, 1902.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —ESTEEMED BRETHREN IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—As I have been requested by a brother and a sister in Christ to write for the SIGNS, I now with much hesitation make the attempt. I will endeavor to write my experience as best I can.

I was born on the 13th of May, in Jackson Co., Ala., in 1838. My father and mother were Old Baptists in belief, and I had the pleasure of seeing my father baptized in the fellowship of an Old Baptist church, in Young Co., Texas, in 1883. My mother never made a public profession, though she was strong in the belief of the doctrine of salvation by grace. Father died in his seventy-seventh year; mother died in her eighty-first year. They had many sore trials and tribulations, the greatest was the loss of my two youngest brothers, James K., on the battlefield of Chickamauga, and John Wilson, who was killed outright, in Young Co., Texas, February, 1883.

In the month of August, 1858, there was a great religious excitement in our part of the country, and I became deeply troubled over my sinful condition, and mourned many days. Much of the time I mourned because I could not mourn, and even after I had felt that my sins were all forgiven, and that old things had passed away, and behold all things had become new, and though it seemed that for a short time I was in a new world, I fell into doubts and fears, and greatly desired to realize my change again, so I might understand it better, and know that it was a true change. But with all my weeping and lamentation I was as I verily thought, without hope and without God in the world. I certainly realized that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelt no good thing, and how to perform that which is good I found not. I lost all hope in the help of man. I was in this hopeless condition for weeks, but at the Lord's appointed time I was relieved of all my trouble, and found that the Lord was better than all my fears. I was made to rejoice in God my Savior with joy inexpressible, and full of glory.

The following October I, with two other brethren, went to Salem Church of Old School Baptists, and were received into the fellowship of a precious band of brethren and sisters, (nearly all of whom have long since passed away) and were baptized the following day, by Elder James Austill, who was a gifted preacher of salvation by grace. The God he loved so dearly, and served so faithfully, gave him a long, eventful life, and no doubt he died in the faith that works by love, and purifies the heart. I received the answer of a good conscience in following our dear Lord and Master down into the water, and being buried beneath its yielding waves, and being raised up to walk in newness of life. I shall never forget the sweet comfort and peace I enjoyed on that beautiful fourth Sunday evening of October, 1858. It seemed that when I had passed from death unto life, I would never see any more trouble, so it seemed the day I was baptized. I was delighted with my home in the church of the living and true God, the ground and pillar of the truth, a glorious habitation for the saints of the Most High, to dwell together in peace, union and dear esteem. I felt that I never should grieve or suffer again.

A short time after I was received into the church, I was liberated to speak in public, and my first appointment was at the house of brother Joe Gentry. A large congregation came out to hear me. I had good attention, and perhaps the

sympathy of all present, but that is about all I ever did know about my first meeting. Brother and sister Gentry have long since passed away, but their house was for many years a pleasant home for Old Baptists.

On the 26th of November, 1860, I was married to Mrs. Sarah A. Gover, whose maiden name was Matthews. She had been raised up by Methodist parents, but never professed a hope in Christ until some time in August, 1858, soon after which time she joined the Cumberland Presbyterians, and received pouring for baptism. While I was on a visit at her home, we talked on the subject of baptism, and I asked her if she felt happy when the minister poured water on her head? Her reply was with light remarks about immersion, but from that time on the subject of baptism became a serious question in her mind.

When she was a little girl, her father bought a Bible that had a picture in it representing the Savior kneeling in the water, and John the Baptist pouring water on his head out of a horn. Her grandfather Williams was an Old Baptist, and when he saw the picture he cut out the horn. By asking questions she learned that her grandfather did not like such a perversion of the ordinance of baptism. That circumstance also bore on her mind when she came to investigate the subject of baptism. But she after awhile learned obedience by the things she suffered. While the war was going on between the States, religious meetings in our part of the country were very much interrupted. Some of the meeting houses were torn down by the Federal army to build winter quarters. I was in the war some time, and even when at home I was so worldly minded that I cared but little about church meetings. In fact I might say that for several years I was almost a castaway. In the fall of 1865 we moved from Alabama to Franklin Co., Tenn., to live among my wife's people, who by this time were nearly all Presbyterians. I became acquainted with Elder James Wagner, then of Deckerd, Tenn., and after a short time I had him come and preach at our house. His preaching pleased my wife so well that she learned to love brother Wagner better than her own preacher. The doctrine of grace was a feast to her soul, but she still desired to live in a church with her people. But the Lord showed her in a little while what great things she must suffer for his sake. About this time we had several cases of serious sickness, and my wife was given up to die; she was so low that she could not speak above a whisper. She called her sister, as she wanted to talk about her hope and trust in the Lord, and said, if she should get well she wanted to be baptized in the fellowship of the Old Baptists, but if not, she wanted Elder Austill to preach at her funeral. Her sister said she was not rational; the doctor said it was the effects of opium. She talked the same to me, and I knew she was quite rational. It was a travail of mind about her duty as a child of God. She had been persuaded that sprinkling, or pouring, if not baptism, would answer the purpose all the same. She could not from that time on regard it anything but a gross perversion of the sacred ordinance of baptism. In 1867 I took a letter from Old Salem Church, and joined Wagners Creek Church, Elder Wagner pastor. My wife went with me up to the church to hear Elder David Jacks, who was one of the greatest preachers of that country, and she was so pleased with the preaching, she thought surely on that day she had an ear to hear

the glorious sound of the gospel.

In 1879 we moved up near Wagners Creek Church. I had been licensed by this church to speak in public. On Saturday before the fourth Sunday in May, my wife went before the church, and gave a reason of her hope in Christ: "With weeping, and with supplications, will I bring them, saith the Lord." The dear brethren and sisters received her with joy and gladness. The following day she and sister West were baptized by Elder Wagner.

At the June meeting I was ordained to the full work of the ministry, by a presbytery comprising Elder James Wagner, James H. Holman, of Lincoln Co., and Elijah Rogers, of Warren Co., all of middle Tennessee. And the following September we bid the brethren, sisters and friends of that country farewell, and started on our long journey in wagons to Hood Co., Texas. Samuel P. Rogers, my oldest brother, and brethren Sol. Wagner and Joe Night, and their families, came with us, but brother Night stopped in Arkansas. Our trials and tribulations in Texas for several years were many. In 1873 I joined old County Line Church, of the Trinity River Association, thirty miles east of my home, and continued a member of that church until 1879, when I took a letter to go into the constitution of Friendship Church, near my home, Hood Co., Texas. I was called to the care of this church, and have continued pastor ever since. I have had the care of from two to four churches for the last twenty years, but I must confess that my service as pastor of churches has come so far short of what it should have been, that I have been in despair much of the time.

On the 17th of August, 1892, my faithful wife, partner of all my joys and sorrows for thirty-two years, was taken from us by death, but thanks be to God's holy name, she died in the true faith. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." In October, 1894, I was married again to Mrs. Mary S. Donaldson, of near Blum, Hill Co., Texas, whose experience was published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES several years ago. She was baptized in the fellowship of Friendship Church, the first Sunday in November, 1894, and her daughter, Mrs. Lizzie Raines, was baptized by the writer in the fellowship of Sardis Church, in April, 1900, which is near Arlington, Texas.

The God of our salvation, both for time and eternity, has certainly blessed the unworthy writer with two faithful and devoted companions, through many sore conflicts in this world of sin and sorrow.

Dear brother Beebe, I submit this to your better judgment; I cannot tell whether it should go into our family paper, the SIGNS, or not.

Yours in hope,

W. L. ROGERS.

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1 JOHN IV. 1.

"TRY the spirits whether they are of God."

In all ages of the world, from the dawn of creation until now, living witnesses to God's immortal truth have tenanted their houses of clay, travailing in pain and sorrow, it is true, but none the less unceasingly breathing forth praise and adoration to Jehovah, and testifying often in the midst of most awful ordeals, to the salvation found only in the arm of the mighty God, the fortress of his people in all ages in time and forever in eternity.

In all ages of the world, from the dawn of creation until now, have been those ever ready to curse the saints, to inflict all manner of persecutions upon them, striving to beguile them in the name of the Lord (?) and with a mask of seeming saintliness to fall down and worship Baal, and to leave the Shepherd of Israel. But he whose goings forth have been established upon the Rock Christ Jesus, is there to stay, and though often menaced by worldly adversaries and persecuted in most hideous fashion, has invariably come forth from the fiery furnace bearing not a single scent of smoke, with his gold not tarnished nor lustre dimmed.

Against these enemies of the doctrine of God our Savior, the apostle sounds the warning note, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Even at that time, so soon after the manifestation of God in the flesh, false prophets have arisen, so cunning as to almost deceive the very elect.

Many come to the saints filled with the holy Spirit of God, animated by a desire to speak to them concerning his goodness and glory, trusting that God will bless their labors to the edification of the saints and to the upbuilding of Zion. Others come to the saints filled with the spirit of their father, the devil, animated by a desire to gain a good name for themselves, and to win a high place among men, stopping not from hanging salvation upon conditions, and clothing poor, puny man with a fancied glory of his own. Having their eye not single to the glory of God, they deem it an unimportant thing to leave him in the background.

But all who would teach in Zion, no matter by what spirit they are animated, are ushered before God's most awful tribunal, the highest court before which a man can possibly be brought, and from which there is no appeal; the church of the Most High. Here, in the hearts of all God's children, is a judgment-seat erected, and here, too, are unfurled the banner and standard of the truth. By this, the saints "try the spirits whether they are of God." Upon the spirits before them, they set their seal entitling them to serve the Lord in his most holy temple, or banishing them from their presence forever. Among all these spirits, the "man diligent in business, shall stand before kings." Every saint is a king and a priest to God, and before this most regal company only he whose business lies at wisdom's gate, whose whole desire is to praise the Lord for his salvation and mercy to usward, and whose testimony upon the walls of Zion declares him as the Rock and his work as perfect; only he, I say, can stand before this royal priesthood, the assemblage of the saints.

Such is the primary interpretation of the language of John quoted in the beginning. Now, briefly, let us glance at the secondary or experimental side of it.

None but those who have traveled it, can know how rough is the road from earth to heaven. Now it rises over the summit of a lofty mountain, then dropping a little, it pursues its course along a level plain, farther on, it suddenly drops and is lost to view among the dark recesses of some narrow valley only to rise again to climb the mountain where, lo, the golden sunlight gilds its highest point. How many different moods of mind possess the christian wayfarer all in a single day. Now doubting, now fearing, now mounting a pinnacle of hope, now plunging into the depths of despair, now calmly resting in sweet deliverance from the pit. Whether held in

the bonds of the spirit of prayer, whether imprisoned in meshes of the spirit of hope, whether held by the spirit of grief, we constantly cry out, "Is this God or the devil?" "Is this the kind of affliction the Lord's people have, or are the whole human race partakers of it?" Thus daily does the child of God try the spirits which possess him, to discover whether they are of God or of Satan, whether they are the evidences of the indwelling of grace, or the croppings out of the propensities of the flesh. His constant inquiry is: "Am I, or am I not, one of the heaven-born sons of grace?" and only as the Spirit of God bears witness with our spirit, do we realize that we are the children of God. To-day you may not know that the spirit which holds you is of God, but to-morrow, God will interpret your experiences, and by his Spirit, which is always your indwelling guide, bearing witness with and testifying to your spirit or experience, you will know what the past means. It is by the future that we understand the present, and by the present that we interpret the past. Next year you will realize how much God has been with you this year, but now, as he walks with you daily, you are not aware that it is he, so confident do you feel sometimes that he has left you. This is because you are in the cleft of the rock, and his hand is over you so that you see only his back parts, places where he has been, and not where he is now.

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

1322 VINE ST., PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 4, 1902.

ROELLEN, Tenn., Jan. 23, 1902.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed find post-office order for two dollars, as payment for subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for one year. I have been reading it from a boy, I think from 1837 or 1838, and I have some very old numbers, and if it has changed in doctrine or practice, I have failed to see it. I have read it carefully since 1866, and I am sure there has been no change in it, for it then taught what I was taught experimentally, and if it had changed I should have stopped my subscription, as I cannot endure any other doctrine. The Bible teaches that God is the only sovereign Ruler of all things, he doeth his pleasure, and there is none to hinder, and Jesus is the only Savior of lost and ruined sinners; he saved them with an everlasting salvation, he purchased them with his own blood, hence we are not our own, but belong to Jesus. He trod the wine-press alone for there was none to help; he saw of the travail of his soul and was satisfied; he finished the work the Father gave him to do, and of all the Father gave him he had lost nothing, but raised it up the last day. That is my hope, and I am satisfied that is the truth, and the truth is all that will do a poor old sinner, saved by grace any good. I scribbled this in justice to the editor from first to last, not for publication, as I am seventy-seven years old and cannot hold my hand steady.

May the Lord bless you.

M. A. WELBORN.

WORTHINGTON, Minn., Dec. 3, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—You will find inclosed two dollars to pay my subscription to the SIGNS for another year. I do not know what I would do without the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, it brings love, joy and fellowship to us when we read the truth published in its columns, and our hearts go out to the writers. When they speak of their feelings, we have felt the same. O, how sweet it is to a poor old sinner to hear that there are others traveling the same

road; how sweet it is to talk with them, it is not so with natural men, the Lord has not taught them in the school of grace, and they have not learned the language of Canaan, and cannot understand it. If predestination of all things was to be taken from the Bible, and also election, my foundations would be gone. There is no limit to the power of God, he works all things after the counsel of his own will, I feel glad that it is so. I can say his loving-kindness has been about me all the days of my life. I pay no attention to the do and live system; all that I have in this world is a hope in Jesus, that he will save me at last; I know that I cannot save myself, I cannot do anything to merit his favor.

We desire your prayers for us. Your brother in hope of eternal life,

HENRY JAMES.

WAVERLY, Pa., Jan. 8, 1902.

EDITORS AND READERS OF OUR FAMILY PAPER:—All who love the doctrine of God our Savior, allow me to talk just a little. Elder Tharp visited a few of the churches this fall that I am serving, and gave a little account of the condition of things, and gave a true statement, too. I am trying to serve nine churches, and they are from four to nearly five hundred miles away from my home. I know that they are poorly served, and I feel sad for them. I am obliged to have many appointments on week days, and often it is not possible for the male members to leave their business. I do wish the dear Lord would raise up and qualify more men to preach the pure, unadulterated gospel of the kingdom, and send nine or ten this way. I am weary of trying to preach, and O, how I would delight to hear some one else every Sunday. God may grant my desire some time; I am living in hope. I have never been anxious to preach or to try, and why I have been placed in the position that I am, God only knows. I have always had this feeling about it, ready to give up, but do not know how. It seems to me to be one of the most unexplainable mysteries of my whole life; it may never be explained to me. The churches that I visit regularly are getting on as well as could be expected, all things being considered. Some have had a few additions the past year. Seven of them had a two days meeting, making seven two days meetings which were fairly well attended. Elders Chick, Ker, Durand, Hubbell, McConnell, Slauson and Keene attended them, and preached Jesus Christ and him crucified. No conditional business about it, or in it, and that is rich food for the poor, needy, helpless sinner who cannot do one good thing if that one thing would save them from eternal destruction. We hope the ministering brethren will feel it in their hearts to come among us, and preach for us, as often as they can. Also any of the brethren and sisters and friends of the cause, would be gladly welcomed by us all. It does us good, and we hope it would you. I did think that I would write a little about the long spell of sickness we had in our family this last summer, and the manifest goodness of God through it all. The five children that had the typhoid fever, are all gaining nicely, in fact they appear real well. May God be praised for his goodness and mercy to us all.

I will now stop; I feel so much like a base intruder whenever I write anything for publication, and think I will never do so again.

This may be my last, and it may not. If you have space you may publish the inclosed letter of sister Ely, it is full of

that love which is of God, and that is a good subject to talk about. I wish I continuously felt more of it.

A poor, weak, erring sinner,

D. M. VAIL.

WELLSBORO, Pa., Dec. 29, 1901.

ELDER VAIL—DEAR BROTHER:—I remember that you said to me when I last saw you that it had been quite a while since I had written to you. I know it has been, but it is only because I feel myself too weak, ignorant and sinful to write to any benefit to any one. But my heart is filled with love to all the dear ones of the church, and how I long to be with them, and I know it is not as I love other friends, for naturally there is nothing why I should have a deeper feeling for them than for others around me. It is with me as brother Rounds says in his letter in the SIGNS, which I just read: The more I am with the brethren, the more I love them, and the more I want to be with them. By this love which we have for the brethren, our hope is strengthened, for in 1 John iv. we read, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us."

The more we see the Spirit of God manifest in a brother or sister, the more we love that one.

There was also another thing in brother Round's letter of which I will speak; it was about hearing preaching; that if we were edified and strengthened, and felt the presence of the Lord, we should be satisfied if we could not store it away to carry home with us. That has been one source of trouble to me, when I have enjoyed a sermon very much at the time, I could not remember as much of it afterwards as it seems I might. If we could store it away to feed on, we would not find it as sweet to the taste as when we received it, for then it was just what we needed.

Please excuse me for intruding on your time with such a long letter, for I know your time is fully occupied. I did not think of writing as I have, but have felt very happy to-night while writing. My earnest desire is, to know and do the will of God, and be submissive to him in all things, and that I might give all praise and honor unto God and his dear Son Jesus Christ.

Your sister in a precious hope,

FLORENCE ELY.

PEASTER, Texas.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed you will find an order for four dollars, to be applied as directed below.

I will write a few lines and submit them to your judgment to do with as you think best. Paul has said, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." The Lord he is God, the Creator, upholder and righteous disposer of all things, and he has commanded the gates opened that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in. There is a nation that keep the

truth, yea, they are a very small remnant; they cry out with Gideon and his three hundred, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." There are some that are called Primitive Baptists that are crying, The sword of Gideon and of the Lord, saying eternal salvation is of grace, and time salvation is by our works. It is not the truth, for I hope I learned by experience years ago that the more I worked, the deeper in debt I got, and I hope though I worketh not, (acceptable) but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, my faith, which is the gift of God, is accounted to me for righteousness. I am so glad the church is not under the law, but under grace, that grace of God that brings salvation, and to the last keeps and sustains the saints, yea, saves them in time, and brings them off more than conquerors through Jesus who is our life, salvation, our all and in all, the beginning and the end. Some men in the Baptist ranks remind me of Ahab's questioning Elijah, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" They say it is the "can't help its" who are making the trouble, when they are the ones making it, because they cannot stand sound doctrine. Some of the giants that are in the land say, "It is necessary for some of our preachers to be debaters, able to meet the giants of other orders, and show to the world that the Primitive Baptists are the church of Jesus Christ." Trying in vain to show the world something they cannot see, for God has hid these things from the wise. That is what is the matter with the church in many places, she is reaching out after the world. Too much theology. O brethren, let the potsherds of the earth strive with the potsherds of the earth, but let us all cry with one voice, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." I have found out by bitter experience, here in Texas, that Leah's sons are like their mother, tender eyed, and are always ready to sell or kill Rachel's sons, and if they cannot do it any other way, they will start the report that they are in disorder, and are old two-seeders, although we are contending for the old Black Rock faith. My answer to these charges are that I am satisfied the doctrine is God's, and he will keep it, and them that believe it, and that my order is as good as the order of those that talk about myself and my brethren.

It is my desire in my little ministry to gather the children together, and not scatter, and if I find one casting out devils, preaching salvation in Jesus' name, whether he follows me or is with me or not, I want to do like the Master said, just let him alone; not go and spread an evil report about him, and put up bars of fellowship against him. We are told to judge not another man's servant, for to his own master he stands or falls. There are some preachers who remind me of Jehu, who said, "Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord." O, they are so fearful that the brethren will not see their zeal.

Dear brother, do as you please with this, if you think it had better go in the waste-basket, let it go.

Love to all. Farewell.

J. A. RUTLEDGE.

ITASCA, Texas, Dec. 7, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have had a desire to write a few lines for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but have had such a feeling of unfitness that I have put it off from time to time, but this morning I will try to write. I am feeling sad and lonely, and if I write anything that will prove to the comfort of any one of God's little children, it must be because the dear Lord

has so directed. I well know that in and of myself I can do nothing, but our God has all power in heaven and in earth, he can work and none can hinder, and so if it be his will to comfort any of his flock through my writing, they will be comforted, as truly as though the most able servant was writing. How wonderful are his works, and his ways past finding out. When I consider the majesty, honor and glory of the Most High, and my own sinfulness and nothingness, being no more than a grasshoppper, or as the small dust of the balance, and less than nothing, and vanity, I am humbled down in the dust, and am made to wonder why he should ever be mindful of me. Why was I not left behind, among the thousands of mankind who run the dangerous road, and die and never know his grace. What a wonder of wonders, that a poor, sinful wretch such as I, should be so wonderfully blessed as to have a name among them who are saved, though they are in this world a poor, despised people. How wonderful to be enabled to look to God as my all and in all, for I know that he is my all, and glory be to his holy name. Sometimes I feel that I want to shout forth his praises to the four winds of the heaven, and tell his children that salvation is of the Lord, and is sure, and that they should earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. We need not fear any of the fiery darts of the world, our God will never leave nor forsake us; his people are kept as the apple of his eye, and all things do work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. These words are of great comfort to me. Let come what will, all will work for good to them that love God. I have a little hope, that the world could not buy, that I do love God, and his people. If I do not love them, there is no love in my heart for anything. If my name is written in the Lamb's book of life, and if I am one who was chosen before the foundation of the world, then when the time comes for me to bid farewell to time and time things, all will be well with me, I shall meet the Lord in peace and hear him say, "Come ye blessed of my Father, enter into joys prepared for you." But if I am not one of that number, just is my condemnation. Sometimes, I feel that even if banishment is my doom, I shall still praise him, if I am so blessed as to be among that innumerable company who come up out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, it will not be for anything that I have done. In me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing. Not one of his will be left out: "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." All his then shall at the last, be forever with the Lord.

How blessed the season when believers all shall get home. Poor, weary pilgrims, who are scattered abroad in the world, may well put their trust in the Lord. He will give them strength to bear all their sufferings, trials and troubles. We need not think it strange that all these fiery trials come upon us, for when the blessed Lord was here on earth he went a mourner all his days, and he said, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."

In closing I will say, I know that I am nothing but a poor sinner, saved by grace and grace alone. Surely those who contend for a conditional time salvation, have not been made to feel their helplessness and nothingness as I have, or they would know that all their salvation is of the Lord, both in time and eternity. I ask

an interest in your prayers, that I may walk in that strait and narrow way, and ever be found looking to Christ, the author and finisher of my faith.

From an unworthy sister,

MARTELLE N. GRIFFIN.

LEOTA, Ind., Oct. 23, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I will cite a few passages of the Scripture which unquestionably teach the certain salvation of every believer. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."—Rom. viii. 28. This is a most glorious truth, and it ought to be believed by every lover of God. It means that one cannot get into a place so dark and low that these words cannot reach them and comfort them. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." The very ground upon which this is said by the apostle is that of the purpose of God. In verse thirty-one he says, "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" Who can overturn those whom the Lord is for? This whole chapter makes our salvation as certain as the power of God can make it. One thing is added to another, until it seems that none could deny the final perseverance of the saints.

In verses thirty-five and thirty-seven he says, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us." Notice, the list again; tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword; study what a vast field each one of these words includes, and then put them all together. How much room is there for apostacy? Then notice verses thirty-eight and thirty-nine: "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, not things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God." Now put these two verses together and we have, "tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword, death, life, angels, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height and depth." Now if there be anything not enumerated in all this, I cannot think what it may be. The words, "Things present, and things to come," as it appears to me, embrace all that is, and all that is to be, and if none or all these things can separate us from the love of God, I should think the case was made out.

But lest these things should not cover the whole ground, the apostle adds the words, "Nor any other creature." This covers all things, even the believer himself; for man is certainly a creature. But "The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."

Paul said, Rom. xiii. 1, 2, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation."

This doctrine, predestination or foreordination, is wonderfully abused by

the Arminian world. I will ask what is foreordination? It simply means to ordain, or prefix, or place before. There is nothing in the animal or vegetable kingdom that is not under the control of a fixed law, and everything produces or acts according to the requirements of that law. Therefore we are sure that the apple tree will always produce apples, and so with all things else after their several kinds. The chestnut tree always produces chestnuts, and never grapes. To predestinate, is to decide beforehand or before the action; I decided to send my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES before I did so, or acted it out. Now brethren editors of the SIGNS, I feel that I owe you an acknowledgment for my delay. I thought that you would stop sending it, but as you have not, and the year is drawing near to a close, I inclose the amount due.

Do with this as you think best. Remember me at the throne of grace.

THOMAS J. MOUNT.

AUGHRIM, Ontario, Jan. 24, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I have felt a desire to bear testimony to the worth of the SIGNS, but I have felt somewhat discouraged in doing so on account of the great multitude of witnesses that are bearing witness, and that are giving honor to whom honor is due, and I humbly hope that I have felt constrained to bless and praise God at every manifestation of love and heavenly wisdom, as declared in the SIGNS, and we are encouraged to believe that the publication of the SIGNS is well pleasing in the sight of God, and it brings those who are very far away from us in body, to be very near and dear to us in spirit; not because they are Old School Baptists, not because they contend for the doctrine of God, but because they are manifestly children of God, having been with Jesus, and learned of him. The above, if I am not greatly mistaken, is why I love the writers in the SIGNS, and desire its success and continuation, and that the dear editors may be blessed in their souls, and continue to drink deep of the cup of salvation, and bring forth things new and old, for the comfort and edification of their readers.

Another year has rolled into that eternal past, and with it how many dear ones have passed away, and it makes us feel sad and lonely. Elder W. L. Beebe was greatly beloved by many in this country, and they feel their loss to be great indeed. Also, we in Canada have had to mourn the loss of our late dear pastor, Elder William Pollard; he was an able minister of the New Testament, rightly dividing the word of truth. I have heard him preach very ably. While so many are passing away, I would ask those dear ones that remain, I will only mention a few of their names, to write often: Elders Bartley, Durand, Vail, Curry, and the dear editors of the SIGNS. I greatly enjoyed the experience of dear sister Ruth Keene, also of Elder Sawin's daughter.

I remain your brother in hope,

R. CASE.

LIGONIER, Ind., Jan. 21, 1902.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed find money order for two dollars to pay for year's subscription to the oldest and best Baptist periodical printed, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Address it to Lewis Smalley, Ligonier, Ind. I believe in the near future I can get you a few more subscribers; at least I shall make quite an effort to do so.

With unfeigned love, I am as ever, yours in hope,

ABRAM H. SMITH.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1902.

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EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MATTHEW XX. 16.

SISTER Elmer Pierson, of Bethayres, Pa., desires our views upon the Scripture found in Matthew, which reads as follows: "So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen." Some years since we gave through the SIGNS some thoughts concerning the same Scripture, and therefore we do nót desire now to write at length upon the matter, but as sister Pierson may not have access to what was then written, we will present now a few thoughts.

The key to the meaning of the Savior in these words, it seems to us, is found in the preceding chapter, and in the parable with which these words are connected. In the preceding chapter it is recorded that the young man who came to Jesus, and whom he loved, had gone away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. Jesus had then said, "How hardly shall they who have riches enter the kingdom of heaven?" Peter had then come and said, "Lord, we have left all and followed thee, what shall we have therefore?" In this he was contrasting himself with this young man: he has gone away, but we have stood the test, and followed thee; he was promised treasure in the kingdom of heaven, now what shall we have? Thus spoke the legal, fleshly mind of the disciple. To this the Lord replied that to those who had really left all and followed him, should be given an hundredfold more in this life, and they also should inherit everlasting life. But he adds to this, "Many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first." These words at the close of the preceding chapter contain a warning to Peter, and to all the disciples to beware of the spirit of legality and self, in what they do as his followers. Legal service, that is, service rendered in a legal spirit, cannot be accepted in his kingdom. A little done in the eyes of men, and according to their judgment, weighs much, if the spirit be that of free willing gospel service, while much done with the thought of reward, or upon selfish, legal grounds, counts as nothing in the judgment of the kingdom of God. Many who have been prominent in the church, are least and last in the eyes of the King who judges righteously, and in the hearts of the truly humble and spiritual, while many who have had no opportunity to labor or follow in any prominent manner, or for any length of time, are, because of the spirit of true gospel love and willingness which dwells within them, counted very high in the judgment of God, and in the heart's affections of his people who are truly spiritual. The first is last and the last first, in the above sense.

The parable of the laborers in the vineyard, which follows, is but a setting forth of the same truth of the difference between gospel service and legal service. It all applies to and is a word of warning to God's own children. It was addressed to Peter and the disciples first, and then to all his servants in every age. There were but two kinds of service then, and

there are but the same two kinds now. The disciples of Jesus then were actuated much by the old leaven of legality, and the same is true to-day. Peter wanted a reward for his service then, and many of the disciples of the Master want the same to-day. This is not to really serve God at all, but self instead. He who seeks his own glory and a reward for himself, is not seeking the glory of God. Carnal religionists openly teach that all is for self, that men ought not to be expected to serve God for naught. But the people of God, the subjects of his rich and reigning grace, have a higher motive, and when they seek their own advantage as the motive of their service, they have descended to the weak and beggarly elements of this world, and are in bondage again. Jesus in this warning to Peter, and in this parable, warns his disciples against this spirit of Judaizing service. Paul, in Galatians, does the same thing.

In the parable, they who went into the vineyard at the first hour said, as did Peter, What shall we have therefore? Those who went into the vineyard afterwards, made no such bargain, asked no such question; their reward was the reward of grace, while the others had the reward of legal service. All were alike the servants or employees of the master of the vineyard, but how different the spirit of the service, and at the end this difference is seen still more plainly. To the last he gave a penny. They had more than they could have expected, more than they had deserved or earned; they knew that this was so, they could but praise the grace of the master of the vineyard. The first received no more than the penny. They expected to receive more, as the last had received the penny also. But they had made a bargain, they had said at the beginning, What shall we have? This was all that they would receive. Legal service does receive its reward, but there is no grace or love in it, there is no sense of the goodness of God in it, but the last are more wonderfully blessed, and they must say, How good and merciful is our God; what we have done does not deserve what is now given us. What they receive is a token of the love and good will of the blessed Lord, and to their souls the love of God and his mercy to them is more than all things else.

Now at the close of the parable the same words are again used, "Many that are first shall be last; and the last first." To our mind this proves beyond question that the parable is, in the thought of the Savior, connected with the narrative of the young man, and the question of Peter, What shall we have therefore? The Lord would say, (to pharaphrase his language) Peter, you have indeed been first in point of time, and in point of burden-bearing and labor in my service, but nevertheless this spirit of legality in your service spoils it, and puts you last and least really in my kingdom. On the other hand, he who may come in at the very last, and have no opportunity to labor more than one hour of the time, and that in the cool of the day, who yet comes in with the spirit of loving and willing service, by reason of this spirit in him, is counted first in my kingdom.

The words, "For many are called, but few are chosen," do not relate to what we call effectual calling, or to the doctrine of the eternal election of the people of God, at all. As regards these things, all who are called are also chosen, and all who are chosen are also called; one is as broad as the other. We have long thought that the words relate to the very things of which the parable treats, and

which were presented in the close of the preceding chapter. The disciples were called to the free, willing, non-legal service of the gospel, all of them. This is in the call itself, but how many manifest the spirit of legality in their service, how few come to fully realize their liberty in Christ. The Galatian brethren failed in this respect, and Paul to the Galatians said, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." That is, until you come into a full understanding of your liberty in Christ, and until your service be not slavish, but that of sons of God. Among our own selves, how much of our time are we asking, What shall we have for what we do? How hard it is to get away from legalism. In this sense how few stand among the chosen ones. Many went into the vineyard, but how few labored there upon terms of grace. How many labored there upon the ground of hire or reward of debt, in which there was no grace. God's people are all called to the liberty of the gospel, but how much the flesh hinders. Is not this the sin which doth so easily beset us? We leave these thoughts with our sister, and all our readers. C.

2 CORINTHIANS XI. 7-9.

BROTHER C. M. Bruce, of Pawnee Rock, Kan., desires our views on the following Scripture: "Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely? I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service. And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me, the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself."

First. We will say, Paul had preached the gospel at Corinth first of any, and the church there was established under his ministry, afterward, when he had departed from them, preaching the gospel in other regions, he heard of many things amiss among them. Among other things, he learned that some men who professed also to be teachers of the gospel, had come among them, and had perverted the minds of the church, or some of them, away from him. Paul was not jealous for himself, but for the truth, and for them, that they might not be led away from it, and so he wrote to them two epistles, in which he rebuked, exhorted, and warned them against that which was contrary to the gospel, and against those who had perverted their minds.

Second. In this chapter he contrasts himself with these false teachers, and calls to the minds of his brethren, his sufferings in the service of the Master. He also speaks of his self denials among them. So jealous had he been for the good of the cause, that he desired to take away all room for even the appearance of selfishness in his ministry, and so had not made himself chargeable to them for a temporal support, as he had a perfect right to do, according to the law of God, and according to that which even men judge to be equitable. Therefore he had labored among them freely, receiving the things which he lacked, from the brethren in Macedonia. Now, in verse seven, he asks, Have I committed an offence against you in so doing? It might well be thought so, by some of them. If any among them had the truth in their hearts, and love to God and to his servants reigned there, they would feel as though he had deprived them of a great privilege, in that he had received what he lacked

from others. They might well be offended that he had not shown more confidence in them. But he explains that he had done what he had because of his desire that none among them should have room to say that he desired to make merchandise of them. Paul plainly teaches that he had a right to a support from them, but that in this case he had waived this right, and had become chargeable to the brethren in Macedonia.

According to the judgment of men, he had abased himself through preaching the gospel to them freely, but it was that they might be exalted. That is, that they might receive the word at his hands, and come to an understanding of it, which they might not do if they suspected that he was preaching for gain, and not simply for the glory of God. Was this an offence to them? In the thirteenth verse of the next chapter, Paul tells them that they were inferior to no other churches, except in this, that he had not made himself chargeable to them, and then he says, Forgive me this wrong. Thus he counted it a wrong that he had not given to them the privilege of caring for him in temporal things, while he had ministered to them in spiritual things. Yet he excuses this apparent want of confidence in them, by showing that he desired to take away all occasion from enemies of the gospel, by so doing. It was his right to be supported, and it was his right to expect that they would willingly do this, but Paul in verse eight says that he had robbed other churches, taking wages of them to do the church at Corinth service. That is, other churches had done what they were not under any obligation to do, in order to enable Paul to labor among the church at Corinth, and yet not be chargeable to them. They freely bestowed this help upon Paul, but yet after all, it was but relieving the church at Corinth, from their duty, and from what ought to have been a privilege to them. Then he says that no man should stop him from this boasting in all Achaia. He does not use the word boasting here in any offensive sense. He did what he did, not for his own exaltation, but for the glory of God, and the good of the churches, yet if any were spiritual among that church, they would feel very keenly the statement that he had been supported by others, while devoting himself to them. It seems to us that the brethren at Corinth, as they read these words, must have felt a great spirit of admiration for the unselfishness of Paul in preaching the gospel freely among them, and must have felt to praise that grace which thus appeared in him, while at the same time they must have had a feeling of deep sorrow that they had not themselves ministered to him as his needs required, while he was laboring among them.

Paul expressly teaches in all this connection, and in other places also, that those who labor in word and doctrine among the churches, have a right to support from those among whom they labor, but that they may waive that right also, for the good of the cause, and the glory of God. Yet he regarded it as being in some sense a wrong against that church, and felt to beseech them to forgive the wrong.

C.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MARK XVI. 17, 18.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Will you give your views on the last words which our Savior spake before his ascension, namely: "And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

F. BRENDELL.

HAMILTON CO., Iowa, March 10, 1859.

REPLY.

In the early ministry of the apostles of the Lamb, and of the primitive disciples of our risen Lord, all these signs did literally follow them that believed, for it is added in the closing verse of the same chapter, "And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen." Many instances are recorded of miracles performed by them in the name of the Lord Jesus, such as healing the sick, casting out devils; and we have an instance of the deadly viper which lit on Paul's hand, and which he shook off into the fire, to the utter astonishment of the heathen with whom his lot was providentially cast, and all these signs were performed in confirmation of the word of the Lord. To prove by ocular demonstration the reality of the exaltation of the Son of God, and his divine omnipotence, external evidence was thus given, and such as confounded and stopped the mouths of infidel philosophers, but having thus by the most supernatural testimonies established the certainty of the resurrection and exaltation of our Divine Redeemer, ocular demonstrations were to cease, and the saints in all subsequent ages were to live by faith upon the Son of God, and not to walk by sight. If these ocular demonstrations were to be continued, the natural judgments of men might be convinced without any radical change of heart, as many were in those days of miracles. But our knowledge of God, of spiritual and divine things, is not by informing or convincing our natural or carnal minds through the natural senses of seeing, hearing, feeling, &c., but by special revelation of the Spirit to the faith of the children of God. The carnal Jews, whose religion was the service of a worldly sanctuary, and whose ordinances were carnal, relied on signs, desired signs, required signs, and the learned Greeks who sought after wisdom, were in their carnal state, incapable of appreciating any other evidence, for except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit. But the children of God shall all be taught by the Lord. The Spirit, the Holy Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth, is the teacher of the saints. He, said Jesus, shall take of the things of mine, and shall shew them unto you. They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them even unto the greatest, saith the Lord.

Miraculous displays of the divine power are not now made to the natural understanding of natural men, as in the apostles' day; but we do not hold that the day of miracles is passed. The work of salvation by grace is as miraculous now as it ever was. The work is superhuman, supernatural, and in it the naked arm of God is as visible to the faith of God's children at one time as another. The ministry of the gospel, in a spiritual sense, is as healing to the sick, and quickening to the dead now, as formerly. Not that preaching in itself ever quickened or

healed any one, but these signs follow all those whom God has quickened by his Spirit. It is the power and wisdom of God. In his name devils are now displaced, cast out, and believers in Christ are secured from the rage of wicked men and devils. The old serpent, and all his brood of vipers, are in this day, in a spiritual sense, trodden upon by the saints, and all their venom is rendered harmless to God's people by and through the matchless name of our ascended Lord.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 15, 1859.

PERSONAL.

CHILDS, Md., Feb. 20, 1902.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—Will you please insert the following in your valued paper?

To the many friends of Elder E. Rittenhouse:—Our father does not improve in health or strength, and we do not expect him to last long. It can hardly be a question of more than months at best. His chief enjoyment now that he is bedfast and helpless lies in the letters he receives from those he holds dear in memory, and we especially request that those to whom his ministrations have been a precious memory would keep him in mind during the time of his affliction, and write to him from time to time. He is unable to read or write for himself, but the reading of his correspondence to him affords him much comfort.

E. B. RITTENHOUSE.

VIEWS WANTED.

WILL Elder Durand or any brother who may have light on the subject, give their views on what is commonly called the millennium and judgment? (Rev. xx.) and oblige this unworthy brother,

GARRETT MURPHY.

GARDEN CITY, Minn., Feb. 15, 1902.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$555 55
John E. Heartt, N. Y., $2.00; Mrs. Edward Griffin, N. Y., $3.00.—Total	5 00
Total to date	$560 55

MARRIAGES.

By Elder M. L. Jackson, at the home of the brother of the bride, near Rudd, Iowa, Nov. 18th, 1901, L. B. Grundy and Miss Myrtie Allen, both of Floyd Co., Iowa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **Harriet Thorn Green** departed this life on Jan. 1st, 1902, at the residence of her son-in-law, Albert Manning, near Guymard, Orange Co., N. Y., aged 72 years and 8 months. She was one of ten children of Thomas and Hannah Bennett Thorn, who lived near Slate Hill, where she was born, reared and married, in April, 1848, to Osmer B. Green, of Otisville, N. Y., who died April 29th, 1890. On July 6th, 1901, she, in company with the writer of this notice, had attended the church meeting at New Vernon, and in stepping from the carriage her gown caught on the step. The horse starting suddenly threw her violently to the ground, badly fracturing her hip. She never recovered her strength, but was able to walk about the house with the aid of crutches. About three weeks previous to her death she was attacked with jaundice. She was considered critically ill only twenty-four hours, and though everything that skill and loving hands could do was done, she passed peacefully away at 1:30 a. m. New Year's day. There was scarcely a day during all those months of suffering that I did not converse with her, and I never heard her utter a murmuring word. She was always cheerful, patient and resigned. She was one of the most unselfish, self-sacrificing person I ever knew. Being blessed with an amiable and quiet disposition, none knew her but to love her. She was a devoted wife, a kind and loving mother, and a true friend. Her memory must ever be precious to her children, her friends, and to the church. She was a faithful member of the New Vernon Church, and was baptized by Elder Benton Jenkins, June 14th, 1885. She was indeed a meek and lowly follower of Christ. We shall all miss her, but none can miss her as her daughter, with whom she lived during the last few years of her life. She was her constant companion, and cared for her with untiring devotion as long as she lived. Three children preceded her to the grave, two sons and one daughter. She is survived by two daughters: Augusta, wife of Theodore Writer, of

Otisville, and Hattie, wife of Albert Manning; five grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, one sister and two brothers.

The funeral services were conducted at her home, by her pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, who used for a text Romans viii. 38, 39. After which her mortal remains were laid away in the cemetery at New Vernon, by the side of her husband.

ALSO,

DIED—At his residence in Middletown, N. Y., my brother-in-law, **Stephen W. Robertson**, aged 46 years and 2 months. He was a son of William and Martha Mulford Robertson, both deceased. His only brother died two years ago. He was born near South Centreville, N. Y., and married to Abbie E. Rundle, Jan. 23d, 1883, and moved to Middletown the following April, where he has since resided. He had been in poor health for some years, never having fully recovered from a severe attack of typhoid fever in 1890. July 26th, 1901, he was prostrated with remittent fever, which left his condition crippled both mentally and physically. He was a tender and devoted husband, a faithful friend. Not only was he a friend to the poor, but was ever ready to lend a helping hand to any one in trouble. He was blessed with a remarkably even temperament. In an intimate acquaintance of twenty years, I never saw the least change in him, having always a pleasant word for everybody. He never made a profession of religion, but he was a firm advocate of the doctrine of predestination, and salvation by grace. His house was a home for the Old Baptists, and he was never happier than when he was entertaining his friends. No better, kinder, more hospitable man ever lived. He leaves a heart-broken wife and a host of friends to mourn their loss, but I feel we have abundant evidence that our loss is his gain.

His funeral services were conducted at his residence, by Elder H. C. Ker, who spoke greatly to our comfort, using as a text, Job vii. 1: "Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? are not his days also like the days of an hireling?" After which his remains were laid away in the cemetery at New Vernon.

CAROLINE MANNING.

DIED—At our home near Forsyth, Monroe Co., Ga., our youngest son, **Ernest Lee McCowen**, Jan. 27th, 1902. He was born Sept. 10th, 1877, being 24 years, 4 months and 17 days of age at the time of his death. He was married to Miss Woody Bell Rumble, December 26th, brought her home the next morning, and was taken suddenly and very severe with that dreadful disease, appendicitis, from which he had to take his bed, and was never able to be up any more. All that the physicians and kind friends could do for him seemed to do him but little good, only when under the influence of opiates. He bore his sickness with great fortitude until Monday morning, Jan. 27th, about 8 o'clock, he breathed his last. It was sad indeed to see his dear wife, who was so kind and attentive to him during his sickness, left so soon after marriage in this bereaved condition, having to give him up. Our poor hearts are bleeding, as it were, with sorrow and grief at the loss of one so dear and so much loved by us; we feel that his place will never be filled. Ernest was a good boy, and our mainstay and protector in our declining years. He was our youngest son, and youngest child of eight. He was not a member of any church, but was a good moral boy, and respected the worship of God at all times. He was energetic, sociable and pleasant, and made many friends. Hence his future prospects were bright, all of which go to make our grief and sorrow more heavy. But the Lord gives, and he takes away, and though it seems almost more than we can bear, yet we try to be reconciled to his holy will, believing that he always does right, and never makes a mistake. The Scriptures teach us that these light afflictions work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. It was through suffering that the blessed Savior learned obedience, therefore we have hope that our dear son is taken from a world of trials and afflictions, to one of rest and happiness, where there will be no sorrow, and parting will be no more.

After a short service the body was laid to rest in the family cemetery, in the presence of a large congregation of relatives and sympathizing friends, there to await the resurrection morn. May the Lord give us supporting grace, that we may bear our trials with patience and hope, and prepare each of us to meet the loved ones that have gone before, in his upper and better kingdom, there to unite with them in singing praises to his great name for ever and ever.

D. G. McCOWEN.

FORSYTH, Ga.

Mrs. Tabith Caroline Casey was born in Kentucky, March 22d, 1833, and died Feb. 3d, 1902, aged 68 years, 10 months and 12 days. She was the daughter of Sebear and Catharine Beard. I became acquainted with her in 1868, and we were married on the 9th day of September, 1869, and we lived a happy life together for more than thirty-two years. A more patient, loving and faithful companion no man ever had. We only had one child, she died at the age of twenty-one years, leaving her husband and two little girls, one not quite one year old. I now have the two girls as the only family left me in my lonely condition. On the one hand it is so dark, so lonely, so gloomy, to be bereft of so loving a companion, and on the other so glorious, so consoling, so comforting to know that my great loss is her glorious and eternal gain. She was not a member of the church, never feeling worthy to so much as claim a hope in a precious Savior, until on Sunday night, before she died Monday eve at twelve

minutes after 2 o'clock: at about 9 o'clock she began to talk, and then broke out in sweet heavenly strains. She spoke of my mother and said, "Mamma will be so glad to hear of my being so happy in death; she wanted me to tell her of my hope a long time ago, but I could not then, but if I could see her now I could." She kept saying, "Bless his holy name," called our two little granddaughters to her and told them to be good children; be good to your grandpa, and said to us, "Do not grieve for me, for I am prepared to die. O, I am so happy." She took me by the hand and said, "Farewell, farewell," I said, "We have the grace of God to fare well upon." She said, "Yes, we have." She was the happiest person in death I ever saw. We took her to the meeting-house at Enon, two miles south of Lead Hill, where brother Elder W. E. Brumbelaw made a short but comforting talk, and sung a song she sung in death; we then laid her beside her father, mother, sister and daughter, there to await the sound of the trumpet, when she with all the blood-washed throng of saints will come forth in the likeness of our precious Savior. I desire the prayers of all who read the SIGNS, in my lonely condition, and trust that the God of all comfort will be with me, and enable me to still go forth to proclaim the gospel of Christ, to preach Jesus the way, the truth, the life and the resurrection.

Your brother in gospel bonds,

WM. J. CASEY.

IT becomes my painful duty to record again the death of one of our New Valley members. Brother **C. A. Cannon** was born April 24th, 1839, died Jan. 14th, 1902. He leaves a wife and eight children to mourn his death, together with a large number of friends. Brother Cannon was eminently a man of affairs, and left quite a large estate to testify to his business ability and habits. He was a noble husband and father, a kind, loving, open-hearted brother. He was much respected by all who knew him, and beloved by the church. Out of the deep of the wells of his own trials and afflictions, he drank of the waters of mercy, charity and forbearance. We shall greatly miss brother Cannon from our meetings, but hope he is at home with the Head of the family. The writer baptized him, and also officiated at his funeral. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to his bereaved family.

Your brother I hope,

E. V. WHITE.

MY dear husband, **Elias H. Allen,** departed this life Feb. 6th, 1902, aged 74 years; was buried on the following Monday. Elder Durand preached the funeral sermon, and spoke very comforting words. My husband did not belong to any church, but we believe he is at rest. He told me in his last sickness, he was resigned to the will of God.

Your unworthy sister,

SARAH A. ALLEN.

Mrs. Harriet Heartt departed this life Jan. 25th, 1902, in the 76th year of her age. She was born in Warwick, N. Y., but for many years has been a resident of New York city, where her decease occurred suddenly and unexpectedly. Both in Warwick and in this city she leaves a large circle of relatives and friends to mourn their loss. She was a lovely character, and was beloved by all who knew her. Gentleness, meekness, humility and love for the Old School Baptists was conspicuous in her life and deportment. Though she never united with the church, a feeling sense of unfitness seeming to restrain her, she possessed the fellowship of all the church, and was an example to us of every virtue we covet. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and deemed it her highest privilege to meet with lovers of this doctrine upon all occasions. For over forty years her seat was seldom vacant in the Ebenezer Church, and then only through unavoidable hindrance. She will be sadly missed by us all.

Funeral services were held at her late residence, this city, on Monday evening, Jan. 27th, and on Tuesday at the residence of Mrs. A. H. Drew, her niece, in Warwick. The writer and Elder H. C. Ker spoke at these services respectively.

JOHN McCONNELL.

W. T. Blunt departed this life Feb. 5th, 1902. The subject of this notice was born August 28th, 1829, in Muskingdom Co., Ohio, and lacked a few days of being 73 years old. He was married to Sarah Cordray, Feb. 13th, 1851. To this union were born seven children, five sons and two daughters. In 1852 he moved with his family to this State, located near West Union, lived there about twenty years, then moved to Floyd County, and settled two miles south of Rudd, Iowa, where he had his home until death. He leaves a wife, four sons and two daughters to mourn their loss, besides a host of neighbors and friends.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer.

M. L. JACKSON.

POETRY.

GOD SENT HIS SON.

GOD sent his Son, and has redeemed
His holy bride, for good it seemed;
To purge her and to make her free,
He shed his blood on Calvary.

So out of bondage he did take
His holy wife for his name's sake;
Presents her life before the throne,
As pure and spotless as his own.

While mortal, she in sin remains,
But his pure blood has cleansed her stains;
Though tempted, tried and ever tossed,
His precious blood has paid the cost.

O why does she in sin remain?
All for the glory of his name.
It was to show the heavenly throng
That they are weak, but he is strong.

Also to show the rebel race
That they cannot his power efface;
For he who doeth all things well
Hath power o'er heaven, and earth, and hell.

Then who can stay his mighty hand,
Who holdeth all at his command?
The frail and puny arm of man
Shall never overthrow his plan.

His plan is sure, his work complete,
To bring the children to his feet;
To sing high praises to his name,
To all eternity the same.

MRS. PETER ALLISON.

MUIRKIRK, Ontario.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 70. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1902. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GREAT IS THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS.

My mind has been considerably exercised upon these words of late, and some little time since I wrote a few pages upon this subject, when suddenly all impression to write left me, and I threw it aside feeling that my impressions had been of the flesh, else they would have remained with me. Now again they have come to me, and again I seem much impressed to write some thoughts upon the same subject, which after all, may go the same way as have many other things which I have written to relieve my mind.

The apostle in writing to Timothy says, "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness." Now there is but one character to whom this will apply. To the professedly religious world there is no mystery of godliness, for they can have just as much religion as they work for, and to them, it is like any other science of which a knowledge can be attained to by a course of study, or by strict application to a course of good works, or by pursuing a moral and charitable life, and by giving up their hearts to God. Now there is no mystery connected with such a system of godliness as this, for the subject of it knows all about his religion, and knows why he is religious, and why, as he thinks, he serves God; but after all, such are only serving self. So these are not the characters to whom godliness is a mystery, and are not those to whom the apostle referred in the text.

I want to try to give some of the characteristics of this mysterious people who are not only a mystery to themselves, but also to the professedly religious world. I will try to tell these characteristics from an experience in them, and will begin at the first evidence of this mysterious work being begun in the heart of the individual.

The first evidence is that such an one feels that he is a sinner. How do they find out that they are sinners? Here commences the mystery. Some unseen power has been at work in a mysterious manner, and the soul begins to feel that there is something wrong with him, and he begins to tremble and fear before God. This poor soul has no idea as to what has caused the trouble, but he knows that sin dwells in him, and he is made to feel the truth of the words, "The soul that sin-

neth, it shall die." The first thing then that he thinks of is, I must try to mend my ways, and live better, and act better. He may or he may not succeed outwardly, but in neither case does he find help in this way. There is an eating sore at his heart, and he is made to realize that no outward application of good works can cure him, and thus the mystery deepens, and the poor soul knows not what to do, or where to go, for relief. But this mysterious power drives him at last to God for mercy, and though it may be that he cannot see how God can have mercy upon such a vile sinner as he, yet cry to him he must, and though shut up into blackness and darkness, and what seems to him like a state of despair, still he feels the cry in his heart, though it may not be uttered in words, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and all the powers of hell combined could not stop that cry; God is being manifest in his flesh, though the poor soul cannot see anything but sin manifest in him. Here is a deepening of the mystery, for he has tried to do better, walk more carefully, and perhaps has left off some outward sins, and yet instead of becoming better, he is growing worse, and worse, without any hope of ever being any better.

I wish that some of our conditional time salvation brethren would turn and look back to their own experience, and ask why it was that after God had convicted them of sin, and had manifested in them eternal life, they should have been led for months, and in some cases even years, in darkness and in sorrow, and were not able to see salvation in Christ, while yet crying all the time to God for mercy. Brethren think of these things carefully. But I will proceed with the history of the mystery in the soul of the condemned sinner. After a time there is a mysterious entrance into the soul of that sinner of some promise, or it may be a light and sweetness, without any words, came, and the mystery is, where did it come from? It may have been in the secret grove, or on the couch wrapped in slumber, or at the daily labor, no matter where, it is still a mystery, wherever or whenever it comes, and that soul to whom it comes immediately sings praises to God for his mercy. How does the recipient know that it is from God? Because God mysteriously communicates this knowledge to the soul. This is the secret of the Lord which is with them that fear him.

It may be that the poor soul will now go on his way rejoicing for some time, yet this was not the case with the unworthy writer, for with him it was just a flash of light for a moment, and then again the blackness of darkness, and this went on for months and months, as if the contending forces of light and darkness were contending for the mastery in my tempest-tossed soul. But to follow up the mystery in the experience of the soul: such an one now rejoices, and hopes that his trials and conflicts are passed, and that all will now be peace. Perhaps in the first love God leads them to seek companionship and fellowship in the church of God. Well, what mysterious power has led them there, for they feel all unworthy of a place among God's people, or in his house; they feel that the people of God are far better than they, and above them, but this mysterious power drives them, no not drives, but compels them, to ask a home among the people of God, whom they have been compelled to love. None but God can compel one to love what he did not love before. No other power in earth or hell can compel one to love another, although their power might compel one to *say* that he loved, what after

all, he did not love. What a wonderful mystery, known only to God.

But let us return to the humble one who has been brought to the church of God. It is now a mystery to such an one why he was received with such love and fellowship, for he feels totally unworthy of it, and this brings up another phase of the mystery, which is, if one thus coming to the church expresses the least feeling of worthiness in himself, at once fellowship flees away, and doubts and fears will arise in those who hear, as to whether this soul has after all, known what a work of grace is. For grace, and the love of God, never puffs one up, but always humbles the individual under a sense of unfitness, and the more grace and mercy is shown, the more humility and meekness is manifested, and the more one is led into a knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of God, the smaller and less they grow in their own estimation and esteem, and also the less they will feel to know of the mysteries of grace, and of the boundless ocean of the love of God, which is everlasting and reaches from eternity to eternity, and to that one the most wonderful mystery is that grace should ever have reached to such a vile and worthless one as himself. For myself, I often feel that it will never cease to be a great mystery, even in the ages to come, that I, a poor, worthless one, should ever have a place in the love of God, who is holy, and in the love of a spotless Jesus; this truly is to me a most wonderful mystery. Right on this line, it is a wonderful mystery that it should be given to me to love so holy a God, or his people. How can a vile sinner love those that seem so much better and lovelier than himself, and how can sin love holiness? It does not, it cannot, but in the secret chambers of the soul there has been implanted a germ of life which may be like a mustard seed, as far as observation goes, but which still is a principle which sends out its tender, yet firm strong branches, and it becomes a tree of life, which is manifested as the result of the small germ of life. So in the soul of one who has any love to God, or his people, there is that germ of life, which will also become a tree of life, and if not openly manifested in time, yet it will blossom and bloom while eternal ages roll.

What a mystery a child of God is to himself, all his life long, and how deep and mysterious are God's dealings with him; he prays to be kept humble, and perhaps God humbles him in an unexpected manner, and then he begs for deliverance; he prays that God may grant him trust and confidence in God, and in reply the Lord takes away all his fleshly religion, and fleshly confidence, and he is in despair, unless the Lord holds him up; he prays that God will not allow him to set his affections upon the vanities of time, and in reply his substance is taken from him, and then like Job, he may be tempted to curse God and die, or feel that God is dealing hardly with him. But at such times, if the Lord says peace, all is calm within, though the tempest may be still raging without, as before. This is a mystery we cannot understand, although we feel its sweet influence. We do not see where this peace came from. Is it because we have been obedient, or have done good works? This will not fit my case, I know. If our true peace and happiness are the result of our obedience, or our good works, then godliness in this respect ceases to be a mystery, for then we could understand just how to produce it, and just what produces it, and it can all be figured out as a scientific problem, and in the future we need not any more to be

troubled with darkness, doubts and fears, for we have the remedy in our own hands and hearts. Is not this just what is claimed for "Conditional Time Salvation?" My conditional brethren, is this truly your experience? If so, then I am entirely different from you, for to me it is a mystery every day of my life, how I am kept from falling into the power of the enemies of my soul, and so often I am so hemmed in on every side, that escape seems impossible. God only knows the terrible foes which I have to encounter, their name is legion, and if I were to begin to repeat them, it seems to me I would never more face a respectable person, to say nothing of the dear children of God. But then in some unexpected moment, every foe disappears, and it is truly a deep mystery whither they have fled. Then peace that the world knows nothing of, comes to my poor soul, and my tried heart, and there is a mysterious calm. Now, brethren, how do I feel, or what do I say at such a time? Do I say, Lord I have been obedient, and have done good works, and now thou hast rewarded me for them, and I am glad? Dear brethren, how would such language sound in the ears of a poor, humble child of God? O, it would most certainly be a stench in their nostrils, and also in the presence of a holy God, and yet it must certainly be the right language to use if the sentiment of Conditional Time Salvation be true. Now let us hear what the poor sinner really does feel and say at such times. "O God, I thank and praise thy holy and blessed name that thou hast been merciful to me, and hast not dealt with me, or rewarded me according as I have deserved, for though I have walked contrary to thy precepts, and have been a wicked and disobedient and rebellious child, yet thou hast extended thy mercy even unto me; O, praise the Lord for his mercy to poor, guilty, hell-deserving me. O, it is a most wonderful mercy that I am permitted to call upon and praise thy great and holy name," and mystery of mysteries, how I am kept from day to day from sinning to my own destruction, when it seems at times as if every fibre of my being was permeated with all manner of sin, and weakness, and wickedness, and that it would require but a spark from hell to set me in the flames of destruction; then again to think that in a moment of time there is not a sinful thought or propensity to be found. What a wonderful mystery it all is.

It is not the outward sins (though I have them to my sorrow also) that cause me the most worry and annoyance, as well as humiliation, but it is that mysterious inward fountain of evil which is continually casting up mire and dirt, that causes me the most trouble, and until my conditional time salvation friends can dam up the source of that fountain, and shut up the flood gates of evil that flows through my heart, their remedy is, to me, of no avail. I hope that I know and have felt the power of that mysterious principle which can in a moment still the wildest tempest that ever raged in my soul, and can calm the swelling waves of that great deep of iniquity which some, and I believe many of the people of God have never been so fully led into, for not all the people of God are led in the same way, or into the same experience, at least so deeply of trial and sorrow, nor into the depths of Satan so far as are others of them.

But I must stop, though volumes could be written upon this wonderful mystery, and the subject then be but begun. But O, we hope for that bright beyond, where sin and sorrow are banished for ever, and

then the great mystery of godliness will be unfolded and displayed in all the glory of its infinite author.

Dear brethren, I tell you that then there will not one word about rewards that we have deserved, or that we have earned any blessing in that glorious abode, fall from our lips, but the song will be, "Thou art worthy," and "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy great name be all the glory, and not to me." And so I will cease from writing upon this great mystery, although it seems as though I have hardly hinted at the theme. I have scarcely touched upon the shore of the boundless ocean of love and grace that encompasses the mystery of godliness. The more I contemplate the subject, the greater the mystery seems, and the more wonderful the love of God in connection with it. If any read this, I hope they may be blessed with that mysterious blessing of eternal life which no finite mind can fathom, but which mystery shall endure through eternal ages.

From A POOR SINNER.

[BECAUSE the above letter has been full of marrow and fatness to us, we desire to commend it to the poor of the flock, and to those who cannot do the good that they would. The whole burden of the song of the redeemed, both here and to all eternity, must ever be, "Not unto us, not unto us, but to thy great name be all the glory." How clearly the writer of the above has in the words of his letter joined in this refrain.—ED.]

LIBERTY, Ind., Feb. 16, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have had an impression for some time to write some thoughts for the readers of the SIGNS concerning the word "condition," as used in Baptist papers of late. A few days ago my inclination was increased by receiving a letter requesting my views on the subject, therefore I have determined to write subject to your approval. I desire to write in a spirit of love, for I am sure that good and well meaning brethren differ on this subject.

We will first notice the meaning of the word "condition" as it relates to the controversy. Webster defines it thus: "That which must exist as the occasion or concomitant of something else; that which is requisite in order that something else shall take effect; stipulation; terms specified. Example: Many are apt to believe remission of sins, but they believe it without the condition of repentance."

The above definition is so vague that it requires Webster to define it that we may know what he means. His example is clear in meaning, but it is well to notice here that but few, if any, scholars of reputation any longer recognize Webster as authority. I will therefore quote from the Standard Dictionary, which is rapidly taking the place of Webster's.

"Condition (4): "An event, object, fact or being that is necessary to the occurrence or existence of some other, though not the cause. (5) Something stipulated as prerequisite to a promise, or to its fulfillment."

From the above definitions we conclude that the word "condition" implies first, a promise or contract; second, a person who has power and authority to contract and make promises; third, a person on whom the favor or reward is to be bestowed for the performance of certain stipulations called *conditions*.

In the example given by Webster, God is supposed to be the person having power to forgive sins; the sinner is the one on whom the favor of pardon is to be

bestowed, and repentance is the condition of pardon.

If the above is not the true meaning of the word, then the Arminians will have to coin a new word as an exponent of their belief.

There is another self-evident truth concerning conditionalism, that is, the one performing a condition finds no reward in the condition. He is looking beyond the condition to the thing promised for his reward. For example, the man who plows the field for wages does not find his reward *in* his labor, but for it. Plowing is not pleasant to him, for if he found his reward in plowing, there would be no need to reward him afterward for it. His dislike to labor makes it necessary to hire him. We do not hire men to do that which they are willing to do for the love of the doing.

I once asked an Arminian, "How many people would worship God if they could be made to believe that they would not be brought into judgment with him?" He said, "No one, I reckon." The question and answer is in point here: men in nature take no pleasure in worship except as they expect to be paid for it. It seems to me that this is a serious objection to the use of the word "conditional" as an exponent of Baptist doctrine. How is it in your experience; is your obedience to God performed with the same motive that prompts the hired laborer? or can you sing with the Spirit,

"How charming is the place
Where my Redeemer God,
Unveils the beauties of his face,
And sheds his love abroad.

Not the fair palaces
To which the great resort,
Are once to be compared with this,
Where Jesus holds his court."

If this hymn expresses your mind your service is not a condition, but a cause. Your reward is *in* the service, not *for* it.

Conditions abound in the old covenant or legal dispensation. Then some may say, "Has God changed that he does not require the performance of conditions now? Certainly not. That covenant served the purpose God designed it should. It was a "show," "our schoolmaster." It was God's way of teaching the insufficiency of conditionalism. It never was God's plan of blessing humanity, or it would have continued and succeeded. God has never depended on the will of man for the execution of his purposes.

But let us examine some Scripture on this subject. "If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees and field shall yield their fruits."—Lev. xxvi. 3, 4. In this text we have all the elements of a condition. First, a promise of rain; second, God who promises has right and power to execute; third, the Israelites are the people who are to be rewarded, or rather to escape punishment by obedience; fourth, keeping the commandments is the condition.

There are hundreds of such texts in Moses' law, and the analysis of one will answer for all, and if there are a similar class of texts concerning the government of the saints in Christ's militant kingdom, then conditional time salvation will be proven. But the old covenant was "found faulty," in that it could not "make the comers thereunto perfect." "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel,

and with the house of Juda: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people."—Heb. viii. 7–10.

The above Scripture clearly presents the fact that the failure of the Israelites to perform certain conditions, was the reason for all their misery, therefore a covenant is made with God's people, from which those conditions are omitted. In the old covenant it was, "I will if you will," but in the new covenant it is, "I will and you shall." "For all the promises in him [Christ] are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God by us."—2 Cor. i. 20. No other nation ever suffered such terrible punishment for sin as did the one nation whose time salvation was made to depend on conditions to be performed by them; and their punishment still continues, for they are still a hiss and a byword among the nations, and this great lesson should teach us that our case would be like theirs, if we were under a conditional government.

Let us now examine some texts that are thought by some to teach conditional time salvation. I suppose there is not a text in the New Testament that comes nearer imposing a condition on men by or for which they may have salvation, than Acts ii. 38, yet this text has been a bone of contention between Baptist and Campbellite debaters, ever since I have taken any notice of their contentions. Some of those who are now advocating conditional time salvation have, to my certain knowledge, disputed with Campbellites, claiming that this text does not teach conditionalism. Repentance is a gift of God, and cannot be a condition required of us. But notice that they are exhorted to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. What we do in the name of another, is not put down to our account. The remission of sins is not for repentance and baptism, but the name of Jesus Christ stands for remission of sins. See Acts v. 31: "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."—Rom. viii. 13. It is contended that "if," in this text, implies a condition, but as "if" does not always imply a condition, and as certain essential elements of a condition is wanting, it is certain that no condition is intended. It is a plain statement of truth, based on cause and effect. Paul tells them what effect is certain to follow certain causes. Living after the flesh produces death, while mortifying the deeds of the body through the Spirit, maintains life. (The sense in which the words "life" and "death" are used in this text is immaterial for my present purpose.) There is a vast difference between the man who eats food that he may live, and the one who refrains from murder that he may live. The one is a cause which he enjoys and finds his reward in his food. The other (based on state law) is a condition which produces no effect upon him. If the first disobeys he shall surely die; there is no waiting for some one to kill him; if the second disobeys he may yet live, for the power

that imposed the condition must take his life. The one finds his reward *in* doing, the other gets his reward *for* doing.

"Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."—Rom. x. 13. If you think that in this text salvation is restricted to time, read on to the sixth verse of the next chapter, and learn that it is not of works; for there is no change of subject, it is the same paragraph. "But what sayeth the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so then at this present time [do not forget that this includes time salvation] also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." If the first "shall" in Romans x. 13, had been written "will," and then the remainder of that chapter and all the eleventh chapter omitted, then conditional Baptists would have a strong text, but I am glad the Scriptures explain themselves.

"Take heed to thyself and to the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."—1 Tim. iv. 16. This text is resorted to as a bulwark by conditional Baptists, but the essential elements of a condition are wanting. It is doing violence to the language to suppose that salvation is in this text offered on conditions. Is it not absurd to talk about Timothy's hearers being saved *for* what he does? Let me illustrate again. If Timothy had been a sea captain, and his ship had sprang a leak, he would have repaired the breach if possible, for in so doing he would save himself and them that were with him. His salvation and those with him in this supposed case is not conditional but causative; the taking heed saves them. Now let us suppose that the ship is broken beyond repair. He then raises the danger signal, and it is sited by one having ability to save the crew, but he imposes a condition which Timothy may or may not accept. If he accepts then he does not save himself, but he and his crew are saved by another, on conditions performed by him. There are no overtures of mercy in the text. Paul does not offer to save Timothy and his hearers, nor does he authorize Timothy to offer salvation to them, but tells him what effect will follow a certain cause, the reward is in the work and not for it.

"Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."—Matt. xi. 28. Will any one dare say that in this text Jesus offers rest to the weary on the condition that they come to him? Read John vi. 44, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him."

"All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—2 Tim. iii. 12. Here we have the same construction of language that is construed to teach conditional salvation, but is not the reward a strange one? Who would engage for it?

"And the world passeth away, and the lusts thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."—1 John ii. 17. If 1 Tim. iv. 16, teaches conditional salvation, this teaches it more, for it has more of the elements of a condition in it. But we are not left in doubt about this being eternal salvation, so if conditional time salvation is taught by the one, conditional eternal salvation is taught by the other. But the obedience in this last text is the evidence of eternal life, not

the cause of it, nor the condition by which it is obtained.

Paul said of Jesus, "Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered: and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him."—Heb. v. 8, 9. If our Master, the lovely Son of God, learned obedience by the things which he suffered, think you that poor mortals have found a shorter and easier route to obedience? All true obedience is learned through suffering. It is God's way, any other obedience is in the letter, formal and not acceptable to God. Jesus was made "perfect through suffering," "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him." If the word "eternal" in this text had been written "time," it would have been the golden text for those who believe time salvation is conditional. But if it would be conditional with the word "time," it is as much so with the word "eternal."

To those who think that the word "if" introduces a condition which we may or may not perform, I would say, point out those conditions in the following texts, and you will be experts in solving puzzles: Romans vi. 8; viii. 9, 10, 11, 25; Acts viii. 37; John vi. 62. There are hundreds of texts like the above, but a solution of one is a solution of them all. Some texts with "if" in them present a condition, but the condition does not depend on "if."

I will now quote part of an editorial written for a Baptist paper, by one who believes that our temporal salvation is conditional:

"If salvation is partly by grace and partly by works, what part does the sinner do? If the sinner fails to do that part, would he not be lost? Certainly. Then if he does that part he is saved? Yes. Then on what does the salvation of the sinner depend? On the sinner doing his part. If Christ does his part, and the sinner fails to do his, will the sinner be lost? So says the conditionalist. What part then must the sinner perform? 'He must keep the law,' says the legalist. Paul says, By the deeds of the law no flesh is justified. * * * Again it is said, We must love God in order to be saved. The Bible teaches that love is of God, and not of the sinner, and every one that loveth is born of God. Hence he is in a saved state before he loves. Love is a fruit or evidence of salvation. Hence our love to God is not the cause of salvation, for we cannot love God until he first loves us. Love being a fruit of the Spirit, we must have the Spirit before we can love."

In the above quotation we have the true principle of salvation set forth both for time and eternity, but the author of it would say, "No, stop, that won't apply to our time salvation, for that is conditional." But it is a well established truth that principles are the same under all circumstances. If conditionalism makes Christ a "mere cipher" in eternal salvation, it will do the same in time salvation. If conditionalism gives the sinner "all the merit" in the one case, it will do so in the other. If love is of God in one case, it is of God in the other. If works will give a man a right to boast in one case, it will give him a right to boast in the other. We do not possess a divine life independent of God (our life is in him).

I read some time ago where one said of Phil. ii. 13, that "God works in us to will and to do, but does not work the do." This was certainly playing on words, but let us turn to Heb. xiii. 20, 21, and read,

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." And I say, Amen.

Your brother in gospel bonds,

W. N. THARP.

UNTO JOHN'S BAPTISM.

I WISH to present more fully than heretofore my reasons for believing that the twelve disciples whom Paul found on his second visit to Ephesus had not been baptized in gospel order, and that when the apostle explained the matter to them they were, by his direction, baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. (Acts xix. 1–7.)

1. My first reason is the plain and only reading of the text. There must be a radical change in the construction of two sentences, verses five and six, in order to make them express any other meaning than that when these disciples heard what Paul told them about John teaching those whom he baptized the necessity of a belief on the Lord Jesus, then they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

2. Paul did not ask the men who baptized them, but unto what they were baptized; that is, what pattern or authority they had in view in receiving that ordinance. If John personally had baptized them it could not be said that they were baptized unto his baptism.

3. About twenty-five years had passed away since the death of John. If it were at all likely that these men had been baptized by him, how could they have failed to hear of the baptism of Jesus and of the Holy Ghost during all those years? John's baptism was his own personal work. No one ever had the right to baptize in his name, or unto his baptism. Of the one hundred and twenty who were together after the ascension of Jesus, some may have been baptized by John. On the day of Pentecost, and from that day I do not see anything to warrant the thought that any were added to the church without being baptized. We do not read of any coming and being received in any church upon any former baptism. How strange it would seem to find, twenty-three years after the notable day of Pentecost, twelve men who had been baptized two or three years before that day, and yet in all that time had not even heard that there was any Holy Ghost, nor known the baptism of Jesus.

4. Paul had been at Ephesus some time before, bringing Aquila and Priscilla from Antioch, and leaving them there. At that probably his first visit to Ephesus, he did some preaching and reasoning in the synagogue, and soon left them. Some time after (Acts xviii. 24,) Apollos came there. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, but not perfectly, knowing only the baptism of John. He spoke for some time eloquently and diligently, teaching the things of the Lord so far as he knew them. Whether he or his imperfect instructors baptized these twelve men we cannot tell. He had not been teaching long before he was heard by those who were fully instructed in the gospel, and they faithfully expounded to him the way of God more perfectly.

These twelve disciples were found at Ephesus on Paul's second visit. They seem to have been recently baptized, and likely they had not heard Apollos after he had been more perfectly instructed

and began to preach the gospel of Jesus clearly.

5. The apprehension that the validity of John's baptism is involved in this question, has undoubtedly led some to try to re-arrange the sentence so as to make it express the idea that these men had been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, but had never known it till Paul told them. Our object and effort should be to find out what the inspired Scriptures do really say, without reference to what we might think they ought to say. The validity of John's baptism, as his personal act, is not at all involved in this subject, but only his baptism as the example and authority to be had in view in administering the ordinance under the gospel. John's baptism ceased when he ceased to administer it personally.

However satisfied one may have felt when receiving baptism, if it was not administered in gospel order then it is not gospel baptism. The ordinance must be in the name of Jesus, and the faith of him who is baptized must be in that name. It must be in the fellowship of the gospel church, in accordance with the command given by Jesus to his apostles, and set in order by them in their acts and teaching.

How carefully and jealously should the order of the gospel church be observed and guarded. To the eye of faith that church is "the perfection of beauty," out of which "God hath shined." It is the order as established by the Lord, not the numbers, by which any organization is known as the church of God.

Many are around almost any gospel church who have not been baptized, yet who are loved and held in esteem by the brethren as dear children of grace. They love the church, and attend with deep interest upon the preaching of the word, and yet they do not come in. We often try to show them that it is their privilege and duty to be baptized, but without avail. We often feel that we ought to be able to say the loving and powerful word that shall remove the hindrances from their minds, but it is not given us to say it. We have to learn that it is in the day of God's power, not in the day of our power, that his people shall be willing. When any do come, and O, how easily and sweetly they come when the Lord opens the way, both they and we know that it was God's power, not ours, that brought them. If they never come, as is the case with so many dear believers in the Lord, we know that it was not God's purpose that they should be thus united with the visible church of God, as his witnesses here in the world. We still are bound up with them in the bundle of life, holding them in christian love and fellowship, though not being able to extend to them the hand of church fellowship. When they leave this world we believe they have gone to dwell with their dear Savior in glory.

Baptism is an ordinance of our dear Savior for this time state, but has nothing to do with the preparation of his people for heaven and its eternal glory. To that eternal glory and blessedness "many are called," even a great company that no man can number, "but few are chosen" to be of "the little flock," to whom the kingdom is given here in time, who shall stand as witnesses of Jesus in the world, as the church of God, "the pillar and ground of the truth." For this church, and those individually who are members of it, there are appointed reproaches, and burdens, and afflictions, and a yoke, and labors, and crosses, and daily dyings, and honors unseen by the world, and joys unknown to men, and conflicts; all of which

are in some measure seen by the dear children of God without, but not shared in by them except in small measure.

But these things end with time. Our eternal state is not affected by them, nor is there any difference there between those who were in the visible church here, and those of God's dear people who were not. We cannot say to one, "If you will join the church here you will be the happier hereafter." The Lord gives his servants here a higher, holier motive to labor in his service than that, even his own glory. Love is in the heart of every redeemed soul when called by grace here below, the love of God, whether in the church or out, and that love remains when we go from earth to glory. In that blessed world of light all the redeemed shall join in the endless song of praise unto God and the Lamb.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 4, 1902.

JESUS COMPARED TO EARTHLY PHYSICIANS.

WE appreciate those through whose labor we obtain an education, we love those through whose advice we accumulate a fortune, but our fondest and most tender affections run out to the one through whose skill our health has been restored. While languishing upon beds of affliction we say, go houses, lands, money, all of our earthly possessions, if in return, health may be given.

Jesus is presented to us in the Scriptures as the Son of man, the Son of God, our High Priest, our Intercessor, the Lamb, the Savior, but the name that charms the ear of the sinsick sinner most, is the one that reveals Jesus as the physician. I desire by the help of the Lord to compare Jesus to earthly physicians.

First. Jesus treats the dead. When an earthly physician is met with the statement, He is dead, with lost hopes he turns aside. Not so with Jesus. When he was told that Lazarus had been dead four days, his hope was as bright as ever. He knew that he could raise the dead to life as easily as he could command the living to move. When Adam fell, all his posterity died in him, and were dead in sin. None of his posterity have any inclination to seek after God until he quickens them, that is, gives them life, enabling them to see the need of Jesus as their physician. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live."—John v. 25. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."—Eph. ii. 1.

Second. Jesus always effects a cure. I see thousands of God's little ones on their way to the haven of rest, and I ask, Where have you been? and the answer is, To Jesus. What for? I ask again. To be cleansed from sin. Were you healed? Yes. For Jesus has said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."—John vi. 37. False teachers, and original sin, may deceive men, but Jesus has assured his people that every one embraced in God's gift to him, shall come to him, and for encouragement of the coming soul he has said, I will not cast you out under any circumstances. When the woman who had had an issue of blood for twelve years, and could not be healed by any physician, touched the hem of his garment, her issue of blood was stanched immediately.

Third. Jesus does not charge for his services. The woman just mentioned had spent all her living upon physicians, but Jesus did not charge her or any one else

one cent for the benefit. Neither did he ever charge his patients for treating their souls. Paul says, Rom. xi. 6, that salvation is of either grace, or of works. It is wholly of grace, or wholly of works. The first worshipers had the same idea: Cain, believing it was wholly of works, offered a sacrifice accordingly, but Abel, believing it was of grace, offered his sacrifice accordingly. Satan seeing that Cain's offering was rejected, has never made any one else believe that salvation is wholly of works, but has made millions of people believe that it is partly of grace, and partly of works. Paul says emphatically that it is wholly of grace or of work. He states with as much assurance that it is not of works. He declares, by the Spirit of God, hundreds of times, and in as many different ways, that it is by grace. Jesus is no cheap John, seated at his Father's right hand, peddling out salvation to the highest bidder. He is a benevolent giver. "The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." The Arminian world has never been able to see the difference between a gift, and an offer. A tells B that he has a nice tract of land that he will give him, if he will accept and improve it. B agrees to do so. A then makes him a deed of it, and the land becomes B's. That is an offer. But A sees B in need of a tract of land, and without consulting him, goes to the county clerk, has a deed to a certain body of land recorded, takes a copy of the same with him to B, and says, You have a tract of valuable land, and here is the deed to the same. This is a gift. And that is just what Jesus has done for his people; Christ by his own blood entered into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us, and at God's own appointed time, the Holy Ghost makes this known to the heirs of promise.

Fourth. Jesus has no partner in effecting a cure. Jesus knew when he made man, that men would differ not only with him, but with one another, with regard to what was best for the disease of sin. He knew that it would be detrimental to his patients for him to have an assistant, and consequently he has ever refused all partnership in the work of redemption. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." There is none other name under heaven given amongst men, whereby we must be saved. It is not Jesus and company, not Jesus and the church, not Jesus and any priest, king or potentate, not Jesus and anybody or anything else, that saves sinners, it is Jesus, and Jesus alone.

Fifth. Jesus uses but one kind of medicine. He, being the all-wise Creator of all things, knew more about diseases, medicines, &c., than all earthly physicians shall have learned when he comes as a thief in the night, without sin unto salvation, to gather his jewels from the four quarters of the earth. With his knowledge he selected the medicine which will heal the sick, rich or poor, black or white, bond or free, male or female, of his people in all ages of the world, and announces in his own word that this medicine is his own precious blood. When I see the blood, I will pass over you; the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth from from all sin; redeemed by the blood of Christ; justified by his blood; by faith in his blood. The direction does not say his blood taken with works, or diluted with water, but the blood of Jesus Christ his Son, cleanseth from all sin.

Sixth. Jesus always effects a permanent cure. I have a sister who is lingering upon the brink of the grave with a disease which she once thought perma-

nently cured. Earthly physicians are not always able to remove the cause of disease, and as a result the same symptoms show themselves again, but not so with Jesus, it did not matter how long nor how badly a person had been sick, when he dismissed the case, the disease never returned. If it be contradicted, that the history of the unclean spirit does not agree with this, I reply that the record says, when the unclean spirit is *gone*, not *cast* out of a man. This unclean spirit went out and returned to his house, of his own accord. He was not hindered or compelled by any other power. It simply means that one may resolve to do better, and finding it such a hard task to keep the law, he becomes discouraged, and returns to his old sins, and is more desperate than ever before. But when Jesus cleanses the house, casts out the unclean spirits; he removes the cause of condemnation, which is unbelief, and says he that believeth hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation. Jesus has said, He that drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst, but it shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. A man digs through the ground until he strikes a body of water that sends a stream to the surface of the earth, and we call it an artesian well. A local drought does not at all affect the flow of that stream. This is because that somewhere there is an inexhaustible body of water from which this stream flows, and as long as that body of water remains, that stream will flow. When the soul comes into contact with that fountain which was opened for the cleansing of the houses of Israel from their uncleanness, they find the fountain always flowing. He has said, All thy springs are in me. As long as this fountain remains inexhaustible, the stream will continue to flow. When the shepherd found the lost sheep, he placed it upon his shoulder, and carried it home.

The first six verses of the sixth chapter of Hebrews is supposed by some to teach the possibility of apostacy. Paul said it is impossible to renew one to repentance, if he shall fall away, seeing that such ones crucify the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. Why would this put him, Jesus, to an open shame? Is it because he will not furnish his children with work to do? No, for Jesus has said, Son, go work in my vineyard. Is it because he does not tell us what kind of work to do? No, for he has said, He that will do the will of the Father shall know the doctrine. The most ignorant child of God on earth can find enough of the right kind of work to do, to keep him from apostatizing. Then why does it put Jesus, rather than the one who shall fall, to an open shame? It is because Jesus has promised to save his people from their sins, and has declared that he has done so, without any conditions whatever to be performed by them, and if he does not do so, like all others who fail, he has not kept his word, and is put to an open shame.

Yours in hope through an all-sufficient Savior.

E. F. STANTON.

DUKE, Oklahoma Ter., Nov. 15, 1901.

[THE general sentiment of the above able letter is commendable as being clear and sound, and in harmony with both the Scriptures, and all true christian experience. With regard to the last text spoken of by our brother, we have long thought that what Paul intended, was not the possibility of falling away, but the impossibility of renewing one, if he could fall away, and this very impossibility rests upon the fact that Jesus Christ would be

compelled to be crucified afresh, in order to his renewal; a thing impossible, according to the word of the Lord. He was put to death once in these last times, and if the benefit of that one sacrifice could be lost, then to enter into life again, Jesus must die again, and thus would be put to an open shame again, as he was once upon Calvary. Seeing that all this is true, we understand the apostle to argue from it, that it is impossible that any can fall away, so as to be in a lost condition again. Paul strikes a death blow to the Arminian notion of getting religion, and losing it again, a half dozen times in as many seasons.—ED.]

BUFFALO, Kan., Feb. 7, 1902.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—If I may so address you. I have long had a desire to write to you to try to tell you what a great blessing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been to me, but I am so very unworthy, so very apt to follow my evil impulses, that I have feared it was the tempter telling me to write, and so have quenched that desire time after time; sometimes going so far as to write, and then upon re-reading what I had written, cast it into the fire, as like myself, utterly unworthy of notice by or knowledge of any one who could claim a home among the people of the church; the church, not one of the churches, for though there are many organizations, yet there is only one church. There was once a time in my life when I had such a home, a blessed, happy home in the Primitive Baptist church, but by reason of my own sin and weakness, I forfeited all right to that claim. In order that you may know something of how vile a creature I am, or was, as the case may be, I will endeavor to tell you what I did, but in order to do so I must go back to November, 1891, at which time I was to my great surprise, and I believe to the sorrow of the church since, accepted by the Turkey Creek Church of Primitive Baptists, at Bronson, Kansas, Bourbon Co., and the following December was baptized by their pastor, Thos. Job. But living quite a long distance from the place of meeting I was only permitted to attend their meeting three times during the next two years, at the end of which time I, with my husband and one-year-old baby, moved to this place, where we have since lived, which is about sixty miles from the Turkey Creek church's meeting place. Now I come to the part that is hard to relate, though I do not wish to shield myself, for I well know from long and bitter struggles with my own will, and exceedingly sinful being, that the least of God's creatures is far better than I; that,

"I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

The truth is, I offered myself to the Campbellite or Christian church, and they very willingly accepted me. I lived with them for three years, attended their meetings, communed with them, and tried with all my strength to be a Campbellite, but something was lacking, I was longing for bread, I received stones. How I suffered only those who have sinned and must suffer the consequences can know. I felt that I was dying for the fellowship of my old saintly brethren and sisters, yet I well knew that I had forever lost them, and must forever after live with the people whom I in my blind blunderings had chosen in preference to the ones I loved so dearly, but I never realized just how much I did love them until I found I had lost them forever. But I at last determined that though I had no other claim to a church home, I would

not live with them. So I withdrew from them, and now I have no church home. But the Campbellites have no claim on me, for I very plainly told them that I was not one of them, and was determined to try no longer.

But I have wandered far from what I started to write; I had no intention of writing as I have done, and to take up so much of your valuable time to read my poor letter, which is of course like myself very unworthy, but I trust you will pardon me. I only wished to say that though I am not a subscriber myself, (yet only poverty prevents it) my dear father, Stephen Holeman, of Bronson, Kan., is a regular subscriber, and has been ever since I can remember, and sometimes when he has read them he sends the papers to me, and they are the only preaching I get now, and they are dear to me indeed. Perhaps you will think strange that one so vile as I should love the truth, but such is the case. Sometimes I am very doubtful, and live away down in the vale of doubts and fears for days at a time, and then again I am made to feel that all is well, and I do know, and knowing do greatly rejoice, that whether I am saved or eternally lost, it is all as God has willed, and all is well. God's will is much wiser than man's wishes, and I humbly yield to his will, and only pray for grace to bear with christian fortitude whatever may be his will to place upon me. My burden is indeed great, but I try so hard to bear it without a murmur, well knowing that all things work together for good to those who love the Lord, to those who are the called according to his purpose.

I am not sure but I may yet consign this to the flames. If I send it, it shall be with the assurance that your excellent judgment will place it where it deserves to be, if in the flames, I shall be satisfied.

May God guide you to do with this as will be best for his glory and his children's good.

Very unworthy, if a child at all,

MARY HOLEMAN WHEELER.

[Of course we know nothing of the circumstances concerning the writer of the above, and the Turkey Creek Church, only what are given in her letter, and if there are no other barriers than those mentioned, we do not doubt that if she will write the Turkey Creek Church, to the effect of the letter here published, they will be rejoiced to restore her again to full fellowship with them.—Ed.]

Tolbert, Texas, Feb. 4, 1902.

Elder F. A. Chick—Dear Brother in a Precious Hope:—I have just read, and re-read, your editorial in the Signs of Nov. 15th, 1901, and O, how my heart goes out to you in fellowship. How good and how true your words are. I feel that they are both good and timely, they have been as a feast of fat things, and I hope that they may sink down deep into the hearts of the Lord's children, for surely there has never been a time when such writing and preaching was more needful than the present, for there are many heresies and evil practices creeping in among many of our churches unawares of late, which heretofore were not tolerated among Old School Baptists. It seems to me that all we who realize that in us (that is, in our flesh,) dwells no good thing, and that at our best estate we are altogether vanity, and who have no confidence in the flesh, and who realize that when left to ourselves we shall go astray, and that continually, should look well to our ways, that we bring no reproach upon the Zion of our God. Surely we should be careful not to be a stumbling-block to

others, always praying our heavenly Father to withhold us from, and to deliver us from all evil, and all appearance of evil also. This should be our prayer, for salvation is from the Lord both in time and eternity. It is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure, of ourself we never either will or do anything that is good or acceptable to God. The carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Therefore we should be the more careful to keep our bodies in subjection. Surely if we do indeed love the Lord, his Spirit that dwells in us will teach us to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world. It will teach us to avoid all things which will serve to bring reproach upon the glorious cause of Christ, or that will give offense.

I have had a name among the Baptists for more than thirty years, but have often felt that I was not worthy to be numbered among them; I have always felt so weak, sinful and blundering; I had hoped that as I grew older I would become better, but alas, each day seems to reveal more and more of the inbred corruption of my sinful heart. I am fully persuaded that if I am saved at all, it is by the grace of God, and not for good works that I have done, for I have none to boast of. The older I grow the more I feel constrained to lay my hand upon my mouth, and cry, Guilty and unclean, before God. I have so many shortcomings, and misgivings, and foolish thoughts, and we are told in the Scripture that the thoughts of foolishness is sin, and O, my foolish, wretched thoughts; I would not have any one know them, and yet our God knows them; O, how I try to get away from them, or put them away from me, but cannot, and as I cannot save myself from my thoughts, I know of a truth that salvation is of the Lord.

But because salvation is of unmerited grace, the grace of God, which is his gift to us, there is no excuse for us to give way to carnal desires. If so be the love of God dwell in the heart, the flesh will war against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so long as we dwell in the flesh, but thanks be to our God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Then, dear brother, does it not behoove all who believe, to press forward to the mark of the prize of our high calling, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? Our eye should be single to the glory of God, and to the end of our desire, which is in heaven and immortal glory. Pray for me when it is well with you.

With love and good wishes to all the household who are scattered abroad, I am, as I hope, your little sister,

(MRS.) LIZZIE CAMPBELL.

[It is clear from the above letter that a belief in the predestination of God, and that salvation is all of him, both in time and eternity, does not by any means lead to licentiousness of conduct, but rather to carefulness in all that we do and say. We have often felt to wonder, when we have seen such denunciations against predestination, and unconditional salvation in time, as well as for eternity, upon the ground that all incentive to right living was thus taken away, whether those who uttered these denunciations lived any more carefully than those who believed such "dangerous" things. Do those who deny unlimited predestination live any better than those who believe it? Do those who contend that our present salvation is conditional, live any better than those who believe that our present

salvation is of sovereign grace, without conditions of our performance? How is it? If it is so indeed we would like to know.—ED.]

A LAST REQUEST.

"LET me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."—Numbers xxiii. 10.

The above Scripture has been on my mind for some time. I am in my eightieth year, and my desire is that my last days be like the righteous, then shall I die like them. The righteous are a very peculiar people, they are ever looking how they may secure the crown that is laid up for them who love his appearing. And why? Because they know that he will be the end of all their troubles, doubts and fears, and that when the Savior appears, they will not only see him as he is, but they will be like him. Glorious thought; blessed hope; if the children of God could for one moment realize fully what their Redeemer now is, and then know that the time is coming when they shall be like him, I think they would endure the trials of this life with more patience than they often do. The children of the Redeemer's kingdom know at times that their salvation is sure as the throne of God, but at other times they have their doubts and fears. I have been an Old School Baptist for fifty-three years, the second day of March, 1894. I well remember the time and place that God for Christ's sake pardoned my sins. Then I was almost sure I would have no more trouble, for I was happy in my Savior.

"Tongue cannot express the sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

When I look back more than fifty years I am made to wonder. I shall not undertake to tell my trials, doubts and fears, but suffice to say, I have had my share, but now my desire is that I may die the death of the righteous, and that my last end shall be like his, then I know that poor, unworthy me shall before long see my Savior, and be like him. It will not be long till I shall bid this vain world adieu, and enter that rest that remains to the people of God, where the wicked will cease from troubling, and the weary be at rest. I know I have a portion worth more than the Indies of gold, that cannot be wasted nor mortgaged nor sold. I know that my discharge is made out, and it only takes the signature of my Captain, then I will go home.

URIAH E. LINN.

CROOKED CREEK, Indiana.

(See obituary notice on page 190.)

KELLER, Texas, Jan. 8, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I remember that my remittance is due for 1902, and I do not feel that I want to do without the SIGNS, that has been coming to me for so long a time. I for one, feel to indorse the sentiment set forth in the SIGNS. I have been a subscriber for about thirty years, and I find it contends for the same principles now as when I first began to peruse its pages. I find solid comfort in seeing the steadfastness of the editors of the SIGNS. There has been much opposition in this part of Texas to the old SIGNS, but I feel sure that to some extent it has abated. There have been some non-fellowship resolutions passed in some churches on account of the doctrine of predestination, but there are five or six associations in this part of Texas that stand firm, and will not countenance those resolutions. I feel glad that when I find the SIGNS in a brother's house, I find a brother in peace, not contending for a "conditional time salvation," but one that believes that salvation is of the

Lord, both for time and eternity. We have some faithful and able brethren in the ministry in Texas. Elder J. C. Sykes was with us last fall, and visited all the churches in our association; he was with Elder Curry while he was in Texas, and spoke very highly of him. Brother H. B. Jones is another that is sound and fearless in defense of the truth. I never had the pleasure of meeting him; I only know him by ruputation. Elders J. A. Campbell, W. L. Rogers, Ira Lankston, and a number of others in this section, have suffered persecution for their steadfastness to the truth.

Dear brother Beebe, I feel to be one that loves the doctrine that your father so ably contended for in his life, and I see that you are standing firm on the foundation of God's eternal sovereignty over all things, and may you be kept by Israel's God to wield "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," to the comfort of the saints.

I have not scribbled this for publication, but to let you know that I appreciate the labors of you and brother Chick in forwarding the old SIGNS OF THE TIMES to many hungry saints. I feel often that one article that I read is worth more than the subscription price.

I wish you a happy new year. I will forward post-office order in this, that you may place to my account.

I will close my scribble. As ever your brother in hope of life eternal,

A. D. BOURLAND.

RILL, Pa., Jan. 31, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find two dollars to pay for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, our dear old family paper. I should have remitted ere this, but have been hindered. The SIGNS seems like a dear old friend, for my mother took it over fifty years ago, and I have taken it ever since her death. To me it brings nearly all the preaching that I have, for it is a long way to a church of the Old School order, and I do not often get to one. O, how I often wish it was as when I were a child, for my people lived less than three miles from a church of our order, and always went if they possibly could, and the preachers were often at our house. I can remember old Elders Mitchell, Moyer, St. John, Bundy and Gilbert Beebe. If I could meet any of our Elders of these days as often now, I think I should appreciate it very highly, but the Lord knows best, and I wish to be conformed to his holy will.

(MRS.) MARTIN CLEMENS.

ELMWOOD, Ill., Feb. 25, 1902.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I inclose a draft for four dollars to be applied on my subscription to the SIGNS, and I will ask you to change the address of my paper from Elmwood, Ill., to 510 Johns St., Champaign, Ill., where we expect to make our home, at least for a time. This change has been brought about through the necessity of making a change of climate for a part of the family. I will also ask you to say to my friends and correspondents to address me at the latter place.

SMITH KETCHUM.

FARMINGTON, Ill., Jan. 14, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed find a postal note for two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for 1902. I have taken them for over forty years, and have been a constant reader of them for over fifty years. I always look for it as a welcome messenger to comfort the poor and needy in Zion; may peace and love abound within her borders.

E. D. VARNES.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1902.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REVELATION XX. 11–15.

SISTER Lucinda Riley, of Camp Point, Ill., desires some thoughts from us concerning the last five verses of the twentieth chapter of Revelation.

We do not feel that we can make any extended reply to this request, but will call attention to some things which for a long time have seemed clear to our mind. First, we have no idea that very much, if any of the things contained in this book which is called the Revelation of Jesus Christ, has any reference to the future world of glory. The heaven so often referred to in this book cannot manifestly be the final state of peace and perfection which awaits the righteous, who have been redeemed from sin and death, because in that heaven war cannot be supposed to exist, while in the heaven of revelation, war is said to exist. Beside, in the beginning of this book it is said, I will show thee things which must shortly come to pass. We have long felt no question that nearly all, if not all contained in this book, relates to the gospel state of the church, and contains the same spiritual truths that are set forth elsewhere in the Bible.

The eleventh verse of this chapter seems to set forth the same thing as is presented by the Savior in the parable recorded in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, concerning the sheep and the goats. In both Scriptures a division among men is presented. This division is going on now, and has been ever since the gospel was first preached, and the kingdom of heaven set up. The gospel message itself divides, and puts one man on one side, and another man on the other side. Men's desires, affections and thoughts are not changed by the preaching and the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, but these things in them are discerned and brought to light, and so separation takes place. Men who have been quickened into life by the power of the Spirit of God (not by the gospel, but immediately by direct operation of the Spirit) receive gladly the gospel news, and love the Savior presented in it, while unquickened men, yet dead in trespasses and sins, do not receive nor love the gospel. So the gospel does not in any way change men, but it discerns what is in men, and brings it to light. It is thus the savor of life unto life to the one, and of death unto death to the other class. How important then the question, What is the gospel to me? Does it find a place in my heart or not? On which side do I stand? I must stand on one side or the other.

In verse twelve we are called to contemplate a judgment which includes all men, and which is before God. In this judgment the dead, both small and great, stand before God and are judged. The books are opened. These books we do not doubt are the things contained in the law of God, and it is said that all were judged according to the things written in the books, according to their works. Now the result is declared to be that all are condemned, and cast into the lake

that burns with fire. This must always be so. So sure as any man is judged by the law, and according to his works, so surely must he be condemned. No man can enter into life when judged by the law, and according to his works. So it is said, Every one whose name was not found written in the book of life, was condemned and cast into the lake of fire.

God brings his people into judgment with him, and in their own conscience, in their first experience of his saving grace. The result is that they are all condemned in conscience, and confess that their condemnation is just. This condemnation only increases as they look more and more at themselves, and at what they have done. They come to know that by the deeds of the law no man can be justified before God.

So at the end of all time things, when the secrets of all men are made known, and the law of God discerns all that is in men, every one must be condemned. There is none righteous, no, not one, either now or then, and in the future world, whosoever is judged according to his works must be for ever condemned.

The only hope of salvation for any one then is that his name is found written in the Lamb's book of life, and the writing of that name in the book of life is not because that one is any better than others who are not written there, but solely and alone of sovereign grace and electing love; it is just because the Lord will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

One thing beside seems to us clear, viz: The people of God are already judged, and already by that judgment condemned, but for them salvation has been found from that condemnation, through the blood of the Lamb alone. This is an accomplished fact, this is the teaching of the word of God, and it is the truth which has been revealed to them in their soul's experience. Children of God can well remember when the law revealed to them all the secrets of their hearts and lives, and when its thunders spoke terror and condemnation to their souls. They can also remember when under the fear and trembling of that awful hour, at last a sweet voice said to them, "Thy name is written in the book of life, and thy sins are all forgiven." The judgment and condemnation which was upon them, Jesus their surety has borne, and they are saved. Every one whose name was not found written in that book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

God's people need have no fear of any future judgment. Why should there be a future judgment for them? They have already been judged, and already have they been condemned in their own consciences, but we have the testimony of the blessed Redeemer himself that they shall never be judged. Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life."—John v. 24. The word translated condemnation, in this verse, is really judgment. So that the Savior really said, that such as believe on him shall not come into judgment. Therefore there is no future judgment for the redeemed. If the redeemed were to be judged by their works, they also would surely be condemned. We need no further proof of this than our own daily experience. Is it not true that whenever we come to see our works, even the best of them, in the light of the holy law of God, we are still always condemned? By experiences of this kind

we learn the sweetness of the finished salvation which is in Jesus.

But the finally impenitent, who are all those whose names are not written in the book of life, shall surely perish for ever. Their judgment is their condemnation. God's dear people need not dread then any future judgment. Whatever may be true of all the rest of mankind, they shall not be judged. We repeat the testimony of the dear Savior, (for the everlasting comfort of his disciples it was spoken) "They shall not come into judgment."

C.

EXODUS III. 2.

BROTHER W. J. Bramlett, of Bishopville, S. C., desires some thoughts upon the words found in Exodus iii. 2.

This relates the miracle of the bush that burned, and was not consumed, which Moses saw in the mountain of God, which was called Horeb. First, it is sure that here was a real miracle; Moses saw really a bush burning, and yet not consumed; the reason was that the Lord was in the midst of the bush, as he was with the three Hebrew children, as recorded in Daniel, when they were cast into the furnace, heated one seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated. Moses drew near to see this great sight, and the voice of God spoke to him commanding him to put off his shoes from off his feet, for the place where he stood was holy ground. It was holy ground, not because the quality of the ground was different in any wise from all the ground around it, but simply because the Lord was there. It was thus the presence of the Lord that made the temple, or before that, the tabernacle, holy. It is the presence of God that now makes his people holy, and not any innate goodness of their own. Paul could say as a believer and apostle, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing," and yet he was one of those of whom it is said that they are holy. They, as well as Paul, are holy, simply because the dear Lord dwells with them. What a wonder that such a glorious guest should dwell in such a poor, mean, perishable tabernacle. Still, poor and unworthy as the vessel of mercy feels to be, he is yet a vessel of mercy, and an habitation of the Spirit, and thus becomes holiness to the Lord.

It was in this sense that literal Israel with all their stubbornness and rebellion could be called a holy people; the Lord was with them; his presence was all that separated them from the ungodly nations round about them. God said of them that they were the most stiff-necked and rebellious of all people, and yet they were a holy nation to the Lord. How sacred is that place where the Lord dwells, and it is sacred simply because he dwells there. As we write of this, there comes over us a sense of awe in the thought and the hope that this holy Lord has made even ourself holy by his indwelling. How the soul is humbled within that man who gets a glimpse of that solemn and awe-inspiring truth, that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and are therefore holy to the Lord.

The bush was an emblem of Israel in Egypt. The fire was an emblem of the hard and fiery bondage to which they were subjected. That the bush was not consumed was an emblem of the fact that the burning rage of their masters had not been able to destroy them, and that they should never be destroyed. The presence of the Lord in the bush saved it from being destroyed, and nothing else. So it was the presence of God with Israel that saved them in Egypt.

Now all this is a type of the spiritual

people of God, who in every age have been subjected to a great fight of afflictions, and persecutions, and temptations, from the world, and the flesh, and the devil, and yet continue to live and to bear testimony to the power and goodness of God. It also presents the truth that each individual believer is chosen in the furnace of affliction, and yet lives, and is not consumed, simply because the Lord is with him at all times. He walks in the fire, with all his people, even when they themselves do not realize his presence. He never leaves nor forsakes them, and when they pass through the fire it shall not kindle upon them. When God gave Moses to see this great sight, the time had come when he would deliver Israel out of their trials in bondage, and we know he did deliver them with an high hand and outstretched arm, and to him was all the glory due for this deliverance. Neither their wisdom, power, courage or merit, could have had any part in this deliverance, either as against their enemies, or as towards God, in securing his blessing to themselves. So our God sends deliverance at last to all his people, and that of his sovereign mercy alone, and not because they are in any wise better than they were before. It is all along the line, and all the time, a sinner saved by grace. C.

FATALISM AND PREDESTINATION.

A BROTHER inquires, What is the difference between fatalism and predestination?

There is a difference it is sure, but before replying directly to this question, we will call attention to one thought especially, and that is, If there be no difference between these two words, then if any one act is predestinated, that act comes under the head of fatalism, as it is called. It is claimed by some that the predestination of all things which come to pass would be fatalism. If this be so of all things, it would follow that it would be true of any one thing which was predestinated as well. So if men fear the reproach of fatalism, they must not contend for the predestination of anything.

But they are not the same, they are as opposite in meaning as light and darkness. In this one thing their difference is at once to be seen, fatalism puts God out of the universe altogether; it does not allow that there is any God, or at least any God who concerns himself with the affairs of men. On the other hand, predestination brings God in everywhere. It declares that a self-living, self-conscious Creator has made all things that are made, and that he has declared the end from the beginning; it declares that nothing happens by chance, but that an all-wise and beneficent being has appointed all things that come to pass. This was the faith of Job in his trials, a faith which gave him hope and comfort. He said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." He said, "Shall a man receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall he not receive evil" (at his hand). He said, "He performeth the thing which he hath appointed for me, and many such things are with him." And we know that Job spake truth, for the Lord so testified of him at the end of the book of Job. He said, The friends of Job had not spoken the thing that was right concerning him, as had his servant Job.

Was it fatalism when Jesus was betrayed according to the predestination of God and crucified? Was it fatalism when Joseph was sold into Egypt to save much people alive? Was it fatalism when God hardened the heart of Pharaoh,

that the purpose for which God had raised him up might be fulfilled? Was it fatalism when the people of God were predestinated to eternal life? If there be no difference in the words, then it was fatalism, and then fatalism would be the sweetest word in the English language. In short, predestination acknowledges God in all things; fatalism acknowledges him in nothing; predestination tells us of a God who sees all things, knows all things, and who controls and appoints all in wisdom; fatalism sees nothing, knows nothing, and manifests no wisdom in its control, if indeed it may be said to control anything: fatalism is own brother to chance; predestination has nothing to do with chance, and is its most bitter enemy. Let no one again say that they are the same. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MATTHEW XIII. 44-46.

SISTER Peck, of Catskill, N. Y., requests our views of the parables of the treasure hid in a field, and of the merchantman seeking goodly pearls, &c., presented in this portion of the divine testimony. Unwilling as we are to withhold from any of God's dear children such views of the Scriptures as we have, we feel more hesitation in writing on the parables generally, than on those positive and emphatic declarations of the word which declare the truth, which parables are intended to illustrate. Parables or figures may bear some analogy to other subjects than those which were primarily set forth by them; and it is sometimes difficult for us, with our limited understanding, to tell with certainty the precise design, or application intended by our Lord in the use of them. The two parables now under consideration, both have reference to the kingdom of heaven; thus far we are certain, for it is so written; and therefore, cannot without violence to the truth be applied to the world, or to the children of men indiscriminately. For the same Jesus, who spake them, has said, "My kingdom is not of the world, but [it is stated in both these parables,] of heaven." It is neither of the world nor visible to the world; for, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see it." This kingdom of heaven, Jesus says, was prepared for those who are, and shall be, found at the King's right hand, from the foundation of the world, and was revealed by the angel of the Lord Jesus to John, as coming down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride for her husband. And Jesus testifies that it is a kingdom which he has received of his Father, and which he has appointed to his disciples and farther, that it is their Father's good pleasure that the *little flock* of Jesus, shall inherit it. In the word of God it is declared to be an everlasting kingdom, and a dominion that shall not end. And all saints are taught by the word and by the spirit to confess unto God, "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen." In its gospel organization, or manifestation, in this world, it is a kingdom which the God of heaven has set up, a tabernacle which God hath pitched, and not men; and can in this respect be easily distinguished from all the religious organizations on earth which are set up by the wisdom or works of men; its maker and builder is God. If we would be instructed by the parable, we must not forget that it is the kingdom of heaven, and not the kingdom of Satan, or anti-Christ, *that it is like treasure hid in a field, &c.*, and that there must be a sense in which this kingdom is *like* treasure which is so hid-

den. Our object is now to inquire after that likeness, or resemblance. If the earthly nature of the saints constituted this kingdom, we could not see how it could be hidden; but we are expressly informed that flesh and blood doth not inherit it, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption, it must therefore be a spiritual kingdom, which none but they who are born again, of an incorruptible seed, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, can enter, or inherit. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and this kingdom embraces the spirit of just men made perfect, by their vital union with the King, and their interest in his atoning blood and justifying righteousness, and so far as they walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, there is no condemnation to them; they are holy and without blame before God in love; made acceptable in the Beloved.

Three questions are now presented:

1. What field is this treasure hidden in?

2. How is it hidden, and for what purpose?

3. From whom is it hidden?

First. In a field. A field, in the common acceptation of the word, is a certain quantity, a specific portion of the surface of the earth that is set apart, and inclosed by the proprietor for the purpose of sowing seed, and from that seed producing by development a harvest. The specific quantity of this field, is indicated in the parable in the same chapter of the leaven, as *three measures;* a measured quantity, so much, and no more. The field being a portion of the earth, may well signify the chosen, redeemed and purchased members of the human family, chosen from among men, redeemed out of every kindred and tribe of mankind, bought with a price, sanctified, set apart, or inclosed, by the Spirit's sealing operation. Or, in other words, embracing the mortal bodies of all the saints, which are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise; and predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son of God, that he may be the first-born among many brethren, which bodies shall accordingly be changed at their resurrection, and fashioned and made like the glorious, risen body of our Lord Jesus, who is the first begotten from the dead, and the first fruits of them that slept, and in whose resurrection all the saints are begotten to a lively hope, to an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that cannot fade away, being reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God, &c.

Second. How, and for what purpose is this immortal treasure hidden in the people of God whom he hath chosen from among men? To hide, is to conceal, according to the illustration in the parable of the leaven, which was hidden in three measures of meal, and which is to work secretly but effectually in the measured quantity of meal, until the measured mass shall become perfectly assimilated to the nature and quality of the leaven which was hidden in it. The leaven hidden in the meal, thus signifying the same as the treasure hidden in the field. The three measures, having reference to the people of God, under the three dispensations, patriarchal, legal and gospel. The holy seed from heaven, being the germ, or the entire kingdom of heaven in the germ, is the treasure, hidden in the elect of God, out of Adam's race, as the leaven was hid in the measures of meal, or as the mustard seed, which had in it the tree which should be developed, expanded, and made manifest. But first, the seed must be cast in the earth, Christ, who in his Mediator-

ial character as the Son of God and Head of the Church, is the embodiment of this seed, (and that seed is Christ,) said, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth alone," and thus applied the figure to himself, as dying for our offences, and rising for our justification, and securing the full harvest of what the seed should develop. The life of the church is hid with Christ in God, and God was in Christ, reconciling, or subduing all things to himself, and the angel, or Spirit of Christ, was in and with his people, from the days of Abel, and he carried them and bare them all the days of old, and still in this third measure of the meal, we have the same treasure in earthen vessels, which is Christ in you the hope of glory, and it is so that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

Third. From whom is it hidden? From the wise and prudent, from the learned and great of the world, and from all natural men? God hath hidden it effectually from them, because so it seemed good in his sight. And the same God, and for the same reason or purpose has revealed it to babes, that no man should glory in the flesh, but that he that glorieth shall glory in the Lord. Except a man be born again, whatever may be the amount of his wisdom, learning, or of his work of willing or of doing, he cannot see the kingdom of God, for it cometh not by observation; it is hidden in the field, and shall be there concealed from human scrutiny until God shall make it manifest.

The which, when a man hath found, he hideth. Who is the man that hath found this treasure in the field? It cannot be those men from whom God hath hidden these things, unless men have power to thwart, or make void the purpose of God, and that they cannot do, unless they are wiser and stronger than he. Men in nature who cannot see the kingdom, would make a sorry work of searching for what they cannot see. And we are told in the Scriptures, that neither the kingdom, nor any of the things of the Spirit of God can be seen by any man who is not a subject of the new birth. The natural man, or unregenerated man, however wise, and prudent, receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. This then, settles that matter, that it cannot possibly be a natural man, that findeth the hidden treasure in the field, and if he could find it, all his possessions will not sell in any market, for a price sufficient to purchase the field in which the treasure is concealed. This field cannot be bought with corruptible things, as silver and gold; nothing short of the precious blood of Christ, is an equivalent for this field. It was the Man Christ Jesus who came down from heaven to seek and to save that which was lost. The Man which is my fellow, or equal, saith the Lord of hosts. He is not only the Mighty God of heaven and of earth, but he sustains equally the character of the Man of God's right hand. The Man whom God has made strong for himself. The Man that shall be and is a hiding place from the wind, and covert from the tempest, &c., and the Man by whom God will judge the world in righteousness at the last day. This Man of God's right hand, was made flesh and dwelt among us; was manifested in the flesh, seen of angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory; he took the responsible work upon himself, saying, I will both seek my flock, and find them out; he possessed in his own right an interest, a treasure, in the field which

he came to look after, to seek, to find and to redeem, and he found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness, and he is successful in his researches, he knows where to look, and with his omniscient eye he has the power to see. All things are naked and open to the eye of him with whom we have to do, and the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.

But, sister Peck will inquire, Did the Man Christ Jesus sell all that he had and buy the field in which this treasure was hidden?

We reply, So it appears to us. We must remember the language is figurative, it is a parable. Jesus was rich, but for our sake became poor. The glory which he had with the Father before the world began was exceedingly rich and valuable, but all was laid aside, and the form of a servant put on. A babe is born in Bethlehem, he reclines in a manger, there is no room for him in the inn; the foxes have holes to burrow in, the birds have nests adapted to their comfort and convenience, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. But is all this humiliation and poverty enough to buy the field? Eternal Justice demands an infinitely greater price. His life, his blood, the Shepherd pays. Himself he gives, for nothing less could buy the field; and the field must be bought, that is, redeemed. Now, we ask, Has this field ever been bought by any other man than the Man which is the fellow of the Lord of hosts, whose name is The God of the whole Earth? And did it not cost him all that he was and all he had? "He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people," &c. If we are right in understanding the field to be the chosen vessels of God's election from the tribes of the earth, and the kingdom of heaven, as that which was hidden in them, then we must regard the final resurrection of the bodies of all the saints, changed to the fashion, purity and immortality of Christ's glorious body, inevitable and certain, as the redemption of the purchased possession. The Lord Jesus did not sell all that he had to buy life for the church, for that life he himself is, but he gave his life for them. Hence Paul says to the saints, Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are his. And to the Elders the charge is given, Feed the flock of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. He findeth the treasure in the field, he hideth it, and for joy thereof goeth and buyeth the field. The treasure was hidden before, it still is hidden, it is in the secret place of the Most High under the shadow of the Almighty; hidden with Christ in God, in the safe hiding place, the pavilion of God.

And for joy thereof goeth and buyeth the field. "Who for the joy which was set before him, endured the cross, and despised the shame." Ought not Christ to suffer these things, and then enter into his glory? His life which he gave, he was able to take again, as his resurrection has proved, and although he came forth to this work, *weeping*, he returns to his Father in glory, rejoicing, bearing his sheaves with him. That spiritual, immortal and divine life which he gives, he had no occasion to buy, it was in him secure, but the vessels in which this treasure should be developed, were members of the fallen family of the earthly Adam, and the demands of the law which they in that earthly nature had transgressed, had to be met and canceled, and the amount required was all that he had. Not one

jot or tittle less than Jesus Christ could pay the price, or be received as an equivalent for the purchased possession.

We have dwelt so lengthy on this parable, that we have very little space in which to express our views on the parable of the merchantman, and the goodly pearl, but we will briefly remark that we understand this parable to be substantially the same as the one which we have considered, with some change in the figures used. As Christ is the King, and all that constitutes the kingdom of heaven is in him, and called by his name, so we suppose that he as embodying the whole Church, and especially in his connection with her, is called the Kingdom of Heaven, and is, in the sense intended, like a merchantman, seeking goodly pearls. But very unlike a merchantman offering to dispose of pearls, or to sell merchandise for a profit. All that he has advertised for sale is, Milk and Wine, garments, eye salve, &c. And all these are bestowed without money and without price; freely, graciously and unconditionally, not to the rich, but to the poor, the needy, and to those who have no money. But as the preceding parable shows, he was seeking goodly pearls, or a treasure which was hidden. The subjects of his grace which were invaluable in his estimation, like the hidden treasure in the field, or the precious pearl in the unfathomed deeps, was to be sought by him and found. Therefore, from his radiant courts on high, he bowed his heavens and came down to seek and save that which was lost. Nor did he miss his object; the treasure he found, the field he purchased, the pearl, and the casket in which it was concealed he secured. This was a pearl of great price. All the gold of Ophir could not buy it. All the treasures of this world, all the works and merits, could not make up the amount. To estimate the price demanded by Eternal Justice for this pearl, think of the cross, the spear, the nails; think of the agony, the sweat, think of the scourging, buffeting, the pain, the grief, the dying groans, the rending rocks, the opening graves, the darkened skies, the rending veil, and quaking earth, and such was the price; justice could not take one farthing less. His holy soul was poured out unto death; his marred, pierced, but unblemished body sinks in death upon the cruel cross, and his Spirit is committed to his Father in heaven; justice sums up what is the exact amount; this, but nothing less, could buy the pearl which Jesus came to seek and save. Now resounds the loud anthem!

> "His work forever is complete;
> Forever undisturb'd his seat;
> Myriads of angels round him fly,
> And sing his well gain'd victory."

These, sister Peck, are such views as we have on the subject submitted, if our views are not satisfactory, they are at least, as good as we can give. The writer of this article finds it much easier to see the defects, in the views of others, than to give an explanation with which he is perfectly satisfied himself. If we have failed to present the true design and doctrine of the subject, let those who are blessed with clearer views present them.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 1, 1859.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon William C. Tyndall departed this life on the morning of Dec. 31st, 1901, at his residence near Trenton Junction, N. J., at the age of 80 years. His death occurred upon his birthday. He had been growing feeble for several years, but his last sickness was paralysis, and endured but a few hours, when the end quietly and peacefully came. Our brother leaves a widowed companion, to whom he had been united in marriage nearly sixty years, and five children to mourn their great loss, yet they sorrow not as those who have no hope. He was baptized about the year 1845, in the fellowship of the New School Baptist denomination, but after a few years he moved into another vicinity, where he began to attend the ministry of the late Elder Philander Hartwell, at Hopewell, N. J., and soon felt himself at home with the people of that church. About the year 1854, he was baptized in the fellowship of the church at Hopewell, and remained a most faithful and steadfast member to the end. Dec. 24th, 1864, he was chosen as one of the deacons of this church, and none have filled that office better than he. So long as he was able, his seat in the meetings of the church was seldom vacant, although he had to drive some ten or twelve miles to attend each Sunday. During the last few years age and increasing infirmities have hindered his constant attendance with us, but we have all known that when not with us, it was because his strength was not sufficient. What a blessed record this is for any one to have. He was not satisfied with simply attending the meetings of the church, but looked after its interests in temporal things, being liberal financially, and giving care and anxiety to all the interests of the cause among us. The last time that we saw him living, he spoke much of the necessity of careful and strict, though gentle and kindly discipline in the church. Among other things, he said that when one was left to go astray, and nothing was said to that one, or about it, another could, when approached, say to the church, I have done no more than the other, and nothing has been said to him. He said that not only the interests of the church as a whole was involved in careful discipline, but especially the interests of the one who had departed were involved, and that we ought to be anxious to save such a soul from death, and to hide the multitude of sins. We will never forget his solemn words at that time. He loved to converse much upon the things that he loved best of all. His speech was seasoned with grace, as with salt, at all times, when we were privileged to be in his company. The things of God and of revealed religion were solemn realities to him, he thought of them and spoke of them with a solemn gladness. He was grounded in the faith of God's word, and believed in bringing all things to the test of the word. He had a wide acquaintance with the Scriptures, and in exhortation and prayer made much use of their language. We have heard some of his children say that in their earlier years, when he would engage in worship at the fireside, they felt that his every word was impressive and solemn indeed; it seemed to them that he felt to be in the presence of that God whom he loved and served. A good and gracious man has fallen asleep in Jesus.

His funeral service was held at his residence, on Friday, Jan. 3d, and was largely attended by friends and relatives. By request of the bereaved companion the text in John xi. 25, 26, was used, and afterwards the remains were taken to Hamilton Square, near his early residence, for interment. The sympathy of all goes out to the bereaved companion in her old age, left lonely and desolate. May the God of hope be her comfort and strength, and may his blessing rest upon all who are bereaved, and upon the church of which he has been for so long a time a member. C.

DIED—At his home near Winterton, N. Y., **Daniel Carmichael Clark,** Jan. 29th, 1902, of heart disease. Mr. Clark had been complaining for several days, but was able to be up and help about the farm work. He had helped his brother Samuel to load the milk to be taken to the station, walked in the kitchen and said he felt tired. He was given a chair, and expired in a moment. He never made a public profession of religion, but for years was a regular attendant at New Vernon Old School Baptist Church, and loved the truth. His home was open to Old Baptists and their friends. He was a kind and good man, and will be greatly missed. Mr. Clark was a son of Samuel and Maria Clark, born Sept. 31st, 1827, was married Nov. 23d, 1859, to Mary E. daughter of Thomas Palmer, of Otisville, N. Y. Mrs. Clark died Nov. 9th, 1864, leaving two children, Willis G. and Ida. Willis is married and living in Port Jervis, N. Y., Ida at home; one brother, Samuel, and two sisters, Elmira L., at home, and Mrs. E. W. Cook, of South Dakota, also survive him. Mrs. Albert J. Howell, deceased, was also a sister.

The writer attended the funeral, which was largely attended by his many friends. May the Lord bless the sorrowing ones.

ALSO,

Mrs. Hila McEwen, at her home in Middletown, N. Y., Feb. 18th, 1902, aged 72 years, 8 months and 15 days. On the 14th she suffered a stroke of paralysis, and gradually failed until she passed away. Sister McEwen was the widow of Nelson McEwen, and a daughter of Walter and Elizabeth Rockafellow. She is survived by two daughters and one son: Florence L., wife of G. W. Cowley, of Middletown; Alice E., wife of L. Hudson Everett, of near Goshen, N. Y., and George W., who lives on the homestead near Mechanicstown, N. Y., one daughter, Frances E., wife of Charles W. Tryon, died July 10th, 1885. She is also

survived by three brothers and two sisters. Sister McEwen was a faithful member of the Middletown & Wallkill Church nearly thirty-three years. She was baptized by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. She was a kind and devoted mother and a true friend; we shall miss her much.

The writer was present at the funeral, and tried to speak to the glory of God, and to the comfort of his people. May we all be sustained.

H. C. KER.

Louvenia, daughter of John and Ruth Peters, fell asleep in Jesus Feb. 19th, 1902, aged 53 years, 1 month and 16 days. She was united in marriage to John P. **Light,** Jan. 24th, 1867. To this union was born five children, three daughters and two sons, who, with the husband, survive her. She united with the Primitive Baptist church twenty-four years ago, and lived an active, exemplary christian life until called to her reward. She had very delicate health for several years prior to her demise. She lived to administer to the wants of her parents until they were called home. She being the only daughter living, it was her great desire to comfort them in every possible way she could. She lived to see her children grown, and she desired that her life and strength might be given to comforting and guiding and directing them in the way of morality and uprightness, and to instill in them noble characters, and done all in her power to make them perfect in walk and conversation, and to make a cheerful home for her husband, and has left all along her married life many monuments of love, faithfulness and usefulness, accompanied with christian fortitude, and her family will always arise and call her blessed. Ability fails us to extol her virtues high enough. She had been a patient sufferer for a long time with a weakened body and very weak nerves. Her last sickness which continued for about four months, aggravated by the ravages of an eating cancer that greatly affected her spine, which caused her mind to be considerably clouded, causing her to be a great sufferer of both mind and body, but she bore all with great christian fortitude, and seemed to be much grieved that others went to so much pains to administer to her. We feel her life was a model for all. Her one great comfort was in the blessed truth of the doctrine of God our Savior, having been given a living faith, she anchored all her hope in the blessed doctrine of salvation by grace, and was given a higher and nobler view of salvation than that which men claim is secured by works; a salvation that is purely of grace without works. She fully understood what the depravity of humanity was, and was given also a view of him who alone is righteous.

The funeral services were conducted by Elders H. M. Curry and Frank McGlade, after which her remains were deposited in the cemetery at Rose Hill, Darke Co., Ohio.

NEWTON PETERS.

My dear husband, **Uriah E. Linn,** was born July 24th, 1814, and departed this life Dec. 2d, 1900. He was united in marriage to Mary Starr, March 24th, 1836. This union was blessed with five children, four of whom, with the wife of his youth, preceded him to the world beyond. His second marriage was to Martha A. Earl, May 3d, 1857. This union was blessed with seven children, one of whom has gone before. He leaves a wife, seven children and many friends to mourn their loss, but we feel our loss is his eternal gain. He lived the life of a christian, and was a consistent member of the Primitive Baptist Church fifty-nine years, or from early manhood unto the time of his death. The family have lost a kind, indulgent husband and father. He said to me during his sickness he was going happy as sure as there was a God in heaven. At times we feel we know this, at other times we have doubts, but O, how I miss him.

Elder A. F. Dove preached at the funeral a very comforting discourse. May God lead us all to cherish his virtues and emulate his example.

In sorrow,

MARTHA A. LINN.

South Camden, Mich., Feb. 23, 1902.

(See communication on page 178.)

Our dear mother, **Mrs. Eliza J. Fox,** in her 62d year, fell asleep in Jesus, Feb. 16th, 1902, after four days illness from a paralytic stroke. She was born Oct. 11th, 1840, at Towsontown, Md. She was married to Jesse T. Fox, Oct. 29th, 1857, he having preceded her to the better land, August 1st, 1898, at the age of sixty-eight. He was born Dec. 10th, 1830, at Leesburg, Va. Ten children were born to this union, five of whom are living. She experienced a hope in Christ, and was baptized in the membership of the Primitive Baptist church at Rock Springs, Md., by Elder Wm. Grafton.

Her funeral services were held at the home of her son-in-law, Llanerch, Pa., after which her remains were laid to rest at Elk Ridge Landing, Md., to await the resurrection of the redeemed.

HER CHILDREN.

Alma Hazael Fisher was born near Lightsville, Darke Co., Ohio, Nov. 23d, 1883, died near Sidney, Shelby Co., Ohio, at the home of her grandfather, Wm. Hance, April 26th, 1901, aged 17 years, 5 months and 3 days. Her life was full of sunshine; she always had a kind word for every one with whom she came in contact; she was endeared to many loving friends outside of her immediate family. Her last illness was accompanied with intense suffering, which she bore without a murmur. All that medical skill and the best of nursing could do, was done. She leaves her mother, Mrs. A. M. Peters, and one sister, Cecil M. Fisher, to mourn their loss, besides many near relatives and loving friends.

The funeral services were held at the U. B. meeting-

house, at Cedar Point, three and one-half miles east of Sidney. Interred in Graceland Cemetery, at Sidney, Elder David M. Bartley, of Crawfordsville, Ind., speaking very comforting on the occasion.

WM. HANCE.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 70. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1902. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE FULLNESS OF THE DIVINE BLESSING.

"BLESSED be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved: in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."—Eph. i. 3-7.

BELOVED IN CHRIST:—The words of Scripture are right and true and wonderful, and none more wonderful in their all-comprehensive fullness than this text, addressed to the saints at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ. In this one sentence almost every part of the doctrine of Christ and the fullness of salvation is included. Blessed with this wonderful revelation to his faith, Paul blessed God for what he is in himself, and for his unspeakable gift and blessing to his chosen people, and mentions the chief of the infinite blessings. Let us follow the inspired apostle. Our blessed God is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is as well our God and Father, in the sacred relationship that the Lord Jesus is ours, and ours in all that he is to God and in all that he does. At the conquered grave he said to Mary: "Go unto my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." The night before the holy Son of God died on the cross, he prayed to God for his people, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." In the text Paul testifies how all this shall be accomplished. It is a blessed and sacred truth, then, that the God of his covenant people is as well their everlasting Father. Both these ever-enduring relations exist in our Lord Jesus Christ; for in him only are we the blessed people of God, and his beloved children. Every sacred and holy tie that binds and endears us to God is in his well beloved Son. We cannot too well understand this fact, nor too humbly and gratefully cherish it, lest we forget and think of ourselves more highly than we ought. The holy child Jesus is the only begotten Son of God; therefore our sonship to God and his Fatherhood to us is in our Lord Jesus Christ. It is in his life manifested in us that we are the chil-

dren of God, and in his obedience only shall we be made righteous.

Let us observe that a right spirit and a true conception of God ever leads us to bless, adore and extol his holy name, and banishes the thought that would say, "Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" The child-like, meek and true spirit will ever say, "Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name." "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." The spirit of sonship is to thank the Father, the Lord of heaven and earth, for all that he is, and for all that he does, though he is sovereignly discriminating in hiding himself and the things of his kingdom from the wise and prudent, and revealing them unto babes. But the spirit of the flesh and of worldly wisdom is to cavil, object to and find fault with God, because he is the Lord God Almighty, and does not conform to the will and ways and works of men.

"Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." What God doeth is forever. He changes not; but from eternity to eternity he is the same. "For the gifts and callings of God are without repentance." That is, he does not turn from them or recall them. "For all the promises of God in Christ Jesus are yea, and amen, to the glory of God by us." The blessing of God is done, is eternal and unchangeable. "Hath blessed us." This is in the perfect tense. The people whom he hath thus blessed did nothing to move him thereunto, nothing to obtain his blessing; neither can they do anything to turn this blessing of God into a curse, or to cause him to change and revoke the blessing. It is positively unconditionial on their part, and it is forever. The full measure of the divine blessing of our blessed God is, "all spiritual blessings." This is infinite fullness and riches of blessing. Nothing can be taken from it, nor anything added to it. It is unsearchable, incomprehensible, and as enduring as eternity. It is impossible to conceive of the smallest heavenly blessing outside of or more than "all spiritual blessing." No enlightened mind will presume to say that our God has conditionally blessed us with any of the all spiritual blessings. For all the boundless fullness of this everlasting blessing of the Amighty Father is "in heavenly places in Christ." Therefore, they are as sovereignly unfailing and free as is our Lord Jesus Christ himself. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" Paul thus shows, for the assurance of our faith and hope in God, that as we had done nothing to move him to deliver up his holy Son for us all, as his unspeakable gift to his people, so with him he will likewise freely give us all other blessings of his love and grace. It is written of Jesus, "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." And he says, "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Words could not more clearly and fully express the entire freeness of all spiritual blessings, the inexhaustible treasury of heavenly grace. All, all as freely and surely given to us as the blessed Son of the holy Father's love. The infinite gift of his Son secured to us all things else, "all spiritual blessings." They are all in Christ. The Father is in Christ. "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." So the blessed Christ

is the fullness of heaven. We are in Christ. The innumerable brotherhood of saints is in Christ. In Christ his God and Father hath blessed us. Christ is our wisdom and righteousness, our sanctification and redemption, our resurrection and our life. We have salvation only in Christ. "He shall save his people from their sins." They have received of the Lord's hand double for all their sins. The double is eternal redemption, and "all spiritual blessings in Christ." The redeemed of the Lord shall go up into immortality and eternal glory, and find their Father and God, their heaven and blessed all in Christ. Blessed Christ! "Do not I love thee, O my Lord? Behold my heart and see, and turn each cursed idol out, that dares to rival thee." If I make my salvation, either for time or eternity, depend upon myself, my obedience or works of righteousness which I have done, and expect any of the spiritual blessings of God for what I have done in his service, is not this an idol and a rival of Christ? For it is attributing some of the blessings and gifts of salvation to myself and my works, instead of to Christ and for his sake. Even when we have served the best we are enabled to do, our Lord teaches his disciples to say, "We are unprofitable servants."

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." Paul said this of all the faithful in Christ, with the saints at Ephesus. They are all in Christ, and in him they are faithful, or have full faith in him, not in themselves; for in themselves they are not faithful. By the choice of God they are in Christ. God looked upon them or viewed them in Christ even then, when he chose them in him, and vouchsafed to them all spiritual blessings, both for time and eternity. To the brotherhood in Christ Paul therefore says, "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." For we and all our blessings of salvation are in the Lord. We are blessed with them all, not only in Christ, but also according as God hath chosen us in him. So then, all the blessed of God and saved in Christ were in him by the choice of God before the foundation of the world. Not in him in their persons, but in him in their life, with all their spiritual blessings. "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." "Your life is hid with Christ in God." This life God gave us when he gave us his Son. Therefore, Christ is our life. "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." And he hath not any spiritual blessing. Our identity and being is in our life. This is true of all animal and human beings, as the creatures of the Creator; it is also true of us as the brethren of Christ and the children of God. The life and head of the church is Christ, and the life and head of Christ is God. Paul says, "All are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation."

All who live and believe in Christ, as their righteousness and salvation, have faith to understand that they are now the children of God in Christ Jesus, and only because Christ lives in them, their hope of glory, and they live in him. Without Christ, they would yet be dead in their sins, and without God in the world. Thus it is true that our sonship unto

God was not in the life of Adam, nor is it now in our fleshly being as born of the flesh, but it was in the life of Christ, and is manifested in us as born of the Spirit of God. So as truly as Adam was and is our natural head and life, as the creatures of God, our Lord Jesus Christ was and is our spiritual head and life as the children of God. So it is only because we are Christ's, his people and brethren, and Christ is ours, that we receive eternal life and all spiritual blessings, now in time and unto blissful eternity. God hath now revealed these blessed things unto us by his Spirit, and they are true in us who are full of faith in Christ Jesus, our head, our life, our salvation, our all in all. But all this that is true in us and blessed to us now in time, causing us to rejoice in Christ, was just as true with God before time was born, when he chose us and blessed us in Christ. Every believer in Christ in all time was both chosen in Christ and given all spiritual blessings in him before the foundation of the world. Christ and all spiritual blessings, to help them on earth and to crown them in heaven, are the gifts of God's eternal love to them. And every one of the countless millions of redeemed and saved sinners are the people and children of God's love. So all spiritual blessings are the gifts of his love. They were unconditionally given us in Christ Jesus. Faith and hope and love in Christ, in whom we believe and rejoice, are to us now the Spirit's witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. These three now abide in us to whom they are given, and they are a precious foretaste of "all spiritual blessings," a three-fold chord that cannot be broken, and a sure promise of the full possession of the heavenly inheritance unto God in Christ, when time shall be no longer.

"That we should be holy and without blame before him in love." This is the blessed and holy purpose and end of God in his chosen people. They are a peculiar people, both to themselves and the world, a spectacle to men and to angels; for every one of them is a Shulamite, in whom is seen the company of two armies. For the children of God are partakers of flesh and blood, as well as partakers of the divine nature, and are those who are twice born or born again. The first birth is of the flesh, the last is of the Spirit. In the flesh they were unholy and condemned under the just and holy law of God, so that their salvation is according to the rich mercy and abounding grace of God in Christ Jesus alone. But as born again, born of God, they are freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and are the beloved children of God, his heirs and the joint-heirs with Christ to the heavenly inheritance and all spiritual blessings. The eternal purpose of God regarded them as sinners, unholy, guilty and righteously condemned under the law of God; for he chose and blessed them in Jesus Christ the righteous unto the end that they should be cleansed from all unrighteousness, washed from all their sins, made spotless and holy, and perfected in the love of God and comformed to the image of his beloved and altogether lovely Son. The omnipotent power of the Father's everlasting love, graciously and sovereignly bestowed upon his chosen people in Christ, their Mediator and immortal Head, and shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us, will thus purify all the sons of God and wholly sanctify them, until their whole spirit and soul and body shall be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, when he shall

bring all his saints with him in glory and present them faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

Chosen of God before time that they should be blessedly and divinely lovely as perfected in holiness, a choice supremely worthy of and glorifying to God in the highest, in due time he calls them with a holy calling, and they run after him, love him, because he first loved them, show forth his praise and find their supreme bliss in his loving service and praise. As new born babes, they desire the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby, having tasted that the Lord is gracious. "To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Behold, all the fullness of blessings in Christ Jesus are spiritual, all the chosen people of the Father's love are "a spiritual house," and all their offerings and devotions to the God of their salvation and worship, as "a holy priesthood," are "spiritual sacrifices," and all this spiritual house, and all their spiritual sacrifices offered up to God, are acceptable to him by our Lord Jesus Christ, our ever-living and glorious High Priest. All this glorious power of God in the salvation of his chosen people "he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."

How infinitely wonderful, glorious and blessed is all this! "My soul stands trembling, while she sings the honors of her God." O the precious name of Jesus! Aged, afflicted, reproached, persecuted, poor, weak and helpless, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior." Yea, I rejoice that I am counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. "It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him."

And now, my dearly beloved kindred in Christ, my earnest desire to God the loving and holy Father for you all is, "that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

In the faith and hope and love of Christ I am your brother companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,

D. BARTLEY.

MONTGOMERY, Ala., Feb. 3, 1902.

(Concluded next number.)

GENESIS XXXII. 24.

"AND Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day."

The life of Jacob is most interesting and instructive. His pathway, amidst the providences of his God, was a succession of changing scenes, wherein he proved the faithfulness and compassion of the Lord. The future scenes of our lives are hidden from our view. "We know not if the dark or bright shall be our lot; if that wherein our souls delight be best or not." To-day our portion may be in paths of pleasantness, to-morrow the storm may overwhelm us. Says Job, "I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came."—Job iii. 26. This was God sent trouble, else it never could have touched Job. All the vicissitudes of our lives are in the hands of our God, who apportions to each one according to the good pleasure of his will. This chapter from which our subject is taken gives us a glimpse of some of the varied scenes which God's providence accomplished in the life of Jacob. Having parted with Laban, his father-in-law, "Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanain." This day had a gladsome beginning for Jacob, God's host escorting him on his way. "Are not the angels all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation?"—Heb. i. 14. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him and delivereth them." Jacob forthwith sends messengers before him unto Esau his brother to acquaint him of his coming. "And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him. Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed." The day dawned with every encouraging prospect, and now dense clouds are gathering, and before the night enfolds the earth in its dark mantle Jacob is in trouble indeed. He exhausts all his wits contriving for the safety of his family, but in all his trouble he is graciously helped to pour forth his distresses unto the Lord. "And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Ruturn unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come, and smite me, and the mother with the children. And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude."

"Jacob was left alone." His family and all that he has have passed over the brook Jabbok, and now in the darkness of the night there remains the solitary one. I suppose he felt he could not pass over with the rest of the company, he could not lodge with them that night. In the deep distresses of his soul he chose to be separate from all earthly intercourse. It is not uncommon to those who fear the Lord to-day to feel that their peculiar case has separated them from their former companions, and beneath the chastenings of the Almighty the child of God "sitteth alone, and keepeth silence."—Lam. iii. 28. He feels unfit to associate with the family of God. Isolated by temptations, distresses or

guilt from all the kindred, he spends the night seasons in pensive disquietude. "I am like a pelican of the wilderness, I am like an owl of the desert. I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house-top." "Jacob was left alone." There was no friendly one to whom he could appeal for help, and like David when in the cave Adullum he could say, "I looked on my right hand and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul." Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed, his cogitations troubled him. How tossed to and fro was his soul! What will the morning bring forth? Truly we know not what shall be on the morrow. Will it be dark or bright? All now looks dark; Esau and four hundred men are coming to meet him. He remembers his brother's threats to kill him. (Gen. xxvii. 41.) He remembers how because of Esau's anger he fled from him to Padan Aram. His conscience accuses him of his guiltiness in supplanting his brother, and the deception he practiced upon his father Isaac, and now he cries out, "Deliver me I pray thee from the hand of my brother Esau: for I fear him."

It was night.

"'Twas in the night when troubles came,
I sought my God for thee,
But found no refuge in that name
That once supported me."

There was darkness without, of that Jacob was not afraid, for oftentimes in the darkness of the night he had kept watch over his flocks, and sleep departed from his eyes. (Gen. xxxi. 40.) But there was a night felt within. His soul was laid in darkness in the deeps. His fears and unbelief, the remembrance of his sins, the accusations of Satan all combined to make this night the hour of darkness to Jacob left alone. "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it."—Jer. xxx. 7. Was Jacob also for a little while left alone by the Lord? Did God hide his face from him? "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment: but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." Jacob was left alone, but not for long. In the shades of the night there cometh one that layeth his hands on the distressed solitary one, and or ever he is aware, Jacob is in his grasp, and this one begins to wrestle with him.

"There wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." Is it Esau that has stealthily approached in the darkness that now has Jacob in his grasp? Once he struggled with his brother, (Gen. xxv. 22, 23,) and Jacob was the stronger. No, it is not Esau, it is the angel of the Lord in human appearance. (Hosea xii. 4.) This was not as some have erroneously taught the pre-existing manhood of the Son of God. For the manhood of Christ was of the seed of the woman, of the seed of Abraham, which when the fullness of the time was come (Gal. iv. 4,) was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary, and she by the power of the Highest overshadowing her was the mother of the manhood of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is far better to abide by the clear testimony of the Bible concerning the manhood of Christ than by a perversion of the Scriptures to build up a fanciful theory of an everlasting, pre-existing manhood. The angel said unto Mary, "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus." The Virgin Mary was Christ's mother according to the flesh. "He sucked the breasts of his

mother." (Psalm xxii. 9, 10.) When the fullness of the time was come God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, and this time was, "In those days that there went out a decree from Cesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria."—Luke ii. 1, 2. How explicitly stated!

But let us return to the wrestlers. The man took hold of Jacob, then Jacob took hold of him. We never take hold of God, we never wrestle with the Lord until he takes hold of and wrestles with us. We never come to the Lord except he draws us. (John vi. 44.) We love him, but it is because he first loved us. (1 John iv. 19.) We are apprehended of Christ Jesus. (Phil. iii. 12.) Then we reach forth to apprehend the things which are eternal. We are arrested by the reigning grace of God, and the result of this grace working in us is that we lay hold on God, on Christ, on eternal life, and by a divine power we wrestle by faith and love, with prayers and tears until the blessedness of Christ is imparted to us. The Lord wrestles with his people to bring them down in the dust. He overthrows Jacob, and raises him up Israel. He is humbled in the dust, a poor, sinful, unworthy worm, but is so marvelously strengthened by the blessing of God who wrestled with him, that he arises strong in the Lord and in the power of his might as "a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth, to thresh the mountains and beat them small, and to make the hills as chaff." "I was brought low, and he helped me." There are times when the Lord has a controversy with his people. (Hosea xii. 2.) There are seasons for the trial of our faith; he pleads with his people. (Micah vi. 1, 2.) Yes, in various ways the Lord wrestles with his people; by his providence they find themselves in straits, in afflictions and temptations. The Scriptures afford us records of such wrestlings. Paul had such a wrestling. (2 Cor. xii. 1–10.) Moses also. What a wrestler he was for the tribes of Israel. (Exodus xxxii.) The Lord wrestled with Job, and as he approached him said, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me." And when Job was abased and cast to the earth he answered the Lord, "Behold, I am vile: what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth." Again the Lord challenged him, and took hold of him. (Job xl. 3–7.) And again Job is prostrated, and he answered the Lord and said, "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? Therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak; I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." As the Lord wrestles with his people, bringing them low, they are enabled to lay hold upon his promises, to plead with the Lord his own immutability, and the honor of his name. This is a divine miracle, that a sinful creature should wrestle with the Lord. A miracle of God's own invincible grace in the heart of a poor sinner. Draw near and look with sacred eyes at Jeremiah wrestling in prayer with God. "Hast thou utterly rejected Judah? hath thy soul loathed Zion? why hast thou smitten us, and there is no healing for us? we

look for peace, and there is no good; and for a time of healing, and behold trouble! We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers; for we have sinned against thee. Do not abhor us, for thy name's sake; do not disgrace the throne of thy glory: remember, break not thy covenant with us."—Jer. xiv. 19-21. When the Syro-phenician woman came unto Christ in behalf of her daughter, he wrestled with her, and she wrestled with him. First, he answered not a word, then again he answered, "I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But she clings yet more to him, and worshiped him, saying, "Lord help me." But Jesus replied, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs." Is she not now cast from him, overthrown, a dog in the dust? But like Jacob she wrestles still, she clings to Jesus still, and her faith is saying, I will not let thee go except thou bless me, and she said, "Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the Master's table." She prevailed, and Jesus blessed her there, and said unto her, "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt, and her daughter was made whole from that very hour."—Matt. xv. 22.

"Wrestling prayer can wonders do,
Bring relief in deepest straits;
Prayer can force a passage through
Iron bars and brazen gates."

(Concluded in next number.)

IONA STATION, Ontario, Feb. 7, 1902.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—It is, I think, with a sense of my unworthiness that I address you as above, or seek to trespass upon your time by asking you to peruse anything that I may write; it seems like venturing too far, but since coming home from the Duart meeting, I have had you very much in my mind. In conversation, for the most part, I seem as it were within prison walls, so that it is seldom that I have liberty in talking, and the thought is often suggested that if I know anything of a work of grace in the heart, I could sometimes talk. I have to conclude sometimes that this is true, and that the evidences are all against me, but I think that I can say such is not always the case. I think that I can say of a truth that I do have seasons of rejoicing in my heart, as I had, if not sorely mistaken, at the Duart meeting, by which it would seem I was lifted up high on the mountain, and from which, if needs be, I must take another tumble. Pardon this expression. As a result it seems to me that I have had some of the sweetest meditations of my life, have been enabled to look back over all the way in which, as I hope, the Lord has led me, and have viewed with extreme pleasure many of the times in which by the embrace of his loving arms I was prevented from going in the broad path wherein my willing feet were only too ready to lead me. O, how often on my bed at night, or about my daily employment, am I made, as I am now while I am penning these lines, to shed tears of joy at the goodness of the Lord towards me. My joyful times however seem few and far between; I travel most of the time in much darkness and great sorrow of soul, so that at times I am brought very low in mind.

On one occasion, about two years ago, the conviction that I was a deceiver, and was deceiving the church, fastened itself upon me, and the array of evidences in proof of the same, seemed to accumulate so thick and fast one night as I lay upon my bed, that I was brought to the very verge of despair; I thought that perhaps in a few moments more I would be a

raving maniac. But my desire was, as I hope, unto the Lord; I felt sure that he had all power in heaven and in earth, and in all deep places, and I felt to hope that whatever might befall me, he would still watch over me and care for me. In my extremity the dear Lord, as I hope, turned his ear again to me, and heard my cry, and indited for me a prayer which he would hear, viz: "Restore unto me the joy of my salvation." My mourning was at once turned to joy, so that I rejoiced, as I sincerely hope, with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and one hour by the clock seemed but ten minutes only. I mention this as one of the several things in which, since I became a member of the church, I have been brought very low in spirit through the feeling of unbelief which seems to be the bane of my life.

Since the Duart meeting I have had some pleasant reflections and meditations upon what I saw and heard there. I think I was more edified than ever before in my life; it seems so to me. Your remarks in Dunwich, with reference to your feelings when speaking before the Lord's chosen ones, were very touching to me. In my feeble attempts to say a few words at my table, as I sit to partake of the necessaries of life, those very thoughts are I think I may say always uppermost in my mind; and your remarks along that line seemed to me the richest part of your discourse that evening. Your remarks on Sunday, at Duart, upon the marriage supper of the Lamb, were precious to me, as they seemed to agree exactly with my experience. I have this very winter had that text considerably in my mind, and it seemed somewhat perplexing to me. I could not think that it was proper to go out and take one by the arm, and tell that one to come in and unite with us, and say, "Yes, you must come," and "Now is the time." No, I could not approve of that view of the matter, but as you spoke of the compelling power of the gospel of the blessed Lord, it found sweet acceptance in my poor heart, for I felt that when I went to the church, it was because I was compelled to it, and many have been the trials which I have had since then through the fear of having run before I was sent. No one then asked me to come. It simply seemed as if there was no going past the time, which I firmly believe was the time appointed of the Lord, if so be that I am one of the little ones chosen in Christ in eternity, or before ever the earth was.

My blindness, ignorance and unfruitfulness in the things of the spiritual kingdom of our God, has been a source of much grief and trouble of soul to me. It has been only within a couple of hours of this time that my mind has been set at rest somewhat at least with regard to these things. In my trouble and anxiety about my inability to talk freely upon spiritual things, it occurred to me that if I could talk with the liberty I so often desire, I would have to preach. O, how glad I was made to feel that if I am what I hope I am, a subject of saving grace, it was enough, and a feeling of contentment came over me which made me, for a little time at least, desirous of submitting to the will of God in all things, with a seeming desire to say that I thank God that I am what I am.

I enjoy the SIGNS OF THE TIMES very much, many of the articles are precious reading to me, and although I cannot say so of all, I do not feel like charging the fault upon the writers. No, not by any means, for I confess that I myself am blind. I have as yet, especially since I became a member of the church, never

heard the doctrine of election and predestination either written or spoken too strongly for me, and what is more, I conclude it cannot be done. I believe that we who constitute the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, are truly a people highly favored of the Lord, inasmuch as he has sent and continues to send to us those who are truly called of God to preach the riches that are in Christ Jesus, and this is the only name under heaven, given amongst men, whereby we must be saved.

Now, my brother, I have extended my letter to a much greater length than I intended when I began to write, but I have felt like expressing to you some of the sentiments of my heart, from the quiet seclusion of my own home, which seems to me impossible under any other circumstances to do. Now the suggestion has come that you will think by my writing that I am doing so for publication. I will confess right here that the thought has often come to my mind in times gone by, that I would like to figure, so to speak, among the great of the earth, but a consciousness of my weakness of mind, my proneness to evil, the vanity of my nature, and above all, as I hope, a realizing sense of my sinfulness in the sight of a just and holy God, are such as I feel does eliminate from my mind, to a great extent at least, the desire to appear prominent among men.

I am glad of many things revealed in the Scriptures; I am glad it was written of Moses that he was slow of speech, and that "Blessed are the poor in spirit," and that "Not many wise men after the flesh are called, and not many noble," and that the blessed Savior gave thanks to his Father that "He had hid these things from the wise and prudent, and had revealed them unto babes," and "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Such Scriptures seem to reach my case, and therefore afford me comfort and consolation. These, together with the pleasant meditations with which I have been favored since the Duart meeting, seem to have renewed in me joyous anticipations of that inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away, and which is reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

But I must not continue longer, time forbids it, and your patience must be nearly exhausted. I would like a letter from you, but I know that your time is much occupied, so will forbear making the request. In what I have written, self seems to have been the most prominent feature. My greatest concern is about this; I have no anxiety about the Lord's people ever failing of their inheritance; they shall all come to glory at last, I am sure, but whether I am one of that number who find shelter under the robe of Christ's righteousness, is the great question with me.

May the Lord watch over you for good, and keep you faithful to the end of your pilgrimage. Will you sometimes remember me in your petitions at a throne of grace? My family join with me in extending to you our kind regards.

I remain, I hope, your brother,

J. T. KERR.

[UPON the receipt of the above letter we wrote to brother Kerr, asking that we might be allowed to publish it, or so much of it as was not of a personal nature, and have received his consent to do so. Many things in it have come very closely home to ourself. How full of interest must narrations of daily travel in

the pilgrimage of believers always be to all their fellow travelers. Christian experience does not cease to go on when believers are added visibly to the church; the after travel of the Lord's people is as full of revelations of his grace as their experience before that time. Our dear brother writes of his daily travel, and we are sure that it will describe the travel of many others, and be of encouragement to them.—ED.]

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 24, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I send the inclosed letter for publication in the SIGNS. The spiritual reader will not need to ask why I send it? Sister Attie does not write letters to me and others with a view to their publication, but she has given me liberty to publish any one when I wish to do so, as she knows I find sometimes in a private letter a freedom of soul and of expression, a spiritual frankness and power that does not always appear in one written for publication. I have many from her and others which I feel like sharing with the household of faith as soon as I read them, and which, if I were an editor, I should at once "hang on the hook" to be printed as soon as space could be found for them. But now and then there is one which appears to my mind so especially timely, appropriate and comforting, that I feel constrained to "send it around" to the rest of the family.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

LAWRENCE, Mass., Feb. 23, 1902.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I expect you are declaring the unsearchable riches of Christ, unless you are sick. You know very well I would be glad if I could hear the sound of your voice while you are setting forth the things of the kingdom of our God. There is nothing so cheering and full of comfort as Jesus Christ the Savior of sinners. I am never weary of listening, speaking or writing, for it comes into my mind often with such power and sweetness it all seems new. There are times when it seems far beyond my reach, and I do not feel the power of it, but I know it has not changed. I am being led in another place and taught some useful lesson, and by and by the power of divine things is felt again, and again it all seems new. Do you not think Paul had reference to the different exercises of his mind, when he said he had learned in whatsoever state he was to be content? We are taught, and we do learn that the various exercises we have, are all for our good. When we are in darkness it is not because the Lord has left us, or we have committed more sin than usual, but simply the way he is leading us, and teaching us how dependent upon him we are. When we are sweetly rejoicing in him, it is not because we have done some good thing, or become better in any way than our brother or sister, but because it has pleased the Lord to make the power of these divine things felt in our hearts, and it brings a joy which the word "unspeakable" fully expresses. The natural man and carnal mind cannot find out and understand these things. They are hid, and come only by revelation. I think very likely I have written it several times in letters to you, but I feel it will bear repeating, and then I shall not have told all the fullness. I seem to realize more and more as the days pass away how much I need just such a Savior as Jesus, one mighty to save, no sin so vile that his blood cannot cleanse; no sinner so great that his power

cannot save. This is the name which we love to exalt and hear exalted. We have been taught that without Jesus we can do nothing. The wisdom of this world did not teach us that we were sinners justly condemned, nor reveal Jesus as our Savior. It was the Lord's work. While I have been busy each day the last few weeks the Lord has been mindful of me, and given me many precious thoughts; sometimes a verse of Scripture, and sometimes the verse of a hymn has sung itself over and over in my mind. One verse in particular the last two weeks has seemed more like a text and a sermon, and I wish I could write you as it has flowed through my mind:

"Thy ways are little known
To my weak, erring sight;
Yet shall my soul, believing, own,
That all thy ways are right."

I have felt how little I did know the ways of the Almighty, and how weak and erring my sight was. How little I understood of the way I had been led, and yet there was something within assuring me that I did believe and know that all his ways were right, and my soul, believing, owned it. It is the work of God when we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. How every passage of Scripture and our experience cuts off all boasting.

The thought came early this morning of how the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost were one, and that the Spirit, the water and the blood agree in one. The Spirit of truth always testifies of Jesus, and brings to our remembrance what Jesus has said unto us. He can never take the likeness of sinful flesh again, and die to redeem his people, for he satisfied every jot and tittle of the law, he finished the work the Father gave him to do, and there can be no more shedding of blood, for he was a perfect sacrifice. He redeemed his people, and they are saved with an everlasting salvation. I know these are the very truths you are declaring to-day, even if I cannot hear you. Your theme must be of a God who changes not, whose mercy endureth for ever. The flesh and blood of Jesus must be presented as the meat and drink of his people. He is the Savior of sinners, and has been wrought in our soul the hope of glory, and it is a good hope through grace, for the Lord has done it. No works of our own to be found here. It is glad tidings to the sinner who knows he is vile and helpless, to have an all-sufficient Savior presented to his view. One who comes right where he is, and pours the oil on his wounds, and brings him out of the horrible pit and miry clay, and sets his feet upon a rock, and establishes his goings, and puts a new song into his mouth.

"No voice can sing, no heart can frame,
Nor can the memory find,
A sweeter sound than Jesus' name,
To those of heavenly mind."

The Lord's people want to hear of a God who has all power, wisdom and knowledge; who speaks, and it is done; as David testifies, "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek;" as the leper experienced, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean, and he said, I will, be thou clean, and immediately he was healed." The witness within testifies that I, too, have been taught by this same powerful God.

I have been trying to tell you of how my mind has been led into the comfort of these precious truths as I have been busy, but I feel I have come far short, and I have not answered your letter at all. It may be in my mind to write again soon, for I do not intend to let a long time pass without speaking to you, although sometimes many things do hinder me

and keep me from that pleasant task. It may be all the better for you. I was very glad of your letter, and will try next time to answer it. I hope you are all in usual health, and you are able to attend your appointments, and that the Lord will bless your labors among the people. May he bless us with the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit.

Your loving sister in hope,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

RIPLEY, Oklahoma, Dec. 30, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I send a letter for publication from our esteemed brother, Elder E. A. Norton. He is a sound minister, and a very exemplary man. I received much comfort in reading his letter, and think it too good to cast aside. If you deem it worthy, I would like to see it in the SIGNS. It was not written for publication, but I do not think that he will object.

Your sister,

(MRS.) V. McCOLLUM.

HAMPTON, Iowa, Nov. 15, 1901.

MUCH ESTEEMED SISTER:—Your welcome letter of the 10th inst., was received and was read with the greatest pleasure, and it was like wine upon the lees, well refined. It caused your unworthy brother, if one at all, to rejoice. It caused the tears to flow down my cheeks, as you spoke to the praise of Zion's King, who is Lord of lords, and in whom we live, move and have our being. Now surely had I not been taught in the same school of Christ, it certainly would have been a dead letter to me, and like sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. It caused my mind to run back over forty-five years, as you remarked, when I passed through the same trial which you experienced when all hope was gone, and I was made to cry, "Lord have mercy, if it can be consistent with thy holy will, for thou art just; and if my soul were sent to hell, thy righteous law approves it well." I felt to be such a sinner. But in a twinkling my burden was gone, and I was made to rejoice in a Savior's love, all nature seemed to be praising his holy name, even the birds of the air in their songs were praising him; everything was changed. I thought that I would never see trouble again, but alas, it was only a few days ere I got into doubting castle again, and I tried to get my burden back again, and if ever a poor sinner prayed, I prayed that it might return again. But it never did return again.

Now my dear old sister, I will digress here and make an application, and try to tell to what and where this will apply: Moses was a full type of the law; the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. The law was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ; the law was added for transgression; there is no life in the law; if there were, Paul says, Then righteousness should have been by the law. The law is the ministration of death. When the commandment comes, sin revives, and we die; it kills; there is no life in it. Now Moses, for the transgression of the law, was never permitted to enter the promised land, but was led up on Mt. Nebo, and was given but a view of the land, and his body was buried, and his sepulcher has never been found to this day. Now, my sister, that sepulcher was our burden, and you and I, and all who have been born again have tried to find it, but never have been able to do so to this day. Thus Moses' tomb is a type of the burden of sin, but Jesus the mediator of the new covenant of grace has taken away the burden. It was not by works, but of grace, for there was not

a particle of spiritual promise in the old covenant, there were only promises of a temporal nature for obedience to the law, the transgressor must suffer and pay the penalty demanded by that law.

Notice right here, that no one but an Israelite could transgress that law, for it was given only to Israel, and no other nation was ever under it, save Israel, so none could transgress that law as an Israelite could, and he well knew that the transgression of it was death. All looked to Moses to intercede for them, which he often did, and many times the Lord granted his intercession. Now we who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, when all our prayers and supplications were to the Lord that we might be relieved of that burden of sin which was so heavy, in the beginning fled to this law for justification through our own righteousness, and learned that the law was but a schoolmaster, we worked out all that we could do, and the end of all our works was that we gave up all hope, and felt that we must perish, and that if we were sent to hell it was but just. But right here we found Jesus, the end of the law for righteousness to all who believe. He paid all our debt, therefore we are no more under the law, but under grace. There is now to us no more condemnation, for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death, and now we walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.

My dear aged sister, I could write more upon this subject. I hope that you can understand me, and I hope it will edify you. If so, give to the Lord all the praise. I am but a poor old sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all. I did not think to write this way, when I began, please throw the mantle of charity over it. Now I will close, hoping that this will find you well. May God's blessing rest on you in your declining years, is the prayer of a poor old sinner.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

E. A. NORTON.

MATTOON, Ill., Feb. 17, 1902.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—I am heartily ashamed to think I have gotten so much behind with my subscription account, but circumstances have been such that it seemed almost impossible for me to do any better. Please credit my account with amount of inclosed draft. I thought I should have to discontinue my subscription to the SIGNS, but when I remembered that I had been a patron for a little over forty years, and a reader several years longer, I did not have the heart to order a discontinuance, so I will try to pay for it while I live, for at best I will not be here many years longer. If the doctrine that has been so ably advocated in the columns of the SIGNS since the issuing of the first number, up to the present time, is not true, and in full accord with the teachings of Christ and the apostles, then surely I am ignorant as to what gospel truth really is. It is the sole and only basis of any hope or comfort I ever have. This life affords nothing in the way of substantial happiness and joy. The social, commercial, political, or even the religious world, so called, have no charms that will compare with the beauty, excellency and infinite sweetness of a moment in the court of our God. In the presence of our Lord there are pleasures for evermore, a blessedness that can never be moved in time or eternity. The world with all its wisdom, its boundless resources, cunning craftiness, scientific research, and extravagant claims in the way of bringing the ungodly to

Christ, has never yet been able to impart spiritual life and knowledge to a single one of all the countless millions of Adam's race. And what is more, they never will. All, all that have ever been brought to know Christ, and love his righteous kingdom, were taught of God and raised up by his everlasting arm of grace and power, and then were and are led by his holy Spirit, beside the still waters where they sit together in heavenly places in Christ. Grace crowns the entire work. The help of man is vain. The true followers of Christ have found this out in their experience. Their impotency is apparent at every point in their perilous journey. They need the helpful hand of the blessed Savior every moment. They would sink were it not for the everlasting arms of the Lord being underneath to support their trembling frames. Thus they all sing in precious unison and matchless harmony of the triumphs of grace, sovereign and unchangeable, "that first began the scheme to rescue fallen man." And more and better still:

"Grace first inscribed my name
In God's eternal book;
'Twas grace that gave me to the Lamb,
Who all my sorrows took.

Grace taught my soul to pray,
And pardoning love to know;
'Twas grace that kept me to this day,
And will not let me go.

Grace all the work shall crown
Through everlasting days;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

How wonderful the omnipotent and unchanging love of God! It is stronger than death or hell. Its riches are as unsearchable as the ways of God which are past finding out. The love of God by which we are constrained is from everlasting to everlasting. He is not for his children to-day and against them to-morrow. He is the same yesterday, to-day and for ever. Who shall dare to fix limitations for his wisdom, and set bounds to his high and exalted habitation? None of his finite creatures can do it. Life, death, things present or things to come, principalities, powers, heights, depths, nor any creature in heaven, on earth, or under the earth, can frustrate the purposes of God, nor distract or turn away the love he has for his people. Their salvation is amply secure, because they are kept by the power of God. Their righteousness is as faultless as spotless linen, for it is "of me, saith the Lord." This is good enough and sure enough for both time and eternity.

But I have rambled along to a greater length than I intended, yet I must say to the editors and the many able contributors to the SIGNS that I rejoice in the masterly and fearless manner in which the truth is presented so that it cannot be gainsayed, or even suffer at the hands of uncharitable critics. The spirit of meekness has generally prevailed, and does prevail among the brethren in their labors of love. May it continue thus, however exasperating the harsh words and uncharitable actions of their assailants may be. Let their threats be answered in the language of Nehemiah: "The Lord will prosper us; therefore we, his servants, will arise and build, for thou (Sanballat) hast no portion nor right nor memorial in Jerusalem."

As you will see from the date of this, it was written some time since and thrown aside, but I have now concluded to send it, trusting the free exercise of your judgment in its use.

Your brother in hope,

J. G. SAWIN.

ACTON, Texas.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I now will remit two dollars to pay for our family paper for this present year, and in all probability it is the last time I will ever be able to address you in this way of communication, as I will soon be in my sixty-second year, and am very feeble in health, but the good Lord has brought me along thus far through many dangers, seen and unseen, for some purpose. I have been a member in the Primitive Baptist Church for over thirty years, and I can say I cannot claim that I am any better in all this time than I was when I was first received in the church, but I hope God has enabled me to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth, but my fleshly nature remains the same; when I would do good, evil is present with me, and how to perform that which is good I find not; then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. O, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Jesus is our deliverer and our Savior, there is no other name given in heaven or among men whereby we must be saved, only the name of Jesus; that was his mission from his glorious habitation to this sinful earth: to save his people from their sins, and I believe he accomplished just what he came to do. He was their sin-bearer; all sins, past, present and to come; he fulfilled the law in that which we could not do, and satisfied the demands of justice, paid the debt for all his people, and now they are no more under the law, but under grace, and every one that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto him, for he says, No man can come unto the Father but by me; I am the way, the truth and the life; I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me, and this is the will of him that sent me, that all the Father giveth me, shall come unto me, and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. Yes, I believe all that were given him in that grace covenant will by his own mighty power be brought in that everlasting habitation, where there will be no more sickness, no more weeping, no more warfare with the poor and afflicted children of God, but it will be an everlasting habitation of joy and love; to sing the anthems of praise to our blessed Master, who has obtained our eternal and temporal salvation by the shedding of his precious blood. Not one moment of joy or comfort can we poor, helpless, finite creatures here enjoy without his aid, for every blessing we poor worms of the dust receive, whether temporal or spiritual, must come from him who created all things, both in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, dominions, principalities or powers; all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. He is an independent sovereign over all the works of his hands, and has a perfect right to dispose of all things just as is according to his divine will. If he wills to withhold blessings from his people, or sending rain upon the earth to bring seed to the sower, or bread to the eater, where is the power that can thwart him in his will? I am glad he has all power, both in heaven and in the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

In conclusion, I pray God that he will lead us all in the path of humility, and may we ever be found walking in the footsteps of Jesus. May the editors of our family paper; the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, be blessed with the holy Spirit,

that they may be enabled to still contend for the truth, as it has from its first edition to the present time. Now, do with this imperfect scribble as you think best. If published, correct mistakes. Farewell to all, perhaps for the last time.

Your brother I hope in the Lord,

W. L. McPHERSON.

FEBRUARY 24, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Elder Pate's letter in the Feb. 15th issue of the SIGNS was a word fitly spoken, and made me think it might be a blessing to any Old School Baptists, or our friends, as well as to the churches out west, to give through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the location of some of the Baptist churches of this State, for of the contemplated immigration to the northwest, estimated by the transportation companies at 200,000, during the coming season, there surely will be a few of our kindred in Christ who would prefer to locate near a church, and I know all sound Baptists will receive a hearty welcome from their western brethren. The following churches belong to the Siloam Association of Oregon and Washington, and no doubt any one wishing information about the country could obtain it by writing to the addresses given below, viz:

Sulphur Creek Church, in Lewis Co., Wash., west of the Cascade Mountains: Elders W. R. Belcher, Mossy Rock, and L. F. Riffe, Riffe, Lewis Co., and brother I. F. Coleman, Riffe, Church Clerk.

Harmony Church, eastern Washington: Elders B. S. Pate and I. N. Newkirk, brother C. C. Hubbard, Church Clerk, Dayton, Wash.

Pleasant Grove Church, middle south Washington: Elder J. P. Allison, Grass Valley, Oregon, (Mrs.) Minnie Hess, Church Clerk, Goldendale, Wash., where the church meets.

Arm of Pleasant Grove Church, middle Washington: Elders W. H. Gilmore and W. J. Hess, (Mrs.) Sonora A. Hess, Church Clerk, all of R. D. No. 3, North Yakima, Wash.

There is a church not belonging to Siloam Association, with Elder G. E. Mayfield, Elgin, Union Co., Oregon, pastor, also other churches, but not knowing full address of pastors or clerks, will only add there are eleven churches in Oregon belonging to the Siloam Association. The association meets with the church near North Yakima, Wash., beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in June, 1902, continuing three days. Any of our brethren or sisters of the east or middle west who may be here looking for a location, could get a lay over ticket to North Yakima, for the meeting, where they could expect to find messengers from nearly if not all the churches of the Siloam Association, and a cordial welcome among us.

Hoping you will give this a place in the SIGNS, I am yours in hope of eternal life,

(MRS.) SONORA A. HESS.

ST. THOMAS, Ont., Feb. 9, 1902.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find two dollars to pay for the dear old SIGNS. I hope, if it is God's will and pleasure, to take it as long as I live, for I get so much encouragement and comfort from its pages, that I am sometimes amazed and astonished that it does not find its way into every Old School Baptist family in the land. Dear Elder Durand's last "Fragments" were particularly good and instructive. O, how I enjoyed these articles, as I do most of his. I hope God may spare his life yet many years to

proclaim his truth, and that he may visit us in the near future, as he has done for a great number of years, coming once each year, and always acceptably.

Dear brethren everywhere, I do firmly and truly believe the SIGNS is getting better each and every year; if it is God's will, to whom we must submit in all things, I hope it may continue. God bless the editors and writers.

Your brother in hope,

A. J. BLACK.

P. S.—I thought I was through, but after reading dear Elder May's letter, my poor heart went out in love to him, he writing so plainly what I felt in regard to our inability to do anything good of ourselves; I thought, Well, if Elder May is so weak and poor, what of me? I am the poorest of the poor, and fear most of the time that I am deceived, and have no part or lot in the matter.

Looking over the paper, which is all good, still further on I fully agree in every particular, editorial or otherwise. Although not a reader so long as our dear unknown brother West, it did me good to see his firmness and love for the truth, and I hope I took courage from some strong and good points made by him.

A. J. B.

MAYFAIR, Ontario, March 5, 1902.

G. BEEBE'S SON—VERY DEAR FRIEND:—Inclosed find twenty-four dollars, for which give credit on subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as directed below. The list is the same as last year with one new subscriber added. I am sorry I could not add any more names to the list. It does seem strange to me that more do not take it. We would not know how to get along without it.

Elder Chick was at the February meeting, but he did not fill his appointment at Ekfrid; on account of sickness in the locality the meeting was canceled, and those that could not get to the February meeting were very much disappointed. I do not get to any meeting outside of Ekfrid, as my aunt is up in years and quite feeble, will be seventy-nine if she lives to the 15th of this month. So you can imagine that I was disappointed not hearing Elder Chick preach, but I understand they had a real good meeting, and I hear there are five to be baptized at the May meeting.

Your friend,

THOMAS A. ARDIES.

FREMONT, Neb., March 1, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed please find money order for two dollars for my SIGNS, which I find is again due. I feel that I want to be prompt in my payments for our family paper, and am sorry I am not able to contribute more than this, that others who are not blessed as abundantly as myself in this respect, could be able to share the benefits and privileges of so valuable a paper as the SIGNS. I wish I could have had something cheering and pleasant to communicate to our kindred in the Spirit, that might at least cause one weary pilgrim to have a feeling of fellowship for me, and I should feel repaid, but alas for me, I know I am unworthy the least favor from one of God's humble poor, and ought not to expect or ask it. But then if the spirit is willing and the flesh weak, was not this what we find Paul bemoaning in his daily walk? And we sometimes like him feel to thank God and take courage that it is as well with us as it is. I will not say any more this time.

Your most unworthy sister, if one at all,

ABBIE CODDINGTON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1902.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

OUR VISIT IN CANADA.

It was our privilege to attend the quarterly meeting of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, held the first Sunday in February and Saturday before, and Monday afterwards, at Duart, and it is in accordance with our own desire, and also with the expressed wish of the pastor, Elder Carnell, and others of the members of that church, that we will try to write some brief account of it. It is not our purpose to speak of the details of our trip there and back, or of the special places where our time was spent while there, but rather of the spiritual comfort of the meeting, and of the fellowship which was so apparent in the truth, and of the specially good preaching and conversation to which we were permitted to listen and enjoy. We have seldom heard as well as it was given us to hear at that meeting. With all the gladness of the meeting, we could but feel an element of sadness as well; two years ago it was our privilege to be at the same place, at the quarterly meeting; that was the first time we had ever visited the brethren in Canada, and that meeting was full of precious things, the memory of which has not faded yet. But then we met their long time faithful pastor, Elder Pollard, and came to feel very near to him in the truth. Our feeling of sadness at this meeting was because of the remembrance that we should see his face no more on earth. We met his dear companion, and his children, and received a most cordial welcome from them.

The meeting really began on Friday evening, the church coming together for the transaction of business, and for the settling up, as we understood, of the accounts of the church. There was preaching on Saturday forenoon, and at four o'clock in the afternoon. At the close of the morning service a brother came forward and related a clear witness to a work of grace, and was solemnly and gladly received for baptism. On Sunday a. m. there were two sermons again, and afterwards a sister came forward and tremblingly gave a reason of her hope, and was with tears of gladness and joy received. Afterwards the supper was administered, and to us it proved to be a season of special solemnity and gladness. That afternoon again at four o'clock there was preaching. On Monday there was a short sermon in the morning, and then all the rest of the brethren in the ministry spoke briefly, Then another sister came forward, and gave a clear testimony to the work of the Lord with her, and was welcomed most gladly. Two others, as we understood, are awaiting baptism. It appeared to us that many others were on the verge of taking up the cross, and becoming followers of the blessed Redeemer in his ordinances, in that section. We feel glad for that church, and for their pastor, Elder Carnell.

We cannot speak of all the preaching, but desire to say that Elders Eubanks and Curry were present, and both preached with much power, as it seemed to us. Especially on the last day Elder

Curry spoke briefly regarding the fact that some when they came to the church could say but little, and that afterwards they might be troubled, fearing that they had been received upon insufficient evidence. His remarks upon that theme were touching, and cheering, as we were assured, to many. Elder Eubanks came very near to many as he spoke briefly on Monday concerning the upper and nether springs. And Elder Carnell in some remarks upon christian fellowship came near to the hearts of all. We know that it was so with us.

We were glad indeed to see the love and fellowship which has sprung up between that people and their pastor. Elder Carnell has not been with them many months, but deep attachment and full confidence was apparent among them. This is of the Lord, and it is good that it is so. May pastor and people be made more and more a blessing to each other as the years pass away. Elder Carnell spoke often in our hearing of the gladness and freedom which he felt among all that church, and of the pleasure it was to him to find them so ready to converse in their homes about the things of the kingdom of God. The little that we have been among the brethren in Canada has convinced us that they love the theme of the love and grace of God to poor sinners. May it ever continue to be so with them.

We did not wish to write lengthily, and so will close these remarks. As we cannot write personal letters to all whom we met, and from whom we received special kindness, we trust that we may be permitted to express our thanks to one and all in this general way. From the time when we entered the pleasant home of brother Robert Scates, in London, Ontario, and met a hearty welcome from both himself and his companion, until we parted from them all at the close of the meeting, we received nothing but kindness from all. May God bless and keep his people there, from all the evil that is in the world, is our prayer.

C.

PSALMS LXXVI. 10.

"SURELY the wrath of man shall praise thee, and the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."

How incomprehensible to the carnal mind is the above Scripture. Natural reason cannot understand how the wrath or wickedness of man can be to the praise of God. Yet the psalmist says, *Surely* it shall redound to the praise of God. Not only the wrath displayed at certain times, but *all* wrath that is not restrained, for all that is not to his praise he will restrain; therefore all that he does not restrain must be to his praise. There are many circumstances in the Scripture where this wrath of man has been manifested to the praise of God. If any of the persecuted saints had met Saul on his start for Damascus, when he was "exceeding mad," and breathing slaughter against them, how utterly impossible it would have been for them to discern how his rage and hatred to the christian faith, and the disciples, could be to the praise of God. But Paul's wrath could only continue to the extent the Lord purposed it should, and the remainder God restrained. At midday this boasting pharisee is stricken to the earth, while surrounded with his guard, and armed with all the authority of the Roman law. Where now is this mighty Saul? Groveling in the dust, and though a pharisee of the pharisees, he for the first time in his life inquires, "Who art thou, Lord?" acknowledging that he had never known him. Can any subject of grace read

Paul's experience and not see wherein Paul's wrath was to the praise of God? O, says one, it was not Paul's wrath, but God overruling that wrath, that was to the praise of God. But the psalmist does not say so, he says, "The wrath of man shall praise thee, and the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." It seems to us that it was necessary for the wrath, in order that it might be so miraculously restrained. The Scriptures of both the Old and the New Testament, abound with incidents showing the mighty power of God in permitting just a certain amount of the wrath of man to flow from the corrupt fountain of his heart, and at the appointed second, or place, restraining that wrath. We might speak of Joseph's brethren; Pharaoh; Nebuchadnezzar, full of fury, and in fact the wrath of the whole world, concentrated and consummated at Mt. Calvary, all of which wrought the praise of God. Had not the wrath of the carnal Jews been vented on the blessed Savior, the whole covenant of salvation by grace would have been thwarted, but at the appointed time and place it was unrestrained, and their murderous spirit wrought just what God designed it should, and thus declared his praise, and proved his almighty sovereignty in causing their very wrath to do the very things that were prophesied of them centuries before, "that the Scriptures might be fulfilled."

Not only does the child of God have the truth of the psalmist's declaration proven to him by the incidents recorded in the Scriptures, but in a deeper and more sacred way is it revealed to him in his personal experience. The incidents in the Scriptures are, as it were, a type of what he finds in his christian warfare. By nature every child of God was a child of wrath, even as others, and was enmity itself to God, and not only had no pleasure in spiritual things, but they were hateful to him. And even after he has been quickened by the Spirit, they still remain hateful to his carnal nature, which is continually crying out, "We will not have this man to rule over us." Have you not, my dear brother or sister, experienced seasons when it seemed that your whole nature rose up in enmity and wrath against everything of a spiritual nature, and it seemed to you that you were the greatest infidel on earth, and if you were not such a hypocritical coward you would confess it to the brethren? If you have not, you have had a happier experience than the unworthy writer. When in this state of enmity to God, it is impossible for us to comprehend how such a condition can be to the praise of God, but when by divine grace we are restrained from continuing in this state of wrath, and the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, how our souls break forth in praise to God, and then we can join with Paul and say, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me," knowing that in our very weakness is our strength made manifest, "for when I am weak, then am I strong."

Then let us not say, There is not a needs be for these things, lest we come under the same condemnation as the two disciples that were on their way to Emmaus, whom the Savior pronounced "fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets had spoken," for not knowing from their prophecies that Christ "ought to suffer these things and enter into his glory." But let us join with the psalmist and say, "*Surely* the wrath of man shall praise thee," whether vain reason is reconciled or not. B.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

REMARKS ON JOHN V. 40, AND REV. XXII. 17–19.

G. W. POOL, of Mississippi, has requested our views on John v. 40, and Rev. xxii. 17, and brother Israel J. Miller, of Indiana, has asked for our views on Rev. xxii. 17–19.

Such views as we have, or may be enabled to give on these passages of Scripture, we will give in one reply. On all of these passages our views have frequently been called for and given on former occasions, but as many of our present readers have not access to our files, and as we hold no secret views on the subject of divine revelation, we will cheerfully comply with the desires of our brethren as frequently as they may have occasion to call on us, to the extent of such ability as God may be pleased to afford us, and at that point we desire always to stop, without thinking our own thoughts, or speaking our own words.

The text in John, which is often brought by those who oppose the doctrine of special, discriminating and sovereign grace, to perplex the minds of those who love the truth, reads thus: "And ye will not come to me that ye might have life." Without considering the connection of the subject, or the occasion on which, or the people unto whom these words were addressed, the advocates of free will and human power rudely detach them from the place where they belong in the Scriptures, and endeavor to make them appear to sustain the idea that the salvation of souls rests upon the will and work of men. And although we are expressly told that the new birth is not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, who sheweth mercy; that it is not of works lest any should boast, still they show a settled determination to make the Bible appear to be a book of contradiction, and to turn even the truth of God into a lie, by making it seem to say what it does not say, and to teach doctrines opposite and antagonistic to each other. But all those who fear the Lord will revere and tremble at the word.

In this text our Lord was addressing the work-mongrel, self-righteous Jews, whose religious proclivity, and self-confidence, were in the most perfect unison with the doctrine, and delusion which is held and cherished by all the Arminian tribes of the earth, who oppose the truth of God at this present day. Jesus had, as we are told in this chapter, healed the impotent man, and bade him take his bed and walk, and these ancient free-willers sought to put him to death for breaking the Sabbath. He had announced himself to be the Son of God, and they were still more intent to slay him for blasphemy, in making himself equal with God. He had also declared his sovereign power to give life to whomsoever he would, without even asking their consent or co-operation in the work, just as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will; and that the dead did at that time, and should continue throughout all time, to hear the voice of the Son of God, and live. The dead shall hear, and they that hear shall live. And furthermore, this same Son, with the same power and judgment which he then possessed, shall ultimately raise the dead and judge the world at the last day. And that the resurrection of all the human family from their graves should be by him effected by the same sovereign and irresistible power and majesty of his

voice, as in their being called by grace from death to life, when they are born again. But these declarations of his power and Godhead did not pacify them, nor did the unanswerable arguments incline them to yield their cherished doctrines of free-will and human power, nor divert them from looking away from the law, and their own willing and doing power for justification, to him as the only Savior, and the only way in which they can come unto the Father. Still, although confounded by his arguments, which they could neither resist nor gainsay, they cherished the prevailing delusion that the law, or the Old Testament Scriptures, possessed eternal life for them, on condition of their obedience to its requisitions. In them (the Scriptures of the Old Testament, the law of works, &c.,) they thought, as all their kindred of all ages think, they have eternal life, and therefore they see no need of Christ to save them. These Jews were as unconscious then, as the Arminians are now, of the truth of the declarations, By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God, and as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse. Hence they clung to the works of the law, to their own willing and doing, for justification and eternal life, and would not, had not the slightest inclination to turn away from themselves, from the law, and look or come to Christ for salvation. They had the same aversion to salvation through Jesus Christ, by sovereign, reigning and almighty grace, as have those who are of the same brood in our day.

Hence the words of our Lord to them, "Search the Scriptures." The New Testament was not at that time published; the law and the prophets were intended, and in them the carnal Jews thought they had eternal life; but they were mistaken, and so are all who hope for acceptance before God now on the ground of their own wills or works, mistaken. "They are they that testify of me." The law and the prophets testified of Christ as the Shiloh, the Messiah, the Lord God that should come with a strong hand, and his arm should rule for him, and that he would gather his sheep with his arm, &c. But these carnal Jews were not his sheep, as he had said unto them; and therefore they were the more deluded in thinking that in the law and the prophets they had eternal life. Again, the Old Testament testified of Christ that "A seed shall serve him; it shall be counted to the Lord for a generation." That they should all be taught of God, and that every one that heard and learned of the Father should come to Christ; that they should be willing in the day of his power. But these legal work-mongers did not possess these characteristics, these marks; they had not the will nor the power. Instead of a will to be saved by him, their will was to put him to death as a Sabbath-breaker, an impostor, and blasphemer. Jesus not only declared their utter destitution of a will to come to him for life, but he declared to them the reason why they were thus destitute of the will: First, because they had not been taught of God; for said he to them, "Ye have neither heard his voice at any time nor seen his shape," therefore they were not taught of him. All his saints have heard his voice, for says he, My sheep heard my voice, and I know them, and they follow (or come unto) me, and I give them eternal life. (John x. 27, 28.) And they see his shape, for they see Jesus, who is the image of the invisible God, the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. All who have seen him have seen the Father also, for they are one.

He is in the Father, and the Father is in him. These carnal Jews were not manifestly the subjects of saving grace, therefore they could see no attractions in him, for they had nothing in them to be attracted by him. They saw neither form nor comeliness that they should desire him or a knowledge of his ways.

"And ye have not his word abiding in you." In the absence of his word, they were dead in sin; for his word is Spirit, and it is life, but they had it not, and were therefore dead, and destitute of the power to will to come to him. The word was made flesh, or incarnate, and in him was life, but they had not the Word. The Word was with God, and the Word was God, and it is God that worketh in all in whom he dwells, both to will and to do of his good pleasure, in working out their salvation with fear and trembling. But as the Word was not in them, they did not and could not will to come to him for life. The Word of God is the Son of God, and life was given to all his members in him, so that he that hath the Son of God, or the Word of God, hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. And he that hath not life, certainly cannot possess the legitimate effects or functions of life. As evidence that they had not heard the voice, seen the shape, nor received the witness which the Father has given of the Son, they had not believed on him, nor in the testimony which he bore to the truth. All who are born of the Spirit, possess the Spirit, which is life, and the fruit of that Spirit is faith, and faith is indispensable to qualify any to believe in Christ, as all revelation of the Son of God is made to the faith, and not to the sense of man; consequently their rejection and unbelief was conclusive evidence that they were yet in their sins, and destitute of either desire or ability to come to him for life.

Another reason which Christ gave, was the impossibility that they should come to him for life unless they were drawn to him by the same power of the Father, which sent the Savior into the world. "No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day."—vi. 44. All who are thus drawn, are taught of God, and Jesus says that all who are taught of God come to him, and that of all who thus come to him, none shall be cast out. This embraces all his children, for "All thy children shall be taught of God." And it embraces all that the Father has given to the Son, for "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me, and him that cometh I will in no wise cast out." It embraces all the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, and all who are called by his name, and whom he has created for his glory, for he shall say unto the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth." But bring how many of them? "Even every one that is called by my name, for I have created him for my glory; I have formed him: yea, I have made him."—Isa. liii. 6, 7. All these, therefore, not only must, but by the immutable promise, and decree of Almighty God, shall come to Jesus, and be saved in him with an everlasting salvation. As he has said, "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory."—Isa. lv. 25. But, "They are not all Israel which are of Israel." Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are

counted for the seed."—Rom. ix. 6–7. These shall all come to Christ for salvation, and none but these can come: for no man can come unto the Father but by Christ. None can come to God unless they believe that he is; and that belief is the action of faith, and that faith is the gift of God; not of works, but of him that calleth; it is the fruit of the Spirit, and of the operation of God; it is the faith of the Son of God, and Jesus Christ is the Author and finisher of it. None but those who are under its power, have the will, the inclination, or desire, to come to him for life.

REV. XXII. 17.

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come." What Spirit? Whose bride saith Come, and to whom do they say Come? These questions are involved in the correct elucidation of the text. The Spirit of the gospel, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. The Spirit which is life and immortality. The Spirit which moved on the face of the great deep when all was without form and void. The Spirit that breathed upon the slain, in Ezekiel's vision, and quickened the dry bones. God, by his Holy Spirit, in the holy calling of all the heirs of salvation, says "Come." Does not invite them to come, but says, Come, with the same power and effect as when God said, "Let there be light." He speaks the word and it stands fast: he commands and it is done. An invitation leaves the person or people invited to accept or decline, as they may choose; but in the calling of God by the Spirit, he saith not unto the seed of Israel, Seek ye my face, in vain:

> "He speaks, and that almighty voice,
> Fulfills his great decrees."

The dead shall hear his voice, and they that hear shall live. At his voice the south gives up, the north resigns; from the rising of the sun to the extreme west, all who are called by his name, come with singing to Zion, and with everlasting joy upon their head. "And the bride says Come;" and as the bride is the Lamb's wife, and she is one with him, "They twain shall be one;" she has the Spirit of Christ. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." But, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Therefore, to what the Spirit of Christ says, the bride, the church of God, responds, therefore the Spirit says, come, and the Spirit in the bride says come, and this is said to every one that is called by Christ's name, as we have seen. Come where? To the River of Life, to the Holy City, New Jerusalem, to the Tree of Life, to the Fountains of living waters. Not to the mountain that might be touched, but to heavenly Jerusalem described in this and the preceding chapter; to the spirits of just men made perfect; to the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel; to Jesus, the Mediator; to God, the Judge of all. This calling of the Spirit and bride is not to the law, to Moses, to human aid, not to some wooden-bench, said to be anxious, not to a system of works, for they were all there before they were called experimentally by the quickening operation of the Holy Spirit. But, come from death to life; from darkness to light; from bondage to liberty; from sin to holiness; from Moses to Christ. "And let him that heareth say, Come." For they that hear shall live; they live by the spirit of life and immortality which distinguishes the Spirit and the bride. All who hear are brought manifestly into the unity of the

faith, and God teaches them a pure language, and in perfect harmony with the language of the Spirit and the bride, he that heareth will reiterate the language of the Spirit. "And let him that is athirst come." The river of life flows from the throne of God and the Lamb to supply the thirsty in the New Jerusalem, with its streams which make glad the city of God. The dead do not thirst, none but the living can desire or appreciate the living waters of the New Jerusalem, to the fountains of which the Lamb that is in midst of the throne shall lead his flock, and beside the which he maketh them to lie down in green pastures. And all as who have an ear to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches, are welcome to hear, are of those who are addressed, so the gospel, with all its promises, provisions and privileges, is addressed to those who have a desire for them; for none desire or thirst for them until quickened and made alive by the life giving Spirit of our God. To hunger and thirst after righteousness is a blessed state for a sinner to be in. Poor as they may feel, they are called to Come to the waters, and buy wine and milk, without money and without price. "And whoever will, let him take the water of life freely." As none but the living can thirst; so neither can any in an unquickened state have a will, a desire for the salvation which is of God. We have seen in our investigation of the first text, that God only can work in us to will and to do, or to make us a willing people, in the day of the Redeemer's power, therefore whoever will, is a subject of quickening power and saving grace, and let him take the water of life. How, conditionally? O, no; there are no conditions resting on the creature. If he has a hearing ear, God has furnished it. If he is thirsty, God has made him so. No man has power to make himself thirsty, and especially no dead man has that power, as all unquickened sinners are like the carnal Jews, without a will to drink of the waters which flow from Christ the Rock of our salvation, it is sufficiently discriminating to say, and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely, it flows freely, and it is without money and without price, and therefore the poor, the helpless, the wretched, and those who have nothing to purchase it with, are welcome to take it freely, and they must have it freely, unconditionally, and without fee or reward, or not at all.

"For I testify unto every one that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book." This is a fearful testimony which Jesus has sent his angel to testify in the churches. Should we add a single condition, to be performed by the creature to entitle him to the water of life, we add to what is written, and whatever we may teach or practice without a clear "Thus saith the Lord," is an adding to the words of the prophecy of this book, and all who do it shall receive at God's hand the plagues which are written. Of the nature of these plagues we cannot speak particularly in this already extended article. But it is spoken to those in the churches who should be rebuked and chastised when they presumptuously add to what God has said, or teach for doctrine the commandments of men.

"And if a man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." The Book of Life in this case, as

we understand, means the record of the living in Jerusalem, not the record of eternity, in which all the members of Christ are written, and from which they can never be blotted out, but the living in Jerusalem, or those in fellowship, and who have the privilege of his house. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. None even of the children of God are entitled to the fellowship of the church of God, and the privileges of his house, who walk not in obedience to the authority of Christ, as laid down in the New Testament. If they walk not according to this rule, they become the subjects of discipline, and if they persist in their unruly course, they are cut off from fellowship, and their part is taken out of the church, and as long as they continue thus they are to the church of God as heathen men and publicans. They being out of the bounds of the church, find for their companions, dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers, and whatsoever loveth and maketh a lie. This is not what is called falling from grace, for if they are subjects of the grace of God, they shall be brought back with weeping, but they fall from works, for want of grace to preserve them in the order and fellowship of the church of God. Many who have had a name to live, and who have been recognized as orderly members of the church, by disorder have forfeited their part in having a name to live, and as being entitled to the privileges of the church in her gospel order. Therefore take heed, and let him that standeth beware lest he fall; not from grace, but from his steadfastness in the truth.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 15, 1859.

PERSONALS.

CHILDS, Md., March 12, 1902.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—I send herewith two dollars for renewal of my subscription which has just expired. Will you kindly insert following in your valued paper:

To the many friends of Elder E. Rittenhouse:—Our recent request that our father's many friends would keep him in mind, now that he is under affliction and helpless, and write to him, has met with many kind responses, which he deeply appreciates. As we may be unable to reply to each one in turn as should be the case, we take this means of expressing our appreciation and thanks, trusting that the good work may continue. Kindly address him at his home, State Road, Delaware.

Brother Beebe, I was with father a portion of the day last Sunday, and my sisters told me that your own letter was the first received in response to the appeal made. He does not change any, to the eye, but his mind is not quite straight, and he travels in his sleeping hours, among his beloved people as before. These dream visits are real to him, and much of the time he thinks he is away from home somewhere.

Much of his correspondence had fallen off since he was unable to keep up his part of it, and this caused him much distress. It was for this reason that I sent you the notice, which you kindly inserted with best results.

Your brother, I hope,

E. B. RITTENHOUSE.

NORTH PLEASUREVILLE, Ky., March 7, 1902.

BROTHER CHICK:—Please say to Elder Durand, Please give us some more "Fragments," I like them very much.

C. F. DUDLEY.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—March 1st, 1902, our dear daughter, **Mrs. Pearl Merrick.** She was born April 6th, 1871, and was married to Dr. D. Q. Merrick, of Blossburg, Pa., July 11th, 1894. She was sick only four days, with what is called peritonitis. Her husband had left home on business a few days before, and was some distance away from his home when she was taken. A telegram was sent to him, but as it was the time of the high water, the railroads were bad, and he did not get home until she had passed away, although making every effort, even riding by wagon from Elmira to Blossburg Saturday night, a distance of nearly fifty miles. No one knows the anxiety and burden upon his mind all of that long, wearisome journey, but God and himself. He loved Pearl, and feels his loss greatly. He is a broken-hearted, lonely man. God alone can give him strength to bear him up under the weight of his severe affliction. She leaves of her immediate relatives, her husband, a little son six years old, Walter T. Merrick, father, mother, two brothers and five sisters, to mourn the loss of one dearly loved. Also many other relatives on the side of her husband, and her own people, and friends, deeply mourn their loss. She was well schooled in the line of music, vocal and instrumental, through the kindness of her uncle, brother James C. Beard. Having a good voice, and a love for music, she was often called upon to sing and play in public, which she did, but not for wages. She has told me several times that the hymns and pieces that she enjoyed most, but few seemed to be interested in, and when she sang what was not in her heart, it was only mechanical, which she had often done to please the friends. She generally appeared cheerful, and loved to see others cheerful and happy, but in her heart she had been sad much of the time since a child of ten or twelve years of age. I will quote a verse of poetry that she has repeated to me a number of times, as expressive of her feelings:

"You think I have a merry heart, because my songs are gay,
But O, they were all taught to me by friends now far away.
The bird that sings the sweetest note, some echo doth impart,
But underneath the sunniest smile, may lurk the saddest heart."

Her Bible shows what was in her heart and mind. Many, many marks are left to show her exercises of heart. She was received in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Pa., about twelve or thirteen years ago, and was baptized by me, and has always had her membership with us, being fully satisfied with the doctrine and order of the church, and said she could not feel at home religiously anywhere else, or among any other people, though all were very kind and friendly to her. All that friends, neighbors and three doctors could do, was done, but God's time had come to take her to her eternal home, and we fully believe that our loss is her eternal gain. God alone can give grace and strength to all of the sorrowing ones, and help us to say, "Thy will be done."

Funeral services were held in the Methodist meeting-house, in Blossburg, Wednesday, March 5th, at 3 p. m. Burial in Wellsboro, Pa., Thursday, 1 p. m.

D. M. VAIL.

Please publish this poetry, as it was one among many of her choice selections.

"I know not when on the heaven blue sea,
The boat of death shall be launched for me;
When the heart shall falter, the brain shall reel,
And the active fingers cease to feel:
But I know some time on the other shore,
The bark shall be anchored for evermore.

I know not how the change shall be,
Through what black waves of misery;
What clouds may gather or storms may beat,
Ere the outward voyage shall be complete,
But I know when the pain of the voyage is o'er,
I shall pass through the tempest nevermore.

I know not why I am waiting here,
And what I shall be doth not yet appear,
But I know some time the Lord shall call,
Without whose notice no birdlings fall,
And in pain or pleasure, toil or rest,
I shall be as his wisdom seeth best."

Dr. Albert Schumacker Atkinson departed this life in Baltimore city, on Monday, Feb. 24th, 1902, at the age of 31 years. His death was from heart disease, and was instantaneous. He was at the side of a patient who was in his charge, witnessing a surgical operation, when he said, "I feel faint," and before help could reach him was gone. His friends had known that he was a sufferer from an affectation of the heart, but had no thought of immediate danger, and the blow fell upon them with crushing force. About four years since, he was married to Miss Nellie M. Chick, daughter of one of the editors of the SIGNS. Of him we desire to say that a more kindly and thoughtful son, a more devoted husband and father, a more affectionate brother, and a more kindly man never lived. This is much to say, but it is true. Life was opening with many pleasant and bright prospects before him; he was succeeding in his chosen profession, to which he was enthusiastically devoted, and a wide field of usefulness seemed to be opening before him. He was a most generous hearted and noble minded young man. These were traits prominent in him from his youth. None knew him but to admire him and love him. It is the first bereavement

that has ever entered his parents' household, and they are sorely afflicted. But who shall measure the loss to his young and devoted wife, and to the little boy, to whom he was so devoted a father? God's ways are not our ways, and his thoughts are not our thoughts. Let us remember that one thing is sure: "He does all things well." May it be given by grace to all the sorely bereaved ones to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord."

The funeral service took place from his home on Wednesday p. m., Feb. 26th, and was attended with every demonstration of respect, and every evidence of the deep sorrow of many friends who had known him in life. The interment was in Greenmount Cemetery. May God comfort all that mourn, as he has promised to do. C.

John Rizer was born in Perry Co., Ohio, April 6th, 1841, and died March 1st, 1902, aged 60 years, 10 months and 25 days. He was united in marriage to Martha Notestone, July 14th, 1867. To this union were born two children, one of the children dying in infancy, leaving to mourn his death a sorrowing companion, one daughter, two brothers, one sister, and a host of relatives and friends. In early life he united with the M. E. Church, from which he took a letter, in 1862, and never rejoined, but became a regular attendant of the Primitive Baptist Church called Laurel. In his last sickness he expressed a wish not to get well again, as he would be so much better off. His companion asked him, "Are you willing to die?" He replied, "Yes, I am ready and willing." As a business man in the world he was useful, honest and trustworthy, always ready to assist the distressed and needy; the hungry were never turned from his door unsupplied and fed. He began life with nothing but an earnest mind and industrious hands, and accumulated quite a fortune.

His funeral was held at the Methodist house, in South Perry, on the 4th, where a multitude of people assembled to manifest the high esteem with which he was held by them, where a discourse was delivered by the writer, to the comfort of the sorrowing. After which the remains were laid to rest in the South Perry burying ground, to await the resurrection of the just.

G. N. TUSING.

My uncle, **David Hickerson,** was born in Harrison Co., Va., Dec. 28th, 1826, and died in Stubbs, Ohio, May 1st, 1901. When three years of age his father moved to a section of land in the western part of Freen township, a portion of which he afterwards owned, and continued to reside there until his death. His parents were of French and English descent; his grandfather was a Major-General in the Revolutionary war; his father and five of his brothers were Baptist preachers. Uncle was the main support and stay in the Baptist church at Mt. Olive, the meeting-house being located on his land. He was united in marriage to Mary Carmen, in 1853. To this union were born seven children, three of whom preceded him to the spirit world. He loved to meet with his brethren, and never lost an opportunity to be at the house of worship. While not free from imperfection, he adorned the christian profession. He was a great student of the Bible, and a man of sterling integrity. The aim of his life was to be in peace with all men, as far as was possible. He had been a sufferer with a complication of diseases for a number of years. Three years ago he suffered a stroke of paralysis, from which he never fully recovered, causing him to nearly lose his speech. During all his affliction he was never heard to murmur or complain, and frequently spoke of his desire to go home, once writing,

My soul is weary of the chain that binds me here;
Let my spirit leave its prison for a brighter sphere.

Though dead, his influence lives still. He was laid to rest in the Wolf Creek Cemetery, to await the great resurrection morn, when Christ will come to gather his people home, where they will know no tears or parting.

(MRS.) ANNA M. CLARK.

SAINT EDWARD, Neb., Dec. 29, 1901.

MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting of the Wilmington Old School Baptist Church, is appointed to commence at 2:30 p. m., on Saturday before the second Sunday in April, (12th and 13th) and continue over Sunday. Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

WM. B. TAWRESEY.

BALTIMORE Association is appointed to be held with Harford Church, Harford Co., Md., beginning Wednesday before the third Sunday in May, (14th) 1902, and continue three days. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth to meet with us.

DELAWARE Association is appointed to meet with Salem Church, in the city of Philadelphia, beginning Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, (21st) 1902, and continue three days.

DELAWARE River Association is appointed to be held with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, N. J., beginning on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (May 28th) 1902, and continue three days.

THE Warwick Association is appointed to be held with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, Middletown, N. Y., beginning Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, (4th) 1902, and continue three days.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 70. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1902. NO. 8.

POETRY.

A POEM

THAT suits my case better than I can tell it.

"His voice methinks I sometimes hear;
I tremble then with love and fear.
His footsteps, with a muffled tread,
I seem to catch with solemn dread.

'Tis then I raise my sleeping soul,
Like runner striving for the goal,
And forth I rush to seek his face,
Or grasp his form in love's embrace.

With bated breath I forward bound,
With hurried steps I spurn the ground,
But dark and darker still the clouds
Enwrap my soul in sable shrouds.

I listen for his footfall's sound,
But only silence, deep, profound.
Then back with careful pace I go
To search through all the realms below.

Upon the right I seek him far,
But gloomy doubts my vision bar;
Upon the left, my search is vain,
My heart grows sick with longing pain.

His work I see above, below,
On every side, where'er I go;
His love revealed in nature's laws,
His wisdom, in effect and cause.

I cannot see his smiling face,
His holy form I cannot trace,
I cannot grasp his hand divine,
Or lean upon his breast benign.

And yet I know I'm in his care;
I feel his presence everywhere;
His love shall wipe each tear away,
And fill my heart with endless day."

(MRS.) H. TUTTLE.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE FULLNESS OF GOD'S BLESSING.

(Concluded from page 197.)

"HAVING predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself." Paul here proclaims what our God does for his beloved people. Having made known their standing in Christ Jesus, their spiritual Head, as chosen of God and blessed in his beloved Son, the apostle now considers them in their fleshly standing in Adam, their natural head. He says, "The first man is of the earth, earthly: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthly, such are they also that are earthly: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthly, *we* shall also bear the image of the heavenly." This is very plain. It shows most clearly that the people and children of God the Father are vitally related to his creature Adam, in the flesh, and to his Son Jesus in the Spirit. This is a life relationship, both to the creature Adam and to the Son Jesus. The two lives are manifested in the two births, and both are manifested in the children of men, as born of the flesh, and born of the

Spirit. Thus they are really both the *people* and the *children* of the Most High. In Jesus they are the children of our Father in heaven, and in Adam they are his foreknown people, whom "he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the First-born among many brethren." Thus it is most clear that it is as conformed to the image of the holy Son of God that we are our Lord's brethren and his Father's children. "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Paul said this of the Israelites who were only the fleshly children of Abraham, showing that a man, though a son of Abraham, must be born of the Spirit of promise, before he can see and enter into the kingdom of God.

Therefore, predestination is "unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself." Adopted unto sonship and heirship to the blessed and holy God himself. How wonderful! "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!" We who "were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Now that the love of God is thus bestowed upon us, the beloved John says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." This will be the full adoption unto sonship to God the Father in perfect love, the fulfillment of predestination. This is by our Lord Jesus Christ, "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." This is the work of salvation from all the sins of the chosen, blessed and predestinated people of our God, in conforming them to the holy image of his dear Son, and it is wrought in them by the life-giving, renewing and sanctifying power of the Spirit of promise, "the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." You will observe, beloved brethren, that all is in Christ and through him and by him. And so Paul says, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." This is also true of all in whom Christ lives in the flesh. "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God."

Predestination itself, therefore, does not cause or perform this merciful and gracious work of adoption, or of conforming the redeemed people of the Lord to the image of Christ; for predestination is only the holy determination of God to save his people from their sins, and make

them "The holy people, the redeemed of the Lord." This he purposed in himself before the world was, and so it is "according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord," says Paul. So the purpose and choice and blessing of the God and Father all are in Christ, and the predestination of the chosen people unto heavenly sonship and heirship is by him, and it is through his death in the flesh, and by the power of his resurrection from the dead, the power of an endless life. Paul therefore speaks of "the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places." "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." All this is fulfilled in and to us, whom God hath predestinated unto the adoption of children by our precious Redeemer and Savior. Our redemption was by the precious blood of Christ, who reconciled us to God by his death unto sin in the flesh, and our salvation from our sins is by his life. He "verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God." While this is most blessedly true, it is just as true that the foreordination of God did not *cause* his holy and well beloved Son to be "brought as a lamb to the slaughter;" for the inspired apostle said, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." The determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God were "according to his eternal purpose," and as sure as his eternal throne, for the agonizing and betrayed Son said, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" but the counsel and purpose of God that his obedient Son should be stricken for the transgressions of his people did not move or incite or cause the wicked men to put him to death. It was also determined that Judas should betray Jesus, and this prophetic event must come to pass in the fulfillment of God's determined counsel and purpose, but the black crime of Judas was not the effect of God's predestination, because Satan put it into the heart of Judas to betray Christ. The same is true of the death of Ahab, a wicked king of Israel, who was slain in battle by the enemies of Israel, as the Lord had determined; but it was a lying spirit in Ahab's prophets that caused him to go into the battle, in which was fulfilled the Lord's purpose and word. We should thus be instructed and convinced that God's determined purpose of events is not the agency or power that causes those events. Almost a thousand years before the destruction of Jerusalem and the kingdom of the Jews, the God of Israel declared (Isa. v. 5–7) that he would bring this fearful destruction upon them. And long before the fearful judgments of God were poured out upon that people and nation, the Son of God foretold the fearful calamities which should be visited upon them, and said to them, 'The kingdom of God shall be taken from you." But it was the ungodly Roman armies by whom the determined purpose of God was fulfilled, and they did it for conquest and selfish gain. The before-determined

decree of the holy God did not cause wicked men to fulfill the things determined. Predestination is one thing, and it is as true and unfailing as the foreknowledge of God; but the bringing to pass and doing the things determined beforehand in God's eternal purpose, is another and entirely different thing, both in respect to wickedness and holiness. God said, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son." In the type, the envy of Joseph's brethren and the famine combined to send his son Israel into Egypt. So the wise men of the east and the envy and wrath of Herod were instrumental in sending his Son Jesus, the antitype of the lovely Joseph, down into Egypt; and it was by the hands of Joseph that God called his Son out of Egypt. So it is in the fulfillment of every purpose of the Most High; for between the purpose and its fulfillment almost numberless causes and effects successively arise as links in the chain of causation, until at last the decreed event is done. The omniscient eye of God saw the *end* from the beginning and just as he saw it and his counsel purposed it, so is it.

"According to the good pleasure of his will." And so the Redeemer said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." To his disciples Jesus said, it is not the will of their Father that one of his little ones should perish. To our Savior-King our God said, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness." The inspired prayer for them is, that the God of peace would "make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

"To the praise of the glory of his grace." This is the crowning purpose of the blessed God in it all. All the chosen people of his covenant, whom he blessed in Christ their immortal Head with all his heavenly fullness, and predestinated them to be his beloved and holy children for ever—all the redemption and purification of his people unto true holiness, in the spotless nature and immortal life of his well beloved Son—all is, that the grace of God should be magnified and glorified in his glorified children world without end. And that this shall be blessedly fulfilled, "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Such is the victorious power of triumphant grace. The grace of God bringeth salvation. It possesses all the merit and success and power of the obedient Son of God, the righteous Redeemer, who liveth by the power of God, and is exalted upon the throne of glory and reigns in righteousness. Yea, the Father and Son and Spirit support grace in its triumphant reign in and unto all the people saved by the Lord. Paul on earth and Paul in heaven says, "By the grace of God I am what I am." Salvation is the praise and glory of grace. Grace saves from all sin and death, and saves unto perfect holiness and life eternal. All rewards of salvation and righteousness are the free rewards of grace. Grace abounds, it much more abounds; grace reigns, it reigns righteously; grace is triumphant, it destroys sin, conquers death, vanquishes the grave, and ministers life. The song of praise and glory on earth and in heaven

is the song of grace.

"Wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved." Not in our works, but in his grace God hath made us accepted in the righteousness of his beloved Son. So all our acceptance unto God is in his grace, and every divine blessing we receive is a blessing of his grace, but not a reward for our works. "To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt," is the divine judgment, and it is according to truth. There is no mixing or confusion here. The bestowments of grace are free and unbought. The gospel of the grace of God is the gospel of salvation, and it is "without money and wtthout price." In the gospel of Christ, by whom grace reigns, grace reigns without a rival, and without a helper, reigns alone as the royal princess of heaven. Her righteous throne is in the holy Mount Sion, and in the hearts of all her blessed subjects. So grace uplifts in her people a supreme love of holiness and to the God of grace, a hungering and thirsting after righteousness, a soul-yearning after the pure water of life, and a panting after the living God, with the longing desire to come and appear before God, "to the praise of the glory of his grace." And in all the sons and daughters of grace this heavenly yearning shall be filled, and the holy Father shall be glorified for ever.

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." The God of salvation "hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Thus are we led up to the eternal Source of grace and salvation in Christ Jesus, in whom the church is blessed with all the fullness of God. Salvation from the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ flows out from his eternal white throne, "a pure river of water of life," down to all his chosen and predestinated sons and daughters, "according to the riches of his grace," purifies and sanctifies them, and raises them up to the holy and divine and blessed estate of children of the Most High in immortal heaven. This is the grace of predestination unto the adoption of children to the Almighty Father in eternal glory. "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him." "Waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." O blessed God! O glorious grace!

Your brother in the good hope through grace,

D. BARTLEY.

MONTGOMERY, Ala., Feb. 7, 1902.

GENESIS XXXII. 24.

"AND Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day."

(Concluded from page 201.)

The night is far spent, and the angel and Jacob continue their wrestling. But the Lord will not contend for ever, he will bring his dealings with his people to a gracious conclusion. Our heavenly Father ever has our welfare in view, no matter how severe his discipline. Though he casts us down, and we are laid in the deeps, he will bring us up again from the depths of the sea, and exalt us in due time at his own right hand in heavenly places. Thus, when the angel of the Lord saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh, and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. Thus as the ascension of the morning was ap-

proaching, by a mysterious, divine touch Jacob's thigh is put out of joint. This was a master stroke. Jacob can no longer stand upon his feet, he sinks, he falls in his anguish to the ground. Did Jacob loosen his hold of the man as he sank prostrate to the earth? No; the man who wrestled all night with him is down with him too, held fast in his embrace. When we in our troubles could hold up no longer did we yield to despair? Did not our hearts the rather cry out, "Other refuge have I none, hangs my helpless soul on thee." When Jacob was lowest, then he was uppermost; when he was weakest then he was strongest. Out of weakness he was made strong. This is a divine paradox so often verified in the experience of the saints. There can be no mistake in affirming that a divine power was imparted to Jacob, a poor, sinful creature, to wrestle with the man. But surely Jacob is done for, vanquished, he will slacken his hold, for he can rise no more. Will he not now cry out, Enough, I yield, thou hast gained the mastery? Not so. Shall I say that amidst his agonies the poor, prostrate cripple tightened his grip? What a scene is this just before the break of day; wrestling still, though no longer able to stand upon his feet. What tossings to and fro have also been going on in the heart of Jacob. Before the man began to wrestle with him he was greatly agitated, and his conflicts then taxed all his energies. So Jacob now is engaged in a twofold conflict. This inquiry also exercises his soul, "Who is this that wrestles with me? The darkness of the night is upon me, and I cannot see his face." So the child of God often inquires, "These sharp temptations, adversities and trials that I wrestle with, are they friends or foes?"

The day breaketh. Draw nearer with me, fellow witnesses of this scene. See one of the wrestlers weepeth. There course the tears down his cheeks. Listen, he maketh supplications. Which one is it that weepeth and is the suppliant? The weeping wrestler is the one the hollow of whose thigh is out of joint. (Hosea xii. 4.) Jacob wept and made supplication. The day breaketh. It was then Jacob obtained the first glimpses of the face of this mighty wrestler, and such glimpses did he have of the one bending over him, that his heart was wholly persuaded it was not a foe, but one whose look was tender mercy toward the fallen one. When the Lord has brought you low, has it been revealed to thee, as the day breaketh, that he who has afflicted thee, whose providences have prostrated you, is thy gracious Friend, full of tender pity?

"Jacob wept and made supplication unto him." All the dear family of God have their times of weeping. Indeed, to many much of life's pilgrimage is in the vale of tears. A tearless religion is not the religion of Christ, for the Spirit of God so teaches the elect that in a heart-feeling way they are made to feel their estrangement from the holy One of Israel, and they mourn every one for his iniquity. (Ezek. vii. 16.) The causes of the tears of the saints are manifold. They weep when in captivity to the enemy, (Psalm cxxxvii.) and when they tread the homeward pathway they come with weeping and supplications. (Jer. xxxi. 9.) Contrite souls even in our day water their couch with their tears. (Psalm vi. 6.) Peter wept bitterly; Hezekiah wept sore. There are seasons when the daughter of Zion weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks. (Lam. i. 2.) Weeping may endure for a

night, but joy cometh in the morning. Then she sings, and her face is radiant with smiles, for the Lord has forgiven all her sins, he hath scattered her foes, he has lifted up the light of his countenance upon her.

"And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." Jacob might say, Shall I let thee go, and wilt thou leave me, a poor, disabled cripple, in the dust?

"Lord, I cannot let thee go,
Till a blessing thou bestow;
Do not turn away thy face,
Mine's an urgent, pressing case.

No, I must maintain my hold,
'Tis thy goodness makes me bold;
I can no denial take,
When I plead for Jesus' sake."

"Except thou bless me." Thy blessing shall dry my tears, heal my woes and strengthen me. With thy blessing I will fear no evil, I can face Esau and his four hundred men. "Let them curse, but bless thou."—Psalm cix. 28. Leave me not, neither forsake me, give me first thy benediction. Thou camest as an adversary, and hast brought me in anguish into the dust of the earth, now, only as my friend can I let thee go. Thou camest with a frown, now leave thy smile with me. Thou was angry with me, let thine anger be turned away, and comfort me with thy blessing. O, dear reader, whatever thou hast, if thou lackest the blessing of the Lord, how destitute thou art. "And he said unto him, What is thy name? and he said, Jacob." This inquiry and Jacob's answer is full of meaning. There was signified in it Jacob's unbrotherly conduct. Esau in his exceeding bitter cry exclaimed, "Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and behold, now he hath taken away my blessing."—Gen. xxvii. 36. The Lord is constantly drawing forth from his people the confession of their low estate, and it is not with a trifling tongue they answer the Lord's searching inquiry, but in lowliness of heart they bow at his feet confessing their name is Jacob. A worm, (Isaiah xli. 14,) the chief of sinners, (1 Tim. i. 15,) ready to perish, (Deut. xxvi. 5,) dust and ashes, (Gen. xviii. 27.) When Jacob had acknowledged his name, did the angel say, Thou art too unworthy, thou hast been too contemptibly mean to have my blessing? O no. In such exceeding riches of grace the Lord deals with the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory, for on them he will make known the riches of his glory, and Jacob was one of such vessels of mercy. "I have loved you, saith the Lord: yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau." Here we have displayed the holy and glorious sovereignty of Jehovah's love. "And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with man, and hast prevailed." O, this in truth is raising up the poor out of the dust, and lifting up the beggar from the dunghill, to set him among princes, and to make him inherit the throne of glory. As he spake these words methinks I see the man and Israel arising from the dust. Yes, when the man arose Israel with him. The everlasting arms lifted up the lame man, and in tender compassion put his thigh in joint again (although he ever after had a remembrance of this in the sinew that shrank). The Lord bringeth low and lifteth up. How often are believers in Jesus brought low through oppression, affliction and sorrow; our pride and self-sufficiency have to be so often

brought to naught. He brings down our heart with labor, we fall down, and there is none to help. "I was brought low, and he helped me." This is ever the experience of the people of God.

"Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel." The Lord gives to his people another name, a new name. (Isaiah lxii. 2.) The first name is significant of what we are in our fallen estate, base and sinful, earthy, a name declaring our dishonor, a name upon which reproach and condemnation rests, a name in which we are ashamed and weep before God. "But thou shalt no more be termed forsaken; neither shall the land any more be termed desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married."—Isaiah lxii. 4. "Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God."—Eph. ii. 19. "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."—Gal. iv. 7. The Lord pronounced Jacob a prince. This honor have all his saints, for our mighty Savior who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father. "As a prince hast thou power with God and with man, and hast prevailed." This was God-given power. Glorious illustrations of this are portrayed in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. "Through faith they subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens." The people of God according to their day, the circumstances they are in, and the work to be performed, are endued with power from on high. Even the wonderful privilege of having power with God flows from the gracious power of God. The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much, and this spirit of supplication the Lord pours down upon his suppliants. (Zech. xii. 10.) Our power with God in prayer at his footstool ever proceeds from the glorious and precious fact that we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. Through him, through his sacrifice and blood, his obedience and eternal excellency we have access, acceptance, favor and power with God, and in triumphant faith we sometimes sing, "We shall be more than conquerors through him that loved us."

"And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there." "Thy name." In what relationship do we stand to each other? How shall I think of thee when thou art absent, removed from my sight? From the very dawn of the Lord's dealings with his own they begin to ask after his name. How hallowed is his name! and as the name of the Lord is unfolded to them by the holy Spirit they reverently, affectionately and prayerfully think upon his name; and the wondrous works of the Lord in creation, providence, the gospel of the grace of God, declare to them how near is his name. (Psalm lxxv. 1.) "Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name?" Ah, Lord, thou thyself knowest. So poor, weak and sinful am I. Is thy name Jesus, art thou my Savior? Is it Redeemer, and hast thou ransomed me from hell? Is thy name Shepherd, Husband, Friend, the Lord our righteousness, Emmanuel, Incarnate love? Art thou all

this unto a poor sinner like me? "And he blessed him there" on the field of conflict. He anointed him with it. The dark, bitter night is over, and the morning finds Jacob no longer "greatly afraid and distressed," but there he stands in princely majesty, for his name is Israel. Now he can meet Esau.

"And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. And as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh. Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew which shrank."

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

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129 EAST FIFTIETH ST., NEW YORK CITY.

DEARLY BELOVED IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I have for a very long time felt impressed to write some of my exercises, and to visit a little with you, but I have not followed my inclination because I was not able to say or feel at all sure that it was of the Lord. I am just as much at a loss to know at this time, but the impression has become a burden, and I cannot carry burdens alone, and so I shall ask your tolerance for a little while.

I often wonder that I dare to speak of the things of Jesus as I do, for they seem too high for me to claim a knowledge of them, but I have been given a hope so deeply bedded, like a well cast anchor, as to hold me in an unspeakable way, though at times I have almost seemed to lose sight of it. There is so much carnality about me that I find myself in heaviness through manifold temptations much of the time. My mind seems like the sea in a storm, turbulent and not to be trusted. I know not who or what I am, save that I feel very forcibly that I cannot do the things that I would. I have some doubts as to whether I can honestly say, "for to will is present with me," but I can testify to the following, "how to perform that which is good I find not."

Just now I find myself hoping that I see the ray of light, as well as the hidden things in me, which it reveals, and I seem to see the need of such a view, and the wondrous wisdom of him who is the light, as well as the way, the truth, and the life to his saints. At times, I am led away from my miserable self to meditate upon some Scripture with comfort and peace. I think I see what is meant by the words, "Ye have the mind of Christ." Now the Holy Spirit alone causes our hearts to glow with love which makes the yoke of the Savior easy and his burden light, and makes us willing to lay down our lives for the brethren, and also tolerant to those who know not the love of God. If we have no confidence in the flesh, and feel that there is no soundness in us, we shall earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, and not for views and opinions. Then we shall also insist of necessity that faith is the gift of God, free and unmerited, to helpless sinners, and that without it, it is impossible to please God, and that there can be no good works without faith. We must be kept in the faith, by the power of God, whose we are, and who wrought our faith in us, and causes us to live by the faith of the Son of God, if indeed it so be that we are chosen unto this life of faith. It is but once delivered to the saints, but the power of it is manifested to them as they pass along from one experience to another, and this faith must abide, it cannot fail. Faith bids us hope in God's mercy and abundant compassion, and that all

our infirmities shall be met with mercy, and that though the outward man perish, the inward shall be renewed day by day, and that we shall finally be brought off conquerors, and more than conquerors through him that loved us, and gave himself for us: "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

I often wonder that we, who are so prone to wander, and to make mistakes, and who suffer so sorely from our propensity to evil, should ever be otherwise than kind to, and tender hearted towards each other who are journeying along the rugged road together, lame and halting with thorns piercing our feet. One would think that we would only have time and disposition for sympathy and love. May we all be enabled to put on, or manifest charity; then we shall be easy to be entreated, and shall think no evil, and shall contend with loving forbearance for that faith which is the gift of God, and which is strength to him who is without might. Surely we must be kept in the exercise of faith, hope and charity, by the sweet humility which Jesus does impart, else our walk will be after the flesh, and we shall reap corruption for ourselves, and shall burden the hearts of our brethren. Such conversation as this is not with grace seasoned with salt. I dread the spirit of criticism; I have felt its baneful influence, and have reason to dread it. I know it to be not a discerning spirit, and it can only bring us pain, but this too, like all other maladies common to God's people, must be remedied by the touch of the divine healer, the great physician of our souls: his look never fails to cause his child to go out and weep bitterly. I trust that I know the meaning of going out from the presence of my best friend.

The crucible is withering and consuming to all manner of human goodness, but in its fiery depths is brought about a willing and a doing, according to the good pleasure of him who sits as a refiner of silver, and consumer of dross, that when we are tried we may come forth as gold. We may not hope to see a change for the better in ourselves, for our own righteousness will ever be but filthy rags, but there must and will be a growth in grace, which seems to be but a growth in helplessness, and in dependence upon that arm which is strong to save.

I think that I am never conscious of having worked the works of righteousness, or having done any good thing that would be pleasing in the sight of God, yet I hope that I am kept so that my brethren can tolerate me. But I sometimes fear that they are not faithful toward me, for I feel to be all wrong so much of the time. I want their watchcare and help, and they always have been kind to me, and if ever they are unkind, I wish that I might not know it. I am glad of their constant fellowship and love, and long to be worthy of it. O, that I might be kept in the love of God, then indeed I should be at the feet of my brethren, a safe place indeed. Should I be left to sow to the flesh, I shall then need their loving help more than ever.

We, as a church have been favored in many ways, and have great cause for gratitude. What a blessing it is to meet together and listen to the proclamation of the gospel, and talk over our joys and sorrows. I fear that I have but a poor appreciation of the favors of the Lord. The SIGNS are good. I get many a helpful thought through its pages. May you dear editors be sustained in your faithful work, and the friends continue to contribute with their pens, their testimony to the riches of grace, as they

are able.

I am troubled at the length of this letter. You will confer a favor upon me by not publishing it, if in your judgment it would be better so. I send it with serious misgivings.

I inclose a copy of a letter from sister Taylor, that I think exalts the dear Savior, and abases the creature. You can publish it if you think best. Brother McConnell baptized her the third Sunday in October. She was not able to relate many of her exercises when she came before the church, and said she wanted some one to know what great things the Lord had done for her.

Your sister in hope,

WATIE A. BEARD.

STRATFORD, Conn., Nov. 3, 1901.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I call you sister, yet it seems that it does not become me to do so, for I feel to be the least, and all that I can say is that I have a little hope. I can truly say that the light given me was from the dear Jesus. It seems as if the Lord has done so much for me that I would like to have some one know it. I never can express the goodness of the Lord in his remembrance of me, and in leading me from time to time. I really think that if ever there was a poor sinner whom the Lord has led out of darkness, it is me, and it seems as if he has been with me all the days of my life. If I were at my father's homestead I could put my feet on the ground where I first tried to pray, and the desire to be a christian grew with me, but the more I tried to pray, and to be good, it seemed to me the worse I got.

I want to tell you of the blessing the Lord sent upon me more than twenty years ago: I heard the Lord when he called me, and asked me, Why I did not pray? What was I waiting for? I know that it was his voice, for Satan does not come like that. I was nothing but a poor, wretched sinner, yet I knew it was Jesus that called me, and I wept and rejoiced within. But I never knew anything but Arminian belief, and I wondered how I ever could be a christian. I was raised in the Methodist faith.

Now I want to tell you of another blessing which the Lord bestowed upon me: Nine years ago, my husband and I went to a park where there was a three days meeting held by a Methodist minister who was then stationed in Zion, where I went all the time. I went to church three times every Sunday, and every Wednesday to prayer meeting, and on Friday to class meeting. Nothing kept me from the church when there was anything going on, until I heard this minister preach from the text in Ezekiel, about the valley of dry bones. He preached all over the Bible, and said the Lord had the power to send a serpent and kill the people there, and their bones lay, and were bleached by the dew and sun. Then he pounded on his Bible and declared that there was one thing that the Lord could not do. From that I stood up, for I wanted to know what it was that the Lord could not do, when it was declared that all power was in his hand. Then he positively said, The Lord could not save us unless we let him. If the earth would have opened, I would have been willing to sink out of sight forever, to think that I was trying to serve such a God as that. I felt as if some one had pushed me right out of doors, and I had nowhere to go.

I became so disgusted with the doctrine, that I did not want to see nor to hear them again. From that time, I asked the Lord to give me a home among his true people, and where I would be satisfied. He

has been nine years answering my prayer. Though I knew not how to pray, I believe it was intended that way by the Lord, to separate me from them. I never could be one of that sort of christians, never. If ever there has been one whom the Lord has brought through many dangers, toils and snares, it has been me, and I want to be thankful.

This morning when I got up and saw how beautiful the morning was, how I wished I could to be with you, for I never heard any minister explain the gospel in a way that I liked so well as brother McConnell did, and I believe the Lord gave me an ear to hear, and understand, and to feel what he was preaching about.

Now, my dear sister, there are many more experiences which I could speak of, but I will not take up any more of your time, and will close.

With love from your unworthy sister in Christ, as I trust,

JULIA TAYLOR.

FRAGMENTS.

If one who is a subject of grace does not clearly comprehend and fully accept some particular point of doctrine, as the predestination of all things, or that the old carnal nature is not changed and made spiritual in the new birth, shall the preacher insist upon setting that particular point of truth before that one every time he preaches, to the exclusion of other parts of the great variety of spiritual truth? I have met some ministers who would continually dwell upon the same subject, especially when they suspected some to be present who disputed that point, or were not fully in accord with it. At such times such preachers seem to feel it their duty to repeat and repeat their arguments in defense of that docrine; and not only that, but they are inclined to reprove one who does not on every such occasion reassert his belief in the disputed point of truth, and repeat his reasons for his belief. One who may disregard the opposition to that point sufficiently to go on to other important and blessed portions of truth, is sometimes thought to be lacking in boldness and faithfulness as a gospel preacher, and as a watchman upon the walls of Zion.

Suppose one member of our household does not like beef. He sees that it is good food for others of the family, for they relish it, and thrive upon it, but he does not seem able to digest and assimilate it well. He prefers lamb and wheat and herbs. Shall I persist in placing a generous piece of beef upon his plate every time I wait upon the table, and insist that he shall eat it? He says, "I am willing you shall have your strong meat. It seems to do you good, and I am glad to see you enjoy it; but as I am weak, let me have my herbs, with a little lamb or a young pigeon." Shall I still insist that in his case beef is a necessity? That unless he shall eat of it freely his right to sit at the table is questionable? Shall I not rather cheerfully and lovingly accord to him his privilege of choice of all the good things of the gospel which are spread before us, and his right to eat what suits his present appetite, though it be only herbs? If I am spiritual I will not despise him because he eateth only herbs, nor he, if spiritual, judge me because I eat meat. (Rom. xiv.)

How often we are surprised to see that one whose food we were so anxious about, seeking of his own accord for that very piece of strong doctrine which we had tried so often in vain to force him to eat. He has been brought into that condition by the Spirit of the Lord, which makes

him now need that particular kind of food. Herbs do not satisfy his need now, nor even lamb. He must have the beef, and a large piece of it, too. We could not make him hungry for it by all our zealous urging, but the Lord could do it easily in his appointed time. Instead of turning away from that doctrine, now he sees it as a green pasture into which the great Shepherd makes him feed and lie down in sweet gospel rest.

I would not have any minister of the gospel avoid any scriptural truth which may be upon his mind because of the presence of any opposer. I am not conscious of ever having done so. If I have, I have done wrong. But I cannot say that I have not dwelt upon some disputed point because of the presence of some one whom I regarded as an opposer. At such times I have often feared that I was actuated by the contentious spirit of the carnal mind. It is my desire to preach the truth in love, trusting to the power of the Spirit to make a way for it, and give it force, rather than to any power in myself.

The Lord's ministers are not sent to debate, but to deliver the solemn messages of the gospel. The excellency of the power is of God, and not of man, and that is the reason we have this treasure in earthen vessels. The gospel is high above all worldly subjects. It is solemn, and clear, and firm, and well defined, and stands in clear and sharp contrast with, and contrary to all the principles of natural religion, as the light of the sun is in contrast with darkness. The preacher of the gospel, who is an earthen vessel, has no power to cause any one to see or believe the truth. But when the Spirit enables him to preach, those who have been prepared by the Lord will see that truth and gather to it, as those whose eyes have been opened will see and rejoice in the light.

All of the Lord's people are not prepared to see with equal clearness all points of divine truth at all times, and instead of dwelling always upon that which is not clear to some one or more of the dear children of God, as though it were left to us to give them power to see all things clearly, we should go on handing out of the rich variety of blessed good things spread upon the table of the Lord, remembering that it is the Lord who alone can give the second touch upon the eyes, enabling each poor soul to look up and "see all things clearly." While we are presenting some other of the precious things of the gospel, it is often the case that the particular truth which some of the children had not clearly seen, is made clear to them. Then we know it is the Lord who has done it, and not we. Then can each one say, "The Lord is my Shepherd."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 15, 1902.

STARRSVILLE, Ga., March 10, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have had some impressions for a long time to write some of the dealings of the Lord with me, as I hope, but knowing the deceitfulness of my heart I am afraid, but hope the right spirit will lead my mind.

I was born in Newton Co., Ga., in 1833, where I have been living nearly all of my life. My parents, my husband's, and nearly all of our kindred were Primitive Baptists, and of course I thought they were right, but was ignorant of what they believed. I went on in ease and pleasure perhaps until nearly grown, not knowing or caring anything about these things. After I became settled in life I

began to think about religion, and would get scared when I would hear of some near ones dying, and would think if it had been me what would have became of me, but it would soon wear off, and I would be the same sinner. I would set times when I would try, for I thought I could get religion in time, before I died; did not think it a good thing to live on, did not need it.

I always loved to go to Primitive Baptist churches, and sometimes was almost persuaded that a change had begun; if so, I was satisfied that it would be carried out to my salvation, but I thought I must do something in the matter.

In 1855, my husband went to the association at old Hebron Church, in Jasper Co., where that dear Elder James Henderson, was pastor. I did not go with him. Elder David Patman was there, one of the best preachers. On coming back my husband asked Elder Patman to let him ride with him, which he was very glad to do, believing he had a hope. Pretty soon he began telling him the dealings of the Lord with him. When he had gotten through talking with him, he asked Elder Patman not to tell any one what he had told him. His reply was, that he did not belong to any secret society. They went on to his appointment at Harris Spring, and I met them there. In his preaching he told of what he had heard that morning, and I knew at once that it was my husband. He had had a hope eight years, and the church members would often ask him about joining, but he would always tell them, No. I was always glad to hear him say that, for I did not want him to go without me.

At the time spoken of, I hope, the Lord arrested my mind, turned me about. I believed now he would join. My mind went in different ways; I tried to pray to God to make me fit to go with him. It seemed my breathing was, "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner." I think I watched myself closer than I ever did; my soul seemed to be panting for that living water. I went on in this way for about six weeks, did not know what was the matter, but hoped there was a good work begun in me.

After I had done all I could, and saw I could do nothing, I hope the Lord spoke these words to me, "Ye know that ye have passed from death unto life, because ye love the brethren." I immediately found and read that Scripture, seemingly with much love and interest. My husband was at work near the house, and I went to him, and told him what a dear Savior I had found. He rejoiced with me and said, "We will go to your mother's and tell her about it, and then will go to Shoal Creek meeting." When we were ready to go, mother said that she could not go. I was sorry, and said, "William wants to talk with you." "O," she said, "I will go, there is nothing in the way." He talked with her, and told her that I wanted to talk with her, which I did, and we had a little heaven below. That meeting I think I heard my first preaching, by my uncle, James H. Montgomery, and Elder Spalding Fielder. It suited me. My mother gave us encouragement to go to the church. My mind was constantly exercised, thinking of the goodness of God in saving me, and giving me a good hope. I thought I had found a great Savior; it seemed I walked and talked with him. He said, "You are mine, and I am yours." I thought I had lots to tell the church, and was anxious to tell it, but did not tell all I thought I was going to tell, but felt so good and easy after talking. I did not feel and see as much in baptism as some do.

Our minds were directed to Harris Spring immediately. We went and were received and baptized by Elder Isaac Hamby, in December, 1855. We went on our way rejoicing a long time. Harris Spring is a dear place to me; my father, mother, brother and sisters, eight children with their companions, one of whom was dear Charlie, who died four years ago, and several grandchildren, are members there. I had a near friend tell me twenty years ago that I never would have a child to be anything else. I told her that I hoped not, and still hope and believe that I will not. My husband was pastor there about sixteen years, until his death. I went often with him to his churches, and had many seasons of enjoyment. I told Elder William Beebe once that I was afraid that I did not have enough trouble to be a christian, and he laughed at me. I felt that I was too easy in Zion, and there is a woe pronounced against such. I have often thought there never was a deep enough conviction of sin in me. I never was wicked like some, but I think I know the deceitful wicked heart more than I used to, as represented in the Scriptures. I know I am a dull scholar in the school of Christ, if one at all. I use to enjoy all good preaching and christian talk it seems more than I do now. I think I know more about human depravity, and God's wills and shalls, and about all things being fixed and complete before the sun shot forth his silver rays.

Dear brethren, I have written some of my experience of mind in a weak way. It seems too shallow to be an experience of grace. Publish if you think fit. I have my mother's published in SIGNS near forty years ago; perhaps some of my children will read this in time to come.

Brethren and sisters, write your experiences more frequent, I like to read them; write them and talk them more, they will shine brighter, will bring us in closer union with each other. I heard a brother say once, when asked to tell his experience, "I will have to rub it up, it is rusty." Perhaps there is some truth in that.

"O for a closer walk with God;
A calm and heavenly frame;
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb."

I love the dear old SIGNS, have been seeing and reading them all my life; they are just my age. My father, husband's father and ourselves, have been taking them all the time. I knew dear old father Gilbert, and Wm. Beebe, they were great men of God. I believe the SIGNS contain the same good doctrine they always did, and there still will be good men to carry on the good work. I am anxious to get every number, and expect to take them as long as I can see to read them. I lend them, but cannot make every one love the doctrine. I hope the editors will live long, and be blessed in their souls for such ardent labors.

Your sister in hope,

S. F. ADAMS.

MERRIFIELD, Va., Jan. 11, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have waited so long, hoping that peradventure the Lord would give me a word, but alas it comes not, and yet my whole desire is that the Lord would comfort the children of his gracious choice, whom he in his purpose has called, with affliction and sorrow dwelling in their own breasts continually, while they are made to feel there is no help save in the Lord. These are they whom I love for the truths sake, and they are my brethren in tribulation, and

who feel their need of a salvation that is out of their own ability to obtain. These are they whom I love and cherish as those who are near and dear to me. They are near and with me at all times, and I can understand their language. It is not a mixture, a half and half sort of language, but a pure, simple and child-like tongue. These pray, Father of all mercies, give us each day our daily bread, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the power. And the manifestation of it in us is to the glory of God in our experience, both now and ever. So let it be.

Dear brethren when you pray thus, self is lost sight of in the glory that surrounds the mercy seat, and the Spirit of Jesus says, "I will never leave nor forsake thee." My heart goes out to you, and I cannot go from you. We are bound together, yea, a fellow feeling, a tie too strong to be broken will not let us get away. To whom should we go? Eternal life is there made manifest. There is no time business in this, but one eternal now. Eternity now is, and like all other attributes of the great and mighty God, it has neither beginning nor ending. Yet it may be asked by some one if I think that I am standing in eternity at this time. I will say in answer, Time is not eternity, in that it had a beginning, and will have an end, and therefore it is not eternal. "What hath been is now, and that which is now hath already been, and the Lord requireth that which is past."

I am now writing in a great hurry, and do not claim the above as a verbally correct quotation from the written word, but it expresses an experience which I had years ago, as my sins and trangressions came up before me. It is written, As in Adam all die. And judgment is passed upon all men. This is all in the present tense. All die and is passed, not will be. It had gone forth before our time, yet the Lord requireth that which is past. Where is there a salvation that meets our case, aside from that which the Lord brought to us when the Son of man was lifted up in the fullness of time? Yet it was an eternal salvation and meets all our requirements both now and ever.

There is a reward in doing his commandments, but not for doing them. Salvation is brought to us, not bought by us. Now all who feel to say, "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling," are my brethren and kindred dear, and I want to be near them. All their sorrows are mine, and their joys and hopes are mine, and we can therefore mingle our tears, having no confidence in the flesh, or in the things of time. Our only rest is in a finished salvation. May our blessed Redeemer sustain and comfort you, my dear fellow travelers, while time shall last. May salvation gloriously crown the end of all time things, is my heartfelt desire for you. Please make all allowance for mistakes. All my letters addressed to you are at your disposal to do with as you like.

From the least among the saints,

ELI T. KIDWELL.

ADRIAN, Mich., Jan. 29, 1902.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Another year has passed into the great beyond, and the grim reaper has gathered his victims to their long home, one by one. But a merciful God has been pleased to spare unprofitable me to again send my remittance to the dear old SIGNS, which is about all the preaching that we have. I often wonder why I am left to cumber the ground, while others who seem so much more useful are called away. It was with deep sorrow

that I read of the death of Elder Wm. L. Beebe, and I wondered how the church could do without him. He was indeed an able minister of the new testament, so gifted, and so winning in his manner. I never can forget the beautiful things that I have heard him say. How vividly it comes up before me, while I in memory, go back to a sermon that I heard him preach. O, happy day, but never to return, only in memory; the love of God was written in everything; it was an heavenly place in Christ Jesus, and when I recall it, I want to write and talk about it, for there was a glimmer of light in the darkness, that causes me to have a little hope that I know the joyful sound, and the true ring of the gospel bell. Though his voice is stilled on earth forever, yet our God is able to call and qualify whom he will, to preach the gospel, for so long as he has sheep here on earth, he will have faithful undershepherds to feed and watch over them, and when he has none here, time will be no more.

I have always believed in what Elder Gilbert Beebe once said in some of his writings. Some Arminian preacher had said that he would live to preach the funeral sermon of the last Old School Baptist, and Elder Beebe said, If so, he would have to do it quick, for he would not have time to preach a very long sermon. I do believe that this world stands for the elect's sake, for surely the Lord would not suffer the ever increasing crime and wickedness in this world, were it not for his chosen people. They are the excellent of the earth, rich in faith, and heirs to that glorious inheritance reserved for the saints of God. These feel that they are strangers and pilgrims here, and have no abiding city, but seek one to come, whose builder and maker is God. O, how secure they are, hidden in the clefts of the rock. Their prayer is,

"Hide me, O my Savior hide,
Till the storms of life are past."

This glorious refuge and hiding place for the people of God cannot be sought out by science, nor by men, nor devils; it is a garden inclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed, and it is hidden from the wise and prudent of this world, and revealed unto babes. It is by revelation that we come to know God, and if we love him, it is because he first loved us, and sought us out.

"'Twas the same love that spread the feast,
That sweetly forced us in,
Or we, without a saving taste,
Had perished in our sin."

But the great and all-absorbing question with me is, Has he sought me out? Do I know him by revelation? or is it all a myth and delusion? I am so blind and ignorant that I cannot judge. But of late my prayer has been, Lord grant me true repentance, that needs not to be repented of. I know by searching I cannot find the dwelling place of the Most High.

Dear editors, I will close, by wishing you a happy new year, in every sense of the word, though all things in nature fade and decay, yet the glorious truths which are set forth in the SIGNS, and advocated there shall never lose their luster, nor grow dim, but shall shine brighter till the perfect day.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) H. TUTTLE.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1902.

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EDITORS:

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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ROMANS XIV. 1.

"HIM that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputation."

In this number we publish a most excellent article from our highly gifted brother, Elder Silas H. Durand, to which we call the special attention of the readers of the SIGNS. It has ever been our desire to avoid "hobbies," or "getting in a rut," and dwelling continually on one or two points of doctrine to the exclusion of all other truth, and as brother Durand says, we should not attempt to compel one to eat meat whom the Lord has given no appetite for it. The figure brother Durand has given is very clear, and the arguments he puts forth are undoubtedly correct under such circumstances as he has so ably pictured. But the "weakling" at the table that he treats with such charity, is quite a different character from some that surround the Old School Baptist table at the present day.

Perhaps there is no brother in the ministry that has a more general knowledge of the condition of the Primitive Baptists throughout the United States, than brother Durand, as they were a few years ago, but we doubt if he can fully appreciate the extent of the change that has taken place in many sections. Could our brethren who still remain firm in the doctrine, visit our office and read the fifteen or twenty exchanges we receive of publications claiming to be Primitive Baptist periodicals, they would be convinced brother Durand's illustration did not fully portray the situation at the present day. And if brother Durand will pardon us we will draw another picture which we think will be more up to date.

Let us consider a family that have lived in peace and harmony for many years, but too large to all eat together, so have to be served at different tables, (localities) with some one chosen to serve each table, and at some of these tables there shall be found some who are serving them, not satisfied to let those have "strong meat," that relish it, but insist that it shall be banished from the table, and refuse all admission to the table who insist on eating it. Not only so, but suppose these parties are trying to prejudice all they can against eating the meat, by telling them it is poison, and after succeeding in causing a number to rebel, not only against eating the meat, but also against all who do eat it, declare that none that relish meat shall come to the table, then, having thus established a few "side tables," insist that husks and wild gourds shall be the diet, and the wine of Babylon the drink, and many are seen to be growing weak on this diet, and becoming intoxicated with this most seductive of wines, shall he who is appointed to give meat to each in due season, cease to serve meat because some have been prejudiced against it? Some, as we have said, have no idea to what extent many claiming to be Apostolic Primitive Baptists have gone into Arminianism, or become intoxicated by the wine of the cup of the "old mother," and may therefore think the picture we have

drawn is too black, but that our readers may have an opportunity to judge for themselves, we will give a few extracts from publications claiming to be genuine Old School or Primitive Baptist in sentiment.

We have yet to learn of the first church affirming predestination of all things, declaring non-fellowship for any for not believing it, while on the other hand there are published records of churches declaring non-fellowship for all that do believe it, thus refusing to allow any at the table who relish meat.

The following extracts from the *Baptist Trumpet* witness to the above:

RESOLUTIONS.

"Whereas it is being advocated by some people among the Baptists that God did 'absolutely predestinate all the sinful acts of men and devils which are done in time,' and as we believe the doctrine to be heresy,

We, therefore, declare non-fellowship for the doctrine herein named, and those believing it.

Furthermore, we believe it to be disorder to affiliate with those believing this doctrine, and we solemnly ask the churches of this [Red River] association [Texas] to adopt the same."

P. D. AUSMUS.

AMBIA, Texas.

The Territory of Oklahoma, Day Co , August 31st, 1901.

We, the members of Liberty Primitive Baptist Church of Christ, do enter our solemn protest against the heresy of the absolute predestination of all things, both good and bad, as believed by some claiming to be Primitive Baptists. We believe said heresy to be detrimental to the cause of Christ and destructive to the peace and fellowship of the brotherhood. Therefore we will not suffer it preached at Liberty Church.

Done by order of the church in conference August 31st, 1901.

J. B. DONATHAN, Mod.

A. B. KEITH, Clerk.

Can any read these extracts and say that the characters portrayed in our picture are overdrawn?

Having as we believe established our charge that there are those who not only refuse to eat the "meat," but are denying the right of those that have any appetite for it, to come to the table, we will append a few extracts from a paper styling itself the *Apostolic-Primitive Baptist*, in evidence that these very characters are serving on the tables over which they have control, husks and wild gourds for diet, and the wine of Babylon for drink.

In the *Apostolic-Primitive Baptist* for June 17th, 1901, appears the following stanza:

O sinners, sinners, won't you hear,
When in God's name I come?
Upon your peril don't forbear,
Lest hell should be your doom.
What will your doom, poor mortals, be,
If destitute of grace?

Again the same paper dated March 17th, 1902, the following:

There's one thing that grieves me,
And lies upon my mind,
And that is my tender offsprings
That I must leave behind.

They cause me natural sorrow,
My heart for them is sore,
For fear that I should leave them
And never see them more.

O now, my loving children,
For Christ's sake I entreat,
Forsake your ways of sinning,
And fall at Jesus' feet.

Supplicate the throne of grace;
He for you his blood has spilt,
And full atonement then was made,
To take away your guilt.

That when I part with you below,
Upon this earthly clod,
I may meet you all once more
At the right hand of God.

There we will join together,
Our Savior to adore
Where trials and vexation,
And troubles will all be o'er.

And now, my dear companion,
A word or two with you:
Call in all worldly, wand'ring thoughts,
And bid all sins adieu.

Think of the awful circumstance
That your dear soul is in;
How can you bear the awful thought,
To live and die in sin?

Come, now, and take bold courage,
And try to seek the Lord;
Forsake your ways of sinning,
And walk the heavenly road.

That I may be so happy,
Once more with you to meet,
Where we shall wear the starry crown,
And walk the golden street.

Then happy, happy shall we be
In that bright world above,
To meet our children, and see
Our neighbors whom we love.

As further allurement to heaven would it not be well to add, To behold Jesus as he is, and be like him? It might have a tendency to draw some old time saint who is determined to know nothing among us but Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Also in the same paper, dated Feb. 24th, 1902, is published over the signature of one signing himself "Dr. A. N. Johnson," the following:

But here is a "Solemn Address to Sinners," of equal age with the above prayer:

"No words can declare,
No fancy can paint,
What rage and despair,
What hopeless complaint,
Fill Satan's dark dwelling,
The prison beneath;
What weeping and wailing,
And gnashing of teeth!
Yet sinners will choose
This dreadful abode;
Each madly pursues
The dangerous road.
Though God give them warning,
They onward will go;
They answer with scorning,
And rush upon woe.
How sad to behold
The rich and the poor,
The young and the old,
All blindly secure!
All posting to ruin,
Refusing to stop.
Ah, think what you are doing,
While yet there is hope;
How weak is your hand
To fight with the Lord!
How can you withstand
The edge of his sword?
What hope of escaping
For those who oppose,
While hell is wide gaping
To swallow his foes?
How oft have you dared
The Lord to his face!
Yet still you are spared
To hear of his grace.
O pray for repentance
And life-giving faith,
Before the just sentence
Consign you to death.
It is not too late
To Jesus to flee;
His mercy is great,
His pardon is free;
His blood has such virtue
For all that believe,
That nothing can hurt you
If him you receive."

Now that is preaching the gospel to sinners, but the Antinomianism born of the absolute predestination of all things, good and sinful, in Christ, calls it shaking dead sinners over hell fire to scare them into becoming christians. This saying is a damnable perversion of the truth of the gospel, and loudly proclaims that the light these people claim to have in them is thick darkness indeed. The darkness is so intense and thick that they cannot distinguish between Arminianism and the truth of the gospel of Christ. God pity them and their blinded followers.

How any subject of grace, brought by the Holy Spirit to see himself a poor, lost, helpless sinner before God, and whose only hope is in the finished salvation of Jesus, can ever subsist on such husks and wild gourds as are served upon these side tables, is certainly a mystery to us. If we believe that every chosen vessel of mercy was chosen in Christ before the world began, and that their salvation was complete in Christ when he cried, "It is finished," how can we consistently appeal to sinners to Come to Jesus before it is too late? We would not have our brethren think that we accuse all who do not agree with us in the predestination of all things, or on what is termed "conditional time salvation," as indorsing the rank Arminian sentiment embraced in the extracts above given, yet it is a significant fact that the authors

of these Arminian effusions are, without an exception, strong advocates of conditional time salvation, and denouncers of unlimited predestination, and having seen how these sentiments have *crept* in among us within the last few years, we feel impressed to sound a warning. Twenty years ago if any minister claiming to be of our order had advanced any such sentiment as contained in the extracts quoted, he would have been silenced. But of such a nature is this Babylonish wine (man's efficiency), in its exhilarating effect upon poor, weak, human nature, that it insinuates itself through our whole system so stealthily that the more we become under its influence, the more indignant we are that any should charge us with having partaken of it. Nothing but the grace of God can show us our true condition, and if in his purpose he sees fit to leave us to become filled with our own ways, we will become maddened with this, to our natural taste, delicious beverage. It is so much more agreeable to the flesh to have wherewith to boast, than to be mere clay in the hands of the potter. Salvation by grace excludes all works, for, If it be of works, then it is no more grace; and if by grace, then is it no more of works, says the apostle.

The religion of Jesus Christ is a revealed religion. Then how can we persuade sinners to partake of the revelation of Jesus? If we are so unspeakably blessed as to be one among those chosen in Christ before time began, it needs no effort of man to accomplish our salvation.

We have been pained of late to see the baneful influence of this wine of Babylon among our brethren. First it was made manifest in the denial of God's predestination of all things, then by a denial of salvation wholly by grace, and we fear that it will not be long before that other stone of offense, "election," will have to be taken out of the way.

We hope none will construe anything we have said as opposed to brother Durand's article, for as we said in the start, we fully indorse what he has said, and admire the spirit manifested, and do wish to most emphatically say, "He that is weak in the faith, receive ye," but must also add, "not to doubtful disputation," for, "How can two walk together except they be agreed?"

While we have been very positive and plain in what we have written, we hope and feel that we have been prompted by a spirit of love for the welfare of the saints, and the glory of God.

We have no disposition to enter into a heated discussion upon these subjects, with those who are opposed to us, and hope our brethren who indorse our views may be kept from being drawn into a controversy. There is little that can be said in defense of these principles of the doctrine, but what has been said time and again, and as about all the readers of the SIGNS are established on these subjects, it would be more edifying to them to have a more general variety treated upon. We do not think the opponents of the SIGNS can, after what we have here written, accuse us of recanting or yielding the position the SIGNS has ever held on these principles, if we decline to further enter into the controversy.

It is beyond the comprehension of carnal reason to understand why the Lord suffers his children to be so distracted and torn by divisions, but we know we are told by our blessed Savior that it should be so, and the Scriptures must be fulfilled, and the only reason assigned is, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." B.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

BROTHER Elder J. T. Rowe, of Baltimore, Md., has written to us proposing the following questions, which we feel willing to answer as best we shall be able, as we desire at all times to be at the call of our brethren, but yet realize that at best we can but poorly serve them. Further, it is sure that no man can answer all questions wisely, and least of all do we feel able to do so. We know that these questions were not proposed because any controversy is desired by brother Rowe, but rather with the hope that truth may be made to appear more clearly, and that the interests of our beloved Zion may thereby be subserved. We have always desired to write carefully concerning any matter about which there may be differences of opinion among brethren, but realize that, at the best, our words are but poor and halting, and that words which we may use, may not convey to others the meaning which they have in our mind. Especially, when any matter is controverted, is there need that all who speak or write upon the matter should be very careful in what they say, because at such times, anything that we may say is liable to be misconstrued by others who may differ. Still further, very few are able to enter into the feelings and thoughts of another, or to see all that may bear upon the mind of another, and therefore all should speak or write with an effort to put themselves in the other's place, and to see things from the point of view of that other. With these general remarks we will quote the questions proposed by brother Rowe, and try to present as clearly as may be our view of the subjects presented.

First. "Under what influence is the christian when he sins?"

We have no hesitancy in answering, he is under the influence of the world, and the flesh, and the devil. These all are presented as enemies of the believer, and of the truth, and of righteousness, and of God, in the Scriptures. The world lieth in wickedness, and therefore its influence is toward sin. The flesh at all times, lusts against the Spirit, and hinders the christian from doing the good that he would, and leads him to do the evil which he would not. And the devil is a liar, and the father of lies. By the word "world" is not meant this earth which we till, and from the soil of which we gain our daily bread, but rather the things which are in the world, which are there by reason of our first parents. In this sense the world is called, "this present evil world," and believers are bidden not to be conformed to this world, and men are said to be in bondage under the elements of the world, and we read of that which is after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ, and the friendship of the world is enmity against God, and that the man who is the friend of the world, is the enemy of God, and he that loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him, and we read of worldly lusts, which war against the soul. Therefore, it is sure that the world leads to evil in all the influence which it has upon the believer.

By the flesh is not meant this body of flesh, blood and bones, which must crumble to dust after death, but rather that inward nature of evil in all men which still remains in a man after he has become a believer in Jesus, and a follower of him. It is this flesh which loves all that is in the present evil world, with every lust and pleasure. It is this evil nature in the believer which opens the door to the assaults of the world and the devil, and so mars the peace and joy of salvation in him. It is the traitor in the

camp, without which the other two enemies could not enter the citadel, and work evil and havoc there to the shame and sorrow of the child of God. Under a sense of these things the soul will cry, O Lord deliver me, first of all, from myself. This is that flesh which is weak while the Spirit is willing; it is called sinful flesh, and believers are told not to walk after it; and believers do not war after the flesh; and this is that flesh which is said to be crucified. True, in some scores of places in the word of God, this word, "flesh," does mean this literal body, but not where it is spoken of as the enemy of the soul, and as striving against the Spirit.

We have no hesitation in saying that the believer is under the influence of these three evil powers when he sins.

Second. "Under what influence is the christian when he serves God?"

There can be but one reply to this, as we well know brother Rowe believes, and so must all the children of God believe. Perhaps it would be well to choose another word than the word "influence," as it is used but once in the Scriptures. In Job it is said, "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades?" We do not mention this to carp about words at all, but perhaps it is as well to use the words of Scripture in speaking about these things. Nothing can be more clear and positive than the testimony of the Scripture as to what it is that produces obedience in the heart and outward life of all believers. It is not self choice, or will; it is not the teaching of men, no matter how true and good that teaching may be; it is not from the natural heart and mind that obedience flows, seeing, as has been shown before, that they tend to evil, and only evil, and that continually. All true obedience is summed up in the word "love." Love to God, and love to the neighbor, includes all, as is testified by the apostle. "Love," he says, "is the fulfilling of the law." And love, says another apostle, is of God. And he alone that loveth, is born of God and knoweth God. This love is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us, and it is sure that all believers are made to know that we love him because he first loved us, and we work out just that which he works in us, both in willing and doing of his good pleasure.

Every child of God when led by the Spirit, like Paul, says, "By the grace of God I am what I am." The world, the flesh and the devil never influence men to obedience to God, but are always opposed to God, and to righteousness. Our God, who is holy and of purer eyes than to behold iniquity with favor, does not influence any man to sin. Man sins always when drawn away of his own lusts and enticed. The Lord says that he hates sin of all kinds. He hated the abominations of the Canaanites. (Deut. xii. and xxxi.) He hates idols. (Deut. xvi. and xxii.) The dear Redeemer is said in Psalm xlv. to love righteousness and hate iniquity. In Proverbs vi. the Lord is said to hate six special things which are evil. (See also Jer. xliv. 4), wherein the Lord declares that he hates the idolatry of the people, and in Zech. viii. 7, the Lord declares that he hates a false oath, and the purpose of evil in the heart against the neighbor, and in Revelation ii. the Lord declares twice that he hates a certain doctrine. From all these scriptural testimonies it is sure that sin is hateful and abominable to God, and that he does not, and cannot from his own holy nature, tempt any man to do that hateful, and abominable, and exceeding sinful thing. A man's own lusts are what lead to sin. The grace

and power of God, the leading of the Spirit of God, and the love of God shed abroad in the heart, are what lead to obedience at all times. It must never be forgotten that love alone is the fulfilling of the law. No amount of outward formal obedience can be acceptable to God. Such obedience is not really obedience at all. Love and its fruits alone constitute obedience in the sight of God, and according to the teachings of the Scriptures.

Third. "When the christian sins is he doing the will of God?"

When the christian sins, it is sure that he is but following the bent of his own carnal heart. Let no man say when he is tempted, that he is tempted of God, for he tempts no man, and is not himself tempted; we know of no better reply to the above question than this. How clear is this testimony. Man follows his own lusts when he sins; it is his nature to sin. If he does not sin at all times, in every foul way, it is but by the restraining power of sovereign grace, that he is kept. Man, even the believer, when left to himself for a little, runs after sin greedily, and will be guilty of the vilest crimes. Witness the denial of his Lord by Peter; and yet the denial of Peter was declared beforehand by the dear Redeemer. "Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice." And it was so. Peter was not pushed into that denial by the power of God, but was drawn into it through the weakness and sinfulness of the flesh, and yet, after the Lord had said that he should deny him thrice before the dawn of day, it must come to be so, else the Master's word would not have been fulfilled. Peter's denial proceeded out of his own self confidence, and the perversity of the flesh in him, as do all our transgressions and denials. In this sense, when a christian sins he sins against God, for all sin is against God. So David said "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned." All sin, whether in the believer, or the unbeliever, is the transgression of the law of God. This is plainly stated in the word of God, and it must not be denied. When a man sins he cannot say, with any meaning that any body can understand, that he is doing the will of God. If a child of God should commit adultery, and when accused of it should confess it, and then claim that he was but doing the will of God, it would certainly be the duty of faithful servants of God to say to him that adulteries are positively forbidden in the word of God; they are declared there, to be sins against God, and God condemns the adulterer, and places such characters outside of the gates of the city of God. Our God does not say to any man in the Scriptures, neither does he speak to the heart of any man when he sins, saying, "Thou hast done my will." This ought to be enough to settle the question asked by brother Rowe. And all this does not involve the denial of the predestination of all things whatsoever comes to pass. Arminians, ever since we can remember, have insisted that if our God has thus predestinated all things whatsoever come to pass, it destroys human accountability. That is, if predestination be true, God cannot judge man to be guilty, and justly condemn him for his sins. But Paul's words in Romans ix. contain all the reply which need to be made to this assertion. And we would also call attention to this, that our God does commend men for the good things that they have done, which he is himself the author and producer of, and which he has predestinated shall take place. If, then, it is not inconsistent with him to thus commend men for doing predesti-

nated good things, why should it be inconsistent with him to condemn men for doing predestinated evil things? There may be, there are, great mysteries in all this, which our finite minds cannot fathom, but we should expect that there would be unfathomable mysteries in God's ways and thoughts to our finite minds, and we ought to expect that to us there would SEEM to be contradictions in God's ways and thoughts, yet it is really not so, of this we may be sure, and with this assurance we may rest content. It is sure that man sins out of his own evil nature, and transgresses God's law in so doing, and is not doing the will of God as revealed in his righteous law, and yet is doing the deed which has been predestinated of God before the world was.

Fourth. "Does the joy of the christian grow out of the fact that he is a sinner?"

On the contrary, our chief trouble ever since we can remember, has been that we have sinned. There has never been a moment since we first felt that sin reigned in us, that we have rejoiced in it, but we have rejoiced that a ransom has been found. O, how many times does the believer look upon him whom he has himself pierced, and mourn for him, and say it was my sins, my cruel sins, that nailed him to the tree. Some have thought that Paul's language in Romans, "God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin," implied that believers could rejoice that they were sinners, in order that Jesus and his grace might be exalted. But we have not understood the apostle to mean this at all in this text. Rather, the emphasis ought to be placed upon the word "servants," in the text, and that Paul meant by it, that he would thank God that sin had become a bondage to them, hard and destructive, just as before their deliverance from Egypt, the bondage of Israel had been increased so that they could not bear it. And this was so in order that they might cry to God for deliverance, and find it at his hand. So the convicted sinner comes to feel that he is the slave or servant of sin, and then he cries for deliverance, which he finds in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Sin is a joy to unregenerate men, but it is a curse, a body of death, to that soul made alive unto God; from it he prays constantly to be delivered; because of it he makes humble confession before God. It makes him go with bowed head and sorrowful heart. At least we can say from our heart, this is true with ourself. We are far from believing that brethren who say, if any do, that their joy grows out of the fact that they are sinners, mean that sin is to them a joy. We can see how some might say this on the ground that by their sins Jesus has been exalted as a Savior, which could not have been the case had it not been true that his people were sinners, but even if said from these considerations, the language does not express even that which they mean to say, and besides will involve in the minds of most children of God what is altogether untrue. In the first three chapters of Romans we are shown what sin is to natural men, they roll it as a sweet morsel under their tongues, and they so love murder that their feet are swift to shed blood, and they do not like to retain God in their knowledge, and the very poison of asps is under their tongues. Such expressions imply a great love of sin, and a delight in it. It is on the other hand the chief trouble of the child of God that he does bear about with him such a vile nature. He says, "Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips." "Wherefore I abhor myself, and

repent in sackcloth and ashes." "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" No, no; sin is not and cannot be a joy to him who loves God and holiness. How can that which he has come to so abhor, be a joy to him any longer. Even that nature in him which does still furnish congenial soil for sin, he hates and abhors, and longs to be rid of it. And the one thing without which he will never be satisfied is that he shall be found in the likeness of Christ. "Then," said the psalmist, "shall I be satisfied, when I awake in thy likeness." If any man should profess a hope in Jesus Christ as his Savior from sin, and at the same time say that his joy grew out of the fact that he was a sinner, we should not know what to think of him, or to say to him, except that our chief grief grew out of that same fact. To say the very best about it, it is an extreme expression, which to most minds would convey falsehood rather than truth.

We have spoken of these things as they seem to us, and will leave them for the consideration of the brethren, feeling sure concerning the truth which we have aimed to present, but do not feel sure concerning the way in which it has been presented. We do feel great anxiety to seek out right words. We all need the guidance of the Holy Spirit both that we may speak, and understand what is spoken. C.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

We have a number of obituary notices which are crowded out of this number, which we will publish as soon as we can possibly make room for them without crowding out other matter of more general interest, and beg the patience of the friends until the notices are published.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

REVELATION XXII. 1, 2.

By request of M. J. Jones, of Decatur Co., Georgia, we present very briefly such views as we have on the text proposed for consideration.

And he showed me a pure river. This was and is a part of "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John."—Rev. i. 1. In the conclusion of his vision on Patmos, John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride for her husband, and gives a description of the church of God as thus presented under this sublime and glorious figure. After showing the church originated in, and descended from, God, with all that adorns her for her husband—shows her definite proportions, walls, gates, foundadations, streets, provisions, &c., and among them the supply of the water of life, which in its quality was pure and vital, the same of which Jesus spake to the woman of Samaria, which shall be in him that drinketh of it, a well of living water springing up into everlasting life. In quantity it is a river. Rivers flow on from age to age, without diminishing the fullness of the fountain from whence they flow, and this with the dispensation of life and salvation from God, can never impoverish him, or lessen his resources. This is the river, the streams whereof make glad this holy city of our God, this New Jerusalem, adorned as a bride. And as to its channel, or the medium through which it flows, Isaiah says, For there the glorious Lord shall be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams, &c. All spirit-

ual blessings and divine life are given to them in, and flow down to them through the Mediation of our glorious Lord Jesus Christ.

Clear as crystal. Perfectly transparent, and unmingled with any of the filthy waters which flow from the polluted fountains of poor, depraved, sinful nature. Its purity and transparency is inferred from its place of emanation, and the channel through which it flows.

Proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb. The city which is supplied with the water of this river, also proceeded from God, and her supplies must be congenial with the purity of that heavenly origin. The "throne" is the place of power, of sovereignty, and absolute authority. The throne of God and the Lamb is above all other principalities and powers, thrones or dominions. All the power and majesty of God and the Lamb, in providence and grace, is implied. In the midst of the throne of God, John saw the Lamb, in his Mediatorial character, feeding his flock, and leading them to living fountains, and wiping all tears from their eyes. Truly, the throne of the Redeemer is high and lifted up, higher than the heavens. The streams of immortality from God the Father, flow down to men through Jesus Christ alone. He is the only place of these "broad rivers and streams, which make glad the city of God." These living waters not only emanate from the throne, but their course and flowing is under the direction and power of the throne of God and the Lamb, which is signified by the throne on which God and the Lamb, and God in the Lamb, preside. How presumptuous, then, for poor, finite, sinful man to assay to send these waters forth, or to direct their course; yet they arrogantly talk of sending the gospel, sending the power of God, the water of immortality, to the distant nations of the earth, and to make such contemptible things as mission funds, the channel through which it shall flow. But it was not so revealed to John; as he saw it, its course was fixed and irrevocably directed by the throne.

In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life." The pronoun IT, refers to the city which the angel of Christ was shewing to John, as the WAY, the channel, the highway of holiness, and points us to our Lord Jesus Christ, himself as the Street of it, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. As the street of the city the saints walk in him even as they have received him, as Christ Jesus the Lord. By the midst of the street of it, we understand is signified the advent and incarnation of the Son of God. For in the Son of God centres the street, or way of salvation, and the tree of life, which is not only in him, but on either side, both before and after his advent, and embracing all who through the abounding grace of God have ever walked in this street, drank of the waters of this river, ate of the fruit of this tree of life, or felt the healing efficacy of its leaves, both before and since the incarnation of the Son of God.

Good and sound brethren have differed in regard to what is signified by the "Tree of Life," some supposing that it means Christ, and others contending that as it is here presented in the feminine gender, "yielding her fruit," &c., that it is only applicable to the church of God. We will not controvert either of those positions, for to us, both are evidently intended, for how can Christ and his church be separated or divided? Is she not one with him, even as he is one with the Father? Who then shall separate what God has joined? Jesus says, I am the

vine, ye are the branches. As all the branches of a vine grow out of the vine, even so all the members of Christ, being many, are one body; even so is Christ. But to settle this matter beyond all reasonable controversy, in verse sixteen, of this chapter, we have the words of our Lord, "I Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David," &c. David and his seed were used to signify Christ and his church, and from this figure we learn that as the tree is but a development of the root from which it grows, so the church had her spiritual creation in the Lord Jesus Christ, has proceeded from him, and are members of him, even as the branches are members of, and compose the vine. The church which John is describing as coming down from God out of heaven, not only had her origin in Christ, and is a manifestation or development of him, as the fully developed tree, with its spreading branches, its wholesome fruits and healing leaves, are but the manifestation of the life and virtue of its root. We, therefore, understand the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God, which was typified by the tree of life in the garden of Eden, and which in our subject is seen by John in the midst of the street of New Jerusalem, and on either side the River of Life, signifies the Head and body, the Vine and branches, the root and offspring, which embrace Christ and his church, which is his body and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. The church in the fully developed Tree, in her vital union with her immortal Root, is by the Root made fruitful, and as bearing fruit, the feminine gender is applied, for she is the mother of us all; that is, of all the children of the free woman. But separate her from her living Root, and she becomes barren and dead. In her union with the Son of God, as her life-inspiring and life-giving Root, she "bears twelve manner of fruits." Whether the number twelve in this case, referred to the twelve apostles of the Lamb, as is generally supposed, or not, it is certain that all the fruits of this Tree of Life are fruits of Life clearly developed from a vital union with the immortal Root, and do embrace all the peaceable fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, &c., against which there is no law; and they are periodcally (every month,) presented in striking contrast with the fruits of the flesh, which are the development of the earthly, fallen, depraved Adam, or root from which our earthly nature sprang. By her fruit she is known. A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit, neither can a good tree bring forth evil fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. However prolific professed churches or religionists may be, if the tree be evil, and the fruits, unlike those of the Tree of Life, which only spring from Christ, as the Root, the axe which is laid at the root of the trees, shall cut them all down, and devote them to burning, and fuel of fire.

The centre of the street of the New Jerusalem, in which the immortal germ of this tree is found, having allusion, as we have supposed, to Christ, in his coming in the flesh, and the "either side of the river," to mean the two dispensations, the tree in its development is found under both the old and new, like the cherubs on the mercy-seat, on each extremity, but with their wings meeting at the centre, and their eyes towards the mercy-seat. As the street or way of access to God under the figurative dispensation was between the the Cherubim and over the

mercy-seat. There the God of Israel met the high priest of the chosen tribes, and held communion with Israel through Israel's priest, so signifying the advent of Christ at the end, or winding up the former, and as the beginning of the latter dispensation. Here the two olive trees cease to be known as twain, for the wall of partition is abolished, and of the twain Christ has made one new man, so making peace. The patriarchs and prophets, with all the Old Testament saints, are component parts of the tree, or kingdom of Christ, for the Gentile portion is brought in under the gospel, and sit down in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Thus all the church of God, from righteous Abel, to the last vessel of mercy that shall be brought to the unity of the faith, and knowledge of the Son of God, form but one body, and all live by virtue of vital union with Christ as the Root and Life of the body, the church.

Yielding her fruit every month. The variety of her fruit, twelve manner, shows that, as in nature, God has provided and caused the trees of the earth to bear their fruit periodically, so he in the kingdom of grace has his set and fixed times to favor Zion. Every revolution of the ponderous wheels of nature, every waxing and declining moon, shall witness the development of the Tree of Life. All the means using in our power would not enable us to gather fruit from the trees of nature, except in their decreed seasons, and so in a spiritual view, we cannot change the immutable laws of the kingdom of Christ. When the vision tarries we must wait for it, for it will come at its appointed time, and it will not tarry.

And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. The foliage of the trees as clearly indicate a vital union with the root, as does the fruit, but it is the fruit that shall demonstrate the quality of the tree. Of the saints it is said, Ye are the salt of the earth, and it is for the elect's sake that the world stands. But the visible walk, deportment, doctrine, and practice of the saints here are brought to bear against the delusions and abominations of the Gentile nations of the earth; but in a more special sense those of God's quickened children, who feel and lament the depravity of their carnal nature; for it is only the sick who need a physician, so it is the sick who can be benefited by healing medicines. Quickened heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus, the Root, shall all be healed, and perfectly and permanently cured of all their diseases, and there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face, and his name shall be written in their foreheads.

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, [that is the commandments of Jesus] that they may have a right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., July 1, 1859.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

THE Old School Baptist brethren of Cleveland, Ohio, met at the home of Cyrus Cross, March 16th, 1902, for the purpose of organizing a church.

After listening to an able discourse delivered by Elder Hanover, Sr., of Westerville, Ohio, Elder H. E. Purris was chosen Moderator.

The Articles of Faith drafted by the brethren at Black Rock, Md., were adopted.

Letters of recommendation were read and approved from the following brethren: Elder H. E. Purris, William Harman, William Barker, Jane Barker, Louisa A. Harman, Jennie O. Cross.

The following visiting brethren were present, and were invited to seats with us:

Brother W. P. Gass, of the Schoharie Church, N. Y.

Brother Stephen Taylor, of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, of New York city.

At the close of the meeting the right hand of fellowship was extended by Elder Hanover, after which a hymn was sang, and benediction pronounced by Elder H. E. Purris.

In behalf of the church we extend a hearty invitation to all who may feel it in their hearts to visit us (of our faith) and behold our order, and join with us in worshiping the God of Elijah.

JENNIE O. CROSS, Clerk.

EUCLID, Ohio, March 19, 1902.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, at the home of the bride's parents, near Ewing, Ohio, Charles Hensel, of Logan, Ohio, and Miss Lucinda Hardin, of Ewing, Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon Charles B. Hill was born at Harbourton, N. J., Nov. 21st, 1825, and died Feb. 14th, 1902, at his residence near Glenmore, N. J., having always lived within eight miles of his birthplace. Nov. 1st, 1855, he was married to Permelia Titus, who preceded him to the grave a number of years ago. To them were born six children, five daughters and one son, three of whom, all daughters, survive him. Our deceased brother was baptized by Elder Wm. J. Purington, in the fellowship of the church at Hopewell, N. J., about twenty years ago, and not long afterwards he was chosen deacon, which office he has ever since held, performing the duties which devolved upon him to the full satisfaction of the church, and also fulfilling the testimony of the apostle that they that use the office of a deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our dear brother was naturally of a quiet and unassuming nature, never putting himself unduly forward, but nevertheless going forward in the discharge of the duties devolving upon him with faithfulness and care. It was seldom, for many years, that his place in the assemblies of the church was vacant. He was favored with general good health during his life, and in cold and heat, in sunshine and storm, we expected to see him at our meetings. We knew that something was seriously wrong if he were absent. He did not allow social relationships to interfere with his obligation to the church, and to his Savior. He made no loud profession, and was not a man of many words, but he was steadfast in the faith, and by his walk and conversation manifested the grace of God which he professed. He loved sound doctrine, and clear testimony to experience, and to see a consistent life in those who professed godliness. He was possessed of a very lowly opinion of himself, and walked before the Lord with fear and trembling day by day. None knew him but to esteem him as a truly consistent man, and a good neighbor and citizen. Many who are not in harmony with the views of truth which were precious to him, have spoken of him as a man who lived his profession, if any man ever did. These things were said of him while he lived, and not only after his departure.

The funeral service was held at his late residence on Wednesday, Feb. 19th, when the words found in Matt. xxv. 21, were used as a text, by request of the children. The words were as appropriate of our dear brother, as they could be of any one in this life. The dear daughters, all of whom are members of the church, feel their loss deeply indeed; yet they have hope and joy in their sorrow. The father who was so dear to them is now at reet. May the comfort of the holy Spirit be with them. C.

Miss Mary Olive Hardy was born near Loraine, Ill., Feb. 20th, 1869, and moved with her parents to Missouri, when four years old, where she grew to womanhood. She died at her home on West Jefferson St., Kirksville, Mo., August 24th, 1898, having been in ill health for a number of years, though seriously ill only ten days. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church some years before her death, and lived a devoted christian life until death relieved her of her suffering. She held the love and respect of all who knew her. She leaves a mother, two sisters and four brothers to mourn their loss, besides a host of friends and relatives. Her remains were brought to Greensburg, where she was laid to rest by the side of her father, who preceded her to the better land a short time before. Funeral services were conducted by Elder George Edwards, of Laplata, Mo.

Benjamin Frankin Winter was born in Fairfield Co., Ohio, Sept. 23d, 1829, and departed this life March 15th, 1902, aged 72 years, 5 months and 22 days. Although having passed his three score years and ten, he was busily engaged in active farm life, and after completing the labors of the day, he retired in unusual good health and spirits, but in the silent watches of the night, while tired nature slept, at the hour of 2:30 a. m., the silent messenger came. The silver cord was loosened, and the golden bowl was broken. He laid down life's burdens as unconsciously as he had taken it up, and his spirit returned to God who gave it. He was united in marriage to Miss Elizabeth Ann Miller, June 11th, 1855. Unto this union was born three children, one son and two daughters; one daughter dying in infancy. He taught school and vocal music in his earlier life; a close student with a well stored mind of a literary turn, a deep thinker, and a ready debater. Until age prevented,

he took an active interest in the cause of education. He united with the New School Baptist Church in early life. He filled many responsible positions in life. He was a faithful husband, a kind and indulgent father, an obliging neighbor, a good citizen. He leaves a grief-stricken companion, one son, one daughter, six grandchildren, two brothers, one sister, together with a large circle of relatives and friends to mourn their earthly loss. May their loss be his eternal gain.

His funeral was largely attended, and conducted by the writer, after which his remains were laid to rest in the Walnut Creek burying ground, to await the resurrection.

G. N. TUSING.

MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting of the Wilmington Old School Baptist Church, is appointed to commence at 2:30 p. m., on Saturday before the second Sunday in April, (12th and 13th) and continue over Sunday. Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

WM. B. TAWRESEY.

MAY meeting will be held with the New Valley Church, commencing on Saturday before the second Sunday in May, holding over Sunday. Parties coming from the east or south will be met at Leesburg, Friday before. Take the train leaving Washington, D. C., 1 p. m. If any should fail to meet that train, take the 4:35 p. m.

We cordially invite all our friends to come, especially our ministering brethren.

E. V. WHITE.

BALTIMORE Association is appointed to be held with Harford Church, Harford Co., Md., beginning Wednesday before the third Sunday in May, (14th) 1902, and continue three days. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth to meet with us.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Salem Church, in Philadelphia, Pa., May 21st, 22d and 23d, 1902.

Those coming on Tuesday afternoon by Pennsylvania R. R., or B. & O. R. R., will go to B. F. Coulter's, 1910 N. Twenty-second St. (or to places where they are acquainted.) Those coming by Reading R. R., will get off at Columbia Avenue station, and go to sister Margaret Craven's, 1735 N. Seventh St. All who come on Wednesday will walk from Broad St. station, or Reading Terminal, to the place of meeting, southeast corner Broad and Cherry Sts., between Arch and Race Sts., (Odd Fellows' Temple) entrance on Broad St. Take elevator to seventh floor. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

B. F. COULTER, Church Clerk.

DELAWARE River Association is appointed to be held with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, N. J., beginning on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (May 28th) 1902, and continue three days.

THE Warwick Association is appointed to be held with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, Middletown, N. Y., beginning Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, (4th) 1902, and continue three days.

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"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 70. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1902. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NEWARK, Del., Oct. 24, 1901.

MISS BESSIE DURAND—MY DEAR SISTER IN A MOST PRECIOUS HOPE:—Once more our precious little season, the yearly meeting, is over, and the dear ones have nearly all gone away, some to their homes and others to the Salisbury Association, and we feel very lonely to-day. It was my plan to try and answer your letter as soon as the meeting was over, that I might receive another from you, and to-day I feel like telling you some of the many thoughts which are crowding up in my mind since the meeting, if it will not make too long a letter. I would love to talk with you instead of trying to write, or rather I would like to hear you talk. I feel that the Lord has been very good and merciful to me all through the meeting. That he should be so, is more than I can understand. It is too wonderful for me, I cannot attain unto it. How it humbles me that he should thus extend his mercy and grace unto me. Surely "he is great, and greatly to be praised in the congregation of saints. O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee? Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face." His desire is toward his people; his mercy will he never take from them. The mercy of the Lord is everlasting. Nearly all through the meeting I have felt in my heart that peace which passeth all understanding, and much of the time I have felt that I was with Mary, sitting at the feet of Jesus, feeling that in him I had all things, "Content with beholding his face, my all to his pleasure resigned," feeling that faith in God and submission to his will which I love to feel, and which brings peace; feeling that, "Before as behind, God is, and all is well." It is such a comfort to me to meet with the saints and to hear them tell of the wonders of Emmanuel and of the salvation which is in Christ Jesus. I feel that here is indeed the house of the Lord, that here his honor dwells, and that it is good to be here. How "great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." The forty-eighth Psalm expresses much of what I have felt in regard to this, though more and more I realize my unworthiness and un-

fitness to be with this blessed company, and in any measure to receive the favor and grace of God. That this grace should be extended to me at all is wonderful. I realize more and more that I am not even worthy to so much as gather the crumbs from under the Master's table, yet in his great mercy and love he has said, as our brother Elder Durand told us at the meeting, "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." We are not come to these precious things through our worthiness in the flesh. If the coming had been in this way I know I must ever have been left out; but all the way of the coming is grace, first and last, and this coming the devil can find no way of assailing, hence the hatred of it. The way of salvation is established by God in the heavens in righteousness, and is as firm and sure as God himself is sure. In the Scriptures the question is asked, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died," &c., continuing to the close of the chapter, the eighth of Romans. The christian's hope can never fail. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." "We are come by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." Please notice the meaning of this word consecrated, how good it is. Paul in his second letter to the Corinthians, speaks of this doctrine of salvation by grace. "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." It is written that to know him is life eternal. "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." By grace God's people are saved through faith, and that not of themselves; it is the gift of God.

The Lord has been pleased, as it seemed good to him, to renew day by day the hope which has been with me nearly all my life, so that I can hardly tell when it began, though I remember well, and cannot forget the times when the glorious gospel and the peace of God which passeth all understanding, has appeared to me. The glorious light and beauty of this kingdom can proceed only from a just and holy God, and can be known only by the revelation of God as it seems good to him to give this revelation of his glory and holiness, and glorious kingdom, which is not of this world, but is spiritual, heavenly, as high above earthly things as the heavens are higher and above the earth. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. It is not possible that these things can be known by the natural mind, nor is it the purpose of God that they should be thus known, therefore it is certain they will never be known in this way, whatever men in nature may say or think should or should not be, in their ignorance, blackness of darkness and presumption before God who is in wisdom high and lifted above all that we can know or think. One thing is certain, and all should consider this truth, that all things are created by God for his purpose, and that his purpose shall and will be fulfilled in all his creation, and that this purpose of God is righteous as God is

righteous, just and holy. He ruleth in the heavens and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou? and what is man before him? Is he not as grasshoppers? Is he not as clay in the hand of the potter, fulfilling each day that which God has purposed shall come to pass? Therefore the only thing that we can say should be or will be, that can be true and certain to come to pass, is to declare what God in his infinite wisdom has declared shall be, which things are purposed by God in righteousness and truth, that they shall come to pass. He rules in the heavens and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou? We do not find it written in the Scriptures of truth, "It may come to pass," "This may be fulfilled," "The Savior may be born," "He may save his people from their sins if they will let him." There is no uncertainty with God, who foreknows all things, and who has created all things. It is not possible that a line in the Scriptures could read with an uncertain sound, for he says, "Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass, I have purposed it, I will also do it." It is always with the power and foreknowledge of God that God's purposes are made known. His people shall be willing in the day of his power. I cannot tell the number of times it is written in the Scriptures, "Behold it shall come to pass," "It shall be fulfilled." Even the time is known of God. "In that day" in numerous places is written. I am reminded of a conversation which a dear sister and I had a few days ago on this subject. We were speaking that we could not at all times receive the doctrine of predestination, and the other Bible truths; I then told her the thought I had so often had about this, that whether we could receive these truths or not, God's truth remains firm, founded on a rock. Though we may change, God changes not, and his truth remains eternally the same, and the christian's hope is as sure as God is sure. It has been upon my mind so much of late how the things foreknown and predestinated by God to the fulfillment of his purpose (and this necessarily includes all things) are spoken of in the Scriptures of truth. There is not the least uncertainty or doubt with God. It is always in power and certainty that God foretells what shall come to pass. How many times the word "shall" is used. So many verses in the Bible have come to my mind in which God foretells what is to be, and he speaks always in this positive way, declaring his sovereignty and power to carry out his purpose. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass, I have purposed it, I will also do it." How beautifully the hymn No. 15, (Beebe's Collection) fits in here, does it not? That is a grand hymn.

I have been especially interested in the prophecy regarding the Savior's coming, and the salvation of his people. "The people that walked in darkness, have seen a great light; they that dwell in the

land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."—Isa. ix. 2, 6, 7. "The angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost, and she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation." "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is the name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." How much more is written declaring the sovereignty of God, both in the Scriptures of truth, and in the hearts and minds of God's people. We know that the things which God said by the prophets should come to pass have been fulfilled in their appointed time, and are being fulfilled daily. In Ecclesiastes it is written, "I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him. That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past." How great and marvelous is the power of God shown in the salvation of his people. He directeth all their way; he leadeth them by a way they know not, in paths they have not seen. He brings them into his banqueting-house, and his banner over them is love. All that the Father giveth the Son shall come to him, and Jesus said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." None can pluck God's people out of his hand; they were foreknown by him before the foundation of the world. All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. In their experience the saints are delivered out of the power of the darkness of the natural man, into the kingdom of God's dear Son, into the light of the gospel, into the spiritual kingdom, which is eternal, which is not of this world, a work which must necessarily be of God, for it would not be possible for man to perform this work, for he is of the earth earthy, while this new birth, this spiritual kingdom, is from above, is heavenly, is from the Father of light. This new birth is God manifest by revelation, by his Spirit, to his people in the flesh, through Christ Jesus, (the anointed Savior) Christ in them the hope of glory. They are brought by a new and living way which he hath consecrated

for them, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. Their hope is laid up in heaven for them, therefore it is safe in the hands of God, and can never be taken from them. Christ came into the world to save his people from their sins, and he finished the work which the Father gave him to do. He kept the faith, he saved them with an everlasting salvation; he came from God to do this; he kept the law in every jot and tittle; he was delivered for their offenses, and raised again for their justification. He became sin, who knew no sin, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. He took on himself their nature, and received the judgment, condemnation and death which was theirs. He was delivered for their offenses, and raised again for their justification. All this he did because he loved them.

A minister called and beloved of God has written, "Let the heathen rage, and the people continue to imagine vain things, the God of heaven rules, and his church is his peculiar care. The church is dead, and her life is hid with Christ in God. Even when we were dead in sins, our life was hid with Christ in God; before Adam was created, our life was there. The sin of the first man did not reach that life, and never can reach it. Sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ and called. Thus the record stands; thus the record stood when we were dead in sins; thus the record stood from the ages eternal, and thus it forever shall stand. We were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and this is God's purpose of election, and must stand."

We had a most excellent meeting. Elder Durand surely came to us in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, as I believe also did the others. The preaching to me seemed wonderful. The words of the Lord kept coming to my mind, "All power is given me in heaven and earth." This evening the words came to me, "And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open, and I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place, and he shall be for a glorious throne to his Father's house."

I have felt astonished that so many have spoken to me of my letter in the SIGNS being good, and a comfort to them. While it is a comfort to me to hear them say so, I cannot tell you how it humbles me before the Lord, for surely there is no one less qualified to write a good letter or comfort any one than I, in and of myself, and that the Lord should give one of his people comfort by my writing, is more than I can understand, though I know he can comfort his people through whom he will. I must confess that what little I have written is by his grace, all the praise is due him; in and of myself I could do nothing, and, dear sister, I am glad to have all the praise his, for all praise is due him, and he is worthy to be praised. I never thought that my letter would be published. Perhaps I could not have had the courage to send it if I had known it would be. I was greatly surprised to see it in the paper. I felt a trembling all over, and such a questioning if it was all right; if it was sound in the faith, for I would so much rather that it were left out if it were not in accordance with sound doctrine. I feel that I am such a very little child in the understanding of these things.

Now I find I have written so long a letter I am in doubt whether to send it or not, but hoping that you will forgive the length, I have decided to send it just as

it is, as I would not know how to write another, and it would probably end in my not writing at all, as I would no doubt consider it all a failure. It comforts me to talk to you in this way, telling you of my feelings, and your replies bring to me just what I want and need.

Very affectionately I am, I hope, your sister in the fellowship of the gospel,

LAURA A. HAMILTON.

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313 HYMAN ST., LONDON, Ont., Mar. 16, 1902.

ELDER F. A. CHICK:—Dear brother in the afflictions of this life, and may I also hope in the gospel, though I have but little evidence that such is the case with me. Your letter of the 8th was received, and though sad and sorrowful, it was a comfort to us to think you would think of us in your affliction. My first thought as I read your first words: "Dear brother, I feel like writing you this morning," was O why should you feel like writing to a poor, miserable creature like me? Why would your thoughts be directed to me above all your correspondents, the very poorest and most unworthy? Surely you cannot know me or you would not feel that way, but I want to acknowledge your kindness and send you my sympathy in the deep bereavement that has been sent upon you. God alone can comfort you, I cannot. He wounds, and he heals, and none can deliver out of his hand, but you have our sincerest sympathy in your affliction, if I know what sympathy is, but I am so selfish that I fear I do not know anything about the matter. There seems to be nothing good about me, and I feel unable to write anything that can possibly be of any benefit to you, but I felt I ought and must write you a few lines in acknowledgment of your letter.

Elder Carnell was here yesterday, and I gave him your letter to read, and he said it was good to him, and he sends his love and sympathy to you. He and family are well, and the friends generally, except dear Kate Bateman. She is gradually sinking, but her comfort and joy remains bright, and her hope firm so that she has no fear of death, and she said only a short time ago, "O will not death be glorious?" What faith and hope can do for a poor mortal, is it not wonderful? O that I had just a sip of such faith and hope, how it would comfort me, but alas I am in a dungeon, and my ways are hedged with hewn stone; stones fitted together by God's eternal purpose, so there is no tearing them apart or throwing them aside. Of late my tears have been my meat day and night while they say unto my soul continually, Where is thy God? O, my brother, I cry unto God day and night that he would say unto me, I am thy salvation, but no answer of peace comes; and will he leave me utterly to sink in despair? You see how very selfish I am, just thinking and writing of my own sorrow instead of writing of yours, or of other things that would be of more interest, but when sorrow and trouble comes we cannot get away from it, and as I look at the experience of some of the Bible saints, I find they could do nothing but cry out of pain, as is instanced in Job, Jeremiah, many psalms, and others.

You say if your sermonizing is tedious, please forgive, but I assure you your letter was every bit good to me, as far as writing on the things of the Spirit, but the affliction sent upon you and your family was sad reading, and I thought with that aged man you spoke of, Why was I not taken, for I am a useless creature, and yet, dear brother, would it not be a sad feeling if we thought we would not be missed? Yes indeed, and yet I know I am not worthy of being missed,

and why I should be loved or esteemed is a mystery, for there certainly is nothing lovable about me. I was glad indeed that I could say truthfully what I did about Elder Carnell, to give you a feeling of gladness, and that you are so drawn to each other in the gospel, and in the fellowship of Jesus. May it ever remain so with you both. Elder Carnell and others would like to have you come to our May meeting, but I think you said you could not come at that time, much as you would like to do so, but if you feel that you can, please send me a postal by return mail. We expect Elder Curry. He has not far to come, and can come almost any time. You say in the last of your letter, you prize my fellowship highly, and this humbles me in the very dust, and were it not that I cannot believe you guilty of flattery in such a solemn matter as this, I would feel it not possible that your words could be true, and yet I could not help but feel some consolation and comfort in the thought that you did desire the fellowship of poor, unworthy me. O what a wonderful mystery it all is; that mysterious principle of fellowship that runs through the people of the living God, in all ages, stations of life, and in all nations, and none feel worthy of it.

You wrote of what the apostle said, The Lord will make a way of escape that we may be able to bear it. O yes, but dear brother, my trouble is that I do not seem to be given strength to bear my trouble, but that I am sinking down to despair. I do believe I cry day and night for strength to be given me, but I seem to get weaker all the time, and O, I fear the end of it all will be death. You know the apostle says, The sorrow of the world worketh death, and I fear that is my sorrow: worldly sorrow and trouble. I was comforted in reading brother Benton Beebe's writing on the cup of salvation; it was a great comfort to me for a time. He says, Dear child of God, you never had one pang of physical pain, nor met with a loss, or been bereft in any way, but what it was by the purpose of God placed in this cup to wean you from the world, and to bring you to call upon the name of the Lord. These are the temporal trials and afflictions in the cup, but there are deeper trials than these, even the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, and we say, All these things are against me. The whole piece was good indeed, and if I could but feel as he says in conclusion, Not as I will, but as thou wilt, then indeed all would be well, but I am deeply rebellious, and will be till God says in my heart, Peace, be still.

Now, dear brother, I feel I better stop my scribbling and complaining. I have nothing worth writing, and it is hard to write, talk or preach, or do any spiritual worship or act, when the heart is shut up in hardness and death. Never did I feel it such a solemn thing to try to pray as of late. I think of the Athenians whom Paul said worshiped an unknown God, and am I any better? My wife desires me to read and pray with her, and I try to do so, I bow my knees, but when God hides his face who can behold him? and how can I pray to a being I cannot see? It is as Milton says, Like breath against the wind blown stiffling back on him that breathes it forth, and yet I continue to go through the form, and sometimes there is a little access and melting of heart, but I often feel it is all selfishness, and yet is not every prayer selfish? It is always be merciful to *me*, and when the answer comes it is resignation to the will of God. Pardon this rambling scribble.

Mrs. Scates says she will always desire to be remembered by you, and to you, in

love. I do believe your visit was precious to her. We never talked on spiritual things as much as since your visit, and it seems a great privilege to do so. My hand is bad to-day, and I write with difficulty. If you are given the feeling, O pray that I may be sustained and kept by the Lord from utter despair. Love to your family.

Unworthily your brother,

R. SCATES.

KELLY'S CORNERS, N. Y., Feb. 2, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—While musing upon the experience of the grace of God which brought salvation unto me, and believing as I do that I am saved by hope, I have been led to the comfortable assurance expressed by the words of Paul, "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam a quickening spirit." This leads to a number of questions and answers all very significant regarding the important matter of man's salvation. First of all it shows that there must be a new or second birth, of an incorruptible seed, which liveth and abideth forever. In this is implied the choice and gift of the Father unto his Son Jesus Christ, of those whom he came to seek and to save, and whom he will raise up at the last day. There can be no doubt concerning the nature of his descent into the world, or of the work which he must do to deliver them from their sins, because they were under the power of darkness, and must be translated therefrom into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Therefore Jesus dies to redeem them, and his death, as the head and life of the church, satisfied all the just claims of the holy law of God, which in all its jots and tittles, held them fast forever.

The power of an endless life could be shown only by the rising glory of Jesus Christ. As he had died to redeem them, so he must be raised up to justify them. And this includes all who were given to him in the well ordered and sure counsel of God. Jesus is the Savior of sinners, because he is the resurrection and the life. He was dead, and now lives forever. He has brought the heaven of his people to light, and has taken possession of the joy. This is the first resurrection; this is the bringing forth of a nation at once; here is the sanctification of God the Father, and the preservation of his people in Jesus Christ. Therefore their calling must be a holy calling. To those who are called, here is the spirit of adoption. To them that believe this is an earnest; it becomes to them a good hope through grace, and an everlasting consolation. Is this my happy lot? So I believe. So I profess. And because of this I have been trying to preach to the comfort of the saints. I am thankful to God for his great mercy, and for my brethren and sisters and listening believers not yet in the visible organization of the church, that it is so that they have received the truth, that there shall be a resurrection of the just and the unjust, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

The dividing line is drawn. The sheep, or saints, do not and cannot know fully in this life the things which God through Jesus Christ has reserved for them, but a living and overcoming faith holds them on their way. They know by an experience of the grace of God in their hearts that if in this life only they have hope in Christ, they are of all men most miserable. This is my experience during the past forty-three years of professed christian life. I have found very many compan-

ions in tribulation, yet we have all lived in hope of the resurrection, the better resurrection than from under the dominion of the law. That was glorious; that was mysterious; that was in very deed wonderful. Surely there was nothing in that experience to lead to the thought of an Arminian heaven, a place in the skies where we shall recognize each other's friends. But here we had a real forecast, or faith's view, of the glory of God in Jesus Christ, made known in the fellowship of the gospel. This enduring tie enables us to look forward with pleasing prospects to being with and like Jesus; to being with him when we die, and like him when he comes the second time without sin unto salvation. Of the whole we have an earnest, while faith and hope and charity abides. Here we only know and see in part, but the reality will surely come. This mortal man, this Adam sinner that I am now, has two lives; one will ere long cease forever; it is corrupt, and of the earth, the other is eternal and unending, my hope is founded in it; if I possess it as one of the flock, I am predestinated to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. In giving the kingdom to Jesus as the Savior of his people, the Father is excepted, as Jesus is accepted at his right hand, yet they are one still, for Jesus has the Spirit of his Father without measure, and therefore we approach to the Father through the name of Jesus. This will be until he has gathered in all those whom the Father gave him. Then the last trump will sound. Then the race of Adam will cease forever from the earth.

Let us recall the words again, "They that have done good, to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of damnation." What do the words good and evil imply? Surely it is not in doing or not doing something, as man naturally judges, but it is in the faith, without which it is impossible to please God, or to do any good thing. Thus we understand that the grace of God underlies and overtops all his work in raising his people, whether they have been infants or adults, men or women. The grace of God is sufficient. I trust that I have the proof of this in my heart. There have been times and things in which I did not know which way to turn. Then I was sure that I must stand still and see the salvation of God. Thus the world, the flesh and the devil is overcome. Devils also believe and tremble, and know that there is a time when their work will come to naught.

My belief from the Scriptures is that Jesus will come manifestly in person to be recognized, not by mortal eyes and scoffed at as he was before, by the self-righteous and the hypocrites, but in his great glory, to the admiration of the saints, and the dread of all his foes. His saints will be brought up to the holy union and joint heirship with their glorified Lord; in bodies fashioned like unto his glorified body. Those that are not his, are already under the curse, and they continue in their own strength and righteousness, working only (as they openly acknowledge) to escape the very destiny which is theirs as they continue on in their profession. But Jesus himself is the way and the truth and the life to his people. I should want to praise him here if there were no hereafter, for what he has done for me, a miserable, sinful worm. I have no right to expect anything from him save only from his mercy, I have no claim upon his glory. To-day his glory, as was the case forty years ago, makes me desire to see him, and to be like him. So I will

still hope on to the end of my journey, if he wills it.

I have written in love to the saints, as I believe. Brother Beebe do as you think best with this, and all will be right with me.

Your brother,

J. D. HUBBELL.

CAMMAL, Pa., Feb. 3, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE AND THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—For a long time I have been impressed to write a letter for the SIGNS, and so with fear and trembling, not knowing what I may write that would be of any benefit to the saints of God, and being much cast down in feeling, because of my unworthiness and unfitness, I now make the attempt. If it be only from a fleshly desire to exalt my own righteousness it will be all consumed. We are told, "If we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption; but if we sow to the Spirit, we shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and it is the word of God, who speaks and it is done, and commands and it stands fast.

There is no other way by which we may know the people of God but by revelation. We are not to know any one after the flesh, and therefore it is needful for the ministers of the gospel to draw the line in their discourses plainly, so that the child of God may know what way they are following, and that they are not following after the doctrines and commandments of men. Paul says, "Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord." To stand fast in the Lord is not to know any other gospel save Christ and him crucified.

How plainly the line was drawn when the Savior was crucified between the two thieves: one said, "Save thyself and us," showing that he had no knowledge of God and his kingdom, while the other was made to cry out, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." And every child of God is made to thus cry out when crucified to the flesh. Paul said, "For sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace."

The law which was written on tables of stone has been fulfilled, and now he says, "I will put my law in their hearts." So now we have a salvation that is finished and complete, and this is the only salvation of which I know anything, and this can only be seen by an eye of faith, and this faith is the gift of God. And now it is said, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure." The subject of grace is the only one who will work out this salvation. When they are brought, in experience with Jonah, into the belly of hell, and have the weeds wrapped about their heads, then they are enabled to say with the prophet, "I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord."

We see that God's people are a poor and afflicted people, and tried as gold is tried, and refined as silver is refined. Gold was gold before it was tried, and silver was silver before it was refined, and they are proved to be gold and silver in the trial, and the refining. Silver must be heated in the furnace to consume all the dross. So God has chosen his people before the foundation of the world, and now he tries them. While I have been trying to think upon the name of the Lord, it has caused me to rejoice

to know that our God has formed and redeemed his people for himself, and that he will bring them off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him that loved them, in the end. So by all these trials and afflictions the child of God is made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. They serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil."

All these things are hidden from the world, and so we cannot teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they all shall know him, from the least of them even to the greatest. The city cannot be hid, for it is built upon a hill; the foundation is built upon a Rock, and death and hell, and all the principalities and powers of the world cannot overthrow it, and we have the blessed assurance that while these things are hidden from the wise and prudent, they are revealed unto babes. All the wisdom and works of men are burnt up and destroyed, and his people are made to cry out, Unclean! unclean! And to such comes that still small voice saying, "Be still and know that I am God."

I have been reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for over twenty years, and I have seen no change in them, nor in the doctrine they set forth; it still testifies that we are saved by grace, and grace alone. I would say to all the able writers, Keep on writing, for it is about all the preaching that some of the poor and afflicted saints of God get to hear. Here in our little church we have the privilege of hearing the gospel preached in its purity, by our pastor, brother Vail, who has been coming to us about twenty-six years, declaring the whole truth, and the same truth, and if it be the Lord's will, I hope that he will be spared yet for years to come. Many others that I could mention have visited our little church, setting forth the same precious truth, which has been for our good. All things work together for good to them who love God, and are the called according to his purpose. Thus we see that God has a purpose in all things that his children pass through in the trying times that come to them. May we all be made to say, Thy will and not ours be done.

I trust that the brethren and friends that can, will lend their aid in distributing the SIGNS, both far and near, for God declares that he has a people in every nation, kindred and tongue, and that they shall show forth his praise.

Now, brother Beebe, this is not what I thought I would write when I began. I will leave it to your better judgment to do with as you think best. I do not wish to crowd out better matter. Fearing that I may weary you by what I have written, I will close this poor scribble. I hope that you will remember me, a poor, weak brother, if one at all.

In fellowship with all saints,

J. T. BADGLEY.

ASHLAND, Ill., Jan. 26, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Although I am poor, and in poor health, yet I cannot feel that I can do without the SIGNS, and so inclosed find order for one dollar. I love to read the good letters, they cheer me, as I find that others feel as I do. I am too unworthy to implore the mercy of God, but O where else can I go, hungry and thirsty as I am, but to the God of mercy for grace and mercy?

Dear brethren, I want to tell you what a conflict of mind I have had for a long time, and how I have been made to feel certain that you contend for the truth, in what some dear ones call fatalism. When

I was first reconciled to the true doctrine of the Bible, I felt satisfied that God worked all things after the counsel of his own will, in other words, I believed in the predestination of all things, but knowing some things as I did, I said I must give it up, save as regards the first creation. That was settled in my mind, and I thought that for God to have a chosen people before time, and ordain a Redeemer before the foundation of the world, and then create man sinless, intending that he should remain sinless, was altogether inconsistent. Had they remained sinless, then his eternal purpose in Christ Jesus would have been foiled; his foreknowledge of his people, and predestination of them, with their justification and glorification, would all have been foiled. I may be called a heretic. I would rather be called a heretic than to try to limit the power of God, when he has said I will do all my pleasure.

Poor old Nebuchadnezzar was brought to acknowledge that the Lord rules in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. Where then is there any place for man to rule, or to have his own way, independent of an overruling power who is sovereign of heaven and earth? Now you can see, dear editors of the SIGNS, how I succeed in explaining away the predestination of all things, and it is the same all the time. I often try to give it up, and I even wrote against it, but when I attempt to argue it away in my mind, or when talking with a saint of God, I find myself back in the same belief as before.

This very day I said, "It is of no use for people to say they cannot do better if they would." Then, dear brethren, these words came to me with such force, "You poor, sinful mortal, were it not that God's eternal power is underneath you, you would at once sink to ruin, but his sovereign power and reigning grace sustains you." Now, dear brethren, who may read this, you cannot tell how humiliated my feelings were, unless you have passed through the same. I saw plainly, poor earth worms that we are, that we can have no power at all only as God gives it to us. And when God's power is taken from us, and the light of his countenance is withdrawn, we grope in darkness. The Lord went away and Satan came and tempted Eve to sin. When the Lord withdraws himself from us, or leaves us in the dark, then Satan, the night prowler, comes in, and at once we are in the forbidden path. Then soon we hear the Lord's voice, and how humiliated we feel, and at once begin to pin the fig leaves together, of our good resolutions with the promise to do better in the future. But then we must feel the rod for our chastisement. Thus no flesh shall glory in his sight.

Our God does work all things after the counsel of his own will, and none must question him, or say unto him, Why or what doest thou? All things are his, and he is under no law, and therefore cannot transgress, let him do as he please with his own. All things through him do work together for good to his people. When our little hope brightens, and we can feel some assurance that we are his, then we can bear trials and tribulations and reproaches for Jesus' sake, and find at the end, that they do work for our good. How true it is, that we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. We go stumbling on, trying to heed the admonitions, and to honor our blessed Lord by an upright walk, but we do so often fail. Our faith looks alone to Jesus for spiritual enjoyments here in time, and this is time salvation through

God's unmerited grace; this is the propelling power that causes us to desire to walk uprightly. Dear brethren, we do not want to feel that we are performing some condition, but to fall at his feet prostrate, crying, "We cannot do the things that we would." O, dear ones, let us give to God all the glory, all the praise, and rejoice that he has given us a hope of heaven through our Lord Jesus Christ, and that he has shed abroad his love in our hearts, and that all is unmerited by us.

Write on for the SIGNS; I love to read your good letters, and the editorials are so instructive that I love to read them also.

Brother Beebe, do with this as you think will best honor the Lord.

S. B. THOMPSON.

RIDGEWOOD, N. J., March 30, 1902.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I cannot join with the mixed multitude this day to offer an Easter (?) greeting, although it seems from the record that the day is mentioned in Acts, that Peter was kept in prison, the authorities intending after Easter to bring him forth. Does this prove that the church observed this day? Paul, addressing the Galatians, says, "Ye observe days," &c., "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain." I would be glad to have, through our family paper, views from some one of our faithful watchmen on Zion's walls, concerning this subject. I trust I am not in bondage myself, but I would like to give a more satisfactory explanation than I can frame. Cowper's expression occurs to me, in harmony with my own views, "He is a freeman, whom the truth makes free, and all are slaves beside." I trust I do enjoy a sense of freedom in belief of the truth, but I have much still to learn and unlearn. I have, I trust, also an abiding hope in an unchanging God, one who cannot err, who remaineth or abideth faithful, who cannot deny himself, who says, "I am God, and beside me there is no Savior." O, when we realize this, can we desire to limit his sovereignty? As the late Elder Jenkins, our dear and esteemed brother and pastor, once said to me, with so much feeling, "I am glad the Lord reigns," so may all our minds be exercised.

A little more than a year ago my eldest sister peacefully fell asleep at her late home in Georgia, and now I have word from California that my youngest sister is no more. We were seven children and an adopted one, now I am alone, as to those natural ties, but while I have so many evidences of God's goodness toward me; kind and sympathizing letters from those I love in the truth; the dear old SIGNS, that would still maintain a "Thus saith the Lord," and cling to our old order, for was not Moses enjoined, "See thou doest all things after the pattern shown thee in the mount?" not changing for convenience, but say as Paul, we have no such custom, I am not alone, for I realize the Lord reigns. And in the frequent and terrible disasters that have come upon us I am constrained to say, "It is the Lord, let him do as seemeth him good." Man by his presumption is only fulfilling the Lord's purposes. May we feel it is good to draw near to God. May we be enabled each day of our lives to say, Christ has risen.

With love to the household of faith,

MARIA HELLINGS.

LAURELVILLE, Ohio, Feb. 16, 1902.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE DEAR OLD SIGNS:—After much delay I will renew

my subscription to our dear old family paper. I must confess that nothing but negligence has prevented me thus far. I have had the money laid aside for you this long time. I am so glad that you are not as careless about sending me the paper. We think that the SIGNS is just as precious and full of truth as when we first read it with the understanding. I enjoy reading the letters from the dear brethren, and only wish that I could write such. I was much comforted by reading sister T. R. Pittman's letter in the Jan. 15th number, and also made sad by brother B. F. Craig's letter in the same number.

God "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," and "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." We here are surrounded by other denominations, and I often think that if they only could see by the eye of faith, how much plainer the word of God would be to them, but the giving of sight to the blind is a work in which man has neither part nor lot. Their zeal is not according to knowledge, but I often think their devotion almost puts us to shame. I think we should not ridicule them, for we were once on the same road, climbing up by our own works, or "another way," and it was all we knew, and who made us to differ, or what have we that we did not receive? Not one of us will take any of the praise unto ourselves. When Christ calls them as he did Zaccheus, and we hope us, to "come down," they will be willing to restore every man his own. I know I am kept busy casting the beam out of mine own eye.

Our little church at Laurel is awake, and all in peace, and O, may the God of all grace keep us so. May he be unto us, and to all the Israel of God, wisdom, and supply the fruit of the Spirit. (Gal. v. 22, 23.)

Remember me, the least, if one at all, at a throne of grace. With love to all,

GEO. W. HARTSOUGH.

DELMAR, Del., Jan. 6, 1902.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I will try to write and let you know that I received yours and was glad. I would like to hear you preach again soon. I often think of you. If I could tell my experience and feelings as you have told them for me, I would talk about them often with joy, but when I do try to tell what the dear Lord has done for me, it seems as though I have not told it so as to be understood. It seems to come far short of what it really is. I do not want to deceive my brethren and sisters, and I do wish that they knew me as I know myself, then I would not be afraid that they were deceived in me. They seem to love me, which I enjoy very much, and I know that I love them, yet I fear that I do not love them as I ought, or as I should if I were truly a subject of grace. It is easy for me to tell what I would like to be, and the way I would like to go, but it is hard for me to tell what I am. For, "The good I would, I do not, and the evil that I would not, that I do." And evil is always present with me. It seems to me that I have the will, but how to perform that which is good, I find not.

I must close for this time. My love to you and your family. From a little sister, if one at all,

A. L. HANCOCK.

[THE above letter was written to us as a private one, but it is full of the daily thoughts and feelings of the little ones, and so we take the privilege of publishing it. It is true that all the children of God

travel but one way. There are diversities of outward circumstances, and applications of the Scriptures, but yet the same lessons are taught to all who are led by the Spirit. The above letter speaks briefly of the desires, complaints and longings, which always characterize the child of God; herein is the fellowship of saints.—ED.]

THAMESVILLE, Ont., March 23, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed find express order for four dollars, which apply as follows: two on my own account, and two on John Cudmore's account, both of above post-office. This brother is a neighbor, and while not a member of any Old Baptist church, or ever heard one preach, yet loves the doctrine, and so wants the paper continued. He has a very wonderful experience of grace, and I hope some day to send it to you to publish, if you deem it profitable.

It was with sorrow I heard of the death of your brother, Wm. L. Beebe. He was the first Old School Baptist I ever heard preach, and his discourse had the effect of satisfying my mind as to what was "the truth." His text was, "God is a Spirit," &c. I sat back near the door with an open Bible in my hand, intending to criticise him closely. Well, when he was through I closed the book, and have never opened it since, I think I can say, in that spirit. It seemed to me that surely I had found at last the true worshipers, and had some measure of hope I was one of them. I remember shortly afterwards walking fifteen miles to hear him again, and then stayed at the same house with him that night. He was truly a "fisher of men," yet took no glory to himself for his peculiar gift. He will long be held in loving remembrance by many in Canada.

But I only intended to write a note to you about remitting, but it seems easy to talk on to one I seem to know, yet never saw in the flesh. If I could, I would greatly desire to say a word of cheer to you, to encourage you to continue on "steadfastly" in the noble work you are now engaged in. I hope it may be given you to often feel that "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

With love I remain unworthily your brother,

J. R. DUFFUS.

JASPER, Ark., Feb. 14, 1902.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SON—MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—It is by the kind hand of our gracious heavenly Father that I am permitted to pen you a few lines, which will inform you that in due time I received three copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which were read from first to last, and were indeed a feast of fat things to your unworthy servant. O, the many comforting articles written by our worthy brethren and sisters. While I do feel to be the least of all God's little ones, those precious truths cheer me by the way, and leads my thoughts, and places my mind upon our spiritual Head, to whom our dear people gives all power, honor and glory; the great Lawgiver in Zion. While we are strangers in the flesh, we are all baptized by one Spirit into Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. By the atoning blood of Christ there is a near and dear relationship of God's dear children. I am now in my seventy-first year; was ordained Nov. 29th, 1869, and soon must lay my armor by. I confess that I am yet a poor old sinner, saved by grace, not by anything I have done, and now, nearing the close of this mortal life, I still

stand unshaken upon the doctrine of our people, and am willing to risk my eternal destiny upon the same, for I do believe with all my heart, that our people are the only ones that are preaching the gospel in its purity. O bless the Lord, his truth will ever be proclaimed by his humble called servants until time shall end.

May God help us to discharge every known duty, and live at the feet of our dear brethren, is the prayer of your unworthy brother,

A. R. McPHERSON.

CUMMINSVILLE, Neb., March 14, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I came to this State in 1894, and have been traveling to comfort Zion until last year, and I am still having meetings four times a month. My farthest appointment is about forty-three miles from home. Now I want two or three Predestinarian Baptists that preach salvation by grace, to move into the northern half of Nebraska. There is plenty of government land that a poor man can make a living on, and there is a Baptist here and there. I think there is room for about fifteen preachers out here. If I was able to travel all the time I could not get around once a month, or answer all the calls I have. I drive a team in winter and summer, and kept account of how many miles I traveled in one year: I drove my team 6,000 miles, and rode on the cars 1,000 miles; in all I traveled 7,700 miles that year, and did not half get around to all the calls I had.

Now I am not asking the Baptists to keep me and my family, but asking other preachers to come over in Macedonia and help us. O, may God put it in some preacher's heart to come.

If there is any minister that wants to correspond with me, I would like to have him do so. J. S. HAM.

LANCASTER, Ohio, March 31, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Find inclosed two dollars to pay for the SIGNS for another year, as they are next to my Bible, and I expect to take them as long as I live, if I cannot do more than pay for them. I would like to do more if my circumstances would admit. Yes, they are my home companion; so many of the dear writers tell my travels better than I can, and sometimes I do believe we are all one in Christ, then again I examine myself, then I am fearful. What an old sinner I am; the older I get, the worse I see myself. I know I do hate myself. He knoweth all the way I take, and O, how many things I have to be thankful for. I cannot thank him half as much as I should. A poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all, in time and eternity.

As ever,

SARAH B. PEARCE.

CENTERBURG, Ohio, Feb. 25, 1902.

MUCH ESTEEMED BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed find money order for two dollars. This is the first I have ever been delinquent, and this only from December, 1901. I have been called away from home for near two months to care for a sick daughter, and also been deprived of the reading of my much esteemed paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which I so much appreciate. I feel that they speak the things that I believe and take comfort in. I feel like I would like to tell all the dear brethren and sisters how much I appreciate their words of comfort in this day of great degeneracy. I feel to give God all the praise, power and glory, that he still enables his dear children, a few of them, to walk in the old way, not fearing what man may say or do unto them.

Your sister in a precious hope,

SARAH C. BOYD.

LAMBERTVILLE, N. J., March 30, 1902.

MY DEAR ELDER CHICK:—In looking over the drawer where my wife kept the things which she prized most highly, I found the inclosed letter, written to Elder Beebe, by her. It must have been written many years ago, and from the way it was folded I think that she intended to send it to him, but I suppose her heart failed her, and she laid it away with the things which were most dear to her.

Whatever may be the merit of the letter, I know that it is sincere, and expresses her feelings as well as she could do so on paper. She was sincere in her belief, and her whole life corresponded with her profession. She possessed in an eminent degree that highest of all christian virtues, charity. When her brethren and others lapsed from the path of virtue or honesty, she had charity for them, and would say that we should thank the God of all grace that we were kept from doing likewise. And when some would stand aloof from the unfortunate, she would say, "I cannot help what they have done, the time of their extremity has come, and I must go to them." And she did go, and rendered material aid, and spoke words of comfort and consolation, and soothed the dying hours of many.

I do not send the letter especially with the idea of having it published, but because I want you to see it. It expresses her feelings when she was young, and full of life and strength, and her life has been in accordance with what is written there. It seems to me like a message from the grave, and it is inexpressibly dear to me, and my heart swells with love and grief, and the tears blind me so that I can hardly see to write.

P. H. HARTWELL.

ELDER BEEBE:—With a trembling hand I attempt to write these lines, feeling my inability to write anything that would be interesting to the readers of your valuable paper. I take much pleasure in reading the communications of the brethren and sisters, for I esteem them far better than myself. It has been impressed on my mind many times to attempt to write you an account of the dealings of the Lord with me in delivering me from the power of darkness, and translating me into his marvelous light.

I had many serious thoughts about death and eternity from my earliest recollection. I was an Old School Baptist in sentiment from childhood, as I believed that salvation was all the work of the Lord, and at the age of thirteen years I saw that I was a great sinner before God, and I often wept when alone, but my troubles at times would wear away for awhile, and then return with greater force than ever. When my trouble subsided, I would neglect to read my Bible, and on their return I would resume my reading of the Scriptures, and make many promises to do better, but they were all soon broken. When I was in my fifteenth year my trouble became so great that I feared to go to sleep, lest I should awake in another world, but after some time even these troubles wore away for a time. Often when hearing preaching every word seemed to condemn me; sometimes I could scarcely refrain from weeping aloud. I looked upon christians as the most happy people on earth, and greatly desired to be one, but I despaired of ever being so happy.

I had no more such severe trials until in my nineteenth year; this lasted one year, when the Lord spake peace to my troubled mind, and said, "Thy sins I freely all forgive." After this my Bible seemed a new book to me, and I found

myself singing,

"In all my Lord's appointed ways my journey I'll pursue;
Hinder me not, ye much loved saints, for I must go with you.
Through floods and flames, if Jesus leads, I'll follow where he goes:
Hinder me not, shall be my cry, though earth and hell oppose."

My sins at times would rise like mountains before me, and my prayer was, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." "Lord, save, or I perish." This hymn often came to my mind:

"When thou, my righteous Judge, shalt come
To take thy ransomed people home,
Shall I among them stand?
Shall such a worthless worm as I,
Who sometimes am afraid to die,
Be found at thy right hand?

I love to meet among them now,
And at thy gracious feet to bow,
Though vilest of them all.
But can I bear the piercing thought,
What if my name should be left out,
When thou for them shalt call?"

It was on the eighth day of August, 1858, when I went to the church at Hopewell, and tried to give in some of my experience. I was received as a candidate for baptism, and on the next day I was baptized by Elder P. Hartwell. The baptismal water looked so lovely to me, and when going down into the water I felt to say,

"This is the way I long have sought,
And mourned because I found it not;
My grief and burden long have been,
Because I could not cease from sin."

I know if I am saved at all it will not be for anything good that I have done, or ever can do, but it must be all of free and sovereign grace. Surely if I am a christian, I am the least of all. One great consolation I have, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I can say that I have a love for those whom I think are christians, that I have not for the world, and,

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress,
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly,
Wash me, Savior, or I die."

My old nature is unchanged, it is the same as it has always been. "The carnal mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me;
I was once lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."

And now I have related what trials I have seen;
Perhaps my brethren know what such sore temptations mean.
I've told you of my conflicts, believe, my friends, 'tis true,
And now you may inform me, if it be so with you.

JANE F. P. HARTWELL.

(See obituary notice on page 284.)

NEAR COVINGTON, Ga., March 15, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE AND CHICK:—Inclosed please find two dollars for subscription to the SIGNS. For the past twelve months I have reveled in the sweets of divine truth gathered from its pages. These sometimes appear too wonderful, too precious a repast for my hungry soul. To me they seem fresh from the lips of the blessed Master. How I am made to rejoice at the wonderful revelations given to the saints, and to see how they are thus made to "work out" their salvation with fear and trembling before one another. O, wonderful, wonderful truths, given by the indwelling Spirit of Jesus, and "worked out" for the comfort and edification of God's little children. Each is thus made to rejoice in the gracious truths that enrich the pages of your paper, for divine truths are the meat and the drink of the little flock, whether they dwell in the fold or wander in the waste howling wilderness.

I said wonderful truths, and they are not only so because they are so mighty, so glorious in themselves, but from the fact that multitudes of witnesses, strangers in the flesh, send the glad messages from afar, and a kindred host answers back, Yea and amen in the Lord. All having been taught of the same blessed Spirit, being given the same experience of love and grace, to each the crumbs of truth fall like manna upon his famished soul, and "in spirit and in truth" he thanks God that he has revealed these things "unto babes."

I have greedily devoured so many rich repasts spread by others in our family paper, and though my soul responds so often, and I would fain draw nigh and tell the dear brethren and sisters what I hope the Lord has done for my soul, yet I become strangely dumb, even awed, by the sanctity of your columns, and my pen refuses to do my bidding, and I am made to feel that anything from me might be a discord in the divine and perfect harmony. Your paper is to me more like holy writ, than anything I have ever read, and I believe its editors and contributors are a people taught of the Lord. Thank God for such unspeakable gifts. It was my privilege to know and be intimately associated with Elder Wm. L. Beebe. Words are tame to express the gentleness and purity of his life, and his ardent devotion to the cause of his Master. We in this section deeply mourned our loss; there were few like him. To the long list of gifted contributors I send holy greeting. I cannot discriminate. To each I feel deeply indebted. Each paper makes me a still greater debtor. May the candle of the Lord shine upon the Israel of God evermore, that they may be as "wise as serpents but harmless as doves." May the blessed Spirit abundantly sustain you in your arduous labors in the cause of truth.

Yours in hope and love,
(MRS.) MITTIE DAVIS ROBERTS.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., April 7, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER B. L. BEEBE:—Inclosed you will find a post-office money order for two dollars, for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for this year, as my time was out the first of this month. Give me credit up to April 1st, 1903.

My dear and faithful brother in the precious faith of the Son of God, be not discouraged under all your fiery trials, it will but endear you to your brethren of like precious truth. All the way along through the dark ages, the saints of God have had to suffer; they were counted as sheep for the slaughter. Paul says, "Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." We see this plainly manifested in our day; sowing the seeds of discord, instead of praying for the peace of Zion. God give you strength equal to your day.

J. S. CORDER.

[SUCH words of encouragement and commendation of our feeble efforts to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, while they humble us in the dust to think how unworthy we are of the sympathy and esteem of our brethren, are yet a great aid to us. None can be more painfully aware than we are of how insufficient we are for these things, and were it not for the assurance that the Lord chooses the foolish things of this world to confound the wise, we fear that we would become a cowardly deserter. Speaking after the manner of men, it is indeed disheartening to see so many with whom we have had for years such sweet fellowship, and in whom we

have had such confidence, led away by the new theories brought in among us by those who are trying to reduce the truth of God to a theory consistent with the natural reason of man, so that they may be able to teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord. But we know that God rules, and all things are working for good to them that are his chosen vessels of mercy, and dark and mysterious as his providences may seem to us at the present, yet if by faith we are enabled to lay hold upon the promises, we shall be led to say, It is the Lord, let him do as seemeth him good, and to rest in his love, knowing he is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. This is a rest that those who deny his unlimited predestination are deprived of, for if they do not believe God has a wise purpose in, and an overruling power over all events, how can they have the assurance that he works all things for their good?—ED.]

TROY, Ind. Ter., Jan. 30, 1902.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you money for my own and J. M. Springer's subscription to the SIGNS; I heartily indorse the SIGNS with its correspondents. The Baptists are somewhat divided here on predestination and time salvation on conditions to be performed by the creature. We have yet some among us that love the good old doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone. Receive my love and thanks for the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Yours in love,

J. T. ANDERSON.

309 E. 85TH ST., NEW YORK, N. Y., March 13, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Please find inclosed two dollars in payment for the SIGNS for the present year. I trust your appeal to delinquents will be fruitful, and that you may be enabled to continue their publication for many years to come. If they are a source of comfort to those who are privileged to meet in the assembly of the saints, how much more of a comfort must they be to those who hear no other preaching than they have proclaimed in its columns.

In fellowship of the gospel I remain,

ALICE L. HARTFORD.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

SECOND VOLUME OF BOOK OF EDITORIALS.

WE are very sorry we have been compelled to hold the orders for the above book so long, but as will be seen by the following note from the bindery, the matter is beyond our control:

NEW YORK, N. Y., April 9, 1902.

MR. B. L. BEEBE:—DEAR SIR:—Responding to your postal of April 8th, we can only repeat what we stated in response to your first letter, which was, in substance, that we are very much laden with heavy orders, and the best we can say now is that we will try our best to get you one hundred copies of your book in about ten days from date.

Yours respectfully,

R. RUTTER & SON.

None are more anxious than we are to fill all the orders now in for these books, and as soon as we receive them, we will immediately mail them to all who have ordered them.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1902.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE IMPOTENT MAN AT THE POOL OF BETHESDA.

BROTHER J. J. House, of Carbon, Texas, requests us to present some thoughts concerning the healing of the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, as recorded in John v.

This miracle of our Lord has been much upon our mind for many years past, as, no doubt, it has occupied the minds of many others of the people of God also. It may well engage our attention, because the narrative records one of the most noteworthy of the miracles of our dear Redeemer while he walked in human flesh. We are told that Jesus worked many miracles, of which we have no special particulars, but concerning some a very particular account is given. It is and has been our mind that all the recorded miracles wrought by the Savior set forth some truth concerning the greater miracles wrought in all ages of the world, in the salvation of precious souls from sin and death, and it is in these greater works, as it was in the miracles then wrought, some present circumstances which are especially notable, while concerning the great multitude of those who are now healed and saved from sin and death, there seems but little to be said, beyond the great fact that a miracle of salvation has been wrought in that soul. We see just this difference between disciples in the early ages of the church. Much, for instance, is said concerning the calling of Paul, while but little is said of the calling of the rest of the apostles, beyond the fact that they were called, and called of Jesus to follow him. These outward notable circumstances are but the covering, the shell as it were, while the call felt in the soul is the chief and the essential thing which all must alike have, if they be indeed disciples of the Lord. Many have said, O, if I only had the experience of Paul, or of some other brother or sister, in whose experience there are many noteworthy occurrences, while after all, that which Paul said, and that which these others bear witness to, all of it comes home to those who wish for similar experiences, and thus it is seen that essentially, all have the same experience after all. The outward circumstances differ, but it is the same Spirit, and the same calling, and the same salvation, in all.

In the miracle recorded here we have special noteworthy circumstances brought to our mind, but after all, we think it will be found that this miracle records that experience which is common to all the children of God, when the Holy Spirit is pleased to open it to our understanding.

First. We desire to call attention to the difference between what is recorded concerning this pool, and the work which the dear Redeemer came to do, and which in the case of this infirm man he did do. Under this head occurs to our mind this difference, no one could be healed by the waters of the pool, save the most active and the strongest among all the great multitude. It is manifest that among so great a multitude, all anxious to step into

the pool first after the waters were troubled, the weakest, and most needy, and most helpless, would be pushed one side, and the most active, and strongest, and all who had least need of healing, would be the first to step in. It seems manifest that nothing much could be the matter with him who might be the first at the water side, and first to step in, among so great a multitude. This is manifest, for in the case of this man, it is said that he had lain there a long time, without being able to get any benefit out of the troubled waters, while he himself testified that he had no one to put him in, and while he was yet coming, another stepped down before him. Now, on the other hand, this most helpless of them all, was the one to whom Jesus came, and to whom he ministered healing. On the one hand we have a picture of selfishness among the people who were rushing forward at the troubling of the waters, and the strongest paid no regard to the weakest, and those who were least in need of healing pushed those who had most need one side, in the rush to the pool. Surely this is not the way of salvation as recorded in the Scriptures.

Thus, we have come, long since, to regard what is said of this pool, to be fully emblematical of all that legal service by which men hoped under the old covenant to gain the favor of God, and by which now the same legal spirit manifests itself in spasmodic revivals, and in what may be called the effort system generally. It is all selfish, and it all appeals to that which is selfish in men, and is in keeping with that system which promises the greatest rewards to the strongest and most active, and those to whom are given the most opportunities for usefulness and service. Men, under the influence of that teaching which is so much in harmony with selfish human nature, say, "I want a high seat in heaven." One said, "I do not want to sneak into heaven, I want to go to heaven with my head up." It all depends upon human strength, and human activity and faithfulness, and there is no grace in it. So there was no grace or mercy to the weakest and most needy in this pool, nor in all that legal service. On the contrary, he who had stepped first into the pool could well say, I was stronger and more active and more zealous than the rest, and therefore I am saved. It is a perfect picture of that religion which declares that God has given a chance to every man to be saved, and he who avails himself of this opportunity reaps the benefit. And we know of nothing which sets this forth more than the modern spasmodic revival system which once or twice a year holds out to men special chances for salvation. Is there any Christ, any gospel of free grace in all this?

A great multitude of impotent folk, blind, halt and withered, lay there. This man is said to have been impotent; the word in the original Greek means helpless. It is manifest that this man, at least, was helpless. Of what benefit could all this be to him? Here is opportunity, but he must avail himself of it, and how could he, when he was helpless? This was his complaint when the Savior addressed him, "I have no man to put me in." Here is a confession of inability to comply with the terms of this salvation; he cannot even step in, and he has no friend to help him; helpless and friendless. He sees others claiming that they, through complying with the conditions, have been saved. Of what benefit is all this to him? He needs a salvation that comes to him, and not one to which he must go. Thanks be to God,

he, and not only he, but all such as he, find such a salvation, or rather it finds them. Jesus comes to him out from among them all. He does not come to those who are able to comply with the terms of salvation, but to him who is too far gone to think of obtaining salvation in that way. "Wilt thou be made whole?" This poor man knows of no way of being saved other than that which he has been taught may be found in the pool after the waters are troubled, and so he says, "Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool, but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me." What a confession of weakness, and helplessness, and friendlessness, is here, and what a concession of the uselessness of all methods of salvation which depend at all upon the effort of men. Job said, "How have ye helped him that is without strength?" Devotees of that system which exalts human strength, and human righteousness, might have preached their system of salvation at the pool of Bethesda, as indeed they did, and still this impotent man could say, How have ye helped me? Tell me, he could say, is there no way by which a helpless man can be saved? If there be no such way, then there is no help for me; if there be any such way, then I need it sorely indeed.

Now to this man, thus reduced to hopelessness as well as helplessness, the dear Savior comes. Men talk about coming to Jesus to be saved. If any man may be said to have come to Jesus, it is always because he first comes to them. We love him, but it is just because he first loved us. And when from the broken, utterly discouraged heart, comes the confession that fell from this man's lips before the Lord, it means, "Lord, save, I perish;" it means, "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

This man did not know who and what Jesus was, but at least he had found some one at last, who was interested in him, and who evidently pitied him, and to whom he could open his heart and confess his need. He did not say, so far as is recorded, I want to be healed; there was no need that he should say this in words. Who that is sick does not want to be healed? Jesus knew what was in his heart. If no words of prayer arose to his lips, Jesus knew the prayer of the heart; his evident sore need, and his confession of weakness and friendlessness, appealed, as it always does, to him who is the Friend of the friendless, and the Helper of the helpless, and he said, "Rise, take up thy bed and walk." The power of a Savior King was in that word, and we do not read that there was a moment's questioning, or a moment's delay in that man's heart, but immediately he arose, took up his bed and walked. Jesus spoke and it was done. And it is as true to-day as it was then, that if any soul feels the power of the word in their heart saying to them, Arise, and take up thy bed, or thy burden whatever it may be, and walk, that soul has assuredly felt the healing, and has come to know the salvation of the Lord. Does a voice speak in our hearts urging us to any service, to come to the church and render our offering of praise for his great salvation in his courts, or to minister to the needy a cup of cold water; that is full evidence of the power of that salvation which takes away all our impotency, and which makes it our joy to walk in his ways.

It was not a task which the Savior set before this impotent man as the price of his healing, neither was it a burden placed upon him whereby he might earn some further joy, but he arose and took

up his bed and walked as joyfully as a child runs and plays in the fullness of its joy and gladness. It was not a burden placed upon this man; it would have been a sore burden if he had been forbidden to walk. It is not a burden that is placed upon that soul who has been made strong in the Lord, and by the power of his grace, when the dear Lord says to him in that very word which conveys to his soul the healing, Arise and walk, but rather a liberty and joy which is conferred upon him. How gladly this man walked rejoicing that strength was his, and that he had found such a Savior, and such a salvation. There might come dark days in the future, there might come to him temptations and trials, as indeed did come to him immediately afterward, but now all was joy, and peace, and life, and strength, and salvation. He rejoiced as a young man to run a race; the lame man leaped as the hart. What more could he ask, what more could he want? But trial did come: "It is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed on the Sabbath day." And who said this? Religious people. Perhaps this man may have gone to them rejoicing in his new found strength, and called upon them to rejoice with him, but instead, there were averted scornful looks of disapproval. They would have sacrifice rather than mercy; they thought more of form, than of the power of healing manifest in this man. Instead of wondering to see this man, who had been infirm thirty-eight years, now walking as another man, and bearing his burden easily as another man, they began to carp and find fault. They did not say, How wonderful it all is, and how glad and thankful we all are that thou canst once more be as another man, but instead they said, "It is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed on the Sabbath day." And so to this man came the hour of trial, as it must come to all who know the Lord. He that will confess Jesus and walk as he commands, shall find opposition often where he least expects it. He who has experienced this healing must learn that all religion is not the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ. He must learn that not the careless world, but the votaries of a false religion are the foes to be most dreaded by those who know the grace of the Lord indeed. The senses must be exercised by reason of use to discern both good and evil. To this man this lesson came at once, and in all cases when the soul begins to openly follow the Lord, and to keep his commandments, the powers of the worldly religion of his time will at once oppose. We, for ourself, well remember that when we first felt a hope in the blessed Lord, we thought that we had but to tell the story, and every one would rejoice with us in our joy, but it was not so, and it never has been so. All who follow the Lord will soon find themselves companions of this man, as the Jews began to accuse him with breaking the law.

What does carrying his bed mean? We will here tell what a dear, aged brother in the church at Black Rock, Md., has said in our hearing many times, in telling his experience. The time came when it was laid upon his mind that he ought to confess his Savior in baptism, but in his heart the thought arose, as it does in all, "I am not worthy. See how sinful I am, and vile." The thought was, if he could only be free from his sins, how gladly he would follow the Lord. Then came to his mind the story of this impotent man, and the words, "Take up thy bed and walk," came with power, and he thought how filthy this bed must have been, upon which he had lain so long, and yet he was told to take it up

and walk, and the application in his own mind was "My old nature is filthy, O how filthy, and I must take it up, filthy as it is, and walk also. Thus he was strengthened to go forward in the ordinances of the Lord, and we remember that he once said, "I have been compelled to walk, carrying this old filthy bed still." Sure it is, that if we ever walk in the ways of life at all, it must be with this filthy nature accompanying us all the way along.

In conclusion we will say, We have no question as to the literal truth of the narrative in all its particulars; the waters were troubled, or disturbed, or agitated, at certain times, in this pool, and it was the view of the people arising from some superstition, as such superstitions have always arisen, but for which no word of the Lord can be found, that he that first stepped down into the water after it was disturbed, was healed of any malady he might have. And we have no doubt that it was so, but, as said at the beginning, Among such a great multitude, he that was least infirm of all would reap the benefit, and not the man who was really infirm. In this we have no trace of the glorious gospel of the Lord, who came to save the lost, and to heal the sick indeed. Again we say, What a contrast is presented here between the salvation ascribed to the waters of the pool of Bethesda, and that bestowed upon this most feeble, helpless and friendless man, by the dear Redeemer. In this work of Jesus we have the gospel presented indeed. Thus we all have been saved, if saved at all. To this man came the grace of God as his hope and joy, as it must come to us. In this salvation we have fellowship with him, and he with us.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

BAINBRIDGE, Ga., July 12, 1859.

BROTHER BEEBE:—As I see there are many requesting your views on passages of Scripture, I will also request your views on the following subject: When God gave a law to Adam, the penalty of that law was death. Now, what death did Adam die? Some of our brethren preach that he died a three-fold death—a spiritual, a temporal and an eternal death. My own mind is dark on the subject. Please relieve your brother, if I am a brother.

W. C. THOMAS.

REPLY.

In reply to brother Thomas, in regard to what death Adam died in the day of his transgression, we have no theory to offer, but simply to refer our brother to what the Scriptures teach, namely, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." What the advocates of a *three-fold death* mean by a spiritual, temporal and eternal death, we leave them to explain, as none of these terms are used in the Bible in reference to the execution of the divine sentence upon man for having eaten of the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. How a natural man could die a spiritual death is as difficult for us to solve as it would be to show how a creature of time could die an eternal death. Neither of these terms are, in our estimation, either scriptural or appropriate in setting forth the death referred to in the words of our Creator to Adam, "Thou shalt surely die." And if by the term *temporal* they mean in a literal sense, still we apprehend a difficulty in accounting for the fact that Adam lived after the transgression to beget all his sons and daughters, and continued to live until his nine hundred and thirty years were numbered. The word *temporal* does not, to us, seem to sufficiently express the nature of that death that passed

on him the day he ate of the forbidden fruit. We ask then to be excused for rejecting all these terms with their respective theories, and for preferring the language used on the subject by divine inspiration.

Whatever was the death that Adam died, is and must be the same death that has passed on all men, for that all have sinned. If then Adam died a spiritual, a temporal and an eternal death, then all men have died, or do die, a spiritual, temporal and eternal death, for the same death has passed on all men. But this will prove too much for the theory of the advocates of the three-fold death of Adam. That Adam was created pure and holy or sinless, and that all his posterity were created in him in the same purity, no intelligent Bible reader will dispute. But that he was even in that state, or in his creation, a spiritual man, the inspired apostle Paul denies. On the other hand we have the testimony of Moses that God made man out of the dust of the ground, and after he had breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man had become a living soul, and after he had sinned, God himself said to him in pronouncing on him the sentence of the very death that had been threatened, "For dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." As all the posterity of Adam was in him in his creation, so were they all in him in his transgression; and so when death passed on Adam, it passed on all his then unborn posterity. The whole Adamic nature was involved in the death which was incurred as the penalty of sin. For as sin entered by transgression, so death entered by sin, and as it entered the person, so it entered the posterity of Adam. Death has passed on all men, for that all men have sinned. Although millions, untold millions of the sons of Adam perhaps are not yet literally born, still death has passed on them, for they have all sinned. We were in Adam, and we were Adam, when he, and when we in him, sinned, and when death passed on him and on us in him. We still, in our earthly nature, are Adam. For the decree of God was, that Adam should multiply and replenish the earth. We are not added to, but are the multiplication of Adam, whose name God called Adam, for God did not call *his* name, but God called *their* name Adam in the day when *they* were created. Whose name did he call Adam? *Their* name, that is, as we see from the connection, the generations of Adam. Generations of Adam is the antecedent in this Scripture to the pronoun *their*. God, therefore, called the name of the generations of Adam, ADAM. Hence, as the earthly Adam, we all die, because sin has entered and death has passed upon Adam, and that is our name, and beyond all controversy, that is the condition of us all in our earthly nature. Mortality, and all the train of mortal evils to which we are subject, were introduced into the degenerate family of man as the consequence of sin.

In our first estate we were pure and sinless, though natural and earthly beings. In that state we were adapted to and capable of enjoying an earthly paradise, of subsisting upon the spontaneous productions of an uncontaminated and uncursed earth, and free from disease, sorrow, pain, infirmity and death. What then is the death inflicted on Adam? It is not only mortality, but it involves us in degeneracy, in sin and transgression against our holy and righteous Creator, entails upon us a nature which is corrupted and totally depraved, and places us under the condemnation and wrath of

that law, the penalty of which, unless it be canceled by the Redeemer, dooms us to endure the wrath of God for ever and ever. This is not a spiritual death, for we were not spiritual in our first estate in Adam. It is more than temporal death, for temporal death only consigns our dust to dust, while the death that has passed on us leaves us dead in trespasses and sins, children of wrath, condemned already, and the wrath of God abiding on us. It is not eternal death, if by such terms is meant the decease of an eternal life before possessed. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. And those unto whom this life is given are secure from death." "I," says Jesus, "give to them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and none shall pluck them out of his hand."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., July 15, 1859.

ORDINATION.

PURSUANT to a call of Mt. Enon Church, near Plant City, Fla., the following Elders, after preaching service by Elder S. T. Bentley, of Georgia, closed by the pastor, M. L. Gilbert, on the second Sunday in March, 1902, met in counsel, for the purpose of setting apart to the gospel ministry, brother E. J. Devane, viz: J. W. Futch, W. Webb, J. H. Kirkland, T. J. McMullen, S. T. Bentley and M. L. Gilbert.

The presbytery was organized by choosing Elder J. W. Futch, Moderator, and M. L. Gilbert, Clerk.

At the request of the Moderator, while singing the introductory hymn, Deacon Wm. Clemmens presented to the council brother E. J. Devane.

Being requested to relate his experience and call to the ministry, he did, to the satisfaction of all.

The church believed that he possessed fully the qualifications of a bishop which Paul enumerates.

Then counsel proceeded to lay hands on candidate, bowing in prayer with Elder S. T. Bentley.

The charge was delivered by Elder J. W. Futch, in a very feeling and impressive manner.

During the singing of closing hymn the presbytery and church extended the hand of fellowship to the dear brother, and adjourned amidst the tears of gladness, and good feeling abounding.

J. W. FUTCH, Moderator.

M. L. GILBERT, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at the residence of J. M. Dalrymple, Esq., Hopewell, N. J., on Wednesday, April 2d, 1902, Daniel C. Chatten, of Pennington, N. J., and Miss Lucinda S. Smith, of Hopewell, N. J.

By Elder D. M. Vail, at the home of the bride's father, Deacon W. W. Graves, of Ingleside, N. Y., Dec. 21st, 1901, Ray A. Hiler and Miss Lizzie C. Graves, both of Ingleside, N. Y.

By Elder W. W. Meredith, in the Methodist Episcopal meeting-house in Willow Grove, Del., Feb. 26th, 1902, Hynson M. Cohee and Miss Lola Cook, both of Willow Grove, Del.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, at the home of the bride's father, Mr. W. L. Laws, near Wango, Md., April 2d, 1902, Elmer C. Williams and Miss Mary E. Laws, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SURELY in the midst of life and activity, as limited creatures, we are in the midst of death. So it was with the unfortunate man whose death came as a surprise to all concerned. And most of all to his dear companion and parents. **John H. Corbin** was actively engaged Feb. 15th, 1902, with other men, a few miles from home, getting out saw logs, when a tree they were felling slipped from the stump and caught him on the left thigh, carrying him with it to the ground, crushing his limb, and shocking him to that degree that death came to his release within an hour, or before medical aid could be obtained. The unexpected news was broken as gently to the widow and parents (who were at home with her) as possible, yet no one can tell, only those to whom it comes as a reality, the effect. But God in his holy habitation is the Judge of the widow, and a Father to the fatherless, so I trust in this sad case the dear young widow with her limited strength, and a babe of a few days, had grace given her to prove as her day, so was her strength, and the grace of God is always sufficient. The widow did not see the lifeless body of her husband, because of the distance from home. The deceased was 34 years of age, an active, hard working man, striving to maintain his beloved companion and now two fatherless children. He was not a professor of religion, yet as well prepared for the future as thousands that cry aloud, for he has gone to the bar of a just God and Savior, one who is the only Savior of sinners.

May God bless the survivors with his presence, and may especial grace and strength be given the sorrowing widow, to bear up under her affliction, that she mourn not as one that is without hope in his great mercy. The residence of the deceased was near Union Grove, N. Y. The place of accident was near Arena,

N. Y., four miles up the river, and the cemetery where his body lies is ten miles further up the east branch of the Delaware River.

His funeral was attended on a very cold day at Margaretville, N. Y., by the parents and sorrowing sisters, and other relatives, where the writer tried to comfort the afflicted with the same comfort wherewith he himself has been comforted.

ALSO,

DEPARTED this life, Feb. 27th, 1902, after eight days illness of pneumonia, **Francis O'Connor, Sr.,** at his home at Vega, N. Y., in his 70th year. In this as in many other cases, a great loss is felt. A widow, one son, two daughters, two brothers and two sisters, with their families, and the churches, mourn.

Brother Frank, as he was generally known, was a settled and consistent believer in the faith of the Old School Baptists, as being in accord with what the disciples of Christ preached as the doctrine of God our Savior. He was acquainted with tribulation, having lost children, and their faithful mother, after which a very devoted and faithful daughter managed his house until he married our dear sister, Polly Ann Slauson, (who was a widow) in December, 1899, after which he came to live with her, his daughter accompanying him. It surely was a pleasant home; a trio of the Lord's afflicted and poor people, and they together enjoyed themselves in connection with what they believed; going to their own meetings, and meeting in other places with those of the same faith and order. So as it is given us on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but to suffer for his sake. All of our trials are wisely wrought, but our carnal reason says all these things are against us, therefore we say, "Not so," because we cannot fully know God's will. And now while the home is desolated, and the dear widowed sister and her stepdaughter is in mourning at the home desiring to be resigned to God's will in the removal of the loved one, I find in myself a rebellious spirit that I cannot suppress, for in this great loss a cousin in the flesh, (our mothers having been sisters) the playmate of my youth, a companion in tribulation, a devoted attendant on public service, delighting in the truth as it is in Jesus, is no more on earth to mingle his voice with ours in thanksgiving and praise. He united with the Middletown Church forty years ago. How many times my poor heart has had occasion to ache because of dear ones falling around me in the past forty years. One thing I desire for the mourning friends and for myself is reconciliation and resignation to the will of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who has all power both in heaven and on earth. May we feel truly to be still and know that he is God alone, to enable us to go on the journey a little further, still looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith. May we all be enabled to lay hold on the hope set before us, as a hope we have as an anchor of our souls, sure and steadfast, which entereth to that within the veil, whither Jesus the forerunner hath entered for us; knowing that here we have no continuing city, yet believing when the last trump shall sound, and all are ready, the change shall come, and all will be like him, and all be with Jesus for ever. Amen.

Elder Slauson and myself tried to comfort the mourners.

ALSO,

DEPARTED this life at her home in Roxbury, N. Y., after continued illness for many years, **Mrs. Angeline Hill,** in her 76th year, or thereabouts. Sister Hill had been a consistent member of the Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury for over forty years, her home being a hospitable place for all she could entertain. She had lived a widowed life for about eleven years, managing her affairs successfully, being blessed with good helpers; and especially in her last days to have an adopted daughter with her husband, and attentive family, to care for her. Her real concern, above her household cares, was for the welfare of the church, and for its peace. We may say she died in the triumph of faith, or God-given victory. Many have been the enjoyable seasons of the unworthy writer at the house, before and after the departure of her husband, in rehearsing those things that make for the peace of Zion, well knowing that only that which was and is of the Lord would stand the test. And now we know after years of struggling with the world, the flesh and the devil, and numbers growing less and less, "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." This is the important part of redemption. For by his (the Redeemer's) knowledge shall he justify the many (all the Father gave him) and be satisfied. Surely then a seed shall serve him, and it shall be accounted a generation. Our dear, departed sister who loved the doctrine and order of the gospel above her earthly joys, was for a number of years deprived of going to her meeting on account of ill health. She was indeed a great sufferer. How we shall miss her in her home, at which no more inquiry will be made after her welfare. May the dear Lord sanctify the loss we sustain to our good and his name's glory.

The writer attempted at her funeral to show the difference between the creature in bondage and the liberty of the children of God.

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLY'S CORNERS, N. Y., March 21, 1902.

OUR dear sister, **Mrs. Jane F. P. Hartwell,** was born Jan. 18th, 1838, and passed away from this life on the night of Thursday, March 20th, 1902. She was the daughter of the late Wesley A. and Louisa Hunt. She was born on the old homestead where her father was born, and died, which is now owned by a grandson, Israel Hunt Vannoy. She was married to Philander H. Hartwell, a son of the late Elder Philander

Hartwell, who was pastor of the church at Hopewell for twenty-five years, on Dec. 12th, 1860. As the narrative of her experience published upon another page of this paper will show, she was baptized into the fellowship of the church at Hopewell, by Elder Hartwell, in August, 1858, and remained a steadfast and loving, and well loved member ever since. There was no place to her on earth like the house of God; she loved to meet in worship with his people. Her dear husband, now so sorely bereaved, in the communication published in this number of the SIGNS, has spoken only what all who knew her believed and knew to be true of her. During her last long sickness she spoke freely to her husband of the approaching end, and said many precious things to him. It was our privilege to visit her a few weeks before the end came, and we could but wonder at the victories of faith, in giving her such patience, resignation and cheerfulness in the midst of such suffering, and in the view of her approaching departure. She had much to live for, and many tender ties had to be broken, and yet she was willing that the will of God should be done. She had no fear of death, and her only regret was that she must leave her husband alone. One night as her husband was caring for her, he said that it was hard to see her suffer so, and not be able to relieve her, and she said, "My sufferings are as nothing compared to the sufferings of Christ, when nailed to the cross. I saw him there," she said, "and he smiled on me. He died that I might live." She quoted many hymns during her sickness, and in her hymn book many pages were turned down, and her Bible was much more disfigured by marks and leaves turned down, showing not only that she read it, but that it had ministered much comfort and help at different times to her. She had realized for some months before that her end was near, and yet she maintained her cheerfulness of manner and hopefulness of conversation among her friends. In all her life, since we have known her, she seemed to walk by faith, and close with God. Divine things were real to her. She was a true follower of him who was meek, and lowly, and gentle, and kind, even to the unthankful and the froward. As her husband testifies in the words of his preface to the letter from sister Hartwell, she had none but kind thoughts and deeds, even for the wrong doer. What a power there is in the law of kindness. Of the virtuous woman it is said, "The law of kindness is in her lips." We could say much, and yet fail to say all that we would like to say concerning this dear sister.

The funeral services were held on Monday, March 24th, at her late residence, near Lambertville, where many friends and neighbors gathered, testifying not only by their presence, but in many cases by their tears, and by words of affection, to the esteem and love in which she was held by all. The text used was in 1 Cor. xv. 20. Afterward the body was taken to the cemetery at Hopewell for interment. She died in sure and certain hope of the resurrection of the body, and that in the end she should be satisfied when she should awake in his likeness. She leaves three sons and two sisters, beside her husband, and many dear friends, who can but sorrow, and yet also rejoice that they believe it is well with her. The church will miss her much in their assemblies here. But after all why should we grieve? She has but gone to that reward which we all hope shall also be ours, when our mortal life shall end. We are but pilgrims and strangers here, and we believe that heaven is our home. May God bless with comfort and strength all who are bereaved, and build us all up in our most holy faith. C.

(See communication on page 274.)

Mrs. Matilda Matheny Black was born March 29th, 1823, and died March 10th, 1902, aged 78 years, 11 months and 11 days. She was a native of Morgan Co., Ohio. Her parents, Andrew and Sarah Matheny, were natives of New England and Virginia. They emigrated to Illinois in 1835, purchased a farm in Schuyler Co., and there they lived until death. Both the paternal and maternal ancestors were patriots, and fought in the war of the Revolution. Mrs. Black was one of a family of four children. She was united in marriage to Wm. T. Black, Oct. 30th, 1842. Eight children were born to this union, five of whom still survive: Austin, F. P. and A. E. Kettenring, of Woodstock, W. H., of Camden, Ill., and Richard, of near Macomb. Sister Black was a member of the Old School Baptist Church. At the time of her death her membership was with the Mt. Zion Church, near Astoria, Fulton Co., Ill.

The funeral services were conducted by her pastor, the writer of this notice, at her home, near Rushville, Ill. The remains were laid beside her husband, who was buried about seventeen months before. Thus one by one the harvest is gathered, and in the fullness of time the last of the redeemed will find eternal rest.

JOHN L. SCOTT.

PLEASANT PLAINS, Ill.

Abel T. Green died at the home of his mother, 1001 West Sixth St., Wilmington, Del., Feb. 27th, 1902, in the 26th year of his age. He was a favorite son of brother Isaac Green, (deceased) and sister Sarah E. Green, of the Bryn Zion Church. His exemplary life and deportment leaves the sweet impress of affectionate remembrance. During his long, weary suffering from consumption, he manifested the spirit of christian endurance, sustained by the grace of the giver of every good and perfect gift. A short time before his decease, while visiting with him, he told me he had much to be thankful for: a kind and affectionate mother to care for him, brothers and sisters to sympa-

thize with him, and his dear affiance, who remained with him during the last days of his suffering unto the end. Nevertheless he was reconciled to go according to the will of the Lord. He manifested some anxiety (as he said) because he had not realized any emotional or special change of heart. I asked him if he did not realize a great change having taken place gradually during the past several years in his faith and life? He answered, Yes. He confessed the same faith as his father and mother, and fell asleep peacefully reconciled to his heavenly Father's will. While he was not a professor, he was an honest confessor. "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven."—Matt. x. 32.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Bryn Zion meeting-house, and Abel was gently consigned to his last earthly resting-place in the old churchyard adjoining. The sorrowing mother, three sisters and seven brothers, are left to affectionately remember him, and his loved affiance to mourn her loss. But not to mourn as those who have no hope, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

W. W. MEREDITH.

PETERSBURG, Del.

MY dear husband, **Mr. A. M. Jefferson,** passed away Feb. 28th, 1900. He was a great sufferer, his trouble being heart and Bright's disease. He told me, "Not to mourn for him, he was not afraid to die." "If he was one of God's elect he would be saved." He was an Old School Baptist in belief. When convenient he always attended the associations and meetings. He was always pleased to have the Elders come and visit with him. He was a great reader of the SIGNS, which he enjoyed very much for twenty-five years.

(MRS.) D. R. JEFFERSON.

ALBANY, N. Y., March 24, 1902.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday, at the Hall,

226 West 58th Street,

10:30 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ, is extended a most cordial invitation to meet with us.

MAY meeting to be held at Sidling Hill, Pa. All parties will be met at Hancock, on Thursday before the first Sunday in May. Meeting will commence on Friday, continuing over Sunday. All cordially invited, ministers especially.

E. V. WHITE.

MAY meeting will be held with the New Valley Church, commencing on Saturday before the second Sunday in May, holding over Sunday. Parties coming from the east or south will be met at Leesburg, Friday before. Take the train leaving Washington, D. C., 1 p. m. If any should fail to meet that train, take the 4:35 p. m.

We cordially invite all our friends to come, especially our ministering brethren.

E. V. WHITE.

BALTIMORE Association is appointed to be held with Harford Church, Harford Co., Md., beginning Wednesday before the third Sunday in May, (14th) 1902, and continue three days. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth to meet with us.

Those coming by way of Baltimore will take train leaving North Avenue station, on the Md. & Pa., heretofore B. & L. R. R., on Tuesday at 3:05 or 4:50 p. m., for Long Green and Forest Hill. Those coming by way of York will take train leaving there at 1:30 p. m. for Forest Hill, on the same railroad.

MILTON DANCE.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Salem Church, in Philadelphia, Pa., May 21st, 22d and 23d, 1902.

Those coming on Tuesday afternoon by Pennsylvania R. R., or B. & O. R. R., will go to B. F. Coulter's, 1910 N. Twenty-second St. (or to places where they are acquainted.) Those coming by Reading R. R., will get off at Columbia Avenue station, and go to sister Margaret Craven's, 1735 N. Seventh St. All who come on Wednesday will walk from Broad St. station, or Reading Terminal, to the place of meeting, southeast corner Broad and Cherry Sts., between Arch and Race Sts., (Odd Fellows' Temple) entrance on Broad St. Take elevator to seventh floor. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

B. F. COULTER, Church Clerk.

DELAWARE River Association is appointed to be held with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, N. J., beginning on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (May 28th) 1902, and continue three days.

THE Warwick Association is appointed to be held with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, Middletown, N. Y., beginning Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, (4th) 1902, and continue three days.

THE sixty-ninth annual session of the Sandusky

Regular Baptist Association, will be held with the Rocky Fork Church, in Marion Co., Ohio, commencing at 10 a. m. on Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1902. Those coming by rail will be met at Morral, on the Hocking Valley, and at Monnett, on the C., S. & H.

H. D. BISHOP, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

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Total to date	$564 55

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 70. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1902. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., Feb. 24, 1902.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR BROTHER:—It seems and is a long time since I sent you those few lines telling you I I was in Virginia. I think I promised then to write later; I know I told your dear daughter I would do so, while she was with you, and I intended it, but expected to reach home very much earlier than I did.

You asked how it was brought about that I went east, and had forgotten why our correspondence ceased? I am sure you wrote last, and it was not that I appreciated it less than the rest, but we met with reverses about that time, and another had been added to the family, and I let the things of this world have supremacy. I do not mean that I was satisfied, or that I willingly hedged myself about. My worst enemies were of my own household; they showed me myself as you never could see me, (so I thought) and I concluded that I had been misled, and might mislead you. But from the day I last saw you I have never ceased to love you, or the cause which you have espoused, and I have waited, watched and prayed all the while that I might go back and meet with you all again, and be baptized. At times God has hidden his face from me, and I deserved it, but I have never been left comfortless, nor have I ever found anything but Old School Baptist doctrine that I was willing to live by, or die by. I have tried everything, so far as listening is concerned, and I went home hungering for the crumbs that fall from your table. Occasionally I would go home almost persuaded, but it would not be long before I would hear the voice so well known, and so well loved, and I would hide my face in my hands as it were, and beg for forgiveness. So many times in all these years I have stumbled, have doubted, have sinned, but God has never forsaken me, and has led me to say hundreds of times, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." I have been sought after by the rich and influential, and have been told the advantages of uniting with them, but never for one moment have I hesitated as to who God's people were, and if I felt unworthy to be numbered among them, I was not willing to go anywhere else. How could I? It is only when we feel our littleness, or help-

lessness, our need of him, that we have faith to call on him, and the religionists of to-day do not want such among them. If I ever say to such a one that I feel myself a sinner, they ask, "Why, what have you been doing?" I have had them to look at me many a time as if they thought I had fled from somewhere to escape the law.

But I must not make this too tiresome. I never could see my way clear to go home until my boys took a notion to leave and go to work. Finally I remembered that I promised the Lord so many times that if it were not for them, I would start at once to meet with his people, and I trembled at the thought; I felt so unworthy to stand among them, to say nothing of being numbered among them, that I reasoned with myself, saying, "You are too old to take the trip, and then something may happen to one of the family." But the desire to go came to me by day and by night, so one Wednesday I said to the family, "One week from to-day I am going to start to see mother." I kept my word, and I had it in mind to go see you, too, thought you knew my weaknesses, my disappointments and my desires better than any one else, besides you had comforted me more, had been more Christlike toward me than any other member, still I loved every one of them, and all of you better for having done in my case what you considered to be your duty. My first husband had died years ago, and while I felt free in that respect, I approached the church with mingled feelings of joy and hesitancy.

I reached my mother's house the fifteenth of October, was so glad for myself, but especially glad for her, that we had the privilege of meeting again. It seems to me that I never will be or can be thankful enough for all that occurred on that trip, and in my uninteresting way will tell you something of it.

Thursday before the first Saturday in November, Elder Badger and wife, and Mr. Murphy and wife from Frying Pan, came and stayed all night with us. I was so glad to meet them, and enjoyed their visit that evening so much, but there was such a house full of so many beliefs that nothing was said on the subject of religion, but the next morning Elder Badger began talking to some of the girls, (Methodists) and I said I would like to ask some questions. I wanted to find out if I really did believe as he did, it had been so long since I had talked with one, I thought I might be less than nothing after all. We differed in a few non-essentials, I was not surprised at that; I did not know any better. We just talked of certain passages of Scripture, never touched on experience, and when I asked if such differences would prevent one from joining the church, I felt greatly relieved when he said, No. I wanted to be honest with myself, and you all. We wanted him to spend the day, Friday, with us, but a Congregational minister and wife were to be there for dinner, so they left for Manassas, accompanied by the Murphys, Mr. Murphy saying he could not possibly stay longer than Saturday afternoon. Well, mother, my sister and I, went over the morning of that day, and it may be that Elder Badger had me in mind, at any rate God had him in mind, and gave him great liberty. The gospel of the Son of God came to me in sweetness and power, and I felt repaid for the separation, deprivation, my loneliness and everything in connection. It was the same sound, the same people, the same God, the memory of whom had followed and haunted me

all those years; one day with them was worth the pleasures of sin for a lifetime. When the invitation was given for any one to speak, my heart was bursting, but my tongue cleaved to my mouth. I reconciled myself by saying, I wanted Elder Chick to baptize me anyway. But I had been crying in the meantime, and when the congregation was dismissed, Mrs. Cox came to me and said, "I think you had something to say to us, would not you have felt better if you had spoken? I answered, "Yes," and she immediately requested Elder Badger to call to order, which he did, and I was given the privilege of telling the old, old, but ever new story to the church; not that I told all I felt, or all I wanted, but I made them understand that the Spirit of God had abided and striven with me all the while I had been gone; that though I was sinful, weak, and the least of all, that he was too wise to err, and too good to be unkind, and that if I was cut off from him forever, his righteous law approved it well; that the more his glory was revealed to me, the more humble I felt, and that I loved his people, and wanted to be numbered with them. And they believed it. Under the circumstances it seemed they could do nothing else. It was not for my much speaking, but there I was, had come three thousand miles to be baptized, to be a witness for him, and not to tell what some one else had told, but what I knew and felt for myself. What motive could I have but to glorify God, and to satisfy my ever present desire to have that privilege granted? There were many happy faces there that day, and they all looked heavenly to me; faces that never would have attracted me under other circumstances, seemed precious to me, and I could put my arm around every one of them and say, "My brother, and my sister." I went there a stranger, but I found loving christian friends, and I felt willing to share in their sorrows, their trials and their reproaches, counting it an honor.

Miss Sallie Johnson asked me to go home with her, as Elder Badger and many of the members were going there, but I told her I had no clothes ready for baptism. She said she had everything at the house, and all I had to do was to wait till the time arrived. I enjoyed that Saturday evening; I felt just like I was with my Father's family, and Mr. Murphy and Cousin Mariana were there, too. I had said to him, "Are you still determined to go home?" and he said, "No, we are going to stay to see you baptized." I slept with his wife, my very dear cousin, that night, and we talked for hours of God and his wonderful love for sinners. How I wish I could express myself as she can.

Sunday morning was clear but cool; I only thought of my unworthiness though, and of Elder Badger, whose health was anything but good. I will never forget the solemn occasion, nor the love and fellowship shown by the brethren, and then my old mother looked so happy that I had to acknowledge as always that God always knows what is for the best. My Methodist relatives were there, too; they seemed to think somehow that I had gotten a long way from them, and they said, "Auntie, you will love us now, will you not?" I replied, "Better than ever, I hope." They do not like our religion, but they wonder at the mystery about it, and it seems to me they see something different from the works of men..

At eleven o'clock we had as good a sermon as I ever heard, and so comforting to me. An hour and a half later I was saying "Good bye," as I thought,

for the last time, but providence overruled, and the next first Saturday and Sunday I had the pleasure of meeting with them again; the good bye's were repeated, and I turned my back on those for whom my love passes all understanding, and with whom I would like to spend the rest of my life. I promised to write to Elder Badger, and will do so some day. Wrote to one of the feeblest of the flock last week; she seemed drawn toward me, and insisted on it so much that I promised and fulfilled it. Then there is another, brother Kidwell. I told him when all went well with me that I would write to him.

After leaving Virginia I went to Baltimore, stayed one night with Dr. Thorne, and in memory was carried back to the days of long ago. I could almost see you standing in Rechabite hall once more, and the comforting message of peace and pardon was bringing joy and gladness to my heart again. I was there but one Sunday, and heard Elder Rowe speak of the same things, with the same feeling and belief; also had the pleasure of meeting with your daughter again, whom I loved for Christ's sake, for her own, and for yours. Then I went to Washington to visit my dearly beloved cousin, Bettie Bennett, whom you know, I think. We had, she and I, the privilege of hearing Elder Rowe twice one day in that city, as well as of hearing Elder White once in Georgetown. All those days were appreciated by me, and will not be forgotten while memory lasts.

Sister Bennett has been greatly bereaved since I left, in the death of her only son. How my heart goes out to her in love and sympathy.

I forgot to say that mother and I went to Frying Pan the third Saturday and Sunday in November, to hear Elder White. Sunday he preached from the text, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief," and it satisfied my every longing, removed every doubt I had, and filled me so full of that which nourishes and sustains, that I thought I would never need anything more. He was given wonderful liberty, and I was given wonderful enjoyment, but I find we need to be filled day by day.

I find since coming back that I need the refilling, and crave the companionship more and more. I know that God rules and reigns over this western country the same as anywhere else, but when he hides his face from me, I want some one to talk to me, and point me to the Rock that is higher than I, that I may rest for awhile from my doubts and fears. I want them to tell me of his dealings with them, that I may be sure that he deals with all his children alike. I want them to know me better, that I may not deceive them in regard to the profession I have made, and I, if I am worthy, want them to love me for the truth's sake. I want to be firmer in the faith; I want to love and serve him better, not that I may believe, but because I do believe.—Lord, help thou my unbelief.

I wish I could have seen you, and still hope that I may in the future. In the meantime I shall always remember you with loving kindness, and my best wishes and thoughts are for and of you.

My husband is all that could be desired in a worldly sense, honest, just and true in his dealings with men, and loving, kind and affectionate to his family, and better than that, he feels his sins weighing him down, but has never felt good enough to join a church here; says, If it is left for him to save himself, that he is lost and undone. They asked me in Virginia, What he would say in regard

to my baptism, and I said, "He will put his arm around me and say, 'It is well.'" He did that very thing, and added, "God bless you."

Do not feel that it is incumbent on you to answer this; I know you are a busy man, and I am always willing to be the one left out. I only ask that I may be the servant of all. I have not grown in grace or knowledge as I desire, and I feel so incompetent to say a word that can interest others who have had, and do have, the opportunity of hearing and reading more excellent things. I did not go among you that I might engage in doubtful disputations, but rather that I might sit at your feet and hear of him who is meek and lowly; that I might find rest to my soul, or that I might be a Martha, owing to my great willingness to serve.

Had a letter from mother this a. m.; she was usually well, and will soon enter her eighty-second year.

Give my love to your wife, also to sister Atkinson. I have good health, was not sick one hour during my trip; all was joy, peace and happiness. Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life.

Yours in gospel bonds,

B. E. WRIGHT.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pennsylvania.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is with much hesitation that I send personal letters for publication, yet, at times, it seems the Spirit has intended them for the household of faith. The two inclosed, it is thought, are such as should be shared with our kindred in Christ. So, with the consent of the writers, I send them for your disposal. These youthful brothers seem imbued with the love of holiness, and Christ is all their theme. The letter from brother Horace Lefferts, the youngest member of this church, came to me last fall while away in Bradford County. It was a pleasant surprise, and very refreshing; bringing back some of the same experience that was mine in the springtime of my hope; many years ago.

The one from brother Rounds, received more recently, continues the blessed song of redeeming love, and clearly manifests the Spirit of Christ, in esteeming others better than himself.

I trust these messages will be read with interest by those who love the same things, and it may be they will come to some with the same sweetness that the letter of that dear young sister, Ruth Keene, came to me a few months ago. How many have told this old, old story, but each time it is with some fresh interpretation, so that it is always new. Sometimes I like to go back to the old volumes, and read over some heart histories that filled me with gladness at the time when I first learned to love the bright columns of the dear old SIGNS, and it is pleasant to dwell again on the instructive articles of dear Elder Beebe. His sublime utterances, his fatherly care, and words of love to the poorest of the flock, and tender lambs of the fold, cannot be forgotten.

What a blessing to have a messenger of truth coming into our homes, especially to those who are far from the assembly of the saints, or shut in by sickness and sorrow. And it is the lot of some of that poor and afflicted people who trust in the name of the Lord, to lie for years on beds of languishing, with no outward change of scene, as is the case with that beloved sister, Mrs. Nannie Edwards, of Georgia, whose interesting letters in the SIGNS filled many hearts with tears of love and tender sympathy. She is now unable to

write, yet we hear from her through the letters of her precious little daughter.

Often those who are in this path of sorrow and suffering, are cheered and encouraged as they unfold the welcome paper, and read their own peculiar exercises in the language of some far off brother or sister. Then do they feel that they are not alone, but are flowing together with the assembly of the saints to the mount of God's holiness: the heavenly Jerusalem. By faith they are transported to the general assembly and church of the first-born, and no distance can sever such a blessed company, who are dwelling together in the soul-union. Poverty or riches cannot separate them, for they are one in Christ Jesus, and are communing in his holy mountain; raised from the valley of sorrow and gloom by the riches of reigning grace.

Affectionately your unworthy sister,
BESSIE DURAND.

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22 N. FOURTH ST., CAMDEN, N. J., Sept. 3, 1901.

MISS BESSIE DURAND—MY ESTEEMED SISTER IN CHRIST:—Why should one so small as I, essay to write to you? It is only that you may know that you are held in remembrance by those you have left behind. A loftier aim than this I cannot claim. The love of God is so great that when poured into a human heart, it cannot hold it, but must needs overflow and extend itself towards all the members of the holy family wherever they are. It is not myself, but God, that has brought you to my mind, and you have been with me all day, and now my pen only portrays in black and white the evidence that such is the case.

Brother Durand spoke ably on Sunday morning from these words, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace."—Psalm xxxvii. 37. It was good. He presented Christ as the perfect man; "perfected" through suffering. His aim, mission or "end," as being the establishment of peace between his people and God—the work of reconciliation. Is it not wonderful how the Bible portrays Christ, his life and work, in every word, in every line? The Old Testament Scriptures point to it as something yet to come; the New Testament looks back to it as being finished. "Christ, and him crucified," is the soul foundation of every christian's hope. Sister Hart once said to me that she thought every true christian is a worker. True, they are. Workers not for salvation, but *because* of it. They are constantly manifesting by outward acts the salvation which God has wrought in them, for it is he that worketh in us, "both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

Did you ever feel alone in your experience? Of course; we are all of one family, spiritually, but still our experiences do differ, and it seems that nobody goes through just what I do.

> "Like one alone, I seem to be,
> O, is there any one like me?"

The same plant may bear many leaves, yet no two are exactly alike, and although we are all branches of the same vine (Christ), yet no two are exactly alike. How easily it is to mistake the workings of the Spirit for what we think is merely carnal promptings, and *vice versa.* I know that I have sometimes told my feelings to a brother or sister and then asked them is that of God or of the flesh? and to my surprise they say, "God." Well, I cannot always see it that way. Not that I doubt their sincerity, but I fear they have not understood my feeble utterances.

Not since coming within the borders of

the visible church, have I been able to devote much of my time to anything but the Bible or SIGNS. The newspaper takes no more than five minutes daily. I do not always enjoy the Bible, or the SIGNS either. Indeed, the former is more often sealed than unsealed, it seems to me. Nevertheless, I cannot leave it alone even then. One time during this last spring, I became much disturbed in my mind over my comparative ignorance as to current events, and things in the world around me. I have always been a great reader, but the Bible had superseded everything else, and being thrown in contact with well read people daily, I thought it behooved me to brush up on literary topics of the day. Feeling thus, I one evening walked around to the Public Library here, in which I hold a reader's card, with the intention of reviving my interest in current topics; determining to read my Bible less, and history and fiction more. One book after another I removed from the shelves, scanning their leaves only to find "vanity and vexation of spirit" written upon every page. Something said within me, "You must not; you must not." Discouraged I retraced my steps homeward. Entering the house, I picked up a Bible lying on the table and opening it at random, read. Ah, here at last was something worth my time and thought. My eyes were glued to the page as I read chapter after chapter. The Bible never seemed sweeter to me than at this time. Closing it at last, I resolved that nothing but the Bible should engross my time, so when I am approached on subjects that are engrossing the public mind, I simply say, "I do not know," and though they may think me a fool on account of my ignorance, yet I have the comforting assurance that we have become fools for Christ's sake.

Now, my dear sister, I will not further take up your time. If you can find it in your heart to answer this, do so; but I know your time is much taken up, and will try not to feel disappointed if you do not write me. Trust we will again soon have the privilege of you being with us at Southampton.

With much love, I desire to be yours in the bonds of love,

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

1322 VINE ST., PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 20, 1902.

MISS BESSIE DURAND—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—It looks like the height of presumption in me to attempt to write to one like you. You have been on the road from earth to heaven so much longer than I. Your conversation has been such as becometh the gospel of Christ. Mine has not. You have let your light so shine before men (your brethren who are short-sighted, and cannot see without some outward manifestation) and they have seen your good works (the works which the Lord hath wrought in you), and have glorified your Father which is in heaven. "Out of Zion the perfection of beauty hath God shined." When the love of God is shed abroad in the heart of a poor sinner it does not lie dormant there, but it permeates their whole being, and shines forth in the face, and every day life, and in conversation. "Look upon Zion," she is the perfection of beauty. Why is she so beautiful? Because she is clean and pure and white. The Lord's people love purity, they love holiness, they love righteousness, they hunger and thirst after it. This is why Zion is so beautiful to them, because they see purity, holiness and righteousness there; there the handiwork of the Lord is displayed; there we see the King in his beauty. Yes, in the heart of

that poor, trembling, bewildered, tempest-tossed, sin-perplexed soul, there we see the King in his beauty. "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." We are apt to interpret Scripture to suit our own experience. The above Scripture expresses my feelings. I do not know what this house of the Lord is, unless it is that spiritual house that is built up of lively stones, where spiritual sacrifices are offered up. Is it not the church of Christ? Is it not our brethren? Are not the sacrifices that they offer up, a broken heart, a broken and contrite spirit? and also praise and thanksgiving? I desire their love and fellowship, even if I must suffer to obtain it, and I know I must. I desire it of the Lord, for this is the only source from whence it can come. It is the Lord who raiseth us up together, and maketh us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. When this is the case, then true spiritual fellowship abounds.

"Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." How important it is that we heed the exhortation of the beloved apostle: "I therefore the prisoner of the Lord beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering; forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Seeing it is so good and pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity, how foolish it is for dear brethren to let little trivial matters come between them to mar their fellowship. But we must remember this dwelling together in unity is of the Lord. "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." The Lord does and will keep the city. He is head over all things to the church; the government is upon his shoulders. All things work together for good to them that love God. Yes, his ways are equal, there is harmony and consistency in all his works, he works all things together, not separately.

Like David, we may be envious at the foolish when we see the prosperity of the wicked; but when we come into the sanctuary of the Lord then we see the end of the workers of iniquity, we see then that even the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he restraineth. When we come into the house of the Lord we can see beauty in all his works, we can cast all our care upon him who careth for us; though we murmur and complain, with blessings in our hands. The Lord fainteth not, neither is he weary: but he is long-suffering, and his mercy endureth forever; he knows our frame, he remembereth that we are dust. Yes, our blessed Savior knows what sore temptations mean, for he has felt the same. We have not an High Priest that cannot be touched, but one that is touched with a feeling of our infirmities; therefore we can come boldly to a throne of grace and find mercy to help in time of need.

"What a friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear."

Remember me in your prayers, dear sister, for I am poor and needy, and long for the prayers and sympathy of the Lord's dear people.

Your little brother in hope, and companion in tribulation,

EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

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571 CENTRE ST., TRENTON, N. J., March 15, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I send you herewith a letter from my father-in-law, brother George M. Leedom, which I will leave to your judgment in regards to

publishing it in the SIGNS. I felt myself it was too good to keep from those who I feel will rejoice to learn that the Lord has again visited him with light and great enjoyment. He has for several years been in much darkness of mind most of the time, and I feel to rejoice that the Lord has thus visited him. Only a short time before we received this letter he made us a visit, and it was while on this visit to us that he was again made to rejoice with great joy, feeling that the Lord had not utterly cast him off, as he had been made to feel many times before.

I was talking about the difference of one walking in another's footprints, and footsteps: that when walking in one's footprints, we walked where one had walked before, but if we walked in that one's footsteps, we were walking where that one was, and that if we walked in the footsteps of Jesus, we were walking where he was, and he was ever with us, though we could not realize it many times, and though we many times feel to be in great darkness, and in the deepest hell, yet even there he is ever with us, with his arms underneath us; we never get so low but what he is still a little lower with his arms underneath us, for he continually carries us in his arms, and bears us in his bosom. After I was through talking, our brother told us that while I was talking he was made to realize the presence of the Lord with him, and of how the darkness had been lifted from upon him, and of the great joy he was then made to enjoy and rejoice in. The next day the time I was with him he was almost continually talking to me upon these things. I have seldom been permitted to see one so lifted up after being in such darkness. As we rode through the streets together he seemed to know nothing of the surroundings, or of what was going on; his whole mind seemed to be entirely taken up in thoughts and in conversation upon these things. I felt to praise God from the bottom of my heart for it all. May he forever have all the praise and glory, for all praise and glory belongs to him.

Your unworthy brother,

CASPER G. FETTER.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 9, 1902.

DEAR CHILDREN:—Will try and write you a few thoughts which I have had, and which were brought to my mind while contemplating the passage of Scripture which reads thus, "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys." Who is this rose? Is it not Christ? The rose is a most fragrant flower, beautiful to gaze upon with the natural eye. Then is Christ not more beautiful to look upon with an eye of faith, when we can trust all to him, and look to him for all spiritual enjoyment? Surely so. But we must consider where this rose is found. He says he is the rose of Sharon; now the word "Sharon" signifies "a plain." If this is his plain, then it is there that we find him, and we cannot find him there if we are not in that plain. Then we must most surely be there before we can see him and partake of the beauty and perfume of this heavenly Rose, and Lily of the valleys. We see that he is not only in the plain, but also in the valleys, in the different forms; that of a lily white and pure, without spot and blemish. Therefore we must need go down into the valley, for if we were always on the mount, we would not find the lily of the valley; it does not grow on the mountain. When we see these things with an eye of faith, are we not following in his footsteps with his almighty arm under us to bear us up and

keep us near to him? "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters." We see that we are cared for, although we may have thorns in our flesh to remind us of our weakness and aptness to wonder, but they also remind us that the lily is there, and "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons." Another beautiful figure. Just think of an apple tree among the trees of the wood, where all is gloom; think of the woods of our sinful nature; think of the apple tree among the trees of the wood, all laden with blossoms; how sweet to look upon, and when laden with fruit what enjoyment to partake of it. The apple tree is a fruitful tree, while the trees of the wood afford no fruit; thus we sit down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit is sweet to our taste. Yes, surely is his love among the sons likened unto this, for when in the gloomy wood of our nature how sweet to contemplate the love of him that gave himself for us, that we might partake of the fruits of his righteousness.

MARCH 11, 1902.

I feel to pen a few more thoughts to you, as I have again to-day had much enjoyment in looking for the rose in Sharon, which is the plain of God's righteousness, and I feel that I again found him, Christ, the only rose of any beauty to the poor, tempest-tossed soul. In him all the beauty of the rose, and all the fragrance combined, make him most beautiful in the eyes of his children, when we are given eyes of faith to view him in the plain of his righteousness which he wrought. Then, dear children, you see that after I had had much pleasure in looking for the Rose in Sharon, that it was necessary for me that I must needs go in the valley to look for the lily, and again I was made to rejoice in his presence, for I was assuredly blest in finding the Lily. I have thought much about you both, whether you was in the enjoyment of the peace of which God is the giver, and whether you could in your soul's experience feel to say, The winter is over and past, the time of the singing of birds has come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land. Now I feel to say, as I said before, that Sharon signifies his plain, that is his righteousness, and that it also signifies his song. What is that song? In my view, or the way that I trust it was shown to me is this, "The Lord has triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider he has thrown in the sea." Yea, all my works and self-righteousness have been cast in the sea. God in his mercy, I trust, has brought me to his banqueting-house, and his banner over me is love, and has made me feel to be content with that wherewith I have, that is such light as the Lord has given me, and not to try to obtain more than my portion; for each shall have his portion in due season, and that which is most needful for the time, whether it be a feast at midday in the glorious light of our Lord on the mountain, or whether it be an evening repast, at the close of the glorious day; that is, when we again feel the shades of the night of sorrow drawing near, we shall receive each his portion; that which is most needed, or it may be at the dawn of the day, after the night of sorrow and gloom is passing away, and the Sun of righteousness again rises with healing in his wings, then we again receive our portion, and are made to sing, The Lord has triumphed gloriously. Yes, dear ones, I feel to be content with such as the Lord gives me; I feel to be as the clay in the potter's hands, or the iron in the hand of the

smith, which he takes and forms that which he pleases; first heating in the furnace of affliction, that the dross may be consumed, that it may be straightened, that the crooked places be taken out, that the rough places be made smooth on the anvil of God's everlasting love, and tempered with mercy. O, the wondrous love and mercy of God to us poor, sinful worms. And then again I was made to contemplate the building of the temple, the spiritual temple. The timber for the temple was prepared in the wood, and quarry of nature, and not a sound of hammer or saw was heard in the setting up of the temple; thus it is with the setting up of the spiritual temple, we are dug from the quarry of our human nature, we are dressed and fitted to fill our places in the temple, and not a sound of any tool or any instrument is heard; it does not take any steam derrick of man's invention, nor a heave here or a heave there, to place these stones in their proper places, there shall be no sound of a saw or hammer, but a still small voice shall accomplish the work, for we are lively stones. Then if we are lively stones, we must have life, and then each one will fill the place and the station which the Master builder has designed.

Now, dear children, I have given you the thoughts that were given me, as near as I can, while I was working in the woods to-day, and if there is anything that is of any comfort to you, give the Lord all the praise, and tell me if you think it any wonder, if while I was at work in the wood, that I should hunt for the Rose of Sharon, or look for the Lily of the valleys?

Your loving father,

GEORGE M. LEEDOM.

DADE CITY, Fla., April 15, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have just read your review in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of some quotations clipped from the *Baptist Trumpet*, and from the *Apostolic-Primitive Baptist.*

You ask me to write you faithfully just what I think of your editorial of April 15th, stating that whatever I may say will be held in personal confidence, if I so wish it. I have ever been free to express my convictions on any point of the doctrine of God our Savior, and if I have ever had a religious secret I am not conscious of it.

While I have been associate editor on Elder S. F. Cayce's paper, the *Apostolic-Primitive Baptist*, for several years, there have been some things published in it that I could not indorse. I hold Elder Cayce in dear esteem as a minister of the gospel, and I am loath to believe that he approves of all that he has suffered to be published.

I was surprised to see such Arminian effusion published in *Apostolic-Primitive Baptist* as Dr. J. A. Johnson's poetry and comments which you quote. This is not the only article from his pen that is rotten to the core. Were he to claim the honor of being a Primitive Baptist, I should think he lacks much of being apostolic in faith and doctrine. Verily if this "Dr." was ever cured, or healed, of a sin-sick soul, by the great Physician, he has been bewitched by such doctors (?) of divinity as Andrew Fuller, Wm. Carey and John Wesley. I am glad you had that charity not to brand the paper as an Arminian sheet because the productions of some Arminians are suffered to appear in its columns. By nature we are all more or less Arminians, and if not under the direct leadings of the Spirit, will be pulling that way; the way that is con-

genial to our nature. There is nothing in our nature that is a friend to grace. But Arminianism is only fed by fleshly vanities; it is like the flesh, and Christ said, "That which is born of the flesh, is flesh." So we might say with equal propriety, That which is born of Arminianism, is Arminianism. It, serpent-like, creeps into the bosom of most all the Lord's people at times, and leaves but few worshipers untainted by its venom. It says, A man can have all the salvation he works for; live or die; sink or swim, just as the man wills. My experience, to the contrary, is that I cannot move in religion one step Christward but as the Holy Spirit inflames my love, or invincibly quickens me. Jesus says, "No man [saint or sinner] can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." If the Lord's people have the power to serve and worship God in Spirit at option, I wonder why Jeremiah said, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Was David at fault when he prayed, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit," or could he have mounted Duty-horse and regained these blessings? Again, he pleads, "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I." He felt his need of the Spirit not only to lead, but guide as well. We learn that when his feet were sinking in miry clay that the Lord had to take them out, and establish his goings. Did not Peter learn that "time salvation" was of the Lord when "beginning to sink, he cried, saying, "Lord, save me"? I suspect that Old Jonah thought when he went to Joppa and paid his fare on boat down to Tarshish, that he would be lord of all he surveyed, not having to say all through life's journey that "Salvation is of the Lord," but that man can do what God requires of him or do otherwise. However, he learned when brought into the waters of affliction that "they that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy." So he was made to know and willing to vow again that "Salvation is of the Lord." Isaiah could say the same: "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid."

Dear brother, I did not purpose to write as I have when I began, but I now desire to say more. You are at liberty to make it public if there are no objectionable features to it, and you think it to the glory of God and the cause of truth.

What is salvation? It is a deliverance of the heirs of promise from law, sin, wrath, Satan and death; yea, a salvation that saves from the guilt of sin; the damning and reigning power of sin, and at death, the inbeing of it. This salvation meets all the needs, necessities, emergencies of his people in all generations. There is not a circumstance of life, however painful, distressing or perplexing, that this salvation cannot reach; and not only so, but bring them out, for in all these things they are more than conquerors through him that loved them. This is our stay in the night of adversity, and in the sunshine of prosperity.

But some one says, "If the children of God will always walk in the paths of obedience, and do the fit things, God will bless them." But we learn that there is a solemn coming and going betwixt the soul and the Lord, when God the Spirit is pleased to lead us by faith to walk in his ways. We shall find that we only walk there as necessity is laid upon us, and God the Spirit draws us. Talk not about the fitness of things as if one could do them because they are fit things. We can only do the fit things in a right spirit

when the Lord leads, guides and draws us, and fills our souls with heavenly dew and love. We are exhorted to "grow up in Christ in all things." Can we do this by growing up in pride, self-conceit in our own ability, our own knowledge, our own way? Echo answers, "Can we?"

Yours in hope,

M. L. GILBERT.

(See editorial remarks in this number.)

PRESCOTT, Ark., March 14, 1902.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—MY DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—Your good and very welcome letter of 28th ult. came duly to hand, and I thought I would answer immediately, but have been so busy it seemed I could not find time to do so, but I feel that I should not let my business hinder me from writing to any of the dear brethren and sisters, because I do appreciate their cheering and refreshing letters of love to me, a poor worm, and feel to thank my Lord for causing them to remember such an one as I. What a blessed privilege is afforded the dear saints in communicating one with another by letter, and through such a valuable medium of correspondence as the dear old SIGNS.

You ask if I still get the SIGNS OF THE TIMES? Yes, it still comes to me regularly as a very welcome visitor; either brother Beebe or some other dear one is still sending it, for which I feel that I can never thank them enough for such a valuable gift, and if it was to stop, I would feel at a great loss, as my circumstances will not yet allow sending subscription price. However I could not feel hard at any one if it was to stop, for it certainly does take money to publish such a paper as the SIGNS, and brother Beebe should if possible receive sufficient financial aid to publish and send out such a paper. I have been trying to do what I could for the SIGNS here. Last fall when brother Beebe published his special offer I secured ten subscribers for the time specified, (till the end of the year,) but none of the brethren of my church renewed, and I do not know whether the brethren elsewhere did or not, but I know it was not because they could not indorse the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS, but because they were unable to raise amount of subscription. Those of my church that took it expressed themselves as being well pleased, and yet say it is the best paper in existence, but, my brother, we live in a poor country, that is, in our immediate section, the soil is thin, and last year we had the severest drought we ever had, consequently most every one is in straitened circumstances. We have had only about two real good crops out of six. Pardon me for writing this, but do not think that I am complaining, because I know such calamities do not happen to be, or come by chance, but are sent on us by him that doeth his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth beneath, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? Then whatever he does is right.

But I wish to say a little more concerning the faith of our brethren, or their standing in regard to the issues that have hitherto disturbed us; that is, predestination and time salvation. My church, or the church to which I belong, is very nearly a unit in believing in unlimited predestination, and unconditional salvation, and I will add, In any sense, and generally the prejudice that once existed has been greatly eliminated. Some of those who have differed from us, but have been reasonable all the time, could be approached, and by careful and, I

hope, prayerful investigation, have been made to see their error, and have laid down their weapons, and are at peace with us. I have not urged my views of these particular points upon the churches which I have been trying to serve. I have often thought I would give them my views in full, but when the time came they did not come into my mind. Of course I have on some occasions tried to present my firm belief in God's absolute sovereignty; his universal dominion, and Jesus as a complete and ever faithful Savior in every sense, but what I have said was not intended as a thrust at somebody, but it was because I firmly believed what I said. I have found out (and greatly to my satisfaction) the best way to treat a brother in error, especially as pertains to doctrine, is to gently and gradually lead him step by step into the light of the truth; though we cannot approach such without a previous preparation of the heart by the Spirit.

I am very glad to learn your health is better than when you wrote me last. If it be the Lord's will may you live long yet to comfort the children of our King.

Please excuse this rambling and botched letter. Write me again when you have opportunity; I am always so glad to get a letter from you.

I remain as ever your unworthy brother in gospel bonds,

P. H. JAMES.

FARMINGTON, Ill., Feb. 9, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I will write you a little, if you have the patience to read it. I hope you have not lost all confidence in this poor, old sinner. If you have not, it is more than I can say, for I feel to have no confidence in the flesh, or in myself. I have been one of the despised Old School Baptists for more than forty years, and am now near my journey's end, and I still find no good in me. The word says, Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? But I come so far short of what I desire to be, I desire to know whether I am indeed a child of God or not? I grope most of my time in darkness, in doubt and in fear. It is my daily inquiry, Can it be possible that I am his? Can there be mercy in store for such a sinner as me? I often think if I were a child of God I would be given more interest in reading the Scriptures, but often while reading, it seems a sealed book to me, and my prayers are but a chattering noise; all within seems to be darkness; the Lord seems to have led me into darkness, and I have seen affliction by the rod of his wrath; my cruel sins seem to hide his smiling face, but my daily prayer is that of the poor publican, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." I feel as one of old said, There is but one step between me and death, and the grave cannot praise him. I desire above all things to praise him for his goodness and mercy, yet I fear that one day I shall fall by the hand of my enemy, this sinful self. So David feared that he should fall by the hand of Saul. If I could have it so, I would be clear of this old sinful nature; this world has lost its charms for me, I seem to be as one alone in this vast howling wilderness; I do hunger and thirst after righteousness, and I desire to read my title clear to a hope beyond this vale of sorrow, but here I still grovel in this world of sorrow. I often greatly chide myself for my complaining, when the good Lord has been so merciful to me all my life. Then I think that it is only in this life that his mercy and long forbearance is extended to me. I well know

that none but the dear Lord can save me, if indeed I am his. None seem so doubting and undeserving as I am; if saved at all it must be by the grace of God. "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling."

Dear brethren, I receive the SIGNS regularly, and it is all the preaching I get through this long, gloomy winter, as I live quite a distance from where the gospel is preached. There is much that is called preaching, in this town, but I seldom go to hear them, for there is nothing in it for me; the truth is trodden under foot, together with the true witnesses and the Bible. Surely this is a day of great darkness, and it seems to cover the earth with gross darkness, while the Lord's witnesses are lying dead in the streets of that great city, which spiritually is called Sodom. But the glorious time will come when they shall arise with their Lord.

I hope, dear brother, that the SIGNS may be conducted to the honor and glory of God, ever contending for the truth in the spirit of love and forbearance. If we do not all see just alike, the Lord alone can open our understanding of the Scriptures. He alone can save poor, hell-deserving sinners. I do not wish to wound the feelings of any one, much less those whom I believe are the children of God. So farewell. May the Lord be with you and yours. Please pardon me for troubling you.

I remain your brother in hope,

E. D. VARNES.

[WE are in fellowship with brother Varnes in the sorrowful and doubting state of his mind. "Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." The most obedient of the children of God, and the most humble among them, are called to walk through the deepest sorrows, and to know the greatest doubts and fears, and this arises out of the soul-humbling views which the Lord gives them of themselves, and their need of his grace.—ED.]

WINCHESTER, Tenn., March 14, 1902.

VERY DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—The time for which I subscribed for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES having expired with the current number, I inclose five dollars to pay for another two and a half years. If my present feelings are to be taken for an index, it is very likely that I will not be here in the flesh that long, but at least one of my children out of four will enjoy it almost as much as myself. The state of depression that is now upon me comes from a spell of "la grippe," in so far as it can be accounted for upon a physical hypothesis, and I am so seldom allowed to realize any spiritual life, if ever, that spiritual depression seems to have become a constant condition with me.

I want to give you some of the reasons for my clinging to the SIGNS; there has never yet been displayed by any other publication so high an order of logical consistency, and intellectual honesty, and absolute devotion to the cause espoused, as the SIGNS has manifested throughout its existence of seventy years, and I would say that the spiritual excellence of the paper exceeds its merits in all these things, if I may presume to speak on that line. The tone of the editorials and correspondence shows that the spirit of love and forbearance prompts and pervades its utterances. Its uncompromising attitude in defense of the great doctrinal truths of spiritual religion, as taught in the holy word, embracing the complete divinity of God in the predestination of all things, and in the salvation

of sinners by this power alone, never betrays the SIGNS into an exhibition of ill temper or harshness. Hence its great and wholesome influence for the truth. Yes, let it continue to come, I do not expect to be without it any part of the few days that remain to me. I have passed my three score years, and two of the additional ten allotted to man. It will be wonderful should I reach that appointed time.

I am your unworthy brother, if one at all,

WM. P. TOLLEY.

[IF, as brother Tolley says in the above letter, we have been enabled to so conduct the SIGNS as to impress our brethren that it "Never betrays an exhibition of ill temper or harshness," we assure our readers that all praise is due to God for restraining grace to keep our old carnal nature from being displayed in what we may have written, for we are painfully aware that we are by nature full of all the evils that flesh is heir to, and when we meet with opposition, we feel all these hidden evils of our depraved nature striving to make themselves manifest in sarcasm, ridicule, railing, and such like carnal weapons, and have often been fearful that we have been influenced when writing, by more of a spirit to "down" the opponents, than that God might be glorified and his children comforted. Therefore such assurances as quoted from brother Tolley's letter are especially comforting and encouraging to us, and we trust that we are grateful to God for putting it in his heart to write us as he has, for we know that a writer cannot judge his own writings, and we have often felt a desire to know just what kind of a spirit our feeble productions portrayed to our brethren, who might give them sufficient consideration to read them.—B.]

LOVEST THOU ME? FEED MY SHEEP.

(John xxi. 15-17.)

IT is only when we have this question in our hearts, and feel this great love, that we can feed the sheep. Does he ask this question but once in our hearts and put something there to stay, so that there is never a time rest afterwards except when we are obeying his command, "Feed my sheep"? I do believe that the sweetest rest and comfort comes to us when we are made to know that we are feeding these same sheep. No one can speak with comfort to the flock unless he has this love in his heart. The continued desire to comfort the flock cannot remain in the heart without an experimental knowledge of the new covenant: "I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their heart." Truly the main proof that we have the love of God in our hearts is this, that we love the brethren. If one feels this love really in his heart, he will find some way to manifest it. If one can enter his closet and sorrowfully confess his sins, and pray for strength to do better, and be able to say to the Almighty God, Thou knowest that I earnestly desire to walk more worthy of the high calling, then that one has evidence that the covenant is made with him, and that he is indeed one of the chosen people.

It would be well for all of us to ask the question, Am I in earnest? before trying to speak or hear. I am sure that his servants cannot preach the glad tidings without feeling this love for the little ones, and the desire to comfort and strengthen them in their hearts. If all who are ministers of our faith and order would remember this, there would be less trouble. Then if trouble does come, let us keep it at home, and not spread it abroad everywhere. We should not want

to talk to others about the faults of our friends; let us rather publish their virtues; let each care for his own household. Unless a minister be called in council with another church, he should not be expected to introduce his views upon the matter of trouble, either in his preaching or writing, so making more trouble. Preach the word, and speak of the evidences there given, and then the little ones will be comforted, and all the Baptists will love that minister better. Hearing of trouble in the churches does not comfort them. What you have to deliver, if it be the truth, is revealed to you, and if it be necessary for the peace and comfort of others, it will also be revealed to them. When a preacher comforts the flock, it is because he and the flock both have experienced the truth of what is spoken. The dearest and best beloved servants are those that strive for the things that make for peace and edification. One who stirs up strife, and spreads the news abroad, does not live long in the hearts of the little children. Even little children soon learn who their best friends are, and soon turn a deaf ear to one in whom they see no humility. Jesus said, "Feed my sheep." He gathers them together and gives them pastors and teachers. When one comes to them and does not feed them, their love does not turn to him, but to the one who does feed them. Then the unprofitable servant is cast out. God works these things, and if one feels that his labors are not profitable, he must bow his head humbly and wait upon the Lord; it is good that each one examine himself lest the fault be in him. This examination is very often sad and bitter, but God gives us what is best. All the hatred of enemies of the truth, and all their acts of cruelty, but serve to exhibit his power to triumph over them; all the acts of kindness, and deeds of love from his servants, but serve to show that he rules in the heart, and altogether serve to teach his people that salvation is of the Lord.

Dear brother Beebe, this is submitted to your judgment. May God keep you and yours.

Your brother in hope,

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.

LAWRENCEBURG, Ky., Jan. 21, 1902.

ATLANTA, Ga., April 11, 1902.

OUR VERY DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Another twelve months has rolled up its scroll never to return, and the great monster death has gathered his many victims to their long homes; one by one they disappear, and another takes their place, and so the world goes on. I often wonder why I am still left? I do not see any use the good Lord has for poor me. I am still a time creature, but I do not know how to work out my salvation aside from grace, in any spiritual sense. If I did or could, I would be as good as some of my brethren, but I do not know how to think one good thought, much less do any righteous act. I have always been so dull and blind, I need some one to teach me, for I fall so far short of what I would like to be. I can see the brethren and sisters enjoying themselves, and looking so bright, and O, how I long to catch up in the class, but I am a dull, backward scholar.

Brethren, I will beg your pardon again; I should have sent in our renewals for our faithful paper, the SIGNS, I would be so glad to see all of the subscribers get two or three new subscribers every time they renew. Brethren, it is no trouble, but a privilege and a pleasure; you can do so without losing any time. Please

let the dear editors know we indorse the SIGNS by taking just a little stock in it in this way. There is no doubt but you try to get your man elected on all election days, and it would not be any more trouble, if you count it trouble, to get two or three new subscribers. I for one do want to try and hold up the hands of the editors; it can be done in many ways. Let each reader that loves the truth as this paper teaches it, clean and unmerited, if no more, just speak some word of encouragement.

Yours in hope,

H. H. BENTLEY.

[BROTHER Bentley has sent the SIGNS a long list of new subscribers, as well as many renewals of old subscriptions, within the last few years, and has thus proved in a substantial way his deep interest in the welfare of the publication, for which we return him our sincere thanks.—ED.]

MASON CITY, Neb., March 19, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE AND CHICK:—Enon Church, near here, had such a good meeting last Saturday and Sunday, that I thought that I would report it to the SIGNS. Elder D. Waggoner, our pastor, returned from an extended visit in the eastern part of the State on Friday, and on Saturday when the invitation was given for the reception of members, four came forward and united with the church; three were by letter, and one by experience. Then on Sunday night another came forward, giving a good reason for a hope, and was also received in full fellowship of the church. This last was a lady who never heard of the Primitive Baptists until her marriage to a young brother, something over a year ago. She had received a hope several years ago, but had not united with any of the Arminian churches because, as she said, she wanted to unite with a church which did not require her to work to save souls, as she had learned by her own experience that souls could not be saved in that way. She seemed to fully understand that salvation was by grace alone, and she miraculously found a companion and a church, who had been taught in the same school of Christ. We do feel thankful to God for blessing us with these additions to our little flock, and feel encouraged to pray that others whom we see around us, who are fit subjects for baptism, may be led to obey their Savior in coming in among us.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

F. A. AMSBURY.

[IT is no wonder that this sister could not unite with those who required of her that she should strive to save souls from eternal death, seeing that she had not been saved by human means. How can one who has been saved by grace go about trying to save others? Must they not know well that Christ must save all others, even as he alone has saved themselves? Shall one redeemed soul praise God for his salvation, and then call upon others to praise man for it? Where then is the fellowship?—ED.]

LOGAN, Ohio, April 1, 1902.

G. BEEBE'S SON:—Inclosed find two dollars, for which give credit on my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I see my time is about out, so I will send for another year. I am now in my eighty-first year, and do not expect to subscribe for the SIGNS many more times; this may be the last. I have been a member of the Old Baptist church over fifty years, and I do not feel any better than I did when I first started out; I cannot even govern my thoughts.

E. C. HARSH.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1902.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

BROTHER J. E. Fincher, of Boyd, Ala., writing under date of Feb. 2d, 1902, asks the following questions, and desires that we respond through the SIGNS.

First. What has been the custom of the faithful in Christ Jesus, acting in church capacity, respecting members who do not attend their meetings from perhaps six to twelve months at a time, and send no communication by letter in that time?

Second. Would the excuse, "You have no regular pastor," be sufficient reason?

Third. What ought to be done; compel them to attend or exclude them?

Fourth. Should a committee be sent to see them? Some say so, while others say, Let them alone, because the Lord has told them their duty by putting his laws in their hearts and minds.

Fifth. Is not the violation of his holy law always visited with a penalty?

Sixth. Is this not as true of the gospel law, with regard to those who are under the gospel, as of any other law?

These questions contain the substance of the letter written us by brother Fincher, and we have put them in the form of questions, for convenience in replying. We feel willing to speak of these things, and to try to present what we understand the Scriptures to teach concerning these matters. It is certain that the word of God is to be our rule as professed followers of the Lord in all things. All our thoughts are but fancies, speculations and notions, unless they be in accordance with the letter of the Scriptures. This is true of what we call the principles of the doctrine of Christ, of all the precious promises of the word, of all the warnings, admonitions and exhortations addresed to individual believers, in the Scriptures, and also of all the order of the church of God, which is declared by the apostle to be the pillar and ground of the truth. It has been the glory of true believers, and of Baptist churches in the past, that they know no standard but the word of God, and that they demand a "thus saith the Lord," for all that they believe and are required to practice. This one principle ought never to be departed from. Our own inward exercises of mind must be brought to this test, and if they be not according to the plain word of God, they are false and visionary.

Now, replying to the first question presented, we will say, It has been the custom of all orderly gospel churches to endeavor to follow the rule of the Scriptures in this, as in all other matters. It may have been, and we doubt not that it has been the case at times, that churches have departed from this rule, and when they have done so, evil has followed very soon. Churches, as a rule, know what are the different circumstances of their members sufficiently well to judge very fairly as to whether it is possible for them to regularly attend the meetings of the church. Some live many miles away, some have no means of conveyance, some sisters have no way of coming, because their

husbands, or sons, or friends with whom they live, do not furnish them with a way to come, some are hindered by sickness, either in their own body, or in those dependent upon them, and some may be in a cold, dead state, and so are not at their meetings. Let the hinderances be what they may, the churches as a rule will know all about these things sufficiently well to enable them to judge why their members are not at the meetings from six to twelve months at a time. But we want to say here, that we have in our ministry of thirty-five years, known of but very few cases where members could not have gathered together with their brethren at least once or twice a year, had they loved the courts of the Lord's house well enough. At least, we have seen this, that some did come who labored under greater difficulties and hinderances in every way than some who did not come, both as regards bodily infirmities and outward circumstances. Love and zeal make a vast difference in a man when he is possessed of them. It is the exhortation of the apostle that his brethren should not forsake the assembling of themselves together, as he said, the manner of some already was. And Paul goes on to speak of this sin as a willful one, saying that he who committed it, after receiving the knowledge of the truth, had no more sacrifice remaining for his sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which should devour the adversaries. How solemn, and even terrible, are the apostle's words concerning this matter. It is a willful sin, there remains no more sacrifice for such willful sin, and there does remain a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation. Those who commit this sin then, will find another word of the apostle true, if indeed they be the children of God at all, viz: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." And note it is concerning this one special sin that Paul in Hebrews speaks, when he says such things as have just been quoted. We may be disposed to make light of such absence, but Paul does not.

When such absence is willful and not unavoidable, it betrays a death in the soul, and a sad indifference to the truth, and to the glory of God, and the good of the cause, and a carelessness to our own soul's growth in grace and knowledge, which is to be deeply deplored. It not only wars against the man's own soul, but it brings reproach on the name of him who has, as we profess, redeemed us from all iniquity, that we should be a peculiar people, zealous of good works. It is sure that if we be among those who really fear the Lord, we shall desire often to speak one to another, and when such is the desire, we shall deeply mourn and lament when providential circumstances get in the way of such converse. We shall not then need to be urged to go to the meeting, but rather should need very much to be in the way, to hinder us. If we love the courts of the Lord's house better than the tents of sin, we shall try to arrange our business and our surroundings so that we shall not be hindered from attending. All this seems sure to us. And it has been our observation, that when members become indifferent to their meetings, many other things are the matter with them as well. That is, there are departures in other things also; the general life becomes more unlike a believer, and the world secures more power over heart, mind and life, and favored are they indeed if not allowed to go on into worldly pleasures and vanities, and forget the things which make for their peace altogether. It is of hindering grace if all

these other things do not follow.

Now, in more direct reply to the first question of the dear brother. We think the Bible rule is, that such ones should be sought out by any one who loves them and the cause well enough to do them this kindness. We have not as a rule been much in favor of regularly appointed church committees, though we do not here mean to condemn them, but we do think that if we love a brother or sister as we ought we shall desire their good well enough to go to them and urge them for their own sake, and for the glory of God, to not deprive themselves of such high and holy privileges. How miserable a thing it is to sell one's birthright for a mess of pottage. Child of God, you have a heavenly birthright, and are entitled to all heavenly blessings in the heavenly places in Christ. Why then forsake these things, so high and holy, for things which at best are but temporary, and which perish with the using? This ought to be the spirit which animates us toward each other. It seems to us that this is the substance of all Bible teaching, as regards the course to be pursued in any departure from the walk and the faith of the gospel. This covers such departures as our brother alludes to, as well as all others.

Second. Should the excuse, You have no regular pastor, be sufficient? Most emphatically no. On the contrary, the fact that a church has no regular pastor, is an added reason why all the members should be faithful in their meetings; they are needed more. It is to be hoped that we do not attend our meetings just for the pleasure we get out of them. If we feel as though we shall not enjoy the meeting because we do not expect to hear preaching, or because we have no pastor, that is no reason why we should manifest no love to God, or to his cause, or people, but rather, as said before, all the greater reason why we should manifest it. What is a soldier for, if not to endure hardness? If one should urge this as a reason why he did not attend his meetings, we should think him very far gone from the narrow way, and very far swallowed up in the temptations of the wicked one, and very much under the rule of the powers of darkness.

Third. What ought to be done; compel them to attend or exclude them? Compelling will go a very little ways, unless it be that compelling of which the dear Redeemer spoke in the parable of the marriage supper. If the gospel does not exercise over a man a compelling power, nothing else will do much good. The servants of God, whether ministers or members, are not to be lords over the heritage of God. Paul did not seek to compel his brethren, even when he faithfully exhorted them, but he said once, "I beseech you by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, which is your reasonable service." We are told to reprove, rebuke, entreat with all long-suffering and doctrine, but not one word is said about compulsion, other than that which the Spirit of God exercises in the hearts of his people. Yet we are to stir up each other's pure minds by way of remembrance of the things spoken in the Scripture, and we hope written in our hearts, and God does and will bless his word, when spoken by his children in meekness and love, to the good of those who hear. We would think it altogether wrong to go to a brother or sister who had become derelict in his or her duty, and say to them, If you do not do better, and come to the meeting more regularly, we shall exclude you: now take your choice. This sort of compulsion is entirely foreign to the spirit of the blessed

gospel of the Son of God. But still, if such absence is continued, there will come a time when it will be manifest that the branch is dead, and then nothing is left but to cut it off, and cast it aside from the church. But we can lay down no rules regarding this matter that will fit every case. Each church must judge each case as it comes before them, and upon its own merits. Long-suffering and all tenderness should be exercised under all circumstances, and in all cases. If we love the erring brother as we ought, we shall not go far wrong in dealing with him. And let us always remember that it is better to convert a brother than to destroy him.

Fourth. Should a committee be sent to see them? Some say so; while others say, "Let them alone, because the Lord has told them their duty by putting his law in their hearts." We will not repeat what we have already said concerning the propriety of appointing a committee, further than to say, that if any brother sees such a departure, he ought to consider that he is bound by love to go to that brother himself, and urge him to another course of conduct, but we do want to say that it is wrong wholly to let them alone. What! allow a weak brother to perish for whom Christ died? It is true that our God has put his law in the hearts of his people, yet they do need exhortation after all, else we should find no exhortation in the word. In the connection in which Paul in Hebrews, chapter ten, treats of this very sin, he says that his brethren should exhort one another; and so much the more as they saw the day approaching. He would not let his wandering brethren alone. And concerning not only this but all other departures, the epistles of all the writers of the New Testament are full of warnings, reproofs and exhortations to all good works. We are guilty of the terrible sin of presumption, if we say our God has fixed all our steps, and therefore it does not need that we be careful in the matter of our walk at all. Our God does appoint our steps, and yet he puts into the hearts of all his, a great anxiety to know what he would have them to do, and to answer this cry the Scriptures were given us, and the ministry.

Fifth. Is not the violation of the holy law of God always visited with a penalty? We certainly hope that none are found among all who bear the name of Old School Baptists to deny this. We need not surely multiply words of proof here. All have the Scriptures, and they are full upon this matter. The first violation of the law brought everlasting death upon the whole race of Adam, from which there is no redemption, save in our Lord Jesus Christ, which is for the elect. Every commandment under the Mosaic covenant had a penalty attached to the violation of it. And Paul testifies that every transgression received a just recompense of reward under that covenant. But we need not to multiply proof here. It hardly seems possible that any one will question a matter so plainly taught in the word as this.

Sixth. Is not this as true of the gospel law, with regard to those who are under the gospel, as of any other law?

This cannot be gainsayed surely. For the same beloved Paul in Hebrews, after saying that under the old covenant every transgression received a just recompense of reward, goes on to say, "Of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God," &c. And again he said, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" These, and other

Scriptures in the New Testament, show, if language can show anything, that transgression under the gospel has a penalty also. But in connection with the general subject of our brother's questions we desire to say that this sorer punishment, of which the apostle speaks, always finds its subjects. There is no escape from it to the believer who transgresses. He may escape exclusion from the church, but he will not and cannot escape the guilty conscience, the reaping of corruption, the death to spiritual light, warmth, comfort and service. These are penalties which come as the necessary result of wrong doing, and wrong feeling. A child of God might, in a fit of anger, strike another. That man might escape arrest and punishment by the authorities of his State, but he cannot escape the penalty which God has annexed to his wrong. He will be brought to repentance, and experience that death from which the apostle says that he who converts his brother saves him.

If one stays away from the solemn assemblies of the church, he may escape a vote of censure from the church, he may not even be reproved by any brother, because they may all prove unfaithful, but he will not escape dearth, and lack of growth in the knowledge of spiritual things. He will not escape the growing alienation which must follow in his own heart, and in the hearts of his brethren. To be one in feeling, and to enjoy the confidence of the Lord's people, is much; it is everything to him who is ruled by the peace of God. A member cannot neglect his full duty in any direction in the house of God, and afterwards be able to get so near to his brethren as before, or as others do, until the Lord gives him such sorrow for his sin, as leads to repentance not to be repented of. A sincere, steadfast and godly walk, will call forth sincere, steadfast and godly love from all who are spiritual.

We have been called to attend some funeral services of late when it was a source of real joy to us to be able among other things to say, The departed brother or sister had been a faithful attendant upon the service of the sanctuary as long as it was possible for them to be present. Where the treasure is, there will be the heart also, and where the heart is, there will the feet tend at all times.

How solemn are the questions, Is our treasure in heaven? Are the people of God our companions? Is one day in the house of God better than a thousand? Would we rather be but door-keepers in the house of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season? If we are in the public assemblies of the church, save when it is impossible for us to be there, this will go far to prove that there indeed is our treasure, and our companions, and our joy. We will leave these remarks for the consideration of all who may read.

C.

PLEASE BE SURE

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Please be particular about this.

REMARKS ON ELDER M. L. GILBERT'S LETTER.

(On page 299.)

SEVERAL months ago while looking over our exchanges, our attention was especially drawn to an article in a paper named the *Apostolic-Primitive Baptist*, and the more we read, the more we felt a christian fellowship warming our heart towards the writer, for to us it had the old fashioned ring, and was so free from that spirit of man's self-sufficiency, it stood out prominently by comparison with the articles generally found in the columns of that publication. We read the article through before looking to see who was the writer, so that we might be sure we were not prejudiced either in favor or against it, by the signature, and when we had completed it we found it was from our brother, Elder M. L. Gilbert, and to our surprise we found his name on the editorial staff of the paper. We wrote brother Gilbert the above facts, and since then have had occasional letters from him, both personal and for publication. So when in our issue for April 15th, 1902, we published several extracts from this paper carrying his name as one of its editors, which we denounced as rank Arminianism, we wrote brother Gilbert, requesting him to give us either privately or for publication, a candid and faithful expression of his views of the extracts and the comments we had made. Our reason for doing this was, we had every confidence in brother Gilbert as one having an experience of the work of grace in the heart, and we wished to know how he could, at least appear to indorse such "stuff" by giving his name as one of the editors of the paper publishing it? and his letter appearing in this number is in reply to the same.

Of all that has ever been published in the SIGNS on the subject of "man's free will," "conditional time salvation," &c., there, to our mind, has never been a more clear, concise, powerful, yet meekly written refutation of these errors than brother Gilbert has been enabled to present in his letter.

Most especially would we call attention to that portion of our brother's letter where he presents "the conclusion of the whole matter" in the expression, "A salvation that saves from the guilt of sin; the damning and reigning power of sin." Christ did not merely save his chosen people from the *penalty* of sin, but they "Receive of the Lord's hands double for all their sins." They are not simply pardoned, and still left guilty, but in the sight of God they are seen only in the spotless righteousness wrought out for them by his only begotten Son, who saved them from their sins; from sin *itself*, not from the punishment for sin merely: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin: for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

Then, says one, Why need we feel any concern about the matter? If our eternal salvation is secured, and we cannot again come into condemnation, why not let the matter rest there, and live in full enjoyment of our carnal desires? What is the use of our keeping the commandments? Ah, there is just where the flesh is made manifest; it is ever prompted by a covetous spirit, and it knows no incentive but gain, and will not work without hire. There are no promptings of the love of God in such a spirit. But the child of God needs not to be convinced of the *use* of obeying God, and keeping his commandments, for when God's love is shed abroad in his heart, it is his meat and his drink to keep the commandments,

and it is not from fear of punishment nor in hope of favor that he obeys, it is just because he "can't help it." All the law of the gospel kingdom is summed up in the one word, LOVE, and when we are influenced by the Spirit we are solely and wholly actuated by this love of God, (or God's love,) and this makes every commandment a blessed privilege, and the law of the gospel covenant, "A perfect law of liberty." "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Notwithstanding these blessed assurances that we are made free from sin, some still insist that we must perform some works to merit the favor of God. "But if ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law." All of grace from first to last; nothing left contingent on our works.

While this is the glorious and justified state of the subjects of grace, yet they are still bearing about with them the body of this death, and it is the sin that is in the members of this body that is ever warring against the law in their mind, and is continually bringing about this captivity to sin, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that YE CANNOT DO THE THINGS THAT YE WOULD."—Gal. v. 17. This is what constitutes the "christian warfare," and if we know anything about grace, this has been our experience in the school of Christ. If there is a saint on earth that has been more tormented with the man of sin than ourself, they have our most sincere sympathy, yet we can truthfully say that never since, as we trust, we were shown Jesus as a complete Savior, have we in our deepest feelings of condemnation ever felt the slightest anxiety about a future state of torment beyond this Adamic life. The mourning for sin, we believe, was not from fear of punishment, or of the favors we might lose, that the Lord had in store for us; but the groaning has been on account of the base ingratitude found in our selfish, carnal nature, which is so hateful to that law of love that is given us in the new birth, that we can no longer live in the pleasures of sin. Please read the seventh chapter of Romans, and if what we have here said is not in accord with it, reject it, and extend charity to us in our weakness.

There is but one thing in the letter of brother Gilbert that we cannot see in the same light that he does, and we feel confident he will bear with us while we beg to differ with him as to the responsibility of editors for what their papers contain. Of course it is not to be expected that editors indorse the peculiar application of every passage of Scripture that each and every one of the correspondents may have published, but we do think that they are responsible for the general tone of the publications at head of whose columns their names appear as editors. Whether the editors are held responsible or not by the readers of a paper, the publication itself is held responsible, as we can witness to from having a very recent object lesson, in the SIGNS losing many hundreds of subscribers by being "too straight-laced," and refusing to admit into its columns any of the new theories that have been brought in among the Old School Baptists within the last few years by those claiming to be of our faith and order. B.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MATTHEW XVII. 20, 21.

SISTER Blake, of Charleston, S. C., has desired our views on this passage: "And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief; for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit, this kind goeth not out, but by fasting and prayer."

Connected with these words we have an account of an afflicted parent whose son was sorely vexed with a lunacy, or derangement, which seems to have been occasioned by an evil spirit, and in his distress he had called on the disciples to cure him, but they could not, and as a last resort he had now come and implored the mercy of the gracious Savior. Jesus, in his wonted kindness, rebuked the spirit and cured the child. "Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?" and the words of Jesus above copied were his reply to their inquiry.

From these words we learn one important fact, which is consoling to the saints down to the present time, namely, that the primitive disciples of our blessed Lord were, as well as ourselves, troubled, embarrassed and defeated in some of their undertakings by unbelief, or by want of a firm and unshaken confidence in God. And when we would do good, how frequently do we find this very evil present with us, to clip our wings when we would rise up, and to paralyze our strength when we have to contend with evil spirits. But we presume the point on which our sister desires to be enlightened is in regard to what is said in relation to the quantity and power of faith, the removing of mountains, &c.

The faith of which our Lord is speaking in our text, we understand to be that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit, and the gift of God, and not the faith of devils nor of men. No quantity of human confidence or self-assurance can qualify the disciples of Christ to successfully encounter evil spirits, either in ourselves or in our fellow men. Hence, instead of cherishing or confiding in any kind of faith that we can originate or exercise, we are solemnly admonished to have no confidence in the flesh. And by the term flesh we understand is meant all that is born of the flesh, all that is of the earth, and all that is not given to us from above. That faith which is peculiar to those who are born of God, is a heavenly and not an earthly principle. Death is stamped upon our flesh, and all the powers thereof, and hence that kind of faith which natural men can produce and exercise is, in the Scripture, denominated *dead faith.* But the faith which removes mountains is living faith. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."—1 John v. 4. The faith then which can remove mountains, or otherwise overcome the world, is that, and only that, which is born of God, and it is that which is expressly called the faith of the Son of God, by which we live. For says Paul, "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God," &c. The faith of the Son of God, exemplified by him in the days of his flesh, never failed; it was equal to every trial; to blast a fig tree, still a tempest, heal the sick, or to cast out devils. The same faith was tested in the patriarchs, prophets and Old Testament saints, as recorded

in Heb. xi. By it the elders obtained a good report, and through it we understand the worlds were framed by the word of God, and its victories are traced in that chapter from the framework of creation and its power in Abel, Enoch, Noah and Abraham, down through the prophetic ages to the coming of the Messiah, subduing kingdoms, working righteousness, obtaining promises, stopping the mouths of lions, quenching the violence of fire, escaping the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turning to flight the armies of the aliens, &c. Of this victorious faith the inspired word tells us in the next, namely, the twelfth chapter of Hebrews, "Jesus Christ is the Author and Finisher."

Having now learned what kind of faith it is that removes mountains, or overcomes the world, let us attend to its comparison to a grain of mustard seed. This figure, as used by our Lord in another case, (Matt. xiii. 31, 32,) is said to be the least of seeds. Applying this idea of the mustard seed to its use in our text, we are encouraged in our assurance that, although our faith may seem very small, and when we attempt to compare it to that of Abraham, Gideon, Sampson, David or Daniel, or even to that of dear brethren and sisters cotemporary with ourselves, may seem to be truly least of all seeds, yet the power of divine omnipotence is in it, and however long the siege may be with us, it shall assuredly overcome the world, and witness the subjection of the last enemy which is to be destroyed, even death, and the delivering up of the kingdom in all its fullness to God, even the Father. (1 Cor. xv. 25, 26.)

Again, the kingdom of heaven itself is likened, in a parable of our Lord before alluded to, to a grain of mustard seed. But small as that kingdom has appeared to be, the germ of immortality was in it; the Tree of life, with all its living fruits and healing leaves, is its development. So is the faith of God's elect, in all his children, in whose hearts God has implanted it, shall be equal to every emergency. It is born of God, and it can, it will, it certainly shall overcome the world. Mountains are portions of the world; they are lofty and towering, and our feeble efforts to remove them by a word of command is altogether unnatural; they mock our vain attempts, and we are humbled as we contemplate their surpassing majesty and stability. Our ambition droops as we see the "Alps on Alps arise." But all these mountains shall leave their beds of ages, and with lightning speed leap into the sea, before the living faith of God's poor, tried, tempted and afflicted children shall fail. Mountains of the earth are sometimes figuratively used in the Scriptures to signify the difficulties which seem to obstruct the way of the saints, as the mountains hemmed in the children of Israel at the Red Sea, when the Egyptians pursued them, or the great mountain before Zerubbabel. (Zech. iv. 7.) How often do we find our way hedged in by what seems to us like insuperable mountains.

> "An host behind, a sea before,
> And rocks on either hand."

But that living faith deposited deep in the heart shoots forth from its immortal germ, the blade, the stock, the ripened confidence in God our Savior, and as Dragon feel before the ark of God, and as Goliath fell before the Hebrew stripling,

> "Faith, like a conqueror, can produce
> A thousand victories."

We do not see christians trying experiments with their faith by attempting to

remove mountains literally. Should they attempt it as a test of their faith, the very attempt would prove a want of confidence or faith, and they would certainly fail, unless that faith which is born of God directed their effort. Their faith, being of heavenly birth and origin, lives only on heavenly food, is directed by the word of God, and is of the operation of God, and that direction is given to it only by the Lord, and only to result in his glory. Hence it cannot be used to gratify an idle curiosity or to inflate us with pride. But if God bids Moses raise his rod over the Red Sea, faith obeys, the sea divides, and Israel is saved. When God directs, Daniel by faith securely enters the den of raging lions; Elijah calls for fire from heaven, for drought, or rain, as the Spirit of the living God directs; Peter lets down his hook successfully into the sea, when Jesus bids him do so, and Paul, by faith, strikes Elymas, the sorcerer, blind, when so directed by the Holy Ghost. But let the seven sons of Sceva attempt to cast out devils by their self-wrought faith, or let all the magicians of Egypt attempt to imitate the wonders wrought by the hand of Moses, and all will prove abortive and vain. Or let even the child of God attempt to go beyond the word of the Lord, and he will find himself shorn of his seven locks like Sampson, and like David, when clothed in the mail of Saul.

Howbeit this kind goeth not out, but by prayer and fasting. From these words of our Lord we understand that the saints have to encounter divers kinds of spirits, and among them there are some which are not easily displaced or cast out. The spirit that vexed the lunatic child was of that kind. Fasting and prayer on the part of the disciples, were to show that their only ground of hope for success was in God, and their faith leads them to call on his name, and to humble themselves by fasting, under his mighty hand. The spirit of the world, when it gets possession of our fleshly minds, leading us into a conformity to the world, is seldom cast out, until a painful fasting has been endured. The spirit of falsehood in the mouth of Ahab's prophets, or in the many false prophets which are gone out into the world, when these false prophets creep into the churches, cannot often be cast out without much fasting, and that, perhaps, in a two-fold sense. First, the saints are made to feel a famine, not of bread, but hearing the word of the Lord, and this famine and consequent fasting continues as long as those false prophets, who make empty the souls of the hungry, remain in the church. And secondly, the false prophets themselves generally require to be starved out. We do not often see them go out peaceably, so long as they can remain secure of a large salary, or a fat living.

From the whole subject, in its connection, we learn that when called to confront evil spirits, our faith in God, however small, it being genuine, shall certainly triumph ultimately, and when we seem to fail we have occasion for humiliation and prayer to God, whose potent word shall vanquish all the foes of Zion, and give to the saints the final victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory evermore. Amen.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., August 1, 1859.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

POETRY.

BURDETT, N. Y., March 19, 1902.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR SIR:—I will inclose some verses written by Mrs. Abbie Coddington, of Fremont, Neb., for my people's fiftieth anniversary, Mr. and Mrs. Alex Wheat.

M. ALMA WHEAT.

Fifty years have come and gone
Since their wedding day's fair dawn;
Two sturdy sheaves of ripened grain,
Bethought themselves to entertain.

Toward east and west, toward north and south,
They sent the invitations forth,
In hopes that all will come and see
Their golden day of jubilee.

We have gathered 'round the old home board
Aflame with love and cheer,
Where fruits of labor have been stored
To welcome each one here.

These friends have met to honor them,
Whose faithful love so true
Hath stronger grown with hairs of grey,
Since eighteen fifty two.

Sweet marriage bells rang all in tune,
Just fifty years ago;
Gone happy years, flown all so soon,
The fruits have ripened so.

Forth from the tree whose roots are strong,
Grow tendrils firm and sound,
Guided by love, knowing right from wrong,
This family tree is found.

Forth from the tree the branches spread,
'Twas God's decree, you know;
They wander where by fancy led,
The children come and go.

You are journeying on together,
Your locks are like the snow,
But blessings on your frosty brow
Are promises, you know.

Now you must totter down life's hill,
But hand in hand you'll go,
And sleep together at the foot,
Nor heed the storms that blow.

You have stood the storms of sorrow,
Patient in the hour of gloom,
Hoping for a bright to-morrow,
When the flowers again should bloom.

Now as you stand before us,
Stooped with age and grey,
What sacred thoughts come o'er us,
That you are spared to us this day.

Your path is growing clearer,
As you're drawing nearer home;
Heaven's light is drawing nearer
To greet you as you come.

You are homeward bound to the land of peace,
To the realms beyond the skies:
We know not when that life shall cease,
We know not when that soul shall rise.

But this we know, that end of earth,
Is not the end of life,
And this we hope, that end of breath,
Will close earth's weary strife.

DONATIONS RECEIVED.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—Please announce through the SIGNS the amounts received from brethren and sisters for our meeting-house at Montgomery, Ala.

By Elder H. C. Ker, from New Vernon and Middletown & Wallkill, N. Y., churches, $22.00; sister D. S. Slauson, New York city, $5.00; Elder E. V. White, Leesburg, Va., $3.00; by brother B. F. Coulter, Salem Church, Philadelphia, Pa., $8.50; Mr. E. B. White, Leesburg, Va., $25.00; by Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell Church, $25.00; Mr. W. M. Webb, Goodwater, Ala., $1.00. Total received by me, $89.50.

Amount sent to brother H. W. Coleman, Clerk of the church: Clara Beauchamp, Winfield, Iowa, $1.00; J. C. Jackson, Bucyrus, Ohio, $2.00; Etta Rafforty, Ore, Mo., $5.00; Elder B. J. Wilson, Henderson, Ala., $5.00; J. A. Reeves, Boston, Ga., $6.35; Elder True, $1.00; in blank letter, $1.00. Total, $21.35. Total amount received by Elder Bartley, $108.00.—Grand total, $218.85.

I wish to thank the brethren and friends for their remembrance of us, and for the contributions, and hope the blessings of God may rest upon them. I will also state that we have redeemed our house, but lost our lot, and on last Tuesday we purchased a lot about one hundred yards from the city limits, a nice, suitable place, and with a few more dollars we will be able to move our house and be entirely out of debt, and I am glad to know that we were not dependent on the enemies of the truth for help, but our brethren remembered us in a time of need. We raised in all $280.80, and we will need about one hundred more to finish up our house as it should be done, and if any of our brethren still feel inclined to help us we will appreciate it, and feel thankful for the same. If any other amounts have been sent and no showing made, would be glad if the parties would write to me in reference to the matter, as we want to account for all sent to us, and if any are lost in the mail in any way, we would like to know of it. We expect to have our house of worship ready for our June meeting, and I will state now that any one coming into the city will find our house near the terminus of the Court St., car line, South Court St.

W. LIVELY.

OPELIKA, Ala., April 16, 1902.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At her home near Salisbury, Md., Dec. 4th, 1901, **Emma J. Johnson,** aged 31 years, 3 months and 7 days, after a long and suffering illness. She united with the Old School Baptist Church at Nassaongo, June, 1894, and was baptized by Elder T. M. Poulson, and was a faithful and devoted member until death. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of predestination of all things, and salvation by grace alone. She was a kind and affectionate wife and mother. She leaves a husband and three children, and a number of relatives and friends, to mourn their loss, but we feel that our loss is her gain. May it please our merciful Lord to comfort us in our bereavement, and reveal to us that her condition is far better than ours.

MAY SHOCKLEY.

Charles Alfred Newlon departed this life at the home of his son-in-law, S. E. Newlon, April 1st, 1902. He was 86 years old the 28th of last October. He has living by his first wife, Laura Skinner, nine children, (one dead) and by his second wife, May Jane Arnot, who still survives him, six children. He has living fifteen children, twenty-eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. He was baptized by Elder Joseph Purrington, in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Church, Loudoun Co., Va., and remained, so far as I know, in full fellowship of that church until his death. Though having moved from Loudoun Co., first to Fairfax, and then to Alexander Co., his attendance at his church meetings were not frequent, though occasional, until enfeebled by old age. I am told by his wife that as he grew older he became more and more established in the faith, while not at all inclined to enter into bitter controversies, he would with great zeal contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Brother Newlon was held in high esteem by those among whom he lived, which was fully attested by the large number that attended his funeral. He was buried at Walker's Chapel, near Washington, D. C. The writer preached on the occasion, and also buried him.

ALSO,

R. Burton Hutcherson was born July 17th, 1849, and died April 4th, 1902. About three years ago he married Miss Florida Hutcherson, who lives to mourn his death. His last days, though suffering with that dreadful malady, cancer, were made happy and joyful by the divine power of reigning grace, proving how true the word of God, that where sin abounds, grace does much more abound. He was not a member of any church, but died with glory full in view, telling his dear wife, to whom he was devotedly attached, and all who stood around, not to weep nor sorrow for him. What a blessed death is a death in faith. It is that alone that gives the victory over the world, over all sins of omission and commission, over all our weaknesses, over all our short comings. Bless the Lord for this inestimable gift by which we live in hope of the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The funeral was largely attended, and many sorrowful faces showed how dearly he was loved. The writer tried to preach on the occasion, and buried him in the family burying ground.

E. V. WHITE.

LEESBURG, Va., April 15, 1902.

DIED—March 1st, 1902, at his home in Anacostia, D. C., our brother, **David B. Campbell,** in his 63d year. His disease was heart trouble, which caused dropsy. He was a very patient sufferer. For nearly two months he sat in his chair, and there were times when his sufferings were intense. He was in great distress of mind during the most of his sickness, and would frequently cry out, "Lord, have mercy," and would say to me, "Ask the Lord to have mercy on me," and again, "Sing me a sweet hymn, and perhaps it will give me comfort." The darkness was great. A few weeks before his death he awoke with the words, "Bless the Lord, bless the Lord, O my soul," and talked very comfortingly of the great love and merciful kindness of the Lord to him, a poor sinner, and from that time on he had sweet comfort. He would frequently say, "Rejoice with me, I am so happy, the Lord is very good to me," and as we gazed on his peaceful countenance, we felt it was well with him.

He leaves a widow and one son and daughter, two brothers and four sisters, to mourn, and though we keenly feel our loss, yet we would rejoice with him.

Funeral services were held at his home Monday evening, and the following morning we brought his remains to Welsh Tract, where so many of our dear ones lay.

S. A. CAMPBELL.

IRON HILL, Md., March 25, 1902.

DIED—At his home in Mt. Sterling, Ky., Oct. 20th, 1901, **James W. Ratliff,** after a lingering illness of heart trouble, for more than two years mostly confined to his room. Our dear father was united in marriage Oct. 18th, 1855, to Louseanna Jones. Seven children were born to this union; all are living together with his dear companion. He was born in Bath Co., Ky., near Sharpburgh, Dec. 24th, 1825, and baptized in the fellowship of Bald Eagle Church, Bath Co., Ky., May 18th, 1874, and was chosen clerk July of the same year. He was held a consistent member until his death, and was truly a good man, a dear father and a precious husband, and was held in high esteem by all who knew him. His house was always open to the Old Baptists. Up to a short time before his death he rejoiced to hear the gospel preached. O, how it saddens our heart to pen these few lines, and to think we will have him with us no

more, or hear his gentle words of advice to his children, to be honest in all their dealings. We feel he has gone just a little ahead of us, and now enjoys that sweet rest that remains for the children of God.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder P. W. Sawin, at his residence, after which his remains were taken for interment to Sharpburgh cemetery, there to await the resurrection morn.

T. J. RATLIFF.

MEETINGS.

BALTIMORE Association is appointed to be held with Harford Church, Harford Co., Md., beginning Wednesday before the third Sunday in May, (14th) 1902, and continue three days. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth to meet with us.

Those coming by way of Baltimore will take train leaving North Avenue station, on the Md. & Pa., heretofore B. & L. R. R., on Tuesday at 3:05 or 4:50 p. m., for Long Green and Forest Hill. Those coming by way of York will take train leaving there at 1:30 p. m. for Forest Hill, on the same railroad.

MILTON DANCE.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Salem Church, in Philadelphia, Pa., May 21st, 22d and 23d, 1902.

Those coming on Tuesday afternoon by Pennsylvania R. R., or B. & O. R. R., will go to B. F. Coulter's, 1910 N. Twenty-second St. (or to places where they are acquainted.) Those coming by Reading R. R., will get off at Columbia Avenue station, and go to sister Margaret Craven's, 1735 N. Seventh St. All who come on Wednesday will walk from Broad St. station, or Reading Terminal, to the place of meeting, southeast corner Broad and Cherry Sts., between Arch and Race Sts., (Odd Fellows' Temple) entrance on Broad St. Take elevator to seventh floor. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

B. F. COULTER, Church Clerk.

DELAWARE River Association is appointed to be held with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, N. J., beginning on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (May 28th) 1902, and continue three days.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Middleburgh, Schoharie Co., N. Y., will hold her yearly meeting (the Lord willing) as usual, on the first Sunday in June, and Saturday before.

A cordial invitation to ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

A. COOK, Clerk.

THE Warwick Association is appointed to be held with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, Middletown, N. Y., beginning Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, (4th) 1902, and continue three days.

THE sixty-ninth annual session of the Sandusky Regular Baptist Association, will be held with the Rocky Fork Church, in Marion Co., Ohio, commencing at 10 a. m. on Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1902. Those coming by rail will be met at Morral, on the Hocking Valley, and at Monnett, on the C., S. & H.

H. D. BISHOP, Clerk.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 70. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1902. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION.

"WHEREFORE, my beloved, seeing ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."—Phil. ii. 12, 13.

MY BELOVED BRETHREN:—This text shows that the saints in Christ Jesus are the possessors of salvation, not as having worked for it and thus obtained it, but as their inheritance in Christ, in whom their Father and God freely gave them all things, as freely as he gave them his beloved Son. God is love, and he loved all his chosen people in Christ with everlasting love, even as he loved him; therefore with loving kindness he draws them to him, and sheds his love abroad in their hearts by the holy Spirit. So they are taught of God to love one another, for they are his own dear children in his well beloved Son, and Paul was endeared to them as his beloved brethren. He commends them for their obedience of faith and love in Christ from the first, since God had given them in the behalf of Christ to believe on him, and also to suffer for his sake. Christ was so precious to them, and his love so blessedly and powerfully constrained them in their self-denying work of faith and labor of love and patience of hope, that they were even much more obedient in the absence of their beloved Paul than they had been in his presence with them, to the comfort and joy of his heart. And so he inspires them to thus continue on in the commendable manifestation of their salvation, which God had so mercifully bestowed upon them.

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." The beginning of their salvation, as wrought in them, had been with fear and trembling, as in the experience of the jailer, and in every one who knows the blessing and joy of salvation. And so they were to continue on in witnessing, experiencing, testifying of and making known their salvation, even as it had been begun in them. The good tree works out the life and nature given it, as is evidenced by its growth, its leaves, blossoms and fruit. "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." The child of God neither grows nor bears divine fruit by any free will or voluntary effort of its own, but always by the power of the divine life within. This mysterious

life-force is unseen and silent, yet mighty and wonderful, as shown in the natural world, and much more in the spiritual. The Lord says of his, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." This living water possesses the power of an endless life, and therefore it can never be successfully resisted nor suppressed, though the flesh of its possessor will struggle, complain and oppose, but grace much more abounds than sin, and life is more mighty than death, for Christ, who is our life, swallowed up death in victory, and the life of Jesus is made manifest in our mortal flesh. "For greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world." The Spirit prevails over the flesh. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Free from their enslavement and cruel bondage, their dominion and sting. But still there is an antagonism and conflict in every heir of salvation; therefore our salvation is necessarily worked out or made manifest with fear and trembling, and there is much wrestling in the soul, with strong crying and tears unto God. His children are sojourners, pilgrims and strangers in this sin-blighted world, encompassed with infirmity and mortal weakness, the world and the flesh and the devil being against them, so that they are made to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Thus it is with fear and trembling that they even claim the promise of eternal life and the hope of salvation, and can seldom "read their title clear to mansions in the skies."

The words, "your own salvation," clearly express the precious truth that salvation is a glorious possession, our own inheritance, our Father's gift to us as his children. And because it is ours, we are to work it out, not neglect it, but abide and walk in it, for in it is our life and joy, and in its heavenly fruitfulness in us the beauties of holiness and salvation are manifested, and our Father is glorified in us. This is the blessed and holy purpose of God in the salvation of his people in Christ Jesus, and unto this end he chose them and blessed them with all spiritual blessings, that they should be without blame before him in love and show forth his praise. Our God and Savior will not be disappointed in this divine purpose, but all his chosen and predestinated people shall be to the praise of the glory of his grace; therefore the inspired psalmist David said, "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom." It is in their hearts to do all this, for the Lord writes his laws in their hearts, and so with delight do they talk of his power and his mighty acts in their salvation, joyfully telling what great things the Lord has done for them, whereof they are glad. The humble in spirit hear these things, and they are glad. So far, then, from the dear children of God doing religious works in order to obtain some sort of salvation as a recompense for their works, the text shows that they work out the salvation which is already their own, and theirs by inheritance, "not of works." It is eminently proper that a son who inherits a farm or vineyard from his father should appreciate it with grateful affection, be interested in it and work it out, or be oc-

cupied with it. Moreover, the loving and faithful father will so bring up his son and teach him that it will be his delight to do his father's will, and thus please and honor him. This is blessedly true of our Father in heaven and his children, for he bestows his love upon them, and their meat and drink and blessed reward is in doing his will; therefore all their service is the work of love, the devotion of gratitude and praise, and not done that they may obtain salvation as a reward. This last is the motive or incentive of all legal religion, and it is always selfish, for it asks, "What shall we have therefore?" and expects or demands salvation for the works of service. Whether the salvation worked for be in time only or unto eternity, the principle is the same—it is salvation of works.

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Salvation is a good work, the work of righteousness, the merciful deliverance from sin, the justification unto holiness, and this is the work of the Father and Son and Spirit. Salvation is the most glorious and blessed work in all the universe of God, and in it he is more infinitely magnified and glorified than in all his works of creation and providence. "God hath in the person of his Son all his mightiest works outdone." For in all his other works, God spoke the word only, and they were done; but his work of salvation cost him the sacrifice of his darling Son, in whom was all his delight and glory. Of this Son Simeon said, "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

The work of salvation is two-fold in its manifestation: it is wrought *for* us, and also wrought *in* us. In both respects it is our own salvation. The text presents salvation as it is wrought in us, and as we are made the blessed partakers of it. In this connection Paul calls it a good work, saying, "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." A good work is the work of righteousness, and its fruit is salvation. Of the Lord it is written, "His work is perfect." Jesus said, "There is none good, but One; that is, God." "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us."

Of the good pleasure of God he *worketh in* his children. He not only begins the good work of salvation in them, but he also *performs* it, even until the day of Jesus Christ, the day of his full revelation in eternal glory, when all his saints shall be perfected in his righteousness and bear his heavenly image. This is salvation begun in them in time, and ended in blest eternity. There is no opposing power that can prevent or hinder when God "worketh," for he is omnipotent in all his work, and says, "I will do all my pleasure." The Lord God Almighty never *tries* to work and fails, neither does he ever *want* anything that he cannot obtain, for then he would be fallible, like man; but "what his soul desireth, even that he doeth," and he will perform the good work in us which he has begun. In this divine assurance was Paul's confidence for his brethren in Christ. And upon this solid rock he inspired the beloved children of God with the full assurance of faith in Christ Jesus that salvation is their own blissful heritage and possession, and has the blessed God for its Author, who also worketh in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Therefore, seeing that the God of salvation and comfort had begun the good work in them, giving them repentance towards him, and rejoicing faith in the Lord Jesus, "the resurrection and the

life," they had from the first yielded the fruits of loving obedience in their believing hearts; but the apostle was thus enabled to encourage them to continue on in the good begun work of salvation, and work it out, make it manifest and rejoice in it. For their salvation is of God, who will surely perform the good work in them, working in them both the good will and the good work of his good pleasure. All this divine assurance Paul gives his beloved brethren, both then and now. And because of this solemn truth that their God wrought in them, this faithful servant knew that the work of God in their hearts would inspire them with fear and trembling, and that thus they should be the manifest witnesses of their own salvation, showing it forth with fear and trembling. It would be trifling with sacred things to say that we can at our will be filled with fear and trembling, or that we can bid these solemn emotions to leave us at our pleasure. Yet the only way that we do or can work out our own salvation is with fear and trembling, which are not voluntary on our part, but are always manifest in us when God's power is wrought in us, subduing our rebellious will, making us willing for his will to be done, and giving us strength in our weakness to do his will. When the Lord so worketh in us, then there always will be fear and trembling in our soul. So when the glory of the Lord shone round about the shepherds, they were sore afraid. And Paul preached the gospel of Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation, in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling, yet it was in demonstration of the Spirit and in power, that their faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. God's work and power will always bring every one in whom he works into fear and trembling before him, for that one is made to realize the great solemnity of the work of salvation, and his entire unworthiness of this great salvation, to either possess it or testify of it; therefore he will do so with fear and trembling, and will ascribe salvation to the Lord, but never to his own works, saying, "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory."

It is both passing strange and lamentable, when any who have known the power of God in salvation, will contend that the children of God, in whom he works both to *will* and to *do* of his good pleasure, may yet be unwilling and refuse to do what he has wrought in them. This would be to defeat and disappoint the Lord God omnipotent who reigneth, and who said to our Savior, by whom grace reigns, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness." To take such a position as this, is "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." To say that those who realize their great need of salvation, and that it is worth more to them than all the world, in whom God *worketh* both the willing mind and the power to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, that they may still refuse to do that which they are most willing to do, which God wants them to do and they want to do, is a very ridiculous and absurd notion. But, my beloved brethren, we rejoice that our God of wisdom and power and love does not thus trifle with his dear people, nor so teach them, for his word is in power, saying, "I will," and "they shall." But now, because this is true, the carnal and fault-finding objection of old is being made, that this takes away our responsibility, our sacred obligations in the gospel of salvation, and reduces us to mere

passive machines; that it is Antinomianism, do-nothingism and fatalism. Legalism has from of old till now thus replied against God, and exposed its spirit of rebellion against the sovereign power and way and work of God in the salvation of his people, and the Scriptures testify that it shall ever be so till our Lord shall come again. Therefore the people whom God graciously reconciles unto himself in Christ Jesus, who say with him, "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight," must be reproached and spoken against, as he was. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." And all the hard speeches, reproaches and epithets against the Lord and his reconciled people, from all fault-finders, arise from the carnal mind, and he rebukes them all, saying, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?"

That we may see how unfounded and untrue are all such replies, we need only consider that all life and its activities of whatever nature are from God; that to his people he gave eternal life and all spiritual blessings in his Son, and so every heavenly emotion and spiritual function or activity in us and by us is from the life of Christ, but not from natural life; that the Lord ordains peace for his saints, and has wrought all their good works in them; that not only does God begin the good work of grace and salvation in his beloved people, but he *worketh in them* both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. And thus it is fully shown in the sacred oracles of God that all the spiritual wisdom and understanding and knowledge of his believing children, with all their faith and hope and love, their work of faith and labor of love, and all their willing and active service and obedience and sacrifice, in doing and in suffering the will of God, is *because* he thus worketh in them of his good pleasure, so that his good pleasure becomes also theirs. "Now the God of peace make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen," says Paul again. He also says, "Whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily." Our Leader and perfect Teacher himself said, "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." Much more dependent are we upon the Father that dwelleth in us to do the good works, and perform the work of righteousness unto salvation in us until the day or revelation of Christ. Shall it now also be said that his own precious doctrine makes him as passive as a lifeless machine? O shame! where is thy blush?

So far from this blessed doctrine of God our Savior justifying such slanderous reports against it, just the opposite is true; for all the spiritual devotions and mighty activities of the saints of all ages, their loving and willing sacrifices in the service of their God, their patient endurance in tribulation and persecution for his sake, their abiding steadfast in the faith of the Son of God, who loved them and gave himself for them, and

their overcoming through the blood of the Lamb—all, all is from this God-honoring and glorious truth: "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

D. BARTLEY.

MONTGOMERY, Ala., April 16, 1902.

DAYTON, Wash., Feb. 20, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have had a desire to write to you, and if in your judgment it will do to print, and will not crowd out better matter, you may publish it. Though I have had such a desire to write, because of my weakness and imperfections I have delayed, but last evening I received the SIGNS for Feb. 15th, and read a letter from Elder James M. True, upon a subject which has occupied my mind much of late, and since reading this article over the second time, I have concluded to write. I do not find any fault with the article, neither do I think that I can better it in any way, but I do desire to express some thoughts connected with the people therein set forth.

In the twenty-first verse of this same forty-third chapter of Isaiah it is said, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." The first thought presented is that of a God of power, who is able to form, create and raise up a people. Second, we have a God of wisdom, to design or purpose in forming this people, and that purpose is that they shall show forth his praise. In the third place we have a God of authority, who is able to execute his will in the purpose for which he raises up his people: "They shall shew forth my praise." This surely is definite and without conditions. "And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God."—Ezek. xxxvi. 28. This is the word of God. It sets forth what his people shall do, and why they shall do it. We have no right to modify it in any degree. "This people," he says, "have I formed for myself." This people is that same people who are said to be brought forth. "But now saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel." Thus we find who this people is. Thus it is certain that God has formed and created this people for a certain purpose, which purpose is that they shall show forth his praise. Now in the formation of this people, God manifests his power, wisdom and authority. His power is seen in that he caused one man, Abraham, to leave his father's house, and his kindred and native land, and to go into a strange land. In this also God exercises his right to choose and to call whom he will, and to separate him from among all people beside. Then God made a covenant with him, and in this covenant God promised him a child who should be heir to all that God had given to him.

But now appears a little conditional work, and in that work a child is born in bondage, who shall not be heir with the child of the free woman. "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." Now to be brief, all the people of Israel, the subjects of whom I am writing, were embodied in Isaac, and received the promise and the inheritance in him. With this people God established a law and a covenant which was a law of carnal ordinances, a law of works. But in still further tracing out this people we find a higher order of things, for in this covenant with Abraham God promised him that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed. And again, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." He saith not unto seeds as of many, but as of one, and this seed

is Christ. Now as all literal Israel received the promise, and were blessed in Isaac, so all spiritual Israel was embodied in Christ, and receive their blessing and inheritance in him.

Some time since I was in conversation with a very learned professor, or minister, upon the subject of predestination; I cited Paul in Gal. i. He admitted that it was a Bible doctrine, but not as we hold it, he said. He said it was this way: "Suppose the President of these United States should issue a proclamation calling for one hundred thousand troops to be enlisted, equipped and drilled; thus the President has predestinated that this army should be enlisted to serve the country, but he had no knowledge as to who would enlist, or who would not enlist; this was left entirely with citizens themselves to decide in the matter, and that whoever enlisted was the one predestinated." I have mentioned this in comparison with my understanding of the subject. But in forming the people of the text God did not, and neither will he receive the works or efforts of man. But he said, "At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son." This is that son whom God has decreed and declared should be born, and none other could inherit that land, and as all Israel received that promise in Isaac, so all the promised seed received the inheritance and heavenly blessing in Christ. Therefore Paul could say to the saints at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus, which embraces all that people which ever have been and will be in Christ, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved; * * * having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Thus it is declared that this people were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and that in him we have redemption and forgiveness of sins.

Now the Lord calls this people his sheep, and says, "I know my sheep, and am known of mine." "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me: and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." But I will raise him up again at the last day. Again he said to them, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

But I will return. "And they shall shew forth my praise."

Dear brethren, we see the decree has gone forth as to just what this people shall do. In order for this decree to be fulfilled his people must do just what he has said they should. If not, his decree falls to the ground, and we know that he says that the heaven and the earth shall pass away, but that his word shall not

pass away. Is it not certain then that they shall show forth his praise? But how is this done, and how are they prompted in this work? Is it not by an inward emotion of the heart? Are they not prompted by the Spirit of God? Let us see. The same God who spoke the words of the text also said, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away a stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh." Now this is what the Lord says he will do, and not what we must do. This new heart is the new affections, desires and will; it is a new life, a new principle of being. This new affection is the love of God shed abroad in the heart, which produces the will to love and serve him. By this new spirit the mind is enlightened so that we are enabled to see what poor, lost sinners we are, and because of this, the old heart so hard and stony, or your love for sin, is taken away. Now we cannot enjoy these things as we once did, and now our affection and our enjoyment is of an altogether different order. Now our desire is to love, serve and obey the Lord. Why is this? Is it because we expect to receive a great reward? Is it not rather because the good Lord has taken our feet out of the mire, and placed them on the rock, and established our goings, and put a new song in our mouths, even praise to his holy name? And now as we are led into the banqueting-house, and find that his banner over us is love, how our hearts go out to him in love and praise to his holy name. And as we are enabled to realize all his benefits to us, how our hearts bound within us in praise and adoration to his holy name. Thus it is evident that it is by the new heart and new spirit that we praise him. Because of a knowledge of the great things which he has done for us, we must praise him. The individual is led by the spirit of love to show forth the praise of God, and thus we desire to obey him in all of his ordinances, and to walk in love and fellowship, and in the bonds of peace.

Is this desire produced by the expectation of receiving a reward in eternity? Rather is it not because of the love of God in us? Is it not because we love him, and love righteousness? Thus is fulfilled in us the word of God. The love of God constrains us from all evil. His Spirit and love prompts to all obedience. Now Paul tells us that the carnal mind is enmity against God, that it is not subject to his law and cannot be, and that the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are so contrary the one against the other that we cannot do the good that we would. Is it not the experience of all the people of God that they can say, I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing? And do they not know that it is true, as the Master said, "Without me ye can do nothing"?

Now, dear kindred, if this be your experience, how can you claim any merit or reward for what you are enabled by the Spirit to do? Do you not realize the fact that if the dear Lord withholds his mercy all your efforts are a failure? All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags in his sight. "All your righteousness is of me," saith the Lord. If this be so, let us give him all the praise. Let us then praise his holy name for the gift of the Spirit, and for the grace given us, whereby we cry, Abba, Father, and thus his people shall show forth his praise, not by the flesh, or from fleshly motives, but in and by the Spirit of God. Now as the Lord has decreed that his people shall show forth his praise, he has not left it

with them to exercise their discretion or will, but the Lord has sent forth his Spirit to direct them, and his praise is produced in them by his revealing his praise to them, and they come to see in him the altogether lovely one.

Now as I close, I feel that the subject is so full that I have but written imperfectly indeed.

I remain yours in gospel bonds,

B. S. PATE.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., April 19, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I feel like having a quiet little talk with you. Your face often comes up before my mental vision, and it is always welcome. The "unity of the spirit" which embraces all the Lord's people is more far-reaching than any of us can conceive of. We think of it often as simply a oneness of mind, and of faith, and of doctrine, &c., without reference to the invisible communication (through the Spirit) between each and all the members of the body of Christ. All natural communications must be visible to at least one of our five senses. Even wireless telegraphy must have visible induction and a visible receiver. How much more powerful is the working of the invisible Spirit of Christ, which electrifies and exercises the perfectly united body of Christ, which is the church of the living God. In various ways the Lord has communicated with the children of men from the beginning of time, by which inspiration they have in turn communicated with the whole body of Christ to the upbuilding of the church. All the blood in your body issues from the one great fountain, (the heart) and permeates every fibre of the body. There is not one drop of blood in your body that did not issue from that one great source. As it courses through all the multitudinous avenues to each member of the body, it supplies from its substance the various needs of the several parts of the body; at the same time it takes up all waste material and carries it away, both of which is for the sustaining and purifying of the whole body. So the Spirit takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us. And each bears witness with one another's spirit to the things which have been revealed. I cannot tell you just how the communion of the spirit is wrought out in its invisibility, but I do know this: that when the whole church of Christ is revealed to you by faith through vision, that the whole church of Christ is at that moment in your heart, and every member of its body is in secret communion with you; you see perfection and harmony and unity of faith, with the pure river of the water of God's love flowing through all its boundaries, missing not one, even of the most fearful or isolated ones within its borders. At the same time this revealed church sets forth to you in unmistakable view and language, that it is "the fullness of him that filleth all in all. Abraham is dead, so far as this natural life is concerned, but have you not had sweet communion with him in the spirit? Have you not walked with him, and talked with him? And by that heavenly companionship have you not been built up in your most holy faith? I know of your life's devotion in the service of your Master, and though not in the body, but in the spirit, I walk and talk with you, and because you LIVE, my life is ofttimes brightened, my hope strengthened and my burden made lighter, because there is (as I fondly hope) that answers to your faith, and that can testify to your walk of faith. Were you to ask me, What is this secret influence that communicates

its power and enlightenment from faith to faith throughout every hill and valley of Zion? I would say, It is the LOVE of God shed abroad in every heart which is subject to the grace of God. There are no confines to the power of the love of God; it has no boundaries to be reached by measurement; its flowing out from the throne of God never for one moment ceases; it reaches every tendril of our body; by its sweet influence we sing the songs of our beloved Zion; by it our feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; under its vitalizing rays we go forth beholding the nuptial day of our glorious Lord, the day of the espousals of our precious Husband. When we are low down in the valley of Achor, the love of God in our heart makes the valley a door of hope to our burdened soul; we walk through darkness and have no light, for, "The day of the Lord is darkness and not light." Yet the Lord is there, and in his own time he will make the darkness brighter than the noonday sun. He revealeth the secrets of his glorious kingdom to all of his children. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." His kingdom is not a visible kingdom. Neither is spiritual communication visible to the world's intelligence. Neither is it necessary for us to be face to face in order to have sweet intercourse one with another. Were it so our lot here would be a sad one indeed. For are we not scattered throughout all the world, in every nation, tongue, kindred and people? Yet what a joy it is, and how our pleasure is enhanced when we do meet together, weighing one another's experiences, and comparing them with our own, by which we are encouraged and mutually benefited. When the Spirit reveals the things of Jesus unto us we do not want to hide the rich treasure in our breast, but we want to tell (even from the housetops) what wonderful things the Lord has done for us. We extol the name of Jesus because his Spirit flows through our veins, and into his name do we run and are saved. Our identity is lost in him, and there is no way by which we can supplicate a throne of grace except in and through his precious name. As I am writing methinks I can see all the members of the body of Christ as precious jewels of his casket, each name written in the Lamb's book of life, for he knows them all by name, and each name is as precious as every other name; all are loved alike. The various gifts are given, not because of greater love, but because of the particular service to be rendered. He qualifies whom he please. So that the prophet, or preacher, or beloved pastor, has nothing whereof to boast, any more than the timid little one who slips quietly into the assemblies of the saints, and hides himself in a secluded corner, hardly daring to raise his eyes. That one's heart is just as big, and his spiritual mind just as open to receive the word of life, and to partake of the broken body (the bread of life) of our gracious Redeemer, as any one in the company. The gates leading into the green pastures of God's love are as wide open to one as another. There are no big ones or little ones in the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ; all are of one size, and each gift is according to the measure of the gift of Christ. I want to tell you, brother Beebe, how I look upon the various gifts in the church, for instance: the Lord has bestowed upon you a very valuable gift, of which many hundreds are partakers; to all who are benefited by your gift, to them the gift belongs, you simply exercise it in the service of your Master.

Well, I reckon I have used up sufficient

of your patience. Come to our association, we will do our best to make you comfortable.

With love to all the dear ones at Middletown, affectionately your brother,

B. F. COULTER.

1 JOHN III. 1.

"BEHOLD, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."

First. I will notice the length and breadth and height and depth of this most sublime and interesting subject. When we begin to try to measure it, we find that it is far beyond the comprehension of mortal man; for it is an attribute of the eternal and everlasting God; it begins in eternity, and comes on down through time, and ends in eternity; this the Scriptures abundantly teach, and God is true. We are told by the inspired word of God that our God is from everlasting to everlasting. Hence all his attributes are the same. We hear one of the old writers saying, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Hence the love of God is as old as himself. No wonder the apostle could say, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."

Next. I will ask who are the characters that are called the sons of God? They are sons and daughters of a fallen race, who were embraced in God's eternal purpose, and were the objects of his eternal and electing love before they had any natural existence in Adam. Hence Paul could say, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, according as he hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Not that they were any better by nature than the rest of mankind, nor was it for any good thing that God foresaw in them, but alone according to his own wise and holy purpose. I believe that the objects of his love embraced all the heirs of salvation; which is the church of God, the bride, the Lamb's wife. They are scattered all over this world, in every nation, and, as already stated, were sinners of Adam's race; being totally depraved by wicked works, but already known to God before Christ came into the world.

Now Paul says, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." No wonder the apostle could say, "Greater love hath no man than this, that he should lay down his life for his friend." It was love that moved Adam to follow his wife in the transgression. The power and influence of love, man cannot resist. So love was the moving cause that led the glorious Son of God to lay aside his glory which he had with the Father, and to descend into this world of sin and sorrow, to be persecuted and crucified, and while extended on the cross he cried, "It is finished." He there satisfied all the demands of the law, and made a full and complete atonement for all his beloved people; and they shall all be saved from all sin and destruction, and come to feel the power of his Spirit. Its power is so great, and its influence is so wonderful, it brings the rich and the poor, the bond and the free, all to one level. Grace calls the affections from the world and unites them to the love of God. It frees them from the love of sin, and brings them into a sacred relationship with a love that

they never felt before. A wondrous love indeed it is! It causes us to love those whom we once hated.

This love is implanted in each one of God's elect here on earth in regeneration, which takes place here in time, and in God's time they are born again. This birth takes place, and is accomplished by the direct work of the Spirit of God, and without any human agency to aid or assist in this wondrous work. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." So the apostle John could well assure the saints of the most high God, that nothing could ever separate them from the love of God which was in Christ Jesus our Lord. And this love has flowed through the blessed Redeemer to his children in ages past, and will continue to flow, until the last one is made to feel and realize the power of this love, then they will say, What wondrous love is this.

Each one, in his own experience, will often doubt the reality of this love, and will often be ready to decide that they are deceived. In this great conflict, which they all have to endure, they wonder if it can possibly be that a child of God can wander so far from God, and the path of duty, and so often be filled with such a train of evil and sinful thoughts, perhaps often even doubting the existence of a God, and filled with unbelief, and almost drowned with infidelity. Then they will feel that they must sink to rise no more. But amidst all these sore conflicts, and in spite of all the dark and gloomy clouds, God makes manifest the reality of his power in their poor benighted souls, and again they feel the warm rays of the Sun of righteousness shining with God's redeeming love, filling their hearts with sweet love and fellowship for God's dear children, so that they long to be with them.

They are now once more enabled, not by might nor power, but by the Spirit of the living God, to repose on the Savior's love. The apostle John says, "By this we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." O, dear child of God, when doubts and fears and sore conflicts arise, and foes are within and without, we begin to search for this love, which is often the case with this poor sinner who is now trying to write about this love, whose lot it is to be utterly blind, and to live where there are but few of the dear children of God. Sometimes it is a month that I am not with any of them. O, how despondent and lonely the time seems, and how I long to meet with those dear ones. But it matters not how cast down and cold and lifeless I feel, when we do meet, the love of God springs up in my poor heart. Yes, each pulsation beats with love, and joy unspeakable and full of glory. Then I love to speak of his wondrous love, and proclaim it to God's dear children. It is like the natural sun: when it breaks forth the darkness flees away, so the love of God in the hearts of his children subdues our carnal desires, and enables us to lay aside all malice and all guile, and all evil speaking one of another, and gives the spirit of forbearance, and enables us to watch over one another in love, and to esteem each other better than ourself; it helps us to follow after the things which made for peace, whereby we may edify one another, and to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, instead of confusion. How it hurts and wounds my poor heart for God's dear children to bite and devour one another, speaking harshly, and magnifying little motes into great beams. O, that all would read and heed

the exhortation of the apostle John, To love one another, realizing that we all at best are imperfect, fallible creatures, and that time here on earth is short, and too precious to spend in biting and devouring each other. Let me, as one who loves God's dear children before any and all things in this world, and whose deepest interest and desire is for this people and their welfare, ever pray for and with them for their welfare.

Dear ones, at best we only have a foretaste of that love and joy which awaits God's dear children. The fullness of that love cannot be expressed here in this sinful life, but is beyond this vale of tears. So, dear ones, cheer up, and look forward to the time which will soon come, when our warfare will be over, and we shall be called to receive our discharge. O, will it be my happy lot to hear the words, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"?

Although poor and blind and afflicted, I would not exchange my little hope for all this world, for the time will come when this world will pass away. My hope reaches beyond the destruction of all things mortal or temporal. Then the bodies of the sleeping saints shall arise and be changed and fashioned into the likeness of the glorious body of the Redeemer; then we shall receive the fullness of God's everlasting life and love; then shall we sing one eternal song of redeeming love, ascribing all power, honor and glory unto our God.

What I have written here, although feebly, is I believe my own personal experience. Realizing my weakness and my sinful nature, I know that nothing short of the power of God's love and grace can ever reach my case. I stand in need of his love and grace each moment of my life.

I will say to all who care to read this, when you come to a throne of grace, remember a poor, blind, afflicted brother, who if one at all, is the least.

Yours in gospel bonds,

W. R. HUMPHREYS.

TEBO, Texas, March 1, 1902.

[THE manuscript, as we understand, was written by brother Humphreys' own hand, although he is totally blind, but though blind to the things of this life, God has graciously conferred upon him eyes to see wonderful things out of his law. May the blessing of God continue to rest upon him, and grant him the desire of his heart, as expressed in this letter.—ED.]

CHAGRIS, Ind. Ter., Dec. 18, 1901.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—It is of so much comfort to me to read after the writers for the SIGNS. How great and wonderful is the mercy and grace of our God to poor sinners. "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty." They are marvelous to me, for when I look to myself I cannot see anything in me to cause the dear Lord to bless me, yet his love and mercy have been over me all the journey of my life. I am now nearly sixty years of age, and have had a hope in Jesus for twenty-five years. Sometimes, since then, I have gone rejoicing, and sometimes mourning.

"How tedious and tiresome the hours
When Jesus no longer I see."

Yes, my dear brethren and sisters, when we are left to self, and sit lonely and chatter as sparrows, and wander around as sheep having no shepherd, we do hunger and thirst for the living water which springs up into everlasting life. And Jesus is that water, and to all that come

to him he is a well of living water, springing up into everlasting life. O that the Lord might always give me of that water to drink. Sometimes I feel sure that I have tasted of this water of life. In Jesus is meat and drink for the poor, and the halt, and lame, and blind. He goes before them, and leads them in ways that they have not known, and in paths that they have not seen, and he makes crooked things straight before them, and rough places smooth.

Let us praise the Lord, for in him do we trust, and by his love we still praise him. The Lord has said, "I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, * * * to give drink to my people, my chosen." Yes, my dear brother, I am nothing but a poor, helpless sinner without the presence of the Lord; I will not trust in my bow, and neither shall my sword save me; my own righteousness is but as filthy rags, and the Lord alone must be my righteousness, and my salvation, and my all and in all.

It is written, "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed, we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." "For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." All the writers for our dear paper manifest the life of Jesus in their writings, and each one can bear witness to the other, for the Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.

But the chief question with each one is, Am I a witness with those who are taught of God? Am I a child of grace? I question thus, for I find in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing; to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. The things that I would not, them I do. I feel that I am not worthy to call any of the Lord's children brother or sister. But the Lord knows all things; he created all things for himself, and he creates a new spirit within us, that we may trust in him; he is all and in all. I hope that I am a child in the covenant of grace, or of promise, for the Lord is not slack concerning his promise. All is by the blood or Christ. This is my hope and trust.

May the blessed Lord lead all his children in the way of peace and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you," and in the way of truth this peace is found. Jesus says, "I am the way and the truth and the life," and he says where he is we shall be also.

I will now close by asking you to bear with me, for I am weakly, sickly, ignorant, unlearned and sinful, but I feel that I am weaned from the world in great measure. I hope that I am crucified to the world, and the world to me.

I will leave this to your judgment whether to publish or not. I feel as though I am acting as a hypocrite sometimes, in writing for publication, and imposing upon you, but I do not want to deceive the children of God. Pray for me. I trust that the Lord will bountifully bless you and all the household of faith.

From an old sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all,

NANCY CREEL.

MARGARETVILLE, N. Y., Feb. 2, 1902.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—I feel impressed to write you a few lines to inform you that the SIGNS are still highly prized by me; especially were the November numbers comforting. I have read and re-read them both. They were very excellent indeed, being filled with food that was greedily devoured by a poor sinner like me; every communication was so good; I should feel very lonely were I deprived of the pleasure of reading them. My health being poor, there are months at a time in which I cannot meet with the saints, then I can read our valuable paper, with my heart filled with gratitude to the Giver of every good and perfect gift that we do have such a precious medium of communication as the dear old SIGNS. Elder Durand's communication, and Elder Chick's editorial in the number for Nov. 15th, were very interesting. Surely if we could always remember that we were bought with such a fearful price, would we not be more careful, and try to live more worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called? I for one feel my nothingness, and know that I come very far short in all things that I profess to be.

O, that we all were eager for the approach of the day to meet, and that we were always found at our post of duty. It is a great loss to me when I am compelled to remain away, yet I know that it is right, else the Lord would not have so appointed for me in providence; it is right that I should be afflicted. Perhaps it is to wean me from the world and worldly things; perhaps it is to bring me near to Christ, to that friend that sticketh closer than a brother; he is the same from first to last, bless his holy name.

I was strong enough to attend our two days meeting of the Roxbury Association, held at Vega, last September. Not long before that meeting, while reading hymn 411 (Beebe's Collection), the first line of verse three seemed very sweet to me, but I little thought that I so soon should be passing through those brilliant gates of gold. The first day of the meeting was excellent, but the best of the feast was reserved for me till the last day, and while Elder Ker was preaching my glad soul mounted higher, and the world was put under my feet. It did seem as though I was on the very highest peak of the mountain; it was like heaven below. The ordination was sweetly solemn, and during the afternoon the preachers all of them spoke so good, I was still passing through those gates of gold. Surely, 'Tis a heaven below, our Redeemer to know, and to adore the Savior of sinners. How good the Lord has been to me; I ought to praise his great name always. "Praise ye the Lord, for he is good, and his mercy endureth for ever." "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men." "Praise him from whom all blessings flow." Yes, praise our great Maker and King, for he hath loved us, and suffered and died to redeem us. How vile and full of sin I am! My mind so much of the time wanders after worldly things which perish with the using. What is all this world to me if I have no hope in the Lord, no hope like an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast? But, blessed be God, I sometimes feel that I am anchored upon the Rock Christ Jesus, where I am safe through all the raging storm. "He safely leads my soul along, his loving kindness O how strong," and it is true that "Though I have him oft forgot, his loving kindness changes not." Now unto him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us fault-

less before his presence, with exceeding joy, be all the glory, dominion and power, now and ever. Amen.

From a little sister,

PHOEBE J. FAULKNER.

PATTERSON, Pa., Jan. 10, 1902.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—As I am admonished that it is time that I should remit my subscription to the SIGNS for another year, I wish to assure you that I esteem them very highly for the scriptural truth for which they contend. I have never as yet seen anything in their pages which ought to mar or break the peace of any of the Lord's children, but to the contrary they should be built up in their faith, and encouraged and comforted. How comfortingly do all who write, speak through the pages of the SIGNS; it is meat to the hungry, and drink to the thirsty. I hope that the dear writers will still continue to give us words from paradise, and not be weary in well doing, for by their writing many of God's little ones find out that there is a people that still holds to the faith once delivered to the saints. For my part I esteem the SIGNS next to my Bible, and I feel glad that brother Beebe could assure us that their circulation is on the increase. I hope that our dear editors may be encouraged in their labor of love toward the household of faith. Dear brethren, go on, and the Lord be with you. You have the Lord on your side. I am well aware that you who are the editors of the SIGNS, hold a very responsible position, from the fact that much correspondence no doubt is sent to you that you would not dare to publish, and that would not be interesting to the readers, and probably if published would give sorrow instead of joy and comfort to the people of God.

Sometimes some of our very ablest ministers go into subjects which the Lord has not clearly revealed to them, nor to his people, and such nearly always are unprofitable, and cause trouble. I hope there are but few in the Old School Baptist church who have gone into this hobby of conditional salvation in time. There must have been a few in Elder Purington's day, as I judge by the republication of his article lately, but I do hope that the time has come when our dear brethren can all unite and say, "Salvation is of the Lord," from first to last, and all through the way. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God. If any man minister, let him do it as of the ability that God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified." Every word that our Savior spoke while in the flesh, contains a volume, and should be interesting matter to all the chosen ones down through all the ages of time.

Dear brother Chick, I must say that I have received much comfort from your editorials, and also from those that are republished from dear Elder Gilbert Beebe. What a blessing it is that we have a God who rules all things according to the counsel of his own will. In him there is neither variableness nor shadow of turning. When he shuts none can open, and when he opens none can shut.

Dear brother Benton Beebe, I love to read your writings. Give us more of them through the SIGNS. You give the power where it belongs, and not to the creature.

Your brother in hope, by the grace of God,

M. H. VARNES.

[BROTHER Varnes' words of commendation are indeed encouraging, and we feel thankful to him for them.—ED.]

GRANDVIEW, Texas, Feb., 1902.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—If you can allow such an expression from the chief of sinners, for such I feel myself to be. While meditating upon the blessed word of truth my mind is somehow directed to our Lord's commission to his disciples, and while this is my first attempt at writing, I will state what is in my mind in the form of a question, subject to your approval. I feel confident that you can give some light on the subject which may be of importance to others of our beloved brethren, as well as to myself. Among all the writings in the SIGNS, I have never seen a letter or communication of any kind where this question has been asked.

The Scripture referred to is found in the tenth chapter of Matthew. There we are informed that Jesus had called to him his twelve disciples, and had given them power over all unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease. Then he gives us their names, commencing with Simon, and ending with Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him. Now let us remember there are twelve men under consideration, and what the Lord said afterward was with reference to them all. He tells them where to go, and gives them most explicit instructions about lodging, and then tells them of trials and afflictions that await them, and that they are to be brought before rulers and governors for his sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. Then he tells them to take no thought as to what they shall answer. And now comes the word concerning which the question is in my mind, if it can be considered a question at all. In the twentieth verse Jesus said to them, "For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." Was God the Father referred to in these words, and if so, was Judas included?

My dear brother, this question is not asked for the purpose of stirring up any such thing as discussion or difference among brethren, for I assure you that the humble writer feels himself to be less than the least of all, if indeed a saint at all. I only ask your views upon the above Scripture, and am willing to leave the subject with you to do with as you may see proper.

Your brother in a very faint hope of a better life,

WILLIAM J. HILL.

[WE will call attention to a few things in connection with the question of brother Hill. First, in all the teaching of the dear Redeemer while in the flesh, he spoke to all of his disciples alike, as well as in this place. They all, Judas as well as the rest, saw his miracles and heard his words. Until the end of his life the time had not come to separate the vile from the precious, the false from the true. This was in the infinite purpose of God, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. None of the addresses of the Savior to the disciples while about his ministry excluded Judas, and so he was not excluded here. He was present when Jesus taught them to pray, "Our Father which art in heaven." None of these things implied that Judas was a child of God, and so the words in the text to which our brother alludes, do not imply that. Judas was a devil, and the son of perdition, or as we used to hear Elder Wm. J. Purington say, "perdition's son." And it was said of him that it were good for him had he never been born. He is called a traitor. We again repeat that the words to which our brother has called attention do not differ from all the other

words of the Savior to his disciples, in which he includes them all. But still Judas was a devil, and the son of perdition, and a traitor. He went to his own place.—ED.]

JASPER, Ark., April 15, 1902.

MY DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It is through the mercies of our gracious heavenly Father that I am blest to pen you a few lines for your consideration. We learn from God's blessed word that he has a people redeemed by the blood of Christ, out of every kindred, tongue and people and nation, and hast made them unto our God kings and priests, and they shall reign on the earth. (Rev. v. 9, 10.) The flock being in different localities in this wide and wicked world, it is heart-cheering to the saints to read those precious articles and experiences of our beloved brethren and sisters in our dear family paper. O, how edifying it is to the scattered flock, being in the midst of a gainsaying people, but God's people has ever been an unpopular and persecuted people, but I do rejoice that I belong to a family that never has been connected with Mrs. Babylon, the mother of harlots. God's humble servants have always, and will to the end of time, contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, and the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace; it being a God-honoring doctrine, giving God all the power, honor and glory, which is justly due him.

I will now give a brief sketch of my ministry.

November 29th, 1869, I was set apart to the work of the ministry, but never felt worthy of such a high calling. I felt to be the least of the flock, and do until this day. I was made to wonder why God would call one so unworthy as I felt myself to be, to so important work, but when I became convinced that I was called, I conferred not with flesh and blood, but at once entered upon my duty, putting all my trust in the Lord, for I had no confidence in the flesh.

Dear brethren, during these many years of trials and toils, I have passed through many dark places, and at times have been made to rejoice in my blessed Master. I have during my ministry organized six churches, and for twenty-five years had the pastoral care of Mt. Gilead Church, Newton Co., Ark., the oldest church in the County, numbering at one time one hundred and sixteen members, and has stood firm and unshaken until recently a few of her members left the fold, and united with the United Baptists, but by the help of my Master, in my weakness I have ever contended for the faith and doctrine of salvation by grace. I feel to thank my blessed Master that he has abundantly blessed me. But my warfare soon will end. I am now near seventy-one years of age, so you can see my race is almost run.

In looking over my past life I cannot see anything that I have done to merit the least of God's blessings. For some purpose he has been pleased to keep me to see a good age, and I am glad to know that I serve a God that works all things according to his own will. Then let us poor worms of the dust give him all the power, honor and glory, for the swift wings of time are bringing us through life's toilsome plains, to a world of bliss and glory. No false teachers can shadow those shining courts of endless glory, but the redeemed shall walk therein, and can say, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessings; who has made us unto our God kings and priests. O, then the

church in her triumphant state will hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat, for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and lead them unto living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

A. R. McPHERSON.

GOODNIGHT, Ky., March 18, 1902.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—May a poor sinner claim such a relationship? I have been wanting to pen you a few lines for weeks, but have been confined to my bed with rheumatism and heart trouble much of the time. On the 7th inst., I began gaining a little strength, and have continued to do so.

I trust that you will pardon my long delay in sending my past dues for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; it should have been sent before. We experienced a severe drouth in our country last year, more so than for years before. At one time I feared I should not be able to renew my subscription for the present year, but you kindly continued to send them on still, and at last I have the money to send you.

The dear Lord has said by his prophets of old, Leave thy fatherless children to me, and let the widows trust in the name of the Lord. He has been better than all my fears. I feel that I have been blessed beyond measure always, yet if I am left to myself for one brief moment, I shall forget all the past blessings, and be filled with fears. O, how I grieve and stumble; my heart is so cold and unfruitful; I search in vain for one good thought, or one mark that God's precious ones should possess. But, dear brother, in all my trials and tribulations I find much comfort in reading the SIGNS; it is indeed a welcome and consoling visitor to me and to my children. When I read the evidences from so many of God's little ones, I am made to rejoice at times, and to hope that the Lord has been merciful to me, even me, a vile sinner. The dear Lord says, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known." He brings his people by different ways, but it is by the same Spirit, and to the same place, and into the one fold.

Dear brother, I rejoice that so many of the readers of the SIGNS, in their communications, have spoken such words of endearment and praise to the dear editors and contributors to its pages. They voice the true sentiments of my heart. I would gladly add my mite, but it is done by the best of writers. Yet I may wish you God speed. May God bless the editors and readers of the SIGNS, and prosper his cause, is the sincere wish of my heart. I crave an interest in your prayers. I am in the seventy-third year of my age.

Your sister,

LAURA M. BAIRD.

INFORMATION WANTED.

UZ, Texas, April 22, 1902.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I see in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of Dec. 15th, an account of the old Hazel Creek Association, held with the Fox River Church, Doris Co., Iowa; that being the association that my father and mother, Murray P. and Susanah Tipton, belonged to before the war. The church was Hazel Creek, meeting at what was called the old Bledsaw meeting-house, Elder Isaac D. Sidwell being their pastor. I want to know if any of the dear Old Baptists or friends are still living or not?

(MRS.) S. E. ELLIS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1902.

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EDITORS:
F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

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GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

"WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION."

(Philippians ii. 12.)

THE above words have been on our mind for some time, and during the absence of our pastor, at a recent Sunday meeting, we attempted to give expression to some of the thoughts we had had upon them, but our effort was so unsatisfactory we feel like trying to express ourself in writing, and if it shall be the pleasure of the Lord to enable us to convey to our brethren a small part of the comfort we have had in contemplating them, we shall not repent writing.

As is well known, these words are used as a banner text by all evangelists at their religious excitements, called "revivals," to induce converts to work out a salvation of their own manufacturing, as though salvation was something that dead sinners, dead in trespasses and in sins, had to obtain by their own efforts. For instance, to illustrate, suppose a man is deeply in debt, in a section where they imprison for debt, and he has no money, so his creditor comes to him and offers or pleads with him to work out his indebtedness, and he falls in with the overtures, and goes to work, and continues faithful until he has discharged his obligation, and the debt is liquidated, he has now worked his own salvation, or saved himself from imprisonment. This we think is a fair illustration of how the legal religionists interpret this text. But the Scriptures will not sustain any such application, for many reasons. First. There is not a particle of grace in such a theory, and it is "by grace ye are saved." Second. This idea presupposes the debtor to be alive and able to work, while the plain declaration of the word is, "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sins." As well might we go to a cemetery and preach to the lifeless bodies in their graves, offering them conditions upon which they might obtain natural life, as to exhort sinners dead in trespasses and in sins, to work out their own salvation, and thereby obtain spiritual life. Perhaps there are no words in the Bible more frequently quoted by anti-Christ in her efforts to make proselytes, yet taken in its connection there is not a passage of Scripture that more positively condemns them both in theory and practice. Not only are they in error in theory, but in practice are they most inconsistent, for while the text distinctly reads, "Work out your *own* salvation," in their blind, pharisaical zeal, the very first work they assign their converts, is to go about each one working out some one else's salvation by "bringing them to Jesus." Their own salvation they have very little fear and trembling about, for with many they are not only sure of their own salvation, but are doing "over work," and thereby getting extra pay, by way of jewels in their crown, so that they will outshine the less worthy angels in glory. But if God in his mercy has shown us a more excellent way, we have no reason to boast, for it is only by divine revelation that we can know the things pertaining to the Spirit.

It is very important that we take the words under consideration in their immediate connection, for often detached sentences can be made to appear to say directly the opposite of what their connection shows them to mean. It is so with the words at the head of this article, yet they are detached from the middle of a sentence, by those who wish to make them appear to prove that our salvation is secured by our works.

In the first place we should ascertain to whom this language is addressed, and to do this we have but to turn to the commencement of the letter in which these words occur, and there we find they are in a joint letter addressed by Paul and Timotheus, "To all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi." By this we see that none but those who are in Christ Jesus have any right to appropriate this language to themselves, and therefore it cannot be applied to the unregenerate sinner, who never knew Christ, but "to the saints that are in Christ Jesus," and if they are in Christ Jesus, their salvation is already accomplished, and therefore their working cannot be to bring about this salvation, but to work it out. One may work out a problem in arithmetic, but their working does not create the product; the value was there, and their work merely made it manifest, or proved it. So with the child of God, the salvation is in them, and it works out through the fruit of the Spirit, named in Galatians v. 22, 23: "Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Now this fruit is the manifest evidence that God is working in you, not working *into* you, but *in* you, and in order for God to be working in you, he must be in you, he is not standing outside and exercising an influence within you, but he is right in there himself, executing his good pleasure: "Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" "What know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you?" But we do not deem it necessary to multiply Scripture to prove that God dwells in each and every one of his chosen vessels of mercy, for we do not doubt but that all claiming to be Old School or Primitive Baptists, believe this, neither do we think that any will deny that all in whom the Holy Ghost dwells, are saved with an everlasting salvation. Therefore they have not got to work to secure their eternal salvation.

Thus far in what we have tried to write, we presume we have not said anything but what all bearing our name will consent to. But now we come to the point where there is a difference of opinion among the brethren. Some hold that the same arguments that are valid against a system of works securing eternal salvation, are of equal force in regard to temporal salvation being secured by our works. We have heard brethren in whom we have every confidence have been quickened by the Spirit, and taught by experience that eternal salvation is wholly of grace, say, "If I am walking in the path of duty, and obeying the commandments, I enjoy a comfort that I would not have if I was living in disobedience." This is undoubtedly true, and we never knew of a child of God that would deny it. But we will ask these brethren, What caused that very peace in their soul? Did it arise from a feeling that they had lived so much better than their brethren, or was it from a sense of the goodness and mercy of God in keep-

ing them by his grace from fulfilling the lusts of their flesh? Was not your joy in the evidence that God's grace had been sufficient for you? or were you so rejoiced to find that you were able of yourselves, and did keep the commandments, and thereby merited the favor of God? Were not your emotions feelings of gratitude to God, and a flowing out of your soul in praise to him for his condescending love in saving you from yourself? O, brethren, may God keep us from being confused by this insidious leaven of the pharisees, that is so enticing to our carnal nature, and of late is insinuating itself among us. As already stated, the words we are considering, are a portion of a letter to "the saints in Christ Jesus," those who had already been quickened by the Spirit, and it should also be marked that they are addressed to those who were commended for having "always obeyed," and not to the disobedient, as they are applied by some at the present time. It would seem that if "time salvation" could be worked out by voluntary obedience, that these saints who had "always obeyed" would have accomplished it, and it would not have been necessary for Paul to exhort them in the matter. This work of salvation is all of God, and it is a work between God and each individual heir of heaven. To each one it is their own salvation, and none but the God who gave it, can enable each trembling saint to work it out. Each one must drink their own cup of salvation, filled up with the measure of their own suffering. When it is the pleasure of God to withdraw his presence from one of his children, no brother or sister, not even that saint himself, can bring the joys of salvation back to his soul, until the Lord accomplishes in him the willing and doing of his good pleasure. This very groaning of the Spirit within, is the working out of his salvation, and it is with fear and trembling, manifesting to his brethren that he is saved of the Lord, for if he was able to save himself, he would not endure such sufferings, but would work himself out of them.

We have continued this too long, we fear, and will just add that after we had commenced to write, we read brother Bartley's article on these same words, which appears on first page of this number, and since reading it we have some hesitancy about publishing our feeble efforts, but from some cause we have not been able to free our mind of these words, and therefore have tried to give expression to some of the exercises of our mind on the subject, and submit them to the forbearance of our brethren and friends.

B.

MARK IX. 41, 42.

BROTHER M. H. Varnes, of Patterson, Pa., wishes some thoughts upon the Scripture found in Mark ix. 41, 42, which reads: "For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward. And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea."

This whole connection is full of warning and instruction to all who are disciples of the blessed Lord. In the connection it is said that John said to the Savior, "We saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbade him, because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a mir-

acle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me." And then he said, "He that is not against us, is on our part." This is a wonderful saying. It is not true of the relations of men with regard to each other in the world, but with regard to the things of the kingdom of God, it is true to the letter. In this kingdom, and with regard to it, every man is either for or against the Savior, and therefore it follows that he that is not against him, must be for him. This man indeed followed not outwardly with them, but he did belong in spirit to their company. It would have been better for him had he followed outwardly, for many reasons, but still because this was not so he must not be rejected, if indeed he did perform miracles in the name of Christ. There have been in all ages, and there are now those in the world who do the mightier works, in the name of Christ, and who are really his disciples, known and loved of him and his Father, who do not follow outwardly with his visible church. No doubt they miss much in christian companionship, help and joy, but they still are his disciples, as was this man. And as John had no right to forbid his work in the name of Christ, so have we no right to forbid it, if indeed it be in the name of Christ that he does it. The key of the matter is found in the three words, "in my name."

Then follow the words to which brother Varnes has called attention, which constitute a continuance of the same theme. The Redeemer would say to John, If this man be indeed, as ye tell me, giving a cup of cold water to any, in my name, and because that one belongs to me, I tell you that he shall not lose his reward. In other words, he is as much my disciple as are yourselves, and whatever ye receive, he shall also receive. Mere outward profession, mere following in outward forms, counts for but little in the view of the Redeemer. It is the spirit, and the heart, and the motive, to which he looks. Is our following outwardly, in his name? It is false and vain if it be not so. No doubt it is good to follow outwardly, but after all the chief thing is to bestow the cup of cold water in his name. There are many, we doubt not, like this man, who are doing these very things every day, who have not yet, in a formal way, followed Christ, and these shall not lose their reward. They are the Lord's, and shall be his at the last. They now have the joy of loving, willing service, and like the dear Redeemer, find it their meat and drink to do the will of their Master. These believe in Jesus as the only Savior, and love and adore him; these are filled with praise and gratitude for all that he is to them, and all that he has done for them; these feel as though they desire to minister to all who are his disciples, and so, in some faint manner, show forth his praise, and their deep love to him. Because they cannot minister to him in person, they minister to him in his disciples. In them he is clothed and fed. The same motive actuates them that is common to all in whom the Spirit of Jesus dwells; Jesus is their life and daily bread. What a rebuke is here administered to that spirit of ecclesiasticism, ritualism and formality which has ruled the great mass of professed believers in all ages of the world. Only the very work which God has wrought, and does still work in the people of his choice; heart work, deep, indwelling love, fear and faith, avails or counts as of any value in his sight.

Now, in verse forty-second, Jesus utters a solemn note of warning and reproof, spoken first to John, and then to all who

may be actuated by the like spirit. Take note, this reproof is not to the ungodly world, who knew not Jesus, nor cared for him, but to a disciple of the Lord. John had offended this unknown disciple, not in the sense of making him angry, or even in the sense of causing him grief, but in the sense of not recognizing and acknowledging the work of the Lord in him, and by him. In thus offending or opposing one of the disciples of Jesus, who had received this power from on high, John was opposing the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of all true discipleship, the Spirit of vital godliness; and what a terrible thing for a disciple to do this. This warning of the Savior was not so much for the benefit of that unknown disciple, as for the benefit of John. The one offended in that manner does not need that Jesus should speak to him, so much as the one who commits the offense needs it. The meek, humble disciple who has been opposed by his brethren, is not so much in danger as are they who oppose him. They need warning, and elsewhere are told by the Redeemer that it is better to be drowned in the midst of the sea, than to thus offend the little ones which believe in Jesus. When led by the Spirit of truth to see things rightly, what disciple of the Lord does not know and feel this? Have not all at some time in their life as disciples said in their heart, Rather let me perish from the earth than to do aught to offend the little children? Thus the Savior speaks to John in the forty-second verse.

The whole subject from verse thirty-three to fifty, is connected together by this thread of thought: Vital godliness, as opposed to a mere form of it without the power. Especially is the connection clear from verses thirty-eight to forty-two. We trust that our brethren will read carefully these last named verses.

C.

"FOR WHERESOEVER THE CARCASS IS, THERE WILL THE EAGLES BE GATHERED TOGETHER."

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—Will you please give your views upon Matt. xxiv. 28, through the SIGNS, at as early date as may be convenient? I receive a great deal of comfort from reading the SIGNS. I believe it advocates the truth.

Your brother I trust,

G. E. LEE.

ROANOKE, Ala., April 7, 1902.

REPLY.

In making a brief reply to this request of our brother, we would say first of all, that these words seem to be a familiar proverb of that time. From Job xxxix. 27–30, we find that even then the same thought was expressed by the same proverb. In the reply which God made to Job out of the whirlwind he says, "Where the slain are, there is she." The meaning there is that the eagle obeys the decree of God in her creation, and seeks out her proper prey. If there be a field of the slain, there will she be. The Savior uses the same language as the text, in Luke xvii. 37.

The special thing of which the Savior spoke in the connection was the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies. This proverb, thus used by the Savior, and applied to the Roman armies, would be doubly appropriate, because the eagle was the symbol upon the Roman standards. To the Jew the eagle was among the unclean birds. How foul and putrid must that Jewish people's worship and service have become in the eyes of a most holy God, before he would send upon them that which was, according to the law which he had given them, wholly unclean. The Redeemer compares the whole nation, with all their service and worship, to a dead body, a carcass. It was already dead, and only had a name to live, and decay had marked it for its

own. Henceforth it was fit only for the unclean eagles to devour. In just judgment, the unclean and idolatrous Romans should come upon them, and devour them. Jerusalem, and the whole people of Judea, had become a proper prey for the unclean. And as the eagles, with the piercing eye, sought out the foul carcass of the slain men or beasts, so now would Rome seek her prey in this dead and decaying body of the Jewish people.

This is the meaning of the Savior here as we understand his words. What solemn and awful words were these to that self-righteous, and yet wholly unclean people. Professing themselves to be holy, they were in these words declared to be foul as a dead carcass, from which all life and beauty had departed. Now they had become fit food for the unclean. What a blow to their pride of sanctity. No wonder that they were enraged, and sought to destroy him who spake such things.

While this proverb is here used to describe the state and end of that people, yet it will also apply to all that hypocritical profession of godliness which men have sought to cover themselves with in every age, while yet wanting the reality and power of godliness. All dead formal religion is vain, and worse than vain; it is a stench in the nostrils of that God who looks into the hearts of all. Where such a dead carcass is, there is the gathering of the eagles, God's scavengers, appointed to remove such filth from the streets of the city. The lesson which we may learn from all this is, as it seems to us, that all that is false and vain in all places, has no abode in the city of God, and God has his appointed means of removing it, and the eagles of God shall surely fulfill their mission. In all the world, as well as in Israel of old, in all the churches of the saints, and in our ownselves, shall this word of the Redeemer be fulfilled. That which is foul and unclean shall be devoured by the unclean; each shall in the end go to its own proper place; the eagles shall have their own. How awful is the thought, and how solemn the inquiry to ourselves, "Lord, is it I?" Israel had forgotten and forsaken God's law to them; this was their punishment. Let us fear lest like sin in us, should bring like punishment to us. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

LUKE XVII. 13–20.

BROTHER BEEBE:—In a former letter I requested your views through the SIGNS on Luke xvii. 13–20, concerning the "ten lepers," and I still request your views on the same.

JAMES SHOWS.

ELLISVILLE, Miss., July 18, 1859.

REPLY.

Our brethren should bear in mind that we are constantly receiving calls for our views on various portions of the Scriptures, and if we were competent to explain them all, it would require more time and space than we can command. But the truth is, we are not competent; we are as dependent for every ray of divine light as any of our brethren or sisters can be. Still, we do feel disposed to do the very best we can, and when called on, if we have any light on the subject presented we take great delight in offering it; but when queries are sent to us, and we do not reply, let it be fully understood that it is because we have no satisfactory light on the subject; but we never decline from neglect or want of respect for those who call on us.

In the subject of the ten lepers and their being cleaned, we discover one of the numerous demonstrations of the good-

ness, power and Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ. When in his incarnation he dwelt among us, he went about doing good, healing the sick, raising the dead and casting out devils, yet bearing the reproaches of a wicked and gainsaying world. In all his wonderful works, in all his mercies performed, our faith may discern important lessons, not only of his goodness and power, but also of admonition and instruction for our special benefit. For instance, these lepers represent the loathsome and incurable disease of sin and pollution by which we were defiled, and which like the leprosy under the ceremonial law, shuts us out from the privilege of mingling with the congregation of the Lord. No human power or skill could cure us. Our condition was wretched and hopeless, until Jesus, the great Physician, revealed himself and took us in hand. He spake the word, and it stood fast; he commanded, and we were made whole. The power and grace of God our Savior is wonderful indeed in cleansing us from the leprosy of sin and guilt, and we are made to rejoice in the efficacy of his blood to cleanse and his righteousness to justify us. But in this case there were ten lepers cleansed, and but one of them returned to give God the glory. How very apt we are to forget the obligations of love and gratitude to God that we are under for his amazing goodness and grace displayed in our salvation. It is true the ten were all perfectly cured of their leprosy, whether they were quickened by the Holy Spirit and born of God at the same time or not; it would certainly appear from the saving faith in Christ possessed by the one who returned, that he was indeed a subject of the new birth; but of the others we are not positively informed of their having received more than a temporal cure. But it is certain that those who are cured of the defilement of sin, are all born of God, and shall eventually return to give glory to him. Yet it is to be feared that there are many, and, if we are not greatly mistaken, a very great many who have witnessed the healing efficacy of the Savior's blood, who have been delivered by him from their burden of sin and guilt, and have been made to rejoice in him as their precious Savior, who have never returned in any public manner to give him glory, by declaring in Zion what he has done for their souls, or by publicly owning him in the ordinance of baptism, or by uniting with his disciples in the fellowship of the gospel. To all such delinquents what must be the reproof of his interrogation, "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?" Can it be supposed that all who have received an evidence of his saving power and grace, have owned their allegiance to him as their Lord and Master, by obedience to his commands?

And in our solemn assemblies, when a few, and but a few, of those who profess to love the Lord, are found in their seats, may not the inquiry be made, Where are the nine? or where are those whose vacant seats occasion sadness to the few who have not forsaken the assembling of themselves together? And, in many other applications of these words, may we contemplate them with propriety and profit.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., August 15, 1859.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

ELM CITY, N. C., April 28, 1902.

To the many brethren that compose the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, the Baltimore, Delaware, Delaware River and the Warwick associations—Very dear brethren:—I feel it to be my duty to inform you that your corresponding Minutes to our association, the Contentnea, reached us too late to note them in our Minutes last fall, as you have no doubt already seen by referring to our Minutes to you. They were sent to me, but came too late by one week. We wish to keep up correspondence, and hope that many of you will come to see us. I also would be very glad to visit you all again. May the Lord bless us all together.

Yours to serve,

WM. B. WILLIAMS.

[WITHOUT doubt brother Williams' explanation will be fully satisfactory to all the associations named. We desire to add that very many here well remember brother Williams, and would rejoice to see him among us once more. May God grant him his richest blessings in his declining years.—ED.]

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$564 55
Thos. W. Records, Missouri	1 00
Total to date	$565 55

MARRIAGES.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, at his home in New Church, Va., April 29th, 1902, Immanuel Taylor and Miss Mary E. Hall, both of Accomac Co., Va.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, at his residence, April 28th, 1902, Otis L. Mansfield and Miss Lida Claffey, both of Groveport, Ohio.

POETRY.

LINES COMPOSED IN MEMORY

OF Mr. and Mrs. James Thompson, late of Caradoc, Ontario. They perished at the burning of their home, near Ramah, Colorado, on the night of Jan. 13th, 1902. Their obituary notice appears on page 349.

The Easter flowers adorned the bride
All life seemed fair as May;
No thought of sorrow marred their joy
That happy bridal day.

As hand clasped hand, and willing vows
To love and keep were made,
"May heaven's richest gifts be theirs,"
Their dear ones 'round them prayed.

A few short hours, and loving friends
Pressed 'round to say good bye;
They started for their distant home
With hopes and prospects high.

Far distant from the old home scenes
Their lives were to be spent;
But happy in each other's love,
Their hearts were well content.

All through the long, bright summer months,
They wrought in home and field;
Obedient to their laboring hands,
Earth did her bounties yield.

The autumn days sped swiftly by,
And then the winter's chill
Crept o'er the land; they had no fear,
Nor thought of coming ill.

But Christmas greetings scarce were passed,
When news flashed o'er the wire,
Their home was burned, and awful fate,
They perished in the fire.

We do not know the way in which
The cruel monster came;
We only know their lives went out,
That death was in the flame.

Yet they who sorest mourn them find
Some comfort in the thought
That fate, which tore them from their friends,
To them no parting brought.

Not his to mourn a loving bride,
Nor hers the widow's pain;
United as they were in life,
In death they still remain.

We ponder sadly, wonderingly,
Upon the awful doom,
That sent those two young, strong and brave,
So early to the tomb.

Not ours to know the reason why,
Not ours God's plan to tell;
Not ours to question his decree;
He doeth all things well.

Copied from *Strathroy Age.*

HYMN

COMPOSED BY ELDER R. C. LEACHMAN, DURING HIS IMPRISONMENT IN THE OLD CAPITOL DURING THE LATE CIVIL WAR.

My God in whom I trust
Will all my grief remove;
His ways are righteous, good and just;
He is a God of love.

He hears my every groan,
And listens to my sighs;
He hearkens to each plaintive moan,
And dries my weeping eyes.

Though in the prison cast,
A dismal, loathsome place,
His truth consoles and holds me fast,
And Jesus shows his face.

Within these prison walls
He gives me food and rest,
And makes me hear his heavenly calls
To tell me I am blest.

His promises are strong,
And will sustain my hope,
And though the days and hours seem long,
Affords me ample prop.

And when from earth I go
To mansions fair and high,
My God will all his love bestow,
And banish every sigh.

1322 VINE ST., PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 25, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—The inclosed verses are sent to you for publication if you see fit to give them space. They were handed me by my grandmother, Mrs. Margaret M. Lefferts, an aged sister now in her ninetieth year, and who, after the course of nature, feels her race is almost run. She has had them in her possession for years, and considers them a genuine gem. Now she desires to have them given forth to the household of faith scattered throughout our land, trusting that some one, like her, may derive benefit from them.

Leaving them subject to your judgment, I am your unworthy brother,

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

WHERE CAN THE SOUL FIND REST?

TELL me, ye winged winds, that round my pathway roar,
Do ye not know the spot where mortals weep no more;
Some lone and pleasant dell, some valley in the west,
Where free from toil and pain, the weary soul may rest?
The loud wind softened to a whisper low,
And sighed for pity as it answered, "No."

Tell me, thou mighty deep, whose billows round me play,
Know'st thou some favored spot, some island far away,
Where weary man may find the bliss for which he sighs,
Where sorrow never lives, and friendship never dies?
The loud waves rolling in perpetual flow,
Stopped for awhile and answered, "No."

And thou, serenest moon, that with such holy face
Dost look upon the earth asleep in night's embrace,
Tell me, in all thy round, hast thou not seen some spot
Where miserable man might find a happier lot?
Behind a cloud the moon withdrew in woe,
And a voice sweet but sad responded, "No."

Tell me, my secret soul, O tell me, hope and faith,
Is there no resting-place from sorrow, sin and death?
Is there no happy spot where mortals may be blessed,
Where grief may find a balm, and weariness a rest?
Faith, hope and love, best boons to mortal given,
Waved their bright wings and whispered, "Yes, in heaven."

ORDINATION.

THE church at Little Flock, Anderson Co., Ky., and of the Licking Association of Particular Baptists, having called for a presbytery of Elders and deacons, to sit with her in council for the ordination of brethren Dudley G. Johnson and Charles W. Bond, to the full work of the gospel ministry, if found qualified, the following met pursuant to said call on the fourth Saturday in April, 1902, to wit:

From Bethel—Elder P. W. Sawin, Wm. Slead, T. D. Money.

From Goshen—J. E. Paxton, A. B. Bickers.

From Salt River—Elder Smith Hawkins, Z. T. Martin, W. B. Barnes.

Elders S. H. Durand, P. G. Lester and J. G. Sawin, having been specially invited to aid in the council, were present.

The presbytery composed of the following Elders: S. H. Durand, P. G. Lester, J. G. Sawin, Smith Hawkins and P. W. Sawin, was duly organized by selecting Elder S. H. Durand, Moderator, and J. T. McCoun, Clerk.

The following visiting brethren from sister churches were present and invited to seats: W. H. Thompson, J. W. Waterfill, George Turner, George Chilton, John Chilton.

The church being in regular conference, and of the same mind as when the call was made, through her pastor, Elder P. W. Sawin, set the young brethren before the council.

After due examination, led by Elder S. H. Durand, the brethren were found qualified for the office of

Elder, to which they were ordained by prayer by Elder P. G. Lester, and laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

Elder J. G. Sawin in a solemn and impressive manner, in behalf of the council, extended the right hand of fellowship.

The charge was delivered by Elder S. H. Durand, in an able and impressive discourse from 2 Timothy iv. 1, 2, after which the council was dismissed in peace and good will.

S. H. DURAND, Moderator.

J. T. McCOUN, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—Near Ramah, Colorado, on the night of Jan. 13th, 1902, **Mr. James Thompson**, and his wife, **Mabel Saxton Thompson.**

No human eye witnessed their terrible death. Their new house was entirely destroyed by fire, the origin of which is unknown. The poor burnt bodies were found the following morning, about one-half mile from their home, lying together in a little ditch. All their clothing had been consumed by the cruel flames. The tracks left by their bare and bleeding feet, and the bits of burnt clothing, told the pitiful story of their struggle to find human help. The flames must have been upon them before they were awakened. The surrounding farmers noticed a bright glare, but thought it a prairie fire, and so no investigation was made.

Mr. and Mrs. Thompson were born and raised in Caradoc, near Melbourne, Ontario. He was 23 and she was 19 years of age. They were married March, 1901, and went to Colorado to live near her father, and built themselves a good home, where they prospered in every way until this terrible fire swept them and their home from this earth. Mr. Thompson's parents are living in Caradoc. Mrs. Thompson was Miss Mabel Saxton. Her mother died when she was very young, and when her father moved west, little Mabel was placed in the home of Mr. Thomas Errett, of Caradoc. Mr. Errett and his two sisters, Miss Eliza and Miss Rachel, did all they could to make their house a happy home for the beautiful little girl left in their care. She was a great comfort to the kind friends who raised her, and fully repaid them for their earnest training. They are deeply grieved by this terrible ending of the bright young life in which they felt such hope. Mabel went regularly to the Old Baptist meetings with Mr. Errett and his sisters, and enjoyed the preaching, and loved the truth. To those who are crushed by this great sorrow the writer would say, It is the Lord; he doeth all things well. He has wounded, and he alone can heal.

KATE V. BEEBE.

(*See poetry on page* 347.)

SISTER **Laura J. Titus,** consort of brother T. Sid Titus, departed this life May 2d, 1902, at her home in Washington, D. C., to which city the family had removed a few months ago. She was born Jan. 6th, 1847, and married to our brother, T. Sid Titus, Jan. 25th, 1871, and baptized by Elder Joseph Furr, in the fellowship of the New Valley Church, Dec. 4th, 1880, where she remained a loving member until removed by death. She leaves a husband, three daughters, Nellie, Mary and Elizabeth, and four sons, Edward, Albert, Robert and Elijah, together with a host of friends, to mourn her death. Perhaps no woman ever filled her place more faithfully as wife, mother or friend, than did she. Her hand was ever open to minister to the afflicted in sickness and in need. Whatever she found to do, she did it with a willing mind and a heart full of tenderness, sympathy and love. She was emphatically a noble woman, the like of which as time moves on it seems to me are becoming more and more rare, therefore the more to be lamented. Purity of life, honesty of intention, faithfulness to duty, were the gems that adorned her earthly crown, while meekness, humbleness, forbearance and charity, shone supremely bright in her christian character.

The funeral service took place Sunday, May 4th, at the home of Mrs. M. McIntosh, Leesburg, Va. From there, followed by a large number of sorrowing friends, she was taken to her last resting-place in Leesburg Cemetery.

Our tenderest sympathy and best wishes are extended to the bereaved family.

E. V. WHITE.

LEESBURG, Va., May 7, 1902.

Eliza A. Hagerman, aged 76 years, departed this life on the 30th day of March, 1902, at the home of her son-in-law, William Barnsley, 2621 N. Twenty-ninth St., Philadelphia, Pa. Mrs. Hagerman spent the greater part of her life in Bucks Co., Pa., in the neighborhood of the Southampton meeting-house, at which place of worship in her earlier years she was a regular attendant. It was her delight to hear the gospel preached, and she was especially fond of hearing the songs of Zion sung. Although she never became a member of the church, because of her feeling of unworthiness and unfitness, yet she manifested a sweet christian spirit, and a quiet resignation to her Father's will in all his providences concerning her. She was left a widow nineteen years ago, after having raised a family of children who were a comfort to her in her declining years. It has been the privilege of the writer to know her about eighteen years, and during all that time she manifested love for the church of Christ, desiring the company of the saints, having an interest always in the welfare of Zion. She leaves to mourn their loss, four sons and two daughters, with numerous relatives and friends. Her

daughter, sister Amy R. Barnsley, with whom she has made her home for a number of years, waited upon her faithfully and lovingly to the end, as did also each one of her children.

Elder John McConnell preached a comforting discourse on the occasion of her funeral services, after which she was laid quietly away in the old Southampton cemetery.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., May 8, 1902.

DIED—At his residence, in Goshen, N. Y., April 25th, 1902, **James J. McNally**, in the 78th year of his age. On the 23d he was stricken with paralysis, and remained unconscious until he passed away. He was born in Paterson, N. J., in 1824, and was the son of Jas. McNally. He was the youngest child and only son of a family of four. He learned the printing business in this office in the early years of the publication of this paper, and while he never made a public profession, he has been all his life connected with the Old Baptist people, having married the daughter of Elder Thomas P. Terry. To this union three children were born, two sons and one daughter. His first wife died a number of years ago, after which he was married to Mrs. Phebe A. Carmichael, daughter of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, who survives him.

Mr. McNally was a very energetic man, diligent in business, and although for several years he battled with physical infirmities that would have placed most people upon the helpless invalid list, yet he, to within a few days of his death, continued to go to his office, where he published the *Monroe Herald* and the *Goshen News*, two local newspapers, and attended to his duties as editor and publisher. While he had never made application for admission into the church, we are told by those who were most intimate with his every day life, that they had never heard him use a profane word, and that he was a reader of the SIGNS, and a firm believer in the doctrine they advocate. His home was ever open to entertain our people, and his religious sympathies were strongly with us, which enables us to say, we do not mourn as those without hope.

The funeral services were held at our meeting-house in this city, on Sunday the 27th, where our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, preached a most comforting sermon from 2 Tim. i. 7-10, after which the remains were conveyed to the Wallkill Cemetery, about three miles from this city, and laid to rest in the family lot.

To his widow, our sister, both in the flesh and in the Spirit, and to his children, we will say, Your husband and father was spared you many years, and now that he is called home, may he who gave, and who has but taken back to himself that which he gave, reconcile you to his will. B.

MEETINGS.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Salem Church, in Philadelphia, Pa., May 21st, 22d and 23d, 1902.

Those coming on Tuesday afternoon by Pennsylvania R. R., or B. & O. R. R., will go to B. F. Coulter's, 1910 N. Twenty-second St. (or to places where they are acquainted.) Those coming by Reading R. R., will get off at Columbia Avenue station, and go to sister Margaret Craven's, 1735 N. Seventh St. All who come on Wednesday will walk from Broad St. station, or Reading Terminal, to the place of meeting, southeast corner Broad and Cherry Sts., between Arch and Race Sts., (Odd Fellows' Temple) entrance on Broad St. Take elevator to seventh floor. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

B. F. COULTER, Church Clerk.

DELAWARE River Association is appointed to be held with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, N. J., beginning on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (May 28th) 1902, and continue three days.

Those coming on the P. R. R. to Stockton, will be met there on arrival of the train from Trenton, at about 6:30 p. m., on Tuesday afternoon, May 27th. Those coming to Frenchtown, by Pa. R. R., will inquire for brother O. R. Kugler, living near the station, where they will be kindly cared for. Those coming from the east, will be met at the New Jersey Central Depot, in Flemington, on the arrival of the train at 6:25 p. m., on Tuesday, the 27th, and conveyed to the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

C. RISLER, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Middleburgh, Schoharie Co., N. Y., will hold her yearly meeting (the Lord willing) as usual, on the first Sunday in June, and Saturday before.

A cordial invitation to ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

A. COOK, Clerk.

THE Warwick Association is appointed to be held with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, Middletown, N. Y., beginning Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, (4th) 1902, and continue three days.

Those coming on the Erie R. R., from the east or west, and from the north on New York, Ontario & Western R. R., come directly to Middletown. Twelve passenger trains stopping at Middletown leave New York city daily, from foot of Chambers and West Twenty-third Sts., Erie R. R. Excursion tickets from New York to Middletown and return, good for thirty days, can be procured at $2.75. Those coming through the city of New York can reach here at 10:33 o'clock a. m. on Wednesday, by taking train at foot of Cham-

bers St. at 7:30 a. m., or Twenty-third St. at 7:25 a. m. All coming by Erie R. R., either from east or west, are especially requested to come to the James St., and not the East Main St. station.—ED.

THE sixty-ninth annual session of the Sandusky Regular Baptist Association, will be held with the Rocky Fork Church, in Marion Co., Ohio, commencing at 10 a. m. on Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1902. Those coming by rail will be met at Morral, on the Hocking Valley, and at Monnett, on the C., S. & H.

H. D. BISHOP, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held, the Lord willing, at the usual place, Aughrim schoolhouse, in the township of Brooke, Lambton Co., Ontario, five miles from Alvinston station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1902, and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

SILOAM Association, of Oregon and Washington, convenes June 13th, 14th and 15th, 1902. Brethren and friends will be met at the depot at North Yakima, Wash., June 12th, on arrival of east bound train, at 4 p. m., and the west bound at 2:30 p. m. Those intending to come by rail will please write W. J. Hess, R. D. 3, North Yakima, Wash. The place of meeting is about five miles north-west of the city, up the Natchez River.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 70. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1902. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE RESURRECTION.

ELDER W. J. May has published in the SIGNS of February 1st, a request that I should give my views through the SIGNS on the resurrection of the bodies of the Lord's people, and especially on 1 Cor. xv. 38. The text reads: "But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body."

This is a great mystery, and I hesitate to write concerning it, and yet I am drawn in my mind to do so. It is not merely that I wish to comply with brother May's request. Of course, as he knows, I would do that when I could consistently; but brother May, or any other brother who requests me to publish my views on any subject, knows that if I do not do so it is because I do not feel that I have any views on the subject proposed which I think it would be of benefit to the cause of truth to publish. For such reasons I have answered very few of such requests for many years. I feel less and less qualified to write on scriptural subjects to edification, and therefore do not write as much as I did formerly. And even when views that are new and rich and sweet are brought to my mind concerning portions of the word I feel generally satisfied with trying to preach them instead of writing them.

Now on this subject of the resurrection of the body, it seems at first thought as though I could be contented to simply say, I take just what the Bible says on the subject, and believe that; but I do not understand it. In considering this subject I am apt to think more of what is not true concerning it than of what is, for the natural mind is constantly trying to enter into this mystery, as also into all the other mysteries of the gospel, and to understand and explain all the details of them. But this cannot be. The natural man cannot understand these things. The ways and judgments of God are unsearchable and past finding out. (Rom. xi. 33.)

What I do believe, and sometimes rejoice in, is that "There IS a resurrection of the dead." "The dead are raised up." The Lord Jesus Christ "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."—Phil. iii. 21. How this work shall be done I do not

know, nor does any mortal, any more than any one knows how the world was made out of nothing. How the raised body will appear I do not know, nor does anybody else. It is by faith alone that we know that there is a celestial body. "We know not what we shall be," said the apostle John, but we know that we shall be like Jesus, and we know that we shall be satisfied with his likeness, (1 John iii. 2; Psalm xvii. 15,) and we know that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall also appear with him in glory. (Col. iii. 4.)

The poor, tried soul is very apt to disclaim such wonderful knowledge, and to say that he does not know these wonderful things for himself, though he knows they are true of all the people of God. It is seldom that one can realize in himself "the full assurance of faith" to say, "I know that I am a child of God," and that "I shall behold his face in righteousness." This knowledge is an experience; it is an experience of the power of divine life; it is a belief which rests not upon the evidence of things which we can see and understand, but upon faith, which "is the evidence of things not seen." Sometimes the truth of our experience of this knowledge of faith is brought forth to our view under the ministration of the word, and by the teaching of the Spirit, so that we can say with holy assurance and with tremulous joy, "We know that we have passed from death unto life."

Again and again we are halted in our efforts to search deeper into the mystery of the resurrection, and attain unto a more perfect knowledge of it. It is not to be known in any degree by searching; it evades the scrutiny of the keenest intellectual powers. It is understood as fully by a child as by the most learned man. It is known only by revelation. It is believed only upon the evidence of a God-given faith. It can never be understood except in the experience of it. We are to "hold fast the form of sound words," concerning this, as well as all other spiritual subjects, "in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." All that is written of it in the Bible is true, but is not for the comprehension of the natural mind, but for the comfort and instruction of the Lord's people.

We can say certain things both negatively and affirmatively concerning this deep but lovely mystery, which will never be understood in time, and so by the teaching of the word we may be kept from erroneous ideas on the subject, awaiting the times when the Lord may be graciously pleased to open "the form of sound words" more fully to the understanding of our faith.

1. The raising of the body of Jesus from the grave is not mentioned in the Scriptures as an *example*, showing how the bodies of his people are raised up. The bodies of the saints are not to be raised up as his body was raised up, for his body saw no corruption, while theirs shall all see corruption. His body came out of the grave just as it was put into the grave, no change having yet come upon it, in order that witnesses, chosen before, might see that it was still unchanged. They saw the print of the nails and the place of the spear, and saw him eat and drink. Thus he was manifest as "the Resurrection and the Life." Afterward he was glorified.

2. From that day that he ascended out of the sight of his disciples he is never to be known any more after the flesh. Therefore there appears to be a direct contradiction in the Scriptures to the theory that Jesus now exists in a body of

flesh and bones in heaven, and that his people after the resurrection shall so exist in a body like the one we have in this mortal state. The apostle says, "Wherefore, henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more."—2 Cor. v. 16. Also, we read that "It doth not yet appear what we shall be."—1 John iii. 2. Also we are told that the body "is raised a spiritual body." Jesus' body could be seen after he came out of Joseph's new tomb. That was the evidence that he had abolished death, and had become the destruction of the grave, and had brought life and immortality to light. From the time he ascended up on high and was glorified he has not been seen by the mortal eyes of his disciples. He is not seen in any way by anybody but his disciples.

Now we are to remember that it is the same body which is sown in corruption that is raised in incorruption. It is the same body which was sown a natural body that is raised a spiritual body. The sowing is undoubtedly the instant of death. We are to notice that the resurrection is not a preliminary act to the change. We do not read that it is raised and then changed to a spiritual body, but it is raised a spiritual body. At its last appearance to the mortal sight of the saints on earth it is a currupt, natural body. At its next appearance to the faith of God's people here, and to their spiritual sight in glory, it is a spiritual body that shall never know corruption. It is the same body which was a vile body here on earth that has been changed that it may be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus.

3. This is all I can say. How this work is done I do not have the faintest knowledge; I only know that it is according to the working of Jesus, "whereby he is able to subdue even all things unto himself." How we shall appear in that glorious body I do not know; I only know, and rejoice to know, that we shall be like Jesus, and that we shall appear with him in glory.

In replying to the question of the one whom he addresses as a fool, as to how the dead are raised up, and with what body they come, the apostle illustrates the subject by the dying and quickening of grain after it has been sown in the earth. It must die in order that it shall be quickened. The body given the grain in its resurrection is its own body. The apostle does not mean by this that the grain which fell in the earth is lifted out again. It is not in this sense that the seed is given its own body, but that to the seed of wheat is not given a body of rye or of some other grain, but of wheat, the same as the seed which was sown. Why does the apostle bring this peculiar figure for our contemplation just here? Because the one he calls a fool evidently regards the resurrection as the lifting of a body out of the grave, and wants to know how it is done. He evidently is combatting and hushing the thought of the natural mind that in the resurrection the body will be raised in the sight of men, and the desire to know beforehand how that body will appear.

But the apostle has been presenting Christ as the fullness of the resurrection. The resurrection of the dead depends upon the resurrection of Christ. There is a vital and necessary connection between the two. If Christ be not raised then the dead will not rise; "then they which have fallen asleep in Christ are perished." For all the saints who, to human view, die, are fallen asleep in Christ. The apostle still, in the use of this figure

of the sowing of grain, is directing our faith to the view of Christ, as the quickening Spirit, as the Resurrection and the Life, without whose resurrection there could be no resurrection of the dead. In the sowing of grain the apostle reminds us that we do not sow that body that shall be. That literal grain or body of wheat that is sown is seen no more, but from it there comes forth a resurrection which shows much more than was sown, yet to the seed is given its own body. This figure of the seed of grain is fulfilled in Christ. The resurrection of his body was a literal resurrection; that is, it came out of the grave just as it was put in. Death and the grave had not been able to make that body see corruption. Thus the sting was taken from death, and the power from the grave, and Jesus became as the grain of wheat that was sown, and became the first fruits of them that slept. Thus the resurrection of the bodies of all the saints was so secured that they are not spoken of as dying, but as falling asleep. Their bodies see corruption, but Jesus is to them the resurrection. They have borne the image of the earthy Adam; now in the resurrection, on account of that seed that was sown, they come forth in the image of the second man, the heavenly. It is in his image that they are raised, not in their own image, not in the image of the body that is sown in corruption, but in the image of Jesus, and fashioned, not like unto his body as it was when nailed to the cross, and when it was raised from the tomb, but like unto his body when he was glorified, "like unto his glorious body." This appears to me to be the apostle's teaching by the figure of the sowing of grain.

The resurrection of the body of every saint is in the resurrection of Christ. This is the great object of the apostle's regard in all this chapter. As regards the time, answering the question, "When are the dead raised?" I have to believe that the resurrection is not a matter of time; it is beyond time. In calling the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, Moses at the bush showed that the dead are raised up: "For God is not the God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto him."—Luke xx. 37. They who have fallen asleep in Jesus are dead unto us, but they are living unto God in the resurrection. *How else is the resurrection of the dead taught by Moses at the bush?* To us who are yet in time the resurrection is yet to be; those who have gone out from time have come into the enjoyment of the eternal and glorious presence of him who said, "I am the resurrection and the life."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May 10, 1902.

EXHORTATION.

"IF I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin." "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated, both me and my Father."—John xv. 22, 24.

It is surprising how much is said of late years among some of our brethren, to the intent that God's predestination of all things would render all exhortation useless. It has never been surprising to hear Arminians say such things, but to hear it from Baptists sounds as though the old brethren who formerly believed the truth had been called home, and some of their children had united with the church because their parents had been members of it, and yet lacked a true experience of grace, and had imbibed freely of Arminianism. Have such brethren ever read how Christ exhorted the Jews,

and how he preached especially to them, while at the same time he declared that their unbelief was a thing that he well knew beforehand? as we see it set forth in the twelfth chapter of John.

"Though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: that the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him." Now how can any one who believes the Scripture think for one moment that the decrees of God destroy or render void exhortation, and the preaching of the gospel, in the face of the above Scripture? The whole of the public ministry of Christ was among that very people, whose eyes were blinded, and hearts hardened, that they should not see with their eyes, and understand with their hearts, and who should not be converted and healed. And Jesus knew that this was true all the time.

The apostle Paul bemoaned and bewailed himself that God had given his people, the Jews, the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, and hearts that they should not understand, lest they should be converted, and he should heal them. And he said that "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." But neither did Christ nor the apostles consider this a reason why they should not preach and exhort among them. Had they not done so, Jesus said that then they had not had sin. Had the ministry of Jesus been accepted among them, then might he not have had such extreme sorrow, and if Paul had not understood that God had blinded this people, he would not have had cause to have wished himself accursed from Christ for his people, his kinsmen according to the flesh.

The knowledge of the Jews' woeful state of decreed blindness was what caused the Savior to cry, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how oft would I have gathered thy children, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." Why would they not? Because Jesus himself said that they believed not, that the prophecy of Isaiah might be fulfilled, which foretold that our God would blind the eyes of the Jews. "These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory and spake of him." But the gospel must be preached in all the world for a witness, and then should the end come. The apostles' preaching was a witness against the Jews and the city of Jerusalem, and the city of Jerusalem was not destroyed, and their kingdom taken from them, until Christ and the apostles had preached against them for a witness. Yet at the same time Jesus and the apostles knew beforehand that their preaching would not convert the Jews, nor do any good, except to those who were called of God out from among them. But Paul elsewhere said, "We preach Christ, and him crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness, but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, the power of God and the wisdom of God." Also he said, "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved

it is the power of God."

The Lord told the prophets Ezekiel and Jeremiah that they should prophesy unto Israel, and at the same time that Israel should not hear them. Yet that was no excuse that they should not prophesy. The burden of the word of the Lord was upon them, and the Lord told them that if he destroyed a people or city which they had not warned, then he would require the blood of that people or city at their hands. But if they prophesied unto the people of Israel, and the Lord destroyed Israel, then these prophets should deliver their own souls. This was not a legal service for legal reward, for they gained nothing, only to keep what was already given to them. So now the true ministry of the Lord, upon whom the burden of the word rests, will cry aloud and spare not, with warnings and exhortations, without inducements and offers of rewards for service, but are glad if they like the prophets deliver their own souls. This is God's way of making his servants willing, without offering rewards or inducements.

Thus also Moses and Aaron were bidden of God to go and entreat Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go, and yet at the same time our God informed Moses that Pharaoh would not hear them, because he would harden the heart of Pharaoh. Was this any reason why they should not go and entreat Pharaoh? We might say, Of what use were these entreaties, since God had decreed that Pharaoh should not hear? Let all our brethren who say that predestination paralyzes all exhortation answer this, or else never say again that the decrees of God hinder entreaties and exhortations. God said that he hardened the heart of Pharaoh, that he might lay his hand upon Egypt, and he had raised him up for this very purpose, that he might show forth his power in him, and that he might get honor upon Pharaoh.

Likewise Noah preached unto the old world one hundred and twenty years, and at the same time was told that his preaching would not reform the people. And so sure was he that they would not hear, that he did not stop building the ark. So God had frequently foretold the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, and yet continually inspired his prophets to warn and entreat them to turn from their idols. All these prophets knew that the destruction of Jerusalem was sure, yet still kept on warning. Our God metes out no dread punishment without first sending warnings and exhortations, and men themselves justify God in the punishment, because they did not turn and repent. Yet if they look up the prophecy, they will see that the punishment was decreed of God. Christ spoke much to those who were blinded, and yet who will say that his ministry was of no use?

Moses said unto the children of Israel, I have led you forty years in the wilderness, and you have seen all the miracles which God wrought in Egypt with Pharaoh, and at the Red Sea, and all the miracles in the wilderness, and yet he told them, God hath not given you eyes to see, nor ears to hear, nor hearts to understand unto this day. They only saw and understood naturally, and were not moved with spiritual comprehension of God or his purposes. So when I hear men say, What is the use of entreaties and exhortations, if all things are ordered, I feel certain that such expressions come from those who have never properly studied the life and ministry of our Savior on earth. He well knew who his people were. He preached to mixed multitudes,

as also did the apostles, but it was only those who were called out of the multitudes who heeded any exhortation, and in them it was true that God had wrought all their works. He had worked in such as believed and heeded, to will and to do of his own good pleasure. Why, we do not even know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit of God which is in us makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Jesus wept over Jerusalem, and said, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." Yet Jesus and the apostles warned them again and again.

In conclusion, let me ask the brethren who claim that predestination renders entreaties, exhortations and prayers vain, to explain what was the use of Christ's praying to the Father, as he did many times, that the Father would keep through his name all that he had given to Jesus out of the world? He said, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled." Do our brethren for one moment think that the Father did not know what the Son had been doing? and were not all for whom he prayed the members of his body? and was not their salvation secure? Then what was the use of the prayer of the Redeemer? He also prayed that they might be with him where he was. Was not that also a decreed fact? Will the brethren tell us of what use was this prayer for the accomplishment of a fact already decreed?

As ever your brother,

NEWTON PETERS.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Jan. 14, 1902.

ELDER D. BARTLEY—DEAR FRIEND IN THE LOVELY JESUS:—Perhaps you will be surprised to receive a few lines from me, after so long a delay, for I indeed feel that I have not done my duty in this matter. But O, did you know how much I am made to feel my great weakness and incompetency to write to one whom the Lord has so greatly blessed, surely you would look over my infirmities.

Before you came to visit us, it had been my desire for a long time that the Lord would send me some one that could in a measure tell me of the afflictions of the people of God, and I ever shall believe he did, O man of God, send you that way. I never did, nor ever expect to, spend another such a summer as that whole summer through was to me. So calmly was I made to trust, hope and believe that the Lord would sustain me, both in providence and grace, that I was made willing to bear all, endure all things; yea, even to die, that I might win Christ. Indeed, the felt presence of my Lord seemed to be so great, it was a heaven below my Redeemer to know. O, how I longed to follow his footsteps, and know his will concerning me. Little did I think at that time I would be able to be moved within the bounds of the Mount Olive Church. The gracious Lord did show me wonders and greatly sustain me; so much so that I said, "I will follow him through the water and do my duty." Then the Lord suffered me to get a fall. Although there has been no

particular change in my bodily afflictions, I have been brought very low in darkness that can be felt. Like the prophets of old, requested that I might be out of my troubles. Yet, let me be what I may, I have a sweet fellowship for the people of God, and when I read of your removal so far away, it made me feel so sad. I am reminded more every day that we have no continuing city here, but seek one to come.

It seems to me that some cannot stand strong doctrine; but I love to eat my honey with my honeycomb. I am not gifted to tell what I have seen, but am most surely enabled to witness to the truth when I read it or hear it advocated, and that my soul does love it. It is my meat and my drink. And if we be persecuted for the truth, blessed are we.

When it is well with you, please write to me, and comment somewhat on the parable in Luke xv. 4–8. Does not this one of the hundred, a lost sheep or sinner, represent Christ's church under the law, which he came to redeem? For they that were just in their own sight, were not the chosen in Christ. But when Christ came, this was all taken away. So, whether Jew or Gentile, they were all sinners, all found in the wilderness, that is, Christ's people, and all saved by the shedding of his precious blood. Please make this plain as you can. This seems to be a wonderful subject to me, as well as many others, and I love to hear gifted men's views on them, if it is not asking too much.

I know that the pharisees were a covetous people, and so are false professors to this day, but they know not Christ; while I am made to believe that he came to seek and to save poor sinners like me.

Why, then, all this trouble and darkness, through which I have to pass, like Bunyan in the slough of despondency? Yea, shut up, until the blessed Lord says, "Come forth." The world, the flesh and Satan, all combined to hide my lovely Savior from my view. But the love of God constraineth me to hope and travel on, thinking it not strange concerning the fiery trials which try me, as though some strange thing had happened to me, and all obstacles shall be taken out of the way. One said of old, that when he was tried, he should come forth as gold.

Surely the hand of Providence is laid heavier upon some of his children than others, but when they are made to feel and believe that it is for their good and God's glory, they can most sweetly bear it. When left to self we sometimes rebel, murmur and repine, pleading to know why it is so, and are brought in sweet humiliation to his feet. The Spirit worketh to the pulling down of those strong holds, evil thoughts, imaginations, &c. We are made to see our depraved condition and inability to do anything, but to stand still and see the salvation of God.

By our opposers, we are called a do-nothing set. When they know not the way and have not the bitter experience that brings us to the feet of Jesus, who is the Head over all to his church. "Great God of providence, thy ways are hid from mortal sight, wrapt in impenetrable shades, or clothed with dazzling light."

We are now situated in sight of the Mount Olive Church, near the spot where grandfather Corder first settled; a noble Baptist, a useful man. I can see the place where he now lies, sleeping the sweet sleep in Jesus. * * * Elder G. Beebe's writings are very precious to me; but he, too, hath laid his armor by, and gone to dwell with Christ, which is far better.

Well, I will bring these lines to a close, hoping to hear from you soon. Please excuse mistakes.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) T. E. COLE.

MONTGOMERY, Ala., Jan. 25, 1902.

MRS. T. E. COLE—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—Your very interesting and good letter was indeed a pleasant surprise to me, and I am glad that you were enabled to write so much and so well, for it has been to my comfort. I can understand and enter into your feelings and sorrowful experiences, as expressed in your letter, and sympathize with you in those trials of faith. Also, I am comforted in your comfort, and trust I have entered into that rest that remaineth to the people of God. This rest is found alone in the Lord Jesus, who calls the laboring and heavy laden to him and gives them rest. Having finished the work of redemption in his sufferings in the flesh unto death, he is the end of the law (its full perfection) for righteousness unto every one that believeth in him. And we believe in him because we first live in him, and living and believing in him, we also rejoice in him, and shall never die. For the believer in Jesus is passed from death unto life. This truth is symbolized in his divine ordinance of baptism, in which is shown forth his resurrection unto life, and that we have been quickened together with him, (are saved by grace) and are raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in him. This is expressed in your letter, dear sister. You have also followed Jesus, who is the resurrection and the life, into the wilderness of temptation, where you have hungered in spirit and fasted, until heart and flesh failed, and your soul fainted within you. But then the Lord sent his angel to minister to you and strengthen you. "In all their afflictions he was afflicted." The Lord knoweth how to succor them that are tempted, and he is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." This truth you have known in your experience. But our God hath ordained the night, as well as the day, and he has set adversity over against prosperity. Thus he teaches us to feelingly say, "Give us this day our daily bread," and causes us to hunger and thirst after righteousness, through a sorrowful experience of our destitution of all goodness and righteousness. So it is the poor in spirit that are blessed of the Lord, for he hath chosen them rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him.

This will lead me to speak of the parable of the lost sheep, (Luke xv. 4–8,) of which you ask me. But it seems to me, dear sister, that you understand it better than myself, and I concur with what you have said about it. The occasion of the parable was, the publicans and sinners drew near to Jesus to hear him: "And the pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." This was true, and the parable justifies Jesus as the good Shepherd of the lost sheep. The self-righteous Jews regarded themselves as safe under and in the law, and not lost. They represented the ninety-nine. So did the elder son, who said he had never transgressed. Those did not feel that they had gone astray, like lost sheep. To them the Lord said, "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."

The publicans and sinners, who drew near unto Christ, had confidence and faith in his power to save them, and they heard him gladly. They were as lost sheep, to whom the good Shepherd came, sought them out and brought them home to the gospel fold. Thus he had found Peter and Andrew, James and John, along the shores of Galilee's lake, and Matthew a publican, with all the others of his lost sheep, and in his love and pity he saved them. And so there was great rejoicing in heaven, in the Father's house, when the lost were found, and the dead were made alive. Take all the multitudes of sick, halt, lame, blind, palsied and leprous, all poor and wretched and suffering sinners, whom Jesus in his mercy sought out and saved, and behold how great the blessing and joy in the kingdom of heaven. "Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me." We do not wonder now, when we read, "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight."

These two characters and classes very clearly represent the straying sheep that was lost, and the righteous that felt no need of repentance. All this truth you have felt and known, dear and afflicted sister. So you would far rather be the poor sinner and sufferer, cast out from the rich man's house, (the self-righteous house of Israel, who trusted in his riches,) and at last died from starvation, died unto sin, than to be as the whole who need no physician. "Poor and afflicted, Lord, are thine, unfit among the great to shine." "I once was lost, but now I'm found, was blind, but now I see." It is truly said, "And the deeper their sorrows, the louder they'll sing." "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes. The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver." "I have longed for thy salvation, O Lord; and thy law is my delight. Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and let thy judgments help me. I have gone astray like a lost sheep: seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments."

Thus and in this way of mercy does the Lord save and bring home his sheep that was lost, to the glory of his name and their great joy. All this you have been given to know and rejoice in, and have expressed it in your letter. "And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of heaven." "He hath filled the poor with good things: but the rich he hath sent empty away."

You know, dear sister Cole, that in the gospel of his grace and salvation, the Lord does not call the righteous to this divine feast, nor reward the good and worthy, who have no infirmities or diseases, no poverty or wretchedness, who plead their own good works and obedience; but he fills the poor with good things, and saves the chief of sinners. In this is the glory of Christ, the excellence of his gospel, and the riches of his sufficient grace. This is the fountain opened in the house of David for sin and uncleanness, wherein sinners are washed and made pure and white, and all are healed of their maladies who have need of

healing. We feel poor and needy, weak and wounded, sick and sore. The voice of Jesus says, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." "And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." This is salvation for the lost, full and free. This is the salvation for a poor sinner like me. This salvation is in Jesus alone. He is not only our resurrection and our life, but he is as well our bread of life, and our water of life, our robe of righteousness, and our garments of salvation. He only is the way unto the Father, and all our prayers and praises to God through Christ our High Priest and Advocate acceptance gain. He is of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, to the end that all our glorying shall be in him. Out of sickness, he gives us health; out of weakness, he strengthens us; out of poverty, he makes us rich; out of death, he gives us life; out of deepest sorrow, he gives us songs of highest praise; out of the bottomless pit of sin and destruction, he raises us up to the holiest heaven of salvation unto eternal life. O, who would change this way of the Lord? Blessed Naomi most truly confessed, "I went out *full*; but the Lord brought me home *empty*." She was one of the lost sheep of the house of Israel. How rich the mercy that the Lord brought her home!

Dear sister, my health has been poor for some time, and I am low in spirit, but I feel to say with David of old, "Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him who is the health of my countenance, and my God." We have a mild and pleasant climate here, and some poor Gentiles who will rejoice with us, that Jesus "receiveth sinners, and eateth with them," and unite with us in the sentiment, "I once was lost, but now I'm found, was blind, but now I see," and will joyfully testify, "A man named Jesus opened mine eyes." Blessed Jesus! Blessed man born blind!

We both send love to you and your dear household, and all who believe in Jesus, wishing mercy, grace and peace to you all. The Lord sanctify all your afflictions, and give you to truly say, "Thy will be done in earth," even in you.

In the faith of Jesus your brother,

D. BARTLEY.

EWING, N. J., March 9, 1902.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR PASTOR:—I have been thinking about you much during the past few weeks, and have wanted to tell you what a comfort the sermon at my father's funeral was to me. The roads and the weather have been such that I could not get out to the meetings, but I hope that both will soon be better. I saw by the paper that you and your family have had sorrow. Another dear one has gone. How lonely Nellie must be. But my prayer is that God will comfort her in her sad trial, and that she may be able to calmly say, Thy will be done.

"Though cast down, we're not forsaken,
Though afflicted, not alone;
Thou didst give, and thou hast taken,
Blessed Lord, thy will be done."

There is not a day in which I do not think of my dear father, of his dear, smiling face, and his kind advice both naturally and spiritually. I did not realize what love I had for him until he was gone. What great meaning has that little word "gone," when it comes home to us. What is this life? There is nothing in it but what must fade away and die; our dearest and nearest friends can be with us but for a time. But if we are among the redeemed of the Lord, saved by his grace, is not that the richest bless-

ing? But the thought comes to me, Am I one of that number? Can I claim that sweet assurance? I feel to be such a vile sinner, not able to think a good thought, unless it comes from God. How prone I am to wander from him whom I love. I do not feel worthy of his notice. But I know that nothing that I ever have done, or that I can do, can save me. If I am saved, it is only by his grace. How thankful I am that it is so.

"Thou dear Redeemer, dying Lamb,
We love to hear of thee;
No music's like thy charming name,
Nor half so sweet can be."

I remember the last time father was to see us. At the table he offered thanks. What a solemn feeling came over me; tears ran down my cheeks, and I seemed to realize that his end was near. He always spoke so feelingly. But now he is gone, and I do not wish him back, I know that our loss is his eternal gain. I felt so sorrowful and cast down that morning of the funeral, but your sermon caused me to look away from this world of sorrow, and to view the redeemed of the Lord singing praises to him for their salvation, in that world where all tears are wiped away. It was such a comfort to me, and I felt so thankful and full of praise to our dear Redeemer. I felt that I could, vile as I was, yet claim him as my Redeemer.

I have two letters that father sent me when I was troubled in mind, and would like to have them put into the SIGNS, if you think best. I will leave it to your better judgment.

With love to you and to sister Chick, and to all your family, I remain as ever, your sister,

OLIVIA N. HELLINGS.

EWING, N. J., Feb. 21, 1887.

MY DEAR DAUGHTER:—I received your kind letter on Saturday, and was very glad to hear from you. Now with regard to the resurrection, concerning which you ask my views, I would say that I hope you will not be troubled by what carnal teachers may say with regard to it. They can only imagine a fleshly heaven, where they will know their wives, husbands, sons and daughters. Now if all these earthly scenes could appeal to us in heaven, it would destroy perfect happiness. But on the contrary, all earthly scenes will be passed away, and they who are accounted worthy (through Christ) to obtain that world where all sighing and sorrow shall be done away, and all tears shall be wiped from all eyes, will ascribe all honor unto him who has washed us and made us clean through his righteousness. But they who are accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection of the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage, and neither can they die any more, but are equal to the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. (Luke xx. 35, 36.) So you see that Christ teaches very differently, declaring that all earthly things shall be done away. We then shall behold our Redeemer, and see him as he is, without a veil between. Our relationship will be wholly spiritual, for flesh and blood cannot enter or inherit the kingdom of God. Hence there is to be a great change in the resurrection. God will change our vile body, and make it like his glorious body. In 1 Cor. xv., we have the order fully set forth: "As we have borne the image of the earthly, so shall we also bear the image of the heavenly." We then shall be freed from all earthly passions, and delight only in giving praise to God for our salvation from sin; for worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive blessing,

and power, and honor, and glory; for he has redeemed us out of every nation, tribe and tongue. Our powers then will be wholly spiritual, and we shall be known as the children of God, redeemed sinners. If we could take all these earthly passions with us, what change would there be? It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall see him as he is. We appear here in a sinful state, but in heaven, a perfect state, and all through the redemption of Christ. This natural body returns to dust, but it shall be raised a spiritual body. You can search the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians for yourself, and may God give you understanding in spiritual things, is my prayer.

I am very glad to hear you say that you feel to be a great sinner. This is one of the first lessons that the Holy Spirit teaches. Without divine light you could not have seen this. The light of truth shining in the heart shows us how vile we are, but also by the same light, which is Christ, he shows us that it is a faithful saying, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Of these, Paul adds, that he was chief. If Paul felt himself to be the chief of sinners, should we despair of receiving the forgiveness of sins. This was the great purpose for which Christ came into the world; to save sinners.

But the question may arise in your mind, Will he save me? This is a question that comes home to us all with much force. You will find that you are destitute of all fitness to come to him, but thanks be to God, he does not wait for us to come to him, but he comes to us, gives us repentance, and then faith in his name, as the only name given under heaven whereby we must be saved. Now the Lord finds his sheep, no matter how far they wander from him, and lays them on his shoulder and brings them to his fold, and he never makes any mistake and takes a goat for a sheep.

What I have written may be of some comfort to you, and may the God of all comfort lead you to the fountain of living waters, so good bye for this time. Yours in love. From your father,

WM. C. TYNDALL.

EWING, N. J., May 4, 1887.

MY DEAR DAUGHTER:—I received your kind letter last evening, and was very glad to hear from you. Our church meeting will be on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in the month always, at half past two p. m. I am very glad to hear that you have found peace in the rich atoning blood of Jesus. How sweet and consoling the thought that while we were yet sinners, and condemned by God's holy law, Christ died for us. His blood cleanses from all sin. You have known what it was to be under the law and its curse, and now he has shown you his great love wherewith he loved you as his redeemed when he hung upon the cross to offer the one perfect sacrifice for sin. O, what love can be compared to his everlasting love? How sweet and precious to the poor, helpless sinner. I thank God that through the riches of his grace he has revealed to you the provisions of the gospel of the grace of God. This we could not see until God in his love and mercy revealed it; and where he has begun a good work, he will perform it to the day of Jesus Christ, and to the praise and glory of his grace. You may be assured that all whom the Lord draws by his love will find a warm welcome and reception in the hearts of the people of God. If you feel like Ruth of old, who said, Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to

return from following after thee, for thy people shall be my people, and thy God, my God, I hope that you will come and take up your cross, and follow him in the ordinance of baptism. May the Lord sustain you by his grace in the hour of temptation, doubts and fears, and enable you to listen to the voice of your Savior, saying, Fear not, for I have loved you with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. You must expect the warfare to commence between the flesh and the Spirit, for these are contrary the one to the other, so that you cannot do the things that you would. But thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, you have been marked as one of his sheep for whom he laid down his life. May you hear his voice and follow him.

Farewell for the present. Yours in love,

WM. C. TYNDALL.

[It will be remembered that a short time since the obituary of brother Tyndall was published in our columns. We have read with deep enjoyment the above letters from his pen, written to his daughter, sister Hellings. They must have ministered great strength and comfort to her when she received them, and we do not doubt that others will read them with sympathy and profit. How encouraging and tender were his words to his child in her trouble, and in the time of her first love through having found the Savior. This was characteristic of him. He was a gentle, tender man, who was clear in doctrine, and rich in experience.—Ed.]

East Dixfield, Maine, April 9, 1902.

Elder F. A. Chick—Dear Brother in Christ:—I received your welcome letter last evening, and sit down to begin a response, but it will, I fear, be like myself, wandering and unfruitful, but at least I can tell you how much I feel strengthened, and how greatly I rejoice that I am counted worthy of your fellowship and favor. I am obliged to look for the fruits of the Spirit in others, and am not at a loss to discern them, but in myself the rubbish of my carnal nature so obscures these fruits, that I am often made to cry out, and am wounded sore, and as I now write, the precious seasons which I have enjoyed during this past winter in contemplating the efficacy of the blood of Christ which cleanses from all sin, the glorious work wrought in the hearts of believers, and their completeness in Christ's robe of righteousness, come to my mind, and it is with amazement that I look at myself, first, that I ever have had a hope that that robe encircles me, and then that sin so often obscures it, and brings me into bondage; this day, the noise of battle; the next, the victor's song, thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

They who have tasted of the good word of life, hunger without it, and cannot be satisfied with any substitute. Again, the child of God is chosen in the furnace of affliction, and to our weak faith it often seems that the furnace is heated one seven times hotter than it is wont to be heated. As for myself, it seems ofttimes that an empty life and a purposeless one is being prolonged, yet I have the assurance that God careth for me, and with the psalmist I can say, "How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings." In tracing the workings of God's hand, we see that what we call afflictions are but blessings in disguise. We can but wait. The wheels of time are rushing us along, and our light afflictions

are but for a moment, in comparison with endless eternity.

In listening many years ago to a discourse from a believer in universal salvation, he made the remark that his doctrine comforted all. It has often come to me that the covenant of grace comforts all embraced in it. The gracious promises whereby we are made partakers of the divine nature, forbid us to question, or to find fault. "Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."

The subject matter of the preaching at your spring associations and conversation will, I know, be quite different from that with which I meet from those whose avowed purpose is to save the world. For this they labor; for this they have a form of prayer, and an unlimited amount of zeal. I often think of your remark, "Let the potsherds strive with the potsherds."

As I am writing, your last editorial comes into my mind with its satisfying fullness, written in reply to brother Rowe. God help all who have named the name of Christ to depart from iniquity; sin can be glossed over in no way; it is a deadly poison, hateful to God, and hurtful to man. There is but one Physician can cure the sin-sick soul. And

"In him we have a healing Friend,
To on our daily path attend;
And where thorns and stings abound,
To shed a balm for every wound."

With a heartfelt response I can say that the longer I live the more do I believe that all we need is to be free from sin. In the best times of enjoyment we still feel the thorn in the flesh, and cannot always say, Where sin abounds, grace much more abounds.

"To our Redeemer's glorious name,
Be everlasting honor given;
He saves from hell, we bless his name,
He guides our wandering feet to heaven."

In the ever comforting fourteenth chapter of John, verse twenty-two, is recorded the question of Judas, not Iscariot, "Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" And "Jesus answering said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but my Father's which sent me." Then, in continuance, Jesus gave the promise of the Comforter which he said "Is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." In connection with this language, I remember that not long since, while enveloped in a dense cloud of unbelief, I could not for a time recall a promise in all the word, and the only feeling I had was, that I was in possession of peace. But so far as a foundation for that peace was concerned, in my mind, I might as well have been on a boundless ocean, but I did not long remain in that state.

I hope since that time I have been less prone to distrust the gracious promises of God; and that I have been led in all things to give thanks for what is the will of God concerning me in Christ Jesus.

"Bread of heaven, on thee we feed,
For thy flesh is meat indeed;
Vine of heaven thy blood supplies
The blest cup of sacrifice."

"The dear Redeemer says, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." The good Shepherd ever goeth before his sheep, and so they go in and out and find pasture, and none shall pluck them out of his hands. Jesus

said, "My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me, and the voice of a stranger they will not follow." Paul writing to his brethren says, "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice." I am made to rejoice that so much of the blessed word of God is in the present tense. But I desire an increase of faith. Paul said unto the Hebrew brethren, "Ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." These all are in the present tense. How

> "Sweet in the confidence of faith,
> To trust God's firm decree;
> Sweet to lie passive in his hands,
> And know no will but his."

In my lonely condition as regards the church of God, while I so greatly enjoy written communications, yet I would greatly prefer meeting with the saints. But with a thankful heart I receive my dear SIGNS, and therein read comforting words from many whom I shall never see in the flesh, and from some others with whom it has been my privilege to meet. In the theme of all there is no discordant note, but testimony to the fullness of that salvation ordained in all things and sure, wrought out and finished in our Lord Jesus Christ. I desire that you may find grace to sustain you, and lift you up in the clear light of the goodness of God, and that you and yours may find the dear Lord very near to bless and sustain you. In time of sore need you may cast your burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain you. I know that time is the only healer of wounds caused by the broken ties of nature, but may you each find comfort and consolation from the hand which takes the gifts it lent.

With love and fellowship, your sister in hope,

ELIZA WHEELWRIGHT.

WAVERLY, Pa., March 14, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—You will see by the closing words of brother Hickerson's letter that he gives his consent to use his letter as we think best. It is good.

Your unworthy brother,

D. M. VAIL.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Feb. 28, 1902.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I received your letter a short time since, and it brought tears to my eyes as I read it, to think that such a poor worm of the dust should be noticed by one of the servants of the Lord, and that you could indorse the few imperfect lines which I wrote to Elder Chick. In writing that letter I asked the Lord to so direct my mind that I should not say anything that would wound the feelings of the flock of God, which have no confidence in the flesh. By the flesh I understand Paul to mean the works of righteousness under the law, which is claimed by some to-day who profess a hope in the blood of the Lamb, and yet claim conditions to be performed in this time state, for life. This is but a part of the filthy garments of self-righteousness. I do not feel that I can claim that anything good dwells in me. If any good be in me, it has been given by one stronger than the puny arm of flesh.

Man knows not by nature the will of God, and so it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. It is as the psalmist

proclaims, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." We all fulfilled by nature the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were children of wrath even as others. Therefore we could not please God. Then why return to the law for obedience, as it was but a fleshly covenant. That covenant was a failure, so far as literal obedience was concerned. You say, my dear brother, that I am a man after your own heart. I often fear that I am nothing, as I feel my unworthiness so much. At times I feel that I am less than nothing. I am not fit to be called a child of God, or a brother, for I come so far short of true obedience. I often exclaim, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." What more can I say or do, my dear brother? I know my life is in the hands of God to do with me as it seems good in his sight. If deceived, I trust in God to undeceive me; I have no worth or merit to offer, only to plead for mercy. You said that I say the right things in the right way. I trust that it is not self speaking, but the Spirit of God that gives me words of utterance to speak of his glorious plan of salvation, and to put no confidence in the flesh, for the flesh profiteth nothing. You also say that you like solid things. Nothing but his revealed will will give us a heart to rejoice, and give all the praise to God and none to man. You say that you are a poor sinner. Do any of the children of God feel otherwise? Paul said that he was the chief of sinners, and God's children feel that they are nothing but sinners in his sight.

Speaking of the conditional time salvation theory, I can say that I am sorry that such a disturbing thing is advocated by some who claim the name of Primitive Baptists; and as to predestination, my dear brother, had it not been for God's eternal purpose and predestination, I would have been of all men most miserable. His love and his righteousness are, we hope, within our hearts leading unto obedience, and it is not the works of the law, which are the works of the creature, and as such cannot be accepted of the Lord. God sent his only begotten Son into the world to redeem them that are under the law; he sealed this work with his blood, and cried out, "It is finished." He paid it all. Why then claim that there are works of conditions to be performed by the Adam man? This is but a filthy garment which is of the flesh, and altogether self-righteousness. I can but pray, O Lord, deliver me from such idol worship, and lead me by the still waters. "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of our God," the holy place. This is the place that I love. I trust that my Jesus paid it all, and there is nothing else to do to finish the work. There is none else that I love but Jesus. What a love showered down upon such a poor sinner as I feel myself to be. What love that he should suffer for me the cruel death of the cross. How thankful and submissive I ought to be to his will in all things. And by him we have all blessings, both temporal and spiritual. O, what a loving Father!

Speaking of my letter to dear Elder Chick, I wish to say that his editorials are all so good, I had often felt that I wanted to talk with him face to face, but as that could not be, I thought that I would write to him some of the dealings of the good Lord, as I trust, with me. I felt that there was no other name under heaven given amongst men whereby I must be saved. And his editorials were of such comfort to me that I felt to love and desire to write to him.

Referring to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, they are an old established periodical; I have known them ever since I can recollect, and I hope that the Lord gave me understanding to read them through all the trials which they passed through, under the management of Elder Gilbert Beebe. Then many charges were brought against him, with the dear old SIGNS, by Baptists of that day, and still it stood firm as on a solid rock, the Rock Jesus Christ, who is the chief corner-stone. The SIGNS stood firm and solid with no uncertain sound, but speaking the same truths, and now at this late day, the poor tried ones who are wielding the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, are being condemned for advocating the same truths as were advocated by the dear old brethren who have been called hence to the reward laid up for them in heaven from before the foundation of the world. I trust that the good Lord will bless the present editors in their labors, as the paper always comes richly laden with such good food from the Master's table, and without any conditions in it.

I hope that what I have written will not mar your feelings. I feel to thank God to know that I am not alone in the world, wandering about, hunting for a crumb that is not tainted with will-worship. Dear brother, you are a stranger in the flesh to me, but thank God I feel that we can claim relationship through the blood of the Lamb. I feel to be at his feet in the humblest manner that I know. When it is well with you, remember me, and pray for a poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all. May the Lord bless you, my dear brother, in your labors in feeding the flock of God, over which he has made you overseer, is my prayer.

O. B. HICKERSON.

SAINT EDWARD, Neb., Jan. 19, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I received the SIGNS for Jan. 15th, and have read it through this morning, and my heart goes out in love to God, and to his people. As I read Elder Chick's editorial upon the parable of the mustard seed, my heart rejoiced, and my eyes filled with tears, happy tears. I believe every child of grace has found shelter at times in those branches, when they have felt cast down in mind, and as though all earthly friends had forsaken them, and their Savior had withdrawn his presence from them, and all is dark. Then to feel a love in our hearts to God, and to his people, and to say with one of old, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I desire beside thee," and thy hand has led me through all the journey of life to the present time, is joy indeed. Elder F. W. Keene's letter was surely a feast of fat things. I am glad we have such able writers. Yes, God's dear people shall be willing in the day of his power. God works in the hearts of his children, and none can hinder, or say, What doest thou? He works all things after the counsel of his own will. I do rejoice to believe that he has all power in heaven and in earth, and none can stay his hand. "He leads the blind by a way that they knew not, and in paths their feet have not known. He makes darkness light before them, and rough places plain, and by his Spirit they are made to cry, "Abba, Father." For such love let us bow humbly at his feet.

It is almost four years since I have heard a Baptist sermon. I feel much cast down at times, and often wish for the presence of my spiritual kindred. But the will of God be done, and may I be contented with my lot on earth.

I remain your unworthy sister,

ANNA M. CLARK.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1902.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

COLOSSIANS I. 15-17.

BROTHER Peter C. Charles, of Lockhart, La., requests that we present such thoughts as we have upon the language of inspiration which reads as follows: "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist."

We have never felt that we were capable of entering into the deep things of God as are many of our brethren, and so have ever hesitated to speak or to write much concerning some of the wonderful descriptions of the blessed Lord, penned by the apostles in their epistles. The language to which our attention has been called, is wonderfully sublime, and presents things which are far above our finite comprehension, yet the great apostle to the Gentiles was inspired to write these things for our instruction, and God forbid that we should be found among those who say that certain Scriptures ought to be let alone, because they treat of things too deep for us. It is a sufficient answer to all such objections as the above, to say that the Holy Ghost did not withhold them from the church, but inspired the apostles to declare them, and so it is sure that they are profitable to be considered.

Such things as are presented in this Scripture are very deep, too deep for reason's line to sound, but it is true of all that is contained in the word that reason cannot fathom it, and so this Scripture stands, so far as that is concerned, upon the same ground as do all others. We desire to respond to brother Charles' request, and above all to write reverently, and with an abiding sense of our need of the Spirit of truth to take of these things of Jesus and show them unto us. We would not seek to go any further than the Spirit of truth may lead our mind. All beyond this would be but profitless and vain.

First, we would say that as the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of all prophecy, so the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of all that is written in the New Testament also. We have but to refer to the connection of the text to learn that Jesus is the theme of the apostle's discourse. Every sentence in this whole chapter is full of meaning, because they all present some grand truth concerning our Redeemer God. The words of the text describe the eternal power and Godhead of him of whom it is declared in the preceding verse that we have redemption by his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. Our blessed Savior, whom we love, is then described in all these verses. Shall we not rejoice at the exaltation which the apostle declares to be his? As we contemplate these things, let us remember that they are said of him in whom we trust for salvation. How secure is this hope given to us then, since

our Savior is such as he is here declared to be. We are not called to contemplate a mere theory, or a being in whom we have no interest, but our own blessed Friend and Savior, who is our hope and our help and our strength. All the things presented here are helpers to our joy, since they confirm the certainty that our Savior is able to save.

Second, it is said that he is the image of the invisible God. Other Scriptures fall into line with this declaration. To Philip when he had said, "Lord show us the Father and it sufficeth us," the dear Redeemer said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," &c. And in 2 Corinthians iv., Paul again declares him to be the image of God, and in Hebrews i., he is said to be the express image of the person of God. The word image involves the word likeness, but also includes much more than likeness. The latter word means simply a resemblance, while image is better expressed by the likeness which one sees of himself in a glass, or in water. We have no doubt that an allusion in all these places is made to the fact that Adam was said to be made in the image of God. Now whatever was meant in this statement concerning Adam, this much at least seems to us to be true, viz: In our blessed Lord, both as the essential Word existing eternally with God, and as the Word made flesh for our redemption, he bore the full likeness or image of God in all things. "It pleased the Father that in him all fullness should dwell." "In him dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily." "He was God manifest in the flesh." As God manifest in the flesh, he laid down his life for us, that life which he had assumed, and which was forfeited by man when he sinned in Adam. He laid down that life which he assumed in the flesh, because no other life than this was possessed by Adam when he fell, and no other life could have been demanded at the hands of Adam, than the life which had been given him. So we understand the text to mean both as regards his eternal being, as the Word which was with God, and which was God, and his revelation in the flesh, he was the true image of the invisible God. And it is true to-day as it was in the days when he was in the flesh, that he who by faith through revelation in his soul, has seen Jesus, has also seen the Father. Jesus did not mean this in any fleshly sense, for then those who hated him would have seen the Father also, but in the true spiritual sense in which believers now share with all the saints in every age.

Third. He is declared to be the first-born of every creature. To the same effect is the language in Rev. iii. 14, where he is declared to be the beginning of the creation of God. This does not mean that he was created of God first, but rather that he is the "Beginner of all the creation," as it is declared that all things were made by him, in the text. All creation would not be represented as adoring him, if he were but one of themselves. It is our understanding that this language means in substance just what is meant in the words, "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made."—John i. 3. The expression in the text, "He is before all things," seems to imply the same thought, viz: he is the beginning of the creation of God. What a wonderful mystery is here, and how is our blessed Redeemer exalted and glorified over all, so that he is truly Head over all things to the church. Again it is said, "By him all things consist." But we will not multiply quotations with regard to this matter; all these

things are spoken by the holy Spirit to exalt the name of our Redeemer. It conveys to our mind in the time of our weakness and trembling, that we have an almighty Friend, who is God over all, blessed for evermore. The most exalted language cannot describe him, and our highest thoughts do not reach the first step around his throne, and then to be told that this exalted being is our friend, and that his love is set upon us, and that he so loved us that he forsook all this exaltation and glory, and came down to earth, and took upon him our nature, that he might bring us to himself, to live with him forever, and to be like him in all holiness, must humble us in the dust of humiliation on the one hand, and on the other exalt our joy, and add to us supreme blessedness. How secure must these who are so well beloved be. What can harm the objects of such a love? Who shall separate us from it? We do feel as we write these halting words, as though we are lost in wonder, love and praise for such a wonderful Redeemer. It is most good to contemplate such a Savior and such a God.

Fourth. "By him were all things created." All things, and lest some one should say this word had some limitation, the apostle goes on to enumerate and name all this creation: "All things that are in heaven," and this is true whether we speak of the natural heavens above this natural earth, or of the third heavens, into which Paul was once caught up; it is true of all things in the first, or legal heaven, and of all things in the second, or gospel heaven. There is absolutely nothing in all that may be called heaven that was not created by him. All the ordinances of the sun, moon and stars, of the light, and heat, and air, all the dews of heaven, and all the early and the latter rain that waters the earth with showers, all spiritual blessing showered down upon us while we live on earth, or that shall be ours forever and ever, come to us through him. To us he is the author of them all; they flow down as the oil upon the head of Aaron, to the very skirts of his garments. As it is true of the natural heavens that he created the sun and moon and stars, and set them in their courses to fulfill their appointed work for the blessing of man and of all the earth, so is it true also of the spiritual heavens. ALL, ALL is of him, and through him, and to him, and all shall declare his glory. In all this there is no whisper of praise to man, or to any of the creation of God, only as that creation shows forth the praise of God. "And all things that are in earth." The heavens above and the earth beneath speak one to another of the glory of God. The things of the heavens look down upon earth, and say, "We are because of the wonder-working power and wisdom of God." And all things in the earth look up to the heavens, from whence come to them all spiritual or temporal blessings, and ascribe all praise to the God of the heavens. Naturally Jesus is declared to have created every little seed, and to have given all its fruitfulness to the soil, and to have filled the whole earth with the treasures which feed and clothe and minister comfort to man and beast. But above all temporal things, the new earth shows forth the praise of her Redeemer. Beside all this he created the invisible things, as well as the visible. We cannot put our thought upon anything but that it is true of that thing that he created it. And among these visible and invisible things, Paul mentions thrones, dominions, principalities and powers. It seems to us that the word thrones here

means rather the place of dominion; that place recognized as rightful, and acknowledged among men as the proper source of authority. The word "dominion" signifies rather the sovereign or potentate himself. The word principalities signifies one holding the first or most prominent place, and the word powers means literally power, ability, in the sense of superiority. All these words in substance present the same thought, viz: something exalted, or high, or in authority, yet with these differences in shades of meaning. But we do not need to go into detail concerning all these different words, the one thought is clear enough that all that might come under the heads here named are the creation of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. This also takes in the whole universe, so that wherever any of these things are found, whether in heaven or earth, whether in the natural universe or in the spiritual world, whether in the present kingdom of grace, or in the future kingdom of glory, whether in the legal or in the gospel covenants, they were created by the blessed Lord our Savior, and are for him.

Fifth. "And all are for him." What does this mean but that all shall work out the glory of God? All is for the lifting of Jesus on high. Nothing shall prove of no avail in the kingdom of the Lord, all shall surely work out his unfailing purpose and grace; all are for Jesus, and being for him, they must also be for his chosen ones. "For," says Paul, "all things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." All things, according to the apostle, takes in Paul, Apollos, Cephas, the world, life, death, things present and things to come; it is hard to see what is left out. All this is so because we are Christ's, and because they were all created by him, and for him, and for us in him, and because we are one with him. Because they are the Lord's, they are also the inheritance of his chosen ones. So we, if we be indeed his, need not fear anything in all the universe which has been created. Instead of any harm coming to us from any or all these things, they are for us, and shall work together for good to us. "Nay," says the apostle, "we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." More than conquerors. What does this signify to us? Does it not signify that these things shall all be made to do us good instead of harm? If a man destroys his foe he is a conqueror, but if he makes that foe his friend to do him service, he is more than a conqueror, is he not? Now, believers do not destroy these things that oppose, but they are made to do them good, and to advance that which is truly a blessing to them. So we who have hope in the blessed Lord are also interested in this short sentence, "And for him."

How complete then is the sovereignty of our blessed Master. To us he may well be all in all. David, beholding the vanity of all earthly things, after he had been envious of the prosperity of the wicked, and had then come into the sanctuary of God, and beheld there their end, could say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. Thou art the portion of my heart and my strength, and this forever." And David could also say, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness, then shall I be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness." Nothing then can work harm to the believer in Jesus; nothing can separate us from his love; none is able to pluck them out of the hand of the Father, and no harm shall

come nigh their dwelling. What seems to be harm to them, in all the providences of God over them, and in all the conflicts of the narrow way, are not really to their hurt, but all shall work out some spiritual advantage to them. "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word," said David.

We know not how it may be with those who may read these feebly expressed words, or how it may be with the brother at whose request we have written, but for ourself we will say that we have found solid consolation in the contemplation of such precious things just now, and also during the past years since we first believed; in these things have we found our best assurances. May God bless his truth to all who love him.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

SHROB, Ill., May 7, 1859.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I earnestly desire you to answer, through the SIGNS, the following questions: 1. Why do the Old School Baptists object to their members joining secret and oath-bound orders, as the Free Masons and Odd Fellows? 2. What course should a gospel church take with members who join these orders and attend their lodges? For one, I feel deeply the importance that the Baptists should be well informed on these points, for numbers of them are joining these orders. I mourn that it is so. Please answer early. Affectionately your unworthy brother,

D. BARTLEY.

REPLY.

In replying to the inquiries of brother Bartley, it is not necessary for us to attempt to show what are the merits or demerits of the societies or orders of which he speaks, and we frankly confess our utter inability to do so from our own knowledge. We have never been connected with any of them, either directly or indirectly. Like most of the modern self-styled religious societies of the present age, these orders claim to be benevolent, moral and philanthropic, and to possess some valuable secret, which their philanthropy does not lead them to divulge without money and without price. Our soul has never come, or sought to come, into their secrets, with their assemblies we have had no inkling to be connected. As worldly, social or benevolent institutions, we shall not attempt to analyze them, nor to pronounce sentence of approval or condemnation on them. But the question of our brother calls for the reason of the course pursued by the Old School Baptists in regard to their own members, and we deem it proper that we should, so far as we are able, reply to his inquiries. Of course he does not expect us to answer for all the Old School Baptists, or to pledge all Old School Baptists to indorse what we may say on this or any other subject, but merely to give such reasons as have weight on our own mind on the subject.

The first reason we have to give why we do not join those institutions, or feel willing that our brethren should join them is, that whatever may be their excellence, even admitting them to be as pure and benevolent as their advocates claim that they are, we find in the gospel of Christ and in the organized church of the living God, a fullness which leaves no room to hanker for any of the *leaks* or *onions* of Egypt. In Christ, it has pleased the Father, that all fullness should dwell, and if, as professed disciples of Jesus, we are found seeking for treasures or comforts which are not found in Zion, we imply by our conduct that there is not that fullness in our Father's house which has been represented. Why should we go abroad for joys if we have a feast at home?

Second. Whatever may be the secrets held by Free Masons or Odd Fellows, we

have a *secret* which is far more profound, more useful and important; for the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and God will show to them his covenant. As heaven is higher than earth, so does the Lord's secret transcend all human mysteries. In Jesus our Lord are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And this fact the apostle has declared to the saints, lest any man should beguile them with enticing words. (Col. ii. 3, 4.) This wisdom and knowledge comprise all that can be profitable to the saints; for in him is given to them all things that pertain to life and godliness. (2 Peter i. 3.) This heavenly treasure, this divine secret of the Lord, which God has hidden from the wise and prudent of this world, and revealed unto babes, is far superior to any secret of the orders under consideration. First, because it is the free and sovereign gift of God, and cannot be bought with money. Secondly, it requires no oath, pledge or penalty to keep it, for none but God can reveal or show it, and none but those who are born of the Spirit of God can possibly learn it. Christians may talk freely about it before all men; ministers of the word may proclaim it unreservedly to Jews and Gentiles, without the fear that any of Adam's race will ever know it unless it be to them revealed as it was to Simon Bar-jona, by our Father which is in heaven. To seek for a secret or mystery in any other fraternity or brotherhood than that of the household of faith is to depart from the greater to seek a less.

Third. Old School Baptists object to their members uniting with those orders, because the obligations assumed in doing so conflict with the obligations assumed in their allegiance to Christ, to be subject to the watchcare of one another. In visiting the lodges, they cannot be under the watchcare of their brethren, who are not permitted to accompany them in their secret conclaves. That which makes void the laws of Christ is incompatible with the christian profession.

Fourth. It is said an oath or affirmation, a solemn pledge, or profane imprecations, are exacted of those who become members of those orders. Presuming this to be the case, the Old School Baptists object to their members assuming such obligations, because the King of Zion has forbidden them to forswear themselves.

Fifth. To waive all other objections, it is certain that when members of the church unite with those institutions, it occasions grief and trouble to their brethren. This, of itself, is sufficient to render it highly improper and disorderly for any member of the church to join such orders. They have professed to prefer Jerusalem above their chief joys; and if they do not they certainly never ought to take on them the sacred name of Jesus, or profess before heaven and earth to be disciples of the Son of God. Those who name the name of Jesus should regard it as the business of their lives to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace; to follow after the things which tend to peace, and things whereby one may edify another. What can there be in our joining the secret orders of Free Masons or Odd Fellows that tends to the peace or edification of the saints of God? Churches have been thrown into disorder, distress, and, in some instances, have lost their visibility from this very cause. But who that sincerely loves our Lord, who is willing to deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow the Lamb, will persist in breaking the peace of the church, wounding the hearts of dear brethren, and in bringing reproach upon the sacred cause of God for this gratification of his

fleshly mind? Who would, like Esau, for one morsel of meat, sell his birthright among the saints in the house of God? We have Christ and his apostles as our example, and until we can find them running into these connections, and disregarding the peace and comfort of the church, we are solemnly bound to abstain from them.

These are, at least, some of the reasons, as we apprehend, why Old School Baptists object to their members joining any of these societies, and they are some of the reasons why we could not consent ourself to join them, or feel satisfied with brethren who do join them.

The second question of brother Bartley is, "What course should a gospel church take with members who join those orders and attend their lodges?"

According to our understanding of the laws of the kingdom of Christ, a gospel church should labor faithfully, affectionately and prayerfully to reclaim such disorderly members. Point out to them the impropriety and wickedness of their course, and to restore them to the order of the church. But if after a gospel course of labor they cannot reclaim them, if they really prefer the society of Free Masons and Odd Fellows to that of the church of the living God, then the course of the church is very plain. Let them go to their own company; but let the church withdraw from every brother that walks disorderly, as Christ by his apostle has commanded. If they refuse to hear the church, let them be unto thee as heathen men and as publicans.

Before we close this article, we wish to say, that on all subjects of discipline, a hard, overbearing or domineering spirit should be studiously avoided. You that are spiritual should attempt the work of restoration in the spirit of meekness. Let nothing be done through strife or vain glorying, but with singleness of heart to the glory of God. We have doubted the propriety of requiring a brother who has joined any of these orders to come out and denounce them, or to divulge any of their secrets, which he has promised or pledged himself to keep secret. To satisfy our own mind, it is enough that the brother discontinues his connection with such institutions, come out from them, and walk no more with them.

One word more. We hold the same objections to our brethren or sisters joining any of the professedly religious or benevolent societies of the age, except the church of God, whether it be for religious, moral, social or political purposes. Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are of good report, may be pursued, without any unjustifiable confederacy or organization with any of these institutions. And we should never turn aside from the footsteps of the flock of Christ for any cause or pretext whatever. If, for instance, Mission, Tract or Sunday School societies do not require the forswearing of their members, yet they make more extravagant pretensions to religion than the order of Free Masons or Odd Fellows do, and are perhaps more likely to decoy the unsuspecting. Other institutions for the ostensible purpose of temperance or politics, have used pledges, if not oaths, which are very far from being harmonious with either the spirit or letter of the gospel. Concerning all these things then, we would reiterate the admonition of inspiration, "Touch not, taste not, handle not." The man who attempted to go from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among thieves, who stripped, and robbed, and wounded, and left him half dead. Let us take

warning then, and remain in Jerusalem forever,

"Where our best friends and kindred are,
Where God our Savior dwells."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., August 15, 1859.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, to the churches comprising the same, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—As you will expect to hear from us through a Circular Letter, we will try not to disappoint you.

We feel at this time to call your attention to a Scripture found in the first epistle of John, second chapter, twenty-first and twenty-second verses, and reads as follows, "I have not written unto you because ye knew not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? he is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son."

We feel that we can adopt this language as our own, and say to you that we write to you because you know the truth. We would not like to tell you things you do not know, but would like to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance. Paul told Timothy that if he put the brethren in remembrance of these things he would be a good minister of Jesus Christ. This Scripture, like all others, proves in itself that it is addressed to those who already believe in Jesus Christ, and shows that neither prophets, Christ nor apostles in their public ministry spoke or wrote with the view of making believers of unbelievers, but with the view of comforting those who were already believers.

The words of no gospel minister find a lodging place in the hearts of dead sinners, it is God's voice alone that makes the dead hear, and that is not audible to the ear, but still and small, yet powerful in their hearts, so then when men and women read letters from apostles, or hear sermons from gospel ministers, and find comfort in them because it brings to their minds their own experience, it is an undisputable evidence of life already received. Jesus said, "Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear." Therefore seeing, hearing, feeling and believing are all by the power of life, which is God's first gift to a poor sinner. How vain then it would be to address a letter to a dead sinner, who knows not anything, and in whose heart therefore the word of Jesus has no place. God has a people in all nations, but they, like all others, are dead in sins until God by his Spirit speaks to them, saying, Come forth. Then the disciples being commanded by Jesus can take away the grave clothes, loose them and let them go. This Paul and others did when they preached the gospel plainly and truly to the end the brethren might be established, and this is no doubt done many times to-day, and how good it is to those thus taught the way of God perfectly, where the word spoken falls on the circumcised ear and into the circumcised heart, and brings to mind some experience that the humble child of God had thought peculiar to himself; (and wondered if there was any one like himself) how he is benefited and encouraged. The gospel has come to him as a witness that his experience is that of a child of God. Who then of the servants of Jesus would not love to write and speak the truth to those who know it and are therefore good witnesses of what he says, and do always rejoice in the truth? Now these know that no lie is of the truth, the word which was with God, and was God,

is truth, through which Jesus prays the Father to sanctify his disciples on earth. He is God and cannot lie; he never makes false impressions on men's minds, therefore our sense of exceeding sinfulness and nothingness is the right feeling, and God gives it, also our sense of the exceeding greatness and goodness of God. But when the child of God feels that he is rich and has need of nothing, (as did one of the churches of Asia) he is pharisaical, and it grows out of his own conceited and deceitful nature, and is not the influence of the Spirit of a pure and holy God. And when our carnal minds claim our works as a help in our salvation, thereby denying that Jesus is Lord, or if we should deny that he came to save sinners, men and women of Adam's fallen race, and that the man, the woman, who feels in their hearts the power of sin, is the same that does and shall in the great beyond feel the power and sweetness of his saving grace, it lies to us, for Jesus who is truth tells us that he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. No heretic is taught by Christ, but by antichrist, for no lie is of the truth. How sweet it is, and how safe it is, to have a Friend who loves us with an everlasting love, and who never will leave nor forsake us, but will be with us alway, even unto the end of the world, and to know that this Friend has never and will never tell us a lie, and so pure and holy is he that no lie can emanate from him, but all that he tells us, and all that he makes us feel of our sin and our great need of him, yet our unworthiness of him, is all the truth, which he has given us to see and to feel, and therefore know to be the truth. But there is another side to this picture more beautiful to behold. This Friend was delivered for our offenses, and by his stripes we are healed. He has overcome the world and dwells in you, and is greater than he that is in the world, and says, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." This also is his word, and is the truth and no lie.

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?" Those who in the days of Jesus' flesh denied that he was Christ, the one whom God had anointed and would exalt to be a Prince and a Savior, lied. His name is called Jesus because he shall save his people from their sins, but neither his pure life nor miracles convinced his enemies that he was the Christ, but they lied, saying, "He is a man that maketh himself God." He is the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved; should we claim any part of the glory of salvation, either of ourselves or others, we should deny that Jesus alone was thus anointed, and so deny that he is Christ, and be liars.

"He is antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son." This to our mind refers not only to those who would deny that Jesus, the son of Mary, was the Son of God, but also to those to-day who would deny the sonship of such sinners as we have found ourselves to be. This same Jesus who was truly the son of Mary, and verily man, is as truly the Son of God. He wept and cried, saying, O Father, hear me, and he has given us of his Spirit, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. We then who are the sons and daughters of men and women, are also born of God, and are therefore his sons now. Yes, now though we sin and wander from our Father's house, we are his sons, and all shall come to him and be saved with an everlasting salvation. This salvation is of the Lord as truly as Jesus came into the world, and he did not come to save

himself or anything that came from heaven. The Spirit of God has no need, and therefore does not cry for mercy and salvation, but he has graciously given us of his Spirit, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The sinner being shown his sins and his great need of righteousness, cries to Jesus in whom he sees the power of salvation, which salvation he receives through Jesus Christ in such way that he knows it is the gift of God, and in all his experience in this life it is he that feels his proneness to wander from God, and mourns because he cannot be what he wants to; he knows he is weak and sinful still. As a loving son he fears his heavenly Father, he does not wish to displease him, but would like to be the pride and pleasure of a loving Father.

Our earthly fathers may disinherit us, turn their back to us forever, but our heavenly Father never, his mercy endureth forever. He hath borne all our sins, and carried all our sorrows, and is with us alway. Take courage, then, poor, trembling, doubting ones, for it is you that the Father loves. Sometimes we fear that we shall be left behind, because we are so little and weak, but do you not know that when a loving father walks with his children that he always keeps the smallest one nearest to him? He leads the little one by the hand, and should he tire, or should the way be rough, he carries the little one in his arms, not forgetting to point out the best way to each of them, nor to advise them concerning their conduct toward him and toward each other. Your Father, dear children of God, will not leave you, but will be with you in the fire, in the water, and in every trial. You could not bear them if he did not, so now remember that though you are weak, he is strong; though you are ignorant, he is wise; though you are sinful, he is righteous; though you forget his benefits, he never forgets your needs, and he will supply them according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. God's promise is that the weary shall find rest, the hungry and thirsty shall be filled. How sweet such promises to the poor and needy, to whom God says, I will feed you, even you, O poor of the flock. It is not therefore an eternal spirit, not an indescribable something to represent the sinner, but the poor, sinful, fearing, trembling, doubting son and daughter of Adam's fallen race, who shall see Jesus as he is, and be like him, and it is he who bears enough of that blessed image now to be known and loved by all who love our Lord Jesus Christ.

The spirit that denies this loving, personal, effectual work of God in our hearts, denies that God is our Father, and that we are his children, and so denies the Father and the Son, therefore he is antichrist, for the apostle tells us that of his own will begat he us by the word of truth. Jesus Christ has not only come in the flesh, but is come in the flesh, for Christ is in you the hope of glory; it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. It is not an outward demonstration of power, but an inward sense of necessity laid upon us, and so Jesus Christ is come in the flesh to do that for us which the law could not do, and cannot do, for there is neither life nor comfort in the law. O, how good, how unspeakably sweet to the poor sinner to feel assured that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom he is chief.

May God give us this assurance more and more, and to his great holy and precious name be all glory both now and forever. Amen.

WM. GRAFTON, Moderator.
MILTON DANCE, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Harford Church, sendeth greetings to the associations and meetings with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We are glad to say that we are having a pleasant meeting; good weather prevails and we have little to disturb us. Our churches are all walking, so far as we know, in the order of the gospel of Christ, and it seems good to us to meet together in these meetings, and hear the sweet story of Jesus and his love. May God in his love and mercy grant us many more pleasant seasons of refreshing in the Lord.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore city, at the usual time in May, 1903, when and where we hope to meet your messengers, and receive your messages of love.

WM. GRAFTON, Moderator.
MILTON DANCE, Clerk.

ORDINATION.

PURSUANT to a call of Smyrna Church, Union Co., Arkansas, the following Elders met in council April 26th, 1902, for the purpose of setting apart to the gospel ministry, brother J. T. Nash, viz: Henry Archer, W. K. Smith and Robert S. Farrow.

The candidate was examined by Elder Archer, prayer offered by Elder Farrow, and Elder Smith delivered the charge.

The occasion was a solemn one, and all seemed to be impressed that the Lord's hand was in the matter.

L. C. TRULL.

WESSON, Ark.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder W. Lively, May 18th, 1902, E. S. Renfro, of Valley Head, Ala., and Miss Nettie P. Lively, of Opelika, Ala.

By Elder H. M. Curry, May 20th, 1902, at the residence of William Logan, Lebanon, Ohio, A. J. Stout, of Transit, Ohio, and Mrs. Elizabeth Oliver, of Franklin, Ohio. They are both believers, and godly persons, and we believe they are married in the Lord.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At the home of her son-in-law, **Mrs. Mary Roberson.** She was born April 30th, 1817, and died June 20th, 1899, of pneumonia. She was the daughter of William and Anna Hogan, and was raised in Giles Co., Tenn. She received a hope in Christ when young, and I believe she joined Sugar Creek Church. She married James McGill, who died in Tennessee. After his death she moved with her parents to Arkansas, where she married my father, David Roberson. She loved the sound doctrine taught by Christ and his followers, and was quick to detect error, either in preaching or in practice. When she was taken sick she told us that she was going home, and begged us to shed no tears for her. She had been an invalid for twenty years. I said to her, "Mother, are you willing to go?" Her answer was, "Yes, God does all things well." O, it is so hard to part with mother, never to see her on earth again, but we believe our loss is her eternal gain. We lived near Wapanucka, in the Chickasaw Nation, at the time of mother's death. She was buried there on the 21st of June. Pray for me and mine. Her daughter,

REBECCA SMITH.

Kezia L. Brees died at the residence of her son, A. B. Brees, May 16th, 1902, aged 85 years, 9 months and 12 days. She was born August 4th, 1816, in Chemung Co., N. Y., whence she emigrated to the territory of Michigan, with her father's family, and other relatives, about 1831. She was married to Solomon M. Brees, Feb. 10th, 1841. When about sixteen years old she experienced a hope in Christ, and joined the Baptist church, to which faith she has unwaveringly held ever since, and when the division occurred she remained steadfast in the original faith of the Baptists, needing no improvement in methods or means of salvation upon the merit of Christ, and redemption by his blood. She always appreciated sound doctrine and order in the church, and endeavored to set an example of humility and love, yet faithful and forgiving. She died with no malice toward those whom she had thought were inconsiderate and harsh. Her last words breathed the sentiment of peaceful regard for all on earth.

Elder Jacob Gander spoke comfortingly at her funeral.

A. B. BREES.

OUR brother, **E. Wilson,** who departed this life May 7th, 1902, was born in Yancy Co., N. C., in the year 1846, and there grew up to manhood, and was married to our sister, whose former name was Luesey Hill. He then emigrated to Minnesota, where he joined the people known as the United Baptists; not being satisfied with them and their doctrine, he moved back to Palo Pinto Co., Texas, where he found the people

that he thought knew and believed the truth, the Old School Baptists, with whom he united, and was baptized in the year 1885, and lived a member of the Primitive Baptist Church until his death, always contending for the doctrine of salvation by grace. Brother Wilson leaves his wife and five children, together with many friends, to mourn, but we hope they mourn not as those who have no hope. He was always a great lover of Baptist company, and all brethren and sisters visiting him were kindly treated. To know brother Wilson was to love him. His whole mind was to talk of salvation by grace, and grace alone, and he often spoke of his weakness to do all as he wished to do.

J. T. ANDERSON.

TROY, Ind. Ter., May 10, 1902.

POETRY.

EXPERIENCE.

"GLORIOUS things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God;"
Not one promise shall be broken
To thy saints baptized in blood.
They shall see thee
Far beyond time's fire and flood.

They shall have faith's tribulation,
Wear sin's yoke of grief and shame;
Out of every kin and nation
Hear thy guilt-atoning fame;
Rising heavenward,
Boast in thy beloved name.

On the scrolls of earth, scarce written,
Graven in life's book they stand;
Through all ages slain and smitten,
Gathering still a lowly band,
Round their Savior,
Corns of wheat in death's dark land.

Who would choose the wordless sorrow
Daily crucifixion brings?
Who by nature's hope would borrow
Tears to dim its hope-poised wings?
'Tis thy gift, Lord,
Life alone life's conflict brings.

So a mighty race, yet lonely,
All their pathway traced in blood;
Serried ranks of visage homely,
Sons of Adam, sons of God;
Brave, yet timorous;
By his power their feet are shod.

MRS. J. STREET.

BRANTFORD, Ont., May 10, 1902.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$565 55
R. M. Clark, Arkansas	1 00
Total to date	$566 55

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ADDY, Washington, May 18, 1902.

VERY DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Please send the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to Addy, Washington, instead of Oregon City, Oregon, as I have taken up land here, and we intend to make this our future home. Would be glad to hear from any of the brethren, especially those in Washington. I am in Stevens Co., ten miles south of Collville. F. O. LONG.

MEETINGS.

THE sixty-ninth annual session of the Sandusky Regular Baptist Association, will be held with the Rocky Fork Church, in Marion Co., Ohio, commencing at 10 a. m. on Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1902. Those coming by rail will be met at Morral, on the Hocking Valley, and at Monnett, on the C., S. & H.

H. D. BISHOP, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held, the Lord willing, at the usual place, Aughrim schoolhouse, in the township of Brooke, Lambton Co., Ontario, five miles from Alvinston station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1902, and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

SILOAM Association, of Oregon and Washington, convenes June 13th, 14th and 15th, 1902. Brethren and friends will be met at the depot at North Yakima, Wash., June 12th, on arrival of east bound train, at 4 p. m., and the west bound at 2:30 p. m. Those intending to come by rail will please write W. J. Hess, R. D. 3, North Yakima, Wash. The place of meeting is about five miles north-west of the city, up the Natchez River.

THERE will be a two days meeting at Tapscott Church, in Warren Co., Ohio, on the third Sunday in June, and Saturday before. Those coming from the north, on the Mackinaw R. R., will get off at Carlisle, and inquire for Henry Marshall. Those coming on the electric cars will get off at Franklin. Visitors should arrive in Franklin by half past ten o'clock Saturday. Get off at the ticket office. All that love the Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth are invited to meet with us, whether in the church or out.

H. M. CURRY.

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THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 70. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1902. NO. 13.

CORRESPONDENCE.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 4, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Once more I will write you. I feel that I have once again been made to praise and give thanks to the Father of all mercies for giving me such a great feast. For a few days I have journeyed in such a lovely way that it seemed there were no thorns nor thistles by the way, but sweet, fragrant flowers, such as God's cheering and sweet promises, and a feeling of thankfulness for all his loving kindness and his protection over me in all my life.

Sunday I was not well enough to go to the meeting, but it was a most precious day, with not a cloud, and all light and grand; I had a feeling of humility given me out of the great storehouse of God; it seemed to me that I had a view in that storehouse, and O, how precious the things which were therein. There was the whole armor, the sword and the shield, the oil of healing, the balm, the sweet spices, the milk and the honey, the fountain of living waters, and the garments, which were O, how beautiful, of charity, of humility and of love, of peace and of sweet submission, all were there. I could not mention anywhere near all that I saw there, and I had a feeling of praise and adoration to him who giveth all things as he sees his children have need. I did feel that all would be well, for the Father was at the helm; no storm could harm us.

I now look back and see the dark clouds that I have been in, and that have been over me, at a time when all these things were locked from me, and I can now see that it is well to be in such darkness at times, for it gives a greater appreciation of the light. I sung with the song of David, concerning which I have often wondered how he could sing, after being in such darkness with the feeling of distance from God. I felt that I had a taste of his great joy when he sung, "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the Lord is good, his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations." The whole sixty-sixth Psalm seems to describe the praise I felt to the great and holy One. I did feel that he was omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, and that his name is holy and reverend.

Monday I wanted to read something; I had read the last number of the SIGNS through, and had enjoyed it so much, and one thing right here I wish to speak of: it gave me so much joy to read of so many who had been readers of the SIGNS for so many years saying that they were just the same as at first, and that the doctrine was being contended for just as when those strong forefathers wrote in its pages. How true it seemed that he will never leave nor forsake us. How faithful our God has been to keep us in the same good old way, when there are so many lo heres and lo theres. But his mercy endureth for ever. But to return, as I was saying, I wished to read something, and as I did not know just what to read, I thought of a letter from brother Coulter, which he had written me over two years ago, in answer to one from me with regard to the leaven and the unleavened bread. At the time I received it I knew it was good and true, but I had no great enjoyment in it, but as I read it on Monday it was as apples of gold in pictures of silver. When I finished reading it I said to myself, Why did I not enjoy that before? It seemed as though it were spoken to me, "Awake, thou that sleepeth, and arise from the dead," and it did seem that I had been asleep, but now was awake to the honor and praise of God. I read the letter over again, and felt that it was bread cast upon the waters. My mind was not so fruitful as brother Coulter wished it to be. How I would have rejoiced to hear him tell all that he saw in it. I will inclose the letter to you, and if you enjoy it as I did, I am sure that you will give all a chance to read it. All of us love brother Coulter, but none of us fully know his worth, as the Salem church knows it. I pray that the Lord will continue to strengthen him to feed and to comfort us in our low estate.

I have written much more than I intended. I so often write you of my darkness and gloom, that now that I have had a season of light, I desire to tell you also. May the Lord bless you in your ministry, and bless both you and brother Beebe in your editorial labors.

From your unworthy sister,

MARY HILL TERRY.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Dec. 7, 1899.

DEAR SISTER TERRY:—I was greatly pleased to receive your letter this evening. The subject of the leaven is truly an interesting field for meditation, inasmuch as it holds a prominent place in the types presented under the ceremonial law in the Old Testament Scriptures, and also is a part of the teaching in the record of the ministry of Jesus, and in the letters of the apostles. It is well for us always to keep in remembrance that all that took place in Israel as a nation, their manner of life, and all their works under the law, was but a type of all that is now realized and experienced by the children of God under the gospel, as spiritual Israel. When Moses received commandment of all that he should make, of all things that were to be used in the Jewish ceremonial service, God said to him, "And look that thou make them after their pattern which was showed thee in the mount." And as you know, the pattern of a thing is but the symbol of the reality. The view which you presented to me in your letter is in accordance with the christian experience. As you said, bread is that which supports and strengthens and nourishes the body, and the leaven in the bread represents the unrighteousness which is the natural element of the natural mind and the natural

body. Works for reward were the things to be accomplished under the law. The promise of reward to the children of Israel was, that when they were obedient they should eat the good of the land, and when disobedient they would be punished. Therefore the leaven fitly represents the works of the creature, which is the leaven of unrighteousness, and to which Jesus referred when he said to his disciples, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." The work of the unrighteous leaven still goes on, even in this our gospel day, keeping alive the vain desires and lusts of the flesh. And when Jesus put forth the parable, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened," he pointed to the great truth which has presented itself in all time, that the leaven of unrighteousness began its work with the woman in the garden of Eden, and its work will not be completed until the end of time. The "three measures of meal" signify the three dispensations. The first, from Adam to Moses; the second, from Moses to Christ; and the third, from Christ to the end of time. At the expiration of which the whole lump will be leavened. When the whole is leavened, then the work of the leaven ceases. Leavened bread supports, sustains and nourishes the natural body, and is pleasant to the natural appetite, because it is the element of the natural life. Unleavened bread is not pleasant to the natural taste because it is in opposition to the natural desires. Now the Israelites were commanded to eat unleavened bread in the special services rendering praise and thanksgiving to the God of their deliverance; manifesting themselves as passive in the hands of the God who was able to deliver them fully and completely without any works of their own hands. In the special feast of the institution of the Passover, when the lamb was slain, and its blood sprinkled upon the side posts and the upper door posts of their houses, they were commanded thus: "And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and WITH BITTER HERBS they shall eat it." And the Lord also commanded, "And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the Lord's passover." How I wish I had the time and opportunity to tell you the many wonderful and precious things that are herein presented in type. But I will just mention a few of them in outline, and I am sure your fruitful mind will gather precious handfuls from its contemplation, and that you will also draw water from the wells of salvation opened up before your delighted and enlightened mind. As you said in your letter, no man can teach you, but the Lord can make all things plain. The blood of the sacrifice sprinkled upon the door posts, signifies and points to the great atonement on Calvary. That the "blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin," and that the eternal life of all spiritual Israel is secure in the shedding of the blood of our gracious Redeemer, that they have already entered into the "holiest of all" by the blood of Christ. "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"—Heb. ix. 13, 14. When the last enemy, death, trav-

eled all through that land on that dreadful night, it could not enter beyond the blood of sprinkling upon the door posts. Whosoever hath Christ in him the hope of glory cannot die, for Jesus said, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."—John xi. 25, 26. The unleavened bread signifies dead works, and an entire dependence of the creature upon the Lord for deliverance. Then as soon as they had partaken of the passover feast, eaten with bitter herbs, (the sufferings and afflictions of the saints) then were they shod, and girded, with their staffs in their hand to begin that long journey out of Egypt into the wilderness, and on to the promised land. So the pilgrimage journey of the saints of which you have had experience, dear sister, is one continuous journey, and an incessant warfare until the end, and there is no discharge in this war.

You will please overlook the delinquencies in this letter, for I have written at intervals and in haste. I must now close, hoping to have the privilege of talking with you further on this interesting subject. And I may say to you, in the language of the apostle, the words which you quoted, and of which you have truly expressed the meaning, "Therefore let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." This do all the saints by the grace which doth work mightily in them.

Affectionately your brother,

B. F. COULTER.

SYRACUSE, Kansas, March 28, 1902.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—It is in much weakness, and with a feeling of unfitness and unworthiness, that I attempt to address you, yet it seems that I cannot get rid of the impression to write you, although questions arise in my mind as to whether it is from a desire or lust of the flesh to have my name and writing read by the readers of the SIGNS, and to try to crowd myself in with the dear people of God, or whether it be from a desire to edify and build up the feelings of the dear saints scattered throughout our land; I hope and trust that I am influenced by the holy Spirit, and trust that God will in his divine wisdom guide my pen and control my mind.

I have been a reader of Baptist papers about two years, but in that short time I have had more real enjoyment than in twelve years before, at which time I left my dear old home church, called Honey Creek, in Vigo Co., Ind., and came here to Kansas. I tried to find some Primitive Baptists for two or three years after I came west, and finally found three: brother Charles Mitchell, and brother Henry Holdren and wife, with whom my dear companion and I have had sweet communion, although then they were not members of any church, but believed the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone. They are now members of the church called Bethel, located nine miles north of Lamar, Colorado, of which myself and wife are also members. We found the church about two years ago by an enemy of the church writing in a slurring manner about it, and having it published in the County paper. He meant it for evil, but God meant it for good, as in the case of the brethren of Joseph, when they sold him to the Ishmaelites, to save much people alive. This dear little church has prospered ever since, and is still prospering as in the days of the

apostles, when the Lord added daily to the church of such as should be saved. The more the world and Satan persecutes the church of God, the stronger she grows, and the brighter she shines. If we go forward as this little church did, and as little David did, trusting in the God of Israel, we need not fear the Arminian world, with all her brood of institutions, such as Sabbath Schools, Bible societies, Tract societies and Mission boards, for they are nothing, and less than nothing and vanity, and will become unto us as did Goliath of Gath unto David. And this must be by faith.

Paul in Hebrews xi., speaks of many things done by faith, and through faith. In verse thirty-two of that chapter he says, "And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae, of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets." Then he tells what they did through faith, and what great things they suffered, of which time and space will not admit the telling here. In verses thirty-nine and forty he adds, "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Then in the beginning of chapter xii., he exhorts them to constant faith, saying, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and the Finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Yes, Jesus is seated at the right hand of the majesty in the heavens, making intercession for us. Let us think, dear brethren and sisters, of what the dear Savior suffered for us, if we are what we profess to be; no pen can ever write, nor tongue ever tell, nor can the mind of man ever draw the faintest picture of his suffering. O, then what manner of persons ought we to be? Let us think about this. Are we living the life we ought to live? Are we attending to the duty devolving upon us, or are we neglecting these things? Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Again he said, "A new commandment give I unto you, That ye love one another." Dear ones, how can we show that we do love one another? Is it not by showing forgiveness for each other's trespasses; by bearing one another's burdens; by trying to remove every obstacle out of the way which might cause a dear brother to stumble, and if any poor, weak sinner is overtaken in a fault, by going to him in the spirit of meekness and trying to reclaim him? If we do these things we shall accomplish much. Peter came to Jesus once and said, "Lord, oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus said unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven." Have any of us ever forgiven our brother this often? I think not. I do not understand that our erring brother must come and get down on his knees, and ask forgiveness, but even without the asking we ought to forgive. And if we know that our brother has cause to be offended with us, it is also our duty to go to that brother and in the spirit of love ask for his forgiveness. Also, if any brother or sister writes anything that we think they ought not concerning us, or

what we believe, let us forgive them. We all of us are ready to admit that we ourselves are prone to sin as are the sparks to fly upward, and therefore we ought to look over the faults of others.

Now, dear brethren editors, if I have written anything that in your judgment would wound the feelings of any one of the saints of God, I think it is your duty to point it out, or not to print it. There is no doubt in my mind that many dear ones have written on the spur of the moment, while they were feeling a little hurt at a brother, and have said things of which they would have been glad afterwards if they had not been printed.

I do love to read the letters written by the dear brethren and sisters, but it causes my poor heart to ache to see contention and strife among the dear people of God. Brethren, do not call each other hard names; the world will give us enough of such names. If we cannot all see alike upon all points, let us not fall out and say hard things; let us believe and say we differ honestly, and let us write more about the things upon which we agree. I know that I leave many things undone that I ought to have done, and do many things that I ought not to have done, and am many times made to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I look back over my life, and see that it has all been a failure. What have I ever done to show my love for the dear Savior for all his goodness to this poor, polluted worm of the dust? Surely he has blessed me all the days of my life, and very poor have been the returns of my heart. "When I would do good, evil is present with me."

When I was about sixteen, I trust that I was shown that God for Christ's sake had forgiven my sins; then a love for him and his people sprang up in my heart, which I trust is still there.

I must bring my letter to a close; I hope that God will bless his truth, and pardon error, and that he will cause all jars and discords to cease among the brethren, and bind us all together with his love, and help us to esteem our brethren as better than ourselves.

And now may the grace of God, and the Spirit of our blessed Savior rule in us, and reign over us in all our dealings one toward another, is the prayer of your unworthy brother, if a brother at all,

A. G. HURST.

[To our readers we commend the kind and humble tone of the above letter. The most important thing is to know and hold to the truth. Then it ought to be always remembered that the truth ought to be held and taught in love. Let there be no swerving from the truth, but let us love all who know the grace of God indeed. Earnestly contending for the truth is perfectly consistent with great forbearance toward those who may not see it clearly. We all see but in part. We hope to be also kept in the use of kind words, and not to be left to call any one hard names. There is no need of this at any time.—ED.]

RUSHING, Texas, May, 1902.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SON:—On the 23d, 24th and 25th of April, 1902, I attended the old ex-confederate reunion held in the city of Dallas, Texas, where I met many old comrades, and a host of people from the various States and Territories of the United States. Previous arrangements had been made for an Old Baptist meeting to be held in the Court House at the same time, which was the most important of my visit to Dallas; to meet many of the dear Old School Baptist

brethren whom I had never seen before. This was an unspeakable pleasure to me. The coming together of many dear brethren from the different sections of our country to mingle their voices in hymns of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord of heaven and earth, far exceeded in importance the great clamor of any earthly reunion. During the hostilities of war, great armies are called out. Each company or regiment having captains and colonels, but in the kingdom of heaven, the church, one God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the true and living God, is the great Captain of our salvation. What a contrast between the worship of God, and that of the world. While the thousands were rushing to the different camps of the old soldiers, looking for their friends and relatives, and other thousands were pressing at the entrance of the auditorium to hear the speeches of some generals who commanded in the southern army, the Old School Baptists could be seen as a little handful making their way through the crowded streets to the Court House, there to bow before the most high God, and to pour out their petitions unto the Lord and to worship toward his holy temple, ascribing greatness unto Israel's God. Here I met many brethren in the ministry for the first time in my life, and among them the two dear servants of God, Elders Boaz, of Fulton, Ky., and Wm. Lively, of Opelika, Ala., whom I had long desired to see, as I had read after them in their published writings many years, and knew them by reputation as sound and able ministers of the New Testament. After the meeting closed at Dallas, Elders Boaz and Lively came to Arlington, and preached to the church near there on Saturday 26th, and then to Fort Worth, Sunday 27th. Here I met the dear brethren again and heard them with ability speak forth the things that become sound doctrine; preaching the fullness and power of the eternal God, and the nothingness of poor, finite man. From here I accompanied the two brethren to Keller, Texas, their next appointments, for Monday and Tuesday, 28th and 29th. Here we met Elder A. D. Bourland, pastor of the church at that place, and a small company of dear brethren and sisters, where again the two Elders addressed us in the fear of the Lord; preaching ably salvation by grace alone, to the satisfaction and hearty approval of the church. After this service the two brethren went to the pleasant home of Elder Bourland to rest for the night.

From here the two Elders went to Liberty church, on Wednesday, 30th. Here we had another good meeting, and the preaching was all of a piece. Now after our feasting under the preaching of Elders Boaz and Lively, the separation came, and we were obliged to bid the two brethren farewell, praying God to prosper them on their way, and to crown their efforts with peace and reconciliation to the divine will. Those dear brethren made a favorable impression among the Baptists of Texas, and we hope, if it is the Lord's will, they will come again to us with the same consolation, in the fullness of the blessings of the gospel of Christ.

Dear brother Beebe, I have written the above at the request of many brethren, giving a little sketch of Elder Boaz's and Lively's visit to this country, and our appreciation of their stay among us, whom we fully indorse, and are grateful to find sound in the faith, walking in the fear of the Lord, and immovably fixed in the unlimited sovereignty of God, and salvation by grace alone, unconditionally. It re-

joiced our poor hearts, and gives us renewed assurance that the Lord is God, and beside him there is none else. We now submit to your better judgment whether or not to the publication of this. God bless you, and long live the dear old SIGNS, to contend for the truth, is our prayer.

ASA HOWARD.

CARDINGTON, Ohio, April 27, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I feel that I must tell you that I appreciate the dear SIGNS, and that I often think of you. I am not indifferent concerning my obligation to you. If I do not receive the money soon will try to borrow it. Have just been reading the SIGNS of April 15th, how sweet it is to my taste. I am glad the Lord gives you boldness to contend so earnestly for the faith. There are so many good letters I would like to speak of, but you know their merit as well as I. The Lord has given us to enjoy the same things. Is it not wonderful and comforting to read our own experiences of hope, fear, joy and sorrow, from the pen of some brother or sister? When we can see the likeness of the mark in our forehead reflected back from their own, it causes us to take courage. Elder Durand's letters are especially comforting to me. I see no contradiction between your letter and his in the latest SIGNS, there are times to nurse with milk, and also times to rebuke sharply. I felt thankful for both letters. I would be glad if I could just give you my hand in fellowship and love in the Lord.

We have things here to make the heart ache. But O blessed thought, the Lord omnipotent reigneth! O, my brother, I cannot praise him enough, or love him enough. How beautiful are all his attributes. In every one perfection shines. And nothing can separate us from his love and care. What comfort to know that he is able to keep us, and to preserve the honor of his name. It seems strange that we should fear or be sad. But it is decreed that we must suffer with him, and we know that he doeth all things well. May his will be done. I am so glad he is able to fulfill everything he hath purposed; so thankful that the government is upon his shoulder. He hath formed a people for his praise; he hath caused them to walk in his statutes; he hath caused them to abhor all their works, to have no confidence in themselves. When I have a view of what I am, I wonder that I ever hope in his mercy. To say that I abhor myself, seems hardly to express it. But I cannot forget the whispers of his love, efficacious cleansing of his blood. O what love, to love a sinner like me. None but an omnipotent power and perfect wisdom could have saved me; none but an almighty God could keep me all the way. I dare not present any of my works and expect return for them. I dare not! for I in myself am vile, helpless and poor. I can give him nothing but sin. But in him have I righteousness and strength. Yea, all things are mine not only through him, but in him, for we are in him, and he in us. One with Christ, our sins were his, his obedience ours. Beautiful, wonderful truth; our hope of salvation is Christ in us; there is complete fullness in him, and he leadeth us in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. I grow to despise myself more and more, and to know that I cannot do good unless the Spirit leads and causeth me to walk in the way. The work is the Lord's, and he that hath begun a good work in us will perform it to the end.

With love in the Lord, your sister,

JOIE E. WICKHAM.

KANSAS, Ill., May 26, 1902.

BENTON L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—Having a desire to once more address the dear readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I do so, if you think proper to publish it. I have been a reader of the SIGNS, and an occasional correspondent, for sixty years, and have found no change in the doctrine it has from the first advocated. I am naturally much drawn to it. Most of the first correspondents, as well as your dear old father, its founder and able editor, have passed away, but the Lord has raised up others to fill their places, so the truth is published and sent amongst the faithful in Christ Jesus. Go on, my brother, contend earnestly for the truth, it will stand when all men-made theories fail, truly as the prophet said, "The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." An inheritance is something that comes from another. So Jacob is from the Lord, and is as secure as the one from whence he came. The apostle Paul said this is true where he has said, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Romans xviii. 38, 39. This fact, brother Beebe, being so completely established in holy writ, is a sure foundation to stand upon. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid." Again, "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." We may well inquire just here, What is this seal? It is no more nor less than the blood of Christ, and we read the names of his people are "graven in the palms of his hands," and in addition to this he, Jesus, has said, "As I live, ye shall live also." So, dear, trembling child of God, take courage. The salvation of God's people is finished, and not one shall perish, but all "shall be brought off more than conquerors through him that loved us, and gave himself for us." It seems to me there is no conditionalism in all these proofs, neither for time or eternity, and that "salvation is of the Lord." I have no hope other than this, either for time or eternity. This has been my stay and hope for the last sixty years, and now that I have almost reached my four score years, I desire no other salvation.

In closing this I feel to be bidding farewell to all of God's people so far as writing is concerned, and my prayer to God is that he may still keep me to my end, and that all of you that read this may be blessed in Christ Jesus.

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior be glory and majesty dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

JAMES M. TRUE.

PLEASE BE SURE

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Please be particular about this.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Salem Church, at Philadelphia, Pa., May 21st, 22d and 23d, 1902, to the churches of which this Association is composed, sends greeting with love in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We follow a long continued custom in sending you this Circular Letter. While new isms and doctrines are extant in the world to satisfy the cravings of modern fleshly ideas, and to propagate new matter to stimulate the waning interests in the so-called religious world, we desire to "Remove not the old landmark, and enter not into the fields of the fatherless." Not because we are apathetic, and prefer to run in grooves established by our fathers, but because the law of God which was established and written in the hearts of the fathers still retains its power undiminished and undimmed in the hearts of the children. God changeth not. "He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever." His laws are not subject to change. His church that was set up in the wilderness is in the wilderness still. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father," is ample and sufficient in this enlightened age, as it was in the dark days when the followers of Jesus were hunted and persecuted so that they, in sheepskins and in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. We, as the church of the living God, desire above all things to be set as a seal upon the heart, and upon the arm of our gracious Redeemer, for the love of God, and for the glory of God, and not for the glory of man. A landmark that remains in continuance, and is handed down from generation to generation, gives evidence by its continuity that it points all lookers thereunto in the right direction. The advice of Gamaliel, a doctor of the law in the time of the apostles, to the high priest and the council at Jerusalem was this: "Refrain from these men, and let them alone, for if this council or this work be of men it will come to nought. But if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it." God works in the hearts of his people, and they are joined together as one body, having one faith. They worship God in Spirit and in truth, and not according to the dictates of reform councils or conventions of men who deem themselves wise, though they have been blind from their birth. The Scriptures of truth need not that men should revise them in order that they may conform to modern notions. They are the simple testimony of Jesus. To those to whom they are vital and necessary they cannot be changed. The dear, ignorant child of God goes to them for instruction in righteousness; for the edifying of his mind. And if good works is the result of his inheritance in Christ Jesus, it is because the Scriptures have thoroughly furnished him unto them. It does look sometimes as if the modern scalpel would endeavor to eradicate the Father's mark from the foreheads of the saints and place there instead the mark of self-righteousness. Of God Job saith, "He is of one mind and who can turn him?" The rulings of his mind are surely according to his own pleasure and will. He has fixed the heavens in their majesty, he hath laid the earth's foundations. All worlds and all creatures are in the hollow of his hand. His wisdom is perfect. He knoweth the end from the beginning. Shall man presume to reach him through the avenues of science, or to influence him with their pharisaic deeds of pretended goodness?

Even Jesus in his humanity declared, "There is none good but God." None of the works of the creature have ever carried him into the kingdom of Christ, or brought him one whit nearer to the tree of life from which he was driven in the beginning and separated therefrom by the cherubim and flaming sword. The word of the Lord for Israel came to Joshua, saying, "And I have given you a land for which you did not labor, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them; of the vineyards and olive yards which you planted not do ye eat." The wisdom of the Lord was displayed in all that Israel did, and in all that Israel said, and not by any wisdom of their own. Men in this day and time think they are wiser than their forefathers. They strut about on the stage of this generation, saying, Listen to me. Be guided by my wisdom. The old paths and ancient landmarks were good enough for the ignorance of the dark ages; but we are wise above our fellows. Listen, we say, to us. But how different the language of the apostle in writing to the church at Corinth. He says, "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise let him become a fool that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God: for it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. Therefore let no man glory in men." The points of doctrine which make up the fundamental principles of the foundation of the church of Christ can never be annulled by whatever changes man may make. Christ is the chief corner-stone of that perfect building of God, which is his church. And it is built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. They all testified to the coming of Jesus. And we know that the testimony of Jesus is the very spirit of prophecy. The prophets testified in prophetic language that Jesus should come. While the apostles testified in no less sure language that he has already come. The burden of all preaching to-day is that Jesus rules and reigns in the hearts of his people. That God has declared the end from the beginning. There is nothing to change. From ancient times the things which are not yet done are known to him, and ordained by him. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." This is what we call the predestination of God, and is a part of the foundation of the prophets and apostles upon which the church of Christ is built. Election: How precious is this doctrine to them who have come to the end of their six days of labor and toil under the law. Written in their hearts and presented to their understanding are these words of truth and light. "We are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Again, "Ye are a chosen generation," &c. Again, "For the Lord hath chosen Zion. He hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever. Here will I dwell for I have desired it." The contingency is never with man to choose salvation. The word of the Lord hath gone forth. His law is established. His chosen are forever blest. They desire to walk in his paths, and to work in his vineyards, and labor in his fields. They pray not to "Enter into the fields of the fatherless." Only a "Thus saith the Lord," will satisfy them when they are contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. The fields into which the modern religious world would enter to-day are the "fatherless." They are

without foundation; they find a starting place and a lodgment in the vain imaginations of the minds of men. Other points of the whole doctrine of God our Savior are indelibly written in our hearts. Let us be simple minded, desiring rather to become fools than wise, that all glory may be ascribed to the God of our salvation. For all his works shall praise him, from the least of them to the greatest of them.

J. N. BADGER, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

The Delaware River Association convened with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, N. J., May 28th, 29th and 30th, 1902, to the churches of which she is composed, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been a long established custom at these annual gatherings of the Association to address to the churches some thoughts with regard to the things in which, as believers, we are concerned, and which it is good for us to contemplate. We desire to follow this custom at this session also. In the past it has been generally the custom to present some portion of the word of God for our consideration, and to call attention to the things which have seemed to be presented in it. To this custom also we think it well to adhere, and so for your consideration at this time we desire to speak of the words of inspiration found in 2 Timothy iii. 16, 17. This Scripture reads as follows: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

First, we desire to call attention to the fact that the very language of the text itself shows how important it is that we do carefully consider the Scriptures. In this day when, among almost all men, there is such a great indifference to the teaching of the word of God, it is doubly needful that we all should have our pure minds stirred up to still more reverence for the word, and to a still greater care in the interpretation of it. If indeed we be lovers of God, we shall in proportion to the depth and earnestness of that love, also hold the words of God in reverence and love, and shall be exceedingly anxious to know what they do teach with regard to God himself, and with regard to men, and with regard to both the law and the gospel.

Let us then come to the consideration of some things which seem to us to be embraced in the above named text. It may be well to first notice one expression in the verse preceding, as it will help us to define what is intended by the words, "All Scripture," in the sixteenth verse. In the preceding verse Paul said to Timothy that from a child he had known the Scriptures. There can be no manner of doubt that Paul in this language meant the Scriptures of the Old Testament, for then the New Testament was not written. This however does not at all imply that now the books of the New Testament are not to be considered as also being of that Scripture which has been given by inspiration of God. Surely as Baptists we do not need to say that we believe that the New Testament is of equal authority with the Old Testament, so far as divine inspiration is concerned; but still it remains true that when Paul wrote these words he meant the Old Testament Scriptures. These Scriptures were able to make Timothy wise unto salvation. Now it is of this Scripture that Paul in the text says that it was all given by inspiration of God.

What does this mean? Does it mean that each and every word in the Scriptures is a statement of truth; divine, infallible truth? A moment's consideration of the subject will show that this could not have been his meaning. These words of Paul were written by the Spirit of God living and moving in him, and were therefore altogether true. And so Paul could not have meant anything that was not true with regard to the Scriptures of the Old Testament. We have recorded there the sayings of evil men, and of false prophets, and of Satan himself. Things coming from the lips of men altogether false and blasphemous are recorded there. These men were not inspired by the Spirit of God, who is called the Spirit of truth. For instance, the friends of Job said many things to him which were false, and of them God said to them at the end that they had not spoken the thing which was right concerning him as had his servant Job. Satan's words to our first parents were lies, all of them, for he is a liar from the beginning, and the father of lies. And so many things recorded in the Old Testament Scriptures as having been done and spoken by men, were evil and false in themselves. The men who did and spoke them were not inspired of God in so doing and speaking.

What then does this language mean, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God"? It does mean among other things that we may rely upon every statement of the Scriptures as recording an actual truth, without any mistake as to its correctness. The historians of events which took place were inspired, so that they could not make any mistake in recording those events. We may be sure that Job's friends, for instance, did say just the things recorded of them. We may be sure that each event in the history of Israel, and in the record of other nations, and cities, and men, is precisely as there stated. Not only must men be inspired of God to declare events yet in the future, so that there shall be no error in their prophesy, but also those who recorded past events must have the perfect guidance of the same spirit to enable them to avoid error, and to state the exact truth. So also all that is said for instance in the Psalms regarding the workings of grace in the soul, with the conflicts of mind and heart through which David passed, while being a record of his own soul's travel, yet must be guarded and guided by the inspiration of God, else we could not be sure that the record is true. And if we cannot be sure that this is so, then we must be plunged in perpetual doubt as to whether our own exercises are what we have hoped they were, namely, the conflicts of the believer in the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit.

There must be no limiting of the word "Scripture" as used in the text, save as Paul limited it, and that was to the books known by us as the Old Testament Scriptures. The word Scripture is used in the New Testament about fifty times, and in every place means the records of the Old Testament. Of many things in the life of the dear Redeemer it is said that they were done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. We cannot in the limits of this letter of course refer to them all, but all mean the same thing, the written word of the Old Testament. If we accept the words of Paul as the words of truth, we then must believe that every word of the Old Testament was recorded just as the Holy Ghost would have it recorded. Every statement made there is a true statement of what did actually take place, and of what was ac-

tually said by either the enemies or friends of God. We can go to them with absolute confidence, and be sure that we shall make no mistake in receiving them as true.

Now, furthermore, Paul says that they are all profitable. This must seem to be so, if we do indeed believe that our God has by his Spirit written them for us. We could not believe that anything needless would be placed in his book by an all-wise God. Some lesson of either comfort, or warning, or rebuke, or instruction, must be in every line, in every word, as the apostle here declares. Even the narrative concerning ungodly men and their ungodly deeds is profitable for us. Even the words recorded as having been spoken by Satan contain in them some lesson to profit. Our God takes even the wrath of men and of devils, and makes it work to his praise and our good. The mariner's chart must point out the shoals and rocks and quicksands, as well as the ports of refuge, and the channels in which it is safe to travel. One is as needful and useful and profitable to the mariner as the other. Therefore we have in the whole Scriptures, both of the Old and the New Testament, untruth set before us as well as truth, and both are labeled, so that he who runs may read. If a sunken rock is pointed out, we may be sure it is just where it is marked. If a safe channel is marked out, we may be sure that it is safe. There is no mistake in the chart which God has given us. All, therefore, are profitable to be considered. How important that we should consider them. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." We cannot then insist too much upon the absolute truth of every statement in the word of God. Deep, spiritual meaning is found in every portion of the word it is true, yet the literal events recorded there did literally take place, and this must not be doubted or denied. If the literal truth of Bible statements be denied, then we have no certain basis upon which to trace out the spiritual signification. For instance, Joseph's brethren did sell him into Egypt. If not, then the type is of no value. The shadow becomes so shadowy that it is evident that there is no substance behind it. Jesus Christ was actually born of the virgin Mary, and did actually bear our nature, and was actually clothed in flesh, and did actually die the death of the cross. All took place really, and of this whole history the Old Testament prophesied. If this be not so, then we have no basis of hope or faith, and we are yet altogether in the darkness and blindness of those to whom no revelation has been vouchsafed. There must be no shadow of a doubt cast upon the absolute truthfulness of the whole Bible. The moment that such doubt overshadows the word, that moment hope and faith and love sink down in despair, and all our comforts die. But when we are assured that all is as recorded, then indeed we can rejoice and greatly desire that these true records might be opened up to our understanding, so that we can see and rejoice in the spiritual things dimly made manifest in the letter of the word. Herein is the profit of the Scriptures to us.

Now, brethren, it does not seem needful to us to dwell in this letter upon each of the things named by the apostle in which the Scriptures are profitable. He names doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness, as embracing the things in which they are profitable. And we have no doubt that these things cover all the ground of that which

is needful to the believer. The word "doctrine" here signifies, as it does in almost all places where it is used, not so much the act of teaching, as the thing that is taught, and the effect that that teaching has. The word "reproof" means here rather conviction of wrong when one has erred; while the word "correction" signifies "setting one right who has erred." The last expression, "instruction in righteousness," has the force of "nurturing," as one would nurture a child by feeding it with food proper for it, that it might grow in stature and strength. Now the Scriptures are profitable in all these things, and it would be hard to find anything needful to the child of God which might not be placed under one or the other of these heads.

But we desire for a moment to call attention to one very important expression in the text, viz: that the "man of God" may be perfect. The Scriptures are then for the benefit of the man of God. This is but one form of expression by which believers are designated, but it is a very forcible and important one. The man of God is one who has been chosen of God, loved of God, redeemed unto God, born of God, kept by the power of God, and at last brought home to God. He is one who loves God, and serves God, and hopes for the presence of God. He trusts in God, and finds all his help and hope in God. What an exalted title, and how solemn the relationship signified. And yet even the weakest and most insignificant of the flock bear this exalted title, and this holy privilege. This man of God feels his need of teaching in the truth, he desires constant conviction of all his wrong doing and thinking and feeling. He desires to be corrected or restored to the right way when wrong, and also that he may grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord. Here it is stated that the Scriptures are profitable to him in all these things that he feels the need of. How gracious are these words to him. How full of rejoicing is this truth. How much such an one will prize the book of God, and how greatly will he desire the presence of the Spirit to open the Scriptures to him and to apply them.

Surely we do not need to remind you, dear brethren, of our need above all things of the presence of the holy Spirit to enable us to understand the Scriptures, but we will gladly remind you that ye have an unction from the holy One, and need not that any man teach you. Our blessed Redeemer does from time to time walk and talk with us by the way, and at such times when we are sad and have need, he does open our understanding, that we may understand the Scriptures. And so in the Scriptures we have a perfect rule for all our faith and for all that we practice, so that all that is not expressly sanctioned in the word is to be avoided. The Scriptures thoroughly furnish us unto all good works. We need no other chart for our guidance. The man of God who possesses in his soul what that name means, wants no other guide than the word of God. He finds there just what he needs. Its exhortations, its commandments, its promises, its warnings, its reproofs, are all just suited to his need, and they all become in his need an excellent oil, that does not break his head.

In conclusion we would say, May the great Author of the Scriptures, who has given them to us, also put in our hearts a great and abiding reverence for all that he has spoken to us and recorded in his word. And may he continually open our hearts to receive the word gladly, as he did the heart of Lydia in the former days.

May God bless you all with an experimental growth in knowledge and in grace.

S. H. DURAND, Moderator.
ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, at Middletown, N. Y., June 4th, 5th and 6th, 1902, to the churches composing this Association sends christian greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—In continuance of a custom practiced by this Association for many years, a Circular Letter has been prepared for the consideration of the brethren constituting this body, and, if accepted, to be published with our Minutes, as an expression of the faith of the members comprising this Association. The writer of a letter of this character should ever keep in mind that it differs from a personal communication, in that if it be adopted, it becomes an expression of the faith of the Association, and therefore he should be very careful and not weave in anything of a personal character, or embrace the opportunity to defend any personal views he may have, that he knows are not generally acceptable to the brethren of the Association. Likewise the Association sitting in council on the letter, should be no respecter of persons, and not for fear of hurting the feelings of the brother who wrote the letter, permit anything to pass that they feel is not in keeping with the faith and practice of the Association, but should deal faithfully, so that if the letter is received to be published with the Minutes, each member of the Association would feel willing, if needs be, to sign it as their own personal letter.

That the Association may not be embarrassed with any confusing or ambiguous questions, let us select a plain declaration of Scripture to write upon, about which there can be no doubt as to even its literal meaning. This we will find in the gospel as recorded by John, third chapter and sixth verse, viz:

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit."

These words were spoken to Nicodemus, by our Lord, in answer to his inquiry, How a man could be born again? He wanted Jesus to explain to his natural understanding how such a thing could be a physical possibility? But Jesus did not gratify Nicodemus' carnal curiosity by philosophizing or resorting to vain reasoning to convince his natural mind, but declared to him that all that is born of the flesh, natural wisdom included, belongs to the flesh, and avails nothing in understanding the things of the Spirit.

There is no mistaking the import of this language, it could not read plainer. It divides everything in nature and grace into two distinct classes, and only two, for there is no blending of them, or middle ground. This unalterable truth runs as a middle wall of partition through the whole inspired word, from Genesis to Revelation, and through the experience of every saint. In fact every thought, word or act in all the universe, is on one or the other side of this wall; there is no merging of the two natures; each must remain as they are born, as long as time lasts, and each can only exist in its own element. It is as utterly impossible to change that which is born natural, into spiritual, as it is to change that which is born spiritual, into natural; they are as opposite as the east is from the west, and all efforts to change the natural into the spiritual, can only result in confusion. This striving to transform the flesh into

the Spirit, is what creates the christian warfare. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Every one that has been taught by the holy Spirit, knows how fruitless have ever been their efforts to change their old carnal nature, and yet having this knowledge, they still continue looking to the flesh to see if they cannot find some evidence that it is growing more spiritual, and invariably they have to turn away sadly disappointed and discouraged. But the trouble is, they are looking on the wrong side of the line; among the things born of the flesh, to find spiritual comfort. To just the extent we think we are successful in our search for something good in our flesh, to just that degree we are qualified for the companionship of the pharisee, and disqualified to say with Paul, "In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing."

Is there a child of God that has not often been sorely tried in their endeavors to discern whether certain acts, or thoughts and intents of their heart, were of the flesh, or of the Spirit? They have learned by sad experience how closely the flesh can counterfeit the Spirit, and many times when they have thought they were actuated by the Spirit, and their motives were the best, have they been afterwards shown that it was all of the flesh, and prompted by a selfish desire for admiration, or prominence among the brethren. Perhaps they have attended the assembly of the saints, and attempted to speak to their comfort and edification, and felt that they had some liberty, and thought, Surely this was of the Spirit, but afterwards have been shown by the light of the Spirit that they were more rejoiced over the successful way they were able to express themselves, than they were concerned about the honor and glory of God. Thus being so often deceived in *their best efforts*, they are led to inquire, How are we to know when we are truly obedient, and influenced by the Spirit? There is no safer way to determine this question, than to appeal to the inspired word, and there we find the distinction between flesh and Spirit clearly defined, for the Scriptures declare that the flesh *works*, but the Spirit *bears fruit*. Paul tells us in Galatians what are the *works* of the flesh, and also what is the *fruit* (not fruits) of the Spirit. Now whatever is produced as a result of our works, belongs to the flesh, but that which is of the Spirit, is manifested as the fruit, which comes forth and matures without any effort on its own part, but wholly as the result of life within itself. And of this fruit of the Spirit, the first of the beautiful cluster mentioned by Paul is, Love, which is the life of the fruit, next joy, then peace, &c. It should be marked that joy and peace are as much the fruit of the Spirit as is love, and are no more obtainable by the voluntary efforts of the saints, than love, and who that has an experience of grace, will say that we can of our own volition command the love of God to be shed abroad in our hearts? Or who when it is the pleasure of God to so unspeakably bless them as to pour out his holy Spirit upon them, can prevent this heavenly fruit, joy, peace, &c., from coming forth? God has his set times to favor his children, and he will prepare each and every one of them in his providence, either by sore afflictions, or whatever way he sees fit, to bear this divine fruit, and all the efforts of the flesh to force the yielding of this fruit, outside of God's appointed seasons, can but result in the production of a counterfeit, void of all spiritual life.

How beautifully the figure of the vine and the branches portrays Christ and the members of his body. The life is transmitted through the vine from the root, which is the reservoir of the life. So our spiritual "life is hid with Christ in God," and through Christ, in his mediatorial character as the vine, this life is conveyed to the branches, and from the branches the fruit is put forth as the effect of this life. No effort is exercised by the material substance of the branch. But, says one, The branch is not conscious like man, therefore the figure is not complete. In answer to this we will first say, If any are not satisfied with the figure they must settle the matter with the Author of it. As to the consciousness of man, or his carnal mind, if tested by the line drawn in the text, it will be found that they belong among the things born of the flesh. In fact, the neutral condition of the material of the branch, while in no wise spiritual, is in a far more favorable condition than man, with his boasted reasoning faculties, for all are born of the flesh, both his mental and physical power, and the fact that man is possessed of a natural intellect, instead of giving him pre-eminence, only separates him farther from God and holiness. Because the carnal mind of man is itself enmity to God, and it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. It sets itself up in judgment over the things of the Spirit, and rejects all that it cannot conform to its logic. This conflict between natural reason and spiritual revelation will never cease while we remain in the flesh, for one is born of the flesh, and the other is born of the Spirit, and it is only by the direct power of the Spirit that we are ever kept from being carried away by the philosophy and vain reasoning of the natural mind.

May God give us divine wisdom to draw the line between the things of the flesh, and the things of the Spirit, and grace to enable us to hold fast that which is good.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Salem Church, in Philadelphia, to the corresponding associations and churches with which we correspond, sends christian good will.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We are glad to inform you that our meeting has been to us a season of enjoyment and encouragement because of the manifest grace and favor of our God abounding unto us. Our several churches are abiding in harmonious peace, love and fellowship, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

Our meeting is largely attended, not only by our own churches, but also by brethren of our faith and order from distant associations and churches, all uniting with one heart and one voice in the exaltation of our Redeemer to the praise of his grace, who loved us and gave himself for us.

Our next session will be held, if the Lord will, with the Bryn Zion Church, in Kent Co., Del., where we cordially invite you to meet with us in May, 1903, where and when we may again manifest our love and fellowship to one another in the name and Spirit of Christ, our eternal bond of union. Blessed be his holy name.

J. N. BADGER, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Kingwood Church, to the associations, corresponding meetings and churches with which we correspond, sends greeting in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—It is written,

"As in water face answereth to face," so the heart of man with his friend; so with the association of brethren in the appointed meetings of the church, as they join in songs of praise and thanksgiving to our God for his love and tender care over the redeemed subjects of his grace, brought into fellowship through the revelation of the Spirit, and are made partakers of that life that separates them from the vain things of this time state, and unites them together in the enjoyment of the blessings of that life of which they have a foretaste while journeying through this wilderness world, manifesting the perfect work of Christ in their salvation, and preservation unto eternal glory.

We have received your messengers and correspondence, laden with the rich fruits of the Spirit, and have set together in a heavenly place in Christ Jesus.

Letters from our churches report the Spirit's work in calling redeemed subjects of God's grace to Zion's solemn feasts, through the liquid tomb, to a resurrection and newness of life, realizing that old things have passed away, and all things become new. And many have departed from us to their inheritance with the saints in the realms of eternal glory.

The events of the past year confirm to the Lord's people that the King Eternal reigns in heaven and on earth, accomplishing all his purposes concerning his people and the inhabitants of the earth, and it becomes us whether in sorrow or affliction, prosperity or adversity, to bow in humble submission to his will, knowing that he reigns in righteousness, and rules in justice for the good of his people.

The blessings of the gospel of the Son of God have been presented to us during this meeting in harmony and demonstration of the Spirit, witnessing to us that there is one Lord, one faith and one baptism, unto which we are called, in one hope of our calling. Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, where Christ our forerunner hath entered.

Our next meeting is appointed to be held with the Southampton church, Bucks Co., Pa., to commence on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1903, at 10 o'clock a. m., when we hope to receive your messengers and correspondence in the love and fellowship of the gospel.

S. H. DURAND, Moderator.

ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, at Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., June 4th, 5th and 6th, 1902, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth christian love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more we feel encouraged to address you. The God of all comfort has been pleased that we meet at our usual time as an association, to receive your messengers, and messages of love and fellowship. How glad we are to know you are steadfast in the apostle's doctrine. We are also glad to state that we abide in the same, having faith and hope in God. Our session now about to close has been a pleasant one. Your ministers have preached Jesus Christ, and him crucified, with power, and in demonstration of the Spirit. No uncertain sound has been heard. We desire a continuation of your christian correspondence.

Our next session will be held, the Lord willing, with the Ebenezer Old School Baptist church, in New York city, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, before the second Sunday in June, 1903.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1902.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ROMANS VIII. 22, 23.

"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

Brother W. T. Myers, of Tyron, Texas, requests our views on the above Scripture, especially the last verse, and in reply we will say,

First, that there is in all probability no Scripture upon which more divergent views have been held by those who know and love the truth, than the above named portion of the word. We do not feel that we are any wiser than any of those who have written upon this theme, yet we do feel that it is our privilege to present such things as seem to us to belong to the theme, and leave the matter to the judgment of the brethren. It becomes us to tread carefully where brethren, equally precious, and equally lovers of the truth, have differed. It becomes us all to tread carefully whenever we consider any portion of the inspired word; the things of the Spirit must not be handled lightly. We desire at least to always speak and write reverently concerning what the word presents. Most of all do we desire to feel our dependence upon the Spirit of truth to take of the things of Jesus and show them unto us.

The first and most important question arising in the consideration of the text is this, Who or what is intended by the words, "creature," or "the whole creation," used in the text, and connection? For a long time we have been convinced that these words mean just the believer, the child of God, of whom Paul has been writing all through this wonderful chapter. It is the man in Christ Jesus, the man made free from the law of sin and death, who is not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, in whom Christ dwells, whose mortal body shall be quickened by the Spirit that dwells in him, who is led by the Spirit of God, and is a son of God, who has not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, by which he cries, Abba, Father, and who is an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Jesus Christ, who suffers in this present time, but in whom the glory of God shall finally be revealed. All these things are said of the believer, in the preceding portion of the chapter.

Second, we do not understand these things to be said of the Spirit alone, by which we cry, Abba, Father, and which dwells in the child of God, nor are they said of the sinner alone, in whom this Spirit dwells, but of the believer, who is the sinner in whom dwells the Spirit of God, crying, Abba, Father, and by which this sinner himself cries, Abba, Father. The sinner who is still dead in trespasses and sins is not meant, and neither is the Spirit of God, aside from the sinner in whom he dwells, meant by these words. But the sinner redeemed and quickened into divine life, and now living unto God is, as we understand, intended by the creature in the text.

Concerning this creature the apostle

says, verse nineteen, that his earnest expectation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. The word "expectation" here means, "a looking for," and includes both the thought of desire and expectation. It seems to us that this text means just what John said in his first epistle, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." The creature is now a child of God, but the full glory of that sonship is yet veiled. We are not yet what we desire to be, and we do not yet see what we desire to see. Therefore believers are said to be waiting and desiring and expecting what has been promised, and what their own experience has brought them to love. This is the full manifestation of what their sonship means. As long as life here shall endure will these words express their attitude. The aged in natural life, as well as the young; he that has been on the King's highway many years, as well as he who entered the way but yesterday, are still waiting for this full manifestation, when we shall be what we desire to be, and see the full glory of God. We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

Now, verse twenty, the apostle says that this "creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." The word "vanity" here seems to mean all that becomes a trial and source of sorrow in the life of the believer. The word in itself means uselessness, and this is the constant feeling of the child of God; he cannot do the good that he would; he cannot love and serve God as he would; he cannot be of the least use to his brethren, as he desires to be. He is made subject to this as a part of his experience to humble him and abase him, that he may learn from whence his strength and righteousness comes. It is not willingly with him; he desires to be of use, and cannot be satisfied to see that he is nothing but vanity, yet the grace in him, which leads to this experience, is of God; God hath subjected him to this for good reasons, yet take notice that it is in hope, after all. The promise of verse twenty-one is with him, he shall be delivered from this bondage, into the glorious liberty for which he longs. It is the same thought, as we referred to before, in the epistle of John: "But we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." We are indeed now the sons of God, we are led by the Spirit, and are heirs of God truly, yet we are not fully delivered from our sore bondage, which is in the flesh and of the flesh; but we shall be. What a wonderful fullness of meaning must be in the words, "The glorious liberty of the children of God." Not any longer the bondage of sin, or of the law which condemns, and which can do nothing but condemn the sinner, but the liberty of sons, who are one with God, and who dwell in his presence, as Christ the elder Son also dwells there.

In verse twenty-two we read, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." The word creation, and the word creature, are in the Greek precisely the same word. Paul is speaking of the same believer, but now with this difference, he takes them all in. The word "whole" may just as truly be translated "every," and so the text means "every creature," rather than "the whole creation." This brings this twenty-second verse into full harmony with all the connection. Paul appealed, in this verse, to the common knowledge of all to whom

he was writing. They all, without exception, knew what this groaning and travailing in pain under this bondage of corruption, this vanity, meant. All the brethren to whom he wrote, felt this constant struggle and warfare, and this inability to do the good that they would. It is all just what Paul has expressed in the closing verses of the seventh chapter with regard to the warfare. Out of this he was constrained to say, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

In verse twenty-three, Paul says that not only all believers thus groan, but he himself, and all who had received the first fruits of the Spirit were thus groaning, waiting for that which they had not yet received, to wit, "The redemption of the body." It was just because they had received the first fruits of the Spirit that they did thus groan. This groaning expressive of mortal anguish belongs to the child of God. No one else finds his sin and inability to do the good he would, a bondage. That man who is described in the first two chapters of the Romans as loving sin, and rolling it as a sweet morsel under his tongue, cannot be said to groan under it. He who does not like to retain God in his knowledge, cannot be said to be waiting for the revelation of God, and for conformity to his image. But those who find sin a burden unspeakable, and separation from God the most sorrowful of all experiences, will groan under such a painful burden, and long for release. It matters not that such a release is promised, so long as the release is not fulfilled, there will be pain, and that pain will extort groaning. A man under the surgeon's knife may feel well assured that the end of the operation will be cessation from all pain, and yet he can but groan while the pain lasts. A man may know that the end of his warfare shall surely be victory, and yet the warfare will be none the less with confused noise and garments rolled in blood. So the child of God feels well assured of victory and rest at last, but still while the strife lasts he suffers, and can but groan within himself, waiting for the final victory. And for this victory he longs. It is a constant question of the adversaries of grace, "If your final victory is assured, why take any care or thought for the present?" What, shall a child clothed in filthy rags, and knowing and feeling the degredation of them, cease to grieve over them, and to long for the royal robes, because he is well assured that one day he shall be clothed in them? So long as the rags with their filth remain, he will abhor himself, and long for the full cleansing, and for the word, Take away his filthy garments from him. If there be no anxiety there is no watching or waiting. Some loved father is coming to bring his child home. Who is waiting for him? Is it not the child who longs for the coming? Others may have heard of the coming of the father, but the child only is waiting for the day to dawn, when he shall come. Other children of other fathers may have heard of the hope of this one child, but yet they are not waiting; they are going right on with their pleasures; they are not waiting, because the coming of this father means nothing to them, but the children of God have the Spirit, and their longings are the longings of the Spirit; the Spirit cries in them, "Abba, Father," and by it they are crying the same, and to thus cry means that they want and must see the Father, else they cannot be satisfied. So David said, "Then shall I be satisfied, when I awake in thy likeness."

No matter what the attainments of the people of God here may be, no matter how much of his dear presence he may vouchsafe to them, no matter how dear are the ties which bind them to all who love his name, there is something yet to be desired, something yet to be attained to, and for this something they long and wait. God's people are now waiting; believers are waiting; we do not count ourselves to have yet attained; we are not yet satisfied, there is something yet before every living child of God; he is not what he wants to be as yet.

This one thing for which we wait Paul says is the adoption, the redemption of the body. This adoption, this redemption of our body, is the glory which shall be revealed in us (verse 18). It is revealed in us, and not to us. If to us it is because it is revealed in us. It is so with the present heavenly places, we can only see that glory which is in us, we can only know the grace of God by its revelation in us. So it will be with the final glory, according to the apostle. It was so when Jesus was transfigured before the disciples; the glory was not shining from without upon him, but from within; it was not a reflection, but a transfiguration. Our final glory also will not be a reflection from without, but a transfiguration. The sons of God will then be manifested. We are now sons, but then will be the full manifestation. It is for this that Paul says we are waiting. We now have the spirit of adoption, then we shall have the adoption itself. The adoption is the redemption of the body. Here is the promise of the resurrection of the body, and its final glory, even as the risen and ascended body of Jesus is glorified, and as the body of Enoch and Elijah are changed; here is full deliverance from the bondage of corruption; in this glorious experience there shall be no more suffering, so needful here, no more subjection to vanity, no more bondage to corruption, no more groaning and travailing in pain, no more waiting for the adoption, but full redemption, and full perfection, and full glory for ever and ever. What encouragement then to bear the present trials and burdens, and to glorify God even in the fires. May our God add his blessing to what has been here written. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ROMANS V. 14.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Will you please give your views on Romans v. 14? Who were those who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression? May the Lord abundantly bless you, and enable you to conduct the press to the honor and glory of his great name, and to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints.

Yours, as I hope, in tribulation, and in hope of immortality, JOHN S. BRINSON.

NEWBERNE, N. C., Feb. 4, 1858.

REPLY.

The word "similitude" in the text referred to, as in other passages of the Scriptures, simply means *in the same manner*. In this fifth chapter Paul proves that the family of mankind were under law to God before the Mosaic dispensation, or before the Sinai law was given to Israel through Moses. As sin is a transgression of the law, and death is the wages, or consequence of sin, so the fact that death reigned from Adam to Moses, demonstrates that sin was in the world, and, sin being the transgression of the law, the law must have existed before sin entered, for where there is no law, there can be no transgression. That all the family of man were involved in Adam's transgression is proved from the fact that infants as well as adults died before

Moses proclaimed the Sinai covenant to Israel. Adam was not deceived; he had a knowledge of the authority against which he rebelled, and the precept which he transgressed, when he followed our mother Eve in the transgression. But those, either infants or idiots, who do not after that manner or similitude sin, are equally subjects of mortality, because they were in Adam, and were Adam, when he ate of the forbidden fruit.

Again, Adam *is the figure of him that was to come;* that is, Adam is the figure of Christ, and consequently his transgression was a similitude of the manner of Christ's assumption of the guilt of his church. Paul says that Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression. "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church." Christ, the second Adam, being the Lord from heaven, could not have been deceived when he followed his bride (to redeem her) into the transgression, when he was made sin for her, who knew no sin, that she might be made the righteousness of God in him. The type or figurative import of Adam's transgression pointed to the coming of Christ to put away the sin of his bride, by the sacrifice of himself. But death reigned from Adam to Moses over all his posterity, whether they had sinned in the manner, form or similitude of Adam's transgression or not.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., September 1, 1859.

1 CORINTHIANS IX. 14.

ELDER BEEBE:—Please give your views on 1 Cor. ix. 14: "Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." I want your views particularly on the ordination of God relative to the Lord's preachers living by the gospel. I presume you believe that what God has ordained comes to pass; if so, why is it that the Old School Baptist preachers generally get little or nothing of a temporal support? Are they not called to preach? or does the ordination of God fail? By attending to the above request you will much oblige an inquirer after truth, ISOM CRANFILL.

REPLY.

The word "ordain," like many other words in our vocabulary, is used to express more than one idea. Sometimes it is used in the Scriptures to express the determined counsel or decree of God, as in Eph. ii. 10. Sometimes it is applied to the setting apart of elders, pastors or apostles to the work whereunto the Holy Ghost has called them, &c.; but in the text under consideration, it is, as we understand it, intended to signify that the Lord had instituted or commanded that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel, just as he ordained, instituted or commanded in the ceremonial law, that they which minister about holy things, should live of the things of the temple, and they which waited at the altar should be partakers with the altars. Even so has he given commandment concerning his gospel ministers, who devote themselves to that work, that they shall be sustained by the brethren. They sow to the brethren spiritual things, and receive from them of their carnal things.

But like all the other commands of Christ, this is sometimes disobeyed, and for this very reason the apostle admonished the church in regard to it. Inasmuch as Christ our King has ordained or enacted this as a law or precept, and made it binding, it should be solemnly regarded by all his loyal subjects.

We certainly believe that the firm decrees of the throne of God shall all be fulfilled. What he predestinates must surely come to pass. As many as were ordained to eternal life believed. And Christ was ordained before the foundation of the world as a Lamb slain for them who, by him, do believe in God, &c. But when

the word is used in reference to his laws and ordinances in the church, it does not express what he has promised himself to accomplish, but what he has enjoined on his saints to do in obedience to his commands.

We certainly believe that Old School Baptist preachers are called to preach, for they are the only class of preachers under heaven that we know anything about who do preach the gospel of Christ, but why they, or any of them, fail to receive an adequate support, would be as difficult for us as for brother Cranfill to tell. In some instances it may be that they are located among brethren that are poor, and unable to be as liberal as they wish, and in some cases it may result from a reprehensible negligence, or disregard for the laws of Christ.

But it is possible that the ministers themselves are in fault. When Jesus sent out the seventy as lambs among wolves, he allowed them not to take purse or scrip with them. They were to rest solely on the indemnity of his name, and leave the whole matter of their support to him, and they returned, and reported that they had lacked nothing. Christ's ministers are still required to go in his name, and to rely on his power and providence to sustain them, and if in doing so they lack anything, let them report the matter to him.

Some of our preachers have in protesting against making a trade of divinity, or merchandise of the gospel, been understood to hold that it is wrong for ministers to be supported by the liberality of the saints, and to denounce those who are so sustained, as hirelings. Others again have, by an overreaching greediness of filthy lucre, by storming, scolding, fretting and complaining of the meanness and covetousness of their brethren, disheartened them. The most liberal hearted christians are, probably, as a general thing, those who are the best fed. But there can be no reasonable doubt that too little regard is paid to the authority of Christ by the churches in regard to the obligation laid on them to communicate to the support of those who labor in word and doctrine among them.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., September 1, 1859.

PERSONALS.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., May 28, 1902.

B. L. BEEBE—MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—If you will allow a poor, helpless sinner to claim such relationship in the precious Christ. On last Saturday evening, which was our meeting day at Mt. Olive, my dear crippled daughter, B. D. Cole, who has been unable to walk for twenty years, was carried into the water by Elders J. N. Bartlett and S. A. Cleavenger, and baptized in a chair. It seemed to be her soul's desire to follow her Master through the water. She did not seem to mind going into the water in the least, but wiped the water from her face with her own hand. When brought out and set in a chair on the bank of the stream, she called for a little babe which was in its mother's arms, in the crowd, and said, "For of such is the kingdom of heaven." She will not soon forget the grand counsel and good instruction that Elder David Bartley gave her. No doubt the dear brother will be glad to learn that she has been baptized, with many others who knew her condition. She was then carried from the water to the house in a chair, some four hundred yards, by her own dear husband, Truman E. Cole, and others.

Also, at the same time and the same place, Elder J. N. Bartlett baptized a

young man by the name of Nathan M. Corder, who came eighty miles to be baptized, from Fayette Co., Pa.

J. S. CORDER.

CORRESPONDENCE SOLICITED.

WE would be glad to correspond with any Primitive Baptists contemplating moving to the west, and invite any members of our church coming our way to call on us. There is lots of room out here unoccupied.

S. K. PAINTER.

2204 LAMBARD, AVE., EVERETT, Wash.

SELECTED.

FRAGMENTS.

WE are often bound to a certain extent by traditions and theoretical beliefs, which have been taught us by the commandments of men, but which are not according to the truth of salvation. The evil result of such natural beliefs, such efforts to have our belief conformed to the wisdom of the world, would be greater, but that divine life is in constant exercise—within the soul, and will tend to correct such mistakes, and throw off those doctrines of men which are not in accordance with its own nature and principles. "The fear of the Lord," which God puts in our hearts, "is a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death." Our doctrine, our theories of religion and salvation, must be continually brought to the test, in our own experience, and tried by the principles of the Spirit of Christ within us, and the hungerings and needs which that Spirit makes us daily to feel.

[THE above is copied from "Fragments," in *Zion's Landmark*, written by Elder Silas H. Durand.—ED.]

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$566 55
Elder D. Bartley, Ind., $1.00; L. B. Hanover, Ohio, $2.00; A friend, N. Y., $5.00; L. S. Bloomfield, Colo., $1.00; Mrs. M. Beardsley, N. Y., $2.00; Mrs. Effie Wood, N. Y., $2.00.—Total	13 00
Total to date	$579 55

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Sarah Ann Moulton was born in Taswell Co., Ill., Sept. 18th, 1829, married Alfred W. **Simmons**, August 26th, 1847, and together they settled on the farm near Greenbush, in Warren Co., Ill., where they have resided continuously for nearly fifty-five years. She was the mother of ten children, six sons and four daughters; three sons and one daughter have passed on before, three sons, Henry, of Abingdon, David, near Youngstown, and William, of Berwick, and three daughters, sister Marjorie Ross, Mary Sink and Rose, at home. These, together with the husband, Deacon Simmons, and one brother, Thomas Moulton, together with a number of grandchildren, and many other relatives, survive her. In April, 1862, she united with the New Hope Church, and for over forty years was a devoted communicant. It can truthfully be said of her, she was faithful in all the relations of life, and filled the description of the virtuous woman, as recorded in Proverbs xxxi. During her long illness, lasting over three years, she uttered no word of complaint, but was always cheerful, and although her sufferings at times were excruciating, she was the most jovial member of the company, always seeing the brightest side of every circumstance and condition of life. She was greatly loved, and universally respected for her sunny disposition. When the end came it found her prepared by grace divine to say, "Come, welcome death, I will gladly go with thee." She died on Sunday evening, May 18th, 1902, the day of the church meeting.

The funeral, which was very largely attended, was held at the residence on Tuesday. The services were conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder S. H. Humphrey. She was buried in the cemetery west of the village of Greenbush.

ALSO,

Mary Phronia Ketchum was born Dec. 7th, 1866, in Henry Co., Ill., where she grew up to young womanhood, moved with her parents to Elmwood, Ill., in 1883. In 1892 she began teaching in the common schools; in 1895 entered the art department of the University of Illinois, and became quite proficient as an amateur artist. She was married to Prof. S. H. **Smith**, of the agricultural department of the State experiment station, at the State University, August

8th, 1901, and settled in the city of Champaign about the 10th of September. At about this time she contracted a severe cold, which persistently refused to yield to medical treatment, and about the first of January a case of pulmonary tuberculosis developed. Her mother came to her bedside as soon as she could leave her home, and done all that a devoted and loving mother could do, employing the best medical talent that could be procured, and during March and April her symptoms encouraged the hope that she would overcome the disease. So by advice of her physicians, and on her own solicitation, on the 13th of May her mother and two brothers took her to Lajunta, Colorado. She stood the journey well, and even enjoyed the trip; greatly enjoyed visiting with her two brothers, (who are located at Lajunta) eating and sleeping well until Tuesday evening, her mother noticed she was a little more nervous than usual, and called in a doctor, who said the spell would soon pass off. Then about 2 o'clock in the morning they called another physician, and he told them she could live but a short time. She was very quiet, suffering but very little if any. At about 4 o'clock she began to realize that she must die, and began to give directions as to the disposition of her things, selected the dress (her wedding dress) to be put on her, gave directions how to trim it; spoke to her brothers kindly and lovingly, counseled them to be true to themselves, an honor to their parents, and a blessing to mankind; said she thanked God that she was raised by christian parents; selected a text that she said had for a long time been very dear to her, which reads, "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God. They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright. Save, Lord: let the king hear us when we call."—Psalms xx. 7–9. Selected hymns to be sung; asked that Elder John L. Scott preach her funeral; sent messages to father and brother, and of love to husband, then lay very quiet for some minutes; then a sweet smile spread over her face; she raised up and said, "I have had one glimpse of that beautiful city," closed her eyes, gave one light gasp, and at 4:30 oclock, May 21st, the mother and brothers realized they were alone in the presence of death, no, not alone, there was an unseen presence that said to those aching hearts, "Peace, be still." The mother and two brothers brought the body to the home in Champaign, where it was buried on Sunday, May 25th, 1902. We were much disappointed because Elder Scott was prevented by sickness from complying with her wishes. She leaves a devoted husband, father, mother and five brothers, Prof. Milo S. Ketchum, of the State University, D. C., Principal of the Rosemond schools, G. S. and C. C., composing the firm of Ketchum Brothers, of Lajunta, proprietors of the Bon Ton Restaurant, and Harold, fifteen years old, to mourn the loss of a faithful wife, a loving and dutiful daughter, and a very dear and affectionate sister. She has left us many proofs of her artistic taste and skill, as well as tokens of love and affection, but the sweetest and most precious jewel of them all is her last words, "I have had one glimpse of that beautiful city."

Her sorrowing father,

SMITH KETCHUM.

CHAMPAIGN, Ill., June 4, 1902.

John G. Morgan was born in Dade Co., Mo., March 13th, 1839, and died at his home in Independence, Mo., March 11th, 1902, thus lacking only two days of being 63 years old. He was married to Miss Lavina Plank, in Doniphan Co., Kansas, Oct. 31st, 1861. To this union was born one son. Mr. Morgan never united with the visible church of Christ, but was a firm believer in the salvation of sinners by grace, and was a Primitive Baptist in belief, but often expressed himself as being too unworthy, and feeling to be too great a sinner to unite with so good a people as he held the children of God to be. He would always attend meeting when he could, and enjoyed the preaching so much that I have often seen the tears trickling down his face while under the sound of the preaching of the gospel of a loving Savior. His home was a home to the Baptists, as many can testify to who have partaken of his hospitality, and the ministers who have been helped on their way are not a few, for he was liberal to those who proclaimed the truth. In the year 1886 he first saw himself a sinner in the sight of God, and received a hope soon after. Mr. Morgan's sickness was of short duration; not feeling well for some time, yet going about most of the time, his death came as a surprise and shock to his friends. He suffered from a fall in the winter, and other complications setting in, he was made to feel that the end was near, but the faith of Christ being in his heart, he rejoiced in Spirit, so much so that he sang songs of praise to God. When the end was near he told his wife that he was ready to go, he did not fear death, and that her loss would be his gain, and passed peacefully away in the enjoyments of a living faith, leaving behind a loving, dutiful and humble but sorrow-stricken wife, to mourn as only a childless widow can. Elder Wm. T. Brown and myself were sent for, but Elder Brown did not come, so I tried in much weakness and deep emotion to speak to the sorrowing relatives and friends words of comfort concerning the glorious resurrection of the bodies of the saints of Christ. This was the most solemn funeral occasion I was ever at; young people wept bitterly, while old men cried like children. He was highly esteemed as a citizen, well liked and respected as a neighbor, kind and gentle as a father and husband. It was our privilege to live with him for a number of years; he was so kind and good it was hard to give him up.

He was buried in the old family burying ground in

Doniphan Co., Kansas, where he will rest until the Master will bid him arise in newness of life to praise him in heaven, where parting will be no more. So weep not, Aunt Vina, the time will not be long until we, too, I hope, will bid farewell to this vain world of sin and sorrow, to meet Uncle John in glory and eternal praise to God through eternal ages, is my sincere prayer for Christ's sake.

WM. L. HALL.

OTTAWA, Kansas, May 25, 1902.

MY dear sister, **Alice R. Search,** youngest daughter of Griffith and Maria Search, (both deceased) departed this life at 8 p. m., March 22d, 1902, at the hospital in Baltimore, Md. It was a terrible blow to my sister Corrie and I, and to the whole community as well. She had always been delicate, but during the past year she had been suffering much more than usual, and showed plainly that she was fast losing strength. No advice that we could obtain in the country seemed to help her, so on March 15th, we took her to Baltimore city, to consult a physician. She went under his treatment, and he thought her in a fair way to recovery, when all at once her heart began to weaken, and in one short hour, without a struggle or a murmur, she quietly went to sleep. The doctor who was with her said that there was no murmur, nor any words but of praise to the physician and nurse who attended her. On Sunday morning, just eight days after we had taken her away, we brought her body home. No tongue can tell my anguish, nor my utter helplessness in this dark and bitter trial. Kind friends and neighbors flocked around my home, all anxious to help and comfort me, but all in vain. On Tuesday afternoon, the 25th, my dear and lifelong friend and brother, Dr. C. H. Waters, spoke comfortingly to a large assembly of sympathizing and sorrowing friends and neighbors, at our home. As I looked for the last time upon the form of my loved sister, robed in white, it seemed so hard to give her up; my own little sister, the last one to remain in my home, and whom I have loved and cared for nearly all her life. There are only sister Corrie and I left now, and I am all alone, while my sister has her family. Alice had been much depressed over her suffering condition all winter, and would often say, "O, if the Lord would only let me die, if I could just drop out of the line it would be better, and I need not suffer any more." She was not a church member, but had a great respect for religion. How much I miss her, and how lonely my life will be, no words of mine can tell.

With deep sorrow I remain your sister in hope,

IDA SEARCH.

[OUR heartfelt sympathy goes out to our sister, and to the other sister of whom she has here spoken, in their sore bereavement. Both of them are members of the church in Baltimore city, and both know well where is the source of all true comfort. We also grieve for the sister, whom we first knew as little Alice, and who always had a kindly greeting for us when we visited their home in former years. May God comfort the dear sisters, for they sorely need his comfort.—ED.]

DIED—At their home in Roanoke, Texas, **J. A. Fanning,** Nov. 5th, 1901, and wife, **Rada Fanning,** May 17th, 1902. Brother Fanning dying of pneumonia, after a week's illness; sister Fanning dying from a lingering spell of paralysis. They were married in 1843, in Fayette Co., Ill., and both united with the Primitive Baptist church in above mentioned County, the same year they were married, Isaac Sidwell being pastor, but name of church unknown. Only one child was born to this union, which died in infancy. About 1850 they moved to Denton Co., Texas, and were members in the constitution of Denton Creek Church, in 1855, and he was chosen church clerk at that time, and served in that capacity continuously until he was ordained deacon, in May, 1866, in which capacity he served his church faithfully until death. Uncle Johnny Fanning, as he was familiarly known, was indeed a model pattern of a man. He was not only a very meek, humble and orderly walking christian, but had the respect and admiration of every one, and those that differed with him religiously would often commend his honesty, integrity and steadfastness. Truly to our little band he was a father in Israel, a safe instructor and wise counselor, always in his seat on meeting days, if not providentially hindered. He and his companion both strove hard to make their home a home for the brethren. Often in the early days of Texas, during association times, they would take care of from fifty to seventy-five people, their whole desire being to serve faithfully their brethren. He has been almost a lifelong subscriber to the dear old paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, taking it from its early days of publication, contending earnestly for the doctrine set forth in its columns, declaring it to be in harmony with that taught by Jesus Christ and the apostles. While each member of our little church feels the magnitude of our loss, yet we mourn not as those who have no hope, feeling as we do that our loss is their eternal gain.

Sarah Winchel Brown, daughter of the late Jacob and Sarah A. Winchel, of Olive, N. Y., and widow of the late Wm. L. Brown, was born in Olive, N. Y., Nov. 21st, 1825, and died in Rollin, Lenawee Co., Mich., June 1st, 1902, aged 76 years, 6 months and 10 days. She was married to Wm. L. Brown, August 17th, 1844. To them were born seven children; the three oldest died in childhood; four remain to mourn the loss of a loving mother. For many years she was a manifest lover of the truth, although she did not publicly profess a hope in Christ. She loved to attend the public services of his house, and delighted in

the company and companionship of lovers of the truth, but through fear of a lack of sufficient spiritual revelation of Christ as her Savior, she was hindered from taking up the cross publicly. In her late illness she spoke of having had a love for spiritual things from childhood; that when a mere child she delighted in hearing visitors at her father's house talk of the good things of the kingdom. Her last sickness was the result of a fall on Sunday night, March 30th, from which she never fully recovered. On Sunday evening, June 1st, she suddenly breathed her last while being prepared for the night's rest. Besides her own immediate family, she leaves three brothers and four sisters to mourn the loss of a loving sister and friend.

Her funeral services were conducted by Elder W. L. Lines, of Indiana, after which her remains were laid beside those of her dear husband in the little cemetery near Woodstock, Michigan, to await the last call.

HER CHILDREN.

DIED—At Port Deposit, Md., April 15th, 1902, **Mrs. Eliza Morton.** She was a member of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist church in Baltimore city, having been baptized by ourself May 10th, 1891, in the fellowship of that church. Her sister writes us that she was not ill long, only about a week, and that she suffered but little, and that her mind remained perfectly clear until the last. It seemed like a literal falling asleep in Jesus. She often, during her illness, spoke of the presence of the Savior being with her. She was buried beside her husband at Parkton, Baltimore Co., Md., on the 18th, and her pastor, Elder J. T. Rowe, conducted the services. We desire to add a brief tribute to her memory. We knew her for several years before it was our privilege to baptize her, and was much in her company afterwards, and learned to appreciate her devotion to the truth, and to her Savior. She loved the services of the sanctuary, and also to converse upon the theme of her soul's experience of grace. She was of a gentle and cheerful disposition, and it was pleasant to be with her always. She lived and died in full hope of the final resurrection, when this vile body shall be changed, and fashioned unto the likeness of the risen and glorified body of the Redeemer. Our sympathy goes out to her sister, and to all her relatives and friends, and to the church which she loved so well, and who loved her.

C.

DIED—Jan. 30th, 1902, our dear brother in Christ, **Peter Brill.** His home was at Broughton Hollow, Pa., where he had lived and raised his family. He was married to Miss Elizabeth Moyer, July 14th, 1852, who with six children are left behind to mourn, together with the church and many friends. He was 75 years of age, and was baptized by Elder Durand, about thirty-five years ago, uniting with the Old School Baptist Church at Cherry Flats, Pa. About six or eight years ago he united with the church at Cammal, Pa. Brother Brill was highly esteemed by the church as a faithful christian, talking continually with his feet and hands, but quiet and unassuming in conversation and manner. He had been a constant reader of our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for many years, and believed and loved the doctrine published in it. He died suddenly of heart failure. He is at rest. God bless our lonely sister, his widow, and the children.

D. M. VAIL.

DEPARTED this life, May 2d, 1902, near Halcottsville, N. Y., after a generally debilitated condition from lung trouble for a year or more, **Mrs. Emily Vermilyea,** in her 70th year. Sister Vermilyea was the widow of the late N. D. Vermilyea. Again the Second church of Roxbury sustains a great loss, for in the person of sister Vermilyea the church had a stable traveler as long as she was able to go, having been a member forty-five years or more. It is not necessary to speak of her good qualities to those that knew her, for she was a good true woman, wife and mother, as well as a christian sister, quite generally known among the churches here. Surely we believe she is at rest, and we must go on a little longer without her company. Her natural spirit was greatly broken a few years ago in the loss of their only daughter, which was followed by the death of her husband, leaving her sad indeed. She has left one sister older, and a sister-in-law and their families, beside her two sons and grandchildren, with more distant relatives, and the church, to mourn. Elder Slawson was with me at the funeral.

J. D. HUBBELL.

Somers Bennett, son of Mrs. Bettie Bennett, of Washington, D. C., was born Jan. 23d, 1879, and died of pneumonia, on the 5th day of February, 1902. He was sick one week. His mother was sick with the same disease, in the same room, and when he was nearing the end, he called his mother and told her he was going home, and asked her to come and go with him. He said he would not go back. Sister Bennett feels her loss is great in being bereaved of her only child, but feels that her loss is his gain. Sister Bennett is a lovely christian woman, and we all sympathize with her in her sad affliction.

Written by request.

J. T. ROWE.

AT the residence of her son-in-law, near Pataskala, Licking Co., Ohio, **Susan Peters** departed this life May 24th, 1902, aged 79 years, 5 months and 11 days. Her maiden name was Warthen. She was married to Simeon Peters, July 20th, 1843. They had four children, three sons and one daughter; her husband and daughter passed away a few years ago. She united

with the Baptist church at Reynoldsburg, some forty years ago, and retained her standing with them until her death. The funeral services were conducted by Elder G. N. Tusing, after which her body was laid away to await the resurrection day, when her hope will be realized.

G. N. TUSING.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, June 4th, 1902, at the residence of the bride's parents', Arthur W. Blue, of Fairfield Co., Ohio, and Mrs. Flora C. Crawford, of Ross Co., Ohio.

POETRY.

JESUS A PRECIOUS FRIEND.

COMPOSED BY BETSY BOUTON, IN HER EIGHTY-FIFTH YEAR.

O precious Jesus, Prince of peace,
When wilt thou my poor soul release?
I sit alone from day to day,
And sometimes think I cannot stay.

But all things, Lord, are in thy hand,
And all events at thy command;
Submission to thy will I crave,
Till landed safe beyond the grave.

Thy precious word is all my stay;
I meditate from day to day,
But not one word can understand,
Unless unfolded by thy hand.

Helpless and poor is all my plea,
Dear Lord, when destitute of thee.
I hope and trust thy promised grace,
And long to see thy smiling face.

Nature is restless as the sea;
Godly content must come from thee;
And when thou sayest to the waves be stayed,
Thy powerful word must be obeyed.

Man's days to seventy years are set,
But fifteen more to me is let;
I find the patriarch's word is true,
Sorrow and pain are still in view.

My precious friends have passed away,
I can but little longer stay;
I watch and look as for a friend,
And wonder when the scene will end.

CHRIST THE LIFE.

CHRIST is the Life and Leader, too,
Of all the chosen race,
Though they were ordained to cares and woes,
Sustained by his grace.

He is Alpha and Omega, too,
The beginning and the end;
He never lets his children go
Out sight of a faithful friend.

He lets them murmur and complain,
And then he makes them know
He is the one them doth reclaim
Out of the depths of woe.

He is the Shepherd of the sheep,
He goes before them all;
He knows his sheep, they know his voice,
When they do hear him call.

He is the Rock on which they rest
When tribulations rise,
But soon he'll take their weary feet
With him above the skies.

O Lord, may this my portion be,
When all my toil is done,
To dwell throughout eternity
In thine eternal home.

BETSY BOUTON.

ROXBURY, N. Y.

ORDINATIONS.

BY special request of Ammon church, Taylor Co., W. Va., J. S. Corder and S. A. Cleavenger, Elders of the Primitive Baptist, met with the church on Saturday before the third Sunday in May, 1902, to ordain Ila Henderson to the office of deacon, and Andrew Jackson Rogers to the work of the ministry of the Lord Jesus.

The candidates were set before the presbytery on Sunday morning. S. A. Cleavenger proceeded to sing a suitable hymn, and call on the deacon for his christian experience, which was satisfactory. The parties then knelt down. The ordination prayer was by S. A. Cleavenger; charge by J. S. Corder; hands laid on by the presbytery.

The said Elders then proceeded to ordain the minister. S. A. Cleavenger asked for his christian experience and call to the ministry, also his views on Bible doctrine. Being fully satisfied, they knelt down.

The ordination prayer by J. S. Corder; charge by the same; hands laid on by the presbytery.

J. S. CORDER, Moderator.

E. T. HENDERSON, Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER David Bartley having changed his address from Montgomery, Ala., to Lebanon, Ohio, requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

BROTHER J. T. Barnes, formerly of Prescott, Wash., has changed his address to Touchet, Walla Walla Co., Wash., and requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 70. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1902. NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?"

THIS was the deeply solemn question of the jailer at Philippi. Paul and Silas, the faithful servants of the Lord Jesus, answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house."—Acts xvi.

The miraculous and almighty power of the Lord was manifested in all this amazing and glorious work of salvation, as the inspired history of it clearly shows. In this merciful work, the power of God had quickened the heathen keeper of the Roman prison, by his life-giving and convicting Spirit, so that he was filled with awful fear and trembling, under a solemn sense of the mighty power of God, as well as of his own sin and guilt, and his righteous accountability to him who had so fearfully shaken the foundations of the prison by an earthquake, opened the prison doors, and loosed the bands of all the prisoners. The jailer was awfully convinced that all this was nothing less than the righteous judgment of God in this fearful display of his just indignation against his wicked enemies, who had so cruelly sinned against him in persecuting his servants, in which he himself was guilty, and that now the impending wrath of God was about to fall upon him in a fearful death, which he justly merited. His only hope of escape from this dreadful doom was in the mercy of God, and so he, in his guilty terror, instinctively pleaded with the servants of the Lord to tell him what he must do that he might escape the fearful punishment of his sins and be saved.

This guilty and awfully condemned man fitly represents the case of every awakened and unpardoned sinner, who is made to experience sin and guilt and condemnation by the law and Spirit of God, in the dreadful ministration of justice and wrath against sin and ungodliness. It was at the dark hour of midnight, when men naturally are locked up in unconscious sleep, typical of death. Out of this helpless sleep the mighty power of God awaked this unthinking and uncaring man, and at once guilty terror and remorse seized him. Till now he had been unmoved by the tortures inflicted upon the meek servants of the Lord, but his own hands would add to

their cruel persecutions by making their feet fast in the stocks.

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," and they are dead in trespasses and sins, and are by nature the children of wrath, even as was the cruel and wicked jailer. But the fearful display of the power of God, "who quickeneth the dead," awakes the sinner out of death, as did the power of the Lord call up Lazarus out of death, and although the guilty soul was locked up in carnal security, yet the power of God fills him with a sense of impending wrath and dreadful guilt; fear and trembling overpower him, and he cries out in alarm, turns to man for help, and asks what he must do to be saved. For every awakened sinner is under the law, and sincerely thinks, but ignorantly, that he must keep the law or do something to be saved. So did the troubled jailer think, not knowing that "Salvation is of the Lord," nor that the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, the chief of sinners. This was the gloomy and hopeless experience of each one of us who have believed on the Lord Jesus. For the law was our schoolmaster until Christ came and fulfilled it; yea, until he fulfilled it *in us*. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Not fulfilled *by* us, but *in* us, by the righteous Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, and who liveth in every believer. But of this way of salvation, the guilty and fearing jailer was ignorant, and he therefore tremblingly asked Paul and Silas, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" In this he voiced the legal spirit of every one to whom God has not revealed his Son, for, like him, all naturally depend upon works of their own doing to save them, and cleave to the law of works for salvation, as does the wife to the husband for protection when danger is impending. This is the way that seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof is the way of death. For the reward or wages of sin is death, and all our works are marred by sin.

There are only two principles and ways of salvation, and the question of the lost jailer represents one way, the legal way, the way of works, the way of being saved by what we must *do*. This do religion, do and be saved, is the way of all the world, and all the world, both Jew and Gentile, Catholic and Protestant, accept and believe in this way, and it is the way that seemeth right unto them. Then let us not abuse them for it, dear brethren in Christ, for they, like Paul and we, were alive without the law, and so they are not dead to this first religion, which is natural and legal. Therefore, as we see and know, the whole world is carried away with this *do salvation*, and their great zeal is in doing something to be saved. All their religious works are for this purpose and to this one end—*to be saved*. So with the jailer; he was deeply in earnest, devout and sincere in it, for he was lost, and fearfully he felt and realized it, so now he sought to be saved, but he sought it by what he must do. So it is with the world. The fatal weakness and error in this way of being saved is, it is of self, by self, for self, and all selfish, for it both begins and ends with self. It asks, What must I do? What for? we ask. Because you love the Lord,

who died for you and saved you, and therefore you would live to him and glorify him? No, not this, but "to be saved." What must I do to save myself? So all the religious world is saying, both in christian and heathen lands. This, then, is the way of the wise and prudent, the popular way, the only way that will ever make the Baptists popular and sought after. Alexander Campbell, Andrew Fuller, and all lesser leaders among the Baptists who have gone in their steps, have gone in this way, and have taught the people that they must do something to be saved. They may be and are shades of difference as to what must be done, and as to the extent of salvation, yet the principle remains the same among all—do and be saved.

The answer of Paul and Silas to the trembling sinner reveals the other way of salvation: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Through faith in the Lord Jesus is the way of salvation, therefore, and so Paul states it, saying, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." This settles it, both as to the power and the way of salvation, showing that it is not of works, but by grace through faith in Christ, and faith is the gift of God to us, therefore not of ourselves. "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." And so, when the legal Jews said to Christ, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." It was not their own work, then, to believe on Christ, but the work of God, wrought by the Spirit in them, and faith is a fruit of the Spirit, not a work of ours, which we must do. So when Peter believed on the Son of God, Jesus said to him that his Father in heaven had revealed it to him. This is true in every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul therefore says, "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh *not*, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his *faith* is counted for righteousness. * * * Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed"—to all the heirs of promise. How clearly and strongly does Paul thus separate between works and grace, as between chaff and wheat, and shows that faith is of grace, but not a work that we must do.

To teach otherwise, and say that to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ is what we must do to be saved, and that it is now a condition of our salvation here in time, and is our work, and depends upon ourselves, and that this is voluntary on our part, to be either done by us or refused, is an Arminian and legal principle and doctrine. And it is condemned by the Scriptures already given, and by all the oracles of God. Our works never produce faith in the Lord Jesus, nor cause us to believe in him, but the revelation of his faith in our hearts by the power and Spirit of God, will and does produce in us the works of faith and labors of love, moving the blessed possessor of the faith of the Son of God to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and to show his faith in him by his heart-given service of loving and willing obedience. This is the obedience of faith, which worketh by love and purifieth the heart, and it is both the way and the evidence of salvation; yea, and its testimony in the heart and life of every saved sinner

is, that salvation is of the Lord, and by his mercy and grace alone. The believer in Christ will not say, It is by what I must do that I am saved, but the blessed Jesus saves me now and ever by his death and life, by his Spirit of love and grace and power, "which worketh in me mightily," so that I joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, whose grace is sufficient for me, and whose strength is made perfect in my weakness. "For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Therefore, to me the precious word of Jesus is all my desire and all my salvation, saying, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." "By him my prayers acceptance gain," of his fullness do I receive, and grace for grace, and with him my God, who is rich in mercy, freely gives me all things; so that for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

The jailer earnestly desired and sought to be saved. Paul faithfully told him by whom and how he should be saved. He should be saved by the Lord Jesus Christ, through faith in his name. Thus and in this way he and his household should be saved. What did they mean by the word "saved?" It would be trifling with the most solemn matters and feelings to say that neither the question nor the answer meant anything more than a sort of salvation which was only temporal and in part and for the time being, and which he must obtain by what he must do, for the guilty sinner cried out for salvation from his sins, and of this salvation Paul and Silas preached to him and his household. They pointed them to Christ, the Lamb of God, testifying that salvation is by him, and that whosoever believeth in him shall be saved. So the vastly momentous word "saved," in the question and answer, covers the whole ground of salvation, affirming that Jesus is the only Savior, and that faith in him is the medium or the manifestation and assurance of salvation. "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Not for calling on his name, but because they realize that they are lost and cannot save themselves, they do thus pray to him who is able to save them to the uttermost who come unto God by him; therefore they shall be saved by him on whom they call, and living in him they also believe in him, and call on him in whom they believe. Thus saved by the Lord Jesus Christ, and given faith to believe in him to the joy of their heart, yet with fear and trembling, they are received to the cross of Christ, and to them is given the sacred ordinance of baptism by the authority of Christ, as the declaration of their faith in him as their only Savior, and as the figure of their salvation from sin and death, by him who died for them, and rose again, and is their resurrection and their life. It was of this salvation from all that can destroy that the jailer asked, and faithful Paul and Silas answered.

From this answer, which is by inspired revelation, let every penitent and fearing believer in Jesus, who trembles in view of the solemn greatness of salvation, of which he feels entirely unworthy, take courage and be comforted in faith and

hope. For the beloved John says, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." Paul says, "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." And blessed be the name of the Lord, this salvation is now, and for ever and ever. The blessed Savior himself says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Saved now, and saved world without end. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life." "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die," said Jesus to Martha. Nothing less than this salvation did the jailer tremblingly ask for, nor Paul and Silas assure him of in the blessed words of truth: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." This is the glorious way and power and fruit of salvation, and it is to the glory of the Lord and his grace, and the rejoicing of the saved.

In the faith of Jesus,

D. BARTLEY.

MAY 28, 1902.

SOLOMON'S SONG IV. 6.

"UNTIL the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense."

The light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines in our hearts, and we by faith see the day; then we learn something new and old about the written word. The Bible does not bring any one to God, but he brings us (if indeed we do know anything) to the knowledge of the truth, and we learn that we love him because he first loved us, and not because the Bible says that he must be known and loved. God gave the love of the truth, the Bible religion, and the writers of the book say, "The word of the Lord came to me saying." Hence the word must first come to us, and then that portion of the written word which is needful to each one for growth in grace, is revealed to us. We were enveloped in darkness until he came into our hearts, then in this day dawn of our experience we came to know both light and shadows; it is only in this way that we can come to see the beauty of the text.

This Song of Solomon is very sweet, for it is the song of Christ to his church, and her song to him. "My beloved is mine, and I am his." God has joined them together, and they cannot be put asunder. Nothing can separate us from the love of God, so says Paul. This Song of Solomon was sung under the law, in the darkness of the legal dispensation. It was truly a song in the night. I once heard a bird singing in the night; all around was darkness, and it was so quiet that there seemed to be no life; lonely I lay upon my bed and wondered, then all at once a beautiful trill, a wonderful melody came to me; how sweet it was, it was a promise of life, and of day to come. But the song of this bird is more beauti-

ful when we remember the sweet songs that the prophets sung before the coming Christ; they sung of the glory of the gospel day to God's sorrowing ones who longed for the light, and were made glad by this evidence that the world was not all dead. In the song of these night birds was the promise of daybreak, when the Sun of righteousness should arise with healing in his wings.

Isaiah sang, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."—Isaiah vii. 14. Hagai wrote, "Behold the desire of all nations shall come." Then, as the time was at hand, God moved the wise men from the east to follow the star to where the young child lay, even as you, my kindred, were moved to follow the star of hope through darkness and doubt, to the place where you found Christ the hope of glory. The shepherds watched their flocks by night, when the angel of the Lord came upon them and proclaimed the birth of the King, and even so the chosen flock of God had been kept by his power, and their salvation was sure, because he knew them every one. Then John came crying in the wilderness even as something cried in your heart, saying, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." The day was near at hand. Many heard the glad tidings, "Arise and shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." By the power of God, John the Baptist was made to know the Lamb of God.

In the coming of Christ the law was fulfilled, and with it all the types and shadows; the old heavens were rolled together as a scroll, the new heaven and the new earth were made, the light of the gospel day dawned, the birds sang of peace and joy, and the little ones were fed and enabled to fly from the old nest into the open field, where they found all that they needed prepared for them in the green pastures, and beside the still waters. The flock of God had been kept unto this day by the Shepherd who knew them every one, but now the Shepherd has come, and wonderful to contemplate, they knew his voice, and were called together; this was because they were of God. Our Lord said to some, Ye do not hear me, because ye are not of God. Then the disciples were taught and made ready to feed his sheep, and by his death and resurrection he prepared a place in the mansions of the Father's house or kingdom, which he came to prepare for each one of them.

Many a prodigal, many a poor sinner, has come crying to this house to find the best robe and a loving Father to bless and keep him. Never could they come to him under the law; Christ is the end of the law; until the appointed time they must walk in darkness. It was night when the tidings came to the shepherds. He must come to us; no one comes to him, for like Job, they cannot find him, though they rise from their bed, wandering, laboring, looking for their beloved. This is that earnest looking and longing given of God to his chosen ones, but when he is come, the day breaks and the shadows flee away, and the light shines round about them, leaving no shadow. Now they see Jesus, who "of God is made unto them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." Thus only can we really learn that Jesus has come in the flesh; thus only can we come to know that the gospel day did break when the Light of the world came; thus only can we learn that the Scripture is the word of God, which came to the writers of the Bible. Praise be to God,

it is all in his hands, and man cannot take it away. One must be of God before he can say of the Scripture, These words are true and faithful.

The most evident proof that Jesus did come into the world and save his people is the known fact that in your heart some power, or spirit of truth or love, has come, and has turned you about from the ways of destruction, and has made you desire salvation from sin, to such an extent that your walk manifests that you are led by the love of truth and righteousness; this is evidence that one is called, and that Christ is working in him both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. Do not say that God has not given you evidence enough. Hope is not something that we can see, but it is an earnest expectation and desire; it is a looking for that blessed coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. You are satisfied of this, you hate sin and mourn on account of it; you are satisfied that you love truth above all things, and that even in your hours of doubt, when you question whether there be a God or no, you believe if there is, that he is a God of power; you love his manifested children, and the doctrine that teaches his power and everlasting love. May the everlasting Father bless us with strength to do his will, and give us from time to time a glimpse by faith of that day dawn, so that all the dark shadows of the law of sin and of affliction may flee away. One bright glimpse will drive away all care.

O, our Father, what would we do without thy love in our hearts? What a desolate place is this world without the love and sympathy of his people, yet even they may be hidden from us by the veil of the flesh, still in his own good time he will raise us up and the veil shall be rent in twain. Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, who keeps us with him on the holy hill of sweet smelling frankincense and myrrh, until the day break and the shadows flee away.

In the book we have the record of the legal dispensation, of the dawn of the gospel day, of the setting up of the kingdom, and of the church looking for the final coming of Christ, when time shall be no more. So in our experience we labor under the law until we are given faith to see Jesus Christ, the hope of glory, and learn from him that we are under grace, then in this hope we live, looking for the final consummation of all things, when in deed and in truth the day shall break and the shadows flee away for ever.

Peace to God's people.

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.

LAWRENCEBURG, Ky.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., June 18, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Through the goodness and mercy of our heavenly Father we passed through our trip among the brethren and returned home safe. Our last appointment was in Washington, on Monday evening, where we had a goodly number of good hearers. The whole trip was very pleasant, and we were often made to feel, "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." This is the only way they dwell together. There is quite a difference in living in the same house, or even in the same family, and in dwelling together in unity. Where there is unity there is a oneness. There is a sweet and sacred unity in the Godhead, there are no schisms there. For this cause the election, the redemption and the sanctification are all of one, and for one. By this is the vital unity of Christ and the church.

Not only that they are made nigh by the blood of Christ, but they are kept nigh by the operation of the holy Spirit in the heart. By this Spirit the people of God are brought together in sweet fellowship; they drink deeply of each other's sorrows, and rejoice in the one Spirit. Thus they are manifestly united with and in the one Head, and both he and they are one. By the operation of this Spirit they are made to hate sin with all of its evil consequences, and, hating these, they desire with all their hearts to turn away from all iniquity. Because they see sin in all they do, they mourn and are brought very low, and often hate their own lives. O, what a mass of contradictions and sin we are! What a blessed source of righteousness is our Lord Jesus! What a contrast between these two! How powerful and wonderful that life and death that makes that poor sinner pure and white as that pure and glorious Lord! How incomprehensibly great is this mystery of mysteries, and yet here lies the secret of our unity of fellowship in which we come together in the worship of our God. This is a secret we cannot tell, it is foolishness to the wise of the world, and a stumbling-block to the infidel; he will dispute the Scriptures and accuse them of being contradictory, but when we tell him of the personal, internal workings of the Spirit in our own heart, in harmony with the Scriptures, he is put to silence, for it is something he cannot understand. The worldly religionists are just as blank when they hear of this testimony. This shows that everything but the truth is of the same evil spirit, and of the same class. This is the reason they all join together in one voice against the truth of salvation by grace alone. Herod and Pontius Pilate made friends when our Lord was to be put to death. Even so all the enemies unite against the truth. This proves that we are the church, for it is the sect everywhere spoken against. In our many trials we are the more closely united, so that in the valley of Achor we find the door of hope, and here we enter in through the gate into the holy city. This gate is Jesus, for he is the door into the sheepfold, by whom if any man enter he shall go in and out and find pasture. Whether we are lifted up in the praise of our God, or if we be low down in the valley, Jesus is all our hope, and in all our changes he is our only refuge. If we sing, or pray, or preach, or hear, if we tell the dealings of the Lord with us, there is no feeling, no life if we do not feel Jesus with us in all we say or do. Here is our unity and strength. I am satisfied that the further we are from conditionalism, and the more firmly we believe in the unlimited sovereignty of God, and our complete salvation thereby, for all time and in vast eternity, the worse we hate sin, and the further we want to stay from it, and the more we love righteousness, and the stronger we are to pursue it. Here all our strength fails us, and as passive matter in the hands of God, he gives us his strength and his mind, and we desire to follow him. He hath wrought all our works in us, and his goodness leads us unto repentance, which he gives us from his throne above. Thus faith is in lively exercise, and through this channel we receive all the graces of the Spirit, and we press forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Our Lord said, "I can of mine own self do nothing." "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." This should be a key to all lovers of the truth to tell them the source of all their good works and of the joys thereto belonging.

Dearly beloved, let us go on in this way as the Lord has led us into it, and not be led about by every wind of doctrine, and by the cunning craftiness of men who lie in wait to deceive.

The Galatian brethren did run well, but some bewitched them and turned them from the service of the Lord to the service of the law, and the apostle told them that those who had been thus turned had fallen from grace. Why should I desire to teach my Father's children in such a way as to cause them to fall from grace? God forbid. No, let me speak the truth in righteousness, that all may be to the praise of him who hath made us acceptable in the Beloved.

I want to say to those who are so situated that they cannot often hear the preaching of the gospel, Be of good cheer, knowing that he by whom you believe, and whose arm is underneath you, is with you, and is the fullness of the gospel. Many hear preaching (in the letter) all their life, and never know the truth, but the one sweet whisper by our blessed Jesus in your heart brings a knowledge of this truth which liveth and abideth for ever. You hunger and thirst often, but you shall be filled with the righteousness of our dear Lord, and when you awake with his likeness you shall be satisfied.

To the many brethren, sisters and friends who showed me so much kindness, I want to thank you through our Lord Jesus. May his blessings attend you, and his grace fill your hearts with peace which passeth knowledge.

The Lord grant that the SIGNS may continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

Brethren editors, I know you are but men, and if left to yourselves you would go in the drift of the times, but with the blessings of our God may you be able to keep your heads up the stream, with your eyes steadfastly on our Lord Jesus and his glorious kingdom.

I am your brother in this blessed hope,

L. H. HARDY.

OXFORD, N. Y., March 17, 1902.

MRS. CARRIE DRAKE—MY DEAR SISTER:—I must sit down and tell you how the blessed Savior seems so near to me, so near that I can almost reach out and touch the hem of his garment. O, "It is heaven below, the Redeemer to know." I am at times sure that it was the Savior that spoke peace into my troubled soul, and said, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." What is sweeter than rest in the Lord, and to feel that he is your all? His rod and his staff comfort me. If we feel this here for a time, what must it be when we enter into that long rest for which we hope? and of which we hope that many who have gone before, have entered it.

Sometimes my hope seems almost gone, and doubts and fears come, and I become afraid that I never knew anything about these things, and think that the church must be convinced it is so, and I almost shrink from writing to the brethren and sisters. I feel at times so unworthy, so sinful, and to be no fit company for the saints, but when I do meet them, I am so glad, and am made to rejoice with them, for they so often tell my feelings, which I often wonder whether any one else has. Sometimes I wonder how I came to be numbered with them, but all that I can say is, I hope it was all of the Lord.

I tried for so many years to keep out of the church, and also not to say much to the dear Old Baptists; but the time came

when there was no resting-place, and the Lord stretched forth his arms, and said, "Come my child, come in ye blessed of the Lord." What a sweet season that was, and I longed for it to last, but he knew what I needed, and he had many trials for me to pass through, and there are many now, and will be many more, as he sees fit. In all my afflictions I never quite lose sight of my blessed Redeemer, and am made to cling closer, and to put my trust in the Lord, and to stay upon my God: if indeed I dare call him my God. I hope he is mine; I hope that I am not altogether deceived, but he knows the heart and will judge, and to-day I feel willing to leave it all with him, and we cannot have such a feeling of willingness except the Lord gives it.

Now sister, I want to say a little about death; I do not fear death as some speak of doing; I have been many times very near death, as the doctors have said to me, and I must say that I have felt almost sorry to think it was not so, and sometimes now I wish that the end was near for me. Arminians do not fear death, many of them, because they feel so sure. I do not feel so sure, but am willing to leave it all to the Lord; let him do as seemeth good in his sight, and all will be well. It is not because I do not feel that I am a sinner, for I feel to be the worst of sinners, and of myself I cannot do one good thing, and if saved at all, it must be by the grace of God.

I felt that I must write this to you today, while the fountain was open, and that I must relieve my mind. Most of the time I am shut up and cannot utter a word as I would like to. Is there any one like me; I am such a strange creature?

It seemed the last number of the SIGNS was better than ever, at least, I received so much comfort from it. As I write this, the tears fall, and moisten my paper so that I can hardly write, but I cannot seem to help it. Wonderful indeed are the works of the Lord. My desire is that I may always be found trusting in the Lord. I hope I know what prayer is, I hope that I have felt it.

I must say a little more to you about the rest. Have you not ever felt tired and weary of worldly things, and of light talking, O so tired and footsore, and burdened with temptations, and losses, and crosses, and come near to despairing, and then the Comforter come and sweetly put underneath you the everlasting arms? Then how safe and secure you felt; there can nothing harm you then; you then felt to rest, rest under the great Protector's care. "Weary I am, I know, and the weary long for rest." Even if it lasts but for a short time, it is so sweet to have Satan flee, if only for a little, and we can say what a merciful God.

I cannot get to the meeting often, as it is so far, and my health not good so much of the time, but I am wonderfully blessed with such good reading in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and the Bible.

Since I have written this letter I do not know as I will send it to you, it seems to look so much like me, but I may send it and you can put it in the fire.

Let any one read this if you wish to do so; let Elder Chick see it. I would like to know what he thinks of my thoughts about death, it troubles me for fear it is not the right feeling; I do not know that any one else feels as I have spoken here, I never heard any one say that they did, but they are my feelings, and have been ever since I was a child.

May the Lord bless you, my beloved sister. He bestows so many rich blessings upon me every day, but am I thank-

ful? "What was there in me to merit esteem, or give the Creator delight?"

I must close, with love to all the household of faith, I am your little sister,

MARY BREWSTER.

[SISTER Brewster desires to know what we think concerning her excercises about death. We think that she has been wonderfully blessed of the Lord to enter into that experience of victory, which Paul expresses when in the triumphs of faith he exclaims, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Our dear sister feels all unworthy, and is humbled, but this is the result of that work of the Lord which always abases self, and exalts Jesus, and Jesus has conquered death, and risen from the grave, and so secured the final victory of all his redeemed. In this experience of mind concerning death, our dear sister is but entering into the victory of the blessed Lord. May God bless all who may read this excellent letter, with the same soul-humbling experience of the grace of God. Our own righteousness exalts us, but the grace of God exalts the Lamb of God, and abases the creature. Any experience or any doctrine that lifts up man, ought to be at once rejected; any experience that humbles us, and exalts Jesus, cannot be wrong.—ED.]

LAWRENCE, Mass., June 12, 1902.

MY DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—It is in my mind to tell you of my safe arrival home, where I found all well. If I could only express the joy and comfort I have had in your company the past four weeks it would be the best letter I ever wrote, but as the joy is "unspeakable," each one of you have the letter written in your own hearts by the wonderful work of our God. There is such a realizing sense of the goodness of the Lord to me, I cannot help feeling that this letter should be full of praise and thanksgiving to him who has so richly blessed me. It is a great blessing to have health and strength to journey so many miles, attend all the meetings of three associations, make several visits at the home of loved ones, have the privilege of meeting one Sunday with the church at Southampton, one in Philadelphia, one in Hopewell, and one in Roxbury, and not feel very tired when I arrived home. But how far beyond my ability it is to tell how I was blessed with the hearing ear and understanding heart, as each servant of God declared the unsearchable riches of Christ. There is something wonderfully sweet to me in hearing the name of Jesus exalted above every name that is named. Over thirty years ago he was wrought in my soul the hope of glory, and revealed as the Savior of sinners, and since then salvation by grace has been my theme. It made me rejoice to behold the unity of all God's servants at the three associations in declaring that "Salvation is of the Lord." I was deeply impressed as each one spoke, that God had given the gifts, and they were all for the edifying of the body of Christ, all necessary, and not to be thought lightly of, for he fills the earthen vessel, and not the least fragment of the gospel will ever be lost. The Lord prepares these vessels and makes them feel their unfitness, unworthiness, and they seem crushed and broken, but how sweetly the power of God unto salvation is set forth in every sentence, and the little ones strengthened, comforted and fed. This is the Lord's work, and all praise must be given unto him. Your expressions of christian love and fellowship made my visit very pleasant, and I hope profitable. Pleasant because the same love and fellowship was

in exercise in my own heart; profitable, because it humbled me and made the evidence shine forth more clearly that I had indeed been with Jesus and learned of him, and was dwelling in the house of the Lord. My pure mind was stirred by way of remembrance, and the words I sang so many years ago with a sweet melody in my heart to the Lord, have been given me again:

"Now, my remnant of days
Would I spend to his praise,
Who hath died my poor soul to redeem;
Whether many or few,
All my years are his due,
May they all be devoted to him."

It is with a more subdued and chastened feeling I sing them now, for I hope I have been made to see his wonders in the deep; have traveled in the way the Lord leads his people, and know that growing in grace is having the confidence in the flesh destroyed. My walk and conversation have been so different from what I desire, there is an earnest prayer in my heart for mercy and grace. There must be a continual looking unto Jesus, and who can express the sweet peace and joy when the assurance, "My grace is sufficient for thee," is felt in the heart? Then again it is impossible to express the utter desolation, the uneasiness, the longing to fly away and be at rest, the coldness and darkness that comes upon me when all this spiritual comfort is taken away; I go down into the depths, and am at my wit's end; my cry is unto the Lord for help, and in his own time and way he delivers me out of my distresses, and makes me sing again, "The Lord hath triumphed gloriously." It has been a journey of sorrow and joy, conflicts and peace, trials and deliverances, and I believe it is the way the Lord leads his people, and I love it, and desire to be found numbered with them.

"My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life and breath remains;
Their my best friends, my kindred dwell,
There God my Savior reigns."

As some of you asked if sister Ruth Keene had come to the church, it is in my mind to say to all that she was received and baptized last October, and it was a time of rejoicing with the church at North Berwick, and a day never to be forgotten by our dear little sister Ruth.

Brother Beebe, I hope your health has improved very much since I saw you, and that you will be spared to us many years. If I write too often, or the letters are too long, cast them aside, and it will be all right. May God bless and comfort you all, make us meek and lowly, more like Jesus whom we desire to follow.

Your sister in hope of eternal life,
ATTIE A. CURTIS.

CAMMAL, Pa., Dec. 7, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been somewhat worried, feeling that I ought to write, but yet feeling so much unfitness at the same time, but I know the dear Lord does his will in all things. I hope that it is through him alone that I am impressed to pen these lines; if it be of myself it will be but poorly done; I am afraid of self, even in writing. In me, I know, dwells no good thing; there is but one good, and that is God. I often think when I read the SIGNS, what a comfort it is that we have the privilege of reading the narrations of experience of the dear brethren and sisters, and when I do read such an experience I think if my writing would sound to me like that, I would be glad. But I must not complain, all comes from the kind hand of him who is above. Every good and every perfect gift comes down from above, we are told. It is not because we are worthy, but all is the free gift of God. I often think, as I look out

over the earth and see the beautiful snow-flakes falling, not one of these could be made by any earthly hand. I remember, something over a year ago, one sweet afternoon I was looking out of doors, and the beautiful snow in large flakes was falling, and all at once the bright sun came out, and how beautiful was the sight. It seemed brighter than sunlight. I was carried above the valley, and I wondered whether others could see as I did. I even asked some whether they saw what I did? They did not remember. I felt overcome with joy. There have been many times when I would only know that it was snowing, or the sun was shining, but now the Lord showed to me the beauties of his wonderful handiwork. O, what a moment. How glad I am that the dear God of heaven has made me to see thus. I have a hope in his love. How dependent we are upon him for all things, health, breath, and all must come from him.

My dear friends, I do hope that I love my Redeemer. I feel that without my God there is no peace, yet I have dark hours, and sadness, and fear, and doubts, yet I believe that if we are ever his, we shall ever be his. But I do want to walk in the right path, and if not walking there, all is sadness and sorrow. A good part of the time I seem to be in the valley of bitterness, this place seems to be my home much of the time, but I desire to say, The will of the Lord be done; in it all there is a needs be; it is good to dwell at Jesus' feet, and I hope I am one of that number. He can bring his people down, and he alone can raise them up, and he does, when it is his own good pleasure. He can place them upon a rock, and that Rock is Christ. He is the blessed Lord who rules all things, the blue sky, and the twinkling stars, which God has placed each one in its place, and the moon to give its light by night, and the sun to rule the day. How beautiful is all this work of the Lord, and he has, I hope, shown something of it to me. Then I wonder, Am I worthy of handling these precious things? God alone knows. I feel to be very unworthy, but still I cannot help at times, as I look out over this beautiful world, rejoicing in him who made it, and while I know all is as it used to be, yet it comes to me as something new. I desire to praise my God, that if I am his child, he has suffered and died for me, that I might live, and then I feel my heart attuned to sing, "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in christian love."

Since I began to write there seems to be a joy and comfort in my soul, if I could but find words to express my feelings. There is a joy that is unutterable; I feel as though God has once more given me a season of love. For a long time I have been in sadness, and much cast down, but how merciful and kind God has been to me. Great and marvelous are his works. I often remember the suffering of mind when, as I trust, the dear Lord was first leading me to him; I cannot doubt his work, it was not of myself. It is true that in Adam we die, but in Christ we are made alive. Jesus takes his children up out of the horrible pit, the miry clay, he sets their feet upon a rock, and puts a new song in their mouths, even praise to their God. Yes, it was a time of love, but soon again doubts and fear came. God himself brings his children into this darkness, and thus leaves us nothing to boast of. But how ignorant and how far from knowing God's ways we are; his ways are past finding out.

I have wanted to thus talk with the Lord's people for quite awhile. Will it

prove of any comfort to them? When I took up my pen, I did not know that I should write so much, but yet hoped the Lord would lead me. O that the Lord would guide my ways.

Well, I must say that I do love to be with the people of God, and to talk with them, though I feel to be the least among them all. I am glad the blessed Lord has given me the sweet privilege of loving his truth, and has made me to know that he is God, and there is none beside.

With love and fellowship for all the dear ones, I am your sister in hope,

MARY E. OSTRANDER.

JACKSON, Mich., Jan. 29, 1902.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES: —Much esteemed for the truth's sake as it is in Christ Jesus our divine Lord and Master, and to all the scattered ones who, with the poor, unworthy writer, love the sweet gospel dainties published in our dear and much loved paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which has stood the test for seventy years.

Just to think, our fathers and our mothers loved its pages, and how we, with them, have been strengthened from time to time by its pages, to go on in the rugged way, sometimes halting and sometimes in doubting castle, and in great and sore trials every day, when everything, as with good old Jacob, seems to be against us. But when the dear SIGNS comes laden with the sweet words of gospel truth how often we do feast upon the delicious fare.

My dear kindred, I send this to you, I know full well that none but the tried and poor of the flock loves this doctrine, and these have no strength of their own, but trust in Jesus, the source of all strength for the righteous.

In my lonely and sad moments, how refreshing to me to hear from the lonely ones. For over two years I have been removed from the old home some little distance. This was the church of my youth, and how I mourn at times because of this, yet the dear, good Lord sees fit to allow me to fill my place, if indeed I have one here. I feel very unworthy of a place in the sanctuary, but it is of all things the dearest to me in this world of sore trials and disappointments; it is to me a source of great delight when I am in company with the dear saints. If I am excluded from their company I have no other place to go. We read, Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness. This has given me hope, for if I desire anything in this life, it is to be a true and faithful follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, but I come so far short that it causes me sorrow and mourning. O that I might walk in his precepts and keep his commandments.

Soon I shall put off this body. Will I then be clothed with raiment of needlework? Will I be among that happy number who shall hear the welcome plaudit, "Come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"? Is this language not plain enough? This great and eternal work was entered upon before the foundation of the world, and it was a covenant ordered in all things and sure, to all the heirs of glory. O my Father's children, is it not grand and glorious? But it is the heirs only that receive this inheritance; the Master said to the mother of Zebedee's children, it was for those for whom it was prepared of the Father. Can we inherit what belongs to some one else? No indeed, but I do trust and hope that Jesus is my elder brother, the near of kin to me, if so, he will ever keep me and all his dear

children, as Peter said, To an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fades not away, reserved in heaven for all who are kept by his power through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. It is Jesus, the great Advocate, who intercedes for his dear ones, else they would fall, never to rise, but he is ever near, and his right hand, and mighty arm, is always underneath them. It is my only hope that Jesus has become my surety, and that he will when a few more sad, dreary and cloudy days are past, and the summons comes, take me to himself. He said to his sorrowing disciples, "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also." What a comfort to our poor tried hearts that Jesus knows our every motive, and that he knows all, is what causes us to hope and believe in his dear name.

Now I will say that every time I send my remittance I must say something to the dear ones, who write for the paper which has become so dear to me.

With much love to the household of faith I remain, as I hope, your sister,

(MRS.) M. P. LEWIS.

CAPRON, Okla. Ter., Dec. 31, 1901.

DEAR CHILDREN OF GOD:—While others are passing the last night of the year in worldly amusements, I feel like passing it in a different manner. Silver and gold I have none, but such as I have give I unto you. It is written in Psalm cxxvii., "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Thus we learn that it is vain for man to try to build the church of Christ, and yet we find men striving to do this work all over the world. They think that this is their work and mission in the world. The dear Savior has told us that men would say, "Lo here, and lo there, is Christ," but that we are to believe them not. No man is foolish enough to say, "I am Christ," in so many words, but a blind man might almost see that virtually these men claim to be the Savior, by claiming to save men. How often it is said that our mission here is to save souls. Every heaven-taught soul knows that the Lord himself came into the world for that very purpose.

The angel said to Joseph, "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." Then according to the testimony of the angel, it is not the preacher that saves souls, but this Jesus. But how was the immaculate Lamb of God to do that work? Why, he was to come under a violated law, and render full satisfaction for the sins of his people; he was to be made lower than the angels, and then crowned with glory and honor, and set over the works of the Lord's hands. It was said, "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all things in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that

sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren; saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."—Heb. ii. 8-12. And the Redeemer said unto Peter, "Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Thus Jesus is the builder of the house; and it is a sweet consolation that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Are you not, dear child of God, glad that the Lord is the builder of that house of which you are a part?

The expression, "the gates of hell," includes all our own weakness, every temptation, every trouble. Sometimes I feel as though these gates have well nigh prevailed against me, for I find that I am so ready to yield to every temptation. O, how can I be a child of God? In myself I am so mean, but as the Lord is the builder, he knows just what every part of the house is, and all must be perfected for the place which it occupies. By the obedience of this one man many were made righteous. This is my hope. And dear child of God, it is by the obedience of the dear Savior that you are made righteous, and it is not by your own obedience. Thus every part of this building is so perfect that it cannot be made more so. But, says the poor, tempted child of God, "I am anything else but perfect; in one thing only am I perfect, I am a perfect sinner." But so is Jesus a perfect Savior, and "Where sin abounds, grace does much more abound." Blessed indeed is that man to whom the Lord does not impute sin. Now if the Lord does not impute your sins to you, why are you not perfect? I know that I suffer greatly because of my inbred corruptions, but Christ, the Captain of our salvation, was made perfect through sufferings. He was our Head, and if the head suffers, how can the members hope to escape? I suffer in body, but I suffer in mind on account of my short comings more than in all bodily sufferings.

Paul speaks of bodily afflictions as being light, and only for a moment, and says that they work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Solomon's temple was a type of this house which the Lord builds; in that temple every stone was prepared before it was brought to the temple, and there was not heard the sound of axe or hammer in its erection. All the material in this spiritual house is ready prepared before it is brought to the house, from the quarry of nature. By his Spirit he pries them out from the quarry, and he leads them about, and instructs them, and keeps them as the apple of his eye; he takes away the stony heart, and gives them an heart of flesh. Now this poor child can for the first time weep on account of sin, and this poor sinner feels that he is almost anything else than a part of the house of which the Lord is the builder. O, how happy such ones would be could they only believe that they were parts of this building. I feel altogether unworthy of a place in that house; it seems to me that I become more and more mean and vile. I must be candid, my dear brethren, and if you can have no fellowship with me it is no more than I deserve. Yet I cannot bear to be entreated to leave you, nor to return from following after you; I want to follow after this dear people who say that salvation is of the Lord, and who sing, "Grace all the work shall crown through everlasting days."

Except the Lord keep the city, the

waketh but in vain. Now all false watchmen will tell the inhabitants of this city that now being saved, they must keep themselves by careful living, else they will yet be lost, but Jesus, the builder of this city, says, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." All false teachers say that although Jesus has given eternal life, yet if they are not very careful they will still perish. Dear reader, you can be the judge as to which is right. Paul said, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Dear children, as sure as your life is hid with Christ in God, so sure will the city be kept. Peter said, We are begotten unto a lively hope, and unto an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, which is reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. The Lord does keep this city unto final salvation. The inhabitants of this city are loved with an everlasting love, and so he will surely keep them from all harm. Do not be afraid, dear child, you will not be left out of this city, but to the end you will be kept inclosed within the walls of this city, whose maker and builder is God.

How strongly fortified is this city, for salvation is appointed for walls and bulwarks. The Lord came once to redeem us from all iniquity by his own precious blood, and before he left the world he spoke words of comfort to us, saying, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." It is declared that he is coming again, but not to suffer for sin, but to take his jewels to himself. In that world there will be no need of the sun to shine, for he is the light of it; the countenance of our King will lighten that city. O, then lift up your heads, for the day of your redemption draweth nigh. It will soon be said to you, "Come up higher." You feel all unworthy of a high seat, and are perfectly satisfied with the lowest seat, even at the feet of Jesus. But he loves his bride too well to suffer her to remain at his feet, but will take her to his side.

O, let us bless the Lord for his safe keeping of this city. As surely as you want to be by his side, so surely you will not perish before him. No! he will never permit any soul that would see his face to perish at his feet.

Dear brethren, may God bless his cause, and may he bless the editors and correspondents of the dear old SIGNS, together with all the readers; may he bless the dear souls who get no preaching only through the dear SIGNS; may he deal tenderly with his church; but we know he has chosen the church in the furnace of affliction.

Now do with this as your better judgment dictates, and all will be right with me.

I am, as I trust, your brother in the hope of a better world than this,

J. M. DULEY.

MASSEY, Va., June 25, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I hardly thought when I wrote last, that I should ever ask for space again in our family paper, but during my attending the associations, namely, Delaware, Delaware River and Warwick, what I witnessed stirred up

quite an exercise of mind, and for relief I have concluded to pen some of those exercises down. I thought the very first day of the meeting that I never had seen such bright indications, and heard such strong expressions of love and fellowship in all my life, and my mind was arrested at once, and I began to feel humble and crushed, and my strength as a man began to give way, and I soon began to feel overcome with humble joy, and began to wonder what this meant. At first I could not apply it anywhere but to myself. I thought these strong expressions of fellowship are meant to strengthen and prepare me personally for some approaching trial, and I really thought that it was a sign to me that this was the last interview that I should ever have with the saints in the north-eastern country, and it kept me filled to almost overflowing. I have not only wondered how I ever got along in the pulpit, but how I did behave while in there, for it seems to me that I was hardly responsible, for I felt more like a child than a man, and this personal application of what occurred to me never changed until brother B. L. Beebe commenced talking at the close of the Warwick association, then all at once like a flash it occurred to me, It is general in its application, and wisdom has designed it for general good. Then I began to fear that some great trial is going to come upon the associations and churches, and this is the way the Lord is going to prepare them for it when it comes, by increasing their love and fellowship, and thus make them strong in the power of his might. So I am settled, and firmly believe that it is coming, if the signs of the times which are before us express anything. Who would have thought twenty-five or thirty years ago, that so many "isms" and "schisms" would have found way in amongst us? Who would have dreamed that war would have been made in the ranks of the Primitive Baptists against the doctrine of predestination, by attaching to it such awful limits, allow the God of heaven to predestinate the good things, and the devil the seeming wicked things? because predestination means whatsoever cometh to pass. Then all things are predestinated by some power or wisdom. Again, who would have even thought, even a few years ago, that such a theme or phrase would have arisen amongst us as a "conditional time salvation"? I think that brethren have got things phrased up wrong; we all know that there is such a thing as being in possession of or possessed by the joys of salvation, and at other times to feel that those joys are shut out from us, causing the cry, "O Lord, restore unto me the joys of thy salvation." I think truly that every act of obedience to the divine law is the effect of the grace of God, and will be to the praise of that grace; if it be otherwise, it would be to our praise. Then we would claim preeminence over some one else, but it must not be so. How terrible it is whenever any of these new ideas are sprung upon us, there seems to be a spirit in them to drive brethren to accept them or be renounced. But let us be quiet, not rendering evil for evil, but be gentle toward every one. None of these things should raise a bar of fellowship; let us wait on the Lord. If predestination in its full sense had been made a bar of fellowship some time after I was baptized I should have been cut off, but now I believe it with all my heart. And it seems to me the more I try to secure my time salvation, the more I blunder and fall, and the more bruises I get. But sometimes he, the Lord, leadeth in paths of righteous-

ness and peace, for his name's sake, and not for anything that I have done, and the praise is all the time due to his name. My heart's desire is that war would cease against the doctrine of predestination, and wait on the Lord, and also all caviling about "conditional time salvation." For when the Lord shuts, none can open, do as they can; and when he opens, none can shut; not all the powers of the flesh and Satan, and I do hope and trust that the doctrine of the non-resurrection of the saints will not become a topic, or be urged upon, for take away the hope of the resurrection of the saints, my hope is much blasted. As Paul has said, "For if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." I hope that we may be kept from trying to make it appear that the resurrection has passed already, and thus overthrow the faith of some, as says the apostle, for what I long for in this life, I have not nor cannot attain, but faith views it fully consummated in the resurrection.

Brethren, I fear there is a trying day approaching; let us mark the signs as they appear, and let our loins be girt about with truth, and have on the whole armor of God, so as to stand firm and united.

I wish to express my gratitude for the kindness shown on our visit to the three associations; we will not soon forget it.

Brother Beebe, if you think this worth publishing, do so, if not, lay it aside.

T. M. POULSON.

GEORGETOWN, Texas, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—If I could write like other brethren I would love to do so, they all write so plainly and lovingly, and their words are so comforting. How good and pleasant it is for the children to agree, and how good it is to be led by the Spirit of our God in all our preaching, and praying, and singing, and sitting together in love. Brother, I call all this good works, which we are created unto; they are the fruits of the Spirit of God; this all is the working in us of God, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. I desire to tell you what I believe. The language of Jude has reference to the salvation that is taught of men, such as Paul preached before his conversion. Jude says, Beloved, I write unto you of the common salvation, and it was needful for me to write unto you, that ye should earnestly contend for the faith, once delivered unto the saints. Now, as I understand, brother Beebe, Jude never told them to contend for the common salvation, but for the faith of God's elect. Jude told the brethren to contend for something that God had given unto them, for faith we are told, is the gift of God. The whole tenor of this epistle of Jude leads my mind to the preaching of Paul while he was persecuting the saints. Charity, which is the greatest of all things, seems to abound in this chapter. Love is the gift of God, as much so as salvation is his gift.

God made choice of his people to serve him, and they do so, for God works in them, both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and they cannot help serving him. God opens, and none can shut, and he shuts, and none can open. So also with obedience, till God opens none can obey; till he opens, none can repent; till he opens, none can preach the everlasting gospel; till he opens, none can love him; till he opens, none can love another; till he opens, we cannot perform any good work, for all love and obedience is of God, without any conditions on our part. No man can receive anything only from heaven.

If I could live obediently all the time

before God, why should I be chastised? God says in his word that whom he loveth he chasteneth, that they may bring forth more fruit, to the honor and glory of God, and, If any be without chastisement, they are not sons. Christ Jesus the Lord was obedient in all things, and his lot was one of suffering, and at last death, because it was the purpose of God that it should be so. And he says, if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him. If our disobedience is the cause of all our suffering, we would suffer all the time, but we do rejoice a little sometimes, but it is for a little time only, for sin is mixed with all we do. If then, we could work out a salvation at all, it would be a sinful one, and would not be worth anything to us in time or in eternity.

Now another question, If the doctrine of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES was right at first, and there has been no change from that good day till now, how is it that they are wrong now? God is the same God now, that he has always been. Never, no never, has he changed in anything. God bless the SIGNS, and its editors, and all who love them. I glory in the doctrine published in them, for it is of God now, and has always been, it is the truth, and if the truth make us free, we shall be free indeed. May God bless us all for evermore. Do with this as you like; I am ashamed to send it to you.

Your brother,

J. I. YARBROUGH.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March 2, 1902.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—After reading the many excellent letters in the SIGNS for Feb. 15th, I felt like writing a few lines to express the comfort and edification that I received therefrom, and did so, but my scribble was so imperfect that I was ashamed to send it, and so laid it aside. Now I have just read several of the letters in the SIGNS for March 15th, and feel like adding my feeble testimony. I do not know whether I will send this to you or not. I can never write a letter to suit me. I write many letters which none ever see save myself.

For a long time I have been in the wilderness. "Like one alone I seem to be, O is there any one like me?" O that it were with me as in days past, when the candle of the Lord shined round about me. Will I never experience those golden balmy days again? Then Jesus, all the day long, was my joy and my song. I think I have known what it was to rejoice in the God and Rock of my salvation, and now my prayer is, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." "If a moment in praising of God I employ, I have hours again to complain." I often become very much discouraged; my lofty aspirations are all blasted; my bright hopes to the winds are given; the shadow of death is upon my eyelids; my days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope, and yet I have hope, but it is a hope against hope; I seem to be waiting for the Lord, but what else can I do? The longer I live, the more I realize man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. Are these the trials we must expect? Is this the lot of God's elect? Has he who has been so precious in my young life, now cast me off?

Could I realize that the experience through which I am now passing is for the good of myself, and my brethren, and for the lifting of Jesus on high, I would not only be willing to endure it, but would glory in it, but how can it redound to this end, when my mind is so barren and I have no light on the Scriptures, and no travel of mind, but con-

stantly am thinking of myself, poor, sinful self. I do not feel to complain at the Lord, no! no! for in all this he hath not dealt with me according to my transgression, but in the midst of deserved wrath he has remembered mercy. Yea, it is through his mercy that I am not consumed; it is by his grace that I am what I am; he will not lay upon man more than is right. Pray for me, my dear brother, for I am poor and needy.

Yours in tribulation,

EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

OTEGO, N. Y.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—It is with a feeling of gratitude to my heavenly Father that I am again privileged to write to the household of faith. The dear Lord has been pleased to favor me with strength to attend once more the association at Middletown. I can say it was "a feast of fat things;" Christ was exalted as a Prince and a Savior to give remission of sins. If I know anything of these things, he is the only true and living way, for he is the truth and the life. How blessed to sit under his banner, to drink his blood and eat his flesh. It has been a wonderfully refreshing time to my thirsty soul. How cheering to behold the Lord's servants raised up to preach glad tidings of salvation. As our dear aged ones are called home, others come forth. It encouraged my soul to see the Lord carrying on his own work; none can stop or hinder. What a mercy that all the powers of earth and hell combined cannot frustrate his design. "It must go on, amen, amen." Sometimes we are brought into dark places, and cannot see any evidences of belonging to this glorious company; but the Sun of righteousness appears once more, and out of the darkness he ariseth "with healing in his wings."

> "The more the beauty strikes my view,
> The humbler I shall be."

Many times I have to mourn my wretched, depraved nature, yet I have a hope; why should I mourn? If I had never known the Lord, I should not know anything of the light. When the sun breaks forth with refulgent glory, then I can say, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his."

It was delightful for me to attend the ordinance of baptism, to witness what I had so much desired. For many years I have been looking and praying for it; I have known Clara from her childhood, and have long been assured she was one of the chosen ones. It encourages me to look still to him who is a prayer-hearing and a prayer-answering God.

I wish to thank all the dear friends for their kindness. The Lord reward them and bless them. The love and unity manifested among the brethren and sisters was delightful to behold. May the Lord enable us all to stand fast, and as the day approaches, have on the whole armor of God, being grounded in the faith. I believe the day is not far distant when our faith is to be tried. May we stand immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

I bid you farewell, I may never see you again in the flesh, but am with you in spirit. We shall join our voices in singing the sweet anthem of redeeming love. To him that hath loved us and washed us in his own blood, be glory and honor, now and forever.

> "Then we shall see his face,
> And never, never sin,
> And from the river of his grace
> Drink endless pleasures in."

ELIZABETH BEESLEY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1902.

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EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

CHRIST THE FIRST THAT SHOULD RISE FROM THE DEAD.

(1 Cor. xv. 20; Col. i. 18; Rev. i. 5.)

FROM some cause our mind has been very pleasantly dwelling upon the truth presented in these portions of holy writ of late, and we feel like presenting some of our reflections for the consideration of our readers. Nothing can be more important to be considered by all who believe, than the truth of the resurrection of the dear Redeemer, because all our salvation both here and hereafter depends upon it. Take away the fact of the resurrection of the crucified body of the Savior from the gospel, and we should have no gospel left to proclaim. Paul abundantly testifies in all that he says in all his epistles that if Christ be not raised, all his preaching was vain, and our faith is vain, and we are yet in our sins; that is, we are not yet justified, and our hope is for this life only, and cannot embrace what is beyond. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable."

There are three special things which are declared in the word to be involved in the fact of the resurrection of the body of Christ. We say the body of Christ, because that was what was taken down from the cross, and which was laid in Joseph's new tomb, and which arose from that tomb, and appeared to many before the time came in which he ascended out of their sight. These three things we wish to briefly call attention to.

First, Paul in Romans i. 4, says that by his resurrection he was declared to be the Son of God with power; that is, his rising from the dead proved him to be all that he had claimed to be during his earthly ministry. He said that he was the Son of God. In his death, to his enemies it seemed that his claim was fully proven to be false, and could he have remained in the grave there could have been no assurance to his disciples that he was what he had claimed to be, but the rising again of Jesus from the dead was full proof that he was all that he had claimed to be. Now this is of the utmost importance to all who believe, because in this sonship of the dear Redeemer lies our sonship also. If he be not the risen Son of God, then we are not sons of God; we cry, Abba, Father, in vain, if Jesus be not risen from the dead. We do not purpose to dwell upon this, but have simply desired to remind those who read of this truth.

Second. Paul also testified in Romans iv. 25, that he was raised for our justification. Not only is our sonship then involved in his resurrection from the dead, but also our state of justification before God. In all the Scriptures this truth of justification is presented, and presented as a thing essential in the sinner's salvation; this we do not need to argue, for surely none among all the people of God question or doubt this, yet it is good to contemplate this truth for our comfort and joy. Job asked the solemn question, How shall a man be just with God? And here in the doctrine of the resurrec-

tion of the blessed Lord, we have the answer. The resurrection of the body of Christ proved that his atonement for our sins was complete, for had this work remained unfinished in his death, then he could not have risen again from the dead; his resurrection proves that the divine law was fully satisfied, and that now there could be no more condemnation to them who were embraced in the covenant of redemption. In the death of Christ, and in his resurrection again from the dead, lies our only but yet all-sufficient hope of salvation. Christ did indeed die for our sins, according to the Scriptures; in this is our salvation, because in him is our atonement and justification, and our righteousness, and all that we need, but none of these things could ever have been ours had he not risen from the dead.

The third thing that is again and again said in the word to be connected with the resurrection of Christ, is our own resurrection from the dead. It is not only true that in his resurrection we come to be sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, by a new and spiritual birth, and are justified freely through his redemption, but also the final and future resurrection of our bodies is involved in it, so that if Christ be not risen, there is no resurrection for us who believe, and if Christ be risen then nothing can hinder the resurrection of our bodies also. This need not be dwelt upon here surely, because all are familiar with the scriptural testimony which so abundantly bears upon this subject.

There have been some reflections in our mind in more special connection with the texts of Scripture referred to in the beginning of this editorial, to which we have felt like calling attention, and first among them is this, that in all these places Christ is declared to be the first to rise from the dead. There is no contradiction here of the statements of the Old and the New Testaments concerning the raising again of the two children by the prophets Elisha and Elijah, or concerning the raising up of the ruler's daughter, and the widow's son, and Lazarus, by the word of the Savior himself, for all these were but raised up to a resumption of this natural life, and were still subject to disease, decay and death, together with sin. Paul in Hebrews testifies that women received their dead raised to life again, while others were tortured, not accepting deliverance that they might obtain a better resurrection. Better than what? Why, better than that accorded to the children who were restored to their mothers, better than a resurrection back again to this natural life. None had before been raised up, as was the blessed Lord. In the true gospel sense he was the first to rise from the dead. None had thus risen before him. This is a plain statement, and by it we learn that none of the patriarchs, or prophets, or holy men of old, had yet been raised up from the dead. Two of the Old Testament saints had been translated, that they should not see death: "Enoch walked with God and was not, for God took him," and Paul singles him out as a solitary example of the escape of death. Had this been a common experience of believers, it would not have been said of Enoch more than of the rest. Enoch alone under the patriarchal dispensation, and Elijah alone under the prophetic dispensation, escaped death. God gave to them this faith. But of all the rest who died in faith, it is not said that they were translated that they should not see death. And of them all it is true that they have not risen from

the dead, else Christ had not been the first to rise.

This is also evident from this additional fact. It is testified by the holy Spirit by the apostle Matthew, that among the wonderful signs which accompanied the Savior's death, such as the rending of the rocks, and the darkening of the sun, and the rending of the veil of the temple, that the graves were opened, and many bodies of saints that slept arose and came out of their graves after his resurrection, and went about the holy city, and appeared unto many. Thus it is evident that these bodies at least were not yet risen, else they could not have been said to have been raised, and to have come out of their graves after his resurrection. Also we ought to notice that it is not said that all the bodies of all the saints that slept thus arose, but many. "The word "many" just as surely means only a part, as the word few would mean it. Thus the resurrection of these many bodies proved beyond all contradiction that Jesus was truly the first to arise from the dead. In view of this it is no wonder that Paul in 2 Timothy ii. 17, 18, utters such condemnation of the heresy of Hymenæus and Philetus, who said that the resurrection was past already, thus overthrowing the faith of some. This was an express denial that Christ was the first to rise from the dead, and if this were denied, then the hope of justification, and of their sonship in Christ was vain; they who had hoped in his resurrection were yet in their sins, and all the experience that they had rejoiced in, was but a figment of the brain. No wonder that Paul uttered such severe condemnation of these men and their heresy.

Still further, if Christ was the first to rise from the dead, then it is manifest that in the sense in which this is spoken, his people did not rise when he arose. Had they have then arisen, it could not have been said that he was first. All who rose with him would have been first, as well as he. In one sense all his people did indeed rise with him, that is, from under the curse of the law, and into the new covenant relation with God. This is shown elsewhere in the Scriptures, and is not disputed, and we need not to dwell upon this here, but in the sense in which the apostle spoke, his people did not then arise. Their resurrection is also yet in the future. From the example of the Old Testament saints, and from the resurrection of the bodies of many that slept after his resurrection, we learn that the resurrection does not take place at the moment of death. And we learn from the statement that he was the first to arise, that his people did not rise at the moment of his resurrection. Therefore the resurrection, to all the people of God, save only those whose bodies arose when he arose, is in the future, and this the Scriptures in all places say. They always speak of it as being yet future.

Another thought suggests itself here, viz: Jesus himself was in paradise while his body lay in Joseph's new tomb. He said to the penitent thief, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." We know from the narrative that their bodies were not in paradise, both were laid away in the earth. The body of Jesus arose on the third, the appointed day. Thus was fulfilled in the death of both Jesus and the penitent thief the decree, then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit to God who gave it. But we see the dust of Jesus rising again from the dead, and as he was the first, so shall this dying thief, and all who believe, also rise from the dead, and it appears to us that the testimony of the

record shows that this resurrection will not take place with one until it takes place with all, at the last moment, when the last trump shall sound.

It is because of this hope of the resurrection of the body that saints are said to sleep in Jesus. Sleep has with it the hope of an awaking again. Because this is so the word is used to set forth the hope of a believer that when he dies he shall rise again from the dead. We would call attention to the fact that before the resurrection of Christ from the dead, the word sleep is used to describe death, and after his resurrection saints are not only said to be asleep, but also dead. In Job xiv. 12, the dead are said to be asleep. See also Jer. li. 57, Dan. xii. 2, Deut. xxxi. 16, and other places in the Old Testament. Jesus also said of Lazarus that he sleepeth, meaning as he said directly, he is dead. Thus death was spoken of as being a sleep, before the resurrection of Christ, and on the other hand afterwards saints are said to be dead, as well as asleep. They are so spoken of eight or nine times in 1 Cor. xv. See also 1 Thess. iv. 16, and other places beside. But whether we use the word sleep, or the word dead; whether we speak of those who sleep in Christ, or of the dead in Christ, this sleep and this death still abides, and none are yet risen from it save those who arose when Jesus arose. For in all places their resurrection is said to be in the future. Faith in the people of God can say no more nor less than the written word says, and the word of God speaks of the resurrection as being in the future. If we therefore say that the resurrection is past with any, save those already spoken of, we come into the same condemnation as did Hymenæus and Philetus. And as it was the body of Christ that arose, so must it be our bodies also, that they may be fashioned like unto his glorious and glorified body. How his body of flesh and bones was glorified, and what that change in it means, we cannot know, and so also we cannot know what this change means in our vile body, but it was his real body of flesh and bones that was glorified, and so will it be our body of flesh and bones, now vile, that shall be glorified, being changed into his image. For this God's dear people have hoped in every age, and in this hope have they died, triumphing over death, and rejoicing. This glorious hope will not be disappointed.

Redemption will be finally completed. We have not yet attained, but we shall attain. Then shall we be satisfied, when we awake in his likeness. We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. This our hope embraces and expects, and for this we wait. This is the adoption, the redemption of our body. The things which we experience here are but the earnest of the inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession. As man sinned in the flesh, so must he be redeemed in the flesh; as death passed upon him because of sin, and so the body goes down to the grave and into death, so redemption must embrace the body, else death is not fully conquered, and redemption is not fully complete, but Christ goes before in all; he is the first to rise from the dead, he was the first to enter the full glory. As the bodies of Enoch and Elijah are in that perfect state, changed into the image of the dear Redeemer, and as those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, so shall the bodies of the dead who believe be raised, experiencing the same change as do those who are alive then, and all together be

with the Lord, and like him.

"This glorious hope revives our courage by the way,
While each in expectation lives and longs to see the day."

The crowning thought with us as we write these things is, that in all things Jesus has the pre-eminence; in all things he is the leader of his Israel, and they can but rejoice to follow where he goes. Let us be steadfast in the faith, rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

REVELATION XXII. 2, 3.

"IN the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him."

In this connection we have an illustration of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, as a holy city, New Jerusalem, coming not up out of the sea, like the seven-headed beast described in chapter xiii. 1, or the two-horned beast which came up out of the earth, in the same chapter, nor like the scarlet colored beast ascending out of the bottomless pit, described in chapter xvii.; but in this vision the church of God, as the bride, the Lamb's wife, is seen coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. All her preparation, and all her adorning comes with her from God, from heaven, and needs none of the trappings of earth to make her the perfection of beauty. Under the similitude of a city, her foundations, gates, streets, light, and all her internal glory, order, provision, security and happiness, is beautifully described in chapter xxi., and the description is continued in the xxii. and last chapter of the New Testament. The pure water of life flows clear as crystal from the throne of God and the Lamb, for her abundant supply. And, "in the midst of the street of it." That is, in the midst of the street of the holy city, or church of God, and on either side of the river, was the Tree of Life. A street is a thoroughfare, a way, a passage by which the citizens have intercourse with each other, and enjoy the privileges of the city. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the way, and all the citizens of the New Jerusalem abide in him. He is the Truth, and they all walk in him. In the midst of this street, that is, in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God and Man, and Mediator between God and men. His Mediatorial indentity being the centre or midst of him, in which dwells all the fullness of his eternal Godhead, and in which the entire church of God is complete.

By the Tree of Life, we understand the whole church in her vital and eternal union with Christ, for he is the Root and the Offspring of this Tree of Life, while the Church and all her branches are brought into manifestation by their vital union with the Root. He is the true vine, and his members are the branches. Centering in him all the family of God exist.

"*And on either side of the river.*" Not only subsequently to his advent into this world, but throughout the patriarchal and prophetic ages, and even from everlasting, this Tree of Life has existed; and subsequently to his manifestation in the flesh, this Tree of Life has been revealed in her gospel organization. As in Zech. iv. 3, Two Olive trees supply the bowl of the lamp or branches of the golden candlestick, with golden oil; the one on the right side of the bowl, and the other on the left side thereof, so this Tree of Life

is on both sides of the River of Life, which John saw. This tree, as we are told, bare twelve *manner* of fruits, and yielded her fruits every month. The number twelve agrees with the number of months in a year, also with the number of the tribes of Israel, apostles of the Lamb, of the gates and foundation of the city, &c. By the twelve *manner* of fruits we do not understand a difference in the nature or quality of the fruit, for our Lord has informed us that a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruits, and as this is a good tree, a Tree of Life, all its fruits must be good and vital. But in *manner* its yielding is adapted to the varied circumstances and condition of the citizen of the New Jerusalem. As the seasons of bearing, *every month*, show that there is no time or vicissitude of the church or of her members, in which this Tree of Life fails to supply with the fruits of immortality or life. These fruits, the apostle informs us, are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, &c., against which there is no law. God has his set, or appointed times to favor Zion. She has her winter and summer, her seed time and harvest, but she has never yet found a time or season in which the grace of God has not been sufficient for her.

"*And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*" The leaves, as well as the fruits of a tree, are the productions of the tree, and show that the tree is in a healthy and vital state, and that the life or sap from the living root is diffused throughout the tree, and all the branches where the leaves appear. The tree is clothed in verdure and beauty. So the Church of God in her living union with Christ her Root, from spiritual life derived from him, is invigorated and made to flourish like the Palm Tree, and to grow as the Cedars of Lebanon. While the exhibition of truth, righteousness, and purity in doctrine, order, ordinance, and in all her practice, resists the corruptions of our fleshly nature, reproves the disorders and abominations contracted from the world, and heals those who are made partakers of its medicinal virtues, of those inordinate affections, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife and seditions, wherein we once walked, and produce in them a love of holiness, a desire to be more conformed to the image of their divine Lord, to mortify the deeds of the flesh, to put off the old man with his lusts, and to put on the new man, which after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. The kingdom of Christ is indeed but one nation. "A chosen generation, a peculiar people, a holy nation." But her members are redeemed out of every nation and kindred, and require the healing virtues of the leaves of the Tree of Life.

"*And there shall be no more curse.*" The holy Jerusalem is the vision of peace. No wrath can enter: For this, saith the Lord, is as the waters of Noah unto me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee. (Isaiah liv. 9, 10.) Although the Lord has chosen his people in the furnace of affliction, and ordained that in the world they shall have tribulation, and although he rebukes those whom he loves, and chastens every son whom he receiveth, yet it is always in love, never in wrath. His word, his oath is pledged that he will not be wroth with

them; therefore it is impossible that there shall be any more curse. All things do work together for good to them that love him.

"*But the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it.*" The throne is the place of power, and the throne of God must be the place of Almighty power, of Divine Omnipotence, the power by which he governs the armies of heaven and the inhabitants of earth, while the throne of the Lamb more immediately refers to his spiritual dominion over his subjects as the King of saints. Still, as all power in heaven and in earth to reign in providence and in grace, is vested in our risen and exalted Redeemer, and as he is ever in, and inseparably identified with his church, the throne of God and of the Lamb is in this holy city. Whatever, therefore, the saints may need in providence, or to protect, support, and defend them in temporal matters, as well as all the spiritual government of the church, is in him, and he with all power and grace is in the midst of Zion, so that she shall not be moved. Truly he is the head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

"*And his servants shall dwell there.*" Happy then to be a servant of the dear Redeemer. All his subjects are children, but the relationship of a son is demonstrated by birth, that of a servant by obedience. His servant ye are to whom ye obey. Neither obedience, nor any act of ours, can make us sons, but if God has made us sons and heirs, is it not our duty and privilege to obey him? We enter in through the gates of this city, and have a right to this Tree of Life, by our obedience, if we are subjects of his grace, for he who proclaims himself Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, says in verse fourteen of this chapter, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." Those who obey are his servants, and they shall dwell there; Jerusalem shall be their abiding place, and they shall go no more out forever.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., October 15, 1859.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$579 55
Philemon Stout, Ill., $10.00; Nancy Strathers, W. Va., $3.00; Mary A. Deffenbach, Ohio, $1.00.—Total	14 00
Total to date	$593 55

CHURCH NOTICES.

THE Primitive Baptist Church of Jesus Christ, at Providence, holding to the doctrine of election, predestination and salvation by grace, near Farrar, Limestone Co., Texas, to all orderly Primitive Baptists in Texas and elsewhere.

This is to certify that Elder G. I. Thomas, having been excluded from our fellowship at our April meeting, 1902, and this church having demanded of him his credentials, and he refusing to give them up, we therefore desire to inform the Baptists generally, that we are no longer responsible for his deeds or conduct.

This done and signed by order of Providence church, in conference this June 14th, 1902.

WM. LITTLE, Moderator.

JOHN BISHOP, Church Clerk.

AT A GREAT REDUCTION.

"THE Priesthood of the Son of God" will be closed out as follows: one copy, 40 cents; two copies, 75 cents; three copies, $1.00. Sent postpaid. Address,

D. BARTLEY.

LEBANON, Ohio.

This book was approved by the editors of the SIGNS, the late Elder Wm. M. Mitchell, and very many others. It is now the only book devoted entirely to the priesthood of our precious Redeemer, and as it is not electrotyped, this is the only edition, and all who would secure it should order soon. This is done in order to publish a third edition of "Man Redeemed from Sin and Death," of which notice will be given, if the Lord will.

D. B.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, at his residence, Delmar, Del., June 18th, 1902, his daughter, Edith B. Francis, to Joseph Eusminger, of Harrisburg, Pa.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, assisted by Elder J. G. Eubanks, at the Welsh Tract meeting-house, New Castle Co., Del., June 10th 1902, Everett C. Jobinson and Miss Louisia J. Staton, formerly of Newark, Del.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

It is among the sad duties of a pastor's life to be called upon to conduct a service at the funeral of a beloved member of his flock, more particularly in the case of one young in years, and in the church, and for whom he had reason to hope for a long and useful life, who is cut down in the flower of manhood, or womanhood. Such was my feeling on being called to attend the funeral of sister **Margaret Hannah Gordy,** at our meeting-house in Delmar, Del., on the afternoon of the first Sunday in last month. She was the wife of brother Edward E. Gordy, and with her husband, not long after their marriage, was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptists, at Little Creek, Delaware, in September, 1894. She had a warm place in the affections of her brethren, and well deserved it, because of the many sterling virtues that made up her lovely character. She was of a retiring disposition, and did not have an extensive acquaintance, but was loved by all who knew her. She was a true home-maker, devoted to the interests of her home, husband and son. She was a victim of Bright's disease, from which she suffered over three years, and which caused her most intense suffering for about three months prior to her death, which occurred on the night of the second of May, 1902. During all her illness she never complained, but was a most patient sufferer, and when she knew that the summons must soon come, waited for the call of the heavenly Lover in humble faith and hope. Her age was 31 years and about 6 months. She leaves her husband and one son, her father, brother Perry D. Lecates, six brothers and two sisters, all of whom realize their loss deeply, and the church of her membership. But our sorrowing is not without hope.

A. B. FRANCIS.

Delmar, Del., June, 1902.

Dr. L. N. Mimmis was born in the State of South Carolina, April 1st, 1812, departed this life May 28th, a few minutes before 8 o'clock a. m. His disease was dropsy of the chest. He was compelled to sit up in his rocking chair about two weeks, could not lie down. He bore his sufferings with great patience and christian fortitude, without a murmuring word, but said to his dear old companion and children, "I cannot stay much longer with you, but I am ready and willing to go home, and can only leave you all in the hand of God," and soon fell asleep in the arms of the dear Savior. He left South Carolina when quite young, and went to Mississippi, afterwards to Louisiana, then to Texas, afterwards returning to Louisiana, settling in the latter State, where he resided till the last great change came. He was in three wars, in two as a soldier, and in one he practiced medicine. He had been a practicing physician about sixty years. He embraced the faith of God's elect many years prior to the time of coming to the church. He united with Antioch church, Big Woods, La., (one among the oldest Primitive Baptist churches west of the Mississippi River) about four years before his departure. He was one of the excellent men of the earth, had many friends and a good reputation. He leaves an aged companion, several children, all married, and many grandchildren, besides a host of friends, to mourn their loss, but we mourn not as those who have no hope; we believe with him it was far better to depart. He called to mind affectionately the church to which he belonged, in his last conversation. He said, "Tell my brethren and sisters of Antioch church good bye, my love to them and best wishes for ever."

Elder Wm. Perkins was requested to preach his funeral at the graveyard, on the second Sunday in June, 1902, but on account of sickness he was unable to meet the call, and at his request Elder D. Richey filled the appointment. The text used on the occasion was 1 Cor. xv., "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" There was a large attendance and good order throughout the services.

D. RICHEY.

Mrs. Mary Wade Sutton, daughter of Thomas and Julia Wade, was born near Darrtown, Butler Co., Ohio, Jan. 11th, 1817. Her parents moved to Vermilion Co., Ind., in the year 1821. She was married to Sylvanus A. Sutton, Jan. 24th, 1839, and moved with him to Indiana Co., Pa., where she resided until March 4th, 1869, at which time she returned with her family to Franklin Co., Ind. Her husband died in Oxford, Ohio, Sept. 9th, 1888, where they spent part of the time. She was the mother of three children, two of whom died in infancy. The other, Julia Emeline, married T. B. Barkley, Feb. 28th, 1866, and died Feb. 17th, 1877, leaving five small children. The youngest, a girl, Mary, was given over to the care of her grandmother, and proved a great support to her in her declining years. She grew up an accomplished and affectionate lady, doing everything in her power to make her grandmother happy. Since May 31st, 1897, the grandmother and granddaughter resided in College Corner, Ohio. She united with the Primitive Baptist church at Bethlehem, November, 1869, and remained a worthy and consistent member until death. On Friday, Jan. 24th, she was stricken

with paralysis, and sweetly fell asleep in Jesus at 6 o'clock, Jan. 26th, 1902. In her the community loses a cherished friend, the church a useful and faithful member, and her grandchildren a loving and beloved counselor. Several years before her death she selected John xvii. 3, as her funeral text, and requested that the writer preach the discourse, and her request was granted. She was a subscriber and reader of the SIGNS for many years.

W. N. THARP.

SISTER **Hester Hogan Tatum** departed this life June 19th, 1902, at Ocheyedan, Osceola Co., Iowa. Deceased was born in Estill Co., Ky., August 8th, 1822, and came to Putnam Co., Ind., when six years of age, and to Fulton Co., Ill., in 1845. Her maiden name was Hogan, and she was married to Landrine Tatum, March 19th, 1846. Six girls and four boys were born to them, of whom four sons and three daughters survive. Sister Tatum united with the Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church in 1862, and lived from that time a consistent member of the same, and a helpmeet to brother Tatum, who remains to mourn his sad bereavement.

The burial was from their home on the 20th, as she requested not to be taken into an Arminian church after her decease. Words of comfort were spoken to the sorrowing relatives and friends by Elder William Morphew, from John xi. 25, 26. The congregation sang by her request, "Rock of Ages cleft for me," and "Jesus, lover of my soul;" after which her body was laid in the earth from which she was taken. (Gen. iii. 19.)

GARRETT MURPHY.

GARDEN CITY, Minn., June 25, 1902.

MEETINGS.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet in her seventy-first annual session, the Lord willing, with New Hope Church, in Greenbush, Warren Co., Ill., on Friday, Sept. 5th, 6th and 7th, 1902, at 10 o'clock a. m. Those coming by rail will be met at St. Augustine, on the Quincy branch of the C., B. & Q., on Thursday evening before. The a. m. train from the south will be met on Friday. Those coming from the northern direction will come to Galesburg by 5 p. m. on Thursday evening, and go south at 5:45 p. m. All lovers of the truth are invited, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting, the Old School Baptist Church of Cammal, Pa., will hold their yearly two days meeting Saturday and Sunday in August, 30th and 31st, 1902. We are expecting Elders John Slawson, of Delaware Co., New York, and Joshua Rowe, of Baltimore, Md., and would be pleased to see others who love the truth, and desire the company of God's people, present at our meeting; all are welcome. Those coming from the south will come to Williamsport, Pa., and take train at Philadelphia & Reading depot, N. Y. Central R. R., to Cammal, Pa. Those coming from the north will take same railroad at Corning, N. Y., to Cammal, Pa. Brother Sammy Moffat, Mr. James Jamison and sister Charity Campbell live only a few rods from depot. Friends will be met and cared for.

LORENZO CAMPBELL, Church Clerk.

HAZEL Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, will meet in her forty-eighth annual session with Providence church, three miles north of Plano, Appanoose Co., Iowa, on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1902, and continue the two following days. Those coming by rail will be met at Plano, on the K. & W. R. R. All lovers of gospel truth, especially ministers, are invited to attend.

S. B. JONES, Moderator.

J. M. CATE, Clerk.

ACCORDING to promise I will do as the brethren at Montgomery requested me to do. I have written one letter to the SIGNS as an acknowledgment of what was received, and also replied to each letter sent me with contributions for our house of worship. I am more than glad to express our sincere thanks to all who aided us, and to say we received enough to buy our lot and move our house, and at our last meeting, the second Sunday in June, met the brethren who seemed so thankful for our present surroundings in our house, on a lot of our own. By the kindness and help of our brethren we are thus situated. We have enough to finish paying for all work done. We will also paint our house and build a fence. We are standing firm on predestination and on salvation by grace, and grace alone, and we hope for the blessings of God to rest upon us. We have changed our meeting to the third Sunday and Saturday before in each month. Our district meeting will convene with our church on the fourth Sunday and Saturday before, in July. Our place of meeting is near the terminus of the Court street car line, Montgomery, Ala., and would be glad for any of our brethren to meet us at any time they should visit the city.

May the Lord bless, encourage and prosper his people in the truth is my sincere desire.

W. LIVELY.

P. S.—Since I last reported received $15.00 from sister Guernsey, sent by the church at Otego, N. Y.

W. L.

OPELIKA, Ala., June 17, 1902.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 70. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1902. NO. 15.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BISMARK, MO., March 15, 1902.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I desire to send the following to your readers upon the words, "The whole world," as these are the favorite words of the Arminians and Universalists, and sometimes they puzzle some Primitive Baptists.

First. John said, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." To whom was John writing? To the children of God. "For the promise," says Peter, addressing the children of God among the Jews, "is to you and to your children." Shall we stop here? No! If we do we shall have none saved outside of the Jewish nation, where but a part of the children of God are; but he adds, "and to all that are afar off." Now if we stop here we shall have universal salvation, and this would be handling the word of God deceitfully, and not rightly dividing the word of truth; but Peter adds the words, "even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Now here is the world that is meant, the church. Paul says they are first saved, and then called, with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ before the foundation of the world. (2 Tim. i. 9.) Again he said, "But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, [in the past, when Jesus died,] by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." (when quickened or born again.) Again Paul said, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." And "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the sons of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ." Then let us put the word all in every case where God has put it, and it means everywhere just all that are referred to.

Paul says again, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that

he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" These are God's *all*, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?" Here then is the "all the world" of John. They embrace the saved and called among the Jews and the Gentiles.

Let us read again: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and will write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall no more teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they all shall know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and will remember their sins no more." Now this is the "all the world" of John, embracing both Jews and Gentiles who are saved. And Jesus said in his prayer to his father, "I thank thee that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." "All things are delivered unto me of my Father, and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Now can we suppose that those from whom these things are hidden can with the help of Satan's ministers, who compass sea and land to make one proselyte, find out that which God has hidden from them? And the blessed Redeemer said, "All that the Father hath given unto me shall come unto me, and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out; for I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me, and this is the will of him that sent me, that of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day." Thus we see that even our blessed Savior was not a free agent. If he was not, where does free agency come in? There never was and never will be a free agent among the sons of men. We see that all that are saved will be with him at last, as sure as there is a God in heaven. All power is of God, and he has never created a power that he cannot and does not control.

Christ said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." And again it is said, "These words spake Jesus, and

lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me out of the world, for they are thine. Now can all the efforts of men save that world for which Jesus would not pray? John the Baptist said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." This is the same whole world of which John spake as quoted at the beginning of this article. Jesus said again, "Other sheep have I which are not of this fold, them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." These sheep of the two folds brought into one fold, compose the whole world referred to, and he gives all these sheep eternal life, which the lost world does not possess. Read and compare the thirty-fourth chapter of Ezekiel with the tenth chapter of John.

And the apostle said that the seed of Abraham are not all children, but "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." That is, these which are the children of the flesh, are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. Again it is written that "the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord." "As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord, my Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put into thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seeds' seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth even forever." And David says, "A seed shall serve him, it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." This seed is the whole world which John had under consideration. Now if any man, Jew or Gentile, "be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Again it is written, "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." This is the same all that the Father gave to the Son, and Christ said of the same all that they should know the truth, and the truth should make them free. And again of them he said, that whom the Son should make free, should be free indeed. It is also written, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time; whereunto I am ordained a preacher and an apostle. I speak the truth and lie not, a teacher of the Gentiles in truth and verity." Here we have the same all again, and limited to the people of God. And it is said, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the

peace of thy children." Christ referring unto this said, "No man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Now how does the Father draw them? Let us hear Jeremiah. "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." And such Jesus said he would raise up at the last day. The Lord has but one way of bringing his people unto himself, in all ages of the world, and that is a right way. It is written in the prophets, "And they shall all be taught of the Lord. Every man that hath heard therefore and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."

Some doubt the ability of God to teach without a great deal of help, and so they form a great many societies to help him, as they say, carry on his work, but he needs none of their help; all power is of God, the powers that be are ordained of God, and he has made no power that he cannot and does not control. He is all-wise. None but they who are taught of God ever will or ever have come to Christ. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor: that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." Now let us go on and see who this every man is: "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, behold I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

If you see fit to publish this, please send me a copy of the paper, and oblige. I have been a subscriber for thirty years.

R. S. BANKS.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, March 31, 1902.

MISS P. HITCH—DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD:—"The Lord bless thee, and keep thee, the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."—Numbers vi. 24–26. Thus of old the high priest blessed the tribes of Israel. Much more will Christ, our great High Priest, pour forth upon his people, whom he has redeemed, all grace and glory. While here in the world we have only glimpses, "the earnest of our inheritance," but when we are brought home to glory then we shall see face to face, then in all its infinite fullness we shall know the blessing of the Lord our God.

"Not all things else are half so dear
As his delightful presence here:
What must it be in heaven!
'Tis heaven on earth to hear him say,
As now I journey, day by day,
Poor sinner, cast thy fears away,
Thy sins are all forgiven."

Having a precious hope that the Lord has been gracious to us, and that his grace endureth for ever, we may well trust in him, go on our way in sweet confidence, with our hearts lifted up in the ways of the Lord. (2 Chron. xvii. 6.) Though I write this I well know that we

need much grace ministered to us by the holy Spirit that we may in truth be found cleaving to the Lord with full purpose of heart. I can well understand your lament of the smallness of your love to the dear Redeemer; my cry continually is, O that I could love thee, O Savior.

"Lord, it is my chief complaint,
That my love is weak and faint,
Yet I love thee, and adore,
O for grace to love thee more."

But I promised you to write upon a certain subject. Now lest I should make my letter too bulky I will begin and quote as a starting point Hebrews iv. 15: "For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Christ Jesus our High Priest is both God and man. This is a precious and glorious mystery, for it presents him so pre-eminent, and so peculiarly suited to be our Friend and Mediator beyond all that the wisdom of men could have devised. He is the Son of God equal with the Father, (Phil. ii. 6–8,) and to whom equal honor is due. (John v. 23.) God the Father hath spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds, who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. (Heb. i. 1–3; John i. 18; Psalm cx. 1.) Then we have the glorious mystery to contemplate that the Son of God became incarnate. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us."—John i. 14. "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham."—Heb. ii. 16. His name is Emmanuel, God with us.

"Some take him a creature to be,
A man, or an angel at most;
Sure these have not feelings like me,
Nor know themselves wretched and lost.
So guilty, so helpless am I,
I durst not confide in his blood,
Nor on his protection rely,
Unless I was sure he is God."

Now such a person as our Lord Jesus Christ became us to be our High Priest, our Redeemer, Shepherd, Husband, Friend, our All. He has such power and grace in his own person as the incarnate Son of God to undertake all things for time and eternity in behalf of his people.

I have mentioned these things pertaining to the person of our High Priest because when it is taught us that he is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, we may know that he is able according to the fullness of his compassion to succor us in all our times of need. Creatures may feel their hearts often touched for each other's woe, and yet find themselves powerless to afford any relief. No such lamentable condition can befall Jesus, our almighty Friend, "but what his soul desireth even that he doeth."—Job xxiii. 13. Our blessed Redeemer stands in such relationship with his church that it is not an exaggeration to speak of Christ as saying,

"I feel at my heart all thy sighs and thy groans,
For thou art most near me, my flesh and my bones;
In all thy distresses thy Head feels the pain,
Yet all are most needful, not one is in vain."

"He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye."—Zech. ii. 8. When Saul of Tarsus was making havoc of the church, Christ arrested him, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"—Acts ix. 4. How very near and dear the church must be to Christ.

"Ye children of God and the Lamb,
Remember when sorrows press sore,
Your Jesus did once feel the same,
When trials and conflicts he bore.
And still his redeemed should know
He's Jesus the same in his love;
The foot can't be crushed below,
And the Head be unconscious above."

The precious doctrine then is, Christ is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He wept at the grave of Lazarus, he had compassion upon the hungry and weary multitude. (Mark viii. 2.) He was touched with the affliction of the widow of Nain. (Luke vii. 12–15.) He shewed compassion upon the man possessed with a legion of devils. (Mark v. 19.) How many instances might be cited to declare that he is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. O, he is full of compassion, and his compassion never fails. (Psalm lxxvii. 38; Lam. iii. 22.) Even when his people are smarting beneath sore chastenings because of their transgressions, his compassions fail not. (Jer. xii. 15.) Muse upon the following revelation of the kind heart of the Lord our God. "Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him, I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord." That sweet text you mentioned in your letter is very appropriate: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." How very blessed it is for a poor sinner amidst his manifold infirmities to be drawn to the everlasting God, and endowed with the spirit of adoption to say, "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name."

It is declared of our dear Savior that he was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. He therefore knows our infirmities, he is in truth acquainted with our grief. (Isaiah liii. 3.) Touched with all the woes of his body, the church, he was beyond all others a man of sorrows. He made himself of no reputation, he was poor, he hungered. The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air their nests, but Jesus had no where to lay his head. He was persecuted, despised and rejected of men; cruel men buffeted him, smote him, spit in his face, beat him with whips and crushed upon his sacred brow a crown of thorns; they pierced his hands and his feet, and lifted him up upon the cross, a spectacle to men and angels, the mob reviled him, mocked him, but he reviled not again; while they cursed him he prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." For our sakes our dear Savior surrendered himself to all these shameful and cruel things. He gave himself a sacrifice for our sins, and in enduring all this ignominy and misery it was that he also should come into all the trials and miseries of his body, the church. Truly he was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and in that he suffered being tempted he is able to succor them that are tempted. He was tempted of the devil. (Matt. iv. 1.) He was tempted of men. (Matt. xvi. 1.) He was called a gluttunous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. They said, He hath a devil, they called him Beelzebub. (Matt. x. 25.) Thus he was touched. It is comforting to consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest we be wearied and faint in our minds. We have many infirmities, and at times are in heaviness through manifold temptations. We have seasons when Satan with hellish spite infuses into our minds dreadful things, his messengers buffet us, his fiery darts are hurled at us, and sometimes hit and wound us, too, when we have neglected to use our shield. (Eph. vi. 16.) You remember how Christian was assailed in the valley of the shadow of death. But our Lord Jesus who was touched is our succorer.

"When Jesus with his mighty love
Visits my troubled breast,

My doubts subside, my fears remove,
And I'm completely blest."

When Christ draws near, the enemy flees, our trust is then in him and his precious atonement for our sins. O, his blood silences all the accusations of the enemy, and quiets our troubled minds. Our sinfulness is no trifling thing, how it sometimes seems to drink up our spirit, and we are brought (yes, a gracious and divine power brings us) in shame and heaviness of spirit, with a contrite heart before the Lord. Have we even then a compassionate Friend in our High Priest? Yes indeed. In a wondrous mystery Jesus so bore our sins that he was wounded, grieved and crushed beneath them. He himself was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. But Christ the Lamb without blemish and without spot was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. To the pure and holy Jesus how black and loathsome was our guilt. O, what sickening anguish he endured beneath our dreadful sins, and then upon him, our dear Surety and Ransomer, was poured the wrath of God. He was the victim, our atonement. Well might the lovely Savior, the just One, be sore amazed and very heavy, and sweat great drops of blood when all our sins confronted him, were laid upon him, while he was stricken, smitten, wounded, bruised for our transgressions. He indeed was touched. Having such an High Priest, so kind, so compassionate, who does not despise us and cast us aside because of our infirmities, let us unbosom to him all our cares and temptations; "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Those lines you quoted from the beautiful poem, "The glory of God in creation," were noble and inspiring. Let me now close my letter by quoting a few lines from another poet, they have a tender place in my heart.

"I was a stricken deer that left the herd
Long since. With many an arrow deep infixed
My panting side was charged, when I withdrew
To seek a tranquil death in distant shades.
There I was found by One who had himself
Been hurt by the archers. In his side he bore
And in his hands and feet the cruel scars,
With gentle force soliciting the darts,
He drew them forth, and healed, and bade me live.
Since then, with few associates, in remote
And silent woods I wander, far from those
My former partners of the peopled scene,
With few associates, and not wishing more."—Cowper, "The Task," Book 3.

I shall be expecting a few lines from you before long. May the Lord graciously watch over you and uphold you in his fear.

I am your brother in the fellowship of the Son of God, who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities,

FRED. W. KEENE.

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336 HANCOCK ST., NASHVILLE, Tenn., May, 1902

B. L. BEEBE—BELOVED BROTHER IN CHRIST:—It is time to renew my subscription for the SIGNS another year, and inclosed I send a money order. Little did I think one year ago that I should be spared to renew again, but the Lord has been mindful of me in sparing my unprofitable life, and I desire to be thankful to him for his loving care which has held me up and guided my steps; he is all my refuge for deliverance from sin and death, and I can put no confidence in the flesh; the flesh is enmity against God and prone to do evil. With sorrow of heart I find some dear brethren who have offered new things which have disturbed the peace of Zion, which grieves the Spirit of God; I am made to mourn on account of this going back to the works of the law for

righteousness; we have no righteousness of our own to offer before God; God's people are poor and afflicted, with nothing to offer, but thank God, he will save us and pity us, and will strengthen the inner man to say, "Salvation is of the Lord," and he gives a heart to rejoice in this, and to glorify his holy name; our God will save them, and will not forsake them. Solomon has said, "Remove not the ancient landmark which thy fathers have set." Jeremiah said, "Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, for there is the good way, and walk therein; and ye shall find rest to your souls." But they said, we will not. The characters here spoken of remind me very much of some in the present time who have gone out of the old paths, and have invented something new. The Lord sent watchmen as he does this day, but none will heed them, as it was then. God said, "They shall eat of the fruits of their own desire."

Dear brother Beebe, your editorial in the last number was good, in calling us back to remember the many years of peace and harmony among the people of God. This peace has been disturbed by the inventions of men, who profess to know God, but who have gone off into strange doctrine, and who have declared non-fellowship with those who do not follow their invention; they are opposed to strong meat, and are not content with what God has given his people to eat, and cannot digest it, and so they want to banish it from the table; and to refuse those who want to eat of it. These do not wish to observe the old landmarks, as the faithful old SIGNS always does. I am glad that it has stood against all the storms for many years, and that it still clings fast to the old landmarks. These things were taught by your aged father, who stood firm as a rock, and contended faithfully for the former paths. He plead with those who opposed him, to walk in these paths, and they would not, and do not still. I am glad to see you standing so firm in the old ways, and contending for the faith as did our fathers. Our esteemed brother Chick is also, I find, firm; and the able brethren Bartley, Durand, Perkins, and others, also go forward in the strength of Israel's God. These all like Paul say, "By the grace of God I am what I am." But some who claim to be Baptists are so much intoxicated with the wine of Babylon, and so prejudiced against the doctrine of God's eternal purpose and predestination of all things, that they oppose it altogether. I could pray that God would, if it be his will, deliver them from this bondage. May they see the error of their ways, and let us live in peace, and worship God together under our own vine and figtree, with none to make us afraid. May we all walk in the name of our God forever. How pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, having fervent love one for another. Let us have no harshness, but let us stand firm, contending for the truth as it is in Jesus. Such false teaching is but fulfilling the Scriptures, and is pharisaical. We are not wise enough to understand his ways, and as you say, "It is because it so seemed good in his sight." We have no right to call our God into question with regard to anything, he made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil; all are his to do with as seemeth good in his sight.

I was very much pleased with the reply of Elder Chick to brother Rowe in answer to his question. He depends upon God to be his instructor, and to make him ready to give a reason of the

hope that is in him, with meekness and fear, and this hope is an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast. This faith was once given to the saints, and gives God all the praise, as all true believers do, for he is all and in all, he is the source of truth for time and for eternity. This river of life flows out from our spiritual head, with no uncertain sound, and it is an everlasting stream, which makes glad the city of God, and this is the new Jerusalem, which is adorned as a bride for her husband. Isaiah said, "There the glorious Lord shall be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams." Here is the divine life, which is given unto the church, and which flows to us through the mediation of our glorious Lord and Master, and is clear as crystal, and pure and undefiled. The true city must be pure, seeing that it is supplied with water of this divine river, which is also pure, and which proceeds from the throne of the Lamb. It flows from the Father, and comes to men alone through Jesus Christ, who is the only source of this river, which makes glad the city of God. What a strong foundation is here. This poor little one may be here oppressed with doubts and fears, but he feels to thank God for such wonderful love and mercy.

I have that hope that is sure and steadfast to the soul. In him is holiness and righteousness, and he brings us to his banqueting-house where all is love, peace and joy. How pleasant it is to dwell together in peace. Nothing but his loving arm extended around us will draw us together, we cannot trust in the flesh, or make it our arm. The Son of God, the tree of salvation, stands in the midst of the street, or the way of salvation, which is the way of life, and this life is in his Son; this life was given us in Christ before the foundation of the world, and this good old way is a denying of self in all things, but walk therein, and ye shall find rest to your souls. If ye know these things happy are ye if ye do them, but how prone we are to do evil, forgetting to look into the perfect law of liberty, and continuing to abide therein. But I feel so unworthy, and with fear I claim him, who am the least of all. The way looks dark and gloomy, but I feel to thank God sometimes, that I have the evidence within. I love to hear about and to read of his glorious plan or salvation, this salvation is given to all poor hungry souls who are seeking his love to know, and who are made to feel that if there is any righteousness at all, it is in our blessed Jesus, the friend of sinners, of whom I am one. Without his righteousness, I am nothing. O, may I be kept humble at his feet in all things, and may I be willing to bear all things, as the blessed Master endured all things unto the end, for his bride, the church. He bore our afflictions and our sins, and blotted them out with his blood, and cried, "It is finished." But was I embraced in his suffering? This is the chief question with me. I often feel to hope so, but so many things cause me to doubt. I often ask, Am I his, or am I not? I desire to feel the indwelling of his love, and to have his presence with me, that I may be kept humble and submissive in all things to his holy will. O, that his true followers may be brought together by his mighty arm, that they may see eye to eye in giving him all the praise, so that peace and fellowship may abound.

I was talking with a dear brother in our city, and he said in speaking of the SIGNS that it was the soundest and best periodical that was published. I was glad to know that there are some left to read them, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal: I thank God that it is

so. Our God has said that he will not leave himself without a witness, and the SIGNS is filled with the writings of the tried ones who have been in the furnace of affliction, and have come out with no smell of fire upon their garments; they stand firm in the old paths, and are not hunting for new things. What glorious promises God has given to his little children while they walk in the old paths, and put no confidence in the flesh. He has promised not to forsake them, and he says that he will be unto them a God, and they shall be to him a people. This should satisfy all the doubting Thomases. I know that the flesh is weak, and that the finite mind cannot think a good thought, why then quarrel about words to no profit? Let us ask the Lord to strengthen the inner man that we may show forth fruits meet for repentance, denying the body in all things.

I did not think that I should write this long letter, but my mind is so much absorbed in this glorious subject that I have kept on writing; I trust that the Lord has directed my mind; I feel no harshness against an erring brother, but hope that the Lord may direct the steps of all such in the way wherein they should go. What I have written is my belief and hope, if you do not think it is according to the teaching of the written word of God, please throw it aside, and all will be right with me.

Dear brother Beebe, I leave this to your better judgment, I hope to see another article from you again, in the SIGNS soon.

From your brother in hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

CAMMAL, Pa.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I send the following letter, with sister Hamilton's consent, for publication in the SIGNS, believing that others as well as myself will enjoy it, should you see fit to publish it.

MARY OSTRANDER.

NEWARK, Del., 1901.

MY VERY DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—If I may indeed include myself in this blessed relationship. I received your dear letter of July 11th, and need not say that I was pleased to hear from you, I have delayed replying because I have felt unable and unworthy to write about the things of the kingdom of God, I often feel a desire to write, and a love for these things draws me on to do so, yet I feel my unworthiness so greatly; I think I feel something as Elder Brees said it was with him, in a narration of his experience in the ministry, published some sixteen years ago, he said he dared not look to himself when engaged in the work of the Lord, so I think it is with us all, in a measure, at least, we must look beyond the flesh in filling our place, we must look only unto God, realizing that it does not depend upon ourself, our ability, to comfort or instruct others, but that he works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Do you feel as I do about these things, or am I different from others? But when I can feel the leading of his Spirit, as I trust, drawing me to write or speak, then I have some assurance that it is his will that I should do so, as do others, to the comfort and building up of the dear ones of the Father's family. Do you feel thus also?

We know the things whereof we speak, and testify what we do know, and we can speak with no uncertain sound, for the salvation whereof we speak, is revealed in us; it has not come to us in weakness, but in the power of God; it is not as men who are only taught of men, preach, or

rather teach, that it is a salvation wrought out of themselves, but rather, it is a salvation wrought in God for us. God is not dependent upon men for the working out of his salvation towards his predestinated people, whom he has predestinated to be conformed to his image, before the foundation of the world, but to us he appears as God having all power over all things, and as a Savior having power in heaven and in earth to save, to redeem, to call, and to prepare them for the inheritance, which he has prepared for them. These things we are taught, not of man, or by man, but by revelation of Jesus Christ, and these things man is utterly incapable of teaching. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, and cannot know them, because they are spiritually discerned. It is all by revelation of Jesus Christ.

Jesus said, Ye must be born again; born from above; a spiritual birth. Thus the Scriptures, and the experience of the children of God are in perfect harmony; this is the way spoken of by the prophets, in which all his people are taught of the Lord, their experience is the same, whoever and wherever they may be in the world, and such ones can have no fellowship with those who are only taught of man, and not by revelation of Jesus Christ. The Lord, by the prophet Isaiah said, "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow, from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it." Does not this show the power of God to save his people? Jesus said unto Peter, when he had said, "Whom say ye that I am?" and Peter had replied, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Does not this show plainly how the knowledge of Christ comes to the soul? Thus Jesus teaches us the things of God, and there is no other teacher of the things of the kingdom. He is the only teacher of those who are called to preach the gospel, as well as of those who hear.

I think those who are called to preach the gospel are brought more than any others, to realize their own dependence upon the Lord in the preaching of the word, and to know that their strength is in him alone, and that without him they can do nothing. He speaks through them now, even as in the days of old he spoke by the mouth of the prophets. The effect of the calling upon them was the same then as now. When the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, he in response said, "Ah Lord God! Behold I cannot speak; for I am a child. But the Lord said unto him, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak." And all are called of God in like manner, and all are brought to know the power of God, and their own inability and helplessness, and are made willing to follow him in all things, and to speak what he has commanded them.

I want now to tell you how very much I was comforted by your letter, it was made precious to me; I would so much like to meet you, and converse with you upon spiritual things, I believe that it would do me much good, and be far more satisfactory than writing. May the Lord give me this privilege in his providence.

It is indeed a great comfort to talk with one another of the blessed things of the kingdom. I can see by your letters that you are much blessed along the way, and are much further along the way than I am, and I think that it would be to my profit to be with you and hear you speak; my part in the conversation would be very little, for I cannot speak of these things as I would like to, and I feel that I have not journeyed very far in my experience, yet I would not give what little hope and interest I have in these things for all that the world could give, and really they cannot be compared, as they are so opposite. A dear brother said, "The things which I need, and desire, and hope for, the world cannot give. Nothing will give me peace and rest, and comfort, and satisfy me, but the things pertaining to Christ and his church." It is true that many things in this world are needful for us while we are in the world, but the Lord knows just what things we have need of, and we need not take thought for ourselves what we shall eat, or drink, or wherewithal we shall be clothed. The life is more than meat, and the body more than raiment, and our heavenly Father knows that we have need of all these things. Then the dear Redeemer speaks of the ravens and of the lilies of the field, of how he feeds the one and clothes the other, and then says, "Are ye not much more than they?" Then he adds, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." This is and ought to ever be first in the hearts of the people of God, and if we are dependent upon God for the things of this mortal life, how much more are we dependent upon him for the things that pertain to our spiritual life; how entirely apart from and distinct are the things of the kingdom, from the things of this life; how heavenly are the joys, how sweet is the rest of the gospel; how precious are the seasons when for a time we are taken from the things of the world, and for a little season are made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and with Abraham Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of our God. At such times our joy is full, and all our trials, sorrows and afflictions are forgotten. As I heard our dear pastor say one time before I was baptized that he thought these seasons were a foretaste of heaven. I think that I then understood what he meant. In your letter you wrote of the way in which you had been led, and of the things that you love and have been taught of God, and my mind was stirred up by way of remembrance in the things which I trust and hope I do already know.

I have written you a long letter, and must stop. With love to you from us all, I am, as I hope, your sister in a precious hope,

LAURA A. HAMILTON.

FRENCHTOWN, N. J., July 4, 1902.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER:—I have you in mind this morning, and will try writing you. I have had some thoughts on these words of the Savior, "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." In undertaking to write upon this, I am somewhat bothered in my own mind with this question, How shall we, so full of evil thoughts, so full of vanity, so easily captivated by seen things, come to an

understanding of divine things? You remember Jesus was talking to his disciples, and Peter had just been told that he should deny him, although Peter felt and said he would not forsake him. It occurs to my mind this way: The disciples and all those who testified of this same Jesus, had the traditional mind that prevailed among the Jews that Christ would come, or had come, (for some did believe him to be the Christ, and some did not,) and reign as king over Israel, and that he would establish his kingdom here on the earth, and all the world, Jews and Gentiles, would see and know his power, but they did not understand, even those spiritual Jews did not know what the spirit in them did signify. The old legal covenant or dispensation pointed to him as the end of it, all the law and the prophets were fulfilled in him. The law must be satisfied, and Jesus alone could satisfy its demands. Not one of all the children of God could come forth from under the curse and condemnation of the law without him. Jesus then as the head of the body, the "Father's house," must go away, must go down in death, must come forth from the grave, and ascend at the right hand of God. Thence he knew what they evidently did not; he knew what was accomplished in his death, burial, resurrection and ascension to glory. All the Father's house was in him, all those who were given him before the world was, and in the accomplishment of his Father's will, nothing was lost, all the Father's house must be complete in him, and in this work which he accomplished by his going away; the way devised in infinite wisdom by which they could be and were brought into that perfect oneness with God, made manifest.

The part I wanted to speak of more particularly is the "many mansions." You know the Jews were few, and now as Jesus was about to go away, and in that work break down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile, and the desert be made to blossom as the rose, the Gentiles were to be brought in. Not the Jews only, but all those who were given him before the world was; chosen out of every kindred, tribe and tongue under the whole heaven, made fit for a habitation of God through the Spirit. Jesus saw them the whole Father's house, he saw every member of his body, and he declares, "In my Father's house are many mansions." "I go to prepare a place for you." For these mansions, they never could be a dwelling-place for God, never could be the temple of God, only by this one offering by which he perfected forever them that are sanctified. And now in the testimony of every child of grace, in the judgment of the church of God in all that pertains to godliness, there is now made manifest that which Jesus said, They come from the north, south, east and west, and sit down in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In every testimony of the children of God that are received in the church, Jesus is manifest as dwelling in the testimony; in every act of obedience Jesus is manifest; in the walk and all that pertains to the church walking in gospel order. These are the ones who Jesus saw and spoke of as the "many mansions;" mansions of his love, and in these mansions he dwells alone, there are no strange gods with him, every false god is destroyed and consumed in the brightness of his coming, and in these mansions is the law fulfilled. Thou shalt have no other gods beside me, &c. Hence it follows that he must go away to perform the work of preparing a place for them, and presenting them to the Father

holy and without blame before him in love, and they are accepted in him, for he says, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." They are now made in his righteousness the dwelling-place of the Lord. What wonderful work is this, man, a poor lump of clay, with not power to live naturally without God gives the life, yet so depraved, so dead that he even blasphemes his only source of dependence, this unholy man made perfect in God's perfection, by the blood of Jesus, and becomes a mansion in which God dwells forever.

Will close for the present. Excuse blunders.

Yours in hope of life,

O. R. KUGLER.

RICHMOND, Maine, May 4, 1902.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—At the time of our last association I think I told you that I would write to you, as there were many things that I desired to speak with you about. I had of course looked forward with much pleasure to the time of once more meeting with the brethren, and hearing the word proclaimed, and as I took my place among the audience at the opening exercises of the first day, I was struck with the falling off in numbers, from our former meeting. In my mind's eye, I pictured the faces of those near and dear ones who had gone out from our midst since I could remember attending an association, I saw their places vacant, and realized as never before, the meaning of the words, The places that knew them once, shall know them no more forever. Their upright lives, and their godly conversation came up before me, and I realized that theirs had been unto us a precious example, and I recalled that they had seemed to me as the salt of the earth. Then came to me these thoughts, "You are now nearly at the age of some of these departed ones when you first knew them, they have gone to their reward, the burdens and duties which they so nobly bore and fulfilled, have fallen upon you, and your brethren, how do you bear yourself before your brethren, and in the eyes of the world? Do you think that any one seeing your weakness and blundering could for a moment regard you with that reverent spirit with which you always regarded the children of God?" Need I say that I was crushed with a sense of my unworthiness, and with a sense of my inability to walk as I desired to do, or in such a way that others seeing me should say, She has been taught of the Lord? My shoulders felt all too weak for the burdens, and I was saddened and cast down, I wondered if any one else ever felt so unfit, so unable to fill their place acceptably, as I did. I do not know that any one noticed my depression, and I could not tell my feeling to any one either. Now this was the burden that I bore during the two first days of the meeting. I had hoped and anticipated a crumb from the Master's table, even if I could not sit at the feast, and instead of this the dreadful sense of unfitness, and of being unable to bear the burdens and responsibilities and privileges of the christian life becomingly, was with me all the time.

Now the reason I have written this is that I want you to know that God must have given you the mind to say just the things that I was longing to hear. In your sermon on Sunday you told of just the same feelings, the same sense of unworthiness, and you told it so much better and plainer, than I have been able to do, that I was made to know that my experience was but the experience of every child of God. We are not to feel fit, we are not

fit for or capable of anything good, but Jesus is all and in all to us, he has become unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, and the more we realize our own nothingness, the more we realize the wonderful love and mercy of him, in whom it pleased God that all fullness should dwell.

I do not say that I have remembered your exact words, only some of the truths you brought forth, and I was made to rejoice, and to thank God that he had given me bitter draughts to drink, that I might be permitted in a small degree to have fellowship with his suffering, and although the trial was in some respects strange and disquieting, yet I have realized that it has brought forth peaceable fruits. I think that I have been led in such a way that I can declare boldly that there is no God like unto our God; he maketh the clouds his chariots. Yes, I am so wayward that he chasteneth me often, but I can and do rejoice that it is only his own children that he chastens.

Dear brother, I hope that I have not exhausted your patience, I have wanted to tell you of the deliverance that your sermon brought to me, and to give God all the glory. Give my love to all, and to sister Hubbard if she is still with you. I have been to our meeting to-day, Elder Beal was down, and brother Clark came also, Elder Beal's text was, "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of the darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ!" You may know we had a good sermon. I must add just a word and close, I want to say that I often think of dear Nellie in her bereavement. Hoping sometime to hear from you, I remain as ever, your sister,

ANGIE J. THOMAS.

ROCKVILLE, Md., June 17, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed you will find post-office order for two dollars, my remittance for our dear and interesting family paper the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Such comes twice every month, and I enjoy it much. You already know the reason of my long delay, from a hard spell of fever of three months at home, and four weeks in the Garfield hospital. I had every attention at home, but the change benefited me, and I am now able to go all about near home. At my age of nearly three score years and ten, I have done pretty well, is the opinion of the doctors, as also my nurse at the hospital. But it was not my time to go, though I had no desire to get well, but I have to stay my appointed time, which is known only to our God of love, mercy and grace. My mind dwelt much on the resurrection of our blessed Jesus, who left his silent tomb just at the appointed hour, though the cave was sealed, and the Roman guard was near. But do I know him, the power of his resurrection and fellowship of his sufferings, and was mine in fellowship with his great sufferings on the cross? were questions that occupied my mind much during my sufferings. The peace of Jerusalem, and prosperity of Zion, were also given me at times, and I hope they are still in my heart in faith and love. But the dear Lord only knows the spirit of man, and he searches all the inward parts. Search me, O Lord, and try me, and show me the evil of my heart. He must come to us, show us our sins, and teach us to repent, or we can never know him in power, sufferings, faith and love. O, how much there is in that little word love, the greatest of the three graces.

"Could I but make those doubts remove,
Those cruel doubts that rise,

And see the Canaan that I love,
With unbeclouded eyes.

Could I but stand where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er,
Not Jordan's waves, nor death's cold flood,
Could fright me from the shore."

My long spell of sickness caused my eyes to be very weak, and I could not read or write but little until a few days since, and am compelled to be careful now and not try them too long.

May the blessing of our God of love rest upon you, dear editors of our dear family paper, and fill your hearts with love, joy and peace, to continue to publish the whole truth, that perfect word that knows no deception, that Elder Ashburn defined to the great Theologian during his stay in Washington city; yes, the truth of an unconditional salvation for time or eternity, is the desire of one who hopes for unconditional and eternal rest in Jesus the Savior of sinners.

RUTH ADAMSON.

WAVERLY, Pa., March 3, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The inclosed letter from sister Moffet was sent me by the sister to whom it was written, to be forwarded for publication, when you have space. It is one among many experiences that does not harmonize with the doctrine, "If you will do this or that, you will be happy." "I am perfectly helpless," is the testimony of living sinners saved by grace.

Your very unworthy brother,

D. M. VAIL.

CAMMAL, Pa., March 6, 1900.

DEAR SISTER IN BONDS OF LOVE AND FELLOWSHIP:—I will try in my weak way to answer your welcome letter, after so long a time, but do not think I have forgotten you, for I hold you in sweet fellowship. I do hope it may be the dear Lord's will to keep me, for I know I cannot keep myself; this I hope I know from experience, for when I would do good, evil is always present. I am so prone to sin, this is one of my worst troubles, I fear that I am not born again. But this thought sometimes comes, Do you love the brethren? O, dear sister, what joy I find in the blessed Scripture, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." And if I know what this means, it is to love them after the Spirit, not the flesh, and how soon my heart goes out to one that I find loves the truth.

We still have our little meetings every Sunday, and how I do wish it might be that you could be with us, as you seem to be all alone and away from all the sweet privileges of meeting with us. I hope you may be able to come to our next meeting, I will be glad to have you at our place; Elder Vail will preach, if all is well. I hope it may be the Lord's will for you to be with us again, and that it may be your privilege to eat that manna that falls from heaven, and how strange it seems for a moment to us that we cannot lay up any, or it is like this with me, I hear the word and how I do enjoy it, but how soon it is gone, but if this were not so we would not get hungry, and it would not be enjoyed so much. It is not always we are prepared to receive the word. The preparation of the heart is of God, and when he has prepared it we receive it gladly, and how we do enjoy the preaching then.

I have been away for some time, and all the while gone not once heard the name of the dear Lord praised; it made me anxious to be home again to meet with those that give God all the glory, and not man, poor, puny man. The Bible says, "Cursed be the man that

trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." How many that do this, or it seems they do, when they are trusting in their own works to save them. As for me, I am so helpless and destitute of any good that I am made to ask God for mercy every day, and I do hope I am thankful for his many blessings to me, so vile a sinner as I feel to be in the sight of a just and holy God.

I will close, hoping you will cast the mantle of love and charity over all mistakes. My husband joins me in saying, Come to our meeting, as we are always glad to have any one that loves the truth with us at that time, and our house is always open to friends.

Your sister in hope,

ELLA MOFFET.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., May 3, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have read the SIGNS of May 1st, where several have written encouraging you for your steadfastness in contending for the truth, and this has stirred up a poor, unworthy sister, as such things have done many times before, to add her feeble testimony. I trust that God may sustain you in your arduous labors, for I am sure that they are many. Some who claim to be Primitive Baptists are drifting from the old landmarks, and fixing up their side tables, as you term them, and very appropriately, too, but there will still be some whom God will enable to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. I have just been reading an old copy of the SIGNS, date 1886, which my daughter found. She said, "Ma, the first article is from Scio, Oregon, and I know it is from Elder Stipp. I expect it is one that you have laid away." So I began to read, and found it was from him, and very interesting. Dear old servant of God as he was. He is gone, but his testimony still lives. I then began to read the next article, and found it was upon the subject of predestination. The further I read, the more interested I became, as I found some ideas which I had been trying to advocate in my weak way, with regard to the chain of God's purposes, for they will surely come to pass. When I came to the end I found it was from Elder Lively, and you do not know how much good it did this poor, old sinner to find his views in so much accord with my own. My husband and I talk the subject over many times. I sometimes tell him that some who claim to be Primitive Baptists, are as afraid of the word predestination, as they would be of the small-pox. I see that one of our learned preachers uses the words "efficient predestination of holiness," and "permissive predestination of sin." I do not understand the language. If this be ignorance on my part, I would be glad to be better informed.

The Bible teaches us that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness, for correction, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." I think the word of God ought to be sufficient for all lovers of truth, without any interlining.

I also wish to say a word or two in commendation of brother Chick's editorial with reference to the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda. I thought it such good preaching.

Now, dear brother, I hope that God will comfort you with his sweet Spirit. David said, "By thee I have run through a troop; and by my God have I leaped over a wall." All our help must come from him.

This is from a poor, old, helpless sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all.

VIRGINIA A. CORDER.

PALESTINE, Texas, May 28, 1902.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—AND ALL OF LIKE PRECIOUS FAITH:—It is to you that I write, for it is you that are my joy and comfort, and some of you are here in this country, but you that are far off, I hear from oftener than you that are close by. Anciently they were not all Israel that were of Israel; just so it is yet, but if I am not one of them, I think I am acting Ruth pretty well, for I am still following you up, and then, brethren, I must be like you in some other respects, for I am most of the time bleating or crying, and this bleating and crying is not because I feel so good, but most of the time it is because I feel so mean; so in this I am like some of you. "So brethren," as the old colored man said, "if such as dis makes kinsfolks, wes kin." Anciently God's people were writing bitter things against themselves, and so we are. If God ever had any "better" servants, it was those that cried, "Guilty; unclean, unclean; I am vile; no soundness in me; no good thing in the flesh." Well, in all this complaint we are akin to them (our fathers), or else we are base hypocritical liars. As to what we see in ourselves, and as to what we are really of ourselves, brother Beebe has told us in this number seven, April 1st, 1902. Yes, my brother, I have experienced many such seasons, and then I have played that other part, too, hypocritical coward. Brethren, it appears to me of late that your writing, or communications in the SIGNS, are more edifying. The editorials more pointed, while at the same time along this line you have always done the best you could. Brethren, it has always been that we should watch, but now methinks the more so, since they have turned their guns on us; and one gun charged with the limitation act, and another with conditionalism. It appears to me the time has come to be plainly seen that the love of many has waxed cold; it seems in this country that the time for a great falling away is at hand. Brother Beebe may not be surprised at what I shall state, but I am, it is this, twenty years ago I came to this county, then there was in this county a great many subscribers for the SIGNS, now if there is one besides myself, I never hear from them. Sometimes I think it is as hard for me to raise the two dollars each year, as it can be for any of them, and really that will do for an excuse. I am by this like I am by non-attendance, it will do to tell, but yet the devil does not believe it, for I heard one preacher of this country say, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES caused more devilment amongst the Baptists than anything else, and after that made a tour amongst you, partook of your hospitalities, and came back. I deal in facts. I have a basket full of SIGNS, if they that are not able to pay for them want to read them, they can do so at my cost. I deal in facts. I tell them if they just come to the church to have their name there, they are an imposition, a burden to the church. Men and women that have to be run after three or four times a year, on account of non-attendance, their treasure must be somewhere else. I tell some professing to be Baptists, that do not like the SIGNS, you lack just that much of being an Old School Baptist. Brethren, very few in this country I can walk with, and I see some of our best preaching brethren proposing things which I do not indorse.

Yours in sorrow,

U. J. BELL.

FARMVILLE, N. C., July 7, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I promised some of the sisters that I met on my visit to the associations in May and June that I would write a short piece for the SIGNS, and let them hear how I got along, and how I found all at home on my return. I have delayed writing until now, being somewhat busy with the affairs of this natural life, although I have, as much as I feel to be practicable and right, tried to lay aside the burdens and annoyances, and also the allurements of the world, that I may the more diligently and sincerely devote myself to service in the gospel.

I greatly enjoyed my trip, and feel to say the good Lord greatly blessed me with the liberty of his Spirit, both in speaking and hearing. At the meeting in Philadelphia I did not feel quite well in body or mind, and while my judgment approved of the preaching, and I believed it was in demonstration of the Spirit, and with power, yet I could not enter into the sweet spiritual feeling of it that I so dearly love to enjoy.

I was blessed to get back home on the 9th of June, and to find all my family, who are living with me, in usual health, but one of my sons, who lives about fifteen miles from me, and who had been off to school, had returned to his home with typhoid fever. He has since recovered from the fever and has married, and is now at my home with his wife, staying with me while convalescing.

The Lord has also blessed my younger sons, who are at home, and to whom I had rented my little farm, with good judgment and skill to rightly manage, and has blessed their labor with the prospect of a good and bountiful crop.

I feel that I cannot thank the good Lord enough for his abundant mercies to me. My love is too weak, my adoration too imperfect, and my thoughts and desires too much mixed up with self. He is abundant in mercies, and I am so weak and imperfect that I cannot appreciate them. O, that I could love him more, and that I might be more devoted to his service and think more upon his name.

I feel to desire to ever remember the dear brethren and sisters with whom I met on my trip, and may the beloved Master abundantly bless each and every one of them with all needful blessings.

D. A. MEWBORN.

ROELLEN, Tenn., April 16, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN IN HOPE:—I am still a poor old sinful worm, and cannot do the things that I would. Though I have had a little hope for nearly forty-one years, I am just as weak and dependent as I ever was, and all my hope is in Jesus, for he is the only Savior of poor, lost and ruined sinners, that the dear word of God tells many things about. I believe that he is sufficient, I cannot divide the glory with man, at least not such as I am, for in me there is no good thing. Ofttimes I have to cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Jesus must do it, if I am delivered.

Dear editors and correspondents, I do believe I truly thank and try to praise the Lord for sending and qualifying such precious gifts as he has, to comfort and encourage his poor, little, feeble children; I have failed to ascribe the praise and honor to the earthen vessel, as I should do if our time salvationists are right; if they are, I cannot see why the Bible, our only guide, talks so much about the holy Spirit leading and directing his poor little ones. I am glad, and try to thank his holy name that he has said he will never

leave nor forsake us. Jesus is all my hope, and I feel that he is sufficient.

Your little brother in hope of a glorious resurrection. May the good and gracious Lord keep you in the right way, is my prayer for Jesus' sake,

M. A. WELBORN.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, to the Baltimore, Delaware, Delaware River and Warwick Associations, of Old School Baptists, with whom she corresponds, sends greeting.

WE, being convened together at our annual quarterly meeting, have received your messenger and beloved brother, Elder S. H. Durand, who has come to us in the fullness of the gospel, preaching only salvation by grace, and we were made glad by his coming, and to hear that you desire a continuance of your correspondence with us, which has been so pleasant in the past, which desire we do hope we reciprocate, and we also do desire a continuance of the correspondence. And in the absence of any messenger from us we desire to convey to you by letter our fellowship in the gospel, and in the blessed truths which have been preached among us. And we also desire to let you know that we still hold fast the blessed doctrine of salvation by grace alone, both for time and for eternity. We also still hold fast to the sure and certain fulfillment of all God's purposes, which he purposed in Christ Jesus ere the world began. And we do most firmly believe that his purpose includes all things that have ever or that will ever come to pass, in this and in all other worlds, and therefore we must believe that our God, the Almighty, the God of heaven, has predestinated all things without respect to what poor, fallen man may call good or bad, and that he most surely does his will in heaven and earth, and in all the universe, and that no man has the right to say unto him, "What doest thou?" or to question his sovereign right to do what seems good in his sight. A copy of this is desired to be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

Done by order of the church.

ROBERT SCATES, Clerk.

EKFRID, Ontario, June 21, 1902.

The South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association, in session with Good Hope Church, Union Co., Ark., September 20th, 21st and 22d, 1901, to the associations with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We thank the infinite Giver of all good for his merciful dealings toward us in permitting us to meet with the brethren of your bodies with their epistles of love so precious and comforting to our souls.

The next session of our body will be held with the church at New Ramah, in Claiborne Parish, La., six miles west of Haynesville, La., commencing on Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1902, when and where we hope to meet with you, bearing your kind epistles of love. Brethren, pray for us, that brotherly love may continue to abound, and that the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace be kept.

Done by order of the Association.

W. K. SMITH, Moderator.

S. B. BAUCUM, Clerk.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1902.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MARK XII. 34.

WILL you please give your views upon the Scripture found in Mark xii. 34, especially the middle clause of that verse? and oblige a poor sinner saved by grace, W. J. BAGGETT.

BETHLEHEM, Ga., June 10, 1902.

The special clause to which our brother refers reads as follows, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God."

In the connection it is said that one of the scribes came, and having heard the Redeemer and the Jews reasoning together, and perceiving that Jesus had answered them well, asked him which was the first commandment of all. And when Jesus had replied that love to God and to the neighbor were greater than all other commandments, the scribe said, "Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." Now in the verse to which the brother refers, Jesus, it is said, perceived that he had answered discreetly, and said unto him, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." Evidently Jesus perceived that this scribe did not question him to catch him, or to obtain matter upon which to accuse him, but honestly and seriously, desiring to know the truth, if indeed Jesus could teach him the truth. There also appeared in this man a readiness to receive the truth, and a power of comprehending the truth. This could come from God alone, and it is bestowed alone upon reverent spirits. There was also in this scribe a perception of the superiority of this essence, or substance of the whole law, "love" over all forms and outward offerings whatever. These things showed that he was close akin to those who should enter the kingdom of God. While he might not clearly see as yet just what the true work of redemption meant, nor his own need of that redemption, yet he did possess that spirit to which God does impart this knowledge of himself. Such a spirit is from God, and God honors and owns it by revealing his truth to him who possesses it. One who can say from the heart what this man said, is not far from entering into the fullness of that knowledge and joy which belongs to the kingdom of God. In this sense he was not far from the kingdom. Thus the eunuch was not far from the kingdom of God when he was reading the prophet Isaiah, in his chariot, with desire to know what the Scripture which he was reading meant. So all to whom has been given a spirit of seeking, and some knowledge of the uselessness of forms, and the need of vital godliness, are not far from the kingdom of God. Souls who are mourning over sin, and longing for righteousness, are not far from the kingdom of God. That is, they are near akin to it, and soon shall enter more fully into its privileges and joys. Not every one who asks questions upon the subject of religion is near the kingdom of God, but they who ask with reverence and fear, and who desire above all

things to know the truth, are near the kingdom. In one sense they are already in the kingdom, but they need to enter into it more abundantly, so far as the knowledge and enjoyment of it are concerned. These shall follow on to know the Lord, and the promise is that they shall know. These come to know, and so to enter more fully into the kingdom by what often seems to them to be a very bitter experience. Such experiences humble their souls, and bring them away from self and the world, and to count the wisdom of the world but foolishness, and so they come to trust alone in Jesus. Thus they grow in faith and knowledge. Some whom we know seem to us to be near the kingdom of God, and still are not yet clear in the knowledge of the truth, but they have grasped the root of the matter, and know that the love of God shed abroad in the heart is more than all forms or works of men. C.

JONAH'S DISOBEDIENCE.

COULD Jonah have gone right on and preached as God bade him at Nineveh? If he had done so could he have been a sign of the Son of man through being in the whale's belly three days and three nights?

DAVID L. MCNEES.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., May 1, 1902.

It seems sufficient to know that he did not go right on, and that by not doing so, he did become a lively figure of the Son of man as he was in the whale's belly three days and three nights.

Brother McNees says that some brethren claim that he could have at once obeyed the command of the Lord to preach to Nineveh. It is certainly true that he did not want to go as God bade him; he did not desire to preach there such unpopular doctrine as he was bidden to preach. The one question which lies at the root of the whole matter is this, Could he have wanted to go when he did not want to do so? Before he could obey a spirit of obedience must be begotten in him, and that spirit was begotten in him afterward when he had that bitter experience in the belly of hell, with the weeds wrapped about his head. Down there he learned the lesson that salvation is of the Lord, and was made willing to confess it, and to act upon it. Jonah did not want to go, and he did want to flee away from the word of the Lord, and this was the way in which God brought about his own purpose that Jonah should be a type of the blessed Lord. Some time since a brother wrote us that he was present at an association in the vicinity of which a fair was going on, and he heard a brother in the pulpit say to the people, contending for freedom of the will, "Now you all could have gone to the fair if you had wanted to." That was no doubt true, but that did not touch the real question; they could have gone indeed had they desired to go, but could they have desired to go? Suppose that minister had said to that congregation, "You could all have desired to go to the fair this morning," perhaps hundreds would have at once said, That is not so, I could not desire to go. If a man can control his desires, so as to desire or not to desire a thing at will, then he may have some shadow of reason for saying that his will is free. But our desire is not under the control of ourselves or of our own will, but rather we are controlled, and our will is controlled, by our desires.

So when it is said that Jonah could have gone to Nineveh at once, we are confronted with the fact that he did not desire to go, and that he followed out his desires when he took ship to Tarshish. When the Lord wrought a change of desire in him then he did go. Jonah's desire or will not to go manifested the re-

bellion and unbelief of his nature, just as when Peter denied his Lord he manifested his own weakness. This was an evil deed on the part of Jonah, and it proceeded out of his own heart of unbelief, and so he ought to be condemned, and no doubt felt condemned, as did Peter, when he went out and wept bitterly. Peter did not seek to excuse himself from blame by saying, Lord, thou didst say last night that I should deny thee thrice before the cock should crow twice, and so I could not help it, and am not to be blamed therefore. The Lord had indeed said that, and after he had said it there could be no escape from it without involving a denial of the perfect knowledge of the Redeemer, yet Peter was none the less to be blamed. So indeed Jonah must become a type of the blessed Lord in his burial and resurrection, yet Jonah was none the less blameworthy, and could not excuse his fault. The words of Peter, and the deeds of Jonah, proceeded out of an evil heart of unbelief in them, and were sinful, yet God controlled the denial of the one, and the wrong deed of the other, and brought out the evil purpose of men, much good to his people in all ages. Indeed the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder he shall restrain.

What proneness there is in man to exalt himself. This claim to human free will is the offspring of that desire which lies hidden in every human heart, and which shows itself on all occasions, but often with the garb of an angel of light. It sometimes garbs itself with the appearance of great zeal for the righteousness and truth of God, and insists that only upon the ground of free will can God justly judge men, either to condemnation or to exaltation at his right hand. But if we believe in sovereign and unmerited grace we must reject human free will. When one comes in, the other hides itself away. C.

BUILDING SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have heard many times that in the building of Solomon's temple there was one stone for which no place could be found, and which was regarded as useless by the builders until the building was ready for the capstone, and then this stone which had been rejected was found to be the only one which would fit in that place. Is there any record in history of such an event?

Your brother,

C. B. BARTLETT.

IRVINE, Ky., May 10, 1902.

There is no such record in any history, of which we have ever heard. In Psalm cxviii. 22, 23, we find the words, "The stone which the builders refused is become the headstone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes." As recorded in Matt. xxi. 42; Mark xii. 10, and in Luke xx. 17, Jesus applies these words to himself, and in Acts iv. 11, Peter is recorded as also applying this text in the Psalms to the Savior. So that it is sure that he is the stone intended in the Psalm. He was rejected of the Jewish builders, but is become the chief corner-stone of our salvation. Upon him the whole church rests. He is both the foundation and the capstone of the building. This capstone is brought forth with shoutings, crying, "Grace, grace unto it," according to the prophet Zechariah. We have ourself heard from our childhood the tradition of which brother Bartlett speaks, but it is only a tradition without any shadow of proof. We have no doubt that the story grew out of the text in Psalms, to which we have referred. We do not know by whom it originated. But the text is a very striking one. It seems to us, from the use made of it in the Scriptures, to have been a common saying or proverb

in use among men to present in a brief and forcible manner how that one who had been esteemed of no account among men, might be exalted to the highest places under the providence of God. Let this be as it may, however, the language was true of the blessed Redeemer in his human humiliation, and then in his exaltation in glory. It is true also with every one who is brought to believe in him as the Savior of the soul. Jesus first is rejected as of no use by every man, but when grace begins the work of salvation in the heart, at last it brings that soul to Jesus as the only name given under heaven, among men, whereby we must be saved. And then indeed he is exalted in the highest, and Jesus truly becomes the head of the corner. In the eyes of all who experience this work it is marvelous indeed. C.

MINISTERIAL AUTHORITY.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Will you please tell me how Primitive Baptists have generally done when their minister or pastor was desired to assist in organizing churches, ordaining ministers, &c? I mean, does he go at his own discretion, or does the church of which he is a member, appoint him and send him?

Your unworthy brother in hope,

L. A. GIBSON.

THORNTON, Texas, May 14, 1902.

We think that the general rule has been for the churches to be called on to send messengers from their body, whomsoever they would, to act in such cases. A minister thus appointed would have the weight of his church behind him in that case. We can conceive of cases where a minister might be called upon to act in the constitution of a church, or in the ordination of a minister, being present as a visitor, and being invited by the church or counsel to act with them, in which no wrong would be done, if he should thus act, but we think that as a rule the custom has been followed of appointing messengers by the churches, and we think that this is a good custom to follow. We do not know that any Bible rule is violated when a minister takes part in such a counsel without special appointment by his church, but it is not likely to be as satisfactory as when he has been sent by his church. It is well to act in all such cases carefully, and in a manner that will show regard for all the household of faith. Some things may be lawful which yet are not expedient to be done. One who acts inexpediently will lose in the esteem of his brethren as a careful, wise man. They may not lose their love and fellowship for him, but will come to feel that they cannot trust his judgment safely. Such an one will become a burden upon the hearts and minds of the church where he belongs; such an one may not be censurable as an evil doer, but he will weaken his influence through want of judgment. Our advice to all ministers and pastors would be to secure the appointment of the church, if possible, before acting either in establishing churches or ordaining ministers.

C.

ALL GONE.

ALL of the cloth bound small hymn books are gone, and all we have left of the other styles of binding, of the small books, are 42 blue plain; 10 blue gilt edged; 15 Imitation Morocco; 7 first quality Turkey Morocco. For full description of these books, prices, &c., see next to last of the white pages of this number. We cannot now say when we will have any more of these books, if ever, as we have not yet decided whether or not we will print any more of them. If we should decide to do so, notice will be given in due time.

"THE TRIAL OF YOUR FAITH."

WITH what significance the words above quoted come to every tempest-tossed child of God. Every trial they are called to pass through during their sojourn in this mortal state, is designed by their heavenly Father for the one purpose; the trial of the faith that he has given them. There is no need that they should have the depravity of their wicked natural heart demonstrated to them, for that is among the things that can be seen by every heaven-born child, but the things that pertain to faith cannot be seen, for it is written of "faith," that it is "the evidence of things not seen." And this faith is the gift of God; no one can possess it at their option. This trial of your faith is not to prove either to God or yourself, how *much* faith you have got, for we are informed by the Captain of our salvation that we are "of little faith." But this God-given faith is made more precious than gold, that perisheth, by the trials we endure, and the more it is tried the more precious it becomes. Gold, though it will endure the fire and come forth even more refined from the fiery trial, yet the heat can be increased to that degree that it will vaporize the gold, and it perisheth. But this is not true of this faith, "which is the gift of God;" though it may seem to each individual who has been so unspeakably blessed as to receive it, by the grace of God, at times about to perish, and they are thereby made to cry, "Lord, increase my faith," it is as impossible for any trial that can be brought against this heavenly faith, to diminish it, as it is for the Author and Finisher of it to be dethroned. Then, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

B.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

1 JOHN II. 1, 2.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Will you please give your views on 1 John ii. 1, 2? "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world."

Yours in love,

JOSEPH HUGHES.

PENNINGTONVILLE, Pa., Nov. 21, 1859.

REPLY.

We have scarcely room to express all that might be said on the text proposed for consideration, and must necessarily be brief in our remarks, as we have considerable very interesting matter waiting for insertion in our crowded columns.

The simple, but affectionate appellation, "My little children," frequently occurs in the writing of this beloved apostle, and shows the paternal solicitude which he felt for the saints, to whom his instructions were addressed. "These things write I unto you, that ye sin not." The context shows what things he alluded to, not only what he had said of their spiritual, immortal, eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested, and of their consequent fellowship with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ, and their fellowship one with another, but the strife and opposition of their carnal, depraved natures, in opposition to the Spirit of life revealed or manifested in them; but also all that the whole epistle contains was designed not only that their joy might be full, but that they should not sin. A knowledge of their eternal vital union in and with their Lord

Jesus Christ, was calculated to deter them from sinning, and to awaken every heavenly energy within them to holy aspirations, joy, and love, and gratitude to God, for his abounding goodness and grace. The apostle could by no means indorse the foolish theory that a knowledge of the fixed and immutable principles of God's eternal counsel and decrees, would tend to licentiousness, but, as he fully implies, they should be written and read, preached and believed, for the very opposite effect, which they were sure to secure, that the saints, or little children, instructed in them should sin not. The mystery should be elucidated, that we all, while in this state of existence, have a depraved, sinful, unrenewed nature, so that if any man shall say he hath no sin, he deceiveth himself, and the truth is not in him. But notwithstanding the indwelling pollution of their nature, which makes every saint groan while in this earthly tabernacle, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with their house which is from heaven, or in other words, that mortality might be swallowed up of life, there is in them who thus groan, an inward man that is born of God, and does not sin, "Because the seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." The old corrupt nature is born of the flesh; but the new man is born of the Spirit, and is Spirit. For this reason the saints are admonished to crucify the old man with its affections and lusts, and to put on the new man, which, after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

But, notwithstanding the opposition of the inner man to the sins and depravity of the flesh, the children of God are frequently harrassed and perplexed with a consciousness of their short-coming; to will is present with them, but how to perform that which is good they find not; and if it were not for the happy consideration that they have a divine Advocate with the Father, they would utterly despair. They are too thoroughly acquainted with themselves to allow them to have any confidence in the flesh. But—

"If any man sin, we have an Advocate," &c. Whatever be the condition of others who sin, (and all men are sinners,) we, the saints, the little children, have an Advocate with the Father. Who is he? Jesus Christ. What is he? The Righteous. Then Jesus Christ the Righteous is the Advocate of his people, and this consideration is calculated to fill them with joy and gratitude. He has every requisite qualification to manage their cause with honor to God and safety to the saints. His name is an ample guarantee of this: Jesus signifies a Savior, and Christ, the Anointed and Holy one. As he is the Savior, he can be relied on, and as he is anointed to preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken hearted, to open the prison to them that are bound, and to comfort all who mourn, &c.; no other one could fill the office of our Advocate so well. Possessing in himself embodied all the fullness of the Godhead, with all heaven and earth at his command, and all principalities and powers, thrones and dominions, things visible and invisible, under his control, with all the power in heaven and earth in his hand, and all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden in him, how can he fail to maintain the cause of those for whom he officiates? He is the Righteous. He is never wrong. "He is of God, made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption." And not only is he the Righteous, but he is "the Lord our Righteousness." By virtue of a deathless union with all the members of his mystical body, he is their righteousness, and so in the presentation

of himself before his Father, he presents his saints perfect and without blame before him in love. Eternal Justice is satisfied with him as the justifying righteousness of his body, the church; the law can ask no more; and the Father is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; but the apostle adds—

"And he is the propitiation for our sins." The word propitiation signifies reconciliation, or atonement, satisfaction &c. He, our Advocate with the Father, by his righteousness, is the reconciliation or atonement for our sins. He gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquities, and purify to himself a peculiar people, &c. Instead then of sinners being redeemed with corruptible things, as silver or gold, nothing short of the precious blood of Christ could propitiate, conciliate, or satisfy the demands of law and justice for our sin. And instead of the pardon of the Pope, or Priest, the absolution of the Bishop, the prayers of ancient or modern revivalists, or the works of our own hands, commending us to the favor of God, he, and be alone, is the propitiation for our sins, and that on the most sacredly righteous principles, as he is *the* righteous. No sacrifice that we could make, or offering the world could afford, could atone for our sins. The cattle of a thousand hills, ten thousand rivers of oil, or the fruit of our body, or the labors of our hands—all, all would be offered in vain. "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not; neither hadst thou pleasure in them. Then said I, [Jesus,] Lo, I come, in the volume of the Book it is written of me." And it is written in that volume of none other, consequently there is salvation in none other. Ages of penitence, rivers of tears, millions of wealth bestowed for benevolent purposes, with all the reformations, prayers, or voluntary humility that mortals could perform, could make no propitiation for our sins, any more than they could make another "Jesus Christ the Righteous." For Jesus Christ the Righteous is not *a* but *the* propitiation for our sins. And for any man to attempt to make or offer, or to rely on anything else for atonement, or reconciliation, is to set up another Christ, which is idolatry.

"He is the propitiation." This declaration is clear, positive and emphatic; it admits of no uncertainty; it rests on no contingent agency or condition. It is not something which may be, or is to be; he already is the propitiation for our sins; and this propitiation is complete, as Jesus is complete; it is righteous, as Jesus is righteous; and it is the only propitiation, as he is the only Jesus Christ.

"And not for our sins only." That is, as we understand the inspired apostle, not only for the sins of those little children, or saints to whom he addresses his epistle, which were scattered abroad, and then in the flesh; but *also*, or in like manner, *for the* sins of *the whole world.* The enemy has attempted to pervert the terms, *the whole world,* by an unrestricted application of them to the whole material world. But while they thus cavil, they would scarcely allow that it should include the sins of horses, swine, snakes and vipers; but they would rather contend that it means only the human family. They themselves, then, while they condemn the restriction of the application of the words, do themselves what they condemn. But let it be remembered that the apostle John uses the same words in reference to another class who, instead of being reconciled to God by this propitiation, are still in their sins: "We know that we are of God, and the *whole world*

lieth in wickedness." Here it is very obvious that John contrasts the condition of those who are of God, with that of the whole world, which lieth in wickedness. (John v. 19.)

These words are to be understood according to the manner in which they are used. When used in an unrestricted sense they mean the heavens and earth, and all that they contain. When used in reference to the saints, they mean all the saints, from the beginning of the world to the end of time; and in this instance it applies more expressly to the saints among the Gentiles as well as those among the Jews. And when used in regard to those who lie in wickedness, it means all sinners, in all ages, and in all the nations and kindreds of the earth.

The plain and obvious sense, then, of the words, as they are used in the text, is that Christ is the only Propitiation in the whole world. That God's elect among the Gentiles are saved in the same way and manner, as are the saved of the Jews. Go where you may, no other Savior of sinners can be found; with no other sacrifice will God be pleased; with no other atonement could the law, or eternal justice of Jehovah, be satisfied. All, therefore, who are redeemed from among men, in every kindred or nation, are reconciled to God by him who is the only and blessed Potentate, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light, which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see, to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen. (1 Tim. vi. 16.)

Notwithstanding all the caviling of Arminians, and general atonement advocates, on the text under consideration, there is not another text in the Bible the plain and palpable meaning of which they have more reason to dread than this. It sweeps away, as with a besom of destruction, every refuge of lies on which they would predicate their cherished theories of salvation by works, by the use of means, by the labor of good or of bad men. Let the plain import of the text be admitted, and Jesus Christ the righteous will stand alone confessed as the only Savior, the only propitiation, the only propitiatory sacrifice for sin, that the eternal counsel of God has ordained, that the law can recognize, or eternal justice admit.

The contemplation of our subject is full of consolation for the tried, tempted, troubled and persecuted saints of the Most High God. The inspired words of truth regards them, as they realy are and should be, a brotherhood of little children. They do not feel like giants, able to save themselves, and aid considerably in saving others. They feel the necessity of being led by the Spirit, step by step, and instead of eating or earning their own bread, or of wearing their own apparel, they desire the sincere milk of the word that they may grow thereby. As the confiding babe relies upon the strength of its faithful nurse, so do they rely alone on the everlasting arm of their blessed Savior, which is underneath them. They rejoice in their adorable Advocate with the Father. In heaven's high courts they have a reliable Advocate. As Jeremiah said, "Their Redeemer is strong; the Lord of hosts is his name: he shall thoroughly plead their cause, that he may give rest to the land, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon."—Jer. i. 34. Our Advocate knows our feeble frame, he knows the feeling of our infirmities, and well he knows how to succor them that are tempted. Nor is he less familiar with his Father's counsel. The law of God is in his heart, and all that he asks of the Father is granted, for the Father always hears him,

and is always well pleased in him. He never lost a case, nor will he ever lose a case. While the presumptuous, who love sin, and find in it a congenial element, are sent empty away, the poor, the broken-hearted, who lament their vileness, and who, above all things, desire to be holy, as their Father in heaven is holy, may rest assured that

"Their cause can never, never fail,
For Jesus pleads, and must prevail."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., November 15, 1859.

ORDINATIONS.

BY order of the Leading Creek Church, Randolph Co., W. Va., Elders J. S. Corder, J. B. Cross, J. N. Bartlett and S. A. Cleavenger, met with the church on Saturday, June 28th, 1902, to ordain to the work of the gospel ministry, brother Jonah Murphy.

After singing a suitable hymn, Elder S. A. Cleavenger called on the candidate to relate his christian experience and call to the ministry.

Elder J. N. Bartlett made inquiry by many questions relative to his views on Bible doctrine, all of which were satisfactorily answered by the candidate.

Ordination prayer by Elder J. B. Cross.

Charge given by Elder J. S. Corder.

Laying on of hands by the presbytery.

Right hand of fellowship given by the brethren and sisters.

JAMES MURPHY, Moderator.

A. G. PHILLIPS, Clerk.

CHURCH NOTICES.

THE State of Texas, County of Freestone, Salem Church of the Old School Primitive Baptist faith and order, now seated in conference, on Saturday before the first Sunday in July, 1902, to the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

This will inform you that we have excluded Elder G. W. Meece, and sister Meece, wife of G. W. Meece, from our fellowship upon the following charges, to wit: Contempt of the church, and such conduct of late as to destroy confidence in him as a Baptist. We also demanded of him his credentials, which he refused to give up, therefore we are no longer responsible for his acts. Therefore we ask you to publish this in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Done in conference and signed by order of the church.

WM. LITTLE, Moderator.

I. R. BETTS, Church Clerk.

HELP WANTED.

WESSON, Ark., July 11, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—There are a few Primitive Baptists here, and we are poor, most of us, in worldly goods, and we are contemplating erecting a house of worship, provided a sufficient amount of means can be raised. We would like to erect a nice but small house here in Wesson, Ark., for our people to meet and worship in. Should any of the brethren who read the SIGNS feel it in their hearts to assist us in this matter, such contributions, however small, will be gladly received and properly appropriated. A small amount from each one would enable us to build the house. Send contributions direct to me, either by registered letter or post-office money order.

LATTUS C. TRULL.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder D. M. Vail, July 3d, 1902, at the residence of the bride, Otego, N. Y., Eli Cartright, of Oskosh, Wis., and Mrs. Eliza A. Bundy.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

FELL asleep in Jesus, on the evening of the 24th of May, 1902, **Jennie B. Allen**, beloved wife of Herbert Allen, and only child of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Gunnell, aged 27 years and 9 months. She was sick six weeks with whooping cough, and for four weeks confined to her bed. Her suffering was intense, but she bore it without a murmur, saying always to the loved ones around her, who were so anxious and distressed about her, that the Lord knew best in all things, and that it was all right. She said she wanted to live for her dear husband's sake, for he would be so lonely without her, but prayed that she might be made willing to bear whatever the Lord saw fit to put upon her, and that her husband and all her loved ones might be made submissive to his divine will. The last hours of her life were peaceful and quiet. Laying her head on the bosom of her dear Savior she breathed her life out sweetly there, without a struggle or a groan. It seemed a literal falling asleep in Jesus. She was not a church member, but had great respect for religion, and believed in salvation by grace, through Jesus Christ alone. She had a happy and cheerful disposition, and it was pleasant to be with her always. None knew her but to love her, or named her but to praise. Her life was short, but sweet and beautifully spent. She was a good true woman, a devoted and loving wife and daughter, and we believe a good christian. As we looked for the last time on our loved one robed in white, how hard it was for us to give her up, and we felt to cry out, O Lord, why hast thou taken her and left us here to mourn? O, how we miss her, and will miss her always, and how lonely

our lives will be without her, is more than words can tell. She died in Washington, D. C., where she had lived since her marriage on Oct. 12th, 1897. We brought her home and buried her in the old graveyard by the side of her little babe, where she will rest until her Savior bids her arise in newness of life, to praise him in heaven, where parting will be no more. The time will not be long when we, too, will bid farewell to this vain world, to meet her in glory, I hope, where no more farewell tears will be shed. Truly in her death her dear husband and aged parents have sustained a great loss, but we should not mourn as those without hope, for we feel assured that she is safe in the kingdom of a dear Redeemer.

We loved her, O, we loved her,
But Jesus loved her, too,
And took our precious darling
To a bright and shining shore.

MOTHER.

Mitchel H. Varnes, of Patterson, Pa., was born Feb. 17th, 1838. He united with the Tuscarora Old School Baptist Church near Mifflin, Pa., on July 29th, 1882, being baptized by Elder A. B. Francis. He at once became an active member, and was dearly loved and highly esteemed by the church for his faithfulness, and for the truth's sake. He had been in poor health for quite awhile, and yet his death was very sudden. On the morning of June 23d, he told the dear members of his family that he would not live to see the sun set that day. This was a true prophecy, for about 6 o'clock that evening he passed away.

The funeral services, which were held in the Tuscarora meeting-house on the 26th day of June, 1902, were conducted by the writer, after which the remains were laid in the cemetery at the meeting-house.

Each member of the church feels the loss, yet believe that their loss was his gain, and that he is now at rest. May God comfort and bless his widow and children.

J. C. MELLOTT.

RIDDLESBURG, Pa., July 8, 1902.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Brookdale, Pa., will hold a two days meeting, if the Lord will, at Franklin Forks, Pa., on the 19th and 20th of August, 1902. We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us at that time. Those coming from the west will be met at Conklin, Monday, the 18th, at 6 o'clock p. m., also Tuesday a. m. at 8 o'clock. Those from the east will be met at Montrose Monday afternoon at 3 o'clock.

By order of the church,

WILLIAM M. HART, Church Clerk.

THE Abbington Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting to be held Thursday and Friday, August 21st and 22d, 1902. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. Those expecting to come will please write me at Justus, Pa. Those coming by D. & H. or O. & W. R. R., will be met at Olyphant. Those coming by D., L. & W. R. R., will get off at Clark's Summit. Arrangements will be made to meet all who can come. Our place of meeting is three miles from Olyphant and four miles from Clark's Summit.

GEO. GOODRICH.

HAZEL Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, will meet in her forty-eighth annual session with Providence church, three miles north of Plano, Appanoose Co., Iowa, on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1902, and continue the two following days. Those coming by rail will be met at Plano, on the K. & W. R. R. All lovers of gospel truth, especially ministers, are invited to attend.

S. B. JONES, Moderator.

J. M. CATE, Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting, the Old School Baptist Church of Cammal, Pa., will hold their yearly two days meeting Saturday and Sunday in August, 30th and 31st, 1902. We are expecting Elders John Slawson, of Delaware Co., New York, and Joshua Rowe of Baltimore, Md., and would be pleased to see others who love the truth, and desire the company of God's people, present at our meeting; all are welcome. Those coming from the south will come to Williamsport, Pa., and take train at Philadelphia & Reading depot, N. Y. Central R. R., to Cammal, Pa. Those coming from the north will take same railroad at Corning, N. Y., to Cammal, Pa. Brother Sammy Moffat, Mr. James Jamison and sister Charity Campbell live only a few rods from depot. Friends will be met and cared for.

LORENZO CAMPBELL, Church Clerk.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet in her seventy-first annual session, the Lord willing, with New Hope Church, in Greenbush, Warren Co., Ill., on Friday, Sept. 5th, 6th and 7th, 1902, at 10 o'clock a. m. Those coming by rail will be met at St. Augustine, on the Quincy branch of the C., B. & Q., on Thursday evening before. The a. m. train from the south will be met on Friday. Those coming from the northern direction will come to Galesburg by 5 p. m. on Thursday evening, and go south at 5:45 p. m. All lovers of the truth are invited, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE South Ouachita Association, of Arkansas and Louisiana, convenes September 26th, 27th and 28th, 1902, with New Ramah church, Claiborne Parish, La., six miles west of Haynesville, La., on L. & N. W. R. R. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

L. C. TRULL.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 70. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1902. NO. 16.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE APOSTLES' DOCTRINE AND FELLOWSHIP.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—The doctrine of the chosen and inspired apostles of our Lord Jesus is the revealed truth of God which they taught, both by tongue and pen. The doctrine primarily regarded the "eternal Godhead," revealed as the Father and the Son and the Spirit in the one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus. In the fullness of his holy Manhood dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Jesus the Son of Mary was God manifest in the flesh. So in him God was related to men as the covenant-God of his chosen and predestinated people and the Father of his quickened and saved children.

This is a brief summary of the doctrine of the apostles. They thus preached Christ Jesus the Lord, the Emmanuel, God with us. "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." This sums up the doctrine of the apostles, the whole truth of God which they taught and preached. This doctrine embraced the redemption and salvation of the children of men, whom God predestinated unto the adoption of children unto himself in glory by his Son, who was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit and raised up from the dead by the power and glory of the Father. In view of this Jesus said, "I am the Resurrection, and the Life." He is this to all his people, who were chosen and blessed of God in him with all spiritual blessings before the world was. Therefore, the apostles of Jesus preached through him the resurrection of the dead. This was the gospel of Christ, the good news and glad tidings of salvation of dying sinners; therefore it is called the gospel of salvation. Salvation, then, is the fullness and blessing and glory of the gospel of God our Savior. Unto this end, Christ both died, and revived and rose again. For this cause he came into the world. "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," said Paul. The angel of God said, "For he shall save his people from their sins." They need only this.

All this was clearly and fully brought out in the apostles' doctrine. It was the burthen of their teaching and preaching.

Salvation, the salvation of sinners, salvation through Christ Jesus, was their glorious proclamation. They were determined not to know anything else among the people in their doctrine or teaching, "Save Jesus Christ, and him crucified," and risen from the dead. For they joyfully preached, "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept." "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth." "It is the power of God unto salvation." It never falls short of this. So the glad tidings of Christ is salvation. "Neither is there salvation in any other." His very name, Jesus, is salvation. With him in his arms, Simeon blessed God, and said, "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

One point more in salvation was in the apostles' doctrine: *How* does God save sinners through his Son? Does he save them conditionally? or unconditionally? Is it by his grace? or of their works? This is the great contention in the religious world, who oppose the "sect everywhere spoken against," for believing that we are saved by grace alone, and "not of works;" while the world says that, while God in Christ made the way possible, which is grace, yet he now offers salvation in the gospel upon conditions of acceptance and obedience, which make it partly of works which we must do. This is a fair statement of the controversy as to how God saves sinners through Christ.

But now, behold, a compromise of this difference is devised by some middlemen or go-betweens, as a modification or softening down of both grace and works. This half-and-half gospel (?) is thus expressed: The eternal salvation of sinners is by grace; but the salvation of believers in Christ in conditional is time and depends upon their works of obedience. The advocates of this yea and nay gospel (?) take pride in this compromise between grace and works, and make great claims for its advantages over either of the other ways of salvation. And they fondly think they have laid a good foundation for the fellowship of the Grace Baptists, by putting in it the plank of eternal salvation by grace; and also a broad and liberal enough platform for the fellowship of conditional religionists, by adding to it the popular plank of "Conditional Time Salvation." Thus a confederacy is formed between grace and works, or rather an alliance, making a fair and agreeable blending of the two, as is supposed, with which all believers in salvation should be pleased, and come and unite in fellowship in a grace-conditional gospel (?) For it is held that in this half-and-half way of salvation grace is honored in giving it the first part in the salvation of a sinner, which is enough for grace; and then due honor is given to works also, for the salvation of believers in time, is of works. This will please many, no doubt, because it is putting the sinner humbling grace of God in the background, and placing the greater stress upon the believing sinner's own works, upon which his salvation and its blessings as rewards depend in time. With this liberal grace-and-works gospel (?) it is easy to allow grace to regenerate sinners, since their salvation is then in their own hands as long as they live in time, and depends upon works of their own. Why, yes! this is a religious platform broad and liberal enough for all conditional salvationists in the world to unite upon; for they all admit that the death of Christ was in some sort necessary, and that the regenerating Spirit is necessary, and these are of God's grace or favor; and not a devout believer in condi-

tional salvation on earth would object to being in fellowship with the doctrine of the conditional time salvation of professed christians.

But the apostles' doctrine spoils this mongrel or mixed salvation, saying, "And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." This settles it, either for grace, or for works. It proves that salvation is one harmonious whole, in which there is no yea, and nay, but yea and amen, to the glory of God and his grace.

The natural result of the doctrine of conditional salvation in time is, revivals of religion will be gotten up by the preachers of this half-and-half salvation of grace and works; for many will be taken with it, because it suits their natural feelings; it appeals to their selfish desire to seek the reward of happiness for their religious service in joining the church, and so there will be a great many of all sorts gathered into the churches of a conditional time salvation gospel. This is the fruit of such doctrines, taught as the way of salvation, and it will thus go on, more and more, in all conditional churches. For if the salvation of believers is conditional in time upon their works, and they thus receive salvation as a reward for their religious services, a flood-gate is opened to religious zeal, and a strong appeal is made to the selfish desire in young and old to thus seek happiness and self-good. And to help on in this sort of salvation, conditional upon religious works and zeal, protracted meetings will be gotten up, running days and nights, perhaps into weeks, in which many appeals will be made to the natural feelings and sympathies of all who are at all religiously inclined (as most persons are); they will be invited to come forward for prayers, and members will be sent through the congregation to urge them to come to the church and receive the salvation and happiness which they may thus obtain. While thus aroused and wrought up in their feelings, the appealing exhortations will be interspersed with pathetic song after song, until there is produced a general religious fervor of excitement, and the effect is, not a few, especially of the young and sympathetic, yield to this strongly religious excitement, impulsively go forward and are gathered in. Perhaps some of God's children are thus taken in, but others, not a few, doubtless are. The result of this conditional effort will be published abroad, as an inducement to others to go and do likewise; and so the work of conditional salvation (such as it is) spreads here and there, like fire fanned by the winds in a burning forest—as the fire spreads the winds increase. Moreover, as time salvation is believed to be conditional, and so depends much upon the conditional workers in the ministry, and the churches and people who must thus be saved in time, ministerial meetings (like institutes for school teachers) will spring up, as helpful to preachers in successfully gathering a large membership into the churches, and such meetings or conventions of "leading preachers" will become more popular, until a preacher will be quite behind the times who does not attend them. Then, too, a Sunday School for the young people will naturally come in for its share of aid in conditional time salvation, and this religious enterprise and zeal will not be content without the Sunday School to help the young, as it will not be without the ministers' convention to help the preachers. Then, again, since stirring music and en-

livening songs help much to fan the religious fervor in a revival meeting, it will be counted a great aid to bring in the organ to make the singing more thrilling and effective; and so the organ also will come in for its part in the work of conditional time salvation. Some "old fogies" and croakers may grumble at first against all these helping influences in this cause of getting all the conditional salvation in time we can, but they will have to give place to the more active and zealous workers in this salvation of works. Candidly, they should take back seats, or else go in for all that helps on the work of salvation in time. For, admitting that this conditional gospel (?) is true, it necessarily follows that all these things are helpful in making this sort of salvation more effective and successful, and there is no denying it. Hence, religious schools and societies for better instructing all, both preachers and people, to take hold and do their part in time salvation, are not only justifiable, but needful as well. There is no evading this, and these things are sure to come. The New School Baptists are a good example of the natural consequence of these things, which follow as certainly as *cause* and *effect*. Within my memory they were with the Old Grace Baptists. Where are they now? They have only carried out the doctrine of conditional time salvation. And as a religion in time, they have been very successful in this conditional gospel, (?) and are enjoying all the religion they live for or work for. They have great ingatherings in membership, *because* they have, consistently with the doctrine that salvation in time is of works, called to their aid all those things named above. And so they have sent out their religious teachers and workers as home and foreign missionaries; rightly so, if conditional time salvation is right, and they should be commended for their consistent practice with their doctrine. For, once admit the principle of conditional salvation, and then all this practice in religious zeal and works will follow as the legitimate fruits of the doctrine that salvation is of works. The attempt to modify and guard this doctrine, by limiting it to our salvation in this life, does not in the least change the principle and nature of the doctrine, which is *conditionalism*. This is the principle of the religious doctrines held by all the world. Hence, all Baptists who fall away into it, are sure to become more popular with the world, just as it is with the Baptists of the conditional time salvation school to-day. For Jesus told his disciples that the world would love its own, and if they were of the world, the world would love them. The world loves all worldly religion.

Let us now return to the apostles' doctrine, that we may see what they taught is the way and principle of salvation. While they were all with the first gospel church in the city of Jerusalem, the question as to the way of the salvation of believers in Christ arose in the church at Antioch, and on one side it was taught that they must do certain things, or they could not be saved; but Paul and Barnabas opposed this principle of conditional salvation, and held that believers are saved by the grace of God through Christ alone. This question was then submitted to the apostles and whole church at Jerusalem, and this is their decision: "We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved." This is by the authority of God himself, and it stands in the true gospel church for all time. To the saints and faithful in Christ, Paul therefore said, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and

that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: *not* of works, lest any man should boast." Time conditional Baptists have said, Paul speaks of eternal salvation, but the clause, "*are* ye saved," is present time, and the words "through faith," make it clear that Paul speaks of salvation in time, for it is here in time that we walk by faith, not by sight. Then the last clause, "not of works," we know refers to works in time. This apostle says, "By the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain: but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Certainly this was gospel salvation in time, when Paul thus preached Christ, yet he says it was the grace of God which was with him, and not himself. So he said, "Unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." "By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name." So their apostleship was of grace, and gospel obedience is of faith, which is by grace and is the gift of God. "For if through the offense of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. * * * Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Thus the full and entire salvation of sinners from all their sins is proven to be by abounding and sovereign grace, from its beginning in making them spiritually alive from their death in sin, through all time, unto eternal life, and this because matchless grace now reins, reigns through righteousness, and reigns by the power of the Lord Jesus, who is the righteousness of his people and their salvation. The invincible and saving "reign" of much more abounding grace than abounding sin, makes it certain that our salvation here in time is by grace, for the word "reign" is in the present tense or time.

"Now to him that *worketh* is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of *debt*. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his *faith* is counted for righteousness." (not his works.)

This is the apostles' doctrine. "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." This is written of all the church in Jerusalem. Their fellowship was in the *doctrine* of the apostles, which is the doctrine of God our Savior, the truth of salvation as it is in Christ Jesus. It is the doctrine of grace, of salvation by grace alone, as here proven. Therefore, had they not continued thus truly in the apostles' doctrine, neither would they have continued in their fellowship. Later on some did not thus continue, for the apostle John says, "They went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." Fellowship is a fruit of the Spirit of truth, and a blessing of God's grace to his household, and this fellowship is in the truth of salvation, which the apostles taught. So John wrote, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." And Jesus said, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and

the truth shall make you free." "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

"And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." The gospel of Christ, therefore, is the gospel of grace and truth, and it is the gospel of salvation. For this doctrine of Christ, Paul was made to endure bonds and afflictions, yet he said, "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." With faithful Paul, so would I likewise "testify the gospel of the grace of God" to the close of my ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus. For the gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, and so it is the gospel of the grace of God. The gospel of salvation is in time, we know; therefore our salvation in time is in the gospel of grace. There is no other gospel.

In the apostles' doctrine and fellowship your brother,

D. BARTLEY.

[We desire to add to the letter of solemn warning from Elder Bartley published above, that just the results which he predicts as sure to follow in the wake of the term "conditional time salvation," have been also the things which we have feared. It is certainly true that if any part of our salvation be conditional upon ourselves, our choice or our works are what decide whether we will be saved in that sense or not. If our final salvation be unconditional it is and must be all of grace and not of works. We suppose that none will deny this. On the other hand, if our present salvation from error and disobedience and sorrow be conditional, then it is equally sure that grace has nothing to do with it. We have apostolic testimony that grace and works cannot be partners in salvation. The entrance of the one casts out the other. Now it is because we have seen plainly that "conditional time salvation" meant that grace had and could have nothing to do with it, that we have opposed that expression. And we must continue to oppose it so long as it seems clear that it casts grace out. We have not at any time charged that all brethren who have adopted the expression and contend for it, see or mean what is really involved in it. (Neither do we understand brother Bartley in the above article to charge this.) If they did, we are persuaded they would object to it, and reject it with abhorrence. The question is simply this, Will the brethren who contend for that expression, be willing to say as some have, "Grace has no more to do with our present time salvation, than works have to do with our eternal salvation?"

Exhortation, admonition, reproof, warning, instruction, which are all found, and abundantly found in the Scriptures, does not argue that our "time salvation" is of works, or of ourselves, since again and again holy men of old, including kings, prophets and apostles, thanked God for all the graces that were manifest in the people of God, and for all the fruits that they bore. Solomon thanked God that the people gave of their treasure freely and willingly. Paul thanked God for good reports which he had heard from his brethren. All, then, is of God, and by his grace. Both the good works, and the joy which is found in them, are to his glory and praise. We want to feel and

say such things all our lives. Grace all the work shall crown, both our fruits, and the redemption secured on Calvary. —ED.]

AN INDEPENDENT GOD.

INDEPENDENT means not to be controlled by any power or circumstance. God does not act according to circumstances, nor what we may think of him. He is above all beings, being eternal and self-existing, and therefore not controlled by any power. The psalmist says, "Our God is in the heavens; and hath done whatsoever he hath pleased." Thus it is evident that he possesses power over all worlds and things, to control all events according to his will, though the worldly religionists think they by their good works can prevail with the Lord, and he will save them. Then he would not be independent, but governed by the actions of individuals. Job says, "He is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth."—Job xxiii. 13. Man is not so. Hear again what Job says, "Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass."—Job xiv. 5. We are mortals, and must die; we cannot live beyond the appointed time, because we have no power to retain the spirit, and there is no discharge in that war. Therefore all power is in his hands, and we exist only by the power of God, then we, being his creatures, have no power whatever, only the power given us by the Creator. Then we cannot go beyond the power given us. It is evident we can do what we do do, but to say we could have done otherwise is without any evidence. We poor, weak mortals sometimes think we are great, when we are nothing, yet our God in his majesty, and from his lofty habitation, looks down on his creatures with pity and compassion, sending rain on the just and unjust, and is the Savior of all men, especially them that believe. In the common salvation, we see no difference between the believer and unbeliever, but his choice of individuals to eternal salvation is unconditional, otherwise he would be a conditional God. As there must be a choice, God uses his prerogative in choosing the heirs of salvation; and his ways are not our ways, his ways are higher than our ways, as the heavens are above the earth. We poor mortals are ready to do good to them that do good to us, but Paul to the Corinthians says, "He [God] hath [in the past tense] chosen the base things of the world, and things that are despised, hath God chosen, yea, the things which are not, to bring to naught the things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence." God's works are contrary to human nature, for a man in nature thinks God has human nature, and that he will bless with salvation them that are good and obedient, while there is no commandment to people in the state of nature to hear what Jesus says: "If ye love me keep my commandments." John says, "He that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." Then there is no commandment to any but to those that are born again, and they are not able to keep the commandments that are in the Bible, but there is a law, the judgments of which we keep, and that law is put in the mind, and written in the heart, and every command in that law we are in perfect obedience to. Hear what the apostle John says: "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." We see a great many of the Lord's people not walking in the footsteps of the Master,

and who seem to be disobedient, but it is because so far there is no command in the law, that is, in the heart. Hear what Paul says, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments." How do we then know what he has determined for us to do? Some say our time salvation is conditional. How can any one keep a command that is unsearchable, and cannot be found out? The idea would be in contradiction of the Scriptures. Then hear what the Lord says, "I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers." The promises in the covenant he made with the fathers, were yea and nay promises, that is, conditional. But the promises in Christ are yea and amen, to the glory of God. Then all the promises are sure in Christ. Can it be supposed that God ever prepared anything for any of his people that they will never receive? I think not. Hear again, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath [in the past tense, already] prepared for them that love him." Being an unconditional God, he blesses accordingly, and again he said, "I open, and no man can shut; I shut, and no man can open." If any part of our salvation is conditional, then we could open the door of mercy at our pleasure, or close it at any time, which is contrary to divine teaching.

It seems to me that they that believe such, have two husbands, Moses and Christ. Thinking that the latter husband is not sufficient, but that they must look to both. But I find we are dead to the law, by the body of Christ. Being dead to the law, separated, then we are under a dispensation of grace, and if there are conditions to perform in order to our time salvation, there are also conditions to perform in our eternal salvation. If grace is a divine favor in one part of our salvation, then in all. Paul says, "By grace are [past and present] ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast." If any part of our salvation depended upon our works, and some would perform the works, they certainly would boast of their enjoyment by their obedience. I have seen happy times, but never thought it was on account of my worthiness, but always thought it was by grace. I can see nothing in myself to merit it.

Editors SIGNS OF THE TIMES, do as you think best with this.

JOEL HUGHETT.

VIRGINIA, Ill., March 15, 1902.

LEBANON, Ohio, July 2, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—This evening a peculiarly touching letter came to me from a dear brother, I. H. Webb, Waco, Texas, son of the late Elder Richard Webb, who was an able and prominent minister in the south, and then in Texas. I had not heard from brother Webb in some years, and was both surprised and revived on reading his letter, which has so wrought on my feelings that I want to share it with you, and if you think best, with the readers of the SIGNS. I have just written him in reply, to try to comfort him, for I do feel a deep and tender sympathy for him.

Your brother,

DAVID BARTLEY.

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604 TYLER ST., WACO, Texas, June 29, 1902.

ELDER D. BARTLEY—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST, AS I HOPE:—From some cause I have thought of you frequently

of late, and this morning in looking over some relics I found a letter from you written in 1897, the last one I ever received from you. I also found one written by Elder Mitchell twenty-two years ago. These things go to make up life and some of them afford pleasure to think upon, and it is pleasant to see the handwriting of those whom we love for Jesus' sake. I have had much conflict of mind during the past six months, and I am writing to you now, to see if I cannot relieve my mind for a few moments at least. We lost our dear and only son on the 21st of May, aged nineteen, which has been one among the worst trials of my life. He was sick and in bed most of the time for four months, suffering much pain and spending many restless hours by day and by night, until the final summons came to take him away. He had been afflicted all his life with bladder and kidney trouble, and as he grew older the disease seemed to grow worse. He seemed to be hopeful all the time of getting well again, and often expressed a desire to be well once again. We did not approach him at any time upon the subject of religion, or of a future life, and he left no evidence of a gracious state, more than that his life was good, moral and upright. I find myself grieving over these things. I felt impressed at several different times to speak to him on spiritual things, but kept thinking that he would get better, and was unable to approach him in that way, which is now a regret on my mind. I know that if his name was written in the Lamb's book of life, and he was one of the ransomed, he is happy in the presence of the great I Am.

Dear brother, I can hardly contain myself when I contemplate the relative condition of this time world, and the world to come. Here all is sin, sorrow, disappointment and continual changing of scenes and times, and finally death. While on the other side all is perfection, all is day, all is joy eternal, and no fear of death is known. O, the wearisome hours which I spend in brooding over my imperfections, my mistakes in life, my shortcomings, and the loathsome condition of my being, so sinful, so weak and so imperfect. I am made to often seriously question the reality of my claim of a true hope in Christ, as there often seems to me to be but little evidence at my command to rely upon for comfort. Still there is something that keeps me longing for the better land. I am no longer desirous that this earth should be my permanent abiding place. No, but I am seeking a city yet to come, whose maker and builder is God. I feel sometimes as though I want to open the door and pass through. I am vain in attempting to peep through the veil that keeps us benighted from that heavenly land, but such are my desires to know of the other country, that I become impatient waiting for my change, which as I am sensibly and forcibly reminded will not be long in coming.

Looking back this morning over the past, I see so many changes, so many scenes of sorrow, and of disappointment, that I am ready to say it would have been better for me to never have been born. Why these conflicts? I cannot tell. My whole life has been a bundle of mystery, and I can never know what I am here for, or why I have been permitted to remain on the earth this long. I have accomplished but little that I have desired to do, and have been a continual dead head, and now the best part of my life is past, and I cannot hope to ever come forth from the rubbish heap, to

victory. But I know, or believe, that I shall slumber out the remainder of my days on earth. I am a great complainer I know, and have not been an obedient servant, and this worries me, but the war will not last a great while longer.

Now, for fear that I shall worry you, my dear brother, I will change the subject and say a few things and close. We expected to have had preaching here in the city yesterday and to-day, but rain hindered the minister from coming, and the meeting was postponed. There are several Baptists here in Waco, but no house in which to worship. The ministers seem to take but little interest in preaching here, and there is not much life manifested. After the storm at Galveston, we decided to come here, but there has not been much comfort or prosperity since we came.

I notice that you have lately moved from Montgomery, to Lebanon, Ohio. I would be glad to see you, and hear you preach once again in life, but I reckon it will not be now, unless you should come this way. I am in a poverty-stricken condition, and see no way ahead of me to be better off what time I live. But I would give all honor, all praise and all power to him who holds the keys of death and hell, and who can kill and none can make alive, and make alive and none can kill.

> "Dear Jesus, thine I'd ever be,
> From sin and sorrow make me free."

O, dear brother, will it be that we shall soon meet around the great white throne, and there enjoy in reality what we hear about, what we think and read about, and what we hope for, or will it all prove to be a myth, a dream, a disappointment? I know that we can never know in this life how it will be in the life beyond. We must live by faith, and as this is a gift from the Father, we must say, "Not my will, but thy will, O Lord, be done. This is a sweet resting-place, when we can sit down and sip at the fountain of pure and simple truth, believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Pray for us, dear brother. May God bless you and yours, for Christ's sake.

Your brother in sorrow,

I. HARVEY WEBB.

CAMMAL, Pa., March, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Feeling my unworthiness, a very grave and serious doubt arises in my mind as to the right to use the word brother. I have had very many serious reflections when examining myself, whether it was right for me to claim this very important relationship, and to-day the doubt comes to me anew, and so I am to made to fear and tremble. In myself I feel that I am very far from being the character that I should be, or that has a right to use this expression, but bear with me this once. For some unknown reason I have a very warm place in my heart for those who have obtained like precious faith with me in the doctrine that salvation is of the Lord, and that we do not fulfill the law's demands by the labor of our own hands. It is by grace that we are saved, and not of works, lest any man should boast; it is the gift of God. I believe that God has a people whom he chose before the foundation of the world, but I often have my doubts and fears whether I am one of that number, for I am so unworthy of such glorious things. I find that as one day goes, so goes another; I get no better, but rather worse; I am not satisfied with myself either when I am on the mountain top or in the valley, but the Lord has been very merciful to me all my days, yea,

he has been my hiding place, and yet how ungrateful is my heart for all his blessings. I have never been able to tell my full experience to my satisfaction, but I have listened to the brethren and sisters in the Old School Baptist church here at Cammal, as they have told of the way in which they had been led, and they have fully told my experience for me; I can indorse what they say, but I am unable to tell it for myself.

I was received into the church and baptized by Elder Vail, July 4th, 1900. I felt unworthy to take that step, but there was no place on earth for me, where I could find any comfort, except among the brethren. I loved them because they told the same old story of Jesus and his love; they told my experience. I feared all was of the flesh, but I am made to hope that this love and drawing to them was of the God of Abraham. I hope that God will keep and sustain us, as it seems good in his sight, although I feel too unworthy to ask any blessing at his hand; I trust also that my dear brethren and sisters will allow me to follow after them.

I have read so many good articles in the dear old SIGNS, and for this reason I have been made foolish enough to try to write something about myself, but I am just as far from writing as I want to write, as when I commenced. I dare not claim anything of myself, either temporal or spiritual, rather, with the psalmist I would say, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake." When my heart is engrossed in meditation, I believe I can go beyond this world of trials, and at times rejoice, but most of my way is surrounded with doubts and fears, and so I am always searching for evidences to confirm my hope that I am a subject of grace. When I look back upon my past life with its affliction and troubles I find the grace of God has upheld me, and that now is all my hope and my salvation. "By the grace of God I am what I am." My prayer is that Jesus will keep me at the foot of the cross, believing that he alone is the way, the truth, and the life. Blessed be the name of the Lord, it is my heart's desire to do the will of the Master, but I come so far short of it many times, but my hope is that God will keep us all. I ask an interest in the prayers of God's dear children for myself, and for the little church here at Cammal, that we may be kept in perfect peace, and in the enjoyment of the fullness of his love.

I may send this to you and I may not. If I do send it, do with it as you deem best, for I do not see what has made me foolish enough to write anything for the SIGNS, but I find that I am always trying to do something that I have no business to try to do, but Jesus knows all our weakness, and we are told, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." This seems to me enough, and no one can get into any dark and low place where these words cannot reach and comfort them. Many times we think all these things are against us, but if God be for us, who can be against us? Who can overturn those who have God on their side? The salvation of the children of God is sure, as sure as the power of God can make it; one thing is added to another until it seems that none could deny the final perseverance of the saints. Then we may say, Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulations, or distress or any other thing? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

Wishing you many long and happy

years in this glorious cause as editors and publishers of the SIGNS, I remain an unworthy scribe,

ALVA B. CALLAHAN.

POWELVILLE, Md., March 9, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I received your statement, which is correct. I have been waiting, thinking that at the spring associations I would see Elder Chick, or some one else who would attend to the matter. I could have paid you long since, but have neglected it until now. I will not delay any longer, as I am satisfied you are in need. A little from each of so many delinquents would be of great help to you, and it would not be much to any one of them. I do not feel that I am as prompt to do my duty as I ought to be, but I cannot see why any honest Old School Baptist should neglect to help a cause which is so important as the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. For many years your dear father fought hard against the enemy, who, if possible, would deceive the very elect.

I know that the Lord is able to take care of and bring to himself all for whom his blood was spilled, yet I believe that they can be led off into error by seducers, and by doctrines of devils. If there were not something like the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, or the preaching of the word to them, for instruction, and the building of them up in the faith which is wrought in them, many more would be led into error. Many a time I have commenced reading the narrations of the experience of those who have been led by the mighty power of God, who has brought them through the furnace of affliction, and it has touched a tender chord in my heart, and caused my tears to flow. How would we know, were it not for the SIGNS, or some way of communication, whether the Lord was working elsewhere as well as in our own hearts, and this is worth more than thousands of dollars laid up for some one after us to waste in riotous living. So I say, Brethren abroad through the land, let us encourage our paper which brings to us good news from a far country, and enables many who are destitute of gospel preaching to rejoice and be glad at the sweet messages brought to them through the SIGNS. How good such messages are to those who have experienced like precious things with those who write. Thus they are built up in the most holy faith.

Dear brother Beebe, if I had the gift to express my thoughts and place them on paper, I would gladly pen down what runs through my mind at times; I would tell how much I enjoy such seasons of refreshing as I derive through the SIGNS. I do not think that I can all the time enjoy it, or all the time feel spiritually minded, or even at any time as I desire. My mind is so much tangled with worldly things I cannot feel always as I would like to.

I hope that others will think of you, and help you out. I know something about giving long credit. You spoke of some who would be offended if you should stop their paper after the subscription had expired, but I should think it would be a greater offense to you to furnish the paper to delinquents year after year, and then you not receive anything to encourage you in your kindness to them. I think that every honest reader will arrange to pay you, or else have the paper discontinued. I think to be more strict in the matter would be better both for you and for them. If you are sending the paper at a loss to yourself, and to your creditors, you are doing both yourself and creditors injustice, unless you

can do this without a burden upon yourself. If any have no other gospel preaching, and are too poor to pay for the paper, there are others abundantly well able to furnish means to assist in sending it to them without your assuming all this burden. If any are able and do not pay, I do not see why you should throw away your labor upon them by sending the paper to them.

Now I have written what seems to be my mind in the matter, and if it is worth anything to you, publish it. If not it will be all right with me.

As ever your brother,

L. A. HALL.

[IT is always encouraging to receive assurances of an interest in the welfare of the SIGNS, and words of kindness from the friends of the paper.—ED.]

BONO, Texas.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I was very much interested in brother Ker's letter published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, where he was telling of the glorious meeting at Duart, and how sweet his meditations were after his return home. It caused me to think of a pleasant meeting in Atlanta, Ga., during the exposition there, when I was carried in Spirit to the mountain top, where I was suffered to remain for some months after my return home. I yet at times have sweet meditations as a result of that pleasant meeting.

I was made to shed tears when I read brother Chick's letter telling of his trip to Canada, and of the pleasant time he enjoyed among the brethren, and of Elder Curry's touching and cheering remarks, and of the number who came to the church, telling of the great things the Lord had done for them. I could but cry out in my heart and say, I want to go to such meetings, too. I long to hear the glorious truths proclaimed by God's able and gifted ministers who are not afraid to declare the whole counsel of God. Brother Ker struck a responsive chord in my heart when he said he had never seen or heard the doctrine of election or predestination either written or spoken too strongly for him. With me it is either an Almighty God or a God of chance. He either rules supreme or he does not rule at all. "The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble." "The Lord is great in Zion, and he is high above all the people." "Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, thou art very great."

Since writing the above I have had the sweet privilege of attending a meeting of Primitive Baptists at Dallas, Texas, during the "Ex-confederate reunion," among the number of preachers there were Elders Boaz, of Fulton, Ky.; Lively, of Ala.; Harris, of Ark.; J. C. Sikes, of Texas, and McCauley, of Miss., who were not afraid to preach the whole counsel of God, lest some one would say, "Can't help it ism," or "absolute ism." No, they preached an almighty, all-powerful, all-wise God, and yet merciful to the noticing of a sparrow's fall.

I want to thank sister Bessie Durand for publishing the two letters she received from brethren Lefferts and Rounds I did so much enjoy the sweet messages they contained. I also enjoyed sister R. E. Wright's letter, telling of her pleasant trip to Virginia. I know she did so much enjoy it.

Brother Beebe, I have been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for about thirty-three years, and if possible every number grows better. I love the doctrine it has ever contended for. May God in his mercy spare you long to the noble work

you are now engaged in.

If you deem this worthy, give it space in our family paper.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

LYDIA C. RAY.

P. S.—Brother Beebe, since writing the above letter I have been blessed with the hearing of the gospel preached by brother H. B. Jones, of Mt. Vernon, Texas, and brother Humphreys, the blind preacher, whose letter appeared in the SIGNS a few numbers back. I have attended a series of meetings, and while the gospel has been ably set forth by God's gifted ministers, yet I have not received what my soul longs for, and that is, "a refreshing from the Lord." I long for a "shower of blessings." L. C. R.

PSALM LXXIII. 10.

"THEREFORE his people return hither, and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them."

Often, of late, have the above words been my portion, or field of contemplation, but this was more especially the case during one day's journey over a rugged mountain's side, where the passing panorama of nature's varied hues was a source of constant pleasure to me, and in the love of nature I held communion with her various forms. For a time I thought on the giant trees, shady glens, rugged rocks, among whose wonderful groupings were delicate forest flowers, and indeed all the elements of primal earth were lavishly bestowed upon this bit of untamed earth, making it to appear like nature's own camping ground, and destined to forever defy the puny hand of man to substitute it. Streams and torrents of water trickled and leaped down the slopes to bury themselves in the brimming river, recalling the lines, "Time that sears us, maims and mars us, leaves no track or trench on thee," until the desire to drink of that pure, cold water was transcended by that more than mortal theme of the living water, of which if a man drink he shall never thirst, and it shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life. Then came the contrast to my mind of that time when waters of a full cup are wrung out, which waters are the vain lusts of the flesh, pride and all worldly cumberance, which entangle our footsteps, and goad us with their rigorous demands, until we have crossed the mountain, traversed the plain, and are far out upon the desert waste. Then it occurred to us that these waters of the earth have each a bound, beyond which they cannot pass; these streams cannot rise beyond their source, and all their channels lead downward, until they converge at one common level, and their turbulent volume returns to cover the earth.

Now we realize that it has all been the work of the Lord; his strange work. He has commanded the sea, saying, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." He gave to the sea his decree, that the waters of it should not pass his commandment. These are strong bulwarks of faith to him whose life is hid with Christ in God, and whose trust is stayed upon the holy One of Israel, and whose judgment has been quickened to discern the work of the Lord in the land of the living, where all things, both animate and inanimate, temporal and spiritual, work together for good to them who love God, and who are called according to his purpose. "Waters of a full cup have been wrung out to them," and their desire is toward him, who passing through the valley of Baca makes it a well, and their constant prayer is for that rain which filleth the pools.

The waters of the earth are now placed

under the powerful microscope of spiritual discernment, and their poisonous contents become sickening to the soul. We crave to have their contaminating elements entirely wrung out, and that we be not numbered with the multitude who taste only the waters of the earth, and who by their seductive flow are lured onward and downward.

The trembling saints of God, who is Jehovah Jireh, and who hath wrought salvation by his own right hand, and by his holy arm, can scarcely lisp the prayer which has been written upon the fleshly tables of their hearts, yet it is their only hope that in God's appointed time, and in his own good way, they each may come to the living fountain and partake afresh of these abundant streams. Here is displayed in a beautiful manner the Spirit's power, and the work of the Holy Ghost, that permeates these emptied channels, carrying the truth to every part that it may be assimilated, and then manifested in the new creature, in Christ our Lord and Savior.

This mysterious work, this strange act, is not performed upon the vessels of mercy, while the cups are full of earthly waters. Hence they are wrung out by processes which are according to the determinate counsel of God. Each in a way differs from all others, and yet all are made partakers of the full cup, and to such the water of life flows freely, and to him that is thirsty, they are given freely, without money and without price.

O, what a blessed privilege to journey toward that fountain, whose streams make glad the city of the living God, where the gentle loving Savior stands, ever ready to greet the weary pilgrim in a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths, which spring out of the mountains and valleys.

This letter would have been forwarded sooner but for the feeling that some one else had written upon the same subject, but I have not been able to find anything in the SIGNS upon it, and so will send it.

I remain your sister,

MARTHA J. LEE.

CAMMAS VALLEY, Ore., March 10, 1902.

LANHAM, W. Va., Feb., 1902.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—As I am confined to the house on account of the bad weather, and my mind runs out after the dear children of God, I feel that I must write, though I have no education, but I hope you will make allowance for me, and so I will make the attempt, God being my helper.

In the book of Ruth it seems to me that I see a beautiful cluster of types and shadows which are profitable to the saints of God in this day. It seems that Ruth represents all the dear children of God, who desire to be within the pales of the church, and who can adopt the language of Peter, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." While they linger around the fold in hope of obtaining a crumb from the Master's table, that the inner man may be strengthened, they ever have a single eye to their mother-in-law, Naomi, (which means gracious, comely) the church. As we read on, we see that Ruth gleaned after the reapers, the ministers of Jesus, and that they dropped some handfuls of purpose. This is God's purpose. Yes, the poor have the gospel preached to them now in this gospel day, for they are fit subjects of gospel address, for they have no might nor power of themselves. To such the gospel is preached, and is glad tidings of great joy, and good news indeed to the poor souls who feel that they want to be with the saints of God. Then

they cry out in the language of Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee." But Orpha kissed her mother-in-law, and went back unto her own people, and to her gods. This kiss was only lip service, from the teeth outward. I have thought that I have seen such worship as this by those who made a loud profession of religion, and soon turned back to their old habits, as the dog to his vomit, and the sow to the mire. But Ruth was one in whom the fountain of the great deep had been broken up, and in whom the hard and stony heart had been taken away, and to whom a heart of flesh had been given. In that heart God had written his laws, and had promised, I will be to you a God, and you shall be to me a people. "Happy art thou, O Israel! who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord?"

Boaz was a faithful type of Christ, and the near kinsman. Howbeit we are told that there was a nearer kinsman still. Now this nearer kinsman must be the law, for it has the first claim upon the poor sinner; but it cannot give life, if there could have been a law which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. The law is unable to justify the guilty, for the law is not of faith. This nearer of kin seems to me to set forth the law. By nature the Jew is under the law, and the law therefore has the first claim upon him. Hence this nearer of kin in the gate of judgment and in the presence of the ten elders, which I think represent the ten commandments, tells Boaz to buy or redeem his right according to the manner of Israel. So he plucks off his shoe in the presence of witnesses, and gives it to his neighbor Boaz. So now Boaz is the neighbor who stands in his shoe, or in his right under the law, and bears all the burden, and redeems the sinner, and raises up seed to the dead. He is typical of that neighbor that showed kindness to him that fell among thieves. He is typical of that brother born for adversity, or necessity. He stands, as it were, in our shoes, and does all that is needful to fulfill the law; he redeems his inheritance; he marries Ruth, who is figurative of the Gentile church, and raises up seed to the dead, which is typical of the resurrection. He builds up the house of Israel so that Jew and Gentile, fitly framed together, grow up into an holy temple in the Lord.

O, how pleasant to preach Jesus, the way and the truth and the life of all the saints. We, in this country, are few, but the promise is to the little flock. The enemy of truth is all around us, bragging of their numbers, and it seems to me that because iniquity abounds, the love of many waxes cold. I believe that many, even of the children of God, are paying for the asses' heads, as set forth in second Kings, or the brain work of dead men, committed to memory, and sold at a salary.

Yours in hope,

J. W. McLANAHAN.

KNOXVILLE, Iowa, June 23, 1902.

MY DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have often felt like writing to you and offering a few words of encouragement if I could, but I am so ignorant I cannot find language to express my appreciation of the dear SIGNS. The editors, as well as all that write for it, are dear to me, and I cannot pick up the paper and read it through without shedding tears, for my heart goes out to them in love, and how I would love to meet them all. I would give up in despair sometimes if it was not for this passage, "For we know that we have passed from death unto life, be-

cause we love the brethren." Now, brother Beebe, I do believe with all my heart, the Old Baptists are the only people on the earth that do preach the truth in its purity, and I do believe the SIGNS publishes a sound doctrine, and it is the only religious paper I have any use for, and I am going to take it as long as I am able, and my prayer is that you may be spared long to publish the truth, and I would say to the dear saints that write for its columns, to write on, for they do this old sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all, so much good. I gathered up all the old SIGNS that my father had at his death, and divided them equally among us children, and I get them out and read them over. There is lots of the dear writers gone, we see their names no more, but yet the paper is always filled with good letters.

From your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) Z. I. JONES.

DADE CITY, Fla., June 2, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—As you have kindly asked me to write you some account of my life, I will attempt to give a sketch. I was born in the state of Kentucky, September 16th, 1857; married and came to Florida in 1881; received a hope in Christ, of eternal life, May, 1884; joined the Primitive or Old School Baptists at Mt. Enon church, Florida, May, 1886; ordained to the work of the ministry, March, 1889; was called to the care of three churches in 1889, viz: Bethel, Empire and Antioch. In 1892 was called to the charge of Little Flock church; to El. Bethel in 1900, and to Mt. Enon, 1901. I have been supplying these churches continuously since called, except Bethel, my home church, which I gave up last winter. I have spent about half my pilgrimage since I was ordained in serving my charges, and to supply them during this time have traveled upwards of eighty-five thousand miles, the greater part was by private conveyance. To visit churches and sister associations have traveled some seven thousand miles. One tour of fifty-six days I was at the session of four associations, traveled about three thousand five hundred miles, and more than three hundred of this by private conveyance, and preached, or made the attempt to preach, forty-eight times. Met on this tour eighty-nine Primitive Baptist preachers; many of these were young men under thirty years old. Though our enemies have been saying for hundreds of years that these people will soon be dead and out of the way, they still find that there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

I have baptized 207 persons, and only six of that number have ever been excluded from the church. I have tried to preach Christ one thousand, five hundred and sixty-seven times. By the way, many have attested that some of my efforts have been comforting and confirming. But strange to say, there have been times when I felt to speak with much gladness of heart, and in demonstration of the Spirit and power from on high, and both expected and desired (perhaps the desire was fleshly) to hear some one say, I was comforted and built up by your sermon, &c., but never a word could I hear. At other times, when I felt to have no special power, more labor than freedom in speaking, the effects or commendations seemed to have been the greater. Hence, if I have ever been blessed to preach the gospel, I seem to be a poor judge of the times. I often wonder if any of the Lord's preachers have such an experience.

Though poor in spirit, as well as in

the goods of this evil world, the good Lord has sustained me, and kept me from looking to the liberal or illiberal moods of the churches. I believe that those whom God calls to feed the church, or flock, which he has purchased with his own blood, and that go preaching with that faith which worketh by love, that God will dispose the sheep of his pasture, according to their prosperity, to give unto his servant's necessities. The preacher is Christ's servant, and only the servant of the church as he serves the Lord. With such ability as God has given me I have not shunned to declare all his counsel. Truly I can say, my brethren have made loving sacrifices to hold up my hands, for which I desire ever to thank them and praise the Lord.

Yours in church bonds,

MOZELLE L. GILBERT.

[THE above was written as a private letter, but we have taken the liberty to publish it without asking the consent of brother Gilbert, and hope we have not incurred his displeasure by so doing. —ED.]

DALLAS, Texas, March 29, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I thought that I would write and tell you that I enjoy reading the SIGNS, for it is all the preaching that I have. I do not know how I could do without them. I see that you have a great many delinquent subscribers, who do not pay. I do not see how any Baptist can take it without paying promptly. He is not worthy of it, if he can pay, and if he cannot, he ought to notify you at once, and stop it.

I want to give you a little of my experience. From my conviction to my deliverance was only about three days and a half. I went to a Baptist meeting, and the preacher said that he judged a man by the company he kept, and that he would be judged by the company that he kept. That is all that I can remember of the sermon, but those words rested on my mind, and I tried for the first time in my life to pray; and the more I prayed, the more I saw myself a lost sinner in the sight of God. On Wednesday evening I went out to a grove to try to pray for the last time, as I thought, and if I did not get some relief I would cease trying, but I did not, for I was not saved. I kept on trying to pray, and after supper that night my wife and I were sitting by the fire talking, about what I do not know now. I replied to her, to keep her from thinking there was anything the matter with me. I was sitting with my head bowed down, and I viewed myself standing upon the brink of a great gulf which was beneath my feet, and there was no one to help me. Then all at once the burden left me, and I thought that I was the happiest man on earth.

The next morning I went out, and all nature seemed to be praising God, the trees and birds and all creatures, and I felt as though I loved everybody and every thing. But I went right into Babylon, and remained there during the best part of my life. About ten years ago, the bottom, as it were, fell out, and I have never been to hear one preach since, and never expect to again; I was living in Waco, Texas. Two years ago, a brother went down there, and I got acquainted with him, and he preached at my house. I believe God sent him to me to instruct me more fully in the Scriptures. He is the only sound preacher that I remember to have heard in all my life. [We could not make out the name of the minister referred to by our brother.—ED.] He went to Waco occasionally to preach

for us, the last time was on my birthday, June 19th, 1901. I do not expect that I shall ever meet him again in this world, but I hope that we shall meet again in a better world than this, never to part again.

My present wife was born and raised among the Methodists, but she loves the SIGNS as well as I do. I say to her sometimes that the Methodists spring up like the mushrooms, without father or mother.

Now, brother Beebe, if I live to the nineteenth day of June, I will be ninety-two years of age. I am ready to depart, and be with Christ my Savior; I feel that this world is all behind me. I have passed through my six troubles, and the seventh is just before me: that deep still river that Bunyan saw, and had to cross. He looked over into the celestial city, and I can now look over as he did, and see the golden streets and its cool shade so pleasant to look upon.

Brethren editors, and writers for the SIGNS, may God bless you all for Jesus' sake.

T. SPINNEY.

ROSEDALE, N. J., Jan. 26, 1902.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I feel unworthy to address you by that dear name; I feel too sinful and unworthy to call any of the dear children of God by such a name, but the sweet assurance is that we have passed from death unto life, if we do love the brethren. As I was again denied the privilege of being with you all on yesterday and to-day, I will try to write you a few lines. My mind has been with you, but it has not been the will of God that I should be present with you in body. Among you is my home; there my best friends, my kindred dwell, and if it were in my power I should have met with you. My desire is to meet with the dear brethren and sisters whenever they meet. It has been two months since I was there, and it seems like a long time, but why should I murmur or complain, when I read of so many who never get to meeting at all, or see the dear brethren, and some but once a year? All they have is the SIGNS to read, but they are so good; I love to read them, for in them I find comfort and peace. How good to read that others pass through our joys and sorrows also.

My path is down in the valley most of the time. In this world we must have tribulation, but beyond this vale of sorrow all is joy and peace. My ways are so sinful, and my thoughts so evil. The things I would, I do not; the things I would not, them I do. So I can do nothing pleasing to God. "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me." If I am saved it is all of grace; I can do nothing good, and my thoughts are evil. I often look back to the time and place when I thought that all was right. I was trying to keep the commandments, and I despised the Old School Baptists, but when the Lord's time came, he opened my blind eyes. It was not by study nor by reading the Bible, for I had tried that, to see whether I was wrong; it was all of the grace of God; it was in his own good time. He has said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." But O, how far short I have come of what a child of God should be, but I hope he will keep me in the right way, and then all will be well.

I hope that I shall be able to get to the meeting before long. I often think of what dear brother Fetter said to me, "It is better to have a desire to come, and not be able, than to live close by, and have no desire to come."

I feel too unworthy to send you this poor scribble.

I remain, as ever, your sister,

SARAH GOLDEN.

FARMINGTON, Ill., July 7, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have felt somewhat inclined to write a little for the SIGNS, yet I feel to hesitate somewhat. In my recent visit to the association held in Philadelphia, I met so many dear loving friends, brethren and sisters in Christ, I never enjoyed myself better. I believe that I was given the hearing ear all through the meeting. I met with many whom I met four years ago, and many I never met before. One was dear sister Attie Curtis, who writes good letters to the SIGNS. There were twenty-three ministers present, some of whom I did not get to hear, but I feel to thank the good Lord that, as I hope, he was with me, and I was made to rejoice in God my Savior. I seemed to be lifted up for a season out of the slough of despond. But O how sorry I did feel that soon the "needs be" came that we must part from so many loved ones, never perhaps to meet them in the flesh again, or in this veil of sorrow.

From Philadelphia I went to Warren, Md., where I heard on Sunday, a good sermon from Elder Grafton. I then visited brother Milton Dance, and his good wife, and we had a very pleasant meeting in the unity of the Spirit. How pleasant it is to dwell together in love and fellowship. After visiting some two weeks with Elder Grafton and family, and my sister, Mrs. Robinson, I went to Baltimore, to visit a sister in the flesh, and we had a very pleasant time talking of the spiritual things. I attended a meeting in Baltimore city, and heard a very able sermon from Elder Rowe, and met many of the dear and loving saints there whose hearts seemed to be in the cause. From there I visited my dear brother, Mitchell H. Varnes, at Mifflin, Pa. I had a very pleasant visit, and remained two weeks. He had been in very poor health for some years, and on Sunday, the twenty-second of June, he was taken very bad, and died on Monday evening, about ten o'clock. O what a shock it was that he was taken away so suddenly. He had made arrangements for meeting on the Wednesday following, for Elder Cordie Mellott. Little did he or I think that he would be silent in death before that time. Elder Mellott attended the funeral on Thursday, and spoke to the people.

On Friday I left in sorrow for my home. I arrived here safe on Saturday evening, and found all well, having been absent nearly six weeks. The Lord was good to me, and kept me from all danger, for which I desire to ever praise his name.

Now, brother Beebe, I know this cannot be of general interest to the readers of the SIGNS, yet to my friends here, and in the east, who are readers of the SIGNS, it will perhaps be of some interest to know of my recent visit east, and return, but I do not wish to crowd out more interesting matter. Now fare you well. Pray for me, a poor, needy, sinful worn of the dust,

E. D. VARNES.

ROLAND PARK, BALTIMORE, Md., July 18, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Please state that the notice in the SIGNS that I will attend a meeting at Cammal, Pa., Saturday and fifth Sunday in August, is a mistake, as I promised Elder Grafton in May to attend one at Harford, Md., at that time.

J. T. ROWE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1902.

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EDITORS:

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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MATTHEW XVIII. 15-17.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I wish that you or brother Chick would explain the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth verses of the eighteenth chapter of the gospel of Matthew. I had thought that I understood that Scripture, but I am not sure that I do now. I have heard some say that if our brother offend us, we are to go to him as directed by the Savior, and tell him his fault, and if he will not hear us, take one or two more, and if he will not hear them, tell it to the church, and if he will not hear the church, then let him be to us as a heathen man and a publican, and that this is all that we or the church are called upon to do, and that the church can exclude that one at once, without further notice. Others, however, say that after the matter has been told to the church, the church must appoint one or more to go to him, and then if they accomplish nothing, the church can exclude, and not say anything more to them. I wish that you would explain it in full, and as plainly as you can. I have nothing in view but to know the true way, and how all this should be done.

Please answer through the SIGNS.

Yours to serve, D. KOONTZ.

ASHLAND, Ill., July 10, 1902.

In reply to the above communication we will first say that some three years since we wrote somewhat lengthily upon the above subject. Yet we will now give such views as we have in brief. We all need wisdom from on high not only to enable us to understand the Scriptures, but also to enable us to practice what we know. It is much easier to see what the word teaches us regarding the erring brother, than it is to do as we are told in the word. The precepts of the dear Savior are spiritual, and can be obeyed only when in the Spirit, and when led by the Spirit, and the flesh always rebels against the Spirit, and so we cannot do the things that we would.

When a brother has trespassed against us, the flesh at once is filled with resentment, and the first impulse is to revenge ourselves, if not by some direct reprisal upon him, then by leaving him alone, and refusing to have anything to do with him in the future. The flesh leads us to forget that the brother who has committed the trespass is far more to be pitied than we, against whom he has trespassed. We forget that by his trespass he has cut himself off from the peace and joy which he once had in the Lord, and that he must suffer in his transgression sooner or later. In trespassing against us, he has sinned against God, and must come into darkness and not into light. David, when he had sinned, and was convinced of his sin, said, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold with thy free Spirit." If we at such times were wholly under the leadings of the Spirit of Christ, we should have great compassion toward the brother who has sinned; we should think more about his danger than about his want of regard to us; we should feel that he was a brand to be plucked from the burning; he needs to be saved from his sin. What does our hurt amount to compared to the hurt which he has received by his transgression?

Jesus meant this, and no more, when he said, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea." Jesus meant this for his disciples. It were better, not for the little one who has been

offended, but for him who has committed the offense, that he were drowned without remedy. Jesus was more anxious about that disciple who should commit the offense, than about the little one against whom the offense had been committed. Just so in the text to which our brother has called attention. Jesus was not anxious about the one against whom the trespass had been committed, but about the one committing the trespass. And he was anxious for the salvation of that one from his wrong course. Of course the trespass was understood to be an intentional one. If unintentional, then there is really no trespass. It is the spirit, the intent, that gives value to anything, whether for good or evil. If, then, one has willfully trespassed against us, it shows that in heart and spirit he has become ensnared by the devil, and that he greatly needs to be saved. The one act which he has committed in anger, or selfishness of some sort, is but the index of a grievous sore within. This sore, if unhealed, will rob him of his true life, in the sense in which he that lives after the flesh shall die, as Paul has testified in Romans. If we then love Christ, if we love him in Christ, and because he is Christ's, we shall be sorrowful at the danger he is in. His trespass against us will be as nothing compared with the disease in him which it reveals. We shall greatly desire that he may be healed from that disease.

It seems to us, and has for a long time, that the whole spirit of the teaching of the dear Redeemer in this chapter is that all that is possible should be done to save this erring brother. He is under the dominion of a wrong spirit; he is possessed of devils. Our desire, if we are truly spiritual, will be that the devils may be cast out, and he restored to his right mind. If he may come again to his right mind, then the outward trespass will cease. A maniac is a dangerous man; under the power of his perverted mind he will seek to injure his best friend, but that friend does not harbor ill will against him, because he recognizes that he is insane. Rather, that friend will desire to see him restored to his right mind. If he may be restored then his friend fears no further evil from him. The people of God may become possessed of the devils of pride, enmity, revenge, selfishness, &c. At such times they will err also in outward life, but how gladly will those who are spiritual see a restoration to their right mind again, and when they are thus restored, all the wrong committed by them will be as though it had not been committed. Nay, more; even before they are restored to the mind of Christ all that are spiritual will pity rather than blame, and will strive to restore and heal, rather than to cut off that one.

Now we understand this is precisely what Jesus tells his disciples to do in all such cases: First, the impulse of true pity and love always is to conceal the weaknesses and failings and faults of those whom we love. We shall try to keep all such things hidden from all around us. In this sense also charity hides a multitude of faults. This is also true in natural life. What mother, or father, or brother, or sister, or child, or husband, or wife, is there who truly loves, who will not with all care guard the weaknesses, and even faults of those whom they love, from coming to the light of day. This impulse is one of the most sacred of our nature. How much more will the love which is in Christ, and which embraces all whom he loves, seek to conceal the errors of another. By this

one thing we may know that the love of God dwells in us, and that we have true fellowship with one another, if we find our first impulse to be to shut up in our own heart the wrong of our brother, of which we may have become aware.

But this charity will lead to more than this. While we shall not reveal to any other one what we have seen, and while we shall be filled with grief, and shall long to see that one restored to the joy of the Lord, we shall be moved to try to save him. We shall go to that brother alone, and this means more than going to his fireside, and sitting down by his side. That any man, even a stranger, might also do. But it means that we become weak to him in his weakness, and in his error. It means that we come to him as Peter, after he had denied his Lord, could have come to some other one who had also denied him; it means that we shall go to strengthen him if we may, in his conflict of soul against the evil that is within him. It does not mean that we shall claim that we are guiltless, and that he has sinned, but we, if we go to him at all in the true sense of the word, will go as one who knows what sore temptations mean, because we also are in the flesh, and have felt them, and know how weak we are against the weakest foe. Yet it may be that the brother to whom we go does not feel these things; it may be that as yet he is under the dominion of the flesh, and so we do not gain him. If we have gained him, and find that the Lord has given him repentance for his fault, and for the hidden evil more than for the trespass against us, and that his confession like that of David, is "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight," then indeed we have gained our brother, and saved him, and we can go on our way rejoicing, and thanking God on his and our behalf. No more needs to be said or done. But if we have not found such a spirit of sorrow in him, and the repentance which such sorrow would lead to, we are not to cease our endeavors to restore him: "Take with thee one or two more," is the command. And let us take them without telling them our story until we are with them in the presence of the brother. We are not to take these that we may have partisans of our own against him, or to have witnesses against him in the church, but that they may help us gain him to the right way again; the whole object is to save him from his error of spirit and deed. If this be not the sole object, then we ourselves are wrong, and need converting sorely, as well as he. As it is the spiritual who are told by the apostles to restore those who have erred from the truth, so we ought to take with us spiritual men. We ought at once to reject the thought, if it occurs to us, of taking with us some whom we may regard as our special friends, or those who may not be specially friendly to the erring brother. If the spirit within us be that which the Lord will approve, the one thing in our view will be that the brother may be helped, and only the spiritual can help any one in time of need. If indeed we be ourselves in a right frame of mind, and if the spirit be in us, we shall at such times feel that it may be that we have magnified the fault of our brother, and if so, we shall want to be shown that also, and so be saved ourselves. It will not be our honor, or our good name, or our credit, for which we shall care, but only to save our brother, and to be saved ourselves if need be. If we truly love the erring one, we shall regret that it was needful to spread his fault abroad, even to the ears of but one or two more.

If the brother hears the united testimony to the truth of the brethren who have gone to him with us, that ends the matter, and it never ought to be suffered to go to another person on earth, but if he is not saved still; and if he still manifests the spirit of rage, envy, hatred, or revenge, which has given rise to the trespass in the first place, then tell it to the church; this is the last resort. Do not understand that we are limited to once going to the brother, and once only. It may be that we shall feel to go again and again, in our anxiety to save the brother. It is safe in all such cases to consult the impulse of love as it dwells in our hearts. Love may hope on, and so may lead us to go to the brother many times before we become convinced that it is useless. Nothing in this whole matter is to be done in a legal spirit, but in the spirit of forbearance and love, the spirit of the gospel, the spirit of the meek and loving Savior.

The church is not to sit coldly, as a judge on the bench, and she will not, if the Spirit of the Master be reigning in her borders. The church, one and all, will remember that they are members of the body of Christ in particular. If this truth be realized, there will be in every member an anxiety to save, and not to cut off or destroy. The church, under this spirit, will not be thinking of her own dignity, or of what men in the world will say, but of the good of the brother, and of the cause of Christ. She will grieve at the slightest prospect that one of her members must become to her as an heathen man and publican. How can we bear to see one in whom we have taken delight, and with whom we have taken sweet counsel together, and with whom we have gone to the house of God in company, by some evil spirit cut off from that sweet communion, and at last set one side, as an heathen man? For ourself it seems right to say, There have been but few cases in our knowledge, where all have been actuated by the desire to save one from this evil course, that it has become needful to withdraw from him, and in the few cases where this has seemed to be needful, we have not ceased to this time to grieve over them, as we would if compelled to lose a finger or an arm from our body.

In direct reply to the question of brother Koontz, we will say, There is no authority that we know of in the word, for the appointing of such a committee. Of course, the church must let the erring brother know that the matter is before them, and some one must do this, but the church ought to, as a body, talk with this brother at the time of meeting with him. If the brother shall refuse to hear the church, it will be at once manifest that he is under the dominion of a spirit of rebellion to Christ, and the law of his kingdom; he shows that he does not possess the spirit of a citizen, and that he is an alien, or as the Savior said, that he is to the church as an heathen man and a publican. At this point, all has been done that could be done, and all that the Redeemer himself required to be done, and here the matter must rest. The brother still persists in his evil course. Concerning such Paul teaches that he should be delivered to Satan that he may learn not to blaspheme. We do not think that the church will violate the law of Christ if they are so desirous of saving the erring one, that they decide to lay the matter over, after one hearing, for another, and another. Let all long suffering be shown in every case. Still, let the law of Christ be honored both in the letter and in the spirit. The word how-

ever does not require that after the church has heard the case, a committee should be appointed to wait upon the brother who has erred. This is our judgment, and we think it is scriptural.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE IRISH REVIVAL.

MUCH has been said through the Protestant press of late of the wonderful revival in Ireland, and the most flattering hopes have been cherished of the speedy overthrow of the Papal, and prevalence of the Protestant cause in that country. The following description of its attendant characteristics, from a celebrated Protestant Bishop, will show that the anticipated transmigration from Catholicism to Protestantism is to result in no great improvement. We copy the article from the *Banner of Liberty*, for the perusal of our readers.

In former ages the delusive spirit of anti-Christ has produced results of a similar type. Those of whom we read in the early days of christianity, who were possessed with devils, were subjected to physical derangement, falling down, losing their reason, and becoming unmanageable. In the early settlement of Kentucky, Benedict describes the manifestation of the most unreasonable and even ludicrous demonstration of religious insanity; such as jerking, biting, barking, crawling about on the floor or ground, to become as little children.

There is scarcely less fanaticism displayed at the present day, not only in Ireland, but also in our own country, by humanly planned, and humanly conducted revivals. Nor have we any right to look for any better results from any religious excitement that can possibly arise from anything short of the quickening power and grace of God. The asylums for the insane in our country afford fearful proof of the deleterious effects religious excitements produce, by stirring appeals made to the fleshly passions of the people. Lashed to a tempest of terror, the frightened victims of alarm, instead of being scared into immortal life, are driven to madness and distraction, while the doctrine of the Bible remains true, that "the work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever." Isa. xxxii. 17.

THE DEAN OF DERRY ON THE IRISH REVIVAL.

In a letter to his brother, the Bishop of Raphoe, the Dean of Derry, (Episcopal) says:

"Time, of course, can alone satisfactorily test this as to each individual case. I am strongly inclined to think, however, that many of the cases, and a few of the accompanying phenomena, are to be assigned to lower causes. Some of the seizures have taken place under such circumstances, and accompanied by such symptoms, as to have all the appearance of an epidemic attack—the physical effects not being preceded by any apparent exercise of the mind, or referable to any previous excitement. I have met with cases, of persons who had not been at any meetings, and who had given little or no thought to the subject, suddenly struck in their houses, and even in their beds. One woman, who had felt ill and low, but without any apparent reason, all day, fell out of her bed in a state of insensibility, followed by the usual symptoms. Others have described it as beginning with a pricking sensation in the soles of the feet, gradually advancing upward till it reached the breast, when it become insupportable, and led to fainting, screaming, &c.; and I myself saw a woman who, while sitting in a neighbor's house, conversing on ordinary matters, was siezed with a sudden faintness and all the appearances of a strong hysterical affection. The sensations, as almost invariably described to me, are a great weight and oppression about the heart, with a distressed, anxious feeling: not generally accompanied by a very acute sense of guilt, but rather by a sense of want and restlessness, and an earnest desire for relief, leading to strong and passionate prayers and cries. This state is usually followed by a kind of trance, in which visions are presented of Satan under various forms, and offering various temptations; of the torments of the lost; of the Savior at length coming to their rescue,

and occasionally of the glories of heaven. A sense of relief and happiness then succeeds, lighting up the countenance and showing itself by every outward demonstration of pleasure, but accompanied and followed for several days by great bodily weakness and exhaustion, much excitability of mind, a disinclination to return to their ordinary vocations, and an almost irrepressible desire to be with those who have been similarly affected. This is nearly the universal process, so far as has come under my notice, and is regularly looked forward to in all its stages by those who are either visited or desire to be. Now while in this there is much that is natural enough, on the supposition of a real work of God's grace in the heart, there is much also that has no necessary connection with such a process, and that may reasonably be referred to natural causes. Atmospheric influences with some, apprehension with others, the excitement of crowded meetings and vehement addresses, a general feeling of expectation and awe, and even a strong desire to be themselves the subjects of this remarkable visitation. Nay, in some cases, exhaustion from long standing pressure and foul air. Any of these may account for the convulsive or hysterical attacks. The visions, &c., are the natural and common result of extreme weakness and exhaustion of mind and body, and the season of relief and comfort may, in a great measure, arise from the abatement or removal of these physical derangements. I am inclined to think that in many instances the entire effect produced may be traced to such causes, and probably much of the outward demonstration, in all. In fact, these phenomena furnish no satisfactory test. I think, therefore, that they ought not to be encouraged, but deprecated. It is a striking circumstance connected with the remarkable revival at Combuislang, in Scotland, in the year 1742; as related by the minister, the Rev. W. McCulloch, that far more of those who were brought at that time under concern without these bodily agitations, persevered in gospel holiness, than of such as were so affected, and this I believe is generally found to be the case, as though the salutary influence was liable to evaporate in the over excitement of mind and body. It would, I think, be very desirable to call attention to the constant recognition of this truth in our church's services, which abound with supplication for that heavenly gift, and to exhort our people to earnest prayer, both public and private, for the outpouring of a large measure of the Spirit among us. This might be accompanied by such information as to the progress of the movement as can be relied on for accuracy and the absence of exaggeration: care being taken, at the same time, to caution the people against yielding to over excitement, against considering swoons, or convulsions, or visions as in themselves any essential part of God's work in the heart, or as such to be desired or looked for."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., November 15, 1859.

TO THE FRIENDS OF THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

To assist those who may have a desire to aid in the increase of the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, we have published on the last page of cover of this paper, a proposal to issue one thousand postal cards, in lots of ten cards for five dollars, each card good for six months subscription to the SIGNS, but as these terms are actually below cost of supplying the paper for the six months, we cannot afford to issue more than one thousand of these cards, nor can we receive more than one card for the subscription of the same person.

The convenience of this system can easily be seen: All who may feel to assist in the circulation of the SIGNS, can more conveniently and profitably do so by procuring ten or more of these cards, and then on receiving a subscription for six months, all they have to do is to write the name and address of the subscriber on the card, and drop it in the mail, and on receipt of it we will credit the party whose name and address appears on the card, for six months subscription.

For full particulars read notice on last page of cover of this paper.

ALL GONE.

ALL of the cloth bound small hymn books are gone, and all we have left of the other styles of binding, of the small books, are 42 blue plain; 10 blue gilt edged; 15 Imitation Morocco; 7 first quality Turkey Morocco. For full description of these books, prices, &c., see next to last of the white pages of this number. We cannot now say when we will have any more of these books, if ever, as we have not yet decided whether or not we will print any more of them.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, at his residence, July 5th, 1902, James Looker and Mrs. Carrie Johnson, both of Columbus, Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

By request of the family, I send the obituary notice of **Miss Kate Bateman**, of St. Thomas, Ontario, who died on the 17th of May, 1902, aged nearly 35 years.

The subject of this notice was the second youngest of a family of nine daughters and one son. Her father and mother were firm Old School Baptists, and her father was for many years a deacon in the church, and a most consistent and devoted member. From her youth, Kate was a frail, delicate girl, and was of a very modest, retiring and lovable disposition, and was hardly ever known to manifest any feeling of anger or even of vexation, and yet she was of a very bright and observing nature, and thoughtful for her years, though rarely expressing her feelings with any freedom. At her father's death, about twenty years ago, she was exceedingly broken down with grief and sorrow, as she had been devoted to him, and on account of her frail, delicate constitution, she was perhaps more petted by him than the rest.

At about the age of twenty, she became exercised on account of her sinful condition, but kept her feelings to herself as much as possible, but her keen attention to the preaching, and the silent tear, would betray her interest in spiritual things, which she would gladly have kept hidden in her own heart. I well remember speaking to her many years ago after one of our quarterly meetings, when she had been quite visibly affected under the preaching, and I asked her if she did not feel a desire to unite with the church? She replied with tears, "O, I am too sinful, and unworthy to be among the people of God." Then she told me some of her exercise of mind, which I felt was a clear evidence of a work of grace wrought in her, if I knew anything of the matter. From that time till her death I always hoped to see her come to the church, but such was not the purpose of God.

About two years before her death she became more delicate than usual, and that fatal disease, consumption, fastened itself upon her, and she gradually sank to her end. Though at times the lamp of life would flicker up somewhat brightly, yet it would be only for a little while, and then she would again fail in strength. During last summer and fall she was much exercised about her state and condition before God, and felt her exceeding sinfulness and depravity of heart, but it was more from inference than direct talk that she would let her feelings be known. As, for instance, after she had read a letter in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, in which the writer told of his wicked, sinful nature, and of his helpless condition before God, and of how his evil nature was a plague and torment to him, she said it was the best letter she had ever read; so it could be readily inferred that she also felt deeply her sinfulness, and the depravity of her own heart. To me this was wonderful, as I had always looked upon her as one of the most exemplary persons that I knew, and could hardly realize that she had a sinful heart, but such was her experience, and she felt herself to be as vile as the vilest.

She suffered much from the fear of death, and was almost in despair at times, fearing that she would go down to destruction, as she realized that her end was near. But the Lord was better to her than all her fears, and the word of God came to her saying, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee," and immediately her captive soul was set at liberty, and she could sing the praises of redeeming love. I visited her just after this, and if ever I could see love, joy and peace in any countenance, it was in hers. To me it was as the face of an angel, radiant with the joy of the redeemed. And myself and brother Kerr, who visited her with me, felt it a privilege indeed to be with her, and talk of the goodness and mercy of God, and as brother Kerr said to me at parting, "I felt it to be a profitable visit, and one long to be remembered, and to me it is as a waymark on the rough path which I have traveled." She lived in this sweet, peaceful frame of mind for about seven months, and hardly a shadow of care or a doubt ever crossed her pathway. She seemed to be living on the borders of that blissful shore where sin and sorrow never come, and she wrote me that she could go down to the grave without a shudder or a sigh. On another occasion she said, "O, will not death be glorious?"

You, brother Chick, will remember that you visited her last winter, and she enjoyed your visit very much indeed, as she did also a former visit two years ago, but at that time she did not express her feelings, nor until long after. Elder Curry visited her a day or two before her death, as did Elder Sawin, and she desired that Elder Curry should sing some hymns, and among her favorite ones, "I would not live always," was sung, which she greatly enjoyed. Elder Carnell, our pastor, visited her the day she passed away, and she told him that a day or two before she had passed into the immortal state, and of the beauties and glories she had seen, and how sad she felt to come back to this mortal, sinful state. But she said she never could tell the glorious things she saw in that vision of glory. And on the second or third day after, she passed away to forever enjoy the blissful state of which she had seemed to be given more of a foretaste than is allotted to many.

It may seem that I am writing a great deal about this dear child of God, but to her was given a most wonderful display of the love, grace, mercy and peace

of God, in this time state, such as is not often witnessed, and when witnessed cannot soon be forgotten by a humble, helpless child of God, and pages might be written with profit of her sayings during this happy state of her existence. You, dear brother Chick, I feel sure can testify to this from your short visit with her. What wonders hath grace wrought.

Her remains were taken to her brother-in-law's, in Ekfried, and from thence to the grave, followed by a large concourse of people. Elder Carnell preached from the words, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection, for on such the second death hath no power," greatly to the comfort of the friends and lovers of the truth generally. Then all that was mortal of her was returned to the earth to await the resurrection morn, when this mortal shall put on immortality, and death be swallowed up in victory.

Dear brother Chick, will you kindly publish what you feel to be profitable and right in the foregoing, and throw the rest aside? for I cannot do any better.

Your brother in hope,

ROBERT SCATES.

[As brother Scates has referred to our visit last winter at the home of this dear sister, we feel to add an expression of our comfort in that visit, and in the solemn conversation which it was our privilege to have with her. Our sympathy goes out to all her family, to whom she was so dear, but they cannot sorrow as those who have no hope. With this obituary from brother Scates we also received a pleasant and touching letter from sister Anderson, her sister, telling us of many precious things which she uttered during her last days. Such testimonies are to the praise of sovereign grace. We most gladly publish that which glorifies God and his grace, whether in the life or death of believers.—C.]

BROTHER **Sherman S. Vermilya** departed this life at his home in Grover, Bradford Co., Pa., June 10th, 1902, of brain trouble, caused by a paralytic stroke. He was born in Middletown, Delaware Co., N. Y., Feb. 24th, 1844. At the age of seventeen he moved with his parents to his present home, and has since resided in the same locality. January, 1865, he was married to Miss Augusta J. Scudder, of Andes, N. Y., who with one son, C. E. Vermilya, and family, are left to mourn their loss, together with a large circle of relatives and friends, and the little church of which he was the only active male member. Our dear departed brother had been a member of the Old School Baptist denomination since 1872, when he related his experience to the church at Grover, and was received, and baptized by Elder S. H. Durand. The vain theories of modern times did not perplex him, because he was established in the doctrine of God our Savior. He was a person of few words, comparatively speaking, but when he said anything concerning the salvation of the church of Jesus Christ, it was always to the point, and his integrity, uprightness and genuine love for the children of God, showed conclusively that he had been made the recipient of divine life, and that he was a God-fearing person, realizing that he was only a pilgrim in this vale of sorrow, that God was his Father, and heaven his home. He had been for a number of years the main support of the church, always willing to carry its burdens from his own bountiful hand. He was good to the poor, and always ready to lend a helping hand to those in trouble. His house has been a home for the Old School Baptists for many years, and all was done that could be to make them comfortable and happy. As a business man he was well thought of. How we all shall miss him, but none so much as our dear sister, her son and family. They all looked to him for counsel and advice. May it please God to comfort them in this their great bereavement, and may they be reconciled to his will.

The writer of this notice spoke on the occasion to a large congregation of relatives and friends, after which the remains were laid in the cemetery at Grover.

C. BOGARDUS.

BROOKTON, N. Y., July 20, 1902.

BY request of his daughters I send you the notice of the death of Uncle **George J. Borthwick**, which occurred very sudden and unexpectedly on June 22d, 1902, at the home of his brother, Nathaniel D., where he was visiting, in the town of Rensselaerville, N. Y. He had reached the good old age of 87 years and 1 month, but he had enjoyed good health and strength for one of his age, and his mind and memory was extremely good. He had been here one week, went to bed about 9 o'clock Saturday night, seemingly in good health and good spirits. Sunday morning I went to call him to breakfast, and found the messenger of death had been there, and his body was cold and lifeless. There was not the least trace of suffering, and to all appearance he had fallen asleep very soon after retiring—asleep in Jesus, as we believe, to awake in endless joy. It was a great shock to his children, but all said his desire had been granted, as that was the way he wished to go when his time should come to be called home. He united with the Middleburg Old School Baptist Church, and was baptized in March, 1832, and ever remained a steadfast, faithful and loved member. Our little church feels the loss, but we believe for him to die is gain. He attended our yearly meeting the first Sunday in June, and his seat in the church was never vacant when circumstances would allow him to attend. Uncle George was married to Polly Hagadorn, Dec. 14th, 1836. To this union were born two sons and six daughters. His wife died Dec. 21st, 1873, and April 25th, 1877, he married sister Harriet Vanvalkenburg, who died May 8th, 1890, since which time he has

lived with his children. But he has been called home to dwell forever with Christ, which is far better. I do not think he had an enemy. He leaves one son, five daughters, twelve grandchildren, several great-grandchildren, four brothers, four sisters, and a host of relatives and friends, besides the church, but we sorrow not as those who have no hope.

His funeral was largely attended June 26th. Our pastor, Elder John Clark, conducted the services, and used for a text 1 Cor. xv. 12–16, after which his remains were laid beside the wife of his youth.

ADDIE COOK.

RENSSELAERVILLE, N. Y.

Mr. Samuel Henry Garrett was born in Loudoun Co., Va., Dec. 20th, 1828, and died in Whitt Hall, Frederick Co., Va., Dec. 19th, 1901, from cancer of the stomach. He was a great sufferer, but bore his agony with great fortitude, never once complaining. He leaves a widow and seven children to mourn their loss. Mr. Garrett was a consistent member of the Primitive Baptist church, but the funeral was conducted by Rev. A. A. P. Neal, of the M. E. church, south, Dec. 21st, 1901, five sons and one son-in-law acting as pall bearers. He was a brave confederate soldier throughout the war, serving throughout the war as Orderly Sergeant, in Co. F, 18th Va. Calvary. He was twice married. Thus has one of the most devoted husbands and fathers, one of the most devoted and brave confederate soldiers, and one of the best citizens, gone to his home. Peace to his memory. His death is the first to occur in his immediate family in fifty years.

I will add that brother Garrett came to the Ebenezer church, Loudoun Co., Va., from the "Clark Baptists," with whom he was not in fellowship, several years ago, and was baptized by me, in the fellowship of his brethren of Ebenezer, where he found a home and kindred in spirit. He was a lovely brother, meek and lowly in heart, like his Master. His departure, though such a gain to him, is a great loss to the church, though his residence was such a long distance from the meeting place of the church, he seldom could meet with us, especially in the later years of his life.

Affectionately yours,

J. N. BADGER.

ALDIE, Va., July 15, 1902.

APPOINTMENTS.

ELDER S. H. Durand is expecting to visit the church at Otego, N. Y., and preach Saturday afternoon at 2 o'clock, August 16th, and again Sunday morning and afternoon, August 17th, 1902.

S. C. GUERNSEY.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Brookdale, Pa., will hold a two days meeting, if the Lord will, at Franklin Forks, Pa., on the 19th and 20th of August, 1902. We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us at that time. Those coming from the west will be met at Conklin, Monday, the 18th, at 6 o'clock p. m., also Tuesday a. m. at 8 o'clock. Those from the east will be met at Montrose Monday afternoon at 3 o'clock.

By order of the church,

WILLIAM M. HART, Church Clerk.

THE Abbington Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting to be held Thursday and Friday, August 21st and 22d, 1902. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. Those expecting to come will please write me at Justus, Pa. Those coming by D. & H. or O. & W. R. R., will be met at Olyphant. Those coming by D., L. & W. R. R., will get off at Clark's Summit. Arrangements will be made to meet all who can come. Our place of meeting is three miles from Olyphant and four miles from Clark's Summit.

GEO. GOODRICH.

HAZEL Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, will meet in her forty-eighth annual session with Providence church, three miles north of Plano, Appanoose Co., Iowa, on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1902, and continue the two following days. Those coming by rail will be met at Plano, on the K. & W. R. R. All lovers of gospel truth, especially ministers, are invited to attend.

S. B. JONES, Moderator.

J. M. CATE, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing on Friday, August 29th, 1902, and continuing three days. We shall gladly welcome all who desire to come. Those coming will be met at North Berwick railroad depot on Thursday before the time appointed for our yearly conference.

FRED. W. KEENE.

THERE will be (if the Lord will) a two days meeting at the Harford Church, Md., on the fifth Sunday, and Saturday before, in August, 1902. Elders Eubanks, Rowe and Mellott are expected to attend.

Those coming from Baltimore will take train leaving North Ave. at 3:20 p. m. Friday for Long Green and Forest Hill.

MILTON DANCE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, the Old School Baptist Church of Cammal, Pa., will hold their yearly two days meeting Saturday and Sunday in August, 30th

and 31st, 1902. We are expecting Elders John Slawson, of Delaware Co., New York, and Joshua Rowe of Baltimore, Md., and would be pleased to see others who love the truth, and desire the company of God's people, present at our meeting; all are welcome. Those coming from the south will come to Williamsport, Pa., and take train at Philadelphia & Reading depot, N. Y. Central R. R., to Cammal, Pa. Those coming from the north will take same railroad at Corning, N. Y., to Cammal, Pa. Brother Sammy Moffat, Mr. James Jamison and sister Charity Campbell live only a few rods from depot. Friends will be met and cared for.

LORENZO CAMPBELL, Church Clerk.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield church, at Whitefield, Maine, commencing Friday, Sept. 5th, 1902, and continue three days.

Those coming by rail will be met by friends at either Gardiner, Maine, on the Maine Central R. R., or by the way of Wiscasset, and connect with the Wiscasset and Quebec R. R., which will take them to the station at Whitefield, where they will be met by friends on Thursday, the day before the meeting. We shall be glad to welcome all who have a desire in their hearts to visit us.

Z. M. BEAL.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet in her seventy-first annual session, the Lord willing, with New Hope Church, in Greenbush, Warren Co., Ill., on Friday, Sept. 5th, 6th and 7th, 1902, at 10 o'clock a. m. Those coming by rail will be met at St. Augustine, on the Quincy branch of the C., B. & Q., on Thursday evening before. The a. m. train from the south will be met on Friday. Those coming from the northern direction will come to Galesburg by 5 p. m. on Thursday evening, and go south at 5:45 p. m. All lovers of the truth are invited, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the First Church of Roxbury, at Vega, (formerly Batavia) Delaware Co., N. Y., on the second Wednesday, and Thursday following, (10th and 11th) of September, 1902, beginning at 10 o'clock. We cordially extend an invitation to those who love and delight in the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, to meet with us, especially to our ministering brethren.

Trains will be met on Tuesday afternoon, at Roxbury, on Ulster & Delaware R. R., the day before the meeting.

WM. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Licking Association of Old School Baptists will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Elk Lick, Scott Co., Ky., commencing on Friday before the second Saturday in September, (12th, 13th and 14th) 1902, and continue three days. Owing to circumstances over which we have no control, the meeting will be held in the city of Georgetown, Ky. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of truth, more particularly our ministering brethren. All coming to our meeting from north or south will be met at Georgetown, and cared for at places arrranged for entertainment.

J. P. FIELD, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting at Rock Springs, the Lord willing, will commence on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1902, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue over Sunday. We hope a goodly number of our brethren may meet with us.

Those coming from Baltimore will take train to connect at Perryville with the 4 p. m. train, on the Port Deposit & Columbia Railroad, for Conowingo, Md. Those from Philadelphia and intermediate stations will meet same train for Conowingo, where they will be met and cared for.

D. M. THOMAS.

THE South Ouachita Association, of Arkansas and Louisiana, convenes September 26th, 27th and 28th, 1902, with New Ramah church, Claiborne Parish, La., six miles west of Haynesville, La., on L. & N. W. R. R. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

L. C. TRULL.

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D. B.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 70. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1902. NO. 17.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LUKE IV. 7.

"If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine."

Conditionalism is the foundation, and the framework, too, of all carnal religion. Like the house built upon the sand, when the floods and the winds and the rain come upon it, it falls. Equivalent reward is the promised result of compliance with the offered conditions. "If." So much depends upon the force and power of this little word. If you will follow the dictates of the carnal mind, the spirit which controls it will give you all within its jurisdiction. But inasmuch as that jurisdiction only embraces carnal things, therefore "He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption," as a necessary result. The temptations presented to Jesus in the wilderness were not an isolated experience of Jesus only. Whatever can be said of him under temptation, can be said also of every member of his body. Between Jesus and his redeemed, the power of resisting or withstanding temptation is not in the strength of the temptation, but in the abundance of grace given. It is declared that "Jesus being FULL of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness." Surely Jesus in his humanity was sorely tempted; for did he not come in a body of flesh, and was "in all points tempted as we are"? And also, "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." He was without sin in the sense that he was given grace without measure, therefore he was able to resist all sin and all temptation; while to his people the gift of grace is in measure. Consequently we fall by the wayside, and into all manner of pitfalls, that we may be succored in all points as we are tempted. Just here is a point upon which there has been much controversy. It is contended by some that the body of Jesus' flesh was not like our body; that our body is a body of sin, while his was a sinless body. If that were so, how could he be LIKE unto his brethren? If that were so, how could he have been "made under the law"? The law has jurisdiction only over those who are under its curse. Well, some will say, he took our sins (not his own) and bare them in his own body. Yes, that is true, but how? When he came under the law

in a body of flesh, was it not our flesh in which he came? Being born of Mary, was he not our very brother? and he had a body of flesh, and the flesh IS sin. None will deny that. But as I have before quoted, he was "FULL of the Holy Ghost," by which he was able to keep the law, and to live above sin. In that sense then he bore our sins in his own body. Yet he himself was without sin, because grace without measure was given him, by which he was able to resist all temptation. Therefore sin had no dominion over him, yet he was tempted in all points as are we. What is it that constitutes temptation? Must there not be an object greatly to be desired, also a subject whose greatest striving is to gain possession of the object? In the absence of either there could be no temptation. Had Adam been created holy, could unholy desires have possessed him? Had Jesus been above all temptation, how could he have been tempted? The record by Luke declares thus: "Being forty days tempted of the devil." In small measure we all know something of the terrible temptations with which he was tempted in his flesh. And what a cross was the denial, and how severe was the resistance, and the superabundance of grace necessary to overcome. Therefore could he say, out of his own perfect knowledge through suffering and sore trials, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me." Then follows this record, "And in those days he did eat nothing, and when they were ended he afterward hungered." The devil was too smart to offer him a stone, but he did say, "IF thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread." When one is hungry, it denotes a perishing body, a demand for bread, with a longing desire to obtain it. Had he been offered a stone, would that have been any temptation? No indeed. Had he been offered bread, would THAT have been any temptation? Yes indeed, his perishing body was crying out for it. This is the strong hope of our sonship, that we are succored in that our Deliverer was tempted as we are, and overcame our temptations in and through his suffering. Now the devil took Jesus up into a high mountain, and shewed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and offered him all the power and glory of them on these conditions: "IF thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine." This is the very essence of all the carnal religion extant in the world: do and live. IF you will do, so shall you have. There is no Jesus seen or felt in that kind of religion. Man is the power, and has full liberty to choose, to act, or to let it all alone, and so be lost. When the power and glory of all the worlds were offered to Jesus, think ye not it was a sore temptation? For was he not subjected to these things in our own flesh? For surely power and glory is the highest ambition to which man would attain; and the higher he reaches in the ladder of them, the less esteem he has for his fellow man. But how different with the followers of the lowly Lamb of God. Of Mary, the angel of the Lord said unto Joseph, "And she SHALL bring forth a son, and thou SHALT call his name Jesus, for he SHALL save his people from their sins." No conditions there, no IFS to stumble over, to fall and to die. The only IF in the vocabulary of the saints is, If indeed I be risen with Christ. And the doubt arises in our carnal mind, (which is a very nest of ifs) and not in any uncertainty of the power and of the work of the salvation of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. In an-

swer to the devil's fine offer, Jesus said, "Get thee behind me, Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Can the trembling, fearing little child of God say in his own strength, "Get thee behind me, Satan"? No indeed. But when but a moment before he (or she) is tormented with a legion of devils, and in sore straits, suffering untold agony, not knowing whither to turn, the voice of Jesus speaks, saying, "Get thee behind me, Satan." We look up, and now our enemies have fled at the voice of Jesus, and we behold Jesus only. The power of his resurrection stands between us and all our enemies. Surely this is how we realize the power of his resurrection. There are no conditions when Jesus deals with our arch enemy. He makes no offer with an IF, but he commands, and every earthly power obeys. Does the little child wince under the sovereign rule of their heavenly and divine Master when he says, "I wilt," and "thou shalt"? No, never. But with joy unspeakable they nestle in his sweet embrace, and his banner over them is love. May we all richly experience the fellowship which the sufferings of Christ have brought into our souls, and remember always that he came where we were, entered the death chamber of his bride, and saw her pollution, then in humility and suffering took up our thread of life, worked out its hidden and mysterious problem by his own death and resurrection, making darkness light before us, clothing us in his spotless robe of righteousness, and presenting us before the throne of the Father's glory, as a bride adorned for her husband.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., July 24, 1902.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., July 25, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER COULTER:—Your good letter came in good time, and I read it with much joy. However there was one thing in it which made me think a little strange, that was that you were so ready to scold me about what I said about your brother, "L. H. Hardy." Dear brother, if you will not think me speaking illiberally of my neighbor, I would like to tell you something about the fellow for whom you claim such fellowship, and whom you seem so ready to defend. I know that I cannot tell you about him so as to make you fully understand all of his tricks, for I have never become fully acquainted with him myself. We were born about the same time, nearly fifty years ago, but I did not know of him as being full of hateful things for seven years thereafter. At that time he began to trouble me, and I was made to weep because I found him to be troublesome in all his companionship. The more I saw his course was wrong and tried to so persuade him, the more he persisted in going that way. Thus I learned him to be a stubborn, self-willed rebel, and though he has been constantly with me until now, this very principle is yet his delight. I have often expected that my brethren would drive me away from them on his account, and have been surprised that they have borne with me, because I have to keep company with this fellow. When I was under deep conviction for sin, and was often praying to God to forgive me, this fellow began to propose his plans of deliverance just as if he was perfectly innocent of ever having caused me any grief. His first step was to show me his comrades, and tell me how they were enjoying themselves with their worldly sports, and he actually made me believe that my troubles were only a whim, and

that I could throw them by, and he persuaded me to try. I followed him to the dance, and to the card table, and sometimes yielded to his malicious nature and got mad and said things I was made very sorry for, and things I would have given the world not to have been guilty of. And do you believe it, this very impudent fellow after having led me into this trouble, would stand up before me and laugh at me and say, "Don't you see that there is nothing of a religious character about you? if there had have been you would not have done this thing, nor have said that ugly thing." Thus I was made ashamed, and he caused me much grief. After all this he had such a cunning way of putting his propositions to me that I would listen to the very next one and follow his dictations. When I was twenty years old the Lord by his mercy and strong grace overcame this fellow, and gave me a blessed hope in my Lord Jesus Christ. Then for nine days this fellow was so firmly overcome that he did not dare to raise up his head. The truth is, everything he had proposed to me I had found to be the way of death, and the very way he had tried to discourage me in pursuing, had prevailed. Does it not seem to you that he would have been satisfied now, and ready to keep his mouth shut, and to not make any more propositions? But no, sir, his eyes were only closed nine days, showing very much of the canine principle.

Dear brother, the very first thing he proposed to me was that all this glory and praise with which I had been so much filled, was a deception, and that there was no reality in it. To my sorrow I accepted just what he said, and the trouble I then entered into I shall not be able to tell you. I was now heart-broken and disappointed, so that I was filled with weeping. I had thought I was clear of this old man for whom you express such fellowship, and that I would not be troubled any more with his company, but now he had popped up his head again and gotten me to believe him. He began to try to comfort me by telling me I had not told any one of these things, and that I must not tell them lest I might be mistaken, and if I were to deceive any one it would be worse with me. I was thus under his influence for about three hours, and hours of darkness and great distress they were to me. Then I trust the Lord put him down again, and opened up the way of salvation so plainly that all doubts were gone, and I was ready to tell it from the mountain's top. I started to go tell it to my dear mother, but do you believe it? this very fellow stuck up his head again and told me to not say one word about that matter, for my mother, who was a poor, distressed widow, would be worse troubled if I told her this thing and deceived her. I believed him again, and kept it all to myself.

Twenty-nine years ago, on the fourth Sunday in this month, I was baptized, and for a little while this old man was quiet, but it appeared that he was only trying to take a little rest so as to renew his strength. What do you think he next proposed to me? He came up with the suggestion that religion was a farce, and that there was no reality in anything only what we got out of the world as we went along. This suggestion was rather too heavy for him to make me fully believe, but he did shake me terribly for awhile, and threw me under the thickest cloud of doubts I had ever experienced, then he was impudent enough to abuse me for listening to him.

The first time I ever went before the

public in prayer he made me believe that I must say something grand, and that my brethren would be able to see a gift in, and when I tried and failed to do this, notwithstanding I had a good conscience toward God, he made me believe that I had made a most miserable failure. For one year and a half I struggled hard with this old man until the Lord gave me the grace of liberty in speaking in his holy name. Just as soon as he was proven to be false in his former temptations, he came in at the other door and said, "That is the way to do it, just have confidence in yourself now and you will go through all right," and I began to fear that it was my terrible self-will and self-confidence which had enabled me to succeed in speaking that one time, and again I went down under the clouds. Since that time, for some cause the Lord has not taken my liberty from me, but has given me more or less at each effort, and I am often tempted to believe that it is my own strong, determined self-will that has carried me through, and not the grace of God. Thus I fear that it is all selfish—I am so terribly tempest-tossed.

I find this old man to be covetous in many things, and you know, dear brother, that that is idolatry. Some time ago I attended the funeral of a very poor person, and while standing at the grave he said to me, "What do you suppose these people will give you for all this trouble?" I was so hurt with him that I wanted to spit in his face and rub it over with nasty mud. I felt that it would be not half humiliating enough even to do that. I would not have anything from that poor family if they could have offered me anything, which they could not do. Thus you see how tormented I am with this fellow for whom you claim such sweet fellowship.

O, my dear brother, if he were with you in all your uprisings and downsittings, in your outgoings and incomings, at your table, in your prayers, all your thoughts and every devotion, making all your efforts to do good to stink in your own nostrils, you could not have the confidence in him which you have expressed. I have been trying to find him out in all his ways for these forty-three years, but he is so much like a snake that he is beyond my conception. The more of his ways I know, the worse I hate them, and often when I try to find them out, it is to keep out of them, but the only way I ever find them out, is when I get my feet in his snares. Then he taunts me for being so careless.

My dear brother, I have honestly told you something of this old man with whom I have to contend. Now how think you that I can be good or ever escape any snare, with this trial to contend with? Can I be sanctified? can I be holy? can I do any good thing in such evil company? Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

I hope what I have said will not cause you to lose fellowship for me, but I do not see why it should not, for all I have told you is truth, and yet the half has not been told you. However if you do throw me away, I shall not think hard of you, nor strange of your act, for I have often wondered why all the brethren have not done so. However, I love them, and would be like them if I could.

With love to you and sister Coulter, with the brethren and sisters in Philadelphia, I am your brother in hope and affliction,

L. H. HARDY.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., May 20, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If obedience is God's work, or the work of God in us, then why did Paul exhort the brethren to obey? Why, rather, did he not exhort the Lord to make them obey?

My answer is, Because it was not Paul who exhorted the brethren, but the grace of God which was with him. It is the work of God to exhort the brethren, and his work is always effectual, and so those, both individually and collectively, unto whom the word of exhortation is sent, are exercised by such exhortation, so that the word of God does not at any time return unto him void, but accomplishes that whereunto he sends it. For this reason Paul said, "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance."—1 Thess. i. 5. In this place, the third, sixth and following verses, testify of the effectual work wrought through Paul's preaching. We also would do well to read the second chapter. This exhortation to the church was not at Paul's own option, because the love of God in the heart of Paul constrained him, and even when Satan hindered Paul and Sylvanus, they sent Timothy. Let us stop and read the thirteenth verse of the second chapter, and we shall see that it sustains this view beyond any doubt.

Obedience being the work of God wrought in us, Paul would glory only through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God. "For," or because, says Paul, "I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed."—Rom. xv. 18. It being thus a scriptural truth that obedience is the work of God in us, and he being in one mind and without variableness or shadow of turning, is not obedience every whit established in his own mind, and is it not evidenced as being the fruit of the vine, and will it not in due season manifestly appear? There is with God a time and purpose to everything under heaven; thus the way of man is not in himself, and this is because God has established his goings; especially is this declared of the steps of a good man, for it is said, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." And indeed it is written of a good man, "Though he fall, he shall rise again," and after being lifted up he only continues in the steps ordained of God, and this fall did not destroy, disannul or prevent the good man continuing walking in the steps in which God has ordained that he should walk. The Lord has lifted him up when he has fallen, that he should continue in the steps appointed for him. This good man is "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that he should walk in them."

Whence then is our disobedience? All disobedience is sin, and sin is the transgression of the law. When our earthly father, Adam, transgressed, we were all by him made sinners. We were not merely made subject to sinful influences, but were in reality by this one man sinners. Thus we by nature are all disobedience itself, for sin is disobedience. Now when born again, born according to the decree of God, we also according to his decree, grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth. In thus growing we grow out of sin, or out of disobedience, and are said to grow up into a holy temple in the Lord. This growth in knowledge spiritually is our experience in grace; this growth necessarily continues while we tabernacle in our sinful flesh; this growth in knowledge of our

sins teaches us how exceedingly sinful we are; not how sinful we have become, but how sinful we are. Our number of years in life do not make us more sinful, but time and daily growth in spiritual knowledge teaches us how sinful we were and are by nature. In grace we grow out of sin. Our sins are numbered, and they are no more nor less than when we were born of Adam's race. The sins of God's people, all of them, have gone before to judgment, and are canceled from the book of remembrance, to be remembered no more forever, and the people of God receive here in this time world, the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father. God's people, as they grow in grace and knowledge of the truth, see clearly what sinful beings they are, and therefore they "groan within themselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their bodies." The gospel, as it comes to them in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, does certainly strengthen them. So also the words of exhortation wrought within them by the holy Spirit in power, does assure them that it is the work of God, and his labor of love. Being thus assured, they continue in well doing, knowing that he which hath begun a good work in them shall finish it unto the day of Jesus Christ. Thus being drawn by the manifest power of God, they draw nigh in full assurance of faith, having their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and their bodies washed with pure water. Thus being blessed by faith which is exercised within them by the power of the gospel, they walk in good works, and are blessed in the deed, or blessed in keeping the commandments. Yes indeed, even the good man (man in his best estate) is sometimes imprisoned or bound with strong fetters in a dark, loathsome dungeon, as were the apostles literally. During that space of time they cannot go forth, but still the word of the Lord is not bound, and the enemy of truth in relating what was as he supposed the cause of their imprisonment, told what the apostles preached, and wicked and cruel men preached the very doctrine which they hated, through envy, in declaring what the apostle had preached. Even so now some ministers who have met with some calamity, are criticised in an evil manner by their opponents, and these opponents thus often advertise, as it were, the true minister, so that we sometimes learn of their whereabouts, and find our own dear kindred in Christ. Thus the wrath of man praises God.

Now in conclusion, dear editors, let me consider the difference between being blessed *in* the deed, and blessed *for* the deed. Some one, whom we will call John, is to be blessed for his deed; he is burdened with business cares, has a family to provide for, his crops or other business must necessarily be attended to, his children cannot apparently go to the meeting, and neither is it safe to leave them at home, yet with this heavy burden he goes on to his meeting, not blessed in his going, because he is to be blessed for his going; he must go all the way feeling heavily burdened, only to receive the blessing after he reaches the church, and even after the whole service. Assembling together, singing hymns and spiritual songs, praying, ministering to the support of the minister, all these duties must be done before he can say, I have obeyed. For this reason he cannot be blessed until after all his service is done, because he is to be blessed or rewarded for his deed.

But how is it when one is blessed in the deed? To him indeed the tempter

presents the same excuses to neglect his duty, but this poor, trembling one, whose heart is all aflame with love to God and the brethren, prays, saying, Lord, I am weak and ignorant, and am even doubtful about myself, as to whether I am a child or not, but O, God, the Savior of sinners, if indeed I am one of thine, whose duty it is to assemble with the saints to serve thee, be thou unto me sanctification; make me to know that thou hast indeed set me apart to thine own service; be unto me power, for I have no strength of mine own; be unto me wisdom, for I am ignorant, and do not even know what to pray for as I ought; grant thine unerring Spirit to guide me, to lead me, and to intercede for me "with groanings which cannot be uttered." Such an one is already blessed; he has been drawn by the Father's loving kindness unto Jesus, who has been made unto him wisdom, sanctification and all things. It is in Jesus only that we can come to know the Lord, and it is only in him that we are chosen from the foundation of the world unto salvation, and are therefore set apart by his Spirit to the joys of salvation.

Thus it was with a very dear sister in Christ; she was growing in the knowledge or experience of a Savior's love; her meeting day approached; she felt that she could not go to the meeting; she was among the blind, halt or maimed, in some way; she had heard the word on some previous occasion, when it seemed only the word without the power, but now those same words came with power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; for this reason, that is, the power of the gospel, she felt that all was well, and she took the yoke upon her, and learned of him, and found rest unto her soul. Jesus revealed this rest unto her, and because of this she with joy unspeakable made all needful preparation in her domestic affairs, and in the blessing of a Savior's love was blessed from the moment that the will was wrought in her to go, and in going she was blessed. Blessed with the joy of salvation, blessed while there, and comforted in doing the Father's will; she was strengthened in hope, which abided as an anchor to her soul, sure and steadfast, and entered into rest.

I remain your brother,

D. L. McNEES.

LAMAR, Colorado, July 7, 1902.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I take the privilege of writing to you what I hope have been the Lord's dealings with me, or at least to tell you some of my feelings, and travels of mind. You will know if there be any evidence that would entitle me to a hope, in it. In the first place, I cannot tell just when this exercise of mind began, it came on so gradually. For two or three years I felt that something was wrong with me, but did not know what it was. This exercise gradually grew worse, until I could see that I was a very great sinner; I read the SIGNS with great interest, and tearfully, and I hope, prayerfully, and found that the saints in general had about such travel of mind as I had. This comforted me much, and led me at times to wonder whether or not this was an experience of grace in the inner man, but it seemed impossible that God had sent his Son to save such a wicked one as I, and when I would read in the word where the apostle Paul said that "Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief," it would give me much comfort. Again, I would read where Christ said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance," and also,

"They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick," I, feeling like Paul, to be the chief of sinners, and to be not whole, but in need of a physician, would be comforted.

There are very few Old School Baptists in our part of the country. At that time I lived in Northeast Missouri, and the popular religionists gave me no comfort or consolation, in preaching or in their conversation. Their whole theme was that we should repent and believe, and God would bless, but I would read in the word that Jesus was exalted a Prince and a Savior to give repentance to Israel, and the remission of sins, and that we are saved by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves, but that it is the gift of God. It is not by what we have done, or of merit, but a gift, and a free gift at that. For the word further said, It is "not of works, lest any man should boast." I was made to rejoice to find that all this was fulfilled in Christ, and that all our sufficiency is of him. The carnal man cannot produce these fruits which are meet for repentance, these things are but the evidence of a hope in Christ. I was glad indeed of this knowledge, for I could not see any such fruits in me. I think the two portions of Scripture which gave me the most comfort and consolation were these, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled," and, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I felt, at least at times, that I did hunger and thirst after righteousness, and if so, I have the blessed assurance that I shall be filled. If not so, what will become of a poor, sinful creature like me? and I certainly do feel that I love the brethren everywhere. I love you, Elder Chick, and many others whom I have not seen face to face; I feel to love you in spirit, for the comfort which you have ministered to me through the SIGNS, and for the brave stand you have taken for the truth; I believe that your sufficiency is of the Lord. But the question with me is, Have I any of this sufficiency? If so, it is of the Lord, who is the Almighty, for there is none in myself.

My chief trouble now is that I am not sorry enough for my sins, I believe that I am getting worse, and it seems to me that if I were sorry with a godly sorrow that worketh repentance, my burden would become lighter instead of heavier. I am burdened because I cannot do the things that I would.

I have had a desire to write many times in the past, but something would impress me that the desire was of the flesh, and that you would not bother with it, and that I could not deceive the Lord's chosen in that way, and this has been a hindrance to me from time to time, but today I felt that I could put it off no longer, and so in much weakness, and against a stubborn and rebellious will, I make the attempt, and if I have not been guided by the Spirit to write you things pertaining to an experience of grace, I am but as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.

I am now in southeastern Colorado. There is a Baptist church about eight miles from this town, and I have met with several of the members, and heard two of what I thought were gospel sermons, or at least they suited me and my case as none others have. I have learned to love some of them very much, as they seem to be bearing about the sufferings of the Lord Jesus.

I fear that you can see nothing in this that is an evidence that I am a child of grace. I cannot tell you of any marvelous immediate conversion, all that I have

experienced has been so gradual; I have never had any light that exceeds the brightness of the natural sun, as many others have had, and so I fear that all with me is but vain imagination. If I know myself, my heart's desire is to know the will of the Master, and to be made willing to act in accordance with his will. I pray often, (but whether it be of the flesh or not, I cannot tell,) "O Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Sometimes it seems to me the answer comes like this, Go and join thyself to my people, and walk in humble obedience to my commands, put on Christ by baptism, and rise to walk in newness of life. It appears to me that for those who really and truly love the Lord, this is a blessed privilege, but can I say this is for me?

Now, if you can see any evidence of a hope in Christ in all this, please let me know. I believe like Paul, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." If there is no ground of hope in this, please tell me, that I may not deceive myself and the people of God.

Cast a mantle of charity over this imperfect letter, it is the best that I can do, it can be no better than the unworthy creature who penned it. Finally, I will say farewell; continue to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

I am at least your friend, and I sometimes hope, your brother in the hope of Christ,

J. H. HARDY.

[THE feelings and exercises of mind expressed in the above letter cannot be found in the natural man, the true evidences of a work of grace in the heart are not the wonderful exercises of which some can speak, but the little things, as we are disposed to think they are, at least in our own case; love to the brethren, to the truth, and to the name of the blessed Redeemer, a longing to be in the assemblies of the saints, are every day evidences, and these and others like them, abide with the believer, and these things our brother speaks of feeling.—ED.]

BERLIN, Texas, Jan. 23, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I now send the money due upon my subscription, and I feel as though I would like to write something to the dear brethren and sisters, of my many trials in this world of sorrow and affliction, if you will bear with me in my weakness. I have a name among a people who believe that afflictions are needful, and I wish not to complain. It is written, "I will leave in the midst of thee a poor and afflicted people," but am I one of that number? If I were, it seems as though I would realize more strength to bear my troubles. I used to think that I would get better as I grew older, and should then live more as I think a christian ought to live. But alas, it seems that I am still the most sinful creature on earth, but if I am a great sinner, I hope that I have a great Savior, and that by the grace of God I am what I am.

It was by his great mercy and grace that he called me out of Babylon, when I was at peace with myself, and with all my good works, and made known to me what a wretched condition I was in: what a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. How I was made to hate the things that I once loved, and how far short I came from doing the things which would restore myself. I wept and prayed for a revelation from on high, as to what was required of me to do, and when I had given up all hope, and thought to die alone and friendless, in God's own

good time I found that precious people whom I had heard always spoken against, the dear Old School Baptists. I had been told often before that I believed as they did, but I had never met one of them. In this waste howling wilderness I was led about and instructed, and finally I offered myself to this dear people, and they took me in and cared for me, and manifested a love for me. Why, they have washed my feet, in obedience to the word of the Lord and Master, as he said we ought to do.

Was not all this wonderful? What good news they told me about this same Jesus whom I felt so fearful of offending. I would not eat on certain days, and was afraid to look over my garden even. They told me that this Jesus had finished all these hard things, which I was so vainly trying to do. O, what good news, that I could go free! Who would not love and try to serve such a Savior? Who would be found complaining against his almighty power in saving sinners, of whom I felt to be the chief? and how hateful that I should ever sin against such a good and holy God, yet I know that if I am not a sinner, I cannot claim Jesus as my Savior, for it was sinners lost and ruined that he came to seek and to save; beside, these dear people could have no more fellowship for me. Where they live, I want to live, where they die, I want to die; and with them I want to be buried; their people, shall be my people; and their God, my God.

Dear ones, my path in life has led me over steep and rough places, but I have been guided by some unseen power, even when my way could have seemed no harder had it been through fiery flame. Of this I wish to speak, and please bear with me for a while. I had a child whom God saw fit to afflict for eight long years; she, from the first, seemed the fairest one among twelve children, but it pleased God to lay affliction upon her in such a way that it would seem that I could not live when the fits would come upon her. I wept, and tried to pray that this affliction might depart from her. My only answer was in a dream. It was of a man who had once lived here, but who had taken a journey. He said, that I was to get a doctor, and if she was not cured he had left the wherewith to pay the debt. And as she grew into womanhood how hopefully and yet vainly, we sought to cure her. Before her affliction many things took place which now I can see was pointing to God's unerring decree concerning her. I will name here a few of those things. When a mere babe she once left her play and little sisters, and stood before me and said, "Mamma, God made us, did not he?" I said yes, "But mamma, he made me the badest one didn't he?" And at another time she came as before and said, "Mamma, when God gave us all to papa, why did not papa ask for a better one then me?" I could not see into the future, but surely it was a revelation to her mind, when she was less than four years old. When her affliction began to appear at eight years of age, which often caused her much suffering, she asked why she must suffer thus, and on being told it was for some purpose unknown to us, and that she could not suffer more then her Maker had done when he suffered the just, for the unjust, she was never heard to question in this way again. At one time she told me that she knew that her affliction had caused her to be of a great deal of trouble to us all, but, she added, "I will tell you what it is that I am now, I am one of those dust or puff balls that grow out of the ground with something growing over it to shelter it," holding out her thin hand to show us. On her death bed she allud-

ed to it again and started to say more, but did not finish what she wanted to say, much to our regret. Over a year before she died she called us, telling each one she was going soon to leave us. She said, "I saw my Savior standing in a door, and he waved his hand for me to come to him," and then she began weeping, and said, "O mamma, praise Jesus for me, can't you?"

For the first time I could see that I had never praised him for the evil as well as the good, for I know that this, though evil in our sight, was good in his sight, and to-day I feel to praise his dear name, for all the affliction both to her (which I hope is now forever ended) and to me also. It has brought sweet promises to me, such as this, The everlasting arms are underneath, and my grace is sufficient for you, and many others which I shall ever remember. When she came to die, I begged for a brighter evidence that she was one of the redeemed; then came to me these words, "Except ye shall see signs and wonder, ye will not believe." And afterward, "Women received their dead raised to life again." I did not then know that these last words were in the Bible. By all this I learned things which I never could have understood in any other way, so wonderfully was the power of God displayed in the ending of this seemingly useless life, in this world of sin and sorrow.

I have written but a few of what seemed to be mysterious things to us, and to relieve my mind is why I have written at all. Now dear editors, if this is not interesting, withhold it, or any part of it, and correct all mistakes if published. O, remember me at a throne of grace.

Your little sister in bonds of affliction,

ELIZABETH C. FOGERSON.

[TRULY our dear sister has seen much affliction. How true the words of inspiration, "By terrible things in righteousness will he answer us, O God of our salvation." We pray for more knowledge of God, for more love, and trust, and patience, and the answer comes in such a way as we had not thought; the way of suffering, and weakness, and trial. It is through much tribulation that we enter the kingdom. Thus God has answered our sister, and revealed to her his faithfulness, truth and power.—ED.]

ASHLAND, Ill., June 25, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—You know that I wrote you to stop my paper, as I was too poor to pay for it, but afterwards I said I must lay by a little money, and to-day I wish to write you about a Scripture that has been running through my mind.

First. "Take therefore no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself." What does this mean? Does it not mean that the Lord provides a way for us here as we travel through this lonely world? Many times I have seen the hand of his kind providence manifested toward me, a poor, sinful, unworthy worm of the dust, and to-night, bless his holy name, he has given me to feel assured that he will provide a way for me while it is his pleasure for me to live here. It comes sweetly to my mind, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow." Yes, dear brother, they grow by God's power, and we are taken care of in the same way. But O! so often we are of such little faith, worrying about the morrow so much. But let the morrow care for the things of itself.

Now I am going to send you post-office money order for two dollars, to pay for the dear old SIGNS another year. I can-

not go to the meeting often, and the editorials, and letters from dear brethren and sisters are so comforting to me, who am like Paul, wretched because I cannot live as I want to live. I want to be more like Jesus, who when he was reviled, reviled not again. The SIGNS always, as I believe, gives the certain sound. While there is good reading in many Baptist papers, yet some things I see does not seem right to me. One opposed the preaching of predestination in one of them. To take away predestination, and urge conditional time salvation, seems to me to be drifting away from the old paths. Dear brethren, take away predestination from Old Baptist preaching, and it seems to me it would sound something like a sermon that I heard in this village last Sunday, by a man whom I believe they call a christian. He said, "You cannot do any good works to save yourselves, Jesus has done that, but you must submit, must be willing, in order to become an inheritor." When predestination is left out, it leads to just such things as this. Perhaps this man never heard predestination preached. And let us not speak of conditions to be performed in order to salvation. Conditions of our performance will never bring a blessing. Paul said, "Not I, but the grace of God which is with me." Why not then drop the word conditional? Is it not sufficient to just say, "Time salvation by the grace of God," and not because we are performing some condition, something to offer to God to obtain his blessing? Not because he is his friend, but because of his importunity will he arise and give to him. But does any other poor soul feel his utter helplessness as I do? My poor heart is so poor at times. I pray for grace, I pray for light, but it only comes in his own good time. I would walk humbly as possible before God. I feel to be such an unprofitable servant, I have not one good act to offer to the Lord in exchange for his blessings. No, I cannot even expect a blessing, for I have only in my poor sinful way done that which was my duty to do, still there is a peace of mind in the doing of our duty. With me it is grace that gives me the will to do my duty, and when grace is withheld I begin to murmur and pity poor self. I am not patient in my trials, as I ought to be; I feel that surely if I am a child of God I would walk more as becometh one of his; at times I see nothing but my vile, sinful nature. In this condition of mind I try to pray for light, but still grope in darkness; I would fain perform some condition, in order to be saved from this awful darkness, but like the poor blind man, I have to wait till Jesus passes by, to give me light. At times, the sweet words come to me, "Your righteousness is of me, saith the Lord," and then I run and am not weary, and walk and do not faint, because his grace bears me up as on eagles' wings. Grace! precious word! it is God's power to save in time and in eternity.

Brethren, why not drop the word conditional? To all God's people who write or speak, I would say, It has such an Arminian sound. Just say all the time with Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am." So far as performing any righteous act in the sight of God, all that Paul could say without grace was, "O wretched man that I am!" The things he wanted to do he did not, and the things he did not want to do, he did. In such a state of mind could he say I have performed some condition to deliver me out of that awful state of wretchedness? No, he said, "I cannot do the things that I would." How often we feel as did

Paul.

For one, when I am in this wretched state of mind, I must stand still and see the salvation of God. Yet in a sense we are told to save ourselves. Paul warned his brethren with tears, to save themselves from this untoward generation, who were worshiping idols; he exhorted them to shun every appearance of evil. Is not the church of God to-day exhorted not to run in the way of Balaam? Yes, save yourselves from this generation of conditionalists; let us shun every appearance of evil by not conforming to their ways, means and conditions. But we cannot save ourselves from the dark seasons, when God in wisdom and justice sees fit to withhold the light from us: this is all for our good, as the night season helps make the lilies grow.

Dear brother Beebe, I have written in such a poor, ignorant way, but I have written some things which have been on my mind so long, if it be not the truth, throw it away; I intended to write but little. May the Lord stand by you in your labors in publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and in all your trials, for the truth's sake.

Your unworthy sister in affliction and trial,

S. B. THOMPSON.

KANSAS, Ill., June 13, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I send herewith a letter from sister Petty, for your consideration, and publication if you think proper. She is a dear old widowed sister, and stands firm in the principles as always has been held by the Baptists. She has no use for the new "isms" that have recently been introduced by some of the preachers in this section of country, called "free moral agency" or "conditional time salvation."

JAMES M. TRUE.

WESTFIELD, Ill., June 8, 1902.

ELDER JAMES M. TRUE AND SISTER C. M. TRUE—VERY DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—After a long delay I am spared through the kind mercy of a long forbearing and ever merciful Father to try one more time to pen a few words to remind you that I am mindful of you, and have thought of you so much of late, and wondered how you were, and so this very pleasant evening I thought it would be pleasant to speak to you even on paper, and do hope you are enjoying good health, both bodily and spiritually. I am in common health in body, but spiritually am lifeless, and my way seems so dark and gloomy that I am made to cry as did Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?" &c. My dear father wrote to me a long time ago, whenever I felt as I do so much of my time of late, to read the fortieth chapter of Isaiah, and sometimes it seems comforting for me, but at other times it does not seem there is anything in it for me. If I knew that I was one of his flock then I should be fed, but it is a great mystery if one so vile as I can claim any of the precious promises recorded in all the dear old book, to the children of the dear Redeemer, and sometimes I have a little encouragement when I read from the pen of the dear ones who are scattered throughout the land, for this evening when I read the letter of that dear old blind brother, W. R. Humphrey, in the dear SIGNS of June 1st, I could not help but weep, as his words were comforting and soul-cheering. And although blind as to the things of this world, he seems to have a grand view of heavenly things. I cannot tell how thankful we ought to be that we have the blessed privilege of being able to read God's word, and so many good letters

that are written for the SIGNS, yet I do not get to read much here of late, for it seems I have been burdened with work all spring, so that I could not get time in the day, and am so tired when night comes, and my eyes have been so weak, that I could not read long after dark, but I always try to read the SIGNS when I get them, and I do not see how any one could believe any other doctrine than the doctrine that is published in the SIGNS, and do not know how I could ever give them up, and I do hope the good Lord will always bless you, dear saints, for sending them to me, and I know, if I know my sinful heart, that I thank you for the precious gift.

I will close this imperfect letter, and hope to hear from you soon, and may the good Lord bless you, is the earnest wish of your friend and sister, I sometimes hope,

MARY J. PETTY.

2164 FIFTH AVE., NEW YORK, May 6, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Inclosed you will find a letter from our brother, Walter Bartlett, which you may publish in the SIGNS, if in your judgment it will prove profitable to your readers. I like his view of faith and knowledge, for it has been and still is a subject of much contemplation by me. I think that I am glad that the walk, or the life which we now live as the subjects of unspeakable grace and mercy, is by the faith of the Son of God, and yet, just as a wicked and adulterous generation seek after a sign, so I want also to see. Sometimes I am encouraged to feel that I am kin to Paul in his experience, which is expressed in the words, "With the mind, I serve the law of God, but with the flesh, the law of sin," and many times I seem to myself to know nothing about it; I am in deep water that knows neither bottom, brim or shore; I do not feel my heart glow with love for the company of God's people and the things of the Spirit, which at other times seem to be all that is worth living for. Yet I trust that I am not dead at such times, because I suffer, and long to break away from this awful bondage.

I hope that we shall see you before long in New York.

WATIE A. BEARD.

ATLANTA, Georgia, April 14, 1902.

MRS. WATIE A. BEARD—MY DEAR SISTER IN HOPE:—I have just read your letter of love, published in the SIGNS, and I must say to you that I enjoyed it so much; you wrote my feelings so completely that I assume the privilege of writing to you; I do believe that the Lord directed you in it, as you mentioned in the beginning of your letter, in speaking of your impressions, but alas we do not know, and cannot tell, when we are led by the Spirit of God, at all times; we walk by faith and not by sight. The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith. Paul said in Romans, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith." So every righteous act is of faith, rather than of knowledge, for we are so worldly, and so prone to do wrong, even when trying to do what we think to be right, that we may not act according to the faith of God's elect, but rather according to our own fleshly feelings, in the matter. Now comes the sweetness and marrow, the wine and the honey to us: after we have done what we felt it to be our duty to do, and others have borne witness in experience with us, we do

have some right to say that it is of faith. Then is our strength renewed, although our weakness is manifested, and we are able to stand erect on both feet, and exclaim that we can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us. I am a member of the East Atlanta church; we have meeting every Sunday, and on the third Saturday.

I hope that what I have written may prove to be of encouragement to you. What I most desire in this life is to encourage the brethren and sisters in hope, and to admonish them to all longsuffering and doctrine, and to all the duty laid upon us in the word. This is all that we can do.

May God bless you and yours, with your church, and Zion everywhere. I will add that if there is any comfort and joy and any consolation to you in what I have written, let God be praised. May all glory and honor be his to whom all honor is due.

I remain your brother in hope of eternal life,

WALTER BARTLETT.

MEEKER, Colorado, Feb. 29, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed you will find a money order to pay my subscription for the SIGNS another year, as my wife and I want them while we live, for it is about all the preaching we have. We have now been residents of this State over twenty-eight years, and have been visited but once by a minister that we thought preached the truth, and that was this last summer, when Elder J. L. Scott, and some of the brethren of Illinois came here to see us, and we had the gospel preached in its purity, with no work salvation mingled with it, which does suit us, as we believe the doctrine advocated in the SIGNS.

We have been back to Illinois three times together, and I twice besides, by myself, since we came to this State. There was one time from 1881 to 1896, that neither of us were where we could hear any Old Baptists, and when I did hear some, I was surprised, for I thought that I had either forgotten what was the truth, or else there had been a vast change in the Old School Baptists; especially so when I heard one of the Elders say that predestination had been nearly all knocked out of him. But when I found some out of whom predestination had not been knocked, and they still proclaimed the truth which has always been contended for among our people, and by the SIGNS, it was food for me, but whenever they preach this "do and live system," it is of no benefit to me, because there is so much that is bad in me, that I know that I can have no part in the matter, unless salvation is all of free grace, and not of the good works of man.

Some of the brethren out there said, "I would not go off where I could not hear gospel preaching." But they do not know what they are saying, for we know not where the Lord may lead our steps. When I first talked of coming west, I said that I would not be like some of the brethren of whom I had read in letters, who said that they lived where they could not get to meeting and hear preaching that they liked, but that I would go somewhere so that I could be with the Baptists. But look at the result. Who that is an Old School Baptist will not say that it is not man that directs our steps. I, for one, feel satisfied that it is all right or else it would not have been so ordered. If I had been with the brethren, I might have been a thorn to the church, but as it is we live alone, and have no commu-

nication with the so-called religious sects about us, but still retain our membership with the Mt. Zion Church, of Fulton Co., Ill.

Now I will say to you, brother Beebe, that we live in one of the best game countries of the United States, and that if you know of any Old School Baptists who want to take a pleasure trip to see the mountains, or who are going to California, if they will come this way, we will try to entertain them. We live forty miles from Rio Grande R. R., at Riffle, on the Grand river, but there is a daily stage to Meeker, and we can show them some as grand scenery as there is in the west, both here, and coming on the railroad here, and the pure air of the mountains may brace them up, and do them good. Nearly all those who were here last summer, felt the better for the trip. We took most of them back into the hills, where they could see the snow that lies there all the year.

I hope to have some of the brethren from Illinois here again this year, and also hope that the way may be made clear for us to visit with the home church once more.

You will be tired of reading this, but I thought I would tell you there are some scattered ones, who still believe that salvation is of the Lord.

Your brother in hope,

L. B. BLOOMFIELD.

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153 East Tenth St., Riverside, California.

Dear Brother Beebe:—I am admonished by time that it is my duty, as well as privilege, to remit my subscription for our dear family periodical.

I should be pleased to write a few words of encouragement if it seemed that any words of mine could be of any help, but I have come to realize that words are but empty sounds, and can only help our feeling for a moment, and that business is not given any strength, except in purpose, by them, and therefore it is far more becoming in subscribers to look to dates, and see if they are in arrears, and if so, show great zeal, as well as your appreciation of the blessed medium of correspondence and religious intercourse, by paying up. I know many are ready to say, "I would pay up if I had the money." Please, my brother, is there not some needless habit, the gratification of which you might forego? Perhaps you will say, "I hardly think that there is." But think again, are you not pursuing some habit to the extent of neglecting your subscription to the Signs, which is the exponent of the doctrine which you so dearly love, or trust that you do? Do you not spend money foolishly for anything? Are you sure there is nothing? I know that these things are sometimes hard to resist, but James says in substance, "Show your faith by your works." Therefore, if you believe the doctrine advocated in the Signs, show it by paying promptly, and if you have the money a little ahead of time, just send it along, and as much also as you can collect of careless brethren, such as you may have been.

When I read the appeals of brother Beebe, it makes me feel like writing roughly sometimes, not that I would offend, but that I would defend the right. Come brethren, wake up, then! What is due will go a long ways towards furnishing material and running the business.

Brother Beebe, if this is or will be of any use or service to the cause, just give it a place where all can read it.

I am as ever yours in the hope of eternal life through the resurrection of Jesus our Lord,

A. H. HAGANS.

[We are grateful to our brother for his

kindly interest in the SIGNS, and for his words of good cheer. When one subscriber owes two or three dollars, it is not so much, but when a thousand owe that much each, and do not pay, we are at a loss of two or three thousand dollars. And that loss to us is just as hard to bear, as it would be to any one of our subscribers. We do not suppose that we have a subscriber who cannot spare two dollars, better than we can afford to lose two thousand dollars.—ED.]

DECATUR, Texas, Dec. 11, 1901.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR AND BELOVED BRETHREN:—Knowing that my paid up subscription expires with the next number of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I feel a burning desire within me not to miss a single number. We have been visited with an awful drouth this year, and I have been thinking that I should have to give up the SIGNS, which has been of such great comfort to me. O, if I could only speak a comforting word to the dear and beloved editors and writers of the SIGNS, to encourage them, and let them know that their words of comfort are not in vain. I do feel that the Lord of hosts has filled them with words of comfort to the poor in Zion.

Dear brethren, I feel sure that the SIGNS is contending for the same truth that Christ and the apostles taught, and for which they were persecuted and put to death. When I compare the SIGNS with the Scriptures, I see the same doctrine. They are against compromising with error for the sake of peace. The more we try to wrap up the truth, for fear of men, the greater will be the mourning in Zion, for nothing but the truth will comfort one of the children of God. I hope that you will bear with me for sending this scribble.

Inclosed find money order for two dollars for the SIGNS another year.

Your unworthy brother,

M. B. F. JONES.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

TO THE FRIENDS OF THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

To assist those who may have a desire to aid in the increase of the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, we have published on the last page of cover of this paper, a proposal to issue one thousand postal cards, in lots of ten cards for five dollars, each card good for six months subscription to the SIGNS, but as these terms are actually below cost of supplying the paper for the six months, we cannot afford to issue more than one thousand of these cards, nor can we receive more than one card for the subscription of the same person. That is, we cannot receive two cards for a year's subscription.

The convenience of this system can easily be seen: All who may feel to assist in the circulation of the SIGNS, can more conveniently and profitably do so by procuring ten or more of these cards, and then on receiving a subscription for six months, all they have to do is to write the name and address of the subscriber on the card, and drop it in the mail, and on receipt of it we will credit the party whose name and address appears on the card, for six months subscription. These cards will be received in payment for anything on sale at this office, at the rate of fifty cents for each card.

For full particulars read notice on last page of cover of this paper.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1902.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

2 CORINTHIANS VI. 1.

A BROTHER has written us with regard to the words found in 2 Corinthians vi. 1, and asks, "How can it be said that a believer receives the grace of God in vain?" The whole verse reads as follows: "We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain."

It is in our mind to call brief attention to some thoughts connected with these words, which have seemed plain and important to us for a long time past.

First. Negatively the words do not belong to unregenerate men, but are addressed to believers in Christ who have already received grace, the grace of life and salvation and hope in Christ. That this is true will appear when we consider to whom this epistle is addressed. "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia." These words are the opening words of this epistle, and fix beyond denial the characters to whom the whole epistle is addressed. Every word in it, whether of doctrine, teaching, warning exhortation or promise belongs, and belongs only, to the saints of God. It is true that in this epistle, as well as in many other portions of the word, mention is made of others beside the elect of God, such as deceivers who bring in damnable heresies, and evil practices, false professors who know not God really, but have been seeking their own advantage alone, making merchandise of the people of God and of the gospel, but no one is directly addressed save those who have been called by grace. Unregenerate men are not recipients of grace, and so Paul could not beseech them to "receive not the grace of God in vain."

Second. We do not understand from the context that Paul means by the word grace, that grace by which they have been redeemed from sin by the atonement of the Lord Jesus, and justified through his resurrection from the dead, or that grace which gave the holy Spirit to quicken them into divine life, and by which they had been made partakers of the divine nature, nor that grace by which they from time to time rejoiced in the fellowship of God, and Christ, and of his people. Truly all this grace had been conferred upon them, and it had not been ineffectual in its object, and could not be received in vain by any one. The atonement did redeem all for whom Christ died, the holy Spirit did quicken into divine life all to whom it was sent, and true fellowship for God and Christ and his people sprang up in their hearts, and abided there, through the effectual work of the Spirit. The whole epistle shows that Paul recognized this as having been effectually wrought through Christ and the holy Spirit for them and in them. There was no room for any exhortation here that this grace be not received in vain; it could not be thus received, but is and will always be effectual wherever it is sent. But Paul here is speaking of

the grace of the ministry which God had bestowed upon his church in the persons and gifts of the apostles, and in all who were called to labor among the churches in word and doctrine. Turning back to the preceding chapter, we read verse seventeen: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." The old things are the law covenant, the forms, rituals, days and times, which were ordained under the law, until Christ should come, and which were types of the substance which Christ is to his people. The old things also embraced the carnal joys so dear to the natural heart. Whether a Gallio is called, or a Saul of Tarsus, it matters not which, it is still true that old things have passed away with that one, and all things have become new. All who believe are redeemed from sin and death and hell, and from legality on the one hand, and carnality on the other. They are redeemed from self-righteous observances of the law, and from outbreaking sin also. All such, whether Jew or Gentile by nature, are new creatures in Christ Jesus, and so to them all things have become new. This does not signify any change in the mind and purpose and grace of God toward them, for there can be no change in him, but rather that with themselves there has been a wonderful change wrought, so that they are now servants of God, and no longer servants of sin; they are no longer "strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God."

In verse eighteen, Paul says that this is all of God, who hath reconciled us to himself, by Jesus Christ. Notice, God is not said either here nor anywhere else in the Scriptures, to be reconciled to us, but we are reconciled to him by Jesus Christ, or as said elsewhere, by the death of his Son. Then Paul adds that the ministry of this reconciliation is conferred upon himself and the other apostles. That is, it was conferred upon them, to proclaim this work accomplished through Christ for them. If any poor soul is seeking peace and reconciliation with God by morality, or by rituals, or by any deeds of the law, it was the special business of Paul to proclaim the folly of all this, and that reconciliation was already effected through the work of Christ.

One of the first lessons which the work of grace teaches in the heart is that we are unreconciled to God; enmity exists where love ought to be found, and when this is realized, in that soul springs up trouble and strong cryings for a better state of things, and it is the case with all such ones that they will, not knowing any better way, put forth their best efforts to bring themselves into peace and harmony with God. Now to all such comes, though Paul, the message that peace and reconciliation have already been secured through the finished work of Christ; he has made peace by the blood of the cross. We are reconciled to God by the death of his Son, and so shall much more be saved by his life.

Thus Paul introduces the work of the ministry as a gracious gift from God. The blessed news of reconciliation is also a grace conferred, and when Paul, verse twenty in the preceding chapter, says, "We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God," the meaning must be that he would urge upon them that their own works could not avail them in this salvation, and that they should no longer strive for peace in that way, but submit to the one way of salvation pointed out in the word, the way of salvation through sovereign mercy alone. It seems to us that

Paul here meant the same thing as when John the Baptist preached saying, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." That is, turn from your forms, and ceremonies, and religious rites, by which you expect to be justified, for in the kingdom which is near at hand, these things have no place. In other words, Paul said to the brethren at Corinth, that Jesus Christ was all in all in their salvation, and bids them remember that there was salvation in no other. "He was the only name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved." And the substance of Paul's teaching to them was that Jesus Christ had been exalted a Prince and a Savior, to give to them this repentance, and the forgiveness of sins. But men are opposed to this way of salvation because it abases self. Even the people of God are ready too often to receive another gospel, which is not another indeed, but a perversion of the true, as witness Paul's rebukes to the departing Galatian churches. To these churches, as well as to the church at Corinth, Paul addresses warnings and reproofs, and beseeches them that they do not depart from the grace which has been bestowed upon them. If they again went back to the weak and beggarly elements of the law they would be falling from grace; that is, from grace to their own merits, for salvation, and would be unreconciled to God, as in the subject which we are considering. To turn from grace to works is to be unreconciled to God in the sense of the text.

Now we understand it to be this teaching of the apostles, and of all who are called to the ministry of this reconciliation, that is called grace, in the text named at the beginning of this editorial. It is this teaching which the apostle beseeches them not to receive in vain. This seems to be borne out by the third verse: "Giving no offense in anything, that the ministry be not blamed." The second verse, it will be noticed, is included in a parenthesis, and so ought to be ommitted in reading, so as to bring the first and third verses together. Thus they would read, That ye receive not the grace of God in vain, that the ministry be not blamed. Paul thus evidently speaks of the ministry of the word, the preaching of the gospel to them, and he urges upon them that they pay heed to it, and let it have its due effect upon them; he would exhort them that they be good hearers, and not as stony ground, or wayside, or thorny ground hearers. Paul was anxious regarding his ministry, lest he should have run or labored in vain; he was full of warning, and rebuke, and reproof, wherever it was needed; he cared for the state of the churches, and sought their true welfare; he desired that they might walk according to his teachings, and be followers of him as he followed Christ. Here also he betrays his anxiety for them lest his preaching should be forgotten by them, and they should receive it in vain. Once to the Galatian churches he said, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." Christ indeed was already formed in them; that is, they had come to hope in his grace and redemption, but still their knowledge was small, and they needed to be taught, even as Apollos once had needed teaching at the hands of Aquilla and Priscilla. Paul labored to instruct them, and as will be the case with any true gospel minister, he longed much to see fruit of his labors; he wanted them to stand clear of error, and firm in the truth. That he had preached the truth to them, being called of God to that work, was indeed a very great grace

from God.

What would it be to receive this grace in vain? It would be to hear the teaching of Paul and others, and not to heed it. If he taught them that Christ was all in all, and that forms and legal ceremonies were all done away in him, to any longer observe these ceremonies would be to receive this teaching in vain, or to no purpose. If he said to them to put away the fornicator from among them, and they did not do so, this teaching would have been in vain. If he warned them against those who said that the resurrection was past already, and yet they tolerated such teaching, this would be to receive the words of Paul in vain. If he taught that all who believed in God should be careful to maintain good works, and they proved themselves careless in good works, his teaching would be in vain. How often was his heart sad and oppressed at seeing the apparently small results of his preaching, even among those who had received him as the apostle of the Lamb, and who believed his teaching. What gospel minister who has been faithful, and who with all earnestness has preached a full gospel, is there that has not longed with great longing to see the results of his ministry, and those results so much desired by such a minister, will be that he sees the church standing firm in the truth, clearly understanding salvation which is of the Lord, and not carried about with every wind of doctrine, but maintaining a sober, God-fearing walk, and adhering constantly and unwaveringly to the ordinances of the house of God. What faithful pastor does not grieve when his warnings, reproofs and exhortations seem to be of no avail, and when the members of the church seem not to regard their duty in the house of God, and are found putting the world before Christ, and the good of the world before the things of the kingdom? This is to receive the grace of God in vain.

Paul says, "We beseech you," in this matter. It seemed as though he could not find words strong enough to express the overwhelming and overflowing desire of his heart toward them, that they might so walk as should be for their true good, and for the glory of God. I beseech you, he says, as though he would appeal to their love to him, and ask this of them as a personal favor to himself. Do not, he says, allow my ministry among you to be blamed. It surely will be if you give no heed to what I have preached among you. If any church is found departing in anything from the right way of the Lord, one of the first things said will be, "They cannot have had a good faithful ministry." Often this will be so, but yet there have been times and instances when the ministers have been faithful, and yet their churches have turned against them, and their teachings, and have gone after idols, and into false ways. Yet even then those who know not all the circumstances, will blame the ministry, and say, Surely there must have been something wrong about it.

In conclusion, we repeat that it is not our understanding that any man can receive the grace which atones for sin, which quickens the dead into life, which produces fellowship with the Father, and the Son, and with the people of God, in vain. These things when given to a soul, abide, but how often is the grace of true gospel preaching, of faithful exhortation, of warnings and reproofs, forgotten and passed by, or at best but little heeded. Paul found it so in the churches where he labored, and we must not be surprised if it often be so still. But the churches

ought now, as then, to be exhorted to give heed to these things; this will be to receive the grace of the ministry to profit, and not in vain. C.

WHAT CONSTITUTES CHRISTIAN OBEDIENCE?

MUCH has been written and said of late in regard to christian obedience, or keeping the commandments, and with many it would seem that they lose sight of what truly constitutes obedience under the gospel. With some a mere outward or mechanical performance of the commandments seems to be sufficient, such as being baptized; not forsaking the assemblies of the saints; reading the Scriptures; having stated hours for prayers; living upright in the sight of all men, &c. While these are all good and acceptable deeds, yet they may all be performed by a graceless hypocrite, and instead of their keeping the gospel law in performing these acts, they would be committing blasphemy in the sight of God. Then we must look beyond the acts of men to find true obedience.

We know brethren who live most consistent, and in their outward life are blameless, and who are most devout in the meetings of the saints, and to all appearance to their brethren they are living a life as unspotted from the world as it is possible for any one to live, yet when these brethren come to speak, they tell us of the sore trials they have on account of the depravity of their wicked heart. Indeed the very brethren that live the most exemplary lives are the ones that complain the most of the hidden evils of their heart, and the trials and temptations their carnal mind subjects them to continually. As we write a circumstance is presented to our mind which occurred at one of our covenant meeetings in this city: the brethren were speaking in regard to their spiritual exercises of mind, when one dear old brother, who has always lived a most exemplary life, in telling of the trials and temptations he had passed through, among other things said, "Last night as I lay upon my bed, and could not sleep, it was suggested to my mind to try and think a good thought, and I did try for half an hour or more, but I had to give it up, I could not of my own will *even think a good thought.*"

This dear old saint was over eighty years old and had lived a life blameless in the sight of his brethren, yet after this long pilgrimage he had to acknowledge with Paul that we are not "sufficient of ourselves to think anything, as of ourselves."

If then we are not able of ourselves to think our own thoughts, how are we able in and of ourselves to obey the gospel commandments?

We have read many arguments, "pro and con," on this subject of keeping the commandments in hope of a reward, and have tried to read them as free from prejudice as possible, and after as careful an investigation of the subject as we have been enabled to give it, we are satisfied in our own mind that much of the trouble and confusion among the brethren is brought about by the forgetfulness of many good brethren of what really constitutes obedience in the sight of God. Men can only see our outward acts, but God is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, therefore true obedience must be a heart service, and not merely outward performance of certain duties; no one can ever excel the pharisees in an outward religion, yet they were an abomination in the sight of God.

Our blessed Savior said, "If ye love

me, keep my commandments." Then the first requisite is to love the Lord, before we are able to keep his commandments, for if we do not love him we cannot keep his commandments. Therefore it is written, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." And again, when the Savior was tempted by the pharisee with the question, "Master, which is the greatest commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."—Matt. xxii. 36-40.

Then if all the commandments are embraced in these two, and "love is the fulfilling of the law," we must say with Paul, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."—1 Cor. xiii. 1-3.

Then who is sufficient for these things? Is there a subject of grace who has been made to know the depravity of his heart that will dare to say that he is able of his own volition to love the Lord with all his soul and with all his mind, and his neighbor as himself? If then he is not able to do this, how can he say that in himself he is able at all times to keep the commandments? But when God in his love and mercy is pleased to shed his love abroad in our hearts, then we can keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous, but joyous. Thus the gospel law becomes a law of liberty, and the saints delight to walk in all its ordinances.

But it is not the will of God that his children shall alway dwell in the realization of his presence, but he is pleased at times to withdraw his presence from them, and leave them to themselves, that they may learn their own weakness, and that their sufficiency is of him, and when thus he hides his face from them, how soon they find themselves in the pit of miry clay, where there is no standing, and when they are in that dark valley of the shadow of death, how would they be comforted if one should preach to them that if they would love the Lord more, and their neighbor as themselves, the Lord would deliver them from their troubles? Poor soul, the very bitterness of their condition is because they cannot love the Lord as they desire to, and have learned how impossible it is to exercise that love that a short time ago exercised them. Then if pure and undefiled love for God and his ordinances is a prerequisite in keeping his commandments, and they have learned by sad experience how impossible it is for them of their own volition to exercise that love, how can they believe that they are at all times able to obey the commandments?

May God give us grace to trust him in all our trials, as well as when we are given the assurances of triumphant faith, and to say with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." B.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE SUPPORT OF THE MINISTRY.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Please give us your views more fully on the duty of the church in regard to the support of her ministry, as there is some misunderstanding with some of the brethren in regard to your editorial remarks on 1 Cor. ix. 14, in the 17th number of the current volume. Some understand you to put it on the principle of the old priesthood. "The tenth, the shoulder," &c. The reason I ask, is, because we look to you for instruction. We have had a great deal of trouble here with hirelings who care more for the fleece than for the flock. They have caused division among us.

Your unworthy brother,

WILLIAM P. COTTON.

SILVER SPRINGS, Miss., Oct., 1859.

REPLY.

In reviewing the article in the 17th number of this volume, we scarcely see how to express our views more intelligibly on the subject of the *ordination* of God, and the neglect of the churches.

It is true, that in showing that the word *ordain* in this connection, signifies to us that he had *enacted* in the law of Zion, that they who preach the gospel shall live of the gospel, as he had in the Levitical law ordained that the Levites who ministered about holy things, should live of the things of the temple. Any brother who doubts the correctness of our position, has only to read what the inspired apostle has written on the subject, in the context, 1 Cor. ix. 8–14, "Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also? For it is written in the law of Moses, thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sake? For our sake, no doubt, this is written: that he that plougheth should plough in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sworn unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ. Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things, live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so," &c.

Is it not clearly perceptible that Paul's allusion to the ordination in the law of Moses, for the living of those who ministered at the altar, was written for our sake; for the instruction of the saints of the gospel dispensation? What was written aforetime was written for our instruction. Although whatsoever things the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, and the saints are not now under the law, or that law, but under grace; they are under law to Christ; yet the righteousness of the law, or the spirit of the law, is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. The ceremonial law was figurative; embracing the shadow of good things to come. The law was not ordained in regard to muzzling oxen, for the sake of oxen, *but altogether for our sake,* for the sakes of us who live not under the law of Moses, but under law to Christ.

The priests under the law, inasmuch as they were called by divine authority from their secular concerns, to minister about holy (or legally consecrated) things, at the Jewish altars, presented a shadow of the order of Christ's kingdom, in relation to those who are now called to minister about spiritual things. It is true the priests under the law were not gospel ministers, nor are gospel ministers priests, only as all the saints are made priests unto God, but the priests under the law, especially in regard to the ordination in the law for their support, were the figures

to signify to us the ordination of God in the law of the new covenant, that gospel ministers shall live of the gospel which they preach, even as the priests under the law lived of the things of the altar. This is so clearly demonstrated by Paul, in the Scripture under consideration, that we dare not dispute it. How else can we construe his language? He says plainly that those who ministered about holy things, lived of the things of the temple, and they which waited at the altar, were partakers with the altar. "Even so," in the same manner, after the same similitudes, *even*, or *exactly* so, hath the Lord *ordained*, or *commanded* in the law of the kingdom, or Christ under the new dispensation, that they which preach the gospel, shall live of the gospel.

This is then as clearly the law of Christ, as the former was the law which was dispensed by Moses, and we can no more annul it, or disregard it, without involving disobedience to our King, than we can any other precept that he has enjoined upon us.

In regard to the detail of that law, requiring of Israel the tenth part of their increase, or a specified portion of some of the victims which were offered, we only learn that the law of Christ is ordained in perfect equity. Now the detail of the law of Christ on this subject requires every man, as the Lord has prospered him, as a faithful steward, should voluntarily contribute, not only to the support of those who preach to them the gospel, but to every other object enjoined by the law of Christ, such as relieving the wants of the poor, &c.

The law of Moses was written on tables of stone, or on parchment as the law of a carnal commandment; but the law of Christ is written by the finger of God on the fleshly tables of the heart of all his children, as an exact transcript of what is found in the New Testament. Therefore, instead of legal enactments, defining the *tenth*, or *shoulder*, &c., the christian finds the law in his heart, and is constrained by it to conform to the requisitions of Christ, of a willing mind. And if through disobedience he fail to comply with the obligation, he brings leanness and barrenness upon his own soul. Can it be possible that the spirit of christianity can dwell in our hearts and there predominate if we find it in our hearts to withhold from the faithful servant of the Lord, and of the church, that which Christ by his apostle has commanded us to give? Or if we see a brother in need, and say unto him, Be ye warm, Be clothed, &c., and withhold those things from him, how dwelleth the love of God in that man? The law of Christ is a law of love; it is the law of liberty, for it imposes nothing that is not perfectly agreeable and pleasant to those who are under the controlling power of the love of God.

Our brother says, the churches in Mississippi have been troubled with *hirelings*. So the churches in other places have been, and were in the apostles' days, but that did not release the saints from their obligation to sustain the ministers of Christ, nor make the law of Christ of none effect.

All the laws of the kingdom of the Redeemer are perverted and abused by wicked men, but that does not annul them; they are not the less imperative upon the loyal subjects of King Jesus. It is proper that the saints should protest against every perversion of the laws and ordinance of Christ, but in doing so see that we observe them in truth and righteousness. Ministers of Christ are as strictly forbidden to engage in the work for filthy lucre's sake, as the saints are to withhold from them that aid in their calling which the

laws of Christ require. As nothing but a carnal greediness for filthy lucre would lead any ministers to desire to gratify himself by imposing unreasonable burdens on the church, so only the same reprehensible spirit of covetousness would lead the saints to desire to withhold more than is meet; which tends to poverty.

It may be said, if our construction of the apostles' doctrine on this subject be correct, the church has to a great extent, in many places, lived in neglect or disobedience of the law of Christ, and the ministers have in very many instances failed to insist upon obedience to the divine rule. This was so in the apostles' days, and to some extent has been so in all subsequent ages. Paul says, in the same connection in which he insists on the law of Christ on this subject, "But I have used none of these things; neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me." And we doubt not that in most instances where the faithful ministers of Christ have waived their right to support, that it has been upon the same principle; that they would rather suffer or even die, than to *hinder the gospel.* How *hinder* the gospel? Not hinder its power, or prevent it from being the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, but should Paul, or others of the ministers of Christ, wait for arrangements to be made for their support, and only preach when and where they find brethren ready and willing to reciprocate the service, the proclamation of the gospel would be retarded. Here is a noble example for the ministers of the cross, for if it were justifiable in Paul to forego his privilege rather than hinder the promulgation of the gospel, it is equally so for the ordinary ministers, so far as is in their power. It is to be presumed that a very large proportion of the ministerial labors performed at this day are upon this very principle: they love the cause of God and truth, they love the sheep and lambs of the fold of Christ; and prefer, if the brethren do not understand nor do their duty, to labor with their hands, make tents, or perform any other honest calling, than to refrain from preaching the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ. They feel that a necessity is laid upon them, and a woe, if they preach not the gospel of Christ. If through the neglect or disobedience of the saints, they should be neglected, God will still provide for them; their trust and confidence is in him who has said, "Lo, I am with you always."

There is a wide difference between the gospel provisions in the law of Christ for sustaining the ministry, and that of the law for the support of the old priesthood, for under the former law, those contributing were compelled, whether willing or unwilling, to comply with the positive demands of the precept, while by the gospel rule, every one is left to judge and act according to his own sense of what is right, as a steward in charge of those things which God in providence has committed to his trust.

Equally great is the difference between the gospel and the hireling system of antichrist. The latter is based upon the wisdom of men, without divine authority. They make merchandise of the gospel; first, by investing a certain amount of capital in qualifying themselves for the work, and then offer their services to the highest bidder. They have not freely received, therefore they cannot freely give. God has not called them, therefore they cannot trust him to provide for their support. They have their bargains arranged in dollars and dimes, as a debt and credit system, so much labor for so much money,

and that money in some cases secured by the indorsement of some wealthy person or persons. While the minister of Jesus has no bargain to make, no stipulated sum to require, no bondsmen to indorse either for the Lord or for the church, if entirely neglected by his brethren, still his trust is in the Lord, and as long as he is supplied with ability, he will never shun to declare the counsel of God, to preach the word, or to feed the sheep and lambs of the flock, to the utmost of his ability.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., December 1, 1859.

ON SALE AT THIS OFFICE.

FOR the convenience of our subscribers, Eld. D. Bartley has sent us a few copies of his book entitled "Priesthood of the Son of God," which we will mail direct from this office, on receipt of price. For full particulars see advertisement on page 548, of this paper.

ALL GONE.

ALL of the cloth bound small hymn books are gone, and all we have left of the other styles of binding, of the small books, are 31 blue plain; 10 blue gilt edged; 15 Imitation Morocco; 7 first quality Turkey Morocco. For full description of these books, prices, &c., see next to last of the white pages of this number. We cannot now say when we will have any more of these books, if ever, as we have not yet decided whether or not we will print any more of them.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$593 55
Sarah B. Sanford, New York	1 00
Total to date	$594 55

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. E. Mayfield, July 30th, 1902, at his residence near Elgin, Union Co., Oregon, his daughter, Edith B. and O. C. Maxwell, of Halsey, Linn Co., Oregon.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

BY request of our dear sister, Mrs. Mildred Thomson, I send for publication in the SIGNS, a notice of the death of her husband, **William D. Thomson,** who passed away July 16th, at his home in Winchester, Ky. He was born Nov. 10th, 1825; was married Oct. 18th, 1866, to Miss Mildred Duerson, who survives him, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Mt. Carmel Particular Baptist church in July, 1872, by Elder Thomas P. Dudley. Sister Thomson writes: "He had been afflicted with organic heart trouble for a good many years, but a partial paralysis was the cause of his death. He was entirely confined to his bed for ten weeks, and was a terrible sufferer, but a very patient one. He made all preparations for death as calmly as if he had been going on a pleasant visit. He said he thought it would be a glorious change to put off this old mortal body."

Our dear sister has suffered a sad and sorrowful bereavement in the departure of her beloved and devoted and faithful husband; the little church, and the other churches of the Licking Association, have lost a very dear and highly valued brother, and the community a most highly esteemed citizen, neighbor and friend. I met him first in September, 1865, and became somewhat especially acquainted with him during my visit to Kentucky in the following year, 1866, and have enjoyed an intimate and confidential acquaintance, friendship and fellowship with him and with his wife since September, 1867. I would love to write suitably of his character and standing as a noble man, and as a true christian. He was one of the best men I ever knew; but he did not feel that way about himself; he was very humble. In doctrine he showed incorruptness. He was steadfast in the truth, remaining firm when many wavered. His life was according to his profession, and no one could have any evil thing to say of him. Prosperity in business did not affect him in any unfavorable way. He did not seem to attach undue value to temporal things, but felt that his worldly goods he held as a steward, to be bestowed according to the direction of his Master. He felt much care resting upon him for the welfare of his brethren, and how many were helped by him we shall not know. What I do know enables me to say that he was a very liberal man to the needy in the church, and in the community, to the ministering brethren, and also in bearing a full share of the temporal burdens resting upon the churches. He would not like to have such things mentioned concerning him as praising him; he was very sensitive in this respect, but was frank when speaking in confidence. For several winters he and his wife were in Florida, where my wife and children and I enjoyed their society during part of two winters. For several years his voice was almost gone, so he could only whisper. A few years ago he left his farm

and moved into Winchester. Both on the farm and in town his house was a home for the brethren, which, however, can be said of the houses of Old School Baptists generally in Kentucky, and throughout the States. During the past thirty-six years how many pleasant meetings of brethren I have enjoyed at his hospitable and pleasant home. My last appointment there was in April last. He was then hardly able to go out on the street, but met his guests at the gate, and seemed to enjoy the meeting, and visit very much. He was a spiritually minded man, but at that meeting, and at the time of my next preceding appointment at his house in September last, his mind appeared especially engaged upon spiritual things.

His funeral was attended by Elder P. W. Sawin, who preached on the occasion.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Aug. 6, 1902.

SISTER **Hennie E. Ryall** departed this life April 29th, 1902, aged 36 years, 7 months and 22 days. The deceased was born August 12th, 1865; she was the daughter of Minus B. and Hetta A. West, and was married to Robert E. Ryall, Feb. 3d, 1885. She leaves her husband, five children, four boys and one girl, with the church and many relatives and friends, to mourn their loss. We can in truth say that the church at Nassaongo has lost a loving, worthy member, for every one that knew her loved her. She was esteemed by the members very highly. I visited her frequently, and she seemed always ready to talk of the goodness and mercy of our God. She was a great sufferer, but bore her suffering with patience. She was confined to her room but a few days, and seemed to wait for the summons with patience. A short time before she breathed her last, she said, "It is a good way to live so you can forgive, so your heavenly Father can forgive you." She passed away with a bright smile on her face. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist church at Nassaongo, by our much esteemed pastor, Elder T. M. Poulson, April 21st, 1894. We can in truth say, It is the Lord's doings, may God reconcile us all to his will. I have thought many times in the year past, that I, too, will soon be discharged, and have tried to ask the good Lord that my last days might be my best days. May God bless all that mourn, for we feel that the loss of our sister is her eternal gain.

D. J. STATON.

SALISBURY, Md., July 16, 1902.

Mrs. Marvin Kelley, whose maiden name was Every, died at her home in Columbia, Mich., on Thursday, May 8th, after many weary months of languishing with that dread disease, consumption, aged 56 years, 8 months and 22 days. She was a native of this township, where she was born Sept. 16th, 1845. Jan. 1st, 1866, she was married to Marvin Kelley. To them were born two children, a daughter and a son, the son dying in infancy. The dear heart-broken husband, and the dear daughter, now Mrs. Floyd Lester, alone survive her. This dear one was kind and very pleasant in her every day life, always having a good word and a smile, when met. Her life was truly a pleasant one, making friends everywhere she went, and by her immediate friends she is so greatly missed, but the dear husband and beloved daughter feels the sorrowful blow more than all. She was so very pleasant, and looked so very lovely all through, and in death so very restful. She never made a profession of religion, but I can say truly she was a lover of the truth. Many times under the preached gospel has the tear coursed down her cheek, and a few days before she was called away I asked her how her mind was? She said, "It is the same, only I have many doubts about myself." At another time she said to those standing by her bedside, speaking very loud for her, that her sins, which were many, were all forgiven; at another time she said to her daughter, after she had passed through a bad spell, "O, if I had died then, I was so happy; I fear I shall not be at that time as I was then."

Our pastor, W. L. Line, was called. His text of her own choice was Psalm xxiii. 2.

M. P. LEWIS.

DIED—Dec. 21st, 1887, **David Nordan,** at his home in Choctaw Co., Ala., aged 80 years, 1 month and 2 days. He never joined any church, but he believed in the Old School Baptist doctrine. I was about eighteen years old when he died, and I have heard him say that he never did believe anything else, from a child. He said the reason he did not join the church was because he felt too unworthy. He came from Henry Co., Ala., to this County, I think about 1853, and built him a house and lived at that place until he died. Everybody thought well of him as a neighbor and citizen. He was postmaster and Justice of the Peace a good many years. When any of the neighbors wanted any advice they would go to him for it. But there were not very many that liked his belief; it seemed that was all they had against him. It has been about fourteen years since he died, but I would like to see his obituary in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, because he was a subscriber, and liked to read the paper so well. The last paper he got was about two days before he died, and he wanted to get his glasses and get to the window and read the paper, but he was too weak. He did love his Bible and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and he liked to talk about the predestination of all things.

His grandson,

A. J. DOGGETT.

DRAG, Ala., July 27, 1902.

BY request, it becomes my sad duty to write a few lines in memory of **Mr. John Moulds.** He was born in Cambridgeshire, England, Sept. 8th, 1831; came to America June 1st, 1853. He was married to Mrs. Ann Ingrey, July 9th, 1876; died May 16th, 1902, aged 70 years, 8 months and 8 days. He leaves a wife, six brothers and one sister, to mourn the loss of a devoted husband and brother. Mr. Moulds was not a member of any church, but was a regular attendant of Mount Pleasant church of Predestinarian Baptists, at York, Neb., and we always had good reasons to believe that he was a strong believer in the doctrine of free and unmerited grace, as being the means of redeeming poor, sinful man from punishment in the world to come, and placing him with the redeemed family or church of the Lord and Savior, in heaven. So his relatives and friends have good reasons to not mourn as those who have no hope in that which reaches beyond this world of sin and trouble. Mr. Moulds was an honest, unassuming man, who had the respect of all his neighbors and acquaintances, and will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

The unworthy writer was called to preach his funeral sermon, and used as a text Job xiv. 15, 16, after which his body was consigned in the cemetery near York., Neb., to await the resurrection morn.

C. M. COOPER.

MEETINGS.

HAZEL Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, will meet in her forty-eighth annual session with Providence church, three miles north of Plano, Appanoose Co., Iowa, on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1902, and continue the two following days. Those coming by rail will be met at Plano, on the K. & W. R. R. All lovers of gospel truth, especially ministers, are invited to attend.

S. B. JONES, Moderator.

J. M. CATE, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing on Friday, August 29th, 1902, and continuing three days. We shall gladly welcome all who desire to come. Those coming will be met at North Berwick railroad depot on Thursday before the time appointed for our yearly conference.

FRED. W. KEENE.

THERE will be (if the Lord will) a two days meeting at the Harford Church, Md., on the fifth Sunday, and Saturday before, in August, 1902. Elders Eubanks, Rowe and Mellott are expected to attend.

Those coming from Baltimore will take train leaving North Ave. at 3:20 p. m. Friday for Long Green and Forest Hill.

MILTON DANCE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, the Old School Baptist Church of Cammal, Pa., will hold their yearly two days meeting Saturday and Sunday in August, 30th and 31st, 1902. We are expecting Elders John Slawson, of Delaware Co., New York, and Joshua Rowe, of Baltimore, Md., and would be pleased to see others who love the truth, and desire the company of God's people, present at our meeting; all are welcome. Those coming from the south will come to Williamsport, Pa., and take train at Philadelphia & Reading depot, N. Y. Central R. R., to Cammal, Pa. Those coming from the north will take same railroad at Corning, N. Y., to Cammal, Pa. Brother Sammy Moffat, Mr. James Jamison and sister Charity Campbell live only a few rods from depot. Friends will be met and cared for.

LORENZO CAMPBELL, Church Clerk.

THE sixty-second annual session of the Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Baptists will be held with the Sulphur Fork church, near Campbellsburg, Henry Co., Ky., commencing on Wednesday, Sept. 3d, and continuing three days. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

E. F. RANSDELL, Clerk.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield church, at Whitefield, Maine, commencing Friday, Sept. 5th, 1902, and continue three days.

Those coming by rail will be met by friends at either Gardiner, Maine, on the Maine Central R. R., or by the way of Wiscasset, and connect with the Wiscasset and Quebec R. R., which will take them to the station at Whitefield, where they will be met by friends on Thursday, the day before the meeting. We shall be glad to welcome all who have a desire in their hearts to visit us.

Z. M. BEAL.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet in her seventy-first annual session, the Lord willing, with New Hope Church, in Greenbush, Warren Co., Ill., on Friday, Sept. 5th, 6th and 7th, 1902, at 10 o'clock a. m. Those coming by rail will be met at St. Augustine, on the Quincy branch of the C., B. & Q., on Thursday evening before. The a. m. train from the south will be met on Friday. Those coming from the northern direction will come to Galesburg by 5 p. m. on Thursday evening, and go south at 5:45 p. m. All lovers of the truth are invited, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the First Church of Roxbury, at Vega, (formerly Batavia) Delaware Co., N. Y., on the second Wednesday, and Thursday following, (10th and 11th) of September, 1902, beginning at 10 o'clock. We cordially extend an invitation to those who love

and delight in the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, to meet with us, especially to our ministering brethren.

Trains will be met on Tuesday afternoon, at Roxbury, on Ulster & Delaware R. R., the day before the meeting.

WM. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Licking Association of Old School Baptists will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Elk Lick, Scott Co., Ky., commencing on Friday before the second Saturday in September, (12th, 13th and 14th) 1902, and continue three days. Owing to circumstances over which we have no control, the meeting will be held in the city of Georgetown, Ky. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of truth, more particularly our ministering brethren. All coming to our meeting from north or south will be met at Georgetown, and cared for at places arrranged for entertainment.

J. P. FIELD, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting at Rock Springs, the Lord willing, will commence on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1902, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue over Sunday. We hope a goodly number of our brethren may meet with us.

Those coming from Baltimore will take train to connect at Perryville with the 4 p. m. train, on the Port Deposit & Columbia Railroad, for Conowingo, Md. Those from Philadelphia and intermediate stations will meet same train for Conowingo, where they will be met and cared for.

D. M. THOMAS.

A YEARLY meeting of the Albany & Troy Old School Baptist church is appointed to be held Sept. 24th and 25th, 1902, at the residence of Wm. W. Vandenburgh, near West Sand Lake, Rensselaer Co., N. Y. All wishing to hear the true gospel are invited to meet with us. Visitors will be met at Bath, opposite Albany, N. Y., on arrival of Albany and Troy Belt Line steam cars, leaving Albany, N. Y., at 4:30 p. m., Sept. 23d, 1902. Also on arrival of train leaving Albany 7:30 a. m., Sept. 24th, 1902.

EZER LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

THE South Ouachita Association, of Arkansas and Louisiana, convenes September 26th, 27th and 28th, 1902, with New Ramah church, Claiborne Parish, La., six miles west of Haynesville, La., on L. & N. W. R. R. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

L. C. TRULL.

THE Old School Baptist church of Columbia, has appointed her yearly meeting the first Sunday in October, and Saturday before. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. Our pastor, W. L. Line, and Elder Geo. A. Bretz, are to attend.

M. P. LEWIS.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 70. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1902. NO. 18.

POETRY.

LEBANON, Ohio, August 14, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed I send you a little rhyming sketch, I shall not call it poetry. I submit it entirely to your judgment. If you would not be ashamed to see it over my name, you may publish it, but if you see nothing in it but *rhyme*, please for my sake, as well as for the paper's sake, withhold it.

May God continue to bless you and prosper you in your good work of giving us the SIGNS.

Yours as ever, H. M. CURRY.

SUFFER little children to come unto me,
For my sake they are washed and forgiven;
In the mouths of sucklings my praises shall be,
For of such is the kingdom of heaven.

Suffer the aged to come unto me,
Who long on life's ocean have striven,
For I am the goal that their eyes long to see,
I am the kingdom of heaven.

Suffer the mourner to come unto me,
Whose heart with deep anguish is riven,
Whose soul from its sorrows has no place to flee,
For of such is the kingdom of heaven.

Suffer the hungry and thirsty to come unto me,
Who are starving on earth's musty leaven,
Who no good in themselves, no righteousness see,
For of such is the kingdom of heaven.

Suffer the poor in spirit to come unto me,
Who are naked, and homeless, and driven;
Poor pilgrims and strangers in this world to be,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Suffer the weary to come unto me,
For sweet rest unto them shall be given;
For easy and light my burden shall be,
There's no toil in the kingdom of heaven.

From the ends of the earth they shall come unto me,
Even all that the Father hath given;
My glory and beauty and righteousness see,
And sit down in the kingdom of heaven.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WESTERVILLE, Ohio, R. F. D., August 8, 1902.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—MY DEAR AND BELOVED BRETHREN IN CHRIST, FOR THE TRUTH'S SAKE:—During my pleasant visit at your associations, in a conversation I had with our dear brother, L. H. Hardy, of Reidsville, N. C., I mentioned to him something about the way my mind has been exercised with reference to the fulfillment of the last portion of the Scriptures, and that the time was not far distant when the faith of God's dear children would be tried, and only that faith that Jesus is the author and finisher of, would stand the test, and I found in our conversation that his mind was exercised on the same line of thought. I requested him to write to me on that important subject, and I assure you that I feel very grateful to him for complying with my request, and I herewith send you the letter that he wrote me, and submit the same to your judgment, and if you deem it best,

I would be glad to have the letter published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for in my weak judgment it would have a tendency to stir up God's dear children, and especially his true servants, to a more prayerful and diligent searching of the Scriptures.

I will say to you that I have the brother's consent, that if I think best I might send it to you for publication in the SIGNS. With much love, and kind regards and best wishes to you and your dear family, and all those dear and precious brethren that I had the pleasure to meet during the entire visit that I made at your association, and may the blessings of our kind heavenly Father attend you all through life, is the prayer of your poor, unworthy brother, if saved either in time or eternity, it will be by the grace of God alone.

L. B. HANOVER.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., July 30, 1902.

ELDER L. B. HANOVER—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I have often thought of you and Elder Cole since we parted at Middletown, N. Y., and have felt a desire to know how you got along on your homeward trip. I have looked in the SIGNS for some expression from both of you, but as yet have not seen any. I remember my promise to you to write to you on what appears to me to be something of the signs of the present times. The subject is so deep, and I am so shallow, that I feel so unequal to the task, it is with great desire for wisdom that I undertake it. I am not a prophet, and can understand very little of the prophesies of either the Old or New Testaments. Very often those books are entirely closed to me, and religion seems to be a vain imagination, but when the light of God's holy Spirit shines forth, all creation seems to be but a very little speck here in the midst of the vast eternity of our glorious God, and I not so large as the smallest insect which may be discovered with the most mighty microscope. Then I am made ashamed to think that such a small creature should dispute the work of this wonderful Creator and Preserver.

I am not well enough acquainted with the history of the progress of the gospel in its course from Jerusalem to tell much about it in the old countries. The Lord said, among the last words to his apostles, "That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."—Luke xxiv. 47. It appears to me that that which began to be preached first among the Jews, after it has gone the rounds of all the nations, will finally reach the beginning corner, Christ Jesus, among the Jews, connecting the church in all her parts to him as the glorious Head. Thus he is revealed to us as the chief corner-stone of this great building of God, wherein dwelleth righteousness, peace, love and joy for ever.

I confess that there is a great mystery to me right here, and I feel to leave it alone with the eternal God. According to the prophesies the Lord had ordained the salvation of his people among all nations, and yet the Jews were the natural or tame olive tree, and the branches grown upon this tree, either those growing there as the natural branches, or those partaking of the root and fatness of the root, by being grafted in where the natural branches were broken off, are the only people who are ever to be brought into sweet fellowship with God. We are told by the apostle Paul that the natural branches were broken off that the Gentiles might be grafted in, and therefore it is through their fall that salvation

is come to the Gentiles. Thus the gospel went out from them to us, as the Lord said, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away."—Matt. xiii. 47, 48. Thus the kingdom of heaven came to us, and the work of gathering began and continued in place after place, and as the children were gathered in in one place, the net was spread out in another, and the gathering began there, &c. Thus the old world was covered, and as the work was nearing its completion, the church began to be persecuted and hated and cast out just as it went out from the Jews at the first. Persecution seems to be the vehicle upon which the Lord will have his word spread abroad. When they were persecuted at Jerusalem they were spread abroad and went everywhere preaching the word. The persecution of Israel in Egypt seemed to have been the fertilizer of the soil for increase, and it appears to be the same way with the gospel church.

The Lord told the disciples that they were the salt of the earth. You know that salt as long as it is in its natural state and visible as salt, is not felt in its savory element, but it must be dissolved, enter in and lose its visibility as salt, and then its savory element is felt and its work is done. I cannot apply this, but we do see that for generations the gospel continues to be preached, and the people gathered in, and the church flourishes, when for some cause known only to God, it begins to wane, and finally loses its visibility at that place. Thus the work was done in all the eastern countries, so far as we know. Then the people of God were so persecuted that they had to seek shelter in the wilderness, where God had provided an asylum where she should be nourished for the stated time. He in his abundant mercies had ordained for her here in our beloved America, until she shall have developed in all his goodness and mercy as he has appointed for her. Thus, according to the best information we have, Elder (Dr.) John Clark and eleven other persons, constituted a church at Newport, Rhode Island, in 1638. This was the first Baptist church in America, the Roger Williams' church, at Providence, R. I., being constituted a year later. Here the church as an organization first took shelter under the dome of the asylum which God had prepared for her. From this small beginning, for 264 years the church has spread out through the wilds of savage tribes, and the vast wilderness, until the curtains of her habitation have spread from shore to shore, and her trumpet sound is heard on every hill and in every valley of this land. Notice that the direction of her travels have been south and west, and as her wings have touched the Gulf of Mexico and the great Pacific, she has begun to lift her influences from the great north and east. What does this tell us? Does it not say that the network of the kingdom is rapidly being finished there, that the good are gathered into vessels there? There we see the salt no more except a few grains, a little handful here and there, and widely scattered. It tells us that the work is being finished there, as it has been in most of the old countries.

As the work of the kingdom finishes up its course, infidelity prevails the more, and what the world calls a higher class of civilization sets up. The world's religion blossoms abundantly, and brings forth fruit by great multitudes. Even so where the great centers of wealth are, there will

the world's religion center. In the great capital city of Rome, the first regularly organized powers of persecution prevailed in the name of christian religion. Here the wealth and powers of government centered, and here the powers of mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots, took on her full force to rule the world, and put the saints to death, in the person of the first beast that John saw rise up out of the sea. Since she was wounded, the second beast has been gradually rising up out of the earth. She is rising in about the same way a spruce tree grows: at first very slowly, so that it would have taken a very scrutinizing eye to discover her whereabouts, but as she is growing older she speaks out more confidently, and spreads abroad her branches, and now she is trying to cover the whole earth under the shadow of her wings, which are many. Wherever this false religion prevails, you will see the government gradually yielding to its influences, and trusts and great money combines take charge of the governments to the sad oppression of the poor, with whom the Lord Jesus had companionship when he was here in the flesh. This, my dear brother, tells us that our free government is nearing its end, and that a kingdom is looking us in the face. It appears that the children of God must not have long rest in this present evil world, for the very places which have furnished them with a safe retreat have afterwards proven to be places of their severest trials. I know that these things cannot come upon us until our Father please. The present rest which the church is now enjoying is, in my humble opinion, the thousand years of rest promised us in the book of Revelation. Constitutional power is the chain with which the angel of God has bound Satan until the thousand years are expired. We do not know when that will be, nor need we to care, but one thing we do know, it cannot come until it is in the arrangement of our God, for his hands have the reins of government.

In the seventh chapter of the book of Daniel we read of four beasts, which are explained to be four kingdoms of the world. The first answers to the Babylonish; the second, to the Grecian; the third, to the Romish. Now where is the fourth? which was different from all the others, with her ten kings in the regular order, and the eleventh taking on his power during the reign of the eighth, ninth and tenth, finally rooting them up and establishing himself, speaking great swelling words of vanity against the Most High God? My brother, is it not this government of these United States? So I see it. Are the rights of the people respected to-day, or does the gigantic trust and money powers rule in this government? Is not this centralization, and is not this the very foundation of every empire? Then what need we expect but that the same principle which has worked to a certain end in other nations, will surely work to the same end in this nation? Thus far the marks which have shown themselves have come up under the cloak of innocence. For example: the Blair educational bill, which he introduced in the United States Senate some years ago, had a clause in it to this effect: That the principles of the christian religion shall be taught in all public schools taught under the provisions of that bill. Then another section provided that no teacher of any religious denomination should have the right to teach the principles of the religion of their denomination. What would this lead to? Simply this: a council would have to be

called in which the Popes, Cardinals, Bishops, Doctors of Divinity, &c., would have to come together and draw up a creed wherein they could all agree as containing in every part the principles of christian religion. What would be the difference in this and the creed of the Nicene council, which gave power to the old mother of harlots? Would not her harlot daughters and their allies do the same things with the same powers of their old mother? Give them a trial and they will prove it.

But some one may say that that bill did not become a law. True, it did not, but may it not yet become a law? Only last year some one in the United States' Congress asked, "Where is the Blair educational bill? Why not that be revived and enacted into a law?" Thus we see that it is only slumbering for a time.

Just as it was with Israel when they were prosperous, so has it been with every nation. "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked." Another said, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself." Thus the elements of destruction are in the things which are destroyed thereby. We know this by the things of our own experience. The elements of destruction are in us. We sin often, and our works prove to be fuel piled around us and on us, when the fire of God's wrath against sin is set to these faggots they burn us terribly until we are destroyed as to any power in ourselves. It is this same way with the governments of this world, for the christian's heart is a true index to all the things of nature. No nation has ever yet been destroyed only as the elements of destruction have fully matured in itself. The Lord would not settle Israel at once in Canaan, for the iniquity of the Canaanite was not yet full; the Jews could not be broken off until their unbelief was full; Sodom and Gomorrah could not be destroyed if ten righteous were found there; Belshazzar was drinking in honor to his gods, and defiling the sacred vessels of the temple of God, when his kingdom was destroyed; the Romish kingdom was of iron and clay, elements which would not adhere one to the other, when it was destroyed. These things might be multiplied, but let this suffice. As all these things were, so must it be here. The money powers, unto which all men are looking now, will prove to be the destruction of this government. Last year one said that a republic was good for the past generations, but it was an insult to civilization to talk of it in this advanced age. As time develops, it will develop these acts and sayings as being the sentiments of the money classes, and great centers who have combined to govern this country.

This, in my humble opinion, will develop into the fourth kingdom of this world. This will be the last general kingdom which shall rule all nations, and in this will the fullness of the world develop itself. The gospel will finish its work among the Gentiles, and return to the Jews, who shall confess Christ the Lord as their King, and with full faith in his holy name they will be turned to the Lord. Then will the chain which is on Satan be taken away, and he shall gather together his host Gog and Magog together to battle against the saints. I believe that Gog and Magog are Gomar and Magog, two of the sons of Japheth, who appear to represent all the Gentile nations in this general gathering. This, as was the case with the first beast which John saw, will be a gathering under the name of christian religion, to persecute the saints, who will be termed heretics. This eleventh king will be a religious

monarch, and his government a religious government, but there will be no Christ in it only in name and profession. True christians will be the sufferers, and through their suffering they will be driven as one man to the holy Lord God, who shall appear as the Lamb upon Mount Zion. This great host of religious persecutors will be gathered for destruction, for then will the Lord destroy them.

Now, in my mind, the elements of destruction will prove to be the very things which they, by their many improvements, will have provided.

I am told that the air we breathe is composed of oxygen, nitrogen and hydrogen. Take the hydrogen away and the oxygen and nitrogen are nothing but a flaming mass of fire. It is my opinion that when iniquity shall have grown to its full statue, then all the natural gasses from the earth, with the electrical generations, both of which will fill the great expanse around us, will have grown to their perfect statue, and all will ignite and consume the whole. This is, I believe, what is stated in Revelation xx. 9.

My dear brother, this will be the fullness of the gospel as a savor of life unto life to them that believe, and as a savor of death unto death to them that believe not. The one shall enter fully into eternal life without a shadow between them and their Beloved, while the other shall go away into everlasting punishment.

This letter is long, but this subject is so wonderfully great that only a little hint here and there is given. I cannot tell it; I would if I could.

I hope you may find it in your heart to pray for me. I wish to be faithful to my God, and to serve him and his children. Would be glad to hear from you.

Your brother in a blessed hope in the resurrection of the just,

L. H. HARDY.

DAYTON, Wash., March 25, 1902.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I write to inform you that your letter declining our invitation to be with us at the association of the churches belonging to the Salem Association, was received by me yesterday with sadness and disappointment. You speak of the obligations and duties which you owe to your own churches, and the sentiment which you express is good. There are also corresponding obligations resting upon those among whom you labor so faithfully as to deny yourself the pleasure of a western trip at our charges. All this is right on both sides, but the brethren here almost, and I believe unanimously, would have been rejoiced to have met with you at the time mentioned. This was Elder John Styles' association, and wherever he could go in his laborious and useful life, you can go and find a hearty welcome, my brother. Of this I feel assured from a close acquaintance with him and his brethren, and also from a long and pleasurable acquaintance with you as a stranger, through your faithful pen for many years. But we must all bow to the righteous Lord in his providence, as well as his gracious dealings with us, saying, "Thy will be done," and to truly say this is final obedience, however painful or pleasurable it may be to us. His will, not ours, is the law of righteousness, and to say this is acceptable, willing, hearty obedience, proceeding from the law of love written in our hearts by the ministry of the Spirit of truth; it is written in the heart to love the Lord, and such ones need no other incentive.

Now here is the law of liberty in Christ Jesus, making us free from the law of sin and death, which is in our members, and which brings us under the spirit of bondage to the law of Moses, which in the

letter ministers only condemnation to those who are its bond slaves. These are also slaves to sin and death which is in their mortal flesh. This law of love written in the heart solves the problem of free-will, and shows the difference between the will of the flesh, which is under the law of works, and the will of the Spirit, made free by the cross of Christ. There is given to us the liberty of the gospel wherein we stand fast through the grace of God in Christ Jesus the Son of God, who maketh free indeed. The liberty of the gospel must not be confounded with the spirit of bondage again to fear, if we are to understand the nature of the gift of grace in our Lord Jesus Christ. For he says, "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." That is, in the work of the Spirit, against which there is no law. This is, I think, true with all the attendant doctrine of the gospel. Now all this implies that, I believe, and no more; in this there is no bondage; the will to do right is not in bondage, either in constraining or restraining, for this law of liberty is engraven in the heart by the Spirit of the living God in the regeneration of the Spirit, and the renewing by the Holy Ghost, and all beside this is the spirit of bondage, in the body of the sins of the flesh which restrains from good, and constrains to evil, in all the servants of sin, who are made so by the disobedience of the one man, Adam. "Ye will not come," expresses the mystery of iniquity in one sentence, and no further comment is needed to show the status of the will of the flesh; "Ye will not," tells it all. Therefore it is written, "My people shall hear my voice;" "My people shall know my name;" "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." He reigns on David's throne, and here is the sceptre and the rod of Israel. And here are the sure mercies of David, in the covenant with the seed of David, who was the man after God's own heart. This is the law of faith, and not of Moses, whereby no man living shall be justified.

I send you inclosed a letter from Elder Hagans for your perusal.

I remain your brother in hope,

I. N. NEWKIRK.

SAVANNA, Cal., Jan. 31, 1893.

ELDER I. N. NEWKIRK—MY BELOVED BROTHER FOR THE TRUTH'S SAKE, AND TO ALL WHO LOVE THE LORD JESUS IN SINCERITY:—Grace, mercy and peace be multiplied unto you. Your favor of the twenty-fourth inst. is at hand, and as we have just passed through a very heavy rainstorm, and it is not fit for work, I will answer your very kind and welcome letter. Yes, I have hope that we have been taught in the same school, the school of Christ, and have come to know something of the difference between light and darkness, truth and error, and that we know something of the reasons why we love one another; yet we loathe our own selves on account of our inbred corruptions. Here I will remark that if my letters are of any comfort, if they give any strength, if they are of any good in any way, let us praise God, for you, and all others taught in the school of Christ know, that before we were thus taught, we had neither will nor ability to comfort these little ones, these precious ones of our God. Therefore now we rejoice to say, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the praise."

True, Mr. Bartlett can never reconcile his law theory to or with the gospel of our God and Savior, for one is the law of death, and is adapted to the dead, while the other is the law of life, and is adapted

to the living. Paul said, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death." By this we see plainly that those who are trying to be justified by the law of sin and death, have never had the law of the new covenant written in their hearts, and they are like the troubled sea, constantly casting up mire and dirt; there is no rest for them, but it is constantly do! do!! do!!! Even their effort to keep the seventh day is but do, do, do. These are they, as well as all others who have power, will and ability in their own estimation, that grasp the shadow, and miss the substance, which is Christ Jesus the Lord, who is the end of all strife; who is rest from all labor by faith, which is the gift of God, and to whom all the restraints of the Sabbatic law pointed. Until a poor sinner can by faith rest in Christ, he is ever changing, and wandering in the wilderness of sin, and like Israel of old, is stiff-necked and rebellious. But with regard to Israel it was the will of God that all save two, who were twenty years old and upward, who came out of Egypt, should die in the wilderness. I have thought that these two "Caleb and Joshua" were typical of the two witnesses in Rev. xi. So we must die to the lust of the flesh, and the desire of the mind, for the child of God must be weaned from all this before he can enter into that perfect rest in Christ.

Mr. Bartlett, and all his Arminian friends who engage in work, are opponents of the day of rest, that is, of the true gospel rest. The first day, Sabbatarians are worshiping, is a day consecrated by a Pagan monarch, to a Pagan sun-god, neither of which could give life to the worshiper, and if the seventh day was a seal of the covenant of works, it certainly has no claim to be regarded after that covenant was fulfilled, and so far as the first day is concerned, the resurrection of Jesus on that day, does not hallow it any more than his crucifixion on the sixth hallows that day, for had he not died, he could not have arisen, for both were in strict accordance with the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. The one difference is that he was put to death by wicked hands, but he was revived again by the glory of the Father. Yet the glory of God could not have been manifested in that way, but for his death. Thus, I conclude that it required all these combinations in the all-wise purpose of God to bring about the desired end, and therefore, as a necessary sequence, the sixth day, on which he was crucified, is as glorious as the first, upon which he arose, and one ought to be remembered as much as the other, and there is as much force in remembering one as the other.

Seeing that antichrist cannot worship the Lord Jesus, it remains for her to worship the creature of the Lord Jesus, pretending in it of course to be worshiping the Lord Jesus himself; O how deceptive!

I often am made to inquire, How can I know that I am not in some way deceived by this craft? and I search through my life to see if I can find any evidences that I am a subject of grace, and I am often made to weep and to pray to God for brighter evidences, or a more sure testimony of his love to me, and how long, sometimes, I have to wait and mourn, and go back and gather evidences, yes back and back to that little spark of hope which I was given forty-six years ago. Well, says my accuser, That was a dream, and afterwards you were worse than ever before. Then I start back again to see if I have missed any evidence, and I come to the summer of fifty-

nine, and there I remember that out of the deepest abyss of trouble I still cried mournfully, "Lord, have mercy upon me." Then, in a small still voice, it was said to me, "My grace is sufficient for thee," and my burden was gone. Strange as it may seem, I there could see that our God in some way ordered all things according to the counsel of his own will, and in this grace I have grown until I am a firm believer in the absolute sovereignty of God, and here is my rest, even in Christ Jesus the Savior of sinners, of whom I am chief.

My love to all the dear brethren, and for yourself a share. Pray for me and for the peace of Zion. Fare you well.

A. H. HAGANS.

EDITORS SIGNS—BELOVED IN THE LORD:—The inclosed part of a private letter is so expressive, clear and comforting, both of the doctrine and experience of the truth as it is in Christ, I feel that I cannot do you and your dear readers a better service of love than to submit it to you, for which the meek writer will kindly pardon me. With her, my own spirit was early and deeply exercised upon this blessed truth of our identity with the holy Son of God in his *life*, his obedient, suffering, righteous life, as one with us in our flesh, as our Shepherd, Surety, Husband, Brother, Prophet, Priest and King; yea, our Redeemer, Resurrection and Righteousness, and we "the righteousness of God in him." Never have I know this divine truth of the way of righteousness more sweetly set forth in beautiful simplicity than our sister has told it in her touching words, which must come to the heart of every one who *lives* and believes in Christ. To me it is very comforting. For unless *I* am one with Christ, and Christ is one with me, I have no part in him, no joint-heirship to God the Father with him. In this oneness, my sins were his, and his spotless righteousness is mine. My rejoicing is in this Scripture truth that, "My Beloved is *mine*, and I am his." Let my name as a sinner be lost in his name as the Savior, and let me sign myself,

CHRIST'S SERVANT.

CARDINGTON, Ohio, July 27, 1902.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—I love to contemplate the limitless power and dominion of Jehovah. O how can any one wish to limit our loving, all-wise, almighty Friend! who is too wise to err, too good to be unkind, too strong to fail?

The wonderful attributes of our God are all beautifully blended, so perfect in perfection, we know not whether to admire wisdom and power, or love, most; they are all coequal. Is his love more comforting than the knowledge that he is able to keep us ever by his side? We are completely swallowed up in wonder, love and praise, when we but catch a glimpse of his being. How much is contained in each of the blessed names by which he is called! "I AM!" from eternity to eternity the same. Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace." Jesus, the Savior of Israel, *my* Savior, my loving Father, my Brother!

Sometimes I feel that my knowledge of spiritual things is very small. How much would I give *to know* that I have saving faith, and really know God! Ever since my connection with the Baptists, I have been called a very "Hard-shell," a sort of "Beebe Baptist." My mind has been exercised so much upon doctrine that sometimes I fear that I am only theoretical, and know nothing of grace. Yet how can I love it if I know

nothing about it? Sometimes, when I hear the blessed gospel preached, my heart leaps for joy, and there seems to be a witness in my heart, and I thank God for sending the heavenly message and enabling me to hear it. And surely I love God's people.

Sometimes I grow very bitter against some of them, when they assail the truth I love. But O, dear brother, I do want to have charity to hope all things, believe all things, endure all things, and *think no evil.* Yet I do not wish to compromise with error. O, may God help us to contend both earnestly and lovingly for the faith, knowing that God will reserve his own very elect to the belief of the truth. He does not seem to teach some as fast as he does others, but gives them here a little, and there a little. I think I know of some who are led that way. I should not be surprised if the Elder whom you spoke of would some day know that he has been trying to fight against God. He does not like to hear law and gospel mixed, as we so often hear. (O! how it hurts me to hear it that way.)

Years ago, my mind became exercised as to how a guilty sinner *could be* justified. I could easily see how a husband, or substitute, could pay another's debt, or *pardon* him; but how could he *justify* him? I trust the following Scripture was opened to my understanding: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." I saw that even as I was one with Adam, so was I one with Christ. I was in Adam when he sinned, so was I in Christ when he fulfilled the law, suffered for sin, died and rose again. That in Christ *I* had suffered for sin, had also fulfilled the law; that I was in spirit a child of God by descent and birth, and in flesh was his by election and adoption. It is a comfort to think that my life was hid with Christ in God before I existed as an individual; that his suffering, his righteousness, is all mine; that with him and in him I have passed from under the law, having become dead to the law, and with Christ have arisen to walk in newness of life. In him holy and without blame before God in love, and shall not come into condemnation. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Blessed, who by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath been made free from the law of sin and death. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Is it not sweet to know that our warfare is accomplished, our sin is covered, and we have received at the Lord's hand double for all our sin? But you can think much better than I can tell you.

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Does not faith lay hold on Christ, and, seeing through a glass darkly, rejoice to know that *in Christ* we are pure? Though we are still in the flesh, and suffer and groan under sin, yet faith looks to Christ, and sees all sin washed away—the robe of righteousness cast about us. Then, is not this a *little* of the *substance* we hope for? the earnest of our blessed inheritance?

But we must expect persecution in this time of confusion and strife. I hope the time will come when we can worship God in peace and unity. You will know, dear brother, that I often have a heart-ache.

Your sister,

(MRS.) JOIE E. WICKHAM.

CAMMAS VALLEY, Oregon, April 5, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—The within letter is from dear brother and sister Bruce, to whom I mailed a copy of the Minutes of the Siloam Association, in response to their inquiry for Old School Baptists living in the vicinity of Oregon City, Oregon, in the SIGNS of recent date. Since that time they have written to me regularly, and I rejoice that they are situated where they can enjoy the preaching of the gospel, by the dear brethren whom they name. Each one of them I have heard preach, when situated differently, for we were glad to welcome them to our home and church meetings, but now I am where it is impossible for me to meet with any of the church assemblies, and I seldom hear a word spoken with regard to spiritual things.

The bonds of love to my two dear children is sufficient for all care and felicity of which my heart and hands are capable naturally, yet I make slow progress in a growth in grace, and knowledge of the truth, and I find a willingness to evade duty, so that I dread to write or speak of the wonderful things in righteousness, which are daily my portion, lest it be some strong delusion which has been sent me. If it be the eternal purpose of God that my soul should rest in him, then indeed no fears ought to annoy; but O, the solemn questionings and doubts that arise.

I have not written this for publication, but only to send you brother Bruce's letter, that you may judge whether its publication will edify others also.

Your sister,

(MRS.) M. J. LEE.

OREGON CITY, Oregon, March 29, 1902.

MRS. M. J. LEE—DEAR SISTER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE OF A BLESSED IMMORTALITY BEYOND THE GRAVE:—Your precious letter received this evening is full of comfort to us, and makes us feel that we would rejoice to have the privilege of meeting you, which I trust will be so some time in the near future. Yes, I was surprised to meet so many of the dear kindred in the faith so soon after coming here. We have had the privilege of meeting with them at each meeting since. At our last meeting Elder George Girard was here, this being the first time that I ever met him, although we were well acquainted with his brother and sister in Nebraska. If it be the Lord's will, he will meet with us again in April. Next Saturday and Sunday is the regular time for our meeting, and we expect Elders Matthews and Moffet to be here at our house on Friday night before. We are well satisfied here, and when we go to meeting we feel at home with these strangers in the flesh, but we do feel that we are with kindred in the Spirit, and so we truly are, if we are what we have professed to be, for the apostle says, We are bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, and all one is Christ. Now if such be their union, is it any wonder that God's dear people feel at home when they meet together to worship the great I AM, and to mingle their voices in songs of praise to his great and holy name? O what a precious Savior we have, and what precious promises he has left on record for our comfort. You remember he said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst." The circumstance which took place on the morn of the resurrection of our blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, when the two disciples were journeying to Emmaus, and Jesus joined them as they journeyed, and asked them what manner of communication was this that

they had as they journeyed and were sad, has rested upon my mind. They asked him if he was a stranger and knew not what had taken place, how that Jesus of Nazareth was taken and crucified and slain, in whom they had trusted that he should redeem Israel, and they said, Beside this is the third morning, and some have testified that he is risen. Then we are told that he preached to them, saying, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" And after this he made himself known to them in the breaking of bread, and then vanished out of their sight. You will remember that these dear disciples afterward said, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?"

Are not these same things seen to-day? I do believe that the holy Spirit whom he said the Father would send in his name, guides and directs our pen to speak words of comfort to others, while at the same time we share the same comfort wherewith we are comforting others.

Now I have written you a lengthy letter, and if there are in it any words of comfort for you, it is because the Lord directs it, for I did not know how I would write when I began this letter.

From your brother,

JOSEPH BRUCE.

CENTERBURG, Ohio.

BENTON BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—Inclosed you will find two dollars for the SIGNS, as my subscription expires to-day. I have received much comfort in reading them this year. It gives me joy to see that there are still a few who are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, and that the dear SIGNS still continues, with able writers to fill its columns. I do not get to hear much preaching, but sometimes have preaching in my house. I am among those who have been sued at law, and my church house taken away, and I and a few others, gave them our cloak also, being compelled to go one mile, I went two, and being smitten on the one cheek, I was also smitten on the other. Through much trial, I hope I was led to renounce the hidden things of dishonesty. I, with one other sister, took our petition of acknowledgment to a little church, about twenty miles away, and they accepted our petition, and received us into their fellowship, while we still stood as a church here where we are. We chose dear Elder Benjamin Martin, of Ashley, Ohio, as our pastor, and he continued as such until his death something more than a year ago.

Now, brother Beebe, I would like to have your views, or the views of any other brother upon this question, Do you think that we two could stand as the church here? I feel that I now stand with a people that give God all the glory, and have no confidence in the flesh. I sometimes feel that I am one that has seen and felt affliction in the church, but I have a hope that it is for Christ's sake, and there is something that follows me saying, "What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits toward me and mine?" Last night, I dreampt that I was out on water, and the words came to me, "You are instructed in the Scriptures," and there I began to speak to the people on the shore. And one said to me, "You are not fit to teach the people, for you have too much trouble with them." Then I awoke myself by saying at the top of my voice, "They that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution." And so I think it is, but am I one that has been so blessed as to suffer persecution for the

truth's sake?

I would say to brother Bartley, I also know what it is to have a dear sister say to me, "You believe it was predestinated to be so, and so you need not worry concerning it." As much as to say, "You believe all things are predestinated, now do not worry," in derision of my faith.

I might tell of the many trials through which I have passed, but a word to the wise is sufficient, those who have passed through the same know all about it, and those who have been favored to escape such persecution, while they may in one sense be said to he blessed, in another I feel as did the apostles that we have reason to glory in tribulations. But I did not mean to tell you of my trials. I wanted to tell the dear brethren and sisters who write for the SIGNS how much I enjoy their words of comfort; the Lord provides for unworthy me, through the SIGNS. My table may be filled with papers and books, but I hunt out the Bible and SIGNS for my comfort. I am nearly sixty years of age; thirty-five years ago the dear Savior made himself manifest unto me in the forgiveness of my sins, after I had mourned over my lost condition for seven long years. But I feel to day, as brother Chick has said, it is good to decrease, and I feel that I am less and less every day of my life, and feel my weakness more and more. I ask an interest in your prayers, that I be kept in the true and right way. I have had the privilege of reading the SIGNS from my early youth. I have them in my care, feeling that they are too precious to be destroyed. My mother left them in my care, and also the editorials. So, brother Beebe, you see I know something of your life's work, and if my prayers avail anything for you, you have them.

I remain your sister in hope of a better life, (MRS.) SARAH BOYD.

[NOT knowing anything about the circumstances of trouble referred to in the above letter, it is impossible to advise in the matter, but we feel a deep sympathy with all who are oppressed because of steadfast adherence to the truth. The Savior said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst." Where two or three can meet in the name of the Lord, and maintain the order and ordinances of the house of the Lord, there could be a church; still where so few are together, it seems that it would be better to have their names connected with some other body, even if they were some distance away. All depends upon whether the order of the church can be kept up by the two or three. If not, they had better unite with some other body of believers, and come under their watchcare. This is only our opinion, and not intended to cut off an opinion by others.—ED.]

PINE BLUFF, Ark., May 2, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed find money order for two dollars, in payment of my subscription on the SIGNS; I do not see how I could do without them, as they publish the doctrine that I love.

I have just returned from a tour in Texas; I was gone several days, and preached in a number of places, and met a number of ministers. [As we could not make out the names of ministers and places correctly, we have omitted this part of the letter.—ED.] Upon my return home I found all well, for which I feel thankful to the Lord who sent his Son into the world to die for sinners. He fulfilled the law, and took away all things that were against his people, and nailed them to the cross. It was written,

For a virgin shall bring forth a son, and his name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. This is the stone which the builders set at naught, but which has become the head of the corner. And neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name given under heaven or among men, whereby we must be saved. He has saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and grace reigns unto eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ. "By grace are ye saved." By grace are we saved in time, and after time we shall not need to be saved, for nothing unclean can enter heaven. He was our Savior before the world, in the world, and he is our Savior in God's eternal purpose, for eternity. For this purpose he came into the world, that he should manifest it to his children. He saves them from their sins in time, for he came into the world in time, and here is an eternal salvation having no beginning nor end. He is our everlasting all, and there is no salvation in any other, and when he comes to us he brings salvation, and teaches us to live godly lives, soberly and righteously, in this present evil world. He paid all our debt, and came and preached peace to us.

O, dear reader, can you remember when he preached peace to you in your heart? He saves us by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us through Christ. Thus he shall save his people from their sins, and he is our Savior in time, and in eternity. He was set up before the world began by God the Father, and he bare them and carried them all the days of old, and he lives in us. Thus you see he is always with us, and is our Savior every day, and he never will forsake us, but will bring us home to rest forever.

How we ought to praise God for all his goodness! O, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness to the children of men! This is due forever to the Lord Jesus Christ. To him be all the glory, both now and forever.

Well, if you publish this, correct all that needs it, and if not, all will be right with me. I have written this, as it came to me while writing.

Your brother,

D. WESTALL.

DAINE, Ore., March 7, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—The time has come again for the renewal of our subscription, and I will inclose the amount due. We do not feel that we can get along without the dear old family paper, for it is nearly all the preaching that we get in winter months. We do enjoy the soundness of doctrine which it advocates, and I do hope and pray that the dear Savior will open the eyes, and give an understanding heart to all his dear children, the chosen vessels of mercy, so that they can lay aside every idle thought, and be prepared to ascribe all honor and glory and power to the heavenly King. Conditional time salvation has caused much trouble. Salvation by grace has been the dividing line between Old School Baptists and all Arminian denominations from the first, but I believe that many a dear brother is yet being brought out into light; may this work be soon done.

Our church held their meeting with us last month, and I do believe that the Lord was with us. Elder Thurstan preached for us, he did not have any great light or liberty on Saturday, and I did pray that

he might have more light on Sunday, and he did preach an able sermon. I told one brother after the meeting was over about how I had prayed for him, and he said, "Why, my sister, I thought you did not believe in works." I asked him who was the author of that prayer? was it my own manufacture, or was it the Spirit of Christ interceding through me in the dear brother's behalf? Can any of us pray without the Spirit of prayer?

But one may say, We have power to teach our children good morals, and to raise them in the right way. Do we have this power within ourselves? Is not all the power that is in man ordained of God? and is not every thought or deed of his power? I always feel, when warning my children against evil ways, thankful that the Lord gives me discernment between right and wrong; all this must come from God; what is man and what does he know? It seems to me there is but one thing that we do positively know, and that is that we all must die, that is, our body must die. But we have hope of a better world beyond this veil of tears, and at times we have glimpses of that heavenly home, which makes us "long to lay our armor by, and to dwell with Christ at home." The sweet promises which he has left on record for all who trust in his holy name, encourages us to run with patience the race set before us; bless his holy name; he is our all, and to whom else shall we look but unto him? He is all that we have to look to in time and in eternity.

I remain one whose whole trust is in the dear Lord,

S. MORNINGSTAR.

KANSAS, Ill., Aug. 14, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Having a desire to hear from others of your correspondents I conclude to again pen down a few words for your inspection, and if published, for the perusal of the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

A good old sister since reading the SIGNS of August 15th said to me, How good all the SIGNS are. I told her I considered the first article in the issue of August 15th was a complete defense of "the apostles' doctrine and fellowship," and was surely comforting to any child of grace. Elder Bartley will pardon my remarks, he surely was given wisdom and knowledge to know the truth, and rightly divide the word of truth. Such workmanship surely is approved of God and needeth not to be ashamed of by his servant Elder Bartley.

Of late the words of Jesus as recorded in the twelfth verse of ninth chapter of Matthew have been much in my mind: "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." So many in this our day are like the pharisees of the day when Jesus thus showed them that they did not need a physician; they were self-righteous, like some that now say, "Grace has nothing to do with our obedience to the commands of God; we can have all the religion we will live for." O how different is this sentiment to Paul where he said, "The good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do." This language and its connection seems to be my condition, and I realize that I need the healings of the great Physician every day and moment of my life. If I was able at all times to do right, I surely could not adopt the further language of Paul, and say, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" yet with him I hope I can truthfully say, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord, so then, with the mind I myself serve the law of

God; but with the flesh the law of sin." O, so much of the time it seems I am serving with the flesh, but I realize that "They that are in the flesh cannot please God."

So, dear reader, you see I need an unconditional salvation for time as also for eternity. Mary Magdalene, and the woman that had been so long a sufferer with infirmity that she felt that the touch of his garment would heal her, were some of the sick that needed the Physician. They, with many others of the sick, realized the great salvation they had been given, while the self-righteous were reviling him, and saying he was an impostor. So to-day, the self-righteous that can do good, and save themselves, do not need a physician, but the poor, helpless, sin-sick soul that has become as a little babe does need the Physician; not merely for once, but all the time.

How comforting it is to the poor in spirit to know that the great Physician that they look to for salvation has been touched with their infirmity, and knows their weakness, and can and does come to them in this their hour of need. Jonah could say when all earthly help was gone, "Salvation is of the Lord." So Peter when the Lord had said to him, "Lovest thou me?" could say, "Yea Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest I love thee." So each and every redeemed child of grace can say the Lord knowest all things, and can know with David that the Lord has taken them up out of the miry clay, and established their goings, and put a new song in their mouth, even praises unto his holy name.

JAMES M. TRUE.

CENTERBURG, Ohio.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I feel that I must write, for my mind is carried above earthly things this morning, to behold the beauty of Jesus, and how that all things are finished, and nothing left undone of all that pertains to our salvation. I hear some say it is such a hurt to the cause for a brother to do this or that. If they could see for one moment, as I see, what poor mortals we are, they would not think that we could hurt the cause of God, for his work is finished, and how can it then be hurt? But it is so hard to get used to the Lord's ways only as they are revealed to us. We must be beat down, humble at Jesus' feet, to learn of him, as Mary was. My prayer is to always be kept humble, but he often leaves us to our ourselves for awhile, for our good. It is then that we can look back to the times when the Lord was with us, and learn what poor mortals we are without the presence of the Lord.

As I am deprived of meeting with the church in public worship, I feel to say the Lord's will, and not mine, be done. I feel to praise God, who made all things for himself, that is made, and who rules the armies of heaven and earth. How thankful I ought to be that he has revealed such precious truths to such a sinner as me; were it otherwise I should be like the novice, as Elder Curry says, knowing nothing of the goodness of God. The school of Christ is a school of experience, and I believe that every child of God has an experience of the total depravity of men, and when I hear some say that they sweetly believe in predestination as absolute, I feel to say that if I have an experience of grace, I was made to see that all things were certain to be just as they are, and nothing was left to poor mortal man to do. I was made to see my helplessness, and that I could do nothing without Christ; he was my all and in all, and if I was saved it was by

the grace of God, and not by works of man, and I am just as needy of Christ now as ever; yes, every moment of my life I need Christ; without him I can do nothing.

Brother Beebe, I never saw anything from your pen but what I believed was the teaching of Christ. Some things have been published which I could not understand. Now you may send me the SIGNS on, for if I know my heart, I do believe the articles of faith therein set forth. I am sure that you believe in the unity of Christ and his people, but there are so many who do not understand it. Many are just like the ones who turned back and said, These are hard sayings, who can hear them? and followed Christ no longer. This truth is a stumbling-block to those who are not the followers of the Savior.

I hope that you will find comfort in this, and if you think best, and that it will comfort the family of God, send it abroad; I have written as my pen has been directed. I ask an interest in your prayers.

I remain your sister in the bonds of love,

ELIZA DAVIDSON.

LAFAYETTE, Texas.

BELOVED EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—While I am poor in this world's goods, yet I do not think that I shall die any poorer for having subscribed and paid for a publication the value of which cannot be computed in dollars and cents. I deem it the best publication I ever saw. It was conceived and brought forth in wisdom and in love, and in the spirit of truth, of love to the Master's cause, love for that faith which is the gift of God, and without which it is impossible to please him, love for the doctrine of God our Savior, and it at all times discriminates between the doctrine of God, and the commandments and doctrines of men and devils. The doctrine of God is salvation by grace alone, both for time and eternity; there is but one salvation for a poor sinner spoken of in holy writ, and Jesus Christ and him crucified is that salvation, and beside him there is no Savior.

The common salvation of which Jude speaks is the one salvation given us in Christ before the foundation of the world, but made manifest in time, and made known to the heirs of promise according to God's own purpose and grace given us in Christ before the world began. Hence it is common to every vessel of mercy. It is common, because they all share it alike. For it is said, "Of his fullness have we all received." Our experience is the same; our joys are one in Christ; the same love of God is shed abroad in our hearts; all by the grace of God, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost; it is not for anything that we have done, or shall do, but because of his own will, purpose and grace given us in Christ when we were not, except in the purpose of our God. And this inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled is shared equally by the saints in light, and so is common to them all.

When made manifest as an heir to this sublime inheritance, we have surely tasted the good word of God, and have learned that he is kind and merciful, and of long-suffering to usward, to the end that we should be blameless before him in love. This love to God and his Christ, of which we are made the happy recipients, is so great that we are compelled like Saul of Tarsus to say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" And to such a soul it is meat and drink to do the will of his Mas-

ter. It is not to work out our salvation, but because of that salvation which is already wrought in us, that we are enabled to do the will of our Father. How then can we expect a reward? Rather has not the blessing gone before, which fits us for every christian duty, and our doing is but the effect of what he has done for us. We have to say in the sequel of the matter, that we are unprofitable servants at best.

Now in conclusion, let me say to you, dear editors, go on in your good work of love, and may the blessing of God rest upon you and those that write for the SIGNS. I hope that I do believe the doctrine it so earnestly and patiently contends for.

How glad I am that God hath said that he would not be left without a witness. His witnesses are to declare the whole counsel of God, and not a part of it simply, that the name of God should thereby be glorified. And this includes speaking of all his perfections, his power, his majesty, his decrees, his predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass, and that his predestination is commensurate with himself and all his perfections, which are all without limit. Concerning this I never heard of any dispute until of late among us. Some now would, it seems, make us believe that some things are not under the purview of our sovereign God, but David said, "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." Then we have full warrant for saying that our God fills immensity, and performs all things after the counsel of his own will, and I mean what I say, when I say, *all things*, and so does the Scripture, and they say that all things work together for good.

I remain your brother in hope,

H. L. WILLIAMS.

PALESTINE, Texas.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I often think of writing you, and as often give it up, because I cannot write as others. Our old medium of correspondence comes regularly, laden with good things which are so much better than anything that I can produce that I cannot wonder when my scribbling does not appear. However, I write you a little to let you know that I become more and more positive as regards the controverted points of doctrine.

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men." This follows the announcement made to the shepherds by the angels. Well, what is announced? A Savior is born. This was the announcement by the angels to the shepherds keeping watch over their flocks by night. The angel said to them, (verse 10) "Fear not." Why should they fear? The ninth verse tells us, "The glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid." And this angel said to the shepherds in their fear, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Away back ages before we hear the prophets speaking of his advent; they told it as something that must come to pass, ages beforehand, but now the angel said he is here; he is born. It is not something, or a child, which shall be born and will be a Savior after awhile, when he shall have grown up, and the people obey him, and believe in him.

No, he was not born to be a Savior after a time, but he is now a Savior, and a complete Savior. We find him so, after we become acquainted with him, for he is so good, kind, loving and obliging, we cannot help but love him and be willing that he should rule over us. We are but poor, blind, deaf and dead creatures, and do not know it. One's head may be blossomed for the tomb, and yet blind and dead. I sometimes think that I pity such. If such an one ever knows anything better about the matter, it will be because the Lord has taught him, and not man.

Now all are not shepherds, but this was announced to the shepherds, and they had the oversight of the flock. Before the Savior was born, it was said unto Mary, That holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God, and the angel said unto her, "Fear not, Mary." Here but one is addressed, and this one had fear. It is always with such ones a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, and it is God that they should fear, and not man.

Now brethren, it is you to whom I am speaking that know that this Jesus or Savior was a perfect and complete Savior before he was born of Mary. He was then as complete a Savior as now. If one thing could be first with God it is this Jesus our Savior. He was God manifest in the flesh, and God our Savior is from everlasting to everlasting, he is the first and the last. I have not felt to say that God *provided* a Savior in Jesus Christ, for God is our Savior; he is from everlasting to everlasting our Savior. When Jesus was born, then was manifested that which was already with God; then was God manifest in the flesh.

In conclusion I would say that God's people are saved with an everlasting salvation, and I believe this is in harmony with the Bible. If I am wrong, correct me.

Your brother,

U. J. BELL.

COTTON HILL, Ill., June 16, 1902.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—I have been thinking of writing you a short letter for some time. Inclosed I send you check for ten dollars, if there is any trouble getting it, just destroy it and let me know and I will send you draft. It seems very little to send to one who has devoted his life to the Baptist cause, and is an invalid, but while I am no millionaire, I have been greatly blessed, I feel far more than I merit. I am in my eighty-first year, and have almost perfect health, and enough of this world's goods. I have been a member of the Old School Baptist church, almost sixty years. When I offered myself to the church, it was with fear and trembling, fearing I should disgrace the good cause, and I thought if I lived to be old I would be better, but I am now old, and find that I am the same dependent sinner, as full of sin, and as dependent on the grace of a kind and loving Savior, and if I am saved it will be by grace, free grace, not for anything that I have ever done, or ever can do. I feel that the good I would do, I do not, but the evil I hate, that I do. Why I am left and so many so much better taken I cannot tell, but hope if I have anything to do in this world, the Lord will give me grace to do it, for without his grace we can do nothing to his glory, and it seems to me I ought to be one of the most thankful to a kind Savior for his many blessings: when young, brought to see myself a poor dependent sinner, dependent on him alone, and how could I have gone through this

long life without that trust which I hope I have in a kind and loving Savior? I I have been reading the SIGNS sixty or seventy years, and it seems to me they are better than they ever were.

Our little church I do not think has missed having meeting the second Saturday and Sunday a dozen times in fifty-nine years, and while there are few of us, we are in peace and harmony, and have great reason to be thankful for the many blessings that he has given us. Every member that was in the church when my sister and I joined, is gone, we believe to happiness, and every Baptist preacher that we knew is gone but one, and he is over eighty and feeble, but the Lord has raised up able defenders of the truth to take their places, and we believe he always will have them on the walls of Zion.

Dear brother, I have written far more than I expected to. May a kind Savior be with, sustain, strengthen and bless you in your life work, is the prayer of your unworthy brother,

PHILEMON STOUT.

[BROTHER Stout is one among the very few of our present subscribers who has been a reader of the SIGNS from its earliest numbers, therefore his statement that the SIGNS is even better of late years than ever, is indeed encouraging, and we sincerely thank him for his kind expression of appreciation of the paper, as well as for his liberal donation in support of its publication.—ED.]

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I thought that I would write and tell you how much I like the SIGNS, they are to me the best of all books except the Bible, because I think that they set forth the truth as it is revealed in the word of God, and all who write for its pages give to God all the glory in their salvation, and declare that without him they can do nothing. That is what I love to hear; I desire that he should have all the glory, and be crowned by all, Lord of all. I have read them from my youth until now, and I cannot see any change in them. I am now in my seventy-first year, and I think that I shall take them as long as they contend for the truth as it is in the word of God. O, what a comfort it is to me to hear the aged saints speak of their troubles, and doubts, and fears, and the questions which arise as to whether they are the children of God or not; their troubles revive me. Is it possible that they have the same trouble that I have? It makes me feel sure that they are my companions, for they tell these things better than I can. I do not expect to become any better as long as I live in this world. I once thought that when I got older I would not have so many doubts and fears, but the contrary is true, I seem to have more of them; I cannot see anything good in this body of mine; sin is mixed with all that I do. But if I know my heart, I do have a desire to live to the honor and glory of God. O, that I might own and serve him as long as I live; O, for grace that I may live to his praise; God alone must keep me, there is nothing good in me, that is, in my flesh. I have a hope that he has taken away my stony heart, and given me a heart of flesh, and I would praise his holy name for such a gift, and this is what causes me to love and praise him, and love his people.

I only thought when I commenced, to write you a few lines, to let you know how much I like the SIGNS. Now throw the mantle of charity over my imperfection. May God spare you long to proclaim the gospel, and feed the sheep and lambs, is my desire. This is from a poor

old sinner, saved if saved at all, by grace alone.

S. P. CARY.

GLENS FALLS, N. Y., Aug. 6, 1902.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Please find herewith money order to change date on printed slip, and so far as I am able to feel or express gratitude, I am very grateful for the SIGNS, to be comforted, as I hope, in the things wherein those who write for its pages are themselves comforted. I have never felt that I appreciated this, or any of the Lord's blessings sufficiently to prevent their being withdrawn, so with my ingratitude and unworthiness in the enjoyment of these favors, there is a fearful looking forward to a time when I shall be punished according to my sins, and rewarded as my iniquities deserve, and I am reminded of the criminal who was told not to fear, that justice would be done him, who replied, Justice was just what he did fear, but it was mercy he wanted. But our righteous Judge can be both just and merciful through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, and really when we consider that his ways are unsearchable and past finding out, how are we to appreciate fully his loving-kindness and tender mercies, and how much like a chattering noise my prayers have often sounded to me when it has come in my mind to whom they were addressed, and for the great and wonderful things which they tried with thanks to acknowledge, or the undeserved things asked in petition. I am so well satisfied and contented with salvation by grace, and grace alone, that "do and live" religion is with me very much a thing of the past, and I feel a curiosity, but no confidence, in the lo here and lo there inventions of men, whereby, as I have experienced, "they lie in wait to deceive."

May it please God to sustain us in these last days, for indeed perilous times have come, men are ready to do anything to satisfy their selfish desires, even to those who profess to love the truth.

Yours truly,

EVERETT R. KINNEY.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., July 27, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES AND ALL THE DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS WHO READ THEM:—I would like to cast in my little mite with you all, and tell you how my poor hungering and thirsting soul is fed and nourished by your writings in the SIGNS from time to time. Every number brings cheer to poor, disconsolate me; being situated where I scarcely ever hear any Primitive Baptists preach or talk, it makes the SIGNS doubly dear to me. Often while reading of the travels of the ministering brethren to the associations and churches, it calls my mind back when I, too, had the same privilege, and right here I will say what I have often wanted to say: Brethren, think of the hungry lambs you might feed in such isolated places as the Falls of Guyandotte river, where the brethren used to visit and have seasons of refreshing, not only at the school-houses or in the groves, but around the firesides at the houses of some of the brethren there would be evening meetings, and love would flow from heart to heart, and it seemed from house to house. I believe there are a few who yet are alive who used to meet us at such times and places, one especially, who preached my dear old father's funeral, nearly twenty-one years ago, viz: Elder Wm. A. Melton. O, if brother Melton is yet alive, and should see this imperfect scribble, call to mind your visits with brother

John Byrnside, thirty odd years ago, and come again.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

ATHENS, Ga., May 30, 1902.

DEAR EDITORS:—I wish to say to you that I feel to thank almighty God for the blessed gift bestowed upon you in enabling you to so faithfully defend the cause of Christ, and I wish to say to the corresponding brethren and sisters, Continue to write as the Spirit of the Lord may enable you, to the comfort of many of the little ones.

Dear brethren, if I could feel the ability to do so, I would try to write you some of the travels of my mind, but O, I feel so barren and unfit I cannot attempt it, yet I wish to call special attention to all lovers of the truth to the number for March 15th, 1902, to the article under the heading, "Great is the mystery of godliness." Read the above named letter carefully, dear brethren and sisters, and you have the experience of this poor sinner far better than he can tell it.

A poor sinner saved by grace if saved at all,

W. J. BOLTON.

JACKSONVILLE, Ill., April 22, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I heartily indorse the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, with its correspondents. It is about all the preaching I get, so you may know how I enjoy reading the many good letters; and your good editorials; they fill my heart with love for you, my dear brethren, and I feel like taking you by the hand and telling you how much good your writings have done me. I am such a poor old sinner, I have no strength in myself; all my help must come from God, the giver of all good. My dear brother, my prayer is that you may be spared many years to publish the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that your heart may be filled with the choicest of God's blessings.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

GEORGE H. LEE.

FRANKLIN, Tenn., July 15, 1902.

DEAR SIGNS:—Inclosed please find post-office order for four dollars. We enjoy the SIGNS and feel that God will continue to bless them as in the past. We can but think of the admonition, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit ye like men, be strong." Our God is silently and imperceptibly at work, and all his purposes ripening fast, unfolding every hour, every event is brought forth in due time, and answers the very purpose the God of heaven designed from the beginning. Who can say, Amen, to this?

Your unworthy brother,

J. W. HARVEY.

SAN FRANCISCO, California.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I want to express my grateful thanks to you and the faithful in Christ dwelling in New York city, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington city, States of Kentucky, Illinois and Missouri, for the kindness extended to me as I returned from Europe to my home in San Francisco, California. It was a rich feast indeed to me to sit under the sweet sound of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and take part again in the services, after so long a season of loneliness and hunger for the word of God.

W. W. POLK.

[BROTHER Polk named many brethren and friends who were very kind to him, but as it was of too personal a character to be of general interest, we trust he will pardon our omitting the publication of his letter in full.—ED.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1902.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

2 CORINTHIANS VI. 10.

"As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing."

In the Scriptures of truth, sorrow and joy are set over against each other; it is so in the above text; it is so in all our life as believers here on earth; "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." "He that goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bearing his sheaves with him." In natural life even, burdens, trials, sorrow, weeping, underlie all that is really worth having in the way of joy and gladness. Much more is this true in the spiritual world, and the spiritual life. The Scripture quoted at the beginning of this editorial seems to us to set this forth very plainly, and it is in our mind to call attention to some things connected with it, if the Lord will. These words occur in the midst of a wonderful description of the life of faith, which belongs to all the people of God, and which is realized by them all, to some extent at least. There is a vast difference between the possession of a thing, and the realization of all that that thing signifies. The life of faith belongs to all who believe, but all have not yet comprehended what it involves.

Paul speaks here of APPARENT contradictions, but of REAL harmony in the life of disciples: "As deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." In these seven statements of opposites we have the perfect life of the children of God presented. This is true of them all, there is not one of all who have hope in Jesus to-day who does not live this double life, if we may so speak of it. But it is not in our mind to call attention to more of this wonderful statement than that embraced in the words first quoted. It is a statement true, not only of the brethren at Corinth, to whom this letter was addressed, but it is also true of all; of the very weakest believer, of the one who knows least of the divine life, and of him who is deeply instructed in the things of that life. God's people then are a sorrowful and yet a rejoicing people. Before considering some of the things which cause sorrow or joy with all who. believe, we will call attention to the one fact that Paul does not say here, that *at times* they have sorrow, and *at other times* joy, or that the one follows the other in the order of time, though in a certain sense this is true with us all, but he speaks of both the sorrow and the joy as existing in the heart of the people of God at the same time. While these words, according to all rules of human thought, may seem to express an impossibility, yet in the daily life of all who are believers, they are proved to be true words, and there is no contradiction in them. God's dear people do sorrow, and at the same time rejoice. This is the result of the indwelling of the two natures within them, the one fleshly, and

the other of the Spirit. They bear about with them things to sorrow over, and things to rejoice over. On the one hand they see nothing but reasons for sorrow, and on the other hand they see nothing but reasons for rejoicing. Did not David know this experience when he said, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." Did not Paul and Silas have this experience, when in the inner prison at Philippi, with their feet fast in the stocks, and their backs sore and bleeding from the scourging, they yet sang songs of praise to God?

There is another thing shown not only in these words, but in the hundreds of places in the word where joy, gladness and rejoicing are spoken of, viz: the life of the child of God is not all gloom and sadness here below. In fact, joy, gladness, rejoicing, are words as frequently used as are the words that express gloom and sorrow. In fact, the power of grace is made manifest in this one thing often that those under sore affliction, caused by persecution, loss of friends, possessions, and even conviction of sin within themselves, and of their own frequent disobedience and unbelief, yet are able to joy in the Lord, and rejoice in the God of their salvation. Grace does not so much appear when afflictions come, and the result is that we are despairing and oppressed by them, as when under them the child of God is able to lift up his head, and like the brethren of old, even take joyfully the spoiling of his goods, and count it all joy when he falls into divers temptations, because he knows that all is working for his good, and the glory of God. Was it not a wonder of grace that Paul could say, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ might rest upon me"? There are times when joy so comes to the believer's heart in the assurance of sufficient grace for all his need, that under the burden itself he is glad and full of praise. At other times some signal deliverance from the burden itself causes gladness in that heart which has been so oppressed. Let the grace of God manifest itself as it may, whether in taking away the affliction, or that which caused it, or in adding strength to us so that we can bear it gladly, the effect is joy in the Lord.

We need not fear to be glad, as though it were more likely to be of the flesh than of the Spirit. Joy in the Lord can never be of the flesh, and there is equal room to question our sorrow, whether it may not be of the flesh also; there is room to examine ourselves, and our emotions, on both sides; still there is such a thing as godly sorrow, and there is such a thing even here in this low life of ours, as godly gladness. What child of God is there that does not remember the wormwood and the gall, and having them in remembrance, have hope? But also where is there a child of God who cannot remember some seasons of deliverance, either by the removal of that which gave pain, or by added strength given him to bear it, when his soul was filled with praise to God, and gladness inexpressible and full of glory? One was of the Lord, and by the Spirit as well as the other. When the Lord reveals himself how can the soul help rejoicing in him? Paul said to the churches, "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice."

It is good to remember past trials and conflicts, and to recount them over and over again, but the memory of past conflicts and trials could be of no help to the

soul unless with the remembrance of the wormwood and the bitterness, there also came the remembrance of the deliverance, when the Lord made bare his arm and they were enabled to bear it. When we speak of the sore conflicts, and of the fearful foe who assailed us, it can minister no hope nor strength to others, unless we also tell of him who was able to save, and who did deliver us. So Paul in the first chapter of second Corinthians says to his brethren, "We would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: but we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver." Thus he speaks of the trouble, but is also careful to magnify the grace of a faithful God who delivered him, and from the past experience of deliverance he gathers hope for the future. It is good to speak to each other of these things, of the joy and gladness, and the sorrow as well, for in these things very often comfort comes to others in their trials. What a joy it is when called to sit down by some sorely afflicted one, to be able to say to that one, True, you are deeply afflicted, but our God is faithful, and he will sustain you until the final victory, and this we could not say did we not for ourselves know something of his delivering and overcoming grace. Who of all that have seen sore trials and conflicts, is not ready to acknowledge that they have been helped by the testimony of others to the power of sovereign grace. Thus Paul again spoke of comforting others with the comfort wherewith he himself had been comforted of God. Both the memory of the past and the hope of the future ministers joy to the heart of the tried believer.

The poet says,

> "His love in times past forbids us to think
> That he'll leave us at last in sorrow to sink."

Therefore it is good to recall the past, and from it to gather hope for the future. For ourself we must say that much of the comfort and gladness of the present time comes to us from a recollection of the covenant faithfulness of God to us in all our many wanderings and departures from him in the past, and from what he has done we do gather hope, and at times assurance, that he will be faithful to the end. And when we remember all our daily shortcomings, we still at times can rejoice in hope of the glory of God, which shall be revealed in us. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." There are seasons, long drawn out at times, with the people of God, when all that they have to live upon, so to speak, is the memory of past deliverances, or the hope of such deliverance in the future. We may say like the psalmist, "Why, O my soul, art thou cast down within me?" and we may say to our soul, "Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him," but still we can but say, O God, my soul is cast down within me.

There is such a thing in experience as being "cast down, but not destroyed; perplexed, but not in despair." Was this not the state of mind in which the psalmist penned the above words? But O, how the soul longs for another visit from the Bridegroom. Though he is absent, still love abides for him, and ardent longing and prayer, for his coming again. I sleep, but my heart waketh, the spouse said in Song of Solomon. But the hope

of his coming again still abides, because he has come in the past, and though perplexed and cast down, still the soul believes in his covenant faithfulness. He is still the Rock of salvation. But O, to feel our feet once more upon the Rock. Such affliction as this is good. It leads us to search for the foundation, and to desire to feel it under our feet once more, and such desires could not be so earnest, at least we should not realize how earnest they are, did our feet always find and rest upon the Rock. It is in the felt absence of comfort that we desire it most. To those who walk in darkness there is but one refuge, they MUST stay themselves upon the Lord, and so under all the trial and darkness, there is abiding strength, and believing this, there is gladness in the Lord, even in the furnace. Even in the furnace let the inhabitants of the Rock sing.

We feel like giving a brief expression to our thoughts as to why God's people sorrow, and also as to why they always rejoice. They sorrow because of what they find in themselves; they say, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing." All the works of the flesh are in our nature sown, and many of them have sprung and borne fruit, and for these things we must sorrow. God's people sorrow in the afflictions of their brethren, weeping with those who weep; they sorrow at any departures from the true way, by those who have once run in that way; if any have grown careless of their privileges in the church, it must bring grief to all who love the Lord, and are faithful and true themselves; but sin, sin in the world, in their brethren, and chiefly in themselves, must at all times be a source of sorrow to all who love God. While this is and must be true, still there is joy or rejoicing always, and the rejoicing, when sin in the world is seen, is that what men mean for evil, they know that God means for good; the very wrath of man in numberless instances they know has praised the Lord, and what they have seen to be true so many times they doubt not is true at all times, and in this they rejoice always. When their brethren err, still they rejoice that a faithful God has promised to heal all the backslidings of his people, and so all Israel shall be saved, and when sin in their own flesh becomes exceeding sinful, then the glorious hope of a finished redemption in Christ appears, and joy unspeakable and full of glory is theirs. For ourself, we think that we can say that the times when we have most deeply felt our own sinfulness, have often been times when we have rejoiced most in the Lord and his finished work, and in the hope of final glory, when we shall be satisfied, awaking in his likeness. When we have decreased most, then Jesus has increased, and our joy in him has increased also.

In conclusion, was not all this double life of sorrow and of rejoicing set forth by the prophet Habakkuk in these words: "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." All these mercies bring gladness when they are given, but how much more glorious is it to rejoice in the Lord. This rejoicing no changes, whether sad or joyous, can rob the believer of. Through how many tears does the sun of God's favor shine.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

CLOSE OF VOLUME TWENTY-SEVENTH.

ANOTHER year of our editorial labors terminates with the issue of this number; another year of our mortal pilgrimage is numbered with the past, never to be recalled. All the toils and labors, the joys and sorrows, the imperfections and follies which have marked the fleeting moments as they have glided by, are indelibly written, and cannot be erased from the records of the past. Still here we remain, in this earthly house of our mortal tabernacle. God is gracious, and we live. His mercy endureth forever, and we are spared. He changeth not, and we are not consumed. Could we but record his goodness, and tell of his long-suffering, his faithfulness, his loving-kindness, speak of the glory of his kingdom, and talk of his power, it would be worth living for; but alas! we are too forgetful of his mercies, and too frequently have reason to acknowledge with contrition our ingratitude and folly. Who can review the events of the past year without being sensibly impressed with their ingratitude? The wars and commotion which recently agitated the trans-atlantic nations, and shook the thrones of Europe, have measurably subsided, their fearful strife and carnage is for the moment somewhat allayed, still wars and rumors of wars are frequent, and China, Mexico and other parts of the earth, are still involved in strife, or anarchy. Although the change in the past year has been favorable to other nations, it is lamentably the reverse in our own beloved country. Strife, sedition, alienation and animosity usurp the place where kind and fraternal feelings once predominated. A fearful crisis seems to be impending. Our federal organization, Constitution, Laws and Government, although undoubtedly the best ever instituted by man, are not appreciated by the people generally as they should be, and the elements of contention and discord are painfully felt, threatening the perpetuity of our republican institutions. At the moment while we write, it is a fearful question whether our National Congress will ever again organize, whether the people of these States shall longer enjoy the social, civil and religious rights which God, in his holy providence, has thus far favored us with.

To these commotions which agitate us, as citizens of a great and (thus far) glorious brotherhood of States, the Church of God is not and should not be an idle spectator. In no part of the earth, under no form of government under heaven, has she enjoyed so much liberty to worship God according to her own sense of propriety, without being trammeled with earthly legislation to dictate to her how, where, or when to worship her God. In the present fearful crisis does it not become the saints to call mightily upon the God of our salvation to preserve our country, perpetuate our federal Union, hush the tumult of strife, and bless the country with more wisdom, and a more fraternal feeling one toward another?

It is not our province, nor do we wish, in this, as a journal devoted to the cause of religion, to dictate, or even to express our opinion in regard to what political policy should be pursued, but it is safe to say to those who strive, as Moses said to the Hebrews, Sirs, ye are brethren, why strive ye one with the other? And we are commanded to pray for those who are in authority over us, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty; for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior.

We do honestly believe that by far the greater part of all the turmoil and angry discussions which now agitate our country and disturb the councils of our country, have emanated from the clerical or ecclesiastical conclaves of a base, false and fanatical religion; and it therefore becomes the Old Order of Baptists to show to the world, as we have always done, that we are not in fellowship with those religionists who assume the right to supervise the political affairs of our country. While we repudiate a national chaplaincy, and desire a total disconnection of Church and State, of politics and religion, we do believe it is the duty and the privilege of every child of God to pray earnestly and without ceasing for the peace, prosperity and perpetuity of our beloved country.

During the year now closing, God has been graciously pleased to pour out his Spirit on many portions of his Zion. Many churches of our order have been greatly refreshed, her cords have been strengthened, and her stakes established, and many of his redeemed have come to her communion with joy upon their heads, whose songs have made vocal the habitation of the chosen people of our God.

Many of the faithful ministers of Jesus have, in the past year, finished their course. The index of this volume shows a great mortality, and among the departed are some whose names are familiar to our readers, as former correspondents of this paper, Elder Eli Gitchell, D. Morrison, Reed Burritt, John W. Thomas, Harper, Battle, and others, have finished their course, and died in the triumph of that faith of which the Lord Jesus is the author and finisher.

Quite a goodly number have also been raised up, and sent into the vineyard of our Lord to labor; several have during the year been set apart by ordination, and others have received the approbation and fellowship of the churches to improve their gifts in the ministry.

So far as we are advised, a general state of union, peace and harmony prevails throughout our churches and associations generally, and to a greater extent perhaps than for some years past. May God grant that it may not only continue, but increase. We still have enemies, and they are now in the field, but if God be for us, who can be against us?

We have traveled many thousand miles, and visited churches and associations in many of the States during the now receding year, and our absence has made the issuing of our numbers, since the first of August, irregular; but we hope hereafter to be more regular in sending them out.

Notwithstanding all the opposition we have encountered for a few years, our circulation, as our published receipts will show, has been regularly and gradually increasing. We have now more subscribers than we have ever had at any time before. It is still between six and seven thousand.

We contemplate making some improvement in the paper, both in regard to typography and matter. We shall, if the Lord will, begin our twenty-eighth volume with our next number, which we hope to issue on or before the first day of January, 1860. We hope our agents and subscribers generally will exert themselves to make up and forward as many names for the next volume as possible, and to send them early, that we may know how large a number to publish.

Those who may order a discontinuance, will oblige us by stating distinctly their name, and the names of their post-office, County and State, and see that all arrearages on their subscription is paid.

Those who desire to have their papers

changed to a new post-office, will be particular to say what office they are to be changed from, as well as the post-office they are to be sent to.

New subscribers' names should be written very plainly, and also their post-office, County and State.

Agents should be very explicit in stating the names and post-office address of all who are to be credited. Our terms for the new volume will be as formerly.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., December 15, 1859.

OUR OFFER

OF ten cards for five dollars, advertised on last page of cover of this paper, will not be continued after the 1st of October, 1902, whether the whole thousand cards are ordered or not, therefore all who wish to avail themselves of these terms must get their orders in by that time, if the supply of cards is not exhausted sooner.

For full particulars see last page of cover.

ON SALE AT THIS OFFICE.

FOR the convenience of our subscribers, Eld. D. Bartley has sent us a few copies of his book entitled "Priesthood of the Son of God," which we will mail direct from this office, on receipt of price. For full particulars see advertisement on page 548, of this paper.

ALL GONE.

ALL of the cloth bound small hymn books are gone, and all we have left of the other styles of binding, of the small books, are 31 blue plain; 10 blue gilt edged; 15 Imitation Morocco; 7 first quality Turkey Morocco. For full description of these books, prices, &c., see next to last of the white pages of this number. We cannot now say when we will have any more of these books, if ever, as we have not yet decided whether or not we will print any more of them.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$594 55
Elder L. B. Hanover, Ohio, $5.00, Herrick H. Greene, New York, $.50.—Total	5 50
Total to date	$600 05

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MY dear old aunt, **Mildred Bowen,** died May 8th, 1902, and was buried May 9th, which was her 86th birthday. She was born and raised and married to her first husband in Virginia. She spent nearly three months with us last fall, and was present when I wrote obituaries which appeared in the SIGNS of Nov. 15th, 1901, and gave me the particulars of her sister's early life. She was very familiar with the New Testament Scriptures. She had long lived a lonely life, and her Bible was her chief companion. I would read the SIGNS for her, and she would enjoy them and say, "O how glad I am to know there are some good people yet." I would say, "Yes, aunt, they are the salt of the earth." That she rests from all her labors, and has gone to receive a crown of bright glory, prays her niece,

E. JOHNSON.

DIED—May 1st, 1902, at her home in Matamoras, Pa., **Mrs. Elizabeth Halsey Allen,** aged 45 years. She had been ill for eight months with a complication of diseases. She was the wife of Dorastus B. Allen, whom she married Oct. 17th, 1877. Mrs. Allen was a daughter of John B. Halsey (deceased) and Harriet Sayer Halsey, and a sister of Mrs. A. D. Cook, of Princeton, N. J., and also of Wm. H. Halsey, of Westtown, N. Y. She leaves one daughter, Harriet, wife of Henry C. Muhlenbrink, of Matamoras, Pa. For years Mrs. Allen was a member of the Westtown Presbyterian church, and a great favorite with all who knew her. She said to her mother not long before she died, a heavy cloud had been lifted, and she could rejoice in a Savior's love and mercy. Sister Halsey's cup is indeed full, but underneath are the everlasting arms, and she realizes the sustaining power and grace.

Elder Ora J. Shoop conducted the funeral services, after which body was laid to rest the in Laurel Grove Cemetery, at Matamoras, Pa.

H. C. KER.

MEETINGS.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield church, at Whitefield, Maine, commencing Friday, Sept. 5th, 1902, and continue three days.

Those coming by rail will be met by friends at either Gardiner, Maine, on the Maine Central R. R., or by the way of Wiscasset, and connect with the Wiscasset and Quebec R. R., which will take them to the station at Whitefield, where they will be met by friends on Thursday, the day before the meeting. We shall be glad to welcome all who have a desire in their hearts to visit us.

Z. M. BEAL.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet in her seventy-first annual session, the Lord willing, with New Hope Church, in Greenbush, Warren Co., Ill., on Friday, Sept. 5th, 6th and 7th, 1902, at 10 o'clock a. m. Those coming by rail will be met at St. Augustine, on the Quincy branch of the C., B. & Q., on Thursday evening before. The a. m. train from the south will be met on Friday. Those coming from the northern direction will come to Galesburg by 5 p. m. on Thursday evening, and go south at 5:45 p. m. All lovers of the truth are invited, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the First Church of Roxbury, at Vega, (formerly Batavia) Delaware Co., N. Y., on the second Wednesday, and Thursday following, (10th and 11th) of September, 1902, beginning at 10 o'clock. We cordially extend an invitation to those who love and delight in the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, to meet with us, especially to our ministering brethren.

Trains will be met on Tuesday afternoon, at Roxbury, on Ulster & Delaware R. R., the day before the meeting.

WM. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Licking Association of Old School Baptists will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Elk Lick, Scott Co., Ky., commencing on Friday before the second Saturday in September, (12th, 13th and 14th) 1902, and continue three days. Owing to circumstances over which we have no control, the meeting will be held in the city of Georgetown, Ky. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of truth, more particularly our ministering brethren. All coming to our meeting from north or south will be met at Georgetown, and cared for at places arrranged for entertainment.

J. P. FIELD, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting at Rock Springs, the Lord willing, will commence on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1902, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue over Sunday. We hope a goodly number of our brethren may meet with us.

Those coming from Baltimore will take train to connect at Perryville with the 4 p. m. train, on the Port Deposit & Columbia Railroad, for Conowingo, Md. Those from Philadelphia and intermediate stations will meet same train for Conowingo, where they will be met and cared for.

D. M. THOMAS.

A YEARLY meeting of the Albany & Troy Old School Baptist church is appointed to be held Sept. 24th and 25th, 1902, at the residence of Wm. W. Vandenburgh, near West Sand Lake, Rensselaer Co., N. Y. All wishing to hear the true gospel are invited to meet with us. Visitors will be met at Bath, opposite Albany, N. Y., on arrival of Albany and Troy Belt Line steam cars, leaving Albany, N. Y., at 4:30 p. m. Sept. 23d, 1902. Also on arrival of train leaving Albany 7:30 a. m., Sept. 24th, 1902.

EZER LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

THE South Ouachita Association, of Arkansas and Louisiana, convenes September 26th, 27th and 28th, 1902, with New Ramah church, Claiborne Parish, La., six miles west of Haynesville, La., on L. & N. W. R. R. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

L. C. TRULL.

THE yearly meeting of the Cow Marsh Old School Baptist Church will meet on the fourth Saturday and Sunday in September, (27th and 28th) 1902. Brethren and friends of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us.

Those coming from the north will take the Saturday morning train, which leaves Philadelphia at 7:25 a. m. for Woodside, on the Delaware R. R.

Those coming from the south will be met at Woodside, on train leaving Delmar at 8:01 a. m.

W. W. MEREDITH.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the regular Old School Baptist church at Halcottville, N. Y., on the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (1st and 2d) 1902. Brethren and friends are invited to attend. Those coming by rail, either from east or west, will come on the U. & D. R. R. to Halcottville, N. Y.

JAMES AVERY.

THE Otego Old School Baptist church of Otego, N. Y., have appointed their yearly two days meeting to be held October 1st and 2d, 1902. Visitors will be met at depot Tuesday, Sept. 30th, and cared for.

S. C. F. GUERNSEY.

THE Old School Baptist church of Columbia, has appointed her yearly meeting the first Sunday in October, and Saturday before. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. Our pastor, W. L. Line, and Elder Geo. A. Bretz, are to attend.

M. P. LEWIS.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 70. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1902. NO. 19.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TRUSTING IN MAN: TRUSTING IN THE LORD.

"THUS saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." —Jer. xvii. 5-8.

These descriptive words of the Lord are very searching, discriminating, expressive and forcible, and their meaning is too clear to be evaded. They are verily as Paul said, "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." All who trust in the Lord, may lovingly adore him that all this is true, for they have the comforting assurance that none can in the least flatter or deceive him, and that his almighty arm protects them for ever.

The above words of the Lord are dwelling in my mind with a measure of comfort, and so I am moved to write upon them, as the Lord may give unto me. Having never heard them preached upon, nor seen them written upon, of course the views of our brethren are unknown to me as to their full meaning. But a glance shows us that they are very far-reaching, and that they apply to every man and to all men. Herein the Lord himself declares the state of every man of Adam's race, and we know his word is infallibly true, and that his judgment upon each man is neither too woeful of the one nor too blissful of the other, but both are absolutely true. When the Lord utters his voice, his words are not fancy-sketches of shadow and light, either to frighten or to flatter; for his omniscience sees every one exactly as he is, and just so he points them out, and declares how they stand in his sight and how the case is with them; and from his decision there is no possible escape. This solemn truth should strike awe to every soul. Yet too many strive only to gain the

favor of and please men, like themselves, even by hypocrisy and feigned words of flattery, "having men's persons in admiration because of advantage," not caring that God seeth them.

It is true of the Scriptures that one plain and positive "Thus saith the Lord," places the truth spoken by him above controversy, and that truth is sustained by the entire volume of inspiration. In the bottom of the sea, God made Jonah know and confess, "Salvation is of the Lord," and this is the one primary testimony of the Bible. Simeon called the Babe of the manger God's salvation. Peter said of this man of the cross, "Neither is there salvation in any other." In preaching salvation, Paul was determined to know nothing save the crucified Christ Jesus. The angel of God named him Jesus, because he is the Savior of his sinful people. Paul said again, that their reconciliation to God is by the death of his Son Jesus, and their salvation by his life. Jesus said of them, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." Of him the word says, "By the obedience of one shall *many* be made righteous." Not one word of God's inspired truth is against this divine testimony, but all agrees with it.

Yet there are men, not a few, professedly the servants of the Lord, who trust in man, and make flesh their arm or strength. Every one of them is perfectly known to the Lord, though they may deceive for a time his people; for they want to be called by his name, and are very zealous in religious works. His faithful word says of them, "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." The only reason why they deny the power of God is, because they are ignorant of his all-sufficient power and righteousness and grace, and know not that "His arm shall rule for him." They fear, therefore, to trust all in his hands, but think that they can greatly help advance the kingdom and work and cause of the Lord. But they forget, or do not know, that he is King of kings, and Lord of lords; that thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, angels and saints and devils, all, are subject to the word of his power; and that he rideth upon the heavens in the help of his people, and in his excellency on the sky. And so, in their own littleness, they limit the holy One of Israel; therefore they vainly think that his cause will languish and trail in the dust without their valuable help, and flatter themselves that they are doing a great work for the Lord, for which he must be well pleased with them, and will delight to honor them with many rewards. "Verily they have their reward," said the Son of God.

Every one who trusts in man, and relies upon fleshly power for help, sadly proves thereby, not only that he does not know the infinite fullness of the Lord's salvation and strength and blessing, but also that he is ignorant of the utter insufficiency and nothingness of all men in the sight of God. The man who knows himself, having been taught of God, has felt the power of the word of the Lord in his soul, saying to him, "Cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?" But the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh or natural power his arm, depends largely upon his own ability to please God by his free will and voluntary service; therefore he has great confidence in the ability of man's will, and the power of moral law, both to do and to obtain all that God requires and man needs: but he sadly discounts the divine and spiritual power of the Lord and his free grace. So he is

wont to insist much more upon the virtue and value of man's so-called good works and obedience, as entitling him to the favor of God and the blessings of salvation, than upon the obedience and imputed righteousness of Christ, and his much more abounding grace. Because he trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, his belief and position is, God has endowed me with freedom of will and moral agency, consequently my obedience and service to him is in my own power, and is voluntary and free, because it is a moral obligation, and it depends and rests upon myself whether I keep the commandments of God or not.

This is the man whose heart departeth from the Lord; that is, whose heart is not with the Lord, but he has gone down to Egypt or the powers of the natural and moral world for help. This is the direct result of having confidence in the flesh. —But what does the Lord define "the flesh" to be? "That which is born of the flesh." Man in his first birth is of the flesh, and is not spiritual, but natural only. "The first man is of the earth, earthy." It is true, then, that all that religion in the world which is the product of man is earthy, fleshly, natural and legal, although it may claim to be highly moral and cultured. It all rests and depends upon the natural and moral resources and forces of man. It claims the blessings of God and his kingdom upon the ground of man's religious services and works, as the moral agent of God. This is its least and lowest claim now in time; but its highest and ultimate claim reaches up to the kingdom of immortal glory. It talks much of the divine *rewards* which the religious man expects the Lord will bestow upon him for his works and zeal in his service. It regards the kingdom and government of God as moral, and holds that he will honor the man who is morally good and obedient with special favor and manifold blessings. Therefore, it urges upon others that they, too, should come and espouse the cause of religion and do good, that they may also obtain the rewards of salvation and the many blessings that God will delight to honor the good and obedient with. The wisdom of the world would frown upon any people who would not accept this as the true and best religion. Why, it looks so suitable and desirable in the eyes of the world, they who have partaken of it insist that all ought to unite with them and help on the good work; and the "remnant," who will not, are counted far behind the times. Ah, they are regarded as "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense," as fit only to be spoken against, and their names are cast out as evil. Ofttimes they have been persecuted from city to city; they are defamed, "are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day." For a denial of the ability of man to either stand or fall, to serve God or serve him not, just as man will, is condemned as taking away moral obligations from man, as denying the necessity for good works, and as removing the needed incentive to a religious life.

For these and like reasons, the spirit that maketh flesh its arm is up in arms against all the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. It is set down as intolerable, when the ability of religious men to keep the commandments of God, and possess the rewards, is denied. But it is zealously held that to depend upon man and his strength to this extent is the only right and safe thing to do. And all who cannot fall in line with this way that seemeth right unto man, but have been made to

stand still and wait upon the Lord, are written down as "stocks and stones," "lifeless machines," "can't help-its," and as saying, "Let us do evil that grace may abound." The Scriptures abundantly and sorrowfully show that from this spirit of religion that maketh man's ability its arm of dependence and reliance, has arisen all the religious intolerance and deadly persecution against all that trusteth in the Lord, from Abel to Jesus, and from Jesus until now. It has hunted down, driven out, maligned, oppressed, excommunicated and killed millions of the poor of this world, whom God hath reserved unto himself, and who neither could nor would ascribe any part of their salvation to man. Not a few of the remnant according to the election of grace, who now dwell upon the earth, have been made to feel and deeply sorrow and suffer from the religious spirit that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh its arm. But the ears of the Lord are open to the cry of the poor and needy, and "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

The religion and its success that depends upon man's ability, is very prominently a *rational* religion, and it consists far more in *human reason* than *spiritual revelation.* It talks much more about the christian's ability to obey the Lord and reap the reward, than of his need of faith that overcometh the world. It dwells very much upon our religious works that we may obtain the blessing, but very little is said about the need of the grace of God in the heart, that subdues sin and reigns through righteousness.

"For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited." The Lord has said that thus shall it be with the man whose heart departeth from the Lord, and maketh flesh his arm. The words of the Lord are right and true, and as he has said so shall it be. This is a fearful but righteous termination of all who depend upon man for salvation. It was fulfilled in Cain, in the pharisee, and in all the house of Israel, who trusted in themselves. Of them it may be woefully said, "How are the mighty fallen!" To see how verily the word of the Lord is fulfilled, the humble soul that trusts in the Lord need only enter a man-trusting religious meeting, and he will sadly witness how like the barren heath or bush in the desert it is, how destitute of good, how like the parched places in the wilderness, and he will say, "I perish here with hunger." The Lord did not say in vain, "Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow." All this is necessarily and righteously so, for it is denying the power and grace and mercy of God in the full salvation of his people, and is worshiping and serving the creature more than the Creator; therefore it amounts to idolatry, and must fail and come to naught.

O how all this solemn word of the Lord should humble and admonish all the dear children of his love and grace! and lead them to implore him to take from them all confidence in an arm of flesh and keep their heart from departing from him. Many of you, dear brethren and sisters, who have known the Lord's people sixty and seventy years, have sorrowfully known the blighting effects when any of them have departed from the Lord and have trusted in man. For among those who have thus turned away from the truth and from the Lord's sufficient grace,

there is a lamentable spiritual dearth, and a famine of hearing the word of the Lord. Yet many of the dear children of the Lord have been thus enticed and drawn away into the wilderness of carnal reason and worldly religion, and their soul faints for the pure word of grace, the bread and water of life. Thus will the Lord fill those who fall away from grace with their own ways, until they are made to know that his word, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord," is verily true in them. They will then say, "The Lord is my salvation."

"Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." O how thankfully now we turn away from the other to this man! We realize how good and pleasant it is to be a companion with him. With joy and gladness we hear him say, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." "Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defense; I shall not be greatly moved. * * * In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God. Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us." O how highly this man exalts God in our view! and his cheering words inspire us with hope in the Lord. With this blessed man we feel a sacred nearness to the Lord, for the Lord is with him and has blessed him. Truly it is good to be in this place. "In thy presence is fullness of joy."

"Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies." The words of the Lord are true, and placed in their right order. He does not say, The man that trusteth in the Lord shall be blessed for trusting in him; but being blessed of the Lord to know him, he then trusts in him. The psalmist therefore says, "The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee." For knowing him, their confidence in his righteousness and merciful goodness and power aboundeth unto abiding faith and trust in him, inspiring them with the assurance that he will execute his righteous judgments and do all the good pleasure of his will. This banishes far from them the dishonoring thought that the Lord is limited and hindered by "wants," and that he "tries," but fails. O no! for his word to them is, "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Isaiah therefore joyfully says again, "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah, We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." Surely the salvation appointed for walls and defense is not in our keeping, as depending upon our faithfulness and strength, as it must be if conditional; yet it is now in the gospel day, where the people of the Lord need the safety of a walled city. Conditional salvation in this time of warfare would lamentably be the most uncertain protection against the fiery darts of the wicked one. But we rejoice, beloved soldiers of Christ, that the salvation which

is the Lord's wall round about his people secures them against all the assaults of every foe. O this is the salvation for me!

Our heart will unite with the sweet psalmist of Israel and sing, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? * * * The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him." "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever."

"And whose hope the Lord is." Trust in the Lord inspires us with hope in him. To Timothy Paul said Christ is our hope. Believing in him as our wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption, we have the hope of eternal life and glory in him. "My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus and his righteousness." "O my soul, * * * hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." This hope in the Lord is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and it is entered with our glorified High Priest and forerunner within the veil. He reconciled us to God by his death, and we shall be saved from death by his risen and triumphant life. Christ is our life and light and salvation, and when he shall appear, we shall also appear with him in glory. This will be the full fruition of our confidence and faith and trust and hope in the Lord, for we shall then be holy and without blame before God in love.

"For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." This is the blessing of the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. O how supremely this one is blessed of the Lord! The Lord is his Shepherd and he shall not want. He shall be as Eden, as the garden of the Lord, and as the tree of life, planted by the river of life, a tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified. O brethren, beloved in the Lord, "Thus saith the Lord," to you, who trust and hope in him. May his sure word inspire you all with patient steadfastness in faith and trust and hope, in this time of the trial of your faith, so you may rejoice in him in tribulation, and meekly endure reproaches and threatenings, for the Lord's sake, from those who trust in man. Be patient in tribulation, brethren, and cast your burdens on the Lord, for he careth for you. I love you who trust in the Lord, more than words can express, and I rejoice with you in the Lord, that he has mercifully revealed to us that the curse of God rests upon every one that trusts in man, and in fleshly strength. Be not moved, my dear brethren, though a yet greater fight of affliction may await you; for the Lord's fire is in Zion, and it will burn up all the works of the flesh, but his faithful love and power and grace shall keep you ever trusting in him, and his blessing maketh you rich.

Hoping in the Lord,

D. BARTLEY.

LEBANON, Ohio, July 26, 1902.

MATTHEW V. 5.

"BLESSED are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."

Probably no one (who knows the truth) can have any doubt whence arises this blessing of which our Savior speaks, and also what that blessing is. The words of Jesus are weighty, and power accompanies the words of his mouth. Therefore with solemnity and with reverence should we weigh every word as spoken by him. He never spake a word in vain. Lexicographers from a natural standpoint attempt to give the meaning of the word "blessed" thus: Such character is happy, prosperous in worldly affairs, enjoying or pertaining to spiritual happiness and the favor of God. Enjoying or pertaining to heavenly felicity, &c. But no man save the blessed character himself (the living child, born of God and established in grace) can tell what that blessing is in a spiritual sense. The knowledge must come from within, and not from any external source. God bestows the blessing upon the creatures whom he hath chosen in Christ. To them he gave his only begotten Son. Jesus therefore is himself the blessing; he is the very life of his people; and whosoever believeth in him is blessed indeed. The blessed character then is he in whom is Christ the hope of glory. They have certain undeniable marks which distinguish them from all the world beside. Yet those marks are invisible to the natural eye, and are seen only by those who have like precious faith, and who are blessed characters also. They speak a language which the world understands not; it is the pure language of Canaan. In consequence of which they are a people in the world, yet separate from it. The marks which they bear, and by which they are known one of another, have been placed upon them in the new life which they breathe, and which sustains them in their new existence. And this life is the life of Christ Jesus their Lord. As he is, so are they. The marks which are manifest in the life of the followers of Jesus are designated as "fruit of the Spirit," yielded in the growth in grace, and perfected in the upbuilding of the saints in their most holy faith. They are these: "Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. Then from the wearing of these precious jewels, other marks are brought to light, which are strangely beautiful. I say "strangely beautiful," because to the natural senses they are ugly and objectionable. Poverty, blindness, nakedness, wretched and miserable in themselves on account of indwelling sin, and inability to do the things they would. These make them beautiful, and strangely so, because such are found clothed in the riches and treasures of Christ, in whom they have all things. Still other marks are prominent as evidences that they are rightful heirs to the inheritance which is in Christ Jesus, and inhabitants of the holy city. They "hunger and thirst after righteousness." They are "poor in spirit." They are mourners, and merciful are they, also "pure in heart," and peacemakers, too, and not least of all, they are persecuted for righteousness' sake. How wonderful and precious to hear Jesus say, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

"Blessed are the meek." Each particular fruit yielded, bears its own especial insignia of our right to that which

we profess. It is a broad declaration to say that meekness does not exist except in the children of God; yet it is true. Jesus makes no modification in the Scripture under consideration. "The meek." All who are meek are blessed. There is in the world an imitation of meekness, and some of it is pleasant to think of, yet underlying every display of it, there will be found on close examination some selfish motive or interest. Entire self-abnegation marks the one who is truly meek. That condition is never realized or manifested except in the character which is blessed of God, and in whom is the lively exercise of the Spirit of Christ. No man ever did truly deny himself until he began to hate himself, and to love holiness. In the gift of Christ by the Father to his dear children, the love of God is implanted in the heart. Self-denial is at once apparent in every motion, esteeming other better than himself, taking up the cross, and following him in meekness, who was meek and lowly in heart. The lawyer who could not give up his rich possessions was not meek, because he could not deny himself. The woman who in the press and swaying of the multitude reached forth her hand and touched the hem of Jesus' garment, fully believing, was meek and lowly in heart, as was her Savior. Therefore did virtue go out of him, healing all her infirmity. True meekness is never voluntary. The Spirit of Christ is the Spirit of meekness, and when such Spirit is made manifest, it is bright evidence that Christ is within us; that we have been delivered from self, which is sin. In his humanity Christ had a will of his own, but he declares, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." This is true meekness; pure self-denial, and and all who truly follow him are like him, because they are moved by his Spirit. And they shew forth meekness, as the light of the testimony of Christ Jesus, who is revealed in them; they walk in "the path of the just, which is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

"For they shall inherit the earth." An inheritance is a possession which comes to us without either service or emolument from us; without consulting us, or giving us liberty or freedom of will to accept or reject. The inheritance of the saints, into which we come into possession in this time state, is a varied experience. That blessed character who is meek, has the earth for his inheritance, and although it is a waste howling wilderness, a place of destitution, overrun with enemies, and every evil growth, with no smooth places for the feet to tread, yet he would not exchange it for fertile valleys, or hills of plenteous growth. And inasmuch as he had no part in selecting his place of abode, neither has he any choice in the matter as to remaining in it, or leaving it. He who gave the meek one the inheritance, also gave him the will to accept it, with calm and peaceful resignation, and with gladness of heart. So we read in the literature of this earthly inheritance, that, "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." What will a WORLDLY man not suffer for the treasures of this world? The secret of our great willingness to accept this earthly inheritance is, that there is hidden treasure there, and immediately on taking possession of our estate we begin searching for

the precious jewel of our heart's desire, and although we are subjected to much suffering, sore trials, and many discouragements and conflicts, yet we go on, and on, in our search. The enemy is strong, and cunning, and persistent, and ofttimes we are well nigh ready to give it all up, but we find "There is no discharge in that war." Often, too, along the way, we are succored and helped, at the times when we least expect it, and from whence we looked not for it. When we are poor and needy, and seek water, "and there is none," and our "tongue faileth for thirst," we cry unto the Lord. Then we hear in sweet accents the word of the Lord saying, "I the Lord will hear them, *I* the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." But methinks I hear some saying, But you have not yet told us why the EARTH is a special inheritance of the MEEK. I hear you say, The hungry and thirsty are filled, the mourner is comforted, the merciful obtain mercy, the pure in heart see God, the saints are persecuted for righteousness' sake, &c., but in what particular way do the meek inherit the earth? Well, sometimes it is easier to ask a question than to give an answer, because words at our command do not always convey intelligently that which is in our mind. Anyhow, I do not mean to separate the meek in any way from the blessed characters that are designated as receiving other gifts, but they are that same individual in the varied experience of which I spoke a little while ago, having all these things, but varying in character of experience. As I said, entire self-abnegation is true meekness. The growth in grace is as the growth of a tree, while the stalk and the green leaf are manifesting themselves above the earth, the roots inherit the earth and abide there, and work their slow growth downwards into its dark confines, yet all the while giving support and nourishment to the upward growth. So the growth in grace, while it attains unto a knowledge of God, it also (as the roots) attains unto a knowledge of self. The greater knowledge we have of our enemy and his movements, the better fitted we are to cope with him. Also the greater knowledge we have of self, the more we hate self, and the more willing we are to deny self. The meek are they who are strong in self-denial, because in the downward growth of the knowledge of self, they see the total depravity and pollution of all the lusts of the flesh. Jesus was meek and lowly in heart in his perfect knowledge of the depravity of the human heart. When we see the wide chasm between the unrighteousness of man, and the holiness of God, how we fall prostrate in very meekness and lowliness of heart. So I am trying to make plain to you that the blessedness of the meek consists in his downward growth of knowledge into all that is "earthly, sensual and devilish" in man. Therefore does he inherit the earth; he taketh possession of it; he searcheth out its depths, and also as the "cedars of Lebanon," the farther into the earth the roots do go, so in proportion is the upward manifestation, and as the tree is pleasant to look upon in its clothing of green, so also is Zion the very perfection of beauty, for out of it God hath shined.

I think I fully realize that I have undertaken beyond my depth in attempting to open up to your view this wonderful Scripture, but I assure you I have used the very best material in my storehouse,

and would have done better if I could. Sometimes a little glimpse into the hidden treasure-house of some coveted passage of Scripture will reveal to us Jesus, and it is him for whom we are searching in the pilgrimage of our earthly inheritance.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., July 26, 1902.

DETROIT, Mich., July 19, 1902.

MR. ROBERT SCATES—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—How glad I was to get your letter, for sister Bessie wrote me that you had asked for my address, and why you should trouble yourself about a vile, sinful wretch like me, is very strange indeed, and more than the natural mind can understand. I read your letter over three times before I could put it away, and must tell you I felt sad for you being in such a dark state of mind, and trust the dear Lord will give you comfort again.

I have enjoyed such peace of mind since I was baptized as I have not language to express, and yet I feel if I had my just due that such would not be the case. Whenever the least doubt comes into my mind, immediately experience in the precious hope comes so vividly to my mind that the doubts at once disappear, and I praise God continually.

The night before Kate was buried, Mr. Neil Blue and I sat up all night, and in some way we got talking about the Bible, and I said to him I considered the Bible a history of these times, and so poorly written that if written in the present time, it would not be allowed to be published. But I had never read the Bible very much, as I did not have any desire to do so, and when I did try to read it, over three years ago, I would always put it away in disgust.

The day of Kate's funeral (May 20th) when dear Elder Carnell prayed at the house, and we started for the church-house, I said to my wife, I wished we could go direct to the cemetery, and not have any sermon at all, for I felt sure that the sermon would spoil the beautiful prayer at the house, which I liked very much. She replied, The prayer was lovely, but she was not so sure he would spoil it, but I replied, He would to me at least, for I never cared to hear him preach, and had told several as much, but I assure you, my dear brother, that the sermon came far from spoiling the prayer, and I never, never expect to hear such a sermon again, and yet I cannot recall a single sentence of it. I managed to control myself until we got outside, and Bessie was so weak that I went with her to the cemetery. We no sooner got started till I began to cry, and what I was crying about I scarcely knew, but I felt so changed. It seemed to me we would never get to the cemetry, and I wished we never would, for I felt sure I could not control myself, and I felt I would rather die than let the people see me in such a state, and I made Bessie promise not to tell any one, and then I prayed the Lord to give me strength to control myself at the cemetery, and I was given strength to do so.

On the way home to Mr. Carnell's as we were about to cross the railroad, I did not look to see if there was a train coming, but I wished one would come and kill us. I had been talking to Bessie and asked her where I should start to study the Bible? for I felt there must be something in it after what I had heard. She said she could not tell me, but the Lord would when he saw fit to do so. Before we got home these words came to me, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not

want," but I did not know they were in the Bible. That evening sister Maggie came and sat down beside me and said, "Well, Jake, what did you think of Elder Carnell's sermon?" I sat for a moment, which seemed like an hour, and resolved in my mind that she would never know, and I got up and left her without saying one word. I thought if Bessie would keep her promise that I could control myself, but soon found out differently. When we retired, I asked my wife if she knew where that passage was, "The Lord is my Shepherd," &c., as it was on my mind continually, and she told me and then I cried again, and asked her to have Maggie come into our room, and I then told Maggie I never thought mortal man could preach such a sermon as I heard that day, and by a man that I had so often said could not preach, and then I made her promise not to tell any one. The next morning I was in great distress, I felt like there was something about my heart that was swelling, and if it continued it would blow me to pieces, and a desire came over me to go and see Elder Carnell, so I asked Maggie to go with me. She at once got ready and they wanted us to take a lunch before we started, but I could not eat and did not want to delay a moment, so they put a lunch in the buggy for us, but O the horse was so slow I thought we would never get there, till Maggie started telling her experience, which comforted me very much. My intention was to try and tell Elder Carnell what a vile, sinful wretch I was, but I did not, but while I was talking to him these words came into my mind, "The peace of God that passeth all understanding," and then I felt better. I thought first to ask him where I would find these words, but I could not, but thought Maggie could tell me, but I could not ask her. We went to Mr. Blue's for supper, and then back to Ekfrid, and then Hester and I went home to Detroit that night, and I was feeling more comfortable. But when we retired I was in great distress, and I had such a pain in my forehead I thought my head would split, and then I saw a vision of Kate (who was buried) so plain, surrounded by a soft light, and I stretched out my hands and said, "Kate," and it all vanished, and to my surprise my pain (such as I had never experienced) was gone, too. For several days after this, wherever I went, I felt that every person could look right into my heart and see what a vile, sinful wretch I was, and thought every one was watching me. Then I got a letter from Maggie saying that to her the book of Ephesians was very interesting. This I read and liked, but felt I must read on, for I had been hunting for the passage that came to me when I was talking to Elder Carnell, so I read the book of Philippians, and in the fourth chapter and seventh verse I found what I had been looking for, and felt comforted: "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

A few mornings after this I was working in the garden, and the words came into my mind, "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me." I stopped hoeing and got my Bible and something seemed to say to me that I would find these words in the fourteenth chapter of John, which I did, in the sixth verse, and since that time it seems I cannot doubt, for I knew nothing about the Bible, and to think how these passages came to me, and how I was enabled to find them, is beyond the power of mortal man to understand.

I desired to come before the church, but I had such a dread that I would be told to wait awhile, for when I called to mind how Maggie had been exercised, and several others that I had heard of, I felt that I had not had experience enough, so did not know what to do. So when dear Elder Durand preached here the Tuesday before the Ekfrid meeting, I decided to talk to him, which I did, and he gave me some hope in his manner and what he said.

I had subscribed for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I found in one of them an article on secret societies, and that worried me, as I had joined the Masons. At first I made up my mind that no one over in Ekfrid knew anything about my being a Mason, so I would say nothing about it, but I could not do that, and spoke to Elder Durand about it, and he spoke so nice about that part of the belief that I resolved to withdraw at once from them, which, thank God, I have been enabled to do.

Now, dear brother, I am going to tell you, and I never told this to any one before: When I came before the church I was afraid of you, and wished in my heart that you were not there, and I can never tell you how relieved I felt when you extended the hand of fellowship to me. The sweet look on dear Elder Carnell's face, and also the pleasant smile on Elder Durand's, are constantly before me. I often feel the pleasure that Elder Curry gave me as he slipped his arm in mine on the way to the water, and as I write I see you so plain as you stood at the water's edge that day, with your Bible in your hand. As I was coming out of the water I felt as if my feet were on solid rock, and then I thought,

"On Christ the solid Rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand."

May the Lord ever keep and lead me, for I know how helpless I am, and more unworthy than words can describe. I hope I have not wearied you with this long letter, and have written nothing to grieve you. Remember me to your wife, and we would be glad to have you visit us when in Detroit. I long to hear a sermon again, but perhaps would go to sleep, as I did when Elder Curry preached here after the Ekfrid meeting, and I so much desired to hear him. Will hope to see you in August, as we expect to spend some time during that month in Ekfrid and St. Thomas.

Your unworthy brother in a precious hope,

J. L. YOUNG.

[THE foregoing most interesting experience of grace has been forwarded to us by brother Scates, with the suggestion that it will prove of deep interest to all who love the truth, and believe in the effectual work of the Spirit in the heart. We have read it with deep comfort, and feel to rejoice at the assurance which it contains that the arm of the Lord is not shortened that it cannot save. The Lord still makes bare his arm in salvation in wonderful ways. Some have objected to sermons at funeral occasions, but such experiences as the above furnish full justification for them. Let the gospel be preached at all times; God surely blessed the preaching upon the occasion spoken of by our brother.—ED.]

REIDSVILLE, N. C., July 25, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Since we were in conversation upon the matter my mind has been much exercised about Abraham, the knife, the fire, Isaac, the wood, and the ram, and for some cause, I want to communicate to you some of my thoughts.

It seems to me that in every act pertaining to our salvation Jesus is seen in all the figures of the Old Testament, and therefore Abraham must represent Christ in his official work as our Savior. To my mind he is the high priest, receiving at the hand of God the commandment to offer a sacrifice. The knife is the sword to slay the sacrifice, and however objectionable it may be to him, he must carry it until the offering is made, knowing all the while the end to which it is appointed, and just what it must perform. The fire is that which must consume the wood and that which is laid thereon. Abraham, as our high priest, must carry both of these to the place of offering, where they must accomplish their work in the death, and the consummation of the sacrifice, and the consuming of the wood which is appointed to consume the sacrifice.

Isaac is appointed to bear the wood which is chosen for fuel to consume the offering. He is the wood-bearer. The ram is the sacrifice which releases Isaac, and his father receives him in a figure from the dead. As the ram is consumed, the wood is also consumed, and neither Isaac, nor any one else, has to bear it any more.

I would be glad to tell this to you just as I have seen it, and as I hope that I have been given to experience it. O, for grace and wisdom from our dear heavenly Father, to preach Jesus and him crucified.

Jesus Christ as the great High Priest of the glorious new covenant receives all the commandments of salvation from the Father, and into his hands the Father commits all the means necessary to perfect this salvation in every sense; not one of the children are seen in all this arrangement, and yet every one of them in all the nations of the world, and in all the dispensations, are represented in this divine arrangement, and grace is given them in this High Priest, that he should be to them the head over all things, over all principalities, and that their desires should be unto him. It is as the Lord said to the woman, who was the true figure of the church, "Thy desire shall be unto thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." And even so, all the desire of the church shall be unto her husband, and he shall rule over her.

Jesus, the High Priest, as the representative of his people, receives the covenant. He is not consulted in the making of this covenant, but the eternal God, as the Father, is the Covenantor. This is one of the beauties of all the covenants of the Bible, God makes the covenants without ever consulting the receiver of the covenant. There is this difference between his covenants, and the contracts talked about by conditionalists. Now as our High Priest received this covenant as our representative, even so all who are in him and represented by him, have received the covenant in him. Just as God spoke to Abraham, and commanded him what to do, and he did it, even so has he spoken to his Son, Jesus Christ, and he has done as he was commanded by the Father. This covenant, as made by the Father, pleased him, and he delighted to fulfill all its provisions. He said, "I delight to do thy will, O God." Here a body was prepared him, in which he should bear his people, and all their iniquity. So we read, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me;" "Surely he hath born our griefs and carried our sorrow," "in all their affliction, he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and bare them, and carried them all the

days of old. Thus it is fully proven that as the sin-bearer he must have a body, and for him it was prepared. As our High Priest he lays all our sorrows, sins and griefs, on Jesus. We are nothing but a mass of sin, and he bare and carried us all the days of old. The sins which he bore on the altar were our sins, and the grief was ours, and he bare it all for us, that we should be saved by him.

While this was being done, the High Priest was there with Jesus, in all his fiery vengeance against sin. This fiery vengeance upheld him, and so he declared, "My fury it upheld me."—Isaiah lxiii. 5. And he was anointed to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God. He made no covenant with sin, nor listened to any temptation. He hated them and turned away from them. He loved righteousness and hated iniquity with all his heart. Thus he was angry with sin, and the fiery wrath was carried by him. In Gethsemane, he did not give it up, nor in any sense try to quench it, notwithstanding the great heat that was upon him as the sin-bearer, which pressed him as a cart under many sheaves, causing him to fall to the ground and sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, and to cry, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." But it must not pass; he must drink it; divine justice demands that he drink it, and this demand he had taken upon himself to satisfy, and he must satisfy it, he is willing to do it, he delights to do his Father's will, and therefore he says, "Not my will, but thy will be done." O, such humble submission. "He learned obedience by the things which he suffered." Here, "he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Now the altar is built, and the wood laid upon it in order; Jesus is made sin for us, he is nailed to the cross. Here the knife, which has been all the while in the hands of the high priest, but not in use (as it were sleeping) is commanded to awake. It is said, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts: smite the Shepherd." From this sword the Lord prayed to be delivered, saying, "Arise, O Lord, disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword."—Psalm xvii. 13. Thus it is set forth what the sword is, which is to slay the sacrifice, and which was carried in the hand of the great High Priest, as our blessed sin-bearer went along to the altar, with all the great combustible weight upon him, which was appointed to consume all of him that pertained to this world, that in being put to death he should forever destroy this load of guilt, and him that had power over death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

O, the dark and gloomy moments to Abraham as his faith triumphed gloriously, when he could see nothing in view but the altar, the wood, his bound son, the fire and the fatal knife, all backed up by the commandment of the Lord to offer his son, his only son Isaac, thus upon the altar. He takes the knife, but the voice of God breaks through the darkness, he sees the ram behind him. Isaac is received in a figure from the dead, the ram is bound as the appointed sacrifice, and all is consumed upon the altar with the wood. Isaac was the appointed head of the great typical family of God, and they were all seen in him at that very time.

When the ram is consumed, all the wood is consumed with him, and Isaac is no more a wood bearer, nor does the High Priest any longer hold the sword,

nor the fire. All is done now, and God speaks in sweet approval. Jesus bore our sins to the tree, and as a man he was bound with our snare, and nailed to the cross. While thus extended, darkness covered the earth which quaked and trembled, while the rocks were rent and the graves were opened. In that trying hour we hear a voice piercing through the darkness, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" The disciples had turned away, even to the bold Peter, and the holy women had all gone, and all have fled away but the sacrifice, while the sword executes its work of death, and the fiery vengeance in all its heated fury consumes our sins, and our blessed Lord bows his head and cries, "It is finished."

The work is done; the head of Satan is bruised; all the enemies of the church are overcome. And as the Philistines fled, and were slain at the death of Goliath, so all the enemies of the church are forever cut down. At the appointed time the sacred body, now dead, is laid in the tomb, whence it arises on the morning of the third day a triumphant victor, and our ever living High Priest, fully and forever delivered from the sword, together with all who are represented in him. Thus we see Jesus no more as a sin-bearer in a body of flesh and blood; he is a risen, triumphant, victorious and glorified Lord, gone on before, that all who were represented in his death should also rise, and be glorified with him, and be as he is.

The above is a sketch of the matter as I see it.

May the Lord bless those who may read it to enter much further into the great deep of pearls, and partake freely, and rejoice in this great salvation, is the prayer of your brother in this sweet hope,

L. H. HARDY.

FRAGMENTS.

We may reason with great apparent power and clearness concerning the doctrine of salvation by grace, and yet find to our surprise, that no convincing force seems to be exerted by our argument upon the one to whom it is addressed. Our theory seems to be correct, yet something is lacking. It is evident that our carnal mind is taking the lead rather than the Spirit of truth. When light contends with darkness the argument is effectual. When the Spirit directs us in our contentions for the truth no mistakes are made, and the words spoken are with power. The air issuing from the mouth of a bellows is of greater force than the breath of a man, but it ceases when the hands stop working: no life is indicated by it. The breathing of a living soul is infinitely better. I have heard and read arguments for the truth that were unanswerable, and yet I had no more comfort in them than I would have had if they had issued from the mouth of an automaton. There seemed no spiritual power in them, but they expressed a light and trifling spirit, and a spirit of bitterness, anger and jealousy was clearly seen behind the carefully chosen words. Again I have heard one talk, or read his writings, who was trying to defend an error, and yet I could see and feel a gentle, truth-loving spirit speaking through the words, and could see that the one speaking, though tangled in a labyrinth of error, was anxious to be right, and was earnestly searching for the truth, and was in a conflict with his own carnal mind more than with any man. I can feel an interest and comfort in conference with such a man, knowing that he really wants the truth, and assured that he will know it in the Lord's good time, and that the truth will make him free.

We may present the clear opposition

of the Scriptures to the doctrine of a conditional time salvation, and yet find that not only the hearer or reader, but ourselves also, are left in doubt and perplexity as to the nature of the responsibilities that scripturally appear to rest upon the Lord's people, and as to the true place and meaning of the exhortations, admonitions, commands and reproofs that are given to them, with the stripes, chastening and scourging that their transgressions are visited with. We want whatever theory we present to be consistent with the Scripture, but we are taught that it is not our province to straighten crooked things, nor establish theories concerning salvation in all its parts and breadths and lengths, and concerning the way we come into a knowledge of it.

While one may be wondering if there is really some conditions upon the performance of which God has rested some part of our salvation in time, and has offered some spiritual or temporal blessing as a reward, he may be taught the truth in a plain, convincing way. Some one comes to the church and tells us that he is happy because he is living as he ought to live. He says that because of his good and obedient walk the Lord has rewarded him with joy and peace in his soul. He expresses himself as sure that his comfort and happiness in this respect have been left with himself, and that if he will he can have grace to secure them by walking right, which he is determined to do. Now, while there may seem some semblance of the letter of the truth in this, our hearts at once tell us that this man is deluded, and is resting in vain self-confidence, and is not in all this moved by the Spirit. We know that the Lord's people do not feel that way. They feel their dependence upon the Lord for every right motive, for every good thought, for every right action, and "without him they can do nothing." We know from the Bible, and from our own experience, that the true follower of Christ never feels that he has by any works of his own merited any favor from the Lord. He regards all the favors he receives as given him through mercy and abounding grace, and esteems as the greatest of blessings the grace by which he is enabled to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he is called.

I NOTICE that every token of the Lord's favor is received by me with surprise. I find myself delightfully surprised when the Lord's people manifest love and fellowship for me, as though I had no right to expect it, and I wonder still more when, as is sometimes the case, I do feel the sweet assurance that this great blessing does truly belong to me. I am surprised every time that a portion of the Lord's written word comes to my mind with power and sweetness, and when there springs up in my soul a feeling of praise and thanksgiving to his holy name. It would almost appear as though I were expecting evidences of his displeasure on account of the evils and disobedience in my heart and life, rather than tokens of pity and love, it is such a wonder and delight to me when those tokens come, and when he sheds his love abroad in my heart. It is a wonder to me that I have a place in the church; that I am allowed, not to say constrained, to preach the gospel of his grace, and that some of his dear children give me evidence that he blesses that preaching to their profit and comfort. I find myself astonished and very thankful that I desire to give him praise and glory, and to devote myself wholly to his service, and more than

astonished when I am assured that he will receive praise and devotion from one so unworthy as I.

Therefore the words of David are very sweet to me when he and the people rejoiced and thanked the Lord because they had offered willingly unto the Lord of all their precious things: "Now therefore, our God, we thank thee and praise thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee. For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding."—1 Chron. xxix. 13–15.

It would be a carnal spirit that would prompt one to offer of his work and gifts unto the Lord with the expectation of being rewarded for them. The Spirit by which David was led moved him to thank and praise the Lord because they were able to offer willingly unto him.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the First Church of Roxbury, at Vega, Delaware Co., N. Y., September 10th and 11th, 1902, to the several churches composing the same, sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Through the gracious hand dealing of our God, we are again privileged to meet in an associate capacity, to enjoy a yearly greeting, and to worship we hope in spirit and truth.

And surely we have great cause for thankfulness to our God for his abundant mercy to us; although we are called to mourn the loss of those who formerly met with us, enjoying the association of brethren in the true sense above all worldly pleasure. But they are at rest, while we still are in a world of trial.

The year passed has truly been of an eventful nature, for all the things enumerated by our Savior to his dear disciples, while he was with them in the flesh, have been transpiring in some parts of the earth or world. Yet we believe our God does for his elect's sake shorten the days of devastation in the earth, or set bounds to tribulation, so it can only do what he has in his counsel determined to be done.

This leads us momentarily to the word of inspiration as a subject to write a little as the Spirit may direct in this annual letter:

"For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."—Malachi iii. 6.

The subject is a conclusion or following as a reason that God's ancient covenant people as considered in Jacob as God's love rested upon him as a type of his chosen spiritual people. It is good to think of things of a stable and unchangeable nature in earthly things. Yet only with the God of heaven and earth is there unchangeableness. And in closing up the Old Testament Scriptures, there appears a rehearsal of Jacob's sin, and comes as the burden of the word of the Lord to Israel, by the hand of Malachi, declaring both the love and hatred of God himself toward the children of men. For we conclude Jacob and Esau are both representative characters. The choice of God's people in Christ; the changeless character of God who is a Spirit and love as well; with the necessary name of Jesus, were all significantly set forth in this burden the favored prophet bore to Israel. Showing the house to the house; as preaching

does when it comforts and edifies the child of God; when it brings to view the fullness there is in Jesus Christ as God manifest in the flesh as he became poor that his people might be made rich. It is in this we know that except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. In this natural figure we have the work and power of God in sustaining men as laborers whose life or lives are in his hand, as they build or put together material prepared for a house. So we understand all the children of God as lively stones built up a spiritual house to offer up spiritual sacrifice acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, are as samples of his work, proving the unchangeable character of the God of heaven and earth. And his enemies have known in past time in their measure, as well as his people, the effect of his power in its sway in their midst. And yet it can be only in part here, because there can be no sanctification of the flesh. The Esaus can only know a part of their doom here in this life, yet we believe they will be raised up in bodies to bear or feel the condemnation. Hence when Israel is told that God loves him, he wonders how or wherein, yet he is not told directly, but is led about and instructed, and proves his God to be in one mind, and believes none can turn him. Therefore this good news the prophet bore as a burden, like good gospel preaching in the apostle's day, is God's word maintaining itself and sustaining his dear people in every age. Therefore there is nothing like the word. It endures forever. And we prove to-day that this is the same word which by the gospel is preached to us. It tells us of the everlasting love of a covenant-keeping God, who is all-powerful, all-wise, yet just and merciful, and changes not. And that is the reason we are not consumed. Can we not look back, dear brethren and sisters, and think of the manifest work of God in our hearts, as having one heart and judgment given us, and see how foolish we were; supposing it must be by good work or merit on our part; and may be some of us have not gotten entirely free from it as a yoke of bondage.

This will do for Esau's house which is in bondage with all her children, the unbelieving world in a general sense know their house is in ruins, but they are able to build up, and truly they work. Never could there be more zeal and enterprise when it was said on behalf of a people of one speech, "Let us build a tower that will reach to heaven." It did not fail to find a hearty response or co-operation in the minds to build. But the unchanging God has a purpose to bring to pass: confusion to the builders. So it has been ever since, Esau's builders are in the confusion. Their strength is in themselves and not in the Lord. The modern Esau possesses all the cunning of hunters and trappers, and as they will and run with their drag and net no doubt they lead away many whom were clean escaped from error, and even may captivate some of Christ's servants. Notwithstanding this the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. What a wonderful seal; the knowledge of the Lord. Known from all eternity; loved with an everlasting love, and with loving-kindness drawn; being called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to God's purpose and grace, &c. We are glad therefore to believe our unchanging and eternal God did store up a certain amount of grace for every one of the heirs of that joint inheritance, and that he himself as the God of all grace measures it out unto them, and proves to them that as their

day, so shall their strength be. How humbling and yet how consoling it is to rest, if only in thought, one moment out of sixty, and though it be true moments of joy against months of woe. Our God is in the heavens and hath done his pleasure. It was his pleasure to put his only begotten to grief, yet he is without change. Once have I sworn in my holiness, I will not lie unto David.

Therefore he brought again from the dead that great Shepherd of the sheep, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, and this is now our enjoyment; this is one of the days of the son of man; a heavenly place in Christ. No place like it to us on earth now in this mind of Christ. If we are as we hope we are, truly blessed of God as a people, in that we delight to hear the gospel of the Son of God set forth in a clear, simple and unmistakable manner, a clear and certain sound: salvation by grace, and grace alone, through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we are most happy. He died to redeem us from all iniquity; he rose to justify us; he lives at the right hand of God in heaven above as well as in the right hand of power in the churches of his care on earth; he is to us in the burden of the word of the Lord, as comes to us in our pilgrimage, a consuming fire, burning up all that is earthy or vain; trying us as gold is tried, &c. And while we know it is a fearful thing to fall into his hand, he still tells us it is because he changes not that we, as well as the sons of Jacob of old, are not consumed.

It is as Christ of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, that we know; he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever.

Time is passing rapidly, the place we occupy as that of our predecessors will soon know us no more forever on the earth, but our hope is that when the end of all material things, the end of the world, shall come, our Jesus will descend with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, and the dead in him shall rise first; being raised by his Spirit's sealing, in which his knowledge rests. Who will also raise the unjust by his power, to go away in bodies to everlasting punishment, to the place prepared for the devil and his angels, synonymous with that of his dear people, from the foundation of the world; for as he hath purposed, so shall it stand.

J. D. HUBBELL, Moderator.
WILLIAM BALLARD, Clerk.

The Old School Baptist Conference of Maine, held with the church at North Berwick, Maine, to the associations with whom we correspond: We wish you all grace and prosperity in the kingdom of God.

We have received your messengers and Minutes, and esteem it our happiness that we are still, through the grace of God, in your fellowship. Our fellowship we verily believe is in the truth of the gospel of Christ. (Phil. i. 5.) In this the Lord has made us to differ from the world that lieth in wickedness. It is a matter for adoring gratitude that the Lord has put a difference between us and the world. This is all of God's grace. Well may the apostle Paul challenge the saints to assign any other cause than the good pleasure of the Lord. "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?"—1 Cor. iv. 7. We read, "The Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel." Thus it was in the type, setting forth the holy and unsearchable ways of the Lord. God in his dealings with the children of men puts a difference between them, after the counsel of his own will, in

which some are declared to be vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory, and the others vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. O, what a difference! Now this difference is not in their earthy creation, for they all were created in the first man Adam, who was made a living soul. Not in their nature, for all mankind are alike in their nature, and are now enmity against God, the children of wrath by nature. It is not in their national, social or intellectual standing that this difference subsists, but the difference all flows from the purpose and grace of God given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. In this eternal purpose in Christ Jesus his people are set forth as his chosen and eternally beloved, and all the difference between them and the rest now in time and throughout eternity is embraced in the purpose of God according to election. Let me repeat a declarative instance of the difference the Lord puts between his people and others: "Thus saith the Lord, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more. But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast; that ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel."—Exodus xi. 4-7. All the judgments that the Lord visited upon Egypt clearly marked this difference. One very striking difference that the Lord put between them was the token of the blood of the passover lamb. "The blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are, and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt."

"Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us."—1 Cor. v. 7. We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. Thus the Lord maketh his chosen ones to differ from others. They are washed and made white, reconciled and made nigh unto God by Jesus' precious blood. This, when revealed and applied by the holy Spirit, does in truth put a difference between them and the rest. As believers in Christ Jesus they have peace with God, they taste the sweets of the forgiveness of their sins; they are cleared from all their guilt, justified from all their offenses, and are enabled to rejoice that there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. The Lord maketh his own to differ from others by the powerful and gracious operations of his Spirit. They are born again of the Spirit, and made partakers of the divine nature. He puts his fear in their hearts, writes his law in their minds, the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts by the holy Spirit which is given unto them, and thus by the work of the Spirit in them they worship God in spirit and in truth. The fruit of this divine work in them is farther manifested in that they hunger and thirst after righteousness, and the beauty of the Lord that it may be brought forth in them and be upon them. O, to be thus gloriously appareled!

Then, beloved brethren, how wonderfully believers differ from unbelievers, for they are quickened by the Lord into eternal life, the rest remain dead in trespasses and sins; they are illuminated by the light of life, the rest are blinded,

alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their heart. Unto you, saith the Savior, it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. It is the unspeakable blessedness of God's chosen to have as their lot the communion of the Holy Ghost. (2 Cor. xiii. 14.) This is the medium of all their spiritual comfort and knowledge while pilgrims to the better country. He communes with us concerning eternal things, unfolding to us the preciousness of the new covenant; he takes of the things of Christ and shews them unto us, giving us also foretastes of heaven, the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession. We are sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, and under the divine ministrations of the Spirit we are drawn forth in affectionate longings to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. God maketh us to differ by sending forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Even now we have foretastes of the blessedness of adoption to which God hath predestinated us in Christ Jesus, for we are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. If indeed God hath thus put a difference between us and those who know not God, our glorying will not be in ourselves, but in the Lord who hath so loved and so signally favored us. Now we are but tasting the streams; now we know but in part; now we see as through a glass darkly; now we have only the earnest, but the time of our sojourning here will in a little while terminate, and the day of our actual eternal perfection draweth nigh, then the eternal glory to which God hath predestinated us shall be our actual everlasting possession. We shall be raised in the resurrection at the last day in the likeness of our dear Redeemer. We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

Dear brethren, we have hope toward God that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. (Acts xxiv. 15.) "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Thus the Lord shall put an eternal difference between the vessels of mercy, and vessels of wrath.

"Let me among thy saints be found,
Whene'er the archangel's trump shall sound,
To see thy smiling face:
Then loudest of the crowd I'll sing,
While heaven's resounding mansions ring
With shouts of sovereign grace."

We have appointed our next yearly Conference to assemble, the Lord willing, with the church at North Berwick, Maine, on Friday before the first Monday in September, 1903, when we hope to again receive your messengers and correspondence.

FRED. W. KEENE, Moderator.
JOSEPH F. HALL, Clerk.

ALL GONE.

ALL of the cloth bound small hymn books are gone, and all we have left of the other styles of binding, of the small books, are 28 blue plain; 10 blue gilt edged; 15 Imitation Morocco; 7 first quality Turkey Morocco. For full description of these books, prices, &c., see next to last of the white pages of this number. We cannot now say when we will have any more of these books, if ever, as we have not yet decided whether or not we will print any more of them.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1902.

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EDITORS:

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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to

GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,

Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

"SAVED BY WATER."

(1 Peter iii. 20.)

WE have commonly heard of the wonderful manner in which Noah and his family were saved FROM the flood BY the ark, which was a most striking type of the salvation which is through our Lord Jesus Christ, from the judgments of God against an ungodly world, but have heard but little said of that salvation which Noah and his family experienced BY the water of the flood. In the Scripture referred to above, Peter uses the expression, "Saved by water," and we desire to call attention to it, and if the Lord will, to say something about it.

After the presentations of several exhortations to the brethren, as to walking as becometh believers, and as to how they ought to endure persecutions and afflictions, suffering not for ill doing, but for well doing, the apostle calls to their minds how Christ had thus suffered in the flesh, the just for the unjust, that they might be brought to God, but was now quickened by the Spirit, living for them and living in them, as is testified elsewhere in the New Testament. Peter then says that by this same Spirit by which he had been made alive from the dead, he had in the days of Noah preached to the spirits in prison, while the ark was a preparing. Concerning this expression there has been some difference of opinion as to its meaning. Romanists and high church Episcopalians have claimed that after the death of Jesus upon the cross, he went to the place of the dead, and preached the gospel to them, as now it is preached to men on earth. These believe that there is an intermediate state, which is neither heaven nor hell, where the dead, both the righteous and the wicked, are confined until the last judgment, and that the wicked may yet repent, and that to this end the gospel was preached unto them, after the crucifixion, and before the resurrection of the Savior. It seems sufficient to say here that this notion grows out of the same thing that all Arminianism grows out of, viz: that God gives to all men a chance to repent and believe, and that he also, in that world, gives men another chance to be saved. If indeed salvation be by the choice of the creature, and all have a chance to believe, it is perfectly consistent that our God should give another chance in that world also. And we suggest also that it would be consistent, should he give evil spirits a chance to repent, believe and be saved. If he be under any obligations to give all fallen men a chance to be saved, why not also devils, and all evil spirits? But this Scripture has no such meaning, and there is nothing in all the rest of the Bible that even suggests such a thing as that Jesus between his death and resurrection went to the place of the dead and preached to them. The plain meaning is that through Noah, who was a preacher of righteousness while the ark was being prepared, Jesus did preach righteousness to that ungodly generation. And it was to the spirits in prison, and to those only, that this preaching of Jesus came; not to

all men, but to those who were prisoners, and as such, longed for deliverance. Noah and his family were in prison indeed, surrounded by that ungodly generation, every imagination of whose heart was evil, and only evil, and that continually. But enough with regard to this.

Peter says that in the ark eight souls were saved by water. What does he mean? After this he says, "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us." It all seems perfectly plain and clear how Noah and his family were saved in the ark, and by the ark, from the flood. But how was he saved by the water? It seems clear to our mind that the meaning of the apostle is that by the waters of the flood Noah and his family were saved from the former ungodly world, and from association with those who were enemies of God; he and his family never could again live in that world that was before the flood; they had been brought over on this side of it, never to return again thither. So Israel were saved by the waters of the Red Sea from Egypt, and the Egyptian hosts; so by the water of baptism God's believing people to-day are saved from the former things, and are known henceforward as those who follow Christ, and are separated from the world in which they once walked.

But Peter says that both the salvation of Noah by the water of the flood, and baptism, are figures, and only figures. Could it have been possible for any of the ungodly world in which Noah lived before the flood, to have come over on this side of the flood, while yet ungodly, and saved alive as was Noah and his family, yet Peter could not have said of that one, he was saved by water. He might have said of such an one that he was saved FROM the flood, but he could not have said that he was saved BY it. Noah was saved by water, because and only because, first of all he by grace had been saved in heart and spirit and desire, from the world of ungodliness around him. It is said that Noah was a preacher of righteousness, and that God saw him to be righteous in that generation before him. Thus he was separated first in heart and soul from the generation in which he lived; the Spirit of God had wrought in him that which made him diverse from all around him; he could not any longer be one with those who hated God and truth; he had come to love God, and all that was righteous, he longed for salvation from such surrounding, even as he had been before saved in heart and desire; like Lot, afterwards, he vexed his righteous soul at the ungodliness about him. The only reason why this was so was the effectual work of grace. This, and this alone, had saved him, and separated him, forever from all ungodliness, and all ungodly men; they were his companions no longer, and a vast gulf was fixed between them, which could never be bridged over. This work had been wrought in the heart of Abraham when he went out of his own idolatrous land, although he himself had once been as others around him. This work had been wrought in the heart of Lot, and so he was vexed at the wickedness of those among whom he lived. This same work was wrought in Paul, and henceforward he was separated in spirit from all that had been dear to him, and became a preacher of Jesus and his salvation. This work is always a separating work.

Now whenever this work is wrought in the heart of any man, it begets in that man new desires and longings, he seeks new companions, new enjoyments, new ways of living; he can enjoy the old no

longer; former delights, former companions, former thoughts, please him no longer; he has risen to higher things, where Christ sits at the right hand of God; the things of the Spirit, and not of the flesh, have become dear to him, and he must hereafter seek after them, and, to be satisfied must have them. Thus Noah before the flood was in prison indeed. He could not be of the world in which he lived though in it still. He longed for deliverance, for salvation from such evil men and their evil conversation. Saved in heart, he could but long to be saved in body also from the evil which he had come to hate. This was the salvation which he found by water. The flood did not give him a new heart, but it did confer upon him the desire of the new heart, separation from the ungodly and from ungodliness. That old world had nothing in common with him, nor he with it, but on this side of the flood was his home and his rest. The salvation which he found by water was a figure of that salvation which God had wrought in his heart. But it was more than this, it did actually save him as he desired to be saved, from the ungodly world in which he had lived, but which had now become a prison to him. What a great change had been wrought here: that man who by nature loved just what other men love, now hates such things, and to this man thus inwardly saved, comes also by water an outward salvation. This last was not the salvation wrought in him by the Spirit of God, but it was a real, a necessary, a desired salvation, in which the God-given desire of his heart was gratified and satisfied, and in this salvation by water, was a figure of the true salvation wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, as is here testified by Peter.

Now he says that baptism is a like or similar figure, and this baptism also saves as did the water of the flood. There is then a salvation in the ordinance of baptism, just as there was in the water of the flood, and just as Noah was saved by the flood, so are believers saved by baptism. The water of the flood did not put away sin with Noah, neither did it give him a new heart to love God, seeing that this he had before. And so baptism does not put away the filth of the flesh, or sin, neither does it give any man a new heart, or in other words, it possesses no power to regenerate any man. In the case of Noah, there would have been no salvation by water, had he not been first saved by the work of the Spirit of God, and so the figure would have been without meaning, and valueless to him: yea more, would have been false in his case. So in baptism there is no salvation, save to a believer in Christ. Unless first one has been redeemed by the blood of Christ, and quickened by the Spirit, so that he has come to hate what once he loved, and to love what he once hated, and so to be separated in his inner life and spirit from his former life, and from all who live still in that former life, baptism is a mockery, a falsehood to that one. But if any one has, like Noah, come to abhor his sin, and to love righteousness, to abhor himself as a sinner, and to receive Christ as a Savior, and had been separated in deed and in truth from the world, then baptism does bring a salvation to him, a salvation which he longs to know more and more of. This is not salvation from sin and death and hell, for all that is involved in the work of Christ, in which he has come to hope; neither does baptism create in him a new heart, or renew in him a right spirit, seeing that these things have been wrought in him before, but baptism is the profession of these things, and does separate

him outwardly from all that he has been separated from before, inwardly.

Baptism is that figure which God has commanded to be fulfilled by all who believe. Jesus said "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." It is God's appointed entrance into an outward profession of his name. We cannot be his followers without baptism; it is the first step in obedience to him. Do what we may, we are not walking in obedience to him until we have been baptized. Our God has attached a meaning to this figure, a very solemn meaning: it presents to us first, the death and burial and resurrection of the blessed Lord, in which is our atonement and justification, so that in baptism we profess that our hope is in this finished work of the Lord; it presents to us our own death, through the Spirit's work, to sin, and resurrection again to righteousness and life, so that henceforth we walk in newness of life; it says to all who witness our walking in this ordinance, that we are dead and alive again in Christ. Death and resurrection all along the work of salvation is seen, and is set forth in the ordinance of baptism. No wonder then that so much is said about it in the New Testament, and in figure also in the Old Testament.

Baptism then is truly the answer of a good conscience toward God; it is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, it does not atone for or wash away our sins, and it does not give us a new heart; it neither atones for us nor regenerates us, but it is our answer in a good conscience toward that God who has done all these things for us, and in us. The apostle in this connection unites it as a figure with the real salvation, which we have through the resurrection of Christ. It is not then an unmeaning form; it is not something which can be changed, or laid aside, or in any way ignored by the believer; it is a solemn obligation laid upon his conscience, that he may thus confess the Lord's work of grace; it is the answer of a good conscience toward God. The soul in whom the effectual work of the Spirit has been wrought, desires to confess it, and here in baptism is God's appointed way for him to confess it. In no other way does God provide for such confession in his word. How full of meaning and how solemn is the word, "The answer of a good conscience toward God." It saves us. By it we become separated from much that would lead us in forbidden ways; by it a solemn restraint is thrown around us; at least we found it so. A young sister once said to us, that after her baptism she was saved from many temptations which assailed her before; her young friends did not afterwards ask her to engage with them in the amusements which they expected her to engage in before. So, she said, I found a salvation in the ordinance of baptism. But she had come to find no enjoyment in such amusements before she was baptized, and desired to avoid them; higher joys were hers, and she rejoiced in that which shut her out from the former things. It is not only unbecoming for a believer to engage in wordly amusements, but he has ceased to desire to do so. If at any time the flesh leads him to seek satisfaction there, straightway he finds that he has sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. But for him who desires to be saved from earthly folly, baptism comes as that which does save him. C.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

The last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

INTRODUCTORY TO VOLUME TWENTY-EIGHT.

NEARLY one half of the three score years of our mortal pilgrimage has been devoted to the publication of this paper. We have now reached the commencement of the twenty-eighth volume, and have great reason to adore and praise the Lord our God for his abounding goodness and loving-kindness to usward. He has spared our unprofitable life, delivered us from foes without and from fears within, so that we are constrained with gratitude to acknowledge that his goodness and mercy have followed us, thus far, all our days; for having obtained help from him, we continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, and desiring to say none other things than those which all the prophets and Moses did say should come. To what extent we have succeeded, or how far we have come short of the attainment of that desire, is for our brethren to judge. It has been cheering to know that many of the precious sons of Zion have been edified, encouraged and strengthened through our labors, and that some of the lambs of the Lord's fold have been fed and established in the truth as it is in Jesus, and that some of the giants of Gath, who have defied the armies of the living God, have been made to bite the dust. Surely we may say in the language of inspiration, There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heavens in our help, and in his excellency on the sky. The words also of the psalmist seem to us appropriate: "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us; then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us." —Psalms cxxiv. 2, 3.

It can hardly be deemed necessary for us to reiterate the doctrine which we design to advocate in this volume, as our flag has been nailed to the mast-head almost a third of century. The doctrine of salvation by grace alone, through Jesus Christ our Lord, has been our constant theme, and we hope that it may continue to be so as long as we shall be permitted to use our tongue or pen.

No angry discussions will be admitted in this volume, but the utmost courtesy must be observed in objecting to, or criticising upon any position advanced by ourself or any of our correspondents. It will be our aim to make the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a medium of general correspondence among all our brethren and sisters north and south, east and west; and we hope that every brother and sister who may write, will pursue a course which is calculated to edify, comfort, confirm and establish each other in the faith and order of the gospel of the Son of God.

Those who feel disposed to write a statement of their christian experience, would do well to state the more prominent incidents, without going into all the minute details, which would swell their communications to too great an extent, so as either to preclude their insertion, or crowd out others of equal interest.

Very many of our subscribers write us that they are located remote from any church of our order, and have very little or no opportunity to hear the gospel proclaimed, only as it is proclaimed through the medium of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Let those who write remember the lonely condition of such, and speak a word of encouragement and comfort for them.

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever

things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."—Phil. iv. 8. "Only let your conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ; * * * stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together [not apart] for the faith of the gospel; and in nothing terrified by your adversaries; which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God. For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."—Phil. i. 27–29.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., January 1, 1860.

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1 TIMOTHY IV. 10.

A CORRESPONDENT in Westchester Co., N. Y., has desired our views on the latter part of this text, namely: "For, therefore, we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those that believe." Paul and Timothy were laborers in the church, or vineyard of their Lord and Master, but they did not labor on the principle which stimulates the Arminian teachers with which the world abounds. The latter labor because they do not trust in the living God. They often frankly confess that if they believed the doctrine which we hold, of God's perfect reliability to do all his pleasure, in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, if they could trust implicitly in him to gather in all his elect, to build up and defend Zion, to cause the north to give up, and the south to resign, and by his own power and grace bring in all his sons from far, and all his daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one of them, because he has created them for his glory, that they would fold their hands in idleness, or give full vent to their wicked propensities, and take their fill of sin. But that God may safely be relied on to do all that he has promised to do, and all that can be done for the salvation of sinners, they do not even profess to believe it; and they reproach us for believing his word, and for trusting all to his faithfulness. They labor, according to their own statement, because they do not, cannot trust in the living God; but we, upon the very opposite principle, do trust in him. As we have no confidence in the flesh, we have only our confidence in God, to stimulate us to labor and bear reproach. If we could give up our trust in the living God, and bow at the shrine of some imaginary gods, which have no vitality or reality, they would cease at once to reproach us, and extend to us most cordially the hand of fellowship.

The living God, in whom we trust, and at whose bidding we labor, is the Savior of all men, especially of those that believe. Both in providence and in grace, the God in whom we trust is the only Savior. On his common or providential salvation, all the creatures of God are dependent. He saves from sword, famine and pestilence, from sickness and death. He only can cause the earth to bring forth food for men and beasts, and he alone can deliver us from temporal calamities; and in that sense he is the Savior of all men. Again, he being the only Savior, the only name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved, he is the Savior of all who are saved, either temporally or spiritually.

But he is, in a *special* sense, the Savior of them that believe. Their believing does not save them, for then their believing would be their Savior, but their faith in him and their believing is an evidence that God is their Savior. He that be-

lieveth and is baptized shall be saved, but neither their believing, being baptized, nor anything else that they can do, will save them, for by grace are they saved, through faith, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God, even of the living God, in whom alone they trust. Their special salvation not only delivers them from wrath, from sin, from pollution and guilt, from hell and from condemnation, but from all evil. Under his mighty hand all things work together for their good, and equally for God's glory.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., January 1, 1860.

NO MORE CARDS.

WE have no more cards at the rate of ten for five dollars, as advertised on last page of cover of the last few numbers of the SIGNS, but if any of our brethren and friends have secured subscribers at the rate of fifty cents for six months, with a view of sending for the cards, they can send their lists on at the fifty cent rate for the six months subscription, provided their lists are sent on by the 15th of October, 1902.

CHURCH NOTICES.

WE have finally decided on a location for future place of meetings of Ebenezer Baptist Church, and congregation, which will be in "Stephen Merritt" building, corner of Nineteenth Street and Eighth Avenue, fifth floor. Elevator entrance on Nineteenth Street, (or Eighth Avenue, either).

JAS. C. BEARD.

2164 FIFTH AVE., NEW YORK, N. Y., Sept. 17, 1902.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, near New Church, Va., August 27th, 1902, Arthur L. Byrd and Miss Maisy E. Coulborn, both of Accomac Co., Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

OUR beloved brother, **D. A. Culpepper**, departed this life at 5 o'clock a. m., August 31st, 1902, at his home in Upshur Co., Texas, surrounded by his devoted companion, three children, other relatives, and many dear friends. Deceased was born in Henry Co., Ala., on the 6th day of December, 1854, and in his twentieth year was married to Miss Varnie Bland, of Quitman Co., Ga. To them were born five children, three boys and two girls, two of which, a girl and a boy, died in childhood. Brother Culpepper joined the church called Mt. Pelier, in Henry Co., Ala., and was baptized by Elder Wm. Hubbard, on the second Sunday in May, 1876. He moved to Texas in December, 1880. The disease with which he suffered so long, and which finally brought death, was a throat and lung trouble. He was confined to the house some ten or twelve weeks, and was a great but a patient sufferer all this time, for he was blessed in a good measure with the spirit of reconciliation. The writer was intimately acquainted with him since the year 1883, and always considered him a sound and consistent Baptist of the Primitive faith and order, and to his many noble and manly traits I feel that no eulogy of mine could do justice. He had a host of friends, as was attested in his sickness and at the burial. I feel to deeply sympathize with his grief-stricken companion and children, and feel that the Lord in his own good time will pour into their wounded hearts the balm that will heal the wound his fatherly hand has made. He only can give comfort. It is sweet to meditate upon the bright testimonies of "acceptance in the beloved" he left behind. A few weeks before he passed away his wife came into his room where he had been alone a few minutes, and found him sitting on the side of his bed weeping. She asked him what was the matter? When he could control his emotions sufficiently he told her he had been praying the Lord to remove the bitter cup if it could be his will, when just without the window which he sat facing the Savior appeared upon the cross, a most lovely and beautiful sight, and now he felt so happy. From this time he appeared to have lost all concern for worldly affairs, and seemed to be just waiting for his time. The writer did not have the privilege of being with him in his confinement until the last week, and just four days before his death I bade him the last sad farewell. It was only in a whisper that he could speak, and that with difficulty, but he testified to the doctrine of grace, and the fact that he was still a poor sinner saved by grace, and told me to go on preaching the doctrine, saying that he never should see my face any more, and expressing resignation to God's will.

The mortal remains of our brother was consigned to the grave in the Fellowship cemetery, in the evening of the day he died, to await the day when "the

Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."—1 Thess. iv. 16–18. I am informed that Elder W. L. Williams preached a comforting discourse on the occasion.

"He left the world with all its toys,
For better, brighter worlds on high;
His faith embraced substantial joys,
Soaring beyond the starry sky.

From Pisgah's top by faith he saw
The land where milk and honey flows;
Nor can the power of hell below
Prevail to break his sweet repose.

He trod the shades of gloomy death,
Could set his seal that God was true;
Finished his course and kept the faith,
And died with glory full in view.

Methinks I see him now at rest,
In the bright mansion love ordained;
His head reclines on Jesus' breast,
No more by sin or sorrow pained.

Why should our eyes with sorrow flow,
Our bosoms heave the painful sigh;
When Jesus calls the saint must go;
'Tis his eternal gain to die."

In hope of life,

H. B. JONES.

MT. VERNON, Texas, Sept. 7, 1902.

Mrs. Ollie Dunlap Holsheiser was born May 16th, 1869, and departed this life August 14th, 1902, aged 33 years, 2 months and 18 days. She was married to John Holsheiser, March 16th, 1887. Her daughter Edna was buried just nine weeks before her mother. She spoke often of expecting to see Edna in a short time. She leaves her husband and two sons, Harry and Willie, to mourn the loss of a devoted wife and mother. Of her father's family there are still living five brothers and two sisters. Her sister, Mrs. Jennie Power, has been almost a constant companion with her in all her afflictions. Ollie will be sadly missed among a host of friends, as well as in the home circle. Sister Holsheiser united with the Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church, and was baptized by the writer, her pastor, in September, 1897. She was a lover of the gospel of Christ, and held her church in high esteem. Her death came without warning. She did her work Thursday morning, and no one anticipated that the death angel was near. While her friends were watching for her at the Old Settlers' meeting, her summons came to join that innumerable company from which no traveler returns; a meeting of loved ones gone before; a place of rest; a shelter from the storm; a refuge from sin; a haven of perpetual peace; no tears; no sorrow; no aches; no pains; no anxiety; but asleep in the bosom of a loving Jesus is her abode, where we hope, by the mercy of God, to join her in the chorus of praise, when earth's pilgrimage is o'er.

Death, thou hast lost thy sting for me,
Since through thy gate is endless life;
We must thy face, thy shadow see,
Before we cease this mortal strife.

'Tis through thy valley we must go,
To find the place of peace and rest,
To wear our garments white as snow,
We make of thee a welcome guest.

We know not when with thee we'll meet,
Or when our days on earth shall end,
Or when our loved ones we shall meet,
Or when for us our God shall send.

But through our Conqueror we shall rise
Above this piece of mortal clay;
To our bright home above the skies,
Thou openest for us eternal day.

Thy plague, with thee, the grave destroys,
Then may we with expiring breath,
As we mount up to endless joys,
With rapture sing, Come, welcome death.

The funeral was preached at the home to a large gathering of relatives and friends, on Sunday at 2 o'clock, by the writer.

JOHN L. SCOTT.

PLEASANT PLAINS, Ill., Aug. 27, 1902.

Francie Pauline, daughter of Joseph and Margery **Ross**, was born in Greenbush township, Warren Co., Ill., Dec. 15th, 1890, and died Sept. 2d, 1902, of diptheria, aged 11 years, 8 months and 18 days. Four brothers and three sisters survive her.

Thus a beautiful bud was taken away, that was nearing the opening of the full flower. God has taken the lamb to himself. We believe a work of grace was wrought in her heart during her sickness. She asked her mother more than once this question, "Ma, is it because I am so bad that I have to suffer?" This language is so different from what generally comes from children of her age that we are led to believe the Lord prepared her for himself. "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise," and the calmness and resignation of her mind speaks rest in Jesus.

The writer was sent for to try to speak words of comfort to the sorrowing ones, using these words of the Master, "Suffer little children to come unto me,

and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." And I tried to show that salvation by grace was the only plan that could reach the condition of the child, and that all must be converted and become as little children, or they can in no wise enter the kingdom, and that the adult has no advantage over the child, for none know anything of the way of life and salvation only as it is revealed to them. Jesus took children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them. What more does any one need than this? His hands, and his arms by which he puts forth his hands on them, represents his power, for Isaiah says, "To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed." The same power that reveals to one of age, can reveal to the child, and thus the sorrowing ones were comforted with this thought, that she is asleep in Jesus.

JOHN DOWNEY.

WENONA, Ill., Sept. 10, 1902.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$600 05
A friend of the cause, Ontario, $2.00; Mrs. C. Euderlin, New York, $5.00; Mrs. Eliza Newman, Ohio, $3.00.—Total	10 00
Total to date	$610 05

MEETINGS.

A YEARLY meeting of the Albany & Troy Old School Baptist church is appointed to be held Sept. 24th and 25th, 1902, at the residence of Wm. W. Vandenburgh, near West Sand Lake, Rensselaer Co., N. Y. All wishing to hear the true gospel are invited to meet with us. Visitors will be met at Bath, opposite Albany, N. Y., on arrival of Albany and Troy Belt Line steam cars, leaving Albany, N. Y., at 4:30 p. m. Sept. 23d, 1902. Also on arrival of train leaving Albany 7:30 a. m., Sept. 24th, 1902.

EZER LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

THE South Ouachita Association, of Arkansas and Louisiana, convenes September 26th, 27th and 28th, 1902, with New Ramah church, Claiborne Parish, La., six miles west of Haynesville, La., on L. & N. W. R. R. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

L. C. TRULL.

THE yearly meeting of the Cow Marsh Old School Baptist Church will meet on the fourth Saturday and Sunday in September, (27th and 28th) 1902. Brethren and friends of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us.

Those coming from the north will take the Saturday morning train, which leaves Philadelphia at 7:25 a. m. for Woodside, on the Delaware R. R.

Those coming from the south will be met at Woodside, on train leaving Delmar at 8:01 a. m.

W. W. MEREDITH.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the regular Old School Baptist church at Halcottville, N. Y., on the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (1st and 2d) 1902. Brethren and friends are invited to attend. Those coming by rail, either from east or west, will come on the U. & D. R. R. to Halcottville, N. Y.

JAMES AVERY.

THE Otego Old School Baptist church of Otego, N. Y., have appointed their yearly two days meeting to be held October 1st and 2d, 1902. Visitors will be met at depot Tuesday, Sept. 30th, and cared for.

S. C. F. GUERNSEY.

THE Old School Baptist church of Columbia, has appointed her yearly meeting the first Sunday in October, and Saturday before. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. Our pastor, W. L. Line, and Elder Geo. A. Bretz, are to attend.

M. P. LEWIS.

THE Juniata Association of Old School or Primitive Baptists will be held with the Sidling Hill Church, Fulton Co., Pa., to commence on Friday, October 10th, and continue over Sunday. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth. Those coming by railroad will come on the B. & O. road to Hancock, Md., on Thursday, and pass over to the Hancock side, where they will be met and conveyed to place of meeting, a distance of twenty miles.

E. V. WHITE, Pastor.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting will be held with the Frying Pan church, Fairfax Co., Va., commencing on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, (15th, 16th and 17th,) 1902, and lasting three days. Trains leaving Sixth street depot, Washington city, Tuesday, 1 p. m., and Wednesday 8:10 a. m., will be met at Herndon. We cordially invite all who love the truth to attend our meeting. Also the ministers of our faith and order we would especially like to see.

E. V. WHITE.

THE Welsh Tract Church has appointed her yearly meeting to commence on Saturday, Oct. 18th, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue two days. Those coming from Philadelphia and Baltimore will please come Saturday morning, via B. & O. R. R., to Newark, Del. Train leaves Philadelphia at 7:30 a. m., and Baltimore, Mt. Royal station, at 8 a. m. All lovers of the truth of like precious faith are cordially invited to meet with us.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 70. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1902. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Aug. 13, 1902.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I herewith inclose the to me excellent letter of our esteemed brother and fellow-laborer, Elder W. J. May, for publication, if you think best. I was much comforted in reading it, as also of his faithful testimony of the truth in Christ. It seems to me sometimes a mystery why any one of the dear saints of God should desire for a moment to recognize or contend for a blessing upon the ground of merit, or because of obedience. They cannot realize their utter failures and dependence, and have such a deceptive heart and evil nature to contend with as I have, or they could not.

I was forcibly reminded of the utter dependence of the servants of our Lord Jesus, and it harmonizing so perfectly with my own experience as I was reading a few days since in the memoirs of Gadsby, I will here extract from it. One Lord's day, after preaching in the morning, he felt shut up and dark, and had no text for the afternoon, so he went to lie down on his bed that he might study, and as soon as he had closed the door, instead of meditating on spiritual things, he began to think that it was possible to make paper out of bones, and there he laid, gathering together all the old bones in the town, extracting oil from them, and then making them into paper, until he was disturbed by a knock on the door. "Who is there?" cried he. "It is time to go to chapel," answered his wife. "Time to go to chapel," said he "good Lord, where have I been, and what have I been about?" He went into the pulpit and preached from these words, "Without me ye can do nothing," and truly he felt the truth of the text.

Some years since, after passing through deep trials and sore afflictions indeed, I was in Virginia, and attended a meeting near the home of the late Elder Furrs. Elder Wm. Beebe was preaching, and to me it was marrow and fatness, wine upon the lees, well refined; my soul was filled with rejoicing; my cup running over; I could see before me several that were either asleep or looking some other way with careless indifference. O, thought I, how can they do this when the feast is so rich and full of marrow? and so it was during the meeting. I went from there to the Corresponding meeting, fully ex-

pecting just such a feast again. Elder Beebe preached the introductory, and I sat down to listen as before, but ere I was aware I was nodding. I aroused myself up, saying within, Why, how is this? I will listen to the preaching, and at the same time I observed many whose hearts were overflowing, for Elder Beebe was surely in the Spirit on the Lord's day. With renewed efforts I fastened my mind on the preaching. The day was very warm, and many fans were in motion, so in a few moments of time I found myself in a mathematical calculation of a supposed number of fans, and what they would come to at a certain amount a piece, and so went through the meeting without one word of comfort. My desire was unto good, but how to perform? I must learn, as did Mr. G., "Without me ye can do nothing." Jesus must awake the sleepy saints, must touch the hearts of stone. "Without me," it seems to me, covers every step in the experience of a child of God. Mr. G. could expound the text understandingly, and like every other true subject of grace, would say this is my infirmity, he charges it to himself, yet it was for his good and God's glory. Jeremiah says, "He hath brought me into darkness, but not into light," and Isaiah says, "I will bring the blind by a way they knew not; and I will lead them in paths that they have not known." How is one to guide his way and escape the darkness, when darkness is as needful as the light? In perfect harmony with Elder May's text is Psalms xxxvii. 37, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace." This only applies to Christ, the only perfect man who could fulfill the law, and who is our righteousness, and in him, and him alone, either in time or in eternity, will we be accepted. If our godly walk and obedience does not spring from him, it will not be accepted. God is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity. God looks upon the motive that prompts the act, and therefore is a searcher of the heart. I have thought if one could be found who had obtained all the privileges claimed in reach for obedient living, I should find that one saying, "God, I thank thee I am not as other men," &c. With me it is so often I would, but cannot, pray; I would, but cannot sing, for sin is mixed with all I do. I, too, have gathered up stacks of Mr. Gadsby's old bones along the way, and know how utterly void of life and spirit they are. Vain is the delusion if you, dear child of God, expect to get oil and marrow out of them. O, why should any heaven-born soul desire to lug in legalism or selfism in any form? when his word says, and blessed word indeed to me when given power to lay hold upon it, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, he leadeth me beside the still waters."

Now everything outside he maketh, leadeth or causeth, to my mind is dry bones. When the Lord said, Seek ye my face, my heart said, Thy face, Lord, will I seek. I reckon I am a very little child, if one at all; others have outgrown me, and are not so dependent. Pardon me for quoting from Mr. Gadsby again, but the point is so clear: Mr. G. says, After preaching once against oppression, one of his hearers went into the vestry in a rage, and told him he had no right to be personal. "Why," said Mr. G., "what is the matter?" "You knew," said the hearer, "that such a thing had taken place in my establishment." "Indeed I did not," said Mr. G., "I never heard a word about it." So you see I have only

to draw the bow, and the Lord will direct the arrow. Said the Redeemer, "Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end."

May the Lord's dear servants and children feel more and more of their dependence upon him, then will they walk more humbly, and in his fear before him who has said, "Without me ye can do nothing."

Submitted to you and to the household of faith, if thought worthy a place in the SIGNS.

Yours in hope of victory in the name of Jesus, and in hope by his grace to live in the fellowship of the saints while here below,

P. W. SAWIN.

PINSONFORK, Ky., June 29, 1902.

ELDER P. W. SAWIN—MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have concluded to write you once more. Although it has been so long since I have written you, I have not forgotten you. I think of you almost daily, and not only you, but of the brethren and sisters generally. I need not undertake to tell you how much I want to see you, and be with you once more, but inasmuch as I do not know that I ever shall see you again in this world of trials and tears, I will suggest to you a few thoughts on the following text of Scripture: "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way."—Psalms xxxvii. 23.

I am aware of the fact that this is a controverted text even among our people. The conditional time salvationists say, This just means the good steps of a man, but it does seem clear to my mind that the sentence would have to be reconstructed before we can afford to give in to such an idea, for it does not read that way, neither does it mean that in my opinion, for this is a declaration of inspiration, therefore cannot be wrong, neither can it be rubbed out by designing men. The inspiration of God did not discriminate between the steps, and say, good or bad steps, but positively declares that "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." That is to say, all the steps of this good man (not men) are purposed, settled and fixed of the Lord. This phrase, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord," embraces the eternal purpose of God in Christ, Christ being the good man under consideration here. Hence, no need of qualifying the steps of this good man, (Christ) for his steps are all good, and all ordered or purposed of the Lord It seems to me that the context demonstrates the fact that this good man is Christ, and "Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand."—Verse 24. Daniel speaks of the Messiah (Christ) being cut off, (Dan. ix. 26,) and Isaiah says, "He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his [Christ's] generation? for he [Christ] was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken."—Isaiah liii. 8. Furthermore, Job says, "For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant."—Job xiv. 7–9.

Brother Sawin, it seems to me that this Scripture has reference to Christ: this good man, for we see that this tree brings forth boughs, or branches, which his children do not do in this sense. Christ the good tree, the true vine, brings forth the branches, and the branches bear fruit. In fact, in the strict sense of the word, I

know not of but the two men, Adam and Christ, and one is a bad man, and the other is a good man, and in consequence of the badness of the bad man, all his steps are bad; but as a consequence of the goodness of the good man, all his steps are good, and "are ordered by the Lord; and he delighted in him," as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, and "who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God."—1 Peter i. 20, 21.

This good man is the good Shepherd that giveth his life for the sheep; therefore his sheep follow him, for they know his voice; but a stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of a stranger. This good man is meek and lowly in heart; and of the abundance of goodness, meekness, &c., the mouth speaketh. Guile never was found in the mouth of this good man, nor uttered by his lips, for there was no guile in his heart. Hence, no guile ever was found in his mouth; but this good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things. This is the Fountain from whence all blessings flow. I mean, both for time and eternity.

Dear brother Sawin, and precious Elder in Israel, too, I do most assuredly believe with all my heart and soul, if I am not deceived, that we are as dependent upon God for good works, as we are for eternal life or happiness.

I have been watching for a place to leave off the subject, and quit writing for the present, but it seems that I cannot find it, but must stop now.

Dear brother, I hope to hear from you soon. Give my kind regards to sister Sawin and family, and also to the household of faith among you. My wife joins me in love to you and family.

Yours to serve,

W. J. MAY.

RIDDLESBURG, Pa., July, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Having had many requests to write my experience for publication, and being impressed often to do so, I now take this opportunity to address my dearly beloved brethren in the Lord.

I will say this as an introductory: I was born August 31st, 1876. From that time on I grew in years and in a knowledge of earthly things, but had no knowledge of my true condition as a guilty sinner until the fall of 1889 or 1890. Then for the first time the searching rays of the Sun of Righteousness illuminated my poor benighted heart, and I looked, and lo I beheld a cage of unclean birds, of four-footed beasts, and all manner of creeping things. Then there began to hover over me a cloud, and I began to groan and lament under its awful pressure. Like some strange and unaccountable sorrow it began to flow in upon my soul. I at once began to set my house in order, and rid myself of this dreadful monster, but when I began to feel as if he had disappeared, then like the swelling waves of the ocean he would burst forth in some deeper sorrow. Again I would with still better resolutions set about to rid myself of this oppressor, and just as often were my good resolutions broken, and instead of getting better and feeling free from grief, my grief grew heavier and I kept getting worse.

As I have in my possession a letter which I wrote to Elder Durand while under a dark and threatening cloud, and which will give you some idea of my

early and recent experience, I will give some extracts from that letter.

EXTRACTS.

I will go back and review my experience. I can well say, "O wretched man that I am!" I am far more wretched now than I was before I was brought to a sense of my sinfulness at all. Then I went about enjoying all the foolish pleasures of this world that came my way; partaking abundantly of the sins of this life, and never once thinking of Jesus, precious Jesus. Now I do not enjoy the many sinful pleasures of life, and cannot fully see that I am one of the elect, chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. Do I, dear brother, give any evidence of a christian spirit? I have prayed many times of late for such a manifestation, but with no result. There is by times a quietness steals over me, but it never lasts very long. Before I united with the Old School Baptist church, and even before I had received any evidence whatever of a blessed hope in Christ, I was happier than I now am. Then I went among other denominations seeking a place of refuge, a place where I might work and become worthy of Jesus' love. Now I know that all my works are useless, that if I am saved, it will be by grace through faith, and that not of myself. Then in offering up my prayers, I always made promise to do something to become worthy, but now I always offer up my prayers willingly, because I so much need his blessed promises.

At the time when I first felt my need of Christ, O how miserable I was. I was sick on account of sin. All my earthly enjoyments were forsaken, my companions became castaways, and all my spare time was spent in prayer and in reading the Bible, always desiring to be alone. Day after day, week after week, and month after month, I kept this up. Finally I began to become weary of this, as I found no comfort in it for me; everything seemed to condemn me. I then thought, Perhaps if I go and rejoin my companions and retake of the pleasures of this world, I may realize a change and become happy. I did as I thought, but O, the result was far from what I expected. When I heard them take the name of Jesus in vain, it made me shake from head to foot with fear. I followed after them, clinging to the idea that perhaps comfort and happiness will yet come, but how disappointed, instead of comfort, came sorrow; instead of happiness, came unhappiness. Where can I go to find the desires of my heart? I must be saved, delivered out of this wretched state, to whom shall I go for salvation? All the while sinking deeper and deeper into this awful pit of sin, until at last I could not read, pray, sleep, or even eat. Father noticed that there was something wrong with me, and often asked me what it was. Mother began to get uneasy about me, while my brother, who was around me most, said I was going crazy, and that if I was not kept from reading the Bible and going to church, I would lose my mind entirely. I am often led to believe that my actions would have led any one to believe as he did. Becoming more and more wretched, I really began to think that I was sick, and if I remember correctly they called the doctor in to see me. I can now see that no doctor, not even all the D. D.'s, could have helped me. The whole family became worried about me, and I was worried more than they all were.

I shall never forget the day when this stone, which had been sealed over my life, and been guarded on the outside by servants of Satan, was rolled away, and I,

who had heretofore been dead in sin, was made alive in Christ. In the morning of the above mentioned day I was, if not deceived, stripped of all power, and delivered over to the enemy to meet my just dues. In a very small degree I was witnessing or experiencing the trials, sorrows and afflictions before the crucifixion. It is beyond my power to express my condition; suffering untold agony; I cried unto Jesus. Father came into the room and asked me if I was getting any better. O, how could I say yes? I could not. He began to talk to me of Jesus, but while his name sounded dear to me, I could not listen to his story. So wretched was I, I did not care to talk about anything. My all was absorbed in this: "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

My condition grew worse and worse. Great clouds of sin seemed to hover over me, and becoming more dense, seemed to lower and carry me down deeper and deeper into helplessness, until it seemed as if death and destruction were inevitable. Moments seemed to me like days.; no rest for me yet.

In the afternoon, with my condition inexpressible, I went upstairs into my room, closed and locked the door behind me. O, that God hears my prayers, and makes me well; these were my thoughts. With the prison doors closed and the exits guarded, with the lights out and the city gates closed, with the cross of Jesus upon me and no strength to bear it, I began to pray. My prayers sounded vain, and like a dense fog seemed to envelop me in sin, and fill the room with darkness. The more I prayed the worse I got. I felt as though I was without hope and without God in the world. My prayers can never be answered, rendered me speechless. So deceitful was I, I was asking one thing and desiring another. I grew more helpless, strength vanished, tears filled my eyes, and in my distress I cried for mercy: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Everything before me grew dark; my eyes were opened and nothing could I perceive; my prayers had long ceased; my head dropped, and with the thought that it was all over with me, I knew nothing more until I heard the voice of the Son of God, "Come forth." Thus I passed "from death unto life." I knew at once that the glorious light which was round about was nothing less than the brilliant rays of the Sun of Righteousness. He brought to my soul peace and comfort. O, how great was that calm. This was the day that Jesus Christ arose from the dead for me, conquering in my stead death, hell and the grave. What a glorious Easter day that was for me. I arose from bended knees, and went downstairs praising and glorifying Jesus; told father that I had prayed to Jesus and that he had made me well. My joy was inexpressible. My father said, "I hope it is the work of the Lord." I could but reply, "It is." Can I still say, "It is?" I thought that sin, sorrow or doubt would never trouble me more, but how mistaken. Soon was that delightful peace taken away, and I began again to doubt. It was renewed again, and again vanished. Now it has vanished again, or else something else is wrong with me. How long shall it last, or how soon will a revelation come?

Brother, something seems to say to me, "Preach my gospel; feed my sheep," but O, something else says to me, You are too deceitful, too sinful, to wicked, too altogether unworthy, and you can never, never preach Christ and him crucified. O, I am so wretched, I do not know what to do. I cannot work without many

thoughts upon it. I cannot sleep at night. My appetite, which is now much better, had left me for a short time. What causes me to be so horrid? What shall I do? I read abundantly, but apparently with little understanding. Now and then I see just a glimpse of what I know to be truth. It causes a peaceful moment to me, but is soon gone. I pray often, very often, for some revelation revealing to me my condition, but I have not yet been satisfied. I am afraid I am just so haughty that my imagination has caused me these thoughts. What do you think? Dear brother, tell me just what you think about it.

Your unworthy brother,

J. CORDER MELLOTT.

CARDINGTON, Ohio, September 2, 1902.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR BROTHER IN OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST:—I have at different times wanted to write to you, but a feeling of unworthiness and inability has withholden my pen. Your editorials are so expressive of my own trials that they often cause me to take courage and press on; sometimes with joy. The one in the SIGNS of September 15th, is especially near to me. I have had my sore and terrible trials naturally, as well as spiritually, if indeed I do know anything of divine things, but when almost overwhelmed with grief, too much for mortal to bear, Jesus has appeared and sweetly whispered, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee; I have loved thee with an everlasting love; fear not, I am thy help." Then sorrow has been lost in joy unspeakable. O, the depth, and the wonderful comfort and strength in such precious promises, when Jesus speaks them in our poor tried hearts.

Rest in Jesus is sweet to those who have been cast into the furnace of affliction. But so much of the time I stumble along in darkness, yet Jesus is in the darkness also. It is written, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." Then how sweet, when almost overwhelmed with a sense of guilt, to remember Calvary, and that all the fullness of Christ is ours.

But I feel so unfit to write anything that would be edifying to you, that I will stop if I can. I have wished to send a greeting of love in the Lord. I inclose a letter which I wrote to brother Goble, of Indiana. It was written in July, 1901. I have just read it having just found it in a drawer. For some reason I found some comfort in reading it, if you think it worthy of a place in the SIGNS you may publish it, but I hope that you will cast it aside, if it deserves it.

From your sister,

JOIE E. WICKHAM.

ASHLEY, Ohio, July 4, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER GOBLE:—I say dear brother, not because I feel worthy to use the expression, but because I feel that you are a dear brother. I do not know whether I am prompted to write you by the Spirit, or by a fleshly interest in reasoning out deep things. I have read your letter in the July number of the *Monitor*. Whether we think alike, or whether we do not, I found your letter interesting. You, no doubt, will remember the text commented upon in your letter. My dear brother, there are four words in this text, which it seems to me almost all writers fail to remember, or to notice to the extent that they should be noticed. Those four words are, "with fear and trembling." The exhortation to

the Philippian brethren was that they should continue working out their own salvation as in the preceding verses it was said they had been doing. But the point at this time, it seems to me, was to warn them against being over bold, or self-righteous, and to work with fear and trembling; they must not forget that it was God who worked in them, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

As Paul had said that they had been thus working, he did not surely mean to tell them to get to work and save themselves, but he meant to say, "While you are working out your own salvation, be humble and remember that it is of God, he worketh in you, both to will and to do." When a child works out his salvation, he is acting; is working, and the last part of the text tells how it is done, and forbids them to claim any ability of themselves, or for the obedient child, but to remember that it is God who works in them. When a sinner repents of his sins, and begs God to have mercy upon him, he is acting, but it is the Spirit of God that causes him to act. It is the work of God, as it is written, "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee." Here they approach, but God causes it in them and by them.

As to the question of accountability, the Bible is too plain to admit of any difference of opinion. I have never known a Baptist, whether a believer in unlimited predestination or not, to deny man's accountability. In second Peter, second chapter, we read of some who have eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin. Are such ones excusable because of inability to cease from sin? If those who go to final perdition are accountable, because they do not do what they cannot do, is it a different principle when we say that somebody else is accountable though they can say, "When we would do good, evil is present with us"? And again, "How to perform that which is good, I find not"? It is said, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." And again, "Pray without ceasing." Can we do these things? Nevertheless was Paul unreasonable to exhort after that manner? Is there unrighteousness with God? Let us not say who hath resisted his will, but remember that he is too wise to err, to good to do evil. God is holy and all-wise, and the Almighty Sovereign over all worlds, beings and events. I am but a fool before him; I dare not mark out a path for God, or make excuse for him, neither do I feel excused for sinning, and doing wrong, though I have learned that I cannot do good. No, my dear brother, I feel the burden of my shortcomings so deeply that sometimes it seems that I cannot bear it. How many times have I resolved that I would do better, but have had to shed bitter tears of defeat. I know that my righteousness is but filthy rags, and when I am enabled, if ever, to serve God in spirit and in truth, it is all of grace, and I am sure that I deserve no reward. But thanks be to God for the unspeakable gift of his dear Son. Rejoice with me, my brother. It seemed that the Lord shone in my heart, giving joy too great for silence. Therefore, I said just now, "rejoice with me," for I believe that you also know the burden of your own imperfections, and also know the deliverance that grace gives. How sweet the assurance, I am your strength, and I will fight your battles for you, and the warfare is accomplished. Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

O, that I could walk worthy of this high calling, and show by my life that I have been with Jesus, but the imperfec-

tions of my flesh cause me to remember that my sufficiency is of God; he hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. And, dear brother, we are holy in him, yes, perfect; perfect even as he is perfect.

Is not this an unspeakable gift, "Your righteousness is of me, said the Lord"?

With much love, your sister,

JOIE E. WICKHAM.

FRAGMENTS.

I HAVE thought that we must regard the body of Jesus as differing in one respect from the body of any other man that ever lived upon the earth, in that it was sinless, and because of that, could see no corruption. "He was made in the *likeness* of men," to be a servant, "and being found in fashion as a man," he became obedient unto death. He was sent forth "in the *likeness* of sinful flesh," but are we to understand from the record that his was sinful flesh? "He was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." He must be under the law in order to redeem those who were under it. The son is under the same law as his mother, though the father be not under it. If his had been a sinful body, could he have been a proper offering for the sins of his people? Could he have borne their sins if he had been capable of sin himself?

Though he was made of a woman, yet his father was not a man, but God. The angel said, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." That body was a holy thing. I do not think I can say that the body begotten by the Holy Ghost was a sinful body.

He was made flesh, "made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death." He took part of flesh and blood in order that "through death he might destroy him that had the power of death," and in order that he might be "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," and be "tempted in all points like as we are;" yet in all this he was "without sin." The tempter, the prince of this world, had nothing in him. (John xiv. 30.) "He knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." "He was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." "He was made to be sin for us, who knew no sin."

It was said to Adam, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," but it was not so said to Jesus. Nor was this true of his body. It could not return to dust, for that would have been to see corruption, and it was written that God's holy One should not be suffered to see corruption. Had his body been sinful he could not have borne the sins of others, for he must have died on his own account, as one of the sinful race of Adam, even though he had not sinned himself, and his body must have seen corruption. But he was undefiled, pure, God's holy one, with no touch or taint or nature of sin in his body. Therefore he could bear the sins of his people, and only the sins of others could cause him to die.

But though the sins of his people could prevail to bring him down into the baptism of death, they could do no more. Their power over the body ceased when he died, for the law had no further claim. He could not see corruption. When the grave received the dead body of the Son of God, then its power was gone, and in the appointed time that same body must

come forth in form and fashion as it went into the grave, to show openly that he had triumphed over both death and the grave. He had "abolished death" by giving it all it could demand under the holy law of God for the sins of his people, and then coming forth from it by the power and glory of the Father. Also by the same glorious resurrection he became the destruction of the grave; so that his people, who in a legal and mystical sense died with him and rose together with him, are forever delivered from death and the grave. "Death hath no more dominion over him" or them.

In the resurrection of Jesus he is said to be born from the dead, and thus to be "the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead," as it was written, "Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee." The sonship of his people is in his Sonship, and they are therefore secure in him. They shall not "die any more; for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., August, 1902.

SAN FRANCISCO, Cal., August 25, 1902.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—My heart leaped with joy this a. m. when I opened your kind letter of the twentieth inst. and saw the endearing relation that you acknowledged in addressing me, a poor old sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all, and if a saint, the least of all. As I felt you would do, you did, in returning my letter, which I have reread, and find the sentiments that I tried to express are still the sentiments of my heart, though they may need more lucid explanation than I was able at the time of writing them to give.

If I have prayed for and earnestly desired to have one thing above another, in communicating with brethren and friends, it is the power to express in simple language, and beautiful metaphors, the things that are revealed to my mind concerning Jesus Christ our Savior, not only as the Nazerene, the humble carpenter working at the bench, as I have done a great part of my life, and have been doing to-day, but as the great burden-bearer, bearing the sins of his people; as a Master Builder, building the holy temple that groweth in the Lord; as a Shepherd laying down his life for the sheep; as a Husband weaving by his obedience a robe of righteousness for his bride; as our High Priest offering himself without spot to God an offering acceptable for our sins; as the Captain of salvation, fighting death, hell and the grave, to liberate the church, which is his body, from all the claims of a violated righteous, holy and good law; as our King arising triumphant over death, and robbing the grave of its victory, and being crowned by the Father with glory and honor, and ascending to the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, and as the resurrection and the life of his people, in whom all the building groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.

I do wish that I could tell of the beauties seen in the heavenly places in Christ, as I have often felt that I have surely seen them. But alas, I so often see them for myself, and not for another. I sometimes feel that I am caught up into the third heavens, and there hear things of which I can find no law by which I can convey them to another.

I do have a burning desire to tell of the beauties and consolations there are in the gospel of Christ. I desire to contend earnestly for the faith, once delivered to the saints. Each saint re-

ceives that faith, which is the work of God, by revelation of the Holy Spirit which is sent unto us by our High Priest, by which we have access unto the Father through our risen and glorified Savior, Jesus Christ. This has been my desire for over forty-five years.

We cannot convince a brother by argument. If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God. Man cannot take of the things of Christ and show them to man; this is the work of that Spirit which Christ said should come. I aspire to talk of those things only which the hungry child of God knows, by way of putting them in remembrance of what the Spirit teaches in their hearts, the hearts of all God's children. It pains me to know that I have done so little in the church; I have spent most all of my life in talking to people of other denominations, and many of no church relation at all.

I hope to see you some day, face to face, and to talk with you, when our hearts may burn within us from the warm influence of the presence of our risen Lord. I am grateful to you for your comforting words when you say, "From your letter as I read it, I gained fellowship for you in the truth of the gospel." May that fellowship be strengthened and become a bond of indissoluble union between us, is the prayer of your humble brother in hope of a part in the first resurrection,

W. W. POLK.

WERTSVILLE, N. J., Aug., 1902.

ELDER CHICK:—I know that we are strangers in the flesh, but I hope not in faith. This is my second attempt to write to you, but knowing my weakness I laid it aside, but it seems that necessity is laid upon me, and once more I will try, and if God will lead my mind, I will tell you what my mind is.

I lived in Hopewell, about eleven years ago, and attended meeting then. I often wished to be a member, but my tongue was tied, and I could not tell any one about my trials, so I gave it up, but it is like a root out of a dry ground, it will spring up. About three years ago, one morning when I awoke, these words were presented to me, just as if some one had spoken to me, "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace." Then I wrote to you to see if you would tell me what the words meant, but before I got to send it I was taken sick and did not think I ever would get well, but for some reason, God saw fit to raise me up again. Sometimes while I was sick, I was so happy, and felt ready to go then, but for some reason, I know not why, I was spared.

All this time I felt as if I would like to be baptized, and for a long time after I would think it to be my duty to come and ask a place with you. Time went on, and I had "la grippe," and I had trouble without end. Then these words came, and were my comfort, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, until my change come." And after that my mind ceased to worry.

But I have seen many stormy days from that time till now, and I am so much like the children of Israel; so stiff-necked and rebellious, but I cannot hold out any longer; I want a home, and I love the order of the Baptists, and I always feel at home with them, but they are all better than I am. But the Bible says, "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise," and, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God

raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

I will now leave it, for I know that God works all things after his own will, and I can do nothing to save myself. When I would do good, evil is present with me. If I am saved, I shall receive of the Lord's hand double for all my sins. These words are my comfort, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Yours,

DELIA HOAGLAND.

[THE writer of the above, though colored, certainly gives full evidence that she has been washed white in the blood of the Lamb. We replied to the above letter, with the advice for her to come to the church at once, and it gives us great pleasure to state that with two other dear sisters, she came to the church at Hopewell, and was baptized on the fourth Sunday in August. Both Saturday and Sunday were days of rejoicing to the church. We believe that it was that kind of rejoicing that is peculiar to Zion, the city of our solemnities.—ED.]

DECATUR, Texas.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—Since I last wrote to the SIGNS, my mind has been that I would never write again, for when my letters are published I am made to feel as though they have crowded out better matter. You must receive a host of correspondence, and I can but believe that mine is the most insignificant of them all, still I hope that you will bear with me. It seems that I cannot reconcile my mind without trying to tell you how much I love the doctrine of the SIGNS; they set forth the doctrine of God our Savior. It is sure that there is nothing outside of the truth that will be of any spiritual comfort to the child of God. I feel well assured that none of the true ministers of God will differ in the doctrine. Paul says, We preach Christ Jesus the Lord, and him crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness, but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. When therefore we hear one claiming to be a minister of Jesus denying the power and wisdom of God, we know that such an one is a falsifier. When we hear one say that something has been that our God did not intend to be, we know that he is limiting God's power, and when we hear one saying that all things will not be just as God foreknew them, we know that he is limiting God's wisdom. The wisdom and the predestination of God are commensurate, for in the beginning God's wisdom fixed and made sure all things that ever have been, or ever will be, for if we say that all that his wisdom saw will not come to pass, we make him a liar. He says he is God, and changes not. He is the same God to-day that he was when he declared the end from the beginning; he declares that yesterday, to-day and forever he is the same, and he is without variableness or shadow of turning; his wisdom, before creation began, saw all the wickedness of men and devils, and his wisdom so arranged that they should work for his own glory, and the fulfillment of his own purpose.

All the reason that I can give why the things which we hate, must be, is because so it seemed good in his purpose, and for the best, to him who rules and works all things after the counsel of his own will. Every trial, trouble, distress and affliction is among the all things which work for good to them that love him. O, that we could at all times be reconciled to his

dealings with us, for we know that he is just and true in all his ways. O, that I could thank and praise him for that hope that causes me to look to him as my God and Savior. I have often been made to wonder why he allows such a rebellious, wretched sinner as I to trust in him, when I cannot even thank or praise him as I ought. But, dear brethren, I feel confident that if I am not embraced in the covenant of redemption, all my pleadings and crying will not change him, or cause him to look down on me in pity, for his decrees went forth to all the ends of the earth before creation began, and there is nothing under the sun that can alter them, for he declares the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. [We would not be found pleading, nor crying, if he were not embraced in that covenant of redemption before the world was. No one ever has a heart to cry to God, unless he has been chosen in that covenant, before the world was. God's people are led with weeping and supplications. To weep and cry are evidences that one is being led in the way of redemption, and that one is chosen in Christ to be saved everlastingly.—Ed.]

Dear brethren, I feel well assured that all the zeal of the religious world cannot add one soul to that company of the redeemed, and all the devices of the wicked one, or of evil men, cannot take one from that number. I have never found any comfort in slighting the truth to please the religious world. I have good neighbors who belong to those worldly religious denominations; I used to visit their meetings in order to please them, but the good Lord has shown me, as I believe, that it is wrong to encourage them with my presence. I have not been to any of their meetings for five or six years. It seems to me that if there was one sin which Christ and the apostles condemned more than any other, it was idolatry. Some say it is not wrong to go just so that we do not take part with them. It seems to me that we had just as well say that it is not wrong to visit a horse race, or gambling house, if we take no part with them. Now I believe that there is just as much sin in idolatrous worship, as in these other things. What can be a greater sin than to mock God? I trust that the Lord will keep me from all evil temptations, and enable me to go in the way he would have me, and to speak the truth concerning his holy name

I trust, dear brethren, that you will throw the mantle of charity over this poor scribble, for it is just like the writer, less than nothing. I leave this with your better judgment to do with as you deem best; whatever you decide, all will be right with me.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

M. B. F. JONES.

GEORGETOWN, Texas.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—As it is time for me to remit my subscription for the SIGNS, I want to add that it is a paper of which I am proud. It is worthy of being in every Baptist family that loves the truth, and dislikes false doctrine. I hope that you will not think that I am rich, or wise, for I am neither, and I am glad of it, for by wisdom the world knows not God, I am also glad of that. I am, by nature, so ignorant that sometimes I think that I am not respected by those who know me. It is said that wisdom is justified of her children. I feel to be grateful to God that all his little ones are known of him, and he never forgets them

nor forsakes them in time of trouble; he is ever near them, and he knows all their wants, and he will never suffer them to be tempted above what they are able to bear; he loves his own little flock more than all else. I know that he is a God of wisdom, and that he never forgets anything, and we read in the Bible, that every plant which he has not planted shall be rooted up.

God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. The world spoken of in the text is the people that he chose in Christ before the foundation of the world, for it is said, As many as were ordained to eternal life believed. And again it is said, No man can come to the Father, except it be given him of God. Our God works in his children both to will and to do of his own good pleasure, and he makes them willing subjects in the day of his power. Now, if God works in us, what right have we to claim to do the work of God, and say it is of ourself? Self is a great fellow. Man by nature is an Arminian, and believes in a conditional salvation, but in the day of God's power, his mind becomes different. Then we hear him cry out, "Salvation is of the Lord." Such an one sees himself, and is made to feel that God is all and in all, and he is nothing but a poor sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all.

Dear brother Beebe, I will say, after reading the SIGNS to my entire satisfaction, to all the dear brothers and sisters who write for it, that it is a great comfort to me. I sometimes feel that I am all alone here below, put when I take up my paper to read, I find that I am not alone, for my brethren are just like I am; they are like all the people of God in this, that they all must suffer, for to suffer is their appointed lot. While in this sinful world, I do know that I cannot live right, for it does not seem to be our lot to do so. But the great trouble with me is, "Am I his, or am I not?" In this I am often at a great loss. If any one does know that they are, I would like for them to tell me how they found it out, for I would like to know for myself. If they are children of God, they will I am sure gladly tell me. I am great sinner, "And what I am, it is hard to know." I am far from knowing. With me it is a hope. Take my little hope from me, and I should be in despair. Without this hope, I should have no evidence of things not seen. I feel that I do love the Predestinarian Baptists, the old, old flock of the Father's peculiar care.

Brother Beebe, I thank you for your brotherly kindness. You contend for the true doctrine. Hope in God and he will sustain you, and all true lovers of this doctrine will stand when worlds are crumbling down.

Truly yours,

J. I. YARBROUGH.

OTEGO, N. Y., Sept., 1902.

TO THE DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—May grace, mercy and peace dwell with you. I wish to declare some of God's wonderful works; to tell of his goodness to me, one of the vilest. I trust he has made me to see that he is the chief one among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. I look back on all the way he has led me. It is nearly seventy years since I was buried by baptism, following my Lord in the liquid grave. That was a day ever to be remembered by me. What scenes I have passed through, what miracles have been wrought by his almighty power. My soul is made to say, "What hath God wrought?"

Now, in my eighty-fifth year hath he, in his great goodness, permitted me to attend the Roxbury Association, where I have beheld the love and fellowship of the saints, sitting in heavenly places. All feasting on the bounties, hearing the gospel bells chiming so sweetly, telling of God's marvelous works to the children of men. His mighty power was extolled, and the sinner abased,; that is what I love to hear. The dear servants, how blessedly they chimed in, the one with the other; no "linsey-woolsey," but all united in giving God all the praise.

"My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this,
And sit and sing herself away
To everlasting bliss."

This is sitting in heavenly places, this is the Lord'f day. It is a foretaste of that which is to come.

"If such the sweetness of the stream,
What will the fountain be?"

We shall then drink full draughts of God's pleasure, we shall then see him as he is, and be like him.

I would say to the dear ones in the faith, Many of you may live to see the time when your faith may be tried, when you may have to endure much, meet the enemy; you will need great grace to stand in the ranks as good soldiers. Remember the Captain of your salvation will lead on to victory; may your eyes be steadfastly looking to him. He says, "I will never leave nor forsake you;" his word stands fast forever.

I want to thank our dear friends and kindred in Christ for their great kindness to us. The Lord bless them four-fold.

I will now say farewell. May the peace of God that passeth understanding be and remain with you, is my sincere prayer.

ELIZABETH BEESLEY.

AMANDA, Ohio, Aug. 25, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—In response to the request of some dear brethren and sisters whom I met at the Philadelphia Association, to send them a line through the SIGNS, I would say, I have pleasant memories of my visit there. The unexpected and the undeserved fellowship manifested to me by those both in and out of the church, bespoke a oneness not found in the world outside, and gave evidence that an unction from the Holy One pervaded the assembly, and evidenced that God and not man had been the teacher. Is it not strange, to some at least, that without any preconcerted arrangement, God's people meet as strangers to each other in the flesh, from all parts of the compass; the sons from far, and the daughters from the ends of the earth, literally speaking, and all speak with new tongues; not in the dead languages of earth, but in a living language, and that all in a moment understand each other? and they need not that any man teach them, but as the same anointing teaches them. Truly our Rock is not as their rock, our enemies themselves being judges.

Unworthily yours,

THOMAS COLE.

ON SALE AT THIS OFFICE.

FOR the convenience of our subscribers, Eld. D. Bartley has sent us a few copies of his book entitled "Priesthood of the Son of God," which we will mail direct from this office, on receipt of price. For full particulars see advertisement on page 548, of this paper.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 98 means 1898; 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902, &c.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Licking Association of Old School Baptists, convened with the church at Elk Lick, Scott Co., Ky., September 12th, 13th and 14th, 1902, to the several churches of which she is composed, sendeth love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In sending you this our annual epistle of love, we have no desire other than to write only such things as shall be to the honor and praise of our God, and to the comfort and edification of his people; to that end we feel to pray that the holy Spirit may direct our mind to write only such things as make for the peace and comfort of God's dear children.

What is, or should be, the object of a Circular Letter? If it is simply a custom handed down from the fathers, and we follow as a tradition, they are useless. We are led to inquire, What has been the effect produced by the sending out year after year of these annual epistles? Have they been to the glory of God and the peace and happiness of his people, or have they brought pain and sorrow and division among them? If the latter, we would do well to discontinue them, or at least to consider well each message, and see that nothing is written that would wound one of those little ones for whom Christ died.

These circulars are sent out by the messengers of the several churches assembled in an associate capacity, who have come together bearing messages of love and fellowship to one another; telling of their several conditions, and a Circular is simply a report of these messengers to their several churches of the joys and blessings attending their coming together; of the love and fellowship manifested, or of any sorrow or pain that may have come to the body. They are not intended as an avenue to sustain or controvert some mooted point of doctrine, nor as an opportunity to strike at a brother with whom we have disagreed, but it is proper in these epistles, to tell of the dealings of the Lord with us; how he has led us and blessed us; to tell of our sorrows and of our rejoicings; of our temptations and deliverances, and to exalt the name of our God above every name, and to praise and adore him for his loving-kindness, and tender mercies; it is proper to tell how our poor hearts have been made to rejoice in our coming together, to tell of the love and fellowship that has been manifested; of how God's dear servants have come to us in the fullness of the gospel, and in its proclamation how our hope has been strengthened, and our hearts encouraged and made to rejoice in God our Savior, and to feel that it was good to be together.

Now, while we bless the name of our God, for the peace, love and sweet fellowship that abides in and with us, we are made sad to miss at each session, some of the dear fathers and mothers in Israel that have been called home to their Father's house. How we miss the counsels of these dear faithful ones to whom we have so long looked for counsel, and upon whom the burdens and responsibilities of church and association have been wont to fall. Who among us are ready and willing to bow our necks to the yoke and move on in the full discharge of every duty that is incumbent upon us as faithful soldiers of the cross, ever found ready to lay aside every weight and hinderance that comes between us and the assemblies of the saints? The faithfulness of those that have crossed the river should encourage us to press forward in their footsteps, ever ready to honor and

praise the name of our God; ever striving for the peace and prosperity of his cause and people; rejoicing with those that rejoice, and weeping with those that weep.

May the grace of our God strengthen each one of us to a better and more faithful service, and so guide and direct us that we shall walk more worthy of the vocation wherewith we have been called; so letting our light shine that others beholding, may be constrained to glorify their Father in heaven.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.
J. T. McCOUN, Clerk.
T. J. RATLIFF, Ass't. Clerk.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the church at Whitefield, Maine, Sept. 5th, 6th and 7th, 1902, to the associations with whom she corresponds, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year has passed away, and brought many sad changes. We are reminded that God does not change, and our desire is to be found speaking of his tender mercies. It is our custom in this annual letter to write from some portion of Scripture, for the comfort and edification of the Lord's people, but there seems to be only one word, or name, in our mind, which we will use, for the Scriptures do testify of this same "Jesus," and there is no sweeter sound to sinners saved by grace.

Jesus is God manifest in the flesh. It is a mystery the natural man can never understand, and admits of no controversy. His people are taught of the Lord, and flesh and blood does not reveal unto them "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and forever." It is so plainly stated in the Scriptures that no one can call Jesus, Lord, only by the Holy Ghost, and our experience agrees with the testimony, so we have no hesitation in declaring boldly that the doctrine of God our Savior has not changed, and never will. What he said to his disciples while here in the likeness of sinful flesh, comes with the same power and sweetness to his children to-day: "I am the way, the truth and the life." "I am the vine." "I am the resurrection and the life." "I am the door." We need never be fearful of this being too strong doctrine for his little ones, for we cannot testify to it unless we have been taught of the Lord, and "the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." The work of Jesus, in the salvation of his people, was a perfect work. He fulfilled every jot and tittle of the law, took away everything that was contrary to them, and nailed it to his cross, for he condemned sin in the flesh, and we are justified in him. Nothing can be laid to the charge of God's elect. The apostle Paul speaks plainly: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Sinners saved by grace love to hear this name exalted above every name that is named, for he is "all in all" to them. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in him; all the fullness dwells in him, because it pleased the Father. He is a hiding place from the wind, a covert from the tempest; the shadow of a great Rock in a weary land; he is made unto his people wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption; their life is hid with him in God, and how beautiful for situation Mount Zion is, and "God is in the midst of her," so she can never be moved; her walls and bulwarks will always be salvation; no weapon that is formed against her shall prosper, and every tongue that shall

arise in judgment shall be condemned. God loved his people with an everlasting love, and saved them with an everlasting salvation; they are more than conquerors through him, and his love embraces them all, so they can never be separated from him. Nothing can be known among us but Jesus Christ, and him crucified, whether we write or speak. Salvation by grace is all the salvation we know or want; it is the only salvation that can reach vile, helpless sinners; it is God's salvation, and those who have tasted the joys of it, long, as David did, to have it restored again unto them. We are reminded that although we have quoted no passage of Scripture to be used as a foundation for what is written, we have been led to select "the foundation" which is already laid in Zion: "The tried Stone," the precious corner Stone, the sure foundation; the whole building fitly framed together; the city whose builder and maker is God, where no works of man can ever be heard or found. We have tried to build on this foundation only what the Lord has done, for we know his works cannot be shaken. What he does is done forever; nothing can be added, nothing taken from it; all things were made by him, and for him, and for his pleasure they are and were created. But our pen falters, for the subject is too vast, too deep for finite minds.

Finally, brethren, farewell; love one another; forgive one another, as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Think for one moment what a wonderful love it is that blotted out all your sins, and it is "shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost," forever excluding the thought that it comes by any act of obedience after the flesh. "Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear."

Z. M. BEAL, Moderator.
J. C. CLARK, Clerk.

The Elders and messengers composing the Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Southampton Church, Bucks Co., Pa., May 30th, 31st and June 1st, 1877, to the several churches whose messengers we are.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—"Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ," who hath abundantly blessed and preserved us through the vicissitudes of another year, the "Centennial Year" of our independence as a nation. And while we have seen by contrast in bringing together the different parts of our own country and the nations of the earth, the great advancement we have made in mechanism, art and science, the rapid strides we have made to greatness and power, we have also seen, with great fear and awful forebodings, the wickedness of the depraved human heart and our weakness as a nation, when justice, truth and virtue give place to the corrupt passions of ambitious men, whose hearts are fully set to do evil, and whose god is mammon and unrighteousness. How applicable the language of the prophet Isaiah in the fifty-ninth chapter: "And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off; for truth is fallen in the streets, and equity cannot enter. And while we have been passing through seasons of great anxiety, mourning the deplorable state of our country, a more solemn scene arrests our attention. The religious world in vast assemblage joined, send up a united cry to their god, imploring a blessing to convert the world; with prayers and songs they have gathered tens and thousands to their fold,

professedly turned them from evil to good. But hath righteousness and peace taken the place of evil? No; the world is full of wickedness, murder, wrath, strife, envy, and all manner of evil. Are not many of them thus gathered, manifesting the character written of them? "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when ye have made him, he is twofold more the child of hell than yourselves."

Beloved brethren, the church of the living God, whom we trust we are addressing, is in the world, and surrounded by its temptations and evils, but we have the prayer of our Savior, that we shall be kept from the evil thereof. And it is also written that vengeance shall overtake the wicked; the wrath and indignation of an angry God shall destroy them. The exhortation of the apostle to the church at Colosse, iii. 1, is worthy of our attention at this time: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." The children of God in their lives, as fallen, degenerate sons of Adam, dead in trespasses and sins, walking in their own strength, and trusting in works that they call righteous, which they can do at will and pleasure, to cancel the debt of sin charged against them, pass on in carnal security until God sends an arrow from his quiver, piercing their hearts, and bringing them to a knowledge of themselves, and of God, the sovereign Ruler of the universe; which knowledge enables them to see themselves sinners, condemned, and the wrath of God abiding upon them, and the weight of their guilt sinking them down to everlasting destruction. But as the dark shadows of despair close around them, the light of the Son of Righteousness beams forth, and Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the sufferings of death, appears the atoning sacrifice; they behold the Lamb of God slain for them, and the law that held them firmly bound fulfilled, and arising from under its curse the redeemed soul with full confidence looks away to Jesus, the author and finisher of his faith, and prayerfully inquires, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" And when they receive the command, "Follow thou me," how pleasant to "seek those things that are above," in the company of the saints, and to follow with them in the footsteps of Jesus, and to realize the battle over, the victory won, and to sit down under the banner of Immanuel, his love encircling every fold as it waves over their heads, shielding them from all harm. How delightful to peruse the pages of divine truth, to dwell upon the love and perfections of God, and to slake their thirst at the fountain, the streams whereof make glad the city of our God, and to feast their longing appetites upon the rich fruits of the Lord's table, ripened and sweetened in the sunshine of the Savior's love, receiving strength thereby to journey on to a more perfect walk in the heavenly way. Then the Savior's yoke is easy, and his burden light, and it is their meat and drink to do the will of God.

Beloved brethren, we profess to be risen with Christ; as we have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, are we so walking in him? Are we rooted in him, built up and established in the faith, as we have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving? Or are we being spoiled through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ? For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and we are

complete in him which is the Head of all principality and power. Are we seeking those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God, or are our affections set on things on the earth? Do we remember that we are dead, and that our life is hid with Christ in God, and that when Christ who is our life shall appear, that we shall also appear with him in glory? Are we mortifying our members that are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry? Do we remember that for these things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience, in the which we sometimes walked when we lived in them? But now we are expected to put off all these, anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communications out of our mouth, and to lie not one to another, seeing that we have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after him that created him, and to put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing one another and forgiving one another; and above all things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. Let the peace of God rule in our hearts, let the word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Dearly beloved, it becomes us in this day of darkness and strife to examine ourselves. Are we abounding in love, or is our love growing cold, and our minds dark and selfish? Are our visits to our pastor as frequent as they should be? Do we speak words of comfort and encouragement to him, and contribute of that fullness that the Lord has bestowed upon us for his support, and those incumbent upon him? Do we hold up his hands by filling our places in the appointments of the church? Do we prefer Jerusalem above our chief joys, and are we living in and contending for the faith and order of God's house, as delivered to the saints? Do we cut off right hands and pluck out right eyes when they become an offense? Do we speak often one to another of the things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God, exhorting one another to love and obedience? Are we often with them at the throne of grace, asking for such blessing as the Lord hath in store for his people, remembering that he has said for all these things he would be sought unto? Do we sing with them of the wonders of redeeming love, making melody in our hearts unto God? And is the church with us attractive, and beautiful as a city set upon a hill, that quickened souls should desire it for habitation, and beholding our order, shall be constrained to say, Beautiful is Mount Zion for situation, the joy of the whole earth; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness? Brethren, if these things be in us and abound, they make us that we shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

God hath in all ages permitted his servants by faith to look beyond the narrow bounds of earth through the mists of the dark, deep river of death, to see Jesus exalted a Prince and a Savior at God's right hand. It is recorded, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy enemies thy foot-

stool." Hence our Savior, when he had finished the work of redemption, ascended to his Father, the right hand of God, the seat of power, honor and glory, beholding the travail of his soul with full satisfaction, and continues the advocate and intercessor of his people.

We will close this letter with the exhortation of the apostle to the Ephesian brethren, recorded vi. 10: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helment of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

P. HARTWELL, Mod.

A. B. FRANCIS, Clerk.

[THE above letter is republished by especial request. As a rule we are obliged to decline requests for the republishing of articles, as they crowd out original matter, but peculiar reasons make this request more urgent than common, and therefore we have complied with it.—ED.]

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, to the corresponding associations and churches, sends greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We are glad to inform you that we feel that our meeting has been a season of profitableness to us, as the gospel which is glad tidings of great joy has been preached to us by the ministering brethren which have been sent among us. Our hearts have been made glad and encouraged by the way, as the gospel of Christ has been preached unto us. As far as we know, we are abiding in love, and are made to know that we are kept by the power of God unto salvation. We are few in number, but we have faith to believe our God has not forgotten us. Our meetings are well attended considering our numbers. We desire a continuance of your correspondence.

Our next session will be held, if the Lord wills, with the Gardiner Church, Gardiner, Maine, Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1903, and continue three days, where we again hope to enjoy your messengers. It is our prayer that God's peace may reign in Zion.

Z. M. BEAL, Moderator.

J. C. CLARK, Clerk.

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with First Church of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., September 10th and 11th, 1902, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends christian love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In the providence of our kind and gracious God we are once more gathered together in an associate

capacity, and one more year is numbered with the past, and in the goodness of our God we have been blessed and afflicted, yet we feel to say, "Thy will be done." Your ministers have come among us preaching the gospel of our heavenly Father's kingdom, and bringing glad tidings of great joy, for which we are thankful to the giver of every good and perfect gift.

Our next session will be held, the Lord willing, with the Second Church of Roxbury.

J. D. HUBBELL, Moderator.
WILLIAM BALLARD, Clerk.

The Licking Association, Primitive Baptists, when convened with the church at Elk Lick, Georgetown, Scott Co., Ky., to corresponding associations.

DEAR BRETHREN:—According to appointment, and by God's power, we are brought together, and gladly greet those of like precious faith.

It is pleasant to note the meeting of the members, and to feel the hearty handclasp while God's love wells up in our heart, for the called according to his purpose. We often feel that the truth would comfort us even if no other on earth believed, but it is a consolation indeed to hear the gospel proclaimed as it has been at this meeting. God remembers Zion, and his children yet receive their daily bread.

We sincerely hope and trust that you may realize the keeping care of our heavenly Father, and may he continue to bless you with able preachers of the word.

Remember us at a throne of grace, and may God enable you to pray according to his will.

Your messengers and Minutes are received, and we desire a continuance of our correspondence. May the God of all grace keep you, and all Israel, is our prayer for his name's sake.

The next session of our Association is appointed to be held with Bethel Church, Shelby Co., Kentucky, where we hope to hear from you again.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.
J. T. MCCOUN, Clerk.
T. J. RATLIFF, Ass't. Clerk.

STATEMENT OF LICKING ASSOCIATION.

For publication in the *Gospel Messenger*, and also in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and in our Minutes.

Our attention has been called to the following paragraph in some "remarks" in the *Gospel Messenger*, written by the editor, Elder Sylvester Hassell: "I have been informed that the membership of the Licking Association has been reduced from twelve hundred to less than one hundred, by the continual and extreme preaching of unlimited predestination, that many of their meeting-houses are vacant, or occupied by other denominations, and that their last minister, Elder J. G. Eubanks, late of Georgia, has left them and moved to Delaware."

This information given to Elder Hassell is incorrect. The doctrine of predestination has never been the point upon which any have gone out from us, unless it may have been to some extent the cause of separation of the New School, from us, in 1832. Some left this Association many years ago because of difference on the subject of the new birth. Again in 1888, about half our membership separated from us upon a point of doctrine in which predestination was not at all involved; they believing the same as we upon that doctrine. We have now a membership of 154, and have four ordained ministers living with us, and serving churches. Elder Eubanks, whose membership was in the Mount Pleasant Association, but who served three churches in this Association, did not leave us because of difference of sentiment, but because he felt the Lord had called him to serve the church at Welsh Tract, Delaware. He is with us at this session of our Association. The doctrine of predestination has never occupied a prominence above other points of doctrine in the preaching we have been accustomed to hear. Elders Gilbert Beebe, Wm. L. Beebe, Wm. J. and Joseph L. Purington, Gold, Lester and Durand, with others from the east and south-east, have visited us for many years, and such as theirs has been the preaching with which we have been fed.

We ask Elder Hassell to give this a place in his periodical. We are now in session at Georgetown, with the Elk Lick church.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.
J. T. MCCOUN, Clerk.
T. J. RATLIFF, Assistant Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1902.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

2 CORINTHIANS I. 20.

"FOR all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."

It is noticeable in the writings of the inspired Paul that often out of statements of some seemingly unimportant matter, or at least some matter of a purely temporary nature, he brings in the most important and fundamental principles of the truth as it is in Jesus, and connects them together in his argument. Thus he shows that in reality there is nothing trivial, or unimportant, when viewed in the light of our relation to God, in the gospel, and as regards our profession of his name. This is true of the text named above, and the connection of it.

From what is said in verses sixteen and seventeen, of this chapter, it seems evident that Paul had promised to visit this church, and had failed to do so. In the sixteenth chapter of the first epistle written by Paul to this church, we find that he had so promised them. As he had not done so, he speaks here about the matter, and declares again that he had been so minded, but he had been hindered. Note how careful Paul was that none should say that he had made this promise lightly. He says, I was minded, or it was my purpose to come to you, and of you to be helped on my way again. Now he says, Did I use lightness, or was my word yea and nay, or was my purpose according to the flesh? No, he says, I did not make this promise without full purpose to fulfill it, and my word was yea. That I have not fulfilled my promise, has not been because I regarded my word lightly, but because providence has not furthered my way to you.

How careful Paul was to give no room for any one to accuse him as a minister and apostle of Jesus, of lack of stability, or of want of faithfulness to his word. Perhaps thousands have promised to pay a visit to churches, and have used no endeavor to fulfill the promise. Not so with Paul, he regarded his promise as a sacred thing; he felt that if he were to show himself careless with regard to such a matter as this, when his promise had gone forth, it would argue that there was a root of instability in him as a believer, and (as he was what he was by grace) there was also no certainty in grace itself, or in the fruits that it should bear. Some one might say, Paul claims that the grace of God has made him what he is as an apostle, and as a believer, and now we see of how little value grace is, according to what we see in Paul, and so not only would Paul, but grace also, be discredited, in the view of all men. To Paul it was more important that grace should be magnified by him, and in all that he did, than that any praise should accrue to himself, and so to clear the grace of God from any such charge, he takes pains to show why he had not come to them. He had been hindered, and could not come though this was his full intent.

We feel like adding a word right here to this effect, to the christian every promise that he makes ought to be regarded as of importance. Though it be a little

thing in itself, it is a vast thing when seen to be connected with the grace of God, which he has professed. Ministers ought to be careful to do all that lies in their power to fulfill every engagement which they have entered into with their brethren, and with all men. And others also, as well as ministers, are under solemn obligations to fulfill their solemn covenant engagements in their relation to the church, and also to all men. To be careless in the fulfilling of their vows in the house of God argues something radically wrong in themselves, and gives occasion for men to speak in reproach of the religion which they have professed. Paul felt that it was a little thing that men should reproach himself, but how important that they should have no occasion to speak in reproach of the religion which he had professed. Therefore he was careful even in little things, that none should judge that he lightly regarded any promise that he had made. O, that this spirit might dwell and rule in us all, at all times.

Paul affirms, verse eighteen, that the word of himself and Timothy was not yea and nay, and in the same verse he connects this with the truth and faithfulness of God, saying, "As God is true." Paul would call to the minds of his brethren this most important truth that all that God has said he will do, and so ought all who have the Spirit of God in them, to have solemn regard to fulfill as far as in them lies, all their promises. Believing in a faithful God, tends to make men faithful. Believing that he in whom they trust will not fail toward themselves, tends to produce in the hearts of those who so believe, a desire that faithfulness to their slightest engagements shall be found in them. What solemn weight does it give to the words, promises, and life of a believer, to remember that he is related to a God of faithfulness in such vital union that the truth and faithfulness of God will also produce like truth in the inward parts, and like faithfulness in all his engagements among men. The truth and faithfulness of God are reflected in the lives of his people. On the other hand, if any are unfaithful and careless in the fulfillment of promises made by themselves, it tends to throw reproach upon the name of that God in whom they believe, and in whose life they profess to live.

In verse nineteen, Paul affirms the wonderful and soul-cheering truth that Jesus, the Son of God, whom they had preached among the people of God at Corinth, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. That is, the gospel is not a conditional thing. Christ and his salvation, with every promise that is in him, makes up the gospel; it is the gospel of Christ, and because it is the gospel of Christ it is the gospel of salvation. Paul means that in Christ is no conditional salvation, as though one might be saved by him, or might not be saved, according to other circumstances outside of Christ. The gospel declares a finished salvation in him. It is fully true that nothing, either great or small, remains to be done to atone for, and justify the redeemed of the Lord in him. The gospel is not in any part of it, or in any sense of the word, an offer of salvation upon conditions that its subjects can perform. The gospel which Paul preached among them had no nay in it; all was yea and amen. Paul did not preach to this church saying that Christ has indeed died and risen again, but still you are not justified and saved unless you shall believe, repent and obey him. No; Paul did indeed preach repentance, faith and obedience,

but he preached them all as belonging to the good and perfect gifts which God had stored up for them in Christ, and which God had exalted him to give unto them, as their Prince and Savior. As their souls felt the need of these things, faith, repentance and obedience, and that without them all, they were empty, and naked, and wretched, so Paul preached to them that in Christ all these things were found, and through him bestowed freely upon them without money, or price, or effort on their part. By the grace of God they were what they were as believers, and by the grace of God they did what they did as his followers. Thus both what they were, and what they did, were the gifts of God to them through Christ, and the gospel preached by Paul was this very truth. Paul reminds them of this in order that they might understand that as this spirit of a faithful God dwelt in him, and in Timothy, and in others, it would make the subjects of it also true and faithful, as we have presented more than once before.

Now after all this glorious presentation of the stability of the gospel itself, and the certainty of it, and of the security of all who are redeemed, and of the fact that no part of this security depended upon aught save the grace and power and faithfulness of God, Paul proceeds to assert in the text first named that all the promises of God are also without possibility of change or failure; not one of them is conditional; all are sure of fulfillment.

What a vast difference between the old or legal covenant, and the new covenant in Christ. The former was a conditional covenant; it said to the people, If thou wilt do so and so, then I will bless thee. But let it be always remembered that in that covenant there was never a promise of eternal life, or of any spiritual blessing of any sort, either for this world or for the next. If they obeyed, they were to be blessed temporally in basket and in store; they should eat the good of that temporal inheritance if they were willing and obedient. This is of the utmost importance to be remembered. How miserably they failed. How good it was that only temporal blessings rested upon their obedience. If any spiritual blessing had rested upon their faithfulness, how great would have been their loss. Likewise today, how good it is for the people of God that no spiritual blessing depends for its bestowment upon conditions of their performance; how good it is that all the promises of God in him are yea and amen to the glory of God by his people.

Even before the law was given, or any conditions of any sort were imposed upon the people, there were precious promises given unconditionally to the people. And Paul confirms elsewhere the faith of his brethren by saying that the law cannot disannul these promises so as to make them of no effect, for it was given four hundred and thirty years afterward. Eternal life, or the blessings belonging to eternal life, have never at any time been contingent upon what men shall or shall not do. All that pertains to everlasting salvation, whether that part of it received here, or that fullness received in eternity, comes to the sinner as the absolutely free gift of God in Christ. If in any sense of the word it could be said that there were any conditions contained in this salvation, or in the promises belonging to it, those conditions were all fulfilled in our glorious Mediator and Savior. If any work needed to be done to secure this salvation to any poor soul, that work was done by him. To us then this salvation comes as a finished work wrought out for us, and

bestowed upon us freely. So that the apostle could say, "being justified freely by his grace."

Are there any promises out of Christ for the believer? The text says all the promises of God in him are yea, &c. Does this mean that some of God's promises are not in him? By no means; on the contrary the language means that all the promises of God pertaining to the gospel, are in Christ. This is the very ground upon which he could say that they are not yea and nay. That is, they are not dependent promises, conditional promises, but are sure of fulfillment. If there are any promises out of Christ, they do not belong to the gospel, and are not given to the redeemed people of God. But we have to do with the gospel, and with the redeemed vessels of mercy.

How blessed are they to whom such faithful promises are given. What poor sinner is there who, when once convinced of the sin of his heart and life, and of the constant inability that is in him to do even the good that he would do, will not rejoice that all the blessings which God has in store for him are free, and will be freely bestowed? What recipient of these blessings is there who will ever feel like saying, I have fulfilled the conditions demanded, and therefore they are mine? No! no! all such favored souls will ascribe all to the free grace of God, and under the joy of all such blessings say, Not unto me, not unto me, but unto the blessed Lord be all the praise for his grace. All is of grace, and all must be to the praise of the glory of his grace.

This is a little of what Paul means when he says that all the promises in him are yea and amen, unto the glory of God by us. We can but think therefore that the brethren who insist upon the use of the word "conditional," with regard to their salvation in time, have missed the very spirit of the apostle's testimony in this Scripture. It is but a poor blessing if it comes to us as a reward of what we do, or upon the ground of what we do. Those in the parable who labored for pay, and who bargained as to what they should receive, felt at the end that they had not received what they had deserved, and so were dissatisfied. Those who came in on terms of free grace, were satisfied altogether, and could greatly rejoice in the freeness of the gift, yea they could rejoice that they had been given the gift of free service. How glorious to serve freely such a Master, who gives through grace, and not at all through merit. Our God bestows freely, making no conditions, and his people having his Spirit also serve freely. Does the fountain say to the ocean, I will send my waters down to thee if thou wilt return me the refreshing dew and rain? Does the ocean make a bargain with the fountain, saying, I will bless thee if thou wilt serve me by sending thy feeble rill to my mighty bosom? No. The ocean freely gives, and the fountain just flows naturally toward the great source of all its fullness. So with God's blessings to his people, and so with their service toward him. Neither the blessings which he bestows, nor the service which they render, are marred by the thought of a condition or an "if." All is free on both sides, and yet, like the fountain, they cannot send back to him any flow of service or praise unless they be first filled from his almighty fullness. If not a rill or a river flowed to the ocean it would retain all its fullness, but such a thing cannot be; the fountain must return to the ocean. So the praises and the service of the people of God must return to him. The ocean does not need the fountain, but the fountain does need the

ocean. There is complete fullness in God, and he needs us not to add to his infinite blessedness, but we do need him. Our springs dry up and cease to run when he hides his face, and the rain does not fall for a little.

In conclusion, let us remember that from the text we learn that not one of the promises shall fail. As Christ fails not, so all that is secured to us in him is secure. All the promises in him are yea, and in him amen, to the glory of God (and to his glory alone) by us. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

1 SAMUEL XVI. 14.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I would like to have your views on 1 Sam. xvi. 14: "But the spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him." All the gospel preaching I receive is through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and the *Southern Baptist Messenger*. I get some crumbs from them which feed the hungry soul, make glad the heart, and which serves to buoy me up.

JOHN E. HAMMOND.

OAKLAND COUNTY, Michigan, Dec. 19, 1859.

REPLY.

WE do not understand by *the spirit of the Lord*, which had been with Saul, and which departed from him, that either the Holy Ghost, or that Spirit which is born of the Spirit, as mentioned John iii. 6, are intended, although both are called the Spirit of the Lord. God is a Spirit, and that Spirit, or Holy Ghost, is God in an absolute sense; immutable, and therefore never vacillating. Wherever it hath taken its abode, it abideth forever. That also which is born of the Spirit is Spirit, (not matter, not flesh,) and it is from God, it is of God. It is eternal life, spiritual vitality. It is that life which was with the Father and was manifested. (1 John i. 2.) It was given to the saints in Christ. (1 John v. 11, 12.) This also permanently abides wherever it is implanted. "I," says Jesus, "Give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish."—John x. 28. The assurance that they unto whom it is given shall never perish, proves that this Spirit of immortality does not come and go, as did the spirit of Saul.

The spirit of the Lord, which God bestowed on him to qualify him to reign over Israel, was a spirit of wisdom, of might and courage, &c., and embraced such qualifications as were essential for him to have in order that he might fill the office to which the Lord had anointed him. Hence when this spirit was upon him, he was valiant and mighty, but when it departed, he was melancholy and fretful.

At the time spoken of in our text, the anointing had passed from Saul to the son of Jesse. Samuel had been sent to anoint David, and Saul, as king af Israel, was superceded by David, and with the anointing, the essential qualifications for the government had also passed from Saul to David.

The evil spirit from the Lord which came upon Saul and troubled him, is spoken of, and was treated as a disease, which could be healed temporarily at least, by the skillful playing of David on a harp. It is called an evil spirit, signifying that it was a righteous judgment of the Lord for the wickedness of Saul, and opposite in its effects from the spirit which had departed.

At one time the spirit of prophesying came on Saul, as we presume it came on Balaam, and, for aught we know, upon the beast on which Balaam rode, for he was made to speak with a man's voice, and rebuke the madness of the prophet. To argue that Saul, or Balaam, were born of the Spirit, and that they *had fallen from grace*, is as preposterous as to argue that Balaam's ass had also fallen from grace.

We are informed that the hearts of kings are in the hands of the Lord; that he turneth them as the rivers of water are turned. He hardened the heart of Pharaoh, that he might make his power known in him. He directed the movements of Cyrus, a heathen monarch, who knew not God, and went before him; opened the two-leaved gates, that they could not be shut. Evil spirits as well as good spirits are under his control, and can only go where he sends them. Legions of them were unable to go into and drown the swine until he sent them. A lying spirit was, by divine command, put in the mouth of all of Ahab's prophets, that they might persuade him to go and fall at Ramath Gilead. Indeed, if we were compelled to believe there were any unchained devils, independent of the controlling power and absolute decrees of Jehovah, we should tremble for the fate of the universe. But because the Lord reigns, therefore let the earth rejoice.

Our risen and exalted Jesus has ascended up above all heavens. All things are put under him, and he has a name written upon his vesture, and upon his thigh, King of kings and Lord of lords.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., January 1, 1860.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$610 05
W. O. Rathbun, Connecticut	3 00
Total to date	$613 05

MARRIAGES.

By Elder John McConnell, at his residence in New York city, Sept. 30th, 1902, Peter Q. Stryker and Miss Wilda Rittenhouse, both of Somerville, N. J.

By Elder D. M. Vail, at the residence of the bride's parents, at Justus, Pa., Sept. 17th, 1902, M. C. Miller and Miss Olive E. Miller.

By Elder S. H. Durand, at the home of the bride's mother, Southampton, Pa., Sept. 2d, 1902, Edward F. Rounds, of Philadelphia, to Miss Naomi J. Lefferts.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MY father, **George W. Lefferts**, departed this life August 15th, 1902, at his home in Southampton, Pa., aged 64 years. He had been slowly declining for the past year, but was confined to his room only five days preceding his death. Jan. 1st, 1862, he was married to Sarah P. Leedom, the union being blessed with four children, three sons and one daughter. Both himself and wife were members of the New School Baptist denomination before their marriage. A few years later they became dissatisfied with their condition, having been made to see their true standing before God. Being much exercised concerning the faith and order of the true church of Christ as recorded in holy Scripture, they began attending the meetings of the Old School Baptists at Southampton. Feeling a strong desire for truth, and having a fellowship for the people they found here, they were made to ask a home among them, saying, as did Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee," &c. The church received them, and they were baptized, both on the same day, by Elder Wm. J. Purington, in 1876.

My father was chosen deacon of the church at Southampton some thirteen years before his death, in which capacity he faithfully served his brethren. His one desire and care always was for Zion's welfare. Love of the truth inspired him to zealous endeavor in her behalf. The poor of the flock, and the sick and afflicted, were foremost in his thoughts, as his visits to them proved. His illness was unattended by suffering, being characterized solely by a gradual decrease of vitality and a growing weakness until the end came. In his last moments he was heard to say over and over again, "I know I'm a sinner, I know I'm a sinner," followed by the words, "but its all of grace, its all of grace." Finally he engaged in prayer, which had always been his especial gift, employing language and sentiments beautiful indeed. The last words he was heard to utter were, "Hallelujah, amen," a fitting close to the time existence of a saint in Christ Jesus. He leaves behind a wife, two sons and a daughter, the eldest son having died four years ago.

Elder Silas H. Durand preached the funeral sermon from Isaiah xlix. 11, after which the body was laid to rest in William Penn Cemetery, near Philadelphia.

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

Osman P. Zimmerman, son of Fletcher and Lucy Zimmerman, was born in Fayette Co., Ohio, Sept. 6th, 1861, and departed this life July 13th, 1902, aged 41 years, 10 months and 7 days. He was united in marriage to Emma Luttrell, Dec. 25th, 1880. His wife and five children are left to mourn the loss of a true and loving husband, and kind, indulgent Father. He was born and reared by Arminian parents, and taught in all the doctrines and commandments understood

by men naturally, and we learn he was as exceedingly zealous of the traditions of his father before him, as ever Paul was zealous of the traditions handed down by his Jewish parents. But in June, 1892, there seemed to be as radical a change wrought in him as there was in Paul when on his way to Damascus, and like the apostle Paul, he was completely delivered from the power of darkness. He had never known a people that had an experience like his, and hence for seven or eight years after his deliverance from the old traditions, as he called them, he was alone. His mind was wonderfully exercised, and he wrote volumes with the new light he had, but like every true child he learned that he could not open the eyes of the blind. His neighbors and friends all being Arminians, believing that salvation depended upon the works of the creature, none of them could understand him. He would go into their pulpits to try to tell them the way of salvation, but it fell on deaf ears. Finally, through a brother-in-law of mine, he was requested to pen his wonderful charge to me, and a correspondence was thus opened up, and then an appointed meeting at my house, where the late Elder Henry Hole, Elder B. F. Hutchinson and myself awaited his coming, which I believe was on the first day of January, 1896, and upon his arrival with my brother-in-law, Mr. G. W. Dutro, who introduced him, then commenced a wonderful narration of how he had been brought by a way he knew not, and in paths he had never before seen. The exchange of views was agreeable, and we all rejoiced together. Brother Zimmerman said he had at last found the people of God, who had an experience like his, and believed what had been revealed to him.

NEWTON PETERS.

PORTLAND, Ind., Aug. 27, 1902.

AT this late date I will send a notice to the SIGNS of the death of our dear sister, **Miss Lydia J. M. Fetter,** who passed away Tuesday night, Sept. 24th, 1901. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Southampton, by Elder Wm. Quint, Oct. 28th, 1866, and was one of the most faithful and devoted and lovely of christians. No lover of the truth could know her and not love her, and she was held in the highest and most affectionate esteem by all her neighbors. She lived with her mother, who is also a member of the church, and kept a store in the same house. For some years her mother was an especial care, her bodily health and her mental powers having failed. She still lives, and this heavy but tender care passed from the devoted heart and tender hands of her loving daughter to the two sons, her brothers, one of whom, John Fetter, now occupies the house with his wife and family, with this affectionate responsibility upon them. The other son is Elder G. M. Fetter, of Raton, New Mexico, from whom I have been expecting to see an obituary notice of his sister. As many inquiries have been made by her friends far and near, I send this brief and inadequate notice and testimonial of her worth, and of the affectionate esteem in which she was held. She suffered much during her last illness, but very patiently and without complaint. Her mother was much upon her mind. Once, toward the last, she was heard to whisper, "It will be all right which ever way it goes." She passed away very peacefully.

Her funeral was on Monday, Sept. 30th. By request of brother G. M. Fetter, I read Isaiah xliii. 1–7, and spoke concerning that portion of the word.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Sept. 25, 1902.

SISTER **Harriet Walker Elder,** after much suffering, fell asleep in Jesus on the 22d day of August, 1902, at her home in the town of Buffalo, Sangamon Co., Ill. Sister Elder was born in the State of Ohio, on the 8th day of September, 1821. Her parents, Daniel and Sarah Weller, came from Virginia in an early day. They moved from Ohio to this State, Illinois, in 1835, and settled in Christian Co., near Taylorville, where on the 27th day of February, 1844, at the home of her parents, she was married to James Elder. To this union were born seven children, four of them going before to the tomb. Her husband and three children, eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild, with many other relatives, are left. She and brother Elder joined the Buffalo Hart church of Old School Baptists in the year 1872, and were baptized by the late Elder J. H. Myers. They were truly faithful members. She was a noble woman and a mother in Israel. She was a great peacemaker, always ready to overlook the faults of others, and was a close reader of her paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; it was next to her Bible, which she read daily when able.

Her funeral was preached by the writer, at her home, on Sunday, August 24th, to a large and attentive congregation. Her large home was filled with sorrowing friends. After which the dear old body was laid at rest in the beautiful cemetery near by, to await the coming again of her blessed Lord.

W. A. THOMPSON.

SPRINGFIELD, Ill.

OUR dear brother, **John Thomas Crooks,** was born in Indiana, Oct. 9th, 1841, and died at his home in Goldendale, Wash., August 23d, 1902. He moved with his parents to Oregon, in 1848, united with the Old School Baptist church, and was baptized by Elder Ezra Stout, about thirty years ago. He was married twice; to his last wife, Miss Josephine Fisher, in 1881. Moved to Goldendale, Wash., in 1888, where he resided until his death. He leaves two noble, steady boys, young men, and two little girls, one but a toddler, along with his widow, the church and many friends, to mourn.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the sorrowing, from Isaiah ix. 5. May he who gave, and has taken, sanctify this sorrow to our good and his glory, giving the lonely widow and fatherless children grace and strength according to their days, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

"Clouds and darkness round us press;
Would we have one sorrow less?
All the sharpness of the cross,
All that tells the world is loss,
Death and darkness, and the tomb,
Trouble only, till he come."

W. J. HESS.

My dear brother in the flesh, also in the Spirit, **Judson Nethaway,** died at his home near Bramans Corners, N. Y., of Bright's disease of the kidneys. He was a patient sufferer; for nearly a year he was confined to his bed. He was born March 7th, 1828, being 74 years, 5 months and 12 days old. He leaves a wife, one son and five daughters, two sisters, one brother, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, together with the church of Schoharie, of which he was a member, to mourn their loss. He was received in the fellowship of the church, and baptized by Elder Balas Bundy, about twenty-five or twenty-six years ago. He was a strong believer in the predestination of all things. It was not my privilege but once during his last sickness to visit him, and then he was in such pain he could not talk much. He told me he longed to go, but he must await the Lord's time. His only son, who is a member also, and one daughter, who lives at home, had the whole care of him.

Our beloved pastor, Elder John Clark, of Halcottsville, preached a very comforting discourse from the words found in Philippians iii. 20, 21, at the New School Baptist-meeting house, at Bramans Corners, after which his body was conveyed to its last resting place in the cemetery at Delanson, there to await the morn of the resurrection.

HIS SISTER.

Reba, the little daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. E. **Oliphants,** died August 21st, 1902, aged 7 years, five months and 21 days. She was a sweet little girl, loved by all. Her disease being of a congestive form, she did not suffer long. We are confident that she is happy in her new home above, where, through the sovereign grace of God, we hope again to meet her. While viewing her beautiful form the smile on her face told the sweet story that she had gone to rest, to be with Jesus for ever blessed. The hymn was sung, "Thou art gone, our precious darling." We believe her blessed Jesus called, "Child, come home,"

"Where rivers of pleasure flow o'er the bright plains,
And the noontide of glory eternally reigns."

Her aunt, EDNA.

MEETINGS.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting will be held with the Frying Pan church, Fairfax Co., Va., commencing on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, (15th, 16th and 17th,) 1902, and lasting three days. Trains leaving Sixth street depot, Washington city, Tuesday, 1 p. m., and Wednesday 8:10 a. m., will be met at Herndon. We cordially invite all who love the truth to attend our meeting. Also the ministers of our faith and order we would especially like to see.

E. V. WHITE.

The Welsh Tract Church has appointed her yearly meeting to commence on Saturday, Oct. 18th, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue two days. Those coming from Philadelphia and Baltimore will please come Saturday morning, via B. & O. R. R., to Newark, Del. Train leaves Philadelphia at 7:30 a. m., and Baltimore, Mt. Royal station, at 8 a. m. All lovers of the truth of like precious faith are cordially invited to meet with us.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

The Salisbury Association is appointed to meet with the church at Broad Creek, Sussex Co., Delaware, October 22d, 23d and 24th, 1902.

Those coming by rail will come to Laurel on Delaware division of Pennsylvania railroad, on Tuesday, 21st; from the north, on train that leaves Philadelphia at 10:16 a. m., and Wilmington 10:58 a. m., arriving at Laurel at 1:27 p. m. Those from the south, take train that leaves Cape Charles at 10:55 a. m., Salisbury 1:50 p. m., and Delmar 2:15 p. m., arriving at Laurel at 2:25 p. m. It is important that those coming to attend the meeting come on these trains, as the brethren live some distance from the depot. We hope to see a goodly number of ministering and other brethren with us at that time.

A. B. FRANCIS, Pastor.

The Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie, N. Y., have appointed a yearly meeting to be held, if the Lord will, on the fourth Sunday, and Saturday previous, in October, 1902, at the meeting-house on Schoharie Hill. Brethren of other churches of our faith and order, and those who love the truth, are invited. Trains will be met at Howe's Cave, on Friday previous. Any who may come to Cobbleskill will call on brother Jas. E. Livingston.

G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

A yearly meeting of the Old School Baptist Church of Olive & Hurley is appointed to be held November 12th and 13th, 1902, at their meeting-house in Olive, N. Y. A cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth is given. All coming by rail will please come to West Shokan, Ulster Co., N. Y.

A. BOGART, Clerk.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 70. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1902. NO. 21.

POETRY.

THE STRANGER AND HIS FRIEND.

"YE have done it unto me."—Matthew xxv. 40.

A poor wayfaring Man of grief
  Hath often crossed me on my way,
Who sued so humbly for relief,
  That I could never answer, "Nay."
I had not power to ask his name,
Whither he went, or whence he came,
Yet there was something in his eye
That won my love, I knew not why.

Once, when my scanty meal was spread,
  He entered, not a word he spake;
Just perishing for want of bread;
  I gave him all; he blessed it, brake,
And ate, but gave me part again;
Mine was an angel's portion then,
For while I fed with eager haste,
That crust was manna to my taste.

I spied him where a fountain burst
  Clear from the rock; his strength was gone;
The heedless water mocked his thirst,
  He heard it, saw it hurrying on.
I ran to raise the sufferer up;
Thrice from the stream he drained my cup,
Dipped and returned it running o'er,
I drank, and never thirsted more.

'Twas night; the floods were out; it blew
  A winter hurricane aloof;
I heard his voice abroad, and flew
  To bid him welcome to my roof;
I warmed, I clothed, I cheered my guest,
Laid him on my own couch to rest;
Then made the hearth my bed, and seemed
In Eden's garden while I dreamed.

Stripped, wounded, beaten, nigh to death,
  I found him by the highway side;
I roused his pulse, brought back his breath,
  Revived his spirit, and supplied
Wine, oil, refreshment; he was healed;
I had myself a wound concealed,
But from that hour forgot the smart,
And peace bound up my broken heart.

In prison I saw him next, condemned
  To meet a traitor's doom at morn;
The tide of lying tongues I stemmed,
  And honored him midst shame and scorn:
My friendship's utmost zeal to try,
He asked if I for him would die;
The flesh was weak, my blood ran chill,
But the free spirit cried, "I will."

Then in a moment to my view,
  The stranger darted from disguise;
The tokens in his hands I knew,
  My Savior stood before mine eyes.
He spake, and my poor name he named;
"Of me thou hast not been ashamed:
These deeds shall thy memorial be;
Fear not, thou didst them unto me."

(Montgomery.)

NIGHT.

WILT thou draw near to me, O Lord,
  And sweet communion give?
Unfold the beauties of thy word,
  That I may hear and live.

O, may I call upon thy name,
  With power that flows from faith,
And may thy words drop as the rain,
  In showers upon my path.

Wilt thou inspire my stammering tongue,
  To sing the Savior's charms,

To echo forth a heavenly song,
Drawing me to his arms.

As giving doth not make thee poor,
Nor withholding riches give,
Wilt thou supply from mercy's store,
And all my wants relieve?

It seems thou art so far from me,
I'm hidden from thy sight;
O give me, Lord, one glimpse of thee,
One ray of heavenly light.

O, then may darkness not return
To fill my heart with gloom,
But stars of hope may ever shine,
And midnight be as noon.

BESSIE DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Oct. 4, 1902.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FEET WASHING.

EQUALLY good, faithful and humble brethren, understand this subject differently. Some literally, and some figuratively. In view of our short-sightedness as creatures, and our inability to judge aright of the things that God doeth, should make us charitable in our censures of his acts, or our understanding of them.

All good works, and things required of the Lord's people, are ordinances, but not all church ordinances. An ordinance is a rule or law established of sovereign power. Church ordinances must be administered by an ordained servant of the church; as baptism and the Lord's supper; while there are ordinances which bespeak more of the nature of an obligation or duty that the christian owes, than a direct command from God; as visiting the sick, clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, entertaining strangers, and I am persuaded that "feet washing" would not be out of place to tack on here, (though my own association, the Mt. Enon, of Florida, holds it to be a church ordinance). What we should, or ought to do to one another as men and brethren, we ought to do, but our duty in this respect could not properly be called a church ordinance. However I know of no better or more convenient place for the observance of the duty and example of feet washing, than in the church. Though I am far from limiting it to be done only in the church as a christian act.

I have said that no better place can feet washing be attended than in the church, and no better time, I would add, than immediately following the Lord's supper. Some people think that Christ did not wash feet on the night of the communion or passover supper, holding that it was previous, from the opening words of John xiii., "Now before the feast of the passover." Now I regard the "passover" as coming before, and the "feast of the passover" as coming after his crucifixion, hence not the same. I think that the passover and communion supper were one, or connected, and that the feet washing followed. Note the coincident statements of Luke and John. At the communion or passover supper, Luke xxii. 21; and at the feet washing, John xiii. 21, Christ foretells who shall betray him, which came to pass before morning. In confirmation see Matthew xxvi. 24, 25; Mark xiv. 18–21; Luke xxii. 34; John xiii. 28. I will give a few Scriptures to show what the passover and feast of the passover are: "In the fourteenth day of the first month it even is the Lord's passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast."—Lev. xxiii. 5, 6. "In the fourteenth day of the first month is the passover of the Lord. And in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast: seven days shall unleaven bread be eaten."—Num. xxviii. 16, 17. So it is clear that the passover and the Lord's supper and washing his disciples' feet were in connection; and that the

feast of the passover was the day following, which was the occasion for the celebration of the passover. Evidently Matt. xxvii. 15; Mark xv. 6; Luke xxiii. 17, show that our Savior was crucified on the morning of the feast day.

"But," says an objector, "I do not find where the apostles ever taught feet washing in connection with the Lord's supper." John assures us that it was done in connection with the Lord's supper by Jesus, who said he would give them an example. What a good teacher is Christ. He taught by example as well as doctrine. An example is worthless if it be not adhered to. "I know," says objector, "that Christ said, 'I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you,' but the apostles said very little about it, and many Primitive Baptists both in Europe and America do not literally observe the example." True, but are these reasons sufficient to set aside Christ's teaching by John?

When Jesus had washed his disciples' feet, he said, "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet."—John xiii. 14. Who is there among us that would say we ought not to wash one another's feet? "But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant."—1 Cor. xiv. 38. Jesus says, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." Thus it is apparent that some do not know them in the sense of doing, and it is also true that some things are revealed to one, that are not to another. Instead of despising the christian to whom it has not been made clear, by passing non-fellowship resolutions, it would show more charity, forbearance, long-suffering in doctrine, compassionate love, and manifest more of the spirit of feet washing, to continue in fellowship, and thereby indoctrinate some who have held contrary views. I am glad to say and know that I have never heard of such a resolution being passed in any church, but am sorry to say I have heard a few brethren say it should be done. I do not think that those who have been impressed with this ordinance as a duty to be observed in churches, by the teaching of some pastors, should smite those who do not thus teach, or those who have not been taught. If such a thing were done, where would be the spirit of feet washing? Is that the way to let brotherly love continue? Is that the way to "tarry one for another"? "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."—1 Cor. xiv. 37. I am aware that it is the opinion of some good brethren that our Savior's language on this subject is to be understood as having only a figurative or spiritual significance; that when he said, "If I your Lord and Master wash your feet, ye ought also to wash one anothers' feet," he did not mean literal feet, or literal washing. I cannot understand such a conjecture, for if that were true we could with the same propriety apply such a construction to baptism or the Lord's supper. Because the ordinances have a spiritual significance, are we not to eat the bread and drink the wine literally, or be baptized with literal water? I know not how to go about explaining away a plain example. If a child of God could always be in that spirit that he could esteem his brother better than himself, and manifest that meek and humble spirit, by being at his brother's feet, and the love of God constraining him with a will to heed, observe and practice all that his Lord has commanded or ordained, strife to a great measure would cease among the brother-

hood.

But some one says, "Feet washing is not a command or an ordinance, but an example." Then why not observe it as an example? Is not Christ's example good enough for any saint? If he had said, I wash your feet, but ye ought not to wash one another's feet, who would misunderstand the language? Does he not say, "Why call me Lord, Lord, and do not the things I say?" What right have I to refuse to do this work, since Jesus has taught it both by example and word? Paul who is a judge in Israel to expound the meaning of what Jesus said, so states in speaking of the widow who became chargeable to the church, (for temporal support) where he says, "Well reported of for good works," and among the things enumerated, says, "If she have washed the saints' feet, if she have diligently followed every good work."—1 Tim. v. 10.

Some one says, It is only a Jewish custom or tradition from Abraham. If Christ washed feet because the fathers did, why did he condemn the traditions of men and the rudiments of the world? If Christ designed only the perfection of a Jewish custom in washing his disciples' feet, does it look reasonable that Peter should render any objections, since he himself was a Jew, and zealous in Jewish laws and customs?

Another objector says, "They wore sandals in those days, and their feet got dirty." I wonder if people's feet ever get dirty that wear shoes, and so need to be washed from a sanitary measure, at least?

Let us paraphrase a little to suit this objector. "Ye should wash one another's feet while ye wear sandals, and when it becomes fashionable to wear shoes ye ought to quit it." Peter declares (2 Peter i. 20) that we should not hold the Scriptures to be of any private interpretation. For the Scriptures to be so construed, they would cover a thing to-day that they would not to-morrow. While men change, the word of the Lord endureth forever. Neither can there be any improvement made to the true worship of God. The Lord's ways cannot be bettered.

"He that is washed [washing of water by the word] needeth not save to wash his feet." In our daily walk as pilgrims in this world of evil, our steps become soiled in the dust of man's frailty. Naturally being prone to evil, we cannot direct our course aright. Truly, "It is not in man that walketh, to direct his steps." But "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way." In order that the path of the saints be as a shining light, they have need that Christ cleanse this way, which is symbolized in Christ washing the disciples' feet. But we are not to understand that by washing one another's feet, we thereby cleanse each other's way. This example of Jesus shows how he condescended to wash their feet and cleanse their way. From some cause Peter objected to Christ washing his feet. But when Christ said, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me," he became exceedingly willing, not only for his feet, but his head and hands. Although he could not know as yet the purport of the act, for Christ had just said, "What I do, thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." The Spirit takes of the things of God and reveals them, and guides into all truth. Jesus shows by this example his humiliation unto death, and that it would wash them from all sin. For the love he had for his people he laid down his life. So should the saints love and lay down their lives for one another,

which is manifested by being at each other's feet, serving each other.

M. L. GILBERT.

DADE CITY, Fla.

EVENINGTIME EMBLEMS.

THE time when tired nature seeks repose from the multitudinous labors of the day. The silent shades of evening steal gently about us, wrapping its cloak of dark mystery and impenetrable gloom over our senses. The ambitions and aspirations of the day are laid aside, giving place to meditations, or perchance more frivolous intent. The fiery monarch of the sky glides into the horizon, and hides his brilliant face behind the western hills, as though he would laughingly say, Now show yourselves, you dull visaged moon, and you silly stars. But the moon, all unconscious of his predecessor's greater glory, appears, clothed in his borrowed brightness, shedding a mellowed light on all the earth beneath. While the coy and timid stars wink their twinkling merry eyes, trip back into the darkness, until in very boldness they disport themselves upon the whole canopy of the darkened heavens, making the dismal night a thing of beauty. O fickle, changeable moon, who wast ordained of God, thy usefulness knows no end. Controller of tides art thou, O moon, and furnisher of the dew, to give nurture to luscious fruits. A night candle for the belated wayfarer, and above all emblematic of wonderful things in righteousness. O stars, the creatures of the handiwork of God, inhabiting the firmament in the dim, unmeasured distance. Myriads of worlds are the foundation of thy beauteous twinkling, and mayhap living, breathing, thinking creatures fulfill their span of life on thy surface, as on ours. Emblems of eternal and heavenly things are presented to us by thy nightly presence.

"Eveningtime." "Let there be light," God said, and light was. At his command the great machinery of a created world began its unwearied, ceaseless labor and toil. "And the evening and the morning were the first day." 'Twas eveningtime which ushered in the cycling years, whose almost countless nights and days have meant so much for man upon the earth. 'Twas then "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," and in confused haste chaos fled away, while harmonious life and motion held their perfect sway. 'Twas also eveningtime when another life from heaven came down and appeared in Bethlehem, in the land of Juda: a babe in swaddling clothes, cradled in a manger. Poor and unknown, of the people round about, 'tis true, yet ushered in and announced by an angel from heaven, with a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." The moon and the stars looking down from their dizzy height on this eventful, wondrous scene, making obeisance in silent wonder, as the glory of the Lord shone round about. Emblematic of this scene and its far-reaching results, the dove returned to the ark in the eveningtime; "And lo in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off." "On earth peace, good will toward men." With awe and reverence did the psalmist say, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?" Again, the faded light of day (the eveningtime) portends a time of danger, when the beasts of the forest creep forth to seek and find their prey. Foul crawling things of earth

hold high carnival with the things of secret darkness, and so steal away our freedom of the night. From this picture we look within ourselves, and view the daily life of experimental things of faith and righteousness. The Sun of righteousness hath hid his beauteous face behind the hills and mountains of sinful lusts, upon which idols (the work of our own hands) are set up, and now in the eveningtime of our experience, all the powers of darkness issue forth, and do so beset us, and torment us, that we become a stench in our own nostrils. We look for the hand that guided us in the daytime, and find it not. Bethels and Ebenezers which had been set up from time to time in our pilgrimage for our remembrance, we remember not. The idols which we embraced and fondled, have become staring, offensive things, laughing us to scorn, and saying in derision, Where is now thy God? Insurmountable difficulties and obstacles block our darkened way. We stumble and fall, and out of a bitter, torn and jaded heart we cry, "O that it were with me as in days past." Upon this dreadful scene the moon and stars look down, and in contemplative mood they say, We, too, are not pure; we are, alas, tainted also with the curse which followed Adam's transgressions. Behold (saith Job) the moon, and it shineth not, yea, the stars are not pure in his sight. How much less man that is a worm, and the son of man which is a worm. And we (say they) are a part of this dreadful eveningtime. And now, O sorrowful moon, what is thy mission in this created world? Of what art thou a harbinger among the sons of men whom God hath blessed? Dost thou present a picture in emblem of the church of Christ in her wilderness travel? Sometimes in the dark, and again in the light? Because thou art uncertain, O moon, and subject to eclipse? or because as the church obtains its brightness and glory from Christ, the Sun of righteousness, so thou obtainest thine from the natural sun? Surely we read all this in thy countenance, in thy clothing, and in thy exalted position in the world. But is this all that you shew forth? O no; like the creature of many horns, pointing out many ways, you are prolific in leading us into the unfathomable depths of sacred truth. A voice comes to us from the Patmos isle, saying, "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." Yes, thou leadest us back in remembrance when Israel filled the earth with her fame and her glory. And here again you show your *borrowed* light. Representing the law that bound Israel down, and held her captive with chains of earth, until Shiloh came, severing her bonds, and setting her free, in fulfillment of the law, by his own death upon the accursed tree. And now, O moon, where art thou? The woman (the church) is clothed with the sun. Her head is crowned with a crown of twelve stars. But thou art under the feet of her who hath risen above thee, becoming victorious through her glorious Lord, the Sun of righteousness. What more canst thou say? Didst not thou stand still at the command of the Lord in the valley of Ajalon, and there stayed until the people of Joshua avenged themselves upon their enemies? O thou art a valiant moon, and obedient. For seasons hath the Lord appointed thee also, and evening sacrifices were offered in Israel when thou wert new and in thy best estate. But what of thee, thou stars, both great and small? Hast thou a word of prophecy?

Where is the secret place where thou dwellest in the daytime? only showing thyselves at eveningtime. Hast thou great and mighty secrets, to be divulged only as the Lord directs, and only to whom he has called by his name? Is there one glory of you all, and does each differ from the other in glory? Have not the children of Israel been likened unto thee for multitudes? Each one of you is a world, as is our world also a star; each one representing in our world a nation, a people, a kindred or a tongue. The members of the body of Christ are gathered out of them all. For thus saith the God of Israel, "I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west, I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back, bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth, even every one that is called by my name." And as they are countless in number, so art thou. So each one of you stand in the pattern or emblem for each individual child of the living God. One of you was selected to guide the wise men from the east to the place where lay the holy child Jesus. Thou risest yet higher in thy vocation, for thou in thy secret chambers has knowledge from ancient days of the coming of our gracious Redeemer. Even Balaam declared thee: "There shall come a star out of Jacob." And also Peter calleth upon them to represent Jesus as the day star (that shall) arise in (our) hearts. Do not thou also represent the angels, who are messengers of the word of God to stricken, broken-hearted Israel? for thy fellows embellish the crown upon the head of the woman, who is clothed with the Sun. And also art thou not emblematic of the ministry of the word, who shine as stars in the gospel heavens, preaching Jesus Christ as the bright and morning Star, and him crucified and risen again in the power and glory of the Father? O what secrets thou holdest in the secret places of the heavens, and at eveningtime thou declarest them. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." Secrets which have defied and successfully resisted the searchings and investigations of the wisest natural minds. But to the living in Christ Jesus thou dost reveal "the work which God maketh" from the beginning of time to the end of time.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

ACTS XIII. 22, 23.

"I HAVE found David, the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will. Of this man's seed hath God, according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Savior, Jesus."

I am moved to try to write some in connection with the above declaration of Scripture, from the fact that I have been hearing all my life, from pulpit and press, from Arminian and Predestinarian, that "David was a man after God's own heart." In recent years I have been led to dissent from this broad view of the subject, and have so stated on more than one occasion, and I feel now to try to write what I think about it.

A Scripture that I cannot read Christ or my own experience in, does me no good. Hence in the above declaration I see not David, but Christ Jesus the Lord. I do not think this passage warrants the oft repeated assertion that "David [as a man] was a man after God's own heart." Only so far as he was a type of Christ, was he a "man after God's own heart."

David was chosen of God to be king over Israel, and his kingdom was a type

of the spiritual kingdom of Christ. But David after the flesh did not look or act much like a "man after God's own heart" when he put Uriah into the hottest of the battle, that Uriah might be slain, and he (David) get his wife. So this Scripture says, "I have found David, the son of Jesse, *a man* after mine own heart, who shall fulfill all my will." Now is not this "man" whom God found David, "the man Christ Jesus?" "I have found David a man," &c. Is not the Lord Jesus Christ the *only man* that ever "fulfilled all the will of God?" Hear him: "Then said I, Lo I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God." And again, "For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." And again, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." Again, "I seek the will of my Father which sent me." "I delight to do thy will, O God." "If this cup may not pass, thy will be done." These things can be said of no other "man" but Christ. But Christ was the "seed of David according to the flesh." "Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Savior, Jesus." But this is not all; we find in Revelation that Christ is the "Root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning Star." He is the "Root" of David according to the Spirit, and the "offspring" according to the flesh. Therefore he is both the "Root" and the "offspring of David." David said of him, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Peter, on the day of Pentecost, has this to say, "For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face; for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;" "For David is not ascended into the heavens," &c. "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses." This is some of Peter's testimony concerning Christ and David. Now let us turn and read from the eighty-ninth Psalm; "For the Lord is our defense; and the holy One of Israel our King. Then thou speakest in vision to thy holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people. I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him; with whom my hand shall be established; mine arm also shall strengthen him. The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him." "My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven." "Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah." Now, dear saints of God, can you not see Jesus in all this? It is not David, after the flesh,

that is a man after God's own heart, but it is our spiritual David, the Lord Jesus Christ; "The man Christ Jesus, in whom is hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and in whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."

In Isaiah ix. 6, 7, we find the following, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it "with judgment and with justice, from henceforth, even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." It is clear to my mind that all these Scriptures refer to our glorious Lord and Savior. In almost all the Psalms of David he is either personating Christ, his sufferings and victorious reign in the hearts of his children, and in his glorious spiritual kingdom, or telling the experience of his suffering and tempest-tossed children. And how it does make my poor heart rejoice to realize that we have such a glorious King.

"And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."—Isaiah xxv. 9.

I must now close, as this is enough at one time. I cannot write it like I see it, or could tell it with my tongue, but hope the dear saints may be able to gather up a few fragments from what I have written, and that your minds may be drawn to the "only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

In tribulation and afflictions,

H. J. REDD.

RIVER VIEW, Ala., Oct. 4, 1902.

MARSHALL, Minn., Aug. 28, 1902.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel too unworthy to claim any such relation, but I love to read the Bible. I love the SIGNS, and my heart goes out in sympathy and love for the editors, in their labor of love and untiring zeal for the love of Christ and his cause, and the comfort of the poor and despised people that God declared he would leave in the midst of sin and sorrow, to try their faith, that they might come forth fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. When we think of the old soldiers that stood in the front of the battle, like Elder Gilbert Beebe, and many others I could mention, (but it would take too much space) they have great reason to thank God and take courage to think their forefathers gained the victory, and they are left to guard the lines, and every one that reads the SIGNS knows they are good faithful soldiers, and true to their calling. I feel for one that they need the help and prayers of their brethren to help them in their labor of love and watchcare for the peace and welfare of Zion. The SIGNS is all the preaching we have, and I am thankful to have them. I can indorse the doctrine they contain; it is my meat and drink; it is none too strong for me. When I read I. H. Webb's letter most of it touched my case, and L. A. Hall's also, and many others I could mention.

Yes, I feel weary of this vain world, and if my hope in Christ is vain, and I am not one of the elect, and not saved by grace alone, I am lost, for of myself I am nothing but a sink of sin. God only knows, and there my soul must rest. Sometimes I hope, and try to pray that all my sins are washed away, and I shall rest in heaven.

I have just read L. H. Hardy's letter to

B. F. Coulter. When I think of going hundreds of miles to meet with the people of God for worship, it seems it was nothing but a desire of the flesh, a myth, and the company I keep tells me not to believe it was love for God, or his Spirit within me that led me to the church. The darkness seems unbearable; I feel to cry with despair, O wretched man that I am! is there any help or comfort for me?

I think I have left my subject. I feel that my life is nearly spent. I want to say a few words to the editors, and all that are called to stand upon the walls of Zion, to cry aloud and spare not; stand firm in the faith that was delivered to the saints; God has declared that he would never leave himself without a witness, and his word is true. Every child of God has a work to do. I have nothing to look forward to but the cold and silent grave. I shall never hear a sermon preached, or meet with the people of God in this world again. No, never, but hope to in heaven. But I can think of the past eighty-two years of my unprofitable life, and think how the Lord called his chosen people out of Babylon, or rather show how God in his love would not permit them to turn from the strait and narrow path, that was cast up for his chosen to walk in, and a small part of the Baptists, with God's help, kept the name and cause untarnished, and with the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, have fought the enemy until they were fairly conquered, but only those that lived forty, fifty or sixty years ago, know what the called and chosen and faithful had to try their faith, but God was their strength, and kept them firm as a rock. I have read and reread the editorials of your father, so I know a little what he had to contend with, and I went one hundred miles to hear him preach, and his text was Eph. iii. 8, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." For twenty years I heard him every year, and the last time I heard him it was at my father's funeral, (N. D. Rector) and I loved him for the truth's sake, and I have your father's and mother's picture, and when I look at them it seems that I could hear his voice. Though dead, he yet speaketh in each paper that we read. And your dear brother stayed at our house and gave us a sketch of his sufferings in the army prison, and how the mercy of God was his support, and we heard him preach, and he gave God all glory. We also heard Elder Leachman, after he composed the poetry that was reprinted in the SIGNS not long since, and his text was the parable of the mustard seed. Elder Trott I never saw, but heard of his trials. When I think back of those days, when every inch of ground had to be fought for, I feel the Old School Church as a body ought to be thankful that they did not live in those days.

Perhaps my thoughts might better been kept to myself, but I was impressed to write them, and now I say, Fight on, brethren soldiers, you will soon be discharged; the war will be ended, your bounty enlarged; the isms are but few to what they have been, and when the last one of God's elect is brought in, time will end.

That makes me think fifty years back, a New School deacon said he would rejoice to see the last Old School Baptist dead. An Old School deacon said, "You would not have long to rejoice, for the world would not stand one moment."

I will close my poorly composed and written scribble; it is the last I now think you will have from me. Do as you

think best with it, and all will be right.

Yours in hope,

PARTHENIA PATTERSON.

OPELIKA, Ala., June 18, 1902.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—It occurs to my mind to write some on this interesting subject for the consideration of the sons of peace, who love peace, and desire to see peace in the borders of the Zion of our God. When I first felt the power of this peace in my own soul, it seemed to flow like a river, and for days I was in a state of delight and pleasure. I have not been able to tell when Jesus spoke and said to the troubled sea of my heart, "Peace be still." O, how calm and serene; my sins, which had troubled me, seemed at once to be buried out of my sight, all nature seemed calm about me. Truly did the poet say,

"Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love.
That sweet comfort was mine,
When the favor divine,
I first found in the blood of the Lamb."

And I believe that Jesus came and preached that peace in my own soul. I was however captured by the New School Baptists, and landed among them. I went on for fifteen years among them, but that peace was so often marred, and O, how many troubles and trials I encountered, fightings without and fears within. Storms arose again of another nature, and I witnessed the mire and dirt cast up in the rivers of Babylon, where mud abounded, and whose inhabitants seem to get used to their city; dwell there, and know no difference between a sweet peace of soul, and the endless confusions of that city. I found in the course of time that that was not the city of my soul; there was something needed I did not have, and in the course of time I fled from that city in search of the city of Zion, the city of peace, and in God's blessed providence he showed me the New Jerusalem, the true city of peace, where the glorious Lord should be unto me as broad rivers, where no galley with oars, (work boats) nor gallant ships should pass that river. I saw her then, and when brought there it revived my experience of peace, and how sweet it was, and his word came into my heart, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt with thee bountifully, for he hath delivered thine eyes from tears, and thy feet from falling."

I shall not forget that last experience in 1880, in July, but since then there has been turmoils, trials, doubts, fears, distresses of soul, anguish, tribulation, discord, strife, and so far removed I have said, Will I ever feel it again? But Jesus has reminded me, My peace I leave with you, I give you rest, and now this sense of rest, quiet and peace, fills my soul; I love to think about it, I love to write about it. "In the world," said Jesus, "ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace." What a glorious declaration, and but for this we would quite despair. It is heaven in the soul, even here below, and what shall it be hereafter? If this is a foretaste, what will the real be? Now we know in part, blessed truth. There is confusion among us now, as the church is in a warfare, and in a militant state; there will be these seasons, but shall we now cease to contend and labor for peace? No, we must plead, labor to enter into that rest; there is struggle and exercise, but what exercise or struggle yields so much, or in other words, how could we be better prepared to enjoy our peace than God's appointed way for us? Yes, bless God, at

the end of all our contentions and our suffering for the truth's sake, we shall rest, and go into the camp of eternal peace, by the river of God, whose stream is as clear as crystal, and gently flows, and as David indicated, beside the still waters, in the green pastures of his love. Lift up your head, your redemption draweth nigh. So it is, I think, of the blessed hope of the children of God, the end of our hope, the salvation of our souls. We hope, desire, expect, long for this blessed peace and rest. Some have gone before, and some are going, and soon our time will come when we can hear, "Child, your Father calls, come home," away from sin, sorrow, weakness, fear, distress, trouble, gloom and oppression, and "enter into thy rest."

Yours to serve in the gospel,

W. LIVELY.

NORTH WHITEFIELD, Me., Sept. 7, 1902.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN OUR BLESSED SAVIOR:—To-day is the last day of our association, and a stormy one it is. I went down on the train on Friday, and came back after the meeting yesterday p. m. Elder Ker preached both Friday and Saturday mornings, and Elder Keene in the afternoons. I was not out in the evenings, but I think that Elder Beal preached both evenings. The preaching was good. Elder Ker preached on feet washing, and I just enjoyed it; that was on Friday. All the preaching was good, but that seemed to be for me. But O, my brother, so many were not there that I have always met at our association. You, I expected certainly to see, but I am glad that Elder Ker came. There was nothing but sound doctrine preached. It was what all of the people of God love to hear. We missed dear brother Lowell, but his bereaved companion was there; I cannot make it seem that he has left us, not to meet with us again on earth. Elder Campbell was not able to be out. But a handful of us are left; one after another seems to be passing away; why am I spared? why is my unprofitable life prolonged? It seems to me that of all God's little ones, if so be that I am one, I am the least. When I come into their company I seem to be dumb; I cannot express my feelings; I cannot tell my thoughts. When alone, thinking, it seems that I could tell to one or more of the dear ones very much, and how at such times I long to see some of them to talk with them, and then when the time comes, my tongue seems to cleave to the roof of my mouth. Shall I ever be different? Shall I ever again praise him? or shall I ever again feel as I did in the earlier part of my experience? How much I enjoyed then, but it has been so long since I was on the mount rejoicing; I walk so much in the valley of sorrow and death. There are times, just for a moment, when I can see the light, but most of the time it seems as though a thick cloud was hanging over me; I open the Bible to read, but it is dull reading. I used to love to read my hymn-book, and sing hymns that I knew, but I cannot now; at the association they sang one that I love so well, "If I must sing, I'll sing of grace," but I could not open my mouth. Shall I ever be brought out of this place? I feel glad that salvation is of the Lord, and I am glad that all things pertaining to that salvation are just as they are, but I cannot say that I am glad to feel just as I do, or to be in such a place as I am. I cannot help shedding tears, as I write you, my brother, though it does no good. I am in the state that I have been in so long, and cannot get out of it, neither can I get

away from self; all that I can say or do is to beg, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." He knows as no one else can where I have been, and where I am, and how I feel, and none but himself can lead me out of this place, but O, I have been here so long; I am tired with waiting. It may be that I am like the one that was spoken of yesterday in the preaching, as sounding brass, and a tinkling cymbal. It may be that I have no part nor lot with the people of God, but yet I cannot give up that little hope that I have had so long. I know that whereas I was once blind, now I see. Once I thought and believed that I must save myself, but now I know I cannot do so, and if ever I am saved, it is through what Christ has done for me, poor, sinful and fallen as I am. I am evil, all evil, and there is no soundness in me.

Well, my brother, I started to tell you all about our association, but have written altogether different from what I expected when I began, so I will leave that for others who can describe it better than I can.

I have been thinking how cruel jealousy is. I desire not to be jealous of my brethren, nor to fear that they will love some other brother or sister more than myself, and, should it be so, I know that others are far more worthy of love than I. I often feel drawn more toward some sister or brother because of something that they have said, to which I could witness as a personal experience; they seemed to have been just where I had been, yet I did not love them any more than those with whom I had but a few words, just enough to gain the evidence that they were children of God. I always could talk with Elder Quint and tell him all that I felt, when I could not seem to open my mouth to some others, yet I loved other ministers for the truth's sake, and for that alone. I felt yesterday that I would like to speak to some, of where I am, but could not, I could not seem to find words nor courage to do so. I know it is wrong to feel this way among brethren, for if we are all of one family, we certainly ought not to feel afraid to speak with each other of our feelings. But it is so with me, and I cannot seem to help it; I am of such a stammering tongue, and cannot seem to find words to express what I mean.

But I will not tire you any more now. Write me when you feel to and can. I love to receive your letters, and feel very glad of your fellowship; it is more than I deserve. I am a poor, vile sinner, unworthy even of a thought from the children of God. Love to you and yours.

As ever your little sister in hope,

MARTHA E. GLIDDEN.

[LIKE the apostle, we would say to our sister, concerning her long and sore darkness of mind, that no temptation hath befallen her but such as is common to men, and the Lord will with the temptation make a way of escape, that she may be able to bear it. Mark the apostle says, "to bear it," not to be relieved from it. And out of the darkness and long continued absence of comfort and joy, will come richer blessing bye and bye. Be patient unto the coming of the Lord, and if the vision tarry, wait for it, for it will surely come and not tarry; at the appointed time it shall speak and not lie. Just such conflicts as these bring the people of God nearer together in the fellowship of suffering.—ED.]

DELMAR, Del., Sept. 16, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—We would be glad to have you with us at the time of our association, but that is a pleasure

we can scarcely hope for. We shall expect Elder Ker.

I have just reread your last letter to me. At the time I received it I felt very much humbled by the undeserved praise of me implied therein. As I read it just now, I thought, How deceived you are in me, to speak of such a poor coward as I am, as a "fearless warrior." I realize that I come so far short in all the true characteristics of a child of God, much less a minister of the gospel, that if I were honest, I would insist that I be released from all pastoral and other duties as a minister. I never was much of a preacher, and I get to be less and less as time passes. I feel that there should be improvement, but if there is any change it is the other way, and I feel sure the brethren see it so, too. There are times when I feel ashamed to face the brethren, and for that reason, principally, I did not attend the Warwick Association last June, remembering what an exhibit I made of myself at Middletown three years before.

You speak of some of your feelings, but really and truly I do not know who would have conducted the SIGNS any better than you have done. Certainly you are not chargeable with any of the divisions that have taken place. I regard those things as the fulfillment of Scripture, and that we are surely nearing the "last times" alluded to by the apostle. The "perilous times" that he said should come, are now upon us. Many are departing from the faith, "giving heed to seducing spirits, doctrines of devils," &c. The man of sin is to be fully revealed, and surely his hideous proportions can now be plainly seen.

Take courage, my dear brother, God is still the triumphant King on his throne, and will surely defend his own cause, and maintain his glory and dignity, and bring all his enemies into subjection.

Your brother in hope,

A. B. FRANCIS.

WESTERVILLE, Ohio, Sept. 22, 1902.

MY DEAR AND BELOVED BROTHER IN CHRIST FOR THE TRUTH'S SAKE AS IT IS IN JESUS:—Inclosed find post-office order for four dollars, for which please send the SIGNS to sister Sophiah Gorsuch and J. H. Trumbo, both to Westerville, Ohio.

I do hope if it may be the will and pleasure of the dear Lord, that your life may be spared yet many years, and strength, wisdom and a discerning mind given you that you may detect error, and still contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; that faith that is the fruit of the Spirit that Jesus is the author and finisher of, which the SIGNS has ever contended for without wavering, from its very commencement. I hope that you are better and stronger than when I saw you.

With much love to you, and your dear wife and family, I remain as ever yours to serve,

L. B. HANOVER.

P. S.—My condition is about the same as when I saw you. L. B. H.

[BROTHER Hanover is one of the faithful old soldiers of the cross whose name has been familiar to the readers of the SIGNS since our earliest recollections, and his assurances of satisfaction in the conduct of the paper are most encouraging to us. It is a significant fact that those still living, whose names appeared in the earliest numbers of the SIGNS, still indorse them, which proves conclusively that if there are any to whom the SIGNS are not now acceptable, that the change of sentiment is in the younger brethren, and not in the SIGNS.—ED.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1902.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 JOHN III. 17; JAMES V. 4.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK;—Will you please give your views through the SIGNS upon the following Scriptures, "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"—John iii. 17. Also, "Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth."—James v. 4.

It seems to me that this is addressed to the Lord's chosen people out of the twelve tribes, and is also an admonition to his people to-day, wherever they may be scattered throughout the world.

In hope your brother,

WM. F. SLOAN.

HEMPRIDGE, Ky., July 20, 1902.

REPLY.

THESE are both weighty admonitions, and they both express the very spirit and life of the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, when it once dwells in the heart of the subject of grace. The first enjoins upon all believers the fruit of love to all who love God. The love of God and of his children, when it dwells in any heart, is not a mere sentiment, but a power producing the fruit of love in the outward life of those who possess it. The second text is a solemn warning to all who are covetous, and who refuse to deal justly by their fellow men. Were it not that we know just what human nature, fallen as it is, will do, it would seem as if such admonitions were needless, if a man love God at all. Is it possible that one who really has the love of God shed broad in his heart can rob his brother? Is it possible that he can see his brother have need and fail to at once fly to his relief?

Of some Scriptures it seems that nothing can be said, because they say in themselves all that can be said. It is hard to know how to throw light upon Scriptures which are already clear as words can make anything. We think our brother is right when he says that they apply to-day as well as then. The same spirit dwells in men now as did then, and grace is needed now as well as then, and admonitions are in place now as well as then. There is not a commandment written in the sacred page, or in the heart of the believer, against which the flesh does not rebel, and in all these things, like Paul, all believers find that the more they desire and strive to do the will of God, the more they are hindered by the opposing flesh. With bitterness all must and will confess that they cannot do the good that they would. Hence the necessity to have the pure mind stirred up by way of remembrance, again and again. The child of God loves all the written admonitions in the word of God, because they stir him up to remember that which he is so prone to forget, and which yet he does not desire to forget.

If we know ourselves we shall all find covetousness dwelling in the flesh. We shall know that when we see our brother have need, there will arise a selfish spirit in us, which, if followed, will lead to our refusing to help him, or to the shutting up of our compassion from him, and also we shall come to know that we have a spirit in us which is so greedy of gain,

that it would, if unchecked by grace, lead into fraud, or to keeping back the hire of those who have labored for us. Some have been captivated by these evil dispositions, and have failed to minister to the needy, even when they had abundance of this world's goods, and some have so coveted riches that they have failed to deal honestly, even withholding the hire of the man who labors with his hands for a living, and if they do not withhold the hire of the labors, they give short weight or measure to those who purchase from them. We all need to be watchful over ourselves, and to pray for such grace as shall enable us to overcome the evil spirit which leads to wrong doing.

Believers are enjoined to do more than to pay their honest debts; they are to be charitable in the true sense of the word charity; they are to love their neighbor as themselves, and does not this mean more than loving as a feeling or sentiment? Does it not mean loving in practice? Not in word or profession, but in deed and in truth. The Savior said, "The poor ye have always with you," and it is good that it is so. How selfish and unfeeling should we all grow, were there no poor to lay claim to our kind feeling and charity. It is good for the rich that they have poor brethren. The word of God says, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." This does not mean more blessed in feeling, but more blessed in its result. We give but that which is temporal and perishing, while we receive growth in the love of the neighbor and of God.

From the first text we learn among other things, that there can be no love to God without love to our neighbor. These two commandments, "Thou shalt love the Lord," and "thou shalt love thy neighbor," cannot be disjoined. The text does not say, if one shutteth up his compassion from his needy brother, how dwelleth the love of the brother in him, but, "How dwelleth the love of God in him." The love of God shed abroad in the heart brings with it the love of all whom he loves. If we love the Savior, we shall love the poor and the needy brother, for he also loved all such. It is then vain to claim zeal for God and his cause, while we have no zeal to give a cup of cold water to him in the persons of his children. A dear aged brother in Maine, years ago wrote to us saying, "If a brother loves me well enough to stand by me when in trouble, or to help me in my need, he loves me well enough to suit me, whether he ever says so in words or not." His words at that time deeply impressed us, and we to-day realize the force of them more than we did them.

We also learn from the first text that one special reason why God has given to us this world's goods is that we may minister to the needy. Riches in themselves are neither good nor evil, but they work the one or the other according as we use them. If we give no heed to the cry of the needy, while riches accumulate, they result in starving the better life, and we reap corruption from them. If we, however, use them for the purpose for which they have been conferred upon us of God, they will prove a blessing to us. Using them to sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption, that is, more and more of selfishness and covetousness, and unmindfulness of the needs of others, and other vile and corrupt things. But using them as God directs, for the good of others, and thus sowing to the Spirit, we shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting; that is, more and more of loving kindness and tenderness and thoughtfulness of others, all of which are blessed spiritual gifts; they belong to

the life that is everlasting.

From the second text we learn that the Lord of Sabaoth, or of host, for so the word Sabaoth signifies, has regard to the humble, though men may not have. If any child of God has given himself up to the love of gain so that he forgets justice, and right, and mercy, let him know, yea, sooner or later he shall know, that the Lord God is the Lord of hosts, and the cry of the poor whom he has wronged, finds an entrance into the ear of God, though he heeds it not. That believer who has thus wronged his brother, shall reap the fruit of his own injustice. Upon such an one the face of God will not shine. Rather, he bends down his ear to the poor and the needy, and pities them who are wronged. If any man has been guilty of thus withholding the lawful wages due to him who has labored, he has sinned against God, and with the God of Sabaoth he must sooner or later reckon. That man shall find it a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. May we all be given the spirit of fear and love, to heed these solemn admonitions, and to profit by them.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Please give your views through the SIGNS upon Matthew v. 42. Your brother,

I. COX.

BENTLEY, Ill., July, 1902.

REPLY.

This Scripture reads as follows, "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." Much the same things are taught here by the Savior, as were presented in the foregoing Scriptures commented upon above, still the general connection is somewhat different; in the former Scriptures the disciples of Jesus are taught as to their behavior toward those who are dependent upon them for justice and for kindness, who are yet their brethren, and friends of the Master, and of those who love and serve him; here they are told how to behave themselves toward those who deal harshly and unjustly with them. They are here taught to be kind even toward the unthankful and the froward. They are not only to love and do good to those who are the servants of God, but also to do these things to those who are the enemies of the Master. Reference to the immediate connection will set the matter forth still more clearly. In verse thirty-eight, Jesus said to the disciples, "Ye have heard that it hath been said An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." This was under the legal covenant, where the law speaks, and holds forth an even pair of balances; but Jesus says that under the gospel it is not to be so, rather his disciples are not to resist evil, that is, wrong treatment from others, but rather show all kindness to them: though thine enemy smite the on the one side, do not refuse to still deal lovingly with him, and to still show him kindness. This is strikingly expressed by the words, "turn to him the other also." And so if a man will sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, still continue to show him kindness; give him thy cloak also. And if any man shall compel thy service even unjustly to the extent of going with him one mile, show him the good will and forgiveness that is in thine heart by going with him twain. And still further, the Master said, verse forty-two, that his disciples were not to shut the bowels of compassion from any one, but give to him that asked of them, and lend to him that would borrow, and in the following verses he still further sets forth the difference between the Spirit of the gospel, and that which belonged to the legal covenant; also he shows the difference between the

Spirit of Christ, and the spirit of the world. "It hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy, but I say unto you, Love your enemies," &c. The above references have been given to set forth the contrast between that which seems good to men, and which belongs to fallen nature, and that which belongs to God, as revealed in the gospel.

We understand that the Savior refers first of all to the manner of spirit which characterizes the gospel, and which was to dwell in the hearts of those who loved and served God. This spirit was first of all manifested in the PERFECT MAN, our Lord Jesus Christ. He loved his enemies, prayed for them, and did them good all his life; he sought not to avenge himself; he did not exact an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; rather, he rendered good for evil, and blessing for cursing. His spirit was to dwell in the hearts of all his disciples, and if so, it would produce like fruits in them. We are, however hindered by the flesh, while he was victor over all in every conflict. Yet the things which he did, are the things which his chosen and called disciples desire to do. All these admonitions of the Savior, command the ready desire of all who love him. They, when they are led by his Spirit, will desire to forgive all injuries, to bless when they are cursed, to do good for all evil, and all that appeared in his heart and life, will they desire to be and to do.

We do not understand that the meaning is to be taken with absolute literalness in outward form, but rather the Savior aims to present the spirit of all meekness, forbearance and kindness, even when unjustly treated. When the Savior was smitten on one cheek, he did not literally turn the other, but bore the smiting with such meekness as to show that he was willing to suffer all things, to finish the work which the Father gave him to do. This is what we understand the Savior to mean here; if so used, forbear, and reply not again; still return all kindness and pity to him who would oppress you. And in the immediate text we do not understand that the meaning is that we are to give without question to all who may say that they have need, for we may know in some instances that the wants of such are already provided for, but is intended to show that we are to forgive even enemies, and do them good when they appeal for help. "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink," sums up the whole matter.

If God has loved us, and saved us, when we were yet enemies to him; if he has borne with us, and still bestowed upon us manifold tokens of his kindness, when we were still evil disposed toward him, ought we not to do likewise toward our enemies? His own life on earth is the best interpretation of his sayings here. These are the things becoming the people of God, these are the things that they have a desire to do, and for the many failures they so feel, and so live, they grieve daily. These things are not to be done as though we would merely comply with a form, but they are to be done as to the Lord, and not unto men. They are all heart matters, How blessed are they in whose hearts have been shed abroad such precious tokens of the love and power of God, as these fruits of the Spirit are.

In this wonderful sermon on the mount, Jesus declared the very spirit and substance of all that his law required, and then in his life, he showed out just what his words did mean. How lovely was that life, and how earnestly those who

see its beauty, desire to bear the same image, and how blessed is he who sees in Jesus all that he needs and desires, and who has ceased from his own strength, and has come to rest alone in the saving power of Jesus. Through Jesus, the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, and when fulfilled in us, what longings will there be to have it fulfilled by us. But right here the cry of failure comes in, and the soul is humbled within. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." We have but glanced at the wondrous theme. May our God fulfill his own word in us for Jesus' sake. C.

FEET WASHING.

On page 642 of this paper will be found a letter from our beloved brother, Elder M. L. Gilbert, of Dade City, Fla., on the subject of feet washing, as an ordinance enjoined on the saints to be performed literally. Much has been written in the Signs in former years on this subject, and equally gifted and faithful brethren have differed in their views as to the meaning of the Savior's language when he said, after he had washed the disciples' feet, "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." But of late, what little has been said on the subject through the Signs, has been by those who do not understand the Savior to here instruct the disciples to continue to perform the literal act of washing each others' feet, as an ordinance belonging to the church. Indeed so little has been written for publication in the Signs of late years by those who affirm that the Savior did mean that the disciples should perpetuate the overt act itself, that some have gained the impression that the Signs, and most of its readers, are not in fellowship with the practice, or with those who celebrate it. This is a mistake, for as long as the brethren feel to exchange views through the Signs, on this subject, in the spirit of meekness and brotherly love manifested in the article from brother Gilbert, we are perfectly willing to place a reasonable amount of space in the Signs at their disposal. In doing this we feel that we are impartial, for we are not prejudiced in our own mind on either side of the subject. The language of the Savior, above quoted, is indeed clear and explicit, yet there are other portions of this thirteenth chapter of John that seems to imply that the Savior was using a figure, to impress upon the disciples' minds the spiritual interpretation that he would shortly reveal to them after his resurrection, when the Comforter should come and bring all things to their remembrance. For instance, in the fifth, sixth and seventh verses it reads, "After that he poured water in a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and wipe them with a towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter; and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." This Scripture proves conclusively that Peter had witnessed the washing of the disciples' feet by Jesus, for when the Lord came to him, he knew that it was to wash his feet also. Yet, although Peter had just witnessed the washing of the other disciples' feet, yet the Lord told him that what he did he (Peter) did not know now, but that he should know hereafter. Peter certainly knew at the time that the Lord washed his feet, and

therefore the act itself could not have been what the Lord meant that Peter did not understand at the time, but that there was an import to the act that would be revealed to Peter later on. Not only to Peter was, and is, the spiritual import of this act of the Savior revealed, but to every heaven-born child of God, when the Comforter first comes to them, are they given to know the spiritual meaning of the Savior's language, and they are brought down to the feet of their brethren, in meekness and love, and while in their earliest love it would rejoice their hearts to think their brethren considered them worthy to loose the latchets of their shoes, or wash their feet.

The mechanical performance of any religious rite or ceremony is an abomination in the sight of the Lord unless we are moved by his Spirit in the observance of it, for, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit."

While the churches in the limited section of the country we have been permitted to visit, do not practice feet washing as an order of the church, and we have never had the privilege of witnessing the celebration of the order, yet we have had the pleasure of the visits of a number of brethren whose churches do practice it, and we have had sweet communion with them, and such a thought as non-fellowship never occurred to our mind, but to the contrary, love and fellowship flowed out involuntarilly, and we have been cheered and encouraged by their company, and the only thing that marred our joy, was our unworthiness of the fellowship the brethren manifested for us.

Rather than being ready to declare non-fellowship for every brother that does not see everything pertaining to the church in exactly the same light as do we, let us follow Paul's instruction in Romans xiv., "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despiseth him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him." "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks." And may we not add, Let not him that washeth the saints's feet despise not him that washeth not feet; or him that washeth not feet despise him that washeth feet?

While to those brethren who are persuaded in their own mind that the Savior intended that the practice should be perpetuated, it is a solemn obligation, yet for other brethren to whom it had not been revealed as an order to be observed by the churches, it would be as much of a mockery for them to go through the form, as it would for one to be baptized merely because it was an act that was practiced by the churches, but who had never felt the ordinance impressed upon their mind as a duty and a privilege, or as much as for one to partake of elements of the Lord's supper, without any discernment of the Lord's body.

As to ourself, as said before, we have never been fully settled in our mind on the subject, and we feel that we need the instruction of more able and gifted brethren.

B.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

REVIVALS.

It is cheering to learn from our numerous correspondents that the Lord is graciously manifesting his saving power and grace in various parts of his Zion. For several years past the church of God has been in a peculiarly trying condition; few indeed, comparatively, have come to her solemn feasts, and her ways have seemed to mourn. But God has promised to make her an eternal excellency, and when he shall build again Zion, he will appear in his glory.

The churches in this vicinity have also experienced some seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Some few have recently experienced the quickening power of the Holy Spirit, while others show some convincing evidence that the arrows of the Almighty are sharp in the hearts of the King's enemies, whereby the people fall under him. Two Sundays of this month, in succession, it has been our privilege to enter the frozen stream, and administer the ordinance of baptism, which has been witnessed by many whose streaming eyes and solemn countenance betray the deep interest they have felt on those occasions. Our meetings at New Vernon, Wallkill, Howell's Depot, and at this place, are well attended, and we have enjoyed some precious seasons, which will be long remembered. We confidently hope that the gracious indications of the divine presence with us may be continued, and that the arm of the Lord made bare for the salvation of lost and perishing sinners, may be still more gloriously displayed.

Middletown, N. Y., January 15, 1860.

Dear Brother Beebe:—We read, Gal. iii. 8, "And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." My mind is perplexed on the above passage, particularly on the words, *And the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen, &c.* I have always taken the Scriptures to be the inspired writings of the Old and New Testaments. Daniel says in chapter x. 21, "I will show thee, that which is noted in the Scriptures of truth," and Christ told the Jews to search the Scriptures, for in them they thought they had eternal life, and that they testified of him. Again, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled," &c. And again, the Scripture cannot be broken. Christ died according to the Scriptures, and rose again according to the Scriptures. I could mention various other passages, where the term Scriptures is used in reference to the inspired writings, but in the passage first named, I cannot see that it refers to the Old or New Testament. You see how I am difficulted? believing the Old and New Testament to be the Scriptures, how could they foresee? or does it refer to the inspired men who wrote the Scriptures, or to the I AM, who created all things; for it is God alone who knows, governs and foresees all things, and manages all things after the counsel of his own will. He declares the end from the beginning, and known unto God are all his work from the foundation of the world. Then is it him that foresaw that he would justify the heathen through faith?

When you receive this, in all probability the old year will be numbered with the things that are past, and a new year will be calling upon us to adore him who has spared us to see it. Let me, as one of your patrons, greet you: Well done, thou good and faithful servant of the Most High God, and as you advance in age, may you grow in grace, and by faith lay hold of this promise, and enjoy its consolation. "Even to your old age I am he, and even to hoar hairs will I carry you; I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you."—Isa. xlvi. 4. And may the God of all grace, long preserve you as a watchman to root out and pull down and destroy, and to throw down error and heresy, by whatever name it may be called, and may you build up and strengthen God's little ones in the faith of his elect.

Yours to serve,

JOEL T. HALBERT.

Columbus, Miss., Dec. 26, 1859.

REPLY.

We understand the apostle to refer to the inspiration by which the Scriptures were written. The literal meaning of the word *Scripture*, signifies anything that is written, but the term applies in a

Bible sense to the written testimony of God which is recorded in the Old and New Testament; the records, which by way of distinction from profane records, are called the Holy Scriptures, and we are told by Paul, 2 Tim. iii. 17, that they are all given by inspiration of God; and that they are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to every good work. As the Holy Scriptures are to perform all these offices; reproving, correcting, instructing, &c., they must reflect the perfections of their divine Author to some extent, at least. Not the mere ink and paper, but the inspired testimony of God. Hence the Scriptures are spoken of as speaking, as testifying, and as seeing ,&c. These books are of themselves only of earthly composition, paper and ink, totally inanimate, and having no power to see, hear, or speak, yet the testimony which they have recorded in them, is the inspired wisdom of God himself, and as the inspiration of God they see all things past, present and to come. How could they testify of things of which they had no perception? Indeed, the peculiar excellency of the Bible is that it does foresee, and foreseeing, it foretells what God has in store for them that love him, and are the called according to his purpose. So far as the mere book is concerned, the terms are used figuratively, but in its application to the inspired testimony of God, it is not figurative nor allegorical. As the inspiration of God, the Scriptures foresee, foreknow and foretell; they declare the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things which are yet to be accomplished, saying, God's counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. If in this sense the Scriptures did not foresee, they could be to us but a record of the past, and unable to instruct the man of God in righteousness, or to point us to that heavenly abode in glory, which is yet to be enjoyed by the saints, when time shall be no more. Thus the Scriptures foresaw that God would justify the heathen through faith, that is, the inspiration, or testimony of the Scriptures anticipated, predicted and declared beforehand that in Abraham all nations should be blessed, that distant ages, and remote tribes of the earth were by the unchanging decree of God, interested in the blessings of Abraham. The inspired Scriptures are a perfect transcript of the mind, will, purpose and decrees of God, who spake to the fathers by the prophets, and subsequently to us, by his Son. But their being written or spoken did not give them pre-science. What are to us now literally the Scriptures, were the testimony and truth of God before they were written, and they foresaw, not only in Abraham's days, but from everlasting, what blessings our covenant God in Christ had treasured up for us poor Gentiles. Hence the Scriptures were *given*. By whom? By inspiration of God. Where were they before they were given? They were securely hidden in the cabinet of the gracious giver; and could foresee as well before they were given, as afterwards.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., January 15, 1860.

GONE TO HIS REWARD.

JUST as we are about ready to go to press we receive word that our beloved and faithful brother, Elder E. Rittenhouse, fell asleep in Jesus on the morning of October 22d, but have no particulars. A suitable notice, we trust, will be prepared for the next number of the SIGNS, by some of the brethren acquainted with the facts.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Mt. Pleasant Association of Primitive Baptists, in session with the church at Sulphur Fork, Campbellsburg, Ky., on 3d, 4th and 5th days in September, 1902, to the several associations and churches with whom she corresponds, christian greeting and salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—By and through the kind providence of an all-wise and unerring God, we are again permitted to meet in an associated capacity, for the purpose, as we trust, of worshiping that God who is the Creator and Upholder of all things, who speaks, and it is done; who commands, and it stands fast.

Dear brethren, we feel to have had a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Your messages of love and fellowship we greatly appreciate, and your messengers, the servants of God, coming among us proclaiming the whole truth in power and in demonstration of the Spirit, all of which is to us a source of great rejoicing, and we trust a building up and strengthening in that most holy faith, the faith of God's elect.

The eminent apostle Paul, in speaking to the Corinthian brethren, says, "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."—1 Cor. ii. 2. This, dear brethren, we feel has been the theme in this coming together of the saints, for which we desire to render thanks and praises unto him who is the giver of every good and every perfect gift.

We desire a continuance of your correspondence, by messengers and Minutes, feeling that we are one people, whose only hope of salvation is alone in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our next Association, the Lord willing, will be held with the Mt. Pleasant church, at Pleasureville, Henry Co., Ky., commencing at ten o'clock on Friday before the first Saturday in September, 1903, where we hope to meet again your messengers, and receive your messages of love.

C. F. DUDLEY, Mod.
E. F. RANSDELL, Clerk.
G. R. TURNER, Ass't Clerk.

The Elders and messengers of the Lexington Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Roxbury Old School Baptist church, October 1st and 2d, 1902, to the several churches of which she is composed, greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have great reason to be thankful to God for this, another manifestation of mercy, in suffering us to assemble according to previous appointment, and as you will expect a Circular Letter from us at this time, as a servant of God of ancient time addressed the twelve tribes which were scattered abroad, so we will endeavor to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance, by presenting for your consideration the first chapter, second and third verses, of general epistle of James, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations. Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." We notice in the outset that the apostle addresses a particular character as distinguished from mankind in general, a people called, sanctified and taught of the Lord, of like precious faith with himself, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, who could receive the instruction from the beloved apostle in the same spirit in which it was given, for "He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding."—Prov. xv. 32.

Now we are sensible that this admonition was not designed for, and would not and could not be received by the world at large.

"Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." Now brethren, have we not been sorely tried by the attacks of the ungodly, and been tempted to reply in the same manner and spirit? Again, have not our thoughts been caught away to the Savior in remembrance of the instruction to the disciples, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Being assured then from the text that we are to meet with various temptations, let us also remember the instruction to watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation. There is then joy to the believer when he finds that he has been enabled by the grace of God, through faith, to resist, in a christian spirit, the wiles of the adversary, though sorely tried, and to meekly bridle his tongue, or in imitation of his Lord and Master, and in remembrance of his example who replied not when mocked, reviled and spit upon, and whose visage was marred more than any man, "Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience."

The apostle declares for a certainty the things which he knows and the things which all believers do experience, for we glory in tribulations, also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." And we are assured that through much tribulation shall we enter the kingdom.

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."—James i. 12–14. "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."—James v. 7, 8. "Behold we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." How fully and truthfully is this text verified in the case of Job, whose sons and daughters, and all his substance were destroyed from the face of the earth; that Satan might be proven a liar, and a perfect exemplification might be had of the power of faith and reigning grace in the heart of a man pronounced as a perfect and an upright man, by his Creator. Truly the trial of his faith only brought him in closer relationship to God, and it is said of him in all this, Did not Job sin with his lips. Now, brethren, do you not find in your pilgrimage that though the trial may be severe, so that you have been shaken like a reed, yet you have been the more firmly established in your faith and in your reliance on divine help, when you have experienced that deliverance and been made to feel the contrast, and to see the wisdom of God manifested in your behalf?

for the apostle assures us "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth." "Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me. For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like minded one toward another, according to Christ Jesus; that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."—Romans xv. 2-6.

"Temptations, trials, doubts and fears,
Wants, losses, crosses, groans and tears,
Will through the grace of God our friend,
In everlasting triumphs end."

JOHN CLARK, Mod.

G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

JAMES AVERY, Ass't Clerk.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting of Old School Baptists, in session with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va., October 15th, 16th and 17th, 1902, to the several churches composing the same.

THROUGH the boundless mercy of our God, we are once more permitted to address you a Circular Letter, in the manner ordained by the fathers, who in times past established the associational meetings, that churches and brethren far separated by distance, might know we are still united in the apostles' doctrine with those of like precious faith throughout the utmost bounds of our correspondence.

We desire to set forth in this letter some of the principles by which, as we believe, the church of Christ is now, has been, and ever will be known and distinguished from the popular and fashionable societies of antichrist, and believing there is no true and reliable record of the church outside of the Bible, we will, if God by his grace permit, go to that fountain of truth for our testimony, and there learn what was done and taught by the apostles, themselves witnesses of the words and works of Jesus, at the first establishment of the visible church on earth, after all the law had been fulfilled, and its claims satisfied by the Lord our God, in the person of his Son, and our elder Brother, as the Head of the church.

In the story of the acts of the apostles, when the Holy Ghost, "the glorified Spirit of Christ," in full measure was poured out, we read, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship." Here was the church of Jesus Christ, visible to all the world, set up in complete gospel order, and the prophecy of Joel, spoken eight hundred years before, that, "It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh. * * * And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," was fulfilled.

The "last days" of the law had come; the poor had the gospel preached unto them, even to every creature under heaven, for all were there: from Egypt, Asia, Parthians and Medes; strangers in

Rome and Jews, regardless of language or nationality, all present, and all hearing from the single-tongued Galilee fishermen, each in his own language. Small wonder that the people "were amazed," but "those who gladly received the word," knew the language of the Spirit, because the spiritual ear and understanding had been given them, and the same Spirit meets the same response to-day in those who have the quickening Spirit, and only those can receive it.

This marvel took place on the day of Pentecost, which signifies "fiftieth," the year of Jubilee, and the captives of the law had been freed from its shackles by the one perfect and complete sacrifice of the sinless Son of God.

When these wonderful things were noised abroad, the multitude came, the "sheep and the goats," the two and only classes, and these two comprising all the world of people; one class, no matter from what nation, hearing, understanding and receiving the word, as Peter told them what the Spirit gave him power to speak in all languages, causing them to cry out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" while the other class reviled and called them drunken.

Peter's preaching could not please that class, because he gave them no share of the work of salvation; no institutions in aid of the gospel; no Sunday Schools as "nurseries of the church;" no missions, no "acceptance of offered salvation;" no "turning in with the overtures of mercy." But he did preach Jesus and the resurrection, a finished and complete work, wrought by himself alone, when he trod the wine-press of wrath, and "of the people there was none with him." Some gladly received it then, as the living in Christ receive it to-day, while now, as then, the dead to the Spirit are made mad.

The three thousand who had heard, believed and been baptized, were "the ends of the earth," "poor in spirit," without power to perform any works of righteousness, and now they had the gospel delivered to them by Peter, who proclaimed the doctrine of predestination and election, on that wonderful birthday of the church, telling them there what had been foretold in the olden time, of the crucifixion of Christ: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him, in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know; him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."

Nothing here about *permissive* decrees, but altogether positive, declaring it to be the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, with no fine spun theory of difference between the two, but both together predestinated and foreknown, by and through which is wrought the redemption of the purchased possession. And then he goes on, "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call." No longer confined under the law to the Jewish nation, but a fixed and certain number, none added to or taken from it: "even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

We have the same sure word of verity from Paul, when he writes of God, "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." We find here nothing left for man to do in the work of salvation; no beginning place for our

work, because it was all done in the purpose of God from the foundation of the world, by the almighty One, who will accomplish all his purpose, and by his grace manifest it to whom he will. Again, by the mouth of Paul, "Whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate them he also called, and whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified." This is God's own work, no chances, no doubt, no uncertainty at any point in all the glorious doctrine of God our Savior, and it is the same doctrine, preached in all languages at once, by Peter in that beginning day of jubilee for the church of Christ on earth. Election, predestination, salvation by grace, the same doctrine which was gladly received by the three thousand on that day, and by all the saints of God since.

There is anxiety, but not joy, in uncertainty, and these people were glad of the witness of the Spirit that God the Father, and God the Son, had done this great work in their own hearts, and they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine; unmovable, abounding in the work of the Lord; rejoicing in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free; not troubled or disputing about their own free will or agency, as the manner of some is, for they knew they had none of themselves. Neither did they argue as to Christ's relation to God and themselves, whether or not he was *created* equal or inferior in power and dignity to the Father, or as to their own work or mission of saving souls for him. There were no Arians nor Arminians among them on that day when the grand, eternal kingdom of him who was exalted with God's right hand to be a Prince and a Savior to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sin, was manifested to the world. Neither can there be any such thing among the saints to-day, for they know in whom they have believed, and how vain are all their works, how filthy and ragged their own righteousness, but they were and are found earnestly contending against all the power of priestcraft, for "salvation by grace, through faith, and that not of themselves; it is the gift of God." No humanly devised schemes nor works of men's hands can help in this great work, for by revelation of the Spirit they know that nothing avails but a new creature in Christ Jesus, and then it is not a marvel to them that they must be born again, of an incorruptible seed, knowing well by death's experience the corruption of their own nature.

"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship." Here are the two points: doctrine and fellowship, and we believe that without the first the second cannot exist, and without fellowship, the loving communion of the saints, for fellowship is brotherly love, we are without evidence that we have passed from death unto life.

It is possible to be well established in the doctrine of predestination and election, and yet lacking in fellowship: love, charity, but then we are become as sounding brass, without the Spirit, assuming to judge the church and the brethren, condemning this, and declaring non-fellowship for that brother, saying, "He is not my brother, whatever may be his relation to the church." Such are not in the apostles' fellowship, for those who gladly received the word were of one heart and one mind, dwelling together in the unity of the Spirit, and the bond of peace.

Fellowship is peace, and means a great

deal, and includes a great deal in the church, for the broken bond of fellowship severs the cord of love and life which unites it to its head. Those who are led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God, and we have no authority for including any others among the children. So, since God is love, love is the Spirit of God by which his sons are led, and love is the law written in their hearts, according to the new covenant.

Unless the covenant is thus sealed, we are not parties to it, nor can full belief in the doctrine, though we be ready and willing to contend for it even unto death, avail without the seal of love, for, "he that loveth not his brother abideth in death," and even "if a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar, for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" and the commandment we have from him is that he who loves God, must love his brother also.

So long as these first manifested members of the church were together in fellowship, "They had favor with all the people, and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

When a church is walking in the fellowship of the apostles, her members will love the ordinances given by the Savior; the order of the house will be observed and maintained, and God the Father honored in them and by them, but without this fellowship, which is born of brotherly love, the church becomes a body of discord and confusion, a type only of Babylon of old.

May the fellowship of the apostles, and of all the saints who have gone before, be the happy lot of all the churches in this association, and of all who have received his word, and to God be the praise for his name's sake.

Our next annual meeting is appointed to be held with the Mill Creek Church, Berkeley County, West Virginia, to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1903, when and where we hope to greet your messengers, and receive your messages of love again.

E. V. WHITE, Moderator.
G. G. GALLEHER, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Roxbury, October 1st and 2d, 1902, to the associations with which we correspond, send greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year has passed away, and we are still the spared monuments of our heavenly Father, and we hope he has gathered us together in his name, and we do hope he has been with us in our deliberations, and in our feeble attempts to worship him.

Brethren, are we not living in the days spoken of by the Scriptures, when there should come a falling off, and is there not a need of strict discipline to-day, as ever there was? It does seem to us, if one may speak for all, that we are living in a dark and cloudy day, and iniquity seems to abound, and the love of many to wax cold, and we feel that we are compassed about with many infirmities, having foes without and within. O, that God would once more cause Zion to arise and shine, and that the glory of the Lord might be seen in her midst, yet we would desire to stay upon our God, and trust in the name of the Lord.

Your Minutes have been received and examined, and we feel in accord with the sentiment therein contained.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Gilboa Church, on the first

Wednesday, and Thursday following, in October, 1903, where we hope to meet and greet your messengers, and receive your Minutes.

JOHN CLARK, Moderator.
G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.
JAMES AVERY, Assistant Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, Wednesday noon, Oct. 8th, 1902, at bride's residence, George Whitenack, of Skillman, Somerset Co., N. J., and Miss Elizabeth C. Labaw, of Stoutsburg, Somerset Co., N. J.

By Elder Joel Stanley, Oct. 9th, 1902, at the residence of Henry Young, Garretts, W. Va., John Young and Miss Molly S. McComas, of Teyo, Putnam Co., W. Va.

By Elder L. B. Hanover, at the bride's residence, Oct. 12th, 1902, Thomas W. Irwin and Miss Bertha Hatch, both of Delaware Co., Ohio.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, at the residence of Herbert Blue, in the city of Columbus, Sept. 30th, 1902, Charles Merwin Barr, of Amand, Ohio, and Miss Irene May Mocker, of Columbus, Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

BY request I send for publication in the SIGNS, a notice of the death of **John Wesley Hobbs**, at Middletown, N. Y., on Friday, Sept. 5th, 1902. His home was in Brooklyn, N. Y. He had been failing in health for more than a year. On June 5th he was taken to Middletown, with the hope that the change might be beneficial, but that hope was not realized.

The subject of this notice was born Jan. 27th, 1841. He received a hope early in life, and united with the New School Baptist Church, where he remained about twelve years. In 1874 he moved to Middletown, and there heard Elder Gilbert Beebe preach. At once he recognized his own experience in the preaching, saw the truth, and was made free by it, and ceased to walk with the church he had joined. From that time his mind was clear in regard to the doctrine of grace and the order of the church of God, and also in regard to the erroneous character of the doctrines and institutions of men with which he had been formerly connected in church fellowship.

About twenty-four years ago, while on a steamer between Albany and New York, he related to me the experience and exercises of his mind upon this subject, which were very clear and deeply interesting and touching to me. For some reason he never felt at liberty to come into the church, though his heart was there. His walk before men was in strictest honesty, and except that he was not a member of the church, his life was as becometh the gospel of Christ. His candor, frankness and absolute truthfulness were remarkable; so also were his kindness of heart, and his devotion to what he felt to be right, and to be his duty. While I was serving the New York church as pastor, he was regular in his attendance at the meetings. He was kind and attentive to those who served the church, and his kindness to me I must always remember very pleasantly and gratefully.

The day before he passed away his wife asked him if he knew he was going home? He answered, "Yes." She then asked him, "Is there any fear? Is it all quiet?" He replied, "I have told you that I have no fear." During the last twelve hours he was in a stupor, and passed away quietly, like one falling asleep. We believe that he did fall asleep in Jesus, to awake in the likeness of his risen and glorified Lord.

Three sons and our dear sister are left. The sons mourn a loved and honored father, the wife a devoted, affectionate husband. She is sustained by her hope in Jesus, and by the precious promises of the gospel.

Brother Ker, the pastor of the church at Middletown, was absent at the time of the funeral, on the first Sunday in September, and brother Horace H. Lefferts, who was supplying the church that day, preached on the occasion, using as a text the words recorded in John xiv. 6, and reading hymns No. 1289 and 1257 (Beebe's Collection). The body lies in the cemetery at Middletown.

May the Lord be manifest as the Comforter of each of the mourners. May his sustaining grace and love be especially felt by our bereaved sister, in her great affliction and loneliness.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Oct. 18, 1902.

SISTER **Martha O'Bannon.** According to God's immutable decree death has again invaded the Frying Pan church, and taken from her one than whom she never had a more lovely christian woman, nor one whose walk in the church, and out of the church, in season, and out of season, more pleasingly illustrates the holy life of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Our beloved sister O'Bannon was born June 6th, 1839; baptized by the writer in the fellowship of Frying Pan church, 1879 or 1880; married to brother Henry O'Bannon, in the Frying Pan meeting-house, second Sunday in February, 1884; died at her home, near Pleasant Valley, Va., 2 o'clock a. m., Friday, Sept. 12th, 1902; funeral preached by the writer, in the Frying Pan meeting-house, second Sunday in Sept., 1902. In the place where they were united as man and wife, there they parted, never to meet again in this world. The very large concourse of people that followed her remains, testified to the universal esteem in which she was held. In my long acquaintance with her I never heard pass from the lips of any hu-

man being a single charge against her, nor a murmur of suspicion. Indeed, such was her life, no one would have believed it had it been made. She was also a good steward, using her Master's goods, with which she was amply provided, with discreet judgment, and generous liberality; helping the needy, and relieving the distressed. Though she suffered untold agony with that dreadful disease, cancer, for more than a year, never for one moment without pain, still she attended her church meetings, going eight miles, up to a few months before her death. The last time I saw her, her great anxiety was, "Will my faith hold out?" Poor creature, she was suffering then beyond the power of words to tell. Her greatest anxiety was, her faith. She was most anxious about that which most deeply concerned her. What an exhibition of that wonderful grace that united her to her living Head. The most important thing with her in that crucial hour, Will it hold out? It did. Nothing shall separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. She leaves a husband, our beloved brother, Henry O'Bannon, a fit companion for such a worthy woman, a brother, together with many friends, and a sorrowing church, to mourn their loss. Yet there is not a doubt in our minds but that she is infinitely better off; our sorrowing is not for her, but for ourselves. We beg the supporting power of God's grace to sustain and comfort our lonely brother.

E. V. WHITE.

LEESBURG, Va.

ON June 14th, 1902, death entered our humble home, taking away little **Henry Dykes**, at the age of 10 years and 7 months. He was sick only eight days. His disease was typhoid fever, accompanied by a nervous disease a few weeks before he was taken sick. It was heart trouble that took him away. He passed away very peacefully. We had promised ourselves much comfort in him, but it appears that whatever on earth we look to for comfort, proves to be a failure. The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord. We weep not as those that have no hope; our loss is his eternal gain. We know there is a place where there shall be no more death, and when we are done with this sinful world, we shall dwell with him forever, and be clothed in his righteousness. May the Lord guide us all in the strait and narrow way, is the prayer of his afflicted

MOTHER.

BROTHER **W. J. Stringer** fell asleep in Jesus on Jan. 21st, 1902, in full faith in the hereafter, and that God does all things well. Brother Stringer passed away in peace, as a child enters sleep. He was born in the State of Alabama, Jan. 14th, 1831, and was about 71 years of age. He leaves one son and four daughters, with grandchildren and many friends, to mourn their loss. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church of Bethel, Arkansas, where he lived a consistent member until called by death. I have known him from boyhood, and can truthfully say we have lost a good citizen, the church a strong pillar, a true, tried friend. He will be long remembered by those who knew him.

M. E. McDONALD.

CAMDEN, Ark., Sept. 5, 1902.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$613 05
Dr. D. M. Leonard, N. Y., $50.00; J. R. Yerkes, D. C., $1.00.—Total	51 00
Total to date	$664 05

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER W. Lively having changed his address from Opelika, Ala., to 712 West Twentieth St., Birmingham, Ala., desires his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

ELDER Frank McGlade having changed his address from Wagram, Ohio, to Maplehurst Farm, Pataskala, Licking Co., Ohio, requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

APPOINTMENTS.

ELDER Silas H. Durand will attend the following appointments, if the Lord will: Sunday night and Monday night, Nov. 9th and 10th, at South River, N. J.; Tuesday night, Nov. 11th, at Mr. Eber Livingston's, No. 343 Orange St., Albany, N. Y.; Wednesday and Thursday nights, Nov. 12th and 13th, at brother John Boes', 160 Seymour Ave., Utica, N. Y.; Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 15th and 16th, at Burdett, N. Y.; Monday night, Nov. 17th, at Grover, Bradford Co., Pa.

MEETINGS.

OLIVE & Hurley Old School Baptist Church yearly meeting will be held the first Saturday and Sunday in November, (1st and 2d) 1902, nothing in providence permitting. Brethren coming from a distance will be met at Shokan, via Ulster & Delaware railroad.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

A YEARLY meeting of the Old School Baptist Church of Olive & Hurley is appointed to be held November 12th and 13th, 1902, at their meeting-house in Olive, N. Y. A cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth is given. All coming by rail will please come to West Shokan, Ulster Co., N. Y.

A. BOGART, Clerk.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 70. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1902. NO. 22.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MT. VERNON, Texas, Oct. 21, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Again I feel a desire to pen a few lines, if only to faintly express my appreciation of your good letters and editorials. If I could only write as you all do, instructively and comfortingly, I would write more frequently, but how often it is my mind seems to be only worldly, barren and fruitless in spiritual things; how often it is that I am shut up and cannot come forth. With the poet I can truly say,

> "When I turn my eyes within,
> All is dark and vain and wild;
> Filled with unbelief and sin,
> Can I deem myself a child?"

But the blessed Lord now and then, it seems, lifts me up out of these dark places, and I feel comforted, and at times I hope rejoice in Spirit. If it was not for this, I think I should long since have given up in despair. I cannot understand how one who finds himself shut up and cannot come out, but has to remain in prison until he is brought out, and again finds his heart at a time unexpected filled with praise to God, and he cannot refrain, can think for a moment that the enjoyments of spiritual blessings are conditional, and are in our power to possess or reject at option. I do believe that both the Scriptures and all christian experiences teach that all spiritual blessings, are life in Christ before the foundation of the world, therefore each person who in time receives them, with every emotion of love, peace and joy felt by them in time, with all things and every single thing necessary to prepare the hearts of the subjects of redeeming grace to serve God, are the gifts of God in Christ, and are by him freely bestowed upon us in time, according to God's own will, and not ours. If we have a will or desire to serve him, it is because he has given us this blessing in Christ, and so "works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure." I cannot believe that there is a single spiritual blessing comes to one of God's people but what is the gift of God the Father in Christ Jesus his Son, for each person who receives it, nor that a single one of all the redeemed host of the sons and daughters of the earthy Adam, can fail to receive a single blessing that God the Father has given them in Christ Jesus their Lord. I know that such ex-

pressions bring the epithet, "Can't help it," and the like, and by a little evasion and sophistry we might dodge such epithets, but how could that help us? If our position be true, if it has for its foundation God's word, it will stand when all such epithets, with all accusers and those who bring reproaches, are fallen to rise no more. If any should ask my scriptural reasons for the belief expressed, I would ask them to read the following Scriptures: Eph. i. 1–11; 2 Peter iii. 9; Gal. v. 17; John xv. 5; 2 Cor. i. 20. Hundreds of passages might be referred to, but let this suffice for the present, with the additional thought that no other passage in all the Scriptures teach to the contrary, for the Scriptures are not contradictory, but are one harmonious whole.

I will now turn from this subject to tell the readers of the SIGNS something of two of our Predestinarian Baptist associations here in east Texas, the Sulphur Fork and the Fellowship. I was blessed with the pleasant privilege of being at the fourteenth annual session of the Fellowship Association, embracing the second Sunday in September; also at the fifty-sixth annual session of the Sulphur Fork, embracing the first Sunday in October. The two associations combined number thirty churches, with above an average membership of twenty-five, and with an aggregate membership of 772, with fifteen ordained ministers. The preaching and conversation at these meetings was such as to admit of no doubt as to their true standing in the doctrine of God our Savior, and such has been the case for many years past. Elder David Bartley was with us at the Sulphur Fork, and both him and his preaching was joyfully received. Although these associations have for several years stood solid in the advocacy of unlimited predestination, and salvation by grace alone, not one of the churches have ever set up non-fellowship resolutions against those brethren who hold different views. On the other hand, different ministers who did not fully accept our views have passed through our bounds, at different times, preaching at the different churches. Things here in Texas, however, as elsewhere, have in the last few months taken a turn, which makes it inconsistent, we think, to receive many whom we could before have treated as brethren. The so-called "Bonham council" held about the last of June having set up a barrier between that element and ourselves, by declaring (after garbling and misrepresenting) doctrinal principles we hold sacred, heresies.

Very few of our brethren object to the free use of the words "absolute," or "unlimited," with reference to predestination, though none of them are sticklers for these words, though we can but think that where there is much kick against the words, that really the doctrine is the trouble more than the words. We have used the word "absolute" as meaning in its general sense, free, or independent of anything extraneous; complete in itself; positive; unconditional, &c.; existing independent of any other cause, as God is absolute; unlimited by extraneous power or control, &c. Now when one finds fault with the word "absolute," is it because he believes predestination is dependent on something extraneous, some outside influence? Was the predestinator dependent on something outside of himself, or his predestination dependent on something outside of what was included in predestination for its fulfillment? Is not God's predestination complete in itself? Is it conditional, depending on

something else for its fulfillment? If so, then is the word absolute improperly used, when used with reference to predestination. If not, it certainly is not wrong to use the word "absolute" with reference to predestination. No learned Rabbi in the world could ever make me believe that either God or his predestination are dependent on anything under the sun, or above it, but God is independent, and his predestination can never fail of fulfillment, even in its minutest parts, and this makes it without doubt, *absolute.*

Neither is God or his predestination limited, because God "was before all things," "Creator of all things," "whether they be things *visible* or *invisible,* thrones, dominions, principalities or powers." Hence he is the owner or possessor of all things, and most surely the disposer of all things. God's predestination is unlimited, because he is a God without limit, and his predestination certainly embraces all things. His predestination limits some things, but is itself without limit. It says to the surging billows of the ocean, "Thus far shalt thou come, and no farther." It says, The wrath of man shall praise thee, and the remainder shall be restrained. It just as much says the waves of the ocean shall come so far, as it says they shall come no farther, and that the wrath of man *shall* praise him, as that the remainder he will restrain.

If we do not like the word "unlimited," as used in connection with predestination, then we must like its opposite, *limited,* for I cannot see how we would get a middle ground between the words. I know it is hard to ride a fence built on the ground between the two. An able minister in this country, who passed away a few years ago, used to say, "Some brethren were very much afraid of getting the Lord in a difficulty," so it seems. A nice line of distinction is drawn between the relation of God's predestination to good things, and its relation to evil things; to sin, and to holiness. Of holiness it is *causative,* of sin it is permissive. Difficulties will arise in the mind, however, and we will question the correctness and sift in our minds the "pros and cons" relative to the subject, though it should come from the lips or the pen of a Solon. The question in my mind, and I will now submit it for the consideration of all concerned, Is predestination, abstractly, the direct cause of either holiness or sin? I suppose by "holiness," as used in this connection, is meant the obedience or "good works" of those who obey God, as none likely would argue that predestination was the cause of the attribute of Deity, called holiness. What then is the cause of obedience on the part of God's children? Is it not the effect of the operation of the holy Spirit in them? This is our understanding, and if correct, then it follows that it is the operation (the subduing, ruling and guiding influence) of the holy Spirit that is *causative* in the case, and not predestination, although predestination embraced both cause and effect. It is said of God's holy Son, our Savior and elder Brother, that, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him." Then if the elder Son must suffer in the flesh, and thus learn obedience, to be brought into the "fellowship of his sufferings," we, if sons, must suffer in the flesh, and learn obedience. This it seems is God's ordained way, and he leads them through this world of sorrow and pain and affliction, and gives to each one his needed and appointed share, and thus brings them into closer and closer relation

to himself experimentally, and here I conclude we have both cause and effect. On the other hand, when we consider the relation of God's predestination to the wickedness of men and devils, we have to conclude that it is or it is not predestinated or determined of God. If we say it was not determined or predestinated, then we have to conclude that sin has entered the world and done its dreadful work among men without any determined course, and contrary to the will of God, and hence we must have a thwarted, baffled, disappointed God. If we say it was determined before time, must we therefore say that predestination causes men to sin and commit wickedness? Nay, by no means. Although it is abundantly proven by the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, that all the things Jesus suffered at the hands of wicked men and devils, was before determined and appointed of God, the perpetrators of those wicked actions had neither knowledge of nor regard for God's predestination. Hence predestination is not *causative* in these things, but their wickedness was, as is the case of all wicked or sinful actions of men or devils from the beginning of the world, the outgrowth, or fruit, of the evil nature or spirit in them. It is as true of them as of all, or any tree in the vegetable kingdom: they bring forth fruit after their kind. The trees of the vegetable kingdom were not placed here in the earth and just suffered or permitted to bear fruit, but a life and a law of life was given by which they bear fruit, and each propagates its several species, and brings forth after its kind. This we all know is true in both the vegetable and the animal kingdoms.

The word "permit" occurs only twice in the whole Bible; the word "permission" only once, and "permitted" twice, and in none of these places does it apply to wicked or sinful actions of men or devils. Still we know that none can do either good or bad, if the Lord does not permit us. Paul trusted to tarry awhile with the Corinthian brethren, "if the Lord permit." He said to the Hebrews, "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection," &c. "And this will we do, if God permit." He had the will, the desire to do these things, but knew he could not do so unless God would permit. As James puts it, he would do so and so, "if the Lord wills." So in all ages, the children of God in their every experience have often felt strong desires to do things in the service of the Master, and of each other, but have realized that they could not do so unless God permit. So wicked men and devils desire to do much in sin and opposition to God, that God will not permit, and they do nothing but what God does permit. "For the wrath of man *shall* praise thee, and the remainder thou shalt restrain." So he restrains, or hinders, will not permit what he has not purposed should be to his praise.

In conclusion I desire to say that the two associations named above have stood firm for several years past in the doctrine of predestination, and denying conditionalism, or Arminianism. Yet they have not felt the necessity of, or at least to the extent of taking part in any of the council meetings that have yet been called: even the last one having its objectionable features. Although we have been advertised time and again as "fatalists," "antinomians," "arian two seeders," "non resurrectionists," &c., we have not as yet set up any non-fellowship bars.

I hope I feel humbly thankful to God, the "great Shepherd of the sheep," for

his preserving care of us, and pray for a continuance of unanimity of sentiment and fellowship among us.

May the Lord bestow like blessings upon his dear people everywhere.

Your little brother in hope,

H. B. JONES.

CAPRON, Oklahoma, July 19, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I have been deprived of the privilege of meeting with my little church, now the third time in succession. I have cried like a child over my disappointment, for I would rather be in the presence of my dear brethren, than admitted into kings' courts.

Jeremiah said, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Jesus commanded us to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and said that all needful things should be added to us, and the apostle exhorts us not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, and yet the Scripture at the head of this letter is true. I believe that I want to get to my meetings, though I sometimes fear that the desire is but a selfish one, and not one prompted by love, as it should be, but I find that the way of man is indeed not in himself. But where then is his way? Solomon said that a man's goings are of the Lord. How can a man then understand his own way? "The way of man," and, "man's goings," mean the same thing, in these two texts. Sometimes poor man is on Pisgah's top, and then again he wanders to the foot of the mount, and is low down in the valley of despair. But O, dear child, be encouraged; after you have wandered for perhaps a long time in this low valley, the good Shepherd comes near and lifts you out of the low, miry place, and sets your feet on a rock, and puts a new song in your mouth. Then how sweetly you can sing the songs of Zion's King, because your goings are of the Lord. Even while in doubting castle, and in the hands of Giant Despair, or in the slough of despond, as Bunyan has it, still your God rules even there. It would not do for you to always be upon the top of the mount, for if we were never weary, we could not know what rest means. If God never led you through the deep waters, or in the dark and thorny desert, you could never appreciate deliverance.

I am so glad that the way of man is not in himself, and that his goings are of the Lord. Not only your different stages in life are of the Lord, but Solomon says, "A man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps." A man may be sitting still, and yet make the steps intended here. A man performs some deed, and we say that it was the worst step that he ever made. In this sense the Lord directs a man's steps. The heart may devise his way, and yet another notion strikes him, and he does the exact opposite of what he purposed to do. We see this illustrated in the case of the two brothers who were bidden of their father to go work in his field; one said, "I will not," and then repented and went; the other said that he would, and then did not go. Does not all this show that the way of man is not in himself? No doubt both of the brothers thought that they would do as they said at first, but the way of each of them was not in himself.

I will speak of myself in this connection. I united with the Old School Baptists, and at one time went so far as to say to a member of the Missionary Baptists, that I knew that Old School doctrine

was true, as certainly as I knew that I was sitting on these stone steps. He was astonished at my positive expression. I also told him that nothing could turn me from the doctrine. And then afterwards I was in the Missionary ranks in a year, and he was a member of the Old School Baptists. Yet I was never a Missionary Baptist in sentiment, though I tried to think that I was. My way was not in myself then surely. In this also I learned the difference between the predestination of God, and our doing what he had predestinated, that it was as brother Chick said, "In the motive." I meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. He meant to teach me where my sufficiency was. At that time, while I wanted to be instrumental in the conversion of some poor sinner, and worked as hard as any one ever did in their meetings, yet I never believed that I had a thing to do with the salvation of one sinner.

I asserted that I never was a Missionary Baptist in sentiment, and the committee that was sent to see me can bear testimony that I said that I believed the sentiment of this lines,

> "Dear, dying Lamb, thy precious blood,
> Can never lose its power,
> Till all the ransomed church of God
> Be saved, to sin no more."

I truly had to go there, and yet I felt that it was my own act nevertheless, and I believe it was marked out of the Lord for my good, and now I believe in the predestination of all things, both good and evil, which I did not before that.

I find that I am saying too much about myself, but I could write a long article all about myself, and yet be right in the text named at the beginning of this letter. Either God purposed every event in time, or else they come by blind chance, and if he purposed them, he certainly predetermined all events leading up to them. David committed a most grievous crime in the case of Uriah and Bathsheba; he was wicked in what he did, and yet God had purposed through this lineage to bring his Son into the world. Matthew says, "David begat Solomon of her that was the wife of Uriah." Well may we say in view of all this, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." I once told an Elder of the limited predestinarians that here was a crime which must be committed, else the line through which the Savior came after the flesh would have been broken. And his answer was, "Solomon could have been born unto David by some other woman." I asked him about his own two little girls? What would his wife say to such a statement? I think this showed him the folly of his position, and well it might, for his statement was pure Arminianism.

And Uriah's steps as well as those of David were directed of the Lord to the fulfillment of his purpose, as the careful reading of the narrative will show. And so, dear children of God, all our times are in his hands. We shall have a few more thorns and thistles to pass over, and then our long and rough journey will be ended, and we will be called up higher. Then we will hear the King say unto us, "Come in, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Peter, speaking of these heirs of God whose steps are ordered of the Lord, says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in

heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

I do not feel that I can dwell strongly enough upon that blessed word, "inheritance." Just to think! Poor beggars lifted from the dunghill, right into an eternal inheritance. O, it seems too good to be true. Nevertheless it is true. Poor, tried pilgrims whose faces are bent forward, crying, Life! life! your steps are all traveled over, and the dark stream of death is before you, but fear not, the same hand that has led you thus far, will safely land you, though the stream may roll high and boisterous; the waves will not overflow you, for the same hand that has led you all the way through, will not then, in that trying moment, forsake you, but will bring you off more than conquerors through him that loved you, and gave himself for you.

I am an afflicted man bodily, but my bodily afflictions are not to be compared with the plague of sin. O, my leanness, my leanness.

Dear brother Beebe, I cannot trespass much longer on your precious time. Perhaps it was best for me to be deprived to-day of meeting with my brethren; there may be many comforted in reading these lines, while there would be but few comforted in my being at the meeting. I know that those who read will be comforted, if they but catch the sweet mood that I am in as I write these thoughts. No one is with me but my dear son, and he is absent from home much of the time, and is not therefore much company for me. I am like Bunyan in Bedford jail. I write from mental fullness. Do with this as you think best, and all will be right with me. May God bless the dear old SIGNS, and all her correspondents and readers, and especially you, my brethren editors. May you long be spared to wield "The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon," is my prayer.

A poor sinner,

J. M. DULY.

RESTING IN THE BLESSED PROMISES.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS, AND ALL OF LIKE PRECIOUS FAITH:—I feel to write something to you which will, I trust, be of some comfort to you. Somehow I am drawn to you in sweet and strong fellowship, and why should we not speak often one to another? Let us read, search and study the blessed book, we have a rich, inexhaustible store-house from which to draw; O, what a fountain. There is so much in God's record to comfort and cheer us, so much to strengthen and instruct us, so much to help and humble us, so much to guide and keep us, and we do well to heed its lesson; we do well to consult its pages, and make it our counselor, and take heed to its blessed doctrines, for interwoven with its teachings, instructions and admonitions, are the rich and blessed promises.

Like Ruth, I will try to glean from its holy pages, and make some comments which I hope and trust may be God-honoring, and of comfort to some dear souls, some tried and tempted ones, some of God's little ones. I trust that he will guide me in this matter, for without him we can do nothing; with Christ strengthening us we can do all things. (Phil. iv. 13.) What a comforting promise that is, and yet self-abasing. Paul had a wonderful conception of spiritual things, for Jesus had appeared to him in the way. He was most wonderfully favored and blessed, and what sweet and precious testimonies he has left on record for us who are kept by the power of God, through

faith, unto salvation. If I drew only from the writings of this dear apostle and saint, a book might be written that would be for the comfort of the saints, who are resting sweetly in the blessed promises, but let us for awhile go to the words of the blessed Master, as recorded in the sermon on the mount. He spoke as never man spake, and all the promises in him are yea and amen; no change in one of them, no contingencies, no conditions, and I am glad of it; he is God and changes not. Let us read in his sermon, Matt. v. 1–11: Are you poor in spirit? then the kingdom of heaven is yours; are you mourning? then you shall be comforted; are you meek? then shall you inherit the earth; are you hungering and thirsting for righteousness? then you shall be filled; are you merciful? then you shall obtain mercy; are you pure in heart? then you shall see God; are you a peace maker? then you shall be called a child of God; are you persecuted for righteousness' sake? then yours is the kingdom of heaven; are you reviled and persecuted and spoken evil of falsely, for Christ's sake? then rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. "Ye are the salt of the earth, ye are the light of the world." Also our Jesus promised to send the Comforter. O, the Bible is running over with the promises and pledges, with the covenants and consolations.

Then in the prophecy of Isaiah, how rich, free and plentiful, are the promises and declarations of God, and how wonderfully sustained was Job in his sore trials and sorrows. Do any of the little ones think their trials are greater than were those of Job? Remember not only Job, but also David, Isaiah, Moses, Peter and Paul. Think of what they endured, and read the testimony which they all have left, and take courage. How highly favored we are in having their testimonies. "What more can he say, than to you he hath said?" Let Jesus be all and in all, and his be the glory. Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown him Lord of all. Are we resting in the promises, so satisfying and sweet?

What clouds of them there are for number. It seems that even one ought to satisfy us, but he knew our weakness, and so he has just built them up mountain high. Who can sum up all the promises of God's book? Eternity will alone be long enough for us to comprehend the fullness and richness, the immaculate completeness of all that is embraced in the promises and doctrine of the Bible. God has provided all things for his own, both for time and eternity. How lost in wonder and admiration, and adoration, are our minds in attempting to grasp the meaning of the promises of God, for he is a wonder-working God indeed. Who can fathom God's love so richly revealed in the promises? We can see but in part, but how blessed are the glimpses that he does give us.

Salvation is of the Lord. Simeon had a glorious vision of it when he saw and adored the blessed Christ. It is sufficient for all time and for eternity. We can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth us. This is enough for our time salvation. We would be like poor Peter, without the presence of the blessed Lord. Let us rejoice because our names are written in heaven, for so the Lord bids us; let us bless and praise his holy name. Human nature has always tried to provide its own righteousness, but Christ has provided the only true righteousness. I know of no righteousness but his, whether for our time salvation, or for any other.

In this life we need the presence of God; this suits my case, for I am weak, vile and sinful, of myself. Can you, my brother, stand in your own strength? Will you return to the bondage of the law, after having been translated into the glorious liberty of the sons of God? Christ indeed atoned for all the sins of his people, all original sin, all sins of omission and commission, and so all is secure in him. We may rest in the promise of that God that cannot lie, and who is able to save to the uttermost. He will keep us and not forsake us, and through Christ, freely will he give us all things, and forgive us all things; these are certainties; these are realities, thanks to God, who is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent; who is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind.

One more thing I want to say, Are you chastised? this is an evidence of sonship and joint-heirship with Christ. If ye receive chastisement, then are ye sons and not bastards. God is merciful and tender, and he chastens us in love, not in anger. In all the names and titles of Jesus, we have the crystalization of all the doctrine and promises that underlie them. Can we add anything to make it stronger? No, it has no weakness.

I will close by quoting Paul's wonderful words in Romans viii., "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor heighth, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

J. G. WILLIAMS.

QUINCY, Ill., Aug. 14, 1902.

SAN FRANCISCO, Cal., July, 1902.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find two dollars, for which please send me your paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I will also advance some thoughts upon the following Scriptures.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."—Gen. i. 1.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."—John i. 1.

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."—Gen. i. 27.

"Create: to produce, to bring into being out of nothing, to cause to exist." (Webster's unabridged dictionary.) "Create: to make out of nothing, to bring being out of nonentity." (Cruden's complete concordance.)

"These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, and every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew."—Gen. ii. 4, 5.

Thus, the first stage, the beginning, was the creation. The second stage, was the formation of created things. The third stage, was the endowment of creatures with consciousness, followed by intelligent action. The faculties are in obedience to the will acting as directed by the intelligence or motive power, wisely or unwisely, as the case may be.

James said, Acts xv. 18, "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world." God's will is the supreme law of the universe. It is absolute, unchangeable. God says of himself, Mal. iii. 6, "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." The mind cannot comprehend

how anything can be known that has no existence, or whose existence depends upon a contingency which would jeopardize its existence. Christ said, "I will build my church." Paul said, "Ye are his workmanship." Then it follows that God knew all the members of the body of Christ before the world had assumed under the Master's hand, a condition to be habitable for man. For it was in the beginning that God created (not formed) man, both male and female, and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day that they were created.

All things were first created, as in the case of the plant in the field, before the earth by the processes of evolution took the form of dry land, being separated from the waters. So also man, both male and female, existed in the created state before the body was formed. But as an entity he partakes of flesh and blood, as it were, by the door of the first Adam, entering into this earthly state of existence. His beginning was in the creation, and not in the act of his partaking of flesh and blood, which act was an important event in his history.

Why quibble about what man is born again, or what part of the man is born? Christ says, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." God said, "Let us make man." So God created man, and as he was first created, he must be formed or made. He was created both male and female, and was endowed with dominion and the powers of created intelligence. This gave shape and personality to the formation of his body. When the mind can grasp the fact that man existed as an entity in his created state, we then may comprehend the fact that he partook of flesh and blood. I know that it requires the great light of divine truth to enable the mind to grasp the fact that we had a created existence before the dry land appeared, or the Adamic body was formed.

It is no less difficult to grasp the fact of life beyond the grave, when we, as living and intelligent entities, shall be partakers of the immortal pleasures and felicities of that heavenly home, where we shall dwell in mansions not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. If it be true that to know a thing, implies the existence of that thing, it must be equally true that to know of the condition of a thing, implies the existence of that condition. Paul to the church at Rome says, i. 20, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made."

When Christ is presented to us as God manifestly in the flesh, we are not led to think of God as having a beginning, but of the manifestation of the invisible God in the person of him who was made under the law. I repeat that God's will is the supreme law of the universe. God's knowledge takes in all things, acts and conditions of things; God's will is immutable. Men of science know this as the law of nature. All natural things, known by science, are but an expression of God's will. We may not understand, and we may not comprehend, but we will learn many good wholesome truths by looking at and studying the things that are made. The seed that swells and bursts under the action of the life within, is but the opening of the door for the entrance into our view, of the tender sprout of the new plant, unfolding its leaves, and opening its flowers, whose petals fall and give place for the ripening fruit, which we have before us. In all this we see the beautiful manifestation of the wisdom, power and love of God in its

creation, with all that is needful for its sustenance and adornment.

In the contemplation of these great truths revealed by the things that are made, the spiritual mind rises in gratitude to God in the language of Paul to the Ephesians, and repeats, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath [in the past tense] blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." The child of God, filled with the love of God, as manifested in the life, work, sufferings and sacrifices of his only begotten Son, who was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, feels like looking for others of like precious faith, and is anxious to find the children of God, who have seen the One altogether lovely, and who believe in his power, love and grace. Power to conquer, and love to forgive, and grace to crown us more than conquerors through him that loved us and gave himself for us.

What gratitude, what love, what self-sacrifice, this calls for from us who have been made partakers of these spiritual blessings. When one has enjoyed the sweet power of the Sun of righteousness, who rises with healing in his wings, he is inclined to reach out a loving hand to all who dwell in the rays of that divine light. We, all of us, in our weakness, are the faint and dim likenesses of the great and loving Savior, who bled and died for us. We are but in a state of transformation, as the plant that is unfolding the beauties which God gave it in its creation. So the little children are growing in grace, and unfolding the spiritual beauties given them in Christ, and preserved for them in Christ, and which we see manifested in the children of God.

Little children, think of these things, and bear with one another. Let each bear his own burdens and also bear each the others' burdens. Let us be careful not to place our burdens upon others, but rather seek to relieve others of their burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

I remain yours,

W. W. POLK.

MARSHALL, Minn., May 31, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—It is through great tribulation that we enter the kingdom. It is said in the never failing word of God, "I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." These are not always poor in the things of this world, but poor in Spirit. To them the blessed Son of God promised blessings, before he left the world, and finished the work that his Father gave him to do, and he left this world of sin and sorrow to intercede before his Father for those given to him. It sometimes seems that the children of God are more afflicted than the children of this dark world. Perhaps it is partly because the children of God feel to mourn with those that mourn, and to weep with those that weep, in the kingdom of the heaven-born family of God. When I heard of the death of our dear brother Wm. L. Beebe, a sadness filled my heart which I cannot express. It could be truly said, A great man has fallen in Israel; he has gone to his reward. And when I heard of your sickness, I almost felt to despair. I thought, Is every one of the family so long connected with the SIGNS to be taken away from this field of usefulness and honor, to their reward, and poor, unworthy me be left? I do not feel to murmur, but to mourn.

I will say here that I am a cripple, and

have been for eight years. Six weeks since my husband took a violent cold, and since then has been nearly helpless, and a great sufferer. Sometimes we feel as though the Lord has left us in the hand of Satan, to try our faith, as was the case with Job, but if we be numbered among the Lord's elect, the devil cannot touch our life. If we were chosen in Christ before the world was formed, all our troubles and trials here will only make us the richer when we arrive at home. If we be the children of God, though cast down, we shall not be forsaken, for the Lord hath said it. When the SIGNS was received for the first of June we were feeling very sad, but it came, as it always does, as food to the famishing soul. It revived our drooping souls. How we enjoyed sister Bessie Durand's letter. We always enjoy her letters, and I wish that we could see more of them. We did not enjoy it because it told of sorrow, but because it told of comfort in affliction, and of the rich clusters which she had received from the memory of the dear ones who had fallen asleep in Jesus, but who were still precious in her memory, and it brings to my mind so many that have laid their armor by, and have gone to receive their reward. In my lonely hours I think of so many things too precious to be forgotten.

The SIGNS this year has been more interesting than usual; it has seemed that the editors, and all who have written for it, have had a message from the Lord, for the comfort and edifying of those who enjoy the things that are spiritual. In the SIGNS of May 15th, Elder Vail speaks my mind in full; I have not the gift to express these things as he has.

But I must trouble you no longer with trying to read my scribbling; had it not been my duty to write now, I should not have attempted it under my present trying circumstances.

A lady is now visiting me who has been a cripple like me for the last seven years, and sorely afflicted in many ways, with dead and living troubles, and while we took a little rest I gave her the SIGNS to read; she read sister Bessie Durand's letter, and enjoyed it, and I said to her that I wished that she would take the SIGNS. She said that she was afraid that it would keep her from reading her Bible. I told her that it would cause her to the more love to search the Bible. She gave me a dollar, and I do think that she will never be without the SIGNS again. Send her the number for the first of June. This is the first dollar that I have sent on from here for the SIGNS in twenty-seven years.

I will close this poor scribble with much love to you. I hope that you will remember me at a throne of grace.

From your sister in hope,

PARTHENIA PATTERSON.

BROOME CENTER, N. Y., Oct. 19, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE, AS I HOPE, THROUGH THE MERCIES AND GRACE OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST:—Of late I have been reading brother B. F. Butler's article published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, September 15th, 1898. I wish all Old School Baptists who have plenty of this world's goods, might read the same with the feeling that I had while reading it. My mind has been exercised on the same matter for a long time, and I have thought of proposing to the brethren of being one of twenty, to give fifty dollars each to clear you and our beloved paper from debt, but I have decided to inclose you fifty dollars, and leave all with him with whom we have to do,

hoping that the minds of many may be moved to assist in making your burden as light as possible. I would that the Old School Baptists might "love in deed and in truth" at all times, and "not in word, neither in tongue," after the fashion of the world. I would that the minds of the brethren might be called to the matter, but as you feel very delicate about doing so, I feel to excuse you, but brother Beebe, you ought not to be so burdened. O that we all might show a brotherly love by contributing to your relief in this matter, and thus show the love of God dwelling in us; let not our hearts condemn us: God knoweth all things.

Brother Beebe, I have for a long time been trying to devise some plan to lay this matter before the brethren, that might be agreeable to you, but thus far have failed, therefore I have decided to remit, and let the matter rest until more wisdom is given me: I would that we might show our love by our works, and make a little sacrifice; it would do us all good. If we suffer with one another, we will be drawn more and more together. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." Did we not hear and learn in our beginning that we should love one another? Love is of God.

Brother Beebe, my heart goes out to you in tenderness when I think of your afflictions and your burden and anxiety. May the Lord sustain you.

I have written in haste, farewell.

D. M. LEONARD.

(See editorial remarks in this number.)

SIMS, Okla. Ter., May 24, 1902.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Inclosed find order for my subscription to the SIGNS for another year. I have been intending for the past two months to send it, but hoped to be able to write something of interest to your readers, just by way of showing my appreciation of the many words of comfort and encouragement in the paper, which my parents and grandparents have read since its first issue. I wish that I could add a long list of new subscribers to the paper, which of all papers I would like to see prosper, but I do not know of one who would care to read it, much less to subscribe for it, yet I hope in this new country, opened during this past year, I may learn through the SIGNS in some way of members and ministers sufficient to constitute a church near enough for me to attend regularly. So if any of your readers live in either of the counties, Kiowa, Comanche, Caddo or Greer, I should like to hear from them, one and all, and try to make some arrangements to have some preaching.

I have heard but little preaching since I united with the church, fifteen years ago, but I shall never forget the refreshing sermons I heard from brother Barns, of Otterville, Mo., though I found that little church but a short time before I left there, by seeing his name in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I do not believe I should be so cold and lifeless, and in such utter darkness, if I could hear preaching occasionally by one of the servants of God, who would preach just what I could indorse at all times. O, how I long to worship the Savior in Spirit and in truth, of whom I read in the Bible, and in the SIGNS. I find but little, if any, comfort by hearing preaching of other denominations, and it seems to be my lot to drift further and further away from those whom I so greatly enjoy hearing.

May God bless you and your labors of love, and may the SIGNS continue as long as time shall last, if it be the will of God,

Now all who read this, pray for me, that I may yet hear the truth. But the will of God be done.

(MRS.) L. D. BOLTON.

"PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD."

To every heir of God, and joint-heir with our elder Brother, to whom is made known his, or her, heirship by the power of the Holy Ghost, and new covenant of grace ("My grace is sufficient for thee"), the new promises of divine heirship to the great High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec, would I sincerely commend this little book of 144 pages. Read it thoughtfully, carefully, earnestly, while tempered by love divine, consequently unbiased by creed, or traditions of men.

They who are blinded by the god of this world, envious, covetous, who would labor only for pay or promises of reward, or, like Simon, would give money for the power of the Holy Ghost, the free gift of God, to such it would seem useless to appeal for an acceptance of gospel truths. Go on with your sin-offerings, your atoning sacrifices, your law-satisfying obedience. "Render unto Cæsar what belongs to Cæsar." While to those who are taught, and find a full atonement for their sins in a crucified and risen Redeemer, a High Priest who entered into the Holy of holies once for all; those who works follow them, showing their faith by their works, who preach salvation by grace and grace alone, tasting the sweets of the labor of love, bringing the branches in sweet communion, love and obedience to the true Vine, the Head of the church; those who see "every new covenant blessing the reward of grace;" (p. 138,) to all such would I commend this labor of love of brother Bartley. Especially would I direct your minds with thoughtful Christ-love, God-salvation theme, to the concluding chapter, "The Sacrifices of the Royal Priesthood."

To those who are acquainted with Elder Bartley's gospel ministry of over forty-five years, and Early Religious Life (pamphlet), these lines are superfluous, and I need only say, for such they need not have been written.

JOHN L. BLOOMFIELD.

Rio, Ill. July, 1902.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Elders and messengers composing the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Broad Creek, Delaware, Oct. 22d, 23d and 24th, 1902, to the churches whose messengers we are, send christian greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We will address you at this time upon the subject of the churches of the saints. This will prove a pleasant and profitable theme to contemplate, if the Lord shall be pleased to direct our minds into its excellencies. Nothing on earth can be more beautiful than the church of God seen by an eye of faith. As thus seen by those who have been born again, and have felt the love of God in their hearts, the church is declared by the psalmist to be "the perfection of beauty," also, "the joy of the whole earth," and "glorious things are spoken of her." (Psalms l. 2; xlviii. 2; lxxxvii. 3.) This beauty cannot be seen by the natural eye; the glorious things spoken of her cannot be heard by the natural ear, nor have they entered into the natural heart, but they are revealed unto us by the Spirit of our God. (1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.)

The church is spoken of in the Old Testament as Zion and Jerusalem. In the gospel dispensation it appears as many churches of the saints. It is still

one, though many; many, yet one. Wherever two or three are gathered together in the name of Jesus Christ, there is manifested the church of Christ, with him in the midst; there is one of the churches of the saints. Varying in numbers, differing in nationality, in personal condition, and in all worldly circumstances, yet these churches, scattered abroad through the world, are one. "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul." It is so yet. In all that characterizes them as the churches of God they are one, having "one Lord, one faith and one baptism." One of these little companies of believers, standing firmly in the truth of God, and walking in the order of the gospel, is the most lovely object that can be contemplated by a believing soul. It is in this church that we experience the fulfillment of the prayer of Moses, the servant of God, "Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children; and let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us."—Psalm xc. Here in the church of Christ we see only the work of God, and his glory only appears. Here we behold his tabernacles which shall never be taken down, and where the laboring and heavy laden souls enter into that rest which remaineth to the people of God; remaineth when all other things are shaken and removed, to go no more out for ever.

All that pertains to this gospel church is God's work. No hand of man appears in any part of that work. The power and glory of God are seen in all their brightness in every part. "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." The gospel church, as seen by the faith of God's people, comes down from the perfecting hand of God out of heaven. "And I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."—Rev. xxi. 2.

This perfection of the church in Christ is seen in measure by the faith of God's quickened people as it is set forth in the New Testament, and to the perfection of that pattern they desire to attain in all their walk and conversation as members of the churches of the saints. It is seldom if ever that they can see themselves as having attained, or as already perfect. (Phil. iii. 12.) Only two of the seven churches of Asia escaped rebuke for disorder. Probably even a smaller proportion of the churches in our day are worthy of commendation such as was given to the churches at Smyrna and Philadelphia for faithfulness in walk and conversation. But it is still the desire of the spiritual mind to reach that perfection. And it is the desire of the minister, as it was of Paul, to so preach Jesus, warning every man, instructing every man in all wisdom, that he may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

It was for this that gifts were given to men; "to some apostles, to some prophets, to some evangelists, to some pastors and teachers; for the work of the ministry, for the perfecting of the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come, in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."—Eph. iv. 11–13. Something like this seems to have been experienced by the churches whose condition is so sweetly described in Acts ix. 31: "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied."

These gifts are all of the utmost importance, and are so to be received and regarded by the churches. It would be pleasant and profitable to consider each of these gifts, and the character, power and effect of each, with the measure of responsibility resting upon the church in her relation to each, but our limits will not allow of this. We will therefore speak particularly only of the gift of pastor, and of the relationship which the Lord has established between the pastor and the church, with the duties and responsibilities devolving upon each.

And first, as to the pastor. The apostle Paul said to the Elders at Ephesus: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood."—Acts xx. 28. The apostle Peter in similar language says, "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory which shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."—1 Peter v. 1-3. Thus in plain, simple but very comprehensive language the relation of the pastors to the church, and their duties, are clearly defined by those to whom it was given by our dear Savior to set in order in the churches the things which he had commanded. It is by the appointment of Jesus that one becomes pastor over a church. That appointment is made manifest when a church which is in gospel order is led to call one to serve her in spiritual things. The minister of the gospel does not need to seek a church to serve. As he is led by the Spirit, and as doors are opened to him in providence to preach the gospel, churches come to know him and the gift that is in him. So far as his gift is that of an evangelist he will be directed by the Spirit to desert places, as Philip, the evangelist, was, to places destitute of gospel preaching. So far as his gift is that of a pastor, his services will be sought after by churches who need them. The relation of pastor is brought about by the great Shepherd, who directs the flock to seek for him, and leads him to the flock where his services are required. He who should seek to be called by a certain church as its pastor, and undertake to bring about that result, would thereby give strong evidence that the Lord had not been with him in that seeking. A minister may feel a drawing of soul toward a certain church, and a desired impression to serve that church, but he will not need to say anything to that church about his feeling, nor will he be inclined to do so. If that desire is of the Lord, that church will surely be led to call for him. The church must be the first to move in this matter. The church must give the call. It is not for him to make the Lord's will in the matter known to them by saying, "The Lord has sent me to serve you," but it will be made known to them by his ministry, in which he will come into their hearts and commend himself to their consciences in the sight of God.

When one has been called to the pastoral care of a church, and has felt that the Lord has directed him to accept the call, from that time a most solemn obligation rests upon him with reference to that church. This is clearly and powerfully expressed in the language we have already quoted from the two inspired

apostles, and we will not at this time enlarge upon them. Also there is an equally solemn obligation resting upon the church. The apostle Paul says to the church, "Remember them that have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and forever." Also, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you."—Heb. xiii. 7, 17.

When once the relationship of pastor and church is established, and is manifest as of the Lord, it may not be lightly severed. It should be regarded by both the pastor and the brethren of his care as most sacred and solemn, and each should try to realize the important obligations involved on his own part in this relation, and also to estimate adequately the duties, the cares, the trials belonging to those on the other side. A pastor has much to burden one who is blessed with an honest heart and a tender conscience. The trials and afflictions of various kinds among the members of his care are his in a sense. He must try to help and comfort those who are in trouble. Coldness of heart and worldliness of mind on the part of any cause him to anxiously put forth efforts to awaken such to a sense of their condition, and to awaken in them the experience of God's love again. Difficulties and quarrels between any of the loved ones of his care must bear heavily and sorely upon him. Sometimes a sense of his own infirmities, sins and evil propensities, make him deeply question his right to exhort or reprove another. Often on this account he will seriously doubt whether he has been called by the Lord to the place he is occupying in the church. Sometimes the afflictions and deprivations of poverty will cause sad forebodings, and a keen sense of the forgetfulness and neglect of some whom he serves will cause him to fear that he does not truly trust in the Lord, who always knows his needs, and has promised to supply them. Sometimes cases of discipline try him deeply in ways that cannot be known except by experience, and therefore cannot be fully appreciated by his brethren. The rule which he has over the church is not because of any authority vested in him as a man, not because of any superiority which he has naturally over others, which would make him a lord over God's heritage, but it is in the word of God which he has been called of God to administer, and in the office he has been appointed of God to fill. In all these things the church should try to realize the cares, difficulties and trials of his situation, and render such help and sympathy as they may be able.

No other minister should interfere in the affairs of a church which is supplied with a pastor. It is good and pleasant where the ministers are in sweet union and fellowship with each other, as is almost universally the case with those in our correspondence and fellowship, so that we enjoy brotherly freedom and mutual confidence, and are glad to have visits from each other. But even where there is such cordial fellowship and confidence among us, great care should be had in visiting churches that have pastors, and especially in regard to interfering with the care and responsibility of a brother in his field of labor. We should be as careful as we would in visiting in a brother's family. There have been cases where visiting ministers by

their intrusiveness and interference with subjects and cares belonging exclusively to the pastor and the church, have caused great trouble, and have left a trail of fire behind them. Of course a minister who is careful, sensitive and considerate, whose visit would not be other than helpful, would not visit a church, especially where there appeared any special cause of anxiety, without the invitation of both church and pastor. We do not think that regular stated appointments should be made by a preacher in a church that has the services of a pastor, nor that such a church should allow them, unless by the cordial arrangement of both church and pastor. The first thought by both church and pastor will be, when the love of God rules in their hearts, to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace among themselves. The Lord has brought them together in that sacred relation, and the love of God in their hearts will cause them to think first of each other. They want to love not in word only, but in deed and in truth, and while they will be glad to receive visits from their brethren in the ministry, they will carefully and jealously notice the first attempt on the part of any one to sow any seeds of discord, or any apparent effort to supplant the pastor in the love and confidence of his brethren.

The pastor's care is for his brethren particularly in spiritual things. The Lord has placed it upon him. The care of the church is for him not only as a brother in the church, for his spiritual comfort, but in an especial manner for his temporal welfare. This sweet and loving care the Lord has laid upon them. "Remember them who have spoken unto you the word of God." When Jesus spoke unto the two disciples in such a way that their hearts burned within them, though they thought him a stranger, they were solicitous for his welfare, and said, "The day is far spent and the night is at hand; go in and abide with us." So those who have received of the spiritual things of the Lord's servants who have been sent by him to minister unto them, will feel a strong and loving desire to minister unto them of their carnal things. This God has ordained; it is his work in the hearts of his people. They will feel as Lydia did, who, when she had been baptized, besought the apostles, saying, "If ye have judged me faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide with me. And she constrained them."

It is when all the gifts of our dear Savior are in exercise, and all the members, which he hath placed in the body as it hath pleased him, are each satisfied in his place and work, and all the offices occupied, and all moved and constrained in their work by the love of Christ, instead of selfish desires, that the church appears in all her glorious beauty and loveliness.

Then looking upon the spiritual company, whether few or many, we must say,

"How charming is the place
Where my Redeemer God
Unveils the beauties of his face,
And sheds his love abroad."

"The church of God is fair;
Her fame of old was known;
And Christ shall dwell forever there,
And claim her for his own."

A. B. FRANCIS, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Sidling Hill Church, Fulton Co., Pa., Oct. 10th, 11th and 12th, 1902, to the churches and associations with which we correspond, sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—Through the tender mercies and gracious dealing of an

all-wise God, we are once more privileged to meet in an associational capacity, to enjoy christian greeting, and to worship, as we hope, our God in spirit and truth.

We have many reasons to be thankful, and great reasons to rejoice, but our rejoicing is in the Lord, and to him we are thankful, "for he is good" and "his mercy endureth forever." It is therefore our soul's desire to ascribe unto him all praise, power and dominion, and try in our weak way to tell some of our trials and deliverances, the reason of our trust in God, and to give some evidence of our faith in hope of eternal life.

It is with a feeling of deep solemnity that we now attempt to write, and it is, we hope and trust, with fear and much trembling. May we be led to write in spirit, truth and love, to the praise of our God and to the comfort of Zion. We do not feel that we possess the ability to write thus, but our confidence and trust in God, leads us to write with the ability that God giveth.

We therefore call your attention to these words: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me;" the language of our Savior to his disciples. Much might be said and written about the literal interpretation of this language of our Savior, but it is our desire to write more particularly about the spiritual interpretation.

This language, "Let not your heart be troubled," may be applied to the experience of every heaven-born child, but not until after they have experienced for themselves that tribulation that worketh patience, and also the sweetness of that joy that is unspeakable and full of glory, and to them only does this language belong. How sweet the words, "Let not your heart be troubled," of Jesus, sound in a believer's ear.

Let us now examine these words more carefully. In our early experience, when God appeared in our flesh; and for sin condemned sin in the flesh, then we were made to mourn on account of sin, and sin did appear exceedingly sinful. In this experience we felt and knew for ourselves that there was one who could pardon and forgive, but we did not believe that there was one who had conquered sin for us, therefore our hearts were troubled. Presently Jesus is revealed to us as the way, the truth and the life, and we beheld the Father, for "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father." What a great and glorious light has now illuminated our sky! Our souls are filled with joy and burst forth in psalms and songs of praise. Jesus in a still small voice has said, "Let not your heart be troubled," and when he speaks it is done. Those who have been taught of the Lord, and all that are his shall be taught of him, hear and understand his sayings, and can therefore embrace and believe him. How came this knowledge? Jesus said, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter." It is this Comforter, the Holy Ghost, that has taught us these things, for this Comforter, whom the Father will send in Jesus' name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. This Comforter, even the Spirit of truth, the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, but we know him, for he dwelleth with us, and shall be in us. Thus we behold his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, and can thus bear witness of him, and say and believe that he is Christ, the Son of the living God. Therefore our hearts are not troubled, because his word has been made life to us, and we believe not only in God,

but also in Christ, and because he lives, we shall live also.

Now we who have experienced these things are prepared to comfort and be comforted, because the Comforter is with us. He hath shown us that we are the sons of God. Verily, "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God," and are therefore heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. We, the elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through sanctification of the Spirit, are now prepared to say, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

As we thus contemplate these things and meditate upon them, are not our hearts filled with joy and adoration? And this joy no man can take from us. By an effectually working within he hath enabled us to say, "Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God." When we thus sweetly realize these things, how our souls leap for joy, and break forth in praise and thanksgiving; a new song is in our mouth, even praise unto our God.

Thus we possess evidences of eternal life, nevertheless we also manifest evidences of natural life, the life that we derived from Adam. We are in a world of sin. It is our desire to be kept from the evil thereof. And although our carnal minds tell us that we can if we will, and though false teachers and the world say that it is left with us, yet we are necessarily bound to regard it as the goodness and mercy of God bestowed upon us. We believe that we, the children of God, are kept from the evil of the world by reigning grace, and can truthfully say, It is by the grace of God that we are what we are. We are glad to know and believe that the new covenant is, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness."

D. M. VAIL, Mod.
J. C. MELLOTT, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Association, in session with the church at Broad Creek, Sussex Co., Del., Oct. 22d, 23d and 24th, 1902, to the several associations and meetings with which she corresponds, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—It is with pleasure that we address you at this time in this our letter of correspondence. We feel that we have especial reason to praise and adore the great Ruler of all, that our meeting has been one of especial interest and comfort. We have been favored with beautiful weather, and all preparation for the meeting has been in perfect order, and we hope an ear has been given us to hear the word, and your ministers have come to us richly laden with the excellent things of the gospel, and that there has been a response in the hearts of people, which makes such meetings good and profitable. We desire a continuance of your correspondence, believing such intercourse to be strengthening, and tending to bind us in a closer fellowship. There has been no discordant note or inharmonious sound from the pulpit. The preaching has been all of a piece, all seeing eye to eye,

The next session of our association will be held, if the Lord will, with the Little Creek Church, in Delmar, Sussex Co., Delaware, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, before the fourth Sunday in October, 1903, when and where we hope to meet your ministers and messengers, and receive your messages of love.

A. B. FRANCIS, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

The Juniata Baptist Association convened with the Sidling Hill Church, Fulton Co., Pa., to the sister associations with whom she corresponds, sendeth love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED:—Through the mercy and loving-kindness of our God we are happy to inform you that we have been privileged once more to meet in an associated capacity, to see and hear from our brethren in the Lord. We have enjoyed much comfort and satisfaction in the company of one another, and a spirit of union and brotherly love has been evinced among us while we were together. We hope that the churches may be built up, and will continue to walk together in love and harmony. We have been much built up in our most holy faith, by the preaching and company of your messengers and Minutes, and hope that you will continue to favor us with your correspondence, and our repeated prayers have been for the building up of our churches, and for their continuance in time; that we may at last meet together in that association which shall never end.

Brethren, pray for us that our faith fail not, and that the glory of God may ever be our aim.

Our next meeting of the association will be held with the Springfield Church, in Huntingdon Co., Pa., to commence on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1903.

D. M. VAIL, Moderator.
J. C. MELLOTT, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1902.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REMARKS ON LETTER OF BROTHER D. M. LEONARD.

IT is with considerable hesitancy that we publish the letter of brother Leonard, found on page 684, as the brethren and friends of the SIGNS can readily appreciate our embarrassment in the matter, but as it is brother Leonard's second effort to lay the matter before the readers of the SIGNS, and as he has so substantially expressed the earnestness of his desire, we do not feel that we can again decline to publish his letter, but we feel that in doing so it is due our readers and ourself that we make some explanations, and to do this intelligibly we must repeat some things that some have read before.

Some time since we received a letter from brother Leonard requesting a statement from us of the financial circumstances of the SIGNS, and we sent him a faithful report, and shortly afterwards we received a letter from him suggesting to be one of twenty to contribute fifty dollars each to liquidate the obligations due on the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but fearing some might attribute the publication of his letter to a covetous motive on our part, we wrote him to that effect, and in return received the letter which appears in this issue.

As some of the readers of the SIGNS will remember, a few years ago we published a statement of how the SIGNS became incumbered with a debt, but as many have since became readers who were not then, we will make a brief repetition of the circumstances.

At the death of our late beloved father, the portion of his estate left to us was the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and the income from its publication. But when the paper came to us, May 1st, 1881, the subscriptions were about two-thirds paid in for that year, and we had to furnish the paper to the thousands whose subscriptions were paid to the end of that year at our own expense, besides paying an annuity to our mother of one thousand dollars. In order to do this we had to go in debt for about fifteen hundred dollars, which we paid from the receipts of the first of the next year, which left us with the subscription to fill out for the next year, and so on each year, every year since, with a slight decrease of the debt each year, until it is about one-third liquidated, and all would have been paid if we could have collected one-tenth of the amounts due us, for, while the subscription price of the paper is two dollars a year, our loss from delinquent subscribers brings the average down to less than one dollar and sixty cents a year received for each subscriber, including all donations. And during this time the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has passed through the most trying adversities, and influences have been brought to bear by misrepresentations and slanders, to suppress its publication, and sometimes in the weakness of our human nature we have been made to fear that "our enemies would swallow us up quick."

The most severe trial we have had, has been the witnessing of many turning away, whose names for more than a generation have been familiar both in the columns and on the subscription list of the SIGNS. Yet painful as this has been, we are not conscious of having compromised what we believed to be the truth, in order to continue the indorsement or patronage of any from whom we have felt compelled to differ on cardinal principles, and if we know our own desire, it is our prayer that God may keep us from ever turning to the right hand or the left, in order to curry favor with the opposers of the truth, and that we may not be governed by a covetous motive in the conduct of the SIGNS.

Though the SIGNS has met with much adversity within the last decade, yet the Lord has sustained the publication through it all, and for the last two years there has been a returning of some who were led away from the paper, and the doctrine it advocates, so that there has been a steady increase in its circulation and receipts, for which we do desire to thank God and take courage.

With these remarks we leave the subject of brother Leonard's letter with the friends of the SIGNS, and may the Lord impress their minds to do what seemeth good in his sight. The paper has been sustained for nearly seventy years, and the prospect now is that it will be prospered of the Lord yet many years, and if the cause is maintained, it is but a comparatively small matter what becomes of personal interests, as long as we are able to meet our obligations when due, and thus avoid bringing a reproach upon the cause. This we have thus far been enabled to do, for which we wish to ascribe praise to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, and to extend our sincere thanks to the patrons of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. B.

OUR TRIP TO CANADA.

In obedience to the request of brother Carnell, their pastor, and of other brethren there, and also in compliance with our own wishes, we will give a brief sketch of our recent visit to the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, and of their quarterly meeting at Lobo, which it was our privilege to attend on the first Sunday in October. This meeting also included the Saturday previous, and the Monday following.

It is not our purpose to give all the personal details of our visit there, as this would only interest comparatively few of our readers, but we do desire to speak of the visit in a general way, and of the meeting at Lobo. It has been our privilege to attend the quarterly meeting of this church twice before, both times at Duart. All those meetings were to us good, and pleasant, and solemn seasons. The first time, their late loved and honored pastor was living, and we have always been glad that it was our privilege to meet with this church before he was called away from his labors, and to be at his home for a little time. Most of our readers will know that we here refer to Elder Pollard, who for so many years filled the office of pastor of that church, with zeal and faithfulness. We shall always be glad that it was our privilege to have become better acquainted with him, than had been the case before, at our first visit.

The second time, when we visited this church, Elder Carnell had been chosen pastor, and we were privileged to be with him much at that time. Both, at that time, and at the recent visit there, we were much in his company, at his home and elsewhere, and had much conversation with him concerning the precious things of the kingdom of God, and if we have ever known what the fellowship of the people of God is in the truth, we became knit closely to him in that way. Brother Carnell believes and preaches the truth of the gospel, as we were accustomed to hearing it in our youth from Elders W. J. and J. L. Purington, Wm. Quint, Hiram Campbell, P. Hartwell and others in Maine, and afterwards down to the present time, among the dear brethren of what are known as the eastern associations generally. We felt glad to know that he stands firm upon the old ground, and yet that his preaching is in love, love first to God and to the truth, and then to those among whom he labors. In the gospel there is no room for hatred or enmity toward any one. If such a spirit appears in our preaching it is to be feared, and hated, and rebuked, as being of the flesh, and if, on the other hand, there be any disposition to modify the truth to escape censure, or to please men, that spirit also is to be feared, and hated, and rebuked, and will be thus rebuked by all who love the truth sincerely.

It was our privilege to meet appointments at St. Thomas, where there is a good little company of members, and lovers of the truth, on Tuesday night after the fourth Sunday in September. We were at Duart on Wednesday night, at Dunwich on Thursday night, and at Ekfrid on Friday night. They were all pleasant meetings to ourself. All the friends with whom we met at all these places, were most kind to us, and all made us feel at home among them. We were with Elder Carnell at his home, and at the meetings at Dunwich and Ekfrid, and he conveyed us to the above places, and to the quarterly meeting. We are glad to remember that the meetings and the conversation all along through the visit was solemn and edifying. It was all profitable to

ourself, yet we were oppressed, most of the time with a sense of unfitness and unworthiness to receive such great blessings, but we have learned that there are times when the seasons of deepest sorrow and shame because of self, are also seasons of the highest joy and peace, because of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus for the vilest sinners. Is not this what the apostle means when he says of his brethren at Corinth, that their state was one of sorrowing, and yet always rejoicing? Does he not mean sorrowing over self and sin, over tribulation and trial, over weakness and infirmity, and yet rejoicing in that grace of God which brings salvation, and which overcomes all these things? A GREAT sinner finds a GREAT Savior. It is good to be given eyes to see our own deformity and depravity, in order to come into that rest in Jesus which remains to the people of God. All growing in grace is but growing out of self and self-confidence. We have hoped that we knew something of this experience which glorifies God and abases the creature. It is as Jesus the gift of God is revealed to the humbled soul, that his name becomes wonderful; it is wonderful that such salvation should come to such a sinner, and the lower we sink in self-abasement, the louder we sing the glory of that redemption which is in him.

Elder Curry was with us at the quarterly meeting, and all through the meeting, his manner both in preaching and in conversation was solemn. The Lord gave him to deal with weighty things, and to deal with them in a solemn and weighty manner. The whole meeting was characterized with unusual solemnity of feeling among all with whom we met, and both at the meeting, and at the homes of the people, there seemed to rest upon all a quiet restful solemnity. We heard it remarked by several that it had not been their privilege to attend any meeting where there was so little worldly conversation at the homes of the people, as was the case at this meeting. Our personal observation was the same. The conversation at the homes of the brethren and friends was cheerful, but lightness was absent. We could wish that our own frame of mind might always, at such meetings and everywhere else, be of that order. The joy of the Lord does not consist in gayety of spirits, and the conversation which characterizes such as are thus joyful, will not be light and trifling, but fraught with a cheerful weightiness. Neither will they who dwell in the presence of the King think that it is needful to put on a long face, or sanctimonious expression, in order to show forth the praise of God.

We found some of the dear children of God there, as elsewhere is the case at times, dwelling in the valley, and some complained that it had been long since comfort in the Lord had been theirs, yet even these the Lord had not left utterly desolate, since they expressed themselves as longing for another visit from him whom they loved. While some were cast down, yet the general feeling among the brethren and sisters seemed to be that of hope and comfort in the Lord.

To Elder Carnell, their pastor, was given wonderful peace, and gladness, and exaltation in the goodness of God. He has written us since, that such an experience has seldom been his to enjoy. We could but feel that in many ways he has abundant reason to rejoice in the Lord. He has received some signal tokens in the past two years that the Lord was in his moving to Canada, and taking charge of that church. We felt that all the church there, as well as himself, had full reason to believe that his coming among them

was of the Lord indeed. His labors have been greatly blessed among them. The church has been fed by his ministry, mourners have been comforted, the feeble strengthened, doubting souls made to rejoice in hope, and a goodly number of the children of God have come home to their friends, telling what great things the Lord has done for them, and has had compassion upon them. Very many of these perhaps, must go back to the ministry of Elder Pollard, as having been first of all blessed to them in some way. It has been given to Elder Carnell to reap where Elder Pollard had been sowing. We were reminded of the labors of Elder J. L. Purington, among the churches of the Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, years ago. He told us personally that among something over a hundred members whom he baptized, after coming to that association to live, in the course of two or three years, all but very few dated their first exercises of mind back to the ministry of Elders Trott and Leachman, their former pastors. Thus those who follow after, reap the fruit of the labor of those who have gone before them, and they themselves also sow for others to reap in coming years. It has been so in all ages, and it will be so to the end of all earthly things.

On Saturday evening of the quarterly meeting it was our privilege to witness the administration of the solemn ordinance of baptism. Two dear sisters who had been received at previous meetings of the church, were baptized, after the command of the Lord, and after the example of the dear Redeemer, in the stream near by. It was a solemn and joyful scene. It was not such joy as produces laughter, but that solemn joy which produces tears far oftener than otherwise. On Sunday morning, before the supper was administered, two other dear ones came forward, relating clear testimonies to the work of grace within them, and were cordially received for baptism. And again, after the afternoon service, the congregation repaired to the water side, where these also were baptized as the others had been, by the pastor.

Thus many things conspired together to witness the presence of the great Master of the feast, and that his blessing was with his people at their meeting. How vain are all our best forms of devotion unless he who alone can make them live, be with us. The dry bones of worship are but dry bones still, unless the Son of Man prophesy upon them. We need the presence of the Spirit at all times, else all our worship will be but formal indeed, and we know of nothing more distressing to a humble, spiritually minded child of God, than to be able to come before God only in form, and with words without life or spirit in them. If we may speak for our own self during all the meeting, we can say that while we were not carried above, and out of all thought of things below, yet we did find a sense of quietness and peace and rest, accompanied with some assurance that these people were indeed our brethren, and their God our God. One thing we do know, that we would most willingly stay in such a frame of mind, were it the will of God that it should be so.

The meeting closed on Monday most solemnly and quietly, and with, as we believe, among all a deep regret that the time of parting had so soon come. Those who love God will love each other. And in the truth God's people must abide in fellowship. The people of God are commanded to love one another, and when this love dwells in the heart, it will cause a desire to meet together, and there will

be sorrow when the time for parting comes. Yet even this sorrow is but for a time, for faith assures us of the glorious hope of that meeting which knows no parting, when we shall be with and like our Lord.

"This glorious hope revives our courage by the way,
While each in expectation lives and longs to see the day."

We cannot close without expressing our gratitude to all the dear friends, for all their kindness to us in all our visit. May God bless them and their pastor, and increase their mutual love and fellowship, and cause it to abound yet more and more as the years go on. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

RIPPON, Wisconsin, Jan. 12, 1860.

FRIEND BEEBE:—Although a stranger, yet I take the liberty of addressing you. I happened to get a few copies of your paper, through a friend, a short time ago; I have taken much pleasure in reading them; they have unfolded to my mind many things which have always appeared hidden things to me. I feel that it is the true doctrine which you defend. I am placed in a very unpleasant situation at present, and I would be pleased to have your views in regard to what action I should take in the matter. In the spring of 1857 I became awakened to a sense of my lost condition, and indulged a hope that Christ had washed away my sins, and that through him I had obtained forgiveness. I felt that it was necessary I should unite with the church. The question arose in my mind as to what church I should join. I became convinced there was but one mode of baptism. Thus far I thought I was a Baptist, but then I found a great wall in that church, which I could not get over, which was the doctrine of election. I had a conversation with the pastor of the Baptist church, and he gave me to understand that their doctrine was "softened down a great deal" from that of the Old School, and, in fact, as he explained it, there was more of the Arminian doctrine about it than there was of the Regular Baptists'. I united with the church, and for a while thought I enjoyed myself in attending prayer and covenant meetings; but I soon began to study their doctrine, and I felt that it was impossible to make it harmonize; one portion was in direct conflict with the other. I believe that I tried as hard to believe it as any one ever did, but I could not reconcile my mind to both portions, but found that the Arminian portion of it suited my views the best, yet still I could not rest satisfied with that. I often doubted that God had spoken peace to my soul, and felt that I was wandering in darkness, and could not discern truth from error. I read the Bible, but it was a sealed book to me, I could not understand it, I thought at times that it taught the free-will doctrine, and then again I would find passages which were so plain on election that I could not get around; and thus matters passed along for two years or more. I became cold and indifferent, neglecting the prayer and covenant meetings; I felt that I could not enjoy myself in the meetings of the church; I could not feel the same interest that I did when I first united with the church. I saw so much of the follies and fashions of the world in the church that I was led to doubt that the Spirit of the Lord was with them; they were so mixed up with the world.

About six weeks ago I began to get awakened as to the course that I was pursuing; I felt that I was not doing my duty as a church member or a christian. I chanced to read an article in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, on God's electing grace, wherein was quoted many passages of Scripture which seemed new to me. I then began to read the Bible anew; it seemed that the scales had fallen from my eyes, and the Bible was a new book to me. Although I had read a chapter every morning and evening for nearly three years, and read it a considerable besides in the meantime, yet it suddenly seemed to unfold a new doctrine to me, there seemed to be so much there that I had never seen before. The doctrine of election was written so plain that I wondered that I had never seen it before. I felt that I could not remain with the church, believing they held erroneous doctrines. I attended the church meetings and asked to be dismissed, but was told there was no such thing as withdrawing from the church, and that I could not get out of the church unless by expulsion or death. I have since had a conversation with the pastor, and he told me he did not think it was profitable to be looking after those points of doctrine. He thought it was so designed by God that christians should differ, for if they all believed in one doctrine they would become careless, and would not read the Scriptures; he said he believed in election as strong as any Old School Baptist, but he went farther; he believed in man's free agency. I told him I could not make it harmonize. He said he could not, but seemed to think it was immaterial. I cannot feel at home in the church, nor I do not feel it my privilege to commune with them. I do not wish to be recognized as a member, but do not know what action to take, for they will not dismiss me, but still wish me to remain with them, but I cannot, for I feel that the church is groping in darkness, and that they do not hold the true doctrine as taught by the apostles. I feel that I have a hope in Jesus, and that if ever I am saved, it would not be by anything that I have done, or

can do, for when I would do good, evil is before me, but that it must be entirely by grace through Jesus Christ. Please give your views in regard to what course I should pursue in regard to the church, and oblige.

HENRY M. LOVELESS.

REPLY.

THE trying circumstances which so greatly perplex our friend, are by no means strange or unusual. Very many of God's dear children have in their early experience been allured by what they have mistaken for the church, the doctrine and the ordinances of the kingdom of Christ, and have afterwards been enlightened to see their mistake, and to feel themselves to be starving in a foreign land. Some of the children of God are seemingly born at once into a clear understanding of the truth as it is in Jesus, but very many are brought to rejoice in their early love, their burden of guilt is removed, their deep depression of mind relieved, and they feel an assurance that their sins are forgiven, and that love which transports them, like the infant gaze of a new-born babe, seems to regard everything which professes the name of Christ as equally lovely. The unrenewed nature which remains in them is still fond of a work-mongrel system, and they are easily drawn into the snares of the enemy. But if they have indeed passed from death unto life, the Lord will not suffer them to live comfortably in such company, or to feed and fatten on such doctrine. That which is born of God can only feed on the Bread of Life which comes down from God, while earthly religion can feed and feast on earthly things. As all the children of the kingdom shall be taught of God, and as every one that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto Christ, so those who have been scattered in the dark and cloudy day, shall be gathered by our gracious Shepherd's arm, and carried in his bosom.

Our friend appeals to us for counsel. We refer him to 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18: "Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." As to the manner of coming out, no letter of dismission or of commendation is required. If they be the church of God they will listen to his word, obey his precepts, walk in his statues, and maintain the doctrine, order and ordinances of the gospel, and then there will be no occasion for coming out. But if they only have a form of godliness and deny the power thereof, then from such, God's children are commanded to turn away. If our friend can regard the people with whom he has stood connected, as the church of Christ, then he is bound to remain with them and be subject to their rules and authority, but if he is convinced that they are not the church of Christ, although he may indulge the hope that there are some of God's children among them, he is commanded to come out and be separate from them.

Their expulsion has no terror in it. It is but the withdrawal of a professed fellowship, a mere nominal fellowship, on their part, as, if we understand him, he has already withdrawn his fellowship from them. How then could they give, or how could he consistently receive from them a letter of dismission in fellowship? If there is fellowship, why come out? And if there be no fellowship, why ask for a letter certifying full communion and fellowship?

With the statement contained in the above letter, any Old School or Regular Baptist church would receive him on a profession of his faith as a candidate for

gospel baptism, the same as though he had never been connected with a false church, if satisfied with the relation of his christian experience. Of course, the Old Order of Baptists cannot recognize the baptism administered by those outside the fellowship of what we regard to be the church of God, for if their baptism is valid, then their order and standing are also valid, and there is no occasion for leaving them. But if convinced that they are not the church of God, as you had supposed them to be when you joined them, and from a conviction of this you are constrained to come out from them, remember that in coming out you are to be separate, and to touch not the unclean thing. We wish to deal tenderly, but at the same time honestly and faithfully with our inquiring correspondent, on this subject. If now convinced that the church with which you have been connected is impure and unclean, and not such an one as you would now apply to for baptism, certainly their administration of baptism must be unclean, for it is written, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one."—Job xiv. 4. If then the church be unclean, she cannot sustain a clean ministry, and if her minister be unclean, the thing administered by him is also unclean, and however honestly or with however much sincerity you received the administration at his unclean hands, in the reception of it you touched an unclean thing. Do not then bring the unclean thing out with you, but cut entirely loose, and discard all that is polluted.

While on this subject we will also notice a letter of inquiry, which we have had on hand for a long time, and which involves the same subject in part as the above. The letter is from our brother, Elder James Strickland, of Indiana. The following is a copy:

GIBSON Co., Ind., Aug. 18, 1859.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—The universal practice of the Old School Baptists in this part of the country has been, and is now, to reject the baptism of all other denominations of professed christians, on the ground of the illegality of the administration of the ordinance; and therefore we require them to be baptized. Now we will suppose a case, about which I desire counsel from my brethren, for I feel somewhat difficulted on the subject, and do not know how to act. The case is this: A man comes to your church and asks for membership, telling you that he loves your church, and your doctrine, that he is willing to obey her rules, but that he has been a member of the Missionary Baptists, and was baptized in the fellowship of said church by a man that he believed was a christian, (and you believed the same) and was called of God to preach, and that if he ever knew anything about regeneration, and sanctifying grace, it was before he was baptized, and that in his baptism he verily believed that he received the answer of a good conscience toward God, and was fully and entirely satisfied with his baptism, but notwithstanding all this, he was willing to be baptized by you, in order to obtain fellowship in your church. (I use the term *your church*, meaning the Old School Baptist, or Church of Christ.) In this case what would you do; and your reasons?

There is still another question about receiving members, and that is this: It is a well known fact that there are a great many factions among the Old School Baptists that are not numbered among the Missionary or Arminian Baptists. These factions have split off from us on some doctrinal questions, and it has become us to withdraw our correspondence and our fellowship from them. Now, inasmuch as we have withdrawn our fellowship from them, is it order to receive their baptism? Have we done so? What say you? We are aware that many who call themselves Old School Baptists have embraced errors that we cannot fellowship, having as much fellowship for the Missionary Baptists as what we have for them. Therefore, if we receive the baptism of any so-called Baptists, with whom we do not correspond, and have fellowship, should we not receive the baptism of all that call themselves Baptists?

The next matter of inquiry is, Is not the church of Christ the highest ecclesiastical authority known on earth, and has she not a right to determine all matters in relation to membership in her body, as she in her wisdom may think just and right? Can she concede or give away this right in her compact with other churches in forming an association?

There are still other questions of grave importance that I may at some future day propound, provided the above questions are met and answered in as kind

a spirit as I hope I feel in asking them. I am young in the ministry, and have not that knowledge in the management of churches, as would make me feel free in acting in these matters without the counsel of my brethren that have both age and experience, as well as the good of the cause at heart. Therefore, all that feel an interest in the peace of Zion, are requested to give information.

Dear brother, God has been pleased to visit us, and revive his work in our midst. There has been fifty-five added to the church that I belong to, and still the work is going on. Many of the churches of our association have been much refreshed.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

JAMES STRICKLAND.

REPLY.

THE first inquiry we have answered in our reply to our friend Loveless. We do not regard it as our duty to search the hearts nor try the reins of the children of men, that is what none but God can do. But we are to be regulated in extending or withholding our church fellowship by the rule which God has given us. The reality of the regenerated state of the candidate or of the administrator is not what we are capable of judging. But whether the administrator stands connected with and sustained by the fellowship of an orderly church of Christ, we are competent to judge, and we are required to judge. Hence, in replying to the first interrogative of brother Strickland, we say, with due deference to the judgment of the church, whose servant we are, We should decline to baptize them on our faith, and prefer that they should remain unbaptized until they, for themselves, should see and feel the necessity of walking in the order which we believe to be the order of the gospel and kingdom of Christ. And our reason for this decision is the want of Bible authority for baptizing any but believers.

In reply to the second inquiry of brother Strickland, we say, If the factions which have split off from us are so far departed from the faith and order of the gospel as to be rejected from the fellowship of what we regard to be the church of Christ, then they are to us as heathen men, and as publicans, equally with the New School or Missionary Baptists, so called, which have been excluded from our fellowship, and all their religious administrations to us are equally null and void.

The third inquiry. The church of Christ is undoubtedly the highest ecclesiastical authority on earth, but she has not a particle of authority to determine any matter in relation to her own or any other members, or anything else, only as the matter is already determined in the rule given in the New Testament. When the church, or any individual, departs from the laws of Christ, she or they act without divine authority, and their decisions are illegal and invalid. The church has no power to concede or delegate any right, or authority vested in her to any other ecclesiastical body, counsel, or association whatever.

We have candidly expressed our convictions on the questions involved in the two foregoing letters, and in doing so believe we have expressed the order and practice of the church of God generally, which order and practice appear to us to be clearly laid down for our guide in the New Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and we submit what we have written to the consideration of our brethren and to the household of faith generally.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., February 1, 1860.

DEATH OF EBENEZER MC COLL.

A TELEGRAM from Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, brought us the sad news of the death, on the 30th ult., of brother Ebenezer McColl, husband of the daughter of the late Elder Wm. L. Beebe, but we have learned none of the particulars.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, Friday p. m., Oct. 31st, 1902, at Hopewell, N. J., Benjamin Berkinroth, of New York city, and Miss Jennie Lux, of Amwell, N. J.

By Elder D. M. Vail, Sept. 17th, 1902, at the residence of the bride's parents', Eli White, of Mount Bethel, Pa , and Miss Olive E. Miller, of Edella, Pa.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, at the bride's parents', in South Perry, Oct. 19th, 1902, George B. Beaver and Miss Myrta Federolf, both of Hocking Co., Ohio.

By the same, Oct. 23d, 1902, at the residence of the bride's parents', near Ashville, Robert G. Peters and Miss Della D. Brinker, both of Pickaway Co., Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

A MESSAGE has been received by us informing us of the death of our beloved and highly esteemed brother and father in Israel, **Elder Ephraim Rittenhouse**, of the Delaware Association, at his residence at State Road, Delaware, on the morning of the 22d inst.

We deem it fitting for us at this time to give expression to the sincere regret we feel at the death of this dear, faithful, old soldier of the cross, and to extend our heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family, the churches of his late charge, and the Delaware Association, with which he has stood connected for more than forty-four years. He was in an eminent degree a true and faithful minister of the gospel, laboring untiringly to feed the sheep and lambs of the Master's fold. The character of his preaching was such as to hunt out the poor little lambs, and encourage them. A true hunter, a mighty hunter before the Lord; he hunted the scattered ones out of the holes of the rocks, and from the mountains whither they had hid themselves. He was a constant visitor to, and closely identified with this association, having also served churches in its bounds for over forty years, and we shall miss him in our assemblies, but we mourn not for him, but for ourselves, for we are assured that our loss is his eternal gain. "He fought a good fight, he kept the faith, and died with glory full in view." May the great Head of the church raise up other faithful ministers to take the place of such as fall on the battlefield.

A. B. FRANCIS, Moderator.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

SALISBURY ASSOCIATION, October, 1902.

Mrs. Mary E. Selecman died at her home near Manassas, Va., July 28th, after a lingering illness of intense suffering from different complications. The deceased was born in Fairfax Co., Va., April 2d, 1818. She was twice married, first to Wm. DeNeal Willcoxen, who died in early life, leaving her two little sons. Her second husband was the late Redman Selecman, of Fairfax Co., Va., where she spent most of her life. She leaves two grandsons and one granddaughter, with their mother, the widow of the late Wm. Willcoxen. She also leaves nieces and nephews to the third generation, together with the church. All will miss her cheerful face. She sustained the loss of all who were the dearest to her with a beautiful resignation, even when her only devoted son was taken from her, she was never heard to murmur. Her life spoke louder than the voice, "Thy will be done," O Lord. She was baptized by the late Elder Trott, in fellowship of the Jerusalem church. Upon its dissolution she placed her membership with the Bethlehem church, where she remained a faithful and consistent member, loving to meet with her church whenever possible. It was never too far nor too cold, and only within the last few months her health prevented her attendance. Many will remember her hospitable home open to all.

The funeral services were held in Bethlehem meeting-house, where she loved so well to meet her brethren. Elder J. N. Badger, her beloved pastor, preached a comforting sermon, after which the remains were laid to rest in the family lot near by.

May God reconcile us all. She is resting in her precious Savior's love beyond these earthly trials and temptations so besetting to the living.

C. M. LAMB.

MANASSAS, Va., Sept. 27, 1902.

OUR dear mother, **Mrs. Deborah Strimple**, was released from her suffering, Jan. 8, 1902, after being confined to her bed for five weeks with a broken hip. She was born May 16th, 1811, was married to Mahlon Strimple, Dec. 27th, 1828, who departed this life Jan. 26th, 1871. To them were born seven children, three sons and four daughters, one son and two daughters having passed away before her, leaving two sons and two daughters to mourn their loss, also one sister, Mrs. Ruth Butterfoss, and thirteen grandchildren, twenty-five great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren. She died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. S. E. Chamberlin, at Locktown, where she had lived for several years.

Services were held in the Old School Baptist meeting-house at Locktown, where she had always been a faithful attendant while able to get there. Mother never made any public profession, but was a firm believer in salvation by grace; spoke often while sick of her trust in the Lord, and what he done would be right. She suffered very much, and was delirious the most of the time, but when the end came, the sweet peaceful expression that rested on her face gave us comfort, believing she was at rest. She was a kind neighbor, loving wife and mother. Though we miss her sorely, yet we desire to say, "Thy will be done." Our pastor, D. M. Vail, spoke words of comfort to the friends, from John xi. 25, 26.

MARTHA A. HORNER.

ORDINATIONS.

At the regular meeting of Henderson Church, Knox Co., Ill., Saturday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1902, the church having chosen brother Jonathan F. Reed for deacon, and having requested helps for his ordination, responses were received as follows:

Elder J. M. Brown, of Henderson Church; Elder S. H. Humphry, of Friendship Church; Elder D. W. Owens, of Mt. Gilead Church, and Deacon Joshua Ray, of New Hope Church. There being present Elders Smith Ketchum and John Downy, and Deacon G. C. Jorden, they were also requested to join in the council.

Organized by choosing Elder S. H. Humphry, Moderator, and Elder D. W. Owens, Clerk. The church presented brother Reed, and the ordination proceeded in the following order:

Prayer by Elder Smith Ketchum. Charge by Elder D. W. Owens. Laying on of hands by the council. Hand of fellowship by the council and church.

Council dissolved.

The church requested that these proceedings be published in the Signs of the Times, and the *Messenger of Peace.*

S. H. HUMPHRY, Moderator.

F. M. Epperson, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

The Burdett Old School Baptist Church will hold a two days meeting commencing Saturday, Nov. 15th, at 11 o'clock a. m., and continue two days. Elder S. H. Durand sent word that he would, the Lord willing, be with us, and we invite all of our faith and order to come. Trains arrive in Burdett on the Lehigh, from the west, at 10 a. m., and at 5 and 5:20 p. m. from the south or east. There will be some of the brethren at the depot to meet all that may come.

H. B. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday, at the Hall, corner of 19th St. and 8th Ave., fifth floor. Elevator entrance on either 19th St. or 8th Ave.

10:30 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ, is extended a most cordial invitation to meet with us.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 70. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1902. NO. 23.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE DAY'S WORK OF JESUS.

"I MUST work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."—John ix. 4, 5.

By the request of sister Theobald, of Sadieville, Ky., I shall endeavor to explain, as the Lord may enable me, the meaning of these words of our dear Savior. As I regard them now, they seem to enlarge and expand, and to reach out over wide fields, comprehending not one subject only, but many subjects. The inquiry of our dear sister concerns particularly the day in which Jesus worked, and the night when no man can work. But there is also to be considered the works which Jesus worked, that they are the works of him who sent him; that he did no works of himself as a man, but that the Father who dwelt in him did the works. (John xiv. 10.) They are the works of "God manifest in the flesh." Also these works of God in the salvation of his people are manifest in this blind man whom Jesus saw as he hid himself from the pharisees, who would have stoned him, and "went out of the temple, passing through the midst of them, and so passed by." This blind man was there, not because of the sins of either himself or his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. He was born blind, and was there at that particular time, according to the eternal purpose of God.

The day in which Jesus must work the works of him that sent him, I understand to be the time during which he was in the world after he began his ministry, from the time of his baptism by John, till he was crucified. A man does his work in the field while it is day, from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same. When the night comes he cannot work. So Jesus used this fact as a figure to show not only when his work was to be done, but that it was a work that must be done by him alone, unaided by any man, and that when he had accomplished that work it would be done forever, and that so far as that work, or any work of that kind, is concerned, it would henceforth be night to all the world, when no man can work. The time while he was in the world, engaged in that work, was the day. That work which he was to do, and to fulfill in his suffering, death and resurrection, was manifest in all the miracles

he did, and in all his teaching while he was in the world. All power was in his hands then, for the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily in him, and that power was manifest when he healed diseases, made the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak, opened the eyes of the blind, raised the dead, hushed the tempest, bade the raging sea be still, and multiplied a few loaves and fishes, till they satisfied the hunger of thousands of men. Thus he was manifest as the light of the world, all power and knowledge being in him.

During this day, while Jesus was in the world, and was the light of the world, the great work of salvation must be completed, and it must be completed by himself. The works of God in him were done when he died the accursed death of the cross for the sins of his people, and arose for their justification. It was then and in that work that "he finished transgression, made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness." It was then that he slew the enmity of the law, and secured its favor for his people. It was then that he abolished death, became the destruction of the grave, destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. But in all his works of healing while in the world, this greater work was manifested. In all his encounters with the devil, his power over him was shown in the victory he gained. In raising the dead he displayed the power that he was to gain over death through his own death. Indeed, in this sense his works were finished from the foundation of the world, so that Abel, Eve, Noah, and all the Old Testament saints, by faith received the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. In this wonderful, mysterious sense he could say, "Before Abraham was I AM," so that it was given to Abraham to see his day and be glad.

But all this work was his work alone. The patriarchs and prophets, to whose faith he was made known long before he came in the flesh, saw him as the only one who could do that work of salvation, and saw that he had no one of all the people with him to help or uphold, but that his own arm brought salvation unto him. (Isa. lxiii. 5.)

In this glorious work which he worked during the day of his life in the flesh, he saved all his people with an everlasting salvation. When he had finished that work in and by his death, it was and must be night, henceforth and forever upon the earth, as to that work. No work in the way of salvation from sin can henceforth be done, for he who was the light of the world has gone from the world, having finished that work, and it is now, in that sense, night in the world when no man can work. Those who are not embraced in the work that was done during the working day of Jesus will never know salvation; nor, we can also say, will they ever desire it, or hunger and thirst for righteousness; for Jesus has declared all who thus desire and hunger to be blessed. It will be with those who are not redeemed according to the words of Jesus which John heard: "He that is unjust let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy let him be filthy still." Those represented by the wise virgins went in with Jesus, and were accepted with him, and those represented by the foolish virgins never went in. Their work day, the legal day, is ended, and to them the night is come, when no man can work, while upon the righteous, the Sun of Righteousness has arisen, never more to go down, making for them an everlasting day. But this day of the

Lord is night unto his enemies.

However many there be of the redeemed, they are all embraced in the redeeming work which Jesus did while the day of his life in the world lasted. However few there be of those who are not redeemed, they were not embraced in the work of Jesus, and shall not come into his righteousness. Nor do they ever hunger for it, but are haters of that which is good, and lovers of that which is evil.

Now a few thoughts concerning the blind man, and how the works of God were made manifest in him.

Of this particular man it is said that he was blind from his birth. I think he represents one who has received divine life. Some who are blind have once been able to see, but by accident or disease have lost their sight. Such came to Jesus from time to time, asking that their sight might be restored. They knew what things they would see when this blessing should be granted them, for they had seen them before. In each case some spiritual truth was illustrated and taught. But in this case the man had never seen, and could not know the value of the blessing he had never possessed. He did not ask for sight. But he had life, and therefore he hungered and thirsted, and felt all the wants that this life causes. These wants he was powerless to supply, and therefore he sat and begged. So the poor soul who has been given spiritual life, by which he sees himself a sinner in the sight of God, feels the need of spiritual food and water and clothing to supply the wants of that divine life. But as to any way by which those wants can be supplied he is blind. He cannot see what it is he needs, nor how to obtain it. He can only feel the hunger and the thirst and the cold, like a little child, or a lamb, and cry. He begs of all that come by. He does not ask for sight, for of that he knows nothing. He just cries to all that come by, because of the pain of hunger and cold. He is by the wayside. Many that go by try to help him, and he gets enough to keep him alive, alive to still feel the anguish of sin and a longing to be righteous, but nothing more until Jesus comes by, the persecuted, suffering, sorrowing Jesus. He is sure to come that way at the appointed time. His way lies just there, wherever such a poor, hungry beggar sits, and there is the way that he will surely come. And he comes to every such poor, blind creature from the angry crowds of men who hate his doctrine and his work, and who would persecute him to death. They follow him as far as they can, to prevent any from believing on him, but they cannot keep him away from one poor, sorrowing soul. He hides himself from the raging multitude when he will, and comes softly to the side of the helpless, needy one just at the right time, and manifests the works of God in him.

That this blind man represents the conscious sinner is shown in the conversation of Jesus with the pharisees, recorded at the close of this chapter: "And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. And some of the pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind ye should have no sin; but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."

This shows that the ignorance of the natural man is not represented by the blindness of this man, but that he represents the sinner who has been quickened, and who has been made sensible of his

condition before God, but is blind to any way of salvation for such a sinner, who is justly condemned. The pharisees were not blind in that sense, for they said, "We see how we can be saved, it is by the works of the law." Now they did not know that by the works of the law no one can be justified, and that was proof that they were yet dead in sin. Their sins remained upon them. Whereas those who are blind, in the sense that Jesus meant, are those who see the true majesty of the law, and the justice of its demands, but cannot see how a sinner can escape its just penalty of death. This blindness as to the way of salvation proves one to be alive, and therefore to be one of the redeemed, whose sins have been atoned for and removed by the death of Christ, and who is in the sight of the law forever free from sin, there being no condemnation to him. It only requires that his eyes shall be opened to see his deliverance from sin and death. What the poor sinner will see when his eyes are opened by the Savior, for only he can do that work, is just as true before as after his eyes are opened. If those pharisees had been blind in this sense it would have proven them to be alive spiritually, and therefore to have no sin. But they said, We see. Just as the same character today says, "We see clearly how a sinner can be saved. It is only needed that he keep the law. Salvation is offered him upon conditions to be performed by him." This shows them to be still in nature's darkness, and that their sin remaineth upon them.

I do not know that I understand the meaning of the method which Jesus took to open the eyes of this man, but I will present some thoughts upon it. To be born blind was regarded in Israel as a special curse. Therefore the disciples asked whose sin caused this affliction, and the pharisees referred to this common understanding among them that a blind man was held as abhorred and base, when they said, "Thou wast altogether born in sin, and dost thou teach us?" This blindness represented the curse of sin as felt by the sinner, causing self-abhorrence, with no hope of any deliverance. Now Jesus, to remove that curse of sin, was made sin for his people, and became a curse for them, and endured shame and reproach. It is this shameful death that delivered his people from the curse, and it is only when this is made known to them, and applied to the case of each, that they come to realize and see this wonderful deliverance. Jesus spat upon the ground and made clay of the spittle, and anointed the eyes of the blind man. Spitting expressed contempt, and was to the shame of the one who received it. We may think that the clay made of the dust and the spittle when applied to the eyes represents the application to the poor sinner of the shameful death of Jesus by which the curse of sin is removed. This is applied to the eyes in order that the blindness, which represents the felt curse and shame of sin, may be broken. Now one thing remains to be felt and known, and that is the power of Jesus' word. By that word spoken unto his disciples they are clean, as he said, "Now are ye clean through the words that I have spoken unto you." There is a "washing of water by the word." The power of Jesus' word, as risen from the dead, must be felt, working obedience in the heart, and bringing us into sweet conformity to his will. So he said to the blind man, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam." Immediately the interpretation of the name of that pool is given, which to my understanding presents the key to

the subject. "Which is by interpretation, Sent." Here is the felt power of Jesus' word. Here is the experience of obedience to his blessed will and word, and the acting out of that obedience thus wrought within by his holy power. Here are the works of God made manifest in this poor beggar, blind from his birth. "He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing." How far he had to go, I do not know; it is of no importance. We read of no one leading him; it was not necessary. The interpretation of the name of the pool shows how he went: he was SENT. The power of Jesus' word sent him. He could not fail to go, nor go amiss, for Jesus SENT him. Men TRY to send, but may fail. Jesus never fails; he cannot fail; he sends, and obedience to his will is certain and absolute. And in that spirit of holy obedience to the sweet power and will of Jesus the cleansing of sight is felt, and the deliverance from sin is experienced.

He came seeing, but Jesus was no longer there. What solemn gladness is in that astonished soul! but he does not know who healed him, only that he was "a man that was called Jesus." He must wait awhile, and have some blessed but trying experiences to try the work of God in him before he shall know that Jesus is the Son of God. He must tell the truth concerning the opening of his eyes, before his neighbors and to the pharisees, and thus honor and exalt the name of Jesus whom they hate. He must be separated from his father and mother, and be cast out of the synagogue, and be left alone in the world, before he shall know by whom he has received this blessing, and what great things it means for him. But the blessing is his, and his soul cannot but rejoice as he comes into conflict with the religious world because of it. How his voice rings in our souls as he says, "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not; one thing I know, that, whereas I was once blind, now I see." What wonderful words are these, and how they have been taken up by thousands and thousands since then to tell the wonders that have been done in them, and the glorious assurance that now they do see the wonderful works of God, whether they belong to them or not. "Whereas I was once blind, now I see." He did not know till now to what he was blind. Now the untold beauties and wonders of a new world burst upon his view. No need to argue with one whose eyes Jesus has opened, for he knows that he now sees, and he is wonderingly absorbed and delighted in what he sees. The truth that his salvation is of God is clear and unquestionable in his soul. He cannot divide the praise with any, nor does it occur to him to claim any part of the credit for himself. His going to the pool of Siloam and washing was just as much the work of God as the putting of clay upon his eyes.

But after all there is a sadness in being alone, separated from friends and acquaintances, even from father and mother, and cast out by those who represent all the religion he has ever known up to this time. He cannot cease to speak of Jesus as a good man, and the opening of his eyes as a work done by the will and power of God. But he feels his loneliness.

It is just then that Jesus finds him, and asks him that question that stirs up all his wondering soul with tender longing: "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" Remember he has never until now seen the face of Jesus, but he addresses him with the solemn reverence that is born of God, and shows a knowledge of Jesus in his soul deeper than he himself under-

stands. He answers, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?" O, what thousands of men and women and children there are in this world of sorrow who are feeling just that way; who have just that longing desire, that hungering to know of the Son of God, that they may believe on him.

Here they stand together, the man whose eyes are opened, and Jesus who opened them, but the man does not know him. Yet he has felt the touch of his soft hand, and has heard and obeyed his precious, powerful voice. And now he stands looking into that heavenly face, expecting, hoping, loving, and asking of him as no poor soul could ask of anybody else, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?" And then Jesus tells him, as he also tells you, my dear brother, sister, child, "Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee." Then he knew, then you know. Your past experience is brought to your mind. You remember it may be when you first saw, when you first knew the way of salvation by grace, perhaps years ago, though you did not know that you were one of the redeemed. But how differently you have felt ever since that wonderful experience, and how differently you have talked. A new world has been opened to your view, and it has been a comfort to look upon the things of the kingdom of God, even though you could not know that you had an interest in them. And now what a comfort it is to look into that dear face and ask, in deepest humility, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?" He does not describe him, does not tell you to go here or there to find him; does not tell you to do this or that to gain his favor, but just turns you to your own experience. "Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 6, 1902.

THE OMNISCIENCE OF GOD.

OMNISCIENCE—boundless knowledge. Omniscient—knowing all things. God only is omniscient, for he alone knoweth all things. All his intelligent creatures, whether men or angels, are greatly limited in knowledge, being finite in all their powers. Not so with God, who is unlimited in every perfection of his, for he is the infinite one. Infiniteness cannot be measured nor bounded, and therefore God is absolutely unlimited, both in his being and in all his faculties or powers. So his knowledge is as unbounded as his eternity, and omnipresence, and omnipotence, for these, with all his other perfections, ascend upward and downward and outward forever and forever, all filling infinite eternity, having no bound or limit. And in all these majestic and awe-inspiring attributes, our blessed God and Father has always been present in all his limitless or infinite universe, and now is,

AT ONCE AND EVER SEEING AND KNOWING ALL THINGS.

This is profoundly wonderful, and it overwhelms us, beloved, because we are so infinitely less than nothing, as compared with God, and we know nothing perfectly. But the omniscient One, who fills eternal space or limitless ether, sees and knows us and all things at a glance, perfectly and exactly as we are. For although his word says that all the nations are as the small dust of the balance, which is too small for us to notice, yet they are all so clearly seen in his omniscient eye that he watches the little bird, and numbers the very hairs of our heads. No wonder that David the king would say, "Such

knowledge is too wonderful for me: it is high, I cannot attain unto it." "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee." All this is as true of every child of God, as it was of David. How blessed for us that it is true!

Yet there are those who are so wise in their own eyes that they make light of all this, and even ridicule the belief that the infinite One takes notice of all little things, because they in their self-importance would not. And so they measure God by themselves, and think themselves so wise that they can judge of what the Almighty should be and do, and set limits for him. It is a rich mercy, however, that our omniscient God does see and care for the smallest particles of dust in his boundless dominion, because unless he did, those vaunting nothings, who reply against their Maker, would be left to their own reward, that is, to perish in their littleness.

EVIDENCE THAT GOD IS OMNISCIENT.

While Baptists and many others admit the omniscience of God, that he forever knew all things, still this does not prove that it is so, and we must therefore turn to the law and testimony of the Lord in proof of this, as also of every other attribute and truth of God. For, on the other hand, some Baptists and many others deny the omnipotence of God, his unlimited sovereignty, but their denial of this truth does not disprove it by any means, for if it did, then "his eternal power and Godhead" would be destroyed. The apostle Peter said to his Lord, "Thou knowest all things." James said, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." And as to the extent of his works, Solomon said, "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." David asks, "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see? he that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knnowledge, shall not he know? The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity." Hannah said, "The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed." "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard," sang the sweet psalmist of Israel. "For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." To his disciples the Lord said, "Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; nor hid, that shall not be known." Of Christ, Paul says, "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." The wise man said, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." Paul said of him, "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

All this Scripture fully establishes the omniscience of God, and shows that all things were forever known unto him, so that his foreknowledge is perfect, unlimited or infinite. To deny this, is equal to saying that the Lord was both ignorant and changeable; for every increase in knowledge shows former ignorance, and change to more perfect knowledge. It follows also, that if God did not possess perfect knowledge from all eternity of all things that should ever be, then neither could he "work all things after the counsel of his own will," nor could Paul have truly said, "And we know that all things

work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose;" for both his counsel and his purpose would be at fault concerning everything which God did not perfectly see and know from the beginning. This is a self-evident truth. The most perfect man in knowledge, is yet ignorant of many things, both present and future, and so he cannot provide for or against anything or all things unknown to him, even if he has the power to do so.

This absolute truth as certainly establishes another truth; that is,

GOD'S ATTRIBUTES ARE EQUAL.

His counsel and his purpose and his power are as unlimited as his knowledge, and all are alike infinite and changeless. To deny this, is to deny that God is, and say with the fool, "There is no God." For as truly as the omniscience of God saw and knew all things from the beginning, or ever the earth was, so surely did his wisdom and counsel and purpose also determine all things; because either himself or some one else must determine all things, before they could be foreknown as certain to come to pass. This is a self-evident fact. For not God himself could foreknow anything, great or small, and yet that thing never exist or come to pass. To say he could, would be as absurd as to say that a lie is the truth. Therefore, beloved, all must admit, either that the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God"

ESTABLISH THE CERTAINTY OF ALL THINGS,

or else they must deny the certain foreknowledge of God, and limit him in knowledge, even as they limit him in his "determinate counsel" and purpose; for it is self-evident that the divine foreknowledge of all things, makes

ALL THINGS ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN.

And we know, beloved brethren, that when God knew all things in the beginning, there was no other being or power besides himself that could have determined the certainty of all things, nor of anything whatever. Therefore, the God of omniscience is equally the God of omnipotence, and his foreknowledge and foreordination are co-extensive and co-equal, for they are parallel and harmonious one with the other, as also with every divine attribute. To deny this, would be to say that God is divided against himself, and that while he is unlimited and infinite in some of his perfections, he is limited and finite in others. But our infinite God declares that his ways are equal; and we know that there is no weakness or defect or lack in him, but in all his divine nature he is a unit or one, and so he is

INFINITE PERFECTION.

O, beloved, how this divine truth fills us with supreme reverence and adoration in his holy presence; and inspires our spirit with confidence and trust in him, and the heart with the love that casteth out fear. And now, as God is omniscient, perfectly foreknowing all things in his unlimited universe, this fixes the absolute certainty of all things, and also makes it evident that God himself determined their certainty, because not anything yet existed, outside of himself, when he foreknew all things in eternity, before he had created heaven and earth, with all the fullness of them. For unless the infinite Creator of the universe had before determined in his wisdom and counsel and purpose all things, his omnipotent power could and would have prevented them, and he in his infinite wisdom would have purposed and ordered differently. Certainly he would. To say otherwise, is to charge God with folly, and such folly that even an intelligent man would not

knowingly be guilty of.

The self-evident truth, therefore, beloved children of God, is this: The infinite foreknowledge and the infinite foreordination of all things,

BOTH STAND OR FALL TOGETHER.

This is inevitable, because there is not the least discrepance, conflict or opposition in the uniting and perfect attributes of him who is at once all knowledge, all wisdom and all power, and who says, "I will do all my pleasure." It certainly follows, therefore, that the infinite and blessed and holy Lord God Almighty, who "declared the end from the beginning,"

BOTH DETERMINED AND FOREKNEW ALL THINGS.

For unless God had before determined all things, they could not possibly exist or come to pass; and unless all things are certain to come to pass, they could not exist in the foreknowledge of God. These are undeniable facts. So then, a denial of God's determination of all things, is a virtual denial of his foreknowledge of all things, and there is no sensible escape from this fact. Hence, Arminians, who limit the Almighty in his foreknowledge, as they do in his other attributes, are more consistent than Baptists, who limit him in his "determinate counsel" and "eternal purpose," while they admit his unlimited foreknowledge. For the eternal and infinite Jehovah, whose presence fills all immensity and all eternity, is as almighty and unlimited in all his attributes as he is in any one of them. This is perfectly self-evident, and God has thus most infallibly and gloriously,

REVEALED HIMSELF IN THE BIBLE.

Therefore, beloved, a denial of any of the unlimited or infinite perfections of the everlasting God, who changes not, is a virtual or real denial of his "eternal power and Godhead," and it leads to godless infidelity. While many brethren, who limit the holy One, do not so intend, and do not see that they are replying against God, or else they would not tremble before the Majesty of heaven and beseech his forgiveness for their ignorant presumption and folly, and shrink with horror from this whirlpool of dark infidelity, which is fast swallowing up the faithless world; yet the fact is solemnly the same, that all the divine attributes are alike unlimited, and they all co-operate and join in unison as the mighty pillars of the grand and unbounded universe, which God upholds by his own power, and are

THE GLORIOUS HIGH THRONE FROM THE BEGINNING,

or else the kingdom, dominion and power of the Most High, all are denied and charged with weakness and fearful failure. We know, beloved brethren, that all the Arminian religious world, no less than open infidels, do thus charge the God of the Bible, whose attributes are all alike unlimited, with weakness and woeful failure, with "wanting" many things done in which he is defeated. But we know that the Almighty, who "doeth his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth," has no "wants," never "tries," and knows no failure, but "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." And this because omnipotence is as limitless as omniscience. And now, beloved, well may we be glad and rejoice in the Lord that it is so. If the Lord will, the closing attributes will be the truth of God.

D. BARTLEY.

WARDSVILLE, Ontario, August, 1902.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE:—Your letter was received in due course, and was read

with satisfaction, and we felt glad that you had it in your heart to write us again, and to remember us with such words of kindness and love. For I most surely realize that I am not worthy of such love and fellowship, and yet I do believe that I long for it, and love to receive it. I have told you so often, and so much, about my unworthiness that I will desist from it now.

To-day, as I was reading the SIGNS for September first, which I enjoyed more than for a long time, and which seemed to fit my frame of mind, the words of the apostle came to my mind, as they have done on several occasion during the past year, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." I have felt impressed several times to write a few thoughts upon this declaration of the apostle, but have put away the impression, but to-day it comes back more strongly than ever, and to ease my mind, I take my pen, though it is a task for me to write, owing to writers' cramp, which has made it a task for me to write for the past two years; and I would gladly be spared the task. Some might say, you do not have to write unless you wish it, but perhaps others beside poor, worthless me, who find that like the apostle, they cannot do the good they would, and that they are not able to control their actions, may understand why I write. To me it seems very strange, yet wonderful, that a poor, helpless, ignorant person in the things of the kingdom of God, like me, should have any feeling given them to write upon the solemn and wonderful things pertaining to the kingdom of God. Often do I feel that it is but presumption in me to think of such a thing. Then comes the wonderful thought that the treasure is always in earthen vessels, and the excellency of the power is not in man, but in God, who disposes of his creatures as he sees fit, and uses them for the fulfillment of his purposes, so that they merely accomplish his purpose, in all that they do and say. As Jesus said to his disciples, "It is not ye that speak," so also is it to-day; when we speak or write of the things of the kingdom of God, as they have been revealed to us, it is the Spirit of God speaking through us, for the apostle says, "Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God."

Now the apostle says, "I am crucified with Christ." Jesus was crucified in the flesh, and so must every child of grace be crucified in his flesh, and die to all hope of salvation by anything that they can do in themselves. And as crucifixion is a long, lingering, painful death, so also is this being crucified with Christ a painful, lingering death. The apostle says in another place, "I die daily." Thus it is a daily crucifixion, and sometimes we feel that the flesh is so thoroughly crucified that we will no more have any confidence in anything that we can do, but even while we are feeling sure that the flesh is crushed to the very ground, we are making resolutions as to what we will do to get into the favor of God, so that nothing but being crucified with Christ, and being crucified all the time, will ever keep us from having confidence in the flesh. I have thought at times that I have been so thoroughly stripped of confidence in the flesh that I would always afterward know that I was perfectly helpless, but I find that I have to die daily, for the flesh will always be flesh, and cannot be anything else, but when crucified with Christ, I am made to know that I have no power in

the flesh.

But now the apostle goes on to say, "Nevertheless I live." But for fear that it might be thought that after all the crucifying of his flesh, there still remained something good in himself, he quickly corrects such an idea by saying, "Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." This is not like many that say that they can live by their own faith, or by exercising faith which is given to them. I believe that many of God's dear children get into a state of mind in which they really think that they can so walk as to obtain the favor of God, and be rewarded for it, but such are not yet crucified with Christ, and are not made to die daily. God, for wise purposes, has left them as the Galatian brethren were left, to fall from grace. For every child of God who is left to the idea that in himself he can better his spiritual condition, is certainly fallen from grace, having confidence in the flesh. But Paul says, "Having no confidence in the flesh," and the person who is crucified in his flesh, daily tortured and torn to pieces by the terrible conflict within him, and as the poet says, Made to feel the hidden evils of the heart, and the angry powers of hell assailing his soul in every part, and as though God with his own hand seemed intent to aggravate his woe, and cross all his designs, and on blasting all his gourds, and laying them low, learns then, like the apostle, that the good he would do, he cannot do, and that the evil that he hates, is constantly with him, and though he hates it, he cannot get away from it. What a strange and trying experience this is. O, how alone the soul often feels. He cries out, "O, is there any one like me in all this wide world?" and in his soul he can realize the feelings of one of old who said, "O, that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away and be at rest," I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest."

The storms and the tempests that sweep over the soul, O, so often, seem as if they must carry it to destruction, but after all they but crucify this body of sin and death, and give to the subjects of grace fellowship with Christ in his sufferings. It was said of him that he trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him, and so must his people be alone in their suffering. The apostle says, "If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him." This conveys the idea that if we do not suffer with him, we shall not reign with him, and we know that Jesus has said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation," and if we do not have tribulation, we have no evidence that we are the subjects of his grace. So while all these things are seemingly against us, they are really for us, for the apostle says that they all together work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

So this crucifixion of the flesh must go on as long as there is any life in this old Adamic nature, and until with the last expiring breath we are able to exclaim, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" and when death has claimed this mortal flesh, as it did the flesh of Jesus, the dear Savior, then the power of the resurrection will be manifested toward all those who have been crucified with him, and as we have been crucified with him, so shall we arise with him, to enjoy that perfect and holy state of eternal happiness, where we shall be like him, seeing him as he is.

Am I crucified with Christ, is my anx-

ious and solemn inquiry, or is it but the sorrow of the world which worketh death? as the apostle testifies.

Your unworthy brother,

ROBERT SCATES.

[Of one thing we feel sure, that the sorrow of the world to which brother Scates alludes in the last sentence of his feeling and experimental letter, never leads to any such fear or questioning in any soul, as exists in the heart of the writer of the above. One of the evidences of crucifixion to the world is that the soul becomes exceeding anxious not to be mistaken in such a solemn matter. God's people have great searchings of heart in the day when the Lord tries them. No others are thus tried, and no others have such heart-searching thoughts. Our dear brother has seen affliction both within and without, and it has brought him to know the deep things of God, and the deep places wherein he makes his power known. It has also brought him into hearty fellowship with all who know the Lord.—Ed.]

Brooksville, Ala., Sept. 28, 1902.

Dear Editors of the Signs of the Times:—I desire to say a few things for the dear people of God, if I can get a hearing through the columns of your paper. I attended the Five Mile Creek Association of the Old School Primitive Baptists, commencing on the Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1902. These brethren correspond with Lost Creek and Buttahatchie associations, all of which preach election, predestination, salvation by grace, and grace alone, through the merits of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, but north and north-west of these associations which are located in north Alabama, and east Mississippi, the preaching brethren often speak of Jude's "common salvation," and call it "a conditional time salvation," a new thing that I never heard of until a year or two ago, though I am now past seventy-eight years of age. Those same preaching brethren will sometimes speak of other brethren using the unscriptural term, "absolute predestination." I wonder if conditional time salvation is not an unscriptural phrase also, gotten up to suit the modern popular taste of men and women. The word conditional is more hurtful to the Primitive Baptists than the word absolute. The word absolute, if I am not mistaken, means something actually done. Simply means that all of God's purposes do actually or absolutely come to pass in time. Those brethren surely or actually believe this. My poor, weak mind cannot understand how my common, time salvation, is conditional on the part of the creature, although God says for us to work out this salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. This godly fear that makes my poor soul tremble, is a power that overcomes the fleshly oppositions, and makes me do the will and pleasure of God. If it was according to our own good will and pleasure, we could have some excuse for the term conditional salvation. But as this salvation has to be according to God's good will and pleasure, there can be nothing conditional in his will, or in his good pleasure. Then as God actually works in us this common salvation, we actually, not conditionally, work it out in time. Do not those brethren believe that God purposed or predestinated all that is good that comes to pass in the world, and that he suffers the evil also to come to pass, knowing that he would control it for our good, and for his own honor and glory?

And did not God purpose in his own mind to let this evil enter into this world? He actually did this, or he actually would have prevented it. These are mysterious things, and who can set limits to Jehovah's mind? God could always see the end from the beginning, and could see all the time what would finally be best for his dear children in this present world. Then as we cannot measure God's mind or thoughts on these things, we must not say to him, "Why dost thou do thus and so? Poor old Elder Beebe could make all these things plainer to my poor, feeble mind, than any man I ever read after. Yet in all these things we should not strive unlawfully or unscripturally, but be kind and forbearing one towards another, and pray with and for one another, hoping that the Lord will give light, and a true knowledge of his truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

Let good brethren everywhere lay down all worldly, fashionable phrases, and not try to join them on to scriptural phrases, for this will bring trouble, more or less, among brethren. But wherever a preacher, or any other brother, brings two or three direct scriptural truths to prove his position, let him alone, and let him enjoy what he believes. In this way of doing, we will patiently wait on every one's gifts and callings in Christ Jesus; in this we will promote brotherly love, and harmony, and union, in that body of people that is called in the Bible the bride, the Lamb's wife.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

J. C. SHELTON.

KANSAS, Ill., Nov. 3, 1902.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—Still being spared alive, and I trust by the grace of God given an interest in the doctrine and fellowship of the saints of God, I once more attempt to write to the scattered ones through the medium of the columns of your dear, old, steadfast SIGNS.

After reading over the second chapter of the Acts of the apostles to-night, I felt like penning a few thoughts on the twenty-second, twenty-third and twenty-fourth verses: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him, in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."

This was a part of Peter's remarkable discourse on the day of Pentecost. This day, as we understand it, was the first preaching of the gospel in public after the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ. This preaching of Peter did not please all, for there were some there that accused them of being "full of new wine," but there were others there that heard them speak in their own tongue, and rejoiced, "And said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter was preaching Jesus, and the resurrection a finished and complete work wrought by Christ alone when he trod the wine-press of wrath, and "of the people there was none with him." Some that were there gladly received it then, so the living in Christ gladly receive it to-day. Peter's preaching had nothing about *permissive* decrees, but altogether positive, declaring it to be the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; no fine spun theory of permissive decrees, but all predestinated and

foreknown by God, through which is wrought the redemption of the purchased possession. Peter goes on and quotes from the old Scripture, and says, "For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." We find the same assurance in Paul's words where he says, in writing of God's work, "Who hath [in the past tense] saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." We find nothing conditional, either for time or eternity, in any of this teaching. No humanly devised schemes, nor work of men's hands, can help in this finished work of God, in time or to eternity. We find they continued as Peter said, "Steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship." Here are two things brought prominently to view, doctrine and fellowship. How can we have fellowship where the doctrine of God our Savior is not taught? Paul says, "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren; moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified." This is surely God's sovereign work, and there are no chances about it; no uncertainty in any of it; so it harmonizes with Peter's preaching on the day of jubilee, and with all other sound Baptist preaching of today.

May God keep us all from error, is my heart's desire.

JAMES M. TRUE.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 11, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER EMORY:—Your encouraging and welcome epistle came a few days ago. How wonderfully does the fellowship of our brethren build us up in our most holy faith. It shows us how necessary we are one to another. As each member of our own body depends upon all the other members, so also the members of Christ's body. In Christ they "are builded together for an habitation of God through the spirit." They hold up one another's hands, and so fulfill the law of Christ; and inasmuch as these things are done unto Christ's little ones they are done also unto him. We cannot always realize how much of the life of Christ we live each succeeding day. When we confess our own frailties and infirmities, and write bitter things against ourselves, we are confessing Christ, because only the Spirit of Christ could cause us to lay bare our heart before our brethren. We want to be righteous and holy in Christ Jesus, and the desire for divine perfections is the Spirit of Christ, which reveals unto us the things of his kingdom, and they are more precious unto us than the things of time and sense.

We had a short visit, and a good sermon from brother Ker, on his way to the Corresponding Meeting. He is a very precious brother to me. The Lord has not only raised him up as a faithful watchman on the walls of Zion, but he continues with him to strengthen and guide him.

I am hungry to see you all again at Middletown; you are all in my heart all the time, and in my mind much of the time. I would love to visit you oftener than I do, if I had opportunity to do so. The Spirit of our gracious Redeemer is manifestly present with you, according to my observation. I have had a desire for

many years that we might have a visit from you both. We have some precious brethren here. The membership of our church is small, (twenty-two) yet we have a good congregation, and all interested in our meetings; many of them, like the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, waiting for the troubling of the water.

Now, dear brother and sister, you perceive that my mind is at a standstill, and I cannot come forth, and I feel about it as the bride in the "Song," when she said, "I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up nor awake my love, until he please." I want to be patient. So you will please accept this, not for its worth, but for the christian love and esteem I have for you both. We both send love.

Affectionately your brother,

B. F. COULTER.

TORONTO, Ontario, Oct. 19, 1902.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I desire to ask you when you come to Canada again, to go and see my dear mother. There is nothing which gives her so much pleasure as to have a minister of the gospel visit her, and preach at her house, as Elders Durand, Carnell and others have done. But it is seldom that she is favored in that way.

Inclosed you will find some verses which she had on her mind, and which she asked me to write down. If you think they are worthy of a place in the SIGNS, she would be glad to see them there, but we are willing to leave it to your better judgment.

Unworthily your sister,

BERTHA WELLS.

Draw near now, all ye blessed,
And lend a listening ear,
To things that Jesus did endure
While he was traveling here.

He was mocked, and scourged, and spit upon,
And crowned with piercing thorns,
And then by wicked, cruel hands,
His flesh with nails was torn

Until the crimson streams of blood
Down from his wounds did flow,
To cleanse his favored people
From all their sin and woe.

Near by Kedron's flowing brook,
The weight on him was laid,
And on the mount of Calvary
Their debt, his suffering paid.

But now a Prince and Savior,
He reigns in heaven above,
And we shall soon be with him,
And praise redeeming love.

No more by sin and sorrow,
To live in pain and fear,
But in the full enjoyment
Of the rest we tasted here.

With our exalted Savior
We shall forever be,
And sing his lofty praises
Through all eternity.

REBECCA WELLS.

(Aged eighty-five years.)

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58 DECATUR ST., ATLANTA, Ga., Oct. 13, 1902.

TO OUR DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—If the dear SIGNS approve of it, I desire to ask some questions concerning Primitive Baptists sending their children to Sunday Schools, and I very much desire some brother to speak a word of admonition in a tender way, for the protection of ourselves and children, from practicing what we hold is in opposition to what we believe, and teach them at home.

We know when a child is raised up in their nursery and ready to be, as they say, transplanted into the church, they are always ready to strike, like the adder, at anything that teaches total depravity, predestination, election, the omnipotence or the omniscience of our God, and place all our works, which turns the scale to eternal death or eternal life, in our hands to dispose of, and quote as proof the Scripture which reads, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is bap-

tized, shall be saved." They say, *If you will* believe, and be baptized, Christ will save you, thus taking the children's bread and giving it to dogs.

If the Lord wants to save me, and I will not let him, by the same rule I would not let him damn me; I would not go anywhere, I would stay right here.

Brethren, I want some one to write on this subject. I know I cannot write for publication, but I feel just as anxious as if I could. The Baptists' well being is what I want. Brethren, let us be a little more consistent in our manner of raising our little, tender ones; we all well know they never get so far off from God that he has any hard cases to control, but we well know that Sunday School way of hatching christians, invariab y severs them from us religiously, and makes them our enemies in that sense, and many times they are very strenuous in their enmity and contempt against the doctrine we hold so near and dear to us. I ask, Is this right? Is it right to send your little ones to the Sunday School to be taught what you so much abhor in yourself: self-righteousness, or the righteousness of the pharisees, which is the same? Brethren, in the tenderest way, and with love in my heart, I do desire that Primitive Baptists, above all people, "practice what they preach." We like consistency, it is a very precious jewel, and should be watched continually.

I will close this scribble, it looks too much like me, but I feel anxious for some brother to give us a little admonition on this line. H. H. BENTLEY.

NAPLES, Texas, May 30, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed find order for two dollars, for which you will please give me credit on the SIGNS. I trust that you will pardon my long delay in sending it, as it should have been sent before, but we had a very severe drought last year, and made but little, and having a large family to provide for, and care for, is my apology for delay. I do hope the dear Lord will bless me with means in the future to pay for the SIGNS promptly, for I want to take it as long as I live. According to my experience, and the teaching of the Scripture, it gives to God all the honor, wisdom and power.

Brother Beebe, I understand that all our wisdom, power, and riches, if we ever have any, are found in Christ, and existed in him before the foundation of the world, and outside of the blessed Savior I feel that I have no right to claim anything from God, except it be eternal banishment from his presence, and from the presence of the blessed Redeemer.

Now I will close by saying to you that so far as I know, the Sulpher Fork Association, of Texas, is at peace, and wherever the SIGNS OF THE TIMES are read in this section of Texas, among the Baptists, they are at peace, and are sound in doctrine.

Brother Beebe, I would like very much for you or brother Chick, or any of the contributors of the SIGNS, to give a solution of the Scripture found in Matthew xxii. 2-13.

Your brother,

T. W. PEEK.

[WE are glad indeed to know that the brethren in Texas where the SIGNS circulates are in peace, and stand firm for the truth as it is in Jesus, and as it has always been contended for earnestly in the SIGNS. We have tried to present the truth, and to present it in love to the truth, in love to the God of truth, and in love to those who love the truth. Where the truth is precious to any people, and where love abounds, there will be peace.

Those who depart from the truth will be found departing from love also, and then peace cannot abide. May God bless the brethren in Texas, and continue love, and truth, and peace among them. Will some one comply with the brother's closing request?—ED.]

BRYN MAWR, Pa., Nov. 14, 1902.

BENTON L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—I read your piece in the SIGNS, in the September number, on "Christian Obedience," and it filled my heart with such a glow of love that I thought I should have to write to you, but have neglected to do so until the present time. My step-father and mother were members of Southampton Church from my earliest recollection. I had a great reverence for anything of a religious nature, and I always believed in the Old School Baptist doctrine, and I think understood it as far as it was possible without the grace of God in my heart. I grew up to womanhood and married; my husband's people were Quakers. I lived quite a distance from Southampton, and did not get there often. I often wished I was a christian, but knew I could do nothing of myself. My brother-in-law, Edmund Vanartsdalen, furnished me with the SIGNS, in which I read a piece written by your father, about Philip and the eunuch, which gave me much comfort. This was more than thirty years ago. My mother-in-law was visiting at our place, and the conversation turned on religion. She asked if all Old Baptists believe that Christ had a chosen people? I said, Yes. She did not think it was right for God to give some a chance to be saved, and not others. I said, The Old Baptists do not believe salvation is left to chance, but that the Lord's people were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. She replied, "O, the reason you believe that doctrine is because your father was always talking on religion; it is nothing but the force of education." I shall never forget the misery that her words cost me; it was as if I had been stabbed to the heart. The adversary was telling me, You were not in as deep distress on account of your sins as some you read of; you always thought the Old Baptists were right; it is nothing but the force of education; you have no experience at all. I was in great trouble for days, and these words kept ringing in my ears, "Nothing but the force of education," until one day I was reviewing all I had seen and felt, and it seemed as if some one asked me, "Would you be willing to part with what evidence you have?" I answered, "No." The answer to me was, "Then it must be genuine." Thus I went on for several years, until I went to the association at Southampton, and heard your father preach; his sermon was about the queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon, and there was no more spirit left in her when she saw his tables, his attendants and his cup-bearers. He compared it to that table that is spread in the wilderness of this world for all them that love God, that is spread with love, joy and peace. While he was speaking, it was said unto me, "Surely you will doubt no longer that you have tasted of the meat of this table." I have not seen as much of that fiery law as I desired to, but there have been times when I have been carried away into a region of bliss, and been permitted to feast at that table that your father so vividly portrayed. These words came to me with great comfort, "Ye have not come to the mount that burned with fire, and might not be touched, but to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that

speaketh better things than that of Abel."

Dear brother, do not be discouraged, the SIGNS is the same as when your father was the editor, and I hope you will long be spared to wield "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon."

I am seventy-four years old. Excuse bad writing, my pen was bad.

SARAH A. ALLEN.

COTTON HILL, Ill., Nov. 18, 1902.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—In the last SIGNS is a letter from D. M. Leonard, saying he would be one of twenty to pay $50.00, and free the SIGNS and you from debt. I am willing to be one of the twenty, and inclose you check for $58.00, including four subscriptions that are almost due. I truly sympathize with you in your great afflictions, and hope the full twenty will soon come forward. I like brother Leonard's argument, especially his taking lead.

Your unworthy brother,

PHILEMON STOUT.

[As will be seen by the above letter, brother Philemon Stout has again sent a liberal donation to the SIGNS, and in response we will say, It is impossible for us to express in words the feelings we have in regard to the sincere interest the brethren are manifesting in the welfare of the SIGNS. For a number of years back there has been a falling away from the SIGNS on account of their opposition to some, to us, new theories among the brethren, and we must confess that at times we have become well nigh discouraged, and made to fear the Lord was not on our side, but for the last two years there has been a steadily increasing growth in the prosperity of the paper, and within the last few months an awakening of interests in support of the old principles for so many years advocated in the SIGNS, by the old fathers who now are asleep, and resting from their labors, while their works still follow them. While it is indeed encouraging to receive such manifest proofs of the desire of the brethren for the prosperity of the SIGNS, yet personally we are pained by a realizing sense of our unworthiness of the confidence they impose in us, by their liberal donations in support of the paper, and we ask their prayers that we may ever be kept from betraying their sacred trust, either by personal transgression, or by permitting the SIGNS to soften or compromise the truth, to curry favor with the advocates of the more popular theories of the day.—B.]

WESSON, Ark., Nov. 13, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed please find money order for three dollars, for which you will please forward my date on subscription to the SIGNS. It may be notional in me, but the longer I read the SIGNS the more I like it. I notice that brother E. Rittenhouse is no more. I feel that in the death of this dear brother, we have lost an able defender of the truth. May the Lord enable us to be submissive to his will, and comfort the hearts of the loved ones this dear brother leaves behind.

L. C. TRULL.

PAYETTE, Idaho, Oct. 20, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have moved from my old home in Thomas Co., Kansas, and I will reside here until further notice, and I hope the brethren and sisters will write me here, and if there are any Old School Baptists in this part of the country, I hope to meet them. So if you deem it fit, please publish this, as it might be the means of my meeting some of the dear brethren.

STEPHEN MURPHY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1902.

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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE ONE THING NEEDFUL.

As all Bible readers are familiar with the narrative recorded in the tenth chapter of Luke, of which the above words are a part, it is not necessary to fully quote the narrative here. Our desire is to suggest some reflections from the narrative for the reflection of those who may read, and for their instruction, if so be the Lord's will. Some dear brethren for whose judgment in the Scriptures we have great regard, have thought that the two sisters, Mary and Martha, here represent or are types of the church under the two dispensations; Martha representing the old dispensation, and Mary the new. It has however been our understanding that all the types ended when the Son of God and the Son of man came in the flesh. They all pointed to him, and were fulfilled in his coming. While Jesus was on earth, and since then, we believe the types have no place, since the substance to which they pointed has already come. It appears to us that all the events in the human life of our dear Redeemer, belonged to the fulfillment of the types, rather than to the types themselves. Thus it appears these two characters and persons, Mary and Martha, both belong to the new dispensation, and are representative of persons and characters, both of which belong in the kingdom of God here and now.

We do not mean by this to find fault with brethren who have seen differently, but rather to give the reason why we shall speak of this narrative, and of these two characters, as we hope to do in this editorial.

Martha and Mary, with their brother Lazarus, were all dear to Jesus. "Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus," it is said. Their house was his home when he visited Jerusalem. They lived at Bethany, not far from Jerusalem, and he was evidently welcome there. They loved him, and rejoiced to minister to him. They were diverse in disposition, and yet alike in the love they bore to the Savior. This was true of both the sisters, and the brother. We see this difference in disposition when Jesus came to them at the death of Lazarus. When the word came, "Jesus is coming," as soon as Martha had heard it, she arose and went to meet him, but Mary sat still in the house. Afterwards when Martha had said to her that the Master was calling for her, she also arose and went to meet him. So, in the narrative especially under consideration, Martha is active, and cannot seem to rest in quietness; while Mary can sit at the feet of Jesus and devote herself to listening to his words. All this difference between the two sisters did not arise out of any superior love that one had for the Master, more than the other, but out of the natural difference of disposition between them. The lesson which we learn from it is that the people of God are diverse in a thousand ways naturally, but in the love of Jesus they are one, and the love of the one is just as much the love of God shed abroad in the heart of that one, as in the heart of another. God

reads the heart, and not the actions alone. The tribute of love is always sweet to him, no matter how it is expressed, either by the active care of Martha, or the quiet sitting at his feet of Mary.

Jesus had now come again to their home to rest for a little from his labors of love and of suffering. Jesus, as a man, was tried and suffering, and weak and needy of rest, as we are. How near to us all does this bring the Master. Under the stress of labor and trial we often grow weary, and feel almost ready to drop by the way, and so we must have a time of resting, even for the natural body. So Jesus was wearied also, and must have rest. This was another evidence that he was a man in all things like ourselves, with the exception that he did no sin, and no guile or taint of evil was found in him. How wonderful that the man Christ Jesus should be so one with his tried, weary and suffering people, and yet with no sin, and still holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, as the word says. But it was our weaknesses, and our sicknesses, and our sins that he bore. He was alone, that we might forever find in him our friend, and so never more be alone. And how blessed it is when wearied in mind, and heart, and body, to come into some house where the Son of peace abides, and find there such rest as both soul and body needs. We could find bread and water at a hotel, and it would satisfy our hunger, but how much sweeter is the refreshment given from the hand of those who give it as to the Master whom we love. Jesus found love in this house at Bethany.

This was not evidently the same supper as that recorded in the twelfth chapter of John. This was before the death and resurrection of Lazarus, and the one there recorded was after his resurrection, for there it is said that Lazarus, "whom he had raised from the dead," was with them at the supper. But in this second supper also we see Martha serving, and Mary washing his feet and anointing them. Still the same difference between the disposition of the two sisters is apparent. But in this second supper we do not find Martha finding fault with her sister, as at the first supper. Perhaps she remembered the Master's words at the first supper, and had taken a lesson from them, and had learned that it is best to sit at the feet of Jesus, while she has found that Jesus also does appreciate the love that swells in her own bosom toward him, and which impels her to minister all that she can to his temporal wants. The natural dispositions of the sisters have not been changed, neither are the natural peculiarities of any of us changed; we are still ourselves, but now grace reigns, and grace manifests itself in us by controlling these natural peculiarities, and causing the glory of God to shine forth in them. So Martha as a believer is still active and careful, and Mary as a believer is still quiet and thoughtful.

There is in the text to which we are calling special attention, two little words that seem to throw a flood of light upon the whole subject. Notice in verse thirty-nine it is said of Mary, "which ALSO sat at Jesus' feet." The little word "also," does it not necessarily imply that before this she also had been serving, with her sister? But now she also sat at his feet. She had not been careless of the temporal needs of the Savior, and his disciples, any more than Martha, but having done what she thought was needful, she now fulfills her one chief desire to sit at his feet, and receive of him spiritual and abiding lessons. Martha, on the con-

trary, still is nervous and anxious, and cannot find a place or time to attend to the richer and better things. She must still be looking over the affairs of the house, and seeing over and over again that nothing is wanting. Mary has done what was needful, and rests, while Martha never gets done with her work. Yet all was out of love for the Master. In support of this thought the language of Martha comes in also. In verse forty she said, "Dost thou not care that my sister hath LEFT me to serve thee alone?" Notice the little word "left;" hath left me. Does not this word also imply that she had been serving with Martha, but now had left the service, to come to the feet and hear the words of the Savior? So Mary had not been neglectful of needed duties in the house, neither had she been careless concerning the comfort of the Savior and his disciples, but Martha was troubled about many things, which was not true of Mary. Martha made a burden of her service, by undue anxiety and care, while it was not so with her sister. It seems at this day we can see these two things illustrated among those who love the Lord, and who desire to serve him.

It is not true, as has been thought by some, that Martha had chosen the world, while Mary had chosen Christ as her portion. Martha was doing all that she did for the Master, and out of the warm current of love for him, and he knew this. Such love can dwell in no one's heart unless shed abroad there by the Holy Ghost. She was loved by him as well as Mary and Lazarus, and is mentioned first as one whom he loved. Her service was also needful in a sense, and the Redeemer did not rebuke this service in his words to her, of which we hope to speak directly. In the Savior's words of rebuke to her there was absolutely no note of separation between himself and her. Rather his words were the words of warmest love and appreciation, and she could but feel them to be so, even while recognizing that rebuke was also in the words. If his words conveyed any wound, they also conveyed healing, to her. She might indeed grieve, but she would love him still, and all the more. She could but know that had he not loved her, he would not have so spoken to her. If she had not loved him, and out of this love sought to do for him, he would not have so spoken to her. The rebukes of the Lord are for his children. He rebukes them always because he loves them. If he smites, it always proves an excellent oil, which does not mar nor destroy, but rather heals.

What then do the words mean, "But one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her"? It seems that they mean, among many things, this at least, that while the things of this life must be attended to, and may be done out of love to the Lord, and so be acceptable to him, yet they are but temporary; essentially to the believer they are not needful; they subserve a temporary interest; they are the bread which must not be preferred to the word of God. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." In the case before us, the Savior might eat, and his disciples, but after a little they would all hunger again; they might drink, but in a little time they should all thirst again. "Labor not," he said once, "for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth." The meat that perisheth is needful for this life, yet something else is so supremely needful, that in comparison, this bread is not needful at all. We

can do without this temporal bread, but we cannot do without the word of the Lord. We eat the meat that perishes, and remember that it is the gift of God to us, but still it perishes, and we also die, but we eat the bread of heaven, the word of God, the body and blood of the Son of man, and it does not perish, and we who have eaten, live forever.

Now it seems to us that this is just what Jesus would bring to the mind of Martha. Lovingly, he would bring her away from too great care for this perishable meat, to remember that something else is infinitely better. Jesus puts the stamp upon spirituality, upon communion with him at his feet, upon learning of him who is meek and lowly of heart, as the chief and only thing that is really essential to the believer. It was better far, in his view, for Mary to sit at his feet, than to minister to his temporal wants. The chief thing, the best thing, is not temporal comfort, but nearness unto God. Even though we are striving to minister to the suffering, hungry, needy children of God, and our labor and care is all with that end in view, still he says it is but a service which belongs to this temporal life, and not to the eternal life. It does not last beyond the present time. Days of trial will come, when not the service which Martha is rendering, will be her comfort, but the words which Mary has heard at his feet. No matter how unselfish and earnest our service may be, out of it we do not derive comfort and help in the time of need, but sitting at the feet of the Master, we do learn things which shall prove to be our stay for evermore. These things shall not be taken away from us.

We would return again to the thought that Mary also had been serving with her sister. It seems clear that those who have the disposition to sit at the feet of Jesus, and to learn of him, will also have the spirit of service. At least from the narrative it appears that Mary also served. The Spirit of the Master is a spirit of service in every way, whether in giving a cup of cold water literally to the needy, or ministering in spiritual things. Jesus said himself, "I am among you as one that serveth." It must be apparent then to all, that he who said such a thing of himself as this, cannot despise service in his servants. He does not despise the service of Martha, and to Mary sitting at his feet and learning of him, would also belong in great measure his own spirit of service. Mary was learning what was the wisest preparation for service, and she was learning in what the highest and best service consisted. Mary in this sense also had chosen that good part, that should not be taken away from her. "The one thing needful," without which all service is vain, was hers.

For ourself, we trust that we can say that all our life, since we first believed, we have desired to serve the Lord in his disciples, for in them alone can he be served here below. But how often we have tried to serve with over anxiety, and without remembering that to sit at his feet is the best preparation for this service. O for more of the spirit that was manifest in Mary, in us all. Let us serve as best we can, but let us also sit at the feet of the Master. May God bring us all into this experience, and through this experience into service, so that we may be mutually blessed together with him, who is the ever blessed one, and whose meat and drink it was to do his Father's will.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

SIR:—Will you do a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the favor to give your opinion of the doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son of God?

REPLY.

THE above note came to us by mail, precisely as we have copied it above, without place or date, but post-marked on the envelope by the stamp, Baltimore, Md., Feb. 11, and directed to us at New Vernon, in this County; thence it was forwarded to us at this place. Who the querist is, and what is desired, and for what purpose, we do not fully comprehend, but as we desire always to oblige, as far as we have ability, the readers of the SIGNS, we will inform the inquirer frankly, that we do not know what the doctrine is, on which our opinion is requested. We have found no mention made, in our version of the Scriptures, of *the eternal generation of the Son of God*, in so many words, therefore we suppose the inquiry relates to some theory or doctrine so designated, as held and taught by men. As we do not know what the theory or doctrine is, we have no other opinion than this, that the Scriptures contain all that it is essential for the saints to understand in regard to the doctrine of God our Savior. That he is the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, and that he was the Son of God before he was sent into the world, and is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and that he who is the Son of God, is also the eternal, underived, independent God, we also firmly believe. That in his Mediatorial union with his body, his church, he is the only begotten of the Father, while in his supreme Godhead, he is the fullness of the Godhead, underived and unbegotten.

The New Testament begins with the words, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David."—Matt. i. 1. Of his generation in this sense, we are told that he was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. (Rom. i. 3, 4.) Of his generation as the seed of David, we find no record of its being called *eternal*. The inspired psalmist, in prophesying of him, says: "The kingdom is the Lord's, and he is the governor among the nations," &c. "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation."—Psalms xxii. 28, 30. This prophetic declaration of the royal prophet, compared with 1 Peter ii. 9: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people," &c., very clearly presents to us, the generation of Jesus Christ the Son of God. The life, that is, the eternal life or immortality of this generation, was with the Father, (1 John i. 2:) "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life."—1 John v. 11, 12. This generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as we have proven by 1 Peter ii. 9, is a *chosen generation*, and Paul testifies, Eph. i. 4, that they were "chosen in him," that is, in Jesus Christ the Son of God, "before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Thus far we have the testimony that the life which was given to the generation of Jesus Christ the Son of God, was *Eternal Life*, and that it was, and still is so in Jesus Christ the Son of God, that no man can have the one without having the other, and no one can be destitute of the one without being destitute

of the other. Such, then, is the seminal union and relationship of vitality, of immortality, that indissolubly unites the Head and Body of the church of God, that we are compelled to regard it as eternal.

The book of the complete generations of the earthly Adam was given in the day that God created man, (Gen. v. 1,) consequently before any of the children of Adam were born of the flesh. And as the earthly Adam is the figure of the heavenly Adam, (Rom. v. 14; 1 Cor. xv. 47, 48,) we infer that the seed or generation of Jesus Christ the Son of God, is just as ancient as his Sonship. That is, we cannot from the Scriptures learn that our Lord Jesus Christ held the office, or occupied the position of Mediator, before the eternal life, which was with the Father, was given to us in him. That this is what constitutes the relationship between Christ, the seminal Head, and his seed, the Progenitor and the chosen generation.

We believe there are some who have held the idea that the flesh of our Redeemer, in which he was born of the Virgin, which suffered on the cross, was laid in the tomb, and which was raised from the dead, was begotten and brought forth by what they call an eternal generation, and so existed a human body and soul, from the ancients of eternity. If that theory be true, we have not so learned it, and must wait for clearer light on that subject. If what is called the humanity of Christ was so generated and did so exist before all time, then, instead of his assumption of our flesh, instead of his taking on him the seed of Abraham, or being made of a woman in his advent to this world, the whole race of mankind must have assumed his human nature when they were born of the flesh. And furthermore, we see no reason why it was expedient for him to be made of a woman, in order to be made under that law which the human family were under, as that law was binding on all human beings, until they are redeemed from its dominion by his one offering of himself without spot unto God. Until these difficulties which, to a very little mind like ours, are insuperable, are obviated, we are unable to indorse this speculation.

Another, to us, equally untenable theory, called eternal generation of the Son of God, sets forth, that his supreme Godhead is a derivative Godhead; that it is not original, self-existent, independent and eternal. This theory, as it appears to us, seems to deny all that is essential to his Godhead. How can we conceive of absolute Godhead that has descended by generation or otherwise from any producing source higher than himself? That Christ exists in a Sonship which is begotten of the Father, is clearly demonstrated in the Scriptures, and confirmed by his own declarations, but this we understand to be in relation to what he is as Head and life of his church. But that he also is the eternal, self-existent God, the Jehovah, is equally demonstrated in the Scriptures, and in the personal experience of every saint. For if he is not God in an absolute and unrestricted sense, he cannot be the Savior. He says: "I am God, and beside me there is no Savior." We must, therefore, be excused from indorsing a doctrine, however popular or plausible, that would rob us of a Savior, or present him in a character in which we are forbidden to worship him. This doctrine of a begotten Godhead is, to us, equivalent to a denial of his Godhead in all but a nominal sense. Nor does the fine-spun reasoning of his being eternally begotten, remove the difficulty. The effect would be the same, whether

begotten in eternity or in time. Alike it must and would imply a begetting or producing God, anterior to his development as a God; while, to our view, the denial of his self-existence is a denial that he exists at all, as an absolute, eternal, independent and self-existent God. The argument, that the son is as old as his father, that a father cannot exist without a son, is quite too feeble to bring conviction to our mind. Stripped of all artificial verbage, the naked question returns: Is Jesus Christ absolutely, eternally, independently, underivedly, the very supreme and eternal God? To this question we emphatically answer, Yes! and as such we hope to worship and adore him when the earth and heavens shall be no more; and even now we have no sweeter song to sing than,

"Jesus, my God, I know his name,
His name is all my trust;
Nor will he put my soul to shame,
Nor let my hope be lost."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., February 15, 1860.

REVIVAL.

THE Lord is still manifesting his power and grace in this vicinity. On the first Sunday of this month, (February) we baptized five candidates at New Vernon, and on the Sunday following, two in this village. Five times this winter it has been our privilege to lead joyful converts into the frozen stream, to own and obey their Divine Lord and Master, in the ordinance of baptism. Others have professed a hope in the Redeemer, and some are still breathing forth the words of the publican, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." This is indeed heart-cheering, for

"We long to see the churches full,
That all the chosen race
May with one heart, and voice and tongue,
Sing the Redeemer's praise."

Our youngest son was one of the number baptized. May the good work still go on and increase; for "when the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory."—Psalms cii. 16.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., February 15, 1860.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed I send you one dollar for the present number of the SIGNS. I would have sent before this time, but it is circulated through the White Water Association that you and some others had departed from the doctrine held by the Old School Baptists, but I see nothing in the SIGNS but what seems to be sound at this time.

LAUGHLIN KING.

HENRY COUNTY, Indiana, Feb. 18, 1860.

REPLY.

BROTHER King may rest assured that we hold the same doctrine now that we have been contending for almost fifty years. We are not aware that we have departed from a single sentiment that we held when we were baptized on profession of our faith, in December, 1811. As to what our faith is, we have been preaching it constantly ever since 1818, and publishing it in the SIGNS ever since September, 1831. We hold no *private* sentiment on any religious subject. We venture the assertion that there is not an Old School Baptist in the United States, if in the world, whose doctrinal sentiments are more universally known, or more generally indorsed by all sound and orderly Baptists.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., February 15, 1860.

PLEASE BE SURE

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Please be particular about this.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Ephraim Rittenhouse was born Dec. 17th, 1819, in Hunterdon Co., N. J. His parents were members of the Kingwood church, and on August 15th, 1847, he was baptized in the fellowship of that church, by Elder Gabriel Conklin. Our mother united with the same church shortly afterward, and on Feb. 10th, 1849, they were married. Father soon began his public work of speaking and writing, a preliminary license having been given him in 1851, and I think his first letter was published in the SIGNS in that year. In July, 1852, he was given a regular license, and he then began traveling abroad. I think his first visits were made chiefly to New York State, but later he began visiting churches in Delaware. He was ordained on April 13th, 1856, but he continued to reside near the Kingwood church, retaining his membership there, and traveling and preaching as there was opportunity, until March, 1859. In April, 1858, he received and accepted a call from the church in Wilmington, Delaware. In the course of the year three other churches united in the call, and in the spring of 1859 he moved to Delaware. He never moved again, but lived for over forty-three years in the same house, and continued, without any interruption, to serve the same churches of which he then took the charge. He lived to see not only the children take the place of the fathers, but in several instances the grandchildren as well, there being now but one member living in any of his churches that was received before his coming. He traveled considerably through the five adjacent States, but he never made long trips away from home, as he did not think it right to take many Sundays away from his own churches. In addition to his churches in Delaware, he was pastor for a few years of three churches in the Salisbury Association. He took this additional charge with much reluctance, as he was beginning to feel the weight of advancing years, but in one church (Little Creek) he baptized thirty-eight in the ten years that he served as pastor. According to his record, the whole number that he baptized was one hundred and forty-seven. Two of the number are now gifted and acceptable ministers. I believe he assisted in eight ordinations. He was never a strong, robust man, but he seemed to retain such measure of health and strength as had been given him, until he began to weaken from old age. Even then he would not spare himself, but continued to try to answer every call, going sometimes when it was really unsafe for him to leave home, and taking long journeys alone, when we were distressed at seeing him start away.

Our mother died Oct. 20th, 1885, after a short but terribly severe illness. He never entirely recovered from the shock of her death; was never quite the same afterward, and continued to grieve for her as long as he lived. After her death his ministerial work, and the care of his churches, seemed to be all he lived for.

In April of last year, while attending a yearly meeting in Wilmington, he got a fall, fracturing his hip, and causing him many weeks of suffering. We thought then that his work was ended, but he slowly recovered, and after three weary months he stood on his feet again, and was able once more to meet with his churches, but his strength was sadly broken, and it was in much weakness, and often in suffering, that he continued his work for three months more, and then the end came. He left home on Saturday, Sept. 21st, apparently as well as usual. He attended the yearly meeting at Cow Marsh, on that day and the next, and from there he went to a meeting at Nassaongo, on Wednesday and Thursday of the next week, and there, on Thursday, he preached his last sermon. Elder Francis says of it, "I well remember the text, and that it was a sweet, comforting, gospel sermon. It was a fit ending of a long and useful life devoted to the ministry of the gospel. The text was Isaiah li. 1, 2: 'Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.'"

On the 28th of September, two days afterward, while he was sitting quietly talking, the stroke came, paralyzing his entire left side, rendering him helpless, and affecting his mind as much as his body. He was over one hundred miles from home, but with the kindest of friends, and as soon as possible we arranged to bring him home. We all felt that the case was hopeless from the first; that whether the time was long or short, it could have but one certain ending. So, with no hope to cheer us, we cared for him for nearly thirteen months. Sometimes his mind would seem almost clear, and he would talk sensibly and rationally; at other times he would be restless and excited, so that it was hard to pacify or quiet him. Throughout his sickness it was not of himself that he thought, but of his churches, and his continual regret was that he was no longer able to visit them, and he hoped for months that by the next meeting day he would be able to go.

On Friday, Oct. 17th, his sister came to see him. He talked a little with her that night, and again the next morning, and that was his last conversation on earth. He seemed drowsy through the day Saturday, and on Sunday he became unconscious, and remained so until the end, which came at 8 o'clock on Wednesday morning, October 22d, just seventeen years and two days after our mother was taken from us.

On Saturday, Oct. 25th, a large number of brethren, sisters and friends, came together to see him laid away. Elders Grafton, Durand, Meredith and Francis were with us, and all spoke comforting words, not only to

the family, but to the many here that were to him as dear children, and who felt, with us, that they had lost a loved and loving father.

Servant of God, well done;
Rest from thy loved employ;
The battle fought, the victory won,
Enter thy Master's joy.

KETURAH RITTENHOUSE.

[THE family of our late beloved brother Rittenhouse requested that we write an obituary notice of his death, in which we publish a letter we sent his daughter, sister Keturah Rittenhouse, but as she has given so full a sketch of her father's life, and labors in the ministry, in the above letter, we feel that by appending our letter, which they wish published, in which we express something of the feelings of our heart regarding him and his life, we have said all we can say that would be of any interest or comfort.—C.]

HOPEWELL, N. J., Oct. 27, 1902.

MISS KETURAH RITTENHOUSE—MY DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I feel as though I must write to you, and through you to the rest of your family, this morning. This is the first that I have had a moment's leisure, since returning from the association last Friday night. I was much perplexed about what I ought to do, regarding the funeral, and the meeting here, and it was a great grief to me that I felt that I ought to be here. I did not feel that I could have added anything to what I know was said at your dear father's funeral service, but I did feel that I desired greatly to be present, when the last sad rites were said, ere my dear friend and brother, for so many years, was laid away to his last rest, till the trumpet shall sound and waken the sleeping dead. That it was your father's written request that I should be present, made it seem all the harder that I could not see that I ought to leave the church meeting here. This was so, especially, because we expected that one at least would offer herself to the church, which was the case, and I baptized her yesterday morning. I was helped in my feelings however by the remembrance of your father's faithfulness to his appointments in the churches where he labored for so many years, and by the knowledge that several ministers would be present to add a testimony to your father's worth as a man, and as a minister of the word. That I was not with you, could not have been so much of a grief to any of you, as it was to me. I gave brother Meredith a few words which I told him if he thought it wise, he might read in the congregation. But in those words I could not express what I really felt. Indeed, I never can write or speak as I feel at the time. I can speak of it afterwards, but expression seems to be denied me whenever I feel most deeply.

I have been living over again the past thirty-five or more years since I first met your father at Bryn Zion, at the association. There were present then, Elders Barton, the two Beebe's, Leachman, Durand, Harding and St. John. I recall just how your father looked, as he stood up the last day, to say a few farewell words. About as he looked then, he always appeared in my sight afterwards. There was as little change in his outward appearance as I have ever known in any one. I recall, however, a steady growth in his power as a preacher, and in the richness of his preaching, right on to the end. He was not like most men in old age, that is, he did not lose power and freshness of thought. I think that it was the universal feeling among us, that he constantly grew in the depth and richness of his preaching. I know that it seemed so to me. We had a continued correspondence all those years until since his enfeebled and paralyzed condition came on, more than a year ago. I think that in all these years, we must have interchanged from five to fifteen letters each year, until the last year. We, when together, and in correspondence, discussed almost all the subjects that have been controverted among our people, and if in anything there was a serious difference between us, I did not know it. Perhaps, concerning some particular texts we might have had somewhat different views; it would not have been possible for it to have been otherwise, for no two men can see all things from just the same standpoint. But so far as any principle of doctrine was concerned, we never had a different view, I believe. I recall that at times I almost envied him his quiet power and clearness of expression, which made some matters, (which had been confused in the minds of many by the confused language of some who had written and spoken) plain and clear and simple. I recall one circular letter written by him many years ago, of which I felt at the time so glad; and it was so plain and clear, that some who had said other things, could find no place for criticism in it. It was upon redemption. Perhaps some of you will also recall it.

So many reminiscences come up to my mind as I write, I cannot speak of them all. Best of all, your dear father leaves the savor of a good name, of a patient and faithful ministry, of an humble and goodly walk before men, of a steadfast and constant and tender care for the churches where he labored, and of tender dealing with those who were inquiring the way to Zion. I can recall at Broad Creek, and Little Creek, when he labored there, and his labors were so much blessed among them, the tender feelings which he exhibited by gentle words, and by tears often, as he moved among the people, so many of whom he baptized, and whom he loved. It was very touching to me to watch him as he moved among them, and so evidently longed to see them blessed of the Lord. And how glad he was when any came to Zion, and how gladly, and with what thankfulness would he mention the steadfastness of the churches where he labored. They were in his heart to serve them day and night.

I do not here seek to speak direct words of consolation to you as a family. I know that you are com-

forted by the things of which I have spoken, and that you all believe that your father has entered into rest, leaving behind him a good name among all who knew him. The loneliness that you must all feel, only God can comfort you in, and you all know where to look for help. May God bless you all. Many dear friends here, including my own family, send warm sympathy to you all in your bereavement.

At the church meeting Saturday I spoke to the church of your father, and of the peaceful end which had come to him at last. Many afterwards, spoke with sorrow that they should see his face no more.

When you can do so, I desire to hear from you.

I remain as ever your brother in hope,

F. A. CHICK.

OUR brother, **James H. Lowell**, of South Gardiner, Maine, was born May 22d, 1844, and departed this life to be with Christ, which is far better, July 19th, 1902. He was married to Emma D. Peacock, in 1868. When it pleased the Lord to call him by his grace, he was deeply taught his just condemnation as a transgressor of the law, which is holy, just and good. His soul went burdened beneath the felt displeasure of God, and his heart was bowed in sorrow beneath the weight of his sins. No hope could he see for such a wretched, vile sinner as he felt himself to be, and he could see no way of escaping the damnation of hell. But the time for the discovery to his soul of the riches of God's mercy drew nigh. On a certain day in the year 1868, he was working in an old saw mill, deeply pondering over his lost condition, till at length he felt he would have to say amen to his own damnation, when suddenly he felt there shone round about him a light above the brightness of the noontide sun, and everything around him was resplendent with the golden brightness, and between the heavens and the earth he beheld with eyes of faith the crucified Son of God, and by the working of the Lord's gracious power he was made to hope, and to rejoice with unspeakable joy in Christ Jesus as the dear, almighty Savior. After this he went to the assemblies of the Advents, and joined them, but found no satisfaction among them. Sore discomfort and conflicts he endured with the members of this society; there was no fellowship for him there. In due time Elder Hiram Campbell came into the neighborhood to preach, and for the first time he heard the gospel proclaimed, and then he found out where the church of Christ was. He went to the Advent meeting and told them he must withdraw from them, and told them the reasons why he must do so. For some time he was troubled about baptism, having been immersed by the Advents, but in his troubled state of soul one day, as he was cutting bushes, the Lord gave him rest by sending home to his conscience the question, Was his Advent baptism of God or of men? and the answer was, of men. He united with the church at Bowdoinham, and was baptized by Elder Hiram Campbell, in December, 1871. Our brother greatly delighted in the assemblies of the saints, and was chosen deacon of the church at South Gardiner, and he was in truth a deacon; he ministered in the office well, purchasing to himself a good degree and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. The church at South Gardiner has lost a valued and precious member. Our dear sister Lowell, and his daughter, mourn their loss, and I feel myself I have lost a dear companion in the gospel of the grace of God.

At his funeral the writer preached from Psalm xvii. 15.

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK Maine.

Mrs. Martha Lucas Graves, of Middletown, Ohio, was born Jan. 28th, 1828, and departed this life Sept. 18th, 1902, after a short illness. Sister Graves had been an humble, devoted and faithful member of the church called Mt. Pleasant, in Butler Co., Ohio, for nearly half a century. She was a God-fearing woman, and ardently loved the gospel of the grace of God, believing steadfastly that salvation is wholly of grace. When Mt. Pleasant church divided a few years ago on the means question, sister Graves stood firm with the sound Baptists, and when the modern revival of Arminianism among Baptists under the name of conditional time salvation, came on, she again took her stand for the old doctrine of grace. Sister Graves is sadly missed by the church and the community, and especially by her surviving children. She leaves behind, six devoted children: Mrs. Kittie Childs, Mrs. Minta Cox, Mrs. Clara Myers, Mrs. Belle Selby, Miss Mattie Graves and Mr. Samuel Graves. The first four named of these are members of the church, and the other two are experienced believers of the truth. The children were all with her in her last illness, and were present at the time of her departure. In the death-chamber for awhile all was darkness and gloom. The Lord's mercy seemed to be gone, and all left to wrestle with despair in his own regions, but in due time the Lord appeared. His glorious presence was visibly manifest, and in a moment all was bright, all was hope and joy and peace. This visible manifestation appeared to all in the room, and remained until she had breathed her last. Praise God for his goodness, and his wonderful works to the children of men.

The funeral was attended by a large company of sorrowing friends and relatives. Elder J. G. Eubanks was present, and spoke a beautiful prayer at the home. Elder J. M. Struble was also present at the church. I tried to speak on the occasion, from the words of the psalmist, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Her remains were laid to rest in the beautiful graveyard adjacent to the meeting-house, where she had so long been a faithful attendant upon the service of her Lord. In hope of a glorious resurrection, her devoted children, the

church and friends consigned her body to the quiet and restful grave.

H. M. CURRY.

DIED—May 3d, 1902, from injury received by the kick of a horse, May 1st, **Deacon W. W. Grave**, of Ingleside, N. Y., aged 54 years. He was married to Miss Hepsy A. Riker, Dec. 15th, 1869. Six children were born to them, three girls and three boys. He leaves besides wife and children, of near relatives, three sisters and five brothers. He experienced a hope in Christ about the year 1873 or 4, and was baptized by Elder A. St. John, in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist church, at what was then called Rikers Hollow, and lived in the love and fellowship of the church until called away from earth. He was deacon several years, serving to the satisfaction of his brethren, having a good gift in prayer, and could speak to the comfort of the saints, being sound in the faith and clear in his views of Scripture doctrine. He was a lover of Bible doctrine, therefore loved to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, having been a subscriber many years. In the resurrection morn of his soul he was brought to magnify the Savior with shoutings of praise to Almighty God, after which he said he was not waiting for the resurrection, but glorification. May the dear Lord bless the lonely widow in her sad life, with his gracious presence, also the dear mourning children. He was a good husband and father, an honorable citizen. We mourn the loss of the little church of his membership. He will be missed very much, but it is well with him; his faith was strong to the close.

Services were held at the meeting-house, which was filled with friends and neighbors, while the writer talked a little to the friends.

D. M. VAIL.

John T. Randolph passed away August 1st, at his home in Springtown, Texas. He was born June 21st, 1837, in Jefferson Co., Tenn.; served in company I, of 31st Tenn. Regiment, Confederate army, the last three years of the war. With his discharge in his pocket, Nov. 5th, 1865, he was married to Miss Louie Selvidge, and shortly after that time moved to Alabama. In 1875 he moved to Springtown, Texas, where he lived to the day of his death. During the time, he served as postmaster sixteen years. The younger part of his life was spent as a teacher. In 1865 he professed a hope in Christ, and was an Old School Baptist in belief, but never joined the church. In his experience written by himself, and published in 1884, in regard to the church he says: "After my deliverance it seemed deeply impressed on my mind to go to the Lord's people and tell them my exercises, and be baptized, which I resolved many times to do, but when an opportunity offered, the cloud of doubts became so dense, and my unworthiness became so prominent that I as often put it off till I would feel better, and I have continued to put it off, and to-day I am no nearer the church of God than I was eighteen years ago. Would the Lord in mercy grant to incline the followers of Jesus to give me instruction, that I may do my Master's will. O, that the dear children of God may be impressed to continually mention my case at the throne of God's grace, that my duty may be made plain before me."

When death came, as the result of a long spell of typhoid pneumonia, our dear brother had no fears, but went down to the tomb trusting, as we hope, in the holy One of Israel. He was a cripple in his feet all his life, from which he suffered much at times. Of the ten children born of this union, only four survive, one son and three daughters. He was a friend and reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES all the time that he was able to pay for it. Our dear friend Randolph believed in salvation by grace, and was pleased with the doctrine in all points advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. A great and good man has been taken from this world of sin and sorrow; therefore we sorrow not as those without hope, for we believe our loss is his unspeakable gain.

W. L. ROGERS.

BLUM, Texas, Oct. 2, 1902.

Edna Catharine Holsheiser was born August 21st, 1889, and died June 6th, 1902. She left to mourn their loss, her parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Holsheiser, and two brothers, Harry and Willie. She seemed like a ray of sunshine, always bright and cheerful, and her bright and beautiful face and disposition, made her a great favorite both in her home and among her many friends. She was indeed a talented child, at the head of her classes in school; her musical ability, and a voice remarkably strong and sweet for one so young, made her a leader. O, how she will be missed in the happy home circle; her little friends will miss her sweet face at school and in their play, but she was a jewel too pure for this earth, her place was in heaven. If she could speak to us she would say, Do not weep for me, dear papa and mamma, Harry and Willie, for I am so happy with Jesus.

Her school teacher,

ALICE TOMIELINO.

BROTHER **James Sneed** departed this life at his home in Powellsville, Md., July 9th, 1902, aged about 80 years. This dear brother was baptized at Welsh Tract, a great while ago, but has been with us at Indiantown about thirty years, during which time he had endeared himself to the church very closely, and his constant attendance at the meetings spoke loudly of his deep interest in the things of the kingdom. His unwavering confidence in God, and manner of expression, was always encouraging to this poor one. As his seat was seldom vacant, we do miss him so very much. He was naturally kind, morally speak-

ing, and pleasant in speaking on spiritual things, so that he never insulted any one. He watched at the bedside of the writer of this at one time with all the care and tenderness of a mother to her infant child, both night and day, about five weeks, while in the flesh we were mere strangers, therefore I loved him dearly, for I believe that the love of God in his heart prompted him. I was up to see him a day or two before he died; he said he was almost gone, but his assurance seemed bright and strong. He leaves his wife, and several children all by a former wife, to mourn the loss of a kind father and husband, and the church, of which he was a devoted member, but God took him unto himself, so we believe all is well. May God give us submission.

T. M. POULSON.

Eli Winnie died at his home in Kome township, Mich., Sept. 27th, 1902. He was born in the town of Cherry Valley, Otsego Co., N. Y., in the year 1820. In early life he was converted to the Calvanistic faith, and in after years was baptized and united with the Old School Baptist Church at Woodstock, then known as Kelley's Corners. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Jennie Winnie, also by four children, Samuel Winnie, of Petoskey, Mich., Mrs. R. Tomer, of Hudson, Mich., Mrs. C. G. Potter, of Sylvania, Ohio, and Mrs. G. F. Sanford, of Cement City, Mich. Brother Winnie was a firm believer in the doctrine of election and salvation by grace; he was a devoted husband and father a kind neighbor and a good citizen. The writer was personally acquainted with brother Winnie, and has enjoyed his hospitality and communion very much; he was well versed in the Scriptures, and an able defender of Bible principles. But the dear old brother is fallen asleep in Christ, and is buried near his old home in Oustead Cemetery, to await the final consummation of all things.

"Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep,
From which none ever wake to weep."

The writer tried to preach on the occasion, to the dear friends and relatives, words of comfort, and to console the broken-hearted.

T. J. WYMAN.

Ellen Earhart was born August 8th, 1822, near Lebanon, Ohio. Her parents were Edward and Elizabeth Dunham. She was married in February, 1842, to Geo. W. Earhart, with whom she lived happily until 1846, when after a short illness he was called to his reward. For more than half a century she has been called to walk the journey of life a widow. She was a most true-hearted, pure-minded christian woman, with a firm, unshaken confidence in the atoning sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ as the only foundation of life; the Bible was truly a lamp to her feet, a light to her path, the guide of her youth, and the support of her declining years. At twenty minutes after twelve o'clock Thursday, after a short illness of but a few days, scarcely one week, surrounded by loving friends and kindred, she calmly and peacefully fell asleep in Jesus.

The funeral was preached by Elder H. M. Curry, from Rom. viii. 29, in the West Baptist Church in Lebanon.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, Nov. 16th, 1902, near New Church, Va., Richard W. Kelley and Miss Anna W. Dickerson, both of Accomac Co., Va.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged	$664 05
Philemon Stout, Illinois, $50.00; Mrs. M. J. Lee, Oregon, $1.50.—Total	51 50
Total to date	$715 55

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER Asa Howard having changed his address from Rushing, Texas, to Snyder, Scurry Co., Texas, requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

POETRY.

LINES written by H. J. O'Bannon, on the death of his beloved wife.

Her gentle spirit was too pure
For earth's polluted breath:
God sent an angel down from heaven,
And took her away in death.

Though kind and gentle hands may lay
In cold clay on her breast,
I know she is in heaven now,
That holy place of rest.

For she has left us here to know
That she is now in heaven,
And now my spirit like some bird
Before the storm is driven.

But God can turn the darkest cloud
To noonday's purest light;
God never, never can do wrong,
For what God does is right.

Then it is right that we should lie
Within the silent grave,
For there the dear Redeemer lay,
His loving ones to save.

O, then we know it is but right
For Christ himself to die;
To bring eternal life to light,
That life that's from on high.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 70. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1902. NO. 24.

POETRY.

MORNING.

WHAT a rich secret is with those
Who know and love the Lord;
Who rest in his sweet promises,
Yet tremble at his word.

They have the faith that works by love,
And purifies the heart;
By which they view the joys above,
That here they see in part.

How blessed is this living faith
To look beyond our sight;
Trusting in all the Savior saith,
E'en in the darkest night.

This secret makes the wilderness
To blossom as the rose,
And the dark desert of the heart
With gladness overflows.

The parched ground becomes a pool,
The thirsty land a spring;
And fainting souls refreshment find,
And with rejoicing sing.

The prison proves a palace fair,
Where Jesus is extolled;
The fragrance of his precious name
Is better far than gold.

The lame leap as an hart for joy,
The dumb for gladness sing,
Blind eyes behold the works of God,
And praise their heavenly King.

How sweet to join in songs of praise
To his most holy name,
While our hearts triumph in the grace
And glory of the Lamb.

BESSIE DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 23, 1902.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FRAGMENTS.

IT seems a sad thing to read in the Scriptures that all flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the field. It appears to present a good cause for sadness. But there is a time when it causes unspeakable joy to find that the Scriptures do declare this as a solemn truth. That time is when we have found this to be true concerning ourselves; when we have come to the sad conclusion that we are of no more value than the grass; that all our goodness and glory are no more substantial than the flower of the field, fading as quickly and withering away. When also we feel our grief aggravated by the conviction that it is all our own fault; that it might have been otherwise if we had been more diligent, and more faithful. We feel altogether to blame; feel that we have neglected golden opportunities for improvement, and have brought ourselves to this wretched condition of nothingness. What self-reproach and self-loathing! We see ourselves as "less than nothing and vanity," and our own vile and depraved hearts and ways the cause.

Then what a change comes over our feelings, what a brightening of our gloomy minds, what a soft and holy comfort in our hearts, as we read that this is true of *all* flesh; true of "every man is his best state," as well as in his most debased condition. "For all flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever."—Isaiah xl. 7, 8; 1 Peter i. 24, 25.

Then is it possible that while this is true of all the race of Adam, only those realize and know it upon whom the Spirit of the Lord has blown; that these are they who have been born of the Spirit; who have felt the quickening power of that Spirit, which is the heavenly wind blowing upon them. "The wind bloweth where it listeth," and they have heard the sound thereof, but could not tell whence it came or whither it went. They felt its terrible power withering the flesh, as grass, and causing its glory to fade as the flower of grass, but had no thought that this ruin and desolation were evidences of God's blessing and heavenly favor.

Now, instead of gloom, and regret, and sorrow, and self-reproach, there are gladness, and thanksgiving, and praise. We are thankful for the very bitterness of the wormwood and gall, and for the humility they wrought in us, as these are evidences that the Lord has brought us up out of the dust of death, and has become our salvation. Now as we come up out of the darkness, desolation and grief, we find the one thing of value, the one thing which can never fail or change, the word of the Lord, which shall endure forever. Here is our hope and joy.

"And this," says the apostle Peter, "is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." This is the word of God's salvation. It is the Word which was in the beginning with God, and was God, and was made flesh and dwelt among us. It is preached by the gospel; it is the fullness of the gospel; it is that which causes the gospel to be glad tidings; it is Jesus, "the wisdom of God and the power of God." All that we can ever need is in him, for he is "full of grace and truth," and all is ours if we have ever felt this heavenly wind which causes the flesh to wither as the grass, and its glory to fade as the flower of grass.

DOES the Spirit of Christ ever lead one to speak or write of spiritual things in a sarcastic manner, or with harsh and bitter denunciations of those who may differ from the view we are presenting, or those who do not see the truth? I think not.

SOME one has said that in most of our cities God's humble poor have not the gospel preached to them. But Jesus said, "The poor have the gospel preached to them." How good it is to remember that the Lord, and not man, has charge of this matter. Wherever they are the promise of God shall be fulfilled to God's humble poor: "Bread shall be given them and their waters shall be sure."

HOW much pleasanter it would be to read the letters of some correspondents if they would take a little more care in writing them. Sometimes it is a really painful task to study and find out approximately the writer's meaning, instead of a pleasure, as it should be. Some seem to think they cannot write plainly because they are not educated. That is not so. It is not lack of either

skill or education that causes one to write illegibly, but want of care and thoughtfulness. The one whose penmanship gives the reader so much trouble knows how to form every letter in each word he writes, yet often not half the letters are made, but only crooked marks, and that with a pencil or the faintest, palest of ink.

One of my correspondents taught herself to read and write after she was sixty years of age. There is no difficulty in reading her letters.

Directions: Take a good *pen*, *black* ink, *white* paper, and then write each letter of each word so that the letter could be recognized if it stood alone. Do I write that way? No! but I ought to.

WHEN engaged in preaching, and especially when the power of the Word is felt in my soul, I cannot think of my manner of speaking, nor am I conscious at such a time of any wish to produce any effect upon the audience by oratory, or by anything but the plain presentation of the truth of the gospel in the subject under contemplation. But at other times I have wished I might so improve in my manner of speaking, and be able to present my subject so attractively as to hold my audience in absorbed interest. Once, while thinking thus, and wondering why I had not paid more attention to this matter, and why I should not be as interesting and attractive a preacher as others I knew personally and by reputation, I resolved to make the attempt to improve in this respect, by bringing to my aid such knowledge of literature as I had. I would try to embellish my subject by illustrations historical and otherwise, and to improve in oratory, so as to produce a strong and pleasing effect upon those to whom I should speak. "Yes," I said to myself, "I will do this; I will remember this when I stand up to preach to-morrow." For I had always forgotten, when I arose in the pulpit, to pay any attention to any rules of oratory, to any possible helps from literature, or to anything but telling as plainly and as quickly as possible my thoughts and feelings concerning the subject on my mind.

That night I dreamed I was fishing, and at one point in my dream I stood with my hook in my left hand not baited, while in my right hand I held a piece of mince pie. Suddenly the thought came that I would bait my hook with the pie; then instantly I said to myself, "Fish will not eat mince pie," and at once I threw it away. My eye followed it as it left my hand, and saw it go into the open mouth of a dog that stood waiting near. Then I awoke, and I saw that the day before I had decided to try to draw men by something well represented by the mince pie, which would only attract and feed the flesh.

My desire is to preach as with the ability that God giveth, and to be contented with that. No part of the true power is in the manner of the preacher, nor is any part of the true spiritual effect produced by eloquence of speech, nor by any natural ability or learning that he may possess. The power is in the Word, in the message. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of man." When we think of a messenger bringing good tidings, we can easily see how all the power is in the message, and all the effect is produced by that. If one were about to receive the execution of a just sentence of death, and if he felt the crime a greater grief and terror to him than the punishment he was about to receive, and if one should be sent to tell

him that not only was the punishment remitted, but the crime itself was removed, and he washed whiter than snow, how little would he feel like criticising the messenger's manner of speech. He would not complain that the man's ignorance made him a tedious speaker, nor express a wish to have a more learned and eloquent man sent to speak to him. He would be likely to say of him, "He is the best and sweetest preacher I ever heard."

I COUNT it a great blessing when the Lord makes me willing to endure hardship and affliction with patience, and without murmuring. I count it a great favor when I am enabled to keep down my unruly disposition, give the soft anwer to harsh and cruel words, that turneth away wrath, and so to walk as becometh the gospel of Christ. I have learned by sad experience that I cannot claim the credit to myself for any self-denial, or for the exercise of any grace of the Spirit. It is clearly manifest to me that it is only by the grace and power of God that there is any overcoming of any of the evil propensities of my depraved nature, or that there is any good thing done or spoken by me. Often I know that it is contrary to will that the good thing is said or done, and the evil thing suppressed. Grace has reigned so that self is forced to be denied. Truly "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 14, 1902.

"HE BEING DEAD YET SPEAKETH."

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—This letter from our beloved old Elder Threlkeld, written more than forty-one years ago, which I have just now re-read, so impresses me as good and profitable for all the brotherhood that I am moved to copy it, word for word, and submit it to you. At the time it was written, he was an aged father in the ministry, and I was but a lad, having been ordained only a little more than four years, young in years and in the trials of the way, and so I was despondent and timid. But to me he was tenderly and truly as a father with a son, and most affectionately do I cherish his memory, as will dear Elders True (his son-in-law) and J. G. Sawin. These true yoke-fellows in the gospel are now old and wayworn, with myself, but the grace of the Lord Jesus has been sufficient for us, and his strength has sustained us in our weakness through all the way of tribulation. And to me there is now a preciousness and comfort of fellowship in brother Threlkeld's letter which I cannot express. Like Abraham, he was strong in faith, giving glory to God, and he never was known to waver or falter in his firm adherence to the gospel of the grace of God, as his letter will testify. So of him, as of Abel, may it truly be written, "By faith he offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh."

D. BARTLEY.

LEBANON, Ohio, September 10, 1902.

MATTOON, Ill., March 25, 1902.

MY DEAR BROTHER BARTLEY:—This morning I received your kind letter, and was glad to hear from you, and that you still remember me, but was sorry to hear

of your embarrassment and discouragements. I know how to sympathize with you, for I have been in similar circumstances; but I beseech you not to be cast down, but remember that we must through much tribulation enter the kingdom, and we should endeavor to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. And I hope the brethren will remember you in your discouragements, and help you to bear your burthen. The Old School Baptists are sometimes remiss in holding up the hands of their ministers, and leave them to bear the burden alone, and they are liable to faint under their load.

In all probability the Lord's witnesses, when they have finished their testimony, will perish by neglect. The church will neglect the minister, and he through necessity must neglect them, and thus a famine will come on them, and so, in their official capacity, they will perish. Satan has tried killing with the sword, and has found it an ineffectual method; and he may now be at his tricks, prejudicing the minds of the saints against helping the minister, and glory when he has accomplished his design.

You know antichrist, through his policy, is to cause craft to prosper; and I have thought that by the Missionary craft, in prejudicing the minds of the saints, he will cause them to neglect the ministry, that some of them, at least, will fail. Dear brethren, think on these things.

I am sorry that you could not attend the brethren at Mount Pleasant through the winter. If the Lord will, I will try to be with them in May, and will try to get brother Shellenbarger to go in June. And I hope the Lord will enable you to go and see them often. I am sorry to see them starve. I have a great desire to see you and the brethren at Hickory Creek, but think I cannot do so before the first Sunday in May. If I could feel any assurance that I could come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, it would be a matter of joy to me; but the most of my time I am so dark, so cold and lifeless, and so much under the influence of the carnal mind, that I fear my visit will be of no benefit to you. But that matter I must leave with the Lord, as I have done for the last forty-two years. It is no wonder my eyes should become dim, and my memory fail; but the Lord has been so kind and gracious to me for those forty-nine years, since I have put my trust in him, that I often say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name: who forgiveth all my sins." And I feel desirous still to serve him; and I think I know what Paul meant when he said, "To abide in the flesh is more needful for you." When I see the destitute situation of the brethren, I feel desirous to remain in this world of sin and sorrow, that I may serve them to the best of my ability. And I am determined to spend the remnant of my days in the service of the saints, although I often fear I am not one myself. "I am so vile, so prone to sin, I fear that I'm not born again."

But when I see the love, the grace and goodness of God in Christ Jesus towards poor sinners, I still have a desire to declare it to others, and sometimes I think I do love him, and if this is the case, all is well. I know I love the Old School Baptists, and if they are the children of God, then, according to the gospel rule, I am safe. And "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who can condemn? It is Christ that died." This is all my hope, and all my expectation, although sometimes I think he makes it not to grow.

Once I thought to grow in grace, was

to feel better, wiser, and my confidence increase, but how sadly have I been disappointed! My confidence in myself diminishes, my goodness has passed away, and I know that in my fleshly nature there is no good; and my only dependence for salvation is in God's eternal free favor in Christ. And I think, if I get to heaven, I will sing free grace louder than the rest, for I am surely the greatest sinner.

Give my love to all the dear brethren; and if you wish, you may read this letter to them. God bless you.

THOMAS THRELKELD.

CARMEN, Oklahoma, Nov. 2, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—It has been a long time since anything has appeared over my name in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the oldest and best paper that I know of among the Old School Baptists. It was a welcome visitor in my father's household from my earliest recollection. The accumulated numbers were laid carefully away by my father for future reading and reference. After they became precious to my understanding I gathered many old volumes and sewed them together for my own reading, thus getting acquainted with the writings of many of the early writers of the SIGNS. My first communication for that paper was written in October, 1860, and appeared in the June number, 1861. I have always been ashamed of my poor effort and of many that have appeared since then. It has always appeared that I could not get into the full spiritual measure that so many writers do who have written, and who write for the SIGNS. I have often spoken to the brethren about the SIGNS seeming to be the most spiritual paper that we have, that there is less of a worldly nature spoken of than by any others. Whether this is just a notion of mine, or whether the editors are choice about what shall appear in its columns and select the communications best suited for publication, or not, this I shall leave for you to determine.

Ye saints of the Most High, I have been wanting to say something to my dear brethren for some time, and more particularly has this desire become strong in my mind in the last year, ever since it has pleased the Lord to favor us here, a little band of outcasts, scattered from the different states, seeking earthly homes in this, once called, "Great American Desert." I should like to express some emotions of holy love for God's people, to the brethren who are situated where they have never wanted for church privileges of mingling monthly and oftener with precious brethren, and hearing God's servants proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ. How would it appear to your minds if you were widely separated from your brethren, so that you could not mingle with them in worship, so that you could not have any opportunity to hear the gospel proclaimed in its purity, and this, not for one month or one year, but for years, yes, from ten to eighteen years? Well, this has been the condition of the scattered remnant that the Lord has gathered together by his providence and grace here in western Oklahoma. Many times have my wife and I, since coming here, wondered if the Lord had any people here. We had traveled about some, and got acquainted with many people, made inquiries, and it seemed for nearly four years that every time we thought we had got on the track of Old School Baptists we were sure to be disappointed. However, when we first came here, nearly six years ago, there were four of us. I preached to the three, and all others who

came through curiosity, once a month, through all the dark days of our widowhood, hoping that the Lord would discover to us some of his scattered people. Many times we would conclude that we never could find any more in this country of 2,760 square miles, containing a population of more than 35,000, without any large towns, and all emigrants from other states and territories. After a year or two we found three Baptists of our order in an adjoining county, about thirty miles away. We were much elated, and took steps to the organization of a church, but we were soon disappointed; two of these brethren moved to a distant State, so we knew that the Lord was not in it. We felt to realize that if God had a people here that they would be manifested at the proper time. Our over anxiety was somewhat appeased in the thought that we will just go on as before and give up all hope of a church organization for a long time yet. The Lord knows how to succor those who are tempted; he will not suffer us to be tempted above that which we are able to bear, but with every temptation he will make a way for our escape. Less than three years ago, one day as I got my mail, a letter among others was of great interest; it was from brother Duley. He said that he had got my post-office address from one of the Baptist periodicals; he told me where he lived, which was about twenty-eight miles from us, also making inquiries about my place of residence; that he, like myself, had been almost alone as far as Baptist company was concerned, and was longing for the society of brethren. In a few days after the receipt of this letter, I was with this brother. He knew of one sister and one man who was strongly inclined to the Baptist doctrine. In less than a year from this time we had found several more of the scattered saints, some that had been so long from home that their churches had become extinct. We now had good meetings in three and four places each month. The question of organizing as a church body was now before us, but how to meet the question in our scattered condition was our great trouble. The extreme location of our homes was forty, yes, more than fifty miles. Remember, however, reader, that does not seem to be such a great distance on these western prairies, especially among hardy pioneers, and more especially among the Lord's afflicted and poor people who trust in his name. The time had come, Oct. 27th, 1901, when by previous appointment three names with hearts and hands were banded together in church covenant. Immediately three more walked in the way of "holiness," to follow the Lord in all his appointed ways. Soon after this meeting, by several additions we numbered eleven. We have found other brethren and sisters, and some strong in the faith, but not members yet, to the number of nine more, who attend our meetings in different places. We call our church Ebenezer, for surely it is a stone of help, and hitherto hath the Lord helped us, but we have no abiding place, it is like the ark of the covenant of old, movable. As one of our brethren has often remarked, our church is a "church on wheels." We mutually agreed that where two or three of our members meet together for public worship, there is the church, and that she has proper authority with her minister to receive members or transact any business which may be proper, having love and confidence for each other to such an extent that would prohibit any two or three members from doing anything that would

reflect on the judgment or cause pain to any other member.

Now I think of dear sister Sarah Boyd, of Centerburg, Ohio, whose letter appeared in the number of the SIGNS for September 15th last. She, like many others, has passed through many troubles, and two only are left as the legal church. This is the smallest number to get the blessing, but the promise of Jesus is to two or three: "Where two or three are met together in my name, there am I in the midst."

Brother Bruce, of Oregon, in the same SIGNS, also speaks on the same subject. He says, "O what a precious Savior we have, and what precious promises he has left on record for our comfort. You remember he said, 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst.'"

Dear sister Boyd, our brother editor seems to give as good advice as can be given in your case, not knowing the particular circumstances in connection with your troubles. If the house (or church) can be kept up in order by two, it is better than to be dissolved, or far better than to join in with error or discord. Or it might be better to join an orderly church remote from you, than to be so lonesome. I remember once after coming west that I retained my letter for three years, because the churches near me were in disorder, and finally joined a church fifty-five miles from my home.

We now have meetings at five places, as often as we can conveniently meet. All the brethren and sisters are punctual to the appointments. We have had four communion seasons, and as pleasant and precious as any like seasons in the memory of the writer.

In love for all the household of faith,

JEFF. F. BEEMAN.

DAWSON, New Mexico, Nov. 24, 1902.

ELDER GILBERT BEEBE'S SON—DEAR FRIEND:—I have just read the letter of D. M. Leonard, of Broome Center, N. Y., Oct. 9th, 1902. I am pleased to read what he says. In his letter he refers to a communication from B. F. Butler, of Holmes, N. D., Sept. 15th, 1898. According to Leonard's request we got the SIGNS and read Butler's letter. Now I feel in my heart to indorse what he says. Friend Butler's letter is over four years old, and I can only answer for myself, I have either overlooked that letter or forgotten it, and I am satisfied there are many friends of the SIGNS who have been raised up in the past four and a half years, who would be willing to help pay the one thousand dollars. Some might be like myself, never read it. I have been a constant reader of the SIGNS for more than forty years, and my wife has also, and we sometimes skip something that we afterwards find, and it seems new, so you see others are likely to have missed reading the appeals of the friends of the SIGNS to pay what it owes. I want to ask you, if you please, to publish this letter of mine, also with it republish friend Butler's letter of 1898. I hope God will help you to pay this old debt, that you may thereby be free from that embarrassment. I want now to appeal to the friends of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to help make up this amount; almost any of the friends can furnish one dollar and upwards. Send it at once, right away. I inclose in this my check for one hundred dollars. May God help the cause. Read the twenty-third Psalm.

I would like to know if friend Butler is still living. Your friend,

J. B. DAWSON.

[IN the management of a publication of the nature of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES

many questions arise which are hard to decide. It is so with us in regard to the publication of letters of the character of the above. Our brethren can appreciate our embarrassment, and the delicacy of the matter, yet on the other hand, when brethren request us to do so, and substantiate the earnestness of their requests by such munificent contributions to the cause they are pleading, we cannot feel that we should allow our own personal feelings to persuade us to refuse to grant their requests, and with these remarks we submit these letters to the brethren and friends of the SIGNS, and leave the matter with them to do as they may feel in their hearts and minds to do. This much we know, as long as it is the pleasure of the Lord for the SIGNS to be continued, they will be sustained, and when he has served his purpose with them, they will cease to be published.

Again thanking the brethren and friends for the kind and efficient aid already rendered the SIGNS, we herewith append the letter of brother Butler, that friend Dawson requests republished from the SIGNS for September 15th, 1898, and in answer to his inquiry will say, brother Butler is still living, and is now receiving his SIGNS at 46 Allens Ave., Galesburg, Illinois.—B.]

"SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD."

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I had fully decided to lay aside my pen, and drop out of notice, so far as writing for our publications is concerned, for I realize that when I would do good, evil is present with me. The world, the flesh and the devil, are so strongly allied against the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, that it seems many times we will fall, as individuals, by the wayside, and that the church as a body must all but come extinct. When I read Elder Bartley's article in a recent number, on the text, "And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt," &c., I felt his points were well taken, for certainly many of the bodies (churches) lie dead in the street, for they are without visible life, being inactive, "Have a name to live, but art dead." "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw." —Rev. i. 1, 2. John was commanded to speak to the angels of the seven churches. These angels (ministers or pastors) were addressed severally, or individually. The command was emphatic, the instructions definite, and it was the Spirit, or Holy Ghost as personated by Jesus Christ, as the first-born from the dead, the faithful and true witness of God the Father, as sent to these pastors, or stars, which was held in his right hand, to proclaim to the seven golden candlesticks, or churches. Now it seems to me if the cause was so sacred, and of so much importance, that God caused John to be banished to the lonely Isle of Patmos, and to be there alone, in order to receive those wonderful profound revelations, that it was not to cease with the final disorganization of these several churches of Asia. They were organized and established by apostolic authority, and must serve as a pattern for apostolic, or properly organized churches, for all time to come. This being admitted, does it not appear that all pastors, or ordained ministers, are vested with authority, not only to proclaim the riches of God's grace and mercy, extended to lost and ruined sinners, through the precious blood of Jesus, as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, but also to rebuke, reprove, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine? It appears to me unnecessary for our pastors or ministers to be forever "after Arminians with a sharp stick." It is well enough incidently, but God's command was, "Speak to the children of Israel that they move forward." Then it is the true Israel of God that are the objects of address. If Jesus is preached, if he is lifted up for an ensign, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, those who are bitten with the plague of sin, will look, for they are ever looking, with a "God be merciful to me, a sinner." "Lord, save, I perish." And when they hear a proclamation heralded from the throne of God, they receive with joy and thanksgiving the testimony, for they themselves have an unction, a witness within, which further proves that we are saved through preaching, not saved with an eternal salvation, this was, and is, the work of Jesus, but it is through the foolishness (simplicity) of preaching, that God will save them that believe, they receive the word gladly, and are transformed from a prior belief, where they were in a state of unrest, and enter into a gospel rest. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." They rest in hope, in faith, in charity. The love of God is shed abroad in their hearts by the power of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit, which Jesus promised to send, is now received by the poor, doubting soul, and

in the power of faith he can proclaim, "The Lord our Righteousness." This plan of salvation is no longer seen with an obscure vision, "as men as trees walking," but they see a resurrected Savior, as born again from the dead, a triumphant, glorious conqueror, a Hero of heroes, a King of kings, and Lord of lords, and rest not only in sweet forgiveness of all sins, but rest in his promises, rest in his dear arms of everlasting love, and look upon the company of his saints with great favor, beg, in their hearts, for entrance to their communion, they are now come unto Mt. Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, &c. Further Paul says, "Let brotherly love continue," implying that it is liable to grow cold, that we are liable to become selfish and covetous, which is idolatry, and a sin against God, for as we do to the least of these his brethren, even so do we as unto our Savior. Then let us not think, after that God has been gracious to us, in granting us our desires, by being baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," and thus following the dear Savior in fulfilling all righteousness of God's law, that it is doing all that is required of us, by putting on Christ in open profession of our faith in him, by following in this ordinance which he observed and honored, and requires all his believers to also recognize and honor. Nothing is farther from Scripture teaching. Read the Spirit's command to each of the seven churches. They were composed of men and women of like passions as you and I, chained to a body of this death, who also by nature were the children of wrath, even as others, but God in his own counsel predestinated them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, and chose them heirs of salvation, and as children of his kingdom they were and we are subjects of him as King, and he has a right to require them. As Paul says, "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price." Dear child of God, think of the price it cost to redeem your soul from hell; look to the cross of Calvary; behold your dear Savior nailed to the rugged wood; see the accursed band of Roman soldiers, and the fiendish mob, jeering and making merry at his awful sufferings; see him sweating great drops of blood; look at the thief on his left hand, railing at him because he does not show the power of a God in his release; look with me at the malefactor on his right, hear him telling his companion, we are only getting what we deserve as law breakers, but this tortured man that occupies the centre of the group, is innocent; then see him turn his dying eyes to the dear Savior; hear his pleading cry, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom;" hear the response, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Look for the sun, and the moon, and stars, where are they? Darkness itself has covered all; the very earth is reeling and staggering like a drunken man. All nature is convulsed. The God of earth and heaven is personated in Jesus nailed bleeding and torn and racked with pain. He is fulfilling the demands of stern justice, which would ultimately been our doom. Was not this a great sacrifice? Now, my brethren, what sacrifice are we making for the carrying on of the cause? Are we doing our part, or are we putting all the burden on our ministers and publishers? Sin, like the plague of leprosy, is in the world; none of us are free from its contamination. Do we strive to overcome? Are we doing what we can? If we were, brother Beebe would not need to make the second call for aid in sustaining the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Providence is now most certainly blessing its present readers as much as those who have read it in days past, and who now are gathered to the fathers. Will we betray the trust committed to us, their successors? Let us be up and doing. The laws of commerce say, "Pay me what thou owest." All bills of a financial nature must be met promptly, else they will go to "protest." Some may say, "Brother Beebe has gone daft, or is quite an Arminian, and the next thing we will hear that he is a Sunday School superintendent, or has gone to darkest Africa to convert the heathen." Not at all, brethren, plenty of work at home. Let us reason together. The condition that surrounds our churches to-day are different from "ye olden times." The strange woman and her children have usurped great authority. They come into our very houses, telling us about their gods, and try to get our children away from our influence. O, how many of our brethren have lived to see their children led away to serve other gods. How many have labored late and early, hardly take time to go to the house of our God, even on Sunday, say nothing of Saturday service, working to lay up treasure, perhaps for their children to spend on the gods they themselves abominate. He that believeth and provideth not for his own house, has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. It is proper to provide for the future necessities of our own, but to do this to the exclusion of looking after the welfare of Sion, is altogether wrong. If we are in a nice shape financially, the world will court our favor, but way down deep in their hearts the enmity exists that God said should, for he declared that he would put enmity between thy seed and her seed, in the things of this life. So, brethren, the sooner we break away from the love of the world, and have a love for our brethren, and aid them in the service of the Master, either in the preaching of the word, or publishing approved papers, the more money you will have as a result. I would that I could condense this appeal, and make it in a few well chosen sentences, but I cannot. I have put this matter from me as long as I can. I was trusting some one of more note among the brethren would take up the subject, and stir up the pure minds of the brethren relative to this matter. I wrote a dear sister in Illinois soon after

brother Beebe published his first appeal last year, urging her to lend her voice and pen, to raise money to relieve permanently the embarrassment of the SIGNS; but she did not have the courage, but was in sympathy with the project. But we know the custom has been so long with our churches, of "a little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little folding the hands in sleep," that it appears a sin to mention money. Paul says, Be diligent in business, serving the Lord. He commands that the details of the house be kept in order, and if money was required, to gather it and use it, and if a member was covetous or selfish, to deal with that member as an offender. This is the gist of the whole matter. Now, brethren, when there is a will there is a way. Brother Beebe has been forced to raise the flag of distress. Will we stand on the shore of self-complacency, and tell the Lord we "can't" afford to aid him? when the Lord knows most of us can help if we have the will.

I ask the publishers to print this letter, and if it offends my brethren, I will stand personally responsible, and if in their hearts they excommunicate me for making this appeal, I want to know it, and know where to find them. "A friend in need is a friend indeed." "An unfaithful friend in time of trouble, is like a broken tooth, or a foot out of joint." Let us all say, by the grace of God, "THE SIGNS SHALL NOT GO DOWN," and in less than thirty days after this appeal is published, brother Beebe will feel to thank God, and take courage, feeling that the Lord has heard his prayer, and cry of distress, the SIGNS will be continued, and we all will feel it the best sacrifice we ever made. I would like to write my experience on this line, in my travels of the past fifteen years, and show cause why I take this view of the matter, and make this appeal. I have thought the reason so many of us do not like to let the left hand know what the right hand does, is because it does so little it would be humiliating to let it be known. Brethren, let us raise this thousand dollars at once, and donate it to the cause of truth, and to the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have come through the late panic badly singed financially. At times I thought I would drop all subscriptions, but by hustling I kept them and other dues paid up, the Lord opening the hearts and pockets of strangers, to tide me over. So I have found that if we do right, nothing is lost; if we do wrong, God can and will punish his children. God is no respecter of persons. Before I became acquainted with the Old School Baptists, I was associated in a friendly way with Presbyterians and Methodists, and if money of any amount was needed, some one would say, I will be one of ten to give fifty dollars, one of twenty to give ten dollars, as the case might be, and the necessary amount would be forthcoming at once. Now, brethren, let us put our shoulders to the wheel. Pastors, call the attention of your deacons to the importance of this matter; put this before the brethren at the very next meeting of your churches; do not wait till brother Beebe is forced to make an assignment, then it will cost more to redeem the publication, besides save the humiliation, not of brother Beebe, but of the readers of the SIGNS generally, for it can be prevented, and no one distressed. Let us use the means, and not cavil the question. A cause that is not worthy of our financial support, is of no value to us morally or spiritually. If we profess to be the light of the world, let us prove it by putting on our beautiful garments of charity, which is love, and show by our works that we appreciate brother Beebe's labor of love in publishing the SIGNS. Let us strive to keep the house of the Lord in order, be prepared to meet the Bridegroom when he cometh, not only by a well ordered walk, and a godly conversation, but to do our duty, and not live so much for self as for others. I shall make no apologies for what I have written, only that I could not condense and make the article shorter. Could I have been in the vicinity of our churches, I should not have written, but made the appeal personally in different churches. I will show my faith in my brethren, to aid me in raising a thousand dollars, by starting the list with fifty dollars, which I will pay October 1st, 1898. Away with mock modesty, show your hand, and encourage others, and when we read the list let each one feel before God that we "have done what we could." "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty."

B. F. BUTLER.

HOLMES, N. D., July, 1898.

[SINCE the above was in type we have received the following letter, and we feel that the Lord is certainly manifesting his supporting hand in sustaining the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and we desire the prayers of our brethren, that if it is his pleasure to continue our life, that he will enable us to so conduct the SIGNS that it will redound to his glory and to the comfort of his children.—B.]

BUFFALO, Ill., Nov. 28, 1902.

MY DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed you will find draft for fifty dollars, my thanksgiving offering, also two dollars for renewal of subscription. The Lord having blessed me with nearly eighty-one years of fairly prosperous life, with a family of three daughters who are very devoted to me, and prosperous in this world's goods, eight grandchildren and one great-grandson, of which I am very proud. I was blessed with fifty-six years of married life. I have reason to be thankful. I am now ready to lay down the burden of life, and join my companion of fifty-six years, who departed this life the 22d of last August.

May the Lord bless you and your work.

Yours in his name,

JAMES ELDER.

MINUTES OF THE FORT WORTH COUNCIL.

PURSUANT to a call made by the church at Fort Worth, Texas, of the Old School Baptist faith and order, the messengers, ministers and brethren whose names appear below, met with the church at Fort Worth, Texas, from the 21st day of October, to the 23d day of same month, A. D. 1902, and deliberated as follows:

1st. Praise and prayer by Elder J. H. Daniel.

2d. Elder J. H. Fisher, pastor of Fort Worth Church, made a brief statement of the object of the meeting.

3d. Appointed Elder J. R. Hardy clerk *pro tem.*

4th. Appointed the following, Elders W. G. Green, J. W. Martin, J. C. Sikes, brethren J. I. Money and T. L. Adams, together with Elder J. H. Fisher and E. Holt, moderator and clerk of Fort Worth church, a committee to seat the messengers in the Council.

5th. The committee reported as follows:

NEW HARMONY ASSOCIATION.

CHURCHES.	MESSENGERS.
Ephesus	Elder S. N. Stephens, B. O. Glover.
Concord	P. W. Warren, E. Huckaby.
Shiloh	Elder W. G. Green.
Antioch	Elder S. C. Brinson, J. R. Pice.
Willow Springs	Elder J. W. Martin.
Friendship	Elder W. B. Sikes.
Macedonia	Elder J. C. Kilgore, W. R. Bowden.
Mount Olive	A. J. Boen, J. N. Watson.
Pioneer	Elder J. C. Kilgore.

NEW HOPE ASSOCIATION.

Sabine	Elder J. C. Sikes, Elder J. R. Hardy, J. I. Money.
Shiloh	L. B. Mackey, J. K. Dennington.
Lebanon	Elder S. M. Dickens.
Lake Fork	Frank Clifton.
Prospect	W. C. Voos.
Mount Zion	J. A. Money, J. J. Darnell, R. M. Kilgore.
Beulah	Elder W. W. Slaughter.
Arm of Sabine	J. M. Hanlin, J. A. Osteen.

TIMBER CREEK ASSOCIATION.

Providence	Elder P. M. Pearce, O. B. Fisher.

UNION ASSOCIATION.

Center View	Elder W. L. Goss.
Pilgrim Rest	Dennis Owen.
Cool Springs	G. W. Martin, W. H. Burns.
Elm Ridge	J. E. Polk, E. D. Potter.

MOUNT ZION ASSOCIATION.

New Mount Zion	Elder J. H. Fisher.

PEACE VALLEY ASSOCIATION.

Friendship	Elder W. L. Rogers.

CHURCHES NOT IN ASSOCIATIONS.

Roane	Elder J. R. Perry.
Pleasant Hill	W. S. Tippett.
Fort Worth	E. Holt, J. L. Lewis.
Fairland	Elder R. E. White.
Emeas	J. S. Young, J. M. Right, A. J. Hurley.
Macedonia	Elder J. B. Adams, W. A. Turner.
Providence	Elder J. M. Griffin.

The following visitors were seated:

Elder John H. Smith, Newark, Texas; Elder D. Bartley, Lebanon, Ohio; Elder J. H. Daniell, Magnolia, Arkansas; Elder J. J. White, Bryan, Louisiana; Elder G. M. Fetter, Raton, New Mexico; Elder J. D. Hopkins, Norton, Texas; D. J. Dossey, Willis Point, Texas; Elder J. A. Rutledge, Peaster, Texas; Elder Asa Howard, Snyder, Texas.

The Council was then duly organized by electing Elder J. H. Fisher, Moderator, and Elder J. R. Hardy, Clerk.

The moderator then appointed Elders S. N. Stephens, J. C. Sikes, W. G. Green, D. Bartley, J. H. Daniell, J. C. Kilgore, W. B. Sikes, J. W. Martin, and brother J. I. Money, after which the moderator and clerk were added, as a committee to prepare matter and submit to the Council for their consideration, which they did with much deliberation and caution, as shown below, which was then read, first as a whole, before the entire Council, then re-read and carefully considered and unanimously adopted, article by article, by the entire Council and the committee was discharged.

By motion and second the entire work of the committee was then unanimously adopted as a whole by the entire Council. After which the assembly sang the song, "Bless'd be the tie that binds," and engaged with Elder J. H. Fisher in prayer

and thanksgiving to God for his mercies and protection.

Minutes were then read and adopted.

ELDER J. H. FISHER, Moderator.
Graham, Texas.

ELDER J. R. HARDY, Clerk,
Tidwell, Texas.

INTRODUCTION.

Forasmuch as men have risen up among us, denying the predestination of God in all things, as is most surely believed by us, and as has been held and repeatedly set forth by our ancient brethren, and those who are of like precious faith with us, in all former times; and denying that salvation is wholly of grace, both in time and eternity; and contending for certain practices in matters of worship in the churches, which we believe to be unauthorized in God's word, and threatening to the peace and welfare of Zion. Also those of the household of faith who refuse to be drawn away by their new doctrines and practices have been misrepresented by them, and many of them deprived of church privileges by the raising of bars to fellowship. Therefore, we, the messengers, members and ministers from regular Old School Baptist churches, having met with the Old School Baptist church at Fort Worth, by their request, to consider of the things that might be for the peace and unity of our people in Texas and adjoining territory, with representation from Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Ohio, New Mexico and Texas, representing a large number of churches and brethren of the old predestinarian faith and order; and desiring to be understood by our dear brethren and sisters abroad, do hereby set forth this, our declaration of faith, as we understand the holy Scriptures and our experience to teach.

AS TO PREDESTINATION.

We believe that God's eternal and holy purpose embraces all things whatsoever come to pass, as "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." That God has purposed that all righteousness shall come to pass by his authority and influence, and that all unrighteousness shall come to pass without his authority and influence; as is most explicitly set forth in the London confession of faith of the Baptists of 1689, and re-affirmed by them in the Philadelphia confession of 1742, upon the authority of the holy Scriptures.

We do not believe that the predestination of God is the cause which moves men to action either in righteousness or unrighteousness, but that all righteous acts are the fruits of the holy Spirit, and that all unrighteous acts are the works of the flesh, under the influence of Satan. Therefore we do not believe that God is or can be either the author or approver of sin, as we have been unjustly accused.

AS TO ACCOUNTABILITY.

We believe that all human beings are under law to God, and are therefore accountable thereto, and should obey all the precepts of this law, and are justly punishable for any violation thereof.

AS TO SALVATION.

We believe that the salvation of God's people, whether in time or eternity, is by the free and reigning grace of God through Christ Jesus. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

We believe that all spiritual blessings received by God's people, are secured to them in Christ Jesus, and bestowed upon them freely as a merciful gift from God, "According as he hath chosen them in

him before the foundation of the world," and are not dependent upon conditions to be performed by them.

We believe that the love of God shed abroad in the hearts of his children binds them under the most sacred obligation to walk in the good works which they are created in Christ Jesus unto, and in which they enjoy the salvation of the Lord, but because of the flesh lusting against the Spirit, they cannot do the things they would, only as they are enabled and led thereto by the holy Spirit, according to the power that worketh in them, being renewed in Spirit day by day: "For it is God that worketh in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure," and "makes them perfect in every good work to do his will; working in them that which is well pleasing in his sight, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Therefore Jesus said, "Without me ye can do nothing."

We believe that teaching the hope of reward, and the fear of punishment, as incentives to obedience, are carnal and selfish, and belong to the legal covenant, and have no place in the covenant of grace, in which every good thought, word and deed of the subjects thereof are the fruits of the life of Christ in them, and they are constrained thereunto by the love of God, which passeth knowledge. We therefore do most heartily believe that, so far from the children of the regeneration being neutral and passive in their christian service and obedience to the Lord, as stones or lifeless machines, as has been so uncharitably charged upon us, they are ever active in turning to the Lord in their repentance, supplications and faith, as also in all their work of faith and labor of love in the worship of God. We certainly believe that all christian obedience is the fruit of the Spirit, and love of God in our hearts, and is unto the praise and glory of God in Christ Jesus by us, and that with such sacrifices God is well pleased, and that in his loving service we are blessed with his loving smiles, but that he faithfully chastises us for our disobedience, until we learn obedience by the things which we suffer.

We therefore believe that while all our obedience and good works in the gospel arise from the love of God bestowed upon us, as our willing and active service unto him, on the other hand, all our unbelief and disobedience arise from our sinful flesh, and is not pleasing to God.

Therefore we believe that all the gospel obligations, commandments, encouragements and exhortations exist in this holy and blessed relation of children unto God, and that he lovingly and faithfully dealeth with us as with sons. And they who have believed in God are commanded to maintain good works, that they may thereby adorn the doctrine of God our Savior, and glorify him in their body and in their spirit, which are his.

We believe that God's children, through the instructions and exhortations of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, which our Lord makes use of in leading and directing and saving his children from disobedience and its consequences, as on the day of Pentecost the apostle exhorted, saying, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation," and as ministers save themselves and those that hear them, by taking heed unto themselves, and continuing in the doctrine, for "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." They are often even "made all things to all men that they may by all means save some," and being influenced by the grace of God in their hearts, they labor abundantly, endure all things for the elect's sake; seek, and they

find; knock, and it is opened unto them; ask, and God even gives to them the holy Spirit. And while we do not think that any obedience is the price or meritorious cause of spiritual blessings bestowed upon us, yet we do most sincerely believe that those who are hearers and also doers of the word are blessed in the deeds of obedience. Not for keeping a law, (which is legalism) for law pays nothing to those who keep it, and all of us come short of God's law, and therefore cannot receive anything from a violated law but condemnation, and we can look only to the mercies and grace of God, since we are sinners who have come more or less short of compliance with any of God's laws. This shows us how unprofitable is even our best service, yet we are under continual obligations to obey all of the commands and exhortations laid down in the New Testament, and to serve God without distraction, in decency and in order.

Therefore we hold that it is right for us to exhort one another with all long-suffering and doctrine, warning every man, teaching every man "that denying ungodliness and worldly lust, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world."

AS TO BARS OF FELLOWSHIP.

We believe the practice of raising bars to fellowship against those who hold to predestination and salvation alone by grace, as above set forth, is wholly without scriptural authority or church precedent, and has been a fruitful source of confusion among the churches, and all who are or have been engaged in raising such bars, have involved themselves in disorder, and have thereby separated themselves from the fellowship of all sound Old School Baptists, and we should cease to affiliate with them until they renounce said bars and return to the primitive faith and practice of the church of Christ.

However, we would not have this article construed so as to mean that we would non-fellowship those dear brethren who are yet with us, but are not fully agreed with us on these points of doctrine, and yet are willing to live with us in peace.

We recommend that those who have been deprived of church privileges for no other cause than believing and contending for the doctrine of predestination and salvation alone by grace, as above set forth, and refusing to submit to bars of fellowship against those points of doctrine, be received and recognized by the Old School Baptist churches. We would urge, however, that the utmost precaution be used in receiving such members, so as not to be imposed upon by any who might be cut off for disorder of any kind.

We further recommend that where divisions have occurred among any of our churches on the points of doctrine above mentioned, and on the raising of bars to fellowship, that those who contended for the points of doctrine on predestination, and salvation wholly by grace, as before set forth, and stand in opposition to bars of non-fellowship, be recognized as the church proper, whether they be in the majority or in the minority.

AS TO ADULTERY.

We believe a man or woman who puts away his or her companion for any cause except it be fornication, and marries another commits adultery. And who marrieth the one which is put away commits adultery. (Matt. xix. 9.) And just so long as they continue in that condition, they are living in adultery. The Scriptures say adulterers shall not inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10; Gal v. 19–21.) Therefore we will not, knowingly, receive such into our churches, nor hold

in fellowship those who persist in doing so.

AS TO TWO-SEED AND NON-RESURRECTION.

Inasmuch as Two-Seedism and Non-Resurrectionism in their different phases have troubled the Lord's people in places, and are a denial of both grace and redemption, as embracing the sons and daughters of the earthly Adam in joint-heirship with Christ in the salvation which is in him; therefore it behooves us to affirm the Bible truth:

1st.—That the elected by grace were by nature the children of wrath, even as others, so that grace only makes the children of God to differ from others, and

2nd.—That redemption by the blood of Christ, which cleanseth us from all sin, includes our "whole spirit and soul and body." And that as the Spirit quickened the buried body of our Redeemer, so also shall our mortal bodies be quickened by his Spirit that dwelleth in us; and the bodies of the saints shall be raised up from the dead in the likeness of Christ's resurrection at his coming, at the last day, unto which adoption to sonship God hath predestinated us, for which we now wait, "to wit, the redemption of our body." Therefore we are forbidden to receive or bid God speed to any who do not abide in the doctrine of Christ.

AS TO ASSOCIATIONS.

We believe that associations have no right to dictate to, advise or usurp any authority over the churches; but that they are only general meetings of the churches, for their mutual worship. And any usurpation of authority by the association over the churches is wholly unscriptural. And a church belonging to an association or not belonging to an association does not affect her order, neither should the suspending of correspondence between associations be construed as affecting the fellowship between the churches in the associations whose correspondence is thus suspended. We therefore urge forbearance by the churches and brethren on these lines.

CONCLUSION.

TO ALL OF LIKE PRECIOUS FAITH WITH US—DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—In the special providence of God, we have been convened together in Council with the church of Christ in Fort Worth, Texas, the last three days (October 21st, 22d and 23d, 1902,) for public worship and godly deliberation, as messengers of numerous sister churches and other visiting brethren and ministers, who were invited to seats with us. A committee of brethren arranged for preaching each day and night, apart from the work of the Council, which work was conducted throughout with the utmost good feeling and brotherly kindness, and all of it was adopted in mutual love and entire unanimity. For this we are humbly grateful to the Prince of Peace, in whom we rejoice for his presence in our midst, and for his grace and truth in our hearts. We joyfully realize the truth of his word, that "the work of righteousness shall be peace," and we have been led to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, desiring only to know and abide in the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, to the praise and glory of God and his saving grace.

It has not been either the purpose or the effort of this Council to change or interfere with the articles of faith of the churches in the least, neither to dictate to nor control the churches; for Christ alone is the Head of the church, and our Master. We therefore recognize that all the outhority of our dear Lord is in the church, and by the church, and for the church, unto his honor and glory.

This being true, we have therefore been called and drawn together as members of sister churches in Christ, and as brethren in him, to pray and confer together upon the confusing things which have come in upon us of late, and have greatly afflicted us all. In this conference we have faithfully considered and set forth the things which have troubled Zion, and have also given a brief outline of the doctrine of God our Savior, and of the order of the gospel of Christ, according to the wisdom he hath given us, and in harmony with our understanding of the sacred Scriptures. This we have done in godly fear, sincerity and love. We believe that we have expressed the faith of God's elect, as sacredly held by our fathers in the gospel, and the apostles of Christ.

This is for the faithful brethren and churches to judge of, and decide for themselves, as the love of Christ constraineth them, and as they may believe their general good and mutual fellowship and peace requires of them. We desire no more than this.

Now, having been enabled to bring this labor of faith and love to a happy close, we prayerfully send it forth to the Predestinarian Baptists of the United States and Territories, and in love submit it to their charitable judgment and disposal. We do this, beloved brethren in Christ, because a sore trial af our faith has been forced upon us, as you all sorrowfully know, and we are all made to suffer for the truth's sake. It therefore behooves us all, who are of the truth and love of it, to unitedly stand together, ask for the old path, the good way, and walk therein, and so find rest.

With this in view, and unto this end, we kindly request that *The Advocate of Truth*, and all other sound Old School Baptist papers that will do so, to publish these proceedings, so that all our brethren of like faith may read them.

Besides this, we authorize two thousand copies of these proceedings published in pamphlet form, by our secretary, and that he sell them at the lowest price he can afford. We also request all the churches that may adopt these proceedings as their own declaration, will please give official notice thereof to *The Advocate of Truth*, for publication therein.

To the Forth Worth church and friends who have so untiringly entertained us, we express our hearty thanks for their generous hospitality and christian kindness.

With our prayers for God's grace and peace upon you all, dear brethren, farewell.

Signed for, and in behalf of the whole assembly.

ELDER J. H. FISHER, Moderator,
Graham, Texas.

ELDER J. R. HARDY, Clerk,
Tidwell, Texas.

[MANY of the readers of the SIGNS are not aware of the persecution the brethren in Texas have endured, who stand firm on the principles of the doctrine advocated in the SIGNS from its first issue to the present day. These brethren have been misrepresented and maligned until forbearance ceased to be a virtue, therefore they have met in council to declare to their brethren their faith and practice, and to assist them in this work we have printed several hundred extra copies of this number of the SIGNS containing the minutes of their meeting, together with a declaration of their belief, which we will mail free of charge to any whose address may be sent us for one or more copies.

Address G. BEEBE'S SON.
MIDDLETOWN, Orange Co., N. Y.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1902.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

DO WE SUFFER FOR SIN?

DEAR EDITORS:—Will you please give your views upon the following subject: Do we suffer for sin? And if so, how? If we suffer, do the wicked go unpunished? Some in my knowledge believe that all their suffering in this life is not for anything that they have done, while others believe that all their crosses in this life are for sin. In this case, we have the record of the impotent man, as recorded in fifth chapter of John. On the other hand, we have the record of the man who was born blind. No doubt others beside myself would like to hear your view upon this subject. The truth is all that I desire to know.

Your brother,

J. J. OKES.

PROGRESS, Va.

To the above questions, we will say first of all, that no suffering in this life, either of the elect or the non-elect, is intended as an atonement for sin. To say so, would be to take away the atonement of Christ from the faith of the believer, and to say that it was not needed at all. An eternity of suffering, on the part of the sinner, would not wash away his sins, or make a sufficient atonement for them. The sufferings and death of Jesus, the Son of God alone, can avail to put away sin, and secure the eternal happiness of any one.

Still further, if the sins of the redeemed, even after they have believed, were not also laid upon the suffering Savior as he hung a bleeding sacrifice on the cross, then they also must suffer forever for them. Jesus bore all the sins of all his people on the cross, and put them away by the sacrifice of himself. There is no redemption save in the atonement of Jesus. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? The reply is, no one can do so, since Jesus died and arose again.

Yet it is sure that believers do suffer on account of sin, in various ways, but this suffering is not an atonement, but rather a fatherly chastisement at the hand of God. Peter suffered on account of denying his Lord. David and the people of Israel suffered on account of his sin. Every child of God suffers many distresses of mind because of sin. It is well, when the Lord turns and looks upon us, as he did upon Peter, and we go out and weep bitterly for our folly, weakness and sin. Not only so, but we reap as we sow and what we sow. Such things as idleness, sloth and wastefulness, bring poverty and distress, whether indulged in by the people of God, or by men of the world. But there is this difference between them, God's transgressing people have torment of mind, and convictions of sin against God, which the unregenerate do not. David said, "Against thee, and thee only, have I sinned." The feeling of having sinned against God showed that he was a child of God. So also, vice of every kind brings its proper reward in the lives of all, whether children of God or not. What men sow they reap. They sow folly, and they reap more and more of folly. They sow selfishness, and selfishness grows upon them. What they sow, they reap, in all things. But the people of God, while reaping as do the others also, are in the end, given sorrow and sore repentance for their folly.

As said before, the wicked also suffer for their sins, but with their suffering there is no turning to God in humble repentance of heart and life. The result of dissipation and vice is always weakened bodies and minds and disease in some form or another. Another result is that the wicked wax worse and worse, becoming hardened in their wickedness, till the conscience is seared as with a hot iron. So while the judgments of God do follow their wickedness. yet they do not recognize these things as the judgments of God. But the people of God, when visited with judgment for their sins, do come to know that it is a chastisement from the Lord, and so are brought to sorrow with godly sorrow for their sins.

But all the crosses and trials of life are not chastisement for sin. We need but to refer to Job to prove this, from the Scriptures. His trials were to prove him, and to show that pure and unselfish religion dwelt in him. So the persecutions to which the godly have been subjected in all ages grow not up out of their sins, but are trials of faith and love which God has shed abroad in their hearts.

There can be no doubt, it seems to us, that in the case of the impotent man, his impotency had come upon him as the result of sin upon his part, for Jesus afterward said to him, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee." No doubt this is true in many instances in the world, but it does not follow that sickness or trial come upon men because of some special sins. Yet sin, as a whole, is the cause of all the suffering and misery that dwells in the world. But we cannot say of this or that man, he has sinned more grievously than other men, because he suffers more. This would be to throw away entirely the lesson of the sufferings of Job. And it would be also to deny the lesson in the case of the blind man, referred to by brother Okes. The two instances named by him, show clearly that while sin does bring upon the souls and bodies of men its proper fruit, yet we cannot say of this or that man, that he has sinned most, because he has suffered most. It all should humble us, and make us careful in our conclusions and judgments regarding our fellow men.

We trust that these thoughts may be of some satisfaction to our brother, and to others who may be interested in reading.

C.

CLOSE OF VOLUME SEVENTY.

WITH this number the SIGNS OF THE TIMES completes its seventy years of publication. For three score years and ten it has continued without a single interruption, so far as our knowledge goes, and for fifty years we know for a certainty that it has not missed a single number. During all these years it has passed through many changes of circumstances; the day of adversity has been set over against the day of prosperity. Seasons have been granted when the cause the publication advocates has been revived, and the brethren have been made alive with zeal and devotion, then again there have been seasons when the cause seemed to languish, and the love of many waxed cold. The latter condition has seemed to be the case in many sections for the last decade, but for the last year the signs of the times certainly indicate the Lord is about to favor Zion, and revive his cause in the midst of her enemies. Indeed, the revival has already begun in many places, and the old time zeal of the brethren is manifest. How this revival will be wrought out in his people, God alone knows. It may be by more severe persecution, to knit them to-

gether more closely in brotherly love, or, if it is his pleasure, he may favor his church with a direct manifestation of his presence in her midst, and by the shedding abroad of his love in the hearts of his chosen vessels of mercy, cause them to glow with holy zeal and love. Whatever way it may be the purpose of God to work his will in us, we know that he is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind, and whatever may be his providence with us, it will all be for our good and his glory.

Identical with the prosperity of the saints, is that of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, therefore we feel that we are in a position to speak with some understanding as to the condition of the cause throughout the country in general, and by these signs we are encouraged to believe that the morning is breaking, and Zion is awakening to put on her beautiful garments.

The year just closing has been the most encouraging one the SIGNS has had for a long time; its circulation has increased steadily, until now we close the volume with several hundred more subscribers than we had at the commencement of the year, and financially, (not counting the liberal donations lately received) the receipts have increased in proportion to the increase in the circulation of the paper. But what is still more encouraging is the many assurances of the brethren of their hearty approval of the efforts of brother Chick and ourself in the conduct of the paper in defense of the truth against the errors and delusions which are so popular at the present day.

Thanking the brethren and friends of the SIGNS for their kind and efficient aid in its behalf, we now close the seventieth volume of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

B.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

HEBREWS IV. 1–12.

MR. BEEBE:—My wife is an Old School Baptist and very much afflicted, and has been so for the last eight years, so that she does not have the privilege of hearing preaching often; you would confer a favor by giving your views on Heb. iv. 1–12.

Yours with respect,

E. CORY.

BLOOMING GROVE, Jan. 2, 1860.

REPLY.

"LET us therefore fear, lest a promise being left *us* of entering into rest, any of you should seem to come short of it," &c. The inspired apostle describes the endless rounds of legal ceremonies, rites, sacrifices, toils and labors required of the carnal Israelites under the Levitical law as a state of bondage and fatigue, allowing not a moment's respite or rest, for the law not only required a perfect obedience, but also a perpetual labor. But the gospel in direct contrast in that respect, is set forth as a rest that remaineth for the people of God. The former dispensation is set forth by the six days labor in the creation of the world, and the six days of every week in which the Israelites were commanded to labor and to do all their work; also by their tedious wanderings for forty years in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, and other significant and impressing figures which are used in illustration. While the rest which the gospel presents and which remained after the expiration of the legal covenant to the people of God, is exemplified by the hallowed day in which God rested from all the work of creation; and the seventh day of every week to the Hebrews, also the possession of the land of milk and honey, to the Israelites after their tiresome journey in the wilderness. Indeed, all the sabbath days, sabbatic years and other legally appointed

times of rest to the carnal Israelites, were figurative of that spiritual rest which believers in Christ enter when fully and experimentally delivered from the toil and bondage of the law. With this brief explanation of the types employed in our subject, as a key to the admonition in our text, we pass to notice the entering into the rest which is left unto the people of God.

At the expiration of the old covenant dispensation all the rites and ceremonies of that covenant were abolished. The shaking of the heavens and the earth was to remove the things which are shaken that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. (Heb. xii. 27.) Of the things shaken and removed, the apostle includes the old covenant with all its rites and carnal commandments. (Heb. viii. 13; x. 9. But the things which cannot be shaken remain. The covenant of grace and salvation in Jesus Christ, embracing the promise of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, made before the world began, could not be shaken. The kingdom prepared for the saints from the foundation of the world, as described and contrasted with the Sinai covenant in Heb. xii. 18–24, is a kingdom that cannot be shaken; for it shall never be destroyed nor left to other people. (Daniel ii. 44.) It shall stand forever. "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear."—Heb. xii. 27. While the commonwealth of Israel organized nationally under the covenant of works, as we have shown, could not rest, only in a ceremonial sense, the kingdom of Christ, embraced in the covenant of grace, is emphatically a kingdom of rest. "For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever; here will I dwell, for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision, I will satisfy her poor with bread."—Psa. cxxxii. 13–15. The bread which is to sustain our earthly nature, is obtained by toil and labor, and by the righteous decree of God, man shall eat it in the sweat of his face, until he shall return unto the dust, &c. But the bread of life which sustains those who belong to the kingdom which Jesus claims as his rest forever, is not obtained by toil and sweat, it cometh down from heaven, is freely given, and divinely blessed, to fill Zion's poor. "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious."—Isa. xi. 10. The apostle finds a promise of rest to the people of God implied in the types, the entering into Canaan, the seventh day, &c., and this promise is exclusively to the people of God who shall all be righteous, for the wicked are like the troubled sea which cannot rest. But Paul says, "For we which have believed, do enter into rest." Again, "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works as God did from his." When God had finished the six days of creation, he rested from all the works which he had made. Nothing more has been created; nothing more required to be created. So, when the people of God enter into God's rest, they find it a perfect cessation from all of their own legal works to commend them to divine favor, for Christ is their righteousness. He is made the righteousness of God unto them, and as the righteousness of God cannot be improved or made more perfect than it is, they have only to rest in it. When trembling at the startling thunders of Mount Sinai, before Christ was revealed to them as their righteousness, they la-

bored hard and long.

"They toiled the precept to obey,
But toil'd without success."

Guilt-stricken and despairing with deep contrition they confessed their guilt, and the justice of the fiery doom assigned them by the holy law of God, while on their heart the crushing burden pressed them down. But while in this state, far from the reach of human aid, the blessed Savior appears in all the glory of the Father, in all the irresistible attractions of life and immortality, and his voice is heard, not in the terror of Mount Sinai, not in bursting peals of wrath, but in the still, small sound, which thrills the heart with heavenly rapture and supreme delight, and his words are, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls, for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."—Matt. xi. 28, 29. This is not a mere invitation, but a heavenly calling which cannot be resisted by any unto whom it is addressed, it is the King's word and full of power. At his word, the burden is removed from the heart, yea, a new heart is given, a new spirit is put within, and a new song breaks forth in sweetest melody of praise unto God and the Lamb. The toil-worn soul is now released from Moses' yoke, which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear, and ceasing from all his own works to justify him before God or to meet the fiery demands of the law, he enters into that rest which remains for the people of God when all things else have passed away. This is the rest which Paul enjoyed, when he said to all the troubled saints at Thessalonica, Rest with us. Cease from your own works as God did from his. Come under the yoke (or law) of Christ, your King, learn of him, for he is meek and lowly; he will condescend to instruct you, and lead you about and keep you as the apple of his eye, as he did Jacob, and although he will stir up your old nest, and tear it to pieces, he will teach you to mount up with wings as eagles, to run and not be weary, and to walk and not faint; for his yoke is truly easy, and his burden is light indeed.

Now for the admonition. "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." We have seen that such a promise is left, and such a glorious rest remains for the people of God, but how can any of God's people even seem to come short of it? Much perplexity has been occasioned to some of God's people by mistaking the true import of the admonition, by supposing that the rest remaining for the people of God, will not be entered until we reach the final consummation of our glory. But the apostle does not say, there shall a rest remain, &c., but "there remaineth therefore a rest." The things that are shaken, are removed, and the kingdom of Christ is received, which is that Zion of which the Lord says, "This is my rest forever, here will I dwell." It even now remaineth, and all true believers have entered into it, and in entering into it, they cease from their own works. But as in the type, the carnal Israelites who believed not the promise of entering into Canaan, could not enter in because of unbelief, their carcasses fell in the wilderness of Sinai; so the people of God seem to come short of gospel rest, whenever their doubts and fears and unbelief prevail. How can a child of God rest, confide and feel secure in the provision of the gospel while he doubts his personal interest in our Lord Jesus Christ? It is

only when our faith triumphs over our unbelief that we confidently rest in the full security and blessed enjoyment of the house of our God. To doubt our calling of God, and our having been born again, fills us with trouble, darkness, and we recede from the place of our rest, and become entangled with the yoke of bondage, and find labor and fatigue, and until we are again delivered from our unbelief it is impossible for us to rest. But the moment our faith is renewed, or made to triumph over our doubts, we say, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." The Jewish Sabbaths were designed to illustrate the rest which remains to the people of God. It was enjoined on them to rest from all their work, to kindle no fires, gather no manna, to do no manner of labor, nor were they permitted to think their own thoughts, nor to speak their own words. So in our Sabbath of gospel rest. We are to kindle no fires. "Behold all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of my hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow."—Isa. l. 2. Under the gospel dispensation it is sabbath-breaking in this sense to kindle fires or get up revivals of our own kindling. When instead of waiting a visit or a message from the Lord, we think our own thoughts, make up our own creeds, speak or proclaim the vain imaginations of our own understanding, and speak our own words, we violate the gospel Sabbath law, and seem to come short of that rest which is promised to the people of God. But we are commanded to strive to enter into rest, by denying ourselves, by ceasing from our own works, and by trusting confidently in what God has said, and in what he has done.

"Go ye that rest upon the law,
And toil and seek salvation there;
Look to the flame that Moses saw,
And shrink, and tremble, and despair.

Let me retire beneath the cross,
Savior, at thy dear feet I'd lie,
And the keen sword that justice draws,
Flaming and red, shall pass me by."

Reviewing the whole subject, we think the christian will perceive that there is reason to fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest (experimentally), we may seem to come far short of it. But still, although the faith of God's people must be tried, and they have to experience much tribulation, and sore temptations, and often oppressed with doubts, and failing of the enjoyment of that sweet rest which we desire, the final triumph of the saints over all their doubts and fear, over all their sorrows and their sins, is secured in Christ, and their divine inheritance of glory is reserved in heaven for them; and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time.

"O glorious hour! O blest abode,
Thus to be near and like my God,
And flesh and sin no more control
The sacred pleasures of my soul."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 1, 1860.

PLEASE BE SURE

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

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MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, Oct. 5th, 1902, in Middletown, N. Y., Benjamin K. Hunt and Miss Lavina Galloway, both of Middletown, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

[We have a large number of obituary notices which are unavoidably crowded out of this number, but we will try and get them in next number.—Ed.]

Mrs. Ruth Ann Watson, relict of the late Silas H. Watson, died at the residence of her daughter, Mrs. Amanda Hagel, in the city of Wilmington Delaware, June 16th, 1902. She was the daughter of Ebenezer Alden, for many years a faithful member and deacon of the church at London Tract, Chester Co., Pa., and was of the seventh generation in a direct line of descent from John Alden and Priscilla, who came to America in the Mayflower, with the little band of devoted pilgrims who landed at Plymouth, Mass., Dec. 22d, 1620; notable as the first Europeans to be married in New England, and made famous by the poet Longfellow, in his poetical romance entitled the "Courtship of Miles Standish."

Sister Watson was born in Cecil Co., Md., August 10th, 1812, and was at the time of her decease, 89 years, 10 months and 6 days of age. She was married to Silas H. Watson, about the year 1830. Her husband died in 1874, so that twenty-eight years of her life she was a widow, and proved to be one described by the apostle as a "widow indeed, and desolate." She was the mother of ten children, nine of whom lived to grow up to manhood and womanhood, only six of whom however survive her. There are also eleven living grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren. She was all her lifetime a devoted friend to the Old School or Primitive Baptists, but a sense of unworthiness deterred her from asking a place among them as a member, until July, 1891, then in her seventy-ninth year, when she united with the church at London Tract, and was baptized by the late Elder Joseph L. Staton, in White Clay Creek, near the old Iron Hill (Welsh Tract) meeting-house. Though coming in so late in life, she enjoyed the full measure of comfort of all who walk in obedience to the command of the divine Master, and proved a faithful and worthy member till her removal from the church militant, to the church triumphant. She was a woman of unusually robust constitution, and was able to assist largely in the housekeeping duties until December, 1900, when she got a severe fall from the stone steps to the brick pavement, at the Old School Baptist meeting-house in Wilmington, and was taken up for dead, but she revived, and was so far restored to health and strength as to be able to visit her children in the city where she lived, and to attend the two days meeting last April at the place where she received her hurt. She was quite sure she would die from the effects of her fall in a few days, and as soon as she recovered consciousness made all necessary arrangements for her funeral, even making request of me that I would attend it, but she lived a year and a half, and at the time of her death I was too ill to go, so the family called in Elder J. G. Eubanks, pastor of the Welsh Tract Church, who spoke to the comfort of the bereaved ones. On the 19th her remains were taken to London Tract and laid by loving hands beside her husband, to await the trumpet's sound.

May the bereaved children take comfort in the assurance that when the Lord shall appear in his glory, to raise the dead, she shall also appear with him in glory.

ALSO,

Miss Elizabeth Ann Watson, a sister-in-law to the above, died at the home of her niece, sister Susan E. Tawresey, 111 East Seventh St., Wilmington, Delaware, on the 5th of August, 1902. Miss Watson was born near London Tract, in Chester Co., Pa., May 1st, 1813, and was consequently 89 years, 3 months and 5 days of age. She was all her life a devoted friend of the Old School Baptists, always attending meetings whenever convenient. In her last illness she confessed to a desire to be identified with the church, though feeling unworthy. Thus she gave evidence whereby her friends feel that their sorrow is not as of those who have no hope. She was a very kind-hearted, helpful woman, and by her many good qualities won to her in bonds of friendship all who came to know her, and was loved best by those who knew her best.

These two aged persons were born within a few miles of each other, and within a few months, and were intimate friends in childhood, entered into a family relationship in early life, and continued close friends all their lives, passing away within a few weeks, and within a few blocks, and our hope is that they have entered into that "blessed sleep, whose waking is supremely blessed."

A. B. FRANCIS.

Delmar, Del., Nov. 26, 1902.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 71. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1903. NO. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"THINGS WHICH ARE NOT."

(1 Cor. i. 28.)

WHAT complaints often proceed from many of the Lord's dear family because of their felt insignificance. They are feelingly the hindmost ones, so inferior to the rest of the flock, so small in their own sight, just nothing. O, that I could be such as I esteem others to be. Thus they bemoan their littleness.

Dear, humble one, I have often looked upon you and envied you your meekness; I have said, O that I were lowly minded like this dear child of God; O, that I could walk the earth and live before God and his people in humility and simplicity, feeling to be but dust and ashes. It is far better to sigh over thy nothingness, than to have to blush before God over thy pride and fancied eminence. Ah, sometimes I have been carried away captive by my fleshly mind to esteem myself something, somebody. Then suddenly our God has given me a sight of the lowly, and in contrast a revelation has been given me of myself. How my spirit has sunk within me, such loathing of myself, and such a sigh of despair, its sickening bitterness I cannot put into words. Perhaps you have never been in such a case, God grant, if it is his will, you never may. But again and again the Lord has shewn mercy even to me, and beneath our heavenly Father's rebukes and chastenings I have been brought as dust and ashes before the throne of God.

When we are led by the holy Spirit to contemplate God's infinite greatness, we shall feel that we are exceeding small. David, viewing the immensity of creation, exclaims, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers; the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the Son of man, that thou visitest him?" And by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah the Lord says "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counselor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught

him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding? Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity. To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?" How precious it is to trust in such an almighty One. He sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; he stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in. Our puny thoughts are swallowed up in the attempt to comprehend the eternal power and infinite greatness of the high and holy one that inhabiteth eternity.

"The spacious worlds of heavenly light,
Compared with him, how short they fall!
They are too dark, and he too bright:
Nothing are they, and God is all.

He spoke the wondrous word, and lo,
Creation rose at his command!
Whirlwinds and seas their limits know,
Bound in the hollow of his hand.

There rests the earth, there rolls the spheres;
There nature leans and feels her prop;
But his own self-sufficience bears
The weight of his own glories up.

The tide of creatures ebbs and flows,
Measuring their changes by the moon;
No ebb his sea of glory knows,
His age is one eternal now."

What are you, poor sinner, what am I, that God hath set his love upon us, chosen us in Christ Jesus, chosen us to salvation, and predestinated us unto the adoption of children, and unto eternal glory? Not only are we as nothing when compared to the infinite greatness of God, but when we consider the eternity of God, surely we are nothing. "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how frail I am. Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth, and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity."—Psalms xxxix. 4, 5. What is your life? It is even a vapor which appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. God remembers that we are flesh, a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again. As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth, for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more. But "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: they shall perish, but thou remainest, and they all shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."—Heb. i. 10–12. But it is especially in the kingdom of grace that the elect are brought to see the wondrous grace and love of God. It is an infinite and eternal wonder that God hath chosen unto himself "things that are not:" "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the things that are wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence." The apostle Paul could claim that he was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles,

and says also, "If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more."—Phil. iii. 4. Yet through the grace of God he had such lowly views of himself that he says, "I am nothing."—2 Cor. xii. 11. And in the church he esteemed himself "less than the least of all saints."—Ephesians iii. 8. The exceeding riches of God's grace is displayed in the objects upon whom this grace is placed: "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" And in that prayer, which the wisdom of this world can never comprehend, we obtain additional glimpses of the ways of sovereign grace. "Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes, even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."—Matt. xi. 25, 26. Far beyond our ways are the ways of our God, how unsearchable are his judgments. The world that knew not the Son of God can see nothing in the members of Christ to excite their admiration. They were despised in the days of the apostles, and accounted the offscouring of all things. In our own times believers in Jesus have liberties and privileges to worship God in public and private, that perhaps surpass all preceding periods in the history of the church since our Redeemer's ascension to glory, yet the carnal world no more loves the glorious gospel of grace than in former centuries, and would if it could suppress the proclamation of the truth, and would banish from the earth the flock redeemed by Jesus' blood. That we are worthless and a thing of naught is not very easily acknowledged, and in truth it is only by the discipline of the Holy Ghost that we learn our insignificance. "Christ is all and in all," thus writes the apostle, then to appreciate the Savior we are taught of the Lord our nothingness. Persons may claim to believe the truth, to be attached to the church of God; they may have their names enrolled as members of the church, and manifest zeal for the doctrine, but if before God they have not been abased because of their sinfulness, if they know not what it is from their hearts to sigh and mourn, and to be ashamed because of their hearts' sins in the sight of the holy One, then all their pretensions to pass among the people of God as believers are a delusion, and they themselves are deceived, or else they are presumptuous mockers, sporting themselves with their own deceivings. It is well to examine ourselves whether we are in the faith or not. There can be no spiritual attachment to Jesus Christ only according to the soul's felt need of his excellencies. It is only the afflicted and poor, the bruised and wounded, the sin-stricken, perishing ones, that have any need of, or that are brought into any spiritual participation in the unsearchable riches of Christ. Persons may proclaim themselves to be sinners, and tell how carnal they are; (who would dispute their statements?) they may say, I am the chief of sinners; they may talk about their sinfulness ever so constantly, but being a sinner, worldly minded, a contemptible, mean wretch, and talking about it is no evidence whatever that one is a subject of the grace of God, any carnal man might say the same. If we are born again of the Spirit, sin will be our grief, our unspiritual mindedness will make us heavy hearted, our vileness will abase us in our own sight, and loathing it the language of our moans and longings will

be, O God, be merciful to me, a sinner, and bring my soul relief. O save me from my sins; grant me thy pardoning love. O let not mine iniquities have dominion over me. "Base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence." Look at these "things which are not," as they are portrayed in several portions of the Scriptures. In Zechariah iii. 2, it is written, "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire," and in Ezekiel xv. there is a full presentation of how unprofitable, valueless and insignificant is the vine which the fire hath devoured. "Behold, when it was whole it was meet for no work: how much less shall it be meet yet for any work, when the fire hath devoured it, and it is burned."

The Lord has many fires in which his people are made meet for the display of his glory in them. He disciplines them beneath the fiery law. (Deut. xxxiii. 2.) Beneath this ministration of condemnation and death they tremble, shrink away in self estimation to nothing. The just demands of God in his holy law bring the poor sinner to feel, I die, I perish. (Exod. xx. 19; Rom. vii. 9.) Then again under the Lord's fiery chastenings because of transgression and backslidings, how small Jacob is brought. (Amos vii. 2–5.) Now, the Lord's chastenings of his inheritance is all in his fatherly love. Notwithstanding this, no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous. Sometimes with the "things which are not," whom God hath chosen, it is to be brought out of one fire, and then with scarcely time to take one's breath, to be plunged into another.

"O Zion, afflicted with wave upon wave,
Whom no man can comfort, whom no man can save."

"They shall go out from one fire, and another fire shall devour them."—Ezek. xv. 7. Trial after trial, thus in such measure as God sees fit, our life will be. He hath chosen his people in the furnace of affliction. (Isaiah xlviii. 10; Deut. iv. 20.) But all our fiery afflictions are in the covenant faithfulness of God. (Psalm cxix. 75,) and all is designed by him for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. What dross comes to the surface when we are melted in the fire. Such corruptions of our nature we are made to feel as we little thought were in us. Before the consuming trials came we pictured perhaps to ourselves how quiet and trustful and heavenly minded we would be under the sore providences of our God, but fretfulness, rebellion and unbelief, and O so much of the perverseness of our flesh came to the surface, but deep down in the caldron there is found sighs and cries to the Lord for his compassion and sustaining power. All the wood, hay and stubble is burned up, but the gold, silver and precious stones, our faith and love and all the divine work of the holy Spirit in us, though melted, abides, and is found unto the praise and honor of God. In our fiery trials the Lord separates in us the precious from the vile, but O, so much of the scum, so much that is vile at times we feel and see we fear there can be nothing of the precious left. Our poor hearts sink within us because of our felt destitution of the grace of God in us, so little that reflects the image of the Refiner, the holy One of Israel. There are no people like God's chosen. There was once when even the Incarnate Son of God, the Head of the election of grace, moaned forth, "But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they

shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him."—Psalms xxii. 6–8. Ah, this was in his deep humiliation, when he gave himself a sacrifice for his church. O, to what depths he descended for her sake, to bring her up unto himself in faultless, immortal beauty. Did Jesus in his humiliation say, "I am a worm"? So we abased in our own sight feel to be poor worms, "things that are not."

Ah, this suits me, for much of my time I am as a poor, trembling, crawling worm. Who could take a worm to his bosom? Who takes pity upon a worm? When the baseness of my nature is felt, I am made to despise myself, and subjected to the assaults, insinuations of Satan, I have become so weak, I have feared in my trembling heart that I was such a vile, insignificant worm, only fit to be crushed under the feet of the holy One of Israel. But a mysterious, and as I believe, a divine power, has moved me so that my thoughts have reached forth to the bleeding, dying Savior, and in brokenness of heart I have said,

"I will creep beside him as a worm,
And see him die for me;
I'll hear his groans, and view his wounds,
Until, with happy John,
I on his breast a place have found,
Sweetly to lean upon."

The voice of redeeming love has spoken to my heart, saying, "Fear not, thou worm Jacob."—Isaiah xli. 14. How this reaches down to poor, creeping things, to things that are not! The self-righteous might be offended by being addressed by the name, a worm; but not so those who are born of God, these are so taught of God that they feel themselves to be just such poor, crawling things. "Things that are despised hath God chosen, and things that are not, to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence." Therefore when God speaks, saying, "Fear not, thou worm," they are not offended, but they lift up their faces unto his gracious voice; their hearts respond to his soothing, strengthening, saving salutation. Job in his humiliation cries out, "Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?"—Job xiii. 25. In Psalm lxxii. 6, the people of God are described as "mown grass," and in Isaiah lxiv. 6, they are likened to a fading leaf. With his fellows Job could contend, saying, "I am not inferior unto you."—Job xiii. 2. But how frail and worthless he is in his own estimation when he is turned unto God. In his crushing affliction, his earthly substance all swept away, bereaved of his children, his body covered with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown, O, his grief was very great! (Job ii. 13.) Then to aggravate all this what fierce assaults he endured from Satan, and how the depravity of his fallen nature did at times so arise as a mighty flood that he uttered in his desperation (Job vi. 26,) grievous words before men, and before God, the language of folly. Grace is triumphant! How blessedly is its reign displayed in Job. Amidst all the wreckage of his earthly portion, the blasting of his happiness and hopes he arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshiped, and said, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord," and unto his wife he exclaimed, "What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Thus the mighty grace of

God supported him, and even when driven to and fro, amidst his bitter woes and doleful lamentations this precious grace brings him lowly, and he sees himself as abject nothingness, and thus he comes before the Almighty saying, "Wilt thou break a leaf driven to an fro? and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?" There is the faded, fallen leaf; every wind disturbs it, backward and forward it is driven; it is caught up in the whirlwind, and then let fall from the heights to the earth again; the wind asks not its consent, it has no anchorage, no resting-place, but whithersoever the wind listeth, thither it is driven, a helpless, worthless, hopeless thing.

What are we but base, vile clay? Is this too degrading? O, no! When very low, worthless and helpless in our own esteem, how gracious it is to be drawn near to God with this cry in our poor hearts. "But now, O Lord, thou art our Father: we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we are all the work of thy hand."—Isaiah lxiv. 8. Take us in thine hands and mould us to thy will, O our Father.

Abraham was lowly in his own sight when he confessed before the Lord that he was dust and ashes. (Gen. xviii. 27.) Daniel beholding a vision of the Lord tells us, "There remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength." —Dan. x. 8. A bruised reed and smoking flax. "The destitute," "the ready to perish," are appellations well suited to and accepted by sinners called by God's grace, and even such a view of one's utter worthlessness as is contained in the language of the son of Jonathan, is not too abasing for a poor, vile sinner to feel at times before the high and holy One. "Mephibosheth bowed himself and said, What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?"—2 Sam. ix. 8. Ah truly it is to such "things which are not" that the "kindness of God" is shewn! To the Lord our King we come, and all self-glorying is hushed before his throne, but here the leaf tossed to and fro, the dry stubble, dust and ashes, brands plucked from the burning, worms, base things, things that are despised and things which are not, poor, sinful, contrite souls can come and find a gracious welcome, abundant mercy, and plenteous redemption. Such creatures so signally blessed are prepared most willingly to give all glory to the Lord to whom it is due. God hath chosen them in his dear Son, called them by his grace, redeemed them, and justified them, and will bring them to everlasting glory. Look upon believers in Christ in all ages, whom God hath called, not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble ones can be found in the chosen host. Happy are we if grace has made us willing to become fools, that we may be wise unto the knowledge of God and his salvation; to be weak that we may be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might; to be base in our own estimation, that we may be raised to the nobility of being kings and priests unto God, and though despised of men, accounted the off-scouring of all things, we are made in Christ our head, and by the sanctification of the Spirit, all glorious in the eyes of the Lord, an eternal excellency, and though nothing in ourselves, "things which are not," in Christ Jesus we have all things and abound, for he of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

Less than the least is a name that well suits me,
For who is so sinful, unworthy, unfit?

To be with the flock is all of rich mercy,
Most blessed am I with God's children to sit.

I am surely included in "things which are not."

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Aug. 26, 1902.

BENTON L. BEEBE—BELOVED BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I send much love to the dear saints that are scattered in these low grounds of sorrow and tribulation. But, thank God, we are told that in the world we shall have tribulation, but the Master said, In me, ye shall have peace; be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. He has said also that we shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice. "Ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy." How true it is. The true church of God is much persecuted with that worldly religion, which desires to be seen and heard of men, and which claims to have a part to do in the redemption of the soul. But the true followers of Jesus do not claim any part in their redemption, since they believe that the work was finished when our blessed Savior said when he was crucified, "It is finished." Also he said just before he was offered up to be crucified "Not my will," (as man) "but thine be done, O Lord." He said that he did not come in his own name, but in the name of his Father, and his Father gave him the will to do of his good pleasure.

The natural man cannot please God, because God's works are spiritual, and man's are natural. They that are spiritual "speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world to our glory." It is also written, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him." Why then contend for a thing that is foolishness? Although so wise in their own conceit, they cannot teach the wisdom of God, not knowing it themselves. If, in the days of the Savior they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory, but then, and now, they are blinded by the god of this world, and deny the true Lord.

It is said, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsel or hath taught him?" "The nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are caunted as the small dust of the balance." We are all as nothing before him, and less than nothing. Then how can poor finite man claim that there is a work for him to perform, and then call it obedience in doing the will of God, when they all are counted to him as less than nothing and vanity? Moses was commanded to take off his shoes, for the place was holy ground. His shoes were the works of man, when he comes with some of his self-righteousness. We are told to deny self in all things, and the prophet said that all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags in the

ight of God. Solomon said, "Keep thy not when thou goest to the house of God, nd be more ready to hear than to give he sacrifice of fools; for they consider not that they do evil." The angel was commanded to take away the filthy garments from Joshua. Was not this his self-righteousness? and his iniquity was made to pass from him, and he was clothed with a change of raiment, and his garment was the Lord our righteousness; we have none of ours to offer. Peter was self-confident, and was left to himself to show him that he was not sufficient of himself to do the will of God. But when Peter was brought to weep bitterly, when he was made to see his weakness and inability, he was brought low, as are all the disobedient children which claim to have the will to do or not to do. This is a fine pharisaical religion which was believed by Paul once, when he thought that he was doing service to God, but when the scales dropped from his eyes, and he was told what to do, he went willingly, doubting nothing. God gave him the will, and marked the way in which he should go, and the Lord sent him, and then he did not shun to declare the whole counsel of God, and then he took heed to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made him overseer, to feed the church of God which he had purchased with his own blood.

Paul said, "After my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your ownselves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." How true it is even in this day. Paul knew the trials that awaited them, and he felt for the true church of God, and ceased not to warn them with tears. He commended them to God, and to the word of his grace, which was able to build them up, and to give them an inheritance among all them which were sanctified.

Dear brother Beebe, the admonitions which Paul gave to the followers of Christ then, are now talked about, and preached among those who put no confidence in the flesh, who are not self-righteous, but like Paul, are still holding to the true doctrine of the prophets and apostles. There are those who still warn the people of God, with tears, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

I was glad to see our dear Elder Bartley's communication. His writing is so much in harmony with the teaching of the word, and with those who put no confidence in the flesh. And your able editorial upon what constitutes christian obedience, is good and to the point, and is established by the word. If such teaching was to be found among all who claim to be Old School Baptists, there would be more love, and harmony, and fellowship abounding, and there would be less contending for conditions to be performed by poor finite creatures, who are not able to think a good thought, of themselves, neither in this time world, nor in the one to come. For it is all of faith given to us, and we have nothing of our own to offer before God. Outward worship alone is of the flesh, to be seen of men, and to sit in high places, expecting to be rewarded for the good works performed. But I can but say, If I have ever done any good work which was acceptable with God, I do not know it, that is, in and of myself, but I desire to be in all things obedient. I desire to be thankful to him for all his benefits and blessings, and trust that I am; that is all I can claim. It is through him that we live, move and have our being, and, without him, we cannot think a good thought. I feel that I am still a sinner, saved by grace

alone, if saved at all. I do at times feel some refreshing seasons. I felt that it was good to meet with the dear saints upon the third Sunday of the present month; the Lord was in our midst as I felt. Our beloved Elder J. K. Womack was given utterance and liberty, and boldness in proclaiming the gospel of our Lord, saying that nothing but his blood will cleanse us from all sin. It was a refreshing season to thus meet and worship God under our own vine and figtree. We have no conditional worship with us. May this branch planted of the Lord grow up unto a holy temple in him. We trust that he may richly bless us from his bountiful hand. We feel to bless God that we are blessed with a loving pastor, who puts no confidence in the arm of man. He does not come with man's wisdom, or with enticing words, but in demonstration of the Spirit, with power. He is a sweet singer in Israel.

Brother Beebe, the more I read the precious old SIGNS, the more I love them. They are filled with such good things, I love to read them, and often feel thankful that I have experienced some of the travels from nature to grace which are described in their pages. But, dear brother, I have so many doubts and fears. I am less than the least, if one at all, but thank God, I do love the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ, and I hope that I feel to give him all the praise. Without him I am forever lost.

May God bless you, and your associate editor, Elder Chick; may he keep you firm in the faith, earnestly contending for it. I hope that you will pardon me, but I felt that I wanted to express myself in this way. It is, I trust, only for the love which the Lord has given me that I write the way I do. My prayer is, my brother, that we may all grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth, as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. When you feel that it is well with you, remember me at a throne of grace. Though we are strangers in the flesh, I trust that it is not so in the Spirit; I believe we see eye to eye, and speak the same things.

If you think this will be of any service to any one, you are at liberty to publish it.

As ever, your brother in hope, if a brother at all,

O. B. HICKERSON.

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH, WHAT IS IT?

ON a casual thought, many would say it is the first day of the week, but all who hold this view must excuse me when I most positively deny that such is truth, and if they will bear with me I will try to show them what is the truth regarding this matter. It is written that, "If the truth make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Again, it is written, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Note, it is the man of God that is profited, and he will be profited by knowing what the christian Sabbath really is.

What does the word Sabbath mean? By turning to the law of Moses, we find that in every instance it signifies rest. In Genesis ii. 2, it is recorded that God did rest from his work on the seventh day, and he blessed it, and sanctified it as a day of rest, and it is the type of a more glorious rest to the man of God. The Levitical law also, with all its Sabbaths, is a shadow of better things to come. Even the second coming of the

Lord Jesus Christ is protrayed by the year of jubilee, when the church shall enter the perfect rest with her holy Head and Husband. The Head of the church is King in Zion, and as King in Zion he never invites, and never offers any opportunities to any to labor for reward. He commands, and it is a most glorious fact that his word or command is always obeyed. Therefore he says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Here we have discovered to us the rest that is for the weary and heavy laden, even the holy Son of God, who is that glorious holy Sabbath of the man of God. He is the Alpha and the Omega of all that are called with the holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began.

Again, the apostle to the Hebrews said, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." And again, "He that hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his, hath entered into rest," or the Sabbath, which is no less than the holy Son of God.

It is a fact that the members of the church of God often return to the weak and beggarly elements of the world, to seek out a way in which to be independent of the King of Zion, having concluded, no doubt, that the lamp of the love has gone out in their soul, or that it never was aflame there. Therefore, that free-agency principle that exists in the flesh, whispers, "If you would enjoy tho comfortable communion of the Spirit, you must do something; you must keep the Sabbath day holy." Yet owing to our environments we may be pardoned for doing things of necessity or mercy, they say which under the law of Moses would be styled picking up chips, and kindling fires, which would necessitate going out of the tent, which to us is Jesus, and which was under that law, forbidden. The type must be a perfect rest, to truly represent the christian Sabbath, even our blessed Lord Jesus Christ.

But there was no possibility of any one keeping those types perfectly, till Jesus came under the law and fulfilled it in every jot and tittle, and when he on the cross cried, "It is finished," the law had no more demands against the bride, the church, the Lamb's wife. Then how secure, and with what assurance every member can cease from his own works, as God did from his, and enter into that rest which remaineth to the people of God. This truly is the christian Sabbath, and glory be to God it is also a sanctified Sabbath, sanctified by the blood of the Son of God upon the Roman cross, as was ordained by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of the Father.

Then, brethren, there is no need of articles of faith declaring that we believe in the sanctity of the first day of the week, called the christian Sabbath. Of such as regards days, Paul said, "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain." It is a fact that those who cannot look beyond the deeds of the law for salvation, are, if heirs of God at all, in the toils of bondage in Babylon, or confusion, and they cannot enjoy perfect liberty, because they have never known what it is; the truth has never made them free. O, beloved brethren, what wonderful freedom it is to implicitly believe in Jesus as our Savior, our life, our all, and to rest in him as our Sabbath. But lest some should not be perfectly satisfied with the proof already presented, I will call attention to Col. ii. There the apostle not only shows that the

seventh day Sabbath was not replaced by the first day Sabbath of Roman Catholicism, but was a type of Christ, who is the substance or body. (Verse 17.)

Now, in connection with this, I want to add a few thoughts upon the true Lord's day, or gospel rest. It also is not understood by many of the children of God. The reason is that antichrist proclaims everywhere, through all its teachers, the first day of the week, called Sunday, which was the day dedicated to the great sun god of the Pagans, (see Neander's history) and which was by the emperor Constantine made the christian Sabbath, is the Lord's day, because he arose from the dead on that day. And I am sorry to see some claiming to be Old School Baptists proclaiming the same. But Constantine appointed this day some years too late at least. The Lord's day is the gospel day. The law and the prophets were until John. Of course the gospel day began when the law and the prophets, or the legal day, ended. No man of God will be likely to be so presumptuous as to dispute these facts.

The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes. The gospel is peace on earth and good will toward men. But how can this be among those where hypocrisy pervades every element of the worship, and where Sabbath days, and new moons, and feast days abound, all of which were to perish with the using?

If any brother will take up the history of antichrist, no matter under what name, he will find this Sunday-Sabbath question, with its schools, to look very much like one of the horns of the two-horned beast, which John saw rise up out of the earth, having two horns like a lamb, but speaking as a dragon. This beast, unlike the others, came up out of the earth, showing as I understand it, its origin to be of the intellectual type, and of a higher order of creation in the creations of antichrist. Hence these two horns represent mighty power, and though so innocent in appearance as a lamb, yet destined sooner or later to dominate and rule the kingdoms of the earth, and bring about that millennium of antichrist of which we read and hear so much.

This letter is written partly because of a request from Elder David Bartley. While corresponding with him I wrote a page on the Sabbath question, and he approved it, and expressed a desire that I, when in the Spirit on the Lord's day, would write more upon the subject. Believing that I have shown what is, and what is not the christian Sabbath, and that the first day Sabbath is the Sabbath of antichrist, and a snare and a delusion, and that the Lord's day is the gospel day, beginning with the end of the legal dispensation, I submit it in love to the truth, to the editors of the SIGNS, and will say, if you deem it worthy, give it a place in your pages, for the comfort of the readers.

As ever your brother,

A. H. HAGANS.

315 SAN PEDRO ST., LOS ANGELES, Cal., Sept. 8, 1902.

[THERE can be no doubt that Jesus is the true rest of the people of God, and that therefore he is the antitype of all the legal Sabbaths, and we do not question that the gospel day is truly the Lord's day, to all who are in the Spirit. When in the Spirit this is realized very blessedly by the humble in heart. The things of Jesus are revealed by the Spirit of truth, the Comforter. How blessed to cease from our own works and find rest in the dear Redeemer, whose work is finished forever.—ED.]

A TOUR IN TEXAS.

DEAR EDITORS AND BRETHREN:—Many of the dear spiritual kindred in Texas desired me to write for the SIGNS of my visit there, so I will give you a brief report.

First, the Lord in his grace and providence moved me to go and sent me, though in weakness, fear and trembling. My health was very delicate when I made the long journey, on which I rested a few days at Gilbert Beebe's, the only remaining one of my three children, who resides in Anadarko, Oklahoma, whom I had not seen for more than three years. The first meeting was the Sulphur Fork Association, which was truly good and pleasant. The preaching was all harmonious, and testified of Jesus, the salvation of God sent unto his people, "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual." And this statement will as well apply to all the churches and ministers and meetings with whom it was my blessed privilege to be assembled, in all my sojourn among them, including the large assemblage of brethren and ministers in a three days' council in Fort Worth. For at all the meetings of the brotherhood of saints in Christ, God, and the Father and Son and Spirit in his sovereign power and wisdom, love and grace, was the theme of all the praise and prayer and preaching; and in this divine service we were all made to rejoice in Christ Jesus, the Rock that was smitten for us, by whose stripes we are healed.

While doctrine and exhortation, encouragement and comfort, faith and hope, and love in Christ, harmoniously blended in the preaching, yet at none of the many blessed meetings was there any selfish or fleshly appeals, or exciting efforts, and no other motive was presented in all the service of God than his love and glory. "Speaking the truth in love," as also in simplicity and godly sincerity, characterized all those dear servants of the Lord Jesus. They ministered as those who believe and trust in him, as not only saving his people from their sins now in his own fullness of time, but also as building the church and reigning in it so sovereignly that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." It is a joy to be with such faithful and true churches and ministers. They believe in God, as did Abraham, "that what he has promised, he is able also to perform;" and he has said to his Son, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness." Therefore, says our Lord, "If a man love me, he will keep my words." It is in his heart to do this. For love is the dearest and strongest motive, and the most active and earnest force. Those Texas brethren show their faith and trust in the Lord by their works of faith and labors of love and patience of hope; for they do not turn away from the reigning grace of Christ to conditional works, nor get up protracted and distracted meetings, nor call on the people to come up to be prayed for, nor try to excite and drag them into the churches, to thus swell their numbers, as is so common with all worldly and conditional churches and ministers. The very many churches and Elders of those beloved saints, not only keep the faith of Jesus and abide in his doctrine, believing in God, "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," (for which the conditional party of Texas have raised bars of non-fellowship against them) but they walk humbly before the Lord, and in love keep his words. Therefore, they will not trample his sacred word under their feet, nor dishonor him,

as their conditional opposers and accusers are doing, by wantonly receiving in their churches and holding in fellowship those who are living in gross unscriptural wedlock. Many humble and godly-walking men and women have been bitterly reproached and cruelly cast out, just because they reverently believe that their blessed and holy Lord God Almighty is equally infinite in his wisdom and purpose and power, as in his knowledge, and that their entire salvation is by his free and sovereign grace as not worthy of the fellowship of Conditional Baptists; but persons having two or three living wives, or husbands in Texas, and Free Masons and Odd Fellows in other States, if not in Texas, are not only good enough to be held in the churches, but also in the ministry, with the Conditional Baptists, who profess a great zeal for God, while they deny his power and transgress his plain word. It was this state of things which led to the Old School Baptist council in Fort Worth last month, the work of which is published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for December 15th, 1902. All would do well to read it, and know how the Grace Baptists of Texas stand. One thing is worthy of attention: many of them read the dear old SIGNS, and all those Baptists who do so are united in the doctrine of God our Savior, and are in peace.

On my return trip I again visited my son, who kindly obtained for me free passes both ways, from Chicago to Anadarko, saving me twenty-six dollars in railroad fare. Returning, I visited my brother Joseph, grandchildren, nephews and nieces, and the Hickory Creek church, in eastern Illinois, where my wife joined me. I was in the constitution of this church in May, 1855, and ordained in it January 2, 1857. Much of my gospel ministry and many of my baptisms were there. Many of its members have fallen asleep in Jesus, and I alone am left of those who formed the church. Sadly enough, conditionalism has confused them of late, as it has done wherever its advocates have been received. Well will it be for the peace of the churches, when they who are not of us will go out from us, as they have done in Kentucky, Illinois, Tennessee and Texas.

We are now resting a few days at the pleasant home of dear Elder and sister Tharp, companions in the afflictions of the gospel for the truth's sake, and have visited their home church.

In all the long sojourn, nearly 4,000 miles, the Lord has protected and sustained me, and gave me favor with his faithful people, who were loving and good to me. "Happy art thou, O Israel! who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord?"

Your brother and servant in Christ,

D. BARTLEY.

NOVEMBER 27, 1902.

TOUCHET, Wash., September, 1902.

VERY DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I read in the SIGNS of March first, 1902, your views upon the words, "The last shall be first, and the first last," and I am pleased with them, and with your bringing the apostle Peter as an example. Surely he was an exemplary disciple; his zeal for his Master was very great, yet we see that the flesh vaunted itself in him in asking of the Master, "What shall we have therefore." Again, when he started to walk on the water see the flesh appear. He said, under the influence of the flesh, "Though all men forsake thee, yet will not I." Just before the Lord began to show them his sufferings and death he said to the disciples, "But whom say ye

that I am?" Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Then the Lord said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Then what said the dear Lord? "I say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Again see the zeal of Peter when he said, "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be done unto thee." Here the dear Lord rebuked him sharply. "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Now, by the foregoing it does not appear that Peter was the feeble one of the twelve, yet it does appear that Satan was ever near to present himself, for we hear the dear Lord say, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he might sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Yet how soon after this do we see Peter influenced by the Satanic spirit, boasting, "I am ready to go with thee to prison and to death." Then how soon he denied his Lord, saying, "Woman I know not the man;" and even until the third time denying him. Then the Lord turned and looked upon him, and his heart felt the sting, and he went out and wept bitterly.

Thus every saint of the living God will pay bitterly for boasting. The Lord will somehow bring it to their minds, I do believe, for ever child whom he loveth he chasteneth, and I do not believe that his precious blood flowed out for any one whom he did not love, for love comes of God: God is love. So he that hath passed from death unto life will love his brethren; poor, feeble, tempest-tossed ones will cry, O Father, have mercy, have mercy; teach me to so walk as to show myself approved unto God, and before men. Thus it becometh all saints to walk circumspectly in the sight of men, for they are closely watched on all sides by the infidel, by the man of no religious profession, and by the Arminian world. We are by faith through hope, looking for the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us unto God from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works. Then what shall we say? Paul to Titus said, "These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee."

Does this "no man," signify the world? I think not. I think it must be the believer. It is true that some of the people of God do not like such exhortations given with authority. But he said that we live in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom we shine as lights in the world. Again he said, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." This is to the living, for he said, "Christ shall give thee light," not life. "See that ye walk circumspectly." Now if there be no manifestation of our faith, is not the candle put under a bushel? I think so. Again he said, "Speaking to yourselves in Psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord." Dear God give me strength to cross the billowy waves which would cut this melody off.

By the fruit is the tree known, but I fear the fruit of this tree has been frozen, and is consequently withered and fallen. May the gracious God give me grace and

strength unto the end, which cannot be far off. I am seventy-four this month, the sixteenth of September, 1902. I am growing quite feeble. If my memory serves me, I was the second member baptized into the old fashioned Predestinarian church in Oregon, my husband being the first. The first church was organized, as I think, with nine members from the middle states. Some were from Missouri. They, or the most of them, became dissatisfied with this valley, and migrated. Their pastors, Elders Wm. Simpson and John Stipp, their wives, and a few others were organized into a church; my husband, Benjamin Walden, soon joined them, the first, as I think, by baptism; myself was the next. I lived rejoicing many years, yet not without doubts and fears.

Alas, alas, the time came when the bleak winds blew, and the fruit was frozen, and withered and fell. My body will soon be gathered to its mother earth, and my spirit take it flight, and whether the dear Lord will say, "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise," or "Depart, I never knew you," is the great question. I still live in hope, though the place that now knows me, will soon know me no more forever.

Now, brother Chick, if this letter is approved, I would like it published, as there are a few of the old saints who were well acquainted with me, scattered over this far western world. I should like them to learn of my spiritual and bodily welfare. It is tiresome to write to all, and they all read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; it maintains that doctrine that strengthens the feeble, as well as those who are stronger in the fold of Christ.

Your sister,

I. J. CUMMINS.

MT. VERNON, Texas, Nov. 23, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I inclose you a letter from a dear young brother, in which he sketches his christian experience. Since this letter was written he has been given the courage to come before the church, and was joyfully received and baptized on the third Sunday in October. It is a privilege highly prized by me, when blessed with it, to read or hear such testimonies of God's continued goodness to poor sinners, and to his church. How pleasant it is to witness "the Lord adding to the church daily such as should be saved." Such is not a product of excitable protracted meetings, which produce only mocking Ishmaelites, but a product of the Spirit and grace of God. It is good indeed for us to have a mind to wait upon the Lord and witness a fulfillment of his promises to his people, for he "is not slack concerning his promises, as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to usward."

Print this experience, and let it be numbered with the testimonies of the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if you think best.

Yours in a little hope,

H. B. JONES.

SIMPSONVILLE, Texas, June 6, 1902.

ELDER H. B. JONES—DEAR AND MOST PRECIOUS MINISTER OF THE BLESSED SON OF GOD:—It is with fear and trembling that I in my weakness, both of body and spirit, attempt to pencil you a few thoughts, which I have realized much comfort from, but as I have been afflicted so much here of late, and continually going down, until I am forced to believe that my stay in this world is very short, and the nearer it comes the more I am forced to rely on those sweet thoughts named above, and the weaker they seem

to be. I often groan and mourn for the Lord to restore unto me the joys of his salvation. Then I begin to look back over my past life, and see how kind the Lord has been in leading me along, and protecting me, and my heart is made to rejoice with unspeakable joy. But now, in these seemingly last hours, I am almost left in despair, without God and without hope in the world, but when I realize that in Jesus is life, mercy, truth, power and all, I am bound to fall at his feet and beg for mercy, and cry, "Lord, save, I perish."

Brother Jones, (I sometimes hope that we are brothers) I have had a deep desire for a long time to give you and those I believe are God's people, a reason of my hope, but it seems so little I fear none of them would claim fellowship with it, and if those whom I dearly love could not claim my hope, then all my hopes would be blighted, because I would not dare to question their judgment of an experience of grace.

Now, brother Jones, if not intruding on your valuable time to read what a poor sinner has to hope for an experience, though as dim and as little as it often seems, all this world contains would be less than nothing when compared to it.

I shall begin where I hope the Lord opened my eyes and let me have a full view of my own sinful, corrupt and deceitful heart, which was sad and horrible to look on. All the sins I ever committed were before my eyes, and it looked like I had lost lost sight of everything but my own sins, and there I hope I mourned on the account of sin. I remained in this condition for something over twelve months. I would try to read our Bible, but the more I read it, the less hope there was for me, for it condemned me in almost every line. Brother Jones, I will have to skip over many things here, for fear of wearying your patience. After my burden had grown until I thought I was going to die, and meet my awful doom in an eternal hell, which I justly deserved: I was my own witness, therefore I found no escape. But my heart's desire was, "Lord, have mercy on a poor, lost and undone sinner," and was begging if it be possible for God to be just, and pour out his mercies on as vile a sinner as I, when it seemed as if some one said to me, "With God all things are possible." Then a calm feeling came over me, and everything looked bright, and I felt in my poor heart that God had been just, and had been looking down on me in mercy, and I was one of the ones that he had sent his Son to suffer and die for. I shall never be able to tell how my poor heart rejoiced in giving praises to Jesus, the Savior of sinners. This same burden has never returned in its depths any more.

I have had a deep desire to join the church and be baptized ever since, but knowing that I cannot live as I ought, and for fear I would be a disgrace to the people that I so dearly love, I keep putting it off, thinking I will reach the place that I can overcome the sins that doth so easily beset me.

I will tell you a dream which is the strongest brace I have to my hope. About four years ago I was taken sick, and it appeared that I was going to die on the account of disobedience for not joining the church and being baptized, so I began to pray if the Lord would give me a brighter evidence that I was a true subject, and had eternal life, that I would do anything in the way of honoring my Savior. So on the night following I dreamed that I was in an old trail which I used to travel when I was a boy. It

was very dark, and I was afraid. I knew the place I was at, but I knew I could not follow the trail, as it was so crooked; I knew there was a field not far ahead, and as I raised my head to look, a light flashed in front of me; then the thought struck me that this light was a token from God, and he meant to show me thereby, so I began to beg the Lord to show me this light again, and I would be satisfied, and sure enough, it appeared in arms' length of me, and I stood and gazed on it in wonder why it was in the shape it was, for it was like a barrel hoop, and about the size of one, and the space that made the light was about as broad as a rainbow, and was brighter than the brightness of the sun. So I wondered why this light had appeared in the shape of a ring, and what is the definition of a ring, and it seemed as though some one said, that it is something without end, and this is to show you that your life is eternal life. So, when I begin to doubt my first experience, this dream affords me much strength.

I will now close, hoping you will pardon me for wearying your patience; look over my weakness, as I have written most of this on my bed. Remember me, a poor sinner, saved by grace, and grace alone, when in prayer.

J. E. HARRIS.

WYOMING, Del., Nov. 3, 1902.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I feel this morning that I want to write you a few lines and tell you if I can how I am feeling at this time. For the last few days my heart seems to be almost overflowing with love to my brethren, or I might say to the church. On Wednesday of the Salisbury association while at home alone at my work, there came over me such a peaceful, calm feeling, that I felt my Savior was near me, drawing me by the cords of his everlasting love. I thought of you all at the meeting, and would have liked very much to have been there. While feeling as I did that day, I wondered if I would have felt the same with many around me, as I did alone, and yet not alone. Yesterday, and this morning, I have been feeling very much as I did then. What a pleasant frame of mind it is to enjoy, but I do not expect to be on the mountain top very long at one time, I guess it would not do for me, for I so often need to be humbled; much more of my time is spent in the valley; I seem to be in a cold, lifeless state much of my time.

It is just thirteen years ago since our dear old pastor, Elder Rittenhouse, led me down into the water and baptized me. Never have I regretted asking for a place in the church, but a great many times I have felt that I was too unworthy, and entirely unfit to have a name and place among such lovely people as the dear saints of Christ. I feel that I have so much to be thankful for, and I am afraid that I do not show forth nearly as much thankfulness as I should; my walk seems to be more worldly than otherwise.

Some thoughts have been passing through my mind since Saturday night, which I think of trying to write to you. I did write them to sister Hannah Jenkins, yesterday, and when I began this, I thought that I would not write them again, but I have written so far, and no other thoughts would come to me. I may be wrong in the application of the text, but will submit them to you, knowing that you will cast a mantle of charity over my thoughts. I awoke with these words so forcibly on my mind, "The evening and the morning were the first day." It called to my mind the experi-

ence of a child of God, when he is awakened to a sense of his lost and ruined condition, how dark and gloomy the night is; there is not a ray of light to be seen, but when God sees fit to take the burden from us, behold the morning has dawned. Then there is no more night like that we have had before. With some the sun bursts forth suddenly, so that they can tell just where they were when the morning broke, but with me it came gradually, it seems to me as the dawning of day, with just a little light, so dim it could scarcely be discerned, but as the moments passed, it became lighter, until bye and bye the noonday sun appeared. My night, or evening, was finally gone, yet I did not know how or when it went, but the light appeared, and I knew it was morning then. It is very seldom that any Scripture comes to my mind to cause me to think of experience as this one did on Saturday night. Do you think I have the right application of it? Is it to be applied to christian experience? I do not remember whether I ever heard any one speak of it in this way or not.

Mother is well, she and the rest of the family join me in love to you and your family, and we would enjoy a visit from you so much. Your unworthy sister,

ANNIE MEREDITH.

[WHAT a pleasant experience has been this just spoken of by our sister; how good it is when some Scripture comes to us, and leads us back to remember all the way in which the Lord our God has led us. We are glad for her that this experience has been hers of late. We do not doubt the correctness of the application of the text to which sister Meredith has referred, as it came to her, and as she has expressed it, we do not doubt that this plain and simple narration of the work of the Lord will appeal to many.—ED.]

ERRATA.

GALESBURG, Ill., Dec. 18, 1902.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—I notice that you have republished a former article over my signature. I noticed a typographical error in the original letter, and thought to call your attention to it, but thought the letter would soon pass out of mind, and let it go.

On page 746, volue 70, second column, your typo makes it read, "Some will say brother Beebe has gone daft," &c. It should read, "brother Butler has gone daft," &c. I would be very much pleased to have you correct this in Jan. 1st number, as you have given it so much publicity. The way it now reads is without sense, as you never have said anything that I am aware of that I could have quoted you in this way.

Yours truly,

B. F. BUTLER.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO BROTHER D. M. LEONARD'S APPEAL TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$272 50
J. G. Ford, Ohio, $5.00; E. Ketchum, Ill., $2.00; Sarah Hawk, Ind., $1.50; Henry Stigleman, Ind., $5.00; Mrs. Geo. S. Yard, N. J., $1.00; Mrs. J. M. Macfarlane, Mich., $2.00; Wm. A. Gwaltney, Ind., $1.00; Eliza Mobley, Ind., $1.00; Miss S. O. Heard, Ga., $2.60; Mrs. T. E. Cole, W. Va., $.50; A. G. Dawson, N. M., $10.00; A Friend, N. B., $1.00; J. A. Davis, Va., $1.00; A. B. Russell, Pa., $10.00; Mrs. L. M. Stewart, Pa., $5.00; Carl Kulander, Kan., $1.00; Mrs. G. H. Faulkner, N. Y., $2.00; Mrs. Edward Griffin, N. Y., $3.00; Mrs. Amy Shaddick, Pa., $1.00; L. R. Groom, Mo., $10.00; Dr. B. P. Earle, Ky., $1.00.—Total	66 60
Total to date	$339 10

CHURCH NOTICES.

SHILOH Church meets regularly third Sunday in each month: morning, 11 o'clock; afternoon, 3 o'clock. At present we meet in Wonns Hall, Sixth street, No. 721, between G and H streets, N. W., Washington, D. C.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1903.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

INTRODUCTORY TO VOLUME SEVENTY-ONE.

At the beginning of a new volume of the Signs of the Times, the arduous duties and responsibilities connected with its publication loom up before us to such a degree that we feel to shrink from the undertaking, yet the marvelous way in which we have been sustained in former years, and the many kind assurances of brethren and friends of their approval of the conduct of the paper, and of the comfort it has been to them, encourages us to hope that we may be enabled of the Lord to continue it on in the old path. We cannot promise our readers to introduce anything new the coming year, but hope that the publication may still be "Devoted to the Old School Baptist cause" in the future as it has been for the last seventy years.

During these three score years and ten the Signs of the Times has met with some very discouraging reverses; not from the professed Arminian world only, that was to be expected, but of our own-selves have men rose up speaking perverse things. This has been the most disheartening of all, and we have many times been made to sympathize with Paul when he said that he had been in "perils among false brethren." It has indeed been painful to receive orders from brethren who have for years been warm friends and strong advocates of the principles to which the Signs have been devoted for nearly three quarters of a century, to discontinue their subscription because the paper still maintained the principles that for fifty years had been received by them as the truth, and for nearly ten years the subscription list continued to decrease at the rate of several hundred a year, and in our weakness we have been made to fear that the work of the Signs was nearly finished. But, blessed be the Lord, for the last two or three years there has been a reviving of the cause, and more of the old time interest has been manifested, and the patronage of the Signs has steadily increased until we are now able to announce to its friends that the present volume is commenced under the most favorable circumstances, and with the largest list of regular subscribers the paper has had for many years, for which we feel to thank God and take courage.

With a publication of the nature of the Signs, each subscriber should feel a personal interest in making it as interesting and comforting to its readers as possible, and they can very materially assist us in doing this by contributing to its columns items of church news, writing upon scriptural subjects, relations of christian experiences, and other matter appropriate to the nature of the publication.

Relations of christian experiences are most highly appreciated by the readers in general, especially the earliest exercise in the travel from nature to grace.

In writing for publication it is very necessary to write as plainly as possible, and if lead pencil is used, always use a dark one. It frequently occurs that good and acceptable articles have to be delayed

a long time until we can get time to copy them. If you do not write a plain hand yourself, it is an excellent plan to have some friend who writes a clear hand, to copy your article for you, or, best of all, if you can do so, have it copied in type writing, only be sure if type written to have plenty of open space between the lines. By following the above suggestions you will save us much time, and enable us to give your articles earlier insertion in the paper.

Relying on the continued favors of God, and forbearance and assistance of our brethren, we hope the present volume of the SIGNS will be equal, if not superior, to any of its former volumes. But remember, brethren, in making it so, much depends on you.

B.

A NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

IN all ages of the world, so far as history, both sacred and profane, has informed us, men have set apart special days, and have regarded them as waymarks along the march of events, in which they have deemed it good to take account of the past and of the future. This seems to have been a common thing among all people and nations. As a nation we have our fourth of July, our memorial and decoration days. And all civilized nations have days set apart in memory of some great events in their history. The people of God, under the old covenant, also had their days specially set apart, in which God commanded them to remember and celebrate his mercy to them upon notable occasions in the past of their history. The feast of the passover, and the feast of tabernacles, were two special occasions in which year by year they were commanded to remember the past, and to celebrate God's great goodness to them. Since the gospel day was ushered in, and the spiritual people of God have been gathered into churches for his worship, they also have set apart days specially devoted to that end.

It is indeed true that Israel ought to have remembered the goodness and wonderful works of God toward them every day of the year, and no doubt many among them did remember and meditate upon his works at all times. It is true that the church engages in the worship of God, when led by the Spirit, every day and hour, yet special occasions are set apart for special remembrance of him, when publicly and together they engage in his worship. And God has commanded this of them. It was his command to Israel, and it is his command to his church now, not to forsake the assembling of themselves together for his public worship. As individuals, believers feel that they receive tokens of mercy from the Lord every day, and that they ought to praise and adore him every day therefor, yet they also remember some special times of blessing in their lives, and often in memory go back over the past. These occasions are waymarks along the way, and they often set up their Ebenezers there, and in the future go back to those special seasons, when the Lord was very sensibly near to save and bless. This is not only not wrong, but God has placed this disposition in their very nature, and it is good to have our minds and hearts occupied upon such occasions, in special praise to God. And this is true notwithstanding that all believers desire that every day should be a day of the Lord's favor to them.

So upon the beginning of a new year, and upon the beginning of another volume of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, it seems but natural (that is, in keeping with what

has been true with God's people in all ages,) that we should also look over the ground, and raise some special note of praise to God for his mercy in the past, and some special prayer to him that he would continue to keep us during the year to come. It was said to the people of Israel after they had come up out of Egypt, that they should remember all the way in which the Lord their God had led them to prove them and to teach them. No doubt very often the spiritual among them did remember the goodness of God in bringing them out of the land of Egypt, and in conferring upon them the manifold favors which they found in the promised land of Canaan. And we find them in the words of prophets, and in the songs of David, calling up these blessings, and giving praise to God for them. So there comes to us all special times when we remember the way in which we have been led, and in which the Lord has proven us, and in doing so we are filled with shame for our own wretched failures, unbelief, and departures from him, and with wonder, gladness and joy at the mercy which he has vouchsafed to us in spite of our vile ingratitude, and our proneness to lust after the things which are contrary to his commandments, dishonoring to him, and hurtful to ourselves.

It seems also but natural that we should think of the future as well as the past, and that as we remember the weakness and failures that have shown themselves in us in the past, we should fear and tremble as we look forward, and go forward into the unknown future; while at the same time we are made to hope in the continued longsuffering and faithfulness of that God who has done so much for us. Of one thing we feel well assured, viz: we shall need his grace every moment, else we shall utterly fail to follow him, and serve him, as we have failed so many times in the past. This will be, as we are persuaded, the feeling of every one who has come to know and love God. The Lord's people do rejoice often, but they rejoice with trembling, and so do they work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, as the apostle enjoins upon them. Even in the midst of the happiest hours, when the presence of the Lord seems near to the believer, he can but remember how often he has failed, and how often he has erred through the infirmities of the flesh, and so come to fear. This leads him to go softly in the way. Boasting is excluded from such an one, and he can but trust in the Lord alone for help and salvation.

For ourself, we are often reminded of the language of the apostle: "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." This sums up the whole matter of salvation, daily salvation, in a few brief words. It is all a treasure in an earthen vessel. This is true, whether we speak as did the apostle, of the ministry of the word, or whether we speak in a more general sense, of grace in the experience of every child of God. How great the treasure if we speak of the gift of the ministry, whether as prophets, apostles, teachers, evangelists, pastors, or whatever gift it may be. Paul counted his ministry as a gift from God, and so considered it as a sacred thing, and this gift, or treasure, is in earthen vessels, and in earthen vessels marred and broken and unsightly enough in themselves. How great and precious the treasure; how mean and vile the vessel. So when we speak of salvation which is all of grace, how rich the gift of hope, faith, love, and of every fruit of the Spirit, and

how poor and imperfect the vessel. Yet that vessel, mean and vile as it is, has been washed and sanctified to the use of the Master, before the treasure is committed to it. Of this earthen vessel Paul could say, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing." But on the other hand he could speak of the riches of grace, of the abounding of grace, and of the glory of grace which does dwell within the vessel.

In the connection of this last Scripture the apostle speaks of the light which shines within the vessel. He says, "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Then he follows on and says, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels." The light of the knowledge of the glory of God then is the treasure. One of the effects of light is to make manifest, and pure light makes manifest all impurities where it falls. This light shining within also makes manifest, and among other things it manifests the sin, and evil, and vileness, and poverty of our nature. It reveals every crack and deformity of the vessel. No man ever saw these things till the light shined within. That moment that we see the light, we begin to see ourselves also. Then we begin to wonder why such a gift should be put into such a vessel. I am unclean, unclean, each one must be brought to confess, but how glorious the light. It is the light of the knowledge of God in his glory, that is, in his perfections, the chief of which is holiness. As the sinner comes thus to see the holiness of God, he comes also to see the great unholiness of his heart and life.

Such thoughts as these have been in our mind as we stand upon the threshold of another year. God has been good to us all, notwithstanding all the unbelief and failure of our lives. His mercies, temporal and spiritual, have flowed out to us beyond all our power to express. Personally, we can but say, "Hitherto the Lord has helped me." "Having obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come," was the testimony of the apostle. Both in the preaching of the word, and in writing editorially for the SIGNS, and in the share which we have had in conducting it, we have felt all the time to have come far short of what we have desired to attain to, yet we do believe that the Lord has been with us, and has blessed us in manifold ways, and at many times. Among these blessings from God, he has given the people of God with whom we dwell, and who read the SIGNS, great forbearance toward our weakness. None of them can have realized the imperfection of our labors, as we have ourself done. We can but rejoice that among all the many sacrifices under the law of Moses, which were all typical of the one great sacrifice upon Calvary, there was one sacrifice for the iniquity of their holy things. The poet said, "If I pray, or hear, or read, sin is mixed with all I do." This is the confession that we must also make. How then can any service that we render be acceptable to God, who cannot accept that which is impure or mixed with sin? How can he accept and own and bless what we may do or say or write in his service, seeing that all is so imperfect and filled with sinful motives, and fleshly lusts? Only in the truth stated above, that there is in the atonement of Jesus that which also covers the iniquity of our

holy things, can we find any hope that anything that we have offered has been accepted of God, and blessed of him to the good of his people.

As for the continuance of the SIGNS, we feel that no praise is due to ourself, but to God alone. The editors and contributors are imperfect men and women. All who have had to do with the conduct of the SIGNS, have confessed themselves sinners saved by grace if saved at all. Yet God has been pleased to own and bless its columns to many, as we have had gracious evidences during the past year. Our God works by very feeble instruments in the blessings which he conveys to his people. He has not chosen the mighty, the wise, the noble, neither has he chosen angels or glorified and perfected men, to preach his gospel, or to labor in any way in his vineyard. He has chosen to convey instruction and comfort to his needy ones by the feeble ones who also feel their great sinfulness, and their need of constant grace. Is it not then apparent that no praise can belong to the instrument which God has seen fit to use, but all praise must be rendered to God, who has wrought so gloriously, by such feeble and imperfect instruments? The treasure is indeed, as said before, in earthen vessels, to the end that the excellency of the power might be of God, and not of us. And so, "No flesh shall glory in his presence." We can say for brother Beebe and ourself, that we desire to render to God all the praise for the favor which has been shown the SIGNS and to us by the people of God.

For the future we can but hope and pray that we may be sustained in the conduct of the SIGNS, so that the truth only may be published in its columns. May all, both editors and contributors, be kept from all speculation, from all vain disputations, from all debate and strife, from all error, and be led more and more into the truth, which alone makes any one free, so that all that are spiritual may be edified and built up in their most holy faith. It often would be a joy unspeakable to us when we attempt to preach the word, if we could know the spiritual children of God were praying for us as Paul desired that the brethren should pray for him. So, in the conduct of the SIGNS, and in writing editorially, we should rejoice could we feel some assurance that God's humble poor were praying that we might be made of use to those who read. Paul spoke of the brethren helping him by their prayers; we feel to greatly need such help.

During this coming year we hope those who write for the pages of the SIGNS may be kept free from all that is contrary to sound doctrine, and may be enabled to write that which their souls have felt of the indwelling word of the Lord. We should rejoice to see frequent narrations of the way in which believers have been led, narratives of the dealings of God with the soul, by which they have been convicted of sin, and brought to hope in the mercy of God through Christ. It is also good to speak of the daily travels of mind into which we are led after peace and hope are first given.

We see no reason to change our faith from what we have held, and tried to present from the beginning. We do not believe that God ever now gives new light, in the sense of teaching that which was taught by the apostles, and all holy men of old. We do not believe that the true church of God in past ages has been left to very greatly err from the faith. The things which are precious to his children now, have been so to all his people

at all times in the past. If our fathers were in error in some things, we cannot claim exemption from all error, even in this day. For this reason let us go softly, with a realizing sense of our dependence upon God, to keep us in the truth at all times. In this imperfect state brethren must be expected to differ in, for instance, the view which they may have of some text of the Scripture, or with regard to the application of the Scriptures in discipline, and in other ways, but with regard to the doctrine of salvation, they must and will see eye to eye, because the Lord has saved them. We desire to allow freedom of discussion of the Scriptures and scriptural subjects, believing this is right and profitable for instruction and edification, and growth in understanding of the Scriptures, but we do not desire to admit any harsh words, or unkind reflections of a personal nature, and shall strive to keep such things as these out if it be possible, at all times. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

VIRTUAL UNION VS. ACTUAL UNION.

We have read some very labored articles which have been written against the doctrine of eternal, vital union of our Lord Jesus Christ and his mystical body, the church, in which the writers have attempted to draw a line between what they call a virtual eternal, and an actual eternal union, admitting the former, but denying the latter. Some of the less discerning of the saints have become perplexed, and we have been frequently called on to define the difference.

Before attempting to do so, we will remark, that every expression of Bible truth by which the church of the living God, which is the ground and pillar of the truth, is or ever has been distinguished from the world or anti-Christ has been assailed in the same sly and insidious manner. Predestination, election, special redemption, regeneration, final preservation of the saints in grace to glory, the resurrection of the dead, and ultimate glory of the heirs of salvation, have shared the same fate. Read to the Arminian, "Whom he [God] did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son," &c. "Having predestinated us to the adoption of children," &c. "Him being delivered up, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Ah, says he, I believe in predestination; but not in absolute predestination! Well, let us see: What kind of predestination can that be which is not *absolute?* Something like this. The Lord had a design, a purpose or a will to do certain things if men or devils would allow him to do so; but nothing in reality made certain by the counsel or predestination of God. This is in reality a flat denial of predestination in toto, yet it is what predestination must be if it be not absolute.

We believe in election. O yes, says the self-conceited freewiller, certainly, I believe election, but not eternal, sovereign, personal election. But that God chose to save all who would comply with certain terms, perform certain conditions, and make use of certain means. A man must be lamentably stupid who cannot perceive that this is a full denial of election altogether. Special redemption, yes, says Andrew Fuller, and all his motley echoes, we believe it is *special* in its design and in its effect, but general in its nature, and so general that all sinners, if they are so disposed, can avail themselves

of its full benefit. Thus professing to believe it to be *special*, deny its speciality, and rest its efficacy on the will of the creature, and thereby disallow the saving virtue of the blood of Christ. Regeneration. With one voice all the work-mongrel tribes of the earth agree, the sinner must be born again, but at the same time deny that the new birth brings forth anything that the sinner did not possess before the birth; no seminal pre-existence of the life which the birth brings forth: no begetting by the heavenly parent, but a mere change of purpose and pursuit, a new modeling of the carnal mind, and a new formation of the old man. Perhaps this may be a *virtual*, but not *actual* regeneration. All who are thus *virtually* born again, if such a thing could be, would present a race of fatherless children; bastards, and not sons. Perseverance is admitted, if they may be allowed to supply the condition, *if they hold out faithful, &c.* Anything that will strip the crown from the head of Christ, and crown the sinner as his own savior, they seem very willing to admit. The resurrection is only admitted with such qualifications as either, *it is past already*, or that it does not mean what the Scriptures affirm, that "He that raised up Jesus from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwells in you.

We come now to our subject, and will inquire, What is meant by Eternal Vital Union?

2. Does such a Union exist? And if so,

3. Is it Actual or Virtual?

By the term eternal, we mean that which was before all time. The word *vital* means life, and union is oneness—identity as a unit.

What kind of life does God give to his people? Is it eternal, or is it only time-life? John says, "This is the record that God hath given us eternal life."—1 John v; and Jesus says, "I give to them *eternal* life." Many other express declarations of Scripture prove that the life given to the children of God is eternal, and consequently did as fully exist before they individually and experimentally received it, as afterwards. If it did not exist before it was implanted in us, or communicated to us by the new birth, then why is it called eternal? The eternity of it is attested by the declaration that it was with the Father and was manifested. (1 John i.) This life is hid in God, those who receive it, receive by being begotten of his own will, and born of God. Not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. This vitality then is eternal vitality, or eternal life, which was with God, the Father, before it was manifested.

Having then settled by Scripture testimony the two points, namely, the life and *its eternal character*, we come to the word *union* in its connection with the terms *eternal, vital.*

2. Did such an union exist? It seems almost like insulting the intelligence of the reader to ask, was this life a plurality, was it legions, or was it one life as it was with the Father before all worlds? Was it more than a unit, when given to us in Christ Jesus, according as we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world? If it was more than one life, perhaps some one can tell us how many lives it was, but if it was one and the self-same life as it originated in God the Father, and is hid in him, if it was but one and the same life as given to us in Christ Jesus before the world began, then the controversy on the subject of eternal vital union may cease, for one of the two propositions must be admitted or the

Bible rejected. To deny that a vital union, or a union of spiritual vitality did so exist in eternity before all time, is rank infidelity, for God has so declared it. This life was and is and forever shall continue to be that which makes us one with Christ, as Christ is one with the Father, and that Christ and the church are identified in, is positively asserted by Christ himself. He is in them, they are in him. He also is in the Father, and the Father is in him, and so completely so that he that hath seen him, hath seen the Father also. And we ask, who has ever seen the Son, who hath not seen the church also? seeing that he is in the church, and the church is in him. He is the head, the church is his body; and does a head and its body make more than one man or person? "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also in Christ."—1 Cor. xii. 12. Then Christ the head, and his church with all her legitimate members, being many in membership, are but one unit in life or vitality. Christ says, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." If it be admitted that Christ is truly the life of the church, the true God and eternal life, then that same life which unites him to the church as his body, unites his body, the church, to him as her head. If it be admitted that Christ is now to-day the head of the church, will they presume to say that he was not the head of his church yesterday? Dare any one deny the announcement of the Holy Ghost? "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and forever." Of course, when we speak of Christ in his oneness with and headship of the church as his body, we speak of him in his mediatorial character as the Son of God, and so revealed with power.

3. Is this union of oneness of life in Jesus Christ *actual* or only *virtual*? As neither of these words are used in the inspired writings in connection with the union of Christ and the church, we must depend upon our lexicons for their signification; Webster's Dictionary is the recognized standard of our language in the principal colleges of our country. His definition is: *Actual*: 1. real or effective, or that exists truly and absolutely; 2. exists in act; real; in opposition to speculative.

Virtually: In efficacy or effect only; by means of some other influence, or the instrumentality of something else.

According therefore to the established and acknowledged laws of our language, those who hold the doctrine of eternal, actual, vital union, believe that the life of the church of God is one life, and that it really, effectively, truly and absolutely did exist in eternity, before the world began, in a sense opposite to that of mere speculation.

While those who deny that it was *actual*, deny that it was *real*, or that it existed *truly* and *absolutely*, in a sense opposed to that which is only *speculative*. And those who deny that this union was actual before the world began, but admit that it was *virtually* existing in eternity, deny that it was *really*, *truly* or *absolutely* so, but in efficacy or effect only; and that efficacy or effect could only be developed or produced by the *means* or *instrumentality* of something else.

Now which of these positions, if either, do the Scriptures and the teaching of the Spirit in our experience establish? To us it is very clear that if this union of the life of the church in Jesus Christ existed in him before the world began, it was more than a speculation; that it was a reality. If it was not then a reality, a

fact, what is there in the communication of that eternal life to us experimentally in the new birth, that can make the life what it was not before we were made to feel its power? But one will say, the word *actual* signifies an *act* or *action.* This Webster admits in a secondary sense, not in its primary signification. Well, be it so; are we not told that the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord? Does not the giving a thing imply an act or an action? Certainly it does. Well, when was the act or action of giving us eternal life in Jesus Christ performed? We are told that God hath blessed us with *all* spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. Is eternal life a spiritual blessing? It certainly is not a mere temporal blessing, then it was actually given us in him before the foundation of the world. God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. The *gift*,not *gifts* of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord. It is given us in him, and through him it is in due time communicated to all the members of his body, when they pass from death unto life, are born again, and brought into the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God. If the work of the Spirit in the new birth is the action which makes this union actual, then we set aside the reality of grace given us in Christ before the world began, and instead of the *gift* of God is eternal life, we should read it, the *gifts of God,* there are as many distinct gifts as there are members in the body. And as the relationship of *nearest of kin* could not exist in *reality* before the life union existed, the consequence must be that when the Lord Jesus died for his members on the cross, we, who now live upon the earth, were not really, truly and absolutely so united with and related to him, as to allow us any part or lot in the atonement.

Much confusion prevails where brethren confound this *vital union* with our individual experience of it when brought into it. The union, spiritually, was as perfect before we were brought experimentally into the enjoyment of it, as it is now, or ever will be. But in our earthly, carnal, sinful nature, we had no union with Christ, but were children of wrath even as others; nay, we were dead in sins, and enmity against God, and enemies to him by wicked works. But although the holy law of God cursed us in the earthly Adam, yet for the great love wherewith he loved us in Christ Jesus, even when we were in ourselves, that is in our earthly nature, dead in sins, he hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in him, and thus by grace are we saved through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk therein.

We all know that our earthly nature is estranged from God, and in it we are strangers and foreigners, requiring to be redeemed from the earth, called by grace, quickened by the Spirit and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. This gift of God, which is eternal life, was not given us in the earthly Adam, neither was our earthly, carnal and corrupt nature given to us in Christ. The first Adam is of the earth, earthy, and as is the earthy, such also are they that are earthy. But it was given us in the Son of God, who is the Lord from heaven: as is the heavenly, such also are they that

are heavenly. Our natural birth develops us in the one life in which we were created in the earthly Adam, and a spiritual, new and heavenly birth, develops or makes manifest in us, experimently that one life which was hid in God, and which is now made manifest by the appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.

In conclusion, we do not regard either the words *actual* or *virtual* as necessary, or they would have been supplied in the divine volume, but when men deny the reality of this eternal, vital union, or oneness of life, and say it is only *virtual*, or that it is not so in fact or in truth, we are compelled to resist them, and contend that it is an eternal reality.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 1, 1860.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder P. W. Sawin, Nov. 5th, 1902, at the home of the bride's parents, near New Castle, Ky., Charles A. Rowland and Miss Essica Maye Ransdell, both of Henry Co., Ky.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Keturah Rittenhouse Myers was born Sept. 12th, 1823, in Hunterdon Co., N. J., the third of six children of Allanson and Mary Rittenhouse, and died Sept. 20th, 1902, at Waterloo, Douglas Co., Neb., aged 79 years, and 8 days, survived by two brothers, one, Elder E. Rittenhouse, having passed away since, and a sister, Mrs. Mary Lawshe, of Trenton, N. J. December 30th, 1846, she was married to Tunis Myers, whose obituary appears in the SIGNS of October 15th, 1901. August 6th, 1848, she united with the Kingwood church, at Locktown, N. J., being baptized by Elder G. Conklin. She continued her membership here till after their removal to Nebraska, when it was transferred by letter, with father's and mine, to the Council Bluffs church, at Loveland, Iowa, which is one of the seven churches composing the Missouri Valley Association. Her two children, their wives and twelve children, and three great-grandchildren, survive her. November, 1901, she made the trip from Omaha to Trenton, N. J., alone, then with her sister visited their brothers at State Road, Del., and Asbury Park, N. J., attended the Delaware and Delaware River associations, and meetings at Hopewell, and at other points. Also visited relatives in and near New York. In June, 1902, she became troubled with her stomach, from which she could only get temporary relief, and finally, in July, her physician told her he "feared there was a growth in her stomach, and as she was getting weaker, and could eat so little, would advise that if she cared to return to Nebraska she do so while able." On our being advised as to her condition, my brother went east and accompanied her home, arriving here Saturday, August 3d, just seven weeks before she died. At first she seemed much better than we expected to see her, but soon found she was not as well as she appeared, and that she was growing weaker, and having such terrible burning pains, from which there was no relief except from opiates. The growth continued till the lower part of her throat seemed almost closed, and she could only take liquid food. A weak heart caused her to have sinking spells, from one of which she passed gently away without a struggle. Mother never left our house after she arrived here, and here we had her funeral, Elder E. Aston officiating, making appropriate remarks from Psalms xvi. 11, "Thou wilt shew me the path of life; in thy presence is fullness of joy, at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore." The services were as much the same as father's, a year ago, as possible, same pall-bearers, and same hymns sung: "There is a land of pure delight," "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep," and "Come unto me when shadows darkly gather." The services then were so much to her mind that we felt we could do no better than have near the same now. I presume no person ever enjoyed a visit more than she did hers east, she was so satisfied and content, and felt so thankful for the kindness and consideration shown her wherever she went, speaking so often of the different ones she met, of the sermons she heard and the visits she had, but regretted she was not able to write the many friends she had promised. When she first came home we were in hope she would be able to attend our own association at Soldier River church, Iowa, Sept. 6th, 7th and 8th, but she was bedfast at that time. She was an exemplary christian woman, sound in the faith, and ever ready to converse on the things of the kingdom, to praise her Lord or defend his cause, and now we have no doubt but that she is in the full enjoyment of that home, and rest, and glory, to which we all look, but sometimes with a fear, and a dread of the crossing of the river. We miss her.

E. R. MYERS.

WATERLOO, Neb., Nov. 25, 1902.

DIED—At Otego, N. Y., Nov. 10th, 1902, **Miss Emily A. Brown**, suddenly, of a heart disease. She had not been usually well for some time, but attended to her various duties, and seemed to be in good spirits till Thursday, the 6th, after over exerting herself a ter-

rible pain began in or back of the stomach, not yielding to any remedies given by her cousin, and by sister Beesley. The doctor was summoned, and he relieved the pain somewhat. No alarm was felt, and she continued about the same till Monday noon, though not able to retain any food or liquid without great pain in the attempt even to swallow anything. Her friends and herself decided Monday that she must go away for a rest, and treatment, and she was going to Rochester as soon as able to travel. She tried to take a little clam broth Monday noon, and great distress followed. Her friend, Mrs. Grant, of Utica, went into her room and instantly saw a great change in our sister's looks, (she at once telephoned for the doctor) and asked, Are you faint? Soon after sister Emily said to her cousin, "I never wanted to go and not know it, but it don't matter," and spoke no more. She seemed to fill up and to be in agony, which was soon over, and she entered into rest indeed. Sister Emily was born in Buffalo, N. Y., March 7th, 1839. She was the only child of Thomas and Hannah Brown, who moved to Oneida County when she was very young. She graduated in the year 1859, and taught in the Utica schools till 1879, except for one year spent at Joliet, Ill., as principal of a school there. She went to New York from Utica, and became a teacher in the school for deaf mutes, on Lexington Avenue. She especially fitted herself for this work, which was much more difficult than her former school work. She continued in the work till 1891, when her health failed, and she was obliged to make an entire change in life. In November, 1891, she went to St. Paul., Minn., where she recuperated fast. After a time she engaged in business with the Anchor Shoe Co., occupying the position of secretary and treasurer. It was said of her that a brighter business woman was not known by those who met her there. In May, 1898, sister Emily came to Otego, to take care of sister E. Beesley, at Elder Bundy's home, and soon became very dear to her, and her society was highly prized by her church friends, and also by those she became acquainted with in the town. Sister united with the Ebenezer Old School Baptist church at Utica, more than twenty-five years ago. She was baptized by Elder S. H. Durand. Her pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, was away from home at the time of her death, and Elder C. Bogardus was able to attend the services at Otego, on Wednesday, at 3 o'clock. He spoke ably from 1 John iii. 1, 2: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us," &c. The second verse was especially comforting, and caused our hearts to take courage, and rejoice that there was a time when all the saints are satisfied, when they see him as he is, and all like him. "Though cast down, we're not forsaken," we truly felt that day. The grief and mourning at the loss of our dear sister is very sincere, and we can scarcely go on with the cares and duties of life, but we have her example to follow, to be brave and not shirk or neglect any duty or work that comes to us to do. Thursday morning, Nov. 13th, Mrs. Grant and sister Squire accompanied the dear body in its casket to Utica, N. Y., where funeral services were held that afternoon at the parlors of the undertaker, Mr. Cassidy, who was once a pupil of sister Brown. Many relatives, friends and former pupils attended the solemn services, and the closest attention was given to the reading and remarks by Elder S. H. Durand, who was visiting at Utica at the time. He read and spoke from 1 Corinthians xv. The 1290th hymn was read at both services, a favorite of our sister's. The burial was at Whitesboro, where the body was laid away at the feet of her parents, according to her request. Her many cousins, friends and acquaintances, together with the church, miss her greatly, and sorrow that her life, which was so useful to others, has gone out, but we feel to echo the hymn sister Beesley requested to be read at close of services at Otego:

"Wait, O my soul, thy Maker's will,
Tumultuous passions, all be still;
Nor let a murmuring thought arise,
His ways are just, his counsels wise."

The whole hymn seemed to be so suitable and required to calm the troubled minds and hearts. Sister Beesley's pleasant little home was broken up suddenly, yet her faith fails not. She believes and knows that he who has cared for her thus far on her journey of life, is able to care for her remaining days, and she feels grateful that she had dear Emily's kind care and lovely society for over four years, in her old age, and she has many pleasant memories to cherish and enjoy. May the Lord in mercy grant, and give to all who mourn this stroke, submission and reconciliation to his most holy will and pleasure.

I have written this little sketch against the expressed wish of our departed sister, who told me she did not want anything said of her, except a notice of birth and death, but others felt they would not be satisfied without more of a notice, though I have tried not to say anything our sister would condemn. I have not said many things that are true and suitable in her case. I will say this: she was faithful and true, honest and sincere, and we loved her much.

SUSIE C. F. GUERNSEY.

OTEGO, N. Y., Nov. 23, 1902.

DIED—October 30th, of pleuro pneumonia, at his late residence, in Winnipeg, Manitoba, brother **Ebenezer McColl**, aged 67 years, 2 months and 17 days. Five years ago he was paralyzed, but such was his wonderful vigor that he attended to all business till within a week of his death. Together with his wife, the daughter of the late Elder Wm. L. Beebe, he united with the Old School Baptist church in this city, January 10th, 1884, and ever remained a devoted and faithful laborer in his Master's vineyard. Broth-

er McColl, we believe, was born in Ontario, where most of his life was spent, but for about twenty years he served his government as inspector of Indian Posts, in British Columbia, and the length of time he held this position attests his integrity, and the faithfulness with which he discharged the duties of his responsible position. To many of our readers, especially in Ontario, he was personally known, and to all such words of commendation from us are needless.

He leaves besides his widow, eight children, and several near relatives in Ontario, to mourn the loss of a loving husband, a devoted father and affectionate brother, together with the church at this place. But blessed be God for the glorious hope that his death was precious in his sight.

The earthly tabernacle in which our dear brother sojourned here was brought to Ontario, and laid to rest Nov. 4th, near the home of his earlier life.

May God grant that consolation which he alone can give to the bereaved loved ones, and may he give us to see that his way is always the right way, thus enabling us to say, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." B.

DIED—At her late home, near the village of Eagle, Ontario, November 4th, 1902, **Mrs. Mary B. Love**, wife of Alexander Love, at the age of thirty-eight years, eleven months and three days. After a long time of suffering she went to a hospital in London, Ontario, the first of April, where a surgical operation was performed for the removal of a tumor. She lay there seven weeks less one day, and then returned home, but she never gained much strength afterwards. Finally she was stricken with nervous prostration, from which she suffered a constant and severe pain in her head. She was never able to raise her head from the pillow. It was distressing to see her suffer, as she did almost constantly, for more than two months, till the end came. The best medical skill could not relieve her in the least.

She left a lonely husband, and four dear little boys, father, mother, (Neil and Ann Blue) and one brother, all of Muirkirk, to mourn their loss, which is sorely felt. But we have the consolation of believing that she is better off. In religion she was a devoted follower of the Covenanted Baptists in Canada, though not a member. She had no use for any other faith, she knew not the voice of strangers.

She had been in great trouble of mind since the meeting last February, in Duart; often telling the writer of the great sermon which she heard on Monday, from that man of God, as she was pleased to call him, Elder Chick. She had been in great darkness most of the time afterwards. She received one of Elder Durand's hymn books about the first of July, which she perused much, while able to read, and marked upwards of twenty hymns of such as suited her case, and described her feelings. A sample of them are numbers 414, 415 and 416, and others having the same sentiment. Elder Carnell called to see her several times, and was satisfied that she was indeed one of the Lord's little ones, though in such great affliction both in body and mind. A few days before she died, she repeated the twenty-third Psalm to the writer, in a clear and comforting manner, and about twenty minutes before she died, repeated a part of the same Psalm. Then her strength failed. She was conscious to the last. It was a sore distress to see her embrace, and take an affectionate farewell of her dear boys, and husband, and friends present.

The funeral took place on Thursday, the sixth, at the house. The services were conducted by Elder Carnell, before a large gathering of friends and neighbors. The twenty-third Psalm was sung by request of the writer of this. Afterwards there was preaching from the same Psalm. The Elder said this was the text that was in his mind to speak from. It was one of the ablest and most comforting discourses within the memory of the writer. After the service, the remains were conveyed to the Love cemetery upon the home farm. CONTRIBUTED.

MUIRKIRK, Ontario, November 20, 1902.

Cornelius Davis died October 31st, 1902, aged eighty-three years, one month and twenty-three days. He was born in Missouri, September 8th, 1819, and came to Illinois in his boyhood. He was married July 10th, 1842, to Catharine Clingingsmith, who survives him, though her mind has been a blank for three years. Eight children were born to this union, two of whom died in infancy, three boys and three girls remaining, all grown, and all married except Amanda, the youngest daughter. He united with the Primitive Baptist church before his marriage, and was a deacon for about forty years. He was firm in doctrine, sound in faith, yet courteous to all, and his last days were spent in prayer that he might be taken to his eternal rest. His last sickness was of about two weeks' duration, during which at times his suffering was very great.

Sunday afternoon, November 2J, a large concourse of relatives and friends gathered at the family residence at Camp Point, Illinois, where services were conducted by the writer of this notice; using as a text, Prov. xiv. 32, (last clause) after which the remains were laid away in the family lot in the cemetery near by.

The family have the sincere sympathy of a host of friends, especially Amanda, to whom the whole care of the worse than helpless mother, and the loss of her dear father, is a double burden and bereavement. May the Lord grant her strength and grace for the duties before her, and resignation to his will in all things. The Little Flock Church, at Coatsburg, will sadly miss his presence and ministration as deacon, where for so many years they were never lacking, except in cases of providential hinderances.

D. W. OWENS.

DIED—At the home of her parents', near Landmark, Va., Nov. 13th, 1902, little **Catherine Durand Glascock,** youngest daughter of Charles H. and Fannie A. Glascock, aged 2 years, 1 month and 20 days. It was hard to give her up, but we feel that he who doeth all things well, has taken her to himself, to be at rest for evermore, in that home where there is no more sorrow, pain or death. May he enable us at all times to say, "Thy will be done."

HER MOTHER.

DIED—In Topsham, Maine, October 1st, 1902, our brother, **Charles A. Clough,** aged 71 years and 6 months. He united with the Old School Baptist church at Bowdoinham, Maine, in 1873, and was baptized by Elder Hiram Campbell. He is greatly missed, for he was always present at the church meetings, only when sickness prevented, and ready to speak of the great things the Lord had done for him. He was established, rooted and grounded in the doctrine of God our Savior, and desired to hear all the praise, honor and glory given unto him who inhabiteth eternity. He served as deacon for many years acceptably to us all, and his walk and conversation was becoming as a child of God. Our hearts are sorrowful and sad as our numbers grow less every year, and we can see their faces no more. He had been called upon to part with sister Clough and four children, but a niece cared for him faithfully during his last illness.

Elder Z. M. Beal attended the funeral, and spoke to the relatives and friends with heaviness of heart, for brother Clough was very dear to him.

May God comfort us all with the sweet consolation of the gospel.

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

IT is with aching hearts we write you the death of our darling babe, little **Charlie Morningstar Powrie,** who was born Oct. 3d, 1899, and died Sept. 2d, 1902. Just a "wee bundle of love," let down from heaven only for a little span, just to twine his loving little memories round his parents', sister's and brother's hearts until the separation seems to almost wring life's blood from our sore hearts, yet we have great comfort furnished us from his own little lips; when so very ill he said, "O mamma, I want to go home." I told him he was home, to see that papa and mamma and all of us were here. He said, "No, mamma, 'ish not the home." He asked me to take him in the "rockyday" and sing, "Nearer my God to dee." We know God had shown to that young and tender mind that there was a better home than ours, for out of the mouths of sucklings he has perfected praise. While we feel that life's interests, joy and comfort were laid away with our little one, and we are caused to look towards the setting sun of life's rugged journey, yet we find comfort in God's precious promises. We feel that he has taken the treasure from our earthly home to himself in heaven, and we only ask for strength to bear our sorrow with obedient grace, knowing that our loss here is his eternal gain. We humbly ask the household of faith to remember us at the throne of grace.

His papa and mamma,

J. B. & OLIVE POWRIE.

DIED—At her home, Oct. 10th, 1902, **Mary Schafer,** daughter of Henry and Margaret Morris. The deceased was born August 5th, 1845, and was aged 57 years, 2 months and 5 days. She was married to William Schafer, August 6th, 1863, and with her husband moved to Palmer township, Putnam Co., Ohio, in 1864. She was the devoted mother of twelve children, all living; these, with her husband and twenty-two grandchildren, are left to mourn their great loss. Sister Schafer was a good helpmate to her husband, a kind and loving mother to her children. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of grace, and of God's unlimited sovereignty over all things, and that his predestination embraced all events. The Lord blessed her with a clear conception of things pertaining to his house, and his doctrine that distills as the dew, so that she was never moved by any wind of doctrine. Her delight was to meet with the church, and worship God with those of like precious faith. Before her death she gave all instructions about her funeral; selected the text: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course," &c. The unworthy writer addressed a large congregation from the above text, after which the remains were laid peacefully to rest in the burying ground near North Creek, to wait till the resurrection day.

May God bless the bereaved with resignation to his righteous will.

H. E. PURRIS.

BLOOMVILLE, Ohio.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 71. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1903. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WEST NEW BRIGHTON, N. Y., June 22, 1902.

ELDER H. C. KER—MY DEAR PASTOR: —Words of mine would fail to express to you (if you had never known by experience,) the comfort and pleasure derived from the message you brought me in your last Sunday's sermon. If you have ever felt yourself really starving for spiritual food, and then been provided with a good hearty meal, you can appreciate my feelings on that day. Some days before, I had given a long drawn sigh, and said to myself, "I am starving, yes, actually starving to death for a crumb of spiritual food." Then with a start I thought, "What if I should die? (spiritually.) I am surely not dead now, or I could have no desire for food." O, I am so thankful there is still life, and while there is life there is hope. But we sometimes hear of those who having life are yet unable to taste or perhaps swallow, consequently though the best of food be provided they can obtain no strength or nourishment from it. I am still blest in that respect also, as it is sweet indeed to my taste, and gain much strength and comfort when I receive it. O, how glad I am that the children of God are "harnessed," as you expressed it in your sermon, and so kept in the strait and narrow way, for were it not so, and if others are like me, they would often become frightened and scattered from the flock, losing sight of the kind Shepherd for a time, when the tempter pounces out upon them unawares, as a great dog will suddenly jump out barking at an innocent flock of sheep trotting quietly along suspecting no danger near, and the poor, timid creatures are so frightened at his noise and bluster that they jump and run, bleating, in all directions, not knowing his bark is worse than his bite, for he is chained, and is allowed to go thus far but no farther. The tempter is always ready to disturb the little ones of the flock by his noise and temptations, and doubtless enjoys hearing their pitiful cries to their Shepherd for help and strength, and seeing them run about in different directions, losing the right path, and getting entangled and torn by the briars of sin and unbelief. But "Fear not, little flock," it is only one of the trials of the way, and "not a single shaft can hit unless the God of love sees fit."

I have been thinking much of the

beautiful figure in which Christ is represented as the vine. Your representing God as the root, Christ the vine, the apostles the branches, and we little ones the fruit, seemed so expressive and beautiful. In thinking it over, an apple tree came into my mind, laden with beautiful blossoms, I have them in my yard, and I thought how lovely and refreshing they look when bearing their snowy blossoms. The church looks like that to me; pure and white like the blossoms, sweet and refreshing like the tender leaves giving the cooling shade; his "banner of love." It seems to me each bud it bears, is a fine representation of the child of God when first made manifest or brought to the light. How pure and sweet and clean they seem in their fresh new robes of white. For "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." How we admire the delicate blush they wear in shame for the sinful past, and as they gradually unfold or make known to the church the secret of their hearts, they reveal to it what only God has seen before, a tiny tear drop. Tears of penitence for sin, tears of gratitude to God, and tears of joy that they at last behold the light of his countenance, and feel its warmth shining down into their hardened hearts. Like a sweet perfume the old, old story is wafted again and again from flower to flower, making the whole tree or church sweet with their fragrance. Then comes the gentle breeze, as come the many teachings of the gospel, and blow away, petal by petal, all worldly love and deceptions, and lays bare the heart, where rests the coming fruit. And how it grows and expands when the light of divine love shines upon it. Hard and bitter at the first, it now rapidly matures, and how tender and mellow, sweet and luscious it soon becomes. Is there anything sweeter than a dear old saint just ready to go home? And when the fruit has reached its prime, and the dear Gardener comes to gather it in, what a glorious time it will be for all the dear, loving, weary ones, God's tried but happy children. But, dear Elder Ker, what is to be done with the fruit which remains green and gnarly, such as poor, unworthy me? Really it seems to me, though clinging like the others to the branch (for there is nowhere else I want to go,) I do not seem to grow at all. If possible, I am getting smaller and smaller. I do not seem one bit better, if as good, as when I first (as I hope) beheld the light. But I do love his truth, and I dearly love his precious people, and this is really the only encouragement I have. I sometimes have precious seasons of thought, but am so far from being what a true follower of the dear Savior should be. I can point to any brother or sister I know, and truly say they are in every way more worthy than I. I want to be quietly submissive to all God's dispensations, knowing it is best, but instead, I am like a peevish child, asking, Why is it so? Why can it not be otherwise? And right here I want to ask, Do you think it sinful to repeatedly plead in prayer for what we need, or appear to greatly need, when we do not receive it, or does it seem to you like a child teasing a parent who in wisdom refuses to grant the request? I have felt as if it might be so, and have hardly dared repeat my petition at the throne of grace, as he does not answer me. It is right, all right, as long as my heavenly Father does it, but am I right if I continue to plead? You remember he once prayed, "If it be possible, let this cup pass, yet not my will but thine be done." I thought of this Sunday, when you were preaching, when you spoke of our self-

ishness in prayer, and that we receive not, because we ask amiss. It is such a comfort to me to know that the Son of God also knows what it is to offer an unanswered prayer, for I then am encouraged to feel it is not because I am too unworthy to receive his answer, for surely he would have answered his only Son. The first of his prayer shows, O so clearly, the shrinking, timid weakness of the fleshly human nature (of which the dear Savior partook) and was not answered, the last part, the trust and submission of the spiritual, triumphing over the weakness of flesh and blood, and was answered. All his terrible suffering of mind and body, meekly borne to give comfort and strength to his little, trembling followers. I want to love him more and serve him better. I desire to grow daily more and more like him and to follow meekly in his footsteps; I want to put my hand in his and walk, though it may be blindly, just where he sees fit to lead, though it be through flood or flame, and feel that underneath me are those dear "everlasting arms" for my support. Instead, I find myself complaining that the journey is so long, and I am weary. The path is rough and thorny, and I stumble so. Instead of resting my hand in his, and letting him quietly lead me on, I throw it out on all sides to feel in the darkness what I may pass through next, or try to grasp some passing shadow, and when he purposely leads me into darkness, I strain my eyes to see the light. If I am led through pastures green, when they are passed, I look backward and mourn because I cannot always remain beside the still waters. So,

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought;
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

But, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." He can never make a mistake, and he is "too wise to err, too good to be unkind," and I cast my burden upon him, and trust in his holy name.

Please forgive this intrusion upon your time, but I did not intend to write so much. I know you must be busy, and so hardly dare ask an answer, but O how I should enjoy just a few words in return.

With christian love for yourself and family, I am yours affectionately,

ADELA JONES.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., July 29, 1902.

MRS. WM. JONES—MY DEAR SISTER:—Your very good and comforting letter of June 22d, was received gladly by me. Hardly a day has elapsed since that I have not wished I might write you. I have been waiting for a lead of mind in order that the things written might be a comfort to you. If I know my heart, above all things I would like to be a benefit to the church of God. As yet the mind I have desired has not come, but I cannot wait longer to at least acknowledge your letter, and tell you how much good it did me to hear you tell of the Lord's dealings with you, while you do not speak of it in this way. If I know anything of his dealings with his poor and afflicted people, you very clearly demonstrate his work in the things you speak, and the trials you endure. You tell of the hungering and thirsting for righteousness; this is never known except in the wilderness, by the children of God; this is indeed a desolate place; no bread, no water, no light, no strength; so thirsty we become that our tongue cleaves to the roof of our mouth, death is on every hand, and all we have is a desire (and how accute it is) for righteousness; the desire is not satisfied, our longings increase; now in despair we

hear a cry, "Has the Lord forgotten to be gracious? Are his mercies clean gone for ever?" Faith breaks through the darkness, lays hold of the promises, and upon eternal life, whereunto we are called; righteousness has come to us in the appearing of Jesus. So it was with you, dear sister, you felt yourself actually starving, but in his own time and way God said, Come to the waters, the call was obeyed, and your thirsty soul filled with the waters of life. How beautiful the figure you present in the apple tree, its blossoms and fruit, in the work of grace in the children of the kingdom; surely the experience of each one is set forth. But you ask, What is to be done with the fruit that never comes to perfection? The whole need not a physician, but they who are sick (gnarly, green). The branch is not the blossom, the blossom is not the apple. The apple is manifested fruit, is it not? though it does not seem like the other fruit, all the fruit is not ripe at the same time. As it ripens the husbandman gathers it into the garner. In time all will be alike, ready for the harvest. There is no such thing as standing still in this spiritual life. We do grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and to feel our need of him and his righteousness, which is an evidence of a growth. We begin as babes; we feel all our sorrow and sin is over; we shall now rest in peace, but as the knowledge of Jesus is imparted to us, we begin to see we are still vile; this nature of ours is as sinful as ever, this carnal mind is enmity to God. First in the way we talk of the salvation of the sinner by grace from death and sin, but after awhile we feel the need of salvation every hour, on the right hand and on the left. Cannot you see, my sister, your growth in knowledge and grace? We do often indeed become cold and indifferent, and many times ask, "Do I love the Lord or no? Am I his, or am I not?" But if there was no life or interest, how could such a question be presented to our mind? Under it all there is confidence in God as a Father, and faith that we *are* his children.

You behold the church pure and holy, and say any one of the household is more worthy than yourself. Did not Paul say, Esteem others better than ourself? This commandment of God has been given to you, and you are living in obedience to it. Was the law given to any but Israel of old? Neither is the law written to-day in the fleshly tables of the heart, except in the spiritual Israel of God.

You ask, Is it sinful to repeatedly plead for that which we feel our need of, when the petition is not granted? Read hymn 1007 (Beebe's Collection). There is such a thing as prayer, and answer to prayer, and we, like the prophet Elias, continue to ask. You will remember he prayed seven times that it might rain, when it had not rained in answer to his prayer for three and a half years. The number seven is full and complete; seven thousand God chose to himself in the days of old; seven spirits of God are spoken of; seven churches in Asia, and if our brother offend against us seven times in a day, and turn and repent, we shall forgive him, but the Savior explains this number when he said, not only seven times, but seventy times seven. If the prophet prayed the seventh time, he also prayed the first time, as the prayer was the same. He did not become discouraged, God had heard him in days past, and his faith looked backward as ours often does. Our faith in earthly

friends is soon at an end when they are made acquainted with our needs, and shut up their bowels of compassion against us, but not so with our heavenly Friend and Father; we will go and go again to him, and make our wants known, though he may seem not to hear us; something tells us his ear is not dull that he cannot hear, nor his arm shortened that he cannot save.

But, dear sister, you fully say in your letter you want to be more Christlike. God is answering you all the time, but as the hymn tells us, in a way we never thought of. Remember he said to James and John, when they wanted to sit the one on the right hand, and the other on the left, in his kingdom, "Ye know not what ye ask." They knew full well what they wanted, but how this would be brought about they knew nothing of. After the storm is passed I have often felt had I known how my petitions would have been answered I could never have asked. We ask to grow in grace, and when the Lord begins to answer prayer by leading us into the wilderness to be tempted, and again into the garden with Jesus, having our souls filled with anguish and pain, we begin to murmur and say, O Lord, deliver me from this place. To follow Jesus is to go where he has gone; to be conformed to his image, we must be made acquainted with his sufferings and death. No, dear sister, it is not sinful to continue to ask of God for what you feel you need. It manifests your faith in God, and in spirit you are saying with the queen of old, "I will go in unto the king if I perish." It is in this way we are pressing into the kingdom of God, and have fellowship with those of old. The Lord is blessing us here in bringing into our number such as shall be saved. We have had five additions since our association, in the Middletown church. Twenty-one have been added to the two churches in the past six years, and we feel to thank God and take courage.

How glad we would be if you could with brother Jones visit us. Will now bring this to a close; it is far from an answer to your good letter, but is the best I can do. My wife joins me in love to you and family.

I am as ever your brother in hope of the gospel,

H. C. KER.

STATEN ISLAND, Sept. 7, 1902.

DEAR ELDER KER:—You cannot imagine how it rejoiced my heart to receive your kind, interesting and instructive letter. Am sorry I was unable to reply before, but as "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," so I find it in our natural cares through life. I have so longed to receive news from my dear little church-home in Middletown, but my time is so occupied and strength so limited I have not felt equal to keeping up a correspondence with any one. O, how it filled my heart to overflowing with gratitude to our dear Savior as I read of the twenty-one of whom you wrote, who have turned their back upon the world and confessed him as their all. This is one of my prayers answered. The Lord is good, and his mercy endureth for ever. I well remember the glorious day in June, 1869, when I (a girl of fourteen) stood with five others much older than myself, beside the sparkling, quiet water in Middletown's beautiful cemetery. As plainly as though it were but yesterday, I can see our dear sainted old Elder Beebe taking one by one to the watery grave, and hear that kind, and solemn voice proclaiming, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, Son and holy Ghost." I

shall never forget, as he put out his hand to gently lead me in, (the last and least of all) the heavenly smile which illumined his whole countenance as he so sweetly said, "Come, my daughter." It breaks my heart to feel that I shall never see him here again, but it is right, all right I know, for God knows best. Before reaching the cemetery the tempter came to me and made me tremble. He suggested danger, knowing I was timid and feared the water. I began to think it possible there was soft earth and great holes under the water into which we might step and cause an accident, and had I not just read of a case where the minister had let go of the candidate, and the swift current had borne her away and she was drowned? The Elder was old and probably not very strong, and might not be able to hold me, and I might meet the same fate. Though the evil one held possession for a time, he was unaware a better and stronger than he had already come to dwell in my heart, and would suddenly cast him out. The sweet spirit of peace soon stepped between him and me, and quietly whispered, "If death comes to you now, could there be a sweeter time? Would it not be the happiest of times for you to go, while in the act of doing your duty in obeying your blessed Lord and Master?" And immediately I became O so strong and happy that I truly think I could have gone into the water just as cheerfully, and with as much confidence, had I known death was to meet me there. Is it not wonderful, dear Elder, this intense love one feels for him who so powerfully yet gently draws us? O, how glad I am he does draw us to himself, and if we faint or stumble in coming, puts those dear, strong, everlasting arms underneath us, and takes us up, carrying the "lambs in his bosom." Ours is so unlike the worldlings' God; so faithful, kind, all-wise and powerful. "How firm a foundation" has the dear, old fashioned religion we profess. How high, how deep, how broad and satisfying, and how gentle but powerful that almighty voice that when it calls even the dead are made to rise, the deaf to hear. When drawn by the strong cords of his love none can refuse to come, and even the most rebellious are "made willing in the day of his power." When they are once raised out of the "horrible pit and miry clay," the "everlasting arms" are found underneath them, so there is no fear of falling back. No haughty spirit can soar so high he cannot reach and bring it down; no wretch so low or in such utter darkness he cannot see and hear and raise and give him light; no heart so hard or vile he cannot soften and cleanse it in his own precious blood; no being so sinful and depraved he cannot freely pardon and love, and no mortal too small or insignificant for his ever watchful eye to see, and a great comfort to me has been, he can never be deceived or mistaken, for "he knoweth them that are his," and says, "All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me, and he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Can we ask more? O such love, such joy, such peace our Savior gives. How very sweet and comforting are all these precious assurances to the timid, trembling, doubting ones. "Fear not, little flock," he knows and loves each one, and not the weakest will be forgotten or left out when he comes to make up his jewels. Paradise will be imperfect if the smallest is left out, and that can never be. There is a place for each and every one which must be filled. A place for me? Yes, even me, if I am his, and we know that we are his, if we

love the brethren.

But how I ramble on and cannot seem to stop, and yet have not answered your precious letter. The hymn to which you refer, No 1007, is indeed very true, appropriate and sweet. If we would reach at last the home for which we sigh, it must be through tribulation. If we would wear the crown we must first bear our cross. And I often ask myself, "Would you be willing to endure the trials poor old Job endured if you could be found as true as he?" Here I find "the Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." I sometimes am made to blush with shame when I think how I murmur at my little trials, when others so much better than I endure with patience so much more.

Dear Elder Ker, you ask permission to have my very imperfect letter to you published. Do so by all means if you think there is a particle of comfort for the dear ones in it. If there is any good in it, it is surely not mine to withhold, and I should feel as if I were robbing my Father's children if I refused the slightest comfort I was able to give. I consider it not mine, but a message sent to them through me, and I cannot feel enough gratitude to my heavenly Father that I have been chosen as his humble messenger. The imperfection in that letter is all mine, over which I am sure my kindred in Christ will cast the mantle of charity. All the good there is in it comes directly from above, from the giver of all good and perfect gifts. To him give all the glory. May I too ask the favor of having your answer which I inclose, published beside it? And may it comfort others as it has comforted me. I fear that few in my little church-home still remember me, and only a few of those who knew me still remain. Other dear ones have come in to fill the places of those who are gone, whom I do not know, but there is always a warm spot in my heart for each of my Father's precious little ones, whether I have ever known them or not.

Mr. Jones joins me in hearty thanks for your kind invitation to visit you, but at present it is impossible, though nothing could give us greater pleasure.

With kindest regards and christian love for yourself and family, I am, I hope, your sister in Christ,

ADELA JONES.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., June 16, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER EMORY:—It is not simply because I gave you my promise that I am now writing, but because I desire to do so. My visit to the Warwick Association this year, was a time which I hope will long be treasured in my memory. Much of the time during those three days, I felt to adopt the words of the Lord to Moses, when he stood before the bush that burned with fire, and was not consumed, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." The abiding presence of the Lord was clearly manifest in the hearts of the people at that meeting, and the very atmosphere of the place seemed ladened with the sweet incense of his presence and his love. Can you conceive, dear brother, of a more beautiful sight, than a company of living children of the God of heaven assembled together for his worship, with faces illuminated with that unmistakable light of God's everlasting love, which proceedeth in its abundance out of their hearts, as they through the windows of faith look for the appearing of their lovely and gracious Redeemer? And do they not present the fullness and the realization of the type,

which God showed to Moses in the burning bush? to wit: the wonderful works of God in the hearts of the children of men, which are marvelous in our eyes. The bush burned with fire and was not consumed. The word of the Lord by the mouth of the prophet comes to us on this wise: "For I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." And does not the burning bush typify the preparations in the heart of man, which cause him to do the will of him who hath prepared him? Every living witness of the God of heaven who walks the earth is tried as by fire. "If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire." Such is the power of grace in the work of salvation. As the timbers that were prepared in the forests of Lebanon, and the stones in the quarry of nature, for their place in the temple built with hands, so also each lively stone to be placed in God's spiritual temple must be prepared to fill its place of usefulness as God hath ordained. They must pass through the fire, and be "tried as gold is tried." All the hay and stubble of our carnal nature is consumed as we pass through the fire of God's burning. Moses had already passed through the fire of God's dealings with him, before he came face to face with this wonderful sight. He had been burned out of Egypt; out of the house of Pharaoh, and was made willing to "refuse to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Again, forty years was he in the land of Midian, in the house of Jethro the priest, walking uprightly and in integrity in the sight of God, and now he was shown that which was typical of his glorious Redeemer. It was his faith that carried him through many trials, out of the house of Pharaoh, and made him not afraid of the wrath of the king: "For he endured as seeing him who is invisible." It was his faith that led him into the land of Midian. It was his faith that also led him to this spot where God's presence was manifested to him. It was the presence of God that consecrated the ground upon which he stood, and that made it holy ground. And now by faith he could look beyond the bush that burned with fire, and see his gracious Redeemer in the glory of the heavens, and in his salvation. He could say as Job said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," &c. Yet he was not ready to do the will of God concerning him; his faith caused him to look down into his own soul, to behold his own weakness and unfitness, therefore he answered the Lord, saying, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh?" &c. And he continued to resist, saying also, "O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore nor since thou hast spoken to thy servant, but I am slow of speech and of a slow tongue." All of this wavering and fearing and resisting, was because he had seen the Lord. Was not that also your own exercise of mind, my brother, when the Lord made you a lively stone, and placed you in a fit place in his beautiful building? Jeremiah also said, "Ah, Lord God, behold I cannot speak, for I am a child." And again, "I am a worm and no man." Isaiah, when he saw the Lord "high and lifted up," he said, "Woe is me, for I am undone," &c. Job said, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." And so, the experience of all the Lord's witnesses on the earth, they are all made willing in the day of his power, when he

makes his presence known in them, and felt by them, in the person of the holy child Jesus through faith which is the gift of God. The antitype of the burning bush, is then, the accomplishment of the work of salvation, God working in his people, fulfilling all his purpose in them, causing them to dwell with the devouring fire, and the everlasting burnings, that they might be holy and without blame before God in love. This is holy work, God's work. The sound of man's hammer, pounding out his works of self-righteousness is never heard in this invisible work of God's holiness. "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet." How significant and yet how beautiful and wonderful is this language. When the poor sinner stands in the presence of God he is on holy ground, all things are made holy by his wondrous and condescending presence, all our creature works which we have been cherishing, and leaning and depending upon, melt away in the sunlight of holiness, and immediately we are unclothed of our shoes of unrighteousness, and we stand naked and bare before him with whom we have to do, fully acknowledging his sovereignty and omnipotence.

Ofttimes this question comes up before me, Who am I, that I should hope in the mercy of God? I feel to say with David, "For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee." Even our prayers which ascend unto the throne of God's glory are indited by him. We are passive in his hands, he moveth us, and he causeth us to stand still and behold his salvation according as he seeth fit. If we are favored to see Jesus as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, he has opened our eyes of faith. How entirely helpless are we, and dependent upon our God for all things. Even your present natural affliction, dear brother, has been blessed (in some invisible way perhaps) to the comfort and edification of your brethren, and to the upbuilding of his spiritual temple. Great and marvelous are all his works, for they all do praise him, and all redound to his glory. The life of all his saints is consecrated to his service, and although we each feel ourselves to be unprofitable, yet God knoweth, and has ordained the end and the purport of our life, and as time goes on, each day unfolds another leaf in our book of this present life, disclosing the hitherto hidden mystery of a life of faith in the flesh of a child of God. How truly grateful we should be that all our life is in the hands of God, for the path that we would take leadeth to destruction.

May God, who is rich in mercy, bless you with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus our Lord, is the prayer of your unworthy brother,

B. F. COULTER.

P. S.—My wife joins me in love to yourself and sister Emory.

B. F. C.

FREMONT, Neb., Dec. 6, 1902.

BENTON L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—I have lately returned home from an extended trip to New York State among my dear kindred, after an absence of three months, and as I was also a sojourner among my Master's brethren, it has led my mind to many reflections which I would like to give expression to, if I could find words adequate to express myself in a manner that would show my appreciation of the deep gratitude I owe to those who did so nobly in trying to make my coming among them so pleasant. Added to these are the oft repeated requests for me to write of my travels for

the SIGNS. It was my happy privilege to meet Elder S. H. Durand, at Burdette, N. Y., on my way home. This was a pleasant surprise to me. I heard him preach several times, as he was there the Saturday and Sunday that we were there, also especially did he urge me to write when I had returned home, and to mention that it was his request that I did so. This had the effect to somewhat encourage me, and has led me to try and comply with his, as well as others' requests, with the ability that is given me. I hope I may be kept from saying anything that will lead them to regret or make them ashamed that they have urged this upon me. For I feel so ignorant and simple concerning spiritual things that I cannot write anything that will serve to edify or encourage any one to think that I could have any part or favor in God's electing love and mercy with those who were chosen in Christ before the world began; chosen in him from the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. I do so often search in vain for evidence that I am a child of God, and am grieved times without number because I cannot learn to walk more carefully in darkness. I know that God's children have an abundance of charity, and perhaps it is the best gift, for charity covers a multitude of sins, but this would not warrant me to venture upon their confidence or good feeling toward me. One reason why I have hesitated is because I could not bring myself to understand how I could be of any reputation for good among you. But I have hoped that I could plainly see how God could and did take the poor beggar from the lowest depths and make him to sit among princes. It is because it seemed good in the sight of the Father to take the robe the Savior wrought and cast about him, covering up all his defects: "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." Still another question in my mind is, Would one who is truly a child of God be found so weak in the faith as to shun to declare the whole counsel of God, or so much of it as he himself has learned by painful experience? Would he not be ready to give the reason of the hope he has in him, though it be with fear and trembling? I have no good thing to say of myself:

> "Nothing in my hand I bring,
> Simply to thy cross I cling."

We are glad that we find no element in ourselves that desires to know anything save Jesus Christ and him crucified. This is the spirit we find prevailing in the true church of the living God, and is one of the reasons why we feel that they are fit companions for such as desire the lifting of Jesus on high. We know the soul shrinks from a confession of its sinfulness and weakness, because it is the very element of its nature to do so. Only divine grace can make us strong to bring the full price and lay it at the apostles' feet, for their judgment and distribution. And for this we humbly pray, for without the Spirit's guiding power it is not easy to command the soul's utterances or subject ourselves to proper control.

How like a dream it all seems to me, that I have been privileged to be with you again; I cannot bring myself to understand, and to fully realize that it is so. To the home church, and to the brotherhood in general, I am compelled to say, I have many things to regret, "For the good that I would I do not; and that which I would not, that I do." But a good name is better than precious ointment. So I conclude that if I have done the things that I would not, it is no more

I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. The esteem and fellowship of the brotherhood is more to me than I can find words to express. How pleasant it is for me to recount with freshened memory the continued evidence of christian fellowship and hearty welcome I found among you all. Time will not obliterate it from my mind, I trust, as long as life remains. To me there seemed to be but one thing to mar or tarnish the perfect picture that I had drawn in my mind in anticipation of my visit among you, and that you may all know was the feeling of my own unworthiness among you; of my inability to put off the old man with his affections, and to put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. If I have received Christ Jesus the Lord, should I not walk in him with all humility, that others may see that I have been with Jesus, and learned of him, and glorify our Father that is in heaven? How my soul longs for that peace and purity that is so plainly manifest in the walk and conversation of others whom I esteem so much better than myself. Why cannot I walk as others, and purify my soul that I need not so often to pass under the rod? O my soul, why am I the chief of sinners? Why almost persuaded that I do not know anything as I ought, much less do I do it, though I do feel to thank God that he has kept back my soul from presumptuous sins, and has answered the desire of my heart, "O Lord, undertake thou for me," for thou, O Lord, knowest me altogether. I do know that I have esteemed it a great privilege to have been among you once more to behold your order and steadfastness, and to find you contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, thus making manifest in you the truth that God will not be left without witnesses in the earth. It was also my privilege to hear several of the faithful servants of the Master preach the gospel of God's dear Son, all lifting up the voice as one man, telling the same old, old, though ever new story, that salvation is of the Lord, in demonstration of the Spirit, and with power. And, dear brethren and sisters, I trust and believe that you, by the quickening power of the holy Spirit, have been brought into an experimental knowledge of the awful depravity of sin, and of its fearful consequences, and by grace divine given unto you to behold him who was made sin for you, that you might be holy and without blame before him in love; that you might be made the righteousness of God in him. "Then, my soul, put in thy claim, sure that promise speaks to thee." I know that you with me greatly desire to be free from sin, and daily realize that you are in the warfare; the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. This is the heritage of the saints, and your righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace. All the promises of God are yea and amen in Christ Jesus. Therefore we would have no confidence in the flesh, that we would desire to live after the flesh, but would desire to walk as becometh the gospel of Christ, and have no confidence in the flesh. For if we live after the flesh, we shall die, but if we live after the Spirit, we shall live. For the words that Jesus speaks, they are Spirit and are life.

An absence of fourteen years from the scenes of my early life had wrought many changes for me, though the hills and the valleys be not removed. The grand old mountain standing as sentinel

to welcome me back again to the home of my birth, the land of my nativity. Though time, which is ever on the move, had caused manly forms to succeed youthfulness of age, and the middle age that were, I find leaning on their staff, and while of the aged with whom I had been familiar, where are they? The places which once knew them, know them no more forever. I have only to trace my footsteps to a place almost sacred to me, to find inscribed on marble shafts, names that almost startle me, and find that they, too, sleep beneath the stone. Dust to dust; ashes to ashes, had been said, and I realize that I am with the dead, though they speak to me in pleasant memories by their deeds which do follow them. O man, thou proud monarch of the universe, thou hast destroyed thyself. Through the blasting, withering influence of sin thou hast been brought to the dust; to the dust from whence thou wast taken. Is there any hope? Let us see: they that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him, therefore comfort one another with these words. My heart had been made to tremble at the thought of the separation, and the severing of ties which would never again be fully united, when the time would come for me to say a sad farewell, with no expectation of meeting again this side of the grave. But I have been made to see that the power of him who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb is also able to throw the protecting arm about a weakling of the flock, so that almost unmoved with emotion, and seemingly unconscious of the surroundings about me, I passed out from under the sheltering hills of that grand old mountain, and the valley sleeping so peacefully at its foot, surrounded as I was by dear friends who had come to wish me Godspeed, I turned my face toward the setting sun, and the home of my adoption, where I arrived in safety, welcomed again into the home of a dutiful son and his amiable wife, with a feeling of thankfulness in my heart that the goodness and mercy of God hath no bounds.

As I am about to close this imperfect scribble, I wonder why I have not before spoken of some of the aged disciples and brethren whom I met in my travels, and found worshiping, leaning upon their staff. My mind was much impressed with the evidence that God does have respect in memory of his covenant promise that even down to old age and hoary hairs he will be with his people. Even as the mountains are round about Jerusalem for firmness, so will he surely surround them with his everlasting love, where Christ receives his own to himself; where all danger is past, all doubts removed, all the mysteries of this life gloriously solved; we to know as we are known, and see as we are seen.. The Spirit of God has vouchsafed this to all his believing children. Just so, I apprehend, is death. "Only a little longer," has been the watchword for many a weary pilgrim, that they hold out faithfully to the end, hoping all things, enduring all things, as good soldiers of the cross.

I will again say farewell. I know this is imperfect as I myself am, but it is the best I could do with the ability given me. I would have gladly done better. I have at least shown a desire to be subject to the wishes of others.

Yours most unworthily,

ABBIE CODDINGTON.

SNYDER, Texas.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—By your permission I wish to give a brief sketch through the dear old SIGNS, of my visit to south-eastern Texas.

On Friday before the first Sunday in October, I boarded the train at Mansfield, Texas, for Wortham, Texas, where we sojourned over night, and next morning hired a livery rig, and early started out over rough country, to the associational ground of the Big Creek Association, which was held with Union Church, near Fairfield, Limestone Co., Texas, arriving just as the association was ready to commence services. After the introductory was preached, the association organized and went into session. The business of the association was conducted in a spirit of peace and brotherly love. The preaching was all of a piece, salvation by grace, and grace alone. The doctrine of God's unlimited sovereignty, his righteous decrees in all things, marked every sermon preached on that occasion. All being united on the good old grace plan, were truly of one heart and one mind, and were contented to stand in the way, and see and ask for the old paths, &c. The trumpet gave no uncertain sound, and the dear servants and saints were all walking together in the order of God's house, believing all things written in the law, and in the prophets; having their souls confirmed in the faith of God's elect, and were not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, but believing it to be the power of God, rejoiced in partaking of the sufferings of Christ, esteeming the reproaches of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt.

Elder I. W. Bowers is the Moderator of this association. He is a faithful servant, and is well versed in the holy Scriptures; a good judge of order, and is untiring in his zeal for the cause of the christian religion; willing to spend and be spent; willing to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. The dear Lord has made his mountain to abide strong, and given him grace commensurate with all his persecution, and made him able to face a frowning world.

The association closed in peace, amidst great manifestation of love and good will; a time long to be remembered; a blessed oasis to us all, because "The name of the city is, the Lord is there."

Here we rested one day, and on Wednesday following, the writer started in company with Elders J. L. Taylor, I. W. Bowers and J. H. Bourland, traveling across a rough woodland country, through the heat and dust, reaching a place on the road, a desirable spot, by a little running stream, to rest our teams for noon, and take some refreshments for ourselves. And O, dear brethren, at this juncture bear with me while I relate an incident just here. Christian experience was the topic of conversation, after eating dinner. The Spirit of the Lord came upon Elder Bowers, whereupon he began to speak of the wonderful works of God, his mercy to them that feared him, and his exceeding great and precious promises to his people. At this point Elder Bowers arose to his feet, and at the top of his voice preached in the power of the Spirit, in line with his experience, telling his fiery trials, his deliverance from sin, his wretchedness as a poor sinner, the awful temptations that baffled him for a time, his desire to go to the church and tell what great things the Lord had done for his soul, and the strong opposition that confronted him, even his dear companion resisting him, but was made submissive afterwards, the turning point, when by the grace of God he was made to forego all his doubts and

fears, and to triumph over the flesh, and over all the powers of the enemy, but by no worth or merit on his part, save through the blood and righteousness of Christ Jesus the Lord.

This took place under "a lone elm tree," and the dear brother thus discoursed. Myself, and the two other preachers, were overcome, and in the emotion of souls wept tears of grief and joy. Our cup ran over, and we felt how good and pleasant to wait upon the Lord. Even here in this wilderness land, I believe with all my heart, the Lord gave us a banquet. Here in the open woods he renewed our strength by the way, filling our hearts with food and gladness, and overshadowing us with the palm tree of his everlasting love.

Soon as our minds were sufficiently composed we pursued our journey, reaching the Trinity River at night, were detained a few minutes, as we had to ferry the river. Crossing over in safety, we came to the house of A. M. Reagan, who cared for us kindly for the night.

Next morning we felt rested and again resumed our journey in the direction of Elkhart, Anderson Co., Texas, arriving there near twelve o'clock. Here the brethren met and piloted us out to the house of young brother Franks. By night quite a large company of brethren and friends came in, who, like ourselves, were on their way to the old Union Association. That night brother Thompson and the writer held services, preaching to a deeply interested company of people. Here we met Elders Roden and Goss, whom I had never seen before. Next day being Friday, we went to the associational grounds, a distance of about three miles, reaching the place in due time. We noticed the brethren and messengers coming in from every direction.

Elder L. F. Roden introduced the worship by singing and prayer, and was followed by W. Neal preaching the introductory sermon, after which the association went into regular session, and proceeded to business, by choosing Elder Roden, Moderator, and Elder W. Neal, Clerk. Elder I. W. Bowers, was appointed to preach to the people at the stand. The association getting through their business for the day, adjourned till Saturday morning, nine o'clock, which closed the business of that body for the session. Elder J. L. Taylor and the writer were sent to the stand to preach for the congregation, which I hope was according to the ability which God giveth. The writer spoke two hours to a large concourse of people, who patiently gave audience.

On Sunday, Elders Slaughter and Bourland addressed the people, preaching in demonstration of the Spirit, and in power. After this an old farewell hymn was sung while taking an affectionate leave of each other. Then all kneeled in prayer, with the writer, and were dismissed to go to their respective abodes. Our poor hearts realized "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity;" to be humbled in heart by the grace of God, serving the Lord, vindicating the doctrine of God our Savior, as maintained by the apostles and prophets in the primitive ages, and advocated through the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES for nearly seventy years. The more the doctrine of unconditional salvation by grace, for time and eternity, is opposed and persecuted, the more it shines with resplendent glory in the church, "For my people shall never be ashamed."

Now brother Beebe, at the request of many brethren, the above report is sub-

mitted for your consideration, hoping, for the sake of the brethren, that you will be able to give it a place in the faithful old SIGNS. I feel that the Lord has humbled me by his grace while preparing this narrative.

Wherever I go and find the SIGNS in a brother's house, these troublesome times, I am not afraid to enter; for I feel free and welcome in their presence, and pray the peace of God to rest upon them. May the sovereign mercy of our adorable Savior bear you up through all the remaining years of your life, and support you in sending our old reliable paper to comfort the hearts of thousands, to cheer the house of God, and confirm the feeble knees of "a poor and afflicted people," for the sake of Jesus, and the glory of God.

In truth, and christian fellowship, affectionately,

ASA HOWARD.

PINSON FORK, Ky., Dec. 8, 1902.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—I have noticed of late years such a growing tendency, both from the pulpit and press of some of the Baptists, that I desire to express a few of my thoughts on the subject to the many readers of the old, reliable SIGNS, if you will allow me a little space. While I have been noticing this tendency in some of the Baptist periodicals, I have never in the very least degree discovered any such thing in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for which I desire to thank and praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has sustained you, the editors, and also the many contributors, whose precious articles appear in its columns.

The tendency I have reference to is the suggestions of these Baptists to the Old School or Primitive Baptists to discard from their preaching and writing some of the eternal truths of God's word, such as the predestination of all things, or the purpose of God from eternity, respecting all events, &c. They say, This will prevent a division among the Baptists. This seems to me to be healing the apparent division slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace, or daubing with untempered mortar, &c. So far as I myself am concerned, or can discern, I see but one result for the Old School or Primitive Baptists if they discard these precious and God-honoring truths, and that is, all will go into the ditch of Arminianism, so that there will be no place that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth. (See Isaiah v. 8.) These same Baptists also have been and are raising a great hue and cry about the word "absolute" being used with predestination, and say we should not use it, because it is not a scriptural word.

We will briefly notice the word "absolute," as used with predestination, together with some other unscriptural words which they themselves use a great deal more than we old Hardshells use the word absolute. These things cause me to think of the Scripture that tells us of some who strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.

While I readily admit that the word "absolute" attached to predestination does not make it any more full or forcible, neither does it weaken it or hurt it in any way, for it is neither speculative nor misleading in any way, for predestination is absolute; forasmuch then as predestination is absolute, how can it be wrong to call it absolute predestination? I can see a propriety in and a need for using the word absolute sometimes when

we have occasion to speak of predestination. There is the same like reason, and the same need for using the word "absolute" to predestination as there is for the terms Old School, Hardshell, Primitive, &c., when speaking of Baptists. There has been a time when these discriminating terms did not have to be used to point out God's people. Also, upon the same principle, were it not that some of the Baptists are preaching a limited predestination, there would be no need of us, the Old School, using the word "absolute," but just simply predestination would convey to our hearers just what we believed on the subject of predestination. Therefore there is a necessity at times to use the word absolute predestination in order to make straight paths for our feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way. If there was no Baptist contending just for a limited predestination, there would be no need of using the word absolute predestination. So it is plain as the sun at noonday that no harm can arise from the use of the term. And beside all this, the very people that are making such a great complaint about us using the word "absolute," they themselves often use the word "free," when speaking of grace, and say, "Free grace, or the free grace of God," &c., when there is no more need for the word "free" attached to grace, than there is for "absolute" attached to predestination, yet no one is complaining about it, neither ought to, for it does not hurt nor change it in any way, for grace is free as free can be, therefore no harm can arise from calling it free grace. Then why strive about these things? And not only so, but the word "sovereign" or "sovereignty" is almost, if not altogether universally used by both writers and preachers, and if either of these words are scriptural terms I have no knowledge of ever seeing them. Yet they say "A sovereign God, or the sovereignty of God," while the word "God" does not need the word "sovereign" attached to it any more than predestination needs "absolute" attached to it. Nothing at all can be attached to the word "God" to make it imply any more than it does, yet there is no wrong in using it in that way, for he is sovereign of all worlds, beings and things. Hence no harm can possibly grow out of the use of these terms, for none of them are speculative or misleading in any way. Then why should we strain at a gnat and swallow a camel? but rather let us by love serve one another, and God forbid that the Old School or Primitive Baptists should ever discard from their preaching or writing any of these eternal truths for the sake of a confederacy, or joining house to house.

Just so sure as the sun and moon endure, just so sure when we discard these God-given truths, we discontinue the apostles' doctrine, and consequently their fellowship. But I am persuaded better things, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak, for our confidence is in the Lord, who keeps the feet of his saints, and has declared that, "The people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations."

W. J. MAY.

ASHLAND, Ill., October 20, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—While I have never seen you in the flesh, yet I have a hope, and feel like we are connected in the brotherhood of Christ Jesus our Lord. For some time I have felt inclined to write for your paper, but have let my weakness conquer the impression, but now, God being my helper, I will try

to write you a few words upon the election of God. In the first place I will try to notice some of the objections or arguments against the doctrine, that God elected a chosen people to salvation.

First, they tell us that it makes the plan of salvation too narrow, because it gives no one else a chance. Let us see which plan is narrower, God's plan of election, or the Arminian plan upon conditions. Upon the Arminian plan they tell us that the sinner must do something in order to inherit eternal life. They tell us that we must fall in with the overtures of mercy which God is offering to every man, if they will only believe. Now let us see how many that would save. What state is the unquickened sinner in? Paul says that he is dead in trespasses and in sins, and that there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Again, it is said that every imagination of the thoughts of the heart, are evil and only evil, and that continually. Now such people as this are told to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. All will admit that no one can believe anything without evidence. Now where does the evidence come from in this instance? John says, "He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself." And in Colossians i. 27, we find that this witness is "Christ in you, the hope of glory." Therefore without this witness there can be no belief. But says one, "We can do something in order to obtain this witness." But the Bible says, "Without faith it is impossible to please God," and also that this faith "Is the gift of God." Now no one can possibly believe for one moment, that if we do something that is not pleasing in his sight, he will reward us for so doing, by placing Christ in our heart. Thus we see, if salvation depends upon the condition above named, to be done by the creature, it is impossible for one of the race of Adam to be saved.

Now let us see if the doctrine of election cannot be sustained by the Scriptures, and if it is as narrow a doctrine as the one just investigated, held by Arminians. In the first place, the immutability of God cannot safely be denied, for he says of himself, "I am the Lord, I change not." "He is of one mind, and who can turn him?" "For what his soul desireth, that he also doeth." Now if he is of one mind and changes not, he must know every one that will be saved, and must have known them before the foundation of the world. For if he does not thus know, and some person does something entitling him to salvation, then God must of necessity change toward that person, and this he cannot do, according to the above Scriptures. This then shows that the number of people to be saved was fixed in the mind of God. Now the question naturally arises, What determines the number to be saved? In Ephesians i. 4, Paul says, "He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. Jesus said, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." Many Scriptures could be urged to show that choice determines the number, but this is not needful here.

Now, as we have seen that God's people are saved according to election, let us see if this be so narrow a plan as is the conditional plan before explained. Christ said, All that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me: and he that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out, but will raise him up at the last day. We draw the conclusion from this, that all that are taught of the Father, are saved, with no chance that a single one will be lost. Jehovah says, in speaking of his people, they shall all be taught of

him, from the least of them even to the greatest of them. Therefore those included in this word "all," must all be saved, since every one whom he teaches, comes to Christ, and Christ has promised to raise them all up at the last day.

What is the method used in this teaching? In Jer. we read as follows, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." This, in other words, means the new birth, or having Jesus implanted in the heart, the hope of glory.

Thus all, in whom this work is wrought, have the witness in themselves, which produces faith, which enables them to please God. And now, in conclusion, I would say a word to those outside of the fold who feel burdened by a load of sin, take hope. For, if you will notice in the thirty-sixth chapter of Ezekiel, you will see that the new birth, or the implanting of a new heart, precedes all such feelings. I have written more than I intended when I began to write. I will close, desiring the prayers of all the people of God, for I feel that if saved, I am the least of all.

Yours in hope,

EDGAR LOBBS.

[It is good to have our attention called to the doctrine of personal unconditional election. The Bible teaches it, and all that ever comes in the way of blessing to any poor sinner, is the result of this election of grace. Election injures no one, but it is the cause of every spiritual blessing that ever reaches a sinner of Adam's fallen race. Saints in every age have rejoiced in this doctrine, and in all eternity, their song shall rise to the praise of that God who has chosen them out of every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue. While every christian experience, when rightly interpreted, contains the doctrine of election, yet after all, it is to the testimony of the Bible that we must come for our proof of it. Believers have the experience of God's election in their hearts, but the doctrine was true, before they ever felt its power to save them.—Ed.]

Dansville, N. Y., Jan. 2, 1903.

Editors Signs of the Times—Dear Brethren:—Once more, in the providence of God, I forward my subscription to the Signs, in the hope that it may be sustained, and continue to promulgate Bible truth, as it ever has done from its beginning, and contribute to the comfort and edification of its readers, who are scattered over this wide country, and so many of them, like myself, destitute of any other means of communion with those who love the truth and rejoice in it. I suppose there are thousands of God's elect people scattered over the face of the earth, in every nation, kindred and tongue, who never heard the name of Jesus, as we pronounce it, and are ignorant of the history of the prophets and apostles, as we have learned it, yet God takes care of them, and reveals himself to them in a way to their comfort and happiness, as he does to us, who claim the advantages of civilization. It is just as easy for God to quicken, by his Spirit, a wild savage of the desert, as it is to communicate spiritual life to a learned philosopher of the schools, and after the change the warfare in one is with human nature in its wild, savage state, and in the other with human nature in its cultivated state. Both now made alive by the Spirit, are subjected to the same warfare within that Paul describes, and the poor savage encounters the same difficulties that Paul describes, though he is not able to describe it as Paul does. Our

learned philosopher finds himself in the same trouble, and after a long struggle perhaps, learns that "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Then they both rejoice in that grace which is equally beyond their comprehension, only as revealed to them by the Holy Ghost, who "works in them to will and to do according to his own good pleasure, working in them that which is well pleasing in his sight." Yes, I think it will do to trust God to take care of the salvation of his elect, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, bond and free, or whether they in their ignorance bow down to storks and stones, or in the blaze and light of civilization are carried about by the cunning craftiness of men who lie in wait to deceive. The might and wisdom of man is foolishness with him who said, I will write my law in their hearts, and they shall be to me a people, and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more. The poor savage and the learned philosopher are on equality now; both saved by grace.

This is the way I have learned Christ; the way I understand his teachings; the way it seems to me they correspond with the teachings of the prophets and apostles, and the way the SIGNS OF THE TIMES have unceasingly and invariably taught for seventy years, and will continue to teach so long as it pleases God to stay at the helm as pilot.

Now may this be a happy new year to you in verity, as regards the prospects, financially, of the SIGNS, and may the grace of God sustain you in its publication for the comfort and edification of its readers.

In the blessed hope that we may ultimately enter into that rest which remains for the people of God, yours,

P. WEST.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

ALTHOUGH we have several times before expressed our sincere thanks to the brethren and friends of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for the kind and substantial interest they have manifested in the welfare of the paper, yet their continued liberality, as shown on page 60 of this number, compels us to beg forbearance while we attempt to again express the gratitude we feel, first to the Lord for putting it in their hearts, and then to the friends who have so liberally demonstrated their high appreciation of the paper, in defense of the cause to which it has been devoted for more than seventy years. We are too painfully aware of our own weakness and unprofitableness to ever permit of our being so egotistical as to attribute the generosity of the brethren and friends to a personal consideration. Therefore we feel the more encouraged by this proof that the paper is still so highly prized by its readers, and, if possible, it increases our feeling of sacred responsibility in the position we hold on the paper, and it is our prayer that we may be kept from ever betraying that trust.

Owing to a physical debility, causing a trembling, or shaking of the hands, it is with much difficulty that we write, therefore we have not been able to write privately to each one who has sent a donation, and we ask them to each accept this as a personal acknowledgment to them of our sincere thanks for their kind and efficient aid, and we do trust we are thankful that the Lord has blessed the SIGNS with such sincere friends. B.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1903

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LUKE XXIII. 25, 39–43.

"AND he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will."—Luke xxiii. 25. "And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering, rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."—39–43.

In compliance with the request of brother John Thorne, of Baltimore, we will present some thoughts upon the above noted Scriptures.

First. It seems to us that in these three men we have the whole history of mankind, religiously speaking, presented. But while much has been said by many concerning the penitent thief, as he is called, but little has been said concerning the impenitent thief, and that other, Barabbas, in whose place Jesus hung and expired on the cross. Yet these two present lessons for our consideration as well as the other who was penitent. These are all representative characters, and it is because they are so that we have the above record of them in the Scriptures. All men come under the one character or the other. And the whole work of Jesus, in the effect of his atonement, and in the work wrought by his holy Spirit in the hearts of his people, is here presented. And also his place between the living and the dead is here set forth. It seems to us needful that the relation which Jesus occupied to Barabbas should be set forth and considered as well as his relation to the penitent thief, because in the one we have the work or the effect of the atonement presented, while in the other we have the effectual working of the holy Spirit in the new birth presented. And both these things are needful in order to the redemption of any soul from death and final destruction.

Second. What then is set forth in the narrative concerning Barabbas? The first thing to attract our attention must be the fact that Jesus died in his stead. Had not Jesus hung upon the cross, then must Barabbas have hung there. As the high priest, Caiaphas, just before had spoken more wisely than he knew, in saying that it was expedient that one should die, and that the whole nation perish not, thus setting forth unwittingly the truth that all the prophets had testified of, that Jesus must die for sin, so here the people demanded in their hatred against Jesus and his truth, that the very thing should be done for which he came into the world; and also in demanding that Barabbas should be released unto them, and Jesus crucified in his stead, they unwittingly set forth the great doctrine of the atonement, and so presented to the admiring gaze of the people of God the only way in which any soul could be saved from eternal death. True, in the narrative Barabbas is only presented as escaping natural death as the punishment for transgression against

Roman law, but it is by natural figures all through the narrative of the Scriptures that the great work of redemption is shown forth.

Third. There is a most striking similarity between this salvation of Barabbas from natural death, and the salvation of the elect of God from eternal destruction. Barabbas was a transgressor against the law, and it condemned him. By it he had been seized and tried and imprisoned, and was condemned to die soon in expiation of his crimes; to him this death was the end of all here below; from this death he could not escape; he lay in his dark and noisome cell without one ray of light, comfort or hope; he had not a friend among all the sons of men; there was none who could deliver him; the sentence had gone forth that he must die the cruel death of the cross; who can depict, or even comprehend the feelings of his heart as he awaited the fulfillment of the decree of the law that he must die? He knew that he was a transgressor, and that he deserved to die; he could expect no pity nor forgiveness, but at last the door of his cell opened, and a messenger stood before him; no doubt he looked up supposing that the summons had come for his going forth to execution; it was the hour of utter despair to him. But lo, as the messenger looks upon him, and he looks into the face of the messenger, he sees no stern, hard expression there, but rather an aspect of mildness and gentleness; and now what words are these that fall upon his ear? Thou art free; a ransom has been found; another dies in thy place, and behold thou livest. Then the irons are stricken from his hands and feet, and he is bidden to arise and go forth free once more. We are not told of what went on in this man's heart as the glad message reaches his understanding, but we may know what unutterable joy must have been his. Perhaps it was a joy too deep for words; perhaps in a maze of tumultuous thoughts and feelings he went forth to behold once more the light of the sun, and to walk upon the earth, and among men. Perhaps he could hardly realize the whole significance of what was done. But it seems to us that of one thing we may be sure, viz: he could never afterward hear the name of Jesus, who had died that he might live, without a tender love filling his heart, and a sense of gratitude too deep for words. Whenever afterwards he heard that blessed name uttered, he must have listened eagerly to hear what men might say concerning him. Whatever Jesus might have been to others, to him he was the giver of life from the dead.

Now if all this must have been true of Barabbas, the murderer, according to human law, and condemned to die by human law, much more is it true of that sinner who has felt the condemnation of the holy law of God. Each awakened conscience does see plainly the guilt and just condemnation of every transgressor. Death has passed upon all, for that all have sinned. When therefore the work of the law that condemns and knows no mercy is begun in the heart and conscience, at once there is a realization of arrest, judgment and condemnation, and the sentence is passed in that conscience, and horror takes hold upon that man, for that he is so great a sinner, and because such utter destruction awaits him. That soul seems to himself to be only awaiting the execution of the sentence of death, of final banishment from God, and saints, and heaven. All hope of finding any good in self, all hope of mercy in the law of God, all hope of finding any extenua-

ting circumstances is gone, and death is all that the sinner can expect. Yet there is the desire to live. It is in this state of midnight darkness and horror that the word of pardon comes to this man, as it came to Barabbas. When he expects death, behold life is given. When he expects the summons to execution, behold the bestowal of freedom. And to this sinner, as to Barabbas, comes the message that Jesus has died. Looking upon the cruel cross he says, There must I have hung, had not a ransom been found. How sweet the name of Jesus sounds to that ear. Always afterward there will be a power in that name that none other can possess to his heart. Is it any wonder that the friends of Jesus are jealous of all that would seem to rob him of his crown?

One thought more concerning this man. Life and pardon was not offered him, they were given him. The messenger did not come to his cell, saying, I have offered thee deliverance and life, if thou wilt undo thy sins, if thou wilt promise not to sin again, or if thou wilt after this do the best thou canst. The messenger would have been false to his trust had he said any such thing to Barabbas. No, there was no offer of deliverance upon these grounds, neither was there any offer upon the condition that he would accept it. In the first place, he would be sure to rejoice in the message, and gladly receive it, but even if he had not thus gladly received it, still he was free, free in spite of himself; free so that no law upon all the statute books of Rome could bind him any more. So likewise there is no offer of salvation in the gospel. No, we, the messengers of life and peace to the guilty, trembling sinner, do not bear life in one hand, and conditions in the other. We have a message to proclaim, and that is, that the lawful captive is delivered; the work is done; the redemption is completed.

Fourth. Upon this work of the atonement is founded all the help and hope of the sinner. All spiritual blessings come to any of us, simply upon the ground that the atonement is finished. All the present experience of grace, mercy, peace, communion with God through the Spirit, the privileges of the house of God, which we love and prize so dearly, and every spiritual blessing upon which we rest, and in which we rejoice in our daily travel, come to us simply because Jesus has died, and the atonement is completed. It is because of this last truth that it is so important that we consider Barabbas, as well as the other thieves. Connected with him is the truth of the atonement, and then with the coming in of the other thieves, we come to another truth; another truth, but a truth based upon this first great truth.

Fifth. As we turn to consider the scene at Calvary, one of the first things that must arrest attention is that Jesus hung between two thieves, between the penitent and the impenitent one. This is always his place. Thus did Aaron, the high priest of Israel, stand between the living and the dead, when the plague would have consumed them all, because of the transgression of Korah. And, as he stood with the censor between the dead and the living, the plague was stayed so that no more died. Here was separation, and here was life and salvation for the living. So Jesus hung literally between the spiritually living and the dead on the cross, and so it was set forth, as in the type just alluded to, that he as our great High Priest today stands between the living and the dead, so that not one who lives in him, and who is sheltered by him, can ever perish.

Sixth. Let us notice another truth presented here. Two of the evangelists tell us that both of the two thieves cast the same in his teeth. So that at the first there was no difference between the two thieves, both were equally guilty, and both were equally hardened in their evil course, but grace soon works a difference. It must have been grace, and grace alone; if any other thing could work such a change, then it must have wrought that change in both, seeing that both were alike in all things, in disposition, in hatred of the Master, in sufferings, in the events which surrounded this dreadful scene upon Calvary, and in the witnessing of all that went on as Jesus was crucified. But right in the midst of it all, one thief begins to rebuke his fellow, while the other continues right on in his desperate course, and still reproaches the Redeemer. Surely the penitent thief cannot boast over his fellow, neither does he. He says, We are justly condemned; "we," that is, thee and me. Boasting here, as well as everywhere else, among the redeemed of God, is excluded by the law of faith. Works, nor creature choice can neither enter here. All, all is to the praise of free grace. And this poor penitent sinner, is a penitent sinner, just because grace has met and conquered him, and humbled him by showing him his sins against God, and so he confesses the justice of his condemnation, both by the law of the land, and the law of God. Indeed, he never would have acknowledged the sentence just which condemned him to the cross had he not first seen his just condemnation before God, and thus he is prepared to confess his sins and just condemnation and then to pray for mercy. No one else but such as feel these things ever do pray, and these must pray, they have no other remedy than to look to the Lord and plead for help and salvation at his hands, upon the ground of sovereign grace.

We do not pause here to dwell upon the prayer of the penitent one, nor upon the reply of the dear Savior, further than to say, that both the Redeemer and the thief were that day in paradise as Jesus said. Whatever else paradise may mean, one thing is sure, that it means a state of perfect conscious happiness. Indeed, we need not have added the word conscious, for happiness belong to consciousness; the unconscious are not happy, neither are they miserable.

Of the impenitent thief, we can only say that he died in his sins, and to him was no such promise given as was given to the other; he still remained among the dead in trespasses and in sins; the only reason why the other did not so remain, and the only reason why any child of Adam does not so remain, and die, is that electing grace has chosen otherwise.

C.

PLEASE BE SURE,

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Please be particular about this.

2 CORINTHIANS XII. 9.

"MOST gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

For some time the above words of Paul have rested on our mind, and we have had some very enjoyable reflections upon them, which we would gladly share with our brethren, if we had the power to convey the edification and comfort we have received, to the pure minds of those whose "infirmities" have been such a source of grief to them; but the ability to apply any portion of the inspired word with its spiritual import belongs alone to him who gives the eyes to see, and the ears to hear, and the heart to understand. Yet while we cannot always communicate the comfort and encouragement with which certain Scriptures may be applied to us, we are told to bring all the tithes into the store-house of the Lord, and if a child of God has been blessed with an experience of grace which has given him special comfort, it is right that he should make mention of it to his brethren, peradventure the Lord may apply it with the same sweetness to some who are "ready to perish," and who on account of their "infirmities" have about concluded that they are certainly deceived, and their hope is a delusion. To all such the above Scripture will be of the greatest comfort, if they are enabled to lay hold on it, as it has been presented to us, and while we feel how utterly impossible it is to express in words the things of the Spirit, yet we know that "A word to the wise is sufficient," and relying on the ability of the brethren to discern, more than ours to express our meaning, we will, with the ability given us, try to make mention of some of the thoughts we have had on the words quoted at the head of this article.

To the natural mind how absurd is this language of Paul's, for to him who has never known what Paul meant by "My infirmities," it would appear, and indeed we have heard it so argued, that he had reference to some physical affliction peculiar to himself. But how careless must be the reader of this twelfth chapter of second Corinthians, to place such an interpretation on this language. Paul had just been relating his christian experience, and telling of the wonderful joys and revelation with which he had been blessed, and then, like every heaven-born child, he had soon to record the realization of a "thorn in the flesh," which he tells us was *given him*, and he also tells why it was given him: Lest he should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelation he had received. Also what this thorn in the flesh is: "The messenger of Satan to buffet me." Can language read plainer than that? Now we have a clue to what Paul referred when he spoke of his "infirmity," and he prayed thrice that it might depart from him, but it was not taken away from him, but the answer to his prayer was, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Then follows the words first quoted: "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities." Why? "That the power of Christ may rest upon me." And in view of this he now, instead of praying to be relieved of these buffetings of Satan, could say, "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, [Remember these infirmities are the buffetings of Satan's messenger.] in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong."

How often we hear the saints to-day complaining of these buffetings of Satan,

suggesting to them that they are not the children of God, for if they were they would enjoy more abundantly the revelation of the Spirit, and dwell more of the time upon the mountain top. But instead of always being filled with the Spirit, as they supposed a child of God must be, they go for days, weeks, and perhaps years, bowed down in grief and sorrow; walking in darkness and having no light, feeling that surely some strange thing has happened unto them, forgetting that they were appointed thereunto. And in their terror they flee to the throne of grace and beseech the Lord that these buffetings of Satan, this thorn in the flesh; in short, their infirmities, may be removed, but all the prayers of all the saints have never removed this thorn from a single child of God while in this time state.

We are aware that some good brethren have been carried away with the idea that they can so live as to get rid of this thorn in the flesh, and remain in the third heaven, but unless they are made of better material than was Paul, it would spoil them for the communion and fellowship of the saints, through exaltation above measure, and the poor, weak, trembling, humble child of God would become discouraged in their company.

No, dear brethren, the fact that you feel, see and know your weakness and inability to serve your Lord and Master as you would love to do, and that you feel so lifeless, worthless and unprofitable, is not a proof that you are not a child, but one of the most unmistakable evidences that you have passed from death unto life, and the more you are made to see your own weakness, the more will the power of Christ be made manifest in your salvation. Do not be discouraged if your seasons of rejoicing seem long delayed; Paul at the time of writing this most glorious letter had to refer back more than fourteen years to the time when he had this wonderful experience of being caught up into paradise, and perhaps it may be the pleasure of the Lord that some of you, dear brethren, may be called to go mourning for even more than fourteen years, without an abundance of the revelations of Jesus being made manifest to you, but fear not, as long as you are mourning over your "infirmities," you are in a safe place, and will give your brethren no trouble, and he who has begun the good work in you, will carry it on until you shall be able to say with Paul, not only that you glory in your infirmities, but that you take pleasure in them, knowing that when you are weak then are you strong. B.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MATTHEW XXIV.

MY BROTHER:—Will you please give me your views on Matthew xxiv? I am at loss to know how to present the subject in the form of a text; but I will try to let you know what I want. In the third verse it is said, As he (Jesus) sat upon the Mount of Olives, his disciples asked him privately, What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? It appears to me that from that verse to the thirty-fourth, Jesus describes and tells them what shall take place before his coming and of the end of the world. And then he tells them, "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." The words, *This generation shall not pass*, is what is a mystery to me. The general acceptation of the word, *generation*, means all that were living at that time, and so I understand it. Now the query with me is, what does it mean as used in this place? This is what I want you to explain. Believe me to your devoted friend, and, as I hope, your humble brother in the Lord. May God bless us, and give us light and understanding in his word. Farewell. E. T. HORN.

LEAK COUNTY, Miss., Jan. 29, 1860.

REPLY.

There were three questions privately asked of the Lord by his disciples, as he sat upon the mount; our brother has embraced but two of them in his inquiry.

The questions stated in the third verse are, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming? and of the end of the world?" "These things," mentioned in the first question, referred, as we understand the subject, not to the following questions, but to the things which Jesus had just told them in the second verse should come to pass; namely, the destruction of Jerusalem, the temple and its buildings. The disciples had just attempted to show him the buildings. And in reply to them, Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things, namely, the buildings of the temple, and then added, "Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, "Tell us when shall these things be?" This first question must therefore have been asked in regard to the time when the things just predicted should come to pass. Why this inquiry was privately made, may be accounted for on the ground of the well known sensitiveness of the Jews, when anything was said disparagingly of the temple which they held in such veneration. As they had charged him with saying, Destroy this temple and I will rear it up again in three days, Christ had used these words when speaking of the temple of his body; but as the Jews understood him to speak of the temple which the fathers had been forty and six years in building, they were incensed at him for suggesting that it should ever be destroyed. The Jews were so exceedingly hard to admit that the temple would ever be destroyed, that we are informed by historians that when their city was besieged by the Roman army, and famine, pestilence and death raged within their walls until famishing parents feasted on the flesh of their deceased children, and even after Titus had applied the flaming torch and the devouring element was rapidly consuming the building, they would accept of no peaceful negotiations, but persisted in their belief that God would avert the blow, and preserve the temple, and deliver the city. The buildings of the temple were nevertheless doomed to destruction, and not one stone should remain on another. It is not strange that the disciples should feel desirous to know when these things should be; and therefore they asked him who only could inform them of the matter. In his reply to this first question, Jesus told the disciples of many things that should accompany the fulfillment of his fearful prediction; but, as a final answer to the first question, he told them distinctly that, "This generation should not pass away until all should be fulfilled." We understand the term generation, here used, as our brother Horn does, to mean those who were at that time living; some should live to see the fulfillment of what he had said on this subject; and this was actually the case; there were those then living who did not see death till all these things were accomplished.

The second question was, "And what shall be the sign of thy coming?" Some have understood this question as relating to his coming in the last day, to raise the dead and judge the world, and some have supposed it to embrace only his coming in the execution of this judgment on Jerusalem, and the destruction of the temple. But to us it seems that his answer to this inquiry clearly presents his coming to occupy his throne, to set up his gospel kingdom, gather in his saints, and to make himself known to them as their

risen, glorified and reigning King, as he had frequently said to them that in this wise he would certainly come. I go, he says, to receive a kingdom, and will return to you again. And as he told his apostles, When the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye that have followed me in the regeneration, shall also sit up twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Was it not probable that in the expectation of these things the disciples would seek to know clearly as possible what should be the sign of his coming? At all events they inquired of him, and he told them of many things that should indicate the near approach of that coming. On the signs of his coming, we have not time now to dwell; but like the first question, this second is also settled by the emphatic declaration, this generation shall not pass away until all these things be fulfilled. This declaration being made in the thirty-fourth verse, is a conclusion of his answer of the first and second questions; must include them both, and expressed the certainty that the overthrow of Jerusalem, and also the coming of Jesus in power and great glory, as the King of Zion, should both transpire while some who were then living should continue to live on the earth. The apostles themselves who were to occupy the thrones of judgment in his gospel kingdom, were then living and reckoned in that generation, and certainly they did live to witness his coming to organize and preside over his kingdom. But in his answer to the third and last question, he does not, as we read the chapter, say, This generation shall not pass away until the end of the world shall be accomplished, but he says, Of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels of heaven, but the Father only. The day and hour of the end of the world, in whatever sense we understand him here to speak, is not a matter of revelation; it is only known to the Father, and must be regarded as among the secret things which belong to God, and which we have no right to meddle with; while things which are *revealed* (by the Word and Spirit) belong to us and to our children. While therefore every subject published in the Bible, belongs, as revelation from God, to us and to our children, and it is our privilege and duty to search them, and strive with all the saints to know what is their dazzling height, their awfully profound depth, and to know the love of God that surpasses the narrow limits of our understanding, it is not lawful for us to go beyond what God has revealed.

> "Not Gabriel asks the reason why,
> Nor God the reason gives,
> Nor dares the favored angel pry
> Between the folded leaves."

It is enough, but not too much, for us to examine prayerfully the unfolded and constantly unfolding leaves of that blessed book which the Lion of the tribe of Judah has unsealed, and given as a volume of revelation. Therefore, To the law and to the testimony; if any speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

We do not attempt to fix the application of the "end of the world," as here used, to the final dissolution of nature; for, from what follows in this and the next chapter, we have long believed that the "end of the world" here intended to be the end of the Jewish economy, which was simultaneous with the coming of Christ in his kingdom, as set forth in the foregoing remarks. But as that subject is not fairly embraced in our brother's inquiry, we will leave it, at least, for the present.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 1, 1860.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO BROTHER D. M. LEONARD'S APPEAL TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged.....$339 10

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Total to date.....$435 10

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, Dec. 17th, 1902, at the residence of the bride's parents', John B. Funk and Miss Maude B. Hansel, both of Hocking Co., Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Gusta B. Grover, daughter of Charles and Jennie Grover, and wife of Harry Grover, died of consumption Nov. 26th, 1902, at North Berwick, Maine, aged 30 years, 8 months and 18 days. For some time the holy Spirit had been teaching her that she was a poor sinner. This brought her into unrest and grief of soul. At length she could no longer conceal the distresses of her heart, and murmured them forth during this last sickness to her dear parents. She told them that she felt her sins were many, and feared she should die and not be a christian. "Ah, mamma, you do not know my sins, I am liable to die any time, and when I am called before God's judgment throne I do not want him to cast me away. I feel my sins are very great, and I am afraid God will not forgive me. O, I do want him to receive me and not cast me off." On the morning of Nov. 18th, word was sent to me that she would like to see me. I found her very feeble in body, and in much anxiety of heart over her sins before God. I sat by her bedside and preached unto her Jesus. I told of Christ's sacrifice to purge away the sins of his people, of the cleansing and justifying efficacy of his righteousness and blood, that salvation, forgiveness and eternal life are all the gift of God through the Lord Jesus Christ. She listened most eagerly, with sighs and tears, to the glad tidings, and then she exclaimed, "O, your words are so comforting, they have done me so much good, I am so glad you have told me these things," and as I went on to tell her of Christ she would say, "O, how wonderful, how wonderful, how comforting, but O, will the Lord pardon my sins?" From this day until her departure she was so comforted in the hope of salvation that she was constantly speaking of her soul's blessedness, or desiring to have the things of Christ declared to her, and to have precious hymns sang to her. In her it was very sweetly exemplified that

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are."

These last days of her life will never be forgotten by her dear relatives, and those who called to see her. How often would she burst forth in fervent rapture, exclaiming, "O, I love him; O, how I love him; I do trust in him; he is so dear to me; I believe in him; I do hope he has forgiven me my sins; I believe he is a just and true God, and I love him; I would not wish to live and not believe in him and love him, and I cannot die without him." God gave her a gracious acquiescence to his will in removing her from her loved ones, and she sought to comfort them, telling them not to grieve for her, and that they should look at it in this way, "It is God's will, and I am ready to go to him when he will have me." Her gratitude for the kindnesses of those who waited upon her was very expressive, most touching, and then from this she would turn and declare her love and praise of the Lord for his kindness and love to her, a poor sinner. There would recur little moments of trembling, fearfulness, lest after all she should not be received into the everlasting kingdom of God: "I hope he will receive me, O, I hope he will not cast me away; I am a poor sinner, I cannot live and I cannot die without Jesus." One cannot pen the transforming animation that vivified her countenance as she again and again experienced the restoring consolations of the Lord, and would speak of his goodness. "He restoreth my soul," so she proved it.

On Saturday evening, Nov. 22d, while the hymn, "Jesus lover of my soul," was being sung to her, she joined in singing, and sang in sweet but feeble strains the verse, "Other refuge have I none," &c. This was most touchingly blessed to those around her, to hear this dying child of God so sweetly sing of her soul's longings and abiding hope.

At her funeral the writer preached from the words, "Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee." —Solomon's Song iv. 7. Her father and mother and husband feel their loss very much, but their bereavement is much sweetened by the riches of God's grace

so comfortingly manifested in their loved one. Her body was laid in the grave to await the glorious resurrection at the last day.

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

OUR aunt, **Nancy Ferguson,** so long a sufferer, has entered into rest. We miss her very much, but would not call her back to this world of sickness, sorrow, pain and death. She had her doubts and fears to the last. Just three days before she left us, she said to me, "If I only knew I was going to a better world than this, all would be well with me, but I am such a poor sinner it makes me tremble." I asked her to tell me her experience. She said, "O, I am such a poor thing, and if I have any experience it is so little." I told her there was a blessing for the poor in heart, and Jesus died for sinners. She was sick in our house for four years. I will copy the lines read at her funeral:

"Mrs. Nancy A. La Follette, in the presence of whose last remains we now pay the tribute of our sorrow, was born in Kentucky, May 24th, 1819. Her parents removed to Indiana when she was ten years of age. At the age of twenty-four she was married to Zechariah Ferguson, in Putnam Co., this State. She had been a widow twenty-four years. She received a hope in the Savior in 1855, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Pisgah church of Regular Baptists, where she remained a consistent member until removed by death, Sept. 17th, 1902. She yielded up her spirit in the presence of many loving friends who mourn their loss. Although living to the great age of 83 years, she was an invalid eighteen years, bedfast. A large circle of relatives and neighbors testify to her serenity of mind and patience under severe suffering. It was a coincidence that she was born the same year and day with Queen Victoria, of England. Death spares neither prince or peasant, ruler or subject. To God's supreme providence we bow in submission, believing our dear sister has inherited the true riches of the eternal world."

Elder Oliphant preached a very comforting discourse on the funeral occasion. Her favorite hymn I have often heard her sing while suffering:

"When sorrows encompass me round,
And endless distresses I see,
Astonished I cry, Can a mortal be found
Surrounded with troubles like me?

O when shall my sorrows subside?
O when shall my sufferings cease?
O when to the bosom of Christ be conveyed,
To the region of glory and peace?"

ALSO,

Susan Crane Line was born in 1821, in Ohio; died Sept. 24th, 1902, in Linden, Indiana. Her father, Elihu Crane, moved here from Ohio and settled on a farm four miles west of Crawfordsville, and in his house was constituted our dear old Sugar Creek church, in 1823, and he and wife were in the constitution. The little band of faithful brethren worshiped there until the first churchhouse was built where now stands the Morrow station. This was the first house of worship in Crawfordsville. When sister Line was a young lady she, with two of her brothers, joined the Missionary Baptists of this place. After living with them a few years she became dissatisfied with the preaching, and talking with my mother, she told her experience of grace, and said, "I am sorry I did not wait until I found my right home, for I love the Old Baptists, but feel too unworthy to live among them." Mother advised her to go to our church and tell her troubles. She did so, was received, and baptized by Elder Jesse Goben, about thirty-five years ago. She was faithful to fill her seat whenever she was able. One time she came without shoes, walking in her stockings. Mother asked her if she had no shoes? She answered, "Yes, but my feet were too sore to wear them; but I could not stay away from this good place, even if I had to come on my hands and knees." She was very happy when with the church, and listening to preaching. I have often seen her smile while the tears were raining off her face. Jerusalem was her chief joy while here below, and now she is safely gathered to the new Jerusalem, basking in the presence of the dear Savior she loved so well.

"O happy soul, safely passed
Thy weary warfare here;
Arrived at Jesus' feet at last,
And ended all your care."

I could say very much more in praise of this christian woman, for she was my neighbor, and I knew her many virtues. She was very loving and kind to the sick, and the poor and needy she never sent empty away. She will be missed in many a household.

LINA W. BECK.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Nov. 27, 1902.

Mrs. Julia A. Ellis, my sister in the flesh, departed this life June 25th, 1902. She was born near Springfield, Mo., Dec. 14th, 1839, and was married to Mr. E. S. Ellis, in 1856, and unto this union was born fourteen children. Her husband and two children preceded her to the grave. Nine sons and three daughters survive her. She was 63 years, 6 months and 11 days old at the time of her demise. Soon after the Civil war, she and her husband removed from Parker Co., Texas, to Menard Co., the extreme frontier of the State, where she lost her companion, and was left with the care and responsibility of a large family to raise. Under such discouraging circumstances, exposed to the privation of a new country, and the ravages of the wild Comanche Indians, yet under the special providence of God, she was made able to endure the uneasy hours and restless nights of those

years. Our sister from youth delighted to read the holy Scriptures, and entertained a hope in the blood of the Lamb some thirty years before she united with the church, but during those intervening years she realized her loving Savior's everlasting arms were around her, giving patience, strength and resignation to his matchless will; guiding her by his unerring Spirit to realize her own helplessness, and that all her help was alone in the sovereign mercy and grace of an all-sufficient Savior. Time passed on, and our sister moved from Menard Co., and located in Snyder, Scurry Co., Texas, where she spent the remainder of her days. Being surrounded with Arminian churches she stood alone, and did not consider them anything more than institutions of men. However, soon as an Old School Baptist church was organized in Snyder, she offered herself, and was received into the fellowship of the church the 16th of November, 1895, and baptized by Elder Wm. Lagow, and was ever faithful in filling her seat in church as long as her health would permit. Often she would say the little time she had been in the church was more real enjoyment to her than all the other years of her life. It was her meat and drink, her chief joy to mingle with the church in the worship of the Lord of hosts until her physical affliction, which lasted nearly three years, when death came to her relief.

A large procession of friends followed her to the grave, where funeral services were conducted by Elder J. A. Bean, who after a hymn was sung, read from the seventh chapter of Job, and spoke words of comfort to the many sorrowing friends, after which the remains were laid in the Snyder cemetery.

ASA HOWARD.

SNYDER, Texas, Nov. 18, 1902.

MY dear wife, **Lusania Nall,** was born in Nelson Co., Ky., Nov. 26th, 1859, departed this life Oct. 14th, 1902, aged 42 years, 10 months and 18 days. She was married to Charles H. Nall, March 14th, 1882. This union was blessed with nine children, six daughters and three sons, six of whom, together with her husband, survive her. She with her husband moved to Illinois in 1888. She united with the Primitive Baptist church eight years ago, and was baptized by Elder G. W. Murray, and lived an active, exemplary christian life until called to her reward. It was her greatest desire to live to see her children grown, if it was the Lord's will, but she said if it was the Lord's will to take her now, she felt resigned to his will in all things; it was all right. She did all in her power to make a cheerful home for her husband, and has left all along her married life many monuments of love, faithfulness and usefulness, accompanied with christian fortitude, and her family will always arise and call her blessed. She was in poor health for years, and in the last few months was a great sufferer with that wasting disease, consumption, yet she bore her affliction with great patience, and at the last spoke of her hope growing brighter. She contended earnestly for the faith of the Old School Baptist church, and her comfort was in the blessed truths of the doctrine of God our Savior. Having been given a living faith, she anchored all her hope in the blessed doctrine of salvation by grace. The family have lost a kind, indulgent wife and mother. She said to me during her sickness she was going home, and that death had no terrors for her, and that Jesus was with her. But O, how we miss her; but we weep not as those who have no hope, for we feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

The funeral services were conducted at her home in Pleasant Plains, Ill., by her pastor, John L. Scott, from the text of her choice: "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord," and at the church by Elder J. B. Dobbs, after which her remains were laid to rest in the Old Baptist cemetery near Yatesville, to wait the resurrection morn.

C. H. NALL.

PLEASANT PLAINS, Ill.

DIED—At the home of S. E. Mabey, South Westerlo, N. Y., Nov. 2d, 1902, **Ruth A. Elmendorph,** in the 94th year of her age. Of the deceased it may be said, her long life was filled with somewhat peculiar surroundings and experiences. Her mother having died when she was only three weeks old, she was from early childhood under the care of her stepmother, whose kind treatment and loving care she recalled with pleasure down to the end of life. At the age of thirteen she was converted, but as the religious views prevailing in her home were not in harmony with her own convictions of duty, she did not for a time enjoy the privilege of following Christ as she believed her duty required, although she longed for the time when she would be permitted to do so. Eventually she was baptized, and united in church fellowship with the Old School Baptists, in which faith she lived and died, and until within about two years of her death she was a regular subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the denominational paper. At the age of eighteen she was stricken with disease, and confined to her bed. Medical skill failed to provide a remedy, and all human efforts for her recovery were unavailing, but God watched over his child, whose faith failed not, and after thirteen long years of suffering, she was restored to health, and became an active worker in the service of her Lord. She was united in marriage to Conrad Elmendorph, of Ulster Co., who also was a member of the Old School Baptist church, with whom she lived seven years, when he was removed by death. During the years of her widowhood, she was welcomed and found a home among different members of the Mabey family,

the last twenty years having been spent in the home of her nephew, S. E. Mabey, where she was most tenderly cared for, every kindness being shown her, and all possible comfort provided. Being deprived of her eyesight during the last ten years of her life, she required increased care and attention, which were never lacking. Familiarly known as Aunt Ruth, she seemed to love and to be loved by everybody. No one doubted her christianity, and long will linger in the memory of many her bright example of trust and her words of praise.

Her funeral services were conducted by the pastor of the Christian church, and as we laid her away in the tomb all felt that surely another of the Lord's children was at rest.

SOUTH WESTERLO, N. Y., Dec. 14, 1902.

Joseph B. Turner, son and only child of the writer, was called home from earth Oct. 28th, 1902, after an illness of about thirty-four hours, with spinal meningitis. The subject of this notice was born Nov. 10th, 1894, being a few days less than 8 years old. At the age of sixteen months he was stricken with curvature of the spine, and was confined to his bed for over two years, after which, with the aid of crutches, he was able to go about. He was a child of very bright mind, and uncommonly patient in his afflictions and pain, never having been heard to murmur or complain, always having a bright smile and a pleasant word for every one; to know him was but to love him. Though of the tender age of less than eight years, we feel to have evidence of the dealings of the Lord with him. We rejoice in the thought that he is now at rest in the presence of our God. Of the last few months of his stay on earth, a good portion of his time was spent in reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and the Bible. A short time before his death a friend of ours visiting in town, called to tell him good bye, on nearing the door found him lying on a couch with the Bible open at his head, and a Durand and Lester hymn book open in his hand. He said, "Joseph, what are you doing?" Immediately he arose, closed the books, put them together and said, "Cousin Ernest, these books are the keys." These, with many other things which space forbids us to mention, are to us sweet reflections. While the parting with one so tender and so dear is hard, we weep not as those who have no hope, desiring to be resigned to the will of him who doeth all things right. We feel to say with David, We cannot bring him back, but we can go to him. Also with Job, The Lord giveth and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.

May the Lord direct us and protect and guide us all, and in heaven receive us to himself, where we shall ascribe praise, honor and glory to his name for ever, is the prayer of your humble brother in hope,

G. R. TURNER.

TURNER'S STATION, Ky.

SISTER **Caroline Gebhart** departed this life Oct. 15th, 1902. Her maiden name was Williamson. She was born Feb. 4th, 1841, and married brother George Gebhart, Dec. 23d, 1867. Sister Gebhart was a faithful member of Mt. Pleasant church, in Butler Co., Ohio. She was a meek, quiet, godly woman, and loved the truth and the church. She had many friends who filled the house to overflowing at the funeral, which was held at the meeting-house where she had so long attended services with her family. I tried to speak from the text, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come."

Sister Gebhart leaves a family of five children, all grown, one of which is a member of the church, and the others give evidence of a work of grace. May God comfort them. She leaves many friends, both in the church and out. Her remains were laid in the quiet and peaceful grave in the graveyard at Mt. Pleasant church, by the side of her godly husband, who went before her. So pass the godly from this sinful world to their home where death never comes.

H. M. CURRY.

Mrs. Rebecca M. Craft was born in Fostereek township, Miami Co., Ohio, July 19th, 1819, and died Oct. 20th, 1902, aged 83 years, 2 months and 21 days. The funeral services were held at her late home near Fletcher, Ohio, Oct. 22d, 1902 conducted by Elder Isaac Bennett, subject, "Strong Faith." She was buried in Fostereek church cemetery, near Casstown, Ohio. Sister Craft united with the Old Shool Baptist church when quite young, and remained a zealous member to the day of her death. She was a constant reader of the Bible, and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, during all her membership of the church, being a regular subscriber to the SIGNS during all of those years. She leaves one sister and two brothers to mourn their loss. Her husband, Michael Craft, having preceded her to that other shore.

GEO W. ELY.

PLEASANT HILL, Ohio, Dec. 1, 1902.

MEETINGS.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

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Z. GILLIES.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 71. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1903. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Jan. 2, 1903.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It has been on my mind for some time to write something of my experience and call to the ministry for publication, if in your judgment you think it should be published.

I was born in Barbour Co., W. Va., on the 20th of May, 1850. My father, mother and nearly all my relatives were members of the New School Baptist denomination. I was taught good morals, and until I was approaching eleven years of age I thought I was a good boy. In the winter of 1861 I did not go to school, as there was no school convenient that winter. But I had learned to read previous to that time, and I could read well for my age, and I concluded to read the Bible through that winter, which I did, from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation. In reading the Bible I was greatly impressed with the wonderful power of God. I also read several volumes of Spurgeon's sermons. I cannot tell why I loved to read the Bible and sermons when I was so young, unless it was to be informed as to what the Bible taught in a historical way, but I did love to read it and talk of many things that I would read.

Towards the close of the winter I attended a protracted meeting held at the New School Baptist Church, and under the preaching one night I felt for the first time in my life that I was a sinner, instead of a good boy, as I had thought before, and then I began to feel my lost condition, and I commenced crying and went out of the meeting-house. I soon dried my tears, but thought I would not go to the meeting, as I did not want any one to see me crying, so I stayed at home the next day, but I did not get rid of my trouble; my conviction of sin was deeper. So I was reading in the Bible that morning, and I read of the crucifixion of Christ, and it impressed me different from what it ever did before. It seemed to me I could see him hanging on the cross, and the blood dropping down from his wounded hands and feet; I could see the suffering Jesus, and then I felt he was suffering and dying for my sins. Tears gushed from my eyes, and I cried unto the Lord for mercy. I laid the book away and went some distance from the house to try to pray the Lord for mercy,

for I now felt I was one of the worst sinners living. My sins seemed to all be brought to my memory, and they seemed terrible and dreadful, and while I prayed the Lord to have mercy on me and pardon my sins, I could not see how he could do it, they were so many and so bad. I went to the house to read the Bible to find if there was any promise there for me. I commenced reading in the fifth chapter of Matthew, and there read, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." When I read this I thought there was hope for me; I believed God would bless me; I now believe that God then gave me faith, and enabled me to believe that he would do according to his promises in his word. I then began to hope in God. But I thought then I would go to my former place of prayer and ask God to pardon all my sins, and bless me, and he would do it. But when I went out I found I was not crying, and my heaviness of heart was all gone, and before I got to my place to pray I discovered that all nature seemed changed; everything looked bright, and I was full of gladness, and was rejoicing and praising God in the belief that he would bless me; not realizing that God was really blessing me then, and that I was already blessed.

I continued in this happy condition for some time, but I could not understand it all. So I told my mother about it, and she seemed to understand it at once. She was glad, and told me I had a christian experience, which I did not know before. Then I began to understand, and believed that God for Christ's sake had pardoned my sins. I felt very thankful to God for his mercy, and determined to live as near perfect as possible, but soon found I could not live without sin, which to me was a source of a great deal of trouble, and I had many doubts and fears; many "ups and downs;" many temptations and trials; many conflicts with the world, the flesh and the devil, and all these things I still have to contend with and to perplex me, which still causes me great trouble.

I was then a child in nature and in grace; I did not then understand many things pertaining to the doctrine of grace. I desired to be baptized, but my parents thought I was too young. So I was not baptized until about one year after I received a hope, then I joined the New School Baptist Church, with my relatives, and felt satisfied I did my duty.

In 1870 I married Ann Belle, oldest daughter of Elder J. S. Corder, who was and is yet a prominent preacher of the Primitive Baptist Church. My wife was not a member of the church. I then went to Elder Corder's church frequently with my wife. I liked some of their preaching, and some of it I did not like. I believed in election, predestination, and final perseverance of the saints. I also believed that the atonement of Christ was for his people, yet I also believed in good works, and thought Sunday Schools, long protracted meetings, missionary societies, and many other things of that kind, were all right, and those that worked in these things were doing good works, and that they were approved of God, and that God used all these things as means and instrumentalities for converting sinners.

After several years my wife professed a hope. Then I done what I could to influence her to join with me, but she preferred to wait awhile, and she did not join any church for some time. I was convinced after awhile that she desired

to go to the Primitive Baptist Church, and told her to go, but I could not go, I was satisfied where I was. So she went to the Old Baptist Church at Mt. Olive. I was there; she told a good experience to the church. The Old Baptists were having a good meeting; they were singing and giving my wife the hand. I enjoyed it, and wished to take a part, and asked the pastor if it would be in order for me to give my wife my hand. He said it would be all right if I felt like it, so I gave her my hand. While I felt I could not go with her, I was willing for her to do what she thought was her duty.

So I attended Old Baptist meetings with my wife, and she attended my meetings with me, and we had no controversy.

In the winter of 1879 there was a great revival meeting in my church, in which forty-two professed religion; it was a very long and excitable meeting; I thought at the first of the meeting it was the Lord's work, but I had heard the Old Baptists say such meetings were influenced by fleshly excitement, so I determined to notice closely and see if there was anything like that in that meeting. I believe the Lord opened the eyes of my understanding, and enabled me to see the flesh at work there, and to see there was excitement and confusion there, where Baptists and Methodists were praying and shouting together, and when the young converts would talk to the church they did not tell a christian experience. I took but little part in the meeting, and did not feel like indorsing many things done and said there. So I began to be in trouble, and to examine many things in the order of the church to find a "Thus saith the Lord" for. The more I searched and compared their works and teachings with the word of God, the more trouble I was in, for I became greatly distressed. I soon found they did not believe the doctrine I believed, and when I found out that I differed with them in doctrine and practice I did not know what to do. They were soon in hot controversy with me, both publicly and privately. I faced their preachers and met them on every point, and I believe the Lord was working in me wonderfully at that time, and that he made me strong, and able to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Soon I heard the voice of Jesus saying to me, "Come out from among them, be ye separate, and I will receive you."

In the June following I was at the Old Baptist meeting at Mt. Olive; it was a three days visitation meeting; the preaching was sweet to me, and the brotherly love that I could see there among those Old Baptists was beautiful to behold, and they all seemed to preach the same doctrine and believe the same things. On Sunday they gathered around the table to eat the Lord's supper; I looked on those Old Baptists gathered together eating of the same bread, drinking of the same cup in union and in fellowship. I thought it was the kingdom of heaven, the church of the living God; tears gushed from my eyes; it was the loveliest sight I ever beheld. I went out of the house and climbed in a covered carriage to hide myself; I did not want any one to see me crying. I was then satisfied that I was in the wrong church for me, the New School Baptists, and that the Old School Baptist church was right, so in August, 1879, I told the Old Baptists of my little hope, and some of the experience that I have now written, and was baptized. I felt if there was any lowest seat in God's house, that was the one I wanted. I felt that I loved the brethren in truth and in deed, and that that love

was of God. I sometimes feel that way yet, and sometimes I feel cold.

But there was more trouble in store for me, I soon felt impressed to preach the gospel. I fought against these impressions, and hoped to get rid of them, but I could not. The struggle went on for years, until it seemed to be the greatest trouble of all. It looked impossible for me to preach, and yet I could not get rid of the impressions, "Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel." Yet I felt to be the poorest qualified of any of God's people, and then I was so unfit; I was not good enough for a preacher. That was the way I felt, and I feel that way yet sometimes. After a long time it seemed to me I was fighting against God, or replying against God, and I was in great fear. So after much suffering I felt willing to try to preach, if the Lord would give me evidence that I could not doubt that he had called me to that great work. But it was some time before I could think of the nature of the evidence that would satisfy me, until one day in the winter of 1884, while in secret praying unto God to relieve me of the trouble which was very great upon me, I prayed the Lord if it was his will for me to preach, and if he had called me to this great work, that he would bless me now with his presence, and that this blessing might be an evidence that he had called me. Immediately the Lord blessed me graciously and abundantly, unworthy as I was. My heart was filled with love, and I spoke his praise with joy and thanksgiving. How long I was there I do not know, but I said, Lord, it is enough, thy servant heareth. The Lord had heard my cry, and he had granted my request, and I had said it was enough. For a short time after that I felt satisfied, and was only waiting for an opportunity to try to preach. But after all that my heart seemed to harden, I became stubborn, and again I said in my heart, "I cannot preach." Then I become cold and indifferent. Some time after this I dreamed I was in my father's house at the old home where I was raised, and that I had been upstairs in one of the rooms (exalted above measure); I had gone down, and at the foot of the stairs I met my father. I said, "Father, the Lord has called me to preach the gospel." He said, "Yes, and there shall seven great calamities befall you." (My father was dead at that time.) Immediately I awoke from my sleep, and before I could call my dream to remembrance these words came to me as if spoken by some one, "For I will show him what great things he must suffer for my name's sake." Then I thought of my dream, and then I was in trouble worse than ever. The next day my trouble was so great it made me sick, and as I was lying on the bed, my wife asked me what was the matter? I told her all, and she was the first one I ever told of my trouble. In the evening of that day I presented my case before the Lord in prayer. I said, "Lord, if it is thy will for me to suffer, and if great calamities shall befall me, may I have thy grace to support me in it all. These words were given to me as if they were spoken to me, "I will be with you in the sixth trouble, and in the seventh I will not leave thee, nor forsake thee." I was then satisfied, and felt willing to suffer for his name's sake. I felt willing to do anything he would have me to do. Shortly after this, in April, 1884, I was licensed to preach, and in August, 1886, I was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, and in much weakness I have been preaching since that time.

J. N. BARTLETT.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Sept., 1902.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —The principles of doctrine in your editorial in the SIGNS for Sept. 15, 1902, upon the text "As sorrowful, and yet always rejoicing," are replete with comfort to my wife and myself. We have in our daily trials, ever had heartfelt rejoicings because of confidence in the truth revealed in this Scripture, and in the text, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Then when trials and persecutions have assailed us, and we were pressed beyond endurance in ourselves, and tempted most severely to doubt a Savior's love, and even ready to cast away all our evidences of hope, a still small voice would speak, saying, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Yes! all things. The tempter would suggest that we did not love God, thus we were cast down with doubts, but God, who always comforts them who are cast down, sent unto us this message, "And every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him." Thus these two texts were connected, and came unto us with power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, and not in word only, assuring us that to love the brethren is to love God, and that loving God, we love the brethren also.

O, we have had many trials of this God-given faith, that is, that "All things do work together for good to them who love God." We have not been able at the time, when such sore trials came, to see how they could work for good, but the sustaining grace of God has thus far kept us in the faith, and as often as we have fallen under the heavy load of doubt, we have been again raised up, and made to let patience have her perfect work. Thus grace through faith hath saved us in the time of trial, until now, after many years, we are able to see that the trials and persecutions of many years ago, did work for our good.

I am now forty-six years of age, and have had a hope over twenty-seven years. Then persecutions began assailing me, and I have been enabled to know in part at least that it was good for me to be afflicted with sore trials and persecutions. And now while I only see in part, I feel sure that the time will be, when I can say with Paul, that I know that all things have worked together for good to me. The dear people of God may always rejoice when any one tries to do them harm, for in some mysterious way, through the purpose of God, and his dealings with those he loves, offences must needs be. We are told that there is a woe upon them by whom offences come, but seeing our own depraved nature, and our proneness also to offend, we cannot rejoice at the woe which God has pronounced against the offender. The Lord said that it were better for a millstone to be hanged to a man's neck, and he drowned in the midst of the sea, than for him to offend one of the little ones which believed in him. May the grace of God help us to rather feel sorry for the offender, and specially ought we to have charity for a brother who may offend, and pray God to forgive him, since he knows not what he does.

Were it possible for us to know the pain and grief which an unkind word may cause, we surely would strive to be careful. This does not of course imply slackness regarding discipline, but it does mean meekness in our efforts to restore those who are overtaken in a fault. We need to be children of light, yea, light in

the Lord, to succeed in leading erring ones back from the darkness into the light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Without this light we ourselves are blind, and for the blind to lead the blind, the result is disastrous, for they shall both fall into the ditch.

Dear Elder Chick, were it not that by grace you and other writers in the SIGNS are lights in the Lord, and by him do lead and instruct and comfort this poor blind creature, I would so often fall into the ditch. Even from the pens of the babes in Christ I find praise perfect. God bless the little trembling ones. If they could only know the comfort there is in their baby talk, as they may think it, they would write more and feel less embarrassed.

When so severely persecuted it was my nature to strike back with equally severe blows, for I knew their criticism was unjust, but I was comforted by the words of loved ones, and admonished by the pens of others. That I dwelt in the family of Elder W. W. Sammons for seven years, was evidence that I was moral, and therefore all that was said and done against me was persecution. I was reminded not to render evil for evil but to rather turn the other cheek also. In my effort to heed dear sister Martha Sammons' admonition, I was blessed. It was difficult to keep the old man in subjection, but the reigning grace of God sustained me, and as often as wounds were inflicted, I found that there is indeed a balm in Gilead, and unto this day, when in the decline of life, having passed the meridian of time, I still find a soothing balm for every wound, and just at this moment it seems the most peace and contentment comes from the words, "For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God," in connection with the words, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren."

My mind is now away off at a distance of over one hundred miles, where the brethren are assembling in an associate capacity at the church called Beulah, in Gibson Co., Tenn. I am with them in spirit to-day, while affliction, with other reasons, deprives me of the pleasure of the being with them in person. Myself and my wife recall the meeting of an association there twenty years ago, and while the dogma of "Conditional Time Salvation" was beginning to creep into our little Eden, yet that meeting was one of the greatest pleasures to us. There, for the first time, we met our dear tried brother, Elder R. H. Boaz, and our conversation with him then was a source of great pleasure. Our hearts are humbled in prayer that their present meeting may be blessed of the Lord. And while they will admonish one another to faithfulness, they will not forget to say, For it is God that beseecheth you by us, be ye reconciled to God. And if some are persuaded to go home to their friends, and tell the church what great things the Lord hath done for them, they will give all the praise to God. Thus, by many words, they are exhorted to save themselves from this untoward generation, and thus repenting and being baptized in his name, they will ascribe all their salvation to him, believing that repentance and baptism are gifts from heaven. God shut Noah in the ark, and saved him by water, and so in the like figure, even baptism, God saves us now, because baptism, though a figure, is still from heaven, even as was John's baptism, as the Savior taught.

Baptism by water does pertain unto life and godliness, and is one of the all

things given us by his divine power. Thus when we unite with the church, it is still the Lord who adds to the church daily such as should be saved. Baptism, even as a figure, is the gift of God. It is through the faith of the operation of God, and is not done at our own volition or option, only so far as God works in us to will and to do, thus putting in our hearts the desire which so strongly is wrought of him that at his appointed time we find it is something which we shall do. And this is not for fear we shall be damned even with a time damnation, but our fervent desire is to follow in the footsteps of the Savior, and be buried with him by baptism into death. Yes, into death, for then we come to meet persecutions and temptations, more than before.

Baptism is through faith, and faith is the gift of God, so it is by grace we are saved through faith, and this faith not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. This grace and faith of baptism was also treasured in Christ before the world began; it is therefore eternal. Therefore when God saves us here in time, it is also an eternal blessing, eternally treasured up in Christ for us. So, in all things, salvation is of the Lord.

When my mind is engaged upon such precious, divine things as are written by the brethren, I feel as though the language of Baldwin expresses my sentiments, when he says, "To know the greatest men of earth, men who think as I do, but deeper, who see the real as I do, but clearer, who work to the goal as I do, but better, that may be an incitement to my humility, but it is also an inspiration to my life."

Wishing the SIGNS and its editors and correspondents success, and with love to the brethren, myself and wife are both as ever yours,

DAVID McNEES.

WILTON, Maine, Jan. 10, 1903.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—For several days past I have been wanting to write you, and one day this week thought that I would do so, but circumstances prevented, and that night your letter came to me, making me glad, as is usual when your letters come.

If not mistaken I have been greatly favored the past few weeks by the blessed Comforter. A feeling of trust has been given me, enabling me to claim the precious promises given to the children, as mine. Yet sin and carnality are always in the way, always intruding. As I recall my early life, the question arises, Why was I always so glad to have ministers visit my father's house? and the more they talked of spiritual things, the more I thought of them, and it has been so all my life. This never came to me as it has during the past few weeks. I so often fear the flesh, fear that I have mistaken the working of the flesh for that of the Spirit. During my stay last winter in Hopewell, and my associations there, and with those in other places, I found that those who said the most about spiritual things seemed nearer to me than those who talked mostly of the things of the world. Still I am a great admirer of good language, easy manners and a graceful appearance. But I am not writing as I intended, and time is passing.

To-morrow is my seventieth birthday, which seems to me the greatest birthday of my life. Fifty years ago this present winter I was made to search the Scriptures to find God's plan of salvation, and when convinced that his chosen people were saved with an everlasting salvation, while I had no evidence that I was em-

braced in that number, I could but plead and beg for mercy. It was the last of May before the assurance was given me that my name was written in the Lamb's book of life. It now seems to me that I could write quite fully and lengthily of these things, but prudence forbids it, as my eyes will not bear too hard usage.

With this I inclose a letter from brother Horace Lefferts, from which I have derived much satisfaction, and feeling that others will be interested, I will forward it to you. As you know, it was my privilege to be present when the church at Southampton gave him liberty to exercise the gift which it was evident to all the Lord had given him. It appeared to me that the Lord had wrought most wonderfully in one so young and so rich in experience. That day to me seemed like a day of thanksgiving and praise, although all were strangers to me in the flesh, except three or four. Still I felt at home, and to be one with them; I also felt at home with the brethren at Hopewell; my stay there was an oasis in my life. In mind, as I recall the precious meetings and pleasant interviews, I seem to appreciate them more even than I did while there. I wonder whether it will ever be my privilege to mingle with you all again. No, not with all, for some have already passed away, and I cannot expect to remain many years on earth. The blessed Father only knows what he has in store for us. May he prepare us all for whatever changes he has in store for us; may he reconcile us all to his holy and righteous will, is the sincere desire of your very unworthy sister in hope,

MARTHA K. HUBBARD.

1330 VINE ST., PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 28, 1902.

DEAR SISTER HUBBARD:—My only excuse for not answering your last letter sooner is my state of mind. To write a letter has been an utter impossibility, for my mind has been shut up completely to all spiritual thoughts, and I have been dwelling in a barren land. Did I not have to speak in public my sense of destitution would not rest so heavily upon me, but to have to try to preach in such a state of mind is a sore trial. But the Lord is merciful, and I have seen at times rifts in the clouds while I have been speaking, but after I would be through speaking the clouds have settled down as dark as ever. No inclination to read the Bible, and study its precious themes has been mine, but instead I would much rather read some current magazine or some book of the world's literature. What a sore dilemma for a preacher to get into. I can recall when it was different with me, when the Bible was supreme in my estimation over any other book; when its contents were my delight, and my one desire was to be given light into its wonderful depths. Last spring, when you were here, and when the church saw fit to do with me as they did, all went well with me. Whenever I would open the Bible some new thought would be mine concerning what I saw there. To stand before the people, and speak to them of the wonders of salvation, was my delight. Indeed, it was a trial to me to have to keep silent. I would rather preach at such times than do anything else in the world. After a time, about the middle of summer I suppose, I found my mind closing up, and that I was acquiring the habit of repeating subjects which had engaged my mind at previous times. This annoyed me, especially when I found myself compelled to use the same texts over and over again, covering in my speaking always about the same ground. Several texts I have used twice, and some

three and four times. This I thought should not be, as I felt there were sufficient texts in the Bible to use without using the same one over again. Though I saw myself falling into this rut, I was powerless to prevent it. So far I had been unable to speak with any liberty from any New Testament Scripture, and my mind stayed among the types and shadows of the Old Testament. Finally at one of my appointments I resolved that I would break away from this routine and launch out upon some new line of thought, so took for a text the words in 2 Cor. iii. 18, and failed utterly, because I had no better sense than to force a door of utterance when it was denied me. I found to my sorrow that when the Lord shuts, no man can open, and that I was helpless to control my mind, and must wait for the Spirit to guide me into realms of unrevealed truth. So, crushed and humbled, I went to the Salisbury Association in October, hoping that deliverance would come. When called upon to speak there, I found my mind still clinging to old roads, and no sense of liberty accompanied me in speaking. Now thoroughly convinced that my preaching was nothing, and absolutely sure that the church was mistaken in me, I started on my way home. I had previously promised to stop on my way, at Clayton, Del., and have meeting there at the home of an invalid sister, who hears preaching very seldom. Though I felt my going to be useless, yet I went, because I had promised to do so. My mind was a complete blank. In the evening the friends began to come in, and soon I began to cast around for a text, but the Scriptures were sealed, and I could find nothing. I gave out the first hymn and then spoke in prayer, after which I gave out another hymn. This preliminary over I arose to my feet, but without a text. Suddenly the words in Romans viii. 23, came to my mind, and opening the Bible took them for a text, and lost consciousness of all earthly things for the next one and one-half hours. The liberty was great, and so unexpected, and I so glad that my deliverance had at last come. For the first time I spoke with freedom from a New Testament Scripture. Since then I have been able to return to the Old Testament for a text but once. The instruction of the Lord is wonderful, and he gives it in his own peculiar way. Just at the time appointed we learn the lesson best suited to our needs. Doubts are silenced and fears flee away when the day dawns and the Sun of Righteousness is set in our heavens. The desire for wisdom is of the Lord, who will not disappoint the prayer which he himself has inspired. James tells us that, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." I feel sure that if the subject of grace has the desire to be enlightened on any portion of Scripture, or to be set right on any point of doctrine, his desire will be granted to his satisfaction, though never in the way he is looking for it. The instruction desired will be so interwoven with his spiritual makeup that he will bear the marks of it for all time plainly in evidence.

We all join in sending love to you, and want you to write to us soon again, and let us know how it is with you. I trust you are experiencing the Savior's presence.

With a sincere desire for your welfare in every way, I am your brother in hope of eternal life,

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

NORTH WHITEFIELD, Maine, Jan. 8, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I send you this letter from sister Ruth Keene. I send it with her consent to be published in the SIGNS. It did me so much good, and I enjoyed it so much that I want others to enjoy it too. It brought up my past experience so plainly, and things which had been buried so long from my view that I was made to feel a joy that I have not felt for a long time. When I have more time and feel like it, I will write you more about the travel of my mind over my past experience, but this must suffice now.

Your sister in Christ,

MARTHA E. GLIDDEN.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, Nov. 2, 1902.

MY VERY DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—Yesterday, upon opening the SIGNS, I found your letter, and it was so good and comforting to me, that to-night I feel that I must write to you and tell you how sweet it was to me. I met you at the association at Whitefield, but scarcely spoke to you somehow. I am so glad that you enjoyed the preaching; it was a very pleasant meeting to me, though I was tired. When I got home and thought how far away I was from you all, I felt so sad and lonesome that I used to weep after I had gone to bed, thinking that perhaps I would never see you all again in this life, and certainly not for some time, if ever. You speak of thinking when alone of much that you would like to tell the dear ones, and that when you come into their presence your mouth is closed, and you can say nothing at all. Dear sister, it is that way so much of the time with me that I think sometimes that I am not a true child of God, else I would be able to speak of spiritual things to the Lord's people. When alone, I often have sweet and blessed thoughts, and wish that I could tell them to the dear brethren and sisters, yet when conference meeting comes my joy has often gone, and I feel cold and dead. Then I hear others complaining of the same thing, and insensibly my burden is lightened, and I feel that there is a sacred reality in these lines,

> "Blest be the tie that binds
> Our hearts in christian love;
> The fellowship of kindred minds
> Is like to that above."

My constant cry is to be nearer my God, "E'en though it be a cross that raiseth me."

One year ago all was beautiful and peaceful to me; the love of God was shed abroad in my heart, and I was continually praising the blessed Savior who had called me out of darkness into his marvelous light. But now those happy days of joy and praise are but a memory, though a sweet and precious memory; the sabbath day of my soul. Yet at times I still feel that "my Beloved is mine and I am his." For the most part it is but the prayer, God, help me, for I am weak and helpless, and unable even to think a good thought, or perform a good action.

Dear sister, a short time ago I was feeling very much forsaken of God, and of every good thing, and though I would often open my Bible and attempt to read, I found no comfort in it, no food, and was tempted by the thought, "If you are a child of God, these Scriptures ought to be food for you. Do not you see that you are not one, since you can derive no comfort from the word of God?" I was in despair; trying to pray did no good, for the heaven was as iron, and the earth brass, yet I was longing, longing for a word from God. One night I was sitting in my room with the Bible closed in my lap; I was longing, as ever, for some as-

surance that God looked upon me, and I said in my mind, O, if I could only open my Bible at a text which would come home to my heart. O, God, grant that it may be so. I opened the Bible at Isaiah, chapter fifty-four, and the first words my eyes fell upon were, "For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee." My doubt was done with, my fears were gone; I fell upon my knees praising the dear God for his message of love. I found that "My Maker is mine husband, the Lord of hosts is his name, and thy Redeemer, the holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called." "In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." Since then I have not had the same despair; that wonderful message is still a source of comfort to me.

In one of papa's sermons, some time ago, he was defining faith. I believe that his text was Matt. viii. 2, "And, behold, there came a leper and worshiped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." "This poor leper," said he, "had faith; he knew that if Christ so willed, he had the power to make him clean, and in this knowledge of the power of Christ he showed his faith, and this is about as much as the most of us have. We believe that God is able to do his will in the armies of heaven above, and among the inhabitants of earth beneath, but we cannot always feel when praying that the prayer will be answered in the way that we want it to be."

When I was writing just now about the temptation that I had concerning being a child of God, I was thinking of how the Savior was once tempted in the same way. After he was baptized he went into the wilderness, and was there tempted of Satan, who said to him, "If thou be the Son of God, command these stones that they be made bread." Christ as a man was hungry, and he needed food, and what a temptation this must have been to him. It seems to me that the temptation really came to him as a doubt whether he really was the Son of God, just as this doubt comes to us when we cannot find any comfort in the holy Scriptures, and no balm for our aching hearts. Christ was, we are told, tempted in all points as we are, and yet without sin. "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham, wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." "Let us therefore come boldly unto a throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." But I cannot always come boldly to the throne of grace, for I feel too unworthy, too sinful, to even lift up my eyes to the great and holy God. Like the poor publican, I can only stand afar off and cry, or whisper, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner."

Papa preached this morning from the one hundred and sixteenth Psalm, "I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications." What a rich sermon it was to me. He showed what it was to call upon God, how the Lord always hears the cry of the needy, and not only hears their cry, but clothes them as well. When the psalmist cried unto God, the sorrows of death compassed him, and the pains of hell got hold upon

him, and he said, "I found sorrow and trouble." "Then called I upon the name of the Lord."

I am so glad that your letter was published; it has been very comforting to me, and to many others I know. I wish that you could have told me what you wrote to Elder Chick when I was at Whitefield, but if you had, perhaps you would not have written to him as you did, and then the dear people of God all over the United States would not have had the comfort of reading it. As Elder Chick says, it is just such conflicts as these which bring the people of God nearer together in the fellowship of suffering. Although I loved you before, from the mere fact that you loved Christ and his people, still when you tell of things which are exactly my own feelings, there is something strong and tender that draws me nearer to you.

Now I must close this long letter, hoping to get a letter from you some time. Papa and mamma send their christian love to you.

I am, I trust, your little sister in a precious hope,

RUTH A. KEENE.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., Dec. 4, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—My mind has been exercised about the condition of things as they appear to be scattered throughout our country, and in these thoughts the words of our Lord and Master as he commanded his disciples has flowed in. They are found in Matthew x. 34, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." Then questions began to come in as to whose hands he had appointed to use this sword? I think a look at the field of the past of the church will be sufficient to show us that he has not put that sword in the hands of those who follow him in faith and practice. He has given them to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, but not to use the sword.

We learn from the psalmist that the wicked are his sword and his hand that is appointed to use it. This was fully demonstrated at the crucifixion of our Lord, for not one righteous person was engaged in it, yet those who were engaged were carrying out to the very letter just what God had purposed, and was now bringing to pass in the very way he had purposed, and by the very personages in whose hands he had put the sword to be used against his holy child Jesus. They were gathered together to do just what his hand and his counsel had before determined to be done.

These things being true in the Green Tree, are they not also true in the dry tree? If they are true in the Head of the church, are they not true in the church, the members of the body of this Head? How can one member of a body be heir to a certain inheritance, and the other members of the same body not be partakers jointly of the same inheritance? To be sure no one will deny that Jesus, our Head, was appointed of the Father to suffer just as he did. Isaiah fully told of this part of his inheritance, in pointing him out as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; having his garments stained with blood; treading the winepress alone; being upheld by his fury; preaching the day of the vengeance of our God, &c., &c. This is a part of his true image, just as we see him bowed in Gethsemane, being made fully conformable to the will of his Father. Paul tells us plainly that all the saints are predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son. Can he mean the glorious image

only? Then why would he learn the fellowship of his sufferings that he might be made conformable unto his death? Do not these things fully prove that the saints are predestinated to suffer with Jesus here in this world while tabernacling in the flesh? It does appear to me that this is all fully embraced in God's eternal purpose. We are told that it became him, by whom are all things, and for whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering. Listen! It was becoming to God to make his Son, our Jesus, perfect through sufferings. For this cause he employed the all thiugs which were for him and by him to carry out his purpose, even employing the sword to slay his Son. The wicked are under the government of his sovereign hand to carry out his purpose which he had purposed in himself before the world began. How can this be denied by any one who wishes to keep on the side of truth? Nor does he turn this sword loose here, saying, I have no more use for you, you have accomplished all that I have purposed for you to do; no, he said to the saints, In the world ye shall have tribulation. (Shall have. A decree of God.) Again, he said, If you will live godly in Christ Jesus you shall suffer persecution. (Shall suffer. A decree.) By whom shall they have tribulation if not by the sword which is in us, the continual consciousness of an indwelling enmity? And by whom shall they suffer persecution if not by those who are the Lord's sword? Do any of these come under the hand of God's divine purpose? What think ye?

In conferring his inspired blessings upon his sons we hear Noah use this language, "God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem." When was this brought about, and how was this fulfilled? It was brought about by the unbelief of the Jews in the fulfillment of all things after the crucifixion of our Lord. Paul tells us in the fortieth of Romans that it is through their fall salvation has come to the Gentiles, and that their diminishing is the riches of the world. Yet, he tells us that they were broken off through unbelief. In this unbelief they stretched out the sword against the disciples and elders of the Lord, and they were scattered abroad, going everywhere preaching the word of the Lord which grew mightily. Strange vehicle this! But thus the Lord ordained to spread his sacred word. Who used the sword here? Was it not used by the faithless Jews and their allies, the wicked? and yet the Lord sent that sword, and it was under his purpose to the fulfillment of his word by his prophets.

In course of time the sword got in the church, and the wicked Catholics, *Babylon, the great, the mother of harlots, the abominations of the earth*, got hold of it, and persecuted the saints until the church was driven, according to the word of the Lord by his servant John, to flee into this wilderness, *America*, where the Lord had prepared a place for her that she should be nourished until his appointed time. Who used the sword in that persecution? Not the church, but the enemies of the truth. These, we notice, were the conditionalists who were calling the saints heretics, and persecuting them as such, slaying them in every conceivable manner. They were worshiping under forms and ceremonies as the Jews, the original persecutors were, yet these were using the sword of the Lord which he had sent. From this source enemy after enemy to the church sprang up, filling up the measure of the harlot daughters of

Rome, according to the word of the Lord, as he had before spoken by his servants. All of these are legalists, and have on a law righteousness, and embrace the largest part of the human race. These all use the sword, so far as our legal protection will allow them, against the church of the living God. The church has never persecuted them, nor drawn the sword. No, no, she has no mind to do so, for the gospel in her heart is peace on earth and good will towards men.

From time to time there have arisen false prophets or teachers among us, just as the Lord said there should, and they have invariably used the sword against the church, and preached legalism, and conditionalism, until they have produced divisions, and set up bars of fellowship, as many are now doing, and excluded from the communion of the church those who contend faithfully for the true principles of our eternal, sovereign King. While this is going on, the church only stands firm on the Rock, holding the sacred promise that the gates of hell shall not prevail against her.

Brethren, let us be content with this. Let our enemies use the sword; leave them to him who has said, "Vengeance is mine." Let us continue to stand upon the Rock, and contend earnestly for the faith which has done wonderful things in the earth, the glorious channel through which comes every blessing of the Lord in our experience. The Lord strengthen us.

Your brother in the afflictions of this blessed hope,

L. H. HARDY.

LEBANON, Ohio, Jan. 5, 1903.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—At the solicitation of the little band of humble believers in Jesus, in Cleveland Ohio, who are his friends and devoted to the truth as it is in him, myself and wife were with them the last two Sundays of the old year. Before we left them, they pressed it upon me (against my protest) to write a report of the church and the meetings for the beloved SIGNS, which they read and approve. This itself speaks much for them, for the friends of the SIGNS are as well the friends of grace and truth.

My words will poorly express the fullness of the comfort, joy and peace of all our hearts in our meetings with that dear "little flock" of the good Shepherd, of which dear Elder Purris is the under-shepherd and a member, but he was not with us, owing to the long distance to his home, which we all regretted, for his sake and ours. We had never seen their faces before, but their acts said at once, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord," and we felt that the Son of peace was in their midst, and where Christ is it is a heavenly place. They are certainly plants of the true Vine, and the heavenly Father has planted them in the garden inclosed, the garden of his grace, and his north and south winds have caused the spices thereof to flow out, "to the praise of the glory of his grace." For they have been chosen in the furnace of affliction, and have endured the wintry blasts of affliction and trial for the name and faith of Jesus, who is their salvation, peace and rest. Even before they were formed as the church of Christ, they were tried and sifted upon the legal question of Sabbath-keeping, through a legal would-be leader, who took away a very few from their small number, which only united them the closer and made them stronger, and was a blessing in disguise. They see this now, and their hearts are comforted.

At the present the church meets in the

homes of some of the members. So the third Sunday meeting in December was with brother and sister Barker, both forenoon and afternoon, and all partook of their hospitality. They were baptized in the Strict Baptist church in London, England. The first text was, "For he shall save his people from their sins." The personal name, "JESUS," and his character as one with his Father and brethren were dwelt upon, and then his work of salvation, embracing the redemption and regeneration and resurrection of his people. The Spirit of the Lord was upon us all, and our faith in his precious name abounded above our fears. Several of the members arose and spoke of their joy in the Lord, and of the preciousness of his truth to their comforted hearts, among them dear Mr. Secor, while the tears flowed from his eyes, who told us that his full soul could hold no more. We were all melted in love to God for his unspeakable gift. To me it was a heavenly feast to sit and hear his saints extol and bless the Lord, and speak forth their gladness and joy in his salvation. O how much better this than to tell of their works! The songs of praise were mingled with all the service, and all the worship was in spirit and in truth.

After the sermon in the afternoon, quite a number again spoke feelingly, and then brother Secor arose and told us of his faith and hope and love in Christ Jesus, and said, "I can hold out no longer," and meekly asked to be numbered with them, when joyfully all welcomed him. They had appointed to meet the next Friday, a day after Christmas, at the home of Mr. and sister Jennie O. Cross, fifteen miles out on a traction line, and also the next Sunday, near where there was "much water," and the baptism was to be on Friday. On Friday we were all gladdened at the coming with the kindred friends from Cleveland of sister Joie E. Wickham, ninety miles, and brother and sister B. G. Ford, one hundred and fifty miles, who helped much in the singing, conversation and comfort. But brother Secor came late, being very ill from an attack of heart trouble; but he and we all were comforted no little to have him with us. The Lord again blessed us with his presence in our meetings that day and night. All met again here Sunday, and after my discourse, there was a precious conference again. After all had dined, we were carried to the water in a big sled over snow, the thick ice having been removed, the western sun beamed upon us, and above all the Sun of righteousness had arisen upon us with healing beams, and our humbled and obedient brother in Christ was buried with him in baptism. It was a calm and solemn scene. Our hearts were warm, and ice and snow did us no harm, but we were all comforted in the love of God.

Although our cup of salvation had been made to run over, yet the Lord blessed us still more in our last meeting that night. The subject was the power of the grace of God, which both saves us, and teaches us, and leads us heavenward, patiently looking and waiting in faith and hope for the final and glorious appearing of our Lord and Savior, who gave himself for us, when he shall bring all his redeemed with him in the power and glory of his resurrection and ascension to God our Father. Then dear sisters Cross, Harmon and Wickham and brother Secor talked again, beautifully and feelingly. Last und best of all, our dear brother Cross, long a true believer in Jesus, who has been a deeply interested and untiring helper of the little

band, and had so laboriously waited on us all, amid his and our tears talked very freely of his experience, his many doubts and fears, and of his faith and hope and rejoicings in the Lord Jesus. After much hesitation, because of his deep-felt unfitness, he tremblingly submitted his case to the faithful judgment of the church, and all hearts and hands were open to welcome him to the sacred cross of Christ, who was crucified for us. His baptism is to be in the future, when the Lord will. We could all happily say, "The Lord hath done great things for us, wherefore we are glad." The Lord builds the church, adds to it such as shall be saved, and keeps it. This was the subject on Sunday at brother Cross'. It was the Lord's day to us."

With fear and trembling I went to Cleveland—not that I feared them, but myself, but their love in Christ Jesus, their hearty christian welcome, and loving words and deeds both comforted us and endeared them to us. They have a clear discernment of the truth, and they abide and walk in it. Those who are of the truth, who believe with the apostles that "through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ" we shall be saved, both now and evermore, and those true servants of Christ who thus preach the gospel of his grace, will receive a hearty christian greeting by the little band in Cleveland.

With our affectionate greetings to all the household of God, and with our prayerful wishes that he will guide and keep us all to his praise,

Farewell.

D. BARTLEY.

1 JOHN V. 10.

"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself."

First, What is it to believe on the Son of God? This is a serious question. Do I believe on the Son of God in the true sense of the word? I hope that I do, but I do not know. To believe on him is first to believe that he is, and then to believe what he is, and what the Scriptures declare him to be. It is to believe that he is the Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace; it is to believe he is "The Lord our righteousness;" it is to trust in him, and not in the puny arm of man. One said, "Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief."

A physician professes to be able to heal some dreadful malady, you may be possessed of this remedy, and may be surrounded by numerous witnesses, and believe in the physician, upon the testimony of these witnesses, but when he has cured you, you have the witness in yourself. There is a certain fellowship between you and those who believe in this physician, but your belief is not based upon their testimony, but you have seen for yourself and not another, and have the witness in yourself. "He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself."

I was once shut up in prison as it were; I spent my days in pain and anguish and misery; I thought the brute creation was better off than I; I realized that I was a great sinner; I knew not where to go or whither to flee to escape the vengeance due to me, I fled to the law for refuge, but found condemnation there, after a long time I seemed to leave behind me the thunders of Mt. Sinai, and wandered on in the wilderness; I knew not where I stood; like Abraham I journeyed on and on, not knowing whither I went; the law was my schoolmaster; I was shut up

unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Then Jesus, the Son of God, opened the prison door in which I was confined, and the light of his countenance gradually illumined my dungeon. He opened my eyes, and at first I saw men as trees walking, afterwards I saw things plainly; he broke my bands asunder, and set me free; he assured me that he was delivered for my offences, and that he rose again from the dead for my justification. My heart burned within me while he communed with me by the way, and opened to me the Scriptures. I knew that my Redeemer lived; I had seen him for myself and not another.

But some may say, Is it not necessary to have witnesses in order to believe on the Son of God? I must answer, No, our faith is not based upon the testimony of others, faith is the gift of God. Witnesses do not have dominion over our faith, but they are helpers of our joy, they strengthen and establish and confirm us. We are not alone in our belief on the Son of God, we have a great cloud of witnesses. Abel was a witness to the things which we have seen and heard concerning Jesus. What kind of faith is Paul speaking of in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews? It is that faith which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Out of this substance or root, our hope springs. This is the kind of faith which all the ancient saints had. Of many of them, Paul speaks in this chapter; their faith was in the Son of God; they believed on the Son of God, and it was because they had the witness in themselves. So Paul said, "Wherefore, seeing that we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us." What is this sin which doth so easily beset us? The Bible says that all unbelief is sin, and I believe that it is the most besetting and perplexing sin which the child of God is compelled to encounter.

Was it not a sin, and an awful sin, for the children of Israel to disbelieve that it was the Lord who had so miraculously delivered them from the hand of all their enemies? Was it not an awful sin for them to make a god of gold, and worship it, saying, "These be thy gods, O Israel! which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."? It is now just as great a sin for us to disbelieve what the Lord has done for us to-day, and to turn from him, and make a god of our own thoughts and hands, and worship it. "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." Worship God; trust in God; here alone is perfect peace found. You will find it a great help to you to speak often with the witnesses which compass you about. Then "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." Jesus is the one object upon whom the eyes of all this great cloud of witnesses are fastened. In him, "they every glory view, of safety, strength and beauty, too." Yes, they look to him for guidance, for wisdom, for strength, for comfort, for righteousness, for redemption, yea, for salvation now and in eternity. Amen.

Your brother in hope,

EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Oct. 20, 1902.

BLOOMVILLE, Ohio, Dec. 17, 1902.

BENTON BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—I bid you Godspeed in the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have been a reader and subscriber about twelve years, and as long as it continues as it has in

the past, we expect to continue to take the paper while we live. We love the doctrine for which it contends, of God's predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass, and his government and absolute power over all worlds, creatures and things. I do rejoice that it has never wavered in the God-glorifying doctrine of his eternal power and majestic glory, who is from everlasting to everlasting; the same yesterday, to-day and forever, by whom all things were created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, principalities or powers, all things were created by him and for him, and by him all things consist.

"Shall the vain race of flesh and blood,
Contend with their Creator God?
Shall mortal beings presume to be
More holy, just and wise than he?"

"Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Nay, rather that our mouth be shut in everlasting silence, than to say, Why or what doest thou? or question his right to do as it seems good to him. It has been our lot in time past to be connected with those who do not believe the doctrine of the inspired apostle, during which time we endured much suffering, but they were only light afflictions compared with what was endured by others, who have finished their course, and received a crown of righteousness. In these afflictions my mind was stirred up to seek for a home where fellowship in the truth existed. Elder Bundy and the church at Otego, was continually on my mind, and I wrote him, and he wrote me a letter of love in the sweet fellowship of the gospel, and as a true yokefellow he greatly encouraged me concerning the afflictions of the gospel of Christ. We met Elder H. M. Curry, and found him of the same precious faith. When the church in Cleveland was organized we were enrolled with them. This church is a unit in faith and doctrine, and we all sincerely desire those to visit us who are of like precious faith. We want no preachers among us who come with yea and nay, for all the promises of God in Christ are yea and amen. We hope the Lord will remember us in his mercy, and send such among us as know nothing save Christ and him crucified. We realize that we are as lambs among wolves, but the Lord is our Shepherd, and in his power and care we have enjoyed his divine presence in our meetings, and by his rich and abounding grace we hope to continue to eat our meat with gladness and singleness of heart, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody in our hearts to the Lord. Our hearts constrain us to welcome all of God's poor and afflicted people. The poor, the needy, the helpless and the hungry are welcome here, those that have no money to buy, the beggar, and the outcast in the land of Egypt, will find a welcome from the King.

"Poor and afflicted, Lord, are thine,
Amongst the great unfit to shine;
But though the world may think it strange,
They would not with the world exchange.

Poor and afflicted oft they are,
Sorely oppressed with want and care;
Yet he who saved them by his blood,
Makes every sorrow yield them good."

H. E. PURRIS.

RIDDLEVILLE, Texas, Jan. 18, 1903.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—I herewith inclose you subscription price for another year of the dear SIGNS. It seems to be one continual song of praise to Almighty God, and the cry from poor, unworthy sinners who have learned through great affliction to put no confidence in the flesh, but to look to

Jesus to save from every evil, and the sin which doth so easily beset us.

I was much pleased with the minutes of the council held in Fort Worth, and feel that the Lord was surely with those brethren, and enabled them to express their understanding of the doctrine of God our Savior in clear language, that all may read and see what it is we do claim as our faith. Please send me five copies of SIGNS of Dec. 15th, 1902, that I may distribute them among some Baptists I know.

Will you, or brother Chick, or any brother who feels inclined, give their views through the SIGNS on 1 Cor. ix. 22, especially the last clause?

Will you insert a notice in the SIGNS to the effect that there is a place in Karnes Co., Texas, greatly in need of a sound Baptist preacher, one who can indorse fully the proceedings of Fort Worth Council? No church, but some who have been baptized and hope to see Jesus, and be like him. This is a good country, and such a man can get a good home here.

Your brother I hope,

LOUIS CULPEPPER.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., Dec. 29, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I do most heartily indorse those articles of faith of the Fort Worth, Texas, Council, and am compelled to stand with those who stand upon them. I would be glad if every Old School Baptist in our land would adopt them, for they are the true faith of God's elect.

I have seen very much trouble this fall, until I have come to the place where I feel perfectly willing for the will of God to be done with me. As a feather floating in the air waits for the moving power, even so I wait for a revelation of the power of the most high God to move me as he will and where he will. I do want to praise him in my body and spirit which are his. I think the circular letter of the Salisbury Association is one of the richest things I have ever seen in print in any paper. It reads almost like inspiration.

The Lord bless you to continue the good work of publishing the SIGNS.

With much love to all the family, I am yours in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

SNOW HILL, Md., Sept. 17, 1902.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Inclosed you will find two dollars, for which please send me the SIGNS another year. I am sorry that there is so much trouble getting into the church, but I suppose it is all just as the Lord knew it would be, or intended that it should be, or there would not be so much admonition in the apostles' letters in regard to all this mischief that Satan is doing. You are having much to contend with, much more, I suppose, than I have any knowledge of, but I believe the good Lord will guide you in the good work, as he ever has done. I believe he will have a visible church in this world as long as the world stands, and as long as there is a church here, she will need to be fed. I have never seen as much good food for God's hungering children in any other paper, as the SIGNS always contains. I do not want to ever be without it.

ELLA COULBOURN.

WELLSBORO, Pa., Nov. 10. 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I send two dollars to renew my subscription for the SIGNS. They are very dear to me, and I do not feel that I could do without them. Through them we come to know many of the dear kindred in Christ whom we may never meet face to face in the flesh. Many are the rich feasts which we enjoy

through the SIGNS; we cannot always do so, but perhaps one that has been read and laid aside we take up again, and re-read something, and it just fits our needs, and we see a beauty in it we did not see before. We love the doctrine it contains, strong, rich and pure, giving God all the glory, for our God is a God of power, wisdom and love. May the holy Spirit lead and direct us all, is the desire of your unworthy sister,

FLORENCE ELY.

OTEGO, N. Y., Jan. 7, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BENTON BEEBE:—At the annual church and society meeting of the Otego Old School Baptist Church, held Jan. 3d, 1903, it was voted that we send you one hundred dollars to apply upon the SIGNS' debt. We take great pleasure in sending this amount, only regretting it is not several times more hundreds than it is. We hope other churches will help in this way. Please find check inclosed.

Done by order of the church.

(MRS.) S. C. F. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

[FOR the continued marvelous kindness the brethren and friends are showing the SIGNS, we can but repeat our sincere thanks, and prayer that the Lord will continue to bless its publication to the edification of his saints.—ED.]

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE WARWICK ASSOCIATION

APPOINTED to be held with the New York church, on June 10, 11 and 12, will doubtless be largely attended. To many, living at a distance, who wish to attend, the matter of traveling expense may be of consequence, and the proposition herewith is to minimize such expense.

Most railroads selling tickets to New York are members of the Trunk Line Association, and under certain conditions this association will authorize a reduced rate of fare returning to points where tickets to New York were purchased. Seventy-five cents is the minimum fare to be paid by any one to whom a reduction on return ticket is conceded. The reduction will be two-thirds off the cost of one regular fare. The conditions are, tickets to New York must be purchased not earlier than June 7th, and return tickets must be used not later than June 16th. This benefit will not be available to attendants at preceding associations except they return to the point whence their ticket to New York was issued. To obtain this concession on return tickets it will be necessary to show the ticket agent's certification of having sold to the individual a ticket to New York within the dates mentioned above. Blanks for this certification will be supplied by the writer upon application, and it is hoped that as many as possible will avail themselves of this offer before April 15th. As 100 vouchers for sold tickets must be in evidence before any can obtain this rebate it is important that everyone, to whom the slightest saving is assured, shall make use of this privilege. And we would urge its use if for no other reason than to assure to others, who may be at greater expense, the benefit involved.

All who know this church know that a hearty and cordial welcome awaits every lover of the truth, and we are confident a visit with us will never be regretted. Many, no doubt, will wish to make their visit here an occasion also to meet friends and relatives; but all who are not thus provided for in entertainment may rest assured of ample provision for their comfort.

ELDER JOHN McCONNELL,

2100 SEVENTH AVENUE, NEW YORK.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1903.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ROMANS III.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Some time, at your leisure, I would be pleased to have your comment through the SIGNS upon the third chapter of Romans, but more especially the seventh verse.

In brotherly love,

L. C. TRULL.

WESSON, Ark., Nov. 7, 1902.

REPLY.

To attempt a comment upon the whole of the third chapter of Romans would exceed by far the space which would be allowable to use in the SIGNS, besides being a task far beyond any ability which we feel to possess. But we will give, as best we can, some thoughts upon the verse especially named by our brother, with some reflections upon the immediate connection. The verse named reads as follows, "For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner?"

The language of Paul, embraced in the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth verses of this chapter, has seemed difficult to understand by most of those who have written and spoken upon them. We cannot hope to clear the doubts away from the minds of every one, in what we may say, yet we feel like giving what seems to us to be the meaning of the apostle in as brief a manner as possible.

In the first place, it must be remembered that Paul has, in the preceding two chapters, been presenting the fact that all men, both Jews and Gentiles, are sold under sin, and justly condemned before God. And let it be especially remembered that he declares that there is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have come short of the glory of God. The Jew was no better off with respect to this state of death and condemnation, because that unto him had been committed the oracles of God, and neither was the Gentile relieved from condemnation because he had been without law, that is, without a revelation of the law, such as had been given to the Jew. This is the substance of the teaching of inspired Paul in the opening chapters of this epistle. Paul has shown that salvation cannot be by the law, either for Jew or Gentile, and that all are under condemnation alike. Thus he lays the foundation upon which he afterwards goes on to assert that salvation is by grace through faith, and not by creature works. This is the general theme of the first six chapters of this wonderful epistle.

Now in this third chapter Paul considers some objections to his doctrine of the total depravity and complete condemnation of all men. And in the first place he brings up an objection which might be urged by a Jew. "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way, chiefly because unto them were committed the oracles of God." Without pausing to comment upon this, we will say that the gist of the objection named in the first verse seems to be this: if the judgment of God turns solely upon what is seen in the heart of men, regard-

less of the state of the Jew under the covenant, or of the Gentile outside of that covenant, of what advantage was that covenant to the Jew? Paul says that the first advantage was that the Scriptures were theirs, or the revealed oracles of God. The word "oracle" is translated from the same Greek term that in many places elsewhere is translated "word." The oracles of God are the words of God.

But now he considers another objection: "What if some did not believe?" In fact the great body of the people did not believe, but Paul states the matter very gently by saying SOME, rather than MANY. "Does their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid." More than once Paul uses this reply, God forbid, to some argument of his adversaries. Literally it means, "let it not be." It is something abhorrent to assert that such consequences follow from his doctrine or teaching. Only the bitter enmity and prejudice of the fallen heart of man could even think of urging such an objection. It is as though he had said, Away with such a thought. Paul not only repudiates this conclusion, but thus expresses his abhorrence of it also. And then he adds, "Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar." The general sense is, as it seems to us, that we are to vindicate the justice of God at whatever expense to ourselves. God must be accounted just, though in doing so every man is proved to be a liar. The words that follow in this fourth verse are quoted from the fifty-first Psalm.

Now, in verse five Paul asserts that our unrighteousness commends the righteousness of God, and then meets an objection to the doctrine in the words that follow. The objection is from a Jewish adversary, and it is this: that if it be true that our unrighteousness commends the righteousness of God, then God must be unrighteous in taking vengeance against man's unrighteousness. That this is the argument of an opposer is shown by the parenthesis (I speak as a man). This is the same objection in substance that is presented in the ninth chapter of this epistle, when one is represented as saying, "Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" There Paul in reply simply says that this objection to his doctrine is a replying against God. And he there shows that it is a presumptuous replying against God by one who is frail, and puny, and ignorant, and an enemy of God, and his truth and sovereignty. So in this third chapter the objection just stated comes from an enemy of grace, and a proud believer in human merit. This unbelieving Jew would say, If the unbelief of the Jews, as you have asserted, only causes the righteousness of God to be the more commended, God must be unrighteous in taking vengeance against this unbelief. But Paul says, Is this so? and then he again replies to the question in the words, "God forbid," thus showing his abhorrence of such a conclusion. This conclusion does not follow from the doctrine just stated, however much the reason of fallen man may thus conclude. No heart and mind could admit such a conclusion, if that heart and mind were not already fallen and blinded by sin, and full of enmity to God and to his sovereign grace. Believers in human merit are always ready to assert that God's ways are unjust, unless their merit is acknowledged. Sovereign grace is abhorrent to fallen, self-righteous man. The assertion that God cannot justly condemn that unrighteousness which commends his righteousness, is shown to be untrue, because then as Paul says, he

could not judge the world. And what does this mean but that all the unrighteousness of the world will in some way commend the righteousness of God? It is a most wonderful depth into which Paul by the Spirit enters here. It is too deep for reason's line to sound. But still God has revealed it to the inspired apostle. That the unrighteousness of all the world does commend the righteousness of God, must be the conclusion to be drawn from Paul's argument here, else his reference to the right of God to judge the world could be of no force at all in this connection.

Now in verse seven we have another illustration of this same objection: "If the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie, why am I yet also judged as a sinner?" If my wrong results to the glory of God, why am I condemned? is the substance of the objection of this self-righteous Jew, who is the supposed objector all along here. And indeed, in verse eight, the apostle declares that this very doctrine is slanderously affirmed of the saints themselves; that is, that they assert a doctrine which means, Let us do evil that good may result. And more than this, it seems from the language of the eighth verse that some asserted that he and the brethren with him did say in so many words, "Let us do evil that good may come." Paul never did say this, and no believer in sovereign grace ever did say this, but enemies of grace conclude that this is the logical result of a belief that our evil does work out the righteousness of God, and then assert it, not only as the conclusion which they draw from it, but as being the very thing which the advocates of God's sovereignty over the unbelief and evil deeds of men intend to say. They foist their own conclusions upon the doctrine, and then say that those who believe the doctrine do hold to all the conclusions which they have drawn from it; false conclusions though they be, which could only spring up in a mind altogether perverted and alienated from God.

Now Paul says in this eighth verse that those who can say such things concerning the sovereignty of God are justly damned. That is, to say such things argues a heart unrenewed and still alien from God and the covenant of grace. Such souls have not yet come to see the need that is in their own hearts of cleansing by the blood of Christ, nor the need of justification before God by some other means than by human merit, let that merit consist of what it may, whether of forms and ceremonies, or of morality. All men are alienated from God by wicked works, but those who have become religious after the flesh are especially alienated from God. They not only have not grace, but they oppose grace. They not only are condemned by the law with all other men, but they are so blinded as to think that the law saves them instead of condemning them. They love themselves and their righteousness, and love not God or his righteousness. They boast their own power to do good, and dislike any mention of the power of God. They are dead in sin, and think that they live; they are blind, and think that they see. It is impossible for men to get any farther from God than these self-righteous ones are; whose damnation is just. The extreme ignorance, blindness and enmity of their hearts to God appears when they say, "If my unrighteousness does indeed commend the righteousness of God, then he has no right to condemn me." How awfully the base pride of the self-righteous heart appears in all this.

In the first verses of the sixth chapter

Paul brings up the same objection in another form. In that connection he shows not only that the unrighteousness of men commends the righteousness of God, but still more, that the abounding of sin commends the grace of God in salvation. And then the opponent of grace asserts that the conclusion must be, "Let us do evil, that grace may abound." And here again Paul says, "God forbid." So far from its being a true conclusion that because grace abounds still more where sin has abounded, we therefore ought to continue in sin to the end that grace might abound, the very opposite is true. For grace has made the subjects of it to be dead unto sin. That is, those who have felt the work of grace have come to abhor sin, and have been redeemed from its dominion, and how then can they continue in it? The very work of grace is to turn men from sin to righteousness, and if this has not resulted, then grace has not been working in that heart.

The doctrine of God's eternal purposes, and of the accountability of man, of free grace and the unchanging obligations of the law of God, have ever been subjected to the charge of inconsistency by all those who will bow to no truth which their reason cannot fathom. But amidst all the clouds and darkness which envelops the present administration of Jehovah, and also many of the truths which are declared in the Scriptures, the broad and deep principles which are here laid down and which shine in their own lustre, will be found the sheet anchor of our faith: "Let God be true and every man a liar." And if any advocates of salvation by grace shall say, "Let us do evil that good may come," it shows that they do not know the power of grace, but have only the theory of it, and their damnation is just.

Now, briefly summing up the general argument of the chapter, Paul, verse ninth, concludes that the Jew is no better than the Gentile, although to him the oracles of God were given, and he was for certain purposes the chosen of God, and then he shows that all are alike depraved, verses ten to eighteen. And so, verse nineteen, every mouth is stopped, and all are shown to be guilty before God. Thus he has laid broad and deep the foundation for the conclusion found in verse twenty, that by the deeds of the law shall no man be justified. Now then his arguments shut men up to one conclusion, viz: Salvation can be found alone in Christ.

We do not need here to enlarge upon this. In conclusion, how solemn and how abasing are the words of the apostle. The evil heart of all men is laid bare, and the very objections which they allege to grace and to the sovereignty of God, are shown to be but additional manifestations of depravity in them. And what a wonderful deep is presented here concerning the sovereignty of God over the unrighteousness of men, making it work to the commendation of his righteousness, and to the glory of his grace. Sin is not excused in his sight, nor in the sight of those who love him, and confide in him, and bow to him, but is shown to be exceeding sinful. Sin must be exceeding sinful to so blind men that they will seek to hide their sins behind the overruling sovereignty of God. God makes all evil work to his glory, but man is still the sinner, and as such is still condemned by his sins. How all evil works to the glory of God he has hidden from our sight. And here we need not seek to tread, but it becomes us to accept humbly and trustingly the truth, believing that God knows and that we do not need to know.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

CHURCH ORDER.

MANY difficult and perplexing questions may be suggested on almost every discriminating point of doctrine and practice by which the church of Christ should be distinguished from every other organization claiming to be religious, but we should impugn the wisdom of our divine law-giver, were we to conclude there was any deficiency in the rule given us in the New Testament for testing the correctness of the faith and practice of the saints.

Perhaps, when difficulties arise, we are too prone to inquire, what is best under the circumstances of the case; whereas the only proper inquiry should be, What is right? What does the word teach? What does the *rule* require? By the divine rule we are to know what God approves, that do, and leave the result with God. And if any man lacketh wisdom to understand the rule in its application to trying cases, let him ask of God who giveth to every man liberally and upbraideth not. We do not regard it as any departure from the law of Christ to counsel one with another on the subject, for our Lord has constituted his members *helpers* one of another, but in all our deliberations and investigations we should bear in mind the supremacy of Christ as our Head, and of his laws as our rule.

As we read the divine law in regard to christian baptism, it is both definite and clear. The candidate should be a believer, making profession of his faith in the Lord Jesus, and confessing his sins. We care not how old or how young, provided he can so bring forth fruit meet for repentance as to satisfy us that he has a right to the ordinance. The administrator must be, at the time of administering baptism, recognized by a gospel church as a regular ordained minister of the gospel, sustained by the fellowship of the church as her servant. Then the ordinance must be administered according to the precept and example given by our Lord Jesus Christ. A departure from any of these regulations, in our estimation, renders the administration null and void. Neither the sincerity nor honesty of administrator or candidate can supply the deficiency if these rules are any of them neglected.

Now, while we presume brother Strickland agrees with us in the foregoing remarks, a difficulty is presented in determining the indispensable qualifications of the administrator. But, as neither the prerogative nor ability to search the hearts or to try the reins of the children of men belong to us, instead of our being required to decide whether the administrator or the candidate is a subject of grace or a hypocrite, we are only to look to the precepts of Christ, from these learn whether he has authorized us to extend or to withhold an expression of fellowship. If therefore a candidate asks baptism, confessing his sins, giving scriptural evidence that he repents of them, and professing faith in Jesus, however weak he may be in the faith, or whatever may have been his previous course of life, we do not feel at liberty to reject him, and if he imposes upon the church or the administrator by making a false profession, the guilt is on his own head. The church and the administrator are clear, provided that they have been faithful in the investigation of the matter.

As the administrator must be indorsed or sustained by the fellowship of the church of God, in order to make his administration of the ordinance valid, it be-

comes a question with us, how far a church of Christ may be involved in disorder and still be a church of Christ. Let us have the assurance that the administrator stands in the fellowship of the church of Christ at the time of the administration, and that gives the ordinance validity which we dare not annul. The Corinthian church, and the churches of Galatia, had become to some extent disorderly, but did not lose their standing as apostolic churches. The validity of the baptism of such as were added to them while in a disorderly or *bewitched* state, was not questioned as we are informed. Associations and churches may extend or withhold their immediate correspondence one with another, without effecting their standing as regular churches of Christ. But if fellowship is broken, and the expression of it withdrawn, it is manifestly inconsistent, to still regard their administrations valid gospel administrations, if the churches cannot be regarded as gospel churches. The cases mentioned by brother Strickland, are probably very trying cases, but the question on which our decision must rest in this matter is, Are they churches of Christ or not? If they are, we have no right to reject them because they have in some measure become disorderly, but labor in meekness and faithfulness to reclaim them. But if they have been labored with and have persisted in disorder until the divine rule has compelled the orderly churches to withdraw fellowship from them, then let them be unto thee as heathen men and as publicans were to the Jews, and let their baptism be unto thee as though it had been administered by publicans or heathens.

It is very important and desirable that our churches should decide and act harmoniously on this subject, or their peace and harmonious correspondence will become involved. The churches which profess to be of the Primitive or Old School order, with but very few exceptions, have taken the same view of the subject which we have expressed, and have acted accordingly. But such churches as have disrespected the general usage of the Old School, have received persons on what is generally regarded as invalid baptism, have opened a door for divisions.

Should persons, wishing to become members of one of our churches, find that we cannot indorse their baptism, that, in a gospel sense, we consider them unbaptized, they may make a bridge of a neighboring church which will receive them without baptism, and then come to us with a letter from a church with which we have been, and still are in all other respects in fellowship, and in such case compel us to reject what they have indorsed. How can two or more walk together, except they are agreed? While we all desire the peace of Jerusalem, and the order of the house of God, let us be exceedingly cautious how we act, in all matters involving the union, harmony and fellowship of those who belong to the household of faith.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 15, 1860.

PLEASE BE SURE,

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Please be particular about this.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO BROTHER D. M. LEONARD'S APPEAL TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

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Otego Church, N. Y., $100.00; Jesse C. Ellis, Ohio, $5.00; G. R. Turner, Ky., $3.00; Elder J. N. Bartlett, W. Va., $1.00; Mrs. Mary Smith, Ill., $1.00; John A. Leitch, Ont., $5.00; Martin D. Fisher, N. Y., $1.00; A Stranger, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. Phœbe Arnow, N. Y., $20.00; T. E. Cole, W. Va., $5.00; A Friend, N. Y., $1.00; John Barger, Ohio, $1.00; Mrs. S. J. Basham, Va., $3.00; First Ind. Baptist Church in Woburn, Mass., $4.00; Geo. Teakle, Ont., $1.00; Elizabeth A. Hutchins, Oregon, $1.00; S. H. McWilliams, N. Y., $1.00; P. W. Lecates, Md., $3.00.—Total 157 00

Total to date.....$592 10

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Wm. Grafton, January 14th, 1903, at the residence of the bride's mother, Frank A. Althouse and Miss H. Mary Scott, both of Lancaster Co., Pa.

MEMORIAL.

WHEREAS, it has pleased God to call to his eternal home and reward our late pastor, **Elder Ephraim Rittenhouse,** we, the members of the Cow Marsh Old School Baptist Church, deem it our duty and privilege to publicly acknowledge the afflicting hand of our heavenly Father in taking unto himself and from our midst a true father in Israel, whose labors in this church date back to 1858. He was a faithful pastor, ever having an eye single to the glory of God and the welfare of Zion. We feel our loss deeply, but desire to bow in submission to the will of him who doeth all things well. We desire to extend by the publication of this memorial our deepest sympathy to his bereaved family, but would commend them to look beyond the strength of man for comfort, for our blessed Lord has said, I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you, May we all be enabled to say, The Lord hath given and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord. We authorize our church clerk to enter this memorial on our church book, and to send a copy to the bereaved family, and also a copy to the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

Written by the direction of the church, and adopted by the same, Dec. 27th, 1902.

W. W. MEREDITH, Moderator.

J. B. MEREDITH, Church Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **Sarah Kerlin Varnes** departed this life Dec. 14th, at 5 p. m. Sister Varnes was born in Juniata Co., Pa., and was raised in the Presbyterian church, and had an experience of grace when a young girl, but was prejudiced against the Old Baptists, but she married one, and moved to this State about 1861, and attended our meeting for awhile; still hated us. But Elder John Davis, who afterwards baptized him, in his discourse told some of his experience, and it was so much like hers, that the scales seemed to fall from her eyes, and she was constrained to love the Old Baptists ever afterwards, and was a sound, faithful member of Fountain church for over forty years. Her husband died some years ago. Her age was 74 years.

Elder Humphrey preached an able discourse at her funeral, after which her remains were carried to its resting-place in the graveyard near by. This is the fifth one that has been taken by death out of our little church in the last year. O, how we miss them. O, that we could say with David, We cannot bring them back, but we shall go to them.

E. D. VARNES.

FARMINGTON, Ill.

Robert Franklin Beck, son of Jeptha and Phebe Beck, was born near Shannondale, Montgomery Co., Ind., Dec. 27th, 1831, and died in Crawfordsville, ten miles from his birthplace, Dec. 12th, 1902. He was 71 years old, lacking 15 days. In 1851 he was married to Angeline Lee. This union was blessed with one son, who is still living. This wife died in 1857. In 1858 he was married to Lina W. Johnson. To them were born five children, three daughters still living to comfort the bereaved mother. He knew he was going to leave us, and told how he wanted to be buried, so we tried to fulfill his wishes by burying him in a plain, quiet, calm manner, in beautiful Oak Hill cemetery. He served in public office in this city a number of years, and made many warm friends who attended his funeral, which was conducted by Elders Oliphant and Montgomery Canine.

For him I feel there is rest and love, joy and peace; a meeting with the blessed Savior he so sincerely desired to worship and adore. In his agony of pain he would often say, "O my God," and once he said, "I want to sing," and to soothe him I sang, "Come, thou fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing thy praise." He was quiet while I sang the whole hymn, and now I hope he is singing the sweetest song of praise to the

"Dear, dying Lamb, whose precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved to sin no more."

He was troubled much the last year of his life be-

cause he had never been baptized. He said, "I am afraid I am not the character to follow the dear Savior in this sacred ordinance. Forty-five years ago I found I was the chief of sinners," he told me. All these many years he has been a faithful attendant at our church meetings, and many times I have looked into his shining countenance while listening to a good sermon, and could see he understood and enjoyed the gospel. A few days before he left us he told a neighbor, "I am ready and waiting to go." He was an honest, good, upright man; his walk was more Christlike than mine, who have been a church member nearly forty-nine years. In his last days I told him, "Baptism will not save you; remember Jesus is a whole and complete Savior." That seemed to comfort him. He often sang, and it seemed to be his prayer,

"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly;
While the raging billows roll,
While the tempest still is nigh."

I feel that he is safe, his troubles are all over, but I must still cry,

"Abide with me, fast falls the even-tide;
The darkness deepens, Lord, with me abide!
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me!"

LINA W. BECK.

JANUARY 9, 1903.

DIED—At the family residence in Camp Point, Ill., at 5 o'clock a. m., Dec. 19th, 1902, **Mrs. Catharine Davis,** aged 79 years, 8 months and 2 days. Catharine Clingingsmith was born in Missouri, April 17th, 1824, and was married to the late Cornelius Davis, July 10th, 1842. Thus these two good people who lived together for more than sixty years, sharing each other's joys and sorrows, and who reared a family of six children to manhood and womanhood, were separated by death less than two months. Brother Davis having died Oct. 31st, notice of which appeared recently in this paper. Three years ago sister Davis was stricken with paralysis, and not only was she deprived of the proper use of the body, but her mind was also seriously affected; in fact to the extent that she has required constant care, both day and night, even as an infant. Until recently her general health has been remarkably good. Two weeks before her death another attack of paralysis occurred, depriving her of the use of all the members of the body except the left arm, and a very limited use of the head. Later pneumonia developed, proving fatal as stated above. The care of this good woman throughout the years of her mental darkness devolved principally upon the youngest daughter, Amanda, (all the other children having married and being scattered abroad from the parental home,) and to her the loss of both her parents in so short a time is a sad bereavement indeed.

Funeral services were conducted at the family home, at 2 p. m., Dec. 21st, by the writer of this notice, the text used being 1 Cor. xv. 26; after which the remains were laid beside those of her husband in the Camp Point cemetery.

Father and mother Davis were for almost half a century members of the Primitive Baptist Church at Coatsburg, Ill., and the brotherhood feel that they have sustained a great loss, though desiring to bow in humble submission to the Master's will.

D. W. OWENS.

HERSMAN, Ill.

Isaac Drake Parker, the subject of this notice, was born in Crawford Co., Ill., Oct. 23d, 1821, and died at his home near Birdville, Texas, Oct. 28th, 1902. He moved with his parents to Texas in 1833, settling first in Grimes Co., later in Houston, and finally in Tarrant. In 1845 he married Miss S. Z. Huntsman, of Madison Co., Tenn., who became mother of eight children, all of whom are dead; dying herself in 1863. In 1865 he married a Miss Mary P. Holt, of Tarrant Co., Texas, who became mother of seven children, three of whom are dead. Uncle Ike Parker, as he was generally called, has been a consistent member of the Old School Baptist Church most of his life, joining while young in years (but the exact date unknown to the writer of this memoir). He has always been a stanch believer in the absolute sovereignty of God, uncompromising with innovations to the church in any form. Contending that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and that there is none that could stay his hand, and whatsoever his soul desireth even that he doeth. Believing that his salvation was wholly of grace, and that there was nothing good or meritorious in himself, but that his righteousness was all in the Lord Jesus Christ. His house has ever been a home for the brethren, and many of the servants of the Lord have partaken of the hospitalities of this dear old brother's home. He was very charitable, not only as regarding his church, but to any who might be in destitution. His ancestors were among the foremost people of their country. His grandfather, Elder John Parker, of Maryland, was an Old School Baptist preacher of considerable note, and his father, Colonel Isaac Parker, in whose honor Parker Co., Texas, was named, was a very prominent man in the early history of the republic of Texas, serving eighteen years in the House and Senate, and who also with his son, I. D., did much service on the frontier of Texas as a soldier, and was a lifelong friend of General Sam Houston. The subject of this sketch served through the confederacy, enlisting at Dallas, Texas, in 1864, but being beyond military age, and hence his service was voluntary. He leaves a wife and four children

to mourn their loss, three sons and one daughter, and our little church at Keller, Texas, where his membership was, will with those of his family miss his counsel, his prudence and judgment, yet while we feel the severity of our loss, we pray the Lord to reconcile us to all the dispensations of his providence, and to feel that our loss is his eternal gain. We believe we can say of him in the language of Paul, That he has fought a good fight, that he has kept the faith, and henceforth there is a crown of righteousness laid up for him, and not for him only, but for all those that love the appearing of the Lord.

W. S. BOURLAND.

BIRDVILLE, Texas, Jan. 3, 1903.

Elder Abner Shanks was born Dec. 27th, 1810, in Montgomery Co., Ohio; moved with his parents to Carroll Co., Ind., in 1829; was married to Anna Lenon, Nov. 14th, 1833; she died Feb. 15th, 1852. He was married the same year to Elizabeth Ewing, (nee Cline) who died Sept. 18th, 1894. He united with the Baptist church called Paint Creek, in Carroll Co., Ind., in August, 1840; moved to Iowa in 1853; united with Sharon Church, in Guthrie Co., Iowa; was ordained to the work of the ministry in 1863; moved to Oregon in 1865; was in the constitution of the Union Church, in Marion Co., Ore., in 1866, where he remained a faithful member till he was called home, which was Nov. 26th, 1902, being 91 years, 10 months and 29 days old. He was pastor of Union and Siloam churches up to his death; the writer of this being his assistant, and member with him in Union Church. He was a faithful minister of the gospel as long as he was able to go. He leaves ten children, six sons and four daughters, to mourn their loss, with many brethren and friends.

The writer tried to speak a few words of comfort to the children and friends at Macleay, where we hold our meetings, then we laid him to rest by the side of his wife, in the Baptist cemetery near by the church, to await the resurrection.

W. S. MATTHEWS.

BROTHER **Luther Bellows** died in Bradford Co., Pa., May 5th, 1901, aged 76 years. He was born in Middletown, Delaware Co., N. Y., and with his wife united with the First Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., July 27th, 1867, and was baptized by Elder Isaac Hewit. Their membership remained there until they moved to Pennsylvania, when they took letters and united with the Old School Baptist Church at Grover, Bradford Co., Pa., in 1872, where they lived until he died. He leaves a wife and nine children to mourn their loss, but their loss is his eternal gain.

ALSO,

SISTER **Jane Garrison,** widow of brother Albert Garrison, of Grover, Pa., died June 7th, 1902, aged 78 years. She united with the Grover Old School Baptist Church in 1872, and was baptized by Elder Durand.

WILLIAM BALLARD.

VEGA, N. Y.

DIED—At the home of D. M. Leonard, **Elizabeth Carter,** aged 81 years, 1 month and 24 days. She united with the Christian church at Freehold, N. Y., in her younger days, when only about fifteen years old. She frequently related some of her travels from nature to grace, which was very comforting to a believer to hear. She leaves one son, Charles, and one daughter, Anna, who has been blind from her birth. Anna and her mother have had their home in the Leonard family for about six years, and Anna remains there yet. They were a great comfort to each other, but the tie is broken; Anna feels her loss as none others can feel for her. She is left alone.

May the God of heaven help her and sustain her during her remaining days.

D. M. LEONARD.

BROOME CENTRE, N. Y.

Mrs. Virginia Johnson, wife of Elder A. J. Johnson, died at her home in Wise Co., Texas, Sept. 21st, 1902. She was baptized in the fellowship of Silver Creek Church, the third Sunday in November, 1894, by Elder W. L. Rogers, where she retained her membership until her God took her to himself. Her maiden name was Martin, being married to Elder Johnson in 1889. She was a sufferer from consumption for many years, an honored member and a loving companion and neighbor. May God grant comfort to the church and brother Johnson in their bereavement.

A. D. BOURLAND.

POETRY.

MORNING.

AWAY beyond and over all
The storms that gather here,
The midnight gloom and pending pall,
A morning doth appear.

It is a soft, reflected light,
Thrown from the world of bliss,
That hovered once o'er Calvary's height;
How wonderful is this!

'Twas there upon the sacred mount
The mighty force of night,
Thought to forever veil the fount
Of this revealing light.

But ignorance was put to shame,
When wisdom wonders wrought,
And triumph through a Savior's name
A glorious morning brought.

An empty sepulchre behold!
Our hope is not in vain;
The morning song will ne'er grow old,
Our Lord is risen again.

The works of darkness shrank away
Before the Father's nod;
What consolation, none can stay
Our covenanted God.

The wonders of his grace redound
Above the waves that roll;
In him sweet liberty is found,
A morning in the soul.

My fellow-traveler in fear,
A pilgrim of the night,
The glory of the morn is near,
Behold the growing light.

The Sun of Righteousness doth rise,
And morning spreads her wings;
A healing for our wounds and sighs
The welcome vision brings.

Temptation here the soul allures,
And trifling things annoy;
Our weeping for the night endures,
With morning cometh joy.

O when our God the earth shall rend,
He'll wake our sleeping clay;
'Tis then the glorious morn shall end
In everlasting day.

SEMMA E. CORDER.

PHILIPPI, W. Va.

EXODUS XXVIII. 33.

THE golden bells are ringing sweet and clear,
And joyful are the songs their music tells
Of brighter scenes beyond this world of care,
In the blissful abode where Jesus dwells.

Ring on, sweet bells, in peals of solemn joy,
In tender'st strains exalt the Lamb of God;
Unmingled with the sound of earth's alloy,
Send out the praise of reigning grace abroad.

Ring out the only Name that can avail
For ship-wrecked mariners on life's rough sea;
Ring, that his promises can never fail;
His name availed for me, sweet bells, for me!

"Not unto us, not unto us," we hear
In each vibration of those faithful bells,
"But unto thee, O Lord," rings strong and clear,
And loud the glad, triumphant anthem swells.

Not time, with all its retinue of change,
Has ever dimmed the lustre of those bells,
Or brought in any false notes, new and strange,
To mar the perfect song their music tells.

SALLIE M. BARTLEY.

LEBANON, Ohio, Jan. 8, 1903.

LOOKING BACKWARD.

How oft the natural mind of man
Revisits places he has been;
Enjoys once more some pleasure past,
Some short, sweet seasons he has seen.
His mind once more beholds a spot,
Or some grand picture most forgot,
And once again, like days of yore,
His thoughts are free from care once more.

How oft the things of spirit mind,
So plain to view, though far behind,
Refresh the inner man anew,
And cheer and guide the footsteps, too.
How grateful are these sights once seen,
Presented to our view again;
When faint with waiting, watchful prayer,
We're nearly given to despair.

Do you recall that time long since,
When searching for your soul's defense,
Those awful dark and lonely tours,
Those hapless, hopeless, hellish hours,
When you were lost in nature's gloom,
And endless death your certain doom;
When each despairing step you trod,
Seemed leading farther from your God?

Did ever man behold this sight,
Then drive it from his memory quite?
To feel his sentence fixed and sealed,
Then hear it all reversed, repealed?
What joy, what rapture in that place,
Where he can say, I'm saved by grace!
To such who sees and wants no more,
When he has tried all sea and shore.

EVERETT R. KINNEY.

GLENS FALLS, N. Y., Dec. 17, 1902, 12 p. m.

PSALM CXVIII. 14.

"THE Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation."

Art thou not wearied, O my Lord,
With my abounding sin?
My crimes it seems increase with years;
O, canst thou dwell within
A heart so vile and black as mine?
I mourn with grief and tears,
And fear that I have ne'er been cleansed,
In vain my hopes and fears.
I dare not ask thee to forgive,
Nor grace nor pity lend,
I can but bend beneath the load,
My ways I cannot mend.
My sins rise up as mountains high,
Who shall deliver me?
Help! help, O Lord, I can but cry,
No other hope I see.
Hark! above my cries and groanings,

Sounds of triumph from afar,
And above the foulest blackness,
Shines the glorious Morning Star.
Jesus comes in robes victorious,
Comes a conquering Priest and King:
Hark! he says, "I paid thy ransom,
Peace and pardon, too, I bring."
See, he comes e'en down unto thee,
Low he stoops upon the ground;
Gives thee wine for drooping spirits,
Pours in oil upon thy wound:
"The Father knoweth all thy weakness,
Knew it e'er he sent me down;
Still in love and pity bears thee,
See, he hath for thee a crown."
O, my soul, what can'st thou render,
Only at his feet to lie?
Ever sorrowing, yet rejoicing,
That for thee he came to die.
Hail! all hail our King, Immanuel,
Low we kneel before thy face;
Let all nations bow before thee,
While we sing of sovereign grace.

JOIE E. WICKHAM.

CARDINGTON, Ohio.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 71. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1903. NO. 4.

POETRY.

PRAYER.

THE following most beautiful hymn we copy from Beebe's Collection, No. 1007.

I asked the Lord that I might grow
In faith, and love, and every grace;
Might more of his salvation know,
And seek more earnestly his face.

'Twas he who taught me thus to pray,
And he, I trust, has answered prayer;
But it has been in such a way
As almost drove me to despair.

I hoped that in some favored hour,
At once he'd answer my request,
And by his love's constraining power,
Subdue my sins, and give me rest.

Instead of this, he made me feel
The hidden evils of my heart,
And let the angry powers of hell
Assault my soul in every part.

Yea, more, with his own hand he seemed
Intent to aggravate my woe;
Crossed all the fair designs I schemed,
Blasted my gourds, and laid me low.

Lord, why is this? I trembling cried;
Wilt thou pursue thy worm to death?
'Tis in this way, the Lord replied,
I answer prayer for grace and faith.

These inward trials I employ,
From self and pride to set thee free;
And break thy schemes of earthly joy,
That thou mayest seek thy all in me.

Newton.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MERRIFIELD, Va., Jan. 8, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—In days that are past, I used to let the dear brethren, readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, hear from me at least once a year, if nothing else to thank them for their kind epistles of love and fellowship through its columns, but now I am shut up in the old prison-house of clay, and there is nothing to feast my hungry eyes upon but these bare walls of mortality; all is vanity and vexation of spirit, I cannot pray or sing nor yet die to it, but must live on in this state of death, this despondency, knowing not where it may end, even if it ever will end at all. Yet I feel that if the Lord only said, "Let there be light," there would be light, for he has but to speak and it stands fast, yea, it is done. But how I know or feel this, is more than I can tell, and if I am to be ready to give a reason of the hope that is in me, I fail completely; indeed, I fear I have no reason to hope at all. We read that "We know that we have passed from death unto life because [or by reason of] we love the brethren." What are these words to one like me? Do they convey

anything to one in the darkness of despair? I do so long to know if I do love the brethren indeed and in truth. How I do crave knowledge of this kind. I feel even to tremble to think of it sometimes, lest it be that same old tempter saying, "Partake of knowledge, and know good and evil, then you shall live." O, to live, is the cry from day to day. I am surely in the evening of the first day, and dreading what the morning will reveal. Have I ever seen the light that the face of Jesus gives, and have I ever heard his voice calling me by my own name? These are questions of deep moment to me, that have followed me day by day for many years, and while I have from time to time forgotten myself while in the assembly of the saints, and had no desire to part, they looked so lovely, yet as the moments fled I have wept for the reason that I should not have rejoiced with them, but rather for them. I cannot tell why it is that I love them, nor that I do in the true sense of the word. So dark is my way I fear I know not the glorious morning star of hope that can and does disperse the gloom of a poor blighted soul, and leads them to the Rock that is higher than they. The thought now comes to my mind that the book called Genesis surely is true history of the generation of Jesus, wherein we may find the Lord's little children set forth in Adam as the clay in the hands of the potter, both to honor and dishonor, but all of the same lump. I wish I could tell this as I see it, but that is not mine to do, I only hope to give a little hint, and pass on. But the first thing that comes up is that our God is a God of purpose, and one that works and none can hinder, and therefore what he wills, comes to pass according to his purpose, and it was his will that in the creation of this world (and I mean all that belongs to it) that it should be without form and void, no development yet, but there came a time within the scope of those six days that a division took place. Just a thought here in the form of a question and then I pass. Who was there to advise or counsel? None. His will and his purpose alone. Now in that day (for so I shall call it) darkness covered the creation, and waters of the great deep covered the face of the whole earth, and in this condition all created things stood when the division referred to took place, but all according to the purpose of the great Creator; working all things after the counsel of his own will. Now his Spirit moved upon the face of the waters, and he said, "Let there be light, and there was light." Now what did the light do? It made no commotion, not a sound, but what a revelation: a whole world lying spread out beyond comprehension of any finite mind, it cannot grasp such a sight. The heavens and the earth were now about to be separated, and a great separation was being accomplished, the waters were being gathered together in one place, ere the dry land appeared, and for the first time the dry land was called earth, and out of that, man was formed. What a development. We see this by reason of light, we feel this by reason of its truth, but when we come to search for a personal knowledge of it, where shall we find it?

Now, I feel often to look back on the years that are past and gone, to the joys I once had in contemplating the salvation of the Lord in all things pertaining to his dear people, when the lamp, or light, of his love shone round about me, and I felt he had clothed me with the garments of his salvation. Then indeed and in truth, I felt sure I had heard his voice,

that he had come where I was. Naked, and he gave me raiment; sick, and he visited me; I was hungry, and he fed me; and in sorrow and in shame, and he made me to lie down in green pastures, and rest in the shadow of his wing. And where did he find me? Even where he found all his children, in a body of clay in Adam, hid away in some secluded spot in the garden of his own good "pleasure," for that is just what the name "Eden" means, each of us were sewing fig leaves together; together, mind you, is a sort of joint partnership business, so much like a little child's bargaining, "You and I will do thus and so." Here he takes us up, and away go the leaves to the winds, and now for the first time we behold the way we have been brought is surely a way of death. "From death to life," while nature says from life to death. But why could we not see this before? Because the evening of death was before the morning of life. And why was it so? Because it was the purpose of God. We were found in the darkness of the earth, earthy, then in God's own time he said, "Let there be light, and there was light," and that light sought us out, and discovered unto us our wretched condition, and we tried to flee from the just condemnation of the wrath of God, for, behold, the light that shined round about us was full of holiness, and too bright for us to look upon, and the voice of God was in it. "Where art thou?" it said, and we knew it was his voice, although we could not see his face, for we answered, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and he said, Go to the brethren and it shall be told unto you there; till the land, and fight the thorns and thistles that spring forth, for the curse is upon thee (the earth), for this is not your home, you have been bought with a price, even the blood of the Lamb. Herein we see the emblem in the skins of beasts, that hid the shame of all the family God placed in the garden of his pleasure, the life of the Lamb was sacrificed to clothe the poor, lost sinner. Then we begin to wonder and are amazed at the love and mercy shown.

But I cannot dwell here, I know I am tedious, and must stop. My mind is unsettled, as I said in the beginning, but some time since, in looking over the SIGNS, a sister, I think it was, made mention of some things in her communication that gave rise to some of the thoughts feebly written here. I cannot find her expression now, I wish I could. I hope some dear one will take the subject up, and not forget to tell me where I am, both in predestination and election, and the salvation of the Lord's dear children, and whether I may hope in his mercy.

May God's grace attend you this the new year, that we have just entered, guide, guard and keep you, and all his dear saints, is the desire of one lonely traveler in a valley of sin and sorrow.

Your brother, I beg,

ELI T. KIDWELL.

P. S.—I cannot tell what has come over me; I do not want to send this, yet as this is my second attempt to write and have failed, I do not know but what it would be better to throw it in the fire, but I even cannot do that, for I have tried that on several occasions, and to no purpose, so I think maybe you may get time to look it over, and see how ignorant I am. I do want my brethren to know, and judge me, too, for if I am deceived, I do not want them to be. I just wished to send my remittance for another year and greet you and all the saints through the SIGNS, but I have failed, and I just ask you to say to them for me, that I

wish them joy in the Holy Ghost, and say for me, Write on, you know how to say things, but I do not.

Ever yours,

E. T. K.

MACOMB, Ill., Jan. 1, 1903.

TO THE EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST:—A year has passed since I penned anything for the columns of the SIGNS, and I have a desire to write a little to the household of faith, I wish to extend to you all my New Year's greeting in the Lord, and to tell you I still have love and fellowship for you in the gospel of Christ. I think of all the poor and afflicted ones, and pray God's blessing on them, both temporally and spiritually. Because I have not written and complied with the requests of dear brethren and sisters was not from lack of interest, or from forgetfulness, but so many things have come in my way. My weakness and unfitness are ever before me, and our paper has been filled with good and precious things, I felt I could write nothing of interest or comfort. I have read all the dear letters from those of like precious faith scattered abroad over our country, telling the same sweet story of salvation by grace, and have been built up and greatly comforted. I think the SIGNS has grown better and better, and if I could in my weakness speak a word of approbation or encouragement to brethren Beebe and Chick I would love to do so. The paper is highly appreciated by the Baptists in these parts, where we have no trouble or dissension to mar our peace. May God's blessing rest upon the paper and its editors, and may they be spared many years to continue it to the comfort of God's children. I think one reason why the SIGNS has grown in favor is because so little controversy finds place in its columns. I wish it may ever be so; for when poor, hungry souls open the paper they want to find something to feed upon, something to cheer, comfort and edify them, surely this is something we all long for and so surely find in our dear family paper.

Dear brethren and sisters, many of you perhaps, like myself, have been shut up at home since cold weather, and living so far from your church, seldom meet with the saints; become hungry and thirsty for the living food. O how I can rejoice with those who have attended good meetings, and what a gracious privilege it is to thus meet with those who love the Lord and worship him in sincerity and truth. Though these things are highly prized by me, and I dearly love the company and association of the saints, yet it is a consolation to know we are not left comfortless, for we have the precious word of God which we can read and receive instruction and comfort from, and the blessed mercy-seat where we can go and pour out our sorrows and troubles to that One who never slumbers nor sleeps, and who never sends one empty away.

For some time my mind has been dwelling on the promises of God left on record for the consolation of his children. These promises are found on nearly every page of the Bible. I have seen many precious things as I hope I have been led along the way, gleaning sweet morsels here and there, and poor, sinful and unworthy as I am, I have believed and been made to rest in these glorious promises. If I could pen these things down as I have felt them, perhaps it might be of some comfort to weak ones like myself, but I feel I cannot do this of myself, I am not sufficient for these things. The Spirit

must take of the things of Jesus and show them unto us. We must experience these things for ourselves. We cannot see the sweetness of these things merely by reading or hearing. Could we at all times claim an interest in the promises of God to his children, and feel they were applied to us we could go on our way rejoicing. But such is not the case, for often the Bible is a sealed book to us. We get low down in darkness, and doubts and fears are our only companions. We read without taking any interest in the Scriptures; we go halting and stumbling, not as much as daring to claim a little hope in Christ. But sometimes through a rift in the clouds we can see a ray of light, that reveals God's love to his people, and the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the sons of God. Then we take fresh courage, we read the Scriptures with new light and the promises all seem for us.

We read in the beginning, when Adam transgressed, involving all mankind in sin, a Savior was promised who would redeem his people and save them with an everlasting salvation. All the offerings under the law of Moses were emblematical of the sufferings and death of Christ. All the prophets and holy men of old believed in the coming of Christ; they all died in the faith, believing in the promises, though having not received them. In the fullness of time Christ came as it was foretold of him. We have but to read the gospels in order to trace his footsteps, learn of his mighty works, and of the many glorious promises he left to the comfort of his people. He said to his disciples, "It is expedient that I go away." "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am ye may be also." "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." "I will not leave you comfortless, but I will come again unto you." "I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me, and the will of him that sent me is, of all that he has given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again the last day." "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God." These are only a few of the many precious promises our Savior left for us. The Old, as well as the New Testament, is full of glad tidings to the afflicted and tempest-tossed child; we have but to read the books of Job, the Psalms, Isaiah and others, to find the many sweet things recorded there for our comfort. These words of hope and comfort come when the poor sinner is bowed beneath a burden of sin, at the midnight hour, when beset with the trials, disappointments and troubles of life's uneven way, when bowed with grief, when death comes. The Lord in his own time and way speaks words of hope and gives grace sufficient for every day and trial. O, may we have a desire to read, a heart to understand, believe and rejoice in some of these precious promises of God.

But my letter is already too long, and I have only begun the story. I have not cited any of the many precious promises recorded by all these same faithful disciples who, after the death and resurrection and ascension of Christ, went everywhere preaching the word, just as true and faithful servants do now, going where the Spirit directs, and God has promised to be with them even to the end, and he is faithful who promised. But I cannot write of more now, but to add that the most glorious of all the promises left for our comfort, is that Christ shall come again, call from the graves his sleeping saints, and take them

home to ever dwell with him in heaven, "Where there is no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor any more pain." "Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Dear kindred, when I think of these glorious promises, I feel to say, Why need we pay any heed to the skeptic, the infidel, the unbeliever, and all those who are spreading their false doctrine abroad throughout our land, and who are teaching through the press and pulpit that the events recorded in the Bible are only legends, and that Christ never performed any miracles. May we be saved from all this. May we have strength to hold our Bible close to our bosom and say, "As for me, I will serve the Lord." May we realize that it is the word of God, given by inspiration of God. I want to ever believe as I have since my childhood, that events recorded therein literally and truly took place. This is not hard to believe. This is my faith, my hope, my great consolation, in this world of sorrow. The world may laugh at us and call us old-fashioned, but they cannot shake the faith of the weakest of God's children, for he says, "Upon this Rock [Christ] I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." So let us rest in God's promises, and take comfort in the thought that he is able and will carry out his purposes. But do not think, dear brethren and sisters, that I feel strong in the Lord, or can claim these promises mine. No, no, I cannot, for I feel weak in the faith, the least of all, yet I cannot always say I have no hope. O, may it

> "Light on some sweet promise there,
> Some sure support against despair."

Your unworthy sister, I hope, in Christ,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

HEBREWS XI. 19.

"ACCOUNTING that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure."

The apostle in calling our attention to the works of faith by the fathers and prophets, does not fail to mention Abraham and Sarah, and to our mind none are greater than these. Of all the trials through which men are called to pass, there is none greater than the one of Abraham. The faithfulness, mercy and loving kindness of God to Abraham strengthened him to believe his word, and rely upon his promise. Sarah desired children, but was barren, and had no hope of bearing them. But God made a promise that she should have a son, and through faith she herself received strength to conceive seed, when she was *past* age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. The son is born, and in him is the promise that all nations shall be blessed. Therefore sprang there even of one, (Abraham) and him as good as *dead*, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the seashore innumerable. God now in his wisdom and purpose commands Abraham to offer this son in whom is the promise. This to our mind makes the trial double; not only would the son be slain, but the promise of the blessing be gone also. This offering was dearer to Abraham than all his earthly possessions; he would gladly have offered them all if his only beloved son Isaac could have been spared, but in his heart he said, The will of the Lord be done. If we sacrifice to the Lord the offering must cost us something; the greater the cost the greater the sacrifice. Notwithstanding the great value of this offering to Abraham, faith moves him to take the boy, not late in the day, but early in the morning, and start for

the mountain that God would tell him of, and there on the third day offered up Isaac; the faith of Abraham believing God's power to raise him (Isaac) from the dead; not that he *did* raise him up, but was *able*. When God said offer Isaac, he was legally dead, because the sentence of death was upon him, but at the last moment a ransom is found; the ram is slain, and Isaac delivered. We were also legally dead, bound by sin, and no way of escape, but in the fullness of time a ransom is found, "The Lamb of God," which took away the sin (death) of the world. Hence Christ died that we might live, not that we were alive and should continue to live, but we were already dead, and Christ died that we might have life. He "was made under the law to redeem them that were under the law." Does the accounting of Abraham that God was *able* to raise Isaac up even from the dead, warrant us to say Isaac was actually slain and received from the dead by faith of Abraham? Abraham remembered the promise that in Isaac shall thy seed be called. He believed God that he would fulfill his promise; even if Isaac was slain he was able to raise him up even from the dead, from whence *also* he (Abraham) *received* him in a figure.

The gift of Isaac to Abraham was from the dead in a figure. Sarah was then about ninety years old, and had been barren also all her life, and Abraham was about an hundred years of age, but the promise was given, and Abraham not being weak in faith, he considered not his own body now *dead*, neither yet the *deadness* of Sarah's womb. He staggered not at the promise through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God. (Rom. iv. 19, 20.) Abraham did not receive Isaac out of the ground from among the dead, but in a figure of this, from his own body then *dead*, and from the *deadness* of Sarah's womb. The promise of Isaac was according to nature impossible, but not with God, and Abraham accounted this as wonderful a miracle as it would have been for God to have raised him up from the dead, from whence he also (had) received him in a figure. Hence the apostle is speaking of the past in the gift of the son to Abraham, and not present, as though he (Isaac) had been slain and raised from the dead in Abraham's faith. Isaac is a figure of the children of God, being a child of promise, and not born after the flesh; in other words, not according to *nature*, but according to the power and grace of God, being born in Christ from the *dead*. The sons of the bond-woman are children of the flesh, and these as then, persecute the children of the free woman. (Gal. iv. 22–31.) Abraham is the father of the twelve tribes of Israel, they being *his seed*, also the father of the faithful, hence a father of many nations according to the promise. Christ is the promised seed, (Gal. iii. 16,) and in him all nations are blessed, and manifested here and there as the children of God, which are the children of promise by Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

Written by request.

H. C. KER.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Jan. 29, 1903.

ELGIN, Oregon, Jan. 1, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Having to write you on business, I have a desire to send you some thoughts that have been in my mind for some days past, on the offerings made by Cain and Abel, for in those two offerings, and the spirit that prompted them, are true types of all the worshipers that have been from that day to the present, and we can trace them all

the way through sacred writ, and they who have eyes to see can plainly discern them to-day. Cain represents what Paul calls "our religion;" the religion that belongs to all natural men, and is prompted by the flesh. Abel, on the other hand, represents the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, as produced in the heart of his people in regeneration and the new birth. So it is written, "And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain, and to his offering, he had not respect." Let us hold in mind here in the beginning that God first had respect to Abel, and then to his offering. This, to my mind, is the key why Abel's offering was a lamb, and accepted as the more acceptable sacrifice, for we read, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which [sacrifice] he obtained witness that he was [not going to be] righteous, God testifying of his gifts." Faith is said to be the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen; a "fruit of the Spirit," and possessed only by those born of God. Then Abel, "blessed of God," as David says, "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest and causest to approach unto thee." So by faith Abel offered the lamb as the figure of the Lamb of God that should put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and by the one offering perfect forever them that are sanctified. God had not respect to Cain, nor his offering. Cain brought of the fruit of the ground, representative of his own works, and like all natural men expected the blessing for the sacrifice he made. The ground that was cursed for man's sake, produced his offering, and like himself taken from the ground, only thorns and thistles would it bring forth. So Cain and his offering are alike. The Lord said unto Cain, "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." "If thou doest well." Now, brethren, I do not know that I understand this aright, but it seems to me that were it in man to do well, even of himself, he would be accepted, but that is impossible, and this we believe was shown in the offering of Cain, for the Lord said, "And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." That is, sin is the cause of not doing well; the act the fruit of a cause. "Sin lieth at the door." The fountain corrupt, so must be the stream; the tree corrupt, so must be the fruit. Cain, like all men by nature, dead in trespasses and in sin, and his offering just like himself, corrupt, God had not respect to Cain and his offering. The beloved John throws some light on Cain and his character when he says, "Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." Was first of that wicked one, and then his works, as the fruit. Now I do not know that I have made my ideas clear enough to be understood, but I feel sure "That they that are in the flesh cannot please God;" that the "tree must first be made good," in order to bear good fruit; that Abel was first accepted, then his offering. "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him." So that we know that Abel was first of God, and then did righteousness. God's salvation to-day, manifested to poor, helpless, undone sinners, is just as with Abel, all of grace. He raiseth up the dead and

quickeneth them, by which they are enabled by faith to offer unto God an acceptable sacrifice by Jesus Christ. And Jesus is their only hope of salvation. We do not understand that God's respect to Abel was for his offering, or because of his offering, but rather God's respect to Abel was first, and his acceptable offering the result. And to-day, all acceptable service rendered unto God by his people does not procure his blessing as a reward, but is an evidence of his Spirit in their heart, who has wrought all our works in us. For it is God who worketh in them to will and to do of his good pleasure, so from him is all their fruit found. To do otherwise is to offer the sacrifices of Cain, the fruits of the flesh; to burn incense to our own drag and sacrifice, to our own net, for all our service prompted by the flesh or free will, is as the prophet says, "As if he cut off a dog's neck, or offered swine's blood." The pharisee who stood up and thanked God that he was not as other men, is in line with Cain and his offering, demanding the blessing on the ground of his doings. But the publican, poor and needy, had nothing to boast of, no sacrifices of his own production; he could but say, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." Such a sacrifice God will accept: "But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word."

I wish to say, brother Beebe, before I close, that the little church here holds to and believes the doctrine of salvation by grace, as contended for by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Do with this article as your judgment may think best, publish or not.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Nov. 3, 1902.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I often think of your arduous labors, and if it were not for the fellowship I feel for the followers of the blessed Jesus, I would never attempt the task of writing to you, and it may be that I will never bother you again. On the fourth Saturday in last May, all obstacles were taken out of the way, so that I was enabled to follow my Savior through the water of baptism, which is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience before God, for what he had done for me. I had peace of mind for several days, and then was brought to pass through sore trials, both in providence and grace. The temptation was so strong against me that I was ready to say, I have done wrong after all. Then these words were made a blessing to my soul, "Happy art thou, O Israel. Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and the sword of thine excellency, and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places." It was enough. Not all the physicians could have afforded me the sweet relief that this great Physician did.

I am now raised again to my common state of health, and made to rejoice in him whose name is above every name. The fourth Saturday in September was our communion day. I wanted to go but was hindered. I think the supper a lovely and sacred ordinance. He who knows all our needs, will supply them as it pleases him, and will do all things for our good and his glory. He said to the disciples, "The hairs of your heads are all numbered." This is a beautiful representation. Do not we all hang upon our spiritual Head, and receive all our sus-

predestinating our righteous acts, and moving us to do righteousness by his holy Spirit, is the same, and we feel that you can make it plain to us.

I send you some money for subscription, and will do all I can to procure more. May the God of heaven bless you and yours, also the family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Yours in hope,

B. RHODES.

[As we had on our desk an article from brother D. Bartley, embracing an answer to the question of the brethren mentioned in brother Rhodes' letter, which is better than anything we could hope to write, we extract and append that portion of his letter. We will simply add that most of the confusion among the brethren on the subject of predestination of all things, grows out of what they understand the expression to mean. Most of those who object to the expression, God's predestination of all things, if it could be explained to them that predestination is not causative any more than foreknowledge, their objection would cease, and in the following extract from brother Bartley's letter this is proven as clearly, it seems to us, as it is possible for language to make it.—ED.]

PREDESTINATION DOES NOT CAUSE EVENTS.

BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Forasmuch as many among us recently have assumed and taught that God's predestination is itself *causative* of each and every event which he predestinated, it behooves us to try this opinion by the Scriptures, for many of the brethren have accepted it as true, because some of the writers have thus confidently asserted. And it is this assumed premise or position, and the conclusion drawn from it, that has misled many of the brethren into an honest but mistaken notion that if God did predestinate any of the sinful acts and wicked conduct of men, then he himself is responsible therefor, because his predestination of any sin and wickedness makes predestination itself the *cause* thereof. Those who accept this as so, are taught to regard the God of predestination with abhorrence, unless his predestination is confined strictly to holiness.

"God's predestination is not the cause of anything, whether good or bad, as the Bible shows. But between the purpose of God concerning all things, and the doing of the things before determined, many causes combine to bring them to pass. All those uniting causes are as certain as that effects spring out of causes, or that everything will bring forth after its kind.

"God predestinated his chosen people unto the adoption of children to himself, but predestination does not adopt them. For their adoption is through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus by his blood, by the life-giving Spirit of holiness, and by the resurrection from the dead. So it is not predestination that makes us holy and heavenly as the children of God, but it is the grace of God which reigns through righteousness unto us and in us.

"So also of all unrighteousness and wickedness, which God's all-comprehensive purpose sets limits to, as to the sea; his holy decree is not the cause thereof, but reigning sin is the cause."

Because the predestination of anything, or of all things, establishes the unchangeable certainty of everything purposed or predestinated, it is therefore assumed by the critics of the unlimited purpose of God that he himself is the author, and his predetermined purpose is

the cause of all the sin and wickedness embraced in his counsel and purpose or decree. To show how untrue this assumption is, it need only be mentioned that those critics themselves admit that the divine foreknowledge embraces all things, and that everything foreknown of God is absolutely certain and shall come to pass. For if the least thing which he foreknew might fail, then his attribute of omniscience or infinite knowledge of all things would be destroyed, and ignorance and imperfection would attach to him; he would be dethroned, and "his eternal power and Godhead" would be made to fall. Yet no one charges that infinite and immutable foreknowledge is the cause of the things foreknown, and responsible for them, although it as infallibly establishes the unfailing certainty of all things, as does the immutable purpose or decree of God.

ALLENTOWN, Pa., Jan., 1903.

TO THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH—DEAR BRETHREN:—Having just read brother Beebe's editorial in the SIGNS for Jan. 15, this volume, which gave me a little comfort, I feel to write and tell him so, and at the same time, say a word to all the dear brethren, many of whose faces I have never seen, and shall never see this side of the river, and it may be that I shall never see them on the other side, for I may be appointed to go to that other place, and if so, there is no hope for me, because my fate is sealed one way or the other. I have the sickening fear that I am not a child of God.

O dear brethren, if I had a bright evidence, then the buffetings of Satan could not trouble me, because then I could always look back to the evidence, as did Paul, and all others of whom I have ever heard. But with me, there is no particular time that I can speak of. I have to travel away back and weigh every little incident of a religious nature, and then sift it thoroughly, and by that time I am pretty well mixed up, and feel that I do not know anything about it. Many of you know that I live in a city where there are no Old School Baptists, and so I never hear the gospel preached in all its purity in this place. And I do not hear it when I am where it is preached, because my hearing is so dull.

I wish that I could tell you just how I feel. I think that I am a mass of corruption and contradictions. Often I fear that I have never had any sorrow for sin; the worriment of mind has been more on account of not having trouble about sin. I could always lay the burden down for a time, if it could be called a burden, but it always returned sooner or later. I have felt that I could not have sought the pardon of sin, where no burden was felt. My thoughts were, "O why am I not convicted of sin?" I hate sin, and think that I am the greatest sinner on earth, but I never went with my head bowed down, nor ever missed a meal, nor a night's rest on account of my sins; neither did I ever feel that I was held over that awful place by a hair, in fact, I never was afraid of that awful place at all.

So long ago as I can remember, I wished that I was a christian, but this wish did not at all prevent me from sinning, and the worst of it is, I keep right on sinning. Dear brethren, I have such mean, hateful thoughts when I would be thinking about him who died the shameful death of the cross for unworthy sinners; my heart is so hard and cold when it ought to be melted within me at the sufferings of Jesus. If indeed he thus suffered for me, could I be so cold toward

him? Does any one else feel as I do? I cannot claim him as my Savior, as some do. O, if he would grant my request, by giving me the assurance that I am his, and he is mine, if only for a moment. I know that I do not deserve it, but that knowledge does not hinder the desire from arising within me to know him as my Lord and Savior and my God.

Yours unworthily,

MARY E. FISHER.

[ONE thing is sure, viz: Such searchings of heart are not felt by the unrenewed, but belong alone to the redeemed of the Lord. To hate sin does not belong to the unrenewed, for they love sin, and roll it as a sweet morsel under their tongues. It is the true light within which is from God that reveals, and continues to reveal this one truth, that in us, that is, in our flesh, dwells no good thing. Being brought graciously to feel this and know it, we come to cry for cleansing and healing. The christian does not feel that he gets better and better, or comes to know more and more, or to be happier and happier, as he grows in grace, but still he does know more of self, and this knowledge always abases that heart; we decrease, but Jesus increases; such experience is good, because it is in harmony with what the Scriptures teach us. Saints in all ages have passed along the same road.—ED.]

BRUNSWICK, Maine, Dec. 4, 1902.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR BROTHER:—During the past few years several have been taken by death from the churches of the Maine association, and no obituary notice has been sent to the SIGNS. I feel that their names should appear in the family paper, which they loved so well. You knew them all well, and loved them, and will see that they were connected with the three churches which compose the Maine association. Our numbers grows less, but our God does not change, and he is a very present help in time of trouble. One was our aged brother Evans, who lacked only a few days of one hundred years. He was a man of few words, but what he said once at one of our meetings, went home to every heart. He said, "You are all good but me." Next, I will mention brother Wilson Moody, and his brother S. S. Moody, who passed away with but a few months between them. They were both gifted in speaking of spiritual things, and were deeply exercised in their minds, so that their conversation was full of interest to those who loved the doctrine of God our Savior. Many precious seasons have I had with them in their homes, and at the meetings. Next, brethren John S. Niles, J. H. Booker and John Curtis, were highly esteemed for the truth's sake, and filled well their places in the church. Salvation by grace was their theme, and they were firm and steadfast, earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints.

Death has taken away many from us this year, and our hearts are sorrowful and sad because we shall see their faces no more. Brother Niles passed away the first of July, and brother Lowell a few days later. Sister Etta Niles died a short time before, after several weeks of suffering. The first of last month, our aged sister Dunlap was called home, and brother Clough, the first of October. I have sent a more full notice of his death to the SIGNS.

Now, if you think best, give this a place in the SIGNS. Make any change you please, and add to what I have said, for I know that a few words from you will express more than many from me.

They all manifested a love and fellowship for you, which was beautiful to see, and is beautiful to see in any one, for it is the work of the Lord. No one has ever obtained this love and sweet fellowship by efforts of their own, but it is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit. May we who remain be ever found declaring the works of the Lord, and be found looking unto Jesus, and running with patience the race set before us.

Your sister in a precious hope,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

[OUR sister desires that we shall add something to what she has written above. It seems to us scarcely needful that we should do so, after her loving words concerning the dear ones departed. We knew them all well, and were the recipient of many tokens of kind regard from them all. We did appreciate the fellowship of them all. As our sister has written, they were all faithful in the doctrine of the gospel, and steadfast in contending for it. They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and their memory is dear to us who still survive. Our early home in the church was among these and other brethren and sisters who were kind and faithful, and who were as fathers and mothers in Israel to us, in our youth. How patiently they bore with all our ignorance and weakness. We can but be sad as we think of these, and the many whom we loved so well in Maine, who have departed and are, we believe, at rest. Those who still remain are equally dear to us, but as we grow older, the ties of earth grow less and less, and we often feel a sense of great loneliness. The churches of the Maine association, and the intimate friends of all the departed ones know that they have our sympathy, and that we would lighten their burdens if we could, but they know that there is one helper who is sufficient for all our need, and who pities them that fear him, as a father pities his children, and he can and does bear both his children and all their burdens.—C.]

YARBROUGHVILLE, Texas, Dec. 25, 1902.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—I will drop you a few lines which will inform you and the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that I as an individual heartily indorse the proceedings of the Fort Worth Council, held by the Old School Baptists, in October, 1902. We as a church are badly scattered, and seldom get together. My membership is with Little Hope church, in Limestone Co., Texas, which belongs to the Big Creek Association. I have been trying to get some new subscribers, but have failed so far; they seem to want a sample copy. I will send you some names to send a copy to with the minutes of the proceedings of the Fort Worth Council.

I feel like I want to say something in way of extending the right hand of fellowship to the editors and writers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but I am so ignorant, vile and selfish, that I fear that what I might say would not be edifying to the dear children of God, but it does me so much good to read the experiences of the dear brethren and sisters that live in distant lands, and are strangers in the flesh, it draws them near to me, and I sometimes feel that we are perfectly acquainted with each other, and I believe we are acquainted in the Spirit, and I believe that we have been made so by the power and choice and will of the God that created all things, and rules and controls all things, times and events according to his own will and pleasure. I

cannot view God as some do, claiming to be Old School Baptists, that is, to limit him in his predestination, and also claim a conditional time salvation. If I am saved in time or eternity it is all the free gift of God, unmerited on my part. When I speak of God or godliness, I hope he will enable me to view him as an eternal, independent, all-wise Creator of all things, and disposing of the same as seemeth good to himself. I get to hear but little preaching; the most I get is the writings in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that is certainly good; it is like cool water to a thirsty soul in a weary land. It does me so much good to know that God has not left himself without a witness. I sometimes feel that I am all alone, but when I read the testimony of so many, I am then made to rejoice with that joy that is unspeakable and full of glory. I have never heard the doctrine of predestination preached too hard for me, nor unconditional salvation for both time and eternity, neither have I heard the doctrine of eternal two seed preached against too hard, and its falsity and erroneousness exposed too much to suit me. I understand and believe that every blessing that I receive here in time, and in eternity, if there be any for me there, was treasured up in the mind and will of the Father in the annals of eternity, before time began; also every stroke of chastisement was known and directed by the Father of love and mercy, for my good and his glory.

Brethren editors, I will close this poorly written letter by asking you to excuse sorry writing and spelling, and correct the same. I leave this scribble to your better judgment; if your judgment says so commit it to the flames, and all will be well with me, and I will think none the less of you. I desire an interest in the prayers of you all. May God bless you all is my sincere prayer.

J. H. BOZEMAN.

NUTLEY, N. J., Feb. 2, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—The inclosed precious letter which I received a few days ago from sister Fetter, I send you for publication, feeling that it is too good to withhold from all SIGNS readers and lovers of the truth.

Your sister in hope,

LIZZIE C. LEFFERTS.

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571 CENTRE ST., TRENTON, N. J., Jan. 28, 1903.

MRS. HENRY T. LEFFERTS—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I feel as if I owe you a letter thanking you for your kindness in remembering us at this time. As I look back over my life I can see how good the Lord has always been to me; how at first he brought me by his great love and mercy out of nature's darkness into the glorious light of his countenance, in whose presence there is fullness of joy; how I was gently told that I was a sinner, living a life of vanity; how he caused me to see, by hearing his gospel preached, that in him alone was everlasting life. He has always led me in love, and by his loving kindness he has drawn me. He has made me look, as he did Moses of old, on his back parts; I was hid in the cleft of the rock while his glory passed by. He has covered the earth (my natural mind) with darkness, and afterward has revealed to me that all things have been for my good. Like Job I can say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." I find that in the last two years I have been blessed with a peculiar experience. I fear sometimes that I will boast, yet I cannot but say that the Lord's hand has been laid heavily upon me, causing me to know that in him alone is

safety. I have been kept from trusting in the puny arm of man, and have seen in all our natural circumstances the hand of him who can cause even the mountains to move, or the waters to stand still; and in our last great trial and bereavement I can see that he is in it all. He says, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you," and he is nearer and dearer to me than ever before.

"This love no end or measure knows;
No change can turn its course;
Immutably the same it flows
From one eternal source."

It has pleased him to remove from me the darling of our hearts, yet I had the assurance before her birth that she was loaned to us for a short time only. He took from us only what he gave, and all things both in heaven and earth are his, and I feel that it is

"Sweet in the confidence of faith
To trust his firm decrees;
Sweet to lie passive in his hands,
And know no will but his."

I have now said all that is on my mind; I have written only as it has been brought to me; I feel as if it has been like Elijah, the ravens have brought meat and bread to me in the evening and morning, and now the brook has ran low, and I must be up and away, to be once more fed by some unseen way prepared by him. If it was not for the meat and bread and drink that comes to me in the strangest way, in the darkest trials, I think I should never be able to eat of that table that has been spread in the presence of my enemies, and which is always full of all things that nourishes my soul and gives me life.

I have written more than I intended, but will offer no apology. Cast the mantle of love over all these imperfections, for language is imperfect when speaking of Christ or his works. O, each day I feel more lonely, for I miss my darling so.

Write again, and remember me as one who is a stranger to myself.

ELIZABETH P. FETTER.

East Dixfield, Maine, Dec. 3, 1902.

Elder F. A. Chick—My Dear Brother in Christ:—Your very welcome letter arrived in due time, and many things made it doubly welcome. I had gleaned from the Signs how busy you had been, and something also of the additions to the church. I do not wonder you are fatigued. But O, the wiles of the arch adversary, how he attacks us at any and every point where he can harrass the children of God, but it seems to me he had but a small chance when he assailed you regarding the display of God's sovereign grace among your churches and people, and I feel only to add this, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

I think that I never get so low down but that I can thank God for the highway cast up for the ransomed of the Lord, and also for the supreme will which is the law of the universe. As a brother wrote recently in the Signs, "We are all powerfully awakened when Zion's sons and daughters are brought to the fold of Christ, and the new song is put into their mouths, praise to the living God." My own heart goes out in gratitude often as I hear of it. It seems to me that though there be diversity of operations, it is the same Spirit, regardless of age, color or people. The blind are made to see, the deaf to hear, and to crown the dear Savior Lord of all.

My mind of late is much led into the immutable sovereignty of God, the rest that is therein, and the confidence derived from the words of his mouth, and in this

also, that the fear of the Lord, which is to hate evil, is given to his children, even to the loathing of their own selves. Then we can say, Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift; the gift of his grace.

I get my preaching, and all the spiritual conversation I have, and nearly all the information of the welfare of Zion which I have, from the dear family paper, the SIGNS. I greatly enjoyed the editorial, "The one thing needful," and better still, the one previous, upon "Sorrowing yet always rejoicing." I mention these two, as they occur to me, but each number of the SIGNS has a rich feast for me, and often I become extremely anxious for its coming. As the winter approaches, and the season of holidays is at hand, there is much that is distressing to my mind in hearing the forms of celebrating them. It is mostly in aid of the churches, and consist of a comic farce by one society, a Sabbath school rally which they call a union one, but from which a quarrel is very likely to develop. One year ago my mind was graciously led away from it all, and from Christmas time to Easter, our sublime Lord and Master seemed presented in some measure very comfortingly. These trifling amusements annoy me but little generally, but they are at times pressed home.

I feel to thank you for your letter, which I found good and comforting. Time passes with me very quickly; days, months, seasons and years, all pass quickly. The sunlight of God's love warms and cheers the wintry days, brightens the nights, and leads me on in hope and trust that I am an heir of his eternal love. The wish is mine that I might again meet you face to face, but of that we cannot tell. One thing is sure, we cannot drift beyond the eye of him who keepeth Israel. May his blessing rest on you, your church and your people. We are all in usual health, and I am better than I was.

In love your sister,

ELIZA WHEELWRIGHT.

[NOTHING shows more clearly the utter lack of true spirituality in modern churches, than the festivals, comic services, and celebrations of the holidays, and the Sunday School Unions, as they are called, to which our sister has referred. No truly spiritual mind can hear of such things without great grief that the name of our most holy religion should be so travestied. But little account is made of the solemn teachings of the Bible to-day, else such things could have no place in the churches. God's people, all who love him, ought to keep as far away from all such God-dishonoring practices as possible. They ought not to be found encouraging such base misrepresentations of the religion which they profess to love, by even allowing themselves to be present at the performance of such worldly rites and ceremonies. The Master had a work too solemn resting upon him to give place to such things, and they who love and truly follow him, will have too solemn a work before them, in declaring his salvation, and in living in harmony with his salvation, to engage in such light and carnal pleasures.—ED.]

MARENGO, Ohio, December, 1902

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I was certainly pleasantly surprised when the Jan. 1st number of the SIGNS came, as I had neglected to send our renewal, and I had hardly expected another number until I did so. Thanking you for kindness I now send our remittance, wishing you a happy new year. I also wish to express my appreciation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the past year; it has been a source

of much comfort to me to read the many precious communications from the dear household of faith; they all bear the same sweet testimony of Jesus and his love. Surely indeed they have all been led and taught by his blessed Spirit, and O, how it strengthens and builds us up when we can hear that which we have felt and realized in our own poor hearts. Sometimes your unworthy writer feels that she would surely sink in despair were it not for the loving fellowship of the dear saints, and the sustaining mercy and grace of our blessed Lord, whose goodness and tender watchcare has ever overshadowed us. What a precious Savior we have, how kind and merciful, how wondrous is his grace, if indeed we have ever sweetly realized his pardoning love in our poor, wretched hearts, in bringing us to a knowledge of glorious things of his blessed kingdom. O, for grace to serve and obey him, to lead and guide us all in the way of peace and truth, to the praise and honor of his blessed holy name.

Now, dear brother, may the continued blessing of our Lord abide with you and all the correspondents of the SIGNS, that peace and love may abound throughout the borders of our beloved Zion.

BELLE GORSUCH.

SIMPSONVILLE, Texas, Jan. 13, 1903.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed please find two dollars, for which please send me your valuable paper the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have never been a subscriber for the SIGNS, although I have been a reader of them for a year or two, through the kindness of Mrs. Cordelia Harris.

Brother Beebe, if one so worthless, so little, ignorant and dependent as I, should call you brother, I love the doctrine that is so cheeringly set forth in the SIGNS, and the reason I do is because I believe it is the truth, and the truth makes us free, not that the truth is optional with the creature, that he can believe it or let it alone, but the fact is, if one believes the truth he is free already. This is a stumbling-stone to the Arminian world. This truth that makes us free, is Christ, for he said, "I am the way, the truth and the life." How do we learn this truth? By going to church regularly and listening to the preacher? No. By reading the Bible? No. Just like Paul, he did not receive it of man, neither was he taught it, but by revelation of Jesus Christ.

Your brother, I hope,

J. E. HARRIS.

LIMA, Ohio, June 4, 1902.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed you will find money order for one dollar, for which we owe you on this year's subscription for SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We enjoy the blessed truth contained and set forth by the writers of the SIGNS. We received a copy which had your editorial in, telling how some are claiming to be Old School Baptists, yet denying the power of God.

Brother Beebe, the name Baptist does not make believers of men, but the power of God through revelation causes men to believe. We have found some two or three here in Lima that believe the truth, and we let them read the SIGNS. They give all honor to God, and none to man; they love the truth as it is revealed to them by his Spirit; the Lord has led them out of Babylon; they can no longer go with the churches of the world, but are seeking those that have been born again.

Yours in love for the truth,

C. GILBERT MILLER.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., Dec. 16, 1902.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, AND ALL THE DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—I again desire to cast in my little mite with you. Though so small and insignificant in myself, I am made to rejoice in spirit while reading your messages of love and encouragement which you send forth through our precious medium of correspondence, the SIGNS. I have read with great interest the two December numbers, and if I can do no more for you, brethren editors, I certainly can give you some names to send some sample copies of December 15th, according to your proposal on page 753.

I must speak of brother Butler's republished letter. Why has his pen lain silent so long? Brother Beebe, I cannot describe the tears and rejoicing of soul that letter brought to me, and that some others who do not take your paper, who I have some reasons to believe love the truth, may have the same feast, if it is God's will, to seal it to their understanding, as I trust he has to mine, I send you these names. I shall take your paper as long as I am able to work enough to earn money to pay you for it. I do trust and pray that your financial embarrassment may be relieved by the precious, good and able brethren and friends of the truth, which your dear father and you have defended so long and so ably, and that you may yet be spared long, and be made strength in weakness, and be made to say with the apostle, "Through Christ I can do all things, who strengtheneth me."

Now, dear brother, here is the poor widow's mite, do with it as seems best to your better judgment, and all will be right with me. My eyes are weak. May God bless Israel.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

CORUM, Nov. 29, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Ever since I was to the association at Middletown I have had a desire to write a few lines to those that are scattered abroad that read the SIGNS. When I read the letters of those able writers that hold forth salvation by grace, and the new birth, my heart responds to it all with love. To my mind, the love of God shed abroad in our hearts gives us a desire to talk to each other of the Lord's loving kindness to us. When I read of Mary Magdalene at the tomb, and how no earthly scenes seemed to attract her, she hardly looking upon the gardener, as she supposed him to be, he said to her as she was weeping, Woman, why weepest thou? She replied, They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. Then with divine love Jesus saith unto her, Mary! She knew his welcome voice, it made her heart rejoice, and so it is with every heaven-born soul, when he gives us that peace in believing on him to the saving of our souls. All those saw their Lord face to face, but we by faith rely on him and his promises; it is a gift of God. "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

I am isolated, seldom hear a gospel sermon, but I trust I am granted a hearing ear and an understanding heart, which is the Master's choicest gift.

I have passed through deep affliction in the past fifteen years, but the dear Lord has upheld me by his mighty power at such times; a sweet solemnity of his tender care sustained me. I am on the evening tide of life, and I still know I am a poor sinner; my trust is in Christ, and I claim his precious promises that are laid down in his word for the comfort of his believing children while they so-

journ here on earth, and until they come into the full enjoyment of their heavenly home above; then we will see him face to face, and tell the story saved by grace.

ELIZABETH SMITH.

WAVERLY, Pa., Jan. 29, 1903.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Would you be willing to publish the following for me?

Hearing from many sources that there is a report circulated that I do not believe in the resurrection of the dead, or a devil, or hell, or eternal happiness, and as it is not thought proper or profitable to publish any more letters for a time upon the subject of the resurrection, I would ask those that have heard that I do not believe these things mentioned, if they wish to know from me what I believe concerning these subjects, to please write to me, and I will try and explain my views as well as I can privately. I will say this now: I do believe in the resurrection of the dead; I do believe there is a hell, a heaven, and a spirit called Satan, the devil, the man of sin, &c. Now, I am done until called upon to make further explanation. I am sorry that I have been so badly misunderstood.

Yours unworthily,

D. M. VAIL.

ST. THOMAS, Ont., Jan. 18, 1903.

DEAR EDITORS:—I see it is time to remember the dear old SIGNS, which comes to us so regularly, well filled with gospel truth.

How beautifully does Elder Chick, in his last editorial, explain the way, and how salvation comes to any one of us poor, unworthy creatures as we are. That word, "unwittingly," did me so much good, as did indeed the whole article.

I am glad, with others, that the SIGNS has the right ring still; all of grace, no mixture whatever. I am also well pleased with dear brother Beebe's last, and love him for the truth's sake, although we have never met. Go on, dear brethren, God is with you, what need you fear? not the united world.

Those that are in doubt about election, and about taking the SIGNS, should see the article on that subject by brother Lobbs; doubts would then soon disappear. To my mind, that article should be thrown broadcast throughout the world; it is clear and to the point.

Inclosed please find my subscription for 1903.

Yours in hope,

A. J. BLACK.

ASHLAND, Ill., Dec. 22, 1902.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—As I want my address changed, I will write once more and say the dear old SIGNS are a sweet comfort to me, and as each year passes away they grow dearer to me; and when I open the SIGNS to read, it is a pleasure from first to last.

Some Primitive Baptists have asked me if I thought the writers of the SIGNS understand time salvation? and say that was why they took some other Baptist paper. I told them when I read in the SIGNS about a cluster of salvations, and a little bit of good that we could do, then the SIGNS would cease to be a comfort to me. I hope I feel thankful to our heavenly Father that our paper still continues to come so richly laden with the good things of the kingdom, which is not of this world. O, are we not blessed above more than we can ask, to be given a heart to understand the Scripture as it is in Jesus? It is so precious and gladdening to the hearts of God's children to

know there are throughout the earth a people who show forth God's praise, and can speak and sing as only God's children can. Dear brethren and sisters, may God bless you all with his richest blessings.

Your little sister who feels the least of all, ELLA M. PARROTT.

LAURELVILLE, Ohio, Jan. 18, 1903.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Inclosed find money order for the SIGNS another year. I still dearly love them, and the doctrine taught by them. The Laurel church is still blessed by the holy presence of the Shepherd, to whom the members look for their sufficiency. Elder Tusing still continues to minister to them of the things of the Master's kingdom, whence cometh their meat and drink. He was with us yesterday and to-day, and although too hoarse to sing, and almost too hoarse to speak audibly, he was given the liberty to preach an excellent sermon, full of grace and truth. Elder Tusing is one of the few ministers who does not believe in stirring up strife. Would to God that he might be spared to the church militant yet many years. We will never be ready to dispense with his services. It does not seem that there will be any one that can take his place, but the Lord is able to raise up another.

With, I hope, love unfeigned to all of the Master's kingdom, I am a very little child, if one at all,

GEO. W. HARTSOUGH.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Mrs. Martin Clemens having changed her address from Rill, Pa., to Elmira Heights, N. Y., requests her correspondents to address her at the latter place.

CHURCH NOTICES.

BROTHER BENTON:—Please publish this line for me. The Beulah church is a little band of brethren of perhaps fifteen or sixteen members, organized about sixteen or seventeen years ago by the pastor, Elder Pollard, and several other members of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, and recognized by them as a gospel church in gospel order, located about five miles from Alvinston. Elder Wm. L. Beebe served them as pastor several years, meeting with them two or three times a year. His death left them without a pastor, and as there was no one that could be gotten to serve them nearer, I was called to serve them. I had met with them quite a number of times, and had become acquainted with them, and loved them. Finally I accepted, agreeing to visit them, providence permitting, two or three times a year, until the dear Lord would send some servant living nearer to them. I hold them in my esteem and fellowship as a spiritually minded, loving little band of christians, and as far as I know, walking in the order of the gospel, and I want to say to the ministering brethren that visit Canada occasionally, it is only about thirty-five or forty miles from places where the brethren of the Covenanted Baptist Church hold their meetings. They are hungry, and would appreciate good gospel preaching. Brethren, go and see them, and preach for them, and although they are not overburdened with gold and silver, I am sure you will not go at your own expense. I do not speak of this as a bait, but to say where love is in the heart, where needed, the hands will hunt for something in the pocket, and generally find a little something.

D. M. VAIL.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1903.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

"A DOUBLE-MINDED MAN IS UNSTABLE IN ALL HIS WAYS."

In all our connection with the Signs of the Times we have never had a more painful duty to perform than the present one of publicly warning the brethren against the duplicity of a regularly ordained minister of tho gospel, but present circumstances demand that we do so now.

As most of our readers are aware, in the issue of the Signs of the Times for Dec. 15th, 1903, we published the minutes of the proceedings, and the declarations of faith of the brethren of the Fort Worth (Texas) Council. When we first read of the meeting, it was a matter of surprise to us, and we must say it was with a feeling of fearfulness that we learned that Elder J. H. Fisher was at the head of the council, and for this reason we felt considerable hesitancy about assisting in giving publicity to the proceedings, and after the copy was in the composing rooms for two days, we recalled it, and it was pigeonholed for two weeks, but not forgotten, for we could not fully decide whether it would be best to publish it or not, as our own observation of, and experience with Elder J. H. Fisher for several years past, had shaken our confidence in his stability. But finally the thought was presented to us that the weakness of one man should not stultify the actions of the rest of the brethren, neither could it alter the truth embraced in the declarations of faith. This settled the question, and in deep sympathy with those dear, persecuted brethren, we decided to do all in our power to promote their interests, and the cause for which they are so valiantly battling. With this in view, the Signs of the Times published the full proceedings and declarations of faith of these brethren, and circulated hundreds of free copies, and still have four or five hundred copies from which we are mailing copies daily free of charge.

We have thus fully explained our motive, as far as we are able to judge, in what we have done, that we may be more fully understood in what we now contemplate doing: exposing the dishonest and double-dealing of an ordained minister, largely advertised as an Old School Baptist preacher.

The readers of the Signs we feel sure will bear record that the paper has been free from personal attacks upon those who oppose the principles advocated by it, but in the present case there seems to be no other course left but to make a public exposure of the duplicity of Elder J. H. Fisher, that the brethren may be on their guard should he attempt a repetition of the imposition he practiced upon the brethren at Fort Worth, Texas. Indeed, it is with sadness, but we believe with righteous indignation, we thus write. And that the brethren may judge for themselves whether or not we are justifiable in thus writing, we append an article headed, "What I believe," written by him, and published in what he styles "Cayce's paper," Jan. 28th, 1903, to-

gether with two letters from him to Elder M. L. Gilbert, of Dade City, Fla.

WHAT I BELIEVE.

WHEN my heart first began to turn from the Missionaries in Kentucky, I began to look around to see what the Primitive Baptists believed. It was a great struggle in my life to know what to do.

I heard Elder P. W. Sawin and Elder J. G. Eubanks preach. They are what is called by some "absoluters." They held a direct correspondence with the Beebe Baptists of the East, and yet keep it up. It has been a relation they held back to Elder Thomas Dudley's day. It was this kind of Baptists that I fell in with in my travels from the Missionaries. Do not know whether the Lord led me to join them or not. Many of my brethren seem to think so. I have given a sketch of my travels and my reasons for leaving the Missionaries in my little book, and have scattered thousands among our people. Many have encouraged me to do so. Some of the sweetest and most godly words of encouragement that have ever been spoken or written to me have been concerning my little book, "My Reasons for Leaving the New School Baptists." In it I give as full as space would allow just what I then believed on the great principles of doctrine as set forth in the Bible. If I know my heart, I yet indorse that book.

In all my travels I have told the people that when they read that book they will find out just exactly what I believe. I still stand there if I know where I do stand. If any Primitive Baptist wants to know just what I do believe on predestination, election, atonement, depravity, means, regeneration, repentance, faith, and all the lines of practice of the church of God, get a copy of that book and read it, and then you will have what I have written with my own hand and sent out as the full sentiments of my heart. I will send a copy to any one for 25 cents. The book has 109 pages. I have had 8,000 of them printed, and three editions have been put into circulation. I have the largest part of the last edition yet on hand, and owe for part of the work of printing them. I would be glad to close these out.

Now back to my subject.

As I said, I joined what is called the "absoluters." They baptized me, and I enjoyed my first sweet liberty in preaching the exalted Jesus while among them in Kentucky. They ordained me at Campbellsburg, Ky. Soon after that I came to Texas. Here I fell in with brethren who did believe in that strong predestination, but for seven years nothing particularly was said about it. No confusion. Of course I knew that most of the brethren did not believe it. And as for myself I was a great deal like I heard of a most precious brother of Georgia saying once, "I did not know whether I believed it or not." From some standpoints it looked to me like it must be so, and from other standpoints it looked to me like it made God the cause and author of everything in the world, and seeing that it was susceptible of this interpretation I never did at any time in my life nor have even yet preached it. Have often preached that God from all eternity foreknew all things that will or have come to pass. And sometimes it seemed to me like this involved the doctrine as far as I cared to run it. I have often said that God is an eternal Sovereign over all things, times and events, and will finally have his way about everything in the world; that God's dominion and supremacy rules and governs this world according to his wisdom and discretion. But I have most carefully avoided using those doubtful expressions, and the furthest I ever have gone towards it has been to say that I indorsed the London Confession of faith.

But I will freely confess that I have dearly loved the absolute brethren, and as dear brethren have written me that they fear that my love for them has led me to go too far in seeming indorsement of their extremes, it may be so. And since my trip to Georgia there seems to be much serious misunderstanding of what I was when I was among them. I have desired to write this explanation to them.

I joined this kind of brethren. They gave me membership, and ordained me, and thus it had got on my troubled mind that the Lord directed me to them, and I felt like I dare not in the face of a faithful God denounce them.

Now, let me say to the brethren in Georgia that with all the power of my life I indorse the little book which I sent to several hundred of you. I also indorse the work of the Fulton Council and of the council lately of Alabama, for that is the way I have always done about it. And as to the Ft. Worth Council, I feel now quite sure we ought to have used clearer and more conservative language in the introductory, and about condition, and about incentives to obedience. It was not my composition. But the last part of the paragraph on salvation was my work and presents the matter exactly as I preach it. I mean all that part treating on exhortation, which is the last paragraph on the subject of salvation.

And now I want to say to Elder Hanks, Barwick and Cleveland and to all others interested in Georgia, as well as all the Texas and Tennessee brethren on both sides, that I do believe in obedience and good works and man's accountability as I preached it at the Echeconee, Pulaski and Harmony associations, and do not indorse the predestination of all things only in the sense of foreknowledge of all things; and do believe that God withholds many blessings from his people who live in disobedience, which he otherwise bestows upon them in obedience, as I preached in Georgia and elsewhere ever since I have belonged to the Old Baptists.

Now, to be plain, I may be asked, "Do you now

mean to be construed as rejecting the doctrine held by the absoluters?" Yes, in part.

"In what part?"

Well, I do not believe it is right to say "God predestinated everything; that no act, thought or word or deed could in any sense have been different."

"Do you agree with them that Adam could not keep the law?"

No, I believe the wording of the London Confession, that "Adam was given power and ability to keep it."

"Do you believe that none of our spiritual blessings depend on obedience?"

I believe that our spiritual enjoyments depend in great measure on our scriptural obedience.

"Do you believe that sin is a link in the plan of salvation?"

NO!

"Do you believe that there are rewards to be given to God's obedient people?"

Yes, yes, yes,

I do most sincerely believe and preach that Jesus Christ will at his coming most surely reward every man according to his works and here is proof: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." Matt. xvi. 17. See also these references: Matt. xxii. 15. Luke xi. 27, 8. Luke xiv. 12, 14.

"Do you think it is right to say that if we get drunk, tell lies, steal, persecute our brother, try to destroy his character, and do all kinds of wickedness that we could not help it, and it just had to be that way, because God predestinated it?" No. I dislike such expressions, and I denounce them, and think that parties who would thus try to justify themselves should be excluded from the church.

"Do you believe that God in eternity predestinated a part of the race to an eternal hell for doing something in time which they could not possibly help doing?"

No, I do not. And I have said so in the paper.

"Do you know why God let sin come to pass in the world?"

No, neither do I think any one does, only that it seemed best to him, and I have never tried to answer that question in forty-two years, and if I live forty-two more I never expect to try it.

"Do you believe that salvation from start to finish is all by grace?"

I do with all the powers of my life and heart and mind; yet I believe that time enjoyments come very largely in obedience. Paul shows that it is all of grace. He says: "By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain, for I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Could anything be clearer?

"Do you believe then that it is right to declare non-fellowship for those who hold to 'conditional time salvation' and call them Arminians?"

I do not. I have sweet fellowship in my heart for dear brethren who think that in a careful way, the word conditional might be used. On this point I do not believe there is much difference, only in expression.

"Do you think it is right to preach a great deal on good works and duty?"

I really do, and am willing for those who hear me to say whether my preaching is on this line or not.

"Do you believe that we can neglect our duty?"

I certainly do, and therefore exhort against it.

"Do you believe that the children of God are passive in obedience?"

I do not.

I desire to be understood by all my brethren on both sides on all these points, and it is for this express reason that I write this long explanation. I had rather not use any doubtful expressions for it is like eating meat, which, if it "makes my brother to offend," I will not eat while the world stands. I would like for other papers with whom my name has been connected to copy this if you have it printed. Yours to battle on,

J. H. FISHER.

GRAHAM, Texas.

Herewith we append the two letters to Elder Gilbert.

RICHMOND, Mo., Dec. 11, 1902.
HOME ADDRESS, GRAHAM, Texas.

ELDER M. L. GILBERT—DEAR BROTHER:—For a long time I had a desire and impression to write to you, and to get somewhat acquainted with you. I have loved your good, kind, easy way, and have noticed some good, sound, safe words from your pen, and at this time there is a great persecution in Texas raging about this predestination and time salvation question. I do think there has been too much said on it, and it does seem to me that brother Cayce ought to cut this discussion out of the papers. He is now talking like he has got dissatisfied with me, and so I suppose I will have to quit his paper. I think he means now to fully espouse Elder J. G. Webb's cause, of Texas, who has caused so much trouble here in Texas. I have

asked not to do so, but he writes me that he intends or thinks at least that he will come soon on a tour to Texas among Webb's people. I would like to get a letter from you on these things.

Do you think we ought to try to hold up Elder Cayce in this move? I rather think there will be another paper started, say at Nashville, Tenn., right soon that will steer utterly clear of all this fuss business, and let all the brethren be free to run their own business. The Baptists up in this part of the world will have nothing to do with either Cayce's or Webb's paper. They have very little or no use for the discussion on "time salvation." Do you not think it would be good for us to pull out from Cayce's paper? I have a great desire to have your advice and suggestions now, for I have been led and drawn toward you in this day of distress and gloom.

Write me at home, as I intend to start home in a few days.

Yours in affliction, yet in a precious hope, J. H. FISHER.

GRAHAM, Texas, Dec. 30, 1902.

ELDER M. L. GILBERT—DEAR BROTHER:—Your most kind and loving letter just received. It does cheer my heart so much to find you sick and tired of the way Elder Cayce is doing. He has been printing some squibs from me that was written some time back, and when these are out he will print no more from me, unless it be a reply to his attack on us at Fort Worth.

Yes, Cayce is showing that he is in sympathy with Elder Webb's departure, here in Texas, and they are both trying to lead the Baptists by misinformation away from the truth into this new system.

Say, I have a complete printing outfit in an office in my yard at home, here out in the country. At present it is idle. I have been thinking of starting a paper on a square, fair basis, opposing bars to fellowship, and holding to the idea of grace from first to last, and get it out in a small size, semi-monthly, and send it all over the southern States. My children are printers, and I could get it out at a small cost. Now, if I do will you allow your name on it as one of the editors, and write for it some along from time to time? I think something should be done to keep these fellows from leading off so many of the Baptists. I have been rather undecided on it. Give me your advice, and tell me whether you are willing to go on it or no.

Yours in love and hope,

J. H. FISHER.

The Fort Worth Council which was called by Elder Fisher, and at which he officiated as moderator, met October 21–23, 1902, and the first letter to Elder Gilbert was written Dec. 11th, 1902, and the second letter to Elder Gilbert is dated Dec. 30th, 1902, and it will be observed by this letter that he claims to have his eyes opened to the evil influences around him, and thinks "something should be done to keep these fellows [Cayce and Webb] from leading off so many Baptists." This is what he thought about "Cayce" when writing Elder Gilbert, Dec. 30th, less than a month before his article, "What I believe," appeared in "Cayce's paper."

It is not our province to judge any man's heart; the Spirit alone is the discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, but what confidence can be placed in the sincerity of a man pursuing such a course of double-dealing? If the matter of calling the Fort Worth Council, and then officiating as moderator, in October,

and then recanting and stultifying himself three months later, was all, it might be attributed to a weak and unsettled condition of the mind, but when the fact is taken in consideration that during this time, and up to less than a month of the time his refutation of his Fort Worth proceedings appeared in "Cayce's paper," he was writing such bitter denunciations of this selfsame "Cayce," we can but consider him a dangerous man, and that the brethren should be cautioned against his treacherousness, and if we have done wrong, we alone are at fault, as we have not consulted brother Chick, or any other brother, about what we have here written, as we did not want to involve them in the responsibility.

In the present case we see demonstrated the Scripture, that he that desires to be first, shall be last. An inordinate desire for prominence has carried its victim into such opposite extremes, it is impossible for any one to have any confidence in his sincerity. Seclusion would now be the most becoming in him, and if he is a subject of grace the Lord will in his own good time humble him to the acknowledgment of his evil course.

If the publication of this article, and the letters accompanying it, shall have the effect to place the brethren on their guard against like impositions from insincere protestations of love, and zeal in their welfare, then its object will be accomplished, and we shall be more than paid for performing this unpleasant duty.

Since the above was in type we have received another issue of "Cayce's paper," in which Elder Fisher is found reinstated, occupying several columns, so he must have met with another change since writing brother Gilbert.

B.

1 KINGS XI. 3, 4.

BROTHER Z. Ward, of Bear Wallow, Va., some time since wrote asking for some thoughts upon the Scripture found in 1 Kings xi. 3, 4.

It is said in the narrative that Solomon loved many strange women, of whom the Lord had said to the children of Israel that they should not seek after them, lest they turn their hearts away from God. Yet Solomon sought after these strange women, and clave unto them. He had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines, and they turned away his heart after strange gods, as the Lord had before warned Israel, so that his heart was not perfect with God, as was the heart of David his father. And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and built altars for the worship of other gods, to please his heathen wives, and they burned incense and sacrificed to other gods. It is not said that Solomon offered sacrifices to these strange gods, but he built altars for such offerings, and suffered his wives to carry on these abominations in Israel. In all this he sinned, for it was his place first to obey God, who had forbidden Israel to intermarry with the nations about them, and also to look out that in Israel no strange altars should be erected. This was a nation and country set apart for the worship of God, and no strange god ought to be allowed a foothold there. This sin of Solomon's grew out of the carnality of his human nature, out of which all the sins of us all proceed. These wives and concubines taken from the heathen nations round about Israel seemed desirable to him, and so all sin presents something which looks desirable to our carnal hearts. No doubt Solomon made excuses to himself for what he did; and so all of us find ready excuses for that sin which we desire to

commit. His wives and concubines represent all those worldly carnal pleasures which are always presenting themselves with attractive appearance before the believer, to draw him away from the commandments of the Lord, and as in the case of Solomon, one sin leads to another. All transgression leads at last to the most grievous sin of all, idolatry.

For this sin God was angry with Solomon, and at the end, took away the kingdom from him. So God is angry with sin at all times, and in some way will he chastise his people when they thus forsake his law, and keep not his statutes. As the king in Israel, and as a man, Solomon sinned in all this, and was chastised sorely. Yet he was God's child, and at the end it was made to appear that God had chastised him as his own child, that he might learn wisdom and submission to the commandments of God. The lesson in all this narrative to us, is, that we ought to beware of anything which has a tendency to draw away our hearts from the Lord. All sin is transgression of the law of God. Sin always comes in desirable forms, and to the carnal desire it looks desirable, but the end to the child of God is sorrow and chastisement, and only the blood of Christ saves them from eternal death, which is the doom of all who die in their sin.

C.

BACK NUMBERS.

As the subscription list of the SIGNS is continually increasing, we have run an extra number of surplus copies of this volume, and are able to supply new subscribers with back numbers to the commencement of the volume. The advantage of having these numbers will appear when the last number for the year is received containing the index of the full volume.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

REVIVALS.

IN a former number, we intimated something of the pleasant state of things in the churches with which we labor; and we rejoice that it is our privilege to say, the work is still progressing. About twenty-three have related to the churches what great things God has done for them, and confessed the name of their Lord and Master before many witnesses; joyfully espousing his cause, and bowing their necks to his yoke, renouncing the world and its vanities, to fall into the ranks of the despised followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God. Some who have but very recently felt the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the spirituality of God's holy law, but recently heard the deep thunderings of Mount Sinai, and made to confess with deep contrition of heart the justice of its dreadful sentence against them, and utterly desparing of finding favor with the just and holy God by any works or virtues of their own, those have declared to us how God's method of salvation, through Jesus Christ, has been revealed to them in their greatest extremity, as perfectly adapted to their helpless and bankrupt state, and freely applied to them by the Holy Spirit, with the gracious evidence of the remission of their sins. To them, old things are passed away, and all things are become new. Their old legal hopes have perished; their burden, which with crushing weight had pressed them down to the borders of despair, has passed away; the gloom of death which mantled them, and which shrouded the heavens to them in blackness, and caused all things in nature to wear a melancholy hue, has been dispersed at the voice of him who alone can

"Clear the darkest skies,
And give us day for night."

God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in their heart, to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Others, who have entertained a hope, with much fear and trembling, for years, have at length felt constrained to come out and acknowledge the irresistible attractions of their divine Lord. On every hand we hear of some who seem to give evidence that they cannot find any resting place short of the church of our Lord Jesus Christ. May the blessed word still be extended; for when God shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., April 1, 1860.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Nov. 26th, 1902, at the residence of the bride's father, Mr. Eli Hastings, Delmar, Md., David M. Knowles and Miss Laura E. Hastings, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

By the same, Dec. 23d, 1902, at his residence, Delmar, Del., Virgil Jones and Miss Lizzie May Benson, both of Sussex Co., Del.

By the same, Dec. 29th, 1902, at the residence of Mr. E. E. Shriner, 111 E. Seventh St., Wilmington, Del., Ward S. Bogert, of Ontario Co., N. Y., and Miss Emma L. Alexander, of Wilmington, Del.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—Oct. 30th, 1902, near Oregon City, Oregon, brother **Seaborn J. Preston,** aged 73 years, 11 months and 13 days. Deceased was born Nov. 17th, 1828, in Franklin Co., Tenn., grew to manhood in that State, but emigrated and settled in Montgomery Co., Ark., and on May 7th, 1857, he was married to Miss Harriett J. Carly. Eight children were born to them. Deceased professed religion in early life, and was baptized in 1861, and joined the Old Primitive Baptist Church in Arkansas soon after the Civil War, and has ever remained steadfast, and died a consistent member of that church. He joined the Confederate Army at the breaking out of the war, and served throughout, being in many of the hardest fought battles in Arkansas, Tennessee and Georgia, among others he was in the battle of Chickamauga, Lookout Mountain, Antietam, and the destruction of Atlanta. After the surrender he returned to his home in Arkansas, but emigrated to western Texas in 1865. He was elected County Treasurer of Haskell Co., Texas, without opposition, at its organization, in 1884, and held that office continuously, having been several times re-elected, until 1893, when he came to Oregon, first settling in Clarke Co., Wash., near Vancouver. The deceased was one of the best men the writer ever knew, during an intimate acquaintance of twenty years; an honorable, upright, consistent, christian gentleman and citizen, highly respected and beloved by all who knew him. In fact to know Seaborn J. Preston, was to love and respect him, because of his genial, loving disposition, smooth temper, sterling honesty and christian character. It may be well and truly said that he died as he had lived, without an enemy, leaving a large circle of friends and neighbors, besides a sorrowing, loving family, to mourn their loss. He was confined to his house and bed about four weeks previous to his death, and seemed to realize his early impending doom, as he told his family he would never recover, and sent for his children. Calling them to his bedside he gave them loving, fatherly advice, and assured them there was a reality in the religion of and a true God, and a sweet home beyond the river.

F. P. MORGAN.

OUR darling baby girl, **Edith May Fetter,** was taken from our midst Jan. 16th, 1903, after a short illness of acute dysentery, brought on by whooping cough. She was born Aug. 25th, 1899, making her stay with us just 3 years, 4 months and 21 days. She was a patient little sufferer, yet her suffering was intense towards the last. But her sufferings are all over now, yet O, how we miss her, but yet we have the comfort that comes alone from him who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. We feel that all things work together for our good, having the assurance which he so sweetly gave us, if we are not mistaken, In six trials I will be with thee, and in the seventh I will not forsake thee. It is hard for the flesh, and our hearts and arms ache for just one embrace of our darling, but we feel to say, It is the Lord's doings, let him do what seemeth him good. She leaves a sorrowful father and mother, two sisters and one little baby brother to miss her in their play and pleasures, and it is hard to see our little family broken; there is a link missing; there is a place vacant, and nothing seems perfect in our home, except the goodness and love of God as it is made manifest in our midst. All we can say is,

We cannot doubt his bounteous love,
Immeasurably kind;
To his unerring, gracious will,
Be every wish resigned.

Sweet be thy rest, our precious child,
Our arms enfold thee here no more;

Thy bright eyes dimmed, those little hands
Are folded, and thy sufferings o'er.

Brother Horace Lefferts was present at her funeral, and spoke words of comfort, using as a text 1 Cor. xiii. 12, after which her little body was laid at rest in River View Cemetery, Trenton, N. J.

Her sorrowing papa and mamma,

MR. & MRS. CASPER G. FETTER.

TRENTON, N. J., Jan. 25, 1903.

DIED—**Deacon John F. Childs,** at his home in Forsyth, Monroe Co., Ga., Sept. 4th, 1902. Brother Childs was born July 26th, 1825, being 77 years, 1 month and 8 days of age at the time of his death. He was a noble man in every respect, a good and useful citizen, a kind and indulgent father and husband, and raised a nice family of children, four boys and four girls living, and the precious old sister, his wife, to mourn their loss. Brother Childs, together with his dear companion, united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Smyrn, Monroe Co., Ga., about twenty-five years ago, and was baptized by Elder W. C. Cleavland. He was soon after ordained deacon of the church, in which capacity he served well to the time of his death, taking great interest, and being ever watchful over the church for her good, and for the glory of God. He will be greatly missed by the church he loved so much. His very presence was a great help to the unworthy writer many times while trying to preach; we miss him so much in our meetings, but we try to be submissive to the will of that God who makes no mistakes. May the Lord bless the widow, our sister, together with the children, with his holy Spirit, and give them sustaining grace, that they may live as the father lived, and finally be gathered together in his upper and better kingdom, where there will be no more parting or sorrow.

The writer tried to speak a few words of comfort on the occasion to the bereaved ones, after which, in the presence of a large congregation of sorrowing friends, the remains were laid to rest in the cemetery at Forsyth.

May the Lord bless us all.

D. G. McCOWEN.

DIED—December, 1902, **Miss Mamie Johns,** eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Johns, at her home in Bothwell, Ontario, aged 27 years. She was born and raised in Bothwell. A general feeling of sadness and gloom was felt by neighbors and friends far and near, as she was widely known and highly esteemed by all who knew her. Truly a deep, heavy, sore trial for the dear parents and relatives has come upon them in this affliction. May God bless them with resignation to his providence. He has given, and he has taken, and says, "Be still, and know that I am God." He alone can comfort, he alone can heal. Doctors pronounced her disease "heart failure," God in mercy has taken her to himself. She was nearly always present at the Beulah meeting when I have been there, and enjoyed listening to the truth and visiting with the brethren. She left positive evidence that she was born of God, for she loved the little band of brethren of Beulah church, and knew the gospel's joyful sound. She attended meeting at Brook when I was there last October, and brother Archie McAlpin took her home, a distance of twelve or fifteen miles, and as they were riding along she said she felt like talking to me. He asked her if she wished to unite with the little church? She burst into tears, and said she could not tell anything; her heart and mind were with the church, and full of love to God and his people.

May the dear Lord have mercy upon all the mourning friends is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

D. M. VAIL.

Mrs. Rachel Callahan, wife of Hiram Callahan, died of kidney and lung trouble, Jan. 13th, 1903, aged 72 years, 6 months and 5 days. She was received in the Old School Baptist Church at Cammal Pa., in 1871, and baptized by Elder S. H. Durand, and has walked in the full fellowship of all the brethren, bringing no reproach upon the church; was looked upon as an example for all to follow. She had a sweet experience, and she left upon the minds of those who stood around her bedside that she had a foretaste of heaven. She prayed to go, and thanked his holy name for the arrival of the last minute on this earth. She will be missed at our meetings. She was a mother to all in the time of sickness. She leaves to survive her three sons and two daughters, and her husband. They have lived at Okome for fifty-five years, on the same farm. Her favorite hymn, No. 1251 (Beebe's Collection), was sung at her funeral. Her husband and children will feel their loss very keenly, but their bereavement is sweetened by the riches of God's grace, and the evidences she left behind that she was a subject of God's grace.

Her body was laid in the grave to await the glorious resurrection.

A. B. CALLAHAN, Church Clerk.

CAMMAL, Pa., Jan. 18, 1903.

Newton Owings died at his home, one mile south of Jasper, Mo., Nov. 22d, 1902. He was born near Lexington, Ky., Dec. 27th, 1820. He left Kentucky when he was in his twenty-third year, and lived in Illinois awhile, crossing the plains in an early day, living in California for a few years, coming back on water by the isthmus, landing in New York. He again lived in Illinois a few years, coming to Missouri in 1876, having lived in Missouri twenty-six years at the time of his death. He was married to Miss Elizabeth Hardesty, Jan. 2d, 1842. To this union seven children were born. She and three of them preceded

him. On Nov. 9th, 1897, he was married to Mrs. Nevada Carson. He is survived by his wife. The deceased was sick with liver trouble for about four months, but was patient to the end, putting his trust in the Lord, and was a firm believer in the doctrine of election, and salvation by grace. He was a devoted husband and father, a kind neighbor and good citizen; was well versed in the Scriptures, and had belonged to the Primitive Baptist Church for more than thirty years. He liked to read the SIGNS, and was a reader of it long before he joined the church.

The writer is the only step-child of the deceased.

PEARL McMECHAN.

Oliver Patterson died Saturday night, Jan. 17th, 1903, at the home of his son, Charles E. Patterson. He was born April 5th, 1815, in Onondaga Co., N. Y., and passed the first fifty years and more of his life in that State.

There were some unusual features of Mr. Patterson's life. It is given to but few to reach his advanced age, and fewer still to enjoy the strength and activity which was his until comparatively recently. Married Sept. 22d, 1840, in Erie Co., N. Y., to Parthenia Rector, these good people lived together devotedly for sixty-two years, and his wife survives him, an invalid as the result of an accident, but with mental faculties scarcely impaired. Two sons were born to them. The only other near relatives are a sister, Mrs, L. S. Morsman and family, living in New York, and a niece, Mrs. Amy K. Emeigh, of Vancouver.

An evidence of Mr. Patterson's activity in old age is the fact that from his first presidential vote in the thirties, he had not missed exercising that right of suffrage for more than sixty years, until last November. In failing health for a year or more, and a sufferer from one or two accidents in recent years, he had been confined to bed since last September, with the close of life almost daily expected. Throughout his life he was held in respect and esteem by all of the community in which he lived.

The funeral service was held on Monday, and largely attended, after which the body was interred in Marshall cemetery.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO BROTHER D. M. LEONARD'S APPEAL TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

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Total to date.....$619 10

POETRY.

SAVING GRACE.

Dear father! on my bended knee
I earnest ask this boon of thee—
Make clean this sinful heart of mine,
And fill it with thy grace divine.

Suspicion, jealousy and doubt,
With hatred, envy, pride, cast out;
Ambition and all selfish greed,
Tone down with care for other's need.

Quench with thy love all passion's fire;
Help me control each mad desire;
Thou knowest I am tempest-tossed,
Lord, save me! or I shall be lost!

Withdraw the shadows of the dead years,
Make smooth the furrows made by tears,
Take from me all this fear and pain,
And give me childlike trust again.

RESURRECTION.

A THOUSAND buried nations lie
Engulfed within the tomb,
Beneath the lanterns of the sky,
Which light the midnight gloom.

Behind them moves a numerous throng,
Which to the tomb descend,
And others crowding still along,
Their life full soon must end.

But hark! I hear a joyful sound,
It thrills my aching breast;
Awake, ye nations under ground,
And enter into rest.

Behold the rising dead ascend
To dwell above the skies;
Immortal life its vigor lends,
A glorious, endless prize.

By faith I hear the angels cry,
And loud their voices raise;
They lay their crowns of glory by,
And sing the God of grace.

And now I hear the wondrous song
That rises from the grave,
And there amidst that risen throng
Stands one who died to save.

Holy the Lamb of God, they cry,
And bless his gracious name,
Who laid his royal honors by,
And down to earth he came.

He broke the captor's binding power,
And washed us in his blood;
He triumphed in that awful hour,
And brought us home to God.

JULIETTA, Idaho, Dec, 17, 1902. I. N. NEWKIRK.

MEETINGS.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

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Z. GILLIES.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 71. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1903. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HE GIVETH HIS BELOVED SLEEP.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Our esteemed sister, Mrs. H. Tuttle, of Michigan, asks me to write in the SIGNS on Psalms cxxvii. 2. "It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrow: for so he giveth his beloved sleep." The first verse is a key to open the second, and essential to the right understanding of it, and says, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Sister Tuttle will kindly pardon my delay, which was owing to my long tour in Texas. I am thankful that she says, "This Scripture seems so beautiful to me. It came to me with such sweetness as I laid on a sick bed, from which I thought never to rise." This makes me feel that she could better write on its meaning than myself.

In this first verse the Lord represents his church as a house, and his kingdom as a city. He has set watchmen upon the walls of the city, to watch for foes and dangers which may come against it, especially in the night, when enemies stealthily creep in to rob and destroy. In his house his servants are laborers and builders, and his chosen people are the materials and members, as lively stones, and they are built up a spiritual house, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable unto God by our Lord Jesus Christ. He himself is the Divine Architect and the Chief Builder of his house, and he said, "Upon this Rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Coming back from death, triumphant over all the power of darkness, to his apostles, whom he had ordained as builders in his house, he said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." He therefore sent them forth, to labor and minister in his name, and said to them, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." The work of building is the Lord's, therefore; and, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." "Jesus Christ himself being the chief

corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." "This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it. The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you."—Zech. iv. This is sufficient to show that the work of building the Lord's house, and of maintaining his kingdom, is in his own hands, even as Christ teaches us to pray: "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever." So it is written, "And the Lord added unto the church daily such as should be saved."

Now, all this being true, "It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows." These words express fearfulness, distrust and unrest, and they betray a lack of confidence in the wisdom and faithfulness and power of the Lord, as though he might neglect to build the house, and fail to keep the city. All such conclude, therefore, that, if the Lord's house is built and the city kept, very much depends upon themselves and their activity and zeal; so they must rise up early, and sit up late, and eat the bread of sorrows, in their efforts to help the Lord. By their works they say, the Lord will not build the house, nor keep the city, unless we thus act, do our part, and help him. But this is the spirit of unbelief, and it dishonors the Lord, for it denies either his power or his faithfulness, or both, and says, the house will not be built, nor the city kept, except we do all these things—rise up early, sit up late, and eat the bread of sorrows, and so be very active and zealous in this work. This is carried out in many religious enterprises and works, societies for the furtherance of religious interests, Sunday schools, Sunday Bible classes, long protracted meetings, especially at night, sitting up late, for the specific purpose of getting up revivals of religion, gathering in many members, and so building the house. To help on in this work, the builders will eat the bread of sorrows, or weep and agonize over those whom they call upon and influence to come up for their prayers, and to be builded as members in the house. So they build of wood, hay and stubble, no less than of gold, silver and precious stones. Having done all these things, they then proclaim it abroad, and make their boasts of what mighty works they are doing for the Lord, to the praise of the revivalists and builders. In all denominations of nominal christianity, not excepting Primitive Baptists, these things are zealously engaged in, and many are aggressive and persistent in such religious building, claiming that they are working for the Lord, and are building his house and keeping his kingdom.

The text shows, not only that such builders and watchmen do not trust in the Lord to build his house and keep his city, but also that they do trust in themselves, and that their confidence is in their own ability and active efforts, as if they can and will take the world for Christ. This is a vain confidence in man, and it is neither pleasing nor honoring to the Lord, but is a reproach upon his faithfulness and power, and it receives his rebuke and condemnation, saying, "Who

hath required these things at your hands?"

Let us now hear the word of the Lord: "For thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. * * * I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment."—Ezek. xxxiv. "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," says the voice of the good Shepherd to his sheep. "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom." This is the Lord Jesus, and this his work. He rideth upon the heaven in the help of his people, and in his excellency on the sky. "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold, the man whose name is the BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."—Zech. vi. "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."

Thus and in this way of thanksgiving and glory do the Lord's people respond to him, and ascribe to him salvation and majesty, power and dominion, because he hath taken to himself his great power and hath reigned. His word assures them that "his kingdom ruleth over all," and that he will do all his pleasure. So their faith in God causes them to rest in his faithful word, being fully convinced that what he has promised, he is able also to perform, and will faithfully do so. And so they trust in the Lord, knowing that in him is everlasting strength, and that the kingdom and the power and the glory are his. In this confidence in their Lord, his servants go forth in his name and authority, moved and strengthened by his Spirit and grace, and meekly minister in his militant kingdom, and lovingly labor in word and doctrine, trusting in him to build his house, the church, and to keep the city. For they know that the Captain of salvation alone can make them valiant in the good fight of faith, and that his strength is made perfect in their weakness. Therefore, in all this warfare, the Lord keeps the city; and in all this work of salvation in the church being built, the Lord builds the house. "Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's build-

ing." "For we are his workmanship." As the people of the saints of the Most High, the household of faith, we are what God has made us and wrought in us; and this is true of us as builded in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. He himself adds to the church such as shall be saved. Those that he does not add to the church, are neither of the church nor in it, but they are as the chaff that shall be driven away by the winds of doctrine; for only the wheat will be gathered into his garner. How vain, therefore, are all the carnal excitements, strivings and labored natural efforts of professed evangelists, revivalists and sensationalists to build the house of the Lord, and to extend his kingdom. O how deplorable that also of our ownselves men have risen up, who have run after the religious world into such measures and efforts, striving to bring multitudes into the professed churches, "supposing that gain is godliness." But this is done for influence and popularity in the world. "Verily they have their reward," said the Lord.

"For so he giveth his beloved sleep." The people of God are his beloved children, and though poor in themselves, yet he hath chosen them in his beloved Son, rich in faith, and heirs of his holy kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him. And they love him, because he first loved them, and bestowed his love upon them, even in the blessed manner of making them his own dear children. All this is in his well beloved Son; in his life and divine nature and holiness. Thus are they spotlessly white and holy in the eyes of their loving Father, and without blame before him in love. For they are complete and altogether lovely in his glorious Son. He is their righteousness and salvation, and he and they are one in eternal life. God hath joined them together. "He is not ashamed to call them brethren." And he gives his bride to joyfully say, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his." Holy and blessed oneness! She rests in his love, "leaning upon her Beloved." As the tender Shepherd, he "makest his flock to rest at noon," beneath the shadow of his protecting and reconciling cross. "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." Here his people blessedly repose, having no fear that their precious Lord will not build his house, nor keep his city, the beloved Mt. Zion. For he gathers his saints together in his bosom of love, and gives them safety and beneficence.

"He giveth his beloved sleep." In his wisdom and love the Lord does so. *Sleep* not only means rest from work, turmoil and weariness, from fightings, sufferings and fears, but it also represents the state of those who have died in the Lord, whose warfare is accomplished, and who have ceased from the battles of life in the flesh. The text doubtless means both these. And it embraces as well the Bridegroom as the bride, the Head with the body, as the beloved family of God the Father. "For so he giveth his beloved sleep." That is, in this way, which is God's way. So Christ must needs come in the flesh for the suffering of death, accomplish the warfare of his people, and suffer unto death in the flesh for their redemption and salvation from all their sins and from death. Then, reviving in newness of life, and rising up in power out of this last holy and blessed sleep, the Lord builds the house of God, the holy and beautiful temple, and brings all his redeemed into the *New Jerusalem*, the holy and living city of our God. His own precious word is;

"Neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." Therefore, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." Their works are the works of the Lord by his Spirit, and they praise him for this, saying, "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us." God hath quickened us together with Christ, and raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in him. So now, believing in God, we cease from our own legal works in the flesh, being dead with Christ unto sin, and do enter into his rest.

For the Redeemer-Lord, our Brother First-born from the dead, hath accomplished our warfare, pardoned our iniquities, conquered the last enemy, and obtained for us double for all our sins, even justification, and a glorious resurrection unto the heavenly and immortal inheritance. In the full assurance of all this faithful and righteous work of the Lord in building the spiritual house and keeping the holy city, our dear sister Tuttle and we can in faith and truth with David say, "I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me." "I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety." David personated Christ, the Man whom the Lord God made strong for himself, and also all who are Christ's. At the time appointed of the Father, the Lord shall surely come in power and glory, and awaken them out of sleep. David, therefore, said again, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." This is a house not made with hands, a heavenly, spiritual house, and it abideth for ever. The children of this household realize that they are strangers and pilgrims on the earth, and they seek a better country; for their home is with their Father in heaven. "Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city." Into this most glorious and eternal city of life, their loving Father will bring them, and they shall go no more out for ever. By faith Abraham "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." "Ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the First-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant." O how divinely lovely and happy is this innumerable and holy congregation of the Lord! "builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

My heart responds to the closing words of sister Tuttle's letter: "If. I have no other evidence that I am one for whom Christ died, I have a strong desire to love and serve him all my remaining days; for surely salvation is of the Lord, and he alone has the words of eternal life. And I hope I do not put my trust in man, or in any fleshly strength, but in the Lord alone; for there is nowhere else to go, and he is able to do all things, for which I am glad. O that I might worship him in Spirit and in truth, and praise him through all eternity." Amen and Amen.

D. BARTLEY.

LEBANON, Ohio, Dec. 5, 1902.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Elder J. P. Allison is one of a precious cluster of ministering brethren with whom it has been my privilege to correspond, who live in Washington and Oregon. I would like to see more of their communications in the SIGNS. I met brother Allison at an association in the north-west corner of Illinois about thirty-seven years ago. I do not think I have ever seen any of the rest of those brethren along the Pacific coast. In a postscript to this letter brother Allison says, "I inclose a letter received from my dear old brother, Deacon E. Loat, which I think is worthy of publication in the SIGNS, and if you think it will not be amiss you can send my little mite along with it."

I certainly do not think it will be amiss, but that these letters will both be good reading in the SIGNS. I wish those dear brethren in the far west would tell us more through the SIGNS about their churches, and about their exercises of mind upon the Scriptures of truth.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

GRASS VALLEY, Oregon, Dec. 24, 1902.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND—VERY DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER IN HOPE:—This morning, weak and very unworthy though we feel, we will try to write you a line. And first of all we feel that we have abundant reason to thank and praise God for his continued goodness and mercy so wonderfully manifested to us, his unworthy and dependent creatures, in giving us to hope that we have an interest in the sufferings and finished work of our adorable Redeemer, and thus far in our seeming unprofitable life in his service has kept us in the faith. So much so that we feel that we can truly say in the language of Paul that we know nothing among the brethren but Jesus Christ, and him crucified, as a means of salvation, in time or eternity, for without him we can do nothing. For these special blessings, and all the multiplied favors the good Lord has been pleased to give us to enjoy, brings us under very great and renewed obligations to praise the name of God, yea, above every name in heaven above or on earth beneath. Yet, my brother, I have to mourn over my great deficiency in rendering that praise and adoration to our exalted Savior that I desire to do, and have to say in the language of David, "What shall I render under the Lord for all his benefits toward me?"

I will now speak about the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have been a reader of that paper since 1859, and I cannot see wherein it has changed in doctrine in the least from the very first. I have both the first and second volumes of the editorials of the late Elder G. Beebe, one of the most able and fearless expounders of the word in his day. And the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God, and the predestination of all things, is as fearlessly taught all through the dear old Elder's life, in the SIGNS, as it is to-day. Now who are the ones that have left the old landmarks of salvation by grace first and last and all the time? It is not the dear old SIGNS, or its editors, neither is it those who write for its columns. Then it must be as dear brother Benton Beebe says, that the younger brethren are the ones that are trying to remove the old landmarks. "Why, seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him not see his days? Some remove the landmarks; they violently take away flocks, and feed thereof." "They turn the needy out of the way."—Job

xxiv. 1, 2, 4. It seems to me that this Scripture advertises those who are laboring to bring in new issues, and new doctrines, such as "conditional time salvation." But I hope I have no ill feelings for any of our brethren that seem to not understand the pure, unadulterated doctrine of absolute predestination, and salvation entirely by grace, unmerited in any sense by our works, that is so abundantly taught in the holy Scriptures, and ably expounded and defended in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES by our dearly beloved editors, and all those old tried soldiers of the cross that write for its columns. And I am glad to note that many of our younger and very able and gifted brethren are also very bold and fearless in the declarations of the truth as it is in Jesus. O, how I love to read their articles in the dear old SIGNS. I do not think that it is possible for a medium of correspondence like the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to be better edited than that paper is at this time. May the good Lord bless and sustain its editors, and all the dear brethren and sisters who write for it, and all of like precious faith, is the prayer of a poor old sinner saved by grace unmerited.

J. P. ALLISON.

THOMAS, Oregon, Aug. 16, 1902.

DEAR ELDER J. P. ALLISON:—Your profitable letter to me, as I trust, dated the 3d day of August, came to my hands on the 14th, and glad was I to receive it, on account of the glorious truth you expressed, which I trust is of great comfort to me, even true comfort, for it sets forth the true doctrine of the grace of God to poor sinners through the finished work and merits of Jesus, God's only begotten Son, the Savior of all his dear people, according to the eternal purpose of God, who hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, as Paul sets forth in all its fullness, in his letter to the Ephesians, the knowledge of which is salvation both present and eternal. It seems that the apostle in this first chapter introduces us into the very presence of God, the only wise, and shews us the very mind of Jehovah, and can be none other than the work of the holy Spirit of God. It is truly wonderful.

If it shall be the Lord's will to prolong my days until the 25th of the present month, eighty-seven years of mortal life will be given unto me. It is beyond the average of human life, but to look back upon it does not appear to be long, and compared with "eternity," how short! And to remember that forty-nine years were spent following the course of this world, shows me the enormous load of sin and guilt I had accumulated, which was laid upon the head of the Lamb of God as he hung upon the cross, and poured out his soul even unto death on my behalf, and gave me (as I trust) godly sorrow for sin and repentance unto life, at the same time speaking unto me and saying, "Thy sins, which are many, are forgiven," with faith in his atonement, which immediately produced in my soul peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, and though nearly thirty-eight years have passed away since, it is yet as precious to me as ever, being the only ground of my hope of eternal life. Grace, grace!

Sept. 15th.—How longsuffering is the Lord, who has prolonged my life three weeks beyond eighty-seven years, in his wisdom and goodness to me, for it is now Sept. 15th, and I can get round about home a little. Though frailer every day in the body, I can say with deep humility, "The inward man is renewed day by day," and may add, I trust, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man."

The time of my departure from this world cannot be far off; the prospect is not at all gloomy, but the contrary; though I have been so unprofitable, the infinite merits of my Savior does more than cover all my deficiencies. To be for evermore in the blessed presence of the Lord of life and glory, to see him as he is, and know him as he knows me, is soul-cheering in its fullness. "The gift of God is eternal life." It is beyond our conception, but the glory of it will be revealed in his good time.

I would rather you had not sent my letters to Elder Durand, they are of so little worth. He is a brother I highly esteem and love; his writings have been serviceable to me for many years, and I can have no objection to him seeing them, only mine are not worth notice; you speak too highly of them. I place it all to your love for me in Jesus. In the world to come we shall know all things.

I am glad to hear of your prosperous surroundings, and pray for their continuance. Truly our God does all things well.

Forgive all you see amiss; I cannot write now but with difficulty. God be thanked for a good harvest, and a good time to take care of it.

Love in the Lord from this poor old man, to you both. It is the best relationship in this world, and in that which is to come.

"Then will he own our worthless names before his Father's face,
And in the new Jerusalem appoint our souls a place."

To go no more out for ever.

EDWARD LOAT.

BETHEL ACADEMY, Va., Jan. 24, 1903.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—As I have been requested to write a brief sketch of my travels from nature to grace, I will try and comply, if the Lord will guide my pen.

I was quite young when I had serious thoughts about death. I knew there had to be a change in order to obtain eternal life, but how that change had to be brought about I did not know, but thought if I would beg the Lord to have mercy on me, and read my Bible, and be a good child, he would bless me. So you see I knew nothing about it. I would read the New Testament, but I did not want any one to see me; I would go where I thought no one could see me, and would read and try to pray. This went on some years, then I quit, thinking it was no use. Time passed on, and my troubles returned again with greater force, and no relief could I find. I felt to get worse, more sinful, and my troubles were so great my cry was, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." I was afraid to go to sleep for fear I should awake in torment. My condemnation was so great I thought surely I cannot bear it. I hated to see my friends coming to the house to spend a day with me, and I thought, O, has my mind got to be taken off the things I so much desire? I desired peace, but I feared there was no peace for me, for I was so wicked. I could not see how God could be just and save such a vile sinner, as I felt I was the vilest of them all; I thought there was no one else had such troubles and sorrows as I had. One night after the family had retired I was sitting by the fire, studying about my lost condition. I thought, It is no use in trying any longer, there is no mercy for me, but the thought came to me, Go try and pray once more, perhaps it may be the last time. I arose, went and fell on my knees, praying, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." How long I remained in that position I do not know; I was beg-

ging for mercy, I was trembling from head to foot, my knees were knocking together, and I felt that I had rather be cut off at that moment and know the worst of my condition than to live in sin any longer as I had. I felt if my soul was sent to hell it was just and right; I did not want any one else to go there; I wanted to be the only one there. This Scripture came to me with great power, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Dear kindred in Christ, my condemnation was gone. I felt to be a new creature in Christ Jesus. Yes, I felt Christ was formed in me the hope of glory; I was unspeakably happy; I cried, "Lord, it is enough, surely I can stand no more." For days I felt like I was soaring above this world, I was praising my Jesus day and night for his loving kindness to such a vile sinner as I. After this when I would go to prayer, by the time I was on my knees I felt I had just what I desired. You who have passed through the same know what it is to be in the felt presence of Christ Jesus. O, it is sweet to be there, but then most of my time I am groping in the dark, there are times when I feel that I am not utterly forsaken, that I have a hope, and as small as it is, I would not exchange it for all this world, although I feel to be the least of all, if one at all. I cannot live as I desire; the good I would I do not; the evil I would not, is what I do. I know I love the brethren, but the question arises, Do I love them as I ought? I know it is the company that I love, although I am not much of a talker, but I love so much to hear them tell of their travels.

Well, I must tell of a little feast I had a few months ago, I often think of it. I did expect to go to meeting, but I was disappointed. Well, on Monday night, after I had retired, I got to studying, and I had quite a little feast upstairs alone, yet not alone, for I felt that I was in that strait and narrow way that leadeth unto life, and that Christ would be with me to the end. So if I missed the meeting, I had the feast, but such precious seasons do not last long. If I go to meeting and get a crumb, it seems as if the evil one is ever ready to snatch it from me. Is it so with any one else, or is mine an outside case? I think sometimes I have missed the substance and grasped the shadow.

Brethren, this is the first I have ever written for publication; if you think it is the travels of one who has been born of the Spirit, please give it space in our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; if not, commit it to the flames. I have not written as I expected, but it is the best I can do. If ever I am saved it is all of grace from first to last, nothing that I have done.

I must close, my eyes are very weak. I was seventy-four years old last November, and I feel that I am nearing the end. I desire the prayers of all God's dear people. Love to all the household of faith.

I am, I hope, your sister in a crucified and risen Redeemer,

(MRS.) WILLIAM UTTERBACK.

PETTIGREW, Ark., Jan. 7, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed find check for five dollars, which please credit to my subscription. I send by check because I have no other means of remitting at this moment, and having so many other things to look after I am liable to neglect it. I am confident that the rea-

son so many of the readers of the SIGNS are in arrears is more a matter of neglect than of intention on their part. I cannot think that any one who loves the doctrine advocated by it can find it in his heart to intentionally defraud you of the amount due you on his subscription. But very few ever think about the cost in cash to you in getting out every issue. If this could be fully realized by every subscriber we feel confident the arrearage on your books would be much reduced. I have been a subscriber, excepting a short period, ever since before I was grown. I have sometimes been in arrears because I could not get the money to remit at the proper time, but I have been behind much oftener because in the multitudinous cares of laboring in the ministry, and of supporting my family, I simply neglected it. Perhaps I should be ashamed to make such a confession, but it is the truth nevertheless.

I was truly glad you published the proceedings of the Fort Worth Council. It presents the doctrine of predestination as held by sound Baptists in all ages, and in a proper spirit. The admonition to use "sound speech that cannot be condemned, that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having nothing to answer," is just as proper in its place, and as necessary for us to take heed to, as any other commandment in the Bible. The people who are sent forth in this world as sheep among wolves, save when their minds are biased by the enemy of truth, cannot help but love the doctrine that not even a sparrow falls to the ground without God; that his determinate counsel directs their steps, and numbers even the very hairs of their heads. Some object, and say that this is carrying predestination too far, but it was the Master himself who said, "The very hairs of your head are all numbered." As the number of hairs of the head of a man who lives to be old must be greater than if he had died or been killed in youth, the life of a hair being only from two to four years, when it falls out and is replaced by a new one, it is evident that the time he is to live in the world is also appointed and determined, as well as everything else that he comes in contact with through life that could effect him either for good or evil. It was in this sense that Christ used the language. It was when he was assuring them that even a sparrow would not die until its appointed time, and commanded them to "Fear not therefore," that he told his disciples that the very hairs of their heads were numbered. But this, as Elder Gilbert Beebe once said, and as the Baptists have always held, "Does not involve the idea of man acting involuntarily in sin." The Roman soldiers fulfilled the Scriptures, and the determinate counsel of God in parting Christ's raiment and casting lots upon his vesture, but that we might know that it was not the result of unseen, mechanical or causeless force, it is expressly stated that when they saw that his coat was woven throughout, without seam, they decided to cast lots for it. Had violence been offered to their wills, or their action the result of a law of necessity, it would have been the same regardless of the condition of the coat. The soldiers ignorant of the Scriptures, and the purpose of God, voluntarily fulfilled them, being influenced by the circumstances before and around them. The Bible abounds with similar instances, and thus refutes the objections of the enemies of the doctrine in all ages of the world, that it destroys man's accountability. No man can blame another, or any one but himself, for what he voluntarily

does or takes a notion to do. The London Confession is in exact harmony with this view.

We are glad to know that the brethren in Texas have not swerved to the right or left a hair's breadth in consequence of opposing extremes. We earnestly desire that the proceedings of the council should be read by the Primitive Baptists throughout the United States.

May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve us blameless, and keep us in the strait and narrow way, though many cry "lo here, lo there," and though the lightning scorch the very ground beneath our feet.

In hope,

C. W. ANDERSON.

HERNDON, Va., Dec. 1, 1902.

MY DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—While I feel lonely and sad I thought I would pen you a few lines, as I have always done in renewing my subscription to the dear old SIGNS, but I fear that it will not be of any interest to you to hear from a poor offcast like me. I say offcast, yes, I have felt to be all of that for many months past, but at our last monthly meeting, in November, I was made once more to rejoice in God my Savior. I had almost come to the conclusion that my case was an outside one altogether, but while sitting under the sound of dear brother White's preaching, on Saturday, I was once more made to rejoice in the joyful sound "that saves a sinner like me." During my short season of gladness I was made to claim the beautiful language found in the Song of Songs, which is Solomon's, the sweet words spoken to the church, the Lamb's wife, which is pure and holy and without blame before him in love, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." O how tenderly and lovingly he speaks to his bride: "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." It is written of God the Father, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." "For the winter is past." Yes, the warm sunshine of his love is upon you, and he is made unto you the chiefest among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely." When in such a frame of mind as this you can always say, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his; he feedeth among the lilies." But alas, the cold rain of winter will come, and the dark and cloudy day, when you will try to seek your love, but you find him not. In the language of the poet,

"Dear Lord, if indeed I am thine,
If thou art my sun and my song;
Say, why do I languish and pine,
And why are my winters so long?
O drive these dark clouds from my sky,
Thy soul cheering presence restore;
Or take me unto thee on high,
Where winter and clouds are no more."

What a strange road the Lord has laid out for his children to journey in, and the most of the way is dark and cloudy with no sunshine to brighten their way, and it is only for a short duration while journeying along that we get a glimpse of his countenance to help us along the way.

Surely the way that I have been led for many months, I have thought was not the way of a child of grace, for Satan has often told me that there was no reality in a christian experience, or in a God that works all things after the counsel of his own will, and at times I have almost

been led to believe him that "I knew not the man." O, the temptations, the doubts and fears that I have been made to encounter for the many months past. But as I have said in the commencement of my letter, at our last meeting these dark clouds were driven away by the "Sun of righteousness with healing in his wings," which gave me comfort to believe that I was included in that number, and that the Lord said unto me, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For lo, the winter is past, the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." Yes, the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. And I did think while brother White was preaching, that he could claim the language written in the book of Isaiah lxi. 1–3: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me," &c. Truly I felt to say in my heart, Brother White is a gospel minister, for I am now feasting on the words that fall from his lips. For it was a joyful sound, and I was greatly blessed to hear it.

One said of old, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound, they shall walk O Lord in the light of thy countenance." It is a joyful sound, it lifts you up out of that horrible pit, and puts a new song in your mouth, even praises unto our God; we have a feeling to rise up above all earthly things, and rejoice in the God who "hath shined in our hearts, and has given us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." It is a rising up from earthly things, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away," &c.

But I must stop right here, lest I weary you to read this scribble. I am a poor ignorant creature, and I often say to myself that I will lay my pen by to never take it again to expose my ignorance to any of God's children, but alas, I find "the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

Your brother, I hope, in the bond of fellowship and love,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., Dec. 14, 1902.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel like brother Butler, and can find no better language to express my feelings, and like him had fully decided to lay aside my pen, and drop out of notice, so far as writing for publication is concerned, for I realize that when I would do good, evil is present with me, but as it is time for me to make a remittance to you, after reading so many letters of encouragement, and being requested by so many of my dear brethren and sisters to write for the dear old SIGNS, I feel like I ought, if I could be of any comfort to any of the dear people of God. I want to give my little testimony of the good old SIGNS, as being one that has never turned to the right or left, but has always advocated the true doctrine, as I understand it, of predestination and election. My dear old father, David Grove, was a subscriber for the SIGNS ever since I can remember, and since he is gone I have taken it, and I see no weak points in its able editorials, just the same as it always was, as it falls in the hands of one generation down to the other, it is still the best and ablest periodical we have to-day. I am sorry to see some claiming to be Old Baptists that want predestination taken out of the way. Ever since I can remember, when I was young and at home with my parents, when we heard of a Baptist preacher coming to our churches, it was a set-

tled fact that he was a regular Predestinarian Baptist preacher, or we would not have had any use for him. I never heard it questioned, we were satisfied that he was sound and steadfast in the apostles' doctrine. Take that away, and we are no better than the Arminian world; we are distinguished by it from the Arminian world. Take predestination and election away and there is nothing left for me. Some say it is too hard for them. It is no harder than the Lord intended it when Jesus was preaching to them, and told them that he was the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever, and so on, in the sixth chapter of John. These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum. Many, therefore, of his disciples when they had heard this, said, "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" And Christ said, "Doth this offend you?" And that is the way that it is now, they will not endure sound doctrine, for Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not. The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. He rules in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say, What doest thou? God declares that his ways are equal, and we know that there is no weakness or defect or lack in him, but in all his divine nature he is a unit, or one, and foreknowing all things in his unlimited universe, this fixes the absolute certainty of all things.

May it be the Lord's will to hold up your hands, and strengthen you to edit the dear old SIGNS for many years to come, is the prayer of one of the least of all God's humble poor, if one at all,

(MRS.) G. S. FRAZEE.

ALEXANDER, Texas, Jan. 1, 1903.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—As my subscription is past due, I will try to pencil you a few words to let you know that poor, weak, sinful worm of the dust as I am, I respect your work very highly, for the truth's sake, for it has been all the preaching that I have gotten for three years, that I can feast upon, for I cannot enjoy the conditional preaching, for with Paul, I feel to be the chief of sinners. If I have a hope at all, or if I trust in anything it must be in the blood of a crucified and risen Redeemer, for I have no confidence in myself. I desire to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, but O how far short of it I come. "When I would do good, evil is present with me, and how to perform that which is good I find not." I have had a name among the Primitive Baptists for twenty years, and when first I had a hope I thought by the time I was as old as I now am, doubts and fears would not trouble me, but O, how sadly mistaken. Brethren, I am ashamed to tell you how much I do doubt, for I have doubted the inspiration of the Scriptures, but perhaps the next moment my mind would be running in them and rejoicing. If the Scriptures are true, there are two things that I never have doubted; which are that God has a people on earth, chosen in Christ before the world was, and that the Primitive Baptists are that people. But am I one of them? is what I doubt. If I could live as I see them live, or talk as I hear them talk, or could be obedient as I see they are, and as pure as they appear to me, how happy I would be, but sin is mixed with every word and action of my life. I have something to return about almost every moment, and I am continually complaining about something, when I deserve nothing but chastisement,

for it seems if I am a child at all, I am the most disobedient of all. So I would ask you when it goes well with you, to remember me at a throne of grace. I hope that God may strengthen and uphold you, that you may yet for many years contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

Brother Beebe, I do not send this for publication, for it is too much like the writer, good for nothing, but that I wanted to write you how weak and sinful I am, and how much I enjoy reading the SIGNS. So I close.

J. T. EVANS.

LEAD HILL, Ark., Dec. 14, 1902.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—As I have to send my remittance, I desire to write you a few lines and then leave it to your judgment whether to publish or not. I have often desired to write, but felt so lean and unworthy, and felt that the SIGNS could be filled with so much better matter than could come from the pen of poor, unworthy me, I have desisted. But now I want to tell you that I love the SIGNS and its doctrine and its contributors, but I know they as well as myself are but flesh, and liable to err, and there has been some few ideas presented in its columns that I could not fully indorse, and then I think of my own inability to tell or write my views so as to be understood, and that it might be me wrong; then I am more than willing to make the necessary allowance. I want to say that the Baptists here are in peace. The little Zion Association is sound in the faith, and has not been led to deny the sovereignty of God. I think some of the ministers in our corresponding associations have been led to the extreme on the subject of time or temporal salvation, but our brethren believe in salvation by grace, for time and eternity, and that the Scripture that says, Take heed to the doctrine, continue in it, and thou shalt save thyself and them that hear thee, are spoken to the children of God, who are already called with an holy calling, but liable to err and be led into false doctrine, but by continuing in the true docine they will escape the punishment or chastisement due disobedient children. But it is not left to the carnal mind, or Adamic mind of God's children, but it is by the grace, love and mercies of God, who giveth them new hearts, and puts a right spirit in them, and causes them to walk in his statutes, and to keep his judgments, and do them. So it is all of grace.

I dearly love the spirit of love, meekness and forbearance manifested in most of the writings in the SIGNS. I so much enjoyed reading brother Butler's letter, and hope the brethren who are able will do their whole duty. I am poor and in debt, and am left without any help, and since the death of my companion it seems the SIGNS is all the comfort I have, only when with the dear saints.

Yours to serve,

WM. J. CASEY.

UZ, Texas, Nov. 9, 1902.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—If one so unworthy as I should address you thus. I am reminded again that it is time to renew my subscription, and with it I desire to send my appreciation of the editors and to all the household of faith, who write for its columns. I have been a reader of the SIGNS a long time, as was also my father before me, and it seems to contain the same truth it did in my first recollection.

Brother Beebe, in looking over an old number of the SIGNS, April 1st, 1898, I

found one of your dear Father's reprinted editorials on John xiv. 2, 3, which reads, "In my Father's house are many mansions," &c., which I thought worth twice the subscription price, for that has always seemed to be a glorious Scripture to me. O, if I could at all times believe that I was one of that happy number, I could rejoice, but instead I have to go most of the time with my head bowed down on account of my sinful nature. O, that I could live nearer the foot of the cross, and be ever ready to do my Master's will, but I find sin is mixed with all I do or say, so I cannot take one step aright, and I feel to say with the poet, Dear Jesus, "I need thee every hour." O, that he may so guide both the editors and all the writers of our dear family paper, that they may not step aside, nor go astray in this dark and cloudy day. It is such a pleasure among all the sorrows to pick up the dear old SIGNS of long ago and read the writings of all the dear old soldiers of the cross who stood the test, that have long since fallen asleep, and gone home to their reward, and to read the names of those that now have to face the battle. We can only say, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name, O Lord, be all the glory, for we know he will take care of his truth, for he says so in his word.

I have written so much more than I intended, I only aimed to renew my subscription. If you see fit to publish this please correct mistakes.

As ever, your little sister,

S. E. ELLIS.

OXFORD, N. Y., Nov. 7, 1902.

ELDER CHICK—HIGHLY ESTEEMED BROTHER:—I do feel too unworthy to call you brother, but I do love the names brother and sister, and I love to meet with the people of God, they look so good to me, but when with them I feel so little and weak and unworthy, and think if they knew me as I really am, they would not want me with them. I am so wicked and vile, it seems as though there is nothing good in me, or that I can do. I feel to rejoice with the church at Hopewell; so many of the little ones have been coming to the church of late. The colored sister's letter in the SIGNS was so excellent, I felt how much I would like to be there when there was baptism. I have not been to the water since I was baptized. It is a beautiful and solemn place, and I wished so much when I was there last summer that there might be a baptism. I was overjoyed to be permitted to hear so much good preaching, and to meet with so many of the brethren and sisters. How could the Lord bestow so many rich blessings upon such a worthless worm as I? I could not talk to them, as I would have been glad to have done, I had such a feeling of unfitness, my speech was dumb.

Dear Elder Chick, I felt so remorseful after I came home, that I did not get to your home more than I did. You and your family have been so kind to me, and when I was in such distress of mind, you and sister Chick spoke such comforting words to me, they made me feel that perhaps I was not entirely lost. At the time, what little hope had been mine for so many years, was almost gone, and I felt as if I was an outcast and a wanderer on the face of the earth.

There are times, I think, when I feel a sweet peace and assurance that God doeth all things well, and for our comfort, but I cannot always see it. When some earthly trial or disappointment comes, then I am so prone to think that I must change it, that I cannot have it so,

but I find that I cannot change the ways of the Lord, and I do not want to do so, only I wonder why and what such and such things are for. I am often reminded that "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform."

You always seem to have the graces that the Bible speaks of, always trusting in the Lord. It is restful to hear you speak of these things. I feel to write you what is in my mind, and feel sure that you will tell me if it be of the flesh. I cannot help my thoughts on these things.

It was the will of God for me to attend the yearly meeting at Otego, and the Saturday and Sunday meeting after I came home from Hopewell. It was a most excellent meeting, the presence of the Lord seemed to be in the midst. I have had such feasts this summer, far better and more than I deserved. I thought O, if this could only last, but there is nothing lasting in this vain world. [No, not even afflictions or darkness lasts; these have an end as well as the joys of the world. —ED.] Hymn 614, in Beebe's collection, expresses my feeling. As I have been at the meetings, I have thought,

"How sweet and heavenly is the sight,
When those that love the Lord,
In one another's peace delight,
And thus fulfill his word."

The other morning, as I awoke at five o'clock, and was looking out of the window watching for the first ray of light, the thought came to me, How wonderful all this is; at just such a time it is night, and at just such a time it is morning, and all things move on just as ordered, with no change or confusion. I said to my husband, "God said, Let there be light, and there was light." I wish that I could express my mind about it. After breakfast I got the Bible, and read about the Lord making all things, and Adam and Eve, and then I thought, Where was God before this? Did he reign in heaven, before he made the earth? Perhaps I ought not to ask these things even in my mind, and I do not know that it is right for me to wonder about these things, but they have been on my mind for some days, and so this morning I was impressed to write to you, and I have done so. But you have so many letters to write, I feel as though I ought not to burden you with such a letter from me. Cast it one side if you think best, and it will be all right.

This morning I am feeling peaceful, and willing to leave all things to the Lord. I cannot go to meeting to-day, and so will finish this letter, begun several days ago. I thought perhaps that I never would send it, but then I concluded to do so. Now remember me to your daughter, sister Nellie, and to all your family. I hope that Lucy is well by this time. I can almost see you all gathering at the old brick meeting-house as I write this morning. My mind is with you there, though my body is far away. It is for some wise purpose that I can meet with the church only once in a while; remember me to the church. I feel to be one of the least of God's little ones, if one at all. Now I must close.

MARY D. BREWSTER.

[SISTER Brewster asks concerning the existence of Deity before he made the world, and all the visible creation. It is a thought incomprehensible, but yet a truth clearly revealed in the word, that he dwelt alone in his own eternity, supremely blessed in and of himself. It is true that with him there is neither beginning of days, nor end of life. Finite creatures cannot comprehend unending existence, that is, existence which had no beginning and will never cease to be.

Our God is the only self-existent being, and therefore the only eternal being. All things else were created, and began to be. How sublime the little glimpse which we may have of this supreme truth. Let us worship him and him alone, for he is the great and only God and Savior.—ED.]

GILMER, Wash., Jan. 20, 1903.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR SIRS:—Shall I add, brethren in the faith that is of and by Jesus Christ? Inclosed you will please find one dollar, for which send me the SIGNS for six months, and I will send you (D. V.) another dollar six months hence. A good brother gave me some old copies, which have been read and reread many times, and may be again. The subject matter contained in them is so helpful, and verily, "Though dead, the writers yet speak." I do not know I am saved, but trust in the mercy of God. The testimony of the numerous writers in these old copies of the SIGNS coincides with my experience, and is not in harmony with the jargon of those who claim to be able at any time to accept or reject offered salvation. I was born in Scotland, and for many years in Europe, and more recently in America, tried to preach what I honestly believed to be the gospel, but God, as I trust, showed me (while being subjected to a clubbing among the Mission Board Baptists) that salvation is in toto of God; not of him that willeth or runneth. We have a church, as doubtless you are aware, at Goldendale, but no resident preacher. We (i. e.) my wife and I, are associated with the church there, and so much desire to see some good preachers. Brethren, come and locate among us, there are cheap (comparatively) and good farms for sale, and some timber lands open to filing. I would be happy to answer inquiries from brethren desiring homes in a healthy and productive country, where a minister of the gospel of grace is very much needed. But he would require to be one who is willing to suffer reproach for Christ's sake, and also able to minister to his own temporal necessity.

Kindly send me the SIGNS, beginning with the first issue in the current month, if convenient. May add that I am about fifty-five miles from the place of our church meeting, being located in a dairying and stock raising country. Please address,

ALEXANDER CHEYNE.

GILMER, Klickitat Co., Washington.

FOWLER, Colo., Dec. 25, 1902.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—I here inclose money order for two dollars, for which please give me credit to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for another year. It seems as though we could not get along without the dear old SIGNS, as they contain most all of the preaching we hear. We went out near Lamar, to meeting, the 26th of October; brother Wm. C. Perdue and brother Nalls both preached very comforting sermons, or at least they were comforting to me. The brethren and sisters that I met at the church there seemed to be good sound Baptists; all that I talked with seemed to give God all of the praise and glory, and say if they are ever saved it will be a gift from God, not by any good works that they have done. This little church near Lamar, I speak of visiting, is some eighty-five or ninety miles from where we live. Now I do not know of any Old School Baptist living nearer than twenty-five miles of here. There are two at Rocky Ford, that are members of the church, and two or three that believe in

the Primitive Baptist doctrine, living there, but that is twenty-three or twenty-five miles from here. There is one brother at Lajunta, Colo., that is forty-five or fifty miles from here; his name is H. E. Thomson, I think. Brother Beebe, I would be glad if I could send you one or more new subscribers, but cannot, as there is no Baptist of our belief in this part of the country. I hope if it be the Lord's will that you may be spared yet for many years, and be permitted to still print the dear old paper.

Please pray for me.

SARAH E. HIGBIE.

FORDYCE, Ark., Dec. 25, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I send you herewith money order for four dollars, for which please place to my credit on subscription. I want to say to you, brother Beebe, that I fully indorse the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have had a name among the Primitive Baptists about seven years. I have taken the SIGNS ever since I joined the church, and to me they are one of the most welcome visitors to my home. I look as anxiously for my SIGNS as I would for the return of some member of my family. In fact, it is one of my comforters; it does my poor soul good to see the riches of God's grace so ably set forth by the editors and correspondents, for there is one thing certain, nothing but God's grace will do us any good. I am glad you are republishing the editorials of your father; I do love to read them, they are exactly the same as what the present editors are contending for, and the same thing that the Old Baptists of this country have ever held to and loved. Then my dear brother, let me say to you as our beloved Paul said to the Galatian brethren, "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Seek not to please men, for you cannot serve God and man at the same time. If you please man you are enmity against God. I am glad the SIGNS has stood aloof from these things; I feel sure the Lord is with you, and he is the strength of your life, and all of your salvation. So fear not what men and devils say or do, for if God be for you, who can be against you, my dear brother? Our blessed Savior has overcome the world, then be of good cheer, be not dismayed, for Jesus has promised to be with us even unto the end. I will here cease.

I am, I hope, your brother,

V. R. HARRIS.

TOLBERT, Texas, Dec. 5, 1902.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—As it is time for us to send our remittance for the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I will say, although times are very close financially in this country, we do not feel willing to do without the paper that advocates the doctrine of God our Savior, as we believe. There are a few of us out here in Wilbarger Co., Texas, that love the doctrine, though there are some that claim to be Baptists that do not indorse the doctrine of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. But we can feast on no other doctrine but such as gives God all power, honor and glory.

We have organized a little church out here, and will welcome all sound Baptists that feel a desire to unite with us, or visit us, though we hardly expect to be without persecution, but that is a part of our inheritance in this life, so we should not murmur. It seems to me that the SIGNS has been well filled with interesting matter this year, but I cannot detect any difference in the doctrine it advocates

now and the doctrine advocated by your dear father in the books of his editorials. We have both volumes, and have read and reread them many times, to our comfort and consolation, and if it is our heavenly Father's will, may you long live to wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon. Please remember the poor and weak of the flock at a throne of grace, of which we feel to be the least of them all, if indeed one at all. Love to the household of faith scattered abroad.

(MRS.) LIZZIE CAMPBELL.

BYRNSIDE, W. Va., Feb. 15, 1903.

BROTHER B. L. BEEBE:—It is through the providence of God I am spared to send you my remittance for the SIGNS another year, and in doing so I wish to bid you God speed. The apostle said, If any come unto you and bring not this doctrine, not to bid him God speed, but I find the same doctrine in the SIGNS that I do in the Bible, so I feel to say, dear brother, go on declaring nothing else for salvation but Christ, and him crucified. That is good enough for God's people. There is no danger of their being lost in time or eternity, if they are blessed with the disposition to trust in grace. The grace system is good enough for us.

My brother, I do not know how I would get along without the SIGNS; I have no disposition to try it. I have not seen a Baptist that did not indorse the expression of the Fort Worth Council. They say it is what they believe, and what the Baptists have believed and preached as far back as any of them can remember, and I am sure it will bear investigation in the light of the Scriptures. Brother Beebe, God has blessed us to that extent that we have not been bothered with conditionalism very alarmingly, and we feel to thank God we have brethren eagle-eyed enough to detect it, and have enough of the grace of God in their hearts to expose it.

Dear brother, I do not want to weary you any more. Your brother I hope,

JOEL STANLEY.

P. S.—I will send you one dollar to help release the SIGNS from debt, as I love them. J. S.

CLINTON, N. J., Dec. 20, 1902.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR AND BELOVED BRETHREN:—As my pay for the SIGNS expires the first of next month, I send you money order to renew for another year. When I sent you last little did I think that I would be here to send this, as I am passing along in my eighty-eighth year. But I do not know the Lord's will. He rules all things well. When I look over my past life and see how I have been spared, and the blessings that I have enjoyed, I do not know how to feel thankful enough, for it is all of him that has all power in heaven, rules all things upon the earth. He does his own good pleasure, and none can stay his hand. I am a poor traveler here below, and what I am 'tis hard to know. At times I am so low down in the dark that I fear that I have not been born again, but when light springs up then I think that it was best so, or I would not prize the light so much.

I must say to you, dear friends, that I enjoy the SIGNS so much, for I do not get out to meeting very often, as the drive of twelve miles is too severe. So the SIGNS is precious to me, and it is filled with such good reading I think the editors, and those who write for the SIGNS, are so able to write, that I wish they may be spared a long time to publish the SIGNS.

Yours as ever,

MAHLON HULSIZER.

GREENWOOD, Colo., Dec. 27, 1902.

BRETHREN EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I hope you will pardon me for even attempting to write to you. I read your paper, the SIGNS, with delight and much pleasure, it all seems to correspond and harmonize with the language of Canaan. It is edifying to the little, feeble ones of God. Yes, they must have nourishment, such as wine, milk and honey. This is nourishing and delicious food for the little, weak and tender lambs.

Please pardon me, I only meant to renew my subscription.

I must say a word for brother W. D. Ons. He came from Illinois to Colorado, and found our little church in a ruined condition; he went to work and put it on its feet again. I never can get done thanking him for what he did for Zion's cause.

Brethren, if you think I am not trespassing too much, I ask to be remembered at a throne of grace. Sincerely yours, as ever,

M. J. DUNCAN.

HOPLAND, Cal., Dec. 15, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Will you please send the SIGNS to Hopland, instead of Ukiah, if you feel that you can send it any longer? It is the only preaching I ever hear. I have not heard a gospel sermon for seven years. I feel almost starved to hear the blessed gospel sound again. I just feel like I was lost in the wilderness, and knew not where to go for comfort. I feel that although I am cast down, that I am not entirely forsaken; although often discouraged. But, dear brethren, I feel that all our sorrows and trials in this sinful world are to wean us from the world and its people, that our thoughts may be more heavenward. Some time, if the Lord wills, I will try to write a few lines for our dear paper. I feel too sad and cast down at present.

I hope to meet dear brother Polk, of San Francisco, soon as my health will permit him to come.

Your lonely sister, I hope,

(MRS.) S. J. GAINER.

SMITHSHIRE, Ill., Dec. 19, 1902.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Inclosed find two dollars, for which please continue the SIGNS to me, at my address as above, for another year.

It seems to me that it is both a privilege and a duty for the scattered few of our order to speak words of cheer and encouragement to each other on all suitable occasions; therefore I will say, as a representative of those of our family that have known and loved your paper for many years, that we feel it to be still up to the high standard of literary and spiritual excellence set for it by its founder. For my own part, I find much in the paper suited to my own humble needs. I wish especially to commend an article written by yourself, entitled "The Cup of Salvation," "Fragments," and the editorials, generally. But where there are so many good things it is impossible to mention all.

We would be most glad to inclose a check for one hundred dollars to apply on the one thousand dollar indebtedness, but we are not situated financially so as to do more than keep our subscription paid up promptly.

Yours in christian love,

GRACE VEECH SMITH.

EAGLE, Ont., Dec. 15, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER:—We are so pleased with the reading which the SIGNS contains. It is one of my great comforts to read or listen to preaching which gives

God all the power and all the glory. It is our happy privilege to have a pastor, brother Carnell, who preaches the gospel in its purity, as our dear departed pastor, Elder Pollard, did. It has been my privilege to hear brother Chick, and much enjoyed his preaching. I hope the dear brethren and sisters will continue to write. Brother Scates' last letter was a feast, also brother Young's experience, and many others who write. I hope you will be long spared to publish the SIGNS.

Your sister,

CHRISTINA MURAY.

RICHMOND, Ind., Dec. 13, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed find a money order for five dollars on SIGNS' debt, also two dollars for renewal of subscription.

The good Lord has preserved my life, as unprofitable as it has been, eighty-one years. I always thought as I would grow older, I would improve and get better, but as the time passed away I found myself doing the very things I thought not to do, and leaving the things undone I should do.

We have taken the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES in our family ever since its first numbers, and if there is any change in it we think it only for the better. Now hoping you a long life of usefulness, your brother,

HENRY STIGLEMAN.

INFORMATION WANTED.

WILL some brother of the Primitive Baptist Association please send me the address of the clerk of that association? as I have a file of minutes and a letter of correspondence from the Big Creek Association to send for distribution among the churches of that body.

ASA HOWARD.

SNYDER, Texas.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Mrs. S. E. Ellis having changed her address from Uz, Texas, to Forestburg, Montague Co., Texas, requests her correspondents to address her at the latter place.

Mrs. J. D. Gainer having changed her address from Ukiah, Cal., to Hopland, Mendocino Co., Cal., requests her correspondents to address her at the latter place.

POETRY.

CLOSING HYMN.

THE time draws near when we must part,
My brethren in the Lord;
O, may we e'er be joined in heart,
And trust God's holy word.

Perhaps we never more shall meet,
While in this world we stay;
O, may we lie at Jesus' feet,
And watch and praise and pray.

I entreat you all to pray for me,
My brethren in the Lord,
That I may ever faithful be,
And trust God's holy word.

If e'er I reach that peaceful shore,
I hope to meet you there,
To sing God's praise forever more,
And love without a fear.

There we shall know as we are known,
And with our Savior be,
Dwell where his brightness will be known
To all eternity.

No sorrows there to make us sigh,
No tears bedew the face,
But each enraptured soul will cry,
Lord, we are saved by grace.

It shall the greatest wonder be,
My brethren, if I'm there;
If grace can reach unworthy me,
Who is it that need fear?

Lord, in thy book of life and grace,
O, may I find my name
Recorded in some humble place
Before my Lord the Lamb.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1903.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PSALM XXII. 6.

BROTHER S. S. Cox, of Blake, Texas, asks for some thoughts upon the sixth verse of the twenty-second Psalm, which reads, "But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people."

There can be no doubt that this whole Psalm primarily refers to the humiliation of the suffering Savior. The opening words of the Psalm clearly show this, for they were the words of the dying Redeemer on the cross, as recorded in the gospels by the evangelists. To our mind there is no doubt also that David wrote out of the experience of his own heart and life. He did not write these or any of the words of the Psalms as an unfeeling and unconscious pen records words at the will of the writer, but as one who lived and felt all that he wrote, and thus wrote out of the fullness of his own heart. But in writing of what he himself felt, God so moved in him, and upon him, that he also wrote what was true of the suffering Savior. And the words of the text, to which our special attention has been called, sets forth the deep humiliation of him who was the Lord of life and glory. In the sight of men he became as worthless as a worm. The wonderful fifty-third chapter of Isaiah sets forth the same things. There it is also said, "He was despised, and we esteemed him not." And "he was despised and rejected of men." All this shame and humiliation culminated on the cross of Calvary. The cross was reserved as the fate of the worst of criminals, and for slaves and conquered people, by the Roman power. A Roman citizen must not be crucified. Jesus met the death of the meanest of men, in company with two thieves, as we read in the gospels. How fitting then was this language, "But I am a worm and no man. A reproach of men, and despised of the people."

While this language describes especially the bleeding and crucified Redeemer, there also comes to the heart and conscience of all who feel the guilt and burden of sin, a similar humiliation. These are all made to feel that there is no place fit for them in heaven or earth, among the children of men or the children of God. They feel that if men of the world even, knew them, they would be despised, and that the people of God must despise them, and count them but worms of the dust, and certainly they count themselves less than nothing and vanity. The only thing which can comfort their hearts, and give them assurance of acceptance with that God against whom they have sinned, is the atonement wrought out upon Calvary, as said before. In Jesus these worms are exalted and made to rejoice, and in him they live as the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, and it is through this depth that they all must come to be at the last thus exalted. Thus also they are prepared to exalt sovereign grace, and to always abase the creature. These are the true "circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and

have no confidence in the flesh." Thus they come into fellowship with David, and with the sufferings and humiliation of the blessed Redeemer. Thus they are prepared to sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the Lamb, and to say, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory for ever and ever. C.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A BROTHER asks the following questions, and desires a reply through the SIGNS. In replying we can only give our judgment and some general reflections, which ought to be tested by all who read, and compared with the word of God, by which all our thoughts ought to be tested. When such questions are asked as we believe from an honest motive, we do not believe that it would be right for us to withhold such light as we have. Still we feel to speak with diffidence at all times.

Question first. Do the Scriptures anywhere show where deacons officiated in the work of constituting churches, or of ordaining ministers and deacons? If not, why should they be used now?

First, we will say that in the Scriptures of the New Testament, which must alone be our guide in all things, there is no record so far as we have been able to find, of any special form being observed in what is called the organization of any churches. It seems that the apostles and evangelists traveled into all places where the Lord called them, baptizing such as believed, and ordaining elders among them, to feed them, and to take the oversight of them. In the last six verses of the second chapter of the Acts, we have the record of the establishment of the first gospel church at Jerusalem. And there all that was required was that first, the word should be preached; second, that it should be gladly received; third, that they that gladly received it should be baptized; fourth, that they then should continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers. After this we read of the travels of the apostles in all the country round about, and of churches at Rome, Corinth, and in many other places, but in all that is said, there is no record of any formality being used in establishment of the churches, save what has been already quoted from second chapter of Acts, neither is any set rule laid down anywhere in the epistles, so far as we have been able to see. It would seem to be enough that a body of people anywhere first believe, and if not baptized before coming together in any place, then to be baptized by some minister appointed of God, and from that time live together in fellowship, as the people of God ought to live. The example of the apostles would seem to show that pastors and officers such as deacons, should be chosen among the people thus brought together in the church, to attend to the spiritual and temporal affairs of the church. This the church must do for herself. The church is then in a state to attend to whatever may devolve upon her in her future travel. It is our judgment that when any called and qualified servant of God finds a body of believers in any place, it is his right and duty to baptize them when they desire it, and to see that they are set in order as a church of Christ, instructing them in all things needful. It seems needless to say that great care should be exercised by any minister in such a case, that all be done to the glory of God. And if any church be near by, it ought to be the case that members of that church be called upon to be present,

and to witness what is done, and to give approval to that which is right. This ought to be, because thus all cause of suspicion would be taken away, and the new church would have the countenance of these brethren, and would thus come more readily into the fellowship and confidence of all the other churches.

As regards the last part of the question, we can only say that we know of no instance recorded in the Scriptures where deacons were called upon to take part in the ordination of a minister of the word. It is our judgment that the presbytery ought to consist of ministers who have themselves been properly ordained. It must not be forgotten that God alone can call and qualify men to preach the gospel, and that in ordination the church and presbytery only make manifest the fact that they recognize that this or that man is called of God to this work.

Question second. If a church should receive one into her body by experience and baptism, and after a few years such an one should be convinced that he had never undergone a change, and should ask another church to rebaptize him, what would be the duty of the church in such a case?

We have known personally of one such case, and the brother at his own request was baptized again in another church. We think that this was right. But we will say that the first church, if still in existence as a church, ought to be communicated with, and all the circumstances made known to them, to the end that there be no room for suspicion that the first church is considered by the second church as being wrong, or that her acts are invalid. The Bible teaches believers' baptism, and if a man has been convinced that he was not a true believer when he was first baptized, it is his duty and his right as a believer to be baptized, but great care ought to be exercised in all cases. And great care ought to be exercised also when one desires what may be called second baptism, lest after all he be under the stress of temptation in coming to believe that he was not a true believer when baptized at the first. Satan has many ways of assailing the people of God, therefore all should act with caution in all such cases.

The substance of the third question is as to what ought to be done when one has been ordained to the ministry of the word, and afterward it is discovered that he was not in order at the time of his ordination, and that there was unfaithfulness in the church that had him ordained, and also in the presbytery. Would such work be in order? This question seems so broad and covers so much ground that we do not know how to give a direct reply. Each such case would differ in some things from every other. Probably there are few ordinations where some flaw might not be picked out, either in the church, presbytery or candidate, but our opinion is that nothing afterward could be done to undo what had been done. If the work was evil, it will come to naught of itself. Such a man thus ordained will soon be seen to be of no profit, and his field will soon become narrow or cease to exist altogether. Such things are painful, but it seems to us must be borne until God gives relief, after he has wrought repentance in those who have done wrong. Probably in most cases greater harm would result in trying to undo what has been done, than in suffering the wrong. Above all things let nothing be done hastily, or through strife or vain glory.

The brother who asks these questions mentioned no particular circumstances which were in his mind, and what we

have written is written without having any particular cases in our mind. Did we know of any special case, we would feel to hesitate about writing at all, lest we should appear to be taking sides with some one against some one else.

C.

CORRECTION.

In reading the article in last number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, in regard to Elder Fisher, please omit the last paragraph. Just as we were going to press last issue, we found among the mail matter on our desk, a copy of "Cayce's paper," still in the wrapper, and upon opening it we found several columns occupied by Elder Fisher, and supposing it of course was the latest number we added the last paragraph, but we have since discovered that the paper was a back number sent us by some one, and hasten to make this correction. And as the last paragraph is merely an annex to the main article, and does not enter into the merits of the case one way or the other, please omit it.

All who have written us upon the subject have expressed their approval of our publishing the article, and Elder Chick writes, "You are at liberty to say that I approve of your course regarding Elder Fisher, notwithstanding my general objection to bringing such personal matters into the SIGNS."

B.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO BROTHER D. M. LEONARD'S APPEAL TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$619 10
C. M. Bird, W. Va., $1.00; Wm. Hance, Ohio, $1.00; Elder Joel Stanley, W. Va., $1.00; Mrs. John Pettit, N. Y., $3.00; Nancy Bragg, Mich., $2.00.—Total	8 00
Total to date	$627 10

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ROMANS V. 18–21.

"THEREFORE, as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord."

REPLY.

In a preceding verse of this chapter, Paul has said that Adam is the figure of him that was to come, and in all the subsequent verses of this chapter, shows wherein Adam is the figure. If we have rightly understood the Parkerite doctrine of *Two Seeds*, it represents that all who were created and embodied in the earthly Adam, were the elect of God, and that the non-elect were added to the human family by the multiplying of the sorrow and conception of our mother Eve. Taking Adam as the figure of Christ, and Eve as the figure of the Church of God, or of that Jerusalem which is free and is the mother of us all, the Parkerite position would contradict the import of Paul's allegory, (Gal. iv. 22–28,) and make Jerusalem the mother of all the ungodly. But it should not be forgotten that Eve is Adam. "This is the Book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created."—Gen. v. 1, 2. "And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh."—Gen. ii. 23. Consequently it is impossible that Eve could be the mother of any but the children of

Adam. If they were her children, and she is Adam developed, then are they unavoidably the children of Adam. But this wild speculation is annihilated by the sweeping declarations of Paul at Athens, that God "Hath made of one blood all the nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth."—Acts xvii. 26. Also that the saints at Ephesus and faithful in Christ Jesus, were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. (Eph. ii. 3.) Again: If Adam in his creation had embodied the church of God, as the holy seed, and that seed exclusively, then instead of being the figure of him that was to come, he would have been him that was to come. For that seed is Christ. (Gal. iii. 16.) But we will give our sister what we understand to be the true sense of the Scripture submitted. Adam, as the figure of him that was to come, was set up in his creation as the embodiment and seminal head of all the human race, and in him their name is Adam. By the decree to multiply and replenish the earth, Adam is multiplied or developed in peopling all the nations of the earth, and no less Adam in their multiplication, than when embodied in him they ate the forbidden fruit. Consequently by the offence of Adam as a unit, the guilt of that offence attaches to Adam as multiplied, expanded or developed, and hence the judgment, which is perfectly just, came upon all men. As all sinned in Adam, before any of the race were born, so judgment came upon all which were to be born unto condemnation. Death passed upon all, because all have sinned. Thus as a union and identity of life in the earthly Adam involved all the posterity of man in guilt, condemnation and death, so a vital union and identity of all the spiritual family of God, with Christ as their seminal Head and Mediatorial representative, secures to all the spiritual seed an interest in that free gift, which includes justification of life. As the earthly Adam embodied all the earthly posterity, so the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven, embodies all the children of God. All mankind, elect and non-lect, sinned in the earthly Adam; judgment came on them to condemnation; death passed on them all, and in him they all die. And after the same figure or similitude, all the children of God, by virtue of that eternal life which was given them in Christ Jesus, before the foundation of the world, are partakers of his righteousness, his life and immortality in due time.

As children of the earthly Adam, we are brought into manifestation in our individuality by ordinary generation, in which our life, which was given us in Adam, is communicated to us personally by being born of the flesh; so all the family of God, chosen and set apart, and set up in Christ, are brought into manifestation as a spiritual seed, by extraordinary generation, or what the Scriptures denominate *re*-generation, in which they are born again, not (as in their earthly birth) of a corruptible seed; but of incorruptible seed, by the word of the Lord which liveth and abideth forever. As all the progeny of the earthly Adam are begotten and born of the flesh in the image of the earthly progenitor, so all the children of God are born again, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; and in the new and spiritual birth they receive that life, experimentally communicated to them personally, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began; and by which they bear the image of their heavenly progenitor. As mem-

bers of the earthly Adam we are depraved, guilty, condemned, and under death, which has passed on us in common with all men; but as members of Christ, we are made partakers of the divine nature, (2 Peter i. 4,) and freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." By what law, either human or divine, could many be made sinners by the disobedience of one, except it be upon the ground of federal identity? The mere imputation of the consequences of sin to those who have not actually sinned, would make them sufferers, but not sinners. It is not then on the principle that the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge; for the text says expressly that many were made sinners. And sin is the transgression of law. We must therefore conclude that all the human family, as they stood in Adam, at the time of the transgression, constituted that one man, and as a unit committed the disobedience, and their multiplication by generation could not release them from the guilt. They were made sinners simultaneously by one act. And those who are not yet born were made sinners by the same act, and at the same time, and death passed upon them all, because they were and are all sinners.

Even so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Those who, as the children of God, sustain the same spiritual and immortal union to Christ, in their spiritual life, as all mankind do to the first Adam in their natural life, were in Christ, when he, as their Mediatorial Head and embodiment, rendered perfect obedience to every jot and tittle of the demands of the law and divine justice. The vital relationship and identity of Christ and his church was such that all who were embodied in him when he fulfilled the law, were made legally righteous in him, the same as all who were embodied in the earthly Adam were made sinners in him in his trangression. Thus the apostle seems to present the subject of atonement, when he says in the tenth verse of this chapter, "For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Christ died on Calvary some eighteen hundred years before the present generation were born, but at that time, though unborn, we were enemies to God, for we were enemies from the time we sinned in Adam, but when Christ died we were reconciled to God by his death. And not only so, but we joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. The atonement or reconciliation though actually made by the obedience of one, we had not received experimentally until now, that is, until born again, and made to joy in God through Jesus Christ our Lord. And this obedience of the one, shall assuredly be applied in due time to all who were represented in him in his death and resurrection. For he was delivered for our offences, and was raised for our justification. "Moreover, the law entered that the offence might abound." Although the die was cast, we had sinned, and judgment had come upon us to condemnation, and death had passed on us all, from the time of our transgression in Adam, yet the law entered to show our alienation from holiness, and the deep depravity of our nature, that sin might appear, as it truly is, exceeding sinful.

Thus the law was added, because of transgression, not as a minister of life, but as the administrator of death. That every mouth might be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God. Not that the law is the cause of our guilt, but the detecter of it. It weighs us in the balance and pronounces us guilty. As an illustration of the idea, let the christian look to his own experience, and, with Paul, he will say, I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, or the law entered, sin revived, showed itself, and abounded in us, and we were slain. We found that by its deeds we could not be justified in the sight of God. If a law had been given that could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law; but instead of life we found that as many as were of the works of the law were under the curse. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. We could never so fully appreciate the abounding grace of God in our salvation if we were unconscious of any other guilt attaching to us than that of originally eating of the forbidden fruit. But the Law entered, saying, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," &c., "and thy neighbor as thyself;" and we found we were guilty of the whole law. We had not loved God with any part of our heart, nor had we loved our neighbor as ourselves. The entrance of the law brings sin to light. "I had not known sin, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." But now that sin is discovered in all its damning power, how greatly is the grace of God exalted which swells above our folly and our guilt.

"That as sin hath reigned unto death," by the disobedience of one, or by our disobedience in Adam, death having passed on us in that disobedience, "Even so might grace reign, through righteousness," or through the obedience of one, "unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." As by our union and identity with the earthly Adam we are sinners, condemned and slain; even so, by virtue of a vital union with that second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven, we are made righteous, and the free gift comes on us to justification of life.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., April 15, 1860.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at the bride's residence, Jan. 28th, 1903, Charles T. Bunn, of Pennington, N. J., and Miss Clara E. Reed, of Hopewell, N. J.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, at his residence, Feb. 9th, 1903, Cyrus S. McAthran and Miss Maggie Allen, both of Columbus, Ohio.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, near New Church, Va., Feb. 15th, 1903, Albert Hart and Miss Alice Kilman.

By the same, at the same time and place, Sidney Bundicks and Miss Nora B. Justice.

MEMORIAL.

IN the providence of God we are called upon to mourn the loss of one of our most worthy and beloved members, a father in Israel, one beloved by us all, a valuable member to this church, and an honored citizen to this community.

Brother **William Lewis Nance** was born near this city, in 1817, and died on the night of the 26th of October, 1902, in his 86th year, after a life of great usefulness to the church of his choice, and to his fellow men. We are certainly sorely afflicted in the loss of our good brother, and we pray God to give us his grace to sustain us in this our calamity. Brother Nance was born of noble stock, his ancestry being of the kind that built up and developed the country, and assisted in making it the greatest nation ever known. He was the last of a large family of brothers and sisters. In his early life coming into the city of Nashville, from his home in the country, he was apprenticed to the brick-making business, and continued in that business the greater part of his life, and many monuments to his skill and ability as a thorough and honest mechanic are to be seen in our midst. He had the most implicit faith in the Scriptures, not doubting the least passage (if there are any small parts of the same). He was an able expounder of the word, having applied himself to the study of the same to great profit to himself and the body to

which he was attached. It seems the Lord had endowed him with talents to understand his word and to expound it to the edification of his people. Brother Nance was never ordained to the ministry, but by some it was thought his talents were of such an order the church would have been justified in setting him aside to the ministry. He possessed the useful gifts of singing, praying and exhorting, and those gifts were never neglected, but used when he had an opportunity to use them. Surely we have sustained a great loss in the death of brother Nance, and we trust the good Lord will cause his mantle to fall upon the shoulders of some worthy person in order that this church may be edified and built up thereby. While our loss has been so very great, we feel that his gain has been much the greater, and that the Lord has not been slack concerning his promise to save those who diligently seek him for salvation.

Farewell, dear brother Nance, for a while only, we hope, for we live in the hope of once more meeting you on the shores of eternal happiness, where we shall join you in rendering praises to God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, in a world of eternal bliss.

To the widow, and those who mourn their loss in the flesh, we extend our heartfelt condolence, and urge them to worship and serve the God that brother Nance so much loved and served, and may they in the morning of the resurrection be found with the redeemed and glorified, together with brother Nance, rendering praises to that God who has redeemed them from all iniquity, and made them worthy a place near the throne of God and the Lamb for ever.

The church at this place is made desolate by the loss of such a useful member, but if we put our trust in God, all will be well, though at present our prospects are very dark and gloomy. Let us, brethren, all trust in the God whom brother Nance so delighted to serve, and may we all meet brother Nance in that bright world where there is no more sickness, sorrow, suffering and death, but one eternal day of happiness.

Done in conference Saturday before the third Sunday in December, 1902.

J. K. WOMACK, Moderator.

C. L. BUCHANAN, Clerk.

PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, UNIVERSITY ST., NASHVILLE, Tenn.

AGAIN the reaper of death has been busy in our little flock, and has thrust his sickle amongst us and cut down one of our members and removed from our midst our dear brother **Edward D. Wright,** who was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for twenty odd years. Brother Wright was born in this city, in February, 1847, and was therefore in his 56th year when he was called home, we trust and believe, to heaven and immortal glory. Brother Wright possessed to a great degree the gift of exhortation, and was endowed with the understanding of the Scriptures, and understood the letter and spirit of the same. He was a man rugged, honest and plain spoken, and open in his dealings with his fellow men. He was firmly established in the faith once delivered to the saints, being a strong believer in the doctrine of predestination and election, and the final perseverance of the saints. Let us strive to emulate the virtues of our departed brother, and throw the mantle of charity over his faults, for none of us are perfect. There is none good but God. We will ever cherish the memory of our departed brother, and hope it may be our happy lot to meet with brother Wright around the throne of God, and sing with him loud hallelujahs to him who has loved us and redeemed us, and made us kings and priests unto God, and may we reign with him for ever and ever. Amen.

We extend to his widow and relatives our heartfelt sympathy in their bereavement and great loss, and exhort them to put their trust in that God whom brother Wright served, and we feel that after this life has ended with them, they will have a habitation with the just, and meet their departed in the realms of eternal bliss, where they will praise God throughout a never ending eternity.

Done in conference Saturday before the third Sunday in December, 1902.

J. K. WOMACK, Moderator.

C. L. BUCHANAN, Church Clerk.

PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, UNIVERSITY ST., NASHVILLE, Tenn.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At her home near the village of Dutton, Ontario, Nov. 8, 1902, after nine days illness, of pleuro pneumonia, our dear sister **Jennie**, beloved wife of Mr. Dougald **Blue**, in the fortieth year of her age. She was a daughter of the late Malcolm and Janet Campbell, and a granddaughter of the late Elder Thomas McColl.

At the time of her father's death, about thirteen years ago, she was brought very low, and was very despondent in her mind; she thought that she was soon to die, and we thought, Shall we also have to part with our dear Jennie? But her days were more on earth. She would not say anything to us but, "I am going to die." She felt entirely deserted of her Lord, and said, "No promise is for such as I." She remained in that low state of mind for about two weeks, when the words came forcibly to her mind, "Blessed are they in God's house, that mourn." From that time, she began to improve in health, though still of fearful mind, lest those words were not for her. But I believe they were from the Lord who watched over her, and gave her strength as her day. Many times she mourned over her sinful state by nature. Though naturally of a cheerful disposition, yet she was of a contrite heart, and there were not many times, when hearing the preaching of the gospel, but what she would weep, though she tried

not to attract notice, and she never became a member of the visible church.

About one year ago she was in great distress of mind; so much so that she could not perform her work. She went to her room, and threw herself on her bed, when the words came sweetly and forcibly to her mind, "Be still, and know that I am God." She felt the burden removed from her soul, and she rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory. She told her husband that these sweet words were from the Lord, as she felt. When her last sickness came, I think that she felt that it was unto death, but for her dear husband's and child's sake she battled hard for life until about four days before she died, when she sent for her pastor, Elder Carnell, whom she dearly loved. She told him that she felt to be a great sinner. She could not talk very much, owing to shortness of breath. At another time, when he came in, she said, "Elder, I am not afraid to die." And, "O, I am so tired, I want to go to rest." As she sent for her sisters, and brothers, and the Elder, we all felt that she could be with us but a few hours, but suddenly she turned to her husband and said, "Do not cry any more, for I am going to get better; something tells me that I am going to be better." And for a few hours she was apparently easier. She said to me, "If I do get better, I will know no more than I did, when I was well." Yes, I said, you will Jennie; perhaps the Lord has brought you down to death's door to reveal his power in your soul.

Shortly after that the enemy came in like a flood, and she sank in deep waters, and would say, "Pray for me, I have deceived Elder Carnell and you all." "There is nothing in me." O, Lord appear unto me once more." "He has hidden his face from me forever" But in his own time he once more dispelled the gloom, and she then said, "The Lord is coming." Then she added, "No more pain, no more sorrow." Then she said to her companion, "I leave you and Mary Bell, her little girl, in the Lord's hands." When asked if she felt Jesus to be precious she said, "Yes." She asked her cousin John T. Kerr to sing. He sang, "The hour of my departure's come." Her husband then asked if he should sing more, but the hour had come, and thus he changed the visage, and gathered back the breath. While it is hard to give her up, yet we should remember God has taken her from us. May the Lord heal the wounds which he has inflicted, and bind up the broken hearts, and confirm the faith of the bereaved ones.

The funeral service was conducted by her pastor, at the residence. The text was, "They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy." The interment was in Fairview cemetery. There her body will rest, till he bids it arise, a spiritual body crowned with glory.

I should have added that she leaves, beside her husband and daughter, five sisters and two brothers, to mourn their loss. Your sister,

MRS. JOHN McPHAIL.

William Ferguson was born August 4th, 1820, in Union Co., Indiana; moved with his parents to Boon Co., Ind., when thirteen years old; moved to Mahaska Co., Iowa, in 1848. Had lived on the farm where he died forty-four years. Was married to Elizabeth Cox, Sept. 8th, 1842. To this union was born two sons and four daughters, one daughter dying in infancy, the others living to manhood and womanhood. Brother Ferguson united with Ebenezer Church of Primitive Baptists, in Mahaska Co., Iowa, the fourth Sunday in August, 1857, and remained a member of said church until his death, which occurred Jan. 21st, 1903, making his age 82 years 5 months and 20 days. Brother Ferguson was a strong believer in the sovereignty of God, and salvation by grace, having no use for the inventions of man, firm in his convictions, outspoken in his manner, and when in good health attended his meetings and the associations, so that he had a wide circle of friends, and will be greatly missed, especially by the members of his home church. Myself and wife had been on a visit for a month, and were on the train preparatory to making him a visit, when the message to attend his funeral was received.

The funeral took place at his home at 11 o'clock, Jan. 23d, after which he was laid to rest in the Belfountain Cemetery, to await the summons when the bodies of the saints shall be raised in the likeness of their blessed Redeemer.

WM. J. REEVES.

OUR dear brother **Elder James Murphy,** was born June 24th, 1833, and died at his home in Randolph Co., W. Va., Jan. 30th, 1903. He was a son of Elder David Murphy and Hester Knotts Murphy. He was united in marriage to Mary Stansbary, May 13th, 1851, who survives him, There were born unto them thirteen children, nine girls and four boys, four girls and three boys still living, all members of the Primitive Baptists, except the two youngest boys. The oldest son is an ordained minister. Our deceased brother united with the Little Bethel Church, in March, 1854, and was granted liberty to exercise his gift by way of preaching, August 20th, 1871, and ordained June 22d, 1872, and called to the pastoral care of the Leading Creek Church, Dec. 26th, 1885, filling the vacancy of his father. He was a most faithful and humble servant of that church, although he was greatly afflicted with rheumatism, yet he hardly ever failed to fill his seat. He used a crutch to enable him to get about, and has been for a number of years unable to walk at all, yet he went and preached, the brethren and friends carrying him from his horse to the church. They had an office chair at the church where he was pastor, but when he visited other churches they would take the writing desk in the pulpit, and then sit the dear old afflicted brother on it, and then he would preach for an hour or an hour and a half, until he was almost exhausted, and his

expressions were in harmony with the apostle Paul when he said, "I am determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified," and gave all praise and honor to his God's great name. His family notified me of his sickness, and requested me to come, which I did, and remained with him several days. He suffered untold misery, yet bore it with great patience, and begged the Lord for mercy, and then would say, "Bless the Lord." His family was very kind to him, and did all that they could for his comfort. I returned home, and in a few days received a message to attend his funeral. I tried to speak from Ephesians ii. 8, 9, which was his selection. The funeral took place Sunday, Feb. 1, and notwithstanding the rough weather, there was a very large crowd present. His remains were laid to rest in the graveyard near the church, where he had so long served as pastor, there to await the morning of the resurrection.

S. A. CLEAVENGER.

PHILIPPI, W. Va.

MEETINGS.

TO THE CHURCHES COMPOSING THE SCIOTA ASSOCIATION.

THURSTON, Ohio, Jan. 24, 1903.

According to a call meeting of the Moderator of the Sciota Association, the following named churches were represented:

Pleasant Run—I. E. Rowles.
Walnut Creek—M. F. Taylor and G. W. Peters.
Friendship—Dr. F. L. Taylor.
Clinton—Frank Matthews.
Turkey Run—Elder T. E. Cole.
Laurel—Elder G. N. Tusing.

1st. On motion, I. E. Rowles was chosen clerk, *pro tem.*

2nd. The moderator, Elder G. N. Tusing, stated why he had called the messengers together, namely: that Richards Run Church has positively refused to entertain the next association as agreed upon, and the meeting was called to select another place to convene.

3rd. When opportunity was given for remarks, brother F. G. Taylor, of Friendship Church, presented a written request of said church for the next association to convene with them on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1903, near Reynoldsburg, Ohio.

4th. On motion, the above request was unanimously agreed upon.

5th. Minutes were read and approved.

6th. On motion, adjourned.

G. N. TUSING, Moderator.

I. E. ROWLES, Clerk, *pro tem.*

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Z. GILLIES.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 71. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1903. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MT. VERNON, Texas, Dec. 1, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Having been blessed with some, to me, very pleasant reflections on the "testimony of our Lord," as found in the fifth and sixth chapters of the book of Revelation, I feel a desire to set down some of these thoughts for your consideration, and if they are according to the Spirit of truth we may be mutually benefited by their consideration, and if erroneous, you may help me to get rid of them. For we are all perhaps agreed that nothing but truth will ever be of any permanent benefit. While the spiritual truths of God throughout the written word of God is contained in a multitude of metaphors, figures, types and symbols, it seems more especially so in the book of Revelation. It was the wise purpose of God to hide in these the glorious truth of God in Christ Jesus, who is the fullness of the redemption of all the purchased possession. Jesus our Lord, when asked why he spake to the multitudes in parables, said to his disciples, "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but unto them it is not given," &c. Again, "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in Spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

Before I begin a presentation of the thoughts I proposed, I wish to say that if they are only the product of a theorizing carnal mind, they are utterly profitless to the spiritual, that is, to edify and comfort. For the one central, grand and glorious truth, involving all that is truth, contained in all the Scripture, is God in Christ the Creator, Possessor, Upholder and Disposer of all things, and Christ Jesus in God the Father, the complete and only Redeemer, Preserver and Owner and Savior of his people, and the Holy Ghost in them both, and in all who are born again, as he who calls them to a knowledge of their inheritance in Christ, and takes of the things of Jesus and shews them unto them. All this glorious truth is opened up to the faith of God's elect in the way he has ordained, (i. e.) by revelation, for Jesus has said, "No man knows who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and

he to whom the Son will reveal him."

The book of Revelation, as I said before, is especially a book of metaphors, containing most wonderful and sublime truth relative to the church, or redeemed of our God, both in relation to the redemption which is in Jesus their Lord, and in relation to this world and the inhabitants thereof. The fourth chapter begins thus, "After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven; and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the Spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne," &c. The next chapter begins, "And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals." This evidently was a revelation to John of the God of heaven and earth seated upon his majestic throne, or revealed in manifest power. The book in his hand, I understand, was that in which was contained the destiny of mankind: of nations and individuals; the book of the decrees of God; embodying the just sentence of condemnation by reason of sin, from which there could be no hope of deliverance by any creature in heaven, in earth, nor under the earth, and further embodying the fact that, "The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." This was he of whom Paul testified, Rom. i. 3, "Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." A combination of humanity and divinity. In the one, nature from earth, and one with his brethren, the children of men, and in the other, from heaven, and one with his eternal Father. Hence a suitable sacrifice, and suitable High Priest to offer up the sacrifice; one that would fully meet all the demands of justice in behalf of his people, and let the prisoner go free. Having finished the work his Father sent him into the world to do, being delivered up for our offenses, and raised up again for our justification, "he was received up on high according to the promise of the Father, and is now seen of John." In the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, "as a lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." This book was sealed with seven seals, representing the fullness and harmony of all the attributes of God in his decrees.

The apostle was told by the voice that spake unto him, "I will shew thee things which *must* [not may] be hereafter." As we behold the opening of each seal, and read the things recorded by the apostle, let us remember that he sets forth "things which MUST be hereafter," no matter what their nature, or whether we understand them or not. Let us notice in the fifth chapter before the opening of the first seal by the Lamb, that the four beasts, which perhaps represented in full the ministry of the church of God, or rather the testimony of this ministry, which is substantially embodied in the testimony of the four evangelists, and the four and twenty elders, which I have thought represented the testimony of the prophets and apostles, "fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors," which are the prayers of saints. "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art

worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth." Joining their voices in this song of praise the apostle heard innumerable angels, all "saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." And joined in this mighty anthem of praise which accorded to the Lamb all the honor, right and power vested in him, John heard "every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, * * * saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever." Thus is set forth the sublime, the sweet and glorious song of all the redeemed host, from righteous Abel to the end of time, every "new creature in Christ," every subject of saving grace, in personal experience in their pilgrimage in this world of sin and sorrow, has in the past, does now, and will to eternity's remotest bound continue to joyfully chime in with all the mighty hosts of the redeemed of the Lord in their testimony of praise to him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb, and they all ascribe him the right, and deem him worthy to take the book and to loose the seals thereof.

Now I will as briefly as I can drop a few thoughts as to the opening of some, if not each of the seals.

"And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see, and I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer." The horse here symbolizes power, and as it is a white horse, symbolizes the power of God. White, it may be, signifying that the power of God is executed in justice and holiness. He that sat upon this white horse was evidently Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, who came into the world clothed with power to execute the will of his Father in conquering Satan, and destroying all his works, and delivering his people from bondage and destruction.

"And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. And there went out another horse that was red; and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword." Here I have thought is presented the first man Adam and his family, and the spirit that has ever dominated his course as such, for the very name Adam, it is said, signifies *red*. The power wielded by him that sat on this horse, was *given* to take peace from the earth. The history of man from the beginning has been one of war and bloodshed; of continual strife and confusion; the very opposite of peace, and "the way of peace have they not known."

"And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and, lo, a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see that thou hurt not the oil and the wine." I have thought that herein is presented the law as emanating from Mt.

Sinai in its terrors, as realized in the heart and conscience of every quickened sinner. (Read the nineteenth and twentieth chapters of Exodus for an account of the giving of the law from Mt. Sinai, and its effects upon the people.) In contrasting Mt. Sinai with Mt. Sion, the mount to which every heaven-born soul has in experience come, in Hebrews xii. 18–21, the apostle Paul says, "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard, entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (For they could not endure that which was commanded, and if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: and so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake.)"

He that sat upon this horse had a pair of balances in his hand, and a voice was heard saying, "A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny." Here is represented the exactness of the demands of the law. Its requirement is perfect obedience, and none of all the human family have ever been able to come to its demands, and a failure to do so takes everything: "life for life, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth." So says an inspired apostle, "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified." The advocates of legalism, or conditionalism, have ever been riding this horse, offering so much blessing for so much work. Some teach, You get heaven and a crown for so much work, and for every additional given amount of work you may have a star added to that crown. Others say they cannot offer you heaven and immortal glory beyond this life for work, but you may have the foretastes of it in this world for your works. You get so much spiritual blessing for joining the church, and so much for being baptized, and still an additional amount for every obedient act of your life.

According to this doctrine the text in Matthew xi. 28, should read, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you *work*." All this sounds a little like the cry, "A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny."

"And see that thou hurt not the oil and the wine." Although God's dear children are sometimes found, as the Galatian brethren, turning "again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto they desire again to be in bondage," &c., yet nothing shall destroy or *hurt* the work accomplished by the atoning blood of Jesus, nor hinder or *hurt* the work of grace in the hearts of the children of God. Thus while the teaching of legalism may ensnare the unsuspecting child of grace for a time, yet it is forbidden to "*hurt*" the oil and the wine.

"And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold a pale horse; and his name that sat on him was Death, and hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with the sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth." Following in the wake of man's violation of law, is death in all its forms, but is only executed as God gives power. Pilate was told by Jesus just before he passed sentence upon him, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above." So I understand that whatever executes

death must have its power from God. "For," says an apostle, "there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."

I will now pass from a further consideration of this metaphor, for I am unsettled in mind as to the kind of death and hell, and as to its being confined to a fourth part of the earth, means. However, with the poet I feel sure that

"Death and hell can do no more
Than what my Father please."

"And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." Here the apostles were given a view of those who have suffered for the testimony of Jesus. I cannot understand this to teach that a component part of those martyrs, called the soul, was confined in some prison, as it were, to await a better condition at some future time. But the language I understand is metaphorical, and teaches that the wrath of God is not yet manifestly executed in full upon the element actuated by that spirit of persecution that in all ages of the world has brought the true witness of God to martyrdom. As to the cry that John heard, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" the Lord himself speaks of it in the case of the first one among the children of man who was slain for the testimony of God, to wit, Abel. He said to Cain, "What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood creith unto me from the ground." Then is it not true that the same voice and cry is heard from the same source continually in the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth? And will this cry go unheard, and his people unavenged? No; for the time appointed will come when all the wonderful purpose of God is fulfilled in the trial and persecution of all his witnesses in this world, then will truth rise manifestly triumphant over falsehood, when the great body of all the true witnesses of God shall be justified in their testimony and manifestly triumph over all false systems, and all enemies of truth. While the enemies have not in this day, (for in this sense Satan is bound) as they have in years gone by, the authority of law, to imprison and put to death literally the witnesses of Jesus, the advocates of the doctrine of God our Savior, yet it is true as it has ever been, the flock of God is counted as a flock of slaughter: "As it is written, We are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." It is true that the principles of truth ultimately triumph in the individual experience of all the children of God; yet in the end, when God's purpose shall have benn fulfilled in the world, I understand that the church shall rise manifestly triumphant, and "Babylon the great, the mother of harlots," embodying all the abominations of false religion, shall fall to rise no more. Perhaps of this we are shown something in the opening of the sixth seal, and the closing verses of this sixth chapter, as well as in chapters following.

But this article is growing lengthy, so I will desist, by remarking that the white robes given them that were under the

altar, as mentioned in the seventh chapter as being upon that "Great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," which John saw, and which evidently is the "righteousness of saints," which is nothing less than Jesus our righteousness imputed.

H. B. JONES.

SERVING THE LORD.

BELIEVERS in our Lord Jesus Christ are not their own, but are bought with the precious blood of the Lamb; they are therefore bound in everlasting ties to glorify him in their bodies and spirits, which are God's. While here in these tabernacles of clay, so encompassed are we with infirmities that our conscious service to the Lord our God is very imperfect. I find, beloved ones of God, I am coming short very often, and I meet with rebukes from the Lord. This makes me ashamed, and sad in heart, but even when smarting under his reproofs there is something tells me that in it all he loveth me still. This is wonderful, how he still loves one so vile, so wayward and unprofitable, and as I think over it my heart mourns, and I feel, O, that I could love him, and serve him for ever.

It is written, "A seed shall serve him, and it shall be counted unto the Lord for a generation." I would hope that he hath accounted us among the number of this seed, but this is very clearly to be seen, that it is not with the flesh, not in our carnal nature that we are the servants and worshipers of God: "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." When we consider how glorious and infinitely holy is the God of our salvation, and how insignificant and impure we are, it looks as though there were impassable barriers forbidding all intercourse. If then we were left to ourselves, our lot would be hopeless and inconsolable, and eternal separation from the Lord must be our doom. But in the gospel of the grace of God what beams of glory, of mercy and surpassing love, shine forth. Life and immortality are brought to light, and therefore it is that the apostle Paul exclaims, "God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son."—Romans i. 9. When the holy Spirit reveals to us the exceeding rich provisions of Christ's gospel, it forbids us to despair, and as these provisions are ministered to us by his divine power, we are raised up out of the dust, we feel to be of good cheer, we are drawn very near to our God, and in our precious Jesus, our Mediator and High Priest, we worship the Lord in the beauties of holiness in the holy mount at the heavenly Jerusalem. I know not altogether how other creatures are exercised, but I feel it is an astonishing mercy that such a sinner as I should be so moved toward God, that there is maintained in my soul hungerings and thirstings after righteousness, yearnings after the holy One. Bear with me while I say there are seasons when I, a defiled worm of the dust, am found repeating over and over in my heart, "Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine holy One? I shall not die." O, such contradictions I find in myself! But in spite of all that is in me so contrary to the holiness of God, I do not feel condemned in cherishing the hope in my heart that the Lord is my God and I am

his. "Whose I am and whom I serve."—Acts xxvii. 23. But look at our service, is it not much of the time very languid? So chilled and pinched up am I sometimes by wordliness and unbelief that I am made to mourn unto the Lord, and in my impoverished estate I cry unto him, "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart." How blessed to have one's heart lifted up in the ways of the Lord. (2 Chron. xvii. 6.) All other paths are paths of crookedness, and misery and death are the end thereof, but so rich are the provisions for the poor and needy in the gospel that they find moments when their hearts are so lifted up that they sing in the ways, and their pastures are in all high places. It is wonderful for a sinner to be so enabled by the Lord to feed by faith upon God's eternal, electing love, the immutability of his counsel, the predestination of the elect unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself. These glorious verities are indeed some of the chief things of the ancient mountains and the precious things of the lasting hills. (Deut. xxxiii. 15.) Our Savior sustains the most endearing characters unto his own, and it is as the Comforter testifies in our souls of these endearing relations that we are enabled by grace given us to serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. "Whom I serve with my spirit *in the gospel of his Son.*" Surely without the grace of God, so incapable are we of serving God that if our salvation in any degree was suspended upon our serving him, we must utterly perish. I realize that I should be a barren, dry tree, incapable of yielding any fruit unto the Almighty. The commandment of the Lord ages ago was, "Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go, that they may serve me."—Exodus viii. 1. The deliverance of the chosen of God by Christ their Redeemer from sin and the curse and unto God, is that they shall serve him, and his name shall be upon their foreheads. (Rev. xxii. 3.) This service which is rendered from the heart unto the Lord begins below. Now, while we are in the earth it is mixed with much imperfection; our vile bodies, the world, the flesh and the devil, are all arrayed against us, and would utterly frustrate our "serving the Lord." But though sin is so abounding, God's grace unto us much more abounds, and in the operations of this invincible grace in our hearts we triumph over all infirmities; by faith we tread under our feet all opposition, and are blessed with seasons of spiritual service unto the Lord our God. It is very blessed to hold fast in our remembrance that the obedience of the saints is in, and results from the most endearing bonds that bind them to the Lord. It is as *the sons of God* that they serve him. They are *not hired servants* who receive so much wages for so much work, and who when they have done their work are no longer needed. The (mere) servant abideth not in the house forever, but the Son abideth ever. Those therefore who are predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto God, do with the only begotten Son of God abide in the house of the Lord. God will never disown them, never will he turn them adrift, but he will love and have them near him for ever. It is very encouraging to contemplate the behavior of the Son of God in relation to the adopted children of God. He is not ashamed to call them brethren. (Heb. ii. 11.) Consider the surpassing acts of his grace in behalf of the elect family of God. They were given unto him, and predestinated unto the adoption of children in him ac-

cording to the good pleasure of God the Father. In his wondrous love therefore he was made flesh and dwelt among us; he bare our sins and carried our sorrows, and in sufferings and blood purged all our guilt away. In all things pertaining to God he is the merciful and faithful High Priest of all the household of God. He declares the name of our heavenly Father, and sings unto us to gladden our hearts, of the covenant ordered in all things and sure. O, it is the presence, the ministry, the wondrous merits and services of Jesus our Brother that inspires our obedience, that makes meet and acceptable unto God all the services of the whole family of God. The Son of God is faithful over his own house, whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of hope firm unto the end. (Heb. iii. 6.) In our service to God so associated with Jesus Christ there is no bondage; the obedience of the gospel is not a yoke which believers are not able to bear. Jesus says, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light." The house of God's mercy is supplied with infinite bounty, and tongue can never tell the goodness and fatness of the house of the Lord, therefore the household of faith have no lack, but God is able to make all grace to abound toward them; so that they having all sufficiency in all things abound in every good work.

In Egypt, Israel could not serve the Lord. (Exodus viii. 25, 26.) Not until they were free could they know how to acceptably serve him. "Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not a hoof be left behind; for therefore must we take to serve the Lord our God; and we know not with what we must serve the Lord until we come thither."—Exodus ix. 26. The shedding of the blood of the passover lamb preceded the exodus of the tribes of the Lord from Egypt, that they might serve him; so to become the servants of God we must be ransomed from the bondage of sin by the atoning blood of the Lamb. Thus the apostle Paul declares unto us, "When ye were the servants of sin ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."—Romans vi. 20–22. "For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God." If then, beloved brethren, through the grace given to us we are come to the obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, there is begun that experience of intimacy and fellowship with the Son of God that shall never be destroyed, for he loveth at all times; our Beloved and Friend sticketh closer than a brother. It is he that gives fragrance to the worship of the true worshipers of the everlasting God. He is the altar on which the sacrifices of the elect come up before God with acceptance.

The Son of God gave to his disciples most precious instruction, and discovered himself in a very wonderful aspect to them. He was their Lord and Master; they acknowledged he was the Christ, the Son of the living God. This glorious One, the Word made flesh, thus speaks to his erring disciples: "Whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth."—

Luke xxii. 27. What! did the Word of God, who is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person, (Heb. i. 1–3,) make himself of no reputation, and take upon him the form of a servant? He was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (Phil. ii. 6–8.) This is an amazing and glorious mystery. All this is according to the eternal purpose of God, and it all is revealed as subsisting in the relationship of Christ to his people. He is the Head of the church, (Eph. v. 23,) and as such in behalf of the members of his body he was the servant of the Father, and the servant of his dear people. "I am among you as one that serveth." The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. His service and work before the Father was to magnify the law, and to redeem the church from its curse, and to accomplish this he was made a curse for us. He gave himself a sacrifice for our sins, that he might present us in faultless and immortal beauty unto himself. He hath died to redeem us; what could he do more? and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. (1 John iii. 16.) By love serve one another. (Gal. v. 13.) Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous. (1 Peter iii. 8.) "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." James i. 27. The above Scriptures present us a glimpse of the practical channels of the service of the saints, and the New Testament abounds in gracious instruction how to serve one another in every condition, and I am sure that the heart of every one born of God responds with a hearty amen to all the precepts of the gospel. It is not in vain that it is written, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." That wonderful 119th Psalm is to-day, and to the end of time will be, a living presentation of the devotion of heart of the servants of God. What a gracious commendation is that "She hath done what she could,"—Mark xiv. 8, and "She hath been a succorer of many, and of myself also."—Rom. xvi. 2. Happy are you if such a thing can be mentioned of you. When our willing but imperfect service to one another and to God is ended in this world, could we look over it we should feel and say unto the Lord, I have been an unprofitable servant, wash all my services in Jesus' blood. Then in heaven it will be our endless delight in faultless service to serve our glorious and gracious God for evermore.

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

CAPRON, Oklahoma Ter., Oct. 29, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I want to say that I love to read your editorials, and also those from brother Beebe, what few he writes. I could name many of the dear brethren who so ably wield the pen, but will name but a few. Say to brother Durand that his fragments are so good, especially the last ones in the number for October 15.

How forcibly it touched my heart when he spoke of his surprises, and of how early the Lord gave a token of his love to him, after he had been so mean. That is certainly my experience. I am so hateful and so mean, and at almost the same hour, I am basking in the sunshine

of his love, as though I had done nothing wrong. O, how forgiving our heavenly Father is to give us such tokens of acceptance with him, in such quick succession, after we have sinned. If I had my just dues I would have to repent in sackcloth and ashes, but so soon it is manifested unto me that he is merciful to my unrighteousness, and remembers my sins no more. Brother Durand, write more in this way.

Brother David Bartley is another who can use the pen so well, and brother Keene writes to my heart's delight. And I would be glad to call the names of every one of them. I love brother J. Corder Mellott; his experience is one of those who are taught of God. Brother J. L. Young is another. Sister Joie E. Wickham wrote such an excellent letter to brother Goble, I do not think it could be bettered. And, brother Chick, your editorial on "Salvation by water," was so clear to my mind, although I had never seen it in that light before.

Dear brethren, you do not know how much it helps a poor castaway like myself to read such letters. I have been brought up here in the far south-west, where I am like poor old Elijah, alone, and how the past all comes up to my mind; how I plead on bended knees in my humble dugout home, on the ground floor, with the good Lord to raise up a people in this far away land who believed and preached salvation by grace, and grace alone, and blessed be his holy name, there was a sample copy of the SIGNS sent me with an article written in it from brother Jeff. Beaman, and I wrote to him, and he received my letter, and answered it before he left the office, and you do not know how my heart did bound with love, as I read his card, which was so full of love. He came up to see me in my little dugout house, and told me how to get down to where he lived, and I went down to his appointment, and met other Baptists, and tried the first time, for a long time, to preach Christ. I was then followed by brother Beaman, and O, how sweet it was to hear a gospel sermon in Oklahoma. Then we were directed to other Baptists, and now we have an organization of eleven members, and others who will come in yet. We have no home at all, but meet in schoolhouses, and have our meetings, and how sweet to meet the dear brethren, and sing from Elders Durand's and Lester's tune book, and Beebe's collection. Most of the members of this church are now taking the dear old SIGNS, and I believe we have a sound church.

We believe in the predestination of all things, and in unconditional salvation, both for time and for eternity.

Now, dear brethren, if this little organization is of the Lord, it will stand, if not, it will fall. Brother Beaman, our pastor, proposed Ebenezer, as the name, as it signifies a stone of help, and the church agreed to it. Brethren, pray the Lord to keep us all humble and submissive to his will, that we may live at the feet of our brethren, and esteem others better than ourselves, and that we may be kept sound in the faith. But most of all, pray the will of God may be done with us, and not our will. Dear brethren, you cannot know what it is to be so scattered and so far apart, you that can meet every Sunday, and find large congregations, and the most of them Baptists.

How differently the people of God are persecuted from what was once the case; then they were, some of them, torn in pieces, burned at the stake, their eyes torn out, and their limbs severed from their bodies, and destroyed in many other

ways, for the truth's sake, to-day it would be the same were it not that the daughters of Rome are under law, and cannot in the former way persecute the church. Were it not for the protection of the law they would fall on the church now, and prohibit them from preaching salvation by grace. In fact, they do say that it ought not to be allowed to be preached.

Jesus said, "Many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many." Who will dare to say that it will not be so, or that there is even possibility that it shall not be so. But persecutions shall not be altogether by the world. It is said, "Even of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. He said, this shall be among your own selves, meaning that in the church itself these men should be found. So we need not be surprised or alarmed when we see it in the church. When God says anything shall be, it means that thing is fixed, or predestinated, to be that way, and how dare a man say that the things may not be that God says shall be? It is said, "There shall be false teachers among you, even as there were false prophets, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction, and many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." Remember, it is the way of truth that is to be evil spoken of.

Under the old dispensation the Israelites tried on a certain occasion to have a great army, but God sifted them down to a very small company. This is the case at this present time. God will not let the church become strong in numbers, for the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. We all feel that we want a goodly number in the church, but it is better to have a small remnant of orderly members, than a large church of members that are unruly, and want everything their own way.

Brother Beebe, if there is anything in this that you think will be for the benefit of the church, give it to them. If not, all will be right with me.

I am yours in hope of a better world,

J. M. DULY.

KINTYRE, Ontario, Jan. 15, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I again make the attempt to write you a few lines. This is the second attempt since you were in Duart. At that time I did not know just where I was; I did not realize that I was asleep, as I found out afterward. I had found a comfortable place, and I thought that I would just stay there; I was going to watch the enemy and keep him in subjection, and in hearing preaching or reading I felt that it was good and true, but I was not hungry, I did not need anything. This went on for two or three months, and when a neighbor called one day, I said to her, "I do not know when I have had such a rest from trouble." The next moment I was in the most trying state of mind that I had experienced for some time. Here, in a moment, I was called into the valley of humiliation, with the weakness and bitterness of my own heart before me, and no way of escape.

It was not long before my hunger returned, and the next time we had meeting, our Elder spoke upon part of the vision of John in Revelation, where John saw the book sealed with seven seals, and no man could unloose the seals thereof, but the Lion of the tribe of Juda. How humility poured into my soul. I was humbled to the dust, as it was given me

to see that it was the Lion of the tribe of Juda who alone could unloose the seal. This taught me something that I had not known before, and that I needed. I feared that I had offended a brother, and rather than offend him I would have washed his feet with my tears, and wiped them with the hair of my head. This could not be any more humiliating than what I passed through at the time. I can now see that all was in mercy, and that feet-washing is but a shadow, or figure of the substance. I can only speak for myself when I say, I fear that if the presence of the Lord were not with me, and if I were not to be humbled in spirit, I am so vile and carnal and miserable in myself, that I would not be humbled in washing the feet of the most lovely saint. And I will further say, that in all of what I hope are the Lord's dealings with me, it is as it was with Peter, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." For if I knew now what the Lord was doing, I could endure for Christ's sake, and this weakness and pollution of my own vile heart would be hidden from my eyes, and I would surely rise to boast over my fellows, and would not be so well fitted to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb.

The Lord's ways are perfect and past finding out, only as he gives us to know, and at those times we can thank the Lord for tribulation also. These are the times that we can sing the song of the Lamb. But why should I presume to write to you upon these things? I do not know, bnt I feel sure that if I write amiss, you will have charity. When I was received into the church I thought I would have no more trouble, I might have sorrow, but not trouble. I thought I was wise now, and would walk uprightly. I thought at that time that I could do all things, and that my very flesh was changed, and that I would grow in grace, and in knowledge, but I have found out that my ways are not his way. Yet, my dear brother, I do believe that I have grown in grace, but not as I expected. I have decreased, but Jesus has increased, and I realize that without him I can do nothing, and with him I can do all things.

When I went to the church, although I was bold and strong, yet I was humbled right down to the foot of the cross, and at that time rather than it should ever be different I even prayed, that if needful, by losses and crosses, I might ever be kept at the foot of the cross. I realized that it was good to be there. It seems to me that the Lord has answered my prayer, for I have had losses and crosses to try me, but, to my sorrow I have not found myself equal to them; I have been rebellious and have murmured, and every evil or my nature has been stirred within me, and the things that I thought dead have come, as it were, to life, to war with my mind. In the depths of these trials how I have prayed that this might depart from me, and have felt as though the hand of the Lord was turned against me, and that if I were his child, things would not be as they were. It seems as if were it not for this thorn in the flesh, I could serve him better, and to my prayers the only answer has been, "My grace is sufficient for thee." But this grace is enough to make me thank him for tribulations also, and to praise his holy name for all his dealings with me. This is the only way that I can be brought to the foot of the cross. There I do realize that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing. There also I am made to sing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." Surely if there were any conditions about

my salvation here in this time state I would have gone to the end of time without any salvation.

I think that I have come to realize now, that as far as the heavens are above the earth, so far are his ways and thoughts above mine. Had my way have been given me, I would have perished in the mire of my own free agency. For the ways that seem good unto man, are the ways of death. But, instead of this, "He brought me out of the horrible pit of the miry clay, and he set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings." And what a blessed time it is when we can say,

Christ, the Rock of my salvation,
He who died and rose again,
He our only sure foundation
Suffered all our grief and pain.

Had he not died for our redemption,
We on him could never stand.
In the law was condemnation,
We could not meet its sore demands.

Satan, who is ever crafty,
Ever building on the sand,
Says the Rock of our salvation
Is in keeping its commands.

But how could we, so vile and doubting,
E'er believe upon his name?
And if we ever kept on mounting,
Could we thus his presence gain?

But when we are sick and helpless,
And he comes us to relieve,
And within, his presence heals us,
We can then his name receive.

O, this Rock of our salvation!
How abounding is thy love!
Were it not for free salvation
Who could e'er be raised above?

But he died for our redemption,
And our surety he became.
Who can move this Rock of ages?
Who can mar his holy name?

Satan, then, with all his angels,
Cannot mar this holy plan,
For the Rock of our salvation
Is the ever great "I Am."

I send love to you and family. May the Lord, in his mercy, still keep you, and guide you into the truth. Your editorial in the last SIGNS brought me right down at your feet. When I read anything that seems so precious, my heart goes right out in fellowship to the writer.

Your sister in hope,

MRS. PETER ALLISON.

ALBANY, Oregon, Jan. 1, 1903.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—And to the faithful in Christ Jesus, and all who share in the one hope of our calling, being of the household of faith, concerning which we read with much comfort and consolation through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. There is such union of thought, and harmony in the writings of the contributors and editors. The editorials of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, as well as those of the present editors, are deep in the word and the Spirit. There are many other welcome names that appear from time to time, which we love to read. Such writing fills my cup to the brim, causing me to say, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." It must be so in order to give such union of thought, and such consolation to the children of God, as has marked the course of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES through its many long years, there being no perceptible difference, or change, as it seems to me. They are always full of the glad tidings of great joy, and always contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. So my poor, feeble mind travels with the longings of my heart, in its great desire to gather the bread and wine, and I wonder if the apostle Jude could find any cause for exhortation or admonition against time or common salvation, as appears in his letter to his brethren. He says, "It was needful for me to write that ye should contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints,"

There was evidently something wrong with them. Let us read the whole letter, and contemplate the evils of which he speaks existing among those who had been called out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of the children of God. It seems that they did not contend for that faith, but had fallen away. He says, "There are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation." The whole letter is against those things that are aside from the gospel of Christ, which is both sure and steadfast. O, if we could only follow in the footsteps of our Lord and Master. The Lord said, "Ye must be born again, of an incorruptible seed, which liveth and abideth forever."

Again he says, I will put my laws in the inward parts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. This is all so sure and steadfast that there is no room for time things to come in, and set aside the eternal decrees of God, whose covenant is ordered in all things and sure. It seems to me that all the trials and tribulations of the children of Israel were caused by their falling away, taking up with time things, such as false doctrines and false gods. We read of David, and of Solomon, of the kings and the kingdoms, which were types and shadows, who all were charged and exhorted by the prophets to serve the only living and true God, and not to do as their fathers had done; calling forth upon them the condemnation and wrath of Almighty God.

Naaman the leper thought that the rivers of Damascus, common things, would do as well as Jordan, but it was not so, the decree of the God of heaven had foreordained that Naaman should be cleansed in Jordan, thus opening up before him a great feast in the Spirit in the gospel's joyful sound,

"Salvation, O, the joyful sound,
Let all the nations know to earth's remotest bound."

These nations were predestinated and foreordained before the world was. The blessed Lord has said, "I in you, and ye in me," and also, "I am in my Father, and the Father is in me." So Peter had all things made plain to him, and henceforth he could not call that which God had cleansed, common or unclean, and the same spirit that moved in Peter, also moved in Cornelius to declare the whole counsel of God, and not by any works of his own. Word for word it was given to Peter to speak the unadulterated truth that there was no spot in all that which God had shown him was cleansed. He could see no spot in this miraculous feast. Thus was the great plan of salvation set forth; and in it all, the eternal, unchangeable love of God to the predestinated and called.

Thus as we look upon this city of our solemnities, we learn that no cord shall ever be broken, and that no galley with oars shall ever pass thereby. And here are broad rivers and streams, sufficient for the people of God at all times. It does seem to me that the apostle Jude had reference to faithfulness, and steadfastness, in his exhortation, and that it was directed against false notions of this time state. For it was and is "lo here! and lo there!" But we are not to go after them.

Now, with these few thoughts written in weakness and unworthiness, and feeling that it is hardly proper for me to mingle my thoughts with the writers in the dear old SIGNS, as I am not a member, I will close. I have been meditating in this line of thought for a good while. I have been putting it off, but the subject would come up again.

Yours in hope,

SAMUEL T. CROOKS.

GRAHAM, Texas, Feb. 18, 1903.

B. L. BEEBE, MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.—DEAR BROTHER:—I have just read your attack on me in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I think you have treated me very unfairly, and stated some things that are not true, and that misrepresents me. The very last statement you make is not true, for you say, "Since the above was in type we have received another issue of Cayce's paper, in which Elder Fisher is found reinstated, occupying several columns, so he must have met with another change since writing brother Gilbert." Now, my brother, you have not received any such a thing. I have the next copy of Cayce's paper myself, in which there is a single line from me, and it is Feb. 11, 1903, and it has only a short correction of some mistakes in my first article, which you have copied before you saw the corrections.

Now I ask you to let this letter of mine be published, as I want to say a few things for your readers, who saw the other. I do not see how you could honorably take the liberty to print two private letters from me to get to make my attitude look ugly before the people.

I stood, and do stand, with the predestinarian brethren here in Texas, but have not been enabled to go as far as some of them on strong points of doctrine, and it was with difficulty that I submitted to the wording of the Fort Worth Council, and objected to using some of the language in it, but the brethren accepting an explanatory article from me to go with it, satisfied me to let it pass. And except to explain what I mean in relation to certain parts, I have had but very little to say about it since.

You saying that I have "recanted" and "stultified" myself three months later is all uncalled for from you, and you have gone to say harder things now about me than the other side has said. I have been determined not to be in the side business, if I could help it, and have not intended to denounce the Ft. Worth Council, or the London Confession of Faith, and I think I can show that all my statements are in harmony with both. I have meant however to say that there were some things that I could not agree with the strong predestinarian brethren on, but not to their prejudice.

I think, dear brother, that you should have let this thing alone till you understood it.

My name was on Elder Cayce's paper, yet I differed from him some, when the Ft. Worth Council was called, and the predestinarian brethren here in Texas knew all about it. You seem to think that I was a leader on that side for prominence. No sir, I am not, and have not been popular with either side, and know that I can never be with those who are extremists. You say to your readers that I am "reinstated" with Elder Cayce's paper, but Elder Cayce dropped my name from his paper after the Ft. Worth Council, and I have not any idea that he had expected to reinstate me. At least I have seen nothing of the kind. I have written him nothing since the letter you have published except a short correction of some mistakes in this article you have published, and hence your statement that I have occupied "several columns" is not true at all. The correction covered only about thirty short lines of 13 em columns. When I wrote to Elder Gilbert I had no idea of writing any more for Cayce's paper, but when I saw from the *Gospel Messenger* and other papers that I was looked on in Georgia as being an absoluter in disguise, I thought I had better come out fuller and say particularly what

I believed, and I had no idea of the brethren thinking I had turned clear back, but of course I expected that some of them did not know just how I held. The things I set forth in this said article are just on the same line that I set forth in Elder Cayce's paper some time before this, in which I made quotations from the different parts of the London Confession of Faith, and said that I indorsed both parts. In the May 7, 1902, paper, *Apostolic Primitive Baptist*, I said that I indorsed that portion of the Confession which said, "God gave Adam a law of universal obedience written in his heart and particular precept of not eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, * * * and gave him power and ability to keep it." Then I also said that I accepted the reading of the same Confession on decrees, which says that "God hath decreed in himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever comes to pass," &c. The dear brethren in Texas who went into the Ft. Worth Council with me knew that I held to these views, or had held to them. I think now that some of them thought I had given up the first view above, but in that they had misunderstood me. I have written in Elder Cayce's paper in the article you have quoted only such as I had written in it before. If I have done wrong in this affair it was in sitting in the Ft. Worth Council. I did not take the entire personal responsibility to call the Ft. Worth Council, as you intimate, but the church considered the thing two days, and finally agreed unanimously to make the call, but even then I wrote to dear brethren and was first minded to postpone the call, but after they wrote agreeing to the matter, we went on with it. But even after that we decided once to call it all in, and so wrote to the brethren, but they decided to go on with it anyhow, and requested me by telegram to return from Georgia in time to be there. I begged the brethren with earnestness to relieve me from the moderatorship, but they would not agree. I was elected moderator of the largest association in Texas once, and promptly asked the brethren to relieve me, as I could not feel right to be ruling over gray hairs. If I have sought pre-eminence in this thing, there is one thing most positively certain, I have failed to get it, only to be denounced and abused by both sides. But to-day none of these things move me, and if the Lord will help me this thing will be sifted to the very bottom. That there is a spirit to denounce brethren for slight differences now among the Old Baptists on both the extreme wings I fully believe, and now I am made the object of heated denunciation from both the extreme wings.

As you have so bitterly denounced me as "stultifying" myself, "having an inordinate desire for prominence," "dangerous man," "cautioned against his treacherousness," "impossible to have any confidence in his sincerity," "met with another change," "like impositions from insincere protestations of love," "course of double-dealing," and again, "dishonest double-dealing of an ordained minister," "duplicity of Elder J. H. Fisher," "imposition," &c. Now, I say, as you have taken occasion to pour out such bitter language to your readers against me, while it is a fact I have never had any bitter words for you, or the SIGNS, or the eastern Baptists, having often spoken of them in the highest terms, I think you should acknowledge that you have done me and the cause a very great wrong. You have violated the statute laws

against criminal libel, and shown a harsh and bitter spirit that no doubt your brethren did not think was in you. And after you are done you complacently state to the people that "seclusion would now be the most becoming in him." Have you the authority over God's distressed and cast down ministers to say now what they shall do? I think not.

Now I ask you to print this at once in your paper, as I would like for the people who have read your attack on me should also read this explanation of some of the things you have referred to.

Yours, believing that God will show the right,

J. H. FISHER.

TIDWELL, Texas, Feb. 20, 1903.

MR. B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—After reading and reflecting over your article relative to Elder J. H. Fisher, I felt that I wanted to say a few words relative to the same. I am sorry that you published what you did, yet I am sure that many will view his course just as you do. I have been very intimately acquainted and associated with Elder Fisher for several years, and I regard him as strictly honest. He has made himself very unpopular with the conditionalists of this country, because he has opposed many of their movements which he thought to be dishonest. No one in Texas has defended the Predestinarian Baptists more than Elder J. H. Fisher. I do not mean by this to indorse his present course or doctrine, but do think that you and many other dear brethren have misunderstood and misjudged his motives. I deprecate his article in the A. P. B. as much as any one could, and I feel that it will greatly injure the cause of the Predestinarian Baptists in Texas, yet I do not believe that he meant to injure us. He has never been fully settled on the doctrine of predestination. But while he has vacillated and seems (to me) to hold to some very inconsistent positions, yet I believe him to be honest.

I hope you will publish this, so that all who saw your article may see what I think of him. I do not censure you at all for what you have done. I feel sure that all who are not well acquainted with him will view his course just as you do, but I do not think he meant it as it really appears from his article, and I would be glad if you would publish this letter and let all concerned have the benefit of what I think about it.

Yours in love and fellowship,

JONAS C. SIKES.

P. S.—Brother Sikes has just read to me his statement to you, brother Beebe, relative to brother J. H. Fisher, and I having been acquainted with brother Fisher for some years, and holding him in high esteem during all my acquaintance with him, as an humble and honest and conscientious child of grace, I feel a desire to concur with brother Sikes in his statements. Please append this as a postscript to his article, should you see fit to publish it.

In bonds of fellowship,

J. R. HARDY.

(See editorial remarks on page 178.)

MASSEY, Va., Feb. 18, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed you will find the widow's mite, of $1.00, to be applied to the debt of the SIGNS. Please accept this as a sign of my appreciation of the paper, and a desire for its continuation. I would be the more glad if I could make it fifty times as much. I am hobbling along the same poor old sinner, whose hope is alone in the goodness and mercy of the Lord.

T. M. POULSON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1903.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REMARKS ON LETTERS OF ELDERS FISHER, SIKES AND HARDY.

(On pages 175-177.)

For the past few years our attention has been drawn to the bitter persecution, especially in Texas, the brethren have been called to endure who are standing firm on the principles of truth set forth by the brethren at Black Rock, Md., in 1832, and advocated by the Signs of the Times from that time to the present day, and we have watched with a jealous eye every move that seemed to us to threaten additional oppression of these precious saints, and it was with this feeling we sounded the alarm in the number for Feb. 15th, in regard to Elder J. H. Fisher. If we can judge our own motives we were not governed by a meddlesome spirit, neither were we actuated by a desire to avenge any personal injury, in writing as we did, but solely to give what we considered a timely warning.

Whether Elder Fisher intended to or not, one thing is certain, he did do the cause a great injury, as brother Sikes says in his letter on another page. The facts in the case are these: A number of brethren in Texas, holding to the old original principles of the Old School or Primitive Baptists, having suffered great persecution for their faith, decided to meet in council to declare their harmony, and belief in the principles of truth formulated by them at that meeting, and to refute the false charges and misrepresentation of their persecutors. This council was called and met with Elder Fisher's home church, and he was appointed moderator, and acted in that capacity, and signed the minutes of the proceedings and declarations of faith of that meeting as moderator. But later, finding he was losing favor with those whose persecution had forced the brethren to call this meeting, he publishes the letter we copied, headed, "What I believe." Now, why did he do this? Was it not because he was afraid his connection with the Fort Worth Council would injure his standing with those opposing the principles set forth by that convention? And sooner than suffer personally their disfavor, his own interests rose in his own estimation paramount to the interests of the brethren with whom he met at Fort Worth, and the welfare of the cause they met to defend, and regardless of their interests he proceeds to publish his apology for officiating at their Council. It should be borne in mind that while he feels called upon to explain and modify certain declarations made by the Fort Worth brethren, he says, without any reserve, that he indorses the Fulton Council. How any man indorsing the Fulton Council, could filiate, to say nothing of acting in an official capacity, with the brethren of the Fort Worth Council, is a mystery to us. Elder Fisher's conduct calls to mind an instance in the Scriptures, when Paul "Withstood Peter to his face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles; but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the

circumcision."—Gal. ii. 11, 12.

As the article in February 15th number had of necessity to be of a personal character, we feel that it is due to Elder Fisher that he should be allowed space to reply, and in this issue will be found not only a letter from Elder Fisher, but also letters from Elders Sikes and Hardy. We have a number of letters from brethren who are personally acquainted with Elder Fisher, approving our publishing the article, but as their publication would only tend to spread the trouble we desist. And here the matter must cease as far as the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is concerned.

B.

ACTS XIII. 2, 3; XIV. 2, 3.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—If it be not imposing upon you I will ask you or some other brother to give your views upon the second and third verses of the thirteenth chapter of the Acts, in connection with the twenty-third verse of the fourteenth chapter. Both places seem to relate to the same subject, and I would be glad to hear them treated upon. I have heard but very little said about these Scriptures. I will also ask a question concerning these Scriptures, if there is a literal performance in the calling together of the presbytery, in the prayer, and in the laying on of hands, is it not as much necessary to literally practice the fast spoken of in that connection? Respectfully your brother in hope of eternal life,

I. H. BOZEMAN.

YARBROUGHVILLE, Texas, Dec. 14, 1902.

REPLY.

CONCERNING the first named text, it seems evident that Paul had already been preaching and teaching for eight or ten years. The cronology given in the Acts makes it about eight years from the time of his call by grace to the time spoken of in Acts xiii. 2, 3. And we are told by Paul himself, in Galatians, that he at once began preaching the word after he had been called by grace. And Barnabas also had been a teacher and preacher for some time. He is thus mentioned in Acts xi. 23. Therefore the work mentioned in Acts thirteen does not appear to be what we now call ordination at all. It would seem from the connection that the work named in verse second, was not the general work of the ministry, but a special labor into which they were about to enter, and to which God had called them, as they were fulfilling their ministry. The narrative in the beginning of chapter thirteen informs us that there were at Antioch certain prophets and teachers who are named, and it is said that the Holy Ghost, as they ministered to the Lord and fasted, said unto them that they should separate unto him Barnabas and Paul for the work whereunto the Lord had called them. This, as said before, seems not to have been the special call to the ministry, but a call to preach in certain places, along in the work of their ministry. And we are told that when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands upon these two men, they sent them away. And in the fourth verse, we are told that they went unto Seleucia, and then to Cyprus and Salamis, and there preached the word of the Lord. This connection does not therefore seem to us to relate to what we call ordination, but to a recognition by the prophets and teachers, named in the first verse, of the fact that the Lord had called these men to go out and labor in destitute places, preaching Jesus. And this, and the following chapters, narrate their journeys and labors afterward. It seems then, that the prayer was for the blessing of God to rest upon them, and those to whom they might go, and upon their ministry, and the fasting was but an expression of the earnest desire that filled them that all earthly feelings and desires might be put under foot, as it were, and subjected to the call of

the Lord. The laying on of hands was but an emblem of their desire that God's blessing might rest upon them. This custom of laying on of hands was an old one in Israel, and among the patriarchs, and it signified the desire that God's blessing might rest upon the person upon whom hands were laid. It is our judgment from careful reading of the connection, that it does not relate to what we call ordination to the ministry at all.

The words in chapter fourteen, verse twenty-three, while they contain the word ordain, do not seem to us to relate to what we are accustomed to call the laying on of hands in ordination. The word "ordain," in the original is, *keirotoneo.* It literally signifies "to elect or choose by stretching out the hand." The text then means that in every city where believers were found, the disciples organized them into churches, and chose out fit men who were evidently called of God to be pastors and teachers among them. This choice was made with prayer to God for guidance, and with fasting to show that all fleshly motives must be laid aside in this, as in all that pertained to the order and welfare of the church. Fasting then, and in all the former days, was intended as a sign that the flesh was to be denied, and God be all in all. Surely this ought to be always so in things pertaining to the church. It means just what the dear Savior said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness;" it means a denial of the flesh in the kingdom of God; it means that fleshly appetites or desires must be denied, if we are to follow the Lord. In the former days Israel fasted, but not to the Lord. They attached a merit to fasting, as they did to every other form or ordinance, and so missed the very spirit of fasting. They did not understand that it was but the outward sign of abstaining from strife and debate and all wickedness which would be fleshly, that they might serve God. And so Israel was reproved and reproached that they gave to God only the sign, and withheld the substance from him.

In conclusion we desire to say that the form of ordination which is used among us now does not add anything to the gift of the one ordained. It is but the recognition, in an official way, by the church and ministry, of the work which God has already wrought in the subject of the ordination. God alone can really call and qualify any one for the work of the ministry, this qualification must be an inward work; God alone can confer gifts and spiritual blessings. All churches or ministers can do is to signify their recognition of the gift and grace of God. This is all that the form of ordination means, or can mean. A man called of God to preach, is as much a minister of Jesus before this official recognition by the church, as he will be afterwards. It seems to us needful and right that some method of recognition among the churches of the saints should be recognized, for the general peace and welfare of the churches, and for the future usefulness of the servant of God himself among the churches.

We trust that what we have here said is according to truth, and that it may prove of some satisfaction to all who may read.

C.

ISAIAH VIII. 12.

BROTHER J. T. Brand, of Lithonia, Ga., desires some reflections regarding the words in Isaiah viii. 12, which reads, "Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confed-

eracy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid."

In brief, we will say that Israel there was forbidden to seek for help against their adversaries anywhere but unto the Lord. The thirteenth verse shows that this is the meaning. The Lord is to be sanctified or set apart by them as their fear and help. They are to dread him alone, and not any mortal foe. So likewise they are not to seek help from any but the Lord. Israel was condemned for seeking to wizards that peep and mutter. (verse 19.) They were at another time censured for going down to Egypt for help, against the Assyrian hosts. They were again and again taught that in God alone was their refuge, and God proved himself to them a jealous God when they departed from him in that way. Not only must they worship him in the sacrifices of the temple, but they must worship him in spirit and in truth, by looking to him in time of need. For to pray to God in time of need is among the truest acts of worship that any one can render to him. The lesson taught us is that we must not, as his children, look to human power to defend us from any foe, or seek any alliance with any government to defend us in time of persecution; that we must not look to wizards, or those in these modern times who are represented by wizards, viz: spiritualists who profess to have special dealings with the unseen world; neither must we look to any humanly devised means for building up and strengthening the church, such as theological seminaries, missionary societies or Sunday schools. God has not appointed these things, and to look to them is to reject God; and all over the world, and in every time, the result with all who have gone back to these things, has been that all spirituality has died out where these things are made use of, and churches have come to be filled up with graceless members, if not arrant hypocrites. This very result is the curse of God upon those churches, for forsaking his name and his way, and for distrusting him. It is a very solemn question however, to ask of ourselves, Are we looking to the Lord indeed with earnest prayer and supplication, while we reject all these vain helps of man's invention? We may not be looking to wizards that peep and mutter, nor to Egypt, for help, but are we so filled with desire for the prosperity of Zion, and that she may increase with all spiritual blessings, that our prayer constantly goes up before God, that he would grant unto us, and unto all his people these things? It is not enough that we turn from all idols and creature help, but do we turn to the Lord indeed in heart and desire for help? C.

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1 CORINTHIANS IX. 22.

BROTHER Louis Culpepper, of Riddlesville, Texas, asks what is meant by Paul in 1 Cor. ix. 22: "To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."

We wish all who may see this would read from verse nineteen in this chapter to verse twenty-two. First, he claims to be free from all men, and yet the servant of all. That is, he does not receive his orders in the ministry, or his commission from men at all, no, not even from the church of God, but from God alone, yet he considers himself their servant because God has made him to be so. As he says in another place, "Your servants for Jesus' sake." Men have no right to tell him what he shall preach, or where he shall preach. This the Lord alone

does; and Paul looked to God alone in all these things. And Paul though free, yea, rather because he was free, made himself subject even to the weakness of his brethren. So he said once, that if meat caused his brother to offend, although it was his perfect right to eat meat of all kinds, and at all times, yet he would eat no meat while the world stood. Thus he sought to gain or win some, by not insisting upon his rights in matters indifferent. He would not, for a moment, forsake the gospel, or at all yield any essential principle of truth to gain any one. But to gain some to the real truth he would not insist upon doing the things which would in their weakness shock their prejudices. So to the Jew he became as a Jew, and to those under the law he became as under the law, that he might gain those under the law. While to the Gentiles who were without law he became as one without law, and to the weak as one who was weak, that he might gain them. In short, for the gospel's sake, he became all things to all men, that he might be a partaker with his brethren. Now Paul did not mean that he preached any false idea to ingratiate himself with men, neither did he yield any principle of truth or order, that he might fill the ranks of the church with numbers, but he sought to understand the feelings and thoughts of all men, and to speak to their hearts. In so doing he adapted himself, in the arguments he used, and in the words chosen by him, so as to set forth the truth to different minds. Paul did not preach after the same manner at Mars Hill, to the learned Athenians, that he did at Jerusalem to the Jews. He preached indeed the same doctrine, but after a different style of argument and illustration, and with different words, adapting himself to the different classes of hearers. The epistle written by Paul to the Romans, is very different in the general style and order of thought, from that written to the Hebrews. We should be very unwise to use to a child who was inquiring the way, and after the truth, the same words and illustrations that we might to some learned man, whose heart the Lord had also touched. We ought to present the same way of salvation, but in different words and in a different way. This is but a partial view of the subject; that is, we mean that it no doubt covers much more ground than we have hinted at, but it seems to us that this is in general what Paul means in all these verses connected with the text suggested by our brother. Perhaps the words of the dear Redeemer to the disciples would cover the same ground when he said, "Be therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

REVELATION II. 17.

REPLY.

To J. MONTGOMERY:—With consciousness of our inability to explain this text to our own satisfaction, we still feel disposed, so far as we may be enabled, to comply with the request of our friend, and give such views as we have upon the subject. While a sensible darkness shrouds some important parts of what seems to us to be contained in the subject, there are some things embraced in it which appear more clear and beautiful to our understanding of it. If our readers will bear with us in giving what light we have, and look to the Lord to lead our minds more fully into the subject, and to such brethren as have clearer

and more extensive views, for a more perfect elucidation, we will venture a few remarks, as our mind may be led.

First. We notice the source of the communications, embracing all that John was commanded to write to the angels of the seven churches. It is what the Spirit saith. When Christ was about to suffer, and to go to his Father, he assured his disciples that he would not leave them comfortless. He said he would pray unto the Father, and he should send them another Comforter, that should abide with them forever. Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. And he told them further, that this Spirit should take the things of his and show them unto them, and finally that he should lead them into all truth. This Spirit of truth, this Comforter of the saints, we understand to be the Holy Ghost; the same Spirit of the Lord God which was upon and in Christ while he was present with his disciples in the flesh. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. It is the eternal Spirit through which Christ, in his Mediatorial character, offered himself without spot unto God. It is therefore the same Spirit by which God spake unto the patriarchs through the prophets, who testified as the Holy Ghost moved them or spake by them. And Peter calls this Spirit "The Spirit of Christ which was in them," the prophets, "When it testified beforehand of his sufferings and of the glory that should follow." A knowledge of the Spirit addressing the churches of Asia, accounts to us for the sovereign, supreme and unbounded power and authority with which he speaks.

Secondly. All these communications are addressed exclusively to the churches; not to the world, nor to the carnal and unregenerated man; for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Although this Spirit speaketh unto the churches of ungodly characters, such as the Nicolaitanes, Jezebel, her children, and their destiny, he does not speak to them. What he saith, he saith to the churches, or to the branches of the church, which is the body of Christ, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

Thirdly. None can hear what the Spirit says to the churches without divine preparation. The natural or uncircumcised ears of natural men, with all their fancied advantages of religious education, with the Bible in their hand, and living where the gospel is preached in its purity, cannot hear what the Spirit says to the churches, for God, the Father, has hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes; because so it seemed good in his sight. And the discriminating characteristic of this Spirit of truth, is "Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." The apostle John says to those who are of God, "We are of God; he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error."—1 John iv. 6. "Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God; it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach

Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men," &c.—1 Cor. i. 20-25. See also the whole connection. As no natural man, whatever may be his mental powers, or his amount of the wisdom of this world, can know the things or the Spirit of God, or receive the Spirit of truth, he that hath an ear to hear what the Spirit saith, must be one who is *called*, one that is quickened, made alive, and born of the Spirit. Blessed are the ears of all such, for they hear, and blessed are their eyes, for they see. Blessed is the people who know the joyful sound. (Psalm lxxxix. 15.) "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."—John v. 24. This settles the matter, and cuts off all controversy on the subject. He that hath an ear to hear, is a quickened, regenerated child. He has passed from death unto life, and shall never come into condemnation.

Fourthly. It is the privilege of all such to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. All the comforts of the Comforter, all the instructions of the Spirit of truth, all the reproofs, corrections in righteousness, as also all the assurances, promises, encouragements and blessings of the Holy Spirit, belong to such. Blessed state then to be in, having an ear to hear the instructions of the Holy Spirit, a relish for the truth as it is in Jesus, a reverence for the word of the Lord, a thirsting for divine instructions by the Spirit.

How many bleating lambs about the fold of Christ, while listening to the communications of the Spirit to the churches, have felt to say, O that it were my privilege to apply these consolations to myself; how sweet, how lovely, and how blessed they must be for those unto whom they belong. But as for me—

> "I read, the promise greets my eyes,
> But will not reach my case."

For I feel myself too utterly unworthy to be fed even on the crumbs which fall from the well stored table of the Lord. My hungry soul would gladly eat; my thirsting spirit would with joy draw water from the wells of salvation, if I had but the evidence that these provisions were for me; that these streams of living waters flowed from the throne of God and the Lamb for such as I. Poor tempest-tossed child, dry up thy tears. The eternal Spirit of truth, in our text, makes you a welcome guest. The feast was spread for you. It is totally impossible that you should have a relish for this food if it were not provided for you. You could not hear, and know, and love the Shepherd's voice if it were not addressed to you. Every gracious promise which gleams with such heavenly beauty to your view, is made to you. The Spirit speaks it to the churches, and bids all who have an ear to hear it. The Spirit speaks to the churches to come out and be separated from those who say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; it commands the churches to cast out the Nicolaitanes, the Jezebels, and the children of Jezebel, to adhere strictly to their first love, to war against ungodliness in all its forms and shapes, and these admonitions are extended to you, even to you, who only have an ear to hear.

"*To him that overcometh.*" Overcometh what? The context tells us that there were those in the church of Perga-

mos, to whom this message was sent, who held the doctrine of Balaam, and some also who held the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes; these doctrines are not to be tolerated or suffered to be held by any in the church of God; nor by those who have an ear to hear what is said by the Spirit to the churches. But to war against these with all other abominations, requires that we put on the whole armor of God; that we fight the good fight, and that we be valiant for the truth. Nor are the saints engaged in a doubtful contest. The Captain of our salvation will lead you to victory; and though the war be sanguine, and attended with confusion, and garments rolled in blood, with burning and fuel of fire, the flames shall not kindle upon them, neither shall the floods overflow them, for they shall be more than conquerors through him that hath loved them. All his saints shall ultimately triumph, but those even now who overcome, and keep their garments pure, have privileges of a most blessed importance to enjoy. The Spirit speaks the precious promise for the encouragement of the saints. "I will give him to eat of the hidden manna." Their bread shall be given them, and their water shall be sure. There was a golden pot filled with manna, which was hidden in the ark, under the mercy-seat, for a memorial, and while it perpetuated the remembrance of God's mercy in showering down bread from heaven, to sustain the carnal Israelites in the wilderness, it also was typical of the bread of heaven, which is provided within the veil, for all who are born of God. This manna is not supplied as our earthly bread, to be obtained as the result of our own toil and labor, and eaten in the sweat of the face, for it cometh not out of the earth; but it is the true bread which cometh down from heaven, as did the manna in the wilderness. But not like that manna, perishable; as the fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead; but Jesus says he that eateth of the bread that I shall give him shall never die. This manna is hidden; no eye could look within the veil and examine the consecrated things within the ark, as they prefigured the sacred things of the spiritual kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. This spiritual food for the comfort, support and nourishment of the saints, is given only by the Spirit that speaks to the churches. If therefore, trembling reader, you have ever had a taste of it, that Holy Spirit has recognized and sealed you, as a subject of sovereign and saving grace.

"And will give him a white stone." Whether the figure of a *white stone* is taken from the ancient custom of balloting with stones, in which white stones signified approval, and black stones disapproval; or from the stones in the breast-plate of the Jewish high priests, in which were engraved the names of the twelve tribes of Israel which were represented by the priests, we will not attempt to say; but it is clearly in this case, to signify divine approbation, and to serve as a witness of the acceptance of the receiver of the white stones, and approving smiles of the Holy Spirit which he shall enjoy. Our Lord Jesus Christ is frequently set forth as a *Stone*, as a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, &c.; and as white is emblematical of spotless purity, he may well be regarded as a White Stone. But that he should be given to those who overcome, by the Spirit, or Comforter, we think can only be understood as being so revealed to the children of God by the Spirit in their experience. The original gift of Christ to the church was before the world began;

but the application of that unspeakable gift to the saints in their personal experience is the Spirit's work; and it is certain that whenever they are permitted to eat of the hidden manna from the golden pot which is in the ark of the covenant, and under cover of the mercy-seat, the Spirit does invariably reveal Christ to them as their Savior.

"And in the Stone a new name written." Nowhere else but in Jesus Christ have we a name, in which we can stand approved and justified before the throne of God. "Of him the whole family in heaven is named." And as in our earthly nature, we all had a name given us in the earthly Adam; when the Lord God called the name of the generations of the first man, Adam, in the day when they were created, so in our spiritual relation to the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven; God has given his people a name which is better than that of sons or daughters. As the bride receives a new name in the reception of her wedded husband, so the saints are called by a new name which the Lord our God shall name. "Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed, Desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah; for the Lord delighteth in thee." "And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory; and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name."—Isa. lxii. 2, 4.

In this White Stone—in Jesus Christ our Lord—we have a new name, a new character, a new life and experience brought to light, of all of which we were ignorant. But in the revelation of Jesus Christ to us, by the Spirit, old things are passed away, and behold all things are become new. And all things are of God. In this new name and standing we have access unto the Father, by the Spirit through Jesus Christ our Lord. But this new name which is written is a name "Which no man knoweth, saving him that receiveth it." This white stone, and this new name written, are things of the Spirit of God. The natural man cannot receive them; they are foolish unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Those who are vainly striving to teach theology as a science, are themselves in ignorance of the true God and eternal life, while those who are laboring to understand the things of the kingdom, independently of regeneration and of the new birth, may be ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Man, without the revelation of the Spirit, may speculate, philosophize and reason to the extent of his ability on the subject of a gracious state, but all to no profit—the White Stone, and the new name written in it are, and must forever be unknown to all who have not received it. The boundless wealth, the untold riches of those who receive the White Stone, and the new Name, cannot be estimated nor appreciated, until experienced. Those to whom the treasure is given may seem to be poor, despised, obscure, afflicted and persecuted; but in reality they are immensely rich. All things are theirs, whether Paul, or Apollos, the world and its fullness, and Christ is theirs, heaven and immortality; and all things are working together for their best good, in connection with God's declarative glory.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 1, 1860.

THE REVIVAL.

THE good work of our Lord is still progressing in the churches of this vicinity. On the last Sunday in April it was our

happy privilege to lead seven joyful converts down into the baptismal waters, at New Vernon. Nearly twenty-five have been baptized and received into the New Vernon and Middletown and Wallkill churches during the past winter and spring, and we hope there are others about to own their Lord and Master, by a public espousal of his name. Although for a portion of the time we have been disabled by illness, to preach or to administer, still the work of the Lord has not in the slightest degree been retarded. His arm was made bare, so that nothing but his arm could be seen in gathering his sheep, and carrying them in his bosom. O, may his work continue, and spread far and wide, and all the churches of his saints be made joyful in the God of their salvation.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 1, 1860.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The San Marcos Association of the Primitive faith and order, in session with the Providence Church, Blanco Co., Texas, to her sister associations (the Fellowship and Sulphur Fork) with whom she corresponds, sends christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Through the goodness and mercy of our covenant-keeping God, we have been permitted to hold another session of our body in peace and harmony.

We feel thankful to God to be permitted to still continue our friendly correspondence with you, and praise the Lord that we have been permitted, as we hope, to enjoy the peaceful presence of the Lord.

Our next session will be held with the church at Mt. Olive, Shiner, Lavaca Co., Texas, five miles east of Shiner, on the S. & A. P. R. R., to convene on Friday before the second Sunday in August, at which time and place we hope to receive your friendly correspondence again.

Dear brethren, pray for us and visit us. May the Lord bless you and keep you, is the prayer of your little sister. We send this letter by the hands of our brethren, whose names appear in our Minutes.

R. M. PATE, Moderator.

J. L. JENNINGS, Clerk.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

ON the third Sunday in February, 1903, a Primitive Baptist Church was organized at Lanett, Ala., with eight members, and one joined by experience to be baptized soon. At our last meeting, last Sunday, the writer was unanimously chosen as pastor. Lanett is a factory town of about 5,000 population, one mile from West Point, Ga., on the Atlanta & West Point R. R. The prospects seem good for a large church there, I have been preaching there for about ten years. At present we are holding our meetings at sister Waldrops, but hope to build a house of worship soon. So far as my influence goes, we shall try to steer clear of conditionalism and kindred doctrines, yet we shall feel it our duty to exhort and admonish the people of God to a faithful discharge of their obligations to the Lord, and to each other, trusting in the Lord to add to the church "such as shall be saved," and "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

In love and fellowship, I hope,

H. J. REDD.

RIVER VIEW, Ala., March 5, 1903.

CHURCH NOTICES.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

BE it known that we, the Primitive Baptist Church at Roaring River, in Wilkes Co., North Carolina, in session on the third Saturday in February, 1903, do, after prayerfully considering, and reconsidering, the confusion and contention that has grown out of the life and labors of Elder W. R. Welborn, at home (among the Primitive Baptists) and throughout the States, do this day withdraw fellowship from him, he having been a member of this church to this day, and we furthermore declare that he is not preaching under our patronage, and that we are not responsible for his conduct whatsoever. And we order that a copy of these proceedings be published in each of the following papers: SIGNS OF THE TIMES, *Zion's Landmark* and *Primitive Monitor*.

This done and signed the day and date above named.

J. M. CROUSE, Moderator.

M. G. LYON, Clerk.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO BROTHER D. M. LEONARD'S APPEAL TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged.....$627 10

Elder D. Bartley, Ohio, $12.00; Adolphos Corder, W. Va., $10.00; Mrs. John Muir, N. Y., $5.00; A Friend, Ohio, $1.00; Harriet Taylor, W. Va., $3.00; George W. Taylor, W. Va., $2.00; Mrs. Mary Turner, Mich., $1.00; Mrs. A. M. Hellings, N. J., $1.00.—Total..... 35 00

Total to date.....$662 10

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, at his residence, March 4th, 1903, Samuel Taylor, of Truro, Ohio, and Miss Carrie A. Glitt, of Groveport, Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

John F. Hilton, the subject of this notice, was born at Hilton, Va., April 12, 1838, and died Dec. 6th, 1902, at his home near Hillsboro, Texas. Brother Hilton was in bad health for several years with lung and liver troubles, but he was very patient from the beginning of his suffering to the end. He was raised by Old Baptist parents, and his father was a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years, perhaps from the beginning. When the war between the States came up, brother Hilton was living in Missouri, and enlisted in the Eighth Missouri Calvary, Mormaduk's Brigade, and served faithfully four years. His father it seems went to the war from Missouri also, and was killed at Bloomfield, Mo. Oct. 24th, 1867, brother Hilton was married to Miss Mary F. Cox, of Debenin, Mo. Of this union there were born unto them four children, two sons, Willie and Thomas E. The two daughters are Sarah and Mary J. Thomas and Mary are still at the home of their parents, and helped to nurse their dear father through all of his sickness. Brother Hilton professed a hope in Christ, and joined the New School Baptists in 1868, his wife and her people being of that order. But he soon became dissatisfied, and longed for a home among the Old Baptists, and in 1882 he moved from Bollinger Co., Mo., to Hill Co., Texas, heard of Friendship church, Wood Co., forty miles from his home, and on his second visit there he and his eldest daughter, Sarah, united with the church, and were baptized by the writer in the Brazos River, the third Sunday in November, 1883. Our dear brother stood firm on the doctrine of predestination, and salvation alone by grace, through all of the war and confusion for the last fifteen years. He has been a very interested reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for twenty years. His membership for the last several years has been with the church at Blum, Texas. While he had great sorrow from time to time, his cup of joy was full to overflowing many times. When his dear, faithful companion joined the church with him years ago, near their home, his joy was complete. He was lovely and pleasant in his life, and his memory is dear to us all. Just before the end came they phoned for me to come, as it was his request that I should conduct the funeral service, but I was gone from home, and did not get the word in time. He selected a hymn to be sung at his funeral, the first line of which reads, "Ye objects of sense, and enjoyments of time." By the request of the family Elder J. B. Buntyn made a beautiful and appropriate talk at the grave. Our dear brother leaves a true and faithful companion, four children, five grandchildren and one brother, who were all with him in his last sickness, and one sister, Mrs. Rhodes, in Missouri, and many brethren and friends to mourn our great loss. A great man has fallen in Israel, and our sorrow is great.

W. L. ROGERS.

BLUM, Texas.

DIED—**Deacon Wilson R. Kugler,** at his home near Frenchtown, N. J., Feb. 10, 1903, of cerebral apoplexy. He was born near Frenchtown, Sept. 15th, 1831, married to Eliza J. Rittenhouse, Jan. 1st, 1861. He was baptized by Elder Gabriel Conklin, in the fellowship of the Kingwood church, 1858, and chosen deacon in 1873. His widow, two daughters, one son, two brothers and one sister, survive him. He was a man of high moral character, and esteemed throughout the entire community. His home has been a place where every one who knew the family felt a welcome, and especially the Old Baptists. His whole life seemed to be bound up with the church, and the loss seems immeasurable to our family, and the few of us who are left in our little church. He had a good gift in prayer, and often spoke to the comfort of the brethren, having been requested by the church over twenty years ago to lead the meetings in the absence of a minister.

His funeral was largely attended on Saturday, Feb. 14th, Elders Vail and McConnell both taking part in the exercises, speaking with great liberty and power of the wonderful provisions of grace for Israel. Salvation by grace alone was the theme of the deceased, and that alone was the subject of the discourse on the occasion of his funeral.

Words are empty things, and we cannot hope to make known our sorrow, neither can we make known our rejoicing; only an experience of both our sorrow and joy can cause any to know our feelings. We sorrow for the loss of his companionship, his counsel, and his natural love and care for us; we sorrow in the loss of his counsel, and companionship in the afflictions of the gospel, but we rejoice in the consolation given us that for him to die was gain; that with him the warfare is ended, and the fullness of that

peace that he so sweetly experienced in his early life, and was his constant and abiding trust and hope, has been fully realized by him. May his God be the strength and stay of our mother in her loneliness, and the support of his children, and may the Lord bless our little church with his presence, manifesting his watchcare for us, and may we be led to see the wisdom of our God in his dealings with us, and be constrained to say, "Thy will be done."

O. R. KUGLER.

William Harvey Johnson was born July 9th, 1805, and died Oct. 31st, 1902, aged 97 years and 4 months. He was born at German Valley, N. J., at the foot of Schooly mountain. He spent a part of his boyhood days at the mountain, and later on he learned the trade of shoemaking. He then settled for a short time in a little village called the "Harbor," not far from Union. At nineteen years of age he was married to Miss Nancy Hamack, This was in 1824. This wife died in 1829. Two children were born to this union, one dying in infancy; the remaining one, Mrs. Elizabeth Trenchard, having survived her aged father only three and one-half months. She was seventy-seven years of age, and died very suddenly of paralysis Feb. 16th, 1903, being ill but a few hours.

About the time of his marriage brother Johnson settled in and finally purchased the old home in Union, where he spent seventy-six years of his life. In 1830 he was married to Miss Marriettea Lyan, of Springfield, N. J., who went to her home above two years ago, after a married life of more than seventy years. Thirteen children were born to them, seven sons and six daughters; three died before their parents. Brother Johnson became a Baptist at the age of twenty-two years, and united with a church at Academy St., Newark, N. J. He remained with them until the division, when he withdrew fellowship. There was then a little band of members that held meetings in Union, and brother Johnson's house was one of the homes where they met. The ministers who were accustomed to preach at his home were Elders Broome, Trott, Goble and others. He sang much during his whole life. In early life he used to sing songs, but told his children after he knew the better things that it was much easier to sing hymns. He was very patriotic, and used to sing on public occasions. His choice hymns were such as these: "My Father's will," "Slow traveler," "The christian's spiritual voyage," "The day is past and gone," "Sweet is the work my God and King," and two years ago, over the casket of his beloved companion, he sang the beautiful song, "The christian's farewell." He sang many that none of his family ever heard sung elsewhere. He had not seen to read a line in more than twelve years, but his memory, and the gift to quote the Scriptures, and to tell where to find them, remained with him. He was confined to his bed most of the time for a year before his departure. His gift in prayer was excellent, and was always such as commended itself to all who were spiritual.

Thus far we have quoted from a letter written to us by his daughter, sister Mary Haines. We desire to add to the above that it was our privilege to know our aged brother during the last few years of his life. It was a pleasure to be with him, and to listen to his conversation and singing. When several years past ninety he sang with sweetness and perfect melody. He loved to sing the praises of his King and Savior.

The funeral service was held at his long time residence on Monday, Nov. 3d, and as a text the words found in the last clause of Romans x. 12, was used. These words, more than seventy-five years before, were the ones used by the Spirit, and blessed of the Lord to his deliverance into hope and peace. He often, in all his life, would refer to that time, and those words as a lasting source of comfort to him. It was our solemn privilege to attend the funeral service, and to use the above words, upon that occasion. We can only add that a good man has gone on to the reward of grace which awaited him, as we fully believe.

C.

Our dear son, **Thurman C. Gainer**, was born July 7th, 1888, and died Feb. 22d, 1903, making his stay with us 14 years, 7 months and 15 days. Our dear boy was taken sick suddenly with what the doctor pronounced sciatic rheumatism. He was a terrible sufferer from the first day of his sickness, never being able to sit up after he got sick, and could sleep or rest but very little without being under the influence of medicine. From his first sickness he would often be in prayer. He offered up the most fervent prayers I ever heard, calling on the Lord to have mercy on this poor sinner, and asking the Lord to spare him and help him to get well, but would always say, if it was the Lord's will he would like to get well. He would ask us to pray for him. He was the most patient sufferer I have ever seen. Sometimes when he was suffering so he would say, "O, that I could enter into heaven and rest with the dear Jesus." Then he would say, "O, that every one could be washed in the blood of the dear Jesus." His mind and heart seemed to all be on his dear Lord Jesus. About two weeks before he passed away he had a sinking spell in the evening; all got dark before him; the doctor came and injected salt water in his body under his heart in several places; he was nearly gone, as his heart was nearly worn out from suffering and impoverished blood, also complications of other diseases, such as double pneumonia. He was in a stupor all night, his jaws came very near setting, but we brought him out of it, and I went in to stay with him while the family ate breakfast. All at once he opened his eyes and said, "Mamma, I had one of the

sweetest dreams; I thought papa and I were singing and praying together, and saw the dear Lord Jesus' face so bright, mamma, O, so bright, mamma." I said, "What were you singing?" He said, "This," and began to sing,

"We will sing the song of Moses and the Lamb by and by,
And dwell with Jesus evermore;
And we shall rest in that far and happy land,
And dwell with Jesus evermore."

His voice was so sweet. Then he prayed, and then he turned to me and said, "Mamma, I have prayed ever since I got sick that the dear Lord Jesus would save me." Then he said, "Mamma, do you think I have committed any bad depredations in my life, or commit any bad sins that Jesus will not forgive?" I said, "No dear, Jesus turneth none away that call on his name." Then his face looked so bright, and he prayed again, but I cannot think of half he said, for he said so many dear sweet words. O, how we miss him; my heart is sore with aching. But the dear Lord knoweth best, although it is so hard to say, "Thy will be done."

We laid him away on Monday, the 23d, at 5 o'clock in the evening. We tried to get dear brother Polk from San Francisco, but he could not come, so the Christian minister officiated at the burial.

Written by his mother,

(MRS.) S. J. GAINER.

HOPLAND, Cal.

SISTER **Ivy Ann Williams Ashbrook** was born in Licking Co., Ohio, Sept. 27th, 1832; died Feb. 16th, 1903, at her home in Lexa, Ill., aged a few months over 70 years. In 1854 the subject of this sketch was united in marriage with our now brother and Elder E. P. Ashbrook, who survives to mourn the loss of a faithful companion and helpmeet. Eight children were born unto them; four preceded the mother to the better world; four, two sons and two daughters, with one granddaughter who grew up in the family from infancy, live to hold in affectionate remembrance one of the tenderest and best of mothers. Eighteen grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, one brother, one sister, and a large number of other friends and relatives, share in the great loss of one beloved and respected for her kindness of heart, noble christian character and benevolent care for suffering humanity.

Brother and sister Ashbrook came to Coles Co., Ill., in 1859. It was the writer's privilege, on the 11th of June, 1881, to lead sister Ashbrook with two other sisters down into the baptismal waters, having been received in the fellowship of the Little Bethel church. To say that she lived her profession is only to affirm what every one knows. Her faith was of that inflexible kind, and she was rooted and grounded in it. It was of the kind too that drew her to the church, and the church to her. It was very clearly and beautifully exemplified throughout her months of illness and suffering, and especially so a few days previous to her death. The writer, with several of her friends and members of the family, were at her bedside. Her departure seemed near at hand. She was fully conscious of approaching dissolution. She was calm and tranquil. She intimated a desire for singing and worship. The twenty-third Psalm was read and briefly commented on, which was followed by singing. Her face lighted up as if her very soul was filled with a heavenly radiance inexpressible in its sweetness. She was asked if she wished any special hymn sang? "O no," she replied "they are all good and so sweet; I love them all." She seemed to say, "Surely goodness and mercy has followed me all the days of my life; I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." Great indeed is our loss, but greater, far greater the gain to her whose entire trust was in the Lord.

The writer spoke briefly on the occasion of the funeral, from the words recorded in Rev. xiv. 13.

May the Lord bless the surviving members of the family, and bring them ultimately, by the power of his grace, into the full joys of the world to come.

JOHN G. SAWIN.

MATTOON, Ill., Feb. 21, 1903.

DIED—Jan. 6th, 1903, at her home, Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., **Margaret B. Fetter,** widow of Casper Fetter, whom she survived nearly thirty-seven years. Mother was born Sept. 11th, 1816; married April 14th, 1842. She was a member of the Southampton church; baptized by Elder Wm. Quint, in the winter of 1867, if my memory is not at fault. She was the mother of three children, Lydia J. M. Fetter, John and the writer. She was afflicted for many years; her mind was the most diseased part, and she needed the care of a child, which was given her most faithfully by her devoted daughter. Lydia, or Jennie, as she was known, died Sept. 24th, 1901, leaving a sad household; as I was two thousand miles away, and my brother could not be with her at that time. A niece was most devoted to her until her youngest son John and wife could arrange to be with her. They cared for her until her death. Her last words were, "As thy days, thy strength shall be." Elder Durand, her pastor, wrote me he spoke from these words at her funeral. Her natural was not renewed as her spiritual mind, as she often spoke of her weakness in the flesh, and her hope in the Spirit. She was a lover of the SIGNS, and had been a subscriber for many years. She believed in salvation by grace, and practiced her profession by a well ordered life and conversation. "The memory of the just is blessed."—Prov. x. 7. "The fear of the Lord prolongeth days."—Prov. x. 27. "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it."—Prov. x. 22.

G. M. FETTER.

FEBRUARY 17, 1903.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

OUR GOODNESS EXTENDETH NOT TO GOD.

"O MY soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not to thee; but to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight."—Psalm xvi. 2, 3.

A true exposition of this text in its plain scriptural meaning and application, is of great importance to all who serve the Lord of heaven and earth in truth, and should teach us to heed the word of Paul to every man in Christ, "not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think." Owing to the weakness and vanity of the flesh, there is great danger of every one doing this. That even Paul should not be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations the Lord gave unto him for the instruction and comfort of the saints, there was a thorn given him in the flesh to buffet and abase him. God said that dust should be the serpent's meat; and God formed man of the dust of the ground. And Paul warns us against a man who is "vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind."

The royal psalmist David was a type of the Man Christ Jesus, who came in the flesh as God's righteous servant and obedient Son, to do his Father's will, and to glorify him on the earth, by finishing the work which God gave him to do. This he did perfectly. His obedience was a good work, the work of righteousness, and was goodness itself, spotless and divine goodness. So infinitely pure and holy was it, the holy law of God was magnified and made honorable by it. Our spiritual or divine David, "the Son of man," and on his mother's side "the Son of David," was Goodness personified. Yea, all the goodness of all the saints in heaven and earth is in him and from him. "And their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." "I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only."

The very name David means, Well beloved; and in this Psalm David personated Jesus, of whom God said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Indeed these wonderful words of David are as well the words of Jesus, David's Son. He beautifully and in faith in God says, "I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.

For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." These last words of the Psalm of the text show us plainly that the Son of God in the flesh is the one who speaks in the words of the text. At the same time all these words were blessedly true in the person of David, and he shall realize their divine fulfillment. And just as they were true in him, so also are they true in every child and saint of God.

It is for our consolation in Christ that we well understand this truth, for herein is our righteousness, redemption and salvation; that is, in our oneness with Christ. For in very truth Jesus, the holy Child of Mary, and as such the Son of King David, is one in the flesh with all his brotherhood, the people and children whom God gave him. And it is just as sacredly true of them that they are one with him in the Spirit of life. God has thus made them all one, both in the flesh and in the Spirit, in death and in life, on earth and in heaven. "For this cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." All that Jesus the beloved Son of God was and is, he is this to all his many members and brethren, his body and bride, the church. And all his obedience and righteousness, redemption and justification, goodness and blessedness, holiness and salvation, *all*, all is to them and for them. He represented every one of them in all that he is and in all that he wrought, and they shall all be equally benefited in it all with himself, for they are his brethren and joint-heirs.

Such is the meaning of the wonderful words of this text and this Psalm. It was the Spirit of Jesus in David that cried to his Father and said, "Preserve me, O, God: for in thee do I put my trust." How true this is in the heart of every child of God, as well as in the heart of David and Jesus. He continues, calling upon his own soul or himself, saying, "O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord." O how blessed is this holy relationship, My Lord! Jesus expressed this to Mary in the sacredly endearing terms, "My Father and your Father, my God and your God." So his precious words of possession, "Thou art my Lord," are true in all his saints. But now, behold, what it is that he says to his Father and God, "My goodness extendeth not to thee." How humbling are these words of the righteous Son of God! How they should shame and abase us! Jesus says, "I am meek and lowly in heart." And Paul says of him that he "made himself of no reputation." In all things he is the perfect pattern of his true followers, and their highest honor is to be as he was, even though it is to be made conformable unto his death, that we may know also the power of his resurrection, being made perfect through his sufferings in our flesh.

But have you considered, brethren, that the goodness of even "Jesus Christ the righteous," spotless and holy though he were, did not extend to his Father and God? He says it did not, and his word is true. His goodness, though of infinite excellence and merit, added nothing at all to the already infinite goodness of God. The eternal perfections of God could not in the least be increased or made more perfect by the perfect holiness and obedience of his righteous Son. For in his holy Sonship the Anointed of the Father, the Man Christ Jesus, came out from God; and Paul says, "the head of Christ is God." It is true, then, that

Jesus and all his righteous goodness is of God. His own word is, "There is none good but One, that is, God." "The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake." "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." These words of our perfect Teacher show the entire dependence of the Son of the Highest upon his Father in all his goodness and work of righteousness. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights."

All goodness descends, therefore, but does not ascend up to God, to either add anything to his infinite fullness of eternal glory and blessedness, or to influence him in the bestowment of any goodness and favor. And since the goodness of the perfect Man does not extend up to God, to bring down his salvation and blessing, how vain is the presumption of imperfect men, whose most righteous works are marred by sinful imperfection, who talk and boast of influencing God to send down his blessings of salvation upon them as rewards for their goodness in their works. Surely they must think that their goodness does extend up to God, or else they would not and could not make such a parade of their works which they call good. The self-righteous Jew thought himself good, and asked Jesus what good thing he must do, calling him "Good Master." But the Master rebuked him, saying, "Why callest thou me good?" As a man, Christ claimed no goodness of himself, but ascribed all goodness to God, and thus he honored his holy Father. We should take his rebuke to ourselves, if we suppose we are good, or have the ability to do good and keep the commandments of God, who is holy, and his commandment is holy and just and good. How can a sinful man keep a holy commandment, and receive a reward for his goodness? Paul says of God, "Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

"But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight." This is a blessed and very wonderful truth, for it reveals the beneficence and salvation of all the saints. The perfect obedience, justifying righteousness, divine excellence and everlasting goodness of our divine David freely and blessedly extendeth to all the saints in the world, from him to them, enfolding and uplifting them as one with him in his own heavenly goodness and excellence, making them the very righteousness of God in his well beloved Son. O brethren, this is most glorious! "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." "Therefore let no man glory in men." "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him which is the Head of all principality and power."

Give thanks and rejoice, O my soul! that the all-satisfying goodness of the Son of God's delight did not extend upward to the Godhead and angels, as though he or they needed anything; but he bowed the heavens and came down to thee, and to all his people and

saints in this earthly life, unto the end that he might minister unto them, and give his life of goodness a ransom for them. "This is all my salvation, and all my desire."

Seeing that this is true of the Lord Jesus, the glorified Head of the saints, to whom he imparts his excellent goodness, unto their everlasting good and infinite benefit, uplifting them into his own endless life and goodness and glory; O how much less true is it that the goodness of saints extendeth to God, to bring his blessings down upon us who love and serve him! Yet this sentiment is the very kernel of all conditional salvation; for it is all based upon the doctrine or claim that the goodness and works of service of the saints do extend to God, and so far influence him as to bring down his divine blessings of salvation upon them as rewards for their goodness. No doctrine in religion and its service could be more untrue and dishonoring to God and his salvation and its free bestowment. For all his bestowments and blessings in all the salvation of his chosen people, from the gift of his dear Son and with him all things, are "without money and without price."

True enough, a man's works may either help or hurt a mortal like himself, but what can he do unto God? The religious world is carried away with this strong delusion, believing that the Almighty needs and wants their help in salvation, and that he will bestow rich rewards upon those who will do much good in this work of salvation. And so they think to add stars to their crown of glory. Others are more modest in their claim and say, "The people of God receive their rewards for obedience in this life only." (Page 101 of Fulton Convention.) Who rewards them "For obedience?" The only answer would be, God does. Then their goodness extendeth to God. This is exalting man above the obedient Son of God himself. How brazen!

Paul commanded that they who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works, and then added, "These things are good and profitable unto men." *This is all.* "Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

D. BARTLEY.

LEBANON, Ohio, March 7, 1903.

CHRIST THE END OF THE LAW.

MANY times I have been asked, What about the law of Moses, is it binding today on the children of men? Again, are the ten commandments, which were written on tables of stone, the law of Moses, or are the commandments issued to the children of Israel after the decalogue was written and promulgated, "The law?" Does the law include the decalogue and all of the ordinances and rules given to Israel by the hand of Moses?

To the first question I must say that the apostle has forever settled this point, as regards God's quickened children, "For ye are not under the law, but under grace."—Rom. vi. 4. The law was our schoolmaster unto Christ, "But after that faith is come we are no longer under a schoolmaster."—Gal. iii. 25. Hence we are not under the law or schoolmaster any more, but are freed from the de-

mands of the law, neither is our justification from the law, but from and through him who is above the law. For by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified. "If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."—Gal. ii. 21. It will not do to say that Christ died in vain, unless we say that he is not the Savior of his people. This would exclude Christ altogether, and make his blood an unholy thing, which is declared to be the blood of the everlasting covenant. Christ is declared to be a full and complete Savior of sinners, hence his people are no more under the dominion of the law. They who are under the law are under the curse, and we know that the saints are not under the curse. They have been delivered from the curse, for Christ was made a curse for them. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse. For it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."—Gal. iii. The covenant in Christ cannot be disannulled by the law which was four hundred and thirty years after the promise. The law is not against the promises of God, for if there had been a law given to give life, then righteousness would have been by the law. God's chosen people could never become justified by any law of works: be it the law of Moses, or any other law which requires work to be performed by them. This would be too weak and uncertain, nor could the Scripture be fulfilled in this way, for it is written, The just shall live by faith, and as Paul says, That they are not justified by the law of works, but by the law of faith. Therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed. The law is holy, just and good, but vain man is sold under sin, and in a state of nature cannot keep the very first commandment of it, to say nothing about the rest that follows. It is a great error among many people, that those who do not believe the gospel are cursed by it. The law of the ministration of life in Christ Jesus does not curse any person. It is the law of the ministration of death which curses or condemns. For "he that believeth not is condemned already." Christ's work was not to destroy, but to save that which was lost, and fulfill the testimony of the Scriptures. It is a gross error to hold the Head in such a way as to make him damn people because they will not believe on him. The law was given by Moses unto the children of Israel. It was not enjoined unto any other people that we can hear of. These were God's chosen and circumcised people to whom pertaineth the law and ordinances. These were dedicated with blood, for Moses sprinkled the book and all the people, saying, "This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you." This dedication made it binding to Israel and to no other people. God placed Israel under law to him without their consent. Hence what the law saith it saith to them who are under the law. All the righteousness to be obtained under the law, as such, was a legal righteousness, just like that which Saul of Tarsus had, and cannot stand before the Sun of righteousness when he arises with healing in his wings. The Gentiles were not favored in having the law of Moses enjoined unto them as Israel was, but if by nature they do the things contained in the law it becomes a law to them in reaping whatsoever it promises, but notice, eternal life was never promised to those under law, or to any people for doing what it required. Christ alone fulfills the law, and fills it full, for all his

people, both Jew and Gentile. The first and greatest commandment he fulfills in the hearts of his people in giving them that power of love whereby they are enabled to love God supremely, thus they have "no other gods before them," only the one God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. This is the "everlasting love" that God had for them in eternity, and is the same love with which they love God and whereby they love one another. The law was a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ. It was a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things. It made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." All things are put under his feet. (Psalm viii. 6; 1 Cor. xv. 27; Eph. i. 22.) "He left nothing that is not put under him."—Heb. ii. 8. From the above we see that Jesus is above "all things," hence above the law, and all law. The apostles called it tempting God to make Gentile believers come under the yoke of bondage, "Which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear."—Acts xiii. 10. As for the precepts of the law which teach morality, none will presume to reject, which is the base of all good human governments, and the foundation of social life among civilized nations. Jesus taught a better precept than is found in the law of Moses. It taught, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, evil for evil, good for good, Jesus taught the reverse, Do good to them who hate you; pray for your enemies. Here are precepts that are sublime, and which reflect the wisdom and love of him who is the author of them. None but Jesus was able to establish this rule among the children of men. Here we see the spirituality of that better law; "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." The isles shall wait for this law. The Law-giver is a quickening Spirit, and quickeneth whomsoever he will. This spiritual power is exercised over all flesh, and none can escape its searching power that he designs to manifest in light, and in the knowledge of the truth.

Some say that the Sabbath day ought to be observed, as it was a holy day in olden times, and was set apart by God to be observed as a day of rest. I dare not now say much on this subject, as this letter would be too long. The Sabbath was a day of absolute rest for man and beast, a violation of this command caused the transgressor to be put to death. Modern times would not admit such a penalty to be meted out to a transgressor of this command. Nor is it probable that a Sabbath is now kept as it was by the Israelites. It ceases to be a Sabbath when not observed as it was in days of old. We have better reasons than this to say why the seventh day of the week is not binding on the followers of the Lamb, first, it being typical of the day of rest that remains for the people of God; when that day came, the type was withdrawn or rolled up, or passed away. Believers only enter into that rest, they only discern the Lord's body and the true Sabbath; they alone of all the earth cease from their labor, as God did from his. Here is rest, absolute rest; rest which the world cannot give them, nor take away from them; resting under the shadow of the wing of heaven; they have heard the voice of their Beloved, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Rest signifies quietness, also peace. Again, he says, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me peace. He giveth his people peace (rest), "For he will speak peace

unto his people, and unto his saints." "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ." —Col. ii. 14–16.

In answering the third question at the beginning of this article in the affirmative, I answer the second also. I certainly think that the law of Moses included the ordinances and rules given to Israel for her instruction and guidance in all that pertained to her worship and manner of living. The law invariably includes the decalogue, and it is the most important of all, the base of all that follows it; notwithstanding many people think the law only embraces the ceremonial law, or ordinances and rules pertaining to the temple worship and rules of living, There are many proofs to show that the decalogue is meant when the law is spoken of by Jesus and his apostles, as there is that the ceremonial is also meant in other places. For instance, Jesus says the first and greatest commandment of the law is the first commandment of the decalogue. The second is like unto it, and upon these two hang all the law and the prophets. "Behold, thou art called a Jew, and restest in the law." "Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?" From the above, it is evident that when the law is spoken of, it means the commandments written on the tables of stone by the finger of God. I have never viewed it otherwise, how can we look at it any other way? This was the old covenant written on tables of stone, whereas the new is written on the fleshly tables of the heart, by the Spirit of our God, which cannot be erased. There is great meaning in this, the writing of the old covenant and the writing of the new: where it is written, how it is written, and what it teaches; "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."—Gal. v. 1. "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments, in ordinances."

I submit this to you, brother Beebe, use it, or cast it aside.

J. F. BEEMAN.

CARMEN, Okla., Feb. 5, 1903.

OAK GROVE, Mo., Nov. 24, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Though I have never written for publication in our paper, feeling that anything I could write would be but to darken counsel, I feel now that I should like, if the Lord wills, to write a few words to the saints to gain the fellowship of all the true believers of our dear Lord, and as the words of Luke, recorded in Acts ii. 42, "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers," come to my mind with some force, I will offer a few thoughts in connection with them; for what can cause more joy and rest in this world of sorrow and turmoil, than the sweet fellowship of the dear saints who have felt the bitterness of sin, and have realized their own hopeless bondage, and their utter inability to release themselves from one iota of the awful load, and after having given up all hope to find themselves at the feet of Jesus? whom they see as their sin-bearer, and behold in him all the power and perfection of the Godhead, and see the infinite love and mercy and grace bestowed on a poor sinner through

him, and to know that in him is all that is needful to save a sinner, and keep him both in time and eternity? Indeed it is so wonderful that my poor, carnal mind cannot lay hold of it, and I seem to doubt whether I can be included in the awfully grand and glorious scheme. And yet he died to save sinners, and that includes me.

But I wonder if I know the doctrine? that is why I write and want to talk to the saints. If I know the doctrine, and the saints have fellowship for me thereby, it is an evidence that I belong to the family, and if so, an heir of God, and joint-heir with Jesus Christ, and this is the most blessed thought. If we know the doctrine, it is because God taught us, for there is no other way of knowing it. We may have a tolerably correct idea of the principles of predestination, election, &c., but not know the doctrine, and thereby come many deceivers, that deceive many of the saints. The doctrine is not a philosophical problem, but is a living fire that is in you, ever burning, but never consuming, and we behold it with wonder and awe, as did Moses the burning bush, and when we feel its power, and behold its majesty, love and mercy, it strips us of all our carnal righteousness, and we stand trembling, feeling that we must take the very shoes from off our feet, for we are on holy ground. And, dear brethren, I feel that every principle of the doctrine is holy ground, and should be approached with reverence, for every principle sets forth some attribute of our most holy and reverend God, who, though we are vile sinners, dwells in us, showing us the wonders of our glorious inheritance, and teaching us the denying of ungodliness and worldly lusts.

I said, If we know his doctrine, God taught us. Jesus said, "All thy children shall be taught of God * * * every man therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me." John said, "That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." David said, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant." So here are three that bear witness that the doctrine is not learned, only as God teaches it. Now Jesus said he would send the Comforter, and he would guide us in the way of all truth; hence it is the one God with the one message, by the one Spirit, to the vilest sinner in all ages, and as they all need the same remedy, they are all taught the same lesson, and rejoice in the same Savior, and sing the same song, even praises to his name. Now there are false spirits in the world, who put on a garment of light; transform themselves, the apostle says, and they say, Yes, Jesus did die, &c., but now you must be good, you must be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect, and you can walk in disobedience and receive the chastening rod, and even die, &c., &c., misleading the poor little child into the idea that he can stand alone, and the devil comes along and says, You ought to be good, and that is all true, and God has taught you that, too, and you learned to your sorrow that when you would do good, evil was there, and it was only when brought into Christ that you found relief; it was not your righteousness that brought peace, it was his; you were in him, clothed in his righteousness; overwhelmed with it; you were satisfied, yea, in peace; you could know what he meant when he said, "In me ye shall find peace." This same Jesus has said, "Abide in me," and this devil's angel would tell you that

you can be good now, because of the good lessons you have learned, and this poor, carnal man thinks, Surely that is so, and so comes trouble. But thanks be to him, he will never leave nor forsake thee. And O, dear saint, remember that this blessed doctrine that beholds the omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient God that "works all things after the counsel of his own will," was taught you by his blessed Spirit, and that he led you to that Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, and that in him you found all things needful for your salvation, even that he was your wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption, your life, and that in him is the fullness of God that created all worlds. Therefore has all power, all wisdom and all righteousness, which is in Jesus for you, and that it is only those that are in him that receive joy and peace, and that he will bring you off more than conquerors through him. Remember this doctrine when talked of brings fellowship, and our feeling how sinful and weak we are, makes us look up to him with prayer and supplication, that he will lead us and keep us, lest we be found among the unbelievers.

Dear brethren, there are many in the west who are numbered among the Baptists, that are afraid of God's complete control of all things, also that are preaching two salvations. I know of only one taught in the holy Scriptures, and in my experience: "The Lord is my salvation. He is my strength and my song." When I am in him I find peace, when I am in the flesh, and have not his Spirit lighting my path, and showing me his will, then do I become a pharisee, and get pretty well contented with myself, which shows us how weak and deceitful is the carnal mind; "not subject to the law of God," but making our own laws. O, what a mercy it is that he does not change, but his love and purposes continue steadfast, for after he has suffered us to follow our own ways long enough to teach us the lesson he purposes, he takes us in his loving embrace, and then we see and abhor ourselves. Who of God's people should want any other teacher? He is the only one that can show us that in our flesh dwells no good thing. Yes, but say some, we can quench the Spirit and resist his teaching. I think not. The spirit in us both kills and quickens. When it pricks us in the heart we are dead to sin, but alive to holiness, nevertheless we cannot put him away and bury him out of sight, but bear him about in our own bodies, and loathe him, but he shall go with us down to our graves, there shall he be put away for ever. The wicked can resist the spirit, as it is manifest in the children of God, because it just cuts to the heart, as they did in Stephen, when they gnashed on him with their teeth. And now, brethren, we, if we continue in the apostles' doctrine, are sure to be in fellowship, because the Spirit teaches the doctrine, yea, the deep things of God, and all God's children can unite in praise to him. It teaches the most humble and illiterate just the same as the most learned; all are brought on one common level, and none can boast. But you will say, Elder so and so is a wonderfully deep man, and the Spirit has revealed to him so much, and I know so little, if anything, and did not our hearts burn within us while he was unfolding God's wonderful ways? Dear child, God was just showing you what he had revealed to you by sending him as a witness, only giving him the ability to tell you what God had shown you, lest you should faint by the way, or Satan should persuade you that it was just a creature

of your imagination. Just see how his loving care follows you. The man you think blessed beyond measure is just like you, an empty blank, in the absence of the Spirit; has all your doubts, all your fears, all your weakness, is in no whit different, only God set him up for a witness to you. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be of God, and not of men." Does the doctrine humble you? Does it show you how sinful, how weak you are? Does it show you the awful, wonderful majesty, power and mercy of God? Does it show you that all this wonderful power is engaged in the salvation of poor sinners? Does it show you that nothing can thwart the purpose of God, and that he will save all that come to God by Jesus? Does it teach you that it was impossible for you to approach the throne of God because of your sins, but that Jesus died for sin, and is the propitiation of our sins, and that having rose again, stands for ever at the right hand of God to make intercession for the saints? Does it teach you that when you were without strength you was made strong in his presence, having been "brought into his banqueting-house, and his banner over you was love"? O, does it teach you humility, love for the brethren? Does it put songs of praise in your soul? Does it make you want to follow him? Does it show you how weak you are? If so, prayer will be the result. You will be praying continually, O Lord, help me, guide me, keep me from evil, save me from myself, &c.

Dear saints, there are some yet that continue in the apostles' doctrine, and in fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer, and there always will be, and let us watch that none take our crowns; cling to the doctrine; it is our experience, it is our practice, it is our life. If we are following after the world we are not in the doctrine. Let us watch lest the wolf scatter the sheep. We are living in a time that is more dangerous than the days of the reformation, and it behooves us, dear brethren, to speak often to each other. May God draw us closer together, and give us eyes to see, and strength to put away every false way, and withdraw from all that walk disorderly, thereby manifesting that we are the children of God in deed and in truth.

Brother Beebe, my mind has wandered much more than I thought when I commenced this. If it is unfit for publication destroy it. It is my first attempt. I know not what is best. I do know though that the theme of God's ways is always on my mind, and I am meditating on the subject at work or at rest, so I have just written as my mind led me. The SIGNS advocates the doctrine of the Bible, and is the only paper in this United States that I know, that is free from adulteration. May the Lord keep you in the truth, and give you strength and wisdom to continue the SIGNS, if it is his will.

Yours in hope,

WM. M. STARTZMAN.

WINONA, Wash., Jan. 4, 1903.

S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—I hope you will not think I am forward, or seek notice, but as you asked me to send some of my thoughts or expressions to the SIGNS, I will send you this manuscript, and it is so faulty that I almost have to shut my eyes to be able to start it. It is awful weak and frail, like myself, spiritually. Do with it as you like.

Paul, in the fifth chapter of 2 Corinthians, shows that our salvation and all that we have and are is of the Lord, and that if we are in the gracious state of a

child of God, we are in the Lord, in Christ; hence a new creature; old things have passed away, behold all things have become new. Now, whether it is the work of the creature, or the work of God, that such a one is a new creature, is a question that in the world has long been in controversy; neither do I expect to settle the matter to the satisfaction of the world, (for if I seek to please man then I cease to be the servant of God,) but perhaps some who read may rejoice that there is one more poor, weak, helpless one that depends alone on the mercy of God. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. The requirements in order to be a new creature, is to be in Christ; if this is the work of man it is time we had some scriptural proofs. Some say it is by our good works that we get in God's favor, and he is under obligation to save us, and I think these are the greater part of professed christians. Now, if this glorious change from death to life is brought about by our own works and righteousness, Isaiah was wrong in chapter sixty-four, verse six. Here he says, "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Would we not look well to take all this unclean, filthy mess to a throne of grace, and try to exchange it for a place in Christ, and thereby become a new creature? In another place the prophet says, "I will declare thy righteousness and thy works; and they shall not profit thee." It looks very discouraging to depend on works, and we have only had two witnesses, but lest the prophets are mistaken let us get some testimony elsewhere: Matthew i. 21, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, [which is savior] for he shall save his people from their sins." This would seem of itself enough to convince any one that it was not the works of men that save, but the blood of man, the man Christ Jesus. There is not a condition in this text. The angel did not tell Joseph he might call the child Jesus, for if the people would let him he would save them from their sins. O no, but, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus," and he tells the reason: "for he [Jesus] shall save his people from their sins." Not may, or might, but shall, and there is not a man, woman or child, but what calls the angel a liar who says there will be one lost whom this Savior came to save. John, in giving his testimony, Matthew iii. 11, 12, says, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner." Here his people are expressed by wheat, and not a single condition, but he will first baptize with the Holy Ghost and then with fire. And, brethren, I am glad, for in passing through this fire all our works and righteousness (filthy rags) are consumed, and we are in Christ a new creature. And this is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. Others say that to keep the law is the way to eternal life. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill."—Matthew v. 17. This every one can testify to who has in reality sought justification, for when they tried the law they learned that it was for the lawless, and that it condemned all such, and they must seek elsewhere. So when they got to the end of the law, there was Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes. Even so with Paul, for while he was keeping the law, and thinking he was doing God service, we find that he was accused of per-

secuting the blessed Lord. Are we better than Paul? Can we hope to succeed where he and all others failed? But if there had been a law given that could have given life, verily righteousness would have been by the law. Paul learned better than to believe such stuff as this, as shown in Gal. ii. 16; iii. 11. With these witnesses and our own experience we are forced to use the expression in Romans iii. 28, "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Then let us leave the law, and not look to it to enable us to get in Christ, and so become a new creature. But, says one, you must take the New Testament as well as the law, take all the Scripture, that is the way, that is what it is for. But here is a neglect shown, for we are commanded to search the Scripture, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me. So you cannot hope to get eternal life in the mere reading and practice of the teaching of the Scripture, but they are for a far different purpose. We are told that they are given by inspiration of God, and are profitable to the man of God for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness, that he may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to every good work. Not to give life, but to qualify the living to good works. O, I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes. Not to the unbeliever, but to them who are in Christ, these new creatures, they are the ones who are saved by the gospel administered by the power of God. We have tried to follow some of the most popular ideas of the religious world, and in so doing the Scripture has flatly contradicted them all. Then let us sing the sweet song, the song of songs, salvation by grace, "For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." This declares that it is the gift of God that you are in Christ a new creature. He (Jesus) is the way, and declares there is no other name given in heaven or among men whereby we must be saved. This is the One who has declared in the new covenant that he will be merciful to our unrighteousness, and our sins and iniquities. What a glorious and merciful High Priest we have, one who has not to go in and offer for sins once every year, for we find that he has taken away the first, that he may establish the second, by the which will we are sanctified through offering of the blood of Jesus Christ once for all. Glorious thought, for by the one offering he has forever perfected them that are sanctified. But when the light of the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ, shines in our hearts to give us the knowledge of sin, how we hate our sins, for we see as did Paul that we are chief of sinners, and that in this condition we can never see God. Then are we truly in a sore condition. We then can see our true condition, and we are made to try all that we think will better us; we try to do good; we try to live up to the law, yet finding this to be impossible, for we are all sin, and we have read that nothing good can come from an unclean thing; we are made to cry and mourn on account of sin; this is evidence to us that we are a new creature, for before this we enjoyed sin, and now we detest it, thus showing that we have already been created a new creature, and this new creature hates sin with a perfect hatred. How is this done but by taking away the hard and stony heart, and giving us a heart of flesh? Then the one that was so oppressed is made to see that Christ

died for his sins, and the language of the angel to the shepherds is direct to him, for he feels that now, this day, is born a Savior, and by faith he believes it is his Savior, and he rejoices with unspeakable joy, full of glory, for he who is his life has appeared, and to be in his presence is a heaven below, and one can lay claim to these gracious expressions as direct to them. This is to be born not of a corruptible seed, but of an incorruptible, by the Word of God; not the written word, but the Word that was in the beginning; that was with God, and that was God; the same was made flesh, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; born of God; born of the Spirit, pure; that which is born of God doth not commit sin, pure, and as is the Father so is the child. No wonder it is called a new creature. All this is done not by the will of man, but of God. We have not chosen him, but he has chosen us.

To all such as have a hope in Christ, not by their own works, but by grace, be of good cheer, for he has said to them who have no helper, to the helpless, to the poor and needy, that he will be their help. He will hold you up by his everlasting arm; he will let you rest in the shadow of a great Rock, and sometimes take you into his banqueting-house, and his banner over you is love. What a glorious Savior we have; one who never leaves nor forsakes us. We may get low in the valley of despair, feel the affliction of sin to such a degree that we are ready to give up all, but the low small voice will in the Father's own time tell us to be not afraid. He has promised to be with us in six troubles, and in the seventh not to forsake. This is enough; if Jesus is with us through life, and does not desert us in death, how blessed we are.

T. E. ATTEBERY.

604 Tyler St., Waco, Texas, Feb. 1, 1903.

To the Editors and Contributors of the Signs of the Times:—I feel like I want to write something, to express my feelings in some way. I desire to say, dearly beloved in the Lord, through the kindness of some dear friend, the Signs has been coming to me for some months past, and the contents of each number has been read with comfort, and my faith in the power of Jehovah has been renewed and strengthened, and I am glad to know that there are yet a few who are enabled by divine grace to contend for the truth as it is in Jesus. I feel sure if I know anything of truth, that it is only by grace we know the Lord; he is our salvation, and that in a complete work, and the same grace that saved us from an endless hell, keeps us through time, and we are just as helpless to control and bring this grace into action after having first received it, as we were before. If grace does not prompt and cause our action in the fear and service of the Lord, then our service is only of the flesh, and is only a hypocritical pretense. Man at his best state is altogether vanity, and therefore if there is any truth, any wisdom, any power, any righteousness, any salvation, we have to look away from man to find it. The subjects of grace find all they need in time or in eternity in Christ Jesus, the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Whatever men may claim or cavil over respecting good works and ability to do them, God's word remains absolute and unchanged, and truth will prevail. The new birth has no effect in changing the old man, the earthy man, and his heart remains deceitful and desperately wicked. His mind is still carnal, and not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. However the

Spirit of Christ dwells in this earthen vessel; "Christ in you the hope of glory," and such vessels are vessels of honor, and chosen of God for the purpose they serve, and there are other vessels fitted to destruction by some power. I see no difference in the power that the potter displays in making his vessels, and it certainly is not wise to claim that he leaves the choice to each vessel as to what disposition shall be made in selecting its attitude to service. Some are claiming however that the Potter has only to do now with the vessels of honor, the good things, and does not shape the destiny of the vessels of dishonor, those fitted to destruction. Jude says these were before of old ordained to this condemnation, or destruction, and I believe it. It would seem strange that a potter would spend his time in making his wares, and then declare he had no purpose in making only such as were to occupy an exalted station or position of honor. The rejected or dishonorable vessels, or vessels of wrath, he is at a loss to know what to do with them, only to turn them over to a world of chance. This seems to me to be in harmony with some doctrine now advocated. But I glory in the doctrine that gives the Potter all the power in creating, shaping and disposing of his wares. Some claim that the vessels of honor after receiving their treasure are then in an active capacity, not passive as before, or as when coming from the hands of the Potter, or in other words, when the new birth takes place the vessel or man is then able to do the will of the Master, by being made alive. This might be if there was any change in the material or composition of the vessel. The contents of the vessel is where the value is considered, and this is where judgment is resting. These vessels Peter describes as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Christ dwells within these stones, and is their life, and their every movement is the direction of the life, and not of the stone. Let us give glory to the life and not to the stone. If I know anything of Christ, it is Christ dwelling in me the hope of glory. I have no other hope. By the spirit of man that is in me I know the things of other men; even so knoweth no man the things of God save the Spirit of God. Then where is man's ability to come to God, only as the Spirit directs and leads him? Is he not passive, helpless, dependent? If there is any true worship of God from his creature it is the Spirit of truth dwelling in them that renders the sacrifice acceptable. No fleshly offerings will be accepted, because they have not been required. The heirs of promise are commanded to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is their reasonable service. How is this done? Have they the ability to do this within themselves, and is it left optionary with their own wills whether they obey or not? The writer says, I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God that ye do this. I believe the experience of the children of God is ever in accord with the language of the Savior, that without me ye can do nothing, and all the evidence there is or can ever be for us to judge as to who are his lowly and humble followers is the Spirit of Christ manifested in the man, in the vessel, in the stone. If we write, if we speak or teach of the things pertaining to salvation, and do not display the Spirit of Christ, our work is vain, and is as a sounding brass or tinkling cymbal. If our service to God is not prompted by

truth, and we are not drawn by love, it amounts to no service at all.

Much is being written and said respecting the purpose of God in all things. I feel glad that all this comes in under the protecting care of Jehovah, and even all men and devils are subject to his sovereign control. Whether we believe or disbelieve the Scriptures, it is a certain fact, all things are moving on fulfilling the word of inspiration, and our helpless condition and the daily experience we have is the best evidence we can have to confirm our hope in the power of God. If we could not see some evidence of the Scriptures being fulfilled we would often sink in despair, and as for me I should not remain on the foundation that I occupy if I could get away and find a better. But I feel to say that it is by the grace of God that I am what I am, and I feel to crave and have a longing desire to be more and more like Christ (if indeed I have ever manifested any of the fruits of the meek and lowly Lamb). My life is not what I would desire, and I am only a wanderer and a stranger, and many times feel to be one alone, and I get restless and become disquieted within, and in retrospecting the past can see nothing but a continued line of effort and failure on my part, and my days on earth have been spent in vain. The treachery of my heart forbids my claiming any of the sweet promises that God has spoken to his people. He says, Be ye holy as I am holy. Well, how can one so vile, and corrupt, and so full of bruises, and wounds, and putrefying sores, comply with this command? This is my condition, and furthermore my heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. What a filthy vessel to claim any honor. Mystery of mysteries! who can understand?

Right here I'm left to drift,
And cannot see my way;
The time is flying swift,
I know I'll soon decay.
I've nothing here to claim,
That renders me solace,
Except the holy name
Of him who fills all space.

Now, what I have written is so full of imperfection I am reminded that probably I have said enough for this time. If what I have desired to hint at is truth, I am not ashamed of it, and if it is only the prompting of the flesh, and I am still in darkness, I have to ask you dear ones to bear with me, and if you see where you can help me, I pray that you fail not to come.

In love and fellowship I remain,

I. HARVEY WEBB.

RIVERVIEW, Ala., Mar. 5, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Here is a short letter from Elder Morgan Brown, of Griffin, Ga., that did me so much good I would like for you to publish it in the SIGNS, believing that it portrays, to some extent at least, the experience of all the Lord's dear children. I am personally acquainted with Elder Brown, and have enjoyed many pleasant moments in his company, but I have never yet been with him as much as I desired. His conversation is godly and edifying, and his doctrinal sentiments sound. I wish he would take the SIGNS, if he does not, and write for it.

Yours in trials and afflictions,

H. J. REDD.

GRIFFIN, Ga., Feb. 15, 1903.

MY DEAR BROTHER REDD:—Your sweet, sad letter of last Friday came to hand to-night on my return from County Line, also the postal was received, 5 p. m. I had gotten ready to go to Milner. You may be sure that I just do not know

how to begin to answer your godly letter. While we had a good, sweet meeting at County Line to-day and yesterday, and I could hardly doubt the presence of the Lord with us, yet can truly say that I wanted to be with you all as much as I ever wanted to do anything in all my life. I believe I had gotten everything ready as did Abraham in offering up Isaac, but when the time came for me to take the very step I was hindered, I guess, of the Lord. I know I as fully intended going out there as I ever did anything in my life, but somehow I was hindered. Your guess of my lack of means was true indeed, as is nearly always the case under such circumstances, but I suppose that obstacle could have been overcome had not a combination of other circumstances suddenly and unexpectedly broke in upon me, the nature of which I will tell you if ever I see you again, and it is the Lord's will. But suffice it to say that the sorrow of my poor soul in this trying ordeal is enough to make one's soul "choose strangling rather than life." O, I have thought of poor Job so much, and of the deep affliction through which he was called to pass, and of the many bitter weepings and pitiful complaints that was wrung out of a heart full of anguish, when to aggravate his misery his wife, who was a stranger to his afflictions, (only in him) would recommend that he "curse God and die." And this bitter experience of Job is in a measure felt and tasted by every child of grace, for Peter speaks of these "fiery trials" which shall come unto you, and shall try you as gold is tried, and he tells us not to think it a strange thing concerning them, for truly it appears to be the heritage of God's people in this world, for Paul says that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God, and it is also a fact that except we suffer with Christ, we have no promise to reign with him. It looks like these gracious words of inspiration ought to comfort us in our trials, but O, how our poor, weak flesh shrinks from such sufferings, and we are found begging, "If it be possible let this cup pass." After it is all over how good it is to think that our blessed Master was tempted in all points as we, and as a merciful High Priest can be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, and that all of our sore trials and conflicts, disappointments, &c., work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, in that it brings us immediately into the fellowship of the sufferings of the Son of God. Thus are we made to be a "partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, according to the power of God," the which the apostle exhorts us to "endure as good soldiers of Jesus Christ." We often feel that we would give all the world for an infallible sign of our acceptance in the Beloved, and indeed that is just the price we are to pay for such a sign, for he that would save his life shall lose it, but he that loseth his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. This is the way we are weaned away from the world, and made willing to relinquish all our claims on the things of earth, and as Paul said, become crucified to the world and the world to me even by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Gal. vi. 14.)

Please write me soon of the results of the meeting, and if you did not constitute your church, and yet desire me to come, I will try again to come. Love to all. Pray for me. May God bless you all.

Yours in hope,

MORGAN BROWN.

JOHN XIV. 12.

"VERILY, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to my Father."

The Lord being my helper, I will suggest a few thoughts on the above portion of Scripture, and send them to your consideration and approval, or disapproval, as your better judgment may decide.

These words were spoken directly to Christ's disciples who had one heart and one way; one Lord, one faith and one baptism, and called in one hope of their calling, and were so attached to their Lord and Master, the great Shepherd and Bishop of their soul, that the thought of his leaving them troubled their hearts, but Jesus consoled them by telling them that he would send them another Comforter.

And now, in order to express my view of this text in few words, I will begin in this way, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also." These are all the works that the believer in Christ can do, or does do; are the works that Christ does in them, and this work is not dependent upon the believer, but upon Christ, who worketh in them, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Phil. ii. 12, 13.) Also see Isaiah xxvi. 12, "Thou hast wrought all our works in us." All the good works of God's children here in their time state are but a manifestation of the works of Christ wrought in them, which he declared they should do, and which they absolutely do, as an inevitable result of the wheel in the middle of a wheel.

The clause, "The works that I do shall he do also," should forever settle the question as to the works of God's children; that he works in them all the works he ever intends them to work; no more, no less; and these works they shall do also. All the powers of darkness combined cannot hinder them from working out every jot and tittle of this work, for Christ says they shall do them.

"And greater works than these shall he do, because I go to my Father." The same believers are to do greater works than they had been, and were then doing, because Jesus was going to his Father, and would send them another Comforter, even the Spirit of truth, which should abide with them forever. These same believers in Christ, whom he had promised to send the Comforter to, to bring all things to their remembrance, he also told to "Tarry in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." —Luke xxiv. 49. This is when and how they (the same disciples) do greater works; that "when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."—Acts ii. 1, 4. Now greater works began to be manifested through these same disciples; they began to speak of the wonderful works of God, and to do many miracles, because greater works were wrought in them by the Holy Ghost, which wrought in them mightily. These greater works were not to be manifested until Jesus went to his Father. So we can see from a scriptural standpoint, that the disciples of Christ were made able to do greater works after the day of Pentecost; after they had tarried in the city of Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high, than they were previous to that time.

I have in a hurried way penned down some of my thoughts on the text at the head of this article. I humbly submit them to you for your consideration.

W. J. MAY.

TOUCHET, Wash., Nov. 18, 1902.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —VERY DEAR BRETHREN IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—If you will give me place in your most precious paper I would like to pen a few thoughts in token of my appreciation, and the fellowship I have for the doctrine set forth by its able correspondents. Very dear brethren, I have felt many times when reading your communications that I would write you privately and tell you how my soul has been made to feast upon the good things of the kingdom which God has so graciously given to you to dispense to the scattered flock all over the land. We are strangers in the flesh, yet when seeing and tasting the sweet spirit of grace of which you write, I am made to say that I am well acquainted with you. Your life is my life, and surely God is good to allow such a poor sinner as I am to hold such dear communion with his people.

O how my soul leaps for joy when God is pleased to lift the veil of doubt and unbelief, and let me enter into the rich treasure of the gospel. Then I can say with the prophet, "Behold a King shall reign in righteousness;" behold his glory; behold Zion in all her beauty, and the King holding the sceptre; the government is on his shoulder; he works wonders in heaven and in earth. Not only are small things subjected to his rule, but the very waves of persecution and doubt, which are the stronghold of Satan, know their bounds; they can rage against the vessel of mercy just so far, and no farther, the King in his glory speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast. It is no wonder that David could say, "walk about Zion, and mark well her bulwarks." O, how the soul rests in hope under the wing of the Redeemer, who has all power, and who says, "All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me, and whosoever cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out, but will raise it up again at the last day." They shall all be taught of the Lord, and they shall all hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall live. They shall know his statutes and keep them. The Lord says, "I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth." Dear ones, are not these declarations of the Lord sufficient to strengthen the feeble knees, and to raise the head that is drooped? Where are there any conditions in this covenant? There is nothing left undone in all this glorious work for you or me to do. The Lord has laid help upon one that is mighty to save, and he said, "I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." And in consideration of the completion of this glorious work, the Father has given to him all power in heaven and in earth. Jesus said to the disciples, his witnesses, Go preach my gospel to every creature. Then poor soul why art thou so fearful? It is the King who has given commandment to go and preach his gospel, and he did not say, if you feel like it go, but positively said, Go. And I fully believe that every one that is called by God's grace to stand upon the walls of Zion, and cry, will heed the call. For it is God that calls. Now, dear companions in these bonds, do not fear that you will not be able to tell the glad tidings. You are not able of yourself, but you are not called to preach self, but Christ, the gospel, the power of God. Neither need you fear that it will be labor spent in vain. If it were of self, well might we fear, but being the work of God, who saw the end from the beginning, and who has power to say, "I will do all my pleasure," it will not be labor

in vain. It is his pleasure for his children to hear the glorious sound, and he prepares the heart for the reception of the gospel before he sends you forth, and as sure as you are called to preach, just so sure some one is called to hear.

Now, dear brethren, one and all, who love and fear God, we know that "All things work together for good to them that are the called according to his purpose." And "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." And we know that the Son of God is come, and has given us a knowledge of himself, and we know that when this earthly house of our tabernacle is dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, and we know that when he shall come, we shall see him as he is, and be like him.

In conclusion let me say to the dear editors that I am well pleased with the way your paper is conducted, and with the doctrine set forth in it. May the God of grace still guide you by his Spirit, in your work. Do with this as you please, and all will be right with me.

Your brother,

I. T. BARNES.

FARMINGTON, Ill., Jan. 8, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I am reminded that it is time to send you my subscription for the SIGNS for 1903, and so I inclose two dollars. I have been a reader of the SIGNS from my youth up; I loved to read them before I experienced a hope, and I love to read them yet, or I would not take them. Since they have been in pamphlet form I have put each year together and they are very handy to read. I have just put together the last year, and have been reading some in them. I read on page 236, thoughts by Elder Durand, and it is good, and also yours on the same. I have no use for any such poetry; I do not claim it as Baptist doctrine; it might do for the New School Baptists. If they are joined to their idols let them alone. That sentiment and spirit does not suit me.

What is man that the Lord is mindful of him? At best he is the small dust in the balance, he is nothing but a poor, helpless sinner in the hand of a just and holy God, who will do as he sees fit, and will have mercy on whom he will have mercy. I do not think that I in all my lifetime have ever changed in my belief that God is a sovereign, ruling in heaven and in earth, and that nothing comes by chance, and that our all is in his hand. Shall poor mortal man set bounds to God? Shall we only admit that he ordained the good things? Job says, "Shall a man receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall he not receive evil?" All sound Baptists, if they believe the Scriptures, must admit that God has a purpose in the wicked acts of some men, because Jesus was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, to be taken and with wicked hands to be crucified and slain, and that they could have had no power against him, except it had been given to them from above. So who will limit God? "The wrath of man shall praise him, and the wickedness of Joseph's brethren sold him into Egypt, and afterward, he said, "Be not angry at yourself, for God hath sent me." All things are eternally fixed, and great is the mystery. The Lord knoweth them that are his, and not one shall be lost. O, that I knew that I am one of the blood-washed throng. I sometimes almost give up, feeling my sinfulness, and that I come so far short of what I think I should be, or desire to be. My life has been an

unprofitable one, and all that I can do is to stand still and trust to his salvation, with a little hope that all will be well with me. I desire the prayers of the Lord's people, and their love and fellowship. I hope that this year may be a prosperous one for the SIGNS. I take no other paper, not but that some of them may be very good. E. D. VARNES.

CANON CITY, Colorado, Feb. 12, 1903.

BROTHER BEEBE:—I will send my subscription a little ahead of time so that I will not lose any number, for they are all the preaching we get out here, although we live between six meeting-houses where they meet every week and have what they call preaching, but my wife and poor old me do not understand them, or do not believe in salvation by works. If good works then I am lost world without end.

I wish I could write like all the brethren and sisters do that write for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I tell you that they scatter the crumbs thick and fast, that a poor hungry sinner can feast upon. Brethren, keep right on, and let us hear from you as the Lord gives you the mind to write. May the Lord bless and sustain you all, is my prayer for his great name's honor.

AMBROSE FLOURNOY.

EXTRACTS.

BUT I proceed to the substance of the promise, that all things work together for good, to such characters. Every word here is pregnant with blessed import; we could not part with a single syllable. And yet, what an exalted view does it give us of the wisdom, providence and power of God. Look at this complicated scene. Here are God's people surrounded by a thousand mysterious circumstances, traveling in the various paths of life: station, age, sex, circumstances, all widely different. Here is the world lying in wickedness around them; a heart full of sin to overflowing, except as kept down by the mighty power of God. Look at all our varied circumstances: and then to believe, that if we are lovers of God, all things we experience are working together for our spiritual good; what a view does it give us of the wisdom, grace and power of a wonder-working God. Let us bear with all our weight upon the text; it will bear all the strain that we can put upon it. All things! Look at that! All that concerns our body and soul; everything in providence, everything in grace; everything you have passed through, everything you are passing through, everything you shall pass through. Let each of you who love God, and fear his name, in this congregation, take everything belonging to you, and lay it upon this text, as you might lay your hymn books and Bibles upon this table before me. There is not a single thing in providence or grace that concerns any person in this congregation, who loves God, that the promise cannot bear. All things! All things! What! is there not a single thing, however minute, however comparatively unimportant, that is not for my good if I love God? No, not one. If there were a single thing, this text would not be true; God would speak an untruth. If there were a single thing that befalls me, be it in Providence, or be it in grace, that is not working together for my good, if I am a child of God (I say it with reverence) this would be a lie in God's book. And yet, when we consider the variety of things that affect us, to believe that all of them are working together for our good, how we must admire the wonderful wisdom, and power, and government of God.—*Philpot.*

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1903.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

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PREACHING MORALITY.

THE following question has been propounded to us, and we feel like trying to briefly respond. It may be that some of the readers of the SIGNS will find something of interest also in it, viz:

Is it the duty of a minister of the gospel to preach morality to the ungodly portion of their congregation?

It is right for a minister, as a citizen and neighbor, moving and acting among his fellow men, to encourage all that is right and just, and of good report among his fellow men. In this his duty is on a par with the duty of all other men. He is to be himself a good citizen, law-abiding and kind to all men. He is taught to pray for rulers, and for all that are in authority, that we as believers may live quiet and peaceable lives. That man who is not an orderly, law-abiding citizen, and a kind and helpful neighbor to all around him, cannot be an acceptable minister of Jesus Christ. Among the qualifications of one called of God to the pastorate of churches is this: he must have a good report of them that are without. It is sure that no man who is generally understood to be a dishonest, selfish, evil-minded man, ought to be put forward into the ministry of the word. Not only is he to live so as to have a good report himself, but he is to advocate what is called morality, whenever occasion demands it, yet let it be remembered that the very best advocacy of morality among men is to live carefully and uprightly one's own self. But as a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, standing before the people as a herald of the cross, it is his sole duty to proclaim the gospel of grace. We do not understand that morality makes up any portion of the work of salvation; that is all by grace. Very many men who are called moral by the world are not believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, and are not saved, and die in their sins. Many who have been immoral in outward life, have yet been among the chosen of God, and have been called by grace at last to know, love and serve him. Neither the morality nor the immorality of the outward life has anything at all to do with a sinner's salvation. That is solely and alone through election and the atonement of Jesus Christ, and the effectual call by his Spirit. And we are fully convinced that in the pulpit, as a minister of the gospel, it is the sole business of the preacher to preach not morality to the unregenerate, but salvation by grace, and spiritual obedience to the redeemed. The gospel has no message to the unregenerate; it is for the called of God, and to them its message is salvation and spirituality of life through Christ, and not morality. Morality is not spirituality, any more than immorality is. A man's moral works are no more a help in his salvation before God than his evil works are. There are many who teach morality in a thousand ways among men, but they are not gospel preachers, and what they teach is not the gospel, and in it there is no salvation. No, it is not the place of the minister of the gos-

pel to quit his high and holy calling and come down to inculcating morality. It is his to proclaim a finished salvation for poor sinners in Christ, and to exhort the saved to spirituality (not morality) of life and conversation. We should be sorry indeed to hear one who we believed was called of God to preach Christ and his salvation, turn aside from the subject of his sermon some day, to address the natural part of his congregation in the way of urging them to practice all morality. (We use the word morality as it is generally used among men.) It is the business of the minister to declare what the law of God says to men, that the soul that sinneth it shall die; that all are already justly condemned before God by reason of original sin, and also by reason of the fact that all have sinned and become guilty before God, and that no amount of legality or morality can put aside this just judgment of God and save men from the penalty of the law, and that the only remedy and the effectual remedy for sin is that Jesus has died for them, and saved them through his perfect work and meritorious death. This is presenting the law with its demands and curses, and the gospel with its full and accomplished salvation. This is the sole business to which God has called his servants, and like Paul, they have no business to know anything among the people save Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Even though morality be held forth by a minister in the pulpit as that by which no man can be saved finally, but only that which will be praiseworthy among men, to fill up the time in urging it upon the people, is to forsake his high calling, and take up with an inferior one. It is to forsake the preaching of Christ, as the only Redeemer for sinners who can and does redeem men from sin and the curse, and to turn aside to that which can be but temporal, and beside, the fruit of it will be that men will be urged to attend to that which will not humble them, but will serve to exalt them in their own estimation. And this spirit is altogether foreign to the teaching of the gospel, which tends to humble men, and impress upon their minds that they are fallen, and vile, and altogether evil. Let all who are called of God to preach Christ, confine themselves to preaching Christ. If any believe their testimony, such ones will have within themselves the strongest incentive to all godliness of life, for life itself, which is in them, will flow out in word and thought and deed, just as natural life exhibits itself in these ways. The query of such a heart will be, "What wilt thou have me to do?" And to such a query comes the response of the gospel, and to such hearts the preacher can only point out the way of salvation, and of gospel obedience. It is a spiritual life, and not morality, that the people of God want.

We repeat that the gospel minister has no message to the unregenerate, because the unregenerate could not hear it if he were to try to preach to them, and because the message which is committed to him is not morality, but the gospel, and the gospel is for them who need it, and feel their need of it. The word "morality," so far as we know, does not even occur in the Scriptures. As men generally use it they mean the requirements of the law of God, but if we preach the requirements of the law of God, we shall only set forth the one fact, that no man has ever kept or can ever keep those requirements, and that therefore all men are already condemned by the law which they have already broken. The truth is that when men forsake the preaching of

the gospel, they do not even go on to teach the truth concerning the law of God. One must first learn what the law says, before he can be prepared to know what the gospel says. And the reason that so many preach such a perversion of the true gospel is that they also know only a perversion of the holy law of God. Ministers have a higher calling than to preach legality. Gospel obedience is not legality. Exhortation to the living is not to legal works, but to free gospel service. The unregenerate have no part in the gospel which we are called to preach, and we are not called to preach the law to anybody, either as the way to salvation, or as a rule of life. C.

PROTRACTED MEETINGS.

A BROTHER writes us that some who bear the name of Old School Baptists, have adopted the plan of holding protracted meetings, sometimes a week or ten days in length, and asks, "What do you think of it?"

We can only say that all depends upon what is the object of the meetings, and the way in which they are conducted. There is no reason, that we know of, why meetings should not continue one, two, three or more days, provided they are the right kind of meetings, but if the object be to promote what are generally called revivals, to excite the people, and urge them under the influence of the excitement to profess conversion, or to come out and unite with the church, and if exciting methods are used, such as inviting people forward to be prayed for, or to kneel at some anxious bench or altar, or to give their hand to the minister, or to some one else, in token that they want to be prayed for, and then are urged to make a profession under the excitement of the moment, then it is all wrong, and can lead to nothing but evil, whether the meeting be for a day or for weeks in length. There have been times when God has been graciously pleased to greatly revive his church in the gathering in of his children, but when the revival is his work, no such methods are needed. As a general thing the work of the Lord, whether in an individual or in a community, will be deep and still. Hearts will be touched, and melted, and broken in the solitude of their own rooms, or at their work, and they will be led to frequent the assemblies of the saints without much said on their part. The faithful preaching of the word will itself feed, and instruct, and encourage them. There will be no need of special efforts on the part of the church or of the ministers among them at such times, except to be ready to receive such ones, when they shall come to Zion, with warmth and hearty fellowship. We believe that when God is pleased to bring his children home, he will see to it that that home is prepared and warmed for their reception. This will not be from any human effort, but from the Spirit of the Lord. We ourself have been favored with some seasons of reviving in the churches where we have served, and they have always come, not with excited meetings, or special efforts, but with deep solemnity on the part of those who attended the meeting, and there has been a quiet earnestness among all the church. We have had no special meetings, except as all meetings where God blesses his people are special to the souls thus blessed. Such revivings are good, and at such times it is well when the people feel to come together for the service of God often. This is but fulfilling the word of the apostle, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of

some is." And in such gatherings the people of God find a blessing. We have known of two revivals, in two different churches, many years ago, when in each case, during the period of two years, the work continued, and in each case about a hundred souls were gathered into the churches thus blessed. But there was no series of protracted meetings in either case. The regular services were kept up as usual. The pastor visited the homes and firesides of inquiring ones, and conversed with them, and the only change in the services was that the church meetings were sometimes held on two Saturdays each month instead of on one. This was because some did not feel that they could wait till the time of the regular church meetings. All this was right, and those in both cases who were gathered in were the pillars of the churches thirty years afterward. There is no need of protracted meetings (which very often deserve the name distracted) when the Lord is pleased to revive his work. He does not need the atmosphere of excitement to further his work; rather he works in the still hours, and speaks with the still small voice to the hearts of his own. Such work will abide when the efforts of creature excitement have all disappeared. All such methods suit natural religion. Such religion is of the flesh, and whatever suits the flesh, will be successful in making fleshly converts to a fleshly religion, but the Spirit of God is not in it. If any soul is savingly called at such times and places, it is not because of the efforts that are being put forth, but rather as Paul was, called by grace even when persecuting the church. Revival meetings have no more to do with true, spiritual heart work, than Saul's mission of hatred and persecution had to do with his calling and salvation. Let all Old School Bible Baptists let all such methods severely alone; they will only result in evil at the end. Even though it be denied that the design is to save men, and claimed that such efforts are only to encourage and help such ones as are called of God, yet the result will be that much bad timber will be gathered in, of which the faithful minister, and the faithful in the churches, will have cause to be ashamed afterward. Spasmodic life is but a spasm, and leaves the sufferer weaker than before. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

1 KINGS VI. 12.

ELDER BEEBE—DEAR SIR:—If you will give your views, through the SIGNS, on 1 Kings vi. 12, you will much oblige me. Does it not convey the idea that there are conditions on the part of Solomon, which lies entirely to his choice, on his part, whether or not he will accept the warning given, in order to obtain the promise given in the thirteenth verse? And does it not also convey the idea that it is left entirely optional with Solomon, whether or not he will receive the counsel? This, with other similar passages, it appears difficult for me to reconcile with absolute predestination, since there are numerous passages in the Scripture wherein the command, precept or exhortation is given as if it were in the power of the creature to obey or not to obey. I only ask for information, and would be glad of perusing an editorial from you on this subject.

Yours truly,

J. CROOM.

MIFFLIN, Tennessee, April 14, 1860.

REPLY.

1 KINGS vi. 12, "Concerning this house which thou art in building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments and keep all my commandments, to walk in them; then will I perform my word with thee, which I spake unto David, thy father."

The first interrogative presented by our correspondent, on this text, is, "Does it not convey the idea that there are condi-

tions on the part of Solomon which lie entirely to his choice, on his part, whether or not he will accept the warning given in order to obtain the promise given in the thirteenth verse?" To this inquiry we answer, it does not convey any such idea to our mind, and we should be greatly shocked if it did. What could be our views of the eternal perfections of Jehovah, especially of his truth, and of his immortality, were we compelled to believe that Solomon, as a man, a finite being, had power to decide whether God should or should not perform the things which he had promised David that he would perform? Or that God's promise to dwell among the children of Israel and not forsake them, depended for its accomplishment on the volition, not of his own will, but on that of a poor, finite, fickle man. In this case a promise was made and sworn to by the immutable God, and David relying on the certainty of its accomplishment had died in faith, but now, according to the horrid suggestion, we are to understand him to waive his own truth and holiness, and submit the whole matter to the decision of Solomon. What confidence could we repose in any of the promises of God, if we were compelled to believe that God could or would change the thing that had gone out of his mouth?

"Let frightened rivers change their course,
And backward hasten to their source;
Swift through the air let rocks be hurl'd,
And mountains like the chaff be twirl'd;
Let suns and stars forget to rise,
Or quit their stations in the skies;
Let heaven and earth both pass away,
Eternal truth shall ne'er decay,
A God, all truth, can never lie."

That God had predestinated the building of the temple in Jerusalem, and that he had made known his purpose to David, before Solomon had any knowledge of the matter, and perhaps before he was born, establishes the doctrine of predestination which these queries seem to be calculated to assail and to controvert. Instead of Solomon having power to sway the action of God, he, with all other finite beings, was himself subject to the power and providence of God. This Solomon understood when he wrote the proverb, "The King's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water he turneth it whithersoever he will."—Prov. xxi. 1. To any one who knows the Lord, this declaration of the wise man will commend itself; but what would be the result if this text could be transposed and made to read, The heart, or will of God, is in the hand of man, to be turned whithersoever man willeth? Could such a perversion of the truth of God add to the security of the children of Israel, or to any other of the creatures of God? Jehovah has himself settled this last question, "For I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob, [or children of Israel] are not consumed."—Mal. iii. 6.

It is very true that Solomon lived under the covenant of works, and that the promises of that covenant were conditional, in form, but not in any way to lessen the sovereignty of God, or make it necessary for him to wait their decisions. He has declared the end from the beginning, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." And we are expressly informed that he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. And hence it is that "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." In giving the ceremonial law to Israel with all its conditional provisions, the precise effect it should have on them was fully known to God; for known unto him

are all his works from the foundation of the world. That law was the shadow of things to come, and embraced the types and figures of what should be more clearly understood under the new, the better covenant, which is unconditional, and abounds with God's immutable *wills* and *shalls.* None but temporal blessings, such as corn, wine and oil, were conditionally promised in that covenant, none but temporal curses were conditionally threatened by it. No spiritual blessings ever were or can be promised conditionally, for they are all embraced in that covenant which is ordered in all things and sure.

Let us now consider the true import of the text in its typical and prophetic application to one who is greater than Solomon. It is not difficult to show that Solomon, in many respects was a brilliant type of Christ: As the son of David and occupant of his throne; as king of Israel; as builder of the temple in Jerusalem, and especially as so identified with the subjects of his government that the great matter of God's presence with Israel was thus connected inseparably with his obedience to all the precepts and commandments of God. Christ, who is the Son of David, in a spiritual sense, is prefigured in this subject, even he shall build the temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory, and he shall sit a priest upon his throne, &c. (Zech. vi. 13.) This is the key of our subject. Leave Jesus out of the Scriptures, and what would they be to us? But how easy to understand, that the whole matter of the salvation of God's elect, the children of Israel spiritually considered, all rested upon the perfect work of our dear Redeemer. Mark with what force and beauty the text applies to Christ. *Concerning the house which thou art in building.* What house was Jesus in building? His church; for he said, "Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. He shall build the temple of the Lord. Paul says to the church of God, Ye are God's building. Peter say, Of lively stones, built up, a spiritual house, &c. Again, Paul says to the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, "And ye are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself, (not Solomon) being the chief corner, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord."—Eph. ii. 20, 21. The weighty responsibilities resting upon Christ, and which he came down from heaven to execute, were all "concerning the house, which he is in building." Such was the vital relations he bore to his people, that all the responsibilities resting on him concerned them, as the house which he was in building.

If we understand Christ to be the antitypical Solomon of our text, we see all the responsibilities of our acceptance resting on him. And he says, "Lo, I come! in the volume of the book it is written of me to do thy will, O God." And in doing the will of God, he was to fulfill all the jots and tittles of the law, to walk in the statutes of that law, to execute the judgments or decisions of the eternal counsel, and to keep all the commandments, and to walk in them. This he undertook, and this he has finished. The law is honored, justice is satisfied. The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness sake, and the promised results of his obedience are secured to all the children of Israel, that is to all the spiritual seed, for "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise." The word which God had spoken to David, his father, as recorded in the

eighty-ninth Psalm, and elsewhere, is secured to those for whom he lived and died and arose from the dead. And furthermore it is now certain that God will dwell with his children, and that he will never leave them or forsake them.

The second query proposed, is, "And does it not also convey the idea that it is left entirely optional with Solomon whether or not he will receive the counsel?" If left *entirely* optional with Solomon, then God retained no power of decision, laid aside his own will altogether, and consented to be governed wholly by Solomon's will. Does such a conclusion seem reasonable? Does God work after the counsel of a creature's will? Be astonished, O heavens, that such a question could be for one moment seriously entertained by any rational being. The *option* of Solomon was under the control of God. Solomon's testimony before referred to proves this; besides he says, It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. The preparations of the heart and the answer of the tongue are both of the Lord. But our querist virtually asks us whether Solomon's heart and actions were governed by the Lord, or the Lord's course governed by Solomon, and seems strangely to favor the idea that God's ways were governed by Solomon.

"This," says our correspondent, "with other similar passages, it appears difficult for me to reconcile with absolute predestination." But why so? If the matter, as you seem to suppose, was left entirely to the option of Solomon, and Solomon decided by his option whether God should dwell with Israel or not, that was predestination; only man is the sovereign, and God obeys. Now, perhaps after all, the Arminians would subscribe to absolute predestination, so defined as to rob God of all controlling government, and place the royal diadem upon the head of a poor, finite man. We do not wonder that those who stumble at the eternal sovereignty of God, should fail to see the harmony of the Scriptures of truth. There is not a text in the Bible that more clearly, fully and unavoidably teaches to our mind the unchanging purpose of God, and his absolute predestination, than this on which we have written these remarks.

The doctrine of predestination does not dispute the application of the commands, exhortations and precepts enjoined by the Scriptures, and demanding obedience; but it shows that if the fear of God is in our hearts, God has there implanted it, and if we be willing or obedient, it is because God has absolutely predestinated that Christ's people shall be willing in the day of his power. And it asserts that it is God that worketh in their hearts, both to *will* and to *do* his good pleasure. Our friend, of course, only asks these questions for information. We will not question his honesty, but pity his deplorable want of understanding of divine things. May the Lord, if consistent with his immutable will, enlighten the eyes of his understanding, that he may see and rejoice in the divine government of the All-Wise and Infinite Jehovah.

Upon the subject of the Absolute Predestination of all things, and the free volition of the human will, many seem to be perplexed. They cannot see how God can positively ordain and control all the actions and movements of men and devils, and yet in such a way as to leave man to act voluntarily and justly accountable to God for his actions. Could we, poor finite beings, comprehend the infinity of God, we might be able to trace his footsteps in the mighty deep, and his ways would no longer be past our finding out.

Who will dispute that the feathered tribes of the air move voluntarily from place to place? We can perceive no restraint upon them, yet we are told that not a sparrow can fall to the earth without our heavenly Father. Does God care for or provide for sparrows, attend to the wants of ravens, and number the hairs on our heads, and has he irrevocably ordained that not a hair shall fall to the earth without an order from his throne, and left the final destiny of mankind unsettled and undetermined?

See by the laws of nature with what regularity the marshalled hosts of heaven fill their orbits, and move in their appointed spheres, without collision, for ages, while moving with a rapidity which mocks our vain attempts to comprehend them, and then inquire, Has God in wisdom decreed their every movement, and left the final destiny of man to rest on chance or uncertainty? That Infidels and Arminians should belch out their maniac ravings against the predestination of God, is only what we reasonably expect from them, but that any who are born of God, taught by his Spirit, and who believe the doctrine of eternal, unconditional election, can doubt the all-pervading providence of God, is strange indeed to us. Many clear examples are given us in the sacred Scriptures of the absolute purpose and determinate counsel of God, determining beforehand the result of the wicked actions of men and devils, and yet the perfectly voluntary action of men and devils, in bringing those very results to pass.

Herod acted out the unrestrained wickedness of his murderous heart when he sought to slay the child Jesus, but by his wicked machinations, occasion was furnished for the fulfillment of the Scriptures: "Out of Egypt have I called my son." He also acted without restraint when, by his wicked action in the murder of the infants of his dominion, God caused to be fulfilled the prediction of "Rachel weeping for her children," &c. The brethren of Joseph acted voluntarily in selling him into Egypt, yet God had a design to be accomplished in his being thus conveyed to that place. The Jews acted according to their wicked inclinations when they persecuted the primitive saints, and drove them from their homes, but God made their wicked conduct the occasion of the gospel's being preached everywhere. Our Lord Jesus Christ was delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, when the Jews and Romans crucified him with wicked hands.

In view of these examples of the power and absolute government of God over all the events of time, what folly, what madness, what infidelity, for men to deny his predetermination of all things. He is supremely holy, in the broadest sense; but can we believe that to maintain his spotless purity he must yield up his government or any part of it? Must devils be unchained, and all the flood-gates of wickedness thrown open, and *Chance* enthroned to rule in his place, in order to preserve the unblemished glory of the eternal God? Is it not much more difficult to imagine how God's majesty could be sustained, if anything could possibly transpire by chance, or independently of an order from his throne? None can rejoice in spirit that the Lord God Omnipotent doth reign; that he doeth his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, who desire to pluck the crown of ruling power from his head, and place the sacred diadem on *Chance*. Who would feel secure under his protecting providence

if he were not the only and blessed Potentate? or how could we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, if we did not know that he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will?

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 15, 1860.

NEARLY HALF A CENTURY AGO

THE above editorial was written by the founder of this paper, the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and at that time the SIGNS OF THE TIMES had the largest circulation it ever had, and of its more than ten thousand readers, none then entered a protest against the doctrine set forth either on the subject of predestination or conditional blessings. It has been charged by some that the SIGNS has changed, and its position to-day on these principles is different from what it formerly advocated, but we could not write anything stronger in defense of predestination, and unconditional spiritual blessings, than the above editorial. Especially would we call attention to the expression on first column, page 218, viz: "No spiritual blessings ever were or can be promised conditionally, for they are all embraced in the covenant which is ordered in all things and sure." This expression went unchallenged by the readers of the SIGNS in 1860, and if it is refuted to-day by any claiming to be Old School or Primitive Baptists, which has changed from the Old Baptist doctrine, the SIGNS or the dissenters? B.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO BROTHER D. M. LEONARD'S APPEAL TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$663 10
Reuben Thomson, Ind., $8.00; Thomas W. Records, Mo., $1.00; Geo. W. Leap, Ind. Ter., $.60; James Wyman, Mich., $1.00; Martha H. Powers, Oregon, $3.00.—Total	13 60
Total to date	$676 70

MARRIAGES.

By Elder D. M. Vail, at the bride's home, Dec. 31st, 1902, Warren W. Graves and Addie Williams, both of Ingleside, N. Y.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at his residence, Hopewell, N. J., Thursday, March 19th, 1903, W. Freeman Perrine, of Trenton, N. J., and Miss Elvira H. Hill, of Glenmore, N. J.

By the same, assisted by Elder E. V. White, at the bride's residence, Saturday, March 21st, 1903, Walter Philip Scheid, of Jersey City, N. J., and Miss Mina H. Blackwell, of Mount Rose, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder John Alsbury departed this life on the first day of February, 1903, in the County of Sangamon, Ill., at the ripe old age of 83 years and 19 days, having been born near Gallipolis, Ohio, Jan. 12th, 1820; moved with his father to Sangamon Co., Ill., in 1830, and settled on Spring Creek, near Springfield, Ill. I have not the date of his marriage. He leaves one daughter, two sons, one brother and three sisters, besides the Old School Baptist Church he united with about the year 1838. He was licensed to preach November, 1846, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry August 11th, 1850, by Elders Denison Tannehill, Isaac Conlee and Charles Alsbury. Brother Alsbury in his younger days done a great deal of traveling and preaching; he tried hard to build up churches; being a carpenter, he tried to build, and helped build several meeting-houses. He was sound in doctrine, and gloried in the glorious doctrine advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; was uncompromising in the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints through grace to glory; predestination and election his theme. While he was a sound believer in Christ and all that the prophets and apostles said, he was something of a politician, having ran against Abraham Lincoln for the State Legislature, and lately, as "middle of the road populist," he ran for congress against B. F. Colwell, our present congressman. I take this from the State Journal, that published a lengthy obituary soon after his death.

I was called to attend his funeral on the third of February, but missed the train, and on that account and for other causes, there were no services at his burial, but his children request that this summer some time there shall be a memorial sermon preached by the writer, or some one else, and it will be taken down and published as a memorial. I have known Elder Alsbury for over thirty years; I have known him to go to meetings when others would have stayed at home under the same circumstances. But enough, the poor old brother has gone to his reward, and with Paul to receive a crown of righteousness, which

the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to all them that love his appearing. Much more might be said, but let this suffice.

W. A. THOMPSON.

SPRINGFIELD, Ill., March 15, 1903.

BROTHER **Jacob Secor** died at Wickliffe, Ohio, at the home of Cyrus Cross, after an illness of five weeks and five days, caused by enlarged and hardened liver. Deceased was born in Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., August 27th, 1845, and died Feb. 15th, 1903. He leaves three children, one son and two daughters, an aged mother, sister Phebe Secor, of Olive, N. Y., two sisters and four brothers, besides the Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, to mourn his departure. He was a man of deep trials, and of him it can truly be said, "He learned obedience by the things that he suffered." He sincerely loved the truth, and had a deep and abiding interest in the welfare of Zion. Our little church will miss him in their meetings, but we desire to bow in humble submission to God's holy will. He suffered much in his last sickness, but bore it meekly and patiently, looking forward with joy to the time of his departure, saying at one time, "The things of time have no charm for me; all is but vanity and vexation of spirit." At another time, when we expressed a desire for his recovery, he replied so sweetly, "It is with the Lord; I desire to go, but if it is the Lord's will to spare me, and I can be any help to the church, I am willing to live and suffer longer. Leave it with him. Be quiet." He was baptized at our December meeting, by Elder D. Bartley, of Lebanon, Ohio.

Elder Bartley's coming among us was blessed to the comfort of all, and especially to our dear, departed brother. He was filled to overflowing, and he spoke many times during his sickness of his last precious meeting, saying it was wonderful! wonderful! He appreciated and was thankful for all that was done for him in his last sickness, saying, God was so good to him to bring him among such kind friends to be cared for.

Funeral services were conducted by our dear pastor, Elder H. E. Purris, at our home. His remains were interred in the cemetery at Willoughby, Ohio, there to await the morning of the resurrection, when the bodies of the saints shall be raised in the likeness of their blessed Redeemer.

CYRUS CROSS & WIFE.

Mrs. Elizabeth Sutphin was born at Flemington, N. J., June 10th, 1814, and departed this life Jan. 20th, 1903, aged 88 years, 7 months and 10 days. She was the daughter of Cornelius Stillwell, and granddaughter of John Blackwell, a Baptist minister. She was married to Richard S. Sutphin, Feb. 2d, 1839, by Elder John Boggs. She was baptized by Elder Philander Hartwell, in 1853, in the fellowship of the First Hopewell Church, where she remained a faithful and consistent member until her departure. In early life she lived for several years in the family of Elder Wm. Parkinson, in New York city, who may be still remembered by some of the friends there. During the past thirty-one years she has lived with her daughter, sister Annie Sutphin, in the borough of Hopewell. It has always been her delight to meet in the house of God, and to mingle with the people whom she esteemed as the children of God. She was positive and unwavering in her faith, and her hope in the finished work of Christ was clear and steadfast. She, as is the case with most of the tried children of God, had her trials of faith, and sometimes walked in doubt and darkness of mind, so far as her own personal interest in the salvation of God was concerned, but she never wavered in the certainty of the truth that salvation is of the Lord. It delighted her greatly to speak of the past exercises of her mind, and of her past relations with the church. Some of her precious seasons during all her past life lived in her memory till near the end, though age had wrought infirmity of mind and memory in her. During all the years of her increasing age and infirmities, she has been most tenderly and faithfully cared for by her daughter, who has also for a number of years been a member of this church with her mother. Thus one by one the aged are passing away from us. For ourself, we can but say that we often feel lonely, because of the many that are gone.

The funeral service was held at her late residence, on Friday, Jan. 23d, where many friends gathered to testify of the regard in which they held her, and to sympathize with her family. The text used was in Psalm lxxiii. 24-26. The interment was in the cemetery, by the side of the house of worship, where it had been her delight to attend the service of God all these many years past. She leaves two daughters, kind and affectionate, to mourn a loss which they feel to be great. Other friends and relatives share in their sorrow, yet we none of us can sorrow as though we had no hope; we believe that with her the end was peace.

C.

DIED—Feb. 21st, 1903, at Eugene, Oregon, **Matilda L. Cranfill**, aged 84 years, 8 months and 9 days. Deceased was born near Mammoth Cave, then Warren Co., Ky., was married to Elder Isom Cranfill in Illinois; crossed the plains to Oregon in 1847, a seven months' journey. They first settled at Oregon City, removed to near Peoria, then to Looking Glass, and finally removing to Eugene, Oregon, 1877, where Mrs. Cranfill resided till her death. (Elder Isom Cranfill died at Eugene, Oregon, in 1877.) Five children and numerous grandchildren mourn their loss. She was a believer in the Old School Baptist cause.

Gone, but not forgotten.

U. W. R.

MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting in the city of Wilmington is appointed to be held on Saturday and Sunday, April 11th and 12th, 1903, commencing on Saturday at 2 p. m., and continuing all day Sunday. All who love the truth are cordially invited to be present with us, and enjoy with us the feast we hope to have.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

BALTIMORE Association is appointed to be held with Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore city, Md., beginning Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, (20th) 1903, and continue three days. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth to meet with us.

DELAWARE Association is appointed to meet with Bryn Zion Church, in Kent Co., Delaware, beginning Wednesday before the fifth Sunday in May, (27th) 1903, and continue three days.

DELAWARE River Association is appointed to be held with the Southampton Church, Bucks Co., Pa., beginning on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (3d) 1903, and continue three days.

THE Warwick Association is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, in New York city, beginning Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, (10th) 1903, and continue three days.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 71. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1903. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JOHN VI. 28, 29.

"THEN said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."

I have often been made to wonder why I have been so long in darkness as to the true meaning of the above text, and many more containing the same truth. Is it true that all the brethren have been in darkness upon this point as I have? I trust not. It seems to me that I never can be an apt scholar in understanding the Scriptures, for when I do discern some great truth, which has been hidden from me all my days, I many times find some who had never tried to teach any one, who had known these things long before I was given the true spiritual understanding of them. The above text has been read and reread by me hundreds of times, I think, and yet its true meaning was not seen by me for a long time. The same is true of many more of like import which are in sentiment connected with this one, viz: "Abraham believed, and it was counted to him for righteousness." And, "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

I have turned to Webster's dictionary to learn the definition of the word righteousness, and find that it means purity of heart, rectitude of life, the keeping of the divine law, holiness, virtue. I had thought from Paul's quotations that it must mean all that Webster says it does. The whole tenor of the New Testament would point that way. The atonement itself could mean nothing less. "If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God." If Abraham could not come before God with his works, and glory in them, can any other man do so? Do we get Paul's meaning when he says, Abraham's belief was counted to him for righteousness? I was so long in seeing it, that I have wondered if it would help any one else to undestand it, to give my understanding of it. If Abraham's faith was counted to him for righteousness, and righteousness means as defined above by Webster, purity, &c., was not the faith of Abraham counted to him, as if he had possessed purity &c., of heart? Can the apostles' meaning be any less than all these. I dare not say, no. And the

wonderful truth contained in the text can mean nothing else. The people that followed Christ desired to know what they should do to work the works of God, and to this Jesus said, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Then, to believe on Christ is to work the works of God. Faith then is accounted to them as though they had lived a perfectly holy life. Paul said, "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, * * * even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all that believe." "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for remission of sins that are past, to declare at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." "Therefore," says Paul, "We conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Is not here a wonderful revelation to all of God's humble poor? Here they learn that believing on Christ, and having faith in him, is counted to them as though they had kept all the divine law, as though they had never sinned. O, what a wonderful God is ours. What glorious news to those who have mourned and begged of God for mercy, and seeing their own unrighteousness, could see no way by which they could be justified before God, knowing that they could not keep the divine law. I say that to these it is glorious news to hear Christ and Paul say that believing on Christ is counted to them for righteousness, with every meaning attached to it, as given above by Webster. O, says one, does my believing on Christ count the same as though I had kept the whole law? We must answer, yes. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Christ has fulfilled all the law for them, and by faith it is counted to them as though they had done it. Therefore to him that worketh not, but believeth, his faith is counted for righteousness. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." And he that believeth on Christ is justified from all things from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses. David describeth the blessedness of that man to whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works. Surely if any one thinks that any salvation is yet to be worked but by the creature, he has not known what was the mission of Christ into the world, or what was the work accomplished by his death. There is nothing remaining but this which Christ spoke in the text, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Paul said, "This is the work of faith which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." It is a heart work. It is not an outward manifestation of legal obligations and forms, but a preparation of the heart in man. And this is of the Lord as well as the answer of the tongue.

I would not for one moment claim that belief is a thing conditional with ourself. We have to believe many things we do not like to believe. If the evidence be conclusive, however much we may dislike the thing, we are compelled to believe. Now he that believeth on the Son

of God, hath the witness in himself, and hath eternal life abiding in him, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. When I contemplate what God has counted to the believer for righteousness, so that they stand before him as being holy, I seem to get a grander view of what Christ meant when he said to the apostles that they must go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, and that he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned. But faith and belief are not voluntary acts of the creature, they are the result of the creature being acted upon. Man believes with the heart, and God prepares the heart to believe. Faith is the gift of God, and Jesus is the author and finisher of it. Paul said to his brethren, "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Both these things, the suffering and the faith, are from God.

While Abraham's faith was imputed to him for righteousness, Paul said that it was not for Abraham alone, but for us also to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. Paul informs us that faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word God, and that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Then he says, "How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" Jesus said unto the pharisees, "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." "My sheep hear my voice," and let us remember that faith cometh by hearing.

A few weeks since I wrote to a brother what I understood Paul to mean when he said, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness," and in that letter, I tried to set forth the true meaning of righteousness, so that it might be understood as being reckoned to one who truly believes in God. The brother answered that he had never before understood Paul's meaning concerning belief or faith. He had never seen before that faith was counted as though a man had done or fulfilled all the divine law. I have wondered whether our conditional brethren ever had comtemplated what Paul meant when he said, "Abraham's faith was counted to him for righteousness." If then, any divine law must be kept in order to our time salvation, will it not be faith and faith alone, that must be counted as that obedience? If the saints have faith in God, and believe in him who raised up Christ from the dead, is there any rectitude, or righteousness, or keeping of the law, that will not be included in this faith? Let them debate with Paul, and turn the matter over and over, and see if Paul himself did not fall short of any righteousness, save the righteousness of faith.

Some might try to excuse themselves because of being ignorant of God's righteousness, for going about to establish their own righteousness, and not being willing to submit to the righteousness of God. I say, some might stumble at that stumbling-stone, as the Jews did, but their so doing will not make the faith of God of none effect. We know that all are not Israel who are of Israel, neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children. Even so it is to be feared that all are not Baptists, who are of the Baptists. I would not be understood as wishing to encourage a wordly, careless life; no, by no means. We must always expect the fruits of the Spirit to

be plainly manifest in the children of God. We trust that the saints will honor their profession with a godly walk and chaste conversation, coupled with fear; they ought to walk worthy of the profession wherewith they are called; a tree is known by its fruits; if we see no fruit, we know not what the tree is. Christ learned obedience by the things which he suffered, and his children must do the same. Before Israel was chastened they went astray, and God chastens whom he loves. He declares by the psalmist that he will chasten his children when they stray, but that he will not utterly forsake them, but he will make a way for their escape.

I love to go into a family of order, where children obey their parents through love and respect, and where parents govern with wisdom, and where children have learned obedience by the things which they suffer, and where parents do not have to hold out inducements and rewards in order to try to obtain obedience from their children. Parents have authority to enforce obedience. I have felt much disgusted every time I have gone into a family who had to hire their children to obey; such government is ruinous to the whole family, and will tend to the dishonor of all such parents. Now God is a sovereign, with power and authority to compel obedience in any of his children, and he has created them in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that they should walk in them. The Savior said in his sermon on the mount, "That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." The scribes and pharisees believed in the righteousness of works, and Jesus wanted a righteousness that should exceed this. So I desire that my brethren shall exceed in their daily walk, and in good works, all that is attained to by those who believe in salvation by works. I am willing that the righteousness of my brethren should be compared with that of any who believe in salvation by works. We expect the fruit of the Spirit to manifest itself. It is as natural for a good tree to bear good fruit, as for an evil tree to bear evil fruit. So while we do not believe in salvation by works, yet we expect the righteousness of our brethren to exceed that of those who do believe in salvation by works.

I will now close the subject; I do not know why I came to write as I have. Excuse the length of this article. My mind has been running on these things to-day, and while sitting by the fire I have penciled them down.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

NEWTON PETERS.

PORTLAND, Ind., Dec. 30, 1902.

[BROTHER Peters we believe is right, both in declaring the doctrine of justification by faith, and not by works of the creature, and also in saying that this faith is wrought of God in the heart, where it is found at all. It must be remembered that faith is no more the act of the creature, than is any other grace of the Spirit, such as love and fear, but the Spirit in the heart produces love, fear, faith, &c., and these things are active principles, and will show themselves in the hearts and lives of all believers to a greater or less extent, some thirty, some fifty, and some an hundred fold. There is no more human merit in faith than in obedience, and there is none in either. Where both are found, God alone is glorified. He is the author of both; the author and finisher of our faith, and he also has wrought all our works in us. It

is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Man then is to be praised for his faith no more than for his good works or obedience. Christ alone bears the glory. All this has been set forth by brother Peters. Faith does sum up all obedience, because all the daily life of the believer he lives by the faith of the Son of God alone. Obedience is the proper fruit of faith, just as all disobedience is the result of unbelief. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

Summing the matter all up, it seems right to say that we are justified really and in the sight of God by the death and resurrection of Christ, we are justified experimentally, or as to our knowledge of it, by faith, and we show to others the fact of our justification before God by the outward works which faith produces. True faith is never dead. That faith which is dead is the faith of the natural man. His faith is dead just as all his works are dead. This is the dead faith of which James speaks. Brother Peters asked that some one should say a few words upon this subject, which is the reason we have added these thoughts.—ED.]

JOHN XV. 1–7.

HAVING been requested to give my views upon the above portion of Scripture, I submit the following.

Verse one declares Jesus the true Vine, and the Father the Husbandman. The use of the word *true* here implies the existence of another vine which is not the true one. This other vine is the tribe of Judah. My authority for so stating is Isaiah v. 7, and Genesis xlix. 11. Israel was the people of God under the legal dispensation, and of that nation; Judah was the reigning star, the centre of power, the dispenser of judgment. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come," declared Jacob with his dying breath. In the division of Israel which occurred upon the death of Solomon, the tribe of Judah alone recognized the son of Solomon as their king, the other tribes preferring to serve another. In this rending of the tribes asunder, Judah was spared not because of any intrinsic worth in that tribe of itself, but solely for "David, my servant's sake, that he may have a light always before me in Jerusalem." At his coming, however, Jesus says, "I am the *true* Vine," implying in those words that Judah, while being the choice vine of Israel, was not the *true* vine, but simply a reflection or shadow thereof, as the moon has no light of her own, but borrows her brightness from the centre of light, the sun. God the Father, as the Husbandman, planted in the midst of his vineyard, Israel, his choicest vine, Judah. In like manner he has placed his only begotten Son in the midst of the church to be the Head thereof, its source of life and light. He also prunes this vine of its branches, as we shall see.

Verse two sets forth two kinds of branches which are in this vine: one set bears fruit, the other does not. The one set not bearing fruit is taken away, while the one set bearing fruit is purged that it may bring forth more fruit. The Israelitish branches are the ones bearing no fruit; the Gentile branches are the fruitful ones, and the ones which experience the purging spoken of. In the fifth chapter of Isaiah, Israel is described as a vineyard in a very fruitful hill. The Husbandman, which is God, fenced it, gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with his choicest vine. A tower was built in the midst of it, and

also a wine-press made therein. In spite of all this care, Israel did not yield the fruit desired, but produced wild grapes. The people walked not in obedience to the law of God, but in disobedience and rebellion. The law written upon tables of stone bore no fruit among this nation which God had chosen out of all the nations of the earth. Only the law written upon the fleshly tables of the heart and imprinted in the mind can produce the fruit well pleasing in God's sight, and such a law national Israel knew nothing of. When Jesus came upon the earth, the hearts of the Jews were hardened against him, and his gospel was hated by them. They heeded not his words, and would not that he should rule over them, but cried instead, "Crucify him." They knew not in their blindness that their own rage was but furthering the end of the gospel, that they were ignorantly sending its blessed tidings over the wall of partition unto the Gentiles. These branches because of their barrenness were taken away, and the Gentile branches were grafted in. The visibility of the church of Christ to-day is not among the Jews, but among the Gentiles. This cutting off of one set of branches does not in the least affect the election of God in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, for both Jew and Gentile is included in that election and the temporal cutting off of one from *visible union* with the vine does not impair the eternal salvation of the same in the blood of Christ. My authority for this statement is Romans xi. 28, 29, and indeed the whole of that chapter. The purging spoken of to which the fruit-bearing branches are subjected, has reference to the tribulations of the gospel church by which it is shredded from all confidence in the flesh, and made to trust solely in the arm of Jehovah. These afflictions will reveal the fruit of the Spirit in perfection.

Verse three sets forth the word which Jesus speaks, being the word of God both quick and powerful, as effecting the cleansing of those unto whom it is spoken. This word falling from the lips of the Redeemer declares us free from the law and all its carnal rites, delivered from the bondage of our transgressions, and therefore clean every whit through the word he has spoken unto us.

Verse four is not expressive of a condition, but is a statement of a fact in connection with the visible church. "Abide in me and I in you." It is given unto the visible church at that time, embodying the twelve disciples, and applies equally well to the visible church now. That which renders a church visible is the manifestation of the Spirit of Christ within it. The church is a seven-branched candlestick, through which the oil of his Spirit flows, and the light exhibited by the church is begotten of this Spirit. As the candlestick needs daily snuffing that its light may shine undimmed, so the church needs daily purging by its Caretaker, God the Father, that the unsullied fruit of his Spirit may remain plainly in evidence. The flesh remaining uppermost in the church would clog the holy light, and thus destroy its visibility. A gospel church in disorder is in danger of becoming extinct, from the fact that there is no *visible* union with Christ, the true Vine. Therefore we cannot bear fruit except we have the indwelling of the more sure word of prophecy.

Verse five emphasizes the truth that of ourselves we are helpless, and can do nothing. As the branch of an apple tree can bear no apples except the life of the tree abide within it, no more can God's elect of themselves bear gospel fruit ex-

cept the life of their head work within them "to will and to do of his good pleasure."

Verse six says, "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered." It is usual for such branches to be cast into the fire and burned. This does not refer to the non-elect, nor does it picture the torments of an eternal hell, nor yet does it teach that any included in the election of grace can fall therefrom on the ground that they do not manifest any evidence of being vitally joined unto Christ. The Israelites manifested no visible union with Christ; they did not show forth the fruits of his Spirit. In this sense they were the men that abided not in him. When the fullness of time had come the wild olive branches were grafted in, while the natural branches were cut off; but, be it remembered, they were cast forth *as a branch*, and were still branches of the true Vine, though severed from connection with it, and because severed, they were withered, devoid of life, and were not of any usefulness to the people of God, but died a spiritual death. A child of God has no usefulness in the church on earth if he shows no evidence of the life of Christ within. He is as useless as a dried stick that men burn in the fire, and as worthless as salt that has lost its savor.

Verse seven: "If ye abide in me, and my words in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." Can I of my own will abide in Christ? How absurd! Did any one walking through an orchard ever see the apple trees cutting off their own branches and grafting others in their stead? No, for that is the work of the husbandman. It is not, "If I will abide," but "If I do abide." If we *are* abiding in him and his words in us, then we are asking according to the promptings of his Spirit, therefore in accordance with the will of God, and thus asking, we receive. It is only the prayer, effectual and fervent, of a righteous man that profiteth. The only righteous man of whom we have any knowledge is the man Christ Jesus. His prayer is effectual and fervent, and availeth much. When his life within his people makes intercessions for them though with groanings that cannot be uttered, it is effectual, fervent, and is heard in heaven, not because they are righteous, but because he that speaketh through them is righteous.

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

1330 VINE ST., PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March 9, 1903.

CHARLOTTE C. H., Va., Feb. 1, 1903.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I hardly know why, but I feel like writing a few lines to you to-night; it may be because I feel lonely and would like to talk with some one who can understand my feelings. I have been thinking to-day of many things in my past experience, and somehow I have the feeling that I wish it were with me as in the days that are past, when my heart was warm, and I could feel a love and rejoicing in the hope that I knew something of a Savior's love to me, a lost and helpless sinner. Now where is that rejoicing? In its place I seem to have no feeling at all; my heart seems dead, cold and barren. Where is that blessedness I knew when first I saw the Lord; that soul-refreshing view of Jesus and his word? Have they not left an aching void the world can never fill? Where is that warm love and heartfelt rejoicing I felt when I met one of God's dear people? and how our hearts ran together like two drops of water. Now when we meet we seem cold and distant, and our conversa-

tion instead of telling of God's precious dealings with us, seems prone to be of the trifling things of time, or of some point of doctrine perhaps too deep for poor, weak minds to comprehend or understand. I remember when but a child, of sitting by the hour listening to my dear father, and the brethren who were visiting him, talking and telling of the way the Lord led them from day to day. I thought they were the best and happiest people on earth, and O, how I did wish I too was a christian, that I might be one with them. In after years when I went with father to Bowdoinham, and old Bowdoin to the conference meetings, how my heart did rejoice as I heard those dear old pilgrims tell the way the Lord led them from day to day, of their joys and sorrows, their hopes and fears, and of their own nothingness and exceeding sinfulness and entire dependence upon the God of their salvation. How it did strengthen my own feeble hope, and make my heart rejoice. I think those meetings were such a help, not only to each member, but to the ministers as well. Dear brother, I sometimes feel such a longing to see a revival of the work of God in our midst, when the power of God is made manifest in bringing in the dear lambs into the fold; but most of all do I desire to feel the quickening power of divine grace in my own heart.

> "My heart seems insensible as steel;
> If aught is felt 'tis only pain,
> To find I cannot feel."

While attending the meeting last October, I thought I enjoyed the preaching much; the brethren all seemed led to speak of God's dealings with his people so deeply, so fully, it did comfort my poor heart, for I felt I knew the way and had traveled the same road, and I fondly hoped the comfort of it would remain with me after my return home, but how quickly has all the joy fled, and I am left in a dry and barren land, where no water is. My daily trials seem not to work the peaceable fruits of righteousness with me, but the opposite; instead of patience, only impatience and rebellion. Is there any one on earth so sinful as I, or so needs a great and whole Savior? I know there is none more utterly helpless; all I can do is cry, "Lord, save, I perish."

The SIGNS are much comfort to me; they contain all the preaching I hear in this place, and I seldom read a number without getting a crumb. I think I would starve without the dear old SIGNS. I have learned to love dear brother Beebe so much through his writings; he writes so sweetly and experimentally, and so much to the point; he reminds me of his dear old father, in the way he expresses himself; his editorial on "Glorying in our infirmities," was beautiful to me.

I have had some comfort in thinking of the poor woman of Samaria; she was a great sinner, but our dear Savior must needs go through Samaria to meet her at the well, and after talking with her she goes to the city and says, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" Is not this the way he reveals himself to his people, in showing them what vile sinners they are? How may we know him and the power of his resurrection, except to be made to feel the need of him day by day, to sustain us; to feel that he is our only hope, our all and in all. He reveals to us our vileness, our utter helplessness. Is not this the Christ? Is not this the work of the holy Spirit? Can we have all our exceeding sinfulness brought before us except by his Spirit? Is it not in this way he reveals himself unto his people: "Come, see a man, that has told me

all things: is not this the Christ?" This thought has comforted me at times, that though "Works of grace I cannot show, all polluted is my breast," yet how could I know these hidden evils if the gracious Savior had not revealed them unto me? Is not this the way he reveals himself unto us poor sinners? Could we cry for mercy unless we were made to feel the dreadful need, and our utter helplessness? I have thought much of these things, and sometimes gleaned some comfort by the way.

My dear brother, pardon me for thus intruding upon your time; I just felt like talking to you a little. If you have an opportunity I would like to hear from you, as I feel so very lonely. Love to all the brethren and sisters.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

MARY J. COX.

FEBRUARY 15, 1903.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I was indeed surprised that you should ask me to let you send my poor letter to the SIGNS, so much so that I could not even make up my mind what answer to give you until to-day, when the SIGNS of Feb. 15th was handed me, and I opened it, and my eyes fell upon the letter of sister Mary Fisher. As I read it my heart went out in love to her, and I felt she, too, had to travel the same dreary road, ever doubting, halting, mourning over her cold, hard heart, when it ought to be melted within her; grieving that she cannot claim Jesus as her Savior. O, dear brother, if I could only express my own heartfelt feelings as well as she has, I would not hesitate to write, but in every attempt I fall so far short. As regards my letter to you, I will say, if you think there is anything in it that will comfort one of God's poor, doubting ones, you are at liberty to publish it. I did not write it for publication, therefore I beg you to correct all mistakes.

MARY J. COX.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—The attached communication is the relation of the early christian experience of brother James E. Hubbard, of Maine, which I have requested him to write out for me. I deem it worthy of publication, and he has consented thereto. I now submit it to your judgment.

Your brother in christian fellowship,

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

WILTON, Maine, Feb. 22, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER:—In trying to tell of the way I trust the Lord has led me from nature to grace; from the dark ways of sin and death, to the marvelous light of the knowledge of the glory of Christ Jesus our Lord, I shall be able to give but few exact dates. The experiences of the saints of God are wonderful and miraculous at all times, but it seems that if I have traveled along that pathway it is especially wonderful. Surely a more sinful and depraved mortal does not exist than the writer is by nature, and if I am kept from bringing reproach and shame upon the cause I profess to love, it is just as great a work of sovereign and reigning grace as it was when I was brought to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus.

From my earliest recollection I attended Old School Baptist meetings with my mother. I remember I sometimes thought them very tiresome. As I grew older there were no regular meetings of the Old Baptists near us, and I went more or less regularly to the Congregationalist meeting and Sunday School. I remem-

ber plainly as a lad of fourteen to sixteen that I thought the Old Baptists were well enough perhaps if a person was not particular about the place they occupied in society, but they were too unpopular for me. For the present I wanted a "good time." At times of real or fancied danger I would get quite devout, and pray the Lord to remove the danger, &c., and I would promise myself that if my life was spared I would become a christian, but after the cause of my uneasiness had passed I speedily forgot all my good resolutions, and plunged with all the force of my nature into the sports and follies of youth.

After a time something came over me, I know not what, but I ceased to take pleasure in some things I had formerly enjoyed. I would attend socials and entertainments only to call them a bore, and go home completely disgusted with myself and everybody else. My interest in church and Sunday school affairs flagged. I was a member of the choir, and strove to keep up my interest through that source, but to no purpose. I would firmly resolve not to go and hear such "stuff" again, but upon being urged by some one I highly esteemed, I would go again and again. Thus time passed on until I was twenty-three or four years of age. I always attended Old Baptist meetings that I could, and I believed they preached the truth. About this time I gradually came to see my lost condition, and to realize what a great sinner I was. I would read and hear how people would weep and mourn for their sins, but I could do neither; I was completely calloused. I finally came to the conclusion that mine was entirely an outside case. I could see how the elect of God could be saved, but I was without hope, and without God in the world. My indifference to all this troubled me more than anything else. I felt that, "If my soul were sent to hell, God's righteous law approved it well."

Elder Hiram Campbell had an appointment at Jay, on the fifth Sunday in the month, but circumstances did not always permit him to come, but on the fifth Sunday of August, I think it was 1886, he held a meeting at the home of old sister Macomber. There was scarcely more than half a dozen present. I remember I was seated upon a couch at the back side of the room. Elder Campbell took for a text the words found in Isaiah liii. 1: "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" He commenced by saying that he often questioned if he could claim any part with the people of God; what right had he to claim any of the promises? &c., or words to that effect. What, thought I, a man like Elder Campbell, and a minister of the gospel, have such feelings as that? He continued to speak I know not how long, but it appeared to me that every word was spoken directly to me. I know not if Elder Campbell saw anything unusual in me that day, but certain it is the Lord sent that message to me through him. After he had finished speaking, dear old sister Macomber, who sat nearly in front of me in her large rocker, turned around to me and said, "Well, Jimmie, do you believe the report?" I was greatly taken back for a moment; how, thought I, could she think to ask me such a question? What should I say? I felt that I did believe every word I had heard, and finally answered, "Yes, I think I can say that I do." The words had no more than left my mouth when I felt the burden I had carried so long was rolled away, and I felt that joy and peace I had never known before.

At the Maine Association, held with the Bowdoinham church, the following month, I was enabled to lay my case before the brethren, and submit it to their judgment, and was baptized at that time. I can never describe the great peace and joy that filled me as I came up out of the water. Elder Chick stood at the water's edge and reached out and grasped my hand. All the sins and cares and follies of this life were banished from me, and I saw only Jesus, the author and finisher of my faith. I hope I may retain the memory of that day while I live.

"O how happy are they,
Who their Savior obey,
And whose treasures are laid up above!
Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

"I asked the Lord that I might grow
In faith, and love, and every grace;
Might more of his salvation know,
And seek more earnestly his face.

'Twas he who taught me thus to pray,
And he, I trust, has answered prayer,
But it has been in such a way
As almost drove me to despair."

No, dear brother, the pathway has been far, very far from what I pictured, but of one thing I feel sure, that if I belong to the King's family, I am traveling along the highway that he has cast up. I hope I may be made reconciled to the dispensation of Providence, and that I may ever be kept from bringing reproach upon the name and cause of Jesus.

Yours in a precious hope,

JAMES E. HUBBARD.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I think this letter of brother Attebery will be read with interest and comfort by many if published in the SIGNS, therefore I send it. It talks what all the Lord's servants know by experience. The brethren in Washington and Oregon have far to go to meeting, many of them, but they go. I believe they all, or nearly all, belong to one association. The preachers seem to me to be a faithful, sound and loving band.

Affectionately,

SILAS H. DURAND.

WINONA, Wash., June 10, 1902.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—Though I have never met you, yet I have been acquainted with your writings as published in our papers, for a good many years, and by our private correspondence. Judging by these (if I am able to judge) you advocate the doctrine, and I hope I love it, which causes me to hope that we have been taught in the same school, realizing that we are an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the Lord. And O, my brother, how willingly we trust in him, for we have long since learned there is no help in Egypt, and vain is the help of man. I spoke to you in my other letter of desiring to go to our next meeting, the second Sunday and Saturday before in this month. I was blessed to go, and if you will pardon me I would like to tell you of the frame of mind I started in, and its changes. I had not been to my church to meeting for seven months, though I had desired to go at every meeting, but could see no way, and when the time came to start, wife was not as well as usual, (though not able to be up at any time) and I had no conveyance, and the distance was about one hundred miles, and I knew it would cost me about five dollars to go on the cars. All this I must think of. How could I take so much, where there was so little to take from, and needed so badly? And now comes the worst part: having a great desire to go, but feeling so cold and dull, seeming

to know what I believed was true, but not able to enjoy it. And what was I, that I should go away up there, could I speak a single word of comfort to one of the least little ones when I was so in need myself? However, I started, and I do not think the train ran as fast on its way as I seemed to plunge into darkness and gloom, and I think I would be safe to say I wished once a mile I had stayed at home. O, such doubts and fears, not only as to my call to comfort the children, but my very hope seemed to almost be gone. Surely the brethren would be sorry to see such an one as I come. But I went on, and got to brother Jones'. Sister Jones met me with a good warm handshake, and soon brother Jones came, and he seemed glad to see me, and I really believe he was; I know I was glad to see them. I could but think how thoroughly they were deceived in me; if they could see me as I saw myself, they would have no use for me. We started to meeting the next morning; my condition was the same, not a ray of light, thinking if I ever had been anything, or any comfort, that time had passed, and I had better stayed at home; there was nothing I could see but my imperfections, and it did seem that there was no one so poor, weak and sinful as I. How good and kind the brethren looked, and their kindness to me seemed so much more than I could even dare to imagine, say nothing about receive. And it seemed that if I must try to talk I would surely sink through the floor, but nothing would do brother Jones but that I must do the talking, though I tried every way to get out of it but to absolutely refuse. I tried to talk, and it seemed to me it was almost a total failure. I shall always look back to that time as the hardest up hill pull I ever had. This caused me to quit thinking I had better stayed at home; I knew now I ought to never come. This was a time of heaping reproaches upon myself: if I ever had known anything it was gone now, and I was left to mourn my leanness, my affliction and my poverty, yet I could but trust in the Lord, and if he (the Lord) was praised through my failure, amen. I had to learn again, "He bringeth down, he lifteth up." I was now away down in the valley, and if ever a poor one begged to be brought out, I surely did, fully realizing that I was totally depending on him, and him alone, and bless his holy name, it was about his time to lift me up. The next day, Sunday, brother Jones preached, and it was food to my hungry soul. I could but rejoice, for he had brought me into his banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love. I had received strength; darkness had vanished, all was light, the Son had arisen with healing in his wings, all was joy; sorrowing and sighing were gone; I was filled with joy and gladness. It was no cross nor burden now to talk, and if I ever was blessed with light, and words to declare Jesus, sweet Jesus, as a full and complete Savior, it was there. And how good it was to see those good old brethren and sisters feasting with me, tears of joy running down their cheeks as silent witnesses, testifying that they had been the same road.

O, my brother, when he who is our life appears, then are we in glory, for it is glory to be in the presence of sweet Jesus. But the time came to go, and how loth were we to leave, but I was comforted on my way home. I had used my money, but I was out nothing; came home, found all as well as when I left.

Do you ever have such a road to travel? Do you think a truly called one will have such extreme doubts? I some-

times think that if I was truly called, my condition would be so I could tend my home church at least.

I guess I better close, lest I tire you. Would be glad to get a letter from you at any time.

Yours in hope,

T. E. ATTEBERY.

DANSVILLE, N. Y., Nov. 11, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER B. F. HAMILTON:—I do not know whether you care to be afflicted with a prosy letter from so obscure and insignificant a creature as I feel myself to be, but somehow I feel inclined to have a little talk with you. You have been in my mind many times since we last met, and I have wished for a communication from you, as well as from many others whom I love in the gospel, and, as if the Lord knew what were the longings of my heart, he prompted sister Maria Hellings to invite me to visit her, and sister Etta Hoffman, in Bath, Steuben Co., N. Y., as she was stopping with her for a short time. It is needless to say that I accepted the invitation with much avidity, and enjoyed my visit with much satisfaction. It is so seldom that I meet with any one who understands me in spiritual things, and even Old School Baptists seem to have deserted this region of country, and left me stranded among enemies of the truth, and why I am unable to conceive. But this visit with sisters Hellings and Hoffman proved an oasis in the desert of my pilgrimage. It is so sweet to interchange views with those who know and love the truth. My experience is to "talk to the wind," when I speak with my neighbors on the subject of God's grace to fallen man, and all I receive in return is "wind," and no satisfaction. I am sometimes pexplexed to know why it is that I am isolated from the saints. But God knows, and I feel to acquiesce with his will in all things, for he knows what is best for me, and he knows why the western New York conference of Old School Baptists has gone out of existence, and why the Old School Baptist church at Riker Hollow has become invisible, also the church at South Dansville. A few scattering members remain in the vicinity of each place, but I very seldom see any of them, and I do not know whether they have any meetings at either place. You can imanine my loneliness when I get hungry for a crumb of spiritual nourishment, such as the saints find in their assemblies, and in speaking often to one another. I do not wish to murmur on account of my isolation, but rather take it as a reproof for my waywardness and unfitness for the society of the church. I find that all the goodness there is about me is of the negative sort; that is, I do not steal my neighbor's horse, nor his money, nor do I wish him any harm, and if I involuntarily do a good act, I am quite sensible of the promptings of some power independent of my own will. I have many seasons of thinking with Paul of his spiritual warfare, and sometimes I draw some comfort from it, for I know I do not do the things that I would, and many things that I resolve not to do, them I do, and find the more I struggle to extricate myself from the perplexities of the strife, the more I become entangled in the mystery, and see my helplessness. Then I derive consolation from the fact that I am in the hands of an all-wise and merciful Guardian. I do a great deal of thinking, but it is fragmentary and disjointed, a little about this and a little about that that, and am not capable of putting things together for a complete subject, so I have avoided trying to write

my thoughts for the use or edification of my brethren.

I enjoy the SIGNS, for it is all the preaching I have, and I am satisfied they speak the truth when they say it is "far behind the times." No, it does not keep up with the tide of fashion and error that is carrying the multitude to destruction, and misleading the unwary and unsuspecting children of God. No wonder they get tangled with the error of "time salvation" on conditions. It is so natural for us all to accept things in the light of "cause and effect." Our natural reason being satisfied with a conclusion, we rest there, until the enlightening rays of divine truth shews us the fallacy of our reasoning, then we embrace the truth and rejoice in it.

DANSVILLE, N. Y., March 26, 1903.

BROTHER BEEBE:—I have just turned up from among my papers the foregoing, which I delayed sending to brother Hamilton until I lost his address, and finally forgot it entirely, but its appearance awakens the old desire to hear from him personally, and if he should see it in the SIGNS I hope he will favor me with a letter, that I may experience a ray of sunshine in the darkness of my isolation.

I derive much comfort from reading the SIGNS, which continues to tell the same old story in varied and interesting forms, as it did and has from its birth. May the Lord prosper you in its publication. P. WEST.

KANSAS, Ill., Feb. 20, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have not written for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for some time, not that my interest in them has failed, but owing to weight of years, and a realizing sense of my inability to write to profit. I am now approaching my eightieth anniversary, and have known the SIGNS OF THE TIMES since my boyhood days; my parents were regular readers of them from their foundation by your dear father. I am glad to bear testimony to the fact that they have never wavered from the principles they started out on seventy years ago. The enemies of God's truth may slurringly call them and their editors and correspondents "Can't-help-it's," and other names, but God's truth will stand when all his enemies are forever gone.

I know, brother Beebe, you editors have many trying things to contend with, but I want to say to you that you have faithfully discharged your duty. If there is any material difference between those holding to "conditionalism," that are claiming the name Old Baptists, and the Missionary Baptists, I fail to see it. They each hold to the workmonger system, and refuse to ascribe all the glory to God and his grace for salvation in time and to eternity. If God is not sovereign, and has not predestinated all things whatsoever comes to pass, then the Old Baptists are wrong, and their enemies are right. But, my brethren, we know that the Bible teaches that God is a Sovereign, and "doeth whatsoever seemeth him right," and "none dareth to say unto him, What doest thou?" We know that he has said by the mouth of the prophet, "I am God, and beside me there is none else." If it were not for the fact that God's people were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and that the language of the apostle is true where he says, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his own purpose and grace given us in Christ Jesus," then should such a poor creature as I be without hope. But thanks be unto the name of Jesus, he has said, "All that the Father hath given me shall come unto

me." There are no conditions in this language, it all means I will, and you shall.

I did not expect to write in the way I have when I commenced, but when I hear the truth of God assailed and prevaricated, I feel like trying in my feeble way to defend it. I have now been a professed follower of Jesus for sixty years; all the old soldiers of the cross that I knew in my first days in the church have passed away, and I know I, too, will soon bid farewell to all earthly things, but by the grace of God "I am what I am," and know if I am saved, it is alone through the righteous blood of Christ.

When I have written several of my last communications to the SIGNS, I have felt they were farewell messages, and now I want to say to you and the supporters of your paper, Stand fast in the defense of God's truth, and may his presence guide you into all truth, and comfort you when under persecutions: "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake."

JAMES M. TRUE.

ACTON, Texas, Jan. 11, 1903.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Through the kind mercies of an all-wise and covenant-keeping God, I have now entered into the new year of our Lord 1903, which is the sixty-third year of my life in this world of sin and sorrow, and the thirty-sixth year of my life, as I humbly hope, in Christ. But I want to confess to the brethren and sisters who are scattered over this broad land, that if I have ever been translated out of the kingdom of darkness, into the kingdom of God's dear Son, it was not by reason of anything which I did to merit God's abounding grace, for when I take a retrospect of myself, I cannot see any good thing that I ever did. If my poor, sinful heart deceives me not, my desire is to walk in the fear and commandments of God, but I find a wretched and wandering mind, that when I would do good, evil is present with me. How glad I am that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps; if it were left with me, I know that I would be constantly doing wrong. I feel my salvation, both for time and eternity, is in Christ Jesus our Lord, who came into this sinful world of poor parentage, and was cradled in the manger, and from the manger to the cross he was persecuted, and mocked, and spit upon, yet he murmured not, but bore it all patiently for the love he had for the church, and while being suspended between the earth and the heavens, before he yielded up the ghost we hear him say, "It is finished." Yes, he now had finished the work he came to do, and that work was to save his people from sin. The Primitive Baptists believe he saved every one which was given him in the covenant of redemption, and he is made manifest unto every one by his own mighty power. But, says the Arminian world, Christ came into this world to die for all mankind, and they can all be saved if they will repent and believe. But stop and think, free-willer, Jesus came as a Prince and a Savior to give repentance unto Israel, for remission of sins. Then repentance and belief are free gifts from Jesus. And how I would love to praise, honor, and glorify him, but I cannot do anything without him, but when he helps me I can trust him for all things, but when I am left to self I grope in the darkness and desert land. I want to be submissive to his will. A few more days, or years at most, and I shall be called to

lay this old body down to its mother earth.

Now please find inclosed two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for this present year; it is the most preaching we have; we feel like we cannot well do without it, as we have been subscribers for it for several years. We greatly admire the editorials of Elder Chick, and old father Beebe; in fact all who write we feel are far ahead of us in spiritual understanding. I fully acknowledge if I am a child, to be the least of all. Farewell to all. Now, brethren, if you see fit to publish this scribble, please correct all mistakes. I subscribe myself yours in hope of eternal life,

W. L. McPHERSON.

HAMPSTEAD, Md., Jan. 11, 1903.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR PASTOR:—I still feel like calling you such, although I have been made to feel since I last wrote you that I can claim Elder Rowe as my pastor. I wrote to the church last February, the first time since you left Maryland. The encouraging words which I received from the church, and also two letters from the family of brother Kelley, made me feel that I was not entirely forgotten by those of like precious faith. This is a feeling that I have often entertained, although I did not want to. The spark which was slumbering only needed a little fuel to bring forth a blaze, showing that it mattered not how long it slumbered, he could arouse it in his own good time. I think it is well to stir up the pure mind by way of remembrance, but I feel that in my weakness I often neglect my duty, but no matter how careless we are, there is one who never forgets us; he chides, but never withdraws his loving kindness. I have my trials daily, and sometimes severe ones. Last summer I suffered more than I ever have before I think, but I feel that my prayers were answered, and it seems that I have seen so much of his guiding hand during the past year that I have this fall been made to cry out like David of old, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." As I read the seventeenth chapter of John this morning, I thought what comforting words these are, "I pray for them, I pray not for the world." "Neither pray I for these alone," &c. Then with that hope which this morning I feel to be sure and steadfast, ought I ever to murmur? No, but O, how often I do, and think the pathway ought to be always smooth, forgetting that the Master said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." O, let your prayer be that I may have a more thankful heart, and live nearer to God this coming year, which is before us as a problem unsolved. But we know that he will not withhold anything that is for our good.

I received last week a letter from Elder Rowe; it was the first; it contained the Spirit of Christ, if I am a sufficient judge; it was kind and encouraging. Did you know that he and sister Emma Kelley called to see me last August? I was weak and nervous, and had been confined to my hot room for several weeks, and having not seen any of my kindred for a long time, the joy, in my weak state, seemed too much for me, and I could not speak of the things which I hope I love to talk about, without weeping. This provoked me, but nevertheless you do not know how I enjoyed it all. For a long time afterwards I could see their forms and faces, as I would lie upon my bed, and as the dear presence of the Savior seemed to accompany me many

dreary hours were filled with pleasure. Although I am not permitted to assemble with God's people, how pleasant it is to be able to write to them, and to receive in return words of encouragement and comfort.

Did you ever read a book called "Satan's lawsuit with a saint"? I think it was my mother's book. It did not look at all enticing, but when I came home from Union Bridge, I felt like reading and picked it up, and became so interested that I did not care to lay it down. I think it is a true history of a child of grace.

Love to you all. I trust this may find you all well. Dear Nellie has had deep sorrow, but I hope that she has been sustained by the everlasting arms.

Your sister,

GEORGIA ENGLAND.

"HATH NOT THE POTTER POWER?"

We are but senseless clay, as regards spiritual things, until by the power of the Spirit we are made to see the truth. When taught in this way how quickly is darkness made light. It is a change from a natural world to the sweet fields of spiritual Canaan. One moment we know nothing, the next there is the feeling and triumphant expression of "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Clearly the great apostle speaks of the power that does it all, and by a simple figure sets forth the fact that without him we are dead to the knowledge of spiritual things. Dead in trespasses and in sin, is the condition of all men until Christ comes to them manifestly. I went to the house of the potter; a mass of clay lay before him on the wheel, he turned the wheel, his hands moved the clay, and a vessel was made. For a moment I looked, then a turn of the potter's hand and again it was a batch of clay. "The vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter."—Jer. xviii. 4. Then he turned the wheel and a more beautiful vessel was made. "He made it again another vessel as seemed good to the potter to make it." God made Israel for himself. By his power he moulded the nation as the potter the clay, and it held the things of the old covenant, and the chosen people of whom Christ came. Then the vessel was marred in his hands. The nation was destroyed, the people scattered that his Spirit might be poured out upon all flesh. (Acts ii. 17.) From the broken body of Christ all blessings pour forth. Because his soul is poured out unto death. (Isaiah liii. 12.) His loved ones live unto him forever. Israel was marred in his hands, but he made another as seemed good unto him. The first was beautiful but temporal, the second made unto honor and "afore prepared unto glory" is eternal: the church, the kingdom, the everlasting home for his people. It is the Father's house of many mansions where each and every one of his weary prodigals find a dwelling place and peace. When we learn that he loves us, with what force and sweetness the words come, "Can I not do with you as this potter?" "As the clay in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand." Once we dreaded his power, now we love it, for he can make of this senseless clay a vessel fit for the Master's use. In your first experience you saw yourself in his hands marred and unfit for anything. Your soul seemed poured out unto death, you could not reply against him, (Rom. ix. 20,) then when your salvation appeared in him you were no longer a marred vessel, but one unto honor according to the working of his mighty power. So we do not, must not, rejoice at his power to mar, but at his

power to save. Not because he took away the first wherein we trusted in works, and a keeping of the law, but because he gives us knowledge of the new covenant, which puts his laws in us, and is sealed with his strong words, "I will" and "they shall." Men dead in sin will murmur at his power and justice, but the child of God is made to see himself justly condemned, that he may rejoice at God's power to justify. He makes you live in the Spirit unto him, and gives the desire to be a vessel fit for the Master's use. He gives the power to see yourself a sinner, the evidence of salvation in your brother's walk and conversation, and best of all he has given you the love of the truth and the brethren. So you learn that "God is love." O, the inexpressible sweetness of this passage, "God is love." No man can know the great calm of this precious knowledge unless he has been made to see and love his brother in Christ Jesus. A child of God cannot feel it at all times, but he who has once been made to feel that blessed peace, will ever long for it in his heart, and the sweet memory of it will hover round like the perfume on the handles of the door. (Song of Solomon.) The sweetness has been distilled in his heart, and he treasures its memory forever. Even when cold and in the dark he recalls those pleasant times when the warm glow was in his heart. He is made to cry, "Whither is my beloved gone?" He knows how precious is his presence, though he may fear and doubt his coming. It is this God of love, and loving God, that has the power over the clay.

Are you unfit for the Master's use? If so who told you? How do you know what is fit for his use? The word of the Lord came unto the men of old and taught them what was fit service. Christ came into the world and rendered perfect obedience, and taught who is condemned. The Word of the Lord came unto you telling you of your sins, and making you know what is required. You may hear his sweet voice saying, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Is he able to do this? "Hath not the potter power?" Are you lame on both feet, and cannot do what you would? Has he not power to heal? Are you a leper? Hath he not power to cleanse? Are you afraid the old church will die and not be revived? Hath not the potter power? Are you all alone and no one to comfort you? Hath not the potter power? Yes! Yes! You feel that some power gives sweet meditations on portions of the word; some power makes you strive to be better, and gives you loving sympathy for those in trouble. Is it not God, or God's Spirit, or "Christ in you the hope of glory"? Does not this power hold you firmly, and will not let you go? Things of the world, trials, joys, search for natural knowledge, all wrap the veil of flesh around you; but in you there is a "still voice" calling you to worship him as the giver of every "good and perfect gift." May the clouds of doubt and trouble, and the veil of the flesh be rifted, so that we may see and be in the holy place where his loved ones rejoice in his love and righteousness.

I trust I am your brother,

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.

LAWRENCEBURG, Ky.

KELLY'S CORNERS, N. Y.

DEAR BRETHREN, EDITORS, CONTRIBUTORS AND PATRONS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—To you all I desire to send greeting, and while it is fresh in my mind I wish to say that the theme in the SIGNS, the manner and spirit of the editors and contributors, and the subjects dis-

cussed, all seem to me to contribute to one end, and that the glorifying of God, which we are told to do in our bodies and our spirits which are his. And, without partiality or hypocrisy, those to whom the truth is dear, who are readers of the SIGNS, as they read and digest what is there written, can say with one accord, Amen, even so let it be. And to those who are still in the drama of life I would say, Go on to know the truth, and to practice what you know. The testimony to the truth in general, and to christian experience in particular, is clear. The childlike writings of both Elders Gilbert Beebe and Wm. J Purington, are so expressive of the character they bore as lovers and defenders of the truth. They allowed nothing to daunt them in regard to the eternal glory and blessedness of the everlasting God, and his eternal purpose regarding his elect people. And beyond this there is no extent of love for it is impossible for God himself, although he is love itself, to reach beyond the confines of his eternal purpose concerning the choice and salvation of his people; having loved them with an everlasting love, he must needs with everlasting kindness draw them, and cause them to prove their need of that store of grace which he has laid up for them in Christ Jesus, and this establishes the name of Christ with believers as having in him all fullness.

Peter said, "Unto you that believe, he is precious." Though he was foreordained before the foundation of the world, yet he was manifest in these last times for those who believe in God by him. Therefore they need no sharp argument, nor any bandying of words. but plain and simple truth itself, is what the Holy Spirit puts into their hearts, and into the mouths of his people who believe in God through our Lord Jesus Christ; and there is neither a superfluity nor any lack of grace; all is complete in the will of God concerning this wonderful chain with its golden links: they were loved with an everlasting love; they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and they were blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ, in the heavenly places, according as they were chosen in him, and in time they are called with an holy calling, which is not according to their works, but according to the purpose and grace of God which was given them in Christ before the world was. All this proves their salvation to be of grace, through faith, which is not of themselves, but is the gift of God, and these saved ones are declared to have been created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God had before ordained that they should walk in them.

Will not every one have according to his choice? Must not every one have in time and in eternity just what God himself has purposed? If not, where is the Rock? Where is the perfection? Where is the power? Who is at the helm of government? Has not God said, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure"? He called Cyrus the Persian his shepherd, an hundred years before he lived on earth, who in his life opened the way for the deliverance of the captives in Babylon, and the after work of Zerubbabel. Who is it that comes traveling in the greatness of his strength, whose hand has laid the foundation of the earth (spiritually) and who shall bring forth the headstone with shoutings, crying grace unto it? But who is it that believes the report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed in these last days? Surely the same kind of people, be they more or less, who then believed,

and who contend earnestly for the truth and the faith of the gospel. And I believe there are men now living to whom the truth is dearer than their natural lives. There are men among Old School Baptists who have jeopardized their lives (professionally) by endeavoring to maintain as brother McPherson says, "The truth which is in accord with christian experience, and with which the people of God are fed."

The baptism of John, who was sent from God to baptize with water unto repentance, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit by our Savior, bring to view the two requisites for initiation into the church militant. Jesus possessed the Spirit beyond measure when he required it at the hand of his Father, and so also the child of God, as a lover and follower of Jesus, must have the same Spirit in his measure, to make him willing to obey.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. D. HUBBELL.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

PLEASE BE SURE,

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

Please be particular about this.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

The last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903, &c.

NOTICES.

Dear Brother Beebe:—In the February first issue there was published a notice respecting a possible reduction in railroad fares to attendants of the Warwick Association.

It was intimated that in order to obtain the concession of 66⅔ *per cent.* rebate on return fare, the sale of at least 100 full fare tickets to New York must be guaranteed the Trunk Line Association. Many applications have been received, but most of the writers misunderstand the proposition.

Single trip full fare tickets must be bought to New York within three days of the time appointed for the Association to convene. No stop-over is allowed coming or returning. None but those coming directly to New York within the time stated can derive any benefit from this plan, and those who wish to avail themselves of the privilege must notify the writer before May 10th. Unless 100 passengers are guaranteed no one will be benefited. Less than half this number have been heard from thus far. If the required number is assured by May 10th each aplicant will be advised by mail how to purchase tickets. If no communication reaches them by May 15th they will know that the proposition has failed for lack of support.

Your brother,

JOHN McCONNELL.

2400 Seventh Ave., New York, April 4, 1903.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1903.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

DO THE CHILDREN OF GOD SIN?

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I feel to be a poor, sinful worm, and do not know very much concerning spiritual things, but I do desire to know the truth. It is not my desire to trouble you with hard questions, but I am searching for truth. Will you please give your views through the SIGNS on the following subject? In first John we have this language, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." And again, "He that committeth sin is of the devil." And again, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin," &c. Do the true people of God sin? If so, are they of the devil when they sin? How are we to understand these things and make them harmonize? As for myself, I feel and know that I am a sinner, and that I say and do many things that are wrong; I can feel sin within me, as it seems to me, and this makes me abhor myself, and cry to God for mercy. Now, if I were born of God would I do wrong? I have a desire to live pure, and I hate sin, but the first thing I know I do or say something wrong, and then I must beg mercy of God again. It seems to me that the best I can do I am always sinning and asking God for mercy. Sometimes I feel his love in my heart, and then for a little while I am happy, but soon down I go again.

A young man told me some time ago that he did not sin. He said that he had power to sin, but did not, because, said he, "Whosoever committeth sin is of the devil." In Colossians Paul speaks of some being reconciled to God by the death of his Son, who were sometimes enemies in their minds by wicked works, that they might be holy and blameless in his sight. And then he adds the words, "If ye continue in the faith," &c. Are we reconciled only when we continue in the faith? I hope that you can understand me.

Yours in hope, E. B. BARTLETT.

IRVINE, Ky., Feb. 5, 1903.

The experience of our brother, as briefly stated by himself above, in itself gives a full explanation of what the Scriptures to which he refers mean. He hates sin, and yet he sins. He cannot do the good that he would, and the evil that he would not, that he does. This was also Paul's experience, and it is the experience of all who are truly called by grace. Paul says, I do these things, yet not I, but sin that dwelleth in me. On the other hand, when he speaks of the service of God, he says, "I labored, and yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Whether we look at the one side or the other of Paul's life, we must never separate Paul himself from the life he lived. If it be sin that is responsible for his wrong doing, or feeling, or motive, yet he does not therefore absolve himself from censure. He says, I do those things that I would not, and on the other hand, when he attributes to grace all the labor of love which was in his life in serving God, he does not exclude himself, but says, "I labored more abundantly than they all." While grace labored in him, and through him, yet he in that labor was himself weary, hungry, thirsty, and filled with pain and suffering of body and mind on account of the labor and deprivation and persecution which befell him.

Our brother, in the few things which he has said regarding himself and his travel, has presented the same things in substance. And there is not a child of God that has felt the christian warfare, who does not at once as he reads what Paul said about it, come into fellowship with him, and feel as he reads that Paul knew just what he knows to be true of himself. We shall all strive in vain to find any other words that will tell the story as well as Paul has by inspiration of the Spirit of wisdom expressed it in

Romans and in Galatians. The Scriptures referred to by our brother only tell in other language just what Paul has said in the Scriptures above referred to. All that both Paul and John have said belongs to the daily life of believers, and believers only. No others have, and no others complain of any such warfare. The careless worldling knows nothing of what it is to grieve because he cannot cease from sin; nay, more, he does not know what sin is, nor the exceeding sinfulness of it. The worldly religionist knows nothing of this warfare, for he is satisfied that he has ceased from sin already, or that he can whenever he gets ready to do so, and he teaches all others that this is in their own hands. The pharisee can always do the good that he would, and boasts of his attainments in religion. He has done good, and therefore he should be blessed. The young man to whom our brother refers belongs to the latter class, and knows nothing of the trials of that broken-hearted sinner who would but cannot do the good that he would.

But to say a few words about the Scriptures to which our brother has referred. First, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Two verses below this language John adds this, "If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." "His word" in the last verse means the same as "the truth" in the former one. If then his word or truth be in us, it will be a light that will show us not only that we have sinned in the past, as stated in the latter verse, but also that we do now sin, as stated in the former verse. If we say either that we have not sinned in the past, or that we do not now sin, it is full evidence that we are yet destitute of his word, or the truth. So in like manner Job said, "If I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse." Paul had the word of God in him most surely, according to this text, for he confessed that sin was with him, so that he could not do the good that he would. We need not dwell upon this longer here.

Let us notice the second text: "He that committeth sin is of the devil," and "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin," &c. There is manifestly no contradiction implied here of the first Scripture, there can be none, for the same apostle in the same epistle wrote all these things; he saw no contradiction in them. It seems to us, as we said before, Paul has said the same things that are said here. Paul said, "Sin shall not have dominion over you." This is just what John is saying in other language here. There is a vast difference between sin reigning unto death in the unbeliever, and sin dwelling in and plagueing the believer. There is a vast difference between the king sitting on the throne, and a company of rebellious subjects causing riot and distress in some part of his kingdom. Paul said, "Sin shall not reign," but he also says that sin plagued him, though it did not reign in him. Grace was the reigning power, and yet sin was not yet extirpated or cast out. So David, and all the kings after him, reigned in Palestine or Canaan, yet the Philistine still dwelt in the land, and there was frequent warfare. But the Philistine did not reign any more, though he had reigned once. So sin dwells in the delivered captive, but it does not reign any longer. On the contrary grace so reigns that sin is hated and abhorred by all who have been delivered from its bondage. Indeed, the breaking of that bondage consists in this, that the love of sin is

taken away, so that each believer can say, I loathe it, and I loathe myself because of my sins.

Now we do not understand that John is saying any more than this: "He that committeth sin is of the devil." That is, he that loveth to sin, and runs into sin with eager desire, and welcomes it, and makes it his life, and finds in it his joy and happiness, is still of the devil, who sinneth from the beginning. This must mean that the devil is by his very nature inclined to sin, and to sin only. Therefore all who are inclined in heart and spirit and desire toward sin, are of the devil; that is, they possess his spirit, and are actuated by his evil nature altogether. God's children, while they sin, yet are striving against it, and hating it, and are filled with abhorrence against it. We understand both John and Paul to be speaking of the inner life rather than the outer life. When Paul said, "I cannot do the good that I would," we do not suppose that he means that he could not visit the sick or needy, and help them, but that even when he did these things, the flesh was so apparent, and so ready to inject some fleshly motive, that he could not do these or any other good thing with a pure motive. This evil motive he hated, and he longed to be rid of it, crying out, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" This it was that took away from him all room for boasting, and humbled him in the dust; this it is that spoils all our good, and makes us feel that we are full of sin in all we do. Did I ever do one thing with a pure motive, that is, with an eye single to the glory of God? each troubled heart must at times say.

Yet both John and Paul do present the life and motive of believers as being essentially different from that of the unregenerate world. All believers know what we heard of one saying, "I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I want to be, I am not what I hope I shall be, but I thank God I am not what I once was." In this sense believers are separated from sin and uncleanness; that is, they no longer love it, but abhor it. But that man who does not abhor sin, but rather loves it, is of the devil, whose element is sin, and sin alone, for he is a murderer and a liar from the beginning. And so it is in this sense alone that he that is born of God doth not commit sin. We must not divide the believer here, any more than anywhere else. It is not said *that* which is born of God doth not commit sin, but *whosoever*. The believer is born of God, and has the Spirit of God in him. His body is a member of Christ; his body is a temple of the Holy Ghost; the Spirit of God dwells in him with power, and manifests itself through his mortal flesh. It is this very Spirit of God which produces in him an abhorrence for sin. Possessing this Spirit, the child of God can say with Paul, when he does that which is evil, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." It is in this sense, as it appears to us, that he that is born of God does not and cannot sin, as John here testifies. And so there is divine agreement and harmony between the testimony of Paul and John, and of all who know what the warfare signifies.

Our brother says he has a desire to live pure, and that he hates sin, and yet he is all the time sinning and asking God for mercy. Once he sinned, and did not ask God for mercy; once he was the slave of sin, but now he is no longer under bondage to it, and yet it plagues him. So long as it is a plague to him, all is well with him. But how terrible when sin is

no plague to a man. That was the condition of us all once. What wonderful mercy to be brought up out of that state into liberty, so that sin reigns in our affections and desires no more. Such as these may often stumble, and even fall for a season, but still sin is not reigning in them, and it is no more they, but sin that does the evil in them. The texts quoted from John may in themselves seem contradictory, but they are not really so, and compared with Paul, it seems to us that each throws light upon the other, and that the meaning of both is clear. Therefore the presumptuous man who says, "I have arrived at perfection in the flesh," is rebuked, and the fears of the humble follower of the Lamb are allayed as the mysteries of the warfare are unfolded before him.

As to the Scripture referred to by brother Bartlett, in Colossians, we understand the question in his mind to be with regard to the word "if" and what follows in Col. i. 23: "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel," &c. First, we will call attention to the fact that the word "if" does not always imply doubt, as regards the subject that may be under consideration. It does not in this place. Paul, in verse twenty-second, says that those who had been enemies are now through his death in the body of his flesh, reconciled, so that they may be presented holy and unblamable and unreprovable in his sight. This great work has then been already accomplished in the death of Jesus on the cross. This work having been already done cannot be affected by any future act of men. What then does Paul mean by this word, "If ye continue in the faith"? Simply this, by this continuance in the faith on their part, it would appear that they were included in the work of reconciliation. Many have made profession of faith in the reconciliation wrought out by the dear Redeemer, but not all have made a true confession. There have been, and are no doubt to-day, some who profess without possession. There is a vast difference between true and false profession. How then shall it be known whether a man has been really reconciled to God through Jesus Christ? A mere profession will not be sufficient proof. Continuance in this profession, unmovedness from the hope of the gospel, adherence to the truth, are the most satisfactory evidences. These evidences cannot appear in a day. Time must elapse, and trials must be endured, and temptations must be overcome, ere this full assurance can be given. So here, Paul says to this church, All this has been done for you, if indeed you continue in the faith, but if your profession be a mere profession with no savor of life in it, it will be made manifest by your failing to continue in the faith, and by your being removed from the hope of the gospel. Still further, Paul, as we understand him, does not mean here that doubts and fears in those who have made this profession constitute a removal from this hope, or a failure to continue in the faith, but rather that they have forsaken the doctrine itself, and have ceased to believe in the gospel of the Son of God. Many a child of God doubts deeply his own interest in this salvation, who yet believes with all his heart that this salvation is the true salvation, and that there is hope in no other. These doubts are not what Paul means by being removed from the faith and hope of the gospel, but rather a rejection of the truth itself for fables. God will keep his true people in the faith and hope of the gospel, in this sense, and if they

are thus kept, it is sure that they have been reconciled, as he has said in verses twenty-one and twenty-two. The word "if" then implies, not a condition of this reconciliation, but rather it introduces the evidences of it.

We leave these thoughts with our brother, and with all who may read.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

SABBATH SCHOOLS.

BROTHER Beebe, my father requested me to ask you to state what are your objections to Sabbath Schools. Yours in christian bonds,

WILLIAM J. THORP.

MOUNT MORRIS, N. Y., May 7, 1860.

REPLY.

As a friend of education, we would not object to schools taught on the first day of the week, if conducted on the principle on which they were first originated by Mr. Rakes, of England, that is, merely to teach neglected children, in manufacturing towns, who have no other opportunity to learn to read, or to acquire any other branch of useful education, but such are not the objects or design of what in the present day are denominated Sabbath School, they are now used to teach religion, or to allure into sectarian traps, the unsuspecting and confiding children of our country, and therefore we object to them.

2. They are now called *nurseries of the church*, a means of grace, an open thoroughfare to the portals of immortal glory, thus calculated to deceive the simple, by implying that men have found out a way to heaven which is not revealed in the Scriptures, was not sanctioned by the apostles and primitive church, and which was unknown in the world until the present century, and therefore we object to them.

3. They are based upon the false theory that the religion, which is essential to salvation, is a mere science which can be taught and learned in schools, as lessons in grammar, mathematics or geography are taught and learned; and consequently they assume to supersede the work of the Holy Spirit in quickening, regenerating and saving lost sinners; and therefore we object to them.

4. They are totally incompatible with the provisions of the New Covenant, under which the Church of God is established, as that covenant expressly provides that those embraced in it "Shall no more teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord." The grand object of Sabbath Schools, openly avowed by their advocates at this day, is to teach the unregenerated to know the Lord. Therefore we object to them.

5. For as much as God has declared in the Scriptures of truth, "I am God, and beside me there is no Savior," every institution of man claiming to possess a power to promote the salvation of the children of men, is contradictory of what God has said, and in claiming to do what God declares none but himself can do, they become an idol, and all who look to them for the salvation of themselves or their children, or who countenance or sustain them in their infidel and blasphemous pretensions, directly or indirectly, are, in the scriptural sense of the word, idolaters. Therefore we denounce them.

6. Sabbath Schools, as patronized at the present time, are bringing into a religious profession thousands of graceless hypocrites, who neither know, or even profess to know anything of the work of the Spirit in the new birth, and who have been invariably taught in their schools to despise, hate, and ridicule the doctrine

of God's sovereignty, as exemplified in election, predestination and effectual calling, and to boldly repudiate the doctrine of the total depravity of all mankind in a state of nature, and to rely upon the fatally delusive doctrine of free-will and human ability to direct their own everlasting destiny. And therefore we object to them.

7. Sabbath Schools, instituted under the General S. S. Union, for the professed object of saving souls, which work, as we have shown, Jehovah declares that none but himself can accomplish, are idols set up in rivalry of Jehovah's throne, defiance of his law, which forbids that we shall set up any other god, and in open contradiction of his express word, are hostile to the cause of truth and holiness, God-dishonoring, heaven-daring, and productive of hypocrisy, deception and idolatry. And therefore we discard them.

8. In the organization of the gospel church, the wisdom of God has been displayed in the institution of all her ordinances, rites, usages, doctrine, discipline, laws and provisions. And Jesus Christ, who is given to be the Head over all things to his church, has sent his angel to testify these things in his churches, with the solemn warning, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book. Therefore we reject them.

9. Sabbath Schools, in the present form of their organization, drive a trade of religious stock-jobbing, selling dignified titles of memberships, life-memberships, directorships, with many other high sounding titles, for stipulated sums of money, thus making a religious aristocracy, and even promising a title to mansions in heaven, to those who will invest their money in their support. Therefore we object to them.

10. We belong to a kingdom which is not of this world, the laws of which require us to acknowledge no Savior but Jesus, to trust in him, and in him alone, to come out and be separate from anti-Christ, to touch not their unclean things. And as it is impossible that we should stand in the Sabbath School Union, and yet obey the command to be separated from them, we therefore stand aloof from them.

11. Zion, in distinction from Mystery Babylon, is the city of the Great King. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion in the sides of the north. God is in the midst of her. She, therefore, has no need of Sabbath Schools, or any other human inventions, or anything whatever which her God has not supplied, either for helps or for ornaments. In the simple comeliness which God has put upon her, she is now the perfection of beauty, and that which is perfect cannot be improved. As the sun in the natural heavens can only be seen in its own radiance, so the church of God, which he has set as a city on a hill, must be seen only in the light and glory of God which has arisen upon her. The Lord God and the Lamb are the light of this city: therefore we have no use for Sabbath Schools.

12. So far as our observation extends, the proselytes made by the Sabbath School machinery and its kindred institutions, like those made by the Jews, who, in their blinded zeal, compassed sea and land to make one, are two-fold more the children of hell after being made. The statistics of our country, the records of crime of every revolting name and class, have increased in our country within the last half century in proportion to the increase of Sabbath Schools and the

like modern religious institutions. And although we readily admit that these modern institutions have brought many thousands into a profession of religion, who have swollen the professed churches of all the workmongrel orders, it is also lamentably true that our penitentiaries, prisons and gallows have been very liberally supplied with subjects from the same source. And the very contentions, strife and treason which at this moment shake the foundation of our states, threaten a disruption of our Federal Union, and the overthrow of all our liberal institutions, as a nation, has been occasioned by the spirit of fanaticism nurtured and matured under the clerical influence of the managers of the American Sabbath School Union and their kindred institutions. For these and many other reasons, which we could name, we refuse to recognize Sabbath Schools as having any claims upon the kingdom of Christ, or the saints of God.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 15, 1860.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Santa Rosa, California, now being my post-office address, brethren and friends are requested to address me at that place.

J. P. ALLISON.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO BROTHER D. M. LEONARD'S APPEAL TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$676 70
Mrs. Drusilla Wheeler, N. Y., $10.00; Mrs. M. M. Rounsavell, N. Y., $10.00; John D. Staples, Ark., $1.00; Elder John Gore, Va., $1.00; Mrs. M. L. Pettibone, Ill., $1.00; D. S. Elliott, N. Y., $3.00; J. Hobson, N. Y., $3.00.—Total	29 00
Total to date	$705 70

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ONE among the saddest duties of my life is to record the death of brother **Joseph White,** and his wife, my sister in the flesh, and in the church of Jesus Christ. Brother Joseph White was born Jan. 11th, 1825, died Feb. 26th, 1903, sister Ann, his wife, was born March 4th, 1827, and died March 5th, 1903. They were married Dec. 22d, 1846, by Elder Phineas Waters. The writer baptized both of them in the fellowship of the New Valley Church. They were both born and lived until their death near Poolesville, Montgomery Co., Md. History does but repeat itself in the lives of all God's children. What was said by David of Saul and Jonathan, can be as truly said of these two devoted ones. They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in death they were but a short time divided. Brother Joseph died on Thursday, Feb. 26th. That day sister Ann said, "My life's work is ended," and Saturday she was taken sick. On that day my wife and myself went to see her, but could not that day. Sunday morning she put her withered arms around my neck and spoke in words of deepest anguish of her dear, departed husband. "But," I said, "sister Ann, it is best that he should go first." "Yes," she said, "I have prayed to the Lord to give me strength to minister to his last wants, and he granted my prayer." The Sunday following I preached his funeral at his home, where many Baptists have received a welcome that comes from the heart of love divine. Brother Joseph was one of those who was always looking out with an anxious eye, and an unstinted hand, for the good and comfort of his brethren. He was a man of indomitable energy, and by good management accumulated considerable fortune, all of which he recognized was given him of his heavenly Father, and out of which he was ever anxious to minister to his Father's children, among whom he was a thoughtful, tender, loving child. The power of God's grace and the blessedness of its influence was never more manifest than in the life of this dear saint.

Sister Ann died on the same day her husband did, of the following week, and on the following Sunday, at the same hour her husband's funeral was preached, Elder Eubanks preached hers. His words were full of tenderness and truth, and brought the tears to many eyes, for they knew what he said of her was truth. They were both buried in the Beallsville cemetery. To her no doubt it was a happy release; from many lonely, sad and sorrowful hours had she been spared; she was relieved. Sister Ann was in some respects a remarkable woman; her words were few, her tone always gentle, yet she controlled without any apparent effort all with whom she was much associated. It was her gentle spirit, not commanding words, that made her supreme wherever she was. In her family, among her friends, and in the church,

we all delighted to do her bidding. With a wonderful sound judgment there was such an earnestness and sincerity in what she said, we all felt and knew that what she said she meant it for good, without the semblance of selfishness in it. A history could be written of these two lovely characters. Indeed, they were lovely to us, and we shall miss them all the days of our life. They left six sons and two daughters, a host of friends, and the Valley Church, together with many others of the family of the redeemed, to mourn their loss, but we all believe their eternal gain.

ALSO,

Deacon Hiram Murphy, born June 28th, 1830, fell asleep in Jesus Feb. 5th, 1903, after an illness of three months, which his wife, our dear sister, writes me he bore without a murmur or complaint. He was baptized by Elder Joseph Purington in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Church. Having moved from Loudoun Co. to Fairfax Co., Va., he moved his membership to Frying Pan Church, about 1882. He was not long after appointed deacon of Frying Pan, in which office he served the church with honor to the office and credit to the church until his death. Brother Murphy was married twice; his first wife was Miss Huldah Munro, of Loudoun Co., Va., by whom he had four children, three daughters and one son. She died in 1874. Two years later he married Miss Mary Anna Morehead, of Fauquier Co., Va., by whom he had one child, a son. Brother Murphy was specially gifted in prayer, and in admonition and encouragement to his brethren. He seldom refused when called either to speak to the church, or speak in prayer. I shall never cease to miss him. His words were always with that tenderness and deep earnestness that made him to us a very useful and profitable member. We feel that we have lost one of our brightest ornaments. In visiting the sick, the poor and destitute, he was very attentive, and this he did for love, as did his Lord and Master. His wife writes me that he called her to his bedside some weeks before his departure, and said the Lord had sent him a message to come home, that he was going to leave them. Wished to talk to all his family before he went; called each by name and bade them good bye, with a loving admonition. Said he had been praying for his dear household, that the Lord might protect and bless them with spiritual blessing, and he felt his prayer would be answered; spoke of how good and merciful the Lord had ever been to him; said he had no fears of death, that it was the gate to endless joy, that he saw a bright, lovely light, and heard heavenly music, asked if they did not hear it; said tell dear brother White and the Frying Pan Church good bye, tell them all to strive to live together in peace, and unity of Spirit, and to have charity towards one another; tell brother White to preach the truth if possible stronger and stronger, and make no compromise; spoke of dear Elder Badger and family, would like him to attend his funeral if weather permit; left messages for others. The last night of his life he said, "O, I want to go home so badly." When told he was at home he said, "I know this is my dwelling-place, but I want to go home and be with Jesus." Soon after he repeated the hymn, "Jesus, lover of my soul," almost through. Next morning at 8 o'clock he passed away without a struggle or moan. I have quoted this much because I know those who knew him would rather hear what he said than anything I might say about him. That this saint has gone home to be with Jesus I have not a doubt. I have no disposition to discuss when and how his body will be raised: "Behold, I shew you a mystery." But that this vile body shall be changed that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself, I do believe with great gladness of heart. This truth is the comfort of my life and the strength of my hope. I know no other vile body but these Adamic bodies of ours, and the apostle says these vile bodies are to be fashioned like unto Jesus' glorious body, and it will be done according to God's mighty power. This power is able to do all things, and will do it. I do not believe any man has ever been taught to know how God changes flesh and bones to Spirit. We do know something about the Spirit, and something about the flesh, but the change is beyond, and we need not to know.

The brother was buried in the cemetery at Fairfax Courthouse. The writer preached his funeral in the Methodist meeting-house, to a large congregation.

E. V. WHITE.

LEESBURG, Va.

Martha Lee Lucas was born near Crawfordsville, Ind., December, 1831, died at her home in Chicago, Ill., March 12th, 1903. She was the daughter of Henry and Priscilla Lee. Her brothers were Gideon, James and David Lee; her sisters Mrs. Nancy Campbell, Mrs. Mary Morgan, Mrs. Maria Gains, Mrs. Elizabeth Galey and Ellen Lee. Only one brother, David Lee, and one sister, Elizabeth Galey, survive her. She was married quite young to John Lucas, and this union was blessed with six children, Mrs. Alice Naylor, Samuel Henry, James, Wilson Thompson and David Lee Lucas, all of Chicago, and Mrs. Nettie Segar, of Bellfountain, Ohio, left to mourn the loss of a loving, devoted mother. She was a kind, dear friend to all that knew her. We grew up from childhood together, and when I met her last spring we had sweet counsel together. She said, "How blessed you are to be a member of the dear Old Baptist Church, where our fathers and mothers worshiped. I have been all over this great city, (Chicago) but cannot find my kind of religion; I feel like a stranger in a strange land." I asked her to come

home and join at Crawfordsville, but she said, "O, I am not good enough for that dear people, I will stay here and read my SIGNS OF THE TIMES; that is a great comfort to me, because they tell my feelings better than I can." Her children brought her remains back to our dear old church, and Elder J. H. Oliphant comforted them with words of hope, taking for his text Paul's writing to Timothy, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."

Dear, sorrowing children, you have my warmest sympathy. I loved your mother; we will all miss her, but we must think of her in that better land freed from pain, no more care, all tears wiped away, living forever in the presence of the blessed Jesus, where she is satisfied.

"A land upon whose blissful shore
There rests no shadow, falls no stain;
There those who meet shall part no more,
And those long parted meet again."

LINA W. BECK.

Deacon Daniel J. Staton departed this life March 23d, 1903, after great suffering of four days, supposed to be pneumonia. The subject of this notice was the last son of Elder Warner Staton. He leaves one sister, S. A. Redish, well known by many. This nearly ends a family of marked distinction. The father was an Elder, and the oldest son, G. W., and the youngest son, J. L., and the other three were men of prominence, all holding offices of trust, having the confidence of the people. Brother Staton was born Nov. 8th, 1831, making him 71 years, 8 months and 15 days old. He was married to Letichie Fooks, in 1852. Four children were born to this union, one son, who is a member of the same church that he was, one daughter preceded him to the grave, thus leaving one son, two daughters and an invalid widow, with the church, to mourn, but not without hope, for we do sincerely believe that our loss is his eternal gain. The subject of this notice was baptized by the writer in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Nassaongo, Wicomico Co., Md., April 4th, 1875, and was soon after chosen deacon.

We miss our dear brother so very much, as he was so true in filling his place at the meetings, and was such a good talker on experimental things. He will remain in my memory while I remain, for our relation as brother and friend was close and strong. I received a message the next day, and responded promptly, and attended his funeral at the meeting-house where he held his membership, in the presence of a large congregation of sympathizing friends. Read as a text Jeremiah xvii. 7: "Blessed is the man that trusts in the Lord, whose hope the Lord is." He was then laid away in the church cemetery to await the morn of the resurrection. The family has our heartfelt sympathy.

T. M. POULSON.

DIED—Brother **W. G. H. Morgan,** Feb. 17th, 1903, at the residence of his son, brother H. J. Morgan, Magnolia, Ark., aged 80 years, 1 month and 17 days. The subject of this notice was born in Fayette Co., Ga., Dec. 1st, 1823, and emigrated to this State in the year 1854. Previous to this time he was married to Miss Mary Ann Freeman, in 1847, whom he survived eight years, nine months and two days. To this union were born seven children, six of which survive, one having died in infancy. Brother Morgan united with the Old School Baptist Church at Fellowship, by experience and baptism, October, 1860; two years later he removed his membership to Bodcaw church, where he was ordained deacon, August 3d, 1862, and for more than thirty years manifested great love and interest for the church, faithfully discharging his duties both as member and officer in the house of God, living a godly, consistent and exemplary life, though sad to relate, in the year 1896 troubles arose in the church, which resulted in the exclusion of our beloved brother from the church, also his son, H. J. Morgan, and his wife. However our deceased brother remained steadfast in the faith, and dearly loved the doctrine of salvation by grace. We can truly say that a good man is gone, one that was highly esteemed as a citizen and neighbor, an affectionate husband, a kind, devoted father. He was a great sufferer for many years, but bore his afflictions patiently without murmuring. The remains were laid quietly to rest in the family cemetery near his old home to await the final trump of God, when we believe that he will triumphantly rise with all the glorified saints, and will be ever with Jesus, our ever gracious King. May the Lord comfort the hearts of the bereaved children and friends, and enable us all to bow in humble submission to his most holy will.

A. R. YARBROUGH.

MARCH 29, 1903.

BROTHER **Eli Meed,** my dear nephew, departed this life May 2d, 1901. He was born Dec. 16th, 1836, and united with the Baptist Church of Jefferson, Feb. 18th, 1857, and was baptized the same day by Elder A. St. John, and continued a worthy member until death. If any soul was ever chosen in the furnace of affliction, it would seem it was him; for many years he was subject to spells of excruciating pain that it would seem impossible that any person could endure. I have witnessed his suffering, and wondered if it did not please the Lord to make him perfect through suffering. He was mild and unassuming, and it won for him many friends. He had an honest pride which buoyed him up to make an almost superhuman effort, when he could possibly get about, to earn his bread by the sweat of his face. He was married in early life to Miss Hannah M. Woodbeck, who was a helpmeet indeed, but she, too, has been greatly afflicted, and sometimes they were both sick at the same time,

but he that caused the ravens to feed Elijah, caused even strangers to come with their mites to their assistance. He leaves a devoted wife, two brothers and one sister, who stood by him to the last, and did all they could for him, but his time had come. Once when he thought he was going, he was so filled with rapture that he raised his hands toward heaven and praised God.

The unworthy writer spoke on the occasion from Hosea vi. 1, when his remains were deposited in the cemetery near the house where he had met many times to worship God. May God reconcile us all to his holy will, is our prayer.

EBER HIX.

JEFFERSON, N. Y., March 2, 1903.

DIED—In Portland, Maine, March 6th, 1903, **Mrs. Mary G. Noble,** aged 93, years and 2 months. Our dear sister experienced religion when eighteen years of age, and united with the Baptist church in Brunswick. At the time of the division she and many others were brought to the Bowdoinham church, where she has been greatly loved and highly esteemed. It has been her joy and delight to meet with the Lord's people, and hear the truth preached in its purity. The Lord wonderfully blessed her with health, so it has been only a little over a year since she met with us. She never felt she had a gift to relate her exercises of mind when she met with us, but there was no uncertain sound as she spoke of the Lord's dealings with her, and how Christ was formed in her soul the hope of glory. She was patient, and reconciled to the Lord's will. Had no fear or dread of death, and felt it was her last illness. She longed to depart and be with Christ. Our loss is her gain, and we sorrow most of all because we shall see her face no more. One son, several grandchildren, nephews and nieces, and one sister survive her. Her desire was granted that she have a short illness, and not be helpless.

May God comfort our hearts and establish us in the truth. ATTIE A. CURTIS.

MEETINGS.

THERE is a May meeting appointed to be held with the Sidling Hill Church, Fulton Co., Pa., commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in May and closing on Sunday. All coming from the east or west will be met at Hancock, Md. Train from the east arrives about 1 p. m. Any coming later will please write brother J. B. Mellott, Needmore, Pa. We most cordially invite our brethren and friends to meet with us, and we do hope some of our ministering brethren will take pity on us and come and preach for us. Any one coming by Washington, if they will come to my house on Wednesday I will see that they get there.

E. V. WHITE.

THE New Valley Church will hold its May meeting at Hughesville, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in May, lasting over Sunday. The trains leaving Washington Friday 8:50 a. m. and 1:05 p. m. will be met at Irene station. We especially request that all who possibly can to come on 8:50 a. m. train. We make an earnest appeal to you brethren and friends to attend our meeting, and especially do we appeal to our ministering brethren to attend.

E. V. WHITE.

BALTIMORE Association is appointed to be held with Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore city, Md., beginning Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, (20th) 1903, and continue three days. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth to meet with us.

DELAWARE Association is appointed to meet with Bryn Zion Church, in Kent Co., Delaware, beginning Wednesday before the fifth Sunday in May, (27th) 1903, and continue three days.

DELAWARE River Association is appointed to be held with the Southampton Church, Bucks Co., Pa., beginning on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (3d) 1903, and continue three days.

THE Warwick Association is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, in New York city, beginning Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, (10th) 1903, and continue three days.

THE Sandusky Regular Baptist Association will meet with the Honey Creek Church, near Bloomville, Seneca Co., Ohio, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 12th, 13th and 14th, 1903. Brethren will be met at Bloomville, Ohio.

H. D. BISHOP, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at the Hall, corner of 19th St. and 8th Ave., fifth floor. Elevator entrance on either 19th St. or 8th Ave.

10:30 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

POETRY.

THY GRACE IS ENOUGH FOR ME.

"I am so weak, dear Lord, I cannot stand
One moment without thee;
But O, the tenderness of thy enfolding,
And O, the faithfulness of thine upholding,
And O, the strength of thy right hand!
That strength is enough for me.

I am so needy, dear Lord, and yet I know
All fullness dwells in thee;
And hour by hour that never-failing treasure
Supplies and fills in overflowing measure
My last and greatest need, and so
Thy grace is enough for me.

It is so sweet to trust thy word alone!
I do not ask to see
The unveiling of thy purpose, or the shining
Of future light on mysteries entwining,
Thy promise-roll is all my own—
Thy word is enough for me.

There were strange soul-depths, restless, vast and broad,
Unfathomed as the sea,
An infinite craving for some infinite stilling,
But now thy perfect love is perfect filling:
Lord Jesus Christ, my Lord, my God,
Thou, thou art enough for me."

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By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition, which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at the following rates, viz: a single copy for 10 cents; 12 copies for $1.00; 25 copies for $2.00; 50 copies for $3.00; 100 copies for $5.00. Address,

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 71. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1903. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

APPIN, Ontario, Jan. 25, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I feel that I ought to write you a few lines again, that you may know that I desire to remember you and to be remembered by you, but I feel quite unfitted for the task, both mentally and physically. My writing shows my physical unfitness, and I fear that my composition will show my mental unfitness, but I know your readiness to excuse both, and therefore do not fear harsh criticism, and as you have always been desirous of hearing from me, poor as I am, I will trespass a little on your time once more. One reason for it is, that I desire to hear from you once more, as both my wife and self, and friends to whom I often read your letters, invariably find comfort in them, and friends always express their gladness at hearing them. You are esteemed here, not from personal considerations, but because the Lord has given you a part and lot in preaching the gospel of the Son of God; and while we esteem you in love for your work's sake, yet we desire to give all the praise unto God alone, who has, as we hope, made you an able minister of the New Testament, that by you, who are but an earthen vessel, the treasures of God's grace should be poured out. It is something the natural mind cannot understand that while we realize that the excellency of the power is of God alone, and we know that the poor, weak vessel deserves no credit, yet we are drawn very closely in love and fellowship to that one in whom this grace is displayed. As our dear Elder Carnell said last Sunday, "If one has anything to say about his own goodness, or good works, it at once drives away all fellowship from such an one, and we have not the power to prevent it. But on the contrary, fellowship will flow out to one who tells how poor, needy, helpless and sinful he or she is; such as these do manifest the brotherhood of those who are born again." The Elder's text was, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." He showed the effects of this birth in a very clear and comforting manner, though I enjoyed his morning discourse much more, from the apostles' words, "For in me, (that is, in my flesh) dwells no good thing, for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not."

How he did seem to enter into the very depths of my heart, in a way that would disgust the religious world, but which I felt was food and drink to my poor, weary, sin-laden soul. I do not know that I ever had my heart and soul more rooted and dug up than at that time, I could not help wondering that he should be enabled to tell all the badness and vileness of my heart. He used words that I have used in several letters of late, in which I have said that as I look back over my past life I could see not a single good act that I have ever performed, and that my whole life, as I look back, seems to have been but one vast sea of iniquity, without a single oasis of good to relieve the dreary scene. How is it that one of God's ministers could so intimately describe my feelings? Can it be because of that birth which brings all the Lord's people into the fellowship of sin and suffering, which is known and felt only by those who are born of God? Is it not wonderful that such results should follow such a blessed birth? It can be likened only to a light which shines in a dark place, revealing all that was before hidden from view, and as light is the opposite of darkness, so is holiness the opposite of sin.

Now, how all these things can be in accordance with the will of God, and yet be condemned by him is, I feel, more than I can understand, yet I hope that the faith which has been given me, receives it as the truth, and sometimes rejoices in it. Sometimes, I am enabled to look beyond this time state and feel an assurance that in the glorious beyond, all these mysteries will be fully revealed to our then immortal minds, for are we not told that then we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known? Sometimes of late I have longed to be at rest from sin, feeling that I have nothing in this life to look forward to but sin, suffering, sorrow and disappointment; I have given up all hope of ever being better in this life. Sometimes I am so weary of the strife, fearing that I will fall by the way, and be cast out of the fellowship of the saints, which though I richly deserve it, I know would yet be like being cast into hellfire (misery). I cannot help wondering at the many expressions of fellowship that I receive, which I feel to be unworthy of, and which I would not have if my nature and heart were only to be made manifest, for I am full of perverseness as a mortal can be, and O, my soul, I often think and feel how much better it would have been had I never united with the church, but if so, why does it pain me so much to think of being put away?

But I am in a very barren state of mind, and can write nothing of interest. We have had several deaths of friends since you were here, but perhaps you did not know any of them.

FEBRUARY 5th.

After writing the foregoing I thought that I would wait before sending it till after the meeting at Duart, and I will just say that the meeting was very pleasant, so far as the preaching was concerned. Elder Frazee, of Illinois, and Elder Curry, were the visiting ministers, and their preaching was in power, and we trust in the Holy Ghost. Elder Frazee spoke with wonderful power and sweetness from the words in Deut. xxxii. 2–4. Truly it did seem as if the gospel heavens did distill the precious dew of God's sovereign grace and power from his lips, yet he is a very humble man, and I suppose that we would not be drawn to him if he were not humble. Elder Curry spoke on Monday from the heir-

ship of God's people, Rom. viii. 11, and O, what a solemn searching sermon it was. Heirs of suffering, heirs of grace and glory, and joint-heirs with Jesus in everything. It was certainly the power of God manifest in mortal man, if I am any judge of such things. Elder Carnell made some very weighty and solemn remarks at the administration of the supper, so it seemed like our meeting in Lobo was a very solemn time; solemn gladness indeed, and O, how hard it is to go back into the world of darkness, and despondency, and fear, but such seems to be my lot. There were four added to the church, none of whom it is likely that you knew.

I inclose a letter from a young sister at Duart, which seems to me to be worthy a place in the SIGNS, and also one intended for Elder Vail, written by her husband, but which from some cause was never sent. I would like to see them both published, they are so good. And now, dear brother Chick, I will close this long scribble, asking your forbearance and your prayers. I would like to write something good to you, but I cannot.

Unworthily your brother,

R. SCATES.

MUIRKIRK, Ontario, Sept. 24, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER SCATES:—Your welcome letter came to hand some weeks ago, and you little realize what a comfort it has been to us. It seems to me that I can have no feeling of fellowship for those who feel any sense of good or right in themselves. I am so destitute of all that is good and right that no one can be so vile as I am, so when others tell how poor and low they feel themselves to be, my heart is filled with love to them. There was a time in my life when I thought I could do wonderful things for the cause of Christ; I taught in Sunday school, and read papers for the Christian Endeavorers, while my heart was but a mass of corruption. O, what filthy rags is all this self-righteousness of ours, when we can see what it really is, and even now when I try to tell people of the things that I feel, I wonder how it is possible for them to be so blind that they cannot see what a hypocrite I am, and yet I do not want to deceive any one. I so often feel that I should do as the lepers who were forced to cry out, Unclean, unclean, so that no one could come near them, and then no one would come near me, to be contaminated by my leprousness. Yet in spite of all I long for the love and fellowship of the Lord's dear people; to me there is no pleasure in any other company.

Did you ever notice what a way the Baptists have of always talking of their experience, and of their troubles, even though they may be together but a short time? It seems to come more natural to talk of such things. Do you not find it so?

How pleasant it is to see those who have been strangers to us, coming to hear the truth preached. I have thought so often of those young men from Watford, how much they are like Naaman the leper, who was forced to travel many miles to wash in Jordan. There may be lots of preachers and preaching around us, and yet we go hungry.

You will miss the regular meeting sometimes, I suppose, since you have so far to go, and yet how well worth going many miles it is, to hear one of Elder Carnell's sermons. It is a great trial to be compelled to stay away from the church, and yet if our hearts are not spiritual how little good we get from attending. I can never understand why or how I came to be received into the church,

and into its fellowship. I had no experience to tell, no great light or revelation had come to me. It seemed to me that the only two things that I knew, or that I ever shall know, are that I am a very great sinner, and that I do love God's truth and people more than anything else in all the world. I was but a child when it seems to me I had a desire to live a pure life, and in my weak way I tried to do so, but O, what grievous falls I had. Sometimes I would feel that I was getting along very well, and living a good life, but it was soon all gone, and I was down in despair again. Now when I would do good, evil is present with me, and evil is mixed with all I do. What a comfort it is to know that with our Savior no work is left undone; no soul who has ever felt the power of the love of God can be left to perish in darkness again, I mean total and absolute darkness; sometimes we wander very far away, and the spark of life seems very small, yet it still lives, and in God's own time it will be revived again. It seems to me the hardest of all for me to realize that in me is this spark of life, even the smallest. If I could be sure of this first, I would have no doubts concerning any other. I hope that I know what it is to love God and his truth, but sometimes I am so wordly and unbelieving that I even doubt the existence of God at all. I often hear people wish that they had more education, so that they could understand things better, but if I could get some of the atheistic notions out of my mind, which have been planted there by reading such rubbish as Voltaire and Tom Paine, and by trying to understand Darwin, Spencer, and those other great scientists, I would have an easier road to travel.

I was quite troubled about the creation of man at one time, and could never understand whom Cain took for a wife from among the children of men, for the Bible gives no account of but three people on earth at that time, Adam, Eve and Cain. I once asked Elder Carnell about the creation, and he said, "Scientists claim that there were other human beings on earth before Adam, but they could not prove it, for it was just as easy for God to create a world, showing the glacial drifts, and all those other periods of time, or prehistoric existence, as it was for him to create the smallest atom of material. If we believe that God created anything at all, we must believe that he created the world, and its inhabitants, just as they are." Since that time I have never doubted in the same way. It seems so simple: man cannot create the smallest, simplest thing, and there must have been a beginner, if there was a beginning.

Well, you will think, that I can write of nothing but myself, and I guess that I cannot, for all that I know in this world is that I am a poor sinner, and a poor, worthless creature.

From your very unworthy sister,

JEAN B. ROUTLEDGE.

DECEMBER 8, 1902.

DEAR ELDER VAIL:—I asked my wife not to send the letter, as I felt that I would like to write you a few words, but when it comes to carrying it out, I almost wish that I had said nothing about it. O, I feel so weak and sinful that it seems that I am doing a great wrong to even think of the Lord's dear people. I would love to tell you how I love the dear people of God, but I cannot. Much less, can I tell you how I abhor myself. I feel that there is no one like me, I am so vile and sinful that God has closed my mouth. It seems to me that I can tell you nothing, yet when I read the expe-

rience of others in the SIGNS, I can understand their feelings so well it seems to me that I have passed through it all; I am full of groanings that cannot be uttered. I think I understand what Ruth Keene means, when she says she mourns because she cannot mourn. I hope that you spoke the truth of me when you said, "kindred in Christ." If I am one of his dear children, tongue can never tell how thankful I am. I feel so thankful for his mercies. Were I dealt with justly, I would be blotted from the face of the earth, yea long ago. I would like to be good, but I cannot, and that which I hate above all things, I do. I have it seems to me tried to do better thousands of times, but have always failed. I know that in my flesh dwells no good thing. If I am saved, it is all through the mercy of God alone.

You spoke of my coming before the church, O, how I would like to do so; it must be such a help to come to the church, to such a poor, weak one as myself. If I ever come and tell them my story, my prayer to God is (if I can pray at all) that if it be not God's will, that I should have a place there, I may be rejected. I would not deceive the church, or any one, for all the world.

You say, "Do not delay, whatever thy hands find to do, do it with thy might." O, how willingly I would do anything if I could have strength and feel that it was God's will for me to do that thing.

Yours,

JOHN ROUTLEDGE.

[THE above letter from brother Scates, forwarding the two letters from brother and sister Routledge, was not intended for publication, but as so much of it seemed to us expressive of the travel of so many of the children of God, we have obtained his consent to publish so much of it as is not purely personal. We believe that it will appeal to very many of our readers.—C.]

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 28, 1903.

DR. G. A. EMORY—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I have remembered your request, as I left your house, to write you concerning the conclusion of Paul in Romans xi. 25, but I have not been in condition of body or mind to think about it. I was taken very ill two weeks ago, and suffered a good deal of pain the first week. I am now just able to go out a little. Mildred also was sick with "la grippe" part of the same time, and now her mother is feeling the ill effects of too great a burden of work and care. I hope, however, we will all be able to start south on the 9th of February, if the Lord will.

Concerning the wonderful mystery expressed by the apostle in Romans xi. 25, I have to say that it looks to me very deep and unsearchable. I cannot fathom it. I have some thoughts upon the subject, but do not know that I will have strength to try to express them. What is written in the text is inseparably connected with all the rest of the chapter, and the preceding chapter.

In all of this connection the apostle is keeping in view Israel as a nation, while he still teaches the doctrine of election, and of salvation by grace without the works of the law. While he keeps Israel after the flesh in view, with the advantages of the Jew, and what pertained to them, (Rom. iii. 1; ix. 4, 5,) and his desire for them as his kinsmen according to the flesh, he yet brings to view Israel after the Spirit all the way through, as it were, a nation within a nation, so that he can say, "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew." This he illustrates strikingly by referring to the seven

thousand which the Lord reserved to himself in the midst of the nation of Israel, in the days of Elijah. These were made to see that to which all the rest of Israel were blinded. It was not, however, as fleshly Israelites that these seven thousand obtained that righteousness which all Israel were professedly seekers after, but as the election of grace. It was not God's purpose that any should know him by wisdom, (1 Cor. i. 21,) and it is in this sense that he is said to have blinded Israel, that they should not see the way of righteousness by their natural understanding, nor obtain it by the works of the law.

But, (eleventh verse) "Have they stumbled that they should fall?" Was it a kind of accident, or haphazard step of theirs, which with due care they might have avoided? How closely and carefully the apostle keeps all the threads of this wonderful argument in hand. The weaving he does can never be raveled out.

The fall of Israel as a fleshly people was according to the purpose of God, that there might be salvation for the Gentiles. If salvation could come to one Israelite because he was of the flesh of Abraham, then no Gentile could be saved, for the promise was to Abraham and his seed. But the apostle, while still keeping Israel as a nation in view, shows here as elsewhere that not the children of the flesh of Abraham, but the children of the promise, are counted for the seed. Still regarding Israel as having received the promise through Abraham, who is the root bearing up the olive tree and its branches, the apostle speaks of those Israelites who did not believe as having been cut off. This, according to the figure he is using, would leave place for some Gentiles to come in, by grafting, so as to fill up the place of the original branches, and receive the root and fatness of the olive tree; or in other words, receive the promises made to Abraham and his seed, not as Gentiles, but as children of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise, as Isaac was. (Gal. iii. 29; iv. 28.)

The fall, then, of Israel, and the diminishing of them, shows a way of salvation for the Gentiles, and is therefore the riches of the Gentile world. Then the apostle widens the argument gradually, showing the possibility of receiving again those natural branches which were cut off and cast away because of unbelief, "if they abide not still in unbelief." But they must come in by grafting, and on the same principle of goodness and mercy which brought the Gentiles in. The Gentiles are warned against high-mindedness and boasting, as though they were brought in because they were better than the Jews who had been cast away because of unbelief. They are no better. "Because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear. If God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee."

In the twenty-fourth verse the apostle refers again to the figure of grafting, the only place where this figure is used in the Bible, so far as I remember. In former years I occasionally heard people speak of grafting into Christ, as though the apostle was representing by this figure how sinners are savingly united with Christ. But a little careful attention will make it plain that he does not speak of grafting in that sense. The olive tree is undoubtedly used here to represent the covenant made with Abraham and his seed, and the Israelites who stand in the natural view as heirs of that covenant and its promises. Because of unbelief

some of the branches were broken off, and the Gentiles, as branches of a wild olive tree, are grafted into this good olive tree; that is, are given faith to believe and receive as theirs the promises made to Abraham, for these promises are the root and fatness of the tree."

A graft bears its own fruit. It is therefore taken from a good tree and put into a tree whose fruit was not good, to make the tree bear good fruit. This shows that grafting could not illustrate the union of sinners with Christ, for by that figure the sinner as a graft would bear the same evil fruit as before. But here it is a branch from a wild olive that is grafted into the good olive tree, in order that the branch thus grafted may be benefited by the fatness of the root. The good tree makes this graft good.

Now the apostle calls attention to how easily the branches once broken from the good olive tree may be grafted into their own olive tree again. But it is noticeable that if they are again joined to their own tree it will be by grafting, the same as the Gentiles.

Then the peculiar words of the text, "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." Israel is still openly regarded by the apostle as the nation, the descendants of Abraham according to the flesh, "to whom were committed the oracles of God," and "to whom pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever."—Rom. iii. 1; ix. 1–5. Some of them did not believe, "but shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?" "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God." Some did believe, and these believing Israelites are regarded by the apostle, in the use of this figure, as still of the nation of Israel, as still branches remaining upon the good olive tree, which waits to be filled up with Gentile believers, the fullness of the Gentiles, the elect among all people, who shall come and sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and be "no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints."

"And so all Israel shall be saved." This is rather sudden and startling, is it not? Then none of the branches that were cut off shall be finally lost, but all be grafted in again, with all the believing Gentiles. Is that what the apostle means? It would seem so. The apostle has been hurrying along to this grand and blessed truth that all Israel shall be saved; has been waiting anxiously for the time when he would be ready to say it. He has expressed unusually strong desires that all Israel might be saved. (Rom. ix. 1–3; x. 1.) He has intimated the truth of the mystery at times, by saying, "For they are not all Israel which are of Israel; neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children, but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."—Rom. ix. 6–8. Then again he has spoken of the seven thousand hidden ones as the chosen remnant, and has also said, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath ob-

tained it, and the rest were blinded."

And now the full, clear note of heavenly gospel music is sounded by the apostle, "And so all Israel shall be saved;" and the spiritual Israel comes forth in our view, out of Egypt, up through the Red Sea, out of the wilderness, over Jordan, under the leadership of our spiritual Joshua, into the promised gospel land, "As it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

Now the wonderful mystery begins to open up, so that the secret of the Lord is manifest as with us. Israel after the flesh now begins to disappear, and we see none saved upon that ground. "By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." For the Gentiles' sake, then, the fleshly Israelites are counted enemies, and so there is a door of mercy opened to those who were aliens because of the unbelief of the Jews as such. But as touching the election those same people who are cut off because of unbelief are beloved for the Father's sake, and shall be made to rejoice in the same mercy which brought the Gentiles in.

So now the secret is opened up, and it is indeed a glorious secret, which is with them that fear the Lord, to whom now he will show his covenant. It is not on account of belief, then, nor of relationship to Abraham after the flesh, nor on account of any works of the creature, nor of any personal merit, that any are saved, but through mercy. "For God hath concluded them all," both Jews and Gentiles, "in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." So all that the apostle has been talking about, all the branches that were broken off because of unbelief, and the branches of the wild olive that were grafted in, all are of that Israel who shall all be saved through mercy. Yes, mercy opens a wide and beautiful door to every poor, mourning soul who sees in himself no merit. Every one who feels that he is justly cut off from all hope, who has no power to believe that he can be one of the Lord's redeemed; every one who feels to be an "alien from the common wealth of Israel and a stranger from the covenant of promise; without God and without hope in the world;" every such one is among those whom mercy takes up, and who shall through mercy be made joyful in God's house of prayer.

"Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song." Well may we break out with the apostle in words of sublime adoration and praise, and say, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."

Brother Emory, I have written rapidly as my mind has been led. I feel that the great depths of the subject remain unfathomed. I feel so like a child taking up with my little vessel a few drops of the waters of the ocean. O, the unsearchable depths and immeasurable fullness of the ocean of God's wisdom, mercy and love. May you and I rest satisfied with the little the dear Lord is minded to give to us. It will be enough.

I hope you may be feeling stronger than when I saw you. I wish for you and sister Emory the comforts of this life, and the greater comforts and blessings of the everlasting covenant of God's mercy and grace and love, which is ordered in all things and sure.

We would all join in love to you.

Your brother in love and fellowship,

SILAS H. DURAND.

WAVERLY, Pa., Feb. 5, 1903.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—Inclosed you will find letters from sister Brewster and brother Kugler, and you are at liberty to publish them if you will. "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord." Each one of the Lord's people testify to the work of the Lord in them, and in this they are one, and see eye to eye. I still regard the family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as the best of all papers published in defense of the doctrine of grace, and I am glad that the brethren feel willing to assist in sustaining it in a financial way. I hope it will continue to publish the same precious truth as long as the world stands.

I am still trying to serve nine churches, but they are poorly served, as you may well know. I have baptized only six this past year. Six of the churches had yearly, or two days meetings, with attendance fair. The following named ministers attended these meetings, but not all at any one meeting: Elders J. D. Hubbell, John Slauson, S. H. Durand, H. C. Ker, F. A. Chick, and licentiate, brother Horace Lefferts. The preaching was excellent. The theme was, as it always should be, salvation by grace. The doctrine of God's unlimited sovereignty was set forth in harmony with the Scriptures and christian experience, showing forth that God did absolutely or independently work in his people to will and to do of his good pleasure, or in other words, that he works all things after the counsel of his own will, which is a God-honoring and soul-comforting doctrine, very nourishing to weak, sickly babes in Christ who need something more nourishing than skimmed-milk doctrine, such as conditional time salvation and limited predestination, or permissive decrees. I was made sick of such teaching more than thirty years ago, and I hope that God my Father will keep me from trying to swallow any more of it.

From your brother in the lowest hell most of the time,

D. M. VAIL.

OXFORD, N. Y., Dec. 3, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—As I do not expect to be with you on Saturday and Sunday next, I thought I would write you a little of my feelings and exercises of mind since I met with you all at the yearly and monthly meetings, the first of October. After hearing the preaching, which was good, and visiting with many of the brethren and sisters, which I very much enjoyed, I returned home, and soon sank into a state of despondency, and doubt, and unbelief, as regards my own case, and so continued from day to day, and from week to week, till I was almost in despair, and almost had lost sight of any hope, beside it seemed that all the evil suggestions of Satan were ringing in my ears, such as, "You know that you are a hypocrite, and have deceived the church, and have allowed them to call you sister, when you know that you have not so much as one pure thought, but that sin is mixed with all you do. Beside, you know that your experience was when you were so young, and no doubt it was all a delusion. You know that you did not feel the terrors of the law as much as christians do." No one can realize, save those who have passed through such fiery trials, what I endured. I could say with Job, "I am a brother to dragons, and a companion with owls, and wearisome nights and days are appointed to me." But in all this terrible trial of soul I never doubted the existence of God, or that he had a people "saved with an everlasting salvation ere time began."

But I was like the pilgrim, with no key of promise to open the door, but I must lie and mourn my sad condition with groanings which could not be uttered. None but God can hear such groanings. But in this sad condition, in the valley of the shadow of death almost, as with an audible voice in my mind's vision, the words came, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for thou shalt praise him." This brought such a quiet hush to my tempest-tossed soul, and seemed so sweetly applied to me, that I felt like a worn and tired child brought to rest upon his mother's breast, and I have been resting upon that sweet promise, together with another that was given me, saying, "To lay hold upon the hope which is set before us, looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith." Also these lines have been with me:

"E'en down to old age all my people shall prove,
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love."

I have not felt that great joy that I sometimes have, but a quiet, peaceful assurance of hope. O, that it might remain with me. But I am such a poor, sinful creature, yet if I know my own heart, I do desire to live such a life as becomes a follower of the meek and lowly Savior. When the Lord first spoke peace to my poor, troubled soul, saying, "Thy sins are all forgiven thee," and sent that sweet song of thankgiving to my heart, it was as unexpected as all his tokens of love and mercy have been ever since. The Savior said, "I will leave in the midst of thee, a poor and afflicted people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." Their pathway is as described in hymn 989 (Beebe's Collection).

"By glimmering hopes and gloomy fears,
We trace the sacred road;
Through dismal deeps and treacherous snares
We make our way to God.

Our journey is a thorny maze,
But we march upward still;
Forget the troubles of the ways,
And reach at Zion's hill."

From your sister in a blessed hope,
LUCINDA B. BREWSTER.

FRENCHTOWN, N. J., Dec. 5, 1902.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—MY DEAR BROTHER:—The day has been very stormy here, and I will try to write you a few lines. I have had some thoughts lately, and if I am enabled to write them down, I shall be pleased, for I feel as though I want you to know my mind regarding the words found in John, when Jesus had washed the disciples's feet, and said unto Peter, "What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." It has occurred to me that in time there has been an unfolding to the heirs of promise of that which was before the world began. Jesus Christ and him crucified is not only the theme of the gospel now, but was the essence and substance of the law and the prophets. Jesus is represented as the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world, and hence all that will ever be manifested of him to us, was virtually true of him before the world was. But in time Jesus makes all this known to his people; the Holy Ghost takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us. Abel was moved by the Holy Spirit to offer that more acceptable sacrifice; Abraham was by faith led to leave his own kindred and country, and journey into a strange land, not knowing whither he went; David was a man after God's own heart, and all the prophets as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, bore testimony in all the word of prophecy, to Jesus, but they did not know what the Spirit which was in them did signify.

The order of the manifestations of the sons of God is established in infinite wisdom, and everything transpires in that perfect order which was by infinite wisdom ordained, therefore though faith moved the Old Testament patriarchs and prophets, and all the Old Testament saints, and they spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, yet they could not go before; they must abide the Lord's time for the full realization of the power and glory of the Spirit by which they were led. So also we find that John desired to know about the sealed book, and what it contained, and wept much, because no one was found worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof. And the elders commanded him not to weep, for the Lion of the tribe of Juda had prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof. Jesus must come in the flesh, in the order that God had appointed, for the revelation of his work, before any could behold the testimony of Jesus in all the prophets, yet the work was finished from the foundation of the world. Although the testimony of Jesus did shine forth in all the testimony of the prophets, they could not loose the seals. Jesus alone could do that. The first covenant must be taken away, before the second should be established or manifested.

These patriarchs and prophets we see now were risen from the dead, they were risen from death in Adam to life in Christ. Hence they testify continually of the resurrection. But they could not go before. In the order of things, Jesus must be the first fruits of them that slept, and every one of these who had filled up the measure of the days appointed of God, fell asleep in Jesus, and when Jesus went down into death, and the law was manifestly fulfilled in him, he arose again from the dead, and every member of his body came forth with him, and he became the first fruits of them that slept. Then we see Moses and Elias in the holy mount with him. "Those that are alive and remain shall not prevent them that are asleep." They shall not go before. The Lion of the tribe of Juda hath prevailed, loosed the seals and opened the book, and now we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honor. All this Jesus proclaimed in every act he wrought, in every miracle that he performed. Yet those who were with him did not know or understand fully. Hence he said to Peter, What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter. And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place, and then Peter stood up and proclaimed the glad tidings of the gospel. Then was it made known to him what was meant by Jesus in the language quoted at the beginning. Now he could see that while there had been great questionings going on from the days of Abel to the coming of the Redeemer, yet now when Jesus had arisen from the dead, the books were opened. Then every step taken by the saints is ordered of the Lord, and by this one offering Jesus had perfected forever them that are sanctified. They were then washed, cleansed and made white in the blood of the Lamb, and while we might question many things done by the patriarchs and prophets, who were said to be holy men of old, yet now in the opening of the book we see that he who is the life of Israel has washed their feet. All the sin and transgression is condemned in the flesh, but cleansed in the blood and righteousness of Jesus. It is no wonder that only the saints know that Jesus has washed the feet of his

people, and even they can comprehend it only as revealed.

We are all in usual good health, and join in love to you and your family.

OLIVER R. KUGLER.

BLESSED SECRETS.

THE living in Christ Jesus possess unsearchable treasures. Unsearchable, because they are hidden in such a way from all the world that the world with all its instruments of insight and of research, cannot find them out. The veil which separates the material from the spiritual is so closely drawn that the strongest rays of the noonday sun cannot penetrate within its folds. There is no comprehension, no light, no knowledge, passing from the world of nature, out of its confines, or beyond its boundaries, to the heavenly beauties of holiness and righteousness. The depths of the sea, and the deeper vault of heaven, with its myriads of objects constellate, are all embraced as stepping stones to man's ambition, and are capable of being sought out. But what says divine inspiration of divine and heavenly things? "O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out." The natural man cannot comprehend his own life; what it is, the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it, and as the grass it withereth, and fadeth away as a candle snuffed out. Now among the "blessed secrets," is the knowledge of life by them upon whom the Spirit of the Lord bloweth. By entrance into the new and living way we obtain a knowledge of the old or natural life; what it is: that to take it in its very best aspect, it is but vanity and vexation of spirit. Jesus tells us, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it." If we seek to harbor and nurse and fulfill the desires and lusts of the flesh, as when we were under the law, then do we lose the joys of salvation in God which we have in Christ Jesus the Lord. But on the other hand, if we subdue and keep in subjection the law in our members, and mortify the deeds of the flesh, and put off the old man with his sins, and put on the new man (which is the Spirit of Christ) in sincerity and humbleness of heart, then shall we save our life (by grace through faith) to the enjoyment of heavenly things. But to do this we must always keep in remembrance that it is Christ in us (and not our own volition) that keeps us and sustains us, in the power of life, unto the revealing of the Lord Jesus, whose dying we bear about in our mortal bodies, that the life of Christ be made manifest in us. This is a part of the mystery of godliness, and of the "blessed secrets" which are treasured up in Christ, to be revealed unto us from time to time, as it pleaseth the Father, all of which are embraced in that which is embodied in that precious declaration of Scripture, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant." The treasures of the earth are found in the secret parts of the earth by the hand which is guided by the natural faculties of the earthly mind, but where do we go to search out heavenly secrets? Is it not in the troubled sea of this life? In the sandy desert of poverty and destitution of soul? And also in the firmament of God's handiwork (the heart) where his right hand worketh? In any of which places his footsteps cannot be traced. There is a searching going on all the time in the quickened child of God. But alas: he never finds that for which he is seeking. No mortal man, by

searching, has ever found out God. But more precious still, the secret discovers him, and illumines his soul, revealing the hidden secrets of the hidden mystery of the wisdom and knowledge of God. Revealing Christ Jesus as the "Alpha and the Omega" of all our hopes and fears. The hidden and invisible things of wisdom, which make up the life of the saint, are "blessed secrets," because they are blessed of the Lord, because they belong to God, and because they are embraced in the divine life. How do the saints recognize their fellow heirs in the inheritance of Christ Jesus the Lord? What is the secret power which draws them together in fellowship and love? Sometimes we are unconsciously drawn to a stranger in the flesh; he (or she) attracts us, and we cannot at once tell why, and although this is true, yet in our mind, a connecting link is formed between that one and the church of Christ, while that secret something within us says, He is my brother. The Spirit of the Lord's secret is awakened, and its drawing power is made manifest. And these precious secrets cannot be divulged outside the church of Christ. Should we proclaim them in stentorian tones to the uncircumcised ear, it would be as speaking to things inanimate. Structures reared by the hand of man, can be viewed with the natural eyes, but the temple of God is visible only to the vision of faith. It is by the blessed secret things of the wisdom and knowledge of God that we live, move and have our being in the church of Christ. First in our thoughts is the source and manner of our entrance into the holy city, and into the rich inheritance of the blessings of the gospel of Christ. We walk and talk with the apostle Peter, and by inspiration of God he shows unto us the hidden mysteries and beauties of the "banqueting-house" (where the Bridegroom folds the banner of his love about us, and we lie down in green pastures, and sing our happy songs on the banks of pleasant streams). He shows that the source of our entrance is Jesus, and the manner, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Every avenue of the carnal nature is closed and barred against an entrance to the holy city, for "the carnal mind is enmity against God." The law of a carnal commandment, instigated and supported by the powers of darkness, draws tight the shutters of the already darkened soul, so that we are assured the servant of sin (the flesh) loves darkness rather than light, because his deeds are evil. It is a cage of unclean birds, a place of venom and poison, of merchandise and all manner of fleshly lusts. Can it be possible that this is the place that Jesus has sought out? And where he has brought the light and countenance of his Father's glory? Is this the place where he has set up the temple of his holiness, and where God's honor dwelleth? Is this the place and the house of prayer? Yea, verily. With the sword of the Lord, Jesus has entered the citadel of his enemies, he has driven out the "money changers," and the sellers of doves, and now the tongue that once uttered cursings and revilings now sings praises to the Redeemer of mankind. And now, dear soul, can you tell how you have arrived at so wonderful a state of salvation and exaltation? No indeed, but like the blind man whose eyes Jesus opened, you can say, "Whereas I was blind, now I see." Blessed secret indeed. When like Mary of old, you are glad to sit at the feet of your gracious Redeemer

and wash his feet with your tears, and wipe them with the hairs of your head. When you attempt to tell the wonderful secret of your life, you have to stop and confess with the psalmist, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." But you can taste and handle of the sweet and precious word of life, and your soul is satisfied.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., April 7, 1903.

WESTON, Mich., Dec. 21, 1902.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—As time develops all things, and all things are hastening on to its final consummation, I am again admonished that my subscription for the good old SIGNS expires with the December 15th number, and I wish to be prompt and not slothful in business, to attend to the things that are for the comfort and encouragement of our brethren editors, and I also feel to admonish others to do likewise: brethren, be diligent in business, serving the Lord; buckle on the whole armor of God, and fight manfully the battles of the Lord; hold up the hands of our dear editors in their good work, say to Israel, Move forward.

I sometimes feel that I would like to write to my dear brethren that I have seen and visited in different parts of the earth, if I could only write something that would be of comfort to them in their journey through this unfriendly world, but O, I know that I lack the wisdom, power and ability to do so, and should I undertake to comfort one of the Lord's little ones, it must be with that comfort wherewith I have been comforted, and the greatest comfort this poor old sinner ever received was when the Lord said, Thy sins are forgiven thee. O, what joy and comfort filled my poor soul; "On the wings of his love I was carried above." Yes, to behold, the glories of his grace and love to a poor sinner. But since then I have passed through deep and sore trials, but Paul's words to the brethren at Rome of late have been a comfort to me: "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Principalities and all the powers of darkness cannot prevent the sweet visits of the Lord to his children:

> "I will be with them their troubles to bless,
> And sanctify to them their deepest distress."

The Savior admonished his disciples that offenses must needs come, but woe unto that man by whom they come.

O, that the dear Lord may remember all his dear children in mercy, and give us all to know and do his will; that they all may be enabled by divine grace to esteem others better than themselves, and this is not very hard for me to do, for truly I know that I am one of the most sinful objects of God's mercy. Indeed, I have never met with one that I esteemed as a child of God, but that I felt entirely unworthy of his company. My unworthiness many times has in a great measure impaired my real joy and comfort with my brethren. My continual cry is, "Lord, am I deceived?" Is what I have experienced indeed of the Lord? O, what trouble of soul I have in these things; I am made to cry, Unclean, unclean, and the strangest thing about it is, I want my brethren to know it all, for indeed I do not want to deceive them, and I am glad the Lord knows my heart. Many times I cry unto the Lord as a helpless child, that he will keep me humble, and obedient to his will.

Dear brethren, may we all remember the goodness of the Lord unto us as poor, wretched and hell-deserving sinners. When we were without hope and without

God in the world, Jesus revealed himself as our sacrifice and Savior, to put away our awful and intolerable load of guilt, wretchedness and condemnation. Behold what manner of love, that Jesus should lay down his life for such an ungodly wretch as I.

Dear brethren, why can we not bear with one another? To do this is to fulfill the law of Christ: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." But Jesus laid down his life for wretched and ungodly sinners. This Jesus quickeneth whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth. It is this same Jesus that quickeneth and maketh alive from the dead, and it is the sinner that is made to cry unto our Lord Jesus Christ for mercy, and it is this sinner that shall sing that glorious and heavenly song that none but the hundred forty and four thousand could sing. This they shall sing to the praise of their adorable King and Priest, in that world that knows no sorrow, pain nor trouble. So fight on, brethren editors, contending earnestly for the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God, and God will give you the victory.

Please find inclosed ten dollars, sent by my aged mother, now in her eighty-sixth year, to be applied on the debt of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. She signs her name Lydia C. Wyman. She has been a reader of the SIGNS for nearly sixty-five years, and when the first and fifteenth of each month has about arrived she wants to know if the SIGNS has come. Her mind is yet bright and clear, though her sight is considerably impaired. Also please find two dollars for my renewal to the SIGNS. I hope all the readers of the good old SIGNS will act upon brother Butler's suggestion. Do what you can; do as much as to read his letter anyway.

Yours in love,

T. J. WYMAN.

571 CENTRE ST., TRENTON, N. J., Feb. 18, 1903.

DEAR SISTER TERRY:—I feel as if I must now try to answer your two most comforting letters. I often wonder why I am so blessed with the love of the brethren, as it is so often shown toward me; I am not worthy of it, and yet I feel to take courage and thank God for his ever loving care and watchfulness over me, who am the least of all saints. If you have received an atom of comfort from my poor, imperfect scribble, it is given to you as food taken from an earthen vessel. I am as a vessel in his hands, and contain nothing of the good things of the better life, save only as he pours these things into me, as into the widow's cruise. And I trust that if I am a chosen vessel of God's mercy, I shall never be found empty, but will contain just enough oil to feed some poor child that has been made hungry by the long famine in the land. I do not know why, but I feel as if I am living in a place where all is surrounded with the great love of God, and by his mercy; I feel as if I could not praise God enough.

"O, may I at all times hold his hand,
And still to him surrendered stand;
Convinced that he is God alone,
May I and mine be all his own."

Dear sister, I feel as if I am in a place where it is simply a foretaste of that great trust and love that precedes death. I am not happy, as this world counts happiness, but am living in a great mysterious maze, through which I think that all his people at times pass. I may be cast very soon in the fiery furnace of affliction, and brought to the brink of the grave of unbelief, yet I do now feel that I am in the hands of him who is my Maker.

Sister, pray for me, that my faith fail not, for I am weak and trembling, and fearful at times lest I go wrong. I dread the fearful calm that holds me fast some-

times. I would rather be driven in the storm and tempest than to be at ease having little desire for good. I am not afraid of the trials and troubles and bereavements of this life, if only I can feel that I am a subject of God's grace.

I look back over the past twelve years of my life and sometimes I am made to cry out at the very thoughts of the great deliverances through which my soul has passed. How good God has always been to me, never forsaking me in my dark hours, and, dear sister, what precious dark times they are to me, as I look back and see how near to me the husband of my soul has been at those times. Is it any wonder that I am made to say, "He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely"? When I have been suffering from the cold winds of winter, the darkness and gloominess of a frozen heart, he speaks then unto me, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away," and I find that his left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me. Then I know that it is his great power that hath kept me and enabled me to arise. It is he that says, "Arise, shine, for thy light has come, and the glory of the Lord has arisen upon thee."

But I must stop for fear I weary you. At times I fear that I may appear as a boaster, but God forbid, I desire only to make mention of him, and it is only by him that I can do so. I hope that some time it may please God to give you a mind to write to me again. I am a poor, weak creature; I am a mystery to myself; I would be glad could I know why it is, just for one moment, that I sin so easily. I do not want to sin, but it is ever present with me, a thorn in my flesh.

Kindly remember me to brother Terry, and to all who may speak of me. I will send this, but it seems to come short of what I would like to write.

I remain yours in hope,

ELIZABETH P. FETTER.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 17, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER TERRY:—I feel this morning like relating something of my experience to you. Four years ago this winter I was brought low with my old complaint. While upon my bed I felt myself to be a poor, condemned sinner before God, without hope and without God in the world; I was surrounded with darkness, and had no light; like one alone I seemed to be. I was in that state three days and nights; I could not rest; I felt that like the cold dust of the valley, I had no life in me. Early the next morning these words were revealed to me,

"'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought,)
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

I felt that indeed it was a point I longed to know. The revelation did not stop there; the first three verses of the fourteenth chapter of John were given me. "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me," &c. Then came these words, "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I." I just felt like shouting. What a joy I then received. I could then rest. When I got about again, I went in this way two years longer, but I felt myself too unworthy to be with the people of God. Two years ago this winter these words came to me, "And I say unto you, ask and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." I felt that I could not stay away from the church any longer. The way was open for me, and I went before the church Saturday before the second

Sunday in February, related what I hoped the Lord had done for me, and was received for baptism. The following morning when I awoke this hymn came to me,

"Christians, if your hearts be warm,
Ice and snow can do no harm;
If by Jesus you are prized,
Rise, believe, and be baptized.

Jesus drank the gall for you,
Bore the curse for sinners due;
Children, prove your love to him,
Never fear the frozen stream."

My fear was all gone, and it was one of the happiest days of my life. I have passed through a great many trials, afflictions and dangers, seen and unseen, since that time. May God be our comfort, and help us all through this vale of tears, and when done with us on earth, may it be our happy lot to be forever with him, who is all and in all.

Dear brother and sister, I felt very thankful to receive such a good letter from you, it was a token of kind remembrance, and I hope the Lord will bless you. The Lord says that he will provide for his children, and I feel sure that he does. He is a very present help in time of trouble. When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, then the Lord will hear them, the God of Israel will not forsake them. What a comfort it is to a child of God that the Lord does not forsake them; it is a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

In my sickness I felt that my time was growing short; I felt cast down like one in sinking sand, but I was strengthened as these words came to me, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." I feel that I cannot praise him too much.

We feel that we are having our portion of trouble, and that it is all for some wise purpose, and "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose." These portions of Scripture seemed to run through my mind while I was sick, and also the hymn,

"We travel through a barren land,
With dangers thick on either hand,
But Jesus guides us through the vale;
The christian's hope shall never fail."

I have written as my mind has been led. I am better, but still keep my room. I trust this will find you all well.

From your brother in hope,

JACOB S. LEEDOM.

ADRIAN, Mich., Dec. 31, 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Of a truth it is written, "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God."

What tongue or pen can fully tell the glories of Mount Zion, the city of the living God? It is there we see the King in his beauty in the midst of his saints. How honorable is the place. I love to sit with the dear people of God in their solemn assemblies, and in the presence of Jesus feel to be at home, it is an heavenly place in Christ. There they speak often and freely to each other of their afflictions and sorrows, and of the thorny road they travel. They are sneered at and derided, but God is their refuge and strength, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land; their names are engraved in the palms of his hands, and they have this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." This is the beautiful bride, the Lamb's wife. Her glorious husband has won her, and stands in her affections without a rival. Behold her lovely dress, it is of wrought gold, and she is all fair within, the King beholds no spot in her, the world cannot

see nor know the rich robes that she wears, they cannot see this glorious city, the dwelling-place of the Most High, where he meets and blesses and smiles upon his little children. And O, how good and pleasant it is when they dwell together in unity, where there is no strife, no devouring of each other, where all is peace, and each esteems the other better than himself. We read, "Where there is no tale-bearer, strife ceaseth." When we lay our armor by to dwell with Christ at home in that city of God, in the great beyond, there will be no more strife nor discord, but one eternal round of joy, where all but love is done away.

O, that beautiful city,
Which John saw of old,
With its throne and river of life;
What a prospect for those
Who enter the fold,
Ever free from earth's struggles and strife.

As we read of that city,
In God's holy word,
How its glories our senses defy,
Prepared as a bride
For her husband adorned
Ere the day of her marriage draws nigh.

But the King of that city,
Ever faithful and true,
Will wipe all tears from our eyes.
No sorrow or crying
To mar our delights
But one grand never-ending surprise.

Dear Editors, inclosed find two dollars to pay for the SIGNS another year. Of late they have been a feast to me, and I hope that those who write for them will continue to write. I do not see how any one can find any difference or change in them. We have the very oldest of them, and if there has been any change, I cannot detect it. I often read the old numbers of the SIGNS, and it seems that nearly all the old writers are gone to their reward, but they all wrote the same precious truth that the SIGNS advocates today. The SIGNS has not departed from the old landmarks, and I am not looking for them to do so, for the Lord is strong to defend, and he will defend them in the future, as in the past. I believe that they have carried many sweet messages to those who are isolated, and shut in from hearing the gospel, as well as to those who have the precious privilege to hear the gospel proclaimed often by the dear servants of God. And I believe that they have often been carried away in spirit above all earthly things, while tears of joy would flow down their cheeks, while they would read the dear old SIGNS. I speak from experience, and O, how grateful I have felt to the writers for such God-honoring letters. I do not believe that he who keeps the city, and never sleeps nor slumbers, will allow them to go down as long as he has a church and people on earth.

According to the present outlook, it seems to me the dear old SIGNS are soon to be free from debt, for which I am glad, and my prayer is, may the Lord reward the cheerful givers. I wish I could give as much.

Your sister in hope,

M. H. TUTTLE.

SILVERTON, Texas, Feb. 22, 1903.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRST:—If worthy to call you so, I am now trying to write some again, after resolving many times, seeing my letters were printed, I would never be found writing any more, for I am the most destitute of all, it seems, that has ever claimed a name among God's people, and it is surely not for what I write at all prompts me to do so again, and I only wish to add my mite in testimony to the truth as I see, hear and understand it, which has been so earnestly contended for, and ably defended through the columns of the SIGNS. It

seems nothing more need be said, if reason would convince all, for I feel sure there is but one salvation which makes free indeed the captive from all law fetters, and lifts him out of the pit, and places his feet upon a firm foundation, Jesus and his righteousness for evermore. O, how sweet to rely alone upon his dear name for everything, both spiritual and temporal, and feel all that is best for us will be given, and what is not is withheld, however much we may desire it otherwise.

Dear children, I feel that this is a day of perplexity in which God's little ones are sorely tried, but my hope is in the Lord alone to restore peace out of confusion, for the fan is in his hand to thoroughly purge his floor of all chaff.

There are a few Old Baptists here, but without a preacher, a meeting was appointed for three who came and preached for us, but not in all according to my understanding of what the Scriptures teach, and in conversation I told them so, adding I felt myself almost out of my place contending with men, but I could never hear any one dispute the power of God in carrying out his will and purpose in all things that take place, ever have, or ever will, without man's will considered, and keep silent, and that that doctrine drove me from the Missionaries to seek a home with the Old Baptist people who believed then as I do now.

I have not written as I thought I would, but please pardon what I have written amiss. I will send my tardy remittance, and ask the forbearance of the dear editors, and what I have written, and please correct mistakes.

Your sister in sweet fellowship,

ELIZABETH C. FOGERSON.

JERSEY CITY, N. J., Jan. 20, 1903.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—As it is time for me to renew my subscription I will inclose post office order for another year, as I should be lost without the paper, for I love to read the letters from the brethren and sisters, and editorials. It has pleased the dear Lord to spare my unprofitable life, and I desire to be thankful to him for his loving care, and for the manifestation of his love to me. It is good to remember that our "God is love." John says, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." What love is then greater that the innocent should die for the guilty? His command to us is, "That ye love one another as I have loved you," and again he says, "If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love." How binding and sacred is the obligation. I long to live worthy of the vocation wherewith I am called, with all lowliness and meekness, but I am so prone to wander, which is a cause for mourning and repentance. But he is merciful, he hath said, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.". Then there can be no end to his love, and with the same love his people love him. They can say with David, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, let all within me bless his holy name," and again, "Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me, Lord, be thou my helper, for without him we can do nothing right in his sight.

Well, brother, I have had a little talk with you and will close, and may God's blessing abide with you.

From your brother,

A. D. LOUD.

HICKORY GROVE, Va., July 25, 1902.

B. L. BEEBE—BELOVED BROTHER IN CHRIST:—It is time to renew my subscription to the SIGNS for another year, and inclosed I send the money for that purpose. I have so much enjoyed reading them, and hearing from the dear brethren and sisters. I often think that if I could write as others do, I would be found writing often. I was taken sick in February last, and since that time have been able to attend the church meeting but once, as I have about eight miles to go. I am at this time suffering with neuralgia around my heart, and am very weak, but I do not want to complain, for I know that it is all just and right. No pain has been so great but that I felt that I deserved it. Christ suffered for us, and if we want to be like him, we must know something of his sufferings. The blessed Bible tells us that it is through much tribulation that we enter the kingdom of heaven. O, may we be kept humble at his feet in all things, and know that he is God, and that there is no other.

I find that I am now too nervous to write, and so will bring this to a close. Will you remember me at a throne of grace, when the Lord gives it to you to pray, for we are all dependant upon him for all things, now and in eternity.

Please excuse all mistakes, and if I have written anything amiss, I know you will be willing to forgive me. I am your unworthy sister in hope of eternal life,

L. S. UTTERBACK.

GRAHAM, Texas, April 1, 1903.

B. L. BEEBE:—Will you please give me space in the SIGNS to say that I am getting out a paper, one thousand copies, of one number, as a full and complete statement, as I can well give, about the Fort Worth Council, and some other things that have lately occurred.

Any one sending stamp, with their address, can get a copy, until they are all gone. I indorse the Fort Worth Council as the truth, and as the true doctrine of the Bible.

J. H. FISHER.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

PETERSBURG, Del., April 13, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Elder W. W. Meredith has removed from Petersburg, Del., to Felton, Kent Co., Del., and requests his correspondents to address him at Felton, Kent Co., Del.

BROTHER Martin D. Fisher having changed his residence from Jamaica, N. Y., to Parksley, Accomac Co., Va., requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903, &c.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO BROTHER D. M. LEONARD'S APPEAL TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$705 70
Mrs. F. A. Thomas, Va., $1.00; Miss S. W. Simpson, D. C., $1.00; J. F., N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. C. A. Norwood, Ark., $1.00; Clayton Shockley, Va., $1.00. —Total	5 00
Total to date	$710 70

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1903.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MATTHEW XIX. 21; 2 CORINTHIANS XII. 14.

BROTHER Jackson Hunt, of Bentley, Ill., asks concerning two above portions of the word, as to what they signify.

It is at all times our desire to serve our brethren in any way we can, but we do not understand, any more than others, all that the word of God may mean, though we hope we have some understanding in the Scriptures. If we undertake to reply to any such requests, it is with no desire to claim infallibility. Though what views we may present may be firmly fixed in our own mind, still we do recognize our extreme liability to be mistaken, and are perfectly willing that others should express any difference that they may see between their own views and ours. We often feel much disturbed in mind when such requests come to us, because of our lack of understanding, and want of ability to express as we would even the views that we do have, and sometimes we are disturbed because we fear that attempts to reply to such requests may seem to be claiming what we cannot and do not claim, that we are capable of answering all the questions which may arise, and of giving a correct view of all the Scriptures of truth. It would be presumption for any man to claim an understanding of all the Scriptures, and to claim infallibility in expounding any of them would be the height of ignorance and self-conceit.

The first text named by brother Hunt is Matthew xix. 21: "Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me." We need not go over this whole narrative. It is said in Mark chapter ten, that Jesus looking upon this young man, loved him. We can but conclude that he was one of the chosen of God, and that in his heart the Spirit of God had begun its good work, but he was yet ignorant of many things, he did not yet know all the depths of the depravity of his own heart, and he had not yet been brought out from under the law, and did not therefore know the freedom of the gospel, but the work which should at last lead him into light and liberty, was begun in him. He was still doing what every soul convicted of his need of salvation will do, for a time, that is, endeavoring to be saved by the deeds of the law. Therefore when Jesus said, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments," he said, "All these things have I kept from my youth up." In this he said no more for himself than Paul afterwards said, "As touching the righteousness which is in the law I was blameless." This, both as related to this young man, and to Paul, related to the outward keeping of the commandments. Paul did not mean that he had kept the law blameless, so as that he could have no conviction of sin. Within, his heart was still vile and contrary to the law, and it was so with this young man. Paul came to know his heart-vileness, and to realize that he could not do the good that he would, while this young man had not yet come

to know all this. Paul did not mean that he could not abstain from blasphemy, murder, theft, &c., but that even though he did not do these things in the sight of men, yet in heart he did them, and so was guilty in the sight of God, who had said not only, "Thou shalt not steal," but also, "Thou shalt not covet."

Now Jesus applies such a test to this young man as taught him the failure of his heart to keep the commandments, even though he had kept them in the letter, or outwardly. The test showed him that all that he had done was for self, and not for the glory of God. It showed him that after all God was not in all his thoughts, but self. Paul was compelled to learn this lesson, and so at last he counted all his righteousness according to the law, wherein he was blameless, but loss and dross, that he might win Christ. The test that the Savior applied was, "Go sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me." It is said that when he heard this, he went away sorrowful, because he had great possessions.

There is no doubt in our own mind that literally this was so, and we do not doubt that Jesus meant for him to sell all these literal possessions, and give to the poor, and we cannot doubt that the young man so understood him, and the apostles evidently so understood him, for Peter at once said, "We have forsaken all, and followed thee, what shall we have therefore?" We know that the apostle has said, "The love of money [by which is meant all worldly possessions] is the root of all evil." And we do know that the love of the gain of this world has more to do with keeping even true believers from their privileges and duties in the kingdom of heaven, than almost any other thing. That is, we mean this evil principle affects more and hinders more of the children of God from walking closely with the church, as she follows the Master, than any other thing. Jesus himself said that even the foxes of the earth and the birds of the air had a home, but to him there was none. He did not seek a home in this world, but too many of us who profess to be his disciples do seek a home on earth, as though this was the place of our continuance, and at this time this young man could not endure this test. As we said, we do not doubt that this was all literally true, and by it we are taught a lesson of our weakness, and earthliness, and of how hard it is for us to escape all worldly influences, and to come to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

In what follows we are taught another lesson of our proneness to self-righteousness, and self-complacency, if we have done anything that is enjoined upon us, or in obedience to the command to follow him. Peter at once said to the Lord, "We have forsaken all and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" This was fully as reprehensible a spirit as was that in the young man, which had hindered him from at once following the Savior. How prone we are to be on the one side of the right line, or on the other; we either cannot deny ourself any worldly thing, or else if we do, we straightway become elated in self, and boastful of it, and think that we ought to be blessed for what we have done. Only grace can guard us from worldliness on the one hand, and from self-righteousness on the other. If we stand, and do not fall either to the right hand or to the left, grace alone must have the praise. Jesus may praise a humble-hearted, steadfast follower, but that follower never praises

himself, unless like Peter he is given up to the flesh for a time. Afterwards, in the same connection, Jesus shows that one of his disciples who may labor all day long in his vineyard, yet may be the least and last in his kingdom, because he has come to think that he ought to be rewarded for his service, and ought to have more payment than he who has been called into the vineyard at the eleventh hour. If through the call of need among the poor, one of his disciples regarding all that he has as not being his own, shall give it away for the relief of the needy, while another has not been placed in such circumstances as calls for this, yet the first is not to think that he ought therefore to have more praise than the other. To think this would so spoil the service as to take away all its value when weighed in the balances of the sanctuary. True service in any way is a blessed privilege to the believer, and he feels that it is something that he must thank God for, instead of thinking that it is something for which God ought to praise and thank him.

We have never been able to see that the young man's riches were his obedience to the commandments of the law, or any self-righteousness, because we cannot understand that Jesus would say, Sell that, and give it to those who have it not. And beside, the narrative seems to show in itself that his obedience to the commandments was one thing, and his riches another. And the apostles, as said before, evidently thought that Jesus alluded to his literal riches. If the young man could sell his righteousness, the price would be valueless, and if it could be given to the poor, it would mock their need.

The second text to which our brother has called attention is 2 Corinthians xii. 14. From the connection, we learn that some had come among this church at Corinth, opposing Paul, and yet claiming to be apostles of the Lord. Paul, in this and the preceding chapter replies to these evil men, and urges the evidences of his apostleship upon his brethren. In verse twelve he says that he had wrought the signs of an apostle among them, and in verse thirteen he asks wherein were they inferior to other churches. except that he had not made himself burdensome among them? That is, he means that he had shown them as much evidence that he was an apostle as he had shown to any other church, so that they were not in this respect inferior to any other church, except that he had not made himself burdensome to them by throwing himself upon their care temporally. In this he says that he had wronged them; that is, he had not treated them as well as he had the other churches, by giving to them the privilege of supplying his temporal wants. This was, or might appear to be, an evidence of want of confidence in their true love to him, and to the blessed Savior, whose minister he was, and so he says, "Forgive me this wrong." That is, I may have wronged you in thinking that you would not be glad to provide for my temporal needs.

Now in the verse to which attention is called, he says that he was coming to them the third time, and that since they have been told what they have by his opposers, he will not again be chargeable to them, nor a burden upon them. He does this, not because it is not his right to demand support from them as their servant in the gospel, but to take away all occasion from his opponents, who are the enemies of the gospel also, through professing great zeal for it. And in verse fourteen he says, "I seek not

yours, but you." That is, I want that you should believe the gospel, and follow it first of all. This is more to me, he would say, than any temporal support for myself can be. You are my children in the gospel, and I am as a father to you, and so, after the manner of this relationship I will labor for you, and not exact any labor from you. Earthly parents lay up for their children, and not the children for them, and so I am willing to do in the gospel for you, and I will, he says, be gladly spent, and will gladly spend for you, even though the more I love you, the less I be loved by you.

How unselfish did grace make the beloved Paul, but it was for Christ's sake that he did this. Christ had called him to endure this hardness also. Even though his brethren, whom he loved, did not love him, yet he would still love and care for them, because to this he had been called of the Lord. He was their servant indeed, but it was for Christ's sake. If indeed we could drink in more of this spirit that was in Paul, and remember that no matter what evil our own brethren may do to us, we are not at all thereby absolved from our allegiance to Christ, we should not at any time allow ourselves to be driven from our duty, or from our place in the house of God by such things. Suppose our brother has ill-treated us, and suppose that he did it knowing what he was doing, shall we therefore cease to serve God as he has commanded us? Rather, may we not leave our injury to God, confident that he will uphold us in so doing, and that he will chastise, as he sees best, the brother who has wronged us? O, let us pray to be kept faithful to Christ, no matter what other may do. Shall a child say, My brother has abused me, and therefore I will run away from home, and forsake my father's commandments and service? No, rather, if he be wise, and has the honor of his parents at heart, he will say, "If my brother does wrong to me, let me strive to all the more faithfully show to my parents, and to all, that I honor them; let me come nearer and still nearer to all the rest of the household; even more than this he ought to say, Let me strive to do my erring brother all the good I can. It was in this way that Paul felt and acted toward this church at Corinth. O, for more of his humble and faithful spirit in us all. C.

MATTHEW XVIII. 3

Brother A. Fuller, of Monticello, Ark., asks, What does the language in Matthew xviii. 3, signify? "Except ye become converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven."

Briefly, it does not mean that natural men must be born again, and become as little children, else they cannot be saved everlastingly, but it does mean that the disciples themselves, who were disputing in a very unchildlike manner as to which of them should be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, must be converted out of that self-seeking spirit and become meek, humble, and loving to others, and desirous of the welfare of others, rather than their own, else they could not enter into the kingdom of heaven here. This means, as it seems to us, that the kingdom of heaven here is within, and in its fruits consists of all meekness, humility of feeling, and love to others, and to God. It may be summed up by saying it is being Christlike, and so being one with him. This could not be so with them, so long as they were possessed of the self-seeking spirit which would seek to

be the greatest in that kingdom. He who wants to have the most stars to his crown, either in this life or the next, shall have no entrance there at all, as long as this be the desire of his heart, or the motive that urges him forward. He who feels that he ought to have the lowest place in the kingdom, if any place at all, is the one to whom the most abundant entrance shall be ministered. The blessed Savior, and the beloved Paul, exposed and opposed this fleshly spirit on all occasions; they condemned it in the people of God especially. C.

TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

It is a great source of regret to us to be obliged to fall so far behind in answering our correspondents, and for fear we may appear careless or indifferent, in not replying to the many precious letters received by us, containing encouragement, not only in a financial way, but by expressing approbation of our feeble efforts in conducting the Signs, and by sweet assurances of charitable fellowship, we will ask the forbearance of our readers while we briefly state the cause of our seeming neglect and ingratitude, which is occasioned by our ill health. As many are aware, our health has never been good; five times have we been on the operating table, and on three of these occasions we have been subjected to very serious and critical operations, but it has been the pleasure of the Lord to raise us up to sufficient strength to enable us to attend to our duties in the office a portion of the time. But for the last few months we have been steadily growing weaker, until for the last few weeks our limbs have become bloated with dropsical swelling, caused by weak action of the heart, and for the last week we have been confined to the house, and most of the time to the bed, and if we should never be sufficiently strengthened to answer privately the beloved brethren and friends to whom we are so deeply indebted, we beg that they will each one accept this as an acknowledgment of our sincere thanks for their many loving acts of kindness and forbearance, for we do assure you, dear ones, that your precious letters have been a great comfort to us in our affliction, and may he who prompted you to thus comfort us, comfort you with that comfort which he alone can give, is the prayer of your brother in affliction.

B.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MATTHEW X. 34–36.

Dear Sir:—Will you do a subscriber the favor to give your views, through the Signs of the Times, on Matthew x. 34–36? I have had much meditation on the subject, and shall be very much pleased to hear from you on it. A compliance with this request, at your earliest convenience, will much oblige your Baptist brother,

A. H. CHALMERS.

Georgetown, Texas, Jan. 10, 1860.

REPLY.

The text proposed for consideration read thus, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household."

The carnal Israelites in regard to the predictions in the Old Testament, of the coming of the Messiah, and of his character and work, had from the letter of the word inferred that he was coming to set up a temporal kingdom, to restore Israel to her national independence, and to preside literally on the throne of David, for-

ever, and by his power and majesty would awe the hostile nations to peace, or destroy them as independent nations and consecrate their gain unto himself, for the enlargement of his own dominion. When they read that his name should be called the Prince of Peace, &c., they seemed naturally to infer that the peace which he should command, was such as they had enjoyed under the old covenant when the Lord delivered them from the sword, the pestilence and the famine. That is, that it should be of a temporal nature. But when he explained this matter to the disciples, they were astonished; and, although instructed by him on the subject, were very slow to comprehend the precise meaning of his words. At one time they asked him if at that time he intended to restore the kingdom to Israel, and at a still later period they said, "But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel," that is from the Roman government.

It is very true that Jesus Christ is, in a spiritual sense, the Prince of Peace, and that of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth, even forever. (Isaiah ix. 7.) And that he is the peace-maker and giver to his people. Having come to redeem them from the curse and dominion of the law, to satisfy the claims of eternal justice on their behalf, to carry their sorrows, bear the chastisement of their peace, that with his stripes they should be healed. He has made peace by the blood of his cross. That is, he has made reconciliation or atonement for them, and he has broken down the wall of partition which was between the Jews and Gentiles. Of twain to make one new man, and so making peace.

Also, in an experimental sense, all subjects of his saving power and grace, when they receive the atonement. experimentally, do have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom. v. 1.) And truly great peace have they that love his law, and nothing shall offend them.

But in the sense of the text on which our views are called for, he did not come to send peace on the earth; but his coming was unavoidably to have an opposite effect. The work which he came to do would certainly draw out against him the most virulent opposition and persecution. He came to judge and to make war, and with his bow and his crown to ride forth conquering and to conquer. But as his kingdom is not of this world, neither himself nor his subjects were to use carnal weapons in their warfare. For our weapons are not carnal, but spiritual, and mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds. No war was made by him upon the persons or property of the enemies or his cause and kingdom; but instead of rendering to them evil for evil, when he was reviled he reviled not again; and he taught his disciples by his precepts and by his example to love their enemies, to do good, or act kindly toward those who should persecute and spitefully use them. This doctrine he exemplified when on the cross; he prayed for his murderers, saying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Still his coming was designed to send a sword, or to send divisions upon earth; and such division as should develop the awful depravity of the human heart, and expose its enmity against God. "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth." He had not come to new-model

earthly governments, nor to interfere with secular affairs of the kingdoms of this world, nor to authorize any of his subjects to usurp authority or vice-gerency over the political institutions of this world. He had not come to decide the rights of Cæsar to demand tribute from the citizens of his provinces, nor to regulate the relations of earthly thrones and powers one to another so as to place them upon more amicable terms with each other, nor to give directions or models for human governments, so as to avoid the contentions and strife of conflicting nations. Neither had he come to so change the arrangements of heaven, or so modify the providential government of heaven, as to suit it to the taste and feelings of the children of this world. He had not come to reconcile the world or the devil to his cause or kingdom, to his doctrine or the institutions of his spiritual kingdom. Neither his doctrine, nor his examples, were calculated to please or satisfy the carnal sons of men, but rather to irritate and draw them out into opposition.

"I am not come to send peace; but a sword." Not such a sword, however, as earthly warriors use, for he admonished his disciples that those who used that kind of sword should perish by it. But the sword which they were to use is "The sword of the Lord." It is described as a very sharp sword, and having two edges, so as to cut both ways; and it is mighty, through Christ, in putting to flight the armies of the aliens. This sword cannot be obtained from the armory which produced those *rifles* for which Mr. Beecher and others took up contributions in the Puritanic churches of New England and Brooklyn, a short time since, for we are informed that it proceeds out of the mouth of him on whose head were many crowns, and on whose vesture and thigh was written, King of kings and Lord of lords; whose name is called, THE WORD OF GOD. This sword was considered indispensable by the inspired apostle, when he admonished the saints, saying, "And above all things, taking the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." *Above all things.* Whatever else we may lack, we cannot do without this sword. As David said of the sword which he found in the House of God, we may also say in truth, "There is no other sword like it."

In the immediate sense of the text, we presume that our Lord used the word sword, figuratively, to signify that his coming to earth, and his work, and the commission which he would give to his servants should occasion great and violent opposition, contention and separations among men. As he himself encountered the wrath of wicked men and devils, so his followers should endure the same. These things had been done to him, in the green tree, and should be repeated on his disciples, in the dry tree. The opposition which he encountered was not unexpected. He knew full well, and told his disciples beforehand, that he should be delivered into the hands of the wicked, and of what they would do to him." And "Truly against the holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, were gathered together both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the men of Israel, and the Gentiles, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done," and as Peter charged on the Jews, "Him," Jesus, "being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."

So also did he fully understand to what extent his children should be persecuted,

harrassed and opposed by the dragon, the beasts, and the false prophets and all that they should endure from the world, the flesh and the devil. He came not to prevent this, but to be the occasion of its development.

"For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother,"&c. Not that christianity, or the Spirit of Christ in his people, will make children less dutiful, obedient or affectionate to their parents, by any mean; for that is not the case, as wes see by the admonitions which are given by the apostles, to children to honor and obey their parents, servants their masters, and subjects their superiors in authority.

And the inspired writer portrays the most unchristian character to be one who is *without natural affections.* How then does his coming set a man at variance with his father, ? &c. The version of this given, Luke xii. 52, 53, may serve to illustrate viz: "For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three, the father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-inlaw against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." See also Micah viii. 6. From these passages we learn that families will be divided by the discriminating grace of God, in calling some of them to a knowledge and love of the truth, and leaving others in their enmity to oppose them. In this application, we have very many examples where those who are born of God, and taught by the Spirit, have to encounter the opposition of fathers, mothers, and near and dear kindred in the flesh, and in some instances, according to the word, some have literally delivered up their own children to be put to death for their faith in and fidelity to Christ; but great has been their reward in heaven. Whether by the mother-in-law and daugher-in-law anything allegorical or figurative is intended, we will not presume to decide; but of this we are certain, that families have often been divided, and have become embittered against those of their number who, for the sake of truth, have renounced their traditions.

"And a man's foes shall be they of his own household." Not only in the division and alienation of families, but every child of God has more or less experience of this last expression in his own person: the flesh warring against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh; the world, with its alluring vanities; Satan with his temptations, but more than either of them, does the christian stand in fear of himself. O, says he, my carnal, wicked nature, my wretched, wandering mind, the pride of my heart, and my proneness to depart from the precepts of the Lord, are foes of my own household more potent, more subtle and mischievous than all others combined. "O, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

In connection with this subject we probably ought to offer a remark on Luke xiv. 26, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." This passage, of course, cannot mean that we are literally to hate those of our kindred whom God has commanded us to love and honor. But we are to loathe that corrupt depraved nature, of which we are born of the flesh. Our love to God will centre only in that which is pure and holy; and that love which only cleaves to the earth and earthly

things cannot qualify us to be disciples of Jesus. We hate fallen, polluted, depraved human nature in our nearest and dearest relations, even as we hate it in ourselves. Not in a manner that would lessen our filial affection and kindest regard for them as parents or husbands, wives or children. When we learn what it is to hate our own lives, from a deep-felt sense of our human depravity, we shall the better understand in what sense we must hate those who are our flesh and our blood. To be a disciple of Jesus, we must love him supremely, and be ready to forsake all, however near or dear by the ties of affinity or consanguinity, and to make any other sacrifice if it be necessary, to follow him. We should be ready to part with every fleshly gratification, and prefer Jerusalem above our chief joys. We cannot serve two masters: we cannot serve God and mammon. If we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption; but if we through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the flesh, we shall live, and if we sow to the Spirit, we shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

To our "Baptist brother" we will say, according to your request we have given such views as we have on the subject of your inquiry. If they shall, under the blessing of God, serve to elucidate the subject to your mind, or to edify others, we will have occasion to be humble, and to give thanks to God. Should any others have a more clear light on the subject, we hope they will let it shine.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 1, 1860.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At the home of her son, H. L. Vawter, near Shelbyville, Shelby Co., Ky., **Mrs. Sarah D. Vawter,** aged 68 years and 11 months. Mother was born near Salt River, five miles east of Lawrenceburg, Anderson Co., Ky., Dec. 19th, 1833; died Nov. 19th, 1902. She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, and loved the doctrine of salvation by grace. It was a great pleasure to her to serve the members of like precious faith, esteeming others better than self. It is sad and causes deep sorrow to pen these words, yet the bright evidences that mother has made a glorious exchange in yielding up life mitigates the weight of this profound sorrow. When the overwhelming burst of grief is calmed into the gentle tear of recollection, and the sudden agony is softened into pensive meditation, we would not have the heart forget such sorrow. Shortly before she died she looked into my face as if to say something, and I asked if she wanted anything? She said, "Yes, I want the Lord to come and take me." I then said, "Ma, do you want to die?" She answered, "Yes; I love you all, and hate to leave you, but I will never be any better." I said, "You love Jesus and want to go to him?" She clasped her feeble hands, threw her eyes heavenward, and bowed her head as a bright smile passed over her wrinkled face. She had suffered much with asthma and heart trouble; marks of pain and suffering were depicted on her countenance. But O, how smooth, how calm and placid in death! The pleasant expression of "rest" plainly spoke, "All is well." As I took the last sad look of the dear, cold and lifeless form, yet so beautiful and peaceful, the words, "Asleep in Jesus," were never so impressive; I felt it was truly "a calm and undisturbed repose." In her last illness she said to me, "I desire to be patient and wait the Lord's time, for I feel to hope that "when this earthly tabernacle is dissolved, I have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Her health had been failing for years, but with unflagging energy and tenacious industry she battled with the duties of life till a short while before she was confined to her bed for the last time. Dear Lord, strengthen me to say, "Thy will be done."

Elder P. W. Sawin spoke very comfortingly and appropriately on the funeral occasion, after which her body was consigned to earth in the beautiful Grove Hill Cemetery, with the last sad tributes of respect. "The body returns to earth from which it came, and the spirit to God who gave it."

DAUGHTER.

OUR dear sister in Christ, **Mrs. Lizzie R. Brooks,** departed this life Jan. 5th, 1903. She was born in Delaware Co., Ohio, Sept. 29th, 1870, and was married to Ellis F. Brooks, August 20th, 1890. They came to Washington, from Nebraska, in August, 1901,

and lived at North Yakima until January, 1902, when they located in Everett, Wash. In June she came back to attend the Siloam Association, and with two other young sisters related her christian experience, and was baptized by Elder W. J. Hess. After she returned home she wrote me a good letter expressing a desire to be where she could attend the meetings of the church regularly. She was troubled with a cough when at the association, which developed into catarrhal quick consumption, and her doctor advised a speedy return to the dry climate of Yakima. They came the last of July, and for a time she seemed much better, but with the approach of winter she failed rapidly, and soon realizing she could not last long, arranged her temporal affairs for her departure. She was ready and willing to go when her time should come. About three weeks before her death she had a lot of back numbers of the SIGNS taken to her, from which she selected several numbers to send to her uncle, Wm. Wright, in Canada. Her parents, John and Emeline (Wright) Clark were Old School Baptists. Elder Hanover was their pastor, I think. They and a sister passed away before she came west. She leaves a sorrowing husband, two little girls and a brother, besides the church, to mourn. May the Lord enable them to look beyond their great loss to her greater gain. While her stay among the Baptists here was short, she was endeared to us all, and we feel sad that her sweet voice will be heard no more on earth, singing the songs of Zion.

"O, what must it be heaven's glories to share;
Prepare us, O heavenly Dove,
To join in the songs of the glorified there,
And drink of the river of love."

SONORA A. HESS.

LITTLE **Claud,** son of Mr. and Mrs. A. J. **Owens,** was born Nov. 28, 1897, and died Jan. 18th, 1900, making his stay on earth only 2 years, 1 month and 20 days. Though his life was short, his days were numbered. All things have an appointed time. God's providence is a perfect chain, therefore no missing links or broken chords. Many times, amid the crushing whirl of cares and anxieties, the tender kiss of his gentle lips, and the warm embrace of his tiny arms, soothed and sweetened all toil and worry of the devoted parents, for much of the joy of life is enhanced by the sunny prattle and gayety of the dear little ones. A home without children, is like a garden without flowers, and little Claud was such a remarkably bright, loving and lovable child, that we sadly miss him, for we were all so much attached to him.

AUNT.

DIED—Dec. 5th, 1902, aged 66 years, 11 months and 20 days, **Harvey Fox,** of Washington Co., Pa. He lived with his sister, Miss Nancy, (neither of them ever married) near the Maple Creek Church, and his was a home for the Old Baptists. While Harvey never joined the church, he was a good friend of the Baptists, and we think he had an experience of grace. He gave us evidence of God's goodness to him that enabled him to trust in him. He attended regularly the meetings of the church, and seemed much interested in the preaching of the gospel. He was an honest, hard laboring man, and well respected by all who knew him. I was called by telegraph message about one hundred miles to attend his funeral. His remains were conveyed to the Maple Creek Church, where we tried to comfort those in distress, from 1 Cor. xv. 22: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." After which he was buried in the beautiful cemetery near by, there to await the great resurrection day.

He leaves to mourn their loss, one sister and two brothers. May the Lord comfort them and bless them for his name's sake, is the prayer of the unworthy writer,

J. N. BARTLETT.

PHILIPPI, W. Va.

DIED—Feb. 17th, 1903, near Towanda, Pa., **Calvin J. Shelton,** aged 73 years. His disease was pneumonia, which after an illness of several weeks left the lungs hardened in such a condition that he could not recover. Brother Shelton belonged to the Old School Baptist Church at Burdett, N. Y., being baptized something over thirty years ago. Living over sixty miles away, it was not convenient for him to meet with the church often, but he always manifested a desire to. He was of a meek and retiring disposition. He had a great desire to go to Burdett once more to see the brethren, but was stricken before the opportunity came. He suffered much in his last sickness, and prayed to be released; to be with his Savior, which would be far better. He finally fell asleep on the date above mentioned. The funeral was held at his late residence, four days later, and he was buried at Monroeton, Pa. He leaves a widow, two children, and grandchildren. Brother Shelton was a man that trusted in God, and belonged to that sect everywhere spoken against, and has fought a good fight, finished his course, and gone to his reward, which is far better than to live.

A. AYRES.

BURDETT, N. Y.

Nathan Tomlinson was born at Honey Creek, Ind., Sept. 4th, 1846, under Methodist faith, and united with that church when about eighteen years of age; moved to the little town of Fort Branch, 1880; was married to Susie Vandeveer, Feb. 16th, 1881; joined the Regular Baptist Church at that place in the same year; was elected deacon of that church, which office he was filling at the time of his death. He leaves a wife and many friends to mourn his departure, which occurred March 13th, 1903.

The funeral service were conducted by the pastor, Elder A. A. Schultz, a large audience attending. He was laid to rest in the cemetery near by, to await the great resurrection morn. We have sufficient evidence to rest assured that our brother shall be permitted to live in paradise forever and forever.

C. N. GWALTNEY.

FORT BRANCH, Ind., April 11, 1903.

MEETINGS.

THERE is a May meeting appointed to be held with the Sidling Hill Church, Fulton Co., Pa., commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in May and closing on Sunday. All coming from the east or west will be met Thursday at Hancock, Md. Train from the east arrives about 1 p. m. Any coming later will please write brother J. B. Mellott, Needmore, Pa. We most cordially invite our brethren and friends to meet with us, and we do hope some of our ministering brethren will take pity on us and come and preach for us. Any one coming by Washington, if they will come to my house on Wednesday I will see that they get there.

E. V. WHITE.

THE New Valley Church will hold its May meeting at Hughesville, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in May, lasting over Sunday. The train leaving Washington Friday at 1:05 p. m. will be met at Hamilton station. We make an earnest appeal to you brethren and friends to attend our meeting, and especially do we appeal to our ministering brethren to attend.

E. V. WHITE.

BALTIMORE Association is appointed to be held with Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore city, Md., beginning Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, (20th) 1903, and continue three days. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth to meet with us.

Those coming to the association, will come to the church house on Madison St., near Calvert St., and those who want to be entertained, will apply to Dr. John Thorne, 633 Calvert St.

JOHN THORNE.

DELAWARE Association is appointed to meet with Bryn Zion Church, in Kent Co., Delaware, beginning Wednesday before the fifth Sunday in May, (27th) 1903, and continue three days.

DELAWARE River Association is appointed to be held with the Southampton Church, Bucks Co., Pa., beginning on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (3d) 1903, and continue three days.

THE Warwick Association is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, in New York city, beginning Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, (10th) 1903, and continue three days.

THE Sandusky Regular Baptist Association will meet with the Honey Creek Church, near Bloomville, Seneca Co., Ohio, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 12th, 13th and 14th, 1903. Brethren will be met at Bloomville, Ohio.

H. D. BISHOP, Clerk.

THE Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon and Washington, will be held with Pleasant Grove Church, at Goldendale, Washington, (if not providentially hindered) commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in June, (19-21) 1903, and continue the two following days. Those coming from both east and west by railroad will get off at Grant, and thence by stage to Goldendale, a distance of twelve miles. Those coming by boat will get off of boat at Lile, on Columbia River, and take cars to Goldendale.

N. J. SHANKS, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 71. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1903. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE PRECIOUSNESS OF CHRIST.

"UNTO you therefore which believe he is precious."—1 Pet. ii. 7.

PRECIOUS KINDRED IN CHRIST:—The above precious words have dwelt in my mind for some time, and so to you let me write of Christ in his divine preciousness to his bride and members, to whom it is given to see him and believe in him. For you will notice that he is precious to you who believe. To others, who have no faith in him, he hath neither form nor comeliness nor beauty, that they should desire him. "But unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." These wonderful words of the context, throw clear light upon the text, and show how entirely different are believers in Christ from unbelievers, who stumble at the word of truth, and are disobedient, unto which they are righteously appointed. And these solemn words of inspired truth show, too, how entirely different Christ is to those who are his, and to those who are not. The first are his friends, but the last are his foes. Why is it so? The cause of it is not in him, but in them. And the reason why they regard him so entirely differently is because grace has made his believing members to differ from themselves in the past, and from others in the present. The grace of God only makes this difference. And grace only makes Christ precious to you who believe in him, and his preciousness is always in proportion to your felt need of grace, and according as grace reigns and abounds in you. For in so far as you depend upon your ability and works, that far Christ ceases to be precious to you, and your spiritual sight becomes so blinded by the legal scales of self-sufficiency and self-dependence that you cannot see the infinite sufficiency and preciousness of Christ, who is full of grace and truth, and in whom alone is salvation. It is for this cause alone that the religionists of the world, who depend upon themselves and their works to

obtain the smiles and blessings of God, fail to see the all-fullness and preciousness of Christ, and therefore fall away from grace to works. The god of this world hath blinded their eyes, and flattered and deceived them with exalted notions of their own good will and ability to resolve and to do.

This is the prevailing principle and sentiment in all natural and wordly religions, of whatever name or order, and the very essence or soul of it is self-righteousness, which is legality. It necessarily separates all who are under its power and control from Christ, and hides from them the glory of his finished work on the cross, the fullness of his salvation, and his inexpressible preciousness and glory. It is ever thus with all who in the least depend upon themselves for any part of their salvation. For it is perfectly self-evident that whoever looks to personal ability and works to obtain salvation and its blessings in any part, even the smallest part, does not and cannot at the same time look to and depend upon Christ for such salvation and its blessings. If I depend upon my own power and works to pay a just debt, I cannot also depend upon my brother or friend and surety to pay it for me, neither will I praise him for having paid my debt myself. Christ himself says, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God mammon." Mammon is worldly possessions or wealth of our own, and everything worldly and of ourselves is mammon. We cannot serve God and self. In serving God, we must have no master only Christ. His word, "No man can serve two masters," shows that it is impossible for any one to serve both himself and Christ. For he must either hate the one, and love the other. This is an infallible principle, and from it none are exempt. Our Lord elsewhere says, that except any man hate his own life, he cannot be his disciple. The moral and godly Jew trusted in his own possessions of wealth and ability; therefore he could not be the disciple of Christ, nor trust in him nor rely on his grace alone, because he could not give up all that he possessed, that Christ might be all in all.

Now, this is just the one impossibility with all who hold to conditional salvation in any part; for they are not ready nor willing to give up all that they have for Christ, their free will and moral ability to do and perform good works as conditions of salvation in part, that Christ and his grace may be all their salvation in all its fullness. O no! for this would seem to them as humbling themselves to mere ciphers or nothings, and would be discounting their own obedience and good works, as not having any merit or value in obtaining the smiles and blessings of God. No, no! this they cannot allow; the thought of it is too humiliating to the dignity and moral nature and ability of man, either to do or not to do, to obey or disobey, to serve God or mammon, as self-reliant man may resolve. Why, to deny this ability to keep all the commandments of God, as his professed children, and to perform good works of gospel obedience, as the conditions of salvation and its blessings in time, takes away the motive and incentive to good works, denies man's moral accountability, and puts him down on a level with the helpless infant and the undeserving sinner, who has nothing to bring as a price for salvation and blessing but his sinful

self and wretched unworthiness, says the voluntary moral religionist, who claims the ability to either serve the Lord and receive present salvation thereby, or disobey and lose the salvation and blessing. How congenial this is to the mind and nature of all men. Any other way of salvation is unreasonable, obnoxious, and does way with practical godliness and good works, according to the way that seemeth right to man. All such stumble at the word of the Lord, the pure word of grace, which will not admit of works of righteousness which we have done as entitling us to salvation in the least, but rejects all our righteousness as filthy rags, and all our works as reprobate silver, as utterly worthless in the view of the grace of Christ. This is so offensive to the capable religionist, that it seems to him as saying, "Let us continue in sin, that grace may abound." Thus does he despise and pervert the grace of Christ, and reject the word of grace which says, "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Ah! this makes no room for works to abound over sin, but attributes all righteousness and salvation to reigning grace. And so all who look to their works as conditions of salvation in part, and are not reconciled nor willing to be wholly unworthy and depend upon grace, stumble at the doctrine and word of grace, being disobedient to it; for they claim and insist that salvation must be divided into parts, between their works and the grace of Christ. For this reason and to this extent, Christ is a stumbling-stone to every self-reliant religionist, and a rock of offence, and they reject the word and counsel of God against themselves. Strangely enough, while they want to have it this way, left to their will and work, yet they find fault with God for this very thing, because he has appointed to thus leave them to their own self-will and way.

The context thus leads us to see how and why Christ is precious to you who believe in him. So your *faith* in him is the key to his preciousness to you, and to every believer in him. And in proportion as your faith in him prevails and abounds, so will his preciousness abound in your view. That is, the preciousness of Christ is revealed to *faith*, and received by faith, but never to works nor by works. There is, then, a peculiar and most sacred relationship and nearness between Christ and the believer in him, of which faith is the expression and evidence. This wonderful relationship is in the life of Christ. Yea, more amazing still, it is also in his death! Every believer in Christ is dead with him to the law of sin and death. His sufferings unto death, which were in the sacred body of his flesh, under the law and unto sin, have been fulfilled in you who now live and believe in him. "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." The faith of your heart is both the faith of the Son of God, who loved you, and gave himself for you, and it is a fruit of the Spirit, and God the Father gives both the Spirit and its spiritual fruit unto you. So your faith in Christ possesses the power and triumph of his resurrection, and it is the Spirit's witness in your heart and to you that you have followed your Beloved in his sorrow unto death, and with him have passed from death unto life, and shall now live because he lives, and he lives in you and you live in him. He is yours and you are his. "He that hath the bride is the Bridegroom."

Holy and heavenly and precious marriage union! All this is symbolized in our Lord's supper and baptism, which touchingly show our sufferings with him unto his death in our flesh for our sins, and our resurrection with him in his righteous life unto God and holiness, to die no more.

Our loving Redeemer is precious to us, because he bowed the heavens and came down to us in our lost estate in sin and guilt, condemnation and death under the curse of the law of God, and redeemed us from all these fearful things, which justly stood against us, "and washed us from our sins in his own blood." O, was ever love like this? Therefore, "We love him, because he first loved us." And because we love him, we love to keep his commandments. In this holy love of God, shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, we behold the Man Christ, the Father's Anointed as fairer than the sons of men, the chiefest among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely. And seeing him as our Beloved, who through suffering and death, as our High Priest, has made us nigh unto his and our Father and God, and has now given us life and faith to behold him in his divine beauty; yea, and adorned us as becomes his lovely bride with the new wedding robe of his righteousness and the beautiful garments of his salvation, then saying to us, "Thou art all fair, my love," our believing heart rapturously responds, "I am my Beloved's, and his desire is toward me." "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my Beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love. His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me." O my adored and precious Christ! thou art the unspeakable gift of thy Father-God to thy redeemed, whom thou dost love, and for whom thou hast laid down thy precious life.

To you that believe Christ is precious, because he is the Surety of the new and better testament, and has paid all your ten thousand talents, taken away all your deep poverty, and made you infinitely rich in joint-heirship with himself in all the unfading bliss and glory of his Father's heavenly and holy and eternal kingdom. Yea, believer, all that Christ is, is truly and forever yours by inheritance in and with him. "For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Our precious Christ is full of grace and truth, "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." "Of God are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the Head of all principality and power." This, all this fullness and completeness of spiritual blessings, grace and salvation, wisdom and power, in all their perfection in the fullness of the Godhead, is the infinite possession by inheritance of believers in Christ. He is blessedly precious to them in all this divine fullness of life and glory.

How parsimonious, sordid and dishonoring the doctrine of conditions in salvation and spiritual blessings; that

believers in him must yet work to obtain them. They who think so are but hirelings, who serve for rewards, and not in the love-given service of faith, which beholds in Christ all fullness of grace and salvation and blessing and glory, in the infinite freeness of all the Father's blessings in Christ. Such conditional service is not of faith, but of the law of works, and it is so blinding that those who thus serve do not understand that all the blessings and rewards in the gospel of Christ are of grace, but not of debt. But the rewards of such conditional workers for salvation and blessing, are not the rewards of grace, but of debt. This is a selfish, legal, faithless and loveless service, which demands that the rewards be measured by the amount of labor done as service. And so its sentiment and fault-finding language is, "These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day."

But to you who find your all in Christ, in whom you live and believe, he is precious again, in that he has borne all your heavy burdens, taken away the oppressive yoke from you, finished all the work of righteousness for you, fought your battles, accomplished your warfare, led captive all your enemies, run in the race and obtained the crown for you; and has now sweetly called you away from all your toils and hopeless conflict, saying to you in his all-powerful voice in your heart, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." So Christ himself is your perfect and perpetual Sabbath, your full recompence and everlasting rest, the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth in him. "For we which have believed do enter into rest." "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest," (God's rest) "he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." Christ is this entire and heavenly rest. He has raised us up above all our crushing burden and faulty works, from which we could obtain no release nor rest, and has made us free from all our slavery and cruel bondage. To us the gospel of his salvation and peace is now the happy year of jubilee, the entire release and cessation from all our strivings and works, and we happily say, "I sat down under his shadow with great delight." "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." How refreshing and full and precious is this rest in Jesus! "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep." "And his rest is glorious."

Whoever still clings to his works as conditions of salvation in any part, has neither ceased from his own works nor entered into the perfect gospel rest in Christ, because so long as he dwells on earth his works of conditional salvation are not finished, but he must ever work, *work*, WORK, for that salvation which is conditional and depends upon his obedience. The fleshly Israel are yet seeking to be justified and saved by their works, because they do not believe in Christ, nor trust and rest in his finished work of righteousness. What better are Gentiles, who also depend upon their works for any part of salvation?

Christ is the good Physician, and you who believe in him may joyfully praise him and say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who

forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies," "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." When the Lord gives us to know this sacred and solemn truth in our personal soul-sickness, and we experience the touching fellowship of his sufferings for our sins, and by faith receive the free and full and everlasting forgiveness of all our sins for his name's sake, then O how exceedingly precieous Christ is to us! Of all the blessed company of his believing disciples, whom Christ called to him in the days of his flesh, he had healed every one of their maladies and diseases and plagues which sin had caused; and it was because they were helpless and miserable and ready to perish in their deadly afflictions and woes that they were drawn to him, and to every one of them he gave perfect soundness, health and life. No words can express the preciousness of Christ to all those joyful believers in him and in his power to save. Thus is it true in all who live and believe in Christ, to whom he has given sight and hearing, health and peace, salvation and joy. He has done for every one of all this countless and happy multitude what no other man or power could do. For out of death he has given them endless life, and out of sorrow and woe he has given them joy and gladness, thanksgiving and praise to God in the highest. And all this salvation and blessing and glory the precious Christ has given them most lovingly and freely, without money or price, works or merit from them, in the fullness of his own everlasting and perfect love. "O for such love let rocks and hills their lasting silence break, and all harmonious human tongues the Savior's praise speak."

"Do not I love thee, O my Lord?
Behold my heart and see;
And turn each cursed idol out,
That dares to rival thee."

Unto you that believe, Christ is divinely precious in his heavenly relations to you; for in these he is your good Shepherd, and feeds his flock, and safely keeps his lambs and sheep, so that none shall pluck them out of his hand, neither shall one of them perish. He knows them every one, and they hear his voice, calling them to him, and they follow him. For he goeth before them, calls them by name, and he leads them out of the world and into his heavenly fold. Christ is precious to them as the Captain of their salvation, and they are clothed with his armor of righteousness, esteem it an honor to be counted worthy to suffer for his sake, and he comforts their hearts in the good fight of faith, and assures them that because he lives, they shall live also. Christ is sacredly related to us as our Prophet and High Priest and King; and he reveals his Father's will to his people, makes them wise unto salvation, takes away their sins, and perfects them in his one perfect offering, reconciles them to God in peace and love, is their Advocate with the Father, and reigns over them in righteousness by his superabounding and saving grace. Thus are they made nigh unto God as the friends of Jesus, and are the children of the living God, a royal priesthood and a heavenly kingdom. In all this divine relation and nearness to Christ, he is most precious to you who believe. We all sorrow because of our sins, and confess our sins before God;

but our faithful High Priest has put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself, and he intercedes for us at the right hand of God; therefore all the people of his priesthood are sanctified and holy in him. Christ is precious in another divinely endearing relation to all the royal priesthood: he is their Brother, and he is not ashamed to call them "brethren." To the weeping sister, Mary, the first to see the risen Christ, he said, "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." O how inexpressible and full of glory is this sonship to God and brotherhood with Christ! This is holy oneness and fellowship and communion with the Father and his Son. "Sons we are through God's election, who in Jesus Christ believe." O how divine the honor and supreme the bliss, that sinful people of mortal make should be raised from earth to heaven, and so highly exalted as to be the holy people and dear companions and cherished brethren of the holy and lovely Son of God! Compared with this immortal blessing and glory, all else sinks into nothingness. And all this comes to us through the precious Christ and in him. O, then, his preciousness is as infinite as his infinite person and love and name, and it surpasses angelic thought.

To his believing brethren, to whom it is given to see the altogether lovely Son of God, who is invisible to mortal sight, and to know him in the fellowship of his sufferings, and the power of his resurrection, he is surpassingly precious in his person; so infinitely beautiful and lovely that he is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, and saints and angels adore and worship him. Yea, our Beloved, our crowned King of glory, is the brightness and joy and glory of glorious Heaven, his Father's delight, and the delight of all his saints. His very name is unspeakably precious to all who know his name; for the sweet name Jesus is salvation, and life and health and peace. In his name all his brethren conquer, and overcome sin and Satan and every foe. His name is above every name; for in his precious name is all the authority and wisdom and power and glory of the eternal Godhead. Yet this highly exalted Lord Jesus Christ, is the child that was born unto us, the Son that was given unto us, the babe in the arms of his virgin mother Mary, the meek and lowly Son of man, who made himself of no reputation, our Brother on our mother's side, the Man of God's right hand, the Christ or Anointed Man, the Mediator of all his Father's people, the Lamb of God, who expired on the cross, slept in the tomb, revived and arose, gave life and faith, salvation and joy to his sorrowing brethren, then went up to God and glory. Thus and there shall all his people and brethren follow him, see him in his glory, and be with him and like him.

In all this is Christ divinely lovely and precious to all who live and believe in him. His precious name calms their troubled breast, soothes their sorrows, heals their wounds, drives away their fear, and comforts their hearts. Christ is precious to them in life, and blessedly precious in death. In him death has lost its sting and the grave its victory. His preciousness is summed up in this: "I am the Resurrection and the Life. Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

D. BARTLEY.

LEBANON, Ohio, Jan. 19, 1903.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., March 10, 1903.

DEAR BRETHREN:—At the close of a former letter, written now more than a year ago, I mentioned that I had in mind to write something more on the subject of calling and ordaining. My mind was then somewhat exercised upon that subject, in connection with what I then wrote. I soon after wrote the following, but deemed it of so little value that I laid it aside. Recently I found it in my desk, and now feel to submit it to your better judgment.

For many years it has seemed to me that it should be a matter of deep, prayerful, solemn consideration, both the ordaining, the calling and accepting the pastoral care of churches, yet I am inclined to believe that it is often all done with light consideration. It has appeared to me to be, in some cases, like the marriage vows often taken, in this our day of evil. Marriage is often not a heart work, it is become a light, trivial matter, therefore the blighted lives of many. Hence also the shipwreck that is sometimes made by both church and pastor.

As set forth in my former letter, the Lord has set up his church or kingdom, he knows not only her every need, but also her every foe, he knows individually the requirements of every member which needs to be ministered unto, consequently he calls and qualifies his servants for the place which they each occupy; men of low degree, as well as men of high degree, learned and unlearned are called as he sees fit. Yet not many wise men after the flesh are called, says Paul. He, we know, was learned, brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, at the seat of wisdom. Peter and the rest of the apostles were not so raised. One said, "Seeing that these are unlearned men." I do not suppose that the preaching of Paul was any better than that of others of the apostles, yet there were some things to which he was called, which was not the case with the others. Must we not conclude that he was, by or under the rich provisions of God's grace, placed under the teaching of Gamaliel for that very purpose? So Moses, by chance, shall I say? no, by the predetermined purpose of God, fell into the hands of Pharaoh's daughter, to be there taught all the arts needful in his eventful life. Thus we find our God providing for every emergency. That he has sufficient ministers or servants, I do not question. If there were not, where is the remedy? Who is authorized to make and furnish them? Who knoweth the peculiar needs of those to whom they would be sent? I do fear that there are a goodly number of men-made preachers, or rather talkers, throughout the land. Lamentable as it is, the churches are suffering in consequence of this. False doctrine has often originated and started in the brains of these men-made preachers, which has made havoc in the churches. It is said, "A man's gift maketh room for him," and so it does. These try to make room for themselves by preaching new or false doctrine, and it is said that many shall follow their pernicious ways. They are not so much after the cause, or the flock of God, as for a place to preach. The church can never prosper in spiritual growth, nor be edified under such men, though they may present the truth in the letter of it.

But the question comes, Who is at fault, and where is the remedy? I answer, the church is at fault. There are just as clear marks and rules laid down in regard to accepting one in the ministry, as in receiving one to membership. An exercise of mind will not do to rely on alone, as evidence of a call to the min-

istry. I have met and talked with many excellent brethren, who for a time were seemingly much burdened with the word, but after a few efforts, were satisfied that they had no gift to preach. But whatever the the exercise of mind may be, the church must judge of the gift. And he who is not willing to leave it there, is rebellious. I have, on the other hand, known of instances where the church was impressed with the assurance that one had a gift in the ministry before the individual himself was. But this is not always so. The church should exercise great care to place the gift where it belongs, that it may be useful to the body.

If I were to attempt to point out the relationship between the church and a young gift, and describe it, I should say, "Point out the most tender, faithful, loving mother in her watchcare over her child, then you will have a pattern and example to follow." That mother watches tenderly and lovingly day and night. How few such in the churches. She corrects in love, as well as watches and instructs. How many times she must lift the little one up. So with kind, encouraging words the church should do. I am disposed to believe that few of the called of God are disposed to run too fast. The work to them seems too solemn, too great, too high, and they say, "I cannot attain unto it." But if too fast, or too forward, the church must be faithful to hold them in check, they should be kept in their place. The church should feel her deep responsibility, as well as the one called to the ministry. How careful they should be to neither dwarf nor have a mushroom growth; a gift, however feeble its possessor may be in his efforts to preach, will be recognized as of God; there will be life in it, and there will be a quiet response in the hearts of the saints. Such an one will preach, and that is the best evidence of all. A man may talk fluently, but that may not be preaching. Says Paul, "Our gospel came not in word only." If it did, any one might preach. If the gift be to the expounding of the Scriptures, it will edify, and it will grow and enlarge with the increase which the Lord giveth. If the church be mindful, faithful and prayerful, there will be no need of guessing, they will feel and see the moving of the hand of God, both minister and church will be mutually blessed. Each one, in his proper place, is as much blessed as the other, and is as dependent as the other. It is recorded, "The Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." "And they laid hands upon them." That is, they ordained them, or set them apart to the full work of the gospel ministry, recognizing the gift which God had given them. If a church has the mind of Christ, and is built up as lively stones, and the Holy Ghost speaks and directs, and she only acts under such direction, there will be no want or over supply in our beloved Zion.

It is true the churches may become too indifferent and careless, may go to sleep, even as individual members do, yet they should never ordain until the Holy Ghost so signifies. While it is right to encourage, at proper times, the gift which one possesses, by going forward in the ordination of that one, yet no one can preach any better by simply being ordained. I was vain enough to think that I could. While I opposed my own ordination, yet I could not rebel against the wish of the church. I was getting along so badly, but after I was ordained, I was inflated with the idea that it would add to my gift, and I would get along better. I say

now, with blushing and with shame, O, the vanity of my heart. Some churches have ordained one to get rid of him, to our shame be it said. That is, they would send them away to other churches. O, what a mistake, no church should seek to ordain one without the full assurance that the gift was worthy of it, and if needs be, would accept that one as her pastor. The church cannot rightfully be a respecter of persons, they ought to be willing to accept whom the Lord accepts and gives them.

The calling of a pastor demands our solemn consideration, the life of the church depends upon this, that is, her living; the church must be fed, and the pastor is for this. Sometimes the church, or members of churches, want the choosing, they have set their minds upon some one that they want, and do not want any other. This is to become respecters of persons. I do not think it wrong to pray for the one, but with the prayer, if acceptable to God, must also be this, "Not my will, but thine, be done." For his is the kingdom and the power. We learn sometimes the sad lesson that was taught Israel of old. They desired a king; he must be prepossessing like other kings of the nations round about. The Lord granted it, but O, the awful consequences. When the church has the mind of Christ, the Spirit of Christ will guide them in the right way. The prayer of faith would be, Lord, send or speak by whom thou wilt. Send us a pastor of thine own choosing, thou, Lord, knoweth all our needs. If the church moves as the Spirit moves them, they will all readily agree, and will be divested of every selfish motive, and will have nothing in view but the good of Zion. This will be manifested of the Lord; then there will be a response in the heart of him to whom the call is made; then there will be one mind, and mutual feeling, between the church and the one called; the one called will be solemnly impressed, seeking to know the will of God, his soul will then be poured out in prayer. I know of nothing that should be done with more solemn deliberation or consideration. Likewise I do not know a worse position than to try to serve where the labor is not blessed, where there is not a mutual blessing and comfort in each other. If one is called of God to preach, he has but to wait the open door, which will assuredly be set open before him; he cannot open that door, the Lord must go before in the matter.

I will here relate an incident or two, as they occurred in my life with myself, because they illustrate the points I would impress upon your minds. At one time I had not the care of any church, I had resigned my care because it had become a prison to me, so far as my preaching was concerned. Some churches then called me, and I was urged by friends there and elsewhere to accept. I made a visit among them, and was kindly received, and every assurance given for our welfare, but I could not feel any evidence that the Lord had designed for me to go, and to go, and then realize that my labors were not blessed, would be to me unbearable; to see the church suffer, I could not bear the thought. I have suffered many trials and conflicts since, but have never felt to regret not going.

At another time, a church invited me to visit them, and it was, as I learned, for the purpose of afterwards extending a call to me. Each time my mind was so dark and gloomy, I dare not give them any encouragement as to myself, but I advised them to call another, which they did. After this I visited them often, and

enjoyed sweet comfort of soul in preaching Jesus.

I have never thought it a good mark to see one hunting a church to serve, or to set the mind upon a strong and healthy church, to serve that or none. The only thought that should govern us is, To whom has the Lord sent us, and where will he have us to go? I would much rather serve a church of three members, where peace and love prevails, and my little preaching is a blessing to them, than a church of an hundred members and no sweet cane. O, how pleasant it is when church and pastor are one, then they are a mutual blessing to each other. To my mind, no one should accept the care of a church over the head of a single member. If the church cannot agree, they should wait. If we are divested of selfish motives, and go to the Lord in prayer, he will guide us. The church should be a unit in calling a pastor. May the Lord in his mercy guide us all and save us from every false way, is my humble prayer.

I have now written what has seemed to be upon my mind, both from observation and experience, may it be blessed to the good of Zion. I have merely touched the surface, but I hope that it may stir up the minds of more gifted brethren to write more clearly, that we may be instructed more perfectly in the things that make for the peace of Zion. The God of love and peace be with you all.

P. W. SAWIN.

[WE are glad that our brother has called attention to this important matter. We cannot be reminded of such things too often. We are all liable to err, and we all have need that our minds should be stirred up to remember these things. As has been said, to wait the will of God is the most important, indeed, the one important matter, both in the call to the ministry, and in a special call to take charge of any church.—ED.]

OXFORD, N. Y., Jan. 29, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I herewith send you some letters from brother Morgan Blackwell, they were of so much comfort to me that I felt like asking you if you did not think them worth publishing in the SIGNS? Do with them as you think best. With love to the church, I remain your sister in hope,

MARY BREWSTER.

GLENMORE, N. J., Dec. 25, 1899.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—As you have requested several times that I would write to you, I will now try to grant your request, if the Lord will enable me to do so. I know that I am not gifted in writing, but after hearing so many of your excellent letters read, I feel it my duty to try to pen you a few thoughts.

A good part of the time for the past few weeks, my mind has been so much taken up with business cares that I have not felt much like writing, and, too, I have felt so wretched and sinful in my mind, and so cast down and undeserving of the many blessings which God has been pleased to bestow upon me, that I have been made to cry out, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner," and my little hope has become so faint that I sometimes fear that I have been deceived, and after all know nothing of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. I sometimes fear that I have deceived the church. If they knew how vile I am, and how prone to wander from the things that are becoming to a child of God, and how I have been led astray by the vanities and pleasures of this world, it seems to me that they could not have any fellowship

for me at all. O, if I could only feel myself to be what I see in others, what a change it would be to me. But instead of this, I feel myself to be the chief of sinners, and the least of saints, if one at all. But thanks be to God, my little hope has never entirely left me from the day when I hope I was changed from nature's darkness into God's marvelous light. From that day to this, I have been enabled to trust in God's mercies, and to know that he is the only living and true God, and that without him we can do nothing, for he has all power in heaven above, and in earth below, and he is an unchangeable God; his promises shall stand assured to all those who love and serve him, until the end of time. O, this little hope! How precious it is! We would not give it up for the whole world. No, there is no price for it. I often think that what comfort I did have in this world before I received this hope was nothing to be compared to what I have now. Then, when passing through the trials and tribulations of this life, we had nothing to look to for comfort, but now we can look to him who is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind, and who is leading us in the way that he has marked out for us. Our trials are nothing compared to those which our dear Savior passed through when nailed to the tree, that he might save his people from their sins. How comforting it is to think of his precious presence, and how comforting to hear the riches of his mercy proclaimed by his servants, whom he has sent forth to preach the glorious truth, and to know his love, which he has shed abroad in our hearts, and to desire to walk in that strait and narrow way which he hath maked out for us. But I come very far short of walking becomingly before God; I feel as did Paul when he said, "The good that I would, I do not, and the evil that I would not, that I do." I know that I do not give to God as much praise as I should for all the many blessings bestowed upon me, for they are very many indeed. I have the pleasure of hearing preaching every Sunday, which is a very great blessing indeed. We are blessed with such a good pastor and preacher in Elder Chick. He exchanged places with Elder Ker, from Middletown, N. Y., on Sunday, December 10th, who preached for us an excellent sermon from Ezekiel xxxvi. 24–28. I think it was about as good a sermon as I ever heard. I felt that I must go to Harbourton in the afternoon to hear him again, but as the afternoons are so very short now, we cannot get away very well. I thought about the time when you went with us up there, and how very much you enjoyed the meeting that day, and also how glad I was that we went. I do not know what is better than to attend the associations, where we hear so much good preaching, all telling the same old story, and all relating the same experience, which we trust that we also know something about.

But I must close, with love to all from your brother in hope,

M. D. BLACKWELL.

GLENMORE, N. J., Jan. 11, 1903.

MY DEAR AND ESTEEMED SISTER IN CHRIST:—Your very excellent and precious letter was received last week, and I certainly felt very thankful to you for such a long and excellent letter, for it contained many things to encourage and strengthen a poor, wretched sinner like me. By preaching, the Scriptures tell us, that our pure minds are stirred up by way of remembrance, and it also seems to me that when we read such good and

precious letters from the saints, relating their experience while passing from nature to grace, our minds are also stirred up by way of remembrance. Therefore it is good for us to write one to another whenever we can do so.

For the last few days I have been feeling much brighter in my mind than I did when I wrote you before, and how good it seems to see the light, after being in the dark so long. I have no one but the dear Lord to thank for this deliverance.

You spoke in your letter about my being so spiritually minded, and free to speak. I must tell you that you are very much mistaken in this. If you only knew my deceitful heart as well as I do, you would not have any fellowship at all for me. When I write or talk to any of the dear saints, and when in the assembly of the saints, I so often feel that I am deceiving them. Even if my walk and conversation does seem to others to be what the walk of a christian should be, it does not seem so to me; I feel that I am deceiving the church, and that I have no right to claim a place among them; I do have a desire to do what is becoming in the sight of God, but like Paul, when I would do good, evil is present with me, and therefore I cannot do as I desire. The Scriptures tell us that we are not our own keepers, the Lord cares for and watches over us, and directs our steps, and if we are his children, he will keep us from falling.

You spoke of finding, the other day, a very precious letter from me, written in 1899, and said that you would like to have it published, with my consent, but that you do not want to offend me. You need not fear offending me in that way, but perhaps some one else has writen that letter, and signed my name to it, which accounts for its excellency, for I never can write excellent letters. But if I have ever written anything that would edify or comfort any of the dear children of God, give to God all the praise, and not to me. I do not feel that I have ever written anything that was fit for publication, yet, if you think best, you can send it, and if the editors can get a few extracts from it, all well and good.

We had a very pleasant call from Elder Chick and Elder Eubanks and brother Andrew Vandyke last Friday. I will close for this time. From your unworthy brother,

M. D. BLACKWELL.

RATON, N. M., April 7, 1903.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—I inclose to you a letter written by sister Lavinia Dawson. She has been much troubled with the discussions rife among our Texas friends. She is visiting us at this time. She said this morning, that she felt as if she must express her feelings upon this subject, and I said to her, "Write, and I will send it to Elder Chick," so I commit it to you.

With sentiments of warm christian love, I remain your sister in hope,

E. H. BOGGS.

DAWSON, N. M., April 8, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I may be multiplying words to no profit and taking up your valuable time, which could be spent to the better edification of the dear saints of the living God, but be that as it may, it seems to me that I must write you a few lines to express some thoughts that are with me of late. I have read in our papers many communications which seem to me to savor of discord rather than the sweet, peaceful Spirit of the dear Savior Jesus Christ.

This all grieves me very much. I read in the holy writ that when the Lord sent Adam forth from the garden, he was told to till the ground which was cursed for his sake, and which has ever since brought forth thorns and thistles. Then also I read that the Lord commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh, and cry against it. Why? For God said, "Their wickedness has come up before me." Nothing was said as to who was the author of their wickedness, but only that it was theirs, and had come up before the Lord. I read again in Matt. ix. 35, that Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom, and sent his disciples out. And what did he say to them? "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." Then again he said, as recorded in Mark xvi. 15, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Now Paul says, in Romans, first chapter, the gospel "Is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth." This seems to me to be a greater question than that which is now agitating the minds of so many brethren, as to who is the author of sin.

"Every one that believeth." Do I believe? I know that I sin; that is with me all the time, and where it comes from, and who is the author of it, are not questions for us, as it seems to me. Sin is of the flesh, and will remain and abide with us as long as we are in the flesh. Adam was driven from the garden of Eden because of sin, and a flaming sword was placed there, which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life. Can we poor worms of the dust, by talking, make one hair white or black? No, neither can we solve the hidden mysteries of God, nor stand in judgment against him. Nor are we called upon to make excuses for his works. I would put my hand upon my mouth, and my mouth in the dust, ere I would attempt to reply against God. Sin belongs to the carnal mind, and is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, and cannot be.

Paul, in his salutation to the different churches, said, "Grace be to you, and peace from God, even our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ." Our God is all-powerful, all-wise and full of mercy, whom we see (if we see at all) by faith. He wrote the names of his people in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world; he fixed all laws from eternity; he knew the end from the beginning, and his *shalls* are all fixed in his firm decrees, whether they refer to the acts of the righteous or to the wicked, the bounds of all were set before the world was.

My dear brother, it seems to me that if all writers in our periodicals would write of grace, of the things of the kingdom, exalt the Lord and Master, speak of his glory, honor, power, salvation, goodness, mercy and long-suffering, that we through him might have eternal life, we would have more peace, more love, more harmony, all of which savors of God's grace in the heart. Then Satan would get behind us, and he would not be bowing to this one, and smirking to that one, urging the holding of counsels here, and meetings there, and articles from this one's and that one's pen, with regard to who made him, and where he came from. He goes up with the Lord's people when they go up to worship, and he is so affable in his manner that were it possible he would deceive the very elect, with the offer of the whole world, which, thank God, is not even his to give, for the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, and Satan is only the prince of the power of the air, the spirit which now worketh in the children of disobedience.

"Salvation is of the Lord." And I read of but one, and that is the salvation of his people. Salvation is not of man, whose thoughts, and the intents of whose hearts are evil, and that continually. Less than nothing is man, the Scriptures say. Then can he by talking find out God? His breath is in his nostrils, and his own works condemn him. He may well cry, Unclean! unclean! For he is unclean in his best estate.

I feel that I have written you at too great length already, but I feel sometimes that if I could but prevail upon those brethren, whose writings in the above direction I have read, to leave off trying to find out where sin came from, and try through faith, to banish it from their minds, and to write more of the things of Jesus and his salvation, and the great and wonderful plan of salvation and redemption for poor, fallen sinners, I would be glad indeed. Did I know that in making up his jewels, he had inscribed my name in the Lamb's book of life, that I was among those whom he foreordained to eternal life, I think my cup would be full to overflowing. Yet, if our salvation were sure in our minds, where would be room for hope.

I will close now. I feel that perhaps I have been writing of things which I do not understand. May God rule and reign, and man give all the power and glory to him.

Yours in hope,

LAVINIA J. DAWSON.

PALESTINE, Texas, Feb. 9, 1903.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I am in receipt of the SIGNS of February 1st, 1903, and as I noticed in a former number something to the effect that it was desired that brethren would write more upon experience, I would here say, that I delight to read such narratives of the dealings of the Lord with his children. I once wrote out a narrative of my experience for the SIGNS in Elder Gilbert Beebe's day, and it was published in the number that contains notice of his death. This is one reason why I hesitate to write in that way now. Another reason is that when I found that my burden of condemnation was gone, I was more like one surprised, and did not know which way to look, nor what to do. Now had it been mine to see and feel what other good brethren have seen and felt, when the burden was gone, it seems to me there would be no hesitancy on my mind, but alas for me, all that I know, is that the burden was gone, and that since then I have sucked a little honey out of what God said the Lord Jesus should do, that is, "Save his people from their sins," for this great burden, or weight, was my sins, under which I had gone bowed down and groaning for some time, often feeling that I would have to sink under the weight. But sometimes I hope that I feel like thanking and praising God that he has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Allow me to say that I have often wondered how it was that my narrative of the dealings of the Lord with me should have appeared in that number. I think the first scrap of the SIGNS that I ever saw, I pulled out of a crack in the house of old father Duck, in Nacogdoches County, in the year 1874. Then he made some remarks about it, which were to its commendation.

Now brethren, many of you in telling your experience, give, as it seems to me, the finishing touch when you have told of what you saw and felt at the time you found your burden was gone; and it is

in this way, in substance: all nature was changed, or seemed to be, and was draped in praise and adoration; even the little birds seemed to be praising God, and to you Jesus appeared and was present. It seemed to you that all these would praise the Lord through time and eternity, inasmuch as he had so favored you and blessed you with such bright and unmistakable evidences. For these things, dear brethren, I hesitate, for I had none of these glorious and life-giving evidences. But you, dear brethren, that have these things, go on and speak of them, yea, tell it upon the house top; I, for one, enjoy such narratives, for it is the doctrine of God our Savior, and it will stand.

I was born in South Carolina, Fairfield District, March 28, 1839, my older brothers and sisters tell me that my mother was a member with the Old School Baptists then; my father never made any public profession. My mother died in the fall of forty-four, as I recollect, my father died in 1868. I had no religious training by my parents. My father, after the death of my mother, rambled round from State to State, and we were always among Arminians, and I could hear them preach when I wanted to do so, but somehow, I cannot tell just why, they never caught me. I have no recollection of ever hearing a Primitive Baptist preach until I was twenty-seven years of age. This was in 1866, in Union Parish, La. The minister's name, as I heard it then, was Tolar. I had said before there was somebody, somewhere, preaching something that I would love to hear, if I could only hear it, and old brother Tolar did preach what I wanted to hear. Then I ran off and sought to lose sight of what little impression was made upon me. I went on till the spring of 1872, when I was in Cherokee County, Texas, and during this spring and the following summer I was in great trouble, such as I never had before, and O, what a sinner I found myself to be; I was not fit to live, and not fit to die, I deserved only this, that the just God should drive me from him. O, what a sinner I was; no greater ever lived or breathed the breath of life. My sins became this burden and weight under which I groaned so long, as I said before.

In the summer of 1874 I was baptized by old father Jacob Duck. I recall what he said to the brethren while he was changing his clothes. It was this, "I think, brethren, that I have baptized a preacher." This was not pleasant to me. However, soon I was impressed in this way in my mind. I finally tried to say something along this line, but was ashamed of myself, and declared I would never do such a thing again. This was only the beginning of much that I have passed through. In about two years after this, I determined to put it all away from me, so I wound up my little affairs and started to leave my impressions with them. I did not want to get away from the Baptists, but wanted to get with some that did not know so much about me, so I went away into south-west Texas, where I soon found a company of Baptists, but I denied the preaching impressions that were upon my mind. Soon after this, one time when alone, something said to me, You must preach, and you must go back and begin at the place from which you have run away. This impression was very strong, but I did not believe it, and went away again into Eastland County, and there I was prostrated with sickness, and in that sickness was made willing to go back and try, which I did in October, 1883. I was ordained right then. Thurston church chose me as her pastor, and I am with them yet.

Now, brethren, I could tell you much more of what I have seen and passed through of late years, and think if the Lord will, that some time I will try to do so. No Baptist has tried to condemn what I preach. Here they know that I am a warm friend to the SIGNS: God bless both editors and contributors. The contents of the SIGNS are backed up and sustained by the Bible. This is yours to dispose of as you deem wise. I remain as ever your unworthy brother,

U. J. BELL.

KANSAS, Ill., March 6, 1903.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—A few days since, I received a letter from brother Abram Spitler, of Mattoon, Ill., and among many good words that were spoken to our comfort were these, "I sometimes hope that the good Lord has blessed me, yet I am so cold, and unthankful, and worthless, and less than nothing in the church. I many times am lost in wonder, thinking of the many good things I am daily receiving at the hand of God that I am not even able to render thanks for," and then says, "My dear brother, have you ever been so low?"

To-night I was reading in Paul's letter to the Romans, and came to these words, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me: but how to perform that which is good I find not." This language of Paul brought brother Spitler's letter to mind, and Paul's words brought much comfort to my mind, and caused me to greatly desire to see brother Spitler, that I might take his hand and say to him, Surely we are brothers, for I so often feel that "I am less than the least of all saints," if one at all. I do surely know with Paul, that "The good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do, and also feel, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" O, what a death it is, and I know from long experience none can deliver from it but God. Jonah was made to say, "Salvation is of the Lord," so brother Spitler and I must with David feel, if we are kept by the power of God, that the "Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want," for with him we are now walking "through the valley, and shadow of death."

When death shall come after we have passed through the valley, then if the dear presence of the Savior is with us it will be a bright and glorious morning, there will be no complaining of sin, or sorrowing over our poor performances, but it will be one continual joy, and ascribing praises to the one that is "able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." Here the trembling child of God may fear and have doubts, but there "God shall wipe all tears from their eyes," and they shall realize the truth of the blessed words of Jesus where he said, "As I live, ye shall live also." Yes, the unity of God, and Christ with his people are eternal, and "they shall never perish. My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

Brethren, I know in my case the words of the poet are true where he said,

"My latest sun is sinking fast,
My race is nearly run;
My strongest trials now are past,
My triumph is begun."

Now can I say in truth as in the chorus,

"O come, angel band,
Come, and round me stand,
And bear me away on your snowy wings,
To my immortal home."

I feel each time in closing my letter that it is probably saying a last farewell to you all. May God in his infinite mercy still bless you and the dear old SIGNS, is my prayer.

JAMES M. TRUE.

BROOME CENTRE, N. Y., April 11, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Of late you have been very much in my mind, and I have many times desired to speak to you, but have not felt as I have desired when it was convenient to do so. Having to send sister Salina's obituary, I feel to add a few words. Truly sorrow and sadness have overtaken us, and we are admonished to look over our past life and see where our hope rests; we are made to feel that in and of ourselves we can do nothing, all our sufficiency is in him; he is our life, yea, our all, in him we live, move and have our being. When we are enabled to feel this, and feel his presence welling up in us, it gives us that sure hope that is truly an anchor to the soul, which is both sure and steadfast, and when called to lay our loved ones in the cold and silent grave, no fear no woe will dim that hour.

Brother Beebe, you know it has been my lot for the last few years to part with those that were near and dear to me, and now comes the parting with one who has been a mother to me. Only in February last our sister Lucy Weckle laid the remains of her husband, John Weckle, in the silent grave; they had lived together, I think, fifty years and four days. These things cause me to make a halt. O, what is life? a dream. What is beyond? it doth not yet appear what we shall be. O, the glorious thought and hope, we shall see him as he is, and be like him.

Truly, brother Beebe, life is too short for any contention or strife at home, in neighborhood, or much less in the church. O, that the Lord would lead us into his truth, and that we all might see eye to eye, and be of one mind. I rejoice in a complete Savior, one who has finished his work, and saved his people with a salvation that is everlasting; one that is Alpha and Omega, that there is no God besides him, yea, that has all power in heaven and in earth, that rules, governs, controls and disposes of all things and events, that having all power there can be nothing, neither life, death, no, not anything can separate his people from him, being one with him and his Father, they are to be conformed to his image, and finally see him as he is, and be like him. In this hope I find rest, and here only.

Mrs. L. joins me in sending love. Hoping to meet you at the Warwick Association, I remain your humble and wayward brother, if one at all,

D. M. LEONARD.

[ADDED to the above was a note stating that it was not for publication, but the loving christian spirit, so characteristic of its writer, is so clearly portrayed in this letter, we know it will be read with deep interest, especially by those who are personally acquainted with its author.—ED.]

DACULA, Ga., March 13, 1903.

BROTHER BEEBE:—When my SIGNS came with the New Year's greeting, it was so cheering to my mind, it seemed that I could not help but try to praise the Lord. There are many precious letters from scores of the brethren and sisters, and it is so much consolation to my mind to read them, and the greatest of all, to read your editorials. I fully indorse everything contained in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I bid you and brother Chick Godspeed to press on: lift high the royal banner. I see no altering from the word of God and my experience, in the

SIGNS. By experience I learned that a man can do nothing; if he is saved at all it is by grace, without anything on his part, and when it is made known to man, it is reason. To my mind when the word of the Lord, by the mouth of his apostle, said, Come ye out from the world, and be ye separated from the world, it was a commandment to the children as the Lord's servants. I think it to mean to be separated from all societies and institutions gotten up by men of the world. Not as the Missionary sister who thought it was a good thing to have a Sunday School in the church. I asked her for authority, and she could not give any, but said that you would praise the Sunday Schools, but I told her you would not, for you had no authority from the New Testament, and she was anxious to write an inquiring letter, and when she wrote she wanted to sign my name to the letter. Brother Chick answered the letter, which did a great lot of good, because some of the members of the Old School Baptists had begun to think the Missionary sister was about right. Brother Chick condemned the wrong with the same words, by referring to the New Testament for our guide.

Your brother in Christ, I hope,

C. S. BURSON.

WAVERLY, Pa., May 5, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—In the SIGNS for April 15th, 1903, there is a letter from brother Perry West, of Dansville, N. Y., in which he states that the Riker's Hollow Church, of N. Y., is extinct, or dissolved. I wish to say that brother West has been wrongly informed; there are twelve or thirteen members. I am serving the church, and have been since the death of Elder St. John; baptized a young man there last month, and the congregations are fairly good, and the church is sound in faith, I believe. At least they have accepted the doctrine I have preached to them the past eighteen years or more, and say they have no use for any other. I may not be sound, but I have been settled and at rest in my mind in regard to the doctrine I have been advocating for many years, and see no good reason for changing one iota. God knows what I may do, I do not. I write this that the brethren may know about the Riker's Hollow Church. Will you please publish it?

D. M. VAIL.

DADE CITY, Fla., May 1, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I will have to give up my contemplated trip to your country for the present. My oldest son had a door weighing more than a ton fall upon him, and mashed his right leg into fragments, so that the doctors had to amputate it at the upper third of thigh. We are now hopeful for him, as the doctors think he is doing well, but I fear to leave him. Pray for us.

Yours, M. L. GILBERT.

[THE foregoing distressing information will be read with sorrow, and with deep sympathy for our beloved brother Gilbert, by all to whom he has so endeared himself by his writings in defense of the truth, in his own peculiar gentle, sweet christian spirit. It was with happy anticipation that we looked forward to meeting him this spring. But God knows what is for our good and his glory, and may he make manifest to our dear brother that even this terrible affliction is for a wise purpose, and if it is his will, may his dear son be spared to him, and yet live to rejoice his heart for years to come, we are sure is the prayer of all his brethren.—ED.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1903.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

CONCERNING THE ALIEN SINNER.

BROTHER Buford Oldham asks the following questions:

Are the Scriptures addressed in any sense to alien sinners?

Has the minister of the gospel any message for the alien sinner?

Should the alien sinner be named by him?

Should the minister of the gospel teach alien sinners, as God instructed Jonah to teach the Ninevites, that by natural repentance they will escape God's judgments here in time?

Please explain the true nature of the gospel. I would have you dwell particularly upon the thought expressed by Paul when he said, "It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes."

In a recent editorial some of these questions have been answered in substance, as we understand the matter, but we will add a few things in reply to brother Oldham.

Are the Scriptures addressed in any sense to alien sinners?

There is one message declared in the word that applies to all mankind, and that is the declaration that all have sinned, and that all are justly condemned, and abiding under the wrath of God. "The whole world lieth in wickedness." "Death has passed upon all, for that all have sinned." But even this message is not believed by the natural man, and will not be, and cannot be, until the Spirit of God quickens him into divine life, and shows him that he is sinful and condemned. The truth stated in the above Scriptures is true of all mankind by nature. The description given in the first two chapters of Romans, of man, is a description of all men by nature, but only those who are quickened by the Spirit can know what Paul means in what he was inspired to write in those two chapters. It is the place of the gospel minister to preach this truth, as well as to declare the one remedy for sin, but when it is preached before all classes of people, only those who are made alive from the dead can hear it or understand it, and these will fear and quake lest they be found at last unredeemed and abiding under the wrath of God. This fearing and quaking is an evidence that the word has entered into their hearts, and has given them light, but all others listen to the words and still abide in death, and are carelessly ignorant of their just condemnation still.

Has the minister of the gospel any message for the alien sinner?

We reply unhesitatingly, No. It is his mission to preach the gospel, which saves sinners from their sins; it is not his business to teach morality, but to preach the gospel of salvation to the condemned and burdened soul. The only message that can at all belong to the alien sinner is the message of the law: "The soul that sinneth it shall die," and this message, as said before, does not reach them unless the Spirit of God shall first make them alive from the dead. The minister of the

gospel has a message for a sinner who feels himself to be a condemned sinner, and that message is one of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, but he is not called to preach to the dead, but to the living. Indeed, he cannot preach to the dead, though he may preach in the presence of thousands of them. The minister cannot know who are dead, or who are among the living, but the Spirit of God knows, and the word preached profits some, being mixed with faith in them, and does not profit others, because not mixed with faith in them. To one it is the savor of life unto life, and to the other the savor of death unto death. To one it is foolishness, or a stumbling-block, while to the other it is the power of God and the wisdom of God. Preaching does not make this difference, but it does manifest this difference in men. And the message is to the believer alone.

We have never felt called upon, and neither do we believe that any one is, to exhort alien sinners to repent or to believe the gospel, and it is not our business in the pulpit, as a minister of the gospel, to turn aside to exhort natural men to practice morality. We have something better to preach. Salvation by grace is a more precious theme than morality, which is at best but a *form* of righteousness, without the *power of godliness* being in it. Gospel ministers are bidden to preach the word, and are never told that it is a part of their duty as ministers to teach morality. Spiritual obedience in the children of God is a higher thing than the highest morality ever can be.

"Should the alien sinner be named by the minister of the gospel?"

We do not see how the gospel can be preached at all without naming alien sinners, since we were all by nature children of wrath even as are others, but the alien sinner is not the subject of exhortations to repent, believe, &c. We have never felt it to be our duty to directly address alien sinners at all, but we do feel it to be our duty to preach a finished salvation to all those who are convicted by the Spirit of God, and to exhort all who believe to godliness of living.

"Should the minister of the gospel teach alien sinners as God instructed Jonah to teach the Ninevites, that by natural repentance they will escape the judgments of God here in time?"

It seems to us that the pattern of all gospel preaching is found alone in the New Testament. In all the epistles of the apostles, and in the Acts, we do not find that any theme was presented save the gospel of the finished salvation that is in Jesus Christ. Repentance is to be preached in his name, and to preach repentance in the name of the Lord is to say that repentance is of him, as salvation is of him. We preach salvation in his name, meaning that salvation is of the Lord, and so repentance is of him. Thus we read that he was exalted to give repentance unto Israel, and the forgiveness of sins. It is no doubt true that nations and individuals have a present reward, and escape temporal calamities and judgments by living soberly, and by the practice of the virtues of frugality, industry, honesty and temperance; these things are apparent among men, but these things do not belong to the gospel ministry, or to gospel sermons or teaching. The grace of God belongs to the preaching of the gospel, and it is to be preached as that which teaches its subjects to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world. We do not understand that the message given to Jonah, was a gospel message, and there-

fore it is not an example of what gospel preaching should be.

We do not know that we can explain the true nature of the gospel any more clearly than we have already tried to present it above. The word means simply good tidings. It contains not an offer of salvation, but a declaration of salvation; it is good news, and not a doubtful offer. Preaching the gospel, we preach a finished salvation. Nothing less than this could be good news to a helpless sinner, and when one comes to believe it, having first felt the need of it, it is to that soul not the power, merit or work of the creature, but the power of God indeed. It declares his power to save, and that he has saved. What glad news is this to the sinner. To all that believe it is the power of God, and to none others.

We will leave what is here written to the consideration of all who may read.

C.

1 CORINTHIANS XIV. 34, 35.

DEAR EDITOR:—Will you please explain to me the following? What is meant in the Scripture which reads thus, "Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home; for it is a shame for a woman to speak in the church." Now what if the husband be a wicked man? Does the Scripture just quoted have reference to public divine service, to church conferences, or to both?

What is meant by the expression, "None are sure of heaven but those who are there"? It is claimed by some here that these things are in the Scriptures, though I cannot point them out.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

ARIANA HARVEY.

As regards the text first referred to, we have thought for a long time that it signifies about the same thing as is intended by the apostle when he said in 1 Tim. ii. 12, "But I suffer not a woman to *teach*, nor to *usurp authority* over the man, but to be in silence." It evidently cannot mean that a woman is never under any circumstances to speak in the churches, for then how could she narrate her christian experience in the first place, in order to be admitted into the church, and to receive baptism? Still further, as the word of God does not require of believers impossibilities, the direction to ask of their husbands at home must evidently mean if they are married, and married to one who is a believer, since none but a believing husband could give instruction concerning church matters, or concerning the doctrine taught in the church. The law of God in the beginning commanded the wife to be obedient to her husband; that is, to take a subordinate place, for it was said, "And he shall rule over thee." Nothing in the law of God justifies the thought that the wife is a slave to her husband, or that he is to be toward her as a master toward a slave. On the contrary he is to love and cherish her as his own flesh, and she is to love, honor and serve him with the service of love. Love between them takes away all bondage, and causes them to dwell together as one flesh. But still the law of God, both in the Old Testament and in the New, puts each one in that place which is best for them, best for all mankind, and for the highest glory of God, and neither one has any right to seek to usurp the place of the other; both being in subjection to the law of God there is no shame in the obedience of the one, nor in the rule of the other. Now, under the gospel, and in the churches, this relation is not changed at all, any more than that of parents and children, or that of masters and servants, but it is clearly taught that all human relationships remain as God ordained them in the first place; nothing could improve

upon what God had ordained. So Paul exhorts husbands and wives, as he does also parents and children, and masters and servants who believe, as to their conduct in all these relationships. The wife should be careful to so behave herself in the church as to show that she desired to occupy that place assigned her in the word of God; she should not be bold nor forward, but in subjection; this is becoming at all times, and in all places; how much more ought this to appear in the church. Let not the woman then seek any authority, or to take the place of a public teacher, but leave all that to those to whom God has given this authority in his word. Still, as we have said, Paul could not have meant that the woman should never be heard in the conferences of the church, or in speaking of the experience which God had given her. It seems that it was the custom in the early church, when one was teaching, for others to ask questions of him, if they did not understand what was said. This was so in the old synagogue worship, under the law, and it seems to have been so in the early churches. Now a woman is forbidden by the apostle to ask publicly such questions, but is told to ask her husband at home. If a woman was not married, or if her husband was not a believer, of course this rule could not apply. Then the woman could ask the Elder, or other teacher in the church privately, and the rule not to ask questions publicly would not be broken.

"What is meant by the expression that none are sure of heaven but those who are there?"

If any one who professes to be an Old School Baptist says such a thing, we do not know what he means. No such expression, nor anything signifying what this expression implies, is found in the Bible. It is an expression that belongs to Arminian doctrine, which is all a lie, from beginning to end. The contrary is true: if any man is in heaven, or ever shall be there, it is just because it was made sure to him by election and redemption before he was born. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

WHAT IS FAITH?

WEBSTER defines the word as signifying "Belief; assent of the mind to the truth of what is declared by another, resting on his authority and veracity, without other evidence." And what he denominates *Evangelical faith, justifying and saving faith*, he says is the "assent of the mind to the truth of divine revelation, on the authority of God's testimony, accompanied with a cordial assent of the will, or approbation of the heart." And this definition is established by the colleges and universities of our country generally, and indorsed by all Arminians and legalists everywhere. But the definition of the term as used in the Scriptures, as defined by the inspired apostles, differs very widely from the popularly received definitions of men. The apostle John speaks of it as a child from heaven, born of God, and inspired with heavenly life, and triumphing over the world. "For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world: even our faith." That faith which is the creature of the carnal mind of man, the mere assent of the judgment of our fleshly mind, although cordially received and confidently relied upon, is but, at best, a creature of our own, born of the flesh, and can no more overcome the world, than can the flesh itself; because no stream can rise

above its fountain. Differing then, in parentage and birth as widely as the distance between earth and heaven, these two kinds of faith have no vital relationship with each other. The faith produced by the convictions of our natural judgment, however cordially assented to or indorsed by the will of man, is nevertheless a child of earth, which, could it overcome the world, would overcome itself, as it is an element of the world. But that faith which is of God, and in God, is the faith of the Son of God, and the Lord Jesus Christ is himself the author and the finisher of it. This is the faith of God's elect. By it, all the saints are distinguished from the world, as none can possess it unless they be born of God, and as without it no man can please God. We do not understand that the birth of faith is distinct from the birth of the saints; but an element of the new, heavenly and spiritual birth, which is not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; that birth which is of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever; and, therefore, unlike the flesh, which is grass, and the goodliness thereof, which is the flower of grass, for they must wither and fall away; but the word of the Lord, the source, fountain and origin of true faith, liveth and abideth forever. This true and living faith is, then, an element of the heaven-born child of God, and only by it can we overcome the world, the flesh and the devil; only by it can we approach the throne of grace, draw nigh unto God, or cry Abba, Father. For he that cometh unto God must believe that he is, and the belief in God's being and perfections is the act of vital faith.

This heaven-begotten and heaven-born faith, is *the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.* It is more than a shadow, for a shadow is not the substance of anything, though shadows do prove the existence of substances which cast them, and to some extent may portray the outline or shape of the substance of which they are the shadows, yet they have no substance in themselves. Thus in the ceremonial law, the meats, drinks, sabbath days and new moons were the shadow of good things to come; but the body, or substance, is Christ. And as the faith of the gospel is the faith of Jesus Christ, and as the righteousness which alone can justify us before God is by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved us and given himself for us, so it must be a substance, in distinction from all shadows, passions or exercises of the natural mind, or energies of unrenewed men. The christian's faith and hope are inseparably associated, and must operate together in the spiritual exercises of the saints while in their pilgrimage state. Faith is not the substance of hope, but it is the substance of the things hoped for, by the christian. The things hoped for by the new man are spiritual, heavenly and eternal, for it enters within the veil, and is fixed on things which are not seen by the natural perceptions of men. Nothing short of the faith of the Son of God can make real, or give substance to, the things thus hoped for. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but he hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; and all the revelations of the Spirit to us are made to our faith. Hypocrites may hope, but their hope shall perish; for it is ideal, having no substance. But the hope of the christian is a reality, and faith points to Christ as the Hope of Israel, and the Savior thereof, and gives

reality to the things hoped for; and until hope shall yield to fruition, it is the substance of the things hoped for, as well as the evidence of things not seen; of eternal things, which are imperceptible to the eye or intelligence of unregenerated men. "While," says Paul, "we look not on the things which are not seen, but on the things which are seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." We could not hope, in a gospel sense, for spiritual and eternal things which are not seen, if faith did not present them; hence faith is the substance on which hope is sustained, and just in proportion to the development of faith in us, will be the steadfastness of our hope, so far as christian experience is concerned. When our faith is not in manifest exercise in our hearts, our hope flags, and we approach the borders of despair, and in great anxiety cry out, My hope is perished from the Lord! But the renewed manifestation of our faith, obtaining victory over the world, says, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." The faith that is born of God will lay hold of and indorse no other doctrine than that of God our Savior; it will point out no other path for the saints to walk in but that which Christ has marked out by his precepts and examples, and it will admit as genuine, no other experience than that which is led by the Spirit of God. And while all other kinds of faith may be attainable by the powers of the flesh, and when attained, can join affinity with other kinds of the faith, that of which we speak can only come from God, and never can be known or felt by any while in an unquickened state, and when implanted in the heart, will not amalgamate with the faith of men nor of devils.

Another peculiarity of this faith is that it will endure trials of the greatest severity, and God has ordained that it shall be tried. All the sore afflictions, tribulations, persecutions and temptations to which the saints of God are subject, are designed for the trial of their faith, and when it shall be sufficiently tried, they who possess it shall come forth as gold, purified and refined. The power of faith shall be known by all the saints, in its victories over the world, the flesh and the devil. It shall triumph over death, and vanquish the gloom and terror of the grave. As in times past it has quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness made strong, caused the saints to wax valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens, women receiving their dead raised to life again, and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might receive a better resurrection, others had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonments, they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword, they wandered about in sheepskins, and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy. And what shall we more say? for time would fail to tell of Gideon, of Barak, and of Sampson, and of Jepthae, of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets. This invincible, almighty faith by which all these victories were gained is directly ascribed, in this very connection, to our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the author and the finisher of it. Into the unity of this faith all the saints of God thus far developed have come; and into it all the redeemed of the

Lord shall ultimately be brought; for, There is one faith, even as there is one Lord, one baptism, one God and Father of all, one body, one Spirit and one hope of our calling.

Having briefly treated on the nature, the origin, the peculiarities, the power and vitality of this faith, and labored to discriminate between it and all other kinds of faith, we will close by inquiring whether we, dear brethren, are in possession of it, and by pointing out some of the reliable evidences of its existence in our hearts.

The apostle has said, "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith." How important is this investigation; in nothing can we be more deeply interested. Without this faith, we may please men, we may gain the applause of the world, we may gratify the lusts of our carnal nature; but without it we cannot please God. In its absence we cannot know God nor approach him. Only by it can we rest upon the provisions and gracious promises of the gospel, find access to the throne of grace, understand the truth, endure the trials of the way, quench the fiery darts of Satan, overcome the world, have communion with God, fellowship with his saints, or finally pass the chilling terrors of death and the grave without fear or dread. What are the evidences of its existence in our hearts? Of the many which God has graciously given, we can at this time only mention a few:

First. The faith of the Son of God in our hearts is always associated with hope and charity. Now abideth faith, hope and charity, these three. If, then, we have the faith, just as its power is manifested in us, to the same extent will our hope be established in God, and our charity, or love, flow to God and to all who bear his image. The love of God shed abroad in our hearts will centre in God as its author and source, in his people, his truth, his government, his laws, his ordinances, and all the privileges of his church.

Second. Having this faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, or, in other words, are reconciled to God, rejoice that he is God, that he has all power in heaven and in earth; that he reigns supreme over all beings, all worlds, and all events, that he has numbered the hairs of our head, and will not suffer one of them to fall unbidden of him to the ground.

Third. If we have this faith, we shall learn by experience that we cannot control it, exercise or enlarge it; but on the contrary, it will assuredly control, exercise and govern us.

Fourth. Having this faith, we shall assuredly also have doubts, fears, trials, temptations and great conflicts with the world, the flesh and Satan, for our faith must be tried, that its power may be understood and appreciated.

Fifth. If our faith be of the operation of God, it will give us such views of the perfections, power and majesty of God, that we shall abhor ourselves, in dust and ashes, while we admire, gaze and wonder at the amazing power and grace displayed in our salvation.

Sixth. This faith will lead us to trust alone in God for our eternal salvation, and for the salvation of all his redeemed family, while it will effectually destroy in us all confidence in the flesh. The more we know of God, by faith, the greater will be our confidence to resign our present interest and our eternal destiny to his hands, and beg that we may not be left to be filled like Ephraim, with our own ways.

In proportion as we feel the reigning

power of this faith in our hearts, we shall be ready, willing and anxious to honor, praise, revere, obey and glorify God. It will lead us to love the assembling of the saints, to frequent the house of prayer, to pray for the prosperity of Zion, and to follow after those things which make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another. And under its power each of its recipients will be led to esteem others better than himself. And although we may feel poor, and weak, and altogether unworthy of a place or name among the children of God, we shall feel an irresistible drawing of heart and soul to be in their company and fellowship.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 15, 1860.

PLEASE BE SURE,

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

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OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Rhoda Butler was born July 22d, 1813, and died at the home of her grandson, Harvey Butler, at Mount Hope, Sanford, Maine, March 1st, 1903, aged 89 years, 7 months and 9 days. Our aged sister belonged to one of the oldest families in York County, having been the daughter of John and Mary (Gowen) Libby, of Berwick. Of this family one brother, Otis Robinson, of Mount Hope, survives. The deceased was married twice, her first husband being William Chadbourn, of North Berwick. To them was born a daughter, now Mrs. H. H. Ford, of Sanford. Mr. Chadbourn died a few years after their marriage, and in April, 1844, she became the second wife of Col. Nehemiah Butler, who died in 1877, at the age of 75 years, 11 months and 24 days. Of their three daughters two are now living: Mrs. Ivory H. Ford, of Berwick, and Miss Rosilla Butler, of Boston, Mass. Our sister united with the church at Oak Woods, North Berwick, Oct. 5th, 1853, and was baptized by Elder William Quint. Our sister was one who had a lowly estimate of herself before God, and often spake tremblingly of her hope of eternal life in Christ Jesus, and much lamented the seasons of unspiritual mindedness that she felt to be subjected to, but she held fast to the precious truth that salvation is of the Lord. How often did she express herself that she was nothing but a poor, unworthy sinner, and that if she were saved it must be by the grace of God. She was a worthy and beloved member of the church of God. On Feb. 10th our sister fell down and broke her arm, from the effects of which she never recovered. I visited her during these her last days, and had agreeable and spiritual conversations with her. She expressed her acquiesence to God's will in her affliction, and supposed that her broken arm would terminate her sojourn in this world, and confessed that all her hope was fixed upon the blood and obedience of the Lamb of God. Thus she lived and thus she died, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of her faith.

At her funeral the writer preached from Hebrews xi. 13: "These all died in faith."

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

Mrs. Salina J. Hamma was born in Roxbury, N. Y., October, 1820. She was the oldest of twelve children born to Henry and Huldah (Hull) Leonard, nine boys and three girls; two daughters, Lucy Weckle and Mary Enderlin survive her, and three brothers, Peter H., Asa D. and Duncan M. One by one we are passing away. She was married to Rudolph Hamma, June 23d, 1844. By this union was born to them six children; Henry died Feb. 20th, 1868; Mary died Sept. 24th, 1868; four survive her; Huldah Blythe, Christina Raeder, Lucy Winston and George R. re-

main to mourn their loss. Rudolph Hamma (her husband) died July 14th, 1886. He was a noble and generous man. At his death his son, George R., came in possession of the farm, and his mother chose to remain and live with him rather than take her right of dower, and considering the care she has been obliged to have for the last past eight years, it has proved a wise decision for her, for words fail to express the care and anxiety George R. has had for his mother; truly he has filled the place or needs of a father, husband and son; no parent or child could do more for one's comfort than George has done for his mother; nothing has been spared, and it seems he has been raised up for this very purpose, and now she is gone, his heart is broken, and he feels his work is done; mother is cared for now, yet much may be held in the future for him. Little do we know what the Lord has in store for us. All our appointed time must we all wait until our change comes.

Sister Salina died April 6th, 1903, in her 83d year. In her youthful days, when about ten or twelve years old, she was made to rejoice and have an abiding hope in her Redeemer, and in about her fifteenth year was baptized by Elder Isaac Hewitt, and from that time to her death she has been a true and faithful believer in salvation by grace, yea, a mother in Israel, always giving counsel for peace and union. For the past six years she has been confined to the house, and for several years previous her health was much broken. During all these years she has never been heard to murmur or complain in the least, always praising God for his goodness and mercy manifested to her. Peace and harmony has always prevailed with her and the family of children; contention and strife are strangers in the whole family.

For the past two years we have been looking forward, knowing that her end was liable to occur any moment, yet when it came how unprepared we all were. It always brings a shock, and our hearts are broken. O, may he who rules all things, bind up our hearts, and cause us all, especially her son, to look to him for all our comfort and consolation; truly in our distresses we have nowhere else to go. O, how I have longed for her mantle to fall on me; she was so patient, so meek, so humble and so very motherly to us all. May the good Shepherd keep and sustain us in this our sore affliction.

HER BROTHER.

By request of brother Luther Ransdell I send you the sad tidings of the death of his mother, **Sarah E. Ransdell,** who died at his home, near Caledonia, Mo., April 12th, 1903, aged 74 years and 18 days. She was born March 24th, 1829, and married to Thomas I. Ransdell, in the year 1853; joined the Old School Baptist Church in 1857, near Campbellsburg, Ky. She joined Wolf Creek Church, Iron Co., Mo., about twenty years ago, and lived a consistent and worthy member up to her death. I was pastor of that church over twenty years, and during her membership of the same. She was quite intelligent, and well versed in the Scriptures. She took the Signs all the time she lived in Missouri up to her death. She was the mother of seven children; her husband and four of her children preceded her to the grave; her remaining children were present at the time of her death. She died strong in the faith of God's elect, trusting in God alone for salvation, both in time and in eternity. She had no use for the new departure from the old faith of Abraham and all true believers from his day to this. She prayed God that she might be reconciled to his will to die in peace; said she was willing and ready to die, trusting alone in her Savior. The day before she died she repeated,

"Great God, and shall it ever be,
A mortal man ashamed of thee?"

Also, "O come, angel band, come and around me stand." Both songs were sung at her funeral. Her body is now at rest; sin's dominion over the saints ends at death, can reach no further: "As sin hath reigned unto death, [death comes from the earthly Adam] even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord."—Romans v. 21. We die Adamlike, we arise (that is the saints) Christlike. "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. xv. 53-57.

R. S. BANKS.

Pleasantville, Iowa, May 4, 1903.

Died—At her home in this city, Feb. 3d, 1903, of apoplexy, after an illness of about two weeks, sister **Hannah Worcester.** She was born Oct. 14th, 1824, and was therefore at the time of her death, 78 years, 4 months and 9 days old. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Middletown & Wallkill Church July 26th, 1851, we believe, and Jan. 1st of the same year was married to the late brother Joseph W. Worcester. Eight children were born to them, six of whom survive their mother, five daughters and one son.

Sister Worcester was one of those noble, patient, christian characters whose very presence was reviving to the spirit of the saints. She was too meek and humble to talk much in our meetings, but what she did say impressed each one with the heartfelt sincerity of what she said. For more than half a century she has been a constant attendant at our meetings,

and never unless unavoidably detained was her seat vacant. She lived her profession, and was one of those members that gives life to a church. In a life-long acquaintance with this dear sister, we never heard her speak ill of a single person, but always pleaded extenuating causes for whatever wrong one might do. In all of her trials, and she had many of them, she never murmured or complained, but was given that meek spirit of reconciliation to God's will, that so sweetens the life of its possessor, and cheers and strengthens the brethren and sisters that witness it.

This church deeply mourns the loss of our dear sister, but we know that for her to die was gain, and we have the assurance that she is now enjoying the full inheritance that she so delighted to receive an earnest of while with us, which is far better.—ED.

DEATH has again visited our family, and on the 26th day of April, 1903, took from our midst our sister, **Lydia A. Dance,** not only the brightest and most cheerful, but beloved by all, especially by her family, and the whole membership of the church, with whom she was a member in full fellowship, and also with many other churches and members of the Old School Baptists within her extended acquaintance. Many of her brethren and friends will remember her welcome smile and cheerful demeanor when meeting and entertaining them. Her life has been one of sacrifice for others comfort, and was spent without thought of self. Her last care was for her oldest brother, whose mind was destroyed by paralysis, which broke her completely down, and lung trouble in a short time ended her natural life, but her spiritual life was unimpaired to the end. Her constant theme was, I am not afraid to die; the sting of death has been removed by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and I do not want to get well in the flesh, but in Jesus. She was baptized by Elder Wm. Grafton, and received into the old Harford Church on the first Sunday in September, 1886. We all feel our great loss, but we believe that life that never, never dies is basking in the full radiance of her Redeemer's love, singing and to ever sing wonderful hallelujahs forever and forever.

Elder Wm. Grafton preached at her funeral a very comforting discourse from Romans vi. 23, after which her remains were carried from the house to the grave by her six nephews, all brothers.

MILTON DANCE.

SISTER **Irena Beach,** of Delmar, Del., was born in 1834, and died Dec. 31st, 1902. She was married to Isaiah Beach in 1851. On the 9th of October, 1880, she was baptized in the fellowship of the Little Creek Church, by Elder Ephraim Rittenhouse, where she continued a faithful member, sound in doctrine, fervent in spirit, given to hospitality, ever manifesting a sincere regard for the welfare of the church, until she was removed by death from the church militant to the church triumphant. Mr. Beach in his old age is left to mourn the loss of a faithful, loving companion, and we want to assure him of our sympathy. Four sons and four daughters are left to realize the loss of a faithful, loving mother, whose affectionate interest in their welfare and happiness was manifested in the last moments of her life. She had arranged to have all her children and grandchildren at a family dinner with her, and while preparing for their reception suddenly and unexpectedly she sank quietly to the floor, and in a few minutes all her troubles and trials in this world of sorrow were over. Truly it was a sad home gathering.

At the funeral, which was largely attended, the writer of this memento in sorrow tried to console the bereaved ones with the comfort wherewith the Lord had comforted him, feeling assured that with sister Beech all is well.

W. W. MEREDITH.

DIED—In Richmond, Maine, April 19th, 1903, **Mrs. Amanda Randall,** aged 69 years and 7 months. She had been in failing health all winter, and felt she was nearing the end of this life. She never made a public profession of her hope in Christ, but when I asked her if she was afraid to die, she said, "My whole trust is in Jesus Christ." This is blessed testimony to leave for the comfort of God's people. Our sister always loved to hear the gospel preached, and loved the people of God. She could not be satisfied with any other preaching except Jesus, the Savior of sinners. She leaves two sons and two daughters to mourn their loss, but their loss is her gain, for she longed to depart and be with Christ. May God bless the children with that same trust in Jesus, for it is a precious hope wrought by the power of God.

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

Ella M. Stephens, the daughter of J. Monroe Snipes, was born October 13th, 1877, and married by the writer to Mr. S. W. Stephens, November 14th, 1900, and died June 29th, 1902, leaving a husband, infant child, and several brothers, sisters and other relatives and friends to mourn their loss. Her mother died when she was eight months old, and she was raised by her father's people, who are now caring for her child.

Ella was an exception in some ways from many other young people, the most of her young associates were Arminians, and she was tutored in a school of that class, but she was a firm believer in the doctrine preached by the Primitive Baptists. From the time I began to preach at Ebenezer she was a member of our congregation, and was always well behaved and showed signs that she loved the truth.

She quietly passed away from this world, and may we not hope that she is received in that bright world of glory and rest?

L. H. HARDY.

MEETINGS.

THE New Valley Church will hold its May meeting at Hughesville, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in May, lasting over Sunday. The train leaving Washington Friday at 1:05 p. m. will be met at Hamilton station. We make an earnest appeal to you brethren and friends to attend our meeting, and especially do we appeal to our ministering brethren to attend.

E. V. WHITE.

BALTIMORE Association is appointed to be held with Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore city, Md., beginning Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, (20th) 1903, and continue three days. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth to meet with us.

Those coming to the association, will come to the church house on Madison St., near Calvert St., and those who want to be entertained, will apply to Dr. John Thorne, 633 Calvert St.

JOHN THORNE.

DELAWARE Association is appointed to meet with Bryn Zion Church, in Kent Co., Delaware, beginning Wednesday before the fifth Sunday in May, (27th) 1903, and continue three days.

Those coming by train can take the cars leaving Philadelphia at 3:20 p. m. for Clayton, Del., via Delaware R. R., on Tuesday. Those coming from the south will take the train leaving Delmar, Del., at 2:10 p. m., if intending to go to Kenton on Tuesday, or the 3:30 train if intending to stop over in Clayton. The trains both from the north and south will be met at Clayton and Kenton. Those coming through to Kenton will change cars at Clayton. All who desire to come on Wednesday morning from the north can take the train leaving Philadelphia at 7:40 a. m., with tickets to Kenton, Del., change cars at Clayton, Del., and get off at Baptist crossing, near the Bryn Zion meeting-house, in time for meeting. Those coming from the south on Wednesday morning will take the train leaving Delmar at 7:06 a. m., with tickets to Kenton, change cars at Clayton, and get off at Baptist crossing. The train leaving Baltimore union station at 2:50 p. m. on Tuesday, connects with train to Clayton and Kenton. The train from Baltimore leaving union station at 6:35 a. m. on Wednesday connects with train to Baptist crossing in time for meeting. Ministers, brethren and friends of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us.

W. W. MEREDITH.

DELAWARE River Association is appointed to be held with the Southampton Church, Bucks Co., Pa., beginning on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (3d) 1903, and continue three days.

Those coming from the north by the Belvidere division of the P. R. R., will leave that road at Lambertville, cross the river to New Hope, and take a train for Ivyland, where they will be met Tuesday afternoon. Those coming from the east will take the train on Reading R. R., leaving New York 1:55 Tuesday p. m., change cars at Trenton for Way train, and will be met at Bethayres, at 4:32. Those coming from west and south will leave Reading Terminal, Philadelphia, 4:23, Tuesday p. m., and come to Southampton. A cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to come.

SILAS H. DURAND.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Middleburg, Schoharie Co., N. Y., have appointed their yearly meeting to be held the first Saturday and Sunday in June, (6th and 7th) 1903, and extend a cordial invitation to ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

A. COOK, Clerk.

THE Warwick Association is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, in New York city, beginning Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, (10th) 1903, and continue three days.

THE Sandusky Regular Baptist Association will meet with the Honey Creek Church, near Bloomville, Seneca Co., Ohio, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 12th, 13th and 14th, 1903. Brethren will be met at Bloomville, Ohio.

H. D. BISHOP, Clerk.

THE Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon and Washington, will be held with Pleasant Grove Church, at Goldendale, Washington, (if not providentially hindered) commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in June, (19–21) 1903, and continue the two following days. Those coming from both east and west by railroad will get off at Grant, and thence by stage to Goldendale, a distance of twelve miles. Those coming by boat will get off of boat at Lile, on Columbia River, and take cars to Goldendale.

N. J. SHANKS, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held, the Lord willing, in the usual place, in the township of Brooke, five miles from Alvinston station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, (20th) 1903, and continue two days. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 71. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1903. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

AMONG THE CHURCHES.

I HAVE not for many years written for publication concerning my frequent visits to distant churches. I will now briefly tell of a visit I made in February and March among some churches in Florida and North Carolina. A warmer climate having been peremptorily prescribed for my wife, I left our home with her and our youngest daughter, Mildred, Feb. 9th, and arrived in Ocala, Florida, on the 11th, where we were cordially welcomed at the home of brother Z. C. Chambliss, by him and sister Chambliss, whose entertainment we have enjoyed before, and whom it has been our pleasant privilege to have at our own home. Our visit with them was pleasant and profitable, our minds being so directed that our conversation was most of the time upon spiritual things. For this we ought to be thankful to our God.

From there I went on alone to Dade City, thirty miles southward, on the 13th, and spent the night at the home of Elder M. L. Gilbert, about five miles from that town, where I spent a night very pleasantly about nine years ago. This brother has the care of several churches, and his wife, like many another preacher's wife, is left with the care of family and farm, while he is with the churches. I sympathize with such lonely wives, and sometimes also with the husbands.

Saturday morning I went with brother and sister Gilbert to their home church, about two miles from Dade City, called Bethel, and had a good meeting with the brethren at their church meeting. I had visited this church before, and so felt acquainted. I would have enjoyed remaining here over Sunday, but the arrangements of my appointments was otherwise, and I went on Saturday evening about thirty miles still southward, to Sidney, where I met the brethren of Salem church on Sunday morning, and spoke with a comfortable feeling of liberty to a large congregation, all strangers to me. Elder Simmons, the pastor, followed me, and from his excellent remarks, as well as from the cordial expressions of other brethren, I had good reason to conclude that we were no longer strangers to each other, but fellow citizens.

I will here remark that not only at this place, but at every church where I spoke,

the brethren manifested a most cordial and loving reception of myself and my preaching. In a few cases a prejudice had been excited in the minds of brethren against me on account of unreasonable and unscriptural things reported by designing men as held by me, but these prejudices were removed. One dear brother, pastor of a church where I spoke on a Saturday and Sunday, said to me, "I acknowledge I was a little prejudiced against you, but it has all been removed. You preach the doctrine just as it comes into my mind." So it always is. The fault-finder can always find business in his line, but his disturbing work cannot prevent the truth of God from finding out those who have felt its power in their souls. Those who feel strong in themselves, and are ready to say, "What shall we do that we might work the works of God?" (John vi. 28,) find fault with the teaching of Jesus concerning the sovereignty of God, and say, "These are hard sayings; who can hear them?" But those whose strength has failed them in their midnight conflicts with the stormy winds and waves in the dark sea of trouble, and who have been surprised and made glad by the dear Savior's voice coming to them with saving power, "It is I, be not afraid;" these love to hear of a sovereign, predestinating God, whose will is accomplished "in heaven and in earth, and in all deep places."

On Sunday night I went about twelve miles to Ybor (pronounced Ebor) City, a part of Tampa, and spoke to the brethren of El-Bethel church, which has been organized only two or three years. The congregation was large, and the attention such as I like to see. An appointment had been made also for Monday night, but a sudden and violent storm prevented the meeting. At Sidney I stayed at the house of brother Owen Pass, and at Tampa at brother Henry Meeks'.

Tuesday I went up the railroad about thirty miles to Lakeland to see brother and sister McKeeney, with whom we became pleasantly acquainted nine years ago. Within the past year a fire destroyed brother McKeeney's store, thus sweeping away the earnings of his lifetime. I found him re-established in a small store, energetically at work, endeavoring and hoping to regain some of his loss. He and sister McKeeney were at first dazed and almost overcome by the catastrophe, but were soon raised up in their minds, and now they seem to see the hand of a loving and faithful Savior in this afflictive dispensation, and to be in a good degree reconciled. I was glad to see them.

Tuesday night I spent in Plant City, ten miles south of Lakeland, at the hospitable home of Mr. D. F. Robinson, whose wife is a member at Sidney, and where those who love the truth are welcome. That day there was a great change in the temperature, which for some days had been high, reaching at one time 90°, but now it fell to 34°, and perhaps below that. Fires were built in orange groves to preserve the blossoms from frost, white potatoes, which were growing nicely, were covered with the plow, and strawberries with pine leaves. The sudden cold was felt keenly that night and the next, for the houses in south Florida are not built for cold weather. It is often the case that you do not have to go out of doors to see the stars, or to feel the wind and rain. There are, however, exceptions to this rule, and these exceptions are very agreeable in cold weather.

My appointment on Wednesday was at Mt. Enon church, three or four miles from Plant City, which is the oldest

church in south Florida, having been organized in 1865. There are now more than twenty-five churches in that region. The extra work made necessary by the change of weather, and also the weather itself, kept many from the meeting, but the Lord favored those who were present with a pleasant season.

From Mt. Enon church I was taken by Mr. Robert Miles seven miles to his home at Kathleen, where I enjoyed a pleasant visit with himself, his wife, who is a member, and his family. Kathleen is a pleasant, lonesome place; a place where one would have a feeling of snug and sheltered cosiness on a winter day, safe from the blizzardy, zero weather that one can almost hear away up north. The pleasantest feature for me of places that I visit is the presence there of those who love and live the truth of salvation by grace.

On the next day, Thursday, Mr. Miles drove me seventeen miles to brother Raulerson's, near Little Flock church, where we found Elder Gilbert, and other brethren, who had come from some distance to the meeting of that church. We had a good meeting that night, though no one stood up to preach. It would be hard to describe the kind of country we drove through to those who have never been in south Florida, "Flatwoods" most of the way; that is, a low, level country, wooded with pine of small size, and no undergrowth, the fire every year preventing that; seldom a house; then prairie, with shallow lakes, and herds of lean cattle feeding around and in them; then some hammock land, thickly wooded with live oak, magnolias of great size, and various other trees large and small, complicated with moss of great length hanging from the branches, and various kinds of vines tangling all. You may drive ten miles and not see house or man.

Thursday and Friday were the meeting days of that church. Brother Gilbert serves them on his way to Empire church, twenty-five miles beyond. The meeting-house is in the flatwoods. Brother Gilbert baptized a young woman at 10:30, Friday morning, in a creek near the meeting-house, after which I tried to preach from 1 Peter iii. 21, 22. The congregation was large for such a thinly settled country. I was told that nearly every family within four miles was represented there. The church, I would think, is in a good condition. That was a rainy day, but people did not seem to mind the rain. A Dr. Brooks from Lakeland, with family and friends, had a tent there, fishing and hunting—for health. They were at the meeting.

From there I rode with brother Gilbert in the rain twelve miles to brother Drawdy's, who with his wife met us at this church and accompanied us to their home. Saturday morning the rain, which had continued through the night, was still pouring down. A ride of thirteen miles was before us to the Empire church, for meeting at eleven. Sister Drawdy was so determined to go that she got into the carriage and started, but the storm was too great, and she retreated by the advice of all. This sister was a thorough and determined Catholic when she married brother Drawdy, who was not then a Baptist. Her experience is wonderful, and the sound of the storm without was almost unheeded, though some of it found its way into the house, while we listened to the story of how the Lord brought her away from that stronghold of error and into the knowledge of the truth.

The rain had about ceased when we reached the meeting-house, and found the brethren waiting for us. After a

pleasant meeting we went for the night to brother Jesse Lee's, where we had a pleasant visit or social meeting, and felt "it was good to be there." On Sunday a very good congregation was present, and the sun was shining. The Sun of Righteousness also seemed to be shining in the experience of some. It seemed to me to be good and pleasant both to speak and to hear. We spent the afternoon and evening at brother E. M. Knight's, near Mascotte, and had some talk upon the experience of the Lord's humble poor as they journey onward through this world of sin and sorrow. This and the other pleasant homes where I rested I shall always remember.

On Monday brother Gilbert started on his return home. I do not expect to see him again till I meet him at our spring associations. I found that I could not get a train at Mascotte by which I could reach Orlando that day, so I was driven eleven miles farther to Center Hill, where I found a train to Leesburg by one road, and from there to Orlando by another, and on Monday night, Feb. 23d, I was again in the company of my wife and daughter.

Orlando is a pleasant town, with many lakes around it, eleven, I believe. The population is about 3,500 in summer, and 5,000 in the winter. There are only three Old Baptist families living in the town: Columbus Sweat and wife, Mr. Wood and wife, and sister Irvine. A new meeting-house has been built since my last visit there, in March. 1895, which is just at the edge of town, a mile nearer than the old one. At my last visit Elder M. R. Rountree accepted a call to the care of that church. He was a good preacher and pastor. He passed away last April, and at my visit on Saturday and Sunday this year, Feb. 28th and March 1st, his son-in-law, Elder W. M. Whilden, accepted a call. He was a railroad engineer for twelve years, and lately resigned because that work interfered too much with his work in the ministry. That looked right to me. It is according to what I regard as the Savior's teaching: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." I hope that church will be prospered under his ministry, and that the churches in that part of the country will be preserved in the peace and fellowship of the gospel, which seems now to be their condition in a good degree, and that they may manifest the mind that was in Christ Jesus, and "look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."—Phil. ii. 4.

Thursday, March 5th, I left Florida alone, and Friday afternoon I was at Durham, N. C., 760 miles from Orlando, at the pleasant home of brother G. C. Farthing, and began that night at the church in that town a series of appointments which lasted twenty days, during which I visited twelve churches in North Carolina and one in Virginia, most of which I had never visited before, traveled by private conveyance a good many miles over very bad roads, the weather being rainy much of the time, and over some good roads, and about three hundred miles by railroad, and spoke twenty-five times. During these twenty days I did more hard work than I have been able to do before for a long time, but was sustained under it so as to keep in health, and enjoyed the meetings and the visits with brethren, and the preaching of brethren, when I had a chance to hear any, and my own preaching also, better than common for such a length of time. I am very glad and thankful when I can

enjoy the latter, for it is so many times a sad trial to me to hear myself preach, not that I object to the doctrine and experience preached, but to the poor and shut up way of preaching it. But when the Word is living in my heart, and I can feel its power and sweetness, and have liberty to tell it, I do feel a glorious joy, and am lifted at times above the sad, depressing things in the world and in myself which weigh me down so much of the time.

I thought when I began this I would speak particularly of the churches I visited in this State, and of the brethren, but I cannot. My visits at every house I entered had some special feature of a gratifying kind, and the weariness of every day was nearly removed during the ensuing night. Elders Gold, Hardy, Simpkins and Wm. Woodward were with me some, and I met also Elders Monk, James Woodard, Farmer and Burch, and some others of the ministers, whom I am always glad to see. I was at the home of Elder Hardy, and spent a Saturday and Sunday, the fourth in March at the home of Elder Gold, where my wife and daughter met me, and where again I left them on Monday, March 23d. I was at my regular appointment at Salisbury, Md., the fifth Sunday in March and Saturday before, and spent most of the following week there, where I have been counted the pastor for about thirty-eight years. The church and congregation there are very dear to me. The flight of time is more noticeable when I visit that and other places where I have been acquainted so many years, and observe the changes that have taken place. I was with our church here on the first and second Sundays in April, but spent the intervening time at South River, Trenton and Hopewell. During my absence our dear young brother, Horace H. Lefferts, had the care of the church. We think we see in him a right gospel gift, not only a gift of prophecy—to expound the Scriptures, but a gift to care for the welfare of the flock, and we are thankful for it. We expect a council to meet on the first Friday in June with this church, to consider the question of ordaining him to the full work of the ministry.

From here on the second Sunday in April, after our meeting and communion, I went to Wilmington, Delaware, where the annual two days meeting had been held, and where I met our home preachers and brethren with a special feeling of comfort, though in a sense I think I feel at home with all who love the truth. Elders Grafton, Meredith and Eubanks, and brother Coulter, had spoken Saturday and Sunday morning and afternoon. Notwithstanding the unpleasant weather the attendance was very good in the old meeting-house, which stands almost in the center of the town, and there was also a good congregation at night. Elder Grafton is now the oldest minister I know of; has been a longer time in the ministry than any I know. He is said to have preached long sermons sometimes, but I have never heard him when he preached long enough to suit me. What a precious privilege it is to hear the gospel preached.

On Monday I went on to Kentucky to make my annual visit there. My first visit to that State was in September, 1865. A very few are still left who were at that association. I could write much concerning this visit with the dear brethren at various points in that State, but will take no more space and time now. From that journey I returned last Saturday, April 25th, and found my wife and children here, and we are glad to be at

home again. I hope we are thankful for the Lord's kind care. I remember with love and thankfulness the very great kindness of the brethren to me in every place where I have been during the two and a half months since we left our home. My wife's health has improved some. Sister Bessie, who is one of our little family, has been with our niece, Mrs. Bronson, in Girardville, and is expected home in a few days. We all hope to be here to welcome the many brethren and friends whom we gladly expect to come to our association the first week in June.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May 2, 1903.

STARRSVILLE, Ga., April 23, 1903.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—As I read the glowing pages of the SIGNS, filled with such wonderful things, to me such unspeakable things, I long to meet you in person, and perhaps then my dumb tongue would be loosed and I could tell you of the spiritual exercises I have almost all the while. A most intense longing to be clothed with the righteousness of Christ, my Savior, is continually with me, and as constant is the desire that I might serve him faithfully, fully and acceptably. It is the supreme craving of my heart to do his will, and to keep his blessed commandments. My family call me too sad, but these weighty things almost shut out everything else.

I feel tempted to tell you, dear kindred in the Lord, of the little but precious hope in Christ, given to me in my youth, ere I go hence to be no more forever. At the time of its occurrence, I was in Athens, Ga., and attending a protracted meeting at the Missionary Baptist church at that place, in the fall of 1860, being at that time in my thirteenth year. I was very much impressed with the opening sermon, and I felt a great desire to go forward and ask the prayers of the church that night, but refrained from doing so because I had been taught by my parents that people should be sure they were truly repentant before doing such a thing, therefore I returned to the home of my aunt in great heaviness of heart. The next day I shut myself in the closet of my room, and all alone there I was trying to pour my burdened heart out to God, when my aunt opened the door and inquired what was the matter. I told her of my distress on account of sin; begged her to pray for me. She knelt at once by my side and prayed aloud with me. But something had taken hold of me that I could not shake off. I longed to be loosed from sin, but felt an inclination to pray all the while. It was the only possible vent for my feelings, and the only comfort I had, if indeed I could be said to have had any. The next night my aunt, uncle, cousins and myself again attended the meeting, for the two former were devout members of that body, and I most heartily believe were God's dear children. I shall never forget the visiting minister, Granby Hillyer, who again preached the second night, taking for his text, "Then King Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a christian." How applicable the text seemed to me, for I now desired above all things to be a christian. I look back to that time now, and believe that I was then already killed to the love of sin, and made alive to righteousness, though I knew it not. How glad I was to go forward that night and have the church pray for me, and so again and again for weeks and weeks I lived only as I prayed. I truly and fully adopted the hymn,

"For if I perish, I will pray,
And perish only there."

I verily believe I would have called upon God, if I had known that I was to be eternally lost. Thus the weeks dragged on. Nothing brought me any relief however. I was constantly thrown with many loving members of that church, who tried to comfort and encourage me all they could. By this time they had become the most attractive people I had ever seen, and it was strange to me that I had all at once grown to love them so. They were sweet and precious to my soul, yet at the same time I seemed to have less hope every day that God would pardon my sins. Others who had been so vitally concerned as I had been, companions and cousins, several of about my age had found comfort and peace in a Savior's pardoning love, and I seemed to be the only one that was to be turned away and rejected of the dear Master. Still, though I felt to be denied, my heart looked longingly toward the holy Jesus, and I would still, even if exiled, stand afar off and cry, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." I looked upon my recent companions in sorrow to find their faces radiant with a new beauty, and "a new song was in their mouths." How beautiful they looked to me! I loved the new-born babes, and I loved the older saints, (for they looked saintly to me,) but yet my own soul had found no peace, no pardon. The three weeks meeting was soon to close, and I would be unsaved, refused of the Son of God, and I felt so loth to part with the good people with whom I had been so endearingly associated. In this frame I went to hear Dr. P. H. Mell, with whose writings most Georgians are familiar. I cannot recall his text, but faith was his subject. I followed him so closely, so hungrily, that I became oblivious of myself, so wrapt was I in the words that fell from his lips. Unconsciously to me, and as imperceptibly as the falling dew, a gradual peace settled down upon me, and I was becoming so tranquil. It seemed as if the Savior had come near to me, and I was encouraged. Every passing moment deepened and increased that peace until I felt that I had a God-given faith in Jesus, a joy inexpressible and full of glory. Truly I could cry, "Abba, Father." While I was thus taken away from myself, the "Sun of Righteousness had risen with healing in his wings," and I indeed found the Spirit like the wind that bloweth where it listeth, we hear the sound thereof, and know not from whence it cometh, now whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Lord. If I were to most fitly describe my state at that happy time, I should say it was one of perfect peace and love.

In one respect my experience differed from most of God's dear children. For many months not a doubt harrassed me, not a cloud obscured the sweet presence of my Savior. Indeed I felt that he carried his little one ever in his arms, and that I reclined in the bosom of his love. How I trusted him and how safe I felt from all harm. O, how tender the loving Father is to the little, helpless lamb that has learned only the creed of love direct from him, and how he wipes its tears away if another wounds it.

Just here I will say that the members composing this church of Missionary Baptists were very dear to me, and I yet believe they were the children of God, and my desire at that time was to join them, but through the providence of God, I hope, I took the counsel of my dear father, who advised me to first "Search the Scriptures."

But here I leave the bright chapter in my life, and open one in which I wrestled long with creeds and endeavored to meas-

ure them by the word of God, searching for the true church, and crying pitifully to my Father for light, as I wandered in the waste howling wilderness. I hungered for baptism, for the sacramental supper and for the fellowship of the saints. I knew God's commands were imperative, and I longed with all my heart and soul and mind to obey him implicitly, if he would only show me the way. How I read the Scriptures and prayed that God would show me the one true and only church, for I knew there was "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." The word of God seemed perfect to me, and all-satisfying, but where was the church that he had builded upon the Rock Christ Jesus, which the gates of hell should not prevail against? For years I realized that "Beautiful for situation is Mount Zion, the city of our habitation, the joy of the whole earth," but I could not enter her gates.

In August, 1880, I listened to a sermon from Elder J. G. Eubanks. I did not go expecting anything new. I had despaired of having any light given me on that question of the church's identity, but my parents were members of the Holly Spring, and I revered and agreed with the Primitives more than any other denomination at that time, from the fact that I had studied the Scriptures, and they both preached and practiced them closer than any other people I knew. Yet I still was not satisfied as to the church, and had no hope of ever being.

Elder Eubanks preached from the two words only, "Our Father," that morning. First he showed who that class was that could say, "Our Father." He pointed to Adam and Eve as being the figure of Christ and his church, showing that Adam and Eve were one, and that Eve had a hidden existence in Adam from his creation, which was later developed. As the type, Adam and Eve, were one, so must the antitype, Christ and his church, be one, for they figuratively represented them, and as Eve had a hidden but coequal life with Adam, developed later in time, so the church had a spiritual life "hid with Christ in God" before the worlds were framed, and that every member of that body, of whom he was head, was necessary to a complete whole, and as secure as the great Head, Christ Jesus. I was very forcibly impressed with the sermon, and pronounced it the finest I ever heard. I believed from that day that the Primitive Baptists were the church of God. In May, 1881, I offered myself to the people of Holly Springs, and was accepted by them, and baptized, at my request, on the same day by Elder J. G. Eubanks.

After the meeting, the loving Elder Wm. S. Montgomery, then fast ripening for heaven, said to me, "Count on afflictions, my sister, for God says, 'Behold, I have chosen you in a furnace of affliction,' and can any one expect to be in a furnace and not suffer?"

I had hoped, after so many weary years, to find rest at last within the fold, and that the bleak winds would not reach me now, but ere the shades of that night settled down upon me, his prophecy was fulfilled, and I was stricken with a terrible sickness that lasted many months, and that practically blighted the bloom of my life. That was but the beginning of sorrows. All of the then household, the noblest of fathers, the tenderest of mothers, and fondest of brothers, I have followed to the grave; but greater trials than even these have befallen me, and the end is not yet. I am tried beyond my strength on every side. I often cannot tell what is right or best or what my

duty is. May the Lord "make a way for my escape," may I be kept from sin, and may he uphold me, that I may be found walking worthy of the high vocation wherewith I have been called, as I humbly trust.

I look back now to that bright period of my conversion, and the unclouded months that followed it, and I am led to believe that God showed me himself so unmistakably, so lovingly, to prepare me for "the great things that I must afterward suffer for his name's sake."

Ever number of the SIGNS is a wonder to me. I am amazed at the revelations unfolded, and the mysteries made clear. Surely only God could put such great things into the mouths of his servants. May he keep editors and contributors in his perfect way of love and truth, is my prayer.

I feel this to be unworthy a place in your columns, and that it would crowd out better matter. By all means do as you think best with it, and I will not be in the least offended.

O, that you might feel to pray for a little sister,

(MRS.) MITTIE DAVIS ROBERTS.

KELLY'S CORNERS, N. Y., Jan. 13, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I send inclosed for publication, if you deem proper, the experience of sister Virtue Ballard, of Vega, N. Y.

With love to you all I am your poor, weak brother,

J. D. HUBBELL.

VEGA, N. Y., Jan. 10, 1903.

ELDER J. D. HUBBELL—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—It is with fear and trembling that I now try to write you something of the way in which I believe the dear Lord has led me, it was in a way that I knew not, and in paths that I had not known. I had noticed for some time that the things of this world did not seem to me as they once had. I once heard you preach a sermon that I enjoyed as I never had before. I often wondered why I could not enjoy preaching like that again. After that meeting you led a sister into the water and baptized her, and the singing at the water was so very sweet to me, after that there would be times when I would really feel that I must read the Bible, and would read a long ways, and then would think that I was receiving no good from it, and then I would give it up for some time, then I would read it again, but with the same effect. But I will pass on for some time, as I do not want to weary your patience. I seldom went to, or cared for any meeting except the Old School Baptists, I always thought they were a people to be saved with an everlasting salvation, but I never thought that I could of myself do anything to save myself, I believed that the work was of the Lord. September 25th and 26th, 1901, I attended the yearly two days meeting at this place, this was the time of the ordination of brother John B. Slawson, but the first day I could not seem to become interested in the preaching at all, Elders Keene, Ker, Vail and yourself, were there, I remember saying to a dear sister that I could not understand the preaching, and even asked her if Elder Keene preached as plainly as he used to? She replied that she thought that he spoke as plainly as he need to. She thought the preaching was good. This puzzled me still more than before.

When Elder Slawson told his experience and call to the ministry, my heart was filled with sympathy, I thought if I could only have an experience something

like that how happy I would be, but I could not understand just how he could remember how and when it all came about, but since then I found out that it is very easy at times to remember these things, and that is when the Lord brings them to our remembrance, at any other time we cannot do or think one good thing, for I have found that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing. On the following day, while Elder Vail was engaged in prayer at the ordination, I went into the church, when in an instant I was made to see my sinful condition, it seems to me it was like it was when Adam and Eve saw their nakedness in the garden of Eden. No sinner ever felt more justly condemned than I, my sins were like mountains before me, I thought there could be no one like me, I thought there could be no one half so vile, how could I ever look any one in the face again? I thought every one could see my miserable condition, I could not dare to look to God, for how could he have mercy upon a wretch like me? In the afternoon Elder Keene preached from Psalm xlvi. 4, 5, and if there had been no other person in the house it could not have seemed any more that he was speaking every word to me, I believed he was speaking the truth, but every word was sinking me lower in my horrid condition. After meeting was out I stayed behind to avoid shaking hands with any one, but Elder Keene came to me to shake hands with me, and he at once saw how I felt, and said to me, Have you a thought or fear about these things? But I could not speak a word, neither could I hide the tears which were falling so fast. He then said, "He that hath begun a good work in your heart will perform it to the day of Jesus Christ." I went home feeling very sad under my lost condition; I felt that "Should my soul be sent to hell, God's righteous law approved it well." Now I wanted to get alone by myself, I did not want any one to notice the change in my feelings, I could scarcely eat or sleep. One day, while feeling that I did not know which way to turn, I took the hymn book and opened to number 809, (Beebe's collection) which begins,

> "Where must a weary sinner go,
> But to the sinner's Friend?
> He only can relieve my woe,
> And bid my sorrow end."

At the heading of this was Psalm sixty-two. Then I took the Bible, and the three first verses of this Psalm described my feelings exactly. I thought, Can it be possible that God is my leader? Truly I was alone, for I could not mention my state to any one. The Sunday following, you preached a splendid sermon for me, and as before, it seemed that you were speaking every word to me alone. Soon this feeling left me for a time, and I thought that perhaps I should never feel like that again, then afterwards, still greater darkness came, and after being in that darkness for some time the words, "The Lord is my Shepherd," came to me. O, could it be that I was under the dear Shepherd's care? The next time that I heard you preach, you spoke a great deal of comfort to me from these words. I went on the most of the time in darkness, my heart filled with groanings which could not be uttered. O, how I wanted to pray, but I could not. I was sometimes compelled to cry out, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." I think that it was about two months after the time I was first condemned, that I was in unusual darkness, when these words came to me, "Although many, thy sins are all forgiven thee." As I think of that

time, these words come to me,

When first I was delivered,
I hardly could believe,
That I, so vile a sinner,
Such favor could receive.

Although my whole soul was filled with praises and rejoicing I could hardly believe that to me had been given a hope of life eternal, a hope in the everlasting salvation of God, then I believe these words were spoken to me so plainly, with blessed assurance, "Peace, be thine," and then I believe that I could for a short time rejoice with that love that is unspeakable and full of glory.

Here I must mention a sermon that you preached from these words, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." It did seem that every word pierced my heart through and through; it really seemed some of the time, that I must shout, for I could hardly contain my feelings any longer. Before you concluded, you mentioned some of your own experience, and repeated this, "Son, although thy sins are many, they are all forgiven thee." What a comfort it was to me to think that some one else had heard these words as I had done. Although we were having preaching twice a month, by yourself and Elder Slawson, I was always in a hurry for meeting time to come. I often found myself cast down, and filled with doubts and fears, but the dear Savior would not leave me there long before he would again let the light shine in my heart, he would soon again smile away my fears. He says, "I will never leave nor forsake thee," and again he says, In six troubles I will be with thee, and in the seventh I will not forsake thee. Another time when my heart was filled with doubts and fears these words came to me, "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me."

Now I had a great love for the Old School Baptists, I loved to be with them, and to hear them talk, they told my feelings so much better than I could do, but I felt so unfit to be among them. When you first spoke to me about my mind with regard to spiritual things, how much I wanted to tell you what I had felt, but I could not.

Soon I found a great burden resting upon me, about going to the church, I felt myself to be a beggar poor, standing at mercy's door. I went stumbling along, trying to ward off these feelings, but all the time they grew to be heavier, until I was made to cry, "Lord if it be thy will, give me sufficient evidence that it is thy will," when all at once these words came, "The Spirit, and the bride say come: and whosoever will let him take the water of life freely." Then the words, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." And then the hymn,

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word.
What more can he say, than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

About this time Elder Slawson preached a wonderful sermon from these words, "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." This was a grand sermon to me.

Now, dear brother, I have but mentioned a few of the sermons under which I have been so much blessed, I could not any longer say that I had no evidence given me, but O, I was so unfit to go before the church, but in the day of his power, I was made willing to go to the church, and July 26th, 1902, I went with fear and trembling, and tried to tell them

what I believed the Lord had done for me, and was received and baptized the following day by yourself, dear brother; the same dear minister of the gospel that had baptized my father and mother thirty years ago. When I came out of the water these words were in my mind, "His banner over us is love." I cannot forget the love that was shown me by the church and yourself. I thought all was peace and love, and all the burden was gone, but soon I was again doubting and filled with fear, lest I had deceived the church, and that I was not what I had professed to be. It is still the earnest prayer of my heart that God will be merciful to my unrighteousness, and keep me by his Holy Spirit, that I may not prove a burden to the people that I so dearly love.

This is the reason that is mine for the little hope which I have. I will leave it to your better judgment to do with as you think fit. Anything that I can write is like myself, very poor in my own sight. Please excuse mistakes and lack of knowledge, also this long letter.

Your unworthy sister, if a sister at all,
VIRTUE BALLARD.

UNCLEAN! UNCLEAN!

PITIFUL indeed must have been this cry of the poor leper; he must stand apart from his fellows and beg for mercy; driven by the law from his loved ones, he must dwell without the camp among those as desolate as himself; no work of his could pave his way to a better home, for all that he touched was polluted; no offering from him could be laid before the altar, for his touch made it unclean; it was not left with him to accept or reject salvation from so terrible a fate; he or his people before him had violated a law ignorantly or knowingly, and he must suffer the penalty.

This is the type of sin; the leper, a sinner. The priest by the law pronounced him a leper, and he must cry, Unclean. The commandment comes to the sinner and he must cry, Unclean, unclean. Not realizing his condition he had hoped to live on as others, doing good and working in his chosen field, serving man until God should call him home to heaven for his good works. But all is changed, and the law in his heart says he must dwell without. There is one thing in the figure that we must not forget: the leper had life and knowledge that he was a leper; as long as that remained he must hunger for the bread of life and sigh for the loved ones at home. Some lepers had been healed in the history of Israel, and there might still be a shadow of a hope.

When one leper was given power to see Jesus, he cried, Lord, thou canst if thou wilt make me clean. What made him believe that this man of all others could heal him? God-given faith that made him whole. The sinner has life and knowledge given that makes him hunger for the bread of life, and when he sees Jesus his cry is the same, Lord, thou canst if thou wilt make me clean. And it is this faith in him that makes him whole. Then he does not go back to Israel of old to see how it is, or to learn of his power, but he bears it in his heart, and like Isaiah he can say, "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us."

Christ said, Thy faith hath made thee whole. If God had not given that faith, (for it is the gift of God) the leper could not have believed in the power of Christ, and if he had not given the sinner faith, he could not cry to him, and there would be no manifestation in his walk that he had seen Jesus.

When the leper was healed, the blessing was his, and there could be no question of accepting or rejecting salvation. He could no more resist the healing power than he could heal himself.

Now, when he is healed, the priest must pronounce him clean before he can live with his kindred. The priest had no power to heal, he simply looked upon the man to see if he was healed. Then he took the offering, which was a type or shadow of the sacrifice made by Christ for the sins of his people, and sprinkled the blood upon the one healed, and pronounced him so. Then the subject must wash himself, put off his old garments, and be pronounced clean before he could live with his people.

It seems to me that in this office the priest did for the one healed, what the church does for the sinner, looking upon him and seeing the evidence of his salvation and manifested power of God's Spirit working in him, she points him to Christ's atonement and commands the putting off the old man and obedience to the ordinances of Christ. Then he can live with his friends and take up the duties of his home and people.

The offering of birds alive and clean, did not heal the leper, or make him clean, nor does coming to the church make the sinner whole. It was because the power of God had healed the leper that he went to the priest. It is because the sinner gives evidence of a work of grace, and his salvation in Christ, that the church declares him cleansed by the blood of Christ. The evidence that the church asks is the experience of the children of God. Not only the confession by the tongue that you are a sinner, but that humbleness that manifests your knowledge, and that walk which testifies that you hate sin, and that you have been with Jesus. This is so evident sometimes that the church is ready to declare one healed before the confession is made by the mouth of the sinner saved by grace.

So, my friend, if you have felt this power which manifests itself in making you hate sin, and cry in your heart, Unclean, unfit, you are the one that is commanded to put off these old, filthy rags, and if you love "the people," go home to your friends. If you feel to be unfit, do you want to still live with the lepers, and make yourself more unfit, by not doing your duty?

I wish I could make you know how our hearts go out to you in your sorrows, and how much comfort it would be to you and the church to have you come and live with us. This life is full of sorrow, and we are often lonely; so are you. A grasp of the hand of fellowship is a strength and comfort to us all. Can you not give it, and do you not long for it? The poor servants, preaching, traveling, footsore and weary, see you standing afar off, and long for your company, and pray for your comfort and coming to us. Do you ever think they need a helping hand, and a word of consolation in the knowledge of you having heard his voice?

A few old brethren and sisters will gather together with bowed heads all through a dreary winter, hoping, praying that God may manifest his love, and bring a wanderer home. Can you not say to them, I love the truth and hope in Christ, let me live with you in the church that I love? You may then together often cry, Unclean, but at times you will feel to fall down before him and joyfully give thanks for salvation by grace.

With what joy did the healed leper leave his filthy rags on the hills of Judea, and hasten to his friends. Do likewise;

leave your place of banishment, and your rags without the camp; put on the new man. Then, with the whole armor of God, come with your people and fight the good fight of faith; you may at least find company, and help to comfort those that are hungry for sympathy and brotherly love.

With a prayer in my heart for your welfare, and the good of the church, I am, I trust, your brother in Christ,

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.

LAWRENCEBURG, Ky., March 22, 1903.

BRUNSWICK, Maine, March 17, 1903.

MY DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—It is in my mind to write to you, but I find as the weeks and months glide away I am led in such a way that I can never tell you any good thing concerning myself. I am glad it is so, for all boasting is excluded.

What a beautiful strain my pen takes up when it writes of Jesus Christ, and him crucified, the Savior of his people; how he bore all their sins in his own body on the tree, became subject unto death, and destroyed him that had the power of death, and delivered his children from all transgressions, clothed them with his righteousness, saved them with an everlasting salvation, overcame the world for them, triumphing openly. So we hear him saying, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." The will of the Father was what he came to do, and that will was, that of all he had given him he should lose nothing. "Behold I and the children which thou hast given me." "I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." In what a strong light the salvation of God's people shines forth. It is the light of revelation, for not one can ever see and understand that there is salvation in no other name only Jesus, unless it is revealed; no one by searching can find out God; no one can say, "Jesus is Lord, only by the Holy Ghost." How wonderfully we are blessed in being made to eat and drink of the flesh and blood of Jesus, so we have sweetly experienced that he is in us a well of water springing up into everlasting life. What a wonderful work is wrought in our hearts when we are made to know and feel the exceeding sinfulness of sin; to know the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; to mourn because the evil we would not do, we find ourselves doing. We are brought into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members. How sad our condition would be if God had not been manifest in the flesh, but we see Jesus clothed with glory and honor, exalted above every name which is named, far above all principalities and powers, to whom every knee shall bow; he is the One altogether lovely, and chiefest among ten thousand, the Savior of sinners, the salvation of his people. When the evidence is given us that this work has been wrought in us, our hearts are filled with praise to God, and we love to tell what great things he has done for us. His glory cannot be given to another, nor his praise to graven images. When the new song is put into our mouth we shall sing it, and not a note of praise to God will ever be lost. It will never cause one of his children to walk in darkness, to hear another one tell of his wonderful works, and declare them with rejoicing. They are never so low in the depths, never so enveloped in darkness but they recognize the note of praise to God, and a desire is found in their hearts that they, too, may render all praise, glory and honor unto him who is alive for evermore.

I feel just now that I can speak with more confidence concerning these things,

as the last few weeks have been spent in ministering to a dear, aged sister, who has finished her earthly pilgrimage. There was such a peace and reconciliation given her death was a conquered foe, and her hope in Christ was sure and steadfast, and the truth as it is in Jesus was her theme. As I listened to her each day, and could plainly see that the end of this life was near, I could not help repeating this verse of a hymn:

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are,
While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

While I feel the assurance that I know and love this precious truth, have been taught by the same Teacher, have the same blessed hope, the same all-sufficient Savior, these words are sung over and over again,

"Jesus, I love thy charming name,
'Tis music to my ear;
Fain would I sound it out so loud
That heaven and earth might hear."

O, what fullness dwells in Jesus! He is Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. May we be made to remember that the body of Christ is a perfect one, every member placed as God hath pleased; it is composed of sinners saved by grace, and such a union exists between Christ and his people that nothing can ever separate them from the love of God. How precious this truth is! "With holy confidence to sing, that death has lost his cruel sting." While we travel here we can speak and write of these precious truths only with the ability God gives us. By and by we shall see him as he is, and be like him, and shall be satisfied. I have been looking forward to the four associations, hoping to meet loved ones again, and many others whom I have not met, but it does not appear now as if I would have the privilege. I am confident if it is the Lord's will I shall certainly meet with you. May our minds be led into the precious truth, and we be established more firmly in it, so no wind of doctrine can move us. May the love and sweet fellowship be kept in exercise so the tender heart and forgiving spirit will be manifest to all who love our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Your unworthy sister in hope of eternal life,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

KINTYRE, Ontario, March 12, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER:—I received your letter, which was full of encouragement and love. Most of the time since I wrote last I have been passing through the valley and the shadow of death; like old Bunyan, I have been hearing the groans of dead men. But if I ever prayed the publican's prayer in my life, I think I did a few days ago, for I felt that I could not endure what I was passing through. I feared that my reason might leave me. I knew that I was in the hands of the Lord, and I did ask him to be merciful to me, a sinner, and he has been merciful. For the last few days I have been enabled to sing, and more so to-day. My table hast thou furnished in the presence of my foes. My heart thou dost with oil anoint, and my cup overflows. These words are very sweet as I write them. I well know that I am not worthy of this, as I am but a poor, miserable sinner.

When I first met you, I thought that now I could keep my house in order, but how disappointed I have been; like Paul, I was given a thorn in the flesh, and how I have prayed that it might depart from me.

I will now write you some thoughts

that passed through my mind yesterday, about predestination, the predestination of all things. Some have said that God predestinated the good, but not the evil. For my part I cannot separate the good from the evil, for in my experience that which I deemed evil has worked for my good, and what has seemed good, has worked evil. I believe that God works all things, good and evil, after the counsel of his own will, for he created all things. I believe, and I think that I have reason to believe, that I was even constituted for the very place and purpose which I have filled, and that the Lord intended I should fill this place. Another thought comes to my mind: we are to learn obedience by the things that we suffer. Now the things that we suffer, do we suffer them for any good deeds that we have performed? Do we suffer from the presence of the Lord, working peace and endurance within us? I would say, No. Yet we must suffer to learn obedience, as did the Master. Then if God predestinated that we should obey him, he must have predestinated also the rod that makes us suffer. If the rod is spared, the child is spoiled. If we are to be obedient children, the rod must be used. And what is obedience? It is what the Lord works within us, making us both to will and to do his good pleasure. And his good pleasure is that we should know him as the only living way whereby we must be saved. Now, if I have any obedience, and know that Christ is the way, the truth and the life, it is because the old man has been crucified and lashed, and this has not been by any weapons that man could produce, but by sin within and without. It was with me as it was with Israel in Egypt, all the plagues were required to soften the hardness of Pharaoh's heart, even to the slaying of the first-born in all the land, and this seems to me to be death in the flesh. Sin is the cause of death, and there must needs be death before there can be a rising to newness of life. This newness of life is obedience, and the suffering is death, and sin is what brings about this suffering. Now if God did not predestinate all things including death, the resurrection from the dead, yea, all things, we are false witnesses, and are yet in our sins. The only ground of hope that I have is that he did predestinate all things, and that he does work all things after the counsel of his own will. There is nothing in my flesh but sin and death, and my hope is solely in the resurrection of Christ.

Truly God tempts no man to sin, he does not need to tempt any man to sin, we are born in sin, and shapen in iniquity, therefore in our best estate we are nothing but sin and vanity. If I am enabled to sing glory and power to the Lamb, it is because of his victory over death, No dead man ever had power to arise from the dead, but Christ, having the victory over death, he can call forth the dead, as he did Lazarus. I feel like adding some thoughts regarding Lazarus: he in the grave represents the body of sin and death; he was just where we were when Jesus said to us, "Come forth," and we came forth bound in grave-clothes. This body of sin clothes the new man, and Jesus said loose him, and let him go. Then we are loosed to praise his name. Thus I, for one, must say that our God did predestinate all things, and does work all things after the counsel of his own will.

Now I send this to you to do with as you deem best. I do hope that I have not written one word of this for exaltation, but for praise to the holy name of

the Lord. I trust that all is well with you. I will close. May his Spirit ever abide with us all, to lead us into the truth.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) PETER ALLISON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., April 25, 1903.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel there ought to be but one object in our hearts when we sit down to write for the perusal of our brethren, and that object should be the comfort, and edification, and instruction which we might be enabled to impart to those of like precious faith; the same which we did receive when in our experience the Spirit took of the things of Jesus and showed them unto us. If we have any other object in view, anything to elevate self, or to bring our name into prominence, let us lay aside our pen, until we are moved by the Spirit of God to communicate in true humility and oneness of heart and mind.

The children of our heavenly Father must have nourishment suitable to their condition and their need; many times all along their pilgrimage journey their flesh cries out for the fleshpots of Egypt, which things serve to satisfy the flesh alone, but the inner man must be renewed day after day, by the milk and honey of truth, wisdom and grace. As lively stones in the "house not built with hands," each one has his own place to fill, and his own duty to perform. One can never do the work, or perform the service of another. In the building built by Solomon (which was a type of the spiritual temple) there were many parts accurately fitted together, each particular part for a particular use. Some were for foundation stones, some for pillars, and others for ornament, &c. Such uses are all called for in the church of Christ. I will not stop to talk to you of the foundation stones and the pillars, as their vocation is no doubt clear in all your minds, but of the ornaments I would like to spend a few minutes with you. Naturally we look upon ornaments as something frivolous, and to attract attention only, but not so in the ornamental structure comprising the holy city, (New Jerusalem). When giving directions regarding the deportment of the wives, the apostle Peter says: "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart in that which is not corruptible, even the *ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."—1 Peter iii. 3, 4. This Scripture applies equally to each and every member of the body of Christ. Because, whosoever uses natural adornment for the fostering of pride and vain glory, becomes drawn away from the meekness and gentleness of Christ. Zion is declared to be "the perfection of beauty," God's glory is reflected in his saints, (which is Zion) and therefore shines out of her with brilliant perfection. He that walketh in the light of God's holiness must be, and is, clothed in the habiliments of "A meek and quiet spirit."

Now I would say to all, who are mourning in Zion, (because they feel their entire unfitness for the service of God's house, that they walk not after the Spirit, but after the flesh, that their time is spent in catering to the desires of the carnal mind, that instead of being an ornament in the temple of God, they are a detriment to the cause of Christ, and a hinderance to their brethren,) that your ornamentation depends not upon the labor of your hands or mind, but upon Christ that dwelleth in you. In you (that is, in your

flesh,) dwells no good thing, but inasmuch as Christ dwelleth in you, you are in the sight of God, all fair, without spot or blemish. You say, my very best efforts are sin-laden and all polluted. Yes, that is true, because your flesh serves the law of sin, but Christ worketh in you, and in him you do the Father's good pleasure. If we see clearly our own imperfections, it is because we also behold the perfection which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. So then our anxiety and sorrow because of our shortcomings, is a sweet evidence that we have passed from death unto life, and that sin has become exceeding sinful. The ornaments in the temple built by Solomon, were placed in conspicuous places, that they might show forth their beauty and significance. So the jewels in our heavenly Father's casket, they are so arranged (in perfect order) that the whole household of faith may behold their beauty and ornamentation. The angel to one of the seven churches said, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God: which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name." How wondrously beautiful is this christian character; bearing the power of an endless life; adorned with all the beauties of holiness; clothed with the armature that continueth to overcome, and swallowed up in the name and merit of his gracious Redeemer.

Dear, precious little brother (or sister) lame in both your feet, weary in the tedious, tiresome conflict of a christian experience, in yourself weak, in your own eyes despicable, what a rich inheritance is yours; an ornament in your public profession, and a still richer ornament in the hearts of your brethren. To you, the possession of "a meek and quiet spirit" is more than all the world can give, you are made willing to suffer, and to bear about in your body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus may be made manifest in your mortal body; you do now realize that sin doth abound in you, yet grace doth much more abound; you know that in Jesus alone you are accepted at a throne of grace. If it is in our heart to "adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things," then will we with all integrity, deny ungodliness and worldly lust, and "Live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world: looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." The vineyard of the Lord is made beautiful with the flourishing vine, and rich clusters of fruit. The vine (Christ) supplies the life and nourishment to the branches (the church), and the branches yield the fruit of righteousness to the glory of God, some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold. The branches depend entirely upon the vine for its life-giving principle, the which produces fruitfulness. Of themselves the branches can do nothing, they are helpless and passive in the strength and power of the vine. So we, if we show forth the fruit of the Spirit in our walk and conversation, it is because the Spirit of our living head (Christ Jesus) exerciseth us unto good works. Have we then whereof to boast if we adorn the temple of our God with the labor of love? But more and more we learn the truth (here a little and there a little) that

our identity is swallowed up in the name of our gracious Redeemer. So be of good cheer, you little ones who think you have no part or vocation in the church of Christ, each and every one of you fill the place which God has ordained concerning you before the foundation of the world.

May his blessing unto fruitfulness rest upon each one of us for his dear name's sake, and unto his name may we ascribe all the glory.

B. F. COULTER.

WORTHINGTON, Minn., Nov. 16, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—May so vile a sinner use this term? I fear and tremble to call you brother because you do not seem to me so vile as I am. The dear Lord has given you wisdom and understanding to know his word. As for me, I am a poor old sinner; I am a peculiar man, I feel to be the greatest sinner on the earth, I am living here in the midst of a people of many tongues, they are of all nationalities, and they have churches, and they all preach works, and so I do not go to hear them. I tell them that Jesus finished the work of salvation on the cross of Calvary, he there said, "It is finished, and gave up the ghost." The third day he rose again from the dead. This is the Savior that I love to talk about, and I love to be with those that do talk of him, and that give him all the glory, and not to man. I feel my depravity in myself, and see it in all the world. I try to watch my thoughts and the desires of my heart, and I see because of the hardness of my heart much sorrow.

Now, brother Beebe, can you fellowship such a wicked man as I am? It seems to me that all the people of God are much better than I am. You can see by what I have written what a sinner I am. Within find two dollars to pay for my subscription to the SIGNS another year. I want to say that I love the dear old SIGNS, I do not know what wife and I would do without them.

Brother Beebe, I have confidence in you that you will cast the mantle of charity over this. If you please, give it a place in the SIGNS. In love of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ our Lord, I remain yours in hope of eternal life,

HENRY JAMES.

BLUE SPRINGS, Mo., March 9, 1903.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR FRIEND:—George W. Leap, an old subscriber to the SIGNS, having moved to Ocmulgee, Indian Territory, hands me two dollars to renew his subscription from June, 1902, to June, 1903, and forward his paper to above address, he also sends sixty cents to aid the SIGNS. I also send two dollars to renew my subscription from May 15th, 1903, to May 15th, 1904, and one dollar to aid the SIGNS, which I greatly appreciate for the truth it contains from its many contributors, also for the way it is conducted by the editors in publishing nothing but sound doctrine, which alone will edify and comfort the saints, feeling sure you will take none of the glory to yourselves, but rather give glory to whom glory is due, knowing you fully indorse Paul's questions to the Corinthians, iv. 7, "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?"

I hope you will continue to publish the editorials of your dear father, the many truths they contain are as comforting and edifying to the lovers of the truth as they were when first written, forty, fifty, sixty and seventy years ago.

THOS. W. RECORDS.

MT. ROSE, N. J.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—For some time I have thought that I would like to write to you, and this evening something seems to lead me to write, although it is an undertaking for me. I cannot express myself as I would like to do. I enjoy reading your dear paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, there are so many able writers, but I have not the gift of writing, still I can think it all over, but when I attempt to speak of these things my tongue is silent, but I am thankful for what I have; I feel that the Lord has done great things for me. O, dear Elder Chick, if I could only tell it all to you as it comes to me every day, and as it did before I went down into the water. O, how beautiful that was to me, yet sometimes I feel as though I had deceived the church, for I could not give in my experience as I would have been glad to do; it was all there to say, but I could not say it. A dark mantle of sorrow has fallen upon me to-night, I am troubled without scarcely knowing why, for I still realize that the Lord is good; he is a stronghold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him. I believe that truly my soul does trust in him.

How I longed to be among you for many years back; I would see different ones go into the water, and would feel as if I desired also to go, but I felt too sinful. Sometimes I would go to other churches, but I would feel there like a lost sheep; I never felt at home anywhere but among the dear Old School Baptists, still I felt too unworthy to come out, but the Lord knows best, and I will trust in him. I do not get to the meeting as often as I would like to, but I am always thinking about the dear ones when not there.

But I will bring this scribble to a close, it will try your patience to read it. I felt that I must write you a few lines.

I remain unworthily your sister,

(MRS.) MARY K. STOUT.

HAMILTON, Texas, May 10, 1903.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed find one dollar to be applied to help pay your indebtedness on the SIGNS. I am a very poor man in this world's goods, but feel that God requires the same of me in faithfulness as the richer class, according as I have, and if the right spirit actuates me, I hope the same one will enable you to not despise the day of small things. While I have been tolerably faithful I believe in my own subscription, and assisted many others that were not able to pay for it, and tried to increase its circulation, I feel that I have let opportunities pass when I could and should have sent more than I am able to at this time, yet I feel thankful God has been merciful to my unrighteousness, and I hope put it into the hearts of others to so liberally respond to your wants. It makes me rejoice that he does not depend on me for anything, but makes me depend on him for everything. I cannot afford to believe that as long as you are kept faithful to declare the whole counsel, as much as in you is, that you will ever have to suffer more than you will be enabled to bear.

With love, sympathy and best wishes for you and all the tried ones of the household of faith, and a desire for your prayers, I am as ever your little brother in bonds,

W. D. WOOD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1903.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

FALSE CHARGES REFUTED.

THE various principles of the doctrine of God our Savior have all at different times been assailed by those who know not God, ever since Jesus arose from the dead and his gospel began to be preached abroad. This is not strange, for fallen, sinful man is perverted in all his faculties, so that he calls evil good, and good evil, and beside, the doctrine of salvation by grace is most humiliating to that self-righteous principle which dwells in every man. Since the fall, man has a most exalted opinion of his own wisdom and righteousness. Satan had said, "Ye shall be as gods," and this statement from the father of lies is fully believed by fallen man. The gospel is therefore a stumbling-block to the self-righteous Jew, and folly to the proud wisdom of the Greek. It is not wonderful therefore that men oppose the divine sovereignty and the divine grace; that they do so is full evidence of their lost condition, being yet in the darkness and blindness of sin, they do not and cannot know the truth, and what they do know of the letter of the word seems to them evil, and not good. All the opposition of men to the truth arises out of self-righteousness, self-wisdom and self-power. When the righteousness, wisdom and power of God is presented, and it is declared that man is possessed of neither the one nor the other, vain, fallen reason rises up at once against this teaching, and begins to urge all sorts of horrible consequences as necessarily arising from it. Thus when Paul declared that where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, men were ready to say at once that the logical sequence must be, that we ought to do evil, that grace might abound. They said that if Paul's teaching was true, then the more man sinned, the more grace would be magnified; it is certainly a good thing to magnify grace, and so they said, Let us sin to that end, but Paul at once refutes this by saying that by grace believers are not only redeemed from the consequences of sin, but from sin itself. He says that redeemed men have become dead to sin, and therefore cannot live in it any longer. No believer could draw such a conclusion as the above from the doctrine of the abounding of grace; he who says such things as this in opposition to Paul's doctrine, shows that he does not know the grace of God at all. Such ones are still in the condemnation of sin, and under bondage to it; they who are saved do not draw this horrible conclusion from the doctrine of the superabounding of grace; they cannot, grace in their hearts itself forbids that. But those who are yet dead in sin, see in grace only a license to further sin; these turn the grace of God into lasciviousness.

Again, when Paul taught that we are not under the law any more, but under grace, some said, Then you take away all restraints from men, and leave all to continue in sin; it will not do to say that the redeemed are not under the law; if all fear of punishment be taken away from men, then wickedness will run riot among

them. But no true believer ever said any such thing. Paul knew and taught, and all who believe with the heart know that the law never did prevent men from sinning; it could not; what the law could not do, because it was weak through the flesh, grace in our Lord Jesus Christ has done, and does still do. "Sin," he says, "shall not have dominion over you, BECAUSE ye are not under the law, but under grace." Legalists and formalists, who know not God, can and do urge this objection to the doctrine of grace, but never a true believer.

Again, when Paul taught that the God of the universe had raised up Pharaoh for the purpose of showing forth in him and through him his own power and glory, and that, too, by the very stubbornness and rebellion of the king, the objector was ready to assert that then God had no right to find fault with Pharaoh, seeing that through him the will of God had been done. Paul states the matter in this way: Thou wilt say then, Why doth he yet find fault, since Pharaoh did not resist his will, but accomplished his will? Paul says that he who puts forward this objection with the motive in view of denying the doctrine of God's overruling sovereignty in the case of Pharaoh, is only replying against God, presumptuously replying, as a creature replying against his creator. Paul does not seek to enter into any argument in the matter. What would be the use? It is the objection of an evil heart, to which he thus replies, and no argument can convince hatred. If the love of God be not in the heart first of all the truth of God cannot be received or understood. It has been the joy and comfort of the children of God always to believe that all the hatred and opposition of men only advances and fulfills the will of God in the salvation and in the keeping of his people. They do not urge any such objection to the predestination of God; they do not say, If he has predestinated the wicked actions of men, then he has no right to find fault with and condemn men for so doing, but carnal reason, which hates the doctrine of divine sovereignty, is always ready to raise this objection, and in all men it is what Paul declares it to be in Romans ninth, A replying against God. Men in every age have said that predestination takes away all right in God to condemn men for their evil deeds; they have said that it nullifies all commandments, all exhortations and all prayer, and all condemnation. Paul says to the contrary, and also that they who urge these objections are not reconciled to God.

Now we need not think it strange, remembering all this, that similar objections are now brought against the doctrine, and we need not think it strange that the same charge is brought now against those who believe it; it is only according to the course of events in all ages since the gospel began to be preached that it should be charged against all such that their doctrine not only leaves room for sin and iniquity to abound, and room to deny the right of Jehovah to condemn in men what he has yet predestinated that they shall do, but also that they themselves admit this, and declare it to be what they themselves believe. Paul said of such ones in Romans, third chapter, their damnation was just; they were charging a lie against the truth, and against those who had received it and loved it. Truth does indeed abound through our lie to the glory of God, and yet it is a falsehood that any one who loves the truth ever could say, Let me then do evil that good may come. If

any man says that he believes in the predestination of all things, and then claims that this absolves him from all blame for his sins, he has never known the grace of God in truth, and is adding an insult to the sin against God of which he has already been guilty.

A church might see cause to bear with the wrong doing of one of her members, knowing his weakness in some particular direction, but if that wrong doer, when brought before the church, says, It was predestinated that I should do this, and therefore neither you or God has any right to find fault with me, that man would at once show that he was entirely destitute of the grace of God, and that he did not reverence his name. Such an one ought to be set aside at once; he has not only sinned, but has sought to throw the blame upon the holy God. It is not possible for a true believer in predestination to feel that he is therefore absolved from blame for his transgressions.

The reason we here have been saying these things is, it came to our ears that in some portions of the country, especially in Alabama, Arkansas and elsewhere, there were those who had sinned most grievously, being guilty of drunkenness, dealing in green goods, filthy conversation, and immorality of the grossest form among the churches who hold the God-honoring doctrine of the predestination of all things, and that when the churches of their membership sought to exercise the proper discipline of the church, these men took shelter behind predestination, and said they could not help what they had done, and ought not to be censured for it, and that in some cases churches had allowed this plea to have weight, and had retained these men as members in full standing, and as ministers of the word also. We felt that these reports must be untrue, and that those who made such statements must have been misinformed; we could not believe that any Predestinarian Baptists could be guilty of saying and justifying such things; we were much distressed and troubled in mind, and felt that we wanted to be assured in the matter in some way. For this reason we finally decided to write to brethren in those sections, and to brethren who were acquainted there, and ask statements from them regarding the matter. We were not so much concerned to inquire whether any who believed in the predestination of all things were guilty of these criminal acts, though that were a most horrible and shameful thing, still we know that in all sections there are those who do wrong in the churches, and who are perhaps often borne with too long, for the honor of the cause of God, but we were deeply concerned to know if the charge that such ones were allowed to shelter themselves from church discipline by the plea above named was true. We knew that the Baptists where we live would not for an instant tolerate such a thing. Could it be so with our brethren in the sections named?

Now we want to say that we have letters from brethren, ministers and members, clerks and moderators of associations and churches, whose names we will give directly, and whose letters we would be glad to publish were it not that to do so would occupy too much space in our columns, all denying this most grievous charge. It is not denied that some among them have done wrong in various ways, as is the case often in all sections, but it is emphatically denied that any one at any time has sought to relieve himself from blame by saying that "It was predestinated, and therefore I am not to be blamed," neither has there ever

been a case where any church has or would have accepted such a plea if it had been made. This denial comes from brethren in Alabama, Arkansas, Texas and Florida. We will now give the names of the writers with the States from which they have written us, and we will also give a few extracts from their letters as we proceed. Elder M. L. Gilbert, of Dade City, Florida, says that he has never heard of such a thing in Florida, and that he is generally acquainted there, and would know if such a thing existed. Elder J. R. Hardy, of Texas, writes that he is acquainted in Arkansas, in certain sections, and he never heard of such a state of things there, and so far as relates to Texas, such a charge is altogether false. Elder V. P. Harris, of Fordyce, Ark., writes that there is no truth in the report, either as regards the evil conduct charged against those who believe in unlimited predestination, or as regards the accusation that any take shelter under that doctrine for their sins. Brother J. W. Sharp, of Fordyce, Ark., writes that he personally knows that neither of the above charges are true in all that section, among Baptists who believe in unlimited predestination. Brother J. W. House, of Bab, Ark., writes, saying the same things as above named with great emphasis. Brother W. C. Horton, of Bab, Calhoun Co., Ark., writes that nothing ever written could be more false, so far as his knowledge goes, and he is well acquainted with nearly all the Baptists in that section of Arkansas. Brother L. C. Trull, of Wesson, Ark., writes that so far from such charges being true of the unlimited Predestinarian Baptists in his section, it is to the contrary true that they walk more strictly than do their opponents as a rule, and that if any should do wrong, and seek to excuse himself upon the ground that it was predestinated, and therefore he was not to be blamed, he would be dealt with speedily for it. Elder J. H. Blythe, of Monticello, Ark., writes that to his knowledge any such report as above named is groundless, and false as any lie that the devil ever conceived. He adds that he has never met a brother who claimed that his wickedness was predestinated, and that therefore he was not to be blamed. Brother G. W. McVey, of Plantersville, Ark., writes that he has lived in Arkansas thirty-five years, and has been a member of New Hope Association twenty-eight years, and has never heard of any such things among any of the churches of that association, and that these charges are not true. Brother Hiram King, who we believe is a minister of the gospel, though we are not sure, writes from County Line, Ala., and is indorsed at the close of his letter by the following named brethren: B. J. Wilson, M. H. Law, W. C. Wilson, W. E. King, C. C. Gibson, S. F. Mason and T. A. Beard. He says that all such accusations are false altogether. Brother J. W. Hamil, of Troy, Ala., writes that any such statement is absolutely false, and that no church nor individual can be found who ever made use of any such statement. No such statement, he says, in that section was ever made from the pulpit or privately. We think that he belongs to the Conecuh Association, in that State. Brother E. L. Norris, of Greenville, Ala., writes that he is astonished, shocked and humiliated, that such charges should be made against any Baptists in his section. He is personally acquainted with every male member of the Ebenezer Association, and with many brethren of corresponding associations, and has never known but two members in all his acquaintance, so far as he can

remember, to be charged with drunkenness, and one was excluded, and the other confessed his fault, and of course was forgiven, but neither of these two tried to justify himself upon the ground of predestination, and he does not know of any case where such a plea was ever made. Brother W. H. Coleman, clerk of Darien church, and H. P. Yarborough, deacon of that church, writes that there is no shadow of truth in the charge that any one there ever sought to take shelter under predestination for his sins. They speak of one case of discipline concerning which there was some dissatisfaction with the action of the church, but no such plea as charged above was made or even hinted at by the guilty person. On the contrary they state that he made full confession and was forgiven. Elder J. A. Mills, of Timothy, Ala., writes that if any such things are true, he does not know of it. He says that he is serving two churches near Troy, Ala., and no such thing has ever come before him. He says that some brethren sometimes do wrong; he has heard one or two say that it seemed like they could not help doing some of the wrong things that they did, but never heard one of them charge his wrong to the predestination of God. Brother J. H. Daniel, of Haynesville, La., writes that if it be the practice of any church or people known as Primitive Baptists, in Arkansas or elsewhere, "To get drunk, swear, deal in green goods, or engage in any other sin of any kind whatever, and then say we were delivered to these abominations, and then are justified and retained by the churches," he is totally ignorant of it. He says, "I assure you, and all others, that there is no such thing in this country."

Now all these testimonies have made us glad, for we could not hold in our confidence and fellowship any brother for a moment who would seek to say, Why does God find fault? it was predestinated, and therefore who hath resisted his will? and we are indeed glad that so many of the brethren in all those sections can speak so positively regarding this matter. We have not felt to do more than to try to ascertain the facts regarding this matter by the testimony of competent men, who are as a whole, believers in unlimited predestination, and who therefore know what they do believe. All these witnesses abhor any such attempt to shield the sinner under the plea of predestination, and say that all Predestinarian Baptists with whom they are acquainted, do the same and feel the same. We know that this is the feeling of all the brethren in this section of the country, where nearly all are full believers in unlimited predestination. The information which led us to make this investigation, and which has called out these many uniform replies, came in a letter or letters marked "confidential," and so we cannot use the name of the brother who wrote us. We do trust that all this testimony will convince him that he has been misinformed, and we hope that he will write us to that effect, and we will take pleasure in publishing such statement from him, if he so desires.

We desire to say in conclusion that the best, the only way to secure peace and fellowship among the children of God, is not found in exhortations to be at peace with each other, but in continuing to preach in love the doctrine of God, as seen and known in the experience of believers, and all who have a place for the doctrine in their hearts will in the end be drawn together to the doctrine, and so true union will abound. To do this does not mean that there shall be fighting or

harsh language used against any one, or that any reference shall be made to any particular individual, in what we preach, but simply that truth be held forth in love, and with all the clearness of expression possible.

May God bless his people with true peace, even the peace of God, which passeth all understanding.

Since writing the above we have received the following statement from brethren in Alabama: "There is no church in Conecuh River Association that would uphold members believing such God-dishonoring doctrine. That any of our churches would allow any member to take shelter under predestination for his sins, is a statement absolutely untrue." This is signed by Geo. W. Hamil, Wm. Davis and H. M. Sneed, deacon of Beulah church; A. S. Summerset, G. W. Harris, C. B. Rollin, deacons of Pleasant Hill church; Elder M. V. Gibson and Deacon John M. Hamil, of Paran church.

C.

NOT ENOUGH.

THE following card from Elder John McConnell, pastor of the Ebenezer Church, in New York city, where the Warwick Association is to be held this year, will explain itself.

"With reference to the notice in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, proposing a reduction in railroad fare to attendants of the Warwick Association, we regret to say that less than the required number have applied for the benefit; consequently the reduction is not available. Seventy-six applications have been received; twenty-four less than must be guaranteed before the reduction would be conceded to any.

JOHN McCONNELL."

NEW YORK, May 14, 1903.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ELDER J. ARMSTRONG'S LETTER.

WE are pleased with the general sentiment of the letter of our esteemed brother, which will be found in this number, on the subject of the ancient glories of the Son of God. His independent and eternal Deity, his Sonship, his Mediatorial identity, &c. And his arguments in refutation of the notion of his fleshly or corporeal body having existed as such, before he was made of a woman, we think are unanswerable, but that the soul of him did exist with the Father before the world began, does not so clearly appear. The first account given in divine revelation of the existence of soul, or souls, is given of the earthly Adam—God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and *man became a living soul.* And Paul in discriminating between the first and second Adam, in 1 Cor. xv., says, "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit." All men descending from the first progenitor, Adam, are generated like him, soul and body. And so all who are regenerated as the seed of Christ, receive from Christ, not souls, but spiritual, immortal, eternal life, which John says was with the Father, and was manifested, and which he also says was given us in Christ; so that he that hath the Son of God hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. But he does not say, that he that hath not the Son of God hath not a soul, for they all have souls in their relation to the first Adam.

We think brother Armstrong had fully established the pre-existence of the Sonship of the Redeemer, in proving by the record which God has given of him, that

he was set up from everlasting in his Mediatorial Headship of his church, as the life and immortality of his body, which is the church. That which constitutes him the Son of God, must have its existence originally in the Father. And that Life, which Christ is, was with the Father, proceeded from the Father, and was given to the church in Christ as spiritual Adam, or spiritual Progenitor, or the quickening Spirit.

In his assumption of a fleshly body, he was *made flesh*, made of a woman, and made under the law. What law? The law that said, "The SOUL that sinneth, it shall die." Had his soul, which on Calvary was poured out unto death, preexisted his being made of a woman, why was it necessary that he should be made of a woman, that he might be made under the law? And again, man without a soul was but dust of the ground; but when animated by the breath of life, he became—that is, man became—a living soul. God's children, being partakers of flesh and blood, partake of flesh and blood in its animated state, as comprising soul and body. So Christ in "likewise also taking part of the same" must have taken on him a body, and that body, like the bodies of his members, must be in possession of a soul that could suffer the penalty of the law. How else could he have been found in the fashion of man? A corporeal body without a soul is not called man, it is the soul which distinguishes man from a mere animal.

The term *man* is applied to Christ, we think, in a two-fold application. First, as the Lord from heaven; not the *soul* from heaven. And as the Man of God's right hand, made strong for himself, as the Mediatorial Head in vital union with his members which are his body; the fullness of him that filleth all in all. These members being many, all the election of grace are one body, so also is Christ. And when all shall be brought experimentally into the unity of the faith, the measurement of the body of which Christ is the Head will be full, complete and perfect as that body existed with the Father before the world began. There was the perfect man, as standing at the right hand of the Godhead, to which the church shall be comformed when "We all come in the unity of the faith, and knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."—Eph. iv. 13. Again, the term is applicable to him in his incarnation. Thus, "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself," &c.—Phil. ii. 6–8. In this last sense of the word, he became a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief; carried our sorrows, bore our griefs, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. In being put to death in the flesh, he poured out his soul, as well as his blood, unto death. His soul was exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death, and his soul was made, with his body and blood, an offering for sin, when he saw his seed, prolonged his days, and the pleasure of the Lord prospered in his hands.

Our dear brother Armstrong, we are sure, will take no offence at our remarks on this one point in his letter, as we fully indorse his views generally, in the able and unanswerable article which he has written against the extravagant, but unscriptural notions of the non-resurrectionists, who, if we have correctly appre-

hended their position, affirm that nothing will ever go to heaven that did not come from that place. On their hypothesis, the creatures of this mundane sphere could have no interest in the provisions of grace and mercy. As Paul has declared, that if the dead rise not, then Christ is not risen; and if he be not risen, we are yet in our sins, &c., they, in order to evade the direct force of Paul's testimony, endeavor to establish the notion that the fleshly body in which Christ suffered, did exist as such, and that he brought it down to earth with him, and then took it back to heaven in his ascension. But even if this theory could be established, would it not prove too much for their purpose? seeing Christ arose from the dead and became the first fruits of them that slept, giving assurance as the first fruits so shall the whole harvest be; it would unavoidably involve the monstrous conclusion that the fleshly bodies of all the saints also came down from a pre-existing state in heaven, whereas God has said they were made of the dust of the ground.

We regret to learn that such speculations exist in some of our western states, and has created much distress among those who preach Christ and the resurrection. May God deliver all those who love and fear him from this and all other perversions of the sacred Scriptures, and save us from the snares of the devil, and give us more fully to know him and the power of his resurrection, and conform us more and more to the heavenly image, for his name's sake.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., July 1, 1860.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903, &c.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO BROTHER D. M. LEONARD'S APPEAL TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$711 70
Henry Holden, Kansas, $1.00; Mrs. Margaret Money, Ky., $1.00; Mrs. T. D. Money, Ky., $1.00; W. D. Wood, Texas, $1.00.—Total	4 00
Total to date	$715 70

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mr. John Blue died at his home April 1st, 1903, in the 85th year of his age. He was quite feeble for over a year. A year ago this spring he was quite poorly, and it was then thought his end was near, but the dear Lord saw fit to raise him up again, and he was able to go around a little, and meet with the church, and it was his great delight to hear Jesus exalted a Prince and a Savior for poor, perishing sinners, of which he often said he was the very chief. He was one that always took the lowest seat, feeling unworthy of his brethren's esteem. He would say, I do not know what the brethren can see in me, so vile a creature as I am, that they can have any fellowship for me. He came to the church four years ago, was received into full fellowship, and baptized by our late beloved pastor, Elder Pollard. He was loved and esteemed by all who knew him. To me he was indeed a lovely brother. Many hours have we spent in talking of the goodness and mercy of God to our souls. I cannot restrain making mention of one time in particular, before he came to the church, he hardly got seated in the house when he began to tell me the exercises of his soul, and how he was cut off from all hope in self through hearing the late Elder McColl preach from the words, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." After many years of deep exercises of soul he was brought into gospel liberty, these words being applied, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." He could then claim all the sweet promises of the gospel his. He asked me to find that portion where it reads, "I passed by thee, and looked upon thee; behold thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee." "I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put a bracelet upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck. And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thy ears, and a beautiful crown upon thy head." I then said to him, You can claim all these precious promises yours. "Yes," he said, "I can." It seemed to me as if his face shone with heavenly radiance while he talked of those beautiful things. It was truly a season of rejoicing to our souls; I shall never forget it. But he was often made to walk in darkness and mourn an absent God.

In 1847 he married Miss Mary Graham. This happy union was blessed with nine children, three of whom preceded him to the eternal world, one in infancy, the other two in manhood, the remaining six, four sons and two daughters, with their dear mother, done all that loving hands could do to sustain and comfort him. He was poorly and feeble, but his end was not expected so soon. He just quietly fell asleep in the arms of Jesus. His end was peace. The dear Lord alone can comfort and sustain the dear family. May he be a Husband to the widow, and make each of them to rejoice in a hope of his mercy, as he did the dear departed one.

Our pastor, Elder Carnell, spoke beautiful words of comfort, using as a text Revelation xiv. 13, to a large concourse of people who paid their last respect to one whom they loved and esteemed, after which he was quietly laid to rest in the family cemetery, to await the final trump of God, when we believe he shall triumphantly arise with all the saints of God to praise him, world without end.

SARAH ANN McCOLL.

WALLACETOWN, Ontario, May 15, 1903.

Mrs. Henrietta Waddy, wife of Mr. B. F. Waddy, 3,609 Prospect Ave., Georgetown, D. C., departed this life March 10th, 1903. The subject of this memoir was a member of the Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., and much loved. She was baptized by the late Elder W. J. Purington, in the year 1865, and remained a faithful member until her death. Her husband tells me she was always a faithful wife and mother, and next to her care as such, was her interest in her church. It has been the privilege of the writer to know her for the last four years, and to be with her both in the church and in her home, and I have ever found her strong in the faith once delivered to the saints. Two points were very prominent in sister Waddy's faith: she was a strong believer in the doctrine of the total depravity of human nature, and the almighty power of God in salvation; grace, and grace alone, was her theme from first to last. The church misses her, for we loved her for Jesus' sake, and we extend to the bereaved husband and children our heartfelt sympathy in their loss, but would comfort them with the blessed assurance that their loss is her gain.

The writer attended her funeral by request of her husband, and spoke from a portion of the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians, after which she was laid to rest in the presence of a large number of sympathizing friends, to await the resurrection, when she shall arise from the sleeping dust, by the power of him who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, and so shall ever be with the Lord.

Her pastor, J. T. ROWE.

[BROTHER Rowe in sending the above, says that as we knew the dear sister so well for so many years, he would be glad if we would add a few words to the above. We would gladly comply with this request, but feel that he has already said all that need be said. We knew sister Waddy for thirty-five years, and as it was our lot to visit the church in Washington city as a supply for more than twenty-seven years, we were often in her company. We can bear cheerful testimony to what brother Rowe has said concerning her love to the doctrine of grace, and her regard for those she believed to be the people of God. We desire to extend a word of sympathy to the bereaved husband and family. May God comfort and bless them in all their need. It is sure that when the loved of the Lord depart, it is to be with him forever. Comfort one another with these words, is the exhortation of the apostle.—C.]

"A GOOD name is better than precious ointment, and the day of death than the day of one's birth. It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart."—Eccl. vii. 1, 2.

By request of the bereaved sister, we send you this notice for publication through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Died, very suddenly and unexpectedly, **William Franklin Jenkins,** in the 72d year of his age. He lived and died at the old homestead at Rocksprings, Lancaster Co., Pa., and was a son of the late David and Hannah Jenkins, whose home it was during their lifetime, and left by them for the benefit of their descendants. This home is very near the meeting-place called Rock Springs. Their ancestors were active members of this little church, and the same disposition has descended to the present time, and has always been their place of meeting. Their house has ever been open for the entertainment of that congregation, and others who have attended there from time to time. The deceased made no profession of faith in the Redeemer, but as far as we were able to judge, decided and with those who met for worship there. He leaves a sister and one brother; the brother has for a long time been much afflicted, and I am sure they have the sympathy of the entire neighborhood. March 1st, 1903, he departed out of this world, and the friends met at the house, where there were some remarks made by the writer, after which he was interred beside those who have gone before, to mingle their bones in the dust, but there is a time when all those who are in their graves shall come forth. The Lord bless and comfort those two remaining ones, and friends generally.

WM. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md.

CHURCH NOTICES.

WACO, Neb., May 4, 1903.

KINDLY inform the brethren that the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church called Mt. Pleasant, is trying to build a house of worship at York. We are few in number, mostly poor in this world's goods, and any donation that the brethren or friends would see fit to give, will be thankfully received. Ever since the church was organized we have been holding our meetings at private houses, country schoolhouses, and such places as we could get, changing from one place to another so often that many who would like to attend our meetings scarcely ever know where the next one would be held. With a little assistance from outside sources we can build a plain frame house with modest furnishings, large enough to accommodate all who may come on ordinary occasions. Without some assistance from abroad we can scarcely provide even a convenient meeting-place, without incurring a debt. Should any one who reads this wish to help us they are requested to send their contributions to B. R. Simmons, Treasurer, 220 W. 19th St., York, Neb.

C. M. COOPER, Pastor, David City, Neb.
J. M. AMSBERRY, Clerk, Waco, Neb.

MEETINGS.

DELAWARE Association is appointed to meet with Bryn Zion Church, in Kent Co., Delaware, beginning Wednesday before the fifth Sunday in May, (27th) 1903, and continue three days.

Those coming by train can take the cars leaving Philadelphia at 3:20 p. m. for Clayton, Del., via Delaware R. R., on Tuesday. Those coming from the south will take the train leaving Delmar, Del., at 2:10 p. m., if intending to go to Kenton on Tuesday, or the 3:30 train if intending to stop over in Clayton. The trains both from the north and south will be met at Clayton and Kenton. Those coming through to Kenton will change cars at Clayton. All who desire to come on Wednesday morning from the north can take the train leaving Philadelphia at 7:40 a. m., with tickets to Kenton, Del., change cars at Clayton, Del., and get off at Baptist crossing, near the Bryn Zion meeting-house, in time for meeting. Those coming from the south on Wednesday morning will take the train leaving Delmar at 7:06 a. m., with tickets to Kenton, change cars at Clayton, and get off at Baptist crossing. The train leaving Baltimore union station at 2:50 p. m. on Tuesday, connects with train to Clayton and Kenton. The train from Baltimore leaving union station at 6:35 a. m. on Wednesday connects with train to Baptist crossing in time for meeting. Ministers, brethren and friends of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us.

W. W. MEREDITH.

DELAWARE River Association is appointed to be held with the Southampton Church, Bucks Co., Pa., beginning on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (3d) 1903, and continue three days.

Those coming from the north by the Belvidere division of the P. R. R., will leave that road at Lambertville, cross the river to New Hope, and take a train for Ivyland, where they will be met Tuesday afternoon. Those coming from the east will take the train on Reading R. R., leaving New York 1:55 Tuesday p. m., change cars at Trenton for Way train, and will be met at Bethayres, at 4:32. Those coming from west and south will leave Reading Terminal, Philadelphia, 4:23, Tuesday p. m., and come to Southampton. A cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to come.

SILAS H. DURAND.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Middleburg, Schoharie Co., N. Y., have appointed their yearly meeting to be held the first Saturday and Sunday in June, (6th and 7th) 1903, and extend a cordial invitation to ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

A. COOK, Clerk.

THE Warwick Association is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, in New York city, beginning Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, (10th) 1903, and continue three days.

Attendants of the above who may arrive in New York city on Tuesday evening will please go to the place of meeting, Merritt Building, Eighth avenue and Nineteenth street, where members will be in attendance to direct them to places of entertainment.

THE Sandusky Regular Baptist Association will meet with the Honey Creek Church, near Bloomville, Seneca Co., Ohio, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 12th, 13th and 14th, 1903. Brethren will be met at Bloomville, Ohio.

H. D. BISHOP, Clerk.

THE Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon and Washington, will be held with Pleasant Grove Church, at Goldendale, Washington, (if not providentially hindered) commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in June, (19-21) 1903, and continue the two following days. Those coming from both east and west by railroad will get off at Grant, and thence by stage to Goldendale, a distance of twelve miles. Those coming by boat will get off of boat at Lile, on Columbia River, and take cars to Goldendale.

N. J. SHANKS, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held, the Lord willing, in the usual place, in the township of Brooke, five miles from Alvinston station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, (20th) 1903, and

continue two days. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 71. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1903. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FRAGMENTS.

I OFTEN feel a strong desire to write what is in my mind concerning the Scriptures in connection with my hope of salvation, but am kept back from doing so by various things. One is what seems to me indolence, but may be weariness of mind or body; another is, a feeling of unfitness, unworthiness, to write on spiritual things; and still another, a sense of my inability to express things clearly, and a serious question whether what I can write will be of any true value or real interest to the Lord's people. There will also come often into my mind a deep, searching questioning as to whether I have a true experimental knowledge of the spiritual things which I am impressed to write about, and whether my impressions are from the Lord, or only from the vain desires of the carnal mind. After making this confession I will say that I have reason to believe that there are some others who are deterred from writing by one or more of these causes which I have alluded to, who, I think, ought to write; whose writing of their heart work and of the revelation of the Spirit to them, would be of benefit and comfort to the Lord's little ones. To them I would say, Write, notwithstanding these opposing and oppressive feelings concerning your inability, unworthiness and lack of spirituality. I am sure that the frequency of your articles in the SIGNS, or any other periodical, will never cause a sense of surfeit to the spiritual reader.

I wish I could take this advice and assurance to myself as freely as I can give them to those I have in my mind, one of whom is a preacher, one of the best, who thinks he is the poorest.

As I walked along to my appointment yesterday morning I felt for a little while very clearly my earthiness, my separateness from spiritual things; not that my thoughts and feelings were sinful, foolish, lustful after worldly things, as at other times, but simply earthy. I was thinking of the relationships of this life with the anxieties, cares and pleasures that are connected with them, of sicknesses of dear ones with the dreads that attend them; of worldly needs and how they will be supplied; of the green grass in lawns and fields, and the beauty of flowers; of "the things that are seen" con-

nected with churches, meetings and preaching, and of my own duty to preach that morning, the time of which was so near at hand, and whether I could think of a suitable text that I knew anything about, and whether I knew anything about any Scripture as I ought to know, and whether I could preach so as to do myself any justice, and whether I should be able to preach so as to interest the people, and even if I did interest them whether it would do them any spiritual good. And then it seemed as though all my thoughts and feelings were simply "of the earth earthy," and that I was "looking at the things that are seen," and not thinking of the glory of God, and that I had no power to think of that and desire that alone.

I saw that in nature the heavens touch the earth and communicate with it, and give to it of their blessings, the sunshine, the rain, the dew, and the elements of the air which call forth the herbs and grass and flowers and fruits, and I said in my mind, "Can the spiritual heavens ever touch me again and communicate with me, and give me to feel their power, and to receive of their goodness? Will they come down to me ever again?" Then I think my soul cried unto the Lord that the heavens might touch me, that I might feel their holy power controlling me, and that I might receive once more their pure and sweet communications. Thus the earth cried unto the heavens, where the blessed Sun of Righteousness has his tabernacle, (Psalms xix. 4,) and the heavens heard the earth, and sent down into my poor, darkened and hungry soul some precious healing and reviving beams of light, some sweet promises, and some of that doctrine which drops like the rain, and this gave me spiritual power to hear the corn and the wine and the oil which God, I humbly trust, had long ago sowed within me, and now these tokens of heavenly blessing heard obediently "Jezreel," *(God soweth)* and came into manifestation for my present help and comfort. "And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth, and the earth shall hear the corn and the wine and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel."—Hosea ii. 21, 22.

"And I will sow her unto me in the earth." Thus it is in the flesh that our God is manifest, and down in what sometimes seems to be the dark depths of our hearts the wonderful and mysterious exercises go on, which are the experience of our betrothal unto Christ as our heavenly Husband. Thus we feel from time to time the vileness and nothingness of the flesh, and seem to hear the Lord saying unto us, "You are not my people." Then we cry and mourn, until in the Lord's good time the mystery which was hidden from ages and from generations, is anew made manifest unto us in the riches of its glory, which is, "Christ in you the hope of glory."—Col. i. 27. So in the very place where it was said unto us, Ye are not my people, there it is said, Ye are sons of the living God. (Hosea i. 10.)

I read that morning to the people the second chapter of Paul's letter to the Philippians, and felt glad to see and to speak of how in this chapter, as in all the Scriptures, the inspired writer shows the heavens constantly and always touching and communicating with the earth.

Here in our flesh, in a world of sin and sorrow and sickness, in the midst of cares and pain and grief, the holy communications of heavenly favor and love come to us, the laws and ordinances of our heavenly Husband are felt to be over, around and upon us, as the heavens are over,

around and upon the earth, and our responses to these sweet commands and promises and assurances of love are called forth in prayers and praises and thanksgiving.

When God worketh in us to will, and has not yet worked in us to do, we are in a sad, desolate, self-loathing condition. Our desires then are to do that which is good and absolutely free from selfishness and sin, but "how to perform that which is good we find not." It may give us a little rest from trouble to know that the apostle Paul expressed the same condition concerning himself, but it will not drive the trouble away. The things that we *would* do, that we have a desire for, we do not think we have any right to do. "We would but cannot pray;" "we would but cannot repent." We feel not merely that we cannot say the words of prayer, but the words, in our mouth, would not be prayers. It seems that it is not our right to pray; it is not our right and privilege to repent; it does not belong to us to be baptized. We have no right to the promises and commands and blessings of the gospel. These things belong to the Lord's people. But when the Lord "works in us *to do*," then we realize a sacred mystery. We have done these things, and yet have not done them. They have been done in and for us. We take the works of Jesus as ours; we walk in them; they are wrought in us, and it now becomes a blessed privilege to work them out, to manifest them openly in our walk and conversation.

How wonderfully the apostle here comes along the road we have trodden, reminds us of our "consolation in Christ" in past days, of our comfort of love and of the mercies of God, and before we are aware we seem to be telling ourselves how we ought to be of one mind, seek the things of others, and not our own, and so manifest in what we say and do the mind that was in Christ Jesus, which the same apostle says we have. (1 Cor. ii. 16.) The humility of the mind of Christ is spoken of as it is manifest in his coming under the law, making himself of no reputation, and becoming obedient to all its demands against his people, even to the shameful death of the cross. Then his exaltation above every name, so that everything in heaven and in earth and under the earth bows the knee in acknowledging allegiance to his name and obedience to his will.

What power the sun has in the heavens, and what power the heavens have over the earth. O, that this great, broad, high atmosphere of the truth of God might come down to me and enfold me, and enlighten and enrich my soul with its holy power. O, that my thoughts and desires might continually reach up into the infinite depths of those gospel heavens, even to the Sun of Righteousness, whose circuit is from one end of the heavens to the other, and whose heat and light reach throughout its whole extent. My desire is that those heavenly powers and blessings might so control this earthly nature of mine that holy things may grow out of it, and be manifest in my life; that the corn and the wine and the oil might come forth from the depths of my soul, where God, I hope, has sowed them, and so the life and blessings of Jesus be manifest in my mortal flesh; that I might have the assurance that God is working in me to will and to do, and so feel it my blessed privilege to work out in my daily life and walk my own salvation so graciously wrought in me, and so render obedience to his holy will.

What wonderful control the heavens

have over the earth, which lies so helplessly, so quietly, so passively and obediently under their power. What precious fruits are brought forth out of the earth's bosom by the Sun, which has his tabernacle in them. As the earth lies under that glorious heavenly control, and is responsive to it, so the Lord's people, the new earth, lie under the power of Jesus, "whose glory covers the heavens." "He comes down upon them like rain, and as showers that water the earth." Then his sunshine warms them into sweet obedience, and the plants of his grace are put forth, and the flowers appear on the earth, and the precious fruits of the Spirit are perfected.

And they are ready to "do all things without murmurings and disputings," working out their salvation with fear and trembling. There certainly are times when this vile, rebellious nature of ours is held under control by the Spirit, and we have a little rest from its troublesome disputings and murmurings. Much of our time we are mourning and worrying because we are so vile, or else because we cannot have our own way. With some this sad, rebellious winter state of the soul seems to continue much of their time. But there certainly are times when they can feel that this command is upon this unruly nature: "The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

NORTH YAKIMA, Wash., Jan. 9, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Another year has dawned upon us, and while taking a retrospective view of the blessings and favors I have enjoyed in the past, I wish to express to you my high appreciation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and of the able and efficient manner in which it is conducted. It also becomes my pleasant duty to send my remittance for another year, which you will find inclosed. My confidence in the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS has increased from time to time, and I find myself growing impatient often for another number to appear. I am aware that we are better prepared at some times, than at others, to receive good news, but it does seem to me that the last two numbers, December 15th, and January 1st, were exceedingly rich in subject matter, and in the pure gospel sentiment that seemed to guide the pens of the writers, which caused their communications to shine forth with the light of the Spirit.

I have always had an aversion to writing anything to appear in print, having such perception of my own weakness, but I believe that I know the truth when other spiritually minded brethren and sisters record the dealings of the Lord with them. Again, I am often comforted and encouraged when an able brother in whom I have full confidence writes of the Lord's dealings with him, and I have to acknowledge that I have had the same experience also. But right here, brother Beebe, a query arises in my mind: I have just said that I believe the doctrine as set forth in the SIGNS, I believe it because it seems to me to be the only doctrine which gives to God all the glory, but I find another class of enthusiastic writers crowding their new-born theories before the Baptist brethren, and apparently very zealously insisting that they shall be received, but I have found that almost invariably when the searchlight of inspiration is turned upon the new-born theory, it turns out to be but the production of a vain imagination, differing but little in dress or appearance

from similar products of the imagination of men, which have appeared before. These new inventions seem to be accounted for by the preacher when he said, "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."

The apostle assured Timothy that the holy Scriptures, which he had known, were able to make him wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Jesus Christ. Then I conclude that all who know the Scriptures, as did Timothy, will be found properly applying and dividing the word of God according to true knowledge, and the dictation of the Spirit, which always leads men into the truth, according to 1 John ii. 27: "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is the truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."

In the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah we read a very plain and full account of the suffering Christ, and yet it was written more than seven hundred years before it occurred, and the account is there given in the past tense, as though the writer was recording an account of past historical events. The beauty of this prophetic narrative is much increased when we turn to the New Testament and find every item of the above account fully corroborated. Then are we not justified fully in believing that this account in Isaiah, written by inspiration of God, declared his foreknowledge, and does it not also prove to us the everlasting purpose of God, and that being absolute in power and knowledge, he was able to bring it to pass? Yes, I fully believe this. Job said, "He is in one mind, and who can turn him? And what his soul desireth that he doeth," and many other Scriptures speak of future events as though they had already been, thus showing the certainty of them. The Lord has spoken of his people in the same manner; pointing forward to a time when he would write his law in their hearts, and imprint it in their minds.

Another query arises; Was it not in the heart of a lost sinner that he wrote this law? I have been made to feel at times that I was a lost sinner, but I believe that I was called to repentance of my sins, and that I found no relief until I was made to hope that God had, for Christ's sake, forgiven my sins. Jesus said that he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. This being his mission in the world, his call must be obeyed, for, "Where the word of a king is, there is power." Jesus again declares the quickening power of his voice when he said, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." There is a sense in which the people of God are dead, and Paul evidently refers to the same condition of the people of God, when writing to the church at Ephesus, he said, "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sins." Hence we can see the necessity of the new birth which Jesus said must take place to see and enter the kingdom of God. A birth signifies a deliverance from one state or condition to another; thus by the new birth we are delivered from our state of bondage under the law into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Again, Paul said to the brethren at Colosse, "And you being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses." By

these Scriptures we see the effects of the new birth, is to raise the people of God from bondage and death; as David said, "To take them from the dunghill, and cause them to sit among princes." Paul again said, "Whom he did foreknow them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." Is it not true that he foreknew his people, as he foreknew the sufferings of Christ, in eternity before he came to endure them? I will say here that holy eternal children of God, if such beings ever existed, which they did not, would not have needed to be conformed to the image of the Son of God, for such ones would have been already in his image to begin with.

Our God looked through the intervening ages of time, and beheld his children, his ransomed people, clothed in the righteousness of Jesus, and saved by his death and resurrection from their sins. Peter seems to present this thought when writing to the strangers scattered abroad; he says that they "Are elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Christ." I have thought that it was through election and sanctification, that we enter into experimental relationship with Christ, for Paul said, "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Again Paul said, "Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." I understand the Lord speaks these words to his people here, in these bodies of flesh and bones. But while they still inhabit a body of flesh, it is declared, "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

Dear brother Beebe, I submit this to your disposal.

Your brother,

W. H. GILMORE.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I received the following letter from sister Julia Bissett, at South River, N. J., and think it good matter to publish in the SIGNS. I met Elder Goble once in New York, in 1857, and heard him several times. Also in 1865, and heard him once, and I tried to preach to the church he served.

Your brother,

SILAS H. DURAND.

NEW YORK, December, 1863.

MISS FRANCES COLEMAN—VERY DEAR FRIEND:—Through a number of channels I have learned of your long and great indisposition of body, and through sister Gilmore, I am informed of your troubles of mind, and that you requested an interest in my supplications at a throne of mercy. I assure you, dear Frances; that I feel interested in your present, future and eternal welfare, and as God shall enable me, I will not forget you when I pray. But to pray aright is as much heaven's gift as is spiritual life itself. I have thought that a short letter from me at such a crisis, and that upon the exercises of a truly gracious soul, might be acceptable, and perhaps of some benefit to you.

Then firstly, to know ourselves is a great part of the Holy Spirit's teaching, yea, it is a great part of our salvation. Hence Christ says, "Take heed to yourselves."—Mark xiii. 9. Paul says, "Examine yourselves."—2 Cor. xiii. 5. The same apostle says again, "For if a man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself."—Gal. vi. 3. Again, "Let no man deceive himself."

1 Cor. iii. 18. Paul again testifies, "Let no man deceive you with vain words." —Eph. v. 6. John says, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."—John i. 8. It would then appear certainly from all these solemn warnings and declarations, First, We naturally do not know ourselves. Second, We may be deceived when we are calculating upon a sure understanding of ourselves. And third, that it is a great blessing to rightly know ourselves. Then it is a knowledge that we do not bring into the world with us, for speaking of that Paul testifies, We brought nothing into the world, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out of it. (Tim. vi. 7.) It is not a human production, for every kind must produce after its kind, and our blessed Lord taught, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." —John iii. 6. And the apostle Paul declares that the world by wisdom knew not God. It is incommunicable; one cannot give it to another, no! not even to their nearest and dearest friend. Paul had a great desire for the salvation of Israel. Now he had a great desire, and they great zeal, yet this peculiar knowledge could not be communicated even by Paul himself. (See Rom. x. 1–3.) This knowledge, our Savior describes himself, as follows, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." —John xvii. 3.

In this great knowledge the saved must know themselves first and principally as lost. What a wonderful term, "Lost." Yes, lost to all intents and purposes as respects anything in themselves which can be spiritually good and acceptable to God, or that can emanate from themselves, by which they can save themselves, or assist in, promote or bring about their own salvation. Till such knowledge is given us by the Holy Spirit, we never feel the weight nor know the import of that word, "LOST." O, dreadful word! O, wretched state when this is brought home to the soul, and opened and explained by the Holy Spirit.

The first thing the Holy Spirit gives in this great work is life, then begins great, strong and protracted strugglings. The life is instantaneous. The conflicts may be days, weeks, months, years, before the soul receives evidences sufficiently clear to rest upon comfortably, or so that he can say, "My beloved is mine and I am his." In these exercises between the quickening of the soul, and the time of its receiving the evidence of sealed pardon, and the spirit of adoption whereby it cries Abba, Father, there are great and varied thoughts, commotions, desires, workings and conclusions. Its first thoughts are, Something must be done, I must not live as I have done. It desires most earnestly to forsake sin, serve God, keep his law, escape hell, and go to heaven. O, what plannings for future amendment of life, of doing better; what resolutions are formed, vows made, times appointed, and works commenced, but alas, in the summing up, all alike prove a total failure. Now comes the test. I have seen and felt myself a sinner, a great offender in the sight of God and heaven; I have tried my best to help myself do better, live differently, and prepare to meet my God; I have tried my best to become a real christian, and now exclaims the troubled soul, "I would give the whole world if I had it could I be a christian, yea, I would part with everything for leave to call Jesus my Savior, but alas, it is not for such as I to have the privilege. I try to pray, but cannot; I try to repent, but cannot. O,

this polluted heart, hard, flinty, unrelenting and unfeeling. "Of feeling all things show some sign, but this unfeeling heart of mine." I try to think upon things that concern my eternal welfare, but even then, what wanderings of heart, what thoughts, like the fool's eye, to the ends of the world, what strange mixtures within, and what stupidity. It would even seem sometimes that not thoughts adequate to natural death, let alone an eternal one; to the death of the body, when instead, it is the death of both soul and body in hell. "O, wretched man that I am!" I cannot deliver myself, angels cannot deliver me, and I feel that God will not; the leper's condition and prayer are mine, "Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean."—Matt. viii. 2. Peter's condition also is mine, beginning to sink he cried, saying, "Lord, save me." —Matt. xiv. 30. Alas, I am undone, I am out of conceit with myself, and of all I am inwardly and outwardly, and of all I think, say or do; I have nothing that I can rest upon, or hope for in myself. O, how empty, stripped and helpless I am. *Lost, lost, lost,* sets forth my real condition.

Now, Frances, this is the character Jesus Christ came to save. Let us have his own words upon this subject, "For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."—Luke xix. 10. This is the very character, and there is no other. Now observe, what a blessing it is to truly know that we are lost. What a blessing that he lets them work themselves out of all human material, before he manifests his love, so that he shall have all the praise of their salvation. When they are brought to the right place, in the right time, he hastens to show himself their God and deliverer. Such a soul can never, no never, be lost eternally, for these he came to seek and to save, he knows who they are, what they are, and where they are, he comes to them, blessed doctrine, for they feel that they are the very characters that Jesus describes in Matt. xi. 5. They are blind, lame, deaf, &c.

Dear Frances, does the foregoing in any of its particulars describe your case? Do you see, have you seen yourself just such a sinner? If so, mark what I tell you, it was never given to you to fit you for hell, but for heaven. And the heavenly manifestations of God's love and favor will be given, for grace will complete what grace begins. But here I must leave the subject, not half told.

Now may the God of love and grace bless your needy, and I trust, waiting soul; may his blessed hand wipe away your tears, his voice speak joy to your heart, and bid darkness and sorrow flee away, and his grace remove the burden of sin, and make drops of sacred sorrow rise to rivers of delight.

Farewell, I hope yet to see you in this life, if not allowed this, still I hope to meet you in heaven.

I remain as ever, your sincere friend,

JAMES C. GOBLE.

[THIS letter written forty years ago, speaks forth the same doctrine and experience that is the hope and comfort of believers still. The things of this world may change, but the God of grace, and the grace of God, and the need of that grace does not change. God's servants called by him to comfort the afflicted, and to feed the hungry soul still speak the same things spoken by this his servant, forty years ago. We do not doubt that it will prove of interest to those who may read it now, as no doubt it was a comfort to the one to whom it was written.—ED.]

NEW YORK, May 20, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—The inclosed letter has been of much comfort to sister Hellings during her enforced seclusion, and since she loaned it to me it has comforted many others. It is gospel from beginning to end. I have her consent to show the letter to others, and the most effective way of reaching many whom I know will appreciate it is through the SIGNS.

How comforting is the hope that it is in the trial of our faith that Jesus appears: that it is thus we receive the salvation of our souls: that in this way he dwells among us and we behold his glory, full of grace and truth. There is no other way; no other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved.

Sister Hellings is improving as favorably as can be expected, but increase in strength is slow.

Your brother,

JOHN McCONNELL.

WAVERLY, Pa., Feb. 18, 1903.

DEAR SISTER HELLINGS:—I learned for the first through Elder John McConnell, whom I met at the funeral of Deacon Wilson Kugler, last Saturday, that you had been confined to the bed for several weeks with a broken hip. I cannot describe my feelings, and when brother John said, "You must write to her," I thought, What can I write that will be of any comfort to her? And now as I am writing I feel very sensibly my inability to express one word of comfort, but you know I would if I could. We can only be of use and comfort to each other as we have passed through the same affliction. It certainly must have been a dark, dark cloud to you; but you remember that when the Savior left the sad disciples he was taken up in a cloud, and they were told that as they had seen him ascend, in like manner would he come again, or descend.

Dear sister, you have lived to prove many times the truth of this: deep, dark, mysterious trials have been your lot, and could you know at the time that it was the appearing of your Savior how different you would feel: in fact there would be no cloud. But instead of this you are left to cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" at times. Can it be possible that this is the appearing of my Savior, my Redeemer, my Elder Brother, my more than friend? Yes, my dear sister, does not his word assure us that he maketh the clouds his chariot? and in this wonderful chariot he comes to those he loves, and he also gives them the hidden treasures of darkness for an inheritance. There is nothing in nature that manifests the awful majesty, power and glory of God more than a heavy, black thunder-cloud. We stand in awe and as worms of the dust tremble, not knowing what the result will be; but as it passes and the bright sunshine appears all nature seems smiling and happy. In the dark and mysterious dealings of God the old patriarch could see no Savior or salvation in the clouds: "All these things are against me." Dear old soul! Joseph is killed, as he supposes, by wild beasts; there is famine in the land; Benjamin is in prison way down in Egypt; what agony must have filled the breast of that father. All these things were against him. Could he have seen God in this, there would have been no cloud, but dear old Jacob must have this very trial, and express himself just as he did so that a record might be kept for the comfort of God's dear people in ages to come. When the time came that the scene must

change in appearance, he saw God's hinder parts; God was passing before him in his glory all the dark night of sorrow and distress; he saw him but did not know or recognize him. Yes, dear sister, your Savior comes in a cloud, and when engulfed in clouds of distress, in your poor soul you are living with Jesus; yea, the very life of Jesus is manifest in your mortal body. He was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. In all our afflictions he is afflicted, and to live and be near to Jesus we must be in the valley, in sorrow, in distress; sometimes saying in mind, All thy waves and billows go over me, I sink in deep mire where there is no standing. The clouds that Jesus comes in are always freighted with salvation, and we have need of all that he comes in. We do not know what we need, therefore we do not know what to pray for, but God our Father knows, and that is enough.

I hope and trust you are realizing the strength of the Lord and his manifest presence though it must be in a cloud, and may your heart and mind be comforted with the thought that Jesus your Savior did take the cup of salvation, and drink it to its bitter dregs, calling upon the name of the Lord; so we to be in fellowship with our Savior in his sufferings must partake of the same, and we, too, will call upon the name of the Lord. Little do we know of the sufferings of Jesus, but that little makes us love him as we see those sufferings manifest in his people. Could we love his people with that peculiar love if we did not see in them the marks of the sufferings of Christ?

Yes, dear sister, he is continually coming in the clouds: his second coming I believe is now to you and all his people, and he will continue to come until the last vessel of mercy is wafted to their eternal home. Should any poor, sorrowing, sin-sick soul call on you, remember me to them in love. I send my unbounded love and fellowship to you. I expect to be in New York the fourth Sunday in March: hope to call and see you then if you are strong enough to see friends.

Your unworthy brother,

D. M. VAIL.

RATON, New Mexico, April 7, 1903.

TO THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, HOPEWELL, MERCER CO., N. J.—DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—For a length of time you as a body have been on my mind. Very many of you remembered me in my loneliness after the death of my beloved sister. To each and all who so kindly remembered me, I would hereby return my thanks, and desire each writer to receive this as a reply to his or her highly appreciated letter, and I would be pleased to hear from any of them again.

Before closing this I would beg to call to your remembrance the truth that our God is unchangeable in goodness, unlimited in power. Despite the sinfulness of feeble man, despite his waywardness and folly, Israel's God blesses daily and hourly his people, while they acknowledge themselves as altogether unworthy. Ever mindful of the wants and weaknesses of his children, our heavenly Father watches over and protects the feeblest of his chosen ones, and although they wander afar on cold, barren mountains, and seek for food even among husks, he still remembers them, and in his own good time he will gather them to himself. His by creation, his by redemption, his by adoption, himself omnipotent, who can pluck them from his hand?

Not all the powers of earth and hell combined are able to hurt one of the elect

vessels of mercy, for we are assured that "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." The building depends for its stability on its foundation, and if the foundation is sure, the edifice is safe. In this spiritual building the foundation is Jesus Christ; he is the foundation, the chief corner-stone; not only a corner-stone, but an elect and precious corner-stone; he has conquered hell, death and the grave, and all things are subservient to him, and this "sure foundation" has a seal. By a seal we understand the emblem of power. The royal seal of the king carries with it much weight, but the seal here spoken of is far beyond the seal of earthly potentates; it is the infinite knowledge of the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He who in his infinite power, knowledge and wisdom, spake into existence from nothing the mighty universe, knows, condescends to know, each and every vessel of his mercy. He knoweth not merely their names, but he knoweth their sorrows, temptations, trials, weaknesses and their sinfulness; he knows all these things, and he bears their sins, and their infirmities; he is ever a present help in the hour of trouble, and he succors his loved ones in ever hour of deep trial.

"The Lord knoweth them that are his." If he knows them, who can destroy that knowledge? Glorious thought, known of God; known of the mighty Jehovah. Men call it honorable to be known by the great and the noble of men, but trifling and insignificant are the mighty of earth compared with the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, whose glory fills the heavens, but who knoweth his own feeble ones.

Not only does he know them, but he is able to rescue them; not only able, but also willing; he gathereth his flock in his arms; he carries the weak and feeble in his bosom. Be comforted, ye weak and trembling ones, though you cannot run with vigor, fear not, yours is a safe resting-place, carried in the bosom of your Father, your Redeemer, your Savior.

How strong the bond of union between the church and her God! Not only his by creation, but also by redemption; not purchase alone, for the stranger may purchase, but the Redeemer must be the near Kinsman. A stranger could not redeem of the same seed, brethren of the same family must the Redeemer be, and Christ is the elder Brother; he is the Husband; in virtue of that office her debts were his, and he paid to the uttermost farthing; he canceled all on Calvary's mount.

But an important question arises in the mind of each that feels an interest in this subject, Am I known? Am I his, or am I not?

May God give each of his loved ones a portion of his Spirit, to witness in their hearts that they are his.

Yours, I trust, in gospel bonds,

ELIZABETH H. BOGGS.

[THE above letter from sister Boggs is published not only because of the excellent matter which it contains, but for the reason that very many all over the eastern section of the country will be glad to hear from one whom they formerly were associated with in very pleasant relations. This letter was read to the church at the last church meeting, and was received with deep feelings of gladness by all who were present. Many afterwards expressed their loving remembrance of the writer, and the earnest wish of their hearts that they might be favored to meet her again.—C.]

THE RESURRECTION OF DRY BONES.

(Ezekiel xxxvii.)

I HAVE been thinking a great deal of late about preaching, and of preachers. There are so many that the world calls preachers, and so much of what the world calls preaching, I hardly know how to shape my thoughts concerning the valley of dry bones that Ezekiel saw in a vision. In commenting on this all-important subject, there are several things to be taken into consideration.

First. The hand of the Lord was upon Ezekiel; he was under the sovereign control and will of God, and was carried out in the Spirit of the Lord, not carried out in the fleshly will of Ezekiel. Dear brethren, should a preacher go out to preach, even in this day and time, only under the hand and Spirit of the Lord?

Second. This vision embraced a valley full of bones, and these bones were very dry; they were then in a complete lifeless condition, representing the sinner as being completely dead in trespasses and sin. Then comes the all-absorbing and serious question that the Lord asked of Ezekiel, "Can these bones live?" How strikingly true was Ezekiel's answer to the Lord, "O Lord God thou knowest."

Brethren, why is it that all that are called preachers after the world's fashion, will not and cannot answer this question truly as Ezekiel did? The Lord here intended for Ezekiel to answer for himself, and all other true servants of God, thus showing the complete foreknowledge of God in all things. God certainly did know, and even foreknew, every dead sinner of Adam's race that would be born again.

The reader of this article will gain a heap of information concerning preaching and preachers, by reading the ~~forty~~ Thirty-sixth chapter of Ezekiel, from the seventeenth verse on to the last of the chapter. As these bones represented the whole house of Israel in the thirty-seventh chapter, so the thirty-sixth chapter, from the seventeenth verse on, shows how God gathers up his people from among the heathen, and brings them into their own land. It seems here that the Lord does not convert the heathen, but it seems to me that he converts Israel from the error of her ways, and brings them into their own land. In the next place we will see how much power belongs to the preacher, by seeing how much Ezekiel did in the resurrection of these dry bones. Ezekiel, under the mighty power and Spirit of the Lord, delivers the message of the Lord; whatever Ezekiel speaks to these bones, it is the message or word of the Lord by Ezekiel. The Lord here tells Ezekiel how this work is performed. Ezekiel is to call on these bones to hear the word of the Lord. It seems that Ezekiel was to prophecy or preach, trusting in the Lord as to final results.

Brethren, I have tried to preach the word of the Lord many times in life, but I never could be decided to say what I have heard others say, that they had no message only to the living ones. Then on the other hand, I could not tell dead sinners that there was a chance for all dead sinners of Adam's race, knowing, as I think I know, that God does nothing by chance. Then in verse five, the Lord tells these bones, in the presence of Ezekiel, how he as a sovereign being can work, and none can hinder; that he would cause breath to enter into them, and flesh and sinews to come on the bones, and skin to cover over the whole surface. Verse nine represents Israel in a spiritual condition, and as the whole house of Israel, which is a beautiful figure of all God's elect that will finally stand before

God's throne, justified through the merits of Christ.

Now a few questions to the readers of the times. Did you ever think why it was that none of the bones of those heathen that Israel was taken from among, were seen in this vision, and as some say, have a chance of salvation the same as the elect? The heathen nations that Ezekiel speaks of were not even under the moral law of the ten commandments. Paul says they are a law unto themselves, and Israel never was reckoned or numbered with any of those nations. Yet I believe that the Lord knows them that are his, in every nation, kindred and tongue. One cannot be added to the number in Ezekiel's vision, which is a true type of all the saved in the Lord and of the Lord: "Whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." Ezekiel shows how all of Israel will be finally conformed to the image of Jesus, even in the resurrection from their graves. Brethren and sisters, I am now in my eightieth year of life, and the sweetest and most comforting thing I can think of is the resurrection of this poor, old, vile body, and to be fashioned just like Christ's glorious body. No wonder the poet says,

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ears!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fears."

I have had many sorrows, and many wounds, but yet in my old age, when the good Spirit enables me to get down like a little child at the feet of my blessed Savior, it is then that I feel that all is well, and that I feel that I want to obey the gentle voice of my Savior.

Dear brethren, this may be my last letter to the SIGNS, God only knows. When it goes well with you, pray for me.

J. C. SHELTON.

BROOKSVILLE, Ala., Mar. 22, 1903.

BOWDOIN CENTRE, Maine, April 8, 1903.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—I send you with this a letter that I received a short time ago from brother Joseph C. Clark, of Freeport, Maine, which I think contains the doctrine that you approve of, and if you think it will feed any of the flock of God, give it space in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have not brother Clark's consent to publish his letter, but I do not think he would object to let the world know that he believes in Jesus. Brother Clark is deacon of the church at Bowdoinham, Maine.

Yours in hope,

Z. M. BEAL.

FREEPORT, Maine, March 2, 1903.

DEAR ELDER BEAL:—I was glad to get your letter, and could not keep the tears back as I read it, for it touched a soft spot in my heart that seemed to soften my feelings, and caused a feeling of hope and joy to come over me. We read, "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Do we love one another for the truth's sake? Sometimes I think I do, but I am a strange being, full of vanity and wickedness, inclined to evil; there seems to be no soundness in me, full of putrefying sores, all my works are vanity. I experience a good deal of a feeling of unrest, and how much I realize that God's ways are not our ways, and I am glad they are not like my ways, for I hate my ways, I am ashamed of them; they do not give me peace, and just now I can remember when all was peace with me. How sweet it is to believe in one who loves with an everlasting love, and who has all power in heaven and in earth, and does whatsoever seemeth good in his sight. O, dear brother in Christ, what should we do if we did not have

such a Savior, one who never changes. "He is in one mind, and none can turn him." I find that I change; sometimes I feel like trying to praise God, gladness is in my heart, and I feel to trust in him, knowing that he can quiet the storms, and then in a few moments I fall away into unbelief, and feel that I am not a child of God at all. Yet I feel sure that God has a people, and that they are safe in him, for he has done the will of his Father, and has saved all the Father has given him; he has finished the work, there is nothing more to do, and why am I so uneasy? Can I see what Paul meant when he said, "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members"?

People are dying around us every day, and it causes me to think that just a little while and my body will be laid away. And shall I be free from sin? This seems too glorious for me, but I know that God's people will be free, for God cannot lie; his people will be brought before him without spot or blemish, their case has been tried, God has paid double for all their sins, there is no power that can rise up against them, for he has put all things under his feet. Will the day of death be a welcome day to the poor, tired sinner? Dear old sister Noble will soon know, for her journey is most ended, and what a glorious meeting to reign with that Conqueror who has conquered death, hell and the grave. Although I know our loss will be her gain, yet I feel sad when I think how few there are about us who stand fast to that doctrine once delivered to the saints. I often find myself arguing with people, for the way looks so plain to me that I think I can make them see it; how vain. Would not the conversion man could give be like all his works? But God can teach a man that which the world cannot give, neither can it take away; this is one thought that gives me hope, for it seems to me that something has been taught to me that the world has not taught.

Elder Beal, I think I love the doctrine of grace which I have heard you so plainly set forth. Your preaching ascribes all good gifts to God. You ask how I am prospering in this world? I will say, much better than I deserve; my health is good at present, and all my family are well, and we find plenty to do, and like the world are rushing along with a greedy disposition. You say that it sometimes appears to you that you have been held captive by Satan for the past ten years. Do we have to pass through such experiences to teach us that we do not know our right hand from our left? How much I miss brother Clough; he was one that stood fast in the doctrine I love, and always seemed to be on the watch that no false doctrine got into the church. It is my prayer that God will raise up people with the knowledge of the truth planted in them, and that hungering and thirsting for the truth may lead them to the church. My desire is that God will be merciful to all his people, and if they know not which way to turn, that he will reveal the right way to them, and I know he will, although his instructions may be different from the way we look for them, yet he can make his people to trust in him. I think I want God's people to be blessed, but I dare not count myself as one. My only cry for myself is, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner."

This is a rambling letter, and is not worth your time to read it, but I was glad to hear from you. Give my love to sister Beal, and remember me, for I am a poor sinner.

J. C. CLARK.

"PRAY WITHOUT CEASING. IN EVERY THING GIVE THANKS."

(1 Thessalonians v. 17, 18.)

When I first became a member of the church I thought that as I journeyed along the christian pathway I would be getting better and better all the time until finally I would be more like Jesus, and that my whole nature would be changed so that I would have no more trouble on account of my sinfulness, and before I professed a hope I had much fault to find with other christian people, and said, "If I could not be a better christian than many others that I knew, I would never make a profession, but now, after twenty-two years, I can only say, I have certainly failed in being any more free from sin than at the beginning, for as one in the Bible said, "All these commandments have I kept from my youth up." Yet how could I have been led to trust in Jesus, as my salvation, my all and in all, if I could have done the good that I would? then I should have been puffed up with vanity and pride in my own works. God is not mocked, he will not give his glory to another, he will not suffer his faithfulness to fail.

Some months after I united with the church, I felt very much cast down and discouraged, and as if I was such a sinner that I had no right to any of the promises of God, nor any right to pray to him, and although I lived more carefully every day, yet every day seemed to condemn me more and more; I read the Bible, but could find nothing to comfort me. One evening the words, "Seek and ye shall find," came to me, and they seemed like a command to me, I took the Bible and found the words, and although there seemed no real comfort in them, yet it seemed that they were to be obeyed the same as any other command of the Bible, and I felt as though I must read and seek, although every word condemned me. Then I came to the words in Isaiah i. 13, "Bring no more vain oblations: incense is an abomination unto me." I saw that I had been trying to appear before him in my own righteousness, and that I had been looking to this instead of that best robe of righteousness which he had wrought out on Calvary, and in which alone I could appear before the Father's throne. "Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto his God; and he will have mercy upon him." We are to forsake even our thoughts, remembering that they are vain, and but that incense which is an abomination unto God. As it seemed to me, referring to the words at the head of this letter, we are to remember that it is only his blood that cleanses us from our sins.

Then the words in Isaiah liv. 7, came, "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer. For this is as the waters of Noah unto me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee." And there are more of just such sure and precious promises. How sweet to remember his everlasting covenant. Should we not be thankful for it at all times? Even though we are cast down and in darkness, remembering the former things of old, we have been made to rejoice in the Rock of our salvation, and pray to God at all times, for he has sworn that he will have mercy upon his

people, and even though we may feel too unworthy to take his holy name upon our sin-polluted lips, there must of necessity be a prayer in the heart that God will have mercy upon us, and remove the stony heart, and give us a heart to do his will, and this may be just the prayer to comfort some other weary soul,

So many burdened ones there are
Close journeying by thy side,
Assist, encourage, comfort them;
Thine own deep anguish hide.

What though thy trials may seem great?
Thy strength is known to God,
And pathways steep and rugged, lead
To pastures green and broad.

May hope, like summer's bright rainbow,
Scatter thy falling tears,
And may God's precious promises
Dispel thy anxious fears.

May we all be enable to take our cross daily, and learn of him, for he is meek and lowly of heart, and we shall find rest to our souls.

From your sister,

NANCY M. OWEN.

COTTON HILL, Ill., May 16, 1903.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—I read your statement of your poor health and afflictions, and I assure you I most heartily sympathize with you. I would say to our brethren that I have watched very closely the fund to pay indebtedness on SIGNS, and I had hoped to see the full amount, one thousand dollars, raised, but when contributions for half a month's came to one dollar, I gave up. The call has been nobly responded to, and now, dear brethren, I would say to those that have advanced fifty dollars and less, Could we not advance a little more, to free the SIGNS, which we all love so dearly, from debt?

My wife, Louisa, has very poor health, and as she thinks she will never be well enough to drive her old horse, fifteen years old, she sold him for fifty dollars, and she denotes ten dollars, and I fifteen dollars of inclosed check for twenty-five dollars.

Dear brethren, I am no millionaire, but I have been greatly blessed, and I feel what I have the Lord has given me.

Your unworthy brother,

PHILEMON STOUT.

[WHILE we do, we trust, fully appreciate the kindness of the brethren and friends in their magnanimous liberality, and sincerely thank them for their encouragement, both by expressions of approbation, and by financial aid, yet it is with a feeling of embarrassment that we publish letters of the nature of the above letter from our beloved brother Philemon Stout, fearing some may interpret them as appeals for further assistance. But as brother Stout's letter is written in the main to the patrons of the SIGNS, we feel that it would appear very ungrateful in us to refuse to publish it, hoping our friends will not attribute a selfish motive to us in so doing.

While we, at the request of brother Leonard, gave a full statement of the financial condition of the SIGNS, we have never felt that our feeble efforts in conducting it have been adequate returns for the liberal support given it by its patrons, much less that they were under any obligations to send us donations. Yet we must confess that their generosity has relieved us of much worry and anxiety about the commercial part of the publication. The present year is the first year since our beloved father's death that we have reached the middle of the volume without having to borrow money to continue the publication, but thus far we have been relieved of that embarrassment, and we would that we could fully convey to our kind benefactors the relief

it has been to us to not have to be worrying about how we would meet our financial obligations; for in our enfeebled condition if we had not been thus relieved, it seems we must have been well nigh discouraged. But as it is, we have again been made to realize how much better the Lord has been to us than all our fears, not only in putting it, as we trust, in the hearts of the friends of the SIGNS to assist us, but at this writing our physical condition seems considerably improved, although we cannot expect to ever again be well.

To brother Stout, who has again so generously contributed to the fund for the liquidation of the debt against the SIGNS, and to all who have so liberally donated to that fund, we can but repeat, We do most sincerely thank you! And our prayer is that we may be given discernment from above, and ability to so conduct the publication of the SIGNS, that all who have contributed to its support may never have reason to regret their liberality.—B.]

BLUM, Texas, May 24, 1903.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—I wish to say through the SIGNS that sister Lydia C. Ray has had a desire to visit the eastern associations for some time, and several of us have urged her to make the visit this year, and she will start in a few days. Sister Ray is in fellowship with the Old School Baptists of Texas, and we hope she will be kindly received by the brethren and sisters of the east. Our sister has suffered much for the truth's sake, and has learned obedience by the things she has suffered.

May God bless your meetings, is our prayer.

Yours in hope,

W. L. ROGERS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1903.

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EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REWARDS.

IN what sense does the Lord reward his obedient people, as is so frequently said in the word?

Some time since brother Elder H. J. Redd, of Riverview, Alabama, wrote us with regard to this subject, calling attention to the frequent use of the words "reward" and "punishment" in the Scriptures. He said that his mind was not clear on this subject, and asked for some reflections from us regarding it, and in a second letter he referred to the parable of the laborers in the vineyard, as perhaps throwing light upon the subject.

Perhaps we cannot throw any light upon the subject by anything that we may say, but still we have decided views upon it, and have had for a long time, and feel willing to present what is in our mind, for the consideration of all who may read.

It is first of all certain that the word reward is used in the Scriptures many times, in all, nearly a hundred. In a few places it is used representing the relation of one man with another, but in most places it is used as presenting the relation between God and man. Sometimes it is used to present the punishments inflicted upon the utterly wicked among men, and

nations, and sometimes it presents God's chastisements of his disobedient people, and sometimes it presents God's blessings bestowed upon his obedient children. The word is a Bible word, and the truth presented by it is a most important truth, and it is well to consider what it signifies, and in what sense it is used. Of course the chief thought in the mind of brother Redd is the sense in which it is said that the people of God are rewarded for their obedience, but before presenting what we have to say concerning this, we desire to call attention for a moment to the word as used regarding the reward of the wicked. When used with regard to the transgressions of men, whether of the elect or the non-elect, it always presents the idea of merit, or rather, of demerit. That is, the thought always is that men have deserved the punishment of their sins. Paul expresses this when he says, "The wages of sin is death." The word "wages," always means, when thus used, that one has earned the wages that he receives. Our sins always deserve wrath or death. The Bible so teaches, and all christian experience, in conviction of sin, so teaches the subject of that conviction. The feeling of the convicted sinner is, How can God be just and save a sinner like me? He says,

> "Lord, should thy judgments grow severe,
> I am condemned, but thou art clear;
> And if my soul were sent to hell,
> Thy righteous law approves it well."

But we need not pause to dwell upon this part of the subject; there is no dispute with regard to the ill desert of men; it is not questioned that all men by nature deserve the wrath of God, and that even the people of God in their transgressions justly earn the sorrows and corruption they reap for their transgressions. The difficulty in the minds of many is not here, but with regard to the rewards of the obedient among the people of God. What do such Scriptures as these mean? "In keeping them [the judgments] there is great reward." "There is a reward for the righteous." "I am thy exceeding great reward." "Ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance." "Great is your reward in heaven." "He shall in no wise lose his reward." "The laborer is worthy of his reward." "Shall receive the reward of the righteous." "My reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." "He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." These and many other Scriptures declare that God does reward his people, but in what sense and upon what ground is this reward given them? Is it as all Arminians, from the Romish church down through all the daughters of Rome, including Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists and New School Baptists teach, upon the ground of human merit? Does God say to any man in the reward given him, Thou hast been profitable to me, and hast accumulated a degree of merit, which I now acknowledge and reward? This is in substance the proud thought of all natural religionists, who know not the plague of the heart, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the truth that do what we will, sin is mixed with it all. This was the feeling of the proud Saul of Tarsus, together with all the sect of the Pharisees to which he belonged. This was the force which gave direction to the prayer of the Pharisee in the prayer which is put by the Savior into his mouth, "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men." This is the thought of all who claim to have done great things for God, and that therefore they have claim upon his promise of reward. But is this the meaning of the word "reward," as used in the Scriptures? If so,

why does the Savior teach his disciples, "So likewise ye, after ye have done all, count yourselves unprofitable servants. Say we have done only what was our duty to do?" What does this mean but that even where all the commandments may be done, even to the loving God with every power within us, and our neighbor as ourself, there still is no merit in the doer, and that he can claim no reward upon the ground of merit.

So likewise the language of Paul before alluded to, conveys the same thought. "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Notice the difference purposely made by the holy Spirit between *wages* and *gift*. Sin, he means to teach us, earns wages, and we deserve the wages, but our righteousness does not earn eternal life, though eternal life is given through righteousness; righteousness not our own, but in Christ, and wrought out for us by him. Eternal life is a gift, a gift pure and simple, and eternal life does not mean alone that unending life that is beyond the grave, but life as received here and felt here, and which produces in us all holy affections, desires and works. So Jesus in perfect harmony said, "I give unto them eternal life." Notice he said, "I give it;" I give it here and now; they that believe, already have it; they have already passed from death unto life, and in the present gift of eternal life is included all heavenly graces, and all heavenly communion with God, and with his son Jesus Christ, through the Spirit. The gift of God then is not only eternal life considered in itself, but it includes all that eternal life secures to us, all that is included in it of that which is heavenly. Therefore not only a future heaven, but the present heavenly places, are gifts from God. There is not one moment of spiritual light, life, joy, communion, peace or rest, that does not come to us as a gift pure and simple, as testified in the pregnant words, "The gift of God is eternal life."

In last chapter of 1 Chronicles, in the prayer of David, there is a statement which also throws great light upon this matter. In verse fourteen David utters an expression of wonder concerning himself and his people that they should *be able* to offer so willingly for the building of the house of the Lord. In this prayer he thanks and praises the glorious name of the Lord for the *ability* to give *willingly*. What does this mean, if not that the willingness to give was of the Lord? This willingness was included in the gift of God to them, and having received this willingness to give, they gave acceptably to God, and David thanks and blesses God for both the giving of the people, and the willingness to give. What merit was there in such giving as this? If any praise must be rendered, David gave it to the right source, the Lord of heaven and earth. If any blessing accrued to the people who had given so willingly, it was not a reward of debt or merit, but just as the light of the sun in the heavens is accompanied by its heat also. David in his prayer waives all right to any reward of merit for himself and for his people.

Brother Redd referred to the parable of the laborers in the vineyard as probably throwing light upon the subject. To our mind that parable sets forth the true principles which underlie all the rewards which the people of God receive on account of obedience to the commandments of God. We feel to call brief attention to the one prominent thought which stands clearly forth in that parable, and which shows the true nature of the rewards given to the humble and

obedient people of God. It is this, to those who were hired at the first hour, the Lord gave the due payment for legal service rendered. They are represented as having made a bargain with the Lord of the vineyard. These represent all legal servants, and their service represents all legal service, and the reward represents all legal rewards, but these have no place in the gospel. Those who came into the vineyard at the third, sixth, ninth and eleventh hours, made no bargain; it was simply said to them that they should go into the vineyard, and whatever was right they should receive. They desired to labor in the vineyard, and had no thought of making any bargain. At the end, to them was given each a penny, as well as to the first. When the first objected the Lord said to them each, "Friend, I do thee no wrong, didst thou not agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way." All was lawful and right, but there was no grace in it all. But to all the others gracious rewards are given; they could not claim that they had earned the penny; if they received it they must praise ever after the free grace and mercy of the giver. The Master of the vineyard did not owe them the penny, and it was not given as though they had earned it. He said to the first, "Is thine eye evil because I am good?" It was goodness which gave the penny to him that had labored but the one hour, and that in the cool of the day. Here is grace and gracious rewards. Here is presented most strikingly the exact opposition that exists between the law and the gospel, between law service and gospel service, In the gospel it is here clearly set forth, there is no room for any reward of merit or debt. As brother Redd suggested, this parable is fully in point with regard to this matter of rewards.

But still further, the language of Paul in Romans iv. 4, 5, clearly presents the true meaning of the rewards of the gospel to the children of God who serve him not in the letter, but in the Spirit. He says, "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Paul here shows the radical difference between the law and the gospel, with regard to the obedience rendered to both the one, and the other. Under the law all is of debt, but the contrast implies that under the gospel all is of grace. The reward of the law is reckoned not of grace, but of debt, but the reward of the gospel is not reckoned of debt, but of grace. All the rewards mentioned under the gospel are then of grace. There is no room in grace for any human merit to come in anywhere, therefore there is no room for any other than gracious rewards. This is in full agreement with the parable of the laborers mentioned above. It seems to us that this one expression from Romans fixes the sense in which rewards are to be understood under the gospel. Unprofitable servants receive of their Lord's bounty without in any sense deserving it. It is a most gracious privilege to give even a cup of cold water to a disciple in the name of a disciple, and then when this privilege is bestowed upon a believer, another also follows, and that is the reward of a disciple, but all is of grace, both the cup given, and the reward associated with it. Every spiritually-minded child of God blesses and praises God that he is able to with willing mind and heart give the cup of cold water, and then blesses God for the added blessing of the disciples' reward. He is and feels

himself to be doubly blessed by grace.

It seems to us that all those scriptural expressions to which at the beginning of this editorial we referred, are covered by this great and blessed gospel principle, viz: rewards of grace, and not of debt. Also that all this is in full harmony with that humility that becomes a child of God, while any other view of the subject of rewards will but serve to feed the pride and vanity and self-righteousness of the human heart.

We leave these thoughts with all who may read them, trusting they may prove of some satisfaction to brother Redd especially. C.

HEALTH IMPROVED.

SINCE we announced in May 1st number of current volume of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that our health was so much worse than for years past, we have received many letters expressing sympathy, and a desire that we might be still spared to labor on the SIGNS, and also expressing a desire to hear from us from time to time concerning our physical condition, as well as concerning our spiritual welfare. For this reason we occupy space to write personally about ourself. While we cannot ever expect to again be well, we are able to inform our inquiring friends that at this writing, (June 3d) and for the past two weeks, we are enjoying improved health, so that we have been able to be in the office several hours nearly every week day, for which we wish we could feel more thankful to the Giver of every good gift, but alas, this ungrateful heart is soon forgetful of blessings bestowed, and distrustful of his future mercies. Even in this present affliction how our cup has been sweetened by the loving sympathy that kind brethren and friends have so feelingly expressed for us. B.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

WINTERSET, Iowa, June 4, 1860.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Brother A. Hood, of this place, put a letter into my hands which he had lately received from Elder N. Gifford, dated "Zionsville, Boone Co., Iowa, May 18th, 1860," in which he (the said Elder) writes as follows:

"We have some new doctrine preached here lately by Benjamin Jones and John F. Johnson and son. I would like to know if it has got as far west as Winterset. I can give you some of the points: They say that the church never was lost, nor defiled, nor contaminated with sin in any way. I have been told that we need not look to any of Adam's posterity for the church, for it was not there. They say that this Adam man is not changed in regeneration, neither in soul, spirit, body, mind or matter. Does not this sound strange, when compared with the gospel, or christian experience? I think it does, and I find no authority for it in the Bible; but we are in an age of progression. If the limits of a letter would admit, I would try to show some of the inconsistencies of this doctrine. Some tell us that Christ only died to redeem these bodies from the grave. As a matter of course, if we never was defiled or contaminated with sin, we need no redemption from it. But it is a pity when Old School Baptists will run into such error: but the leaders of this doctrine are Beebe, Dudley and company. Wilson cannot go the doctrine. I have only given you a sketch of it, &c., leaving it for you to meditate upon."

Brother Beebe, the above is a true copy, and I send it to you by request of my brethren, and we desire you to reply, either in the SIGNS, or by private letter to me, as your judgment may dictate.

Yours in defence of the truth,

BONHAM KESTER.

REPLY.

As our dear brother has been a subscriber and constant reader of the SIGNS for many years, it is not necessary for us to tell him at this late hour that our object in publishing, and the object of our subscribers in patronizing us, has been the general edification of the scattered family of God, the exhibition of the doctrine of God our Savior, and the defence of Bible truth, together with an unsparing exposure of error and delusion. When we embarked in the undertaking, we had not the vanity to flatter ourself

that we could sail over a smooth, unruffled sea, if we kept steadily in view the object of our labor, and the pledge we gave our brethren in regard to the manner in which the SIGNS OF THE TIMES should be conducted; and now, after nearly thirty years experience in our vocation, we cannot say that we have been disappointed. It is true, we have had some opposition from quarters where we did not dream that it existed, and from some who once held up our hands and encouraged our heart in the prosecution of our labors, but such cases have been comparatively few, the sympathies and brotherly aid of the great mass of the old order of Baptists have been constantly with us, as will be inferred from the fact that in the face of all opposition our circulation has steadily increased every year, and is now larger than it has ever before been at the same season of the year since we issued our first number in 1832. If we have had some enemies, we have had many more true, warm-hearted friends, and what is still more blessed, we feel assured that the goodness and mercy of God have followed us and sustained us until the present hour. That we have given no occasion to our enemies to oppose us, or to our friends to censure us, we do not pretend; the very best of our labors have been poor and imperfect, but that our aim and design have been honest, and all our energies employed with a design to the glory of God and the good of his cause, we hesitate not, in the presence and fear of God, to affirm.

As our brethren can witness, we have generally declined to notice the personal assaults which have been made upon us, as we prefer to fill our columns with matter of more interest to the children of God. We have preferred that our name should be cast out as evil, rather than to set up a defence of our person or motives, especially as our readers have a sufficient opportunity to know our views, our doctrine, by reference to the files of our paper for many years. When we have been charged with *new doctrines*, *heresies*, and plots for selfish purposes, we have felt glad that our brethren all over the United States *know* what are our sentiments. There is not, in the United States, a member of the Old School or Primitive Baptist order, whose views on all subjects connected with our faith and order, are better or more fully known than those of the humble editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Twenty-four times a year, during the existence of the present generation, we have been heard from, from the centre to the circumference of our country. Yet almost every year some self-conceited wise-acre has attempted to make it appear that we are an awful and dangerous heretic, and that the Old School Baptists have not the intelligence to know it. Assuming to know more than seven men that can render a reason, they have made themselves ridiculous by assuming more discrimination than the whole fraternity of the old order of Baptists. But we have lived to see scores of those conceited comets arise, flutter and decline to their original nothingness. With a consciousness that the precious cause of God and truth is in better and stronger hands than ours, we have nothing to fear from the bluster of those who have no other idea of rising but by attempting the destruction of those who to them are Mordecais in the gate.

But we intended to refer to the inquiries of Elder Kester. Of the Elder, N. Gifford, whose letter is copied above, we know but little, only what we learn by his letter. It is more than possible that

the design of his *firebrand* was to bring him out of his obscurity into notice, but whatever were his motives, it can hardly be accredited to an honest concern for the truth of God; for had that been his feeling, he would not have attempted to exaggerate or misrepresent the views of such men as Elder Benjamin Jones, John F. Johnson, to say nothing of brother Johnson's son and ourself. The letter bears unmistakable evidence on its face of misrepresentation, and a design to prejudice the minds of brethren in a distant State, against brethren whose praise is in all the churches, as brethren who have spent their lives in their Master's service, who have grown old in their labors in the churches, and in whose character not a blemish can be found; men whose standing in the community, as well as in the church of God, has been untarnished for more than half a century. When men sustaining the reputation of Benjamin Jones, John F. Johnson and Thomas P. Dudley, cannot, in the evening of their long and useful lives be spared the blighting breath of malignant jealousy and slander, we count it, as we doubt not our young brother, Elder Joseph Johnson, does, an honor to have our humbler names classified with theirs, even in bearing reproach and misrepresentation for the sake of the truth. We say the letter bears the evident marks on its face of insincerity and mischief. Had it been otherwise, instead of laboring to spread the report into a distant State, its writer would have sought an opportunity to labor as the gospel directs, to reclaim those veterans of the cross, if he had honestly believed them to be in error. But such labor, we venture to say, he has not taken. We know the brethren implicated too well to believe they have ever uttered the sentiments charged to them, but if they had been strangers to us, when we read that the heresies charged are propagated under the leadership of Beebe, Dudley and company, (which we and all our readers know is false; utterly and unqualifiedly false) how can we believe the other part of his statement against those who are esteemed much better than ourself? Again, in uttering his slander he starts off with a mere inquiry, whether the "new doctrine" has got as far west as Winterset, Iowa? and then, instead of intimating that he desired an answer, closes by saying, "I have only given you a sketch of it, &c., leaving it for you to meditate upon."

But to the points charged: "They say." Who says? Why Benjamin Jones, J. F. Johnson and son. What do they say? "They say that the church never was lost, nor defiled, nor contaminated with sin in any way. When? where? to whom did they say this? and who heard them say it? We do not believe a word of it; we defy Elder Gifford to prove that *they* ever said it. What object could they have for uttering any such sayings? Have they not been for many years preaching that Christ gave himself for the church, that he might redeem her and cleanse her from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works? No sane man would utter any such sayings, much less such men as are assailed and falsely thus charged. They never said it, they never believed it, nor were they ever led into it by Beebe, Dudley and company. We risk nothing in saying that each of the brethren thus implicated believe that the church of Christ was involved in sin, defiled and contaminated with transgression, iniquity and guilt, and that all who are redeemed with the blood of Christ, were by nature children of wrath, even

as others, "All we, like sheep, have gone astray; but the Lord hath laid on him [Christ] the iniquity of us all." What then must be the depravity of the man who, while professing christianity and holding the sacred office of Elder, can deliberately say, write and send out the declaration into a distant State, over his signature, that "They say that the church never was lost, nor defiled, nor contaminated with sin in any way," and that Beebe, Dudley and company, are the leaders of this doctrine.

He also writes, "Some tell us that Christ only died to redeem these bodies from the grave." Who they are who have told Elder Gifford this, he does not say, but the impression is given that some of the brethren named Jones, Johnson, Beebe and Dudley, have told him so. But as this is not directly fixed on them or any of them, we wait for Elder Gifford to explain who has told him this. Certainly the brethren implicated hold no such doctrine. We constantly preach that Christ died to redeem his church from all iniquity, from the curse and dominion of the law, and to redeem them unto God with his blood.

Another direct charge is, "They say," (that is, Jones, Johnson, his son, and Beebe, Dudley and company say), "that this Adam man is not changed in regeneration, neither in soul, spirit, body, mind or matter." This also sounds to us like an exaggeration of the sentiment held by these brethren on the subject, and we doubt whether any of them have said this, in the manner expressed above. Some of them we know have never said any such thing, and therefore the above statement is untrue. The circular written by brother Dudley some years ago, on the christian warfare, holds the sentiment that christians in their present state possess a carnal, earthly nature, which is born of the flesh and is flesh, and that it is at war with holiness, and lusts against the spirit, and constitutes one party to the warfare, and that they also possess in them a spiritual, immortal life, which is born of God; born of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. That the former carnal nature is in the Scripture denominated the *old man*, which christians are admonished to crucify with its affections and lusts, and that the life implanted in them by regeneration, which is not born of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, is called the *new man*, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. These two men are directly opposite in their natures, elements and propensities, the one is born of the flesh, and the other is born of the Spirit; the one is unholy, the other cannot commit sin, because it is born of God. (1 John iii. 9.) These two men, which are found existing in every christian while in this earthly tabernacle are the combatants or parties in the christian warfare. If this be heresy, every christian on earth is an heretic, for not one can be found on earth who does not know and daily feel the struggle between the flesh and the Spirit; between the old man and the new man, between that in them which is born of the flesh and that which is born of the Spirit. Then where is the heresy that so much shocks the sensibilities of Elder Gifford? Is it an unpardonable sin to believe and preach that all that is unholy, impure, corruptible, depraved and at war with the Spirit in us, is born of the flesh, is earthly, sensual and devilish, and that whatever is found in us that is pure, holy, spiritual, godly, is born of the Spirit of God? Is this a new doctrine among Old School Baptists?

Have we not been taught by the word and by the Spirit of our God that all that is in us opposed to holiness is from beneath, and that every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning? Elder Dudley's views are before the public, in his own manner of expressing them, Elder Johnson's, also, and ours, and when Elder Gifford, or any other person desires to tell what "They say," all we ask is that our sentiments be presented in our own way of expressing them, and if they do not stand supported by the Scriptures, and by all christian experience, let them be rejected.

Now, in regard to the *change* effected in us by the new birth, we will only attempt to give our own views, which, so far as we are advised, are also the views of our persecuted, slandered and traduced brethren. It is the view of the writer of this article that in our unregenerate state, or until born of the Spirit, all our nature is earthly, depraved, sinful, and that there is in us no fear of God, no desire after holiness; no love to God or love of holiness; that we are dead in sins, enemies to God by wicked works, and that we are totally ignorant of our deplorable state and condition. When men are called by grace, quickened by the Spirit, are made the subjects of a great and astonishing change, their views of God are radically changed, and they view him as they never viewed him before. His holiness, purity, goodness, justice and truth fill them with a reverence and awe that they were total strangers to before. They are astonished that so holy and righteous a God has suffered them to live so long in rebellion against him; a sense of his goodness leads them to repentance; they are overwhelmed with a sense of their own vileness, and they feel so guilty that it seems to them there is no way for even God to save them without an infringement of his eternal justice. When fully humbled before him under a sense of their vileness, and the justice of what appears to them to be their inevitable doom, and all hope of commending themselves to his favor is taken away, Christ is revealed to them as the hope of glory, his blood is applied to them by the Spirit, for the remission of their sins, and his righteousness as the grounds of their justification before God; the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts, a new song is put in their mouth, and they are made to rejoice in Christ with joy unspeakable and full of glory; old things are passed away, and all things become new; the things which they before hated, they now love; the things which they before loved, they now hate; the Bible now opens to them with new beauty; the precious promises are applied to them; the church and people of God now appear lovely; the doctrine of salvation by grace, which they before hated, becomes food to their spirits; they love and desire to walk in all the ordinances of the house of God, and to live in love and fellowship with the people of God. This looks to us like a change. They have passed from death unto life, from darkness into marvelous light, and from prison into liberty. But this, although a very great and marvelous change, is not all. By virtue of this quickening operation of the Spirit, they begin, from the hour of their being made alive, to learn the difference between the two principles or natures which they find within them. They find a law in their members, (which they never found before they were born again) warring against the law of their mind. They feel the incessant warfare, and become more and

more convinced that while with their mind (which is born of God) they serve the law of God, with their flesh (which is born of the flesh) they serve the law of sin. They find that they bear about with them a body of sin and death, and we are greatly mistaken if they do not become more and more convinced in their experience with Jones, Johnson and son, Beebe, Dudley and company, as well as with Paul and Peter, James and John, that all that is holy, heavenly and divine in them, is born of God, and that all that is earthly, sensual and devilish in them, is born of the flesh, and is flesh. We know not who Elder G. means by Wilson, whom he says "can't go the doctrine." We suppose he may allude to brother Wilson Thompson. If so, we think he does him great injustice, for the past files of our paper will show that his views of this subject accord with those entertained by us, while it is presumed that neither Elder W. Thompson, nor any other sane Old School Baptist, holds any such sentiments as Elder Gifford has charged upon the brethren named above.

We have written lengthily, and it may be thought with a degree of severity, on this subject, but not, we hope, with a resentful feeling; not to defend ourself, so much as to disabuse the minds of misinformed brethren in regard to the real position occupied by those whom we really esteem better than ourself.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., July 15, 1860.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903, &c.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, to the churches comprising the same, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—We wish to offer a few thoughts for the consideration of the association, suggested by the words found in 1 John iii. 5, "And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins."

The text treats of a deliverance from sin. Guilt is removed from the guilty by an arrangement human and divine. This deliverance is the result of conflict, and is brought about through suffering and through blood. Of this manifestation the apostle speaks again chapter v. verse 8, "And there are three that bear witness on earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood." Again we read, "Except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." It will be our aim to show that under the emblem of water, the Scriptures are meant as one of the witnesses which bear record to Jesus Christ as the Savior from sin.

This Savior was first manifested in the early promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. The second manifestation was the Mosaic dispensation, the whole system of which was typical and symbolic. The tabernacle itself represented Christ in his twofold office; its very position in the center of the temple denoting his place in the hearts of his people. A third manifestation was through the medium of the prophets, who received it from God as moved by the Holy Ghost. Whoever examines the Scriptures with this purpose in mind will be amazed by the number and variety of the predictions concerning the manifestation of Christ. Hundreds of years before his advent we find the

records of Matthew, Luke and John anticipated. They pointed out the place of his birth, not only the country and district, but the very village and spot; the very time was also pointed out. It was foretold that he would come, not only of the Jewish nation, but of the tribe of Judah, and of the family of David, and still more precisely, that he should be born of a virgin mother. As by an eye witness are foretold his entry into Jerusalem, the betrayal, the pierced side, the ignominious death, and the resurrection. The voice that spoke at his baptism, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," was heard by prophetic ear many years before the scene at Jordan. Then John was sent as a witness from heaven, and as soon as he saw the Christ, he cried out, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." This manifestation culminated with the incarnation. An object is usually made manifest by a removal of the obstacles that interfere with its discernment, but this was not the case with the Son of God, he revealed himself to us by wrapping himself in our humanity, as it were in a veil. God is a Spirit, and it was told Moses that no man could look upon his face and live. As we take a piece of smoked glass to look at the sun, unable with the naked eye to endure the brightness of his splendor, so God has shown himself to men in Christ through what we may term the smoked glass of our humanity. He who would see God must look upon him in the face of his Anointed, veiled in our humanity.

Thus Christ was manifested by promise, by ceremonies, by prediction, and finally in our own nature. But why was Christ manifested? Not to enhance the glories of the divine perfection, nor to gratify an idle curiosity, nor to enrich the store of human knowledge, No! no! He was manifested to take away sin, not by annulling the fact, but by canceling the penalty. He came to assume in order that he might bear, and he bore that he might bear away. The moment he veiled himself in our humanity, he came under the law, and when he came under the law, he came under its curse. When did he bear our sins? During his sojourn here, during all of his ministry and death, as a prisoner before Pilate, and through his ignominious trial and death. He was God's offering for sin. No wonder he never smiled, or that his countenance was marred. Is this all? No, for he taught as never man taught. He not only suffered and bore the contradictions of sinners, but during his whole ministry he taught how to worship God, and how to walk in this life and not the life to come. That we shall learn when we enter into it. Religion is for time, and his word is for time, and he has sent his witnesses to give the knowledge of salvation. And now he is risen from the dead, raised again for our justification. He is with us not as a man's voice, but as a still small voice in the soul, which is the Spirit of life. His promise he will keep, and his words are living words that the soul believes, as Abraham believed, and hope is anchored on the promise, and is steadfast to the soul. Once pardoned, forever pardoned. As the sacrificial scapegoat in the Jewish ceremonial sent into the wilderness carried away the transgressions of his people, so Christ carried sin into the wilderness of the grave finally and forever. Undoubtedly many sorrows shall come to those who transgress, (Psalms xxxii.) but when once forgiven, we are forgiven forever, and when accepted once, we are accepted forever. The penalty for sin is exterminated and annihilated, for justice

has been satisfied, the debt paid. To satisfy justice God made the sacrifice for man, and to do so he assumed our nature. The sins that God was manifested to take away were the sins of his own people, who were born again by the teaching of the holy Spirit. Hence Paul says, "The life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." That faith that works by love.

Now all this truth revealed to man is like a river of water, and it is one of the witnesses that Jesus is the Christ. It is the same word that was spoken to the woman of Samaria, "A well of water springing up into everlasting life." And again, "And he that believeth, out of his belly flows a river of living water." In other words a continuous stream of living testimony.

WM. GRAFTON, Moderator.
MILTON DANCE, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, to the churches and associations with whom we correspond, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The Lord has graciously granted us another pleasant session; the ministering brethren have come to us richly laden with the good things of the kingdom of our God, and our hearts have been made glad, because we have heard from them the things we have felt in our daily experience. We are glad to say we are in peace, and our session has been harmonious; not a jar has been heard, although different sections are represented, all come declaring that salvation is of the Lord.

Due notice will be given as to the time and place of our next session, and when and where we hope to meet and enjoy your coming and correspondence again.

Brethren, farewell; may God be with you, is our prayer.

WM. GRAFTON, Moderator.
MILTON DANCE, Clerk.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO BROTHER D. M. LEONARD'S APPEAL TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$715 70
Philemon Stout, Ill., $25.00; Nathan Grafton, Md., $1.00; O. F. Ballard, N. Y., $5.00.—Total	31 00
Total to date	$746 70

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, at the residence of the bride's parent, on May 6th, 1903, Albert R. Harsh and Miss Carrie Baugh, of Hocking Co., Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

IT should be remembered by friends that a preacher cannot retain names and dates regarding the deceased, and is often at a loss to know, but I will do my best, and ask the forbearance of those interested.

John Weckel died Feb. 21st, 1903, at his home in Roxbury, N. Y., upwards of 80 years. He came from Germany when quite young, and was well established in the religion of his mother country, yet we believe from conversation had with him, he saw how helpless he was before the Lord, and we trust he is at rest, while the widow and only daughter, our sisters in the church, with three sons and neighbors, are left to mourn.

ALSO,

Feb. 24th, 1903, **Samuel Birdsel,** of New Kingston, N. Y., aged over 80 years. Mr. Birdsel was not a professor of religion, yet we believe he was the possessor of the grace of God that brings salvation. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of God our Savior; that it was not by works of righteousness man could perform.

ALSO,

Martha J. Lake, wife of Richard P. Lake, died at her home in Vega, N. Y., March 20th, 1903, after a short sickness of pneumonia. Sister Lake united with the Andes Old School Baptist Church, August 3d, 1888, and all of her life since felt comfort in trying to fill her place in the house of God. We miss her at the meeting, yet we are sure God alone can comfort the mourners.

ALSO,

MARCH 30th, 1903, **John Sweet,** at his residence near Kelly's Corners, N. Y., about 68 years of age, of pneumonia of a few days. He united with the Andes Old School Baptist Church with his wife and four others, in April, 1874, and loved the doctrine of the Bible, yet saw the weak, fleshly nature which he possessed still to that degree to retard his active progress as a

believer. He seemed resigned to his lot as a man of sorrows, which he had been, and we believe he is at rest, while the mourners go about the streets. He leaves a widow (his second wife) broken-hearted, (in a crippled condition) with one son, and two daughters, and other relatives to mourn.

May the Lord comfort the afflicted.

ALSO,

APRIL 2d, 1903, at his home above Denver, N. Y., after a lengthy illness, **John Redmond.** Mr. Redmond was not a professor to my knowledge, being a long time resident of his home place, I believe he knew the difference between works and grace, and is at rest, while a widow and brother and other relatives mourn.

ALSO,

AT the home of her son-in-law, at Delhi, N. Y., **Mrs. Hausbrook,** in the 90th year of her age. She was sick but a short time, and has left her children, three sons and three daughters, and others to mourn.

ALSO,

APRIL 6th, 1903, **Mrs. Rudolph Hammy,** in the 83d year of her age. Sister Hammy was an uncompromising member of the Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, of the Roxbury Association, and her funeral was largely attended at our church-house, and friends and church mourn.

ALSO,

APRIL 9th, 1903, after a week's illness, **John S. Hinkley,** at his home between Kelly's Corners and Denver, N. Y., aged 67, of pneumonia. Mr. Hinkley had not made a public profession of religion, but was for a number of years a firm believer in the doctrine of God our Savior, as held by Old School Baptists. He was opposed to contention. He left a broken-hearted widow and three daughters, with their families, and one brother and two sisters to mourn. God alone can comfort the real mourner.

ALSO,

MAY 4th, **Mrs. John Neal,** of Andes, N. Y., after great suffering for months with a fractured hip, upwards of 80 years. Mrs. Neal, though not a professor, was settled in God's sovereign rule, and believed that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. Had selected the text for her funeral: "In my Father's house are many mansions." She was nearly the last of a large family, and left all to mourn.

ALSO,

MAY 12th, in Olive, N. Y., **Mrs. John Barkley,** very advanced in age. Sister Barkley in her prime loved the Lord, the church, and its peace. She for a number of years was out of health, and sometimes out of mind, and a great sufferer at last. But all is well, for the last enemy has been overcome to and for her. She leaves two sons and their families, and other friends, with the church, to mourn. But we trust they all mourn not as without hope.

ALSO,

MAY 13th, 1903, the daughter of Elder John B. Slawson, of Vega, N. Y. By this sad event the faith of our dear brother and sister is being sorely tried, it being their eldest of three, a bright, active little girl, yet we trust the same hand that made the wound will send the healing, and we are glad for their grief-stricken condition that it is well with the child.

May the Lord overrule for his glory, and the good of all mourners.

ALSO,

DIED—At his residence in Kingston city, May 10th, 1903, after a short sickness of pneumonia, **Vernon Bishop,** in the 35th year of his age. Mr. Bishop seemed to be conscious of his approaching dissolution, and lived but a few days after he was taken sick. He was married by the writer to Miss Lizzie Elmendorf, of the city of Kingston, about thirteen years ago, and by his death a heart-broken widow and four children, with other relatives, are left to mourn. May the dear Lord overrule this sudden trial for the good of the sorrowing ones, and especially may the young widow find in the dear Redeemer a friend unfailing and precious, though he chastens.

ALSO,

AT Kingston city, at her home, May 14th, 1903, after a short sickness and shock, **Mrs. Charlotte Elmendorf,** wife of Cornelius Elmendorf, in the 76th year of her age. Mrs. Elmendorf no doubt felt the sorrow of her daughter in the death of her husband, which with the labor attending his sickness and burial, was too much for her already weakened condition, by reason of years. But notwithstanding the sorrow of the family and friends, we trust their dear one is at rest. Although she could not talk with them in her last hours, we believe she had a well attested hope through grace, though she had not manifested it by uniting with the church. She leaves husband, one son and two daughters, with many other relatives, to mourn.

Her funeral services were at the house, the 17th inst., where the writer addressed the mourners.

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLY'S CORNERS, N. Y., May 21, 1903.

Mrs. Ann E. Holeman was born near McMinville, Tenn., Nov. 8th, 1854, and at the age of three years her father moved with his family to Bourbon Co., Kansas, where she grew to womanhood, and was united in marriage to J. Riley Holeman, eldest son of the late Deacon Isaac Holeman, of the New Hope church, of Greenbush, Ill., by whom she became the mother of four children, two sons and two daughters. On the third Sunday in May, 1893, together with her husband, she united with the New Hope church, and was baptized by Elder I. N. Vanmeter. In the autumn of 1901 the family moved to Oregon, settling near Junction City, where on Sunday evening, March 29th, 1903, she quietly yielded up her spirit to God who gave it, after having endured great bodily pain for

something like five weeks, at the age of 48 years, 4 months and 21 days. Her death was caused by a tumor in her left side. She died as she had lived, comforted by a blessed hope of a heavenly inheritance at the right hand of God. Her last words were, "I want my blessed Jesus." Sister Holeman was possessed of a retiring, meek and humble disposition, which greatly endeared her to the brethren and sisters of the church; her voice was rich, full and sweet, and she took great delight in singing the songs of praise and thanksgiving as none but those who know what is the height and depth, length and breadth of the love of God in the heart can sing. May our blessed Lord comfort our much beloved brother and the orphaned children, and sustain them by his grace.

ALSO,

Nancy M. Combs was born in Crawford Co., Ohio, on the 29th of March, 1833. Her maiden name was Ketchum, daughter of the late Deacon Eddy and Harriet Ketchum. She united with the Honey Creek Church of Old School Baptists, near her birthplace, in early life, came with the family to Illinois in 1852, was married to John Combs, March 30th, 1854, who together with three sons and two daughters are left behind, two sons and one daughter having preceded her to the grave. She was a member of the New Hope church, but on account of bodily infirmities she very seldom could attend the meetings of the church. For something over a year she and her husband had lived with their children. At the time of her death they were at the home of the youngest son, Boyd, near Opdyke, Ill. On the morning of March 25th she was stricken with paralysis, and never regained consciousness until death relieved her of her suffering, which had been long and severe.

On April 3d the remains were brought to her home near Bushnell, where the funeral was held on the 6th, and she was buried in the cemetery at Prairie City. She leaves husband, five children, a number of grandchildren, six brothers and one sister, to mourn.

ALSO,

Mr. William Vandever died in the village of Greenbush, Ill., Feb. 14th, 1903, after suffering from a complication of diseases incident to old age for about two months. At the time of his death he was 88 years, 10 months and 24 days old. He was the son of Elder Vandever, the pioneer preacher of the doctrine held by the Primitive or Old School Baptists generally throughout this part of the country, and practically founder of the New Hope church. Mr. Vandever was an able defender of the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith. For a number of years his hearing had become so impaired that he very seldom attended the meetings of the church, but was always ready to give a reason for the hope that was in him. He leaves behind him his faithful helpmate in affliction, sister Lucinda Vandever, a member of New Hope church, three sons and two daughters. But they have great cause to rejoice in the midst of their sorrows, because God had called him to himself.

The funeral occurred at the meeting-house of the church, in the village, on Monday, the 16th, and the burial was in the village cemetery, the writer officiating at burial services.

SMITH KETCHUM.

J. T. Dowdell was born in Loudoun Co., Va., May 1st, 1839, and died in San Antonia, Texas, March 4th, 1903. He left Virginia to reside in the south, January, 1870. While visiting his former home in August, 1871, he was baptized by Elder Purington, and united with the Ebenezer Baptist church, of which he was still a member at the time of his death. During his last visit to his relatives in Virginia, August, 1891, he attended a meeting at his church, and expressed himself as having enjoyed the service very much. The meeting was conducted by Elder E. V. White and a visiting brother.

In February, 1881, he married Miss Mary Anna Caffery, of La Fayette, La., who with a son and daughter survives him. He had led an active life until about a year ago, when he was attacked with apoplexy, which finally resulted in his death. His last illness was of short duration. He had been conversing in his usual lively manner at dinner, read the paper and retired to take his afternoon rest, and after the usual time had elapsed, his wife aroused him, but he soon slept again, and was aroused the second time, when he said that there was nothing the matter, that he was only drowsy. She at once summoned her son and the doctor, and they remained with him until the final summons came, about 5 o'clock the following morning. His remains were interred in the cemetery in San Antonia, Texas, beside his youngest son, who died in 1892.

DIED—Brother **Nathaniel D. Burrow,** at his home in Columbia Co., Ark., April 24th, 1903. Brother Burrow was born in Newton Co., Ga., in 1844, moved to said County in his young days, and was married to Miss Hagganbottom, about thirty years previous to his death. To this union were born nine children, three girls and six boys, all of which survive him. He joined the Old School Baptist Church at Bodcaw, July, 1897, and was an humble and consistent member, ever ready to confess his faults and imperfections, striving to his utmost ability to live in peace with all men, and to do unto others as he would have them do unto him. Being a poor man in this world's goods, and also greatly afflicted, he would walk ten miles to meet his brethren and to hear the word preached, often over swollen streams and muddy roads. Truly a good man has passed away, a kind and affectionate father and husband and good citizen.

The remains were laid quietly to rest in the cemetery near the church of his membership, at which

time the writer tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved family and friends. He now sleeps the sleep of death.

"Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep,
From which none ever wake to weep."

But on the resurrection morn we believe he shall awake in the likeness of Jesus, and shall be ever with the Lord, to reign and adore through life eternal. May the Lord bless the bereaved widow and children, and reconcile us all to his most holy will, is my prayer for his name's sake.

A. R. YARBROUGH.

DIED—May 20th, 1903, at the home of her son, Ephraim Manning, Guymard, N. Y., **Mrs. Eveline Blizzard Manning,** aged 83 years, 9 months and 5 days. She was the mother of three children, only one of which survives her, and with whom she resided since the decease of her husband, Joseph Manning, in 1891. Paralysis was the immediate cause of death, the first stroke being suffered over five years ago. Since that occurrence she was an invalid, and much of the time quite helpless. All that filial love could minister in care and comfort she received at the hands of her devoted son and his wife, sister Carrie Manning. Though not a member of the church in name, she loved the Old School Baptists and the doctrine they confess. Her desire was toward them, but a sense of unfitness deterred her from coming to the church. That she possessed a good hope through grace was evident over ten years ago, and growth in understanding and establishment was manifest to the end. She was a good woman; a devoted mother and faithful friend, and memory of her will be cherished by all who knew her.

At the funeral from her late home the writer spoke from Isaiah xlix. 16. The remains were interred in the Manning Cemetery.

JOHN McCONNELL.

MEETINGS.

THE Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon and Washington, will be held with Pleasant Grove Church, at Goldendale, Washington, (if not providentially hindered) commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in June, (19-21) 1903, and continue the two following days. Those coming from both east and west by railroad will get off at Grant, and thence by stage to Goldendale, a distance of twelve miles. Those coming by boat will get off of boat at Lile, on Columbia River, and take cars to Goldendale.

N. J. SHANKS, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held, the Lord willing, in the usual place, in the township of Brooke, five miles from Alvinston station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, (20th) 1903, and continue two days. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

717 HOWARD ST., DETROIT, Mich.

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10:30 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

BY GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,

MIDDLETOWN, ORANGE CO., NEW YORK.

To Whom all letters should be addressed, and money orders made payable.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 71. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1903. NO. 13.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE OLD AND THE NEW.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—In the word and in the works of the Creator, there are many twos or couplets, and almost all things are in pairs; but others are in triplets. So there are three that bear record in heaven; and three that bear witness in earth; yet these are one, and agree in one. Thus we are presented with ones, twos and threes. Besides these, both nature and grace are shown to us in sevens. There are the seven prismatic colors, as shown in the bow in the cloud, the seven spirits of God, and time is measured by sevens. So seven is the full and perfect measure, embracing all. True, seven is repeated many times, but it is still seven in all.

But let us here go back to the simplest division, and consider the twos. These are presented in many simple forms of expression in the two books, the natural and the spiritual, both of which are of God, who is one. The simplest and final is, the first and the last. So we have day and night, and next to these, light and darkness. So we have sunshine and clouds; heat and cold; also solids and fluids. Then there is strength and weakness; health and sickness; life and death.

Coming to the book of Revelation, its Author has given us first, the old, last, the new. In these there are the two most prominent of all else, "the first man," and "the last Man." The first is earthly, the second is heavenly. So, in the very beginning "God created the heaven and the earth." Thus heaven occupies the first place, being the most important, and the earth is last and least. And so it is written, "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the last Man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." This shows clearly that all other men are included with either the first or the last of these two men, and are either earthly or heavenly, as they are related to the first or the last, to Adam or to Christ. The first man is the figure of the last Man. But the last is as high above the first as heaven is above the earth; and yet the first is taken up into the last, and changed into the image of the heavenly Man, so the two become one. "This is a great mystery."

Following on, we are presented with a

group of twos: Moses and Jesus, Mount Sinai and Mount Calvary, the law and the gospel, works and grace, the old covenant and the new covenant, condemnation and justification, the ministration of death and the ministration of life. All these sum up the old and the new. The old began with the first man Adam, and concentrates in Moses; the new began with God, and concentrates in Jesus. "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." So Moses is the greatest man in the Old Testament, but Jesus is the greatest man in the New Testament, and he is as much exalted above Moses as the Son and heir of God is above the servant of God. Yet Moses was the chosen and honored servant in the house of God; and the law of God, which was given by Moses, had its honored place, and it reflected God's glory. The law of God is both the measure and the ministration of his strict and perfect justice. It demands no more than this, but will accept no less. Perfection is its measure, and this it must have. So it marks every failure against man, and charges all sin to him. The law justifies God as holy, but it condemns man as guilty. This is its province and mission, and it can do neither more nor less than this. It protects the righteous, but it justly punishes the guilty. The law of God cannot accept of any imperfect or faulty act or deed, because then the law itself would be imperfect and faulty. For this reason the wicked must be punished, and the punishment must continue until the law is fulfilled and justice satisfied. If this were not required, then God, who gave the law, would cease to maintain the righteous claims of his holy law, which he cannot cease to do, because he is holy. Jesus therefore said that the law shall not pass away until all be fulfilled. But no sinful man can fulfill it. "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin," says the word.

Now, let us remember the first man Adam is under the law of God, and is held by it in all his powers and faculties until it be fulfilled. And man is natural as born of the flesh, and is only natural and fleshly in all his attributes and being. For Adam and his family are not spiritual, but natural. So all the deeds of man are fleshly, and they are measured and tried by the law of God, under which God made man. And so the first man is only natural and fleshly and legal in all his life and deeds, in all of which he ever comes short of the perfection of the law, and therefore the law marks him as faulty and sinful in all his works; "For by the law is the knowledge of sin." Paul therefore again says, "For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." This includes all men in the flesh, and all their fleshly works. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh," or through the sinful weakness of the flesh, &c. All this shows the hopeless helplessness of the first man. He is not only condemned already as sinful in all his nature, but is under death, and all his works are "dead works." The righteous sentence of the Judge is, "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." "There is none good but one, that is, God." "He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works." But as to man, "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." There is no hope, then, for man in man, nor in his works.

All this is the woeful truth concerning the first man, and the first covenant. These are "the old." "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first

old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." This is the word of the Lord, who himself "hath made the first old." There are but the two covenants, the old and the new. So there are but the two headships, Adam and Christ. The first is the *creature* of God, the last is the *Son* of God. Adam is the natural head, Christ is the spiritual Head. All human life is from the first man; all spiritual life is from the second Man, the Lord from heaven. The natural life is received in the first birth, which is of the flesh; the spiritual life is received in the second birth, which is of the Spirit. These are the old and the new, but both are united in every son of God, and every one of his children is as really one with Christ as with Adam. So the word tells us of the flesh and of the Spirit, of the outward man and the inward man, and of the old man and the new man. Yet the son of God is but one person, being one with Christ in his life, and one with Adam in his life and death —and Christ is but one. Therefore, his brethren are the many members in him—in his one body, the church. His word to them is, "Because I live, ye shall live also." He lives, to die no more, and their life is hid with Christ in God. Yea, Christ lives in them, and they live in him.

Thus the people of the new covenant and the children of God are not only partakers of flesh and blood, as born of the flesh, but they are also made partakers of the divine nature, as born of the Spirit, and the life of the holy Son of God is made manifest in their mortal flesh, as says Paul in 2 Cor. iv. Now, therefore, the flesh and the Spirit are the only two sources of all religion and religious works among men. Paul most forcibly expresses this truth in Gal. v., enumerating first the works of the flesh, all of which are corrupt; and then the fruit of the Spirit, namely, "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." How blessed is the state of those in whom the fruit of the Spirit is manifested, for Paul says of them, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." But of those in whom the works of the flesh rule, he says, "that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." This shows the impossibility of any one obtaining any favor of God by his fleshly works, all of which are legal, conditional and rejected as sinful by the perfect law.

All that any man is capable of religiously, must arise either from the life of Adam in him, or from the life of Christ in him, because it cannot be in part a work of the flesh, and in part a fruit of the Spirit. For of these two opposites Paul says, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." This one text entirely demolishes the flesh-pleasing notion of free will and free moral agency. And to show that the flesh does not aid the christian at all, Jesus said to his apostles, who could not watch with him one hour, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." So the Scriptures make a clear distinction and a strong contrast between the flesh and the Spirit, as between Adam and Christ; and also between the old covenant and the new covenant, the law and the gospel, the works of man and the grace of God. For none of these are mixed and blended, neither is there any similarity or harmony between them. Earth and heaven, sin and holiness, death and life, are not farther apart in their character or nature than

these.

It need only be asked, Is obedience by Adam, or by Christ? Is salvation in Adam, or in Jesus? Are we saved by the works of the law, or by the grace of the gospel? Are christians under the old covenant, or the new? Is condemnation by the law of Moses, or by the gospel of Jesus? Does the law of works save, and the gospel of grace condemn? Which way is it? A babe in Christ can answer. The Spirit of truth testifies of Christ, saying, "Neither is there salvation in any other." So then, our salvation comes to us in Christ. Of God's people it is written, "And their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous." This proves that all disobedience is in Adam, in the sinful flesh, and that all obedience is in Christ, even as all righteousness is in him, and all redemption unto salvation. Another simple question: Have we any spiritual blessing out of Christ? Have we any gospel of salvation out of him? Is Christ the Mediator of the old covenant, or of the new covenant? One answer only can be given. All spiritual blessings are in Christ; out of him there is no gospel; and he is the Mediator of the new covenant; yea, God said, "I will give him for a covenant of the people."

Now we are brought to this one strong and clear point, from which there is no evasion or turning away: Christ and his new covenant are yea and amen, positive and sure, and absolutely unconditional; and the gospel of Christ, which is the gospel of salvation, belongs entirely to the new covenant, but in no sense to the old covenant; therefore there is no conditional gospel, and no conditional righteousness and salvation. The new covenant is one of mercy and grace alone, and it is from all conditions clear; but the old covenant was legal and conditional, and it depended upon the people who were under it to keep it, or suffer its penalties, and the whole house of Israel broke it, with one exception; the Son of Mary kept it, fulfilled it, and took it out of the way. "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." This second and new covenant in Christ is established upon better promises than that first and old covenant with Moses, by how much also Jesus is the Mediator of a better testament. The old was weak and faulty, because it was conditional and its people were sinful. So they broke the covenant, as was indicated by Moses breaking the two tables of stone on which the covenant was written, for their works were sinful, like themselves, and the Lord regarded them not. So it is yet with all fleshly, legal and conditional works, not only of the Jews, but also of the Gentiles. Paul confessed that in his flesh dwelt nothing good, and that with the flesh he served the law of sin. As a believer and minister of the gospel he therefore said, "By the grace of God I am what I am." "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law." "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." So faith is of grace, but not of works, and both are of the new covenant, but not of the old, and the

three are of Christ, but not of Moses. "Not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." In this righteousness only will God accept us, but not in our own, nor in our legal works, which are in their very nature always conditional.

All conditional salvation and its benefits, depend necessarily upon conditional works of righteousness, which are essentially legal and selfish in their nature, and, when done, the doer is of right lawfully entitled to such salvation as a reward for his works. Conditionalists are consistent and honest, therefore, in holding to the principle of rewards for works of righteousness, and in claiming that conditional salvation and its blessings are received by them as such conditional rewards. But in doing so, they are fallen from grace, or have gone back from the new covenant of grace to the old covenant of works. "This only would I learn of you, received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" Paul here presents this whole issue, and states it truly and just as it is. There are but the two doctrines and ways, he shows; and the Spirit and faith are the way of the new covenant in Christ; but the works of the law and the deeds of the flesh are the way of the old covenant in Moses. "For these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage. * * * But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."

Paul, the apostle of grace and faith, presents the two in very forcible contrast, saying, "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." Besides these two, there is no other principle, doctrine or way of salvation; and between these two there is no union or harmony, but one excludes the other altogether. The words of Paul are so positive and plain, they can neither be mistaken nor perverted. Grace only, grace without works; or works only, works without grace, is the only principle and way of salvation. It would be foolish to say, that salvation by works is certain and unconditional; and it would be equally foolish to say, salvation by grace is conditional and uncertain. All know that grace means salvation, sovereign, full of free. All as well know that works mean conditional and uncertain salvation, according to the righteousness of him that worketh. His reward is of debt. Grace is not in his works. He and his works are outside of the new covenant, and if he is saved, it is by works of righteousness which he must do. His conditional covenant has no mercy for his unrighteousness, and he receives only so much of salvation as his good works entitle him to. He has turned away from the new covenant, which overflows with mercy and grace for the unworthy, and turned to the old covenant, which rewards none but the good and worthy. His boasted free will has led him to the law of works, so by the law must he stand or fall. He is flattered by that conditional hope of reward in the old covenant of works, which tells him, "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land." This suits the fleshly mind and legal spirit

much better than to be a beggar at the door of Mercy and cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." But Jesus says that this poor sinner was justified, rather than the self-righteous man, who made mention of his works as the ground of his exalted standing before God. These two are typical men, and they truly represent the two classes of professed worshipers of God that are now in the world, and have ever been since Cain and Abel. Cain brought his own works as an offering, on which to obtain the favor and blessing of God; but Abel offered the lamb which God had provided for him, and through it his faith embraced the Lamb of God as his salvation. The religion of Cain is the religion of all who work and worship that they may be saved; but the religion of Abel is the religion of all who work and worship because the Lord has blessed them with his salvation.

The old legal way says, "The man that doeth these things shall live by them." The new gospel says, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." The old talks much of man's ability to do the conditional works of salvation; the new tells of Christ's power to save to the uttermost. The old proclaims aloud what great things we are doing for the Lord; the new delights to sing and preach what great things the Lord has done, is doing and will do for us, whereof we are glad. The old glorifies the conditional works of the so-called church; the new is to the praise of the glory of God's grace. Such is the difference.

O, ye people of the new covenant of grace, let us rejoice in the gospel of Paul, who said, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." This one in Christ has been born anew, has been given a new life, a new heart, a new spirit, and has entered into a new kingdom, a new home, and his people and kindred are all new. His home henceforth is the New Jerusalem, the holy city of our God, and this new man in Christ Jesus has come to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant. The Lord has made this new covenant with him, even in his heart, and says, I will be his God, and he shall be my son. And now, that all things are new, this new man no longer serves God in the oldness of the letter, but in newness of spirit. "Ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all."

O how beautiful and lovely, holy and good and blessed is *the new way*! May our new Master and Leader and Brother ever say to us, "This is the way, walk ye in it." "I *am the way*."

Your brother in the bonds of the new covenant,

DAVID BARTLEY.

LEBANON, Ohio.

BROWNTOWN, Va., Feb. 4, 1903.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Since I have been blessed with the privilege of reading the SIGNS, and the heavenly associations that I have had in affiliating with those whom I know are contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, I have greatly desired to write a few lines for its pages, and for your disposal, feeling as I do, that if the trumpet gives an uncertain sound it will soon be detected. Why I have not written before this

I am not fully prepared to say, and yet I feel that I know why in the main: I feel my inability to write or to speak of the wonderful and most glorious things pertaining to the kingdom of God, or to say anything that will be of any comfort or edification to the church of Christ, which is the pillar and ground of the truth, and in the second place, I am but a child, I cannot speak; I have to acknowledge yet more every day of my unprofitable life, that I am of slow speech, and that my lack of eloquence far excels the least of all, though I have faithfully and most positively promised time and again to address the household of faith in this way, yet it has been left undone. Truly man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directs his steps. The longer I live the more fully I am convinced that the way of man is not in himself; that it is not in man that walks to direct his steps. The dear Savior leaves upon record his own personal experience that, "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just." Can mortal man be more just than God? Can he be more pure than his Maker? Surely Christ was with his people in weakness, and in much temptation he hath borne our grief; he hath carried our sorrows, and was in all points tempted as his brethren, that in our greatest griefs and most profound sorrows he might succor and sustain us. Yes, even the weakest of his children, for in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; they were borne by him and carried by him all the days of old. Surely he has been their dwelling-place in all generations. These are they who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. He prayed that "they might be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." In his predestinating purpose he prepared a mansion in his Father's house for each individual member of his body: "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go, I will come again, that where I am there ye shall be also." In every trial, conflict, temptation, persecution, sorrow, joy, heavenly ecstacy, glory, gladness or peace, whether it be in the top of the mountain, in the valley or shadow of death, in the wilderness to be harrassed by the devil, or to sit among princes, weepings of the night, or joy in the morning, in the garden of Gethsemane, or upon the mount of transfiguration, to be strengthened by angels or fall beneath the weight of the cross, it is his will and pleasure for it to be so, in order to follow the Lamb, or to be with him where he is. This is my own experience, if I have any, and will venture the assurance that it is the experience of the church, for it is a faithful saying, that if we be dead with him, we shall live with him; if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him; this is the heritage of the saints of the Lord; cast down, but not destroyed; persecuted, but not forsaken; dying, and yet living always; bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus; it is his going away, and coming again, (experimentally) and yet he abides faithful; it is in him that we live, move and have our being; kept by his power (not human efforts) through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; trees planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The Lord has effectually established, ordained and predestinated the fruit of the tree, as well as

the tree that is to bear the fruit; he has before of old ordained that we should walk in them, it is ineffable. "Because I live," says the Savior, "ye shall live also." "I am the Vine, ye are the branches." "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me." How can a clean thing come out of that which is so unclean? The prophet says, There is no soundness in man, the heart is faint, the head is sick, wounds, bruises and putrefying sores, from the sole of the foot, even unto the head. Can the sacrifices or fruits of such a stenchful and decayed mess be accepted by him who is pure and altogether good? "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" If this can be so, "Then may ye also do good, that are so accustomed to do evil." If an impossibility with man, can it be made possible by man? If an evil tree can produce good fruit, and this the Savior says cannot be done; if a clean thing can be brought out of an unclean thing by man; if man at his best estate is altogether vanity, and yet after all of this can offer an acceptable sacrifice to God, then conditional salvation, whether it be for time or for eternity, would have its honorable recognition as a god, supremely enthroned; man would be the high and lofty one, inhabiting the eternal throne, instead of a small dust in the balance; God would be abased, as a defeated, rejected man of sorrow; as one foiled and discouraged. Can or will this ever be said of him who is high and lifted up, and whose train fills the temple? No, precious brethren, he is one on whom truly our souls wait upon, as David has said, "From him cometh my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defense; I shall not be greatly moved." "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him." "In God is my salvation, and my glory, the rock of my strength, and my refuge is in God." Therefore, dear brethren, trust in him at all times; pour out your hearts before him. "God is a refuge for us. Selah." "Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie, to be laid in the balance; they are altogether lighter than vanity." "They only consult to cast him [God] down from his excellency; [by giving glory to man] they delight in lies; they bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly. Selah." O Lord, give us help from trouble, for vain is the help of man; give unto us joy and thanksgiving, that we may render to God praises of a broken and contrite heart, such as these will God not despise. Keep our tongue from evil, that our lips may speak no guile, as for me, O God, I am a worm and no man. Keep my feet from the paths of vain men, let me behold thy face in righteousness, that I may be satisfied with the goodness of thy house. For cursed is the man that trusteth in man, or maketh flesh his arm; be unto thy despised and persecuted people, manifestly their righteousness, sanctification and redemption; their glorious King and High Priest, the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last; their meat and their drink, that in the leadings of them by thy kind hand in paths that they have not known, they may behold thy glory, the glory of the only begotten Son, full of grace and truth, as one who can only bring them to their daily bread, into thy banqueting-house, where thy banner over them is love, that the seasons may be abundantly given when we can say, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still

waters." That we may mount up on wings of eagles, that we may run and not faint. Blessed Lord, keep me as the apple of thine eye, lead us about and instruct us, that no strange god may be found in our midst. Keep us in thy fear, that each of us may esteem others better than ourselves. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me. Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.

May the grace of the giver of all good continue to direct the steps of our dear editors, that they may long live to fight a good fight of faith, and be preserved as polished shafts in his quiver. I hope I shall never forget the good counsel and fatherly advice of you all; even reproof is a kindness, and shall prove to be excellent oil that shall not break our head, when it is given by the Spirit of him with whom we have to do. Words fitly spoken are as apples of gold in pictures of silver. Father, forgive us, for we know not what we do. May we be gentle and forbearing, and not make a brother an offender for a word.

I shall long remember my two visits among the churches composing the Juniata, Baltimore, Salisbury, Delaware, Delaware River and Warwick associations. I feel that these associations are blessed with faithful, God-fearing under-shepherds, that fear not to declare the whole counsel of God. I must before I close speak of my personal visits at the homes of the following Elders, for it was pleasant indeed: Elders Mellott, Grafton, Eubanks, Francis, Durand, Chick, McConnell, Ker, and brother Lefferts, and the rest of the pleasant homes that I visited, too numerous to speak of. May God bless and keep them all in love and fellowship, is the prayer of a poor servant, I hope, and companion in tribulation. Love to all the household of faith.

I will close for fear I have now written more than is prudent or profitable.

Yours in a precious hope,

JOHN E. GORE.

JOHN XIV. 18.

"I WILL not leave you comfortless: I will come to you."

This is one of the precious promises that Jesus made to his disciples before he was betrayed into the hands of enemies. Jesus is talking to his disciples of going away, of leaving them. They loved him. They loved him to that extent that they had left all and followed him; they left their families, their occupations and their homes, to follow him who was meek and lowly, and so poor that he had not where to lay his head. They followed him because they loved him. Jesus was everything to them. All their need was supplied by him. They knew if he should leave them they would be comfortless. They could not bear the thoughts of his leaving them. In chapters xiii.–xvi. he is conversing with them, and comforting them concerning his departure. He tells them that they should rejoice instead of grieve, because he was going unto his Father, to be with him. He pities them. In chapter seventeen he pours out his soul in prayer for them. He does not pray that they should be taken out of the world, but that they should be kept from the evil that is in the world. He said, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." This was his desire, that they should behold his glory, and it is the desire of every true disciple of Jesus to behold his glory. But O, what does this mean? It means

floods of affliction, temptation and fire. No glory can be seen in Jesus when there is any glory in ourselves. We have nothing to glory in save our infirmities, and we glory in them that the power and glory of Christ may rest upon us. But Jesus goeth away. He goeth forth sorrowing, yea, doubtless weeping, but to return with rejoicing, bringing all his sheaves with him; to come again with ten thousand of his saints. He goeth away and the disciples are comfortless; their hope is blasted, and they are in despair; they return to their former occupation; they go fishing. The disciples were not alone in this sad experience. Their experience portrays the experience of every child of God. Poor, old Jacob was comfortless when he exclaimed, "All these things are against me." But he was not left so. Job was comfortless when he said, "O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat," &c. But he was not left to die in this condition. The Lord came to him, and comforted him, but he came in the whirlwind. Jeremiah must have been comfortless when he was cast into the dark, damp, miry dungeon, but he was not left there. The eye of the Lord was upon him, when there was no other eye to pity, or arm to save. Poor, old Jeremiah may have distrusted the Lord, and concluded that he must die in that horrible dungeon, but the Lord was greater than all his doubts and fears. Jeremiah is brought to light and liberty again in the Lord's own appointed time. Have there not been times in your experience, dear child of God, when the Lord was with you, when the candle of the Lord shone round about you, and you meditated in his law day and night?

"What peaceful hours I then enjoyed,
How sweet their memory still."

But he goeth away, he turneth aside, he withdraws himself, and we are made to mourn, saying, Whither is my Beloved gone? We are comfortless, and cry, "Return, O holy Dove, return, sweet messenger of rest." Yes, comfortless and destitute. We mourn our absent Friend. But Jesus, though out of our sight, sees us and hears our cries, and pities our groans. We cannot go to him, for we are lame, we cannot walk, our eyes fail with looking upward, and our tongue fails for thirst; we are utterly helpless, without Jesus we can do nothing, we are entirely dependent upon him, we can but wait and watch and wonder till he comes. Though he tarry, wait for him, for he will surely come. He is faithful concerning his promises. He said, "I will come to you." He comes in the clouds. The dark and threatening clouds which we so much dread are the chariots in which the Savior comes to us.

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head."

Jesus said, "If I go not away the Comforter will not come." How true this is in our experience. If we never knew what it was to be absent from the Lord, would there be any such thing as his coming to us? If we never mourned, how could we be comforted? and how can we mourn while the Bridegroom is with us? Yes, there are times when we are comfortless. Our wound is incurable, and we have no healing medicine. There is but one Physician who can heal a sin-sick soul, and though we cannot come to him, he comes to us. He does not leave us to die in our comfortless condition. No, no. "The eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, and upon them that hope in his mercy to deliver their souls from death, and to keep them alive in

famine." Yes, he comes to us as our good Samaritan, pours oil and wine into our wounds, casts his own robe about us, and raises us up from our low estate, and communes with us by the way. He may leave us to try us, yet he never forgets us, though we may forget him.

"I will come to you." How does he come? He always takes us by surprise; he comes as a thief in the night, when we are surrounded with darkness, and by terrors dismayed, when all the beasts of the forest creep forth, when we expect to be swallowed up by them, and the Lord seems so far away.

"When mine eyes are turned within,
All is dark and vain and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?"

Here the Savior comes to us; he finds us in a waste howling wilderness, he leads us about and instructs us; he was leading us all the way along, and we knew it not. This is beautifully illustrated by the narrative of the two disciples who were on their way to Emmaus; their hearts were sad as they communed with each other; he whom they thought should have redeemed Israel was now crucified and slain, and they could not believe that he was alive again; their fond hopes were blasted, and in this sore trial and disappointment Jesus comes to them, begins at Moses and all the prophets, and expounds unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself, but they knew not at the time that it was Jesus who was speaking with them; as soon as he made himself known to them he vanished out of their sight. How often it is the case when brethren come together, and like the two disciples speak of the things that concern them most, that they find their pure minds stirred up, their love revived, and their faith strengthened. What is this but Jesus in their midst?

"And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them," and as they testified of the things they had seen of Jesus, behold he stood in their midst. Jesus is always with his people when they come together to counsel one with another.

"Midst scenes of confusion and creature complaints,
How sweet to my soul is communion with saints."

When we are comforted while in conversation with brethren it is because Jesus comes to us and comforts us, and when a light surprises the christian while he sings, it is the Lord who rises with healing in his wings. When we are reading the testimony of Jesus, and all is shut up, and we have no light on those precious things, and are made to sigh and groan because of our blindness, and cry, "Lord, that I might have my sight," portions of the word that were once full of beauty and comfort seem empty, and we can find nothing that will bring comfort, it is because we do not feel the presence of Jesus.

"I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you." Suddenly as we are pondering over these things, or reading the Bible, there is some new and sweet revelation. Is it because of anything that we have done? No, no, a thousand times no, but it is because Jesus does not leave us comfortless, but comes to us. He is the true and faithful witness, the messenger of the new covenant whom we delight in, our elder Brother, Prophet, Priest and King; he is our Shepherd, our Protector, Preserver and bountiful benefactor; he is our Friend; he comes to us, he manifests himself to us, and we are no longer comfortless, for

"His presence clears the darkest skies,
And gives us day for night;
Makes drops of sacred sorrow rise
To rivers of delight."

"He brings us to his banqueting-house, and his banner over us is love. We sit down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit is sweet to our taste." Yes, we sit down, for it is enough; we rest in his love; we are abundantly satisfied with the fatness of his banqueting-house; here we find a feast of fat things, of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees, well refined; here we behold the beauties of our Lord, and it is a feast to the soul; we eat his flesh and drink his blood.

"He hath loved us with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness hath he drawn us." He hath won our affection, allured us, and brought us into the wilderness, and here we are made to endure the fiery darts of the enemy, to hunger and thirst after righteousness. The things we once loved we now abhor. We are not mindful of the land from whence we came out; no, we prefer the wilderness to that, forgetting those things which are behind, we press forward to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. But often the way seems rough and stony; sometimes we become discouraged and almost ready to fall by the wayside. Hard-hearted, full of unbelief, doubts and fears, we cry out, "Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious? Is his mercy clean gone forever, and will he be favorable no more? The Savior comes to us to cheer us on the way; he speaks comfortably to us, and again we thank God and take courage, and go on our way rejoicing.

In all our losses and crosses and bereavements, the Savior comes to us, and proves a faithful Friend, a precious Comforter. He is precious because he can comfort and cheer us when all others fail, and in the deepest sorrows he is most precious, for he does not leave us comfortless, but comes to us, bringing comfort and consolation.

EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

"THOU SHALT CALL HIS NAME JESUS."

NAME divinely given, coined in heaven's mint, and then brought to earth and given to an infant lying in a manger. Emmanuel, God with us. Divinity and humanity form an alliance never to be severed again. God and man one for evermore. The highest glory of God made manifest in the depths of humility, poverty and weakness. Extremes are blended in one person, and he the sinner's only friend. No wonder many were astonished at the birth of him who was set for the falling and rising again of many in Israel. "He shall save his people from their sins." And he said, "I will redeem them from death."

Here reason fails, princes are turned backwards, and the mighty are fallen to the earth, their crowns are laid down, and their honor perisheth, for this is the King of nations, and the Lord of heaven; the wise seek to him for wisdom, and princes pay him homage at his feet. Truly, God's strength is made perfect in weakness, weakness of the Lord Christ, that infant wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger. Did two such extremes ever thus meet before, and blend together in such harmonious unity? No, and they never will again, save in the salvation of sinners, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. No wonder that the angels desire to look into this mystery: God manifest in the flesh. He who flung abroad the heavens, and hung abroad the stars as chandeliers of light, dwelt in the babe of Bethlehem, and became a man too poor to pay his taxes.

Did ever such wealth and poverty meet? Yes, here it is in the Lord of glory without where to lay his head; the foxes were richer than he, in whom it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell. He who was rich, for our sakes, became poor, that we through his poverty, might be made rich. All is yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. For this he wept and prayed, died, and purchased all things with his blood, which was more precious than gold. O, righteous Father, the glory thou hast given unto me, I have given unto them. O, peerless boon of eternal joy, and sinner, it is thine through the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and by faith in his name, who died and rose again. For by faith we enter into this grace, wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

I'm rich to all intents of bliss
If Christ the Lord be mine.

Art thou poor, without house or home or shelter, wandering in deserts, and mountains, and caves of the earth? He had not where to lay his head. Do the tax gleaners vex thy soul, and cast thee into prison for debt? He wrought a miracle to pay his own tax, and in his poverty thou art rich, rich in faith, and heir to an immortal throne within the jasper walls of the heavenly Jerusalem which is above, and is the mother of us all. Hast thou no friends? Thou shalt find them there. Hast thou no home? Thou shalt own a mansion there bought with the blood of Jesus, and garnished with all the graces of everlasting love. Yea, God is thy Rock and Portion forever. Are thy garments vile and filthy? His spotless robe of righteousness shall cover thee. Is thy body misshapen and earthy? Thou shalt be like him, in the image of his glorious body, wearing that glory which was his before the world began. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." "We through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." These are the words of the Holy Ghost, by the lips of an apostle of the Lamb of God, whose blood cleanseth from all sin. Art thou a sinner then, and believest in his name? Then his blood avails for thee, and even death is thine, as the passage way to mansions in the skies. This is a present salvation, and that not on conditions of subsequent obedience, which Jesus wrought out and finished when he died, for what God hath promised, he is able also to perform through the cross of Christ, for the cross of Christ is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us who are saved, it is the power of God and the wisdom of God.

"And thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." This is the word of promise, which is embraced in the oath of God to Abraham and to his seed. Ye are saved by faith now, and shall be to all eternity, and though the earth be removed and cast into the depths of the sea, I will not fear nor be troubled. God is my Rock and portion forever, and underneath are the everlasting arms. The divinity of Christ in humanity is embosomed forever in the eternal God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was "Crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but shall live with him by the power of God toward you," says Paul, who was at the head of the saints of God in weakness. So much I have written for the babe in the manger.

Your brother,

I. N. NEWKIRK.

RUSSEL, Idaho, February, 1903.

CHAMPAIGN, Ill., April 25, 1903.

BY request of a number of brethren and friends I will write for publication a brief account of my visit to and among the Baptists in Nebraska.

After attending the regular monthly meeting of New Hope church, at Greenbush, in Warren Co., Ill., I boarded the 9 p. m. train at Monmouth, over the C., B. & Q. R. R., for Lincoln, Nebraska, where I arrived at 7 a. m., on Wednesday, March 18th, and soon found the residence of Elder J. H. Ring, 1219 S. Twenty-second St., in whose company I spent the time for some thirteen days visiting among the brethren in and about the city, trying to preach at the residences of Baptist members; Elder Ring's, brother Dickerson's, sister Farmer's, brother Hawkins, (where I met Elder and sister McKnight, who I assisted in ordaining to the work of the gospel ministry, in 1873, in southern Wisconsin) then at the regular meeting of the little band of brethren, sisters and friends on the fourth Sunday in the month, at the residence of sister Jones, where we had a most enjoyable meeting at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. Then Elder Ring conveyed me to Germantown, where we met Elder Chatman and quite a number of Baptist friends, and held two meetings at the residence of brother and sister Darnell, living just near the village, then to the village of Cheney, about ten miles south of Lincoln, where the church has quite a comfortable church building, for a fifth Sunday meeting, where I met Elder C. M. Cooper, Elder Chatman, with Elder Ring, a young brother Carter, recently liberated, and a goodly number of warm-hearted brethren and sisters, where we held five meetings, and so far as we could judge from expressions from those present, all agreed that it was good to be there, because the Lord was in that place. Then in the evening we held a final meeting at Elder Ring's home in the city, where we took final leave, after having tried to preach thirteen times, and formed a goodly number of new acquaintances and warm and we hope lasting friendship. We cannot name all that we met, much as we should like to do so, because all seemed to vie in expressions and acts of unselfish kindness, and I wish publicly to express a heartfelt feeling of gratitude to each one, and especially to brother and sister Ring and their family, for their untiring and self-sacrificing hospitality during my stay with them. Surely the promise has been verified to me, "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and make them inherit the throne of glory."—1 Samuel ii. 8. Then on Monday, March 30th, I went to Chester, in Thayer Co., where I met my son, who is staying with relatives in that part of the country, and after careful investigation decided to locate there. We decided on a farm in the north part of Republic Co., Kansas, on the State line, five miles west of Chester, and two and a half miles east of Byron, on the line of the B. & M. R. R., where on account of the health of a part of our family, it is probable we will for a time at least make a home. Considering the circumstances of latitude, altitude, &c., I am quite favorably impressed with the country, and I found land much cheaper than farther north, in the same latitude, and to all appearances just as good soil, favorable markets and other advantages. If some of our brethren and friends are contemplating a change to the west, we would be glad of some neighbors of that kind, and might possibly be useful to them in finding a location.

I returned to my home and family on

the 20th of April, after attending the April meeting of New Hope church. On my return I found that death had visited the church, and removed to the better world sister Combs, my sister in the flesh, as well as in the Spirit, and from her far off Oregon home also sister Anna Holeman had received the summons to come up higher. Thus it is the bitter with the sweet, the vinegar and gall with the honeycomb, is presented to our lips, and we must drink it all.

I am certainly your most unworthy, but nevertheless affectionate brother in Christ,

SMITH KETCHUM.

TENNILLE, Ga., March 6, 1903.

BROTHER BEEBE:—I do not see how I can do without the SIGNS, for I do believe with all my heart that they advocate the doctrine the Scriptures of truth teach. I know that this doctrine is spoken against everywhere, but I also know assailing the truth does not effect the plan of salvation, or the purpose of God the least bit, "For the foundation standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." "He does his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth," for none can stay his hand or say, What doest thou? He is the Potter, and he has the power and the right to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor, and no one has the right to question his authority.

There seems to be a great deal of confusion among God's people at this time in regard to predestination, and the salvation of God's chosen ones here in time, but I do not see any use of division, for the people of God are and should be one family, and hope, yes truly, that peace, sweet peace, will soon be ours. God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.

Sometimes my hope seems so little that I almost doubt the existence of God, then again I am made to rejoice that he is my Savior, and is the Savior of all them who love his appearing, and when I am in this frame of mind I would not exchange this little hope for all the wealth of the world. Then it is I feel to hope that if this my tabernacle were dissolved, I have a house, a building of God not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Then I can say with the apostle, "By grace I am what I am," and sure enough it is, "By grace [both in time and in eternity] are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it [that is grace and faith] is the gift of God."

I read with much interest, I hope, in the last number of the SIGNS, Elder D. Bartley's article. I enjoy reading all the writers who write for the SIGNS, but sometimes my mind seems to be in better condition for reading than it is at other times, and when I began reading Elder Bartley's piece my poor soul seemed to be thirsting for just such writing. Surely if the Lord does not build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.

Well, I guess I had better close; I feel so unworthy even to write to the people of God, but somehow I seemed impressed to write this. If you in your better judgment see fit to publish it, you can do so, if not, it will be all right with me. I would, if I could, get some new subscribers for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. There are some around here who seem to love to read them, but will not subscribe; perhaps they will after awhile.

Your brother in hope of life eternal,

JOHN W. BRASWELL.

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ATONEMENT.

"Did Christ atone for all our sins?

If so, why do we pray to him to forgive our sins?

And why is all our suffering here on account of our sins, if he has atoned for them all?

Why is Christ interceding for us, if a full atonement has been made for us?

Are we mistaken when at the first in our experience we feel that we are condemned sinners?

Did Christ atone for all our sins, or only for those committed before we were regenerated, and after this we atone for them ourselves?

What is meant by the forgiveness of sins?

And what is meant by the intercession of Christ?"

REPLY.

The above questions were presented to us by letter some time ago, with the request that we would reply to them at our earliest convenience. They call attention to most solemn and weighty matters pertaining to the religion of Christ, and the hope of the believer. We do not feel at all able to write in reply as the subject demands, but yet this is the theme of all gospel ministry, and if one is called to preach at all, this theme must engage his attention, and still more, if one has been called to a good hope through grace, these questions and their answers have become most important to him, and must be the subject of his most earnest thought. Still further, upon the right conception of these matters must the hope and faith of all such ones rest. These considerations have induced us to present some thoughts upon this matter in this public way, rather than by private letter.

"Did Christ atone for all our sins?"

There can be but one answer to this question; the Bible is clear upon this one thing, if upon anything: "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity." "Himself bare our sins in his own body." This text suggests no limit to the number of them. "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities." "The Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all." "For the transgression of my people was he stricken." "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities." "And he bare the sin of many." "He was put to death for our sins, and raised again for our justification." In the great type of atonement under the ceremonial law once a year, the sins, every sin of all the people of Israel, were confessed upon the scapegoat which was slain, and the one that was sent away into the wilderness, and not one sin remained upon all the people when this was done. So also when the red heifer was slain, every sin was covered in all Israel. From all these Scriptures it is clear that Christ did atone for all the sins of all the true Israel of God. None of the above Scriptures suggest any partial atonement, either as regards the number of sins covered, or the complete-

ness of the covering, and there is no Scriptures that speak of the atonement at all that could be twisted by any argument into the idea presented in the question above. An atonement that did not cover each and all our sins, would be as good as no atonement, seeing that one sin unatoned for would condemn any one of us to everlasting punishment. One transgression of our first parents plunged not only themselves but all their unborn race in condemnation, guilt and unending woe. If sin then was such an exceeding sinful thing, it is no less so now. So that one sin left unatoned for would plunge the guilty into irrevocable destruction from the presence of the Lord. We cannot be too careful or too earnest in insisting upon this; the whole scheme of the gospel hangs upon it; the good hope of the believer, which is through grace, hangs upon it; the very doctrine of salvation by grace hangs upon it. If not saved by grace, through the atonement which is in Christ Jesus, from all sin, then there is no salvation at all except through works of the creature. If by grace, it must be by grace all along the line, and the atonement must cover every sin. If our work, our repentance or our faith must be considered as the ransom price for any sin at all, then these things must be the ransom for all sin. If by grace, it is no more of work, and if by work, then it is no more by grace. The testimony is clear upon this in the word. But the apostle leaves no room for cavil, for he says it is by grace. Therefore the atonement of Christ must cover all sin, if it covers any at all.

The atonement lies at the foundation of all the gospel, yea, it is the very substance of the gospel. If we are right in the view we have of the atonement, we cannot be far wrong in any other principle of the doctrine of grace. If we are wrong in the view which we have of the atonement, we cannot be right in anything that pertains to the gospel. It is therefore all important that we have right views of the atonement; the glory of God is involved in it; the exaltation of the crucified and risen Redeemer is involved in it; the comfort, peace, happiness and security of the believer is involved in it. Except Christ did indeed atone for all our sins, his death was utterly in vain, the wisdom of God was at fault, and there is no certain salvation for any one; nay, it is then certain that no one can be saved. Surely every believing humble heart must shrink from the contemplation of such awful consequences as the above.

"If so, why do we pray to him to forgive our sins?"

It seems to us only necessary to say that if we pray for the forgiveness of sins, it can be only upon the ground of the atonement. It was upon the ground of the atonement under the ceremonial law that the high priest made intercession within the veil for the sins of the people. When he came within the veil, provision was made that he should come there with the blood, as full evidence that the required atonement had been made. It was the same with every prayer made by the priests for the transgressor: all was founded upon the blood of atonement. So when now we come before God as priests unto him, our intercession for not only forgiveness, but for every needed blessing, must be upon the ground of the full atonement of Christ, and all our prayers must be in his name, God will not hear them otherwise. And Jesus, our true High Priest in the heavenly places, pleads before the throne for all whose sins he bore, upon the one ground

that he has himself died for them, and put away all their sin by the sacrifice of himself. There would be no use to ask for any forgiveness or any other gift had not Jesus died. The law knows no forgiveness. Forgiveness is one of the precious gifts received for the rebellious when Jesus ascended on high and received gifts for men. Were it a fact that we ourselves must make satisfaction for sin, and could we make such satisfaction, then indeed there would be no room for forgiveness, seeing that we had paid all our debt against the law of God, but as we do not and cannot pay this debt, but Jesus does pay it, to us forgiveness comes upon the ground that he has died and risen again, and only upon that ground.

"Why is all our suffering here on account of sin if he has atoned for them all?"

Our sufferings here are not for atonement, seeing that a whole eternity of suffering could not atone for one sin. In no sense is suffering on account of sin here an atonement for it; then indeed would the atonement of Christ be nullified, and all his work would be shown to be useless. But suffering is often for a trial of faith, and often as chastisement, to correct. David said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word." And again he said, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statues." The sons of an earthly father are chastised, but not to atone for their transgressions. The stripes inflicted upon a child are not payment for wrong which he has done, but for discipline, that he may learn not to transgress, and this is for his salvation and good, not to satisfy any demand of obedience from his father. The father having chastised his child, does not therefore remit the duty of obedience, as though the stripes inflicted were in place of the obedience. So God chastises his children, not to atone for their sins, but to correct and to lead them in the way of peace and blessing.

"Why is Christ interceding for us, if a full atonement has been made for us?"

This we have in substance answered in our reply to the second question, concerning prayer for forgiveness. It is only needful that we repeat that the very ground of the intercession of Christ is his own atonement. He pleads his own work in behalf of his chosen ones. He says in substance, Father, I have died for them. He does not, as the advocate, seek to extenuate their sins, or to make excuses for them. He at once confesses before God all their vileness and foul transgressions, and that they are without excuse. There is not one charge against them that he does not at once confess as being true. He does not plead for mercy upon the ground of the smallness of their guilt, or of extenuating circumstances. He pleads not for small sinners, but for great sinners. One said in former days, "O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great." He pleads for his own because their sins are many and great, and therefore he pleads his own wonderful work upon Calvary. His plea for them is all summed up in the words, I have died, and so his intercession avails always for them. Had he not died, he could not be our intercessor. The atonement is the sole ground of intercession. Instead of the atonement doing away with the need of intercession, it is the only ground upon which any intercession can be made, and such intercession is effectual always.

"Are we mistaken when at the first in our experience we feel that we are condemned sinners?"

We answer positively, No. At the first

in experience the law of God is doing its work, the commandment has come to us, as it did to Paul, and sin revives and we die. The law is to us then as a schoolmaster unto Christ. We are then hearing the voice of God in the law, and the law of God, holy, just and good, can but condemn us. When applied to the conscience by the Spirit, at once sin becomes exceeding sinful. The glorious gospel has not yet come in, and the sinner hearing only the law, feels its condemnation. He is not mistaken under the work and sentence of the law; he is condemned and he dies. It is needful that we travel as did Israel, first of all by Sinai, and hear its thunderings filling our souls with fear. This is a needful experience, otherwise we could not understand the gospel of salvation, or rejoice in it. God has thoughts of peace to us in all this experience, but we are not yet prepared to receive the knowledge of this, or to understand in its fullness just what the atonement of Christ means, nor just what infinite mercy, which provides the atonement, means. To gain some conception of these things there must be first a knowledge of our condemnation and need. To appreciate bread we must be hungry. To understand what redemption in Christ means, we must feel the burden of sin and condemnation, and in mercy God leads us into the knowledge of the condemnation, that we may come to rejoice in the salvation afterwards, he leads us one step at a time, he shows us one thing at a time.

"Did Christ atone for all our sins, or only for those committed before we were regenerated, and after this we atone for our own sins?"

We do not need to repeat what we have already said in reply to this question: Christ atoned for all sin; all our sins, past, present and to come, were laid upon him; he bore them all away forever, and before God and his judgment bar not one of them shall ever arise to condemn the elect. We do not atone for sin after we believe, any more than for those committed before. If we sin, it is still true that we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus, who is the propitiation for our sins, these present sins which we commit now, as the text just referred to clearly shows. Beside, as said before, if one of the least of our transgressions be not embraced in the atonement of the Lord, we are forever without hope. But as all was embraced in his atonement, when we sin we are privileged to come, asking to be forgiven, and pleading as the justification of our plea, that Jesus has died, and that he has cleansed us from all sin by his one sacrifice.

"What is meant by the forgiveness of sins?"

As the atonement blots out all sin in the sight of God, so forgiveness blots out all sin from the conscience. The atonement regards sin as it is in the sight of God. Forgiveness regards sin as it rests upon our own heart and conscience. There can be no redemption without the atonement from the curse of the law, which says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." So there can be no peace of conscience until there is an assurance of forgiveness applied to the sin-burdened heart and conscience, and this assurance, as said before, comes only through the one fact that Jesus has died, and that full atonement has been made. Forgiveness brings us home to God in our own experience, reconciled, penitent and humbled. First there is conviction of sin, then there is confession of sin, and then God gives to the burdened soul the assurance, "Thy sins, which are many, are

all forgiven thee." Literally the word "forgive" in the original Hebrew and Greek means, "to put away," "to let go," and sometimes "to cover." The word "pardon" is from the same Hebrew and Greek words, and means the same things as forgiveness. The thought seems to be this, when assurance of forgiveness comes to a soul, it means that he is shown that his sin is taken away from him, as the scapegoat carried to a land of forgetfulness the sins of Israel, or that it is covered, as a robe covers all the body with all its deformity and uncleanness. Thus the very meaning of the word "forgive" involves the taking away of sin, or the covering it out of sight, and this is the work of the atonement alone.

"What is meant by the intercession of Christ?"

This is also already answered in substance, but we will add that an intercessor, as the word is used in the Scriptures, signifies one who stands between two others, bringing them together. Jesus stands between God and the humble sinner, and in him they are one. Redeemed unto God is an expression in the word that presents the full consummation of all the work of Christ, and through him we look to God and come to him, and through Christ God bestows all answers of prayer, and all spiritual blessings, and final glory upon all the redeemed. Jesus by the Spirit presents to us the love of God, and his glorious salvation provided for us, and he presents before God his loved ones in his own righteousness, and with the single plea for them, "I have died." C.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903, &c.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ROMANS IX. 22.

"WHAT if God, willing to show his wrath?"

It is not strange that men should contemplate the mercy and grace of God with satisfaction, while they dread his awful wrath, for we have all sinned against him, and should he display on us his wrath, as we have displayed our rebellion against him, no flesh could endure the weight of vengeance under which we should be crushed. The greatest Arminians we have met with, seem perfectly willing that God should show his mercy, his long-suffering and kindness to the children of men, while they deny his right, in justice, to show his wrath, but how few consider that eternal justice calls for wrath, and when justice calls for wrath, that justice would be violated, outraged and trampled upon, if mercy should take the place of wrath. Depraved men, in their unregenerated state, find it hard to conceive how the holy God can pour his wrath on them without violation of his justice, especially if he has made any discrimination, and saved some from wrath, and consigned others who are only of equal guilt, to wrath. But quickened sinners, when under his mighty hand, convinced of their own lost and helpless condition, wonder with much greater admiration, how God can be just, and yet the justifier of any of the guilty sons of men.

Whatever, however, may be the views or speculations of men upon this subject, God has on various occasions shown his wrath in his providential government of the world. In bringing the flood upon the ungodly in the days of Noah, and sweeping the guilty race from his footstool; in the case of Pharaoh, Amalek,

Moab, and upon the heathen nations of the earth, and that he has done it demonstrates that he did it willingly, or willed to do it, for he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. For his pleasure, we are told, the earth and heavens are and were created, and that he doeth his pleasure in the army of heaven and among men, and none can turn him. Had God been unwilling to show his wrath, who could force him to do it against his will? And had he not been willing to show his wrath; when the Son of God hung writhing on the cross, by what door could grace and salvation have entered for any of the guilty sons of men? But, was God willing to show his wrath, and to pour his vengeance upon the suffering, bleeding Lamb who died on Calvary? "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief."—Isaiah liii. 10. He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. For this very purpose came he into the world. "Then, said I, Lo, I came to do thy will, O God."—Psalm xl. 7, 8; Hebrews x. 7, 10. And when the dreadful hour had arrived for which he came, he was seen crushed with agony in the garden, sweating, as it were, great drops of blood, and praying, "O, my God, if it be possible, let this cup pass." But no other way was possible. "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."—Isaiah liii. 6. And where iniquity was found, the bolts of justice must fall. The doleful prayer wrung from the agonizing heart of the suffering Savior, fully establishes the doctrine for which we contend. "If it be possible, let this cup pass; nevertheless, not my will, but thy will be done." Could wicked Romans or spiteful Jews; could earth or hell inflict on him one pang beyond what was the will of God? Never, we confidently affirm, from the creation of the world to the great burning day, has wickedness of men or devils been so fearfully developed, never has hell belched forth so much spite at any time, as when the immaculate Lamb of God, loaded with the iniquity of all his people, stood the victim. Truly against thy holy child, Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."—Acts iv. 27, 28. *What if God willing?* Does that make him the author of sin? or does it afford to man a just cause to blaspheme his holy name? God forbid. Because God has power and wisdom to control, restrain, permit, overrule, and even to make use of the wicked acts of men and devils, just as he pleases, does that imply that he is himself a sinner, or that sin flows from, or is compatible with his nature? Absurd and preposterous. Nay, wicked and blasphemous as such conclusions are, the charges are often belched forth from infidel lips, and alas! must we add, that some of God's dear children have thoughtlessly, or carelessly indorsed the horrid blasphemy, by arguing that if he absolutely governs and controls all beings, all worlds, and all events, then he is, or must be the author of sin? But, be entreated, dear child of God, to pause and consider this matter a moment. Must God lay aside his crown, must he yield some part of his governing power, in order to escape your charge? But you say you admit that he has all power, and that he controls all events and all worlds. But, forget not that he is the infinite God; of one mind, and none can turn him; what he wills to allow to-day, was his will yesterday, and from everlasting. You cannot believe

that he has found out anything new, that he did not have in his mind and will before he made this world. One of two things you must admit, either that Jehovah knew precisely what kind of a world he was about to make, and that he made it just as he intended to, or else that he has been disappointed in his purpose. You dare not deny that this world with all its vast machinery, is precisely as the omniscient eye of God saw it, before the days of creation: peopled with all its infinite variety of men, and beasts, of birds, of fishes, of serpents and of worms, from the grosser objects down to the myriads of animalcule which people a single drop of water. What part of the history of the world have we a right to believe God did not know from everlasting, and what may we presume he knew, and yet had not in his inscrutable wisdom determined? Is there a sparrow or a worm, by him created, for which he has no use? True, we may not know or comprehend the use of many of his creatures, but we are finite, and have only that measure of intelligence which he has appointed and provided for us, and beyond that measure who can go?

But, once more. What if God be willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known? The apostle anticipates the ranking venom of the depraved hearts of men, and says, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault; for who hath resisted his will?" In one general sense, every carnal man has and does resist the will of God, they are not reconciled to it; they hate it, and employ all their depraved powers in opposing it, as Stephen charged the persecuting Jews, "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did, so do ye." But how vain is their resistance. All the powers of earth and hell combined cannot prevent the execution of his purpose so as to cause a sparrow to fall, or bring even a single hair of our heads prematurely to the ground. But in the sense evidently intended, the apostle does not say that any have or can successfully resist the will of God. Woe to the world, if they could. What then would it avail us to know that it is our Father's good will or pleasure to give us the kingdom, if he were unable to excute his will? But must it be inferred that if God is so infinitely wise and omnipotent, that he executeth his pleasure in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, that he has therefore no right to punish men for their wickedness which he overrules for his own glory? This is strange logic for infidels, but stranger still for christians. "Nay, but O, man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed, say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known?" Has he not an undoubted right to do so? Are any of his creatures able to give a reason why his will shall not be the supreme rule of his government? If any of us feel that it would be unsafe for us, why do we mock him by praying, "Thy will be done," and then object to his universal control and government of all beings, and of all events, according to his own sovereign will?

But, instead of the frightful images painted in the vain imagination of men, as to the consequences of his wearing the crown, bearing the sceptre, and occupying the eternal throne, let us consider how he shows his wrath, and how

he makes his power known on the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.

If it were his sovereign pleasure to show his wrath and to make his power known upon the vessels of his wrath, by crushing them to atoms, or by such signal displays of his power and wrath as when he destroyed Sodom, or when he deluged the world in the days of Noah, his right to do so could not be contested. But it is his will to show his wrath and display his power in a very different form. By *enduring with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction.* By allowing them to pursue their own course, act out the enmity of their own wicked nature, walk in the light of their own eyes, and to fancy themselves the masters of their own destiny. Long has he suffered them to dispute his reigning power, and to call his sovereign government unjust. With much long-suffering has he spared their lives, afforded them health and strength to fill up their cup of iniquity, by stoning his prophets, killing his messengers, under the old dispensation, and with what endurance and long-suffering has he allowed them to drench the earth with the blood of his saints, and even to stain their guilty hands with the blood of his dear Son. With what forbearance did he wink at the idolatry of the Gentile world before the advent of the Redeemer, and how has he, for purposes of righteous wrath, allowed the anti-christian powers of iniquity to make drunk the nations of the earth with the wine of Babel's intoxicating cup. Even now, what more awfully retributive judgment of God can we contemplate, than to be suffered to reject and defy his government, and to pursue our own course, the course of this world, under the power of darkness, in the pride and vanity of our own hearts treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath? Why has he suffered the wicked to prosper, or seem to prosper, in their abominable wickedness? Had he no power to restrain them? He had, for he has all power. But it is because in his inscrutable wisdom he saw fit thus to show his wrath, and to make his power known on them.

How, or why is it that unto his chosen, redeemed, regenerated children, it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, and from all others this knowledge is withheld? Because, in this very way it is his sovereign will to show his wrath and make his power known. Nor is this a matter for his saints to regret or deplore. Having the mind and spirit of Christ, we will rather with him rejoice and thank God that he has hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes, because so it seemed good in his sight. If our Lord Jesus Christ rejoiced in spirit at the accomplishment of the sovereign will of his Father, can we possess his Spirit, and yet desire that it should be otherwise? If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

We do not say that God could not display his mercy without also making a display of his wrath, for we dare not limit his power and wisdom, but the Scriptures teach us that it is in wrath, that he remembers mercy. (Hebrews iii. 2; Isaiah lxi. 2; lxiii. 1, 6.) The very first intimation of mercy made to fallen man fully expressed this doctrine. The seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent. God's people were preserved by the destruction of their enemies. Egypt must suffer the wrath of God, that the Hebrews might be mercifully released from bondage. The same miraculous display of power which wrought the salvation of Israel at the

Red Sea, overwhelmed in wrath, and utterly destroyed their pursuing enemies. The everlasting salvation of the church of God, from sin, death and hell, was made manifest by the wrath which her sin-bearing Savior endured, when he carried her sorrows and bore her griefs, when the chastisement of her peace was laid on him, by whose stripes she is healed. And the final triumph which awaits the saints at the resurrection, their bodies will be raised simultaneously with the destruction of the last enemy which is death. What then, we once more inquire, "If God, willing to show his wrath and make his power known,"

> "Shall man reply against his God,
> And call his Maker's ways unjust?"
>
> "Shall mortal man presume to be
> More holy, just or good, than he?"

Does it not rather become us to be still and know that he is God?

The will of God being the only recognized standard of holiness in heaven, whatever that will dictates, whether of wrath or grace, is right, and just, and harmonious with all the eternal perfections of Jehovah. If then it be his will to launch the fiery bolts of vengeance down upon the ungodly, or even to bruise his only beloved Son, when the guilt of his people was laid on him, or if he choose to redeem from sin, and death, and hell, millions of the chief of sinners, and ultimately to raise them up to crowns and seats at his right hand, all, all we need to know is, that it is the will of God, and then we know it is all right, for that will is the true standard of righteousness. High as the heavens rise above the earth, are God's ways and thoughts transcending our ways and our thoughts. Therefore, with the apostles, we beseech the saints to be reconciled to God. Our brightest, our only hopes of heaven, rest on the complete and perfect execution of the will of God in all things. If in a single thing it could possibly fail, that failure would shake the very foundation of our hope. It is because he is God, because as God he changeth not, the sons of Jacob are not consumed. O, may we then in sincerity and truth pray, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is done in heaven."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., August 1, 1860.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Old School Baptist Church at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., June 3d, 4th and 5th, 1903, to the churches composing the same, sends greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We present for your consideration some thoughts upon the words of the apostle Paul recorded in Eph. ii. 10, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

This is a most wonderful expression, "We are his workmanship," and full of deep meaning. We are God's workmanship as natural beings. He created us in Adam, and has formed every one individually of all of Adam's race. Our bodies, our minds and all of our emotional nature, are his workmanship; and truly when we consider this mysterious being of ours in our natural creation we cannot but say with the psalmist, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." But the apostle is not speaking here of our natural creation in Adam, but of our spiritual creation in Christ. This very striking declaration has a most suitable place in this clear and precious argument of the inspired apostle, who is carefully setting down words that show how securely the walls of salvation inclose God's elect, "who cry unto him

day and night, and how well they are defended against "the accuser of the brethren, who accuses them day and night before God." He has told of their former state of death in sin, of God's love to them even then, of his rich mercy and his great love, for which "he hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come [the ages of the gospel dispensation] he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

He began by speaking to them in the second person, as Gentiles, but soon included himself and all the saints with them, using the precious words "we" and "us," and so going on in company with them. As he goes on speaking of this quickening of the saints together with Christ, he pauses a moment to say, "By grace are ye saved," as though it were a song, a heavenly melody, dwelling and singing in his soul, and a strain of that music must be breathed forth without further delay. This apostle takes every occasion to speak of the wonders of grace, and ascribe all power and glory to it.

Now the time has come for him to speak forth fully and freely the words which show the exceeding riches and glorious exaltation of grace. Among all the wonderful words of this apostle these sometimes appear the most wonderful. They have been an unfailing source of consolation to the poor and sorrowful in all ages of the world, since they were written. They have come down like a rich and triumphant song through all the generations of time, cheering and lifting up the downcast souls of unnumbered millions, and filling them with unspeakable melody unto the Lord. "For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." It looks as though this was enough. Surely if salvation is by grace; if faith is the avenue through which it comes to us; if it is not of ourselves, but is the gift of God, what more need be said? Who can find a place to introduce man's power, or anything conditional or contingent? But the apostle does not leave it here. The devil is full of lying devices and all subtlety, and delights in disturbing the quiet of the poor and afflicted people of God by insisting that the Lord has left something depending upon themselves. So the apostle goes on showing the firmness of the wall of salvation. "Not of works, lest any man should boast." Here are both affirmative and negative, and the resting-place of the flock is surely secure from the intrusion of the enemy with his erroneous doctrine of salvation by works.

It seems peculiar that the reason given here why salvation is not of works is "lest any man should boast." The apostle is directed and allowed to see and declare this motive of the eternal mind of God, this infinitely wise reason why men are not allowed to secure their salvation in whole or in part by their own works. Boasting on their part would be the sure result, for our nature is full of boasting. The salvation of the Lord's people is an *experience* which makes them humble before God, and fills them with grateful praise to him, instead of being a *work* of their own, which would lift them up with pride, self-confidence and boasting.

Salvation is not simply an experience of deliverance from danger which leaves us just as we were before; as one might be saved from a pursuing lion, or from being overwhelmed and drowned in a

flood, or from death by sickness. In this salvation a work has been done in us, a change has been wrought, and we are not the same as we were before. In the sense in which we were dead we are now alive. We are new creatures. The work done in us has been a creative work. It is not that we are remodeled or made over in our Adamic nature, but we are created in Christ Jesus, and are therefore new creatures in Christ. It is in this sense that we are said to be God's workmanship.

To create is to bring into existence that which did not exist before. The word "create" is thus used three times in the first chapter of Genesis; first, to express the bringing of matter into existence; second, animal life, and third, human life. The word create is used in this place to express the mysterious work by which spiritual life is manifested in a sinner of Adam's fallen race. The man existed before, and the spiritual life existed before, even from eternity; but the bringing of the two together, so to speak, in one person, so that the Adamic man, the sinner, is brought into the experience, and under the control, of spiritual life; this is new; this is the creative work of God, who thus creates us in Christ. Here is one who is the subject of the two births; the first, of the flesh, by which he was manifested in the life of the first Adam, who was made a living soul, and was "of the earth earthy;" and the second, of the Spirit, by which he was manifested in the life of the second Adam, who was made a quickening Spirit, and is the Lord from heaven. In the first birth he was brought forth in the life of Adam, and in the second the same man is brought forth in the life of Christ, by which he is sealed unto the day of redemption, the redemption of our body.

Before the second birth this man could do no good works in the sight of God, because he was dead in sin. He could no more do a good work than a bad tree could bring forth good fruit, or a corrupt fountain send forth pure water. But when this new creative workmanship of God has been accomplished in him, then he is brought into a new and essential relationship with Christ, in which good works are his. But they are his only in Christ.

"Created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." These good works are not works of the flesh, though they are manifested through the flesh. That which constitutes them good works no natural man can see. For instance, two men are immersed in water by the same gospel administrator. In one the act is a good work; it is a gospel baptism. In the other it is not a good work, but is of the flesh. What makes the difference? Faith. One had faith, the other had not. In one the work had been wrought in him by the Spirit, in the other it was merely of the flesh. There can be no good work except in Christ, by faith. "Without faith it is impossible to please God."

There are brethren who have thought that although God had before ordained that we should walk in these good works, yet we may not walk in them. They have thought that the word "should" has only the force of "ought to:" that it means that God before ordained that we *ought* to walk in those good works; that it is our duty to do so, and that we might if we would, but that we may refuse to do so. Now this seems to be a misconception of the subject presented here, and in the minds of such brethren these good works in Jesus Christ seem to be confused and

confounded with the *acts* in performance of a christian's daily duties which are done in the sight of men.

But we must remember that that which constitutes any work a good work is faith. "We walk by faith, not by sight." It is only in Christ that we can walk holily and acceptably before God. It is the work of Christ that we are enabled to walk in him by faith, not our own work. Just see how it would otherwise appear. "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them;" then to add, "But we may refuse and fail to walk in them." Then how about the workmanship of God, has it been a failure? How about our creation by the eternal God in Christ unto good works, if after all they fail us and we fail them? Has God's creative work been in vain? And then, the foreordination of God, has that been in vain? Shall any of those who are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that they should walk in them, fail to walk in them? What kind of an ending would that be to this great and glorious song of salvation by grace? As well might we say that those who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before God in love, may fail to be holy and without blame before him in love. God's workmanship is perfect; his purpose concerning that workmanship cannot fail to be fulfilled.

These good works unto which the saints are created in Christ Jesus are the way in which God has before ordained that his people shall be manifested as his; the way in which they shall pass from death unto life, from sin to holiness; the way in which they shall walk before him in righteousness. Their walk is in Christ, not in themselves. One of the elect may come at an early age, and another not till late in life; but when they do come it is in the good works of Christ in each case alike. One may be manifest as a child of God, and walk in these good works by faith for a time, and then may transgress; fall away from the truth; sell his birthright; live after the flesh, and die to the privileges of the church; be separated from the fellowship of the saints and the comforts of spiritual things. We are taught in the Bible, and in our own experience, that a child of God may thus err from the truth and experience death in this sense. But when the Lord's time has arrived for that erring one to be restored there is but one way for him to walk, and that is in the good works of Christ.

The workmanship of man cannot take the place of the workmanship of God in any part of salvation, nor in any degree, nor can it come into partnership with it as helping in any way. This is what is taught here, and this the quickened sinner learns from day to day. The natural man cannot learn this truth, for like all the things of the Spirit of God, it is spiritually discerned. (1 Cor. ii.) The christian when spiritually minded is continually questioning his motives in every work that he does, for he knows that it is the motive which decides the character of the work, whether it is a good work in the sight of God or an evil work. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." And it is indeed a most serious question with us whether our work is a work of faith or not. We know well that if we are not walking by faith we are not walking at all in a spiritual way, for "we walk by faith, not by sight."

It is a blessed thing to be thus tried

day by day. Spiritual life is manifested in that way, and the trials and questionings show that life to be in exercise. The new creature in Christ ("If any man be in Christ he is a new creature."—2 Cor. v. 17,) cannot be satisfied to go forward in any work without the assurance that the Spirit directs it. To the christian there can be no satisfaction in any religious work without the testimony of faith to that effect. Like Abel and Enoch every child of God must have the evidence and testimony of faith that he is righteous, and that he pleases God. "Without faith it is impossible to please him."—Heb. xi. 4–6. This is the foreordination of God.

They who are God's workmanship in this spiritual sense, are thus prepared to give and to receive exhortations, reproofs, rebukes and admonitions, as well as the preaching of the gospel and the teaching concerning the order of the church and the walk of the christian. These all concern the things most important now to them. The true exhortations and reproofs are given in meekness and love; and when the one who needs them is prepared for them by the Lord they are received in the same spirit of meekness and love and tender thankfulness. The one who is truly prepared by the Spirit to "warn the unruly," to "comfort the feeble minded," to reprove and convert the erring, and "to instruct them that oppose themselves," he does not regard himself as having the power to produce the desired result. He speaks from a feeling heart of love, and with the authority that belongs to his gift in the church, and to the word given him to speak, but there his authority and responsibility end. He must leave the result with the Lord, who alone can touch and move the heart. It is the Lord who alone can apply the word with power, and give repentance to the erring brother. It is because we know that, and "because we trust in the living God," that we "both labor and suffer reproach."

The place of comfort for the Lord's afflicted and poor people is in the gospel church. "God is known in her palaces for a refuge." There may be the deepest trials in the soul of the one who is walking in Christ, in sweet and willing obedience to his Spirit and word, but there is down in the deeper depths of his soul a comfort and peace which can only be felt in that obedient walk. As Jesus suffered in the flesh, so his people must suffer while they are in this bondage of corruption. But "as the sufferings of Christ abound in them their consolation also aboundeth by Christ."

SILAS H. DURAND, Moderator.
E. LEIGH, Clerk.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 15, 1903.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SON:—Please allow me space in the dear old SIGNS to say to the household of faith in Texas that I am now in the office of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, having attended the Delaware River and Warwick associations, where I enjoyed a royal feast indeed. I find the eastern Baptists a lovely band; I feel to thank the Lord for leading me to them.

In christian love,

LYDIA C. RAY.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO BROTHER D. M. LEONARD'S APPEAL TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$746 70
Mrs. Sarah Bishop, Del., $1.00; D. L. Hartsfield, Ark., $1.00; Mrs. Isaac Squires, N. Y., $15.00; Elder B. G. Ford, Ohio, $3.00.—Total	20 00
Total to date	$766 70

ORDINATION.

In pursuance of a call by the church at Southampton, Pa., the following named messengers met with this church on Friday a. m., June 5th, 1903, at half-past nine o'clock, for the purpose of taking into consideration the propriety of ordaining to the full work of the gospel ministry brother Horace H. Lefferts, a member of the Southampton Church.

From Southampton Church—Elder S. H. Durand, Deacon Caswell Reeves, brethren Wm. Hobensack, Elias Hogeland, Chas. S. Bond and Geo. Duffield.

From First Hopewell Church—Elder F. A. Chick, Deacons Elijah Leigh, Johnson T. Blackwell, Wm. S. Bond, Israel Vannoy, brethren Eugene Drake, Daniel Stout, George Yard. Wm. Yard, John Yard and Morgan Blackwell.

From Kingwood Church—Elder D. M. Vail, Deacon Cyrus Risler, brethren O. R. Kugler and James Hand.

From Second Hopewell Church—Deacon Elisha Drake.

From Salem Church, Philadelphia, Pa.—Deacon B. F. Coulter, brethren Edward Rounds, Eli Clegg and Franklin Terry.

1. The Council organized by choosing Elder S. H. Durand as moderator, and Elder F. A. Chick as clerk.

2. On motion, all visiting ministers and members of other churches were cordially invited to seats in the Council.

3. The candidate, brother Lefferts, was presented by the church to the Council for examination.

4. Brother Lefferts was called upon for a narration of his experience of grace and call to the ministry, and for a statement of his understanding of the principles of the doctrine of Christ. This he gave fully and frankly, and to the full satisfaction of the whole Council.

5. On motion, it was unanimously agreed to proceed to the ordination of brother Lefferts by the imposition of the hands of the presbytery.

A sermon upon the subject of the gospel ministry was preached by Elder P. D. Gold, of North Carolina. It was full of clear statements of the work of the ministry, and of solemn exhortations. The text was Romans x. 15.

Prayer was offered by Elder J. G. Eubanks, of Delaware, during which the hands of the presbytery, consisting of Elders S. H. Durand, F. A. Chick, J. G. Eubanks, W. W. Meredith, D. M. Vail and J. T. Rowe were laid upon the head of the candidate, while all the remaining ministers stood with the presbytery. Both the scene and the prayer were most solemn and impressive.

The charge was then given the candidate by Elder S. H. Durand, the pastor of Southampton Church. The charge covered not only the obligation resting upon the candidate to preach the word, but also as to his daily life before men, and also an admonition to the churches, as regards their duty to stand by all faithful ministers of the word. It was an admonition not soon to be forgotten by any that heard it.

The hand of fellowship in the ministry of the gospel was then given by Elder F. A. Chick, in behalf of the brethren of the Council, and of the church, and of his brethren in the ministry.

6. It was voted that the proceedings of this Council should be published in the Signs of the Times, and in *Zion's Landmark*.

7. The Council then adjourned.

After hymn 613, (Beebe's Collection) was sung, the benediction was pronounced by the candidate.

S. H. DURAND, Moderator.

F. A. Chick, Clerk.

Southampton, Pa., June 5, 1903.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, in the Old School Baptist meeting-house, in Salisbury, Md., March 4th, 1903, Carel S. Twilley and Miss Ruth Sirman, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

By the same, at the residence of the bride's father, Mr. Samuel B. Hastings, near Delmar, Del., April 14th, 1903, Ernest P. Francis and Miss Marian A. Hastings, both of Sussex Co., Del.

By Elder Z. M. Beal, in Bowdoinham, Maine, June 10th, 1903, at the home of the bride's mother, Mrs. Ella L. Raymond, Harry E. Hanks, of Augusta, Maine, and Miss Frances Ella Raymond, of Bowdoinham, Maine.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, June 10th, 1903, at the residence of the bride's parents, Ervin Daniel Brautigam, of Sidney, Ohio, and Miss Mary L. Cory, the accomplished daughter of Elder W. N. Cory, of Frankfort, Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

John R. McPherson, son of David and Elizabeth McPherson, was born in Chatham Co., N. C., May 20th, 1832, and died May 27th, 1901, aged 69 years and 7 days. His father's family consisted of three sons and three daughters; one brother and sister have been dead for several years. Mrs. Caroline Nichelson, Mrs. Mary Nichelson, with his twin brother, still live. His father died in North Carolina when he was a small boy, and his mother moved to Indiana when he was very young. He with his twin brother Rily united with the Baptist church called Salem, in May, 1882, and was baptized by Elder James Martindale. He was a firm and zealous church member; none more careful in trying to do that which was right. Seldom was he absent from church. The church loses one of her most consistent and worthy members. As a citizen, upright, honest and indus-

trious. He will be missed by all, but to his twin brother, who was constantly with him through life, even to death, does the blow fall most heavily. A twin brother in the flesh, and a twin brother in the hope of eternal life. They part not as those who have no hope, for they hope to meet again, not as twin brothers, but as children washed and made clean by the blood of the Lamb, where they will sing, Not unto us, but unto thy holy name be all the praise.

L. C. ALLEN.

HAGERSTOWN, Ind., May 5, 1903.

Eliza Newman was born Sept. 14th, 1831, and died May 17th, 1903, aged 72 years and 3 days. She was united in marriage to Joseph Newman, Nov. 6th, 1853. To this union were born two children, one son and one daughter; John died in infancy. Mary Jane lived to the age of forty years, then died. Mr. Newman died in the year 1857, thus leaving her a widow many lonely years, with no family but Mary Jane, who was blind until she left this lonely world, who was a great care on her dear mother. Sister Newman united with the Primitive Baptist Church some forty years prior to her death, and was a faithful, beloved and consistent member all her useful and christian life. Sister Newman was a woman of strong mind and judgment. She was a great lover and reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, an ardent advocate of the sovereignty of God, and of salvation by grace only, through the righteousness of Christ imputed. She leaves to mourn her death, two brothers, one sister, and a very large number of relatives more distant.

Her funeral was largely attended, and the writer tried to speak words of comfort to the bereft and friends of the deceased, after which the remains were interred in the Reaber burying ground, to await the resurrection of the just.

ALSO,

Jonathan Swickard was born in Washington Co., Pa., Jan. 22d, 1814, and died May 30th, 1903, aged 89 years, 4 months and 8 days. He was united in marriage with Lydie Dague, Oct. 4th, 1843. To this union were born four children, two sons and two daughters, one daughter preceding him to the grave. His companion died July 20th, 1881. He again was joined in marriage to Anna Ridenhour, Jan. 12th, 1884. She died in August, 1902. He leaves to mourn his departure, two brothers, one sister, three children, seven grandchildren, and a host of distant relatives and many friends. He made no public profession of religion, but was an ardent believer of salvation by God's grace, through the righteousness of Christ imputed. His sympathies were with the Old Baptists. In his dying struggle he reached out his arms exclaiming, "Come, Jesus, come, blessed Jesus, come," and was dead. These were his last utterances on earth. Blessed promise, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

His funeral was largely attended yesterday, June 3rd, in New Albany, in the Methodist meeting-house. The writer of this notice tried to speak words of comfort to friends, after which the remains were laid to rest in the New Albany Cemetery, to await the resurrection of the just.

G. N. TUSING.

MEMORIAL.

WE, the members of the Delaware Association, sadly and affectionately record this memento of love to the memory of our late faithful pastor and esteemed brother, **Ephraim Rittenhouse.** His excellent gift as a pastor, his long continued faithful care of the churches, his manifest interest and usefulness in the welfare of our association, his exemplary character and christian deportment, endeared him to us in a heavenly tie which can never be broken. We sorrow most of all that we shall see his face no more in this life, but are comforted with the sweet assurance that he is called home to receive a crown of life, which the righteous Judge gives to all who love his appearing.

W. W. MEREDITH, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE Delaware River Association, convened with the church at Southampton, desires to place upon her Minutes an expression of her feeling as a body with regard to **Elder Ephraim Rittenhouse,** of the Delaware Association, who has been called away by death during the past year. It is fitting that we should do so, because of the love and esteem in which he was held by us all, as well as by all the brethren of the associations in our correspondence.

Elder Rittenhouse needed no letter of commendation from us; he himself was the epistle of God to us, known and read of all men. During this generation the memory of his wise counsel, loving words from his lips, of faithful service performed in cold and heat, in storm and sunshine alike, of heartfelt interest in the Master's cause, of watchful care to feed the flock of God, of tender gladness when the churches under his care prospered, or when any gave evidence that they were called by grace, will never pass away. We would, remembering these things, adore the chief Shepherd for the gift of such an under-shepherd.

To his family, first of all, and then to the churches of his care, and to the brotherhood at large, who were blessed by his labors in preaching and writing, we extend our heartfelt sympathy. Their comfort must be that his armor is laid aside, and that the beloved and faithful servant of God is at rest.

S. H. DURAND, Moderator.
ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet (the Lord willing) with Union Church, five miles south of Colchester, McDonough Co., Ill., Sept. 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1903.

Those coming by rail will be met at Colchester, on Thursday before, and on Friday morning, from the south. Only those from east, west and north of Galesburg, will come to Galesburg by 5 p. m. Thursday, where we will endeavor to get reduced rates from there on. All are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 71. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1903. NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GOOD WORKS.

BROTHER C. M. Bruce, Pawnee Rock, Kansas, desires that I write on the above subject. He quotes Ephesians ii. 10: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Also James ii. 17, 18: "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works."

Brother Bruce wants especially to be shown the difference between the system of works as set forth by Arminian teachers, and the works by faith, of which the apostle James speaks.

"For we are his workmanship." The apostle is writing "To the saints which are at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus." Which applies to the saints everywhere, and in all ages of the world. Therefore the word "we" is very significant, and entirely exclusive. We, then as the children of light, are the workmanship of God. By his Spirit which worketh mightily in us, we have been brought out from under the power and reign of darkness, into the light and liberty of the gospel of Christ. His work is perfect, "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." This work he began in them away back in the days of darkness, when they first became conscious sinners, sensible of their just condemnation under the violated law of God. This was the beginning of the manifest work of God in the children of men. Now the apostle says: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." This is all God's work, we have neither hand or voice in the matter, whatever we are, we dare not boast, for we are his workmanship, and as we are, we ascribe unto God the glory.

"Created in Christ Jesus unto good works." This is a part of God's workmanship, to wit, God sending his own Son into the world, to become the first fruits or that generation, which shall be accounted unto him through the seed that shall serve him. So in this holy work we become new creatures in Christ Jesus the Lord. In this creation our identity is lost, our name is no more

Jacob, but Israel, and we now stand in the name and the merit of our gracious Redeemer. He is our Bridegroom, and he wraps the drapery of his love about us, and in him we live and move and have our being.

"Unto good works." Considering our standing in Christ, and the life that we live, that it is a life of faith, and the new creation, (God's workmanship) necessarily implies that our whole life is "unto good works." We work out and make manifest the salvation which God has wrought in us.

"Which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Before the worlds were made our upright walk in Christ Jesus was in the mind and purpose of God. All things which he has ordained, has and will come to pass. His promises and his decrees have never failed to bring forth the fruit which he designed concerning them. So God says by the mouth of the prophet, "For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater. So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Now we behold the creature, as identified in Christ Jesus, created and ordained unto good works. And what about that other creature which stands out in striking and direct contrast to this one? This other man is the first creation, and so it is recorded, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him: male and female created he them." Also, "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good." Doubts cannot surely arise in the mind of anyone as to what was meant when God said, "And behold it was very good." That it was not the creatures of his creation, that was meant, but the *work* of his hands. That is always good. Our own experience tells us that the things from us are not good. When one said to Jesus, "Good Master," he made answer, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but God." Almost immediately after the man was created, he transgressed the law of God, and so became he a sinner, and all the works that followed him were evil and not good. When Jacob was taken before Pharaoh, he made answer to him saying, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been." The apostle Paul also said, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." The prophet Jeremiah says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Such is the spirit that worketh in the children of this world; their minds are carnal, and the carnal mind is enmity against God. They dwell in darkness, and their works are actuated by the spirit of darkness which controls them. They worship the works of their own hands, they carve out idols from wood and stone, and say, "These are the gods that brought us up out of Egypt." They "are murmurers, [and] complainers, walking after their own lust, and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage." They make long prayers, that they may be heard of men. All their works are the result of carnal reason. They claim to be able to save souls, and so they hold protracted meetings for that ostensible purpose, but in reality their object is vain glory and money. Their works therefore

are not "good works" because they all emanate from the flesh, and as has been quoted, in the flesh dwelleth no good thing.

The saints of God not only find this man of sin in the world, but also in their own household, (their own flesh). So that we do not have to go out into the world to find those of whom the apostle Jude speaks: "These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever." If the fountain is corrupt, how can any good thing come from that which flows from it? On the one hand, the dead sinner thinks he can save himself by his works, while on the other hand, the sensible conscious sinner knows that his own works are as a ball and chain holding him down, and driving him farther and farther away from a throne of grace. His self-righteousness has become abhorrent to him. He has become dead to sin, and alive to righteousness. He walks no more by sight, but with eyes of faith he beholds the righteousness of Christ, which is perfect and beautiful, then beholding himself in the same mirror, he sees himself in his true nakedness, and filthiness of the flesh. His desire is to do the will of the Lord, he loveth the courts of the Lord, and his delight is in the assemblies of the saints. Now what is the work, (or works) which this one is called upon to perform? what does the Lord require of him? Is there anything for him to do? When Jesus died upon the cross, the work of salvation was finished, Jesus paid all the debt that stood against us under the law. So there is no more work to do in that direction. The man of sin verily but vainly thinks he is helping along in that work, through natural eyes he cannot see the finished work of salvation. At one time, during the ministry of Jesus, there were some who said unto him, "What shall we do that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Now, they that believe on Jesus, have eternal life, and walk by faith. They are led by the Spirit into all truth, so that the things which they do, as followers of Christ, are good works, because they go where he went, and do the things which he did. For these are they that are "Created in Christ Jesus unto good works." At another time Jesus said, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to my Father." During his ministry, Jesus manifested his divine power in healing natural diseases and infirmities, and the disciples were following him, not yet having a clear knowledge of him, or the work he was doing. But after he had gone to his Father, he sent his Spirit (the Comforter) which took of the things of Jesus and shewed them unto them, by which they (and all saints) were enabled to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, by making manifest the great work of salvation which God had wrought in them. Therefore the works by faith in the children of God, stand out clear and distinct from the works of the flesh as manifest in the children of darkness. Now in the Scripture referred to as recorded by James, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." It is not enough for a man to merely say, that he has faith, there is no evidence in that, and the apostle insists upon that fact, that unless faith makes manifest in an upright and orderly walk, with godly conversation, it is dead, being alone. When faith is in exercise in its subjects, they cannot stand mute, they must shew forth the works of God. And faith points out the difference between works that are spurious, and good works, it shews the subject of the King of Zion that their place is not at the so-called mourners' bench, at camp meetings or anywhere that the religion of the world is bought and sold, for their path is in the footsteps of the gracious Redeemer, and their way is as his way, which is the path of the just, which "shineth more and more unto the perfect day." As the cold wind cometh out of the north, that being its element, so also divine faith emanates from the divine life, and puny man has no more power to exercise it, or bring it in subservience to his will, than he has power to control the north winds. But as all things in nature work in perfect harmony under the law of nature, so also under the precious law of God all the attributes of God flow smoothly out, reaching in their appointed time the temple of holiness, which is set up in the hearts of the children of God. From such a heavenly source, good works are made manifest in the church of Christ.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., May 20, 1903.

APPIN, Ontario, March 25, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed find two dollars for SIGNS for current year, as I see my subscription has expired, and I feel that all your subscribers ought to pay up promptly, and as far as possible in that way relieve you from financial anxiety, as you certainly have enough anxiety and responsibility in other things connected with the publication of the SIGNS, without financial anxiety, and I wish to say that I know of no other publication that I feel at all equal to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as a sound, clear exponent of the truth of God, and I have seen a good many.

I inclose a letter from a dear young sister that I feel would be read with interest by many a poor, tried child of God. I may be wrong, and you must be the judge as to whether it is worthy of publication or not; it was very comforting to me.

I wrote an article for publication a short time ago, but I concluded I was making myself too forward in writing, and so laid it aside. I have thought a good deal of late on the words of Scripture in Matthew xxiv. 12, "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." I feel it in my own case to be a sad fact, and is it not a sad fact the world over?

Yours unworthily for the truth's sake.

R. SCATES.

MUIRKIRK, Ont., Feb. 15, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER SCATES:—I feel that I owe you a letter, even though we had a few minutes talk while you were over, still I am not half satisfied. Do you ever feel, when you have been looking forward to a talk with certain of the dear children of God, and something has kept you silent in their presence, does that

make you feel as though there can be nothing whatever in you, or else it would call forth sympathy from others? That is what I have felt since the meeting in Duart. I looked forward with such hunger to it, and have been left empty. Surely it is sufficient proof that there is nothing in me when I am not fed. No manna falls to my lot, nothing but husks. I feel so much of the time that I have asked for bread and have received a stone. Surely you have never felt the dreary nothingness that has been so much my state for the last few months. I have no desire to read the Bible, and if I do read it, it is mere literature to me; a novel is more interesting and just as instructive. The SIGNS lie unread on the desk, and altogether I feel myself to be the most barren and most utterly void of all good thoughts and deeds; my mind is so full of the cares of this world I have no time to think of other things, and much of the time I have no desire. I often think if I could ever get on the mountain tops I would never again despair, no matter how deep was the "slough of despond." I would have something to look back on and say, I know that I am one of God's little ones, because of that season of rest, that sabbath day, but my hope is so faint and so small that I wonder if I have any at all. Yet now as I write, the words are in my mind, "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," and I feel if I can be sure of anything in my sinful heart, it is that I love the truth, and love all those who believe it. I may not feel attracted to them personally, but to the poorest and meanest of God's humble and poor people I feel unworthy for them to even trample upon.

There was a time a few weeks ago, when the baby seemed more sick than usual, and I was feeling rather badly about him, when the words came, "Behold I will laugh at your calamity, and will mock when your fear cometh." Those words have burned themselves on my heart. I think and feel as if I am utterly cast out, or rather that I was never one of those for whom Christ died. I do not know where the passage is, so do not know the context.

You asked me to tell some of my experience for publication, but I suppose you have sent that other miserable letter by this time, and it will be too late. It is well it is so. I often feel when I try to write to any of the church people, as if some one was saying to me, "Do not tell them any more lies. You know your whole profession is a bundle of falsehood, so do not add anything to it." That is why I could not consent to having the other letter published. I feel that my heart is so full of deceit that I deceive even myself, and try to persuade myself that I am not really as bad as I know myself to be.

Ever since Mr. Black was expelled I have felt at times that such should be my fate. I have no right there at all; no claims whatever to the heritage of heaven, and if the church could see me as I am, they would surely cast me out; cast me into the darkness of hell. Yet I would gladly spend an eternity there if I could feel it would in some measure atone for my sins while in the flesh, but it could not. I sometimes feel that it would take every drop of Christ's blood to cleanse me from sin, and wipe away its stain from my poor heart. O, I know it is not possible for any one to be as vile as I am, and ever be a subject of grace. It is a mockery to think of it.

Tell Mrs. Scates I would like very

much to have a few lines from her if she can feel like telling me any of her troubles. I cannot have so much sympathy with joy as I can with sorrow, because it is mostly sorrow that comes to my lot.

The baby's condition is still unchanged; I fancy he notices more and seems more cheerful, but his weight remains the same. Poor, little bundle of sin, it seems very hard to see him suffer, when he is so wee, and so helpless; yet what babies we all are, crying for the unattainable, beating our feeble hands against the air, the blows oftener falling on our own faces than anywhere else. My baby has taught me many a lesson. I have learned more completely what it means to be a babe in Christ, how utterly helpless we are, entirely at the mercy of the monsters in flesh who toss, and tumble, and tease us; we can do nothing to help ourselves. I wonder how any Arminian mother can look at her babe, and believing herself to be a child of grace, say she can perform one act or think one thought that will help her to gain the inheritance given to us by the great and merciful Father. I often think if I could believe as I used to believe, that works would help to save my soul, I would work day and night, I would leave no stone unturned, I would not be lost. But even in those days I knew I was a failure. I tried to work, I tried to be good, taught in Sunday Schools, read in Epworth Leagues and Christian Endeavors, prayed in prayer meetings, and in fact dipped into all the "good works" wherewith men save their souls, and I would go away from church and dance and play cards and do all the other foolish and even desperately wicked things that a child of Satan could conceive of. O, how I hated the Baptists when I came here; I would not go to hear them, and tried my best to keep John at home. But Elder Carnell showed me beyond all doubt that God has a chosen people, and Elder Vail showed me that it is only the poor in spirit who can be blessed of God. That was at the February meeting in 1900; since then I have learned more or less of the trials of those who are called, though it was not until one day in October of that same year I could ever feel that Christ's death and sufferings were for me. I had been reading to John a letter by E. F. Rounds, in the SIGNS of Sept. 15th, (I think it was) anyway it was about prayer, and it seemed to be so much our own experience that John said to me, "Do you not feel now that these words are for you? I do," and even while he spoke I heard such a still small voice saying, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." It seemed to me then that I wanted to go to the church; that it was only going to my home, yet we did not feel able to go until Dec. 22nd, when we were received. Since then we have had all sorts of doubts and fears to meet, but have still the desire to remain with the people of God.

Your sister in hope,

JEAN B. ROUTLEDGE.

DECATUR, Texas, Nov. 26, 1902.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN AND KINDRED IN CHRIST:—If I could only feel as sure that I am worthy to thus address you, as I am that the doctrine of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is the doctrine of the Bible, I would have no fear and trembling in addressing you as brethren and kindred in Christ. Sometimes when I look back over my past life I feel that I have deceived the dear people of God in asking a home with them, but where would my peace and happiness be if they had no

fellowship for me? for I can find no spiritual comfort outside of the fellowship of this peculiar people; for the God they worship is the God that I love to talk about and to meditate upon. He has all power in heaven and in earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? All things are under his control, and whithersoever he will he turns them.

The whole world lieth in wickedness, but the power of God is over all, and the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder he shall restrain. So when the ministers of antichrist try to overthrow the truth, we may rest assured that they will only cause the truth to shine the brighter to all them who love the truth. The Lord says that he will restrain that which is not to the praise of his glory. The doctrine of predestination stands forth all the brighter to all them that love the truth, when it is assailed. So the doctrine of unconditional salvation, both in time and in eternity, is of greater comfort to all them who feel the need of saving grace at all times, than it was before it was assailed. When the hordes of antichrist arise with hosts of ministers to overthrow the truth, we may be assured that the Lord of hosts will reserve a faithful few to comfort Zion throughout all her generations. His word will not return unto him void, but shall accomplish all that he designs it shall, and prosper in the thing whereunto he sent it. When the word of God is assailed we know that that man is a minister of antichrist. God will not have his ministers ministering to Zion with different doctrines. If one says that salvation, either for time or eternity, depends upon the act of the creature, we know that such an one is a minister of antichrist. Paul said, "By the grace of God I am what I am," and Christ said, "Without me ye can do nothing." When his servants obey, it is by the power of God. He says, "My people shall be willing in the day of my power." When therefore his people obey, it is by the reigning grace of God. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." It is by his mercy that we walk in obedience. When we try to walk in obedience by our own strength it brings death. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof is the ways of death."

Paul thus thought that he was doing right when he was persecuting the saints of God, for he testified, I verily thought that I ought to do many things contrary to Jesus of Nazareth, which things I did. Sometimes brethren misquote what Joseph said to his brethren when he made himself known unto them. He did not say, Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good, but he said, "Ye thought evil against me, but the Lord meant it for good." What they did to him was evil, but we cannot say that they meant it for evil, for they must have been like Paul when he verily thought with himself that he ought to do many things contrary to Jesus. The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, and neither indeed can be. But the Lord uses the wrath of man to carry out his purposes. He used wicked men in the crucifixion of Christ. We are told that had they have known the Lord of life and glory, they would not have crucified him.

Dear brethren, I will leave this scribble with you, hoping that you will bear with me in my weakness. I am under such a cloud of darkness that I cannot write what I want to write. I hope that the Lord will enable you to continue the

SIGNS for the comfort of Zion in the future, as he has in the past. I feel sure that the Lord of hosts has given you wisdom and knowledge to declare the truth for the comfort of Zion while in the fires, and while the fiery darts of antichrist are being hurled against the truth.

From your unworthy brother, if one at all, M. B. F. JONES.

WHITE HOUSE, N. J., March, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have been thinking about you, and so have thought that I would write you, and tell you of some of my trials in the flesh. I think that I am the least of all saints, if one at all. I have not heard a gospel sermon preached since my brother's funeral. Elder Vail at that time preached one of the most powerful sermons that I ever heard. I am at times so cast down, but I hope that I am not forsaken. At times I have a little hope, but I am helpless; I have nowhere to go, but to pray to my God to have mercy upon this old sinner.

The Lord is mighty, and he will save all that the Father gave him, and if I am one that he has redeemed with his precious blood, then I am safe; if not saved in that way I am lost. But he says, Be of good cheer, I have redeemed thee with precious blood. But can I claim that I have any right to the tree of life? I feel that I am the least of all, if one at all. I have been a reader of the SIGNS almost from the commencement, and now it is about all the preaching and good news that comes to cheer me up in my declining years. I am an old man; if I live till the fourth of next September, I will be seventy-seven years of age. So you see I have lived past my allotted time, but yet I enjoy good health, for which I feel thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift; they all come down from God out of heaven, upon a poor, sinful creature.

I want to close this letter to you by telling you of a wonderful dream which I had a long time ago; it seemed that I had a load upon my back which bore me down so that I became so tired that I wanted to get rid of it, and have rest, and have it taken away from my back, and I was given wings as an eagle, and I flew away, and I found rest. I was raised up on a table, and wings were given me, and when I looked down at my feet, the table was filled with loaves and fishes. O, how this frightened me, for this was the Lord's table, and I had polluted the Lord's table with my filthy feet. So I flew from there, and I soared up and up, and there was a great multitude to see me fly, and they wanted to know how it was that I could fly, and they could not. I made reply that I was upheld by the mighty power of God. So I flew on, and so easily did I fly that I rejoiced till I came to a great gulf of dark despair. O, how frightened I was for fear that I should fall, for my feet got to hanging down, and there appeared to be a great multitude in torment. But I was taken up out of this horrible place, and wafted on and on till I came to a beautiful field. O, how I did want to light there and rest, for I was now so tired, but I was not permitted to do so, for some one told me that this was the paradise of God. So I had still no place to rest. So I looked and beheld a beautiful temple on the top of a high mountain. I thought if I could only get to that place how happy I would be to sit down and rest there, and that load would then be taken off from my back. I soared on and on till I came to the beautiful temple, and I landed so easily, and I found a door standing ajar, and I ventured in; the

room was garnished from top to bottom, and was beautiful to look upon, but there was no place for me there. Then I looked about and saw another door, and there I ventured to knock, and some one inquired who was there, and I made answer that a poor sinner wanted some place to rest, as I had a great load upon my back, and wanted it taken off, and the reply was, "Come in, thou blessed, come in, and rest from all thy troubles." I ventured in, and there I saw the Savior sitting at the right hand of God, and there was an innumerable multitude singing praises to him that sat on the throne. These all had their garment washed in the blood of the Lamb.

But I must close this scribble; take it for what it is worth, for it is like the writer, very imperfect.

From your brother in the Lord, I hope,

OLIVER KUGLER.

WILLOW HILL, Ill., May 20, 1903.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I am in receipt of a letter from Elder L. D. Seals, Vanleer, Tenn., which was much comfort to me. I send the same to you for your disposal, and if you think it worthy, please give it space in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I met him last March while visiting middle Tennessee. He is an able minister of the gospel.

Hoping that your health is improving, and wishing the SIGNS Godspeed, I remain your unworthy brother,

MARION BARTLEY.

VANLEER, Tenn., May 5, 1903.

MARION BARTLEY—DEAR BROTHER:—Yours of the 16th at hand, contents noted. Will say that I was very glad to hear from you again, but very sorry to learn that your brother was no better, but I still hope that he may recover. As long as there is life there is hope. But that God who works his will hath said that he would never leave or forsake his people, so if our nearest friends have to go, we can take courage in the thought that God will still be left with us, and will ever be with us to deliver us from all our troubles, and O, how glad we should be that God is going to wipe all tears from our eyes. I think the good book says that he has all the tears of his people in a bottle. So he is watching over his poor people, and he suffers nothing to come upon them but what is for their good, though we in our nature may think that it is the very thing that should not have taken place, but we cannot see in the future, but our God can see to the end of all things, and not only sees to the end, but hath declared the end from the beginning, and I believe that the middle is declared also, for he says, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." So I think "doing his pleasure" is between the beginning and the end. With this view of the matter conditionalism has a hard row to weed. I can see no chance for it to live.

My dear brother, the brethren down here in Tennessee want you to visit us again when you can. I have heard many of the brethren say if they could think too much of a brother, they were afraid that they thought too much of you. But they were not afraid of you, and believed what you preached while you were here, and when I go to the churches the brethren are asking me about you, and how you are, and if you write like coming back to see us. I feel that the dear brethren up there should be glad for such a gift from God as you are. I do hope that the Lord will continue to bless you with health and patience to bear up under all your troubles and crosses while here.

I feel that you have a work to do that is going to prove a blessing to the Baptists, so I do not want you to become discouraged, my dear brother; be sure that you deny yourself, for self is not in it, for if self was to have the honor, the Savior would not have said, Deny self. My dear brother, this "denying self" has always been a great cross to the world, and this being such a cross to the human family, and as the people want to have honor to themselves, the failure just here has given rise to every conditional system that now is in the world. This command comes from the Savior, to deny yourself, so to deny self is to have no confidence in the flesh. You find a man who believes in conditionalism in any sense of the word, and you will find a man who has not denied himself, but you find a man who looks to God for salvation alone by the grace of God, and then you have a man who will tell you there is nothing good in his flesh. You find a man who has denied himself, and you have a man who is ready to tell you that the Spirit and the flesh lust against each other, so that he cannot do the things that he would. Would you not be ashamed to say that you believed in a conditional salvation only for time, and then turn and say that the warfare is such that I cannot do the things that I would? O, how sorry I am for those dear brethren who have left this grand principle of "cannot do," and have gone into "can do." They have left the "not" out, and are going about to establish their own righteousness. (Romans x. 1–3.)

I feel that the brethren up there have a gift from God that they should be proud of. I know that the brethren down here are proud of you, and they thank God for such a gift, and would be glad to have you visit us just as soon as the Lord opens the way.

I must close, as I fear that you will become worried with this letter. We are all well. Elders J. R. Hatcher and J. B. Luther were with me at my home church yesterday. We had a good meeting, the house was more than full of people. Wished you could have been with us. So good bye in the Lord.

Your little brother, I hope,

L. D. SEALS.

San Francisco, Cal., Nov. 27, 1902.

Dear Brother Beebe:—I send you a letter containing a dream which I wrote first to sister Bessie Durand, and which she desired me to forward to the Signs, saying she thought it good matter for that paper. I leave it in your judgment whether to publish or not.

It seemed that I was conversing with a gentleman, a scholar, about the word of God, and how important it was for us to heed when God speaks to us. The gentleman seemed to hold, in my dream, that the Scriptures commonly known as the Holy Bible, was the word of God, and that in the heeding of its teachings, and in obeying its precepts, there was everlasting life. I took a different view. Admitting that eternal life came to us through obedience to the law laid down in the Scriptures, I held that we did not obey, and therefore that eternal life came to us not through our obedience, or our efforts to obey. Perfect life could only come to us through a perfect obedience, and perfect obedience could come only through a perfect man, therefore Christ, the only perfect man, came and obeyed every requirement of the law, thus weaving a perfect robe of righteousness by which to clothe all the Lord's children in that beautiful and acceptable manner which is pleasing to God. We, being

unperfect, Christ by his perfect obedience unto death hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, and thus he, the Lord, became our righteousness.

Now with regard to the word of God which we should hear. He was in the beginning, and it was by this word that the world was created. When God said, "Let there be light, there was light." Let there be a firmament, and God made the firmament. And when God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear, it was so. And when God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon earth, it was so. When God said, "Let there be light," it was so. And so God first made light, and then as he moved, as the scientist would say, by the law of evolution, God crystalized the light into bodies to rule the day and night, and for seasons and years. When God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly by the power of the word of God, the sea obeyed, and the fish and the fowls of every species producing after their kind, came forth with the impression of the word of God plainly marked as it vibrated in the embryonic structure of all animal creation. And when God said, Let the earth bring forth, the earth likewise obeyed.

There is a sublime fact lying back of all these manifestations of the power of the word of the Lord, which we learn in the fourth and fifth verses of the second chapter of Genesis, which reads, "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, and every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew." God exercised his creative power also by the word in the beginning. The first result of that word in its supreme power was the creation of all things, the next result is the heeding of the word of God by created things, and every created thing, both vegetable and animal, moved into visible form by the power of the word spoken by the invisible God, who can only be known by the things that are made. As we know each other sometimes only by what we read of the other's writing, so God is known by his words written, as it were, upon the heavens, and on every mountain, hill and valley of the earth, and also upon the sea. The prophet Isaiah says, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it. For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands."—Isaiah lv. 11, 12. Truly God's voice shall be heard wherever intelligence has grown to that point that is necessary to comprehend language. God's words have gone forth, and we see them in every herb, every tree that bears fruit, every fish, fowl and animal which produces after their kind.

God has given to man every herb bearing seed which is upon the face of the earth, and every tree in the which is the fruit bearing seed for meat. All these are the expressions of God's loving care for us. Thus may we not be able to understand what Jesus meant when he said, quoting from Deuteronomy, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." What loving words were the innumerable numbers of the little round

periods that fell in the desert as food for rebellious Israel, to stop their murmuring.

I awoke from that beautiful dream, as I was telling my friend that the firmament with all its innumerable stars was but an open scroll containing the words of God, and quoting, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun; which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race." Thus ended my dream.

I will close by adding an expression of thanks unto that God who hath made this Sun unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

Yours in christian love,

W. H. POLK.

SIDNEY, Ohio, Oct. 15, 1902.

BENTON L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—I inclose one dollar for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; I would be glad could I send you five, but in this I cannot do the good that I would. I feel that I cannot do without the blessed SIGNS; it contends for the truth, and there are so many able writers. It seems to me that there never has been a time when there were so many that could go down deep into the truth of the Scriptures, as is the case in these latter days. Elder David Bartley's communications are so good. I was made to rejoice when I read his last communication in the SIGNS of Oct. 1st. There are those that write such precious articles. My love goes out to them. I want to be with them and tell them of my doubts and fears and hopes. It has been a long, dark time with me until one night not long ago I was feeling much troubled and cast down, and I longed for the day. As I was ready to go to my bed it came into my mind to read the seventeenth hymn (Beebe's Collection). I read it, and as I read it I felt resigned to the will of God.

"Wait, O my soul, thy Maker's will;
Tumultuous passions all be still," &c.

When I read the hymn I said, I will wait, and I am waiting and hoping that the Lord will visit me with his smiling countenance, and disperse the darkness that has shrouded me so long. O, if I could hear preaching. I have not heard a gospel sermon in ten long years, and I do not want to hear any other. When I read of your good meetings, how I long to be one with you, for I love those that know that salvation is of the Lord, and those who put no confidence in the flesh, but confess that salvation is all of grace from first to last.

"Free grace, we'll count thy glories o'er,
And lift thy wonders high;
We hope at last on death's cold shore
In thine embrace to die."

Now if you see anything in this worth a place in the SIGNS you may place it there. I have not written as I thought I would. Do with it as you think best. I am in my eighty-seventh year.

R. M. CRAFT.

WESTON, Mich., March 3, 1903.

BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—It has been impressed upon my mind to write a few lines to you, and to the dear saints who read our paper, and to tell you how we appreciate the SIGNS, always so richly laden. The article from brother Bartley's pen, in answer to sister Tuttle, we have read and

re-read, and is beautiful, and well worth the subscription price of the paper a year. The Lord has indeed a people who shall speak of his wondrous love and mercy to poor, sinful beings. Surely his mercy has followed us, else we long ago should have perished. He hath loved me with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness hath he drawn me, and though he lead me through deep waters, and the mighty waves roll over me, I shall rise again to sing his praise. All things work together for good to them who love God, who are called according to his purpose, and I am often made to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

We prize the SIGNS in book form, and wish to aid in freeing it from debt, and we feel assured it will be done. The Lord has indeed raised up you and Elder Chick to show forth his wisdom, and he will uphold and sustain you. The saints in all ages will bless you. I am glad the Lord doeth all things; he knoweth best. Yet I cannot at all times feel a spirit of resignation. The Lord has indeed raised up the editors of the SIGNS, and he will be your God; he will sustain you; your words of wisdom are as cool water to a thirsty soul; they are meat and drink to his beloved scattered throughout this land.

In hope,

(MRS.) J. M. WYMAN.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

CHAMPAIGN, Ill., June 15, 1903.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Will you change the address of the SIGNS from the above post-office to Chester, Thayer Co., Neb., and say to my correspondents any letter or telegram directed to that office will reach me?

Your brother in affliction,

SMITH KETCHUM.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Bryn Zion, Kent Co., Delaware, May 27th, 28th and 29th, 1903, to the several churches of which this Association is composed, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED:—Again it becomes our pleasant duty to send you our annual communication, which is called a Circular Letter, and in so doing, we call your attention to a passage of Scripture which we feel will be appropriate at this time: "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned: that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you."—Titus ii. 7, 8. Appropriate at this time because of the necessity for continual watchfulness on the part of all the saints. During the year that has just passed we have seen clouds arising in the horizon of Zion's sky, (no larger than a man's hand perhaps) yet ominous. Surely, brethren, our duty and our privilege is plain before us. Unless the evils that arise in our midst from time to time are stamped out they enlarge to great proportions, and ere we are aware they overwhelm us. We have no knowledge of any other way to walk according to the exhortation of the apostle Paul to Titus, as in the Scripture quoted, than by prayer and supplication that the Spirit of Christ may be in us, and exercise us unto good works, for surely of ourselves we can do nothing.

"In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works." If we desire (with prayer in our heart) to pattern after the perfect man Christ Jesus, we shall not go far astray in becoming a pattern for

others. We cannot estimate the power of example, and when the Spirit prompts to good works it is all of faith. Belief of the truth makes itself manifest in a broken heart and a contrite spirit, the effect of which is works that are fruitful and acceptable unto God. They are viewed by such as are also of a broken spirit, which as a result is yielded the peaceable fruit of righteousness.

"In doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned."

These things require great carefulness and prayerful consideration. We believe we echo the mind of the apostle in these things when we say, Beware of hobby riding. All unsound doctrine when promulgated leads to dissensions, and the falling away of the saints one from another. While on the other hand, sound doctrine promotes harmony, love, fellowship and good will. If we have a matter in our mind and heart that all the brethren do not accept, surely it is better to lock it up in our heart until by prayer and supplication at a throne of grace we become thoroughly established in the truth of God, and by careful examination of the spirits which exercise us, whether they be of God, or of the flesh. Better is it that we die and be buried, than that we (even in the smallest matter) should hurt the oil and the wine. We know that it is necessary that sore boils should sometimes arise on the body of our dearly beloved, that effete material which has crept in unawares may be cast off, but let us ever remember the words of Jesus: "Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come: but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." Let us also never forget this one great truth, that we are vessels of God's mercy, sanctified and set apart for the Master's use; using all things entrusted to our use with all prudence, and not abusing our gift and privileges. The doctrine of God our Savior is so directly opposite to the doctrines and commandments of men, both in spirit and in principle, that one who is clothed in the mind of Christ can easily discern the one from the other, especially in the results produced. The doctrine of Christ is Christ-like, and as it is instilled into the mind and heart of the children of light there is clearly manifest those traits of the christian character as mentioned by the apostle, viz: uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity and sound speech. These cannot be condemned, because they bear the insignia of truth. Against the truth of God no man or doctrine can stand; it is as light against darkness; the moment the light appears in the darkness, the darkness flees away. The church of Christ has stood through all ages against the powers of darkness, and the scorn and contumely of her enemies, firmly established, and invulnerable on the rock of truth, holding in her hand the divine torch, lighted with faith, hope and love; the attributes of divine grace, and the sovereignty of God. Her stately steppings have been traced as she has traveled westward from the rising of the sun, glorious in her apparel, and in the strength of her gracious Redeemer.

"That he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you."

The power of the Spirit of Christ accompanies the word as it is spoken, or set forth in the lives of the saints, so that all mouths are stopped, and it cannot be gainsayed. During the ministry of Jesus it was said of him, "Never man spake like this man," because power accompanied the words of his mouth, therefore

they are made ashamed, who oppose the truth, not being convinced, but awed and silenced by the power of the word. In every community where a branch in Zion is located, the members of the church are almost universally respected as good and upright citizens, as consistent in their profession, yet they are hated for the truth's sake; not as men and women, but because the carnal mind is continually at enmity against God. Yet notwithstanding all this, because of their steadfastness in the faith, and their upright walk and godly deportment, they are made ashamed to withstand them, having no evil thing to say of them. The opposition to and hatred of the truth has characterized the unbeliever in all ages of the world. When the truth is preached he will scoff and rave, for to him it is the very gall of bitterness, while to the believer it is honey and the honeycomb for very sweetness. As in the beginning, Cain and Abel stood opposed to each other in their offerings, the one representing the sins of the flesh, and their evil consequences, and the other representing the Spirit, with its acceptable sacrifice presented to the Lord, so all the way down to the present, the line is clearly drawn. Now if we stand with them who speak the things which becometh sound doctrine, it is an evidence that we love them, and also love the things which they love, and our heart's desire is that we do not have "Men's persons in admiration, because of advantage," but the lifting of Jesus on high, ascribing all power and glory to his gracious name. Let us then stand fast therefore in the liberty of the gospel of Christ, with godly sincerity, and pureness of heart, that the peace of Zion may not be disturbed through our desire for vain glory, by feeding the desires and lusts of our flesh. May Jerusalem be our chiefest joy in the morning, and our glad delight in the evening.

W. W. MEREDITH, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Ebenezer Old School Baptist church in New York city, June 10th, 11th and 12th, 1903, to the churches composing this Association, sends christian greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—As it has been our custom for many years at the annual meeting of our Association to address you with a Circular Letter, we still desire to do so at this time, having this assurance, that it is good for those who fear the Lord to speak often one to another, making mention of the goodness and mercy of our God, how he hath had compassion upon us in hearing our cry, and by his almighty power bringing us up also out of an horrible pit and the miry clay, placing our feet upon a rock, establishing our goings, and putting a new song in our mouth, even praise to our God. What precious declarations of truth these are to poor, needy, helpless sinners, as all the family of God in due time are by God's almighty power made to realize themselves to be. This language is so well adapted to all their needs and necessities anything short of this could not possibly meet their case. For ever since it pleased our God to manifest his power unto us and in us, in quickening us from the dead, and thereby bringing us into a realizing sense of our true condition in his sight, we have been made to lose all confidence in that god that is afar off, who as it is claimed for him has only made a way passable or possible for the sinner to be saved, provided the sinner will accept the offered salvation, and do his part in order to make effectual that which is claimed their God has done for

them. But God's chosen people are such poor, helpless sinners that they have neither part nor lot in procuring their own salvation, and that their God has never offered to save any one. But that Jesus himself hath saved his people from their sins, and in due time by his Spirit he makes this manifest to each one of those that was given unto him by the Father in the covenant of redemption. Yes, it is he who hath brought his people up out of an horrible pit of sin, and the miry clay, and in order to bring them he must come to them right where they are, that is, under the law; he must be made of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, by fulfilling the law in every jot and tittle, and suffering its penalty by his death, thereby satisfying all the claims of a just and holy law, which his people had violated and come under its curse, and by his triumphant resurrection over death, hell and the grave, the justification of all the redeemed was secured. He who knew no sin was made to be sin for his people, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him; our sins being imputed to him, his righteousness imputed to us. He being their nigh kinsman, had the right of redeeming them. He being the Shepherd and rightful owner of the sheep, could and did redeem his own flock, and this he did on Calvary's brow, when he poured out his soul in death and cried, It is finished, that is, the salvation of his people was complete, and in due time these things are made manifest to each and every heir to that inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. But first they must be made acquainted (alone by the operation of the Holy Spirit) with their need of the very things that their elder Brother has secured for them, for it is only by the blood of his covenant that his prisoners are sent forth out of that pit in which there is no water, and after bringing them up out of the horrible pit of sin, and the miry clay of their own self-righteousness, which adheres so closely to them, and stripping them of all confidence in the flesh, he places their feet upon a rock, showing them that they have a standing only in him; that all other ground is but sinking sand. And what a blessing it is to know these things, and it is only by revelation we do know them. We may with the natural ear hear these things declared, but in our carnal state we cannot receive them; we can bear witness to the truth only as we experience it; we must know for ourselves the folly of building upon a sandy foundation, and thereby suffering loss of all hope in creature merit or ability, ere we are brought to that rock upon which if a man build he will suffer no loss.

He establishes their goings. This being true, then the way they take is fixed, determined beforehand, so that it is not for them to direct their steps, and how true this is made to appear unto us at times, when we are made to look back and take a view of the way in which we have been brought. How very different from what we had planned or anticipated for ourselves, and as dark and meandering as it appears to us, yet at times we are made to exclaim, It is the right way, knowing that nothing happens by chance, but that every trial, and every conflict, and all the tribulation that we have, and are caused to pass through, as well as each deliverance, is all ordered of the Lord, and is for our good, and the Lord is glorified in it all. Surely we are made to realize the truth wherein it is declared, "And I will bring the blind by a way they knew not; I will lead them in paths

they have not known, I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things I will do unto them and not forsake them."—Isaiah xlii. 16.

And hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God. God himself hath done this, and not man, for no man knoweth this song, only those who have come up out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Then we see, brethren, that it is the work of the Lord all the way through, from first to finish. It is he who begins it, it is he who carries it on, and also he alone must and does finish it, and how glad each poor, needy, helpless one is that it is so. How they are made to rejoice that he hath done great things for them, whereof they are glad, and they do bless him. It is they, and only they, that talk of his power, and speak of the glories of his kingdom, for unto them only are these things revealed. The wise and prudent know nothing of these things, but out of the mouth of babes and sucklings is praise perfected. And well may they be called babes, being the most helpless of all God's creation, absolutely dependent upon their heavenly Father and Friend for all that they have and are. Well might the apostle say, "By the grace of God I am what I am." This being true, then all boasting is excluded, and how glad we are that it is so; that Jesus only is exalted, and the sinner abased. And how very merciful our God is to us that in all our pilgrimage through we are continually reminded of these things, and by sore trial, we have the desire of our hearts to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and to not be entangled again with that yoke of bondage, for surely it is our God who does keep his people through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, for nothing short of his power can keep them, and it is only folly upon our part to claim that we have any power in and of ourselves, and God who is ever merciful, teaches us in our experience, when we walk in the light of the sparks of the fire of our own kindling, that this is what we shall have at his hand, we shall lie down in sorrow.

We must ever praise our God for his goodness and mercy, not only for his grace in quickening us into divine, eternal or spiritual life, but it is also by the same almighty power and grace that we are brought to obey, for he alone must write his law in our hearts, and imprint it in our minds, and it is only as the love of Christ which constrains us to walk in obedience to the law of God that we do the things that are well pleasing in his sight; any service outside of this would only be a stench in his nostrils, no sweet smelling savor in it. But it is God that must work in us both to will and to do, and he does this as he does everything else, of his own good pleasure. This being true, then the glory is all his, but if on the contrary the creature could of his own will, power and volition work out any part of his salvation to any extent whatever, just to that extent would the glory belong to the creature, and not the Creator. But it is positively declared that "I am the Lord; that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images."—Isaiah xlii. 8. Graven images have always been a snare to Israel, it was so anciently, it is also so in this our day, the gospel day.

Yet our desire is that God's faithful watchmen, whom he hath placed upon the walls of our beloved Zion, may con-

tinue (by grace) to cry aloud and spare not; to shun not to declare the whole counsel of God, whether men will hear or forbear, for they dare not to seek to please men, if so, they are no longer the servants of Christ. The faithful watchman always gives the warning when he sees the enemy approaching.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session May 27th, 28th and 29th, 1903, to the associations and meetings with whom we correspond, sendeth greeting.

OUR heavenly Father in loving-kindness has given us another token of his unchanging love and watchful care over us as an association of churches, by blessing us with a precious, harmonious and soul-cheering meeting. The reports from the several churches all testify to the abounding grace of God in preserving peace and harmony in our church relation, manifesting the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. O, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.

Your messages of love and fellowship extended to us by your Minutes and messengers, we highly appreciate, and pray that our correspondence may continue, to express our christian fellowship, for truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, and with one another. The Lord by his ministers has sent us sweet messages of living spiritual comfort. The gospel without a disturbing sound has been preached during our meeting, and joyfully received by an appreciative assembly, and we feel that our meeting has been blessed to our good, and to the glory of God by us.

The next meeting of our association will convene with the Welsh Tract Church, at the usual time next May, 1904, when and where we hope to renew our correspondence of love and fellowship with you.

W. W. MEREDITH, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Southampton Church, to the associations, corresponding meetings and churches with which we correspond, sends greeting of love and fellowship in our Lord Jesus Christ.

BELOVED OF THE LORD:—Through God's abounding goodness and mercy to usward we have been permitted to meet and greet your messengers and ministers with a feeling of love and sweet fellowship, which we will term gospel fellowship. We are always glad to meet our dear kindred in Christ. The preaching has been, as it always must be, to the comfort of poor, needy sinners; salvation by grace, and that alone.

Our next meeting is appointed to be held with the Hopewell Church, Mercer Co., N. J., to commence on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1904, at 10 o'clock a. m., where we hope to receive your messengers and correspondence in love and spiritual fellowship.

S. H. DURAND, Moderator.
ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO BROTHER D. M. LEONARD'S APPEAL TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$766 70
Charlotte Hill, Mich., $1.00; J. M. Ruffner, Ohio, $6.00; C. Keator, N. Y., $1.00; Ella M. Parrott, Ill., $1.00.—Total	9 00
Total to date	$775 70

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1903.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ROMANS V. 5.

DEAR BROTHER:—Will you kindly explain the Scripture in Romans fifth chapter, fifth verse, and thereby gratify a seeker after the truth of God?

Yours hoping in God,

J. B. JACKSON.

TYRONE, Ky., March 4, 1903.

REPLY.

THE last clause of the text is the one especially referred to, and it reads as follows: "Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us."

The reply to the above request has been somewhat delayed, but now we will try to comply as best we can. The subject presented is certainly a very important and precious one, nothing can be more pleasant to the true believer than to hear and speak the love of God, and the way in which we come to feel its power. The love of God is that out of which all our hope of salvation springs. Each and all our blessings for time and for eternity have their source in this love; it is constant and unfailing and without limit, it is everlasting love, in that it had no beginning, and will have no end. Because of it the plan of salvation was formed in the infinite mind; because of it Jesus was given, and came into this world that through death he might redeem those who were justly condemned to everlasting punishment for their sins against God; because of this love the Holy Spirit was given, and by it this very love of God is shed abroad in the hearts of sinners, and makes itself manifest in their mortal flesh. Love is the substance of all obedience to the law of God, and salvation shall be fully completed when sinners come at last to love God with all their heart, mind, soul and strength. Love is the fulfilling of the law of God, and this law fulfilled by the dear Redeemer in the days of his flesh, shall also be finally fulfilled in all his redeemed, and thus they be finally conformed to the image of the Savior. Seeing then that this love is such an important thing, it is good to contemplate it for a season.

The sentence at the head of this editorial stands as the climax of a series of declarations made by the apostle in the two or three preceding verses. Paul speaks of tribulation, patience, experience and hope, each as being dependent upon, and growing out of the word preceding itself, and then sums all up by the declaration that the hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. There was evidently in the mind of the apostle, and what is more important still, in the mind of the Holy Spirit which inspired Paul to write all that he has here taught, a close connection between all these principles of truth. Let us, for a little, call attention to the train of spiritual truth presented here.

First. Paul says, "We glory in tribulation also." We glory in it not because of anything which appears glorious in itself, but because of the fruits which it bears. Tribulation comes in sad and

sombre garb, it is painful and distressing, there is no beauty in it that it should be desired, on its face it never can be desirable. Of the blessed Redeemer it was said, By affliction his visage was more marred than any man, and being thus marred, there was no beauty that men should desire him. It is not then in tribulation itself that Paul could glory, but that which was not in itself glorious yet wrought glorious things, and in these things Paul saw the true hidden glory of all tribulation. So David said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word." And again he said, "It is good for me to be afflicted, that I might learn thy statues." Jeremiah remembered the wormwood and the gall, and therefore had hope. Paul said again, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." Looking back over the past, where is the child of God who does not feel that he has abundant reason to glory in the trials and hardships of his pathway, seeing that such precious results have come out of them, and seeing also, that still more glorious results are promised as their result, in the word of God.

What are some of these results? Let us see. First among them all is patience. How many of the people of God under stress of trial have prayed for patience, or endurance. They have greatly desired the patience manifested in the suffering Savior. Not grim, uncomplaining stoicism, which endures because there is no help, nor any remedy, but quiet submission to the will of God, looking forward to the final deliverance in God's own good time, and meanwhile willingly yielding one's self to the sore trials of the way, since such good is to grow out of them, and since such a salvation is promised at last. Perhaps no one word will fully express the quality of patience. Endurance seems to come as near to a synonym of it as any other. Jesus endured, as seeing him who is invisible. That is, Jesus waited patiently for the Lord in all his life of conflict and trial: "If this cup may not pass except I drink it, thy will be done." Patience rests upon the will of God; it says under all trials, "It is God's will;" it rests in the truth that God is too wise to err, too good to be unkind; it believes fully that the hand of God appoints all our sorrows, and then presses the cup to our lips. The patience of Job said, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" That is, at the hand of God. It said also, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Again, "He performeth the thing that is appointed for me, and many such things are with him." Patience wrought all this in Job.

The word "worketh," signifies, "to effect," "to cause to be;" and so, Paul teaches that tribulation is the cause of patience in us. Patience is such a good thing that it is no wonder that Paul, seeing that it was the effect of tribulation, should glory in the tribulation. Tribulation then, must also be a good thing. If its fruits are glorious, it must itself be a glorious thing. The glory of things is not in the appearance of them, but in the fruit that they bear. How excellent is the fruit of tribulation, and how excellent is tribulation. Paul means tribulation of all kinds, loss of goods, loss of health, loss of friends, pain, poverty, sickness, all providential trials, and he means also those deeper trials which christians alone know, trials of our faith arising out of what we see dwelling with-

in, temptations of the devil, to which our flesh responds readily, and soul conflicts of every kind; he means all that can come under the head of tribulation. All these serve to produce patience. How glorious is the fruit. Let us with Paul glory in that which produces such precious fruit.

Do we pray for patience? What are we praying for but tribulation? We recognize that patience must come to us as the gift of God, and to him our prayer must be offered for it. So also we must learn that the affliction is in the cup of the Lord, and so much of it shall be given us as will serve to work out the proper meed of patience. Let me drink the bitter cup, since the Father's hand gives it, and since such are the blessed results which he has in store for me, is the heartfelt prayer of the submissive child of God. Most gladly will I glory in tribulation, is his confession; the glorious reward is worth the cost, yea, a thousand times worth the cost.

But patience is but one step on the road. Patience, itself the effect of tribulation, is the avenue through which we come into an experience. Tribulation is one experience working patience, and through patience we come into another experience. It seems to us that by the whole context we are shut up unto this conclusion, that the second experience is an experience of God's grace, goodness, greatness, mercy, compassion and power to save, under and in all our conflicts and trials. Through the trials, and the endurance of them, comes to the believer daily help from God, daily support, daily tokens of the Father's care and love to his chosen, daily proofs that God will never leave nor forsake his people. Thus the poet could say,

"His love in times past forbids me to think
He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink."

We could not know so much of the great goodness, patience and pity of God, were our pathway free from temptations and trials, which all constitute our tribulations. But having these things to battle with, and learning our own weakness to contend with them, we come to see how strong and wise and tender a Father we have, and this is that experience which patience works.

Now out of this experience we come into hope more and more abundantly. Experience works hope. The apostle is talking about a work that goes on with the believer all the time. The tribulation is always, and so the patience is always, and so is the experience, and the hope. The word "hope," as it is here used, includes expectation, desire, and the thought of assurance which grows and increases. Out of this experience of the mercy and grace of God to the sinful, needy believer, comes hope for the present, and for the future. Out of this experience we say at times, Since God has led me thus far, and guarded me from all harm, surely he will continue to care for me, and no plague shall come near my dwelling, and he who has guided and guarded me thus far, and kept me as the apple of his eye, will not at the last suffer me to fall and perish. Paul himself knew whereof he affirmed, when he said these things. Out of tribulation, patience and experience, which all had been his, he could say, I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to his charge against that day. And out of all this experience he, when near the end of his pilgrimage, could say, "Henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the right-

eous Judge, shall give me at that day." Here was hope swelling up into full assurance, and in this assurance is joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Paul adds that this hope maketh not ashamed. That is, the hope thus formed and built up in the believer shall never fail him. Such a hope is not in vain, it is a good hope through grace. A man bases his hope of success in any undertaking upon a certain course, or upon certain circumstances; these circumstances or this course of life proves unreliable, and he fails to attain to his hoped for end; his hope has failed, and he is ashamed. He whose hope of heaven, or of support while on the way, is based upon human merit, or birth, or upon the prayers of others for him, will one day be utterly ashamed before God, and before all who have heard his boastings. But this hope, begotten by the experience of the grace of God, shall not fail, and they who trust in God shall not be put to shame. The expression, "maketh not ashamed," has the force of the words, "putteth us not to shame," as a false and unreliable hope will do. Such a foundation will stand secure when the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and such hope shall not allow us to be ashamed while on our pilgrimage, though the whole world scorn us, and though tribulations abound in us and around us. Men may say, when they see the apparent low estate of the believer, Where is now thy God? but this hope still abides, and faith continues to live, and we can say, "Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God."

The great reason of all this steadfastness of hope is given by the apostle in the words to which our attention was called in the first place: it is because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. The love of God shed abroad in the heart makes its presence felt and known by begetting love in us to God, and to all that God loves; the name of Jesus becomes sweet to all in whom the love of God dwells; "We love him because he first loved us;" we should have never loved him except he first had loved us. Know then, doubting soul, that your love to God is the full assurance that he has loved you, and loved you with an everlasting love. Because he loves you, your hope is good, and in it you shall not be ashamed. His love shall never fail you. Every moment that you feel some assurance that your heart is fixed upon him, however feebly it may cling there, you have an added evidence that he loves you. How can your hope cause you to be ashamed when he so loves you? When temptation comes, and Satan urges upon you the fact of your many sins, still you cannot be made ashamed, because God loves you, and loving you, and having sent his Son to die for you, he cannot cease to love you, and to do all that is needful for you. You shall never perish, since God loves you. This is your ground of hope, sure and unyielding, God loves you. This is a solid rock; the gates of hell shall not prevail over him who inhabits this rock.

The fountain from which this love, and all christian graces flow, is the Holy Ghost, which God has given to you. So Paul said, "Your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost," and being the temples of the Holy Ghost, they are the abiding places of faith, hope, love, patience, long-suffering, and of every grace of the Spirit. All these things are the fruits of the Spirit.

What a blessed gift this is; what a

solemn truth to remember that our bodies are the temples of the holy Spirit, and that in our bodies all the precious fruits of the Spirit are manifested. They can be manifested nowhere else. Through this indwelling of the Spirit our very bodies are the members of Christ, as Paul testifies. What a close relation, and how honored the dwelling; such rich treasure in an earthen vessel, and that vessel broken and marred by sin and evil.

In all this language of Paul there is no shadow of reason for any human glorying, the glorying must be all in the Lord, who hath done such great things for his people, and in them. "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory," was the song of the redeemed, and it must be our song for ever and ever.

Seeing these things are so, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness. C.

PLEASE BE SURE,

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

Please be particular about this.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE NEW CREATURE.

Dear Friend G. Beebe:—Will you oblige a friend who has been a reader of your paper for several years, with your views on 2 Cor. v. 17, inasmuch as there is a misunderstanding here, among Old School Baptists, as to what this and similar passages mean? The question is, What becomes new? *Who or what this new creature is*, which is said to be new? In what part, and to what extent, is he made new?

Your views on this subject may have a tendency to allay the controversy, and prevent the division which seems about to be made for want of a proper understanding of it. I have hitherto taken great satisfaction in reading your expositions of the Scriptures, in the Signs, and, if my poor heart does not deceive me, I am a well-wisher of the Old School Baptists. Therefore please answer through the Signs, sentimentally and immediately, and oblige a grateful friend, and a sincere inquirer after truth.

A LOOKER ON.

May 28, 1860.

REPLY.

It is lamentable that brethren who know and love the truth should allow themselves to differ so widely on experimental matters, as to produce discord, and threaten a separation. However brethren may fail to apprehend the exact import of a passage of Scripture, or its precise application, they can generally find in their own personal experience a solution of what belongs to christian experience, and a solution, too, in which all christians must certainly agree. Those who have passed from death unto life can find, by examination of their own experience, what within them is old, and what is new. All their spiritual exercises are new; their knowledge of God, of his holy law, their consciousness of guilt and depravity, the justice of their own condemnation, and finally when Christ is revealed to them as their Savior, the joy of his salvation, the spirit of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, and all the fruits of the

Spirit to them are new. Whereas they were once blind, now they see; they love the things which they once hated, and hate the things which they once loved, they lose their relish for former pleasures in the vanities of this world, and above all things desire to enjoy the smiles of their God and Savior, and for his sake are made willing to suffer the loss of all things.

The text proposed by "A Looker On," reads thus—"Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

The first word of this text, THEREFORE, shows that the declaration of the text, and what immediately follows it, is a legitimate conclusion from premises before established in the preceding part of the chapter. The word *therefore* implies that what is here said must unavoidably follow, to be in harmony with the truth before stated. To obviate whatever misunderstanding may have existed in the minds of brethren, it will be safe to carefully and prayerfully examine the preceding context. In the beginning of his first epistle, the inspired apostle has detected in the Corinthian brethren some things which he denominates *carnal*, and which wars against the Spirit in the saints. In this epistle he is led by the Holy Ghost to draw the discriminating line between the two ministrations; the one of the law, a ministration of death, to that which is under the law. "For what the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law," &c. The other is a ministration of the Spirit, and of life to them who are spiritual. The ministration of life, he says, the saints have received. "Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not." He goes on in the fourth chapter to tell what we have received, and how. "For we preach not ourselves," or what we have done to obtain it, or what the apostles have or can do to communicate it, "but Christ Jesus the Lord." Thus, "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ. And this treasure we have in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." Can any of the brethren engaged in controversy on this subject fail to perceive that the *treasure* committed to earthen vessels, is the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ? What is this light? We read, John i. 4, 5, "In him [Christ] was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehendeth it not." This life which is light, is not that natural life which was given in the earthly Adam; for John says it was in him who is the Word, which was with God, and which was God, and which was made flesh, and dwelt among us. The remarkable harmony in the testimony of John and Paul, not only proves they were both inspired, but also that they were both dwelling on the same subject. John identifies the Word, in whom was life, &c., as that God by whom all things were made. "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made."—John i. 3. While Paul says, "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness," &c. Alluding to him as the Creator of the heavens and the earth; the Maker of everything that was made. John says, this light, which is life, the life of men, shineth in darkness." Paul says, "hath shined in our hearts." In what darker

place could it have shined? And then he adds, But we have this treasure in earthen vessels. The *treasure* of which he was speaking, is the light of immortality, of life, which was in Christ, and which is now in us the hope of glory. For he has also testified that this life was with the Father, and was manifested unto us. (1 John i. 2.) And then he reads to us the eternal record of the Book of Life. "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life."—1 John v. 11, 12. Can we conceive of any greater treasure existing in us, as earthen vessels, than the Son of God, and in him eternal life, which is so identified with him that we cannot have the one without the other? But our application of John i. 5, may be objected to, because it is there said, "And the darkness comprehended it not;" and it is readily admitted that those who are born of God have the witness in themselves. This is true; but while by faith they enjoy the cheering assurance that they are born of God, will any christian say that he can comprehend the light and immortality of God which is implanted in him? To know that a thing exists, is not to comprehend it. We know that we exist, but we cannot comprehend ourselves. We know that God exists, but we cannot comprehend him. So while Christ is formed in us, the darkness of our human reason falls so far short of comprehending him, that from our carnal minds doubts and fears often prevail over our faith and lead us to doubt that we ever had a saving knowledge of him, as having an abode in our hearts. But the apostle continues, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed." What is troubled? Not this treasure, but the vessels which have it. The vessels, Paul says, are *earthen*, but the treasure in them is heavenly. The earthen vessels may be broken, perish and dissolve, but the treasure which is in them cannot perish, for it is immortal.

"Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." How do we bear in our body the dying of Jesus? We have bodies which must die and which die daily, because they are mortal, and after death they must be raised up, not by a mortal or perishable life, but by a manifestation of the life of Jesus in our mortal flesh. "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might, through the thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." But stop! Here are two men. Who are they? What are they? Where are they? Their existence and connection as *our* outward man, and *our* inward man, shows that both belong somehow to the child of God while in this state of our existence, and in such connection as to produce a conflict, which would cause christians to faint, if it were not that one of these men is renewed, supported, sustained day by day, while the other is destined to perish. In answer to the questions suggested above, Who are they? Do any of the children of God require to be informed that the one which is denominated *our old man*, is the same which is called an earthen vessel, in chapter iv. 7, and our *earthly house of this tabernacle*, in chapter v. 1? It is an earthen vessel, an

earthly house, a tabernacle, or temporary residence during our pilgrimage in this wilderness, but at our journey's end to perish; to be dissolved and fall. For in it we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. This outward man is also in chapter iv., verse 10, called our body, and in verse 11 it is called our mortal flesh, in which death works. All who are christians may very readily perceive who this outward man is, from the facts stated, chapter v. 4, "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon; that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit." What *selfsame* thing hath God wrought his children for? That their outward man, which is earthly, and which must fall, be dissolved, shall finally, in the resurrection of the saints, be quickened with immortal or heavenly life, by the Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead, and thereby mortality shall be swallowed up of life. An earnest of that Spirit of immortality is already given to us, whereby we are sealed until the day of redemption, or to the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. "Therefore," says the apostle, "we are always confident; knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord." Then while this outward man is an earthly house or tabernacle in which we groan, being burdened, the inward man is that treasure which we have in these earthen vessels; it is Christ in us the hope of glory, and that life which we have in him, which is renewed and kept from fainting, by its daily renewal, by the Holy Ghost. This inward man, as well as the outward man, is also called a house; but the outward man is an earthly house, and the inward man is denominated our house which is from heaven. Here the widely different and distant origins of the two men, or houses, is implied, or rather plainly declared, the outward man is of the earth; the inward man, or house, is from heaven. The one is born of the flesh, and is flesh, but the inward man is born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And although these two houses are so closely connected now, and one of them inside of the other, (The life which I now live *in the flesh*, I live by the faith of the Son of God,) yet we cannot be at home in the one house without being absent from the other. Of this we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." There must be a sense in which the apostle regards the saints, in their exercises and experience, as alternately occupying these two houses. There is in the christian a life which is born of God, which can only be at home while abiding in Christ, and another life which is altogether at home in the flesh, the body, the earthly house of this tabernacle which is to be dissolved and fall. In harmony with this view, we read the admonition of our Lord: "Abide in me, as the branch cannot bear fruit except it abide in the vine, neither can ye, except ye abide in me."—John xv. 4. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."—Psalms xci. 1.

The apostle proceeds, "Wherefore we labor." Who labors? Paul and the Corinthian saints, and all other of the saints, "that whether present or absent, we

may be accepted of him." That is, as it seems to our mind, that whether in our spiritual or temporal pursuits, in our necessary connection with the world, in pursuit of our calling as men, in laboring for the support of the outward man, which is earthly, or in our spiritual enjoyments, in the exercise of our spiritual gifts, and enjoyment of communion with God, that we may be accepted of him. "For," he adds, "we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ." We are accountable to him, as our Judge, and he shall judge his people. For this purpose he has taken his seat upon his holy hill of Zion, and to this his judgment-seat we as saints all stand amenable for our conduct, for the deeds done in the body, according to what we have done, whether it be good or bad. "Knowing therefore the terror" or judgment "of the Lord, we persuade men." As in the close of this chapter he persuades or beseeches the saints to be reconciled to God, and in the commencement of the seventh chapter, to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. "For we commend not ourselves again unto you," &c. For as standing before the judgment-seat of Christ, we are manifest unto God, and trust also that we are made manifest to you. "For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God," as the judge that we stand accountable. "Or whether we be sober, it is for your cause." How, or why? "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh," &c.

(Concluded next number.)

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At her residence in Cambridge, Md., **Mrs. Mary E. Woolford,** in the 71st year of her age. Sister Woolford was for about thirty years a faithful member of the Old School Baptist Church at Fishing Creek, Dorchester Co., Md., in the Salisbury Association. She was the widow of the late J. S. B. Woolford, a prominent citizen of that county, a son of the late Deacon Whitefield Woolford, a widely known and prominent member of the Old School Baptists. She was also a daughter of Deacon John R. Rees, of the Welsh Tract Church, in Newcastle Co., Del., who was widely known and highly esteemed as a true and faithful member for many years, first of the Bryn Zion Church, and afterward of the Welsh Tract Church. She was herself a well beloved and highly esteemed, noble christian woman, fulfilling all the duties and obligations falling to her lot, with untiring zeal and faithfulness. She was a true wife, a devoted mother, an obedient daughter, a faithful friend and kind neighbor. She was afflicted with that distressing ailment, asthma, for about twelve years, from which at times her sufferings seemed more than flesh could bear, but she was strengthened and upheld, and enabled to bear her sufferings with true christian fortitude and patience. Her last illness was of short duration, suffering severely for about a week from uraemic poisoning, and finally falling sweetly asleep in Jesus on the 19th of May, 1903.

Her funeral was largely attended at the meeting-house at Fishing Creek, near Woolford, Dorchester Co., Md., on the 22nd, when the writer tried in much weakness to comfort the sorrowing ones. She leaves to mourn their loss one daughter, five sons, three grandchildren, two sisters, two brothers, and numerous other relatives, besides the church of which she was so long a devoted and faithful member. May the God of grace comfort them and manifest his loving-kindness, enabling all to bow in humble submission to his will.

ALSO,

Mrs. Anna R. Chapman, an aunt of the above, died some time in the month of February, 1903, (I have not the exact date.) I will here append a statement clipped from the Philadelphia, Pa. *Ledger* the next day:

"Grade crossings claimed another victim yesterday afternoon, when Mrs. Anna R. Chapman, 77 years old, a deaf and dumb woman, was instantly killed by a Philadelphia & Reading Railway train, at Ninth and Parish streets. Mrs. Chapman left her home, 856 N. Eighth St., to visit friends. The gates at Ninth and Parish streets were down when she reached there, to allow a shifting engine to pass. The gateman saw the aged woman pause behind the gates; on looking the second time he saw her crossing the tracks in front of a rapidly approaching engine. As his cries of warning were unheeded, he ran toward

her in a vain effort at rescue. Before he could reach her the engine struck the unfortunate woman and carried her two hundred feet. The train was stopped, and her body found under the last passenger coach, the entire train having passed over it. Later at the morgue she was identified by friends."

Sister Chapman was received and baptized in the fellowship of the church at Welsh Tract, in Delaware, the first Sunday in June, 1869, the writer performing the service at the request of the aged pastor, Elder Thomas Barton, who, because of the infirmities of age, was unable to attend to it. She continued in the membership of that church until her decease. She was a very amiable and estimable woman, greatly beloved by her family and the church. She was a widow for many years, and her only child, a son, to whom she was very devoted, also preceded her to the grave, but she left nieces and nephews, beside other relatives, and the church, all of whom were greatly attached to her, and who are sorely grieved at her sudden and shocking death, to mourn, but not as those who are without hope. The ways of God are wisely hidden from us, and we wonder, but, "Not Gabriel asks the reason why, nor God the reason gives," either to angels or men, for his doings, but "moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." I felt a warm attachment for this aged and afflicted sister, strengthened by years of acquaintance, and I feel greatly distressed and grieved, but hope for her that hers is an eternal gain. My sincere sympathy is with her mourning friends. May he who has promised to comfort his people, comfort them.

ALSO,

SUDDENLY, at the home of her son, at Church Creek, Maryland, May 29th, 1903, **Mrs. Mary Willis,** aged about 55 years. Mrs. Willis was a granddaughter of the late Deacon Whitefield Woolford, and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Mace, both long since deceased, and was the widow of Mr. Wm. Willis, a long and active business man of Church Creek. She never made a public profession of her faith, but had testified to intimate friends of her belief in the Lord Jesus Christ, and hope of salvation, and had given strong evidence to her love of the truth. Her seat was seldom vacant when there was meeting at the old Fishing Creek meeting-house, where her ancestors had worshiped for nearly a century. By reason of these things we would say to the sorely bereaved children, brothers, sister and other relatives, "We would that ye sorrow not as those that are without hope," for we trust that hers is that "blessed sleep, whose waking is supremely blest." She leaves one son and three daughters, one sister and three brothers, beside other relatives to mourn, and my prayer and desire to God for them is that they may be reconciled to him, and see his loving hand in this inscrutable providence.

Your brother in sadness and sorrow, and in the hope and afflictions of the gospel,

A. B. FRANCIS.

Deacon John H. Ensor died at his residence with his son, John E. Ensor, near Black Rock, Md., Wednesday, March 25th, 1903, aged 80 years and 10 months. The cause of his death was the increasing infirmities of old age. He had never been a strong man, but still was spared to see a ripe old age without having much serious sickness during his life. He became a member of the church at Black Rock about forty-six years ago, and was baptized by the late Elder Samuel Trott, who was then supplying that church as their pastor. We have often heard him speak of that time with great feeling and earnestness. Not long before the Lord had given him a hope in his mercy, but he still felt such great unworthiness that he was hindered from confessing that hope in the assemblies of the saints. We have heard him speak of the experience which at last strengthened him to go forward in the Lord's commandments; it was in connection with the healing of the impotent man at the pool. When he read at one time this narrative, he said that he was especially struck with the command, "Take up thy bed and walk." He said, "I thought how filthy that bed must have been, since he had been lying upon it for so many years, yet he must take it up and walk with it. This," he said, "was my old nature, filthy and vile, and I saw that I must take it up and walk with it. If I ever walked at all, it must be with this old, filthy bed of my vile nature," and he no longer waited to get rid of it. The question of where was Jesus to be found in his people came up before him, and he heard a voice in his soul saying, Follow Jesus, and in deep anxiety and humility he said, What Jesus, Lord? And at once the reply came, "That Jesus which Elder Trott preaches at Black Rock." He received this as a voice from heaven, and so this matter was decided with him. His whole life was devoted to the church, and to the service of the Savior whom he loved, after this time. He was loved and esteemed by all the church, and held in true regard as an honest, sincere man, by the whole neighborhood. About twenty-five years ago he was chosen one of the deacons of the church, and filled the office well. In early life he married Elizabeth Ensor, daughter of Deacon John B. Ensor, who was a helpmeet to him indeed during all their life together. She was called away by death in March, 1883. She was also a faithful member of the church for several years before her departure. Since the death of his companion he has lived most of the time with his children, going from one to the other as he felt to do, but still retaining his home with the son living on the old homestead, where at last he passed away from earth.

His funeral was at Black Rock meeting-house on March 27th, the very large attendance testified to the esteem in which he was held by all his neighbors and friends. Elder J. T. Rowe, his pastor, spoke beautiful words of comfort, and it was our sad privilege to be present and to take part in the services.

Brother Ensor was clear and sound in the faith, but he was also meek and mild in his defense of it, not being given to much argument, but rather seeking to testify to the Lord's work in his own heart, whenever it seemed needful to do so. Before those who opposed his faith, as well as with those who loved it, he would speak of his own experience of grace, testifying that his salvation was of the Lord. This is the best kind of defense of the truth possible.

He leaves one daughter, the wife of Elder F. A. Chick, five sons, with brothers and sisters, and many friends. They sorrow, but yet not without hope. The church deeply feels the loss, but yet realize that a long and useful life is well ended, and that a brother has gone home to his reward. C.

At the request of Mr. Levi Pollard, I send a notice of the death of his beloved companion, **Maggie Pollard,** daughter of Alexander and Janet Campbell, and daughter-in-law of our late pastor, Elder William Pollard, in the 49th year of her age. Her disease was a stone cancer in the breast, which she first felt a year ago last January. She went to the London hospital and had it cut out with the knife, but in a few months it began to grow again, then the Xray treatment was applied with seemingly good results, it seemed to heal and dry the cancer, but it was evident with the doctors that it went inward and through her system, and she slowly wasted down to death, despite the skill of mortal powers and all that loving ones could do. It was the Lord's time to take her; it was not theirs to give her up.

Some twenty-five years ago she felt to see her sinful state by nature in the sight of a holy God, and then had a longing desire to unite with the people she loved, but as she said it was not the Lord's time, and not until three years the coming June meeting, when Elder Vail preached from the words, "And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee."—Psalms xxxix. 7, did she feel all obstacles removed, and was made willing in the day of God's power to take up her cross and follow her dear Lord and Redeemer into the watery grave. She was baptized by Elder Pollard, the first Sunday in August, 1900. Mostly all winter she mourned an absent God. She said one day to me, "If I ever had a hope it is nearly gone; I am in such darkness of mind I cannot find any comfort in reading the Bible or the SIGNS." But the long nighttime in her soul was cleared away, her dear Lord gave her the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, for in her last hours she exclaimed, "Praise the Lord, praise the Lord." It was a great trial to leave her eight children and dear husband, who needed her care, but said, If it is the Lord's will to take me, his ways are not our ways. The evening before she died she called each one to her bedside, bade them good bye, giving each one a good advice, then said, "The sting of death is taken away, and Jesus can make a dying bed feel soft as downy pillows are." She told them to sing, "The hour of my departure's come," and repeated it herself, then she quietly and peacefully breathed her last. She was a kind neighbor, a devoted mother. She leaves three brothers and one sister, her husband and eight children, and many friends to mourn their loss, but their loss is her gain. God alone can comfort the mourners and supply all their needs.

Elder Carnell preached a comforting sermon at the funeral, from the words, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" to a very large concourse of people. Then her body was laid in the Fairview Cemetery to await the final resurrection of the saints to glory.

(MRS.) JOHN McPHAIL.

WALLACETOWN, Ontario, June 25, 1903.

Edmond Clarence Bartley was born Dec. 14th, 1866, and departed this life April 18th, 1903, at his home in Willow Hill, Ill., aged 36 years, 4 months and 4 days. He was a son of Johnson L. and Elizabeth E. Bartley, both preceding him to the grave. His parents were both members of the Primitive Baptist Church for years, and died in the triumphs of a living faith. Our departed brother was united in marriage to Miss Rachel Catt, Jan. 13th, 1889. To them were born two children, a little infant son preceding him to the realms of eternal rest. A little seven year old daughter, his loving companion, four brothers and one sister, many relatives and friends, mourn their loss, but not as they that have no hope, for we believe our loss is his eternal gain. While our dear, departed brother never joined the church, he was a strong believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone, and was uncompromising in the doctrine of God our Savior.

Our brother was in ill health for four years, caused by "la grippe," which led to consumption. He was very low for several weeks, and suffered much from weakness, but bore it with much patience, and said he was resigned to God's will, and trusted in the Lord alone to save him; he had no use for conditionalism in any sense. He led an upright life; he was indeed a vessel formed unto honor. He came nearer living every day alike than any man I ever knew. He had just built a good home, but the Lord had a better home prepared for him than that, and called him hence. In his last sickness he would tell his loving wife not to weep, but trust in the Lord, that he was not afraid to die. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." This Scripture is true with our brother, and our prayer is that God's grace will sustain his dear widowed companion in her great bereavement, and help us all to be reconciled to his will in all things.

His brother, MARION BARTLEY,

WILLOW HILL, Ill.

SISTER **Elizabeth V. Conrad** died June 9th, 1903, after about six months suffering of paralysis, and six weeks acute suffering, all of which she bore with strong christian fortitude, as she was a woman of strong religious faith, and a firm believer in God's eternal purposes in the salvation of his people by grace. Sister Conrad was born in Schuyler Co., Ill., Oct. 24th, 1829, and was therefore 75 years old. She came to Putnam County with her parents, Hiram and Esther Allen, when about two years of age, and there resided until some years after her marriage to George W. Conrad, on June 28th, 1848. Nearly fifty-five years of married life was to their lot. Six children were born of this union, three sons and three daughters, one son and one daughter preceding the mother to the other world. Mrs. Josephine Twist, of Lacon, Mrs. Joseph Dunlat, Douglas and George V., all of Marshall Co., Ill., together with the husband, remain to mourn their loss, together with the Sandy Creek Church, of which she was such a faithful, sound and consistent member for fourteen years, in Putnam Co., Ill.

Her funeral was held at her old pleasant home, on the 11th day of June, 1903, and attended by a large concourse of friends and neighbors, and a discourse was delivered by the writer, after which the body was consigned to the silent earth, to await the second coming of our Savior, to make up his jewels, and take home his ransomed to be with him forever.

W. A. THOMPSON.

SPRINGFIELD, Ill.

DIED—In Whitefield, Maine, at the home of her son, **Mrs. Eleanor King,** aged 89 years, 9 months and 18 days. Sister King was the widow of Deacon Enoch King, who died in the year of 1871. They were both members of the Whitefield Church, of Whitefield, Maine. Since my acquaintance with them they resided on the same farm where they both died, which is now the home of their son, Paul King. Sister King had been failing for a number of years; she was diseased in both body and mind, but at last died of gangrene. She has finished her course, and we believe she has kept the faith of Jesus. Sister King was in deed and in truth a mother in Israel; Her kind and gentle manner toward all was an index to her heart. We sorrow because we know that we shall no more see her pleasant face, or hear her gentle voice again; we also know that by nature she is but dust, and unto dust she must return, for the dust shall return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

The writer attended the funeral, and tried to say something for the comfort of those that mourn, using for a foundation the words recorded in Psalms xi. 3, 4. May God comfort all that mourn.

ZACHEUS M. BEAL.

BOWDOIN CENTRE, Maine, June 14, 1903.

Edward Lee Bone died at the home of his parents, in Petersburg, Ill., Saturday evening, March 21st, 1903, at 7:45 o'clock. Lee was born August 29th, 1879, at the old Bone homestead, on Rock Creek, and moved with his parents to Petersburg, in 1894. During the past two years he has made his home in Jacksonville, Ill., where he conducted business for himself, with no little degree of success. October last he was compelled by ill health to give up his business, after which he returned home. Since his return he has been a long and patient sufferer, always cheerful and hopeful, never having complained of his painful affliction, and even in the hour of death he recognized his friends, and greeted them with a smile. He leaves in sorrow and sadness his father and mother, four sisters, Mrs. Margaret Hartley, Jennie, Lillian and Ida, and three brothers, Eugene, William and John.

His mother, ITHA L. BONE.

Mable, the sweet little daughter of W. L. and Mrs. M. J. **McPherson,** died June 5th, at their residence in the town of Jasper, Ark., aged 1 year, 7 months and 12 days. She was a charming, sweet little babe, loved by all. Her suffering was soon ended, only sick two days. We are confident she is happy in her blessed home, in the mansions of eternal bliss and glory, we hope by the sovereign grace of God. While viewing her sweet, beautiful form, the smiles of her sweet face told the sweet story, that she had gone to rest to live forever with Jesus.

The funeral was conducted by Elder Master, at their residence, who spoke words of comfort to the bereaved parents, and to a large audience of people who shed many a tear. O, blessed Jesus, who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me," while our sad loss is her great gain.

Her grandfather, A. R. McPHERSON.

Luvania Whitecotton was born June 18th, 1815, died April 28th, 1903, being in her 88th year when she died. Was married to John **McPheron** July 9th, 1833, and joined the Old School Baptist Church in 1833, at Hinses Creek Church, Tenn. They moved to Kentucky, and the writer formed an acquaintance with them Oct. 15th, 1852, and has lived neighbors to them until their death, and a part of that time lived in the church with them, and there were none who tried to live up to their duty more than they did. We never found their seats vacant at church. They were seemingly always ready on all occasions to support the cause of Christ. But alas, they are gone, and we believe their spirits are this day in heaven with God, the giver of all good. Brother John and sister Luvania McPheron were the parents of eight living children, who are left to mourn the loss of a devoted father and mother. The bereaved family have the sympathy of their many friends everywhere.

F. L. WARRIN.

MEETINGS.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet (the Lord willing) with Union Church, five miles south of Colchester, McDonough Co., Ill., Sept. 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1903.

Those coming by rail will be met at Colchester, on Thursday before, and on Friday morning, from the south. Only those from east, west and north of Galesburg, will come to Galesburg by 5 p. m. Thursday, where we will endeavor to get reduced rates from there on. All are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition, which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at the following rates, viz: a single copy for 10 cents; 12 copies for $1.00; 25 copies for $2.00; 50 copies for $3.00; 100 copies for $5.00. Address,

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 71. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1903. NO. 15.

CORRESPONDENCE.

B. gick home

GUTHRIE, Okla. Ter., May 18, 1903.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SON:—I send you the experience of brother W. S. Speer, written at my request. I would be pleased to see it published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES if it meets with your approbation. I love to read of the Lord's dealings with his people. It was said to one of old, Go home to thy friends and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for thee.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
ELIZABETH HUTCHISON.

THE EXPERIENCE.

SISTER:—Your request reading, "I desire your experience written for publication in the SIGNS," is an incentive to "Great searchings of heart,"—Judges v. 16, and I try to comply, with mixed emotions of gladness, fear and trembling, and awful reverence for God, whose I I am, and who put into the heart of one of his children the desire to know something of his dealings with me. I use these words, for it has been given me at times to view my history in that light; not at all times, for clouds of sin and "conscience of guilt" have often darkened the heavenly vision, and made me to wonder could the divine mercy reach my case. Then unspeakable agony would grievously torment my soul. I have always thought that the hardest thing in Scripture to believe is that God sent his Son down from heaven to save sinners; to fetch home again his banished; that his banished be not expelled from him, (2 Sam. xiv. 13, 14; Gen. iii. 23, 24,) the more especially if they are or were as great sinners as the record in my conscience reports of me. The Bible is and always has been easy of belief with me, the story of creation, of the flood, of Sodom and Gomorrah, the Exodus, the Jews and the history of Jesus our Lord, all is easy reading until I come to his laying down his life and taking it again to save ungodly sinners, unspeakably vile as I know mankind to be. Well, yes, it may be so, I assent, the Scripture says it is that way; perhaps he wanted to save people not for what they are as worth saving, but for the educational possibilities in them as vessels of mercy. Yes, I could follow that far, but there came a time when discussions of the extent of the atonement, and of the mercy of God,

ceased to charm me in sermon, book or sweet conversation, and a new question startled me, Was I embraced in the plan of salvation? Did Christ love me and give himself for me? That was Paul's limitation of the atonement. The audacity of the man's faith, as I thought of it, and spoke of it. There was another me that I was carrying about with me. This me, to me the most important me in all the world and the most hateful, for in me there was no good thing, not one, only sin. I saw no door of hope, no way of escape for this me, nor from this me. It would exhaust the plan of salvation to save me. Anybody else might in mercy be reached, but mine was an outside case. But this train of reflection was not so appalling when I was young, a lad, a youth, for in those bright, halcyon days I was taught and believed unquestioningly that sincere people could join the church by complying with certain conditions that entitled them to claim the promise. "Do your part and God will do his," was the formula. I accepted the contract when I was nearly seventeen years old, and tried to believe I had the remission of my past sins. There was something akin to comfort in that frame of mind, but what the readers of this experience understand by "the joy of salvation," "joy unspeakable and full of glory," I had no conception until forty-seven years later, when it pleased God to show me his salvation, (there is but one,) and call me by his grace out of marvelous darkness into his marvelous light. For which I hope to thank and praise him ten thousand years from now.

As I was saying, the time came after forty years wandering in the wilderness of theological controversy and confusion, when I saw there was no salvation for me in the plans expounded from the various pulpits and presses of the times. I felt that I was lost, had sinned beyond possibility of forgiveness. I had no doubt of it, and so I told Elders and brethren and sisters in Tennessee and Georgia, and finally in despair one night in Columbus, Ga., I prayed God to relieve me or kill me, for I was utterly unworthy to live longer in his world. I felt to be the worst and most inexcusable sinner that did ever live. Mine was the misery of remorse, and the goadings and stings and tauntings of a wounded spirit. I had sinned against light and knowledge, not merely the sin of nature, that our preachers speak of as inherited from Adam, but sure enough sins, for I had broken the commandments again and again, and so I said to God, always adding, "Is there not one crumb left for me on thy table, or under it?" I had in other years often made and prayed fashionable prayers, but in these four dismal years of trouble and woe and sorrow I had to pray a prayer borrowed from a despised publican, who stood afar off, and would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner."

I do not know what you will think of me, sister, there comes times when that same prayer wells up in my heart, bubbles from my lips and streams from my eyes. Yet tears of contrition, but not of despair, fill my eyes as I write.

To begin at the beginning, I was born of wealthy parentage, grew up proud and wayward, went to school ten or twelve years, was in two colleges, joined a new church in my seventeenth year, (there have been seven new churches come in since my arrival,) and was ordained to preach the doctrine of the new church when I was turned twenty-one, and preached it twenty-five years. Then I

studied, and I may say became proficient in a church newer by eight years, and preached its doctrines fourteen years, when it pleased God that I should see that there was no salvation for me in either of these splendid organizations. Then the darkness of Egypt fell upon me. I knew that I was a doomed and damned man "without hope and without God in the world." I then undertook a review of all current theologies, designing to pick out the good, the beautiful and true in each, and construct a composite theology, a mosaic system, that would wash. I went deep into the mines of comparative theology, and found wood, hay and stubble in abundance, but of gold, silver and precious stones not a gem. Chaff and trash in plenty, but of the "corn of heaven" not a grain. Meantime my sins were crushing my poor soul with mountain weight. Whither should I fly for refuge? The Arminian cities of refuge I had thoroughly explored. There was no safety there for me, this me, the only me, of all the me's in the world, that I was especially concerned for, what is to become of me?

You asked for my experience, sister. I am not writing another's. My concern about myself came of certain events prearranged in the providence, and as I now have the happiness to think of them as the predestination of God, who works all things together for good to them that love him, and are the called according to his purpose in Christ Jesus, before the sun began to shine, or ever the world was. In those dateless depths there was a book written containing the names of the future citizens of Messiah's kingdom and given to him and called most significantly "the Lamb's book of life," because he, as a condition of his inheriting the headship over them, collectively called "the city of God," must wash them from their sins in his own blood and purify them for himself a peculiar people, the word "peculiar" meaning a purchased possession. Happy they whose names were written in that book. Whatever may betide them in "this time world," as brethren speak, "they shall never perish." Alleluia and Amen, world without end, they shall never perish! O, in those dark days of my trouble of which I have told you, my dread and fear and horror was that I should without doubt perish forever.

My father and mother of God's own choosing, joined the Old Baptist church the Sunday I was just six weeks old. When I was about four years I heard my first sermon; it was preached by Elder Russian, at old Mars Hill Church, in Williamson Co., Tenn. I sat by mother and was very happy. I do not remember a word he said, but I have the pleasant picture of him on my heart, and I caught his delightful solemn tone of voice, and when a little older in that same tone used to climb the dogwood trees and preach to the negroes as they were clearing new ground. One night there was a meeting at our house, and my blessed Old Baptist mother shouted, (she was about twenty-eight or thirty then) and you see I have not forgotten that shouting. I might go back, if you can bear so tedious a narrative, and say that Dr. John M. Watson was our family physician, and was present the Sunday morning when I was born. When I was grown and preaching the most brilliant of the varieties of Arminianism, he told me that he had dandled me on his knees many a time. He was the greatest Old Baptist minister of his day. His last words were, "I am going in peace." O, that God would give me to go that way! Me again. Yes, and you and all our brethren and sisters,

One morning when I was about ten years old I stood before my mother; she was sitting on the lower step of the stairway, and told her that last night I dreamed of seeing the Savior. I had jumped off the hill back of our house and lit in an open plain, and there stood the Lord. With his right hand he smote me on the left cheek about as my mother might smite me when she was vexed, (though I remember nothing of that sort from her) and then said, "Now, Sheppard, be a better boy." Mother turned pale and went up stairs, I now think to weep and pray and rejoice at the visitation of her Lord to her boy, who, she told one of her lady visitors, she thought "would be a mighty good man, or a mighty bad one." The Lord appeared to me in that dream. I shall know him when I see him again. His tall figure, his kingly, benevolent, concerned look as he said those words to me, will never fade from memory. When in my trouble I related this part of my experience to a company of Old Baptist preachers, in Butler, Ga., Elder Respess said, "Brethren the Lord has been working with this man from his childhood." When I related it in Elder Veach's house he said, "That is when you were quickened into life."

"Now, Sheppard, be a better boy." That was my authoritative conviction of sin, to be followed by conviction of righteousness, and then of judgment. But I did not become a better boy. I was a bad boy; conscience smote me day and night. "Conscience of sin" followed Sheppard, always at his heels, giving him no rest except such as Arminian opiates afford, and they, you know, only make the case worse, as our Savior pointed out in the case of a certain woman who spent her all paying physicians, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse. There is only one physician for a sin-sick soul, and by his knowledge he justifies and cures, "for he bears their iniquities."

"Now Sheppard, be a better boy," has been ringing in the chambers of my soul through all my pilgrimage, over three oceans, in foreign lands, on the Rocky Mountains, and I hope in company with mother to thank the Redeemer for that first visitation.

The next time I saw him, the same Jesus, was in vision, 9 o'clock Tuesday morning, Sept. 28th, 1886, in an upper room in a young banker's house, Fort Valley, Ga. There deploring my woeful condition, reading Romans six, a chapter or two in Galatians and Philippians, all of a sudden, in the twinkling of an eye, from feeling that I was the greatest sinner in the world, I was made to feel that I was no sinner at all. Christ whom I saw in the vision, the scene was as plain as was the original reality. He was there dead on his cross, having borne all my sins away 1789 years before I was born. From being the most miserable of all born of woman, I was given to feel the happiest man that ever lived. That very hour, as many a time since, I called on the angels to help me praise God for sending his Son to save sinners. I wanted to fill the vaulted dome of the eternal mansions with hallelujahs. At last my burden was gone, and conscience free from guilt. Christ had died for me. I saw him there that hour seeming to hold himself on the cross. You know he had to lay down his life. "No man taketh it from me. I lay it down of myself." All that scene is as plain to me now as it was that Tuesday, 28th of September, 1886, seventeen years ago. But it was with me as in the call of the chief of sinners on his way to Damascus; there was a

light above the brightness of the sun laid down upon the bright light of that morning, and it was all over the face of the world eight hours, whichever way I looked. Whether that light was in the body or out of the body, I have never felt to inquire; one thing I do know, that light was there, a soft, benevolent, heavenly, restful light, and it was spread over a vast plane. On that plane there was nothing to break the level seemingly ninety miles in its sweep, saving the projection of a large rock, mostly buried in the ground, like the church I was destined to join, most of its members in the dust of the earth, waiting for the "better resurrection." Only a small portion of this church visible now. And I was to live alone on this wide plane. So it has so far turned out, only now and then finding rest in "the shadow of the great Rock in a weary land." I have not known how otherwise to interpret this part of the vision. O, I was so glad that day, so happy, so full of joy, words fail me to describe it to you.

Next thing in order I knew I must be baptized by somebody that knew how it was done, and what for. I had, as I thought, been baptized already not once nor twice before. There must be no mistake about the matter this time. The oldest church without a historical founder was the Old Baptist; they were the humblest of religious folk; they were sweethearted, no big I's nor little u's among them. I was on all sides descended of Old Baptist stock. I always venerated the Old Baptist church and people.

The next spring after the marvelous light into which I was delivered, out of the marvelous darkness, at Fort Valley, as above narrated, I went before the tribunal of God at Butler, Ga., was received and baptized by order of the church, by Elder John Rowe, lately deceased, and I was again as happy as a soul overwhelmed with the love of God could be. O, I was so happy. Soon after this I had to endure the trial of permitting a brother to wash my feet in church. I submitted with what grace I could, but when I got down on my knees to wash his feet, I was in heavenly places in Christ then; I felt like a big lump of nothing. When you want to get close to God, sister, you must descend the depths of humility, as indeed you had to do when you joined the Old Baptist church. Whatever you may think of them, there is no people like them on the face of the earth. They are the only people I know of that believe their own religion. They worship in spirit, and live by the faith of the Son of God, who loves them now, and loved them before all time, and to the ages of the ages. The Spirit of God in their hearts enables them low at his feet to lay hold of the robe of the eternal Majesty, look up into his face, and with the feeling of little children cry, "Abba, Father," confident that he knows what they want. Their only fear is that they do not behave themselves as prettily as his children ought. What a joy it is to me to be one in the unity of the Spirit with them; to be recognized by even one of them.

This poor relation of my sweet experience admits of a word of comment. I submit to your judgment whether the history of it from "Now, Sheppard, be a better boy," to the vision of the Redeemer on his cross, and the great light laid down above the brightness of that bright Tuesday's scene, and the inward feeling of peace and joy, was not the work of the divine Spirit. What but the holy Spirit's power could possibly make a sinner knowing himself vile and guilty feel that

he was no sinner at all, Christ having suffered for him the just for the unjust, and this relief coming on him not gradually, not by a course of reasoning, but suddenly and abiding to comfort him with hope as one of the heirs of salvation? O, it must have been the operation of God. I was a saved man, saved, yes, that is the word. I know my unworthiness before and since, but am afraid to lay anything to the charge of God's elect. See Romans viii. 32–39. O, let me rejoice in hope of the grace to be brought to his people at the coming of the Lord in that day.

In another dream or vision, glorious beyond words to tell, I saw for the third time the Lord, the same that appeared to me at first, on the Mount Zion, surrounded by the thousands of thousands of his saints in white robes, and golden girdles, and he was placing diadems upon their heads, with a word of welcome to each one. Thus in my case the holy Spirit, may I not believe, convinced me of sin, "Now, Sheppard, be a better boy," then of righteousness, Jesus by his death having fulfilled the righteousness of the law in my stead, and then of judgment when he received and crowned his purchased ones with the immortal life? Yea, let me believe and cherish all this; I can, I do, and fall at his feet a sinner saved by grace, amen and amen.

I feel thankful to our heavenly Father that I am enabled to give to one of his daughters this account of his mercies to me. If you find it in your heart to recognize me in fellowship, after what you have seen of my awkwardness in church and in this letter, I shall feel strengthened and more joyful in this pilgrimage.

Yours in hope of a better life,

WM. S. SPEER.

BENTON, Ark., June 8, 1903.

FRAGMENTS.

DURING the many years that I have been trying to preach I have tried to profit by any suggestions made by others, or occurring to my own mind, which have reference to the manner of the preacher. Some of these suggestions I am going to set down here, hoping that any who may chance to see them may profit by them more than I have.

1. It is best for the preacher to read his text first, and then make any explanations that may be thought necessary as to how and why the mind was led to that particular text. It would be still better, in most cases, if such explanations were further postponed until the text had been fully talked over. Then very likely the explanations will not be necessary.

2. It is as a general thing pleasanter for the hearers when the speaker goes directly to his subject. It is not necessary for him to tell them either how poorly or how well he expects to preach, nor even that he will do as well as he can. His work will be submitted to them for judgment. A congregation is not put into the best condition of mind for hearing by a statement of the preacher's infirmities, nor by a confession that he is unlearned, and an assertion that he cannot preach. He stands before them as one ordained to the work of the ministry by a council of his brethren of several churches, and by the laying on of the hands of a presbytery, and it is doubtful if he has a right to say he cannot preach. Yet sometimes one's infirmities and sense of ignorance and inability will so oppress him that it seems he must speak of them. Brother George Staton once said, "It seems to me sometimes that if I do not begin by telling how bad I feel I cannot begin at all." But after all the least the preacher can say about himself the bet-

ter. He is not preaching himself, but Christ. He is not preaching his own power and wisdom, but the power of God and the wisdom of God. If he is enabled to preach the gospel his own experience will appear in all he says, for he must preach out of his own heart. But it is the gospel he is preaching, which is the power of God.

3. Sometimes we may say, "Well, I must begin to draw to a close," and then go on repeating various portions of Scripture, and repeating in a weaker way things we have already said. This is sure to be very tiresome. We may know this, and yet go on trying to fix up our sermon in better shape. When the thought came to our mind that we must begin to draw to a close, that was the time to stop; we were really done then. What follows is very sure to weaken rather than than strengthen the good effect of the sermon. When the Bible is closed we ought to stop. If we go on, as we sometimes do after that, the congregation is apt to get discouraged.

4. It is a pleasant thing to hear a young preacher quietly begin his subject, say what is on his mind concerning it in the simplest and most direct manner possible, and then, without comment upon his own manner and ability, quietly stop. He need not say even that he is going to stop; his audience will know it when he does.

It is unnecessary at any time to speak of one's ignorance or learning. A display of either is unbecoming the pulpit. When the Lord calls one to preach he will enable him to do so at once, without further preparation. The lack of learning will not prevent him from engaging in that work to the profit of the Lord's people; nor will the possession of any amount of learning disqualify him for it. Warburton, one of the most powerful preachers in England, was unlearned, while Philpot was a thorough scholar. Each was afraid of the other; Warburton of Philpot because of his learning and his own ignorance, Philpot of Warburton because of his wonderful spiritual gift. Each esteemed the other better and more useful than himself. When they became personally acquainted the mutual fear was gone, and they were as one.

5. The pulpit ought not to be used as a confessional. If one has been tempted to commit a crime, there may be times and places when and where it is proper to confess it, but that place is not in the pulpit, and that time is not when a congregation has come together to hear the gospel preached. There are some experiences that ought not to be told before a general congregation. Those who have had like experiences of temptation and deliverance will understand such allusions as can properly be made; others could not understand the true gospel meaning of the temptation and deliverance even if the fullest details of the incident were given. There may be terrible temptations, most painful experiences of the depravity of the flesh, which, through the grace which has recovered one from them, become as pearls; but they must not be cast before those who would make them a cause of reproach; who would "trample them under their feet and turn again and rend you." A detail of the incidents of a temptation, or of a transgression, in which the inherent sinfulness and vileness of our natures are manifested, is not important, not often useful. It is seldom, if ever, necessary in preaching the gospel, to give such details. In one way or another every quickened soul is kept in mind of the deep and ineradicable depravity of his nature. It is this deprav-

ity, this "bondage of corruption" in the soul, that causes the deep sorrow more than the particular way in which it has been manifested. We cannot but thank and praise the Lord for the grace which has enabled us to keep this evil in any measure from being expressed in word or deed; but while we live in the flesh it will be a source of pain and sorrow; it will be a bondage of corruption, from which we long to be delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God. (Romans viii. 21.) The gospel is the power of God and the wisdom of God, and there is a sweet delivering power felt in the poor, oppressed soul, when given to hear the gospel preached. It is Christ who is preached, and not the details of painful and vile incidents that may have occurred in the experience of some one. It is Christ in his life and death and resurrection, in his grace and mercy and delivering power, the preaching of whom is applied to the sin-sick soul, to the humble believer, through whatever circumstances he has been brought to a knowledge of his depravity, and to a knowledge of Jesus in his redeeming grace and delivering power.

7. It is a sad thing to one who is in a spiritual frame of mind to hear a jest from the pulpit. To handle sacred things in a light and trifling manner is a cause of grief to one who is feeling the weight and solemnity of eternal things resting upon his mind. How sadly and disappointingly the trifling word, the inconvenient jest, falls upon the ear of that one who has been listening eagerly and watchfully, with a timid hope that the Lord might be pleased to send some sweet message of love to him.

NOVEMBER 2, 1884.

A DEAR sister has just told me a circumstance which presents a most striking example of the wonderful power of grace. Her husband's nephew had a number of children; one of them, from the first that he could manifest his disposition, was one of the worst children she ever saw. He was ugly in disposition, ill-natured, and awfully profane in his language. No one could tell how he ever learned the oaths he used, as his father did not make use of profane language at all. His mother said she thought it was born in him. He would never wait for the rest at table, would not mind, and would not go to Sunday School. His quick and strong intellectual powers enabled him to constantly invent new forms of mischief. When he was about five years old she visited them, and noticed a great change in him. He no longer used any bad language. His people had noticed this, but they did not think of it as important. They made no profession of religion, and his father did not believe in religion. They had simply noticed and remarked upon this outward change. He loved music, and was much of the time whistling or singing hymns. He was very patient, never complained, waited for the rest at table, was obedient, and without being spoken to about it asked his mother if she would make him ready for Sunday School. When he returned he was repeating verses of hymns and portions of Scripture. His countenance showed the change, it looked so peaceful, mild and loving. Sister Tomlinson, who told me of this, asked him: "Frankie, whatever has come over you that you are so different?" "Why, the good Man," he said, and this touched her so that she could not say any more then. She told her husband she did not think the child could live long. The change was so great as to be truly wonderful. He was

as much better than an ordinary child as he had been worse before.

In about four months from this time he was taken sick and died. No one who understood spiritual things was with him. His mother thought that if there was any religion he had it. He would talk to his sister, and repeat portions of Scripture. He told her he had seen his little brother who had died, and that he was going home. How interesting it would have been to have heard what he could have said concerning this change. These things are "hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes."—Matt. xi. 25.

WHO is it that follows Christ? What is the path in which he went? How can one follow him? His was a path of suffering, of shame and of reproach. He had not where to lay his head. "He was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners," and yet was most deeply and sorely afflicted on account of sin—the sins of others. "His visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men." He was feeble and sore broken. His soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. "He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." He was finally crucified. And he said, "Except a man deny himself, take up his cross and follow me, he cannot be my disciple." One decides to follow Christ, sets out to do so, as he thinks, and complacently regards himself as a disciple, a christian, and yet has never seen Christ, and knows nothing of the path of suffering and self-denial in which he went during all his life. How many such professed followers of Jesus there are in the world, proud, self-confident, self-satisfied, to whom the suffering Jesus is a stranger, and who would be among his revilers if he were here in the flesh.

Another feels a desire to follow Jesus, and sets out to do so, but cannot find the way. Again and again he tries, but seeks in vain for the way. He cannot get away from the path of sin, for he finds that he is all sin. Sin has a hold upon him, and the law is the strength of sin, so that he cannot get away. He cannot get into the path of holiness, for he is all unholy. He finds his strength is weakness, his wisdom foolishness, and his righteousness filthy rags. Finally he gives up, and feels that he must be lost—that he is already lost, and justly, too. He can find no foundation in himself upon which to rest a hope, and nothing in the world upon which he can rely.

Now, just when he has become entirely discouraged in his efforts to follow Jesus, when he has lost all hope that he can ever come near to the holy One, he is upon the right road. How strange such an assertion would seem to him at such a time. Nevertheless it is true. He is now following him who went down to the depths of suffering on account of our sins, who was bruised for our iniquities. The fear of the Lord, which has been put into his heart, and which "is to hate evil," has made him hate himself, and hunger after righteousness. He sinks down, as Jesus sank down, in deep waters of affliction, and as he follows him into the depths, so he rises with him to walk in newness of life. As he still follows him in suffering in the flesh, so he shall follow him in the joys of his kingdom.

The following of Jesus is all by faith, whether it be following him in sorrow or in joy; in feeling the waves and billows of the Lord go over us, or in feeling the sweet, mysterious power of his resurrection; in receiving the reproaches of the

world, or in feeling the answer of a good conscience and the testimonies of the Lord that we please him; all is by faith. And in all our works in the church, in obeying the commands of Jesus, and in all our self-denial and bearing the cross, and in our experience of the sufferings of Christ abounding in us, and of our consolation also abounding by Christ; in all of this we are followers of him only by faith; "for we walk by faith and not by sight." Therefore, so far as we do follow Jesus we are faithful followers of him.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., June 23, 1903.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., June 23, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have been from home very much of late, and have just read your editorial, "False Charges Refuted," in the SIGNS for June 1st, and I feel just like I want to thank God for that editorial, and I hope the informant will come out and show himself. Indeed, it is due to the brethren in the accused sections that he do so. I am glad that in every section the Lord has reserved to himself witnesses who do not hesitate to come out and tell the whole truth, and put all blame where it justly belongs.

It appears to me that one cannot believe in and love the absolute or unlimited sovereignty of God unless they fear the Lord, and to fear the Lord is to hate sin, and to depart from iniquity, as well as to love God. And we are told that it is the beginning of wisdom. With all these things before us, how can one who believes and loves this sweet truth walk in these abominations of the flesh? It appears to me that such would show very plainly that they love those evil things of the flesh, and not the Lord Jesus, nor his precious doctrine. By their fruits, and not their professions, we are to know them.

A preacher in a letter to me once said, "Why doth he yet find fault? for no one hath resisted his will." In my reply to him I said, You are the very man that Paul was talking about; the Spirit in him knew you would ask that question, and therefore he answered it for me: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" &c.

It does appear to me to be plain enough that all who read the Bible, to see that all unrighteousness is worked by the spirit of wickedness, but one would hate to believe that such a spirit could work independent of the power of Almighty God. When the time of the Lord had come to destroy the wicked king Ahab, he sent an evil spirit, or a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets, and deceived him, and cut him off from Israel for ever. Rehoboam, under the influence of his young and evil associates, spoke roughly to the people of his kingdom, and divided the kingdom, but the thing was from the Lord. It was evil in Israel to desire a king to rule over them, and yet the Lord had spoken of the kings that should come forth out of Abraham, and of the sceptre that should not depart from Judah. Joseph's brethren were moved by the evil spirit of envy, jealousy and hatred to sell him from his father's house, and yet it was God's way of providing salvation for the house of Israel in the land of Egypt, where he had purposed that they should stay four hundred years, and be multiplied into a great nation. It was for the awful rebellion of the Egyptian rulers that the Lord destroyed the land, and yet he had purposed that destruction, and had raised up that very Pharaoh to that end. There are many cases of like importance in this

line which show up the purpose of God, and the hand of wickedness, and yet in every case it is the spirit of wickedness that did the evil deed. None in all the Scriptures are so prominent as the crucifixion of our dear Lord and Master, and yet the wicked were acting under the command, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord; smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered," &c. This awful crime is charged upon those who did it, notwithstanding the commandment. They said, His blood be upon us and our children, and it is so unto this day. God employs the hand of wickedness when it pleases him, and yet charges their wickedness to them. Who of us are there that do not know that we have sown to the wind, and have we not reaped the whirlwind? and yet not one dare charge God with folly, nor to dispute his sovereign right to do as he pleases in this matter.

To think of the terrible vanity of man is enough to humiliate a child of God. Man is not anything in comparison; even the gnat is our fellow creature, and yet we mercilessly crush it to death, and feel that we have done a good deed. God is our great Creator, and yet this vain man, who is less than nothing, and vanity, yes, when weighed in the balance he is found lighter than vanity, will assume to sit on a judgment-seat against his Creator, and charge him with folly. Hear, O ye heavens, and be ye terribly afraid, O earth! The potsherd striving with his maker.

We are compelled to know that God had a purpose in sin, but not one of us in our convictions were ever heard to charge our sins to this purpose, but we quake and tremble with fear in our hearts.

In my own experience I have been troubled because I am such a sinner. Hell and death have not been a source of fear to me, but my poor, sinful heart is where my burden is, and I know that if there is any salvation there for this world, or the world to come, it is all of grace, and revealed through the all-abounding mercy of our God and Savior.

I have no fellowship for any one who would take shelter from his sinful practice behind God's predestination, and we would withdraw fellowship from any such person, believing that he had given evidence that he hated the doctrine he professed to believe, and in which we rejoice.

The Lord make you strong in his holy calling.

Your brother in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

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336 Hancock St., Nashville, Tenn., 1903.

Dear Brethren Editors of the Signs of the Times:—Through the mercy of an all-wise God I am still blessed with reasonable health; I am now in my seventy-first year. In looking back over the years from my childhood to the present time, I ask myself what have I done that I should receive such wonderful blessings? I feel my unworthiness for him to be so mindful of me, and that he should so smile upon me. I often fear that I am not what I profess to be; I often feel to say, "Lord, if I am deceived, wilt thou undeceive me?" I know that there is nothing good in this body of corruption; this is the burden with which I am cumbered, and from which I am not able to deliver myself; my whole dependence is on a risen and exalted Redeemer, and without his imputed righteousness I know that I am lost. I sometimes feel to hope that his love is shed abroad in my heart, and then again I am left in the dark, moping

along the best I can, which is but poorly. I have one great consolation, when I read the sacred word it enlightens my mind, and gives me a heart to rejoice, and to give him all the praise. I know if I have any faith it was given by a higher power than man; there is but one living faith, which is of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is merciful to our unrighteousness; if saved at all, it is through the righteousness of Christ, we are nothing but worms of the dust, dependent upon God for all things, both temporal and spiritual, it is in him that we live, move and have our being. He has brought me in a way that I knew not, and in paths that my feet have not known. After, as I trust, I had passed from death unto life, the light of his countenance shone so bright, and appeared so loving, that my heart was made to rejoice and give him all the praise, my whole mind and desire was love to him, I felt that God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven my sins, and established my goings; my love also went out to the brethren, and this love to them is one of the evidences that I have. John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." This love, I understand, is for the truth's sake, not that we love the person in himself, but the evidence shown forth in his godly walk and conversation, that he has no confidence in the flesh; the flesh profiteth nothing in the sight of God. Our fleshly natures are so much contaminated by the fleshly Adam we are not competent to think one good or spiritual thought, all our dependence must be upon God to guide and direct our steps, we are all subject to vanity, and prone to do evil, and we need the light of his countenance to light us through our dark and gloomy times. We must pass through great afflictions: he was also afflicted, and in his love and pity he redeemed us, and gave us an inheritance in the everlasting covenant, which was ordained in Christ before the world was. This covenant was sealed with the precious blood of Christ, for such poor sinners as we. As Paul said, I am a sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all. There is no other name given under heaven, among men, whereby we can be saved. As we have no righteousness of our own to offer, we must come with a broken heart, seeking his love to know, and such will not be turned away eternally. The Lord speaks peace to the troubled heart, and gives them to rejoice, and they praise his holy name saying, Thou hast done all things well.

I know that without him I can do nothing and am lost, so in him do I trust, and I can put no confidence in an arm of flesh. Without faith it is impossible to please God, and those who are trying to observe the precepts laid down for our instruction, are assailed by the enemy of truth, and as you say, my brother, Not only by Arminians, but by men of our ownselves. Paul in all his journeyings was often in perils, and among false brethren also, and he warned them with tears, saying that after his departure grievous wolves should enter among them, not sparing the flock. Also, he said, Men of our ownselves should arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples. We are commanded to watch. Paul ceased not to warn his brethren that he might present them perfect in Christ Jesus, and that they all should walk humbly before God in love, having no confidence in the flesh.

I feel to thank God that the dear old SIGNS are following the instructions laid

down in the holy word of God. Go on, my dear brethren, the cause is just and holy. We may expect to be reviled, our dear Savior before us was also reviled, he was victorious in doing the will of his Father. As he is our righteousness, let us stand firm, and contend for nothing but the truth; the truth shall make us free. I am glad that the dear Lord has enabled you to rejoice and be glad that the true followers of the Lamb of God have had their pure minds stirred up to return to the fold of God, and been made to proclaim upon the house-top that salvation is of the Lord, and are made willing to suffer with the poor in spirit, to mourn with them that mourn, and to weep with them that weep. We are traveling along, feeling our way the best we can, depending upon God to direct our steps. Many poor children of God have gone astray, depending upon their own strength. I trust that many will swell the subscription list of the SIGNS, that they may rejoice, and thank God that their minds have once more been led to the narrow path. Many who have wandered, are now made willing, in the day of God's power, to return.

I am glad that you are encouraged by such a favorable outlook in the circulation of the SIGNS, the Lord was with the first editor, Elder Gilbert Beebe, and strengthened him in the inner man, to wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon. He had the world, the flesh and the devil to contend with, but still was spared to a ripe old age, contending for the truth. Our dear old brother was often assailed, but still he stood firm in the cause he had espoused. I loved to read the SIGNS away back in those dark hours, and I love them better and better; they come laden with precious truth, and stand firm in the faith, and have no compromise with the flesh. I feel thankful to God that I am so richly fed with the pure manna which comes down from heaven, and not mixed with man's wisdom. They speak so comfortably to the hungry soul, and I hope to take them as long as I have strength given me to read them.

As dear brother Chick remarks, at the beginning of the new year, The Lord only knows how many of us may be called home before another year. We are in his hand, and when he please, we shall receive the summons to come home. And then,

> In thy fair book of life and grace,
> O may I find my name
> Recorded in some humble place,
> Beneath my Lord the Lamb.

In that never-ending world I will render to him all the praise, more perfectly than I can ever do while here; then shall I dwell eternally before the throne, singing the praise of redeeming love in the presence of God and the Lamb. What a happy thought! But still, I am a poor sinner, saved by grace and mercy.

I will close this imperfect letter, I hope that what I have written may prove of some comfort to some poor sinner who puts no confidence in the flesh. May the God of all mercies be with you both in defending the truth. Remember me, dear brother, when it is well with you.

Your brother in hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

HILLSBORO, Texas, May 28, 1903.

BELOVED EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—Two years ago the first day of June, I was journeying northward to the Middletown meeting, and to meet with brother B. L. Beebe and wife. Last night I was thinking over the way the Lord had led me, amid the flashing and crashing of a

storm, and I realized great consolation in the hymn, "Come ye that love the Lord." Then sweet memories of the past flowed through this weak and weary mind, but to-day it all seems flown. Although the physician had been treating me for three months, we called in another one yesterday to search out more accurately about dropsy and my heart. But I have rejoiced to-day that there is but one Physician that can cure the sin-sick soul. This day I was sighing, and crying, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul," until I read the precious tidings contained in the last number of the SIGNS, June first. O, how good the Lord is to renew our strength: I found in dear brother Coulter's letter such sweet consolations, and much enjoyed Elder Durand's communication. I am not able to tell how much I enjoy reading the editorials of the dear old father who is dead, "Though dead, he yet speaks." I can seem to hear him record the praise of the Lord. Strangers in the flesh whom I meet, will remark (those I mean who take the SIGNS), What a great favor you have had to meet such a gracious and God-fearing man, and I tell them that the half can never be told.

Dear editors, I tremble at the thought of asking you to put this in the SIGNS, I am so illiterate and wandering in mind, and so unworthy to take up space there which can be better occupied. Dear brother B. L. Beebe said, and it was well said, Take pains to write plainly, or get some one to write for you. This surely fits my case. Please throw a mantle of charity over it, or put it into the waste basket; if you do so all will be well with me, I cannot apologize enough for it. You can see how badly written it is yourself. In every number I hope to hear that dear brother Beebe is better. But, more than all, my desire is that the blessed Redeemer will light all his way.

During the winter, amid my greatest suffering, and, so far away from the church and kindred of my youthful days, away down south and far from my youthful home, but not far from a few of my father's children; the Lord has seen fit to send Elder Buntyn to me, bringing me goods from the store-house of God, three different times. I have been given strength to go out to the meeting, and am still gaining. He has been preaching on the fourth Sunday, and he now has another appointment the first Sunday in each month at Itasca, a little way from here. He also brings dear old father and Elder Rogers, to his home church as often as is convenient to go over the country twenty-five miles. The last time he brought him home he called a meeting for Elder Rogers to preach at his home, and I spent the night there. At that time I was very feeble, but this pen which I hold with trembling hand, cannot express how the beloved earthen vessel was filled to overflowing.

"Give to the Father praise,
Give glory to the Son,
And to the Spirit of his grace,
Be equal honors done."

My heart misgives me lest I ought not to have troubled you, but I will submit all to your judgment. I write this for the sake of dear friends and kindred who have requested me to write for the SIGNS. This will tell many dear ones that I am often made to rejoice in God my Savior, who sends affliction to teach us that his ways are not as our ways. In my affliction hymn 1030, (Beebe's collection) found its way into my wicked heart, which is so prone to wander.

My beloved daughter, and many friends requested me many years ago to write of the way which the Lord has led me, and I hope to do so, if the Lord will

give me strength and wisdom, so that all may redound to his honor and glory.

The time is near for your association, and my heart yearns for you, and my mind will be there, while this body will be far way. I send greetings to all the beloved of God. Remember us and pray for us in our lonely situation, we are just a little, but a solid, band.

Your sister, if worthy through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ our Lord,

(MRS.) A. D. SIMMONS.

[MANY of the friends and brethren remember the visit of our dear aged sister two years ago, and will be glad to hear from her once more. The prayer of all will be, we are well assured, that the Lord may be with her in all her affliction to the end.—ED.]

ZECHARIAH IX. 12.

"TURN you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee."

It seems that this is a word of comfort from God to his people in all their pilgrimage, and here we may rally to this word of admonition, and rest upon the promise of Almighty God to his people in this time state. This has been the condition of his people while in this time state, peculiarly environed as they are, and chosen in the furnace of affliction. This is a word in season to him who is weary. The Lord speaks and commands us, prisoners and bound as we are, yet in hope to turn to the stronghold. Although bound and prisoners, yet we have hope, and the stronghold is God himself, his power, his promise and the surety of his promise, and the certainty of his salvation, and the deliverance of his people. How easy it is to obey his command and to turn to him. Then our eyes are unto the God of salvation who is able to deliver. God's people have always been hated, persecuted and set at naught by the world, the flesh and the devil, but while in this state they are not without hope in the God whom they worship, and in whom they believe. It is often said to them, I like you personally, but the doctrine you hold is abominable, and I have no use for that. You believe that God predestinated all things, and that, to my mind, makes him the author of sin. You believe in the elect, and that I despise, for I want a more reasonable religion, that will harmonize with my mind, and suit my feelings. Beside, we are charged with believing that there are infants in hell, and men believing this of us, abhor us for it. These are some of the afflictions that come upon these prisoners of hope. Enemies of the truth are ready to administer all these afflictions, and to torture, worry and endeavor to perplex the people who love the truth. Now we are not to modify the doctrine of God, but rather assert it, and show that it is taught in the holy word of God. We know that God made all things, this need not be proved, if so, we could prove it from the word of the prophets and apostles, and in all things that he made, he works according to the counsel of his own will; all things are of God. His wisdom, his power and his purpose, are commensurate, that is, equal, and all manifest his infinite perfection.

To believe this is only to believe in God, his boundless purpose and infinite wisdom. Some, not understanding God nor his doctrine, have misjudged him. Some hold that if he purposed sin, then he is the author of it. Now we know that God purposed the death of his Son, and by whose hands he should die. Did this make him the author of this sin?

Nay! But on the other hand, Peter said that the Jews and Gentiles crucified him with wicked hands. Peter evidently did not believe the assertion that God's predestination of this wicked act made him the author of sin, and we can safely say that he is not the author of sin in any other wicked act which he has predestinated. He is a just God without iniquity. Just and right is he, the King of saints.

Now as far as the matter of infant damnation is concerned, we know that it is not ours to preach any one, infant or adult, to either hell or heaven; all this matter is in the hands of God, and we are well assured that he will do what is right in his sight. All infants, by birth, are the descendants of Adam, and have by this relation to him, and by inherent depravity, merited damnation with all the race of Adam. They are under condemnation as soon as they are born, and we know of them, as well as of adults, that if saved, it must be by the grace of God alone. As to who are embraced in the covenant of grace, or not embraced there, God has not told us, therefore we must be silent. When God has not said, it is vain for us to say. We know that Jesus said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven," but this text is used to show how helpless and dependent we must become to enter the kingdom. It is also said that he blessed little children. It is said of the young man who went away sorrowful that Jesus loved him.

In old times God made no difference in his judgments upon men, not a babe was in the ark, so far as we are told; babes all perished in the flood, with the rest of the world; babes were thrown into the Nine, they perished with all the wicked in Sodom; babes were destroyed and even eaten for hunger, in the siege of Jerusalem. In all these things there seems to have been no difference made. Esau's doom was told before he was born; God commanded the Israelites to destroy sucking infants in Canaan, which was done according to his command. The Lord told Zion that she should serve Babylon as Babylon had served her, and should dash their little ones against the stones.

I heard of a Methodist minister who said, If any people did not believe in foreign missions, he could say of them that they were going straight to hell, and would soon land there. Here is a man who presumes to preach the church of God to hell, and yet he condemns Old School Baptists, whom he charges with preaching infants in hell. Thank God it is not in the providence of preachers, of any order, to preach any one to either heaven or hell.

The opposer of the doctrine of election, also charges against it, that it is unjust in God, if he chooses one to life and leaves others to perish in death for their sins, but the instance of Jacob and Esau is enough to settle this forever. This is the stronghold of the testimony of God, and sufficient to satisfy all who are born of God. They know assuredly that God has written it in his word, and that is enough for one who loves God.

Paul said that the potter had power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel to honor, and another to dishonor, and he said to the objector, "Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Peter said that they were elect according to the foreknowledge of God. Paul said again, Knowing, beloved, your election of God, and that God had from

the beginning chosen his people unto salvation. Jesus said, One should be taken and another left, and, I have chosen you and ordained you. It is said that "He shall send forth his angels, and gather his elect from the four quarters of the earth." And it is written, Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? And, We are chosen in him before the foundation of the world. There is line upon line, testimony upon testimony. When we turn to the stronghold of this testimony, our faces are lightened, and we are content to remain, and to sit and to rejoice until the midnight darkness shall depart, and the prison doors shall swing wide open, and we shall come forth conquering and to conquer, through the power of him who loved us, and gave himself for us. When God opens up to us his testimony in the Spirit, it is double. The letter alone can but kill, but the letter and the Spirit is the way, the Lord doubles, and this doubling brings confirmation, joy, peace, safety and salvation to us forever.

Yours to serve,

WM. LIVELY.

AUGHRIM, Ont., June 15, 1903.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—Find inclosed express order for two dollars, for which give me credit on subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I also inclose a letter written to me by the late Wm. L. Beebe. It was written just before his last visit to Canada, and I would like if you would see proper to give it space in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

I have been a reader of the SIGNS for forty years, and have failed to see any change in them in that time.

I will not take up any more of your time, but will say, If I know anything experimentally, you will find it in hymn 700 (Beebe's collection).

I remain, I hope, your brother in the Lord,

MALCOLM McALPINE.

WARWICK, N. Y., May 2, 1899.

DEACON MALCOLM McALPINE—DEAR BROTHER:—Your favor of the 24th ultimo, was duly received, and I was glad to hear from you and the church. I have hesitated about replying, as I greatly desired to visit my daughter in Winnipeg this summer if possible, and hoped to do so in August. I thought to visit you at the same time. But now I have about given up that hope; so that I propose, if the Lord will, to be with you at the meeting as published in the SIGNS, including the third Sunday in June. I hope the church may be able to get together at that time, so that I may meet all of them. I hardly expect to have many more opportunities of meeting with the dear ones in your section, as I am in my seventieth year, and my strength is very manifestly failing. It was just eighteen years ago to-day that my father was called home. I little thought then to remain until this time.

My family are all able to be up and attend to their several duties; but they have nearly all suffered more or less from the prevalent epidemic. All unite in love and fellowship to you and the church with you in Ontario. I am glad to know that you are sustained in your darkness by the knowledge that God is your unfailing refuge and strength. They that trust in him shall never be moved. May his blessing ever support you under every trial.

Hoping to meet you soon, I will write no more now. With earnest and sincere regards to all the friends with you, and in fraternal love to all the church, I am, as ever, your brother and fellow-pilgrim,

WM. L. BEEBE.

STARKE, Fla., June 28, 1903.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—It seems as though I must have the SIGNS, I have taken them a long time, and do not know how to do without them; they have been company for me a long time. I am now old and feeble, and cannot labor, and can neither read or write, and my girl reads and writes for me. She is over fifty years, and a cripple, has not walked for over four years, and this summer and spring has raised us quite a garden on her crutches. Two years ago the brethren connected with the SIGNS sent me over twenty dollars. Brother Thomas sent a letter requesting aid for me, and several kindly sent to help. I was very sick at that time, and could not acknowledge their kindness. It was a great help, for how would we have got along without it? and I am very thankful. I have here ten acres of land, two of which is fenced, and the rest lies to commons; am not able to fence the rest; the soil is poor here, and land is not worth much, and without fertilizing cannot raise crops.

Well, brethren, I have seen better days in earlier life, but sickness and death in the family, and loss by fire, and lending money, I am where I am. I have lived to the ninety-second year of my life, and I shall soon pass away. O, brethren, is there a hope for me beyond this sphere? If so, all is well. But to look back on youth, it seems as though a voice did speak to me and say, Thy sins are forgiven thee, when fears left me at once, and I could say, All is well, and in age the Scriptures seem to open to my understanding. I feel as though I am a sinner yet, but now I am old. I would write you a long letter, but feel I cannot. I feel I cannot stay but a little while, but the Lord only knows.

IRA PHELPS.

[BROTHER Phelps has been a reader of the SIGNS for many years, and is welcome to it the rest of his life, free of charge, as long as we are spared to publish it.—ED.]

COVINGTON, Ga., July 7, 1903.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—At the request of our dear aged brother, Franklin Wright, I inclose you post-office order for two dollars, to be placed to his credit, in payment for subscription to the SIGNS. It is very gratifying to me to see that the SIGNS stands immovable and unshaken for the doctrine of God our Savior, and it is my heart's desire and prayer that the God of all grace will sustain and keep you, and enable you to continue to minister to the comfort and edification of his dear children.

Your brother in hope,

EDWARD HEARD.

FENNS, Ind., May 9, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I am again spared to send you my subscription. I am blind for two years past, and now am confined to my bed all the time, with none of my own church people near me. Have not heard but one sermon preached in three years. Would be so glad for you to write to me personally, or tell any Old Baptist to write to me, for I lay here yearning for the gospel to be preached to me, for it is such a comfort in my affliction.

Hoping to meet you all in heaven, is my prayer.

JULIA A. TREES.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1903.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

A BROTHER states a case of disorder as follows:

First. An Elder had been silenced in the ministry by his church for false representation and dishonesty in his dealings, but continued in the same course.

Second. He was summoned before the church upon these same charges, and also for heresy, and was unanimously excluded.

Third. His dishonest course had been long continued, and was known to the Baptists of his acquaintance, and to many others.

Fourth. After his exclusion this course was continued.

Fifth. Another Elder, knowing all these things, and also in communion with said church, took the one excluded into his fellowship, and set him to preaching, and preached with him. He also insulted the church by writing coarsely and insultingly about the matter, and giving it to the aged pastor.

Sixth. To avoid any trouble, the church thus sinned against withdrew from the association to which they belonged, and these two ministers then took control of it.

Then the following questions are asked:

First. Is the Elder who thus identified himself with this disorder any more entitled to confidence than the one who was excluded?

Second. Is it honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report that either of these men should be recognized by the brotherhood as the ministers of Christ?

Third. Is it the duty of the outraged church to give public notice of the gross disorder of these ministers?

In reply we will say that no names, places or times are given in the letter containing the above statements and questions. We can only reply to the matter as stated above, and we wish it to be always understood that when seeking to reply to such statements as the above, we cannot be personal, but must seek only to consider the general principles of the order of the churches, as revealed in the word of God. And we want to first repeat what we have so often insisted upon, viz: love, love to God, to the cause and to all the children of God, ought to be the first thing considered by all in all their dealings with each other in things pertaining to the gospel. Without this love, all that is done will be but a dead form, and God will not be honored nor his people benefited. All is as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal without love. Let love be sought after first, and then other things cannot be far wrong.

It is a great sin for an Elder to be guilty of false representation and dishonesty. It is a great sin for any one to be thus guilty, but how much greater is the guilt of one who professes that religion, the essence of all whose fruits must always be truth, open and unconcealed, and such honesty in dealing as would lead one to suffer wrong rather than to defraud another, even to a penny's worth. A still greater sin is it in one who, as a

minister, must have a good report of them that are without. It is a more grievous fault in such an one, because through his evil conduct greater scandal falls upon the sacred cause of God, and the enemies of truth have opportunity to say that there is nothing in the religion of Christ better than the morality of the world. Such an one ought to be put out of the ministry of the word, and given opportunity to repent of his great wickedness.

To continue in such a course of evil after he was silenced from the ministry showed clearly that his fault was a deliberate one, and that he was not simply overtaken in a fault. Therefore the church did right to exclude him from their fellowship altogether, until such time as God should give him repentance to the confession of his sins, and the acknowledging of the truth. The right hand or eye must be sacrificed to save the whole body. This act of the church was final. No other church minister nor member had any right to ignore this action of the church. All such things rest with the churches, acting each in its own individual capacity. When any church, acting according to the judgment given them at the time, in carrying on the order of the law of the gospel, either receives a member, restores one to her fellowship and communion, or excludes any member from her fellowship, that must be regarded as final, and must be submitted to by all orderly churches everywhere. True, if any member or church thinks that the action of the church has been hasty or unadvised, and have any reasons for thinking so, which they may think the church which excluded or restored or received the brother does not know, and which they ought to know, said member or church has a right to communicate these facts to the first church. But that is all; they must leave that church to act upon the information which they communicate. Otherwise we should have confusion worse confounded in all our borders. It must be recognized and adhered to strictly that each church is responsible to God alone for her administration of the law and order of the kingdom of God in her bounds, so that when the minister was excluded that was the end. Still further, there is no warrant in the word for any church to give up the duty which God has in his word laid upon her to administer the affairs of the kingdom of God in her borders. We have never seen any good grow out of the church councils so-called. God will give to each and all his churches wisdom as their day in the administration of the order of his house, and there will be no need of seeking elsewhere for advice or aid. It is not well for any church to say by her action, we do not feel sure that God will fulfill his word by giving us sufficient wisdom in our dealing with this case. It is our judgment that churches ought not to interfere with the administration of the order of the gospel in other churches. We have never seen any good grow out of such a course. The church where members are received, restored or excluded, must be presumed to be in a better position to judge what is right than any other church can possibly be. No matter how small in numbers, or weak in the estimation of men, the church may be, we must believe that God is with her, and that he will give wisdom and grace as her need requires. So that when this minister was excluded, that was final, so far as any other church or brethren was concerned.

It was then a great transgression of the law of God in the church, for another

minister to take the one excluded into his fellowship, and set him to preaching elsewhere, also preaching with him. And it was a sin against God and the church for him to write coarsely and insultingly to the aged pastor of the church concerning the matter. Even though he might have sincerely thought that the church was mistaken and did wrong, yea, even though he might have thought that the church was actuated by a wrong spirit in the exclusion of the minister charged with these evil practices, still it was a gross disorder for him to despise the action of the church. The only thing to do was to submit to the action of the church, and to wait for time to show that wrong had been done. If the excluded minister wished for the renewed fellowship of the church, there was but one way to gain it, and that was by turning away from his evil practices, and so living that all would see that he had repented truly. Even though he had been falsely charged, the only way to show that the charge was false, was to so live afterward that no one would credit the charge very long. A man's life will do more to gain confidence and fellowship than anything else, and what is membership in the church worth without confidence and fellowship in the heart?

As we do not know all the circumstances which actuated the church in withdrawing from the association to which she belonged, we cannot speak advisedly concerning this proceedure of the church. Churches are not bound to become members of an association, or to remain as members of one at all. And for many reasons a church may judge it best not to ally herself with any association. It is all that can be asked of any church that she be in fellowship with churches and brethren of like precious faith. The church had a right to withdraw from the association, providing it was not because of want of fellowship for the churches and brethren of that association. It might have been, under the circumstances, that the church acted hastily, and would have done better to have retained her membership in the association, of that we cannot judge in this case. It looked upon the face of it as if the church did not have confidence in the other churches, but as said before, the other churches were bound to abide by her action in the matter of the exclusion of the minister. And if they are allowing that minister to preach among them they are wrong.

Now, as to the first question proposed by the writer of the letter, we will say that many circumstances might serve to influence our answer if we knew them better. The second minister may not believe the charges against the first minister, and think that personal prejudice existed in the church against him, and that this led to his exclusion rather than justice, but still, even if this were the case, he was altogether wrong in his course; it was an insult to the law of God in Zion. His course was a dangerous one to follow, and had a tendency to beget lawlessness among his brethren. One transgression unrebuked opens the door, not only to other transgressions, but also to a growing disregard to all the commandments of God. This second minister ought to confess his faults and retrace his steps. He should cease to affiliate as a minister and a brother with the excluded minister, and leave that minister to God and to the church, from which he was excluded. Yet, if the second minister fully believed that the first one was harshly and wrongly judged, this would constitute an extenuating cir-

cumstance in our judgment of him.

In reply to the second question we would feel compelled to say that it is neither honest, just, pure, lovely, nor of good report for any churches or brethren to acknowledge the first minister as a minister of Christ, or treat him as such, or as a brother in fellowship. As to the second minister, until his church deals with him and censures him for his course, giving him full opportunity to repent and return, he must be considered as in full standing. There is no half way ground between being a member of the church, and being wholly out of the church. If the church or brethren feel aggrieved at his course, as they have a right to feel, they should communicate with him concerning the matter. Until this is done he must be dealt with as a brother. It would be right to present to the church of which he is a member, a statement or his course, and ask that church to consider it. Meanwhile, the first church is under no obligation to ask him to preach for her, or in her bounds. If this minister has a right spirit at all, he will feel as though he cannot bear the burden upon him, and will himself seek to make the matter right, by withdrawing from his disorderly course. As we understand from the statement given, and the questions, false doctrine is not involved so much as wrong conduct. The second minister may mean to do right, but certainly he is pursuing a very mistaken course.

As to the third question, we will say that as a rule we do not feel favorable to giving public notice of the wrong of any minister or member. Such public notice sometimes savors of persecution, or at least looks that way. It is seldom needful at all, at least, we have found it so. To publish such statements against men personally can at the best benefit but few, and they do wound the feelings of thousands of tender-hearted ones. It is far better to keep all troubles, in all the churches, strictly at home. It is not needful to trouble every family in a community with the publication abroad of the troubles in some one family. In some few cases where it seemed needful to warn others against imposture, we have thought such publication of them justifiable, and even demanded, but, generally speaking, it is best to keep all church troubles at home if possible. Such things have a tendency to fly abroad fast enough without putting forth extra effort to spread them, and where such things have been published abroad, as a rule replies have been made, and it is demanded that they be also published through the same medium that has published the first statements. This, to say the least, is embarrassing to those who have published the statements, for they cannot know the facts of the matter, save as given to them by others, and they may feel as though justice demands that they publish the replies also. All such things are unpleasant, to say the least of them. It is better to bury the fetid pool out of sight in the earth, than to stir up its putrid waters.

As stated before, we do not know anything about any particular case to which what we have said may apply. We have tried to present general principles of truth in what has been here written, and leave what has been said to our readers for their consideration. May the Holy Spirit of God lead us into all truth, and away from all evil in either doctrine or practice, is our desire for all the churches and ministers of Christ.

C.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MAN.

MUCH has been written of late in regard to man's responsibility for the sin he commits, and to our mind most of the confusion now among the brethren concerning the predestination of all things, and conditional time salvation, is caused by a forgetfulness of man's real condition in a state of nature, and if it is the pleasure of the Lord we would be glad to stir up the pure minds of the brethren to a remembrance of what they are by nature.

Paul tells us, "We were by nature children of wrath even as others." Then if we can ascertain what state the children of wrath are in, we shall learn our own state by nature. To do this we will go back to the beginning of nature, as recorded in the divine word. There we are told that after God had created everything else in nature he made man. We will not here stop to argue whether or not he made him "able to stand but liable to fall," we think all will agree that he did fall, and that is all that is necessary to establish what we hope to prove: that man in his fallen state is "dead in trespasses and in sins." This is no figure of speech, but is literally true. Unless quickened by the holy Spirit, man is as dead to spiritual life while on the earth, as he was a thousand years before he was born into this world, or as he will be after he has been a thousand years corporeally dead. It is this fact we wish to emphasize, for a forgetfulness of it is what is engendering so much strife among the brethren.

It is very difficult to so express ourselves as to avoid a misconstruction of our meaning by those who differ with us, for the truth cannot be reduced to a theory and logically demonstrated; if it could, faith would have to give place to knowledge, and spiritual understanding could be taught to the satisfaction of the natural mind, and revealed religion would become a science. For this reason many expressions in the Scriptures in regard to the Lord have to be understood as reduced in language to the finite capacity of the saints in their time state, which if taken literally will seem to contradict many other passages of Scripture setting forth the sovereignty and immutability of God as the great I AM of all ages, unaffected by times or circumstances. Thus when we read of the pleasure or wrath of God, we are not to understand that the Deity is subject to changes of moods, or varying in emotions, but, to our mind, when the wrath of God is spoken of, it has reference to the offense in his broken law, and when the pleasure of the Lord is spoken of it means that in the fulfillment of the law the purposes of his law are consummated.

Likewise many expressions in regard to sin, if taken literally, would seem not to be in accord with other declarations in regard to faith. For instance, we have degrees of sin spoken of in the Scripture, yet we are also told, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin," and "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

Now how are we going to harmonize these Scriptures by a literal interpretation of them? If "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin," and, If he that offends in one point is guilty of all, how can there be any degrees in sin? The only way we can understand it is, that while in the sight of God all mankind is either "dead in sin," or "holy as he is holy" in the righteousness of Christ, yet with us in our time state, we are continually transgressing, and speaking after the manner of men, sinning to a greater or less degree.

As said before, in the beginning the Lord created man, and he gave him a law, and told him that in the day he transgressed that law he should surely die, and he did transgress, and that day he fell from a pure, innocent man in nature, in which state he was incapable of death, to a decaying sinner, dead in trespasses and in sins, and every son and daughter of Adam from that day has been born dead in sin, and if born dead in sin, how can they ever become any greater sinners than they are at the day of their birth? In the eyes of God they cannot, but in our carnal judgment those things which are most repulsive, are considered more sinful than some other things that are more agreeable to our natural feelings, but still we must inquire, How can man that is born dead in sin, ever become any more of a sinner? We know that in corporeal death some are fairly beautiful to look upon, as they lie apparently in a sweet, peaceful slumber, while others, we know, are decomposed and most unpleasant to contemplate, yet one is no more dead than the other. So with God, man is his fallen state is dead in sin, and the most moral, beautifully benevolent character, is as dead in sin, as the most loathesome, depraved wretch on earth. This may not seem possible to carnal reason, but it is scriptural truth, and "Let God be true, and every man a liar." With the spiritually taught child, however, we feel certain the truth of the Scriptures will have more weight than all the objections of the natural mind. There are no degrees in holiness with God, nothing but absolute perfection can be accepted with him, and only as he beholds his chosen vessels of mercy in the robe of Christ's righteousness can there be any acceptance with him. Our own righteousness is but filthy rags, and any efforts by even his chosen ones that are not wrought out by the Spirit of Christ within them, is not acceptable with the Lord.

Of late quite a little concern has been expressed from the pulpit and in some of the publications claiming the name of Primitive Baptists, about preaching to all mankind their duty to repent, and this argument has been advanced, "If a man owes a debt, and becomes insolvent, he of course cannot pay the debt, yet his obligation to pay it is just as great, and it is so with alien sinners; they are not able to fulfill the law, yet it is just as much their duty to repent and keep the law, and therefore should be thus admonished."

Is not that a cunningly devised scheme of the adversary to entrap the very elect, if possible, in the snare of Arminianism? The sophistry of the above might work if the figure was a true one, but let us change this insolvent alien sinner into a dead one, and see if this argument will hold good. Suppose we institute legal proceedings against this insolvent alien sinner, and have the sheriff sent out to bring him in for supplementary proceedings against him, and the sheriff brings him into court, and he is found to be a dead man, what would be thought of the judge that would deliver a charge to the dead man concerning his duty to discharge the obligations of his debt?

If then it would be an insane act to arraign a corporeally dead man before the bar of an earthly judge, how presumptuous must be the act of summoning alien sinners, dead in trespasses and in sins, to the judgment-seat of God. Can it be possible that any real subject of grace can so far forget their own experience as to be led away by such cun-

ningly devised fables?

While every man of Adam's race in a state of nature is thus dead in trespasses and in sin, yet, God be praised, his children have the assurance that "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and in sins." Now we have a new creature, one brought from death unto life, spiritual life, and it is only as animated by this new spiritual life that we can keep the "royal law of liberty." The very first fruit of this new life is love, and "love is the fulfilling of the law."

If then in our carnal state it is impossible to please God, and it is only in our new or spiritual life we can serve him acceptably, how inconsistent are the appeals to either saint or sinner to of their own volition serve God acceptably, and thereby gain a recompense of reward.

B.

PLEASE BE SURE,

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

Please be particular about this.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE NEW CREATURE.

(Concluded from page 443.)

If Christ died for us, if he has endured that penalty, that death which the law had doomed us to, it is legally the same as though we had died, and we are considered dead to the law by the body of Christ, that we should be married to and become one flesh with him that is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. (Romans vii. 4.) As many as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death,—buried with him by baptism, (not by the ordinance of baptism in water, for that is only a figure or emblem, setting forth his baptism into his death) into death, that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." "Knowing this, that our *old man* [which is in our context called our *outward man*] is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead [that is with Christ] is freed from sin," for his blood cleanseth us from all sin. "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him, for in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."—Romans vi. 3–11. It is no wonder then that the apostles were by the love of Christ constrained to believe that if Christ died for all, then were all dead. And that the grand object of his dying for us was that

we which live should not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto him that died for us and rose again. "Wherefore, henceforth know we no man after the flesh." Our old man being crucified, is regarded as dead, legally dead, and put off. "For flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."—1 Cor. xv. 50. "For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."—Gal. ii. 20. In our spiritual relationship we know no man after the flesh. "Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh." In his incarnation, as made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law; now since he has been put to death in the flesh, and quickened in the Spirit, all his communications to us are by his Spirit. Consequently we know him now as our risen and exalted Savior, as the spiritual Head of a spiritual body, and those who are in him we know as his members. For "there is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are all called in one hope of your calling."—Eph. iv. 4.

After thus searching and observing the connection of the text and the subject in it embraced, and learning the premises, to which the text proposed by "A Looker On" is the conclusion, we at last come to the text itself. "Therefore," or from all the foregoing considerations, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new."

We will now attend to the questions.

First. What becomes new? This question is so fully and clearly answered in the text, that we can conceive of no plainer language in which to reply. "All things are become new." That is, to him who is in Christ Jesus. There is nothing in all his experience that he had any knowledge of until it was made known to him by revelation of the Spirit. "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the Spirit of man that is in him? even so the things of God, knoweth no man, but by the Spirit of God."—1 Cor. ii. 10, 11. All things revealed, and all things experienced, are entirely new, and all that now constitutes him, what he is, as a man in Christ Jesus, a believer in Christ, a subject of regeneration, and a fellow-citizen with the saints, and of the household of God, is new to him. This, we think, is not only in harmony with the Scriptures, but in agreement with every christian's experience. Whatever may have been our former views, theories or traditions, when taught of God, all things become new to us. Nor are these new things made out of the old things with which we were familiar before we were quickened and made alive; for old things are passed away, and instead of the new things being a revision of old things, the next verse to our text, declares, "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation." Of the things which have passed away, all our legal hopes, all our self-righteousness, all dependence on the flesh, all the things which we esteemed as gain, we now set down as dross, and as passed away; and the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, for whom we have suffered the loss of all things, is also new.

We have new joys and sorrows, new hopes and fears, new conflicts and victories, new food and appetites, new society in the saints, the Bible opens to us with new beauty, and the way of salvation through Jesus Christ is all new and glorious to us as now revealed by the Spirit unto those who are thus manifestly and experimentally in Christ Jesus. We have no right, therefore, to presume that we are thus in Christ Jesus, if things remain to us as they were before; but however poor in Spirit we may feel, however unworthy of the blessings of the gospel, if we have experienced this change, it is a reliable evidence that we are in Christ Jesus, born of God, and heirs of immortal glory.

The other question of "A Looker On," is "In what part, and to what extent is he made new?" We are not certain that we understand the true import of this last question. Certainly we do not learn from the text that if *any part* of a man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature: nor does it read, if any man be in Christ Jesus, *some part of him* is a new creature. But the testimony is, "If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature." Let us then inquire what man is in Christ Jesus? In the context we have found two men are spoken of as identified in every christian while in the flesh; the one is called the *outward*, the other the *inward* man. The outward man is also called the old man, the *natural man*, &c. The inward man is also called the new man, the spiritual man; and it is also said that the new man is, after God, created in righteousness and true holiness. One of these men, we are told, is born of the flesh, is flesh, and wars against the Spirit. The other is born of the Spirit, and is Spirit, and wars against the corruptions of the flesh; the one is full of depravity, and no good thing dwells in it, the other is born of God, and cannot sin, because it is born of God. Now which of these men are in Christ Jesus? Is it the old man with its lusts, which we are commanded to crucify, to put off, to mortify; or is it the new man, which we are to put on? Will any intelligent christian say it is both the old and the new man? The dead and the living man, for the body is dead, because of sin, but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness. Whichever man it be that is in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature; not a repaired or an improved or new modeled creature, but altogether a *new* creature. It cannot be the *old* man, for that is not *new*: it would be a contradiction of terms. Besides, the old man still continues to annoy, vex and war against the new man. And these are the parties in the christian warfare. Our conclusion is that all that we possess that is earthly, mortal, depraved, warring against the Spirit, and which we are commanded to mortify, crucify, put off, &c., is in the flesh, is born of the flesh, and is called the old or outward man. And all there is in us as christians, that is spiritual, immortal and holy, is called the new, the inward man, and is born of God; bears the image of Jesus, loves God, aspires after holiness, and is truly in Christ Jesus, and so very distinct in its origin, birth, nature, elements, desires, taste, appetite and character, that every saint can easily distinguish between them. To follow the one is death; to follow the other is life and peace. "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die, but if ye, through the Spirit, mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live." With the mind, says Paul, I serve the law of God, but with the flesh, the law of sin.

What there is in this doctrine for chris-

tians to controvert, or to fall out about, we cannot perceive. That worldly religionists should oppose it, is not surprising, for all the religion they know of is to renovate, reform, remodel, or gloss over the natural man. Hence they find no difficulty in training up their children religiously, and in producing numerous converts to their faith by *means* and *instrumentalities*, by education, by inducements and restraints, upon the natural man. No implantation by the Holy Ghost, no new or heavenly birth is needed to make a modern pharisee, any more than was required to make ancient pharisees, but if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his; therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. All that constitutes him a new creature is of God, not of the flesh. That which is not new, is not in Christ Jesus, it enters not into the composition of the new man, it remains the old man, and is to be put off with its corruptions and lusts. What then have we as christians that we have not received of God? And if we have received it, we cannot boast as though we had not received it. Boasting is excluded.

"Triumphant grace and man's free will
Shall not divide the crown,
For man's a fallen sinner still,
And Christ shall reign alone."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., August 15, 1860.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Warwick Association of Old School Baptist churches, in session with the Ebenezer Church, New York city, June 10th, 11th and 12th, 1903, to the associations and meetings with whom we correspond, sends love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—It is with a deep heartfelt sense of love to our heavenly Father that we are again permitted to address you with our epistle of love, and by messengers, for his abounding mercy and grace to usward, and for the fellowship and union of feeling and sentiment that is manifested in the churches composing our body. Brethren, our hearts have been much refreshed by the coming of your messengers, who we feel to say we believe came to us according to the will of God, in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, and our hearts were made to rejoice in God our Savior, while the word of the Lord dropped from their mouths, whom he filled. May our love increase, and fellowship abound, and union be strengthened, with all the fold of our God, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We still desire a continuation of your correspondence. Our Minutes will show you the state of our churches.

Brethren, pray for us. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO BROTHER D. M. LEONARD'S APPEAL TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$775 70
J. D. Hubbell, N. Y., $10.00; G. B. Paxton, Texas, $1.00; Mrs. Bagely Anderson, Ind., $2.00.—Total	13 00
Total to date	$788 70

MARRIAGES.

By Elder W. W. Meredith, at the residence of the bride's mother, in the city of Wilmington, June 24th, 1903, John C. Megonigal and Miss Avis Burrows, both of Wilmington, Del.

By Elder D. M. Vail, June 17th, 1903, in Buffalo, N. Y., Daniel J. McAlpin, of Bridgeburg, Ont., and Miss Margarette Wale, of Black Creek, Ont.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, near New Church, Va., May 16th, 1903, Cornelius Godfry and Miss Alice Hollaway, of Worcester Co., Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Sallie M. Laws, the wife of James Laws, departed this life at her home in Pittsville, Md., May 31st, 1903, aged 63 years, lacking 1 month and 17 days, after intense suffering for several weeks with what was termed dropsy. Sister Laws received a stroke of paralysis a year or more ago, from which she never fully recovered, though able to attend to work and go to meeting. She said that she did not want to get well, for she had suffered so much. The subject of this notice was married to James Laws, April 17th, 1858. Eight children were born unto them, five sons and three daughters, all still living but one, I believe. She was baptized by the writer in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Indiantown, the third Sunday in October, 1872, in company with Cornelia Laws, her sister-in-law, and two others. We feel to say in truth that one of the most noble women that we have ever known has passed away. Many that see this notice will have their minds refreshed with her pleasant and forcible manner in making every one feel comfortable and happy about her. We know the grace of God does great things, but it seems to show itself more forcibly in some cases than in some others. We do not think any one that was well acquainted with her will think that we are using too much eulogy. She seemed to be well capacitated to fill every place to which she was called in her family, in the neighborhood and in the church. The light that was in her was not put under a bushel, but on a candlestick, so that all in the house could see. A life of thirty years was spent in magnifying the grace of God. She was brought up strictly religious, but it was all made to fade like the flower of grass, but that word which was spoken to her was light and life, and endured to the end. Thus in obeying the truth through the spirit she purified her life unto unfeigned love of the church, for we did love and admire her greatly, and notwithstanding so much of the fruit of the Spirit was seen, she was so distrustful of herself, so meek and lowly, we have thought that her case would compare well with the account of the centurion. While she sleeps in death, she still lives in our hearts and minds, and notwithstanding the hand of the Lord has fallen so heavily upon us, we have great cause to thank him for giving to us such a companion for thirty years. We wish to be still, knowing that God is too wise to err, and cannot be unkind. All that loving hands could do was done for her, but when the message came, it baffled the help and skill of all. We sorrow, but not as those which have no hope. This stroke has fallen heavily upon her companion in his old age, whose confidence in her was so strong, and who has looked up to her in his affliction so long, and may he now be able to look to and trust in a still stronger arm.

The writer of this notice was called for, and assumed the painful duty of trying to speak to the people on the funeral occasion, using as a text 1 Thessalonians iv. 13, 14, followed by Elder A. B. Francis. First hymn read by request, commencing, "'Tis a point I long to know," after which her remains were borne to the hearse by her four sons, and one cousin, and then to the old homestead cemetery, there to await the resurrection of the dead, when mortality shall put on immortality. She has left to remember her many virtues, her companion, five sons, two daughters, the church, and a host of friends. We would commend the family, the church and friends, to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build them up.

T. M. POULSON.

DIED—In Lewiston, Maine, June 27th, 1903, **Mrs. Eveline Moody,** aged 77 years. Sister Moody has been an invalid many years, but no one ever heard her murmur or complain. She experienced religion early in life, and has been a loved and highly esteemed member of the Whitefield Church for many years. Meek and retiring, she was more ready to listen than to speak, but in her conversation there was no uncertain sound. Jesus was her hope of salvation, and his finished work was what she loved to hear proclaimed. She was firmly established in the truth, and no wind of doctrine could move her. She manifested much love and fellowship for the saints, and was present at the meetings as long as her health permitted. Her husband and son passed away six years ago, and she has been kindly and lovingly cared for by two daughters and a niece. Two weeks ago she was taken seriously ill, and gradually grew weaker until the end came peacefully. Another loved one has been taken to be "forever with the Lord." While we feel it is well with her, yet the loved ones cannot help weeping because they will see her face no more. May God comfort each sorrowing heart, and enable them to say, "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done."

Her remains were taken to Whitefield, Maine, for interment, and services were held there by Elder F. W. Keene.

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

Asa W. Bacchus departed this life June 16th, 1903, aged 94 years, 4 months and 19 days, at the residence of his eldest daughter, Mrs. Lizzie Cranford, where he had the kindest attention that loving hearts and willing hands could bestow to make him comfortable and content. During his last days and short illness, he suffered considerable pain, which soon subsided, and in a tranquil mind, and apparent reconciliation to his heavenly Father's will, he bowed humbly and resignedly in death, in the full triumph of his exalted Redeemer's love and victory, leaving a record worthy the emulation of the noblest, ever striving with every

endeavor to keep and apply the golden rule to all men; more especially did he most ardently love his brethren in the Lord, among whom he did most love to associate and converse of things pertaining to the kingdom, which things were most precious to his soul.

The subject of this notice was born Jan. 29th, 1809, near Nashville, Tenn.; married Miss Sarah F. Bushart, Sept. 16th, 1828. To this union were born nine children, five of which survive, with quite a number of grand and great-grandchildren; joined the Old School Baptist Church in Tennessee, in 1831; was soon after elected clerk of the association in which he resided, serving most acceptably; emigrating to Arkansas in the year 1849, was re-elected clerk, and continued to serve until too old and infirm to discharge the duties relative to the office. No eulogy from us is needed to express the amiable deeds of his noble character; suffice it to say that a saint of the most high God has gone to his great and lasting reward, where sickness, sorrow, pain and death is no more felt nor feared; sweetly he now reposes in the bosom of the Lord Jesus, therefore we cannot weep nor grieve, for far more blest is he than we.

May the dear Lord impress upon the minds of the children and grandchildren to tread in his footsteps and imitate his worthy example, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

A. R. YARBROUGH.

JUNE 29, 1903.

Mrs. Mary A. (Alspach) Deffenbaugh was born May 27th, 1818, in Fairfield Co., and was married to David Alspach, Dec. 4th, 1838, by Elder Winters, of the German Reform Church, and to them were born five children, three boys and two girls; the two girls are both dead. Mr. Alspach died in the year 1875, and she then married John Deffenbaugh, May 27th, 1879, by Elder J. G. Ford, of the Baptist Church. Mr. Deffenbaugh died in January, 1886; since then she has lived with her son, Frank Alspach, until her death, which occurred July 9th, 1903, aged 85 years, 1 month and 12 days. She united with the Predestinarian Baptist Church previous to their coming to Van Wert Co., Ohio, and after coming she united with Jennings Creek Church, and after the death of brother John Deffenbaugh she united with the Sugar Creek Predestinarian Baptist Church, and was a firm believer in the doctrine of election, predestination of all things, and salvation by grace alone, and a great lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and was a constant reader up to her death, and she did not want to read anything else.

A funeral discourse was preached July 10th, in the Presbyterian meeting-house, in Delphos, Ohio, by the writer, to a large and very attentive audience, from Job xiv. 14: "If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." After which she was laid to rest in the Westside cemetery, there to await the glorious resurrection.

J. G. FORD.

MEETINGS.

A YEARLY or two days meeting is appointed to be held with the Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Pa., Wednesday and Thursday, August 12th and 13th, 1903. Those coming on the Ontario & Western R. R., or Delaware & Hudson R. R., will be met at Oliphant, Pa., Tuesday, the 11th. Please drop a card to either A. B. Russell, Charles Miller, George Goodrich or Ellis Johnson, at Oliphant, Pa. If teams are not at depot on arrival of trains, inquire for Mrs. Stephen E. Akerly, who lives near the depots. Those coming on Delaware, Lackawana & Western R. R., will come to Glenburn, Pa., and take stage to my house, one and one-fourth miles, or drop me a card and they will be met. We send a general invitation to all who long to hear the truth, ministering brethren not exempt, as we have use for them.

D. M. VAIL.

HAZEL Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, will meet in her forty-ninth annual session with Spring Creek Church, near Stahl, Adair Co., Mo., on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1903, and continue the two following days.

S. B. JONES, Moderator.

J. M. CATE, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Harford Church is appointed to be held with said church, commencing on Saturday before the fifth Sunday in August, at 10 o'clock a. m., to continue two days. A cordial invitation is extended.

Those coming by way of Baltimore, will take train at North avenue station at 3:30 p. m. for Long Green or Forest Hill. Those coming from the north will take train that leaves York at 1:30 p. m. for Forest Hill, on Friday before.

NATHAN GRAFTON.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet (the Lord willing) with Union Church, five miles south of Colchester, McDonough Co., Ill., Sept. 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1903.

Those coming by rail will be met at Colchester, on Thursday before, and on Friday morning, from the south. Only those from east, west and north of Galesburg, will come to Galesburg by 5 p. m. Thursday, where we will endeavor to get reduced rates from there on. All are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Second Church of Roxbury, at Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, the 9th and 10th of September, 1903, beginning at 10 o'clock a. m., when we expect to meet and greet our brethren and sisters, and friends to truth and righteousness. The place of meeting is two miles from Roxbury village, and six miles from Kelly's Corners, at which places those that come can stop and be taken to the meeting. Trains will be met on the Ulster & Delaware R. R. on Tuesday evening before the meeting, at both places.

We hope to see a number of ministering brethren with us. J. D. HUBBELL.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 71. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1903. NO. 16.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"THE SCARLET LINE."

"SHE bound the scarlet line in the window."—Joshua ii. 21.

What exceeding riches of grace are exhibited in the narrative centering around this scarlet line. Most preciously is this discovered when we see pictured forth the marvelous kindness of God to poor, perishing sinners. The twelve tribes of Israel with Joshua at their head are now entering into the possession of the land of promise. "And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and came into an harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there."

Look not so disdainfully upon this scene, ye self-righteous, for this is of the Lord. A vessel of mercy whose name is in the Lamb's book of life, an object of Jehovah's everlasting love, is being sought out. (Isaiah lxii. 12.) One who to the end of time is set forth an object of God's distinguishing grace, Rahab the harlot. When the Son of God was in the world in the likeness of sinful flesh, those who highly esteemed themselves murmured that Jesus was gone to be the guest of one that was a sinner, and they contemptuously designated him the friend of publicans and sinners. It is one of the surpassing glories of the gospel that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. (1 Tim. i. 15.)

Before the coming of these men Rahab had been much disturbed in her soul. She contemplated the entering in of God's host into Canaan as the massengers of his righteous vengeance. She believed that her people and her city were doomed to destruction. Then might Rahab say within herself, How shall one so wicked as I escape? The day declines, and the mantle of night begins to shade the doomed city, and there in the twilight enter two strangers, men of the children of Israel. It is not so dark but that they are seen of many, and tidings of their presence in the city are taken to the king of Jericho. They are seen of Rahab the harlot, she knows them, too. Who can portray her emotions of soul as she beheld them? O, not with the eyes and emotions of an harlot does she look upon them. Others look upon these messengers with enmity, and would take hold of them with violent hands and slay them. But this woman is moved by a gracious

and divine power, and is in exercise before the Lord. She believes that he is, and unholy, a sinner, she trembles before him, but trembling and contrite she is drawn to him; her heart craves his indulgent mercy, and these two men are his, his sacred ones, for Jehovah is the God of Israel. She is moved toward these men because of their God with all graciousness of spirit. "She received the spies with peace."—Heb. xi. 31. No doubt she felt unworthy to lodge the representatives of the favored nation of the Almighty, but an inward satisfaction glowed within in the honor conferred upon her that they should seek shelter under her roof. "He that receiveth you receiveth me." In some little measure no doubt she tasted this blessedness. "She received the spies with peace." But her comfort of mind in her graciousness of heart toward these Israelites is soon disturbed; it has been told the king of this doomed city, "Behold, there came men in hither to-night of the children of Israel, to search out the country. And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which are entered into thine house: for they be come to search out all the country." Will Rahab surrender them a prey to their ravening foes? No, she will shew by her works her faith in God, who is the King of kings. "She brought them up to the roof of her house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof." "Wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" This woman's faith was a living faith, and her faith moved her to shield, to save these spies from the vengeance of the king of Jericho. Her works of faith were thus evidencing her justification. "Was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?"—James ii. 25. The woman took the two men and hid them; she comes down from the roof to face the officers of the king of Jericho, and said thus: "There came men unto me, but I wist not whence they were: and it came to pass, about the time of the shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out: whither the men went I wot not: pursue after them quickly: for ye shall overtake them." What is this? Is this the fruit of faith? Never. Faith in the Lord is a good tree that is planted and grows by the operation of God, and cannot bring forth evil fruit. No lie is of the truth. Let us ponder upon this scene of light and darkness, there is profitable instruction in it to those who fear the Lord. Say not, I would never do so. Child of God, you know not how weak you are, unless kept by the power of God the next moment you will sink in the depravity of your sinful heart into all wickedness. Rahab to shield these hidden spies resorts to her deceiving tongue, and pours forth lies to the men of Jericho. They believe her lies and hasten, as they imagine, in pursuit of the fugitive spies without the gates of Jericho. The spies were benefited by Rahab's lies. Was this lying excusable? Jesuitism might answer affirmatively, saying, The end justifies the means. But an inspired apostle of Jesus Christ has declared the just damnation of all such who slanderously reported and affirmed that he said, "Let us do evil that good may come."—Romans iii. 8. How valiantly, with what holy majesty this holy apostle utterly repudiates such a doctrine. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer there-

in ?"—Romans vi. 1, 2. If Rahab was one that was born of the Spirit, in whose heart was that faith in God which is the fruit of the Spirit, is it not a very paradox that she should upon the roof of her house be moved by faith in the Lord to acts of goodness toward these spies, and then descending to the threshold face the officers with cunning falsehoods? Is this something to be winked at and passed over as a trifle? To the child of God no sin is a trifle, but is grievous, damnable. If you are one to whom the Lord has given a new heart, all iniquity will be hateful, and sin not only in words and deeds, but in thy thoughts, will make thee heavy and sad, and thy heart will sigh and mourn over it unto thy God. Those who are born of God have a nature imparted to them akin to the nature of God and as exercised by this nature, (2 Peter i. 4,) the new man, which is created after the image of him that created him in righteousness and true holiness, (Eph. iv. 24,) they hunger and thirst after righteousness. They cannot feast their eyes upon sin. This being so, the question still presents itself, How is it that a child of God can this moment be exercised in love and faith worshiping the Lord, and in a small moment be exercised in matters the most sinful? Can such a state of affairs exist and one in very truth be born of the Spirit, a child of God? And if it be so how do such opposites have subsistence in them? These are momentous inquiries. This is that which is so mysterious, that often causes so much misgiving of heart to those who fear the Lord: that one moment exercised graciously toward God with humble contriteness of heart, or in grateful praises, and then all is suspended, and to our bitter dismay find there is in us a heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. O, the grief of mind that is ours, how discouraged, how we have to blush when once more our thoughts, our faces are turned toward our holy and gracious God. The mystery of these conflicting emotions and sometimes contradictory behavior felt and exhibited in the people of God is that they are the subjects of two natures described in the Scriptures as the flesh and the Spirit, (Gal. v. 16,) the old and the new man, (Ephesians iv. 22–24,) and perhaps no clearer statement of these diverse principles can be found than that given in Romans vii. 14–25. All our emotions of contrition of heart, of faith and love and praise in which we worship the Lord, are put forth in us by the operations of God's gracious power. The arising and intrusion of iniquity is from our corrupt Adamic nature, which ever is the heart-saddening, burdensome load of the children of God while they are in this world. The bitter consciousness of indwelling sin forbids us to glory in ourselves before God. O, the mercifulness of the Lord; he pities us in our low estate, and by his gracious teachings we are melted before him in repentance, and we are drawn to cleave alone to the sacrifice and righteousness of Jesus Christ as our only hope of acceptance before the throne of God. It is a most humiliating thing in the lives of the saints that their most blessed and sacred moments may suddenly be defiled by sinful thoughts, and unless kept by the power of God in the sanctuary of his gracious felt presence, so powerful and ensnaring is the depravity of our fleshly heart we shall as suddenly fall into outward iniquities. How much it becomes us then to cry continually for mercy to be kept from the paths of sin. "Hold thou me up and I shall be safe."

The men of Jericho are gone from the

door of Rahab's house in hot pursuit of the spies elsewhere, and Rahab instantly ascends to the roof of her house. "Before the spies were laid down, she came unto them upon the roof." Did she then, or in after days, chuckle over the deception she practiced upon her fellow citizens? Ah, memories of sinfulness are not cherished by the pure in heart. What gratification can the remembrance of transgressions afford a believer in Jesus? They are ashamed of all iniquity. (Rom. vi. 21.) The grace of God in them forbids that they should glory in their shame.

"Rahab said unto the men, I know that the Lord hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you; for the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath."

What changes take place in this woman all within a little space of time. Moved with faith in God she received the spies with peace, and sought to hide them from their foes; then with lies she barricades the entrance of her house and turns away the men of Jericho; now upon the roof this Gentile woman is discoursing most learnedly (as one surely taught of the Lord) concerning God, her faith in him, and breathes forth her longings that Israel, the people of God, would deal friendly with her and her father's house. It was Peter, and Peter's same natural tongue that said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."—John vi. 68, 69, and who with oaths and cursing denied Jesus, saying, "I know not the man."—Matt. xxvi. 74, and afterward said, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."—John xxi. 17. "Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be."—James iii. 10. Ponder these things in thy heart.

Tidings of the onward march of the tribes of Israel, and of God's interposition in their behalf preceded their entrance into Canaan. If the waters of the Red Sea could not impede their way, if Jehovah dried up the sea for them, and they marched through the deep dry shod, if Israel is triumphant over both the kings of the Amorites, who then can withstand this invincible host? Terror fell upon the inhabitants of the land; their courage fled away and all hearts did melt. No one felt these things more deeply than Rahab, and only she of all the city of Jericho was exercised graciously toward the Lord amidst these distressing forebodings. This monument of God's grace is so affected by his gracious power that she attributes the invincible progress of the chosen nation to the Lord, and she believes that their God who has hitherto wrought so effectually in their behalf will yet go on to display his grace unto his beloved people in fulfilling the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. "I know that the Lord hath given you the land." Israel got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them, but the Lord's right hand, the light of his countenance and his kingly favor

put them in possession of their inheritance. All this is believed in the heart of Rahab, and in her recital of God's grace and power in behalf of Israel she crowns it all with the acknowledgment that "the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in the earth beneath." In Rahab's view, all the Canaanitish gods are famished out of the land; she has cast their images to the moles and to the bats, and the Lord alone is exalted. How divine is that work in a sinner that brings him to that reverend and affectionate recognition of the living and true God. Then, though a sinner, worthy only of his wrath, he is moved to fall down and kneel before the Lord our Maker.

Rahab says, "Our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man." This spiritually is realized by the vessels of mercy who are called unto the knowledge of themselves before the Almighty. All our courage sinks within us when we are apprehended by the Lord to face the curse of the law. Our sins and just condemnation are brought home to us, and we tremble in apprehension of the execution of his coming judgment. "Because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained." The risen and ascended Savior is that man who is ordained to judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and kingdom. (Acts xvii. 31; 2 Tim. iv. 1.)

Now, when the harlot Rahab had confessed to the spies her belief in God, her terror, the loss of all her courage, her meltings of heart in apprehension of coming judgments, her belief in the power and graciousness of the Lord unto Israel, and crowned the whole with declaring that he only was God, then she pours forth her entreaties that kindness might be shewn unto her and to her father's house: "Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the Lord, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token: and that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death." Thus she craved their friendship and deliverance from death. So quickened sinners make supplication unto the Lord for salvation, that they may not perish in their sins, and the Holy Ghost moves them to crave the friendship of the everlasting God. This is a miracle of God's grace, that a sinner, a creature who in his nature is unholy, enmity against God, should be found thirsting for God, the living God. His compassionate mercy is so sought after. O, to be freed from sin, to be holy, that I might live forever with the Lord. God becomes so lovely and so loved that our heart exclaims, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."

"Give me a true token." How descriptive is this language of that life of entreaty in which those who are born again live before God. Give me a true token of the forgiveness of my sins, cries the mourning soul. Give me a true token that thou art my Savior, of my acceptance in thy sight, O God. Give me a true token of thy covenant, everlasting love. Give me a true token that I am one of thy chosen, that I am a child of God. Thus with fervency the child of God pours forth his supplications, and sometimes like Gideon, (Judges vi.) we feel we must have token upon token to satisfy us. O, to find a quiet resting-place in the sure mercies of our God. Give a true token, one that will not fail

me, that will be honored and accepted in that day before the throne of God. Give me the earnest of the Spirit in my heart of that inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. Let the beloved Savior kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for his love is better than wine; let him speak to my heart of his dying love. O, that on me might be put the best robe of the righteousness of the Son of God; that on my hand might be put the ring of the Father's everlasting love; the ring that should be the true token that I am still and forever his child; the ring of espousal, of eternal wedlock to the fairest among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely.

Rahab's entreaty was heard, the spies made a covenant of life and kindness with her, saying, "Our life for yours." Your life shall be more precious than our own; we will give our lives a sacrifice "instead of you to die." "Our life for yours if ye utter not this our business. And it shall be, when the Lord hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee." It is a gracious mystery that a sinner should be so wrought upon that he is moved, with a weeping heart over his sins, to sue for tokens of the Lord's tender mercy, and it is very wonderful indeed, and surpassingly gracious that the Almighty inclines his ear and hears our cry. O, he hears the sighing of the needy, he will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. He forgetteth not the cry of the humble. What encouragement is this for needy souls to wait upon the Lord. "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." So innumerable are our weaknesses, temptations and necessities, and for myself I confess that as the days and the years pass by they become no less, and I should be utterly discouraged and faint indeed were it not that in prayer to the Lord I am enabled to cast all my care upon him who careth for me. But to do this I need the gracious operations of the Comforter to bring my heart to the persuasion that the Lord forgetteth not the cry of the humble, and thus I am divinely constrained to come boldly to the throne of grace to obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Rahab believes the spies; their covenant promises are inspiring and satisfying, and she manifests her grateful acquiescence by facilitating their escape from Jericho. "Then she let them down by a cord through the window: for her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall. And she said unto them, Get you to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you; and hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers be returned; and afterward may ye go your way. And the men said unto her, We will be blameless of this thine oath which thou hast made us swear. Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by; and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee. And it shall be, that whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head, and we will be guiltless: and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him. And if thou utter this our business, then we will be quit of thine oath which thou hast made us to swear. And she said, According unto your words, so be it. And she sent them away, and they departed:

and she bound the scarlet line in the window."

(Concluded next number.)

JUSTUS, Pa., June 21, 1903.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER: —You wrote a few lines some time ago, and expressed your fellowship for me by closing with these words, "Your unworthy brother, if you are an unbeliever." I have thought many times that these words gave me more comfort than I could hope to express, and have felt impressed to write you some of my thoughts in regard to them, but have put the matter off from time to time, feeling that I should fail to express to you what I would desire. Your calling me an unbeliever did not hurt my feelings in the least, nor lessen my respect and fellowship for you. No, dear brother, but I did derive some comfort in thinking that you, too, had known what it is to feel that you were nothing but an Atheist, an unbeliever, an infidel, and everything else but a believer in the Lord. I do not know just what my feelings were toward you. I was incapable of a feeling of love or fellowship for any one; I could not believe that any one had ever known the awful depravity of their heart as I had, but my thoughts were going out to you, and I felt a desire to write and tell you some of my feelings. You know there is a saying that "misery likes company." It seemed wrong and selfish in me to feel glad to think that perhaps you might know from your own experience something of my condition, yet I could not help the feeling of gladness in my heart to know that I was not alone in this terrible experience. We are apt to think while passing through deep trouble, that there is no trouble like ours. We cannot see or feel what is troubling the heart of another until we are made to experience in our own heart and life the same things that are troubling that one. I had for a long time been made to feel that I was alone in this experience that showed me the utter depravity of my nature, that I was totally unable to even believe in the existence of God. If at times thoughts arose in mind that there must be a God of creation, this seemed to me only a traditional belief, a mere assent of the mind to something which, if I believed at all, was only because I could not prove anything different. Of the God of salvation I felt that I was in total ignorance. Unlike some of the brethren whom I have heard speak of the unbelief in their nature, saying they believed in God, in his people, in his salvation, &c., but could not believe for themselves. I was just as much of an unbeliever in God, in his salvation, or that he had a people, as I was in regard to myself. I could not believe that the Bible was the inspired word of God, any more than I could believe that the book of Mormons was inspired, or that the Koran of the Mahometans was the work of inspiration. Those who accepted the teachings of Mahomet, or Joseph Smith, were as loud in their claims of these books being the work of inspiration, as were ever made for the Bible. To my mind they seemed to be the work of deluded men, fanatics, visionaries whose imagination had led them to look upon their writings as being inspired of God. I felt that I had no use for any of them. At times I was proud of my atheism, proud to think I was not carried away by delusions as other men were; resolved in my mind time and time again that I would never acknowledge the existence of any power greater than my own. That religion was a mere matter of sentiment or opinion; people differed

on this subject just the same as they did in regard to the policies and government of a nation. The desire to worship God seemed to me nothing more than that inherent principle in man to worship something which has led some to worship different objects, the sun, moon, stars and images. If there was any true worship of a living God I was ignorant of it, for to my mind God existed only in the imagination of deluded men. In fact I was an Atheist in all and every sense of the word. My experience was all a delusion, imagination. That which others called the experience of a child of God, was to me nothing but an illusion of the mind, no reality in these things. How foolish I had been in professing to know something of what seemed to me to have no real existence. At times the only thing that troubled me was the thought that I had professed an interest in these things. How foolish I had been to unite with the church, and in allowing my name to be with them. I am acting the hypocrite; I am with them only in name; I know nothing of their life and feelings. If there is any reality in religion I am totally ignorant of it; I can no longer allow my name on the church book, for just as long as my name is there I am living the life of a hypocrite; at times the thought would almost drive me mad, until I concluded to tell them that I was an Atheist. I had no belief in the existence of God; did not believe in religion of any kind whatever; request my name to be taken from the church book; let them know that I had no desire for their society in a religious sense; if they were the people of God, that I was wholly unworthy of their fellowship; had no desire whatever to be associated with them as a member; that being only an Atheist I felt that my place was with them, and not with those who believed entirely different. Yes, these thoughts have been in my mind many times. I have tried to tell them to the church, but as they took no action towards granting my request, I would think I had failed to present my case to them as clearly as I should, which seemed to prove to me clearer than ever that I was a vile hypocrite, but my total unfitness for having my membership with them impelled me to try once more to tell them of my condition, so at the conference meeting in April I told them in substance what I have written to you about the condition I was in. It seemed to me at that time that I had told them so fully and plainly of my atheism that they would take some action. I believe I hoped they would see fit to exclude me in the near future, perhaps at the church meeting in May. I concluded not to attend that meeting, so they might feel perfectly free to act in the matter, and at the time would not have felt the least hurt if they had cast me off, but really thought it would be an end to my trouble should they see fit to exclude me. As I received no word from them in regard to my case, I look at the matter now as only another evidence of the forbearance they have always manifested toward me. Perhaps the brethren have come to think of my condition as I have sometimes looked at it, as being the result of a gloomy, melancholy disposition, or some derangement of my physical being. How is it with you, dear brother? Do you know anything about such thoughts and feelings as I have written? If you have seen these things in yourself, felt them in your heart, know what it is to feel and know that you are an Atheist and nothing else, can you look on these feelings as an evidence that you are a child of God? Is this the experience of

a christian? I am anxious to know if there is any one like me. I hope there is not, yet if you have felt what I have tried to tell you, it would be a real comfort if I could know it. It is impossible for me to tell how wretched, miserable and vile I am. I have only hinted at the way I am led most of the time. If such feelings as I have tried to mention to you are the effect of some physical or mental derangement, if there is nothing real in them, if they are all imaginary, then how can I look upon thoughts and feelings which are entirely different, as being real? If sorrow and trouble on account of our inability to believe in God, in religion, is imaginary, if when we see the depravity of our heart, and are made to feel that we are vile, miserable and wretched, we say we have only imagined these things, what shall we say in regard to the feelings of gladness and joy, which we have occasionally?

It was in my mind when I began writing to tell you a little of how vile, wretched and miserable I am, but I feel that I have failed in this, and that it would be useless to attempt to describe the joy of my heart at times. I fear in my heart I have never known the joys of God's salvation. But I feel like mentioning to you something of my feelings the second Sunday in May, of the wonderful change in my mind and feelings, for truly it was wonderful that such a change should be wrought in me. I do humbly hope at times that the Lord wrought this wonderful change, but how can it be possible that one like me should ever feel and know the joy of his salvation, the power of his grace? For months I fully believed I was nothing but an Atheist, until I felt impelled from some motive to tell the church of my condition, and fully expected they would cut me off from their fellowship by excluding me from the church. I fully believed this was their plain duty, and in the condition I was in I really hoped they would do so. I was an unbeliever in the fullest sense. But on that Sunday morning, as I seemed to awake from a troubled sleep, it seemed that I became unconscious of my surroundings, I cannot describe it, it was unlike a dream; I seemed to be awake, yet unconscious of anything around me; there was presented to my vision something beyond my power to describe in words, far beyond my power to comprehend or understand. I remember one thought in my mind in regard to what I saw, its abundance, magnitude, great plenty; then as I looked upon it in wonder and amazement I asked, Why is this shown to me? It seemed there that there was a wonderful presence there, without form. I just felt that there was some most wonderful presence with me, although I could not see it. I remember it filled me with a feeling of awe and trembling. When the question had been asked, Why is this shown to me? from this presence which surrounded me came these words, so soft, so gentle, and yet with such a power in them that even my proud, rebellious heart was crushed to nothing, "To make known to you the riches of my grace." When from the fullness of my broken heart I said, "I know nothing of God's grace, for I am an Atheist." My next thought was that I was rejoicing in a good hope through the riches of God's sovereign grace. How ashamed and humbled I felt, I cannot tell. I have since had many thoughts about the wonderful riches of God's grace. I am no longer proud of my atheism; my idol is gone; yet at times I have been made to realize that I still have this unbelief in my nature; my rebellious, un-

believing heart is not changed; I feel to be as unfit for the society of God's people as I did before, yet it is a different feeling; I know I am unworthy the love and fellowship of God's people. If they can get along with me I do desire a place among them. My experience (if I have any) seems so different from theirs, I fear I am deceived. I have so little evidence on which to base a hope, I dare not say I have a hope. At times I am made to rejoice and to hope in the mercy of God. Occasionally I even dare to think I know what the words mean, "A good hope through grace." I do know if I have ever known what it is to have a hope, it is through the riches of God's grace, and not through any merits of mine; I do know that I am unworthy of any of God's blessings; I do believe that the blessings we receive here are not given to us as a reward for anything we can do; I do believe that all spiritual blessings were treasured up in Christ before the world was made, and that they are bestowed upon his people in God's own way and time.

But I must close. I have not troubled you for a long time with my scribbling. I am ashamed of this, and would not feel hurt if you should throw it in the fire without reading. I have not written as I thought I should. If you feel like writing a little to me, do so, if not, it will be all right.

Your brother in tribulation,

GEORGE GOODRICH.

NORTH WHITEFIELD, Maine, Jan. 11, 1903.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—I will now try to write a little to you again. I sent you a letter from sister Ruth Keene, and I do hope that you will think it worthy a place in the SIGNS. I have received another from her, and both have seemed like cold water to a thirsty soul. She has taken me back to the time when I first saw how Christ saved sinners, and I can well remember just how it all seemed to me; I sat in the parlor at home alone, with curtains drawn, reading the SIGNS; all of a sudden I saw Christ on the cross, with such a golden light all about him, and as the Savior of his people. I did not then see myself included among them, but I did rejoice, and my joy knew no bounds. How glad I was that he had a people, and that they were saved by and through him alone, even though I was left out. I rejoiced in that, and wept because I was not included in his salvation, but it was not many days I think, though it seemed months to me, before during one night I was awakened by passages of Scripture repeating themselves in my mind, as though it was some one speaking them to me, and at the same time in a moment I saw Christ as my Savior, and how happy I was for a little. Then a great warfare began, and I have had more or less of that ever since. So you see, sister Ruth's letters have been precious to me, both meat and drink. Your last one also has been good to me, and I wish that I could answer it as I desire. I was sorry when I got to the association last fall that you were not there, but we were very glad to have Elder Ker. I often wish, and even long to go out to your meetings and associations.

I have been reading more of late in the SIGNS, and have enjoyed them much. The views on feet-washing have interested me, and I have thought much upon that subject. Sister Badger and I have often spoken about these things, I have always supposed it to be but a type or emblem. I do wish that it might be my lot to visit among the brethren some

time. I have received a letter from sister A. D. Simmons, of Hillsboro, Texas, formerly of Ulster Co., N. Y. She saw my letter in the SIGNS, and wrote to me. She spoke of you and Elder Badger, and Elder Campbell.

My mind is more with the people of God of late, or rather they are more with me, and I do so long to be among them, and where I can hear the preaching, but the Lord knows what is best for every one of us. I still live in hope of better things, yet I have no reason to complain. I have worked hard, but health and strength has been given me to labor, and I wish that I might praise God more for all his mercies, but O, how far short I come of what I would like to be, God knows how weak I am; though the Spirit is willing, the flesh is weak; he remembers that I am dust.

You said in your last, "I trust that the dear Lord has been with you of late," and in reply I think I can say that he has, I feel lifted for a little above where I have been so long. I know I must have trials, if indeed I am a child of the living God, they must come in some form, it does not matter in what form, so that they come from him; he never sends any trial upon his children but for their best good, and his own glory. I know I am weak and apt to stray often from the path of duty, and he alone can keep me right, my trust is in him, and in him alone; the flesh profiteth nothing. Had I never been left to myself alone, and so failed, I should never have known many things that I now do. Although he withdrew himself from me for a little time, yet he never forsook me. Though I could not see him, yet his everlasting arms were underneath me. Whom once he loves, he never leaves, but loves them to the end.

I am glad that you and yours are well. With love and best wishes, I remain your sister in hope,

MARTHA E. GLIDDEN.

"IT IS FINISHED."

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

I feel my inability to write to the household of faith, and that perhaps I might stand in the way of better counsel, and of better writers, who write for our dear family paper, yet if I can be led by the light of the Holy Spirit, directing my thoughts in the way of truth and true holiness, I desire to pen a few thoughts upon the words found in John xix. 30, last clause, which reads as follows, "It is finished."

These words were spoken by our blessed Lord in his expiring moments. Doubtless this was the saddest and most remarkable day ever witnessed by men or angels, since the creation of the world. To behold heaven's high Lord, the darling of the skies, reared between the heavens and the earth, nailed to the rugged wood, groaning, bleeding, dying, pouring out his soul unto death, the sun clothed in sackcloth of darkness from the sixth to the ninth hour, the rocks being rent, the earth trembling, all witnessing with wonderful power that he was and is the Son of God, and the same that was in the beginning with God, fills the soul with amazement and wonder indeed.

We are told that all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. God, who

works all things after the counsel of his own will, created man in his image, and in his likeness, but man must be taught the truth that he is under obligation to his Creator, therefore God gives him a law, which he must obey, this law was given unto him before Eve was formed and given to Adam as his wife. Hence, she was one in him before he received the law, and it was as binding upon her as upon him her husband, in whom was the whole human race. Now the woman, being seduced by the evil one, partook of the forbidden fruit, and then gave to her husband, and he did eat, and thus brought death upon himself and all his posterity, becoming dead in trespasses and in sins, with no possibility whatever of recovering himself or his posterity from their fallen state. We are told, "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death," and so "death has passed upon all, for that all have sinned." "There is none good, no not one."

But in the seed of the woman is the promised Messiah, whom according to his foreknowledge, God would send as his only begotten Son into the world, at the appointed time, and when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. The old covenant was faulty, and all the sacrifices under the law could not make the comers thereunto perfect, but it was the shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of them, "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me." "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

Brethren, when our poor, finite minds take thought of the wisdom, and of the power, and of the wonderful sovereignty, and omnipotence of God, as manifested in the wonderful plan of redemption, by which to bring salvation to his dear ones, whom he gave to his Son in the covenant of grace, clothing the divinity with mortal flesh, so that he could hunger, thirst and suffer, just as we poor mortals do, we can only say with Paul, "O, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." Then after his baptism, and the temptation in the wilderness by the evil one, he entered upon his mission, for the prophet said, "The Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold thy salvation cometh; behold his reward is with him, and his work before him."

His mission into the world was to save his chosen people from their sins. He said, "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." "I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep." "I lay down my life for the sheep." "I have power to lay it down, and power to take it again." "I and my Father are one." Glory and honor to his blessed name, when we were without hope and without God in the world, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. He thus cleansed his bride from all sin, and clothed her with a robe of spotless white, so that we can now joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom

we have received the atonement.

I believe in a limited atonement, for the Bible according to my understanding teaches it. He never shed one drop of his precious blood in vain. I do love the doctrine of salvation by grace, and not of works; the doctrine that his own arm brought salvation unto his people, and that in his death and resurrection the church is saved, and is united in bonds of love to her spiritual Head. On the cross he cried, "It is finished," and the third morning he arose from the tomb victorious over death, hell and the grave, and ascended on high, and led captivity captive, and received gifts for men.

Dear brethren, while we are a scattered flock in this wide and wicked world, and are scoffed at by the popular religionist of the world, and the doctrine of salvation by grace is assailed, yet let us hold up our heads, for redemption draweth nigh. Then our stooped bodies which have borne the burden of the day, and our hoary heads which are frosted by many winters, will bloom in eternal youth, in yonder eternity. There we shall join the dear old veterans who are now around the throne of God, we shall be immersed in the unfathomable ocean of eternity. What a rest remains to the people of God. I receive much comfort from our dear family paper.

From your brother,

A. R. McPHERSON.

KELLY'S CORNERS, N. Y., July 8, 1903.

B. L. BEEBE—DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—As this is my sixty-eighth birthday of my natural life, and the forty-eighth year of my spiritual life, and the forty-second year of my ministry, and the thirty-first year of baptismal service in the church, it makes it to me a memorable month. Yet with it all, and a knowledge of my short and imperfect life, and the necessity of trials and burden-bearing, I am heartily glad to believe that the Almighty works all things after the counsel of his own will, and there is no power outside of him, and all things work together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to his purpose. Am I one of that number? (The Lord knows them that are his.) If so, grace was given me in Christ before the world began, and I was called with an holy calling, not according to my works, but God's own purpose and grace that was given me in his Son. Having this in mind by the Spirit, why need I or any one worry about the future, believing as God has purposed so shall it come to pass, and all the Father gave Jesus shall come to him, and not one of them shall be cast out, but all shall be raised up at the last day. Yet in operation and action, or cause and effect, there is or will be, as in the past, just the things that our God, who is a Spirit and Love, desired. And no real believer in Christ Jesus their Lord can in deed and truth believe that one more or less in all the world than God chose in his Son will be saved; nor can there be a failure in public or private, to the disappointing of our God, in preaching, praying prophesying or professing his holiness and love. In regard to this matter a large field is opened. And I know what the critic will say, but it matters not, God works, and who shall let it? Admonition, reproof, rebuke, exhortation, instruction in righteousness, warning the unruly, comforting the feeble-minded, and taking heed to ourselves and the doctrine, and continuing in them, are all needful. But who will arise and say one or any of all these shall fail or fall short of being what our God in heaven purposed in himself,

and also in Christ Jesus our Lord? Many times have I gone over this ground in forty-eight years, and having all the weaknesses in myself, and the tendency being in line with John Wesley, Martin Luther and James Armenius, yet I have proven that only as grace reigns through righteousness by Jesus Christ our Lord, will we do or act out a proof as Paul did and said, "It is by the grace of God that I am what I am." Surely godliness is a mystery, a very great mystery. Do I know anything about it? I have professed to, I am not ashamed of the gospel. Surely it is the power of God unto salvation to believers.

The best of my life is spent, be it longer or shorter. I feel measurably resigned to leave it, and all pertaining to it, in the hand of him with whom I have to do, and wait his divine will with me and mine. May God prepare and bless his people, and keep them in his fear and love, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

J. D. HUBBELL.

HILLSBORO, Texas, July 5, 1903.

TO THE CHURCHES OF THE SAN MARCOS ASSOCIATION; MY LOVE AND CHRISTIAN GREETING:—I have felt for a long time as if I must write to you; my heart goes out in love to you all, and if it were the Lord's will I would be glad to visit you. My dear husband is with you now, and I pray the Lord may give him grace to preach to your edification and comfort. When your letter came he did not feel as if he could possibly leave home, but the Lord opened a way for him, and I am sure he will care for me and the children while he is away. My heart will be with you and him in all your meetings, and in the spirit will hear you tell what a dear Savior you have found. When my husband is away I feel very lonely, but never entirely forsaken, for the Lord has promised never to leave or forsake me, and his promises are sure. I feel a great desire to see you all because you have been good to us, and I am sure the God of love has always been with you, and that you have the love of God shed abroad in your hearts. I thank God for such dear Baptists, and wish I had a home in your association. O, how my heart goes out in love to all those who show their faith by their works; whose trust is in the Lord; whose hearts are filled with the love of God; who hideth not their light under a bushel; who fear not to declare the whole counsel of God; who endeavoreth to walk in the strait and narrow way; whose treasures are laid up above; whose God is the Lord; those who would do good though evil is present; those who have shown that they have passed from death unto life, because they love the brethren. If I know my own poor, sinful heart, I do desire to walk in his statutes, to bow in humble submission to his will, though sometimes it is hard; the Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. Every day that I live I seem to be more unworthy, more sinful; I sometimes wonder why God made me a preacher's wife, I have so little patience; I rebel so often; I almost give up in despair at times, and then I think of the hymn, "Count your blessings, see what God has done," then I know I do not deserve one-tenth part of what I get, and then I cry, Make me humble, make me obedient, let me see thy hand in all that happens unto me. The Lord does surely care for me, or I would have been cast into hell long ago. Though I have passed through sore trials, they have been totally eclipsed by the sunlight of his presence.

I did not intend to write so much, but it seemed I could not tell you all how

my heart goes out in love to you. The Lord bless you all, and keep you under the shadow of his wing.

Your sister,

MARY BUNTYN.

HILLSBORO, Texas, July 17, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I send you the inclosed letter written by W. S. Bourland, son of Elder A. D. Bourland, of Keller, Texas, communicating to me the sad news of his father's sudden affliction.

ASA HOWARD.

KELLER, Texas, July 11, 1903.

ELDER ASA HOWARD—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—Your card just to hand. I am greatly pained to say to you that father has been stricken with paralysis. He was at the depot at Fort Forth, checking his baggage preparatory to starting on a trip to New Mexico, when he fell unconscious, and was carried to the Richelieu hotel, where we kept him three days, then moved him home. He is in a sort of semi-conscious state most of the time. Sometimes he will rouse up and talk for a short time, seemingly conscious; at other times he does not seem to notice anything.

Brother Howard, we do certainly feel the weight of our affliction, while we know that the Lord doeth all things right, and that his loving-kindness and tender mercies have been over us, and sustained us all the days of our lives, yet we know it was appointed unto man once to die, and O, that we could but have grace to feel in all things, "Not my will, but thine be done." But how hard it is to give up a father; one that has been a father in deed and in truth; one that has reared us, and cared and provided for us, and taught us in all soberness and honesty to shun every appearance of evil.

But for the belief that the dear Lord will take him home to his reward, it does not seem that I could bear up under it. We yet have a little hope that he may partially recover, enough to be up again, but we can only wait and see the will of the Lord.

You will please excuse this letter; my mind is so torn up I hardly know what I have written.

Yours in much tribulation,

W. S. BOURLAND.

[IT is with sadness that we learn of the affliction of our dear brother Bourland; he has indeed been a faithful soldier, ever standing firm in the truth, enduring persecution for the truth's sake, and if it may be the will of the Lord, may he be still spared to us to continue his valiant battling for the faith once delivered unto the saints. It is one thing to contend earnestly for the truth when surrounded with brethren in full accord and fellowship with us, and it is quite another thing to stand firm and unmovable amidst the persecution of false brethren, as brother Bourland has done. May God's presence be with him and the dear ones in this affliction, is our prayer for Jesus' sake.—ED.]

AMANDA, Ohio, July 14, 1903.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—Under the promise to send a line to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on my return home from the east, I would say, I arrived home safe and well, and found all at home well. My remembrance of my visit is pleasant, and I am reminded of Psalm cxxxiii, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Truly it is like precious ointment. And the opposite thought presents itself: how painful when that unity is impaired; when a dead fly gets

into the ointment. And woe be to him whom through pride of heart or haughtiness of spirit would be so reckless of words or actions as to contribute to that end. "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver," but a word out of place is fraught with mischief. It is the little things that often give rise to the greatest troubles. "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth." In the mouth of a tale-bearer the spark is blown into a flame. Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines; for our vines have tender grapes. Also Psalm cxxxvii, "Thou shalt dash their little ones against the stones." Being sued at the law and losing the coat, how hard to give the cloak also; being compelled to go the one mile, how hard to go the second mile; to give good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over. But we are so apt to give scant measure in our apologies, to be so slow to ask forgiveness. Our whole duty is to fear God and keep his commandments.

May we by grace be constrained to do so. As ever, in hope,

THOMAS COLE.

APRIL, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—As I am a reader of the SIGNS, though not a subscriber, I, too, like brother Leonard, feel like trying to aid you if it is but a little that I can do, for I should be very lonely indeed if I did not have my favorite paper to read; it is always a welcome visitor, and most highly prized by me; the doctrine it contains is not any too strong for me, but is the kind of food that I like. I often think that one number is well worth the subscription price; lovers of the truth, those that have been called with an holy calling, know what a precious hope it is to us little, feeble ones who sometimes hardly dare hope that we have been washed and cleansed in the blood of the Lamb, but this I do know, that I love to meet with those of like precious faith, love to hear them talk of the way they have been led, although it is very little that I can say. But the Lord knows what is best for all of us, and each one fills the place that he has designed for them, therefore let us be content, for

"Why should we murmur and complain,
With blessings in our hands?
There's nothing here can satisfy,
Nor gold, nor house, nor lands."

Everything of a worldly nature is fleeting and transitory. But I have a desire to seek those things that are above, where Christ dwells, but I have so many wicked thoughts I wonder that I am suffered to live, whilst so many are being called from earth away that are so much better than I.

But I must close, I just wanted to aid you in your good work.

A poor little sister, J. F.

QUINCY, Ill., July 15, 1903.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I send in this a post-office money order for two dollars, renewal for the SIGNS, as my subscription expired last month. I feel that I cannot dispense with our dear old paper. So as long as I can live I want to take and read it. During my boyhood days I read it, and during my youth and young manhood days I read it, and pondered. I was interested then in its contents, but I did not love it as I do now. I read it with delight, it satisfies, it feeds me, it instructs and edifies me. I prize it next to the "good book," God's word. I think I am not so wedded to it that I receive and indorse anything in it unless I find a "Thus saith the Lord" for it. I must test it by

that standard. It makes no claim to inerrancy. None of us are infallible. I feel that it "contends earnestly for the faith." I love to read it; I love to read the old numbers of the old volumes, and I love to read the editorials of the beloved and gifted founder of the SIGNS, and when I read the writings of the present editors, and the dear correspondents of the household of faith, and compare them with the writings of the early contributors to its columns, I find the later writers do not suffer at all by the comparison, and I rejoice in that, too, for they are in the old paths. We do not find any "falling away."

Yours in the best of bonds,

J. G. WILLIAMS.

A FEW THOUGHTS FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE LORD'S PEOPLE.

IT is said of the saints that they are one bread and one body, and how beautifully the loaf of bread in the communion, or the Lord's supper, represents that one perfect body, the church. It seems to me that a piece or part of a loaf only represents a part of that body, therefore viewing it in the light that I do, I would prefer a whole loaf. I see so much more beauty in it. I do no wish to dictate to churches what to do, but merely say how it seems to me. The grain is taken to the mill, crushed in flour, and finally molded or kneeded until it is thoroughly cemented together, then formed into loaves. Bread cannot be made of uncrushed wheat, and wheat once crushed cannot become whole wheat again. Should a whole kernel get into the loaf, when it is broken it will drop out, though it is wheat, it not being crushed, it cannot be cemented with the bread. I am opposed to urging people to unite with the church until they have been well crushed. In fact I am strongly opposed to urging people to unite with the church. I have never seen any good results where people have been urged or hugged into the church, and I am glad to say I have seen but little of that work done. The plain, naked gospel will do its own work, without creature help, and I do believe that every one that follows or walks in the commands of Jesus, must realize for themselves what is their duty or privilege, otherwise it is only form or show, without the Spirit of Christ leading. If I am baptized because a person or church tells me it is my duty to be, to whom do I render obedience? A word to the wise is sufficient. Allow me to say, There is a vast difference between urging and encouraging.

I sign myself, in Adam an infidel, in Christ a believer, and lover of spiritual things,

D. M. VAIL.

OMAHA, Texas, July 3, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—As I am behind with you and have at last got the money, I will send it to you. I have been almost a constant reader of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES since I was about ten years old, and I hope that I was given an understanding of some of the things it has always contended for, and I have ever loved to read the able and edifying communications, and from some cause I have always believed the doctrine set forth therein, and as I have but a few days here, I desire to continue to read your paper as long as I live, if I can pay for it. I know it has not changed, and if I have any understanding, it has always advocated Bible doctrine.

I will be seventy-one years old if I live four months longer, and have had a home

among the Old Predestinarian Baptists forty-six years, and have been trying to preach and trying to quit thirty-nine years last May. I have had many conflicts of this life, and I feel to know through all the hard trials of life, mercy and grace have sustained me, and I feel that I can truly say, as the apostle did, "By the grace of God I am what I am." I know I love the many dear brethren and sisters who write for the SIGNS, and would love to meet them in this life, if it was the Lord's will, and have often desired to visit the Baptists of your section, but have as often shrank back from the thought, as I am such a poor makeshift.

Please excuse me for taxing your time, and forgive me, dear brother, for my neglect, and pray for me that I may still be kept from every false way.

Inclosed you will find five dollars; two for one new subscriber, and give me credit for the remainder. Please send my paper now to Omaha, Texas, former post-office Naples, as I am now living in Omaha.

O, may the dear Lord sustain you in all your great trials in the future, as he has in the past.

Your least brother, in fellowship, I hope,

J. E. KNIGHTEN.

GREENWICH, N. Y., July 13, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I am rejoiced to hear you are better. I feel I could not do without the SIGNS, they are drink and food to poor, unworthy me, I love to read a letter from you, and look in the SIGNS first to see if you have one in, for, dear brother, I have exclaimed to myself as I have read your letters, The mantle of Elijah has fallen on Elisha. When your dear father was called away I said, Who can take his place? The Lord prepared brother William, and he has called him to come home, and behold, dear brother, you have come up by the help of the Lord, and are doing a good work. Long may you live to print the truth that fills our hearts with gladness. I often sit down and take up the SIGNS when I feel sad and lonely, and I read awhile, and I get up singing,

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word."

Write on, dear brother, precious are the letters in the SIGNS, to the hungry child.

From your little sister in hope of life eternal,

(MRS.) CORNELIA GREEN.

OWENSVILLE, Ind., May 4, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I am not willing to do without the SIGNS, they contain the doctrine that I most heartily believe, and we would like to have some of the eastern Baptists to visit us here in southern Indiana. We have heard brother Durand and brother Carnell, and we think they are precious brethren. J. W. CLEVELAND.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

PLEASE BE SURE,

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

Please be particular about this.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1903.

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LUKE XXIV. 47.

"AND that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

Repentance and remission of sins are among the perfect gifts of God, secured to the chosen vessels of mercy by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, as will appear if the verse preceding the text is carefully read. Jesus said to his disciples, after his resurrection, when they were troubled, and for very joy did not believe, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day." And because he had died, and because he had risen from the dead a victor over it, and over the grave and hell, therefore all good and perfect gifts were to be preached; and among them these two, repentance and remission of sins. The two essential things in salvation are here named, repentance, or a turning away from sin in the heart, mind, affections and desires, and a putting away of sin in the sight of justice and the law of God. And it is said that these two things are to be preached in his name, everywhere, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

We are taught in the text that this work of preaching was to begin at Jerusalem. God had so appointed, because the Jews were his peculiar treasure under the legal dispensation, and so to them must the gospel, typified in all their ceremonies and sacrifices, be first preached, as that which all these rituals pointed to. And again, it was needful that it should be made plainly manifest that all the forms and rituals of the law had not wrought one spiritual principle in them, and that by all these things they had no advantage over the Gentile, from whom all these Old Testament ordinances had been withheld. They rejected the testimony of the gospel. The self-righteousness of the Jew was as much the enemy of the gospel as was the besotted brutishness of the Gentile. This must be made apparent, and it was made apparent when the gospel began to be preached at Jerusalem.

We are taught also that this preaching was to be "In his name." The expression simply means by his authority, and because of that work which he had wrought in his death and resurrection. These two things, repentance and remission, are secured to the elect solely by what Jesus had done, and upon that ground they with every other good thing belonging to the gospel are to be preached. "In his name," is an expression which simply presents the ground upon which all gospel blessings are conferred. No gospel blessing can come to any man save through the finished work of the Lord. These things are then to be proclaimed as coming to us through him.

How is remission of sins to be preached? Let the answer to this question be what it may, one thing is sure, that just as remission of sins is to be preached, so is repentance to be preached also. How then are we to preach remission? Surely all

who rejoice in such remission will heartily assent to this, that preaching remission of sins means that by the atoning death of Jesus, and by his resurrection from the dead, remission of sins has been secured to us as a precious gift from God, the gift of his everlasting love. We are to preach that by this man is secured to us the remission or the putting away of sins. In this preaching is involved no exhortation to secure this remission for ourselves, but simply the plain statement that Jesus has died for our sins, and has risen again for our justification, and that we are freely justified by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and that through him we are justified from all things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses. These are tidings, not of duty to be performed by us, but of salvation completed and secured to us through our Lord Jesus Christ. This we believe all Old School Baptists at least will rejoice to believe and confess.

Now just as remission is to be preached as being secured to the penitent sinner through what Christ has done, so is repentance in like manner to be preached as the gift of God, secured to us in Christ, and given in his name. To this agrees the words of Peter in the Acts, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Now the one business of the preacher is to declare to the people just what Christ has done, and among other things that repentance is secured to those who feel their need of it. The servant of God must declare that repentance is the gift of God, and that no man can have repentance without he gives it, any more than he can have remission of sins unless God bestows it. What blessed things then are involved in the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Repentance is thus secured to the chosen of God, and so is full remission, or the complete putting away of sin. Does any soul feel the need of remission of sins? Here it is as the gift of God through Christ. Does any soul need repentance? Here it is the gift of God also, through Christ. Is it not clear that this is the burden of the teaching of the text?

But, one may say, is not repentance commanded of God among men? That is, does not God command men to turn away from sin of every sort and name? If then it may be said, God commands repentance or the turning away from all sin among men, how can it be said that Jesus is exalted to give repentance? And further, does not such a command imply that man has ability in himself to repent, and therefore does not need that it should be given him through Christ? To this the reply is very pertinent: Does not God command love to himself and to the neighbor also? Yet if ever the righteousness of this law be fulfilled in us, so that we do come to love God at all, it is because and only because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. So also it may be suggested that his fear is enjoined, and all other righteous things. And yet he must put his fear in the heart, if it ever is found there. So likewise the fact that God commands repentance from all sin, does not at all argue creature ability to repent, any more than the command to love God, implies the ability to fulfill that law. In all that pertains to the commandments of the holy law of God, man is presented as unable, and if left to himself, unwilling to do any of the things commanded of him. So likewise he cannot of himself repent

any more than he can love or fear God, or serve him with single purpose of heart. If ever any man does love, fear, repent or serve God in any way, it is because God gives these things to him, through Christ, the risen Savior, who has received all these gifts for men.

All these gospel blessings come to the needy; they are provided not for the whole, but for the sick; they are given not to the satisfied, but to the hungry soul; more than this, they are given to the soul who cannot attain to these things in himself, but must receive them, if he receives them at all, as a gift. If a man then loves God, it is because he has come to see loveliness in him, and then that love has been shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost. So also if a man fears, serves and reverences God, it is because God has bestowed these things upon him, who has come to see such loveliness in them as has compelled him to cry out for them. And likewise repentance, if felt in the heart and mind at all, has come to that man as a blessing which he must have, and which he cannot manufacture for himself, but which must be received as the word declares, as a gift from God. The seeking soul, burdened with guilt, and a sense of the desperate hardness and destitution of his heart, in secret, where God alone hears him, cries out, "O for the love of God in my heart; O that I might fear him and serve him: O that I could repent and believe on him." One said, "I would but can't repent." This just describes the condition of such a sin-burdened soul. How he longs to repent, but he is not able. To this needy and perishing soul comes now the blessed tidings of the gospel of grace, Soul, thou canst not indeed repent, thou art hard and stubborn and rebellious, and left to thyself thou wilt not, thou canst not turn to God, and away from sin; thy case is deplorable indeed, but O, troubled soul, thou mayest rejoice and be glad, I come to thee, says the gospel message, with the glad tiding that repentance and all other spiritual blessings which thou desirest, and must have or perish, have been secured to thee through him who died and rose again, and received these things as gifts free and full to men. Jesus is exalted to give thee repentance; it is thine in Christ, and my message is to declare to thee that not only repentance, but remission of sins, all thy sins also, have been secured to thee in him. These are the blessed tidings of the gospel, and this glad message it is the privilege of all the servants of God to proclaim for the comfort and hope of all the sorrowful, who desire repentance and remission of sins.

Man is a fallen being, and the work of grace is to show him his lost and HELPLESS condition. The commandments of God are holy, and all his law is good, but man cannot obey one of the least of all his commandments, because he is the enemy of God by wicked works. It is the work of God through the law to convince man of just what he is, and then to reveal just what Jesus is, and what a fullness of grace is in him. And so all spiritual blessings are in Christ, and not in the fallen sinner, and only he who has Christ can have any of these heavenly gifts. And among these gifts is not only remission of sins with love, fear, hope, humility and faith, but also repentance. To preach repentance then is to proclaim what Jesus is, and what Jesus bestows upon the poor sinner. Preaching does not convince men of the need of repentance, nor of the need of love to God, nor of the freeness and fullness of salvation in him, but it does come to that heart where God has already wrought his great

work, at least in the beginnings of it, and it does bring to that heart the consolations of the gospel, that gospel which declares that Christ is exalted to give the needy soul just what it needs. No wonder that such news is called the gospel, "glad tidings." What tidings could be more glad? The truth is that the distressed, weak, suffering sinner, hungry and poor, a beggar at the door of mercy, only finds that men are binding upon him still heavier burdens, that they are pouring fire into the wound rather than oil, that they are making his condition worse instead of better, just so long as they say to him, "You ought to repent and believe, you ought to love, fear and serve God; you ought to turn to God, and then he will turn to you, and will then save you." These things are just what they want to do, but they are just what they cannot do. If any man says, I can do these things, that man is not that poor sinner whom Jesus came to enrich; he is not that sick man whom Jesus came to heal. And all they who profess to be preachers of righteousness are not called of God, and do not know the gospel nor the plague of their own hearts, so long as they have nothing better to say to a poor sinner than the above. Miserable comforters are they indeed, to any one save a well fed, self-glorifying pharisee.

We do rejoice that it is ours to preach to such poor sinners a finished salvation, all the gift of God, including repentance, as well as all other things needful to salvation. All the preaching in the world, whether it be of the thunders of Sinai, or the sweet promises of life in Christ, will never touch an unrenewed heart. But our God causes the preaching of the gospel to be like rain upon the ground, the furrows of which have been made soft. How blessed to feel the need of repentance! How blessed that it is a gift of God through Christ!

Repentance means a change of mind, and as a result, a change of conduct in a man, but what produces that change in mind and conduct? The apostle in 2 Cor. vii. 10, tells us about that; he there says that sorrow produces it. Sorrow in the heart for a certain course pursued, or thing done, produces, according to the apostle, a turning of mind and of the manner of life into another course. Paul had written his brethren a letter of reproof, and the result had been that the Spirit of God had applied his words to their hearts, and it had wrought in them an entire change of conduct, and Paul says that they sorrowed after a godly sort, and this sorrow had wrought repentance unto salvation not to be repented of. But there was another sorrow, and it works another sort of result. There is a sorrow of the world, and it works not repentance, but death. The first thing is sorrow in the heart, and then from this sorrow, when it is godly, results a turning from sin and idols, to God. Two contrasts named in the history of the Bible occur to us as we write: one was the sorrow of King Saul, which wrought death, and the other the sorrow of David, which wrought repentance, and a turning from his sins. In the New Testament we are told of the sorrow of Judas, which led him to go out and hang himself; it wrought death in him. The other is the sorrow of Peter when he had denied his Lord, he went out and wept bitterly, and we do not need to call attention to the life which followed, with him. Our only wish in calling attention to this was to say that sorrow for sin cannot be begotten in any heart by any human will or effort; but godly sorrow, wrought in the

heart by the love of God, and the love of holiness, through the holy Spirit, works effectually, and produces a turning away from sin with loathing, and a turning away from self also, with abhorrence. To this man, filled with this sorrow for his sins, and feeling his inability to turn away from sin, comes the message of the gospel, Jesus has provided for thee, poor soul, just that repentance which you need, and it is yours in him.

Let us preach repentance then, just as we preach love, fear, faith, humility, or any of the precious things of the Lord; in such preaching there will be found solid comfort, comfort which legalists are strangers to, and which the world does not know. C.

EXTREMES.

In many of our exchanges we have observed of late much complaint about brethren going to extremes in the doctrine, and suggesting a more conservative course in preaching and writing, but it seems to us that there can be no going to too great an extreme in the truth. The unalloyed truth must of necessity be the extreme, to be the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and any compromising, or modification of it would not be the whole truth.

Doubtless a true principle of doctrine may be presented in language that so exaggerates or contorts it that it is made to appear in an erroneous light, but this is not carrying the truth to an extreme, but departing from the truth. If we are in the truth, there is no danger of carrying it to too great an extreme. Error can be modified, compromised and changed, and still be error, but truth, like its Author, knows no change, and anything short of the extreme truth is error.

Let us not for fear of being too extreme in our views make any compromise with error, for "What concord has Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth, with an infidel?"

There are certain views that have been set forth by the Signs of the Times, and advocated by it patrons, for nearly three-quarters of a century, that within the last few years have been attacked by those claiming our name, who have suddenly discovered that these old principles of doctrine are too extreme. But if they ever were truth, they are still the truth, and nothing short of this extreme can be the truth. But if it is not the truth, then all the old fathers that for so many years faithfully contended for these principles, who have now fallen on sleep, died in error.

It is a feature peculiar to those who introduce new doctrines among the saints, and attack the old fundamental principles, after they have started the strife, and caused confusion and distress among the saints, to set up the cry of "Peace, peace; let us compromise." But, dear brethren, if you were in the truth before the attack was made upon you, what would a compromise be but a compromise of the truth, and a victory for those who made the attack upon it?

This is the case with those who at the present time have caused so much confusion among the saints. The very ones that have created the trouble, are the ones who now are so zealous for peace on a compromise basis. If any doubt the correctness of this assertion, we refer them to the first fifty years of the publication of the Signs, when practically the whole brotherhood was a unit, before the "isms" that are now rending the Baptists were ever heard of. The religious world is ever ready to compromise for the sake of popularity, but the truth

of God knows no compromise, but ever remains the extreme of perfection and holiness, and the peace of Zion will never be attained by a compromise of that truth.

May God reveal his truth to us, and enable us to contend earnestly for it, uninfluenced by the frowns or favor of men. B.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

JOHN X. 9.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Will you do me the favor to give your views on John x. 9, particularly on the latter clause of the verse?

ALEX HARRIS.

MALAM, Texas, May 13, 1860.

REPLY.

The text on which we are requested to write, reads thus: "I am the door; by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." In the beginning of this chapter we have a parable which the Lord spake to the Pharisees, but they understood not what things they were which he spake to them. And what we have now under consideration appears to have been spoken in confirmation, and perhaps in explanation of the parable. In the preceding parable, we think our Lord was speaking of the Jewish *fold*, where his people were held under the legal covenant, and shut up, or held under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father. Christ, as the good Shepherd, came to redeem them that were under the law, and to gather them with his arm, and to carry them in his bosom, according to Isaiah xl. 10. In their redemption it was needful that the Redeemer should come into the fold where they were, that is, that he should come under the law where they were shut up. The right of redemption was legally and exclusively in him. He had a right of property in the sheep; a prior, or previous claim. They were his property before they went astray; and it was his right therefore, and his alone, to redeem them. None who had ever come before him, to attempt the redemption of the sheep had any such right, and therefore their claims were never honored by the justice of God, which stood as sentinel, or porter, at the door. "All," said Jesus, "that ever came before me, are thieves and robbers." If a flock of sheep belonging to A., should stray from his premises on to the premises of B., and there commit such trespass as to warrant B. to hold them, for the damages done by them, and C. should come and offer to pay the charges of B. and take the sheep away, would not C. prove himself a dishonest man? Would not B. demand of C. to prove property as well as pay charges, before he would allow him to take the sheep away? None who have ever volunteered in the business of saving sinners, either before or since the coming of Christ, had any right of property in the sheep, and therefore they are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not hear them, nor did the porter open to them; but all their efforts were illegal; they had not entered by the door, but had climbed up some other way; therefore, instead of delivering the sheep from the curse and dominion of the law, they had made it their business only to kill, and to destroy.

But when Jesus, the good Shepherd, whose own the sheep were, came, his title to them, and his right to redeem them, was fully recognized by the *porter*, or by that eternal justice which kept the door. Christ did not come to liberate the sheep illegally, though they were his own, by throwing down the fence, or by

climbing up some other way; for he came not to destroy the law nor the prophets, but to fulfill: Heaven and earth shall pass away, he said, but not one jot or tittle shall pass from the law until all is fulfilled. Thus he entered into the fold lawfully, paid the utmost farthing of the demands of law and justice; opened the prison door to them that were bound; proclaimed liberty to captives; showed in what way the lawful captive could be delivered; called his own sheep by name, for he came to redeem none but his own, and that not to make them his, but because they were his. Well did he know their names: for he had a registry of them in his eternal book of life, and led them out.

And when he putteth forth *his own* sheep, he did not say to them, Now, as I have redeemed you from under the law, and ye are no more under it, you can go anywhere you please; follow your own inclinations, and walk in the light of your own eyes; but when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them; and he does not go and leave them, but they follow him, for he has the power of attraction for them in his voice, for they know his voice, but a stranger will they not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers. Truly, Blessed are they who know the joyful sound, they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.

Where does he lead them? To the gospel fold. They trace his footsteps and follow the Lamb, whithersoever he goeth. He leads them in green pastures, by the still waters; for he is the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, and he shall feed them and lead them to fountains of living water. That is, having redeemed his people from the law, and delivered them from the old covenant, brought them experimentally out of the house of bondage, and out of the prison-house, he leads them to the gospel fold; to his church as set up under the new dispensation, where the pasture is rich and abundant, and where the waters of life flow clear as crystal from the throne of God and the Lamb, and where they shall feed and lie down, and where they shall have food and rest.

The Gospel Church, as organized on New Testament principles, under the reigning government of Christ, is what we understand to be the fold, of which Jesus himself is the only door for the sheep. Neither Abraham, nor Moses, nor circumcision, nor infant or adult sprinkling, nor will, nor works of men or angels, can afford an entrance to this fold of gospel fellowship and gospel privileges. Jesus says, most emphatically, "I am the door." Not a door, as though there were others; for there is but the one entrance into the church of the living God. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God, and except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the gospel fold. He is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No man cometh to the Father but by him. There is salvation in none other. No other name under heaven is given whereby we must be saved. And as he is the only door of salvation, or into the church, he says, "By me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." How positive are his words. There is nothing in them made to rest upon contingencies, nothing uncertain.

He shall be saved. How cheering, truly, to the saints. They can rest upon the positive declaration of him who is himself the Truth. But, says the trembling saint, Have I truly entered by him as the door? Some indeed get into the

church, or into religious profession, and are regarded as fellow citizens with the saints, and are treated as such, who have not entered by the door, but have climbed up some other way, but it is not said of such, They shall be saved, but it is said, They are thieves and robbers, who have come only to steal, to kill and to destroy. And we are also assured that every plant that the heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up.

All who enter this fold without grace, shall be cast out without favor. How awfully important, then, that we know how we have entered. If it has not been by Christ, the door, it matters not how else we have managed to impose upon the saints. If by fasting and praying, by using means, or complying with terms; if by giving all our goods to feed the poor, or to fatten the missionaries; if by works of righteousness which we have done, or by the faith or works of pious parents, the prayers of revivalists, the pardon of popes, the confirmation of mitred bishops, or by anything but Christ, as the door, our characters are indelibly written, not sheep of Christ, but thieves and robbers. But to the fearful, trembling saint, let us inquire, Have you come into the church of God as a thief and a robber? Was your design to steal, to kill, and to destroy? Did you come in by any other way than Christ, the door? Or, in other words, were you not cut completely off from every other hope but Christ alone? Were you not slain to every other hope for acceptance with God, and made to see, and feel, and to acknowledge that all your dependence was in Jesus Christ, and him crucified and risen from the dead? If so, then are ye the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. All such shall be saved; the mouth of God our Savior hath spoken it.

> "Rest, doubting saint, assured of this,
> For God hath pledged his holiness."

"And shall go in and out, and find pasture." On this last clause our brother desires us more particularly to dwell. He shall go in and out of what? The Door. This is the use of a door. Doors to our houses are thus used; at them we go in and out. So when we contemplate the figure of a sheep-fold and pasturage ground. The careful shepherd provides for his flock to go into the fold for safety and comfort by night, and in the wintry and stormy seasons, where there are provisions for the comfort and security of the sheep.

But it would not promote the health, comfort or well being of the flock to be always housed up in the fold; but there are times when the skies are clear, the weather pleasant, the fields green, and the pasturage inviting, when the sheep desire to go out into the green pastures, where they may feed and lie down. It is natural for the sheep to require this. True, they can live on dry fodder, if kept in the fold continually, but they desire the change; they love to roam through the fields, drink of the still waters, lie down in the lovely and peaceful shade, when they know the good Shepherd's watchful eye is upon them, and that he is both able and determined to protect them from all harm. But every well disciplined sheep knows that if he is suffered to *go out* into the green pasture, he must go there through Jesus, as the door. What sheep or lamb has ever enjoyed this privilege only through Jesus?

But it is not for the good of the flock to remain at all times and seasons in the fields which spread along the banks of the river of still waters. Here is where

he causeth his sheep to rest at noon. But the chilling night comes on, the howling tempest rends the skies, the rain, and hail, and snow comes down, and they now require shelter; but where can they find it but in the fold, where they must pass under the rod to attain it? Still they are as dependent on Christ, as the door, for ingress, as they were for egress; as it is only through him they receive all their spiritual enjoyments, comforts and safety, both in the pasture and in the fold.

Brother Harris being a farmer, and in a sheep growing State, is doubtless familiar with the various figures used. A sheep-fold is a building used as a shelter and protection for sheep, but it is not to imprison them, only while their comfort and safety requires they shall be kept there, and when they go into it, it is not to make them sheep, but because they are sheep. And when they go out by the door, it is into the pasture which is provided for them. So the sheep of Jesus, who have entered by him, and all those other sheep which he has, which were not of the old Jewish fold, but which he has redeemed from the Gentiles; them also he must bring, and they shall hear his voice, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd. And as the one flock of the good Shepherd, they shall by him go in and out, and find pasture.

This figure may also teach us that there are *set times* to favor Zion, when the saints are favored, through Christ, with peculiar enlargement of joy, peace and love, and when they can go forth and feed their kids, beside the fold, or shepherd's tents, and other times when their joys are restricted and they are directed to enter into the rock, or turn to their stronghold, until it shall be again announced to them, the winter is past, the rains are over and gone; the flowers appear in the earth, the time of the singing of birds has come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., September 1, 1860.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO BROTHER D. M. LEONARD'S APPEAL TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$788 70
Cash, Georgia	1,00
Total to date	$789 70

OBITUARY NOTICES.

BY request of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Brooks, I will try to write a notice of the death of their mother, **Mrs. Sarah C. Brooks.** It was my pleasure as well as my privilege to know sister Brooks since May, 1897, and I can truly say that as long as she was blessed with health, she was one of the faithful in her attendance at the meetings of her church; strong in the faith of God's elect, cheerful and loving, often speaking words of comfort and encouragement to others. She was ever true to her profession, doing willingly what her hands found to do; not because she expected salvation for the doing, for she knew and often spoke of the weakness and unworthiness of human nature, and she had no confidence in the flesh, but her hope and faith was in Jesus, and his work of obedience to the Father, for poor, helpless sinners, such as she felt herself to be. The writer has often heard her say, "I am nothing, the Lord is all." Early in the year 1902 her health failed, and she became very nervous under this sore affliction. The once light and cheerful heart became sad, and this sadness was seen in her countenance, and the tongue that had so long been given sweet liberty to speak of the mercies of God to her, was now generally silent. But when I would visit her I always found her trusting in that same Jesus who gave her hope in him many years ago. She was not able to attend the meetings now, and how we all missed Aunt Sallie, as she was familiarly known, for she had been there so long she was greatly missed when she could come no more. She lingered on and grew weaker as the days went by, in the home of her son, Alex D. Brooks, where she had every comfort that loving hands could administer, but the Lord's time had come to take her to himself, and nothing could stay the (to her) happy change. On Saturday, May 2d, I called to see her, but she was in a stupor, and we could not rouse her, but she did rouse up later, and talked beautifully of her departure from this vale of tears, as I was told by her son.

Late in the afternoon Sunday, May 3d, her spirit quietly and peacefully took its leave of the mortal frame, and now rests with God who gave it.

At the request of the family the writer attended her funeral on Tuesday, May 5th, at the place so dear to her in her life, Black Rock, speaking from the closing verses of the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians: "O death, where is thy sting?" &c. The high esteem in which sister Brooks was held by the church and people generally, was manifested by the very large congregation that assembled to see the remains, and to assist if need be in laying them to rest. And there beside her long lamented husband we laid her to await the resurrection morn, when that which is sown in weakness shall be raised in power, for the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwelt in her, and therefore he shall quicken her mortal body by that same Spirit. So then, bereaved ones, grieve no more for mother, she is and shall be ever with the Lord, and may he give you and each of you the grace he gave your dear mother, and thus prepare you to meet her in the blessed abode that knows no parting. The church and pastor feel their loss in her death. God grant us sweet reconciliation in his dear name.

By her unworthy but loving pastor,

J. T. ROWE.

[According to the request of brother Rowe and of the family we will add a few words to the above. From an acquaintance of thirty-six years we can bear full testimony to all that our brother has written concerning sister Brooks. It was our privilege to baptize this dear sister in the fellowship of the church at Black Rock, Md., in September, 1871, so for more than thirty-one years she was a faithful, loving member of that church. She was in all this time a lover of the truth and of peace, and no word that could make strife ever willingly fell from her lips. All knew and loved her, because of the desire that was always with her to do kindness to all that had need. She was faithful in her attendance in the assemblies of the church, and she was faithful and generous to contribute her full share to the support of her pastor, and to any other church expense. Grace reigned in her, and manifested itself in her mortal flesh. For ourself we must say that we have never had a better friend, nor one more steadfast than she has been. She leaves three sons and two daughters to mourn a good mother's departure. Her memory is blessed.—C.]

Mrs. Betsy P. Parsons departed this life July 10th, 1903, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Sarah Parkers, near Pittsville, Md. The subject of this notice was born Jan. 22d, 1822, married to Peter R. Parsons, Dec. 22d, 1841, was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Indiantown, Md., Dec. 22d, 1844, by Elder A. Gray. She had been a widow ten years and one month. Sister Parsons was a Baptist of the simon pure kind. She was faithful and devoted to the cause that distinguishes that people from all others. I met her when I made my first visit to the above named place, thirty-five years ago, and have been in close touch with her every since, visiting her house, and having a great deal of religious talk with her and her dear companion, and always found her clear on the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone. As is the saying, "She was as true as steel" in the attendance of her meetings, until she became afflicted. She was an invalid for quite a while, and during that time she would get anxious to go there, and sister Sarah would ask me if I thought it safe to take her, and I would tell her I did not think so. I think that her mind retained more of the blessed things taught by the Spirit, than of this world. We can say in truth, another of the faithful and excellent ones has fallen. We should thank God for giving us such a companion, such a mother, such a neighbor and such a true, faithful christian. We fully believe that she now rests from all of her troubles, both in mind and body, in that sweet sleep in Jesus, no more to be disturbed until the trump of God shall sound, and her triumphant spirit comes to put on all afresh.

Brother A. B. Francis preached on the occasion, I am sure much to the satisfaction of the bereaved and listening ones. We do not sorrow as those without hope. Many will remember the home of this dear one and her companion. Text used, Psalm xvii. 15. We express our sympathy for all who feel the touch of this dispensation of God.

T. M. POULSON.

Massey, Va.

Departed this life suddenly, of heart failure, at his home in Baltimore Co., Md., July 15th, 1903, **Mr. Samuel Howard Cole,** aged 73 years, 1 month and 28 days. He was the youngest of eight children of Lewis and Sallie Cole, who in their day were prominent and substantial members of the Old School Baptist Church at Black Rock, Md., and, if I mistake not, were in the constitution of that church, about 1828. Mr. Cole was born in the vicinity of Black Rock, May 17th, 1830, and spent all his life in that county, and mostly in the immediate neighborhood of his birthplace. He never made a public profession, but was always a devoted friend of the Black Rock Church, and its pastors, always cheerfully rendering any assistance in his power, delighting to serve them. Some time before his death he related to the writer the reason of his hope, and expressed a desire to be baptized, and had fully intended to offer himself to the church at Black Rock, the first Saturday in this month, and, if received, to be baptized in the stream that runs through his farm, on Sunday, but when the time arrived was too feeble.

The funeral took place at Black Rock, on the 17th. Services by Elder Rowe, the pastor, and Mr. Geo. C. Bacon, a Methodist minister, (nephew of Mr. Cole) whom he requested to take part.

He leaves a sorely bereaved and disconsolate widow, four sons and one daughter, (the wife of the writer) eight grandchildren, one sister, one brother, and a large circle of other relatives, by whom he was greatly beloved, May our heavenly Father send to them the blessed Comforter with the consolations of the gospel for their support and comfort in their great bereavement. A. B. FRANCIS.

DIED—Dec. 15th, 1902, at his home, 25 Knapp Ave. Middletown, N. Y., **Oliver Corwin,** aged 60 years, 3 months and 25 days. He was the son of Joshua and Debroah Corwin. In 1872 he was married to Harriet M. Jordan, who with three daughters, May, Anna and Josephine, survive him. Also he leaves his mother, sister Corwin, one brother and three sisters. Mr. Corwin never made a public profession of religion, but was a faithful husband and father, honest and upright, quiet and unassuming, highly respected by all who knew him. We have hope for him.

The writer conducted the funeral services in the Old School Baptist meeting-house at New Vernon, N. Y. May the blessing of grace be with the family.

ALSO,

Alfred M. Horton, at his home in Middletown, N. Y., April 22, 1903, aged 76 years. Brother Horton at the age of eighteen, while engaged in blasting rock, was seriously injured by a premature explosion, which totally destroyed his sight. He was able, however, to go about without the aid of a guide for many years. He was engaged in the feed business. On April 9th he was run down by a horse and wagon, and received internal injuries which caused his death. His wife, Adeline Wheat, died six years ago. He leaves one son, Charles S. Horton, of Middletown, N. Y., one brother, James M. Horton, of New York city, six grandchildren and many friends, besides the church, to mourn their loss. He was a good man, and we all loved him for the truth's sake, and miss him greatly.

The writer tried to speak at his funeral, which was held at his late home, and largely attended.

ALSO,

Anna N. Dolson departed this life June 30th, 1903, at her home, Wisner, N. Y. She was born April 22d, 1871, hence her age was 32 years, 8 months and 5 days. She was married to George W. Dolson in 1897, who with one child, five years old, is left to mourn the loss of a kind, faithful and loving wife and mother. Sister Dolson was baptized in the fellowship of the Warwick Old School Baptist Church, by the late Elder Wm. L. Beebe, in 1899. She was blessed with a meek and humble spirit, was devoted to the cause of Christ. She believed in God's power to save and rule all things. She was patient in affliction, giving glory to God, and died in triumphant faith. Brother Dolson has the sympathy of all who know him. May he be sustained by the grace of God.

The writer tried to speak at the funeral held in the Warwick meeting-house, July 3d. A large congregation manifested their love and respect for her. We shall all miss her.

H. C. KER.

William Waldron Vandenberg was born in the town of Greenbush, N. Y., Sept. 17th, 1824, and died March 5th, 1903, being 78 years, 5 months and 16 days old. He was the only son of Martin W. Vandenberg and Catherine De Forest. He was married to Ruth Ann Slauter, April 15th, 1848. Two daughters were born unto them, Elizabeth Ann Traver and Mary Amanda Greene, who with their mother are left to mourn their loss. While he was not a member of the visible church, he always seemed to take a great interest in the meetings, and with his family made a home for all who came to his house, where meetings were held once a month. He made all welcome who came, and was glad to have meetings at his home. He will be very much missed in the neighborhood where he has lived so many years, by the church for which he did so much, and by his family, to whom he has been a faithful and loving husband and a kind and generous father.

His funeral was held at his home, and was largely attended by his relatives and friends.

May the Lord grant grace to comfort and sustain them in their affliction.

C. BOGARDUS.

BROOKTON, N. Y.

DIED—May 24th, 1903, brother **David McKane,** near Shohola, Pa., of paralysis. His leaves his widow, sister McKane, and three sons. He was baptized by Elder Gilbert Beebe, in 1872, and married by the same to Miss Jane Travis, in 1857; was a member of the Old School Baptist Church in Middletown, N. Y. His hope was in Jesus, and now he is with Jesus. God bless the lonely widow and children, and all that mourn their loss. The grace of God is sufficient for every felt need.

Memorial services July 15th.

D. M. VAIL.

POETRY.

PETITION.

LORD, I am poor, O give me grace,
'Twill make me rich, cure all my ills;
More precious far than Ophir's gold,
Or cattle of a thousand hills.

Lord, I am weak, O make me strong,
O give me strength to follow thee,
That I may rise as on eagles' wings,
And run and never weary be.

Lord, I am blind, O make me see
The riches of thy glorious grace;
To see and feel my need of thee,
And view the smilings of thy face.

Lord, I am sick, O make me whole,
For thou the great Physician art;
Apply the oil of grace divine,
And heal my wounded, sinful heart.

Lord, I am vile, O cleanse thou me,
O wash me free from every sin;
O, robe me in thy righteousness,
And make me clean and pure within.

Lord, I am nothing, thou art all,
O hear and grant my earnest prayer;
Cast every idol from my heart,
And set thy blessed image there.

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

JULY, 1903.

APPOINTMENTS.

IF the Lord will, I attend appointments as follows: Justus, Pa., yearly meeting, August 12th and 13th; Brookdale, Pa., Friday, August 14th, 2 p. m., as brethren may appoint; Otego, N. Y., Sunday, August 16th, Schoharie; Monday, 17th, as brethren May appoint; Albany, 423 Sheridan Ave., 8 o'clock, August 18th, Tuesday night; Utica, 160 Semour Ave., Wednesday night, August 19th.

SILAS H. DURAND.

MEETINGS.

HAZEL Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, will meet in her forty-ninth annual session with Spring Creek Church, near Stahl, Adair Co., Mo., on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1903, and continue the two following days.

S. B. JONES, Moderator.

J. M. CATE, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Harford Church is appointed to be held with said church, commencing on Saturday before the fifth Sunday in August, at 10 o'clock a. m., to continue two days. A cordial invitation is extended.

Those coming by way of Baltimore, will take train at North avenue station at 3:30 p. m. for Long Green or Forest Hill. Those coming from the north will take train that leaves York at 1:30 p. m. for Forest Hill, on Friday before.

NATHAN GRAFTON.

THERE is to be a yearly meeting held with the Old School Baptist Church of Cammal, Pa., fifth Saturday and Sunday in August, (29th and 30th) 1903, the Lord willing. Hope to see a goodly company of sinners, and preachers to minister to our comfort. Those coming from Williamsport will take Pennsylvania division of New York Central & Hudson River R. R. to Cammal. Those coming via Corning, will come on same road to Cammal, inquire for Sammy Moffat, living a few rods from depot. All who come will be made welcome.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet (the Lord willing) with Union Church, five miles south of Colchester, McDonough Co., Ill., Sept. 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1903.

Those coming by rail will be met at Colchester, on Thursday before, and on Friday morning, from the south. Only those from east, west and north of Galesburg, will come to Galesburg by 5 p. m. Thursday, where we will endeavor to get reduced rates from there on. All are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine, will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, Maine, commencing on Friday, Sept. 4th, 1903, and continuing three days. We shall gladly welcome all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Those coming will be met at North Berwick, on Thursday before the time appointed for our yearly conference.

FRED. W. KEENE.

THE Greenville Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association will be held in Lima, Allen Co., Ohio, commencing on Friday before the first Sunday in September, (4th) 1903. We would be glad if the Lord would direct some of his servants to us. If there should not be any one to meet train, take the street car at the depot and ask the conductor for transfer on West Market St., get off car at Jamerson Ave., and go one square south, to 1014 West Spring St., to place of meeting.

C. GILBERT MILLER, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Second Church of Roxbury, at Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, the 9th and 10th of September, 1903, beginning at 10 o'clock a. m., when we expect to meet and greet our brethren and sisters, and friends to truth and righteousness. The place of meeting is two miles from Roxbury village, and six miles from Kelly's Corners, at which places those that come can stop and be taken to the meeting. Trains will be met on the Ulster & Delaware R. R. on Tuesday evening before the meeting, at both places.

We hope to see a number of ministering brethren with us.

J. D. HUBBELL.

THE Licking Association will convene with the church at Bethel, Shelby Co., Ky., on Sept. 11th, and continue the two following days.

Those coming by rail can come via Louisville

Southern from Lexington to Hemp Ridge, Busey or Shelbyville, where they will be met Thursday p. m. and Friday a. m. Over the C. & O., come to Shelbyville from Louisville. Trains on all roads will be met Thursday p. m. and Friday a. m., except the Mixed train on L. & N. (which is uncertain as to time of arrival.) Should any fail to be met, inquire for Middleton's hack, and come to our place in Shelbyville, Ky.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth to meet with us. We pray and hope to be favored with a pleasant season. The Lord in his mercy grant us his favor according to his will.

P. W. SAWIN.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

"THE SCARLET LINE."

"SHE bound the scarlet line in the window."—Joshua ii. 21.

(Concluded from page 487.)

Rahab received and sent away the spies in peace. They are her friends, her sworn friends, for they have sworn unto her by the Lord, calling upon him to witness and to establish the covenant between them. When in dire needs, when in the deeps, when as outcasts, as the vilest, the chief of sinners, distracted with hellish temptations, what shall satisfy us, lift us up, inspire us once more to hope for salvation? If for help we must look to our creature resources, then we must despair, for we have learned and are still learning in our soul's humiliations that we are without strength. Must then the chief of sinners perish? Our hope is in the new covenant, in Jesus' precious blood. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant." O, a sight of this by faith will be as streams in the desert; here we shall find our strong consolations. Hearken to one of the ambassadors of God, "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."—Heb. vi. 17–20. O, ye tried ones, here we have the sworn, the sure mercies of the Lord. This is admitting us into the secret of his presence, this is opening to us the bosom thoughts of the everlasting God. Here the Lord is revealed contemplating all the woes and weaknesses of his people, and he is overflowing in his love and pity toward them. O, ponder each word: "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it with an oath."

The two spies are a lively representation of the ministers of Christ. "Behold, when we come into the land thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window." This, O Rahab, shall be the

true token unto thee that thou shalt not perish, and that we will deal kindly and truly with thee. Rahab has faith in the God of Israel, she has faith in these two spies, and she has faith in the token they have given her, and obedient to her faith "she bound the scarlet line in the window." No doubt she often looked upon this scarlet line with tears of gratitude to the Lord. This true token quieted her fears, and was her support until the day of her salvation, and thus within her heart she might speak, Who am I that I should be singled out to be remembered with the favor that the Lord bears unto his people, that I should be saved, that I shall rejoice with the gladness of thy nation, and glory with thine inheritance? O Jericho! fair and beautiful in thy situation, thou city of palm trees. No longer I love thee, city of my nativity, city of my harlotry. Thou art an offense unto me; O let mine eyes be turned from thee, let mine eyes feast upon this scarlet line, true token of the covenant of life and friendship with the Lord, and with his chosen. My heart is toward thee, O Israel, beloved of the Lord. O, mine eyes and my yearning heart are unto thee, O Lord God of Israel.

"Witness, all ye host of heaven,
My Redeemer's tenderness;
Love I much?—I've much forgiven,
I'm a miracle of grace."

The line of scarlet thread was the true token of the covenant between Rahab and the Israelites. Let us now consider its signification unto us in the gospel. The scarlet line is a figure of the blood of Christ, the Lamb of God. This scarlet line of Jesus' blood runs all through the book of revelation, from Genesis to Revelation, and has been, and will be to the end of time ever gloriously manifested in the faith of God's elect. By faith in the revelation of God, Abel offered unto God of the firstlings of his flock. (Gen. iv. 4.) The Lord thus early gave the scarlet line of blood unto his people, who through the grace given unto them, worship him in Spirit and in truth. Noah displayed the scarlet line when on coming out of the ark he builded an altar unto the Lord, and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offering on the altar. (Gen. viii. 20, 21.) This was all acceptable unto God, and was fragrant as sweet flowers. The sacrifice of Christ is of a sweet smelling savor unto God, and to sinners called by grace. (Ephesians v. 2.) Job presented continually before the Lord the scarlet line, in behalf of himself and his family. (Job i. 5.) Abraham often shed the red blood in his sacrifices to the Lord, (Gen. xii. 8,) and he gave utterance to a glorious prophesy concerning the true scarlet line, saying, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering."—Gen. xxii. 8. Isaac and Jacob displayed in their worship the scarlet line of blood. (Gen. xxvi. 25; xxxi. 54.) Then Israel and his household went down into Egypt and sojourned there, but during the long night of the bondage of the twelve tribes the scarlet line was only dimly seen, the Israelites were generally sunken in idolatry, and when they would have worshiped the Lord with the scarlet line, it was not meet to do so in Egypt, for the Egyptians would slay them. (Exodus viii. 26.) But on the last night of their bondage in the land, a night to be much remembered, behold on all the houses of Israel the token of the scarlet line of the Passover blood! "The blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will passover you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt."—Exodus xii. 13.

Thenceforth in that favored nation how magnificently the scarlet line is exhibited. Every day, in the morning and in the evening, a lamb was slain. (Exodus xxix. 38, 39.) In the yearly commemoration of the Passover, on the great day of atonement, (Lev. xvi.) in all the multitude of personal offerings, in all this typical worship of the Almighty so signally prominent is the scarlet line of the blood of beasts. Now we come to God by the blood drawn from Emmanuel's veins, by this precious blood we are made nigh to God. (Ephesians ii. 13.) We are come to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

But that scarlet line bound in the window of Rahab, the harlot, was unintelligible to the inhabitants of Jericho, it had no voice to them. All the tribes of Israel that encompassed the city could read its meaning, and thus they interpreted that line of scarlet thread, "There upon the wall is the house of the blessed, while all the rest of Jericho are accursed. This is the household to whom we are related in covenant bonds, and in the day of Jericho's doom this house shall stand. Thou, O Rahab, and all thine, shall be saved, and we will deal kindly and truly with thee. So to multitudes to-day the scarlet line of Christ's blood has no signification, they turn aside from it as from a thing of naught, but to believers Jesus' blood is exceeding precious. Have our hearts heard the voice of Jesus' blood? His blood speaks so blessedly to the children of God; it declares their at-one-ment with God. This then is the signification of the scarlet line of blood that runs all through the Scriptures. "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." —Lev. xvii. 11. In our earthly standing we are far off from God, depraved and vile, outcasts, for we are alienated and enemies in our minds by wicked works. (Col. i. 21.) Is this an overdrawn picture? Ah no, as you are taught of God your eyes will be opened to see, and your heart will most painfully feel that the description is so dreadfully true, and then with what heartfelt appreciation you will cleave to blood of atonement. Christ Jesus in his great love hath reconciled us to God in the body of his flesh through death, to present us holy, unblamable and unreprovable in his sight. (Col. i. 22.) Could anything be better? No wonder that we cleave to the scarlet line and bind it fast in the window. Our gracious God laid all our iniquities upon his dear Son, and he gave himself a sacrifice for our sin, and poured out his soul unto death; thus he put away all our sins, shedding for us his reconciling blood. (2 Chron. xxix. 24; Heb. ii. 17.) O, it is so comforting to look upon the scarlet line, and its voice is most sweet to a poor sinner's heart. Do you believe in the scarlet line of Jesus' blood? It speaks to the believer of his redemption, and that all his sins are forgiven. (Ephesians i. 7.) The blood of God's dear Son cleanses from all sin, and in this fountain opened for sin and uncleanness we are washed and made whiter than snow. (Psalms li. 7.) We are justified by his blood, and we shall be saved from wrath through him. The scarlet line gives us the victory over all the powers of darkness, it stops the mouth of our accuser. (Rev. xii. 11.) The scarlet line of Jesus' blood is faith's song in the believer's heart, and it will be our theme in glory. This line of scarlet thread lines all the way from sin to holiness and God, from bondage to eternal liberty. O, Emmanuel's precious blood has consecrated all the way from earth to heaven, (Heb. x. 19,) and thus

we draw nigh to God, ever looking with all affection to this scarlet line. If the scarlet line is so significant, what shall the child of God do with it? Look once more at the picture portrayed upon the walls of Jericho. There stands the house of the one who received and sent away in peace the two spies; at the window she stands, Rahab the harlot, with hope welling up in her heart, with eager hands of faith and love she binds the scarlet line in the window.

Daniel kneeled down upon his knees three times a day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem. (Dan. vi. 10.) There was a window in the ark, (Gen. vi. 16,) and the ransomed of the Lord fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows. (Isaiah lx. 8.) Shall we look upon this window in Rahab's house as expressive of the worship of God? Whenever Rahab looked forth, there to her heart's comfort and delight she beheld the scarlet line bound in the window. So in the window of the believers praises and prayers unto God the scarlet line is seen. In seasons when guilt is so conscious to our spirit, when accusations roll in upon us like a flood, when sin-stained, with a wounded heart and with a blushing face, how shall we look forth at the window unto God? Ah, when in my soul's conflicts, when so buffeted by sin and Satan, imploringly I would look to the Lord, let the holy Spirit ever instruct me to bind the scarlet line in the window. Let others aspire after the fleeting things of earth, if thou wilt reach forth thine hands after wealth and fame, but give, O give to me, a perishing sinner, a true token of thy everlasting love; give me, O Lord, the scarlet line, the priceless token, the blood of the new testament shed for the remission of sins.

"She bound the scarlet line in the window." God commanded Israel to bind his words for a sign upon their hand, and they thall be as frontlets between thine eyes. (Deut. vi. 9.) Solomon says, "My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest it shall talk with thee."—Prov. vi. 20–22. So the called of God are effectually taught to bind in their window the scarlet line of the Savior's blood. Examine yourself whether you have the scarlet line bound in the window, for that religion which lacks that personal, experimental knowledge of the blood of Christ, is valueless before God. The elect are chosen unto the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter i. 2.) Without this scarlet line we cannot know our election of God. What have you bound in your window? Is it your self-righteousness? What! filthy rags? (Isaiah lxiv. 6.) Some bind in the window of their religious profession their supposed work for the Lord, the many wonderful works, which they declare they have done for Christ. Such religionists very fitly sing to themselves,

"A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify,
A never dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky."

But Christ will say in that day, "Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity."—Luke xiii. 27.

Others display in their windows the doctrines of men, and the doctrines of devils, some in the bare theory may mention Christ's blood, but their non-experimental, heartless religion will avail them nothing in the day of God's wrath. But

you, poor souls, who feel so unworthy, sinful, polluted, who long for freedom from all sin, whose hearts crave reconciliation with God in the free remission of all your sins, to you how sacred is the scarlet line. With all desire you contemplate Emmanuel's blood, and muse with affection upon its efficacious fruits, (yielding to believers so richly redemption and forgiveness of sins, and everlasting peace with God) so with believing hands you bind the scarlet line in the window. "Wash me, Savior, or I die."

That language in Leviticus i. 3, is very descriptive of the spirit in which God's people worship him in the shedding of blood. "He shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord." It is written, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."—Psalm cx. 3. So we are brought with all willingness of heart to bind the scarlet line in the window.

Day by day in our journey we are being wounded and bruised by temptations and sins; it is therefore needful for such poor ones as we are to constantly have in our sight the cleansing blood of the Lamb, the precious scarlet line. And as we look again and again upon the Savior's blood, all is well, we have a comfortable trust and taste the sweetness of the atonement, Jesus' reconciling blood heals all our disorders, and sheds upon us its consoling fragrance, our hope is renewed, and our hearts are inspired with sweet gratitude to him who remembered us in our low estate, and gave us the true token of the everlasting covenant, the scarlet line. The scarlet line also very beautifully presents to our faith all the blessed revelations of Christ's gospel, all so gloriously, divinely interwoven, and made so infinitely strong by the immutable decrees, the promises and oath of God, and all scarlet colored with the precious blood of the Lamb.

Let us return to Jericho, and glance again at what is transacting there. "Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in."—Joshua vi. 1. Once a day for six days the men of war compassed the city, following the seven priests with trumpets of rams horns, and the ark of the Lord; on the seventh day they compassed the city seven times. During these days there streams from the window of Rahab's house, upon the wall, the significant scarlet line. All Israel took affectionate notice of it, and of the house upon which was this mark. (Ezek. ix. 4–6.) While all the inhabitants of Jericho are in restless suspense, and their spirits faint within them in apprehension of their coming doom, in Rahab's house there is supporting hope, her house upon the wall is sanctified by the scarlet line, all within that house are in covenant safety, and shall be saved in that day. "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not." She looks forth upon the host of Israel, but she fears no evil of them, for her heart is toward them, and toward their God, and if at any time her heart wavered, and unbelief and fears intruded, there, to strengthen her hope, she sees that true token of the sworn friendship between herself and Israel, the scarlet line bound in the window. One affectionate glance at this and her hope revives, and all is blissful peace. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."

At length the day of Jericho's doom is come. "And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the

city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the Lord hath given you the city. * * * So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword." When the noise of the tumbling walls is hushed, and the dust of the ruins is fanned away, there unshaken stands that house upon the wall, that monument of God's sovereign grace, the sanctuary of the saved ones, the house of Rahab the harlot.

"And in the window still bound fast,
Above the fatal ram's horns blast,
There streams the precious covenant sign,
The token true, the scarlet line."

"But Joshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, as ye sware unto her. And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel. And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein; only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord. And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the messengers which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho."

Thus Rahab came forth in sacred blessedness, with gratitude filling her heart, and then in due time she is adopted into the family of Israel, for she is united in marriage to Salmon, a prince of the house of Judah, by whom she gave birth to Boaz, who married Ruth, the Moabitess, who gave birth to Obed, and Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David, of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all God blessed forever. Amen. (Matt. i. 5; Ruth iv. 21, 22.)

The grace of our God is exceeding abundant, for it lifts up the poor from the dust, and the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, causing them to inherit the throne of glory. Our Savior hath washed his people from all their pollutions, in his own blood, and his church is without blame in his sight. Who shall lay anything to the charge of Rahab, the wife of Salmon, the prince of the house of David? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

May this, dear reader, be our consolation, and when we draw near our journey's end, and our exodus from the earthly house of this tabernacle is at hand; when the things of time, our dearest earthly friends, and all nature swoon away, recede and fade from our view around our dying bed, what then? Then, O thou gracious Redeemer, give me a true token, hold thou before mine eyes the scarlet line; enable me with eyes of faith and love to look upon thy precious atoning blood. O Lamb of God, smile upon me; then with this true token a

passport into heaven's glories shall be mine, and everlasting praises shall be thine.

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE: WHAT IS IT?

BY what rule shall we be governed in determining what is or what is not an experience of grace, which is the experience of one who has been born of the Spirit by the will of God, and not of man? I believe that any experience, which leads to God through faith in Christ, is christian experience. It may have been short or long, it may have been gentle and mild, or intensified to the deepest degree of awful terror of the Lord and of the majesty of his power, but in each degree of it, it causes the knowledge of sin with a felt sense of condemnation by the holy law of a just and righteous God. "For by the law is the knowledge of sin," and without this knowledge there is no sense of guilt, and therefore no consciousness of sin in the heart of man.

Taking the run of the subject, there must be the sense of guilt weighing down the heart, traveling the bitter ways of mortal life, before there will be a true desire to turn away from the world and the lust of the flesh. For the lust of the world, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, are of the world, and not of the Father. He who comes to God by repentance is dead to the world, and to him its vanities are stale and unsatisfying, and he hungers and thirsts after righteousness. Belief in God is a necessary quality in the heart of a sorrowful sinner, "For he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Belief in God implies a knowledge of his character, and a hope in his promises. This belief in God, and hope in his word, implies a revelation of his name and power, and of his goodness leading to repentance, which is the work of a godly sorrow for sin in the heart, which is now to that man a yoke of bondage, loading him down with the corruptions of the flesh, which deprives him of all power to approach to God, although he labors so to do with all his might.

In solemn sadness he pines away in his uncleanness, and in the sin of the flesh and spirit. Now, in this condition, owing to the strength of sin by the law, on his conscience, and the knowledge of the law of sin in his members, the self-condemned sinner prays to God for help and mercy, pleading that, "As for himself, he is cut off for his part," and no way of approach to God is presented to his view, though to the God of holiness, power and love, he longs to come.

Now he learns the truth of the words of Jesus when he said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him." Here his hope perishes. He says within his heart, I would but cannot come to thee, O God, my prayers are sinful, and my breath corrupt, and my way is death, I have no light, whither shall I flee from thy righteous wrath; forbid it Lord that I should sin again, wherever I go or wherever I stay. Such an one is dead to sin, and how can he live any longer therein? What fruit is there in sin for such an one as he? He is dead to sin and the world, and yet alive to it under the law, and feeling its dreadful curse upon every one that continueth not in all things written there to do them. Here lies the man on his way from Jerusalem to Jericho, half dead and robbed of his goods, pressed down with his wounds and bleeding. Moses in

the law will not touch his yoke of bondage with one of his fingers, nor suffer the priest nor Levite to help him in the least, and so they pass by on the other side.

"Cursed is he that continueth not in all things written in the law to do them," says the prophet in the Old Testament. The willful sinner shall surely die without forgiveness, is the law of Moses, and there is no help for him, the man is unclean, he is a leper, touch him not, lest ye become unclean. Thou shalt touch no unclean thing, is the law in Israel. Poor man, he must die, let him lie and perish, ye priests and Levites all.

Now in this we have the attitude of a poor, penitent sinner who is coming to God, both as regards the law of Moses, and the grace of God in Christ Jesus, and it is marvelous in our eyes. It is at such a point as this that we may understand the Savior's words when he says, "No man cometh to the Father but by me."

Remember, the question being considered is, What is christian experience? We have seen the complete failure of the covenant or law of works, to benefit a man only half dead, in the passing by of the priest and Levite under the law of Moses, or under the covenant of God with the seed of Abraham in the flesh, but what shall we find in the Son of David, and in the sure mercies of God in his seed upon the throne, to order and to establish it forever? It is true, as we have seen, that the letter killeth, but let us see on the other hand what about the covenant with Abraham, and with his seed forever, which is expressed in these words of the apostle, "But the Spirit giveth life." And now let us hear the gracious words of the promised seed which is Christ, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth and believeth on me, shall never die, and he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." In this we see what is the attitude of the gospel toward one dead in sin, and under the curse of the law, who has come to realize these truths. Therefore, says the apostle to such ones, "Ye are dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye may live unto God."

Therefore, as John testifies, "If we say we have not sinned we make God a liar," that is, in his law, and "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," but, "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." This presents again the attitude of one coming to God in the gospel. And finally, the apostle Paul fastens the attitude of subjects of the gospel of the grace of God, by saying, "It is a faithful saying, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."

Now to have experienced these things in some small degree, is to have had a christian experience, therefore to have any experience leading up to repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and attended by love to the brethren, is a christian experience, at least, in some measure of it. This is what I had in mind to show at the beginning of this writing; this, and nothing more. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." He may have passed through the howling wilderness, or have been driven by the winds of adversity over the stormy ocean of wordly adventures, or have been carried gently in the arms of the Shepherd, or sheltered near the dwelling of the chief Shepherd, but in all the germs of the truth are the same. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus; ye have all been made to drink of one Spirit, and are of

the one family of God, whether weak or strong, and the Father loves all alike, in his dear Son, and having Christ, ye have a joint-inheritance with and in him. This is subscribed by one who has been in the deep, having gone down there in the ships to learn the ways of the Lord.

Dear brother Durand, I send these pages expressive of my understanding of what christian experience is, and on what it is founded in the gospel; I hope and believe that you will understand me. I have read and heard of so many doubts and fears, that were expressed by many concerning their own personal experience, because in each case they were not like that of some one else, that I have been induced to write these thoughts upon this important subject.

I will close by saying that I greatly appreciate my correspondence with you.

Your brother,

I. N. NEWKIRK.

THE BRIDEGROOM.

WHERE dwellest the Bridegroom of her whose locks are wet with dew in searching for her beloved? Where are his secret haunts? Was it not but yester'een that we looked, and behold, we saw her coming up from the wilderness leaning upon her beloved? and now he has gone from her, and she is weary of her life. With his disappearing her light has gone out, darkness veils her sky, great rolling clouds of thick darkness enshroud her soul, tumultuous fears and dire suspense increase her dreadful agony. In anguish of soul we hear her cry, "By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but found him not." To her love-lit eyes all nature drooped in sympathy with her sadness, the heavens looked down in pity, the stars ceased their merry twinkle, while deep gloom spread her heavy mantle over all her weary way. Still she ceases not in her tearful searching, she goes about the city, in the streets, and in the broad ways, still she finds him not. The watchmen that go about the city found her. Then the secret chambers of her soul lit up, her hopes brightened, she felt now that she would glean some tidings of her beloved. She called to the watchman saying, "Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will inquire, inquire ye, return, come." And she said, "Behold I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him: O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat! I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments. I would know the words which he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me." O, thou watchman on Zion's walls, "Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?" But alas, the watchman had no tidings. Whither shall I go? "When thou hidest the light of thy countenance I am as one bereft." My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of Engedi." Perchance he may be sleeping, and if so, "I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor wake my love till he please." She wanders away in the darkness, and she had gone but a little way beyond the watchman, when lo, we behold her start (as it were) into life, all alert and active, she stops, she listens, and her face, (sad, but a moment ago) is now lighted with joy, her glad soul rises higher, as she more intently listens. Now

we hear her speak, saying, "The voice of my beloved! behold he cometh, leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills." How wonderful is the change, the darkness of the night has fled, the glad morning appears, for the Sun of Righteousness has arisen in all his glory. All nature breathes a glorious halo, echoing praises through mountain and valley, singing with gladsome voice, the Bridegroom, the Bridegroom is come, all hail, and saying to the lovely bride, "Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem." But he finds her with bedraggled skirts, her hair dripping with the dews of the long and dreary night, and with love and pride he takes her to his banqueting-house, and his banner over her is love. Now listen to her happy language! "My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away, for lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land: the fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away." She has discovered his places of hiding, his retreats are made known to her. She exclaims: "O, my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." He tells her all the secrets of his life, and how great is his love for her; he tells her he is the "Rose of Sharon," and that he is the "Lily of the valleys," a heavenly lover indeed is he to his love. The Bridegroom! without whom there would be no hope for poor, lost sinners. Before ever the mountains were brought forth, the glory of the Father was his glory, his Father gave unto him the precious gift, (his lovely bride), away back in the ancients of eternity, and now out of the womb of the morning of this world, when she has come forth, clothed in the veil of the flesh, he follows her notwithstanding the dreadful fact that she has become a transgressor, that she has become filthy and all polluted, vile and full of sin. His love for her is everlasting, and knows no end or change. Therefore he bows the heavens, giving up his glory with the Father, comes down to earth, searches out her vile secret haunts, that he may redeem her unto himself, and clothe her with the spotless robe of his own perfect righteousness, and present her faultless before the Father's glory, as a bride adorned for her husband.

How shall we take knowledge of this precious Bridegroom, who comes to us as a heavenly gift from the Father of mercies? Can we select him out from all the other lovers? By what signs or tokens shall we discover him? Love hath opened up and quickened all our perceptive faculties, our whole being is filled with love, he has sent the Spirit of his divine love into our heart, revealing the riches of his grace, the abundance of his love, and the fullness of his truth. In no other way can we take knowledge of him, only as he graciously reveals himself unto us as our Savior and Redeemer. We take knowledge of him as our Bridegroom, in that he hath betrothed us unto himself, by which we have become separated from all things we ever loved before, and so completely swallowed up in him that his life has become our life. Our faith is strong, and by it we believe him to be the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Can we select the apple tree, from amongst the trees of the wood? Yes, because our under-

standing of all its characteristics is complete. We select our heavenly lover from among all other lovers, because he has shown us the light of his countenance, which while the others are of the earth earthy, he is heavenly and divine, and refulgent in glory. The signs and tokens by which we know him, are the things which show us ourselves as totally depraved, and altogether sinful. We behold him wearing the crown of righteousness, which is laid up in heaven for us, and in our heart we hear him say, as he called to his bride in the Song of Songs, saying, "Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart."

Sacred and unsearchable is the hiding-place of our precious Bridegroom, swept and garnished is our heart, and fruitful in divine and heavenly graces, because our heavenly Bridegroom has come into our heart, and has set up his temple there. With whip and cord he has driven out those who have defiled his temple, vile and slanderous thoughts disappear upon his gracious entrance, while in their stead, nuts and spices of heavenly fruit send forth sweet odors, which ascending to the throne of grace are accepted in the sight of God, who giveth every good and perfect gift. Thus we walk in newness of life, singing psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, to the praise of the glory of his grace. As a light shining in a dark place he possesses our soul. Wisdom and knowledge and understanding are ours by virtue of the life vouchsafed unto us, as a heavenly gift from God our Father, in Jesus Christ, the Bridegroom of our soul. Faith points out to us the way of life, and the path of the just, while wisdom fills our enchanted view with the beauties and perfection of the building of God made without hands, the eternal city, the holy Jerusalem, which God hath built, and not us. Our knowledge and understanding embrace the glorious plan of salvation through him who hath betrothed us in love, in wisdom, and in all understanding. Where then can be found a bridegroom like unto our Beloved? Exalted above all gods, the King of glory, and the High Priest of our profession, glorious in holiness, doing wonders. So let great swelling waves of gladness spread over our willing soul, in praise to him who hath delivered us out of darkness, and translated us into his marvelous light.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., June 14, 1903.

CARDINGTON, Ohio, May 31, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I inclose a letter from sister Belle Gorsuch, which has proven so sweet and comforting to me that I would like to share it with the dear readers of the SIGNS. Sister Belle is one of those good Baptists whom we all love. She is possessed with humility, and love, and holy zeal to a marked degree. She seems as nearly unspotted from the world as any young lady I ever knew. Although we live only eight or ten miles apart, and sometimes spend days together, we find comfort in writing to each other. I am wholly unworthy of the kind things she says of me, and feel that she is greatly superior to me. I have desired that I might be as I appear to her; but I know that I am not. If I really appear to any as a monument of praise, it must be in showing how great and condescending is God's love, which can embrace one so totally unworthy.

To me, her love toward me is a proof of her great charity; our fellowship is

very sweet. If I were as worthy as she, our love for each other could be said to be like that of David and Jonathan. But her letter will tell you more of her than I am able to tell.

My dear brother, I pray that you may be given every needful grace, and be enabled to feel that our dear Savior bears all your grief. He knoweth every pain and heartache and will not give one too many. But I feel sure that you know more of the tender mercies of God than I can tell you. When called to pass through trials of any kind, we find how sweet it is to be able to say, It is well, the Father gave me this; he is greater than all the powers of earth and hell, and will not give one needless stroke. Although we cannot always feel his presence, he always appears when we really need it, and when the burden is becoming too great for our strength, how lovingly he removes it, or gives us to feel that his strong hand will sustain us, and that he loved us with an everlasting love, and will not forsake us. And when it is so dark that we know nothing but our own helplessness, the Lord is there, though our eyes are holden that we know him not.

My dear brother, knowing that you are in poor health, I felt a desire to speak a word of comfort to you, but feel that I have made a failure. But I hope that sister Belle's letter may cheer you a little.

Yours unworthily,

JOIE E. WICKHAM.

MARENGO, Ohio, May 10, 1903.

VERY DEAR SISTER JOIE:—This has been a lonesome day, and I have wished for the company of some of the precious family of God, and yet, O, how unworthy and unfit to be in their midst, for O I am so utterly cast down beneath such dark clouds of doubt and unbelief that I am wondering if in truth I am a hypocrite, or am I deceived, or is this thing called religion a delusion? Is it possible that those who have indeed been born again ever have such thoughts? O, can you, dear Joie, can you bear testimony with me, or have you no fellowship for one who has such a vile and sinful heart? Years ago I was made to realize that in me dwells no good thing, but I vainly thought when I grew older I would grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. Yes, that I would be more spiritual minded, and that my life would show forth the love of Jesus, but alas for me, I am only made to feel more and more my sinful depravity, and realize how very far short my daily life has been of a true follower of Jesus.

O, when I take a backward view of my past profession, I feel to hide my face in shame, and I am made to wonder how the brethren can bear with one who is so prone to sin, and to wander in forbidden ways. Surely if they could see me as I am, they would shun me as an evil thing. And yet if they should cast me out, what would I do? for if I know my wicked heart, I love God's dear people; they are everything to me, and often when with them, and I hear them tell of their joys and sorrows, and the goodness and mercy of God, I feel like Ruth of old, "Entreat me not to leave thee," and amidst all my doubts and fears I take courage to press on, feeling somehow, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Where else can we trust? God alone hath the words of eternal life. It is written, "Of God are ye in Christ Jesus." And truly indeed I have learned, dear Joie, that unless Christ of God has been formed in me the hope of glory, I am of all creatures the most miserable.

All our hope of salvation is in God. It is of him, in him, by him and through him, and all to his glory. And we are taught from day to day that every spiritual blessing with which we are blessed is treasured in Christ, and must come from him. He is our all in all, if indeed we are God's children. Your "life is hid with Christ in God." "Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Yes, he is our righteousness, wisdom, sanctification and redemption. "Unto you therefore that believe, he is precious," for we are given redemption by his blood, and forgiveness of sins according to the riches of God's grace, and it is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

All these precious things are of Christ, and by his righteous merits. Truly indeed "of him are ye in Christ Jesus." It is not the work of men nor angels, but if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious, ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and being justified by his grace we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

O, dear, beloved Joie, surely these are true and precious things to God's dear children, and even I love to meditate upon them. Yet what evidence have I that I have experienced them in my sinful heart?

When I read the Scriptures, the grand and glorious principles of salvation by grace are taught so plainly, and I love to contemplate the almighty sovereign power of God, his holy character, his infinite love and wisdom, his great mercy, and the riches of his grace. And the thought comes to me sometimes, Could all these things be so beautiful and interesting to me, if indeed I have not been taught them of the Lord?

While I feel it is very little that I comprehend, if indeed any, yet even this very little is better than to be left in total blindness and ignorance, and somehow I desire to be thankful for this little portion of knowledge, for surely I am highly favored, and must acknowledge the goodness and tender mercy of God to me, a poor, undeserving sinner, unworthy of the least of remembrances.

But, Joie, I must not weary you with uninteresting thoughts. I have not written as I have desired to, and perhaps when you read these lines you will never wish to hear from me again, but O, how many times I have longed for your company, while I feel so cast down and shut up, yet I could sit at the feet of those whom I cherish as God's children, and listen, to gather, if possible, some crumbs of comfort. The very presence of some dear brother or sister seems good. Sometimes just a few words strengthen my drooping soul.

If you can have patience with one so weak and full of complaints, please write to me soon; I long to receive one of your good letters. It seems to me you are always in the Spirit, and always have a word of cheer to the praise of our blessed Lord. May God continue to bless your precious gift. Come over and visit us when you can, it does seem so long since I have seen you.

I will now close. Pardon all that you see amiss, and remember me at a throne of mercy, and may love and grace abide with you to the praise of him from whom every blessing comes. With love to you and each of your dear household, I am yours sincerely,

BELLE.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Oct. 10, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have a desire to write to you, and so in the midst of my work I will commence. A part of last week I was as a blank, and seemed to have no thought upon the better things, and hardly any on natural things. Brother Coulter was out here on Friday, and I felt surely he will not want to come again, for I was so mute, and even seemed too lifeless to listen. I said to him that I tried to read the Scriptures, but that they were so sealed to me that it was hard work, and I had no understanding as I read. "Well," he said, "it is just so with men digging ore, they work hard at digging day by day and find none, but they are encouraged to dig on, because they know that beyond there is a mine," and I have been feeding upon this thought of his ever since, for how true it is; time after time, I have found nothing in the reading of the word, and then again some part has been given me, if not in clear and full understanding, then a morsel, of comfort, so I find here a little, and there a little.

This morning about my work there came to my mind something about the man who is God's fellow, and the smiting, so I just left my work and searched for it, and found it in Zech. xiii. 7. I cannot say that I understand it, but such a sweetness has come to me, and I cannot help repeating, "And they shall say the Lord is God." I do keep trying to see if I am one of the third part that he will bring through the fire, and refine as silver is refined, and will try as gold is tried, and whether I do call upon his name, and whether he hears me, and whether he does say, "Thou art mine," and do I from my heart say, The Lord he is God? How searching is this, and do I stand the test? If I were left to judge myself, I would positively answer, No, but I know the Lord is judge, also the church is the bar before whom I stand, yet we may hide many things from our brethren, but there is one from whom we can hide nothing. Do I stand the test before him?

I will now close this letter, I know that you will have many letters by this time, but I wish to say that I am glad of the encouragement which you have from so many old members, telling of the steadfastness of the SIGNS to the former principles; how much rejoicing it must bring to the editors. I inclose a letter from Thomas Cubbage, I leave it to your judgment. I remain your sister,

MARY HILL TERRY.

1941 PATTON ST., PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

MR. AND MRS. TERRY—DEAR FRIENDS:—Being at your house I saw a number of letters on the table from your friends, and hearing some read, I noticed they were all of one tone, Love. It would infer that the writers had John's experience, and were commanded to write. "And he said unto me, Write; for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

If I may have the privilege of writing, I would like to write a little of this vision of John contained in the twenty-first chapter and first verse of Revelation, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."

"A new heaven." The word new im-

presses us as of something recently come into existence, of late origin, or the opposite of that which is old. And how better apply it in this text, than to the new covenant, which the Lord makes with his people? "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people; and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me." Under the old covenant they were commanded to teach one another. It would seem here that John saw Christ, as that new heaven or law, because he was the end of the old law in that he fulfilled it. Now how can an old law be erased? Only by a new one standing in its stead, and so if Christ fulfilled the law, which he did, he became the end of it by becoming the new law or covenant, which is put in the minds, and written in the hearts of the people of God. Then is not his judgment-seat set up in the hearts of the people? And he, being the Judge, the Light, and the revelation and life, all who are embraced in this covenant, have an unction from the holy One, and know all things, and need not to be taught of one another.

If then we in our experience see Christ as our risen Savior, we see also in him that new law and our righteousness. Paul said, "Yet now henceforth know we him no more after the flesh." And, "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature. Old things are passed away, behold all things are become new." "And there was a new earth." This, in my opinion, represents man when in the condition in which John was when he saw all these things. He said, I was in the spirit on the Lord's day. This condition comes through the exercise of faith, and when faith is exercised, it is always the Lord's day. It is by faith that we see Christ, and enter the kingdom, and this faith is the gift of God. It is said that "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." The unseen things are the new heaven, the new covenant, the new law. And when this faith is in exercise in us, we shall say to the mountain, Remove hence to yonder plain, and it shall obey. The mountain is that of unbelief and sin. Here is the new earth. And the old earth, or the first earth, passes away, when we come into this condition. But before faith came we were kept under the old law, as a teacher, but after faith is come we are no longer under a teacher, for we are all children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, and if children of the Lord, then heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, according to the promise.

We then are no longer in darkness, no longer behind the mountain of unbelief. It has been removed hence, and by faith belief takes its place, and we see Christ, with his judgment-seat in our hearts. "And there shall be no more sea." That is, there shall be no more sin, nor condemnation for sin, and unbelief; doubts, fears, trials and tribulations have passed away with the old condition things. All the saints, it seems to me, while living under the old law, which is the schoolmaster to Christ, as Paul said, pass through all these trials and conflicts, but when we are enabled by faith to lay hold upon the promises, and see them, we are assured that "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." The one is darkness, the other is light, and so the sea of darkness has disappeared, as has

also the mountain, and shall be no more, because the daystar has risen in the heart, that bright and morning star of which David writes; because the Lord has said, "Let there be light."

I have written much, and have failed to make plain what I thought I saw in this Scripture, when I began. I find that I have not the gift to write as I wish, and will stop trying.

I remain your true friend,

THOMAS CUBBAGE.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., July, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I was asked to give an account of our recent visit to the eastern associations, and churches, through the SIGNS, and to let the friends know of our arrival home. My daughter and I left our home May fourteenth, and attended the meeting at Hughesville, Va., first, I was very feeble in health, and barely able to get there. I trust that I was given strength by him who knoweth all our needs. The meeting there was a very pleasant and enjoyable one, and through the kind and loving ministrations of friends, I was much strengthened physically and spiritually, and I must ever remember the kind friends there, and give praise to the Lord that I, a poor worm of the dust, should find such gracious favor with the people of God. From there we went on to the four eastern associations and meetings, all of which were harmonious and pleasant; the preaching was Christ the exalted Redeemer and Savior of sinners. I cannot make mention of all the associations and meetings which I attended, and will only note the Warwick, held in New York city. This was the first session ever held with the church in that city. It yet seems to me wonderful; they were gathered in an upper chamber, surrounded with the rush of business, and all the vain show that wealth could make, yet there in the midst of it all, but completely separated from it all, was the church of true worshipers of the meek and lowly Jesus. There was the singing of the ever sweet and melodious song, "We have a strong city." I thought that I had never attended a more quiet, peaceful and harmonious meeting. Eighteen Elders were at the meeting. Elder Grafton and myself remained there over Sunday, together with the pastor of that church, Elder John McConnell. Three were received for baptism at the close of the afternoon meeting. How cheering to see the dear ones of the Lord gathered into the fold to be with believers enrolled. The church there seems to be in a healthy, prosperous state.

We left New York city on Tuesday afterward, by boat for Albany, and from there on to Canada, where we attended a third Sunday meeting, and the quarterly meeting at Ekfred, embracing the fourth Sunday in June. Five were received for baptism at the latter meeting. How constantly we were reminded of the faithful promise of our God concerning Zion, and that it is he that giveth the increase, for which we are often prone to look to man. Elders Durand, Eubanks and Curry, attended this meeting.

After filling an appointment at Detroit, on Tuesday evening after the quarterly meeting at Ekfred, we left for our home, arriving here on the evening of July second, finding all as well as when we left. We were absent in all seven weeks. O, how great the mercies of the Lord to usward.

Dear brethren and friends, we thank you all for such wonderful kindness as was shown to us. As I look back over all the way, I feel that the benefits were

all mine. Surely I have reason to sing of the mercies of the Lord forever. Will you kindly accept love and best wishes from both my daughter Goldie and myself?

Sincerely,

P. W. SAWIN.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., July 23, 1903.

MR. B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—If you deem this worthy of publication you can use it. Your editorial in the last issue of the SIGNS is the truth in a plain and simple way expressed, and I feel like I would be glad to add my feeble testimony to the truth of God so ably set forth, and boldly defended. I had rather use defensive armor than offensive, and as the question of preaching to the unregenerate has become a question in some sections, and cunningly devised fables are composed to deceive the simple, I would say to such as might be deceived, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." There are those who have more ability to deceive than to edify. When I left the New School Baptists, in 1880, I feel confident that God showed me the folly of that system then, and I am slow to admit that what he shewed me was not the way. The true church has understood and practiced the truth on the subject of gospel address and gospel subjects, and I have been made to see that the every creature in the command of Christ meant creatures of God in a spiritual sense, and not natural creatures. Those were created in Christ Jesus unto good works, and the restriction of Jesus, when he forbid giving that which was holy unto dogs, and casting pearls before swine. Paul, one of the princes who was to rule in judgment, also said, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned." Jesus also said, "Ye cannot hear my word, because ye are not my sheep," and all God's word harmonizes, and if there is a promise to the dead or the unbelieving, I do not know where it is, and there is no quality or quantity of preaching that I have ever heard or known that would make a believer. Jesus said he spoke to them that were without in parables, that seeing, they might see and not perceive; hearing, they might hear and not understand. In fine the gospel system is high and holy, and consistent with itself, and the infinite divine wisdom of God. This idea of working with the dead is presumptuous and vain; the living in Jerusalem are the ones we delight in in a spiritual sense, and not the dead, who know not anything. It reminds me of the man who mocks the Isaaic gospel which feeds the sheep, and tries to insist on the Hagar law, which can only produce a mocking Ishmaelite. What the gospel says, it says to them who are in the gospel, and what the law says it says to them who are under the law.

Brother Beebe, you are right, it is a cunningly devised fable, and a will-o-the-wisp, a vain light of fox fire, which has the glow of reason and only dazzles to lead astray. But if it were possible they would deceive the elect. God save us from such vain delusions, and keep us unto his heavenly kingdom.

Yours in hope,

W. LIVELY.

EAGLE, Ont., May 13, 1903.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I thank you very much for sending me the SIGNS. You

will find inclosed the balance of my subscription. We look forward for them as we would for a sermon. Dear brother Vail's short letter was so good, I always loved to hear him preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. The message was for me or I never would have heard in Spirit. Also that good letter from dear brother Scates. The meeting in Duart which he speaks of, was to me a glorious meeting. The sermon which our dear pastor, brother Carnell, was enabled to preach on the communion, was to me a feast of fat things, it was sweeter than honey in the honeycomb. Also discourses by brethren Curry and Frazee were good.

Our quarterly meeting was held in Dunwich last Saturday, Sunday and Monday, and we did indeed have a grand and glorious meeting. Dear Elders Eubanks and Curry were here to assist our dear pastor. Their preaching was in power, for they gave God all the power and all the glory, and we were blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. I felt it good to be there. All was peace and harmony. O, how beautiful for brethren to dwell together in unity. We know God directs all our steps, he created all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil, he does nothing wrong, but works all for good. With men things are impossible, but with God all things are possible; he speaks, and it is done; commands, and it stands fast; there are none who can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? He reigns in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

We had a most beautiful and grand discourse by brother Curry on Sunday, from the words, "For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever, Amen." And on Monday from, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a peculiar people."

Pardon this poor scribble, I hope you shall long be spared to publish the SIGNS, and to always crown our God with majesty, and power, and all the glory be to his holy name, forever and forever.

I am your poor, helpless sister, saved by grace if saved at all,

(MRS.) CHRISTINA MURRAY.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., May 12, 1903.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, AND ALL THE DEAR ONES WHO READ AND LOVE THEIR CONTENTS:—As duty calls on me to pay what I justly owe for our beloved medium of correspondence, and as I said in my last letter to you that I wanted to take the SIGNS as long as I was able to work and earn enough money to pay for them, and as I feel that it is very becoming in any person when they make a promise to fill it or give the reason why, I make this attempt, after some delay, to talk a little to you all, and tell you that I am yet starving for preaching, only what I get from the SIGNS. I have a great desire to be patient and wait the Lord's time for him to send some of his messengers to these parts of this desert wilderness, so to speak of a place so destitute of pure gospel preaching; the word of God rightly divided, and rightly handled, sent by the Holy Spirit and accomplishing whereunto it is sent, quick and powerful; sharper than any two-edged sword, dividing asunder both joints and marrow.

Brethren and sisters in the Lord, severe drought is upon our land here, and vegetation is suffering for rain, sickness and death of most all descriptions is very prevalent. But I take courage in these words,

"Plagues and death around may fly,
Till he bids I cannot die."

I also take courage from the words in the Acts of the Apostles iv. 13, when some took knowledge of Peter and John because they had been with Jesus. They being ignorant and unlearned men, men in private life, who had not been instructed in the schools, or by the doctors of the law.

If I do know anything about myself, my one great desire is to be kept humble, and to know that God omnipotent reigneth. "His promises will ripen fast, unfolding every hour." I know he has a perfect right to rule and govern all created things, for he is almighty Maker and Preserver of all things.

Dear brother Beebe, I am sorry you are so afflicted, but these old earthly houses have to be torn down, in which we live and groan, before we can be clothed with our heavenly garments.

Correct errors, and do with this as you think best.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

KALAMAZOO, Mich., Sept. 15, 1902.

BELOVED EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Inclosed find two dollars for the renewal of my subscription to our dear family paper. We love to read the SIGNS because it is comforting to our hearts to hear from those of like precious faith, it brings glad tidings to us in our old age, for in its pages are found no divisions to mar the peace and enjoyment of the children of God. For this, my dear brethren, I hope that I am thankful to our God; I think that I am thankful to him for guiding the dear editors in publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to the comforting and edifying of his dear people, and O, dear ones, may the King of kings lead you to know the truth as it is in Jesus, from time to time, as he may see that you have need. O, Lord guide these soldiers of the cross with might and power in the future, as thou hast in the years gone by.

I have often had a desire to write something for your paper, not that I think myself in any way worthy or competent, and my feelings of unworthiness and inability to write have kept me from doing so before, for sometimes I feel so far away from the fold, walking in by-paths, easy to travel, that I grow faint-hearted and weak, and look back over my life, and wonder if it be possible that one so careless can be among the sheep that belong inside of the happy fold? I believe it is spoken of in the Bible, that the wayfaring man is one who hungers and thirsts after righteousness, and that he is weary, and feels himself far away from home.

Dear ones, how sweet it is to bring that burden to the place of refuge, the church, and receive the sympathy of the dear people of God. We, as a church, at Woodstock, Michigan, are living in peace. This is where we hold our membership. My wife and self attended an association held at La Fontaine, Indiana, September 5, 6 and 7, where a goodly number of the dear saints met. I was made to rejoice with joy untold to meet so many fathers and mothers among the dear saints of our God. Some twelve Elders were present, aged from twenty-five to eighty-seven years, and all spoke as is described in Isaiah, chapter fifty, verse four. O, how my poor heart did rejoice to hear such able young men proclaiming the gospel of our Savior, with such zeal and love, as I never heard before in all my life, and all to the glory of our God, and to the comfort of his people. The above are my feelings often.

My wife joins me in this letter. Pray for us. May we be ready and willing when the Master calls.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

(MR. & MRS.) D. D. McALPINE.

APPEAL FOR AID.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—There is a little band of brethren and sisters in Tampa, and suburbs, that were constituted into a church some two and a half years ago, and who have held their services in a rented house ever since. They have lately bought two lots on Third Ave. and Twenty-sixth St., and appointed a building committee, and the church instructed them to solicit aid from any who are willing to help in this cause. The church is poor, but worthy, standing firm in the apostolic doctrine, predestination, election, resurrection of the dead, salvation by grace, and the things that accompany salvation, good works. I have hesitated somewhat to make or ask help through the paper, in view of the fact that so many appeals are made upon the liberality of the brethren. However, brother Beebe, if you feel that it is not out of place, and any brethren, sisters or churches should have it in their heart to help El-Bethel build a house for worship, be assured that all help will be appreciated by the brethren, and I will acknowledge the receipt through SIGNS, with brother Beebe's permission.

Contributions can be sent to either one of the building committee, or to me, their pastor.

The names and addresses of committee are as follows, viz:

H. L. Meeks, 1118 Second Ave., Eleventh St., Tampa, Fla.

Nathan Roberts, Gary, Fla.

J. A. Oberry, Gary, Fla.

M. L. GILBERT.

DADE CITY, Fla., August 5, 1903.

COSBY, Tenn., August 4, 1903.

DEAR FRIEND BEEBE:—I have thought I would write you for a good while, but it seems that my mind does not get into the right frame or condition. There are no real Baptists here, that believe in the doctrine that the good old SIGNS advocates, or not to my knowledge. I would like for any and all that live here, in east Tennessee, to write me, that believe in the doctrine that the SIGNS so ably defends. I think that there are a few here in old east Tennessee, especially in Powell's Valley. I know of plenty that call themselves Old Baptists, but they are not, and hate the SIGNS because it is true and honest in its defense of the doctrine once delivered to the saints.

Friend Beebe, if it is not too much to ask of you, please publish this, for no other reason than that I may become acquainted with some of the true Old Baptists that live close to me.

Yours very truly,

SAM WILSON.

CARTHAGE, Ill., August 4, 1903.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed you will find postal order for two dollars, to be applied on my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I can say the SIGNS are as good now as they were fifty-three years ago, as I have taken them that length of time, and expect to take them to the end of my time here. I am in my seventy-eighth year.

B. F. TUCKER.

GUTHRIE, Okla., July 31, 1903.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—Please publish in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that my post-office address is Guthrie, Okla.

With all good wishes for your prosperity, yours in the one hope,

WM. S. SPEER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1903.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to

GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,

Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE BETTER COVENANT, ESTABLISHED UPON BETTER PROMISES.

(Hebrews viii. 6.)

It is in our mind to present a few thoughts upon the general subject of the new covenant, as contrasted with the old, for the gospel covenant is founded upon altogether different ground from the legal or old covenant. That this is so we need but to read the verses following the text quoted above to learn, and also Jer. xxxi. 31–34. Also read 2 Cor. iii.

We desire first to briefly note some of the contrasts between the first and the second covenant. The first was of the letter, the second of the Spirit. The first killed, the second gave life. The first was a ministration of death, the second of life. The first was graven upon stones, the second upon the fleshly tables of the heart. Paul here must especially refer to the tables of the ten commandments. The ministration of death had a glory, but the ministration of life has a superior glory, so much so that the first had no glory, by reason of the glory that excelled. The first was done away, the second abideth forever. Of the first covenant Paul said that the children could not steadfastly look to the end of that which was abolished; of the second he says that we with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. All this we quote from 2 Cor. iii. One thing is clear, Paul was not in this chapter speaking of the ceremonial law, but of the law of ten commandments. For he specially speaks of that law which was written upon tables of stone, and the ceremonial law was not thus written. Therefore the covenant made in that law of ten commandments is abolished, and in its place the gospel covenant comes in. We do not say that the ten commandments are abolished, but the covenant made with Israel upon the ground of the ten commandments is abolished, and that covenant is abolished, not by the passing away of the commandments, but by the fulfilling of them in Christ Jesus, for and in behalf of his people.

Now, in Hebrews viii., some other contrasts are noted between the two covenants called here, "the old and the new." The first covenant was faulty, the second was faultless. The first was broken, being made with a sinful, fallen, carnal people, and so was the cause of death to them, rather than life. The second, or new covenant, cannot be broken, seeing that Jesus, the perfect man, has fulfilled all that is or can be demanded of the people of God, and so they cannot break it, because it stands in him, and they also stand in him. The first covenant was written upon tables of stone, while the second is written in the heart and in the mind. Under the first covenant its terms could be taught by one man to another, and one could urge upon another all outward obedience, while under the new covenant, the law of God is written in the hearts of men by the finger of Almighty God, and this writing no man

can perform upon another. Under the first covenant the sins and iniquities of the people were remembered continually against them, while under the new covenant, not one sin shall ever be remembered against those who are under it, or in whose hearts the law of God is written. Under the old covenant the Jew, who was completely carnal, could observe the outward form of obedience demanded, but under the new covenant all who partake of the benefits of it are spiritual. A carnal Jew could abstain from stealing or murder, or adultery, and so might be said to have kept the law in outward form, but the carnal Jew could not abstain from coveting his neighbor's goods, or from hatred of his fellow man, or from looking upon a woman to lust after her in his heart. The new covenant secures to those in whose hearts it is written, what the law of the old covenant could never secure, viz: love to God and to the neighbor, upon which two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. The old covenant promised blessings if the people complied with its conditions, and were obedient to its commandments, but after all, this covenant was worthless to them, because they were not able to keep it, and one chief design in the choosing of that people, and in giving to them this law, was to clearly show forth what a total failure fallen man is, even under the most favorable circumstances. The law teaches some needful lessons, and among them is this, that salvation cannot come by the obedience of man to the commandments. The law is but the schoolmaster, as says Paul, to Christ. By the law is the knowledge of sin, but by the law no obedience is wrought in the heart; if outward conformity is induced to what it requires, it produces no love to God nor to the law, and God sees that the heart is not in the outward obedience, therefore the obedience is valueless in his sight. The best that could be looked for under the old covenant then, was an outward conformity to what the law said in the letter, and not in the spirit. But even this outward conformity was not secured very often, nor very long, among the people, as witness the words, "which my covenant they brake."

On the other hand, what the law could not do, and what never was done under the old covenant which was of the law, Christ does fulfill in his people. "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." The new covenant secures to us in Christ what the old covenant demanded but could never bestow. Every convicted sinner learns sooner or later that he is not able to obey the law, and so to attain to favor in that way with God. The law in his first experience teaches him as a schoolmaster many, to him, bitter lessons, and the chief of them is that salvation cannot come by the deeds of the law. When the sinner has been taught this, he is just where the new covenant can come in, and where Jesus is revealed as doing all for him, and securing full and free salvation to him. But more than this the very law of God which he has seen to be holy, just and good, but which he strove in vain to fulfill, is now written in his heart, and he can say as did David, "O, how I love thy law." This is the fulfilling of the law in him, through Jesus Christ, as was promised should be the case under the new covenant. Now, no one can lay anything to his charge, since for his sins

Jesus has died, and since the very law itself is now engraved in his heart and mind. What a precious truth it is to that sinner when he comes to realize that he is no longer under the law, but that the law is within him, a precious and well loved guest. What a difference there is between being under the law as a burden, and having the law in the heart. It is now no longer a burden, but a great and lasting joy. Henceforth he works not to obey the law, in which work he must ever fail, but now he rejoices to find love and peace and joy dwelling within his heart. The dawn of a new and everlasting day has risen in his heart, and henceforth he loves the God he serves, and serves the God he loves. The law of God is no longer a burden to that man. The only thing that to that man can be a burden is sin. He will always deplore his unlikeness to Christ until the perfect day has come, but meanwhile he by faith sees Jesus as his righteousness before God, and rejoices that it is his privilege to come into the holiest by this new and living way. There is no human effort nor human merit here, all is of God, and all must redound to his praise, and the true believer can sing no other song but this, "A sinner saved by grace."

But there are some other things connected with the former covenant that we desire to call attention to for a little. First, it must be remembered that there was no promise of ETERNAL LIFE, OR SALVATION, in the old covenant. If one had fully kept the law of that covenant, still the blessing was but temporal. It was, "Ye shall be blessed in basket and in store." In every place in the Old Testament where Israel is urged to obedience, the promise annexed to that obedience was not eternal life, but present prosperity as a nation, or as individuals. Even in those places where the words death and life are used in prophetical addresses to that people, only temporal life or temporal good things on the one hand, and temporal distresses and afflictions on the other hand, are intended. Eternal life never in all the history of the world has been offered to any child of Adam upon the ground of any goodness or obedience in him. Indeed, eternal life has never been offered upon any terms or conditions of any kind. We presume that among all who believe in and love the grace of God in truth no one will dispute the statements made above. From the beginning, the faith of the truly spiritual has looked to Christ as the true sin-bearer, and has realized full salvation, and full and perfect righteousness to be alone in him. Men who have been saved in heaven at all, have always been saved by grace alone.

Now this is most important to be considered. If the old covenant did not relate to eternal things, but only to things of time, and the salvation obtained through obedience was but a time salvation, then it follows most certainly that even as regards that salvation which is here in time, conditionalism utterly failed, and must give place to another way, if men are to be saved in time at all. God declared concerning that covenant that it ministered only death. He did not mean eternal destruction or death, but such death as living after the flesh produces. Now then God has found fault with that covenant and has given a better. It is not then true under the new covenant that our blessings come to us through our obedience, seeing that the best obedience we ever have rendered has been so mixed with sin as to demand chastisement rather than reward or blessing. God made test with Israel of the futility of

the hope of obtaining any present blessings by keeping man's side of the covenant. Of it all just this simple language is used, "Which my covenant they brake." The words are few, but how pregnant with meaning. Nothing else is ever said of them regarding that covenant. It is not said that they kept it, but "they brake it."

Conditional salvation then was a failure under the old covenant, and because it was a failure God has made a new covenant with his living people better than that; a covenant of life rather than death, and in this new covenant he writes all his commandments, not upon tables of stone, but in their hearts. Under this covenant he does not say, "If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the good of the land," but all the promises of this covenant are secured to halting sinners in Christ, and are sure to all the seed. Not one mercy comes to such a poor sinner save as to a sinner, and not one blessing comes to that sinner except as a free gift of God through Christ. God most surely has not imposed upon his people conditions which were all total failures when they were tried. If to-day it were to be said to any humble believer, If you will be willing and obedient, and will do my commandments, for instance by feeding the hungry, visiting the sick and those in prison, by attending faithfully the appointed meetings of the church, and by freely giving of your time and substance to the support of the cause, then I will see that you have happiness and peace of conscience, and you shall prosper in all good things, that humble believer would with sorrow say at once, Then I shall never know what peace of conscience is, nor ever rejoice. Such a sinner knows himself so well that he can base no hopes upon such conditions as this. No, he will say, I must have a more solid foundation than this to build upon. To him it would be like signing his death warrant to say such things. He would say, "How have ye helped him that is without strength?" and again, "Miserable comforters are ye all, physicians of no value."

It has seemed a joy to us for a long time to be sure that in Christ Jesus all the promises of God are yea and amen to the glory of God by all his people. The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ. This does not mean alone eternal life in the abstract, but also eternal life in its manifestations in the people of God day by day. In its present manifestations it is also a gift; we have never earned it; it never is offered upon conditions to us, but is a gift of grace in every way. Here is just where the new covenant is superior to the old, wherever conditions lie in the way of a blessing, they always work death, and never life. Thank God, the blessings of the new covenant are always free, either as relates to this present time, or as relates to eternity beyond.

To sum the matter up before closing, we again call attention to the fact that the old covenant which was taken away contained no promise of eternal life for obedience. All its rewards were temporal, and so were its curses. The PRESENT blessings which we could not gain under that covenant by obedience, now are secured to us in Christ, therefore these present blessings are not conditional, save as they were conditioned upon the perfect obedience of Christ for us, and as he did perfectly obey all his Father's commands, the blessings conditioned upon that obedience are secured irrevocably to all the heirs of promise; they are secured beyond the possibility of a

failure. Now if a man be willing and obedient, it is because the law has been written in his heart, and not upon tables of stone. It is never said under the new covenant, If ye will be willing and obedient, you shall receive blessing, but to men whom God has made both willing and obedient, there does come other blessings also, all of which are in perfect keeping with the first blessing, viz: Having the law written in the heart and mind, and it is in this keeping of the commandments, all of which are summed up in love, that we do find a great reward. Yea, love is its own exceeding great reward.

We leave these thoughts to the perusal of our readers; they have seemed very precious and comforting to ourself while we have been writing them. C.

WORSHIPING THE MOLTEN CALF.

In reading the history of the children of Israel one cannot but wonder how they could so often and so soon forget the judgments and the mercies of the Lord, and return to their idolatry and rebellion, but if we examine ourselves will we not find that we are of as rebellious a nature as were these Jews? While we may not manifest our rebellion in the same overt acts, yet we just as positively prove our carnal enmity to the law of God as did they. In fact the record of the travel of the Israelites from their native land to Canaan, is a very striking type of the travel of a child of God from his native state in nature, to grace.

It would be too tedious to attempt to follow all the events in the history of this people, but it will be sufficient for what we wish to express, to note a few of the more prominent incidents in their history. We will commence with their captivity in Egypt; here we find them in bondage, totally unable to deliver themselves, and the more they labored, the more their task-masters demanded of them. Thus it is with every child of God, he finds himself in captivity, or under bondage to the law, and the more he struggles to fulfill that law, the greater he finds its demands. As the captive Israelites were unable to free themselves from their bondage, so every heaven-born child found himself unable to free himself from his bondage; both must have perished in captivity, had they not been miraculously liberated by the mercy and power of God. But after having been thus liberated, it would seem that one could never again doubt the love of God, or his care for his people. Yet how soon all is forgotten, and the subject of grace again returns to striving to please the flesh by trusting in man, and making flesh his arm.

What is more particularly on our mind is the idolatry of Israel in making a molten calf, and ascribing to it their deliverance from bondage, saying, "These be thy gods, O Israel, that brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." It will be remembered that this molten calf was composed of the jewels that were borrowed from the Egyptians, and brought up with them from their captivity. They never were of any use to them, only as ornaments, worn to charm the natural eye, and gratify the pride of the flesh, and it does seem strange how they could attribute their deliverance to these relics of their bondage, when blended into a molten calf. It doubtless was a beautiful object to look upon, but how could they possibly imagine it had wrought the miracles that had freed them from their bondage? Does it not seem strange that they could be so deluded? But let us not censure their weakness too much un-

til we are sure we of the present day are not guilty of just as gross idolatry. It is not at all likely that these people, as slaves of the Egyptians, were in the habit of wearing jewels, and all they possessed they borrowed of those whom they were in bondage to in Egypt. It is not surprising that these poor creatures that had been born and lived all their lives in slavery, should be enamored of the beauty of their gold and silver jewels, and doubtless were very proud when decked out in their borrowed trappings, and this very haughty spirit is what caused them to forget the mercies and goodness of God in delivering them from their enemies, and attributing to this golden image the power that liberated them. Thus the covetous spirit of the flesh always leads from God, and into idolatry. Have not some at this age who are claiming our name, and whom we have reason to believe the Lord has delivered from their state of bondage under the law, in which they were born, who are forgetful of how they were brought up out of that bondage by the high hand and mighty power of God, unaided by any effort of man? Every subject of grace by nature is in bondage to the law, and struggle as they may their shackles only become the more galling by their efforts to free themselves. But when the Lord's appointed time arrives, he makes bare his arm in their salvation, and the poor captive is set free, and then he knows that it was only by the grace of God that he was saved, and then he fully appreciated Paul's language when he said, "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."

Now can it be possible that this quickened vessel of mercy can ever become forgetful of how deliverance came to him, and attribute salvation to anything but the love, power, mercy and grace of God? It does not seem possible, yet of late there have been advanced among us theories that attribute our present or time salvation to other powers from the one that brought us up out of our original state of bondage. This new theory appears to us to be very much in likeness to the idolatry of the Israelites, in merging all their beautiful ornaments in one image and worshiping it in concert. There is a secret disposition in all of us, which is commonly called Arminianism, which causes us to value as beautiful everything that flatters our pride, or feeds our conceit, and we are prone to attribute to such things some virtue in the work of salvation, in time if not in eternity.

There are many jewels which worn as ornaments beautifully adorn the natural character. How beautiful is the character that is adorned with such jewels as honesty, kindness, sincerity, benevolence, virtue, &c. These jewels are more valuable than gold, or silver, or precious stones. Solomon places the price of virtue far above that of rubies. Yet valuable as are these in adorning the natural character, they have no efficacy in the work of the salvation of the saints from bondage, either before or after they have been quickened by the holy Spirit. Paul says, Though he possessed these jewels, if he did not possess charity, (the love of God) they were of no avail. (1 Cor. xiii. 1–3.)

The jewels which the Israelites brought up with them out of their captivity, well represent the traditions which we bring up with us out of our state of bondage. In the vanity of our carnal nature we are prone to cling to some of our pretty ornaments, and sometimes we become so bewitched with their beauty that we attribute a supernatural or spiritual power

to their allurements, and say if we live an honest, law-abiding, benevolent, virtuous life, these ornaments will deliver us from bondage; then we can cast all the jewels in together and get cunning workmen to fashion the whole mass into a beautiful image, or in other words, formulate all these beautiful theories into a tangible form, that we may all dance around it, get up excitable meetings, with shoutings, and cry, "These be thy gods which brought thee up out of captivity." Not only the layity, as they are called, entered into this idolatry, but they were led on by Aaron, their priest, and so it is now; most of the errors the saints are suffered to embrace, they are led into by their priests, or pastors. All the confusion that has disturbed the peace of Zion has nearly always been caused through the public preaching or writings of men in the ministry.

Dear brethren, as we were not brought up out of our former captivity by any of the beautifully wrought works of cunning craftsmen, let us not now look to any works that can be performed by man, no matter how gratifying they may be made to appear to our natural pride; they are but filthy rags, when compared to the robe of righteousness wrought for us by our blessed Redeemer. "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?"

The traditions we brought up with us out of our bondage, which were born and bred in our Arminian nature, are hard for us to become weaned from, yet it is just as much idolatry for us to ascribe our continuance in the liberty of the gospel to anything we can do, no matter how moral or commendable it may be from a natural standpoint, as it was for the Israelites to claim that their jewels when fashioned by cunning workmen into a beast of dazzling beauty, was the god that brought them up out of their bondage.

May we be enabled to "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty, only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh."

B.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

JOHN X. 12, 13.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have concluded to ask a favor of you, which is this, your views on John x. 12, 13. As I wish for all Old School Baptists to agree when they walk together, I am sorry to hear some say they think the wolf there spoken of catcheth the sheep, while others think he catcheth the hireling. This passage may seem to you so plain that any one that can see at all could see through it, but my brother, if I have any light at all, I feel myself to be so far from the fountain of light that I have nothing but the flickerings or glimmerings, so that I cannot see to satisfy my desires. I have frequently been to hear the truth preached, and on account of the crowd have been situated so remote from the speaker that with all the attention I could pay there would be some of his words that I could not understand; I knew I heard him speak, but was not sure I understood what he said. Now, if I have any spiritual sight or hearing, I know that I have fallen so far from God my Savior that if he by his Spirit ever speaks to me, I am so far off that I have doubts whether it is really him who speaks or not. If he speaks a promise to my poor soul, which for an instant almost makes me mount up with wings as eagles, and soar away from this world, the next instant I find myself just where I started from, and doubting whether that promise was mine; I cannot depend upon my hearing at such a distance from the speaker. Then I try the little glimmering light that seems to be flickering about me, with which I try to examine my landmarks, to see whether I am in the way or not, but the light is so dim, or my eyes so blind, that I cannot satisfy my mind, and I am often so benighted that I am almost afraid to call an Old Baptist brother, and if it were not that my name is in the list, and our rules require it, I believe I should not often apply the endearing term. I have no doubt of the Old School Baptists being the children of the living God, and the only people on earth that have the

right to call the Savior of sinners their Elder Brother, for it is right for God's children to call each other brother and sister, but my fears are that I am not of that family. I have been for the last forty-five years trying to draw up close to that Great Preacher, our Elder Brother, that with my dull ears I might hear every articulation and understand every syllable, and read by his great light, so that I might, with my weak eyes, read every word, and distinctly see every letter in the promises; but alas! those forty-five years travel have landed me where I first found myself, away in our polluted world, where I could, by nature, neither see nor hear him whom I trust my soul loveth. Now, notwithstanding I have been striving so long to get up close to the Savior, I do not suppose that my nearest neighbors ever thought I was doing any good works. But I know more about that one thing than they do, for I know to a certainty that in all that time I never did, of myself, do one good thing, and I know I never can, for by sore and sad experience I know that in my flesh there is no good thing. What then can I work with? There being no good principle, what can I work from?

But please pardon me for troubling you to read so much, for I merely intended to send you the remittance, and ask your views on the above Scripture. I have my views, such as they are; if I am wrong, I wish to be right. If my views are right, others are wrong, and as we believe you are blessed with more than ordinary light on the Scriptures, your views are anxiously requested.

My brother, I try to pray God that his Spirit may shine in your heart, and open up the Scriptures plain to your view, so that you can expound it to his dear children, wherever they may be.

Yours, if not a brother, at least a friend,

J. P. TRUEAX.

SANTA FE, Ky., July 26, 1860.

REPLY.

IF not mistaken, we have already given our views on this text, but as our brother, and possibly some others, seem unsettled in regard to its true import, we will cheerfully give such views as we have. The principal difficulty seems to be to understand who it is that the wolf catches, the sheep, or the hireling shepherds. The text reads thus, "But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep."

This illustration is designed to show the difference between the good Shepherd and an hireling. In the preceding verse Christ saith, "I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." To show his claim to this character which he assumes in the context, he contrasts the characteristics of a good shepherd and an hireling. The good Shepherd has an interest in the welfare of the sheep, and holds them dearer to him than his own life, so that he will throw himself between them and danger, and if necessity requires he will die for them rather than they should be destroyed by their enemies. This he has done: he has died to save his people, or sheep. Because he is thus related to them, he is their Shepherd, they are *his own* sheep, he had a right of property in them which he valued more than life. And as he has redeemed them from death with his blood, he is now pledged that they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand.

All this goes to prove that he is truly the good Shepherd, whose own the sheep are. But the characteristics of an hireling are the very reverse of this; he performs his task or labor only from selfish, mercenary considerations, he careth not what becomes of the sheep, if he can only secure his wages; when he sees danger approaching his first and only object is to take care of himself. The wolf may scatter or even catch and destroy the sheep for aught he cares, for he careth not for the flock, if they are destroyed the loss does not fall on him, but on the owner of the flock. These are some of the differences between the good Shepherd, who gave his life for his sheep, and a mere hireling, who would not expose

himself to danger to save the flock from the devouring jaws of the enemy. The reasons assigned by our God why the hireling will desert the flock in the hour of danger are:

First, because he is an hireling.

Second, because he has no interest or right of property in them—*Whose own the sheep are not*, and finally, because he careth not for the sheep.

Hence, we may infer, if we as the sheep of Christ were dependent on a hired shepherd, one who only saves conditionally, or who only works for pay, we should certainly be destroyed by the wolf, but we have reason to bless God that such is not our case; we have a good Shepherd, who owns the flock, and is able and willing and determined to save them with an everlasting salvation. He is no hireling, and we may implicitly rely on his protection. "The Lord is my [our] Shepherd, we shall not want."

Should we so interpret the text as to represent the wolf as catching the hireling instead of the sheep, we would destroy the whole figurative design of the comparison. Beside it would violate the plain rules of our language. The *noun* sheep is plural, and agrees with the pronoun *them*, which is also plural. But in the text, the hireling or *an hireling*, is in the singular number, and cannot grammatically be the antecedent of the pronoun them.

This figure is not used to express the idea that the sheep of Christ are left in the fruitless and unreliable charge of the hireling, or that any of them can ever be destroyed by the wolf, for Christ declares that he himself is the Shepherd of his own sheep, and therefore they shall never perish, as they most undoubtedly would if their Shepherd were an hireling who did not own nor care for the sheep.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., September 15, 1860.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO BROTHER D. M. LEONARD'S APPEAL TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$789 70
L. A. Robinson, Ill., $1.00; Norman Brown, N. Y., $1.00.—Total	2 00
Total to date	$791 70

OBITUARY NOTICES.

IT again becomes my painful duty to record the death of another of my dear sisters, **Martha Midkiff,** who departed this life the 4th inst., after a lingering fever of over two months duration. She bore her affliction with great patience and resignation to the will of Almighty God. My sister's age was forty-nine years and a few months. She leaves her companion and six children to grieve for their dear wife and mother's help and counsel. How many dear friends we have seen die! How many an hour have we spent in the contemplation of death! Surely can we not say that we have seen the doors of the shadows of death, even if they have not been opened to us? No, we have never seen them. We have seen the eyes close, the breath cease, the pulse grow still, and then our imagination has followed the spirit, as we thought, on its viewless journey to its eternal home. But in all this we have been strictly confined to the world; our imaginations have been material and worldly. We have never yet seen what it is to die, except what appears to the outward view, nor had a glimpse of the realm beyond. It is impossible for the human mind to conceive of a state of existence where neither space nor time is. Faith only has looked beyond, and mortal comprehension cannot conceive the knowledge of faith. We only know of faith that it is a confiding grasp and embrace of the word of God: "The substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen," and that it brings peace and rest. And Job has uttered a wish that he might find its darkness (death) and silence a release from his affliction.

E. JOHNSON.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., July 29, 1903.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, Elder Wm. Lively will be at Justus, Pa., Sept. 17th; Waverly, Pa., the 18th; Otego, N. Y., third Sunday, 20th; Brookdale, Pa., 21st. From 22d to 25th, appointments not made, will be later. Cammal, Pa., 26th and 27th; Ingleside, N. Y., 29th. From there expects to go to Canada.

D. M. VAIL.

MEETINGS.

THERE is to be a yearly meeting held with the Old School Baptist Church of Cammal, Pa., fifth Saturday and Sunday in August, (29th and 30th) 1903, the Lord willing. Hope to see a goodly company of sinners, and preachers to minister to our comfort. Those coming from Williamsport will take Pennsylvania division of New York Central & Hudson River R. R. to Cammal. Those coming via Corning, will come on same road to Cammal, inquire for Sammy Moffat, living a few rods from depot. All who come will be made welcome.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet (the Lord willing) with Union Church, five miles south of Colchester, McDonough Co., Ill., Sept. 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1903.

Those coming by rail will be met at Colchester, on Thursday before, and on Friday morning, from the south. Only those from east, west and north of Galesburg, will come to Galesburg by 5 p. m. Thursday, where we will endeavor to get reduced rates from there on. All are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine, will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, Maine, commencing on Friday, Sept. 4th, 1903, and continuing three days. We shall gladly welcome all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Those coming will be met at North Berwick, on Thursday before the time appointed for our yearly conference.

FRED. W. KEENE.

THE Mount Pleasant Regular Baptist Association will convene with the Mount Pleasant Church, in Henry Co., Ky., on Louisville & Lexington division of L. & N. R. R., on Sept. 4th, 1903, and hold three days. Will be glad to welcome as many as can be with us at that time.

C. F. DUDLEY, Church Clerk.

THE Greenville Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association will be held in Lima, Allen Co., Ohio, commencing on Friday before the first Sunday in September, (4th) 1903. We would be glad if the Lord would direct some of his servants to us. If there should not be any one to meet train, take the street car at the depot and ask the conductor for transfer on West Market St., get off car at Jamerson Ave., and go one square south, to 1014 West Spring St., to place of meeting.

GILBERT C. MILLER, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Second Church of Roxbury, at Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, the 9th and 10th of September, 1903, beginning at 10 o'clock a. m., when we expect to meet and greet our brethren and sisters, and friends to truth and righteousness. The place of meeting is two miles from Roxbury village, and six miles from Kelly's Corners, at which places those that come can stop and be taken to the meeting. Trains will be met on the Ulster & Delaware R. R. on Tuesday evening before the meeting, at both places.

We hope to see a number of ministering brethren with us.

J. D. HUBBELL.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the South Gardiner Old School Baptist Church, commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in September, (11th, 12th and 13th,) 1903, and continue three days. All lovers of the gospel of Christ are cordially invited to attend. Parties coming by rail will be met at the South Gardiner depot and cared for.

J. C. CLARK, Clerk.

THE Licking Association will convene with the church at Bethel, Shelby Co., Ky., on Sept. 11th, and continue the two following days.

Those coming by rail can come via Louisville Southern from Lexington to Hemp Ridge, Busey or Shelbyville, where they will be met Thursday p. m. and Friday a. m. Over the C. & O., come to Shelbyville from Louisville. Trains on all roads will be met Thursday p. m. and Friday a. m., except the Mixed train on L. & N. (which is uncertain as to time of arrival.) Should any fail to be met, inquire for Middleton's hack, and come to our place in Shelbyville, Ky.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth to meet with us. We pray and hope to be favored with a pleasant season. The Lord in his mercy grant us his favor according to his will.

P. W. SAWIN.

THE yearly meeting of the Old School Baptist Church of Albany & Troy, will hold a yearly meeting, the Lord willing, Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 23d and 24th, 1903, at the residence of the late Wm. W. Vandenburg, near West Sand Lake, N. Y. Friends will be met at Bath, a station on the D. & H. R. R., just across the river from Albany, N. Y. Please drop a card to Mr. Herrick Green, West Sand Lake, N. Y., or Mr. Delos Becker, Defreestville, N. Y., who will meet the friends that come, especially those coming Wednesday morning. The regular meeting of the church is the Sunday following, and visiting friends are invited to remain over. We hope to see a goodly number of friends; several ministering brethren are expected.

D. M. VAIL.

ELDER D. M. Vail wrote me that Elder Wm. Lively was coming to Burdett, N. Y., and also Elder C. Bogardus wrote me that Elder White was coming to this place about the same time, and would come to Burdett. I take the liberty to ask you to give notice in the SIGNS that the Lord willing, there will be a two days meeting at Burdett, N. Y., the 24th and 25th, Thursday and Friday, before the fourth Sunday in September, 1903. We invite all that can make it convenient to come; we will be glad to see them. Any one coming can inquire for brethren S. M. Baker, A. Ayres, Alexander Wheat or H. B. Elliott.

H. B. ELLIOTT.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 71. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1903. NO. 18.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HARBOURTON, N. J., June 27, 1903.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—By your request, and that of others, I will try to pen my experience in passing from nature's darkness to the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. I tremble at the attempt, fearing that it will crowd out much richer and better pasture than has grown in me, but if God has planted his word in my heart, and I am made to feed upon it, and to be nourished by it, why should I be ashamed of his workmanship? I hope that I never shall, although at times it seems but a dream and almost gone, yet I cannot forget that wonderful change which I was made to feel most thankful for. It was plainly shown to me that I had no part in this work, and it could not be taught by human knowledge, but it is given from above, and is of the free mercy of God. Words spoken by the apostle long ago suited my case, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." It is the gift of God, free and complete, and I saw that I could do nothing but gladly accept his mercy, and walk in humble submission to his will.

It might be well for me to go back to the time of my birth of Adam's race. I was born at Yardville, N. J., April 5th, 1873, and spent my childhood days with my twin brother and three sisters there on my father's farm. I seldom went anywhere to church, as my father was not a member of any church, and my mother was a member at Hopewell, twenty-one miles distant. She could go but a few times in a year, and the most of the time we children were left at home, to keep house when we were old enough. Sunday afternoons Sunday School was held at our district schoolhouse, and against our mother's wishes we children would sometimes go. I was not interested in the Sunday school lesson, but went to see my schoolmates. I well remember one of the teachers telling me about little children in heathen lands without the gospel, and that they without it would be lost, and she said that I with others should bring some money the next time with which they would send a preacher to save them. I did not know what being saved meant, and so did not take the money the next time.

Mother would quite often talk to me about Jesus, who died to save his people from their sins, and of how sinful we all were, and I would get much interested in her talk, and thought it would be dreadful to be destroyed, and in burnings forever, yet I would soon forget all about it.

At the age of ten years I had a strange dream: I thought the world was coming to an end; I was going to school it seemed, and I could plainly see the devil, as I thought it was, gathering up the wicked and throwing them into a large furnace on wheels, red with the heat, and I was greatly alarmed, and feared that he would take me, and longed for my mother's presence. Instantly she was by my side, and I told her what I was afraid of, and asked her that I might hide under her shawl, and then it seemed that we both crept under the fence out of sight as the devil passed by. This childhood's dream left such an impression on my mind that I never forgot it entirely, and to-day I can go to the very spot where it seemed that we hid. But soon again my mind was upon fun, and a good time, as I then called it. I can well see myself as I look back, rolling sin as a sweet morsel under my tongue, loving the world and its vanities, laughing at other people's calamities, until the Lord spoke and said, "Thus far shalt thou go and no further." And truly I was ripe for a fall, for sin was my all. I had now reached the age of fifteen years, and was slender and very tall. I remember well thinking what a man I was becoming, far ahead of my twin brother and others of my age. Now my fall came; trouble knocked at my door and walked in upon me. That summer my father had a large hay crop, and some of it we sold right from the field. One day I drove a load of hay to market, and while I was waiting for my father to come and unload it, there came a very heavy shower, and fearing the hay would spoil I went at it in great earnest, unloading it alone. That was the last of my work for the summer, I had suffered a strain, and for two long years I was able to do but little work. I now realized that pleasure and health were taken from me, and this worried me greatly, and so at last I thought it would be best for me to starve myself to death. My oldest sister coaxed me hard to eat, but I told her that I would not, for I wished to die, and she left me out of patience. When my mother heard all this she told me that I must not think of such a thing, and that in time I would outgrow this weakness and be all right again. I obeyed my mother, but was discouraged in getting well, as the doctors said it would take a long time. Thinking over my condition, and of what would become of me if I did die, I spent many, many nights crying, desiring no sleep.

At that time I cannot tell just how my past life would come up before me; thoughts like this would come, What an evil, wrong, wicked, sinful, vile life I have led, and soon I would forget my bodily affliction, and began to grieve over my sins, which had now become my chief trouble; I knew not what to do nor where to go; I spent my time in sore distress, crying and weeping week after week, and month after month, until I was compelled to seek the Lord for forgiveness and pardon. My poor heart prayed earnestly and constantly that my sins might be blotted out in his sight, but instead of any relief I grew worse and worse. While in this miserable state, one day I picked up one of mother's papers, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I became interested in the reading, as it told

of things which I had passed through. I was amazed, and did not know how to believe it, for I thought my case was an outside one, and that none could be half so vile as I. From that time until this I have been greatly comforted by the rich things contained in that paper.

About this time sister Lawshe and other Old School Baptists arranged to have meetings at their homes in Trenton, and would send us word, and sometimes mother would ask me to take her, and the preaching did me much good. The Elders spoke of the Lord's people being poor and afflicted, vile and sinful, so that they hated their own nature. This was the very way that I felt, yet I did not want it known by any one. I felt a great desire to know the truth, and resolved to read the Bible, but the more I read, the more it seemed to condemn my wicked ways, and my feelings became such that I can never describe them, for I saw again that I was lost, and that I could not help myself, and what to do I did not know, yet I was begging God for mercy all the time, but as yet no relief came; sorrow, grief and afflictions seemed my only friends, for they were with me day and night. Truly I longed for a ray of light.

One morning while caring for the horses, the words came to my mind clearly and forcibly, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in his excellent word," and there came a smile on my face, for they seemed to take me in. O, how sweet to my soul these words were; I never can forget them. For days I seemed to live upon their richness. But joy brings sorrow, and sorrow brings joy, and soon I sank more deeply than ever in gloom and distress, and doubted all that I had passed through. About this time we received a card saying that Elder Vail would preach in Trenton, and father, mother and I went. I do not remember the text, but every word went to my heart and condemned my whole life, and my wicked ways. So weeping was all that I could reap from it, and this was what I needed, though then I could not see it so. When we reached our gate on our way home I told my parents that I would open the gate and walk down the lane. As soon as they had passed through I lay down on the ground and cried bitterly, because I felt so badly and so condemned. When I arose my eyes were fixed upon the sky, and it seemed that walking among the stars down towards me I saw the form of a man with large white wings, and in his hand he carried a sword. Speaking to me by name he said, "Willie, you are my child," and disappeared. It was most wonderful to me, but I said nothing about it.

The friends in Trenton were so kind as to let us know about the appointments there, and we got to them quite often. My excuse was to take mother. Several times that we went there was no preaching, but this did not discourage either of us. I dearly loved the doctrine which they proclaimed, but thought such mercies could not be for me. These thoughts would bring fresh tears down my cheeks, and then I would seek the Lord in prayer, but while praying such thoughts as this would come into my mind, You know that you do not deserve what you are asking for; be still, and bear what belongs to you; do not place your wrong upon the innocent. This I could not deny, and I would get up and leave the place. O, how I feared the Lord because of my sins. I felt that I was lost, and lost forever, yet I begged the Lord that he would save me from hell and destruc-

tion, which path I had all my life been walking in. But the way of God is in himself, and what he does is ever best.

Now the meetings and the SIGNS had become a great comfort to me, they never failed to bring a sense of peace to my troubled mind when bowed down in distress. As I look back over those then dark, sad days, I now count them the best and happiest days of my life, and can see that they were good for me, turning my thoughts toward Christ Jesus, setting my feet upon the Rock, establishing my goings, and putting a new song in my mouth, even praise to our God. At the age of twenty-one years, and through the kind providence of an all-wise God, we moved to my mother's old home at Ewing. How glad I was that we were nearer Hopewell, yet I thought, What can I do with my sins? for they have grown like mountains before my eyes. I seemed to sink deeper and deeper into the miry clay. Many, many times I wished that I was dead, and several times I dreamed of my own funeral, but would awaken disappointed.

I tried to get relief from my burden and sin, and I went into young company, but soon found it a task to enjoy myself; the things they cared for I did not, and so instead of relief, it but added sorrow to my heart.

One Sunday night Elder Wm. L. Beebe preached at sister Lawshe's, in Trenton. It being a stormy night, I went down alone, and after the meeting sister Lawshe spoke to the Elder about me as one interested in the word, and asked him to talk with me about it. He spoke many lovely and comforting words to my mind, but I felt afraid to open my mouth. At last I expressed my feeling as being in the hymn 1022: "I am so vile, so full of sin, I fear that I'm not born again." He took the book and read the hymn, and turning to me said, "If these words express your feeling you should make it known to the church, for in that hymn there is a rich experience of a child of God." This was in the winter of 1895, and this winter had brought more sorrow to my poor soul than any time before. Truly I had come to hate myself, and felt that I was not fit to sit at the table and eat with the rest of the family. I asked constantly that the Lord would take away my sins, and guide my wayward feet in the paths of righteousness. I do not think that I could get into a much worse hell than my ownself seemed to me to be. I slept but few nights that winter without my pillow being wet with tears. One night I slept but little, and had a wonderful dream, in which I saw the end of time, with the heavens on fire, and above the sky I saw a great white throne made of white marble. It was long and narrow. In the centre Jesus stood, and his twelve disciples around him, and at one end was a door, which was also of white marble, and I could plainly see his people going in. I was so happy walking on the clouds in heaven, and I soon came to the door, then the thought came, You are not fit, you are that wicked one. I cannot describe the feeling. I started back as it seemed, to everlasting punishment. Going down I seemed to meet my father and mother, and they told me that was the only way to enter in, at the door, and I broke out weeping. At this moment these words were spoken to me in a loud voice, which awoke me from my sleep, "Thou shalt be made willing in the day of my power." I wondered and felt to praise God for such a token, for it made me so happy, and relieved my sorrow.

At different times that spring these words out of the Bible, that I never re-

membered reading, or of having heard read, would come upon my mind, as though I had known them by heart: "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "The world by wisdom knows not God." It was in the school of Christ that I was taught these things. I now began to feel and know that the Lord was shining round about me, and had become merciful to my unrighteousness. O, how happy I felt because of his love. One morning at the table my sister Lizzie about her work was singing a gospel hymn; the words touched my heart, and I left the table crying. My father followed me into the shop and inquired what was the matter. I asked for my mother, and begged him to forgive me all my wrongs. As soon as I could I told my mother all the trouble of heart that had been mine so long. My mother broke down crying with me, but said she was glad the Lord had led me thus, because it was a true christian experience, as she believed. She said if I felt like telling it to the church, it would be right for me to do so. I felt to ask all the family to forgive me all the wrong that I had ever done them. My love for the people of God grew stronger and stronger, until I asked my parents if they would not ask you down to see me the next time you came to Hopewell, for as you know they were without a pastor at that time. I thought I would like to talk with you when you came. You spent the night at our home, and quite a number came in, and in a weak way I told them what I have here written. You deemed it a good experience through grace, and that it was not mixed with creature goodness or self-righteousness. Some of the hymns that were sweet to me were sung, and they seemed very sweet that evening. I will mention the numbers of a few in Beebe's collection: 751, 464, 1022, 671, 881. The next morning I took you to the train feeling much better. When I bade you good bye I hoped that I would be able to come to the church before long, and I told you to arrange a time, for I longed to be with them, and the second Saturday in June I came and related what I trusted had been the dealings of God with me, and that I had been made to trust in him alone for salvation, that Jesus was the only way given under heaven and among men, whereby we must be saved. I was received as you know. But while I was so glad to be numbered among them, I do not think that I ever felt so broken up, and unworthy, and out of place, as I did standing there asking favor from so good a people. This Saturday was a clear, beautiful, balmy day in nature, but the next was cold, and it rained in torrents, nevertheless three others as well as myself were baptized. I shall never forget the hymn that was sung before we went down into the water: 1129, "Jesus, and shall it ever be, a mortal man ashamed of thee?" Also the words that you spoke to me when you gave me the hand of fellowship; they sank deep into my heart. It all seemed too good for me, but I was happy, and I could not help it.

Happiness is like the wind, it comes and goes without our control. Before dawn the next day the devil seemed to take possession of me, and doubts and fears and blind unbelief filled my mind. When I got home it was a very dark, sad night spiritually to me, and I prayed earnestly that I might know if I had done wrong in uniting with the church,

for I thought that perhaps I had deceived the people of the true and living God. Some time the next day the Scripture came sweetly to my soul, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Instantly my fear was gone.

Dear brother, I have been trying ever since to walk in the way in a becoming manner, but I am so blind to spiritual things that I go stumbling, falling, fearing, and am so faint and weak that at times I am almost persuaded that I am not a saint at all. Then the word comes as an anchor to the soul sure and steadfast, holding me up to praise his great name, through faith, hope and love, which are the foundation of any experience of grace.

Now in closing, I wish to say that I feel that the dear Lord has been very merciful to me all the days of my life; I have nothing with which to repay him, but desire to be thankful and submissive to his will. Since I have been in the fold I have seen many brought into the banqueting-house of God, to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. Two of them are very near to me by natural ties: one my twin brother, and the other the wife of my bosom, for which I feel very thankful indeed.

I give this to your hands imperfect; after reading it and correcting it, if anything is left that you think would comfort one of the dear children of God, you are at liberty to put it in print, not to the honor of my name, but alone to the glory of God.

WM. T. YARD.

HARBOURTON, N. J., June 7, 1903.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR PASTOR:—To-day I will try to comply with your request, which you made last fall, that I write an account of what I hope has been an experience of grace, for you to do with as you think best.

As you already know, I was raised by Presbyterian parents, and attended meeting with them until after I was married, and went to Sunday School whenever my health and the weather permitted. I do not remember ever seeing myself a sinner until the winter of 1893. That Christmas I was given a Bible by the Sunday-School for having perfectly memorized and recited the shorter catechism. Being thirteen years of age, a few years younger than the most of the girls in my class were, when I had gained that knowledge, and received their reward, I felt very proud, and told one of my friends that I was going to read it all through that winter, and in the spring I was going to join the church. I thought by that time I would be good enough. But very soon afterwards I was made to feel ashamed of that remark, and I worried over it day and night. I was made to know that I never could make myself good enough, nor a fit subject for baptism, if I should read my Bible through fifty times. I sincerely hoped that my friend would forget what I had said, and would never mention it to me or tell any one of it, but my wish was not gratified, for some time during the spring months she asked me why I had not united with the church, as I had told her in the winter I was going to do. Then I tried to tell her how I had been ashamed of and had worried over that remark, and what a sinful girl I felt myself to be, but she did not understand me, and I could not explain it to her.

At that time I had never heard an Old School Baptist preach, nor of a christian experience, but somehow I felt that before one should join a church they should

have some assurance that their sins were forgiven, and that they were the children of God, and I thought that if they united with the church before they had received that assurance, it would be the greatest sin that could be committed. But this I could not make my friends understand; they thought every one was saved who was willing to be, and so I was left an outcast in religious matters. After this I continued in and enjoyed worldly pleasures, yet all the while mourned because I was such a sinner.

In the winter of ninety-eight there were meetings in the schoolhouse every evening for two weeks, and I attended one evening, and was again shown my sins as such a mountain before me. An other friend came to me, when the meeting was over, she saw I was exercised, and asked why I did not stand up, when all who wanted to be saved were asked to arise? I told her it was because I had no hope that my sins were forgiven. I only saw such a stack of them heaped before me, and she said that the Lord had done all that he could for me, that he had sent his only begotten Son to die for sinners, and that now if they would not accept of his love, and open their hearts to receive him, they would be lost, that he was unable to do anything more for them, and that it was their duty to act now, and if they would repent and be baptized, they would never feel sinful again. But this talk did not comfort me at all, there was no healing in it for a sin-sick soul, and so I did not attend again. I felt that I would be better off out of the company of people who would be guilty of trying to take the power out of God's hands.

After I was married in June, 1900, I heard my husband talk of his experience, and was brought in company with many Old School Baptists, and heard them all talk of the same blessed theme, salvation by grace, and ascribe all praise to God, and not claim any goodness in themselves. I felt at once that they were the people of God, and that they knew of the things that I desired to know. It was always a pleasure to me to listen when they were talking, and to get my husband to talk of his experience, yet I did not want any one to know I enjoyed it. I continued on in this way until some time in May, last year, when I first received a hope in the blessed Redeemer. I cannot say at just what moment I first saw the light, but received sweet assurances through several sermons which I heard preached, and in heart feelings, when alone. But I did not want to say anything to any one about it, for I was afraid I would deceive them. I felt to be so great a sinner, that God could never have mercy upon me. But as sinful as I have been, ever since then this hope which was given me, has never entirely left me, although at times it seems almost gone.

There seemed to be two things within me fighting each other; one was a wee hope of better things, and the other my own disagreeable nature, which too often would win the battle. It seemed so easy for me to yield to temptation that my mind was not at all settled. It was on Sunday, July 30th, that you first spoke to me of these things. You said, If you were not mistaken, that I was interested in spiritual things. I had to confess that I hoped that I was, and told you that I was so vile that I did not want to tell any one that I was interested, for fear of deceiving them, and you said that the fear of deceiving, and of being deceived, went with a christian experience. This was a great comfort to me, and as often

as you spoke to me you comforted me, yet a hope in the mercy of God seemed too good for me. I knew I could not deserve it, and I hardly dared to claim it, yet what else had I to trust in? I had no goodness in myself to boast of, I was a very sinful creature, and could not do anything good, as much as I desired to.

During the summer I was greatly blessed by having hymns come into my mind; the first one I remember was,

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me,
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."

I never remember hearing any one sing it, but I looked in my husband's book and found it there, and it was a comfort to me all the way through. Another was,

GUIDE 14X "Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in christian love,
The fellowship of kindred minds,
Is like to that above."

This I used to hear Mrs. Mary Pierson sing, when I was a small child. I think she was a member either at Harbourton or at Hopewell, and she often visited in our family, and I used to think then what lovely company it must be, that dwelt together in such perfect unity, and who spent all their days praising God.

During one of the conversations which we had, you told me that these exercises of mind seemed to you like a christian experience, and you thought that whenever I was enabled to come before the church I would be given a welcome home there. I attended the meeting the fourth Saturday in August, hoping to be able to ask for a home, but when the opportunity was given I was unable to move; my sins fastened me in my seat; I yet feared that I was mistaken, and desired you to call at my home that I might talk with you, and tell you more fully of these things, so that if it were but worldly imagination you could tell me so before I tried to deceive the church. One afternoon in September you came, and again assured me that you thought the Lord had been dealing with me. During all this time, I was enjoying sweet seasons when alone, being blessed in ways which I cannot describe. I attended the meeting the fourth Saturday in September, but not with the expectation of going before the church, for I felt just as sinful as ever, and feared that I had no right to ask for a home with such a dear people. But when the opportunity was given, I seemed forced to go by some power not in myself, and as you know, tried to tell the church the best I could of what I hoped had been the Lord's dealings with me, and to my surprise, they received me as a candidate for baptism.

That night I tried to pray that if I was not doing the will of God, he would in some way prevent me from being baptized the next day, which was September 28th, but nothing prevented, and I enjoyed a peaceful season all day. I felt that indeed the Lord was with me, and I desired that I might praise him always, and live for ever in this first love.

Since then he has led me most of the time in paths of light, and has given me feasts of spiritual things, through the preaching which I have heard, and in many ways has blessed me, and I sincerely hope that I may be thankful to him always, and never grow weary of praising him for his great goodness and mercy to me, the least of all his children, if one at all.

I hope I am your sister in Christ,

MARY M. YARD.

[THE two above narratives of expe-

rience clearly show the work of the Lord, and this work is in no wise different in this day, than in former years. To know ourselves as sinners, and to know Christ as a Savior of sinners, sums the matter all up. We would like to see in the manuscript that comes to us for publication, more frequent narratives of personal experience of grace. We can well remember in early years, how eagerly we read such narratives, and felt that we could understand them, when sermons and editorials were too deep, as it seemed, for us to understand. But we hung upon experiences and strove to see whether any had been led as we had been, and what gladness we sometimes felt when some one would speak of feelings that we thought we knew something about. The above letters from brother and sister Yard, conqain all the waymarks that attend the travel of the people of God.—ED.]

"HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, IS THE LORD OF HOSTS."

WHEN irreverence towards God so much prevails among his sinful creatures that many of his professed children are carried away by it, we cannot too often contemplate his absolute holiness. It is shockingly irreverent in a sinful creature to speak of his holy Creator as "the author of sin." This manifests the depth of human depravity. Whoever thus presumes to charge unrighteousness to God, exalts himself above the Most High, and asserts that he is superior in wisdom and holiness to God himself. Whatever God has done, or however universal his "eternal purpose" or decree may be, the truth remains that the God of battles, the Lord of hosts, is holy. So absolutely holy is he that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. The sufferings and death in the flesh for the sins of his people, of the sinless and spotless Son of God, is the most overwhelming proof that God in his holiness is a consuming fire to all sin, and that he has no communion or fellowship with sinners. For this very reason Jesus shall save his people from their sins. God loves his people with unchangeable and perfect love, even as he loved his holy Son, but their sins were so offensive to him that his Son must wash them from their sins in his own blood, and make them spotless and holy before God in love. How is it possible then for those who have any true understanding of God's atonement, made by his obedient and dying Son, to yet reply against God, charging him with being the responsible author of sin, if indeed he decreed all things? If the decree of sin and wickedness makes God the author and cause thereof, then those who make this charge involve themselves in their own charge, unless they deny that God ordained the death of his innocent Son by wicked hands. But the moment they admit that God decreed the atonement by the death of his Son on the cross, their charge that God's decree of sin and wickedness makes him the responsible or guilty author thereof, is proven to be false by the Scriptures and their own admission; for the betrayal and crucifixion of Christ were the most sinful and wicked crimes of the wicked world, yet God's counsel and purpose determined it all. God was most holy in his wisdom and counsel, purpose and appointment, in determining every act and actor in the betrayal and murder of his holy child Jesus, and each guilty person in that most wicked of all crimes was foreknown and determined in the counsel of God as necessary, "For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done," said the inspired apostles in solemn prayer to the

Lord. The fulfillment of God's righteous law, the redemption and holiness of his sin-ruined people, the exaltation on high of his beloved Son, and the eternal glory of God himself in his holiness, all were embraced in this wonderful decree of God. Yet all the actors in the persecution unto death of the dear dying Lamb of God were moved by envy and hatred, and acted from wicked hearts and by wicked hands, and were the guilty betrayers and murderers of the holy Son of man. They were as much at war against the before determined counsel and decree of God as any who now live, and they wickedly labored to defeat his purpose. So did the envious and murderous brethren of Joseph, lovely type of Jesus, yet the very things they did to defeat the dreams of Joseph, only fulfilled the purpose of God and Joseph's dreams. God was holy, and wise, and merciful in it all, both to the suffering Joseph and all his kindred; yet all those purposed events, as divinely recorded in the Scriptures, are the most notable acts of awful cruelty and hardened crime, and they show that the perpetrators were steeped in sin and wickedness. But these were some of the all things that work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. And this they do, because God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and to his own glory. And in all his purpose and counsel and will, God is infinitely wise and good and holy.

Now, having seen both the goodness and holiness of God in his counsel and purpose, as embracing and determining the above Bible record of the most criminal conduct of wicked men, we are authorized to believe and testify that he is likewise just and holy and good in his before determined counsel and purpose concerning all other sinful and wicked events of the world.

"I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory."—Isaiah vi. 1–3. This caused the prophet to say, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."—Verse 5.

This is the hallowed effect upon every one who sees the Lord upon his high and holy throne, and hears the voice of his holy messenger, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts." The man who sees the overpowering holiness of the thrice holy King of glory, the Lord of hosts, upon his throne of glory will also see his own vile unholiness in contrast, and will confess with Isaiah, "I am undone," and with Job, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." John likewise saw and heard those before the throne of God who had six wings, and they were full of eyes within, and said, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come."—Rev. iv. 8. The holy apostles and prophets and patriarchs of old also ascribed holiness to the Lord, as well as supreme majesty, dominion and almighty power, but humbly confessed their own unrighteousness and nothingness in the sight of God. Likewise have the meek of the earth, the saints of all ages, to whom it was given to know the Lord, magnified the name of God as glorious in holiness, and just and righteous in all his works and ways, but

they have penitently confessed that to them belongs sin and unrighteousness and confusion of faces. Therefore we must know that whoever says that the holy Lord of hosts is unholy, unrighteous or the author of sin and wickedness, *in any event*, let him do what he will, he who thus speaks against God is led by the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, for the mind of Christ never leads any one to reply against his Maker. When wicked men went out in the darkness of night to take Jesus, to mock and scourge, torture and kill him, he meekly said to Peter, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" In the agonies of death on the cross he prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Although God hid the things of his kingdom from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto those who were as lowly and dependent as babes, his holy Son said, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." It was good, therefore, and just and holy.

O, let us never reply against God, nor murmur, nor find fault with him, but ever say, "It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good." God hath chosen his people in the furnace of affliction, that they should be purified as gold in the fire, and tried and made white, and that they should worship him in the beauties of holiness. Therefore they are the poor of this world, an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. As an example, consider the Lord's servant Job, who, when Satan by wicked men had robbed him of all his wealth, slew his servants, and bereft him of his ten children, humbly bowed his head in sorrow and worshiped, and said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Then, when Satan had laid his hand on the person of Job, and sorely afflicted him with boils from his feet to his head, and his wife tempted him to "curse God and die," he said to her, "What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" The Bible abounds with such God-given examples of reconciliation to him, and confidence in him, all testifying that his hand and his counsel were in all those afflictive providences, though wicked men and devils were the instruments of them, and in all God was righteous and good and holy. It is written, "In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly." So it was with Joseph, who told his penitent brothers that it was not they who sent him into Egypt, but God; and with Jesus, who answered Pilate, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above," and with Paul, who wrote to the persecuted saints, whose houses and goods were spoiled, not to be moved by those afflictions, saying, "For yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto."

The carnal mind of man would reply against God for all those fearful calamities, and curse God to his face, as Satan said Job would do, and would say, if God "appointed" the wicked to afflict and persecute his children, even unto death, and to put his own Son to death, then God himself is to blame or responsible therefor, and is the author or cause of all that he has appointed to be done. The darkened understanding and sin-blinded judgment of carnal men thus charges God with unrighteousness, and denies the holiness of his counsel and purpose in appointing, predestinating or determining all things.

We have had a recent lamentable in-

stance of this corruption of the carnal mind, as shown by dear Elder Chick's faithful and complete refutation in the SIGNS of slanderous reports against Predestinarian Baptists, falsely charging that the practical tendency and effect of this doctrine is licentious, unholy and debasing. Let us pity those whose minds are so at war against the sovereign purpose and dominion of God in all things, that they will thus reproach his doctrine, and falsely accuse his people who believe it.

Joyfully we turn our attention to holy men of old, who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and gratefully we hear them testify that our God is holy. "Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the Lord our God is holy." "The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works." "God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding. God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness." Daniel said in prayer, "O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day." John said of the victorious saints, "And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy." "And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments."

O, may we be of those who thus love and glorify God, the King of all the earth, who reigneth over the heathen, and cry one to another, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts."

D. BARTLEY.

LEBANON, Ohio, June 1, 1903.

GUTHRIE, Okla., August 10, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—When I was in trouble I went an uninvited guest to the house of Elder John R. Respes, editor of the *Gospel Messenger*, and pastor of the Primitive Baptist Church at Butler, Ga. I found him seated with his son-in-law, in the spacious veranda of his fine old southern mansion. Being an utter stranger I declined a proffered seat until I had told my name and the object of my coming, which was to get some information on religious subjects, and be shown the way of salvation; that I had come to him for this purpose at the suggestion of Deacon Digby, of Brownsville, Alabama. I told him I desired to ask some questions, but not to argue any point in theology, though not pretending to be an ignoramus in current denominational tenets and views; that I had heard he was "A guide of the blind, a teacher of babes, and instructor of the foolish," and that I needed that kind of help, for I was in unspeakable distress on account of my sins and hopeless condition. The interview began at 1:11 p. m., and continued with intermissions for sleep and eating until 1:11 p. m. next day, when I took the train and left on my regular business.

Never before or since has it been given to me to hear the truth so plainly stated in its entirety, and so forcibly demonstrated as on that occasion. Somehow I asked just the right questions, and got just the answers my soul was hungering for. I saw the scheme of redemption as he expounded it. For the first time I understood the Old Baptist doctrine with the clearness of conviction of its truth. But the clearer the view of the infinite holiness of God, and the atoning blood of the Lamb of God, "shed for many," the more oppressive became my burden of sin and guiltiness, and the more depressed

my spirits. For the next five days I was with Jonah in "the belly of hell," beyond reach of any life-line human soul-savers could throw out, and utterly helpless in myself. I, too, saw that "Salvation is of the Lord" only, and my deliverance came at nine o'clock Tuesday morning, Sept. 28th, 1886, but the manner of its coming was as surprising as the joy of it was heavenly, unspeakable by word of man. I hope to talk it over with many ten thousand years from now.

Elder Respes was one of those rare great thinkers whose names are kept alive through the centuries by some formula containing "the sum of the matters," sayings to which reference is made when it is said, "A knowledge of the best things that have ever been said is called learning."

To present to the church one of his demonstrable conclusions, is the object for which this article is written, and sent for publication in the SIGNS.

As stated, Elder Respes in this interview was very cordial and profound, treating of subjects in bulk, and by no means in a "katydid wrangle" sort of way. His was a peculiar mind in this, when once a subject or text came before him for examination, (he said it of himself) he was unable to get rid of it until he had made an exhaustive investigation of it. He was once called to the charge of a certain church, and for a whole year preached on one text: "If I perish I perish." There were forty accessions to the church that year. There was little about him but mind. His bodily presence was not commanding, and for many years he was an invalid. He was a rich man, a graduate of the Georgia State University at Athens, and had served as a member of the State Constitutional Convention. But all there was of him in the days that I knew him, he was an Old Baptist editor and preacher, towering and thrilling in the pulpit, but greatest in conversation with friends, for when heart talks to heart, things find lodgment. He was a man of convictions, humble, yet positive and frank in his expression of them. It is safe to say he seldom sent any caller empty away.

This preamble, not without interest in itself, I am hoping, prepares the reader for a saying of the Elder, to whom the Lord, who has led me about and instructed me all my days, sent me for "sweet counsel" that twenty-second and twenty-third of September, 1886. After he had expounded to me the doctrine of salvation by grace, for which the Primitive Baptist Church stands representative, he said with the solemnity of the full assurance of understanding, "That is it, or there is just nothing of it all." Words that sank deep into my heart. I saw it then; I see it clearer the more I see of the goings on of the bewildered sects, teaching that repentance, baptism, contributing to missions, supporting societies and good works generally, are conditions of salvation. For it is the organic constitution of the universe that "the soul that sinneth it shall die," or as not less graphically stated in Romans vi. 23, "The wages of sin is death." Not repentance, not reformation, not charitable deeds, not human endeavor, but death. A death must intervene; either the sinner must die for his sins, or as the Old School Baptists teach, Christ must die for him, the just for the unjust. "By his knowledge shall my righteous justify many." How? "For he shall bear their iniquities." That is the only "how." So taught Elder Respes, so teach the Scriptures in the law, the prophets and the Psalms; so taught our Lord himself, and

God has raised up the Old School Baptists to keep alive that doctrine: the atonement, the experience of grace, the eternal purpose, foreknowledge, election, predestination, and as Jonah expressed it, "Salvation is of the Lord," and of which Jesus on the cross said, "It is finished." And now the reader will concur with Elder Respes, "That is it, or there is just nothing of it all."

Not satisfied with establishing the doctrine of salvation by grace, he fortified it, making it to his hearers look stronger, by contrasting with it the absurdity of conditionalism, a process of logic of which he was a master.

Sister R. Anna Phillips related to me an incident of a doctrinal import occurring in his last illness that will thrill the heart of every Old School Baptist that reads it. She was sitting at his bedside. He reached and clasped her hand, and with great yearning of soul said repeatedly, "I want to love Jesus." She told him he did. "For have you not," said she, "as my pastor, often taught me from the pulpit, If in our heart we desire a thing spiritual we have it? Now you want to love Jesus, which is proof to me that you do love him." Thereupon they both broke down in tears.

All yours,

WM. S. SPEER.

DRAIN, Oregon, May 10, 1903.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—Our subscription is now overdue, and within you will find renewal for another year. I would be so glad were we able to help pay the debt off from the dear old SIGNS. We do not see how we could get along without it. Some say that we ought to quit taking the religious papers, and take the Bible only for our guide, but to read the SIGNS only sweetens the Bible to me. We read in the Bible of things that took place thousands of years ago. How would we know to-day whether Christ's power was still manifested in the sons and daughters of men, if we had no way of communication one with another? We might, at times, have a conflict within ourselves, but how would we know from whence it came, but by talking with or writing to others? We are strengthened through the SIGNS, and by what preaching we hear, and have the Scriptures explained, which we poor little ones often do not understand.

We have received a good letter from our dear old brother and sister Allison, which I think will prove edifying to all the household of faith, and I do not wish to lay it aside. But one thing in it is faulty, they give too much praise to us. We do not see that we have ever done anything good in all our lives, and it does make us feel so little, when we hear any praise of ourselves. It seems to me that I have one of the most unruly tongues that any one ever had. I do wish so often that I could keep silent. But the dear brethren and sisters have seemed to overlook my faults, and continue to show fellowship for me. Many times I have thought of all these things in tears. How can I keep silent when the Lord has so abundantly blessed me? Many times, it has seemed to me as if our little church was going to crumble to pieces, our pastors would leave us, and all would be dark, and we would be greatly worried, but thanks be to our heavenly Father, he still provides us with an under-shepherd to go in and out before us, and our prospects as a church now seem to be bright again. But we must not look for ease in Zion, long at a time. But let us leave all that to the Lord, and rejoice while we can.

Dear brethren, we all ought to be of a forgiving spirit. If we forgive not the trespass of our brother, how can we expect our heavenly Father to forgive us all that we do that is wrong? and two wrongs can never make a right. As we all know that we sin daily, we ought to forbear one another in love. When we do not what we ought, or do what we ought not, we feel guilty and ashamed, for every heaven-born child of God is possessed with the old, obdurate nature. Some, like myself, have ugly dispositions, and it takes the more chastisement to keep such a nature under, than others may need.

But I am saying here too much. If I could write as others do for the SIGNS, I would not be ashamed to try, but my tongue is but stammering, I cannot tell what I want to tell, but I would love to tell of the blessed Jesus, who has done so much for me, for I sometimes do hope I have felt his cleansing power in my poor, sinful heart. In closing, I want to express to you, brother Beebe, my sincere sympathy for you in all your afflictions.

Your little sister in love to all the household of faith,

S. MORNINGSTAR.

GRASS VALLEY, Oregon.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER MORNINGSTAR:—Through the wonderful mercy of God extended to us poor creatures of a moment, we are still blessed with sanity of mind, and are also enjoying our normal health, which is very good considering our age (we now being nearly seventy-two years of age) for all of which we desire to have grateful hearts to the Giver of all our blessings, both temporal and spiritual, and we do sincerely hope that this will reach you, and find you all well in body and mind, and blessed with the comfortable communion of the Holy Spirit. While reading to-day your very good letter in the dear old SIGNS, my mind was called back to the good old times, which we used to enjoy in visiting you, and trying in weakness to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ in your house, and at Drain Station. O, my sister, those days will never come again, but they will never be forgotten by me, so long as I retain my memory. Those were golden days, when we could meet together in the name of Jesus our blessed Lord, and make melody in our hearts to God. Then we could sing his praise, and offer up our thanksgivings, together with solemn supplication to God.

It is a great comfort to this poor old sinner to remember the earnest and loving faces of dear brethren and sisters while I in much weakness, was trying to preach Jesus. O, how encouraging it was to me to see the glow of love and fellowship in your faces, while I was speaking. How it humbled me to be so kindly received, and so lovingly treated by the dear children of God, I felt so unworthy, and I feel unworthy still, but I feel to thank the dear Lord that though I have often been cast down, I have not been destroyed, and though I am often in darkness and have no light, yet I am enabled to trust in the name of the Lord, and to stay myself upon my God, who is God over all, blessed for evermore. Yea, he is that God who declares the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. The pleasure of the Lord is his people, for "The beasts of the field shall honor me, the dragons and the owls: because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers

in the deserts, to give drink to my people, my chosen. This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." And he says, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember thy sins." This is not for our works, nor because we had become so good that it is his duty to save us. "But now saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee." He does not say, I have made a way possible that ye might be redeemed if you will only become good enough by learning to say the Lord's prayer, and committing to memory some Scriptures, &c. And he says, I have not only redeemed thee, but I have called thee by thy name, and thou art mine. Yes, he has "Called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began." Thus his people are all called in one hope of their calling, and that hope is Jesus, in all his fullness. Because he says, "Ye are mine," it follows that we are not our own, being bought with a price, and that price embraces all the suffering, and the awful death of the dear Savior on the Roman cross. Therefore he says, "Glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

So, my dear brother and sister, I am forced to believe in the absolute sovereignty of God. But I must stop my writing soon, but before doing so I wish to state that I was so much pleased to know, by reading your letter in the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that you were still sticking to the testimony of God, and still earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. And one deliverance of it is enough, for that faith is the faith of the Son of God, and "He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and by wicked hands was taken, crucified and slain." "He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." O, blessed hope. "Who then can lay anything to the charge of God's elect, for it is God that justifies, it is Christ that died."

Now with regard to what some of our brethren call conditional time salvation, I will say that in my experience I was not taught anything on that subject, and so ashamed am I of anything that I have done, and of my nothingness, and so sure am I that salvation is exclusively of grace, that I do not like anything that seems to stand opposed to it, or that would seem to treat this great truth with indifference. The Lord Jesus cannot be scripturally preached, or savingly received contrary to the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God, and of salvation alone of grace, from start to finish. We may profess to love the Lord Jesus, but if we make light of his truth, we will be reckoned among his enemies, even though we may have prophesied in his name. So,

"If I must sing, I'll sing of grace,
Which raised me from the fall,
And gave my soul a hiding-place,
Jesus, my Lord, my all."

"Grace, triumphant on the throne,
Scorns a rival, reigns alone,
Come, and bow beneath his sway,
Cast your idol works away."

The grace of God is the moving cause of all obedience acceptable to God. Therefore, dear brother and sister, let your affections be placed upon things above, not on things on the earth.

With love and fellowship, your brother and sister,

J. P. & MARY ALLISON.

ST. PAUL, Indiana, Jan. 23, 1903.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—For a long time before my aged and good mother died, I delighted to go with her to her church and the associations, and to hear the Baptist preachers exalt and worship the Lord our God, who was manifested in the flesh for us. Beside him there was no God and Savior, as they worshiped him. My mother was very much devoted to her church, and to the ministers. I was often made glad, and was filled with veneration toward the Lord in hearing our pastor, Elder Nay, a venerable Old Baptist preacher, exalt the Lord, who is the Keeper of the highway over which no galley with oars shall pass, and I was often also made glad, and filled with exaltation and admiration toward the Lord, in listening to wonderful sermons preached by Elder Wilson Thompson, portraying Christ as the Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Sometimes I have even thought that he was given the ability and inspiration of the apostle Paul, to unfold the Bible to the exaltation of the Lord, the God of the whole universe.

I wish also to be allowed to say of your editorial in January 15th, number of the SIGNS, upon Luke xxiii. 39–43, that surely the Lord inspired you to write it. It has done me so much good, I have had to read it over several times; there is more in it than in volumes of teachers in theological colleges; more in it to exalt and praise the Lord as the High Priest, and the atoning Savior, and the God of our salvation, and beside whom there is no Savior. So, for the continued coming of such good matter, I inclose you two dollars to renew the SIGNS.

Why cannot other ministers find enough in the Scriptures, yea, abundance to occupy all their time in exalting and extolling the Lord our great High Priest, who has not only entered into the holy of holies, but into heaven itself for us, and is made higher than the heavens? I sometimes think, brother Chick, that if more of the ministers had their minds dwelling upon the worship and exaltation of Christ the Lord, the less time they would have for fussing and parleying about things that do not honor him; there would then be no time for anything else.

From your unworthy brother,

F. N. AVERY, SR.

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118 WALNUT ST., LANCASTER, Ohio, March 14, 1903.

DEAR AND ESTEEMED EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—It is time for me to remit for the SIGNS, as the Lord has spared my unprofitable life another year. In great fear and trembling I pen these lines. My heart seems so void of good, I feel as though I had crucified the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. Some claim conditional salvation here in time; if this be so, I am lost forever; evil seems to be first with me in all that I do or think. I feel this morning as the dear Savior said before his crucifixion, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." I am feeling so forsaken I cannot take hold on one promise. I would love to be holy as God is holy, yet I cannot say, why hast thou forsaken me? for I can see that I deserve no better, and if my soul is sent to hell, his righteous law approves it well. Still I do not feel as I did when I thought, as it were, that I was standing upon the brink of the bottomless pit, ready to be engulfed therein, and believed that the wicked blasphemed God's name there, as they did here, and I cannot portray the horror that was mine at the thought that I

should blaspheme his name forever. But a great reverse was given me, and I was made to know him by his name, Jehovah. And then, as now, I feel that if I am sent to hell, I still want to praise his name.

I have had a name in the church since 1892. I am no better to-day than I was then. O, if I could but have that burning love, and joy, and peace that passeth all knowledge, as I did when I was in my first love. Some say to us, "Exercise faith." O, poor, weak me, who cannot even drive away evil, the evil that I do wish I could get away from. Even at the meetings I feel ashamed, I have such a careless mind. As my hearing is dull I can hear but little of some of the sermons, but when I pick up the SIGNS or Testament, I do feel I have some understanding. At times I can pick up some crumbs from the writers there. I could not do without the SIGNS, no other periodical is so dear to me, the writers seem like dear friends, I do not know any of them in the flesh, but I do hope that I know them in the Lord, and that we are all taught of the Lord. I try to pray to him to keep his people in the straight path, and after the pattern which he gave them to walk in.

With love, and wishing you God speed,

SARAH B. PEARCE.

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712 W. TWENTIETH ST., BIRMINGHAM, Ala., Aug. 19, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Your last editorial is just what I believe, and is in such perfect harmony with the writings of your dear father, who was a true, tried soldier of the cross. I glory in the cross, and the truth he preached and wrote, and feel thankful to God to know the same faith dwells in you as dwelt in him, and that I believe dwells in all the elect of God. I would follow it up, but feel like it is enough. May God afford you wisdom and grace to continue to write the truth so greatly needed in all parts of Zion.

We had a fine meeting at Montgomery, Ala., which closed last Sunday night. We had been dry, but there was a shaking among the dry bones, and we hope the word of God was heard, and God breathed on the slain. On Saturday sister Nannie Barfield came forward with a letter, then sister Ella Norman, followed by sister Annie Owens, followed by brother L. O. Barfield. The last three by experience, and they all related the dealings of the Lord with them, and were received. O, what a happy time; cups of joy ran over, and it made no difference how ugly each looked as they shed tears of joy, it was deep, heartfelt joy, and they ceased not to feel they joyed in God. Our little church felt built up, and said with one voice, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." Three were baptized in the Alabama River, just above the wharf. These subjects came not by my persuasion, but they were made willing in the day of God's power, and we joyfully receive all such. We feel to rejoice, and as we felt it might be of some joy to some of God's dear ones who read the SIGNS, we send you this.

I could, it seems, write a little book on the subject, but time and space forbid.

God bless Zion, and build up Jerusalem in the most pure and holy faith.

Yours to serve in the gospel of Christ,

W. LIVELY.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., Aug. 6, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have read the two last numbers of the SIGNS with such interest that I cannot pass them by without a response. The experience of

Wm. S. Speer is so rich. I have read it through four times. O, how I have praised God for such testimony. I do believe that God does and will lead his children about and instruct them, and keep them as the apple of his eye. And the able editorial written by your dear father forty-three years ago, on "The new creature," is certainly worth the subscription price. It seems to me no one can help believing it and understanding, who have experienced what it holds forth and makes so plain. It has given me great hope.

Now, dear brother for the truth's sake, if you can find time to correct what I have written, and put it in your paper, all will be right with me; if not, still so. I trust you will live long to praise God.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

PLEASE BE SURE,

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

By observing the above rules you will enable us to accurately fill your orders.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1903

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to

GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,

Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

CALVINISM.

It has been often charged that Old School Baptists are Calvinists, and quite frequently we have been asked the question, What is Calvinism? Perhaps some who are readers of the Signs have wondered what ground there is for this assertion. We feel at this time like saying a few things regarding this matter. First of all to say that Old School Baptists expressly disclaim being followers of John Calvin, and deny the right of any one to make this assertion of them. That we as a people hold to many principles of doctrine which were also held by John Calvin is no reason why we should be charged with being his followers. If in anything pertaining to the doctrine of God our Savior, he was in the truth, and if in anything we also are in the truth, thus far both he and we are followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the truth. We are no more followers of John Calvin, except in point of time, than he is of us. We are expressly forbidden to follow any man, save the man Christ Jesus.

In point of fact Calvin held to many things which are utterly abhorrent to Baptists. He believed in sprinkling for baptism, and practiced it; he believed in the union of church and state; he believed

that religious education should go hand in hand with secular education; he believed that the state ought to see to it that heresy did not exist in her borders, and if it did, that the state should punish it, and put to death if needful, all who were regarded as heretics; he believed that in some real sense the body and blood of Jesus were in the emblems, when they had been set apart for the Lord's supper. All these things, with others, which were advocated and defended by John Calvin, are utterly abhorrent to all Baptists. Baptists believe that dipping is baptism, according to the teaching and example of Jesus and the apostles; they believe in the entire separation of church and state; they oppose the idea with all the might that is in them, that the state has any right to take any cognizance whatever of either religious truth or heresy, and that the only province in which the state has any right to interfere, is to see that no one interferes with the right of all men to worship God as they deem right, and that they who worship idols, have a right to just as much protection in their worship, from the state, as have so-called christian denominations. In short they believe that it is not in any degree the province of the state to discriminate between religions, so as that one shall enjoy more protection or privilege than another. They believe that from the state or public schools all religious teaching should be excluded, so that the infidel shall have as full and free access to the benefits of the school for his children, as those who believe in God shall have for their children. They believe that no religious dogma ought to be taught in any school supported by tax, which tax is paid out of the pockets of the infidel part of the community, as well as out of the pockets of professed christians, and they believe that in no real sense is the body and blood of Jesus present with the emblems at the supper, but that the bread and the wine are ONLY emblems of the real body and blood.

It is true that Calvin did hold, and did teach with wonderful power, many principles of doctrine that are dear to us as a people, to-day, yet this does not entitle any one to call us Calvinists. Some things recorded of him in the different biographies which we have seen, have convinced us that he did know the plague of his own heart, and that salvation is of the Lord, yet he was blinded in many things, and especially in the matter of freedom of conscience. That is, that every man in his relation to God must be left to God to deal with in that relation, and that no man has a right to seek lordship over the faith of any other man. Even the apostle Paul did not claim any dominion over the faith of his brethren, but said that he was simply a helper of their joy. Calvin was a persecutor of those who dared to differ from him in faith or practice religiously. Persecution for one's faith has always been opposed by all Baptists. We might as well be called Augustinians, or followers of Augustine, who lived in the early ages of the church, and who held just as strongly as did Calvin, to the various principles of the doctrine of grace. Or, we might as well be called by the name of any other man who was sound in the faith, and who ably defended it, as to be called Calvinists. Thousands have lived in the power of this faith (and have died for it) beside John Calvin; he was but one among many, so far as belief in the distinguishing principles of the doctrine pertaining to grace is concerned.

In substance he held that man is a sinner, guilty and corrupt; man was made

originally pure and upright, but in the fall became vile, and involved the whole race of man with him, and thus he became obnoxious to the wrath of God, with all his posterity, because they are now all vitiated and perverted in their nature, and so bring forth works that are evil, which are called in the Scriptures works of the flesh; not only the punishment of Adam overtakes us, but a pestilence is instilled into us, so that even infants are vile, and condemned from their mother's womb. He taught that to redeem man from this state of guilt, and to recover him from his corruption, the Son of God became incarnate, assuming man's nature into union with his own, so that in him were two natures in one person. Thus Jesus took on him the offices of prophet, priest and king, and by his humiliation and suffering unto death, followed by his resurrection and ascension to heaven, he has perfected the work, and fulfilled all that was required of the Redeemer of men, and perfected the redeemed forever. He believed in the secret and special operation of the holy Spirit by which men are savingly and vitally united to Christ, and made members of his body; that they are also made partakers of his death and resurrection, so that the old man is crucified with him, and they are raised to newness of life; a life of righteousness and holiness. He believed in God's eternal purpose, whereby some are chosen unto life and salvation, while the rest of mankind are predestinated unto eternal death. Those whom God has chosen he believed are effectually called unto salvation, and are kept by him to that salvation. Calvin's own language regarding the fall of man is as follows: "Although therefore I thus affirm that God did ordain the fall of Adam, I so assert it as by no means to concede that God was therein properly and really the author of that fall." Thus it will be seen that he did not believe that the decree of God that Adam should fall, made him the author of that fall. Of course this same principle would equally well apply to every other sinful act of men. If it applies to the first sin, it may as well apply to all succeeding sins which grow out of this first sin.

These were in substance the burden of the faith which Calvin held and defended. But while he was enabled to defend these principles of truth more ably than has ever been given to most men to do, yet he was but one among millions of believers in these truths. So that to believe them does not entitle us as a people to be called Calvinists. To hold these principles of truth is not Calvinism, but Bibleism, since Calvin did not originate them, but they were in the Bible, revealed before he presented them in order, and with such wonderful power. Yea, they lay in the bosom of Almighty God, in the eternity before time was, or the world of man began to be. The truth must never be lost sight of that God is the only eternal and self-existent being, and from this first and most sublime truth springs forth that other truth, that all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made, and from this scriptural statement of truth springs up the other essential doctrine, that all things consist by him, and that in him we live, move and have our being, and from all this, coupled with the doctrine of the unchangeability of God, springs up the assurance that nothing shall ever thwart his will, or work to the harm of those whom he loves. Because of his faith in all these glorious principles of doctrine Paul could say boldly, "All things work together for good to them

who love God."

We leave these reflections, hoping that they may prove to be of some satisfaction to any in whose minds the question as to why we should be called Calvinists, has ever entered. C.

WORLDLY AMUSEMENTS.

A FEW days since, we were speaking in the presence of a few friends, of the effect which worldly amusements as a rule would have upon the mind and heart of any believer who might be tempted to engage in them, and of our own early experience with regard to them, and a dear sister who was present said that she thought it would do good to present the same things editorially through the SIGNS, and added the request that we should present the matter in this way, and now we feel like complying with her request.

From experience, and from observation, we feel sure that nothing will more certainly or effectually mar and hinder all growth in grace, and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; nothing will destroy all spiritual comfort; nothing will more completely interfere with a faithful attendance upon the services of the sanctuary, or take away all interest in the welfare of Zion, than an indulgence in what are called innocent worldly amusements. We think that almost all the children of God will find it impossible to turn away from an indulgence in such amusements with a frame of mind and heart suitable for the service of God in any way. It was a saying of the Savior concerning certain men, "By their fruits ye shall know them." The same general principle applies to all things of which we may speak. What are the fruits of worldly amusements? Are they a growth in grace, and in knowledge? Are they a deeper humility, and a more spiritual frame of mind? Do they add to our love for the companionship of saints, for the word of God, and for meditation upon the things of God? On the contrary, are not the fruits of an indulgence in such amusements altogether opposite to these good things? Can any one turn away from these things in a fit frame of mind to visit the sick and afflicted, and speak to them of the hope of the gospel? Could a minister of the gospel engage in any such things as card playing, theatre going, baseball, football, tennis, golf, croquet, or anything of the sort, and feel that it was a good preparation of mind with which to enter the pulpit and there handle the solemn things of the sanctuary? If such things be not a good preparation of mind for the preacher of the gospel, are they not equally harmful as a preparation to hear the gospel?

It is a question often proposed by those who desire to indulge in these things, What is the harm in them? It is generally intended by this question, we suppose, What is there sinful in them? Are they a violation of any command of God? It seems to us sufficient to reply that whatever results in evil must be evil in itself, and are there any good effects spiritually to any believer in sharing in any of these things? The fruit is all bad. We are sure that all spiritually-minded, humble-hearted believers, who desire above all things a sense of nearness to God, and of communion with him, can never find these things in such amusements. What child of God ever felt that Christ by the Spirit was near to him while engaged in such things? Who ever had any spiritual conversation with another, or any consolation in Christ while engaged in any worldly amusements, such as have been named above? And when the mind is blessed with spiritual medita-

tions, and the love of God reigns in the heart, it seems to us sure that there will be in that heart a revulsion against the very suggestion of finding pleasure in such amusements. It will be felt at such times that there is something incongruous between the joy of the Lord, which attends an experience of his presence, and any such worldly pleasure. Yea, at such times worldly amusement will become distressing, instead of being a pleasure at all. If it be true also that whatever we do is to be done to the glory of God, as we are taught in the word, it seems sure that such worldly amusements could find no place in our hearts or lives. The people of God are not among those who love pleasure more than God, and with them there are infinitely higher pleasures than those that are of the world.

To what a low ebb has modern religion come, since it is now considered essential by the churches to provide amusement for the young members. It is thought that the world will not provide enough for its own, nor tempt those not its own sufficiently with these things, but the churches must see to it that still more abundance of them are provided, and that, too, under the garb, and in the name of religion. But perhaps nothing better ought to be expected of churches filled with unrenewed men and women, who think no more of uniting with the church than of becoming members of some worldly society, such as the Sons of Temperance, or Red Men, or Odd Fellows, or any other such worldly society, but the children of God have seen better things; they have known the Lord in the salvation of their souls; they have found Jesus precious to them, and have been called by grace out from the world, and separated in heart and mind from its allurements; their bodies are the members of Christ. Shall they then pervert the members of Christ into the ministers of folly?

We recall in our youthful years, before and after we became one in name with the people of God, that among our friends, parties of pleasure were frequent at times. A few times we went to the houses of neighbors and friends with other young people, and with them engaged in the simple games of the time, but never once did we fail to reap bitter fruit from so doing. We recall that after returning home, on our bed we would grieve that we had so sinned against God. It seemed to us that we could not come before God in prayer, that our sinful levity had shut us out. We tried to reason in this way, What harm have we done, and what harm is there in such plays and games anyway? but we felt that we had been harmed, and that we had not glorified God in so doing. At last we came to ask this question, Can we ask the blessing of God upon us at the beginning of such an evening? Can we ask God to bless to us the amusements in which we are about to engage? And this question settled the matter with us.

In conclusion we will say, We cannot and do not undertake to lay down fixed rules for any other brother or sister, only remember that it is safest to keep as far from danger as possible. We are told to avoid the very appearance of evil. If one is to run a race, he must lay aside all that will hinder his course, and worldly amusements will hinder in the christian race. C.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903, &c.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I reckon you scarcely remember my face; but I remember yours well. I had no idea of ever seeing you in the flesh, and when I met you and brother Leachman at the Pig River Association, I anticipated that I should hear something good from you: and I thank the Lord, I was not disappointed. You had come so far, and had contended for the same faith which was once delivered to the saints. And, "Did not my heart burn within me"? and I could not refrain from shedding tears, when you and brother Leachman were unfolding the rich fullness of the gospel. It was a feast of fat things. I was so feasted that I thought surely I should not hunger again soon. I firmly believe it was the gospel in its purity. It grieved me that I could not become personally acquainted with you. I have frequently felt, since that time, that I would write to you; but I feel that I am weak and incompetent. Brother Beebe, we little folks hate to expose our ignorance. But I hope we have been taught by the same Spirit.

If you will bear with me, and it will not be intruding, I wish to ask a few questions: First. I would like to have your views on the dying with Christ, lying in the grave with him, arising and ascending with him to glory, as there seems to be some contention on those points. See the number of the SIGNS of July 1, 1855—your reply to brother Howard, in which some brethren seem to think you glory as much in the death of the sinner as in the death of the saint. I understand you, that in the purpose and will of God, Christ is as much glorified in the one as in the other; if I am wrong, please correct me. Second. Your views also, whether Christ is a created being. I believe you are able to give your views satisfactorily. Please do so. Contention and strife among brethren, I abhor. We have been taking your paper several years, and I admit there are some things which are mysterious to me, but according to my weak judgment your editorials are as sound, and unshaken, and firm, in accordance with the testimony as the Scriptures, as ever come from the lips of man. You always admit that you are liable to err, and you seem to evince the spirit of meekness, and a willingness to forgive. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." "Let brotherly love continue." I desire that you may keep nothing back that is profitable to the saints. May the Lord be with you and bless your labors, grant you all the comforts of this life, support you in death, and finally receive you up to glory, is the sincere prayer of your

FRIEND.

P. S.—I will send you a few extracts, copied from the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, by brother Dyer, and sent to another brother, requesting his views on the subject. We have the fourth number for 1856, but have not the other two. I take the liberty of sending the copy to you, and hope you will pardon me, for I do it in friendship. I thought as I was writing, and it is concerning the questions I have asked you, I would send it. There seems to be some contention among brethren about it. My way is, if a brother or sister expresses anything which I cannot see through, to go to them, not to some one else for an explanation. I fear some brethren are trying to take unfair grounds with your doctrine. As the brethren did not authorize me to send this to you, I hope you will not use my name. Brother Beebe, I believe there are many who would rejoice at your downfall. I am sorry to so inform you; but it is truth. May you long stand as a watchman on the walls of Zion, ever ready to obey your Master's will.

A WELL WISHER.

"In the 17th volume of the SIGNS, for 1849, number 11, and page 87, he says: 'Christ, as the life and seminal head of his own church or body, dwelt in the bosom of the Father; was the begotten and the only begotten of the Father; and the begetting and setting up of the body of the head, was the begetting and setting of the body of which he is the head and life. And when that head was put to death in the flesh, the life of the body or church was taken away, and all her members were dead, so long as he lay in the grave, but when he was raised up, together with his dead body did all his members arise from death, and were quickened together with him.'

"In the same year, and in the same volume, number 16, page 121, he says: 'Though they have dealt so summarily with that portion of God's word, I will in candor answer the questions they put to me. The first is, whether the quickening and life-giving Spirit of God is a created existence? I answer, decidedly, Yes.'

"In the 4th number for the year 1856, he says: 'We do not believe that the Son of God is a created being, nor have we ever expressed an idea implying such belief.'"

4/08 ✓REPLY.

AMONG the hundreds of dear brethren and sisters whom we had the pleasure of meeting for the first time, at the Pig River Association, in August last, it would not be expected that we could distinctly recollect but few, but this one thing we shall not soon forget, that we were most affectionately greeted in love and christian fellowship by the whole

assembly of the saints who all appeared to be truly of one heart and one spirit, joyfully mingling in the worship of our God and Savior. Of the multitude assembled, there was not a face that we had ever before to our knowledge seen, except that of brother Leachman, who accompanied us in our journey to visit them. Our preaching, imperfect as it certainly was, seemed to be warmly received, and heartily indorsed by all the brethren and sisters, without one dissenting voice, and the preaching of the brethren of that vicinity was as cordially received and indorsed by us.

But we were admonished by faithful brethren, that the enemy was close upon our heels to scatter arrows, fire-brand and death, insinuating that we were abolitionists, arians, non-regenerationists, non-resurrectionists, and almost anything but what we profess to be. Being thus advised we were the more explicit in avowing our sentiments on all subjects on which we were assailed, and were happy to learn that our views on every point were in perfect harmony with the doctrine constantly proclaimed by the brethren of that section of the country, as well as in harmony with what has always distinguished the Old School Baptists from the days of John the Baptist.

Soon after our return, we were informed by a beloved brother, and highly esteemed minister of the Pig River Association, that we had been assailed by one of Zion's adversaries, and a rehash of the stereotyped slanders which had been so frequently made by our enemy, met, denied, and refuted by us, for years past, were reiterated and as boldly reaffirmed, as though they had never been contradicted by us, and garbled sentences collected from the files of the SIGNS, to fasten the base slanders upon us. Although we have so frequently replied to substantially the same questions many times within the last few years, we cheerfully re-assert our views on the subjects embraced in the inquiries of our correspondent, in the order in which they are stated:

First. "On the dying with Christ, lying in the grave with him, arising and ascending with him to glory." Or in other words, our views of the vital, or life union of Christ as the spiritual Head, and his church as the mystical body of our Redeemer. That such was the identity of spiritual, immortal and eternal life of the Head and body, that when the members of the body of Christ had in their earthly nature transgressed the law of God, under which we were created in the earthly Adam, and the law of God demanded that we should die. Christ, who is the second Adam, and the Lord from heaven, came into this world, and took on him the seed of Abraham; was made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons, and in his own person laid down that life which the law required for our transgressions, suffered the very death which was due to his people, "was delivered up to death for our offences, and raised from the dead for our justification. And thus were all his people "buried with him, by baptism into death," including as many and all who were baptized into Jesus Christ, they were baptized into his death. (Rom. vi. 3–4.) Also Col. ii. 11–14, "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; buried WITH HIM n baptism, wherein also ye are risen WITH HIM, through the faith of the

operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he QUICKENED TOGETHER WITH HIM, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances," &c. "For the love of God constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead."—2 Cor. v. 14. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us *together with Christ*, (by grace ye are saved,) and hath *raised us up together*, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."—Eph. ii. 4–6. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."—Col. iii. 1. These passages embrace all that we know, all that we believe, and all that we contend for, upon the subject of the first question proposed by our correspondent. If this amounts to heresy, we cannot see how the apostles of the Lamb can escape the charge, or what defence the Old Baptists can make for singing,

> "One in the tomb, one when he rose,
> One when he triumphed o'er his foes,
> One when in heaven he took his seat,
> While seraphs sung all hell's defeat."

If there ever was a period in time or eternity when Christ was not the Life of his church, when the church was not one with him, even as he is one with the Father, we desire that some one more enlightened than we, should tell us when and where it was. We have thought it safe to believe just what the Bible says on the subject. But if Paul must be denounced as an heretic for what he was inspired by the Holy Ghost to write, it will not be the first time he has been so charged. See Acts xxiv. 14.

Second. The second point suggested, is an article written by us on the doctrine of predestination, in answer to questions proposed by a brother Howard. We have reviewed the article, and can see nothing in it to recall. We certainly now believe, as we did in 1855, that the power, government and decrees of God extend to all beings, all things, and all events, and think we should feel quite miserable, were we compelled to believe otherwise. If to believe that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, be heresy, then Paul, as well as the humble editor of this paper, must lie under the imputation, for Paul has asserted it, Eph. i. 11. And with all our heart we do believe it.

Third. We are called on to say whether we believe that Christ is a created being. We answer, as we have often answered the same interrogatory before, most emphatically, We do not. We never have either believed or asserted any such thing. We have often made the same protestation, but still there are some who persist in charging us with that belief, and without paying the least regard to our disavowal, have labored with indefatigable zeal to garble something from the past volumes of the SIGNS to prove either that they know better than we do what we believe, or that we are insincere and false in our protestations. We envy not the disposition of those who can make it their business from year to year to vainly endeavor to elevate themselves by scandalizing those who can find better business.

Fourth. Next comes the extracts, said to be copied from the past files of the SIGNS. The design of which seems to be to show that we have both affirmed and denied that we hold that Christ is a created being. Take the extracts as we wrote and published them, (and not as

they have garbled and misquoted them,) and take them in their connection with the articles in which they are found, and we still indorse each of those which are copied from our own writings. But the one which charges us with saying in number 16 of volume 17, and page 121, that "*the life-giving Spirit of God is a created existence,*" we positively deny that we ever wrote, published or indorsed that sentence, as our own. The words are contained in an article written by Elder Trott, in the volume, number and page referred to, and were written by him, in a controversy upon the precise meaning of the word *made* as applied to the "last Adam being *made a quickening Spirit.*" It was not said by brother Trott that Christ was a created existence, for brother Trott has always contended, if we have understood him, that Christ is the self-existent God, one with the eternal Father. But in these passages, in which it is said, He is of God made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, that the last Adam *was made* a quickening Spirit, that as such he is the beginning of the creation of God, and firstborn among many brethren, whether the words *created* and *made* are in those and other passages synonymous was the point in controversy, as we understood it. But we have no recollection that we have ever even expressed an opinion in the affirmative, but upon mature deliberation we have repeatedly said in our published articles on the subject that we do not believe the term created is admissible in that place, especially if by creation we mean the origination of something that did not before exist, as in the creation of the world.

Is it not strange that the brother, in searching the old files of the SIGNS, should entirely overlook, should find but one disclaimer, and then put the words of another writer into our mouth, in order to give it the appearance of a contradiction of ours? In all the other extracts he copies from us, (but not correctly in the first,) and then, in the second extract, writes, "*He says,* I will in all candor answer the question they put to me; the first is, whether the life-giving Spirit of God is a created existence? I answer decidedly, Yes." Did not the brother who copied these extracts know that in his use of the pronoun he, in "He says," that the writer of the other extracts would, according to the rules of our language, be the antecedent, and implicated as saying what *he* never said? Was this done through ignorance of the rules of our language, or was it done to convey the idea that the editor, who is charged with saying the other things, also said what is contained in that extract? Whatever caused him to make the misrepresentation, it is no less a misrepresentation and an untruth, for we never said it, we never thought it, and we have not been slow to disclaim it from time to time.

The extract purporting to be from volume 17, page 87, should read, if copied correctly, "Christ as the Life and seminal Head of his own church or body, dwelt in the bosom of the Father, was the begotten, and the only begotten of the Father, and the begetting and setting up of that Head was the begetting and setting up of the body of which he is the Head and Life." Is there anything wrong in this? If he is not the seminal Head of his church, how are they his seed? (Psa. xxii. 30; Isa. liii. 10; Gal. iii. 29, and 1 Cor. xv. 45–49.) Does he not dwell in the bosom of the Father? Read John i. 18. Was he the begotten and only begotten of the Father? See John

i. 14. Was the Head and body both born of God? Read Heb. ii. 11. Or is it more scriptural to believe that the Head was set up without the body? When Christ died for his members, were they buried with him by baptism into death? if not, when were they so baptized? Were they, his members, quickened together with Christ, and raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places, or not? If they were, what is wrong in the extract? And if they were not, why did the inspired Paul say they were? (Eph. ii. 6, and Col. iii. 1.) But we will copy the rest of the extract: "And when that Head was put to death in the flesh, the life of the body or church was taken away." We hope this is not heresy, seeing that it is Bible doctrine. "For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if Christ died for all, then were all dead." —2 Cor. v. 14. And all her members were dead, so long as he remained in the grave, but when he was raised up, together with his dead body did they arise from death, and were quickened together with him.

Now we have given the whole of the first extract; it is nearly all of it in Bible language, and all that is not in the very words of Scripture may be wrong, as it is only the view entertained by one who is, to say the least, quite as likely to err in his judgment as any of his brethren are. Of course we do not intend to be understood that the children of God were literally dead while Christ was in the grave, for many of them were not born, but all who were redeemed by his blood were legally dead, the death to which they were sentenced was met and canceled, and when he arose from the dead he raised up his church from sin, and death, and hell, so as to justify the express declaration, that "God hath us raised up with him."

In conclusion, we hope our brethren will examine our views, and take what we have written as we have written it, and not run over the volume of the SIGNS for twenty-eight years to garble and detach passages, and by unfair, uncandid and unchristian constructions of our words, labor to make us an offender for a word, or even without a word by us, uttered to justify them.

We have been hunted like a partridge in the wilderness, for years, and we have been charged with the most awful heresies, but when our volumes are searched for years, we are glad that so little can be found to justify the charges, and we submit to our brethren whether anything has been found that when fairly construed can be refuted by the Scriptures.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., November 15, 1860.

RECEIVED

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OBITUARY NOTICES.

MY mother, **Mrs. Eure Ann Drake,** departed this life April 10th, 1903, at her home near Pennington, N. J. Her maiden name was Hunt. She was born April 12th, 1836, near where she lived and died, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, N. J., on the fourth Sunday in July, 1883, by Elder Wm. J. Purington, who was then pastor there, where she continued a faithful member until her death. Her experience of grace was very clear and deep, and her conversation upon spiritual things was valuable and comforting to those of like precious faith. She was exercised about spiritual things while yet very young, dating her experience back to some time during her fifteenth year. She first united with the Presbyterian Church, but becoming dissatisfied was brought by the grace of

God to see that she was wrong, and soon she found a home among the people of God, and loved always to assemble among them when her health would permit. She always had poor health, and for about ten years was confined to her home most of the time, and was a great sufferer, and longed to fly away and be at rest, and when the summons came it was to her a welcome visitor. She said that she was so unworthy of the great love which had been manifested to her through her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. She was conscious to the last, and made all the arrangements for her funeral, selecting the hymns to be read, and the text to be used, Rev. vii. 14–17. This Scripture was used as a text by her pastor, Elder F. A. Chick, and from these words he preached a very comforting discourse to a large gathering of friends and neighbors. She leaves a kind and aged companion and three children to mourn their loss. We mourn not as those who have no hope, but feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

EUGENE P. DRAKE.

[At the request of brother Drake, and also in accordance with our own feelings, we will add a few remarks to the above obituary. As the son has said, she was a woman of spiritual mind, and of deep wrought experience, by which she had come to realize the plague of her own heart, and the exceeding riches of grace in her salvation. Hers was not a letter faith, and she was not one who was satisfied with the name of religion. She desired to realize the power of it in her heart and life. She was not what is called a great talker at any time, yet her words were well chosen at all times, and it was evident to all that she spoke out of a knowledge of what she was saying. At times she would at the close of a service say a word of encouragement to her pastor in the way of expressing her enjoyment of the meeting, and this was always in a way to exalt the Lord, and not the preacher. We visited her several times during the last few weeks of her life, and once Elder White accompanied us, and sat by her side, as he said afterward, with peculiar comfort, listening to her conversation, and we both felt that our visit was blessed to us. Brother White felt that it was the best part of his whole visit in this section. The church and all her friends will deeply miss her, but we can but rejoice in the assurance that all is well with her.—C.]

Mary Campbell, of Northwood, Ontario, Canada, our beloved mother, departed this life July 22d, 1903. Her husband, James Campbell, died five years ago. They lived together fifty-five years. Seven of their ten children survive her, also twenty-six grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. She was a reader of the Signs of the Times forty-six years. She and her husband were baptized the same day by Elder McColl, at the Ekfrid meeting, fifty years ago last June, and remained faithful members till called home. Her mother, Catharine Kerr, was a member of the same church fifty-seven years. She attended the meeting at Duart in February, and enjoyed meeting with the members of the church, as well as the preaching. As she advanced in age she was noticeable for the brilliancy of her intellect, her spiritual mindedness, and her keen appreciation of order in the churches. In March she was stricken with paralysis, at the home of her son-in-law, G. R. Langford. When I reached her bedside she said in a scarcely audible whisper, "His ways are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are peace. 'My peace I give unto you.' 'Peace! peace!'" I could hear just enough to show me the beautiful vision which the Lord revealed to his dying loved one. In nine days she recovered from the stroke, but her strength was gone, and she sank gradually. Each time I saw her again she expressed a desire to be done with earth and earthly things, and her last audible word was, "Jesus." She was a good woman and a devoted mother, and we mourn, but not as those without hope. Our pastor, Elder Carnell, spoke words of comfort to us at the funeral service.

Her daughter,

SARAH McDONALD.

Duart, Ont., August 20, 1903.

Our brother, **Eleazar Waterman Norman,** was born in Lowndes Co., Ala., Feb. 15th, 1834, and died March 12th, 1903. He was married in early life to Miss Parthea Wammack. He with his family came to Arkansas in 1859, and shortly after the war he united with Pilgrim's Rest Old School Baptist Church, and there lived the life of a true christian until called home by death. He leaves his wife and five children, three sons and two daughters, many relatives, and a host of friends that truly say, "We miss him." "Uncle Wat," as he was best known, was a loving husband and a kind father. A noble, good man is gone, and we mourn, but feel sure that our loss is his eternal gain.

(MRS.) MARY E. McDONALD.

MEETINGS.

The Roxbury Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Second Church of Roxbury, at Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, the 9th and 10th of September, 1903, beginning at 10 o'clock a. m., when we expect to meet and greet our brethren and sisters, and friends to truth and righteousness. The place of meeting is two miles from Roxbury village, and six miles from Kelly's Corners, at which places those that come can stop and be taken to the meeting. Trains will be met on the Ulster & Delaware R. R. on Tuesday evening before the meeting, at both places.

We hope to see a number of ministering brethren with us.

J. D. HUBBELL.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the South Gardiner Old School Baptist Church, commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in September, (11th, 12th and 13th,) 1903, and continue three days. All lovers of the gospel of Christ are cordially invited to attend. Parties coming by rail will be met at the South Gardiner depot and cared for.

Conveyances will be at South Gardiner depot to meet all who may come on Thursday afternoon before the meeting.

J. C. CLARK, Clerk.

A TWO days meeting is appointed to be held (nothing in Providence preventing) with the Caroline Old School Baptist Church at White Church, N. Y., on Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 19th and 20th, 1903. Those of like faith are cordially invited to attend. All D., L. & W. (Cayuga Division) trains stop at White Church. Those coming via L. V. R. R. can get off at Wilseyville or Brookton, and will be met with conveyance if they will notify us beforehand.

G. H. BEARD, Clerk.

BROOKTON, N. Y., R. F. D. 24.

THE yearly meeting of the Old School Baptist Church of Albany & Troy, will hold a yearly meeting, the Lord willing, Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 23d and 24th, 1903, at the residence of the late Wm. W. Vandenburg, near West Sand Lake, N. Y. Friends will be met at Bath, a station on the D. & H. R. R., just across the river from Albany, N. Y. Please drop a card to Mr. Herrick Green, West Sand Lake, N. Y., or Mr. Delos Becker, Defreestville, N. Y., who will meet the friends that come, especially those coming Wednesday morning. The regular meeting of the church is the Sunday following, and visiting friends are invited to remain over. We hope to see a goodly number of friends; several ministering brethren are expected.

D. M. VAIL.

ELDER D. M. Vail wrote me that Elder Wm. Lively was coming to Burdett, N. Y., and also Elder C. Bogardus wrote me that Elder White was coming to this place about the same time, and would come to Burdett. I take the liberty to ask you to give notice in the SIGNS that the Lord willing, there will be a two days meeting at Burdett, N. Y., the 24th and 25th, Thursday and Friday, before the fourth Sunday in September, 1903. We invite all that can make it convenient to come; we will be glad to see them. Any one coming can inquire for brethren S. M. Baker, A. Ayres, Alexander Wheat or H. B. Elliott.

H. B. ELLIOTT.

IF the Lord will, the Old School Baptist Church at Cow Marsh, Kent Co., Del., will hold their yearly meeting on Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 26th and 27th, 1903, commencing at 2 o'clock p. m. on Saturday. Our brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us. The morning trains on the Delaware R. R. from the north und south will be met at Woodside on Saturday a. m.

W. W. MEREDITH.

THE yearly meeting of the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church of Lexington, N. Y., Lexington Association, is appointed to be held with said church on Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 3d and 4th, 1903, when we will be glad to see as many of our brethren, sisters and friends and ministering brethren as can come to visit us. Will say to those coming on the U. & D. R. R. from Kingston, that our stage meets the morning train, and also that I will meet the afternoon train if requested. As our association is appointed to be held on Wednesday and Thursday following the yearly meeting, we hope to see a goodly number at the yearly meeting on their way to the association, and I will provide a way for them to get there.

FLETCHER MACKEY, Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will hold their annual two days meeting with the Gilboa Church, on the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (7th and 8th) and we extend a cordial invitation to our brethren, especially ministering brethren, to meet with us, and all that love the Lord and his people. Those coming on the U. & D. R. R., stop off at Grand Gorge and inquire for Miss Jennie Leonard. Will be met on Tuesday, Oct. 6th. Our church meeting is the following Saturday and Sunday, and those who can tarry will be made welcome.

Done by order of Gilboa Church, August 8th, 1903.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Association of Primitive Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, with the Springfield Church, in Huntingdon Co., Pa., on Friday before the second Sunday in October, (9th, 10th and 11th,) 1903, and continue over Sunday. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth. Those coming by railroad will come on the Pennsylvania road to Mount Union, and there take the East Broadtop road to Three Springs. Trains leave Mount Union 9 a. m. and 4 p. m. Come on Thursday. Trains will be met by conveyances to places of entertainment.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, Elder Wm. Lively will be at Justus, Pa., Sept. 17th; Waverly, Pa., the 18th; Otego, N. Y., third Sunday, 20th; Brookdale, Pa., 21st; Broughton Hollow, Pa., 22d and 23d; Ansonia, Pa., 24th and 25th; Cammal, Pa., 26th and 27th; Ingleside, N. Y., 29th. From there expects to go to Canada.

D M. VAIL.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 71. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1903. NO. 19.

CORRESPONDENCE.

IMMORTALITY—ETERNAL LIFE.

"IN hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."—Titus i. 2.

If the apostle had used the word "immortality," instead of "eternal life," it would seem to my mind more easy to comprehend, in the above quotation. I have thought much about this passage of Scripture for many years. Especially was my mind exercised upon its teaching on receiving a letter from an Elder many years ago, at the close of which he said, "Your brother in hope of eternal life." I had read it many times as it is recorded in Titus, but it did not seem to strike me with so much force as when the brother used it at the conclusion of his letter. I thought much about its meaning; I asked myself the question, Have we *now* eternal life, or do we just hope for it? I thought of the many times that I had heard the brethren say in preaching that the saints possessed eternal life, while this natural life was in existence, or during the life that the saints now live in the flesh. The proofs of this fact I had used many times in preaching, but now in closely examining the above from the eminent apostle Paul, there seemed to be a conflict of sentiment with what Jesus taught in John x. and other places. I thought, Did Jesus mean the same life as Paul did when he said, "I give unto them eternal life"? If that eternal life is given in time, why does the apostle say that he was hoping for it? Surely Jesus was not mistaken nor the apostle. He that believeth hath eternal life abiding in him. Belief is the work of God. None can believe on Jesus until a new and holy principle is imparted to him, which cometh from above. This is *new* life to him that was dead, but to God it is not new, it is the same eternal life which was from the beginning. In the manifestation of this life in God's people it is said to be "Christ in you the hope of glory." From this it is evident that there is a hope of glory, a hope of a full development of that which is sown in hope. The imparting of this life is called a sealing. The receiving of it is called, "The earnest of the Spirit;" "The earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." It is also called, "The earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession." Earnest means a reality, a pledge of a promise given. Then we have received from God a reality, a sub-

stance of things hoped for, an evidence of things not seen; a certain pledge of what has been promised. This durable substance is also called, "The first fruits of the Spirit." This is very significant, for if there be first fruits, the full harvest is surely coming. Israel was required to gather the first ripe bundle of grain as first fruits unto the Lord, thus securing the harvest, or a certain pledge that the harvest should be gathered. While the harvest was not yet gathered there was hope that it would be reaped. That hope even to Israel in temporal blessings was "both sure and steadfast," because the first ripe sheaf had been sanctified, or set apart by the Lord, and insured the harvest. It was just like the field full of grain, because it came from the field, and was a piece of it. They who have received the earnest of their inheritance have a hope which is an anchor of the soul, "both sure and steadfast." Sure, cannot fail, because the substance in measure is given, and leads to the complete fullness of the measure of Christ in that glory day for his people, when hope shall be no more, as a guide through the desert. That hope is now steadfast, or unmovable; it holds them till the full manifestation of what God has promised. He has promised eternal life, and that life is in his Son. This life shall be fully realized by all of the heirs just as sure and unmovable as it is that the earnest has been given. The Lord has greatly blessed his people while on their earthly pilgrimage. They have received much from his mighty hand; he has saved them and called them with an holy calling, bestowing heavenly favors upon them, but they are made to hope for much, very much more than they have yet received, in the unbounded fullness of the harvest of time. They are hoping that way, they are looking that way; "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." Those redeemed from earth shall be different from any other beings when they come into their full inheritance with the saints in light. Their personal experiences in all the changing scenes which they shall pass through, shall be different from those characters that never needed any redemption, whether they be of earth or heaven. They shall experience many surprises in their rising from the corruptions of sin to the exalted height of immortality, to be made like him "Who only hath immortality dwelling in the light." Their deliverance from sin, corruption and earth shall far surpass and exceed anything of the kind known to men, angels or any beings, except the Supreme. So great is the contrast between their exaltation, and the greatest lifting up among created beings, that words fail to tell us what it is like. Inspiration tells us that we shall be made like Jesus. No man can tell us what Jesus is like in his exalted power or glory, for, "Which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see." Mortal eyes cannot endure the ravishing sight of the glorified Redeemer at his appearing and kingdom. All flesh shall wither before him quicker than new mown grass before the noonday sun. Before his face the earth shall flee away, and shall not be found at all, "When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day." One glimpse of his presence, an instantaneous sight, grander and more sublime than anything yet ever seen by mortals, will be sufficient to change the living saints from mortal to immortality. It shall be as the lightning's flash for rapidity, for we that are

alive and remain at the coming of the Lord shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall ever be with the Lord. This accords with prophetic language that he should appear in the clouds, and come with ten thousands of saints: "Who rideth upon the heavens in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky." He doth send out his voice, and that a mighty voice. He it is, the God of Israel, "That giveth strength and power unto his people." "His strength is in the clouds." "Who maketh the clouds his chariot, who walketh upon the wings of the wind."—Psalm civ. 3.

The hope of immortality is most precious to the believer, for this is the goal of all their prospects for futurity. In its realization and consummation all saints shall be fully satisfied to all eternity. They then shall be perfected, for they shall be like Jesus. When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. Hope shall then be in the past, for we shall have nothing to hope for, having received all the fullness of the blessing through Christ our Head.

J. F. BEEMAN.

CARMEN, Okla., August 3, 1903.

GUTHRIE, Okla. Ter., August 24, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—If you can be patient with me a few minutes to read further, I desire to tell you a thing personal to myself, and in a way to you. One of your subscribers, a sister Wortham, seeing sister Hutchison's name and mine in the SIGNS, and overjoyed to know after a long wait that she is not the only Old Baptist in Guthrie, addressed a postal card to me through the post-office, giving me her street and number, and of course I called, and of course I was not slow to go to sister Hutchison's and gladden her with the news that she has a sister living only a few blocks from her, and anxious to see her. Of course the sisters will rejoice in the mutual find. If you are sending the SIGNS to any other names in Guthrie please let me know who they are, as it is desirable that we have a church constituted here.

WHAT THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" HAS BEEN TO ME.

Last winter, after my return from Boston, Dr. Hughes, a dentist of this city, whose people in Alabama were Old Baptists, and of whom I was making inquiry if he knew of any Old Baptists here, told a friend of his, Elder Thomas Veach, of Crescent City, Okla., sixteen miles out, of my being here, and he in due course came to town and found me, and told me of sister Hutchison here, and introduced me to her. At her house I saw a pile of pamphlets entitled SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which she had been long taking. She offered me the loan of them, five or six at a time, which I eagerly accepted, and in the course of ten weeks I had borrowed, read and returned the block, fifty or sixty numbers. This was all of the Lord, who has all my life led me about and instructed me. I had never before read a number of the SIGNS, and was not anxious to, some brethren in Georgia and Texas and Tennessee having mentioned that paper with disfavor as being an extreme publication. Your father's name always representing a man of convictions, just the style of man I like, and always liked, but in this case taking brethren's opinion of the man with no opportunity to form one for myself.

These numbers of the SIGNS I read at a time when I had decided that the true, the proper, the most instructive way to

think of and believe on Christ, is not so much as a worker of miracles, a great teacher, and model life, as the Lamb of God suffering the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, the *ultima thule* of pious aspiration. And imagine, for you can, my joy that in the SIGNS I found that the editors and contributors had "so learned Christ," just as I had many years been studying him and hoping in him. In my present frame of mind, brother Beebe, I may use language somewhat extravagant, but it seems to me your writers like your father and St. Paul, were determined to make known nothing but Christ and him crucified. That I take it is the meaning of the words on your title page, "Devoted to the Old School Baptist cause." Then "Christ, and him crucified," is the Old Baptist cause. Let it stand at that, O beloved.

Every article seemed inspired by a love for Christ as the author and finisher of our salvation, and as being himself that salvation. Day after day I read, and every reading impressed deeper in my soul the everlasting consolation of the doctrine of salvation by grace. Number after number repeated in endless variety of phraseology Jesus, the Lamb of God, the Sin-bearer, the sin offering, the good Shepherd, my Savior, even mine, poor sinner me. To cap the climax, after I had returned all the borrowed numbers to sister H., and I was left without "the strong meat" always furnished by the SIGNS, here comes a writer from North Berwick, Maine, and taking the scarlet line that Rahab bound in her window for a text, writes the most beautiful summary of the faith of God's elect that I have seen. How lovingly he mentions the dearest of names, "the Lamb of God." After feasting at this heavenly banquet spread in nearly every number of the SIGNS, and meditating thereon was, as I may say, a finishing of my preparation for an experience so full of rapture. I want to tell it to my friends, what a great thing the Lord has done for my soul, in leading me in the way to find the peace promised as a result of learning of him.

"Learn of me," said our Lord. If this means, I will teach you, or if it means, Learn from the prophets concerning me, in either case the learning will be about himself.

Well brother, here is what I am trying to tell you: One day two weeks ago the peace that passeth all understanding pervaded my soul; the fear that hath torment was all gone; I felt that I was one of the children whom his indwelling Spirit prompts to cry, Abba, Father! It reminded me of my first experience, and the joy I then had, but it was calmer, sweeter; I had found "rest." The writer of the letter to the Hebrews said, "We who have believed do enter into rest." Here and now he means, and he tells also of a rest that remains. These are spiritual matters, and the spiritually minded love the recital of them; to the natural man they are foolishness.

I thought to tell you this much as a sort of discharge of a debt I owe you as editor of the SIGNS. It was after realizing the peace and quiet and feeling of acceptance, that the text came to me with a new and grander force, "Learn of me, * * * and you shall find rest to your souls." I had been learning of Jesus through the SIGNS, and a letter from a brother in Philadelphia that was so genuine, so brotherly, and so sweetly assuring me of "fellowship in a precious hope in Jesus," all strengthening my faith in salvation by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the commu-

nion of the holy Spirit. I should not think it strange, should I, that a holy calm and peace and rest filled my soul that day and yet? an earnest of that eternal, absolute, unmixed rest that remaineth for the people of God.

If you wish you may publish this letter not written for publication amidst contributions ranking as high class literature, but as a heart to heart talk with a worthy son of an illustrious defender of the truth as it is in Jesus.

I beg as a closing to use the language of your North Berwick correspondent, Fred. W. Keene, who has won my heart because he feels what he writes: "O thou gracious Redeemer, give me a true token. Hold thou before mine eyes the scarlet line; enable me with eyes of faith and love to look upon thy precious atoning blood. O Lamb of God, smile upon me; then with this true token a passport into heaven's glories shall be mine."

With much love and fellowship in the truth, all yours,

WM. S. SPEER.

NEWARK, N. J., May 28, 1903.

MR. AND MRS. FRANKLIN TERRY—MY DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER:—My time at this writing is somewhat limited, yet I will indulge in a little talk to you on paper, as it is a very pleasant way to spend a few leisure moments, and I enjoy writing to my dear kindred in Christ when it is the pleasure of the Lord to open up the avenues of my mind, and thus put me in a writing mood. I often sit down to write upon those heavenly and divine things that are so comforting to you both, as well as to myself, and while I am thus writing, or after I have finished, the devil, who has been a close and busy companion all the while, and ready to make suggestions every now and then, tells me that I am writing about things that I know nothing about experimentally, and I am almost made to believe sometimes that he is telling me the truth. But let me be what I may, there is always one pleasant and comforting thought, and that is that what I have been writing I believe is God's eternal truth, that will stand when time shall be no more, when the devil and his angels shall have been cast into the bottomless pit, and the poor, trembling children of God, who have been so tried and tempted in these low grounds of sorrow, will be singing in a nobler, sweeter song, God's power to save. It was my privilege to attend the meeting in New York city the Sunday after the association, when four of God's redeemed children were enabled to come forward and testify in Zion's courts the gracious and marvelous dealings of their heavenly Father with them, and to manifest their desire to honor and glorify their Lord and Savior, in submitting to the solemn ordinance of baptism. On last Sunday it was again my sweet privilege to be there, and to listen to the glorious gospel of God our Savior as proclaimed by our brother, Elder Cole, and after meeting to witness the administration of the ordinance of baptism by Elder McConnell, in the Hudson River, at the foot of 158th St., when those four willing and obedient children were led down into the liquid grave, and buried in imitation of the example that was set before us by our glorious King and Lawgiver.

The lowering clouds that had so recently showered down upon the seriously parched earth, and its anxiously looking inhabitants, were now in this very auspicious and joyful hour brushed gently away, that the great luminary of the day might once more come forth, and shed his bright, warm rays upon the sons and

daughters of Adam, and cheer the hearts of the dear children of God, who were once more gathered upon the banks of the Hudson, to witness the solemn, beautiful and figurative ordinance of baptism, and to make the eventful hour and place more joyful, (perhaps) as it was a most solemn occasion to those heaven-born children whose glad souls had been warmed by the glorious rays of the great Sun of righteousness. And while they were being led down into the liquid grave, where there was "much water," in joyful obedience to the command of their Lord and King, receiving the solemn and beautiful ordinance, the heavens above and the earth beneath were made bright and glorious by the handiwork of God. The words of the poet would seem upon this occasion especially fitting to those heaven-born children, as they were perhaps to others who stood around the baptismal waters:

"What a mercy is this,
What a heaven of bliss,
How unspeakably favored are we!
Gathered into the fold,
With believers enrolled,
With believers to live and to die."

It has sometimes been the pleasure of the Lord to take me back in my mind, and refresh my memory with the awfully deceptive manner in which the devil was permitted to tempt our dear Savior upon that memorable occasion when he took him up into a high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world, in a short space of time, and when the devil had the unblushing assurance to assume to be the possessor of all this great wealth and power, and when he was so desirous that the dear Savior should fall down and worship him, that he offered him all this great wealth and power, as the price he would give him in return. All this was deceptive, for the fact was that the devil did not own one foot of it, and was chained beside. This remarkable circumstance took place, and it is on record by divine arrangement, and is in harmony with God's most righteous will, as well as his eternal purpose, that his dear children might learn a salutary lesson in all subsequent time. For he loved his dear children too well to bring them through this pilgrimage journey without knowing the fellowship of Jesus' sufferings, that they might be made conformable to his death.

So, my dear brother and sister, when the clouds gather and overspread your pathway, and the sun is hidden from view for a time, when Satan is permitted to assail you, and your little bark is tossed upon tempestuous seas, do not conclude that the Lord has forgotten you, for back of every dark and threatening cloud the sun is still shining, and though he hides his smiling face, it is still in loving-kindness that he deals with you thus. For the sweet and comforting declaration is, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Then cheer up, for "The clouds ye so much dread are big with mercy, and shall break in blessing on your heads."

"Glory to God above, the waters soon will cease,
For lo, the quick returning dove brings home the sign of peace.
Though clouds his face obscure, and dangers threaten loud,
Jehovah's covenant is sure, his bow is in the cloud."

And, my dear brother and sister, when a few days or months or years more are passed away, with their weight of sorrow, the sweet sentence from your heavenly Father's lips will fall joyfully and peacefully, I doubt not, upon your listening ears, and earthly friends who have been so dear, and earthly associations that have been so pleasant, will vanish from

sight, while your enraptured souls will be ushered into the blissful rays of the glorious Sun of righteousness, which forever shine in that eternal day.

I have written you to great length, far beyond what I had thought to do when I first sat down to write. When I began I was not in that happy frame of writing that I could desire to be in. But I must now close, and in doing so will transcribe a few lines which have and do still afford me a great deal of comfort in singing:

"There is no grove on earth's broad chart,
But has some bird to cheer it;
So hope sings on in every heart,
Although we may not hear it.

And if perchance the heavy weight
Of sorrow is oppressing,
Perhaps to-morrow's sun may bring
The heavy heart a blessing,

For life is sometimes bright and fair,
And sometimes dark and lonely:
Then let's forget its toil and care,
And note its bright hours only."

Affectionately and hopefully your friend and brother,

GEORGE D. CONKLING.

GREENVILLE, W. Va., May 13, 1903.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—My mind has been called back to former years and past events. I would like to give one expression of gratitude and thanks, and to keep in memory, and to cultivate a desire to keep in memory still, the kindness of the Beebe family, who were so good and so kind as to send the SIGNS to my poor afflicted brother, Ward Mann, for the space of twenty years. He had but one eye to read with, and I can see him lying upon his back with the SIGNS fixed in a split stick, reading its contents, his mind being led after the precious truths which were contained in its columns. But he is gone, and a great many of the writers in the SIGNS are gone; they suffered and toiled in the vineyard of God, and bore the burden and heat of the day until the fulfillment of the measure of time was accomplished, and then the Lord said to them, "Come up higher." They had taken a low seat at the feet of Jesus, and they did not wish the uppermost seats in the synagogues; they wished to repent in dust and ashes, they were glad to be counted worthy to suffer in the cause of their master.

It is very uncommon for me to go back to these sad reflections, or to those things that cause sadness, but, dear brother, there is something that underlies all these reflections which is as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither Jesus, the forerunner, hath for us entered, and that is the hope of immortality which lies beyond this mortal life. If we were enabled to throw off the shackels of the perishing things of time, or of this present evil and unregenerate world, we should indeed exclaim, blessed hope! but we are enabled to see only so far as faith gives it to us; we walk by faith and not by sight. Faith is always moving in a forward direction, it has no backward movement, it is always pressing forward to the mark for the prize of the high calling in Jesus.

"With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Here are two essentials. First, a belief of the truth, and second, a confession of faith. He that has been begotten by the Spirit has been quickened by that life-giving power; the heart has been moved upon by some mysterious, unseen power outside of the natural powers of man, mental or otherwise. The power of the righteous law of God has been made known to that man, for by the law is the knowl-

edge of sin; living faith has taken up its abode in his heart, and he is a new creature, for "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new," he is a new man in Christ; he is not the same man that he was before he received the spiritual birth, he is dead to the world, and freed from sin; "His life is hid with Christ in God; the old worldly hope to which he held for deliverance has passed away; he has no confidence in the flesh; his thoughts and his mind are raised to a higher and more exalted plane; he is enabled to trust in God for faith, and hope, and for strength to acknowledge Christ as the way, the truth and the life; "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of ourselves; it is the gift of God."

When a man passes from death to life he knows that it is a gift to him, a free and an unmerited gift on the part of the receiver. When the blind man received his sight he said, "Whereas I was once blind, now I see." We know that what we once loved, we now hate, and what we once hated, we now love. Like Jacob of old, we have been turned about.

If I could write anything that would comfort the weary pilgrims in Zion, I would gladly do it. I am now in my seventieth year, and my mind is so much drawn out after our people. They are a poor and afflicted people, and their trust is in the name of the Lord, and their hope of salvation is in a crucified and risen Redeemer, and if saved, it is to the exclusion of all the gainsaying powers of the present evil world. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is he in whom we trust. Tribulation, affliction and trials, are on all sides, more especially in time of old age, or at least then they are more sensibly felt.

The good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES has stood the storms of about seventy-one years, and it is still edited as strongly as ever; the same truth is being proclaimed through its columns; it has been read by thousands with sadness of heart, or with tears of joy, of those who are nineteen hundred years behind the age; it never has gathered up the weapons of carnal warfare to fight the enemy with; its warfare has been in demonstration of the Spirit, and with power. God, who works all things in heaven and earth after the counsel of his own will, and to whom all things are open and naked, and beside whom there is no other name in heaven or among men whereby we must be saved, has been with the SIGNS all these years.

There is but one redemption plan, and that is by the blood of the new and everlasting covenant, which was made between the Father and the Son. God said, For behold, I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. I will write my law in their hearts, and in their minds. This is a way which is elevated and lifted up, and the lion's whelp has not trodden that way, nor the vulture's eye seen it. It is a way unseen and uncared for by the world, and in it all the blood-washed throng are led, and are saved until they come to that home not made with hands, the celestial city, the New Jerusalem in the heavens.

I love to read the SIGNS; I want to hear from all the household of faith. The Lord has spoken good concerning Israel.

Brother Beebe, I leave this to your better judgment to do with as you think best. I remain your brother,

JOHN MANN.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., June 21, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I send you a letter from sister Lizzie Fetter, which it seems to me ought to be published in the SIGNS. Please send it on.

Your brother in hope,

S. H. DURAND.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I have written to the church as you see, kindly see if I have said anything amiss, words are poor when I attempt to put down what is in my mind. I feel sometimes as though I could not endure the struggle that is in my heart, sin is so strong, yet I feel that it is kept in subjection by a stronger power. God grant that I may be kept in the right way. I have a feeling of sadness to-day that I do not understand, I feel as if I was alone, and yet not alone, for his hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me; I am sadly waiting until he says, "Rise up, my fair one, and come away." Then, because his hand is underneath, I will arise and come away, and his power will be made manifest.

I am a mystery to myself; pray for me, for I am in need of prayer. One prayer is enough, and that is the prayer of Jesus for all his Peters, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." And it will not fail, for Christ is our strength, and "As thy day, so shall thy strength be."

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571 CENTER ST., TRENTON, N. J., June 13, 1903.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I have a desire to talk with you as you are brought together once more to testify of Christ, and of the great works of him who is mighty to save. When I think of the great kindness of my all-wise Maker, in giving me a home among you all, and also in giving me strength to meet with you at times, I am made to cry out, Why such love to me? and the words of the poet answer me,

> "'Twas the same love that spread the feast,
> That sweetly forced me in,
> Or I, without a saving taste,
> Had perished in my sin."

And the hand that prepares the table before me in the presence of mine enemies, will also anoint my head with oil, and fill my cup full. There is not a miracle recorded in the Bible more wonderful than what has been done for me. I have been blind, deaf, lame, sick and a leper, have been filled with devils and unclean spirits, and the Lord has delivered me out of them all, and enabled me to say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

I find that the trials of the flesh count as nothing when compared to the deliverance of our souls from the body of the flesh which keeps us prisoners: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Says Paul, "No chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward, it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness, unto them which are exercised thereby." How true that seems to me; I can see how afflictions and chastisements have been very hard to me, yet when the Lord has enabled me to see that all things are in his hand, then I find that the glory that has been revealed, and the peaceable fruits that they have yielded unto me, are more to me than the whole earth, were I possessor of it. I have learned whatever state I am in therewith to be content, for I know that God rules in heaven and in earth. I have learned this through trials. "I cried unto God with my voice, even

unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me. In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: my sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted."

Now, because he gave ear unto me, and enabled me to see my unworthiness and sinfulness, I feel that I can never doubt his grace and strength again. There is in all the trials, doubts, bereavements and losses of his people, that life manifested in the walk and conversation, which enables each one to see the glorious union of Christ and his people.

When you spoke to me at the last meeting, I found that we had traveled the same way. We have been in the valley of Achor, and found it a door of hope; we have been with Jacob in a strange place, yet the Lord made it to us as to him, a very gate of heaven. Surely was the Lord in that place and we knew it not; and as the poet says,

"Out of my stony griefs
Bethels I'll raise,
So by my woes to be
Nearer, my God, to thee;
Nearer to thee."

I would not have you think that I have had more love shown me than has been shown to you, but my sins are more, and the grace and love seems greater, because I have been raised above such a mountain of sin. We all learn that salvation is by grace, and we are as nothing in ourselves, but in him are we parts of that great and glorious body, which is fitly joined together in him who is our head. There is no time, nor age, nor sex, in the glorious life of his people. It is written, They shall not marry, nor be given in marriage, in all the holy mountain.

To me that is not some future state or place, but the day that commenced when Christ satisfied the law by his death, and glorious resurrection, the glorious Sabbath day of rest in his holy mountain begun then, and a never-ending day to his people. We do not love each other because of sex, or because married or single, black or white, but because we are members of Christ's glorious body, possessing the life of Christ, which is without sin. We are holy, because he is holy, our holiness is in him. As the branch of the tree receives its life from the root, and one branch has no more life than another, so is Christ the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning Star, and we are all possessors of the same life.

Dear friends, pardon my imperfection by the grace which God gives you. I hope that in all my sojourn here on earth I may be able to look beyond, so as to behold Christ as my help, and be enabled to say that I have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

"The Savior, whom I then shall see,
With new admiring eyes;
Already has prepared for me
A mansion in the skies.

I feel this earth walled cottage shake,
And long to see it fall;
That I my willing flight may take
To him who is my all.

Burdened and groaning then no more,
My rescued soul shall sing;
As up the shining path I soar,
Death, thou hast lost thy sting."

May God give to each one present at your meeting a hearing ear and understanding heart, and fill each with his manifested love, so that all may be able to say, It is good to be here. God grant that I may be remembered in your prayers, for I am weak. Yet in him I am strong, for he is my strength.

Brethren, farewell. Yours in the fellowship of Christ,

ELIZABETH P. FETTER.

[OUR sister may feel well assured that her brethren and sisters remember her in

love, as she has desired, in their prayers before God. God has heard and will hear when his children cry. Even Paul said that his brethren helped him by their prayers. How precious the truth that in all their affliction Jesus was afflicted, and that the angel of his presence saves them. Our sister, and our brother, her companion, have found it so thus far, and his love and pity shall never fail them. Our sister has learned the deepest lessons, as all the children of God have, in affliction, and she also has found the peaceable fruits of righteousness in it all.—ED.]

LUKE XIX. 10

"The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

This truth was spoken by our Lord and Savior when he bade Zaccheus come down saying, "To-day I must abide at thy house." Zaccheus had climbed a tree so that he could see Jesus as he passed, being small of stature, and so unable to see him for the press. No doubt Zaccheus loved him. Now when Jesus made known his purpose to abide at the house of Zaccheus, it is recorded that they murmured, saying that he had gone to be guest at the house of a man that was a sinner.

As Jesus came to save sinners, and sinners alone, when one gets so far along that he does not feel himself to be a sinner, then such self-righteous ones certainly have no part in the everlasting salvation which Jesus wrought out for his people.

First. He came to seek and to save that which was lost. Who are the lost? The whole race of Adam, and with them, the people of God as a part of that race. Jesus knew the work that he came to do; he knew well the enormous debt which was charged against his people, and he was their surety; he came to do the will of his Father, and this was the will of him that sent him, that of all that the Father gave him he should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. What was the debt charged against the people of God? They had broken God's most holy law. They had turned every one to his own way, and had gone astray, and were completely lost. Hence Jesus must fulfill God's holy law in all its jots ond tittles, in their room and stead. He made the law honorable, and magnified it, he brought in everlasting righteousness, he satisfied every claim of the law against his people, and made them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. All their sins were laid upon him, and he suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. There is might and power here, for there is a needs be that all his people be saved, for if but one be lost, then the work of Jesus would not be perfect, but all power in heaven and earth is given into his hands, and his work is a perfect work; nothing can be added to it, and nothing shall be taken from it. So his people are all saved from the least of them to the greatest, "None of the ransomed shall ever be lost, for Jesus' dear blood they did cost."

Second. It is said that he will seek the lost. This also is his work, and he will accomplish it; he will bring the blind by a way they knew not, and in paths that they have not known will he lead them, and he will not forsake them, and they all shall come to him, and shall know him, from the least of them to the greatest. He bids "The north Give up; and the south, Keep not back, bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth, for I have

redeemed them. He paid every claim that was against them; he died the cruel and ignominious death of the cross, and cried, "It is finished." Now, for one of the totally depraved, weak and sinful mortals of Adam's race to say that the work is not finished, is indeed to cast the deepest reproach upon Jesus. It is saying that his work is not perfect. But his work is perfect. It is worthy of the God of the heavens and earth, and he bids his own to come unto him.

Fenced with Jehovah's wills and shalls, firm as the everlasting hills, and firm as his throne his promise stands. He seeks them then, and he finds them, and he also brings them. This work is not left for the preacher, or for any other mortal to do. Jesus is the good Shepherd. O, how wonderful all this is, and how suited to the needs of poor sinners who have no righteousness of their own, and who realize that all their own righteousness is but filthy rags. The more we have of such a righteousness as this, the worse we are off. Yet the work is carried on; Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith, he will carry the work on to its perfection; Jesus is the builder of the church, and the kingdom is sure to the little flock; he is our shield, our buckler, and our high tower, here indeed we can find a safe refuge, in every time of need. The time is short with us, our pilgrimage soon will end, and all will be hushed to rest, and then this people will enter into everlasting rest, and be forever with the Lord. This sore travel, which is given to the sons of men to be exercised with while here, will soon flit away, for our life is as a vapor that appeareth for a little while, and then vanisheth away.

With love to the household of faith, yours in hope,

WM. F. SLOAN.

MACOMB, Ill., August 4, 1903.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—The time has come for me to send my remittance for your paper. I have tried time and again to do without our dear family paper, but as it gives me so much pleasure and comfort I have decided to not try any longer, and hope to take it as long as I am permitted to live and read it. I often think one piece, or some experience of a dear old brother or sister who feels themselves poor and needy, is more than worth the price of a whole year's subscription. I feel my inability and unworthiness too much to expect to comfort or edify any by my writing. I have felt for some time like I wanted to address a few lines to the household of faith, not that I expect to benefit any one, but to ease my mind, and let my dear friends know though weak in body, strong and unchangeable in the faith once delivered to the saints. This faith and salvation are all that can do any of us poor mortals any good, and without this free grace and salvation we are a lost and ruined people, for what is poor man's help toward seeking this great salvation? It is not given to us for any of our help, or anything we have done, no "salvation is free for you and me," and if it was in us to walk and direct our steps, I fear many of us would fall by the wayside, and be left in the miry clay. Our blessed Lord has fixed all this, and before the foundation of the world his plans were all laid out to save his people, and not one shall be lost, but all shall be raised up at the last day to reign with him in glory. Owing to poor health and great distance, I am not able to attend my meetings often; about twice a year I am permitted to go and sit in the sanctuary where his banner over me is love, and I am allowed to listen and drink in

the words spoken by our dear teachers and feeders of the little flock gathered there. The dear people at New Hope Church still bear with me, and I have tried in my feeble way to attend as often as I can, and when I am not there in body I hope I am in spirit and mind, and I only ask them to bear with me awhile longer, as there my happiest hours have been spent, listening to the sweet songs of Zion, and the messages of love from our pastors, many who have gone to their long sleep. A deep sadness comes over me when I enter our church at Green Bush, so many old faces gone; my father, who was pastor many years, and old Elder Dark, whom many of our readers knew, have gone to their reward, and now we are called on to give up our much esteemed and beloved pastor, Elder Ketchum, who has moved west for the benefit of his family's health. We are left without any regular pastor, but we hope to have brother Ketchum with us again soon, as he is sadly missed. We hope that it is the Lord's will to send some one to proclaim his word from the walls of Zion, and comfort and cheer up the now despondent brethren and sisters of our church. He has promised to be with us in the sixth trouble, and not desert us in the seventh; not leave us nor forsake us.

"E'en down to old age all my people shall prove,
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love."

We have been blessed with several visiting brethren in the past year, who came with sweet tokens of the gospel, comforting those sitting under their voice, and drinking in the words of salvation proclaimed by them. Brother Frazee, of Bently, was with us in June, and if I am any judge, he knows how to rightly divide the word, and it seemed he was blessed with great liberty of speech, and handfuls of comforting words were let fall and enjoyed by those under his voice. I felt like I was led in his banqueting-house, where his banner over me was love; his everlasting arms holding me up. With this comforting thought we are enabled to say,

"On the wings of his love,
I was carried above."

These happy moments are not with me long, and I am made to see and feel my unworthiness, not feeling worthy to be called a friend, much less a sister in the church. All I ask is to be counted the very least of all of my brethren and sisters, and to be found at their feet asking forgiveness for my weakness. No other place have I to go, and if they refuse me, I want no other home on this earth.

Dear readers of the SIGNS, write on for our paper, and pray that it may be sustained and kept up, not allowing our editors (who have worked so faithfully for its maintenance) to be embarrassed in their work.

To all the readers, and the editors of our paper, I send christian love, and only hope you may all be sustained by his almighty power and grace, and that heaven's choicest blessings may rest upon each and every one, is my humble wish and feeble prayer.

MARY SHIELDS.

RIVERVIEW, Ala., August 17, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have just read the SIGNS for Sept. 1st, 1903, and feel a desire to tell you and its readers and contributors how much comfort I have derived from its contents.

I have read the Bible a great deal recently, and it seemed to me the more I read the less I understood it, and I even felt that if I continued to read it I would get to where I would doubt its divine

authorship, and such darkness it seems to me I have never before realized. I have been reading in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and so on to 1st Samuel, and noting the many strange things that are recorded, and the immoral conduct of many of the reputed servants of God, and many other things in the history of the children of Israel. I just got into the brush every way, and was at my wits end.

Is it not strange that just at this juncture I should get the SIGNS, and read Elder Chick's article on the two covenants, B. L. Beebe's on the molten calf, and Elder Keene's conclusion of the "scarlet line," &c., all written upon the very things that I had been reading about, and could not understand? And is it not stranger still that I who have passed as a gospel minister for nearly twenty-five years should become so engulfed in darkness as to doubt the authenticity of the Scriptures, and the reality of the religion of Jesus Christ? but such is the fact. But how plainly now it seems to me. I can see the "scarlet line" of the blood of Christ running all through the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. What a magnificent display of God's sovereign grace and election in the salvation of the harlot Rahab and her father's house. While reading the SIGNS to-day I felt that I was enabled once more to see Jesus as the "only name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," and the precious blood that flowed from his veins as the only remedy for sin, and as the only hope for poor, perishing sinners.

Surely the Lord is mindful of his poor, tempest-tossed children, and will not suffer them to sink in hopeless despair. Knowing their whereabouts, and all their sore trials and temptations, he prepares his servants (without the least knowledge on the part of either) to minister to the comfort of those who are "ready to perish." The Lord certainly uses men (men of his own choosing and qualification) to minister to them "who shall be heirs of salvation." He sent the man Moses to deliver the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage. It was two men that appeared to Abraham in the plains of Mamre as he sat in the tent door, and delivered the thrilling message that Sarah should have a son. These same two men spent the night with Lot in Sodom, and delivered Lot and his family from the fate of that wicked city, and many other places recorded in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. It was the man Ananias that went to Saul, in Damascus, and laid his hands upon him and called him "brother Saul," and preached the gospel to him. The Ethiopian eunuch needed "some man" to "guide" him in his understanding of the prophecy of Isaiah. So it seems to me that God has his own way of making his power and grace known to his people.

I have written the foregoing to relieve my own mind. What is the SIGNS but a medium or channel through which the Lord ministers comfort and instruction to his children?

Yours in fellowship,

H. J. REDD.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1903.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SLANDEROUS CHARGES REFUTED.

DEAR BROTHER TODD:—Our regular meeting at Providence passed off with a great degree of pleasure. Elder J. T. Oliphant being present and preaching with so much zeal and power that made us to rejoice. We had with us our distinguished relative, friend and once neighbor, Ex-Gov. Halcomb, of Nebraska, now serving as Supreme Judge of the state, who, during his vacation is spending some time in his old neighborhood. At the close of the regular service the Judge, by request of the pastor, came forward and addressed the audience a short time with a well directed heart talk. As he spoke of his early associations with our old church in his boyhood and early manhood days, of the old names and faces, some seen yet some gone to their reward. The remembrance of his father's relation to the church, his mother's interest felt and manifested at our monthly meetings when she lived and moved among us, his emotion all but mastered him. The climax, however, was reached when he spoke more lengthily of a mother's influence on a boy. He said in part: My widowed mother and the younger children went out west nearly a quarter of a century ago and settled in what then seemed to be discouraging environments. Since then I have had many ups and downs, encouragements and discouragements successes and reverses, but in and through them all I had a constant, attentive friend in the person of my mother. When in my darkest moments, oppressed with the cares of the world, my skies overhung with darkness I have gone to mother to catch some word of cheer concerning the present and hereafter, and such was and is her confidence in the reality of my religion that I have gone away light hearted. Judge Holcomb united with the church under the Pastoral charges of Elder James Stuckland, but during a visit of Elder E. D. Thomas to our church and was afterward baptized by Elder Stuckland. On moving out west, he studied law while teaching school, afterward enjoyed a lucrative practice in Broken Bow, Neb., elected Circuit judge one term, as Governor of state two terms and as Judge of Supreme Court where he now is serving. He married a lady of the Christian church and attached himself to the same, there being no Baptist church convenient and this suggests a question, why do not our Baptist people organize and maintain churches in the cities? Will you please answer?

ANSWER:—I am requested to answer the following question: "Why do not our Baptist people organize and maintain churches in the cities?" Many reasons all of which are so many sins might be given. First after the split with the Campbellites and Missionaries our people became fearful of every grade of arminianism and became antinominian in practice to a great extent. The first time in the history of the church we find the doctrine of predestination expressed by the phrase, "absolute predestination of all things" is found in the minutes of the Black Rock convention which convened September 28th, 1832. This doctrine was promulgated and taught by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and spread its baneful influence over almost the entire Baptist family in America. This doctrine of fatalism has been and its spirit now is a curse to the church of God. It crops out in such expressions as the following: "When the Lord's time comes you will repent and join the church." "I could'nt help it." "God knows all things, I can't do otherwise than I do." "God predestinated my sins and my salvation." No sin, no Savior, no Savior no heaven, therefore God predestinated my sins." "God has all His children in the church he wants in it." No use to preach the gospel to sinners because they are dead and can't hear it. "Preach to the sheep the goats can't feed on sheep's food therefore no use to preach to them." Now I say the spirit of Antinomianism crops out in these expressions and the Black Rock convention is the place of its birth. This doctrine has crystalized every effort to spread the gospel and consequently we have no churches in our cities and centers of civilization. This is our shame, and never until we are free from the spirit of antinomianism will we obey the voice of heaven which says, Isa. liv. 2, "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes." Among all the reasons I can give, the first and father of all reasons is the baneful influence of antinominianism that spread like the pall of death over the household of faith. This is the incubator in which the almost endless brood of "little foxes that spoil the vine," were born. That spirit quickened the temper of carelessness and covetousness to such an alarming extent that but few of our ministry have received compensation enough to live comfortably while pastoring the churches. They could not go into the highways and the hedges"

and compel those who were bidden to come to the gospel feast of fat things. Many bitter tears and unnumbered groans have been shed and uttered because of all this, arminianism is wrong and so is antinomianism. But honestly if I was compelled to choose between them I could soon make the choice. I am glad to see the dawn of the morning and the sun of restoration arising over the eastern hills of hope. I am glad our people are urging the children of God to "dare to do the right" even if some old fellow does put on a long face and say, arminianism. More people are joining our churches than ever before. Show me a church where hard shellism is being taught and I will show you a dead one. The child of God cannot live on bone food and "wild gourds" and such doctrine will sooner or later trail the banner of the cross in the dust of disrespect and death and shame. This is the cause of "church declention" throughout many of the best states of our Union. The churches will continue to die where the spirit or the letter of antinomianism is believed and preached and obeyed. This is why we have no churches in our cities and thousands of hungry hearted children of God are STARVING FOR THAT WHICH WE WILL NOT GIVE, "the bread of life." My soul is full of sorrow when I see great cities, towns, counties and half states that never hear the pure rich gospel of Jesus. Is God well pleased with the course we have pursued from the Black Rock convention until now? If so why do our churches perish with a gifted ministry and a densely populated country to draw from? Something wrong brethren somewhere. Please don't be harsh with me and think unkindly of me when you read this, but just ask yourself if these things are not true. I love our cause to well I hope to nourish error among us though by such a course I bring down anathema upon me. Pray that the sun may shine again. Let some other brother answer the above question.

H. T.

REPLY.

THE above is a letter copied from the *Gospel Light*, a paper published in Indiana by Elder H. A. Todd, together with his reply to the same. We ask all our readers to carefully read and consider the reply to the question asked by his correspondent, Mrs. Compton, "Why do not our Baptist people organize and maintain churches in the cities?" We publish this question, and the reply, that our brethren may see how far some have gone in the way of Arminianism, who yet claim to be Old School Baptists, and in order to call special attention to some things contained in the reply from Elder Todd to the above question.

We have nothing special to say concerning the letter from Mrs. Compton, except that the fact that there is no organized Old School Baptist church in any city where an Old School Baptist may dwell, furnishes no excuse for such an one to unite with the enemies of truth and godliness. There is absolutely nothing in common between those who call themselves christians, or disciples, and who are commonly called Campbellites, and Old School Baptists, as regards their faith. Campbellites believe that without baptism no one can be saved finally. Thus they reject Christ as a Savior, and entirely throw aside the atonement of the Lord Jesus as that which justifies a sinner. They also reject the new birth of the Spirit, and laugh at what believers regard as a christian experience. It is sure that no child of God can have fellowship in truth and in heart with that body of people. Every time a child of God, who knows the plague of his own heart, and who knows Jesus through the Spirit as his Savior, and his personal Friend, and who has tasted and handled of the word of life, hears the preaching which rejects the most precious treasures of his soul, he must feel, Here is no place for me, and where Jesus, my dear Savior, is rejected, I cannot go. Campbellites, by their own confession, have nothing in common with a soul that is exercised by the Spirit of God. By their own confession they are not born again, and do not believe that there can be such a thing. If a man has no friends near him, is that therefore any reason why he should walk hand in hand with the enemies of the cross of Christ?

Now with regard to the reply from Elder Todd, we have no desire to enter

into any debate with him, but simply wish to call attention to the fact that he announces that the doctrine stated and promulgated at the Black Rock Convention, concerning the predestination of God, is nothing but fatalism, and has been a curse to the church of God, and still is so. He states that through the teaching of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES this doctrine spread its baneful influence over almost the entire Baptist family of America. He attributes to it, that is, to this doctrine, a number of ridiculous assertions, which no true believer in the doctrine of predestination ever made or ever thought of, and asserts that the doctrine is responsible for these assertions. He says that this doctrine contains the spirit of antinomianism, and that it has crystalized every effort to spread the gospel, and consequently we have no churches in our cities, and centers of civilization, whatever that may mean. He says that never till we are free of this shall we obey the voice of heaven which says, "Enlarge the place of thy tent," &c. Out of this doctrine, he goes on to assert, has spread a pall as of death over the household of faith. Out of this doctrine, as an incubator, has sprung an almost endless brood of little foxes that spoil the vine. He declares that out of this doctrine sprang up a temper of covetousness and carelessness, to such an extent that ministers were neglected, and but few received compensation enough to live upon, while pastors of churches, and so they could not go into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in. He says that he prefers Arminianism to antinomianism, and that thousands of God's hungry children are starving for that which we will not give, and he puts this last assertion in small capitals to emphasize it. He concludes by asking, Is God well pleased with the course we have pursued from the Black Rock Convention until now? But we will not quote more, as the editorial speaks for itself.

First, we ask, Are the brethren of our order in the west, where *The Gospel Light* is published, ready to receive all this as gospel? Would Elder Wilson Thompson, and others who stood with him seventy years ago, have sanctioned any such assertions, or held in fellowship any one who would have given expression to them? We cannot believe that the great body of ministers and members in the section where *The Gospel Light* is published, are ready to accept any such statements as are made in this reply from Elder Todd. We shall wait with anxiety to see what response will be made to these assaults upon the old faith dear to the hearts of our fathers, and sacredly held by them as the truth taught in the holy Scriptures. It was indeed true that for many years the action of the Black Rock Convention, and the doctrine advocated in the SIGNS, in harmony with that convention, was never questioned among Old School Baptists all over the country. The old fathers loved the doctrine there stated, and contended for in the SIGNS, and no thought of ever departing from it entered their hearts. It has remained for one belonging to the generation, to which the grandchildren of these aged fathers belong, to arise and denounce that convention, and the SIGNS, as the authors of well nigh all the evils to which the church has been subject since then. One thing seems sure, viz: Had Elder Todd been living then, and had he been present at the Black Rock Convention, he would not have been found with those who came out from those who were false brethren. He would have considered that the action of the counsel was fraught

with such evil tendencies that in all good conscience he must have separated himself from them. Had he been living then, and present there, and had he spoken the things which he has written here, he would have been applauded by all the New School Baptists who might have heard him. If New School Baptists read his paper now, they will applaud this article from his pen, and rejoice that one at least has come to see the folly of the criminal and sinful course pursued at the Black Rock Convention. Old School Baptist faith was defined there, and as Elder Todd condemns that faith, he is not an Old School Baptist.

As we have read over the editorial to which we are calling attention, we could but feel as though we had but to close our eyes and hear it read, to imagine that we were once more a youth, and that we were once more listening, as we did sometimes then, to some New School Baptist preacher, as he denounced the doctrine of predestination or personal election, and the "do nothing" system, as salvation by grace alone was stigmatized then. There is not a sentence in this whole editorial that a New School Baptist could not adopt. There is not a sentence in it all that when a child we did not hear fall from the lips or see from the pen of those who then opposed the truth. And to-day we should not be surprised to see just such charges made against the truth by all Arminian orders, and neither should we think it worth while to call attention to the matter, if such charges had emanated from them, but the writer of these charges claims to be an Old School Baptist still, and so, if unnoticed, it may be thought that Old School Baptists have become convinced of the error of their ways, and of the unwisdom of the Black Rock Convention, and that we are all now ready to denounce the doctrine which was dear to our fathers, and which when we united with the church we professed was dear to ourselves. For ourself, we want to say that the faith which we loved as a child, we love still, and unless we forget the lessons of experience, and the teachings of the word of God, we expect to continue to love the same faith to the end. We enter therefore a solemn protest against the assertions of Elder Todd as being Old School Baptist doctrine, any more to-day than they were seventy years ago. The fathers who subscribed their names to the statement of faith adopted at the Black Rock Convention, were known and recognized by all their brethren as godly, earnest, self-sacrificing men, who were ready to yield the good things of this life if need be, but not the truth. Their faith did not make them ungodly in their lives, and neither did it make them careless, or less zealous in seeking to promulgate the truth at all times, and in every place where Providence called them to labor. And in our limited acquaintance the men who have believed these principles of doctrine now denounced by Elder Todd, have not been lukewarm, and neither have they been idle in the vineyard. We have known of no ministers who have been willing to sacrifice more for the faith that was in them, than these same men who have believed the "baneful" doctrine of predestination. On the contrary, this very doctrine believed in their hearts has girded them with strength to go forward, fearing nothing, not even the rage of the devil, against the doctrine of God. And so far as our knowledge goes, those who have believed this strong doctrine have been more stern and strict in their judgment of themselves as sinners, and more jealous of all their words and

deeds, lest they should sin against God, than their opponents have ever been. In this we do not boast, save in the doctrine itself, the power and influence of which has produced such blessed results. To-day, and in past centuries, it has been true that those nations and peoples which have been under the influence of the doctrine of predestination, election and all cognate truths, have been more stern in their morality than those nations and peoples which are and have been under the influence of Arminianism.

Ere we close we desire to call attention to one expression especially, in the editorial from the pen of Elder Todd. He says that one of the expressions which have had their growth out of this doctrine of predestination is, "Preach to the sheep, the goats can't feed on sheep's food, therefore no use to preach to them." Does Elder Todd mean to say that he considers the truth expressed in these rather common expressions, a baneful fruit? Does he believe that the mission of the minister of Christ is to hold him out to the unregenerate, the goats, as he uses the term? It would seem so from the way in which he has written. What does he mean by preaching to the goats? Does he mean that Christ is to be held out to those who feel no need of him? The business of the gospel minister is to preach Christ and him crucified. Is Christ to be held out to the Jew, to whom he is a stumbling-block, or to the Greek, to whom he is foolisness? Again he says, that it is the result of the doctrine that men will conclude from it that it is of no use to preach to sinners, and indeed that this is what believers in the doctrine do say. Again we ask, What are we to understand from this statement? Does Elder Todd mean that it is of use to preach to dead sinners? If so, of what use is it? Does he mean that preaching the gospel is a means of quickening dead sinners?

We will leave our readers everywhere to say if this is Old School Baptist doctrine. We know that it is not Bible doctrine.

Now, in conclusion we desire to say that those who believe the doctrine of predestination have preached the gospel in cities, as much (to say the least of it) as any who deny the doctrine have done, every since the division in 1832. There has been almost constant service in Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York, which have been and are still among the largest cities in our country. In London we are informed there are perhaps a dozen flourishing churches, not one of which would acknowledge any belief in addressing dead sinners as such, and calling it gospel. We will add to the above, that in Washington city, the capital of our country, there has been a church and regular gospel preaching in all these years, and yet in all these cities in our country predestination, with all its cognate doctrines, has always been held and preached, and we have yet to learn that in any cities where predestination of all things has been rejected, there are any more faithful and steadfast churches than in these cities.

We fear that Elder Todd cares more for numbers than for the truth, and the kind of material matters little, so that there is an abundance of it. If indeed the love of the truth be uppermost in his heart, at the end he will find that he shall be saved as by fire, for much with him will have to be burned up. If he succeeds in building up churches in membership upon grounds for which he has contended in this editorial, much will prove to be wood, hay and stubble, and he will suffer loss, if in-

deed he be a called minister of Jesus Christ.

Of course we can have nothing personally against Elder Todd. For aught we know he may be a good citizen, and a kind neighbor, and a pattern of good behavior among men, and we have not written against the man, but against the doctrine which he upholds, and in defense of the old faith, and of the fathers who loved it before us.

Our voice is but feeble, but yet, feeble as it is, we should be guilty did we not raise it against such departures from the faith. We cannot be still when the vital truth which we love, and which we are persuaded all subjects of grace divine must love, is assailed in the house of those who ought to be its friends. We wish to frankly say that we could not and would not suffer such sentiments to be advocated in any pulpit where we serve. If preached in our hearing we should feel that our simple duty demanded that we at once arise and oppose it.

We hope that God will give to Elder Todd a more perfect knowledge, if indeed he knows the truth at all, and also that the faithful, humble-hearted brethren, especially in the section where these things are advocated by him, will lift up their voice in protest, and show that they can have no fellowship with these assaults upon the doctrine of God our Savior. C.

WHILE with brother Chick we feel no disposition to enter into a debate with any man who may be so blinded or regardless of the truth, as to make such baseless charges against the faith so dear to every spiritually taught child of God, yet we desire to call special attention to the fallacy of one charge in particular made by Elder Todd against the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which is that the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES spread its baneful influence over almost the entire Baptist family in America, and that it is now and has been a curse to the church of God.

In refutation of this base and malicious falsehood we have but to refer every candid reader to the condition of the Old Baptists in America for the first fifty years the SIGNS exercised its "baneful" influence unchallenged by those claiming to be Primitive Baptists. For more than fifty years the brotherhood while under this "baneful influence" were practically a unit, and peace and fellowship reigned universal throughout the United States among all claiming our name.

It is too early for the enemies of the truth to attempt to falsify the history of the Old School Baptists in this country, for there are too many living witnesses yet upon the earth who are prepared by personal knowledge to refute any such wicked misrepresentation and base slanders as are made by Elder Todd.

Whether the principles advocated in the SIGNS from its commencement to the present day are truth or error, this one fact is certain, that for the first fifty years of its publication the brotherhood of Primitive Baptists were almost universally at peace, and still at the present time where the SIGNS OF THE TIMES' circulation has not decreased, the brethren are enjoying that same sweet peace and fellowship that was enjoyed by the brotherhood in general, for nearly two generations. These are positive facts, and all who are acquainted with the history of the Old School Baptists in America must acknowledge they are facts.

There are many reckless statements in Elder Todd's letter which have not the slightest foundation in truth, either liter-

ally or spiritually, but we will not weary our readers by citing and replying to them. It is not the open attacks that are as dangerous to the peace of Zion, as are the covert enemies that insinuate their pernicious doctrines among us to the confusion of the minds of the saints.

Any one who can read the article written by Elder Todd and sympathize with it, we have no hopes of being able to convince of its untruthfulness. If what he says is true, then those dear old soldiers of the cross, Jos. L. Purington, Wm. J. Purington, Robt. Leachman, C. B. Hassell, Gilbert Beebe, Thos. P. Dudley, J. F. Johnson, and hundreds of other faithful warriors, all fell on the battlefield fighting to spread this "baneful influence over the Baptist family in America."

What think you, brethren? Can this be so, or are the charges false? B.

PLEASE BE SURE,

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

By observing the above rules you will enable us to accurately fill your orders.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MARK XVI. 15.

Brother Beebe:—Please give your views through the Signs on Mark xvi. 15: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," and oblige.

WM. G. HOWARD.

Powhatan, Ala., September 28, 1860.

REPLY.

We have often expressed through the Signs our understanding of this text, but as our brother Howard has not been a subscriber long, we will offer a few remarks on the subject for his consideration.

It is clearly the exclusive province of our Lord Jesus Christ to call, qualify, commission and send forth whomsoever he pleases to preach his gospel, and also to appoint to them the field of their labor, and to sustain them in their work. Before his crucifixion, while with his people under the law, he sent forth many of his disciples into the cities of Judea, where he himself designed to go, commissioned to announce his advent, and that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, and would soon be delivered from the dominion and curse of the law, and set up according to the prediction of the prophet, (Daniel ii. 44,) but he charged them to go not in the way of the Gentiles, nor even into any of the cities of the Samaritans, for the time had not yet come for the organization of his church among the Gentiles. But now, after his death and resurrection, having redeemed his people from under the law, broken down the wall of partition, and being now invested with all power in heaven and in earth, that restriction to the cities of Judea was no longer necessary, for he has redeemed his subjects out of every kindred and nation under heaven,

and signifies his purpose to send the glad tidings abroad from the rivers to the ends of the earth. This gospel of the kingdom he had before informed them, should be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, but the preaching of it must begin at Jerusalem. Now that he was about to ascend up personally into heaven, he gave the commission under consideration, to the apostles, but ordered them to tarry in Jerusalem until they should be endowed with power from on high, which endowment they received when the day of Pentecost had fully come. (Acts ii. 1-4. The commission bid them, GO YE, not send somebody else, for to give them that liberty would have been a surrender to them the right which belongs to him exclusively of sending whomsoever he would. Not even the apostles themselves were invested with power to make ministers, or to choose, call or qualify them for the work, as none but him who had led captivity captive, and ascended up on high, had received gifts for men, consequently none other could give gifts unto men, and distribute the gifts as it hath pleased him, giving some prophets and apostles, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints; for the work of the ministry; for the edifying of the body of Christ. They were not then at liberty to tarry at home, for mission boards to raise funds, build seminaries, educate men, or to send substitutes, but the imperative command was "Go ye." Where? Not now merely to the cities of Judea, but wherever the creatures of God (that is, human beings, of course,) are found; into all the world. And what are they commissioned to do? Was it to organize Sabbath schools, preach missionary or educational sermons? Was it to regenerate and evangelize the world? to make christians, save souls, &c.? Not a word of the kind is found in the commission, nor can anything like it be inferred from the commission. Their work is clearly stated; it is simply to *preach the gospel*, not *read* the gospel, nor preach a gospel, but the gospel; this gospel of the kingdom. To preach it is to proclaim it, to publish it by divine authority. He who gave them the commission to preach, retained in his own hands the power to give ears to hear and hearts to understand it. "Preach the gospel to every creature." They had nothing else to preach, either to Jew or Gentile, to bond or free. This preaching is to proclaim the finished and complete work of Christ, his full, free and everlasting salvation, all of grace, from first to last, from beginning to end, and all of the Lord.

While the commissioned servants of our Lord faithfully obey the orders of their King, they have nothing but the gospel to preach to any, and that they are to preach in all places and to everybody, where a door is opened in providence. They have no power to apply their preaching to the edification of any. The same God who gives ability to preach, can give the hearing ear and the understanding heart to receive it, and make it profitable, edifying and comforting to the hearers. They unto whom it is preached cannot be profited by the preaching, except it be mixed with faith in them that hear, for without faith it is impossible to please God, and whatsoever is not of faith is sin; and faith is the gift of God, not the gift of the preacher. Presenting the demands of the law, or describing the horrors of the damned, or commanding sinners to save themselves, is not preaching the gospel; for there is no gospel in any such preach-

ing. The gospel is *good news; glad tidings*, inasmuch as it proclaims salvation in the name of the Lord, and preaches a full and perfect Savior, who saves unto the uttermost all who come unto God by him, and that includes all that the Father has given to the Son, for he says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out;" and "No man can come to me, except my Father which hath sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day." The preaching cannot give life to the dead, but it is for a witness to all nations, and as a faithful witness it will demonstrate who are and who are not ordained to eternal life. "As many as were ordained unto eternal life believed." And "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: he that believeth not shall be damned." It will feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood; but it will not suit the carnal and depraved appetite of the natural man.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., November 15, 1860.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Old School Baptist Conference of Maine, held with the Old School Baptist Church at North Berwick, Maine, to the associations with whom we correspond.

WE wish you all grace and prosperity in the kingdom of God. Another year has passed since we last addressed you, and we are still journeying, we hope, to the city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God. We have in Jesus our Savior a lively hope to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, saith the apostle Peter, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. The Scriptures very preciously give us manifold glimpses of the "better country." (Heb. xi. 16.) In that heavenly country Christ and his ransomed ones shall dwell for ever and ever. As Israel saw and tasted the grapes of Eshcol, (Num. xiii. 23,) so believers in Christ have the first fruits of the Spirit, (Rom. viii. 23,) blessed, divine foretastes of our future blessedness beyond this mortal life. Even now we have the earnest of our inheritance, and there are moments with believers when so comfortingly glorious is the experience of the earnest of the Spirit in their hearts that they are inspired with longings to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.

"O, when wilt thou bid me ascend,
To join in thy praises above,
To gaze on thee world without end,
And feast on thy ravishing love?"

"For now we see through a glass darkly: but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." Jesus Christ has gone into heaven, and so near and indissolvable is the union of the church unto him that where he is there shall also his people be. So shall we ever be with the Lord. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the Word made flesh. God sent forth his Son made of a woman. O, it is the crowning glory in the revelation of the gospel that Christ Jesus "the second man is the Lord from heaven." What infinite exaltation, glory and honor hath God taken our nature unto in taking into union with himself the holy child Jesus, "that holy thing" conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary. (Luke i. 35.) He is verily God and truly man, Emmanuel. "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the

likeness of men." The Son of God having purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Our very Jesus who was crucified upon Calvary, who was buried, rose again the third day, ascended and was received up into glory. He was taken up into heaven. (Acts i. 2, 9–11.) He is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God. (Heb. iv. 14.) Christ is entered into heaven itself now to appear in the presence of God for us; the Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. This contemplation of our Savior is very comforting. He has gone before, our Head, the first that should rise from the dead; he has cast up the highway and gathered out the stones; he has prepared all things for the safety of our journey, and has made all things ready for our entrance into heaven, and for our dwelling in the house of the Lord forever. Christ is the Head of the church, and as the Forerunner of his people he proclaims in the court of heaven, before the Father's face, My ransomed ones, the members of my body, are coming, where I am there shall they be also.

"Jesus my all to heaven has gone,
He whom I fix my hopes upon.
His track I see, and I'll pursue
The narrow way till him I view."

The resurrection and ascension of Christ is full of comfort to us poor sinners, for in it we see the eternal glorification of the manhood of the Son of God, and as the Head of the church we very blessedly contemplate him the first fruits of them that slept. "Christ the first fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." These things are vital realities in our faith, for we have, dear brethren, been taught that we are vile sinners, justly condemned under the curse of the law, but the glad tidings of the gospel has come to us in power, that Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. In Jesus we have found all our hope, the hope of salvation, of forgiveness of sins, of justification, of eternal life, of eternal glory. With earnest expectation we are now waiting, (Rom. viii. 19,) we are looking for (Titus ii. 13,) and pressing toward the actual crowning day, the consummation decreed, the eternal glory that awaits the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory. Now, we are dwelling in tabernacles of clay corruptible, mortal, subject to sickness and pain; now we are plagued with indwelling sin, and are buffeted by temptations; we daily encounter cares and trials, and some of the ransomed are appointed to endure a great fight of afflictions. Earth's fairest delights lose their lustre, fade and pass away, and earthly sweets are turned to bitterness. The apostle Paul tells the saints, "We are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day." Encountering such a tide of woes with what certainty he declares, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable." But the consummation of our hope in Christ is not in this present world, but with fond desire we reach forth to that life beyond the grave, to eternity, to the realms of immortal glory, and the full assurance of our faith that is our goodly heritage is founded upon this glorious fact, "Now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept." While we are pilgrims here below we are supported and cheered in the rugged way, being sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of God's glory. The words of the truth of

the gospel instruct us to look beyond the tribulations of our present life, beyond the perishing transitory things of earth and time, beyond these regions of mortality, to the realms of immortality and everlasting day. Having the first fruits of the Spirit in our hearts we know that we have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. When the time draws nigh that the believer must die, (Gen. xlvi. 29,) how sacredly blessed is his exit from this world. To die is gain, to die is to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better. Though on the eve of our departure the body may be subjected to sufferings, yet the sufficiency of God's covenant mercy is such that we shall triumph in death, for death, O believer in Jesus, is yours. (1 Cor. iii. 22.) Death shall not separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Witness the dying thief upon the cross, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Look at that sacred scene when the martyr Stephen fell asleep. "They stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit! and he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep."

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are,
While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

The payment of the debt of the church was exacted of Christ their surety. He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he murmured not, he did not resent the holy demands of the law, he went forth, he gave his back to the smiters and cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; he was the ward of his church, the shield of her salvation, he hid not his face from shame and spitting. O the love of Christ for the church! He gave himself a sacrifice for her. The soul and body of the sinless humanity of Christ was baptized in sufferings to ransom his people from sin, the curse and the grave. "Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin," and in his sore agony in the garden he cried, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." But he shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied. He was crucified, and when all was finished he said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit, and having said this he gave up the ghost."—Luke xxiii. 46. His sacred, incorruptible body was laid in Joseph's new tomb until the third day, when he arose from the dead. So, when the soul is in departing (Gen. xxxv. 18,) in the precious moment of death, the spirit of the believer departs from the body, and is immediately received by the Lord Jesus, to be with him, which is far better than to remain in this life. Our corruptible bodies are consigned to the dust till, as our Savior taught, he will raise them up again at the last day. (John iv. 39, 40.) Martha was not a forgetful hearer of the words of the dear Redeemer when she said to him at the grave of her brother Lazarus, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Then the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality,

then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O glorious mystery! Well might the apostle with holy ardor tell us, "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." It was that he might attain unto such a glorious resurrection of the dead. (Phil. iii. 11.) To this we hope to come, (Acts xxvi. 7, 8,) for then in the resurrection, the Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ, shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

When God made the world he rested and was refreshed, (Exod. xxxi. 17,) and Jesus having redeemed the church with his own blood, rested and entered into his glory, he ascended far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named. He was received up into glory. This destiny is also ours. Our Redeemer thus prayed, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." The Lord will guide us with his counsel, and afterward receive us to glory. The God of all grace hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus. This glory we have little foretastes of, Christ is in us the hope of glory, this is the earnest of our inheritance, and the harvest of eternal glory is yet to come. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the church, is now glorified and we shall be glorified. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." O how sacredly comforting is the thought that our vile bodies, now natural, mortal and corruptible, shall be raised spiritual, immortal and incorruptible. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory, and this shall be the glory, that "we shall bear the image of the heavenly." "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." Then shall we actually know and enjoy in all its infinite fullness for evermore the glorious liberty of the children of God. (Rom. viii. 21.) We are sealed by the Spirit unto the day of redemption. Even now in this present world the moments are very sweet when by faith we taste that we are risen with Christ, and sit with him in heavenly places. Blessed first fruits of the Spirit! In a little while the glorious harvest of eternal glory will be ours. We shall be glorified and share with Christ in heaven a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory. We shall inherit the kingdom prepared for us from the foundation of the world. We shall dwell in the city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God. We shall live in the better country, that is, an heavenly, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain. This is love's own country, and we shall dwell in love and joy forever with the Lord. Heaven is our Father's house, and thou our glorious God shalt make us full of joy with thy countenance.

"Then shall the church, the Lamb's own bride,
Both crowned and seated at his side,
Outshine the sun's meridian ray;
While Jesus smiling at the sight,
Shall then, with a supreme delight,
The travail of his soul survey."

We shall dwell in the King's palace with Jesus our lovely and glorious King, and we shall be holy and without blame before him in love. Yes, in our whole

spirit and soul and body we shall be faultless in the beauty of holiness, we shall see him face to face and we shall be like him, and so shall we ever be with the Lord

"My glorious Redeemer, I long to see thee descend on the cloud,
Amidst the bright numberless throng, and mix with the triumphing crowd.
O when wilt thou bid me ascend to join in thy praises above,
To gaze on thee, world without end, and feast on thy ravishing love?

Nor sorrow, nor sickness, nor pain, nor sin, nor temptation, nor fear,
Shall ever molest me again; perfection of glory reigns there.
This soul and this body shall shine in robes of salvation and praise,
And banquet on pleasures divine, where God his full beauty displays.

Ye palaces, sceptres and crowns, your pride with disdain I survey;
Your pomps are but shadows and sounds, and pass in a moment away;
The crown that my Savior bestows, your permanent sun shall outshine;
My joy everlastingly flows—my God, my Redeemer is mine."

We have appointed our next yearly conference to assemble, the Lord willing, with the church at North Berwick, Maine, on Friday before the first Monday in September, 1904, when we hope to again receive your messengers and correspondence.

FRED. W. KEENE, Mod.
JOSEPH F. HALL, Clerk.

The Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Second Church of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., September 9th and 10th, 1903, to the several churches composing the same, sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE TRUTH, AND FOR THE TRUTH'S SAKE:—Surely we that remain until the present are the spared monuments of our God's enduring mercy, having everything to be thankful for, and nothing of which to boast. And as another year of our mortal existence has passed we may truly say, It is of the Lord's mercy we are not consumed, because our enemies are as active as ever they were for our destruction, and especially for the destruction of our peace. And were it a peace of our own make we know that the enemies of truth and righteousness would despoil us of it. But having passed through another eventful year, in which the word of the Lord has been verified, and the proof still given of its being the last times in which the earth is shaken to its center, yet we may say, (if we are his) Our God is in the heavens, and hath done what he pleased.

It has ever looked strange to the world in unbelief that the God of heaven and earth, as they know him in nature, should have chosen his people in his Son before he made the world, because they cannot understand how God could love them, and treasure up grace in his Son for their needs on earth, and to present them without spot or wrinkle or any such thing before the Father in heaven. Yet this is not the worst, for while the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, because they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Many that have professed to have Christ revealed in them the hope of glory, and some who profess to be called to preach the everlasting gospel, believe and declare concerning the Lord's work and people things (that if true) in which God's will would be thwarted, and the tried child of God disappointed, in not attaining to the blessings God purposed they should have because of their undutifulness or lack of performing the necessary conditions in time.

This leads our mind to talk or write a

little about the two words, "Follow me." All that have any knowledge or interest in these words know the author of them, and the knowledge and effect of these words as to power, have been drawing along after Jesus Christ here on earth and in earth all that have or ever will follow him. Whatever interest may appear to be in the man Christ Jesus of an earthly nature, to the unbeliever or to believers alike, fades away except it is in connection with the trial of their faith; and there must be faith given before it can be tried, and the trial is to prove its worth, and tells the child of God that they must invariably through much tribulation enter the kingdom of heaven (belief and profession).

But in this short Circular we shall confine ourself to the profession of faith in Jesus Christ from the words, "Follow me." There is to the believer on earth no one like him. All that are taught of the Lord learn things that man cannot learn or teach, and great is the peace of those taught of the Lord, and they come to Jesus as he said: "Every man therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh to me, and he that cometh to me, I will not cast out, but will raise him up at the last day." This certainly secures to every Adamite, man, woman or child, the blessedness of the new covenant as far and as fast as it is God's pleasure that his Son shall reveal him to them, proving to them God knows them that are his. There is then a vast difference between coming to Jesus as laboring and heavy laden sinners, for rest, and following him in his appointed ways. To follow Jesus Christ did not mean so much to be with him where he was, as to be like him, or as he was. True, it did separate his first chosen disciples from their vocation and friends, yet they knew but little comparatively about him after all he done and said until after he arose and ascended on high, and sent the Comforter or Holy Ghost unto them. The holy Spirit or Spirit of God manifest through Christ's coming and kingdom as he did his Father's will among the Jews and Gentiles in breaking down the middle wall of partition, and making in himself of twain one new man, thereby making peace, is to be known in its measure in the heart of every witness of the truth. Therefore the truth makes them free, because the Son of God is himself the truth, and they that are most like him, and follow him closest, are those by him made most willing to suffer shame and reproach for his sake, letting God be true, and every man a liar. In following Jesus this one way which he also is to his followers, they that follow him will not only be with him where he is, but also will be like him. But the way the lesson of following Jesus is learned we are sure none would have perfected in them of their own will. Therefore those saved of the Lord are confirmed in the fact that it is not of them as willing or running, &c., but of God that sheweth mercy. So it is given the followers of Jesus here not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. Therefore will we have by and through suffering in this present life a foretaste, earnest or partial knowledge or sight as through a glass darkly, to prove to us as the followers of Jesus that for following all we get are reproaches and persecution from the world, the flesh and the devil. But in it though we both suffer and die for his sake, we are blest of God who has given his Son a ransom for us to be testified in due time, and if we suffer with him, we are glorified together, for in this we are together with him. Because in this the Scriptures are

fulfilled, and the way the people of God are made one with Jesus as his followers, is as he is one with the Father. What a mercy it is that we have the word of God for the man of our counsel given by inspiration, and profitable for doctrine, reproof and correction, and instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. So all good gospel preaching to the followers of Jesus comes as a comfort to them in the form of warning, reproof, &c., yet always by the Spirit it will be with all longsuffering and doctrine, proving one especial thing, yea, all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. What manner of person the follower of Jesus should be in walk and conversation, as the Spirit and Scriptures teach. Not purloining the time because the days are evil, but the God of peace make you perfect through suffering; make you perfect in every good work, and enable you to let patience have her perfect work. To be patient in tribulation, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. And Paul gave as a faithful saying, that those who believed in God might be careful to maintain good works, because these things are good and profitable unto men. Then all the admonitions are to be heeded as a light that shines in a dark place; letting our light shine before men as followers of Jesus, that they may see our good works, and we therefore glorify our Father which is in heaven. Being followers of God as dear children, walking in love, living in peace, with the assurance of the apostle that the God of love and peace shall be with us. Amen.

J. D. HUBBELL, Moderator.
WILLIAM BALLARD, Clerk.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO BROTHER D. M. LEONARD'S APPEAL TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$794 70
D. J. Parsons, Md., $1.00; Roe Redgrave, Del., $1.00; Mrs. Rachel H. Bosley, Md., $2.35; Thos. S. Whitaker, Ky., $1.00; Mrs. R. L. Garett, N. Y., $1.00; F. Crocker, N. B., $1.00; Kate Forbs, Mo., $1.00; R. B. Thompson, Ill., $6.00; Mrs. M. E. Enderlin, N. Y., $.60.—Total	14 95
Total to date	$809 65

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. E. Gore, at the home of the bride's father, Philip S. Deshong and Miss Lettie B. Deshong, both of Fulton Co., Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Henrietta Baughman Humphrey, was born in Germany, Feb. 6th, 1824. Died at Ipava, Ill., Aug. 19th, 1903, aged 79 years, 6 months and 13 days. She came to America with her parents at the age of seven years. When eighteen years of age, she united with the Primitive Baptist church in Coshocton Co., Ohio, where the family then lived, and for almost sixty-two years she earnestly contended for the faith once delivered to the saints. She was united in marriage in early womanhood to the late Elder Cyrus Humphrey, and was truly a helpmeet in the fullest sense until his death, Sept. 9th, 1892, since which time she has often spoken of her strong desire to join him in the home above.

Of the ten children born to this worthy couple, seven remain alive to mourn their irreparable loss: Amelia, Elizabeth, Elder S. H. Humphrey, D. W., W. H., Phoebe and Etta.

Mother Humphrey had a remarkably kind, sympathetic disposition, ever ready to extend a helping hand to the needy, and to alleviate the distress of her fellow creatures to the full extent of her ability, counting it joy to discommode herself that others might be benefited. In her daily life before men, she showed in a marked degree the work of her blessed Lord, and ceased not to express her humble confidence in that glorious work; and like a child going to sleep, she calmly closed her eyes in death.

A large concourse of brethren, sisters and friends, with the bereaved children, met at the Christian church-house in Hermon, Ill., August 21st, where the writer spoke in her memory, words intended to comfort the living and to honor her risen Lord; after which her remains where laid beside those of her husband, in the church-yard.

The unselfish devotion and faithfulness to the truth of God, of this worthy Elder and his wife, the memory of which is now a part of the heritage of God's people here below, will always be remembered by those who knew them, and its effect we trust will show itself in increased piety in the lives of many followers of the meek and lowly Redeemer.

D. W. OWENS.

Moses Kelly Vines, son of Benjamin and Nancy Vines, was born in the State of Georgia, Oct. 13th, 1830, and died Jan. 23d, 1903, at his home in Upshur Co., Texas. Brother Vines was married four times, his last wife was Mrs. I. A. Dyre, whom he married March 19th, 1885. To them was born one child, a daughter, now thirteen or fourteen years of age, who with mother and step-brother, and few relatives and friends and neighbors, stood round his bed when he breathed his last. Brother Vines was a man of great zeal and industry. He joined the church at Mt. Zion, Upshur Co., Texas, in the year 1878 or 1879, and was baptized by Elder J. W. Hester. The writer was intimately acquainted with brother Vines for twenty years, knew him to be a solid, sound Predestinarian Bible Baptist, believing salvation was and is alone of the Lord, both for time and eternity, and alone of grace, not by the works of the creature. Brother Vines loved his Bible, loved the truth, and greatly appreciated the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the truth's sake. He was punctual on meeting days, when not providentially hindered. But now he is gone, there is a vacant seat at church, and an empty chair at home, but our loss is his eternal gain. While we mourn, sorrow and weep with sister Vines and daughter, with relatives and friends, yet we want to be resigned and submissive to the will of God, and say, Thy will, and not ours, be done. We tried to comfort the bereaved and distressed at the burial, with the words, "If a man die, shall he live again?" Also, "I am the resurrection and the life." May the blessings of God rest upon us all, and especially upon sister Vines and daughter, is the desire of the unworthy writer,

W. L. WILLIAMS.

MEETINGS.

IF the Lord will, the Old School Baptist Church at Cow Marsh, Kent Co., Del., will hold their yearly meeting on Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 26th and 27th, 1903, commencing at 2 o'clock p. m. on Saturday. Our brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us. The morning trains on the Delaware R. R. from the north and south will be met at Woodside on Saturday a. m.

W. W. MEREDITH.

THE First Roxbury Church at Vega, Delaware Co., N. Y., will hold a two days meeting, Providence permitting, Sept. 30th and Oct. 1st. All who love the truth are invited to attend. Those coming can either stop at Roxbury or Kelly's Corners, where they will be cared for.

J. D. HUBBELL, Pastor.

THE yearly meeting of the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church of Lexington, N. Y., Lexington Association, is appointed to be held with said church on Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 3d and 4th, 1903, when we will be glad to see as many of our brethren, sisters and friends and ministering brethren as can come to visit us. Will say to those coming on the U. & D. R. R. from Kingston, that our stage meets the morning train, and also that I will meet the afternoon train if requested. As our association is appointed to be held on Wednesday and Thursday following the yearly meeting, we hope to see a goodly number at the yearly meeting on their way to the association, and I will provide a way for them to get there.

FLETCHER MACKEY, Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will hold their annual two days meeting with the Gilboa Church, on the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (7th and 8th) and we extend a cordial invitation to our brethren, especially ministering brethren, to meet with us, and all that love the Lord and his people. Those coming on the U. & D. R. R., stop off at Grand Gorge and inquire for Miss Jennie Leonard. Will be met on Tuesday, Oct. 6th. Our church meeting is the following Saturday and Sunday, and those who can tarry will be made welcome.

Done by order of Gilboa Church, August 8th, 1903.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Association of Primitive Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, with the Springfield Church, in Huntingdon Co., Pa., on Friday before the second Sunday in October, (9th, 10th and 11th,) 1903, and continue over Sunday. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth. Those coming by railroad will come on the Pennsylvania road to Mount Union, and there take the East Broadtop road to Three Springs. Trains leave Mount Union 9 a. m. and 4 p. m. Come on Thursday. Trains will be met by conveyances to places of entertainment.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE next session of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting will be held with the church at Mt. Zion, Loudoun Co., Va., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, and continue three days.

Those coming by way of Washington will take the train leaving the Sixth St. depot at 7:30 a. m. on Tuesday, for Haymarket, on the Southern R. R., where they will be met and taken to places of entertainment.

Brethren are heartily invited to meet with us on this occasion, especially ministering brethren.

G. G. GALLEHER, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 71. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1903. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A DAY'S JOURNEY AND A NIGHT'S DREAM.

(Genesis xxviii. 10–12.)

"AND Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran." How far he went that first day we are not told. A man in the excited state of mind that he was in would walk rapidly, and starting early in the morning, as he undoubtedly did, by the time the sun went down he was a good distance from his father's house. It is with that first day's journey and the night that followed it that I have to do.

Jacob had obtained the blessing which his father intended for Esau. His father had also confirmed the blessing after he discovered the deceit which had been practiced upon him, and had sent Jacob away on his present journey to the former home of his mother to get a wife. So far we may regard the circumstances attending this journey as favorable, and such as would cause him to begin it with elation of mind. But other things tinge the circumstances with the blackness of night, and tend to make this journey notable through all time for fear, self-reproach, shame and misery. Fear of his brother Esau, who felt that Jacob had wronged him, and who had threatened to kill him, undoubtedly hastened his departure early in the morning, and caused him to make all possible speed. This threat of Esau caused fearful forebodings on the part of Jacob, both on this day, and on his journey home twenty years after.

But there was something for Jacob to think about much more fearful than this threat of Esau; his shameful lies to his old, blind father. How they must have come up before him in all their hideous monstrosity, and repeated themselves in his mind as he walked along until he was sick unto death with their loathsomeness. He had done Esau no wrong, for he had purchased the birthright and paid the full price which was asked for it. Esau of course wanted it back, and would have taken it notwithstanding the fair bargain he had made with his brother in disposing of it. But as between him and Jacob he had no right to that birthright.

But the cunning deceit Jacob had used toward his father, and the bold, glaring lies he had told, in order to obtain the birthright blessing, how these must have stung him as they kept flying about like hornets in his mind, and made him cringe

with shame and self-loathing as he walked along. Even if he did not yet feel the full sinfulness before the Lord of his base lies and deceitfulness, yet he must have felt that such things showed him to be a mean, contemptible man, utterly untrustworthy. How thoroughly base and ashamed he must have felt as he kept thinking over that never-to-be-forgotten interview between him and his father: "Who art thou, my son?" "And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau thy first-born; I have done according as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me." And then, when his father asked, "How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son?" with what shameful irreverence and hypocritical audacity he used the name of the Lord, saying, "Because the Lord thy God brought it to me." And the false covering of his hands and neck which met his suspicious father's hands when he felt of him to see whether he was his very son Esau or not. Then must have came up to his mind as he continued on his journey his shrinking, guilty, cowering attitude as his father said, while again he took his hand, "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau." What now if after all this deceitful work, his father should be given sight to see who it was that stood thus before him? He still shrinks and trembles as he walks along, thinking of that scene, although he has seen his father, and felt his hands upon him since he came to know all that had been done to him by his wife and son. Then again the blind father asked with increased solemnity, "Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am." Then after having eaten of the savoring meat of his son, and drank wine from his hand, and smelled his garments, which were Esau's, and kissed him, he said what he could not have said of Esau, for it was not true of him, "See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed."

The apostle says, "By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come." The faith of Isaac was not at fault, but his natural mind was. He thought he was blessing Esau, but his faith took hold of God's thoughts, and led him to use words that expressed God's purpose. And shall we say that in all of this transaction God's purpose was being fulfilled? Certainly. What else could we say? And shall we say that Rebecca's deceit and Jacob's lies were embraced in the predestination of God? Certainly. Were they not all links in the one chain of events? What part could have been left out of this chain? What part was predestinated, if all was not? Shall we say then that if God predestinated the sinful actions of men, then why should they be blamed and punished for them? Let Paul answer. After speaking of God's purpose concerning Jacob and Esau, and concerning Pharaoh, he says, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?"—Romans ix. 11–21. And again, "But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) God forbid. For then how shall God judge the world? For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why yet

am I also judged as a sinner? And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just."—Romans iii. 5–8.

We know that no lie is to be excused, much less justified. A lie is always sinful. All sin is hateful to God. Yet we know also that nothing can ever have transpired which was contrary to God's purpose; otherwise he would not be God. We are told that he "DECLARED the end from the beginning." We are told in his word that the wicked are his sword, and men of the world his hand, and that the wrath of man shall praise him. "Not Gabriel asks the reason why, nor God the reason gives." He says to us, "Your ways are not my ways, neither are my thoughts your thoughts." We cannot limit the Lord, nor charge evil against him.

So we will go on with Jacob as he plods wearily along toward that "certain place" to which it was the Lord's purpose to bring him to spend such a night as he had never spent before. He has lost some of the strength and vigor of the morning, and the harrassed condition of his mind, and the shame and self-abhorrence that were increasing upon him, no doubt contributed to that weariness which rendered him unfit to travel any further that night. He had sinned grievously against his father, and against the Lord. He could not excuse himself by charging it against his mother. He was seventy-five years of age at the time, and must bear the blame of his own acts.

What was said between him and his father at their last interview concerning his deceit we are not told. Both must have been deeply humbled before each other and before the Lord; Jacob because his blind father was now aware of all his deceitful acts and lying words, and Isaac because it was now plain to him that his wishes and purposes had been contrary to the purposes of the Lord, and that what Jacob and his mother had done so wickedly had brought to light God's purpose, and contributed to its fulfillment. He had loved Esau because he did eat of his venison, but now he became aware that God had not loved him, but had loved Jacob. Rebecca had been told this before the children were born, and she loved Jacob. Isaac had learned this solemn truth when Esau stood before him with the savory meat after Jacob had received the blessing and gone out. "And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? Where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it to me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed." This was the time when Isaac knew that the Lord's ways and thoughts were not his. It was so with Abraham; he said, "O, that Ishmael might live before thee;" but God had purposed that the free woman should have a son, and that in Isaac his seed should be called. Truly our ways are not God's ways. Esau's exceeding bitter cry availed nothing. His repeated and pitiful question and request, "Hast thou but one blessing? Bless me, even me also, O my father," were touching, but they were the expression of only fleshly and selfish desires.

I remember when about fourteen years old wondering why Jacob, who was the one the Lord loved, was left to act so wickedly, and appeared to be more dishonest and sinful than Esau, and the answer that came to my mind then was, that it was to show that the elect of God were not any better by nature than the rest of mankind; that they were not chosen and loved because of any good-

ness or merit in themselves. I can see no other reason to-day.

So Isaac and Jacob are together the last time before Jacob's departure, and it must have been a most solemn interview, as each one saw himself a short-sighted, sinful man, and saw with wonder and self-abasement the manifestations of the wonderful purposes of the Lord. Isaac seems to have no word of reproach for Jacob. He sees him as the one the Lord has chosen to receive the blessing of Abraham, and to "inherit the land in which he was then a stranger, which God gave to Abraham," and he pronounces that blessing upon him, and sends him away to his mother's native land. He can well leave him to the teaching of the Lord concerning his depraved and sinful nature.

And Jacob has come into "a desert land," and into "a waste howling wilderness," where the Lord had appointed to find him. (Deut. xxxii. 10.) He represents all that people whom the Lord hath redeemed, who in their fleshly nature are called Jacob. "For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. Therefore THEY shall come and sing in the height of Zion."—Jer. xxxi. 11, 12. The Lord brings all these with weeping, and leads them with supplication. They see enough of sin and vileness in themselves to cause weeping and supplication. They start out, as Jacob did, strong and courageous, in the morning of the natural day, with a definite and desirable object in view. They go forward with zeal toward the land that holds for them all they want. They seem to be traveling at their own will, and in their own strength, and to be urged on and animated by the desirable objects which they plainly see before them. But the Lord is leading them, and this first day's journey of Jacob represents the day's journey of all that greater Jacob, all the elect of God, when the Lord brings them away from the world, away from any confidence in themselves, and causes them to see themselves as justly condemned sinners in the sight of a holy God.

By the light of the natural sun Jacob traveled on until that sun was set; then he must tarry where he was. In that desert land he could find only stones for his pillows. "And he took of the stones of that place for his pillows." Now he is indeed alone and desolate. When his grandfather Abram sent his servant over this same road to get a wife for Isaac he sent him in such state, and with such show of wealth, as became a prince. But Jacob is alone and poor. He has left all his worldly wealth behind him. Twenty years after this, when he was returning with wealth and a large family and many servants, he said, "With my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands."

This day's journey of Jacob shows how the Lord brings all of his Jacobs to know that their sinful hearts are a desert and a wilderness, where no plant of righteousness grows, and "where beasts of midnight howl." He brings them to the place where all natural light and wisdom fail them, and they can go no farther. He brings them to see the law of God holy, and themselves condemned by it, and for good cause. He causes them to feel that the glory of God is manifested in "the ministration of death written and engraven in stones."

The stones of that place are hard and uncomfortable pillows, but these lonely Jacobs have nothing else to rest upon but their attempts to fulfill the law

"written and engraven in stones." They are in a sad and doleful condition; all is dark, and hope seems to have gone down with the sun; no light appears to show how a sinful man can be just with God. The wisdom of the world fails here; it cannot open up a way for a sinner to find access unto a holy God. There is no promise they can see that any to-morrow will ever rise upon this fearful night.

Then comes sleep, a broken, restless sleep. "And he lay down in that place to sleep, and he dreamed." Here is the time, and this the place when and where the Lord found Jacob, and where he finds all his people; when they have given up hope in themselves. "In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed, then God openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction."—Job xxxiii. 15.

"And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it." In this dream the way of access unto the Father is presented in a glorious figure. It is in a vision, in a figure, in a dream, that Jesus and his salvation are made known to men. It is by revelation always, and not by searching, that he is found out. The revelation is first given to Jesus, the man of God's right hand. "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass."—Rev. i. 1. "Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty." I have exalted one chosen out of the people. (Psalms lxxxix. 19.)

Those to whom this revelation is to be made are first prepared to feel their need of it, to feel their need of that help which is laid upon Jesus, by experiencing their utter lack of power in themselves to deliver themselves from the condemnation of the law, and to come into the favor of God. Whatever the Lord has in store for any one he will cause that one to desire, to seek for in vain by any power of his own, and to inquire of the Lord for. Jacob asleep, with the stones of that desert land for his pillows, represents all the Lord's people at the time when they have come to the end of their earthly strength, have fully felt the depravity of their hearts, and the righteousness of God's holy law, and are trying in vain to find some rest in the works of that law which is "a ministration of death, written and engraven in stones." Here is the revelation of Jesus Christ in a figure to those who have been brought thus far by the law as a schoolmaster, and have been prepared by that legal teaching for this wonderful revelation.

This ladder is not for Jacob to climb on up to heaven. I have read that not only must we climb up to heaven on that ladder, but that we must ourselves build the ladder for ourselves as we go up. But this ladder seems to be complete. Its top reached to heaven; not to the natural heavens, which show to our sight and imagination myriads of stars infinitely distant from each other, allowing us to think of no point where the top of the ladder could definitely rest, but from the earth to the heaven where God reigns in eternal glory and blessedness; to the high and holy place where the high and lofty One dwells, who dwells also with him that is of a humble and contrite Spirit.

He to whom this ladder is shown is asleep at its foot, and sees it only in vision. It is not for him to climb upon, but for the angels or messengers of God.

So our dear Savior said, "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."—John i. 51.

While Jacob lies asleep at the foot of the ladder and cannot use it himself, it is for his sake it is there, and and its use is for his benefit. The angels of God are ascending upon it with his longings, self-loathings and supplications, and descending with sweet answers of peace and messages of love from the God of salvation to him. It is through Jesus, and through him alone, than any supplication can arise from a poor sinner's heart to the Lord. It is in his name only that any one can find access unto the Father. He is the "new and living way." "No man can come unto the Father," Jesus said, "but by me." And also all messages from the Father to his chosen people are through Jesus. The angels or messengers of God descend upon that ladder to his people at its foot, with his messages to them. It is always through Jesus that the grace and truth and love and mercy of God come to them. It is through Jesus, and for his sake, that the Father says to them, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee."

"The Lord God stood above the ladder," and gave the blessing of Abraham and of Isaac to Jacob while he was still asleep and dreaming. And he said, "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."

What a wonderful, glorious scene is this, and what glorious and blessed doctrine. The Lord God, who fills heaven and earth, and who inhabits eternity, standing above the ladder, and Jacob, the supplanter, the sinful but sorrowing man, asleep at its foot, with stones for his pillows. The ladder itself a wonder of wonders, set up on the earth, and its top reaching to heaven. Jesus upon the earth in the likeness of sinful flesh, with all the sins and afflictions and infirmities and temptations of his people upon him, and yet "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." "Its top reached to heaven." "I and my Father are one," he said.

This ladder could be seen by Jacob only when asleep, only in vision. When awake he could not see it. The way of salvation could only be seen in vision, in a dream, "in slumberings upon the bed," during all that legal dispensation. It did not openly appear until the gospel day, in the appearing of Jesus Christ in the flesh.

In the terms of the blessing which the Lord God gave to Jacob while thus in a dream, when deep sleep had fallen upon him, what absolute assurance and certainty are expressed No contingency, no conditions, are suggested. "I will keep thee in all places whither thou goest." Jacob, after he awoke, in the wonder and excitement of his mind, made a vow and some promises which appeared to be based upon conditions. There was truth expressed in his vow, but he had not yet come to fully know the Lord and his ways. That was to be fully taught him

twenty years later, in another and more wonderful manifestation of God to him in another night, during all the dark hours of which he was to wrestle with the angel of God, and at the morning's dawn was to prevail, and to receive the blessing of the angel, and a new name, but with it the loss of his own strength. That was to be a time of rejoicing with Jacob, though he was never to walk again in his own strength, but always to halt upon his thigh. But this was to him a dreadful place, and he was afraid. He awoke that morning with all of his natural strength renewed, and was ready to go on his journey, but his heart was filled with the terror of the Lord. He now knew that he had seen in the vision of this wonderful night the house of God and the gate of heaven, but instead of giving him peace and comfort, it made him afraid. But somehow he seemed to see a great importance in the stone which he had taken for his pillows, and he set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon it, and said it should be God's house, and that the Lord should be his God, if he would do just what he had already declared to Jacob he would surely do.

And that Stone is the house of God; for all that was written upon it has been fulfilled by the dear Savior, and he is now in the gospel "the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel." Here is Bethel, the house of God, the sure resting-place for all his people. Under the legal dispensation this house of the Lord was seen only in figures and visions. Now under the gospel dispensation that beautiful house is seen by faith wherever two or three are gathered together in Jesus' name, and by faith and love we dwell together in him.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Sept. 5, 1903.

THE POWER OF RELIGION.

WITHOUT consulting dictionaries, commentaries, &c., I will merely say, Religion, in a general sense, is a worship, belonging to the posterity of Adam, an innate principle of his very nature, over which he has no control, but by which *he is* controlled in various ways, through divers causes. There are no exceptions, every creature of Adam is ruled by its power and might. The lowest order of humanity, uncivilized races, and tribes, have been investigated, to find if there are any who are not subject to some kind of religious worship, but none have ever been found. Religion can (notwithstanding its great variety) however, be summed up in two classes, natural and spiritual, or pure and impure. When the serpent in the garden used the power of his subtilty to cause the downfall of the woman, he said: "Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." And ever since that time the worship of the gods, and of God, have existed in the world, and have stood in clear and strong contrast, the one to the other. In the worship of the gods, (which embraces all legal and natural worship) the evil has always greatly overbalanced the natural good that has been done. Who can estimate the amount of blood that has been shed, and the abundance of evil deeds which have been perpetrated in the name of religion? The worshiper of idols is as persistent and determined in his course, as the one who in true humility worships the true and living God. The only difference in that respect is, that the one is subject to change, while the other changes not. The religious fanatic, swallowed up with whatever tide of

fanaticism his wild fancy may dictate, goes as firmly and unhesitatingly to the stake, giving his life-blood, happy in the thought that he is righteously serving the cause he has espoused. So that, outwardly, we see no difference between him and the martyrs of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are apt, at times, to look upon the suffering and persistence of the old martyrs as exceptional cases, because of their true religion, but we must look farther than that to find the vital difference between the religion which is impure, and that which is pure. In the flowing out of the one, from its origin, it takes a directly opposite course to that of the other. The fountain from which flows one stream is impure, and full of all manner of corruption, while the fountain of the other is pure and unadulterated. Let us at first follow for a little while the impure stream. Wisdom tells us, "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done, is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the sun." So from the beginning of time until now there has been repeated in every generation the things that we now witness. All the things that are in the world, the world has been running after during all time. The apostle John says, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." This is not all religion, but it is the *power* of all worldly religion, of all will worship, and all idol worship. It is the great moving cause of all the horrible deeds of darkness that have been enacted in every regeneration.

Some will tell us that their religious zeal and particular worship is actuated by their conscience, and what they usually mean by that is, an inward prompting, telling them what is right, and showing them the proper course to pursue. But alas, when the lusts of the flesh, &c., are at work in all their activity and power, they deceive their deluded victim into the belief that their conscience is a safe guide, when in truth it tells them to do the very things they want to do. Consequently they are helpless, and in the clutches of their own lusts, and are swayed by the power of evil into every evil deed. It would seem that when this creature of evil, (this offspring of the first Adam, who is conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity) becomes religious, he is capable of blacker crimes than he was before. This is clearly set forth by the Savior, when he said to the Scribes and Pharisees, "For ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell then yourselves." Countries have been devastated, cities and towns depopulated, and nations sunk to ruin, by the religious mania and frenzy of deluded men. Such is the mighty power of this maelstrom of religion so-called. Worshipers who set up idols made of wood or stone, in their houses or in their cities, or those who set up idols of selfworship in their own hearts, all draw their mistaken zeal, and their wild delusions from the same corrupt stream. The children of Israel, when their leader (Moses) had left them to go into the Mount of God, took the jewels borrowed from the Egyptians and made them a molten calf, worshiping it saying, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."

But let us turn from this dark picture, and look upon the brighter side, to the pure and undefiled religion, and the worship of God, which is in Spirit and in truth. Let us search for its wondrous

power, and the honey-sweetness thereof. In what has been presented is embraced the wisdom of this world, as it is possessed by the carnal nature of sinners of Adam's race, and reaches out only to the things of time, that we may receive pleasure and reward from the work of our own hands, but the end is confusion, and proves to be vanity and vexation of spirit. Now in contrast to this the apostle James says, "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." As the lusts of the flesh, &c., are the foundation of all creature worship, and of all religious acts, so "the wisdom that is from above" is the foundation for the worship of the one true and living God. To the dwellers in Messapotamia a light has sprung up; Abram and his family are called out, wisdom from above has been given him, and the gift of faith, and by faith he leaves his own country, his idols, and all things that were once dear to him, that he may seek a country, that he knows not of, but which God will show unto him. In this new life is manifest the chosen of God, the type of the spiritual church, a people rich in faith, and in the knowledge of the truth, who worship God in the Spirit, and have no more confidence in the flesh. Out of the heart of this chosen generation proceed the issues of living faith, the fountain of the corrupt heart is made pure by the salt of grace which is poured into it. And now the strength of faith is greater in the new heart of flesh, than was the strength of evil in the old stony heart. For we are now of God in Christ Jesus, and, "There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." The song that we now sing is, "Jesus has died," and the refrain is carried still higher in glad rejoicing, that "He is risen again," in which we are justified, and made heirs of salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

This is the power of the religion which now works mightily in us, making manifest the life we now live in the flesh, by the faith of the Son of God. Our religion is "pure and undefiled," because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, and our worship is no more in the letter, defiled by carnal reason, but in the spirit of holiness, visiting the fatherless and the widow in their affliction, keeping the acts of the left hand from the knowledge of the right, desiring no reward, but in all things desiring that God may be glorified. .Being weaned from the world, we seek heavenly things, all things become secondary to the high consolation that our glorious Lord has delivered us from the thralldom of sin and iniquity. To worship the God of our salvation, is our soul's sincere desire, and having this, our religion will be in conformity with the life that we live in Christ Jesus. Who can estimate the power of that religion for good, to them that love God, and who look for his appearing? Its effect reaches out into all the world, and to the ends of the earth. In that other religion, they accumulate means, and hire men to spread *their* gospel, and as like produces like, they obtain what they purchase. Now, the apostle James, tells us how *our* gospel is spread, and what are the results of our religion; he says, "And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." The cleansing power of our religion is such that its subjects keep themselves "unspotted from the world." When they become contaminated from contact with the world our Father, for Christ's

sake forgiveth their sins, and blotteth out all their iniquities.

Therefore, "Where sin aboundeth, grace doth much more abound," by which superabounding power we "Are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

May we be so kept by this wondrous power, that every act of our life may glorify God, so that we may continually honor the cause which we profess in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., August 22, 1903.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., July, 1903.

TO THE HOPEWELL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH—DEAR ONES ALL:—I have been thinking for a long time that I would like to be with you at this coming Saturday and Sunday meeting, for it is the anniversary of my being baptized and received into the church with you. I think that twenty-six years have gone by since then, and I am sure that at that time no one could have made me believe that the years would have been with me as they have. I thought then that as time went on I would increase in spiritual knowledge and conversation, and that before the world I would show my faith by my works; I felt then that there would be a constant growth in grace, so that I would know that my path was shining more and more to the perfect day, but thus far it seems that so far from my expectation being true, almost the opposite has been the case, for at the time I was baptized I could hear every word of the sermons preached, and could feed on it all, and then hear another just as clearly, and feel that it was as rich as the one before. But how is it now? I seem to hear the words, and sometimes judge the sermon, and think that the preacher did not go into the depth of it, and that I did not get any good from that sermon. Sometimes I carry away some crumbs and fragments, and get some good even while listening, but it is only seldom that I enjoy a sermon as I used to. I seem so barren in mind, I must have the Scriptures explained to understand their meaning sometimes, them again the meaning of them is given me faster than the explanation. I travel so far from the right path; carnality seems so great in me, that when I read, or attempt to pray, sin is mixed with all I do. I do get so discouraged, and fear that I have and am deceiving the dear ones, but I know that I cannot deceive him who knows all his sheep. Sometimes there comes a hope that I do know his voice, and if so, then indeed I am one of the sheep, and then at once comes up this old nature, asking me to prove that I do know his voice, and then the monster doubt comes in, and my enjoyment is gone. All these years I have lived in this way. If I do one deed that is good, at once comes in the tempter again and spoils my enjoyment by telling me that it was a good deed, and that the Lord will bless me for it, or that men will see it, and praise me. Dear ones, is it thus with you?

In this world there are so many who know from the teaching of men that Christ died for men, and they are told that if they will believe they shall be saved, and under all this teaching it does not seem as if so much sin should abound among men, but there are so many temptations on every hand, so many allurements to keep them from doing according to their good instructions. O, how puny is the arm of man, and yet so many

trust in it. And just here I have a ray of hope, for I have no trust in man, nor in any of his works, they are all as idle dreams. When death comes, all the good works of men will be only as dreams, for they will not be real in the awakening from death, and just so is it with dreams.

I feel that I can say, with all my heart wandering, doubts, and crooked paths, the Lord is gracious, and his mercy endureth forever. I have not been to meeting since the association at Southampton, I have not been very sick, but have been very complaining. I desire that I may be given a spirit of submission to bear patiently all that the Lord may send upon me. I do pray, God be merciful to me, a sinner; keep me from going astray; give me strength as my day; give me humility; give me of all the fruit of the divine vine; keep me from murmuring at thy will, should it not be in accordance with my own; may there never be a time when I shall be ashamed to own thy will; make me as ready to tell of my joys as of my sorrows, for it is a joy when we can feel thy love, and know that thou wilt never leave nor forsake us, but wilt keep us to the end, and guide and guard us, and O, that it might be thy will to enable me to say at all times, "Thy will be done."

What a joy it is when we have a message direct from God. Only a few days ago I was taking a rest, and the words came to me, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." How rich this text was to me, I looked over my life, and only loving-kindness have I received from the heavenly Father. How rich is his love to us poor worms of the dust. What poor, undeserving creatures we are. How often have I tried to live one day perfectly, but it has seemed that that day has been filled with more sin and more wicked thoughts than any day before it.

I so often think of you all and of the blessings that the Lord has bestowed upon you all in the Hopewell church; he has given you, these many years past, pastors rich in spiritual knowledge, discerning, and showing the right from the wrong; he has kept you, as a body, from going astray; he has given you many members; you have had very little strife; which indeed comes not from the Spirit of God; he gives us no such thing as strife; strife comes from our old nature, God is not in it, nor in the man who loves and indulges in it. You have had sorrows, but there has been a needs be for sorrow, that you may seek him in trouble more earnestly. He heals your wounds. I desire for you all that peace may abound, that love, joy and all the fruit of the Spirit may be in you and abound. I desire also that your joys and sorrows may be as one. How sweet to dwell together in unity. May God bless you all, as a family closely woven together. I desire to be with you again ere long, but could not come at this time.

With love to all, I remain your sister,

MARY HILL TERRY.

[THE above good letter was gladly received by the church at Hopewell, where our sister used to hold her membership, and after it was read before the church, there were many expressions of comfort and gladness in it in conversation. So many could say that they were travelers along the same road, that they had the same conflicts, and the same desires expressed in the letter. Though our dear sister is not any longer a member in this, her home church, but has been dismissed by letter to the Salem church in Philadel-

phia, the affections of her brethren and sisters of her former church are still with her, and they think of her, even as she does of them. It is good for brethren to communicate with each other in this way. Absent members ought to write to their own church, if not able to visit it, at least twice a year, and as much oftener as they can.—ED.]

PRATT CITY, Ala., Sept. 8, 1903.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I received the SIGNS to-day, in which I find the good report made by Elder Lively of the church at Montgomery, and as I appreciate such reports as being more becoming, and more beneficial to the household of faith than all this confusion in different places, I feel impressed to cast in my mite concerning our little church at Pratt City.

I baptized two willing and humble sisters into the fellowship of the church here on the third Sunday in April. On the third Sunday in June we received a faithful young brother by letter. In July there was a man eighty-five years old, that lived in the vicinity of the town of Woodlawn, ten miles from here, sent for me on Friday, and on Saturday I went to see him, and he told me some of his experience, and that he wanted to be baptized by a legal administrator. Sunday evening enough of our church members met at his house, and held a short service, and received him as a candidate, or subject for baptism, and set the next Friday, at 10 a. m., to perform the rite, in the creek about a mile from his house. There was eight of us Primitives, some of his children, grandchildren, his neighbors and friends, and we had what I called an old fashioned John the Baptist meeting by the water's side. All present seemed deeply impressed, and many of them said they would never forget that day. The old brother had a forecast that his time in the world was short, though he appeared revived and lively after he was baptized, and his wife told me he continued that way till Monday, August 17th, when he had a congestive chill, and died on the 19th, and I spoke at his funeral the 20th. His wife and his children all belonged to other orders, and we trust that it was of the Lord alone that he desired baptism at our hands.

The members of our church here are all in peace one with another, and our meetings are harmonious. The churches of our association are all in peace, and I hear of some prosperity among them.

If any of the Elders or brethren of our faith and order should have to pass through this section any time, we shall be glad to have them with us. Our regular meeting days are the first and third Sundays.

Yours in hope of life,

P. J. POWELL.

BONO, Texas, Sept. 6, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I wish to say through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to the dear Baptists whom it was my pleasure to meet, that I arrived safely at home on the fifth inst., after a very pleasant trip across the continent to San Francisco and back here. I feel to thank the Lord for his preserving care over me while on the journey. O, how often while on my way did I think of the last thing brother Eddie Rounds said to me, just before the train started on our journey. It was this, "Sister Ray, you will have one with you that is worth all the world." That was a comfort to me all the way through. I feel that the Lord gave it to him to say for my comfort. Words fitly spoken are like apples of gold in pictures of silver. I

had but one drawback to my pleasure on the trip, and that was, I failed to find any Baptists either in Los Angeles or San Francisco, California, although I tried very hard. In reference to my visit to the dear Baptists of the east I wish to say, I never enjoyed a visit more in life, it was a royal feast from first to last, except for a short period when the tempter came and led me into the wilderness, when the sun refused to shine, and for twenty-four hours all was gross darkness, and I was made to cry, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Then the cloud lifted and once more I could say, He is my Savior, my present help in time of trouble.

Brethren I was rejoiced to see so much love and union of heart among you. May the Lord enable you so to live from henceforth to the end, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

It was indeed a great pleasure to meet so many loved ones whose names were familiar to me through the dear old SIGNS, I would be glad to mention each name, but space forbids. My visits to Middletown, Hopewell, New Vernon and Southampton churches were indeed rare pleasures, as well as the meeting of Elders Durand, Chick, Ker, Hubbell and others of like precious faith.

Hoping to be kindly remembered by one and all, I remain your unworthy sister in hope,

LYDIA C. RAY.

FIVE POINTS, Alabama, Aug. 24, 1903.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I subscribed for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a few days or a week ago, and during my absence from home the August first and fifteenth numbers came, so on my return I found them on my desk. The first thing that I read was "The Scarlet Line." I then thought of writing you that I got the full worth of the year's subscription out of that one article. But then I thought that I should not put a money value on the precious revealed truth. That highly gifted brother, F. W. Keene, is a man I have read after for a long time, and when I see his name signed to an article I give it a careful reading.

I have read your writings for years, and I always receive useful instruction in every article. Your editorial in the number of the SIGNS for September first, upon the two covenants, the old and the new, goes a long way toward making one glorify God in his body and in his spirit which are his. When we are led to contemplate the glorious covenant of grace, we are ready to say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name."

The system of grace is most precious to me, for it is therein that we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. The remnant at this present time who will not bow the knee to false gods surely cannot boast that it is according to works of righteousness which they have done. The apostle says, "It is according to the election of grace," and "if by grace, it is no more of works." It does not appear to me that the apostle is here talking about their election to eternal life, but is specially laboring to show that God's electing grace was the cause of their not bowing to the image of Baal. By grace they were kept from this, while many did bow to the image. Thus this remnant stands to the praise of the glory of God's grace.

We are, I believe, having some good spiritual meetings in the churches here, for which the Lord be praised.

Affectionately,

J. T. SATTERWHITE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1903.

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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MATTHEW VI. 13.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—If I am not asking too much, or if you can bear with this poor sinner, I would like to ask for your views upon the words, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

(MRS.) CHRISTINA MURRAY.

EAGLE, Ontario, May 13, 1903.

REPLY.

The words named above are found in Matthew vi. 13, and in Luke xi. 4. As no doubt all our readers know, they are a portion of that prayer which our Lord taught his disciples. In Luke we are informed that one of his disciples said unto him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." And Jesus said to them, "After this manner pray ye." Matthew does not record the request of the disciples, but both record the prayer. Our sister did not request it, and we do not feel like dwelling upon all the expressions of this wonderful prayer; it is sufficient here perhaps, to say that each and every petition offered in these words, presents that which the blessed Lord has in store for all his disciples in every age, and everywhere; it sums up all that any child of God can ever need; each expression in the prayer is filled with a meaning broad and deep, and yet a meaning that the humblest and smallest one in all the kingdom understands when the need felt within his soul cries out to God. Still further, the various expressions of this prayer are not mere forms of words to be used whether the heart is in it or not, but they are the full and solemn expression of desires felt within, furnished to that soul which struggles in vain to find words to tell its crying and groaning. No human mind could have furnished such words, words so suited to the need of the lowly, sinful, humble, penitent heart, as are these blessed words given by the Savior. They are words of the Holy Spirit, and they are given by divine wisdom, which embraces and knows just what all the people of God shall ever need. Let a poor, trembling child examine any sorrow, any suffering, any hunger, any voiceless cry, that he has ever felt within him, and he will find that some one or other of the expressions of this prayer embraces that which he must have. He can desire nothing which these words do not contain and express. Still further, when Jesus taught the disciples these words of prayer, in response to their petition to be taught how to pray, he did not mean to teach just the mere form of words, that is, he did not mean that for a man to use these words when the heart did not feel them would be prayer, but he meant that the need felt in the soul from time to time could be expressed in these words, as they could not be expressed in any other words; these are the right words by which inward desires could find expression. We have never understood that when the disciples said to him, "Teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples," they meant that they wanted just a form of words put into their mouths, but that they meant that they were conscious of a hunger and thirst of soul,

which they could find no words adequate to express, and which they desired to express. It was in recognition of this hunger in them, and of that which would be the desire of all his people in every age, that the Savior gave these words, as the prayer taught to his followers. To repeat these words amounts to nothing, except they voice the desire which exists in the heart, and the desire, the hunger and thirst, cannot exist in the heart unless begotten there by the indwelling Spirit of God. To teach this form of words to a little child, or to one of mature years, when in the heart there exists no such feelings, is to teach them to engage in solemn mockery, and, "God is not mocked." What an awful thought that so many millions of mankind are to-day engaged in teaching to their children what in the lips of those children are falsehoods. What a mockery to teach a child to say "forgive my sins," when the child is not conscious of any sin, and feels no need of forgiveness. But if that child has been convicted of sin, and is longing for some words that will express its longing, then these words, "forgive us our sins," will be true in his lips as they are first felt in the heart. And when the Spirit of God shall take of these words of Jesus, and show them to that child, what a joy and consolation they will prove to him; just what he wants to plead; Jesus has given him encouragement to plead, and has placed the very words, as it were, in his mouth. The power and sweetness of the various expressions of this prayer can come to no one but a disciple, who must have these things or fall in despair.

But we do not desire to dwell longer upon these general remarks at this time, but will try to speak of the sentence named by our sister, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

It seems to us that there are some things which this language cannot mean. It cannot mean anything that will be in contradiction of any other Scripture. For instance, Jesus said afterwards to his disciples, "Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation." And James said, in his epistle, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." And James with regard to this one thing says, "Do not err, my beloved brethren." That is, do not think in the time of temptation that you are tempted of God, but fully assured that your temptations come from your lusts. So that these words cannot signify that God ever does lead his people into temptation. It seems then, manifest that Jesus did not mean here, that they should ask of God that he would not do what he never does at any time do. Such a prayer would be meaningless, to say the least about it. And neither can it mean that we should pray that God would never lead us into times of trial, or places where we should be subject to temptation, since this is manifestly contrary to the testimony of the Scriptures, where again and again it is said that God has placed his children providentially where temptation must and did assail them, and it was beyond question his will that they should be thus placed. Yea, he had himself appointed these providential circumstances for them. Sometimes those providences were of a trying and sorrowful nature, sometimes those circumstances have been of a very prosperous nature. And these latter circumstances have been as full of the possibilities of temptation as have

the former, though of a different sort. Indeed, if the prayer was meant to convey this thought, that is, freedom from circumstances of temptation, we must needs go out of the world to find such freedom, and the prayer would mean simply asking to be taken out of the world, which is manifestly contrary to the will of God, for Jesus in his prayer recorded in John xvii. did not pray for this, but that they should be kept from the evil which seems to us to mean that they should be kept from being ensnared by the corrupt and poisonous elements of the world, which pressed upon them. The people of God are not then to be shut up in cells like monks and nuns, to get out of the world, and away from trial and temptation, but they are to be kept from the evil that is in the world. The word evil here is used in the sense of that which is sinful, and this prayer recorded in John xvii. also signifies that if any one is kept from the evil that is in the world, it must be by the power and grace of God. The Savior does not pray that his disciples may keep themselves from the evil, but that they might be kept. They are to be in the world, but not of the world. They are to move among men as do other men, and to engage in the work and business, and social relations of life, as do other men, but the Savior prays that they might be kept from the falsehood, lying, cheating, strife and pride of the world. Thus, Joseph in Egypt was kept from the evil, and so was Daniel in Babylon, and so was Paul amid the greatest sufferings, and pre-eminently, the dear Redeemer himself was never overcome of evil, but while doing his Father's will among men, and subject to all sorts of temptations, yet overcame, and did not enter into the temptation. These things, as it seems to us, the language, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," cannot mean.

We desire now to call attention to another thing which has seemed to us to throw some light upon the subject; this is that there is a contrast, apparently, between the first and last clause of the text. "Lead us not into temptation," is set over against, "but deliver us from evil." The word "evil," clearly means sin, in the text, as the original Greek word shows. The word "lead," is very strong, signifying literally to bear, to carry. The word "deliver," means literally, "to rescue," and the word "temptation" in this prayer means, "to try," "to prove." The thought which seems to us to be chief in this sentence, and which would give rise to it, and add force to it, is that of human weakness; it seems to us that this prayer would arise immediately from that heart which knows its depravity and lack of strength to resist temptation. Such an one would shrink from even the trial or suffering which would open the door for temptation to any manner of sin to come in. In every believing heart there is such utter abhorrence of sin, and such a sense of the danger of the soul when subjected to temptation, that the chief desire must be to be kept continually from yielding to it. Such ones will feel to heed the words, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation," but still, while giving heed to this word of the Lord, there will be such a sense of the inability and weakness within that the soul will be thrown back, as it were, upon God, and the cry of the heart will be, Lord, give me to watch, and give me to pray, according to thy word.

From all these considerations it has seemed to us that the one thought of the

prayer, not to be led into temptation is that since, if left to ourselves, we shall surely fall into it, our desire is that God will not suffer us to be *led into* temptation, but keep us from it. When Peter entered the judgment hall where his Master was on trial, he was placing himself where he could be tempted. This was very different from going where the Lord leads us in his providence. Following his providence, we need not fear, he will keep us from the evil, but suppose one knowing his own weakness voluntarily places himself under circumstances where temptation will assail him, here is sin on his part in the first place. Now it seems to us that it is this one thing especially, that the prayer embraces: keep us from presumptuous sins; see that we do not seek temptation. Joseph did not go into the house of Potiphar voluntarily; Daniel did not seek high places in Babylon voluntarily; in the providence of God both were placed in these circumstances of trial, and were tempted, and were kept from the evil. The people of God will desire, when led by the Spirit of truth, that they may be kept from not only going into sin under temptation, but also they will want to shun the very places and circumstances where temptation may be found. We shall not only desire not to do evil with those who sin, but we shall want to avoid as much as we can, the companionship of those who transgress; we shall not want to walk in the way of transgressors. Now it seems to us that this is especially the burden of the prayer "Lead us not into temptation."

To sum it all up, the prayer does not imply that God ever tempts the children of men, and neither does it imply that we are to pray to be shut up from contact with the needful business of this life, but it does mean, suffer us not to go into temptation by any desire of our own, but keep us from all such evil desires, and then we shall be kept from presumptuous sins, and from great transgression, as David prayed might be the case with him. C.

PSALMS XL. 1–3.

How wonderfully the psalmist was moved upon by the Holy Ghost to enable him to write the experience of every child of God through all ages. The Scripture cited above reads: "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God."

The expression, "I waited patiently for the Lord," we do not think means to imply that the psalmist waited perfectly contented and in a passive state, for the Lord, for if he had he would not have cried to the Lord, and the Lord inclined his ear to his cry. The sense in which the word patiently is here used seems to mean endurance, as it is said of Job being a patient man, yet he was very restless and complaining, and so it is with every subject of grace; they wait with patience for the Lord when they endure temptation, and look to the Lord for deliverance while they wrestle with doubts and fears, and groan under a sense of the sin that dwells within them, and cry unto the Lord, or as the Scriptures express it, "The Spirit maketh intercession for them with groanings that cannot be uttered." When trials come upon the saints, and they are overwhelmed with afflictions, how the tempter torments them with the suggestion that they are not truly a child

of God or they would be more submissive, and say at all times, "Thy will be done," and thus wait patiently for the Lord. But, dear child of God, if you were able to do this you would be perfect, and you would have no trial of your faith. God gives you this precious faith, and trials and temptations are given that you may have demonstrated to you the value or power of this faith to sustain you through it all. If you had not the trials you could never know the sustaining power of this faith. When the Scriptures speak of the trial of your faith, it does not mean that God wants to learn how much or what kind of faith you have, for he knows without any tests, but to show to you the strength of that faith to sustain you through all the fiery trials that may try you. Then, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trials which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you."

"He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay." This Scripture is nearly always misquoted the horrible pit *of* miry clay, but it reads, "The horrible pit, *the* miry clay." Then the miry clay is the horrible pit, and this miry clay, to our mind, is the flesh. Isaiah says, "We are the clay, and thou our potter," and Paul says, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another vessel unto dishonor?" This is the clay that David calls "an horrible pit." And every heaven-born child can say with David, This flesh, or carnal nature, is indeed an horrible pit, for through painful experience they have learned when they have been left to themselves they immediately begin to sink in this miry clay, and the more they struggle to get out, the deeper they sink. Sometimes in our efforts to free ourselves from self we make strong resolves to do better and be more faithful, and work ourselves up to great confidence in self to put down self. But alas, we find at last we are deeper in this miry clay of confidence in the flesh, and all our good resolutions were but trusting in the arm of flesh. Then after the Lord has suffered us to wallow in this miry clay long enough to show us our utter helplessness to extricate ourselves, and we have lost all confidence in the flesh, and are made to cry unto the Lord, then, and not till then, are we brought up by the Lord out of this horrible pit. If our deliverance depended on anything that we must do when we are sinking in this miry clay, how hopeless would be our condition. We must be brought with David to cry, "Save me, O God, for I sink in deep mire." A man sinking in deep mire is bound to struggle, and although he can see that the more he struggles the deeper he sinks, yet he cannot cease until he becomes utterly without strength. Thus the quickened child of God, when his eyes are opened to a view of his own condition, sunken in sin and fleshly lusts, immediately goes to work to get out of this horrible condition, and does not doubt at the commencement but what he can of himself climb out of the horrible pit, but poor creature, he soon finds that he is in an utterly helpless condition, as far as human efforts go. And when all hope and confidence in self is gone, then he is prepared to receive the salvation of the Lord, and when delivered he will ever after say with David, "*The Lord* brought me up out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay." But he does not simply take his chosen ones up out of the miry clay, and then leave them to take care of themselves, but he sets their feet upon a rock, and establishes their goings.

Some brethren seem to think that after the Lord once takes his elect out of the miry clay, he then leaves them to establish their own goings, but it was not so in David's case, for the Lord set his feet upon a rock, which rock, to our mind, is his fixed determinate counsel, or his predestination. It does not say he placed David's feet upon *the* Rock, or we would know it meant Christ, but it says *a* rock, which implies other rocks, which we know could not be the case if this rock meant Christ. Besides the balance of the sentence, "established my goings," seems to imply that the rock was the "established goings," for the word and is supplied; in the original it reads, "set my feet upon a rock, established my goings." Then, after this wonderful deliverance, and firm establishment of his goings, well might David sing a *new song*. But take notice, David was not permitted to compose this new song, for it distinctly says the Lord put it in his mouth. What was this new song? Was it Lord, thou took me up out of an horrible pit, and placed spiritual blessings before me to be obtained through my good works? No, for that would be plunging him right back into the horrible, the miry clay from which he had so graciously brought him up out of, but directly to the contrary, this new song was praise to God, not only for the deliverance, but also for placing his feet upon a rock, and establishing his goings. And many shall see this glorious manifestation of the power and mercy of our God, not in David's case only, but also in their own experience. And may we not hope, dear reader, that we have been made to see this truth, and experienced in our own souls the deliverance of which David writes? And may it be the pleasure of the Lord to place our feet firmly upon the rock of his fixed purposes, and enable us to trust that he has established our goings, and put the new song in our mouths, "even praise to our God."

B.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

EXODUS XXXIV. 6, 7.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I desire a discourse on Exodus xxxiv. 6, 7, from yourself or some of your able correspondents.

DAVID HALSTED.

REPLY.

The words of this text are, "And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin; and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." We would willingly leave the exposition of this sublime passage to our able correspondents, as we feel deeply sensible of our incompetence to do justice to the subject. These words were spoken by the Lord unto Moses, when he was called up into Mount Sinai to receive the law the second time. In the preceding chapter Moses had expressed a desire that the Lord would show him his glory, and the Lord promised that he would make all his goodness to pass before him, and adds, "And I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy." In our text we have a record of the fulfillment of the promise, and in the awful grandeur of the holy mount, in God's own voice, the proclamation of the name

of the Lord is made. Moses, at various periods, seemed inquisitive to know the name of the Lord. When he was first called and commissioned to go before Pharaoh, he inquired what name he should announce to the children of Israel, and from the burning bush he was told, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto thee." But in our text we have not only a literal fulfillment of the promise to proclaim his name, but in also causing all his goodness to pass before Moses. "And the Lord passed by before him." Thus showing that God claims no goodness out of himself. All his goodness is of himself, and in himself, and he is the embodiment, so to speak, of all that is good and holy in an absolute sense. The goodness of all his creatures is of him, and not of themselves. The things of the natural creation were very good, because he had made them so. And the righteousness of his servants, or saints, is of me, saith the Lord. (Isaiah liv. 17.) In all the provisions of grace and mercy, the Lord was before Moses, as grace was anterior to the giving of the law. And when Moses, as the type of the law, was commanded to smite the rock which was in Horeb, which rock Paul says was Christ, God said to Moses, "Behold, I will stand before thee upon the rock in Horeb, and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink," &c.—Exodus xvii. 6. In all the journeyings of Israel, the Lord went before them in the cloud and in the fire, causing his goodness to pass before them in the wilderness. *And proclaimed* the LORD. That is, the Jehovah, self-existent, independent and eternal God. To proclaim the Lord, signifies not only an articulation of the words, The LORD, but a display of his majesty and power. The Lord; not a Lord, as though he were one of many, or that there were others, for he has frequently declared that he is the Lord and there is none other. "The LORD God." As Lord, the sovereign controller and disposer of all events, and the God to be reverenced and worshiped as the only true and living God. But the Lord proclaims not only his name, but some of his peculiar perfections or attributes. "Merciful and gracious." Paul testifies that God is rich in mercy. (Eph. ii. 4.) And the inspired psalmist says, I will sing of his mercy forever; for he has said, Mercy and truth shall be built up forever, &c. (Psalms lxxxix. 1, 2.) And he proclaims the name of the Lord to all who have a saving knowledge of him, as merciful and gracious; for mercy proceeds from grace, and forbids the plea of merit on the part of the vessels of mercy which he hath afore prepared unto glory. *Longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.* Who that has ever known the Lord can fail to set to his seal that God is true? Surely his goodness and mercy have followed us all our days, and because he changes not, Israel is not consumed.

"Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgressions and sin." The mercies and forgiveness of sins are kept, not by those on whom they are bestowed, but by him from whom they emanate. Were the provisions of grace and mercy subject to the will or works of men, there would be occasion to fear they might be misapplied, for those on whom it is his own sovereign pleasure to bestow them, as he says to Moses, in the preceding chapter, "I will make all my goodness to pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before

thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy." An inspired commentator on this text has drawn this conclusion, "So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy."—Romans ix. 16. "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."—Romans ix. 18.

But while we trace the sacred testimony of the sovereignty of God in keeping mercy for thousands, and bestowing it on them, not according to the volition of him that willeth or runneth, but according to his own immutable will and pleasure, we have in the same connection the positive declaration that he will *by no means* clear the guilty. How the advocates of the means doctrines of the day would dispose of this declaration, we will not presume to say. As they represent the fountain of mercy, forgiveness and salvation, to be accessible to all sinners who will consent to *use the means* to procure it, which means, they say, is in the hands of all sinners for a limited period, and thus placing the mercy of God at their command, they are required to will, or to run, or to make use of some sort of means, but God has rejected this system of means altogether, and *will by no means clear the guilty.* The thousands for whom he keeps this mercy were by nature children of wrath, but the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth them from all guilt. God's mercy does not flow at the expense of justice; hence that the treasured mercy of God displayed in the salvation and forgiveness of his people may be applied, or showed to them, the redemption which is in Christ Jesus must open up the channel in which it shall flow. The thousands for whom God keeps mercy are set free from guilt by the blood of Christ, and freely justified through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. But no means, or system of means, can avail to procure the mercy of God or the remission of sins.

"Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." Here the doctrine of relationship appears. All the human family had their creation in the earthly Adam, were in him when he sinned, and they sinned in him; hence his judgment is visited upon them. By the offense of one man, judgment came upon all men unto condemnation. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death has passed upon all men, because that all have sinned." This inheritance of sin and death is not restricted to the third and fourth generation, but involves the whole race of mankind, but still the principle of the visitation is clearly perceptible. Under the Mosaic dispensation, the limitation of temporal judgments were made. But it should be remembered that death reigned from Adam to Moses, and the Mosaic law was not required to doom the sons of Adam to the righteous judgment which they were under more than two thousand years before Moses was born.

In conclusion we remark, God has proclaimed himself to Moses, and through Moses and the prophets as "A just God and a Savior." As a Savior he is the only Savior, and his mercy is kept by him for thousands on whom it has been and shall be displayed, but it is vain to look for mercy where the claims of eternal justice are not canceled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not a jot or tittle of the law shall fail until all is fulfilled.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., December 15, 1860.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at South Gardiner, Maine, September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1903, to the churches composing this Association, sends christian greetings.

BELOVED BRETHREN IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD:—In this our annual letter we desire that there shall be no uncertain sound, for if the trumpet give an uncertain sound who shall prepare himself to the battle? We desire that our theme should be of the power and wisdom of that God who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast. We cannot ascribe too much praise, honor and glory to the God of our salvation, for it all belongs to him, and it cannot be given to another, because all his works shall praise him, for he is the Lord, that is his name, his glory will he not give to another, neither his praise to graven images. The power and wisdom of God are far beyond the comprehension of our finite minds, and can be known only as the Spirit of truth reveals it unto us. It takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us, and brings to our remembrance things new and old. So we greatly rejoice that he had power to lay down his life, and power to take it again; the salvation of his people is a perfect work, his own arm brought salvation, he trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him; he has all power in heaven and earth. When these wonderful things of Jesus are revealed to the faith of God's elect, it causes them to exclaim with Paul, "O the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" We believe that all of God's works are known unto him, and he has declared the end from the beginning. He can make no mistake in regard to the salvation of his people, for his foundation standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his; neither the cunning craftiness of men, nor the doctrines of devils, will ever be able to deceive the almighty God, for all things were made by him, and for him, and without him was not anything made that was made. He will reign as long as time shall last, and when time shall be no more he will still continue his reign into the mysteries of eternity, for he is upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it, with judgment, with justice, from henceforth even forever, and to the increase of her government and peace, there shall be no end, and all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose, for the Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed, so shall it stand. The power and wisdom of God forbids that his people shall teach one another to know him, for they shall all be taught of the Lord, and they shall all know him, from the least to the greatest of them, and great shall be their peace. "O, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men."

Brethren, in these times when some among us limit the power and wisdom of the almighty Father, we desire to be found using sound speech, which cannot be condemned. Christ is first, and Christ is last, and all in all; he died to redeem his people; he finished the work the Father gave him to do; the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand, therefore he said, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you

the kingdom." It is in him we live, in him we move and in him we have our being; without him we can do nothing, for without him we are but as grass; the flesh profiteth nothing, and we have no confidence in it, but in the fear of the Lord is strong confidence; the only salvation we know is God's salvation, and that is in Jesus. We can never know of this salvation until it is revealed unto us as it was to Simeon, and we hope that we have tasted the joy of it, and felt to exclaim with Jonah, "Salvation is of the Lord." The only Savior we know and believe in is the Lord Jesus Christ, and we love to hear him proclaimed as the way, truth, life and resurrection; the One altogether lovely, and the chiefest among ten thousand; exalted with God's right hand a Prince and a Savior. His blood is sufficient to cleanse us from all sin, and his grace is sufficient for us at all times. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." The truth is sweet to our taste, and refreshing to our souls, and we love to hear it proclaimed in its purity, and faithfully, in the fear of the Lord. Our meditations of God are sweet, for our trust is in him, and they that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever. We believe his people are saved with an everlasting salvation, and there is not anything that can ever separate them from him, for they are all one in Christ Jesus. We hope his love has been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, and when we are exercised by this wonderful love, it makes us kind and tender-hearted to all of his dear children. The love of God is a wonderful love, and we can never have any other reason for loving the Lord, only because he first loved us. "Love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." We desire to have that wisdom which cometh from above, which dwelleth in the fullness of Christ, for he of God is made unto us wisdom. Whom have we in heaven but Jesus? Is there any upon earth that we desire beside him? Does not our flesh and our heart fail? Is not God the strength of our heart and our portion forever? This wisdom is pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, it enables us to walk in the fear of the Lord, giving thanks unto God always.

May we be led about and instructed, and may our conversation be such as becometh the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

Now, unto him who has all power, and is wisdom, may we give thanks, and bless his holy name forever and ever. Amen.

F. A. CHICK, Moderator.

J. C. CLARK, Clerk.

The Licking Association of Old School Baptists, convened with the church at Bethel, Shelby Co., Ky., September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1903, to the several churches of which she is composed, sendeth christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST:—In sending you this our annual letter, we desire to call your attention to the following portion of Scripture: "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following." —Psalms xlviii. 12, 13.

Should the Lord enable us to see some of the beauties of this Scripture, then our letter perhaps will be of some value to the household of faith, for we realize that the words of Jesus are true, "Without

me ye can do nothing."—John xv. 5. For he is the possessor of every treasure of wisdom and knowledge.

First. Walk about Zion, not take a running, hasty view. As the inhabitants of this city are forbidden to make haste, "He that believeth shall not make haste."—Isaiah xxviii. 16.

Second. Tell the towers thereof. The principal and chief tower by which this city is defended, and the one that includes all the other towers, is, "The Lord is there."—Ezek. xlviii. 35. This wonderful tower defends the city on every side, from every foe, so that there can be no possible harm to any of the inhabitants of this city: "For the name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and are safe."—Prov. xviii. 10. The poet has aptly expressed,

"Zion's a city God hath blessed
With peace and everlasting rest;
A glorious city strong and fair,
And Jesus dwells forever there."

All the inhabitants of this city are securely kept,

"For none of the ransomed shall e'er be lost,
For Jesus' precious blood they did cost."

Third. Mark ye well her bulwarks. One mighty bulwark by which this city is defended, is salvation. Jesus has borne all of her sins, and removed them far away into the sea of forgetfulness. He has paid every debt that was against his people. He died the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God, and all that the Father hath given him shall come. All power in heaven and earth is given unto him. He speaks and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast. He opens and none can shut; he shuts and none can open. (Rev. iii. 7.) The north he commands to give up, and the south to keep not back, bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth, even every one that is called by my name. (Isaiah xliii. 6.) For he is King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; which no man hath seen or can see: to whom be glory forever. (1 Tim. vi. 15.) The inhabitants of this city are all sure of their inheritance; it is one city, one kingdom, and one house of many mansions, and "Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks."—Isaiah xxvi. 1. And we can confidently sing with the poet,

"On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
Thou mayest smile at all thy foes."

Fourth. Consider her palaces. It is a glorious palace, when we are brought to his banqueting-house, and his banner over us is love, and we sit down under his shadow with great delight, and each can say, His fruit is sweet to my taste. (Cant. ii. 3, 4.)

Another delightful palace, which none of the proud and haughty of this world care to enter, but which is a safe retreat for his people, is to sit at the feet of Jesus and hear his gracious words, like Mary of old. (Luke x. 39.) In fact it is a palace wherever his people are gathered together, and Jesus in the midst. "For in his presence is fullness of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures for evermore."—Psalms xvi. 11.

Fifth. That ye may tell it to the generation following. As this is singular, not generations, it is evidently the one generation of our Lord and Savior, to whom this good news is to be told; the chosen generation, the royal priesthood, a peculiar people. (1 Peter ii. 9.)

Finally, to sum it all up in a few words, it is this: This city, this kingdom, is set up by the God of heaven, and it shall never be destroyed; it shall stand

forever. (Dan. ii. 44.) It has stood through the ages past, it stands to-day, and it will continue to stand through all of the ages that may be yet to come; it will safely outride all the storms of time, for it is

"A kingdom that shall ne'er decay,
While time sweeps earthly thrones away."

And when we are enabled to trust in the Lord implicitly, we can exclaim with the poet,

"Here we would find a settled rest,
While others go and come;
No more a stranger or a guest,
But like a child at home."

Finally, brethren, be of good cheer, be of one mind, "And trust in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."—Isaiah xxvi. 4.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.
J. T. McCOUN, Clerk.
T. J. RATLIFF, Assistant Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, to the churches and associations with whom we correspond, sends greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—The Lord in mercy has once more granted us the privilege of meeting in an associated capacity, and listening to the gospel's joyful sound, which the ministering brethren have declared to us with all boldness and zeal, and our weary souls have rested in the truth which we have listened to at this our annual meeting, and we have felt to say the Lord is good, and his mercy endureth forever. We have been reminded of his longsuffering, not willing that any should perish, but all should come to repentance, for he has bought them with his own blood. We believe that the peace of God is among us.

Our next session will be held, the Lord willing, with the Bowdoinham church, Bowdoinham, Maine, on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1904, where we hope to meet your messengers and receive your Minutes.

F. A. CHICK, Moderator.
J. C. CLARK, Clerk.

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Second Church of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., Sept. 9th and 10th, 1903, to the associations with which we correspond, sends christian greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the kindness of our blessed God we are once more permitted to meet in an association, to receive your messengers and messages of love and fellowship. We are glad to know that you are steadfast in the doctrine of God our Savior. We are also glad to say that we abide in the same, having hope in God, believing that God works all things after the counsel of his own will. Your ministers have preached Jesus and him crucified, for the salvation of his people, with the ability that God gives, and those that have an ear to hear and a heart to understand, have received it with joy and gladness. We desire a continuation of your christian correspondence.

Our next session will be held, the Lord willing, with the Olive & Hurley Church, the second Wednesday and Thursday in September, 1904, commencing at 10 o'clock the first day.

J. D. HUBBELL, Moderator.
WILLIAM BALLARD, Clerk.

The Licking Association of Particular Baptists, now in session with Bethel Church, Shelby Co., Ky., Sept. 11th, 12th and 13th, 1903, to the associations with whom she corresponds, sendeth christian love.

GOD, in his providence, has again permitted us to meet in an associate capac-

ity. The messages of love from the churches composing the association show peace and harmony and christian fellowship. The preaching has been proclaimed with power from on high, Jesus alone the salvation of sinners. We hope for a continuation of your christian correspondence by Minutes and messengers. May the ties of God's love bind us still closer together as we journey down the steeps of time.

Our next association is appointed to be held with our sister church, Mt. Carmel, Clark Co., Ky., commencing on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1904, where we again hope to meet your messengers and messages of love. May the love of God be with you all. Amen.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.
J. T. McCOUN, Clerk.
T. J. RATLIFF, Assistant Clerk.

APPEAL FOR AID.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In much weakness, fear and trembling I address you. There is a little band of Primitive Baptists in Memphis, Tenn., earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, standing firm in the doctrine of Christ as we believe, election, predestination, resurrection of the dead, and final preservation of the saints. This little band was organized into a church some eight years ago. Elder J. W. Kerley, our pastor, has served us faithfully since that time. We hold our meetings the first Sunday and Saturday before of each month, in the court house, as we have no meeting house. We have been renting for eight years, but have at last succeeded in buying us a lot in East Memphis, pleasantly located, but are poor financially, and not able to build unless we can get help. We are sorry to have to ask or call on our brethren, as they are called on so often, but will say, If any feel it in their hearts to help this needy band, it will be most thankfully received, and appreciated. We are on the committee to solicit and receive any help, be it ever so little, and acknowledge receipt for same through the SIGNS, with the editors' permission.

Contributions can be sent to either Mrs. John Hargan, 245 Madison St., Memphis, Tenn., or my address.

(MRS.) R. M. CRUTCHER.

PEARLEY, Tenn., Sept. 15, 1903.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

RIDGEWOOD, N. J., Sept. 16, 1903.

BROTHER BEEBE:—I have neglected to send you my change of address to 9 West Dayton Street.

I feel in no mood to write, so I can only say, I am in quite comfortable health, and desire to be grateful, I trust, for the great mercy shown me throughout my sufferings; for the kind interest of friends in their many tokens of good will and sympathy. I can travel with more ease, on my crutches, and take considerable exercise, when the weather permits.

I do feel it a great favor to receive a letter from my kindred in Christ, and anxiously await the SIGNS, and they come so promptly.

Trusting the Lord may continue to sustain you in the cause of truth, I am, I trust, your sister, M. HELLINGS.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO BROTHER D. M. LEONARD'S APPEAL TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$809 65
Mrs. L. D. Bolton, Okla. Ter., $1.00; Mrs. Angie J. Thomas, Maine, $1.00; W. O. Rathburn, Conn., $3.00; Mrs. John Beamand, Ohio, $1.00; Harriet N. Harkness, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. Drusilla Wheeler, N. Y., $2.00.—Total	9 00
Total to date	$818 65

POETRY.

THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.

(BY MRS. MATILDA C. EDWARDS.)

The Church and the world walked far apart,
On the changing shore of time;
The World was singing a giddy song,
And the church a hymn sublime.
"Come, give me your hand," cried the merry World,
"And walk with me this way;"
But the good Church hid her snowy hands,
And solemnly answered, "Nay,
I will not give you my hand at all,
And I will not walk with you;
Your way is the way to endless death;
Your words are all untrue."

"Nay, walk with me but a little space,"
Said the World with a kindly air;
"The road I walk is a pleasant road,
And the sun shines always there;
Your path is thorny, and rough, and rude,
And mine is broad and plain;
My road is paved with flowers and dews,
And yours with tears and pain:
The sky above is always blue;
No want, no toil, I know;
The sky above you is always dark;
Your lot is a lot of woe;
My path, you see, is a broad, fair one,
And my gate is high and wide;
There is room enough for you and for me
To travel side by side."

Half shyly the Church approached the World,
And gave him her hand of snow,
The old World grasped it and walked along,
Saying, in accents low,
"Your dress is too simple to please my taste;
I will give you pearls to wear,
Rich velvets and silks for your graceful form,
And diamonds to deck your hair."
The Church looked down at her plain white robes,
And then at the dazzling World,
And blushed as she saw his handsome lip
With a smile contemptuous curled.
"I will change my dress for a costlier one,"
Said the church with a smile of grace;
Then her pure white garments drifted away,
And the world gave in their place
Beautiful satins and shining silks,
And roses and gems and pearls;
And over her forehead her bright hair fell
Crisped in a thousand curls.

"Your house is too plain," said the proud old World,
"I'll build you one like mine;
Carpets of Brussels and curtains of lace,
And furniture ever so fine."
So he built her a costly and beautiful house;
Splendid it was to behold;
Her sons and her beautiful daughters dwelt there,
Gleaming in purple and gold;
And fairs and shows in the halls were held,
And the world and his children were there,
And laughter and music and feasts were heard
In the place that was meant for prayer.
She had cushioned pews for the rich and great,
To sit in their pomp and pride;
While the poor folks, clad in their shabby suits,
Sat meekly down outside.

The angel of Mercy flew over the Church,
And whispered, "I know thy sin;"
Then the Church looked back with a sigh, and longed
To gather her children in,
But some were off at the midnight ball,
And some were off at the play,
And some were drinking in gay saloons,
So she quietly went her way.
Then the sly World gallantly said to her,
"Your children mean no harm,
Merely indulging in innocent sports;"
So she leaned on his proffered arm,
And smiled, and chatted, and gathered flowers,
As with the World she walked along;
While millions and millions of precious ones
The broad road to destruction throng.

"Your preachers are all too old or plain,"
Said the gay World with a sneer;
"They frighten my children with dreadful tales,
Which I like them not to hear;
They talk of sore trials, and fire, and pain,
And the darkness of endless night;
They talk of some things which should not be
Mentioned to ears polite.
I will send you some of the better stamp,
Brilliant and gay and fast,
Who will tell them that people may live as they list,
And go to heaven at last.
The Father is merciful, great and good,
Tender and true and kind;
Do you think he would take one child to heaven,
And leave the rest behind?"
So he filled her house with gay divines,
Gifted and great and learned;
And the plain old men that preached the cross,
Were out of her pulpits turned.

"You give too much to the poor," said the World,
"Far more than you ought to do;
If the poor need shelter and food and clothes,
Why need it trouble you?
Go take your money and buy rich robes,
And horses and carriages fine,
And pearls and jewels and dainty food,
And the rarest and costliest wine;
My children dote on all such things,
And if you their love would win,

You must do as they do and walk in the ways
That they are walking in."
Then the Church held tightly the strings of her purse,
And gracefully lowered her head,
And simpered, "I have given too much away,
I'll do, sir, as you have said."
So the poor were turned from her door in scorn,
And she heard not the orphan's cry;
And she drew her beautiful robes aside,
As the widows went weeping by;
And the sons of the World, and the sons of the Church,
Walked closely hand and heart,
And only the Master who knoweth all,
Could tell the two apart.

Then the Church sat down at her ease and said,
"I am rich and in goods increased;
I have need of nothing, and naught to do
But to laugh and dance and feast;"
And the sly World heard her and laughed in his sleeve,
And mockingly said aside,
"The Church has fallen, the beautiful Church,
And her shame is her boast and pride."

The angel drew near to the mercy-seat,
And whispered in sighs her name,
And the saints their anthems of rapture hushed,
And covered their heads with shame;
And a voice came down through the hush of heaven,
From him who sat on the throne,
"I know thy work, and how thou hast said,
I am rich, and hast not known
That thou art naked, poor and blind,
And wretched before my face:
Therefore, from my book I will blot thee out,
'But the meek' shall share my grace."

"ALL THY WORKS PRAISE THEE."

GREAT and marvelous are thy works,
Mighty is thy grace;
Just and true thy wondrous ways,
Shining is thy face.

Wondrous is thy love to men,
Heavenly is thy peace;
With thy garments dyed in blood,
Thou hast brought release.

Dreadful was the conflict, Lord,
'Gainst the mighty foe;
Glorious is the laurel wreath
That crowns the victor's brow.

Let our songs in triumph rise
To the conquering King;
Angels join the swelling strain,
And his praises sing.

Praise the gift of God to men;
Praise the boundless love;
Jesus stoops from heaven to earth,
Sinners reign above.

HOPEWELL, N. J., 1903.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder P. J. Powell, of Pratt City, Ala., Sept. 3d, 1903, Elder H. Barton and Fannie E. Brooks, both of Alabama.

By Elder John F. Almand, at the home of the bride's mother, near Starrsville, Georgia, Sept. 24th, 1903, Elder Horace H. Lefferts, of Philadelphia, Pa., and Miss Ella Adams, daughter of the late Elder William Adams.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

THE announcement of the death of sister Stout, wife of brother Philemon Stout, will cause sorrow and sadness among the readers of the SIGNS, and hundreds of others by whom brother and sister Stout were so well and favorably known.

Sister **Louisa Price Stout** was born near Richmond, Ky., August 9th, 1825, being the eighth daughter of James E. and Tabitha Brasfield. Her death occurred August 19th, 1903, being at the time of her demise 78 years and 10 days old. With her parents she came to Illinois in 1834, settling near Athens, Menard Co., where she lived until her marriage to brother Philemon Stout, Oct. 26th, 1856. She then, with her husband, took up their residence at the old homestead, nine miles south of Springfield, in Sangamon Co., Ill., where thousands, far and near, will remember the generous hospitality accorded them by host and hostess, for a half century or more, and especially those who love the faith and the cause of Christ, which was so nobly exemplified by those aged pilgrims. To brother and sister Stout were born two sons and two daughters. One son, J. B. Stout, and an infant daughter, preceded the mother to the world beyond time's changing tides and shadows. S. W. Stout, (son of brother Stout by his first wife, who was always loved and cared for by the mother with the same devotion as her own offspring) Joab P. and Melina Stout Lewis, with our dear old faithful brother and father in Israel, are left to mourn an irreparable loss. The children, a tender, self-sacrificing mother, and the husband a devoted, tireless helpmeet and companion, and the sympathy of hundreds will flow unto them as this sketch is being read. For some three years the deceased was afflicted with acute stomach trouble, which gave her much pain and suffering, all of which was borne with remarkable patience and fortitude. On the Rock of Ages she was firmly planted. Her faith was of that inflexible and unwavering kind that has always been a boon to suffering christian martyrs. It was her strong tower, and no influence could shake it. As her sufferings increased the more intense her faith became, bringing with it a constant desire to depart and be with Christ, which was far better. This faith she had rejoiced in and professed some fifty years ago, when

she offered herself to Bethel church, in Menard Co., was received and baptized by the late Elder William Crow. After her marriage she moved her membership to Salem, Sugar Creek church, where she lived an exemplary christian life, and became in the truest sense one of the mothers in Israel, always filling her seat in the assembly of the saints except for truly providential reasons. She was ardent in her devotion to the doctrine of grace as held and preached by the Old School Baptists, and so ably contended for in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. No modern ism found lodgment in her soul. Hypocrisy she could not endure, and anything that possessed even a suggestion of self-laudation, was despicable in her sight; she claimed no honor for self. In herself she saw no good. Humbleness and meekness was ever conspicuous in her walk and conversation. Previous to her death, which she knew was near at hand, she, in a calm and undisturbed manner, expressed her wishes to the family who were gathered around her bed. One wish was that the minister or ministers who should officiate at her funeral would refrain from any effusive eulogies or commendations of her past life. Her life had been an open book, and was before the people. It is not considered a violation of this request to tell now to the household of faith something of a life devoted to the blessed cause. The writer is certainly justified in mentioning a few of her noble virtues, which at best reflect but dimly her true character, who saw no terrors in death, even when its cold hand was already on her brow.

Hundreds of people, from far and near, came together at the funeral, with a last tribute of respect for the departed christian, friend, neighbor and citizen. Elders W. A. Thompson, C. C. Purvines and the writer were present, and took part in the service. May the Lord grant the surviving members of the household grace, to enable them to say, "She is not dead but sleepeth."

J. G. SAWIN.

MATTOON, Ill., Sept. 3, 1903.

"IF a man die, shall he live again?"

My mind has been given a fresh impetus in asking this question which interested Job in his time of trouble, and which is answered with such triumphant certainty in the New Testament: "Because I live, ye shall live also." Christianity comes to tell us about this deathless life, on the authority of him through whom life and immortality have been brought to light. These words ring in our ears in the affirmation which is our promise and our surety: "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die." Never have these Scripture verses been so dear to me, or fraught with so deep a meaning as at this time.

On the evening of May 14th, **Morris H. Trego,** I believe, passed into this new life. He was born in Newtown, Bucks Co., Pa., Dec. 23d, 1844, and spent his life in this place. A severe attack of pleuro-pneumonia four years ago superinduced bronchial catarrh. Two winters were spent in Florida, with no apparent results. By the advice of a specialist he went to Denver, Colo., in June. For a time he was encouraged, but in November an attack of "la grippe" weakened both heart and lungs. He returned in March, but never rallied. He spoke longingly of his great desire to depart and be with God, and of the sweet peace he enjoyed. While he never united with the church, he held in highest esteem all things that savored of true christianity, and was quick to detect a false note in the way of salvation, giving all glory to God. He was of the highest principles, living almost a blameless life. The community has lost a noble citizen, and the family has sustained an irreparable loss. One daughter, Marion Willard, with brothers, sisters and myself, remain to cherish the remembrance of a loving father, brother and husband.

JOSEPHINE W. TREGO.

DEPARTED this life, April 28th, 1903, **Mrs. Martha J. Rutherford,** aged about 67 years. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Southampton Old School Baptist Church June 12th, 1892, and was a most faithful member. Her experience was very clear and deep, and she had the gift to speak of it freely and clearly to the comfort and instruction of the brethren, which causes her to be greatly missed in our covenant and conference meetings. She had been a member of the Presbyterian church, and the experience which brought her away from that organization was very forcible and discriminating. She was well grounded and firm in the doctrine of salvation by grace. Her death is deeply felt by the church. During her long illness she manifested great patience under her very severe sufferings. By her request meetings were occasionally held in the house, and she lying in her bed, appeared to enjoy the preaching of the gospel and other exercises very much. Her husband, Mr. Andrew Rutherford, mourns the loss of a faithful and devoted wife, and her six children a loving and dear mother.

The funeral was held at the house of her daughter, Mrs. Allen, near Jamison, and the text used at her request was John x. 27, 28. I spoke also at the meeting-house in the afternoon.

SILAS H. DURAND.

CHURCH NOTICES.

AT the meeting of Otego church, held Sept. 5th, 1903, the following action was taken, viz: To request ministers who can visit us to come the first Sunday of any month, which is the time of our regular church

meeting. We can arrange for meetings Saturday afternoon and all day Sunday, at any time, by a notice being sent to us. We will be very glad to welcome visiting ministers. The reason for this action is that nearly all the members of Otego church live at a distance, and cannot come but once or twice a year, and they wish to be here at church meeting time, also they feel sorry not to be able to see and hear visiting ministers, when at Otego. Our pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, is here every first Sunday and Saturday before.

Done by order of the church.

S. C. F. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will hold their annual two days meeting with the Gilboa Church, on the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (7th and 8th) and we extend a cordial invitation to our brethren, especially ministering brethren, to meet with us, and all that love the Lord and his people. Those coming on the U. & D. R. R., stop off at Grand Gorge and inquire for Miss Jennie Leonard. Will be met on Tuesday, Oct. 6th. Our church meeting is the following Saturday and Sunday, and those who can tarry will be made welcome.

Done by order of Gilboa Church, August 8th, 1903.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Association of Primitive Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, with the Springfield Church, in Huntingdon Co., Pa., on Friday before the second Sunday in October, (9th, 10th and 11th,) 1903, and continue over Sunday. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth. Those coming by railroad will come on the Pennsylvania road to Mount Union, and there take the East Broadtop road to Three Springs. Trains leave Mount Union 9 a. m. and 4 p. m. Come on Thursday. Trains will be met by conveyances to places of entertainment.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE next session of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting will be held with the church at Mt. Zion, Loudoun Co., Va., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, and continue three days.

Those coming by way of Washington will take the train leaving the Sixth St. depot at 7:30 a. m. on Tuesday, for Haymarket, on the Southern R. R., where they will be met and taken to places of entertainment.

Brethren are heartily invited to meet with us on this occasion, especially ministering brethren.

G. G. GALLEHER, Clerk.

THE Welsh Tract Church has appointed her yearly meeting to commence on Saturday, Oct. 17th, 1903, and continue two days. Those coming from Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore, will come via B. & O. R. R. on Saturday morning. Trains leave Philadelphia at 7:40 a. m., and Baltimore at 8:00 a. m. (Mt. Royal station.) Get tickets to Newark, Del. Elders Grafton and McConnell are expected to be with us.

The second centennial or two hundredth anniversary of the church will be celebrated on Monday, Oct. 19th, the day following the yearly meeting. In order to have our ministering brethren attend this meeting, who may be on their way to the Salisbury Association, we have appointed the exercises to commence at 1 o'clock p. m. Come via P., B. & W. R. R. Trains leave Philadelphia (Broad St. station) at 11:23 a. m., Baltimore at 10:08 a. m., for Newark, Del. Elder A. B. Francis will read the historical sketch, and the pastor, Elder J. G. Eubanks, will preach on the occasion. We hope to have a good attendance of brethren, and all are cordially invited.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE Salisbury Association is appointed to be held with the Little Creek church, in the town of Delmar, Sussex Co., Del., Oct. 21st, 22d and 23d, 1903.

Those coming by rail from Philadelphia and points north can take trains leaving Broad St. at 10:16 a. m. and 3:20 p. m; Wilmington 10:58 a. m. and 4:02 p. m., on Tuesday before the meeting. Take tickets direct to Delmar. Those coming from Baltimore, can come by the Q. A. Route, taking boat leaving Pier 10, Light St. wharf, at 2 p. m., change cars at Greenwood, to Delaware R. R. Buy tickets for Greenwood in Baltimore. The stations at Greenwood are ten minutes walk apart, but if trains are on time there will be plenty of time to transfer. Excursion tickets can be bought in Philadelphia and Wilmington for Delmar, and in Baltimore for Greenwood, good for four or five days.

All lovers of the truth, and ministering brethren of our faith and order, are cordially invited.

In behalf of the church,

A. B. FRANCIS, Pastor.

THE yearly meeting of the Old School Baptist Church of Olive & Hurley, of the Roxbury Association, is appointed to be held with said church on Wednesday and Thursday, the 11th and 12th of November, 1903, when we will be glad to see as many of our brethren, sisters and friends, and ministering brethren, as can visit us. Will say to those coming on the U. & D. R. R., to stop off at Shokan, where I will be glad to meet them.

A. BOGART, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 71. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1903. NO. 21.

CORRESPONDENCE.

INFLUENCE.

BELOVED:—We do well to consider and understand why we do anything, or one thing instead of something else, and what it is that inclines and moves us to action in all we think and feel, say and do. For no finite or creature action is self-caused, or underived, but it is induced by something else. Creatures are not self-produced, but they are caused to be, and for the same reason no act of theirs is self-existent, but is caused.

We may set it down as an axiom, then, that all finite beings and things are *caused*. So there is not any creature or thing that arises spontaneously, whether animate or inanimate, ideal or material, thought, word or deed. This needs no proof, being self-evident, because non-existence cannot give itself existence, or something cannot arise out of nothing. I see the green leaves move, but something else moves them. This is true of all motion and of every movement of things created. Anterior to everything that takes place under the sun, there was something else as the cause. This is as true of mind as it is of matter, and applies as well to man as to animal and bird and mineral.

What is it that thus underlies all motion and action in the universe? It is *influence*. Everything that is done is the result of influence; that is, everything among creatures. All, *all* are subjected to influence. Man and beast, bird and tree, all things, are placed within certain environments or existing circumstances, and within this radius, circle or sphere, all are influenced in every motion and emotion, in all growth and change, in every action and all that is done. *Nothing is done by any creature without influence.* Almost countless influences enter into the formation of every life, many of them antedating the individual life, while many others arise day by day. No one is exempt from influence. Let proud and vain man boast as he may, yet no living man can rise above, turn away or free himself from the dominion of influence.

There is a resistless potency in influence, so universal and strong that it sways and controls all finite beings. The word means, to affect, to sway. Influential means, powerful. So whatever affects and sways us in any way is influence, and the extent to which we are

affected and moved is the power of influence. Therefore all action is the effect of influence. Change the influence, and the action would be changed, or the conduct different. And so opposite influences will lead to opposite results.

Influence is of two kinds—good and bad, or holy and wicked. These two have their source in the holy One, and the wicked one. All holiness is of God, who only is good, but all wickedness is of Satan, who is a murderer, and sinneth from the beginning. "There is none good, but One, that is, God," said his holy Son.

All goodness, therefore, has its source in God, and this includes all natural goodness and every blessing, both earthly and heavenly. When the Lord God finished his whole work of creation, he said all was good and very good. This included the heaven and the earth, with all the host of them. Paul said, "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things: * * * for in him we live, and move, and have our being." And James says, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

This Scripture clearly proves two truths. First. All things good and perfect cometh down from above, and they are the gifts of God; therefore not bought. Second. God neither varies, changes nor turns in the least; therefore he alone is never moved by influence, but is highly exalted, infinitely and forever above and independent of all influence whatever. This is both wonderful and blessed, for in this immutability of God is the perpetuity of the universe, and the safety of his people. "For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." The meaning of this is, if the sins of his people could possibly influence the Lord and change him, he would consume them in their sins; but because he changes not, he consumes their sins only.

Let us dwell a little upon the changelessness of the God of the whole earth, that we may the more revere him, as well as for our profit and comfort. For according to our view of the Lord, so will we either confide and trust in him, or in ourselves; for all either trust and hope in the Lord, or in man. His word is, "I change not." His reason is, "I am the LORD." He is Jehovah, the self-existing, eternal One, the Almighty. He is infinitely high above all other beings, and above the heavens. All others, and the whole unbounded universe, are forever absolutely dependent upon him. "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." It is impossible, therefore, that the unchangeable God should in the least be influenced by men, or angels, or anything outside of himself. "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen." This sweeping challenge and universal affirmation of Paul forever establishes the entire and absolute supremacy and omnipotence and independence of God over all worlds and beings, causes and influences whatsoever, and shows

that all, *all* are under him and subjected to him. His power is almighty, his dominion is universal, and "his kingdom ruleth over all."

God above is forever free, because he is unspeakly high above all influence. His will is his only law or rule of action. "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Daniel had said to the wicked and exalted king of Babylon, that he should "know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will." But he was lifted up with pride, and said, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty? While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men," &c. "The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon the king."

Many men are like that haughty king, and flatter themselves that they have done much, and will yet do much more, "by the might of their power, and for the honor of their majesty." Daniel extolled the power of God, but Nebuchadnezzar represented boastful man, and praised his own ability, until the hand of God touched him, then he was deeply abased, and said, "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase." Yes, praise and adore his holy name. Well did the king know this, for he spoke from his own experience of the truth and power of God.

So it is with those who know the Lord, for they have been taught of God, and have fled to Christ for refuge. They have ceased from man, and have no confidence in the flesh. Now they are willingly under the power of the Lord, and are moved and led by the hand of the Almighty, drawn heavenward with loving-kindness, and constrained by the love of Christ.

O, this is a perfect gift and hallowed influence! It cometh down from above, and it raiseth its blessed subjects upward to the Father of lights. The power of this influence is effectual, and it is divinely sanctifying. Its happy effect upon the life is thus expressed: "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek." The voice of the Lord is full of majesty, and he speaks never in vain, but his word stands fast. He says, that as the rain and snow shall make the earth fruitful, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." No opposing word, or resisting effort or influence, can possibly prevent this, for "God speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast," because almighty power attends his word. He abundantly thus reveals himself in the Bible, as also in his work of creation and providence.

Now, as the sins and rebellion of the Lord's people could not influence or move him to hate them, so neither is he moved or influenced by their repentance and obedience to love them. In either case they would *change* him. The very opposite of this is true, for they are *changed* by him, and the sanctifying and holy influence of his divine power upon them

mightily moves and controls them, causing them to repent and turn away from their sins and ungodliness, and bringing them into obedience unto Christ. "I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right." "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness."

The Lord reigns, as well in the spiritual kingdom as in the natural, and on earth as in heaven. *He is unlimited in his dominion.* "For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God," wrote Paul. God's counsel and purpose, dominion and power, are as unlimited as the worlds or the universe. And hence there is not a creature or being or thing outside of the power of God. The sun and stars, earth and moon, are not more subservient to his determined purpose, or dependent upon "his eternal power and Godhead," in their appointed course, than are all their trains of inhabitants. For none, whether in heaven or on earth, or under the earth, Seraphim or Cherubim, Gabriel or Lucifer, king or subject, saint or sinner, can defeat the counsel of the Almighty, or go beyond his power, but all are chained to his eternal throne. This is the overwhelming testimony of the word. The wisdom of the world denies this, and it affirms that men can and do act upon and influence their Maker, either to hate or love them, and to curse or bless them, just as they will. The worldly wise teach the religious world that in this way only, that is, upon this condition, are they responsible or accountable to God. But this assumption and dogma really reverses accountability from the creature to the Creator, for it holds God accountable to man, to reward him for his optional works, either of merit or demerit. The religion of the world is therefore essentially and necessarily conditional, because it is based upon the assumed claim that conditionality is essential to accountability, and that man is a free moral agent. But this, with every notion of conditional salvation, carries in it the idea that the religious man acts upon the Lord, and influences him to reward him with the salvation which is conditional upon the conduct of the man. It is impossible, therefore, for salvation to be conditional in any sense or part upon the works of man, unless man influences and moves and controls the Lord by his conditional works, which the worker may do or not as he will. For if there is a condition in any part of salvation, and the condition is the act or work of man, which he must do in order to obtain such salvation, then the man by his act and work does act upon and move the Lord to bestow the salvation.

O, how shocking this doctrine is! For it represents that the Lord does change, often change, and that he moves towards man, *because* man moves towards him. Not only does all conditional accountability and salvation deny God's immutability, but it also represents him as subject to the influence and will of man, and controlled by him. This is monstrous. But it is not so, for it is basely absurd and utterly false.

"The Lord God omnipotent reigneth." The Father hath put all things under the feet of his dear Son, whose arm of power rules for him, and he is "King of kings, and Lord of lords." He reigns in heaven upon his holy Father's great white throne, and he as well reigns in Zion and in the hearts of his people. Every holy emotion of love to God in their hearts, every prayer and thanksgiving, every act of obedient service in his kingdom of grace,

all, *all* are from him as his good and perfect gifts to us. These, with ten thousand other gifts of his love, above all, the unspeakable gift of his dear Son, with whom the Father shall also freely give us all things, these all inspire our songs of praise, move us to loving and willing obedience, and *in* this work of faith and labor of love there is a blessed reward, but it is the reward of grace. Therefore, beloved people of God, it is only because we are acted upon, moved and led by his Spirit of life and love, and enabled and influenced thereby, that we come unto the Lord and the throne of grace, and into the obedience of faith, and worship God in the beauty of holiness. All else than this is carnal, legal and formal, and is no better than mocking hypocrisy. From the corrupted, fleshly mind arises all sinful and wicked works, all rebellion against God, and as well all legal or conditional religion, carnal and false worship, which are not of God. O, may he move upon our hearts! then shall the sweet incense thereof flow out in the devotion of adoration and songs of praise to him. "Awake, O north wind; and come thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out." The church is the garden of the Lord, who says, "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." He only can open this sealed fountain, and water the plants in his garden, that their divine fragrance and sweet influences may flow out. So the Lord, in the trial of Job, said to him, "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?" When Job could reach up to these groups of stars, bind and loose them, and many such mighty works, "Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee," said the Lord to him. God alone, who made all the heavenly bodies, can bind their influences, or loose their bands, as he please. "These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth."

Therefore, beloved, the conclusion is, all holy and sanctifying influences, with which the Most High is well pleased, are of his own perfect nature and divine power, and these beautify and sweetly perfume and enrich all the garden of grace, so that the Beloved comes into his garden and eats his pleasant fruits, and rejoices in his saints. "And their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness."

"Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens." "The Lord that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion."

D. BARTLEY.

LEBANON, Ohio, June 8, 1903.

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336 HANCOCK ST., NASHVILLE, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER:—The subject of imputed righteousness has been upon my mind of late. I have been reading some authors of old date, one hundred and fifty years ago, and upon reading my Bible I find they correspond with the teaching of the apostles. I feel to hope in this imputed righteousness, and to say, "By the grace of God, I am what I am." It is all his righteousness, and none of mine, as the prophet has said, "For we are all an unclean thing, and all our righteousness is as filthy rags." Job said, "Behold, I am vile: what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth." No man

has anything to offer of his own that will be acceptable to God, for he is a Spirit, and must be worshiped in Spirit and in truth. I sometimes feel to hope that I have received the imputed righteousness of Christ. And why do I thus hope? Because it is my greatest pleasure and delight to read his word, and I feel that he has put a new song of praise to him in my mouth; it is also such great comfort to sit under the blessings of the sanctuary; here is food that feeds the hungry soul; it is fresh from the Master's table; here truth abounds, and love for one another.

The Lord has reserved unto himself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. These have not gone after the beast, but feel their own unrighteousness, and without his imputed righteousness, their works will avail nothing. I feel thankful to God that he has reserved a few, and has given to them strength to go forth with boldness, declaring his name, and contending for the truth once delivered to the saints. And, dear brethren, I read just such truths in the SIGNS, and I love them, because they are established in the truth of God; they put no confidence in the flesh, nor in man; they encourage the poor who desire the crumbs that fall from the Master's table. These desire the imputed righteousness of Christ, and having immortal life dwelling in them they grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth They are a spiritual seed, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. What a glorious inheritance is this. All this they receive, not by works of righteousness which they have done, but because they are justified by the imputed righteousness of Christ. The natural man is far from this righteousness, he is excluded from it. We can be accounted righteous only through the meritorious obedience of the dear Redeemer, he paid the ransom by his stripes, he for them fulfilled all that was demanded of him, and fulfilled in every jot and tittle the whole law of God. This is the true doctrine; without fear of man or his wisdom, let us lay aside all the works of the law for righteousness, and trust alone in his righteousness. He came to give light, and to call sinners to repentance, and to be the propitiation for our sins; what joyful news to a broken heart and contrite spirit. Christ then, is our obedience, and fulfilled the law for just such poor worms as we feel ourselves to be; he is the only refuge to which we can flee for pardon, as he fulfilled the law, and magnified and made it honorable, let us confess ourselves as having nothing but filthy rags in his sight. Jesus alone is pure, and we are all unclean in his sight. Not being able to keep the law, we must flee to Christ; he as our surety, paid all our debt; he suffered the curse for our sins. Christ has the key of David, he openeth and none can shut, and shuts and none can open; he is able to make all grace both to abound toward us, and to exist within us. Still more, he is the author and the finisher of our faith. Why then should we distrust, since he claims all this to himself? Will not he fulfill his own office? Will he not act agreeably to his own character? Let us not be faithless, but believing. There is no merit on our part, and no conditions, but Christ and his riches are all; we may believe they are all our own. Christ dwells in our hearts. But how? By legal works? No, but by faith. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." Christ is made wisdom unto his people. Christ is made all that they

need, to them. From what are we redeemed, but from chains and bondage, misery, ruin, and all manner of evil? This is precious truth; uncreated wisdom calls us; Christ came to save us; the eternal sovereign displayed his majesty, manifested the riches of his goodness, and he commissioned his apostles to publish it in every nation under heaven. The psalmist said, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me; bless his holy name." What is the cause of such praise? Is it because he "possibly may," or "probably" will save? No, it is because he actually has saved; he forgiveth all thine iniquities. Job's faith in his sufferings was strong: "I know that my Redeemer liveth." He put no confidence in man.

All true believers are brethren, and have one common faith. Peter says to such people, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober and hope to the end." They may have not a dim, but bright hope; not a wavering, but steady expectation of eternal life; it is a free gift. The Lord said, "I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions." No man can love God until it is revealed to him. Man may attempt it, but we shall never be able to exercise this love till we have some apprehension of the good will of God to us. We love him, but from what inducement? Because he first loved us, and hath given to us the faith of this reconciliation. The free will system can neither speak nor admonish to obedience, the valley and shadow of death alone can yield these blessings. We cannot say, I have my own righteousness, but let us proclaim the Lord's righteousness. Having his righteousness, we have faith, and are sealed with blood unto the everlasting inheritance. This excludes all ground of hope by the obedience of man. This doctrine is embraced by a realizing faith which is the only pillow of rest to the weary and heavy laden soul, and this is a free gift.

All our salvation in time and eternity is the work of grace, and of grace alone; Christ alone, the true light, can lead us out of darkness into his marvelous light; we are planted by his Spirit; Jesus makes us partakers of his merit; we are cleansed and discharged from all guilt; we are made holy through his atoning blood. Paul once thought that his idoaltrous worship was doing God service, but after being stricken down by the power and grace of God, he counted all his works but dung, that he might win Christ, and be found in him. Now Paul says nothing shall separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Isaiah exhorts to praise God, and to remember him, for he says, "I have formed thee; thou art my servant; O Israel, thou shall not be forgotten of me." "I have redeemed thee. Sing, O heavens; for the Lord hath done it; shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, * * * for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel." Ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. O for a tongue to praise and honor him.

May the Father of our spirits give us understanding to know him that is true, that we may be in him that is true, that is, in our Lord Jesus Christ. We were chosen from eternity for this purpose, that we should glorify him, and be holy and unblamable before him in love. We are created in Christ Jesus unto good works. I will put my spirit within you, saith the Lord. To what end? That ye may walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments and do them. Our God ob-

tained eternal redemption for us, and brought in everlasting righteousness for us. Jesus is united to his people by the closest of all ties: I will betroth thee unto me forever: I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness and in judgment, and in loving-kindness. He is our maker and husband. The righteousness wrought by Jesus is for his mystical body. He says, "My beloved is mine, and I am his. Jesus came in his own strength, and his own apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength; he spake in righteousness; his own arm brought salvation, and surely they are his people, children that will not lie. So he was their Savior. What would the people of God do, were it not for the great gift of this righteousness, the glorious gift of grace? Were it not for this hope, we should be of all men most miserable. Let us then cast our burdens on the Lord, and learn of him, and walk in him; he spilled his blood for us, and with his stripes we are healed; we must cry out, My leanness, my leanness. This is to deny self and to cleave to Christ. If we have this righteousness we shall be among that great company admitted with angels and the spirits of just men made perfect, to the presence of God forever; these are written in the Lamb's book of life. It is Christ that died and is risen again, and who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us, he is the gift of God to us, the pearl of great price, and so the prophet says with triumphant language, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given," &c. Here is the foundation of our comfort, and his Spirit makes us wise unto salvation, writes his laws in our heart, and causes us to partake of the divine nature: Christ is the foundation of life.

Those that advocate free-will, and conditionalism, need the eyesalve, for such can see no beauty and comeliness in Christ, and need eyes to see the beauty of free grace. Christ's imputed righteousness gives us a heart to praise and adore his great name, it brings us to have no confidence in the flesh. We are enemies, by nature, to God, but are reconciled to him by the death of his Son. Isaiah said, "Who hath believed our report?" And Paul says, "Not many wise, not many mighty are called." We have neither the will or the power to do good, unless it pleases God to give them to us. Worldlings and self-righteous mortals are humbled by the gospel. Some speak of conditions of obedience to the gospel commands, but to such conditionalists I will say that Paul says, "The love of Christ constraineth us." This constraint makes us free. The Master said, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart." Christ is the Comforter, the consolation of Israel: he says, Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished.

Dear brother, I feel glad to know that you have been called, with other true servants, as was Aaron, to stand fast, and to publish to the world the truth, and to expose error, and that you put no confidence in the flesh. We are now witnessing just such trials as our dear Elder Gilbert Beebe, and also many others witnessed, many years ago. Thank God all are not gone after false gods; some yet are standing firm for the old landmarks, as are the dear old SIGNS, which is contending for the same doctrine as it did at the first. It fought the beast, and is still fighting it with boldness, and without fear of men. The God of Israel is at the helm, and has promised that he will not forsake us, nor leave us comfortless; with such promises we can say as did

Paul, "Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," and there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. Can we poor, unprofitable creatures rely upon any accomplishments of our own? Paul did not, he denies himself in all, and makes mention only of the imputed righteousness of Christ. Christ gives sight to the blind, and the tongue breaks forth into songs of everlasting praise, the lame threw aside their crutches and leaped for joy, and men were cured of all manner of disease which had mocked the skill of all physicians, and cured at once, in the twinkling of an eye. He rebuked the figtree which had leaves of great profession but no fruit, and so will the hypocrite be destroyed, when shown to be destitute of inward piety. Jesus is declared to know the secrets of all hearts before they come into action, yea, while yet unformed in the mind; the hidden things of darkness, and the contingencies of to-morrow, are all open to his all-seeing eye; he not only penetrates the minds of men, but he overrules the operations of the soul. He remonstrated with the conceited pharisee who could not endure the truth, nor can the same truth be endured to-day. All hearts are in his hands, and he turns them as the rivers of water, whithersoever he will, and he is our Mediator, our righteousness. The apostle affirmed that in him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; unerring wisdom, every adorable attribute, dwelt in him to the greatest degree; all eternally dwells in Christ, and we are complete in him not partly upon conditions, nor before men, but before God omniscient; we are made righteous in the righteousness of God. What a foundation this is; the righteousness of Christ is our eternal rest, our justification is complete. Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it.

I feel so condemned in his presence, for he is so holy, and I am so vile. Can I claim an interest in his precious blood? The people of God have no place of rest outside of the imputed righteousness of Christ. God shall judge the world, and shall ever be omniscient and omnipotent. How blind man is to claim to be able to perform by his own will spiritual things; they are blinded by the god of this world, they cannot see afar off.

This is a glorious subject, it has no end, and I trust that you will bear with me; we are passing through troublous times in contending for the true doctrine of God our Savior. God is absolute in himself, his foreknowledge, his predestination and all his purposes, from the beginning of time were all absolute in himself. I cannot see how the objector can resist the word, as it all comes from an absolute, self-existing being, and all that he gave to the prophets to prophesy shall surely come to pass. Thank God, I certainly indorse such doctrine; I trust that his absolute decree has given me a hope beyond this life, were it not for this I would be of all men the most miserable.

I trust that what I have here written is within the teaching of his written word; I hope that what I have said will not hurt his little ones, for I feel to be the least of the saints, if one at all. If this does not meet with your approbation, lay it aside, and all will be right. May we give him all the praise, and claim none to ourselves. My desire is to be kept humble before him in love. May God bless the dear editors in contending for the truth. I have written as I have received and understand, and I hope it has come from God, and not from man.

O. B. HICKERSON.

FORDYCE, Ark., Sept. 27, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have been reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES now about seven years, and I never knew until recently that there was any one claiming the name of Old Baptists that did not indorse them. But, brother Beebe, when we stop and consider the teaching of the Bible (and finding the SIGNS in harmony with the teaching of the Bible,) we find that the self-sufficient pharisee has ever been opposed to the truth from the days of Cain down to the present generation, and will be to the end, and while these things are crucifying to the flesh, and causes sorrow to fill our hearts, yet in the end it works out the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby, for by this we are able to judge them by their fruits, for if any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. The fruits of the flesh and Satan has even been to thank God that they were not as the poor publican. And, my brother, until the power of God has killed them of their self-will they will ever persecute and hate the doctrine of grace, for it is foolishness to them, and they feel that they do not need a Governor, and will not have this Governor (Christ) to rule over them. Well do I remember the time in my early life when I thought I was as good as any one; I was well; I did not need any one's help. But finally I found I was in the horrible pit, and without the ability to extricate myself from this horrible condition. But, thanks be to my God, who did deliver me from this, by revealing to me that my sins were pardoned, my iniquities forgiven. I do feel like I have received more than double at the Lord's hands for all my sins.

Now here is the point I want to come to: after all this miraculous deliverance, I was for about two weeks perfectly happy, (seemingly to me,) and I thought christians lived there. So while in this pleasant state of mind I offered myself to the church, and was unanimously received, and baptized by Elder D. Westall. But the Lord after this left me to myself, to learn the great lesson that it will not do to trust in an arm of flesh. Now I was here left in darkness, everything fretted me that went contrary to my wishes. I think that Satan here had me fully in his grasp, and I was his servant. So the first thing to relieve myself of this awful state of mind was to "do better;" that it was my own condition that was the cause, so I tried to do better, and the more I tried the worse it seemed to me I got; it seemed to me like one in the miry quicksand, the more I worked the deeper in I got. I found my heart was desperately wicked, and deceitful above all things, I could not know it, and when I would do good, evil was the uppermost in my mind; not one good righteous act could I do, and O, brother Beebe, I was in the worst kind of a hell, surely, and I was here compelled to say, Lord, save, I perish. I have learned the great lesson that the Lord is the strength of my life, and all of my salvation. He is the true Vine in which I live, move and have my being; no conditions in it, for I have tried every available means, and found that they were nothing, yea, less than nothing and vanity. I am one of the poor that has to wait for the Shepherd to come and spread the food before I can feast. I know these things, because I have learned them through great tribulations; I have learned that I am nothing; a poor worm, and no man. I know this is mighty low down, but brother Beebe, the God of heaven knows it is the truth. I am here in this

world, hobbling along lame like Jacob of old, who wrestled with the angel that left him lame the remainder of his life, and so it is with me.

In conclusion I want to say that the SIGNS has been of much comfort to me, the editorials, together with the correspondents, are according to my understanding of the Scriptures, and my experience. I have said repeatedly that when I went to a house and found the good, old SIGNS I felt at home. And, dear brother, though some of the so-called Baptists may assail you, let me say to you, Stand firm, for you are on a firm foundation, Jesus Christ the chief cornerstone, in whom all the building fitly framed together, &c., the church that the gates of hell shall not prevail against. Then it is sure, but we must suffer the reproaches that Christ did, for these are waymarks, and when I see these fellows assailing the truth, it confirms me. As they did it unto Jesus, they will also unto us, as they knew him not, neither do they know us, for whosoever is of God heareth us, and he that is not of God, heareth not us; hereby know we the spirit of error and the spirit of truth.

May the God of all grace keep us blameless and deliver us from graceless and ungodly men, for vain is the help of man.

Yours in hope through grace only,

V. R. HARRIS.

ALLENTOWN, Pa., Aug. 19, 1903.

ELDER CHICK—MY DEAR PASTOR:—It seems a long time since I heard from you; it was soon after the association at Southampton, if I remember rightly, and at that time I was not favored to have any conversation with you at all, I had hoped to go to Hopewell the following Sunday, and spend a day or two there, but was greatly disappointed to find that other arrangements had been made, and that it would be impossible to get there at that time.

It was unpleasant to mingle with worldly people, and to take part in trifling conversation so soon after being in such congenial company. My mind has been in a barren state ever since the association, so that there seems to be no use in raking it over to find something, but I will try to tell you of my exercises while at the association, for I am sure of those, however barren I may be now. We, (that is, sister Sharp and I,) stopped at sister Opdyke's, with a number of others, brother George Conkling, whose kindness I will never forget, was with us there also, and had it not been for his thoughtfulness I think it doubtful whether I would have heard even one sermon. On Wednesday I heard nothing at all, and was discouraged accordingly, and Thursday forenoon it was the same way, but in the afternoon, when Elder White began to preach, I strained every nerve to hear, but alas, the effort was vain, and my hopes deserted me altogether. Brother Conkling saw how it was and placed a chair for me in front of the pulpit, which I gladly accepted, and then the feast began, and I heard all the sermon. I remarked in the morning that if I could hear one sermon all the way through I would return home satisfied. But was I satisfied? Not at all, I was as hungry as ever. At the close of Elder White's sermon, Elder Eubanks preached, and I heard that sermon, too. My hunger was not appeased yet. In the evening there was quite a company assembled at sister Opdyke's, and we had a little meeting. There were Elders Eubanks, Vail, Keene and Mellott, beside one other whose name I cannot recall. Elder Eubanks preached, and

again brother Conkling came to my help, and placed a chair in front of the preacher, and again I was favored to be fed with the soul-satisfying food. I was lifted up above this sinful world, and permitted a glimpse of another world, whose inhabitants are the King's own subjects, and whose delight is in him alone. I was favored to think for the time being that I, even I, was one of his subjects also; I forgot that I was a sinner, and that there was such a thing as sin in the world; I was taken captive by Jesus and his love. I was still favored of the Lord on Friday, and permitted to sing praises in my heart to God for his graciousness, and for his condescending love. Again I heard all of that dear young brother's testimony, some of which I could testify to as well, but, as you know, my dear brother, I had to come down from this exalted state; I had been on holy ground, and the triffling things of earth seemed altogether distasteful to me for a time; I found that I was still with the earth, and of the earth, and subject to all its vanities. I am more than ever convinced that heaven is a state of mind rather than some special place. Were we in the most beautiful place of which we could conceive, and yet were in rebellion against the owner of it, and even if allowed to remain there, how could we be happy? Happiness is to be realized only where Jesus is. I am sure that he was there on that Thursday evening, where a few were gathered together in his name, at sister Opdyke's. One seemed no dearer to me than another; all bore the marks of the lovely Jesus, and so all were lovely to me.

Now I think that I shall be sorry, when I cannot get this letter out of the mail box to burn; it looks to me as if I had exaggerated, because I have always been so fearful and doubtful about my heirship. Well, I am so now, but I was not then. I am going to mail this letter however much I may regret it.

With love to yourself and family, I remain as ever, your sister, though unworthy,

M. E. FISHER.

ROCKVILLE, Md., Sept., 1903.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The SIGNS come regularly the first and fifteenth of each month, richly laden with good news of heartfelt experience and grand sermons from portions of the Scriptures, by brethren and friends of the cause of truth. The things of earth can afford us nothing spiritual, all must come from above. If Solomon prayed for wisdom, it was because God had first made him wise. We poor worms of the dust have nothing to boast of, "Grace all the work shall crown;" it is through faith, which is the gift of God, and is the evidence that we are his. Have I at all times an abiding faith? Ah no, even with blessings in my hand I feel so rebellious. In the language of the poet I must often exclaim,

> "My grief and burden long have been,
> Because I could not cease from sin."

To-morrow, the fifteenth, I celebrate my seventy-first birthday; I am the last surviving one of my parents' children. My dear sister, Mrs. B. F. Waddy, of West Washington, passed away the tenth of last March, in her seventy-fifth year. Her obituary was very appropriately written by her loved pastor, Elder J. T. Rowe, and published in our family paper, the SIGNS.

"Our family paper" is a very appropriate name, for only the children of one family enjoy reading it. I have seen it taken in hand by old professors of religion, for a short time, and then laid

aside for some Sunday School book, and that book read with interest to the last page. This proved to me that the teaching of the Spirit was not in the heart of that old professor. But can I boast over that one? No, for I was once in the same condition, but when I was given eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand, it was like so many darts piercing me through and through, and then the more I read the SIGNS, the more I wanted to read them. A lady friend, who has long been dead, asked me to let her read my letter of experience (an intelligent lady). On returning it she remarked to me, I was very much interested in your manuscript, but I do not think as you do. I replied, I suppose not, for the things of God are only known by revelation, and there it ended.

As referred to above, our beloved pastor has written an obituary of my dear sister, but I wish to say a little of her last days; ere she left us to return no more. I spent from October to January in her home, for the past three winters, and in conversation last winter I remarked, This is my last winter with you. Her answer was, You do not know that; but the impression still remained with me. So much of my trouble in the death of my husband, and my two children, had been before me during all my last stay with her, still I did not think she would depart first. On Monday I packed my trunk, but by noon I was so sick I could not sit up, and that evening the doctor was called in, and I was taken to the hospital on Saturday, not far from her home, and Tuesday she walked up to see me, and as she sat by my bed looking so pale and feeble, I said to her, "Hennie, you must walk out more," and she replied, "I will." This was the last time that I saw her face in life. Sunday following she was taken to her bed, and never arose from it, but grew weaker and weaker till she passed away, as said before, on the tenth of March.

She said she was not afraid to die, and was willing to go, but was so anxious for her youngest child, a daughter, who is an invalid. She became so weak and tried it was hard for her to make them understand her words. Just before the last breath left her body, a lovely smile passed over her face, and all in the room saw it. Her oldest daughter said, "She saw something more than this world." Thus one passed away from this world who was brought to love and contend for salvation by grace alone. Once she had felt highly insulted by Elder Leachman, in a sermon, and when I was baptized by Elder Purington, on a cold, bleak day in December, she declared that they would never get her to pass through that cold water. But the words of her pastor, Dr. Bocock, of the Presbyterian church, brought light to her when once he said, "The kingdom of heaven was like one walking on the seashore, who picks up pebbles instead of pearls," and the words came to her, "Would he take a pebble instead of a pearl, if he saw the pearl, and knew its value?" The next time she met him she spoke of it, and he said, "Well, that is so." But light was not brought out to him, if any was in him, but the darkness remained. "If the light in you be darkness, how great is that darkness." I would like to read Elder Chick's views on that Scripture. I had some view of that portion of Scripture some time since, but cannot tell it now. "The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." How is this, brother Chick?

I was anxious to attend the association in Baltimore, last spring, but was not

able. I felt it would be worth the trip to see you, as I wrote to sister Ella Darby. This may be my last message to the readers of our dear family paper. I am very deaf, and suffer intensely at times with noises in my head, but I can still read the good news in the SIGNS, and also my Bible. And at times I am given a feast of fat things, when light is brought out upon some portion of the written word. Our God is a God of love and mercy to this poor, sinful worm of the dust. I also find spiritual comfort in singing hymns in my lonely hours. The earth abounds with the good deeds of man, as all think, but they are nothing to me, who have nothing but sin to give him from whom I have received nothing but love and mercy. It is the sinner that is saved, and it takes the soul, body and spirit to compose the sinner, and not the soul alone. Christ, the beloved Son of God, came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief, is the language of the great apostle.

Dear brethren editors, I send what I have written for your judgment; whether published or not, my mind is at rest.

Your sister in a precious hope,

RUTH ADAMSON.

[MANY pleasant conversations with our dear aged sister in the years that are past, are still remembered by us. While we have not met for several years past, yet we remember that her theme was always the way in which the Lord leads his people to himself. As she speaks so much of her departed sister, we will add that with both of them, grace was all in all, in the matter of salvation. May God bless our sister in her old age, with all needed support. The testimony of such aged ones, who have been so long in the way, is precious.—ED.]

AN ADDRESS TO THE PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS.

WHEREAS, we, the undersigned, having had our names associated on the book of the South College Street Baptist Church of Nashville, Tennessee, and whereas, they having proven themselves a church void of fellowship for the Predestinarian Baptists; and whereas, they at their regular conference on Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1903, so declared, saying, that from thenceforth no one who believes in the absolute predestination of all things will be allowed to speak on the floor of said Church; and whereas, we the undersigned, have believed and do yet believe in the absolute predestination of all things, as set forth in the London Confession of Faith, which says, "God hath (Isaiah xlvi. 10; Eph. i. 11; Heb. vi. 17; Rom. ix. 15–18,) decreed in Himself from all eternity by the most wise and holy counsel of His will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever come to pass; yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin, (James i. 15–17; 1 John i. 15,) nor hath fellowship with any therein; nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor yet is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather (Acts iv. 27, 28; John xix. 11,) established, in which appears His wisdom in disposing all things, and power and faithfulness (Numbers xxiii. 19; Eph. i. 3–5,) in accomplishing His decree."

"The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom and infinite goodness of God so far manifest themselves in His providence, that His determinate counsel (Romans xi. 32–34; Samuel xxiv. 1; 1 Chronicles xxi. 1,) extendeth itself even to the first fall, and all other sinful actions both of angels and men, (and that not by a bare permission) which also He most wisely and powerfully (2 Kings xix. 28;

Psalms lxxvi. 10,) boundeth, and otherwise ordereth and governeth, in a manifold dispensation to His most holy (Gen. i. 20; Isa. x. 6, 7–12,) ends; yet so as the sinfulness of their acts proceedeth only from the creatures, and not from God, who being most holy and righteous, neither is nor can be the author or (Psa. i. 21; John ii. 16,) approver of sin." This is yet believed and advocated by the regular Predestinarian Baptists of the United States and Canada; and whereas they, the South College Street Church, have refused (by refusing to vote) to declare non-fellowship for conditional time salvation, and whereas, in fact they, as a Church, advocate and practice the principles of conditionalism, fellowshiping men who preach for salvation the works of men, while we verily believe, according to our experience and the holy Scriptures, that by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified in God's sight, and that we are saved by grace from first to last; and whereas, they hold in fellowship members who belong to all manner of secret societies, which is expressly forbidden in the Scriptures and by Old Baptist Church practice, as is indicated by her history which she has made of herself; and whereas, they have by Church action, refused to allow preachers of our own faith and order to fill our pulpit; and whereas, they have postponed the communion in order for our pulpit to be filled by invitation, by a Missionary Baptist preacher; whereas, they receive members for baptism without a relation of an experience of grace; whereas, they ordained a brother to preach the doctrine of Jesus Christ, and at the same time say he could not be allowed to preach for the Church that ordained him; whereas, we feel it in our hearts, as Predestinarian Baptists, that they are in disorder both in doctrine and practice. Therefore, be it resolved, that we withdraw Church fellowship from them, and declare ourselves to be the Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Church of Nashville, Tennessee, founded on the faith of the Apostles and Prophets, and of the London Confession of Faith as our tenet of principles; therefore, we desire and humbly ask, of all regular Predestinarian Baptists, recognition among you as a regular Predestinarian Baptist Church. In this declaration of principles, which are dear to our hearts, because of their sacredness, we stand identified with Abel, who by faith, offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, who, by his free-will worship, offered a sacrifice not pleasing to the Lord; with Abraham, who, in a figure, by faith, offered up Isaac, and who, by faith, left his own country to go to the one the Lord would show him, not knowing whither he was going; with Isaiah xlvi. 9–11, who declares, saying, "Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure; calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country; yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it;" with the Apostles who, in the Acts iv. 27, 28, say, "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done;" with David, who, in Psalms lxxvi. 10, says, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the

remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain;" with Solomon, who, in Proverbs xvi. 4, declares, "The Lord hath made all things for Himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil;" with Paul, who, in Ephesians i. 11, says, "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will;" also with Paul, who, in Romans ix. 19–21, anticipates the presumptuous Pharaoh in his blasphemous reply against God, by saying to him, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth He yet find fault? For who hath resisted His will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make on vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?"

We are thankful that there are a few witnesses who know that this is no new doctrine, but that it has the age of God's eternal decrees.

The London brethren so indicated it two hundred and fourteen years ago in their articles of faith, which was adopted by the Kehukee and Philadelphia associations in their earliest organizations as Predestinarian Baptist bodies. See Burket and Reed's history, pages 31–33, and Hassell's history, page 883, which says, "We believe that God has freely ordained all things that come to pass, which doctrine is called Absolute Predestination."

Therefore, we would refer those who rail against us, calling us fatalists, Antinominians, &c., for believing this consoling doctrine, to the presumptuous Pharaoh for a companion, and to the faithful and fearless apostle Paul for a just rebuke for their unrighteous perfidy.

As to exhortation and good works. We most certainly believe in both, but they must be based on the principles of the Gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, which is so beautifully and truthfully set forth in Paul's Gospel appeal to the Church at Philippi, in which he says, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Hence, "Salvation is of the Lord," as is declared by Jonah.

Paul again declares past salvation, present salvation and future salvation to be of the Lord, by saying, "Who hath delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust He will yet deliver us." For, says Paul, "We have the sentence of death in us that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, which raiseth the dead;" and "Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father."—Gal. i. 4.

For these consoling principles of doctrine and practice, we feel commanded in Spirit and in word, to earnestly contend, with all humility, but fearlessly, believing that, "If we be Christ's, then we are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise, as was Isaac." For it is declared in the Scriptures of God, that, "Whatsoever His soul desireth, even that he doeth." "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth; it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid." But the carnal mind, in its very nature, replies against

this doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty over all things, and says, God is unjust. It is this same spirit of untruth and carnal mindedness that is persecuting the church of Jesus Christ to-day.

On the other hand, His people say, with Daniel, "O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day." They also feel it in their hearts to say, "Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only art holy."

We feel that a few extracts from the writings of Elder John M. Watson, a former pastor of the above named church, will serve to indicate how our people have stood in the past on the points under consideration. He says, "Our chief happiness in, and enjoyment of, the things of this life, consists in a conviction of the great truth, that God governs and works all things after the counsel of His own will." Which is equal to saying, according to His predestination. This is what Old Baptists have always believed, and is what we yet believe, others to the contrary notwithstanding, God being our helper. He also says, "All things, whether good or evil, work together for good to them that love God." Same principles as the above.

As to good works, he says, "When God works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure, then we work out our salvation with fear and trembling. Thus, this blessed doctrine," says he, "keeps the Lord all the while before us, calling us, leading us, trying us and working in us; but the Arminian will put the creation ahead of the Lord, and have him, in his doctrine, to follow in the course of the creature's works, making the blessings of God depend on works of righteousness wrought by the person, which is expressly contrary to apostolic teachings."

"According to these truths," says he, "our good works are as much of God as is our conversion." This we yet believe. Again he says, "Of His fullness have we all received, and grace for grace, and not grace for works." "While blessings," says he, "were offered conditionally under the law, under the gospel the blessings are sure, unconditionally, to all the elect." This we believe yet. He also says on the subject of good works, "He that performs them for worldly advantage, is a hypocrite; he that boasts of them is a pharisee, and he that claims there is merit in them, is an Arminian."

As to secret societies, he says, "We are the last people on earth who should attach ourselves to secret religious, or secret political societies of any kind. Before we can do so, as true Baptists, we must unchurch our churches, unbaptize our baptism, disprofess our profession, unsay our sayings, and unwrite our writings for many years past! The very profession, sayings and writing, which so clearly identify us with the Waldensian Church."

These things we believe and contend for yet.

Dear brethren and friends in Nashville and elsewhere, whose experience of grace, and who understand the holy Scriptures to teach this God-honoring doctrine, are affectionately and cordially invited to come and be one with us.

Done, as we believe and humbly hope, in the fear of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

J. P. HARVILL, CHAS. M. HOOD,
G. M. HITE, MARGARET J. HARVILL,
M. M. HARVILL, ANNIE WATKINS.

CHAS. M. HOOD, Moderator.

J. P. HARVILL, Church Clerk.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Sept. 21, 1903.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1903.

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THE SABBATH DAY.

A FEW days since sister Mary H. Terry, of Oak Lane, Philadelphia, Pa., requested that we write upon the above named subject. We feel like trying to comply with her request, both for her own gratification, and because the subject is in itself important to be considered, and without further preface will suggest some thoughts regarding it.

First. When God ceased from his work of creation, at the end of the six days, he rested from all his work on the seventh day, as is declared in Genesis, and the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews tells us that this was a type of that rest into which they that have ceased from their own works under the law, do enter when they come to believe in Christ. Jesus is the great antitype of that DAY on which it is said God rested from his work of creation, and the rest which all that come to Jesus find, is the antitype of that rest into which God entered on the seventh day. All therefore who believe in Jesus, and so have ceased from their own works for salvation, do rest as God did, and this day is that day which God has blessed and sanctified to them. These now have the substance of which that day is declared to be the shadow.

But we wish to call attention to the fact that it was from the work of creation alone that God ceased and rested. It was still true that the work of God went on in all the upspringing of the fruits of that creation, in the development of the generations of man and beasts and birds and fishes, each in their own order. The work of creation ceased, but other work of God did not cease. So in the new creation of the sons of God unto good works, the creation has ceased, and they have all entered into rest in Christ, but still the work of praise goes on in all their hearts and lives through all the day of rest, as it did on the seventh day in which God rested. This is fully presented in the words of the blessed Redeemer when he said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Then he at once adds, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, and ye shall find rest to your souls, for my yoke is easy, and my burden light." Here is first rest in Jesus, given to them who believe in him, but this does not imply idleness, but rather the opposite, and so, to these Jesus says, "Take my yoke upon you." Now the believer in Jesus works no more under the bondage of the law service, but he serves God in Christ, as a joyful service, a holiday unto the Lord.

Second. The law of the Sabbath day as a special command was not given to any people save the Jews. This was true of all the Mosaic law; the Jews were the special recipients of that covenant of which the law of the Sabbath day was a part; no other nation was ever under that law. The Jews were not even commanded to endeavor to bring other people under their law; God was their Lawgiver, their Judge, their King, and they were commanded to separate themselves

from all other people, and from all the social and religious life of other people were they set apart. Gentiles therefore were never commanded to observe the Sabbath day, or any other ordinance of that covenant. The Jews were a typical people, and all the history, all the religious rites, all the sacrifices, all the new moons, feast days and Sabbaths, including the Sabbatic year, the year of jubilee, and the Sabbath days, were typical; all pointed out a spiritual people, a spiritual service and a spiritual guide. No other people has ever been commanded to observe the Jewish Sabbath, any more than they have been commanded to observe new moons, feast days or Sabbatic years. When the sacrifices of that covenant ceased, at the coming and crucifixion of Jesus, then also the Sabbath days ceased. As said before, Gentile nations were never under that law, and from the coming and sacrifice of Jesus for sin, the Jews were no more under that covenant. Whatever of Jewish rites are still observed by that people, they observe them without any divine warrant; it is not required any longer at their hands. So the observance of the Sabbath day is not required at their hands any longer. If they, as a people, believed in Christ as the end of the law to all who believe, then they would cease from all these things, as did Paul and the other apostles who were all Jews by nature.

The law of that Sabbath which was typical was very strict, as it had need to be, to be a perfect type of the rest that remains to the people of God; all labor must cease; not only must THEY cease from all labor, but their servants and their beasts of burden must also cease from work; they were not to gather the manna on the Sabbath day; no fire should be kindled on the Sabbath day. (Exodus xxxv. 3.) A man who gathered sticks on the Sabbath day was commanded by Moses, as the mouthpiece for God to them, to be stoned to death. (Numbers xv.) Time and space will not allow us to refer to the scores of texts where the law of the Sabbath day is reiterated before Israel. A man must not even think his own thoughts, nor speak his own words on that day, and concerning this part of that covenant, as well as was true of all the rest, it is said, "This my covenant they brake." The law of the Sabbath, as well as all other laws under that covenant, only revealed what a failure man is, when brought face to face with the law of God. As they could not keep the law of the Sabbath, so did it appear most clearly that a Savior was needed, who was mighty to keep the law in every jot and tittle, in the letter and in the spirit of it, in its penalty as well as in its service. Thus Moses wrote of Christ, not only in the types ordained through him of the sacrifice of the priesthood, and of the sprinkling of the blood, but also in the commandments which enjoined righteousness in deed, word and thought, but which not one among them all ever did, or ever could fulfill. Who for instance among that carnal people could ever obey the command to not think their own thought, nor to speak their own words? Every man has ever failed, and ever must fail to keep the commandments of God, save the perfect man, Christ Jesus.

But Jesus has fulfilled the whole law, the law of the Sabbath, as well as all the rest of the commandments. Here is the perfect antitype of that perfect type. Man has failed, but Jesus has not failed. And so, "He is made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." He is that blessed Sabbath day of rest, and all who believe in

him have ceased from all the days of labor, yea, they have ceased from all the special rest days of that old covenant, and have found the work finished, and the Sabbaths fulfilled in Jesus.

It is contended that the first day of the week has taken the place of the old covenant Sabbath. Probably ninety-nine of all the professed followers of Christ, out of every hundred, suppose that this is the case. Nothing could be further from the truth. First, because God has given no intimation of any such change, either in the prophecies of the Old Testament, or in the record of the New. It was never intimated to the Jews that their Sabbath day should ever be changed; it was not so said by the Redeemer while he was on earth, though he said much to that people concerning the Sabbath day, and it was not intimated by the inspired apostles in any of the epistles or in the Acts; it is a purely gratuitous assumption, without the shadow of a reason, to say that the first day has superseded the Sabbath of the Jews. Paul was at times anxious concerning his brethren, lest they should go back to the elements of the law, which he calls weak and beggarly. He said once to one of the churches, he was afraid of them, because they observed days, and seasons, and new moons, and feast days. He feared lest the Gentile believers should be captivated by Judaizing teachers, and lest the Jewish believers should remain under the bondage of the ceremonial law, and he again and again insists that all these things are found in their full meaning in Christ, so that he who has Christ, has all beside, and has no need of these forms and ceremonies, but he never once intimates that the first day of the week or any other day has superseded the Sabbath day. The Sabbath day is fulfilled, not superseded, or transferred to another day, and fulfilled not by men, but in Christ.

The only reason we have ever heard alleged for thinking the first day of the week takes the place of the Sabbath day to believers is, that Jesus arose on that day from the dead, and that it seems that it was the custom of the early christians to meet for worship upon that day.

No doubt the first day of the week would be considered sacred by early believers, because their Lord arose from the dead on that day. This would be but natural, yet in no place is it said that God blessed and sanctified that one day above all the other six days, neither is there any place in the New Testament where it is recorded that this day was considered more holy than any other day, or more to be observed in honor of the Lord, than any other day. No doubt the thoughts of christians then, as now, would cluster around the scenes of that day as the day when Jesus triumphed over death and the grave, and declared himself to be the Son of God with power, but there is no intimation of any command of God that henceforth it is to be the day of rest for believers, as was the Sabbath to the Jew, under the old covenant.

Indeed, whatever signification that day has, growing out of the resurrection of Christ, would not be that of rest, but rather of arising from rest to life, and activity, and power. Its symbolism, if it is to be supposed to have any, would not be rest, but the reverse of rest. Jesus spent the last Sabbath ever commanded to be observed in the rest of the grave. He had finished his work as he said, and finished it under the law, and now, during the Jewish Sabbath he rested from his work, because it was finished. As God finished the work of the literal crea-

tion, and rested, because there was no more to do in that creation, seeing that it was finished, so Jesus must rest from his work of redemption, because it was finished, and into this rest he entered and abided over the last Jewish Sabbath. Now every type is fulfilled in him, and so the law of the Sabbath is fulfilled in him; henceforth the typical service is no more required. But Jesus rises upon the first day of the week, he arises, he lives again with power, he does not rest on that day, but he rises from rest, he ushers in, not the day of forms and ceremonies, but the day of realities. The spiritual Jew must not go out to gather manna, for he has no need, Jesus is the bread of heaven to him; he must not go out to gather sticks to kindle a fire, but he has no need, Jesus is to him all the warmth that he needs, and Jesus is the prepared bread from heaven; he must not now think his own thoughts, nor speak his own words, for Jesus is to him the thought and word of God, and he has no need of any other.

This gospel day is the antitype of all the Jewish Sabbath days. Here is rest, perfect rest, here are no days of labor, since Jesus has finished all the work. Under the old covenant, man and beast going out to their labor six days would be wearied, and so would need rest on the seventh day, but who in the service of the gospel ever comes to be weary, and so to need a time of resting? Do believers ever become wearied in the love of God, and of their brethren? Is love ever a weariness to any one? Love is the fulfilling of all that belongs to New Testament or gospel service. One indeed may be wearied in body in this service, but love never becomes exhausted. Rather, in it is the power of an endless life, and in this service is rest. The gospel day is a holy day to the Lord, and what is this but a long holy day? It is a day of gladness, when men who belong to it serve the Lord with gladness, and desire no time when they may cease from serving him, to rest. Jesus arose from the dead, and his living people are risen with him, and are now no longer under the bondage of legal service. They now serve, not with weariness, but with added refreshment. They serve now, not in the letter, but in the Spirit. This resurrection life, which is in them, is a living fountain springing up in them unto everlasting life; it springs up in them in love, hope, faith, fear, humility, and all service to God and man. It *springs* up, they do not use human strength to keep this fountain flowing forth, this would be indeed to become weary, and so to need rest days, but as this living fountain springs up within them unto eternal life, they no more weary of it, or in it than it is a weariness to breathe, or for the blood to course in every vein and artery through the body. If the believer has any complaint to make, it is not that he needs to rest from the love of God, but rather that he would serve God more, that is, that he would love God more and more, and that he cannot love him as he would. The weariness is not in loving God, but in failing to love him; the rest is not in ceasing to love God, but rather in loving him more.

The believer has ceased from his own work, but the work of God goes on in him. God has ceased from the work of the new creation in him through Christ Jesus, as he did from the creation of the world that we see, but still the fruit of that creation continues to be developed in the child of God, through the indwelling of Christ, who is the life of all who believe, and so the fruits of life appear daily, as the fruits of the natural creation

continued to appear from the beginning. The new creature is a new creature forever, that work is finished, but the fruit bearing goes on, the fountain continues to spring up, and to flow forth; this is not labor that wearies, but it is rest itself.

It may be asked, Why then, do believers cease from toil on the first day of the week? First, we are, and ought to be, law-abiding citizens. Second, it is needful for man and beast that there should be one day at least, in seven, when needless labor should cease. Third, it is the bounden duty, and if we are led by the Spirit, it is the dear privilege of the people of God, to meet together for worship, and once a week is none too often for this to be attended to, and that day commanded by the law of the land, is more suitable, since worldly labor ought to cease as much as possible, and there is better opportunity therefore to assemble together for public worship, but God blesses his people on any other day when they worship before him in his public courts, as well as on the first day of the week. There is no peculiar sacredness on the first day of the week, in our worship, more than on any other day, neither is the first day of the week any more sacred than other days.

C.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903, &c.

PEACE AND FELLOWSHIP.

IN a number of our exchanges much is being published about all the Primitive Baptists coming together and agreeing to lay aside all "hobbies," as they are called, and agreeing to unite in peace and harmony, and some have published resolutions to be subscribed to, and thus, as they claim, bring peace and harmony to the whole brotherhood.

But why is there any necessity for such appeals? Is it not a new thing that those claiming to be Old School, or Primitive Baptists, should be required to "compromise their belief" in order to live in peace with all claiming their name? While these professions of love for the peace of Zion are being made, the very parties making them are passing resolutions of non-fellowship for all who do not subscribe to their rule of doctrine and practice. Before two can walk together they must be agreed, and all peace that is patched up by resolutions, where actual fellowship does not exist, will be of little avail, it would be like putting new cloth in an old garment, or new wine in old bottles, and this the Scriptures tell us only makes matters worse. To our mind the only way peace and fellowship is to be established, is to first ascertain what has caused the confusion, and after discovering this, if it is possible, remove the cause, and the effect will disappear.

Many of the older brethren will bear us witness that all this strife among the brethren has sprung up within the last twenty years, and that before that, from the time of the Black Rock Convention, in 1832, to within the last few years, practically all that claimed the name of Old School, or Primitive Baptists, were in fellowship one with another, and love and peace reigned through our beloved Zion,

and the brotherhood in general were united on the principles of faith adopted at that convention. But of our ownselves have men rose up of late, declaring perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

If the principles advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, were the truth when adopted by the Black Rock Convention, they are still the truth, and truth can admit of no compromise.

If when error arises, and the legitimate result, strife and confusion, follows, truth is to yield to error's demands, for the sake of peace, then error has gained the victory, for its only object is to overthrow the truth. If the SIGNS has for nearly three-quarters of a century been contending for the truth, and we sincerely believe it has, then because opposers to this truth shall rise up against it, and cause distress among the saints, is that any reason why the SIGNS should "soften down," or abandon such principles as have become obnoxious to the advocates of more modern theories? If so, one principle after another might be attacked, and then as soon as strife was started, that principle must be abandoned. What more complete victory could error desire?

We hope and trust we value the peace of Zion as highly as most of our brethren, but "we know and are sure" that peace purchased at the cost of the slightest compromise of truth, will never be blessed of the Lord to the comfort of his children.

The principles upon which the SIGNS was established were published in the first issue and frequently have been republished from time to time since then, and we herewith append them, viz:

1st. The extensive sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence, and eternal perfection of the Great Jehovah; the revelation which God has given of himself as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. "These three are one."—1 John v. 8.

2d. The absolute predestination of all things.

3d. Eternal and unconditional election.

4th. The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

5th. That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

6th. The sovereign, irresistible, and (in all cases) effectual work of the Holy Ghost, in quickening and regenerating the elect of God.

7th. The final perseverance and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

8th. The resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.

9th. That the Church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers, that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament, that the Scriptures are the only rule of faith and practice to the saints of God.

10th. That there is no connection between church and state; and as touching the proposition of a marriage between them, the Hon. R. M. Johnson, in his report on the Sabbath mail question, has amply revealed our faith.

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath School Unions, &c., waging war with the mother Arminianism, and her entire brood of institutions.

To all whom the Lord has revealed the truth of these principles, our fellowship flows out, unbidden by any compact or resolutions. The fellowship of the children of God is not within their own control, and they cannot bargain to grant it or withhold it, according as they have agreed or pledged themselves to do.

For the above reasons we must refuse to unite in the proposed "confederacy," and while our convictions remain as they are, it would be but hypocrisy in us to subscribe to principles in opposition to them, no matter how great the advantage might seem in gaining popularity by our so doing. We may fall far in the minority, but that need not discourage us, for truth has always been in the minority, as to earthly numbers, but "If God be for us, who can be against us?" And may he give us wisdom from above to discern between truth and error, and grace to keep us in the right. B.

JAMES V. 14–16.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR AND BELOVED BROTHER:—If it is not asking too much, I should like to have your views through the SIGNS upon a portion of God's word found in James v. 14–16, which reads, "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." More particularly the fourteenth verse. I used to live by the side of some who called themselves Dunkers, for a good many years, when one of their members would get sick, and so low as not expected to live, they would call the elders of the church to pray, and to anoint them with oil. Now it seems to me that this Scripture has a figurative meaning, and presents spiritual things.

By complying you will greatly oblige one who feels himself to be one of the least of the Lord's people.

Now let me say, I indorse the SIGNS for the truth which it contains; my heart was drawn out in love to brother Beebe while reading his editorial upon extremes; I fully agree with him that there is no such thing as going to extremes in the truth. I have been a reader of the SIGNS for nearly fifty years, and have been a subscriber nearly all that time. Within a few years past I have broken up house-keeping. I see no change in them during all this time. Among all the Baptist papers that I see now, I prefer the SIGNS.

When Elder Gilbert Beebe was living I said in my mind that if he should be taken away, his place could not be filled. How foolish I was to think this; the Lord is able to raise up others to fill his place; he will not leave himself without witnesses to declare his truth, so he has raised up dear brother Beebe and yourself, to fill the places you now occupy. Elder Gilbert Beebe stood firm as a rock from the time the SIGNS were first started until the day of his death, and I see no change in them now; from the first they have published the same glorious truth that was proclaimed then. May the dear Lord spare you long as editors of the dear old SIGNS, and strengthen you by the way.

From your brother in hope,

I. F. VARNES.

PATTERSON, Pa., Aug. 22, 1903.

REPLY.

TESTIMONIES like these, are strengthening and consoling, coming as they do from one so long tried and faithful as brother Varnes. We feel to thank God and take courage when such testimonies come to us. Of one thing we feel well assured, and that is that we, both, ourself and brother Beebe, do believe with all our heart the same things that were contended for by Elder Gilbert Beebe, in the first number of the SIGNS ever published, and after his death contended for by his successor, Elder Wm. L. Beebe. We desire to say none other things than they contended for. Whatever change there may be, grows out of our weakness, and want of the signal ability which God was pleased to confer upon them. We can say, as a brother once did regarding his own preaching, "I can preach just as good truth as the rest can, but cannot preach it so well." We both feel the need of the prayers of our brethren, that we may be sustained in all things in the conduct of the SIGNS.

As regards the subject presented in James, to which brother Varnes calls attention, we can say but few words. Much in it we have never felt satisfied that we understood. One thing we ought to remember; to the early disciples were given gifts of healing as well as in the preaching of the word. In one instance, one was raised from the dead at the word of an apostle. These gifts of healing were not in the power of those upon whom they were conferred, so as to use them independently of God's will, but they were used in solemn dependence upon his will. This was also true of all the various gifts bestowed upon the early disciples, and the same is still true of whatever gift may be conferred upon any of the saints to-day; we cannot preach to the edification of any one unless the Spirit of God apply the word to the needy heart. So apostles and others received blessing from God, at

times, in healing the sick, and as said before, once in restoring the dead to life. All was done in dependence upon God; he it was that blessed the word preached, and he alone gave his blessing when prayer was made for the sick, and they were healed. In the text to which brother Varnes calls our attention it is expressly said, that it is the prayer of faith that should save the sick. And we know that there could be no prayer of faith unless God gave the faith first. So Elijah prayed in faith, both when he prayed that it might not rain for three years and six months, and when he prayed afterwards that it might rain, but God gave Elijah that faith in which he prayed, his prayer simply said, "Thy will be done." The prayer of faith always said this in the olden time, and the prayer of faith is summed up in this one thing now. So it was the prayer of faith that should save the sick, the elders had no more power then, than is now true of them, all the power is with God. Should God give such faith now, the prayer would be as effectual as then.

Evidently much of the time the prayers of those who follow the letter of the rule given by James are not the product of faith, since we have never known one instance, in which such formal prayer has saved or healed the sick. "The effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much." If the form of prayer is of no avail, evidently it was not effectual, and fervent, in the sense of the text. It has been our view that so far as the literal observance of this direction is concerned, it was for the time that then was, at least no one has ever been raised from the dead, save the one instance recorded in the Acts, since the resurrection of Christ, and we know of no instances in which any have been healed in this manner since the days of the apostles. But it is true, as our brother suggests, that the word of preaching and of prayer, has been brought home to many a bruised spirit, to many a sin-sick soul, in all ages since then, and many have been healed, so that they could run and not be weary, and walk and not faint, though sick and lame and blind before.

C.

FARMINGTON, Ill., Sept. 9, 1903.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I still have you in dear remembrance; your kindness and loving favors to me, a poor worm of the dust, I also remember. I feel now impressed to ask a favor of you; if your time will not permit you to grant it, I shall not in the least think hard of you. Without any desire to flatter you, I do not know where to go for counsel that will be any better, and if you will grant it through the SIGNS it may do good to others also. The case is this: A church which has gone down, and lost its visibility, or identity, while yet a church gave a very worthy member liberty, or license, to exercise his gift, or to preach. After the church went down, some of the members went into other churches by relation of experience. This dear brother who was licensed persists in standing where he is. It seems to me, and I have told him so, that he is bidding defiance to the church. His fear is, that if he connects himself with any other church, they will insist upon ordaining him to the full work of the ministry, and he says that he is aware that churches have made mistakes, and is afraid they will do so in his case. I told him that he ought not to consider that matter at all, but should come in with us and submit to the judgment of the church. We all love him, and his gift appears to be to profit. I feel that he is out of order, and as he is now, has no authority for continuing to preach. He has been preaching, although he makes no appointments for himself, but speaks wherever he is asked to do so, and is now supplying one church or more that I know of. He is a good and sound Baptist, and orderly in his daily life.

Now, brother Chick, do as you please with this. I am satisfied that if you should publish this with your views upon the matter, it will do no harm. The brother is a reader and patron of the SIGNS. I dearly love him for the truth's sake, and I feel well assured that he will not think hard of me if this is published, and it may work out good to others. I have been interested in this matter for about two years, and have also asked able brethren, and they all agree with me in this thing, that is, in thinking that the dear

brother is out of order in his course. I hope that I have nothing in view but the cause of God and truth.

Yours in love and fellowship,

E. D. VARNES.

P. S.—We have just arrived home from the Spoon River Association, where we had a glorious meeting of the saints. Not a jarring word was heard. The gospel was preached in its purity very ably by a number of God's called ministers. We also attended the De Moines Association, in Iowa, where we have a daughter living. The association was held on their place. It was also a glorious meeting. "One day in the courts of the Lord is better than a thousand." There we met Elder Isaac Sawin, whom I dearly love, and who is an able minister, also many others, with a young ordained minister by the name of Nay, who seems very promising. They were all taught in the same heavenly school, and all taught of the Lord, and the world does not know them, even as it did not know the Master. E. D. V.

REPLY.

As brother Varnes assures us that no offense will be taken by any one if we publish the above letter with our judgment concerning it, we will say a word in reply.

It is our judgment from what our brother states to be the facts in the case, that the dear brother of whom he speaks should at once connect himself with some sound Baptist church, and that he, as is the case with all, ought to yield himself to his brethren as one with them. No one of all the people of God is so strong that he does not need the support of the church. We all need reproof, and counsel, and advice from each other. If, for instance, the brother errs from the truth, how are his brethren to restore him when he lives by himself? How is he to take his part in the administration of the order of the house of God, while he remains without? If he should ever go into the bounds of other churches, and seek fellowship with them, how is he to prove to them that he is worthy of their fellowship? No body of people could give him a letter, as a member in good standing at home. How can he and the people of God fulfill their mutual obligations to each other as brethren in the Lord, while he persists in standing without?

We suggest these things for the consideration of the dear brother himself, and also for others. We cannot judge anything farther than what brother Varnes has written above. It is right, it is the duty of all who believe, to be united with some body of believers, when the circumstances will at all admit of it. When one church may become extinct, or so situated that they cannot keep house together, it seems to us that the only right thing to do, if other churches be at hand, is to give each other letters to those churches, or else to unite with other churches of the same faith and order upon profession of faith, and narration of experience. We do not think it needful to say more here. We think brother Varnes is clearly right in his view. C.

PLEASE BE SURE,

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

By observing the above rules you will enable us to accurately fill your orders.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME XXIX.

WITH profound gratitude to the Supreme Ruler of the universe, for his sustaining power and grace, most bountifully bestowed upon us during the three score years of our mortal pilgrimage, and especially for his protecting care of us for nearly one-half of that time, in which we have been engaged in the publication of this paper, we hail the beginning of the New Year, with ardent desire that prosperity and happiness may still attend the Zion of our God. As it has been our custom to address some introductory remarks to our readers at the commencement of each successive volume, it may be expected of us to continue the practice.

Should we review the history of this paper from its commencement, in 1832, it would require a volume to record all the incidents of importance and interest which might be recalled to mind, but as the entire file of our volumes is in the hands of many of our patrons, we are inclined to believe we can better subserve the interests of our subscribers by filling up our columns with other matter.

We have had much opposition to encounter, and some of a most trying character, from the commencement of our labors, but opposition, and even persecution, from the enemies of the cause of God and truth, were what we had been admonished by the faithful records of the New Testament to look for. Had our opposition been only from those who claim no kindred to the cause in which we are and have been engaged, we could have endured it with more fortitude. But as our readers are well aware, some who once stood identified with us, and on whom we had relied as our friends, have caused us more pain than all the armies of the aliens could have inflicted upon us, while fighting us in their true characters.

That, for the last few years, our words have been watched, our writings garbled, our statements perverted, our sentiments misstated and grossly misrepresented, and the most abhorrent heresies charged upon us with unblushing malignancy, those who have read our columns need not be told. All this we have endeavored to bear without retaliation, being admonished by our divine Master, when we are reviled, not to revile again. We have chosen rather to suffer reproach and calumny, and to leave our case with him who says, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay."

But if we have encountered trials, we have also enjoyed many precious privileges. If we have had bitter enemies, we have also had many precious friends, many dear brethren, who were ever ready to weep with us in our afflictions, and to rejoice with us in our joys. We have, by correspondence, become more familiarly acquainted with the children of God throughout the length and breadth of our country, than we could have hoped to become in any other position. And it is among the very greatest of our joys, that we are identified with the great body of the Old School Baptists throughout the world, and notwithstanding the unwearied industry of our assailants, we have the sympathy, the prayers, and the patronage of the Old School Baptists generally.

But above all, we do rejoice in the hope that the eternal God is our refuge, and underneath us are his everlasting arms. He is the shield of our help, the sword of our excellency, and our enemies

shall be found liars unto us, and we shall tread upon their high places. See Deut. xxxiii. 29.

The unsettled state of the affairs of our country at this moment, is truly appalling, but still calculated to develop the workings of the *man of sin*, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish. The spirit of fanaticism, brought from the old world by the Puritans of New England, although somewhat crippled and pent up, from the advent of our national independence, has occasionally broke forth sufficiently to demonstrate its existence among us. Its most prominent proclivity has always been to unite the church and state, to dictate religious creeds for their neighbors, and to supervise and regulate all matters of faith and conscience for their neighbors and for the world. Paul informed us, 2 Thess. ii. 7, 8, that the manifestation of the son of perdition was restrained until he who then restrained it should remove the *let* or restraint. The time seems to be even now upon us; the flood gates of superstition and blind fanaticism are open, iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes cold. This monster of iniquity is described in Rev. xiii., as having power to deceive them that dwell upon the earth, who in their captivation shall worship the *beast*, saying, "Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with the beast?" &c. Already has its power shaken the foundations of our confederated government, and now threatens to spread anarchy and blood throughout our wide spread country.

What the final effect of all this confusion and disorganization is to be upon the church of God, none but God himself can perfectly know, but we rejoice in the blessed assurance that "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." All the trials, persecutions and distresses God has ever suffered his church to feel, has worked for her good, and this may have a beneficial tendency, in separating the precious from the vile, and thus purify and cleanse the true temple of the Lord. Those who cannot abide what God has instituted, and submit to his instructions, on all subjects, shall not be able to abide the day of his coming in the visitation of judgments upon the unrighteous, and these judgments shall begin at the sanctuary of the Lord.

Although the confusion thus far has only divided the various branches of Anti-Christ, who appeal to a higher law than what God has enacted, and who exalt themselves above all that is called God, still let those who stand, take heed lest they fall. It is true the church of God is a unit; she has no north or south, no east or west; she is divided by no geographical lines; she is not of this world. Her members are some of them in heaven, and some on earth, and she embodies all the members of Christ, in all nations and kindreds of the earth, who, while in their earthly identity, are diversified in places and condition, as male and female, bond and free, &c. But in their spiritual identity they are all one in Christ Jesus.

We have not the time nor space now to discuss this subject, but simply to refer to it as a development of the signs of the times, and as calculated to remind us of the necessity of imitating the example of the old saints of whom it is written, "Then they that feared the Lord, speak often one to another; and the Lord heark-

ened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that thought upon his name."

It becomes us in such times as these to watch diligently, lest any root of bitterness springing up should defile us. To cultivate fraternal feelings, brotherly love, and christian union. It is the privilege of the saints to cast all their cares upon the Lord, for he careth for them, and if any of them lack wisdom, they are to ask it of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not. Let our united prayers ascend to heaven, that God may shield and protect his people, and so overrule the affairs of our country that we may lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all honesty and godliness.

As to the future prospects of our publication, we do not feel disheartened. Very few have been influenced by our adversaries to withdraw their patronage as yet. We have closed our last volume with a list of nearly seven thousand names. Some, of course, are discontinued at the close of every volume. On the whole, our prospects are, we think rather flattering. We have a goodly number on our books who have taken the paper twenty-eight years, and some of them have signified their design to continue to take it. We propose no change in conducting its publication. Precisely the same sentiments avowed in our prospectus twenty-eight years ago are still nailed to our mast-head, and we, rather than strike our colors now, will consent to sink the ship. That is, before we will consent to disguise or withhold the truth, we will discontinue the publication.

Our best energies shall be devoted to make the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a profitable and interesting visitant of those who favor us with their patronage, and we hope that the experience of so many years in the cause has qualified us, to some extent, to serve our brethren.

Those who write for our columns are by far more numerous than the correspondents for our preceding volumes, and we believe it will be conceded that many of them are eminently qualified to write for the edification of the saints. We propose no change of terms. Those who are in arrears, will see to what date their last remittances have paid their subscription. Our new method of directing our papers with printed slips pasted to the margin or on the envelope, enables us to present the precise state of accounts on each paper. We are in want of what is due from dilinquent subscribers so meet our obligations, and we hope they will, when they see the statement of their accounts send on the balance due without delay.

The friends of our publication are requested to use their influence to enlarge our circulation.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., January 1, 1861.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO AN APPEAL OF BRETHREN TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$818 65
Wm. Allen, Ill., $5.00; Mrs. Eliza Jones, N. Y., $1.00; J. F. Oliver, Va., $1.00.—Total	7 00
Total to date	$825 65

PERSONALS.

PERSONS wishing to telegraph me will please send messages to Clark Summit, Pa., as there is a telephone line from there to Waverly, Pa.

D. M. VAIL.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, near New Church, Va., Sept. 8th, 1903, Richard Gillispie and Levia Northam.

By the same, Sept. 23d, 1903, Orris Littleton and Clevie Parks.

By the same, Oct. 7th, 1903, at the home of the bride's parents, in Worcester Co., Md., John E. Tull and Goldie R. Outer

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—August 27th, 1903, at her home in Howells, N. Y., **Mrs. Sallie Jane Beakes,** widow of the late Samuel C. **Howell.** She was 92 years old, had lived a quiet, upright life, and left many friends. She never made a public profession of religion, but was a good woman, and we have hope for her. She leaves five sons and two daughters.

The writer attended the funeral, and tried to speak of the power of God to save sinners. Text, Phil. i. 21. After which she was laid away in the family plot in Howell's cemetery.

ALSO,

Mrs. Phebe Beebe, Sept 23d, 1903, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Alfred Crawford, of Eldred, N. Y. She was born in Ridgebury, Orange Co., N. Y., April 9th, 1818. She was the mother of five children, three of which survive her: Mrs. Alfred Crawford, Mrs. J. K. Monigan, of New York, and Henry, of Woodburn, Oregon. Also four step-children: William, Raswell, Mrs. Garret Vernooy and Gilbert. She had long been a firm believer, but never united with the church. During her last sickness she often repeated these lines,

"Must I be carried to the skies
On flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize,
And sailed through bloody seas?"

The writer conducted the funeral services; text, 1 Cor. xv. 57. H. C. KER.

BROTHER **Alba Smith,** a resident of Otego, N. Y., died April 13th, 1903. He was born June 10th, 1816, and married to Miss Maria Shephard, who died Nov. 10th, 1886. He leaves one daughter, ten grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren, and his second wife, formerly Mrs. Oscar Bundy, who cared for him faithfully for many years in his declining health. He was a deacon of the Old School Baptist Church of Otego, N. Y., from July 5th, 1873, until death. He was baptized April 23d, 1871, by Elder S. H. Durand, and was a firm, thorough Old School Baptist, ever ready to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. His chief delight was to mingle with the saints, and hear the unadulterated gospel preached, no mixture or daubing with untempered mortar, would do him; God's absolute sovereignty over all things, and salvation by grace, was his theme. He is in glory. May God bless all that mourn their loss with reconciled spirits.

The writer officiated at the funeral.

ALSO,

HIS brother, **Chauncy Smith,** born Nov. 8th, 1818, died Sept. 29th, 1903. He married Laroncia Shephard, who died Feb. 4th, 1896. One daughter, Mrs. Alice Bundy, survives him, and a son, Henry B. Smith, who cared for him tenderly through his sickness. His death was sudden, caused by Bright's disease. He was not a member of any religious society, but was a strong believer in the doctrine of election and predestination, and as he said to me on my last visit to him, he had no use for any of the trash preached by the Arminians, and requested that I should officiate at his funeral, and said, "Do not preach Chauncy Smith, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified," which I tried to do. He has gone to his eternal home. A good parent, neighbor, citizen and friend is gone. God bless the daughter and son, and all who mourn, with great grace. They were the oldest sons of brother John Smith, and survived all of the others. They lived in the town of Otego all their lives.

ALSO,

APRIL, 1903, sister **Maud Cole,** daughter of brother and sister Brill, of Delmar, Pa., aged about 40 years. She leaves a husband and one or two children, with her mother and one brother and three sisters, with the church and many friends, to mourn their loss. Her home was in Antrim, Pa. She died suddenly of consumption. She was a member of the Old School Baptist church at Cammal, Pa. The writer baptized her just about one year before her death. She was a lover of the truth as it is in Jesus; nothing short of salvation by grace for time or eternity would satisfy her mind. She is at rest, not waiting. God bless all that mourn for Jesus' sake.

D. M. VAIL.

MEETINGS.

YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie, N. Y., at her meeting-house on Schoharie Hill, on the fourth Sunday and Saturday previous in October, (24th and 25th,) 1903, at 10 a. m. each day. Elders and brethren of other churches of our faith and order, and all lovers of the truth, are invited to meet with us. Trains will be met at Howe's Cave, on Friday before the meeting. Those who come to Cobbleskill, will call on brother Jas. E. Livingston.

G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Old School Baptist Church of Olive & Hurley, of the Roxbury Association, is appointed to be held with said church on Wednesday and Thursday, the 11th and 12th of November, 1903, when we will be glad to see as many of our brethren, sisters and friends, and ministering brethren, as can visit us. Will say to those coming on the U. & D. R. R., to stop off at Shokan, where I will be glad to meet them.

A. BOGART, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

717 HOWARD ST., DETROIT, Mich.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at the Hall, corner of 19th St. and 8th Ave., fifth floor. Elevator entrance on either 19th St. or 8th Ave.

10:30 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition, which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at the following rates, viz: a single copy for 10 cents; 12 copies for $1.00; 25 copies for $2.00; 50 copies for $3.00; 100 copies for $5.00. Address,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 71. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1903. NO. 22.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LIFE.

ALL life is a gift. Natural life is a gift, no created thing ever labored to produce life in itself of its own, and as this is true in natural, so it is true in spiritual life. Eternal life is also a gift. A living being must have an origin and source of its existence. There is nothing eternal of its own nature, and of its own independent energies but God; he is self-existent, and self-determined, and self-sought, in glorifying his great name, and he is a Spirit. Spirit is creative, natural matter is plastic, and destitute of thought or motion till moved upon by spirit, as it is said, "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" in the creation and formation of the world. Matter moved upon by Spirit was formed to the design of the creator, and as it was in the first creation, so it is in the new creation of God, and as there was a law of life in the first creation, so there is a law of life in the new creation. But disobedience of the law of life in the first man Adam brought upon him sin and death, for in Adam all die, and therefore death reigns by sin, in and over all that was created in him as the earthly progenitor of a race of creatures, for the wages of sin is death, and no dead thing possesses in itself the inherent power of resurrection. Therefore at the utmost limit of the human understanding and knowledge, the question is asked, "If a man die, shall he live again?" and no earthly mind has ever been able to answer this question, only in a conjectural way, but no proof is procurable of an endless future state of being. It stands to the human mind, "as the tree falls, so shall it lie." It is out on this rock the Rationalist plants, his standard, and challenges all natural and scientific learning and knowledge, and does it successfully on the acknowledged code of human reason, and from a human standpoint. The Bible does the same. If the Rationalist would acknowledge the truth of the Bible, he could prove successfully, every proposition he contends for, by one class of Scriptures at least, that part which treats of the knowledge of man in these things, but he denies the word of God in toto, and thereby condemns himself to everlasting ignorance and shame and folly. "The wages of sin is death" is written in every line of man's face, and recorded

in every muscle of his decaying body, none can deny this, but the sentence that follows is one of the most astounding mysteries. "But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ." This is the way that is hidden from all living, and kept close from the fowls of the air. "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ." The key of knowledge in these things is held in the hands of him who was in the beginning. "Him that was in the beginning, declare we unto you," are the words of John, "And in him was life." Solomon, with all his great wisdom and experience, and by all the knowledge that was under the sun, could trace man only to the grave of mortals, like the beasts of the field, and inquire, "Who knoweth the spirit of man that soareth upward?" Like Job, he could understand a problem like this, "For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again," but man dieth, and where is he? Neither Job nor Solomon could predicate an immortal soul, nor an eternal future state of life, by all the human knowledge that was in them, though aided by the eastern sages, and all the kings who had been before them. Then it was well said by our Lord and Savior, "O, righteous Father, the world hath not known thee." No man hath seen God at any time. Ask the fathers, they will tell you. Nay, he is invisible, but the invisible things of him, even his eternal power and Godhead, are revealed only by the things that are made. Ye have not known God, nor seen his shape, are words of Jesus, but the heavens declare his glory, and the firmament showeth his handiwork, in reason's eye, but his bodily presence was never seen or comprehended by mortal man. No man hath seen God but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven. Nicodemus sayeth unto him, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." And this means a new creature in Christ Jesus. Therefore said Jesus, (John xvii. 25,) "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known thou hast sent me," (verse 8) "For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee." And thus being born again by the word of God, which is an incorruptible seed, which liveth and abideth forever, and not like the seed of Adam, corrupted in the garden, and cast out to labor and live with the beasts of the field, to follow his beastly instincts and passions. For in Adam all men become sinners in their geneology, but truth abideth forever, and says John again, "And this is the witness of God, that he hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."

My leading proposition is, that life, natural and spiritual, is the gift of God, and without works on the part of the receiver, and this stands in proof, both in natural history, and in divine inspiration, confirmed by the text, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Brother Beebe, brother Coulter requests me to send the above for publication in the SIGNS, which you will publish at his request. I also send his reply, I

have not his consent, but believe it will be all right if you publish it.

I. N. NEWKIRK.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., August 25, 1903.

ELDER I. N. NEWKIRK—MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST JESUS THE LORD:—Your letter is at hand, and I appreciate your kindly christian spirit. Like yourself I am not much exercised (as a rule) over *duty* letters, and my reasons are, that when we write because we think we ought to, it is usually more mechanical than spiritual. I think your system of writing, is in accordance with the moving of the Spirit within you. Therefore your letters breathe the atmosphere of spirituality, and of course interest those who have a spiritual mind. Your last letter, on the subject of life, was quite interesting. It is a very intricate subject, but you brought out the fine points, which sets it forth as clearly as pen can do it. No man has yet discovered what life is, and the deepest researches of science, by the most learned investigators, have never brought out an explanation of what it is. The thing that is called life, is a great mystery. We know that life exists, only by the evidences of it, and that is *action*. It is the effects of life then to which we are to look for information. It is as the wind, which bloweth where it listeth, and we hear the sound thereof, but we know not whence it cometh, or whither it goeth. We know when the wind bloweth, and the strength of it, by the effect produced by it, so also with life, it cometh and it goeth, we have no control over it, either in making it, or in destroying it, it cannot die, because it is the direct opposite of death. If we kill the body, the life is not killed, it cannot die, but it becomes separated from the body, and goeth to him that gave it. And now, what shall we say concerning life? nothing, only, that *God knows*. It does appear to me, brother Newkirk, that the very fact that life exists, ought to be sufficient evidence to the natural mind that there is a supreme power, having perfect wisdom and judgment, even if they are not willing to call that power, God. Order cannot come out of chaos, except there is a power clothed with order and harmony to direct it. But we cannot comprehend the darkness of the natural mind, as it gropes its way through the darkness, towards the light. It is declared that, "The life was [is] the light of men," (which life is Jesus) and when God said, "Let there be light," he did not mean the light of the sun, in the natural heavens, but, the light of the *Son*, (Jesus) who is the source of all life, light, wisdom, knowledge and understanding, and all these were made manifest, when order proceeded out of chaos. This is why the world cannot reason out life, and light, and wisdom, &c., because they do not know or comprehend Jesus. Life then will continue to remain a mystery so long as the world stands. Inasmuch as life is made manifest by action or motion, there must be an active or motive *power*, and it must necessarily be in the life principle itself. Your able article has set my mind in motion, and all sorts of questions are coming up for elucidation, for instance, life versus death, in nature, and natural life versus spiritual life. "For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God," says the apostle. This settles the question of the source of all power, whether in heaven or in earth, and also that all life is from God, for life is power. Therefore, as you truly said in your letter, "All life is the gift of God." You also quoted this Scripture,

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Now, sin entered into the world because of the transgression of the law, and death by sin, and death reigned (and sin also) so long as the broken law remained unsatisfied and unfulfilled. Then, my brother, there must have been a power in sin and in death, as well as in life, for they both reigned, and it requires a reigning power to reign. It would seem also that the powers both of death and life are ordained of God, and that the one is necessary to the other, both in a natural and in a spiritual sense. So we hear Jesus say, in illustrating himself as the promised seed: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." This illustration also holds good in natural seed, the body must fall into the ground and die, ere the life that is within can be made manifest. In the creation, before life was blown into the nostrils of the man, he was an inanimate, motionless, lump of clay, but after receiving the gift of life, he became a living soul. Now, out of this process of natural life, which followed the creation and the gift of life, we see (by faith) another death, (not corporeal) and another life (not natural) being set forth, which transition becomes manifest from a different seed, bringing forth its own like, to wit: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, which liveth and abideth forever."

Now, in the subjects of God's grace, the two lives and the two deaths are continually in manifestation; in the natural life death is continually going on, so that it is necessary to eat and drink, in order to sustain natural life in the natural body; this supply is demanded daily, to counterbalance the waste from decay which never ceases. But this is simply a time condition, of years and days, as appointed by the Creator, which when they are ended, no elementary power can sustain the dying body. During this process of life however, in the elect according to grace, this man is born again, into a new and heavenly life, distinct and separate from the old life in the first Adam, yet occupying the same natural body, but springing from an incorruptible seed, not under the old law of nature, but under the law of endless life, a life of faith, which can never die, but which is life eternal, in Christ Jesus our Lord. So that the problem of life instead of becoming unraveled to our minds, as we approach maturity, deepens and broadens into an impenetrable mystery.

Now, one word more, in regard to this natural body, we say, it dies, and so it does. But that is not all, we are told that "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." This is precious glad tidings, and I am sometimes enabled to rejoice in it.

Yours in hope of life eternal,

B. F. COULTER.

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515 West Biddle St., Jackson, Mich.

G. Beebe's Son—Dear Brother:—You are much esteemed for the truth's sake, and for sending forth the truth these many years. First, your beloved father, and now you, his dear son; may God grant you many years yet to wield "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." I for one feel to thank the great Giver of all our many blessings, that he still raises up those who are not afraid to publish the great and soul-cheering truths of the Lord Jehovah, that there

are still those who will continue to proclaim his everlasting truth to wretched dying men, worms of the earth, and who will still declare that his counsel shall stand, and that he will do all his pleasure in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. The dear Son of God, said that he came to do the will of his Father, and that of all the Father had given him, he should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And he said, "This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at last day." And again he said, "All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me, and him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out."

What a free gift is all this to poor lost sinners, who are ruined, and undone, and destitute of all strength. Like the poor blind man, all that they can say is, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me," and so they cry until they reach the last struggle. I hear some say that when sick and in distress that they are safe, and that they have no trouble about that, but I seem to be so different from that; my cry at such times is, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner;" mercy is my cry. About two months ago the Lord laid his afflicting hand upon me, and for a few day I thought the last time with me had come, my breath was so short, and it did seem for a few days as if the dear Lord was about to take me away, could I say, to those heavenly mansions? I could only plead the merit of the dear Jesus' dying blood. O, how I in my weak state cried to the Lord, as did Isaiah; it seemed to me that in a measure I could say, "Lord, thy will be done." Then sweetly I feel into a sleep, and was there assured that I should inherit at last the heavenly kingdom, and I awoke, and behold, it was a dream, yet it was a comfort to my poor tried heart. Dear ones, will that comforting word be mine, "Come in, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"? Yes, it is my firm belief that Jesus, our blessed Master, has power to redeem his dear ones, but I have deep, fearful soul-cryings and pleadings, "Lord, am I one of thine?" The dear Lord will decide the doubtful case, and all will be right. It will not be long with me, as it looks now, but he knows the time, and he will do as seemeth him good; my trust is alone in him who was so cruelly bruised for transgressors, on the accursed tree, and who in the last great agony cried out, "Father, forgive them, for thy know not what they do." It was about the sixth hour, and darkness was over all the earth until the ninth hour, and the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in twain; and when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit," and having said this, he gave up the Ghost; all things being accomplished and finished there and then, on the cross of Calvary.

O, dear ones, what a humiliation the agonizing death of Jesus for poor sinners, the wicked mob, and the soldiers to crown his dear precious head with a crown of thorns; they little knew what a priceless crown he soon should wear, in the Father's glorious kingdom, where he soon should sit as a sovereign over death, hell and the grave. He is a great conqueror truly, and a heavenly messenger to this sinful world of ours, and to-day he wields the sceptre in righteousness, and is unlimited in power over all things, and when he speaks devils themselves tremble, they go as he says to them go,

even those who entered into the swine could do no more than to plunge headlong down into the sea. Let us indeed talk about the almighty power of the great God, the heavenly Friend, Jesus our Savior. My soul is rooted in the glorious and divine doctrine of a Redeemer that has all power, and whose knowledge embraces all his works; there I must leave my poor soul in his gracious hands for time and for eternity.

Dear ones, I will bid you all farewell, it seems that this may be the last time that I shall attempt to write to you. Dear brethren and sisters, go on in the good course, read, and also communicate to the dear columns of the SIGNS, and may Almighty God bless as far it is his will. Farewell.

Your sister,

M. P. LEWIS.

HERSMAN, Ill., Oct. 7, 1903.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed I send herewith a letter received recently from our esteemed brother, Elder James M. True, of Kansas, Ill., by whose permission I send it to you for publication, if you think best to do so.

Yours most truly,

D. W. OWENS.

KANSAS, Ill., Sept. 16, 1903.

DEAR ELDER OWENS:—Yours of August 18th came duly to hand, and was gladly read, and has often been re-read since it came, but O, how incapable I am to answer it.

> "My days are gliding swiftly by,
> And I a pilgrim stranger."

Again,

> "I am a stranger here below,
> And what I am 'tis hard to know."

It has got so it is a great task for me to write even to my best friends. I often feel like I would love to write for the columns of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and thus to my dear kindred in Christ, but failure is the result. I hope I feel to love the truth as dearly as I ever did, but my services in the cause of Christ is closed, (if I ever had any service) but my hope is still solely in the perfect work of Christ, and his grace, to save in time and to eternity. I am trusting as I have been for sixty years, alone in God's sovereignty, and his predestinating purposes, for life and salvation. With you I agree that if ever there was a time for God's servants to be on the guard it is now, in these times of new ideas being introduced, but O, how careful they should be to not give offense to God's little ones. The dear Savior said it was better for such to have a millstone fastened to them, and they cast into the sea, than that they should offend one of his little ones. Paul the apostle left the charge though to "hold fast the form of sound words." O, that our brethren would heed this charge, but alas, some are seeking out many inventions, and are leading God's people astray. But, my brother, I am glad to know that God "rules in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of earth," and I have no desire to say unto him, "What doest thou?" No, I would with one of old rather say, "Let God be true, but every man a liar."

If I live until the fourteenth day of October, I will be eighty years old, and it was sixty years last March since I hope I was born again, and now just at the close of this life I must say, All my righteousness is as filthy rags in the sight of a just and holy God.

If you can visit us this fall, as you spoke of doing, I assure you you will meet a hearty welcome by my wife and self; we also desire sister Owens to come with you.

This leaves us in good health for persons of our age, but we now go but little from home, owing to infirmity of age.

We were interested in learning of your continued faithful service in the vineyard of the Lord. May it be God's will to spare your lives to a good old age, and may he still fill your mind with his blessed truth, as he has in the past. May you still contend earnestly for the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, is our prayer. My wife joins me in what I have written.

I remain your brother in the bonds and fellowship of the gospel,

JAMES M. TRUE.

PINEHILL, Texas, Oct. 2, 1903.

DEAR EDITORS AND BRETHREN:—I notice in the SIGNS a statement that you would like to see in the manuscripts that come to you for publication, more frequent narratives of personal experience of grace. I will therefore give a brief sketch of my own experience, though it is unworthy of space in your paper.

I was about nineteen years old when I first realized that I was a condemned sinner, (that was six years ago.) I then became interested in my soul's salvation. My kindred being Missionary Baptists, it was natural for me to attend their protracted meetings to "get religion," that being the object of these meetings. There I found all the modern improvements, the mourners' bench, &c., for "bringing 'em in."

I was a willing victim, and yielded to the many propositions made by the preacher, and finally joined the church. But my experience did not bring that peaceful assurance I so much desired. O, how dreadful it is to be a member of a church, and yet not have the assurance of salvation. Better to be an infidel out of the church than a hypocrite in the church. I was not satisfied with my experience, yet I could not give it up. So in this state of fear and doubt I remained until about six months ago, when I read an article on Personal, Unconditional, Eternal Election, by C. E. Hughart, of Cuernavaca, Mex., in *Baptist Sword and Shield*, published at Tyler, Texas. The truths presented in that article was just the food I was hungering for, and it filled me with peace and happiness unknown to me before. It was such a feast to me I could not but show it to others, but they called it "Hardshellism." Well, I thought, if that is "Hardshellism," then I am a "Hardshell." I had never heard one preach who was called a "Hardshell," so when I had found out where one lived, I went to see him. You can guess the result: I am now a member of the Old School Baptists. I was baptized the fifth Sunday in August, 1903, a few weeks after I was twenty-five years old.

It is comforting to know that God has a people here in this world, but O, how joyfully comforting to have the peaceful assurance that I am one of God's children, though unworthy to be.

I remain with those who, being justified by faith, have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

R. S. PACE.

DANSVILLE, N. Y., Oct. 23, 1903.

EDITORS SIGNS:—Please change my address from this office to 272 Oakland Ave., Detroit, Mich., when you forward the next SIGNS to me, as I expect to spend the winter there, if the Lord spares me.

The number for November 1st is at hand, bringing its usual budget of comforting matter, and still pursuing the old trodden path of Scripture truth in which it has traveled without wavering since

its first number, as I can testify from a continuous reading almost from the beginning of its publication. Indeed, I have sometimes wished the editors would change the order of the matter a little, and let into its columns more variety, some secular news, or matters pertaining to current events, so that there would be something to attract the attention of those who are more interested in such things than they are in the matter they always find when they take up the paper. But I would not have it waver a hair's breadth from the line of Scripture doctrine it has always maintained, and perhaps a hungry soul might fall upon something in the spiritual communications that would awaken an interest to read farther and more continually. But this is no doubt one of my foolish notions about increasing the list of subscribers. I have many times tried to induce persons to take the paper (SIGNS), but have always had such poor success that I have concluded to let the Lord take care of his own work, and I believe he will do it, whether I canvass the field for him or not.

Excuse my folly, and believe me yours in full fellowship of the gospel,

P. WEST.

CAPRON, Oklahoma Ter., Oct. 9, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I promised you I would try and pay for the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES in advance, but I am almost taking it out of my own mouth to pay for it at this time, but for fear I will not be able, if I let this time slip, to pay at the end of the year, I send now. I desire to help pay off the debts of the SIGNS, but I am not able; my son is now under the oculist, in Wichita, Kansas, for the third time this year, and you see that takes what a fellow has to live on. I am now nearing my long hoped for home. I live all alone when my son is absent, yet not alone, bless the Lord, he is ever with me. I hope your health is better by this time. I have wondered why the good Lord keeps me all alone so much of the time? Even because it seems good in his sight, that is enough reason. I am so hateful and mean that I do not deserve any of his blessings. It does me so much good to hear the brethren telling how unworthy they are; not that I want any one to be unworthy, but I feel that I have company. If they all felt sinless I would be alone. Is it not strange that the Old Baptists are the meanest people on earth? Go to other meetings, and you will hear them tell how much sunshine they have, and they know that they are saved, and thank God that they can live a perfect life. Our God cannot look on imperfections with any degree of allowance. Paul says some are ignorant of Christ's righteousness, and are going about to establish their own righteousness. My dear brother, Christ is the righteousness of his people.

May the Lord bless the editors and the correspondents of the SIGNS, is my prayer.

Inclosed find money order for two dollars; please extend to end of 1904. There is an Old Baptist in Kansas, maybe I can get a subscription from to-morrow.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

J. M. DULEY.

MEXICO, N. Y., August 28, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Inclosed please find check for four dollars, please credit on my subscription. I am very sorry I have neglected sending it before. I should feel lost without the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I am sure if I know my own heart I love the doctrine it advo-

cates. How many times my heart goes out in love and sympathy as I read of the travels of some child of God, and many times when I am wondering if there is another such miserable sinner on earth, I read of others having the same trials and afflictions, and how it makes my poor heart leap for joy, and my little hope which seems small, is again renewed and strengthened, and I take new courage, and go on. In my dark hours it seems the only thing I have to base my hope on is the older I grow the stronger my love for the brethren, and the more I prize their love and fellowship.

Yours in hope, W. P. GASS.

HICKORY GROVE, Va., May 27, 1903.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Again I am reminded that my subscription is about due, so will inclose two dollars to pay for the dear old SIGNS another year, for I feel willing to deny myself most anything sooner than the SIGNS, which contains so much good reading, and the doctrine that I so firmly believe. Now the question is with me, Why do I believe this doctrine? I know I was not taught it by man, for it is not in man to direct his steps. They may preach the dear old doctrine that I feel to feast on, but it is God that teaches us by his Spirit to love the truth, to love the dear brethren and sisters as we do. It is not in self to do this, for evil is ever present when we would do good. When I look over my past life and see what a sinner I have been, the life I have lived, the many evil thoughts I have had, the thought comes to me, O, can it be that Christ died to save such a poor worm of the dust as I? for I am the very least one, if one at all. Yet there is something that causes me to rejoice in his holy name, and to love the dear Old Baptists, as sinful as I am, for when I come to judge myself I find that I am all black within; but is it my desire to be so? No, if I could I would be pure, I would be a true christian prepared and sure of heaven, but I am not an Arminian, so must acknowledge of my own self I can do nothing, but can say with Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

I find I cannot write as I thought to do, so will close. Please excuse all mistakes, and all that I have written amiss.

L. S. UTTERBACK.

GUTHRIE, Oklahoma Ter., Oct. 4, 1903.

BROTHER BEEBE:—The volume 1 of the editorials is O so rich, so deep, so clear, so beautiful, so grand. Your father was a godly man, and like his Master, like Elijah, like John the Baptist, spoke out loud, "plentifully declaring the thing as it is."—Job xxvi. 3. I am too full of gratitude to God for so great a treasure, to write as I would, this morning.

All yours, WM. S. SPEER.

APPOINTMENTS.

BROOME CENTRE, N. Y., Oct. 29, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Please publish the following appointments. Nothing preventing, Elder Eubanks, of Delaware, will try and fill the same. At J. D. Hubbell's, or schoolhouse, as he directs, on Monday night, Dec. 21st. Halcottville, Tuesday, Dec. 22d. Yellow meeting-house, Wednesday, Dec. 23d. Lexington, Thursday, Dec. 24th. Gilboa, Friday, Dec. 25th. Jefferson, Saturday, Dec. 26th. Broome Centre, Sunday, Dec. 27th. Middleburgh, Tuesday, Dec. 29th. Schoharie, brother Kinney's, Wednesday, Dec. 30th. Schoharie, Thursday, Dec. 31st. Meeting each day at 11 a. m.

We feel thankful that he desires to come among us. D. M. LEONARD.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, convened with the church at Gilboa, N. Y., October 7th and 8th, 1903, to the several churches of which she is composed, sends love and fellowship in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—Having been blest with the privilege of meeting once more in an assembly of the churches, according to our annual custom, it is our privilege to express gratitude to God for his continued goodness and mercy whereby we have been kept in the love of the truth and fellowship of those who continue steadfast in the apostles' doctrine, and divine will by which the Spirit of truth has sealed the chosen vessels of mercy, and united them in that heavenly bond of fellowship in the body of Christ, the church. Those who bear the mark in their foreheads, have full assurance of an eternal inheritance with the saints in light. The infinitely glorious immortality of Jesus is reserved in heaven for all those who bear that mark or seal, and are kept by the power of God through all their temptations unto that unfailing inheritance. All this is assured in the calling of God, and distinguishes them from the world, and sets them apart as the rich treasure of God. It is therefore needful that those who have this hope should be sober and watchful, and pass the time here in fear and to hate evil. Not by the keeping of the law written on tables of stone. It is the indwelling of the Spirit of truth in the heart which identifies them as the electing love of God. It is needful that those having the seal of faith should be careful to observe the admonitions given by the King of Zion as recorded in the word of God.

We desire to call attention to the gifts and graces recorded in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, thirteenth chapter and last verse: "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

In the preceding chapter the apostle sets forth the different gifts, and calls them diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. The office work of these gifts is illustrated by the natural body, each having their special place, and of vital importance to the body, working in perfect harmony by the same spirit in such perfect relation that one cannot say, I have no need of the other. This is an illustration of the relationship of the members of Christ's body, the church. How important that we consider carefully the qualification of each member, so there be no schism in the body, all having the same care for one another; the suffering of one member is the suffering of each, showing a perfect relation through living faith. Abel showed this by his offering a lamb, the firstling of his flock (a type of Christ). By faith the ancient worthies endured hardships, privation and persecution by those not having that faith which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. (Heb. xi. 1.) (which is Christ.) Without faith it is impossible to please God. Through faith the worlds were framed. The strength of faith can only be understood as it is felt in the heart of every heaven-born son and daughter, amidst the doubts and fears from foes without and foes within, temptations and trials common to this pilgrim life in the flesh. As the traveler views through faith a haven of rest through the atoning blood of Jesus, hope enables him to wait patiently for that which he sees not now. Anchored by it the wayworn pilgrim plods on through storms of sin and unbelief; it reaches to that within the vail,

whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. Still greater than these precious gifts of faith and hope, is charity.

Paul in his experience was made to know if he should speak with the tongue of angels, without charity he would be as a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal, without the life-giving principle of eternal love, which was in the Father (God) before the world was, and is known and felt in the experience of every heir of the grace of God here in time, through the revelation of his Son Jesus Christ unto his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. The fruit of charity is a work of love to God, (who first loved us) and in loving him we shall be certainly loving them that are begotten of him, who are known by the fruits they bear through God in Christ, our righteousness and our salvation. To withhold our love from the begotten of God is beyond our control, for no man yet ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church. Repentance for wrong doing by a brother calls forth feelings of forgiveness; without repentance on the part of the erring one, with all the charity we can command toward the erring one, cannot bring any good. There are sins unto death that are not to be prayed for. (1 John v. 16.)

The apostle tells us it is the last times, and there are many antichrists, whereby we know that it is the last times. Some have gone out from us that it might be made manifest they were not of us; had they been of us no doubt they would have continued with us. (1 John ii. 18, 19.) Our charity cannot benefit those who have separated themselves from the church. We are told in the word that God shall bring such, and our hope is that in his own time he will fulfill his word. You are called upon (or besought) to mark them that cause division, and avoid them. (Romans xvi. 17.)

Dear brethren, let charity have her perfect work, be courteous, strive for that that shall make for peace among ourselves; in so doing we shall be found walking in the order of the gospel as given by the Head of the church in his word, the law of the Lord, bearing the fruit of faith, hope and charity.

JOHN CLARK, Moderator.
G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.
JAMES AVERY, Assistant Clerk.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., Oct. 9th, 10th and 11th, 1903, to the churches and associations with which we correspond, sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—As we are once more privileged to meet in an associational capacity, to enjoy christian greeting and to worship God in Spirit, our hearts are filled with thanksgiving and we are made to give praise to God.

It is our mind to show the difference that exists between those who have received the Spirit of truth, and those who cannot receive it. We desire to encourage, comfort and instruct the Israel of our God, and set forth the praise of him who loves us. We believe that there are devout and honorable men and women who are to the world exceedingly religious, who know nothing of the truth experimentally, by divine teaching. The Scripture affords us examples of such characters. Who, for example, is more religious, more strict, scrupulous, than the pharisee of old? And, until the blessed Spirit

quickens, all are dead in trespasses and sins, and know nothing of the truth as it is in Jesus; but, when the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth.

Men may be correct in doctrine, may abhor infidelity, may be shocked at profanity, may seem to ourselves and to others exceedingly religious; but "He is not a Jew which is one outwardly." It is not then, the form, the letter, the mere outside, the bare shell and husk of truth, that makes or manifests the Jew, (the christian); but it is its vital possession, for "He is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

It is to that one, in whose heart the love of God is shed abroad by the Spirit, that we write. Now they all have learned that the natural heart is evil, and that continually, and that we have that evil ever to contend against. We know that "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh;" and, though others may have some attainments in goodness to boast of, we have evil to mourn in ourselves. This is that we might base our hope, not upon that which is seen, but upon Christ, whom having not seen, we love. He is our hope, and without him we have no hope.

It is our desire to be rightly understood, and we will therefore ask our blessed God to direct our thoughts. We have a word to write unto you: "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" "Have ye suffered so many things in vain? If it be yet in vain." Now to you who know of Christ's sufferings, "who were kept under the law, shut up into the faith which should afterwards be revealed," we ask: "Ought Christ not to have suffered these things?" and ought not we to suffer with him? To those who did suffer, who were *kept* under the law: Know ye not that the law was not against the promises of God, but that it was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith? Faith is the gift of God. By it we receive the Spirit of truth, the Comforter, and by it have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. To such as know this joyful sound, the truth of our salvation, the peace with God, which passeth understanding, "Are ye so foolish?" I repeat it, "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" Know ye not that the just shall live by faith, "that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God?" And, not only this, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ;" but "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand." "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." You who know that Christ is of no profit to the circumcised, be ye separate from such; touch not the unclean thing; for verily you have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, for you are debtor, not to the flesh to live after the flesh, but by love serve one another. This I say then, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh;" but ye shall yield the peaceable fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance, against such there is no law.

Again, we would say, to all who are Christ's and heirs according to the promises, "That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is un-

der tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: but when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption *of sons.*" It was not because of any good thing that ye had ever done, but because ye are sons, that God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son;" and, if a son, why turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

We do earnestly desire the welfare of Zion, and would write unto you. "If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. If ye see your liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free; if ye live in the Spirit: then use not liberty as an occasion to the flesh, but walk in the Spirit, for they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. Brethren, if one of you, which are spiritual, overtake another in a fault, ought not ye to restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted? "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

Finally, brethren, let us all be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, serving him with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, not with eye-service, as menpleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. "Peace be with you, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

A. MELLOTT, Moderator.

J. C. MELLOTT, Clerk.

The Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, in session with the Mount Zion Church, Loudoun Co., Va., Oct. 14th, 15th and 16th, 1903, to the several churches composing the same, sends love in the Lord.

ANOTHER year has passed since we last met, and it is again our duty as well as privilege to write you in brotherly love and faith, and, if it be the Lord's will, stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance of his mercies and great goodness. Surely his mercies are great to usward, and we do well to have them in continual remembrance.

It is not our purpose to write upon any Scripture or portion of the word, but to endeavor to present to you a few words of encouragement, if the Lord will.

While from a carnal or natural view of the condition of a number of our churches composing the Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, it might seem that we had reason for discouragement in the fewness of numbers, the old age and infirmities of many of our members, the sad inroads that death has made among us, with the fact that there are so few being added to the greater numbers of our churches. But though all this is true, have we not abundant reason to thank God and take courage for the health and prosperity which is not earthly or carnal, but which is manifest in the unshaken firmness in the faith, in sweet and boundless fellowships in the Spirit, and in the love of God knitting and binding our hearts together in christian love; that love of God which is shed abroad in the heart of his people by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto them. We are sure also that the assembly of the saints is as dear to the mass of our people as it ever was. In fact, all that goes to make what rightfully may be termed strong and healthy churches, abounding in good works and in zeal

towards God, fruitful in word and doctrine, is seen among us, and experienced by our people. We do not write this boastingly, or in vain glory, for well we know that the world and our enemies judge of us very differently. It seems, if we mistake not, that our Savior's words are verified among us, viz: "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me peace." It would appear that at the present time there are numbers of those who claim to be Old School Baptists that adjudge us as "dead churches," &c., and that the "deadness" is due to our adherence to the truth which we have received and loved from the beginning. Their idea of prosperity, it seems, is to have large and increasing numbers, and numerous congregations, in which they judge as the world always judges. It is to be feared that those people have not seen "The secret places of the Most High," those hidden "tabernacles" and "secret chambers," where the "glorious Lord" meets and communes with his "beloved," his "little flock," his "very small remnant," where one hour spent with him away from the world and all that "the world" means, is worth more to the Lord's poor and afflicted people, than the congregations of hundreds and thousands, and all the seeming prosperity that dazzles the worldly mind. So we look upon these little companies as dead indeed to the world, but whose life is hid with Christ in God. Our Savior himself gives the number which constitutes, or may constitute, a prosperous church. Said he, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst." These are strange words in our carnal ears, when we consider even our own carnal thoughts and ideas, but we must remember he does not mean where two or three, or any other number are met together and call themselves a church, that they are in his name, and that he is there, but when he himself has "gathered" them by his authority, his Spirit, his word, gathered together in one heart and one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel; where he is King and Lawgiver, Lord of lords and King of kings; where his "whole counsel" is loved and maintained; where his doctrine is declared, and his order observed, or in a word, where his name is above every name in heaven or in earth, and to his name every knee bows and every tongue confesses. In such a company is God known for a sanctuary; the cunning craftiness of men, their means and instrumentalities find no place, for all their work is praise. And is not this the case with our people? The glorious doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God in all worlds, and in all things, the unlimited, the almighty power of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Mediator given him by the Father, the glory, honor and power of his resurrection from the dead, all of which are revealed and felt in present experience. It seems, dear brethren, this is clearly manifest among us. This Christ, and no other, is our Head, our Redeemer and our Savior. When we worship him we must enter our "closet," shut the door, each one by himself, and in that secret place commune with God alone, who seeth in secret, and rewards openly. Is it necessary for us to have a numerous company of people about us, a "large church," congregation, that our Lord and Savior may be duly honored? We know better. We are not thinking of the numbers about us. If our Lord is with us and in us by his Spirit, and our heart witnesseth to his word, we are in "the general assembly and church of the First-born, which are written in heaven." We know

it is for God, and him alone, to add to his visible church of such as shall be saved. We know we have nothing to do with the gathering into the church of even the Lord's people. While our hearts say to those who are without, and who we feel have a good hope through grace, Come in, thou blessed of the Lord, why tarriest thou without? we also know by the Spirit given to us, that when the Lord has prepared them for a place in his visible church, in his own good time, the right time, he will gather them in. But the important thing with us is to see that our house is clean, and in order; clean through the word. Whatever is not of the word of God is not clean, and defiles. All things which are of the flesh, all or any means which may be suggested by fleshly reason to further the cause of God, to upbuild the church, to enhance its prosperity, to add to its numbers, or to the zeal of its membership, are but kindling a fire of our own, and walking in the light of the sparks of the fire which we have kindled, and brings only sorrow and leanness to our own souls. To keep our bodies under, that no reproach be justly cast upon the name and cause we love, is the limit of our obligations and duty. Every spiritual grace and comfort, and all knowledge of Christ and his kingdom, come to us as the glorious gifts of his grace. Christ's commandments are written in the heart and mind of his people, and hence in the keeping of them there is great reward. What greater joy, or greater reward can there be than in having that "new commandment" and doing it: "That ye love one another"? Is there any greater joy than to realize that love shed abroad in the heart? This love is the very life of the saints, for it is God in them: "God is love." All the law is fulfilled in them who have this commandment, and doeth it. Dear brethren, we seek this love, and its fruits, we contend for all the counsel of God, because we love it; we contend for his word, for we love his word which he has given unto us; we mourn, for we are all mourners, because we cannot love him more and serve him better; we would love and serve him with all our heart, and all our mind, and all our strength, but we find another law in our members, warring against the law of our mind, bringing us into captivity to the law of sin, which is in our members, so we cannot do the things we would. But our hope and faith are in Christ, who was made become sin for us, though he knew no sin, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," though we, of ourselves, knew no righteousness.

We close by quoting the words of our mighty Savior, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

Our meeting has been well attended, the weather favorable, and the preaching has been of a piece, to the upbuilding of Zion's children in the most holy faith.

Our next annual meeting is appointed to be held, by divine permission, with the Ebenezer Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1904, when and where we hope to greet your messengers, and receive your messages of love again.

J. N. BADGER, Moderator.

G. G. GALLEHER, Clerk.

The Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, now in session with Spring Creek Church, in Adair Co., Missouri.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST:—Another year of time with its sorrows and pleasures is numbered

with the past, and we through God's love and mercy are permitted to meet in an associate capacity again, and according to a long established custom you will expect a Circular Letter to accompany your Minutes, and for your consideration we will call your attention to the following language spoken by our Savior, as recorded by Luke xxii. 29, which reads as follows: "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me." The author of our text is the faithful witness of God, who spake as never man spake; this divine person having all power given into his hand. (Matt. xxviii. 18.) This person who when speaking to his disciples said, "I appoint unto you a kingdom," was the Lord from heaven, and in him the Godhead dwelt. Then we need not have any fear in regard to his ability to perform all his promises, and as he is from everlasting to everlasting the same, without the shadow of turning, his promises are sure and steadfast. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, * * * but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."—1 Peter i. 18. "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."—Titus ii. 14. Then, O brethren, fear not, the Author of your salvation, who is able to keep all his promises, has said, All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out, for I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me, and this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. Brethren, we see from the foregoing that Christ did redeem his people when they were justly criminals under the law, by laying down his life, and shedding his own precious blood, that the lawful captives might be set free. Verily, if Christ has made you free, you shall be free indeed, the law having no more dominion over you.

O brethren and sisters, can you by an eye of faith view the spotless Lamb of God nailed to the rugged cross, there to suffer the tortures and pains of death, that poor, guilty sinners might go free? Brethren and sisters, do you sometimes hope that precious blood was shed for you?

This kingdom or church was given as a home for the redeemed of the Lord, that they might meet often and speak comfortingly one to another. The subjects of this kingdom are a chosen people, and a prepared people, and made fit subjects for this kingdom by the eternal Spirit. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit."—John xv. 16. Fit subjects for this kingdom are those that have been born again, born of the Spirit, and made ready for baptism. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?"—Romans vi. 3. There we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like Christ was raised up from the dead, by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Dear brethren, we do view the ordinance of baptism to be a very sacred ordinance in the church or kingdom of Christ. First, in order to a gospel baptism it requires a proper subject, one who has been born of the Spirit. Second, the administrator must be one who is chosen, called and prepared of God to teach the gospel of our Savior. Third,

in order to fill this mission he must be ordained or set apart to the work by the church of Christ.

Brethren and sisters, let us honor and obey the laws of our Savior that has done so much for us; in doing this we walk in that strait and narrow way that leadeth to life and peace; let us meet often, and sing and pray with each other; let us pray the Lord to send more laborers into the gospel field, for truly the harvest is great, and the laborers are few.

Dear brethren and sisters, let us say in conclusion, We cherish the hope that when the storm of life is over, and our warfare is ended, we shall meet in that great association above, where all sorrow, pain and affliction is felt and feared no more, where we shall see Jesus as he is, and be like him. "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in christian love."

Farewell.

S. W. GARD, Moderator *pro tem.*
J. M. CATE, Clerk.

The Elders and messengers composing the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church in Little Creek, Sussex Co., Delaware, October 21st, 22d and 23d, 1903, to the several churches whose messengers we are, sendeth love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED:—Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, in his second epistle wrote, "I think it meet as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance." So we in this Circular would put you in remembrance of some few things taught in the word of the Lord, and we trust witnessed in your own experience, and thus stir you up, thereby comforting your hearts by such evidences that you have been made alive from the dead. For if you be stirred up in your mind, it is evidence that "life worketh in you."

For a subject we will quote that sweet portion of the word of inspiration recorded in Hebrews vi. 19, 20: "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." What hope is this? "The hope set before us," whither we have fled for refuge, and which has ever proved a sure refuge to the tempest-tossed children of God, whose bark has been afloat on the tempestuous sea of this unfriendly world, and who amidst the raging storm have toiled all the night long, in continual fear lest their frail ship be broken in pieces, and they be left to sink to utter destruction. As the storm-tossed mariner rejoices in the possession of an anchor, and a secure place to cast it, so God's people find this hope "as an anchor," "and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." God has guaranteed strong consolation to all who have fled to this refuge, "by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie," his word and his oath. It was thus the glorious gospel of our God was preached to Abraham, and thus it is preached to us, and assurance is given us that the curse is removed, and blessings, "spiritual blessings," wherewith God has blessed us in Christ Jesus before the world began, are bestowed upon us. This is salvation to all his elect. Deliverance from the cruel bondage of sin, and from death and hell. This anchor is cast within the vail, and by it we also enter into that within the vail, because Jesus our forerunner has entered there for us, and we enter with him, "Through him we have access by the Spirit unto the Father," and this because he is "made an

High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec," as our intercessor.

It is to this eternal priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ, we would earnestly call your attention, because of its supreme importance. All the priests under the law, with all the multitudinous offerings they offered up, could not suffice to take away sin, or effect the eternal salvation of one sinner. They could only bring a remembrance of sins, as often as they were offered, but could not remove them. Jesus however has appeared "now in the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself;" offering himself as a sacrifice, without spot unto God; thus standing in Aaron's place under the law, the antitype both of the priest and the offering; in his divinity the priest, in his humanity the offering, presenting that body prepared of the Father as an acceptable offering, sufficient to remove sin, to cancel the debt of his people, and having thus satisfied divine justice, he is now in a position to justify them. This is accomplished in, by and through his resurrection from the dead, and now he is shown forth as the intercessor of his people, "a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." "The Lord sware, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." The order of the priesthood of Melchisedec far surpasses that of Aaron, as Aaron was made a priest after the law of a carnal commandment, and could not continue by reason of death, but Melchisedec's was an eternal priesthood; he was king, too; first king of Salem, and afterward king of peace, thus was both king and priest. Thus when in his resurrection from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ was made a Priest, it is by the power of an endless life, and is both King and Priest; King of Salem, Prince of peace, Priest of the Most High God. The Mediator and Intercessor of his people, now seated at the right hand of God, where he ever liveth to make intercession for his people, and is able by the power of that endless life (eternal life), by which he is made a Priest, to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him. It is upon this sure and solid foundation our hope rests.

David, too, and Solomon, illustrate this wonderful personage; David the man of war and of blood, whose right and title to the kingly office was disputed and contested, yet who, by the strength of his arm, seated himself firmly on the throne of Israel, and secured an end of war, but *he* could not build a house for the Lord. This was reserved for Solomon, who ascended the throne, having none to dispute his right. The Psalms of David express, by the Spirit of Jesus, the sore afflictions and distresses of our incarnate Savior, "who in the days of his flesh made supplication with strong crying and tears, unto him who was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared." We view David as a true type of our Lord Jesus Christ in his incarnation, his warfare and sufferings. He, Jesus, took part with his people (the children) of flesh and blood, in order that he might suffer, even unto death, to deliver them from the hand of him that was stronger than they. This deliverance he accomplished, and gave liberty to his people, as David delivered Israel from the hand of their enemies. In the risen and exalted state of our Lord, at the right hand of the Majesty on high, to whom even the Father, God, says, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom," we have the antitype of Solomon, who ascended the throne of his

father, David, with full power and undisputed sway. He it was whom God appointed to build the "house of the Lord." Solomon then was the prince of peace, and his reign a peaceful, prosperous and glorious reign. In these two we have a full type of our Lord Jesus Christ, and a similar presentation of him in the twofold character of his priesthood; like Aaron, making an offering; like David, a man of war; like Solomon, a peaceful King, building God's holy temple; like Melchisedec, who was first king of Salem, then king of peace, and priest of the Most High God, greater than Abraham, in that he received tithes of Abraham. Now we see Jesus, the great antitype of Melchisedec, King and Priest, now exalted a Prince and Savior, making intercession for them, and able by the power by which he was made a priest, to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him.

Such a Priest is just what a poor sinner needs, one who has atoned for sin, the sins of his people, by his death, but who could not be holden of death, because in him was life, which is far more powerful than death. So he can say, "I am he that was dead, but am alive, and alive for evermore." Then as a risen Jesus he is the Savior of his people. Our hope rests on the resurrection of our Lord, and this is the "hope set before us," and is as an anchor of the soul, and is found in Jesus, our great Melchisedec.

A. B. FRANCIS, Moderator.

JOHN H. TRUITT, Clerk.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903, &c.

APPOINTMENTS.

IF the Lord will, I will attend appointments as follows: Delmar, Thursday night, Nov. 26th; Salisbury, Md., Saturday at 3 p. m., and Sunday, Nov. 28th and 29th; Nassaongo, Monday, 10:30; Mr. Levi Laws', Monday night; Indiantown, Tuesday morning and afternoon; Mr. A. C. Holloway's, Tuesday night; Snow Hill, Wednesday night; brother Warren's, Thursday night; Broad Creek, Friday, 10:30.

SILAS H. DURAND.

CHANGE OF APPOINTMENTS.

SINCE the appointments for Elder J. G. Eubanks, on page 681, were printed, we have received the following from brother Leonard, changing the last three appointments each one day earlier.

BROOME CENTRE, N. Y., NOV. 3, 1903.

SINCE I wrote you I have received a card from Elder Eubanks, saying that he wished to be at Middletown on Thursday, Dec. 31st, therefore please change date of appointments. At Middleburgh, Monday, 28th; brother Kinney's, Tuesday, 29th; Schoharie Hill meeting-house, Wednesday, 30th; that will give him time to reach your place. I had arranged it so he might rest with me on Monday, but as he is willing to be harnessed every day, we will give him an opportunity.

We are enjoying a fair degree of health, which I do desire to be thankful for, but that rebellious heart of mine knows no concession, it is pleading for self continually. I am longing to see your faces once more. I had a lovely visit with you all alone a few nights ago in my sleep.

Hoping you are all usually well, I remain your unworthy brother,

D. M. LEONARD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1903.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to

GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,

Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

CHURCH ORDER.

A VERY suggestive and profitable letter from a brother speaks with reference to the editorial found in number fifteen, present volume of the SIGNS, with commendation, and then goes on to ask several other questions, with reference to what ought to be considered as gospel order in the dealings of churches with each other, and with members or ministers.

It is sure that next to the doctrine regarding the way of salvation, the things that pertain to the order of the churches are important. "See that thou make all things according to the pattern shown thee in the mount," is as solemn an injunction to-day as it was at the time when first spoken. The order of the church regarding forms of worship, or regarding discipline, is but the expression of the spirit which dwells in the church. And there is a fitness and suitability existing between the work of grace in the souls of men, and that outward order that is to be maintained, and which we call gospel order. Looking upon the form of a man we say, "There is human life." If we look upon the form of a brute we say, "There is brute life." So the form of the church, and her manner of living, will testify of the life of Christ. This is according to the words of Paul in 2 Cor. iv. 10, 11, where it is said the life of Jesus is made manifest in our mortal flesh, or in our mortal body. Now, just because the life of believers and the order of the church is to show forth of what life they are, it becomes most important to consider what manner of life and what that order should be. All in whose hearts the love of God is shed abroad, will feel that all these things are important to be considered, and that when we come to know what this life and order is, it is vastly important that we strictly follow it. True, the life is more than the letter of the order of the gospel, yet this is not to say that the order may be slighted or violated at our judgment or will. Therefore, as said before, it is important that these things be carefully considered by us all.

We cannot go on to notice the questions in the letter without adding a word or two regarding our own feelings. Two things we must say. First, that we do not feel competent to instruct, either the writer of the letter, or any of the brethren in Christ. And second, we must say that we feel altogether sure that the brother could say what ought to be said regarding the questions proposed, much better, and much more to the purpose, than we can do, yet we are willing to present such things as appear right to us, and then are willing for all to judge, as all who are spiritual must and will do.

For convenience in replying we have put the suggestions of our brother in the form of questions, which we will state one by one.

First. Do you allow that the action of a church in excluding a member may be disregarded by other churches or individual members, and that the excluded mem-

bers may be retained in fellowship by those other churches or members?

A careful reference to our editorial of number fifteen will show that we there stated that such a course would be altogether wrong and contrary to good order. Indeed, the action of any church who is herself orderly, must be acknowledged as final by all other orderly churches and brethren, even though other churches may think that the first church has acted with bad judgment in some particular case. By an orderly church we mean one which holds the doctrine of the word steadfastly, and that desires to do all things as the word directs. Such churches may make mistakes by hasty action, or through misinformation, but even if such be the case, other churches or members must receive the action as final, else we shall have confusion and strife spreading like a canker into every other member of the body. We do think that this one principle must be adhered to, if we are to avoid a multiplication of trouble. We have known of one or two instances when members were excluded, where other churches thought that they had done wrong at the time, but time showed that the church which had excluded the member was in the right, and in one or two cases where churches have acted hastily in excluding members, after a time the church came to see the error into which she had fallen, and repented. In all such cases it was better that the one member suffer the injustice, than that all other churches around should be involved in trouble with the first church, with the probable result also that they themselves would be divided somewhat in opinion among themselves about the matter. Whatever our personal feelings of confidence and fellowship for one excluded may be, we feel sure that we ought to abide by the action of the church, from which that one was excluded, in dealing with that one. We are not to shun such an one, but must let that one know that he must first become reconciled to the church which excluded him ere he can be received anywhere else as a member.

Second. Do I understand you to hold that the preacher who continued to fellowship the excluded preacher was himself to be regarded as being in order by the church whose act of exclusion he had disregarded?

By reference to editorial above referred to, it will be seen that we stated just the contrary, and we still continue of the same opinion. We stated there in substance that he was in disorder, and ought to be dealt with by his church, though till this was done in order, he must be regarded as a member in full standing, as there is no half way ground in the matter of church membership. We think still that the church against which he has transgressed, is under no obligation to receive his ministry until he shall make the matter right in order, and to their satisfaction. Personally, we might, if we knew all the circumstances, see things that to us would extenuate his course to some degree, and our personal judgment of him in his course might be made more lenient, still we should feel that his church ought to take the matter up, and restore him if possible in gospel order, to a right course. The aggrieved church has a right to ask that his church consider the matter in love to herself as a sister church, and in love to the cause in general. If he has been carried away by personal kindness to the excluded minister, or by the opinion that his friend had been unjustly dealt with, and so has acted hastily, rather than with a purpose

to disregard the order of the gospel; this would modify our personal judgment of him, and we would think that he could be dealt with much more leniently than in the latter event would be the case. In this case we should pity him more than if we thought he had purposely violated the order of the house of God.

Third. In case an unjust act has been done by a church contrary to the plain directions of the Scripture, as was done many times in the time of separation between the New and the Old School Baptists, is there not some way in which the attention of other churches may be called to that act by the aggrieved member or members?

We feel sure that this must be the case. In the case referred to by our brother, there was not only unjust action taken many times, but before that and leading up to that there was an entire division in doctrine and order first. Because of the unsound doctrine, division had taken place, and the unsound portion could not be any longer regarded as churches of Christ holding to the faith and practice of the Bible. They were not BRETHREN in disorder, but who might be labored with, and restored, but enemies of the truth, and to be dealt with as such. Only one course was open to sound, orderly churches or members at that time: withdrawal must take place at once, and it was right that it should be so. Now in the case of a church, which must be regarded as a gospel church, holding to the doctrine that is according to godliness, and following in their discipline the order laid down in the word, that yet makes a mistake, or even at the time in haste and enmity does an unjust thing, in excluding a member, or in any other way, it seems to us that the condition is different, and that this church must, after all, be regarded as a church in order, and held in full fellowship by all who hold the truth. It is right to point out to her what we think is wrong in her course, and to advise and entreat her to return, but yet it does appear to us that at the last she must decide in all such matters, and that her decision is final, so far as other churches or members are concerned. If that church has done an unjust thing, God will, we may be sure, give her to see it in time, and lead her to repentance.

Fourth. In the case of a preacher who does not strictly belong to one church, but to all the churches, because he has been set apart by a council from several churches, ought any one church or a few members, as might be the case, who are usurping the rule in the church, to be allowed to put out of their way a minister who has offended them by his faithfulness?

It seems to us that if such a course is pursued by a church or a few usurping members of that church toward a faithful orderly minister, against whom nothing can truthfully be alleged as regards his daily life or his teaching, there will seldom be room for any hesitancy on the part of all other churches in the vicinity. A church which was sound in doctrine, and what is equally important, correct and careful in practice, would not be likely to do such a thing, and if that church was not sound in doctrine, and orderly in practice, according to the rule of the gospel, the surrounding churches would know that perfectly well, and in such a case would be under obligation to warn and rebuke that church, and if the church refuses to return, while the excluded minister, or member for that matter, is sound in doctrine, and humble and orderly in his daily life, in the end the church will fall out of the fellowship of

the other churches, and the one excluded will be in their fellowship. But thousands of things might arise in different cases which would demand a different course in dealing with them. We can only speak here in a general way. But even here, so long as the church is retained in the fellowship of the other churches, they must regard and respect her action.

Fifth. If a church pursues a course which I or any other regards as being entirely unscriptural, ought I not in some way to protest? and ought not sister churches to take notice of it?

We do not think that every transgression demands a formal protest from other brethren or churches, but if the course be, as our brother says, *entirely* unscriptural, every God-fearing man ought to take notice of it. This would not be to become a busybody in other men's matters at all. The object of the protest ought to be to restore and to heal the backsliding church. All ought to be done in love, and with a single desire for the glory of God, and the real good of the church doing the wrong. But ere any of us seek to approach a brother or church, which we believe to be departing in any degree from the truth, we ought ourselves to remember our own weakness, and that we also are liable to be tempted. If we have this in our hearts, we shall not be apt to greatly err, either in the matter or the manner of our communications. Let nothing be done in haste, let all be done in love, yet let all be faithful; faithfulness becometh the house of God, but let us not mistake, and become meddlesome, supposing that it is faithfulness that we are showing.

We cannot lay down any set rule here, for each separate case has its own peculiar conditions, and all these various conditions must be taken into account in our dealing with each other.

Sixth. If a church should send a letter to the association, containing some unsound doctrine, ought not the brethren to take notice of it, and insist upon inquiring into the matter? And if the church hold such unsound doctrine, as for instance that salvation is by the works of the creature, ought we not to withdraw from that church?

It seems to us that the reply must be Yes! Of course due labor as our brother has implied must be taken with that church, by her sister churches, and all must be done carefully. It is our judgment that the association as such cannot discipline the church or inquire into her soundness, but that the messengers to the association, from the several churches, must state the matter of the unsound doctrine presented in the letter of the church to their several churches, and that it is the province of the churches, as churches, to act, and not the association. This has long been our judgment. The association has no disciplinary powers conferred upon her in the word, but all is with the churches. The churches may act, and then send records of their action by their messengers to each other, and this record could be communicated, when the messengers meet at the association, if it was so desired, but churches ought to be slow in withdrawing fellowship from each other. Yet, if a church or member holds to such unsound doctrine as our brother has named, there can be no fellowship between them, and those who hold and love the truth.

Seventh. Is there not some way in which churches may deal with each other or confer together as individual members may? It seems to us that this must be so, and yet we do not know that we feel

prepared to point out any particular way in which this ought to be done. Brotherly feeling and confidence, if felt among the churches, will smooth out all difficulties which might arise in their correspondence, and as the brother states in his excellent letter, churches in the spirit will desire that others should know their order, and will see to it that other churches are welcome to behold their order. Churches must know what other churches believe, and what they practice, if there is to be association and fellowship. The chief things to be considered everywhere, in the intercourse of churches, are love to God, to his truth, and to his cause, and a desire for mutual fellowship, and for the welfare of each other. If these things be in us, all the rest will be right. C.

"MASTER, CAREST THOU NOT THAT WE PERISH?"

(Mark iv. 38.)

THE above language, as all that are familiar with the Bible well know, was addressed to the Savior at the time the disciples were in the ship in a great storm, and it seemed to them that the vessel would certainly be destroyed and they must perish. They seemed to have forgotten in their terror that Christ was in the vessel, and were looking at outward appearances, and doubtless were laboring desperately to save themselves, but with all their struggling their case was becoming more and more desperate every moment, until the "Wind and the waves beat into the ship until it was full." Then, when they had come to the end of their own strength, and were ready to perish, they came to the Master with the words quoted above.

Does it not seem strange that the disciples, after having witnessed the miraculous power of the Savior, should have first resorted to all their own devices and efforts, before they appealed to the Savior to save them? Yet such is our human nature that we are always trusting in our own efforts to save us, either in temporal or eternal salvation, until our frail bark is overwhelmed in the storm, and beaten by the winds of adversity, and filled with the billows of sorrows, doubts and fears, and ready to sink. Then when all confidence and hope in our own efforts is gone, we are ready to "accept the Savior."

How vividly the narrative of that tempestuous voyage of Christ and his disciples portrays the christian experience of every heaven-born saint. Each one is a chosen vessel launched on the stormy sea of life, and in every one of these chosen vessels is "Christ, the hope of glory," and yet although this is known, it seems ofttimes to be forgotten, and when the storms come we begin to try to discern the outward signs, and prepare to avert the threatening disasters with the ever-failing remedy, "creature effort," rather than trusting in the ever certain salvation of the Lord.

Dear child of God, remember you are a chosen vessel of mercy, and Christ dwells in you. While it may seem to you at times that he is asleep in the vessel, yet fear not, the vessel cannot sink, it is as secure as the throne of heaven. We may be driven to such despair that we will question the Master as to his apparent indifference to our salvation, but in his own time he will rise and "rebuke the wind, and say unto the sea, Peace, be still," and there will be a great calm.

How gentle and forbearing the blessed Savior was with the faithlessness of his disciples. When they approached him with their questionings as to his care for

them, he did not rebuke them, but in his sweet and loving Spirit reproved them, by demonstrating his marvelous power in stilling the storm, and then calling their attention to their faithlessness.

May it be our Lord's pleasure to give us to ever remember when the storms come, and we feel that we are ready to perish, that Christ is in every vessel of mercy, and though he may be in the "hinder part of the ship," and apparently asleep, yet rest assured he will at the right time come forth and make his presence manifest. Then we can sing with the poet, "With Christ in the vessel I smile at the storm." B.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

"BUT PEACE SHALL BE UPON ISRAEL."

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I do not like to trouble you too much, but it seems so impressed on my mind that I cannot well avoid it; to ask your views on Psa. cxxv. 5, particularly on the latter clause, "but peace shall be upon Israel."

PENNINGTONVILLE, Pa., Dec. 10, 1860.

REPLY.

THE inspired singer in Israel has expressed the security of God's people in very strong language. "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abideth forever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth even forever." But in the text proposed for consideration, another description of character is brought to view. A people who do not trust in the Lord, who are not like Mount Zion, do not abide forever, but turn aside to their crooked ways, and are led forth with the workers of iniquity. The first described are called the Lord's people. God is their defence; he is round about them as the mountains environ Jerusalem, and as elsewhere expressed, "He is a wall of fire round about them, and a glory in their midst." The eternal God is their refuge, and underneath them are his everlasting arms. They shall not be moved, God shall help them, and that right early. Immovable as the Mount of God, and as securely environed by the divine presence, and as invulnerable as Mount Zion on the sides of the north. Beautiful for situation, and perfectly impregnable in her security. Trusting in God and having no confidence in the flesh, they shall be kept by his mighty power, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

But, "As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways." Who are these? and from what do they turn aside? It is true that God's people do not always feel that confidential trust in God which they desire to feel, and that they find in them a carnal and depraved nature, which often turns aside from the strait and narrow pathway of holiness, to the beggarly elements of the world, causing them much sorrow and lamentation, but still their trust for life and immortality is in God; that is, they have no other trust; they know if it were possible for that to fail them, all would be gone. But the psalmist seems to make a distinction between those apostates, of whom he speaks as turning aside, and Israel, for "The Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity, but peace shall be upon Israel."

Those who turn aside, must be those who have stood, nominally at least, in the ranks of the Lord's people, or no turning aside would be required to pursue their crooked ways. The christian course is straight forward, pressing

towards the mark of their high calling, and looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith, but those who pursue any other course, or follow any other leader, religiously, travel in a thoroughfare marked out by the old serpent. Serpents and vipers cannot travel in a straight path, it is contrary to their nature. Those who were called serpents and vipers, by John the Baptist, and the Shepherd of Israel, were remarkably zig zag in their course. At one time they came to John, desiring admission into the Baptist community, at another they boastingly profess to be Moses' disciples. Sometimes they are delighted with the gracious words spoken by the Redeemer, and anon they attempt to cast him headlong from the brow of the hill. Their piety is at times shocked at seeing the disciples eat corn on the Sabbath, at another they could hire men to swear falsely against the Son of God. With disfigured faces they made long prayers in public places, and with felonious avarice devour widows' houses. In modern times their serpentine course may be traced in their pathetic appeals for ameliorating the sufferings of the Hottentots, and the barefooted Indians of distant regions, and in grinding the faces of the poor at home, or in weeping over the cruelty of the heathen nations, and in furnishing Sharp's rifles to murder the citizens of our own country; in distributing copies of the Scriptures, and repudiating the doctrines of the Bible. These are some of their crooked ways, but all their ways are equally crooked. Such as turn aside to their crooked ways, (for no man can pursue them and at the same time walk in the order of the house of God,) the Lord shall lead them forth. By his judgments, choosing their delusions, until they shall be led forth from the society and fellowship of the people of God, to mingle with their fellow workers of iniquity.

The true character of the workers of iniquity may be clearly inferred from the description given of some of them by our Lord. Many of them shall say, Lord, we have prophesied in thy name, preached, cast out devils, and done many wondrous works. But he shall say unto them, Depart from me ye *workers of iniquity*, for I know you not. The development of anti-christ in the last times, should be with all signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; but a very prominent mark is, his coming is after the *working of Satan*; or working of iniquity. All anti-christian working is upon the ground of distrusting God. As they know not the true God, therefore, they cannot trust him to save his people, and consequently they set about the work to establish their own righteousness. While God's people both labor and suffer reproach because they trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of them that believe.

But we are desired to dwell more particularly on the last part of the text, "But peace shall be upon Israel."

The judgments of God in scourging out from the fellowship of his people those who turn aside to their crooked ways is in itself eminently calculated to promote peace upon them that remain. The psalmist prayed to be delivered from strange children. And in Psalm cxx. he complains thus, "Woe is me, that I dwell in Meseech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar. My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace. I am for peace, but when I speak, they are for war." And in cxxii. he says, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper

that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee." This is what all the children of God desire, and for it they pray. And Paul exhorts, first of all, that prayers and intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men: for kings and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life, in all godliness and honesty, &c. And in all the apostlic salutations to the saints, the prayer ascends to heaven, that grace, mercy and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, may be with them. Peace is a special gift of God. "My peace," said Jesus to his saints, "I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you." Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. And the inspired prophet testifies, "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth and forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform this." For he of whom Isaiah prophesied, is the Prince of Peace. Israel is God's chosen and redeemed people; they were once in a state of hostility and rebellion against God; enemies to God by wicked works, but now hath he reconciled them by the sacrifice which Jesus offered of himself for them. He has made peace by the blood of his cross, and that peace shall be upon them. His law, the law of the Spirit of life, which is in Christ Jesus, is written in their heart, and wrapped in their affections, and it is written, "Great peace have they that love thy law, and nothing shall offend them." A most beautiful illustration of this assurance is found Isaiah liv. 11–13, "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of precious stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children."

In the present agitated state of our country, where since the days of Puritanic cruelties in the colonies, of hanging reputed witches, and the cart-tail whipping through the streets of the eastern cities, and the incarceration of Baptists in some of the southern colonies, we have enjoyed religious rights, which in the threatened dissolution of our constitutional guarantees may be taken from us, we cannot assure ourselves that the blood of martyrs shall not hereafter flow. But even in that event, those who trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion. And although always at war with antichrist, the church shall assuredly enjoy that peace which the world cannot give nor take away. But let those who turn aside from the teachings of the Scriptures, to their crooked ways, know the Lord will lead them forth with the workers of iniquity. "Come out of her my people," saith the warning voice from heaven, "that ye be not partakers of her crimes, nor receive of her plagues."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., January 1, 1861.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO AN APPEAL OF BRETHREN TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$825 65
John T. Yerkes, D. C., $1.00; Friend, Ont., $1.00; Geo. W. Jarman, Md., $3.00; J. H. Messick, Del., $1.00.—Total	6 00
Total to date	$831 65

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, Oct. 7th, 1903, at his residence in Hopewell, N. J., James W. Cherry, of Princeton, N. J., and Miss Margaret Hillig, of the same place.

By the same, Oct. 8th, 1903, at the residence of the bride, Morris T. Reed and Miss Addie A. Sperling, both of Hopewell, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Emma D. Richardson Bray was born Feb. 17th, 1842, and died June 3d, 1903, aged 61 years, 3 months and 16 days. She joined Friendship Regular Baptist Church, at Center Valley, Hendricks Co., Ind., on March 11th, at the age of seventeen years, having received a hope in Jesus Christ as her Savior on Dec. 17th preceding. She, with her sister and others, was baptized next day, by Elder E. D. Thomas. She was married Dec. 25th, 1860, to Ira M. Bray, of which union there are three children, namely, J. W. Bray, of Indianapolis, Mrs. Mary McMurty, of Fairfield, Iowa, and Mrs. Carrie Shirley, of Crawfordsville, Ind. She had been a great sufferer from paralysis on one side of her face for over ten years. Later, to this affliction was added diabetes, which was the immediate cause of her death. Through all this affliction she was a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God alone, free and unmerited by the recipient. She left four grandsons and one granddaughter, and in the words of the latter: "Grandma is having a good sleep now, but in the morning she'll wake up." Blessed hope, to wake up an unfettered soul, to be with her Savior and loved ones gone before, in the realms of peace and rest, where suffering and sorrow can never come. She was a loving devoted mother and grandmother, always willing to help those about her as long as she was able. Although she suffered intense pain at the last, through it all she seemed to have a view of the happy release from pain and worry that would soon be hers, and raising her arms she exclaimed, "Blessed Lord!" and told those around her that "All is well," and that she was ready and willing to depart this life and be with Christ, which was far better. Then saying, "O, I am so happy!" she sank peacefully into that blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep.

THE children of our dear sister Bray desire me to add some words to the above, but I can say nothing more beautiful and appropriate. I was well acquainted with her during her deep afflictions of mind and body, and was often comforted in witnessing her strong faith in God, and her precious Redeemer, and her godly sorrow and tears of penitence. She was deeply experienced in the grace of God, and her faith and hope clung to the cross of Christ alone, in whom she trusted with her whole heart. She had no confidence in the flesh, nor in the doctrines of men, but she lived on the crucified Christ, her resurrection and life. Often would she speak to me of her approaching departure to the heavenly country, amidst her tears, and of the great longing of her wayworn spirit to enter into the rest that remains to the people of God. For him she had the deepest reverence, love and trust. *She was born of God, and was his child.* "She is not dead, but sleepeth" in Jesus.

May the Father of mercies comfort the hearts of the bereaved.

D. BARTLEY.

I AM requested by the bereaved parents to write an obituary notice as a tribute to the memory of a noble young woman, a dutiful daughter, an affectionate sister, a true and faithful friend, and one whom we hope by the infinite grace of an ever merciful God, was a child of Jehovah, and an heir of salvation, and now dwells in his all-glorious presence, nevermore to feel the pains and sorrows incident to this state of mortality in this sinful world.

Miss Clara Estelle Hamblin died at the residence of her father, Mr. A. Q. Hamblin, at Wango, Wicomico Co., Md., May 9th, 1903, aged 25 years and 18 days, after an illness of a little over four months, of tuberculosis (hasty consumption). Miss Hamblin was a particularly bright girl, with those winning characteristics that made friends of all with whom she came in contact. While she was not a member of the visible church, she gave many evidences that her name was enrolled with the saints of God in the Lamb's book of life. Therefore those that mourn the early decease of this estimable young woman, have no occasion to mourn as those that are without hope. May the Lord sanctify this dispensation to the good of the afflicted ones, and to the glory of his most holy name.

The funeral was held at the Forest Grove meeting-house on the 11th, when the writer, in weakness, tried to minister the consolations of the gospel to the bereaved family and friends, after which she was laid to rest in the cemetery near by, to await the resurrection.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., Oct. 26, 1903.

M. T. Harris was born in Monroe Co., Miss., Jan. 6th, 1828, and died at New Boston, Texas, Sept. 28th, 1903. When he was twenty-one years old he was married to Miss Elizabeth Hearren, of Attala Co., Miss., Jan. 6th, 1853, and moved to Monroe Co., Miss., and settled down. To them were born ten children. His first wife died in 1873, and he was married again, to Miss Jane Fuller, of Tate Co., in 1874. To them one child was born. She died in 1876. He then moved to Chesterville, Miss., and in 1877 was married again, to Mrs. Isabella Parkham. To them were

born three children. She died in 1886. He was the father of fourteen children, six of them still survive to mourn his death. He professed a hope in Jesus in 1884, and joined the New School Baptists, and surely it can be said he lived a christian life up to his death. He came to New Boston in May, 1896, and lived with his daughter, Mrs. Mitchell. I can truly say from personal acquaintance with him since he first came to Texas, that he was one of the sweetest tempered men I ever knew. He had a lingering sickness for several months, and all was done for him that his faithful son-in-law and daughter and kind friends could do, but the Father called, "Child, come home," and on the 28th of September he peacefully fell asleep in Jesus, and on the 29th I was called to attend his funeral, and tried to speak to the comfort of those present, after which his remains were laid to rest in the cemetery south of New Boston, there to await the last trumpet, when all will come forth to be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus. It is enough then, dear children, grieve not, but rejoice that father is at rest.

May the dear Lord bless you all, and prepare you by his love to live as he lived, Christlike.

J. E. KNIGHTEN.

DIED—On the 18th of September, 1903, **Mrs. Lydia Seiple.** She was born May 11th, 1826. Her disposition was kind from her childhood. She was a daughter of Elder Louis Seitz, and had the training of a faithful father. She was blessed with the effectual call of God unto the fellowship of his Son, in her childhood days, and received strength to unite with the church at the age of eighteen. Since that time she has been one of the faithful in the home, and the house of God. She was a good mother, kind neighbor, and a devoted wife. She was married to Jacob Seiple at the age of twenty-three, and became the mother of eleven children, six of whom survive her. She was one who loved the SIGNS, or the doctrine for which it has always contended. She lived and died in peace with all men, and in peace with God. In her last hours she often said she was tired, and said in a feeble voice, "Come, O, my Savior, come," and went to sleep; a sleep which will not be disturbed till the resurrection of the dead.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder A. F. Dove, after which she was laid to rest. May the Lord bless all who mourn her departure.

H. E. PURRIS.

BLOOMVILLE, Ohio, Oct. 1, 1903.

Peter S. Garrison died at his home near Blauenburgh, N. J., on Friday, Sept. 17th, 1903. He had reached the ripe age of 86 years and 7 months. He married my sister, Hannah D. Boggs, in 1847. She was the tenth child of Elder John Boggs, who for forty years was pastor of the Baptist Church at Hopewell, N. J. She died some years ago, leaving two children. Their daughter, Lizzie Garrison, married Elder G. M. Fetter, and she died in Pueblo, Colo., in 1891. The sole survivor of his family is Dr. John Boggs Garrison, who is a homeopathic physician in New York city. Brother Garrison united with the Old School Baptist Church of Hopewell, upwards of fifty years ago, and led a consistent, exemplary christian life. His place was always filled in the meetings of the church. He was a great singer, and for fifty years he led the base in all the church singing. An attack of pneumonia, in the early summer, so broke his constitution that he never regained his usual strength, and gradually failed. He had expressed himself as only waiting for the summons to bid adieu to earth. His end was most serene.

Elder Chick being absent, visiting in Maine, his funeral was attended by Elder John McConnell, of New York city.

For more than half a century brother Garrison was identified with my Father's family, and I, the thirteenth child of a family of fourteen, am left the last survivor of that family.

His son writes to me, "I shall miss father in so many ways, but I could not wish him back to meet the trials of earth." We have an abiding trust that his was a glorious exchange; that from the trials of earth he was called to realms of unending bliss.

ELIZABETH H. BOGGS.

RATON, N. M., Oct. 5, 1903.

Eunice Wilson, our dear mother, was the eleventh child born to Ambros and Sarah Cox, and out of a family of thirteen children she is the last to pass away. She was born Jan. 12th, 1811, in Floyd Co., Va., and died at the home of her son Luke, on Saturday morning, Oct. 3d, 1903, aged 92 years, 8 months and 21 days. When a young woman she was married to Joshua Wilson, and moved to Illinois in about 1844. To this union were born seven children. Her death was caused by no disease; the machinery of life, worn by nearly a century of useful activity, ran slower and slower, and finally worn out, stood still. Her mind was at times clouded during the last years of her life. She often said she was only waiting for her Master's call, she had lived out her days, which numbered over four score years and ten. She had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for over fifty years. Although she did not pass through life without her share of trouble and sorrow, she trusted in her Redeemer, and looked to him in times of darkest gloom. She had made her home with her son Luke and family for the past eleven years, and while the family were gathered around her dying bed she talked with them, and said she was going safely home. She sank peacefully to rest.

The funeral occurred from the Middle Creek Baptist Church, on Sunday, Oct. 4th, at 11 a. m., con-

ducted by the pastor, Elder L. E. Frazee. Burial at the Holland cemetery, by the side of her husband. A large crowd was in attendance, and followed to her last resting-place. Her funeral was carried out as she had planned and arranged for it to be; the hymns she had selected were sung. Every one knew and loved our dear mother.

HER DAUGHTER.

BENTLY, Ill., Nov. 2, 1903.

MY dear old father, **Alpheos Line,** died at my house August 28th, 1903. He had been a reader of the SIGNS for over sixty years, and a member of the Old Baptist Church for over forty years. He was an uncomplaining sufferer, and was very feeble for a long time, confined to his bed for sixteen months, almost blind, and so very hard of hearing we had to talk right in his ear to make him hear, but he was never heard to complain a word. He died the death of the righteous, aged 84 years, 6 month and 27 days. We feel the loss of a very dear old father, who was always so gentle and patient.

ELLA LUKENS.

OSBORNE, Kansas, Oct. 25, 1903.

IT has become my painful duty to inform you of the death of my dearly beloved husband, **George Dodson,** your brother in Christ Jesus, which occurred Sept. 27th, 1903, at his home, two and one-half miles south of Bentonville, Ark. He had been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES nearly forty years.

N. J. DODSON.

BENTONVILLE, Ark., Oct. 12, 1903.

DIED—Oct. 14th, 1903, little **Walter Doggett,** son of W. M. and N. C. Doggett, aged 11 months and 25 days. The little fellow suffered about two weeks before he died. We know it is hard to have to give up these little ones, but it is God's glory to take them.

His uncle, A. J. DOGGETT.

DRAG, Ala.

"NEARER, MY GOD, TO THEE."

THIS touching hymn was written by Sarah Flower Adams, a gifted English woman. She was of frail constitution, and, amid many bodily sufferings, kept her pen at work on various poetical productions. At what time she caught the inspiration to compose *that one immortal hymn,* which is now sung around the globe, has never been learned. Probably it was some season of peculiar trial, when the bruised spirit emitted the odor of a childlike submission to a chastening father. It must have oozed from a bleeding heart. Her hymn first appeared in a volume of sacred lyrics by Mr. Fox, in England, about the year 1841. The authoress did not live to enjoy the fame it was to bring, for she died in 1846, aged twenty-four years, and was buried near Marlow, in Essex.

POETRY.

"LORD, what a riddle is my soul!
Alive when wounded, dead when whole!
Fondly I flee from pain, yet ease
Cannot content, nor pleasure please.

Thou hid'st thy face, my sins abound;
World, flesh and Satan all surround;
Fain would I find my God, but fear
The means, perhaps, may prove severe.

If thou the least displeasure show,
And bring my vileness to my view,
Timorous and weak, I shrink, and say,
Lord, keep thy chastening hand away.

If reconciled I see thy face,
Thy matchless mercy, boundless grace,
O'ercome with bliss, I cry, Remove
That killing sight, I die with love.

My dear Redeemer, purge this dross;
Teach me to bear and love the cross;
Teach me thy chastening to sustain,
Discern the love, and bear the pain.

Nor spare to make me clearly see
The sorrows thou hast felt for me:
If death must follow, I comply;
Let me be sick with love, and die."

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ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 71. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1903. NO. 23.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DADE CITY, Fla., July 30, 1903.

ELDER D. BARTLEY—DEAR BROTHER:—Soon after my son had sustained the loss of his leg, I received your comforting letter. I have answered many letters, but could not think of answering all received during those anxious hours, from friends and brethren both known and unknown. However, I have had a desire to write you for several days, if for nothing more than to acknowledge the receipt of your comforting letter, and ask you a question; for I feel somewhat cast down with no enlivening of the Spirit. I have realized by experience that I cannot keep alive my own soul, but that the Lord can keep or give it life, even in the desert. I can only live, move and act, spiritually, as Christ lives in me by his own holy Spirit. Should he be pleased for a little moment to withdraw from me, I die to all spiritual joys or enablings, and to all soul gladness. When he comes near, I rise; when he withdraws, I sink. Is it not a great mercy that Christ is the Resurrection and the Life? It is in the kingdom of grace that we learn that when "I am weak, then am I strong." So our mourning is turned to comfort, sorrow unto joy, sickness unto health, death unto life.

Now, I want you to write me, or through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and prove the consistency of the doctrine of unconditional time salvation, and predestination of all things, with the scriptural warnings, rebukes, admonitions and exhortations. I heard of a sister saying as she went from church, "If I believed like brother Gilbert, I would never correct my children again."

I was exceedingly pleased with your article, "The old and the new."

Yours in esteem and love,

M. L. GILBERT.

LEBANON, Ohio, Aug. 15, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—The above letter from our esteemed Elder Gilbert is so true and spiritual and scriptural in relating his own experience, I submit it to you that your readers may have its comfort.

The question he asks me to answer is of vital interest to the predestinated children of God's sovereign grace, and so I will answer through the SIGNS, if you please.

"Prove the consistency of the doctrine of unconditional time salvation, and predestination of all things, with the scriptural warnings, rebukes, admonitions and exhortations."

In answering our dear brother Gilbert, my dependence is upon the God of predestination and salvation. O may he enable me to speak in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth, and compare spiritual things with spiritual, even with the Scriptures, which are given by the inspiration of God. The Scriptures abundantly prove that our God, who is the author of the Bible, is the God of predestination, as he is also the God of salvation. Only an infidel will dispute this truth, and he who does so is foolish and in darkness.

In the order of nature predestination is before salvation, and is as eternal as God himself. Paul therefore testifies of the eternal purpose of God, which he purposed in himself. His eternal purpose was fully complete and immutable in the Godhead, before he created the worlds and his people and all creatures. His purpose extended to and included all these, or else God would never have created them. Not the least thing exists by chance. "For by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." "For thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." It were folly, then, to say that God's eternal purpose or foreordination or predestination does not embrace all things; for outside of his purpose and sovereign dominion, not the least thing can exist or occur. "Who saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" It is equally foolish to say, Although the Lord created all things, yet he had no purpose to accomplish in many of his creatures and other things, but he has left them to fate, or accident, or chance. To say so, is to charge folly to the Most High. It is likewise foolish to admit that the Lord created all things for his purpose or pleasure, as his word says, then deny that his wisdom and power shall accomplish his eternal purpose in all things. This would charge ignorance and weakness to God.

As to all the race of man, this one text proves that all are subjected to the purpose and power of the Almighty: "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." This fixes or determines all human bounds and events. This is the same as to say, God predestinated all things. The above Scriptures establish this truth.

The Scriptures also fully establish the kindred truth, that the salvation of God's chosen and predestinated people, for whom Christ died, is unconditional in time. This is so abundantly proven in the Bible, that it has ever been held sacred as a prominent doctrine of Christ by his church, and none but legalists have ever denied it. But then, the religion of all the world, Jewish and Gentile, ever was and is legal, based upon the will and works of man; and from this corrupt source has arisen all the opposition, reproach and persecution that the people of God's grace have ever endured. All who depend upon their works for salvation, either in whole or in any part, are naturally and bitterly opposed to salvation by reigning grace alone, and they

will therefore oppose and persecute the children of the free woman, or the covenant of grace. Grace is against all works to obtain salvation; so on the other hand, all who depend upon their works for any part of their salvation are against grace. Between these there can be no agreement or compromise, for the two principles are antagonistic and irreconcilable in their nature and effects. Grace blots out works in salvation, and works blot out grace. If grace brings salvation, works do not; if works obtain salvation for us, grace does not. Paul affirmed this.

It seems very strange that this has come to be denied among professed Old School Baptists; yet the Scripture says that some should rise up denying the grace of God that bought them. Grace cuts the sinner down and lays man low in the dust of self-abasement, and counts all his goodness and righteousness as filthy rags; but it exalts the Lord of grace alone in all the salvation of his people from their sins. All legal minded men resent this and rail against it. "Fatalism," "Antinomianism," "Hard-shellism," "Let us sin that grace may abound," are but a few of the many reproaches cast upon salvation by grace alone. And yet those who so slander the grace of God, and cause divisions among us contrary to the doctrine which we have learned, will then cry, "Do let us have peace." What is this but mockery?

To cloak a legal doctrine, it is called "Conditional Time Salvation." But this none the less denies unconditional salvation by the grace of God, for it divides salvation between the Lord and man, between grace and works; therefore it thus necessarily divides the power and glory of salvation. If salvation in time is conditional upon our works, then it is no more of grace, and to us and our works the praise of such salvation is justly due. The pharisee that thanked God that he had served and done well, and was not as others, truly represents all who hold to a conditional salvation, which does depend upon their works, as said the Fulton Convention. The publican represents grace.

Salvation is deliverance from sin and danger, and it is through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus by his blood, according to the riches of his grace. There is no other salvation from sin and guilt, condemnation, danger and ruin, which drown men in destruction and perdition. All ungodliness, rebellion and disobedience is sin. Salvation is deliverance from all these, unto holiness and acceptance with God. Nothing else is salvation. All this righteousness and divine acceptance is in the spotless obedience of Christ. Peter therefore said of him, "Neither is there salvation in any other." All this is grace—salvation by grace. The grace and salvation of God in Christ is unconditional. No one has yet had the hardihood to say the grace of God that bringeth salvation is conditional. This would be as untrue as to say that the salvation in Christ is conditional; for grace reigns by him.

Salvation, all salvation, is wrought in sinners, not by them, but by the Spirit and grace of God, on earth in time. So all salvation is begun and performed in time. God's purpose is eternal, and all his ordained people were chosen and blessed in Christ before the world or time were born, and fullness of grace unto salvation was given them in him; but the manifestation of God's purpose and grace in the people of his love, in conforming them to the holy and heavenly image of his Son, in which is their complete salvation, all is begun and finished in time.

Before time there were no lost sinners that then needed salvation. After time all the Lord's people shall have been saved by him from their sins. So their salvation is all in time. Jesus himself was sent forth in the fullness of time, and his work of salvation, by his obedience, death and resurrection, was in time. So, too, all his people and brethren are born of the flesh, and born of the Spirit, saved by grace, kept by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, the last day, then raised up in the likeness of Christ's resurrection, all in time. All this stir and noise therefore, about dividing time salvation from salvation itself, and thus to modify and better Arminian conditional salvation, is nothing but a misleading phrase, a self-pleasing name, a covert or pretext to conceal this legal leaven or doctrine; for the very soul or essence of it denies salvation by grace. The plain truth is, that if the salvation of the Lord's people in time is conditional, then the grace of God is dethroned, and salvation is no more of grace, but is of works. For we need no other salvation only the salvation which is ours in time, neither is there any other. So then, if our salvation in time is conditional and of works, salvation by grace is denied and reproached as unpopular and quite too old fashioned, deserving only the epithets of "Antinomianism," "Hard-shellism," &c. This is an arch trick of the adversary of God's sovereign purpose and grace, to lure the children of God away from grace and truth, for Satan hates the supreme dominion and headship of the Lord's Christ and his abounding grace that reigns by him, and he would dethrone and overthrow them if he could, and would deceive the very elect.

Now, to brother Gilbert's inquiry: Does unconditional salvation, salvation by grace, "not of works," and God's predestination of all things, "by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will," "(and that not by a bare permission,)" harmonize "with the scriptural warnings, rebukes, admonitions and exhortations?"

Answer: Scriptural testimony is harmonious and consistent with itself, because God inspired the divine writers; therefore the exhortations and rebukes thereof are consistent with this doctrine of predestination and salvation, which are also scriptural and true and of God, as the testimonies above given prove. Brother Gilbert will agree that all scriptural truth and testimony, which includes all doctrine and exhortation, are not only consistent with God's eternal and sovereign purpose and grace in the unconditional salvation of his predestinated people from their sins, and in working all things after the counsel of his own will, but they are also a very part of his purpose and grace. Therefore, Paul not only affirmed that God the Father had chosen and blessed his people in Christ with all spiritual blessings before the world was, and ordained them unto life and holiness and sonship by Christ; that they are saved by grace, not of works; but he equally affirmed that they are God's workmanship (as the saints), created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God before ordained that they should walk in them. Foreordination unto good works, therefore, is consistent with the exhortation to walk in them, for God has ordained both.

The Lord Jesus ordained his chosen apostles, that they should go and bring forth fruit; yet he charged them to keep his commandments, and to abide in him. God has as well ordained the way as the end, the effect as the cause, the fruit as

the life and tree. It is because God worketh in his children both to will and to do of his good pleasure, that we have the scriptural injunction to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. These go hand in hand, and are of God and the fruit of the Spirit.

The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. "It pleased God by the foolishness [simplicity] of preaching, to save them that believe." All this is in God's purpose and grace, and in harmony therewith. God hath chosen and ordained his peculiar people, and saves them by his grace, unto the end that they should show forth his praise. Not that they should live in sin that grace might the more abound, nor live to themselves, as the legalist does, but should live to him that died for them, and rose again. All the gospel of grace and salvation, with all spiritual exhortations, rebukes and warnings in the Scriptures, are streams from the flowing fountain of God's changeless and eternal purpose and grace in the salvation of his people, redeemed by the blood of Christ, and all shall redound to the praise of the glory of his grace.

So then God's unconditional grace in salvation, and his immutable purpose in all things, are the solid foundation and sure support of all gospel exhortation unto the obedience of faith and love in Christ. So Paul first triumphantly proved the full salvation of all that are Christ's, beyond a condition or possibility of failure, then on this solid rock he rested the soul-inspiring exhortation, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." It is consistent with all the notions and claims of conditional salvation, that their conditional labors may fail and be in vain, for all conditional salvation depends upon the uncertain works of fallible creatures, and is as uncertain as conditional salvation is untrue. This is as a house built on the sand for a foundation. So conditional preachers of every hue are wont to declaim against preaching the solid doctrine of God's election and predestination, purpose and grace, but they talk much about "practical godliness," and lay great stress upon "our works." They slanderously report that predestination and grace take away the motive and incentive to godliness, obedience and good works, and lead to fatalism and Antinomianism, or lawlessness and vice. So this legal religion called Christ a winebibber, and a friend of publicans and sinners. It charged the apostles' doctrine with saying, "Let us do evil, that good may come." But the apostles' doctrine is, that the grace of God not only bringeth salvation to us, but as well teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this world. Upon this true doctrine of the gospel of the grace of God, faithful Paul based his exhortation to all the members of the church. See Titus ii. and Romans vi. "Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace." "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." This is the salvation by grace, and this its blessed fruit.

All salvation is of the Lord, and by his grace; so all gospel preaching and exhortation, with all gospel blessings, com-

forts and obedient service, is of the Lord and by his grace. No other preaching or work or service is acceptable unto God, because it is selfish, carnal and legal. The scriptural warnings, rebukes and exhortations in the gospel of salvation, are largely to turn the people of God's grace and truth away from these legal and false doctrines, and to fortify them against such things, unto the end that his saved people should glorify God and his grace, but not glorify themselves and their works. Therefore Paul exhorted Timothy to continue in the doctrine; that in so doing he should both save himself and them that heard him, from the delusions of those who depart from the truth.

In the merciful ordination of God, he sent Joseph down into Egypt, but he was sent there by the hands of his sinful brothers, and yet they were guilty in doing so, and were not caused to do so by the purpose of God. So it was also in the betrayal and crucifixion of Christ, which was by wicked hands, and they were not impelled or moved at all by the determined purpose of God; yet Christ was verily foreordained before the world to thus die and redeem his people. God's ordained purpose is thus vindicated as holy in all other wicked works, in which ungodly men are voluntary and active, never passive, nor impelled by God's counsel and purpose, but by their corrupt carnal minds, which are enmity against God, whose counsel and purpose in all things shall stand, and cannot be defeated. And so, in the salvation of his people by his unconditional grace, and in their working out their salvation, that is, showing it forth and outwardly manifesting that they are the heirs of salvation, unto which God ordained and appointed them, they are not passive, nor impelled by the predestination of God, but the love of Christ blessedly constrains them, and in their hearts they actively and willingly seek his face and rejoice in his salvation. Unto this end is all divine exhortation, and all true gospel preaching and teaching, to stir up their pure minds, and minister to their faith and hope and love in Christ Jesus, and nourish them in his grace and truth, that they may grow thereby, and not be unfruitful in the knowledge of God.

All this belongs to the counsel and purpose and grace of God, as including all things, and as pertaining unto life and godliness, salvation and glory. All, therefore, is consistent and harmonious with all Scripture, with unconditional time salvation, and with God's eternal purpose in all things, and all "to the praise of the glory of his grace." Dear brother Gilbert's touching experience, as told in his letter to me, with all the spiritual experience of christians, is confirmatory of this truth. It is all summed up in these brief texts: "And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." "By the grace of God I am what I am." "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." This is salvation in time, unconditional and free, because it is by grace through faith. The verb "are" is present time, and "through faith" is in time. "Not of works" vetoes conditional salvation, for this depends upon works.

So far, then, from the purpose and

grace of God in all things and in all the way of unconditional salvation on earth being inconsistent with divine exhortation, the truth is, all scriptural exhortation, rebuke and warning against sin, ungodliness, and doctrines of men and devils, all are by the inspiration and authority of the Author of the Bible, the unlimited Jehovah, the God of predestination and salvation, and all is harmonious with these. As truly as the immutable I AM is unconditional, so also his counsel and purpose, predestination and redemption, grace and salvation are unconditional.

God moves upon his redeemed and quickened people, imbues and endows them with divine life and spirit, faith and love, and then their new heart and spirit with fervent desire actively rise up in adoration and praise to him, because he ordained it so. All scriptural preaching and exhortation, prayer and praise, devotion and service, are from this heavenly source, this flowing fountain of God's purpose and grace. Just as the snow and rain cometh down from heaven, and maketh the earth fruitful, so shall the Lord's doctrine drop in the hearts of his people, and his word prosper in the thing whereto he sends it. Unto this end he has ordained the gospel of his grace, which, like the Scriptures, is to his children profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, that they may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. These are the provisions of God's much more abounding grace in Christ Jesus, and the ministrations and fruit of his Spirit. Thus and in this way the Lord nurtures, disciplines and establishes his children in the kingdom of his grace.

All this is scriptural and consistent with God's counsel and ordained purpose; and reigning grace in the unconditional salvation from all their sins in time. The Lord's ways are equal; his counsel is wise; his purpose is eternal and unbounded. His predestination is not fatalism, and his grace is not Antinomianism, notwithstanding free will legalists and workmongers have ever slanderously so reported since Paul withstood them.

Saved by grace,

D. BARTLEY.

GUTHRIE, Oklahoma Ter., Oct. 6, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have had the pleasure of reading a letter written by brother W. S. Speer, of Guthrie, Oklahoma Ter., to sister E. Johnson, of Sheridan, W. Va., and her reply to him. I have requested him to send the letters to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication, if they meet with your approval. I feel they belong to the household of faith scattered abroad.

MARY J. WORTHAM.

GUTHRIE, Oklahoma Ter., Sept. 10, 1903.

SISTER:—Two days ago came the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for Sept. 15th, and on pages 562-3 I found a wonderful letter making grateful mention of an experience published in the number for August 1st, (q. v.) and from the tenor of that brief communication over the name Elizabeth Johnson, Sheridan, W. Va., I felt that she is of the kindred in Christ Jesus called the "remnant according to the election of grace," given by the God of heaven in the dateless depths before the sun began to shine, or ever the world was, to his Son, their names all writ down in the Lamb's book of life as the future citizens of the city of God, the everlasting kingdom to be given to a certain "little flock" as a token of their "Father's good pleasure."

Thus far I meditated, moved thereto by the earnest words of a kindred spirit, and several times since reading that letter I seem to hear a "still small voice" saying, Write to her, and comfort her heart by the same comfort wherewith you have been comforted of God, for like yourself, as is plain from her letter to brother Beebe, she has been in the belly of hell; all God's billows and waves have passed over her; she felt cast out of his sight as the vilest sinner that infinite mercy has permitted to live for a time on this planet. By reason of her affliction she cried unto the Lord, and in due course in his own way and time he brought her up out of her distress, and filled her heart and mouth with praise to God for the great love wherewith he loved and quickened her, and called and saved her by his grace. Though you have never seen her face, and probably will not in this life, yet write to her, for she is one of the children, a daughter of the Lord Almighty, and with confidence address her as one of the many mansions in the Father's house, which is the church of the living God. In each member God will dwell, hence each one is a mansion in his Father's house.

Sister, you, too, I see, have fled for refuge from self and sin, from the terror of the wrath to come, from dead works, and the agony of a consciousness of guilt, to lay hold of the one hope which saints have as "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail." That is, in the very presence of God, for the hope stops not short of what we sometimes speak of as "ultimate glory," "the beautific vision." Christ is in us the hope of glory, to be revealed in the resurrection of the dead and beyond, as it is written, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," whom no natural man can see and live. I thought to say a word to you about "that blessed hope" as it is spoken of in Titus ii. 13. This hope in its complete realization follows the delivery up of the kingdom to God when God shall be all in all, his children all presented to him without blemish, in his own image, and to be with him their Father through an endless series of brilliant, happy ages. That is the hope by which we are saved. Have you that hope? the one hope of the calling of God in Christ Jesus? An apostle wants us to have the "full assurance" of it, (Heb. vi. 11,) as he elsewhere would have us come to a "full assurance of understanding," (Col. ii. 2,) and "full assurance of faith." (Heb. x. 22.) What awful big words are these! I know the good Shepherd will excuse us for seeking for testimony that we are really and truly his children, and heirs of the unspeakable glory. (John xvii. 24.)

We of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists have been taught by grace to see ourselves sinners, and there was set before us the hope of what was our Lord's joy, enabling him to endure the cross and despise the shame. Grace taught us to look to him hanging there dead, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, and we laid hold on that hope, or as we sometimes say, "We experienced a hope." You see we were every one servants of sin, and fled in terror to lay hold on the hope that is sure and steadfast, because the refugees are in safety as long as the Hight Priest lives, and you know, O glory halleluiah! Jesus was made by the oath of God High Priest "after the power of an endless life." Now you may shout when you hear his voice saying, "Because I live, ye shall live also." There is no other "because" than that. That is

the hope of the Old Baptist people, and they may as well be called the church of the refugees, for they have every one in their trouble and anguish of soul, on account of their vileness and sins, fled, scared almost to death, for refuge, to lay hold on the hope. The reason why that hope saves is, that when the refugees lay hold on that hope it lays hold of them, like a live wire, and it holds them sure and steadfast. In their weakness they might become impatient, and think of letting go, giving it up, but that blessed hope cannot loosen its hold of them, being the gift of God, for you know "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." He is of one mind, and changes not, which is the very reason why the apostle felt justified in daring to write those immeasurably awful and consoling words, Romans viii. 37–39, (q. v.) He wants you, sister, or be sure he would not have called you by his grace (in your experience) to be a member of the bride, the Lamb's wife. You have read of "the marriage supper of the Lamb," and did you know that your experience was a call to that banquet? that you shall be escorted thither by his own angels? that your attire for that occasion will be a robe blood white, (the whitest white known)? that you shall wear a golden girdle, and a diadem? and that then and there you shall hear from himself in a kingly glad tone, "Eat, O friends, and drink, yea drink abundantly, O, Beloved"? It is then that he shall see before him of the travail of his soul, the church of the firstborn, (that is, a congress of kings,) and be satisfied. Later on when he delivers up the kingdom to his Father he will exultingly say, "Behold, I and the children whom thou hast given me!" Do you think you can stand that, sister? Which will be happiest then, the Redemer or his redeemed ones? O how grandly happy he will be! For it was great to speak a world from naught, but greater to redeem.

You want testimonies. Turn to Gal. v. 22–24, and examine the basket of "the fruit of the Spirit" an apostle has collected for your inspection. If that fruit, twelve varieties of it, is found in your soul, you are a tree of the Lord's planting. You have the witness in your own heart, for religion is a spiritual thing; worship is a spiritual thing; salvation is a spiritual thing; "Not of works, lest any man should boast" that his salvation was partly of the Lord and partly of himself.

Gideon, a brave, rough, strong man, in his modesty asked for a sign, and got it, then he wanted another, and got it, and his name appears among the illustrious brave men and women of faith, in Hebrews xi. Have you read it lately? and do you remember the question our Lord asked two or three times, "Why did you doubt?" Is your faith as big as a mustard seed? Comfort your heart, believe and wait. Remember your baptism as a confession and public proclamation that you are saved by the love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the communion of the holy Spirit. You have joined in the communion service, which is a showing forth of salvation by grace through the death of the Lamb of God, slain for your sins; yours, O sister.

I think I hear you saying, "O brother, all that is so nice, so glorious, but I am such a sinner." Hush, you must not talk that way, for all the sins of your whole life were blotted out 1870 years ago; were washed away, borne by another, cast behind God's back, forgotten, cast into the depths of the sea, cleansed by the blood of Jesus, covered, finished,

forgiven, passed by, not beheld, not imputed, not remembered, pardoned, put away, purged, passed away, remitted, removed, subdued, sought for and not found, shall not be mentioned, removed as far as the east is from the west, taken away.

Among other things we get "everlasting consolation," and the divine guarantee of our salvation, in the glorious doctrine of predestination. Some timid brethren and sisters are afraid to believe fully, and feel strong and safe in that grandest of all the blessed things revealed to us for our comfort. But the idea that since God created the world something has transpired in it that he did not know would, and did not intend should come to pass, is so preposterous it seems downright foolishness. Now you may read Romans vi. 17, and intelligently and comfortably join Paul in his thanksgiving.

In the fellowship of the Spirit, all yours,

WM. S. SPEER.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., Oct. 1, 1903.

WM. S. SPEER—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE BEYOND THIS MORTAL LIFE:—It is with fear and trembling I thus address you. Your very kind favors of the 10th and 7th were received a few days ago, also one of later date, requesting me to return the memorandum, which I will at your request. I have read it over several times, and now, my dear brother, comes the task I so much dread. (i. e.) I do not know, neither can I command language to express my gratitude to you for so kindly remembering me, poor me; neither can I ever tell to any one in this life the unspeakable joy and happiness I experienced last Sunday night while and after reading your wonderful exhortations and explanations of the sacred Scriptures. My brother, I was alone, save Jesus in the midst, my aged mother having retired, and I tell you I hardly knew whether I was in the body or out of the body. This I do know, my cup ran over. But as you say in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I hope to talk it all over with you, dear spiritual brother, and all the rest of the redeemed of the Lord, ten thousand years from now. When you speak of the kindred spirits, and the "still small voice" that impressed you to write to me, and address me as one of the children of the most high God, how it ravished my soul. I laid my Bible before me. I turned to and read each passage as cited, and rejoiced in God my Savior.

Brother, all your writings seem so plain and so impressive to me that I hardly could keep from writing to you before I received your letter, and telling you how much I have been comforted by them.

Now, lest I weary you, I will just say, God be thanked for such unspeakable gifts. Bless and praise his holy name. I desire a continuance of your correspondence.

Yours in hope,

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

HUNTINGTON VALLEY, Pa., July 26, 1903.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR FRIEND:—With this note that I am writing to you, I send a letter which I received from one of the members of the church. Although I am not a member, yet I do love to be with you all. Very soon after the association I received the letter which I send you. I wondered why she should write to me, for the letter seemed so sweet, and especially so after our heavenly Father allowed me to witness what I saw the last day of the as-

sociation. When all bade each other farewell, I wondered if it would be the will of God for us all to meet again. But I ought not to say us, as though I would include myself, for I am not worthy to claim a place among them, but I do love to be with all the people of God.

I have shown this letter which I inclose, to several, and all have spoke of it as being so good, and that it was too good to be hidden from others who love to read about the word of God, and my aunt, Mary Terry, has requested me to send it to you for the SIGNS. Now do with it as you think best. How often I wish that I could write such letters as I sometimes read, but the Lord knows best; it seems to be his will that my mouth should be closed from speaking, and my hand from writing, and it is well.

I think that I shall never forget the sermon that you preached at Southampton two years ago, when you in speaking compared the relation of God to his children with the sun shining on the dewy grass in the morning; it seemed so good, brought you very near to me. Shortly after that I had a dream which I think of often, though why I should do so I cannot tell, as it was but a dream.

Now please pardon this letter, as I did not intend writing so much. I trust that sometime it may be God's will that we may be nearer than friends, but I must wait until he says, It is my appointed time.

I remain sincerely your friend,

NELLIE PIERSON.

RICHBORO, Pa., June 7, 1903.

MISS NELLIE PIERSON—MY DEAR FRIEND:—No doubt you will be very much surprised to hear from me first, as I asked you to write to me, and said that I wished it, whether I answered it or not. I feel sure that you know why I said this; it was because of my inability, and no other reason. O, that I had the pen of a ready writer. I cannot tell why I should be impressed to write to different ones, feeling my weakness, and foolishness, and awful depravity as I do, yet I do believe that it is just because of all this that I feel compelled to write to you, I fear that I have thrown a chill upon your tender conscience, and that you have lost, or will lose, your confidence in me. How quickly that confidence can be blighted.

All day Saturday I was cast down with shame and remorse because of my foolish behavior. Before the association, I charged myself that I would take heed to myself and to my steps, I thought I will not act foolishly, hoping thus to redeem the love of my brethren, for I do not want to act in such a way that they may lose confidence in me, for then I should be the most miserable creature on earth, but how can I expect to retain it, when every moment I am doing or saying something that ought to drive them away from me? O, the charity which does appear in my brethren; what else can it be than that love, which is given from above, which holds us in its sweet bonds? Were it not for our heavenly lover, Christ, who has said, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee," our hope would fail indeed, and the more that love is tried, the brighter it shines forth. Did we see it shine any more brightly in any one of the Elders at the association, than in the oldest one there, as he arose to his feet and confessed with trembling heart and lips to our dear young brother, who was

just being set apart to the great battle-field, that he would know more about this love after he had passed through as many conflicts as he had done?

But what an adversary is Satan? Is not this just as great a mystery as the other? How can a man be just with God, when his laws are just, and his judgments sure? But how sweet the doctrine of God our Savior to poor fallen man, he gave his holy law as a school-master to Christ, where we find shelter from the winds of the great adversary which but a moment before appeared ready to blow us to atoms, and no "Dr. Puff" could cure, nor all the arms of men save us. How sweetly Elder White told us how he had been driven back as it were to the law, and seeing its justice he would be driven to his Lord again, with a wonderful lesson which must be learned now here, and can be learned no where else. I believe the law is called a rod of iron, for he has said, "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments, if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their transgression with a rod, and their iniquities with stripes." Let us remember it is not the children, but the adversary, their transgressions, that the fiery indignation of God will devour. The children shall be saved from the great adversary all the time, but not without great suffering. Then let us bless his holy name.

I remember one of the Elders said, "Those who walk religion do not have to talk so much." I can see that very plainly in others. So you see, I must talk all the more, for I feel that I have never walked it, nor can I ever do so, only as our heavenly Lover speaks to me in my distress, because I have not walked in his commandments. When, in his great mercy, he has bowed the heavens, and has come down, and whispers, "I am the way, walk ye in it," then I do feel that he is the way and the life, and all, and in all, to his dear believing ones. But he does not leave it with us after he has shown us the way; for he has said of the weak and the little lambs, that he takes them in his arms, and carries them in his bosom. So it seems to me that I have never walked or talked religion, save in this way. I may try to take heed to my steps, and try to watch, but if the Lord keeps not the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.

My dear friend, read Psalm cxxix., and verse four of Psalm cxxx. Have we ever been sick, and our lips parched with fever? Can we remember how we watched for the morning? Can we remember how long the nights seemed? How often we longed for a drink of water, but would not arouse our loved ones, but would wait for the morning. So the Beloved will come with meat and drink, and all that is sweet, and then how quickly we are healed, with just one little word, "I am thy Redeemer." What more could he say than he has said?

My dear Nellie, I cannot seem to make a point in this letter, but perhaps you can do so. I will leave this with you, hoping that it may stir up your pure mind by way of remembrance of me, to forgive all that is amiss, and to write to your unworthy friend. I will close with love to all your people; keep a good share for yourself.

Your loving but unworthy friend,

LIZZIE SCHAFER.

DECATUR, Texas, June 2, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—If you will allow such a poor weak worm as I to address you thus. If the Lord will illu-

minate my feeble mind, I would love to write about the goodness and mercies of of our all-wise God, who has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Yes, he does as pleases him in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and there are none that can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? All the powers that be are ordained of God, and everything under it the sun fills its place, the place that God appointed for. Tempests, storms and flood can never overleap their bounds, and the habitation of all things is fixed, and made sure by that God who said, Let there be light and there was light. The billows of the raging sea are calmed at his command, for he walks upon the deep and rides upon the storm in his excellency; all things are under his control, and whithersoever he will, he turns them; he is God, and he changes not; he is the same that he was in the beginning; his infinite wisdom beheld all creation when as yet there was nothing made that was made. All that ever has been, or that ever shall be, was embraced in his wisdom: man, the law given him, the disobedience, all was embraced in this hidden wisdom, and Christ stood in that all-embracing wisdom as a Lamb slain for the redemption of his people, before the foundation of the world. Wisdom had appointed a sacrifice before the transgression. If then, Adam was able to keep the law, why was the sacrifice prepared? O, says some one, something might happen, and men might need the sacrifice. Men say it might chance to be so, but let me say that nothing ever happens by chance with the great I AM; when he commands, it stands fast, and when he speaks it is done.

O, what a great comfort it is to me that he allows poor sinful me to view him as my all and in all, and to see that he works all things after the counsel of his own will. Great and marvelous are the works of the Lord God Almighty, and just and true are his ways who is the King of saints. He is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind; he loves his people with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving-kindness he draws them. They are thus drawn by his loving-kindness, not for their obedience, but because he loves them. Some out here say, It is for their good thoughts and actions that God blesses his people. Let me say to such an one, Just try to do your best for one moment, and then, write down every thought that passes through your mind in big plain letters on a blackboard in front of a congregation, where all can see it; I do not believe that one of you will try that way to show their good works. If one cannot hinder having evil thoughts for one minute, how does that one expect to receive a blessing for any good works?

Dear ones, the blessings received here in time are by the working of the Spirit of the Lord in us, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure; it is not for something that we have done, the Lord must put his Spirit into our hearts, before we can cry, Abba, Father. David says that the servants of the Lord are warned by his judgments, and in keeping them there is great reward. It is not *for* but *in* keeping them. Thus we see that the power to obey comes from God. Dear brethren, it seems to me that if I had power to obey, I would live in obedience all the days of my life, for I am sick and tired of sin, yet sin is mixed with all that I do; "When I would do good, evil is

present with me." So, like Paul, "The good I would, I do not, and the evil that I would not, that I do." But Paul said this was because of sin that dwells in him.

I fear this may weary you, but I believe you will bear with my weakness.

Your unworthy brother in hope of life eternal,

M. B. F. JONES.

[THE above letter suggests the truth to our mind that wherever our work comes in, if it comes in at all anywhere, there would boasting also be allowed. Boasting is indeed excluded, but never by the law of works. Whatever our work secures to us, that is not of grace. Grace does not glorify self but God. Our work does not glorify God but self, unless that work be the fruit of living faith within. The child of God knows that his DOING the pleasure of God is of him, as well the will wrought within; he works within, both to will and to do.—ED.]

NEWARK, Del., Sept. 14, 1903.

MRS. B. F. HAMILTON—DEAR MOTHER:—One morning lately I debated, for a moment, whether it would be of any use to take my Bible on the train for a few minutes reading, during my daily trip to Philadelphia. With me, of late, it has been dry times spiritually, so that I began to wonder if I should ever be hungry for the word again. On second thought it seemed borne on my mind that it might repay me to take it with me.

While on the train I began to read some of Elijah and Elisha's journeyings as recorded in Kings. The Lord's remnant at that time seemed very small indeed, and his presence seemed almost entirely withdrawn from the Israelites as a nation, a condition that reminds me of the existing state of affairs with the world generally at this present day. As I read I was made to marvel that men could be still unbelieving, when they saw the wonders wrought by Elijah and Elisha. But my own poor soul was refreshed, and I could praise Elijah's God, with thankfulness mixed with love and reverence. He is the God of the poor and afflicted of this world, and they are in his hands as his choice treasures. Truly we shall be lifted up to reign as kings, even as we are now lifted up, though the world knoweth us not.

In all their idolatry, Israel saw the manifest power of God in the wonders performed by Elijah, but they could not accept his God for their hearts were hardened. But what joy it is to the believer, whom God in his mercy and power has given life, and a heart of flesh, which enables him to know him as his Father, and to his grateful soul the truth that he is a precious jewel in his sight. At such a time the comforts come by the score, for if we are of value to him, we shall be nourished and cherished, we shall be kept by his power, receive all things, suffer and live through all things, live to glorify him, and die to glorify him. We shall reign as kings in the earth, richer than the wealthiest of earthly kings, whose treasures perish. But we have the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. Christ says, "I am the way, the truth and the life." He also says in his prayer to the Father, "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me." Surely the elect people of God are safe in time.

Elijah knew that by the power of God he could prove Baal false, but he could not bring back the hosts of Israel to wor-

ship the true God, for it was not the appointed time. I believe Elijah was reconciled that it should be so. When we are thus reconciled to the dealings of God with us, how pleasant the spiritual journey is to us. When I think of all the blessings bestowed on me in worldly things, I feel like a spoiled favorite child. Although sometimes fretful and complaining, I find my dear Savior is still carefully and lovingly leading me. I can see no good in my natural life, and have to depend on the mercy of God, trusting that I may be clothed in his righteousness, and holy in him.

One more thought, which was shown me in reading about Elijah, when he went in the strength of the food the angel gave him forty days and forty nights, unto Horeb, the mount of God. Spiritual food is given us just as we need it, both as to the manner and measure, so that it sustains us for a longer or shorter time, as our God sees will be for our best good. Natural food is taken often and regularly to sustain our natural bodies, but spiritual food is given wisely, and well suited to any time or circumstances in which we may be placed.

Altogether, mother, it proved a very profitable morning to me, by taking along my little Bible. Would it not be well to have it handy always?

Lovingly,

CHAS. W. HAMILTON.

PRATT CITY, Ala., Oct. 27, 1903.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I feel inclined again to write a little for the SIGNS, and leave it to your better judgment whether to print it or not. Since I wrote last I have attended our own and three other associations. There was a large attendance at these meetings, but the best of order prevailed, and I never saw better attention and more interest manifested in the preached word. The deliberations of all four of the associations were pleasant and harmonious. I returned from the last one on Monday, Oct. 19th, and attended a church thirty miles away last Saturday and Sunday, and at the close of the meeting a young man and his wife were received upon a relation of their experience, and in a few minutes were baptized by Elder Barton, in the Warrior River, near the church-house. I have reason to and do feel thankful to the Lord that he provided for me to attend so many good meetings this year. All has been peace and praise where I have gone.

I received the SIGNS yesterday, and read the articles and editorials in succession, and it was all harmonious. Sound principles, written in a meek and gentle spirit. The appeal of those few brethren at Nashville, did not deviate in principle and spirit. There is not a line of sarcasm in it; it was all plain, earnest and sound. Their platform is compact, and I believe it will meet the approbation of thousands of our people. I will say for myself, that I indorse it and their actions. Some years ago I made a statement in the SIGNS of a church east of Birmingham, that passed a non-fellowship resolution against absolute predestination of all things. I had been visiting the church regularly, but I conferred not with flesh and blood, neither went I to them who were Elders before me, but straightway I quit going there, and would not hear to any solicitations to go again, and I have never been in the stand with the preacher that was pastor there then, and do not wish to be till a reformation. I was new in the cause then, but I shouldered the responsibility of refusing to affiliate or confer with them any further. I had it

wrought in me that sound Baptists did not declare against the doctrine of the Bible, and our primitive fathers, and I want to extend the right hand of fellowship to those few in Nashville, and exhort them to continue in the faith, and be not removed from the hope of the gospel. The Lord will have his reserved ones (the remnant according to the election of grace) when he comes again without sin unto salvation. This remnant is the Lord's portion, redeemed out of every kindred, people, tongue and nation, and there is enough of them to make one body, or bride, and that is all he claims. Paul says, "There is one body, and one Spirit," and Jesus says, "My dove, my undefiled, is but one." The old system of legal and conditionalism admitted the handmaids to increase the number of children, but they were all children of the bond woman, and all continued to mock, even till the Savior rose from the dead, and the bond woman and her children were cast out, and the inheritance, the kingdom of Christ, and the gospel, was given to the children of the promise, and our mother needs no help of the institutions of men, and the doctrine of Arminianism, to help increase her numbers. Her children, and even the hairs of their heads, are all numbered, and they will all be made manifest in time, for it is the promise of God, "At this time will I come, and Sarah [the new Jerusalem church] shall have a Son." And the Lord has said, "They shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest." And the church did not need this volunteer service imposed on her in 1792, and we do not need it now; and let us "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with this yoke of bondage."

P. J. POWELL.

FORESTBURG, Texas, Nov. 2, 1903.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I will try to send in two dollars to be added to my subscription to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as I do not feel willing to do without them, as they contain nearly all the preaching I hear of late, as our Baptists are so scattered in this country we do not get together often, and when the SIGNS comes laden with the precious truths of the gospel, it is certainly like cold water to a thirsty soul. I for one certainly do indorse the doctrine it sets forth, for I believe it to be the doctrine of God our Savior, and O, how thankful we all ought to be for such a medium of correspondence, to our dear editors, and first of all to our heavenly Father, whom we believe ordained it. How I would love to tell to the dear brethren and sisters how much comfort and consolation their writings have been to me, a poor, weak worm of the dust; how thankful I ought to be for every blessing the good Lord bestows upon me, but O, I am so sinful I cannot live as I ought, and my writings look so much like myself that with shamed face I have to lay them aside, and almost wish I could drop out of sight for the time being, and then I remember how good the Lord has been to me all along the way, and then I want to sing his praises out aloud. I felt to be wonderfully blessed this summer in having the happy privilege of visiting some of the churches in the western counties, both in Wilbarger and Greer counties, and meeting many dear brethren and sisters. They are sound and faithful, they have underwent much persecution of late, but they are standing firm on the Rock Christ Jesus. I shall long remember their kindness to poor, unworthy me.

Now, brother Beebe, I feel ashamed to send this poor writing, but I want you to

know how much I appreciate the SIGNS, and I will trust to your charity.

Now may the good Lord so guide the dear editors, and all the writers, as to keep them from error in this dark and trying time, and may he uphold you in the future as in the past, is the prayer of your little sister,

(MRS.) S. E. ELLIS.

BLUE SPRINGS, MO., Aug. 28, 1903.

DEAR SISTER BOGGS:—Your precious letter has been a source of much joy and consolation to us, in that it speaks forth the same sentiments that we trust are our own, and we feel that we can have sweet fellowship and communion together, having, as we trust, been taught of the same Father. While we have unintentionally delayed answering your letter, we have each day spoken of you, and thought of you as we meditated on the things of the kingdom. We rejoice with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory that he is the one God, the same yesterday, to-day and forever, who says, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.

Dear sister, a few things with reference to ourselves will be of interest we hope. We were both born in Kentucky of predestinarian parents, and grew up under the preaching of Elder Thomas P. Dudley, and others of the same precious faith and order. Sister Knight's mother was baptized at the same time with Elder Dudley, and she herself was baptized in February, 1853, and brother Knight the June following, in Clay County, Missouri, and while there have been many sorrowful things to mar their happiness, they have been kept by the sustaining hand of their God, and have not wished to enter into any of the new ways, but have been glad that the Lord has kept them in the old paths, and while there are a great many Baptists around them, very many that they know are misled, and seemingly willingly so, yet there are those with whom they can mingle, and realize that they do know and love the same sound, and so they are content. They do not have the preached word many times, only as they obtain it from the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which has been their family paper from its first publication.

Brother Knight in his early boyhood, about thirteen years of age, went with his mother to church, and in passing his grandfather's place he found him at his woodpile with a copy of the SIGNS, which was then a small pamphlet. His grandfather stopped them, and said to his daughter, "Nancy, come here, I have something that I wish to read to you." He read several articles to her, and she said, "That is Baptist doctrine," and the grandfather said, "It is Bible doctrine." This reply often came to him in after years, when the doctrine was discussed, and while the SIGNS OF THE TIMES bore that testimony then, he feels that it bears the same to-day, without any deviation from the truth, and brother Knight has been a constant subscriber for fifty years, being now in his eighty-fifth year, and he wishes to tell you that in the last few years he has seen things among those claiming to be Baptists that he never expected to see in the Old Baptist church. We know that when the three thousand were added to the church they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and the same doctrine and fellowship is what he would like to see in these times, but he says that it is as we are told in holy writ, there must be a falling away. He is satisfied that the Lord is able and will do his pleasure.

Brother Knight remembers when the

first division occurred among the Baptists, in 1832. Then in 1856 and 1857 when in his section of the country the Baptists were in peace, love and fellowship, all believing the doctrine that the SIGNS advocated; he at that time being an agent for the SIGNS, knows of the falling off caused by those in Virginia who made war on the SIGNS, and the doctrine of the Bible advocated in the SIGNS. Then he remembers when the Means trouble occurred, and many went off in that craze, and he says that he fears that the ideas advanced concerning conditional time salvation, with the gradual creeping in of secret organizations, will again destroy the peace and fellowship of the Baptists in his country. Already he can see its deadly work. But, he adds, we ought not to be troubled by these things, for "We know that the foundation standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." And he will make it all plain.

Brother and sister Knight wish me to say that they have requested me to do this writing for them, as both are unable to see to write as formerly. I am the wife of Elder Wm. Startzman, we live across the street from them, and our mutual comfort in sitting together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus is a great pleasure to us. I hope that you will look kindly over this for my sake, and write again to dear brother and sister Knight.

With love from us all, we remain yours in the gospel,

T. KNIGHT AND WIFE.

BETHLEHEM, Ga.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have for sometime felt impressed to write you in the way of encouragement to you, but I feel my weakness. I was a subscriber to the SIGNS over forty years ago, and was acquainted with brother W. L. Beebe, so I knew something of the trials of brother Gilbert Beebe; I heard him preach over fifty years ago. I find that the SIGNS advocates the same doctrine as then, and it gives me much comfort to read it, and the letters of the dear brethren; I find that they have the same trials that I have. I have much bodily affliction, and do not get to preaching often, and my trials and temptations are sore; sometimes I feel as though my feet were well nigh slipped, then again when I have a little glimpse of my Savior, I feel as though he has taken my feet out of the pit of miry clay, and has placed them upon a rock, and has established my goings, and put a new song into my mouth; I am sometimes up, and sometimes down, yet the goodness and mercy of the Lord have kept me all the days of my life, and it is by the grace of God that I am what I am, and I do desire to praise and glorify his name what few days I have yet to live. There is so much sin mixed with all that I do; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak; to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not. We learn that trials, tribulations and necessities are the inheritance of christians here, but David said, "I once was young, but now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." Yet the poor, halting child of God is sometimes made to exclaim, "Is his loving-kindness clean gone forever?" and, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." But when he has a glimpse of the dear Savior he can say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

Fearing that I may worry you, I will close. Go on, dear brother, in the fear of the Lord, and reprove, rebuke, exhort

with all longsuffering and doctrine, with meekness, and in the fear of the Lord. May his grace keep you, and his everlasting arm be underneath you, with your dear correspondents, that your paper may edify the feeble little ones, and may the Lamb feed them, and lead them to living waters, and may God wipe all tears from their eyes.

Yours in tribulation,

W. J. BAGGETT.

BROOME CENTRE, N. Y., Nov. 10, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I like to unburden my mind at times to you, and when I think of endeavoring to do so, O how I shrink, for I know you must be burdened so much; none can know as you know and feel; truly my heart aches for you, and if you can tell me how to help you bear them, or give you any relief from them I feel it would be a pleasure for me to do so.

I am the same poor, halting sinner I ever was; this is my feeling to-night. Sunday afternoon and evening I felt to rejoice and sing praises; all my feelings were thankfulness to him who rules all things. Yea, I could not keep still, all was joy and gladness; sin, death and hell had fled away; words fail me to express my feeling. But to-night, O what a change, forsaken and alone; yes, I am way down in the slough of despond, hardly a ray of hope left me. I look back to my experience, and I am unable to gather any sense of feeling; my condition is very pitiful. O, why should I be telling you this? you can do me no good, but it does give me some relief to unburden my poor soul to-day. I have often thought that if I could pass away and be at rest, it would be a great relief to me and all the brethren. My life has been so unprofitable to me and all mankind: it has been filled up with mistakes all the way through, so unprofitable, why should I remain any longer? May the Lord keep, guide and bear me up all my journey through, make me to know and do his will. I desire to be humble, and bear what it is his pleasure to place on me, and not murmur or complain.

I will stop on this subject; why I have been led to pen you these thoughts I am unable to say, they were far from me when I sat down; I thought at supper I would just comply with Mrs. Bump's request, which I just received to-night, and see I have run wild, but pardon me, it is only one more of my mistakes.

I have been reading lately some of the writings in some of the old SIGNS; the same old ring, and steadfastness to the gospel as is published to-day; truly there has been an unseen hand that has held and guided the minds of the editors and writers all the way along from its first issue. This unseen hand is mighty, yea, it is almighty, having all power and wisdom, none can stay his hand.

We are (wife and I) well as usual; this we consider a great blessing, which we desire to be thankful for. Mrs. L. joins in sending love to you and sister Beebe. We are all alone now.

Yours in hope of being freed from sin and self,

D. M. LEONARD.

NORTH YAKIMA, Wash.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Inclosed find post-office money order for two dollars, for which give me credit for another year on the SIGNS. It seems to me that I cannot do without them, I have been a reader of them ever since I can recollect; I was but two years of age when the first issue came out; my father took them and I have

been a reader of them ever since I could read, and I wish to say that I do not see any change from the doctrine which it then advocated, and it has stood all the storms of reproach which have been heaped upon it. Dear brethren, still go on and contend for the truth, and the faith which was once delivered to the saints. The doctrine for which the SIGNS contends is indorsed by the brethren in this country. May the dear Lord sustain you by his grace, and give you light and liberty to rightly divide the word of truth, and give to each his portion in due season, that they may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, is the prayer of one who feels unworthy to claim the appellation of brother, but loves them and their company May the Lord keep and sustain you.

Your unworthy brother,

J. L. CHAMBERLIN.

APPOINTMENTS.

IF the Lord will, I will attend appointments as follows: Delmar, Thursday night, Nov. 26th; Salisbury, Md., Saturday at 3 p. m., and Sunday, Nov. 28th and 29th; Nassaongo, Monday, 10:30; Mr. Levi Laws', Monday night; Indiantown, Tuesday morning and afternoon; Mr. A. C. Holloway's, Tuesday night; Snow Hill, Wednesday night; brother Warren's, Thursday night; Broad Creek, Friday, 10:30.

SILAS H. DURAND.

BROOME CENTRE, N. Y., Oct. 29, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Please publish the following appointments. Nothing preventing, Elder Eubanks, of Delaware, will try and fill the same. At J. D. Hubbell's, or schoolhouse, as he directs, on Monday night, Dec. 21st. Halcottville, Tuesday, Dec. 22d. Yellow meeting-house, Wednesday, Dec. 23d. Lexington, Thursday, Dec. 24th. Gilboa, Friday, Dec. 25th. Jefferson, Saturday, Dec. 26th. Broome Centre, Sunday, Dec. 27th. Middleburg, Monday, Dec. 28th. Schoharie, brother Kinney's, Tuesday, Dec. 29th. Schoharie, Wednesday, Dec. 30th. Meeting each day at 11 a. m.

We feel thankful that he desires to come among us.

D. M. LEONARD.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

PLEASE BE SURE,

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

By observing the above rules you will enable us to accurately fill your orders.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1903.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

EPHESIANS VI. 1.

When a difference in views arises among the brethren, how careful we should be to examine ourselves to see if we are in the truth. The fact that we have believed a certain way all our lives, or that nine-tenths of all the religious world advocates a certain doctrine, is no evidence that it is the truth; the Scriptures are our only guide, and a "Thus saith the Lord" must settle all strife. When brethren so far forget their calling that they resort to ridicule and sarcasm, to say nothing of false charges, the more preached or written in such a spirit the wider is made the breach between them, and while pursuing such a course it is vain to cry, "Peace! Peace!!" The only way in which peace can be assured to Zion is in following the divine injunction, which reads, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye that are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou be tempted."

Now when two or more brethren disagree, both or all of them may be in the wrong, but there cannot be more than one in the right, for if one is in the right, all that disagree with him must be in the wrong. In consideration of this fact how cautious we should be about censuring a brother for not agreeing with us in our views.

It is right, and it is our duty to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, but if our brother is overtaken in a fault (error), it is only in meekness that we can restore such an one, considering ourselves how liable we are to err. It is only in this meek and lowly spirit that we can obey this Scripture, and it is only as the grace of God enables us to exercise this spirit that we can be said to be spiritual.

Our mind has been led to the above thoughts while contemplating the condition of our beloved Zion at the present day. Much is being written and said upon the subjects of "Absolute Predestination of all things," and "Conditional Time Salvation," and in some cases there has been a spirit manifested quite different from the rule given by the Scripture cited above.

As far as our acquaintance extends among the Old School or Primitive Baptists, there is none of them but what believe that if any ever come to a knowledge of the truth, it must be by divine revelation. Then what a denial of your faith it is to censure your brethren because they are not as strong in the faith as yourself. While the Signs of the Times have contended and still continues to contend for certain principles of doctrine that of late years have been opposed by many, yet we do not think any will accuse us of resorting to slang or ridicule in defending those principles. Much misrepresentation has been made of the brethren holding to these views, and some have thereby been deceived, and really think that the "Absoluters," as they are termed, do not believe in exhortations, and no matter what they do

they cannot be disciplined by the church, because it was predestinated, and they could not help it. To all such we will say, You are greatly deceived, and we cite all such to the columns of the SIGNS from their first issue to the present day, which they will find ever teeming with exhortations and admonitions from the brethren throughout the whole United States, that believe in the predestination of all things, whose walk and order we feel confident will compare favorably with any sect or faction on the face of the earth. If any reading these statements have their doubts about this, let them visit among these brethren, and behold their faith and order, and judge for themselves, and not from hearsay.

A great deal of stress has been laid on the word "absolute," in connection with the predestination of all things, by those who refute the doctrine, as it is not a Bible word, yet nine out of every ten that object to the word "absolute," because it is not in the Bible, will use the expression, "In keeping the commandments there is great reward;" yet this is not in the Bible, that we have ever seen.

This playing upon a certain word or words seems rather more of the nature of caviling, than of a meek and spiritual effort to restore peace. As to the word "absolute," in connection with predestination, we know none who are tenacious for the word, and if it is obnoxious to any of the brethren the SIGNS is willing, and so declared over fifty years ago, to discontinue its use, as altogether superfluous, as connected with God's predestination, and we feel confident this is the sentiment of the predestinarian brotherhood generally.

Much the same line of reasoning is used against the brethren that do not believe in conditionalism, as is used against those who believe in God's predestination of all things; they are charged with not believing in good works, and it is said of them that they believe that if they are to be blessed they will be blessed, no matter what their walk may be. We really feel sorry for any who are so deceived that they can say such things, and for their benefit we will say that we do believe in conditional salvation, not only in time, but eternal salvation also. The only difference is we believe the saints must be in this condition through the operation of the Spirit, while our opponents argue that we can work ourselves into this condition. We believe that when we are in this blessed condition the condition brings forth the good works, while our opponents claim that the good works bring about the blessed condition. We believe the life produces the fruit, and not the fruit the life. It is only as Christ is made manifest in our mortal bodies that we can rejoice in Spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh, and all true blessedness depends upon this condition, whether in time or in eternity. Hence we believe in conditional salvation, but this condition is all the work of Christ, and not of man. And as said before, when we are thus unspeakably blessed, the fruits of the Spirit spring forth, love, joy, peace and all the beautiful cluster, and we then worship God in Spirit and in truth. When we are in this condition it is a delightful privilege to serve the Lord, and the blessing is right in the service, not something to come later on, after we have performed what we consider our duty, in hope of reward. It is not for what the Lord will do for us, that we should serve him, but what he has done for us, is what prompts us to serve the Lord acceptably.

Exhortation is enjoined on the saints by the inspired word, and is a gift to the

church, and exhorting the brethren to good works is right, but when we appeal to their carnal, selfish natures, by promising them rewards for their service, we are not fulfilling the injunctions of the Scriptures. It is the incentive that is objectionable, not the good works, nor exhortation to good works, but when any other inducement is held out to the saints than Christ and him crucified, to persuade them to serve the Lord, it will bring forth more Ishmaels than Isaacs, and sooner or later we will receive the edict, "Cast out the bond woman and her son," whether she is in the church, or in our individual experience. "For the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac." One gendereth to bondage, and the other is free, and of unmerited grace. B.

NOT HAVING ON THE WEDDING GARMENT.

SISTER Sophronia B. Thompson asks about the man who had not on the wedding garment at the marriage supper?

It is not necessary to quote the whole narrative, as no doubt it is familiar to our readers. The especial thing to which attention is called is that portion of the parable which narrates when the king came in to see his guests, he found there one who had not on the wedding garment, and who could give no excuse, and who was then commanded to be bound, and cast into outer darkness, where there should be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

We have long thought that the wedding garment here is not intended to represent the imputed righteousness of Christ; it does not seem to us that any one ever gets into the feast at all without that. The terms of the parable seem to imply censure upon the man himself, as though he was guilty of a violation of the law or custom of [illegible] this cannot be true of [illegible] eousness of Christ; [illegible] gift, and no man is ev[illegible] cause he has not on th[illegible]

Our thoughts about this matter have been something like this, we have been informed by those who have studied eastern customs, that when a king has made a feast, and has commanded the presence of the chosen guests, he himself sends to each one a suitable garment which must be worn by those who are bidden. If one should come without the wedding garment which was provided for him, it argued either that he had not received the garment, and therefore had not been bidden, or else that he despised the bounty of the king, and had willfully violated the requirements of the glad occasion. Such an one would not come desiring to honor his sovereign; his presence without the wedding garment would be the highest insult to both the king and his guests.

A simple illustration may set this before us clearly. If among ourselves a wedding occurs, and many are bidden to the wedding, or if a great dinner is given, and many neighbors and friends are bidden, it would be thought right by each guest, if he were of a proper frame of mind, that he should clothe himself with the best apparel that he had, in honor of his host and of the guests. Suppose, however, that one should come to the wedding or feast with unwashed hands and face, with rough apparel, or with soiled clothing, as though he had just come out of the field or shop, unshaved and unkempt, it would be rightly thought that he had little respect for the occasion, or for the host or the company present. It would be an insult, and the man who should so present himself ought to be

ared; and perhaps his host would inmate to him that he was not in a suitable apparel to mingle with his well dressed guests. Such an one ought to be ashamed of himself. If any man had a proper respect for the company and the occasion, he would at least endeavor to come in respectable apparel, and with clean hands and face.

Now this illustrates the condition of the man in the parable who had not on the wedding garment. Its application has long seemed to us to be this: there is a form of suitable behavior in the church required in the word of all who profess godliness; yet it is a sorrowful truth that not all who come into the church of God walk as becometh saints; holiness becometh the house of the Lord; some are not suitably appareled with good works, who profess godliness; some are not adorned with the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit; some are not making manifest the beauty of the Lord in their daily life; some walk carelessly as though they had no regard for the place to which they have come, the house of the Lord; the work of their hands is not established as David in the Psalm prays that it may be upon the people of God; some live after the flesh and die. They who thus despise the honor of the king and the glory of his house are a source of shame and sorrow to all the faithful ones; their course is a reproach to Jerusalem. Blessed indeed are they to whom the reproach of Jerusalem is a burden. It seems to us that it is this garment of careful, sober conduct, of obedience to the law in Zion, which constitutes the wedding garment of the parable, and which this one man lacked, thus despising the goodness of the king, and showing no respect to the house of the king, nor to those who abided there. Such an one will be cast into outer darkness, and it will be darkness that can be felt; in his sorrow and shame there will be weeping, weeping over his sin and folly and thoughtlessness, and gnashing of teeth, as he trembles at his condition, for we believe that the man thus cast out was one of the bidden guests, as well as the others, but he was one of those overcome of the flesh, and neglectful of the things that become believers to observe, according to the commandment of God in the gospel. Our God will not pass by the transgressions of his people, but will visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes. This is the binding and casting into outer darkness, this is delivering such an one unto Satan, that he may learn not to blaspheme. In consideration of these things, well might the apostle say, "What manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness." C.

MATTHEW VI. 23; JOHN I. 5.

Sister Ruth Adamson, of Rockville, Md., asks what is meant by the words, "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" And, "The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not"? The first expression is found in Matthew vi. 23, and the latter one is found in John i. 5.

It seems that the first expression applies to those that claim to see and understand, and yet are in total ignorance of the word and will of God. It would apply to the Greeks who sought after wisdom, and counted themselves wise, and who despised the plain message of the cross; claiming to be in the light they yet were in darkness; the natural wisdom which they possessed was really foolishness with God; the more of such wisdom

they had, the grosser was the darkness which filled them, since all the wisdom and prudence which they so much vaunted, only served to blind their eyes to the true light. Better off by far were they who had no human wisdom to pride themselves upon. Reference is specially made to the vain philosophy of the wise men among the Greeks, by which they endeavored to find out God. This was in direct opposition to the truth that God can be known only by revelation through the Spirit. The further human philosophy proceeds, the deeper it plunges into darkness and ignorance concerning God. Thus is fulfilled the word, "No man by searching can find out God;" he can be known only by the humble-minded and the lowly in spirit; babes in contrast with the wise and prudent of this world. The wisdom and philosophy of the Greeks, and of all in all ages who think to find out God by human research, only leads its votaries into deeper and deeper darkness.

So also this language of the Savior applies to the self-righteousness of the Jews; they claimed to have light, and to be especially favored of God; they boasted over the rest of mankind, God's special favor to them they regarded as a token of their own superior goodness, and so instead of being humbled by it, they were exalted and became arrogant and boastful; the true light was not in them, and so what they called light was in truth only deeper darkness; publicans and harlots should go into the kingdom of heaven before these vain pharisees. The worldly wise, and the worldly righteous alike were in gross darkness; the very light in them, of which they boasted, was darkness, and how great was that darkness! The wise must become ignorant, and the righteous must become unrighteous, before the true light could shine in them in the face of Jesus Christ. In their wisdom and in their righteousness they were going away from God, and if ever granted repentance unto life, they must come right back to the starting place, and be saved as the ignorant and the unrighteous are saved.

The second text, John i. 5, we have regarded as relating to the coming and teaching of Jesus on earth, and as setting forth the truth that the carnal Jews and the wise among men did not comprehend the real light that shined forth in all that Jesus did and taught. They were looking for gross earthly light, and were not possessed of eyes to see the true light; they looked for natural things, and Jesus came to set forth spiritual things; they looked for an earthly kingdom, and the kingdom of Jesus was not of this world, therefore they did not comprehend it. Jesus came and lived among the Jews, and his whole ministry was among them, yet they did not comprehend him, or his teaching, or his work. This is what we understand is meant by the darkness not comprehending the light which then shone among them. The same is true today; natural men, where the gospel is preached, do not comprehend it, as being the true light, but count the preaching of the cross as foolishness, therefore men do not receive him or his gospel, if left to themselves. But God has chosen to enlighten the blind eyes of some, and they see, and in measure do comprehend, but these are not darkness but light in the Lord. It is of the free mercy of God that any do comprehend this true light.

C.

GRIEVE NOT THE HOLY SPIRIT.

BROTHER J. W. Patten, of Noank, Conn., asks, What do the words in Ephesians iv. 30, signify, "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God"?

First, we desire to say that it is sure they do not mean the God of the whole earth, who is supremely blessed for evermore, and whose throne is in the heavens, is or can be in his nature grieved, or be caused to sorrow as are men, his creatures. The blessed Lord, when on earth, was often grieved, and spent his life in sorrow, but this was as the son of man, who was one with his people in their flesh. He was made like unto his brethren in all things, but it must not be supposed for a moment that the supreme Godhead is subject to changing passions as are men. Indeed, to the contrary, the Scriptures emphatically teach that he is unchangeable. "He is in one mind, and who can turn him?" "I am God, and change not."

It is then manifest that the words referred to by our brother cannot signify any change in eternal Deity, or that he can know sorrow or pain. It appears to us that the closing words of the verse referred to will when examined, throw light upon the subject embraced in the words quoted by our brother. "Whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Our bodies are said to be the temples of the Holy Ghost; the holy Spirit is said to be given unto the chil- of God; he dwells with them and abides in them. Here is a great mystery, that the Holy Ghost should abide in mortal flesh. We do not attempt to explain this mystery, but we do accept the teaching of the Scripture in this matter, and believe and rejoice in it. This same Spirit is said to make intercession for us according to the will of God, and this intercession is with groanings that cannot be uttered. It is by this Spirit that saints cry, Abba, Father, and the Spirit is said to cry, Abba, Father; he cries, and by him we also cry.

Now it is this Spirit, as it dwells within the saint, which cries in him, which prays with groanings which cannot be uttered, and that within this man also is grieved, grieved by sin; sin is the only thing that can grieve the holy Spirit; sin is the opposite of holiness. By this Spirit, which elsewhere is called the Spirit of holiness, believers come to love holiness, and to abhor all sin; it is a heart-searching Spirit; it detects and reproves all sins; the sins of the heart, and of the thoughts, as well as in the outward lives of those who believe; it is grieved at all sin in the person where it dwells.

Now the best evidence that the holy Spirit has sealed us to the day of redemption, and abides within us, as a seal, is that we ourselves grieve over sin. Does any one feel to adopt the language of David as recorded in the fifty-first Psalm, in which he confesses the grievous sins of his heart and life? Then they may be sure that the holy Spirit dwells within them, and that their grief over sin is caused by this indwelling Spirit. It is the holy Spirit then, as he dwells within us, and lives within us, and controls us, which causes sin to appear so exceeding sinful to us, and that when we err brings grief to the heart and conscience. There is no better evidence of the indwelling of the holy Spirit than grief on account of sin. This is not that slavish grief which is felt only when the punishment of sin is feared, but that grief which a child feels when he realizes that he has grieved a kind and loving father.

By this holy Spirit the believer is

sealed unto the day of full redemption; that is, unto the day of full redemption from sin, when the promise shall be perfectly fulfilled that we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And so as such blessed hope is ours, and we are looking forward to it with earnest desire, all that is contrary to that perfection in holiness must grieve and afflict us. He that expects and longs to be perfect in holiness, cannot enjoy unholiness in his present life; he must grieve over his want of perfection in heart and in life. This is what seems to us to be the grieving of the holy Spirit. The evidence of it is, that we ourselves grieve over sin.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

GENESIS I. 27; II. 5.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Will you or brother Leonard Cox, Jr., give your views either privately or through the SIGNS, on Gen. i. 27, and also on chapter ii. and last clause of the 5th verse? and may God bless you, my brother, and oblige yours,

J. E. SETTLE.

NEW HOPE, Ky., Jan. 8, 1861.

REPLY.

There is probably enough in the Scriptures proposed for consideration to engage the best abilities of all the brethren. We do not wish to prevent brother Cox giving his views on the subject, but will leave enough for him when we have said all we can upon these Scriptures.

Gen. i. 27: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

Gen. ii. 5th verse, and last clause: "And there was not a man to till the ground."

Some have supposed that after the Lord God had created man, there still was not a man found to till the ground, but we should observe that in the first of these passages we have an account of the creation, and in the other, of the generations of the heavens and of the earth. Although a record of the creation is fully given in the first chapter, in order to relate the generations of the heavens and earth, it was necessary to recapitulate the origin of man, which in the second chapter fully accords with the record in the first. That the man formed, Gen. ii. 7, is the same man created, Gen. i. 27, for the Lord God blessed him, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, &c. That this man created and formed is the same of whom it is written, "This is the Book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him. Male and female created he them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created."—Gen. v. 1, 2. The terms, *created*, *formed* and *made*, are used in ascribing the origin of man to the creative power and workmanship of the Lord God. God who had the power to create, form and make man of the dust of the ground, had power also to give to him the decree, multiply and replenish, &c. He spake the word, and it stands fast; he commands, and it is done. This man was by the order of his Creator to multiply, and accordingly without any further creation has been constantly multiplying, and all the millions of his posterity for nearly six thousand years are but the multiplication of the one man which God created, formed and made out of the dust of the ground. In mathematics, multiplication differs very widely from addition. Man has accumulated nothing in the six thousand years of his history, but has been from the birth of Cain constantly developing

what was embodied in him at his creation. And this principle of multiplication is exemplified in every part of the vegetable creation. Every green thing which God caused to grow out of the earth, contained in it the seed for its propagation. How awfully grand and sublime is the contemplation of the infinity of God, displayed in his perfect knowledge of all the myriads created in the one man, Adam, embracing all nations of men who dwell on all the face of the earth, and he hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation. (Acts xvii. 26.)

But we are not only informed that the Lord God created man, and in him created all the human family, and appointed each descendant of Adam, the bounds of his habitation, and time of his development, but we are also told that the Lord God created man in his own image and likeness. From this declaration some have inferred that man was like God in regard to the perfections of the Deity. But although man in his creation was without sin, until he transgressed the law of his Creator, his sinless innocence was not to be compared with the immutable holiness of God. Man was capable of sinning, as his history has painfully demonstrated, while his Creator's perfections are unchangeable. Not only so, but the wisdom, power, truth, justice, omniscience and independence of God were and are peculiar to himself, and have never been found in any of his creatures. What is an image? It is something visible, that can be seen. The supreme and eternal Godhead is invisible to finite beings, and he is called the "Invisible God." No man hath seen his face at any time. But we read that "God was manifest in the flesh," and that our Lord Jesus Christ, in his Mediatorial relations, is the image of the invisible God. That he, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. That he is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, and as God only reveals himself to us in and through Christ, and as the Father is in Christ, and Christ is in the Father, he that hath seen him, hath seen the Father also. Every perfection of the Father is fully deliniated in him who is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.

We speak of Christ in his Mediatorial glory, as the image of the invisible God, while at the same time we hold that he, in his essential Godhead, is the very Lord God, whose attributes are so clearly portrayed in him as the divine Mediator. He is as truly God, as he is truly Mediator between God and man, hence the creation of the world, and the salvation of his church, are both ascribed to him. See John i. 3, "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." Also, Col. i. 15–17, "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature; for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers; all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Hence he is the very Lord God who created man, as declared in our text; while as the Mediatorial Head of the church, he is the image or perceptible manifestation of the eternal Deity, which is in every other sense invisible to us.

If, then, we hold that Christ is, as the Scriptures declare, the express image of the invisible God, how was man created in the image and likeness of the Creator?

To our mind the explanation of the inspired apostle, Rom. v. 14, is satisfactory. In this text Paul declares that Adam is the FIGURE of him that was to come, and in the connection shows that Christ was "Him that was to come." And as we have shown that Christ is the Lord God who created Adam and all things in heaven and in earth, it is enough to know that Adam was constituted in his creation, the figure or image of Christ, to show that he was created in the image of his Creator. A sculptor may from a block of marble carve a perfect image of a living man, but he cannot inspire it with the life or animation of a living man, and so there were many images or figures of him that was to come, contained in the Old Testament types. So Adam, though a mere creature, wholly dependent on God for support, and liable to fall, to sin, and then to die, still "is the figure of him that was to come," that is, Jesus Christ our Lord.

It is not necessary that we should now attempt to trace the analogy of the type and anti-type, the figure, and the body which it represents, the image and the original, designed to be represented. Look at man, as presented in the character of an image, and what do we see?

First. In the earliest presentation he stands a unit, embodying a multitude which no man can number, thus an emblem of the Mediator which is One, and but one, and yet in him God has secured a people which where chosen in him before the foundation of the world.

Second. Adam was the federal head and legal representative of all the human family, before Eve was formed, or any of his posterity born, and in that unity and identity of human life, in his transgression they all were made sinners, even so do we find in Christ the spiritual life of all the spiritual seed, so identified that he is emphatically the life of all his people, and the unity and identity so perfect that by his obedience to the law, all that he embodied in his Mediatorial headship of the church, are made righteous. See Rom. v. 14–21.

Third. As our text says, "Male and female created he them." And in Gen. v. 1, 2, "This is the Book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created be them, and blessed them, and called *their* name Adam, in the day when they were created." Then turn to the Book of the generation of the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, and read, Psa. xxii. 30, "A seed shall serve him, it shall be counted to the Lord for a generation." Also, Psa. cxxxix. 15, 16, "My substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest part of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy Book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." "Lo, I come, in the volume of the Book it is written of me to do thy will, O God!" Psa. xi. 7; Hebrews x. 7–9, compared 1 Pet. ii. 9.

Again: Who can contemplate the creation of the bride, and all the posterity of Adam in him, to make their development in his own likeness, their future destiny established in him, and then when Eve had received her formation, was beguiled by the serpent, was in the transgression, and read the account of Adam following her in the transgression, receiving the fruit at her hand, that he might legally share the penalty with her, and fail to see in all this that Adam is the figure of him that was to come?

We have not time nor space to devote

farther to this subject now, but trust we have left ample room for the more able comments of brother Cox, or any other brother who may do better justice to the subject.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., January 15, 1861.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Levicey Hall Flinn was born in Kentucky, Dec. 21st, 1820, and came to Yatesville Precinct when a child, and lived here all her life, except a short time spent in Kansas. She united in marriage with Royal Flinn, Feb. 6th, 1837. Together they journeyed through life, and endured the trials and hardships incident to early pioneer life. They reared a large family of children, six sons and four daughters of their union, and three step-sons. Three sons preceded them to the better land. Her husband departed this life some years ago. She professed a hope in Christ, and joined Union Church of Regular Baptists, at Yatesville, Ill., June 9th, 1852, and was baptized by Elder Wm. Crow. She departed this life Friday, Sept. 25th, 1903, at the home of her son, Thos. Flinn, of Waverly, Ill. She had been afflicted for almost forty years with rheumatism, and had not walked a step for about twenty years, yet she bore her affliction with great christian fortitude, and never lost faith in her Savior, and although she was not able to attend church for many years, she always enjoyed the company and counsel of her friends and brethren. She will awake in his likeness and be satisfied. She leaves the church, her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, to mourn their loss. Our loss is her eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted at Union church, Yatesville, Ill., Sunday Sept. 27th, at 2 o'clock p. m., by Elder John L. Scott, who preached an able sermon from Psalms xxx. 5. She was then laid to rest beneath the flowers beside her husband in Yatesville cemetery. Six grandsons of the deceased acted as pall-bearers. A large crowd was present at the funeral and burial.

FRANKIE S. McDANIEL.

ASHLAND, Ill., Nov. 13, 1903.

Mrs. Eleanor McQuerry, daughter of Henry and Hannah Watkins, was born near McMinnville, Tenn., Sept. 15th, 1829, died at her home in Pleasantville, Iowa, July 27th, 1903, aged 73 years, 10 months and 12 days. She was the oldest of a family of nine children, two of whom died in infancy, and three are yet living. She came with her parents to Iowa in 1851, and was married to W. H. McQuerry, in 1853. She was the mother of seven children, three dying in infancy, and one, Mrs. G. B. Wood, preceding her to the beyond just three years since. Sister McQuerry professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and united with the Old School Baptist Church, and was baptized by Elder Sampson Dodson, in Warren Co., Tenn., in 1850, and continued steadfastly in the Baptist faith and practice to the end. Her greatest pleasure was in attending her meeting; her place never being found vacant when circumstances would permit her attendance. She was also a very affectionate wife and mother, and the giving up of so many loved children, and her companion seven years previous was a sad blow to her, but she bore all with remarkable fortitude. Her faith in God being her helper all through life, it sustained her in her last sickness, which she bore with patience. Though suffering greatly, she never complained, but expressed her anxiety to go to her Savior and be at rest.

An able funeral discourse was preached by Elder M. E. Young, to a large audience of the relatives, friends and neighbors of the deceased.

BY request of Ebenezer Church, I send the following obituary for publication in the SIGNS.

Died—In Paterson, N. J., Oct. 26th, 1903, **Dennis Webb,** (colored) aged about 63 years. Brother Webb was baptized in the fellowship of Ebenezer Church, in Loudoun Co., Va., September, 1887, by the writer of this notice. His death came very suddenly, as he seemed in his usual health until a few moments before he breathed his last. His color was no bar to the fellowship and confidence of his brethren at Ebenezer, and all others who knew him, and he remained an humble and faithful follower of his Savior until death. He did not appear to be affected by the modern ideas of so many of his race who seek social equality and recognition with the whites, but respecting himself and consequently respecting the distinction the Creator himself has made between the races, he filled his place in the church as a brother in Christ, and was loved and esteemed as such, and was respected in the world as an upright and honest man. Having several children living in Paterson, N. J., he by their earnest solicitation removed there with his wife nearly two years ago. With great regret he left his home in Virginia, and never after ceased to mourn his absence from the neighborhood and privileges of the church of his earliest love. He was sound in the faith, and an earnest believer in the doctrine of the Bible, being taught its truth by a rich gospel experience. Though in the flesh he was tinctured with the color and nature of the African, in the Spirit he was "fair," and now we humbly believe he rests in the likeness of his Redeemer.

I love to write this testimony of fellowship, love and regard in behalf of Ebenezer Church for brother Dennis Webb, whom we greatly miss.

J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., Nov. 17, 1903.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

FRAGMENTS.

Is it repetition you are trying to avoid? You do not want to preach the same thing over and over again? You want to have something new every time you speak or write or talk with the dear saints, do you? Some new field of thought and feeling to explore? You would like to have a constant variety, and to be known as a man of varied and unfailing mental and spiritual resources, and not have to go over the same ground time after time.

Well this is all natural ambition; all fleshly pride and vanity. Having gone down to the garden once to see the fruits of the valley, and to see whether the vine flourishes and the pomegranates budded, does that suffice you, that you must walk in some other direction the next day? Do you not want to go into the same garden again and again? Do you not again and again want to smell the same sweet perfume of the same roses, and taste the same fruits? Yesterday's walk and yesterday's enjoyment of fruit and flower will not satisfy you to-day. The mornings are ever alike, but it is not yesterday morning but this morning that we are enjoying now. It is not a repetition but a new morning.

We are thinking, speaking, preaching upon the same subject of salvation by grace to-day that our minds were occupied with yesterday, but we do not repeat the words of yesterday. We express to-day the thoughts and feelings of to-day in the words of to-day. We go over the same ground, but it is new to us to-day. We breathe the sweet atmosphere to-day that we breathed yesterday, but it is not a repetition of yesterday's breathing; it is the life and breathing of to-day.

It is in this sense that the things of Jesus are always new, while at the same time they are old; "things new and old." When the preacher is alive to spiritual things, he may have the same subject he spoke of exhaustingly yesterday, and yet to the hearer who is hungry for the word he will bring forth out of that subject things blessedly new and fresh. If the subject of yesterday, even the same text of Scripture, is brought to his mind with power, he will not appear to either himself or his spiritual hearers as repeating the thoughts or words of yesterday's sermon.

It is a vain, carnal mind that moves a minister of the gospel to seek after a variety in preaching, and to try to study out some new gospel theme, and new forms of illustration. When the heart is full of the heavenly subject there will come suitable words and suitable illustrations, and the heart of the speaker will be turned to the heart of the hearer, and will be opened to his understanding and comfort. But it will not be to the praise and glory of the preacher, but to the praise and glory of God. It must and shall be known by both preacher and hearer that "we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of men."

How greatly tried I have been because of my limited understanding of scriptural things, and because I fail to find new fields of thought, but must go over and over the same old ground. But whenever I am given a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and my heart is warmed with his love and filled with praise for his grace and mercy, then I am not seeking for some new line of thought, but all the blessed fullness of the gospel is in the words nearest at hand. The simplest words, with which I have always been familiar, will open up in such new and wonderful ways as fill my soul with admiration and astonishment. A few words of Scripture, at such a time, will come to my mind in such a way as to show fountains of living water springing up into everlasting life; gardens of nuts and fruits and flowers; "fountains of gardens;" mountains of holiness; all the power and riches and beauty of the gospel. We might as well seek variety in the sunshine, or in the starlit sky at night, as to seek variety in the gospel. It is in itself infinite variety, having in itself all that is necessary to supply every kind of need among all the family of God.

Sometimes one is tried because he cannot see in his mind any capacity for variety in prayer. That is when he is thinking of his prayer as a piece of work, and wants it to be such as shall do him credit. When he feels his great need; when he is at the end of the earth and his heart is overwhelmed; when he sees himself as nothing but a poor, blind, vile, wretched sinner, deserving only God's wrath; then he does not seek variety of thought or expression in prayer. At such a time the prayer of the poor publican has variety enough to answer his requirements: "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." Then David's prayer answers his need: "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I." But at such a time if these words, or others like them, had not been furnished him, he could only pray "with groanings which cannot be uttered." Why call it repetition when we say the same words in prayer? Do we not need the same mercies every morning and every evening? And is it not because of this same need constantly that the Lord's mercies are "new every morning," and fresh every evening? We may have the same words fixed in our minds as a form of prayer, and many a time it may seem to us that our prayer is but a form. But when our needs are freshly felt, and our desires are strong and urgent for the mercy and grace of God, then the words are filled with the throbbing power of life, and our prayer is not a mere form, but is a present cry unto the Lord.

"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." —1 Cor. xv. 19.

This is because those to whom, and

concerning whom, the apostle is speaking, have a sorrow and grief on account of the felt sinfulness and vileness of their nature, which no other men have. They alone of all men have been given that life in Jesus which is "the light of men," and that light has made manifest to them the depravity of their hearts. (John i.; Eph. v. 13.) This causes them to have continual mourning, and makes them miserable. In due time their mourning is turned into joy by the revelation to them of Jesus as having redeemed them from sin by being made sin for them, and dying under the sentence of the law against them, "that they might be made the righteousness of God in him." But this righteousness is only seen and felt by faith, and is only a hope. "We wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." They are grieved to find that their natures are still vile. They still have to mourn because of "a vain, deceitful heart, and wretched, wandering mind." They are miserable often because they cannot do the things that they would; because "when they would do good evil is present with them." They are made, however, to rejoice in hope of the glory of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Their hope is that he "will deliver them from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." This hope is through the resurrection of Christ, and will be fulfilled in their own resurrection. In this hope is their salvation and their present joy. They "are saved by hope. But hope that is seen is not hope. For what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for? But now if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."

If true religion consisted in a change of nature, so that christians felt no more sin and vileness in their hearts, then they would not be hoping for that, because they would already see it. Some professed christians do assert that such a change has taken place in them, by their own efforts, and that they do not sin any more. But the Lord's people are not left to be deceived in that way. They are made to "feel the plague of their own hearts," and are miserable when they do feel it. Their hope in Christ is the greatest blessing they have even in this life, for it points them to the time when Jesus "shall appear without sin unto salvation." They are helped and comforted by that blessed hope from day to day in this life, but it is not in being given to feel themselves freed from corruption now, and made to be pure, as they long to be, but in being shown more and more how Christ "is of God made unto them wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Since they have all the temporal causes for trouble and sorrow that men of the world have, and beside these, the deep sorrow on account of indwelling sin which men of the world do not have. Surely if their hope in Christ were only that they should become better by nature in the flesh in this mortal life, then indeed would they be more miserable than any other men, for such a change will not take place until the resurrection. It will not be experienced while we are in the flesh. It is not in our own life, however blameless it may be, but in the life of the risen Jesus that we by faith "stand holy and unblamable before God in love." "The life that we now live before God we live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us, and gave himself for us." And our hope is that "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall appear with him in glory." The apostle John says that when he appears

we shall be like him.

COMPARE the power of our sun with that of Sirius, the "dog-star," which is a thousand times greater. Other suns in the heavens are probably a thousand times greater and more powerful still than Sirius. If this earth were as near to that star as it is to our sun it would be destroyed by his heat in a moment.

The Sun of Righteousness is infinitely more powerful than all of the suns in the universe together. There is no obstacle that can keep his heat away from any part of the new earth, from any one of his afflicted and poor people. "His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof." His people in the gospel dispensation are called the new earth, and he shines upon them out of the heaven of God's laws and ordinances and precious promises and infinite blessings. Whatever comes between them and his blessed beams will be consumed in a moment, for to all his enemies, and to all the works of men, and to all sin and iniquity, he is a consuming fire. But the same beams are a soft, beautiful light, and a gentle, penetrating and healing warmth to all the poor, helpless souls who love his name, who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and who trust alone in him. To their unrighteousness he is merciful, and their sins and their iniquities his blessed radiance does not discover, but hides them even from his own sight. He does not remember them any more. The light of the Sun of Righteousness is the clothing of his people, and his heat keeps them in life.

There are some stars so far distant from this earth that astronomers say it takes their light thousands of years to reach us, even though it comes at the incredible speed of ten million miles a minute. Although such stars are probably suns thousands of times brighter and hotter than ours, yet the great distance prevents any of that terrible heat from being felt by us, and allows us to see but little of the light. But the sinner is farther from God than this earth from the farthest star. Distance in space, though that cannot be comprehended by our finite minds, cannot measure the distance from sin to holiness, from death to life, from earth to heaven. But even that awful distance cannot swallow up the heat and light of the Sun of Righteousness, to prevent it reaching the sinner in the lowest parts of the earth, nor even diminish in the faintest degree their glorious power. "His glory covers the heavens, and the earth is full of his praise."

THROUGH what trouble and sorrow we have to learn the truth of Scripture. This has been a dark and gloomy day to me, though the sun is shining from a clear sky, and brightness is upon the face of the earth. All the morning I have been oppressed and grieved beyond expression by a sense of the utter lack of value in myself or in anything I have done. I have felt my life to be a failure, of no real account to myself or any other, and the feeling is one of desolation and unspeakable sorrow. It seemed terrible to look back and see my life a long stretch of nothingness.

But just now the words came to my mind, "Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity," and there came into my soul through this expression of the psalmist a kind of relief and comfort. I thought this way: Why should I be so wretched because I am

feeling in regard to myself what is declared to be true of every man, even his best state? Why should I not the rather be glad because the Lord has made me to know this truth, instead of leaving me in ignorance concerning it till the end of my mortal life? Only the living can know it. Is not this an evidence of a new and heavenly birth? It is this divine life which has caused me to feel my nothingness, and to know the vanity of all fleshly ambition and power and glory. Why should the truth felt in myself fill me with such disappointment and gloom? Have I not been trying to look from a worldly standpoint, and to build upon a worldly foundation? Have I not been expecting a value and a revenue of pleasure from that which has no value, and which can yield no true and lasting joy? Have I not been regarding all flesh as better than the grass, and the glory of man as more valuable and lasting than the flower of grass? It is sad to feel to be "less than nothing and vanity," but the experience of that truth is necessary in order that I may come into the experience of true and lasting good. "Through great tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God."

GIFTS.

THE Scriptures of the New Testament present the gospel church in her perfection, as the workmanship of God. Her doctrine and order are plainly shown there to all of her children, as they are also revealed to each in his experience, so that the word and the experience witness together to all that is of God. We are to look only to the inspired Scriptures of truth to decide concerning any point of doctrine, or any ordinance, or any gift to the church of God; and there alone shall we find the proper order of those things of God, as arranged and established by his authority.

Whatever assumes to belong to the church is to be tried by the pattern shown to us in the Scriptures of the New Testament, and if not found there it must be discarded by every lover of the truth. The gifts of Jesus to the church are named by the inspired apostle in his letter to the Ephesians: "And he gave some apostles, and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers." The object of these gifts is also there stated: "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Any professed gift that is not included in this catalogue and description, must not be recognized as of God; and any one who claims to have work to do as a gift of God to the church in behalf of any but the saints, or in order that any may become saints through his work, is clearly not manifesting the character of a gospel gift, for all of these gifts are declared to be exclusively for the benefit of the body of Christ, to which they themselves belong as "joints and bands" which minister nourishment to the body. (Eph. iv. 11–16; Col. ii. 10.)

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 12, 1903.

PETERSBURG, Ill., May 10, 1903.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER IN AFFLICTION:—I do love to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, they are very comforting to me, and to all the poor and afflicted, at the same time they give to God all the glory, all who write are comforting, unless it be my own poor scribbling, and, brother Beebe, I desire that you should search carefully what I write, that nothing be printed but the truth.

There has been a portion of Scripture

on my mind for a long time, but I have said, I cannot write any more for publication. Much as I love to talk with dear brethren and sisters, of the grace of God which saves in time of need, I feel as though I ought not write to such a good people, when I am such a poor, unworthy, sinner. At the time of which I speak especially, I was suddenly plunged into the most awful darkness, and in a moment all the joy of my heart was gone, with nothing but my imperfections before me. I mourned over my sinful nature, which I often do, and which is for my good, and was plunged into doubts and fears, that I had never been truly regenerated. Then my mind was taken back forty years ago, when I was first made to see myself a poor sinner without hope and without God in the world. I felt that I was not fit to live, and not fit to die, and it was but a little before that I had felt to be good, morally, and that all I had to do was to be baptized and live up to the requirements of the gospel, and I should be sure of heaven, but now, poor hell-deserving sinner, what could I do? I felt that I could not go to God in such a sinful state, and ask him to forgive me, I must first try to make myself better.

At this time, ingratitude to God seemed one of the most hideous crimes of my whole life; I had never been thankful for all his mercies. No, but I had trampled his mercies under my feet, I had never given it a thought that it was his mercy that had spared my life, unprofitable as it was, but now, the more I tried to get nearer to God by my good works, the further away I was. Then I was made to cry to him for mercy, "O God, be merciful to me, a sinner; O Lord, take me as I am; I can do nothing good." And he heard me, and O what joy filled my soul.

Dear brother Beebe, and all dear brethren and sisters, I am sure that you know what I enjoyed then; I praised the Lord for what he had done for my soul; yes, I am sure you know it better than I can tell you.

> "Tongue cannot express
> The sweet comfort and peace,
> Of a soul in its earliest love."

And now, since he has again restored unto me the joy of his salvation, and has made me to feel some assurance that poor, sinful and unworthy as I am, in and of myself, he has filled my poor soul with his love, I know that it is not as a reward for my obedience, but all for the sake of Jesus.

As I was reading some good editorials and letters from the dear brethren and sisters, in the SIGNS, I came across a poor scribble of mine, in which were two words missing; they were the words, "too much." I was writing of preaching predestination, and used the words "too much," for I cannot think that any Old School Baptist would oppose it entirely. I once heard a professed Old Baptist preacher (I have forgotten his name) say that he did not think the hard points, such as election and predestination, ought to be preached too much in the stand, because there were many dear regenerated children of God who would love to come to the church, but who did not understand these hard points. While I was wondering why so many dear regenerated children of God could not understand the true doctrine of the Bible, the parable of the king's supper came into my mind, and in this way, It is said that when the king came in to see his guests, he found there a man who had not on the wedding garment, and he said to him, "Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having on the wedding garment?"

Now it was given to me to see in this way, that this alludes to the true church or kingdom here, and the wedding garment consisted of the absolute sovereignty of God, election, predestination, special atonement, effectual calling, and the final redemption, soul, body and spirit of all that the Father gave the Son, and last, but not least, baptism must not be left out; baptism of the believer, by one who also has on the wedding garment, being duly authorized by the church. This baptism must be administered to one after he has been renewed and born again, and as none were allowed to remain and eat of the king's supper save those who had on the wedding garment, so none but those who believe the true doctrine of the Bible can rest in the true church, and feast upon the wills and shalls of Jehovah.

Beloved watchmen upon the walls of Zion, if this parable does indeed allude to the visible church, what a sentence is issued against him that has not on the wedding garment: bind him and cast him out, so that he shall not any longer sow the seeds of Arminianism, or any other false doctrine, which causes confusion in the churches. Be sure to preach all the doctrine, dear ministers; it does my soul good. Once I read the Bible over and over to try to find something to condemn the doctrine which I now love so well; I hated to hear it preached, but our dear faithful pastors, Elders P. K. Parr, and Isaac Sawin, did not stop preaching the truth; they were faithful, and other faithful brethren came, and preached the same truth, and I look back to this, it was in 1875, then there was more of just such faithful preaching as is upheld by the SIGNS, than there is at this time.

Brother Beebe, it is the people that have changed, and not the SIGNS. Brethren, preach all the hard points, all the time, and if one gets in, not having on the wedding garment, you know your duty, that is, if the right meaning of the parable was given me, at that time. As I thought on this doctrine, and of how many regenerated souls could not understand, I cried out, O God, why is it so? And the answer came thus, While many are called, regenerated, born into the spiritual kingdom, who are gathered out of every kindred, tongue and people, few are chosen and brought into this gospel rest or visible kingdom.

Brother Beebe, how my heart goes out to you in your affliction; I read in my last paper of your affliction which you have endured so patiently. O that it might be the will of God to raise you up again to health, that you may long be spared to proclaim the truth. If you feel able and have time, I wish that you would write an editorial upon the whole parable which I have alluded to. If you do not feel able, will Elder Chick or Elder Bartley write upon it?* My understanding is so limited that I am not sure that I am right. I do love to meditate upon the Scriptures. There is one thought that humbles me in the very dust, and that is this, the very Scriptures that I read in order to try to condemn God's predestination, the blessed Lord in his love and mercy, and in his appointed time, has now given me to comfort me, so that I can say with many other loved ones, even in this, the Lord has ruled.

But I must close this writing, yet, I do not want to stop telling of the love of God to one who is so unworthy as I. If I am one of his I am the least of all, but my little hope to-night tells me that poor

*In the December 1st issue will be found an editorial on this parable.

sinful mortal as I am, I was embraced in God's choice in eternity, and this hope buoys me up when suffering bodily affliction, sorrows and trials, and all darkness of soul. I feel, at times, that he has forsaken me, and that his mercy is clean gone forever, but it is all for a wise purpose, and like Job I can say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." He is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. Pray for me, that I may ever be kept at his feet. Write on, dear ones, one and all. It will be as bread cast upon the waters.

Your sister in hope,

SOPHRONIA B. THOMPSON.

[SISTER Thompson is right, predestination and election can never be preached too strongly. If any poor, weak, doubting child of God does not understand it, as it is preached, it is not that the doctrine is too hard, but the preaching of it is not clear. In it God's mercy is shown to a hell-deserving sinner, and surely this must be good news to such a soul. The soul that knows that of himself he would never have chosen God, can but rejoice in the truth that God has chosen him.—ED.]

CAPRON, Oklahoma, Aug. 30, 1903.

BENTON L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I feel to sympathize with you in your affliction, yet it is good to be afflicted; the good Lord sends affliction to prepare us for the duty which he has assigned to us; you are doing better writing now than you ever did before you were afflicted, and you are writing to the edification of the saints. I, like yourself, will be an afflicted man the remainder of my days. But we are not to preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and we have enough to do to preach him. This morning before I arose I began to pray to the good Lord, and I just thought that the masses of the people were asleep, but the all-seeing eye never sleeps nor slumbers. I cannot tell you how much comfort it was to me to think that the darkness cannot be so dark but what all is light before our God; he is light himself, and in him is no darkness at all.

I was in Wichita, Kansas, some years ago, and was talking with a brother about my affliction, and then our conversation turned, and I began talking about how unworthy I was. He said, "Brother Duley, I felt for you in your affliction, but it does not comfort me to hear of that, but it does comfort me to hear you say that you feel so mean and unworthy."

I was reading the letters of sister Joie Wickham, and sister Belle Gorsuch, and as they both spoke of the sinfulness which they felt, how my love ran out to them, for I was sure that they felt what they said, and I know that this is my feeling. If it were not for the "Scarlet line" in my window, I would certainly be cut off, but that blessed scarlet line protects me from the enemy. The scarlet line in the window says, "Let these go free, I have found a ransom." O, blessed ransom. In due time Christ died for the ungodly. The harlot Rahab was spared because she was in the lineage of Jesus Christ after the flesh. The line was a very vile line; he came through the line of Rahab the harlot, and through the line of David and of her that had been the wife of Uriah, and also in the line of Judah and Tamar. All this wickedness had to be, or the line of the dear Redeemer after the flesh would have been broken. But as brother Chick says, The difference between God's predestinating a thing to take place, and the purpose of

the perpetrators of the act, is a difference in motive. God suffered these things to take place, and he predestinated to suffer it, because they were in line with his purpose. Had they not been in line with his purpose, he would have restrained them. Some of the Lord's chosen people are illegitimate. Cannot we then see the hand of God in all this wickedness? Men have done these wicked works, but God has overruled it all to his own glory.

Dear brother, I have been deprived of my family, and God had a purpose in so dealing with me. I am left alone with but one son, and he is gone so much of the time that I am all alone, but it is all right; I am on board the ship of time, speeding to my eternal home; we have no abiding city here, but we seek a city whose maker and builder is God. Though I have a little place to call home here, yet I am a pilgrim and a stranger wandering to and fro, and I long to be with Christ, and the church who have gone before. I am glad that I believe that as soon as this body dies we go to be with Christ. Paul's language bears me out in this. He said he had a "desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better." And we are told that the body returns to dust as it was, and the Spirit to God who gave it. While we lived here in the flesh, "We groaned, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." The creature shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. John said, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." Is not that enough, dear child of God? I have many relatives: two wives, children, father and mother, who are gone on before, and whom I have reason to believe are happy now, but when God shall take me home I do not believe that they will come running to meet me as husband, father or son. We all have one Father, and one mother, the Jerusalem which is above. All the redeemed shall be as the angels of heaven. They are all the bride, the Lamb's wife.

Children of God, you are born unto a rich inheritance; an inheritance that fades not away, which is reserved for you who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time; and dear child, you need not be afraid that this inheritance will be lost to you, or you to it; it is kept by the power of God, and you are also kept by the power of God, and it can neither be wasted, or mortgaged or sold. As sure as you are born to this inheritance, so sure shall it be yours. The surety of it rests upon the power and faithfulness of God. No wonder it is said to be "the unsearchable riches of Christ." All this riches is yours, dear child of God. In this life we sometimes become embarrassed about our financial affairs, but there is nothing to embarrass you there, for all that soul can desire or wish shall be yours.

Brother Keene says that this scarlet line is to be seen all the way from Genesis to Revelation. It was this scarlet line that purchased this inheritance for us, and us for it, for we had sold ourselves for naught, and had nothing with which to pay what justice demanded of us. The life of the sinner was the forfeit, and justice could not be satisfied until its sword was bathed in blood. Then, O child of God, Christ made himself to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him; God looked to him, our Surety, for the payment of the debt, and the debt

was paid, and the transgressor justified in the sight of God. "He was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification." Now Paul says, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me, and the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Thus we are crucified with Christ, and are dead, yet we live. The law cannot now demand payment again from you, for all is paid, all the debt we owe. Nothing need be done for the poor sinner but what was done by our Surety. The religious world, speaking generally, do not understand this any better than the non-professing world; they all think that we are saved by the suffering and death of Christ only as we comply with the conditions upon which, they say, salvation is based. But Paul will not have grace and works mixed, for he says, "There is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if it be of grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace." So we are saved altogether by grace, or altogether by works. Now which will we take? I say grace, because Paul says it is by grace, and we come to see that nothing but grace will do for such sinners as we. It is not of works, lest any man should boast. The language is positive that we are saved by grace, and not by works, and Paul says again, "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

Brother Beebe, I have the picture of your father, which my mother left to me; it was taken about thirty-five years ago. I do think that he was one of the most powerful expounders of the Scriptures that I ever read after. I trust that you may be spared long, with our dear brother Chick, to contend for the faith as it is in Jesus.

The SIGNS have been coming in the Duley family for nearly forty years, and I have been a reader of them most of that time.

My dear brother, you can do as you please with this, and all will be right.

Yours in tribulation,

J. M. DULEY.

GOOD WORKS.

IT is somewhat amusing, though sometimes sadly so, to look at the different classes of people claiming to be doing good works, and to note the object for which they are working. All are claiming to be christians, but as there is but one Christ, there can be but one class who really have the right to be called christians, and they, of all people, feel to be the least worthy of so great a name. Not that they are less worthy than others, but they alone can see and realize their unworthiness, and are so far from boasting, they do not claim anything for their works, knowing their ability to do anything good is not at all of themselves, but wholly of God, who is "working in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

There is a class of people who believe our salvation depends upon the good deeds done in the body, and that in the final judgment, if our good deeds outweigh the evil ones, we shall enter into that eternal rest, and peaceful happiness. Their justification is based upon the deeds of the law. Their hope shall perish, and they with it. "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have

believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."—Gal. ii. 16. "For if righteousness came by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."—Gal. ii. 21. So away goes your work salvation. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."—John iii. 3.

There is a class of people who believe we are children of God so long as we continue in good works, but when we fall into temptation and sin, we are the children of the wicked one, and our final salvation depends upon our last works. Thus a man may continue in his sins all through life, yet if his last works be good, he will be entitled to eternal happiness, and on the other hand, a man may live a life of sinless perfection (as the holiness people claim to be doing), and yet if his last works be evil, he thereby forfeits his claim to his salvation, and is compelled to spend eternity in a devil's hell. Is that justice? Look at it. They charge our God with injustice. How much more just is such a god as they worship? Because we believe in a free salvation they want to know the need of any works at all? I may not be able to answer this question to their satisfaction, but every sinner who has been saved by grace, (and there is no other way by which any can be saved), knows that salvation is free, and wholly unmerited by them. We do not work to become children of God, but because we are children. Good works are only such as God has commanded in his word, and we do them in obedience to him who is working in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. We are not working to obtain salvation, but are working out our own salvation which was given us in Christ before the foundation of the world, yet not of ourselves, for it is God working in us. We could not by our best works merit pardon of sin, or eternal life by reason of the great disproportion that is between them and the glory to come, but by the grace of God we can rejoice in a free salvation. It is comforting to hear the gospel of Christ, which is the glad tidings or good news of the finished work of Jesus and of a free salvation. Only those who realize their sinfulness, and know their inability to recover themselves from this condition, will feel the need of such a gift. Only those who feel the need of a free salvation will believe in the gospel of Christ, for it is the good news of a free salvation to every one that believes, and these are the ones who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.

The man who believes our salvation depends upon anything we must do, has never heard the gospel. The natural man cannot know the things of God, and until he has been quickened by the Spirit, he cannot hear the gospel. "Faith cometh by hearing," and "whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God," therefore none but God's children can hear and believe the gospel. As God has chosen his people unto salvation, he will also quicken them and call them unto faith in Christ, and not one of the elect will be finally lost. O, say some, if I believed that I would take my fill of sin, and enjoy all the pleasures thereof. That is proof conclusively that they have more confidence in their own works than in the finished work of Christ. They have more confidence in the flesh than in their Savior. Even if we did not believe in a future life, we owe it to our fellow-man to do all the good we can, but if your hope of eternal life is based upon, or even partly upon your good works, or

your abstaining from evil, you might as well take your fill of sin, as to place your hope of eternal happiness upon such a destructive foundation. If such is your hope you are a lost sinner, and sadly deceived. If you see your sinfulness, and realize your helplessness, and know that you are lost if left alone, you may be assured of this, "For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost."—Matt. xviii. 11; Luke xix. 10; see also Rom. v. 8. Now we who believe are assured of this, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John iii. 16. "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life."—John vi. 47. Such is the assurance of God's people, but none but God's people will have this blessed assurance. If we have a hope based upon the finished work of Christ, we do not doubt our salvation, but we should continue to do good works as God gives us the power, in obedience to his commands, thereby manifesting the fruits and evidences of our true faith, and our thankfulness unto God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, for the gift of such a wonderful salvation.

May God's blessings rest upon the editors of the SIGNS, and upon all others who are contending for the truth.

Yours, rejoicing in the assurance of a free salvation,

R. S. PACE.

PINEHILL, Texas. Oct. 16, 1903.

FARMINGTON, Ill., Oct. 14, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—A short time since I had a conversation with a Sunday School superintendent, he said the Bible was made up of contradictions, and that lots of it he did not believe. I replied that I believed it all or none, and what I failed to understand was because of a lack in me, and not a clash in the Bible, and that unless it was revealed to us, it all was but a parable. After reading your editorial in the last SIGNS, on "Lead us not into temptation," I had some solemn meditations upon that subject, and feel like writing somewhat upon it, hoping that the good Lord will direct my pen and my thoughts.

It would seem that there is a contradiction here, forasmuch as it is declared that the Lord tempteth no man, and yet we read that he tempted David to number Israel, and we find that the beloved Master, after he was baptized, was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. It is also declared that he was tempted in all points as we are, and it is also said, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations, knowing that it is for the trial of your faith." And, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, but let not that man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God tempteth no man. But a man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lusts and enticed. Then when lust is conceived it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

Now it seems to me that there is a vast difference in temptations. I feel to speak from experience, if indeed I know anything of the sufferings of the dear Savior, or the temptations of his children; Abraham by faith, when he was tried, offered up his son Isaac. The lusts of the flesh are the works of the flesh, and this is a dark picture, but the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, long-suffering and so on.

The Lord says, If we are without chastisement, then are we bastards and not sons. These chastisements it seems to me are temptations from the Lord for our good, even if they come through

Satan, as in the case of Job. For he said, "What, shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" So the prayer of the soul to God is, Lead us not into temptation. Our desire is not to be led to doubt the Lord's mercy, or that we have a good hope. This is sore temptation to the writer of this. Now, while our faith is that all is divinely arranged by that God who changes not, yet we like David, pray as he did, that the child might be spared. Still David believed that the will of God would be done.

Some would say, What is the use of praying, if all things are fixed, and our God changeth not? We hear the dear Savior pray, when about to be crucified according to the eternal will of God, Father, let this cup pass from me, yet not my will but thine be done. And Jesus cried at the last in his agony, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Now, dear brother, I do not know whether you will understand me. If I had the gift of language I could shape it in a better way, but it seems to me that inasmuch as the dear Savior was tempted as are his children, yet without sin, his children are tempted in the same manner, and that also without sin. This is not the lust of the flesh, but the temptation of trial and sorrow. He says, I in them, and they in me. They are one in the Spirit. So, as he was tempted, they also must be. They must be led in his footsteps for their good and his own name's glory. Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. Why was this? Now, we need not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try us, as though some strange thing had happened to us. The flesh wars against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh. In me, that is, in my flesh, there dwells no good thing. O, wretched man that I am, said Paul. David said, I shall one day fall by the hand of mine enemy. David was a man after God's own heart, yet he was tempted and sorely tried; the pangs of hell gat hold of him, and he cried unto the Lord.

I have felt at times that the pangs of death had got hold of me, and I could not help crying unto the Lord, and he delivered me out of all these sore trials and temptations. All these things I have realized are for my good, and all are from the hands of that God who rules in all things. He says to Satan, All is in thy hands, but spare his life. This he cannot touch. Though the Lord slay me, yet will I trust in him.

Now, brother Chick, if you have the patience to read this, you will judge whether it is the truth. If it be not the truth, it will find no place in your heart. If not the truth, cast it into the flames, and I will say as I have heretofore said, I will think none the less of you. Pardon my poor scribbling. May the Lord ever be with you, to guide you into all truth, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

E. D. VARNES.

[How good it is to confer together concerning the Scriptures and their meaning, Jesus joined the two disciples journeying to Emmaus and they conversed concerning the Scriptures, and he expounded to them the Scriptures concerning himself, and their hearts burned within them as he conversed with them, and it is said in prophesy, They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it. We trust that we do appreciate, to some degree at least, the kind words of brother Varnes

toward us.

Concerning the remark of the Sunday School superintendent, to which reference is made by brother Varnes, at the beginning of his letter, we can only say that this man was only putting into plain words just what a vast number of professed teachers of godliness indirectly say in this age. Such men are presumptuous, self-willed, and heady, having not even the form of godliness, and certainly not its power. If ever our God by his Spirit takes a dealing with them in covenant mercy and grace, they will repent of all their perversions of the word, and their denials of his truth. All such men are dead in their sins.—C.]

2 CORINTHIANS IX. 7.

"EVERY man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give: not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver."

The above language has been on my mind for some time, and I do not know that I have ever heard any one preach or write from the words. I know that I am not so qualified as to even hint at the subject, still I think I see some beauty in it, if I had the ability to put it down on paper; but I cannot.

I remember some years ago of a man coming to my house begging money for the Missionary funds. He said to me, he felt sure I would give him a little mite, as the Bible said the Lord loveth a cheerful giver. Then he called my attention to the "widow's mite." I then said to him, "My friend, as long as you wish to take the Bible for your guide, then let me quote you the language of the apostle Paul, which reads thus: 'And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.'" I then told him that I could not give him anything, for he had quoted the Scripture that said, "God loveth a cheerful giver," and I know the Lord will not love me if I give to you, for I feel it will not be cheerfully given. He then took me by the hand and said, "My friend, I believe you are right in not giving to me if you feel as you say you do about it, but I am sure I never did look at the language in that light before in all my life, for truly it reads, 'The Lord loveth a cheerful giver,' and you say you cannot cheerfully give to me." He then thanked me very kindly for calling his attention to the fact, and bade me good bye and left me. O, how strange it is, and yet not strange, that the Arminian world cannot see or understand the Scriptures in their true light, for when they give alms, they want to be seen of men, and look for their reward in after years; they think if they do not get it in this world, they will get it in the world to come. But O, how different it is with the child of God when charity works in the heart. They do not look for a reward in after years, or after death, but receive the reward in the act itself, in thus giving. It is charity that works by love in our hearts that causes us to give cheerfully and willingly, "not grudgingly, or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver."

The apostle has said, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal;" and again he says, "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity."

O, how natural it is for us all to want some praise, and receive some reward for our good deeds, when charity is not in exercise.

O, that I might have more and more of that pure charity that can hide one and

every fault in all my brethren, and be made humble, so that I could esteem every one better than myself. I have found in all of my experience the best place for me is to be brought low at the feet of my dear brethren in Christ Jesus. When I am brought low at their feet I know then that I am down low at my Savior's feet. It is at such times we cry for help, and the Lord does help, for we are promised that he will help in every time of need.

So it is with the people of God when they see a brother in need, they are made willing to help him, and freely give to him such things as he needs; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver.

Your brother, I hope,

J. F. OLIVER.

HERNDON, Va., Oct. 7, 1903.

SODDY, Tenn., Nov. 21, 1903.

BENTON L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—I was moved to tears when I read recently of the attitude of some of the Baptists toward those who hold the truth as it is Jesus, but my tears were mingled with joy when I learned that a remnant still hold the truth in Nashville in spite of the slurs of those who exalt themselves, and teach for doctrines the commandments of men. However, it is greater wonder that men are found holding the truth, when we think of the opposition of the flesh, the enmity of the carnal mind, and the treachery that asserts itself in the disposition of the flesh to be caught by the snares of Satan, the seducer, who seems at this time to be holding, both day and night, the deceitfulness of riches before the saints to catch them by every conceivable society and "political party" that men of corrupt minds have gotten up for their own advantage. But enough on that. The fact that the old faith is still precious to a few in the very capital city of this State, and that they are as a city built on a hill, which cannot be hid, caused me when I read of it to take courage. God still reigns, and there will never be a time when he cannot overcome the perverseness of the flesh, and the opposition of the world, and make his own to delight in the simplicity of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ our Lord. Yea, and even more, to count one point of the doctrine worth more than all the world calls good or great. To those brethren we would offer a word of exhortation; but what would it amount to? We fear that they would think us too forward, or possessed of the disposition of one who would "rebuke an elder," rather than to "entreat him as a father." But we must say that if not deceived we are defamed also, for we could not accept the formal declaration of so-called "Primitive" Baptists who teach conditionalism. Do we boast in this? God forbid. And we feel to say, even though we are short-sighted, these brethren of Nashville will find opposition yet to overcome. Do they fellowship Paul the apostle? then may they say that the Holy Ghost witnesseth that bonds and afflictions abide them. But what must we say of these things? Out of them all the Lord delivereth his own. He still declares himself their help in his word, and says to those who are weak in the faith, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," even though he rebuke them for their lack of faith and hardness of heart. He never forsakes, never, O no. I am fond of saying that he may cast his own down, but he will never cast them off. (I do not know who first put forth that saying.) To-day I still delight in the old doctrine, if indeed I have ever held it, as my chief delight.

In conclusion I will say that I desire to speak comfortingly of it, and less of myself; self is the greatest impediment in my way. I suppose it is so with the brethren at Nashville. Hence you have my rambling discourse on the great opposition which asserts itself both without and within, in the experience of the saints. But does not even that work for their good? Blind as we are, we think we have seen in a measure how all things are made to work together for good to them that love God; therefore we write as we do.

May the Lord be your strength in your declining years, and may he uphold the brethren at Nashville, and elsewhere, and finally receive them to glory, is the desire of an unworthy, yet I trust, favored sinner,

T. D. WALKER.

BIRCH HILL, Ohio, May 27, 1903.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS AND ALL READERS OF THE SIGNS:—I feel a desire to pen a few lines, if only to faintly express my appreciation of your good letters, and the editorials. Could I but write as you do, so instructively and comfortingly, I have often thought I would write, but my mind seems to be only worldly barren, and fruitless in all spiritual things. How often I am shut up, and cannot come forth. With the poet I can truly say,

"When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark and vain and wild,
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?

But the blessed Lord now and then lifts me up out of these dark places, and I feel comforted, and at times I hope am enabled to rejoice in Spirit. Were it no for this, I think that, long since, I should have given up in despair. I am one that they cast out of the synagogue. I feel to say that I am willing to suffer all persecution for Christ's sake; I feel sure that he knows them that are his. I do not hear any preaching only as I read the SIGNS. My mother takes them, and she lets me have them to read, and it is a great comfort to me. I am nothing, and less than nothing; if a saint, the least of all. With Paul I can say, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." Nothing good dwells in the flesh.

Jesus said, "Blessed are ye when men shall persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." This is a comfort to me. I ask an interest in your prayers, dear editors, and all the household of faith. I know that my Redeemer liveth. Our God knows all things, and has declared them from the beginning to the end. He made all things for a purpose, and all things shall fulfill his purpose. I believe in predestination of all things. Now if this is not fit for publication, throw it in the waste-basket, and all will be right with me. May the Lord bestow like blessings upon his people everywhere. Also, upon the dear editors may his blessing rest.

Your little sister in hope,

MARY MONTGOMERY.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1903.

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"ETERNAL LIFE."

THIS expression is a frequent one in the Scriptures, and it is often upon the lips and in the thoughts of the people of God. Perhaps it may be well to consider it here for a little time.

First, it is set over against this mortal life which shall end when death comes to us. It signifies that which is unending, and that which had no beginning. Our mortal life had a beginning, and it will surely have an ending; we must lay it down sooner or later. But beside the thought of that which is unending, there is in the expression "eternal life," the presentation of a different kind of life. When the Savior said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish," he not only conveyed the assurance of unending duration to his sheep, but also the assurance of a higher life, a life of holiness and true spiritual union with God. This life has in it no seeds of death; it is in God first essentially, and is bestowed upon the subjects of his grace, his sheep, according to the Savior's words. God only is eternal in and of himself; he is self-existent, that is, he owes his being to no other being or power; he never began to be; "He only hath immortality, dwelling in the light, which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see." If any other being therefore possesses immortality, eternal life, it is because it is conferred upon him of God, and eternal life is conferred in the new birth by which men are made partakers of the divine nature. If men and women, or angels, either good or evil, are in their nature eternal, then they also are self-existent, and do not owe their existence to the creative act of Jehovah. Eternity and self-existence are the special attributes of Deity. But God gives eternal life and immortality to his chosen ones, but as said before, this does not mean simply everlasting duration, but that a holy, perfect, divine life is bestowed upon them.

We have made these suggestions to more clearly emphasize the fact that eternal life is not simply endless duration, but another kind of life from this mortal, sinful, human life which we have by nature.

It is abundantly declared, in the second place, that the people of God here and now possess eternal life. With regard to this we only design to call attention to what the Scriptures say with regard to it. As quoted before, Jesus said, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." Mark, he does not say, I will give, but, I give, "He that hath the Son hath life." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life." Notice, he *hath* it. "He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever." "There the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh

my blood hath eternal life." "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." "He that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." "Ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." This last we have quoted because it implies the contrary, viz: Some do have eternal life abiding in them. "This is the record, that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." If this life is in the Son of God, how true it must be that he hath that the Son hath life. This is "Christ in you the hope of glory." "These things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life." We have quoted the above Scriptures without much comment, and they certainly show that here and now the people of God possess eternal life, and possess it because the Son of God dwells in them by the Spirit. If we do not now possess eternal life, then we do not here and now possess Christ; we have not eaten his flesh nor partaken of his blood; we cannot be said to believe on the Son of God; the Lord has not commanded the blessing upon us; we do not know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent; Christ is not in us the hope of glory, and the record is not true that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

In the third place, eternal life is spoken of as something which the believer expects as well as possesses. In this there is no contradiction of doctrine. It is as wholly consistent to say that the believer hopes for eternal life, although he already possesses it, as it was for Paul, who already knew Christ, to say, "I follow after that I may know him." Indeed, in this last reference we may see this clearly set forth, that had not Paul already known Christ, he would have had no desire to know him, and would not have followed on to know him. Knowing him already only begat in his soul the desire to know more of him. So one cannot have the hope of eternal life unless he already possesses that life. We cannot hope for natural life while as yet we do not possess it. So we cannot hope for eternal life until we have entered into the possession and power of it. It is evident that Paul meant when he said that he followed on that he might know Christ, that he desired to know more of Christ, whom he already knew something of. We see but in part, we have not yet apprehended, but we follow after, that we may apprehend that for which we are apprehended in Christ Jesus. So men desire to know more of the natural life which they possess, because that which they do know seems so desirable to them. It is a common expression among men that they want to see life. They of course mean that they want to see more of life, and that they think that what they have seen before is so small a portion of what life means, that they can hardly say that they know life at all as yet. So the fullness of eternal life is so vast that what we have seen and known of it here, is not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. Such expressions as, "In the world to come, eternal life." "That he that believeth on him may have everlasting life." "To them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life." "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." "That we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life," and "This is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life." "Look-

ing for the mercy of God unto eternal life."

All these and other scriptural statements certainly set before us the certainty of something better and beyond what we do now possess. The words of John seem to us to present all that the above Scriptures mean, when he said, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." So also David said in the same blessed hope, "As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."

Now it seems to us that the sum of the truth contained in all the above quoted Scriptures is that we do now have eternal life dwelling within us, giving rise to faith, hope, love, humility, and all obedience to God, but that the work of this indwelling life is not yet fully manifest in us, and in that upper and better world, this work shall be finished, and we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. So Paul could reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. And the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the Son of God. Eternal life does now dwell in us, and one day its perfect work in us, transforming us into the spotless image of Jesus, shall be perfected, and we shall be like him. Therefore it is true that we have hope of eternal life, while yet we do now possess it. This hope shall be consummated when this mortal puts on immortality, and this corruption puts on incorruption. Then shall death be swallowed up in victory.

C.

CLOSE OF VOLUME SEVENTY-ONE.

As year after year rolls by, and we reach the closing number of each volume, we are made to realize the marvelous power of God in sustaining us in our weakness to still receive the approbation of our brethren in the conduct of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. For nearly three-quarters of a century the SIGNS has continued to contend for the principles set forth in their first issue, and they are held as sacred by the Old School Baptists of to-day, as they were by the "remnant" that met at Black Rock, Md., in 1832, and drafted these principles, and assumed the name which designates the Old School Baptists from all other sects in the world.

The fact that the SIGNS have contended unwaveringly for certain principles for more than three score years and ten, is no evidence of the truth or error of these principles; a "Thus saith the Lord" is what establishes us in the truth. Yet we have said, and we now repeat it, without any hesitancy, that at that Black Rock Convention, the brethren that formulated these principles assumed or adopted the name of "Old School Baptists," to designate them from the legalists of that day, and no one denying those principles has a right to the name.

The year through which we have just passed has been in several respects the most prosperous one the SIGNS has had for some time. Aside from the liberal donations there has been an increase in both the circulation and the receipts of the paper, over the last few preceding years. Quite a number who withdrew their support of the SIGNS, have written us that they cannot longer follow after the legalism of the day, and have ordered their subscriptions renewed.

The SIGNS have passed through many dark and discouraging times, but through

them all they have been sustained, and after every heavy loss, there has been a revival of their support, and we have reason to believe it is the will of the Lord to again give it increasing favor among the brethren. This much we can say: there has been an unusual increase in new subscriptions within the last few months. We do not wish to be considered as boasting, but we know that thousands of our readers will be interested in the information that the SIGNS has not only held its own, but during the year it has increased in circulation and receipts.

It does appear to us that there never has been a time when the publication of the SIGNS has been more needful than at the present time, and we know that if it is for the ultimate good of God's dear children, and for his own glory, he will put it in the hearts of the brethren to sustain it, but if not, we hope we may be given grace to say, "Thy will be done."

It would be the height of ingratitude for us to forget the magnanimous liberality of the brethren and friends in donating nearly a thousand dollars within the last year, to the support of the SIGNS, and with this proof of the interest of the brethren in the welfare of the publication, we feel to thank God and take courage. We are too painfully aware of our own weakness for a moment to believe the deep interest felt in the welfare of the SIGNS, is on account of our own feeble efforts, but we feel rather that we have been an impediment, and if the publication was in abler hands, it would be more for the good of the cause, and the welfare of the brethren. Had we known when our dear father was taken away, how the increasing responsibilities of the publication were from time to time to fall on us, we would never have dared to undertake the arduous task. When he was called to lay down his pen, that for nearly fifty years had supplied the editorial columns of the SIGNS, we felt desolate indeed, and fearful lest the publication of the SIGNS would have to cease, but we had at that time our dear brethren with us, the late Elders Wm. L. Beebe and Benton Jenkins. Then failing health deprived us of the assistance of our brother William, then death took from us the able counsel of our beloved brother Jenkins. Thus with brother Chick about one hundred and fifty miles away, we are left here alone; and to think that we have been so marvelously sustained that the SIGNS should meet with the approval of its readers; brethren, it is wonderful, and beyond accounting for on any natural basis.

Deeply impressed with the above facts, and encouraged by the sustaining power of God, and the forbearance of the brethren, we close this seventy-first volume of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, thanking its patrons for their kind support, and asking their prayers that it may be continued in defense of the truth, to the comfort of his chosen ones, and to his name be all the glory. B.

CHURCH NOTICES.

THE State of Iowa, Franklin Co., West Fork Church of the Old School Primitive Baptist faith and order, now seated in conference, on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in November, 1903, to the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. This will inform you that we have excluded Elder Edward A. Norton from our fellowship upon the following charges, to wit: contempt of the church, and in not fulfilling his agreement with the council and committee. We also demanded of him his credentials, therefore we are no longer responsible for his acts.

Therefore we ask you to publish this in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Done in conference and signed by order of the church, this 21st day of November, 1903.

HENRY BROWN, Moderator,

ALBERT WOODLEY, Church Clerk.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—How are we instructed in Matthew xviii. 15, to deal with offenders?

1. Is this rule to be applied to private or to public trespasses?

2. What is meant by the words, "And if he shall hear thee"? Does this imply acknowledgment or repentance, or both?

3. As the Savior directed to take one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses, &c. Does this mean that the aggrieved brother shall be one of the witnesses?

4. And if he meant a private trespass, and I do not see how a private trespass can be proved, what are the two or three witnesses to establish?

5. When the case comes before the church, does the aggrieved and accused stand on the same ground of fellowship with the church, if the aggrieved brother still charges the offence, and the accused denies it?

6. What is meant by being as an heathen and a publican? Is he to be so to the aggrieved brother only, or to the whole church? We also have something on the same subject in Luke xvii. 3, 4.

In hope of eternal life, WM. WIGGINTON.

NEAR FRANKFORT, Ky., Jan., 1861.

REPLY.

Such views as we have, on all scriptural subjects, we feel bound to give, especially when called upon to do so by our brethren who desire to know and walk in the truth. And those who have for many years sustained and held up our feeble hands by their fellowship and patronage, have a claim upon the very best service we can render; but while we in all candor express the convictions of our mind upon all scriptural subjects, we hold no one obligated to indorse our views any farther than they shall find them sustained by the testimony of the Scriptures. To the decisions of the sacred volume we all, as Old School Baptists, profess to bow with reverence and submission, so far as they are made plain to our understanding by the Spirit of him who alone is worthy to take the Book and open the seals thereof. It is true, as brother Wigginton justly remarks, that our brethren do not understand every portion of the Scriptures alike; though equally candid, and honestly inquiring after the truth they may differ to some extent as to the precise meaning of some of the passages; but with the root of the matter in their hearts, they will not be likely to differ so essentially as to break the bonds of christian fellowship in which the family of God is bound. As brethren we should be forbearing, one with another. We are all of us, while in the flesh, compassed with infirmities, and it does not become us to make a brother an offender for a word. While we contend earnestly (not angrily) for the faith, we are admonished "In meekness to instruct them that oppose themselves." Our reply to the several questions proposed by brother Wigginton must necessarily be brief.

1. Is the rule, (Matt. xviii. 15,) applicable to private or public offences? We know of no authority to make any distinction, provided the offence is of a personal character. "If thy brother trespass against thee." The instruction to go to him alone, would seem to favor the idea that the trespass was only known to the aggressor and aggrieved, but, to our mind, it is not restricted to such offences as are only known to the two, but the object of this order is to forbid an aggrieved brother giving currency to any falling of his brother, whether private or public, until he has in obedience to this rule, labored to gain his brother. Any act or expression of a brother which affects the fellowship of his brother is, as we understand it, personal; it is between him and thee, though others may also know and be affected by it; still as it interrupts your fellowship with the offender, it is against thee; therefore delay not a moment, but in all meekness and kindness go and tell him his fault, between thee and him alone.

2. By the words, "If he shall hear

thee," &c., we understand that he receives you in the same kind and christian spirit in which you have come to him. He is willing to carefully investigate the matter, and give you all the satisfaction that the gospel requires. If he be innocent, or unconscious of having committed the trespass; yet, if he hear thee; he is ready to explain, and do all in his power to convince thee of his innocence in the matter, without being angry, but rather thankful that he has a brother and brethren sufficiently faithful and friendly to candidly tell him what they consider to be his fault. If he hear thee, he will regard the order of the gospel, and if convinced that he has trespassed, will turn to thee, saying, "I repent," and thou forgive him; if it is seven times in a day. If he hear thee, the gospel requires of him to acknowledge his fault, and to forsake the wrong, and make such reparation as the nature of the trespass demands. Upon his doing this, you are required to forgive him, and never, to your most confidential friend, much less to an enemy, let it be known that he has trespassed against thee at all.

3. "If he neglect to hear thee, then take with thee one or two more," &c. Who? and for what purpose? The direction of the apostle defines the character of those whom you shall take with thee, viz: "You that are spiritual, restore such an one." That is, those who will not be biased or swayed by any carnal motive, but are actuated by the Spirit of Christ. A venerable preacher among us once remarked, There is a wide difference between the spirit being grieved, and our *old man* being made mad. Those who are spiritual are eminently qualified for this important labor, as first, they will consider their own liability to err, and therefore feel the humility which is calculated to gain an erring brother; and secondly, they will have the honor of God, the good of the cause in view, and indulge in no fleshly or unworthy motive. Such brethren are to be the witnesses, of what? *Of every word.* That in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. Of course they are not witnesses of what they do not know. They may be ignorant of the justness of the charge, or validity of the defence, but if they be spiritual, they are competent to judge of the spirit which the parties manifest. Whether the accusing party is influenced by an haughty, persecuting, censorious, unrelenting spirit, or that of christian humility; whether the new man is really grieved, or the old man angry. Every word has something to do in demonstrating where the fault lies, and when this matter finally comes before the church, if before the church it must come, these faithful brethren will establish, in testimony, to the satisfaction of the church, every word.

Does the direction, "Take one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established," mean that the aggrieved brother shall be one of the witnesses? We presume it does. If he be found as the subject seems to imply, pursuing a gospel course in a gospel spirit, then he is a competent witness, but if not, the two witnesses shall be sufficient to establish every word. If he be included, there will be three concurring witnesses to establish every word; but if he be incompetent, still there are two, which is the smallest number which could be admitted under the ceremonial law to establish every word. "He that despised Moses' law, died without mercy, under two or three witnesses."

But we will here call the attention of brother Wigginton, and of all our breth-

ren, to the words which immediately follow: "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven. Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven: for where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

When the aggrieved brother has failed to gain his brother in the first step, and in obedience to the command of Jesus has taken one or two more, *two or three* are gathered together in Christ's name; that is, by his authority, and Jesus is certainly in the midst. However perplexing, therefore, the case may be, these gathered brethren have the assurance that the Father will hear their united prayer for wisdom to direct them in the investigation, and as nothing can be hidden from the omniscient eye of him who is in the midst, there will be no failure to arrive at a righteous conclusion in regard to the just merits of the case. It is not said where two or three have met together, but where they are *gathered*, as Jesus gathers his sheep with his arm, by his Spirit, by his word, inclining them to convene in obedience to his command. Thus in the name and by the direct authority of Zion's eternal King they are gathered, and Jesus is in their midst, and there is nothing hidden that shall not be revealed, therefore, they are made competent witnesses to establish every word, and what they bind on earth being bound by his authority, is also bound in heaven. The foregoing reply to the third, if correct, will also cover the fourth inquiry, showing how a private trespass may be proved; and also what the witnesses, when they come before the church, are to establish. We will therefore pass on to the next item.

5. When the case comes before the church, does the aggrieved and the accused brother stand on the same ground of fellowship with the church, if the aggrieved still charges, and the accused still denies? So far as the case to be presented to the church for investigation is concerned, they do. Our law judges no man until he has had a lawful hearing, and the object of telling it to the church, is that she may investigate and then decide upon the merits of it. She has no authority to withdraw her fellowship until she has investigated the matter according to the laws of Christ, and then if the accused neglect to hear the church, that is, to respect her authority as the body of Christ, she is to withdraw her fellowship.

Where a direct contradiction is persisted in by the accusing and accused, and the fact or facts involved in the contradiction are only known to the parties, the church may judge from the spirit manifested by them, they then both may be wrong, one or both may be honestly mistaken, or one may be perfectly correct, and the other entirely wrong, but still, he who is in the midst of the golden candlesticks, and as we have shown, when by his authority and in his name and Spirit they are agreed in asking for wisdom to direct, it shall be given them from above. "Some men's sins are open, going beforehand to judgment, others follow after," and as the eyes of the Lord are in his church, he will make the matter clear to the church, when she implicitly observes the direction he has given. It is possible that a whole church may be in disorder to some extent, and if that be the case, the decision should be delayed until a clearer light shall shine upon her.

6. The sixth and last question before us is what is meant by the excluded person being "unto thee as an heathen man, and a publican." If by a careful observance of the divine rule, in the spirit of the gospel, the offender cannot be reclaimed, if he neglect to hear the church, despises her authority, and persists in his wicked course, "Let him be unto thee as an heathen man and as a publican." That is, let him be to thee, as the heathen and publicans were to Israel, under the ceremonial law. The Israelites were not allowed to unite with them in religious rites or allowed any part or lot in the peculiar privileges of their religion. They are not therefore to be allowed to retain a standing in the communion and fellowship of the church, nor treated as those who are of the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, but regarded as if they never had the fellowship of the church. Not that we are at liberty to indulge in a spirit of retaliation, or allow ourselves to injure them, in person or reputation, any farther than to withold from them all expressions of fellowship, until God shall give them repentance, and incline their hearts to return with humble acknowledgments of their wrong to the church. And when the church has become satisfied that the offender has made suitable satisfaction, he is no longer to be regarded as a publican or heathen.

We cannot too highly estimate nor too sacredly observe the weighty responsibility which rests upon the church of God, and upon each member of the body, in the execution of the laws of the eternal King, in all its bearings upon them collectively or individually; but especially in attending to the discipline which he has enjoined. Too often, alas! when difficulties arise among brethren, or in the churches, a carnal feeling stealthily gains an undue ascendancy, and then, although we may seem to adhere strictly to the letter of the word, we may altogether miss the spirit, and thus transgress the law of Christ, and perhaps do great injustice to some one or more of Christ's little ones. If a brother be overtaken by temptation, and commit an offence, *you that are spiritual*, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering your own liability to be also tempted. The laws of Christ are not obeyed if in our labors we act from an ambitious, haughty or resentful spirit, or if we forget that we are also in the flesh, liable at every moment, if left to ourselves, to be overcome by the corruptions of our own depraved nature, and that the very service we are called upon to perform in laboring to reclaim a wanderer, may be, before the next setting sun, required to rescue us from the snares of Satan.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., February 1, 1861.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, at Nassaongo meeting-house, in Wicomico Co., Md., Nov. 18th, 1903, Marion C. Johnson and Della Powell.

By the same, at Salisbury, Md., Nov. 25th, 1903, Mathew Purnell and Lillian May Laws.

By the same, on the same day, at the home of the bride's brother, near Newark, Md., Louis J. Tull and Miss Bessie D. Holloway.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, at the parsonage, Nov. 12th, 1903, Ervin Miller and Miss Alice Heskett, both of Columbus, Ohio.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 72. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1904. NO. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GOD NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS.

(Acts x. 34.)

ALL men naturally think that God is a respecter of persons. No man can think otherwise except by special revelation. It is impossible for our natural minds to conceive of any reason why the Lord should regard any man with favor except as seeing something in his person that causes him to merit that favor. All natural religion is based upon the belief that God is a respecter of persons. If a man would recommend himself to any king or potentate, he must show something in his person, relationship or work deserving his regard. So it is supposed that by some merit of his own, either as the son of a good man, or as having intrinsic or acquired merit in himself, a man must be recommended to the Lord.

Peter thought that God was a respecter of persons even when he preached on the day of Pentecost. Although those who gladly received his word represented all nations, yet they were all Jews or proselytes, and it was his thought that the Lord regarded the person of a Jew or a proselyte above the person of a Gentile, and he was not taught the truth on this point until he was at the house of Cornelius. When he heard the experience of that Gentile, to whom Jesus was yet unknown, and saw that God had visited him and his house with his salvation, then he could say, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him."

At this time he understood the meaning of the vision that came to him on the housetop a few days before. While in a trance "he saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. And Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven."

What a wonderful vision! Out of heaven came beasts and birds and creeping things of all kinds; wolves and lambs; doves and ravens; the lion as well as the ox; the cow and the bear, and even the loathsome worm; but they were all in the great sheet, which was so knit at the four corners that none of them could get out; and all this strange and various crowd of living creatures was received up into heaven again. What could it mean? It must have been the subject of wondering thought in Peter's mind all the way down to Caesarea. But all at once, while hearing Cornelius relate his vision, the sweet, deep, glorious meaning of this vision came to Peter; he now understood that all that was in the sheet represented people; for "he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation: but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean."

Here, then, is that which represents the everlasting covenant of grace. The sheet was let down three times, to show that salvation is the same in each of the three dispensations. All the animals in the sheet were clean, the wolf as well as the Lamb, the worm as well as the dove. The voice declared to Peter that they were all clean, for God had cleansed them. To Peter the wolf and the raven appeared as unclean as they ever had been, but God's voice declared that God had cleansed them. This was true only of those in the sheet. Out of the sheet they were unclean, but seen in the sheet they were declared by the Lord to have been cleansed.

In their own persons, in the flesh, the Lord's people are sinful and depraved, and they feel it when the life of Jesus is their light. So Job said, "I am vile; I abhor myself." Isaiah said, "I am a man of unclean lips." Daniel said, "When thou spakest unto thy servant my comeliness was turned in me into corruption." Paul said, "In me (that is, in my flesh,) there dwelleth no good thing." What a blessed thing that God is no respecter of persons, for if he were, no man could stand before him. But it is in the sheet that the creatures of all kinds are regarded as clean. It is in the everlasting covenant, it is in the person of Christ, that poor sinners are re[illegible]ted. He "is given for a covenant of th[illegible] people," and in him we stand holy and unblamable before God in love. He respects his people not in their own persons, but in the person of Christ.

One has been looking over the whole field of his nature, and it is all a desert. He sees in himself no good, but all evil. When he would do good, evil is present with him. He cries out, "I am a worm and no man." Then the Lord gives him a glimpse of the everlasting covenant; lets him look for a moment into the sheet that was let down from heaven in the sight of Peter, and behold, there is a crawling worm, and he hears a voice from heaven saying, "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the holy One of Israel." What a glad surprise to the poor soul when this revelation of Jesus as his righteousness and salvation breaks in upon his soul, and he is made to rejoice in believing that he is accepted with him.

Truly the coming of Jesus in his power, as the one who ruleth over men in justice and in the fear of God, "is as the light of the morning when the sun ariseth; even a morning without clouds: as the tender grass springing out of the earth

by clear shining after rain." How glad Peter was to proclaim that in every nation the fear of the Lord in the heart, which is to hate evil, and the working of righteousness, are sure evidences that such are accepted with God; accepted with Jesus. The fear of the Lord is put into the heart by our God, who says, "I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me." The working of righteousness is the effect of the work of grace in the heart. He who lies helpless on the bed is as capable of working righteousness as one who is well and strong. It is in the heart; it is heart-work. "As a man thinketh so is he." It is the tree of righteousness planted by the Lord which bears the fruit of righteousness. "The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever." Only by faith in Jesus can any righteous work be done. So Peter was glad to know and to proclaim that wherever there was one in any nation who had the fear of God in his heart, and that faith by which one is enabled to walk in the good works of Jesus, that one is thus manifested as accepted with Jesus, the only wise God and our Savior.

We do not read, "*shall be* accepted *by* him," but "*is* accepted *with* him." All of the Lord's people were in Jesus in a legal and mystical sense when he died, and they were "raised up together with him," and they were accepted with him in the acceptable day of the Lord, when the gates lifted up their heads that the King of glory might come in. The beasts and birds and creeping things were in the sheet when it came down from the open heaven, to show that the righteousness and salvation of all the Lord's people are from heaven, and that they are only righteous and only saved in Jesus. The sinner does not come down from heaven, but his righteousness does. As a saved sinner he is God's "workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that he should walk." He did not put himself into the great sheet, into the covenant of grace, nor can he get out of it. He did not cleanse himself from sin. The word is, "What God hath cleansed that call not thou common." Poor, troubled soul. You look to yourself like a sinner, black as the raven, wicked as the wolf, vile as the worm, but God hath cleansed you, and now you are waiting for the full manifestation of the blessed work, "The earnest expectation of the creature [the new creature in Christ] waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." And this creature "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

And during this time of waiting and earnest expectation there are seasons of comfort and rejoicing. The dying of the Lord Jesus is borne about in our body, but the life also of Jesus is manifested in our body. The tribulation continues on account of felt depravity in the flesh, but we rejoice in the tribulation because it worketh patience, and experience, and hope which maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts. "As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." We cannot rejoice in ourselves, but we do at times rejoice in the Lord, for he is rich unto us in mercy, and goodness, and grace, and loving-kindness, and his blessed name has been unto us a strong tower, in which we have found safety. We cannot but be glad and rejoice in the precious hope that we are represented in

that great sheet that was let down from heaven to the earth, and that the Lord remembers us in the "everlasting covenant which is ordered in all things and sure."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov., 1903.

MACOMB, Ill., Oct. 5, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I send the inclosed letter for publication in the SIGNS, feeling that it will prove a comfort to others, as it has to me. The writer gave her consent to have it published, providing I sent my answer also. She sent my letter back requesting it to be sent with hers. I have hesitated, fearing mine would perhaps be of little interest to any one else. But do with it as you think best. I have received two other good letters from her.

With much love to all the household of faith, your sister,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

SARAH E. RUNKLE—DEAR FRIEND:—I would love to say sister, but fear I am not worthy to call you by that name. If this reaches you no doubt you will be surprised, for we are strangers in the flesh, but I sometimes hope not in Spirit. I saw a communication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES written by you, more than four years since, in which you give a relation of your christian experience. O, if I could only tell you what a comfort that was to me; it revived my little hope which was almost gone, and I felt impressed to write to you, but had to defer it on account of sickness in the family, and ever since my mind has been impressed to write. Your experience was so much like what I had experienced, and I had so many doubts and fears thinking it was all a delusion.

When I was a small girl I wanted to be a christian, would go away by myself and try to pray. I remember one night of dreaming I was in the garden, and I thought Christ came to me; O, I thought he was so lovely; I felt to love him with all my heart, and thought I would be good and would not do anything wrong, for that would offend Christ. Time passed on in this way for several years, sometimes I was careless, and then again I would think of these things.

At the age of twenty-two I was married, and my husband and I began housekeeping close by his parents. Up to this time I had never met an Old School Baptist, and knew nothing about their doctrine; I had heard of them; by the world they were called "Hardshells" and "Ironsides." My mother-in-law was an Old School Baptist, and also a subscriber for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. She became a member when she was a girl, and when she married she left that place, and settled where there was no church, and she would bring her SIGNS over for me to read, and I being a great reader, would always read all they contained, but the doctrine of election and predestination I did not like, neither could I believe it. She asked me if I found anything in the SIGNS too hard for me? I said there was some pretty hard doctrine in them. She said, It was true, and there were very few pages in the Bible but what you could find election and predestination in. I could not believe it, but I did not tell her. O, I feel very thankful to the good Lord that he kept me from saying one word to wound her feelings, for I believe she was one of the redeemed.

I had read the New Testament a good bit, it was our school book, and I had read it at Sunday School, and had committed a good bit of it to memory. Now

I thought I would read it carefully to see if that doctrine was there. I began at Matthew, and when I came to the Acts of the apostles, I read these words, "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." If some one had struck me a blow I could not have been more shocked, and I felt a secret wish in my heart that those words had been left out. Yes, I was wicked enough to wish it, but Satan and my own evil heart soon made me believe it had some other meaning.

A short time after this I was sitting by the fireside alone, when this question was presented to my mind with as much force as if some one had spoken it aloud, "Have you got religion or not?" It was not a thought that came and then left, it was a question in my heart, to be answered. I answered, "No, I have no religion." I then felt myself to be a sinner in the sight of God, and I began to try to pray. Now, I never felt my sins a great burden pressing me to earth, that I could neither eat or sleep, as I have heard some say. Time passed in this way for over a year, I still trying to pray and asking God to have mercy on me, a sinner. Late one evening I went into a private room to try to pray; I felt very much discouraged; I spoke these words, "O Lord, I am a great sinner, I have done all I can do; if thou, O Lord, do not undertake for me I will be forever lost." Right then these words came in my mind with force, "The Lord will hear your prayer in the future," and I felt greatly relieved. I retired for the night with the same feeling, and in the morning as soon as I had opportunity, I picked up the New Testament and opened at Christ's sermon on the mount; there were the same words I had read many times before, but it seemed as though they had a different meaning. I then picked up a back number of the SIGNS; my eyes rested on a piece written on election and predestination; (I do not remember the writer's name) I read nearly half of a column when I saw and understood it as plain as I ever saw the sun shine at noonday. It was clear to my mind, and I loved it, for I saw it was truth. I had always thought they that believed that doctrine were a bigoted sect, and thought there was no one good but themselves. Ah, I now loved that doctrine which I had always hated.

But I did not think my sins were forgiven, but thought they would be in the future. I think it was more than a year after this I was reading a piece in the SIGNS written by Elder Wm. J. Purington, on christian experience. He quoted this Scripture, "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "Well now," he said, "perhaps there are some poor souls who have never met the brethren; how do they know whether they love them or not? Well," he said, "If you love this doctrine, you will love them that believe it, that is the same." O, I thought, surely I love this doctrine, have I indeed passed from death unto life? Are my sins, which are many, all forgiven? Well, I hoped it was so, and I still have a hope, but I have never had the assurance that my sins are forgiven, no, not even for one moment. I often think if I could have that assurance, even for one moment, I would never doubt again. But it seems to me that something has been taught to me that the world has not taught. It has been over thirty years since I have had this hope.

Is it not a great comfort for us to know that God reigns and rules over everything, both small and great, and he speaks the word and it stands fast, and

he will do all his pleasure, and we know he does everything right.

I have never had the pleasure of visiting an Old School Baptist church, but have often thought it would be very pleasant to do so. I have heard three or four sermons preached by a minister of that order, and that has been more than thirty years since. I have been a reader of the SIGNS over fifty years, and a subscriber for a good many years, and I dearly love the doctrine they contend for; it is all the preaching I get. I am nearly alone in these things; I have no one to talk to that believes as I do, except a sister-in-law, and she is a subscriber for the SIGNS, which comes to us richly laden with good news from afar. The only ground of hope that I have, is that the great God did predestinate all things, and that he does work all things after the counsel of his own will. There is nothing in my flesh but sin and death, and my hope is solely in the resurrection of Christ.

Now I would not wonder if you tired of reading this poor scribble. I have scribbled over a good bit of paper, and it is so disconnected I hesitate to send it. I may destroy it as I did the one I commenced some time ago. This desire to write may be entirely of the flesh, the good Lord only knows; I know there is no merit in anything I can do, for I cannot think one good thought in and of myself.

Now if I have done wrong in writing this, I hope to be forgiven. I would be pleased to get a reply from this, but if you do not feel like replying I will not be hurt in the least. I write this as a private letter. If you answer you can do so privately or through the SIGNS, just as you choose. If through the SIGNS, please withhold my name. Please remember me at a throne of grace.

Now may the great God be with you and all his people, and guide them into all truth, is the sincere desire of my heart. From a

POOR SINNER.

MACOMB, Ill., July 5, 1903.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I feel a desire to address you in this way after reading your dear good letter, which came to me a few days ago. My heart goes out in love to you, and though we are strangers in the flesh, I have a hope that we have been led and taught by the same Spirit, and are therefore no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.

I was very glad to get your letter, and have read it over and over, and cannot help from believing that you have been with Christ, and have learned of him. I feel that I am very ignorant of spiritual things, yet it seems plain to me that you have written the experience of one taught of the Lord, that you have been led about and instructed, as was Jacob of old, and there was no strange god with you. I believe you have been made to know the joyful sound that "Salvation is of the Lord," which often comes in that still small voice which the natural ear cannot hear or understand. You surely speak the sweet language of Canaan when you say you cannot think a good thought, and that there is nothing in your flesh but sin and death, and your only hope is in the resurrection of Christ. Surely you learned this not by hearing, neither were you taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Christ reveals himself and all these precious things to his children in his own time and way. It was him alone who gave you a heart to love and

rejoice in the doctrine you once hated, who caused you to mourn for your sins, who caused you to call upon his name. Then, my sister, is there not comfort for you? Cannot you rejoice? For it is written that they that call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Those dead in sin have no desire to call on his name; they feel no need of a Savior. But the poor, trembling child of God is made to see his sins, and to hate them, and given a love for holiness. He calls on the Lord for mercy, for pardon, for strength, for grace. He feels and realizes his weakness, his unworthiness, and knows that he cannot do one good thing, so he calls on the Lord from necessity, for he alone can do helpless sinners good. "He hath the words of eternal life." Then we are made to see that it is all of grace, and while reading your letter I feel that you have been brought this way which is the good old way, the way of holiness, which the natural eye hath not seen, but the redeemed of the Lord walk there. But those of the world desire not nor care for these heavenly things.

It has always been a source of many doubts and many bitter tears whether I have any evidence of a hope in Christ. For I often fear it is only of the flesh, and perhaps I am deceived. I was raised by Baptist parents, my father having been a Baptist minister for over sixty years, and I have heard their doctrine all my life. I have gone among them since a child to the present time, and it seems I always loved and believed the doctrine they preached. I never hated them or the doctrine, and wished while I was a little girl that I was good enough to be one of them, and loved to hear them talk and preach, but I felt too sinful, too unworthy to be with them. I believed I must have a bright, clear evidence of pardon. I thought then that every one had. I went on till I was past thirty years of age in this way, waiting, longing, praying for a brighter evidence, for a stronger assurance that my sins were forgiven, till at last I could stay away no longer. I told the church all I could say, I loved them, and longed to have a home with them, but I was sinful and felt unworthy to be with them, and I wanted them to be honest and not be deceived in me. I was received, and after being baptized I found a sweet rest to my soul, and experienced that peace which the world cannot give. Since then I have had many doubts and fears, many tribulations and trials to bear, yet, too, I have had many sweet seasons of rejoicing. I have been blessed with the love and fellowship of my dear kindred in Christ, and have been at many precious meetings with the saints. I feel I am unworthy of all these great favors, yet it seems I could not live without them. I fear I should not have written all this of myself, but I want you to know I am one, perhaps like yourself, who cannot say with assurance that my sins are forgiven. I do not believe any one can say this, for here we see as through a glass darkly. Here we walk by faith, not by sight. Here we only know in part. Here, my dear sister, we are kept by hope, but that hope which we have often grows dim and we call it little, yet it is as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and enters to that within the vail. So when I read your letter I see where there has been a change in you, while I cannot tell of any time where any great change has taken place with me, so I have more faith in your experience than of mine, if I have any. There seems more hope for you than for myself. Yet with all these misgivings and doubts, if we believe the

truth and rejoice in it, and our only hope is in the Lord, and we have love and fellowship for those who preach Christ as the only way of life and salvation, cannot we rejoice? I hope you will find consolation in this. I wish I could write something that would be of comfort to you. If I have ever done so I am glad, but it is of the Lord I hope, for of myself I can do nothing. I cannot do the things I would, but the things I hate are the things I do.

I think it is so sad that you live so far from any of the Baptists; I believe you would enjoy their society very much, and I feel that you should tell them of what great things the Lord has done for you, and I have no doubt you would be gladly received, and I believe you would be better satisfied than you have been all these years. I believe should you write to Elder Durand, who lives in your State, he could comfort you very much, and likely go and visit you. I do hope a way may be opened for you, and that God may keep you and guide you to his people.

I am glad it was put in your mind to write to me, for I dearly love to get letters from my dear kindred in Christ. I have been highly favored in this way, having received many letters from my brethren and sisters, and from more than twenty ministers of the gospel. I feel to be unworthy of all this. I reply to all these privately in my weak, imperfect way. This is a great comfort to me. I feel that we should speak often one to another, and bear each other's burdens.

Your letter did not tire me, neither was it too long, but it was very interesting and comforting, and I do feel that the Lord hath blessed you with spiritual knowledge and understanding, and I trust that you may grow in grace and the knowledge of the truth. There is one thing I know, that I have never grown any better, and my hope is in the saving grace of God. His predestinating care is over all his creatures, and he speaks and it is done; he commands and it stands fast; he rules all things by the counsel of his own will; he saves his people with an everlasting salvation. O, may we believe and trust in him.

If you feel like this is worth an answer, I would love to hear from you.

Please look over mistakes, and remember me as your sister, I trust, in christian love,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

[By special request we omit the name and address of the writer of the letter sent us by sister Runkle, but we wish to indorse the advice given the writer by sister Runkle. If the experience she relates is not a christian experience we have never read one. While it is very interesting to a child of God to read or listen to the relation of the spiritual exercises of a subject of grace, especially when they are first quickened by the Spirit, yet we know of no Scripture authority requiring that one should be able to give a detailed account of all the way the Lord had brought them, in order to receive the fellowship of the church. It is not possible for any one, naturally, to love the truth, for the carnal mind is enmity to God, and cannot love the truth. But it is written, "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," and if we are able to say, Wherein I was once blind now I see, we have the scriptural evidence that we are born of the Spirit, and this evidence the writer has clearly given in the letter she sent sister Runkle, and now we feel to say, Come in, thou blessed of the Lord, why standest thou without?—Ed.]

JEREMIAH XVIII. 4.

"THE word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and behold he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it."

The above has been my meditation for some days past, and when I would think of speaking or writing upon it, how I would fear and tremble lest I could not shape my words so as to make my brethren understand me, and would cause some of them to think I was trying to introduce something new among them. And now, brethren, we wish to say to you all, If we know our own heart's desire, we do not wish to bring in anything new, or would not set up against any old principles taught in the Scriptures, but would admonish each and every one of you to try every man's writing and preaching by the word of God, and receive it just so far as as it holds out with a "thus saith the Lord." The difference among Baptists generally arises from the application they make of certain texts of Scripture they use. We think they all love the truth, and would all receive it if they could understand it alike, and in making this application I may make a wrong one, but I shall endeavor not to spring any new doctrine by so doing. I understand that "all Scripture is give by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." It is also said, "For whatsoever things were written afore time, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Then we should not look on any Scripture as an idle tale, but as something very important to us, if we could but rightly understand it. And now in view of these facts we conclude that if we could understand the Scripture at the head of this article, it would be of great importance to us, but should we make a misapplication of it, there are some things we need not fail to notice as we proceed along.

We need not be mistaken as to what the potter made, it was a vessel, not something to be put in a vessel, but a vessel itself. We need not be mistaken as to what it was made of; it was clay. We need not be mistaken as to what became of the first vessel that was made of clay; it marred (impaired: made worse) in the hand of the potter. We need not be mistaken as to what the potter then did: "So he made it again," (a second time), another (not same vessel), but another vessel as seemed good to the potter, and now, my dear brethren, I wish to ask you a few questions, Did not the clay of which the second vessel was made, have an actual existence in the first vessel which marred in the hand of the potter? and does not the amount that it took to make the second vessel exist in real substance in the second vessel taken? This granted, we will still ask some other questions: Is it not a fact that whatever process the second vessel passes through, that all the substance contained in the second vessel which also did exist in the first vessel, does pass through? And now, taking the above as a fact, we will proceed to make the application, We understand that God, the creator of all things, is represented here as the potter. It said in reference to him, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" We understand those two Adams that were spoken of in 1 Cor. xv. 45, to be those two ves-

sels that were made of the same clay. And now the question is, How near can we come to proving it by the Scriptures? It is said that God took of the dust of the ground and formed man, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. Elihu said to Job (xxxiii. 6), "I also am formed out of clay." Paul says, 1 Cor xv. 47, "The first man is of the earth earthy." So we conclude that first Adam is this first vessel which marred in the hands of the potter, and now while we may apply this second vessel to that second Adam, which was made a quickening Spirit, we want it distinctly understood we are speaking of him in his human or fleshly nature, as a vessel made by the potter, and when we speak of him in his divine nature, we understand him to be God, to the exclusion of all persons or characters which were distinct from him. Now to the proof in the case, he is said to be the seed of the woman, which should bruise the serpent's head, and if he is the seed of the woman, was he not a component part at least? It is said again, "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law," &c., could he be made of a woman, and not be a component part of her? Moses said, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me, unto him ye shall hearken." Could he be "of thy brethren" without being of the same substance? It is said again, "Forasmuch then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same," &c. It is also said, "The word was made flesh," and again, "But a body hast thou prepared me." "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." If this does not prove our position, we doubt our ability to do so by the Scripture. But if it is a fact that this is a correct application of the above text of Scripture, then the doctrine of the Baptists is easily proven: here are two headships of the church, one natural, the other spiritual, (two natures existing in the second headship,) each producing after his kind. "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual?" If the foregoing be a true application of the texts referred to, then it is true that the church did exist (in her human nature) in both Adam and Christ when he was in the flesh, and when Adam fell in sin and death by transgression the church fell in him, and when Christ died for her transgressions, she died in the person of Christ, and when he arose, or was born from the dead, she arose or was born from the dead in the person of Christ, and it appears to us that when Christ arose and ascended to heaven, the salvation of his people was complete, both for time and eternity, and the only thing that is necessary is to manifest it to those chosen vessels of mercy by the Spirit, which is termed in the Scriptures, being born again, or born of the Spirit, or born of God, or born by the word of God, &c. Then such Scriptures as the following are made clear to us: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." "For as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children." And, "After two days will he revive us; in the third day he will raise us up and we shall live in his sight," "Quickened together with

Christ."

Brother Beebe, do with this as you think best for the cause and all will be right with me.

P. N. MOYERS.

CAPPS FORD, Tenn.

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521 CENTRE ST., TRENTON, N. J., Sept., 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I inclose a letter from my mother, as it has been a great pleasure to me to read it, so I send it leaving it to your better judgment. I feel that it is good to hear of one's exercises of mind, and her letter has been of peculiar interest to me. The words of the poet expresses my feelings at present,

"O, I sunk beneath the load
Of my nature's evil;
Full of enmity to God,
Captived by the devil.
Restless as the troubled seas,
Feeble, faint and fearful,
Plagued with every sore disease,
How can I be cheerful?

Faith when void of works is dead;
This the Scriptures witness,
And what works have I to plead,
Who am all unfitness.
All my powers are depraved,
Blind, perverse and filthy.
If from death I'm fully saved,
Why am I not healthy?"

Yours unworthily,

ELIZABETH P. FETTER.

FOXCHASE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., May 15, 1903.

MY DEAR CHILD:—I feel so unworthy to write or even to think on the precious things of Christ, and yet I feel as if I did not want anything else. I have been for quite awhile so low down, just ready to give up all hope. I was thinking one day just how long, or how far would I go, for there was nothing for me, when these words came, "So far shalt thou go, and no farther." I felt that I was in my Father's hand, and so I am. The words gave great comfort, and I felt that I had not left my first love; nor can we forget it. Sometimes I feel very cold and indifferent. I thought when I first came into the church, over forty years go, that as I grew older, I would grow in grace and in knowledge of these things. I think that it was then, and is yet, my desire to live near my God, but how far short I have come. I feel so ashamed to let my brethren know how ignorant I am, yet it gives me comfort to know that I can say that I love the brethren, and I feel that it is because he first loved me.

I will go back years ago when I was a child. I think that I always felt that I was bad, worse than my brothers and sisters, yet I had no knowledge that I was a sinner before God until one day I was playing in my room, and singing the good old hymn, "When I can read my title clear," when I heard, as it were, a voice saying, "You sinner; you wicked girl." I thought it was one of my brothers teasing me, and I went out to see, but could not find any one. Then I heard it the second time, and no one was near. So I went back into the room, and could not help crying, for I did not know what it meant. I found my mother and told her, and I can never forget her looks, as she put her arms around me. I was sick in bed some days after that, and I remember my sister telling me not to worry, for I was no worse than others, but I could not see as she did. When mother came and read to me out of the SIGNS, I never got tired, for they told me what I wanted to hear, yet I did not understand it all. I was then about twelve years of age. I felt to be such a sinner, but thought as I grew older I would understand more, but as I grew up these feelings never left me no matter where I was. I always felt that I was the worst one about. I remember how glad I was

when my dear mother would take me to the Thursday meetings; I can see them yet, some ten or twelve of the dear sisters going along talking of their trials and joys; they always looked so good and happy to me. I then questioned myself, "Would I ever be so good and happy?" I can now answer, No, I am not like one of thy handmaids. Once I went to an evening dance with a brother, and while dancing I was struck with an awful feeling of condemnation, and felt how wicked it all was. I was taken into another room and was questioned, but all I could say was that I was sick. I felt that I would like the floor to open and let me out of their sight, but I knew I could not get out of the sight of God. I asked my brother to take me home, which he did. That dear brother was brought out and afterwards became a good Old School Baptist, but he has gone to his rest, a true and faithful child of God, how I miss him.

Thus it went on for some time, and I wanted to hear preaching, but there was no where I wanted to go but to the Old School Baptist meetings. I did not know why, for I thought I never could be like them, for they seemed so good, and I was so vile and sinful. I well remember one Sunday how badly I wanted to go to the meeting, but I was away from home, and it was a stormy day, so I took my Bible and went away from the house, under a large lilac bush, where no one would see me, for I was feeling very badly, but I dared not look into my Bible. All I could say was, "O Lord, have mercy upon me, a sinner, for I am so vile," though I dared not look up. In a moment all was light, and I felt as though if I had wings I would fly away. These words came to me, "In my Father's house are many mansions, if it were not so I would have told you." I felt then that there was one for me. O, if there is only a little place, so that I can sit at the feet of Jesus, it will be well with me. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

I was surprised to think that only just a little time before I could not even look into my Bible, but now I could not let it out of my hands, it was such a comfort. I did not want to eat or sleep, but to praise God more and more. I wanted to see my dear mother, and tell her what a dear Savior I had found. I felt that I must tell her. So I went home, and when I got there, mother had some company, and I stopped at the door and heard one dear sister telling her experience, and I thought she was telling mine, and wondered how she knew, for I had told no one. I felt that I could not go in there, and so I went to the barn, and then came to the house from the back. How surprised mother was. She took me into the room, and they all seemed glad to see me; one said, "Have you something to tell us?" I felt that if they only knew how deceitful I was, they would not ask me such a question. I do not remember now what I said, but they all seemed to rejoice with me. That was a day never to be forgotten. Mother and I went the following day to see Elder Harding, and I felt as though I could go to him, as to a father, for he had always a good word for me; I felt as if I could tell the church my feelings, but was so very unworthy, yet I loved them, and wondered how it came that I loved them, and it came to me that it was because Jesus first loved me.

One meeting day, one of the deacons asked me what I was waiting for? He said, that if I waited to get better I

would never come. I often think how true it was, for, after all these years, I am no better, but so slow to learn. One thing I know, that I love to be with the brethren.

I was baptized by Elder Harding, the second Sunday in August, 1862, and have been groping along ever since.

Now Lizzie, I have tried to write my experience to you; it is poorly expressed, yet I know you will understand; if I tried again I could do no better. I feel that I need the prayers of all the dear saints; I cannot do the things I would, and the things I would not, these I do. I will stop. With love to all your family, I remain your mother,

E. B. LEEDOM.

COLUMBIA, Ohio, Dec. 3, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I herewith send you a letter written by brother George W. Hartsough, which I think would be a comfort to others the same as it has been to me. If you think it proper please give it a place in our old reliable, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and oblige yours truly,

G. N. TUSING.

LAURELVILLE, Ohio, Nov. 29, 1903.

ELDER G. N. TUSING—BELOVED PASTOR:—I venture to afflict you with another worthless scribble. Elder Cole came to our place Saturday morning and we had a very enjoyable time, and to-day went to church and listened to a very excellent expounding of the text, "O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem!" &c. He said many things that afforded me much comfort; the text always seemed veiled in mystery as, I might say, almost all Scripture is, for I am so very weak, poor and ignorant that I often think that I am, if a child at all, the least, most unworthy, unprofitable, darkest of the flock. But Elder Cole said to-day when Jerusalem was carried away captive, the great, the smart and noble, were the ones taken, but the vine dressers and the poor non-influential ones were left. When trouble is caused and division comes, the great cause it, and the wise are led away, but the poor, the ignorant, the blind and those of no profit to the enemy, are left to worship God in the wasted temple. This is a comfort to your unworthy servant, because I am sure that I, like Elder Carmichael, am not smart enough to cause division, and none would want to draw away one so worthless.

I have been reading the experience and call to the ministry of Elder Lemuel Potter, and enjoyed it very much. If all ministers could refrain from strife, and like Paul, determine to know nothing among the brethren save Christ and him crucified, and when a little fire is found, try to immediately quench it, instead of adding fuel to the flame, the church would be blessed. "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth." James says, The tongue is a world of iniquity, &c., and is set on fire of hell.

Elder Cole quoted the text, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord," &c., and I thought that I saw new light in it to me. (Eph. v. 32; vi. 1, 4.) The children (those who require milk and not meat) should obey, follow after or take knowledge of the fathers and mothers in Israel, and obey them; be willing to submit their judgment, ideas, &c., to the older heads. Obey in the Lord, or when their instruction is in full harmony with the Scriptures. I think and often tell our dear old fathers and mothers of the Laurel Church that I would like for them to visit the weakest, most ignorant one of the family, G. W. H., and nurture, strengthen and

train him, and prepare him for future usefulness. The Jews were required to teach the younger ones the precepts; it did not make Jews of them, but it was necessary to their equipment. He would have been a very poor Jew if his parents had left him to grow up without instilling into his mind and nature the laws and observances of their nation. Why is it not necessary that the babes in Christ be instructed? Not instruct them to know the Lord, but in the correct practices of the Lord's house. Again, the children in the Lord should be slow to speak, docile, and honor and obey their parents in the Lord, the older members; be not of a forward mind, but willing to be instructed in doctrine, in faith and in practice. Another Scripture I have thought much about here lately, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a christian." The Arminians regard this as one of their strong points, and say that Agrippa was almost persuaded to become a christian, but, suppose Paul's arguments were not quite convincing enough, and therefore he was lost. But we see the text in altogether a different light: if Agrippa was almost converted, that was the work of the Lord, and he would carry it on until the day of Jesus Christ. But Agrippa said, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a christian," or as we would say, "You would almost endeavor to persuade, or it seems that that is what you are trying to do; but, Paul, it is of no use to waste your arguments on me, a king. I will not be prevailed upon to join that poor, despised sect, whom all the world ridicules. Why you have nothing; you even claim to have no righteousness of your own. One who joins you must bid farewell to fame and honor. Therefore, Paul, do not try to prevail on me, because the sacrifice is too great."

But I will stop, I hope this is in accord with holy writ. I am so full of that church book that that is about all that runs in my mind.

I pray the merciful, all-wise God that this will find you well, and that you may be enabled to meet with us at our next meeting.

Pardon me for bothering you, and write if you see fit; if not, I will try to be content. I am your very little child, if one at all,

GEORGE W. HARTSOUGH.

NUTLEY, N. J., Dec. 3, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I received the inclosed letter from brother Fisher some time ago, and as I am sending my remittance for next year, I will inclose it for publication, for no doubt there are others that would enjoy reading it.

Your unworthy brother,

HENRY T. LEFFERTS.

HALLWOOD, Va., Oct. 25, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER LEFFERTS:—I have since leaving New York often thought of writing to you, but have failed so far to make the attempt, owing to the fact that most of my time for the last six months has been spent in darkness; yes, darkness that can be felt, but I feel a desire now to let you and also the brethren at Ebenezer know that for the last few days the Lord has been pleased to bless me with his felt presence, and O, how I am made to inwardly rejoice and be glad. What a wonder-working God is ours. It is he who forms the light, also it is he who creates the darkness, and this we do well know, yet how impossible it is for us to realize when we are made to pass through the valley and the shadow of death, that it is the Lord leading us, and that it is he who creates the darkness, as well as it is he

who forms the light. If we could only realize this, then the darkness would be ended, and the light would appear, for two opposites cannot exist together.

The most of my time for the last six months I have felt that my hope was clean gone forever; that surely I was without hope and without God in the world. There was nothing to cheer me in all this wide world, and I am often made to feel so weary of toiling and rowing, that if such were God's will to take me unto himself, how glad would I be to depart and be at rest. Feeling as I did, I was without comfort, and I was of no comfort and but little profit to any one else. But now a light has sprung up in my poor heart once more.

I was indeed blessed to attend two days of the Salisbury Association last week, even after I had given up all hope of being able to go, for the way I am now situated, I do not get to attend meeting as much as I would like, and feel that this had added much to my discomfort. But I was blessed to attend the last two days of the association, and I feel that I know it was good to be there to meet and mingle with those that I feel that I have been made to love for the truth's sake, and to have the blessed privilege of hearing (a hearing ear being given me) the gospel in its purity preached by God's called and qualified servants. Surely it was a feast of fat things to me. Yes, I was made to rejoice, to thank God and take courage.

What a mystery are we to ourselves; sometimes on the mountain top, and sometimes low down in the valley, and it is the Lord's dealing with us all our journey through; each and every step we take is ordered of him. But we cannot realize this truth at all times; if so, then all would easy be.

I often think of the dear ones at Ebenezer. Do not know that I will ever meet any of you on earth again; that of course is altogether with him who doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. But I do desire to be in New York, but whether the way will ever be open for that or not I cannot tell, but feel now a little hope that such some time may be the case. Now, as to why I desire this rather than to remain here where I am, I do not know. One would think it would be better for me, especially as I am not fitted for the business world, to remain here, but I trust whatever is best for me that my God will do for me.

Our health has for the most of the time been very good since we came here.

I hope I may soon as convenient hear from you. Wife joins me in love to yourselves and to all the brethren.

I am as ever your little brother,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

PINSONFORK, Ky., Dec. 1, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have just received and read the SIGNS for the present date, and am a little bothered over your editorial; but I do not mean to object nor complain, but just simply express a few of my many thoughts about those two points you have mentioned, the words "absolute" and "conditional salvation." I have no doubt in my mind but what you mean is right, and even what you say may be right, as to a conditional salvation, but for the life of me I cannot believe in a conditional salvation, either for time or eternity. "The word "conditional," as used and understood as regards the doctrine and salvation taught in the Scriptures, implies "terms" to be accepted or rejected, discretionary with the one who the terms are proposed to.

As to leaving off the word "absolute," I do not claim, nor do I feel to be a stickler for just the word "absolute," nor any other word whatever, but I am bound to believe that those who are so strenuous for the word "absolute," are more opposed to the clause "all things," than they are to the word "absolute," and I am thinking the greater number of them would not complain about the word "absolute" used with a limited predestination. If the Baptists have got so exacting as to have us leave off the word "absolute," just because it is not a Bible word, why not then leave off the words "sovereign," and "sovereignty?" neither of these words are in the Bible, and the Baptists use them a great deal more than they do the word "absolute." As soon as the Baptists give way an inch they may soon give way an ell. Soon as they can get the word "absolute" dropped off, then nothing will do them but to leave off the clause "all things," for the clause "all things" is a much bigger bugbear to them than the word "absolute" is, and next will leave off predestination in toto. And it does seem plain to my mind to take the word "absolute" out of the principle of the SIGNS that your God-loving and God-honoring father pledged himself to maintain over seventy years ago, would be virtually acknowledging that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES was started wrong, and the enemy will say, If they were wrong in one thing, why not in other things?

My dear brother in Christ, I am poor and needy, both temporal and spiritual, and am behind for the paper, but hope there will be a day when I can meet the demands. Howbeit, I cannot believe there is a man on earth that has more love and prayerful desire for your success and welfare than I have, and I do not love the dear old SIGNS just because they are the SIGNS, and of long standing, but because they honor God and magnify his grace in the salvation of poor sinners. I love to think of your father, and how his feet stood firm in the raging flood of Missionism, for Israel's sake.

Yours in heart,

W. J. MAY.

[THE sense in which we used the word "conditional," in the article above referred to, we wished to be understood as referring to a state, a condition, not terms to be complied with.—ED.]

1116 PUTNAM AVE., BROOKLYN, N. Y., Dec. 7, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Another year has rolled around, and my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is due. Please find inclosed two dollars. I regret my ability to do so little in way of encouragement. The cause and your labor demand more. I feel many times a single communication is worth far more than the subscription price. If I have any gift it is in receiving, not in giving of these precious things. The longer I live, the less evidence I find in myself of spiritual life, yet his mercy has been freely bestowed; when it was his pleasure to smite with one hand he did uphold with the other; not one promise failed.

The doctrine advocated in the SIGNS is the only sure foundation to build on: a sovereign God who predestinated every event in time, elected every vessel of mercy, and chose them in his Son before the mountains were brought forth.

May you be spared long to edit our loved paper, and while sending rich manna to the scattered household of faith, may your own soul be strengthened and encouraged by the help of your brethren.

In hope of life eternal, I am your sister,

H. M. HOBBS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1904.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to

GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,

Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

INTRODUCTORY TO VOLUME SEVENTY-TWO.

As we enter upon the duties of a new year we are fairly overwhelmed with the responsibilities of the arduous duties before us. While great physical labors are connected with the issuing of the twenty-four thirty-two page numbers of a volume of the SIGNS, yet they are but light when compared with the arduous duties and the grave responsibilities involved in the editorial work. When we consider how serious a matter it is that we are to decide in the selecting of matter for publication, and the sacredness of the cause we are pledged to advocate, it is with fear and trembling that we undertake the work, and did we not know that with a worm God is able to thresh a mountain, we would be utterly discouraged.

How marvelously the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been sustained all these seventy-one years. When in 1832 the division took place, a little band of faithful brethren united in unfurling this banner amidst a flood of opposition and persecution. Then one after another withdrew from the venture, until but one man was left to continue the publication, and that our late lamented father, a man with very limited literary attainments. Yet God was with him, and who could be against him? As ever has been the case, the great and the wise men were arrayed against the truth, yet this unlearned young man was given wisdom from above to enable him to confound the "doctors and lawyers" of that day, and the publication continued to increase until it had sought out and brought strength and comfort to God's chosen ones in every section of the country. Is this not marvelous in our eyes? Can it be accounted for from any natural source of reasoning? Then with this evidence of the sustaining power of God in the continuance of the SIGNS through all these years, may we not take courage and hope for a continued manifestation of his support? Indeed, it does appear to us that within the last year there has been a softening down of the bitter opposition that has been displayed by some of the publications against the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and some who have been deceived by them are returning to their first love, having become starved out on legalism. We hope, through the enabling of the Spirit, and the aid of the brethren, to make the seventy-second volume of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES equal if not superior to former volumes in comforting the saints, and glorifying God. We do not contemplate any changes in the form or style of the makeup of the paper. The cause we have been trying to defend we still hold sacred, and with such ability as God may give us we shall continue to advocate. But it should be remembered by the brethren that more depends upon them than upon us, in making the publication of comfort and edification to them, by supplying us with articles for its columns. The better we are supplied with copy, the more edifying we can make the paper.

Trusting we will receive your support, both in supplying matter for the columns of the paper, and in its financial support, we launch out on another year of its publication, and for whatever encouragement we receive, we hope to be made truly thankful. B.

NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

It seems but natural, as we cross the line that divides the old year from the new, to pause for a moment and reflect over the past, and then, over what may befall us during the year that is just ushered in. Yet, as we begin this new year's greeting, we remember that all years and days are the Lord's, and that every day and every year we are in his hand, who is our sovereign protector, our infallible guide, and our King, Judge and Lawgiver. Years and days bring to us all changes, changes within and without. Only with him there is no change, either in his hidden wisdom or his declared purpose. In this great and solemn truth is the ark of safety, and the ground of hope to us poor worms of the dust, as regards the providences of life, and as regards also the eternal purpose of love and mercy which he has towards us, as the subjects of his electing love and redeeming grace. Like David, we may say, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life," and still further we may say, His goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our life thus far. Yes, goodness and mercy alone; for what have any of us merited at his hand? Only condemnation and wrath have we earned. We say, "earned," for "the *wages* of sin is death." And beside notwithstanding all these multiplied mercies, how unthankful and rebellious we have been. There has been nothing in us to merit esteem, or to give our Creator delight. Surely the children of God will all confess this to be true. We were all sinners from our birth, as declares David. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Yet we have hope in the salvation of God. If then we are sinners, with no good in us, it must be that it is by the unchangeable purpose of God that any are saved. Therefore the apostle speaks of his eternal purpose, which he purposed with himself. No repentance nor faith nor good works of the creature wrought any change in the will and purpose of God; for, first we had no such things to offer before him as the price of his salvation, and second; if we had, nothing could work any change in the mind and will of the unchangeable God. It is therefore of his sovereign and unchangeable will that any of the children of men are saved. Again we can but rejoice, and say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name."

Also, the same holy and sovereign will from before the world was, appointed all our steps in Providence, so that, "The steps that we take, and the station we fill, our Father determined and wrote in his will." As in the case of his servant Moses, so is it in the case of all his servants, from the most exalted to the most humble of them all. The natural life of Moses from the cradle up, was ordained of God in such a way as to fit him to fulfill the purpose of God concerning him as the leader and lawgiver of Israel. The forty years of his life in the court of Pharaoh in Egypt, were as much appointed of God to fit him for that leadership, as were the forty years afterward in the wilderness, when he walked and talked directly with God. So also Paul was fitted by youthful training for the

special place that he filled as the apostle to the Gentiles. These instances are given in the word as examples, to show us that the same is true of every servant of God. God rules in the providential affairs of the lives of us all, as well as in the work of grace, when it is wrought in the soul afterwards. His providence and his grace go hand in hand. By manifold providences of sorrow, trial, perplexity, hardship, crosses, burdens, and of temptation, our God opens the way to show forth his grace and his power to save. Well might the apostle say, "Most gladly therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." And again, "I take pleasure in infirmities, and persecutions." It must have been as these things gave occasion for the display of sovereign power and grace, that Paul gloried and took pleasure in them. The same faith in us will lead us to say the same things. The past year has, no doubt, brought many trials to many of our readers, and it has certainly brought some trials to us all, but those things have been, all of them, given us of God, and given for some wise purpose to his own glory and our good. Satisfied that this has been so, we may not only bless the hand that has guided us, and the wisdom that has planned all for us, but we may look forward trustingly and calmly to all the days of the coming year. They will bring nothing, but he will bear us through. They can bring nothing that will not work, together with all other things, for our good and the glory of God. We know not what shall befall us, and it is good that we do not know, but the Lord of all knows, and it is best of all that he does know. All may be dark to us, but all is light to him. Faith receives this truth, and rejoices to not know, if God wills it to be so with us.

In this new year's greeting, what better things can we ask for all our brethren, than that grace, mercy and peace may be with them all, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ?

"Grace, mercy and peace." Do not these things sum up all that we can need, or that God has to bestow? Grace that provides unmerited salvation; mercy that forgives us all our sins, and rewards us not according to them; and peace, by which we dwell in union and communion with God, through the Son of peace, who alone can give peace. "Redemption, forgiveness, and oneness with God," these sum up all that the sinner needs, or that the quickened soul ever can desire. May these infinite blessings be with you all for Jesus' sake. Amen.

As our thoughts turn to our own self, and to the things which we desire from God for the coming year, we are made to hesitate and tremble to express ourself. We know what we "*desire to desire*," if such an expression may be allowed. But we confess that our desires are so much influenced by the flesh, that we fear to say that we are at all spiritual in them. Yet, we do feel some desire for more knowledge of God and his salvation, his truth, and his ways, for more conformity to him in all things, for more union and communion with him and his people, for more humility, more love, more steadfastness in the truth as it is in Jesus, more boldness and faithfulness in declaring the truth, more heavenly mindedness, more drawing away from the world and all its pleasures, ambitions and gains, and more drawing toward heavenly things, and the pleasures which are found alone at God's right hand, more of the spirit to say, "Thy will be done in us, as

it is in heaven," and more of all that would be Christlike in our heart, mind, and in every step in our outward walk. We believe that there is a desire in our heart not to know any man after the flesh, but to be in love with the truth, as God has revealed it in the Scriptures. We desire that neither the love of the applause of men, nor the fear of the frowns of men, nor the spirit of enmity to any man, shall actuate us in anything that we may say or do. We do want that what we shall say, in writing or preaching, may be clear, and contain nothing uncertain. We would not give up one single principle of the truth that is revealed in the word of God, to gain the approval of any one. We desire that the glory of God, and the comfort and edification of his people, may be our sole motive in all our preaching or writing. These things, and others of like precious nature, we trust that we do desire, no matter how far short we come of attaining to them.

It sometimes is the case as the people of God go on their way in the warfare, that men oppose the truth as they proclaim it. It has been so in all ages. We are instructed how to do in all such cases in the word. There is to be first, no yielding in the truth, no departure from it on any account, but there is to be a presentation of it all the more, when it is assailed, but with all meekness and love and pity toward the opposer. It certainly is a poor way to gain a brother to the truth, who has been led captive by any error, either to cease to declare it, or declare it in any spirit of strife or anger. Declaring the truth in love, and striving to instruct the opposer, peradventure God will give him repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, is the substance of the divine command in all such cases. We desire to have no man's person in admiration, in presenting the truth. It is no way to make peace, true peace, to cease preaching the truth, although some we love as brethren may oppose it. The only true peace is that which arises from an adherence to what is true and right; all else is a false peace, like the surface of a volcano, while within all is trouble and confusion, which some day will burst all our artificial barriers, and hurl destruction upon all who may dwell in fancied security under its shadow. Let us continue right on in our testimony to the truth, as the Scriptures declare it, but let us see to it that we are also tender to the weak, gentle to those who may err from the truth, and patient to those who may oppose it. No one has any right to say to another, Cease preaching what you believe the Scriptures teach, since some will oppose it, and to present it will make trouble. The only thing that any one has a right to enjoin upon him who presents what he believes, is that he shall present his faith in love, and without strife. Still further, we ought not to speak, or so act that it shall appear that we claim that we have dominion over the faith of another. Paul did not claim any dominion over the faith of the churches, and we must not. We trust that we desire oneness among all the people of God, but the oneness that we desire is the fellowship that is in the truth, and this truth is not a mere dogma, but the truth as it is felt and realized to the comfort, strength and edification of the believer. God's words are Spirit and life. The truth of God is summed up in what Jesus is. That which is of any value to any man, or to the glory of God, we shall find in the revelation of Jesus Christ. The life that he lived in the flesh, and the death that he died, and the life that he

lives now, which is made manifest to us through the Spirit, the words that he uttered, and the miracles that he wrought, all manifest the truth of God. In this truth, thus revealed, must true fellowship be found.

Urging the brethren to lay all their differences aside will never avail anything in the way of true peace. Rather, let the aim of each be to faithfully present the truth, remembering that God alone can show it to us, or to any man. If the faithful servant of God desires that all who love the truth shall walk in mutual love, let him remember that love of the truth as it is in Jesus is the only true basis of mutual love and fellowship. There are men and women, many of them, in our acquaintance, for whom we have great admiration, for their many pleasant and gentle qualities, but for whom we do not have, and cannot have, one grain of fellowship in the truth. Some of them we have felt to admire, as far better than ourself in all natural qualities, yet we have had to contend against their false doctrine earnestly, and so long as they held that doctrine we could not bid them welcome to the church, which is the pillar and ground of the truth, nor extend to them the hand of fellowship in the Lord. Among some whom we must regard as the children of God, errors have found a place, and we feel forbidden to give place to the error for a moment, while yet we do not have any right to question the work of grace in their hearts. In opposing the falsehood which has entangled them, we do not deny the work of the Spirit in them, but we must keep right on presenting the truth, hoping that God will give them to see it clearly, and bring them to acknowledge it, and we desire to manifest all long-suffering and patience in so doing. We ourself have to acknowledge that in the past years we have held to notions that in later years we came to see were not according to the truth as it is in Jesus, nor sustained by the word of God. This ought to make us patient with others who may err from the truth. Paul was patient with all the churches in their departures in doctrine and practice, yet he ceased not to warn and teach, and in it all he kept back nothing. We desire to follow his example as much as in us lies.

It ought never to be forgotten, and we hope that God will not suffer us to forget it at any time, that the written word inspired of God, so that it is not the word of men, but the word of God, is to be the standard and rule. Whatsoever cannot be found there, either directly stated or necessarily implied, ought not to be received by the churches. They thoroughly furnish the man of God unto all good works. We must not be guided by our own thoughts, or fancies, or feelings, in our faith or in our practice, but solely by the plain word of God. The one question that we ought to ask at all times is, What do the Scriptures teach? How many times in the Old Testament is it said, "Thus saith the Lord"? The one question ought to be with us all, Have we a "thus saith the Lord," for what we believe and practice? One great object in the ministry of the word is that the word written in the Bible may be expounded. One of the essential qualifications of a called minister is the gift of expounding the letter of the word, and showing its application, either in the experience or the practice of the church, and the teaching of the Scriptures is very wide and full; they present not only the ups and downs of the believer as he is being led by the Spirit, and the warfare of the

heart, and the bitter and the happy experiences of the child of God, and the changing feelings that accompany that experience, but they also present the order of the church, such as baptism, the Lord's supper, singing, prayer and preaching, together with exhortation, and what is called in the word prophecy, and the discipline needful for the purity of the church, and the proper walk for the believer towards his brethren, towards God, and towards all men, and also his proper manner of life as a father, brother, son or citizen. The Scriptures speak of the fruits of the Spirit, on the one hand, and of the works of the flesh, on the other hand. The field is unlimited. All these things ought to have place, and they will have place in the mind of one whom God has called to preach the word. If there is sameness in our preaching, it is not the fault of the word of God, for that is full of variety, but it is a lack in ourselves.

But we must not here pursue the theme any further. We desire to ask an interest in the prayers of all who love the Lord in sincerity, that both brother Beebe and ourself may be kept in the right way, if it shall please God to spare us during the coming year. We desire that in the SIGNS nothing but the truth which is for the glory of God, and the edification of his people, may be presented, either by editors or correspondents. We desire also to say that we we greatly appreciate the correspondence which has been forwarded for the columns of the SIGNS; the kind words which have accompanied this correspondence have helped and encouraged us greatly. We wish for you all every needed earthly blessing, and beside, all the fullness of blessing and mercy revealed in our Lord Jesus Christ. Of one thing we do feel sure, that whatever may betide us, all is well, since God reigns.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

PSALMS CXLIX. 2–6.

(Reply to sister R. T. Johnson.)

IT is much easier for us to flourish our pen, than to write that which we feel satisfied will edify the saints, and reflect the glory of God, but of this our readers are, or have had opportunity to be, aware. Such views as we have on any portion of the Scriptures, we do not feel at liberty to withhold, when called for.

The inspired writer of this psalm seems with a prophetic eye to look through the vista of intervening ages to the advent of the King of glory to our earth, and the establishment of his kingdom in her gospel organization, as "the congregation of saints," and as the antitypical Israel of our God. Fired with the animating vision he breaks forth in the most flowing strains of heavenly poetry that ever saluted the circumcised ears of redeemed sinners, and calls on them to learn the song and unite in the sacred theme. "Let Israel rejoice in him that made him." Who but Israel can appreciate the glory of a subject so spiritual, so sublime? Not Esau, not Ishmael, nor any of the self-made religionists of that, or of any subsequent age, while infatuated with the notion of their own power to will and to do, for themselves and for the Lord. None but Israel can rejoice in the assurance that they are God's workmanship, that their Maker is their Husband, the Lord of hosts is his name, and their Redeemer the holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall he be called. Of none but Israel is it written, "Happy art thou, O Israel! Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord?" "This people" (saith the Lord) "have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise."

The God of Jeshurun rideth upon the heavens in the help of this people, and in his excellency on the sky; and he has said they shall dwell safely alone, and that they shall not be reckoned with the nations. This people the Lord has created in Christ Jesus, chosen in Christ Jesus, and blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. "But now, Thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel: Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine; when thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee, for I am the Lord thy God, the holy One of Israel, thy Savior. Fear not: for I will be with thee, I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him."—Isa. xliii. 1–7. This is Israel, God's chosen, redeemed and freely justified Israel; let him rejoice in him that made him, that is, in God. And, "Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King." As their King, he is all they could desire. He reigns in righteousness, and his princes rule in judgment. All the glory of the eternal world centres in him, and all heaven is radiant with his refulgent glory. With his sword upon his thigh he rides prosperously; with his bow and with his crown he goeth forth conquering and to conquer. His regal title is written upon his vesture and upon his thigh. The King of kings and the Lord of lords, and his name is called the Word of God. He is the only and blessed potentate, and he only hath immortality dwelling in the light. Who but the children of Zion can be joyful in him? Who else are satisfied with his laws, ordinances, doctrine, examples, precepts and his unlimited dominion over heaven, earth and hell? But he is in a peculiar sense "their King," the King of the children of Zion. God has given him to be Head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

"Let the high praises of God be in their mouth." These words imply degrees of praise. God will be honored in all the subjects of his dominion. The wrath of man shall praise him, for he is able to command a revenue of glory from all the subjects of his power and providence. Holy angels that have never sinned do praise him, as a holy retinue once sang in the hearing of the shepherds, Glory to God in the highest, but the highest notes of heaven's exalted anthem can only be sounded by the children of Zion, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. They shall sing with the Spirit, and with the understanding also, making melody in their hearts unto God; in no low, murmuring, discordant or jarring sounds, but in sweet, exalted strains, as when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy, as when they were heard in the vision of John, Rev. xiv. 2, 3; xv. 3, 4; xix. 1–7. The highest notes of their immortal song shall in full chorus swell the words, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints, and all the

multitude of the redeemed, as the voice of mighty thunderings, and as the sound of many waters, shall proclaim, The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife has made herself ready." Ah, sister Johnson, if there is any higher praise of God than what is indicated in these passages of the Scripture, its revelation will not probably be made to us until we shall have witnessed the passing away of the earth and skies, the destruction of the last enemy, and the triumphant entrance of all the blood-washed throng into the joys which are reserved in heaven for them who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, which is ready to be revealed at the last time. These mouths which were once full of cursing and bitterness, cleansed by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, shall

"Break forth and extol the Great Ancient of Days,
His free and distinguishing grace."

What can now be more appropriate, more pleasant, more delightful to the children of Zion, than to be thus employed?

"Let those refuse to sing,
Who never knew our God,
But favorites of the heavenly King
Should sound their joys abroad."

"But when this lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave,
Then in a nobler, sweeter song,
We'll sing his power to save."

But not only shall the high praises of God be in their mouth, but, as they are now in an enemy's land, and in a militant state,

Let "a two-edged sword be in their hand." A sword is an implement of war, to be used offensively and defensively, and in ancient warfare the most effective weapon used in close conflict. In skirmishes where the parties were widely apart, bows, arrows and slingstones were used, but when in close engagements the sword was the most reliable of all weapons. If the children of Zion had no enemies to encounter, they would need no armor, but as they are circumstanced while they sojourn in the flesh, they are required to put on the whole armor of God, and, having done all, to stand, not run. They have to fight the good fight of faith, to resist the devil, that he may flee from them, crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts, and to confront the world with all its alluring vanities. Their warfare is not carnal, but spiritual, hence they require spiritual, and not carnal weapons; "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood," that is, in a literal sense, or we might need carnal weapons, such as Sharpe's rifles, Saul's armor, or human policy; "but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Hence, while we are required by the example and special command of our great Captain to be kind, courteous and benevolent to all men, even to our bitterest enemies, we are nevertheless to fight manfully and uncompromisingly the good fight, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. If any of the saints take the sword as a carnal weapon, they shall perish by it. But the sword of the Spirit is what we require. This is called, "The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon." It is quick, or vital, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword. It has a Jerusalem blade, well tempered; and as David said of the sword he had taken from Goliath, "There is no sword like it," so we may in truth say of the sword of the Lord, which Paul says is

the word of God, and which completes the armor of God, by him specified at Eph. vi. 13–18. While the high praises of God are so in the mouth of Zion's children, that all their communications are in harmony with the spirit of truth and holiness, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of the Lord, is in their hand, not merely hanging by their side quietly in its scabbard; it is drawn, and never to be for a moment sheathed until the joyful trump of God shall announce the complete victory over sin, death and hell. Among other peculiarities of the sword which God has put in the hand of his saints, we are told by Paul that it is *spiritual*, and *mighty through God* to the pulling down of strongholds, &c., and in our text it is described as having two edges. It cuts both ways, and is admirably adapted to the christian warfare, as all christians have enemies within as well as without. This weapon cuts off the flesh, that we may be the circumcision that worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, while at the same time its keen edge is felt by the assaulting foe without. The word of God came to the prophets, saying, Thus saith the Lord, &c. And so the word of God is placed in the hand of the saints, as the most effectual weapon in keeping our body, or fleshly propensities at bay; nothing is so potent in defending the cause of truth and righteousness, as to be able to bring a "Thus saith the Lord" to bear upon those foes without who oppose the doctrine, government and institutions of our divine Commander.

In the context, the psalmist shows why the saints should be equipped.

"To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people: to bind their kings in chains, and their nobles in fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgments written. This honor have all the saints. Praise ye the Lord." Israel under the law, in the type, were led in triumph whenever they had a thus saith the Lord to execute upon the heathen nations round about them. Witness the case of Egypt, Amalek, Midian, the Philistines and others, especially the Canaanites, which were driven out of the land, according to the word of the Lord. So spiritual Israel shall execute the vengeance of the Lord, in a spiritual application of the word, upon all the uncircumcised religious organizations which stand in opposition to the truth; as the stone which was taken from the mountain without hands, as typical of the kingdom of Christ, should break in pieces all other kingdoms, and thus execute the vengeance of God on them. As the sword of the Lord was used by Gideon and his little chosen band, in executing the order and vengeance of the Lord upon Midian, so shall the saints triumph over the beast, and his image, and over the number of his name. But the sword is also for the punishment of the people, that is, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, is put in the hand of the saints, to execute the discipline and order of the house of God, upon all who walk disorderly.

"To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron." Such exploits were performed by Israel under the typical dispensation, and under the gospel we wrestle with the kings, or rulers of the darkness of this world, and by the sword of the Spirit we prevail over them, and so bind them with chains, as to despoil them of all their power or influence to annoy us. While their nobles may signify those who are elevated to high-sounding titles, as *Rever-*

ends and *Divines* promoted and made popular only as the advocates of false doctrine, in allegiance to the prince of the power of the air. How often has one of God's little ones chased a thousand of such nobles, and two put ten thousand to flight. Then truly, *This honor have all the saints*; "For the Lord takes pleasure in his people; he will beautify the meek with salvation. Let the saints be joyful in glory;" even in this glory, in which they are by the special grace of God distinguished, but let them glory only in the Lord. "Let them sing aloud upon their beds." Beds are places of rest, not of toil, and the triumph and joy of the saints is not in their own doings, but when resting upon the sure mercies of their covenant God and Savior, "They shall feed and lie down." And they shall lie down in green pastures, in safety and plenty, with the high praises of God in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand. Their enemies may deride them for lying down, and folding their hands, but it is their privilege, for so he giveth his beloved rest.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., February 15, 1861.

ERRATA.

ON page 755, volume 71, near bottom of first column, the quotation from Romans viii. should be "sons of God," instead of "Son of God."

I made a mistake in the obituary published in the SIGNS of Dec. 1st. The name should be Dennis Williams, not Webb. J. N. BADGER.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO AN APPEAL OF BRETHREN TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$837 65
Mrs. J. M. Macfarlane, Ill., $1.00; Mrs. E. Chandler, N. Y., $3.00; Mrs. T. E. Cole, W. Va., $1.00; Dr. B. L. Earle, Ky., $1.00; Mrs. L. M. Stewart, Pa., $1.00; A Friend, N. Y., $1.00; D. S. Koontz, Ill., $3.00; Thurston Knight, Mo., $1.00; Richard Waller, Mo., $1.00; T. R. Pittman, Kan., $1.00; Mrs. E. A. Pipe, N. Y., $3.00.—Total	17 00
Total to date	$854 65

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elijah F. Laws departed this life at Chincoteague, Md., Nov. 10th, 1903. He leaves a wife and one son, also his father, John W. Laws, of Parsonsburg, Md., and one brother and one sister, to mourn their loss. He was born March 13th, 1863. He lived in Philadelphia for several years, but failing health required him to leave there a couple of years ago. His disease was consumption of the lungs. He had a very clear experience of grace, but was not able to come to the church after he received a hope. I had a pleasant visit with him at his father's house in April last, when he told me his exercises. It was the first that he had been given liberty to tell them fully and freely, and he said he felt greatly relieved. I would like to repeat here some of the experience as he told it to his father and me, but my memory of the particulars is not sufficiently distinct. I remember that during the extreme illness of his young daughter his mind was full of grief for his own sinful condition, as well as of great sorrow because she was evidently soon to be taken from them. But I think that within a day or two of her death some portion of the Scriptures was given him which made him rejoice, and during the day on which she died he felt the peace of God which passeth all understanding in his heart, so that he could realize a sweet resignation to the Lord's will. Some of the Scripture which came to him was so good, though he did not know where it was, nor understand it, that he wrote brother Coulter, of Philadelphia, about it, and his answer was a great comfort to him. During the summer he and his family were on the island of Chincoteague.

I will here give an extract from a letter to his aunt, Mrs. George Mezick, of Salisbury, written in June. "I thought when I left you that my troubles would be ended before now, but I am still here, and for what purpose I know not. But it is all the will of the Lord. He still has some use for me here. Whether we can see it or not, it is all right. I have been troubled much for some time. It seems that I have been traveling in the dark, but for the past week everything is much brighter. I think I can see that the Lord has been leading me through the dark wilderness, and now he has brought me into the green pastures, and has made me to see his glory in all its fullness and beauty. I feel like saying with David, 'The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in the green pastures, he leadeth me beside the still waters.' I had a dream last Saturday night that at first seemed beautiful, but since has worried me considerably when I come to think of my own depravity and unfitness. It seemed that I was at Salisbury, and it was the regular church meeting. I offered myself to the church, and it seems that I can see Elder Durand now as he stood up and held out both hands and said, 'Come

along, Elijah.' Just then I awoke, and everything was so bright that I had to cry for joy. I will have to stop now, for I am getting tired and nervous. My prayer is that God will give me strength to bear my affliction to the end, and when the end comes that he will take me home to rest forever. How sweet the word home sounds. When we get there we will have no more trouble or affliction."

I will close with an account of his last days written for me by his sister, Miss Mollie Laws, who was with him to the last.

"For several days we had thought the end was near, and all the time he seemed possessed with a terrible dread of death. During the night preceding the day of which I write, his suffering was beyond the power of tongue to tell. In the morning I had been out of the room for a few minutes, and when I came back he looked up with a peculiar expression which I had never noticed before. I asked him if he wanted anything, and he answered, 'No, I am past wanting anything now. The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want,' and repeated nearly all of the twenty-third Psalm. I said, 'Are you suffering?' and he replied, 'No, I am resting in the arms of the Savior, and they are soft and strong; there is no pain there.' Afterward he said, 'You should rejoice for me, and shed no tears. You know I have suffered much, but now I am coming into my reward, and feel nothing but perfect peace and joy. I am going home, a sinner saved by grace, and all the glory is God's. Tell Elder Durand I wanted to see him again, but it cannot be now, but tell him I know now that what he told me was true, and it's all right.' He remained like this during the whole day, talking in that strain most of the time, although with a great effort, as he was able to speak only in whispers, his voice having left him entirely almost two months before. Toward night the pain and hard breathing returned, and although he lived through that night and all of the next day, was too weak to talk. He was conscious to the end, and though he did not speak we could see no sign in his face of the fear which had been so plain before."

And so another of the Lord's dear children has been manifested in time, and taken home to glory. The Lord will comfort all that mourn.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 5, 1903.

PLEASE record the departure out of this world of our much esteemed sister, **Julia B. Campbell,** in the 67th year of her age. She was the widow of the late brother Wm. Campbell; both were members of the church at Welsh Tract, and both lie interred in the cemetery there. After a life of devotion to each other they are not separated in death. Our sister was baptized Sept. 1st, 1867, by the late Elder Thos. Barton, in full fellowship with the church at Welsh Tract, where she continued an orderly and consistent member, and in full fellowship until taken home. She was a sufferer for some years previous to her death with lingering illness, which she seemed to bear with christian fortitude. She leaves one daughter, with several sons, to feel the loss of one of the most devoted and affectionate mothers, but I make mention of the daughter especially, who remained with the mother to the last, and the thought of being separated seemed more than she was able to endure. May the Lord be near to her. The church also has lost a good member. So they drop off, one by one, and the number is much reduced, when compared with former years.

The funeral was largely attended, Elder Eubanks their present pastor, and the writer, endeavored to speak words of comfort to those who mourned. May the Lord prepare us all, both to live and to die, and to behold his face in righteousness, and be satisfied when we awake in his likeness.

WM. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md., Nov. 26, 1903.

David Lanning was born near Straitsville, Perry Co., Ohio, Feb. 13th, 1836, and died at Logan, Ohio, Nov. 22d, 1903, aged 67 years, 9 months and 9 days. He was united in marriage to Mary E. Powell, Nov. 6th, 1856. To this union were born ten children, seven of whom are living, three sons and four daughters; two sons and one daughter having preceded him to the grave. He had served as a private in the Civil war, Co. M, Third Calvary. After the close of the war he returned to his native county until 1883, when he moved to Portland, Ind., where he resided until a short time prior to his death. He and his wife came to Logan, Ohio, to visit their children, where he was soon stricken down with illness, which soon resulted in death. He bore his affliction with great patience and meekness until we feel the Lord called him to come to him in whom he trusted. He was not a member of the church, yet he was a firm believer in the Lord Redeemer as his Savior only through God's righteousness imputed, all by God's grace and mercy. His feeling of unworthiness kept him from making a profession. His companion survives him, and is a worthy member of the Primitive Baptist Church.

His funeral was held in Logan, last Wednesday, in the U. B. meeting-house, and words of comfort were spoken to the sorrowing by Elder G. N. Tusing, after which the remains were laid to rest in the Logan cemetery, to await the resurrection of the just.

ALSO,

SISTER **Lucinda Search Rochell** was born at Sparta, Sussex Co., N. J., July 9, 1809, and died Nov. 14th, 1903, aged 94 years, 5 months and 5 days. She with her husband emigated to Ohio soon after their marriage, which occurred April 9th, 1825, arriving in Jefferson township, Franklin Co., where she lived

until her death. She was united in marriage to John Rochell. To this union were born twelve children, five sons and seven daughters, four daughters having preceded her to the tomb. She leaves to sorrow her departure three sons, three daughters, twenty-eight grandchildren, sixty-three great-grandchildren, three great-great-grandchildren, one sister and two brothers, with a large circle of relatives and friends to mourn their loss. Sister Rochell united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Reynoldsburg, July, 1852, and lived her profession, highly appreciated by her brethren and sisters, and by all whose lot it was to meet her and enjoy her Christlike walk and conversation. She was a faithful student of her Bible, and a lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, a loved member fifty-one years.

Her funeral occurred at her old homestead on Wednesday last, where she had been cared for by her sons. Her funeral was largely attended, Elder G. N. Tusing officiating. After a discourse delivered by the same, the remains were laid to rest in the family burying-ground, to await the resurrection of the just. Surely sister Rochell was one of the Lord's anointed.

G. N. TUSING.

Mrs. Jane F. Davis was born on Nov. 30th, 1819, and married Johnathan T. Davis, Nov. 20th, 1842, and joined the Old School Baptist Church at Elk Lick, Scott Co., Ky., in 1842, and was called home June 24th, 1903. Several months before her death she had a fall, from the effects of which she never recovered. For sixty-one years she lived a worthy member of her beloved church, and was a regular attendant at the meetings. Like many true believers she did not allow worldly affairs to deprive her of this pleasure and duty. Firm in the faith when others wavered; kind and charitable in her daily walk, she honored the profession she had made. Her life and experience gave ample evidence that she had been with Jesus. Well aware that the time of her departure was at hand, she put her business affairs in order and then calmly waited her summons. She selected the hymns and text, (Mal. iii. 17,) to be used at her funeral. With Paul she could truly say, I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, and am now ready to be offered up. Naturally we grieve when these loved ones are taken, but we should not forget to be grateful to God for giving us in them and their lives such good evidence of the sufficiency of his grace. Faith, hope and charity shine in their faces, and direct their walk, and to know these mothers in Israel is to have abiding evidence that the tabernacle of God is with men. To such as sister Davis we feel to say, "Ye are the temple of the Holy Ghost." Of all such the prophet Malachi wrote, "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

After services at the home of her daughter, sister Edward Burgess, three sons and three grandsons of sister Davis bore her to the quiet resting-place in Georgetown cemetery.

God be praised for the work of his hands, and may he give us all grace to serve acceptably in the church where such loved ones dwell.

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.

DECEMBER 8, 1903.

PUBLISHED from the *Sectarian* by request of the family of the deceased.

"We have been requested by the family to write an obituary notice for publication in the *Sectarian*, of **Mrs. Mary Weedon,** the beloved and faithful wife of Dr. M. B. Weedon, of Fort Scott, Kansas.

We cheerfully comply with this request, because of the high esteem in which we held the deceased, for the many noble qualities of character with which she was endowed, as well as the experience of grace with which she was blessed.

Mrs. Mary Weedon, nee Nelson, was born February 20, 1838, at Grinsted, Prince William County, Virginia, and died March 1, 1903, at Fort Scott, Kansas, aged 65 years and 9 days, having been stricken with paralysis February 24, preceding her death. The services were conducted by Elder John Preston, of La Harpe, Kansas, using John x. 27–29. "Nearer my God, to thee," "God moves in a mysterious way" and "Asleep in Jesus" were sung.

The deceased was married in the same house where she was born in Virginia, to M. B. Weedon, a native of the same state, February 17, 1864.

She with her husband and their three children moved to Kansas from Virginia in the fall of 1871, locating at Fort Scott, where they have since resided, beloved and respected by all who have known the family. Mrs. Weedon was of the highest type of Virginia womanhood, a land noted for the refinement and intelligence of her daughters; kind and tender in disposition, gentle in manner, devoted to principle, and above all else, a lover of gospel truth. She was held in the highest esteem among those who knew her, and loved most tenderly in her family, doubly endeared to them all as a faithful wife and devoted mother. From a letter of her husband we quote as follows.

'Her worth to me no pen can tell. * * * No preacher ever preached doctrine too strong for her. She loved to hear God's power declared. * * * Poor woman, she as you know had a life of severe trial, besides the ordinary hardships of which most people have to endure. * * * During all these trials when I would break down, and curse the day I was born, she could amidst her heart's agony say, 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.' I believe that she is at rest, blessed thought. Her meat, and drink,

her chief joy was in the strong unalterable doctrine of God's sovereignty.'

The deceased leaves her husband, five children, two brothers and one sister, with a host of friends, to mourn their loss in her death.

The bright family circle has been broken, much of the light of its life is gone; its sunshine has been clouded, by the dark and the trying day, but from our (to them) far distant eastern home, and from a heart full of sympathy and friendship for them, we extend a greeting of deep sympathy, to this stricken family, and would lay a floral wreath upon the grave of their beloved and honored dead.

We have known by the sad experience of kindred sorrow something of the deep distress, the anguish of mind which they experience, and can point them to the one fountain source of comfort, to the resurrection life; the immortality of saints.

'I see in thy gentle eyes a tear;
They turn to me in sorrowful thought,
Thou thinkest of friends, the good and dear,
Who were for a time and now are not;

Yet look again, for the clouds divide;
A gleam of light on the grave now lies,
And far above death's swelling tide,
A sunbeam falls from the opening skies.'

Jesus said unto her, 'I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.'—John xi. 25. ED."

MEMORIAL OF ROBERT McCORD.

WE, the members of the East Atlanta Church, in Atlanta, Ga., of the Primitive Baptist order, desiring to preserve the memory of our beloved brother, **Robert McCord,** deceased, adopt the following memorial of him, and authorize our clerk to record the same on our church book:

He was born April 9th, 1823; married June 24th, 1847; joined the church by experience and baptism, at Shoal Creek Church, Clayton Co., Ga., July 14th, 1877; moved his membership to the East Atlanta Church, April 17th, 1880; and fell asleep Sept. 26th, 1902, being 79 years, 5 months and 17 days old at the time of his death.

He was chosen and ordained as a deacon soon after he joined the church, in which capacity he served faithfully until his death.

We feel that in his death our church has lost a worthy and useful member; one whose life and character were adorned and made beautiful by virtue, meekness, gentleness, humility, peace and love. He greatly desired the peace and prosperity of the church, and faithfully labored for the upbuilding of the church. He was very feeble for some time before he died, but was prompt to attend his church meetings up to a very short time before his death. Truly a good man hath fallen in Israel. But we mourn not for him, even as others who have no hope, for we believe that he has fallen asleep in Jesus, and will be raised in the resurrection in the image of Jesus, and that we shall meet him again in the sweet by and by in heaven, where there will be no more death nor sorrow.

We tender to his aged and bereaved widow, and to his sorrowing children, our warmest and tenderest sympathy, praying that our heavenly Father may enable them and us to bow in humble submission to this and every other dispensation of his providence.

JOHN W. GREEN, }
T. J. BOZEMORE, } Committee.

Read and adopted in conference this August 15th, 1903.

D. M. MATHEWS, Moderator.
J. F. GREEN, Church Clerk.

Mrs. H. Elizabeth Tuthill passed away at her home, 212 East Forty-sixth St., New York city, April 24th, 1903. She had serious heart trouble for many years, and that finally caused her death. She was the second daughter of Nathan and Betsy Ann Slawson, born Nov. 6th, 1847, and was married to brother Horton Tuthill, Jan. 19th, 1870. (Many readers of the SIGNS knew and loved brother Tuthill.) She has left two sons, Nathan and Russel, and two daughters, Elvira and Leonora, in the lonely home to mourn the loss of a careful, loving mother. The two daughters have been received into the fellowship of the New York church since the dear mother's death, where we hope they may find comfort and rest. She was hospitable and helpful, and her many relatives and friends were often visitors in her home. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace alone, and while she was not much given to talking about experience, those who knew her best believed her to be a partaker of that grace that reigns through righteousness, and that she had a hope in God's love and mercy toward her. She felt that her sickness and suffering was in the purpose of God, and said she was not afraid to die. Her last words were, upon being asked how she felt, "I feel as if I were dying." She had been a widow seventeen years. May God soothe the sorrowing hearts of those who loved her well and miss her so sadly.

Elder John McConnell spoke at the funeral service to a large company of friends.

WATIE A. BEARD.

NEW YORK, Dec. 9, 1903.

James Watkins was born in Warren Co., Tenn., July 13th, 1833, son of Nathan and Agnes Watkins. When quite young he moved with his parents to Georgia, thence to Iowa in 1849. On July 16th, 1857, he was married to Marinda E. Burch. To this union eight children, seven boys and one girl, were born, all but the eldest, who died when young in Iowa, survive him, the sons all living in Oregon, the daugh-

ter, Mrs. Wm. Smith, in Des Moines, Iowa. In the spring of 1870 he moved with his family to Oregon, and settled in Benton Co., where he remained until his death, which occurred May 20th, 1903, his age being 69 years, 10 months and 7 days. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church in June, 1896, and was baptized by Elder Wm. Mathews; his membership was with the Luckimute Church, Polk Co., Ore., where he served as deacon for several years, being a faithful and consistent member up to the time of his death. His health had been failing for some years, which he bore with great patience and fortitude. He was able to sit up part of the time until the morning of his death, when he passed away suddenly, without a struggle.

An able discourse was preached by Elder Silas Williams, to a large audience of the relatives, friends and neighbors of the deceased, after which his remains were interred in the Newton cemetery, to await the resurrection of the redeemed.

He's gone to the grave, we no longer behold him,
Nor tread the rough path of the world by his side;
But God in the arms of his love did enfold him,
And mourners may hope, since the Savior hath died.

HIS WIFE.

Isabella Sinclair was born in Page Co., Va., July 20th, 1825, and died June 18th, 1903. She came to Illinois with her parents in the fall of 1837, and spent the winter nine miles north-west of Springfield. In the spring of 1838 she went to Hancock Co., where they bought a farm and lived there till she was married, September, 1842, to Gideon Koontz, and came to Cass Co. to live. To this union were born six children. In November, 1854, father died, leaving her with three small children, the other three having gone before. She remained a widow for four years, then married Watson Sinclair. To this union were born three children, all still living. Her second husband died in May, 1881, and she lived a widow the rest of her days. Mother joined the Primitive Baptist Church called Union, at the August meeting, in 1853, and was baptized by Elder William Crow. Mother always liked to go to her meetings, but she did not attend very regularly, as she did not have any way to go, but went whenever she had a way to go.

Elder John L. Scott preached her funeral sermon from the tenth chapter of John. Brother Scott preached a splendid discourse, not about the dead, but about Christ and his sheep.

Mother leaves six children to mourn her death. I cannot help but think that our loss is her eternal gain.

Her son, D. S. KOONTZ.

ASHLAND, Ill., Dec. 14, 1903.

JOSHUA LAWRENCE'S BOOK.

This book was published in 1829, by the inimitable and gifted Elder Joshua Lawrence, of North Carolina, as a defence of the Kehukee Association, and of the Bible doctrine and practice, against the inroads of Fullerism, and Mission Boardism, state salaries, and a system of tithening, as taught by the then rising and fashion loving clergy. His arguments are certainly unanswerable, and while we might not adopt every expression used, yet withal it sets forth what our people mainly believe and practice. Instead of denying the scriptural truths as to the proper carnal aid to the ministry, he boldly affirms and emphasizes that, and sets forth a most forceful rebuke to those who do not aid their ministers according as the Lord has prospered them. While opposing legalism, yet he urges and insists on good works and Bible obedience as God's appointed way to show our faith, and thus brings out those things that show him not to be an extremist. We are reprinting this book by request, brother J. H. Rawls, of Gurdon, Ark., agrees to take 100 of the books. After the expenses of printing are paid the books may be further circulated as the brethren may suggest. Till that is done send 25 cents for a copy, or $2.50 for a dozen.

Most any one can sell a dozen in a community.

Send on a postal card and tell us how many you will take when they are out. Will try to get them ready by Christmas.

J. H. FISHER.

GRAHAM, Texas.

[IN a kind and brotherly letter received from Elder Fisher, he requests us to give the above insertion in the SIGNS, which it affords us pleasure to do.—ED.]

MEETINGS.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 72. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1904. NO. 2.

POETRY.

I HOLD STILL.

"PAIN'S furnace-heat within me quivers,
God's breath upon the flame doth blow,
And all my heart in anguish shivers,
And trembles at the fiery glow;
And yet I whisper, As God will,
And in his hottest fire hold still.

He comes, and lays my heart, all heated,
On the hard anvil, minded so,
Into his own fair shape to beat it,
With his great hammer blow on blow;
And yet I whisper, As God will,
And at his heaviest blows hold still.

He takes my softened heart and beats it,
The sparks fly off at every blow;
He turns it o'er and o'er and heats it,
And lets it cool and makes it glow;
And yet I whisper, As God will,
And in his mighty hand hold still.

Why should I murmur? for the sorrow
Thus only longer lived would be;
Its end may come, and will to-morrow,
When God has done his work in me.
So I say trembling, As God will,
And trusting to the end hold still.

He kindles for my profit purely,
Affliction's glowing, fiery brand,
And all his heaviest blows are surely
Inflicted by a Master's hand.
So I say, praying, As God will,
And hope in him and suffer still."

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—The above poem is from the German, and speaks for itself. I read it last fall to Elder Durand, and he was much pleased with it, and felt that his wife would appreciate it, so I submit it to your columns with the hope that others may enjoy it as I have done. H. M. CURRY.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ROSCOE, Texas, Sept. 1, 1903.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—For some time I have been impressed to try and write my experience, and as I like the SIGNS OF THE TIMES best of any religious paper I ever read, I thought I would write for that paper, to leave with some ones that the good Lord might lead in paths that nature knows nothing about, as I hope he has me. Of course none will be fed spiritually on this unless the Lord helps me to write, and them to understand. I will not be able with the light and liberty that he gave me in regeneration, for I feel to need his presence every day and hour that I live. He says, Without me ye can do nothing, and I feel that I am one that he had under consideration when he spake. I think he gave me power in regeneration to follow in his footprints, and I have a hope that he is still leading me, and I have a sweet hope that he has preserved my life ever since. The moment I was born I feel that he gave me my first breath, and has kept me ever since, but I do not feel that he has been well pleased with my mistakes and the sins that I have been guilty of, but I feel

that I have learned obedience by the things which I have suffered. I feel to be tempted every day that I live, but I feel that he is ever with his children, and will not suffer them to be tempted above that they are able, but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that they may be able to bear it. Such as this was taught me before I ever read it in the Bible, for just as long as I can remember, I was taught spiritual lessons, for before I was old enough to work, when I would be out by myself, I was taught things that were above man's wisdom, and though my mind has always been weak, these things have all along the troublesome journey been bright and encouraging to me. One time I remember, when a dark cloud came up, and the rain began to fall fast and heavy, and as I was running to get to the house, for I was by myself, and quite young, I think it was in the summer of 1866, which would make me twelve years old, I was crossing under a very tall timber, and the thunder was thick and heavy, and the wind and rain caused a frightful noise to a boy like me, for I had now for several years been uneasy for fear that God would cut me off from time, and that I would be forever lost, and at certain times I would be trying to pray, but I did not want any one to know it. Every time I could get the chance I would go to hear T. J. Lawson preach, for he could tell my feelings better than I could, if I had tried, and I did love to hear him preach. I will never forget some Scriptures he used, such as this: "For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." Now such as that did me good, even when a child, but I was very uneasy about myself, for I had been so bad I did not think that God would be pleased with my prayers. I could only say, "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner," and I never felt like this did any good.

Well, now I will go back and tell what I heard and felt in the storm of rain and wind. There was no house in sight, nor in speaking distance of me, and I was running under the tall timber and trying to ask God to have mercy upon me, and the tall trees were, it seemed to me, in as much trouble as I was, and were bending as though they could not stand any more, and there was a poor, little, sinful boy, that was loaded down with guilt and shame, and shown he must be born again, or sink in endless woe, but the trees seemed to be perfectly innocent, and only seemed to be obedient to the Creator, and everything I could see or think of was better than I, so here I had more than I could carry any further, when a still small voice said to me, "Fear not, I will take care of you; you shall not be hurt." Now this was so plain that I knew I could not be mistaken, and it was so plain that I thought I surely could see who it was. Although the storm was raging I looked good in the tops of the trees, for there is where the voice came from, but nothing could I see, neither could I hear the voice any more. While I was studying over this, strange thoughts passed through my mind, and I felt sure that it was the Lord. I have ever felt from that day to this that it was the Lord spoke this to me, and now I believe that the good Lord who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son. I left that place with much peace of mind, but I kept all these things and pondered them in my heart. I went on in fun and sin for many years before

I made any open profession. This was all in Surry Co., N. C., and I will have to leave off many things that I would like to speak of. This is I hope part of the dealings of the Lord with me up until I was about twelve years old. I will speak of but little that passed during the next twenty years, only I traveled about some, and married and settled down in Marion Co., Ark. I married N. S. Irvin, April 5th, 1885. At this date I was nearly thirty-one years of age, and now as time passed on at times my troubles were great, but I had not forgotten the comforting words that were spoken to me by the Lord when I was young. I never had felt or been much impressed to join the church, and now I thought that the time had come that I must be about my Father's business, that is, "Repent and be baptized," and I went mourning most all the time, and could not claim that I was fit to join the church, but felt that the dealings of the Lord with me all along through life were only his goodness leading me to repentance, and that "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose," and so I felt resigned to his will, but had no hope that I was fit for the church, and I kept trying to pray and ask God to have mercy on me, and I verily thought I must work out my own salvation, not having any understanding that it was God working in me, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. But he finally brought me to the end of my own strength, and now I saw that my righteousness was as filthy rags, and then I gave up, and began to sink, and all that I could say was, "Lord, save, I perish," and in despair I gave up, having but little hope of ever being better, but now the fullness of the time had come for the good Lord to show me how weak and helpless I was, and how great and good he is, for all at once, very unexpected to me, it seemed that I left this old, sinful world and all the troubles and dangers behind. Now I want to say right here that this was no dream, for I was not asleep. I know these are real facts; there were a few minutes time that I knew nothing about time, nor time things. After this I began to conclude that it was my duty to join the church, but I could not help doubting, but one thing gave me comfort, and that was, I found in the Bible where one said, If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new. Now I felt that this was the case with me, for what I used to love I now hated, and what I once hated I now loved, and so I went and offered myself to the church, at what was known as Enon Church of Primitive Baptists, and was received by the church, and baptized by W. M. Brumberlain. This was in Marion Co., Ark., in the year 1889, and in the fall of the same year I moved to Taylor Co., Texas, and later the church that I joined in Arkansas found that it was in disorder, and the church in Texas was not satisfied, neither was I with my baptism, and I asked the church to have me baptized, which it did, by Elder L. H. Stuckey.

I cannot say like some dear brethren and sisters; I did not feel any change that was brought about in any way, only I felt that I had discharged that much of my duty. I have felt more impressed to wash the saints' feet than anything else. I believe it to be church duty.

I am glad to say that the little church at Crossroads, in Taylor Co., Texas, is in peace, and we have good humble meetings, but I cannot help being uneasy all the time.

I have left off a good many things that I would loved to have spoken of, but I do not feel like this can do any one any good. I have had a desire for a long time to do this, and leave it on record in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the paper that sets forth the doctrine that I love so well. If I am not mistaken this is truth, and if it is not I hope it will please the good Lord to show me my mistake before it is too late.

May the Lord have mercy on his people, and cause them to love each other more in the future than they have in the past, if it can be his will. O Lord, be merciful to us while we live here in the world, and save us in heaven, where we can praise thee in perfect love and union for evermore. We ask it all in the name of Jesus. Amen.

I. R. BURRUS.

GRACE.

Self-righteous souls on works rely,
And boast their moral dignity;
But if I lisp a song of praise,
Each note shall echo grace, free grace.

'Twas grace that quickened me when dead,
And grace my soul to Jesus led;
Grace brought me pardon for my sin,
And grace subdues my lusts within.

'Tis grace that sweetens every cross,
'Tis grace supports in every loss;
In Jesus' grace my soul is strong;
Grace is my prayer, and grace my song.

'Tis grace upholds when danger's near,
By grace alone I persevere;
'Tis grace constrains my soul to love,
Grace, grace, is all they sing above.

'Tis thus alone of grace I boast,
And 'tis alone in grace I trust;
For all that's past grace is my theme,
For what's to come 'tis still the same.

In countless years of grace I'll sing,
Adore and bless my heavenly King;
I'll cast my crown before his throne,
And shout free grace, free grace alone.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 17, 1903.

B. L. BEEBE—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I am glad to see more frequent and more extended editorials from your pen than formerly. I am not alone in the opinion that you have felt compelled in your mind to write more of late. Brother Chick has been faithful and diligent in his work, and his clearly written editorials have covered a wide extent of scriptural territory, and I am sure that all lovers of the truth must say that the subjects written about by him have been well handled and clearly expounded; also that the doctrine and experience have not been separated in his writing, but have been kept together where they belong, so that the honeycomb of doctrine could be eaten with the honey of experience. "I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey." But brother Chick cannot write your editorials, so I hope you will keep on writing. We all want to hear from you for two reasons: first, because you write according to the truth of the Scriptures and the experience of the saints; and second, because you are your father's son. I am gratified that the brethren have come to your aid financially, and also to hear that the subscription list is increasing.

I am glad to see any publication where the doctrine of God our Savior is maintained, unmixed with error, and I would not make a move to discourage any such. They are not many. But the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is first in the list, and is different to me from any other. It was a very familiar name in our family when I can first remember. It came into our house, as I have been informed, about one month before I did. They were carefully preserved, and are mostly yet in existence, the volumes as they were sewed together by our father at the end of each

year. I have also the whole set from the first number, Nov. 28th, 1832, bound, and that part of my theological library I prize most highly.

For a good many years prior to 1870 my father's name appeared in the SIGNS about once a year, and the letters signed Daniel Durand were well and long remembered by the spiritual readers. I love to look over the old volumes, and see the names of those who were aged and faithful servants of God when I was a child; and I love to see the same doctrine there advocated when the SIGNS was the only Old School Baptist paper published in this country, that is contended for in its pages now, when a number of the periodicals that have newly arisen, claiming to be Old Baptist, are violently and sometimes bitterly opposing some of the most important points of that doctrine.

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been enlarged from time to time, and its appearance has been improved, but its character has not changed. Its position has been uniform in regard to the doctrine of absolute predestination, unconditional salvation and the new birth, upon which subjects, as well as some others, new and erroneous theories have been promulgated in some quarters. Sometimes when some especially strenuous opposition has been urged against some one point of doctrine, the editors and correspondents of the SIGNS have dwelt for a time repeatedly and continuously upon that subject, as it seemed necessary to keep the scriptural teachings for the time before the minds of the brethren. But as a general thing there has been from the very first number a good attention paid to the great variety of gospel subjects.

This is, to my mind, a most meritorious and important feature in a religious periodical. There is a rich and sweet variety in the gospel, and that variety is suited to the various needs of the family of God. When even a good and profitable writer or preacher has gone over the same subject time after time in a debating manner, repeating again and again the same points of argument, he is apt to become somewhat wearisome even to those who do not differ from him in opinion. I think the pages of the SIGNS have not to an unwarranted extent preferred one subject above another, but have, as a general thing, even in its discussions of doctrine, presented the good variety of things new and old which the Scriptures spread upon the gospel table.

Also I must speak in commendation of that feature of the SIGNS, and of any other Old Baptist paper, which keeps local troubles out of its pages. That is surely a most excellent thing. There are times when a public exposure of a church in manifest disorder, seems to be necessary, but not often, I think. I have sometimes read a periodical from which, when I had finished, I would get the impression, if I judged by that reading, that widespread error and general disturbance prevailed among the Old School Baptists over a wide field, when I knew that a visit among the churches of perhaps twenty-five associations would show a general condition of mutual love, peace and prosperity.

I first met Elder Gilbert Beebe in about 1850. To reach the association where he was I walked over thirty miles in three-quarters of a day. It was held in a barn near Waverly, N. Y. I shall never forget his preaching there. I heard him again a year or two later, and remember noticing the powerful effect of his sermon upon my mother and others, as he

spoke of the light shining in darkness, while the darkness comprehended it not. In 1857 I heard him a number of times at New Vernon, Wallkill and Middletown. I had not then a hope, but that preaching was wonderful to me.

After that I studied and practiced law six years, and united with the Presbyterian church. In 1864 I received a hope, was baptized in June by Elder Beebe in the cemetery in Middletown, was licensed in August, closed up my legal business in November, was ordained in December, and have ever since been trying in my poor way to preach the gospel and serve churches.

During the winter of 1865, and for a year or two after, as you remember, I was much in the office of the SIGNS, and the meetings at night within the bounds of those churches will never be forgotten. Elder Beebe was great in a great discussion of great doctrine from the pulpit, but he was greatest in church and conference meetings, and in conversation with some trembling lamb of the fold, or with some dear christian lying upon a bed of languishing.

I helped you in selecting the editorials for the books of editorials you published. What I saw and learned while there from time to time during that year makes me able to appreciate the care, anxiety and labor which are upon you in your work of editing and publishing the SIGNS. You have done your work well. May the Lord continue to give you grace and strength according to your day.

I have some letters from your dear father which I want to publish in the SIGNS after awhile.

We all join in love to you and sister Josephine. If you can find a corner for this in the SIGNS let it go in.

Your brother affectionately,

SILAS H. DURAND.

PRESCOTT, Ark., Oct. 7, 1903.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—I have felt like writing you for some time, and I feel more so now because I have some cheering news to write you, and in the lapse of time what I have "seen and heard" has afforded me some thoughts which I hope are consistent and appropriate to write you.

I, together with my dear wife, have just returned from our association (the North Ouachita), which was the fifty-fourth session, and I am rejoiced to state that it was a pleasant and peaceable session. There was not a discordant note or "uncertain sound" in any of the preaching as I could detect, but the dear ministers in attendance preached with the ability that God giveth. They did not try to "limit the holy One of Israel," nor did they preach salvation based upon creature obedience. I am truly glad that we have had no dissemblers among us. If we have any among us that object to predestination of all things, and unconditional salvation, they have too much charity to revolt and set up bars, or pass non-fellowship resolutions, and think I can safely say that our Predestinarian Baptists will never do such a thing.

I also attended the South Arkansas Association, which was held the third Saturday, Sunday and Monday in September. This is the oldest association in the State. The last was the sixty-fourth session. The preaching there was good and comforting indeed. It was also a pleasant meeting.

It is lamentable to know and hear of trouble and divisions among the dear Old Baptists, but, my brother, I believe it will in the end work out for good to the true and tried ones. I think I can see some evidence of this already. The discussion of the points of difference, pro and con,

have caused the more sober, unprejudiced and reasonable ones to reflect and investigate these points, and the result is, limited predestination and conditional time salvation does not accord with their experience, and they readily abandon such theories. Of course such a change is wrought by the Spirit of our God. Some of our ministers have been outspoken (yet cautiously with gentleness and meekness) in opposing these new doctrines, and such manner of preaching has had a good effect. Children of God cannot long live on husks, but will return to their Father's house, where there is plenty of substantial food.

Now I have been prompted by a desire to write you of our present state or condition, but I do not want to be overjoyed, for now is a little fearfulness mingled with rejoicing, for often when I "think peace and safety then sudden destruction cometh." But I do hope sweet peace will continue.

Ever since I (I hope) have been called by his grace, I have desired above all things to be right in doctrine, would rather be right in this than to possess "all the gold of Ophir, or the cattle of a thousand hills," and I feel assured that if I have known, and do know, the true doctrine, it has been taught me by the holy Spirit, "by revelation of Jesus Christ." And if it is his blessed will for me to know more of the things of his kingdom, he will give me the necessary light and understanding.

But O, my brother, sad will be the end to this "evil servant" who says in his heart, "My Lord delayeth his coming," "and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken." I suppose the evil servant will say in his heart: "The Lord is too slow about coming to do or perform his work, and I must set about to help him, and thereby hasten his coming." There are a great many of God's people in the world, and I must preach against the doctrine of unlimited predestination, and preach conditional time salvation, for that catches the world, in that it is more congenial to their feelings, and more palatable to their taste, and I must hold protracted meetings, and create a sensation, which produces fleshly emotions, and say to his fellow-servants, "We must move up a car's length," and keep pace with this progressive age. And as to the "hardshells," they are antinomians, absoluters; they are so hard-hearted, narrow, contracted and uncharitable, is the reason why we have no churches in our cities, and thousands of hungry-hearted children of God are starving for that which we will not give, the bread of life. And we must introduce organs in our church service, and attend Sunday Schools and thus promote our cause, and carry favor with the Arminians. And he begins to smite his fellow-servants by saying, If you believe in the predestination of all things, you make God the author of sin. That does away with accountability of man, so if you do evil you "can't help it." Although his fellow-servants repeatedly deny by clear and forcible arguments such accusations, they persistently continue to smite them. "You make God the author of sin," so he takes up the same old parable or tradition that Arminians and antichristians have tried to use against the true followers of Christ, for ages past. Not until a few years back this evil servant was clear of this slander, but now he denies predestination of all things, and thinks he will have pretty easy sailing. A few years ago the old London Confession of Faith fully expressed his religious sentiments, willing

to live by them and die by them, but now he says they are only fit for Atheists and Arminians.

So we see this evil servant gets impatient, gets in a hurry, does not want to wait for the Lord to come, but must do some work for him, and eats and drinks with the drunken, and smites his fellow-servants, and joins Pontius Pilate to make friends with Herod to crucify them, but what will be the deplorable end of this evil servant? "The Lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Pardon me for writing as I have, I thought when I commenced I would write you about our meetings, and how we are getting along, but I have written more. Write me when you have opportunity. Our love to you and family, and all the dear saints.

Yours in love, P. H. JAMES.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., Sept. 24, 1903.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—Having to write you, I herein send you a letter written to me by my youngest sister. It is for your more mature judgment to decide whether to publish it or not. If you think it bears the waymarks of a christian experience I would like to see it in print. I have her consent. I do dearly love to read such letters of conflicts and deliverances, of those who are led about and instructed of the Lord, and who are kept by his almighty power.

Your sister in hope,

E. JOHNSON.

LAVELLETTE, W. Va., Sept. 5, 1903.

MY DEARLY LOVED SISTER:—I feel a great desire this beautiful day to see you and talk with you, but as time and distance forbids that pleasant privilege, I feel a great desire to write you some of the exercises of my past life, and of what I sometimes trust are the dear Lord's dealings with me, yet, my dear sister, I often feel myself too unworthy to address any of God's dear children by the endearing name of brother or sister, for I do feel that if I am one of them, I am the least of all.

You will remember the summer of 1890, what poor health I was in, and how I and my dear little family went home to mother's on a visit, and how we spent a week there, the last, as I thought, that I ever would. I had many serious and sad reflections on my past life. One night, which I never can forget, I was lying on my bed, it did not seem that I was asleep, but it seemed that I was going up a very high, rough mountain, and I was almost wearied to death, when all at once I came to a large beautiful gate, and I thought that my toilsome journey was at an end. When I looked over the gate what a beautiful place I could see, so bright and dazzling, and a dear old man with long, white, flowing beard looked down upon me, and told me that I could not come in yet, that my work was not yet finished. I awoke from my vision with a very sad heart. I was often afterward impressed with those sad words, spoken to me, "You cannot come in yet, you work is not yet finished." I pondered it over and wondered what I had yet to do. I told my dear husband that we ought to try to live as christians. Sickness and death were striking our neighbors down on all sides, and in Oct. of the same year, poor Moses, my dear husband, was stricken with typhoid fever, which terminated his mortal life on the

first day of November, 1890. O what heart-rending trials came to me then, I had five little helpless children to care for, with all the other trials. I became so hard-hearted that I almost accused God with doing wrong in taking away my dear husband by death. He was so young, so good, and so very kind. The crop, which he had worked so hard all summer to make, was going to waste, and nothing went on right. I had to trust my little children to their own care, as I thought, and go on a high hill to feed my stock. I can see now that my dear, helpless, orphan children were kept by the favor and almighty power of God. It was in those days of toil and trouble, when distress and gloom nearly overpowered me, that I thought of my vision of the past summer. O, what a miserable creature I was, when I would go to the top of the hill, I would look up as far as my eyes could see, for that beautiful place, and that dear old face, but all was hidden from me. At last, feeling condemned, and that I was the vilest sinner on earth, I fell upon my knees, or upon my face, for I dared not look up. I was all alone with not a soul in reach of me, and all that I could say was, "Lord, what must I do?" When it seemed to me that I must read my Bible and pray. Well, I thought, I knew how to read, but I did not know how to pray. All that I could say was to repeat the words which I had heard my dying husband say, "Lord have mercy upon me, a poor sinner." One night in January, 1891, I was in the most dreadful condition of my life, I thought my time had come, and I must die, and be forever lost, and banished from God, and my dear children. I went to the bed, and kissed them all, (sleeping as they were) as I thought for the last time. I lay down, and tried to sleep, but could not. I rolled and tossed upon my bed, and could find no rest. Then I arose and fell upon my knees with my eyes fixed upon a bright and shining star that seemed to be directly over my husband's grave. This star was the only thing visible to my sight, as it was the darkest night, I think, that I ever saw. When, all at once, my grief was all gone, and light shone all around me, and I seemed to hear a still small voice saying, "Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee," and the next moment I was praising God for his loving mercy in sparing me.

My dear sister, I thought my troubles were all over, I could read and understand in my weak manner. But O, the heart-breaking trials since that blessed night. I sometimes greatly fear that I cannot hold out faithful to the end, but I do desire that you and all the dear ones, who may read this, will pray for me that I may persevere through grace, until the work that my heavenly Father has assigned me is done. I have tried to raise up my orphan children in the way in which they should go, but now they are drifting out into the world, and all that I can do is to pray for them daily and hourly, that the all-wise God who has protected them in childhood, will continue his loving-kindness to them. Although the way often seems dark, still I am looking to the assurance, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

My dear sister, I have written this because I wanted to unburden my mind.

SARAH DILLON.

[ALL who are the Lord's, share in the words of inspiration, spoken of the dear Redeemer especially, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord

delivereth him out of them all." "If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him." The Lord knows how to save all that are tempted, since he also was tried in all points as are his children. One said, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped me." All these blessed assurances, we feel sure, belong to the writer of the above letter.—ED.]

KOMOKO, Ontario, Oct. 20, 1903.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I hesitate to address you thus for fear that I have no right to claim such a relationship with any of the chosen people of God, yet if not mistaken in myself, I love the brethren, and long for their love and fellowship in the gospel; their very presence makes me glad, even though it be the case that they are not led to speak every moment of the things of the Spirit.

It has long been a desire of mine to write and tell you how the Lord has led me since you last visited Canada. What a glorious meeting that was here in Lobo, a year ago, the Sun of righteousness certainly shined upon us, and gave us a feast of fat things from his bountiful store. I was made to rejoice in the love that was shed abroad in our hearts. Everything seemed to be praising God, indeed, it was a pleasant meeting. It was one that I shall always remember. It was then that Jesus led me to tell some of the great things that he had done for me. "He took me up out of the horrible pit, the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings, and put a new song in my mouth, even praise to our God." It was the Lord that had done all these great things for me. I have no good works to offer in return for them all; all my righteousness is as filthy rags, and how he could look upon me, and have mercy upon me, such an erring and ignorant creature as I am, is more than I can understand. God's ways are as high above our ways as the heavens are above the earth.

I had great peace of mind after my baptism; such peace it was as I never knew before; for many days afterward nothing troubled me, all was calm, and I had found a sweet resting-place, and a home with the people of God; I was resting in my Savior's arms. Was it not a beautiful vision that I saw? Jesus with his arms outstretched, clasping my hands in his, and himself leading me into the water. It seemed to me to be Jesus himself baptizing me, and not our own dear pastor. I had no fear of the ordinance of baptism, and why should I when I had such a Shepherd? I had full confidence in the grace of God, as did David when he wrote, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want."

How clearly I could see that all things do work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. His way is perfect, and when by the Spirit we are made to see that perfect way, all is peace. But my pathway has not since then always lain among flowers, thorns have sprung up here and there, doubts and fears have at times encompassed me about. Satan sometimes tempts me, and tells me that the past has only been a delusion.

> "In vain the sons of earth and hell,
> Tell me a thousand frightful things,
> My God in safety makes me dwell
> Beneath the shadow of his wings."

Now, dear brother, I will have to bring this letter to a close, pardon all that I have written amiss. This letter is like the writer, full of imperfections. I hope that the Lord will send you to Canada once more to preach to us, for I want to see

you again. May the Lord keep us from all evil, and lead us in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Your little unworthy sister, if one at all,

LOLLIE CAMPBELL.

[It was our privilege to witness the baptism of the writer of the above letter, with three others, at the meeting at Lobo, in Oct., 1902, of which she speaks. It was a season long to be remembered by all the children of God who were present at that time. We have often thought of all the dear candidates whose privilege it was to then be baptized, and have wondered how it was faring with them. We are glad with this young sister at least, there has been much peace, and in the time when temptation has come, victory through the word and presence of God. The little ones need fear nothing. "When we are weak then we are strong," as said Paul. "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall," but the weak are sure to be upheld; the Lord makes sure paths for their feet.—Ed.]

Watertown, Mass., Nov. 22, 1903.

Dear Elder Chick:—I wonder whether I can write to you anything of what is in my mind. My thoughts are confused, mixed with the affairs of my college, and the life around me. I came on here the fifteenth of September, and have attended but two Old School Baptist meetings since. One was when my father came to Woburn. In the morning there were brother Lewis Ford, wife and child, a young man, father and I, and in the afternoon a lady came in. Truly it was a small number, but where two or three are gathered together in his name, there is he in the midst of them. We had a good meeting, and a good visit with brother Ford and wife.

I have been blessed of the Lord with many a sweet hour of communion with him, sometimes as I have read the Bible, sometimes as I have ridden back and forth on the cars. I find the Lord is not confined to times, and seasons, and places, in which to display his mercy, but that he is always with us, even unto the end of the world. Still, I have times of indifference, of entire worldliness of mind, when it seems to me that my college is above all things, and that the religion of Christ is but secondary to me. It is so easy to omit reading the Bible, when mind and body are tired, so easy to put it off till morning, and then again till night. I think I need not pray, though of course I want God to bless me, and keep me and all his people secure from harm, but really it seems I do not need to pray. But is it not just then that I need the greatest mercy, the richest love and compassion from my Lord?

In reading through the last half of Matthew to-day, these words claimed my attention, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." O, how little I realize, even now, my utter dependence upon God at all times, and in all places.

I have enjoyed reading the Signs, as father has sent them to me, and the sermons of Philpot, a volume of which I brought with me here. Nearly every one of the latter has been simply wonderful to me, and I have had the sweetest services sitting alone up stairs on Sunday morning, when I am alone with God, and yet I am not alone, for I am communing with his people in the enjoyment of the precious doctrine of the Lord our Savior.

Thanksgiving day is near, and I feel that I have so many things to be thank-

ful for, that I can only say, "O, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and his wonderful works to the children of men." "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name."

I have good letters from various ones of the Lord's dear people; one came a short time ago from sister Martha Glidden, and an exceedingly precious one from two dear sisters in the west. Truly the Lord hath loved me, and carried me in his bosom, over places so rough that none but an Almighty arm could have borne me safely.

But I must close. Remember me to all your family, and remember me at a throne of grace. I am, I hope, your little sister in Christ,

RUTH KEENE.

ARLINGTON, Texas.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—I send you a letter written by Mrs. Lillie Staggs, wife of brother John Staggs, one of your subscribers, a warm friend and supporter of the SIGNS. A short time ago they lost a darling little girl; taken from their embrace to the bright mansion of eternal glory, which drew the mother's affection nearer to her God, and the sweet rest of her precious little girl, in the bosom of Jesus. Mrs. Staggs is not a member of the church, but, as stated in her letter, she seems to feel the burden of that duty resting upon her, but like many of the dear ones of our Master's fold, she stays away because of unworthiness, and a fear that she is not fit to come. I feel that she pronounces the Shibboleth of every child of grace. Therefore I would say to her, in the name of our heavenly Master, Go home to the Old School Baptist Church, and tell what great things the Lord has done for you. The Lord being willing, I purpose soon to visit them in their grief and anguish of soul, and my heart's desire is to go to them in the power and Spirit of our adorable Savior, to speak words to their comfort, and if meet, to constitute an Old School Baptist Church there. Her briefly written letter obviously manifests that meek spirit which is in the sight of God of great price. I believe it will interest and do others good, as it has done me; so please, brother Beebe, if you can do so, publish it. She writes as one whom the Lord has taught. God bless you forever.

Affectionately,

ASA HOWARD.

UVALDE, Texas, Nov. 1, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER HOWARD:—We received your precious and most comforting letter yesterday, and what a comfort it was to us. It did us so much good to know you still remembered us poor wretches, and could speak such loving and comforting words that had power to make me look beyond this world of sorrow and the grave. For we know we have a Savior that has conquered death and the grave by his resurrection. O, how miserable we all would be if there was no resurrection. At times I feel as though I knew the love of God, but most of the time my heart seems to be dead, there is no light in me; my cry and continual prayer is, God have mercy on me, a sinner. O, my sins seem to compass me about; all I crave is to know what God will have me to do. I desire to be obedient to his will, and to crucify the flesh; I long to follow Jesus in every way, if I could, but I fall so far short of everything that is good in the sight of my Maker. I fear I am a complete failure, for as you say, when I would do

good evil is present with me, and sad to say, it conquers most of the time. I want to learn of Jesus; he is all in all to me; if I could be humble like him, and do his will. I never had much of a desire to be baptized until seven or eight months ago, when these thoughts took possession of me, saying, "If ye love me ye will keep my commandments," and "If you loved Jesus you would not be ashamed to proclaim his name before the world." Then I would think, Well, I cannot offer myself to the church as mean as I am, for if they received me I would feel like may be I was an impostor, and not fit to be with them, and when I get to feeling better, by the mercy of Jesus, I may some time ask to be united with the church. But the desire grows more and more with me all the time.

Well, brother Howard, I fear I have wearied you, please pardon me if I have, and cover this with the mantle of charity. Pray for me and mine, that God will have mercy on us, to teach us and lead us in the right way.

Yours in trouble,

LILLIE STAGGS.

A TRIP TO ALABAMA.

I HAD the exquisite pleasure of attending the seventy-sixth session of the old Conecuh River Association, which was held near Troy, in Pike County, Alabama, on the second Sunday in October, and the Saturday preceding, and the Monday following. To me it was a glorious meeting; I was received with the warmest expressions of love and fellowship by many faithful brethren and sisters, whose faces I had not seen for nearly ten years. The worship during the entire meeting was devout and edifying; the prayers were fervent and humble; the singing was with spirit and understanding; the preaching powerful in word and doctrine, and without a single discordant note, and the expressions of love and fellowship ardent, unfeigned and without dissimulation.

There were about twenty churches, and a large membership represented, and all reported to be walking in the faith and order of the gospel. There were a number of ministers present, among whom were two young ones who spoke with great zeal, clearness and power.

It was among these brethren that one (whose name is known) writing to Elder Chick, reported that all kinds of gross conduct was tolerated, and themselves justified upon the ground of predestination. The one who wrote this to Elder Chick knew at the time that it was a well premeditated falsehood, as he himself (the one who wrote it) formerly labored among these brethren, pretending at that time to be a Primitive Baptist himself. Now in justice to the cause of truth and righteousness I wish to report a well authenticated occurrence which took place in that country among those who oppose the doctrine of predestination, and yet claim to be Primitive Baptists. In old Ramah Church, located a few miles from Troy, a division took place upon the doctrine of predestination, resulting from an ingathering during a protracted meeting held by the man who wrote the report to Elder Chick. Two men who were baptized by the man above referred to, and who were very much opposed to the doctrine of predestination, have come to grief in the following ways. One was convicted and hanged, in the town of Troy, for the vilest murder and robbery in the annals of crime in that county; the other who was suspicioned as an accomplice in the horrible deed, committed suicide by tying a stone about his neck and casting himself into the water,

These two men were converts of the man who wrote that report to Elder Chick, and were baptized by him, and both of them exhibited great zeal in clearing the church of those who believed in predestination, upon the ground that such doctrine tended to sinful action, and iniquitous conduct.

I also learned that much evil had been caused among them by an Elder who preached the doctrine of predestination and led an evil life. He was sustained awhile by the brethren, because he denied the charges, and they believed him innocent, but when it was plainly manifest that he was guilty, he was excluded from their fellowship.

God bless his faithful people in Alabama, and preserve them from seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.

H. M. CURRY.

EZEKIEL XVII. 3, 4, 22.

If we can see in this portion of the history of Israel something that takes place in our own experience, it will be sweet and useful to us. A portion of Scripture that we cannot find in our experience is not sweet, and I doubt if we can truthfully say we believe it, in the full meaning of the word believe.

The beauty in this subject to me is the contrast between God's work, and man's. The "great eagle" (Babylon) "took the highest branch of the cedar," and set it in a city of merchants. He took the seed and planted it, it became a "spreading vine of low stature." God saith, "I will also take of the highest branch," crop off a tender twig, set it in the mountain, and it brings forth boughs, fruit, and becomes a goodly cedar. Thus man's work comes to naught, is of low stature, creeping over the earth, seeking help of man, and breaking covenants with God and man because man could not crop it off and give it new life. God takes the highest branch, a little "remnant," and from that a "tender twig," cuts it off from the old tree, gives it new life, or life eternal in Christ, then in the "mountain of holiness," under new heavens in new earth, it grows a goodly cedar, a "living temple," the church, to shelter his creatures in all ages from every clime.

The great eagle cut off the top of the branch, but he could not make it grow. The seed (or children of Israel) could only become a vine of low stature. But God took Christ of Judah's branch; he was cut off from the land of the living; then God raised him up the life of his people, the chosen branch of the Lord of lords.

Is not this done in us? There is a Babylon in us that would lay hold of religion and make it serve us. We would take his chosen people and try to make them flourish in a land of labor, a city of merchants, and we try to exchange good works for a home in heaven. All because we are taken captive of Babylon, and have learned her trade, and feasted on dead things, for the "fertile land" is composed of dead things, so we become a vine of "low stature," crawling on the earth. But when God cuts us off from these things we are dead to them, and with his chosen branch on the highest mountain of his holiness, where natural things do not grow, we live, yet not us, as Paul would say, "but Christ" liveth in us. Often and often we learn this, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers out of them all." We are like Israel of old, chosen not because of good works; we go as he leads, but when his hand is hid from us we fall, and are taken captive to weep and hang our harps on the willows of

Babylon, until God brings us back to sing the new song in Jerusalem, the city of our God.

May he keep us and reveal the truth in us, so shall we be sheltered in the "goodly tree" and live unto God, but dead to the world. Then will this dry tree flourish, and we will believe and feel the truth of the words, "I the Lord have spoken and have done it."

Yours to serve, if God will,

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.

EAST DIXFIELD, Maine.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I inclose money order by request of A. J. Fuler to continue his subscription to our dear family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He wished me to add for him that he indorses the doctrine and principles advocated by both editors and correspondents, and does not wish to be without it, and adds that he would like to send a word in confirmation, but feels so poor and good for nothing that it does not seem possible for him to do so. I gladly comply with his request, and surely feel that he has delegated one who is in much the same condition. I often call to mind a remark made by a dear kind brother in my own church, that he sometimes thought it would have been as well if he had never said anything on the subject of religion. Likewise, I think of the remark made by many that it was to them a wonder that the church ever received them. Now I think that just here is the strong bond of fellowship, we have no worth nor worthiness of our own, our righteousness is all as filthy rags, and we have no hope of salvation, save in the only begotten Son of God, Jesus, who shall save his people from their sins. He is a high Priest, who has entered into the holy of holies, and forever perfected them that are sanctified.

As the years go on I am more and more impressed with the abounding discriminating love of God, who reserves to himself a people who shall worship him in Spirit, and put no confidence in the flesh. If it is not my privilege to mingle with them in the flesh, it is rich enjoyment to read communications from them, to whom God is a refuge and strength, and a very present help in time of trouble. "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God; the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High, God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early." The Lord has chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel is his peculiar treasure.

In reading your editorials, as well as the other communications, they describe the way in which I travel, as I hope I can say. I feel a desire to press forward toward the mark for the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus. I desire to be obedient, with no bitter rebellious questionings against the providence of God, and that his dealings may be subservient to my good.

I close with the desire that you will exercise charity toward me.

Your sister in hope,

ELIZA WHEELWRIGHT.

[SINCE the above letter was written, it has been our privilege to visit Maine, and for the first time in our life to spend a little time in the home of our dear aged sister. We desire to make mention of this, because very many have during the past few years, expressed their very great satisfaction in the letters which have appeared in the SIGNS from sister Wheelwright. It was our privilege to sit for a couple of hours by the bedside of her

companion, who for more than twenty-five years has been confined to his room, and for the past ten years to his bed, with rheumatism. Yet the faith of both is clear and strong, and neither of them utter a murmuring word at their lot. Is it not out of loneliness and affliction like this, that the sweetest testimonies of the Lord's mercy and grace come?—C.]

MELBOURNE, Ontario, Dec. 21, 1903.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Find inclosed two dollars, for which continue the SIGNS to me. It is truly a valuable paper.

The past year has been one of peace and happiness to the church at Ekfried; our beloved ministers, Elders Carnell and Curry, have been enabled to go in and out before the people, proclaiming the glad tidings of great joy, that Jesus is our righteousness, our strength, and our all in all, and we feel thankful that God has favored us with such great blessings, and also granted us the hearing ear. We indeed mourn over our hardness of heart, and often lament the apparent absence of our Savior, yet we know that when he cometh there is fullness of joy. In nature we have day and night, and I feel that it is thus with my soul.

"When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark, and vain, and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Dare I deem myself a child?

Could I joy his saints to meet,
Choose the ways I once abhorred,
Find at times the promise sweet,
If I did not love the Lord?"

I believe that I have felt the presence of Jesus, and like Thomas have cried, Draw near to me, dear Jesus, let me place my finger in the print of the nails, and know of a truth that thou art my Savior. The sweet assurance has been given me, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. It is written, Eye hath not seen nor the ear heard the things that the Lord hath prepared for them that love him. Who are they that love the Lord? They are those who are born of God. And these inhabitants of the Rock shall sing, and their song shall be, The Lord is our righteousness. The great army of the redeemed come before my view singing and praising, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth and good will to men.

How glad I am to believe that all the responsibility of our acceptance rests with Jesus. When I know from day to day the failures of my life, and that to-day finds me no better than yesterday, then I can but rejoice as I think of Jesus, who is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and that our feelings and depressions cause no change in him, or in the work of grace, and that though we change, there is One who changes not.

There is no worship of God except by faith that can be acceptable to him; all other worship is sin. Nothing happens but what God has ordered by his supreme command, and we must submit to the issues of his divine decree.

How much I love the dear Old Baptists. I think that I know something about their sorrows, their longings, and also their great joy when the burden is lifted, if only for a moment. With those who are rejoicing, my heart rejoices in their joy, and I sympathize with those who are sorrowful and cast down. The promise is, I will keep them in the hollow of my hand. If we have Christ in us the hope of glory, nothing shall ever separate us from his love.

Trusting that I have not wearied you, I remain yours sincerely,

(MRS.) GILBERT McLEAN.

WILMER, Ark., Aug. 30, 1903.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—As the children of Israel journeyed forty years in a desert land, I too feel that I have traveled in a sense in that desert land, or wilderness of sin and sorrow, and have crossed over Jordan on dry land, and have seen the waves of the river stand still as a heap, firm, immovable as the will of Jehovah himself, and with an eye single to the honor and glory of God have seen Canaan's fair land of milk and honey.

The more I see of the perfection and purity of God, the less I feel to be. Then I feel to say, "O Lord, wilt thou keep me humble and truly abased, that I may at all times, and under all circumstances, feel my entire dependence upon thee, an all-wise, all-powerful and independent God. Sometimes I am in the light, and then my heart is free, and leaps forth like a young hart or roe on the mountains of God's undimmed, immutable, eternal glory; then my mind is made to feast on the fruits of heavenly joy, and my soul is overflowing, as it were, with God's unutterable and saving power, and it seems that my whole being is alone in the etherial elements of Edenic beauty, then my tongue is loosed and I feel at full liberty, without fear or embarrassment, to praise and to magnify our humble Master, our blessed Redeemer, our glorious Savior.

I sometimes feel that I ought to praise him more than I do, when I remember how merciful he has been to me all along these forty years of wondering in the waste howling wilderness of sin, how kind he has been to my unkindness, and how careful he has been to lead me all along through dangers seen and unseen, how his protection, care and love have been around me, and as my God and guide, he is still the same yesterday, to-day and forever. The sweetest seasons of my life all along, seem to have been when I used to stand between my plow handles, or was riding in my little old peddling wagon. It seemes that, at times, I scarcely know where I am, or what I am about. Then again I have seasons of darkness, gross darkness, Egyptian darkness, darkness that can be felt, even this old Adamic nature, this carnal mind, which is enmity against God, is not subject to his law, and neither indeed can be. And then a ray of light breaks through these dark clouds, and my drooping spirits are again revived, and I am made to cry aloud without any effort on my part, "Heavenly and righteous Father, thou art God, and beside thee there is no Savior." And the tears come to my eyes sometimes like the spontaneous dews of heaven, and fill them full, and then I feel the thrill of the gospel of God in my mind, and I am ready to say, "Lord of lords, and King of kings."

When my daughter Florence, under the cloak of religion, was led off into Arminianism, and among their ranks, some one asked me if I was not going to see her baptized? I said, "No." And from the bottom of my heart, I felt that I had rather see her go down to her grave, than to see her baptized by one who perverted the Scriptures, and the blessed gospel, but, knowing full well that she knew nothing of the truth, and knowing also that it is of such that the missionary church so-called is composed, while my feelings were much grieved, nevertheless I felt fully satisfied in my own mind, that when the fullness of time has come, she will obey the divine commandment of God, if she be one of the elect, and come out from them, in obedience to the command, "Come out of her, my people,"

that is, out of mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.

While I may and do protest against this missionary workmongering, I know full well that it will not put a stop to their so-called great works. God's sovereignty and predestination must be fulfilled in them, as we are taught in the Scriptures, which all flow from the divine pen of inspiration. There, we are informed that the Missionary co-workers with God as they claim, shall wax worse, and worse, deceiving and being deceived. Can anything be more plainly in accord with the word? For they, the Missionaries, compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, he is two-fold more a child of hell than themselves, or than he himself was before.

This does not diminish my desire to tell the truth, nor lessen my love for the same. I am not fighting at all, but merely seeking to contrast truth with error. I would strive to show what man is by nature, and what he must be by grace, to ever know the Lord indeed, and see his face in peace.

I remain your brother,

C. G. IRWIN.

WAVERLY, Pa., Dec. 22, 1903.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As I am glad to hear from the churches in different localities, I also feel willing to give a short account of the churches that I have been trying to serve in these parts. I am serving the same churches I did last year, when I wrote about them, all in peace with one exception out of nine churches, which is a great blessing from God. Peace upon gospel principles is greatly to be desired, and highly prized. The attendance is about as common, not much change only in one of them, a little smaller. We have had several yearly meetings, which were fairly well attended, and have had more ministers with us than formerly the past year. The preaching has been good, absolute predestination, election, unconditional salvation, which means salvation by grace, for time and eternity, and is food for poor, needy, hungry, helpless sinners. Those that have some strength are satisfied with conditional time salvation, therefore the plain, unadulterated, simple truth is not relished by them. I, for one, contend that we have just as much power to bring sunshine through the clouds on earth to us, as we have to bring one moment's spiritual comfort down to our poor hearts by anything we can possibly do. God's blessings are covenant blessings, all of the powers of earth cannot hasten them one iota, and all of the powers of hell cannot hinder them one iota; every blessing for time and eternity was given in covenant, and secured in Jesus Christ before the world began, and no elect vessel of God's mercy will fail to receive every blessing that God Almighty predestined for them; not one more, not one less, and each one in just the exact time and way God designed. God has also predestined that when he does bestow a blessing of comfort and peace upon a poor sinner, instead of saying, I was obedient, they will say, I am unworthy, and have done nothing but transgress; why is it? Why is it that God should bless one so vile as I?

There have been several additions to some of the churches the past year, for which we desire to praise the dear Lord. A few deaths also to cause us to mourn, but as we have hope, and they also, we do not mourn as those that have no hope. We are glad to know and believe that the Lord reigns.

I will now say, as a number from a distance have inquired about the prospect of buying farms, and making money farming in Pennsylvania and New York states, farmland is very cheap in most places, and any amount of them for sale, but the most of the brethren that are farmers tell me that it is hard work to make a living; where one makes a little more than a living, twenty run behind, and it has been the same complaint for ten or more years, but more especially for seven or eight years. I am sorry that I cannot write encouragingly, for I would love more company of the right kind. I will say this, If you are willing to be poor, and live with poor sinners, come and buy a farm among us, we will help you enjoy your poverty as best we can.

I want to say a word in regard to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the old, solid, rock-bottom family paper; it is good. Brethren, write on, write it plain, just as you believe it. If I do not see just exactly as you do, some poor soul may be fed by it. You write what you believe, and I will write what I believe, and let it rest there, and if we do not exactly agree, there will be no controversy. I do not like personals in papers unless they are the loving kind.

Farewell for the present.

Your very queer brother in hope of glorification and immortality,

D. M. VAIL.

TURNERS STATION, Ky.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I feel like dropping you a few lines to let you know how much I have enjoyed reading your valuable paper, which comes regularly with glad tidings from the east, west, north and south, all speaking the same things, and all with no uncertain sound. I have been a subscriber of the SIGNS for two years nearly, and I fully indorse all that it sets forth. My father took the SIGNS when I was a boy. There were twelve children of us, and but one strayed off, he going with the New School Baptists. Six sons are members with the Primitive Baptists, I being the last to go home to my friends, three years ago this spring. At that time a nephew and a niece and myself were led down into the water and buried in baptism by our beloved pastor, Elder P. W. Sawin; it was the happiest day of my life.

Sometimes I get so low in the valley that I feel as though I have not a friend in the world, and that no one cares for me. But when on the mountain top, I feel as though I can never praise him as I ought, for all his goodness and mercy to one that is such a vile sinner as I feel myself to be. If I ever had a hope, I went for twenty-five years trying to get a better one; I would sometimes think that I had none, and I would be almost ready to give up in despair, when something would say to me, You have not done your duty. Such passages of Scripture as these would come to me, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light." "He that is ashamed to confess me before men, him will I be ashamed to confess before my Father, and his holy angels." "Deny yourselves, take up your cross and follow me," and so, dear brother, I have found it not to be so hard as I had thought. The yoke is easy, the burden is light, and the cross is light. I find a blessing in obedience, but not in disobedience.

I feel like referring back to the time when I first saw myself a lost sinner, without hope and without God in this unfriendly world. My parents were Old School Baptists, and some would say this is

the reason why you are one, but I tried to believe as hard as any poor soul ever did, in other denominations, but when I went to hear them, the stronger I got in the Old Baptist faith. I had serious thoughts about what would become of me when I should die. I went on in this condition for some time, and I was no company for myself or for my family. At one time my wife said to me, "Will, why do you not go to the church?" I did not know that she had ever detected my trouble till then. Then I began to pray to the Lord to show me my duty, whether I ought to offer myself to the church or not. I prayed that he would give me some evidence in a vision or dream, and while in bed one night, thinking over my lost condition, with tears streaming down my cheeks, I fell into a doze, I thought I was on my knees trying to pray to the Lord to have mercy on me, and my mind often goes back to that time. I arose to my feet and turned my face to the east, when clouds parted, and there was a light that flashed forth, and I heard a shout. It was only a glimpse, but I believe that I saw my Redeemer. It seemed that he had a napkin about his loins, and a trumpet in his right hand. I was satisfied that he had revealed himself to me, that he had risen a mighty conqueror over death, hell and the grave, and that he said, "I will go to your Father, and to my Father."

When I awoke I was trembling for fear this was only a dream, yet my mind goes back to that time. We are sometimes called dreamers.

But I expected to write only a few lines when I began; I have never written for any paper before, but I believe if we write in the Spirit, in a plain, humble way, God will direct our pens. Nothing but the truth will do us any good. Perhaps some have been over the same road as myself, and it may be that some of the little ones may get a crumb as they read what I have written here.

From your unworthy brother,

W. H. CHILTON.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., Oct. 15, 1903.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—It is with a sense of fear and trembling that I once more try to pen a few lines for the comfort of the brethren and sisters, if indeed it can be of any comfort to them, which some assure me it is. But I feel my inability and weakness, and am so very ignorant of things relative to the kingdom of God, that I sometimes hesitate to take the sacred name of God upon my sin-polluted lips, or make the attempt to write anything to the edification of your readers, yet notwithstanding all this, there is nothing that I enjoy as much as talking and writing about God's plan of salvation for such poor, sinful worms of the dust as I feel myself to be; it is not man's way or plan.

I live in the little town of Plymouth, and all the preaching here is about other gods than the One whom I worship, or in other words, about men who are instruments in the hand of God to save people, and all is of the work of man from first to last. I heard one of them say that God made a way possible for every man, woman and child to be saved; he talked as though they all could be saved if they would, all was just left to the creature. I could but think, If that is so, then Christ died in vain, and did not accomplish what he came to do. Such teaching gives to the creature more power than Jesus possessed, or than the Creator. O, such nonsense. I am so glad that God rules, and beside him there is no Savior,

and there is no other power in heaven or in earth that can save but his, and the powers that be are ordained of God; he rules and none can hinder, he commands and it stands fast, he speaks and it is done. What a contrast between this God and such as men preach around me. I am glad that this God is our God, and that we can worship him. This is the God that was preached at our associations of late.

I was permitted to attend two associations, the Spoon River was the first, and the dear brethren came laden with gospel truths, and we all had a glorious meeting. We then went to Salem Association, which convened at Bethel church, of which Elder Harris is the pastor. The Spoon River met with Union church, of which Elder Frazee is pastor. The brethren at both these associations preached with power and in demonstration of the Spirit, and if possible set forth the gospel as it seemed to me more fully than I ever heard it before. O, what a feast. All preached Christ and him crucified, from first to last, there was no uncertain sound, they were like Paul, they had not learned it from men, but of God.

I have been often asked what the preacher is for if he cannot save anybody. I will let Paul answer, he says, that he that planteth and him that watereth is nothing, but it is God who giveth the increase, he is the one, and he adds, Who is Apollos, or Paul, but ministers by whom ye believed? Jesus also told Peter to feed the sheep and lambs, not to make sheep out of them, but because they were his sheep they must be fed. I think that there were sheep and lambs at these associations sitting under the droppings of the sanctuary. We were all filled to overflowing, and it looked from the countenances that the fruit was sweet to their taste. Many were the expressions of love from one to another, such as, "Was not that a feast?" and, "Is it not good to be here?"

One dear old brother Williams from Quincy, whose head was frosted over with the snows of many winters, said to me, "O, is not this a glorious meeting? it is not often that I hear such preaching as this." It seemed as though he could almost fly. He is a physician, and cannot get to be with us very often, yet how much he enjoys meeting with the saints. O, how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. I hope that the dear brethren will endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. I hope that Christ may dwell in their hearts by faith, and that he will grant them according to the riches of his glory to be strengthened with might in the inner man, by his Spirit. Paul says to the Ephesian brethren, that he desired that they might know the love of God which passeth knowledge, and that they might be filled with the fullness of God. I do hope to meet them at our next association, which will convene with Friendship church, the second Sunday and Saturday before, in September, 1904. I hope to then find them all growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be all the glory, both now and for evermore.

From your little sister in hope of a better life,

(MRS.) BELLE FRAZEE.

UVALDE, Texas, Jan. 3, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Please give notice through the SIGNS that I am here at Uvalde, Texas, where I expect to remain for the winter. Correspondents can reach me at the above address.

Affectionately, ASA HOWARD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1904.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PSALMS XIX. 14.

"LET the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer."

How blessed is that man from whose heart such a prayer as the above is indited; it is a blessing from God to be able to pray such a prayer in deed and in truth, and that work which produces such desires in the heart is a most wonderful and gracious work; it is a work which has shown to such a man, first, the holiness of God and the purity of his law; second, the guilt, ignorance and weakness of the human heart; and third, the exceeding need of having such words in the mouth, and such meditations in the heart. All prayer, that is, all real prayer, must proceed from a sense of need, and the greater the need the more earnest and importunate must the prayer be. All these things evidently were in the mind and heart of the writer of this Psalm, for in the text, or in the immediate connection, they are all expressed or implied. These were the words of a man of God, of one who loved God and godliness. A godly principle had been put into the heart of David, and so he desired things which should be according to godliness. And is it not a most blessed thing to desire godliness in inward and the outward life? Such a man is already blessed of God, and he shall continue to be blessed. It is his to receive grace for grace. The grace of desire is followed by the grace of fulfillment of that desire. The grace to love that which is acceptable to God is followed by the grace of the things themselves. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Blessed ones indeed; blessed in a two-fold sense; blessed in being enabled to hunger and thirst, and blessed in the sure supply of that for which they hunger. Blessed are they, and blessed shall they be in the satisfaction of their hunger and thirst. So that man who desires any spiritual blessing is already once blessed, and he shall be blessed again. The desire is an evidence of life divine, of the favor of God given to a poor, vile sinner, and it is a pledge of future abundance of blessing, for "He opens his hand, and satisfies the desire of every living thing."

As we think over these words of David, the solemn thought comes into our mind, that it is one thing to repeat these words, and quite another to really desire what the words imply. Do we indeed want that all the words of our lips, and all the meditations of our heart shall be acceptable to God? What a crucifying of the flesh and the lusts of the flesh must be involved in the fulfillment of this prayer. How many cherished desires, how many secret sins of heart and life, and of word and deed, how many envyings, and jealousies, and murmurings, and fault-findings, and rebellions, would suffer crucifixion in us, were this prayer to once be perfectly fulfilled in us. Are we willing not only to have the blessing, but the sore and bitter crucifixion by which the blessing must come, if it comes at all?

Surely there must be sore lashings of conscience before God, deep convictions of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, even our sins, and exalted views of the beauty of holiness, ere this prayer can dwell deeply in the heart, and be forced into expression by the lips. Do we want the blessing so much that we will welcome the crucifixion by which it comes? Can we say, "Most gladly therefore will I glory in tribulation, that the power of Christ might rest upon me"? Can we say, Lord, here am I, a poor sinner every day in word and thought before thee, who art too pure to behold iniquity, and my sins separate between me and thee, and I want to come to thee, and be accepted with thee, and I want this so much that I am willing to submit myself to the most bitter distresses, even to the crucifying of the flesh, that I may attain to this my desire for acceptance, in my words and in my meditations with thee? O, how we shrink from the cross, and the dying daily, and yet in no other way can the life of Christ be made manifest in our mortal body. But one man, the man Christ Jesus, has ever been able with full consecration to pray this prayer. This was his supreme and only desire, and in him was this desire altogether fulfilled, and the blessed portion of this to us in our poverty and need is, that as this prayer was fulfilled in the blessed Jesus, so does it exist, and shall be fulfilled in us through his indwelling by the Spirit. The flesh falters, but the Spirit is willing. There is a Spirit in the heart of every child of God, even when he errs and altogether comes short of what this prayer means, that yet cries out for this great blessing. It is that Spirit which is grieved at all the transgressions of the child of God; that Spirit which makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered; this Spirit in us still cries out, amid all our perverseness, "Let the words of my lips, and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight."

The text seems to us to imply a vast difference between that which is acceptable to God, and that which pleases man. Our words are heard by men, and may seem good words and full of excellence to them. Our words may in themselves be words conveying truth, even the truth of the word of God; they may be expressed in a kindly manner, and with an appearance of zeal for God, and for the good of our fellow men, and so they may be admired by our fellow men, while yet they are an abomination to God, who looks within, and sees the meditations of the heart. Many a fair work has been performed by the hands while the heart was selfish in it, and we were seeking our own honor, or some other selfish end, and not the glory of God, nor the good of others. Our words cannot be acceptable to God unless our meditations are also. Therefore David includes both in his prayer.

David spoke not only as a man, but as a ruler over Israel. It was his to announce decisions concerning the worship of God, the law of God, and the conduct of the people. How greatly he needed wisdom and grace that he might rule justly and in the fear of God. As a ruler he desired not to seek his own gain, or to be a man-pleaser, but to rule justly and wisely, and in the fear of God. Therefore, in this sense he desired not that his words and meditations might be pleasing to men, but such as should be acceptable to God. "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." But the grace of God alone could cause that this should be fulfilled in his reign, and so he must come in prayer to God for

this great blessing. In Jesus Christ, the antitypical David, was all this perfectly fulfilled; he is the true King, ruling in righteousness and in the fear of the Lord. But all the people of God are kings also; each of them have their life to live, and their testimony to bring to the praise and glory of God. Seeing their own ignorance, and inclination to perverseness, and selfishness, and sinfulness, what great need of prayer to God they must feel that their words and their meditations might also be such as shall be pleasing to God. How many times have the servants of God been approved in their testimony and ministry by the children of God, when they themselves are aware that some iniquity has crept into the very prayer of their hearts, or into the song that they have sung, or into the preaching or exhortation that has fallen from their lips, and they feel humbled and ashamed, rather than glad or exalted at the testimony of approval given by others. One said, when told as he came down from the pulpit, that he had preached a good sermon, "The devil told me that before I came down from the pulpit." For ourself, we can say that there have been times when some word of approval has cut us to the heart, for we have well known that God has seen in us pride, vanity and self-laudation, all of which are evil and fleshly, and abominable to God. We have felt condemned rather than approved. It matters little whether men approve us, but what a wonderful thing to be approved unto God. We remember saying many years ago, one evening while in the company of some of the members of the church in Baltimore city, that we had often felt that if the people could know just what thoughts and feelings often entered our mind, so hateful and horrible to ourself did they appear, that we were sure that they would not remain and listen to our preaching. A dear brother replied, "If you knew what the people were thinking of you would not preach to them." We trust that we have learned by bitter experience that we all need daily grace, that our words and meditations might be acceptable before God.

A couple of verses before the text, David said, "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults." What a vast mystery in iniquity! Who can know the human heart, deceitful above all things and desperately wicked as it is? How vile must that heart be, every imagination of the thoughts of which are evil, and only evil, and that continually. God alone can know it. David prayed in another Psalm, "Search me, O God, and know me, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." He felt the need of being searched, not that God needed to know more about him, but that he might know more about himself. God's searching reveals men unto themselves. It exposes in his light every hidden thing of dishonesty and subtilty and craftiness. Again David said, "Into thy hand I commit my spirit, thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." I commit my spirit into thy hand, he would say, because I cannot know it; I can neither understand it nor keep it; I cannot guard it from evil, neither can I lead it into that which is right. Lord, do thou therefore take charge of it, and keep it for me. And so David in this twelfth verse confesses before God that a man cannot understand his errors, and that he needs cleansing from secret faults. These faults are such as are secret from his fellow men, and secret from his own heart also. Cleanse me from faults that

I myself know not of, is the burden of the prayer.

Then in verse thirteen he prays again, "Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me." How futile is the boast of men that they can at least control their words and deeds. David at least felt that he needed both inward cleansing and outward restraint. Keep back thy servant. How heady and headstrong are we in our intent to do evil. How strongly is the fallen nature within us bent to evil. If we do not go into that evil, it is solely because we are KEPT BACK. And what a mercy it is that the Lord ever shows any man his need of this inward cleansing, and this restraining grace. O, how softly will a man go when he is brought to really feel his weakness, and his awful bent to evil.

To sum all this up, it seems to us that ere one can have such a prayer as David uttered in these three verses of this nineteenth Psalm, in his heart, he must have come to see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the majesty and glory and holiness of God, and the justice of his law, in some measure, as they appear to God himself. Then such a man will abhor himself and repent in sackcloth and ashes. Then will he cry out for very terror of his sin, and with inexpressible longings will he pray for more holiness of heart and life, and more conformity to the will of God. It seems to us that this will be apparent to all who will read this whole Psalm. It is the word of God in the heart and lips of David, setting forth the majesty and glory of the word and law of God, under the figure of the heavens and the earth, and the sun, and its light and searching heat, from which nothing is hidden, and then setting forth that which alone is in conformity to this holy law in men, and this is the work of God in the soul, wrought there by his own holy Spirit. It is the law written in the heart under the new covenant. David saw the holiness of God, and the effect of his word in the heart, cleansing and restraining, and putting there right meditations and right words, and so in faith, and in humble and earnest desire, he prays for the very things which the Spirit of God had given him to see as new covenant blessings, and to write in all this wonderful Psalm. Concerning these and all new covenant blessings, Jesus said, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, ye shall receive." C.

MATTHEW XXVII. 42.

"LET him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him."

The above is the language of the rabble that gathered in malice and rage to perpetrate the most outrageous crime the carnal mind has ever been able to conceive of, and although it was said in derision, yet in it is embraced the principles that govern the entire religious world. If the offense of the cross is removed, the popularity of the cause is assured. It is impossible for the natural mind to become convinced that the Almighty God would suffer and die, when it was in his power to prevent it. Poor, blind creatures, they have no conception of the spirit of the prophecies, and know not that "thus it behooved him to suffer, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled." It is so much more agreeable to have a religion that is not so hard to live, something that is not such a cross to our desires; then we can induce more young people to unite with us, and our thin ranks will soon begin to fill up, and we shall have churches composed of young and strong members, full of vigor and

zeal for the Lord, and the languishing cause will take on "new life," and our "old foggy" brethren will see how we are blessed of the Lord in our ingatherings.

Such are promptings of natural religion, and this Arminian sentiment is not confined to what we term antichrist, but it has of late crept into some of the churches claiming to be Old School or Primitive Baptists, and still closer home it comes to every individual saint, for we are all natural born Arminians, and daily meet losses and crosses that we would have taken out of our lives if we could, and if he would only come down from the cross in our experience, how much easier it would be to trust him and leave all in his hands; if we could only see our way a little clearer, but when all is so dark, and affliction is upon us, and it seems that everything is against us, then our poor, weak flesh cries out, "Let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him," and nothing short of the grace of God can subdue that rebellious feeling.

It is indeed discouraging from a natural point of view to see the ways of Zion mourn, and few coming to her solemn feasts, yet we know that no fire of our kindling can promote the cause, but those that compass themselves about with sparks, have the sure word of God that they shall lie down in sorrow. While they may seem to the world to prosper, yet their doom is certain. While in the weakness of the flesh we can but desire a religion void of the offense of the cross, yet every true and faithful minister will shun not to preach Christ and him crucified, and this will ever be foolishness to the worldly wise. But "where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" "For the Jews require a sign, [Let him demonstrate his power by coming down from the cross, they said.] and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ and him crucified." What is it to preach Christ, and him crucified? Is it merely to proclaim the historical fact that a character appeared on earth nearly two thousand years ago, and was taken by wicked hands and put to death on the cross? If that was all, the world would not object to that, but it is the preaching of Christ crucified in the bodies of his saints, that causes the offense. Every subject of grace as soon as they are quickened by the Spirit, has Christ dwelling in them the hope of glory. Their bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, but still that same spirit that actuated the murderers that crucified Jesus on Mt. Calvary, actuates every son of Adam's race, and his carnal nature rises up in rebellion, and says, "We will not have this man to rule over us," and it is only as the grace of God crucifies these afflictions and lusts of the flesh, that we can rejoice in that preaching that crosses all our earthly ambitions and desires. It is so humiliating to the flesh to be continually crucified in our daily experience, yet to our understanding the preaching of Christ crucified at this day, is as he appears in his saints, crucifying their Arminian, pharisaical natures, and conforming them to his own meek and loving Spirit.

B.

[It is in sadness that we are called upon to say that since the above was written our dear brother Beebe has fallen asleep in the Lord. We know that the hearts of thousands will be made sad by this announcement. We have time to say no more than this here, but a suitable and full obituary will be given in our next issue. Brethren, in your sorrow remember us.—C.]

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

EPHESIANS I. 4, 5.

"ACCORDING as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

In this heaven-inspired language the apostle implies three characters: First, The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings as having made the choice of which this record testifies. Second, Christ Jesus, in his sonship, as the Son of the God and Father who has made the choice under consideration. Third, The church or people, so chosen by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, together with the grand end and design of the choice, that we, (the people chosen,) should be holy and without blame, before him in love. And this choice and predestination to the adoption of children, holy and without blame, is according to the good pleasure of the will of the eternal God.

On this interesting subject volumes might be written; eternal ages, so to speak, will not exhaust the heavenly theme; but at this time our remarks must be very brief. Although Christ, in his official character in the work of salvation occupies a distinct character from the Father, as the Mediatorial Head of his church, still in the unity of the Godhead they are one; hence, in setting forth the choice, we are informed that it is in Christ Jesus, and complete before the foundation of the world, and so perfect from the ancients of eternity, that no more alteration can possibly be made to the choice, in Christ, than can be made to the spiritual blessings treasured in him for us from the same date. As the saints were blessed with all spiritual blessings, according to the choice in him, it follows, that if one of those chosen in Christ can be diminished from the whole, then so may some of the *all spiritual blessings* bestowed, also fail to take effect. It is heart-cheering to the saints to know that instead of spiritual blessings being offered conditionally according to the good or bad pleasure or volition of our will, all is secured according to the pleasure of the immutable will of Jehovah. The blessings and the choice are in sweet harmony with each other, and both according to the good pleasure of the will of God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. In distinction to this, how precarious would be the prospect were it written, that all spiritual blessings were *to be* given, according as men may render themselves deserving of such divine favors from the hand of God. The church chosen in Christ, and in him supplied with all spiritual blessings, before the foundation of the world, demonstrates the existence of the Son of God in his Mediatorial relation both to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and also to that church which was chosen in him, which is his body, and the fullness of him which filleth all in all.

This was and is the plan of God, for making the objects of this choice holy and unblamable in love. Certainly, then, we could not have been so chosen and blessed because we were holy and without blame in ourselves considered; but to make us so in Christ. Arminians and will-worshipers do not think this the best way to secure holiness to the chosen, or to display the wisdom and

goodness of God; but all the saints are delighted to know that it is according to the good pleasure of God's will. And while enemies may charge God with unrighteousness, and may feel more confidence in their own plans and schemes, we know there is no possibility of salvation in any other way.

Having predestinated us. Predestination is first, the choice and all spiritual blessings are established firmly as the throne of heaven upon that predestination, and all who are so predestinated must assuredly receive the adoption to which God has destined them, or the decrees of God must fail.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 1, 1861.

POETRY.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

COME, good Shepherd, blessed Jesus,
Feed thy lambs, feed thy sheep;
Guide us in thy steps, O lead us;
"Give thy beloved sleep."

Make thy weary flock rest at noon,
'Neath the banner of thy love;
Draw us to thy heavenly boon,
And raise our hearts above.

"Lead us not into temptation,"
From evil deliver;
Save us from sinful ambition,
And keep us for ever.

Seek out thy lost sheep, dear Savior,
Bring them home to thy fold;
Bless them in thy loving favor,
Thy bright face to behold.

D. BARTLEY.

DECEMBER 9, 1903.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO AN APPEAL OF BRETHREN TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged.....$854 65

Martha Beardsley, Ill., $1.00; A Friend, Ill., $1.00; W. D. Wood, Texas, $1.00; Cynthia A. Stratton, Mo., $1.00; A Friend, Ill., $1.00; Mrs. J. Pettet, N. Y., $3.00; Mrs. N. L. McDonald, N. Y., $5.00; T. G. Harris, Neb., $1.00; Elder D. Bartley, Ohio, $1.00; J. P. Starr, Texas, $1.00.—Total..... 16 00

Total to date.....$870 65

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Wm. Grafton, July 9th, 1903, Charles Kabre Grafton and Anna May Pyle.

By the same, Oct. 1st, 1903, Harold Cohart and Lorenia M. Weeks.

By the same, Dec. 16th, 1903, Harry E. Patton and Lulu E. Kirk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Wilson Housel died near New Brunswick, N. J., where he had been living for the few years past, on Saturday morning, Nov. 28th, 1903, at the age of 87 years, 7 months and 19 days. There was no particular disease, so far as we are informed, but simply the growing infirmities and weaknesses of old age, which finally took him away from this life. Elder Housel was well known among all the eastern associations of our brethren, and beside had once or twice in former years taken somewhat extended trips in the south and west, among the churches and associations there. He was known all the days of his ministry as a bold, earnest and very able defender of the faith which is dear to the people of God, and which was dear to him. He was ordained to the work of the gospel ministry about sixty-five years ago. We are not informed as to who constituted the presbytery, except that Elder Gilbert Beebe was one of the number, and Elder Buck, of Virginia. The greater part of his ministry was spent with the church at South River, N. J., though he served other churches in past years for a time. We are not fully informed as to the details of his ministry. During the past ten years he has not been engaged in the ministry, owing to increasing infirmities, and the failure of his bodily powers, yet he loved for the brethren to call upon him, and greatly appreciated their conversation.

It was our privilege to count him as one of those who held us in brotherly regard, and we always found a hearty welcome when we could visit him. This was not often however. A few years ago he expressed to us the desire that when his time should come to depart he might be taken to the place of meeting in South River, where he had preached the gospel for so many years, and that in that house the last sad services should be held, and that we should if possible preach upon that occasion. This was done as he had requested. The funeral service was held on Monday, Nov. 30th. The text used was Romans viii. 23. Elders Francis and McConnell were also present. Elder Francis opened the service with some feeling and appropriate remarks regarding his former acquaintance with the deceased brother, their pleasant relations together, and the faithful testimony which brother Housel always gave to the sovereign grace of God.

Elder Housel leaves three children, one brother,

and a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren, nearly all of whom were present upon the occasion of the funeral. Elder Housel was an honest man, plain and outspoken in all things. He believed in and proclaimed the grace of God in the salvation of sinners. We believe that he is at rest with the Lord.

ALSO,

DIED—At the residence of her husband, in Trenton, N. J., on Friday, Nov. 6th, 1903, sister **Mrs. Harriet Shepherd,** after an illness lasting about two weeks with pneumonia, in the 60th year of her age.

We write this imperfect notice with emotions of sadness, in which all who knew her will share. A noble, true-hearted woman has passed away from earth. In all our acquaintance we have never known one whose faith was more simple and earnest, and who loved the truth with more fervent love than did she. We are saying here only that which all who knew her well will bear witness to. She loved to speak of spiritual things at all times, and she could not long be in the company of her brethren without speaking of the things which lay nearest to her heart. The law of kindness was also in her lips, and her hands were ever ready to minister to the needs of others, even beyond her strength, and beyond what many would have felt was incumbent upon her. She did these things willingly, as to the Lord and not to men.

In early life she had been a Methodist, and very earnestly believed and contended for that faith, but under the preaching of Elder Wm. J. Purington she was given to hear and to see as she had not before, and from that time grace without works and without conditions was all her joy and her theme. Her testimony was at all times earnest and clear regarding the way of salvation. In her daily travel in the pilgrimage heavenward was fulfilled the words of John the Baptist concerning himself and Jesus, "He must increase, but I must decrease." This is true growth in grace and in knowledge of the truth. She was baptized about twenty years ago in the fellowship of the church at Hopewell, N. J., by Elder Purington, the then pastor of that church, and remained a steadfast, loving, loved and honored member all the rest of her mortal life. How greatly she will be missed from our solemn assemblies, and from our firesides. Especially will the little band of believers in Trenton sorely miss her cheerful presence and counsel.

Many years ago she lost by death an only child, and to her this life never seemed the same afterward; for a long time her heart seemed well nigh broken, and she never ceased to grieve for him, yet she bore her burden as one who had obtained help of God.

She leaves a sorrowing husband, who can hardly see how he shall bear his great loss. In her last days she spoke of her departure calmly, and made such arrangements as she desired for the funeral service, and for the future of her husband, left so lonely and desolate. It was her wish that Elder Durand, Elder Lefferts and myself should be at her funeral service, but brother Lefferts was hindered. The solemn services were conducted at her residence on Monday, Nov. 9th, by Elder Durand and ourself. The presence of a very large concourse of people testified to the esteem in which she was held by neighbors and friends, as well as by the church. Very many visiting brethren have from time to time partaken of the hospitality of herself and her husband.

Our dear sister died in full and glorious hope of life and immortality beyond the grave. For such to die is gain, though to live is Christ. That they should abide in the flesh seems needful, but to depart and be with Christ is far better. C.

AGAIN we have been called to lay the remains of a dear husband, father and brother in the cold and silent grave, **Peter Hull Leonard.** This is another reminder that life is short, and that we, too, are passing away. Since July, 1898, nine have been taken out of the Leonard family. Truly we feel the afflicting hand has been laid heavily on us, and causes us to look to him who is the Giver of every good and perfect gift, as our sufficiency. We mourn, but not as those who have no hope; nearly all professed a hope in the Redeemer, in salvation by grace.

Brother Peter professed a hope in his early life, and united with the Second Church of Roxbury, about 1837 or 1838, when only at the age of about twelve or fourteen years. He was born in the town of Roxbury, (according to the record) May 21st, 1824, being in his 80th year. He leaves a wife, three sons, two daughters, one grandson, one granddaughter, two brothers, two sisters, and many brethren and sisters in several churches, to mourn their loss. He was a very dutiful husband, father and brother, a very bold defender of the truth all his days. Salvation by grace was his strong hope and anchor, that reached within the vail, whither the Forerunner for us has entered. Brother Peter was blessed with more than a common understanding of the word of God. The needs of the poor and suffering were always relieved at his door; he loved charity; he loved the cause of Christ, and had a fervent love for the brotherhood, and was loved by all; always mild and desiring peace. O, that his mantle might fall on some of us that remain. He died of shock, on Dec. 15th, 1903. Brother Beebe, we are passing away to that unknown land or country at a rapid rate, yet not unknown, for we feel that we shall see him as he is and be like him. Now we see only in part, then know as we are known. Truly we desire a better country, and when we see him as he is, and all conformed to his image, then will be full satisfaction. Can it be a poor worm of the dust, a worm and no man, to-day compared to the grass of the field, to-morrow cut down and with-

ered? Truly man is of but few days, and he goeth to his long home. Of late, brother Beebe, my family relations have been very near to me, and the kindred in Christ have been doubly so; a nearer and dearer feeling goes out as I grow older. O, this contention, away with it, life is too short. O, that it might be his divine pleasure that we might see eye to eye.

May God grant this affliction to be for our good and his glory. David found it good to be afflicted, and we know that when we are in our deep and sore trials, then we cry unto him who is mighty to save, and do we not feel that these light afflictions work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory?

The funeral services were held at his late home Saturday, at 10 a. m., conducted by his pastor, Elder D. M. Vail. The remains were brought to this village Sunday, and interred in the family plot in the Bundy cemetery. A BROTHER.

BROOME CENTRE, N. Y., Dec. 21, 1903.

MOTHER **Sarah Pursifull,** of Waitsburg, Wash., died at her daughter's of that place, Mrs. Juda Johnson. She lived to be 98 years of age, and at time of death her health was fairly good for one of that age, excepting her mind, which has been affected for about seven years, causing considerable attention, yet living along till the time came for her to pass away to her eternal home, to dwell with her Savior, whom she as an Old School Baptist had worshiped in Spirit and in truth, longing for the meeting in great expectation of joy and blessing without measure.

Mother Pursifull had outlived her beloved husband, Isaac Pursifull, sixteen years, he dying near Eugene, Lane Co., Oregon, at the age of eighty-two. Both had been lifelong members of the Old School Baptist Church, coming from Lincoln Co., Ky., to Oregon, as members of the Walnut Flat Church. They soon joined the Bethel Church, of which Elder Ezra Stout was moderator, and J. T. Crooks clerk, and there lived in harmony and fellowship to the end, as a band of brethren and sisters in hope of eternal life, and the saying, "Behold my mother and my brethren." Father and mother Pursifull leave one son and four daughters to mourn their loss.

S. T. CROOKS.

ALBANY, Ore., Dec. 21, 1903.

DIED—**Mrs. Rebecca Runner,** at her late residence, near Rocksprings, Pa. Sister Runner was the only surviving member of that church, that was living at my first visits there, forty-three years ago. Leaving this world at a very advanced age, but few if any can be found more punctual in attending the meetings of that church than she. She was baptized by Elder Thomas Barton, and received in fellowship of the church at Rocksprings, and continued in full fellowship to the end of her days. Her husband was taken from her many years before her death. She leaves two sons, one died some years ago, and has left a widow and some family.

Her funeral was attended from her home, and interment at Rocksprings, with her ancestors, to await that day that knoweth no man, not the angels, nor the Son, but the Father. This mortal must put on immortality, then will be brought to pass the saying, Death is swallowed up in victory. After some remarks by the writer, her remains in the presence of many witnesses were buried to be seen no more here, and to those who remain I will say, "Peace be with you." WM. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md.

Mrs. Martha Dorsey died July 21st, 1903, aged 73 years and some months. Her husband, Samuel Dorsey, preceded her to the grave about seven years. She lived to see all her seven children buried. She has three grandchildren left to mourn the loss of a grandmother, one sister and one brother. She had "la grippe" in the winter of 1892, from which she never fully recovered. Heart failure I believe was what took her at last. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Rocksprings, Lancaster Co., by Elder Wm. Grafton. I do not know the date of her baptism, but she has been a member a long time. She suffered much in the last of her sickness. She told me she would be glad, if it was the Lord's will, to be taken out of this world, but we must wait our appointed time. We mourn not as those who have no hope,

Her sister, MELISSA J. SCOOT.

OTTER CREEK MILLS, Dec. 20, 1903.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 72. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1904. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MORE ABOUT JACOB.

(Genesis xxxii.)

ALTHOUGH Jacob had seen the ladder in a dream at Bethel, and had heard the voice of the Lord speaking to him from above it, and had vowed a vow unto the Lord after he awaked out of his sleep, yet I do not understand that he at that time knew the Lord as his Savior. He knew him as the God of power, but not as the God of grace. While I think he may be regarded as a typical representation of the Lord's people when the presence of God in the law has made them feel that they are in a dreadful place because their sins are manifested and condemned, yet it is evident from what follows that he had not yet experienced that fear of the Lord which is to hate evil, and which causes one to hunger and thirst after righteousness.

In his contract with Laban, after having served him fourteen years for his two daughters, Jacob still manifests the deceitfulness of his nature which his name implies. He agreed to receive as his wages "the spotted and speckled cattle, and the brown cattle among the sheep, and the speckled and spotted among the goats," after all such as were at present among them had been removed; then by an ingenious device he caused the strongest and best of the increase of the flocks and herds to be spotted and brown, and so caused the wealth of Laban to come to himself. This device he kept from the knowledge of Laban, and evidently also from Rachel and Leah. He was not open and candid, but deceitful still. And even when telling his wives that the Lord had told him to return to the land of his father, he seems to have gone beyond what the Lord had said to him, making it appear to them as though the Lord had spoken to him in a dream about this increase of the ring-streaked, speckled and grisled cattle, as a miracle wrought especially in Jacob's favor, not alluding to his own part in bringing it about. The time had not yet come for Jacob to experience the power of a new name, when he should no more be called Jacob.

Surely those who have felt that fear of the Lord "which is to hate evil" cannot think that sins committed by the Lord's chosen people are any the less vile than those committed by others. All sin is hateful to the Lord, and wherever his

Spirit is, there will be felt the same hatred of sin that he has. A lie is no more excusable in Jacob than in Judas; adultery and murder are as terribly sinful in David as in the vilest man. It seems hardly necessary to state what must be so clearly evident to all quickened souls.

The question will often arise, Why were such holy men of old as Noah, and Abraham, and Jacob, and David, left to show in their conduct such weaknesses and sinfulness as they did, and why were such things as they did put on record? I have no doubt that it was that it might be ever known and remembered that in the flesh all are alike sinful; that "there is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God;" that by nature no one is more worthy than another, for all are alike "children of wrath," and that even after one has been quickened by divine life his Adamic nature is still depraved and untrustworthy, and is to him a "bondage of corruption," from which he earnestly desires and expects to be delivered. (Romans viii. 19–21.) David seems to present this thought concerning his great transgression in the fifty-first Psalm, in which he so humbly confesses his sin, and so earnestly supplicates God's mercy: "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and clear when thou judgest."

Surely no one "who knows the plague of his own heart" can think that I am taking an unwarranted liberty with the name of the patriarch Jacob, or of "the sweet psalmist of Israel," when I allude to their sins as something to be abhorred. Surely none can think that in loving them we must love their sins, or even excuse them. They themselves abhorred and loathed them, and themselves because of them, and thus was the grace of God magnified and exalted in them. It was by faith, not by works, that they pleased God; by that faith in them to which Christ was revealed as their righteousness, and by which they saw his day and were glad. We love them not because we see them as better than others by nature, but because we see them as subjects of the glorious grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; and as subjects of that same grace, through that same faith, we, who hate our own lives for their sinfulness, are brought from the ends of the earth to "sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God."

"Through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God." Jacob must come in that same lonesome path of affliction and soul trouble through which all the saints have come into the knowledge of God's salvation. "They shall come with weeping, and with supplication will I bring them."—Jer. xxxi.

Now as Jacob approaches the time and place where the Lord will reveal himself unto him as his Savior, we find him in supplication for the first time, and hear him for the first time in his life humbly acknowledge his unworthiness of the least of all the mercies that the Lord has shown to him. At Bethel, where he had seen the ladder, and had heard the Lord's words in a dream, he made a vow, and promised that if the Lord would keep him in the way he was going, and would give him bread to eat and raiment to put on, and bring him back to his father's house in peace, then the Lord should be his God, and that of all the Lord should give him he would give a tenth to him. But not a word about feeling unworthy, and not a prayer for mercy is recorded of him then. But now he has met the angels of God. What these angels, or messen-

gers, were sent to meet him for, we are not told. He said, "This is God's host." I have no doubt they brought some messages to him from the Lord that stirred his soul, and prepared him for what was to follow.

Jacob now remembers his brother Esau, the borders of whose land he is approaching. It is in the land of Seir, the country of Edom. We may have in mind, as we go along here, that Esau, Jacob's twin brother, older than he, may represent the flesh, from which all our greatest troubles and fears and apprehensions arise. Jacob sends into Esau's land to announce his approach, and with messages to win his favor. But the messengers return with the startling word that Esau is coming to meet Jacob, and with him four hundred men. "Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed." This is indeed "the time of Jacob's trouble."—Jer. xxx. 7. He now made such arrangements for safety as he could, dividing his people, flocks and herds into two bands; and then he prayed, pleading the Lord's command for him to return, and his promise to deal well with him, acknowledging the Lord's mercies and truth which he had shewed to him, and his unworthiness of the least of them, and then pleading for deliverance from his own brother, "from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children. And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea which cannot be numbered for multitude."

Jacob now arranged liberal presents of sheep and cattle and goats in several droves, and sent them on to meet Esau successively. "For he said, I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept of me." There was no quiet or rest for Jacob that night. Fear of Esau and gloomy forebodings of evil seem to have taken possession of his mind. "And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two women servants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok. And he took them and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had. And Jacob was left alone."

Each of God's children is alone when the Lord is dealing with him. Even though many people should be around him, yet he is alone with God. He can have no one with him in this solemn time of intercourse with God. "He led them forth by a *solitary* way." When the Lord has a controversy with his people, and brings them into sorrow for their sins, "they shall mourn apart; every family apart and their wives apart."—Zech. xii. 12. No one can help us mourn; no one can know what passes between our souls and the Lord when this wrestling is going on.

"And there wrestled a man with him till the breaking of the day." This man Jacob spoke of as God: "For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."—Gen. xxxii. 30. Hosea speaks of him as God, and also as "the Angel."—Hosea xii. 3, 4. To me it appears that here is presented the Angel of God's presence in the law, which the Lord said to Moses should go up with him out of the wilderness into Canaan, the promised land. (Exodus xxxiii. 12–15.) We may regard Jacob here as representing all that chosen people, his posterity according to the flesh, with whom the Lord made a covenant in Horeb. (Deut. v. 2.) The Angel of God's presence in the law wrestled with that people during all that legal night and prevailed not. "All the day long [that legal day, which is the

night dispensation,] have I stretched out my hands to a rebellious and gainsaying people, who would none of my reproofs." But that wrestling must cease before the coming of the gospel day.

More particularly and fully does Jacob here represent that spiritual people called by his name, of whom the prophet Jeremiah says, "For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. Therefore they shall come and sing in the heights of Zion."—Jer. xxxi. 11, 12. This one name Jacob stands for all that people as one nation according to the flesh, until the gospel day dawned, when they ceased to be recognized by that name as the people of God. The children of the flesh were no longer known as his people. While the Lord knew that people, as he knew Jacob at Bethel, and again at the brook, yet they as a fleshly people did not know him in a spiritual sense as the God of salvation, as Jacob did not know the Lord in that sense at Bethel, nor yet at the brook until the blessing of knowledge and of salvation came to him with the new name Israel, and with the breaking of the day.

But all the history of that fleshly nation, with that covenant of works, and that worldly sanctuary, and the carnal ordinances, and the first tabernacle, and the gifts and sacrifices, "which could not make him that did the service perfect," with all the rebellions and punishments of that people, and God's long-suffering shown to them; all this had a figurative meaning, and set forth in types and shadows the truth of salvation as shown in the everlasting covenant made with the spiritual Israel, which was to be manifested in the gospel dispensation. All these legal things belonging to this night dispensation were "figures for the time then present," "patterns of things in the [gospel] heavens," "shadows of good things to come" The wrestling which only the Lord's spiritual people among that fleshly nation experienced, was also experienced by all of his spiritual people that had lived from Adam to Moses, and has been experienced by all since, and will be experienced by all that shall come after, till the last vessel of mercy shall be gathered. In the case of each child of God there is the natural state of death in sin; then the awakening to the knowledge of that sin and hatred of it, which brings the soul into the darkness of night; then the struggling and wrestling with the angel of God's presence in the law; then the sense of failing strength, inability to walk in the way of holiness; a recognition of the holiness of the law, but a sense of being helpless and undone because unable to attain unto that holiness, being already condemned by it, and a feeling that the law justly condemns us, and that righteousness requires that we shall give up all hope of God's favor. "Let me go, for the day breaketh."

Here is set forth what is in some measure the experience of all the Lord's people. What is true of the whole nation is true of each one composing that nation. What is true of the Head is true of each member of the body. The length of time in each part of the experience is not essential. The night in one case may seem to be for years, while in another case it is but for a moment; but it is night, and is a time of wrestling, a time of fear, and sorrow, and weeping. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

But now Jacob's thigh is out of joint by the touch of the Angel. All hope of righteousness by the works of the law is gone. It is God's law, and it is holy and

just and good. It was a righteous touch, a just stroke, that weakened Jacob's strength in the way. We now acknowledge that God is just, and his law is just. It has shown us what we are, guilty and justly condemned. Jacob never knew that before. But why does he not give up the struggle now and let the Man go? Ah, that cannot be done; that is beyond mortal power to do. Can the thirsty man cease to thirst? Can the hungry man cease to desire food? Can the man who still breathes let go his desire to breathe? Here is a struggle which was begun by the Angel, but is now carried on by Jacob. A new principle has been developed in him. The movement of a divine life is there. In that dark night in his soul, and with the sense of weakness and pain in the very center of earthly strength, there has sprung up a strong, pervading desire for another kind of strength; a longing for a heavenly blessing. Faith in his soul, a principle he knew not before, has taken hold of God's strength, since his own has failed, and now his will is so thoroughly engaged and engrossed in the holy struggle that he cannot let go.

"I will not let thee go except thou bless me." What a wonderful thing is the will. It is the gathering together and the outcome of all that we are at the time. Talk of a man handling his will, changing his will, denying his will! That can only be done by another will in us superior to the first. We may have a will to deny the expression of our will, but that other stronger will must be at hand.

In the case of Jacob we see the work of that God who alone can work in any one "to will and to do of his good pleasure." He now has such spiritual hungerings and thirstings as can never be satisfied from earthly sources. His whole soul goes out after the blessing of the Lord. "I *will* not let thee go except thou bless me." He cannot have a will to let go that hold. He cannot cease to cry for the Lord's favor, any more than a child burning with a fever-thirst can stop crying for water. Though the babe does not know what it wants so as to tell it, the cry tells it.

Why does the man give the breaking of the day as the reason for asking Jacob to let him go? Because the law must be vindicated and magnified before there can be the glory of a new day. Until the law is satisfied the Sun of Righteousness cannot arise. The law can look over into the gospel land, but cannot go over. When it struck the Rock Christ Jesus so that the waters of salvation flowed out its work was done. Moses is buried by the Lord, so that Israel shall see him no more.

When in the wrestling Jacob loses his strength, then the Angel's work through the law is done, the blessing is given to Jacob, and the Angel ascends as the Sun of Righteousness into the heavens of the glorious gospel day.

But before this blessing comes to Jacob there is on his part a full confession of who and what kind of a man he is. Nothing is kept back, nothing hidden from the Lord. "What is thy name? and he said, Jacob," a supplanter, a sinful man. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Whose heart? The heart of some other man? No, the heart of this man. My heart is the vile and wicked heart. I never knew it in this way before, but I know it now, and I confess it. "My name is Jacob." Here is the end of all hope of righteousness through any merit of my own. But my hold is still strong on the Angel; I will not, I cannot, let him go. Day and night

my cry is unto him, "Remember me, O Lord, with the favor which thou bearest unto thy people. O visit me with thy salvation."

"And he said, Thy name shall no more be called Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." This new name expresses something new in the experience of Jacob. There is a new kind of power in him now, the power of faith. It is manifest, as was the power of Christ in Paul, in weakness. The poor Jacobs through all time must first feel their own strength utterly fail before they come into the knowledge of this new kind of power. In this new strength, this power of faith in Jesus, they prevail over the Angel, over the wrestlings of the Angel of God's presence in the law. His power is with God, and also with men, with all the men of God whom he represents in this great struggle and victory. Through Jesus Christ, by faith in him who was to come, he prevails over the law, whose righteousness is now fulfilled in him. He received the blessing through the law. By his faith it was secured.

He asked the Angel to tell him his name, but the only reply was the question why he asked it. "And he blessed him there." And still Jacob is asking after that wonderful name, which no man knoweth but he that receiveth it. The knowledge of that name is in his experience. It is the new name of Jesus named upon him, and the knowledge of Jesus thus felt and known is eternal life. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

The name of Jacob is now Israel, a prince, a prevailer. Henceforth as a poor, depraved sinner he is Jacob, who questions, and complains, and mourns on account of his corruption; but as a manifest child of God he is Israel, enjoying the prevalence of faith, assured of God's favor, and satisfied that God doeth all things well. "Jacob said, All these things are against me." "Israel said, It is enough, Joseph my son is alive. I shall go and see him before I die."

But which ever is speaking at any time, whether complaining Jacob or prevailing Israel, we shall see in this man no more seeking for advantage by deceitful dealing, without a check of conscience; no more lies unconfessed; no more hiding of his ways; no more keeping the fruits of evil doings; but we shall henceforth see in his life and conduct a desire for that which becomes a God-fearing man, candor, openness in dealing, honesty, truthfulness and humble confessions of the evils of his heart.

"And Jacob named that place Peniel, the face of God, for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. And as he passed over Peniel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh." O, what a sweet and glorious sunrise was there, following such a sad and sorrowful night. The ford which they had passed over in the night was Jabbok, which means "pouring out." There Jacob "poured out his soul before the Lord." It was at such a place that Jesus "poured out his soul unto death." There he was "poured out like water," and there all poor, troubled souls in their distress "pour out their complaints before the Lord."

But now Jacob has seen God face to face, has been given a new name, has received the blessing of the God of salvation, and sees the breaking of a new and everlasting day. It is no more Jabbok, but Peniel, that he passes over, for the face of God is shining with the expres-

sion of infinite love upon his soul. No fear of Esau now. "Perfect love casteth out fear." "The sun rose upon him as he passed over, and his shrunken sinew and thigh out of joint cannot hinder his progress in the journey now before him, for natural strength is not needed here. Who would not gladly lose all his own strength so that the power of Christ might rest upon him, and the Sun of Righteousness arise upon him with healing in his wings?

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 16, 1903.

MT. VERNON, Texas, Oct. 16, 1903.

ELDER D. BARTLEY—MY DEAR BROTHER IN THE BONDS OF GOSPEL JOYS AND AFFLICTIONS:—Hoping that you may feel charitable toward my seeming carelessness and negligence, I will try to pen you a few lines by way of answer to your most welcome letter of the 24th ult. I have also read with much satisfaction your recent articles in the SIGNS. It is comforting and encouraging to one like myself, who often is made to realize his ignorance, weakness in, and utter helplessness to attain to spiritual wisdom and knowledge, to know that even in this degenerate age the Lord has reserved to himself a few bold, fearless and uncompromising witnesses to the eternal truth of his word, as set forth in the holy Scriptures, and revealed in the experience of every one of his humble poor. In the north, east, south and west we read the testimony in our papers of bold and active witnesses, as yourself, Elders Keene, Durand, Chick, Vail, also brother Beebe, Elders Lively, Powell and many others too numerous to mention, as regards the wonderful perfections of God, the fullness of that salvation which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, and the utter depravity and powerlessness of all Adam's race.

Brother Bartley, I know we ought to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints," even though we should feel to be one alone, the "faith" is just as sacred, and should be just as dear to us under such circumstances, as when many are with us. But such is the weakness of our Adamic nature that when we see those of whom we have expected better things; in other words, those of our own dear family name, (Old School or Primitive Baptists) on the right and on the left falling away, yielding to the seductive teachings of old Jezebel, or "mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots," we would give up in despair if we were not upheld by the sustaining grace of God. Whenever men begin to deny the creatorship, or that the "Lord God of hosts" is the Creator of all things, "whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, things visible or invisible," or to say, if he did create them he had no purpose in them, or if he did create them and did have a purpose in them, i. e., did predestinate or determine the beginning, the sphere, the law of the life or nature of each thing, its every movement and its ending, yet it depends upon circumstances or conditions as to whether it comes to pass or not, or in any other way trying to modify or soften the doctrine, so as to make it palatable to the taste of carnal religionists, is doing what I call yielding to the seductive teachings mentioned above; making love with the world. To compromise on one doctrinal principle, is a virtual requisition for other compromises to follow. Hence the agitation on conditionalism followed close in the wake of that on predestination. Wherever you find Baptists in their preaching avoiding the doctrine of predestination, they have but little to say

about either foreknowledge or immutability. Indeed, it would seem inconsistent to my mind for a man to preach a perfect foreknowledge and immutability, and not preach a full predestination, for these terms are inseparably connected. From observation, and some study and knowledge of human nature, I have come to the conclusion that the less the estimate a man has on the perfections of Deity, the higher his estimate on the wisdom, knowledge and power and capabilities of men. The more a man is shown of the majesty, glory and power of the great "I AM THAT I AM," the nearer he sees himself in his true condition. "Verily man at his best state is altogether vanity." "All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing and vanity." (What a high estimate we find these little particles of vanity and nothing putting on their works, and ability to work.)

In the sixth chapter of the prophet Isaiah we find the effect of the sight of "the Lord sitting upon his throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple," had upon the old prophet, for after this wonderful vision he was made to say, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the Lord of hosts." When the power of God was manifest in Christ in the miraculous draught of fishes, it was sufficient to cause Peter to cry out, falling down at Jesus' knees, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." The vain, carnal mind of man in his fleshly relationship, knows of no better name for the doctrine of the absolute perfections of God, and the utter depravity, nothingness and helplessness of man, than Antinomianism. This cry and charge, Antinomianism, comes from the source it always has, i. e., from an Arminian source. You know that an Antinomian is defined as "One of a sect who maintain that under the gospel dispensation the law is no use or obligation; or who hold doctrines that supersede the necessity of good works and a virtuous life." Now I have never met a predestinarian, or an advocate of salvation by grace alone, who teaches or indorses Antinomianism as defined above. If to deny that the law, or good works, and a virtuous life, is of use to us, as a means by which we may obtain eternal life and spiritual blessings, then I plead guilty to the charge. And those who make the charge of Antinomianism on the ground of such denial, are in fact Arminians, and really have no right to the name of Old School or Primitive Baptists, for if they claim that the law, good works and a virtuous life, &c., are of use under the gospel dispensation as a means by which we may obtain spiritual blessings, they occupy the ground of all Arminian denominations, from the Catholics down to the least and most insignificant Protestant order. Such an element ought to be willing to give up the name Primitive, or Old School Baptist, as property that does not really belong to them. But I suppose it is necessary to complete the number seven, as referred to by the prophet when he said, "In that day shall seven women take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel, only let us be called by thy name to take away our reproach." If to maintain that "the law is holy," while we are "carnal, sold under sin," and consequently unable to comply with its righteous demands, that Jesus Christ came into the world as the divinely appointed Sin-bearer and Law-fulfiller for all of Adam's posterity that the Father

had given him, that he did fulfill the law to a jot and tittle, magnified and made it honorable; that he satisfied its righteous demands for and in behalf of all his people, so that not a single violation can be charged to their account, but that the "Son hath made them free, and they are free indeed," yet admonished not to use their freedom as an occasion to the flesh; if to maintain that they must be born from above, born of the Spirit, have the Spirit dwelling in them, and that all spiritual service or obedience is wholly the fruit of this Spirit; if to maintain that all spiritual blessings are the blessed gifts of God, according to his choice of us in Christ before the foundation of the world; if to maintain that without Christ we can do nothing, that God must "work in us both to will and to do," that our inclination to obedience, together with the strength and courage to do so, is all of grace; in short, that the whole of our salvation is of grace, as I have always understood the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and most of its contributors to contend for, is Antinomianism, I plead guilty to being an Antinomian, and I feel that I want to stand with you all on the Old Baptist platform, and suffer my share of the reproach.

Pardon this lengthy and scattering scribble; I did not think of writing so lengthily. Let me hear from you when convenient.

Your unworthy brother in the fellowship of the gospel,

H. B. JONES.

ROBERSONVILLE, N. C., Dec. 28, 1903.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—VERY DEAR BROTHER:—Some days ago I received a card from our young sister, Goldie Sawin, asking me to write to her father a birthday letter. Not feeling that I could write such a letter, I did not get about it at once. But when Christmas came, it being rainy, the request was somewhat upon my mind, and so I commenced to write. After writing a little, some things began to occur to my mind of which I had not thought before. And then the thought came to send it to you for the SIGNS, so that Elder Sawin could read it, and others also. I feel sure that many of your readers know of their spiritual birthday. Your people are very much upon my mind since I have visited them, and I enjoy your fellowship so much. I am well as usual. We have some additions to our churches. It does not look as though the Baptists are dying out, at least in this part of the country. The arm of the Lord is not shortened, that it cannot save.

I have a mind to read the SIGNS, that I may hear from you all, and so send one dollar to pay for it, as far as one dollar will go.

I remain yours in a precious hope,

G. D. ROBERSON.

OUR BIRTHDAY.

As years pass by, we are reminded one certain day in one of the months in each year, that upon this day of this special month, so many years ago, we came into this world, where time has its onward march, and neither does it ever take a backward step, or turn to the right or left, but continues its onward course according to the decree of our God; and it brings to our vision the many changes that occur, some to our appreciation and others not, each year; yea, each day unfolds something to us that had hitherto been hidden both in the kingdom of nature, and ourselves also. Here we have seed time and harvest, winter and summer, fair days and cloudy ones, short

ones and long ones, and as they pass along we grow older; and I once thought that I would grow wiser and better. But what a mistake, it is just the other way; or, at least, it is not as I thought it would be. So to-day I do not feel that I know anything as I ought to know, seeing that I am such a poor learner. Yet it is true that the Adam man learns many things here in this material world that are to our profit. And it is right that we should use the time that God gives us, together with the opportunity with which we are blessed, for the benefit not only of ourselves, but of others also. And being blessed with a sound mind as we trust, according to the will of God, that we may know how to appreciate the many tokens of kindness from others, together with the various presents that come to us from our friends, on these special birthdays of ours. And with the rich feastings at home, even our children are made glad on their birthday, and long to see the day return with its many comforts. Each one of these days make us a year older, so it is a day and a year, and thus we pass along, not knowing when the last day may come. May it be our Savior's will to abide with us by his Spirit, so that we may live the days allotted to us, to his glory and honor, and as though each day was our last one on earth. You and I here in this life, being children of men, have our birthdays, and each one makes the number less, so by and by the last one will come.

May we now say a word or so of another birthday, the one wherein we were born, not of man, nor of blood, but of God? As the first birth brings us into this world and into the fellowship of the things of the same, so the second birth brings us into the spiritual or gospel kingdom, and into the fellowship of the things of God. In both of the these births we are passive, and it is without doubt that we were first born according to the will of God, and we never could have been here, if there were no God. That which is developed, even in nature, shows the great creative power of not only a god, but the living God. It is equally true, if not more so, that we never could have been born again but for the living and true God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This God created man, and that is the reason why children are born of the flesh, men being fathers. But God begets his own children, or not one would ever be born. "Of his own will begat he us." In nature we have but one father, and cannot (truthfully) claim any other, save him that begat us, so no man can claim (rightly so) God to be his Father, save he that is born of God. Those born of the flesh die, but those born of God can never die, because like begets like. In Adam all die, but God cannot die. "I am he that was dead, but am alive, and behold I am alive for evermore." So they that are born again can never die, death has no dominion over them. So without this spiritual birthday, we never could be the children of him that cannot die. Consequently this day excels our birthday in nature. Job cursed the day wherein he was born. But this second birthday is the day of days, yea, better than all other days together; for one day in thy courts is better than a thousand in nature. In nature we have days and years, but in grace we have but one day. It never returns, it is a day unto the Lord; and neither do we have but one year. Christ is the acceptable year of the Lord, and he is ours, if it be that we are risen with him. He is our blessed Sabbath day

wherein we were born. All that are born of him are born on this day. There can be but one, from the fact that there is no night with God, nor in his holy temple, for Jerusalem which is above is the mother of us all. Now as we receive many presents, which are tokens to us of the kind affections of others, on our natural birthdays, which we so much appreciate, may it not illustrate to us the many good things that we have received from our great Friend above? Are not these many good gifts, and this special perfect gift which is from above, also tokens of that manner of love that John speaks of where he says, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God"? Nature's love is but a faint figure of this love. Now if possible we should much more appreciate the many things of the Spirit which we receive on this our special birthday, for as said before, in the kingdom of God there is but one day. God is eternal. In nature we have time, but in God's glorious kingdom there is no time. We have but one experience. It is in nature that changes occur, but in grace none. Here we have past, present and future; but in the glorious kingdom of our adorable God, it is one eternal now. May we be enabled to use these, our birthday presents, to the comfort of others, and not wholly unto ourselves, "For we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." It is also on this day that we have many feastings, being the children of the resurrection, having entered by faith into the glorious kingdom of our God, which the world knows nothing of, for lack of the second birth. But those who have ceased from their own works have entered into his rest, on this our birthday. We, while in the flesh numerating our natural birthdays, groan, being burdened, often wondering how it will be with us when they all end. But again when we can sit down in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob by faith, enjoying the glorious privileges of this one day, (how glorious) then we have some foretaste of what we hope to be. Do we not remember the time, yea, the times, when proclaiming the glorious gospel of God, or hearing it proclaimed, that we, like one of old, were caught up, and for the time being could not tell whether we were in the body or out of the body; having lost sight of houses and lands, yea, wife and children? Just then there was no time with us. If this is not a foretaste of that heavenly day beyond this vale of tears, of which our birthday naturally is a type, then I am yet a stranger to the things of the Spirit, but I hope, and feel to believe, and so do you, my brother, that we have had many gifts (graces of the Spirit) during this our birthday in the kingdom of grace. So let us hold fast to our profession, and earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, in meekness and humility of spirit, until our change shall come.

G. D. ROBERSON.

DECATUR, Texas, Oct. 2, 1903.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, AND ALL THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH—DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST:—I have many times resolved that I would never attempt again to bother you with my poor, imperfect scribblings. I feel my sinfulness, inability and unworthiness. I feel as though I could not comfort or interest any one of all the poor of the flock, yet my mind seems impressed to speak a word of encouragement to the editors and correspondents

of the dear old SIGNS.

When I look around me and see the many lo heres and lo theres which have divided the camp of the saints of the Most High, even of those wearing the garb of Old School Baptists, that they may lead the little ones away from the fundamental principles of the doctrine of God our Savior, even the doctrine that is so cherished and so nourishing, and the only hope of salvation to a poor, trembling child of God, I am troubled and astonished. This doctrine is the only anchor to the hope of a child of God; that is, the doctrine of the sovereignty of God over all things, both animate and inanimate. He, in wisdom, has declared the end from the beginning, and it is sure that nothing can take place contrary to what his wisdom comprehended; his controlling power is over all things, his infinite wisdom takes in all things which have ever been or ever shall be, he is all-wise, and he changes not, he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, he is without the shadow of a turn.

Then, dear children of God, you may rest assured that the controlling power of God is over all our enemies, Satan, with all wicked men or devils, cannot change one of all the purposes of God which he purposed with himself before the world began. Antichrist may invade the camp of the saints, but it is all for the best, because all things work together for good to them who love God.

I have heard a great deal said about extremes among the Old Baptists here of late. But there are at least two things upon which I never have been weary of going to extremes, and one is the exaltation of the great God of heaven, and the other is in abasing poor, sinful man; for our poor, finite minds cannot penetrate and comprehend that all-wise, merciful and compassionate God who rules the universe, and neither can we grasp the depravity of sinful man. Dear brethren, do not be afraid of going to extremes in the exaltation of God our Savior, for his purposes and decrees govern all things; all things shall work out just what our God purposed they should. He says, My word shall not return unto me void; but shall accomplish that whereto I send it. He declares that he works all things after the counsel of his own will, and that all his works were known to him from the beginning, or ever time was.

As time rolls along new inventions spring up, making many changes to our poor, finite mind; but after all, they are but developing his infinite wisdom, which he purposed before the world began. There is nothing new with God, for his wisdom beheld all things which have ever been or which shall ever be; he knew them all before creation began, and the development of creation but brings into manifestation his mighty wisdom.

Brother Beebe, it may seem strange that I should write to you, as we are strangers in the flesh, but my love has been drawn towards you for the truth's sake. Even your visage is pictured before my mind, so that it seems to me that I should know you, were I to meet you. My health is failing me, so that I have not been to meeting in over a year, but I hear several good sermons preached twice a month, through the SIGNS. I have heard some brethren say that they did not want to take any paper, for the Bible was good enough for them. I would inquire of such ones, Why do you go to hear the truth preached, if the Bible is all you want? I cannot see any difference between the truth written, and the truth spoken; only that I can understand

it better if written, for I am so deaf that I cannot hear all that is said; but when written, I can get it all.

Dear brother Beebe, and all who are correspondents of the SIGNS, go on contending for the truth. We have some here claiming to be Old Baptists, who have entered the camp of those who believe in unlimited predestination, and who strive to poison the minds of the brethren against the SIGNS. But, dear brethren, fear not to declare the whole counsel of God in the future, as you have in the past. I hope that you will bear with me in my weakness, and for bothering you with this poor scribble.

Your unworthy brother, in hope of eternal life through Christ,

M. B. F. JONES.

[WE desire to express our thanks to our aged brother for his thoughtful kindness in writing us so encouragingly. We often feel the need of such expressions of sympathy from our dear brethren. We do desire to be steadfast in all things pertaining to the gospel, we also desire to go to the same extremes of which our brother speaks, in exalting the being and perfections of Deity, including his power, wisdom, purpose, love and grace to poor sinners. We also know that we cannot be extreme beyond the truth in abasing the creature, as we strive to point out his sin and condemnation and total depravity before God. No language is too extreme for such work as this.

We know that many are prejudiced against the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, who have never seen but few, if any, copies of it; but we want to say, If the SIGNS commended itself to lovers of truth more than seventy years ago, we know of no reason why it should not be equally acceptable now, so far as the doctrine it contains is concerned. We freely confess our great inability to present the truth clearly and forcibly, as the former editors were enabled to do, but we have not departed from the principles which were nailed to the masthead of the SIGNS at the beginning of its publication; let God be praised for this. It is to be feared that those who object to reading anything but the Bible, do not even read the Bible as much as they ought. Our observation is, that those who read what men have said concerning the truth, are also much closer readers of the Bible than many who speak as our brother reports above.—ED.]

MERRIFIELD, Va., Dec. 29, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I feel like I want to talk with the dear ones who have been writing to me through the SIGNS all the year now nearly closed, but as the year is in the last days of its existence, so seem my days in a spiritual sense. I love the same truth, and have still that longing desire to be among the saints, and in this I do not mean only to be found in person with them, but to be like they look to me, a people of one mind, one heart and one faith; in other words, of one Lord, one faith and one baptism. I say this is the way the dear ones look to me, and I long to be like them. So, dear ones, I would like to tell you how you have comforted me through this, another year. I cannot call each by name, nor particularize, for space says "No," but all are included, and as language fails to express all the heart feels, so words from me can never tell what I sometimes see in the saints of God, for the image of Jesus is reflected there in love and meekness that makes one long to dwell with you. If you have ever had one glimpse of the perfection of the saints in Jesus (for in no other way are

they perfect) you can never forget it. Years may pass, and circumstances may be so changed that you may not now remember many things that were to you very striking at the time, but you can never forget the love of Jesus in shedding his blood for you. But I have felt that perhaps after all I have never tasted that sweetness, and yet again I feel God is love, and my mind seems not to run, but fly back so quickly that it seems just a moment ago Jesus said to my soul that he was the end of the law to me. Who found for the first time that I was a believer, believer of what? Well, dear ones, I believed I was his. I am not a preacher, and I have no gift to expound; if I were and had the gift, I do not know but tongue would fail to express what that belief was, or is to the little ones, more fully than I have. All those points of faith and doctrine that you all have talked to me about this year, are all centered in Jesus, (as dear brother Paul said on board of the vessel as it was going down, "Whose I am, and whom I serve.") and in the very experience the dear apostle had on that occasion is the sweetest comfort that can come to a "poor sinner," even to such an one as wrote that name, whose letter I have just read in the SIGNS. The vessel must be broken in pieces to let the light shine, but you cannot be lost, for in the breaking of the vessel Jesus is there, in that dark and dreadful storm.

While sitting here I hear my wife singing some old words in another room, and while they are now out of print, it tells of going back to the days that are past, and I will just pen a few of them here:

"God is near thee,
Therefore cheer the sad soul;
He'll defend thee,
When around thee billows roll.

Calm thy sadness,
Look in gladness on high;
Faint and weary,
Pilgrim cheer thee, help is nigh.

Hark! the sea-bird,
Wildly wheeling through the skies;
God defends him,
God attends him when he cries."

Thus that song comes floating to me as I sit here thinking of the many years that have passed since each of us have tasted of their joys and sorrows, of the few short moments of gladness, and those long nights of sorrow and distress, when it seemed to us that the morn would never come, but, dear one, the Lord is near thee in all your night sorrow; he has not been away at any time, but to teach you the truth, that the flesh profiteth nothing; it must needs go down, but your life shall not be touched, and sometimes the whole cargo must needs go, but your life is safe because it is in Jesus our Lord. Cheer up, little ones, no harm shall come nigh thy dwelling, because the Lord is your dwelling-place, not only now, but in all generations God has been our dwelling-place, because he is from everlasting to everlasting, no beginning nor ending to everlasting life, and that is just what we have in Christ Jesus, not out of him or separate from him, but as having one life, for that is just what it is, and here is where the sweetness of the doctrine, of the oneness of Christ and the church comes in, that causes the sheep to lie down under the shadow of God's wing and chew the cud and rest. They are at home in the fold of his watchcare and love, and the wolf cannot come there, for the sheep would discover him, for he cannot chew the cud, and though he had a sheep-skin coat and called by a sheep's name, just take notice of what he eats, for thus the test was made by our Lord. Those not called

could not chew the hard sayings of Jesus, and they followed him no more. I now see a little band, it may be in Tennessee or some other place, chewing the cud, and others standing looking on, and they begin to howl, and the little flock runs to the shadow of the Rock, but their life is safe, and others of the flock, who may have been feeding in another field, heard them and came to them with encouragement, telling them to fear not, the Father hath given them the kingdom, and they are given to know what this kingdom is, to love its laws, and to rejoice in the dispensation of grace.

There are many little "bits" through the year now past, which seem to have been dropped purposely for the little ones. Those "Fragments" by Elder Durand have been sweet to me. Years have sped swiftly since I first began to read with comfort from his pen; years that have been, as it were, burned into my memory, mixed both with sadness and comfort, joy and sorrow; yet in all these things I am spared, but for what I know not. Many dear to me have been taken, those whom I once could look to for counsel, and I often look back in fond recollection. Yet such thoughts are mixed with sadness, for we as a church have been passing away one by one, and I now must take my place as one of the old members. I feel lonely indeed, yet it would be sweet if I could only feel as those dear ones looked in life to me, but I cannot attain unto that, and I suppose these ambitious cravings will have to be all cast overboard to lighten the sinking vessel, and the vessel itself must go to pieces, but, dear ones, our life is safe, it will not go down, and on a piece of wreckage we will and often do get ashore, and then we all begin to preach the truth that "salvation is of the Lord," declaring that "by the grace of God I am what I am." I will add here, let it be little or much, dear child, look up, for all we suffer, and all the losses you sustain are but the ways of life and salvation, being yours to experience, and are the waymarks given you, that you are his and he is yours; they are the answer to your prayers that he may guard and guide you, and be nigh you while the "billows roll." Let no man mislead you with smooth words. Call to mind the case of the old prophet Jeremiah; he was asked to say "smooth things," lest he should frighten the people, but he could not do it. Why, it would not have been the truth; even so to this day smooth things are not always the truth, and your experience teaches you this.

I must stop now; I have not written as I intended, but it is just like me. I cannot do the things I would, and I would not trust myself if I could. So without further comment you can see me as I am.

Brother Beebe, this is my farewell to you for this year, together with all the faithful in Christ Jesus. May the presence of the Lord be known and felt by you all in this new year, whether in sorrow or gladness, and may his will be done in earth as in heaven, in sickness as in health.

Your little brother,

ELI T. KIDWELL.

JERSEY CITY, N. J., Dec. 28, 1903.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—It has been on my mind to write you a short letter, but I cannot say whether I will send it or not. I would rather talk with you, but when I have the opportunity, I never can speak to others the thoughts that pass through my mind, when I have no one to whom I can tell them.

The seventh day of January is my

seventy-seventh birthday, and also my forty-third anniversary, being baptized on my birthday, by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and received into the fellowship of the New Vernon church, of which I feel unworthy, for when I look back over those forty-three years and view my walk, I can find nothing but sin, and have been so little use to the church. I have not shown my faith by my works. At the time I was received in the church and for a short time after, I thought I would never have any trouble. I was at peace with the world and all in it, and I thought I would grow better and increase in knowledge, that I was done with the world and all its allurements, but how sadly I was disappointed. Soon the old man began to stick his head up and tell me I was deceived, that it was all a delusion, and for a time I thought I would tell the church that I was deceived and had deceived them. Then my mind was carried back to my experience, and how I was led to go and hear Elder Housel preach, for I was bitter against the Old Baptists, though I had ceased from my works, and had made up my mind there was no salvation for me. When he took his text, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again," and made it so clear that the creature is passive in the new birth, as he is in his natural birth. I said, If that be true, then I am eternally lost, for God will not put forth his hand to save such a wretch as me. I had thought all my life that man must leave off his wicked ways, and do that which was good. I did not understand that the alien sinner has not the power to yield obedience to the gospel, until after being quickened into divine life; and when quickened God has begun the work of his salvation, and will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Yielding obedience without life will not compare with the Scripture. Paul says, "To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." Again he says, "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." So we see every unregenerate sinner is dead, he has no knowledge of spiritual life, then some change must take place before he can receive or yield obedience to the gospel. Now can he bring about this change? I say, No. Then how is it brought about? Christ says by a new birth. Had I any power to bring about my natural birth? Then what power had I to bring about my spiritual birth? To believe that I had, would be to destroy the power of the new birth. We are told, "As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." Paul to the Ephesians said, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)." Then it is not of works. As for me, I want to give the Lord all the praise. I have nothing to boast, then may we say with Paul, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor?" "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen."

Now, brother, as you said when you were here to send it, and let you be the judge, I will do so, and you can burn it.

With love to you and sister Ker, I remain, your unworthy brother,

A. D. LOUD.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Aug. 3, 1891.

MRS. REBECCA WELLS—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—Your letter, mailed July 30th, was received in due time, and its contents read with much interest, as we all were very glad to hear from you again, but we regret that you are so situated that you cannot hear gospel preaching, for it must be a great deprivation to you. The most that now is called preaching is a mixture of rationalism, gnosticism, neology, metaphysics and rant, or rodomontade, and not one crumb of food for a hungry child of God; but alas, if a man does not know the gospel he cannot proclaim it, for "The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits;" therefore however eminent a man's natural abilities may be, if he has not experienced the truth of the gospel in his heart he cannot proclaim it.

My sister, concerning the declarations of Scripture to which you refer, I pen a brief reply. The Scripture reads thus: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."

My sister, I understand that the Scripture now under consideration has direct reference to the resurrection of Christ from the dead and the regeneration of the church from under the law, for turning to the New Testament it reads, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." Well might the poet sing,

> "One in the tomb, one when he rose,
> One when he triumphed o'er his foes,
> One when in heaven he took his seat,
> While seraphs sung all hell's defeat."

"Then answered Peter, and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee, what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Regeneration is a very important word in the Scriptures, for the prefix *re* signifies *again or the second time*, and the root of the word is *generare*, or *generatum*, *to beget, to procreate*, showing that in the resurrection of Christ from the dead that the church, the body of Christ, was *begotten again*, as has already been quoted; but the children of God do not receive that glorious doctrine in a speculative manner, nor as a theory, but they know it as a soul-cheering, heart-warming and glorious doctrine, and the apostle says, "The woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should

be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Also, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." The same apostle, when enraptured at the glory revealed in the gospel, gave expression to his feelings in the following language: "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen." A vast amount more of Scripture declarations from both the Old and New Testaments might be adduced, bearing upon and concerning the regeneration of the church through the righteous life, bitter and agonizing death and triumphantly glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ, but I forbear making any more quotations.

The great and glorious battle has been fought for the church, the body of Christ, and age after age the members of his mystical body have been filled with wonder, admiration and thanksgiving when they have felt the power of reigning grace in their hearts, and have joined in Spirit with the declarations, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, [blood, or the bloody land,] with dyed garments from Bozrah? [tribulation] this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling [not attempting to travel] in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me; for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come."

My dear sister, though hundreds of miles now intervene between us, I cannot help thinking that we are still joined in heart and one communion make, and it is very doubtful whether we ever meet personally again in this world, but the very pleasant season we all enjoyed when you and Bertha were here will not be forgotten while reason is on the throne. We still have a large and attentive congregation on Sundays here at Hopewell, and since you left us three members have been added by baptism, and there are indications that more are inquiring the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, and I know that in God's appointed time, if according to his will, they will be made willing to follow their dear Lord and Master into the "watery grave."

Affectionately yours,

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

(See obituary of Rebecca Wells on page 94.)

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Jan. 7, 1904.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—MY DEAR BRETHREN:—Will you kindly allow me space in your columns to answer the many precious letters received on my sixtieth anniversary? which occurred on the 2d inst. It had all been arranged by my dear family, and I had been kept in profound ignorance. The letters came from Canada to North Carolina, and from New York to Iowa; the writers' ages

from fourteen to eighty-seven years. They came as white winged messengers bearing the olive branch of peace; each one contained sweet messages of love, fellowship and good wishes; not one letter was read but what filled my heart with joy and gladness, yet a deep sense of my nothingness was apparent. I cannot yet understand how it is that you can manifest such tender love and fellowship to one so ungraceful, barren and destitute of the real fruits of the Spirit. That which touched me most of all, my dearly beloved in the Lord, was the sweet assurance that my feeble labors had in any way been blessed to the good of Zion, and your good wishes and prayers in my behalf, that I might be spared and kept and blessed yet many years in the ministration of the word. The sweet assurances of your abiding love and fellowship in the Lord, are some of our God's richest blessings to me; I have in no way merited them, and feel if you could but look into this poor heart and know me as I am, love and fellowship would cease. I can only account for it in the sense of your big hearts filled with charity that covers the multitude of my sins and imperfections. I can truly say, not one of you who have so kindly written me, on this my sixtieth anniversary, but what I hold in loving remembrance, all with whom I have met in the assembly of the saints, and with most of you in your homes, where I have been kindly cared for and ministered unto in the fullest sense of the word. For your good wishes and prayers for my coming years, I would humbly thank the Lord and take courage, I am sure none need them more. It is true, as many of you have said, that as we grow older the glitter and vain show of this world vanishes. Yes, it is true, I want less of this world and more of the heavenly, I am often weary of this world, Satan and self, my worst enemy, I often feel to solemnly sing,

> "Weary of wandering round and round
> This vale of sin and gloom,
> I long to leave the unhallowed ground,
> And dwell with Christ at home."

Yet I must abide my Father's will, for he has appointed the time, place and way in which the end of this life shall come.

Your sweet messages of love did seem to make my heart aglow, and to sing as in my youthful days, in the Spirit. It seemed as though I had drunk to the full of the wine of the kingdom, the wine that makes glad the heart of the simple, so youth was renewed and I felt encouraged to run with patience the race set before me. I had been much cast down, almost buried in the slough of despond, feeling as the way seemed so dark and gloomy, both temporally and spiritually, that I was forsaken of God and man, but he knoweth the way I take, he knoweth all our needs, and so with dear, old father Abraham I can mark my sixtieth anniversary, and call it Jehovah-jireh.

Dearly beloved in the Lord, may grace, mercy and peace abide with you, and may you have the blessed assurance that as you did it unto this poor, least one in the kingdom, ye did it unto the Lord.

It seemed impossible to answer each letter separately, yet I felt to let you know I was the happy recipient of them, hence took this means; this is not satisfactory to me, it seems so empty and cold in comparison with yours, but kindly accept it as a token of appreciation, and that I have you all in loving remembrance.

Yours, a poor sinner, hoping in the mercies of the Lord,

P. W. SAWIN.

P. S.—I neglected to say I received in all sixty-five letters. P. W. S.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1904.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to GILBERT BEEBE'S SON, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.

THROUGH the columns of the former number of the SIGNS our readers have been informed of the departure from this life of our dear brother and associate editor in the publication of the SIGNS. We are sure that among the thousands who were made sad by notice of his death, none have felt more deeply than we have what a loss we all have sustained. And now as we have begun to write something of what is in our heart of sorrow and depression, and of the sense of loss, we hardly know how to express in any suitable way what would seem to be called for, and what no doubt will be expected from us. Elsewhere in this number will be found full notice of our dear brother's last hours, written by loving hands, and out of the fullness of tender hearts, sorrowful as they are, and as they may well be. Of this we will not therefore speak. Elsewhere in this number also will be found a statement of the changes which our great loss has made needful in the proprietorship and the publishing of the SIGNS. And also it will be seen that for the present at least, we are left alone to bear the burden of the editorial department of the SIGNS. It is of this that we wish more especially to speak here. But before doing so, we desire to express to our readers something of the added burden and responsibility which has fallen upon those who now are in sole management of the business and mechanical departments of the SIGNS. We do not doubt that the hearts of very many of the dear children of God, who have so often found a blessing in the, to them, dear old paper, and who have with us so often shared deep anxiety regarding the prosperity of the SIGNS, and who have so often felt to ask from God his blessing upon editors and correspondents, will not fail now to remember the proprietors and publishers at a throne of grace. We know something of the deep anxiety which they feel in assuming this burden, and from their own lips we have learned how dependent and unfit they both feel, and how much they feel the need of divine strength. We can assure all our brethren that they both have this one desire: to so do as shall redound to the glory of God, and the good of his people, and the upbuilding of the Zion of God. From their own lips we have heard the expression of fear lest there should be a failure upon their part to uphold the banner of truth worthily, as it has been upheld in all these past seventy-one years. It is good to feel thus, for then the children of God will go softly, and not self-confidently forward; weak and trembling, and yet strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. We feel sure that the prayers of all the children of God who read the SIGNS will ascend that they may be confident, remembering that God "always causeth his children to triumph through Christ Jesus," and that he has said, "As thy day, so shall thy strength be."

But for our ownself what shall we say? During all the time since we heard the

sad news of our brother's departure from earth, we have felt again and again to ask, "And who is sufficient for these things?" Some years ago when we first took a place among the editors of the SIGNS, the feeling with us was that there rested upon us as solemn and sacred a responsibility as we ever felt resting upon us in our ministry in the pulpit. We never have felt competent for the ministry, or for the pastoral office in the churches, and we did not feel competent to take any place in the conduct of the SIGNS; and now much more do we feel our deep lack of wisdom, of humility, of steadfastness, of faith, hope and love, and of all that belongs to true spirituality, which all are so needful to the believer at all times and under all circumstances, and which are so especially needful in the conduct of the editorial department of such a paper as the SIGNS. Editors of secular papers need worldly qualifications alone to make a success of what they are engaged in, but here such qualifications are of but little avail, and have little place. As in the ministry of the word, so here we need great grace from God. We are not to go forward in any human strength, judgment and wisdom, but in the strength and wisdom of God; and we do feel so much to lack in all these things.

Again we can but ask, "And who is sufficient for these things?" We have been and are greatly depressed and fearful. The words of Gideon, Judges vi. 15, have been much in our mind. When called to a most difficult and responsible place in Israel he said, "Behold my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." Yet we can but confess that from the words of Paul quoted above, and from the narrative concerning the call of Gideon to save Israel, we have felt to receive some gleanings of hope, comfort and strength. For the Lord had called Gideon to this great work, poor and little as he was, and Paul said, "Our sufficiency is of God." We do hope that we know something of what this means, as well as of the feeling which says, "And who is sufficient for these things?" And so for the present we have not felt that we could draw back, but that we will try to still do the best we can in the place that seems to fall to our lot. But how great the responsibility! We have desired help of God, and we must have this help or fail. First, we desire help that the SIGNS may continue to be the vehicle of truth, and nothing but truth, even the truth as it is in Jesus. May the dear Lord grant unto us, and to all who may write for the SIGNS, a spirit to discern between evil and good, between falsehood and truth, between him that serves God and him who serves him not. We much desire that the columns of the SIGNS may continue to be filled with that which will edify the spiritual mind, that the hungry may be fed, that the poor may be made rich, that the backsliding may be rebuked and healed, that the erring may be reproved, and that the name of God and his Son Jesus Christ may be glorified in all things. We hope that all our brethren will bear with us, and still strive to hold up our hands amid the battle. Let us all remember that the cause, the battle and the victory are all the Lord's. In the word it is said, "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." We have thought that some glimpse has been afforded us of what this signifies, but after all how full of unbelief and fear and distressing doubt we are very much of the time.

From our childhood we held in reve-

rence the name of Elder Gilbert Beebe. As far back as we can remember anything we read the SIGNS. Elder Beebe's name was a household word in the family. Along with his name we used to hear the names of others who at that time were correspondents of the SIGNS. Elder Beebe was present when it was our privilege to come to the church, and we well recall how that he, after we had been received, arose and came where we were and gave us his hand, with the kind word brother upon his lips. As the years went on we grew in love and reverence for him as a man of God indeed. Then we came to know the succeeding editor, Elder Wm. L. Beebe, and no one knew him but to love him, and all found his words and his writing as the full ripe clusters of grapes when the vintage has come. We recall also our intimate association with Elder Benton Jenkins and brother B. L. Beebe in the editorial staff. It was our happy lot to walk in union and confidence with them both in this common labor, and no one can tell what their love and fellowship and confidence in this labor was to ourself. Now all these are gone to their reward, and we feel lonely and desolate. Yet we do desire to remember that we are not alone, if indeed God be with us, and we do know that he is with all his people at all times. "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," is his own promise, and what a wonderful promise it is.

Paul said once that his brethren helped him by their prayers, and besought them again and again to pray for him. Brethren who read the SIGNS, we need that help. We trust that it is in your hearts to pray for Zion and its welfare. Pray for us that this may be our one desire, and that we may have no other aim than to glorify God by steadfast adherence to the truth, holding the banner of truth aloft as that which alone will draw the believing children of God together. Truth will not divide those who love the truth. It will divide always between those who love it, and those who love it not. We have always desired to have a single eye to the glory of God; it seems to us now that we have a deeper desire for this blessing than ever before.

Now may the blessing of God rest upon the SIGNS, and upon all who preach the gospel, and upon all who love the Lord in sincerity, forever and ever. Amen.

C.

THE PUBLICATION OF THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" TO CONTINUE.

KNOWING since the death of our brother and editor, B. L. Beebe, many subscribers and friends of the SIGNS are desirous to know if the publication of the paper will be continued, we make this statement: It was the wish of our lamented brother that the SIGNS be continued under the management of his widow and son, Josephine E. and Gilbert Beebe, with ourself editor and adviser. Sister Beebe is perfectly familiar with the business and financial part of the work, having attended largely to this branch of the office for several years past. The son is a practical printer, and perfectly competent to manage the mechanical part of the business, having been in charge of the same for the past fifteen years, and with the kind help of our correspondents we assure you the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will continue, as for the past seventy-one years, exalting God in our salvation, to the comfort and encouragement of many of his afflicted and poor people. We are very glad also to be able to announce that Elder H. C. Ker, the pastor of the church at Middletown, N.

Y., and who is well known to many of our readers, has kindly consented to be in the office of the SIGNS when it is possible for him to do so, and assist with advice and counsel in the selection and preparation of matter intended for publication. We feel sure that all who read the SIGNS, will be glad that brother Ker has given his consent to this arrangement.

Instead of G. Beebe's Son, the name J. E. Beebe & Co., will appear on the SIGNS, to whom all communications should be addressed, and all checks and money orders made payable. Through the goodness of the Lord we hope the present volume and those to follow may compare favorably with those in the past.

"Brethren, pray for us." C.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

WE desire to express our gratitude to the many dear brethren and sisters in all sections of the country where the SIGNS circulates, for the many kind and sympathetic letters which have come to us from them since the death of brother Beebe. The bereaved family feel especially grateful to all who have written such words of kindness and hope to them. They feel that they can never sufficiently express their gratitude to all who have written. It will be impossible to reply personally to those who have written, and we all ask that each will accept this acknowledgment, and believe that they have still more than ever before endeared themselves to us by their kind thoughtfulness.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904, &c.

OBITUARY OF DEACON BENTON L. BEEBE, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER OF THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

IT is with sorrow and sadness of heart that we record the death of our dear brother in Christ, and editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, Benton L. Beebe. He fell asleep in Jesus at his home, 56 East Main St., Tuesday morning at 1 o'clock, January 5th, 1904, after a life of physical suffering, which he endured with great fortitude, seldom speaking of his ill health. He had been gradually failing in body since last spring, but kept up and attended to his office duties with the exception of a few days, during this period. Saturday night, Jan. 2nd, he was taken much worse after being at the office all day. The family physician was called, and pronounced him critically ill. All that was possible was done for him, but in vain, the summons had called him home, and he peacefully passed away at the hour above mentioned, surrounded by his weeping loved ones. Kidney trouble was his disease. In life he had a tired and worn expression, and lines of suffering were plainly written in his face, but in death all this disappeared, and an expression of perfect rest and peace was upon his face. All who looked upon him could but say, "Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep."

The funeral service was held Friday at 10:30 o'clock a. m., in the meeting-house of the Middletown & Wallkill Church, of which he had been a member more than forty years. Before leaving his late home, Elder John McConnell, of New York city, spoke in prayer. At the meeting-house the writer read hymn 1257, at the request of Gilbert Beebe, the son of our departed brother. We read Scripture, Job xiv. 1–13 and first clause of verse 14, also 1 Cor. xv. 12–26, and tried to speak

in prayer. Elder F. A. Chick, of Hopewell, N. J., the surviving editor of the SIGNS, preached the sermon, text, Job xxiii. 14. Elders John McConnell and J. D. Hubbell followed with appropriate remarks. The writer closed the service with a few words concerning the love and esteem in which we held our dear lamented brother, after which hymn 750 was read, it being a special favorite with brother Beebe. The funeral was largely attended, and it was a most solemn occasion to us all. Many followed the remains to the grave in Hillside cemetery, this city, where hymn 808 was read, Elder Hubbell spoke in prayer, and the benediction was pronounced by the writer. Thus another good, useful and noble man has fallen, one who will be sadly missed in the church of his membership, on the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, in which he faithfully and fearlessly contended for the truth he so dearly loved, and most of all he will be missed by his widow our dear sister, and his children. Brother Beebe was chosen deacon of the above mentioned church several years ago, which office he filled well. In all our life we have never known a more noble, kind-hearted, loving and hospitable brother than Benton L. Beebe. Those who knew him best loved him most. We desire in this dark hour to say, The will of the Lord be done, but find it hard. May he reconcile us all to this dispensation of his providence.

Our dear brother Beebe was born at New Vernon, Orange Co., N. Y., March 10th, 1844, the son of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe and Phoebe A. (Cunningham) Beebe. He was the youngest of thirteen children. His age was 59 years, 9 months and 25 days. He was educated at Wallkill Academy, entering the office of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and being associated with his father in the publication of the paper until Elder Beebe's death in 1880, when he assumed sole control of the paper, and continued in charge of it until his death. His heart was in the work, and even when his physical condition was such as to call forth unusual exertion in order to perform his daily labors, he was found in his office bearing his afflictions patiently, and entering into the work before him with as much earnestness as though in perfect health. He lived and died a firm believer in the absolute predestination of all things, eternal vital union of Christ and the church, and salvation by grace and grace alone, for time and eternity. Many of God's dear children have been comforted by his writings upon these and other points of the glorious doctrine of God our Savior. During his management of the SIGNS he never yielded a point of doctrine or practice to please friend or foe, and allowed nothing but sound doctrine, and the things which become the same, to be printed in its columns. May the Lord still give wisdom and strength, that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES be continued, ever contending for the same blessed truth it has advocated since its first issue, to his own glory and the comfort of his poor and afflicted people.

In 1860 brother Beebe was married to Miss Josephine Travis, who survives him with two children, Lillian J., wife of Harry M. Hayes, and Gilbert, of this city. He is also survived by one brother and four sisters, Hon. George Beebe, of Ellenville, N. Y., Mrs. Harriet La Rue, of Castlemans Ferry, Va., Mrs. Phoebe McNally, of Goshen, N. Y., Mrs. J. O. Bailey, of Kent Cliffs, N. Y., and Mrs. Thomas Simons, of New Foundland, Pa. Our hearts go out in sympathy for the family, especially the widow, our dear sister, in

this time of sorrow, and pray that she may be sustained and kept by the power of God. May the son and daughter be taught to look to the Lord for help and comfort. We also desire the blessing of God upon the church of his membership, and upon each subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We all have lost a good, faithful and kind brother, but we know he is at rest from all his sufferings, toil and pain, having entered into the fullness and glory of that salvation he so many years hoped for, which inheritance awaits all the redeemed family of God, through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be praise forever in our salvation.

His pastor, H. C. KER.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Jan. 16, 1904.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ROMANS VIII. 20.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Will you please give us your views on Rom. viii. 20? "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope," particularly the *him* who hath subjected the same, &c. As there are various and conflicting opinions among brethren on the subject, I would be glad to see an exposition from you, if convenient, and oblige, your brother in gospel bonds,

JOHN R. MARTIN.

FRANKLIN, Va., March 9, 1861.

REPLY.

The text on which Elder Martin desires an exposition, is one on which we have been greatly perplexed, and we confess our mind has been somewhat vacillating for years. We have read the views of able brethren, and they have seemed to us plausible and satisfactory for a time, but some difficulties have been suggested, which have, from time to time, confused our mind in regard to the *creature* intended by the apostle. We have felt, and still feel reluctant to attempt a solution of the subject. We have not sufficient confidence in our own understanding of the subject, to willingly oppose any views we have to the views which have been expressed by others. Still, as brother Martin desires *our* views, he will receive them only as *our views*; and from our personal acquaintance we feel sure he will only indorse them so far as he feels satisfied they are sustained by the Scriptures. The particular point on which brother Martin desires our views, seems far more clear to us than some others which are involved in the text. We are satisfied that he who has subjected our vanity in hope is Christ. But who is the creature? When and how was he made subject to vanity? and what vanity was he made subject to? And in what sense was it by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope? And what is the hope in which it is subjected? All these questions, to our limited mind, are involved in more or less obscurity; and we now approach them in much weakness and in fear and trembling, lest we should darken counsel by words without sufficient knowledge. The preceding chapters show that Paul was speaking to and of christians, as complicated beings, brought into manifestation by a first and second birth, a natural and spiritual birth, and possessing two elements distinct in origin, nature and propensity, and yet identified as one person or individual. These two are in the context called flesh and Spirit. The one is dead because of sin; the other is alive because of righteousness. With the one we serve the law of God, and aspire after holiness; with the other we serve the law of sin, and do the things which we would not. Both of these elements are *creatures*, that is, they are not self-existent. Whatever

is created is a creature, whether it be spiritual or temporal, animate or inanimate, but which of these, the *old man* or the *new man*, the spiritual or natural creature, was made subject to vanity? That the *new man* is in conflict with the flesh, annoyed, perplexed, troubled and wearied by the corruptions of the carnal, depraved and wicked propensities of his fleshly nature, is apparent to all christians; but is it true that the new man is subject to them? The christian who is an identity, and who possesses both the flesh and the Spirit, is alternately subject to some extent to each of them. If he lives after the one he shall die; if after the other he shall live. The one christian possesses both, and is subjected to the one or the other; but the two elements are essentially different, and opposite as sin and holiness, as life and death.

Our present impression is that *the creature* in our text is the christian, as personally including the two elements of which in his present state he is composed. Whether we be correct in this position or not, it is certain that the christian as such is subject to vanity, and that he is not so, willingly, or with his consent and acquiescence, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. There are creatures of God who are not subject to vanity. The holy angels, for instance, who surround the throne of God. And had it been the divine pleasure, we cannot doubt the power of God to have placed all his children as remotely from vanity, as the angels in glory. But God has chosen us in a furnace of affliction. It is his all-wise and righteous purpose, that in this world his people shall have tribulation; for their tribulations are necessary to work patience, and experience and hope that maketh not ashamed. By *vanity*, the things of this world are intended. Vanity of vanities, all is vanity, saith the preacher; but of them, more especially the trials, tribulations, persecutions, suffering and the mortality of our bodies, from the connection, seems intended. This world, to the christian, is like Bunyan's Vanity Fair, on a large scale. The young child of grace, in his early joys, feels like cutting loose, flying away to the arms and bosom of the Redeemer; he would not remain in the flesh, or live always, but aspires to better joys on high. But the trial of his faith requires that he shall wait all the days of his appointed time, till his change shall come. Describing this vanity, in the context, Paul shows its universal effect on the whole creation, which groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit: the redemption of our body. The vanity in which the saints participate, makes the whole creation to groan and travail in pain. And we who have received, in the new and spiritual birth, the spirit of adoption, as the first fruits of the Spirit in us, which is to be followed by the fulfillment of the promise in the eleventh verse of this chapter, even we, with this spirit in us whereby we are sealed as children of God, joint-heirs with Christ, with the certain pledge that even these vile bodies shall hereafter be changed and fashioned and made like the glorious body of Christ, even we do groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit: the redemption of our body. And this adoption of which we have now the sealing witness, namely, the spirit of it, will be the deliverance of the creature from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. And

Paul, who was a good reckoner, reckons that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us; for the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God; for the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. But how is all this subjected in hope, and by whom? Christ took part of the same flesh which his children are partakers of, that through death he might destroy death, and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. He was made under the law to redeem them that are under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Now read the sixteenth and seventeenth verses of this eighth chapter. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God, and if children, then heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. Unto the saints it is given, on the behalf of Christ, not only that they should believe on him, but also that they should suffer for his sake. Whom he (God) did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. How could we be thus conformed if we do not suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together? If he was a sufferer while here in the flesh, and we are predestinated to be comformed to his image in suffering with him here, and being glorified together hereafter, then do we not clearly see that our subjection to vanity (suffering) is by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope? Well might Paul with this view of the subject, according to his mode of reckoning, say to the Philippians, iii. 8–11, Yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss (vanity) for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith; that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. No afflictions for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous, still, regarding them as the certain and infallible evidences that we shall be glorified together with our divine Lord, do we not desire, with Paul, to know the fellowship of his sufferings? All these sufferings, vanities and all things are subjected in hope by our glorious Redeemer, for whose sake we count all things but vanity. In themselves, these vanities are trying, distressing, appalling, and some of them exceedingly terrifying to christians; but when we are taught by the Spirit to reckon them all up, as Paul did, with him we say they are light and momentary; but they work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not on the things which are seen, (vanities) but on the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. All things, then, which christians encounter here, are brought in subjection to Christ, and by him ruled for the good of his people, "For we know that all things work together for good to

them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." This is a perfect subjection of them all, in hope to the christian. In view of the subjection of all things, by and under Christ, in which nothing is excepted but him who hath put all things under him, even the last enemy which shall be destroyed is death. What immortal hope looms up before the suffering saints, a hope both sure and steadfast, entering within the veil, hope full of immortality; hope that maketh not ashamed.

"A hope so much divine,
May trials well endure."

A hope which defies the chilling damps of death, and the dreary chambers of the tomb. In defiance of the raging powers of hell, we may challenge the powers of unbelief to say, Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulations, or distress, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed, (or subject to vanity) all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things (vanities) we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us: For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

This is truly a great and blessed hope to those who have the first fruits of the Spirit; though still they may groan within themselves, waiting for the adoption; for being sealed with the spirit of adoption, the redemption, or deliverance of their mortal body is perfectly secure. "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."

The hope in which this is subjected, is the hope of the resurrection of the dead, for which Paul was a prisoner, the hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began; the hope that all our conflicts will soon be over, that these mortals shall put on immortality, that death shall be swallowed up of victory, and we shall swell the exalted notes, O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Even now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept, and in his resurrection he hath brought life and immortality to light. Those sealed bodies of all his saints in his perfect image, shall as certainly be presented before the glory of the Father, as it is certain that they have received the sealing of the spirit of adoption, and that Christ has arisen from the dead. Then let the inspired writer pronounce on all the things of earth, vanity of vanities. We shall be subject to them but little longer, and for that little moment they shall work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., April 1, 1861.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO AN APPEAL OF BRETHREN TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$870 65
Mrs. H. J. O'Bannon, Va., $1.00; Isaac Larowe, N. J., $2.00; Archer Holloway, Md., $3.00; L. R. Groom, Mo., $18.00; Mrs. A. E. Walker, Va., $1.00; Elder T. J. Wyman, Mich., $1.00; A Friend, N. Y., $3.00; Mrs. Wm. M. Sharp, Pa., $.50; Mrs. George R. Yard, N. J., $.50; A Friend, N. Y., $1.00; Wm. B. Bizzell, Ga., $1.00.—Total	32 00
Total to date	$902 65

ERRATA.

THE second marriage notice on page 60, current volume of the SIGNS, should read, "Harold Calvert and Miss Louvenia M. Wicks."

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at the residence of the bride's parents', Oct. 28th, 1903, Wm. A. Bradner and Miss Lillie Fancher, both of Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y.

By the same, at the bride's home, Dec. 2nd, 1903, Burr E. Giveans and Miss Grace E. Reeve, both of New Vernon, Orange Co., N. Y.

By the same, at the home of Mr. Himan S. Collard, of Winterton, Sullivan Co., N. Y., Dec. 23d, 1903, Miss Jennie Sayer and Chester A. Rogers, of Roscoe, N. Y.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Oct. 28th, 1903, at Pittsville, Md., Elijah T. Warwick, of Somerset Co., Md., and Miss Ethel T. Dennis, of Wicomico Co., Md.

By the same, Dec. 22nd, 1903, at Salisbury, Md., Louis E. Wilkinson and Miss Mary E. Hearn, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

By the same, Dec. 23d, 1903, at his residence, Delmar, Del., George T. Jones and Miss Stella F. German, both of Sussex Co., Del.

By the same, Dec. 24th, 1903, at the residence of the bride's father, Mr. Wm. W. Hastings, Delmar, Del., Rozier L. Francis, of Bryn Maur, Pa., and Miss Katie May Hastings, of Delmar, Sussex Co., Del.

By Elder W. W. Meredith, Dec. 2nd, 1903, at Delmar, Md., Charles C. Hastings and Lenora M. Parsons, both of the vicinity of Delmar.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

By request of Elder J. T. Rowe, their pastor, we have prepared the two following obituaries. Brother Rowe made this request of us because we have known the two dear sisters so much longer than he, and knew more about their early life in the church. It is a sad duty that we now have to perform, because both of them were very dear to us as members of the body of Christ, and as personal friends.

Sister **Celia Ensor,** relict of our brother Aquilla Ensor, departed this life Dec. 28th, 1903, aged about 42 years. With her husband she was baptized in the fellowship of the church at Black Rock, July 7th, 1889. Her husband was taken away from earth in December, 1895. Since that time she has made her home most of the time with her father, near the meeting-house at Black Rock, Baltimore Co., Md. She had always been frail in strength, and during the past few years she has been able to go out but very little, yet she was possessed of a remarkable ambition, and did in the house more than she was able to do. It has been our privilege to know her ever since she was a girl, and to hold her in high esteem always. The Lord's work began with her at an early age, and she obtained a good hope through Christ not long before she came to the church and was baptized. Many of us still remember with what feeling and earnestness she narrated the dealings of God with her at that time, and with what joyfulness she followed her Savior, the next day, into the watery grave. Often afterwards she has spoken to us of the gladness, and yet deep solemnity, which was hers at that time. She was never a talker on any subject, but we have seen the tears of deep feeling roll down her cheeks when she has been speaking at times of the goodness of God to her, and of the hope which was hers in Christ. Often also would tears of deep emotion be upon her face when listening to the word preached. She was a good, loving and well loved member of the church. No better nor more devoted wife, nor better and kinder mother ever lived, and it need not be said that she was an obedient and loving child to her parents; all who knew her will mourn for her. She leaves an aged father, with whom she spent the last years of her life, two brothers and one sister and two children, who feel deeply bereft. Elder Rowe writes us that her end was peaceful, and that she said she was reconciled to depart, if it was the will of God.

A large congregation attended the funeral service at Black Rock meeting-house, and the funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder Rowe, who used as a text the words found in 1 Cor. xv. 21. We do not doubt that she sleeps in Jesus, and that she awaits the better resurrection at the last day.

ALSO,

Our aged sister, **Mrs. Elizabeth Kemp,** departed this life at her residence near Arcadia, Md., in November, 1903. We are not informed of the exact date. She was, we think, 92 years of age. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore city, with a daughter, Feb. 13th, 1870, and she remained a faithful member of that church to the end. Her lot in life had been one of much affliction and sore trial; her husband passed away from earth some years before we knew her. If we mistake not she was the mother of eleven children; all but one of these were called away from earth before reaching the age of twenty-nine years, and the other, a son, died with consumption at about the age of forty years. For many years she has been childless, but amid all these multiplied griefs we always found her the same; patient, cheerful and resigned to the will of God. It was at times, to those who knew her and all the sad circumstances of her life, inexpressibly touching to hear her words of resignation and trust in God. The burden of all her testimony concerning these things was, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord." Yet she was a very tender mother, and her children were to her as the apple of her eye. What wonders grace can work in poor mortals! The last years of her long life she was compelled to spend away from her brethren in Christ, with distant relatives. She but seldom could visit her brethren, or attend the meetings, but her faith remained firm, as we can witness.

Elder Rowe writes us that he does not know anything about the funeral rites, as he was not sent for to attend the funeral. But a patient and humble-minded believer has fallen asleep. We are sure that the end was peace. From sorrow and trial she is at rest. C.

Mrs. Rebecca Wells departed this life at the house of her son, Mr. George Wells, Echo Place, near Brantford, Ontario, which had been her home for many years. She was born at Ryarch, Kent Co., England, April 6th, 1817, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Particular Baptist Church at Meopham, not far from Ryarch, by her uncle, William Frenlin. She came to Canada in 1875. She spent the winter of 1890 and 1891 with us, and her daughter, Bertha, whose home was then with us. She felt so much at home with this church that she asked to be received into our fellowship. The church felt a warm love and fellowship for her. Sister Bertha also brought her letter from the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, as they then thought their permanent home might be in this part of the country.

Sister Wells was a very spiritually minded woman, and had been very deeply exercised upon spiritual things. The revelations made to her in her experience of the grace and salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ were most wonderful, and she manifested a remarkable gift to tell them in private conversation with those with whom she could feel at liberty. She had passed through great and fearful troubles of a temporal nature, and had experienced fiery trials in her soul, which had been sanctified to her good by the rich grace of our God. She had been greatly chastened, and was of a tender conscience. Her experience will be found published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of Feb. 6th, 1895, and will well repay a reading.

Her visit at our home and with the church was very pleasant and profitable to us, and was greatly appreciated by the friends. I felt that her conversation was most comforting and helpful. Her membership has remained here, and I have visited her occasionally at her son's home, and have preached the gospel to her and the family, and the friends who would come together there. Other brethren have also visited and preached for her. For three or four years past she has been greatly afflicted in body by rheumatism, which has rendered her almost helpless, and confined her to the bed. Her son and his wife have given her devoted and tender care during her long and painful illness. Her daughters also have been with her from time to time, as they were able, and have helped to minister to her comfort.

By request of the family, and according to her desire, I attended the funeral on Wednesday, Dec. 30th, at 2 o'clock. Her children, two sons and four daughters were all present, also five grandchildren and her youngest brother. One sister lives in England. Three of her daughters are members of the church; two of them are members yet in England. It was gratifying that all the children could be present to say the last "good bye." It was a tender and affecting parting, for she was very dear to them all, yet they could not but be thankful that she is released from her sufferings. Her pain and suffering were very great, but she bore all patiently and without complaint. How she will be missed from that house where affectionate hearts and tender hands had ministered to her needs so long, and by all the children who will see her patient, loving face here no more. May the Lord comfort them.

I read Psalms xc. and some of 1 Cor. xv., and spoke particularly of the words, "Let thy work appear unto thy servants." I read also hymn No. 1252 (Beebe's Collection). Snow covered the ground, and the cold was severe as we buried the dear body out of our sight, but we buried her in the wonderful hope of the resurrection, and believing that she is now with her dear Redeemer in a state of perfect and eternal blessedness in glory.

I send with this a letter written to sister Wells by Elder William J. Purington, which was found among her papers.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 6, 1904.

DIED—At his home, Dec. 29th, 1903, near Grassy Lick, Montgomery Co., Ky., **James Green,** son of Thaddeus Green. Mr. Green was born in Bourbon Co., Ky., Dec. 17th, 1824, was therefore just past his 79th year. He was married to Catherine H. Oldham, Oct. 28th, 1852, and celebrated their fifty-first marriage anniversary last October. To them were born nine children, six of whom survive him and were favored to be with him in the last days of his sickness, and together with the devoted companion of more than half a century lovingly and faithfully attended to every possible need that care could give to alleviate pain and give restful moments. Mr. Green had never made a public profession of his faith and hope, but had long since given full evidence of a gracious work within. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of grace, was a regular attendant at the meetings, loved the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS, and was a subscriber I think for many years. I was informed by his dear daughter that he often requested them to read the Scriptures to him, and the twenty-third Psalm and the eighth chapter of Romans seemed to be special favorites with him. His disease was organic kidney trouble, from which he was a great sufferer, yet bore all with becoming grace, patience and resignation to the will of his God, whom he desired to reverence and adore. Before his demise he gave sweet counsel to the dear family, and unmistakable evidence of a happy exchange. His last dying words, faintly spoken, were, "All is well," and sweetly fell asleep in Jesus. What a comfort to the surviving

ones that while they mourn, they are comforted. We treasure up the fruit of our loved ones that have been born on the living trees of righteousness.

The funeral was largely attended on the 31st inst., at their home, after which the casket with its precious treasure was conveyed to Machpela cemetery, near Mt. Sterling, and deposited in the tomb to await the resurrection. May our God comfort the dear sorrowing companion and children who mourn the absence of a loving, devoted husband and father. May he grant you grace, that as thy days thy strength shall be.

P. W. SAWIN.

BY request we send you a notice of the death of **Elder Joseph Richardson,** who was born in Ramsey, Huntingdonshire, England, Dec. 19th, 1814, and died of old age at his home in Minonk, Ill., Dec. 31st, 1903, aged 89 years and 12 days. He was married to Ann Furnes in 1835. To them six children were born, four sons and two daughters. The two daughters and two of the sons died many years ago, one son dying in the Andersonville prison during the war. Two of his sons, Thomas, of Lake City, Iowa, and Samuel, of Minonk, Ill., survive him. He united, being baptized into the fellowship of the Particular Baptist Church in England in 1840. He was a firm believer in election and predestination, and remained steadfast in the faith of salvation by grace until death. He with his family emigrated to America in 1845, settling in Indiana until about the year 1855, when he moved to Illinois, where with the exception of living in Iowa about ten years, he has since resided, living in Logan, Livingston, Woodford and Marshall counties. Soon after moving to Illinois his wife died. He was again married to Miss Ruamy Springer, in 1856. She also preceded him to the grave about thirteen years ago. He was ordained to the gospel ministry about thirty years ago.

His funeral took place at his late home Jan. 2nd, after which his remains were interred in Mt. Zion cemetery to await the resurrection of the dead.

A FRIEND.

SISTER **Amanda J. Wren** was born in Champaign Co., Ohio, in the year 1835, died Jan. 13th, 1904, in her 68th year. She was united in marriage to Francis **Vanwelzer,** Oct. 3d, 1856, and to this union were born eight children, four boys and four girls, six of whom, with the husband, survive her. Sister Vanwelzer received a good hope in early life, and united with New Hope Church, at Greenbush, Warren Co., Ill., in the year 1867, in which church she gave a life of true and humble devotion to the cause of her Master, which was most precious to her through life. She was confined to her bed only about one week when the messenger came and led her through the valley of death to the sunlit hills of eternal day, where dwell the spirits of just men made perfect, and Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the new covenant, which was the fullness of her hope, and on this let us dry our tears and bow our heads to heaven's King and say, Thy will be done.

The writer was called on to offer words of comfort to the bereaved, using for a text Psalms lxxxviii. 11, "Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave? or thy faithfulness in destruction?"

In her death the church has lost a true and devoted member, the husband a faithful companion, the children a loving and indulgent mother, and the friends a true neighbor, but may we look through our tears and see the justice of God in taking her from us to dwell with him forever and forever.

LEWIS E. FRAZEE.

BENTLEY, Ill., Jan. 20, 1904.

BROTHER D. M. Leonard desires us to add the following to the obituary notice of Peter Hull Leonard, which appeared on page 61, current volume, of the SIGNS:

Peter Hull Leonard died at his home at Bainbridge, N. Y., Dec. 15th, 1903, and was buried at Otego cemetery. His membership was with the Otego Church for several years before his death.

MEETINGS.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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10:30 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 72. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1904. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A GOOD WORK BEGUN.

"BEING confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."—Phil. i. 6.

It is written in the new covenant, "They shall all know me, from the least unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord."—Jer. xxxi. 34. It was from this knowledge of God that the apostle Paul was so confident that there would be a glorious consummation of the good work that was wrought in the saints. To know the Lord is of infinite importance, all things, however highly valued among the children of men, are vanity when compared with this inestimable blessing to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. "Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord."—Jer. ix. 23, 24. Paul put such an estimation upon the knowledge of God, as declared in the only begotten Son of God, that he writes, "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ." Paul knew that the Lord is gracious, immutable and omnipotent. He is our "faithful Creator."—1 Peter iv. 19, our covenant-keeping God, who in his matchless love and grace performeth the counsel of his own will. He repents not of the work that he begins in his people, it is done assuredly with his whole heart and with his whole soul. (Jer. xxxii. 41.) He fainteth not, neither is he weary. His good work begun is not as an experiment that possibly may not come up to his desire, and therefore he will leave undone his work begun, and abandon to fall into ruins the work of his own hands. The Lord of hosts our God is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working, having begun to build he is able also to finish. What he hath promised he is able also to perform,

"The work which his goodness began,
The arm of his strength will complete;

His promise is yea and amen,
And never was forfeited yet.

Things future, nor things that are now,
Not all things below nor above,
Can make him his purpose forego,
Or sever my soul from his love."

The apostle singles out in very emphatic language that concerning which he is abidingly confident, it is, "This very thing." He knew the temptations and rugged pathway of the saints; he knew they are subject to fears that all will not end well with them; he knew that at times the depravity of their flesh is felt to so abound that it appears hardly discernible that there can be such a thing as a good work of the Lord in them, and their misgiving heart says, If there ever was such a gracious work of the Lord in me it has been swallowed up, the spark has been extinguished by the floods of my sinfulness and the temptations of the devil. But for the good cheer of such tried, tempest-tossed, halting people of God, this inspired servant of God declares this very thing of which he is confident, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." God begun the good work. If he had not begun the work, who would or could have wrought such a work? The good work would ever have been undone. What folly is the doctrine of the world that represents the Lord as demanding that the sinner shall "take the first step." The Lord our God is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end in the good work in his chosen. It is he who called us by his grace, quickened us when we were dead in trespasses and sins. It was God that sought us out, it was Christ the Son of God who apprehended us, laid hold of us and taught us to lay hold on himself. (Phil. iii. 12.) It was the Lord who called us that we should call upon him. The hand of the Lord has laid the foundation of this good work in his people, and his hand shall finish it. (Zech. iv. 9.) There has been a glorious work of God done for us in the obedience, sufferings, death, resurrection and ascension to glory of the incarnate Word, our Lord Jesus Christ. In that good work of our mighty Redeemer was wrought our justification and reconciliation before God; we were thereby made free from our sins, redeemed from the curse of the law, redeemed unto God, no one could have begun, and no one could have finished such a good work save Christ the Head of the church.

But this good work of which Paul now speaks with such confidence of its being performed till the topmost stone shall be laid is "a good work in you."

This workmanship of God in the elect has many presentations in the Scriptures for our contemplation, it is described in the language, "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."—Jer. xxxii. 40. Truly this fear of the Lord in the heart is a wonderful work. That a creature, who by nature is alienated from God should have a good work wrought in him that in consequence he is moved toward God in affectionate reverence, and in his heart is found saying, "Hallowed be thy name." This is wonderful indeed! Before this good work, this fear of the Lord was put in our hearts, our faces were turned away from God, but he turned us from the paths of folly to himself; turned us, his enemies, to be his friends. We are no longer saying, "Depart from us for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways," but the good work of God in us is saying continually, "Seek ye my face," and our responding heart exclaims, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek." Now, we come to

God in prayer, yearning for his mercy, and for such discoveries of his loving-kindness as shall bind up the wounds of a poor sinner, and enable him to hope in his salvation. All of this evidences that God hath begun a good work in us, fulfilling in us the work of faith with power. (2 Thess. i. 11.) The good work in us makes us believers in God, our faith is in him, in his holiness, justice, mercy and grace, and all these divine attributes are revealed in Jesus. The Holy Spirit opens up to us the gospel of Christ, and we are moved by his gracious power in us to believe with all our heart in Jesus; our faith is in his righteousness, not our own. His obedience and atoning sacrifice are all our reliance to give us vile sinners acceptance, reconciliation and sweet friendship with the Lord our God. Truly this is a good work, to the everlasting praise of him who hath begun it, and will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. It is because of God's good work in us that we are brought to commune with God, to him we tell our burdens and griefs because of our sinfulness; in his bosom we pour forth our sighs over our unlikeness to Jesus, and humbled and heart-broken we fall at his feet. Very blessed is that man who lives in the sacred consciousness of the omnipresence of the Lord, and the consoling persuasion of his special love. Is such a life in any measure mine?

The good work of the Lord in his people is the illumination of the soul. (Heb. x. 32.) And this is no less than the light of life, (John i. 4,) the light of life eternal in Christ Jesus. God hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Once we were darkness, but now are we light in the Lord. This light is opposed to darkness, to all unrighteousness, to all falsehood, to all that is unholy. No longer does the soul look downward to that which is sensual, to impurities, the depravities of our earthly nature for its delights, but its glance is heavenward to see the face of the Lord. Our faces are turned upward to him who is our everlasting light and immortal glory. (Isaiah lx. 19.) In the light of life we begin to see things in their true forms and colors. How hideous is vice! The glitter of sinful allurements is dimmed to very blackness when God shines in the heart, then how amiable is virtue, how lovely are all the attributes of God.

"Lord, 'tis an infinite delight
To see thy lovely face."

We were in gross darkness before we experienced God's good work of grace in our hearts, we loved darkness rather than light, because our deeds were evil. Like the owl our eyes were shut to the glories of the day, the rose of Sharon and lily of the valley charmed us not; we were wretchedly blind, we had no eyes to behold things that are excellent, we had no light to discern the beauty of the Lord. In the face of Jesus Christ immortal loveliness beams forth, so ravishingly beautiful in Jesus, to me, a poor sinner, I sing,

"His loveliness has won my heart;
Dear Jesus, let us never part."

"He will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." He will maintain that spiritual, divine life in the quickened sinner, all the called of Jesus Christ shall be constantly taught of the Lord, God will fulfill all the good pleasure of his goodness in them, and the work of faith with power, he will work in them to will and to do of his good pleasure. Having by his good work in them been brought to fear his name and to affectionately worship him, he will carry on his good work and they shall cleave to him forever. God

has said, "I will not turn away from them to do them good and they shall not depart from me." What a precious, glorious God is ours!

"He will perform it." Amidst afflictions, dire heart-rending providences, sickness and pain, in summer and winter, in prosperity and the regions of adversity, in spite of the world, the flesh and the devil, he will perfect that which concerneth them. Can we not look back to times when it appeared that all was undone, that the work of grace in us had ceased, had died within us? We feared that never again would our souls be brought into divine intimacy with God and his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Savior. Ah, some of God's dear children are sometimes brought exceedingly low through inward corruptions, the buffetings of Satan and the cares and vanities of this earthly life, then we look, but look in vain, for evidences of God's good work in us. Ah, there are times, dreadful times, experienced by some of the family of God; times of the whirlwind and the storm, when the once delightsome land is swept with the besom of destruction, and all is reduced to a dreary waste. O it is dreadful when the imaginations and emotions of our vile flesh rise up, break forth in open insurrection against the precepts of our God, when in all the moments of the day, so strong is our consciousness of our sinfulness that it would appear that evil only had possession of the city, and was running riot its streets.

"Swarms of ill thoughts their bane diffuse;
Proud, envious, false, unclean;
And every ransacked corner shows
Some unsuspected sin.

Our staggering faith gives way to doubt;
Our courage yields to fear:
Shocked at the sight, we straight cry out,
'Can ever God dwell here?'"

It looks like presumption to entertain such a thought. But God worketh effectually in his people, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against his divine workmanship in them. Look at the following words of the doctrine of God, "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us."—Eph. iii. 20. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy."—Jude 24. "Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ; according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began."—Rom. xvi. 25. So, amidst all the inward tumult of our iniquities, the fear of the Lord in us lifts up its head once more. O the fear of the Lord in us is a gracious fountain of life to depart from the snares of death. Though such a sinful being, unprofitable, unworthy, I am turned to the Lord, I find my heart sighing, throbbing with grief over my unlikeness to the Lord. My heart aches over my sins and implores the tender pity of God. "He will abundantly pardon," so I find it, I cling with all affection to the exceeding great and precious promises, and I am dissolved in melting gratitude that once more the Lord hath remembered me in my low estate. Then, as one that was slipping over a dreadful precipice and has been snatched by the hand of our almighty Friend, as a brand from the burning, I cry out of my trembling, grateful heart unto the Lord, O what a mercy, O the exceeding riches of that grace of thine that keeps me from outward depravities, from acts of iniquity. I said my foot slippeth, thy mercy, O Lord, held me up. Keep me as the apple

of the eye; hide me under the shadow of thy wings, for thou hast not cast off my soul. The surges of evil that would overflow my soul subside, and again for a little space I dwell in tranquillity, for my mind is stayed, O Lord, on thee. He restoreth my soul, he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness, for his name's sake. This, this is our comfort, that he which hath begun a good work in us will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. O the unwearied, condescending goodness of God, hath he not said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee"?

"Until the day of Jesus Christ." This is "that day" of which the apostle speaks. (2 Tim. i. 12.) This is the day of our ultimate redemption unto which we are sealed by the Spirit of God. (Eph. iv. 30.) The day appointed, (Acts xvii. 31,) the great day, in which Jesus Christ will judge the world in righteousness. (Jude 6.) The day when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day. (2 Thess. i. 7–10.) It is called also the day of the Lord, the day of God. (2 Peter iii. 10–12.) The last day, (John vi. 44,) and the dead in Christ shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. (1 Cor. xv. 52.) The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. Yes, in this day of Jesus Christ, he himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. It may well be called the day of Jesus Christ, for this is the crowning day. Then shall all the loved, elect, redeemed, regenerated church appear with him in glory, Their bodies, which are the members of Christ, (1 Cor. vi. 15,) while on earth, corruptible, vile, shall then be fashioned like unto his glorious body. We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 2, 1903.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I feel constrained to write once more to you, and very particularly to those whom I met at the Salisbury Association, who saw me in my gloom in a lone path. No one seemed to be going that way. It was a bitter time to me. But now I can see it was for good. The Lord knows our every need, and give us just what his all-wise will sees best. We are so short-sighted, and cannot see it as it is at the time, but although the bud may have a bitter taste, sweet will be the flower. I will go back a few months. I have been doubting, and feeling at times that I knew nothing about the things that I had professed to know, when I was received into the church. I have so often questioned whether I did really know that there is a Christ, or if the Bible be really true, or is it a fable? At times, for a season, these doubts would be removed, and then they would return again. I wanted to know if I had any good hope that I was one of the elect for whom Christ died. Sometimes, I would be permitted to hope that it might he so, for I loved the works of

those who professed his name, and desired to abide with them. I knew that I had no trust in anything outside of God, for the arm of man is puny. The world, with all its religion, had no charms for me. I wanted a thus saith the Lord for what I believed. I have long been done with works, only the works of Christ, and they are good works indeed. When my doubts would arise in such numbers, I would feel that if I could but hear some sermons as I used to do, by some of the dear elders now laid to rest, when they seemed to bring me up from the very depths, so clearly did they divide between the law and the gospel, perhaps I would have more hope. My hope, it seemed to me, never was at such an ebb as now. My desire was granted me, and at the one hundredth anniversary of the Harbourton church, I was once more permitted to hear, and I feel sure with a truly hearing ear. Sermons were preached by Elders Durand, Eubanks and McConnell. And what liberty was given them! How wonderful it seemed to me! They were preaching just such sermons as I was longing to hear. Wonderful! wonderful! And I was so strengthened. I felt that surely I could not doubt again. Then again I had been so troubled that I did not seem to have a love for some of the brethren, such as I should; indeed in all my journey this has troubled me so much. The word reads, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I would read this promise, and feel condemned, for sometimes I felt that I could only say that I loved some of them, or probably most of them; some I can never doubt my love for; I never have felt free from trouble about this. I went to the two hundredth anniversary of Welsh Tract church, and again I was greatly strengthened, there were such wonderful sermons preached at that meeting. They were so appropriate, and filled me with so much comfort in listening. The history of the church, which was read, was so interesting to me. To me it was a solemn, wonderful rejoicing to think the articles of faith are to-day as they were two hundred years ago. I did feel, This is the true church of God, without any doubt, these poor, despised ones are the true followers of Jesus, for they have not changed, and they are in Christ, God is their Father, and how could they change, for he changes not? How strong, how built up, I did feel. I was sure that I would not doubt again.

On Wednesday morning I started for Delmar, for the Salisbury Association, I was talking with Elder Eubanks, I said, How strange it seems that we can get so low sometimes, even when our hope has before seemed bright. He said, "Yes, sister, the deeper their sorrows, the louder they sing." Right then came the thought as a boast, I am so established in the faith, and it seemed to me a terrible boast. But after we came on the train, the words came to me as a question, "Examine yourself, and see if you be in the faith." I thought of them at the time lightly, but at the meeting, the first day, the question came with more power, so that I had to heed it, it made me tremble, for as I searched myself, I saw that I had boasted, and now I wondered if I really knew what the faith meant. I kept searching, and as I listened to the preaching, that showed me that instead of knowing very much, so as to be established in the truth, I had nothing, and was growing less all the time. What was I to do? I was getting so gloomy. Did I ever know the truth? Had I ever tasted of the fruit of the vine? I was not sure that I ever had

really known what the fruit of the vine was. I was shown that day that I had no charity, or gentleness, or goodness, or meekness; for these could not dwell with a boaster. Had I ever been longsuffering? I tried to claim this, and the fruit of love. I was permitted to enjoy Elder Ker's sermon. I was so lost to self in listening that I had no thought of examining myself. But, after his sermon, I was put to searching again after the promises to find some comfort. I could not claim one of them as mine, and I was so dark again that I could not realize that I ever had enjoyed one of them. Elder Durand's sermon was one that all seemed to enjoy, but how it searched me. He spoke of the love of God, and at once it seemed that I could lay no claim on love, for my love could not be of Christ, for it was not perfect. I could not love my neighbor as myself, and I had not this love as the first and great commandment. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." Could I say, I know that my Redeemer liveth? No, I seemed like one that had never known these things, and I felt to doubt that I ever had. O, what a darkness of soul. I did not know that any one had ever been so led. What and where was I? It seemed as though these words were spoken to me as an answer to my question, A mourner in Zion? No! no! but a real hypocrite. Such anguish of soul, it seemed that there was no eye to pity, no heart to understand. All were so kind to me. I could not make myself clearly understood, for my voice was so choked with my grief. Brother Francis told me that this all would soon be removed, but I felt as though it never could be. Why did I find so much fault with my neighbor, if I loved him? Surely I did not know God, for he says, If we love not we know not God, for God is love.

I looked over the people, the brethren and sisters did look so lovely to me, but I was far away from them. Now where was my boasting? Pride had been so great with me also, because so many had come to me and told me how much they had enjoyed my writing in the SIGNS. At the first, I had felt melted with it, but when several had come, I began to think that my writing must have some good in it, and that if ever I felt like it, I would write again, that they might have more enjoyment. Now it is all right to desire to write for the comfort of another if so permitted, but these thoughts came in the way of pride, and then in my distress, pride pointed at me, and asked me the question if I was proud to weep so, for no one understood me.

On Friday, however, I received some comfort, and the next Sunday at the meeting I received some comfort from brother Coulter's remarks, yet could but weep nearly all the time there. I desired, if it could be the Lord's will, that he would show me what I wanted to know. I had many sweet thoughts, and much light when I read, but soon as the book was closed was in the dark again. Then the desire would arise to be shown how I could love my neighbor as myself.

Yesterday Elder McConnell was with us and preached such a good sermon. I felt that he had been sent here if for no other reason, to show me where I was, and I was much comforted, but not yet released. We met at brother Coulter's in the evening, and a dear sister said to me, You had a sad time at Delmar, I hear. Well, I just wanted to tell her the whole trouble, and as I was quoting the second commandment to her, "Love thy neigh-

bor as thyself," with it came light; I saw that I did not love myself at all, but abhorred myself, for as filthy rags I saw myself, and I had so much selfishness and pride, I was vanity of vanities, all was vanity. I feel to thank God that in his light I do see that I love my neighbor as myself, yea, more than myself, for I see in his forehead the mark of Christ; I hate all in him that I hate in myself. Now I am as one out of prison; all these years past I have been told this many times, but could not see it. So I do feel sure that man cannot impart anything to another, only as the Spirit grants the hearing.

Elder McConnell spoke again in the evening for a time so beautiful to us, and I could hear, for my questions were gone. I wanted to tell them of my joy, but I am of a stammering tongue, and felt that I could not. To-day has been one never to be forgotten by me, I have had such a sweet peace of mind, and I have not wanted to be interrupted. Like the poet, I must say,

O that my soul could stay in such a frame as this,
And sit and sing herself away to everlasting bliss.

There has been no voice that could be heard by any one, but such a sweet melody within. There has been such sweet melody with these words, "Arise, shine, for thy light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon thee."

I have not written as I wanted to, but I am so imperfect in all things, that I must be content. Love to you all. It seems to me that I never had so much love for the church as now. May God bless us in our lone sojourn here. May I ever trust him, and remember that his promise is sure, he will never leave nor forsake us.

Your sister,

MARY HILL TERRY.

[THE travel of the children of Israel did not close when they had crossed the Red Sea, indeed it had but just begun. The travel of the children of God does not come to a close, when they come to the banks of deliverance when the Lord triumphs gloriously in the revelation of Christ as their perfect Savior. It is good to tell the after experiences, as well as the deliverance from Egypt. It is good to tell how the Lord has triumphed over the Ammonites, and the Jebusites, and the Philistines in the land, as well as over the Egyptians, whom we have left behind, and whom we shall see no more. Christian experience or travel goes right on. Let others speak of the daily conflicts and victories also, as has our sister in this letter. The Lord is just as mighty in our daily life as at the beginning of the manifestation of his power. We are just as poor, helpless and dependent as we were at the beginning, and all the way along, we decrease and Jesus increases. Let these daily travels be mentioned that through them the Lord may be exalted.—ED.]

MANASSAS, Va., Jan. 18, 1904.

MY DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Since I heard of the death of our dear brother Benton L. Beebe, my mind and heart have been full of many thoughts and feelings, in connection with which you have been very prominent. I received the inclosed letter from sister Wright a few days ago, and in complying with her request to send it to you, I venture to trouble you with a word from myself. I say trouble you, for I am sure that you are flooded with letters and communications from all over the country, more than you can attend to as you might wish. I only wish to say at this time that my heart and soul are deeply stirred in behalf of the SIGNS, and your connec-

tion with the paper. I have known brother Beebe ever since I have known any one this side of Maine. I loved him dearly, and admired his faithfulness in bearing the burden put upon him by the death of his father, in the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Very many things crowd upon my mind, of which I forbear writing to you now; but it seems to me that we never more needed the paper as it has been conducted always before, than now. Many periodicals flood the country which claim to advocate Old School Baptist principles, but which do not compare with the SIGNS in steadfastness to the truth, and in faithfulness, and in presenting the marrow and fatness of the gospel, unmixed with the notions and opinions of men, which of late have sprung up and are advocated by the periodicals to which I refer.

I have heard that brother Beebe had made provision for the continuance of the SIGNS in the event of his death. May God in mercy to us grant that such may be the case, and that the paper may continue in the same old paths as heretofore. I wish that I could be of any help to you in the very difficult work which is now put upon you, my dear brother; but that is out of the question. You have my best wishes and sincerest desires for wisdom, strength and courage to meet the obligations resting upon you.

Now excuse the length of this letter. The inclosed letter speaks for itself; you will use it as your judgment dictates. Sister Wright is a loved member of the church at Bethlehem. Mrs. Badger and her mother unite with me in love to you and your family.

As ever, your unworthy brother,

J. N. BADGER.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., Jan. 8, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER BADGER:—It has been a long time since I wrote to you, and I have no excuse to offer save that of unworthiness; have thought of you all again and again, and always with love and a desire to be with you once more.

How rapidly time passes! It is more than two years since I was baptized by you, since I have had the privilege and pleasure of hearing an Old School Baptist preach, or of mingling with them. Many changes have taken place during that time; many have been called to that country from whence none ever return. My greatest loss was that of my dear mother, but I sorrow not as those who have no hope, for I believe she is at rest. She had suffered many trials and many disappointments, but her faith continued to the last, for I understand she was patient and resigned all through her sickness. I believe she fell asleep in Jesus, and I would not wake her if I could. Many a time her eyes were dim with tears here. I can see her now as she looked when bidding me good bye; then she was grief-stricken and crushed, but now God has wiped away all tears from her eyes, she having awakened in his likeness and is satisfied. Of myself I scarcely know what to say. Of one thing though I am sure: God has been much better to me than I deserve. I hope I have been thankful, for out of a full heart I have been led to exclaim almost daily, "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name." I have not been without sin since we parted, nor have I lived at all times as my conscience dictated. I find that in my flesh dwells no good thing, and it is only when I look away to the author and finisher of our faith, that I can see how I ever became reconciled to God, and how I came to hear his pardoning voice. Then faith and hope become living issues,

and I can face a frowning world.

Brother Badger, it is lonesome out here, and sometimes the way is so dark. You do not know what it is to be one by yourself in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. You do not know what it means never to have the companionship of one believing as you do, or to be denied the privilege of hearing a gospel sermon. You do not know the temptations that beset me on every hand. Pray with me and for me that I may be faithful to the end. I have the dear old SIGNS, and they are truly comforting and refreshing. If brethren Durand and Chick could only know how I enjoy their writings, they would feel some encouragement, for I find in "Fragments" much that is good and beautiful; the christian spirit displayed in all brother Chick's letters serves greatly to strengthen and confirm me. I read so many good letters in them, and my heart suggests at once, "Write and tell them so," but I express myself so imperfectly that I hesitate; yet I do know that I am still trusting the same God that you all are, and still loving his people.

It is thirty-five years now since my eyes were opened to the truth, and it is more beautiful than ever. There has been no departure in a special sense; I have hesitated, have deliberated, and for a few days at a time have followed strange gods, but the Lord has in his own way and in his own time delivered me. I am at present rejoicing in a hope that seems to have anchored my soul in a faith that is more firmly fixed than ever before, and my love for the brethren is almost past understanding.

I do not nor have I ever known anything about conditional salvation, and I thank the blessed Redeemer for it. He fulfilled the law in every jot and tittle. If anything had been left for me to do, I am surely more incapable of doing it than was he who suffered and died on the cross. If he could not or did not do it all, then I am barred from ever attempting anything. I believe the Lord has a people, and that he knows them, and sometimes though I hardly dare write it, I believe that he numbers among them even me. I cannot say this much to the world, but to you who hope you have life in you wrought by his Spirit, who desire to have meekness and humbleness through unmerited grace; who are hoping and trusting in a free and finished salvation, I write it tremblingly, for I want you to know that the God who changes not is out here in California, watching over and caring for the most unworthy of the flock. But it is only when I look away from myself that I can lay claim to any such things. I must sink if my joys rise, and the more his glory is revealed to me, the more humble I shall be. I feel that all of you know more about these matters than I. God speaks to me by his Spirit, but I need to be taught by word of mouth what he has revealed to others. I remember how beautifully my cousin, Mariana Murphy, talked to me the night before I was baptized, and I long to be with her again. I loved dear brother Murphy, too, but I will never again have the pleasure of listening to him. I will not while memory lasts forget how dear sister Cox looked when she took my hand at Bethlehem and asked if I had not something to say to them all; nor will I forget the kindness of the Johnson family, and there are many things in connection therewith that are indelibly stamped in my mind. First the goodness of God in permitting me to be there, then the pleasure of meeting my mother, and again of seeing and knowing the one to

whom this is addressed. But I said as much in my last letter; it is the same old, old story, but I mean it, and much more; this would really be a letter of love were I to write all that my heart feels.

We are usually well; that is, my husband and I; the nestlings plumed their wings and flew away long ago. California is beautiful now, as always; we need but little fire. We have fruit and flowers in abundance, in fact everything to delight the eye, but there is a dearth of all that sustains and supports spiritually. The life that the people live is meat and drink to them; they are satisfied with their own likeness. I have met but few who are dissatisfied with themselves, and how I wish they and I had the privilege of hearing the truth proclaimed occasionally; they would rejoice with me I sincerely believe. If they are included among those for whom Christ died, it will be well with them at last without it. What a comfort to know our Redeemer below.

I wish you would be kind enough to say to all the little flock at Bethlehem that I hold them very dear, and hope that the new year may be a fruitful one in that which will redound to their good and his glory. I pray for you all that you may have charity, faith, a brighter hope, and such other christian graces as may be well pleasing to him whom you so willingly try to serve. I would be glad if you will send this to brother Chick; not for any merit it contains, nor that I may be known for my much writing, but that he may know that I esteem and love him in the Lord, as I do you all. Remember me especially to sister Badger. May God's watchcare be over us all until we meet again.

Your sister in a blessed hope,

B. E. WRIGHT.

BENTON BEEBE.

When I heard of the death of brother Benton Beebe I was filled with a train of sad, solemn and holy reflections. He was one to whom I was bound by the strongest cords of godly friendship and the most peculiar ties of spiritual fellowship. Last night I lay upon my bed for hours thinking of him and the seasons of conversation that I have had with him concerning the things that pertain to life and godliness.

To brother Beebe godliness was a thing of vital importance. He had been led by grace to know himself, and therefore he hated his own life, and thus he had been turned from himself to Christ, and had been led deeply into the treasures of the everlasting covenant, and made to love most vitally every principle of the doctrine of God our Savior. To him the doctrine of predestination was no mere theory, to be advocated or quibbled at for the sake of popularity or vain speculation, but as a living tree it was rooted deeply in his heart, and twined its everlasting tendrils around his living soul, and brought forth its unfailing and wholesome fruits of meekness, temperance, patience, reliance upon God, faithfulness in duty and steadfastness in the doctrine and order of the elect church.

He was not ignorant of the devices of Satan; they assailed him from without, ever ready to make war upon the doctrine which he published, and besieged him within, tantalizing him with the black horrors of unbelief, even threatening at times the overthrow of his faith, which was more precious than gold. These deep trials of faith in the bottomless pit of unbelief brought him peculiarly near to me, made me love his companionship, and praise God for giving me one at least to walk with me in the belly of hell, from

where I am so often made to cry.

I loved and admired him on account of his steadfastness in the apostles' doctrine. We were most heartily agreed in every doctrinal principle upon which we ever conversed, and he was satisfied with no other authority in doctrine than God's holy word, which God himself had made to him the man of his counsel. He was fenced with iron when he handled the sons of Belial, who are as thorns thrust forth, but clothed with charity when he admonished the church of God.

His position for a number of years was a trying one, that of editor and publisher of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the oldest, most widely circulated and most unyielding paper published among our people in the United States, and perhaps in the world. As successor in this work to his illustrious father, Elder Gilbert Beebe, at whose very name Arminians hiss and tremble, and lovers of God's truth praise God and rejoice, he acquitted himself in a very satisfactory manner to his many critical readers. He did not remove any of the ancient landmarks from the columns of that paper, but the Lord led him strictly in the old path, so that not a sentiment in the prospectus which was sent out nearly three-quarters of a century ago, has been contradicted, suppressed or recanted. His work in this most arduous service of the church and the cause of truth has been most efficient and satisfactory indeed, and bears testimony to the fact that he was a man of ripe judgment, rare discernment, meek sincerity and noble steadfastness in spiritual matters. The bread which he has so patiently cast upon the waters shall doubtless be gathered many days hence.

If he were living, his modesty would doubtless make him slow to publish this encomium, but he is gone, his eye will not see it, his modest soul will not shrink from it, but those who read this, who were acquainted with him, will agree that this panegyric is not overdrawn—that this poor eulogy is not a florid exaggeration; yet if he could speak he would say, Not unto me, not unto me, O Lord, but unto thy name be glory; and so say we all, for we know that it was by the grace of God he was what he was in this world, and it is by the same grace that he will be what he shall be in the world which is to come.

Our dear brother is gone. He will be missed; missed in his home, missed in the office of the SIGNS, and missed in the church. May the God of all grace give dear sister Beebe the unspeakable peace of his love, in this the hour of her deepest distresses, and minister comfort to the bereaved children according to his will. The following beautiful lines from Montgomery are a fitting tribute to our dear, departed brother:

"Servant of God, well done,
Rest from thy loved employ;
The battle fought, the victory won,
Enter thy Master's joy.

The pains of death are past,
Labor and sorrow cease,
And life's long warfare closed at last,
His soul is found in peace.

Soldier of Christ, well done,
Praise be thy new employ,
And while eternal ages run,
Rest in thy Savior's joy."

May God continue the publication of the SIGNS, and preserve it in its former clearness and steadfastness in the truth, to the disappointment of the children of the bondwoman, and the consolation of the children of the free.

H. M. CURRY.

THE CHURCH OF GOD.

WHAT is this church? Of what is it composed? And where is it? These are momentous questions which I am not able to fully answer. But if it pleases the Lord to direct me I will say a few things that are impressed upon my mind. In the first place, the church of God is one body with one head, composed of many members, who are men and women, children of Adam, and manifested as such by being born into the world in sin, and under its curse, there forever to remain, so far as aught that man can do to extricate himself. All that man can do to save himself will not manifest him as a member of the body of Christ.

Among these sons and daughters of Adam, God has a people chosen from the foundation of the world, and in time they are made manifest as such, by being born again (not born over again) but born from above, not again by a natural or Adamic birth, but a spiritual birth, a manifestation of God in the flesh. A new life is given, a life that gives light to see the sinfulness of sin, and the corruption within. And then while grieving over his sin and wretchedness, the Lord manifests his loving-kindness and his salvation, which is life and light to his blind eyes, and he is given power to glorify the Lord of glory, and to sing the new song which is put in his mouth.

Of such as these is the church of Jesus Christ on earth composed. No one can make himself a member of this glorious and wonderfully made body. This body is composed of spiritual stones, made and fitted into this glorious building without the touch of man, as one body with many members. I wish to specially impress upon the minds of all who read this, that this one body or church cannot be divided. But it is one church or body with one head, and if each organized body be separate or independent of the other then there must of necessity be many bodies and many heads. The Scriptures do present many churches throughout the world, but only as members of the great church or body of Christ; all are members of Christ's body, formed and knit together so closely that they cannot be separated without destroying the whole structure. Separate churches so-called are organized all over the world for convenience in meeting together for worship. But the Scriptures recognize them as the church of Christ in such a place, and Christ as the ruling and governing head in all; one body and one head. Christ's body cannot be divided either in numbers nor by distance. Therefore, let us recognize the church of Jesus Christ which is set up here in time, as one church with one Shepherd, as one body with one head. Each organized body is the church in that place, it is not said to be a part of the church, or a church, but the church in that place. In this militant state there are changes in numbers and in members, both of which are unavoidable, but this does not change the unity of the church of Christ nor her unity with Christ her head.

The leading thought in my mind is the dividing of the church in our practice, form and government. I have not found anything in the Scriptures to justify any separation of the manifest children of God even in this time state in their organized bodies. Now, with reference to an old and common practice among the organized bodies of the church, that when members move out of the reach of his or her home church, they must take letters of approval and dismission before they can become members of another church, I wish to say a few words. It may be all

right when they are unknown in the place where they are going, but even this I have not found to be authorized in the church. But it is said, "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you." Why is this not enough? No sound Baptist would want to impose upon any one, and others would soon show their horns as belonging to the other side. The love of God binds his members together in union and fellowship, and enables them to sit at the table of the Lord and feast upon the rich provisions of his house, and to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and to say, It is good to be here. This is unfeigned love. God is love, and we know that love is of God. What I am trying to get at is this: that the church of God is one, wherever the members are situated, and it is composed of spiritual members, who are sons and daughters of Adam by nature, and sinners who are born again, and Christ is in them the hope of glory; God is manifest through Christ in their flesh. Christ's kingdom is set up in their Adamic bodies here in this time state. It is a militant state, or a state of warfare, and brethren, in all the afflictions of this life there is one head, one heart, one soul, one body, and one God and Father of all. They are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. Then should we not be one in all our meeting together, whether we have been baptized here or there? Should not all mingle together as two drops of water, and be partakers together of the joys and sorrows of each other, and also partakers in all the ordinances of the one church, and interested in each other's welfare, and be received in the arms of unfeigned love without letters from each other, and be brethren in all the business of the church? Brethren, think of these things, are they right or wrong? If they are not authorized in the Scriptures drop them, and let us be one church with one Shepherd, who is Christ Jesus the Lord; and may we all rest and abide in him forever.

Your imperfect brother,

MILTON DANCE.

KNOEBEL, Md., Jan., 1904.

[WE commend this thoughtful letter from brother Dance to the consideration of our brethren generally. Truly all the children of God are one in spirit, one in faith, hope and love; and when such are brought together in providence, their hearts will be as the heart of one man. Love will bring those from distant parts to sit together as one, and each will desire the welfare of the other. We do not recall that letters of dismissal from one church to another are spoken of in the word of God, but in two places letters of commendation and approval are mentioned. In Acts xviii. 27, the brethren at Ephesus are said to have given a letter to Apollos, exhorting the disciples wherever he might travel to receive him. And Paul in 2 Cor. iii. 1, says that he does not, as some others, need such epistles to commend him, for he was already known through them. This would seem to imply that to some were given such letters of commendation and approval. But such letters would seem to have been given where the bearers were unknown among the brethren where they expected to journey.—ED.]

HAVANA, Kansas, Dec. 14, 1903.

G. BEEBE'S SON—ESTEEMED BROTHER:—For forty-two years I have made my annual remittance to the SIGNS. Through all those years it has come laden with doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness, because it has con-

tinued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and practice. Because of its steadfast course it has often been made to pass through deep waters, where the floods would overflow, but you have put your trust in the Lord, and he has never put you to confusion. Your last editorial, December 1st, is worthy of all consideration. It seems that it should go a long way to remove the seeming differences among precious brethren upon the doctrine of predestination. Differences of opinion, that gendereth strife, are not the Spirit of Christ within us. It is manifestly the work of our carnal nature. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Are God's children dutiful and obedient while contending about some non-essential? It should be the delight of God's children to walk about Zion, and go round about her; tell the towers thereof (places where the watchmen stand to give the certain warning of danger from without). It is supposed that within the sacred enclosure all is peace and love. Mark well her bulwarks. Behold the firmness of its walls, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. Brethren all agree that this wonderful, spiritual temple is the only sure abiding place for all the children of the household of faith. Therein is found all the goodly fruit that nourishes and sustains the inhabitants thereof. For the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. There is an inseparable unity in the above quotation, but to mar or destroy one, the others are of no force. Fruit being used in the singular denotes undivided beauty. If we are void of love, can we claim either of the other spiritual virtues? If peace does not control our actions, or characterize our lives, what other virtue can we cling to? Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made made me free from the law of sin and death. None of God's children ever contend about that truth. Their own experience causes them to love it, and love all who are brought under its blessed influence. Now if the children of the kingdom were always under the gracious influence of the Spirit, there would be no strife, no contention nor bitterness found within Zion's walls. Then, "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?"—James iv. 1. Then the child of God must have within him two opposing forces, warring one against the other. Then if there are two characters in one, there must have been two births. One must be a natural or sinful birth, the other a spiritual or holy birth. Christ shows the difference in "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit." Now if there is found strife, bitterness, heresies and envyings among the professed followers of Christ, from whence do they spring? "By their fruits ye shall know them." The Spirit of Christ never generates disorder, never causes brethren to fall out by the way. The loving advice that Abram gave to Lot should be gratefully accepted by every believer as his governing principle: "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen, for we be brethren." James defines the condition of man, or rather believers: "Do ye think that the Scripture saith in vain, The

Spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?" Then he gives the consoling testimony showing God's great love toward his children: "But he giveth more grace."

Among the Baptists of our country for many years there has been a seeming difference upon the doctrine of predestination, especially to its limitation. The contention has at various times and places produced bitter strife and divisions. O, brethren, you can walk together in unity of peace on every other christian virtue, every other gospel truth, until you touch upon that deep and mysterious subject of the limitation of Jehovah's wisdom, knowledge and power, then strife is generated, variance comes where love should flow. Brethren, these things surely are the works of the flesh. We should not be contentious about words. I believe the doctrine of unlimited predestination, and never felt, in my weak, finite knowledge, able to measure the knowledge, power and wisdom of God, who hath declared, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne." When we poor mortals cannot fathom his power and majesty, why contend about his authority? "Be still and know that I am God." If we cannot understand his purposes, do we not feel to bow in humble submission to him, and acknowledge his wisdom in dealing out justice and judgment to the children of men? Take the history of Joseph and his brethren. Can any deny that the hand of God was in every detail of that interesting narrative? Did he not know and purpose it all, fully knowing the end from the beginning? The malicious action of Joseph's brethren toward him, the dipping of his coat in blood to deceive their aged father; their sale of him to traveling Ishmaelites for silver; all their base ingratitude toward him characterized their wickedness, yet who will claim that Divinity did not shape the whole? The immediate actions of the brethren could be understood, but the purpose of God in the matter was beyond solution. "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform."

Jesus chose twelve disciples, and declared in his early ministry, "I have chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil." He certainly knew why he chose him, but Judas did not. Did not he perform his terrible part in the great tragedy according to prophesy? Was it not by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God? To the believer predestination is very precious. The denial of it leads to Arminianism and self-righteousness. Predestination precedes revelation; revelation is the rock upon which the church is built. It is that spiritual work by which the Father manifests himself to his children. "Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock [revelation] I will build my church." I am aware that there are differences as to what this rock refers. I have noticed some of the writers in the SIGNS call it Christ. I do not understand that he was referring to himself, but to a great principle that emanated from him, the sublime truth upon which his church is founded. Every true believer loves and rejoices in the doctrine of revelation; it makes known to him that spiritual relationship existing between the Father, the Son and

the child. "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."—Matt. xi. 25. O, how sweet was that word when Jesus was first made known to you as your Savior and Redeemer, when old things passed away and all things became new.

Paul loved the doctrine of revelation, and well knew from whence it came. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man, for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ; that revelation, the rock upon which he built his church.

May God's children everywhere be led by that revealed Spirit that will enable them to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. May that God who has sustained the SIGNS for nearly three-quarters of a century comfort and support you in the coming time.

Your brother in hope,

T. R. PITTMAN.

HERNDON, Va., Dec. 28, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I inclose a copy of a letter we received some time ago from dear sister Lester. She is the widow of deacon A. B. Lester, who fell asleep in Jesus two years ago next February. I was in correspondence with him for nine years up to the time of his death. Since then I have in my weak way been corresponding with her. I have her consent to have it published in the SIGNS if you think it best. Sister Lester is one that has had many afflictions, and is still having them, but believes that the Lord can and will deliver his people out of them all.

Your brother, I hope,

J. F. OLIVER.

MANKATO, Minn., June 28, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER OLIVER:—It has been five months since I received your highly prized letter, and I must humbly crave your pardon for not replying sooner. Did you know the circumstances, you would freely accord your forgiveness. I thought when I received your letter I would answer it right away, but ill health, trouble and anxiety, and more than all else, such an overwhelming sense of my own unworthiness, ignorance and inability oppressed me so that it seemed as though it would be imposing on your time and patience for me to attempt to write to you. I kept thinking that my mind might yet be in rather a better state. But if I do not write to you I will not get any more of your cheering epistles. I will now make the attempt, hoping the Lord will direct my mind and guide my pen. O, brother Oliver, if I could write such letters as you wrote to me, I would not so much dread to write to you and sister Oliver. Your letter gave me a great deal of comfort, for you expressed so many of my feelings that it seemed to cheer my drooping spirit. O, can it be possible that I have the least, yes, the very least knowledge of Jesus? Can it be possible that his love has ever been shed abroad in my heart, and that I have ever been brought from nature's darkness into his marvelous light? O, I am so cold, lifeless and dead, and such a wretched sinner; prone to wander in by and forbidden paths; seeming to say by my daily walk and conversation that I never knew the

Lord. I used to think when I first united with the church, that as I would grow older I would know more, and would not be so ignorant, but I find the older I get the less I know. O, how I would love to see you and sister Oliver, and hear you talk of Jesus and his love for poor, wretched sinners.

JUNE 30.

Dear brother and sister, I have just been looking over my letter, and I find it so imperfect, like the author, that I feel ashamed to send it, but if I destroy it and try again to do better, I might do no better, so I might as well let it go, hoping you will cast the mantle of charity over it all. If it were not so that his promises are to his poor and needy ones, and that he has said he would never leave nor forsake his little ones, O, if it were not so, how wretched would be our case. O, shall I dare to hope that I am included in that band of little ones? Surely if I am it seems to me I would have more light, and would not be so beclouded the most of my time. Of one thing I feel well assured: the Lord knoweth them that are his, and will bring them off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him that loved us. The hymn commencing with these lines, "Keep silence, all created things," has been on my mind a great deal of late, especially the last two stanzas:

"My God, I would not long to see
My fate with curious eyes;
What gloomy lines are writ for me,
Or what bright scenes may rise.

In thy fair book of life and grace,
O may I find my name
Recorded in some humble place
Beneath my Lord, the Lamb."

I must stop lest I weary your patience. Hoping this may find you all well and enjoying the best of God's blessings, your unworthy sister, if one at all,

S. A. LESTER.

NORTH YAKIMA, Wash., Jan. 20, 1904.

B. L. BEEBE—VERY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Herewith you will find inclosed an obituary of my dear old father-in-law, S. R. Darland, written by request of his children, also his last writings on his experience, directed to his oldest daughter, Mrs. May A. Baker, and her husband, and it is their request that it be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the paper that he so highly esteemed all his life.

Yours in bonds of love,

W. H. GILMORE.

FOREST GROVE, Oregon, Jan. 16, 1903.

MARY A. AND DAN BAKER—DEAR CHILDREN:—I desire to write a little account of my life. I was born in Indiana, in the year 1825, May 25th, and was a sinner from my earliest recollection. I remember when I was quite small I went to see my grandmother Darland at the time she died. My father and mother were there to attend to her at her death. I was at her funeral. Elder Aaron Harlan preached, and I have never forgotten it; his words seemed to reach my inmost soul. I do believe that Jesus blessed me there, and yet I have been a rebellious sinner ever since. I have never intentionally done anything to injure or hurt any mortal. I have lived in good faith toward God to this day, yet I have stepped aside in forbidden paths, and I feel as Paul said, what I would not, that I do, and what I would, that I do not. Then I know it is sin that dwells in me. My father died in August, 1841. Then I was a lost sheep, and I hope God showed me what a wretched sinner I was. Yes, God showed me that I was a great sinner, and without hope and without God in the world; not by chance, for I always believed that God was almighty, and had a

purpose in all that he created and made, but what purpose there was in me I could not tell. I had trouble night and day; my pillow would be wet with tears in the morning. This trouble continued for nearly two years. One day I was alone in the field chopping wood. While there something like a dove seemed to fly down by me, which caused me to drop my axe and stand in amazement. I thought then, What is this life to eternity? it is nothing. I then thought I could preach to my comrades if I could see them, but doubts and fears came, from then till now, as to myself, but my faith is in God. It seems I am worse to myself than any one else, and have prayed to God to give me repentance, and sometimes think he has forgiven my sins.

This is probably the last that I will ever write.

Your father in tribulation,

S. R. DARLAND.

(See obituary notice on page 126.)

MARSHALL, Virginia.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—The SIGNS contains all the preaching I get in the winter months, as I am so far from our place of meeting. Our pastor, Elder J. N. Badger, cannot get there very often either, on account of ill health. We would sorely miss the messages from the different members of our Father's family, if the SIGNS did not come as it does, laden with fat things from a far country. Truly everything the children need must come from a heavenly source; this earth yields nothing satisfying to me; everything I try to take pleasure in turns to bitter dust and ashes. If I could only crave heavenly things how glad I would be, but my stubborn, rebellious heart is continually going after the vain things of this world. I hope all are not so rebellious and stiff-necked as I am. I would like very much to see something written on the words, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him."—Isaiah liii. 1, 2. Sometimes this whole chapter seems a complete store-house of gospel treasure, but alas, most of my time I go mourning like a pelican in the desert.

I must close; am sorry I have troubled you with so long a letter; if it is too tedious to be read burn it, I will not be hurt.

Your poor, unworthy sister in hope,

HATTIE L. WALKER.

MERKEL, Texas, Jan. 22, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I want to write a few lines to let the brethren and friends know that I have changed post-offices from Pyron to Merkel, Texas, and I want to say that if there are any Old School Predestinarian Baptists in Taylor or adjoining counties, I would like to hear from them, that is, if they believe in the purposes of God in all things, and the resurrection from the dead, and the one salvation, which is Christ; he is the Rock of ages, the Rock of our salvation; he is our salvation for time and eternity.

Brother Beebe, the SIGNS is all the preaching we have here in this country, and it is a welcome visitor in our house. I have been a reader of the paper for thirty years, and it seems to me that it is just as firm in doctrine and principle as it was when I first read it.

Brethren, pray for me, and may the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob bless you.

W. T. MYERS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1904.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:
F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

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2 PETER I. 8.

"For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."—2 Peter i. 8.

No portion of the word of God can be of more interest to the child of God than this first chapter of second Peter. No language could set forth more clearly the anxiety of a true servant of God for the spiritual welfare of the churches over which he has been made overseer, the wonderful grace of God in salvation, the certainty of the testimony of the apostle to the divine glory which he had witnessed, and the supreme importance of having an earnest remembrance of the things which grace has wrought for believers, and within them. Beside, no language could more impressively set forth the need of carefulness in giving heed to the things which they had learned.

But it is not our purpose to call attention in particular to all that this chapter contains; this would be indeed impossible to do in the limits of an editorial, even were we possessed of the ability to do so comprehensively.

The apostle first calls attention to the exceeding grace of God toward them in giving to them righteousness in Christ, and faith in him as their Savior. He then beseeches the favor of God upon them through the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ their Lord, according to the divine power which had given them all things that pertained to life and godliness. He also proceeds to state that God had called them to glory and virtue, which calling could never fail. By this effectual calling he then proceeds to tell them exceeding great and precious promises have been given them, by which they might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world through lust. Truly most wonderful blessings have been accorded them from God; and these blessings are infinitely enhanced in value when we remember the state from which we have been called, and the state to which we have been called. They and all who love the Lord have been called out from the corruption of this world, and called to the glory and virtue of the kingdom of God.

Now this exalted state to which they had been called is summed up by the apostle in the word "faith." This use of the word faith is not peculiar to Peter alone. Paul uses the word in like manner often, speaking of "obedience to the faith," of "the word of faith," and of "continuing in the faith." The word faith in its primary meaning refers to the principle of faith in the heart, which is one of the fruits of the Spirit. But sometimes the whole system of doctrine, including all the promises of God, is meant by the word faith, and this is the use which Peter makes of it in this connection. Of course the primary meaning of the word is never absent from it wherever it us used. What is called "the faith" as relates to the doctrine and the promises of God's word is of no avail to any one unless that one has faith as a principle dwelling in his heart.

Having this indwelling faith, and having come into the knowledge of God and his salvation by revelation, Peter proceeds to urge upon their minds a remembrance of other things which are inseparably connected with this faith, if indeed these things be in them at all. The apostle is very urgent in behalf of the brethren to whom he was writing. The affection of his heart was with them, and he sought their true welfare. Like Paul he desired not so much worldly prosperity for them, but spiritual prosperity, and so he adds the words that follow: "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue." We desire here to remark two things especially. First, he does not say, Add to virtue faith, nor does he call upon them to form within them faith, as the first step in this new and better, this redeemed life. No; faith is the gift of God, and one of the fruits of the Spirit. These were men of faith to whom he was writing, and they and he knew the source whence this faith that was theirs had been begotten. Here is the dividing line between two classes of men. A man either has faith or he has it not. If any man has it, he has it from God as a special, direct gift. If any man has it not, he is still dead in his sins. If any one has it he is alive unto God, and God has made him to be so. Now, having faith, the following things are to be added. The second thing which we wish to especially notice is that the word "to" (add to your faith) is rather "in." The original Greek word in most places is translated "in," and rightfully so, and here also it ought to have been the same. It is as if the apostle had said, which indeed he did say, in your faith add virtue, and going right on with the language of the apostle we should read, "and in virtue, knowledge; and in knowledge, temperance; and in temperance, patience; and in patience, godliness; and in godliness, brotherly kindness; and in brotherly kindness, charity." By the use of the word "in" we come to see a much closer union between faith and these other fruits of the Spirit, than is conveyed to us by the word "to." All these fruits of the Spirit are thus seen to be wrapped up in each other, so that one cannot be without the other; and these fruits grow out of each other as flowers and fruit grow out of the vine and out of the branches. Faith leads all this band of spiritual fruits, and charity or love brings up the rear. Faith begins, and charity, or the love of God, completes the gracious work, and each one leads on to the next, and in turn is completed by the next.

The fruits of this faith specified here are seven, a perfect number. They are, first, "virtue," which means strength, or strenuous excellency; "knowledge," which signifies the ability to discern between good and evil, and to know the will of God in each detail of our practice; "temperance," which signifies here self-control, and which is the natural fruit of the knowledge of that which is good and of that which is evil. Then "patience," or endurance of whatever trials may befall us in the christian race; "temperance," which signifies abstaining from worldly allurements. Then "godliness" is added, which seems to us to signify here "God-trusting," out of which trust alone patience can grow. Then "brotherly kindness." Not a solitary, selfish manner of life, but all gentleness, kindness and courtesy to all those who love the Lord, is included in this word; and then "charity," or "the love of God," which will lead to love for the brotherhood, and indeed for all men, even our enemies.

Now, reversing the order of these words, he that has the love of God shed abroad in his heart will love and show kindness to the brethren, and he that has brotherly kindness will feel godliness to be needful, and he who has godliness will be patient, not stoical, but patient or enduring, without murmuring, the will of God and all the trials of the way; and to him who has patience, temperance is easy, for temperance is but another form of patience, and he who has temperance weighs things well, and so has knowledge, and knowledge guards against that which would overcome virtue and carry it away. Thus we see there is an inseparable and divine connection between all these fruits of the Spirit; for indeed all these things are included among the fruits of the Spirit in the enumeration of these things by Paul, and that more than once in his epistles.

Now let no man say that all this would prove man to be but a mere machine, like an axe or a watch, moving only at the will of another, and having no will of its own at all. No; the believer is indeed moved, not so much upon as within, so that he labors, yet not he, but the grace of God, which is in him. He loves indeed, and yet he confesses that every emotion of love is but the shedding abroad of it in greater, and still greater measure, by the Spirit. He remains steadfast, and thus commends himself to his brethren, and to the spirit of the apostles, yet he knows that his steadfastness is not of himself, but of God. He hears, and is put in remembrance of the will of God concerning him, and his mind is stirred up by what he hears, yet he confesses that this is because God in mercy has bestowed upon him the ear to hear, and the heart to desire and understand these very things. He willingly does the will of God, sorrowful alone because he has not done that will more perfectly, and yet rejoices to believe that all his willingness is because the Spirit of Jesus, whose meat and drink it was to do his Father's will, dwells within him. He believes with all his heart, and yet confesses that he had never believed, unless the faith of God had been given him by the Spirit. It is not God that believes in him, as Arminians have always charged as an objection to the doctrine of free grace, but yet he would not believe, did not the Spirit of God produce belief within him. Often his prayer must be, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief." Lord, increase my faith. He that has not faith, never prays for the gift of faith, but he that has it, prays for more of this heavenly favor; and the prayer for more of it proves its possession and indwelling. Again, God does not love within us, but by the shedding abroad of his love through the Holy Ghost, we love. It is said that a poor Indian woman, when asked to tell how she came to love the Lord, said, "The Lord loved right down into my heart, and I loved him right back again." A volume could not have made it more plain to any spiritual mind. She was only saying in another form, what John had said centuries ago: "We love him because he first loved us."

The same things might be said of all the other graces of the Spirit named in this connection. The same things are true of virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity. All are of God, and we confess them to be so, and in the word are taught that they flow out of faith, and are to be exercised in faith, rather than to be added to it, as we would add one regiment of troops to another in the

field. Where faith is, these things are, and believers are here exhorted to manifest them, live them out, as things having a vital union with faith and the spirit, and belonging to the life of Christ in us. Peter here is saying just what Paul said: "As ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Both of these Scriptures agree, and both contain the whole substance of vital godliness as it dwells within and appears in the outward life. What wonderful mysteries are involved in everything relating to the faith and the obedience of every believer. He labors, and yet not he, but the grace of God, and both statements are true. Paul does not deny the first, "I labor," by adding and yet not I, but grace. Paul's body was often weary, and his mind burdened by all that he did and suffered, and yet he does not claim one word of praise, but gives all the glory to God. "I labored, and yet not I." Here is summed up all the mystery of godliness, as it appears in the daily life of believers.

Now the text quoted at the beginning of this editorial sums all this up. The apostle says, "If these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." The word "barren" has the thought in it of a field untilled, where nothing good can grow. If these things be in you, ye shall not be as a barren field, destitute of that which is good, and if they abound in you, ye shall not be unfruitful, but shall bear fruit to the glory of God. Their subsisting in us constitutes us not barren, and their abounding in us constitutes us not unfruitful. And the end or goal toward which all that has preceded tends, is the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Here is growing in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This is following on to know the Lord. It is not through human teaching, or through reading the Bible even, that we come to the knowledge of Christ. It is by the knowledge of the fruits of the Spirit that we come to know the Spirit, and this holy Spirit was fully manifested in the Lord Jesus. If we ever come therefore to know Christ in any degree, it is as he is formed in us the hope of glory, and if he indeed be formed in us, then these fruits do also dwell within us, and so far as they are made manifest in our daily life, Christ will also be manifest by us to others. This will be the sweet savor of his knowledge. In all these fruits there is a sweet savor to all who have ever known the Lord in the sanctuary.

Now the apostle says in the ninth verse that "he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." We are sure that this also describes a believer, but one who has forsaken his high privileges. He indeed lives, (if such condition can be called life) but he is blind to what God has done for him to the glory of God, and to the hope set before him, and he is as one who has forgotten his exalted state as a redeemed vessel of mercy, and who thinks, feels and lives as one who is yet in his sins, unredeemed, impenitent and unbelieving. Such an one is asleep, and is lying down among the dead. He is not dead, but he makes his home with the dead. He is as the lunatic who dwelt among tombs until Jesus gave him again his right mind. How sad is such a state. This was well

calculated to stir up the minds of the brethren to whom Peter wrote, and it is calculated to also stir up our minds. Nothing will so well avail to keep the believer walking softly, humbly and obediently before God as to see and remember the atonement, which purged him from all his sins.

Now, in conclusion, we want to add that the apostle in all this solemn language of exhortation and warning was laying no grievous burden upon his brethren which they could not bear. He was on the contrary presenting to their minds the very things which must be dear to them as the redeemed followers of the lowly Lamb. They knew these things already, (verse 12,) and so Peter was encouraged to call them up to their remembrance. It was meet or fitting that he should. Two things are good to have with us: first, a heart to know the Lord, and second, some faithful servant to remind us of the things which we know.

C.

TO DISCONTINUE THE SALE OF BIBLES.

We have only eight self-pronouncing Bibles left in stock, as follows; four of No. 8707, three of No. 8313, one of No. 8701, and only two Testaments. These books will be sold at the usual prices. For description and price see any Signs for 1903.

Owing to the advance in price of such books, and the few calls for them, we have decided not to handle them after these on hand are gone.

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EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

EPHESIANS VI. 12.

Dear Brother:—If it be not asking too much, I would like to have you publish your views on Eph. vi. 12, last clause, "Against spiritual wickedness in high places."

D. M. YARNER.

Somerton, Ohio, March 18, 1861.

REPLY.

In our polyglot Bible, we have the marginal rendering of this clause, *wicked spirits*, instead of *spiritual wickedness*. The apostle has very clearly presented the church of God as the body of Christ, in this epistle, and traced the vitality of the whole body to Christ, as the Head of the body, and the church as the fullness of his body, who filleth all in all. And, having given the more cheering assurances of this vital and indissoluble union, its eternity and vitality, in closing the epistle he is inspired by the Holy Ghost to urge upon the saints such wholesome admonitions as they require; such as loving one another, as Christ has loved the church. The relative duties of husbands and wives, children and parents, servants and masters; for although in the body of Christ, which is spiritual, they are all one, yet in the flesh their relations to each other are unchanged, and their relative duties are as imperative, by the law of Christ, as they were before, so that the husband, the wife, the parent, the child, the servant and the master cannot disregard these relations and duties, without disloyalty to Christ, who is their Head. In urging these with all other obligations which devolve on the saints, and knowing the many temptations and oppositions rising from the flesh and from Satan to a faithful performance of all that he enjoins, he exhorts them to put on the whole armor of God, and describes

the armor of God, from head to foot, as in all respects differing from and opposite to that kind of armor which is used in contending merely with flesh and blood, or with our fellow-men, for instead of a carnal warfare requiring carnal weapons, such as Sharp's rifles, or any other kind of rifles or earthly weapons, we require the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand, for our conflict is against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. By principalities we may understand all the organized forces of the kingdom of Satan, which indeed are many. As in the type, Babylon had an hundred and twenty and seven provinces, and the number of the antichristian beast is the number of a man, six hundred, three score and six, so we may infer that the organized powers of spiritual wickedness has its plurality, its rank and file, its officers and subalterns, against them all the saints are called to wrestle; and against powers, such as the powers of darkness, and the powers of our own corrupt nature, and against the rulers of the darkness of this world. The darkness of this world is what this world calls light, for the rulers of it put darkness for light, and light for darkness. Among the rulers of the darkness of this world we may class the clergy and the professors, who teach what they regard as the science of divinity, and oppose their science to the light of divine revelation. By their schools of divinity, including their infant schools, Bible classes, Sunday and Theological schools, together with such machinery in connection as Missionary and Tract Societies, their pulpit and printing influences, they certainly control to a very great extent the darkness and delusions of this world, corrupting the infant mind with false notions in regard to spiritual things, nurturing in them a prejudice against the truth, which must, if not arrested by divine interposition, ripen into violent hostility, and, perhaps, open persecution. And in their higher schools heaping teachers, having itching ears, which in the present running capacity of their machinery, they can supply to order. If antichrist requires Catholic, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Methodist or New School Baptist preachers, those institutions can turn them out in any quantity or quality required, provided only that a paying amount of cash accompany the orders. And if to thicken the darkness and involve the country in anarchy, abolition preachers be required for the north, or fire-eaters for the south, the gearing of the engine is easily shifted to accommodate that object, so that their graduates may be prepared to cry, Lo here, or lo there, as will most effectually intensify the darkness, delusion and fanaticism required to turn away the ears of men from the truth, and incline them to fables.

Spiritual wickedness, or the abominable corruptions of high places by wicked spirits, appears to us to signify wickedness which assumes a religious or spiritual garb, having a tendency to corrupt in high places, embracing all the antichristian abominations of the man of sin, the son of perdition, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, with all signs and lying wonders. This wicked had already begun to work in the apostolic age, but was restrained until the time when the *let* or hindrance should be removed, and that wicked revealed. Some of the characteristics of this wicked are given by inspired writers,

thus, "Who opposeth and exalteth itself above all that is called God, so that he as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."—2 Thess. ii. 4. These characters are too clearly drawn by the pencil of inspired wisdom to admit of any doubt that the spiritual wickedness against which the saints are called to wrestle, contend and struggle, is the same which we are now resisting; it has become more fully developed since the date of Paul's letters to the Thessalonians; evil men and seducers have waxed worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. None doubt that the inauguration of the pope to his pontifical throne, and his usurpation of the spiritual affairs of the church, and his claim of divine power also to rule over the temporal affair of the kingdoms of this world, was, so far, a fulfillment of what Paul had predicted, and it would have been happy for the world if the whole development had been confined to the papal beast. But alas, the image of the beast presents the same outlines. As the pope assumed the control of the spiritual affairs of the church of God, so he took his seat in the temple of God; and as in claiming, as vicar of God, an absolute right to subject the temporal governments of the world to his mandates, he exalted himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped, for Christ as the King of Zion had made no such claim, in his spiritual connection with his church, but had distinctly declared that his kingdom is not of this world. And as all that the christian worships as God is embodied in Christ, so the pope exalted himself above all that is called God, by assuming such power as Christ disclaimed. It is true that Christ is exalted in his providential power as the God of the whole earth, and has power over all flesh, the King of kings and Lord of lords, but it is equally true that he clearly draws the line between his kingdom and the world; between his spiritual and his providential governments. When he was called on to divide an inheritance for certain heirs at law, he said to them, "Who hath made me judge?" &c., declining to decide their temporal matters. The high places of the papal spiritual wickedness were the assumed headship of the church, and a place so high in temporal power, as to rule over the kings and potentates of this world.

But we have intimated that this spiritual wickedness in high places is not confined to the papal beast. The setting up of the image of this papal beast by the protestant, or two-horned beast, which rose up out of the earth, and the investment of their image with all the power of its prototype by them. See Rev. xiii.—"And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him." Is it not obviously true, that the Reformed church, which came out of the papal establishment, exercised the same power, that is the civil and ecclesiastical and temporal power that some of the potentates of the earth were inlisted and elevated as being By the grace of God, Defenders of the faith, &c., and that they did exercise that power by pains and penalties, and enforce their faith by armed forces in the field? But this is not all: the same power of *all signs and lying wonders, and all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish.* For John testifieth in verses 12–14, "And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly

wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell upon the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live."

The same self-exalted spirit which was betrayed by the two-horned beast, has made its marks so as to give evidence of its existence in all the so-called puritanic and other protestant establishments so far as they have had opportunity. Their violent persecutions have been restrained in our country, since the organization of our national confederacy, by our constitution, which every wisely provided that no religious denomination should be preferred by the government. This restraint, however, has never set easy on the Puritans or Protestants, the former of which had previously, from their landing from the May Flower, at Plymouth, enjoyed the luxury of whipping, banishing, burning, torturing and driving out of the country the Baptists, the Quakers, the witches, and, in short, all who could not, or would not, embrace their creed; while the latter had power to deprive the saints to some extent of their religious privileges, by arresting and imprisoning their ministers.

But even under the best form of constitutional government the world has ever known, which has guaranteed to every citizen of our great republic liberty to worship his God according to the dictates of his own conscience, this spiritual wickedness, though restricted and restrained, has continued to exist, and to make some astonishing developments, by aspiring to the high position of the temple of God, to a seat, a power and dignity; assuming the seat of God, by professing to have authority from heaven to do what none but God can do: the conversion of sinners, the evangelizing the heathen, the salvation of mankind, the calling, qualifying and employing of ministers, the organization of churches on creeds, rites and policies of human invention, ignoring the New Testament, and with it the supreme authority of Christ. And down to the present day they claim and receive from men the honors and reverence, the confidence and prerogatives which belong alone to God, and they exalt themselves above all that is called God, by claiming for their human contrivances a far greater efficiency in the salvation of men than they allow to God's method of salvation. This is spiritual wickedness in high places. But it is not in the nature of this wicked spirit to be satisfied with its extravagant and blasphemous assumption of ecclesiastical influence, its insatiable desire for temporal power demands the reins of our civil government, and the right to control the domestic institutions of the states and territories of our country, and to direct the action of Congress, threatening the states and the nation with the thunderbolts of heaven, if they do not respect their aspirations. The demoralizing and corrupting influences are manifest in the growing degeneracy of the citizens of our country, in the prevalence of crime of every revolting name, and upon the high places of our government in the alienation of fraternal fellowship and genial co-operation, in the disruption of the bonds of our federal union, and in fanning the flame of discord, prejudice and hatred, and in urging our country into the horrors of a civil war.

To wrestle against all this, the saints are not to use carnal weapons, such as

the enemy relies upon. We require the armor of God, and no other armor will do for the disciples of the Lamb of God. But may we have on the whole armor of God, and having done all to stand, having our loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, above all taking of the shield of faith, wherewith we shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying always with all prayer, &c.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., April 15, 1861.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Miss Anna Lane died Wednesday afternoon, Jan. 13th, 1904, at her home in Mt. Sterling, Ky. She was a member of the Particular Baptist Church at Mt. Sterling, of which church her mother and four of her sisters were also members. For several years I have visited that church both spring and fall, and have never failed to see her until last September, when she was too ill to be seen. There was then apparently good prospects of her recovery. Her mother and the family circle have been greatly afflicted in the loss of a very dear and most excellent daughter and sister; her relatives and friends, which include the whole community, have lost one most highly esteemed, and I feel a personal grief in the loss of a dear friend and sister. That pleasant home will be none the less pleasant should I enter it again in the spring, but the pleasant face of one heretofore among the dear inmates who so cordially welcomed me will be missed. It is a sweet consolation to feel the restful assurance that she is forever beyond the reach of sorrow in that world of eternal joy, with Jesus her glorious Redeemer. Her father passed away within two or three years, and a brother not long ago. May the Lord comfort the dear widowed mother and her remaining children.

I will leave the rest to be told by her sister, Miss Lulu Lane, in her letter to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—Death has again visited our home, and taken from us one of the dearest, sweetest daughters and sisters that any one ever had. Just about six weeks since our dear brother was taken. O, it seems so hard. Our cup is full, it seems, but I know that our heavenly Father will not put more upon us than we can bear. I do not believe there lived two better christian people than they both were. Anna lived and died a true Old Baptist. She first joined the Missionary Baptists, but was not satisfied with them long. In October, 1893, she was baptized in the fellowship of this church, by Elder Eubanks, and has lived a faithful and devoted member ever since. She loved her church, her home and her God. She had been sick since the first of June; she suffered intensely, was never out of pain a moment, and died one of the happiest deaths I ever witnessed. She talked so much about the end; spoke as calmly as though she were going on a visit, and made all arrangements herself. Said she was not afraid to die; she knew it would be a happy exchange for her. Said she only dreaded crossing the dark river, but she knew Jesus would be with her. "O," she said, "if I could only see dear brethren Durand and Eubanks, and tell them both how much I love them; and don't forget to mention my name when brother Durand comes in the spring." She said she wanted one of you to write her obituary for the SIGNS, and I will ask you to write it. I only wish I could tell you all she said. She talked to our dear mother and each of the family, and gave us all such sweet advice. She was devoted to her church and ministers. She wanted Elder Sawin, who lived the nearest, to be at her funeral, but saw that it would be about impossible.

The funeral was Thursday morning. A prayer was offered, and three hymns which she selected: "How firm a foundation," "Asleep in Jesus," and "Safe in the arms of Jesus."

She died so easy. The day before she died she was looking up. I asked her what she was studying about? She said, "I am praying to my God; I know he will hear me." Remember us, dear brother, in your prayers.

Your sister in sorrow, LULU LANE.

MY father, **David Lee Reaves,** was born in Greene Co., Ohio, Oct. 1st, 1822, and died suddenly from rheumatism of the heart Jan. 23d, 1904, aged 81 years, 3 months and 23 days. He was sick only a few hours; had written in his diary that afternoon, and walked across the room fifteen minutes before his death. Father was the third of eleven children of Elder George Reaves, one of the pioneer Baptist preachers of this part of the country. (Many of your old readers will remember him, he died in 1854.) His mother's name was Mary Lee. Only two sisters survive him: Mrs. Abigail Powers, of Port William, Ohio, and Mrs. Henry Hussey, of Richmond, Ind. Elder Elias Reaves, who died about eight years ago, was a brother. Father was married Nov. 21st, 1843, to Mary Stewart, who died in 1849, leaving two daughters, now Mrs. Mary Robinson, of Dayton, Ohio, and Mrs.

Rachel Hussey, of this place. In 1858 he married Mary Ann Pownall, who died eight years ago. To them were born four children, all living, viz: Mrs. Ella Harness, of Bowersville, Ohio; Edson C. and Morris C. Reaves, of Paris, Ill., and Jonathan P. Reaves, of Chicago. Two of the above are members of the Old Baptist Church. Father was one of those meek, quiet, gentle kind who always said he was too unworthy to ask for a home with the church, but he had spoken of a bright experience, and was a firm believer and lover of the cause, and was always found at the meetings when it was possible to go, and attended many of the associations. His home has been a stopping-place for the Baptists for over half a century. He had a personal acquaintance with such old soldiers of the cross as Elders Gilbert Beebe, Wilson Thompson, George Tussing and many others. He held many years the offices of township assessor, treasurer and trustee, and was a director of the home bank, and beloved by all who knew him.

The funeral took place Jan. 26th, and although a terrible blizzard raged was largely attended, six of his old, gray-haired neighbors acting as pall-bearers. A very comforting discourse was preached by Elder Levi Bavis, from John xvii. 24. Hymns "Rock of Ages" and "How firm a foundation," were sung. His remains were laid to rest in Bowersville cemetery, there to await the final resurrection, when we hope through the righteousness of Christ to see him as he is, and to sing praises to his name and be satisfied.

His son, MORRIS C. REAVES.

BOWERSVILLE, Ohio, Jan. 30, 1904.

Sallie Ann Meece, wife of Elder G. W. Meece, was born Jan. 24th, 1849, and died Jan. 11th, 1904. She was born in Webster (old Choctaw) Co., Miss., was married to the writer Dec. 25th, 1870. We were married and raised our family in Mississippi, and in December, 1900, we came to Texas. She was taken sick the night we boarded the train in Mississippi for Texas, and has never enjoyed good health since. She was taken with the terrible disease, black jaundice, Jan. 4th, 1904, and lived one week. She was attended twice a day by one of Texas' best doctors, and had the best of neighbors to wait on her. I stood by her bed day and night while she was sick, almost without eating or sleeping, but with all of our attendance we could not stay the hand of death; the Lord saw fit to take her. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord. I can say of a truth in behalf of my dear companion, that though she had her faults and imperfections as well as other human beings, she was a noble woman. Truth, honesty, virtue and industry were sacred principles with her. There were two principles she was so devoted to that she would not sacrifice them for anything; they were love and service to her family, and love and service to the doctrine and practice of God our Savior. She was in fellowship with the old order of Primitive Baptists. Truly she was a helpmeet indeed. O, how I am to live without her God only knows, but while the stroke is heart-rending, and my soul in deep distress, I am perfectly satisfied about "Sallie." I have no doubts about her salvation. I think she was as good a woman as I ever saw. She lived and died in the full confidence, love and fellowship of the Primitive Baptists, who hold that the Lord's government rests upon his shoulders, and not on conditions. She was one like all other sound Primitive Baptists, willing to sacrifice numbers rather than truth and order. O, dear reader, I could write a volume on her life as a devoted companion, mother and lover of truth, but it would not be prudent in this article, so I will close, hoping this will suffice to give notice of her death to all who knew her. If any one has a word of comfort for poor, unworthy me, please write me at Delia, Limestone Co., Texas.

G. W. MEECE.

DIED—At her home near Franklin, Ind., Dec. 4th, 1903, **Mrs. Caroline Park,** our only remaining sister, in her 57th year. She was born July 31st, 1846; was married Jan. 5th, 1876, to brother John Turney, of Coles Co., Ill., where they remained until his death, which occurred Feb. 8th, 1890. To them were born five children; two died in infancy, leaving three which survive her. After brother Turney's death she with her three little ones returned to Indiana, where she was married Dec. 13th, 1891, to our dear bereaved brother R. H. Park, who faithfully performed the duties of step-father in providing for and raising the children to womanhood and manhood. She united with the Cons Creek Church, (now dissolved) Shelby Co., Ind., the second Saturday in May, 1875, giving evidence of a good hope through grace, and was joyfully received, and baptized on Sunday following by Elder Asa Nay. She has lived a faithful and devoted member of the church of her home, ever faithful in her attendance. She has long been a sufferer from a complication of diseases, with nervous prostration, but now it is all over; she peacefully fell asleep in Jesus in the full consummation of her hope, of which it can be truly said,

"Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep,
From which none ever wake to weep."

The casket containing that which is mortal was conveyed to Bethel Church, the place of her membership, where for many years she had met for worship, where Elder Lawrence Ragan, her beloved pastor, preached an excellent discourse suitable to the occasion, presenting with much clearness the doctrine of the resurrection of the body. She leaves a devoted husband, one daughter and two sons, our dear aged mother (now in her ninty-sixth year), five brothers, with many relatives and friends, to mourn her absence. The Lord alone can comfort the bereaved ones. May he grant that grace which is sufficient for the day.

P. W. SAWIN.

DIED—Dec. 19th, 1903, at the home of her grand-nephew, Mr. Elmer Davidson, in Cecil Co., Md., **Mrs. Phebe Lees Willard,** relict of the late Deacon Charles Willard. Brother Willard was for many years a faithful member of the church in Wilmington, Del., serving as deacon with acceptability during a large part of the time. He died in New Castle Co., Del., in 1897, and was buried at Southampton, Pa., beside his first wife, and the graves of his relatives in the flesh.

Sister Willard was full of years. She was born in Chester Co., Pa., Oct. 16th, 1809, making her 94 years, 2 months and 3 days old at the time of her decease. She was baptized at London Tract, by Elder Thomas Barton, in the year 1832, and continued a faithful and devoted member of that church until called home to mansions above. She was married to brother Willard about twenty years ago; never had any children, but leaves quite a number of devoted nephews and nieces, all of whom were kind and devoted to her. But I must here especially mention Mr. Elmer Davidson and his excellent wife, at whose home she spent the last few years of her life, and who carefully nursed and tended her during the long months of illness that preceded her death, doing all in their power, in a noble and unselfish spirit (without hope of pecuniary reward) to alleviate her sufferings.

She was buried at London Tract, Pa., beside her kin, December 22nd, in the hope of the resurrection of the dead. One less of the number of the church on earth, but one more in heaven above. We mourn, but not without hope.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., Jan. 28, 1904.

Samuel R. Darland was born in Indiana, May 25th, 1825, died at Goldendale, Wash., June 18th, 1903, aged 78 years and 24 days. He was married to Miss Susanah Hutton in 1844. To this union were born sixteen children, five boys and eleven girls, of which twelve survive him. His wife died Jan. 4th, 1901. When he was sixteen years old his father died, and at the same time it pleased the good Lord to show him that he was a lost sinner, which caused him to shed many tears, and to walk about two years in mourning, after which it pleased God to grant him forgiveness, and reveal to him the hope of eternal life. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church when quite a young man, and lived a consistent christian life, honored and respected by all who knew him. He was faithful in his church duties; his brethren were always welcome at his home. But God bade him lay his armor by and enter into rest. He was favored with many kind friends, and children that ministered to his wants in his old age and sickness. Six of his children were present to see him pass to his long quiet sleep. He was gathered as a full ripe sheaf, yet we cannot help but mourn our irreparable loss.

The funeral was attended by a large concourse of friends, and a discourse preached on the occasion by Elder Silas Williams, assisted by the writer.

W. H. GILMORE.

Mrs. Lucinda Emerline Sellers, wife of J. S. Sellers, and daughter of Joel and Elizabeth Carter, joined the church at Beulah, Troy, Pike Co., Ala., August 27th, 1864, was married Sept. 17th, 1865, and died Dec. 20th, 1903, at Tuscaloosa, where she had long been under treatment of the State specialist. God gave this dear mother, wife, sister and friend to us 56 years, 8 months and 6 days. She was a sound Baptist, and while in good health wrote several nice pieces on different subjects for the Baptist periodicals, which were comforting and instructive. She was a woman of deep thought and feeling, always contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. She was the mother of thirteen children, of which eleven still survive her, together with the husband and other dear relatives, to mourn their loss.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 72. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1904. NO. 5.

POETRY.

ANXIETY.

O, how anxious is the thought,
Does the precious Christ on high,
Who in Salem wonders wrought,
Plead my cause above the sky?

Bruised and wounded, sick and faint,
Helpless at his feet I fall;
Will he notice my complaint,
He who is my trust, my all?

Yea, within the sacred vail,
Does he carry all my woe?
O, all hope does almost fail
When I feel so dark and low.

Will this faithful Advocate,
Full of tender pity, love,
Own my dark and low estate
At the Father's side above?

O, my heart does overflow
For to tell him all my grief;
He who does already know
All my shame and unbelief.

There's a secret something sweet,
That does draw my soul from hence,
Softly, softly to his feet,
He who is my confidence.

To his portals I would go,
Trusting, there confide my all,
And await his will to know,
He who marks the sparrow's fall.

Will my restless heart be stilled
By the answer from above?
And my anxious soul be filled
With a sense of pardoning love?

SEMMA E. CORDER.

PHILIPPI, W. Va.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, Dec. 14, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—With this I send the experience of which I spoke last September when you were here. It was written by your dear uncle, Elder Quint, so long ago that many of the older members, as well as the children and grandchildren, would like to see it published I am sure.

Will you remember us all at the throne of grace.?

Hastily, but very truly your sister in hope,

JENNIE J. HAM.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, June 25, 1856.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Sister Ham, wife of brother Gilman Ham, of this place, and a member of our church, is now confined to her bed with that disease called consumption, and has been, for about two months. I have been in the way of calling to see her within that time, holding forth the sure promises of God to her, and she in return, at times, has had such a great and sublime view of the goodness of God to her, and has felt free to talk of the same; I, the other day asked her if she was willing to have some of

her experience penned down, to which she answered in the affirmative, saying that it had been on her mind for some time to have it done, if she only knew that it would be right. And, as it is past the time for her to write, being so feeble, she has related it to me, and I have penned it down the best I could. Still I know that I have come far short of writing it in its true light as she related it to me.

WILLIAM QUINT.

THE EXPERIENCE OF SISTER HAM.

I, with all the family of Adam, was born by natural birth, dead in trespasses and sin, and I grew up as careless and as unconcerned about being a sinner against God, and about my unpreparedness for the better world than this, as ever any one could, I dare say, until I was sixteen or seventeen years old, at which time, under some circumstances that took place, I felt different from what I ever had before. It appeared that I had but a short time to live, and that I was unprepared to die; it troubled me at times, much. About that time a young man died in the neighborhood, very suddenly. O, thought I, if it had been me, what must my eternal state have been? All things seemed to look gloomy. At that time there was a reformation in this place, and some were baptized. That ordinance looked solemn and good to me, and I had a great desire to go to meeting and hear christians talk about themselves and of what they had passed through; they looked good to me, and O how I wished that I might be under conviction, and then be liberated as they had been; then I thought I should know that I was a christian, and then I should be happy like them; for I thought every one that was a christian, knew it. I seemed to have a hope that I should experience what christians do, and then I should know of their happiness. I had no idea that God had commenced a work of grace in me. But at times those feelings would, in a measure, wear away; and so I continued in this way until I was in my nineteenth year, at which time I was brought down on a sick bed, and there had a view of my wicked heart I never had before. I thought that I had but a short time to live, and that the justice of God would sink me among the damned to all eternity, and that it was out of my power to do one good deed towards saving myself, or to cause God to save me from eternal woe. It seemed to me that I was the most guilty, self-condemned, lonesome, unhappy creature, that could be found in the whole world, and what ailed me I did not know; but I told no one of the state of my mind. I soon began to recover in bodily health, but my mind got no better; this was in March, 1833. I continued on with the same sense of condemnation resting upon me, so that I could not appear sociable with my young mates as before; some thought that I was in a discouraged state of mind naturally, and tried to get me out of that, but it was all in vain; they did not understand my case. Although at that time earthly prospects seemed flattering, it was nothing to me. I often repeated these lines,

"As on some lonely building-top
The sparrow tells its moan,
Far from the tents of joy and hope
I sit and grieve alone."

I dragged along in this discouraging way until the first of the next September, at which time, one day, my husband being away from home at work, which left me alone with my eldest child, then about six months old, I think that I never did feel worse. I had to go, just as night was coming on, a short distance after the

cows, and while going it did seem to me that the earth was all in mourning on my account; a dark shade seemed to be upon everything that I could behold; it was hard work for me to drag one foot after the other; I did not know but that the earth would open and swallow me up before I should reach home. It would be impossible for me to tell but a small part of my feelings at that time. But I finished my work the best that I could, and than retired for the night, feeling very doubtful about my living until morning. I seemed to be beyond all hope of ever feeling any better. O the agony of soul that I endured, to think that I must be banished from God for all eternity. And yet I had no reason to complain, for it would all be just. After lying some time in that condition, I lost myself in sleep; but after I was asleep, in my dreams, I was still in the same condemnation. But I dreamed that a person came into the room where I was, and he repeated this to me,

> We for whom God the Son came down,
> And labored for our good,
> How careless to receive that crown
> He purchased with his blood.

I was then as happy in my dream as any one could be, for he had forgiven me all of my sins. When I awoke I was still in that happy frame of mind; everything seemed new. I thought that I could praise God for what he had done for me, and I continued in that frame of mind two or three days, but did not open my mind to any one, but thought it my duty to go and tell Elder Hartwell, (who was then our preacher) and Mr. Daniel Chadbourn, our neighbor, how I then felt; but as I had not been in the habit of, at that time, going there, I reasoned thus: What would they think if they should see you coming? and if you should go, they may not be at home; perhaps you are too fast. I then wished that one of them might call in, and then I could freely tell them how I felt. But as no one called, just at night I concluded to write down some of my feelings, and commenced, but had written only in part, when some one came to the door, and I put what I had written in a place where I kept my work, thinking after they had gone to finish it. But as the person came to stop with me some days, my husband being from home, I had not a chance to finish it. But on Saturday night my husband came home, and I still felt well in my mind, but could not say anything to him of how I felt. I wanted to go to meeting the next day, and as he had been in the habit of offering to take care of the child, for me to go, I was in hopes that he would then; but as I had been in the way of not going often he went that morning, saying nothing to me about going. O the disappointment I met with; I went into the bedroom and cried like a child. In spite of all that I could do, my old nature would rise, which made me think that I was deceived in the whole matter. I was glad that I had not opened my feelings to any one, and wholly concluded never to do so. But that same week I sent some work to my mother in the same thing that I had put my letter, and forgot to take it out. She found what I had written, and being overjoyed with what she had found, informed Elder Hartwell and wife of the same, and before I knew anything about it the Elder called to see me, looking very smilingly and taking me by the hand, said, "You feel better in your mind don't you?" I could not deny it, but how he had found it out I could not then think. I continued along in this way of disobedience until the year 1850, the first year that Elder Quint was with

us. But within that time whenever I passed by water, the ordinance of baptism would be before me, and as Elder Quint that year baptized quite a number, I a number of times went to the water. O how good the ordinance did look to me, for christians. But I had such a view of my life, and my case looked so doubtful to me, that I thought I never would be baptized. I reasoned thus: If I am an heir of God, to be baptized will not add or diminish anything in relation to my eternal salvation, and if I am not, what an awful wicked thing it would be for me to be baptized. So concluded that the safest way was for me to remain where I was, and there I decided never to go forward; but I found no resting-place, the ordinance was still before me, and what to do I did not know; but on one Saturday, it being conference day, Elder Quint, and others, invited me to go. I thought I could not tell anything to satisfy them that I was a christian. At last I concluded to go, and if I could not satisfy the church that I had passed from nature to grace, the church would be satisfied, and I should then get rid of the impression that it was my duty to be baptized. When I was called upon to tell my feelings, I thought that I could not say anything to satisfy them that I was a christian, but after the church asked me some questions, to which I answered according to my understanding, they received me as a candidate for baptism. That night I felt very dark in my mind, and the next morning almost concluded to go away by myself, and not go near the meeting, but finally gave up to go, still feeling dark. After I entered the meeting-house Elder Quint commenced reading this hymn,

"How can I sink with such a prop
As my eternal God,
Who bears the earth's huge pillars up,
And spreads the heavens abroad?"

He no sooner had read those words, than my darkness had all gone; I cannot tell the joy I then felt, I felt that I never could sink with such a prop as my eternal God. The way looked so plain that I could not be denied the privilege of being baptized, and while going to the water, I felt in a hurry to get there, and although many people were there, the fear of man was all taken away. The water looked so good, and after I was baptized, I felt the answer of a good conscience. Since that time, my health being poor and having a family of little children around me to look after, I have not had the privilege of going to church, and being with the church as many others have. Now I am wholly confined to my bed (except to have my bed made) and have been for over two months. I have lived already far beyond what I, or my friends, thought that I could. How much longer I shall live God only knows, but I wish to wait all my appointed time with patience, till my change come. So I bid you all good bye, hoping for a better world than this, where parting will be known no more.

HANNAH HAM.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, June 25, 1856.

[THE above experience has been of great interest to us as we have read it. As will be seen, it was written nearly fifty years ago, by Elder Quint, at the bedside of a dying believer in Christ. It is of interest as the dying testimony of one who was living in Christ after the toils and burdens and temptations of this life were nearly past. It is interesting also, because it shows that the work of the Lord does not change with the passing years. The works and thoughts of the creature change, but God's work in salvation abides ever the same. All who know the Lord in deed and in truth will

feel, as they read, that the dear sister is telling just what the Lord has taught them in these later years. It shows clearly that self must be abased and Jesus exalted. Such as have passed through any part of this experience will make mention that the Lord is exalted. We think that it is good to sometimes read the travel of the children of God in former years, it confirms our faith and hope, and many doubts and fears. As Abraham, David, Paul and all the saints of old were led about and instructed, so are the children of God to-day.—ED.]

PRIVATE LETTERS OF ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MRS. JOSEPHINE E. BEEBE—MY DEAR SISTER:—In my letter to your dear husband, and my loved and valued brother in Christ, Benton L. Beebe, published in the SIGNS of January 15th, I mentioned that I had some letters written by his father which I wanted to publish in the SIGNS after awhile. How little did I think when writing that letter that he to whom I wrote would be called away from time to his eternal and glorious home before that letter should appear in the SIGNS. It appears to me now quite remarkable that I should have felt just then such a strong impression to write to him and express my feeling concerning his late editorials. I am glad that he received it, and was gratified and encouraged by it, as you tell me he was. His last short editorial, published in the last number of the SIGNS, is peculiarly good and comforting. Among those from whom I have heard expressions of pleasure in reading it is Elder L. H. Hardy, of Reidsville, N. C., who says in a letter to me: "I read this morning the last editorial of our dear departed brother Beebe, and it felt so good and tasted so sweet to me, that I feel the Lord directed him to write it as a parting consolation to me."

I met him first when he was about twelve years old, when I was occasionally at his father's house for a few weeks. How far was I then from thinking I should ever be a member of the Old Baptist Church; much less did I think of ever being a preacher. From the time of my baptism in 1864 by his father I have met him often and known him well, and my love and esteem for him have increased, especially for a number of years, since he began to bear burdens. Under the weight of serious responsibilities his spiritual character has steadily developed, and the grace of God has been manifested in sustaining him.

My dear sister, a great responsibility has come upon you, and I do not wonder that you feel a shrinking and trembling as you contemplate it. I feel assured the Lord will sustain you, and more confident am I of that since my pleasant, solemn interview with you. You are looking to the true and only Source of strength and wisdom for help. I think it is of the Lord that you have a clear minded and faithful editor in brother Chick, a good adviser at hand in your pastor, Elder Ker, a good business man who, I am persuaded, knows the truth, in your son, Gilbert Beebe, and hundreds, yes, thousands, of brethren, near and far, who wish you success in this great work, and who will be glad to help you in any way they can. I count myself one of that great number. I have known and loved you as a dear sister in Christ for nearly forty years, and my good wishes and prayers are in your behalf.

I will now send to you two of the letters of your dear husband's father of which I spoke to him. The first is to my sister Bessie, written in 1864, and the

other to my sister Rosina, written in 1865. The relations of portions of his own experience, and the breathings of the exercises of his own soul, make them peculiarly interesting, comforting and profitable to spiritual readers. Sister Rosina passed away many years ago; sister Bessie is still with us.

Your brother in christian love and fellowship,

SILAS H. DURAND.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 1, 1864.

ESTEEMED SISTER IN CHRIST:—I have received your letter, and have read with deep interest and delight the record of the dealings of the Lord with you, and only wonder how or why you should object to its publication. You acknowledge the pleasure you have enjoyed and benefit you have received in reading the experimental communications of others; will you, can you withhold from them the like pleasure and profit?

My dear sister, suffer me to so address you, unworthy though I am, your history has in many particulars been very much like my own, only it seems to me I can more clearly trace the work of the holy Spirit in yours than in my own. Like you my mind was seriously impressed upon the subject of religion at a very early age. Indeed, as far back as I can remember anything, I had seasons of reflection on the subject. At as early as seven years of age I think I was so convinced of my guilt and depravity as to feel the need of a Savior, and before I was ten years old I felt an assurance that I should through grace abounding to the chief of sinners, reign with Christ in immortal glory. The tumult and deep anxiety of my mind was calmed, and I really thought if I had a thousand souls I could freely trust them all into the hand of my Redeemer. But still I had no idea that I was then born again, but I felt an abiding hope that I should be born of the Spirit, and become a christian before death. Like you, from infancy I had been in the habit of hearing much conversation on the subject of vital religion in the family of which I was a member. My mother was a member of the old order of Baptists, and we frequently had preaching at our house. Often before my parents had any knowledge of the state of my mind, I have sought a corner or secret place in the room where I could listen to the christian conversation passing between my dear mother and those engaged with her on the subject, and have often had to use some effort to conceal the deep emotion of my own soul.

In a great revival which took place in 1810, very many young people professed a hope in Christ. I was very much interested, and when I heard of one and another being under conviction, and others brought to rejoice in the assurance that their sins were forgiven, O how I longed that I might be the next. But I supposed my convictions must come first, and after due process of grief, anguish and despair, I was to be entirely released from all that was vile, even in my nature. Yes, I tried to lash my mind into distress; I courted the terrors of death, judgment, and tried to imagine what were the terrors of the damned, but still I could not feel that load of guilt and condemnation which I heard others describe; and when I heard them tell of peace and joy in the blessed Savior, in spite of myself I could not help entering (as I then thought prematurely) into their joys. It seemed that my heart was wretchedly hardened that I could not feel the weight of my sins, which I knew were very many and very great, nor could I feel uneasy about

death and what should be my future destiny. But as I cannot now write the whole history of my early exercises, I will only say, I was at length brought to go back to my still earlier exercises, in which I had felt the weight of my guilt with crushing power, and had lived from day to day in constant dread of death and fear of hell; and I could remember when I was released from my bondage and distress, and felt that love to God and confidence in him to which I have already alluded.

At the early age of eleven years I stood with great fear and trembling before the church. O, what a sacred place it seemed to be! I would have put off my shoes, as Moses was commanded to do when approaching God in the burning bush, for the place where I stood seemed too sacred for my feet, it was consecrated, holy ground. What I said to the church I do not know. For many years I feared that I had told them something which I ought not. My great desire to be enrolled with them I feared had drawn from my lips more than the simple language of my heart. I was received and baptized I think in December, 1811. More than half a century has passed since that solemn, happy day; I have become an old man in years, and a sinner in practice, but my covenant-keeping God has been still merciful to my unrighteousness, and I hope that my sins and iniquities he will remember no more.

"O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be!"

I feel greatly obliged to you for the account you have given me of your travels; the perusal has been refreshing, and I can most confidently assure you it is the work of the Spirit, and testimony that you have passed from death unto life, that you are an heir of heaven, a child of God, and companion of the saints of the Most High.

Now, my blood-washed sister, let me entreat you to withdraw your restriction of "private," with which you prefaced your very interesting communication. Let all your heavenly Father's children participate in your joys. Say to the praise of your Redeemer, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he has done for my soul." I shall anxiously await your permission to publish the letter, but if I cannot obtain it I hardly dare to promise that I shall not commit a breach of politeness in publishing what you design only as confidential. Yesterday I received your letter; to-day I received one from your brother, Silas H. Durand. By his order I have to-day mailed to you and your sister Rosina each one of my best bound hymn books, and at his special request I have written your names and my own in them both. You will probably receive them before you will this, as they were mailed to-day, this to-morrow.

Remember me very affectionately to your dear parents, and to all the members of your family. May brother Warren's health improve, and may the peace of God our Father, through Jesus Christ our Lord, rest on you, my sister, and on all the dear ones of your father's family and household, and on all who love and fear him everywhere.

May God bless you all. Amen.

GILBERT BEEBE.

P. S.—Please write again soon, and often, and to the extent of my limited ability I will try to respond.

G. B.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Sept. 20, 1865.

MY VERY DEAR SISTER ROSINA:—I was highly gratified to receive your very

welcome letter. It gives me much pleasure to know what have been the leadings of your mind, and the comfort and assurance you felt when buried with your divine Lord in the sacred ordinance of baptism. Your reference to the disclosure to me of the secret exercises of your mind in regard to a hope in the salvation of our Lord, when you were here, recalls vividly to my mind the trembling timidity with which you expressed to me how your mind had been led along from your earliest impressions on the subject. "When Ephraim spake tremblingly, he exalted himself in Israel." And so, my dear child, your trembling hesitancy and absence of confidence in yourself confirmed the conviction of my heart that you had indeed passed from death unto life. Had you told me that you had great confidence in yourself, in your prayers, your sighing or your tears, or in anything you had done or could do, I should have trembled for you. But in the way in which the Lord our God has brought you, every step has been disputed by the tempter, and yet despite all the cruel temptations of the adversary, and all the doubts and fears arising from your own unbelieving nature, grace, matchless, free, sovereign, almighty grace, has triumphed. Satan, sin, unbelief and darkness and doubts are all defeated, God has triumphed gloriously. The brand is plucked from the burning, and your eternal salvation accomplished in a way that excludes boasting, and compels you to acknowledge from the very fullness of your joyful heart that "salvation is of the Lord." When poor old Jonah was compelled to use these words he had been plunged to the bottom of the mountains, and from the gloomy depths below he had cried unto the Lord. I feel humbled under a sense of the goodness of God to me, that I have been permitted to speak a word of encouragement, which the divine Spirit has applied with any comfort to your fearful or trembling heart, and the delighful privilege with which I was favored to administer to you that blessed ordinance, by which you took on you the yoke of him who is meek and lowly, and also the kindness of our dear brother Schoonover, in allowing me not only that privilege, but also to welcome you and your dear, loving companions into the church of the living God, by the right hand of fellowship. O, how I delight to wait upon the dear converts who come by grace divine to Zion's gates. Yes, my trembling sister, I can heartily repeat, Welcome to the cross, and welcome to the crown. May the Lord strengthen your confidence, not in yourself, but in him. O, cast yourself wholly upon his strong arm; trust him; yield all to him; he will guide you with his counsel, and afterward receive thee to glory. Let me say for your edification and comfort, that your doubts and fears which unbidden rise to oppose your faith, arise only from that unrenewed nature which you must still bear about with you until the earthly house of this mortal tabernacle shall be dissolved and fall. That new imperishable life which God has implanted in you has no doubts, no fears, no unbelief, no sin; it is pure and holy as the fountain from whence it emanated. But, my dear child, in your flesh you will and do see another law (or governing influence) which wars against your mind, and subjects you at times to bondage and fear. Do not be alarmed at that, for it is the common lot of all saints, but it is utterly unknown to hypocrites. Hypocrites or deceived souls know nothing about the christian warfare; nor do they know that perfect love which casteth out fear. "Think it not strange when

tempted, as though some strange thing had happened to you," but "count it all joy." It is an additional evidence that you are born of God. He will not suffer you to be tempted beyond what you are able to bear, but will with the temptation make a way for your escape. Although you may seldom enjoy the privilege of attending the stated administrations of the word and the ordinances of the church, still your lot is cast in a pleasant place; you have a goodly heritage; you have a church in your father's house; dear and gifted companions, those whom you know, love and confide in; not only your kindred in the flesh, but what is dearer and more lasting, they are also your kindred in Christ, fellow-members of him who only hath immortality dwelling in the light. May you with thanksgiving to God appreciate the blessedness of such society, and by grace abounding be kept as the apple of the eye of our Lord, while he shall lead you about and instruct you.

Your kind words of christian fellowship for and confidence in me as a servant of Christ and minister of the gospel, and the childlike manner in which you address me as a father, touches a tender place in my heart. O, that I were worthy of such affectionate, confiding regard of the precious lambs of our Redeemer's flock. The highest honor and greatest happiness to which my humbled soul aspires while this side of heaven, is that I may enjoy the esteem of those who love our God, and be made of use to them as a servant of the bride of the Lamb. Nothing I could so much dread as to be left to betray the confidence of God's little ones, and forfeit their love and fellowship. But full well I know, if left of my God, I should become a castaway; but he who has succored and kept me for more than fifty years, I am persuaded is able still to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.

> "His love in times past forbids me to think
> He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink."

And the same assurance I have also for you, Rosina, and for all the dear children of our God everywhere.

Before this reaches you I presume brother Silas will be with you. I hope he will write me as soon as he gets home. I received a few lines from him, dated at Georgetown, Ky., in which he intended to be home the last of this week. I hope if convenient he will be with us at our church meeting on the last day of this month, that is, if he does not go to North Carolina; it is the same day on which Kehukee Association is to meet. Give my kindest regards to sister Mary; I intend to reply soon to her interesting letter. My love also to father and mother, Bessie, Urania, James, Silas and Warren, John and William, and all inquiring friends, and be assured that I entertain for you paternal solicitude and christian love.

GILBERT BEEBE.

P. S.—Although I have filled up my paper, I have not responded to many of your expressions, every word of which gave me great satisfaction, and I feel to bless God on your behalf. I think if you knew how much delight the publication of your letter would afford to many, you would feel no reluctance to have it go into the SIGNS, but without your consent I will not publish it.

Hoping to see you soon, with our dear brother Silas, I remain your brother,

GILBERT.

St. Thomas, Ontario, Dec. 18, 1903.

Mr. R. Scates—Dear Brother:—You will no doubt be surprised to hear from me. For some time it has been on my mind to write you. I have thought to put it aside, thinking what could I write to you that would be of any comfort? yet it would come to me to write you some of the Lord's dealings with me in bringing me from darkness into light, from the power of Satan unto the living God. O, what a marvelous work! Who can understand it? None but those to whom it is given to know the riches of his grace.

In the summer of 1900, while in Detroit, I heard Elder Wyman speak from Malachi iii. 3: "And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver," &c. The discourse, and what he said to me afterward, was such as I never heard before. I was much troubled in mind about myself for some time.

In June, 1901, it pleased the Lord to lay upon me the hand of affliction, and show me what a poor, helpless creature I was on a bed of sickness, steeped in sin and wickedness. Should I die in that state what would become of me? How could I meet death without a God, without hope, without mercy? I tried to pray to the Lord to spare me, and not cast me off in such wickedness. It seemed to me I could not pray, as I never prayed when I was well; now it seemed like mockery on my part. I thought if some Old Baptist would come and offer one prayer in my behalf how thankful I should feel; but no one came, this was not the way it was to be. Some weeks later my physician told me I must submit to an operation, that I had not long to live if I did not do so. Then came my sore trial; I had such fear of death, and no hope beyond the grave. I could see nothing but death before me. I prayed to the Lord to have mercy on me, to take away this fear, to give strength at this trying time. I dared not look in the Bible lest every word should condemn me, yet felt I must. I took the Bible one morning; it opened at Psalms lxv: "Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion: unto thee shall the vow be performed." I closed the Bible quickly lest the next sentence should be against me. Those words stayed with me day and night for a time; I did not know their meaning. In a few days I was in the hospital. While there if ever a poor, wretched sinner was brought to the foot of the cross, I feel I was. I looked for death. O, the thought, if I was not one of the number I certainly would be lost. I prayed to the Lord for mercy, to give me some word of comfort. The weight of sin and guilt seemed crushing me down. I looked back to find some good thing that I had done in past days, but to my dismay not one good deed had I ever done, no, not one; I had daily sinned against the God of heaven and earth, who had cared for and watched over me all those days. My sinful life rose before me as I lay there, a condemned, wretched sinner. O, why was I ever born? That I were a bird or beast that had no soul; how happy they were, while I was in agony.

Dear brother, it is a fearful thing to stand before the living God; to be arraigned at the judgment bar. I felt I was in the presence of an angry God, before that all-seeing eye that sees and knows the wickedness of my heart. I was down at his feet in the dust of the earth; all I could say was, "Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean." There are no conditions here. What could I do? where could I go? there was no way of escape. It seemed as if the heavens

closed in upon me, and were as brass or iron; my room seemed the same. Not a prayer of mine could ever reach the God of heaven; no use to pray any more; there was no hope for me, I was not one of the chosen. I tried to think of some Scripture that might comfort me. Not a word could I think of; the Bible was closed, sealed against me; all I could say was, Lord, thou knowest all, have mercy, O, have mercy. I felt it was all over with me; only a thread that kept me out of the pit; in a few hours it would be severed, and how just the Lord was. I rightly deserved the sentence, "Depart from me." But O, the thought to be without a God; had I the wealth of this world I would cast it at my feet for one ray of hope.

I went in this state of mind to the operating room. I shall never forget that morning. Towards the close of the day as I returned to consciousness and opened my eyes in this world, my weak heart went up in gratitude to the Lord who saved me from everlasting punishment. As weeks passed I felt my dreadful state as a sinner. I did not want any person to know how I felt; all I could do was sigh and groan. One evening these words came:

"I feel at my heart all thy sighs and thy groans,
For thou art most nigh me, my flesh and my bones;
And the palms of my hands, when I look on I see
The wounds I received when I suffered for thee."

O, if I knew these words were for me; if I could get some comfort. No minister could do me any good. Were there ever any like me? While in great distress one night these words came, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." I could not find them in the Bible, and did not know their meaning. Could I hear some Old Baptist minister speak from these words I would be glad. As I was going to Ekfrid meeting (a year ago) my heart's desire was that I might hear something that would comfort me. I desired to know if this trouble I felt was of the Lord; something kept telling me it was not of the Lord; it was all a delusion, all my own excitement. I longed for the meeting to begin. Saturday, as Elder Curry preached, had any one told him my trouble he could not have touched my case much better, yet I knew I had not told any person my state of mind. I felt my guilt right there; I thought every one could see how guilty I was. Elder Durand's discourse was beautiful, but it was all for the Lord's people, those blessed people; I was not one of them. Elder Carnell spoke about the covenant; if our names were not in that covenant we were not of that number. O, that I knew my name was written there. Sunday, as the members were seated for communion, I sat back looking on. O, the love that filled my heart towards those dear people; the beauty I saw in those people I cannot describe, while something said to me, Look at them, look at them, Christ dwelling in them the hope of glory. My poor heart and soul went up to the Lord. If he would only make me like the most miserable one in mind there, the one that had the very least hope, and give me a place at their feet, how thankful I should be; I would praise him while I lived. I was confident those people were the redeemed of the Lord, the chosen; I wanted to be near them, to hear them talk; I wanted to get away from former companions, they were no company for me now; these were the people, Christ dwelling in them. How could I keep away from them?

Next day I went to the sanitarium; when there about a week in such distress, these words came to me as if spoken by

some one: You have I quickened, who were dead in trespasses and in sin. I trembled with fear. Also paraphrase 66, first and second verses: "How bright these glorious spirits shine," &c. What did all this mean? Would the Lord have mercy on me? I was afraid to be alone. Something said, I will bring them by a way they knew not. I believed the Lord would bring his people, but I was not one of them. Satan was busy telling me it was all a delusion. I sank lower than ever; I was tired of self and sin; wished I could sleep the time away. I cried, Lord, thou knowest all, O, have mercy. Suddenly these sweet words came: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." I was lifted up, and tried to praise the dear Lord for those beautiful words of comfort, when Satan, as before, said, How dare you take his holy name in your evil lips? this is not for you. I knew I was vile and unworthy, yet I wanted to praise his dear name. I had such a sight of my sinful self, and how the dear Lord died for me; my sins were laid upon him. I saw my Savior on the cross, surrounded by a mob; I was there and helped nail him to the cross. In great agony I prayed to the Lord to appear for me if it were his will. The answer came, I have redeemed thee. Again I was lifted up and comforted for a time, and praised the Lord for his mercy and love; yet something kept me back. Satan, as before, said, You are deceiving yourself; the Lord speaks to his people with power; they will see as it were a light round about them; you have seen none. I sank again. My burden was increasing; I could not stand much more. O, for a resting-place. I clung to those words of comfort. I prayed the Lord to make it known to me if all this was from him, or was I deceiving myself, when suddenly I was surrounded with great power that made this body tremble, while something smote my breast with these words, I have chosen you before the foundation of the world, why doubt any more? I cried out, My Lord and my God. Praise be to thy holy name, thou Lamb of God. "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name" for his goodness and mercy toward me. While in the midst of those praises I noticed my burden was gone; my heart was so light. I thought of Christian when the burden rolled off his back. My sins were forgiven, I was free; I felt I could not praise my Redeemer enough. I called on the angels of heaven to help me praise his holy name. At once the answer came: Doth he not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness and go after that which was lost? And the angels in heaven rejoice over one that is found. O, my glad heart broke out anew in praises to the Lamb of God. I was not alone; what royal company I had. I was lifted out of this body. On the wings of his love I was carried above, and the world was put under my feet. O, the power and peace that surrounded me. The brightness of that noonday I shall never forget; everything in my room helped me praise my dear Redeemer for his wondrous love toward me, the vilest of sinners. I wanted to leave this wicked world right then; I had no fear of death; Satan had fled, and I was singing,

> "'Twas a heaven below,
> The Redeemer to know,
> And the angels could do nothing more
> Than to fall at his feet,
> And the story repeat,
> And the Savior of sinners adore."

Also,

I'm not ashamed to own my Lord,
Or to defend his cause;
Maintain the glory of his cross,
And honor all his laws.

Jesus, my Lord, I know his name,
His name is all my boast;
Nor will he put my soul to shame,
Nor let my hope be lost.

Was there ever a greater miracle performed than what was done for me? I thought I would never doubt again, that I should always be happy; but alas, there came a time when I thought I deceived the Lord's people, deceived myself, and all this experience was imagination, when Elder Chick came with blessed words of comfort to my poor soul. Again I was made to rejoice; I was brought back to that day that the new song was put in my mouth. I felt I could say with one of old, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!
That saved a wretch like me."

I am not always on the mountain top, yet I am blessed more than I deserve.

I have written you a lengthy letter, more than I thought I should at first. I write you this because you were one of four that came to me that day while rejoicing, that I should tell my story to, that you might help me praise his holy name.

I trust this may find Mrs. Scates and yourself in good health. Excuse all errors for the writer's sake.

I remain sincerely yours in hope,

BESSIE GILLIES.

[In sending the above feeling narrative of christian experience to us for publication, brother Scates wishes us to add to it that the consent of the writer was obtained with difficulty. While we can fully understand this, yet we desire to say that all such narratives of the dealings of God with his chosen are good to read, because they glorify God as the sole author and finisher of the faith that is possessed by believers. "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." The writer has learned that salvation is of the Lord in the only way in which such a lesson can be learned. Where there is deep and long continued trouble there is generally a more clear and bright deliverance at last. It was so with our sister, the writer of the above letter; and yet in all the above narrative there is nothing that any child of God cannot respond to as his or her own experience.—Ed.]

Macomb, Ill., Sept., 1903.

Dear Kindred in Christ:—For eighteen years I have enjoyed the love and fellowship of the dear people of God, and they have borne with me in all my faults, my weaknesses, my short comings and my unworthiness. During all these years I have never felt worthy of their love and esteem, but most unworthy and undeserving. How many times I have felt that did they know me as I know myself they would have no fellowship for me. Yet I am sinful enough to wish they should not see me as I see myself, for then I should lose that which I prize above all earthly things, the sweet fellowship of my dear brethren. This mutual feeling of love and companionship, I believe, exists among no people except Old School Baptists. It is written, If we walk in the light we have fellowship one with another. How dark and lonely must be the way, when deprived of the sweet companionship of our dear, spiritual kindred. I feel to say that I have never been grateful enough to my heavenly Father for the inestimable privilege of meeting with and enjoying the

society of his chosen people; he has given them the spirit of charity toward me, they giving me a place among them, receiving me with words of welcome. O, this is most precious, and it makes one rejoice, while it also humbles me to think that I should be enabled to so live as to retain the love and confidence of this "royal priesthood," this "holy nation," this "peculiar people." The reason they are "peculiar" is, because this sweet union exists among no other people. It is only by the grace of God, and not by any goodness in ourselves that we, poor, weak creatures, are enabled to so live as not to bring reproach upon his cause or mar the peace and fellowship of each other. This fellowship cannot be brought about of ourselves, it is not a work of the flesh, but is surely a work of the Spirit. Only those that are born again, know anything of this mystery, for it truly is a mystery to the world, for the world cannot understand spiritual things. This tie or invisible bond of love and kinship is made manifest when the people of God come together from different parts of the world, as strangers in the flesh; yet they soon discover they are not strangers in the Spirit, for they are traveling the same road, have the same experience of trials, tribulations, discouragement, doubts, fears and darkness, as well as times of rejoicing. Their hearts go out in love to each other, they feel they are companions and fellow-travelers on the pilgrimage journey. It is said, "Misery loves company," it surely is true that when a poor, trembling child of God is in darkness he loves to seek those of his kindred, and learn if it is thus with them. While bowed down with the weight of trouble, he is brought into the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ, who says if we would reign with him we must also suffer with him. If we could only know that all our trials are for Christ's sake, it seems we could bear them without so much murmuring, but here we walk by faith, we only know in part. God's children are to bear each other's burdens, bear with each other, speak often together, comfort, instruct and build up each other in our most holy faith, and thus strengthen the sweet bond of fellowship.

These thoughts were brought to my mind while at meeting not long since; it was a yearly meeting of one of the churches of our association, and was held at the residence of brother John McFadden, who cared for the association, as well as other meetings at his house. He and his wife and their son have been Baptists but a few years; but they manifest the true spirit of hospitality and fellowship in making every one welcome. Quite a number of Baptists were present at this meeting, Elders J. L. Scott and S. A. Sanders came a long distance to preach for them. Those who are acquainted with these ministers of the word can bear witness to the kind of preaching we had. They shunned not to declare the counsel of God, being not ashamed of the testimony of Jesus. The saints were fed strong meat as well as the sincere milk of the Word, and feasted on the rich provisions of the King's table. The time between services was spent in singing, and conversing on spiritual things.

Nearly all one afternoon was passed by those present in the relation of their christian experience. Perhaps many of you have been at such a meeting, but I had not, and it was very interesting as well as comforting to hear each one tell what great things the Lord had done for them. A calm, sweet solemnity seemed to pervade the room as one after another, some aged, bent with the weight of near-

ly four score years, and some quite young in the cause, told how the Lord had opened their blind eyes, had led them about and instructed them, had brought them through great tribulation, to trust in his name, had relieved them of the burden of sin, and brought them into his banqueting-house, to the church of the living God, where they found a resting place. No two were exercised in the same way, yet all were led by the same Spirit, all testifying to this one most important truth, that "salvation is of the Lord," that it was by grace, and grace alone, they were saved. All spoke in a meek and humble manner, claiming no merit or goodness in themselves, but as helpless and dependent creatures, needing daily grace and strength. Some had a bright and clear evidence of their acceptance with Christ. Highly blessed are such, who amid the darkest seasons and sorest trials of life can go back to that spot to them most dear and receive fresh courage and hope. While others said all the evidence they had was that they loved the brethren and had loved them for years, but had waited for a better hope, trembling, fearing and waiting outside the fold until they were at last gently forced to enter in, where there should be no great or small ones, but all one in Christ.

I enjoyed all this very much. The sweet fellowship manifested by all, each preferring others to himself. One dear sister said if she could only be allowed to sit at the feet of her brethren and enjoy the good things set forth, she desired no more. As for myself, I said I had many doubts as to whether I had a christian experience. I was one among those who had no clear manifestation of God's mercy and pardon, but felt I loved God's people, his cause, his truth, and the relation of their experience was sweeter to me than the grandest music, and if they could have fellowship for such an one, I wanted to be one among them. I wish above all things to see peace and unity among God's people, if I am saved it is all of grace. This, my dear kindred, is my little experience, this the ground of my hope; it seems small, but it is all I have, this love, this irresistible drawing toward the people of God which the world knows not of, neither by wisdom or learning can they attain to it. This was a most precious meeting, and was so enjoyed by all present. Elders Scott and Sanders said it was one of the most enjoyable meetings of their lives.

While beholding the love and fellowship manifested at this time, I felt like giving expression to some thoughts on the subject, and have done so in my weak, imperfect manner. How much better thus to spend the time while together, speaking words of cheer and comfort to the weak and poor of the flock, than in striving over words to no profit, which only bring confusion and dissension among God's people. I am glad, and I hope, thankful that I have never heard any of these things. Our ministers are God-fearing men, firm in the faith of God's elect, preaching Christ and him crucified, with the ability God gives them, without the fear of man, realizing their high calling, humbly making use of their talents as God wills. Why should poor, finite creatures make excuses for God or his ways? "To whom shall ye liken God?" he is infinite, holy and great, and as the "Heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts." We, as creatures of his hands, should greatly fear and tremble before him, and it becomes us, poor worms of the dust, to

"Be still and know that he is God." The flesh is not always submissive; but may we be enabled to pray for grace to keep us from doing aught to offend our brethren, but ever strive for peace and unity. If I could have the blessed assurance that God ever had thoughts of mercy towards such a poor sinner as I, if I could claim a well grounded hope in his name; if I could with Job, exclaim, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," it would be enough to employ my tongue in praise to him in time and eternity.

JANUARY 20, 1904.

You see by the date of this that it has been written a long time; but after reading it over it seemed so full of imperfection I could not make up my mind to send it, but being requested many times to write for the SIGNS, I will send it trusting to the charity of my brethren. With this I send christian greeting to all the household of faith, with prayer that the new year may be fraught with God's richest blessings to the editors and correspondents of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

I am, I hope, your sister in bonds of fellowship,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

JANUARY 24, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Your last letter was received in due time, and it gave me a degree of pleasure and satisfaction to know that you still thought enough of such a poor sinner to write to him. I know that I am unworthy of your notice, and yet how sad I would feel to be deserted by those with whom I have been associated so long, and whom I hope I have loved for years. Yet now that love seems to have grown cold, and I seem to have become indifferent; still it is with shame that I acknowledge it, for it is a pleasant theme to love others, and a sad one to have the opposite feelings toward any one. Yet I am troubled with such feelings more than I can tell. How sad for one who is a professor of the religion of Jesus to be compelled to make such a confession. It is so much better and so much more to one's credit to love than not to love, yet how can I control my affections and my sentiments of any kind? Can it be possible that any one who has ever felt the love of God shed abroad in the heart, can be so filled with such feelings of iniquity as is the case with me?

I have been very much exercised in my mind over dear brother Beebe's last editorial; to me it seemed most wonderful. I see in it the experience of the natural mind of the child of God during his whole pilgrimage in this world of sin and death. "Let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him." O yes, "If I can only have joy, peace and comfort, and worldly ease, and prosperity, the esteem and love of friends, and above all, have the foes within, which are my worst foes, subdued and crushed out of sight, and if my life may pass along peacefully, and in resignation to God's will, then I will believe in God, without any of these terrible questionings of heart, as to whether there be a God or no, and as to whether I have not been deceived in the whole matter.

"So am I made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me," and I wonder where the scene will end. Can all this be the crucifying of the flesh; and is this the body of death of which Paul spoke, and over which he agonized so much, and inquired so anxiously as to who should deliver him from it, or is it all but the vagary of a morbid, despondent mind? If I could but realize that it is God's hand which is leading me all the way, how satisfied I

would be. I read that Jesus cried out on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" If the holy Son of God endured the terrible temptation of being forsaken of God, O may I not still hope that I will be raised up from this terrible state of gloom and death and arise with the dear Savior from the tomb, and be satisfied? But it is a painful experience to be crucified, or as one of old said, to be "killed all the day long."

I am glad that dear brother Benton Beebe wrote that article before he passed away, and that he gave, as it were, such solemn and weighty testimony to the dying of the Lord Jesus in the hearts of his people, for to me, at least, it was a most solemn and weighty testimony to the truth. We feel sad indeed to think of him as gone from among us, and that we will no more read his comforting testimony, but with him it will be, I am sure, a welcome rest, which no tongue can describe. As for his companion in life, who, but those that have passed through the same, can know the sadness and painfulness of the experience through which she has passed, and must pass in the future? But there is a hand which can sustain and comfort, and to him alone can she look in this dark hour of her life. But what a blessed thought, she sorrows not as those who have no hope, and we all trust that this hope will sustain and comfort her in this great conflict of trial and trouble, and it is sure that thousands will mourn and sympathize with her.

I remain your unworthy brother,

***

[THE writer of the above, expressly forbids that his name should be given, if we saw fit to publish it. We can but say that the deep soul conflicts named by our dear brother are not altogether strange to ourself, and we are sure that the children of God will all of them recognize their own travel in the above. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." This is a blessed promise, and its fulfillment is sure. Our brother has, we know, found it so in the past, and he will find it so again.—ED.]

ALLENTOWN, Pa., Jan., 1904.

TO THE CHURCH AT HOPEWELL, N. J. —DEAR FELLOW-PILGRIMS:—I desire to send you a New Year's greeting, and to express my love for my kindred in Christ, if indeed it be that I am one of his. My heart goes out to you, my brethren, with inexpressible longing. It is but seldom that I can meet you in the flesh, yet I fondly hope we do meet in the Spirit at times. In looking back over the past year, I find much to regret, and find that I have not grown better, but rather the worse. As my mind travels back, it stops at the period where my travel from nature to grace began; there I behold wonderful things. It was at my grandmother's home, when she talked of the Scriptures, and related to me some of the wonderful works of Jesus, that a desire sprang up in my heart to become a better girl; it was there that the Spirit began to work in my heart like the leaven in the meal. Yet how far I wandered into dense thickets, swamps and miry clay. I dishonored this wonderful Jesus in whom I did believe. I think that I believed in him as a wonderful Savior, but not as my Savior; I was too bad for that. But the leaven was working all the time, and the desire to become better was growing stronger and stronger, yet I was still held captive by the awful monster, sin. I enjoyed it to the full, yet not without a troubled conscience.

Afterwards I joined myself to a strange

people, whose God I was led to believe, would tear me in pieces in his wrath, if I failed to perform their works. They gave me husks for bread, and they did not nourish me. My mind now travels on to the time when I could no longer eat their pottage, and how hungry and homesick I was, with not a place to lay my head. If I heard the name of Jesus, it was not the almighty Savior in whom I believed as a child. The Jesus whom they declared, must have the help of poor, puny man to assist him in this great work of salvation. This was not the Jesus in whom I believed, for I did believe in his almighty power to save his people to the uttermost; none of them shall be lost, no, not one.

But in the travel of my mind, I pause to ask, "Am I one of them?" I can but say,

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know."

He led me on in the footsteps of the flock, and established my goings. Then he received me into the sheepfold of the good Shepherd, whose tender care is over all his sheep, and who carries the lambs in his bosom, and there, dear kindred, how safe we are. But I know that if I am one of his sheep, I am a very black one indeed. I do want the good Shepherd to guard me in my wanderings, and to keep me at his feet, I want to hear his voice calling me, that I may not follow strangers. Should I be permitted to live through this new year, I want to spend it in his service, but I know that I shall fail unless he works in me to will and to do of his good pleasure. My pathway has not been composed of thorns entirely, there have been glimpses of sunshine given me in my love for the brethren, and, I trust, in their love for me. In all this weary journey I have never doubted this good Shepherd, or questioned whether he would forsake his sheep. Many of us, dear kindred, have ascended the top of the hill of life, and are now descending the other side.

"We nightly pitch our moving tent
A day's march nearer home."

Brother Chick, I will leave this to your judgment whether to publish or not. It is a little expression of my love to you all. I know it is imperfect, but what can one expect from such a poor clod of the earth? I will close by wishing you all a happy new year.

Your sister in hope,

MARY E. FISHER.

ASHLAND, Ill., Jan. 6, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Christmas has come again since I last wrote you how much I appreciate our paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. So many times I feel like I would like to write a few lines and tell you, dear editors and the dear correspondents, how my heart goes out to you in love for the precious truth that comes in my home twice each month of the year. While I am not blessed to write on the Scripture, am I not blessed when I can understand the truth when it is written? Am I not blessed when I look back twenty-eight years ago, when God in his mercy rolled the dark clouds away, and gave me a hope that Jesus is my Savior? O, that sweet peace of mind, I could never find words to express. I thought then I should never doubt again, but soon I found that dark clouds would return, the same doubts and fears, and often I would think, Is any one else like me? I wanted to tell the dear brethren all about my heart-aches, but all I could tell them was, I am not worthy of your love, then they would kindly take me by the hand and

tell me how they missed me when I was not with them. And am I not blessed when I tell you twenty-eight years are now passed, and God in his mercy has once more cleared the clouds away, and I can feel his presence in that little hope which was first so dear to me? We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren.

Unworthily, your little sister,

ELLA M. PARROTT.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Feb. 11, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—The inclosed letter was written by our brother, Deacon A. W. Rittenhouse, the day before he died. It is his last writing. It may be of comfort to those in fellowship. Our brother seldom spoke or wrote of his exercises, but walked and lived as became the gospel of Christ.

What better reason can be given of a good hope through grace than such testimony as this?

Your brother,

JOHN McCONNELL.

SPARKILL, N. Y., Dec. 16, 1903.

DEAR SISTER NEWTON:—Some of the folks tell me of you sometimes. I am now confined to the bed, and unless there is a change for the better I do not expect to live long.

As for my old sinful nature, I have given it up as beyond help. All the hope I have is in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The question is always before me, Am I one of those embraced in the covenant of love, ordered in all things and sure, and which put no condition on the sinner? "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." I believe I was relieved of that old burden of sin when quite young, but could not for a long time go to the church and ask them for a place with them. There came a time when I was made willing, and I went, hoping if I was mistaken I would be kept from it.

Ellie and I will be glad to see you.

Your brother in love and fellowship,

ARTHUR W. RITTENHOUSE.

(See obituary notice on page 157.)

SENECA FALLS, N. Y., Dec. 9, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—As it is time to send on my remittance, I inclose a postal order for five dollars, two for the SIGNS for the coming year, (1904) and three for the SIGNS' debt. I have taken the SIGNS more than forty years, but it cannot be much longer, for if I live until next May I shall be eighty-two years old. I have read the SIGNS with great comfort. They are just as firm for the truth as when I first took them; I thank the dear Lord for giving us such faithful editors to fight for the truth. I hear no preaching, so I long for the SIGNS to come, I do not know what I would do without them, they explain so many things in the Bible that I do not understand. I have been very gloomy of late, and said like one of old, Has the Lord forgotten to be gracious? I feel as I grow old I do not get better. I am a poor, unworthy and ungrateful sinner, but I hope in the mercy of God, and I love his people. I feel, brother Beebe, that you and brother Chick fight nobly for the true doctrine. When I read your editorials my tears flow, and I say, Thank the Lord.

You may not hear any more from me, but hope you both will remember me at the throne of grace.

Your unworthy sister,

E. CANDLER.

CHURCH NOTICES.

WE, the members of the Old School Primitive Baptist church, called West Fork, in Hampton, Franklin Co., Iowa, at our regular monthly meeting on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in December, 1903, have claimed the constitution and order of the church, for the following reasons. First, because the exclusion of Elder E. A. Norton, was not according to gospel order. No gospel steps were taken. There was no charge on the church book against him. On the twenty-first day of November, 1903, they took up charges, and excluded him, neither himself, nor any of the members who claim the order of the church, being present.

Elder Norton has not violated the rules of the church in any respect, and we hold him in fellowship and order.

Second, for publishing their act in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which we consider a stigma on his personal character and standing among churches of the Old School Baptist faith and order where he is not known, and also in the community in which he lives, as a faithful minister of the gospel. Therefore we ask that this be published in the SIGNS.

Done at our conference meeting, and signed by the order of the church this twenty-third day of January, 1904.

JAMES W. ALLEN, Clerk.

Witnesses, James W. Allen, A. J. Tolberd, Mary A. Norton, Catherine H. Norton, Jane Harlan, Eliza J. Tolberd.

This is to certify that Elder E. A. Norton is in good standing with the Old School Primitive Baptist church of Nora Springs, Floyd Co., Iowa. We consider his exclusion unjust and unlawful.

M. L. JACKSON.

Pastor of Little Cedar Church.

[IT will be remembered that some time since we published a notice of the exclusion of Elder E. A. Norton, named above. Some time afterwards we received a letter from him, written in a very kind and brotherly spirit, complaining that injustice had been done him in the notice which we published. In his letter he expressed no censure against the SIGNS at all. His letter contained a statement of his view of the matter. We certainly do not wish to be the medium of injustice toward any one. So we wrote him that if the churches which he was serving would send a brief statement of the matter, but not going into any details, we would be glad to publish it. The above statement has reached us, and we willingly give it space in justice to Elder Norton. In doing so, we cannot, and do not, undertake to express any opinion as regards the unhappy trouble of the churches in that section. We do hope that the spirit of grace and peace may so prevail among brethren in that section, and everywhere, that troubles may not arise, and that where they have arisen they may be healed. We have long had very serious doubts as to whether it is ever needful or wise to publish abroad notice of trouble, or of exclusions of ministers or members from the churches. Is it not generally far better to keep all these things as close at home as possible? We do not wish that the SIGNS shall be the medium of doing harm to any one. We feel our liability to make mistakes, and we hope that all will feel to bear with us, and pray for us that we do no evil. We have now published the statement of both parties, and so far as the SIGNS is concerned the matter must rest here.—ED.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1904.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ARTICLES OF FAITH.

We recall that when at the age of eighteen years it was our privilege to become a member of the church at North Berwick, Maine, we found that church had written articles of faith, embracing the substance of what they believed the Scriptures to teach concerning God the Father, Son and Spirit, and concerning the great work of redemption in Christ. These articles embraced the doctrine of predestination of all things, foreknowledge, election, effectual atonement, limited to the elect, and equally effectual calling by grace through the Spirit, final perseverance of the saints to glory through grace, the resurrection of the dead at the last day, and final glory of the redeemed, and everlasting punishment of the non-elect. These were the things which as it was firmly believed by that church and by our own self, were revealed and taught in the holy Scriptures. We recall also that in those articles of faith, and in the church covenant, the duty of a consistent life was presented and insisted upon. All these things were considered to be in perfect harmony with each other, and with the teachings of the Bible.

In after years we became acquainted with what were called the old Philadelphia confession of faith, and the London confession. These were written out at much greater length, and they more elaborately set forth the same principles of doctrine that were presented in the articles at North Berwick. The articles of faith there were not, however, modeled upon these two latter; that is, they were not in any sense copied, but they were written independently as the expression of the faith of that church. They were also written before the articles adopted at Black Rock, Md., in 1832; yet they contained the same principles of doctrine in substance as those adopted at Black Rock. As our acquaintance with the churches has widened in later years, we have found that nearly all of them have thought it necessary to formulate in the way of written articles, the faith which they have believed the Scriptures teach. Forms of expression and Scriptures referred to, differ to some extent, but still all are in substance agreed.

It has been a question in the minds of some, Why have articles of faith in the churches at all? Of late our own mind has been resting somewhat upon this same question, with some others as well, and we have felt like suggesting a few things regarding these questions. It would seem, since such articles are almost universal among the churches, that there must have been some good reason for them. We desire to say in the first place, that in our opinion churches could not make known what they believe and practice in any other way so well, or at least so conveniently. First of all we would call attention to the fact that articles of faith are but a brief expression of what churches believe the Scriptures contain or teach. They are not meant to take the place of the Scriptures, and all who read them ought to search the Scrip-

tures daily, as did some of old, to see if these things be so.

Why have articles of faith? Because there is no professed religious body in what is called christendom, who will not heartily say, "We accept what the Scriptures teach." To say this, however, does not prove that any one occupies right ground, or is in agreement with what they do really teach. We recall that in our early life we met with Methodists, Freewill Baptists and Second Adventists, and when we would enter into conversation with them, all would strenuously insist that they believed the Scriptures, and were engaged in teaching them to all who would hear. But directly we found that while we all would say this, yet there was no agreement between us in what we thought the word of God did teach; and when it came to stating, either by word of mouth or in writing, what we believed the word of God did teach, this would be to state an article of faith. For instance, we insisted that personal, unconditional election before the world was made, was taught in the Scriptures, while others denied this, and thought it a horrible and impossible doctrine. Thus we divided, and election, as stated above, became an article of faith. But we always remembered that our statement of what we believed the Scriptures taught was not authority for it, but was to be considered as being based upon the sole authority of the word of God. It was thus needful that we should more minutely define our faith than simply to say what we believed the Scriptures taught, or that they were the record of all that was needful for the church in faith and practice. Others who differed from us as widely as the east is from the west, said the same thing. What we have here said of course would apply to each and every principle of doctrine or practice held among us.

From what we have said above, it would seem that articles of faith are a necessity. They are a necessity if we are to be able to clearly state wherein we differ from others as to what the Bible contains. They are needful for those who have come to think seriously of the word of God, and to desire a name and place among those who serve God, not in the oldness of the letter, but in newness of Spirit, that they may readily know what any body of people do believe and teach religiously. No seeking soul could be satisfied to learn from some church that they professed to adhere to what the Scriptures teach, since many such churches do not hold to or teach one word concerning vital godliness, and such an earnest heart would soon starve in their communion. But how shall that one know just what any church or body of people does believe or teach? It is not enough in these days to say, "We teach and believe the Bible." All profess to do that; yet one practices sprinkling and another immersion, or dipping, for baptism. It is then needful that the churches show that they hold and practice that ordinance which is enjoined in the Bible. This statement would be an article of faith. They are a necessity also to keep out those who deny the faith, so as to avoid schisms and strife among us. Any one coming to the church would say, "I believe the Bible to be the word of God revealed, and I believe and accept what it teaches," and yet directly we might find that one denying predestination, election, the atonement, and even eternal life itself.

We find the beginning of articles of faith in the New Testament. The eunuch was required to state his faith: "If thou

believest with all thine heart." He said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Men of their ownselves began to arise in the churches at the earliest age, and to bring in all manner of heresies and false practices. The apostles at once began to write and speak against their teachings. Each statement opposite to these false teachings would be an article of faith in the churches. When the question arose, Acts xv., concerning circumcision and keeping the law of Moses, the apostles declared the faith concerning this, verses 28, 29, and what is contained in those verses would be an article of faith, sustained by the authority of the apostles, which is the final authority always with the church of God. Affirmations of truth, and denials of error, are found frequently in the epistles, as occasion arose for them, and as false teachers sprang up. Brief statements of these would be articles of faith. Then, as time passed on and other heresies arose, it became needful to clearly state just what the word of God did declare regarding these things also, and so other statements of the faith, or other articles of faith, would come to be adopted in the true churches. In the last century floods of error were sweeping over the Baptist churches, and so it became needful to formulate articles of faith against these things, to show that the true followers of Christ would not be entangled in them. These same principles apply with regard to the formulation of the old London confession of faith, and with regard to the Philadelphia confession, and afterwards with regard to the Black Rock statement of the true faith.

These articles of faith, by whomsoever adopted since the days of the apostles, are not in any sense authority as to what we shall believe. What place do they occupy? Just this, and this only: by the statement of them we simply express what we believe the word of God does teach. Perhaps there is a danger which will always accompany any statement of what men believe; that many will come to regard those who formulate such articles, and the articles themselves, as being authority. But danger accompanies even the ministry of the word, in that some may say, "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas." Temptation can enter at any door, unless it be strictly guarded, and the weakness of our nature is such that only divine grace can keep us from mistakes and error. So with articles of faith; some who are weak may come to regard them much as they do the word of God itself; but this is altogether wrong; the Scriptures alone are authority, so what they teach is to be received and believed, and what they do not teach religiously is to be rejected.

Our mind has been led somewhat to these reflections because of the peculiar circumstances of trial through which the church has been passing in the United States during the past ten years. In what has been written and said during this time, frequent reference has been made to the old London confession, and to the Black Rock confession, and occasionally to the old Philadelphia confession. But it must not be understood that those who have referred to these confessions, and who have insisted upon them as containing substantial truth, have intended by so doing to set them forth as having divine authority of themselves. We have ourself referred to these several confessions as containing in the main, Old School Baptist faith, and have insisted that those who have departed from these things ought not to continue to hold the name of Old School Baptists.

This was also claimed earnestly and stated more than once by our departed brother, Benton L. Beebe; but neither he nor ourself intended by so doing to set these confessions up as a standard of authority for the doctrine which is to be believed by the churches of Christ, but as statements of what was undisputedly held as Bible teaching by our fathers, and by the church in all the country at the time they were presented at Black Rock, in 1832. We have referred to the articles adopted by the convention at Black Rock as containing just what we ourself have always held as Bible teaching, and what we still believe to be the mind of the holy Spirit. As we said at the beginning of this editorial, these were the articles of faith held by the church at North Berwick prior to 1832, where we were received into membership more than forty years ago; and it is our recollection that ministers like Elder Wm. Quint, who was then the pastor of that church, and Elders Wm. J. and J. L. Purington, John A. and J. L. Badger, Hiram Campbell, Whitehouse, P. H. Hartwell and others whom we used to hear in that early day, always insisted that the Bible alone contained the true standard. We have often remembered a sermon by Elder Whitehouse, at North Jay, Maine, from the text, "To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them," together with the warm commendation of it by all who were present, in which he insisted that the literal word of God was the one standard to which every thought, feeling and desire of our hearts personally were to be brought and tested, and to which the church was to look for all authority for what she believed and practiced. We recall also how those old and able ministers would insist that we, as Old School Baptists, did have the authority of the word of God for our faith and practice. This commended itself to us then, and it commends itself to us still, as the one thing to be remembered in all our travel personally, and as churches.

We desire to say in closing, that the expounding of the word so that its true meaning shall be brought forth, is the first great qualification of a gospel minister, and the first requisite of an orderly and faithful church. We must insist that all language in the Bible ought to be given its true and just meaning, as we would deal with any other book or writing. This is more important to be remembered as we deal with the Scriptures, than it is with regard to any other book, since all other books are the words of man, while the Bible is the word of God spoken to us in human language. The words of the Bible are God's words; they are to be accepted without question as altogether true; but we come to understand them by comparing Scripture with Scripture, and by the presence and illumination of the same Spirit that indited them and moved men in olden time to write them. For this illumination of the holy Spirit we have need to pray, and all humble students of the Bible will come to feel more and more the need of divine light to shine in their own hearts and in the sacred page.

In conclusion, we desire to say that it seems to us sure that God has at no time left himself without witness to the truth, so that the true church has at no time very greatly departed from the truth, or failed to see the true meaning of the Scriptures.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MATTHEW VIII. 11, 12.

DEAR BROTHER:—I address you to-night for the first time, for the purpose of asking your views on Matt. viii. 11, 12.

The Old Baptists here are well pleased with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so far as I have heard. May the Lord enable you to continue to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, is the prayer of your unworthy brother,

LOVETT LEE.

PAINT ROCK, Ark., April 3, 1861.

REPLY.

THE text proposed reads thus: "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven, but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." These words appear to have been spoken by our Lord soon after he had come down from the mountain where he had preached the sermon on the mount. Having finished the instructions to his disciples, and descended from the mountain, a great multitude of people thronged around him, and in their presence he touched and healed a filthy leper. And when he was entered into Capernaum, an officer of the Roman army came and besought him in behalf of a servant of his who was sick of the palsy and grievously tormented, and Jesus also healed the centurion's servant. This display of miracles very naturally excited the jealousy of the Jews, who regarded the touching of a leprous person as a violation of their laws, and the favoring of a Roman centurion as little if any less defiling. But when he had positively declared that he had not found so great faith in Israel, or among the Jews, as this centurion manifested, the surprise and astonishment of the self-conceited pharisees must have been raised to the highest degree. And yet he had something more to tell them, that many shall come from the east and west, even of publicans and harlots, as he had elsewhere declared, and shall sit down with the patriarchs and prophets, and these self-righteous pharisees be cast out. Publicans and harlots, redeemed and washed in Jesus' blood, and clothed in his spotless righteousness, shall be qualified to participate in the spiritual privileges of the gospel kingdom, while children of the kingdom, or those who legally occupied that position, should be cast out. As the Canaanites were cast out of the promised land, to make room for the heirs of the promise which God had before made to Abraham, so the carnal Israelites should be severed from Abraham, the true olive tree, for the grafting in of the Gentiles. In the sermon on the mount, Christ had declared, Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom. The kingdom in its gospel organization is spiritual, and human righteousness is insufficient to qualify any one to enter it, therefore Jesus has declared most positively that except a man be born again, born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter it. No legal righteousness can exceed the righteousness of scribes and pharisees; but the righteousness of God, which is by the faith of the Son of God, does exceed. And Christ, who knew no sin, was made sin for us, (his people,) that we should be made the righteousness of God in him. This will do; with this even publicans and harlots are cleansed and made holy, and unto them is Christ made wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. And this is his name whereby he

shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness. Men are fatally mistaken when they presume that their works of righteousness or obedience to the law will justify them before God, for, by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God. Justifying righteousness is not of the law. If a law had been given that could give life, righteousness should be by the law, but that no man is justified by the deeds or works of the law is evident from the fact that, The just shall live by faith. Hence, Paul, who understood precisely the difference between the righteousness of men and the righteousness of God, could cheerfully forego everything else, that he might be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

Christ could and did declare beforehand that many of those shall come from the east and west, and, as in another text he adds, and from the north and south, from every point of the compass, and as his members, clothed with the garment of his salvation, covered with the robe of his righteousness, they shall enter his kingdom, come with songs and everlasting joy to his Zion, and inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. There in his kingdom shall they sit down with Abraham, having the faith, not the flesh, of Abraham. If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs accerding to the promise. The children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are recognized for the seed. These are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John the Baptist told the scribes and pharisees to think not to say they had Abraham to their father; that plea was sufficient to admit them to a standing with carnal Israelites under the law, but now the axe is laid at the root of the trees, and every fruitless tree is cut down; and all the trees are barren until they are first made good trees, and then the fruit will be good, for a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, nor can an evil tree bring forth good fruit. But God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham.

The carnal Israelites were in the kingdom, as it existed under the ceremonial law, in the types. But that dispensation is abolished, and they, as children of the kingdom, in that sense are cast out, as was the rich man in the parable, while Lazarus is now in the bosom of Abraham, and a great gulf is fixed between them. Gentile sinners redeemed from all the tribes of the earth are gathered into communion with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the carnal seed are cast out into outer darkness. The kingdom of Christ is illuminated internally, the Lord God and the Lamb are the light of it; but without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. With these the carnal workmongers are associated, and of their doom they shall partake. The light which is in them, of which they boast, is darkness, and it is outer darkness, and how great is that darkness. Darkness signifies death, the opposite of life. In the Word, which was made flesh, is life, and the life is the light of men. The opposite of that life and light is outer darkness, and in it shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Weeping, when it proceeds from contrition, shows a godly sorrow, working repentance which is unto life, and needeth not to be repented of; but the sorrow of

the world worketh death. The first shows the work and yields the fruits of the Spirit, but the latter is accompanied by wrath, violence and gnashing of teeth, unreconciliation to God, opposition to holiness, and implacable enmity to the truth and all who hold and love the truth.

As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; so we see the declaration not only bears upon the carnal Israelites, but extends to all who are of the works of the law, or rather all who are seeking for justification by obedience to the precepts of the law, and to commend themselves to the divine favor by their own works; they are all of them in outer darkness, and have not light to see that salvation is by grace alone, not of works, lest any man should boast. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but of his mercy he hath saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. But the very darkness which hides these things from the eyes of the wise and prudent, they call light, while all the things of the Spirit are unto them foolishness, and they call it darkness. Such was the wretched condition of all men by nature, and those who are now translated from the power of darkness into God's marvelous light were by nature children of wrath even as others, but God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he hath loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. It surely is no less than the works of God himself. "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

"Then give all the glory to his holy name;
To him all the glory belongs;
Be yours the high joy still to sound forth his fame,
And crown him in each of your songs."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 15, 1861.

TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

WE desire to say to our correspondents who have requested our views upon quite a number of portions of the word, that we do not wish to neglect their requests at all, and will reply as soon as we can do so. Some of them we do not feel that we have sufficient light upon to undertake a reply. We hope that none will think that we desire to slight them, if we do not reply, or if our reply should be somewhat delayed. More and more we come to see how little we do know of the things of God, as revealed in the Scriptures. We feel sure of the truth of the doctrine that is dear to us, but cannot present it as we desire. At best we see but in part and know in part.

TO DISCONTINUE THE SALE OF BIBLES.

WE have only eight self-pronouncing Bibles left in stock, as follows; four of No. 8707, three of No. 8313, one of No. 8701, and only two Testaments. These books will be sold at the usual prices. For description and price see any SIGNS for 1903.

Owing to the advance in price of such books, and the few calls for them, we have decided not to handle them after these on hand are gone.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO AN APPEAL OF BRETHREN TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$902 65
L. M. Baird, Ky., $2.00; Mrs. Edward Griffin, N. Y., $3.00; First Ind. Baptist Church in Woburn, Mass., $4.00.—Total	9 00
Total to date	$911 65

PERSONALS.

THOSE wishing to communicate with me by telegram, will please send all messages to Glenburn, Pa., instead of Clarks Summit, Pa., as previously requested.

D. M. VAIL.

WAVERLY, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Ann Eliza Hartley departed this life surrounded by loving relatives and friends, at her home near Macleay, Oregon, Jan. 2nd, 1904, aged 74 years, 2 months and 11 days. The deceased was born in Laurel Co., Ky., Oct. 22nd, 1829. At the age of eighteen she was united in marriage to Edmund Waller Hartley, Dec. 29th, 1847, thus living together over fifty-six years. To this union were born twelve children, eight daughters and four sons. Two daughters and one son preceded her to the great beyond. After marriage she and her husband moved to their home in Jefferson Co., Ill., living there until the spring of 1865, when they crossed the plains to Marion Co., Oregon, coming with teams; they were six months on this journey. They settled on a farm seven miles east of Salem, where she resided until her death. Mother was baptized in January, 1851, by Elder Joseph Hartley, into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church. Since that time she has lived a consistent christian life, and left to her relatives and friends a lasting memory of her unfeigned piety and devotion to the cause of her blessed Redeemer. Thus a faithful woman has departed to be at rest forever. She had a warm place in the affection of her brethren in the church, and deserved it, because of the virtues that made up her lovely character. She was devoted to the interests of her home, husband and children. She was a kind-hearted woman, and by her many good qualities won the friendship of many, and was loved most by those who knew her best. She dearly loved the company of her brethren. Her house was always open to the Old School Baptists at their meetings, and at all other times when they desired it so. She treated the rich and poor alike. But now she is gone; those dear, useful, tired hands are folded, no more to take up life's weary burden, and she is indeed sadly missed by husband, children, the little church and many friends. Mother loved the sound doctrine taught by Christ and his followers, and was quick to detect error either in preaching or practice. She was a victim of that dread disease, cancer of the face, from which she suffered over three years. During all this time she was able to be up a part of each day. She gradually grew weaker, and during the last week could not walk alone. On New Year's morning she seemed better, and sat up the greater portion of the day, but about six o'clock in the evening grew worse, and sank rapidly till the end came at 1:15 p. m., Jan. 2nd, 1904. Her sufferings, which were great, were borne with much patience to the end. All who knew her can bear witness that her faith in the Redeemer, her trust in the God of salvation and providence, were unfaltering. Grace had wrought great things for her and in her, the fruit of which appeared in her life. During all her sufferings sister Maggie and I waited on her, and we never heard her complain, and when she knew the summons must soon come, waited for the call of the heavenly Father in humble faith and hope. She so often said during the last weeks of her life, "I am only waiting." During the last month of her sickness she had her daughter Maggie often read to her from the SIGNS, and said they were such a comfort to her. She had been a subscriber and reader of the SIGNS for a great many years. When she would talk to us about going home, which she often did, and we would shed tears, she would reach out her dear hands and caress us, and say, "Why do you weep? I do not feel like shedding tears."

By her request the funeral services were conducted at her home, by Elders Silas Williams and W. S. Matthews, who paid a loving tribute to the memory of her, whose life was an inspiration to all by whom she was surrounded. After which the remains were followed to their last resting-place by sorrowing relatives and a host of friends. All her children were present on this sad occasion. Interment in the Baptist cemetery at Macleay, Jan. 5th, 1904, near the once happy home.

O, it is so hard to part with mother, never to see her on earth again, but we believe our loss is her eternal gain.

Her daughter, IDA M. HARTLEY.

MACLEAY, Ore., Jan. 25, 1904.

Mrs. Susan J. Mears departed this life after a short illness of five days with what was termed softening of the brain. She died at her home in Accomac Co., Va., near the place of her membership, where she had lived all of her married life. Sister Mears was born Jan. 10th, 1830, and was married to J. C. Mears, who was afterward an Elder, about fifty years ago. She was baptized into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church called Messongoes, Accomac Co., Va., in the year 1859, by Elder Thomas Walters, and remained an orderly, loving and steadfast member until death. She filled every place well that falls to the lot of a member of the church of Christ. She was an exemplary woman at her home, in the neighborhood and in the church. Many will remember the hospitality of her home, and also of meeting her away from home, as she attended associations a great deal. She was well versed and a good talker, and made herself known wherever she went. She took great delight in having her Baptist friends at her house, as many will remember. Sister Mears' has been a familiar name so long we all miss her very much, and no one can miss her much more than the writer of this notice. Awhile before she died she said she wanted to die and be at rest with her Savior. She was unconscious much of the time after she was taken sick, and passed away like a lamp burning out; it could hardly be told when she she breathed her last. A good and noble woman is gone, and we be-

lieve she has entered into rest. At the time of her death she was 74 years and 5 days old, and had been a member of the church forty-five years. She leaves to mourn, four children, one son, A. F. Mears, and three daughters, Mrs. Margaret Summers, Mrs. Sadia West and Mrs. Eliza Byrd, and a number of grandchildren, with the church, but not without hope. We fancy we hear her saying, Weep not for me, but for yourselves and your children.

The writer was called upon to officiate at her funeral. Sang as a memorial of her, "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep," and took for the text 1 Corinthians iv. 7, after which all that was mortal was laid away in the old homestead cemetery to await the summons from on high, then to come forth clothed with immortality, and thus be prepared to enter into the fullness of that glory that shall be revealed. The children have our sympathy.

Her pastor, T. M. POULSON.

SISTER **Ann Eliza (Lane) Simmons** was born Sept. 10th, 1834, in Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., and departed this life Feb. 3rd, 1904, at Hillsboro, Texas, aged 69 years, 4 months and 24 days. Her disease was softening of the brain. She was united in marriage to Mr. A. D. Simmons, Oct. 2nd, 1850. To them were born thirteen children, eight of whom are living: one in Kingston, N. Y., one in Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., two in Colorado and four in Texas. Sister Simmons united with the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, Ulster Co., N. Y.; was baptized by Elder Jacob Winchell, in 1854. Truly a mother in Israel has fallen, and O, how we miss her! We miss her loving, gentle face; we miss her kind and motherly advice, and above all we miss her deep, spiritual convictions, which manifested the image of Jesus so plainly in her every word and deed. To know her was to love her. She was ever ready and willing to throw the mantle of charity over the erring and weak of God's little ones, but when thoroughly convinced that the sin was willful and unto death, she stood firm, however painful it might be to her, and would know no man after the flesh, saying, "We are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." O, for more such good and faithful members. It has been our blessed privilege to see her almost weekly and sometimes daily for seven years, and O, the many seasons of rejoicing we have had telling of our joys and sorrows, and feasting on the flesh and blood of our crucified and risen Lord. She was a devoted wife, a kind and loving mother and a most excellent neighbor.

At her request the writer tried to speak at her funeral, using the text and hymns selected by herself: Phil. i. 21, and hymns Nos. 1246 and 1257 (Beebe's Collection). To the bereaved husband and children we would say, Weep not, for her sufferings are over, and she is now at rest in the presence of her blessed Redeemer. Our loss is her eternal gain.

And now may the God of all grace comfort the husband and children with his holy presence, and guide you in the way of all truth, and when he has accomplished his most holy purpose with you here in this world, may you all be accepted of him, is our prayer for Jesus' sake.

J. B. BUNTYN.

HILLSBORO, Texas, Feb. 7, 1904.

Elder J. M. Griffin died at his residence in Callahan Co., near Cottonwood, Texas, Jan. 22nd, 1904, after an illness of two weeks, aged 57 years. His death was caused by a fractured rib, on which an abcess formed. He was born in Kemper Co., Miss., Nov. 17th, 1846; was married to Miss Martha Francis Stovall, April 27th, 1865. He professed a hope in Christ in 1868; joined Harmony Church, in Neshoba Co., Miss., in 1877; moved to Texas in 1885, and joined Providence Church, in Callahan Co., and was ordained to the full work of the ministry Oct. 28th, 1888. He was a minister of the gospel for about sixteen years. He was known all the time of his ministry as a bold, earnest and very able defender of the faith which is dear to the people of God, and which was dear to him. How greatly he will be missed among our friends, and especially the little band of believers of Providence Church will miss him. The fourth Saturday and Sunday in each month he was always willing and ready to go. Salvation by grace was his strong hope and anchor that reacheth within the vail. His greatest desire was to be with his brethren. He was a kind husband and a loving father. He leaves a wife, six children and several grandchildren. Papa talked with us on Sunday before he died, and told how he wanted his business arranged.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder W. B. Johnson, of Scranton, Texas. Papa selected hymn No. 382 (Lloyd), to be sung on the occasion. Our father died in a glorious hope of life and immortality beyond the grave. His remains were laid to rest in the Cottonwood cemetery Saturday. O, it was hard to give him up, but to depart and be with Christ is far better.

His loving daughter,

(MRS.) G. B. EVERETT.

COTTONWOOD, Texas.

DIED—**Arthur W. Rittenhouse,** son of the late Elder E. Rittenhouse, at Sparkill, N. Y., Dec. 18th, 1903, aged 47 years and 5 months. Sadly we have to record the decease of a brother who lived into the love, admiration and respect of all who knew him. He was a devoted husband, loving father, faithful friend. In the church he was above criticism, a brother in the truest sense; a deacon that used the office well; a trustee and clerk on whose ability, counsel and faithful discharge of duty we could always rely. The peace and pros-

perity of our church is due in no slight degree to his life and labor among us in always seeking the things which make for peace. He was ill many months, but throughout it all expressed no murmur or complaint. His wife, sister Ella, and three children survive.

The funeral took place from his late residence, and the interment in family plot at Sparkill. The writer spoke from Luke xxi. 25–28.

JOHN McCONNELL.

Mr. James Bannister died at his home near Forest, Ont., on Saturday, Oct. 31st, 1903, aged 86 years. He was a native of England, and came to Canada in 1839. He leaves an aged wife and nine children to mourn. Mr. Bannister was not a member of the church, but gave every evidence that he was a redeemed vessel of mercy. The Bible, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, Beebe's editorials and Beebe's hymn book formed his library. He was firmly established in the doctrine of God our Savior. The hymn which was sung at his father's funeral in England, eighty years ago, had been selected by him to be sung at his own funeral. His reputation as a citizen was attested by the great concourse of people who followed him to his grave.

The writer of this notice was called to speak to the bereaved family and friends the gospel of the Son of God. The remains were laid in Beechwood graveyard to await the summons from on high, to rise and meet the Lord in the air, and to be ever with the Lord.

H. M. CURRY.

MEMORIAL.

WHEREAS, It has pleased Almighty God, our heavenly Father, to remove from our midst by death our dearly beloved brother, Arthur W. Rittenhouse, who for many years served us as deacon, as church clerk and as trustee, we, the members of the Ebenezer Baptist Church and congregation, desire to place on record some memorial of our appreciation of his character and of our grief at our loss; therefore be it

Resolved, That in his death we have lost a valued associate, whose presence we shall all sadly miss from our meetings, and whose place in our councils will not soon be filled.

Resolved, That we bear our cordial testimony to the efficiency and fidelity with which our departed brother discharged the various trusts committed to him, and to the uniform courtesy with which his official duties were performed.

Resolved, That we sorrow not, even as others who have no hope, knowing as we do that it is well with our brother, his consistent walk and true love for his kindred in Christ affording clear and conclusive proof of his heavenly birth.

Resolved, That we do tender to the members of his family our warmest and truest sympathy in this their deep affliction, commending them to him who alone is able to comfort them in their sorrow.

Resolved, That these resolutions be entered at length upon the minutes of this meeting, and a properly attested copy be forwarded to the family of our brother.

Resolved, That these resolutions be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church of New York.

R. N. GIBBONS, Church Clerk.

CHURCH NEWS.

DEAR BRETHREN:—By direction of the church of which I enjoy the high honor of serving as clerk, will say that our meeting-house is finished and furnished, and we are out of debt, thanks be to the generous people of York county and a few in other parts of the country.

Brother John G. Stevens was ordained deacon at the December meeting, by the pastor, assisted by Elders John Chapman, of Germantown, and S. R. McFarland, of York.

We are at peace, and blessed of the Lord, praise to his holy name forever.

J. M. AMSBERRY.

MEETINGS.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 72. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1904. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ABOUT PASTORS.

No true pastor ever chose that relation and work of himself. It is the Lord's choice made known to him that causes his mind to turn to a position and a labor so trying, so responsible, so continuous. "Ye have not chosen me," said Jesus, "but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." This was spoken to his apostles, but is true of every gift in the church.

Those who receive the benefit of these gifts to the church rejoice in them, and regard those who are thus sent to them highly for their work's sake. Yet they cannot fully understand the peculiar burdens and trials that these servants have to bear.

The apostle reminds the churches in very forcible language of their duties to those whom the Lord sends to minister to them in spiritual things, and at the same time reminds the brethren of some of the deep and great responsibilities and cares which belong to the gift and office of a pastor, one who is ordained and sent to them by the Lord, a servant faithful and true: "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation: Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."—Heb. xiii. 7, 8, 17.

The first thing in the mind of a true pastor is the work laid upon his soul, and the benefit that he wishes to be to the Lord's people. He is in a position to be sharply criticised, and will often be pained by the apparently cold and unfeeling remarks of those to whom he ministers that will come to his ears; but he will be his own most rigid and uncompromising critic. He will find that he himself is the hardest and most difficult one to be satisfied by what he is and what he does. He will often set himself aside as of no value to the church; he will be dissatisfied with his way and manner of preaching, and with his great lack of ability to take care of the church of God, and with the many difficult things that arise in his work, which make him feel like a child. But

he will go on, and will have now and then a little help from the Lord, whose Spirit will take of the things of Jesus and show them to him; and now and then he will have some words of comfort and cheer from those of his brethren to whom the Lord has sent a message of love through him; and the love of God from time to time shed abroad in his heart, fills him with joy, and the assurance that the grace of the Lord Jesus is sufficient for him quiets his fears and strengthens him in times of weakness and trouble, so that he can say with the apostle, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

Spiritual troubles are the heaviest to bear. In comparison with them temporal afflictions and needs seem light. But these temporal needs sometimes cause great anxiety and heart-searching, not only with those who are called and appointed to serve the church in spiritual things, but with all of the Lord's people. The Lord has promised to all his children, and in an especial manner to those sent to minister the word to them, not only sustaining grace in all their labors, but also the things needful for the body. "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." "All these things shall be added unto you." "Bread shall be given them, and their waters shall be sure." Now when fears and anxieties and questionings begin to arise in the mind concerning the supplies for our temporal needs, then we reproach ourselves for our lack of trust in the Lord, and it will cause cruel doubts as to whether we can be his people. And especially trying will be the doubts in the heart of the poor, worried minister of the gospel, as to whether he can have been truly called to so holy a work, when he cannot even trust in the Lord for the things of this life.

But those who have families dependent upon them will and must feel a certain degree of care concerning temporal things. In the case of those who are servants of the church for Jesus' sake, as also in the case of others in some degree, this care must be subordinate to that which concerns his spiritual work. This sometimes makes it much harder and more trying for the preacher, for his time is not his own, and cannot be employed in his own service when the service of the church or of individual members requires it. And to find sometimes a murmuring, rebellious spirit within him makes him abhor himself, and set himself aside as being of no good.

The apostles have set this subject in order, as they have every ordinance of the Lord in the gospel church, as the dear Savior commanded them to do. They have omitted nothing pertaining to the order of the church. Whatever we need to know will be found in the Acts and letters of the apostles.

Elder G. E. Mayfield, of Elgin, Oregon, writes me as follows: "I would be pleased to see an article from you on 1 Cor. ix. 7–15. There is quite a difference in the views of brethren as to what the apostle means here. If you write, notice particularly the fourteenth verse: 'Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.' Does this mean that the minister should live of spiritual things or temporal things?" The minister must live in the Spirit upon spiritual things, like all the rest of the family of God; but spiritual food will not feed the body. The apostle has been talking in this connection of temporal things. The food he has been speaking of in the illustrations is food

for the body. No one can think otherwise who reads the chapter carefully. When he speaks of having power to eat, he refers to food for the body. The planter of the vineyard eats of the fruit thereof. That is literal. The milk that he eats who feeds the flock is to keep his body in good order so he can continue to feed the flock. Even the law of Moses says, Let the ox that treadeth out the corn eat of the corn, and also the man that plows and threshes. Then to make his meaning clear he says, "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" Then he refers to the ordinance of the law, that they who minister about holy things, and wait at the altar, live (or feed) of the things of the temple and partake with the altar, and says, "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." I have wondered how any one could think that the apostle here refers to a spiritual living, or food, after what he has been saying. But suppose he did, then he would shut himself out from a spiritual living, for he says, "But I have used none of these things; neither have I written these things that it should be so done unto me." Of course he does not imply that he has not used spiritual food, nor that he depended in any sense upon the brethren for that spiritual bread.

The apostle has elsewhere referred to this duty and privilege of the Lord's people to minister to the temporal needs of those who serve them in spiritual things. Those who are fed by the preaching of the word do think upon the comfort of those who feed them. Churches which are in gospel order do attend, according as they are able, to the temporal needs of their pastors. Some churches and some brethren are undoubtedly forgetful or careless of this duty, and some are controlled for a time by a selfish spirit. Some, also, are not able to do what they would desire to do. The true and faithful pastor, who may be unable to supply his own needs while spending his time in the service of churches, does not feel covetous or exacting, but wishes only to live with his brethren, and desires to be with them in all burden-bearing, and to share their poverty as well as their temporal blessings, while they rejoice together in spiritual prosperity.

It would hardly seem possible that a child of God could be willing to receive the services of a servant of God, and not help him bear the expense necessary to that service. Yet there have been those who are temporally able who have asked the service of preachers who are poor, as they generally are, and have allowed them to come and go in that service at their own charges. We might say of such, "How dwelleth the love of God in them?" The two disciples walking toward Emmaus shewed their tender care for the welfare of him whose talk had made their hearts burn within them, by saying to him, "The day is far spent and the night is at hand; go in and abide with us." Jesus made as though he would go farther in order that this love and care of the hearer of the gospel for the preacher of it, might be called forth and put on record for the church during all time.

The preacher himself ought to strive not to be over anxious on these matters, for *the Lord will provide.* Sometimes it seems to him as though both God and his brethren had forgotten or forsaken him, but it is not so. GOD WILL PROVIDE. When he can go at all he will go to the poor as freely as to the rich, and he will be satisfied to live as they live. But

sometimes both he and they will seem to be at the end of the earth, and their hearts overwhelmed. But be of good courage. GOD WILL PROVIDE.

It is good and pleasant when pastors have a warm, brotherly feeling toward each other, as is generally the case, and when a mutual care for each other's comfort and welfare prevails among them. There can be the most perfect liberty in visiting each other's flocks, which it is pleasant and profitable to do, so long as this careful regard for each other's rights is maintained. I have never felt that a minister should do pastoral work for a church which has a pastor, nor have regular appointments within her bounds, except when cordially desired and asked to do so *by both church and pastor*. I do not think one of the Lord's servants is led by the Spirit to seek and try to bring about a call of himself to be pastor of some particular church. The church, it seems to me, must do the calling. The Lord will find work for all his ministers, and they need only watch his hand, and they will find their work pointed out to them.

There was a case in a distant State where the pastor of a church was a very quiet, humble man, who would not assert or defend any rights of his own. He was a good and faithful pastor. Another minister visited that church frequently, and sought as much as possible to do work among them which belongs to the pastor to do, and evidently was taking every occasion to secretly create a prejudice against the pastor, and trying to draw the minds of the brethren to himself. When I first knew of the case I was glad to hear that the thoughtful members of the church had already awakened to the grossness of the situation, and had unmistakably expressed their unshaken confidence in their pastor, and had dismissed the intruder.

A church should be faithful, and deal plainly and fairly with their pastor, and if upon careful and prayerful consideration they find good reason to believe that his work among them is done, and that his services are no longer useful to them, they should kindly and plainly tell him so. If it is true he will know it as soon as they, if not sooner. The relation of pastor and church is one of the most sacred and important, and should always have the most solemn and prayerful consideration by all of the Lord's dear people. SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 15, 1904.

NEWARK, Del., Sept., 1903.

MR. AND MRS. WM. T. YARD—VERY DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER IN THE BLESSED LORD JESUS CHRIST:—I trust that I may indeed include myself with you and all the saints of God in this blessed relationship, though I often question it. I have just finished reading your letters in the SIGNS for September 15th, and while reading them I felt drawn very tenderly in love to you both, and felt very strongly impressed to write to you and tell you how much comfort your letters afforded me, and what a blessing they were. They came as a very refreshing message from the Zion of God, giving me full evidence that you both had been led of the Lord, to the blessed city of habitation whose builder and maker is God, wherein none shall ever hurt or destroy, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, and where peace and rest are to be found, even in the blessed Jesus for all the weary and heavy laden, and supplies for those hungering and thirsting after righteousness, even the righteousness which is of God, and bestowed upon those who

feel their need, and whose souls faint for the courts of the Lord. All this is through his Son Jesus Christ, in whom all the saints appear before God without spot or blemish, clothed in white, the righteousness of saints. And this righteousness God prepared for them in Christ.

"Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow."

Reading of your experiences brought before me vividly portions of my own experience, which gave me great comfort. I was specially comforted by the love which I felt for you both, as children of God, and by the great pleasure which I felt in finding that your teaching had been of the Lord. If I have one evidence that I have passed from death unto life, that is brighter than any other, it is surely that I love the brethren, and the truth as it is in Jesus. Often, when seeking some evidence that I am one who has found favor with God, this precious evidence which has been left on record in the Scriptures is present with me, even when all other evidence seems lacking. This often causes me to go on with some assurance that as the Lord has been gracious to me, in the past, he will continue his loving-kindness to the end, and that he who has begun a good work in me, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

"Though earth and hell my way oppose,
His loving-kindness changes not."

His favor to me, and to all his saints, is greater than we can know. I often think that his saints even, do not realize how great is the favor which they receive daily in their pilgrimage journey. Abundant mercies from his hand are given daily to remind them of his gracious care, and much more they are given to know of his love in the revelation to them of that salvation which he had ordained before the world was, and which shall stand forever. This salvation is in Christ Jesus, and in due time is revealed unto his saints as the only way whereby they must be saved. "God commendeth his love to us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." And this is to the praise and glory of the name of God.

How plainly is his love manifested in the way in which his beloved ones are brought from the darkness of earth unto himself; to them the pleasures of the world become vexation and vanity, and they find rejoicing and rest and peace alone in God, and in the kingdom which is not of this world.

Jesus said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This birth is not of this world. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but cannot tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." What a simple and plain declaration this is, is it not? How it comes home to each saint as applied to them in their experience; they now hear the sound of the gospel and of heavenly things, to which before they had been dead, and they cannot tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth, until in due time it is made known to them that it all comes from God, the fountain of the new and perfect life, which is not of this world. Thus they come to know that God works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and they are bought according to his purpose, which he pur-

posed in himself before the world was; that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. Everlasting praise be to the Father, this purpose shall stand forever. Not one vain word or notion of man shall ever change this purpose of God, it is God's purpose of election and must stand. Here is the foundation of the hope of the people of God in all ages, and thus we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" The apostle was persuaded that nothing shall separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

How I love the above Scriptures; in them the principles of the doctrine of Christ are clearly set forth. If our views do not agree with the above Scriptures we ought to discard them (views) at once, as not being the religion of Christ, but our own vain notions, and the teaching of false prophets which have gone out into the world, who were spoken of by the Lord and his apostles. John declared that the spirit by which we receive false views of the Scriptures is not of God, for the teaching of the Spirit of God in us is always in perfect harmony with the Scriptures. John said, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God. Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God: and every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God." "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error."

Dear brother and sister, read the remainder of the first epistle of John, it is all in harmony with what I have here quoted. Now I want to say just a little about trying the spirits, whether they be of God. Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God. Is not this in perfect harmony with the word of God, confessing Jesus as the sufficiency of his people, and as the finisher of salvation for his people, as God had purposed? This testimony of the Spirit will be received with joy and rejoicing by the people of God. This Spirit is of God, and he that knoweth God heareth it. The saints are not only called of God, but they are kept by his power also. The Scriptures speak of a highway and a way, and the redeemed of the Lord shall walk there. Christ is all in all to his

people; they cannot be severed from their Head, for in him is their life and light; they have no room for conditional salvation, their salvation is in Christ Jesus their Lord, who is made of God unto them, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

In experience, the saints are made to know their inability to work the works of God; they come to the end of their own strength and effort. The salvation which God ordained in Christ is revealed in them, and it is a finished salvation, and except the hope of any be in this salvation, they must be utterly and eternally lost. Now if the Spirit of Christ be in the saints, they must necessarily work the works of God, for the Spirit is of God, and will work in them the work of God; it must necessarily be so. Then the trembling child of God is made to walk in the truth of the gospel, as becometh saints, and to do good works, and to live a godly life, that the name of God be not blasphemed. Such an one must be humbled in the dust before God, and must come to realize more and more the truth of the words of Paul, "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing:" and that it is God that worketh in us, both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and each child of God is but a recipient of the grace of God. Is not this salvation which is to be worked out by them, that finished salvation which is in Christ Jesus, and which they are to work out in fear and trembling? Is it not thus that they are to make manifest to the church of God this salvation? This treasure we have in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. While in the flesh the saints must be ever learning their insufficiency, and the fullness and sufficiency of Christ, their Lord and Savior. If any one gets beyond the need of the Lamb of God at any time, that one has need to examine himself whether he be in the faith. Some have been overtaken in faults, as the Scriptures teach, and some have turned from the faith unto fables, and some have turned back to the deeds of the law; all these are deceived by the spirit of antichrist. Such ones have erred from the truth of the gospel, and do not consent to wholesome words, even the words of the Lord Jesus Christ; they are engaged in doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railing and every evil work. But the fruit of the Spirit is righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. These fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold upon eternal life, to which they are called, and they witness a good profession before many witnesses. This the man of God will follow after: "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babbling, and oppositions of science falsely so-called; which some professing have erred concerning the faith." God will not suffer his children to live in this delusion; their life is not there. The apostle writes, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." One who has thus erred from the faith, has need to learn again what be the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. How did we first receive Christ? Was it not in our own complete insufficiency? Then Jesus manifested himself unto us as our surety and salvation. Then was not this salvation our theme night and day? Did we not then rejoice in the peaceable fruits of righteousness?

I had no thought of writing so much, I will send it however, may it be of some

comfort to you, as it has been to me to write it.

In love to you both, I am, I hope, your sister,

LAURA A. HAMILTON.

ROCKLEDGE, Pa., Jan. 3, 1904.

MRS. CASPER FETTER—DEAR CHILD:—Or children I should say, for what I shall here write is for you both, as we are all traveling the same path, I trust, and are led by the hand of the same all-wise God, who directs our steps, and who alone can control our thoughts and direct our pens, that we may say anything to the comfort of his children.

Well, dear child, you asked me some months ago to write you an account of my experience, but I have not felt that I could do so, and neither do I now know that I can do so; but if the Lord will direct my thoughts I will try, hoping that it may prove to be of comfort to you. In writing this I will begin with the scenes of my childhood, when sister Sade and I were children together, and would wander through field and forest, viewing the scenes of nature. Many are the times that we talked of the goodness of God who rules all things, and I would weep at times to think that he had provided all things for our comfort, and yet I was so unthoughtful of his goodness and mercy toward me. But as I journeyed on, this feeling would wear away, and I was ready to go into anything that seemed to promise enjoyment, in utter heedlessness of what was before me. But the Lord has preserved me thus far, and led me in paths that I knew not. Thus I went on, not thinking of anything that was good. I was accustomed to attend Sunday School, and all gatherings of the New School Baptists at Davisville, thinking that thus I would be saved, until I heard them sing at one of their meetings these lines,

"Stop, poor sinner, stop and think,
Before you further go;
See how you sport upon the brink
Of everlasting woe."

And, dear child, you cannot, and neither can I, tell my feeling at that time. O the fear that beset my soul; I resolved that I would give up my foolish ways and learn to be good, that I might be saved from the horrors of that hell that seemed to loom up before me. But my good resolutions were all broken, and soon I was traveling the same old course. Thus it went on until one Sunday morning, I was standing by the water-side, viewing the administration of baptism to one of my brothers, and some of my companions, when something seemed to say, "See, your brother and companions are leaving you, and you will be lost." This conviction I never forgot, and the awful dread and darkness that filled my soul I can never describe. I thought that I was left, and that I surely would be lost; I felt that I had offended my Savior, and that I had committed some sin that could not be pardoned. Thus it was for months with me. I would read the Bible and try to find some comfort from it, but it was a sealed book to me, there was nothing in it for me. I would wander away by myself, feeling that no one wanted to see me or be where I was, I was so vile, so full of sin. One evening I retired to my room thinking that perhaps I might lose my trouble in sleep, but when I lay down no sleep came, the darkness was a dread and I wished for the light, but some time in the night, the Lord saw fit that slumber should come over me. How long I slept I know not, but about the dawn of day I awoke, and thought that some one spoke to me, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden." I

felt that it was for me. I arose and went to mother's room, and said, Mother, did you call? "Why no, child," she answered, "why do you ask?" I then told her, and then she spoke words of comfort to me, and I believe that it was all of the Lord, for my burden was gone, and I could rejoice again in all things, for all things seemed so bright. Then I felt as though I would tell the church what the Lord had done for me. This I did on the second Saturday in May, 1855; I was received and baptized by Alfred Earl on the following Sunday. Then my mind was at rest for a time. I attended their meetings, and joined with them in all that they did, thinking that it was all right. Thus I went on for awhile, and yet there seemed to be something that I wanted which I did not find there. I hardly knew what it was, I felt that I was a captive, for I did not feel that I could do anything to save myself, it must all be done for me, or I was lost. I felt badly, and used to tell them so, and then they would say, "You should do this or that," until I did not know what to do, or what would be right; and I felt that I could do nothing. Thus I went on for about five years. One day while at work, these words were applied to me, Come out from among them, and be not partaker with them. I felt that I was wrong, and that I would go somewhere else. So one Sunday morning I went to Southampton to see whether they were the same. Elder Harding spoke from words which you will find in the Song of Solomon, He hideth himself in the secret places of the stairs, and sheweth himself through the lattice. Such a sermon I do not think I ever heard, it was food for my hungry soul. I thought that he had certainly hidden himself in the secret places of the stairs, and my life had been as the lattice of a window, darkness and light alternately; light when he revealed his face to me in some of his glorious promises, and darkness when he withdrew himself.

I traveled on for a time, then thought I would leave those with whom I had joined. I thought that I could live outside of any church, and so I did for many years. Now I come to the time of the Civil war. I concluded that I would enlist, and left all that was near and dear to me by the ties of nature, and cast my lot with the army, not knowing whether I would ever return. But the Lord in his all-wise providence spared my unprofitable life, to return. I will say here, that I did have some precious things brought to my mind, which gave me hope. Promises which I never can forget came to me on the eve of battle, when I thought that I might never see the light of another day, and my mind was with those whom I had left at home. These words were applied, "Fear not, I am with you." In six troubles I will be with thee, and in the seventh I will not forsake thee. I felt the Lord was with me, and would care for me. Here is where he showed himself through the lattice.

Well, when I returned to my home and friends, I went to the meeting at Southampton again, and I enjoyed the meetings and the company of the children of God, and felt that I would like to be one among them, but did not feel worthy to be with them. I thought that I could go to the meeting and get in some corner where I could hear them talk of their trials and troubles. But the time came when I could no longer stay away, I felt that I must ask for a home among them, and then the thought came to me, Why, you cannot be one among them without

first being baptized; and as I had once been baptized, although it was by the New School Baptists, I could not feel that a second baptism would be right. Then I thought, Well, I can still live outside of the church, though still I longed for a home among them. Thus I journeyed until, I trust, the Lord showed me the way in a vision by night. I thought I was in strange land and doomed to death, and then word was given me, "Child, come home." Then all doubt was removed, and I offered myself to the church, and was received by them, and baptized by Elder Wm. J. Purington. Then my joy and peace of mind was great; how I enjoyed their company, and to hear them tell of their trials and joys while on their journey through this howling wilderness.

Now, dear children, I have given you a narrative of my experience as near as I can, and I hope that it will be a comfort to you and yours, although it is not much, compared to what others among God's dear children pass through. I have often felt that I know nothing, and have wondered if I have not been deceived, and have not deceived others; but God forbid that it should be thus. There is much more that you already know of how I was made to feed in the pastures, beside the still waters, and to gather flowers, and to eat the fruit in the plain of God's almighty love.

Now good by for the present, and may the Lord ever be near you and yours, is the prayer of your father,

GEORGE M. LEEDOM.

CHAGRIS, Ind. Ter., Dec. 21, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE AND KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I feel as though I want to write a few lines in remembrance to you, my dear kindred in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom is life eternal. I sometimes feel that I have a hope in Jesus, but O the bitterness of soul that I often undergo, for I am cast down and alone in the world, so far as spiritual kindred is concerned. Then again I feel that I am not alone, for the Lord is with me as my shield, and underneath are his everlasting arms, and he has said that he will not leave me nor forsake me.

Dear children of our Master's kingdom, I have learned by experience that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing, and when I would do good evil is present with me. I have long ago learned that I could not keep my own soul alive. I have found in my journeying that if the Lord keep not the city, my efforts to keep it will be in vain. The Lord alone can give my soul spiritual life even at the present time, and blessed be his name, he can make the desert blossom as the rose; his ways are ways of pleasantness; the rivers of oil are his, and the cattle upon a thousand hills are his also.

Dear kindred, I hear people around here talking of their good works, and they tell me that if they believed as I do they would seek to do nothing good. I have told them that all their work is as filthy rags in the sight of God, and that they are under the law of Moses, and that even he could not keep the law given by his hand. The Lord was his guide and his law, and the Lord alone guided him and kept him by day and by night, and the Lord fought all his battles for him; he gave to Israel a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night; this was a type of Jesus, our guide and defense. I have told them that that law was fulfilled in Jesus, and that the former covenant was done away in Christ. Jesus magnified the law and made it honorable by the obedience and sacrifice of himself. Through his death, burial

and resurrection he brought forth a nation in a day, and they are his chosen. By one offering of himself he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. I have given them many Scriptures, and told them to read the gospel of John, and that we are told that Jesus learned obedience by the things which he suffered, and, dear kindred, I believe every child of God also learns obedience by the things which they suffer. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth," and "If ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." How good is the Lord to his people! How merciful to us, yes, merciful even to poor me, who am the poorest of all. But if I, in my weakness, am made strong through his strength, then I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me; in him is life for evermore. They that come to God by him shall have everlasting life. He said, "My grace is sufficient for thee." This Scripture has been of great comfort to me, when at times I have been so cast down that I did not dare to even open my mouth in prayer, or raise or lift my sinful eyes to him to beg for mercy. O, dear saints, have you ever been in such a state that you dared not ask mercy of him? If you have not, then I am not akin to you in this. O what suffering fills my soul! O what terrors I feel within as I view my sins! I can say with Job, "How should man be just with God?" I am less than nothing and vanity, but the Lord is the Savior, and beside him there is no other. We are saved by grace; we are justified freely by his grace through the redemption in Christ Jesus. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Let the heavens wonder and be astonished, for the Lord is Lord of lords and King of kings; his children shall trust in him, and they shall not fear what man can do unto them; their salvation is of the Lord for time and eternity. We can but say, Wait, O my soul, the Lord's time, for if we are his, his everlasting arms are underneath, and no weapon formed against us shall prosper. As for myself, although I mourn as a dove and chatter like a crane, his banner is over me, and his name is altogether lovely. "Bless the Lord, O my soul," for all his benefits to me, the most unworthy of all.

I did not intend to write much, but I want you to know what a comfort it is to me to read our good paper, the SIGNS. Both editorials and correspondence are rich. I often wonder and say, Is it because I love them with a spiritual love, or is it of the flesh? If I am one that is looking for a city not made with hands, whose builder and maker is God, then I might write of spiritual things. When I read the SIGNS, I am made to think of the man who wanted to follow the dear Savior. I also want to follow along in these paths, and learn of him; I have need to be taught of the good way wherein dwelleth righteousness, but there is none that can teach his brother or his sister to know the Lord, but all shall know him, from the least unto the greatest of them. The household of faith can comfort each other, for they are commanded to speak often one to another, and to speak comfortably to Jerusalem, and to cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

I find that the writers to the SIGNS, in speaking the words of Jesus, speak peace to at least one poor, old, starved sinner. Dear saints, I feel as a dear sister said in our paper, if I only knew for one moment

that my sins were forgiven, I would never doubt again. Let us say, Wait, O my soul, for the Lord is good and merciful. Now write on, dear brethren, if indeed you will allow me to call you by that name. It seems that if you could know me personally you could have no fellowship for me; what I have written will prove me perhaps. I love to read the SIGNS, because it contains the truth that I love, and because it is all the preaching I hear, and it gives the Lord all the praise. I am now sixty-three years of age, and my time here cannot be long, but I have hope that when the blessed Lord is done with me here I will hear him say, Come in, thou blessed of the Lord. Then I shall sing his praises in all eternity. May the Lord fill you all with his grace, is my prayer.

From an old sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

NANCY CREEL.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Nov. 27, 1903.

DEAR SERVANTS OF THE BLESSED MASTER:—Often while reading our dear family paper I feel moved to offer a word of encouragement to the editors who serve us so faithfully. When Elder Gilbert Beebe died I thought his place could not be filled; my faith was weak, and I knew his foes were strong, and feared the dear old SIGNS would be abandoned. But the Lord is mighty and able to raise up others to comfort those who mourn in Zion. I have had many bountiful meals when almost starving, from the precious SIGNS, and if I had the pen of a ready writer I might speak of the comfort I have had while reading many communications which were very sweet to me in this year's volume. The editorials are always like precious ointment. My heart was made glad by the one on "The Sabbath Day;" it surely is the truth; every type is fulfilled in Jesus; he is our rest, our perfect rest. My neighbors are great Sabbath keepers, and worship the day more than the Giver, and when I said one day is as holy as another, they are all the Lord's days, they looked at me in astonishment, thinking, no doubt, She is a heathen. I desire to obey the laws of our land, and love to rest and have one day to read and go to preaching, when we can have a minister to speak comforting words to us, crying that our warfare is accomplished and our iniquity is pardoned. Many are deprived of this privilege; as dear old sister Matilda West said to me, "When I was too deaf to hear anything our pastor would say, and too lame to go to the house of worship, I would take my Bible and hymn book, close the door of my room, and no matter how cold and barren I would feel, I would read and sing. So many of the hymns express my feelings." She then quoted,

"Poor and afflicted, Lord, are thine,
Among the great unfit to shine;
Poor and afflicted, yet they sing,
For Jesus is their glorious King."

She recited the whole hymn in such a feeling manner that I knew she was feasting on the blessed promises. For some years now she has gone to join the celestial throng, but I am still here walking the thorny road, stumbling, doubting, and wondering if I know anything about these precious things. The editorial on Peace and Fellowship, in the SIGNS for November 1st, made me glad; it has the ring of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist, the name our church was constituted under in 1832. I love the old articles of faith, for our forefathers believed them, and they lived in trying times. The doctrine of grace from first to last was held in great reverence. As the flag with the stars and stripes was held high

in our soldiers' battles, so grace was not left to trail in the dust.

"It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

These same principles that the SIGNS was established upon, are the same recorded in our old church book, so we can see who have left the old paths. The Lord God saith, "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste." Christ is the solid Rock. "All other ground is sinking sand."

In September I attended a Primitive Baptist association, and there I heard much preaching that startled me. One man said, "We have no stools of do nothing here, we must not stand still, but press onward. Paul's mission was to persuade men to become christians, and that has been my work for nine years." Another said, "I was astonished while listening to the letters read; old Bethel only received four members in one year, and we all know the number ought to be twenty; and Providence six, when it ought to be thirty." I wondered if they had ever noticed the Psalm that reads, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."

May I speak a word to a kindred spirit, whose letter has been much comfort to me, because I have traveled the same sorrowful road? Sister Ruth Adamson, ever since your letter came, Nov. 1st, I have loved you and had you much in mind, communing with you even in the night season. Dear, weary pilgrim, I was born the same year as yourself, and I, too, have tasted "the bread of adversity and drank the water of affliction." I have lost my good husband and two promising children, and often feel overwhelmed with loneliness. I am quite deaf, and suffer very much with weak eyes; so often these long evenings I dare not read a word, but sit idle, so I have much time to meditate upon what I have read and heard. When I think of the many good sermons I have feasted upon, I wonder why I am still crying for more, but I remember the manna the children of Israel gathered would not keep from day to day. I have heard Elders Wilson Thompson, Gilbert Beebe, J. R. Respess, T. P. Dudley, J. F. Johnson, I. N. Vanmeter and many others whose weary warfare is ended, and they are safe from the conflict now being waged.

Yesterday was our government Thanksgiving day. We are told to pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks, so every day is a thanksgiving day. This Scripture was read at my table yesterday, and was my prayer: "Feed me with food convenient for me; lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain."

One day last summer when I felt famished for spiritual food, the SIGNS was handed me, and on the first page I read, "She bound the scarlet line in the window." How I feasted on it, and could hardly wait for the next number, to read the conclusion. I had never heard any one speak on that Scripture, but on reading the narrative I could see a hidden meaning. It was a treat indeed, and I felt like saying, "A vineyard of red wine. I the Lord do keep it: I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." How glad I am that the church is safe, and although I feel unworthy of such a blessing as being

numbered with the household of faith, I pray to love the blessed Master supremely, above all else, and to walk in his commandments; I cannot go one step alone. It will be fifty years next May since I was numbered among believers, and I have been doubting and stumbling along all these years, begging daily and hourly to be helped once more. Is it thus with you, dear sister? How I would love to sit beside you and hear you tell your experience. We could sing together, "Come, thou Fount of every blessing," and

"My God, the spring of all my joy,
The life of my delights,
The glory of my brightest days,
The comfort of my nights."

I must close, with love to all who love the dear Savior.

Your little sister,

LINA W. BECK.

PINSONFORK, Ky., Dec. 4, 1903.

ELDER D. BARTLEY—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS SAVIOR'S LOVE:—It has occurred to my mind this morning to write you a few lines, although I feel too unworthy to think of such a thing, if I could help it, but I cannot. I am one that humbly acknowledges that I have not the ability of thought; I am not able of myself to think anything; neither am I able of myself to prevent my thoughts, but my sufficiency is of God, for without him I can do nothing. I am a poor, helpless creature, lame on both feet, "a worm and no man." With this fact in view, how often does my heart ache and my whole frame quake when I presume to preach Christ Jesus the Lord, whom no man can preach, except those whom he has called by his grace and revealed his Son in them for the express purpose of preaching him unto his little ones, whom he hath afore prepared unto glory. With such a deep, heart-felt sense of my weakness and unworthiness, it is indeed a task for me to write you for the first time in life. I have thought of you often, for I have known of you through your writings in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and some other religious periodicals, for probably thirty years or more, and at times have a great desire to meet with you in person, but have but little hope that I ever shall.

It does seem to me (though I may be blind) that of late some of the Old Baptist preachers are rather giving way a little—prophesying things a little bit smoother, while your feet and those of other faithful servants seem to be firmer and firmer as the dreadful storm approaches, and men's (preachers) hearts are failing for fear, and for looking after the things that are coming on the earth. I have just read in the SIGNS for December 1st, your answer to Elder Gilbert's question, and it is wonderful, so God-honoring that, if I am not deceived I thank and praise the God of our salvation. There has just this moment come into my mind one clause in the declaration God made to the false prophet Balaam, written in the book of Numbers, twenty-fourth chapter; it reads, "Israel shall do valiantly." Dear brother, when I read your articles in regard to the predestination of all things, and unconditional salvation, I rejoice to know there are yet a few valiant Israelites who are valiant for the truth as it is in Jesus. We know, both from a scriptural and an experimental standpoint, that this is the doctrine of God our Savior, and why not contend for it, both from the pulpit and press? Why not be valiant for these sacred principles? Should our hearts fail us for fear, because many are turning back? Many turned back in Gideon's

day; of their thousands all turned back but three hundred, yet God gave Israel the victory through them. Why are we so faint-hearted? "That which hath been is now," therefore we may look for a falling away. But while this is true, they can do nothing against the truth or doctrine, for the doctrine stands forever; it honors God and comforts many poor hearts that are not bloated with legalism, but have a feeling sense of their sinful, depraved nature, vileness and ingratitude to God. God in his infinite wisdom has unalterably fixed the valor of these few Israelites who are contending for the doctrine of Christ and the apostles, and these few valiant soldiers are experimentally taught that their valor is not of themselves, but of God who called them, and their hands are made strong by the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob.

My dear brother, I often think of the few, comparatively, who are standing unshaken on the principles of the doctrine, and among them I often think of you and of your advanced age, yet I am well aware that God takes care of his own cause, and doubtless has men in reservation whom he will muster to the battle, even to the front, for the Lord of hosts mustereth the hosts (ministers) to the battle.

I see that I am extending my letter too far, hence will now close, but I want to say to you, Elder, in my conclusive remarks, that if a poor, Adamic sinner, one who believes in the absolute predestination of all things, and in an unconditional salvation, together with all unmerited blessings, cannot reach heaven and immortal glory, I am gone forever and ever; for I do believe with all my heart, mind and soul, that God in his infinite wisdom did, even before the world was, settle and fix the destiny of all worlds, beings and things, both for time and eternity. At times I am made to wonder why a subject of God's grace can believe otherwise; especially one whom God has called to preach the Lord Jesus, and talk of his wondrous works.

Yours in tribulation,

W. J. MAY.

JOHN XII. 47.

"For I came not to judge the world, but to save the world."

These words were spoken by the Lord, who spake as never man spake, for his teaching was as one who had authority, and not as the scribes. Jesus stood as the Surety, the Daysman, the Mediator for his people, and so he alone could pay the debt for them, and make perfect satisfaction for every demand of divine justice. Therefore he came, as the above quoted Scripture informs us, not to judge the world, or to condemn the world, but to save. "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." —John iii. 17.

It must be evident to all impartial minds that there are two worlds spoken of in the Scripture. This world that is set forth in the text, the world that he came to save, includes all his people from the beginning of time to the end of it. Jesus is a world within himself, for by him all things consist. The life of his people, the church, the bride, is hid with Christ in God. Jesus is the life of all those who believe in him. It is by faith they believe in him, even that faith of which Jesus is the author and finisher, it being one of the fruits of the Spirit, and found in this world (his people) which Jesus came to save.

John said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

Of this nation, or world, it is said that their iniquity is removed in one day. Then again there is another nation or world spoken of in the Scriptures, which is said to lie in wickedness. (1 John iv. 14.) There is no clash in these Scriptures, but when the Lord shall give us understanding we shall see that there is perfect harmony; it all makes a complete and perfect chain of evidence. This last named world is again spoken of as wondering after the beast, and as worshiping the beast. The Scriptures inform us that their names are not written in the book of life, of the Lamb slain, from the foundation of the world.

Now it is evident that these two worlds travel exactly opposite roads. The world which Jesus came to save is led through the strait gate and the narrow way, which leads to life; the other world goes in the broad way that leads to destruction, and there are those in this world to-day who are ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth, who prophesy for reward, and preach for a salary, who love the praise of men more than the praise of God, who love to have Rev. attached to their names. The truth of the matter is that not any of the sinful mortals of Adam's race are worthy to have such a title applied to them. The word "reverend" is used but once in holy writ, and then with reference to the Lord Almighty; it is written in the Psalms, "Holy and reverend is his name." Our Lord is alone worthy of adoration and praise.* These self-righteous individuals go up and down through the length and breadth of the land teaching that Jesus wants to save all men indiscriminately, when it is a fact, as Jesus himself and all his apostles taught, that he came to save his people only. "For the Lord's portion is his people," among both Jews and Gentiles, that there might be one fold and one Shepherd, even as they are called in one hope of their calling. "There is one Lord, one faith and one baptism." Jesus is their trust, their all in all. They trust not in what they can do, and dare not trust in an arm of flesh, because it is written, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm."

It is for the sake of his people that the world stands to-day. He maketh his sun to rise upon the just and the unjust, the evil and the good, and giveth to all liberally. But when the last vessel of mercy is manifested through grace, then time will be no more. The purpose of God in creating and sustaining the world will then have been accomplished, even the salvation and perfection of his body, which is the church. All worlds were created for the lifting of Jesus on high, and every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess to the glory of God. For his glory they are and were created, and his glory he will not give to another, nor his praise to graven images. Hence this world (his people) is saved with an everlasting salvation, out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people under heaven. What an innumerable company, whom no man can number. All these Jesus has saved by the one perfect offering of himself without spot unto God; he has cleansed them and saved them forever. He had power to lay down his life, and power to take it up again. This commandment he said he had received of his Father. A knowledge of this salvation is given to each one of his people through

*[THE pope of Rome, who claims to be infallible, and God's vicegerent on earth, is no more guilty of usurping the prerogatives of Deity, than is every so-called minister of whatever denomination who allows the use of the word "reverend" as a title to his name.—ED.]

an experience of grace. No man knoweth "the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." So all this knowledge comes through the teaching of the Spirit of Almighty God, and so it is written, "They shall all be taught of the Lord." They are blessed with peace and assurance forever.

Yours in hope,

WM. F. SLOAN.

CLAY VILLAGE, Ky., Oct., 1903.

MERIT, Texas, Feb. 10, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I hope that I have an interest in his love, and in the benefits of his everlasting covenant. I have felt for some time like writing something for the SIGNS and the household of faith, but because of a sense of my depravity, and because there are many who are so much more spiritual than myself, I have refrained. I feel so little, so blank, so imperfect and so dark in spiritual things, that it seems as if the light of my spiritual understanding (if I have ever had any) has turned into darkness, and O how great is that darkness, as said Jesus. And because of this I do not feel that I can comfort any of the Lord's children, not even the least of the family, but I have a desire to let you, in the far east, know that there is one of the Adamic family in the far west, in Texas, where there are so many self-righteous ones, who has a hope in the Savior's love. But I so much of the time feel my depravity and sin, which so boils up in my mind, that I am made to doubt and tremble, questioning whether I was ever embraced in the mind of Jehovah as one of his. I will mention hymn No. 1022, (Beebe's collection) as a part of my feeling most of the time; read it. This hymn describes my feelings, though I may be deceived, and not know the true sentiment of the poet who composed it, or the grace of God. But if I do not know, still let God be exalted, and me, a poor sinner, be condemned. I sometimes feel, as I hope, that the sweet presence of Jesus is with me, and that he is high and lifted up, and then the next moment I am down in the valley and shadow of death. I am often made to cry out, like Jacob, "All these things are against me." But Paul says, "All things [not some things] work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." And he also says, "We are more than conquerors through him that loved us." Am I sure that I love God, and that I have been called according to his purpose? If so, then all these things are working for my good, and my salvation is secure in Jesus for time and for eternity.

David said, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." What a glorious and great Redeemer is the Lord our God, the God of the whole earth is his name. He works and none can hinder. "He speaks and it is done." His dominion is from sea to sea, and from the rivers even unto the ends of the earth. He says that he is the high and holy One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy, and who dwells in the high and holy place, and with him also who is of a humble and contrite heart, to revive the spirit of the humble, and the heart of the contrite ones. What a wonderful God is this who will come right down into the heart of such a poor sinner as I am, to help and revive me in time of trouble, and if I am one of these humble ones, I am so by the grace of God. David said, "God is our refuge and strength, a very

present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof."

Is not our God a wonderful refuge for his little children, who, like Mephibosheth, are lame on both feet, and therefore cannot deliver themselves out of their afflictions and trouble? Often in deep trouble, I would have delivered myself, but could not. But when it seemed to me that death and hell were my doom, then Jesus, as I hope, came and delivered me. O how I felt to praise him; he became my strength and my high tower. "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men." Paul said, "By the grace of God I am what I am." He said again, "I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." So even our labors are of the grace of God, we cannot therefore do anything of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God. God is all, and in all to his chosen, to his name be honor and glory; so let him be praised in all things. "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

Dear brother Chick, I was sorry to hear of the death of dear brother Beebe. He was a great man, who I believe stood by the standard of truth, and would not waver or shrink from friend or foe. But when God calls, the great as well as the lowly must go. May God's blessing rest upon his bereaved ones, both those who were his by ties of nature, and spiritually. I want to say that I love to read the SIGNS, for it comes laden with good news, telling of the wonderful works of God in the hearts of his people, who have been with Jesus. Now may the blessing of God rest upon the dear editor of the SIGNS, and upon all others who are beloved in Zion, is my prayer.

Your brother,

S. M. DICKSON.

JASPER, Ark., Jan. 1, 1904.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS, AND ALL OF LIKE PRECIOUS FAITH:—Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Dear brethren, if it is the will of my Master to guide me by his holy Spirit, I desire to pen a few words for your consideration. Behold how good and pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity, and to tell of the dealings of our covenant-keeping God through the SIGNS, our dear family paper. How strengthening to the scattered flock to read the editorials and letters from dear brethren, all being a unit on the plan of salvation, God being first and last in the salvation of his chosen people, setting forth the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace. Dear children, it has been the will of our dear Lord during the past year to call many of our dear brethren from the vicissitudes of life; they are gone from the evil to come, being housed in eternal bliss and glory, viewing the throne of God and praising our dear Lord, whose precious blood cleansed them from all sin. While it has been his will to spare many of us to see the beginning of a new year, may it be his will that we may live nearer to him the coming year, than we have in the year past, doing his holy will in all things, ever looking unto him, the author and finisher of our faith, while we are in this tabernacle of clay, warring our pilgrimage through this world of trials and tribulations, often in doubts and fears, groaning within ourselves, waiting for

the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. Blessed thought, the church of the living God complete.

My race is almost run; my sun will soon go down; I am now tottering along upon my staff, in my seventy-fourth year; this old tenement of clay is becoming greatly dilapidated, shadowing the grave. O, may we feel and realize that we are walking in the glorious light of his blessed gospel.

Dear children, perhaps this may be the last writing from your unworthy brother, if meet to be called a brother. May God in his mercy bless our dear editors, and spare them many years to stand upon the walls of Zion, sounding the gospel trumpet to the scattered flock, is the prayer of your unworthy servant,

A. R. McPHERSON.

AUGHRIM, Ontario, Dec. 14, 1903.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN IN THE BLESSED HOPE OF THE GOSPEL:—It once more becomes my duty as well as privilege to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, and while I live and the SIGNS continues as it has done in the past, to contend for that faith once delivered to the saints, I shall count it my privilege and blessing to subscribe.

It is with much hesitation that I write more than the above, as all the contributors to the pages of the SIGNS have and do so abundantly express my mind regarding the solemn and glorious truths of the gospel in their experience. Had I not an intimate knowledge of my own heart in all its depravity and darkness, I might wonder that any of God's dear children would become entangled with the "yoke of bondage," but I do painfully know that of myself I can do nothing, and that I am entirely dependent upon God for daily bread. Some time ago while my mind was occupied with thoughts concerning those who contend for what is called "conditional time salvation," my mind was led to look to that One who alone is the author and finisher of our faith, and it seemed to me that salvation for time and for eternity was like our God, for we read, He is the Rock, his work is perfect, and this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. Elder Chick so well expressed it, "This eternal life is not simply of endless duration, but another kind of life," and our beloved Paul declares that the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Also, we read and experience that we love him because he first loved us; just as the life given to the fruit tree is the cause of its beautiful fruit, so is that eternal life which God gives to his children the cause of all their good works or fruit. The word of God does not say that if ye through the flesh do mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live, but it does read, "If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live." Of old there were some who came to Jesus asking what they must do to work the works of God, and Jesus declared, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. Therefore I conclude that salvation in all its fullness for time and eternity is of God, and therefore is of grace. I do love to have it thus, for I feel that his yoke is easy and his burden light. May God in his love be with you all, is my prayer.

I remain your brother in hope,

R. CASE.

272 OAKLAND AVE., DETROIT, Mich., Jan. 14, 1904.

EDITOR OF THE SIGNS:—You will find inclosed a money order for two dollars, which please credit on my subscription. Whether I shall be permitted to read the coming volume is for my heavenly Father to determine, but while I live and am able to see the lines, I wish to keep in touch with those who love the truth as I understand it. My only consolation and hope of glory is my confidence in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone through the blood of Christ. Sixty-seven years ago, when I was in my twentieth year, God opened my eyes to see, and my heart to understand my utter inability to extricate myself from the condemnation of the law by any effort of my own. Since that time I have investigated many theories and schemes of men, whereby it is claimed every man, all men, are to be saved, and come into that inheritance which is reserved in heaven for them that love God, but I have found nothing among them all upon which I can rest with that sweet satisfying consolation that a living faith in Christ brings to my soul. In all the wearisomeness of life, here is rest, here the aged and infirm, the sick and distressed, the poor and needy, the downtrodden and discouraged, the sinner and the outcast, find encouragement and rest, for there is no other name given under heaven whereby we must be saved, and God by his Spirit of power and holiness will gather his elect from the four corners of the earth, saying, "Bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory."

Read the forty-third chapter of Isaiah, and much beside in the Scriptures, going to show that God is, and that there is no other in whom poor mortals can trust for salvation, and for rest in the hope of glory.

In common with all readers of the SIGNS, I feel to express my sense of bereavement, in the death of brother Beebe, whose faithfulness as editor and publisher of the SIGNS commanded our confidence and affection. He possessed unvarying firmness in battling for the truth, and in comforting the saints. My heart goes out in sympathy to the bereaved family in their affliction, and I commend them to him, who is the widow's God, and a Father to the fatherless, until he shall have gathered us all into oneness with himself, in accordance with the prayer of his only begotten Son Jesus Christ.

Among the many blessings so continually bestowed upon me by my heavenly Father, is the sweet privilege of listening to preaching, which is in such harmony with my own views as to brighten my hope and encourage me with brighter faith in Christ my only Savior. Since I came here in October last, I have listened to Elders Curry and Carnell, of Canada, and Elder Scott, of Illinois, each and all of whom are able ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Being upon the outer edge of human life, this may be my last greeting to the readers of the SIGNS on earth.

In gospel bonds, yours in Christ,

P. WEST.

[WE have very greatly enjoyed reading this solemn letter from brother West. How precious is the testimony of the old tried soldiers to their Leader's faithfulness and salvation. The younger can but be strengthened and encouraged by such a testimony. Brother West has found nothing to satisfy him save in Jesus Christ and him crucified. This is his testimony, after nearly seventy years ex-

perience of the trials and sorrows of life, and after the trial of all other schemes, which are the inventions of men. None but Jesus can do helpless sinners good; this is all our hope also. In behalf of all who are connected with the SIGNS, and all our readers, we extend greeting to our aged brother. May his last days spiritually be his best days, until his Master shall call him home.—ED.]

MADISON, Ga., Nov. 23, 1903.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—You will find inclosed post-office money order for two dollars, to pay for the SIGNS another year; also one dollar to help pay the indebtedness of the SIGNS. Wish I was able to send ten, for I dearly love to read the SIGNS, and hope to be able to do so as long as I live, which I know cannot be long. I am now in my eighty-first year, and have been failing for several years; am very feeble, not able to leave the house. Have not heard a sermon in several years, and never see an Old Baptist, but the SIGNS come regularly, and I prize them highly, believing they advocate the truth, as they have always done. My heart is drawn out in love to the dear brethren who write for your paper; such good letters. How glad I would be if I could write as they do, but having no gift I must close with love to editors and correspondents of the dear old SIGNS, desiring to be remembered at the throne of grace by all. This will probably be my last. I must now bid you all farewell. God grant that we may reach that blessed world above, where sickness, sorrow, pain and death, are felt and feared no more.

A poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

LUCY LAURA PERRY.

DUTTON, Ontario, Feb. 24, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—The February quarterly meeting of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada was held at the stated time, viz: the first Sunday and Saturday before and Monday following. Notwithstanding the general obstruction to travel by the great depth of snow, there was a fair attendance, though not so many as usual. There were no matters of business before the church, so the time was practically taken up in the preaching of the word and the administration of the ordinance of the Lord's supper. Elder John L. Scott, of Pleasant Plains, Ill., was invited by the church to come to this meeting, and we were favored with his presence and his labors in word and doctrine. His preaching was sound in word and fervent in spirit, and was most graciously, gladly and joyfully received by all who believe, that were present at that meeting. Elder Scott will long be remembered here, and will be cordially welcomed among us at any time. Brother D. S. Koontz, a very gracious man in the church, came with Elder Scott, and enjoyed the good meeting with us.

H. M. CURRY.

CROOK, Mo., Feb. 19, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS:—On account of my health I desire to get to a better climate, so if one brother or sister from each county or church in Indian Territory and western Arkansas will write me and describe their section of country, price of land, &c., it would be thankfully received, and I will try to replace the stamp. I saw a piece in the SIGNS about a year ago from a sister in Indian Territory, but I loaned the paper and it has never been returned.

Your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) AGNES DRUIN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1904.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

UNIVERSAL SALVATION.

SISTER Virginia Coughran, of Red Bird, Ark., writes us, asking for our views through the SIGNS upon universal salvation. She states that some in the section where she lives hold that the word "wicked," spoken of in various Scriptures, means only the flesh. They also teach universal salvation to the inward man.

In reply, we wish to say that the one chief objection which we have to the theory of universal salvation, is that the Scriptures are against it, and the best argument against it that we know of, is the New Testament. Those Scriptures which declare everlasting destruction of the non-elect prove the contrary; those Scriptures also which declare the doctrine of the personal election of sinners to salvation, prove the contrary, and the many Scriptures which speak of believers and unbelievers, and of the righteous and the wicked, do not set forth a contrast between the flesh and the Spirit in some one or more men and women, but do set forth two classes of men in this world.

Election could have no meaning at all as a term in language, except the opposite idea also be implied. Choice always means that two or more characters or persons are involved, and that some are not chosen. Election necessarily signifies that some are not elected, but are passed by, or rejected. Language has no sure meaning if this be not so, and if language has no sure meaning, no one can read the Scriptures with any certainty as to what they do mean. Still further, as regards the idea that the election is of the inward man, or the spirit, whatever that may mean, and that the outward man, or the body, is rejected or passed by, this is altogether false, because death in the first place was passed upon the whole man, body, soul and spirit, and redemption therefore must be of the whole man; one part of man is not elected to salvation, and another part left to perish; the Bible doctrine of election means no such thing as this. Election means that before the world was, some individuals of Adam's fallen race were in the eternal mind and purpose of God elected to be called by grace, and finally saved, while the same sovereign will of God decreed to pass by the rest of mankind, and leave them to perish in their sins. We do not feel called upon here to enter into a defense of the justice and goodness of God as manifested in this Bible doctrine of personal election. The bitterest shafts of the adversaries of God have always been leveled at this plain scriptural doctrine of election, but all such come under the appeal of Paul in Romans ix: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"

Election is the doctrine of the Bible, first and most important of all, and election is, and has been in all ages, the doctrine of the true church of God, and it is the doctrine of all true Old School Baptists now, and all those who deny the

doctrine of personal election of sinners to final glory before the world was, and the decree of God to pass by and leave all others to perish in their guilt forever, are not Old School Baptists, and what is more, they are not Bible Baptists.

Universalism, like all other Arminian theories, is based primarily upon a denial of the justice of God in the condemnation of all men to everlasting punishment, because of the sin of our first parents, and upon very weak and partial views of the enormity of sin; sin against God, the Sovereign of the universe. Sin is to be measured, as regards its exceeding sinfulness, not by the finiteness and weakness of the sinner, but by the dignity and holiness of that God against whom men have sinned. Treason against the government, among men is regarded as being much more criminal than an offense against some individual; sin is an offense against God; how exceeding vile and sinful then must sin be; God in his word says that it demands everlasting punishment. All would thus justly perish had not God in mercy chosen to save some as the monuments of his grace.

1 TIMOTHY V. 8–11.

A CORRESPONDENT from Hampton, Iowa, whose name we have mislaid, desires that we should present some thoughts with regard to the Scripture found in 1 Tim. v. 8–11.

The connection clearly shows that Paul is here giving directions to Timothy as to what he shall set before the churches with regard to poor widows, who are believers and members of the church. Such as are widows indeed, are to be cared for, and their temporal needs provided by the church. But restrictions are also laid down by the apostle. First, they are to be widows indeed; that is, they are not only to be widows in the ordinary meaning of the term, but they are to be without children or nephews to care for them, and are to be destitute of means of their own. This at least seems to us to be the meaning of the expression, "widows indeed." Second, she must be one that trusts in God, and that is known as being devout, and engaged in the service of God with her whole heart. She is to be one who continues in supplications and prayers night and day. This implies humility, and confession of dependence upon God. Third, she is not to be one who continues in pleasure, for such are dead while they live. The word "pleasure" here includes all that belongs to worldly delights, in contrast with the joy of the Lord and the comfort of the Spirit. She is not to be taken into the number cared for by the church, if under three score years of age. There is a good reason that will be at once apparent, viz: that as a rule those under that age are capable of such labor as will provide for their own living. Paul will not admit of idleness or laziness among the people of God; the church is not to be unjustly burdened by caring for those who can care for themselves. She must also have been the wife of one man. We frankly confess that we do not see the reason why this restriction is given, but still it is the plain statement of the qualification which such an one must have. She must be well reported of for good works; she must have brought up children, she must have lodged strangers, she must have washed the saints' feet, she must have relieved the afflicted, and she must have diligently followed every good work. All these are named as personal qualities and works performed in her private life as a member of the church, and in obedience to the Lord's commandments.

Beside this command to provide out of the funds of the church for needy widows, beginning with verse nine, the apostle may refer to some service in connection with the church which these widows may have been called upon to render. Indeed, we know that there were women servants in the early churches, as well as deacons, and there can be little doubt that as the deacons were to look out for the temporal affairs of the church, so also some temporal interests were to be regarded and attended to by these women. As we have said, something of this kind may have been in the mind of Paul when he wrote the words from verse nine to verse twelve in the text to which our attention has been called. From such a place the younger widows are to be shut out, and this must be so, because they may marry again.

With regard to this matter, Paul, verse eight, says, "If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." This relates to the children or nephews of these widows. It is enjoined that they must care for their widows, and not leave them to be cast upon the care of the church. If any son or nephew will not do this, though he may profess to be a believer and follower of Christ, yet he denies the faith, and in this respect is worse than an infidel. Infidels will, through natural affection and regard to the general customs and opinions of men, provide for their near relatives. Shall professed believers show less regard for what is right and kind than infidels?

Kindness to the poor and needy is enjoined everywhere in the word of God. Whatever one's profession may be, he is not a follower of Christ if he disregards the sufferings of the poor, and does not minister to their necessities.

LUKE XIII. 6-9.

BROTHER Thomas Dunham, of Ava, Mo., writes asking for some reflections upon the Scripture found in Luke xiii. 6-9.

This Scripture narrates a parable spoken by the Savior. It is evident from the connection that it was spoken not to the disciples specially, but to the Jewish people who were gathered together at this time. Our understanding is that it relates specially to the Jewish nation, and that it presents the dealings of God with them as a nation in the past, and up to the time that then was. The three years spoken of in the parable may represent all the time of the past in which God had shown that people great forbearance, while the additional year may represent the time yet to be allowed before the final destruction of that city and nation, which took place forty years after this parable was spoken, in the year seventy, by the Roman armies under Titus, as related by Josephus, a Jewish historian. But be this as it may, the general thought of the parable is that God had dealt in long-suffering and forbearance with that people in all their history, and was still full of forbearance. But the time would come, and was near at hand, when upon this generation should come all the righteous blood that had been shed by all their former generations, as the Savior elsewhere said to them. In many places, both in the Old Testament and the New, this long-suffering of God toward that people is presented, and on the other hand, their utter barrenness in all that could be acceptable to God. There was, after all, found no pleasant fruit upon them. The Lord had planted them as a vine, and had watered them and enriched them, but when he came looking for fruit he found them altogeth-

er destitute, and now the time was near at hand when he would cut them down, as a barren fig tree would be cast aside by the husbandman. It seems that this is the plain, simple meaning of this parable. We desire to add that it does not in any wise imply disappointment with God, as though he had not known their barrenness from the beginning, for the Lord had said to them by the mouth of Moses, that he knew them, that they would not keep his commandments. In justice they might have been cut off at once, but in mercy, and because there was a blessing to come out of them as a nation in the birth of Jesus Christ, they were spared during all the former generations, but now the cup of their iniquity was filled, and they must be cut off as cumberers of the ground. When God has fulfilled his purpose with any people or nation, that people or nation also shall be cut off in their iniquity; it is so with all nations and with all men.

The Lord's people, chosen to final salvation, are to count themselves unprofitable, and they feel altogether unfruitful, and many have been disturbed by this very parable; but such as are saved by grace shall never be cut off. This parable does not apply to them; for those who feel unprofitable and unfruitful are they who are most fruitful in all the graces of the Spirit, in which humility stands forth prominently. This parable relates to the boastful and arrogant, who regard themselves as being useful and able to do much good in the world, and who suppose that they have done so, but it does not relate to those who say, When did we ever see thee sick, or needy, or in prison, and ministered unto thee? The proud may well tremble, but the humble are exalted in the Lord; the humble are near to God through Christ, but the proud he knoweth afar off.

We desire to add that the fruits which are pleasant to God are not so much outward works as inward graces. Inward graces will produce outward works, in harmony with themselves, but it is the inward grace that gives to them all their excellency. Humility, love, meekness, fear and trust are inward graces which, when put in the heart, will bring forth obedience also in the outward life. Where these are wanting, no amount of good deeds, counted so by men, can be pleasing to God. Pharisees, who were full of outward righteousness, had no righteousness within, and the Lord called them whited sepulchres. A meek and quiet spirit is in the sight of God of great price; without this spirit man might as well offer swine's flesh as a bullock before God; he regards the spirit rather than the deed. Yet we are to glorify God in our body and in our spirit, both of which are God's, but the inward grace is that which sanctifies the outward work.

These are some of the lessons which seem to be taught in this solemn parable.

PLEASE BE SURE,

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

1 PETER I. 22.

"SEEING ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently."

As we intimated in a late number, we now offer such views as we have on the above text, in answer to the request of brother George Fettenger, of Iowa. The apostle addressed the saints which were scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, and having set forth the grand principles on which their salvation was established, he proceeds to instruct and admonish them in perfect harmony with the foundation of their faith and hope. "Forasmuch," says he, "as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifested in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, * * * seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth," &c.

The principal inquiry of our correspondent seems to be as to the meaning of the apostle, in regard to their having purified their souls, when the Scriptures so manifestly teach that the cleansing and purification of the saints is attributable only to the blood of Jesus Christ, which alone can purge us from guilt, and present us holy and unblamable in the sight of God. We must observe that the apostle in the connection had clearly established the doctrine of salvation by the sovereign grace and atoning blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Their standing and acceptance before God was in Christ. Elected, or chosen of God in Christ before the foundation of the world, and that according, not to their works or merits, but according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, and through the sanctification (separation, consecration, or setting apart by regeneration,) of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. The saints had not therefore purified their souls by virtue of any meritorious action of their own, nor do we understand this text to speak of expiation for sin, or atonement for guilt, for that is very positively ascribed in the verses immediately preceding, to the precious blood of Christ, as possessing the only power or virtue that can possibly redeem sinners to God. But the purification of their souls, in the sense of this text, is from the defilement of error, which they had received by tradition from their fathers, by which they had formerly been defiled; which had led them to confide in the flesh, and to follow and obey the flesh in its dictations, and that in disobedience of the truth. But now, being sanctified, or set apart by the Spirit, and as the apostle adds, Being born again, not of a corruptible seed, but of an incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever, they have received the truth, and the truth has set up its throne in their hearts, and by the sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, they have obeyed the truth, are governed by the power of the truth, and in obedience to the mandates of the truth as it is in Jesus, they have laid aside all malice, and all guile, and all hypocrisies, and envies, and all

evil speakings, as new born babes they desire the sincere milk of the word, that word by and of which they are born again, as being congenial with the new life which God has given them in their new and heavenly birth, they by their obedience to the truth have cast off, or laid aside, their former malice, guile, hypocrisy, &c., and thereby they have purified their souls in obeying the truth. As all error is defiling and filthy, so the truth, which is the opposite of error, is pure, and heavenly in its nature. Truth flows from the word of God by which they are born again, as the sincere milk of the word of God that liveth and abideth forever. Thus while obedience to the flesh, to traditions of the fathers, according to the flesh, corrupts and defiles, the opposite course of obedience to the truth, purifies and cleanses from falsehood, deception and hypocrisy. Under the ceremonial law the Israelite who transgressed the law was pronounced unclean. But a faithful obedience to the precepts was considered clean. God said to Israel, "Wash you, make you clean." How? The manner is pointed out. "Put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed; judge the fatherless; plead for the widow," &c.—Isaiah i. 16, 17. But, it may be asked, How had the saints addressed by Peter, purified their souls by obeying the truth? The apostle tells how. Through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren. An effort of the flesh to cultivate a love for the people of God, or the things of the Spirit, can at the most, only amount to a neat counterfeit. There is no brotherhood to, or fraternal love for the saints felt in reality until we are born of the Spirit, for, All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man is as the flower of grass, which will soon wither, and fall away. Hypocrites may make great professions of love, and feign an ardent love, but it is not reliable; it is not the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, but an imitation, a deception; but that love which is the fruit of the Spirit, is real, vital and lasting as eternity, for it is the love of God, and is therefore eternal and immutable, and is consequently unfeigned; it flows out freely, spontaneously, sincerely and ardently to the brethren, to their kindred in Christ. Not only in times of prosperity, when religion walks abroad in silver slippers, but when brethren are oppressed, despised, afflicted or persecuted. To know that a dear brother or sister is in distress, and needs consolation and sympathy, then will this love find vent, it will gush forth in the most unmistakable and undisguised tenderness. It will not say to a needy and destitute brother, Be warmed, and be clothed, and at the same time withhold the things which are required; but it will weep with those who weep, and mourn with those who mourn, and if necessary divide with him the last loaf, or the last dollar or dime. That love which is induced and cultivated by theory or tradition from sire to son, and grows only out of the flesh, and exhibits only the fleshly passions which belong to our depraved nature, is just as corrupt and polluted as the nature from which it emanates; but that which we receive in the new birth, is as pure and holy as the fountain from which it proceeds. When through the Spirit therefore the saints obey the truth, they love one another with a pure heart fervently; the heart is made pure, it is sprinkled from an evil conscience, and the law of Christ who is essentially the Truth, as well as the Way and the Life, is written in the

pure heart, the new heart which God gives to his people. Then the good man, out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things; from such an heart, unfeigned love proceeds; but all pretension to christian love, which comes from any other source is feigned, deceptive and unavailing before God.

The very expression of the apostle, Seeing that ye have purified your souls by obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, implies that none but such can be profited by the admonition, See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.

We are told that because iniquity should abound, the love of many should wax cold. And is not the same cause at all times productive of similar effects? This was the case, according to the words of our Lord, when the abomination which maketh desolate, stood in the holy place, and the fearful judgments of God were poured out upon the ancient Jerusalem. And at all other times when iniquity has abounded, has it not had the same tendency, that is, with many? not with all, for some have manifested their love to God, to holiness, and especially to the brethren more abundantly at such times. But prevailing iniquity in the world serves to discriminate between feigned and unfeigned love. Far beyond any other time that any of the present generation have known, the present is a time in which iniquity abounds; the man of sin is permitted to scatter fire-brands, arrows and death, broadcast through the world, and do we not see that many who formerly professed to love the people of God most fervently, are giving the saddest evidences that their love, if not feigned, has grown lamentably cold? Are there not brethren in this day, ready to deliver up brethren to the sword, with whom they have hitherto professed to be in fellowship and love? If we see such in hostile array against each other, and ready to consign each other to death, must we not conclude their love, if they ever had any, has reached the freezing point? But let us, dear brethren, whose hearts are cleansed from dead works to serve the living God, heed well the admonition of our text, and See that we love one another with a pure heart, fervently; that we may know how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., July 1, 1861.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

HENRY James having changed his address from Worthington, Minn., to Reading, Nobles Co., Minn., desires his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO AN APPEAL OF BRETHREN TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$911 65
J. F. Varnes, Pennsylvania, $1.00; Willis S. Gott, Iowa, $1.00.—Total	2 00
Total to date	$913 65

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, at the residence of the bride's parents', Feb. 24th, 1904, William C. Notstine and Miss Oela C. Dunnick, both of Circleville, Pickaway Co., Ohio.

By Elder D. M. Vail, at his residence, Waverly, Pa., March 2nd, 1904, Martin F. Bellis and Miss Susan R. Kugler, both of Frenchtown, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Ruth M. Ricketts, wife of Mr. James Ricketts, died at her home, 638 G St., S. E., Washington, D. C., Feb. 10th, 1904, aged 70 years. She had been in failing health for more than a year, but talked little of her condition, and near the end said nothing of passing away to friends who called to see her. Fifty-two years ago last October she was married to Mr. Ricketts, who survives her with the following children: Wm. M., Eugene K. and Edmond L., sons; Virginia A. and Josephine Ricketts, daughters, all of Washington, D. C. Sister Ricketts united with the Middletown and Wallkill Old School Baptist Church June 13th, 1875; she was baptized by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and although she lived many years in Washington, never moved her membership. In consequence of her living elsewhere she met with us here seldom, but attended the church in Washington, beside visiting associations when she could do so. We extend our sympathy to the family, especially to the husband, who in his old age has lost the companion of his youth and declining years.

The funeral sermon was preached by Elder J. T. Rowe, of Baltimore, Md., pastor of the church in Washington, D. C.

Thus another one is at rest from all the sorrows, cares, trials, temptations and afflictions of this world.

ALSO,

Joel D. Northrup died at his home at Otisville, N. Y., at 4:40 Thursday morning, of "la grippe" and old age. He had been ill for some days. He was born Jan. 10th, 1819, in Ogdensburgh, St. Lawrence Co., N. Y., and was a son of Daniel and Annie Filkins Northrup, who were natives of Rensselaer Co. The early life of Daniel Northrup was spent on the Erie canal, and he later was agent for the canal company in New York city. He died when sixty-five years old, and his wife died at the age of sixty-four years.

Joel D., the son, in 1829, went to Ogdensburgh to live with his grandfather, working his way on the canal. He remained with his grandparents until 1833, working on their farm and walking three miles to school. In 1834 he returned home and worked as a driver on the Erie canal between Troy and Buffalo. When he was nineteen years old he became captain of a boat, and served nine years in that capacity. In 1847 he went to New Jersey, and spent two years in farming, then returned to the Erie canal. Later he removed to Washington, N. J., where he boated on the Morris canal. From there he went to New York city and ran a steamboat on Long Island Sound, and later on the Hudson River. In 1849 he went to work as a baggageman on the Hudson River Railroad between New York city and Poughkeepsie. In 1850 he went into the service of the Erie Railroad as baggageman on the Newburgh Branch. He was soon made a regular conductor, and ran regularly until 1889, or nearly forty years, much of the time as conductor on the milk train between Port Jervis and Jersey City, making his home in Otisville. He had lived in that village since retiring from the railroad.

He was married Dec. 2nd, 1839, to Miss Hannah Bright, of Washington, N. J. She was born May 24th, 1820, and died Jan. 26th, 1895. Seven children were born to them, two of whom died in infancy; Augusta, wife of Homer F. Merriman, of Jersey City, died last April. The surviving children are William D. Northrup, merchant, of Otisville; Joel D. Northrup, Jr., merchant, of Otisville; Hannah, wife of Charles F. Blizzard, of Jersey City, formerly of Port Jervis; Irena C. Tears, widow of George H. Tears, who for the past few years made her home in Otisville with her father.

Mr. Northrup was one of the best known railroad men in this section of the country. The *Port Jervis Union* says he was with the Erie Company about forty years, and every man, woman and child who ever rode on the cars between Port Jervis and Jersey City knew him, and few had not had some favor at his hands. No railroad man was ever more popular, and deservedly so, and his death will be lamented by thousands who so kindly remember the genial, wholesouled "Uncle Joe" of the milk train.

The above appeared in the death notices in the *Middletown Daily Times*, Feb. 26th, 1904, and speaks well for our dear old friend. Mr. Northrup never made a public profession of religion, but was a believer in Jesus many years. He had been a reader of the SIGNS sixty-five years. His wife, who preceded him to the grave, was a member of the New Vernon Church, and during her life the Northrup home was an Old Baptist home. Many who may read this will remember the kind hospitality of the Northrup family. Mr. Northrup was as glad to welcome the brethren after the death of his wife as before. It was our privilege to visit him two or three times a year since our coming to New York; these visits were always pleasant. He was a friend indeed to the cause of Christ, ever ready to aid in every way. A kinder man and one more popular could not be found. We all shall miss him.

The writer conducted the funeral service at his late home Sunday, Feb. 28th, which was largely attended; text used, "Surely the bitterness of death is past."—1 Samuel xv. 32. The remains were taken to Washington, N. J., for interment. May the grace of God sustain the children and reconcile us all to his will.

H. C. KER.

LITTLE **Frank Cunningham,** son of T. B. and C. E. Cunningham, was born June 25th, 1903, and died Jan. 13th, 1904, aged 6 months and 19 days. The little fellow suffered ten days before he died. It is hard to have to give up our dear little one. He was a sweet, lovely baby.

His mother, C. E. CUNNINGHAM.

SOUWILPA, Ala.

Sylvia J. Jackson, wife of Elder Mitchell L. Jackson, departed this life at her home at Nora Springs, Floyd Co., Iowa, Feb. 22nd, 1904, at 7:30 o'clock a. m., of pneumonia, aged 65 years, 4 months and 20 days. Sylvia J. Reed was born in Crawford Co., Ohio, Sept. 26th, 1838, and moved to Iowa in 1855. She was united in marriage to Mitchell L. Jackson, August 23rd, 1857. By this union five children were born, one son and four daughters; all have passed to the other shore. She with her husband united with the Little Cedar Church of Old School Primitive Baptists in February, 1874, and was baptized by Elder James B. Burch, of which church she lived a devoted member till death. None knew her but to love and respect her. She leaves to mourn their loss a devoted husband, three grandchildren, one brother, two sisters, and many near relatives and friends.

The writer conducted the funeral services, which were held at the Old School Baptist meeting-house at 10 o'clock, on Wednesday succeeding her death, and spoke to a large and attentive congregation, using for a text 1 Cor. xv. 19, after which her remains were interred in the beautiful Rock Grove Cemetery beside her children and grandchildren, to await the resurrection morn.

I had been intimately acquainted with her several years; I never met with a more devoted sister. Her home was always opened to her brethren.

Now may the God of all grace comfort the husband and grandchildren with his holy presence, and guide them in the way of all truth, is our humble prayer for Jesus' sake. E. A. NORTON.

HAMPTON, Iowa.

BY request of his daughter I send for publication in the SIGNS the notice of the death of our esteemed brother, **John Tyor,** who departed this life at the home of his step-daughter and son-in-law, near Delmar, Del., Feb. 7th, 1904. Brother Tyor was born in what is now Wicomico Co., Md., Dec. 25th, 1826, making him at the time of his death 77 years, 1 month and 13 days old. He was married July 5th, 1852, to Nancy E. S. Brumbly, who died July 10th, 1888. Dec. 20th, 1891, he married Mrs. Frances Lecates, who survives him. To the first marriage were born three children, but one of whom survives him, Mrs. Arkansas Smith, who is an esteemed member of the Forest Grove Church, in Wicomico Co., Md. Brother Tyor was baptized at Indiantown, Md., in the year 1876, by the pastor, Elder T. M. Poulson. He was one of the constituent members of the church at Forest Grove, which was constituted in January, 1886, and continued a devoted and faithful member there until his death, manifesting his faithfulness and zeal by his regular attendance at the meetings of the church, and by a well ordered walk and godly conversation. His remains were laid to rest in the cemetery of the Forest Grove Church, in the presence of sorrowing relatives and friends, to await the trumpet's sound. He leaves a disconsolate widow, sister Tyor, (who is also a faithful member of the same church) one daughter, one brother and one sister, besides numerous other relatives, and the church, to mourn, but not without hope, for we believe that our departed brother was a child of Jehovah, and an heir of salvation. May the Lord comfort the mourners according to his word. Amen.

Your brother in the hope of salvation through a once crucified but now risen and exalted Savior,

A. B. FRANCIS.

Miss Ada Elvina Hatch was born August 2nd, 1868, in Delaware Co., Ohio; departed this life Nov. 5th, 1903, aged 35 years, 3 months and 3 days. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church called Van Buren, at Van Buren, Ohio, seven years ago, and was baptized by Elder A. F. Dove. She lived an humble, exemplary member until death. She was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and loved its precious truths. She had been much afflicted for years, but bore it with much patience and sweet resignation, and quietly passed away; the end was peace, and she is at rest. She leaves to mourn, a loving mother, one brother, one sister, with many other relatives and friends.

Funeral services were conducted at her home by her pastor, Elder A. F. Dove, after which she was gently laid to rest in the silent city of the dead, with the consoling hope of the glorious resurrection.

BELLE GORSUCH.

MARENGO, Ohio, Feb. 8, 1904.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 72. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1904. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

1 THESSALONIANS V. 22.

"ABSTAIN from all appearance of evil."

Things are not always what they appear to be, hence people are often deceived; man sees not as God sees; man looketh upon the outward appearance, but God looketh upon the heart, and knoweth the thoughts and intents thereof. Poor, short-sighted man can only judge by the outward appearance. Then how careful we should be regarding our appearance. If our desires are pure, our actions should be accordingly; if the tree is good, the fruit will also be good, but it may not have the appearance of good fruit. Brethren may do things in their innocence, seeing no harm in them; they themselves are pure, and to them all things are pure, and certainly all things they do are pure, because their motive is pure, but how does the thing we do appear to others, to our brethren? Does it have the appearance of good or evil? Will this make any brethren think perhaps my heart is not pure, because my actions do not seem pure? We remember actions speak louder than words. By our actions men judge us, let our speech be what it may. Will running after worldly amusements to the neglect of our church privileges, visiting our brethren, reading the Bible, or of our families even, cause our brethren to think that we love these things more than we do our Savior and our brethren? Will these things cause jealousy among the brethren? Christ is the embodiment of charity, but is there not a limit to the charity of the brethren? Is not the gift of Christ measured to them, or given to them in measure? Will not a life of apparent evil, finally lead the most charitable brethren to believe that something is wrong within? See what a bad effect the appearance of evil will have upon the minds of the brethren. Surely there is nothing more to be desired among the children of God than the love and fellowship of the brethren, and we sometimes wonder if they really love us, because we see no reason in ourselves why they should. It is a mystery to us if we have the assurance that they do love us. Dear reader, have you not had this thought, O that I could do something to cause the brethren to love me? Let me say, there is no better way than to abstain from even the appearance of evil. It is not

simply because one bears the name of Old School Baptist that we love them; it is not because of the name, but because of what they are through grace. How are we to know what they are? By their fruit shall ye know them. What are the fruits? Are they not love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, faith and temperance? O what a pity it is if all this lovely fruit be hidden away behind an apparent evil foliage, where, if the fruit be seen at all, the tree must be closely scrutinized.

A brother's name was once mentioned in my hearing. A brother present said he had never gotten very near that brother. The question why, was asked, and he said, Because that brother always carries a supply of novels and magazines with him, and he never saw him with a Bible or religious paper. It would have been much better if the brother had not taken the novels with him, thus abstaining from the appearance of evil. One of the most objectionable features in the misconduct of brethren is the bad effect it has upon others; the erring brother is not the only one who suffers; his errors cause others to sorrow. Young brethren have been brought into the church, for whom we felt thankful. They have delighted in singing the songs of Zion, in reading and in conversation upon the Scriptures; they were full of love, and it was good and refreshing to be in their company. It was not hard for them to abstain from the appearance of evil, for they hated evil. The word abstain would hardly apply to them, for the word abstain means a refraining from an indulgence of the appetite, or keeping away from those things to which we may be inclined. Bye and bye the time came to those dear brethren just named, when the evil propensities which were in their nature came forth into manifestation, the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life arose, and temptation came to gratify these fleshly appetites, now the word abstain applies to them. O how hard at times it is to abstain not only from evil, but from the appearance of it.

Brethren, we need the prayers of each other, we need each other's help, we need exhortation and admonition from one another at such times. If a young man be inclined to dissipation, is it not easier for him to abstain under the guardianship of friends? Brethren will find it a great help toward abstaining from the appearance of evil to be in constant touch with each other; this they may have, by not forsaking the assembling of themselves together, and in receiving the exhortations and provocations to love and to good works from each other. I once visited a brother whose wife was also a member, and soon after I arrived he suggested that we have a game of dominoes. I could not get any enjoyment out of such things, and if I could, I do not think it looks well for professed followers of Christ to indulge in them; it is a waste of time, to say the least of it. When the brethren visit me I desire to entertain them without resorting to childish plays; when we become men and women, we should put away childish things. When one has tasted that the Lord is gracious, he can adopt the language of the poet and say,

"Tell me no more of earthly toys,
Of sinful mirth and carnal joys,
The things I loved before;
Let me but view my Savior's face,
And feel his animating grace,
And I desire no more."

This I believe to be the experience of one who is exercised by the Spirit of Christ. When one finds real enjoyment

in worldly amusements the Spirit of Christ cannot be exercising them, but that spirit which is antichrist. When the Spirit of Christ is in exercise, its subject will be abundantly satisfied with the goodness of the Lord's house, and will not want to go outside to find satisfaction. Such an one desires to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of his life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple.

"In him they every glory view,
Of safety, strength and beauty, too."

Your brother in hope,

EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Sept. 28, 1903.

[THE above letter certainly contains good and wholesome counsel. It would be well could we all lay it to heart.—ED.]

REIDSVILLE, N. C., Feb. 26, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have been from home much of late, and have not read a great deal; in fact I have been very much in the dark, and have had no mind to read, but the clouds have to some extent passed away, so I can again claim the Lord Jesus as my own dear Savior.

Yesterday and this morning I have been reading the *Landmark* and SIGNS. I had almost forgotten that there is war in the world, or that Zion had enemies, till we were at breakfast this morning, when my grandson, eleven years old, spoke of what he had just read in a newspaper of the war in Korea. For a moment I could not realize that it was true, for all I had been reading was peace; that peace the world cannot give. It caused a contrast in my mind of the kingdoms of this world and the kingdom of our God, wherein dwelleth righteousness. At once my heart leaped for joy that I belonged to a kingdom in which there are no wars or fightings, but where all is peace and love, and where jealousy, envy and malice have no place.

The two last SIGNS have been of much comfort to me, and to-day I am glad that I belong to the little flock that is so lightly esteemed in the world. I had rather be one of two of them than to be one of ten thousand of the kingdoms of this world, or of the religion of this world with all its glory. There is nothing plainer than that all flesh is grass, and the glory thereof as the flower of the field; the grass withereth and the flower thereof fadeth away, but the word of the Lord endureth forever. How good it is to have this word within us, even the kingdom of God which abideth forever. The members of this kingdom are a scattered people, as salt is scattered throughout that which is to be savored by it, and yet they are one band sweetly united by the revelation of Christ in them the hope of glory. They that have experienced little of this revelation have no lack, and they who have experienced much have none to spare; it is all for the comfort of the saints and for the glory of God. Thus the same life flows freely through every part, as the streams of the river of life pour forth its healing and life-giving waters into the soul, and we are made glad that we have been planted in the garden of the Lord by his hand, "Trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord."

Just now clouds are thick and dark, and snow is falling thick and fast. It is the Lord's visitation to water the earth, but it is disagreeable to one who is compelled to be out in it. If there were no clouds there would be no snow or rain, and the earth would yield no fruit. Even so the clouds which hover so thickly over our souls and bring deep mourning and heart-felt repentance, are messengers from

the Father. They are not pleasant for the time being, but they are filled with rain from the kingdom of our Father, and we grow thereby. The north wind is as necessary to make the garden flourish as the south wind. As the Savior learned obedience by the things he suffered, so must all the plants of the garden learn it in the same way. All these are times appointed to us of the Lord, and we must walk in them, for without them we lose a part of the heavenly inheritance. We are predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, and his sufferings were as much a part of that image as his glory. Therefore we are appointed unto his sufferings to learn the fellowship thereof. Here we learn the need of mercy, and experience deep, heart-felt searchings for the way of life and peace, and are made to feel our need of the hand of the Lord to guide us. Here we are taught that the carnal mind is yet carnal, and to see it as our worst enemy, because it is in us and therefore always present. This often leads us into deep waters, and they flow over us, and we go down to the bottom of the mountains in the belly of hell. Then we cry unto the Lord, and our prayers are fervent and effectual; the Lord hears and delivers us. Our faith in him is renewed, and we grow strong in the power of his might, and feel that we could run the race, or leap over a wall, or stand up against ten thousand, for our war is now peace. The warfare is accomplished, our iniquity is pardoned, for we have received of the Lord's hand double for all our sins. Truly this is the city of peace into which we have entered, and we are given to sit with the King in his throne, and to behold his beauty. Our desires are unto our Husband, and he rules over us. The church can see no one above her Husband, and she will not divide her privileges with another, for she says, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his." As she comes before him she is as a bride coming forth out of her chamber, clothed in raiment of needlework, and wrought gold, for she has on the robe her husband provided for her, and when he looks upon her in this beautiful raiment he says, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." Can it be otherwise than this is a kingdom of peace? When it is the Father's will to take one from this kingdom in its militant state to the triumphant, his departure is but a glorious benediction on all the other members of the family, which makes them the more hungry for the joys into which the departing is entering. Thus they go on from strength to strength, and all in our eternal God and Father.

The Lord so bless and guide us as one common family, that we may live in him, to the praise of his glorious grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.

Dear kindred, pray for this poor worm, who is but a sinner, yet has a good hope through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. L. H. HARDY.

FARMINGTON, Ill., Sept., 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have just received a very good letter from a dear sister living in Ohio, whom we visited about one year ago, while visiting our son-in-law in that State. The Baptists there speak very highly of her, as being devoted to the cause of her Savior. A former letter from her in the SIGNS did me much good, and I felt constrained to write to her, and her letter to me is so good that I thought I would send it to you. I have not her consent to have it published, but if you think it would be for the good of the cause, and a comfort

to poor, halting sinners in Zion, I would like to see it in the SIGNS. I do not doubt that it will be all right with the dear sister.

Dear brother, I have had a name among the despised Old School Baptists now forty-three years, and I feel just as dependent upon God as when I first came in. It seems to me that in all this time I have made no progress in knowledge and grace, and now I am about to the end of my journey, and feel to say, as did one of old, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been." And, "In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." I often get very low down, and think surely that I am deceived, and have no good hope, yet I realize that I am helpless to change my condition. I go mourning on account of sin which dwells in me; I hate myself because of my sins, and feel to say, "O wretched man that I am!" I see nothing worth living for here, and would long to depart did I know that I had a good hope through grace. I know that if I am not saved by grace I am forever lost.

Your brother in hope,

E. D. VARNES.

MARENGO, Ohio, Sept. 9, 1903.

MR. E. D. VARNES—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I certainly was very much surprised to receive your kind, good letter a few days ago, and although it does not ask for any reply, I feel it would be ungrateful in me to not acknowledge, even in my poor, weak way, how much your letter is to me. It greatly humbles me to be thus kindly remembered by and to know that you have loving fellowship for poor, unworthy me, or at least for what you read from my pen, published in the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

I received a letter from a dear sister in Maine (whose face I have never seen) the same day I did yours, who also felt impressed to write after reading my letter in the SIGNS. O, dear brother Varnes, I cannot express my feelings as I read these two letters, amidst my flowing tears. How very kind of you both to express your loving fellowship. My letter in the SIGNS, sent by sister Wickham, was not intended for publication, and was sent without my knowledge. I wrote it to her last spring, one day when I was feeling so utterly cast down and troubled with my many trials and conflicts, feeling that surely those who had felt a dear Savior's pardoning love could not feel so wretched as I did. I just felt so alone, and somehow it seemed such a privilege to tell sister Joie my feelings, she is such a dear, loving child of God, and I have loving confidence in her, and although I realize that she is my superior in every respect, for her to assume such liberty with my miserable complaints greatly humbles me; but if you, dear brother, or any one else can bear testimony with me, and have been in the least comforted, give God all the praise, for unto him are all praises due, for it is all of his grace that I am what I am, if indeed I am his child, for I have no righteousness of my own. Years ago I feel that he taught me just what a poor, vile sinner I was in his sight, and that without his pardoning mercy and grace I was ruined and lost forever. For many months, yes, years, I journeyed along beneath this awful burden of trouble. By and by there came a time, and I have never been able to tell just when, how or where, but I was brought to feel resigned and reconciled to the will of the Lord, that if I were lost, it was just and right, but if saved, I was a poor sinner saved by his sovereign

mercy and grace alone, and somehow there gradually came a calm, sweet rest into my troubled soul, and peace and love filled my heart with gladness and praise to his holy, precious name.

Brother, I have ever keenly realized that my experience, if indeed I have one, is not as bright as I have heard others relate, and for several years I stumbled along, doubting the reality of what I had felt as being an experience of grace or a precious hope in Jesus, and indeed I have always doubted it. The poet tells my feelings when he says,

> "'Tis a point I long to know,
> (Oft it causes anxious thought,)
> Do I love the Lord or no?
> Am I his, or am I not?"
>
> "I am a stranger here below,
> And what I am 'tis hard to know;
> I am so vile, so prone to sin,
> I fear that I'm not born again."

Yes, this is the ever-anxious question, Have I been "born again"? I feel that the brightest evidence that I have, is that I love the brethren. You know it is written, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," yet I so often ask, Why do I love the brethren? Sometimes I am so fearful it is only a natural love, for I have always been associated with Old Baptists from my early childhood, and perhaps all I know is just what I learned from being in their midst. I do know that when I hear them relate their experiences and tell of sorrows and conflicts, and of the goodness and mercy of the Lord, that their only hope of salvation is in him, I indeed feel to say, Entreat me not to leave thee, for these are my people, and their God is my God. They tell the travel of my soul better than I can myself, and they proclaim the precious, sweet story of Jesus and his tender mercy to poor sinners, that blessed gospel, that "salvation is of the Lord," and somehow this all finds lodgment within my heart. I love to hear the name of our blessed Savior exalted, for he, as we humbly trust, has done great things for us. It is he who came into this world of sin to suffer, bleed and die, to redeem us from sin and everlasting woe, that we might be holy and without blame before him in love; we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. I indeed feel this is too much for me to claim, but this is the reason of my hope, if indeed I have any, it is founded upon what Jesus has done, and not what I have done, can do, or ever will do. I cannot have one good thought or perform one good act except prompted by the Spirit, for Jesus is the fountain of all that is good, and O how I have desired to live after the Spirit and follow in the footprints of Jesus, living a life devoted to him and his precious cause. But alas for me, I am such a vain, foolish, worldly-minded child, so prone to wander in forbidden paths, forgetting the tender mercies of our gracious God, whose goodness has followed us all our days; O how this grieves me. I often wonder how the dear, precious brethren who know me can have any patience with me, or confidence in me; surely they do not see me as I am, and when I try to tell them, as I did in that letter to sister Joie, it seems I cannot make them understand, for she and you, with many others, tell me that you all have fellowship for me, with all my trials and soul-perplexities, my sins and imperfections. O how this humbles me and makes me sink deeper into insignificance. O my soul, can it be that God's meek, humble, little ones do truly have such feelings? Yes, you say you do. What a comfort to know that we are not alone in this warfare, but that many others

have experienced the same trials, and have fellowship with the apostle Paul when he cried, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" It is in this way that we have sympathy and forbearance for each other; these things seem to unite us together in loving fellowship. What a peculiar affection this is, but what a gracious Lord is ours; he has taught all his children alike, he has ever been leading them to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus; they all learn that sweet lesson of grace, and are brought to realize their depravity, the plague of their heart, of just how poor, weak and helpless they all are, and they must say, "Salvation is of the Lord," and this unworthy writer must say, It is all of the Lord, both for time and eternity. Truly we have learned the truth of our dear Savior's words, "Without me ye can do nothing," and O how much we feel to need the grace of our dear Savior to lead, guide and keep us humble, that we may walk worthy of our profession, and never bring reproach upon his precious cause, but adorn him in all our ministrations, and unto him is all the praise.

Brother Varnes, this letter is growing too lengthy. I only designed to pen a few lines, that you might know that your letter to me was indeed a comfort, and highly appreciated. May God bless you and yours in tender mercy, abiding love and grace. If you should feel to again write I shall be glad to hear from you, unworthy though I am.

I attended the Sciota Association and also our own; both were pleasant meetings, the preaching was excellent, and to me comforting; all was love and peace, without one jar.

With love to you and your wife, I am yours sincerely,

BELLE GORSUCH.

MANORKILL, N. Y., Oct. 13, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I am inclined to pen a few lines for your perusal, hoping it may serve to cheer you, and if so give God all the glory, for truly without him we can do nothing, even have a right conception of his holiness. I feel like telling you of the travel of mind that has been given me to enjoy the past few weeks, and how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out. About five weeks ago I was thinking about our coming association; will there be any visiting brethren from other associations? (as we are but a feeble few.) The Lord was in the place and I knew it not, and the words, "The Lord in Zion reigns, and will his people keep," came to me, and with these words there was given me a spirit of resignation to leave it all to him, and I could trust and not be afraid, and so I found it, and can say, He doeth all things well. Elder John McConnell was there to cheer needy souls, and I think his message fell in good ground, and the Elders of our association also gave unto us, and we were made to rejoice while hearing the words of life, so cheering to the hungry soul, and all appeared to eat and drink abundantly of Canaan's milk and wine. While being thus fed we could ask,

"Was there ever love like this?
Was ever grace so free?
This be my constant joy and bliss,
That Jesus died for me."

I was led to speak to Elder McConnell of some of the Lord's dealings with me, some of my first, and also the last of my exercises from nature to grace. Before I united with the church, when I was fourteen years of age, in the spring of the year, I was alone in the field, I had these words given to me, I trust, "Seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." I was led to inquire where

they were, as I was very ignorant. I also attended Sunday school, and committed to memory a few verses in the first chapter of John. In the fall I was alone in the field ploughing, and I heard my name called three times, David, David, David, which caused me to wonder, as I could see no one. I related the above to Elder McConnell, with a recital of some of my resolutions, which passed like the dew before the sun. When I was about seventeen years old I was much troubled in my dreams. About this time, or soon after, the children of God appeared so good, I longed to be good like them; I attended meetings of the Old School Baptists, and the first sermon that I remember hearing was from Rev. ii. 17, "And will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." About this time there appeared to be a change; I never saw the trees so beautiful, and the drops of rain that hung on the limbs of the trees appeared like diamonds as the sun shone on them, and sin appeared exceeding sinful, and I needed not to make resolutions to leave off vain words, as hearing any one use them caused me to shudder, for now they were heinous to me. Then I skipped over or left my exercises for about fourteen years, and related to him how I felt just before joining the church. I was cut off from all comfort with man and God, yea, the earth appeared iron under my feet and the heavens brass over my head, and what to do or where to go I did not know, but I had this thought given to me, I had felt the Spirit of the Lord, as I trusted, a few times at former associations, and there was one to be held at Lexington, and the desire was to attend and see if I might find some comfort, so I went, and when I entered the house Elder Gilbert Beebe was preaching. I cannot call to mind a word he said, but I was all broken up, and it seemed that all the sins I ever had committed passed before me, and I was led to ask a place or home with the people of God; I had become satisfied the Old School Baptists were such. I told Elder L. P. Cole I would attend their next church meeting; his answer was, "The door is open by day, and there is no night there," so I presented myself and told perhaps some of what I have here written, was received, and baptized the next day, and felt I had done my duty, but did not have that ecstacy of joy that some relate, but was happy in the Lord. The brethren the night before related their exercises at my house, and it was so interesting to me that I answered thus, The Lord has done great things for us. I think this is the Comforter that the Savior said would bring all things to our remembrance. "The Spirit breathes upon the word and brings the truth to light." This must be that well of water that the Savior said he would give, springing up into everlasting life. Thus it has been with me a few times to cheer me. Jeremiah said, "Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope."—Lam. iii. 19–21. So he comes to us saying, Be not afraid, it is I, and we are led to say, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?"—Luke xxiv. 32. I will relate a circumstance to show that "He sees us when we see not him, and always hears our cry." It was about twenty years ago, I wanted to clear a piece of land that is near my buildings, and the circumstances that attended caused me

much sorrow. While I was in the brush (as it was very thickly covered with brush or small trees) I heard the words, "I will help you," and so I have found it, but as the poet has it, it has been in such a way that almost drove me to despair.

"The Lord can clear the darkest skies,
Can give us day for night;
Make drops of sacred sorrow rise
To rivers of delight."

I am led by this and other experiences to believe that "all things are possible with God." No wonder that it was said, Never man spake like this man. I am most of the time of late willing to leave my all in his hands. My constant hope is that I may "see him as he is, and be like him." May the grace of God rest upon us.

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God our Savior, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. This I feel will be the last.

D. S. ELLIOTT.

LOS ANGELES, Cal., Jan. 15, 1904.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Having to practice what I preach, or be a castaway, I inclose remittance for the SIGNS, and while doing so I feel inclined to write something for publication in our family paper, if it meets your approval. I feel that it is as good to speak often one to another as it was in the days of Malachi, when a book of remembrance was written for those who did speak and think upon his name. Our subject is the new birth. We find that great is the mystery of godliness, and therefore we are constrained to approach these deep things with awe and humility. As a foundation for what I may write I will name 2 Timothy i. 9: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." In the following Scriptures Paul also speaks of this purpose: Romans viii. 28: "Who are the called according to his purpose." Romans ix. 11: "That the purpose of God, according to election, might stand." Eph. i. 11: "According to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Eph. iii. 11: "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ." Now by these Scriptures we are forced to see that the salvation of the sinner is through this purpose of God in Christ. Now let us examine this purpose. First, who purposed all these wonderful things? God, the Almighty, Sovereign Creator. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him."—Col. i. 16. Here we are plainly told this purpose, and in the pursuit of the purpose there must be wisdom to devise the plan, and there must be foreknowledge to decree all that was required to fulfill this wonderful purpose. There must not only be a man, but there must be a serpent also, the devil. Then it follows that there must be a law, and the law must be transgressed to be of force. In the beginning we find our father Adam made of the dust of the ground, and in the image of his Maker, and pronounced good; I do not understand by this either purity or holiness, but simply an innocent being. We bear in mind that in process of time there is made of him (a rib) a woman. We have in the fully developed man a figure of Christ. After Eve is made of the rib from Adam, they transgress the law. Hence Paul could say to

Timothy, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." The question now is, Who is the us in this text? Surely it was Paul and Timothy, and all saints whose life is hid with Christ in God. (Col. iii. 3.) These are the saved and called according to his purpose. For, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."—Eph. i. 3–5. Having established the fact that according to the purpose, decree and love of God sinners are saved, that salvation is made manifest to sinners, and how, is the next thing to determine. We left Adam fully developed in the garden a good, innocent being; will now return and take up his case again. We find that previous to the separation of the rib he is given a license and a law. First, he may eat of the fruit of all the trees of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. The next question to answer is, Did they die? Yes. But what death did they die? Was it a corporeal death? No, for we find that the serpent told the woman, Ye shall not surely die, but become as gods, knowing good and evil, (Gen. iii. 4, 5,) and the Lord God recognized that statement. (See Gen. iii. 22.) It is easy to settle the question of Adam's death, (see Eph. ii. 1,) You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. These are born again, not of the will of the flesh, nor of blood, nor of man, but of God, and God is a Spirit, and that is called love; hence Paul could say, They that are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God. (Rom. viii. 14.)

So far we have not found any discrimination as to what part of man is born again. We will look a little farther. John has recorded the language of Jesus to Nicodemus. First, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus marveled at this, and Jesus goes into this mystery farther, and tells him that except a man be born of water (water of life) and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. Jesus also tells him, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," and we fail to find where there is any particular part of man born again; it is the man. "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." Here is the man who has been born again. This is not a change of the fleshly nature, but a bringing into subjection of it to the law of the Spirit of life, by which the man is made free from the law of sin and death. Thus he becomes a duplex character, the old man and the new man. The old man is the flesh with all its evil fruits, and the new man is the Spirit of God with all its holy fruits, love, faith, &c., by which we are enabled to please God, adding to our faith virtue, without which it would be a dead faith. Hence living faith is more than belief; therefore a man may believe much, and not have faith at all; but he cannot have faith and not believe.

My object in writing this is to help others bear the burden of the day, as there are many crying lo here and lo there, and there are but few here that stand in the way and ask for the old paths; all are seeking out new inventions, whereby they may lead captive the simple. Many cleave to the skirts of one man, (Christ) saying, Only let us be called by thy name (christian); we will eat our own bread and wear our own apparel. This is the kingdom of heaven suffering violence, and the violent taking it by force.

I am glad to note the prosperity of the SIGNS, and hope the brethren will be prompt, and not be careless in remitting, and thus make your burden heavy.

With love in the Lord, yours,

A. H. HAGANS.

PLEASANT GROVE, Texas, Jan. 1, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I inclose a letter from my dear brother in the flesh, and the only brother I have living; it has been a comfort to me, and so I want the brethren and sisters to have the pleasure of reading it. I leave it to your better judgment however. I am your unworthy sister, if one at all,

M. S. DYKES.

WACO, Texas.

DEAR SISTER:—Your good letter was received several days since, and I will try to write you a little in reply. This is Saturday evening, and I am taking a little rest, and have been reading in the Bible, and in the SIGNS, and I do in my soul rejoice to know that there are yet a few who by God's grace are kept from the snare of the devil, and are standing firm upon the solid Rock, Christ, and who are ascribing all power, all honor and all glory to God in all things, and who are contending earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. This faith is the gift of God, and by it his people take delight in believing, because they have the mind of Christ; all true devotion to God emanates from the same.

"If the truth shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." What a glorious thing it is to be free. Whenever we are in bondage of any kind we cannot feel free. If we owe a debt, we feel under obligation till it is paid. We have an assurance that the dear Lord has paid all our debt, so we are free to praise and honor him, and to glorify and adore his holy name, while we have any being upon the earth. We were hopelessly in debt, and ruined, and without strength or means to pay: we were helpless, and in a waste howling wilderness, and our way was all hedged up. In this wilderness of sin we were all found. What a sad condition to be found in! But at a time always unexpected, the dear Lord has come, and revealed himself to us as one mighty and able to save. Then we were taken up out of the miry clay, and our feet placed upon a rock, the rock of love and power, and a new song was put in our mouth, even praise to God who is from everlasting, yea, before the dust of the highest hills was fashioned.

The word of the Lord, says, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." When we truly approach the throne of love and grace, we are always drawn, and we are always willing to go. The Lord said, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Yes, he works in them the will and also the doing, and it is all the work of grace. We do not have to stop and ask what we must do, or look about for something to do, but our work is the work of the Lord,

and it all is to glorify God, and it is the meat and drink of the people of God, to do his will. When we are in our right mind (the mind of Christ) we always feel to say from the depths of our heart, "Not my will, but thine, O Lord, be done." And when we are in this mind, it never occurs to us to question the works of God in all his creation, or to find fault with anything, but a calm peace prevails, and faith which all the powers of earth cannot shake, enables us to say, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." Then we do not feel like boasting of anything we ever have done or can do, and indeed cannot see anything that we ever have done worthy of praise, and this is because we are completely absorbed in the prevailing love of Christ; we are in him, and he in us, and all in God. There is such a union and oneness that there is no room for any good works as means of salvation on our part, but all is of God, and the faith that is given us, which works by love, leaves no desire on our part to claim any honor or praise. There is no room to boast of a single good thought, for this great love bestowed upon such poor, hell-deserving sinners, makes them feel poor and unworthy, and they desire to be allowed to eat, even of the crumbs which fall from the Master's table, just enough to satisfy their hunger. They say, "Let me have the lowest seat, for I am the least of all." O for a mind to be thus continually engaged in meditation, and to feast upon this precious theme, the theme of never-dying love. When we are thus employed we can say, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."—Psalms xxiii. 4.

But then, there is another side to this. The Lord is pleased sometimes to leave his people to their own selfish, depraved and corrupt wills, to go after false gods, this is to show them their weakness. And they always will do this, when grace is not ruling and controlling them. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." I noticed an article a few days ago in which the writer claims that we are able to work out our time salvation, as he calls it. He said, "Life and death are set before us, and we can choose to be obedient, and so obtain the blessings, or to be disobedient, and so receive the chastening rod." It would seem that the writer had forgotten that we are not any longer under the old covenant, but are now under law to Christ, and Christ certainly obeyed the law, and fulfilled it, and we are free from its bondage. Christ has paid all the dept that we owed, and made a complete and full atonement for all our sins, and said on the cross, "It is finished." What is it that was finished if it was not salvation from sin? There can be but one salvation, one faith, one Lord, one baptism, and so all the glory is centered in Christ. The names of the people he loved with an everlasting love are all recorded in the book of life, and they are kept unto salvation, and that by the power of God, which is in the gospel of our Lord and Savior. This is the food upon which we live and feast, and we have nothing to do with preparing it, or making it manifest, but all we have to do is to eat, drink and rejoice in it. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." We become hungry and thirsty, but this condition does not produce the food; but it is a blessed thing that the food and drink are prepared for

the hungry and thirsty before they come to need it, else we should certainly perish. If we should be compelled, after we become thirsty and hungry naturally, to wait till wells were dug, and bread prepared, we should likely perish. But the wisdom of God is so wonderfully great in all these things, that nothing is left undone; he cares for the sparrows, and all his creation is dependent upon him. How wonderful is his power and mercy, and his ways can never be comprehended by man.

I will add that we are in reasonable health, and I desire still to praise God for all his wonderful mercies to me and mine. I am glad to know that you are blessed with the privilege of hearing the word of the Lord proclaimed in its purity. I am in a land of famine in that respect. I hear preaching once in awhile by some who claim to be the true servants of God, but they have a mixture of pottage that I do not like.

Just a year ago, our dear boy was on his death-bed, and my poor heart yet bleeds in sorrow and anguish for him, but I feel to say in humble submission to God, that he giveth, and he taketh away, and blessed be his holy name forever and ever. Amen.

Love to one and all. God bless you and save you all in his eternal kingdom, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Your poor, unworthy brother,

I. H. WEBB.

HARBOURTON, N. J., Nov. 29, 1903.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I have been impressed to write you for a long time, but heretofore have failed to do so. Last Monday, as I was going about my work, I took a leaf from my calendar and this is the part of a verse which was printed there, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." The remainder of this verse, and also the next, seems to be included with the rest as a great comfort to me. If we know nothing of weakness, how can we know anything of needed strength? I feel that I know something of weakness, for who can be more weak than I? But there is One who is the strength of his people.

I have been in a dark state of mind for some time, in fact, nearly ever since father's death, but I have felt to hope that some day the Lord would again give me some evidence that I was indeed one of the little ones. I have not felt to murmur, but so often would find myself doubting that I ever knew anything of spiritual things. I have gone to meeting nearly every Sunday, but often have had to say, "Well, I think that we have had a good meeting," but still there seldom seemed to be anything for me. But last Sunday, during the communion, when taking the bread, this hymn came to me, and it seemed as though I must sing it,

"A crumb of mercy, Lord, I crave,
Unworthy to be fed
With dainties such an angels have,
Or with the children's bread.

Have pity on my needy soul;
Thy peace and pardon give;
Thy love can make the wounded whole,
And bid the dying live."

What a prayer! From whence did it come? And why did it come to me at that time? Truly I did long to be fed, and I was so unworthy. How gracious is the Lord to a needy soul. "My grace is sufficient for thee." How very sweet the promise seemed to me, as I read it. They always remain the same, but to us poor, weak worms of the dust, they do not seem so when all is dark within. I cannot tell this to you as I saw it, nor can I write as much as I had hoped to,

Why was not this given me before? Then, on the other hand, why was I ever made to see? Why did the church ever receive me, so weak and unworthy? These are questions that I often ask myself, with many more. I have to answer, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good." I am very weak, and I seem to stumble and falter so. All the brethren seem to me so much better than I am, but I have a great love for them, a love that the world knows not of, it is because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart of his people, making unity; it is a perfect love.

Now if there is anything in this that does not savor of truth, remember that she who wrote it is a poor, weak, imperfect one, who is less than nothing.

Your unworthy sister,

LIZZIE P. SHEPHERD.

[THE dear Lord brings his loved ones into great straits at times, that they may more perfectly learn to know themselves with all their weakness and imperfections, and then more perfectly know him, who is their perfect strength. It is also that we may decrease and Jesus increase, but the hour of deliverance will always come, for the Lord Jesus will never forsake us, nor give us up to the enemy. The time of love will come when we shall clearly see, not only that he shed his blood, but each shall say, For me. Our sister has been suffered to walk in much darkness for a time, but we are glad with her that the light has again sprung up, and that she has once more come to trust with confidence in the hope set before sinners, through Christ. How often the children of God are left to prove their own strength or righteousness, and then when all this fails, the strength and righteousness of the only perfect One appears, and they are not left to despair. Our sister questions why all this is so. In this she is not by any means alone, indeed all the children of God know what such questionings are, and natural men do not know these things.—ED.]

KINTYRE, Ontario, Jan. 18, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I must confess that I have been neglectful in sending the money for the SIGNS, but my neglect has not been because I have not enjoyed what they have contained. I will add here that so far as I can judge they carry the truth, and the reason that I say this is that I sometimes feel to know that I have the witness of what they contain within myself. So much of the time I feel to know that I am a sinner, and am put to examining myself, and find nothing in my flesh but sin and defilement. Then I am constrained to say, O miserable one that I am, "who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And then along here comes the prayer of the publican.

But, dear brother, I have more pitiful times than these of which I have spoken, although they suit my flesh. It is when I return to the beggarly elements of the world, when, in any true sense, I do not know that I am a sinner, and feel no need of prayer, no need of a Savior; myself fruitful, and others going astray. These are heart-feelings, and I know that they are carnal. But I will say, that even when I feel this way, I am the most of the time afraid to find fault with others, for I read that he that toucheth the people of God, toucheth the apple of his eye. He is a wall of fire round about his people, and I fear the Lord, and fear the furnace of fire. But I am so vile and sinful and so apt to fall; I need a staff continually; and this staff has many times kept me from falling.

I have often thought we were a peculiar people in more ways than one. A peculiar people, zealous of good works, and also peculiar sinners. How common it is to say, "I am the chief of sinners, the vilest of the vile," and yet we are often fault-finders, saying such things as these, "Such an one walks disorderly," "another goes to places he ought not," and so on. Now, is not this saying, I am not so bad as some? I must make the confession. The only time that I am in any way clean, and can say from my heart that I am the chief of sinners, is when I am in the refiner's fire, then I am made to confess it, and when I am delivered I must thank God for it. The same power that kills, makes alive, the power that wounds, also heals, so I have to be compelled, if I walk in the way at all. The world can talk about conditional salvation, but I must say, If my salvation does not stand sure, I am in a lost condition. Now do not understand that I uphold a disorderly walk, but I mean that if we cannot go to the erring to restore them from their fault, and not to find fault with them, our walk is as disorderly as theirs; is this right, dear brother? Now if I know anything about the truth, keep on talking, preaching and writing about the unsearchable riches of Christ, as you have been doing. I must stand as one witness on your side. If any say that you go too far upon predestination, proclaim it just the same, or if they say you preach too strong, or make God the author of sin, still proclaim Christ as your salvation and mine, together with others whom you have been comforting, and thousands who have never heard your voice. You have been sent not to preach yourself, but Christ Jesus the Lord and him crucified. You have not been sent to feed the flesh, but the sheep of the house of Israel. And when they wander far enough away, and get lost, so much so that they need a guide to bring them back, they will then be prepared to hear the watchmen preach Christ as their only salvation, in time and in eternity.

Now I have written you these few passing thoughts, and I trust my only desire is that I may have an eye single to the glory of God. What is not light in this, is darkness, and I am full of that. I trust you will have charity, knowing the weakness of us all in these things. My prayer is that you may be daily led into the unsearchable riches of Christ.

I will say good-by for the present. Your sister in hope of a sure foundation,

(MRS.) PETER ALLISON.

SENECA FALLS, N. Y., Jan. 8, 1904.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SON—DEAR FRIEND:—I am feeling cast down to-day, (spiritually) and although we are strangers, I often read your editorials in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and enjoy them as far as in me lies, and when I am reading them I feel as though we were old friends. Now I will tell you a little of my travels, and could I ask the favor of you to answer me privately? and if you can feel that it is of the Lord, it will be a great comfort and help to me. The reason I venture to write you is that I have no minister, no church, or any one that believes as I do, only my dear old mother to comfort and instruct me, I feel because I am such a sinner, and that for so many years, the good Lord has deprived me of those blessings, and does not see fit to give me any clear light as yet, and perhaps never will. But if not, his will be done. Now if you, after reading this, feel that you can encourage me in the least, I wish you would.

I was much taken with Sarah Runkle's and her friend's experience, for I feel it was so much like mine, for they never knew just when the Lord forgave them their sins. I pray for the Lord to give me a clear evidence, and my dear sister, who is of the same faith, tells me I am asking for something I will never get. Some years ago I became very much exercised in mind, but I did not tell any one but the Lord, to whom I prayed and begged incessantly for a long time. I only had my dear old mother, and I felt afraid she would say there was nothing in it, for she is a very deep, dear christian of your faith. The twenty-third Psalm ran continually through my mind, until I committed it to memory. It seemed a comfort to me, and does to this day. One night I had a dream, and O, I shall never forget how I was crying and pleading to the Lord to forgive my sins and have mercy on me, when in a loud, dear voice that awakened me I heard, "Yes, I will." But with all I have written you, I did not realize I was under conviction, and so did not tell any one. But after that it seemed to wear off, and I was left to go on in sin deeper than ever, without any remorse of conscience; this continued for several years. About one year ago it all came back with double force, and something seemed to turn me directly about from the paths of sin, and set me in that narrow path that leads to life, and all the year I have prayed without ceasing that he would have mercy upon me, and lift this burden from my heart, and let the light of his countenance so shine in that I could see and believe that I am a child of God. But at times I feel, and do to-day, that it is all something I have imagined, and that some day I will hear him say, "Depart from me." Then I cry aloud and say, God forbid that I shall ever hear that. I, like Mrs. Runkle, have never felt my sins such a great burden upon me that I could not sleep, although I often weep myself to sleep. I often feel there is not one good thing in me, and if I am saved it is all through the precious Savior, for I truly believe he finished the work, and there remains nothing for us poor creatures to do. I have never had the pleasure of hearing a gospel sermon from an Old School Baptist minister, nor ever said a word to one on this most blessed subject. I cannot feel the assurance that my sins are forgiven, no, not even for one moment. I often say that if I could, I would sing Hosanna in the highest from morning till night, and that I could tell to sinners around what a dear Savior I had found, but I dare not, for fear it is all of my own works. O, how I do enjoy the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; my dear, old mother takes them. She lives on the same street, so when she has read them I take them. She so often used to want to read a little to me, but I was not interested in them, for I was blind; I could not understand them, and even now I cannot some parts of them. O, how badly she used to feel, she often tells me of it, and she feels so happy about me now. I shall never be without the SIGNS. Mother gave me a lot of Joseph Iron's old sermons, and I enjoy them, and do so pray for more light, that I can understand him better. I love the name of Jesus, and I must continue in my poor way to pray that he will create within me a clean heart, and renew within me a right spirit. That is about all I can say, except "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." I talk a great deal with my mother, and in a way she is a great comfort to me. But the fear comes that those blessed promises are not for me. I do so fear that my name

is not written in the Lamb's book of life, and I do believe as you do, that if it is not, I will never get to heaven. O, if he would only speak to me in a vision, or show his presence near in some way, so that I could have his rod and staff to lean upon, then I could go on and feel as if I would never doubt any more. But the passage in Isaiah, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known," is at times comforting to me.

Now if I have done wrong in writing this, please pardon me. I am thirsting after a spark of hope, and this has prompted me to write you; for if I should hear it from one that is so competent to judge me, I know I could have confidence in it, so please do not think me bold or out of place. I am alone in the world spiritually, so I hope you will be both patient and sympathetic with me in this long letter. I do feel that if I were fit, and the good Lord would bring me to a time and place where I could be baptized, it would complete my happiness, for then I would feel that I had followed his commandment, but I will hope on, and some time I may go down into the water.

Now I will close, hoping you will find time to answer. I am a sincere friend at least.

(MRS.) W. J. PECK.

[WE have asked and received permission of this dear friend to publish the above good letter. It is good in that it presents the ups and downs of the believer's mind as they are led by the Spirit out of self and into Christ. The Lord has his scattered ones in all parts of the land, and now and then he brings out some clear testimony from the lonely ones, as is the case with the writer of this letter. We are sure that this letter will be an encouragement to sister Runkle and her friend, and to all of like faith who may read it. Our advice to all such as the writer, is that they go to the nearest church of Christ, and tell them the story of the Lord's redeeming work, and follow the Lord in baptism as he has commanded them.—ED.]

ACTON, Texas, Dec. 12, 1903.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the kind and tender mercies of an all-wise Creator who created all things, visible and invisible, and who is before all things, and by whom all things consist, I am spared to read to-day the last number for this year, of our dear family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and while it is my desire and privilege of remitting for another year, I would be glad if I had the ability to write for its columns to the edification of its patrons, but I want to say a word in confirmation of the doctrine and principles it advocates, and has advocated since I first read its pages, which has been about twenty years. I, for one, believe it contends for Bible doctrine, salvation by grace, and a finished redemption of all the Father gave the Son in the covenant of grace before the world began. Known unto God are all his works, he "declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." Yes, the great God of the whole universe is omnipresent, beholding all things. He in his divine wisdom beheld the church in her lost and ruined state by reason of the transgression of her earthly head, Adam, who was the figure of him that was to come. God has declared to his people, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore

with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." For that love which he had for the bride, the Lamb's wife, the church, God the Father prepared the remedy to redeem her from her lost estate, before man was formed of the dust of the ground; the remedy was his only begotten Son, who was a Lamb slain. Her life was hid with Christ in God from all eternity. "I in them, and thou in me," these are the words of Jesus while here in the flesh. This is close relationship; the spiritual life of all God's people existed in Christ. There are only two headships, Adam our head according to the flesh, and Christ our Head in the Spirit. In the transgression of our earthly head, the whole family, every nation, kindred and tongue, became involved in the same transgression, so by the disobedience of Adam sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so that the whole human family by nature were dead in sin, but by the obedience of Christ many were made righteous. Christ's righteousness being imputed unto us poor, wretched sinners, this is all the righteousness that will do us any good. If we have not the Spirit of Christ we are none of his, but O, how many we see in this progressive age who are throwing their shells at the "old fogy" doctrine of a finished salvation in Jesus, and say that God has done all he can do to save sinners, and if they do not make the start they will never be saved, and that God wants to save them and they will not let him; what a delusion. The doctrine which honors God and abases man is more assailed now, it seems to me, than it ever was, but let us "old fogies," as they call us, stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.

Yours in hope of a better life beyond,

W. L. McPHERSON.

GREENMOUNT, Colo., Dec. 24, 1903.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I enjoy reading our paper so much that I have concluded in my weak way to send you a few lines for its columns. I appreciate it in the present book form. It is sound and comforting. It comes richly laden with the precious gospel, and it is a feast to me of good things. I feel to thank God for the privilege of reading so many good editorials, and rich, able communications, and I believe that I do sometimes have a desire to thank God for the able stewardship which he has given you in Zion's cause. What sacredness there is in the cause of our all-wise, merciful and covenant-keeping God. I am situated out here in the foothills of the Rocky mountains, and I do not hear much of the good word of the Lord preached; what I read in the SIGNS is all that I hear. Dear brethren, you may judge how hungry I get for gospel preaching.

I have been a reader of the SIGNS for twenty-five years, and in all that time I cannot see that it has departed in the least from the old landmarks. It is now about time for me to renew my subscription; I feel that I cannot do without the paper; I read in it so many blessed truths, and so much precious gospel, which make my heart tender.

I trust that you will pardon me for this poor letter; I will bring it to a close, lest I weary you. May you be long spared to feed the sheep and dear little lambs of our Master's fold. May grace, mercy and peace be with you all, is my humble prayer for Christ's sake.

Yours in hope,

M. J. DUNCAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1904.

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EDITOR:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

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MALACHI III. 16, 17.

ELDER CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I have been in great darkness during a part of this last summer, fall and winter, but while reading the dear old SIGNS the other day I was made to rejoice in God my Savior. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another." Is it required that God's people should meet together in order to speak one to another? I think not, for when I read the SIGNS it seems to me that God's people, living hundreds of miles apart, are talking to me. Will you give your views upon Malachi iii. 16, 17? "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

Your brother, WILLIAM GRIGG.

MT. BRYDGES, Ont., Feb. 1, 1904.

REPLY.

This Scripture has been a very precious one to ourself, and to very many of the Lord's tried and tempted children at various times in their pilgrimage in these earthly grounds. The Lord has been pleased to bless this portion of his word to the consolation of very many. We feel willing to call attention to some things contained in the text as they have appeared to us from time to time. We can however speak only of familiar things; indeed, we desire to speak of no other things to the people of God. The comfort and edification of the Scriptures is found only as the Spirit takes of them, and so opens them up to our minds as to enable us to see ourselves in them. They describe the sorrows, the joys, the temptations, the victories, the sore conflicts and triumphs, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the exceeding righteousness of Jesus to cover our sins, the ups and downs, the darkness, the upspringing of light, in short the whole travel, both inward and outward, of the child of God. In this manner their names are written in the sacred page, and it comes as a most blessed comfort when in reading the word they can see themselves described, and so can come to read their title clear to mansions in the skies.

This Scripture is one of those which seem especially to describe the believer and what manner of man he is. Yet after all we shall read this Scripture in vain, so far as gaining any confidence for our ownselves is concerned, unless the holy Spirit which inspired the last of the Old Testament prophets to write it, shall also illumine our own minds in the reading of it, and in its contemplation.

But to turn to the text itself. First, we desire to call attention to the fact that the connection describes a time of gross declension from the worship and service of God among the people who professed to be the people of God, and who were also acknowledged to be his by a thousand evidences of his love and care. Israel literally had departed altogether, as a body of people, from the Lord. They had robbed God in tithes and offerings (verse 8). They had said, "It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance?"—Verse 14. They had called the proud happy, and those that worked wickedness were set up or exalted (verse 15). They tolerated

all manner of evil characters and evil practices among them, such as sorcerers, adulterers, false swearers and oppressors of the widows and the fatherless, and such as turned away the right of the stranger (verse 5). It was a time of wickedness among both the priests and the people. All together had become corrupted, and had forgotten God. Yet it was now as it was when the prophet Elijah had thought and said that he was left alone amid the awful departures of his day. Now, as then, there were some who still walked uprightly, and sought to depart from all iniquity. There were still some who mourned over the desolations of Zion, and longed to see truth and righteousness once more triumphant in the land, but they were mostly hidden ones. Still as they came to know each other, and as they found here and there kindred spirits, to whom all this evil was a burden and a grief, they would speak one to another about the things that pertained to God and godliness. The prophet describes this in the words of the text. But while this describes a state of things that then existed in Israel literally, yet, as is the case with all that related to the dealings of God with that people, this Scripture points forward to a richer and more complete fulfillment under the gospel day among the true spiritual Israel of God; it was not only true then, but it is true now. The tried and sorrowful people of God do now speak one to another of the declensions which are so often seen, and which are so sad when seen among the churches of the saints, of the former dealings of God with his people in mercy, of the hope which still abides amid much to discourage, that God will again make bare his arm to revive his cause, and of the still more blessed hope that one day they shall be taken up beyond all these sorrowful things, these discouragements and temptations, and shall be forever with the Lord.

One special thought seems to us to be pointed out in this connection, viz: That while God's children may in the time of prosperity neglect to speak of him and his goodness, and of the lasting obligations under which they are placed to serve and adore him, in the time of adversity they will remember and turn to the Lord, and will then speak often one to another of all that is in their hearts. There is nothing like affliction to call out the real work of God in the heart; nothing will stir up the pure minds of the children of God to defend his cause and to encourage each other in that defense so much as to witness the declension which so often arises among those who profess his name. Here it was not the indifference and opposition of the heathen which led them to speak often one to another, but the departures of Israel herself from the truth. We may dwell at ease, in large measure swallowed up by the cares, the pleasures and the vanities of this life, when all is well and all seems prosperous among us, but when the time of adversity comes, or when some depart from the right way of the Lord, then they that really fear him will be stirred up in their hearts to speak one with another for mutual encouragement and consolation. They will then be moved to declare his truth, and to contend earnestly for the faith that has once been delivered unto them. And as the masses of professed followers of God run still more and more greedily after falsehood and evil practices, still more and more will they that really fear God be moved to bear their testimony to the truth, and to the God of truth. This one truth, as it seems to us, is clearly set forth in this

text and in the connection.

It does not seem needful that we should dwell upon the word "fear," which describes those who speak one to another. It is such fear as casts out terror, and is consistent with perfect love. It is that holy, reverential, filial fear that filled the Master's heart in the days of his flesh; it is a fear that belongs to true wisdom, and in which is no torment. Such as possess it love to think of God, and to speak of his glory and power. This fear in the heart will lead all who possess it to believe that God reigns, and will one day manifest that his is the victory. In this filial fear the Lord's children rejoice, and through it they praise and serve him. Where this fear reigns in the heart, what a joy it is to be permitted to meet with those who also fear God, and to speak together of all that is in the heart, and as our brother says, in these our days we are permitted to speak with one another through correspondence, either by private letters or through the press. Some who do not see the face of a fellow-pilgrim for months at a time, hold sweet converse through such correspondence. This is one of the good things connected with a paper like the SIGNS, and we recall that at the first the prospectus of the SIGNS announced that it was intended as a medium of correspondence among the people of God.

Another thought suggested by the text is this: that such conversation is pleasing to God; he has commanded it. When the two disciples, journeying on their way to Emmaus, were talking together, the blessed Lord joined himself to them, and talked with them. He said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Of old Israel were commanded to speak of what the Lord had done, under all circumstances, to themselves and to their children. So we have many other scriptural proofs, as well as in this place, that such conversation is pleasing to God. He is described as bending down his ear to hear the cry of the destitute, and here he is said to have hearkened and heard it. What a blessed thought it is, that when his people meet, either in what we call conversation, or in worship of his name, as we speak one with another he hearkens and hears. Those who thus meet may feel very dull, and much cast down, and very far off from God; it may seem to them that there is nothing in all their thoughts or in all their words that can be of any benefit to any one, or that can please God, and yet notwithstanding all this, he does hear, and he is pleased in all that call upon his name.

Then it is said that the Lord remembers them that fear him, and that think upon his name. It is not said that he remembers them that *speak*, but them that *think* upon his name. He does indeed remember those who speak in this way, but to some there has not been given much gift of utterance, and some are troubled because it is so; they say, O that I could speak as does such and such an one. Somehow they think that if all was right with them spiritually, they could speak more than they do, and often they long to speak as do others, but it seems impossible. When alone they think, O, if some of the people of God were here I could now say much to them of the goodness and glory of God, but when the time of meeting comes they are dumb. To such as these this word, "They that thought upon his name," comes with wonderful strength and comfort. Yes, I do think upon him; he is the one all blessed to me; he has done such great things for me; he is my daily

comforter and strength, and I delight to hear his praises. O, could I speak the matchless worth, O, could I sound his glories forth, is their desire. And the Lord remembers them also; they are his dear, peculiar treasure; he knows the longings of their hearts; he sees and hears the voiceless cry within them; he has provided all good things for them; they also shall be his.

In what day does the Lord make up his jewels? The word "jewels" signifies literally, a peculiar treasure, or a special treasure. The thought is that of one who has many riches, many precious things, but among them all there are special things, things that his heart clings around with peculiar fondness. Who among our readers has not some keepsake of no value to another, worth nothing in dollars and cents, and yet no money would buy it from him? Every time he looks upon that thing he remembers some delightful scenes of the past, or sees some loved face before his mind. Our God looks upon his people thus; yes, upon those who think upon his name and who fear him; in them he sees his beloved Son; Christ is formed in them the hope of glory; he loves them as he loves his beloved Son. What riches of inheritance he has in the saints! These riches of inheritance can be only that which he has himself formed in them, and made them to be by grace. Jesus dwells in them, and in them is his grace and presence manifested, through their fear and the secret thoughts which he sees to be theirs.

And they shall be his in that day. There is no question in our mind that the Lord is making up his jewels now, all through this gospel day; but it is equally true that spiritual men of old were also his jewels; disciples now sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In the kingdom of God, regarded in its highest sense, all who have believed in every age have had an abiding place; they all have been his; he has made up his jewels all the time along, since the days of Abel to the present time. But specially has this been true as regards the visible kingdom of God on earth during what we call the gospel day or dispensation. In all this time God has been making up his jewels and treasuring them up in his store-house, the church of God. All this is true, and it seems to us that we do not do violence to the text in so speaking of it. Still further is it most blessedly true, that at the last day of time, when all the purpose of God is completed as regards this earth, and men enter into their final destiny, either for joy or sorrow, such as think upon his name shall also be his forever. They shall be his, because he has redeemed them and kept them, and given them the victory all the way along, and the final victory over death, hell and the grave. All humble-hearted ones, who boast not in themselves, but who boast in the Lord, shall be among them. All those who lovingly adore the God of salvation, and who ascribe to him salvation and glory, as the warm tribute of their hearts, shall be among them, and the Lord "will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." The word "spare" has the signification of pity. What a tender pity does a man feel for his son; there is nothing like it beside; the Lord so pities his children. All this blessing is for them who think upon him. Some of the children cannot speak, but they all can think, and God knows the thoughts; he knows if his name be dear to us. If we do think upon him, it is because we love him, and we love him because he first loved us.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

FRANKFORT, Ohio, July, 1861.

DEAR SIR:—There is a point of doctrine in theology that I am not fully posted on, and upon which I cannot fully go with my brethren, and upon which subject I should like to see a full and scriptural investigation, and if it should please you to give your views upon it, I should like to have them, either in a private communication or in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The subject, in short, in this: Are all men under obligation to do what is utterly impossible for them to do? Does condemnation rest or turn on doing, or not doing, on obedience or disobedience? Does salvation rest upon a more permanent and solid basis? The eternal oaths and promises of God, who never changes. What kind of a law was it that Adam violated, a moral or spiritual law? What was the penalty? Can anything more be required than the penalty? Are all men under obligation to keep the law in the most strict sense, and suffer the penalty at the same time? Will justice require two payments for one debt? Is not every son and daughter of Adam, now, at this very time, suffering the penalty of Adam's transgression, and must eternally suffer if not delivered from under the curse of the law? Does the law make sin, or does the law punish anybody? Or is it sin alone that is the direct and immediate cause of all evil? Does the good Lord inflict punishment upon any of his creatures? Is it not the necessary and natural consequence of sin to bring its own punishment? Do not all act of necessity, yet willingly? Do we not eat of necessity, drink of necessity, live of necessity, believe of necessity, do this or that thing of necessity, because we could do nothing else? Lastly, do we not all die of necessity? Some people who have not thought much upon the doctrine of necessity, and perhaps care less, say that it makes God the author of sin, and thereby exculpates from guilt. But that is certainly one of the most lame ideas that ever entered a man's brain. If, indeed, God was the author of sin, there would be some plausibility in it. Would it be any melioration of guilt to tell the court or jury that he was naturally so bad and wicked that he could not help but kill his neighbor? I think not, but rather to increase it. Elder Beebe, although you and I may differ in some of our views on theology, yet I hope we differ honestly, or ignorantly, and upon that principle look for forgiveness. I do not wish you to understand that I think or mean that men, all men, are not under obligation to God as accountable beings, for that would be unavoidable, as all are sinners, and it is sin, and sin alone, that separates between us and our God. I would not be so very solicitous upon the subject, but I think it involves one of the fundamental doctrines of the plan of salvation, to wit, salvation by grace. The Arminian says, All men are under obligation to believe to the saving of their souls, and that it is in their power to do so. Whilst, on the other hand, the Old Regular Baptists hold that all are under obligation to keep the whole law, but without power to do it. Now the former at first view would appear most consistent, but it will not bear to be weighed in the balance of the sanctuary; it will be found wanting. The other seems to look somewhat incongruous, for a dead man to be bound to do the work of a living man. When a man is alive he works of necessity. When and wherever God speaks there is power. Now I shall close my scribble, by informing you that we had a member join our church when over one hundred and one years old, and who died about a month ago. His name was Frederick Bray, and an old revolutionary soldier. If you see fit you can respond, if not all will be right.

Yours very respectfully,

ISAAC SPERRY.

REPLY.

The point of doctrine on which our old friend Sperry requests our views, seems to branch out into a number of inquiries, which would require much time and space, even if we had ability to answer elaborately. We are aware that those with whom friend Sperry has chosen his quarters, and with whom he claims fraternity, (the New School Baptists) harp much upon the obligations of fallen sinners to meet the demands of the law of God. They plead that the inability of sinners to fulfill the jots and tittles of the divine law does not invalidate the claims of that law upon them, therefore they justify themselves in calling on dead sinners to do what they acknowledge that they have no ability to do, and as ministers of the law, they are so far consistent with themselves. If salvation were by the works of the law, it would be proper and right to call on them for such works as the law of God demands, but there is not a particle of gospel in such preaching. The ministration of the law to sinners, is death. By the deeds of the law, no flesh shall be justified in the sight of God. Hence, we

are expressly informed, that as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse. The Judaizing teachers, and all other workmongers, have much to say on the subject of moral obligations and human ability, but the gospel ministry is a proclamation of life and salvation to guilty, condemned sinners through Jesus Christ. The demands of the law of God are no less binding because we are carnal and sold under sin. In order to be justified by the law, we must fulfill all the requisitions of the law, by a perfect and perpetual obedience to all its precepts, in thought, in words and actions. We must be all that the law requires us to be, do all the law enjoins on us to do, and avoid all that the law forbids. The man that has ever transgressed the least precept, is irrecoverably lost forever, so far as the law is concerned.

"Curs'd be the man, forever curs'd,
That doth one single sin commit;
Death and damnation for the first,
Without relief, and infinite.

Thus Sinai roars, and around the throne,
Thunder, and fire, and vengeance flings;
But, Jesus, thy dear gaping wounds,
And Calvary speak gentler things."

Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye hear the law? "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all." The fatal mistake with Arminian workmongers is that they regard the fallen sons of men as *probationers*, in a state of experiment or trial, having what they call a day of grace allotted, in which, if they will do the best they can, they shall be saved, but if they do not do something, they shall be condemned. This is making void the law of God by their traditions, or doctrines, for the Bible teaches no such things, but quite to the contrary. He that believeth not, is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him. From the moment when Adam transgressed the law, or commandment of God, in the garden of Eden, sin and death has passed on all men, because all have sinned. All were in Adam at the time, and all were Adam, hence all his posterity are the development of that Adam that sinned. His nature is our nature, and his guilt is our guilt, consequently we are conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity, and we all go astray as soon as we be born, speaking lies. As convicted sinners we are under sentence, and wrath, every mouth is stopped, and all the world is guilty before God. Our condemnation does rest on our doing and our not doing, but remember, the die is cast, our condemnation rests on what we did, and in what we did not do, six thousand years ago. The condemnation under which we are born into this world does rest, or turn, upon our disobedience of the law of God in Adam; and all the works we are capable of doing subsequently to the fall cannot recover us from that condemnation. But if our old friend desires to know whether our salvation rests or turns upon our doing or not doing, we answer, No! "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ." "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." Death is the wages of sin, the payment for what we have done, and rests or turns on our doings. But the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord; that does not depend or turn on our doing, or not doing, on our obedience or disobedience, but on a permanent and solid basis. And the only

hope of all God's people rests on the promise which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began. Not the law, but,

"The gospel bears our spirits up;
A faithful and unchanging God,
Lays the foundation of our hope,
In oaths and promises and blood."

The kind of law which Adam transgressed, and which we all transgressed, was the law of God, under which we as his creatures were created; a law embodying God's right to govern, and the obligation of his creatures to obey; and the penalty of it was death. Nothing more than the penalty of that law is demanded, but that penalty involves all the human family in guilt and death, and from that death the law makes no provision for deliverance, for salvation and immortality.

In answer to the inquiry, "Are all under obligation to keep the law in the most strict sense, and suffer the penalty at the same time?" we repeat, that all are condemned already and under wrath, totally depraved, without either disposition or desire to keep the law. And if they could and would keep the law in its letter and spirit, from this day forth, as long as they live, it would not atone for the guilt and condemnation in which they came into the world. The legal demands of the law are not changed, they cannot change, for the law being holy, is immutable, and all its demands must be met and honored, and all its penalties endured, or we must be damned, and such is our poverty and depravity that,

"No works or duties of our own
Can for the smallest sin atone."

Of course if it were possible for us to keep the law in the most strict sense, there would be no penalty to endure, but as we have already sinned, that is impossible. None but Jesus has ever kept the law in the most strict sense, and none but Jesus had power to redeem sinners from the guilt of sin, and from the curse and dominion of the law, consequently there is salvation in no other name.

"Jesus, my God, thy blood alone,
Hath power sufficient to atone;
Thy blood can make me white as snow,
No legal works could cleanse me so."

Friend Sperry inquires, "Will justice require two payments for one debt?" We answer, Certainly not. Those for whom Christ has suffered the dreadful penalty of the law are effectually and forever redeemed from sin, death and hell, and "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." With his stripes they are healed. They are freely justified, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. They shall never come into condemnation, but have passed from death unto life. For what the law could not do for them, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.

"Is not every son and daughter of Adam now, at this very time, suffering the penalty of Adam's transgression; and must they not forever suffer, if not delivered from under the curse of the law?" We answer, so far as our mortality may be reckoned as a penalty of Adam's transgression, it falls alike on all the children of Adam. But the mortality of our bodies is not a payment made by us to justice; but it is the payment, or wages which justice pays to sin. All the saints redeemed from death by Christ, shall be completely delivered from its power and dominion when the last enemy shall be destroyed, when their body shall be changed, and fashioned like unto

Christ's glorious body, in the resurrection. Death shall still hold his dominion over the ungodly, and their final state of perdition is called the second death; but the second death shall have no power over them that die in the Lord. The dissolution of the mortal bodies of the saints is not a curse, or a penalty, for Christ has suffered all the penalties of the law for them, and he has destroyed death and him that had the power of death. Consequently, when this earthly house of their tabernacle shall be dissolved, it will be a deliverance and a privilege, not a curse. The risen Jesus holds the keys of death, and he will make that change a triumph to his people. Write, from henceforth, (not cursed but) "blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

"Does the law make sin, or does the law punish anybody?" Where there is no law there can be no transgression, for sin is the transgression of the law. Hence the strength of sin is the law; yet the law is in itself holy, just and good, it does not make sin, but it detects sin, and inflicts its penalty on sinners. The law is the ministration of death, and that death, inflicted for sin, is punishment. Sin is the cause of all evil. The good Lord does inflict punishment on sinners who die in their sins, for they shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.

"Is it not the necessity and natural consequence of sin to bring its own punishment?" Not independently of God and his law. If men were free agents, they would have a right to do as they please. The reason why it was sin for Adam to eat of the tree which was in the midst of the garden, was because God had forbidden it. Its baneful effect was from its being a transgression. We know of nothing in that act that would have involved guilt or wrath, but the disobedience of the act. The strength of sin is the law, in the absence then of the law there is neither sin nor penalty. We certainly live and die, eat and drink, believe and disbelieve, &c., from necessity, having no power to avert or change the fixed laws of nature, and notwithstanding this necessity we do many of these willingly. The hungry cannot resist a desire for food, the thirsty have no power to resist the desire for drink, we were all passive in our births, as to time, place, parentage, and all the circumstances. Nor have we the choice in regard to believing; no man has power to believe what he pleases. We are compelled to believe many things which we would gladly disbelieve if we could. The Arminians preach that sinners are required to believe as a condition of salvation, but they repudiate the doctrine of the Bible, that faith is the fruit of the Spirit, (Gal. v. 22,) and that a belief of the truth is a gift of God to the heirs of salvation. (2 Thess. ii. 13; Phil. i. 29.)

We do not agree that "the Old Regular Baptists hold that all are under obligations to keep the whole law, but without power to do it." The apostles and primitive saints were Old Regular Baptists, and their faith on this subject, as recorded in the New Testament, is that, Whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law. But Christ has redeemed his people from under the law, and they are no more under the law, but under grace; that they are now under law to Christ, and his law is not now written on tables of stone, but in the fleshy tables of their heart. The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in them, and the law of the spirit of life in

Christ has made them free from the law of sin and death. Those who are born of the Spirit, receive not the Spirit by the works of the law, but by the hearing of faith, and they are not required to be circumcised and keep the law of Moses; Christ has fulfilled that law for them, and redeemed them from all its authority. They are dead to the law by the body of Christ, and are married to him that is risen from the dead, and now being under Christ (and not Moses, or the law) they serve God in the spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. They need not the fiery law to lash them to an unwilling task, but they desire to have grace whereby they may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. Instead of the yoke of Moses, which neither we nor the fathers were able to bear, the saints take on them the yoke, (or law) of Christ, which is easy, and his burden, which is light, and find rest (instead of toil) to their souls.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., August 1, 1861.

PLEASE BE SURE,

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

POETRY.

LAST night shortly after I had retired to rest the following lines came into my thoughts:

"My Lord, my Love, was crucified,
He all the pains did bear,
But in the sweetness of his rest
He makes his servants share.

His blood was shed instead of ours,
His soul our hell did bear;
He took our sins, gave us himself;
What an exchange is here!"

As I mused upon these words I found the precious truth very comforting. I was truly in need of divine supplies; I was feeling my nothingness and vileness. I felt too hardened to pray, I was altogether too contemptible to come into the courts of the Lord's house. But suddenly, or ever I was aware, the words, "My Lord, my Love, was crucified," were spoken in my heart. Everything in a moment was transformed, the winter was past, the wilderness became as the garden of Eden. (Ezek. xxxvi. 35.) I could meditate, I could pray, I could praise the Lord. I felt the assurance that the crucified One was my Lord and my love. Yes, I do love him; my heart goes forth in fervent longing after him "who loved me and gave himself for me."

Upon his sufferings I mused,
His agony, his blood,
All was endured to ransom us,
To bring us nigh to God.
He bore our sins, a curse was made,
He bowed his head and died;
O, 'twas for me, Jesus, my Lord,
My Love was crucified.

He bore for me the dreadful shame,
On him God's vengeance fell;
He sweat great drops of precious blood,
His grief no tongue can tell.
O, "Why hast thou forsaken me,
My God, my God?" he cried;
"Finished!" he said, then bowed his head;
My Love was crucified.

My Love he died, was crucified,
O love unparallel!
He gave himself a sacrifice
To ransom me from hell.
What shall I fear, who shall condemn,
What ill shall me betide?
Jesus, the Man, the Christ, my Lord,
My Love was crucified.

Christ is my Love, he won my heart,
He drew me to his breast,
Inspired my soul to lean on him,
To find in him my rest.

Sweet rest from guilt, fear, anguish, shame,
In his dear, bleeding side;
He's all my hope, my righteousness,
My Love was crucified.

O thee I love, I yearn to love,
To love thee as I ought;
O can it be, is one like me
One of thine own blood-bought?
Were my dark sins all purged away
In thy blood's flowing tide?
'Tis my heart's hope, my Lord, my Love,
For me was crucified.

When plagued with sin, when fears prevail,
Weighed down with grief I sink.
Empower my soul, blessed Comforter,
On Jesus' name to think.
Then shall his love be all my trust,
I'll in his blood confide;
With this sweet thought within my heart,
My Love was crucified.

Temptations sore, the gates of hell
Buffet and bring me grief;
I find I'm weak, the devils prey,
Where shall I find relief?
By God's rich grace to Christ I'll flee,
My refuge, where I'll hide,
And sing beneath his sheltering wings,
My Love was crucified.

And when upon my dying bed
All nature fades from view,
My Lord, my Love, be with me then,
With tokens sweet and true.
Let me recline upon thy breast,
And in thy love abide;
I'll say to death, "Where is thy sting?"
My Love was crucified.

My spirit Jesus will receive,
When it shall take its flight;
In paradise I then shall be,
With Christ, with saints in light.
The victory won, all dangers past,
Happy Emmanuel's bride:
I'll glory still in this sweet truth,
My Love was crucified.

Members of Christ our bodies are,
They shall from death arise;
At the last day he'll raise them up
Changed, to ascend the skies.
Fashioned like his, in glory raised,
Immortal, glorified,
I'll sing at home, in raptures sweet,
My Love was crucified.

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, Jan. 27, 1904.

THE GRACE OF GOD.

BEHOLD the lily of the vale,
The rose of Sharon, too,
The grace of God, which cannot fail,
Herein is brought to view.

The holy fragrance of this grace
Is sweet on Zion's hill,
And over all its pleasant ways
Its heavenly dews distil.

It makes our weariness a rest,
Counts all our losses gain;
The brightness of this holy guest,
Like sunshine after rain,

Brings life into the wearied frame,
Bids sorrow flee away;
Through endless years it is the same
Divine, illum'ning ray.

It fans the fevered brow of pain
With cool, delicious breath,
And in its rich and sovereign reign
Destroys the power of death.

It leads us gently down the slope
Of time's uneven way,
And in our darkness gives us hope
To see a heavenly day.

SALLIE M. BARTLEY.

CAIRO, Ga., Feb. 5, 1904.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO AN APPEAL OF BRETHREN TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$913 65
M. A. Champe, Ohio, $1.00; A Friend, W. Va., $1.00; Mrs. M. J. Price, Md., $1.00; Mrs. T. V. Richardson, Md., $8.00.—Total	11 00
Total to date	$924 65

MARRIAGES.

By Elder D. M. Vail, Oct. 6th, 1903, near Three Springs, Huntingdon Co., Pa., R. W. Gutshall and Miss Idessa B. Wible, both of Huntingdon Co., Pa.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Feb. 24th, 1904, Clarence B. Lank and Maggie F. Hancock.

By the same, March 9th, 1904, Virgil P. Wilkins and Annie H. Hastings, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, March 6th, 1904, at the residence of the brides's parents, J. F. Awalt and Miss Laura M. Bigham, both of Rock Bridge, Hocking Co., Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Hannah M. Drake, relict of the late Deacon Charles Drake, departed this life at her residence in Hopewell, N. J., on Friday evening, Feb. 26th, 1904, in the 87th year of her age. Our dear, aged sister had been suffering from a weak heart action, with other increasing infirmities of age, for several years. The immediate cause of death was thought to be apoplexy. She was conscious nearly to the last, only a half hour before her death saying good-night to her little great-grandson, who came to her room just before retiring. In many ways our sister was a remarkable woman. She possessed an unusually strong mind, and was well read and thoughtful, always loving to speak of the better things of the kingdom of God, and to converse concerning the holy Scriptures. Owing to age and weakness she had not been able to attend the meetings of the church for nearly two years. The last service at which she was present was at her own home, in January, 1903, when Elder J. G. Eubanks preached much to her comfort, he being at that time on a visit at Hopewell.

In a narrative of her life and experience which is before us as we write this tribute, she says that if born of God at all it must have been at the early age of six or seven years. When about ten years of age she was accustomed to attend the place of worship with her parents where Elder Samuel Trott then preached. At that time she was much exercised in her mind, and as she says would earnestly wish that she was a christian. After much struggle of mind she at last came into the possession of a good hope through grace, and when about eighteen years of age she united with the New School Baptist Church at Lambertville, N. J. But she was never satisfied with this church, nor the preaching that she heard there, and after some time spent in sorrow and anxiety of mind, she came to the church at Harbourton, or Second Hopewell, and was received into their fellowship, where she remained until her departure from earth. She has been a member of that church about sixty-five years. In all these years there has been no wavering with her as regards the faith and order of the house of God. She has been a faithful member, respected and loved by all her brethren and sisters. We have had an acquaintance with her for nearly thirty-five years, but more especially since we moved to this place, nearly eight years ago. Since then it has been our privilege to visit her very often, and to hold very many pleasant and profitable conversations with her. She nearly always had some Scripture for consideration, and had decided views of her own, which were always in harmony with christian experience. She had many deep heart-searchings with regard to her own interest in the dear Savior, and often has said, "O that I had more assurance, and was more conformed to the likeness of the blessed Master." Her last years were largely spent in meditation and reading the word of God, and she was gently and quietly loosened from the life that is here below, and more and more closely drawn to the life that is above. The Lord gave her a gentle dismissal from this life at the last, so that she was spared much severe suffering. We cannot doubt that she has fallen asleep in Jesus. Her steadfast hope was in the sure promise of grace, and in the final resurrection of the dead at the last day. Of this hope she would often speak.

The funeral service was held on Tuesday, March 1st, at the First Hopewell meeting-house, where she loved for many years to attend and engage in the worship of God. Some fourteen years ago she had selected the text which she desired to be used when she should be laid away in the grave; it was Romans viii. 33, 34. Surely no words from the Scripture could have been more appropriate than these, for they expressed what she has so often confessed to be her faith, and the ground of her hope. She has left one brother, brother James Hill, who is well known by so many of our brethren, and who is the last member of a large family, one daughter, with her husband, Mr. John Dalrymple, one granddaughter, Mrs. S. Holcombe, with her husband, and one great-grandson, beside very many near and dear friends, to mourn their loss. Four generations have for years occupied the one home, but now the oldest is gone. May God bless all the friends, family and church with the hope of salvation in Jesus Christ our Lord.—ED.

IN much sadness we record the death of our dear daughter, **Mrs. Elizabeth T. Atchley,** who departed this life Jan. 20th, 1904, aged 24 years, 6 months and 5 days. She died at her home in Pennington, N. J., leaving a dear little babe only two weeks old, and a kind and loving husband, together with her father and mother, two brothers, two sisters, and also her father-in-law and mother-in-law, with whom she had lived the first two years of their married life, to mourn their loss. It is very hard for us to have to give her up, and know we cannot see her dear face any more in this life, but we are not without comfort, for we have the blessed assurance that she had a hope in Christ as her Savior, and that in his arms she has safely fallen asleep. We were looking forward to the time when she would humbly ask a place with us in the church. She loved to come to meeting, and did so at every opportunity, but a keen sense of her unworthiness kept her silent. Her sufferings, which were great, were borne with much patience and without murmuring, bidding her dear husband and friends good-by. We know our heavenly Father doeth all things well, and while our hearts are bleeding, we try to look unto him for comfort in our sorrow, and to humbly say, Thy will be done,

The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be his holy name.

Our dear pastor, Elder Chick, spoke very comfortingly to us at her funeral, using for a text the words found in Malachi iii. 16, which reads thus: "And a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." Hymn No. 668 was read, after which the remains were laid away to rest, there to await the summons from on high.

Her mother, (MRS.) GEO. R. YARD.

HOPEWELL, N. J., March 3, 1904.

DIED—**Janet McIntyre,** beloved wife of Malcolm Campbell, on Sunday morning, Feb. 7th, 1904, aged 69 years, 3 months and 24 days. The funeral services were held in the meeting-house of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, in Poplar Hill, on Tuesday, Feb. 9th.

Mrs. Campbell, although not a member of the visible church, was a devout woman, giving plenteous evidence of her knowledge of grace. Her last words expressed a firm reliance upon the God of her salvation, and sweet assurance of her acceptance in the Beloved. She leaves a husband and sons and daughters to mourn her departure, but their grief is sweetened by the precious thought that she rests from her labors, that she is now "Where the wicked cease from troubling, where the weary be at rest."

I felt as I tried to speak the funeral service, a peculiar assurance that I was speaking over the bier of one who was redeemed unto God; one of the sacred vessels of mercy whom he had afore prepared unto glory. Although the day was bitterly cold, and the snow of great depth, a large concourse of people attended the funeral service and the burial of the body, which was laid beneath the clod in Poplar Hill graveyard, there to rest until the trump of God shall sound and the dead shall be raised in the image and likeness of him who redeemed us.

Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, unto him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

H. M. CURRY.

DUTTON, Ontario.

Mrs. Effie Staples, of North Berwick, Maine, was born Dec. 3rd, 1845, and died of Bright's disease, Feb. 10th, 1904, aged 58 years, 2 months and 7 days. The deceased was the daughter of Isaac and Sarah J. Eaton, and was married to our brother, Deacon John F. Staples, March 5th, 1861. To them were born one son and two daughters, who, with our brother, remain to mourn their loss. The deceased did not make a public profession of religion, but we hope she has departed this life to be with Christ, which is far better. During the last of her illness she suffered very much, but now all such pain is over.

Her funeral was largely attended, and the writer preached from the words, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God."—Romans viii. 18, 19.

FRED. W. KEENE.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

M. B. F. Jones has changed his address from Decatur, Texas, to Mayfield, Oklahoma Ter., and desires his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting of the Wilmington Old School Baptist Church will be held, the Lord willing, on the second Saturday and Sunday in April, (9th and 10th) 1904, to begin a 2 p. m. on Saturday. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 72. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1904. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JUDGES XVI. 29.

"SAMPSON took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up."

For some time past I have had a desire to write a few lines to the pilgrims and strangers scattered abroad throughout the east, west, north and south, many of whom I have met personally, and others I am acquainted with through their writings in the SIGNS. My desire has been hindered by a lack of spiritual thought; this lack is still as great as ever, and I fear it will never be brighter or better with me. I remember however of receiving comfort many times from the writings of those who were, as they felt, not exercised by the Spirit, so perhaps we are not capable of judging our own feelings or writings, but rather should follow our impressions, and leave the matter with the Lord to bless or not as it may seem good to him. The above text is somewhat in my mind, together with a few thoughts which I will give for your consideration. While the world stands the Scriptures will be unfolding to the people of God, but while the seal is broken in one place another portion that we have had light upon will be closed from our view. The ways of God will never cease to be mysterious, and his judgments we can never find out. The Scriptures are a testimony of Jesus, and in reading them we should desire to see him. He is seen in different characters as well as in their word. In the types it requires in some instances several figures to complete the shadow. For instance, Saul, David and Solomon make a complete figure of Jesus. Saul who was king over Israel was from his shoulders and upward higher than any of the people; this places the head above the body; thus he was head over Israel in all things, being their head or king. Christ is Head over all things to the church, which is his body, he being their Head and King. David was the warrior who met and slew Goliath (death) and delivered Israel. Jesus in the battle against sin conquered death and delivered his people from fear of death. Solomon was the builder of the house unto the Lord, and reigned in his kingdom in judgment and wisdom. Christ builds the spiritual house an habitation for God through the spirit, and reigns in righteousness. Sampson also is in many respects a fig-

ure of Jesus, he was Israel's judge; Christ is the judge of his brethren, and he judges not according to the sight of his eyes, nor after the hearing of his ears, "But with righteousness shall he judge the poor." What a blessing, should he judge us according to our conversation and our deeds, who could stand in his presence? all would surely be condemned. When Peter cursed and swore and denied him, Jesus did not judge Peter as man would have done, he knew Peter's heart and that he loved him and believed in him as the Son of God, but to save his own life he denied him. Man's judgment would have been, Depart, thou cursed, but our righteous Judge only looked upon him, and the look caused Peter to remember, and he wept bitterly because of his sin. Sampson took a wife of the daughters of the Philistines, because none of the daughters of Israel pleased him. So with Jesus none of the daughters of Israel pleased him, and he took his bride from among the Gentiles. Sampson was betrayed into the hands of the Philistines by one whom he loved; Jesus was betrayed into the hands of his enemies by one whom he had chosen and sent out to preach the kingdom of God. Sampson's eyes were put out, and he was brought into the presence of his enemies to make sport for them. Jesus was blindfolded, spit upon and mocked. The Philistines believed Dagon their god had delivered Sampson into their hands, but the God of Israel had done it. The Jews believed that Pilate had delivered Jesus into their hands to be crucified, but "he was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." Sampson, to avenge and deliver Israel, and Jesus for the forgiveness of the enemies of God. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." The house into which Sampson was brought to make sport was filled with men and women, and all the lords of the Philistines were there, and upon the roof there were about three thousand men and women, and all beheld while Sampson made sport. We would not be safe in saying what the nature of the sport was, but I think we may well say it was something as humiliating to him as their evil minds could conceive of. Sampson had indeed been their enemy, but he was doing the work God ordained for him, many of their country he had killed by his mighty strength. When he was brought in from the prison, they set him between the pillars, he said to the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth. Then Sampson called unto the Lord, and said, "O Lord God, remember me I pray thee, and strengthen me I pray thee, only this once." How strange it is to see the experience of the chosen of God the same in all ages of the world. When in need or distress they know no time but the present; whatever the trial of yesterday was it seems to be forgotten, and the cry goes up, Lord, help me and strengthen me to-day. "As thy day so shall thy strength be." Sampson prayed for strength that he might remove the two pillars upon which the house stood. Had the desire been from a heart of malice and rage that the natural passions should be satisfied, the petition would not have been answered, but in that it was answered, we are assured it was indited of God, and his holy purpose was accomplished in the pulling down of the two pillars and the fall of the house. Jesus also prayed in the garden when he sweat as it were great drops of blood, saying, Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me, nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. In

this he prayed for strength, and "an angel came and strengthened him." After Sampson had prayed he took hold of the two middle pillars and said, Let me die with the Philistines, and he bowed himself with all his might, and the house fell upon all the lords and on all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life. Thus their power was overthrown, their government unhinged, and their courage daunted. Sampson's brethren took his body and buried it in his father's burying place. The greatest battle ever fought was in the death of Jesus, the greatest victory ever won was in his resurrection; he also was numbered with the transgressors, his body was also buried by his brethren (Jews). In his death the two pillars on which the house of Israel stood were removed and the house fell. The law and the prophets were the two pillars that upheld the house or church under the law. In the death of Jesus every demand of the law was satisfied, and the prophecies fulfilled. No more does Moses and Elias appear, Jesus alone is seen, and the voice from heaven says, "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him." In fulfilling the law and the prophets they were taken out of the way, so that the church to-day is not under the law but under grace. The house that the children of God now inhabit hath foundations whose builder and maker is God, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down, not one of her stakes shall be removed, nor one of her cords be broken. In the ministry of Jesus he overcame every enemy, confounding and putting them to flight with his wisdom and might in the Spirit; he also healed hundreds of afflicted ones, but in his death he healed more than in his life, his entire body being made whole, he conquering their every enemy, death, hell and the grave, and now hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. What a blessing we have the gospel preached unto us, and that we are given to obey it in its ordinances and precepts. May we be found in the way, asking for the old paths. No change in doctrine or order since the days of Jesus and the apostle is warranted, since we are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. If we are enveloped in darkness and sorely tried by temptations we must wait upon the Lord. This was the life of the Savior, and if the saints could avoid these afflictions they could never know the fellowship of his sufferings, without which they could never know the power of his resurrection.

Respectfully submitted,

H. C. KER.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Feb. 27, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—VERY HIGHLY ESTEEMED FOR THE TRUTH'S SAKE:—I wish I were worthy to address you and the whole household of faith with that sacred appellation, "dear brother," but I am not worthy. Some time since at my request mother wrote us concerning her experience and hope in Christ. I have been associated to a great extent with her in trials of faith, and I hope in triumphs also through his present help in times of need. I send it to you, requesting you to give it space at as early a date as possible in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. My father, Mr. R. L. McNees, was a deacon in the church. I think many who knew them in those days, as well as we who know mother now, will be glad to see her experience published in the SIGNS.

We are indeed glad that the SIGNS continues. I will say in short, we would subscribe to everything good that has been written.

Yours &c.,

DAVID L. McNEES.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Feb. 15, 1904.

DR. DAVID L. McNEES—DEAR SON:—I will try to comply with your request in writing my experience.

I am now in my seventy-fourth year. My first impressions were during early childhood; I believed then that God existed, and that he was good, and that there was a heaven where good people went after dying; also believed there was a place of torment, and a Satan, where all bad people went when they died. I was afraid of Satan, therefore I intended to get religion; I thought I could do so. I tried to be an attentive listener to what my parents said to one another on religious subjects, and about the sermons they heard preached. They spoke often about election. They had both been members of the Primitive Baptist Church before they moved to Lagrange, Tenn. I did not ask questions, but thought it best to be a listener. I attended Sunday school and went to hear the Methodists and Missionary Baptists preach. I was not pleased with what I heard the Methodists preach; I memorized fourteen chapters in Matthew, and what I learned seemed to be more in keeping with what the Missionary Baptists preached, therefore I liked them best. (I had never heard an Old Baptist.) I would try to get religion, but soon forget all my good resolutions. I went to the (so-called) mourners' bench several times, but after their revival meetings were suspended I was worse than before, therefore I resolved to remain away from their exciting meetings, and get religion at home in my own quiet way. I went on in this way, making resolutions only to forget them, until in my sixteenth year of age. During a protracted meeting at the Missionary Baptist Church I remained away from prayer meeting for fear they would try to persuade me to go up to be prayed for, but I became lonesome while at home, for all the young people were at the meeting, so I decided to attend meeting after that and brave it out, and when I went a preacher talked to me and asked if I should die that night where did I suppose my soul would go? I did not admire the man's manner of speech, and wished to drive him away, so I replied, "To hell, I reckon," and I became frightened at my own speech; still I held my head up, and sang when others were singing. My oldest sister was at the mourners' bench (a true mourner it proved); she was deeply affected. That seemed to make me more serious about my own condition. I felt I was a much greater sinner than she, therefore I went again to the mourners' bench. My trouble seemed to be greater than ever; I felt like I was a lost sinner, lost indeed. I continued in this condition some time. I had no desire for food; I could scarcely sleep. I no longer felt I could get religion; I was helplessly lost, I could do nothing, yet I viewed God just, even if he did not save me, for I did not feel I was fit to be saved. O, how miserable I felt, but it seemed right when I had reached such a state of despair, even having counted myself irretrievably lost, lost. All at once, as quick as thought, my troubles all passed away. O, I could not tell how they went, but in a second I felt so light and free, everything looked changed and beautiful. I endeavored to keep my feelings con-

cealed, but mother seemed to notice my change of feeling, for I overheard her tell father that "Lu is sincere." My thought had been that when I got religion I would shout, but instead I realized a quietness of soul. Therefore when I arose the next morning I left the house and retired to a secret place, where I gave vent to my happy feelings. I could not think of aught else save that dear old anthem, "What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul?" I remained out in this place rejoicing until some one called me to breakfast. (Behold how different it is, when one gets religion they make a public display of it, but when the religion of God possesses the soul they retire to some secret place to commune alone with their greatest benefactor until he commands, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee.") I was not disposed to eat breakfast; my soul was too full of joy for me to feel an appetite for anything else than to feast on spiritual comfort. My oldest sister (who herself had experienced such joy) was quick to discern my feelings; she embraced me, and said she believed I had a hope. I requested her not to tell any one. I enjoyed this quiet calm peace and happiness for several days. They spoke of the converts joining the church, urging that it was better; but I became troubled, doubtful and fearful that I was deceived in my hope, so preferred to wait. Then I thought that if I talked to the church and told them I was not fit to join them, it would relieve me of the great trouble; but instead of allowing us to talk they only asked us a few leading questions, permitting us to answer only yes or no. That seemed like an easy way for a deceiver or hypocrite to enter in, but I submitted, and with others was received. We were immersed, and although I had proceeded with them this far, I felt too unworthy to take communion, therefore I refused to engage with them in that. I tried to pray, and spent much time alone, feeling so miserable, though sometimes while alone in my room I became very happy. Some time after this they procured a change of pastors. The sermons of our new pastor seemed to be chaffy; he quoted commentaries instead of the plain Bible, and I did not like them. Then I went to hear the Old Presbyterians; I liked a portion of their preaching better, but I could not submit to their modes. I went in this state of unrest three years, but tried to think all the fault was in myself. About this time I visited a friend who lived twelve miles distant. I knew nothing about Primitive Baptists. On Saturday my friend suggested that we go to hear "Uncle Peter." She added, "They say so many funny things, it will be fun to us." I did not inquire who the "old funny man" was, but we went. The meeting-house was in a beautiful grove; it was neat and white. There was a small congregation, most of them aged people. They opened meeting by singing, read a chapter and prayed, then "Uncle Peter" read his text and began preaching. O, how he did preach, he was not at loss for a word. My eyes filled with tears; I turned my head, and the tears of joy flowed. Then I did not care if my friend saw my tears, for I was so full of happiness. I thought, He must be the kind of preacher my father and mother had so often spoken of. I decided that if asked I would reply that was the first Bible sermon I ever heard, and it was. I could not go as fast as I wished on my return home, I was so anxious to tell father and mother my experience in hearing "Uncle Peter" preach.

When I did tell of the wonderful preaching, father said, "Well, Lu, what is his name?" I said, "All I know is, 'Uncle Peter,' and father I want you and mother to hear him." He laughed and said, "That is brother Peter Culp; I have heard him. Why, Lu, he is our kind of preacher; he is the kind your mother and I used to hear and loved so dearly." After this "Uncle Peter" preached in Lagrange where we lived. Then I learned they opposed Masonic societies, Sunday schools and Temperance societies. This surprised me, for I could not see how christians should oppose them. Soon after this I married. Your father's parents were Primitive Baptists. We moved to the country, and lived within four miles of Spring Creek Church. We attended there as often as we could; your father joined there. I loved those dear unpretentious people, but a felt sense of my unworthiness was a barrier that I could not overcome; I simply felt I was not good enough to be one of them. Brother Daughety spent the afternoon and night with us. This was my opportunity to ascertain their scriptural reason for opposing secret societies, Sunday schools, &c. He replied that those institutions were inventions of men, without God's authority, therefore because we have not a "Thus saith the Lord" to support them, we denounce them as being presumptuous, folly and a dishonor to God, adding, "We never reject an order or anything that has a 'Thus saith the Lord' for its origin and support." His plain, meek manner and explanation satisfied me perfectly, and I felt sure they relied entirely upon God's word for all they believed and practiced. I was more anxious than ever to be one of them, but I was too unworthy. After this we met brother Medows, of Mississippi. Your father took my sister and me to a union meeting at Mt. Pisgah Church, where I had heard my first sermon by "Uncle Peter" Culp. In brother Medows' sermon he gave every reason why I had remained away, or had not related my experience to the church. I felt his whole sermon was directed to me, and that perhaps father had told him about my case. I told sister that sermon was all for me. She said she thought it was all for her. Then I remembered I had not told father my trials. It was a mystery how he could tell me in his sermon all about my trials. I tried to remove all my happy experience from my mind, and to feel the same burden again, and begin anew, and perhaps then I would feel better prepared to talk to the church, but I could not get the burden back, so after several months I determined to tell the church my trials, and thought as they were not deceitful they would tell me that I was not a fit subject for membership in the church. Old brother Daughety was moderator, and after relating my experience he said, "Brethren, you have heard, she has related my experience as well as I could." I was unanimously received; an aged sister took my hand, and with such a grip as none but an Old Baptist can give, looked in my eyes and said, "You have related my travels of soul, my dear young sister." I was surprised, because I did not expect them to receive me. I could not relate one-half of what I had passed through of sorrow, gladness, doubts and fears, yet wishing all the while for an evidence of hope in the Savior's mercy and loving compassion. How surprised I was to know that those dear, aged people had experiences similar to my own. I was baptized the next day by the dear, aged brother for whom I had so much love. Brother Daughety was a frequent visitor,

and was a great comfort to us. He was indeed a father in Israel, ever ready in his meekness to explain such portions of Scripture as we requested. During the Civil war our meetings were very irregular, and thus we were deprived of much spiritual comfort. Soon after we moved to Brownsville, Tenn. My husband died in 1870, leaving a family of three boys and three girls, the eldest boy fifteen. You, David, were in your thirteenth year. I can look back over these now nearly fifty years, and feel thankful to our Father in heaven; he is a Father to the fatherless and a Husband to the widow, and did put within the hearts of his dear people pure and undefiled religion, so that they visited us in our affliction. I have by experience all these years believed the doctrine of the Regular Primitive Baptists. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES is our favorite paper; I enjoy the SIGNS, and those articles from your pen, because they are perfectly in accord with the Bible and the experience of sinners who have hope in Jesus as the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

Dear son and children, my experience has been a perpetual one, filled with joy and sorrow. It will continue so until the dissolution of this mortal body. I hope then to realize perpetual rest and endless joy in that bright heaven above, for there is no night there. In all my experience I have realized that of myself I am unworthy, and it is by grace, through faith, ye are saved, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. O how precious a gift salvation is, it saves us in time and eternity. We can never tell our experience when brought to his banqueting-house, and his banner over us is love; we can but exclaim as did the queen of Sheba, The half has never been told. It can be seen and felt, but no mortal tongue can tell it. I would bid all trembling children of hope, with my children after the flesh, Trust alone in God through Jesus Christ for every good thing, even food and raiment, for he is the only source from whence all blessings, temporal and spiritual, flow. If he leads through darkness, fear no evil, be not dismayed, for just as Jesus was received out of sight in a cloud, in like manner he comes, and often we realize that he comes in moments of great impenetrable darkness to bless us. This experience has to be realized and felt to appreciate its fullness; it cannot be told.

I am a poor, weak creature.

Your mother,

(MRS.) L. F. McNEES.

BRANTFORD, Ontario, Feb. 24, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR:—My purpose in writing is to inclose you a letter received from a dear old soldier of the cross, Elder Knifton. More than once have we in Brantford been edified in our lonely way by his opening up of the Scriptures, publicly and privately. A few of us who meet together here read it at our gathering, and felt like sending it on to the SIGNS to speak for itself. Our God can keep even the lone ones, but O, it is in tribulation indeed.

I cannot close without a word of sympathy to yourself. May the Master, if it be for his glory, maintain the cause which has received such a blow, guide the SIGNS and its writers into all truth by his holy Spirit, and bless abundantly its working staff, with yourself.

Very sincerely yours,

(MRS.) J. STREET.

PARRY SOUND, Ont., Feb. 8, 1904.

DEAR SISTER STREET:—And all those of like precious faith who from time to

time meet with you for worship in your house at Brantford, and who being the true circumcision, worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. May grace, mercy and every needful blessing rest upon each one who has tasted that the Lord is gracious, and who knows the plague of his own heart and the powerful motions of sin that still (although regenerate) continue to work within him, causing the cry of the publican to come forth from the heart, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." Such heaven-born and Spirit-taught souls are often found hanging their heads with shame and confusion of faces, by reason of a discovery of the hidden evils of their own wicked and deceitful hearts, and their wanderings from, as well as their too frequent (alas) forgetfulness of the spring or source from whence all their strength and mercies flow, namely, the predestinating love, grace and mercy of Israel's covenant-keeping, faithful and unchanging God. I received your very kind letter just at a time when (in my own feelings) I was indeed passing through the valley of Baca, and my trouble was I could not find the well; I knew it was there, but to obtain a cooling draught was altogether beyond my power. Add to this all the fiery darts that the enemy delights to hurl at the saints, such as one's hope being a delusion, that I had been deceived myself and had willfully deceived others; that whatever I had said in regard to the gospel had simply been to gain the applause of the creature, or to gratify the pride of my own carnal and fleshly heart; that my mark was not the mark of God's children. These and numerous others which all the saints of God are acquainted with more or less, were the things which troubled my mind when your letter came. Dear sister, like the poor worm that is now addressing you, you have indeed during the past few years been called to walk in the pathway of fiery tribulation, with the heavy stroke of bereavement, and your bodily health poor, as I gather from you, not being at all robust, together with eyesight and natural faculties beginning to fail, (and mine are just the same, being in my seventy-eighth year,) you would, were it not that you have a hope that all these things are sanctified by the Spirit to your good, be most miserable, yet now, as they are all in the hands of our wonder-working God, we are enabled by the eye of living faith to see that infinite wisdom and everlasting love causes all these things to work together for good to the tempest-tossed and afflicted family of God, and much as they may be made to mourn and grieve by reason of the felt sense of their leanness in this vile body of unbelief, sin and death, which they carry about with them, yet sooner or later faith will always testify that Jesus hath done all things well. Let us look back, dear friend, all the way the Lord our God hath led us these many years in the wilderness, in providence and in a gracious experience. Has he not brought the blind by a way (Christ) that they knew not, and led us in paths we had not known; made darkness light before us, and crooked things straight? (And this for the salvation of such decrepit, corrupt, gnarly, crooked sticks as we all are.) And all this that his arm (not ours) might appear conspicuously glorious in our deliverance, the God of providence, as well as the God of grace. The path has been rough and thorny, but "The steps that I tread, and the station I fill, my Father determined and wrote in his will." Mapped out, marked out, decreed and settled in heaven before the

foundation of the world. You and I, dear brethren, through vile, vile unbelief, have been often found saying, like Jacob and Israel of old, "My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God," and we have been kept waiting, watching, mourning and crying for our Beloved once more to manifest himself to us, as he does not to the world, and by and by in his own time our dear Savior hath appeared, and we in ecstacy of heavenly and unspeakable joy have said, Lo, this is the Lord; we have waited for him; we will rejoice and be glad in his salvation. My brethren, has it not been thus with you at such seasons of refreshing? Has not every mountain of legality, sin, sorrow and difficulty been brought low, and every valley of soul trouble or even business anxiety vanished away, and the mouth of every lion or other ravenous beast been stopped? The Lord alone has been exalted in that day when we experimentally have again been brought forth into the light, liberty and freedom that belongs to the election of grace, and have exclaimed, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

Now, beloved, you also ask how things are with me in Providence. I must not complain; I am still in the flesh, and through abundant mercy I am out of hell, and thus far my bread has been given and my water been sure. I am pretty much on Elijah's track at times, but the food still comes, though I verily fear that I am left alone. There may be seven thousand somewhere, but I cannot find them in Parry Sound, though I have been looking for them more than seven years. We have seven so-called churches here, and in the very wettest time they are dry, very dry; I fear the grass is very short and dry; sheep like sweet, tender grass, you know.

I will now come to a close by asking you to give my warmest love to all the little flock, thanking them again for all their kindness to me in days that are gone. I would dearly like to see them all, but of sheer necessity the harness had to be laid off. In about two months I shall if spared enter upon my seventy-ninth year, and as I think you are aware, my complaint is the same as our dearly beloved brother Benton Beebe died from. The probability is we shall not see each other again in this world. I can only say the bodily pains I suffer at times are very severe, and medical aid does but little good; but amidst it all many sweet and precious seasons of communion have been given me, utterly unworthy as I am. O, brethren, What was there in us to merit esteem, or give the Creator delight? 'Twas even so, Father, we ever must sing, because it seemed good in thy sight.

You also ask, do I take the SIGNS, and if so, did I read of the decease of our brother Benton Beebe? Yes, I have taken the SIGNS for the past eighteen or twenty years, and I consider it the very best religious publication on this continent, always proclaiming the truth in its doctrinal purity, its experimental preciousness and its practical beauty. When I first read of the death of our brother, it was with mingled emotions both of sorrow and joy; sorrow because of the heavy loss the church, paper and family are called to sustain, and joy to think that another merciful man had been taken away from all sin, sorrow, conflict and anxiety, to rest in Israel's faithful and unchanging God. I am sometimes led to wonder why I was brought here to be "as a sparrow alone upon the housetop," not a soul near that I am aware of that can speak the pure language of Canaan,

"I will and they shall," but about half Hebrew and half Ashdod appears to perfectly satisfy them.

Trusting, dear brethren, that you may be kept together and made abundantly partakers of the precious things brought forth by the sun and of the chief things of the ancient mountains, I am yours in hope of eternal life,

W. KNIFTON.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April 27, 1901.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you the following letter, which I think will be interesting to the readers of the SIGNS. Elder J. F. Almond is a faithful and highly esteemed minister and pastor, and is one of those who preach the clear and unmixed and blessed doctrine of salvation by grace, which is the only doctrine that is comforting and nourishing to exercised souls. It is refreshing and encouraging to find those servants of God who are tried and true and faithful, giving the trumpet no uncertain sound, and whose daily walk and conversation are in accord with the doctrine they preach.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

CONYERS, Ga., March 15, 1901.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—MY VERY DEAR BROTHER:—According to my promise, I now try to comply with your request in regard to writing some things that I hope have been the blessed Lord's dealings with me.

Dear brother, it would take much time and space to tell you all my troubles from first to last, so I will begin at the time soon after I was baptized, when I began to have impressions to talk in public; not to preach, for I did not think I must ever preach. My impressions were very great, though I did not name it to any one, and one day while plowing in my field something seemed to speak these words to me, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."—2 Tim. ii. 15. At that time I was not much acquainted with the Bible, and it gave me much trouble to find whether these words were Scripture or not. It was some time before I found them, but they followed me all the time. I then began to feel it my duty to try to pray with my little family, but O, it did seem that I could not do this, but still it bore in my mind that it was my duty, and I began to beg the Lord to take all this off of my mind. One day I went to my barn to ask the Lord to relieve me of this burden, and bless my family. The burden got heavier, something seemed to say to me, "You ought to pray with your family." One night I told my wife about this trouble, not about preaching, but about trying to pray. She said she thought that she heard me praying at the barn, and it made her feel bad to think I would not come to the house and pray with her and the little children. "Nell," I said, "if you will fix the light and Bible I will try to." I kept this up for awhile. One night some one came to spend the night with us, and I said to my wife, "Do not fix for me to-night, do not say anything about it when we have company." After this, one day something seemed to say, "He that is ashamed of me before men, him will I be ashamed of before my Father which is in heaven." Then I got into so much trouble I decided to stop reading my Bible, but none of this relieved me. After this our pastor would sometimes say, "Brother John Almond, do not you feel to say a word?" I would shake my head. Once there was

a union meeting some distance from home, and brethren Hamby and Wooly, the latter a licensed preacher, went to the meeting and left us without a preacher. The brethren and sisters met and began to fix to go home, and I said to them, "Brethren, are you all going home without saying a word?" and the brethren said to me, "You speak." Then I said, "It makes me think of a watermelon patch; while there are large melons in the patch, we do not care much about the little ones, but when all the large ones are gone, then we gather the little ones, and often find something that is good and sweet." I said, "I feel like I want to burst some of these little ones open." After that the brethren would say, "Tell us about the watermelon patch," so I wished many a time that I had not said a word that day. Then the brethren and sisters would say to me, "Brother John, you had just as well talk, for you will have it to do." But I did not intend to do it. I would go to meeting and stay out doors until prayer was over, and when the preacher was closing his discourse I would make out I was asleep. Finally I decided that I would sell my little home and go into the mercantile business, for the Old Baptists did not have much confidence in any one who sold goods, and by doing this they would quit teasing me about preaching, and I would get my mind off the Bible. So I traded my farm for a stock of goods, but soon I became dissatisfied and sold out, but I was still in trouble, so I bought my farm back, and after awhile I sold it again, and bought more goods. After this, one night I dreamed that there were a great many people after me, and I got worried with them, and decided I would leave them, so I went away off and hid myself in a thick patch of bushes, but soon they found me. Then I decided I would leave the whole place. I went away off to a river, and the current was in a southerly direction, there was a bridge across the river east and west; I crawled under the north end of the abutment of the bridge, and said to myself, I guess I am away from them now, but soon they came upon me, I was then at my row's end. I looked at the river; on the mud sill next to me stood the prettiest man that I ever saw, with a large cloak, and he opened it as you would an overcoat to put it on, it would reach from my head to my feet. He said to me, "Put this on and we will stop pursuing you." I said, "I cannot do that." Then I woke up. I did not say a word about it to any one, but I began to believe I would have to preach. Sometimes after this when called on I would line a hymn. Finally I tried to offer prayer, and it was not long till the church liberated me to preach. Sometimes after talking I would feel relieved. One night I went to bed in great trouble; I fell asleep, and dreamed that I was at a general meeting, and I tried to talk, though I did not have the spirit. I felt cast down; I got out of the stand and walked off, sighing and regretting that I had anything to say, and I was made to look up and saw the Savior, as I thought, in the sky as a little child in the cross with a purple robe on. It seemed, too, that he was representing me. It seemed as though he was as little as I felt to be. In a moment it changed to a man's size, still in the cross. I went to him, and just as I started to embrace him he disappeared, and how I got back to earth I could not tell. I then rejoiced and felt like I could leave my family and go and be with him.

It was a long time before I would go into the stand; I did not feel like I could

do that. Finally at a union meeting at Sorrels Springs, Walton Co., Ga., Elders H. Temple, William Adams and W. D. Almond were the preachers, and the committee arranged for Elder Temple to preach Sunday morning, and myself to follow him. Those Elders prevailed on me to go into the stand. This was the first time I did it. The first thing that I did was to cry. After this I opened the Bible to Jeremiah i. 6–9, where it says, "Then said I, Ah! Lord God! Behold, I cannot speak; for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord. Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth." After this I tried to do the best I could. This was in the summer of 1886. June 11th, 1887, I was ordained, and commenced serving churches at once. It was but a short time until I was called to serve four churches, and have been serving from four to five churches ever since. In 1893 I sold my home in town, and moved to the country on a farm. The farm was run down, and I had lots of work to do. The first Sunday in January was my meeting day at Flat Shoals, about fifteen miles away, and in short days I had to start early to get there by eleven o'clock. I got up that morning and decided that I would not go to meeting that day. My wife came to where I was at work, and said, "It is time for you to fix to go to meeting." I said to her, "I am not going to-day," and she asked me why? I said, "The Baptists do not care for me, they have not paid my expenses this year, and I will soon lose all I have, and I am going to work." So I worked all day, but did not enjoy it. Night came on, and I went to bed as early as I could, and I dreamed that I was a long way from home, and there was a great gulf that I had to cross before I could get home, and I was told that there was but one place that I could cross it. I begun to inquire the way. It seemed that none could tell me, so I became very much distressed. Finally one man told me the way. It seemed that no one paid any attention to me. The way I was told seemed so dim I could not see a footprint. I got upon my knees, but could see but little sign of any one traveling that way. My mother came up with me at this time, and said, "I have traveled this way before." Then it seemed that my wife and one son were with me; then I traveled on, but very sad. Finally the way got a little plainer; soon I came up to a large building; it seemed that it had a window in it right ahead of me. I walked up to the window and looked over; there I saw an unbounded space, as of a vacuum. It seemed there was no height nor depth to it. As I walked up to the window it seemed to draw me over. O, I was so distressed. There I met an old gentleman and his wife; the old man said, "Do not be troubled, I will show you the way." Then I seemed to lose sight of my wife and son. My mother seemed to be ahead. We went along beside this rock wall toward the east till we came to the end of it. As we turned the corner my attention was drawn to see thousands of corn in the ear all over this wall. I asked the old man where it came from? There was nothing but rock, no earth for it to grow in. At this time we were turning around the corner of this great wall. It seemed if I had made an awkward step I would have fallen into

oblivion. O, my poor heart did ache. Finally we came to the end of this narrow path; then the old gentleman showed me a ladder hanging down in this awful place. I could not see the lower end of it. I could not go back the way I came, so I told mother I would go ahead. I got hold of the ladder and started down; I had to feel for the rounds with my foot, I could not see, for it was so dark. Finally I came to the end, and my feet could not find another round in the ladder, so I hung by my hands until all of my strength gave way, and I could not hold any longer, then I let go, to go forever. O, I cannot tell how my poor heart throbbed, but to my surprise I did not fall at all; I went off walking and rejoicing in love. It seemed to fit me like a new suit of clothes; I was happy. Then I noticed near me three men looking at me. I walked up to them; one was most beautiful. I said, Surely this is the Savior. He bowed his head to me. I said, "Are you my Savior?" and he said, "Yes." O, dear brother, my happiness tongue will never tell. I then woke up shouting, and woke up the whole family. I was as happy as one could be. I want to say that God is love, and he fills this world, and his love is greater than all the world. Then I was made willing, if the dear Lord would direct I would go. If I lost all I had I would serve him.

Sometimes, my dear brother, I am afraid that I am mistaken; but surely I am not. It does me good to think of that night, and I try to go faithfully to my churches. The good Lord has blessed me, I have not had any serious troubles. Sometimes we have had to exclude some, but all were of the same mind, no divisions. I have never been from home very much. I have had a large family to care for. I feel I would like to go and see brethren in other sections. The brethren do not let me off much. It may be best for me to stay at home among my brethren, for I feel to be a little preacher, if one at all. I can only look to Jesus for all, for without him I can do nothing.

Brother Durand, I have written more than I thought I would, but it seemed as if I wrote at all, I ought to tell something more that did take place with me, and there are other things yet, but I will come to a close. Please correct all mistakes, and do with this as you think best, and all will be well with me, and remember me, a poor sinner, at the throne of grace.

J. F. ALMOND.

MATTHEW XI. 25, 26.

"I THANK thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."

These are the gracious words of Jesus. There can be but one good and all-sufficient reason why God the everlasting Father, does anything, or has a will to do anything, and that is to glorify his name. For thy sake they are, is the testimony of David. I need not pursue this thought further to answer all the philosophy of men or angels; all reasons are resolved into the glory of God. Even that hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory, resolves itself into the glory of God and of his Son Jesus Christ, through the Spirit of holiness, which raised Jesus Christ our Lord from the dead, and gave him grace and glory. These things being presumed, the mind gathers interest in these words of Jesus, saying, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise

and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." The blessed Lord was thankful for this very thing, that these things of the kingdom of grace are hid. There might be various reasons why we, as well as the Redeemer, should be thankful that the things of the kingdom of the gracious God concerning the salvation of his people whom he hath chosen, are hidden. There was one way in the wisdom of God to govern wicked men, and that was on the principle of rewards and punishments, appealing to the natural consciousness of men and their personal interests, and so the law of Moses was written on that line. For "the law was added because of transgression." "The law was not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless." Therefore the wise and prudent of this world, being the subjects of violated law, are filled with all unrighteousness, who hold the truth in unrighteousness, consequently could they come into the secrets of God, and his elect children, they would take advantage of this knowledge of the grace of God, which is by Jesus Christ, and go on still in their own course of iniquity, as they constantly declare they would do if they believed in the grace of God without works of man, for salvation from punishment, for from this natural and selfish view, under the law of rewards and punishments, all they desire is to escape punishment, having respect only to the reward as the motive moving them to obedience. This is just as it was with fleshly Israel under the law of Moses, which was added because of transgression, until the seed should come unto whom the promise through grace was made. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile in this respect, they are all alike by nature; what the one would do, the other would also do under the same circumstances. Their conscience is not good, and their heart is not right, as said the prophet of Israel; and the Gentile is the same by nature. Wherefore Jesus was thankful that the wise and prudent of this world, in the depravity of their nature, did not understand the secret counsel of God in the salvation of sinners by grace and not by works, lest any man should boast. For if men, natural men, did have this knowledge by wisdom of their own, this world would become a seething caldron of sin and iniquity, because the minds of unregenerate men being relieved from the fear of punishment after death, they would turn the very grace of God into lasciviousness, and run greedily after the lusts of the flesh, as did Sodom and Gomorrah. If the Lord had not left us a seed, what would the nations do? For the world standeth, said the Savior, for the elect's sake. God hath visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name, it is said in Acts. For said Paul to Timothy, God is the Savior of all men, especially of them that believe. All men are, and have been, providentially saved, by the God of heaven, from the fall of Adam unto the present day. The seed of man has been, and will be preserved by God the Creator of man, in whom we live, move and have our being. Of this providential salvation the rainbow bears witness whenever it is seen in the cloud. But especially does he save them that believe, by grace through our Lord Jesus Christ. Of these he is the Savior everlastingly, Paul being witness. "But God be thanked," said Paul in his turn, and he said this with the wisdom which is hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. Jesus sets his seal to this, saying, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." So likewise Paul, in the ex-

uberance of his joy in the salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ, said, "God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."

The doctrine of salvation by the grace of God in Christ is foolishness to the world, or to the wise of this world, and God has arranged to have it so, that no flesh should glory in his presence, for by Christ Jesus were all things made, and for him were they created. Thus it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord; and for the glory of God they are and were created. Now this answers all inquiries and philosophy of men, and affords the fullest joy to the humble, trusting believer in the word of God, who feels to say, "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. * * * For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen." The fullest joy of the soul is in the glory of God the Father, in the Spirit, and through our Lord Jesus Christ, and to this will every creature in heaven and in earth and under the earth cry, Amen. (See John in Revelation.)

Saul of Tarsus, also the thief on the cross, form two objects around which the doctrine of grace shines with equal glory. Jesus dying between two thieves is a tragedy of wonderful interest, and furnishes a page in history transcending all the traditions of a superstitious world. The mysteries of all ages are crowded into this scene, the holy One dying for the sins of men. This also absorbs the interest of angels. The question comes, Who can understand all these things? The imaginative Plato, the philosopher, with all his disciples dwelling upon the immortality of the soul, are outwitted by the revelations of the Spirit of God, which were given to illiterate fishermen of Galilee, in declaring the whole counsel of God, concerning Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews, whom they took and with wicked hands did crucify and slay, because they knew him not, or the voice of the prophets concerning him.

But it all was according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God that thus it should be, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled; one broken link in the chain of the plan of redemption, and all was loss and ruin. So deep and so incomprehensible a mystery, O Lord, who can understand? But it is revealed unto babes; it is not revealed by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of God. This revelation is that he hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. But how strangely the colors blend; Saul of Tarsus, and the dying thief at the cross of Jesus, who died for sinners. Wonderful, wonderful, wonderful indeed is the mystery of the cross, making foolish the wisdom of men.

"And thou hast revealed it unto babes." "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me." "For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee." "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." Strange mysteries. But Jesus said again, "How can ye believe, which receive honor one of another?" Who can believe unless

he be taught of the Father? And again Jesus said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." And "upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." And here we find Paul and the penitent thief, both united, for an habitation of God through the Spirit. The one, once a boasting pharisee, trusting in his own righteousness, and the other, once a sensual thief, who had broken all the laws of God and man. O wonderful counselor! Mighty God! to thy name be all honor and glory.

Your brother in hope,

I. N. NEWKIRK.

RATON, New Mexico, Feb., 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR FRIEND:—I am an old man, a reader of the SIGNS, and a believer in the doctrine that they set forth. I am not a member of the visible church, but my wife has been for many years, and my parents were members. I believe in the predestination of all things, and the SIGNS has always been the firm advocate of that doctrine. Should one ask if that did not make God the author of sin, I should have to answer, that God's ways and God's knowledge are not my ways. Christ, speaking to the people, said that it was harder for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven, than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. His disciples were astonished, and said, "Who then can be saved?" He did not leave them blind, but said to them, That which is impossible with men, is possible with God. The things which were written aforetime, were written for our learning. It is plain to me that God has a purpose in everything, both good and bad. It has pleased the Father to reveal to his children as much as he wants them to know. When he said, Let there be light, there was light. He has compared our goings to the great ocean, saying, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." He has fixed our bounds, and we cannot pass. And so it appears to me that you, dear friend, will have to stand in your lot, by the hand of that great and almighty God.

Now the death of the late Benton L. Beebe came to me in this wise. My wife and I were in Ranton, stopping with a son who is a member of the church. My wife had been to visit "Aunt" Lizzie Boggs, as we call her, who used to teach in Hopewell, N. J., and from her came the word that Benton Beebe was dead. This was before the coming of the SIGNS which gave the notice of his death. When my wife came from "Aunt" Lizzie's we were just sitting down to the supper table. She said, "Benton Beebe is dead." I said, "How do you know?" She said that "Aunt" Lizzie had received a letter from Hopewell, giving the sad news. I said, "Who will now take care of the SIGNS?" and as the words came out of my mouth, the answer came, "The Lord will do it." I then began to cast about in my mind, whom God would choose as his servant in that work. I thought of you as one of the editors, and of others also. I felt sure, however, that the Lord would do right, and felt willing to leave it with him, and there was nothing to do but to wait his will, and now that God has put you in the place, stand in your lot. And as king Solomon prayed to the Lord to give him wisdom to rule righteously and justly over the children of Israel, so may you place your trust in God. God was well pleased with him, and told him that he would also add to him riches and honor. I have no doubt that your petition to the

same God is like that of Solomon; he felt his weakness and so do you; he had no doubt of the power and wisdom of God, and I know you have the same faith, and that the very same prayer has gone up from your heart. Moses, when told by the Lord that he must go and bring Israel out of the land of Egypt, did not feel equal to the task, but desired to be excused. Finally the Lord asked of him, "Who hath made man's mouth?" But you know all these things better than I can speak of them. There are many, yes, very many, such proofs that God rules all things, that he never fails to make his people willing in the day of his power.

The foregoing has been written because I could not help it, it is in the providence of the Almighty if it be right, if it be wrong, it is of the evil one, over whom we know God rules according to his will and to his own glory. Now from the above you can see that I believe that God has all power in heaven and in earth. Yes, I do believe this from my heart, and I believe that he is merciful and good to his people, and when he speaks, the deaf hear, and the blind see, and as Job said, "Many such things are with him."

When you see brother Beebe's family, give them my love and sympathy. There was no doubt but that he was their idol in this natural life. God has removed him from their sight, and now the best thing is to follow the example of David; when the child was sick, David would not eat, but covered himself with sackcloth and mourned, but when they told him the child was dead he arose and did eat. His servants were astonished at this, and made inquiry of him regarding the matter. He answered them that when the child was sick he did not know but what it might be restored again to him, but now the child was dead, it could not come to him, but he should go to it. And we often pray, not knowing what it may please God to give us, but after all is over, our prayers avail nothing, and all we can say is, "Thy will be done." Even this we cannot say unless helped of God. We can go to those departed, but they cannot come to us. And this one thing we do know, viz: that we are in the hands of God, who always does right, and is kind and just. "Salvation is of the Lord."

A few more words and I will close. I would have you and all the correspondents of the SIGNS help one another in the publication of our family paper. God will care for it as long as it is his will that it shall be useful to his people. We are growing old; I am in my seventy-fourth year, and my wife is sixty-two. We are nearing the end, and that we know. We have always been sinners, according to nature, and there is nothing left for us, only as the Lord gives us faith in his mercy and power to save through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I have no apology to make for writing this. If it is of man, it will come to naught, if it be of the Lord, the world cannot overthrow it. This was the language of Gamaliel, when the people were troubled about the language of Peter and John. I pray the Lord that he will have mercy upon you all and sustain the SIGNS and his people everywhere. Amen.

Yours,

J. B. & LAVINIA I. DAWSON.

[WE see no good reason why the dear aged friend who wrote the above good letter should not become a member of the church. They that gladly received the word were baptized on the day of Pentecost, we are told. In the New Testa-

ment we read of no delay in any case when one had come to believe in Jesus as the Savior of their souls. Our friend knows the truth, we are persuaded, in the power of it as felt in the heart. We feel grateful also for all his kind words for the SIGNS, and for us who are connected with its publication. It is in our heart to respond, Amen, to the prayer in our behalf, expressed by this aged friend.—ED.]

WATERTOWN, Mass., Feb. 23, 1904.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I have been reading this morning in the January 15th issue of the SIGNS, and my mind has been stirred with love to the dear ones of God wherever they are. The letter from sister Lollie Campbell brought to my mind my own first experience of God's love, as applied to myself. I remember with what sweet rejoicing I used those words quoted by her: "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." Those were blessed days, the Sabbath indeed of my soul, when I rested from my own labors, and lay at Jesus' feet wondering and praising God for the great things he had done for me. In the remembrance of that sacred season of joy unspeakable and full of glory there is a sweet assurance in my heart that he who loved me then still keeps me as the apple of his eye, and suffers no evil thing to come near me. I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge, and my fortress: my God: in him will I trust."

I often think of that most precious letter you wrote to me soon after that September of 1901, memorable to me for many reasons. You spoke of my hope, and of my peace, yet warned me not to be discouraged at doubts and fears and wicked thoughts. "The Canaanites still dwell in the land." The longer I live the more it seems to me I find them lurking in corners, hiding in pleasant things, annoying me in every way conceivable. One year it is a certain thing that troubles me, another comes the next year to take its place. Just now I think it is my proneness to carelessness in speech. I speak lightly where I should be most careful, I make remarks, amusing, but often, I fear, harmful in the impression they give of flippancy. It is said of Epaminondas, the celebrated Theban general, that he was such a lover of truth that he would not lie, even in joke. What a lesson to christians, of whom I am less than the least.

The Lord has led me in ways I have not known, but there has been always the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night to direct my uncertain footsteps. Peter says, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you." It is the most wonderful thing to know that God careth for us. His love from everlasting has embraced us, and will through eternity.

I was sick the first part of the month, and have not been to college at all, except to register on the first day of the term, Feb. 2nd. My mother, who was up here, fell sick as soon as I was a little better, and is but now beginning to feel better. Father was up two weeks ago to the funeral of dear old Elder Campbell; another faithful soldier at rest. How blessed is the death of a saint! He rests eternally from his labors; his abiding-place is with the Savior; and his works do follow him. The SIGNS are more than ever precious to me. God

help in your work among the churches, and in the editorship of our beloved paper.

Remember me to your family.

I am your sister in hope,

RUTH KEENE.

GILMER, Wash.

DEAR EDITOR:—The flight of time admonishes me that my subscription is past due, and herewith I am sending it to you. I have read the SIGNS for the space of one year as a regular subscriber, but have formerly read copies supplied me by friends. Previously I had read all the leading Baptist and other religious publications, both in this country and in Britain, but nowhere have I read anything so fully (as I think) in harmony with the teachings of the sacred Scriptures as the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Every successive issue seems to me better than the other, and the actual value of the SIGNS cannot be computed in gold or silver. The first article in the first issue of 1904, viz: "God no respecter of persons," by Elder Silas H. Durand, is alone worth more than the amount of a year's subscription, but I feel so enamored of all the princes in the Israel of our God whose names are appended to the editorials and other articles, that I shall not individualize, they are all so good, filled with truth which tastes sweeter than aught beside to a hungry wayfarer. Those precious epistles from the various members of the body of Christ scattered abroad throughout the world; telling their experience in their pilgrimage journey homeward, O how cheering and helpful. I notice not one note of self-glorification, all tell the same story, Saved by grace, kept by the almighty power of God, hoping to be glorified together with Jesus, all tossed on the ocean of life, doubts and fears abound, oftentimes almost submerged, but when the time of needed deliverance comes, the strong arms of omnipotence environs. Those things interest me more and more, but the trouble is that like so many others, and as so fittingly stated by a "Poor Sinner," in the first issue of this year, I do not know that my sins are forgiven. "'Tis a point I long to know, am I his, or am I not?" I am enabled to say that I do love the brethren, and this, not on their own account, but because they manifest the inwrought Spirit of Christ. I feel to need more humility, not mockery as practiced by fleshly religion, but humility resultant from the work of grace alone, it is all of grace, salvation in time and eternity, all of God. Disturbers of peace, object to words such as absolute, &c. All this talk is a foolish contention "about words to no profit." It seems to me the trouble is, that they desire to share with Jehovah in the disposal of things, and help him who hath said, "If I were hungry I would not tell thee."

Yours in the fellowship of the gospel of peace,

ALEXANDER CHEYNE.

JAVA, Texas, March 9, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I feel like trying to write you a few lines; it is the first time; but without the help of our God we can do nothing. I have been reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the past six months, and it is a great comfort and satisfaction to me. I am a poor, unworthy servant, if one at all. I very often think that I am the least of all, even if a child of God at all. I remained out of the church for eight years; my trouble was great. I would go to hear the Missionary Baptists and the Method-

ists preach, but I could not get my consent to live with them. There were no Primitive Baptists here. I am surrounded with the others just named. I would go to hear them, but no rest could I find. I went over to Anderson County to see some of my kinsfolk. I had an uncle who was an Old School Baptist, and it was his meeting day. I went to the meeting, and I thought the minister preached the best sermon that I ever heard. After preaching was over, the door of the church was opened for the reception of members, and soon I found myself in front asking a place with them. When I started to the meeting, I had no thought of uniting with the church. That was on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in March. I was baptized on the third Sunday in May. I often think my hope is so little that it is of no value, but still there is a little spark that never goes entirely out. I would not take the world for my little hope. O, I have been right where, had it been possible, I would have exchanged places with the dumb brute, because my trouble was so great, and I was so full of sin. I could not see how God could forgive such a sinner as I felt myself to be, but there is nothing impossible with God, he is a just God and Savior, he works all things after the counsel of his own will.

I will bring these few lines to a close. I ask you to excuse all that is amiss. If you think best, you are at liberty to publish this in the SIGNS.

I remain your unworthy sister,

F. L. BELL.

ELMIRA HEIGHTS, N. Y., Nov. 22, 1903.

DEAR EDITOR:—Another year is nearly at its close, and the dear Lord in his abundant mercy has seen fit to spare my unprofitable life, for reasons known best to himself, for which I feel to thank him. I wish I could live more to his honor and glory each day of my life; but at the close of each day I feel to be the same old sinful self, and cannot see any improvement; sin is mixed with all I do. The good I would, that I do not, and that I would not, that I do. I often think, Why is it so? My wish and prayer to God is, to ever be found contending faithfully for the right. But, dear brother, it is so hard for our weak, finite minds to discern the right path, and still harder to follow what our best judgment dictates. The tempter is always near, seeking whom he may devour; it is only through the dear Lord that we are kept from his snares wholly. The dear Lord has watched over and kept me nearly fifty-nine years, and I feel to trust him for the future, knowing that his mercy endureth forever. If I am one of his chosen vessels of mercy, heaven is at last my home, but the thought so often comes to my mind, Am I his, or am I not? We read in God's word, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." Do I really and truly love the brethren? Have I true love abiding in my heart? I hope I have. If it were not for hope the heart would break, and yet why do I hope? not that I have ever done anything to merit his favor, in and of myself, but through his abundant mercy do I still cling to a hope that he died to save such poor sinners as I feel myself to be. I would ascribe all praise and honor to his great and glorious name now and evermore.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

(MRS.) MARTIN CLEMENS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1904.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:
F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

BRIEF REPLIES.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Please show me through the SIGNS the harmony between these two passages of Scripture: "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."—Gen. xxxii. 30, and, "Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me, and live."—Exodus xxxiii. 20. See also Exodus xxxiii. 11.

Your brother in love and fellowship,
S. M. DICKENS.

MERIT, Texas, Feb., 1904.

The last text referred to by our brother reads as follows, "And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." Whatever seeming contradiction may appear to exist between these Scriptures, we know that it is only seeming. All the Scriptures, both of the Old and the New Testaments, were inspired by the Spirit of God, and must therefore be in perfect harmony with each other, and all apparent contradictions are the result of our own feebleness of view. Indeed, we might expect that finite minds would often fail to see the divine harmony that exists in all the word of God. These texts are in absolute harmony, even though we fail to see the harmony. There are some portions of the word which we never have been able to reconcile, by our judgment or reason, with each other, and yet not the shadow of a question has ever entered our mind as to whether they are in harmony or not. We know that they do not contradict each other, and that the contradiction is in our own feeble understanding.

But as regards the Scriptures referred to by our brother, we have long had no question in our mind as to their perfect harmony, even in our own view of them. We do not doubt that the harmony will appear if we carefully consider the language of Paul when he says, "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God *in the face of Jesus Christ.*" The concluding expression, "In the face of Jesus Christ," covers the whole ground and explains the harmony in the Scriptures referred to above. Again, the same solution of the apparent contradiction in these Scriptures is presented when the dear Redeemer said, "*He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.*" No man can see God dwelling in his own ineffable glory at all; and no man can see God as revealed in his attributes of justice, holiness and truth, and live. One view of the justice and holiness of God will at once condemn the sinner in his guilt, and he must die. But in the face of Jesus Christ God appears in all the glory of his justice, holiness and truth, united with mercy and forgiveness, through the atonement; and thus it is given to the redeemed to see him and live. Thus Jacob saw him face to face, as God was there revealed to him in the person of the man Christ Jesus, and seeing God in the face of Jesus, he yet lived. The language of Jacob is expressive of that wonder which must and will fill the heart of any poor, penitent sinner when there is revealed to him the glory of God as a just God, and yet a Savior through Jesus Christ. God manifest in the flesh, con-

demns guilt and sin in the flesh, and so no man can see this and live; but yet as there is also in Jesus the revelation of goodness, mercy and salvation, the sinner sees and yet lives. This is a most wonderful thing to the condemned sinner, and like Jacob he will say, "I have seen God face to face," and live.

It means when such a sinner says such things as this, "I am condemned by the righteous law, and I thought that to behold God at all would be to die. The law of God has so declared, and I have felt its power. But wonder of wonders, I have seen him and yet live. All praise to redeeming love and grace." We hope that our brother with ourself has learned that no man can see God and live, and yet we hope that we both have seen him face to face, and do live; yea, we live because we have seen him face to face. To see him in the law kills, but to see him in Jesus Christ is to obtain life and peace.

KENNEWICK, Wash., Jan. 15, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I wish that you would please give your views through the SIGNS upon the Scripture found in Exodus xxxii. 10-14.

MARION CALWELL.

In this chapter is recorded the making of the golden calf by Aaron at the demand of Israel, and of their worship around it, in which they ascribed their salvation from Egypt to it. Then we see stated the narrative of the anger of God toward them for their idolatry, and then the plea of Moses in their behalf before God. This plea is embraced in verses 11, 12 and 13. Then at the close we read, "And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people."

We suppose that the special thing in the mind of our brother is the statement that the Lord repented. It has been a question in many minds, and it was formerly a very serious one with ourself, how to reconcile such assertions in the word as the above with the declarations that "He does not repent," and "with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning;" that he is of one mind, "that he changes not," &c. We can only say that it seems clear to us, both from plain statements in the word, and from clear inferences from other portions of the word, that we must not for a moment suppose that there is, or can be, any change in God in any respect whatsoever, as regards his will, mind, purpose, wisdom, knowledge or decree; and because he cannot be mistaken or disappointed in any degree, we cannot suppose that he can feel sorrow or regret, or that he can see reason to grieve over any of his appointments. All that we have here said relates to the secret wisdom and will of the Almighty, and all may be summed up in the words, "According to his eternal purpose which he purposed with himself before the world was." In this eternal purpose there can be no change, and in this there is no repentance with God. Men change in mind, will and purpose; they feel sorrow for something that they have done because it has not turned out as they expected, but this cannot be predicated of the Almighty. But we need not enlarge upon this; surely all who reverently read the Scriptures know that he is God and changes not. Still further, this is a most glorious and soul-comforting truth to the weak and poor of the flock, for in this truth of the unchangeability of God is the hope of the believer, as he is brought face to face with the foes and the temptations that beset his pathway. Here also is his hope against all persecution from the enemies of truth, and here also is his hope sustained when he realizes his sins daily

committed against God. Why am I not consumed again and again because of my transgressions? is often his question, and the answer that suffices for all his need is alone in the unchangeability of God.

But what does the word mean, "And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people"? It is clear in our mind that it signifies here and in other places where similar expressions are used, simply that change in the manifestations of his will which appears unto men. God has not changed, but he has brought to pass something that in the sight of men is different from the former things. For instance, he took away the former covenant, that he might establish the latter covenant, and yet there was no change in his purpose at all, since this had been his purpose from the beginning, yet it appeared to men as though a great change had taken place. So here God's thoughts were not changed at all, but the manifestation of them differed at different times. It was so when Hezekiah was sick unto death, God's purpose concerning him did not change, but the manifestation of his one purpose was different at one time than it was at another. God does not reveal the future to us, either in his providence or in his grace, but all is known to him from the beginning, and as we do not know the future, we may seem to ourselves to be led in one direction to-day, and in the opposite to-morrow. In experience, the sentence goes forth, "Thou shalt surely die," but yet we sooner or later come to the sweet gospel sound, we shall live and not die. But both experiences are true, there is change with us, and with the revelation of the will of God, but there has been no change in God.

We leave these reflections with all who may read them.

BROTHER Sherrad Grant, of Canfield, Ark., asks for our views upon secret societies.

We have at least twice before responded to a similar request, and so do not feel like saying more than a few words here. Our view of them has not changed from the first. First, we would say that in the minds of men there is, there always has been, and there will always be, a suspicion of evil attached to that which holds itself secret, and that will not come to the light of day. The children of God are told to avoid the very appearance of evil. This would of itself, it seems to us, lead all believers who had seriously thought of the matter at all, to avoid such societies. Second, we will add that we cannot understand how any man can make oath to keep secret what another shall reveal to him, before he knows what that thing may be. For aught that he may know, some evil thing which he ought, as a good citizen and a good neighbor, who desires to live in all good conscience before God and men, to reveal at once, may be that thing which he has declared on oath he would keep secret. We say, this might be so, and the very slightest suspicion of such a thing ought to hinder him from taking such an oath. We understand that all secret societies hold their members oath-bound in this way. For this reason all believers should avoid secret societies. Third, all secret societies of which we have ever known anything, hold some religious service at their meetings, and at funerals, and on other great occasions. We have been present frequently at funerals conducted under the auspices of some secret society, we have watched the religious ritual at such times, and have listened carefully to the prayers offered, and in no case have we seen any reference to Christ as

the Mediator between God and man. The prayer is always such as a devout Jew could use, who abhors and rejects the name of the Son of God. And yet Jesus himself expressly said to his disciples that they should henceforth ask all in his name. It passes our understanding how a professed christian can join in such prayers as reject the name of Jesus in the face of their Master's own words. We have heard men who claimed to be christian ministers read such prayers at the grave of some one dead, thus showing that they were disloyal to him whom they had professed to serve. More than this, members of Free and accepted Masons, of Odd Fellows and of other secret societies, have told us that they must not use the name of Christ in their religious ritual, because Jews and Unitarians, who did not believe in Christ as a Redeemer and Savior, and as the Son of God, were also members with them, and they must not have anything in the service which would be unacceptable to these men. Shall a christian throw away Christ, his Savior and God, for the sake of the companionship and fellowship of Jews and others who deny the Lord of glory? Yet when a child of God unites with such societies he does deny the Lord which bought him. What an awful thing to thus deny the Lord.

We have nothing to say about men of the world who choose to thus band themselves together; we expect nothing better of them. They know not the Lord, the Savior, and have no love for him, and so may well unite with such societies. No doubt very many have been much helped in time of distress by such societies, yet this is not that charity which is commended in the word of God. Men are told there to give, hoping for nothing again, but in all such beneficial societies men give, hoping for something again. This is not charity any more than fire insurance is a charity. There ought never to arise among the people of God any occasion for the poor and needy to seek such societies for relief; the church is a beneficial society, and should so regard herself, and if such mutual love prevails as we claim among us, we shall not allow any brother or sister to suffer in time of need, if we do, there is great fault among us. "Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" This argument has never been refuted yet.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ROMANS V. 18, 19.

"THEREFORE, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

The great doctrine of redemption by grace is the theme of the inspired apostle in our text, and indeed of the gospel ministry. The consideration of this subject involves the fall, guilt and just condemnation of God's people in the earthly Adam, and their deliverance in the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven. Treating on this subject in our text and its connections, the apostle alludes to the federal relationship of the two Adams, and their respective posterities. The first Adam, being of the earth, earthy, is unable to develop or produce a posterity of a different character or quality from himself; his offspring are consequently like himself, of the earth, earthy. The second Adam,

being the Lord from heaven, is spiritual, and the seminal, or progenitive head of his spiritual posterity. Hence the earthy Adam is the figure of the spiritual Adam which was to come, (see verse 14). "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly."—1 Cor. xv. 45–48. The guilt and condemnation of the posterity of the first Adam bears even date with the first transgression of Adam in the garden, before the first of all his numerous progeny was born. They were all created in Adam, and they were Adam, and were therefore righteously included in the guilt of Adam's transgression, for they all being in him, were at the same time in the transgression. For such is and unavoidably must be the nature and effect of federal relationship. Therefore, the apostle tells us, in our text, "As by the offence of one." That *one* was an entire race, embodied in one man, but to be developed by multiplication into all the tribes of mankind. "By the offence of [this] one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." This argument Paul makes conclusive and indisputable by the fact that by one man's offence, death reigned by one. None can deny this, that from Adam to Moses death reigned over all the children of Adam, and that death still continues to reign over all the sons of men. Death cannot reign but by sin, for the sting of death is sin, and the wages of the sin is death. Therefore it is evident that the sting infused the poison which results in death, when all were embodied in the one undeveloped man. This judgment which has already come upon all men is the decision of God, the Judge of all; it cannot be reversed or annulled. It is in strict accordance with his holy law, and its execution is demanded by eternal justice. It has come upon all men; not to come, if they do not repent or reform, for it has come upon all men to condemnation. All men are therefore condemned already, and have been ever since the judgment came, which is nearly six thousand years ago; and it has come upon us who were not then born, and equally on all who are not yet born; for all have sinned in Adam. Every mouth is stopped by the law, and the whole world of mankind are guilty before God.

Now as the nature and effect of the federal relationship of Adam and his posterity has involved all alike in sin, judgment and condemnation, "even so," exactly so, or in the same manner the federal relationship of Christ and his spiritual posterity secures to all the people of God the righteousness of justification of life. On legal principles, if the relation subsisting between Christ and his members was such that Christ could bear their sins in his own body, or that justice could inflict the penalties of the divine law, which were due to our transgressions, on him, then the same relationship must make Christ's obedience to the law, and sufferings under the law, the ground of our justification to life. The law condemned us to death, but the righteousness of Christ's active and passive obedience to the law on our behalf, takes away our guilt, and death as the consequence of guilt, and justifies us to life, as the opposite of death.

In further illustration of this, our apos-

tle continued, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." We have shown that by the offence of Adam, all Adam's posterity are made sinners, judgment has come upon them all to condemnation, now taking this as a divinely authorized figure, we must unavoidably conclude that the justification unto life of the seed of the second Adam, is by virtue of his obedience to the law on their behalf, and the analogy of the figure shows that the same law and divine justice of God, which could behold all the human family in the first Adam, and being in him partakers of the guilt of his disobedience, must with equal clearness behold all the spiritual seed in the second Adam, when he obeyed the law and bore its penalties as partakers in him of his righteousness unto justification of life. We all sinned in Adam, and in Adam we all die, so in Christ all whom God had chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, when he was delivered up for our offences, and bore our sins in his own body on the cross, met the utmost of the penal demands of the law; and when Christ was raised from the dead, we were raised up with him to justification of life. Our perfect justification is therefore not predicated partly on what Christ has done and partly on what his people are to do, but it is by the obedience of one, that is, of Christ, exclusively of anything and everything else, that the saints are made righteous; this is prospective of what shall be by the obedience of one. But if Christ did not fully, effectively and forever purge away all our guilt legally when he died and arose from the dead, this prospect, assurance and certainty that all his children shall be made righteous, experimentally, would be forever cut off. The atonement was perfect and complete in Jesus Christ our Lord, and in him we were reconciled to God while we were yet sinners in ourselves. But all that was legally fulfilled for us in Christ, shall most certainly be experimentally fulfilled in us individually at the appointed time. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." —Rom. v. 8–10.

Much confusion and jargon arises with Arminians and Universalists in consequence of their confounding the type with the anti-type, the figure with the thing signified, the shadow with the substance. General or universal atonement is inferred by them from such declarations as those in our text, because they do not perceive that the earthly Adam, as the type, is connected with his own earthly posterity, prefiguring the antitypical Adam and his chosen generation, royal priesthood and holy nation. The type is the natural progenitor of his own race which includes all his natural offspring, and Christ is the head over all things to his church; which, if we admit that by the disobedience of one many were made sinners, we must admit that many sinned in that one man. A man is made up of a body, head and many members. When we say a man breathes, we do not affirm that his hand, feet and all the members of the man respectively inhale and exhale the atmosphere, it is enough that the proper organs convey the vital air into and from the lungs, to justify the declaration that the man

breathes. Personally, as the respective members of Adam, not one of his posterity was born when we were made sinners by his disobedience to God; and as none are sinners but those who have sinned, the declaration of our text proves that although unborn, we did sin in the disobedience of Adam. So in the application which the apostle makes of the figures to Christ and his seed, as antitypical of Adam and his seed, when Christ obeyed the law his people were so embodied in him that his obedience was our obedience, his death was the very death which the law consigned us to, and when he died for all his people, then were they all dead, and when he arose for their justification, they were all quickened together with him, and raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places in him. Legally this was all accomplished when Christ, and all his people in him, died and arose again from the dead, they were legally all made righteous then and there; but our text reads, "So by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous," in his body, who is the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

The righteousness of Christ unto justification of life, is not held up as a commodity in the market, offered to the highest bidder, nor is it offered conditionally to any, but it is the free gift. It is not offered to, but comes upon all men, that is, all the seed of the antitypical Adam. Free, because it is unconditional, without money, without price. "The gift of God is eternal life," and that gift is free, sovereign and effectual, and where God has sent it, it comes, and where it comes, and on whom it comes, it comes to justification of life. And it is God that justifies, while by the deeds or works of the law, we are positively informed, there shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., August 15, 1861.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, March 20th, 1904, at the residence of the bride's parents', Harrison Creighlow and Miss Nancy A. Beaver, both of Hocking Co., Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Thomas H. Scott died at Black Rock, Baltimore Co., Md., Jan. 22nd, 1904. Some little time before his residence was discovered to be on fire one night, and in endeavoring to save some things from the fire he was badly burned, and could not recover from the shock. He was 69 years, 7 months and 16 days old. He, together with his beloved companion, united with the church at Black Rock, in March, 1873, and was baptized by the writer. We were then the pastor of that church. Elder David Bartley was visiting the church at that time, and no doubt will well remember the scene when they both came to the church with such earnestness and tenderness of feeling, and were so gladly received in fellowship with us. We also well remember how joyful was the scene at the water-side the next morning, when they were buried in baptism after the example of the blessed Lord. From that time on to the end he walked in full and unbroken fellowship with the church, loved and loving, and a faithful witness to the faith which had been given him in the fullness and sufficiency of the grace of God. In former years he took part often in the meetings of the church, speaking with clearness and to the comfort of his brethren many times. Sometimes when we were absent he conducted the meetings, and occasionally funeral services as well. He was well known, and well loved and respected by all the community around him. All, whether they were of his faith or not, respected his integrity and kind-heartedness. It has been our high privilege to visit his home often in former years, and to engage in pleasant and profitable conversation with him. His theme at all times was Christ and his salvation, as felt and known in the experience of the heart. His niece, sister Mary E. S. Johnson, writes us as follows: "My Aunt Celia wishes me to request you to write the obituary notice of Uncle Thomas, as you knew more about him than Elder Rowe does. I will say that while his hands and face were burned, still he did not seem to suffer from the burns very much, but more from the shock, for he had nervous spells every day, which rendered him unconscious. Then after a time he would become quiet again, and have lucid moments when he would recognize those around him. He did not talk much at any time. The day of the fire he said to Aunt Celia, 'The Lord will provide.' On Wednesday before he died he said, 'The Spirit of the Lord is over me.' These were his last conscious

words. The end was peaceful and calm. We know that death had no sting for him, for he has seemed to want to go for years. I have heard him say often that he was ready to leave the world at the Lord's bidding. He had but one tie, and naturally hated to leave his dear companion. It is not death to die as he died. He looked beyond this life for his enduring happiness; the world was but a fleeting show to him. He became enraptured with spiritual things years ago, so that he took little interest in the things of the world. He was always kind-hearted and generous, so far as he was able. He was honest and upright in all his dealings with men. He was very strong in his convictions of truth, and you know his hope and trust was alone in Christ. How enthusiastic he would become when speaking of that precious name. Oftentimes he would say, 'I need thee every hour, most precious Lord.' We believe that he is at rest safe in the arms of the dear Savior, of whom he delighted to speak. He has left a disconsolate wife, sad and lonely. They lived together nearly forty-four years. They both in former years found great pleasure in having brethren and ministers at their home. Elder Rowe preached a comforting sermon at the funeral."

To this tribute by his niece we can but add an expression of the sympathy which we feel for the bereaved companion left in loneliness, and an expression of the desire that she may find strength as her day all the rest of her earthly journey.—ED.

DIED—Sister **Alice J. Cubbage,** beloved wife of Calvin Cubbage, on Sunday evening, Feb. 14th, 1904, after a long and severe illness, attended with much suffering. Sister Alice was baptized in the fellowship of the Welsh Tract Church, New Castle Co., Del., in August, 1894, and received by letter in the Salem Church, of Philadelphia, Pa., Sept. 29th of the same year. Since that time she has been a consistent member of Salem Church, and beloved by all who knew her. Her life in the church was a constant example of true christian humility, exemplified by that fear and trembling which is seen in the children of God when doubts as to their own acceptance assail them. In her home she was a pattern of the true wife and mother, and in the church she was always welcomed and looked upon as one of old, of whom it was said, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." About three days before she passed away, she manifested a living reality in the faith and hope which had an abiding place in her heart, by singing all of one night (her husband accompanying her part of the time). It seemed that (although she was still living) her spirit had entered into the full fruition of the things for which she had so fondly hoped. She was the only daughter of Deacon Job and Kate Frazier, (both deceased) of Welsh Tract, Delaware. She leaves to mourn their loss, a loving and sorrowing husband and three children, also six brothers. May the dear Lord be with them in their loneliness and sorrow.

Services were held at her late residence in the evening before the day of burial. Elder Horace Lefferts spoke words of comfort to the family and the people assembled. On Thursday, Feb. 18th, Elder J. N. Badger (her pastor) preached a comforting discourse from 2 Cor. v. 1, with closing remarks by Elder J. G. Eubanks, after which she was quietly laid away in the old Welsh Tract cemetery, to await the joyous summons from her glorious Lord.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

Ida V. Russell, daughter of Elder J. A. Russell, was born in Talbot Co., Ga., May 5th, 1867. She was married to V. A. **Gibson** Jan. 9th, 1887, in Pike Co., Ala. They were both received and baptized in the fellowship of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church at Troy, Ala., in August, 1897. Her relation to the church of the good begun work of the Lord in her was remarkably clear, and very touching to all. Thenceforth to the close of her life she was a bright and lovely epistle of Christ, written with the Spirit of the living God, ever manifesting that for her to live was Christ, and to die was gain. Her many beautiful womanly and christian graces made her the dearly beloved friend of all who knew her. To her worthy young husband she was truly a helpmeet, stay and comfort, and a most tender mother to their children. After a lingering illness of consumption, borne with patience and sweet reconciliation to the will of her Father in heaven, she peacefully fell asleep in the Lord at their home in Troy, May 14th, 1903. "Them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

D. BARTLEY.

Walder Leland Allen was born near Janesville, Bremer Co., Iowa, Jan. 2nd, 1852, and departed this life March 7th, 1904, aged 52 years, 2 months and 5 days. He was united in marriage to Martha Lewes, Jan. 23rd, 1873; she died Dec. 25th, 1875. By this union two children were born, a son and a daughter, the son dying when three months old. He leaves to mourn their loss his daughter, Mrs. John Williams, besides four brothers and two sisters. Mr. Allen was not a member of any church, but left good evidence of his hope in Christ. He believed the doctrine of the Old School Baptist faith, and advocated it.

The writer was called to officiate at the funeral services, which were held at the Union Ridge Methodist meeting-house on Tuesday following his death. Text used, 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4. A large congregation was present. The remains were interred in the Harlan cemetery to await the resurrection morning. May God reconcile those who are left to mourn.

E. A. NORTON.

HAMPTON, Iowa.

By request of my dear old mother, I write for publication in the Signs the obituary of my father, **John Jacob Watson,** who was born in Martin Co., N. C., July 25th, 1833, and died Feb. 27th, 1904, in Kemper Co., Miss. He was a useful man all his life, a man possessed of great wisdom. He was a loving husband and father, ever thoughtful, kind and gentle. He leaves a lonely companion, two sons and three daughters, to mourn their irreparable loss. Three of his children preceded him to the better world, two sons and one daughter. We have no fear for his eternal happiness; he has been a believer ever since he was nineteen years old, and has given many evidences since that time of his acceptance with God. We have had many seasons of great rejoicing together in speaking one to the other of the great goodness of God, who had blessed father and son with such sweet hope of immortal joy. He desired to leave this world, and said during his sickness, which came upon him about one year ago, that death had no terrors for him, the only thing that troubled him was that he had not discharged his duty in attaching himself to the Primitive Baptist Church, which he believed to be the church of God. Three of his family are members of the church, his dear old companion, his eldest son and his daughter. No stronger believers in the doctrine of salvation by grace divine through Jesus Christ the Lord, ever lived than he was and they are. Dear father during his sickness often said that God was with him in his sore affliction, and he rejoiced in God his Savior, and when it came to his dying moments his sweet and lovely face shone with angelic brightness. He passed into that beautiful world above in great triumph, without a struggle or sign of fear. Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, for they shall rest from their labors, and their works do follow them. It can be truthfully said that a great and good man has fallen, and we feel that his place cannot be filled, but God's will must be done. J. J. WATSON, JR.

Sucarnoochee, Miss., March 13, 1904.

John Frederick Hubbard was born in the State of Virginia in 1848, and died March 25th, 1904. In the year 1853 he moved with his parents to Missouri, and in 1855 moved to Atchison Co., Kansas. In the year 1865 they crossed the plains in ox-wagons to Oregon, and in 1871 moved to Columbia Co., Wash., where he has since resided. By his industrious and energetic life he accumulated a sufficiency to live free from all want. He was of a cheerful disposition, and by his honorable and upright life he gained the respect and confidence of all that knew him. He was never married, but made his home of late years with an older brother. In 1867 he united with the Old School Baptist Church called New Hope, in Washington Co., Oregon. He was baptized by Elder Wm. Townsend, and has lived a faithful member till called home. His death was very sudden and unexpected, caused by neuralgia of the heart. Now our little church here fully realizes that she has lost one of her most faithful members, who was ever ready to prove his love by his works. He leaves one brother, C. C. Hubbard, of this place, and one sister, Mrs. Mary Barber, of Atchison Co., Kansas, and the church and many friends to mourn their loss, but we do not mourn as those who have no hope.

By request Elder J. T. Barnes, of Touchet station, Wash., was called, and preached an able and appropriate discourse to a large and attentive audience. Then his body was laid away to rest until the appointed time of our God, when the grave shall give up the dead, and this mortal shall put on immortality; then we hope to be united never to part again. May this be our happy lot. Amen.

B. S. PATE.

Dayton, Wash., March 31, 1904.

Our beloved brother, **A. J. Self,** departed this life at his son's, in Newton Co., Ark., March 5th, at 11 o'clock a. m., at a ripe old age. He was born in the year 1818, and was baptized into the fellowship of Mt. Gilead Church fifty or sixty years ago, by Elder J. E. Casey. He was a devoted member and deacon, and a strong believer in salvation by grace. His greatest desire was to be with his brethren, and was an attentive member as long as he was able. He was a loving father and devoted husband. His wife, who was a member of the same church, preceded him to the grave a few years ago. He leaves a son and daughter, several grandchildren and many friends to mourn their loss, but he is gone from the evil to come. May the God of all grace comfort the son and daughter, relatives, and his many brethren and friends, and lead them to the Rock of our eternal salvation. A. R. McPHERSON.

Jasper, Ark., March 18, 1904.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO AN APPEAL OF BRETHREN TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$924 65
W. C. Jones, Texas, $1.00; J. I. Foster, Texas, $1.00; Mrs. Cornelia Green, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. C. E. Smith, Iowa, $3.00.—Total	6 00
Total to date	$930 65

ERRATA.

In the communication of Mrs. Agnes Druin, on page 181, current volume of the Signs, the address should read Crook, Missouri, instead of Crook, Maine.

POETRY.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Inclosed find a very excellent poem. I do not know the author's name, but it bears the title of a medieval hymn. It sets forth in dialogue, momentous questions from the believer, and glorious assurances in answer from Jesus. The whole poem is in strict accord with experimental and doctrinal truth. To me it is a glorious sermon on Isaiah i. 18: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

H. M. CURRY.

I WILL KEEP THEE.

Thus saith Jesus, I will keep
In safety my defenseless sheep;
From sin and endless misery,
Seeking soul, I will keep thee.

BELIEVER:

Lord, I believe thy word is sure,
But I am ignorant and poor,
My goodness reaches not to thee;
For mercy's sake wilt thou keep me?

JESUS:

I passed by the rich and brave,
Thee, needy soul, I came to save;
The poor in spirit blessed be;
O trust me then, I will keep thee.

BELIEVER:

But, Lord, I have a deeper wound,
An evil heart within I've found;
My nature's enmity with thee,
Offended King, wilt thou keep me?

JESUS:

Of all the evil I beheld,
Yet was with love and pity filled;
I therefore died to set thee free;
For my name's sake will I keep thee.

BELIEVER:

Yea, I have proved thy power, my God,
And felt thy efficacious blood,
But sin remains, though it I flee;
Wilt thou preserve backsliding me?

JESUS:

Before I wrought upon thy will,
I knew how treacherous thou wouldst deal;
I did thy base transgressions see,
And yet resolved I would keep thee.

BELIEVER:

Permit me once again to speak;
Sometimes thy face in tears I seek,
And oft a gloomy vail I see;
Canst thou be wroth and yet keep me?

JESUS:

Let then this answer thee suffice,
In anger I do not chastise;
More fervent be thy cry, thy plea,
And as I live I will keep thee.

BELIEVER:

But ah, I feel temptation strong,
And if my journey should be long,
I fear I shall dishonor thee.
Wilt thou continue to keep me?

JESUS:

Can I forsake my heart's delight?
Thy end is precious in my sight.
I conquered death on Calvary,
And from its sting I will keep thee.

I will be near thy dying bed,
Amid the waves sustain thy head;
My rod and staff thy help shall be;
In perfect peace I will keep thee.

I am the Ark that goes before,
To guide the pilgrim to the shore;
At my rebuke shall Jordan flee;
In life, in death, I will keep thee.

Then, then, my sister and my spouse,
I will fulfill my sacred vows,
And thou in bliss my glory see,
When on my breast I've placed thee.

BELIEVER:

It is enough, my Lord, my Love,
The hills, the mountains must remove,
But I shall still unshaken be;
Thy word is passed, thou wilt keep me.

MEETINGS.

IF the Lord will, the Old School Baptist Church called Fair View, Fulton Co., Pa., will hold their May meeting on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, May 6th, 7th and 8th, 1904, commencing at 11 o'clock a. m. on Friday. Brethren, friends and ministers are cordially invited to meet with us. Trains from the east on the Baltimore & Ohio R. R., leave Washington at 10:05 and 11 o'clock a. m., arriving 1:04 and 1:33 p. m. at Hancock, Md., where said trains will be met on Thursday.

JOHN E. GORE.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held, Providence permitting, with the Black Rock Church, Baltimore Co., Md., beginning Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, (18th, 19th and 20th,) 1904, and continuing three days.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Welsh Tract Church, at Newark, Del., beginning Wednesday before the fifth Sunday

in May, (25th, 26th and 27th,) 1904, continuing three days.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Hopewell Church, at Hopewell, N. J., to begin Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (1st, 2nd and 3rd,) 1904, and continue three days.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is expected to be held with the Warwick Church, at Warwick, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1904.

THE Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon and Washington, will be held this year, the Lord willing, with the Luckiamute Church, at or near the residence of Elder V. J. Turnidge, about six miles south of Sheridan, Yamhill Co., Oregon, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in June, (17th) 1904, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continuing the two following days. Those coming by railroad via Portland, Oregon, should be at Portland so as to take the train Thursday evening, June 16th, at 4 o'clock p. m., arriving at Sheridan at 8 o'clock p. m., (present schedule) where they will be met and conveyed to the place of meeting. All lovers of truth are invited to attend.

N. J. SHANKS, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

717 HOWARD ST., DETROIT, Mich.

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IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at the Hall, corner of 19th St. and 8th Ave., fifth floor. Elevator entrance on either 19th St. or 8th Ave.

10:30 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

BI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

OF THE

WELSH TRACT CHURCH.

The bi-centennial of the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., was celebrated Oct. 20th, 1903. After some delay it is now published in pamphlet form, and on sale at this office. Price 15 cents. The pamphlet contains photographs of the Welsh Tract meeting-house and Elder J. G. Eubanks, the pastor, the proceedings of the anniversary, letters of greeting from sister churches and a historical sketch written by Dr. B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., and read on the occasion. Some of the brick in the meeting-house was brought from Wales to this country, and hauled on mules' backs a distance of ten miles. The pamphlet is very interesting and full of information.

The edition is limited, and orders should be sent without delay in order to secure a copy.

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"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 72. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1904. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PRESCOTT, Ark., Feb. 6, 1904.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I herewith inclose a good letter I received from dear Elder H. B. Jones, of Mt. Vernon, Texas, which if you think it would be read with interest and good comfort by the household of faith, you will please publish in the SIGNS.

Your unworthy brother in bonds,

P. H. JAMES.

MT. VERNON, Texas, Dec. 24, 1903.

ELDER P. H. JAMES—MY DEAR BROTHER:—Your good and encouraging letter of the 14th inst. came to hand in due time, and has been read and reread with much interest and satisfaction. There is nothing that strengthens my fellowship for a brother or a sister more than a confession of felt vileness, littleness and unworthiness, mixed with an earnest, longing desire for a better condition; this is what produces fellowship with those of like experience. I heartily indorse both the experimental and doctrinal sentiment of your letter.

The question in the latter part of your letter, viz: "Which is it, the old man or the new man?" gives rise to a subject that is vast in its scope and mysterious in its nature, and while it is on my mind to suggest a few thoughts for your consideration, it is not with a view of instructing you, or driving the mystery from the subject, but to satisfy my own mind, and to show that courtesy that I feel is due to every brother that asks for such as we have. So while I do not profess to understand all about the subject, as one of old said, "Such as I have give I unto thee."

I will take the position that there are two great headships, with the posterity or generation of each presented in the Scriptures. As it is written, "The first man [in the order of manifestation] is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven."—1 Cor. xv. 47. Again it is said, "And [God] hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."—Acts xvii. 26. We read in Genesis ii. 7, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul," (a living

creature.) Here we learn that it was from God that he received the breath of life, the same incomprehensible, eternal, almighty power that had "formed him of the dust of the ground," and gave to all his creatures "life and breath and all things."—Acts xvii. 25. In the wonderful complication of this "living creature," in his life, and the law of this life, in all his mental and physical make-up, and in which he was perfectly adapted for the sphere his Creator designed that he should live and move in (which was a natural sphere), we have portrayed infinite wisdom. Since this creature man came from the hand of his Creator possessed of a life and nature, with all the senses, as seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting and smelling, with the faculties of mind, intelligence, judgment and will, the question arises, Could not this infinitely wise Creator have given him another and different sort of mind and nature had it been his will to do so? Certainly he could. Then as he did not, we can but conclude that he made just such a creature, and gave him just such a life and nature as he designed him to have, and as would exactly adapt him to the original purpose. I once asked a brother that was making an argument against the doctrine of unlimited predestination, the question, "Do you believe that God was the Creator of all things?" He said, "Yes." I then said, "Do you believe that he had a purpose in all that he created, or all things?" He answered that he did. Then said I, "Do you believe that all things answered the purpose for which they were created?" He said, "Everything except man." What exceeding great disappointment must have been felt by the Creator if man only of all his creatures failed to answer his purpose. But how foolish, and I might say blasphemous, the thought that God was ever thwarted or disappointed, for we cannot suppose for a moment that he has failed or been disappointed in anything, without supposing a power greater than he. Hence I am forced to the conclusion that God alone is eternal, independent and sovereign; that in all his works he proceeds alone upon his own eternal and sovereign will. Whatever he has done is done because "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

Then let us look at this first man Adam in the light of scriptural testimony, as he came from the hand of his Creator, and at his relative position to his Creator in subsequent developments. "God saw everything that he had made, and behold; it was very good." Man was no more so than everything else, all things were good as creatures only; everything exactly filled its place. It was exactly as originally intended, fully prepared in every respect to answer the purpose of its Maker. This creature man was not spiritual, but natural only. We read, Romans viii. 20, "For the creature was made subject to vanity." He was not a sinner until he had transgressed the law, for "sin is the transgression of the law." But he had in his nature that principle of vanity, and was susceptible to temptation, and hence when he did transgress the law given him by his Creator, he was acting under or according to the law of his natural life. He was involved from the very moment the woman partook of the forbidden fruit; this is proven from the fact that the woman received the law while she was yet in the man, for Adam said of her after her development, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother,

and cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."—Gen. ii. 23, 24. The law then proved the fact that man possessed a nature antagonistic to his Creator, and this fact has been proven by his conduct all along down the line of his history from the beginning until the present. Even the law of Moses, with every law man has ever received of his Creator, serves as a straight edge to the surface of a piece of timber. The straight edge shows the crookedness in the timber upon which it is laid, so God's holy law makes manifest the perverseness of man's nature. I do not think his nature was changed an iota in the transgression, but his nature was made manifest, and the further he has progressed in development, the more the antagonism of his nature to God and holiness is made manifest, so that he has long since proven all that the Scriptures declare of his depravity to be true. So it did not take a great while to develop the fact, "The wickedness of man was very great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."—Gen. vi. 5. Solomon testified years after the flood, saying, "For there is no man that sinneth not."—1 Kings viii. 46. And again in Eccl. vii. 20, "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not." David also said, "Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity."—Psalms xxxix. 5. This description of man in his fallen, depraved condition is reached by the apostle Paul when he says, Romans iii. 10–12, "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Jeremiah says, xvii. 9, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" This is the dark picture of ourselves by virtue of our relationship to the earthy Adam. Well might the prophet say, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man and maketh flesh his arm," for the man they trust in, and themselves also, are under the curse, and are dead in sin, without God and without hope. Then it is evident that by virtue of a natural birth, or the powers of a natural life, or anything derived therefrom, we can never bring ourselves into relationship with Christ, or have any knowledge of, or desire for salvation. So one must be born again, be born of higher parentage, to come into this relationship. Jesus said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Now it is this same man that has been born of earthly parentage that is "born again." Having been given this natural life according to God's purpose in the first Adam, the people of God are chosen out of this race of Adam, and are the sons and daughters of the first man, predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and blessed with all spiritual blessings in him, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, (Eph. i.) and are the gift of the Father to his Son Jesus Christ. (John vi. 39; xvii. 6, 9, 10, 12.) Jesus said unto the questioning Jews, "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish."—John x. 26–28. His sheep are the sons and daughters of the earthy Adam, who were chosen or appointed unto salvation, and the life he here says he will give them is eternal,

The sheep or children were ever his in purpose, or covenant, and their eternal life was in Christ before the world began, as our natural life was in Adam some six thousand years before we were born into the world. Hence being his people both in covenant and purpose, the Father laid upon Christ all our sins and iniquities. As it is written, "All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth."—Isa. liii. 6, 7. Another Scripture implying obligation by virtue of relationship is Luke xxiv. 26, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" I believe, my brother, that from the ancients of eternity in God's account, the sins of his people were laid upon Jesus. The heavenly Father hath not only sanctified (set apart) his people, but he hath preserved them in Christ Jesus, and also calls them. As it is written in the prophets, "All thy children shall be taught of God." And again God said, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Blessed people, chosen of God the Father, and given to Jesus who bore all their sins and iniquities, came into a sinful world, and according to the will of the Father became a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;" was made "to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him;" tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin, "he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich," "of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," "was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification," and is seated at the right hand of the majesty in the heavens to make intercession for his people, according to the will of God, and according to a rich and glorious covenant provision they are "called with an holy calling" to an experimental knowledge of all this rich inheritance. The saints are admonished (Eph. iv. 22–24,) to "put off concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Again the same apostle said, (Col. i. 27,) "Christ in you, the hope of glory." So I conclude that the terms "new man," "inner man," "hidden man of the heart," "Christ in you the hope of glory," "eternal life," "the spirit whereby we cry, Abba, Father," apply alone to that principle of life which was given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and dwells alone in the regenerate. The gift of this eternal life by no means destroys, or even impairs a single principle of our Adamic nature, but this Adamic life in all its depravity and corruption is revealed, and to the new man is hateful. The creature now has dwelling within him two separate and distinct natures, entirely opposite one to the other; the one "corrupt according to the deceitful lusts," loving with all its strength that element to which it is adapted, the other created in righteousness and true holiness. Let us remember the one man has dwelling within him two natures: he finds two contending powers, "the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh," hence a constant warfare in

the bosom of every heaven-born soul. (For the works of the flesh, read Gal. v. 19–21, and for the fruit of the Spirit, Gal. v. 22, 23.) This character has to do with two great mysteries, the "mystery of godliness" and the "mystery of iniquity," so he often feels to be a mystery to himself, he being a complex character, having two separate and distinct natures; these are referred to in the Scriptures, as in 1 John iii. 9; Romans vii. 15: For that which I (in the flesh) do, I (in the Spirit) allow not: for what I (in the Spirit) would, that (in the flesh) do I not; but what I (in the Spirit) hate, that (in the flesh) I do. Every spiritual emotion, love, joy, peace, faith, every act of spiritual obedience and every spiritual desire proceeds from the Spirit of Christ in the creature, and by no means from a changed Adamic nature or any principle of that nature. The old man or Adamic nature is only in a measure brought into subjection here, but from the testimony of the Scripture, (Romans viii. 29,) according to the purpose of God the creature itself shall by the power of God be conformed to the image of Christ. As by the natural life of Adam is developed a natural man, and bears the image of the earthy, so by the power of the spiritual life he (the same man) is manifested a child of God, and as such shall never die. It is as a son of the earthy Adam that he dies, but as a son of God he never dies; he "falls asleep in Christ," and awakes to realize the complete work of conformation to the image of the blessed Jesus. This I understand is in the resurrection. Paul says, Romans viii. 22, 23, "For we know that the whole [new] creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." But it is in that Spirit which has manifested and characterized them as the heirs of promise here in this world of sin and sorrow that they shall praise him through the ceaseless ages of unbounded eternity, in a world that is free from sin and sorrow.

Dear brother, the above has been several days in writing, and as I could snatch a few minutes now and then. It is badly written, and I would copy and try to better it, but I know it would be a long time getting done, so I will risk your getting the sense of it and send it on, hoping that you will feel free to point out any error or mistake you think too bad to let pass.

Your little brother, I hope, in bonds of truth, H. B. JONES.

PROPHECY.

THE mind of the Lord is known to no man, past, present, or future, save unto them to whom God himself has revealed it. Communication from one to another may tell of the wonders of salvation, we may read in the Scriptures of divine truth the testimony of Jesus; but the knowledge and the understanding of it cannot be reached by any man until the light of divine truth illuminates his mind and heart and soul from a heavenly source, by the Spirit of God which dwelleth in all them who know him and the power of his word. Education, learning, research, or any attainment of the natural mind, cannot reach to the heights or delve into the depths of the mysteries of the wisdom and knowledge of God. Luke, the beloved physician, wrote, "It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou

mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed." This is prophecy. We also have this record, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." Again, the apostle writes, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." I make these few quotations in order that you may clearly perceive that prophecy is the direct result of revelation, and not arrived at by study, or by any methods that the natural mind can conceive of. From beginning to ending the Bible is directly or indirectly the testimony of Jesus, and the apostle tells us in the Revelation, "For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Those who were denominated prophets in the olden time were prophets indeed, for they were set apart by the Lord to fulfill the office of the prophet, but prophecy in its spirit and in its fulfillment embraces much more than that, for the testimony of Jesus (which is the spirit of prophecy), is presented to the church of Christ in every experience of every child of God. They not only speak the truth as it is revealed in their experience, but they act it in their daily life. We see so many little lambs as they are entering into the spiritual life, trying, with fear and trembling, to hide those exercises of their heart which causes them to hope yet fear, and the more they try to hide them, the more clearly they manifest them to the clear eye of the church, which quickly perceives the little spark of God's grace as it kindles in the tender heart, lighting up the soul, routing the hidden things of darkness and bringing into motion the wheels and springs of the heart and mind, calling into the light surprise, fear, trembling, hope, joy, peace and every spiritual emotion in their regular order, and by the same spirit. All this is testimony of Jesus, and the very spirit of prophecy. As in every age where true prophecy has been found, false prophets have arisen to oppose them, as also every other gift in the church, there is that opposing element which always marks the enmity between the flesh and the Spirit. In the beginning of time this opposition was clearly manifest by the serpent in the garden, who prophesied falsely to Eve, saying, "Thou shalt not surely die." And in each succeeding year since that memorable conversation in the early morning of life, the two great powers of light and darkness have been deadly foes, and in constant conflict. Yet from the time that sin entered into the world, (and blackened the whole face of nature, even to the abundant growth of foul and nauseous weeds, blotting and staining the once green fields of God's creation,) the light of true prophecy has gone forth through all the earth, with its gracious power to illuminate the hearts of all the sons and daughters of men who have been born into the kingdom of God's dear Son. How plainly marked is this enmity of the flesh, when the Lord calls one of his servants to the work of the ministry. When the purpose of the Lord concerning them first dawns upon them, their first act is to rebel against every impulse in that direction, and to try to

throw off the burden of the word that is placed upon them; the enemy of righteousness is at work in every fibre of their flesh, and so the conflict goes on in all its severity, until superabounding grace makes subject all the powers of darkness. And now with them, (as in all other subjects of God's grace,) they become passive to the work set before them, but with that overwhelming sense of their unworthiness and unfitness which mars their happiness in this present life. Yet the joy of the work laid upon them far surpasses and eclipses the trials and tribulations which go along with it. The motions of the spirit of prophecy in the subjects thereof are entirely spontaneous, they come unbidden, and when present are uncontrollable. In other words, they are elements in the spiritual life, a component and essential part of that life, by which we are moved and led into obedience and knowledge of the truth; they are manifestations in us of Christ our hope of glory. If we ever do walk in obedience to the truth, it is because we are walking not after the flesh, but in the light of truth, which is the life of Christ. There can be no true prophecy except it relates to Christ, and testifies of him, for he is the light of all divine inspiration and also the object of it. The flesh can testify only of itself, but the Spirit testifies of Christ, whose Spirit it is, for (as the apostle says), "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." In this spiritual life wherein dwelleth righteousness, God revealeth the secrets which alone belong to him, he revealeth in our hearts the Lord Jesus Christ, who is our all in all, our salvation, our wisdom, our righteousness, our sanctification, our redemption. By this knowledge we are qualified to prophesy. In God our life is hid with Christ, hidden from all the world save the church of the living God. The members of Christ's body speak a language which the world understands not, a strange language which they have not learned, yet it is a pure language, but not of their country, it is the pure language of Canaan, and clear as the noonday sun to the traveler in the land of Canaan. The revealed secrets of God and divine prophecy go hand in hand, for the one is but the telling of the other to them to whom the secrets have also been revealed. And each one is ready to say with the prophet Daniel, "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are his: and he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding. He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him." So also with the prophet Amos, "Shall there be evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it? Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." Brethren, when God reveals his Son in you, tell it. Confer not with flesh and blood and try to reason it away, but tell it to your brethren, they are competent judges in the Israel of our God. If the Lord giveth thee light, let your light shine, that you may glorify your Father in heaven, proclaim it on the housetops if need be, that Jesus may be exalted a Prince and a Savior. Ye are lively stones, and not mere clods of earth, testify to the things which ye have seen and heard and handled. Make your Master's house a house of prayer and praise, and not a place of merchandise. Zion is beautiful, and it is made so by

the light of the Spirit of God shining in his people, and that shining being made manifest in all the acts of their life. So let us walk as becometh children of light, and prophesy according as God reveals unto us the hidden things of his treasure house.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March 25, 1904.

REGENERATION AND THE NEW BIRTH.

IN order to be regenerated one must be first generated; there must also be a similarity. Now about generation, I understand that the life of every son and daughter of Adam who have ever lived or who will ever live, was treasured up in Adam, the head and representative of the whole of mankind. While this was true, yet they never had an actual natural life personally, until they were generated, then they had actual natural life, and that individually, each one for himself. Now it is not merely treasured up in the head, but each one of Adam's race has an individual life of his own, and each one feels, hears, sees, tastes and thinks for himself; it is an individual life of their own, and not of another. God's all-seeing eye penetrates all eternity, and all is open and naked to him. While God saw Adam's race before Adam was created, yet each one that God saw must be generated and born to see the kingdom of this world. So it is I understand with regeneration. If not so, why make use of the word "regenerated?" I understand also that natural generation must take place before regeneration. If not, why call it regeneration? God chose a people out of the race of Adam before Adam was created; they are declared to be chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Yet this people must be first generated and born in nature, and then this same people, after the natural generation and birth, must be regenerated and born again in order to see the kingdom of God. The language in Isaiah xxvi. 19, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise," I think means that they were represented in Christ in his resurrection. Christ is the Head and representative of his chosen people, and when he was raised from the dead they were, in the purpose of God, raised with their living Head. David, I think, means the same thing in Psalms cxxxix. 16, "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." God saw them in the resurrection of Christ, and they were represented in his resurrection. In this sense I think his dead men lived, and with his dead body arose. The actual resurrection of the people of God is in the future, as much so as is the actual regeneration and new birth of his people who have not yet experienced it.

I want it understood that I am talking of the chosen people of God in this article, and not of the non-elect, they are never regenerated. I understand that the elect are members of Adam's race, just as the non-elect are. They are actually born of the flesh, and must actually be regenerated and born again before they can see the kingdom of God. This regeneration takes place after the sinner has been born of the flesh; in some future time in this life he is quickened and made alive unto God. He is convicted because eternal life has been imparted, or he is regenerated. I understand these terms to mean in substance the same thing. This work then takes place in time. Paul said, "After that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared,

not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." His people were then represented in his resurrection. His holy Spirit is shed abroad in all his people abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Lord. When this work of regeneration takes place it is the same as the renewing of the Holy Ghost. The Lord Jesus bare and carried his people all the days of old. Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Paul claimed that he is crucified, and yet he is living. Paul was represented in the crucifixion of Christ, and he was also represented in his resurrection, and he, with all the family of heaven, was represented in the glorious ascension of Christ. But Saul, while he was bearing letters of authority to bring all that called upon this name bound unto Jerusalem to be tried for their lives, was yet dead in sins actually. And when he was struck with conviction of his sins he did not think it was a token of the kindness and love of God our Savior appearing unto him, but on the other hand, he felt that it was the vengeance of God. Yet Paul was at that time regenerated, and when the scales, as it were, fell from his eyes he could see how God could be just and justify such a hell-deserving sinner as himself. God showed his servant John, on the isle of Patmos, things that must shortly come to pass. One day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. With God all things are so eternally, but with man they must transpire in time. When eternal life is given to a poor sinner he is first bowed down in sorrow and grief; this is a godly sorrow, working repentance unto salvation not to be repented of, and sometimes they cannot eat or sleep. Any one can see that such a one is deeply troubled, but let the change come, and sometimes one can tell it in the very countenance. We are made happy to see the change, to see their once dry eyes now bathed in tears, and to hear the tongue which once blasphemed the name of God, now speaking of his goodness which has led them to repentance. We can see the change in their very appearance, and in their conversation. But now, like Paul, they find that there is a thorn in the flesh, and O how such an one cries to be freed from it. But as God dealt with Paul, so he does still with his children; they find that his grace is sufficient for them. The promise of the resurrection is set before us; we have lived a very imperfect life, and we feel that if saved it must be by grace alone; it will be as a sinner saved by grace. If not justified by the imputed righteousness of Christ, we feel that we cannot be justified at all. We feel much of the time that we are so hateful and sinful, but blessed be his name, he is our righteousness, wisdom, sanctification and redemption, and he is everything else that a poor sinner can need.

I feel that we are almost at the end of our pilgrimage in this world; after a few more troubles and afflictions, and a few more days of hardship, we shall lay our armor by, and be called to dwell with Christ and all the blood-washed throng to all eternity; we shall be redeemed from the grave. "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." Then shall we receive

the redemption of the body, of which Paul speaks. Then awaking with his likeness we shall be satisfied. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." To be like Jesus, O how I long for the day.

Remember a poor sinner at the throne of grace. May the blessing of heaven rest upon the people of God the world over.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

J. M. DULEY.

CAPRON, Okla. Ter., March 12, 1904.

BLACK ROCK, Md., March 10, 1904.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—The church at Black Rock was made glad at its last church meeting by the reading of the good letter from our sister Georgia England, which I inclose. On account of the distance, and bodily affliction, she is not able to meet with the church. We think the letter good enough for publication in the SIGNS, but submit it to your better judgment. You are well acquainted with sister England, and know of the deprivation of those blessings which others enjoy.

Your unworthy sister,

EMMA J. KELLEY.

HAMPSTEAD, Md., Feb. 7, 1904.

TO THE CHURCH AT BLACK ROCK—DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—As it is again the anniversary, and I believe even the date of the month of my acceptance with you in faith and fellowship, and as I am deprived of the pleasant privilege of assembling with you, I feel most thankful that there is a medium by which I can convey my feelings and thoughts of the goodness and mercy of our covenant-keeping God to you. Our God never sleeps nor slumbers, and he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever.

I do not write you these things because you do not know them, but because you do know them, and thereby find a comfort in hearing the weaklings of the flock express the truth that all their hope and all their righteousness is in a full and complete Savior. This morning I read brother Kidwell's letter, and I felt cheered, and as if I must not sink by the wayside. I cannot tell you how much I enjoy the SIGNS, and I do not believe that you can know, being situated so differently from myself. I desire to thank you once more for the SIGNS, and hope that no one contributed who has but little of this world's goods. God grant that you all receive tenfold.

Although the way is rough, I often feel of late that I murmur with blessings in my hands. Just think of the blessings which I have received during the past year. The greatest earthly blessing is an improvement in my health, and through this and other blessings I am made to say, The Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Instead of the trials being against me, as mortality would have it, they must have been given in loving-kindness to consume the dross.

Last fall, while reading the sixty-sixth Psalm I was impressed by the words, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Then I felt as if that was the reason why I was not fully restored to health. I pondered over it, wondering how it could be, when all my sufficiency is of Christ, and I did not wish to be so afflicted. But when I was reading the SIGNS in January, a brother quoted from James, "The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity." And although I must confess with sorrow that such is my trouble, yet I must also praise the

holy name of God for the hope of eternal life, even if this poor, mortal body does suffer now.

Brother Kelley has loaned me some of his old papers, and I do enjoy them so much; they are old, but ever new. I read in one of them, "Hope is too pure a plant to flourish or grow in an impure soil." Then how can my hope be so bright? I feel that I am a strange mixture, for this quotation and the former do not seem to agree. But it seems to me like this, although I say that *I* will do, yet in my heart I do trust in God, and give him all the love a selfish heart can bestow, while I receive from him unbounded love. The same brother said that Elder Cole quoted the text, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord," &c. He thought that he saw new light in it. Those who require milk and not meat, should obey, or follow after, or take knowledge of the fathers and mothers in Israel. They should obey them and be willing to submit their judgment and ideas to the older heads. This brought back to me the trial of my life after being born again. After that time, eighteen years ago to-day, when I came to the church, how I did long to be with them, and, as I believed would be the case, gain comfort from them. The separation was another trial added, but I have long since thought that no one but Christ could or would have borne with me, and therefore he kept me all to himself, pitying me as a father pitieth his child. O, how consoling when we can look back over the things which at times we felt to be against us, and remember that the everlasting arms were underneath, and that his loving-kindness was not withdrawn. O how I long to praise his holy name for taking me out of the valley, and placing me upon the hill. Now I soar upon wings of joy (only when I cannot bridle my tongue), and can say with one of old, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Cannot I say indeed, "All things work together for good to them that love God"?

> "This thought will soothe grief's saddest night,
> My times are in thy hand."

As to the deep things of the Scriptures, I feel just like I did seventeen years ago, when the words were presented to my mind, The love of Christ passeth all understanding; and, "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth;" and, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." Then do we feel to say, As our day, so shall our strength be, and cling to the Author and Finisher of our faith. He said unto Mary, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God. O what comforting words, when cast down by the every day trials of this life, as has been the case with me since beginning to write this letter; so much so that I could not finish it. But I believe that you also know something about this.

I learned through sister Emma Kelley that you had not only been made to sorrow for our dear editor, as well as all the Baptist family, but also for those with whom you were bound by both natural and spiritual ties in every day friendship and fellowship. But we know that he is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind, and thereby are we comforted. The two kind and comforting letters which brother T. H. Scott wrote me in behalf of the church, brought me into closer fellowship with our esteemed brother. In his last letter he dwelt upon the beautiful city, which, I now think,

showed that he was approaching the revelation of it, and his awakening to its full glory.

Meeting with you once more was a privilege I had never expected to realize. O, that I might live more to the honor and praise of God. Out of a full heart I can only say, "Bless the Lord O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

I have a desire now (which had been crushed and hopeless), to meet you often. May it be God's will to open a way for me to meet with you sometimes, at least, and when I am not with you, may you remember me, as God has commanded his people to remember the poor and afflicted ones, for I feel both halt and lame in my Master's vineyard. I hope that you have been comforted by the coming of our esteemed pastor, and that he has likewise been strengthened by your words and deeds of kindness. And although I have failed to be one of the number, I assure you that it would have given me great pleasure to have been with you. It has given me pleasure to write you my rambling thoughts, and I believe that you will accept them as they are sent in love. I often feel the desire to write, but when I make the attempt, have not the language at my command to express my thoughts, and therefore become discouraged. Our former pastor, Elder Chick, spoke in loving remembrance of you all, in a letter received from him last month.

From your erring and trusting sister,
GEORGIA D. ENGLAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 28, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I send you the following article written by Elder W. J. Hess. In a late letter he expressed some thoughts upon the subject of the morning stars, which made me desire to see more from his pen upon the same theme. In reply to my request he writes: "Encouraged by your kind words, I have downed my timidity enough to write a little on the subject you suggested, which I send to you, and if you think it will tend to the glory of God and comfort of his people you may send it to the SIGNS. The article is not satisfactory to me; it does not exalt the Lord God as I would like. My pen is too slow, and intellect as well as words too weak." To my mind the truth is well presented to the faith of God's people in what he has written.

Your brother in hope,
SILAS H. DURAND.

MORNING STARS.

"WHEN the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."—Job xxxviii. 7.

A morning star is one that speaks of the coming day and partakes somewhat of its brightness, it may be Jupiter Saturn or Venus, its being a morning star does not depend on its name, but on its office. As in nature so in grace. Thus all the holy men of old from Abel down to the coming of the Sun of Righteousness were morning stars, inasmuch as they bore testimony to the coming of that great day of the Lord that should burn as an oven. Sin had brought darkness, discord, sorrow and death; but in their song the morning stars spoke of light, harmony, joy and life through Jesus Christ, and you and I, brethren, join that harmony of God when we are enabled to sing and make melody in our hearts to the Lord. They sang together, *i. e.*, in harmony, while to us, they were ages apart, but to him who answered Job out of the whirlwind, and before whom all time is now, it was together.

"And all the sons of God shouted for

joy." I understand that to mean all the people of God from the beginning to the end of time, both male and female, for in the Spirit they are neither male nor female, but one in Christ, consequently sons in this place means all the redeemed. Because God heard the joyous shout of the sons away back yonder when he laid the "Corner-stone of the earth." When the light that shines in our hearts has given us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus, and peace and pardon through him has been sealed upon our hearts, we may make no vocal sound, but I tell you, beloved, there goes up a shout of "joy unspeakable," and God heard it away back in the beginning when he made his Son, who is wisdom and power, the Corner-stone of the earth and the upholder of all things. Think, if you can, dear hearts, of the magnitude of the shout for joy which God heard, and which you and I even now feel the vibration of, if we are in harmony with him. Think of the hundred forty and four thousand redeemed of the tribes of Israel, then of the innumerable company which no man can number, all joining in harmony, and, as it were, with one voice. Would not the whole universe ring with the joy? No wonder the angels took up the shout, and the shepherds on the plains of Judea heard it, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men," and it will go ringing and vibrating down the path of the ages and be caught up here and there by redeemed souls and shine forth in good works and godly conversation. Abraham rejoiced to see the day of which the morning stars sang, he saw it and was glad. John struck the key-note of the song and had a view of the glory of the shout when he called upon men to "behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." The light that shines out of darkness shines in the heart, and is a morning star to every soul in which it shines, for it speaks of the day of Jesus Christ; the "day which the Lord God has made," and we will be glad and rejoice in it. Finally, beloved, that song of the morning stars and that shout of the sons of God shall ring on and on, till God descends from heaven with a shout, till death is conquered and sin ended and mortality is swallowed up of life, till the whole universe of worlds is brought into everlasting harmony, till Jesus delivers up the kingdom to his Father, that God may be all in all. We leave it here.

W. J. HESS.

NORTH YAKIMA, Wash., Jan. 19, 1904.

MANORKILL, N. Y., March 13, 1904.

EDITOR OF THE SIGNS:—I have been perusing some letters that I received in 1892, and I am inclined to think others will be pleased to read this one.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

D. S. ELLIOTT.

BROOME CENTRE, N. Y., Jan. 3, 1892.

DEAR BROTHER ELLIOTT:—I have just reached home from attending the yearly meeting at Halcottville yesterday. I think that I enjoyed it very much. After the meeting I started for home, and reached here this p. m., and found another of your loving and ever welcome epistles, as a token of your love, and a lovely, happy New Year greeting, and I would to God, the Giver of every good and perfect gift, that it might be one of those happy seasons that he gives to his beloved, in whom he is well pleased. O that he would remember us in much mercy, and grant a blessing of divine

wisdom from on high (that wisdom which man never taught) to rest upon us, of which if a man eat he shall never die. I do not know why it is, but for a long time I have had such a longing desire, almost continually, for that wisdom that passeth all understanding, not only for myself, but for the whole household. I feel so poor, so weak, in fact just like an underling in the flock, hardly worth your notice. But thanks be to our God, who giveth us the victory, he hath conquered all our foes, even death and hell; he has fought all our battles for us, and has came off conqueror, thanks be to his holy name, for did he not taste death for every man? Was he not made a little lower than the angels for this same purpose? "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given." This child and Son is not given unto the whole Adamic race, but it includes this "every man" that he tasted death for. "Us" and "every man" are the same. This same "every man" is termed children for whom he took flesh and blood, that he might deliver them from that bondage produced by the fear of death. These same "us," "every man" or "children" are "heirs," yes, they are "joint-heirs with Jesus Christ;" their life is hid with Christ in God. He has been their dwelling-place in all generations; how can we comprehend such a place? In all generations we have been dwelling in him. This is too great, I cannot attain to it. Surely in all these things the God of heaven must give us an eye of faith to see and a heart to understand, or we shall utterly fail in comprehending any part of the matter.

Now, dear brother, you surprise me somewhat in asking me to "discourse a little, at my leisure, on this last clause," viz: "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." I will endeavor to give you such as I have, and what agrees with the law and testimony receive, and what does not, reject.

"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." Why? "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;" and he "gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified." When? "In due time;" that is, at a certain time, in his own time, all that he gave himself for will be testified of, and will receive his testimony. Now this testimony "is the spirit of prophesy," which the dragon and all his angels were all wroth at and are continually making war with and endeavoring to overcome. This is eminent of the seed of the woman that dwells in the wilderness. You have been telling me of this same warfare, fightings without and fightings within. You know full well what they are, and much better than I do. This same spirit or word or testimony, the world, the flesh and the devil have been fighting since the days of Cain and Abel, and I have no doubt that the warfare will continue until the last vessel of mercy is called home. When Cain slew Abel he thought he had now gained the supremacy, and so when they crucified our blessed Savior they thought, Now surely we have put an end to this pernicious sect of people, but they had only opened the way for spreading this most glorious testimony to all the vessels of mercy. It was this "due time" that was the purpose of our most holy Head and Husband. And now the words, "to come unto the knowledge of the truth." What Christ has said unto us we should heed at all times. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life." Now if Jesus Christ is the truth, and we are to come

unto the knowledge of the truth, we must come unto the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and him to know is life eternal. This coming unto life eternal, unto Jesus Christ, or to the knowledge of the truth, is that way that we know not of. We are like little children; we must be led, and our heavenly Father has told us in this testimony that he will lead them by a way that they knew not, and surely is not this the case with us? Have we not come unto this truth by a way that we least expected, by a way that we knew not? Many times we were like John when on the isle of Patmos; we heard the voice behind us, just where we were not looking for it, and had to turn around to see the object of our love. Now, dear brother, these "all men to be saved" are the same men that were to come unto the knowledge of the truth, and to have the knowledge of this truth is life eternal, "and this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God."

D. M. LEONARD.

DACULA, Ga., March 18, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—It affords me great pleasure to write you a few lines, and I would like to give you a little sketch of my experience. It is so little and seems so poor, that I hardly know whether to write it or not, but I will try to give it to you in the way it was given to me. The Lord gives, and the Lord takes, and it all belongs to him. One thing I can say, viz: that I never did, of myself, one good thing, in a spiritual sense. In the year of 1891, I felt to be troubled one day, and I did not know what was the matter with me. I was at a meeting at that time at Flat Creek church, and J. P. Lukers was preaching. I thought the sermon could not be excelled. I also thought of what my mother used to say, "Sometimes I go to meeting and wish myself at home, but before I get away I am glad I came." I started for home, and thought that I was going to ruin, I thought that all my friends were gone, and that I should die. I was soon taken with rheumatism, and it seemed like death to me. I lay down on my bed, and it seemed to me that I should die there. It seemed to me that my sister came to my bedside, and called me three times, but I did not say anything, I could not speak, my tongue cleaved to my mouth. My sister said, Bud is dying, and turned away from me. It seemed to me that I was dying. If I had been under one corner of the house my burden would have been no heavier. When this burden was removed it seemed that I was in hell, and I felt that I was gone forever. I saw no one but myself there, yet it appeared that I could see out, but could not get out. I saw a man on the outside, and he delivered me from that place, and I gave him the praise by saying, Lord, have mercy upon me, a poor sinner. It seemed to me that I was carried to the water and baptized in the Spirit in the name of the Lord Jesus. After this, I went to the church and told them my trouble and deliverance, and they said, "Your trouble is our trouble." Soon I wished that I had not told them anything about it, but I could not help it, I had to speak. The Lord says, "Let God be true, but every man a liar," so I was compelled to tell it just as it was. I try to trust in God, and put no confidence in man. The Scripture says, "It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in princes."

Dear brother, I will close this sketch, do with it as you deem best.

Yours truly,

J. F. KILGORE.

ELLISVILLE, Miss., Feb. 2, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—It has been a long time since I have written anything for your comforting paper, but ever since it has been coming to me I have been comforted and edified to such an extent that I cannot refrain at times from trying to write a few lines for it. I feel my weakness and unworthiness so plainly that I am loath to make the attempt. The SIGNS is the only paper that I have read containing the unadulterated doctrine of God our Savior. Myself and the church to which I belong are all in this country that believe in the doctrine of the Bible fully, as it is advocated in the SIGNS. Many here preach a limited predestination, and do not believe Paul when he says, "All things work together for good to them that love God." They do not seem to think that the Lord made all things; they do not seem to believe that he rules in all the earth; they hold to a chance system; they are afraid of the doctrine of predestination, especially predestination of all things. I can but think that there is a great deal of Arminianism in them which has not been thoroughly purged out by the grace of God. As for me, take away the predestination of all things, foreknowledge and election, and I am lost forever. I have nothing else to rest upon, because predestination, foreknowledge and election, all three go hand in hand, according to Paul's statement in Romans viii., which I do not dare dispute. I am truly glad to know that there are some yet who are contending for the faith that was once delivered to the saints, and I am glad that the knees of some have never yet bowed to the image of Baal. I am sure that it will be so to the end, for God has said that he will not leave himself without witnesses. I am glad and do rejoice to know that God works all things after the counsel of his own will, and that while men may wrangle and the devil may rage against the truth, not one of the purposes of God shall fail to be accomplished, and I am glad to know that all whom Christ redeemed are saved, and saved already with an everlasting salvation. Yes, saved now, not will be, but now, whether I am one of the number or not. Whether I am one that was chosen in the covenant of redemption or not, I have never doubted the promises of God. The doubt is, and has been, Am I his, or am I not? This I often doubt. I used to think that if it should be the will of God to permit me to live to an advanced age, my doubts would diminish, and the great burden of trying to preach would leave me, but I still find both the doubts and the burden heavy. I am now in my seventieth year, and, if possible, I have less confidence in this old Adam man that I ever did, and old Adam bothers me more, as it seems to me.

When I look back over my past life, how crooked my way has been; it makes me tremble and shudder. O could I only say, as did Paul, that I have fought the good fight, and have kept the faith, but instead, I am compelled to say, "Lord, pardon and forgive my past offences." And, dear brethren and sisters, if this should be published, I ask you in Jesus' name, to pray for me, a poor old sinner.

Your brother in hope of a better life,

S. BUSBY.

[WITH our dear brother we can but testify that we have not attained to that freedom from doubts and fears that we expected would be ours if we should live to older years. We recall that we, in our youth, thought that as the years went on, we should grow better, in our outward

life at least. We did not at any time think that in this life we would ever attain to perfection, but we did think that it was only reasonable to believe that we would be more wise, more devoted to the cause, more free from selfishness, and more spiritual, as the years went on, but it has not so appeared to us. Then we could but say of ourself, "A sinner saved by grace," and this is all that we can say now. In some ways perhaps our hope has become more steadfast and unwavering, but we have grown no better.—ED.]

EWING, N. J., March 4, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR PASTOR:—I would like this evening, if the Lord will, to tell you some of my meditations for the past few weeks. I have felt to be alone with my God, and his dear children everywhere, with such love as I cannot describe. At first I had such a lonely feeling that no one cared for me spiritually, that I was unworthy of their love, the love of the church. I felt to pray the Lord to give me some evidence once more that I was one of his children, when one evening I picked up sister Mary Parker's book and commenced at the beginning and read it through. I had read it many times before, but it never was so sweet and comforting as at this time. Never did my heart swell with such love toward God and his children; it was a Bethel to my poor soul. O, if I could only stay in this frame of mind, then neither trials, sickness or death would seem hard to bear. Then we should feel kindly and forgiving toward every one, even an enemy, for God is love. When we can feel his presence near us, then our thoughts and actions both are love. I do desire to live every day more like a child of God, to fear him and to have him abide with me, but I know not how soon I shall be plunged in sinful thoughts, and be cast down because of them, thinking I have been deceived in my hope and profession; then I must pray, "Lord, help me." It is only through his grace that we can come to him.

Your editorials have also been very comforting to me; I am thankful that God has raised you up to write and to preach for the comfort of his children. How good it is to have a kind and forgiving spirit, always speaking for the welfare of the church. I know that you must feel great responsibilities resting upon you, now that brother Beebe is gone. I cannot tell you how sad I felt when I heard of his death. How good the last editorial from his pen was! So many of the dear ones have gone, but God is able to raise up others. I do not know what I should do were it not for the SIGNS, for I do not get to meeting as often as I would love to. I do love to read of others trials and joys. How my heart goes out to them in love, and sometimes the tears so dim my eyes that I cannot see; they are tears of joy.

I wish to be remembered in love to you and yours, and all the family. May God spare you many years for the comfort of his children.

I remain your sister in hope,

OLIVIA N. HELLINGS.

TO DISCONTINUE THE SALE OF BIBLES.

WE have only four self-pronouncing Bibles left in stock, as follows; three of No. 8313, one of No. 8701, and only two Testaments. These books will be sold at the usual prices. For description and price see any SIGNS for 1903.

Owing to the advance in price of such books, and the few calls for them, we have decided not to handle them after these on hand are gone.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1904.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PROTRACTED MEETINGS.

NOT long since the question was proposed to us, Why do Old School Baptists object to protracted meetings? It perhaps has occurred to others to ask the same question. Our answer was, Old School Baptists are not opposed to protracted meetings, but they are opposed to modern *distracted* meetings, and they are opposed to the professed object of such meetings. We have never heard of such a meeting being held for the purpose of worship, of strengthening the faith and hope of believers in Christ, of instruction in the doctrine and order of the house of God, or for the expounding of the word of God, but the one thought and motive in all such meetings of which we have heard is to increase the membership of the church. These meetings are held under all the circumstances of excitement that it is possible to produce, and under this excitement the hope is to move multitudes to profess religion who would never think of doing so in their sober moments. By such methods many are induced to profess a hope in the Lord, or rather, we should say, a hope in their own good works, or in their own decision to own the Lord and to start on the way of life, who never knew the plague of their own hearts, or the mercy and grace of God through Christ, in their deliverance. Thus the churches are filled up with graceless men and women who prove a drag and a curse to the church, if indeed they become members of any true church of Christ. We know that seventy years ago or more some true sound churches were induced to engage in such practices, but the result was the falling off of nearly all who were thus gathered into the New School faith and practice. We say that we know this, but of course we do not know this of our own observation, but from the testimony of old, faithful brethren who lived at that time, and this testimony we have no room to doubt. Such kinds of protracted meetings as these we are opposed to, in common with all Old School Baptists everywhere, for those who bear the name of Old School Baptists, who indorse and engage in such practices, are not such really, though they may insist upon bearing the name. We are not opposed to meetings held for days, and weeks even, providing the opportunity be present, and the object be the quiet, solemn worship of God, without the underlying thought being that perhaps many may be induced to profess Christ, who would not otherwise do so. We are not opposed to the coming of all those who have known the exceeding sinfulness of sin in themselves, and who have at last come to the possession of a blessed hope in Christ, and confessing this experience and this hope before the church, as he has commanded, at any time when the church is together for worship, and for attendance upon the business and order of the house of the Lord. Such ones are, and ought to be, welcome at any meeting of the church in her church capacity, whether on Saturday at what is called a church meeting,

or on Sunday morning or evening, or at any other time when their hearts are moved to come and confess the hope which has been given them in Christ.

Old School Baptists generally through the country hold a two days meeting every month. Once a year they, or the most of them, hold a three days meeting called an association. It has been our privilege to have brethren in past years visit our churches and remain for a week, and each evening service would be held, to the mutual comfort and joy of all who attended. Such protracted meetings as these we never heard any objection against, from any source, but we do stand opposed to the holding of such meetings if the thought and purpose be to urge men and women into the church by special effort at those times. We do indeed believe that all who have hope in the Lord ought to be exhorted to take the yoke upon them and learn of him, but this ought to be done at all times; as much (and no more and no less) at one time than at another. The people of God were urged by the apostles and servants of God in their writings in the epistles to all obedience, including obedience to the command to be baptized, but we do not learn that the apostles set apart special times when such exhortations should be urged more than at other times. Among all the aged ministers whom we have ever known, and among the ministers who now are our associates, there has been at all times more or less of exhortation to those who have hope, who are yet outside of the visible church, to take the pleasant and easy yoke upon themselves in baptism, and afterward to walk in all the order of the church of God. This has however been a steady regular custom with us, and not a spasmodic one at certain times and seasons; we believe this is right and scriptural and apostolic. We would think the other custom of special protracted meetings held for this special object right, could we find that it was enjoined by the apostles or once practiced by them.

In Acts ii. 46, we read that the disciples continued daily with one accord in the temple, and in breaking bread from house to house, and that the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved, but we do not read of any special effort put forth by the apostles, or that this meeting was prearranged for the purpose of increasing the membership. In fact the whole narrative shows that the meeting was simply for the praise of God, and that those who came did not do so because apostles or others urged them to, but because the Lord wonderfully moved their hearts to take this step. Such addition of members to the church as this we are rejoiced to see, but protracted meetings, to say the least of them, cloud the work of the Lord and make bare the arm of men, and so the report goes out that some men have more power in this direction than others, and they are sent for, as though the Lord could not or would not work without their help.

The success of these meetings is pointed to as an argument in their favor. It is said, and it is true, that tens, twenties or hundreds are the fruit of these meetings, but what kind of fruit do the most of them turn out to be? If they get into the church of God at all, they are carnal, as a rule, and show that the grace of God is not in them. They will be found as a general rule, saying more about the preacher who converted them than about the Lord who bought them. They will extol the effort of men more than the work of God. By their fruits shall ye

know them. They are the converts of some man, and not the children of God. Numbers may indeed be added to the membership, but alas for the spirituality of such a membership. Alas for the truth, when that church shall have been filled with such members. Our fathers saw the fruits of all this protracted meeting system in the beginning of the last century, and after patiently enduring, with warning and exhortation, as long as they could, they were compelled to withdraw. This was accomplished all over the country from 1830 to 1840. As long as the fathers lived such practices could gain little foothold again among Old School Baptists, but now another generation has arisen who live far remote from that time of trouble and strife, and among them in some places, as we learn, such protracted meetings as we denounce here have again begun to be held. Because of this we here lift up our feeble voice in warning; we want to have hands unstained in this matter. Brethren, it is right to continue meetings as long as circumstances will warrant in any place, for the worship of God, but beware of the notion that such meetings ought to be held for the increase of members, or that such meetings are more blessed of the Lord than the regular service held by the churches Sunday after Sunday. Anything that lifts human effort above the silent work of the Spirit of God, even in our thoughts, is evil, and will work only evil. Numbers may be added, but they will be Ishmaels rather than Isaacs.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904, &c.

MOURNERS.

THE people of God are all mourners. Once they all mourned without hope, now they both mourn and rejoice. "As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing," is the statement of the life of the believer by an inspired apostle. Israel mourned in Egypt, and they mourned often in the wilderness journey, but the latter mourning was not as the former. Those who have come to believe in Jesus as the Savior of their souls mourn, but not without hope, they mourn because they are still sinful, and cannot cease from sin as they desire; because they are tempted with doubts and fears from the enemy of souls, who takes advantage of their failures and their fleshly minds, to insinuate that they cannot be the children of God, because of the evil around them in the world, as did Noah before the flood, and because of trials and sorrows which fall to their lot in the world, but they rejoice through Christ, and in the hope of salvation beyond this life, and in the assurance of help and strength as their day while they live.

But it is in our mind to speak here of those who mourn, having no hope as yet. It is sure when it is evident that such mourning is begun in the heart of any man or woman, those who have come to know of it among the people of God will feel a strong sympathy, and yet a solemn gladness over them. They will sympathize because they know what it is to thus mourn for themselves, and they will be glad because they also know the outcome, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy to all such mourners. "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." Ministers of the gospel, pastors of churches, who are really called in the Spirit as pastors and ministers, will rejoice to see such signs of

mourning as cannot be concealed, and will daily hope that some word may be given them from the Lord for such ones. In all their ministry, both in the pulpit and out of it, there will be a sacred, solemn feeling when in the presence of such ones; they will feel as did Moses when the Lord told him that he stood on holy ground at the burning bush which was not consumed. In the heart of such mourners the Lord dwells, and where he dwells is holy ground indeed. We believe that where the work of the Lord is begun in any soul, there will be also a work wrought in the hearts of the servants of God, both in the ministry and throughout all the church, that will make the church a fit place for the habitation of such ones. When the Lord would gather together his troubled ones, these outcasts of Israel, he will also prepare the house where he will have them dwell. As the heart of Naomi and Ruth were stirred up to go to Bethlehem, the one returning, and the other coming out of the land of darkness and death to find a home there, we are told also that all the city was moved about them; it is so yet.

Another thing seems sure to us, viz: that such mourners will not want to court the light of day or the attention of men; there will be such views of sin and its sinfulness in themselves that they will not desire to come out into the light of day, but rather to mourn alone as a dove; it will be the feeling in their hearts to mourn, as it was said Israel should mourn, each family apart, and the husbands and the wives apart; into such mourning no other one can enter; the soul is alone before God. While such mourning cannot long be hidden from the spiritual, yet the mourner himself will shrink from notice; he is as one set apart by the foul leprosy that is upon him, and shame and grief will be his attendants; he will feel that all who see him must know how vile he is, and if any seek to approach unto him, like the leper in the olden time he will cry, Unclean, unclean, as a warning, lest others approach unto him and themselves be defiled. Such an one will feel unfit to live with the people of God, and unfit even to be in their company. If drawn by his distress to the assembly of the saints, where Jesus is worshiped and exalted, he will feel as though he has no place there, and the most that he can venture to claim is a seat back in the corner. To think of pushing himself forward among the people who seem to him to be holy and beloved of God would appear to him like the grossest presumption, and he would in his soul feel that the words belonged to him, "How camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment?" He will indeed look upon the courts of the Lord's house with longing eyes, but as one shut out forever by reason of his sins. Should one who may notice him, seek to approach him with some friendly word of consolation, it but adds to his grief, because he now will think, "I have somehow deceived this good man," and the temptation that he is a hypocrite will be burnt upon his soul. Nothing that can be said to him personally can relieve this load of shame, grief and sin; he is ashamed of himself, ashamed to look up unto God, ashamed to seek the notice of men; there seems nothing for him to do but to hide himself away from all who love God; he is one alone, not fit for the company of saints, and abhorring the company of the sinful and carnal. If there be one thing more abhorrent than another to such an ashamed and grief-stricken one, it will be to be urged in the congregation gathered for worship to come forward and give the

minister his hand, or to kneel at some altar to be prayed for. He cannot bear to be seen or known by the people of God, for he is such a sinner, and he thinks that they must see all his vileness and nakedness before God, even as he sees it. It seems to us that when such appeals as the above are made, if any feel willing to respond it will not be the poor, vile, ashamed sinner, who really knows the plague of his own heart, but rather that one who knows not himself.

The whole practice of asking for mourners in the congregation to rise for prayers, to come forward to the altar, or to give the preacher their hands in token that they desire to be prayed for, is wrong, wrong altogether; it is wrong in principle and evil in its outcome. There is no precept or example in all the Scriptures that can be twisted into a support of such practices. Paul indeed asked his brethren to pray for him, but it is nowhere said that he urged his brethren to let him pray for them. There is no instance on record where any apostle urged people to rise for prayers, or to come forward asking for prayers. When the hearts of believers or of troubled ones are stirred by the greatness of their need, they will rejoice if they feel assured that some child of God has them in mind. Paul said that his brethren helped him by their prayers, but he did not come before them urging them to let him pray for them. Such a practice is wrong in principle, because it involves the idea that God will hear the minister sooner than he will the mourner himself; it involves the further idea that there is some peculiar virtue in the especial time and place; it involves the idea also that God will be more likely to hasten the time of deliverance if this is done; it presents ministerial power; it savors of the idea of intercession by the minister as being especially a priest to offer intercession before God; it is saying that the minister has greater access to God than the mourner himself, and is therefore wrong in principle.

If a minister be faithful when in prayer before God, he will feel the solemn necessity of help from God, not only for himself, but also for all the people of God, the mourner as well as all others. The heart of the true minister will at all times when he is in the Spirit be moved with earnest desires for the comfort and blessing of all that mourn. We want to say that in all our life, as a professed minister of Jesus Christ, we have always felt in prayer, either secret or public, to especially remember the sorrowful and the mourner over sin. We doubt very much whether we ever undertook to engage in public prayer that we were not moved to ask some special blessing upon the mourner in Zion. We know that the brethren with whom it has been our lot to associate have always remembered the mourner in their public prayers, but neither we nor they have ever thought it right to ask such ones to rise for prayer, or to come forward, kneeling with us in prayer, and this has been so for the reasons given above, as well as others that might be urged. Nothing can bring comfort to the hearts of such mourners but a revelation of Jesus Christ in their souls; the sympathy of the people of God will, until that glad hour comes, but add to the distress and grief that they feel, because, as said before, they will think that somehow the people of God are deceived in them. Preaching, praying, exhortation nor anything else will avail to bring light and hope to the heart of such ones, save the revelation of Christ, and we cannot hasten that hour any more than we can hasten the rising of the sun.

It is but a piece of deception to impress upon the mind of such mourning souls that they are more likely to find salvation and to enter into its joy by coming forward and showing themselves before the people and asking that public prayer be made for them.

We will close by saying that the chief reason why we have written this, is that we learn that in some sections of the country some calling themselves Old School Baptists are engaging in such practices and justifying themselves in so doing. Brethren, beware of all such fleshly efforts, they put Christ and the holy Spirit out of sight, and exalt the power and effort of men. Preach the gospel, here is comfort for the mourner, and when the Lord shall apply his gospel, comfort will be administered, and not till then.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ROMANS XII. 18-21.

"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves; but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

The solemn and impressive admonitions to the saints with which the New Testament abounds, are never out of season to the children of God, while here in the flesh; for they are continually exposed to temptations, and their carnal nature is as sensitive and resentful of real or of imaginary injuries as they were before they were brought to know and love the Lord. If the spirit of life and holiness which God has graciously implanted in their hearts, had destroyed all the corruptions of their depraved nature and purified their fleshly powers, they would not have to lament with Paul, that in their flesh there dwelleth no good thing; nor would they find a law in their members warring against the law of their mind, bringing them into subjection to the law of sin which is in their members. But although these admonitions are always seasonable to christians, there are times when our exposure to temptations render them more peculiarly appropriate and indispensable. When christians enjoy the smiles of the Redeemer, and his love is shed abroad in their hearts, so that they feel willing to make any and every sacrifice for the benefit of their brethren, they cannot so well appreciate the admonition of the apostle against biting and devouring one another, as when the church is involved in discord. The indwelling Spirit of Christ, if we are in possession of it, will tend to assimilate us to his image, and if we have not his Spirit, we are none of his. The corruptions of our carnal nature would make us as we once were, hateful, and hating one another, but if we are led by the Spirit of Christ, we will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. Poor, fallen, depraved nature is, in all respects, opposite to the Spirit of Christ, but the grace of God is given to conform us to his image, that he may be the first-born among many brethren. How is the description given of the condition of man in the Scriptures, of all men, in their alienation from God? There is no exception. "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison

of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes."—Rom. iii. 10–18. And in the ninth verse of the same chapter, the inspired writer demands, "What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin." This being our nature, as the fallen children of Adam, and that nature still retained in us after our new birth, and found in every saint warring against the Spirit which God has given them in regeneration, how important it is that they should heed the admonition given them, to crucify the old man with its affections and lusts, to keep their body under, and deny themselves of all unrighteousness and worldly lusts, and that they live soberly, righteously and godly in the present world. Circumstanced thus, the text at the head of this article has great importance in pointing out to the saints what should be their constant aim. "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." The very words of the admonition imply that it is not at all times possible to live in peace with all men, for it is also written, If any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution. But still the words clearly imply that in living peaceably with our fellow-men, there is something in us, as saints, to be called into requisition. Another apostle says, Let none of you suffer as an evil doer, or as busy-bodies in other men's matters. When strife and discord prevail, and the peace of christians is invaded by its prevalence, let the christian see to it that he is not in whole nor in part the occasion of it. When invaded by wars and persecution, we are to see that we are acting under the Spirit and example of him who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; that we recompense to no man, (whether saint or sinner, friend or foe,) evil for evil; that we avenge not ourselves, and that we feed our enemy if he hungers, and give him drink if he be thirsty; and leave vengeance and retribution where it rightfully belongs, in the hands of God. This is the course enjoined on all the saints, and if we do not pursue this course, we do not *as much as lieth in us*, live peaceably with all men.

Paul, in writing to Timothy, exhorted, first of all, that supplications and prayers, intercessions and giving thanks, be made for all men, including all rulers who are in authority over us, for this very end, "That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior."—1 Tim. ii. 2, 3.

If in the foregoing remarks we have not mistaken nor misstated the Spirit of Christ as developed in christianity, it must be conceded that none can sustain a legitimate claim to the sacred name of christian who is not governed by the spirit and letter of these admonitions. But if we admit the correctness of this proposition, we virtually ignore the prevailing religion of the present time in our country, if not throughout the world, as false, hypocritical and anti-christian. Apply the rule expressed in our text, with justice to the line, and judgment to the plummet, and reject all professors of godliness as hypocrites, who do not, to the extent of their power, live peaceably with all men, and how few, weighed in this balance of the sanctuary, would not be found wanting The truth is, all false

religion has always been cruel and oppressive, from Cain to the present day, while, on the other hand, the religion of Jesus Christ has as uniformly been marked by its spirit of "Peace on earth and good will toward men," yea, to all men, enemies as well as friends, sinners as well as saints. As the great Author of all true and vital religion is holy and harmless, and as the wisdom of his government is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy, and by its excellency demonstrating its heavenly origin, so these excellencies must forever characterize those who possess the Spirit of Christ, in the absence of which we are none of his.

Those who are born of God and led by his Spirit do love the saints with an unfeigned love, and above all things desire to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace. But they not only love the saints in the bowels of Christ Jesus with pure love fervently, but they desire the best good of all their fellow-beings. Even their enemies share in their benevolent sympathies, and they are heard to pray for them that despitefully use and persecute them, and often reiterate the words of their divine Redeemer, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." But how is it with those of whom the apostle Jude says, "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain"? Do they, while thirsting for the blood of their fellow-men, give evidence that they have been with Jesus? or that they have learned of him who is meek and lowly, who came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them? Did Christ, or any of his apostles in their preaching, excite the passions of their hearers, and urge them to shed each other's blood? Did Paul, Peter or the beloved John, take up contributions of Sharpe's rifles, or Colt's revolvers, to arm an excited rabble for the work of violence and blood? Were their pulpits used to arouse the elements of strife, hatred and war? If such a course were compatible with the spirit of the gospel, why were they not so engaged? Were there no slaves held as chattled property by the Romans, by the Jews, and even by the members of their own communion? Most certainly there were, but they had no commission from the Prince of Peace to assail the institution, nor in any other way to mingle in the political strife of the nations of the earth, but were to live peaceably, as much as in them lay, with all men. They were themselves frequently persecuted most cruelly, whipped, imprisoned, disfranchised, robbed, stoned, tortured and put to death by their enemies, whose religion, like that of modern days, could feast on blood. But in all this they adhered strictly to the admonitions of our text, without making any attempt to avenge themselves, much less to excite brother to stain his hands in brother's blood.

The abomination that maketh desolate, spoken of by the prophet, even now standeth where it ought not. If, for the defence of nations, war, as a necessity, be unavoidable, the place appropriate for its consideration is in the government of the world, not in the house of God, or in that which claims to be the church or temple of the Lord. When, therefore, the sacred name of christianity and the altar of the professed church of God are desecrated by the war whoop, and prayers are offered up to speed the cannon ball, and to hurry on the work of slaughter, the Deity, whom they profess to invoke, is insulted, and his holy name blasphemed. We could give many specimens of such

heaven-daring blasphemies which have been copied from the lips of our blood-thirsty clergy, but such blasphemies are so common that they have become familiar to all, and our design is only now to hold up to our readers the contrast between that kind of religion which feasts on blood, which delights in murder, and the holy religion of the Son of God.

Our design in this article is especially for the benefit of the children of God. When the abomination that maketh desolate standeth in the holy places, (usurping the holy altars of religion,) then let him that readeth understand, let him take timely warning, to touch not, taste not, handle not, to be in no way or shape involved in exciting men to deeds of carnage; but rather, so far as we have opportunity, let us display the banner of love, and, as much as lieth in us, live peaceably with all men. Our warfare is not, as christians, against flesh and blood; our holy religion forbids that we shall injure the persons or the property of our fellow-men, directly or indirectly, by our influence or example. Let our prayers ascend to God, who ruleth the raging elements, that we may be delivered from the horrors of war, and learn to beat our swords into plow-shares and our spears into pruning-hooks, and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., September 1, 1861.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER Asa Howard having changed his address from Uvalde to Authon, Parker Co., Texas, requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, at the residence of the bride's father, Mr. P. D. Lecates, in Delmar Delaware, April 6th, 1904, Robert Leonard Layfield, of Wicomico Co., Md., and Miss Rosetta Lecates, of Delmar, Del.

POETRY.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., April 9, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I inclose you a poem written by Elder Badger during the winter, while he was shut in because of inclement weather, bad roads, &c. You will notice in the reading that it is addressed principally to the ministers of the gospel. It is quite lengthy, and that of course is a hindrance to its going in the SIGNS. The Elder has not expressed any desire or even willingness that it should be published, but I feel sure he would not make any objections if it should be.

As ever, affectionately your unworthy brother,
B. F. COULTER.

YE servants of Jesus the Lord,
Who travel the heavenly way,
Whose hearts he has filled with his word,
And who his commandments obey;

Whose spirit communeth with God,
Who dwell in the light of his face,
Proclaiming the grace of his word,
Dispensing the word of his grace;

I come unto you in my need,
And pour my complaint in your ears,
Assured you are brothers indeed,
Well knowing the ground of my fears.

I have hoped in the mercy of God,
At times have thought that hope good;
Have suffered the strokes of his rod,
And many temptations withstood.

I thought that the heavens drew near,
The joy of their hosts was my own;
My heart then knew nothing of fear,
Its burden was glory alone.

That glory was in and around me,
The earth was put under my feet;
With chains of his love he had bound me,
And lifted me up to his seat.

The years that since then intervene,
Reveal the strange path I have trod;
My life full of evil has been,
And full of the mercy of God.

But now as the end draweth near,
My race upon earth nearly run,
And longer the shadows appear,
And nearer the set of my sun;

Why gather dark clouds in my sky?
Why hideth the Savior his face?
Why closeth his ear to my cry,
If ever I tasted his grace?

So long have I wandered alone
In this, the dark valley of death,
That hope well nigh perished and gone,
Might die with the touch of a breath.

My heart, with the hardness of stone,
Oppresses my laboring breast;
There sure upon earth can be none
So far from the haven of rest.

His word which was once my delight,
A garden of lilies to me,
Its beauties now hidden from sight,
I only the letter can see.

His servants called out by his grace,
Were angels of mercy to me;
The hand of their God I could trace,
The work of their God I could see.

But now all their words I can hear,
But hearing as one in a dream,
Or one with unsanctified ear,
With heart all untouched by the theme.

My soul would embrace them with love,
As bearing the image of God;
Which was, I then hoped, from above,
And blessed e'en the ground that they trod.

With joy I did meet with the saints,
And mingle with them in their praise,
And sharing with them my complaints,
Rejoiced in the Lord and his ways.

Has Jesus forsaken me quite?
Is all a delusion and snare?
The distempered dream of a night?
The work of the "prince of the air?"

The work which his goodness begins,
That goodness will surely complete;
Not all the great armies of sin
Can ever that goodness defeat.

Your God is forever the same,
Ye servants to whom I appeal;
To all who have called on his name
He will his salvation reveal.

'Tis not that I question his word,
For then the foundations would move;
The promise and oath of the Lord
A refuge eternal will prove.

Tell me, is my cry that ye hear,
The wanderer's cry in the night,
That cometh to you out of Seir,
Ye watchmen on Judea's height?

O, could I believe this to be,
Though wandering in darkness so long,
Unable the dawning to see,
I still could unite in your song:

"All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all."

When Satan the woman deceived,
He quickened the pride of her heart;
His falschood she fondly believed,
And saw her Creator depart.

My heart is deceitful I know,
And filled with all evil and sin,
And Satan, my deadliest foe,
Finds meet habitation within.

O, has he allured and deceived me
With hope unsubstantial and vain,
Or has he with cunning bereaved me
Of trust in the Lamb that was slain?

I cry unto God in my need,
The heavens seem deaf to my cry:
O, have I no title indeed,
No place in the mansions on high?

So long, O so long is the night,
Whose shadows have darkened my soul,
That hope oft deserteth me quite,
And waves of despair o'er me roll.

If never again I behold
The beauties and light of his face,
If darkness forever enfold
My soul in its gloomy embrace;

If banished from God and his love,
As wholly unclean in his sight,
Unmeet for the dwelling above,
Unfit for his presence in light;

Still, still I confess it my due,
And justify God in his ways;
Acknowledge them righteous and true,
All worthy of honor and praise.

O tell me, ye angels of light,
Ye heralds of Christ and his cross,
What meaneth this gathering night?
What meaneth this terrible loss?

This loss of my faith and my peace;
This loss of my hope and my rest;
As gathering shadows increase,
And darkness my soul has possessed.

O tell me what witness ye have,
What testifies Jesus in you?
Ye know his great power to save,
The foes of his saints to subdue.

Ye have tasted the cup that he drank,
Baptized with his suffering and pain;
Nor from his great cross have ye shrank,
His fellowship sweetly to gain.

Ye know the great burden of sin;
Ye know the deceit and the wiles
Of Satan without and within;
Ye know both his frowns and his smiles.

Yes, these do ye know, and ye know
A power transcending all these,
Almighty above and below,
Almighty to do what he please.

Almighty in heaven above,
Almighty in hell that's beneath,
Almighty in grace and in love,
Almighty in justice and wrath.

This Almighty God is your Lord,
Your Master, Redeemer and Friend;
Ye go in the might of his word,
And on his dear footsteps attend.

Your message is "peace upon earth,"
Forgiveness of evil and sin,
The conquest of hell and of death,
The bringing of righteousness in.

To hearts that are burdened with grief,
Or broken with sorrow and pain,
Your speech is the balm of relief,
Descending as dew and the rain.

The dew that on Hermon descends,
The rain that the desert revives,
And healing your message attends—
The dying eternally lives.

Your speech on the wings of the wind
Is borne to the ends of the earth;
The halt and the maimed and the blind
In glory and beauty shine forth.

I see, O I see, ye are blessed,
Ye heralds of Christ and his grace,
In glories of heaven are dressed,
Reflecting the light of his face.

Ye bear both the sceptre and crown,
Ye rule o'er the heart and within;
The Prince of the earth ye cast down,
And conquer the forces of sin.

Ye go in the might of your God,
In weakness his strength is revealed,
Sustained by his staff and his rod,
For he is your "Sun and your Shield."

Ye're borne as clouds full of rain,
Which waters the garden of God;
The plants thereof flourish again,
And heavenly fruit they afford.

Can mortals of dust and of clay
Attain to the wonders I name?
Can creatures of earth so display
The graces of heavenly frame?

Ye know both the burden and grief
Of natures corrupted by sin;
Ye cry unto God for relief
From evil that dwelleth within.

It is in your sighs and your moans
That I dare to hope ye come near
To me, who interpret your groans
By the burdens of heart that I bear.

But heaven unveiling its face,
The secrets of ages unfold;
And mortals its glory and grace
In the face of Jesus behold.

In Jesus the heavens have bowed,
And made itself known to men;
In Jesus salvation is showed,
And man is uplifted again.

This Christ is the fountain of life;
The great, the omnipotent One,
In Jesus has ended the strife,
And Jesus the victory won

The strife against sin and with death,
The victory o'er hell and the grave,
And now to the nations of earth
Revealeth his power to save.

These wonders are crowned with another,
The greatest of wonders I see—
That Jesus shall claim as a brother
Such sinners as you and as me.

I have fondly hoped in this Savior,
And thought that in him I believed,
But O, such has been my behavior,
I fear I am greatly deceived.

'Tis Christ who, revealed in his saints,
Is in them the hope of their glory;
Who justifies all their complaints,
And listens to all their sad story.

At night when their sorrowing tears
Of sadness bedew their lone pillows,
Or when on the ocean of fears
They seem overwhelmed by its billows;

He speaks, and their tears are all dried,
Removed by his gentle caresses;
He speaks, and the tempests subside,
They're freed from all their distresses.

For ye are the temple of God,
In you is established his throne;
In you are the spirit and word,
In you is the great "corner-stone."

O tell me why is it that I
Am left in my sorrow to mourn,
And heaven seems deaf to my cry,
And darkness encircles its throne?

If you are my brothers indeed,
(I've called you my brothers, ye know,)
O why in my uttermost need
No "fruit of the Spirit" I show?

Can fellowship live in your heart
For one wholly given to evil?
For one without strength to depart
From ways of the world and the devil?

And yet with all yearning of soul,
Your fellowship more I desire
Than wealth of the world, or the whole
Of all that the earth can inspire.

'Tis not from his cross I would shrink,
If crosses would lead me to him;
The cup of his sorrows I'd drink,
If filled by his hand, to the brim.

O, could I but know he is mine,
My Savior, Redeemer, my God,
I would not, I could not repine,
Though suffering the strokes of his rod.

O, could I but know I'm your brother,
No mortal on earth were more blest;
No child in the arms of its mother
In sweeter contentment could rest.

O, would I could open to you
The innermost springs of my soul;
Alas, but a glimpse can I view—
How then can you fathom the whole?

I ask you again and again,
Ye servants to whom I appeal,
Does aught that has dropped from my pen
The work of your Savior reveal?

But listen, ye servants of heaven,
A truth which my soul doth embrace:
I am, if a sinner forgiven,
A sinner saved wholly by grace.

JAN. 29, 1904. J. N. BADGER.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Zachariah Gipson departed this life Feb. 14th, 1904, aged 68 years, 11 months and 24 days. He passed away at the home of his brother, George Gipson, near Perkins, Okla., with whom he had lived for the last twenty-four years. The deceased was born in Indiana March 1st, 1835, and moved to Iowa in early childhood, where it pleased the Lord to grant him forgiveness when he was nineteen years of age, but did not unite with any church then, there being none in that locality which he could agree with. So it went along that way for about thirty years, when he moved to south-west Missouri, where he became greatly disturbed as to which church to join. Then the Lord showed him that there would be a way opened for him. He then rested easy on that line until about a year ago, when he said he believed the Lord had now opened the way, and he would soon go. He said he wished to be baptized if he lived till morning; he was baptized the next day by the minister of the church at Perkins, Okla., there being no Old School Baptist in Oklahoma that we knew of. He related his experience and the dealings of the Lord with him to me. All his hope and trust was in the Lord Jesus Christ, and not in the works of man. He believed and loved the doctrine advocated in the SIGNS. I truly miss his counsel since he has gone.

ANDREW. J. GIPSON.

PERKINS, Okla. Ter., April 9, 1904.

DIED—At her home in Xenia, Ohio, our beloved sister, **Mary A. Hite,** Feb. 23rd, 1904, at 4 p. m. Sister Hite has for the last twelve years been a sufferer from organic heart trouble, but her condition did not become alarming until about three weeks ago. Her death was somewhat unexpected. Our sister was twice married; her first husband was brother Henry Neff, of Union Church, near Dayton, Ohio, where both held their membership and enjoyed the confidence and fellowship of all orderly and sound Baptists, and was an old subscriber of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and indorsed it fully. There are two surviving sons, John H. Neff, of Minnesota, and Francis Neff, of Midway, Ohio. Our sister was married again, to Elder A. D. Hite, an Old School Baptist minister, about fourteen years ago, and since then they have lived most of the time at Xenia, Ohio. Sister Hite was born Feb. 3rd, 1828, and died Feb. 23rd, 1904, being 77 years and 20 days old. The bereaved husband, Elder A. D. Hite, is now in his ninetieth year, and is quite feeble and weak. We hope and desire that our God will give him grace and strength to bow with humble submission to all of the wise and righteous dealings of our God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and sanctify this bereavement to him and all of the relatives and friends.

Funeral services were held by the writer, both at Xenia and Dayton. L. BAVIS.

JAMESTOWN, Ohio.

AT the request of our dear brother, Preston Staggs, I send a notice of the death of his wife, sister **Tava Staggs.** She was born in Stokes Co., N. C., Jan. 22nd, 1842; died of "la grippe" Jan. 22nd, 1904; she died on her 62nd birthday. She was the daughter of William and Martha L. Boyles. In her early life they moved to Kentucky, thence to Hannibal, Mo., thence to Dallas Co., Texas, in 1854, then in 1855 to this, Parker Co., Texas, where on July 4th, 1872, she married brother Staggs. To them were born five children, one son and four daughters; one of the daughters preceded her to the grave. In April, 1891, she came to Zion Hill Church, was received on her experience, and baptized by the writer. I was with the bereaved brother and children, and tried to speak words of comfort at the home, from the latter portion of the fourth chapter of 1 Thessalonians, pointing them to Jesus, the deliverer of his people, the Rock that is higher than the heavens. May God give them

the spirit of reconciliation to say from the heart, Not my will, but thine, O God, be done, and fill up her absence with his divine presence. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? May God give us all patience to wait till our change comes.

J. A. RUTLEDGE.

PEASTER, Texas, March, 1904.

Mrs. Louis Smith Guernsey departed this life at her home August 31st, 1903, near East Cobbleskill, Schoharie Co., N. Y. Mrs. Guernsey was born July 28th, 1834, married Sept. 22nd, 1856. To this union were born one son and one daughter, George and Effie, George marrying and remaining with his parents; Effie marrying and settling near by. Mrs. Guernsey professed a hope in Christ and was received by the Schoharie Church, and baptized May 25th, 1874, by Elder Balas Bundy. Her disease was heart failure, from which she suffered for some time, bearing her affliction with patience and resignation to the will of God till the end came. She leaves husband, children and friends to mourn, but we trust they sorrow not even as others which have no hope, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

The funeral took place at the house. Read and sang hymn 807 by request, this being her favorite hymn, after which the writer spoke from 1 John iii. 1-3. The body was then borne to its final resting-place in the family cemetery.

JOHN CLARK.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO AN APPEAL OF BRETHREN TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$930 65
F. H. Furbush, Md., $1.00; A Sister, W. Va., $1.00.—Total	2 00
Total to date	$932 65

MEETINGS.

IF the Lord will, the Old School Baptist Church called Fair View, Fulton Co., Pa., will hold their May meeting on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, May 6th, 7th and 8th, 1904, commencing at 11 o'clock a. m. on Friday. Brethren, friends and ministers are cordially invited to meet with us. Trains from the east on the Baltimore & Ohio R. R., leave Washington at 10:05 and 11 o'clock a. m., arriving 1:04 and 1:33 p. m. at Hancock, Md., where said trains will be met on Thursday.

JOHN E. GORE.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held, Providence permitting, with the Black Rock Church, Baltimore Co., Md., beginning Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, (18th, 19th and 20th,) 1904, and continuing three days.

Those coming via Baltimore will take 3:30 p. m. train at Calvert St. station, May 17th; get tickets for Cockeysville. This train will be met at 4:10 p. m. Those coming from the north, on the Northern Central R. R., will take train leaving Harrisburg at 11:50 a. m., May 17th. This train will be met also at Cockeysville, at 2:35 p. m. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, especially ministering brethren.

F. G. SCOTT, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Welsh Tract Church, at Newark, Del., beginning Wednesday before the fifth Sunday in May, (25th, 26th and 27th,) 1904, continuing three days.

Those coming from Philadelphia and other points north will please come via B. & O. R. R. Wednesday morning, on train leaving Philadelphia (at Twenty-fourth and Chestnut Sts.) at 7:40 o'clock. Those coming from Baltimore and points south will come via B. & O. on train leaving Baltimore (Mt. Royal station) at 8 o'clock Wednesday morning, and all get tickets for Newark, Del. Those coming from Delmar, Del., and points on the Delaware Division R. R., will come on Tuesday afternoon and take train leaving Delmar at 2:15 p. m.; get tickets for Wilson and change cars at Porter. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, and to our ministering brethren in particular. All will be met and conveyed to the meeting and to our homes for entertainment.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Hopewell Church, at Hopewell, N. J., to begin Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (1st, 2nd and 3rd,) 1904, and continue three days.

Trains reaching Hopewell by Reading R. R. from both New York and Philadelphia, at about two, four and five o'clock on Tuesday before the association will be met and friends cared for. Those who come from either direction on Wednesday morning will come directly to the meeting-house, which is about ten minutes walk from the depot. A cordial invitation is hereby given to all ministers, brethren, sisters and friends to be with us at that time.

ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is expected to be held with the Warwick Church, at Warwick, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1904.

All trains arriving at Warwick, N. Y., on Tuesday and Wednesday, June 7th and 8th, will be met as follows: 8:06 and 11:54 a. m., 3:56, 5, 6:40 and 7:44 p.

m. Trains leave Chambers St. ferry, Erie R. R., 9:15 a. m., 1, 3, 4:30, 5:30 p. m., Twenty-third St. ferry five minutes earlier. Those coming from the west can make connection at Greycourt for trains to Warwick at 7:42 and 11:26 a. m., 3:22, 4:38, 6:18 and 7:22 p. m. The old and infirm need fear no hardship in attending. Meeting-house in village one and one-half blocks from the depot. Entertainment close by. Every lover of the truth welcome.

JOHN McCONNELL.

THE Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon and Washington, will be held this year, the Lord willing, with the Luckiamute Church, at or near the residence of Elder V. J. Turnidge, about six miles south of Sheridan, Yamhill Co., Oregon, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in June, (17th) 1904, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continuing the two following days. Those coming by railroad via Portland, Oregon, should be at Portland so as to take the train Thursday evening, June 16th, at 4 o'clock p. m., arriving at Sheridan at 8 o'clock p. m., (present schedule) where they will be met and conveyed to the place of meeting. All lovers of truth are invited to attend.

N. J. SHANKS, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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10:30 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

BI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF THE WELSH TRACT CHURCH.

The bi-centennial of the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., was celebrated Oct. 20th, 1903. After some delay it is now published in pamphlet form, and on sale at this office. Price 15 cents. The pamphlet contains photographs of the Welsh Tract meeting-house and Elder J. G. Eubanks, the pastor, the proceedings of the anniversary, letters of greeting from sister churches and a historical sketch written by Dr. B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., and read on the occasion. Some of the brick in the meeting-house was brought from Wales to this country, and hauled on mules' backs a distance of ten miles. The pamphlet is very interesting and full of information.

The edition is limited, and orders should be sent without delay in order to secure a copy.

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The work contains 144 large size pages, in long primer type, clear print on white paper, bound in cloth, and will be sent to any plainly written address, post-paid, for cash orders, as follows: one copy, 40 cents; two copies, 75 cents; three copies, $1.00; twelve copies, $4.00, to one address. Please send cash by money order, or in registered letter. All will do well to order soon, as the work is not electrotyped, and the edition is limited. Send all orders to

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 72. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1904. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JESUS EXALTED A PRINCE AND A SAVIOR.

YESTERDAY I attended one of the popular places of meeting in our town, (which I seldom do) and listened to a so-called "divine" of national reputation. He took for a text, "For I know whom I have believed."—2 Tim. i. 12. From this he developed what he called a creed of knowledge, to which he believed all christians could subscribe. This creed of knowledge consisted of eight principles or articles of faith, each one of which commenced with the words, "I know." The first one was, "I know there is a God, and that he is a God of love." He said nothing about knowing God only in a natural sense outside of revelation. I will notice only one more article of his creed, which is, "I know good and evil." This is all right in a natural and moral sense, but spiritually does it not sound very much like the language of the serpent to the woman in the garden of Eden, after Adam had been commanded not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil: "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil"? He spoke of some expressing doubts as to their interest in eternal things, and asked how much enthusiasm such expressions would create in their meetings. While listening to the above it occurred to me, The Spirit of the Lord is not here. I seemed to receive benefit in a negative way by contrasting what I regard as truth with such teaching as the above. How is Jesus exalted in such a creed?

I dreamed the other night that I was at a meeting in which different ones were speaking, and was asked to say something, and I replied that I did not know what it would be unless I could speak of Jesus who has been exalted a Prince and a Savior for to give repentance to Israel and the forgiveness of sins. These words have been on my mind at times since. They are recorded in Acts v. 31. The apostles had been put in prison for their teaching, but the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors and brought them forth. In the morning they were taken while teaching in the temple, and brought before the council. When questioned in regard to their teaching, "Peter and the other apostle answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus,

whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him. When they heard that, they were cut to the heart." The very things that are precious to believers in this exalted Prince and Savior, cut those to whom they were spoken to the heart with enmity; and while the religious world, so-called, does not repudiate Christ entirely, yet they do not regard him as a *complete* Savior, but only as a *helping* Savior—help the sinner to save himself, as the final result remains with the sinner as to whether he will accept salvation or not. Does such teaching glorify God and exalt Jesus? The same old story, yet ever new and precious to believers in Christ: "Jesus and his power to save." The church sank herself in sin and death:

> "Buried in sorrow and in sin
> At death's dark door we lay."

The evidence is abundant and positive that she was ruined, lost and "dead in trespasses and in sins." "But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Well might the apostle say, "But we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor." Yes, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior." The prophet inquires, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." Again, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" Is it not "the bride, the Lamb's wife?" "Thy maker is thine husband; The Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called." Jesus did not exalt himself, but "he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." "Him hath God exalted with his right hand;" "hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." The express purpose for which Jesus has been exalted a Prince and a Savior is "to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins," which means no less than the salvation of his people; repentance is given, and is not of the sinner. Herein is expressed a cardinal point of doctrine which is as great as the difference between truth and error, light and darkness. "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness." Repentance is given by discovering unto the sinner his lost and ruined condition; previous to this he feels no need of repentance, and there can be none in a true sense. After he has been quickened into divine life repentance necessarily follows. "The Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins." Do we realize this in our hearts? If so, "Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord?" This is an important question; probably but few of us would venture a positive answer, yet no true believer is without some evidence, at times at least, of his acceptance in the Beloved. It matters not in what manner this evidence came into our experience; whether it was

a light that shone round about us above the brightness of the noonday sun, whether it came in a still small voice, or whether it was a gradual turning from the love of sin to the love of holiness, the same effect has been produced. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "He that loveth is born of God."

In a communication from sister Runkle in the SIGNS for March 1st, she spoke of the different ways by which this evidence of "repentance and the forgiveness of sins" has been manifested to different persons. Those who cannot tell of a definite time and place when the change came are apt to think that if they had the experience of those who can, they would not doubt; while those who can are lacking just as much in evidence in some other way. In the case of the writer, if indeed there has been any change, it seemed to be definite in time and place. On the top of a big hill in south-eastern Ohio in 1875, while alone and in deep distress on account of indwelling sin, I heard a seemingly audible voice saying, "Go and be baptized," and I noted the change in the appearance of things in nature. In the evening I sought opportunity to speak to my mother, who was a Primitive Baptist, about what had occurred. She encouraged me to obey the command. In a few days I offered myself to the church, was received and baptized on that bright autumn morning of Oct. 2nd. The next day about ten o'clock a. m. doubts came, and have been coming and going ever since. After John had been with Jesus and afterward cast into prison, he had doubts, and sent two of his disciples unto Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see, which things were the miracles he was performing. If we have ever received a hope in Christ, it is just as much a miracle as the things shewed John again to relieve him of his doubts. So it seems necessary that we be shown often the rock whence we are hewn, and the hole of the pit whence we are digged.

G. C. JORDAN.

GALESBURG, Ill., March 7, 1904.

SNYDER, Texas, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—By request I send you a copy of a letter from our beloved brother Dr. Samuel T. Cubbage, of Felton, Del., to be published in the SIGNS, if it meets with your approval. I am so glad it was in his mind to write upon the subject he did, as he brought therefrom so many interesting thoughts. I have never before seen so much beauty and significance in it. While I was aware of the fact it had a spiritual meaning, I could never reach it to my own satisfaction, but brother Cubbage, in his delineation of the subject has cleared away the mist and fog from my mind, and I now hope that I see in it the light of revealed truth, tangible and clear to my understanding. Having received so much benefit and instruction from his letter, I feel sure that it will be read by others to profit, and be appreciated by all lovers of truth.

Some years since, when brother Cubbage was traveling in Texas and united with the church, I was present and witnessed his baptism, after which he went on his way rejoicing in the love of the Savior. The Cow Marsh church, of which he and his father are members, is, I presume, generally well known by the Old School Baptists of the east.

Now praying that the peace of God

may rest upon you, prosper your way in the publication of the dear SIGNS, and upon all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth, I am, I trust, your brother in tribulation,

ASA HOWARD.

FELTON, Del., April 4, 1903.

ELDER ASA HOWARD—DEAR BROTHER:—In answer to your question, perhaps the best way for me is to write you as best I may, upon the subject of the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, and let you judge for yourself how I feel. James says, "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." There seems to me no doubt that this brings to view the true and the false religion. Not only is there a false or vain religion spoken of here, but such a professor may be among us. The test on the one side is, If a man bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart. No doubt this includes all who have a form of godliness, but who deny the power thereof. Read second Timothy, third chapter, down to the seventh verse, and see if the same antichrist is not spoken of there as in my quotation from James. If a man bridleth not his tongue. Well, does it simply mean that a man must stop swearing, or telling falsehoods, or speaking evil of his brother or neighbor? You remember that Peter cursed and swore, and said he knew not Jesus, yet we know that Peter had more than a vain religion, for Jesus said to him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." To whomsoever the Christ, the Son of God, is revealed the truth as it is in Jesus, his or her religion is not vain.

I do not know how many of the Lord's people may lie as Peter did; this sin was in his flesh. I believe that I have done the same thing many a time. Yet the prophet said, "Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Savior." Notwithstanding the Lord testified by the prophet that his children will not lie, yet Peter did, and so have I and many others, and shall I not say, all others, as natural beings, children of Adam? But as the children of the living God, we cannot lie, but we must and do speak the truth as it is in Jesus. Here is the bridle that is put on the tongue, the truth. "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God." I do not have to tell you what it is, and what it means, to acknowledge the truth, and to confess that Jesus is come in the flesh, but it shows by the walk, in the conversation and in the life of the children of God; you know more about what it is to follow Jesus than I do. But I want to emphasize one thing, and that is, those who are following him, may follow him on to the very threshold of death, and even then and there deny him, and bridle not the tongue.

How comforting that Paul says, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." So it is still the child of the fallen Adam who is doing all these things. But how, then, did Peter manifest that in him was that spirit which confesseth that Jesus is come in the flesh? By going out and weeping bitterly. Jesus had simply looked upon him, and reproved him of the sin which he was committing. Is not this a daily

experience whenever we have sinned? Jesus, in his love and mercy, once more looks upon us in compassion, and it is enough, we weep bitterly, as did Peter. That God-given principle and life which is in us, which is Christ the hope of glory, cannot lie, and hence the tongue is bridled, but the Adamic nature or man does at times deny the Lord of glory, but the weeping is an evidence that the inward man is also there.

May we not go a little further about this vain religion? Are there not cases even among God's children, the subjects of his love and mercy, whose tongues are not bridled at all with the truth? Though such ones may have an experience, and may have professed to love the Lord and his truth, and to have a desire to follow him, yet they are for some unknown reason allowed to go in by and forbidden paths, where we do not expect to find those who do really love the truth. Men profess to be religious, but their tongue by which they speak is not bridled, and their religion is vain, it has fallen short of that pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father. This does not at all interfere with God's predestinating purpose, because this character has not that pure religion, but only that which is vain; he deceiveth his own heart. These last characters are the ones who are more especially in my mind, they seem to be religious and devout, yea, zealous people, going about saying, Lo here is Christ, and lo he is there, preaching works from start to finish. No matter how zealous they may be, or how many good works they may have, if without faith their religion is vain, their righteousness is in their works. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, "Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend up into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) Or, who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." This salvation is an everlasting salvation which shall be made manifest in this time state, and shall apply to us in our experience here in this world of sin and sorrow. Such an one shall be saved from the winds of doctrine that men, as men, preach, which all are summed up in the work system.

As I read the quotation from James, it seemed to me that the character spoken of as having vain religion, might be found also in the church, and hence, as my mind was thus led into the subject, I have written. If it is consistent with the truth as it is in Jesus, receive it and give to him all the glory; if not consistent with the truth, cast it aside, but throw the mantle of charity over it, and over my imperfections, for I am a sinful man. Of that religion which is pure and undefiled in the sight of God and the Father, I need say but little more than to finish the quotation, it is this, "To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Twice I have tried to talk a little from this subject in our prayer meetings, but still it does not matter if I write to you about it. The fatherless and widows, it seems plain, present the same character. In an experience, the time has come to one when he feels himself to be fatherless. Like the old time Jew we once thought to say within ourselves, We have Abraham to our father, with all that

this spirit of legalism carries with it; we once felt that there was something that we must do to command the favor of God, so that he would be our Father; we were married to the law, which was our first husband. But the time came when we could no longer claim anything which would commend us to the favor of God, and could no longer hope to fulfill the law, and in this wretched condition we felt to be without God, having no hope in the world. Then, in despair, sick and helpless, and ready to die, we fell at the feet of Jesus prostrate, crying, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. In this condition we are fatherless and widows. This experience is often repeated in our lives. Now it makes no difference where or when we find such characters, we are to visit them in their affliction. I do not understand this to mean that we are here told to visit the orphan and widow, whose natural fathers and husbands are dead, with the idea of imparting some spiritual comfort to them, but it means mingling with our brethren, sisters and friends who are interested, as the spirit of a pure religion prompts us to do. Whenever we find such fatherless and widowed ones, we cannot help visiting them in their affliction, our hearts will go out to them in christian love and fellowship, and we will tell them of a like precious experience through which we also have passed. This is visiting them in their affliction, and ere we are aware of it, we may have imparted unto them through the Spirit some spiritual comfort, so that they can feel to say with the poet,

"How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
When those who love the Lord
In one another's peace delight,
And so fulfill his word.
When each can feel his brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part;
When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart."

Now to keep himself unspotted from the world is a part of this pure religion, and while I believe that it is right for the Lord's people to live as exemplary lives as may be given us to do, yet it seems to me that this Scripture has more to do with the keeping of ourselves entirely separated from the religious denominations of the day, and from all their abominable practices and forms which they call worship.

Brother Howard, I feel that I have come far short of telling you what I desired when I began writing. My love for the truth is as great as it ever was, and its enjoyment in the various ways in which it comes to me in my life is the chief desire of my life. Were it not for the enjoyment that I have in the church, and occasionally in the sweet seasons of communion with my blessed Lord and Master when alone, I do not feel that this life would be worth living. We have prayer meeting at our church twice a month, and whenever I am permitted to meet with them, which is pretty regularly, except in my busiest seasons, I try to talk to them a little to the best of the ability which God has given me. Sometimes I enjoy real liberty, and sometimes I do not. How I would love to visit you all again, but I fear that the opportunity will never be presented, yet we do not know what is in store for us, and it is well that we do not.

I close with love and fellowship to you and to all the brethren around you.

Your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life,

SAMUEL T. CUBBAGE.

UTICA, N. Y., Dec. 1, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Having read and reread the inclosed letter of Elder S. H. Durand, and regarding it too good to hide under a bushel, I send it to you to place upon the candlestick (SIGNS), if you think best, so that all within the house may receive the benefit. I have not the consent of the writer, but hope he will pardon me. We wish to be remembered to all the household of faith at Middletown, especially to our dear brother Emory in his affliction.

Your unworthy brother,

JOHN M. BOES.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 17, 1903.

MR. JOHN BOES—DEAR BROTHER:—I am thinking much of the constant changes that take place with regard to everything in this world; what changes since I first tried to preach, more than thirty-nine years ago; what changes in Utica as well as with us since I first went there to preach. Nothing earthly continues the same; all earthly trusts fail us. What a change in a whole life takes place in a moment. Last Saturday one of the members of our church, a young man, was shooting birds, and a birdshot struck his oldest son's eye. The eye has been removed; he is about fifteen. What a sad thing. I have been thinking of what the prophet said: "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever." The first part of this seems so sad, but when we notice that it is because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it that the grass withers and the flower fades, there is a little—a good deal—of comfort comes, for it shows that the one who feels himself and all his goodness fading like the grass, has been born of the Spirit. For Jesus said, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." The Spirit is the heavenly wind, and when the Spirit blows upon one then his strength and goodness wither away. When I have felt so sad and gloomy that I hardly knew what to do, and felt that I was nothing, and less than nothing, then a strange and wonderful comfort has come to me from such Scriptures as that I have quoted, and from the saying of the psalmist: "Surely every man, in his best state, is altogether vanity." Then I remember that this is the way the Lord leads his people. "He kills and he makes alive; he brings down and he raises up." He shows us just what we are by nature, and makes us feel it. Again and again he brings us into the deep, that we may know that he only can bring us up. "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee."

How many times I have felt as though one so sinful as I ought not to dare to hope; then I would remember the words of Jesus, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." If I could see myself righteous through anything meritorious that I could do, as I surely have longed to, then I could not see the salvation of God through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. I hope I shall be enabled to "keep under my body," to "mortify the deeds of the body;" to curb my evil propensities, so as not to speak the harsh word or do the wrong act; to put away wrath, bitterness and the like, for that is what a christian ought to do. But if I am enabled by

great grace to thus walk as becometh the gospel of Christ, I still feel the terrible sinfulness and evil is within me, so that I have to say continually, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." It would seem as though one who had hoped as long as I have would have advanced a little farther than that, but I am there yet; I still see all my goodness withering and fading like the grass and the flower. But how glorious it is that "The word of the Lord endures forever." Jesus does not change, and he is our goodness, our righteousness, our life. It is in him we trust, and not in ourselves. "And this," the apostle Peter says, "is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." Jesus is the Word who is preached unto us, and he "is the same yesterday and to-day and forever." He is preached unto us as the righteousness and the life and the salvation and the strength of his people, and in him is a goodness that does not wither or fade; blessed be his holy name. How good it is to trust in him; how sweet it is to love him, and to feel that the love we feel is his love shed abroad in our poor hearts. To think that he loved us when we were enemies to him; to think of how kind and merciful and forbearing he has been to us, and how he has borne with all our waywardness and folly. I have the greatest reason of any of the saints, if I am one, to wonder at his long-suffering and loving-kindness to me, and I think how kind and forbearing I ought to be to every one; and how I mourn my heart-wanderings, and my sinfulness in heart, in lips and in life.

But I did not intend to write at such length, and yet if there is anything of power in what I have written, you may take it as the sermon I might preach if I were there, and may the Lord bless it to you. And, sister Clara, may the Lord favor you with returning health, if consistent with his purpose of love and mercy, and give you a sweet resignation to his righteous will. May the blessing of the Lord, which maketh rich and addeth no sorrow with it, rest upon your dear little family and household. We all send love.

Your brother affectionately,

SILAS H. DURAND.

STARRSVILLE, Ga., April, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER EDITOR OF THE SIGNS: —Inclosed please find four dollars for renewal of subscription to the SIGNS for A. H. S. Davis, Jackson, Ga., and for myself, mine having expired March 15th last. This brings forcibly to mind that when I last subscribed dear brother Benton Beebe wrote me, as also Nov. 7th last I had a card from him relative to his health. The distinct tremor in his penmanship brought the tears to my eyes then; I realized that his days on earth were few, and that the power of God's grace, working mightily in him, was making him yield up all the physical strength that remained in his feeble body in the service of his Master, feeling as he did that both soul and body were rightfully his. Like Paul he fought the good fight, he finished his course, he kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give him in that day. These great spiritual gifts to the church, by which God so wonderfully and graciously manifests himself as working and abiding in his chosen vessels, and by which they are made to so live that others seeing their good works may glorify their Father in heaven, are rich in comfort to the scattered flock, and should "call for songs of loudest praise" as they journey through the wilderness toward

Canaan.

Paul was a persecutor of the saints until Jesus took up his abode in him, and killed him to the love of sin, and afterwards we hear him saying, "That the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." From the persecutor he had become the persecuted, and like the humble Nazarene he had learned obedience through suffering, an obedience even unto death. See the power of God manifested in this miraculous change.

Let us also remember the martyr Stephen, whose face shone like that of an angel as, when being stoned to death, he prayed, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Here is Jesus manifest in Stephen, for did not the Son of God pray an almost identical prayer for his persecutors? "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." O the long array of martyrs who admitted that in their flesh there dwelt no good thing, but to God gave all the honor and glory. O what a legacy of comfort Jesus left behind to us, not only in his own life of holiness, suffering and in his atoning death, but in that it pleased him that he should have many witnesses from the sons of men, that he might make his power known in working such miracles in these earthen vessels. Were not all these gracious demonstrations given to comfort and strengthen his suffering people in all ages? Were it not for these unmistakable evidences of God's presence being again and again shown, even in these latter days, before the eyes of his children, just as he manifested himself daily in mighty signs to Israel of old, they would faint by the way, and the journey would indeed be too great for them. Yes, even to-day God leaves himself not without witnesses; he still abides in his people, and compels them to show forth his praise. Do we not see the same miracles wrought before our eyes to-day when we see the blessed Son of God working mightily in these temples of clay, and do we not see the old man with his deeds cast down, and the new man reigning gloriously, having "put all things under his feet"? The grandest miracles the Master ever performed when his feet trod the streets of earthly Jerusalem, were when he gave eternal life—when he bade a wretched sinner live. Like faithful Abraham have we not longed to see his day, and have we not seen it and are glad? What though we have to walk in the furnace? Let us remember when it was heated one seven times its wonted heat that Nebuchadnezzar saw one like unto the Son of God in the midst of it. Let us remember how the old apostles were sanctified in the fires of persecution; they were reviled, and learned to revile not again. That was why Stephen could pray, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." He had learned it of his royal Master, and it was not of the flesh, but by the grace of God that he could pray it. Let us remember that we are on the march here, and have no continuing city. Yet a little while and we shall cross over, and Jordan's swelling stream shall be forgotten in the fair fields of blooming Canaan. Then will the King reveal himself to us in his beauty, and we shall see him as he is.

> "And the ransomed host shall shout,
> We are come, we are come!"

This is what we are hoping for.

Ere I close let me say that I feast upon

the glorious truths so clearly unfolded in the SIGNS. I have never witnessed anything like it anywhere else outside of God's holy word. Surely God is working in editor and contributors, else they could not open such mysteries. It is not a morsel here and there we find, but the paper is teeming full of the choicest viands to satisfy God's poor and hungry children.

I do not feel that this letter is worthy of the space that can be so much more ably filled, dearly as I would like to send loving greeting to all who contribute to its pages. I only wished to point to the fact that we as God's children see the same spiritual miracles performed by him as did the early apostles, and that in our day, too, "the arm of the Lord is revealed," and that his loving hand still leads his little flock in and out where it may find pasture. May God's blessing rest upon editor, contributors and readers of the SIGNS, together with all who cry unto him from the uttermost parts of the earth.

Yours in a blessed hope,
(MRS.) MITTIE DAVIS ROBERTS.

NEWARK, Del., March 4, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR:—I inclose to you a letter written to our family by dear sister Patterson, which I think belongs not to us alone, but to all the dear household of faith. In her letter she speaks of the desire which has been in her heart to write again to the saints through the SIGNS, but she does not like to write, as it is necessary for her to write with a pencil, as she cannot hold a pen. While reading her letter I could not help feeling that what she had written to us was in her heart to write to all the household of faith, through the SIGNS. I wrote for her permission to send her letter to you, and in reply she says that she thinks a letter belongs to the one that receives it, and not to the one that writes it, and that if her letter is fit for publication it is at my disposal. To me it is such a good, spiritual letter.

Since her husband's death sister Patterson is as one alone in her faith, in her Minnesota home, and yet as she says in her letter, not alone. Her association with the Lord's people is alone through the SIGNS. I think to such ones the SIGNS are made doubly precious, and are more fully appreciated by them than by those of us who have the precious privilege of meeting the Lord's dear ones personally and often. I think we can all follow her in fellowship in the testimony of her experience, because of the same experience being fulfilled in ourselves. I think sister Patterson can hardly finish reading the familiar hymn, which she quotes as expressing her feelings and condition, without finding also good ground for comfort in her life's experience. She is over eighty years old, and she has abundant reason for comfort, in that she is found still looking unto Jesus and hoping in him, even as when she first was brought to hope in his dear name.

I am, I hope, your sister,
LAURA A. HAMILTON.

MARSHALL, Minn., Jan. 18, 1904.

MR. B. F. HAMILTON—DEAR BROTHER AND FAMILY:—I received your kind and very welcome letter in due time, and was glad to hear from you and yours. I thought I would write yesterday, but my heart was too full of grief. It was one year ago yesterday that my dear husband was taken from me to his heavenly home to rest. I could not write. I got the SIGNS OF THE TIMES Saturday night; I

read them and was comforted. My poor soul found in them a gleam of consolation, which they always bring. O what a blessing it is to talk to our friends on paper. Did you ever think of this as one of the greatest blessings in the world?

Well, now I have told you how I spent the day, I will try to answer your letter. I feel as you do, all the hope I have is in Christ. This is my only hope in this world, and of the rest that is promised to the children of the King of kings and Lord of lords. I can say, my hope seems very small at times; if I am one of God's children, I am the least of all, and if I am to find a home in heaven, it is all through the mercy and grace of God, for I know I can do nothing to save my soul, for I feel that I am a poor sinner, perfectly helpless in the sight of a holy and all-wise God, and can say with the poet,

"If I love why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse
Who have never heard his name."

This is the way I feel most of the time.

January 24.

Now you see by the date that I commenced this letter nearly a week ago, then laid it by; I could write no more at that time. I was down by the cold stream of Babylon, and my harp hung on the willow, all out of tune, which is often the case. I think, O if I had a person to speak to of the cause of Christ, it would be a comfort, but I have no one; no, I am alone, yet I hope not alone. Did I say alone, when God is near, sanctifying every tear? He feels my grief, he knows my needs, he would not leave me all alone, since God is present everywhere. I know he sees my helpless frame.

They are having a series of meetings at the Methodist church. One of the smartest men in the world, or they think so, is the speaker. The gathering is too large for the house, and they use the auditorium in the schoolhouse, which will seat nearly a thousand, and they have a large audience, twice as large in the evening, and are doing much good they think. Well, I must refer to the poet again:

"Broad is the road that leads to death,
And thousands walk together there;
But wisdom shows a narrow path,
With here and there a traveler."

I hope I am in that narrow path that is cast up for the righteous to walk in.

Well, I feel that I have said too much, and will close. I feel I would like to write a little for the SIGNS, but as I have to write with a pencil I think it will not be best for me to write ever again, for my hand is crippled so I cannot hold a pen to write. I feel sad to read of the death of brother Beebe.

Now I will close with love to you and yours. Remember me at the throne of grace.

PARTHENIA PATTERSON.

SAMSONVILLE, N. Y., March 31, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER:—By request of the church called Olive and Hurley, I send you the following letter, written by sister Sarah Farrand to that church, for publication in the SIGNS, should you deem it worthy. You will see from the reading of the letter that she was almost a lifelong member; she had been a member there more than sixty years. She was taken to her reward Jan. 29th, 1904; she departed this life at Hillsdale, Bergen Co., N. Y. Her funeral was held at Shokan, Ulster Co., N. Y., Jan. 31st, 1904; Elder John Clark officiated.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Church Clerk.

HILLSDALE, N. Y., Nov. 14, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER BEVIER:—Your welcome letter has been received and read

with great satisfaction, it was like cold water to a thirsty soul, and as I feel unworthy and unfit to attempt to answer, I must adopt your language, "How can I, except some man guide me?" I make the attempt in weakness, fear and trembling. You speak of seeing me when you were a boy; I recollect you, your mother and your grandmother, and often recall the precious hours which I spent in their company. To-day they are casting their crowns at Jesus' feet and crying, "Holy, holy is the Lord," and "Not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory." I hope through the righteousness of Christ to meet them when disrobed of this mortal garment. Dear brother, please write to me again; such letters are all the preaching I have. Tell each and every one of the members to occasionally drop me a line. I must close this letter. You would naturally think that as I get older I would get better, but no, I am the same poor, old sinner. In me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing.

To the Olive and Hurley Church an Unworthy Sister Sends Greeting —Beloved Brethren and Sisters:—First accept my humble thanks and gratitude to you for remembering me in my loneliness and sorrow. I almost thought that you had forgotten me, and that justly, too, for I am not worthy to be held in remembrance by you or the saints of God anywhere, but when I received the letter written by the order of the church by the hand of the clerk, my heart was filled with such love for the brethren, and gratitude to God, as I can never tell with pen, ink and paper. It was a good gospel sermon to me. I get so hungry to hear the truth. But, beloved brethren, if we believe that the steps we tread and the station we fill were determined by our heavenly Father, why cannot we be reconciled to our lot and condition? But O, how my soul longs, yea, even faints for the courts of the Lord. Sometimes I have a season of rejoicing, and then I wish I had some one to speak to that knows about spiritual religion. At other times I am down in the dark, and see my own unworthiness, and fear that I am one who has grasped the shadow and missed the substance. But be this as it may, the foundation of God standeth sure, "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and so every one of the redeemed family will come off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through the blessed Jesus, who suffered and died on Calvary to atone for the sins of his people. Our God cannot look upon sin with the least allowance, but with the greatest abhorrence and detestation. But

> "Rich were the drops of Jesus' blood
> That calmed his frowning face,
> That sprinkled o'er the burning throne,
> And turned his wrath to grace."

Beloved brethren, this is my only hope; if Jesus died for me all is well.

How often I call to mind the dear little band at Olive and Hurley. I often wish myself with them. The last time that I participated in the communion in Olive was before my dear brother died; it was a precious season to my soul. Hymn 1169 (Beebe's collection) was sung. Now, dear brethren, when you again meet around the board please sing hymn 1171:

> "Lord, at thy table I behold
> The wonders of thy grace;
> But most of all admire that I
> Should find a welcome place."

At some of your meetings read 1169; both are precious hymns to me.

I was fourteen years of age when I united with the church; it was August 22nd, 1844. I was baptized by Elder Hewitt. I can truly say,

"E'er since, by faith, I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die."

Now, dear brethren, if we never again meet in this life, may we meet around the throne where we shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, but shall see Jesus as he is, and with all the blood-washed throng ascribe all praise with loud acclamations to him who bought us with his own precious blood, and sealed us heirs of eternal glory.

When I was very sick this summer and looked as it were into eternity, I was somewhat disturbed about my preparation for eternity, and these words were handed me, "Poor sinner, take this robe, it is the Savior's righteousness." O how I was made to rejoice in a finished salvation; it was a richer present than all the world, though it might be laid at my feet; it was my Savior's righteousness, that spotless robe which Jesus wrought with precious blood for all the saints of God.

Yours with fellowship to all,

SARAH FARRAND.

KNOEBEL, Md., March 23, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—The inclosed letter from brother Moyers, of Tennessee, has my hearty approval, as well as of other brethren, and if you think it well to publish it in the SIGNS, do so in the interest of love and fellowship.

Yours in love,

MILTON DANCE.

GOIN, Tenn., Feb. 25, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER MILTON DANCE:—I have just read your article in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of Feb. 15th, headed "The Church of God," and I felt like I could not forbear dropping you a few lines to let you know how well pleased I am with your idea as to what the church of God is composed of. Yes, my dear brother, I feel like giving you my hand as a hearty indorsement of your views. The church of God certainly is composed of men and women twice born, once of the flesh and once of the Spirit. It is said in Acts v. 14, "And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women." This church is composed of men and women of Adam's race, who by transgression in the person of Adam fell and were dead in trespasses and in sins, and it required nothing less than the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ to cleanse it from that polluted condition, and the Spirit to quicken it into life which is eternal. And when you said, "No one can make himself a member of this glorious and wonderfully made body," you were undoubtedly in harmony with the Scriptures. We find again in Acts ii. 47, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." It is said again, "Upon this rock I [Christ] will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." It is also said, "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, [church] as it hath pleased him." So we believe that Christ builds the church, and it is built of men and women of Adam's race who are born of God. And now, my dear brother, while I believe that the church is a unit, and cannot be divided into two separate and distinct bodies, both being the body of Christ, I feel satisfied that the church in one locality might (when a brother or sister is to move to a distant locality) give them a letter of commendation to the church wherever they expect to locate, without violating the Scripture. (See Acts xviii. 27.) This may only be an idea of my own, drawn from an old tradition, yet I cannot help but believe it in that light.

And now, lest I weary you with my imperfect writing, I will close by asking to be remembered in your prayers, that I may be made to understand the truth as it is in Christ. May God bless you, my dear brother, in your labor of love, for Jesus' sake.

As ever, yours to serve in gospel bonds,
P. N. MOYERS.

MEDITATION.

How humiliating to behold the desolation in the land, sorrow, sickness, pain and death, and sin the cause of all. Many times we are brought to the feet of Jesus with bowed heads, begging mercy, and where else could we go? How solemn, glorious and beautiful the thought that there was a sacrifice in Bozrah, a great slaughter in the land of Idumæa. Jesus suffered on the cross for the sins of his people, he fulfilled all the law's demands, and all enmity was put under his feet; he conquered death, hell and the grave. Glorious victory! Wisdom hath builded her house; she hath hewn out her seven pillars. (All her support is hewn out through Christ Jesus the Lord.) She hath killed her beasts, she hath mingled her wine, she hath also furnished her table; she hath sent forth her maidens, (servants of the living God) she crieth upon the high places of the city; (the new Jerusalem, the church in her militant state,) whoso is simple let him turn in hither; as for him that wanteth understanding she saith to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of my wine, which I have mingled.

God said, I will make a new covenant with the house of Judah, I will put my law in their minds, and they shall serve me. The great sheet or vessel descending in the vision to Peter, represented all the people of God embraced in the new covenant, who were chosen in Christ Jesus, both Jew and Gentile, all are one in him. And that which God hath cleansed call not thou common or unclean. The partition wall is taken down, and to Zion the Lord has said, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee."

"My God, my Father, blissful name,
O may I call thee mine?
May I with sweet assurance claim
A portion so divine?"

These are they who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth; they also follow him on white horses, and are clothed in linen clean and white; their voices are tuned like a harp, to sing his praise; they receive crowns, they carry palms of victory in their hands, and they sing honor and glory to him who sits upon the throne. Little children, is not this enough? This is enough, though through the deep waters he calls us to go. Our times are all in his hands, and all events are at his command. Many times we are brought into great straits, and seem left for a time in the hands of Giant Despair; we are in darkness that can be felt, our temptations are great, horrid thoughts come, till we doubt the reality of anything. We say, Are thy mercies clean gone forever? Wilt thou be favorable no more? Then we are reminded that they that seek him early shall find him. Then lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; it is now springtime, and the voice of the turtle dove is heard in our land; all now is peace, all is love, we can now walk the street of that beautiful city of pure gold, the river and the tree of life are there, and the leaves are for the healing of the nations; all is pure and clear, tears are all wiped away, your Beloved is the chiefest among ten thousand, and he is altogether lovely. Foreknowledge, election, predestination, all

the cardinal points of doctrine, are now made sweet to us; they are the comb that holds the honey. "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew." And now we say,

"I would not live alway, I ask not to stay
Where storm after storm rises dark o'er the way."

We are made submissive to bear the cross with Jesus, that we may wear the crown, and we must glorify him in our body and in our spirit, which are his; we are sealed to the day of redemption, then this mortal shall put on immortality, and death shall be swallowed up in victory. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." In that world there will be no night, but one eternal day, and when we awake with his likeness we shall be satisfied.

I have been a poor cripple for twenty years, and am greatly afflicted, but I feel very thankful to my God that I have not lost my reason. I am unable to explain the beautiful lessons that I have been taught, I have seen wonders in the heavens and in the earth, I have seen that God in his wisdom hath appointed all things, even the wicked for the day of evil. He hath also torn, and he will heal, he hath wounded, and he will bind up our wounds; "Holy and reverend is his name."

Dear brother Ker, I feel glad to know that you have given your consent to assist and advise in the collection of matter for the SIGNS. We greatly miss our dearly beloved editor, brother Beebe, but he has gone to his rest. May the Lord be with brother Chick, sister Beebe and her son, for he alone can bless. Please excuse me for trespassing upon your time. I leave this with you for your better judgment. I have thought that I would not bother the beloved editors again, but from some cause my mind is drawn towards you, for I have read some letters from you which were very comforting to me. If I have done wrong please pardon me. I would love to receive a few lines from your pen, if not asking too much. Will you please throw the mantle of charity over my imperfections?

Your little sister in hope,

(MRS.) B. D. COLE.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Feb., 1904.

FREMONT, Neb., March 6, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR:—The time has rolled around for me to again renew my subscription for the SIGNS, therefore please find inclosed two dollars, for which you will continue to send them to my address. Perhaps when I have said this it should be quite enough, yet I often feel when renewing my subscription that I would like to say something more. I have been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for about twenty-five years, and have occasionally contributed to its columns, that those with whom I have cast my lot may know that as far as I am able I endeavor to fulfill the divine injunction to communicate and forget not. During that twenty-five years not one copy has failed to reach me in due time, a circumstance that seems almost remarkable, as it is no unusual thing for us to lose our county paper, which is printed at the same place and comes through the same mail a distance of fifteen hundred miles; I have often remarked this. As far as I have been able to understand, its message has been of peace to thousands who know and love the truth for which it has so long contended, and has been for the edification of God's dear children who love and understand the mission it has so

faithfully proclaimed, which is, that salvation is of the Lord, and only sinful, presumptuous mortals will attempt to deny the truth of it. When we think of the trying circumstances under which the SIGNS first made its advent, with so tremendous a conflict at hand, who cannot understand that the crisis demanded just such a man as God in wisdom saw fit to raise up in the person of Gilbert Beebe, whom the Lord had made strong for himself, in the strength of the mighty God of Jacob, that he might show forth his praise, and make his power known among the sons of men? How hard he fought for the cause which he contended to be right, while in the vigor of his manhood, knowing nothing among those he served saved Jesus and him crucified, and himself a servant for Jesus' sake. And when his mission on earth had been nearly filled, still how bold he stood with staff in hand, fearing neither reproach, nor seeking the applause of the world. He fought the good fight of faith, finished his course with joy, laid his armor by and entered into rest. We see another faithful soldier called to fill his place; he, too, kept the faith, finished his course, received the blessed welcome, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord. And yet we see the hand of the Lord not yet shortened; he will not see his seed begging bread, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. Another faithful steward who had been their companion in tribulation, and who had labored with them, we have seen stand ready to receive the mantle. He, too, has fallen asleep, and his works do follow him. Then let us not be discouraged, or fear that the cause will be shipwrecked; God will care for his cause, and so long as we find brethren let us thank God and take courage.

I will now bring this to a close, and it is my wish and prayer that he who is the strength of Israel may guide and keep us, as we are not able to keep ourselves; bless both readers and writers of the SIGNS, and abundantly bless and prosper those who now have the charge of them; increase our faith in him who is able to do more for us than we are able to ask, and may it be ours to bless his holy name on earth, and continue it throughout a never-ending eternity.

Your unworthy sister,

ABBIE CODDINGTON.

WILMAR, Ark., April 1, 1904.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is written, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people." Isaiah the prophet, could with the wonderful eye of prophecy, look along down the corridors of time further than any man ever could of himself, and with a mind, heart and soul full to overflowing with the gospel of the Son of God, could and did say in language simple and plain, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people." This implies, if I understand the meaning of language at all, that God has a people, the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife, which were an elect chosen people, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Mark, "chosen in Christ." When? From an Arminian standpoint, it would be after we had become good, after we had done some great thing for the Lord, after we had become a leader in some society attached to the church, such as the Sunday School, the Christian Endeavor society, or after we had become sanctified, or after we had committed to memory some man-made prayer, and with uplifted eyes and outstretched hands had been enabled to repeat it aloud, so that the world which wonders after the beast might hear. O

what blasphemy is all this! But what does the testimony of the divine word say? There we read that they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. How different is this, and a thousand times sweeter also. How different is the sound of the true gospel from the wisdom of this enlightened age. But some will say that is a long ways back, so far back that we know nothing about it. I am satisfied of that being a fact, for if they knew anything about the truth, they would not have the audacity to call for more men, more money and more means to convert the heathen.

What a wonder! Chosen in Christ before the morning stars sang together, before sun, moon or stars were made, before the earth was, or any living thing existed upon it, of bird, beast or fish, before time or man was upon the earth. For there was a time, shall I say, before there was time. What a stupendous thought. Yet, long ere this, in the annals of eternity God lived and reigned supreme, and then God did see his church, the members of the body of Christ, yet being unperfect, and the names of every one of his chosen people were written in the book of life. Who wrote them there? Did man himself? Certainly not, for this was before man was created, but the great "I AM" wrote them there. In wisdom God saw fit to create the world. Did he ask assistance of man, or of any other intelligence in any way, shape of form? Certainly not. Did he have a purpose in the creation of the world, or did he not? We believe that he did. In this is another fruitful field presented to our minds, even the eternal purpose of God, but this I will not enter into now. I will only add that the world was a place predestinated to keep the jewels of God, the church, during time. There was no danger that the church should be annihilated or destroyed, and this is true, notwithstanding the Arminian idea, If you will, you may be saved. This is not only a plain denial of the testimony of Jesus himself, when he said, It is finished, but also of the infinite wisdom of God. The salvation of his people was finished when he bowed his head on Calvary and died. It was done, not going to be done. Then comfort God's people with the salvation of our God, is the substance of the meaning of these words of Isaiah.

As ever yours,

C. G. IRVIN.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan. 3, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have thought of last Sunday so many times during this week, and to-day have been enjoying my enjoyment of if. On Monday I could hardly resist the desire to write you, and now I feel that I quenched the spirit in not doing so. Now I can only write of the memory of that day, yet all this week there has been sweet peace with me, a peace that passeth understanding; it has been a great feast to my soul; it seems to me that I will continue to look back upon this past week with sweet recollection. I have often wondered what David's frame of mind must have been, since all his changes were so vivid, being sometimes in deep woe, sometimes begging for mercy, and then again filled with such admiration, and wondrous praise, and with this wonder there has so often been a desire with me that I might at least have a taste of these things. Now I feel that the Lord has been gracious to me, and has granted me a taste. This week he has given me, I think, to be like David, with my whole heart going out in singing praise, and a desire that all should join in the praise.

David desired this because the joy was so great in his own heart.

I came home last Sunday evening singing within, "Praise ye the Lord." All that know the heavenly Father, "praise ye the Lord." In the morning my first recollection was of these words and many such as these, "His mercy endureth forever," "Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks," "The Lord is my light and my salvation," I will extol thee my God, O King, "I will bless thy name forever," "Blessed be the Lord, my strength," "Praise ye the Lord, for it is good to sing praises unto our God," and with these, the first five verses of the 148th Psalm. This all was the substance of my singing within, though I made no outward sound, I had such a joyful time in my heart. Occasionally, all the week, I have been made to sing out, yet all this time I have not been able to speak of it, even to my companion. During this bright spot in the dreary wilderness I have not forgotten the dark places, but I have been lifted high above them, the gloom of them has been gone, and I could only shout from my very soul, and I have had such a desire that one and all might know of his great love, and praise him, and give all the glory to him.

I was so relieved last Sunday to know about many things of which I felt free to ask; I was going about the streets inquiring of the watchmen, and was receiving knowledge of the Lord; right early the Lord gave me knowledge of his word. I enjoyed so much what you said about the birth of the Savior, that morning at the meeting, and about what the angel told the shepherds, and they came and found Jesus lying in the manger, and that this was the birth of Jesus to them, and that we all have a knowledge of our own of the birth of Christ. Many thoughts have been in my mind about all this during this week, and now I am thinking of the shepherds returning and praising God for all the things which they had heard and seen, and I am thinking how every poor, lone soul, when given a knowledge of Christ's birth, seeing that it is so, also returns with praise unto God; they always know it is from the dear Lord that they have been enabled to see and to know Christ. How often each one goes back to a certain place where they first were given to know the Lord, and that he was born of the flesh. Another thought comes to me now, that when the angel told them of the birth of Christ, a light shone round about them, and they were bidden not to be afraid, and were given a sign whereby they might know the babe, and then heard the multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Is it not true that every one who tells of the birth of Christ, to his people, also praises God?

I might go on and tell you of many more things, but these are enough that you may know how much I enjoyed it all. But now bear with me while I speak of the gathering in the evening. I am sure that it was time profitably spent, and that these evenings are alway profitable. First of all, to me, is the acquaintance which these meetings foster of each one of our congregation with the others, and if one is absent, we are so much like a family, that we miss them, and are interested to know why they are absent, and of their welfare. If any one has anything to say, it is said to the edifying of the others. Beside, these meetings help to cast out all fear of each other, and it is lovely to mingle our voices together in hymns and songs, sug-

gested by some one or other. The young gather with the older, and all enjoy it. So often it seems beyond all earthly enjoyment, that at the close I often feel to say, Now we must come back to earthly trials and conflicts.

Now, dear brother, I have written beyond my intention. Come and meet with us again, when it is the Lord's pleasure for you to do so. So many times I look back to those lovely evenings spent in the different homes, and when different brethren come to visit us; such seasons are never to be forgotten. Now may God's choicest blessings rest upon you, the chief of them is charity. Charity is surely a beautiful garment, yet it seems to me that I know experimentally very little about it. May you continue to grow in grace, may you always trust in God for guidance and knowledge, and when your life draws to a close, may you hear your Father's voice saying, "Child, come home." Then the closing of natural life to you will be but to awaken in immortal glory.

Your unworthy sister,

MARY HILL TERRY.

QUEEN, Texas, March 18, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have desired for several years to write an account of my experience for the SIGNS, but a feeling sense of my inability to write, as well as my unworthiness, has hitherto hindered me, but now I will try to write, hoping that the Lord will direct my mind.

When I was a child I had serious thoughts about death, and hoped that some time I would have a hope. When I was in my sixteenth year I attended an association, but did not care for anything only pleasure and pastime with my young friends, until the close of the association, when they were taking the parting hand, and all seemed to be rejoicing in the Savior's love. I believe that I was then shown what a great sinner I was. After this I would try to pray the Lord for mercy. Some of the brethren often went to my father's house, and O how I did enjoy hearing them talk of the dear Savior, and his love and mercy to poor sinners; but I did not want my father and mother to know that I cared anything about hearing them, and so I would hide in the dark and listen to them. After this the trouble left for me for a time, but again seemed to return with double force. I felt as though I was the greatest sinner in the world, and that I was not fit for anything but to be a servant to my folks. Like the prodigal son I sought a servant's place. I would go out and try to pray, but it seemed that the Lord did not hear me. I would wring my hands and cry out, The Lord does not hear me, and I have nowhere else to go.

One Saturday evening I was returning home from the field, and it seemed to me the gloomiest time that I ever saw. Everything was in mourning, it seemed to me. O how sad and miserable I felt. I could not eat any supper, and after the others had gone to supper, I got my Bible and let it fall open just where it would, hoping to find something that would comfort me, but I found nothing. So I went off into a dark room and fell on my knees, and if I ever did pray, I prayed then for mercy, but still I found no relief. I went back and sat down. Directly, I picked up a paper, but with no intention of reading. My eyes fell upon the words where it said, that the Lord leads his people by a way that they know not. The writer went on to say, there is ever doubt and uncertainty among

them whether they are in the right way, or whether the Lord is leading them at all, but we may safely say when one inquires the way, Truly that one is already in the way. O what a wonder! my trouble was all gone, and I was rejoicing in a Savior's love. I cried out, There is mercy for me. My folks heard me, and came to see what was the matter. I read and sung until bedtime, and thought I would read and sing all the next day, but when the morning came I thought I was deceived, and had deceived my folks. I did not want any one to see me; I stayed in the woods nearly all day. My prayer was, Lord, if I am deceived, undeceive me. I would have given anything if my folks had not known about it, and then no one would be deceived but myself.

After this I wanted to be baptized, but felt too unworthy. We lived seven miles from the church, and had no way to go, and I thought I was glad that there was no way for me to go. It seemed to me that if I went I should have to ask for a place with them, and I thought that would not do at all, for I was so little and unworthy. Then it seemed as though some one said to me, "You can walk." My husband and I did walk. We passed the creek where they baptized, and O how beautiful the water looked. Not far off was one of the aged brethren, and he also looked beautiful to me. It was wonderful to me. When they gave an opportunity for membership I went forward; there seemed to be an irresistible power that forced me. I was received, and baptized the next day by my dear father, and when I came up out of the water tongue cannot express the joy I felt; it was better felt than told. The world seemed to be under my feet. Since then I have had many doubts and fears, joys and sorrows.

Now do with this as you think best.

From one of the very least, if one at all, of the Lord's little ones,

(MRS.) J. H. GRIFFIN.

ROLAND PARK, BALTIMORE, Md., April 11, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I am requested by the brethren in Elizabeth City, N. C., to ask the churches and friends to assist them in the building of a house of worship in that city, and with your permission will do so through the SIGNS. I will say that they are worthy for whom you should do this, and by way of introduction to the SIGNS and its readers will say that Elder Charles Meads is their pastor; he is known and I think favorably to a great many of our people. I know all the brethren and sisters in Elizabeth City, and know that they need a house, and hope the Lord may put it into the hearts of those who are able, to assist them. Any one feeling willing to do so will send same to brother C. C. Aydlett, Elizabeth City, N. C., giving their name and address, and if no house is secured he will gladly refund the amount.

Your brother in hope,

J. T. ROWE.

[ELDER Rowe and Elder Meads are both known by many of our readers, and we have no hesitancy in commending this appeal to all who may feel able to respond.—ED.]

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Mrs. R. E. Hicks has changed her address from Wheelersburg, Ohio, to 102 Tompson St., corner East Front St., Portsmouth, Ohio, and would be pleased to see any of her Baptist brethren at her home at any time.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1904.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:
F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MICAH IV. 1-4.

DEAR BROTHER:—Will you please give your views upon Micah iv. 1-4? I love to read the SIGNS next to my Bible. May the Lord bless you in the future as in the past, to stand firm and unshaken by the new isms which have crept in our beloved Zion.

Your little brother, S. S. COX.

BLAKE, Texas, Jan. 14, 1904.

We will not here quote all the verses referred to by our brother, and neither will we write at length upon them, but try to briefly present what seems to us to be the one special promise couched in these verses. They are almost a complete repetition of the promise found in Isaiah ii. 2-4. Isaiah wrote first in the order of time, and Micah some years later; both prophets wrote before the captivity. Both of them wrote much concerning that captivity in Babylon, and both were inspired to see the restoration and the glory that should follow. It is evident also that while inspired to predict what God should do for Israel literally, there was also a vision given them of the still more glorious deliverance which the true spiritual Israel should find in Christ under the gospel dispensation. Sometimes it is the case, especially with the prophet Isaiah, that as he writes of the restoration from the Babylonish captivity, he goes right on to speak of that other restoration, when Jesus should restore that which he took not away, and indeed this might very consistently be the case, because that first restoration afforded to literal Israel was but the type of that other restoration which all the called people of God are given to receive under the gospel.

In the text named by our brother in Micah, and in Isaiah second chapter, there is a setting forth of the work of the Lord in calling his true people out from the darkness of nature into his marvelous light; out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God. It is said to be in the last days. This expression is a frequent one in the Old Testament, and so far as we have been able to see, it refers not to the end of time, at least generally speaking, but to the whole gospel day, embracing all the time from the coming of the dear Redeemer, until the end shall come finally. Now in these our days literally, and for nineteen hundred years past, the mountain of the Lord's house has been established in the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills, and "people" have been flowing unto it; in Isaiah the word "nations" is used. The thought is that not only Jews but Gentiles shall share in the glory of this new city, or kingdom. How often was this spoken of in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. The blindness of natural men concerning the meaning of the word of God, appears in this most clearly. Because the Jews, having the word to read, yet had so little understanding of it that they did not believe that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs in the new kingdom with them. But this is a constant hope set forth in all the Old Testament Scriptures; it is set forth in the text.

It is called the mountain of the Lord's

house, because in the type the house of God at Jerusalem was set upon a mountain above all the rest of the city. But here is still more glory spoken of. That mountain was not in the top of other mountains, but this shall be exalted above all hills, and in the top of the mountains. Kingdoms of the earth, whether we speak of nations, or refer to the domain of mind, intellect, beauty, wisdom or what not, are none of them exalted so high as is this mountain of the Lord's house, this people, this kingdom despised of men, is yet glorious over all. To the spiritual mind there is no real glory save the glory of God revealed in the face of Jesus Christ; humble believers see a glory, an exaltation which is not of this world. To such as these there is a glory, a sublime exaltation in the humblest follower of the Lamb, that the wisest of men do not possess. God has exalted his chosen, humble and despised though they be in the sight of men, to reign over self, and this is the highest dominion possible, for it is expressly declared that he that ruleth his own spirit is mightier than he that taketh a city. To be a child of God, though a beggar on earth, is infinitely more glorious than to be a king among men; the Lord's house is exalted, and they are exalted with it and in it.

The next verse sets forth the truth to which we have referred already, viz: that in these last days "many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob." Isaiah says, "And all nations shall flow unto it." These two expressions fit in together, and help explain each other. Nations flow up to the height of this mountain contrary to nature, and they do so because in their hearts has been wrought that work which has constrained them to say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord. If we may be allowed to use a homely illustration, we will say the thought is that they are not forced up this height as a pump forces water, but flow up as naturally as a stream flows down hill. Nature flows down always, it is fallen, and continues to fall lower, growing worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But in grace, under the gospel, nature is reversed, and the spiritual flow upward. May we say, it is as natural for that which is spiritual to flow upward as it is for that which is natural and evil to flow downward? Here is the liberty of the gospel, and believers are not forced heavenward, but flow that way, because it is in them to flow upward or Godward. They look up, and their heart's desires ascend upward, and they shall themselves be exalted. What a vast difference between what is called free will, and gospel liberty. It is the liberty of the river to flow downward, but it is the liberty of the believer to flow upward toward God and godliness. The word flow expresses liberty, but not free will. It is God's free will working in the heart, and working effectually. But one may say, Suppose the people do not want to flow up to the mountain of the Lord? Then we reply, Such ones do not flow there. The flowing upward is, first of all, felt in the upward desire. But may not one flow or not, as he chooses? Yes, but who fixes the choice? Here is the deciding point in any course of life. The choice is first. But why does a man make such a choice? One may go to a dance rather than to the house of the Lord, if he wants to, but can a christian want to go to the dance? Can he want to, if he does not want to? The choice is decided by the indwelling of the Spirit of God. Believers do choose to serve God, to flow up to the mountain

of the Lord, but why do they thus choose? Here is the effect of grace, and grace alone deserves the credit for this work. A whole field opens up here, which we must not now enlarge upon.

These nations that flow up to the house of the Lord declare what it is that draws them there with such desire: "He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." And in the next two verses the peace and glory of this exalted kingdom is set forth in glorious expressions; figures of speech are used in a wonderful manner; it is a vision of peace, of quietness and of safety.

We do not wish to write more here, as this article is already as lengthy as it ought to be, but we will say that this vision of peace is not in the world or among the nations of the earth, but in the mountain of the Lord's house alone. In the world tribulation continues, but in Jesus is peace. How many of the poor and troubled of this world have had this vision of peace, such peace as the world cannot give or take away. Sometimes it is given to the lowly child to be exalted till he hardly knows whether he is in the body or not, and unspeakable glories open before him. It is true that whenever Jesus appears in his glory to the believer, he also is exalted in glory. To see Jesus is to be like him, according to the Redeemer's own testimony. This exaltation does not consist in frames and feelings alone, the experience of this flowing up to the mountain of the Lord may be accompanied with the utmost self-abasement; it is as we decrease that Jesus is exalted more and more. This work goes on till at the last we learn what the words mean, "A sinner saved by grace."

ACTS XXVI. 28.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—Will you please give your views through the SIGNS upon Acts xxvi. 28? "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a christian."

Your sister, I hope, MARY E. TAKE.

There have been different opinions among brethren as to the state of mind expressed in these words of Agrippa, and some writers have thought that the meaning is that Agrippa was not speaking of his own frame of mind, but rather of the earnestness of Paul, as though he had said, Thou thinkest in a little while and with a little effort to make me a christian. The idea of such ones is that Agrippa spoke rather in the way of derision than of earnestness, but it would seem from the words of Paul which follow, "I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds," had Agrippa spoken in derision, Paul would hardly have replied in this way. There seems to us no doubt that Agrippa spoke with earnestness and sincerity, but still he did not speak as a spiritual man; his heart had not been convinced of his sin before God, and of his need of a Savior, he was still a natural man. Paul was speaking before both Agrippa and Festus. Agrippa was a Jew, and a believer in the Jewish faith, he knew that the Scriptures declared the coming of the Messiah. Paul therefore recited before him the testimony of the very Scriptures which he himself received and believed to be the oracles of God. And so Paul said, verse 26, "The king knoweth of these things." And verse 27, Paul said, "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest." No doubt Paul spoke with earnestness and power, and the arguments which he used had weight with the king, but still Agrippa was but a natural man,

he was almost persuaded by the arguments of Paul to accept the faith that this Jesus was the promised Messiah, but this was no more than thousands and millions profess to-day who have never known the Lord as their Savior. It is one thing to have the judgment convinced, and quite another to feel the power of the word in the heart. Nominal christianity is one thing, real, vital godliness is quite another. It is to be feared that millions, in all ages of the gospel dispensation, have had a name as believers, who have never known what living faith is. It is possible for men to be earnest, honest, devout and self-sacrificing in a religious profession, and yet believe in Jesus only as a Mahomedan believes in Mahomet, or as Mormons believe in Joseph Smith. Men can be persuaded, as Agrippa was almost persuaded, by argument, by reasoning, by the admiration which kind-hearted people feel for works of charity and mercy, by the right doing enjoined in the religion of Christ, so opposite to the vice and crime with which the world is filled, to become nominal christians, as thousands are thus convinced and make religious profession every day; but O how few are aware of the plague of their own heart, of the hidden evil in the flesh, of the deceitfulness of sin, of the inability of the natural man to even desire holiness and the knowledge of God, and of the necessity of an atonement to redeem them from condemnation and death, and of the work of the holy Spirit in the heart. The king evidently had no knowledge of these vital things, but was listening only as a natural man to what seemed to him to be almost unanswerable reasoning, and, too, no doubt he was impressed as any man will be by the earnestness of the argument, and with the evident sincerity of Paul. All this could and did appeal to him as a man, but still there was no vital godliness in his heart. To produce this, more than the arguments of even a Paul are needful, the Spirit of God must touch the heart and give life to the dead; evidently this miracle had not been wrought in Agrippa. It has appeared to us that one reason why such examples are given in the word, is to show the difference between all natural religion and the vital godliness wrought by the holy Spirit. The one is the real living child, the other is but the image devoid of life, though seemingly lovely. What a great blessing to receive not a mere head knowledge of the word, but the power of it in the heart.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

1 TIMOTHY V. 24, 25.

FRIEND BEEBE:—Please give your views on 1 Timothy v. 24, 25, "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going to judgment; and some men they follow after. Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid." By so doing you will oblige a sincere inquirer after truth.

Your friend in tribulation,

J. CHILDERS.

DARKE Co., Ohio, Sept. 21, 1861.

REPLY.

This chapter abounds with practical rules to be observed by Timothy in the discharge of his pastoral duties in the church of God, in which he was an ordained bishop, (or elder.) Among other instructions he is cautioned against laying hands suddenly on any man. That is, if we rightly understand, in setting them apart to the office of elders, deacons or other responsible places in the church. To avoid premature ordinations, it would be necessary to form a judgment in regard to the prospective proclivities of candidates for ordination. Let these

first be proved, and when the church becomes satisfied that they possess the proper qualifications, let them be set apart to the work, by prayer, fasting and the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. But be not hasty. There are perceptible indications which, if judiciously watched, will enable the church and the presbytery to judge even beforehand whether the assignment would be beneficial. Some men, even in the church, are by no means qualified for the office of pastor or deacon, their failings or sins may be anticipated. For instance, if the candidate for the ministry be a *novice*, his prospective sin is that being lifted up with pride, he will fall into the condemnation of the devil. The church and the presbytery must judge in this matter beforehand. Or if he be given to too much wine, or in his natural disposition greedy of filthy lucre, or passionate, a striker, one who is not able to rule well his own house, we are not at liberty to lay hands on him, but from these evidences we are to judge of him beforehand. The evil consequences which would result from their being installed in the sacred office are open, and need not that time or trial be given, for the consequence is so open and apparent that it may be judged beforehand. The bishop, for instance, must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach. In the absence of these qualifications, we may righteously and scripturally judge beforehand, that his future, if set apart to the work, would be unprofitable, and hazardous to the peace of the church. Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand, for, if we find them in possession of all the requisites named in the third chapter of this epistle, we may judge beforehand that his ministry will be edifying, comforting, instructing and every way beneficial to the church of God.

Some have understood the apostle to mean that the sins of God's elect people have gone to judgment before death, and that the sins of the non-elect follow to judgment, and are not judged until after death and the resurrection, but we do not understand this to be the subject on which the inspired apostle was in this text, or its connection, instructing Timothy. We do believe that the sins of all God's people were as fully known, and adjudged by God before the world began as they are or will be at any subsequent period. And further, they are judicially judged, summed up, and laid upon Christ when God laid on him the iniquity of all his people; and experimentally, when they were first quickened with spiritual life and arraigned before their eternal Judge, in their first convictions for sin. We also believe that all the wicked deeds of men and devils were known unto God from everlasting, and that the final destiny of both saints and sinners is unchangeably fixed in the purpose and wisdom of the divine mind as it will ever be. But still, to our mind, the text under consideration does not relate to that subject, but, as we have endeavored to show, to the judgment of the church and of the presbytery in regard to those on whom hands should or should not be laid in solemn ordination, as elders, deacons, &c.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., October 15, 1861.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO AN APPEAL OF BRETHREN TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$932 65
J. M. Ruffner, Ohio, $1.00; A Friend, S. D., $3.00.—Total	4 00
Total to date	$936 65

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, at his residence, April 24th, 1904, Clyde W. Headley, of New Albany, and Miss Georgie B. Taylor, of Reynoldsburg, both of Franklin Co., Ohio.

By Elder John McConnell, at the home of the bride, April 20th, 1904, George D. Genung, of Waverly, N. Y., and Leonora A. Tuthill, of New York city.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **Sarah C. Meredith** died March 12th, 1904. She was born Oct. 25th, 1820; married to her late husband, Deacon Peter Meredith, April 12th, 1849, and baptized into the fellowship of the Bryn Zion Old School Baptist Church, in Kent Co., Del., by Elder Ephraim Rittenhouse, Dec. 4th, 1858. She spent a long and useful life as an exemplary christian, faithful wife, affectionate mother and good neighbor. Many years ago she with her husband and family removed from the vicinity of the Bryn Zion meeting-house to their homestead near the Cow Marsh meeting-house. After their removal, notwithstanding the long drive, they together continued their regular attendance with the Bryn Zion Church at all seasons of the year, and at the same time attended the regular appointments at Cow Marsh. After the death of her husband she continued her attendance with the Bryn Zion Church until prevented by the infirmity of age and its attendant afflictions. Her manifest interest in the welfare of the church won for her the affectionate appellation of "Mother Meredith." Many of the Elders, members and friends of the church can bear witness to her christian hospitality in her Old School Baptist home. Those who were with her during the days and nights of her declining life, and in the hours of her affliction, were witnesses to the faithfulness of our heavenly Father as expressed in the good old hymn,

"E'en down to old age all my people shall prove
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love."

I feel constrained in writing this memorial to mention the untiring vigil of her daughter, sister Anna Meredith, whose constant attendance upon her mother day and night during her illness deserves our affectionate admiration. Sister Meredith has left four children, two sons and two daughters, four brothers, two sisters and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren, who need not mourn as those who have no hope. She sleeps in Jesus. "Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." The Bryn Zion and Cow Marsh churches are both bereaved. May the Lord sanctify our loss to our good and to his glory.

Her funeral was largely attended at the Cow Marsh Church. Elder A. B. Francis preached an encouraging and comforting discourse from Rev. xiv. 13: "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." After which she was gently laid to rest beside her husband in the Cow Marsh churchyard.

ALSO,

Mr. Lewis R. Green, son of sister S. E. Green and the late Deacon Isaac Green, of the Bryn Zion Church, died at the home of his sister, near Newark, Del., Feb. 18th, 1904, in the 25th year of his age. Mr. Green was not a professor, but rather a confessor, by manifesting an attachment to those who love the truth as it is in Jesus. He was the youngest child of his mother, a favorite with her and all the family. His upright deportment was appreciated by many friends. His disease was pulmonary consumption. Through the tedious days and nights of his decline, conscious of approaching death, he patiently and submissively endured his suffering and fearlessly awaited the end, sometimes repeating from the hymn in which he substituted night for day, saying,

A few more nights on earth to spend,
And all my toils and cares shall end.

In the Lord's own good time he peacefully fell asleep.

The writer of this memento of affection tried to comfort the bereaved ones at the funeral, held in the Bryn Zion Church, after which our loved one was laid gently to rest in the family plot in the Bryn Zion churchyard, submissive to the will of our God and Savior. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

W. W. MEREDITH.

BY request of dear sister Francis, I undertake to write an obituary notice of her beloved and much lamented husband, **William Hume Francis.** Our dear brother was born Sept. 27th, 1851, and was baptized by Elder J. N. Badger, at Upper Broad Run Church, Fauquier Co., Va., June, 1875, and lived a consistent member until his death, which occurred at Manassas, Va., April 6th, 1904. Brother Francis was a strong, healthy man, never sick much in his life. He was painting a house on Monday p. m., April 4th, and fell a distance of about fifteen feet and struck face downward on a pile of stones, and sustained internal injuries from which he died on Wednesday a. m. at 10:30 o'clock. Sister Francis sent for me, and I went on Thursday and remained with her until Friday at 2 p. m., when in company with his pastor, Elder Badger, I attended his funeral, speaking (by sister Francis' request) from John xi. 25. There was a large attendance, showing the esteem in which he was held by his neighbors. His death seemed to cast a gloom over the town, even some children sent in a beautiful floral design in token of their esteem. Brother Francis was married to Miss Catherine Hickerson, to whom he proved a loving and faithful hus-

band, ever mindful of her needs and happiness. No children were born to them, and so our dear sister is left alone. May God in his gracious goodness fill the vacancy with his own presence, which he has caused by taking her loving husband to himself.

Brother and sister Francis were members for some years of the church in Alexandria, Va., and for about two years I tried to serve them as pastor. I found in him a strong friend and helper, ever ready to do what he could for the church and pastor, not merely because he felt it a duty, but because he delighted in doing what he could, prompted by his love for the cause of the Master. It seems hard for me to realize that brother Francis is gone, and I shall see his face no more in this life; but he is with Jesus, which is far better, and we must be still and know that he is God. Brother Francis leaves two brothers, one of which is Elder A. B. Francis, of Delmar, Del., and three sisters, one of which was at his funeral (Mrs. Annie Risler, of New Jersey). These, together with a host of brethren, sisters and friends, mourn their loss, but none can feel their bereavement so keenly as the widow, who daily has something to remind her of him who was so good and kind. May God's eternal mercies rest upon her. J. T. ROWE.

DIED—At her home in Russelville, Monroe Co., Ga., Dec. 6th, 1903, **Mrs. Susie A. Huguley,** wife of J. H. Huguley, aged 34 years, 4 months and 6 days. She was married to brother Huguley about sixteen years ago. She leaves six children, four boys and two girls, husband, father, grandfather, a half brother and sister, with many other relatives and friends, to mourn their loss. Her sickness was long and severe, but she bore it all with much patience and resignation. Her disease was consumption, which she believed must finally terminate in her death, yet she was cheerful, and always seemed to be perfectly reconciled, and often remarked that the good Lord would do right with her, and that she felt willing for his will to be done. She was the daughter of J. G. Huckabay. Her mother died when she was only three years old, and her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. C. T. P. Evans, raised her, and she lived with them until she was married. Sister Huguley united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Smyrna, Monroe Co., Ga., April 25th, 1896, and was baptized by the unworthy writer of this notice, and she lived an exemplary christian life. She was of a very quiet disposition, and always seemed to enjoy her meeting and the preaching of Christ so much. Her great desire was to serve the Lord, who she said had been so merciful to her in all of her afflictions. On the morning of the day she died she told her husband and friends that she would die that evening, which she did, and she seemed to be perfectly reconciled, waiting for the time to come. Surely a child of God has passed from earth to dwell with Christ and his saints in heaven. Then, dear husband and children, father and friends, do not mourn as those who have no hope, for she has left the evidence that she is now at rest with her Savior, but try to live as she has lived, and may the God of all grace and mercy sustain you by his holy Spirit, and finally receive you to himself, where there will be no more afflictions or parting.

Her body was buried in the old Huguley cemetery, in the presence of a large assembly of relatives and friends, where the writer tried to speak some words of comfort to the bereaved ones. May the Lord bless us all with his grace and save us in his kingdom.

D. G. McCOWEN.

FORSYTH, Ga., April 27, 1904.

IN much sorrow we record the death of our dear sister, **Nancy A. Pickard Dickey,** beloved wife of L. C. Dickey. She departed this life Feb. 16th, 1904. She was born June 18th, 1847, and raised in Upson Co., Ga. She professed a hope in Christ, joined the old order of Baptists, and was baptized by the late Elder Samuel Bentley, of Georgia, in 1865; was married to brother Dickey Dec. 20th, 1866. To this union there were born ten children, of whom seven are living, four sons and three daughters. Our sister and her husband took letters of dismission from Flint River Church, of Georgia, emigrated to Texas in 1895, and resided near Bono, Texas, till last fall, when they moved within about three miles of Blum, Texas. The writer became acquainted with the family in 1896, and has made their house a home in passing from that time till the present. I think sister Dickey was as near being without faults as any one I ever knew. No sister in all of my acquaintance was better pleased to have Old Baptist company to entertain. She believed in salvation by grace from first to last. She had no fear of death; much of the time during her long illness she was not rational.

Our dear sister's remains were consigned to the tomb near Bono, after a short funeral service by the writer. W. L. ROGERS.

BLUM, Texas.

MY dear sister, **Mrs. Mary Greenland Barton,** died July 6th, 1903, aged 70 years, 6 months and 13 days. Her death was very sudden and unexpected. She had an attack of indigestion a few days before her death, but seemed to be recovering rapidly, and frequently spoke of her gaining strength, and performed light duties about the house. The evening before her death she spoke of feeling so well. We retired at nine o'clock, and a few moments before twelve she came to my room and called me, saying there was something wrong, that she had such pain at her heart. My husband and I arose immediately, but before I reached her side she sank to the floor, we tenderly raised her up and laid her on the bed, she breathed but twice and passed away as calm and

peaceful as a little child going to sleep. After the death of her husband, two years before, she made her home with us. Eleven years ago she received a hope, and was baptized by Elder E. V. White, in the fellowship of the Providence church, Bedford Co., Pa., and remained a faithful member until death. She loved the doctrine of salvation by grace, and loved to meet with the Lord's people. We miss her so much from our little band, as her place at meeting was never vacant unless providentially hindered. Her house was a home for the Baptists at all times. She always looked forward with pleasure when she could meet with the household of faith.

She leaves two brothers and three sisters to mourn their loss. Her remains were taken to Rays Hill, her former home, and laid beside her husband, to await the resurrection morn.

Owing to the absence of our pastor, Elder J. C. Mellott, at the time of her death, the funeral services were conducted by a relative of ours, F. W. Rohrer.

May the God of all grace comfort those that are left to mourn, and may we be a happy united family in that home where sorrow and death can never come, is the prayer of an unworthy sister,

ANNA R. McCLELLAN.

BEDFORD, Pa., March 12, 1904.

Martha A. Linn was born Oct. 9th, 1838, and died April 2nd, 1904, aged 65 years, 5 months and 23 days. She was the mother of seven children, one of whom preceded her to the better land. She was a widow at the time of her death, her husband, Uriah E. Linn, having died in December, 1900. She leaves two sons, four daughters and eight grandchildren, besides other relatives and many friends, to mourn their loss, but their loss is her eternal gain. She had been in very poor health for the past year, not being able to stay in her own home very much of the time. She has spent most of the time with her children, having spent the last two months with her daughter, Mrs. Ida Beck, of East Gilead. She has been a great sufferer from heart and lung trouble, not being able to lie down much of the time for the last four months. She was very patient through all of her suffering; she talked a great deal about death, and was ready and willing to go and be at rest. Just a few days before she died she said, "Life is sweet, but welcome death." She was a kind mother and a good christian, a member of the Old School Baptist Church at Honey Creek, Ohio, having united with that church in November, 1879. She was a firm believer in their faith and doctrine.

On account of bad roads and high water we could not get the minister of her choice, so we had a Free-will Baptist minister, who spoke from Heb. xiii. 14.

Her daughter,

(MRS.) GEORGIE WILLIAMS.

BETHEL, Mich.

Mrs. Sarah Coons departed this life after a brief illness at the home of her son-in-law, at Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., March 30th, 1904, in the 83rd year of her age. Mrs. Coons was not a professor of religion, but we believe a genuine possessor of hope in God through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, giving the best of evidence by a sense of unworthiness. She manifested her interest in going to hear preaching when she could, and in reading the SIGNS. Her last hours were attended with delirium, causing incessant talk until her strength gave way and she fell asleep in Jesus. She leaves to mourn, one son, two daughters, two brothers and other relatives and friends, as well as the church.

Her funeral was quite largely attended at the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist meeting-house.

ALSO,

Sister **Anna Morse,** a widow aged 91 years, died at her home in Vega, Delaware Co., N. Y., April 18th, 1904, after a short illness affecting old age. Sister Morse was one of the stable believers in the sovereign, reigning grace of God, being entirely separated from the works or goodness of the flesh, or legality. No one could delight more in the law of God after the inward man, and as far as circumstances and strength allowed she carried out the injunction, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together." She was made to see the difference between works and grace when quite young, and professed faith in Jesus Christ and maintained her steadfastness therein by a well ordered life and godly conversation to the end. She leaves three daughters and other relatives, with the church, to mourn, but we mourn not as those without hope.

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLY'S CORNERS, N. Y., April 24, 1904.

DIED—At her home on Pine Wood Ave., Troy, N. Y., **Mrs. Sarah A. De Freest.** Her maiden name was Sarah A. Bloomingdale. She was born March 1st, 1832, at North Greenbush, N. Y., was married Oct. 21st, 1858, to Levi De Freest. Six children were born to them. One son, two daughters, three grandchildren and the husband are left to mourn their loss, but they have the consolation, and feel to say, that their loss in her eternal gain. She was a member of the Albany and Troy Old School Baptist church, was baptized by the writer about four years ago. She was a consistent christian, a good mother, and a faithful companion to the aged husband, and may he have grace given him to bear this separation.

For a long time she has been a great sufferer, but bore her suffering with christian fortitude. She lay in a state of coma for a week before she died and did not regain consciousness. Her family were all with her when the end came.

The funeral services were held at their home, and largely attended by relatives and friends. Inter-

ment in Elmwood Hill cemetery. May the blessing of God sustain the bereaved family.

C. BOGARDUS.

BROOKTON, N. Y., April 14, 1904.

BROTHER **William Search** departed this life near Baptistown, N. J., March 14th, 1904, aged 70 years, 5 months and 19 days. Gangrene was the disease, from which he suffered greatly. He was the son of the late Samuel Search and Catharine Puff; he was the last survivor of a family of nine. Dec. 25th, 1856, he was married to Mary E. Britton, daughter of Dennis and Elizabeth Britton, of Davisville, Bucks Co., Pa. He united with the Southampton Old School Baptist Church about fifty years ago, and was baptized by the late Elder Wm. J. Purington. He united with the church at Locktown, N. J., about twenty years ago, and was a faithful member until his Father called him home. He is now enjoying heaven, which is the believer's hope here and rest hereafter. Nothing is necessary to complete the happiness of a child of God but to awake with the likeness of Christ, to whom faith ever looks. May God bless the dear, sad and lonely widow, the family of six children and all that mourn, with reconciled spirits to his sovereign will.

The writer conducted the funeral services, after which the remains were interred in Frenchtown cemetery, N. J.

D. M. VAIL.

Melville B. Eggleston departed this life March 16th, 1904, at his boarding-house, 53 West Main St., Middletown, N. Y. He was born in Hunter, Green Co., N. Y., in 1842; was the son of Zebulon and Huldah Eggleston. For forty years he had lived in Middletown, and was highly respected by all who knew him. He was a believer in salvation by grace through the Son of God, but never made a public profession of religion. He was a kind-hearted man, and it seemed a great pleasure to him to wait upon the Old School Baptists. As long as his health would allow him, he attended the meetings regularly. He was a great sufferer the last three years of his life, but the end was very peaceful, and we who knew him believe he is at rest.

The writer conducted the funeral service, after which the body was buried in Hillside Cemetery, this city.

H. C. KER.

Mrs. Elizabeth Reed died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Fred Sheldon, Tuesday, Sept. 8th, 1903, at the ripe old age of 81 years and 12 days. She was married to Samuel Reed Sept. 27th, 1842. To this union were born nine children, four sons and five daughters; all survive their mother except one son. The deceased had been a faithful member of the Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Jesus Christ for forty years, all that time had been a constant Bible student, and nearly all these years a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, an able defender of the doctrine of salvation by grace. She died as she had lived; had been for nearly ten years a great sufferer, but in all her affliction she never complained of its being too severe, but desired to leave this world of sin and suffering. She has left eight children and a faithful husband to mourn for one that they dearly loved, but while they are bowed down with sorrow, she is at rest with her blessed Savior.

Before she passed from time, her request was that I should attend and preach the funeral discourse, as a last tribute to her memory, which I did, (but not until after her burial) to a concourse of relatives and friends, using for a text 2 Cor. v. 1: "For we know that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved," &c.

J. T. SWINNEY.

John J. Musgrave departed this life Dec. 28th, 1903, after four days illness with pneumonia, aged 91 years lacking a few days. He joined the Indian Creek Church in January, 1858; served the church as clerk for thirty-three years; a more faithful clerk or member never lived to our knowledge. We have known the deceased ever since our childhood. The weather was never too inclement or his work too urgent to keep him from his meeting, his chief delight. He seldom failed to attend the Redstone Association as messenger from his church. He attended his association September last, held with the Meadow-run Church, fifteen miles distant; he heard such wonderful sermons there. It seemed as if his mind was on spiritual things, which made his last days his brightest. He awoke his wife one night when he was greatly exercised over his future home beyond this vale of tears, when these words were spoken to him in the dead hours of the night, "You shall come up through great tribulation." It seemed as if an audible voice spoke, which made him quake with fear from head to foot. He wished his wife to tell him the meaning of all this. She told him what she thought, and what she felt sure would be the result, and comforted him as best she could. His counsel stood high in his church and association. He has passed to his reward, after great tribulation. He leaves his wife and seven children: David S. John T. and S. C. Musgrave, Mrs. Mary J. Lynch, Mrs. Nancy Barbe, Mrs. Mallissa Brock and Mrs. Clara Yost.

A FRIEND.

MORGANTOWN, W. Va.

DIED—At her home, Olivehill, Carter (now Beckham) Co., Ky., March 8th, 1904, our dear mother, **Mrs. Sarah Hicks.** She was born in 1822, and was a member of the Old School Baptist Church for about sixty-three years. She was the widow of Henry Hicks, who died at Olivehill some years ago. She leaves six sons and two daughters to mourn the loss

of a mother, but they feel their loss is her gain; they are sure she is at rest from her labors. It is sad to lose a loving mother, but we know that God is just. Seven children and her husband preceded her to the grave. She suffered so much while here that death was a welcome relief to her.

Her daughter-in-law,

(MRS.) H. C. HICKS.

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held, Providence permitting, with the Black Rock Church, Baltimore Co., Md., beginning Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, (18th, 19th and 20th,) 1904, and continuing three days.

Those coming via Baltimore will take 3:30 p. m. train at Calvert St. station, May 17th; get tickets for Cockeysville. This train will be met at 4:10 p. m. Those coming from the north, on the Northern Central R. R., will take train leaving Harrisburg at 11:50 a. m., May 17th. This train will be met also at Cockeysville, at 2:35 p. m. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, especially ministering brethren.

F. G. SCOTT, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Welsh Tract Church, at Newark, Del., beginning Wednesday before the fifth Sunday in May, (25th, 26th and 27th,) 1904, continuing three days.

Those coming from Philadelphia and other points north will please come via B. & O. R. R. Wednesday morning, on train leaving Philadelphia (at Twenty-fourth and Chestnut Sts.) at 7:40 o'clock. Those coming from Baltimore and points south will come via B. & O. on train leaving Baltimore (Mt. Royal station) at 8 o'clock Wednesday morning, and all get tickets for Newark, Del. Those coming from Delmar, Del., and points on the Delaware Division R. R., will come on Tuesday afternoon and take train leaving Delmar at 2:15 p. m.; get tickets for Wilson and change cars at Porter. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, and to our ministering brethren in particular. All will be met and conveyed to the meeting and to our homes for entertainment.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Hopewell Church, at Hopewell, N. J., to begin Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (1st, 2nd and 3rd,) 1904, and continue three days.

Trains reaching Hopewell by Reading R. R. from both New York and Philadelphia, at about two, four and five o'clock on Tuesday before the association will be met and friends cared for. Those who come from either direction on Wednesday morning will come directly to the meeting-house, which is about ten minutes walk from the depot. A cordial invitation is hereby given to all ministers, brethren, sisters and friends to be with us at that time.

ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

THE Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church has appointed her yearly meeting to be held the first Saturday and Sunday in June, (4th and 5th) 1904. A cordial invitation is extended to ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

A. COOK, Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is expected to be held with the Warwick Church, at Warwick, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1904.

All trains arriving at Warwick, N. Y., on Tuesday and Wednesday, June 7th and 8th, will be met as follows: 8:06 and 11:54 a. m., 3:56, 5, 6:40 and 7:44 p. m. Trains leave Chambers St. ferry, Erie R. R., 9:15 a. m., 1, 3, 4:30, 5:30 p. m., Twenty-third St. ferry five minutes earlier. Those coming from the west can make connection at Greycourt for trains to Warwick at 7:42 and 11:26 a. m., 3:22, 4:38, 6:18 and 7:22 p. m. The old and infirm need fear no hardship in attending. Meeting-house in village one and one-half blocks from the depot. Entertainment close by. Every lover of the truth welcome.

JOHN McCONNELL.

THE Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon and Washington, will be held this year, the Lord willing, with the Luckiamute Church, at or near the residence of Elder V. J. Turnidge, about six miles south of Sheridan, Yamhill Co., Oregon, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in June, (17th) 1904, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continuing the two following days. Those coming by railroad via Portland, Oregon, should be at Portland so as to take the train Thursday evening, June 16th, at 4 o'clock p. m., arriving at Sheridan at 8 o'clock p. m., (present schedule) where they will be met and conveyed to the place of meeting. All lovers of truth are invited to attend.

N. J. SHANKS, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 72. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1904. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DEUTERONOMY III. 26.

"LET it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter."

This language at a distance seemed to me to have a harsh tone, to be very abrupt, but as I drew near in my meditations and considered the suppliant, who he was, that he was one so favored that "he endured, as seeing him who is invisible."—Heb. xi. 27, and that he lived in such intimacy with God that the Lord spake unto him as a man speaketh unto his friend, (Exodus xxxiii. 11,) then I knew that the tone of the Lord's voice, though powerful and subduing, was the voice of love. These are the words of our heavenly Father to one of his dear children.

Because of his rebellion and unbelief, and his failure to sanctify the Lord in the eyes of the children of Israel, Moses was forbidden to enter into the promised land. (Num. xx. 10–12.) He had set his heart upon leading the tribes of Jacob into the land flowing with milk and honey, and to thus have his expectations cut off was a sore disappointment. He tells us, "I besought the Lord at that time, saying, O Lord God, thou hast begun to shew thy servant thy greatness, and thy mighty hand: for what God is there in heaven or in earth that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might? I pray thee, let me go over, and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon. But the Lord was wroth with me for your sakes, and would not hear me." This wrath of the Lord was permeated with love, the chastening of Moses was the chastening of a parent. "What son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?"—Heb. xii. 7. "As many as I love, [saith the Lord] I rebuke and chasten."—Rev. iii. 19. And our heavenly Father in revealing his displeasure, and in denying us our requests, is able to so speak that we are humbled and at rest. "Let it suffice thee; [my child] speak no more unto me of this matter." These words are breathed into the soul with such affection that we are quieted, and are brought into unquestioning acquiescence to the sovereign will of Abba, Father. If it be chiding language, it is love's chidings, in tones of infinite affection for his dear child. "Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do ear-

nestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him: I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord." —Jer. xxxi. 20. The sentence of the Lord forbidding Moses to enter into the land of Canaan was not to be annulled, his disappointment was the Lord's appointment. "Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter. Get thee up into the top of Pisgah, and lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold it with thine eyes: for thou shalt not go over this Jordan." "And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the Lord shewed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan, and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea, and the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar. And the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither. So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day."—Deut xxxiv. 1–6. (It is not my purpose to touch upon the typical signification of this.)

As leader of the chosen tribes the high honor and pleasure of entering into the goodly land of promise was not to be his, but something better was his destiny. After looking with his eyes from the top of Pisgah upon the land till he was suffice,

"Softly his fainting head he lay
Upon his Maker's breast;
His Maker kissed his soul away,
And laid his flesh to rest."

Thus he died, and his spirit released from its tabernacle of clay was translated to the "better country, that is an heavenly." Moses could not have his wish to pass over Jordan into the delightful land of Canaan, but how insignificant is all this compared with the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory that is now his in the better heavenly country.

The heirs of promise in their pilgrimage through this world to the better land are very imperfect creatures, often disclosing how unwise they are. We are graciously admonished as strangers and pilgrims to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul. (1 Peter ii. 11.) But we often most foolishly set our hearts upon this and that, and pour forth our cravings for we know not what. We have witnessed little children asking, yes, with floods of tears, their earthly parent for what they wish, and at length the wise and gracious parent has said to the child, "Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter." For a small moment the child may think, My mother deals hard with me, and is unkind, but before long it becomes reconciled to the denial of its wishes, and some day will know that the denials were merciful. Sometimes indeed the parent as a merciful discipline grants to the peevish and importunate child its request, knowing it will be to the temporary discomfort of the loved one. So it is written, "He gave them their request, but sent leanness into their souls."—Psalms cvi. 15. The desires of our flesh are manifold, and it is hard to be persuaded that our wishes are evil. O, it is hard to relinquish what our foolish hearts are set upon, and it needs much gracious instruction from our God to convince us of the unwisdom

of our wishes, or that our desires are contrary to his revealed will. The apostle James tells us, "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." What a mercy then it is that we receive not. But if we ask anything according to God's will he heareth us, and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him. (1 John v. 14, 15.) Have we not, my dear brethren, much need to ask the Lord to teach us how to pray, (Luke xi. 1,) and what to pray for? (Romans viii. 26.) Israel angered Moses at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with him for their sakes. (Psalms cvi. 32.) But all the ills that befall the children of God are transient, and measured with the blessedness laid up for them in heaven they are but for a moment. Many of the family of God are subjected to temporal discomforts; some are poor, and often lack the common comforts of life; some in passing through this life have almost constantly to experience the frailties of their bodies, and spend their days in pain and sicknesses. Then there are trials that some are appointed to that are far more grievous to bear than those which are merely physical. But whatsoever evil befalls us in chastenings and instruction, "What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?"—Job ii. 10. O, may the Lord grant us grace to receive all evils that in love and infinite wisdom he lays upon us. Our purposes are frustrated, our plans are often overthrown, and we fail to attain to the accomplishment of many of our desires. Then how much takes place that was unexpected, which, had we the power as we witnessed its development, we would have put forth our hand and have said, This shall not be. "By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph." Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly, for Manasseh was the firstborn; but Joseph their father exclaimed, "Not so, my father."—Gen. xlviii. 13–22. The counsel of the Lord it shall stand, but to us finite creatures how often have we in sacred awe to confess, "Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in great waters, and thy footsteps are not known." "The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet."

"Deep in unfathomable mines of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs and works his sovereign will."

But this sovereignty of God must not be confounded with that mimic sovereignty that some mortals are supposed to have over the persons and estates of their fellows. Of Nebuchadnezzar it is written, "Whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive, and whom he would he set up, and whom he would he put down."—Daniel v. 19. Creatures in the exercise of their sovereignty over others often do so capriciously, viciously, in heartless disregard of equity, or the pain or pleasure of those over whom they have dominion; but though the Lord dwells in such infinite exaltation that the inhabitants of the earth are reputed unto him as nothing, and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? yet all his ways are judgment, a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he. (Deut. xxxii. 4.)

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

GOD AS REVEALED IN NATURE.

GOD'S eternal existence, and the unlimited character of his attributes, are clearly and conclusively proven by his creative work in nature. Whatever existed before time was not created, and therefore must be eternal.

Let us consider the works of God in creation. First, let us take a view of our solar system, which is comprised of the sun and the planets that revolve around it. We all know something about the size of the planet on which we live, so we will compare the other seven primary planets with it. The earth is nearly 25,000 miles in circumference, and is situated at a mean distance of 92,897,000 miles from the sun, and it makes one revolution of more than 584,000,000 miles around the sun every year, flying through space in order to do this at the terrific velocity of eighteen and one-half miles per second, or seventy-five times faster than the speed of an ordinary cannon ball. Three of the other seven primary planets are smaller than the earth, one is about sixty times larger, one ninety, one seven hundred and seventy, and one thirteen hundred times larger than the earth. All these planets, with their moons and the nearly four hundred asteroids combined, are not the one five-hundredth part as large as the sun. The sun is flying through space, carrying with it all its retinue of worlds, and all directed with unerring precision by the great Architect of the whole. Shall we try to grasp in our minds this stupendous arrangement? If we cannot fully comprehend the immensity of this great solar system, what shall we say of the starry firmament? of the millions upon millions of this mighty host supposed to be other suns, the greater number of which we have brought to our view through the telescope, and still other thousands are brought to our knowledge, which the eye cannot possibly see, even with the most powerful telescope, but of which we get distinct impressions by means of what is called the photographic telescope. We are told that the nearest fixed star known is more than 200,000 times farther off than we are from the sun. If, as it would seem likely, the stars are all situated thus far from each other, and all flying through space under the direction of their Maker, whose watchful eye is ever over them, and if our minds are still farther carried on in infinite space beyond all telescopic explorations, and we know not of the extent of heavenly orbs in this great endless beyond, shall we not pause, and in awe and wonder think of this indescribable, this inconceivable creation? O, is it possible that the great God could do all this mighty work? And more, control all those myriads of mighty orbs in their course through space in all ages past, all in perfect harmony, and playing upon the mighty chord-strings of infinite space a grander and more glorious refrain of exaltation than it is possible should come from the lips of mortal man, and shall we say, from even the tongues of angels around his throne? O thou almighty God, wilt thou take notice of, and have compassion on poor, worthless me? Shall we attempt to measure the power and wisdom of this great First Cause who brought it all into existence? We are estopped by our own ignorance, and are impelled to exclaim, "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all." No finite mind can comprehend the one-billionth of the one-billionth of this mighty creation. But let us get all the help we can, that our minds may take in everything possible about this most wonderful sub-

ject, about this more than vast expanse. Our earth is nearly ninety-three million miles from the sun, and it takes the light we receive from it 499 seconds (eight minutes and nineteen seconds) to travel that distance. If we divide the number of seconds in a year by 499, it gives for a quotient 63,000; so light travels 63,000 times 93,000,000 miles in one year, and it takes more than three years for light to reach us from the nearest fixed star known, and it is supposed to take thousands of years for it to come from the most remote stars that have been discovered. Can we conceive what a God this is who moves and reigns over all this, and more?

But some one may belittle this sublime view of God's mighty works by saying astronomy contradicts the Bible. Does the Bible rob God of any of his almighty power and wisdom? Astronomy and the Bible go hand in hand in ascribing all power and wisdom and glory to God. We are not concerned, so far as this article goes, about what science says relative to the ages of those heavenly orbs. It is its true teaching about this tremendous work of God which we should receive, and it is not possible for it to go beyond the power of God in any of its researches. Neither do we desire to discuss how God did; whether all his acts were like, "And God said, Let there be light; and there was light;" but to show as best we can that God's work in nature fully sustains the Bible account of his greatness. It must have been infinite power that did all this work. Certainly no one will deny that this great First Cause that we call God is omnipotent and all-wise, knowing all things from eternity, and immutable in every conceivable sense. To be the Creator of this miraculous creation, and to establish it in all its mighty movements, every part of it working in absolute harmony and perfection throughout all ages, God must not only be omnipotent, but he must possess infinite wisdom also. Therefore he is omniscient, and having these two attributes, omnipotence and omniscience, established, he must be immutable. He could not be all-powerful and all-wise, and be changeable. So with all God's attributes. His being infinite in one attribute establishes the infinity of all, for to be limited in any one attribute would circumscribe him, and he could not be unlimited in anything whatever.

I suppose the preceding propositions will be accepted by every thoughtful person, no matter to what religious denomination he may belong. Now, since these tenets are absolutely true, it must follow that every act of God was unalterably fixed ere time began, else his power and wisdom could not be unlimited. This excludes every phase of conditionality. God can no more be uncertain than he can lie. The person who denies these truths dishonors God. It is therefore an undeniable truth, that in the works of nature, and independent of the Bible, we have the most perfect evidence of the truth of the doctrine advocated by the Primitive Baptists, that the Creator does all things according to his own will, which is not influenced, even to the shadow of turning, by anything whatever, living or dead. It is also deducible from this truth that if God has a people here whom it is his will to take to himself to be with him in glory, he will do it, and no uncertainty can be attached to the ultimate result of housing every one of them in heaven. Therefore the doctrine of the absolute predestination in the annals of eternity of every soul that ever shall enter heaven, to that blissful abode,

is true. But however positively all these truths are established by evidences of God's works in nature, it has pleased him to give us a closer revelation, a brighter evidence through his own testimony, and that of his holy and inspired servants of old, and by the living evidence of his only begotten Son, the immaculate Lamb of God, who walked here on earth testifying to the truth of all things concerning the purposes of God to his children, and lastly ordaining his chosen disciples, whom he endowed through the holy Spirit with power from on high to conqinue to bear testimony to the counsels of God, all of which is left on record in that Book of books, the holy Bible.

Let us give all honor to God in singing praises to him in his majesty and glory. We sing his praises by our faith in his immutability and in his unconditional and absolute election of all his children to reign with him in glory; by our faith in Jesus that he redeemed every one of them, and washed them white in his own blood, thereby purging them from all sin, and presenting them spotless before his Father without the loss of a single one; by our belief in the doctrine that this faith is given us of God; that every spiritual blessing which we receive from him is a free and gracious gift bestowed upon us alone through mercy and God's divine will, to the exclusion of every consideration on our part.

The purpose of this writing is to show how God's work in his physical kingdom sustains the doctrine of his almighty power and wisdom, and sings the praises of his eternal existence and the glory of his mighty kingdom, rather than to speak of what we learn of him through the Scriptures of divine truth, and by the holy Spirit which manifests itself in God's redeemed people, only just so far as to show some of the harmonic evidences between the two witnesses; evidences that go to prove they are in perfect harmony throughout, and that to attempt to overthrow the teachings of the holy Bible is to attempt to dethrone God from every work in nature, and we cannot do either without doing both. Still God reigns, and who can withstand his terrible power?

D. H. GOBLE.

GREENFIELD, Ind., Dec. 7, 1903.

[IT is good that our attention should be called to these glorious and sublime things. The Scriptures themselves often dwell upon the glory of the God of creation, and no one can worship God in deed and in truth but by ascribing to him the works and attributes that belong to him. Brother Goble has in the above letter presented the substance of the teaching of such Scriptures as these: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth;" "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork;" "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." These and hundreds of other Scriptures set before us plainly the divine wisdom, sovereignty and predestination, and the smallest mote that can be seen floating in the sunbeam is as much under immediate divine control as the mightiest world in farthest space. No doubt our brother has found lasting consolation in the reflections which he has presented in the above letter, and we trust that many who may read may also be edified and instructed.—ED.]

BORN AGAIN.

FIFTY years ago this afternoon the holy Father gave me faith in Jesus, and revealed him to me as The Lord my Righteousness. This revelation banished all fear, and filled my soul with perfect love and peace. It was a new world to me, and the darkness was past. It was the Lord's day, in which there was no shadow and not a cloud; sin was ended, and death had fled away. Life and light, joy and gladness filled me with triumphant faith in Jesus, and overflowing love to God for his unspeakable gift. My heart went out in fervent love to the church, the brethren in Christ Jesus, and I longed to go and tell them of the preciousness of the Savior to my believing heart, and what great things he had done for me. He had saved me from deep soul anguish, black despair and death. I joyfully understood for the first time that the Lord was my life and light and salvation. To me this was a new experience, and a most wonderful revelation. Old things had passed away, and behold, all things had become new to me. Blessedly I realized that I was in Christ Jesus, and that in him was all fullness of salvation. My soul was satisfied, and I desired no more. "My Beloved is mine, and I am his." This was my new birthday; I was now a new creature; my life was new, my heart and spirit, faith and love, peace and comfort, all were new. The Lord had opened my blind eyes and showed me my lost condition almost ten years before, on the second Sunday in November, 1844, and long and deep had been the anguish of my sorrowing soul for my sins, and fearfully crushing my burden of guilt. I verily believed the just wrath of God in his holy law was burning against me, and felt that I was condemned forever. All my sorrow and mourning, crying and praying for mercy and pardon, with all that I could do to bring myself into the favor of God, had utterly failed me, and I felt that I was a miserable reprobate, for whom there was no salvation nor peace.

When the time of my deliverance drew nigh I was a student in a medical college in Cincinnati, with the view of trying to do good while God spared my sinful life. On Tuesday morning, April 25th, 1854, two letters came, one from my eldest sister, the other from her pastor, both relating to my sorrowful experience as a guilty and perishing sinner, (for I had written to her) and he exhorted me to come home to the church. I was too deeply troubled to go to the school that day, but remained alone in my upper room, read the Bible in search of light and comfort, wept and prayed; but all failed, hope had fled and I was lost. This I knew was just, and I was brought to a standstill, helpless as an infant, and not knowing how it was possible for me to be saved. So at last I took up a pen to tell Elder McQueary that it was impossible for me to go to the church, for none but believers in Christ had right to the solemn ordinance of baptism, and I was in the darkness of unbelief. But bless the Lord, before I could write the sentence against myself, God, who is rich in mercy, gave me faith in his beloved Son, who was now my adorable Redeemer and my salvation. Then I wrote to the pastor and told him of my faith and hope in Christ, the firstborn from the dead, and that I would gladly come home to the household of faith, for God had clothed me in the righteousness of his holy Son, who had loved me and died for me, and had taken away both sin and death from me. And so the second Sunday in June, 1854, I was buried with Christ in baptism,

and raised to walk in newness of life, and to serve God in newness of spirit.

Fifty years in the faith of Jesus, the Son of God, with all the trials of faith, have made him only the more precious to me, and confirmed me in that first revelation of him to my rejoicing eyes, The Lord my Righteousness. From that happy day till now Jesus is all my salvation and all my desire. O how I long to awake with his heavenly likeness, see him in his glory and be satisfied.

My first birthday was seventy-seven years ago to-morrow, yet I am active, my hearing perfect, and I read without glasses. My address is Lebanon, Ohio.

In the new life your brother,

D. BARTLEY.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., April 25, 1904.

LEAD HILL, Ark., April 3, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Brother John M. Beard, of Novice, Texas, has requested my views through the SIGNS on the first four verses of the eighteenth chapter of Jeremiah. It is with deep solemnity, and a realization of my weakness and inability that I now attempt to write upon such a deep and mysterious subject, but I feel that such views as I have are public property, and belong to the dear children of God, and so I will write a few thoughts, and submit them to your judgment, whether to publish or not. The text reads as follows, "The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it."

Now the context shows that the house of Israel was under consideration, for he says, "O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand." And he further shows that if he speaks concerning a nation or kingdom to pluck it up or pull it down, if that nation shall repent and turn from the evil, he will also repent of the evil which he had pronounced against it, or if a nation or kingdom that he had pronounced good upon, to build and to plant, shall do evil, he will repent of the good, and will withhold the benefit or blessing. Now this was all under the law covenant, and under that covenant God promised blessings upon condition of their obedience, and poor, weak creatures, vessels of clay, were not able to obey, or to keep the law. In that sense the clay was marred in the hand of the potter; no one save Jesus was ever able to keep or fulfill the law in all its commandments. So I believe the house of Israel under the law with its conditions, in one sense at least, is represented by the clay that was marred; and the vessel that he made again, in some degree at least, represents the spiritual Israel under the new covenant, made not with conditions, but upon better promises of, "I will, and you shall." So, under this new covenant, it does not depend upon the work of poor, fallen man, the man of clay.

Isaiah said, chapter sixty-four, verse 8, "But now, O Lord, thou art our Father: we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand." So I believe that the whole house of Israel under the two covenants was under consideration. Under the first covenant they failed, and the covenant was found fault with, which called for and made

room for the second or new covenant, which the Lord said he would make with the house of Israel, not like the first which they break, so that the Lord regarded them not. But this was the covenant made with Israel after those days, his law was put in their mind and written in their heart. And God said, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." "And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

The law is our schoolmaster to Christ. So I understand that all the children of God under the gospel dispensation experience the substance of the metaphor here used by the prophet. When quickened they feel their condemnation and guilt, and flee to the law for relief, only to find that it condemns them, and when brought to the end of the law, they learn the weakness of the flesh, and see themselves but clay, marred clay. Then Christ appears the end of the law for righteousness to them, and takes them out of the miry clay, places their feet upon a rock, establishes their goings, and puts a new song in their mouth, even praise to God; then the vessel is made again. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." But this new creature or vessel will not be complete in all its fullness until this mortal shall have put on immortality, and this corruptible shall have put on incorruption. Then indeed shall be brought to pass the saying, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" The apostle says, "Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Then we shall be changed and fashioned like the glorious body of the Lord and Savior, and then all the children of God shall be like him, and like each other. David said, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."

But I am making this poor letter too long, still I want to say a few words before closing concerning the SIGNS. O how I love the doctrine set forth in them, and I sometimes hope that I love the editor, publishers and correspondents, and all the readers, or at least all that believe the doctrine advocated in the SIGNS. I read dear brother Beebe's last editorial, it was so good and comforting, and I was made to rejoice. But when I saw what dear brother Chick said, that since the above was written, the dear brother had fallen asleep, O how I was struck with grief, I felt so sad. The next thought was, Will the dear, old, reliable SIGNS be continued? And it seemed as though some one said, "Be still, and know that I am God." I then felt satisfied that God had some one prepared for the work, and the great responsibility. I then longed to see the next number, and when I read the announcement, I was thankful.

Yours in gospel bonds,

WM. J. CASEY.

CARMEN, Okla., April 22, 1904.

VERY DEAR EDITOR AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have been thinking that it might be of interest to many readers of the SIGNS to let them know that Elder J. C. Beeman, (my uncle)

of Blanchester, Ohio, is still living, though in his ninety-third year. I have lately received a short letter from him, written by his own hand; he says his general health is good considering his age. I also got a letter from his grandson, who says he is able to walk out about town, though he had a fall during the winter, which confined him to his room for some time. He has the use of all his faculties, except that he is slightly deaf. He can see to read without the use of glasses; he celebrated his ninety-second birthday the twelfth of September last, and on Sunday, Sept. 13th, went into the pulpit and preached to a large audience, this being the seventy-fifth anniversary of his ministry, or completing seventy-four years as an Old School Baptist preacher. He commenced to preach in the year 1829. Several local newspapers published accounts in regard to these facts, and said that "Elder J. C. Beeman probably enjoys the distinction of being the oldest minister in the State who is mentally and physically able to fill a pulpit." He associated and preached in company with the following well known Elders of the nineteenth century: Elders Wilson Thompson, Thomas P. Dudley, John F. Johnson, Gilbert Beebe and many others of the same faith, to all of whom he was greatly attached because of the strong and firm doctrine which they advocated. The last time I saw my uncle was when he was in his eightieth year; I spoke to him in regard to the above Elders and others that were then gone, and asked his opinion of the different points of doctrine advocated by them. He expressed great satisfaction with all these "fathers in the ministry," but he was then surrounded by a new element claiming to be the "genuine" Primitive Baptists, which he could not fellowship. About that time conditionalism had made its appearance in many surrounding churches. About ten years ago I wrote to him about the new ideas advanced by many Baptists of the west, that they were preaching two salvations, one by grace, the other by works, and that a child of God becomes a "free agent" after he is born of the Spirit. His reply was this: "We have the same kind of Baptists here." He was noted as being strong in the advocacy of God's power to save all that were chosen in Christ before the world was, in time and in eternity. There is consolation to the poor child of God when he is assailed by those claiming to be brethren, who have brought in new things, in the thought that he is not alone in contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, for many have gone before them who have borne testimony of the will and power of God to save his people, and that with a complete deliverance without any creature help. Much more does it impress upon our minds the sweetness and power of God's grace when we realize that we have seen and heard for ourselves some of the "ancients" who certainly belong to the "great cloud of witnesses" who have overcome the world in the triumphs of living faith. This is the faith of God's elect, none but the elect can attain unto it. The elect cannot obtain it through any earthly agency or means, or because they are personally any better than the non-elect, but it is a gift, free, as grace.

In hope of immortality, yours,

JEF. F. BEEMAN.

[WE feel glad to receive this message from this aged brother, and are sure that all who read the SIGNS will feel their hearts go out in sympathy, fellowship and love toward this aged minister of the gospel. The dear Lord has given him

favor seldom accorded to any one. We rejoice that the faith which he has loved, and of which he has testified so long, is still his hope and comfort. We are glad, too, that we can have this testimony from so aged a servant of God, that the faith which was his long ago, is still his faith, as it is our faith. Nothing but full and free salvation will avail any poor sinner, either in this life or in the next; we must have salvation by grace to-day and all the way through. "Grace all the work shall crown." May the blessing of God, who keepeth covenant with his people even down to old age, abide with and upon our aged brother all the remnant of his days on earth.—ED.]

PETERSBURG, Del., April 9, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—All day yesterday the dear household of faith was in my mind, and I think I never felt the love of God, and love for his dear saints, stronger in my heart than then. I felt that I could scarcely keep from neglecting my work long enough to sit down and address as many of them as read the SIGNS, but it seemed I could not see where I could possibly take the time; then I thought perhaps I might still feel like writing when I would have a better opportunity, and am glad I have it this evening, and that I still feel like writing, but I do not know that I can write as well as I could have done yesterday, although I well know if my thoughts are not guided by a higher power than of myself my letter will not interest God's dear children. I do not know that I ever felt the love of God shed abroad in my heart more, if as much as I have since my dear mother's death. I do feel that he has comforted me in this great loss, and I feel from my heart to say it is all right, for all he does is right, because he doeth it, and we know he does nothing wrong. I felt yesterday, and do yet in a measure feel that I would like to take them all in my embrace, and I believe I do embrace them all in a love that is not of the flesh, but of God. Just before beginning this, I read your editorial in the SIGNS of April 1st, and enjoyed it so much. Where you call attention to the words, "They that thought upon his name," is so good and encouraging to us thinkers. Although at times I am given liberty to express some of my thoughts and feelings by writing to the dear ones, yet when I am with them face to face, it is seldom I can talk of these precious things; I cannot find language to express them. I do feel that it is good for us to speak often one to another, even if we cannot always do so. I feel to say to all that feel discouraged or cast down because they cannot speak of the things that are most precious to them, and that do think upon his name, read the editorial that I have called attention to, and I do think they will be comforted by what you have written.

I feel like telling you of an experience which I passed through last fall, not long after your visit with us. The fourth Sunday in October, after meeting, two or three said to me, "What a good sermon we had this morning." But I had been and was so cold and lifeless that I had not seemed to enjoy it so much, and there came a strong feeling over me that I had never known anything about spiritual things, and that all were deceived in me; I felt so bad, and my sins seemed to be weighing me down. I was constrained to write to my dear uncle and pastor, Elder W. W. Meredith, and tell him my feelings, and to ask him to pray for me, for I felt I could not, for I did not know how to pray for myself. But now I feel

that it was all prayer, and that it was answered in a few days. It caused me to think of the letter I wrote you of my thoughts about the evening and the morning were the first day, &c., and your answer to me of the year before. I received an answer from uncle in a few days after I wrote him, and it was like apples of gold in pictures of silver, although I had begun to feel better awhile before I got the letter. I have read the letter many, many times over and over. I feel now it was for my good to have that experience, but it was awful to me at the time I was passing through it.

We feel much encouraged here at Cow Marsh for the manifest love and goodness of God to us as a church. He has given us a good pastor in our dearly beloved brother Elder W. W. Meredith, and now we feel he has raised up another of the dear ones to speak to the people of God of his goodness and mercy to them and to preach Jesus Christ and him crucified. The young brother who we feel has been raised up for this purpose is brother Benjamin E. Cubbage, youngest son of brother B. C. Cubbage. At our church meeting last Saturday the church set him apart as a licentiate.

Hoping to meet you at the Delaware Association next month, I am your sister in hope of eternal life,

ANNIE MEREDITH.

SUNDAY, October 31, 1875.

MISS LEAH A. ENSOR—DEARLY BELOVED SISTER IN THE HOPE OF LIFE ETERNAL:—I feel as though I want to talk to some one about the precious things that relate to our heavenly Master's kingdom; I hope that I may not tire you with the bungling way in which I may set them forth. I know that I am bound with infirmities, but you, dear sister, know that the word of the Lord is not bound, and if it be his pleasure it will cheer and comfort you, though coming through such a poor, broken vessel as myself. I wish to talk of the glories of our Redeemer's kingdom, and not of myself; I would talk of his feeding those who have come up out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, declaring that they shall not hunger nor thirst any more. It was upon this spiritual food that Elijah journeyed forty days to the mount of God, and I know by my own experience that we often have to go a long time feeding upon some portion of the word with which he has fed and strengthened us. It may be as long as did the prophet, that is, until we implore his throne of grace to know if his mercy is clean gone forever. Then perhaps he shows us terrible things, as he did the prophet in the whirlwind, the earthquake and in the fire. Then we cry out, "I am undone," and would hide from his presence as did the prophet in the cave, if it were possible. Then comes the sweet, still, small voice, and we know that our Savior is in it, and then comes the hiding of the face, and the saying, How couldest thou doubt the love of the dear Savior? Thus it is with me often. Jesus, the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them. This shall not be in a way or manner which will please our carnal desires, but according to his own way and purpose. We desire to be fed to the satisfying of this old carnal nature of ours, but it is not his purpose for us to walk by sight, but by faith, and he gives us food sufficient for us to hope in his mercy, and it is by hope that we are saved. Erskine says of this food and this throne, "It must be plentiful provision that comes from this throne." His kingdom is a spiritual one,

and it is not of this world. "The flesh profiteth nothing." Food for the soul must be spiritual, and his words are spirit and they are life. The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; there is wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption; there is wisdom for the ignorant, righteousness for the guilty, sanctification for the filthy and redemption for the ruined; there is comfort for the sorrowful and strength for the weakest. David says, "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house."

It is thus, dear sister, that each of the little ones receive their food in this world of sin, sorrow and death. There is enough for a march from one Bethel to another. At each they find blessings. Despair is never so black as to drive away all hope of the mercy of God and his Christ our Redeemer, nor is the pathway which I have trodden so bright that hope is turned to sight. Yet faith bids me to trust in his power, and to hope in his mercy. I believe that he will give you and me, and each of his precious children their meat in due season. Now that he has mounted his throne he will let down blessings to the poor at his footstool.

Yours affectionately,

THOMAS H. SCOTT.

[WE have found the above excellent letter among some old manuscript, and deem it worthy of a place in the SIGNS. Both the writer and the sister to whom it was written, were then members of the church at Black Rock, Md. Both have departed this life, and we believe are at rest forever with the Lord. Sister Leah Ensor, to whom the letter was written, lived but a short time afterwards, while brother Scott passed away but a few months ago. We believe fully that both are now in the full realization of the excellent things spoken of in the letter. Both were dear to us for the truth's sake. —ED.]

WESTFIELD, Ill., Jan. 6, 1904.

EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES: —I have a very precious letter from my much esteemed brother and sister True, of Kansas, Ill., and herewith submit it to you to publish in the SIGNS, if you think proper to do so. It is very comforting to me, and I feel that it might be to others, and as many of the readers are acquainted with brother True they will likely be glad to hear from him in this way.

I have often thought I would like to tell you how much I enjoy reading the many good letters, as well as the editorials in the SIGNS, and that I do hope you may be permitted to live long, and that you may be sustained by our heavenly Father to as earnestly contend for the faith that was once delivered to the saints in the future as you have so nobly done in the past. I can see no difference now in the doctrine they advocate than what was contended for forty and fifty years ago. I have most of the volume of 1870 in my house, and they surely speak the same truths that you do now, and may the dear Lord still sustain you in your labors in publishing the SIGNS, is the prayer of a poor sinner, saved by grace if saved at all,

MARY J. PETTY.

KANSAS, Ill., Dec. 13, 1903.

DEAR SISTER PETTY:—Last Sunday night we were talking of you, and you were writing to us. To-night you may be thinking of us, and we will now try to answer your precious letter written a

week ago to us. The dear Savior in his sermon on the mount said among many other good things, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." Your letter brings these words of Christ forcibly to mind. We want to say to you as he did to his disciples, "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven." Dear sister, it comforts both of us, Mariam and me, to read of your sorrows on account of your sinful nature, not that we want you to have sorrow, but because it shows us that one whom we have utmost confidence in as a child of God, has sore conflicts and doubts of their condition. It gives us strong fellowship, and also increases our poor, trembling faith in love, we hope, to God. John in his first epistle general says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Now you do not deceive yourself, but confess your sins. So this same writer says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." O dear sister, what a dear, precious Savior you have, to forgive your sins. Yes, you are tempted, and we read, He was tempted in all points like unto his brethren, but blessed truth, he knew no sin. So he is able not only to feel for your sins, but able to save just such a sinner as you are, and we hope such poor, weak ones as we are also. If he does not save us in time and to eternity I am without hope, for I know by long experience that I cannot save myself. One thing that often gives such a poor creature even as I am encouragement, is in the word of Paul where he said in alluding to the things that he did, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me."

Now, sister, in conclusion we want to say to you, Christ "came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Please write again. My wife joins in what I have written.

Your brother in hope of being freed from sin when this mortal shall have put on immortality,

JAMES M. TRUE.

MT. VERNON, Texas, April 21, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I herewith inclose you a letter from Elder P. H. James, of Arkansas. If you think it worth its room, and will not occupy the place of better matter, you may publish. It was a comfort to me, and I thought it might be to others.

Yours to serve,

H. B. JONES.

PRESCOTT, Ark., March 22, 1904.

ELDER H. B. JONES—DEAR BROTHER:—After so long a time I will attempt to answer your last good letter, written me in January. What a time has elapsed since I received it. However I have frequently been reminded that an answer was due you, but I have neglected writing. Please pardon me for such neglect. At intervals since I received your letter I have felt somewhat like writing, but most of the time I have been careful about many things, (worldly things) and "living after the flesh," and you know when we are thus engaged we have no spirit to write to our kindred in Christ.

How clearly and aptly do the Scriptures agree with our experience. What was wrought in the patriarchs, prophets, Jesus and the apostles, is evidently wrought in us, hence the perfect agreement. So there is a sameness in the experience of all the heirs of promise as they journey through this "thorny maze." They all in a measure, at least, "taste the wormwood and the gall" in their

travel from nature's darkness to his marvelous light, and for a time rejoice in his light, but sooner or later the warfare begins, then there is never any discharge in this war. There are many foes to fight; foes within and foes without, and if I know anything about christian conflicts, the most insidious and unrelenting foe I have to contend with is this old deceitful and desperately wicked heart of mine, and this is one foe I cannot conquer, and unless Jesus the mighty conqueror undertakes for me, it will never be conquered. But, my brother, I am often weary, O so weary and footsore, while traveling this rough and thorny road; I feel to say with the psalmist, "O that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away and be at rest." Again, I feel to say with the poet,

"I sigh from this body of sin to be free,
Which hinders my joy and communion with thee."

But my days are numbered as are hirelings, and I must fill up my cup of suffering before I go hence; then let me suffer and wait all my appointed time till my change comes. If I am numbered with the blood-washed throng what a happy release, what a glorious transition. This will be the ineffable joy of all that Jesus bought with his precious blood. Then he is worthy and deserves all the glory, adoration and the highest anthems of praise that is possible for poor sinners to render to him.

Well, dear brother, as I am tired tonight, and do not feel to have anything more to write you, I will bring this letter to a close. I so much desire to see and be with you, and would be so glad if it is the good Lord's will to have you visit us some time during the year. I would like so much to visit you and the dear children out there, but my means for traveling expenses are generally so meagre I do not travel much by public conveyance.

May heaven's blessings rest upon you and yours. Write me when you have time. Excuse this short and disconnected letter, and believe me as ever, your unworthy brother, I hope, in bonds,

P. H. JAMES.

TENNILLE, Ga., Dec. 21, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I cannot express in words how I enjoy reading the SIGNS; I told brother Jerry Brantley yesterday that I would feel lonely without them. He said he would feel so, too; that one piece sometimes is worth the price of the paper; said sometimes he wished the whole world could read them. I told him if the whole world should read them it would not believe the doctrine the SIGNS advocates. The world did not believe the doctrine of God our Savior in Christ's and the apostles' day, neither does it believe their doctrine in this day. I do not see how any person can claim to be an Old School Baptist and say they do not believe the doctrine the SIGNS OF THE TIMES advocates. A person told me once the reason I believed this doctrine was because I read your paper. I told him I knew that was not the reason, for I believed it before I ever saw or even heard of the SIGNS. I also told him that I hoped the Lord had taught me to believe this precious truth, for had I been left to myself to believe, and some one else to teach me this God-honoring doctrine, I would be far from believing it now, for I have tried very hard to disbelieve it.

Dear readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I did not think when I began this letter that I would write anything for publication, but somehow or other I have a mind to write. I do not have this mind

often, I am such a great sinner, and feel my unworthiness so sensibly, and my understanding is so limited, and I am so often in darkness and in the slough of despair, that I fear anything I write may darken counsel, and not be comforting to the children of God. Sometimes when I am way down in the valley and groping along in the dark, all at once the light of God's reconciling countenance shines into my poor soul again, and I am made to feel that the Lord has restored unto me the joy of his salvation, poor, sinful and unworthy as I feel myself to be. My poor soul is filled with his love; I know that it is not for anything good that I have done, but all for the sake of Jesus. I sometimes, when all this takes place with me, exclaim with David, the sweet singer in Israel, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Glorious thought! precious hope! Dear brethren, I would not give the little hope I have in Jesus for all this world. Wealth can be taken from us, fires, storms, floods and misfortunes destroy it, but this hope we have in Jesus can never be taken from us, can never be destroyed; none but God can take it from us, and this he will not do, because what he does is done forever. He gave it, yes, and gives unto his people eternal life, and they shall never perish. I am glad this hope in Jesus can never fail, and am glad it is founded upon so solid a foundation, one that can never be moved. May the Lord continue to bestow his blessings upon his dear people everywhere.

And now, brother, may the dear Lord ever be with you, to guide you into all truth, is my prayer, I hope, for Jesus' sake.

Your brother in hope of life eternal,
JOHN W. BRASWELL.

OXFORD, N. Y., March 20, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—May one so undeserving as I am of the glorious promises of God thus address you? Yet I do hope that I am one of his children, he is all and in all to me, he is my life. In all my trials, and in all my joys, I look to him, and he is my all-sufficient aid, he is the Lily of the valley, and the One altogether lovely. I fear that I wander very far away from him sometimes. Of myself I cannot think one good thought. I so much fear, dear brother, that my love will grow cold for the brethren. Sometimes it seems that I do not care to read the Bible as I did years ago; it is so easy for me to take up other reading. There was a time that I could not do much else but read the Bible and the SIGNS, and sing hymns. O I am so fearful that I follow after the vain things of the world too much. But I am reminded that God is my all-sufficient aid every hour. I do not love the vain world. I feel that I am just staying and waiting for the Lord's appointed time to release me from the world, how long I must stay I do not know. I get so low and dark in my mind, and am doubtful, and feel that the children of God must be disappointed in me since I made a profession of religion, they must see that I am so sinful and so wicked. Sometimes when I get down in the depths the Comforter comes, and in a voice soft and low, whispers, "Fear not, I am with thee." Then I feel strong, and let come what will, I fear nothing; the Lord is my Shepherd. Then my faith is strong, and I dare to hope that I am one of his

children, his chosen ones, a true follower of the meek and lowly Jesus. I do love his dear name, and all those who love him.

My mind is with you all at Hopewell so much of the time. Sister writes and tells me of what good meetings you have. I do not get out to meeting often, as it is so far from here. I hope to go again soon. Elder Vail comes to us sometimes. We love to have him with us, and all other Old School Baptists who can come. I hope to be with you at Hopewell at the association if the Lord will. I feel very glad that the SIGNS will continue; it must be a great care upon you all. May the Lord help and sustain you to bear all the burdens of this life, is my prayer. I hope that you and your family are well. I long to see your faces again. Pray for me, that I may be found walking in the way that shall become my profession. I desire the love and fellowship of the true church of God.

I remain yours in fellowship,

MARY BREWSTER.

KENNEDY, Ala., April 24, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I have been reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to-day, and they have been so much comfort to me, my little hope that was about gone has been renewed, and I have been built up in our most holy faith. I have an impression to write to the SIGNS and tell what I hope have been the dealings of the Lord with me. It was in the year of 1897, the 31st day of January, when I saw myself a great sinner in the sight of a just and holy God. My father came to spend the day with us, and brought the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to read. He and my husband began to read an editorial, it was headed, "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." These words sounded in my ears like some one had spoken to me, "Will you ever bear the image of the heavenly?" I then, for the first time in life, saw myself a lost sinner without God and without hope in the world. I commenced begging the Lord for mercy, almost without ceasing. One month passed and I was still in great trouble, it seemed that I could not live under the load of sin much longer; I came to the conclusion that I had not asked the Lord in the right way, and this was the reason he had not heard my prayers. So I thought I would get the Bible and see how Jesus taught his disciples to pray. I thought then I could pray a prayer that he would hear. But when I took the book to read, these words came to me as though some one had spoken to me, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they that testify of me." I did not open the book to read, for I felt condemned in the sight of God, and saw that eternal life was in God and not in the Bible. I had been begging for mercy almost without ceasing, and why it was that he had not heard my prayers I did not know. Then these words were spoken to me, "Without faith it is impossible to please God." I then saw that I did not have faith, and he would not hear my prayers. O what a horrible pit I was in! My burden grew heavier and heavier until my physical strength began to give away. When those burdensome feelings came upon me I would get so weak I could hardly walk. I began to think that some dreadful disease had gotten hold upon me. I thought I would put those troublesome feelings off. The next time I felt that burden I was sitting by the fire, I rose up and said, I will

not allow this feeling to bother me any longer, I will go and get some fuel for the fire, and put it off. But I grew weaker and weaker, and when I got to the wood I picked up one small stick, and could hardly raise up with it. Then I saw I had no power to resist whatever the Lord saw fit to put on me. I thought I would not live long, and if he sent my soul to hell I deserved it. I was so sinful I did not deserve any mercy, but I could not keep from begging for mercy, and longed to know if my name was written in heaven. On the morning of the fourth day of July, that same year, it pleased God to reveal himself to me the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely. I had a great desire that morning to read some in the Bible, I had no choice place to read, so I said, Wherever it opens I will read. It opened at the seventh chapter of Revelation. I commenced to read, and when I got to where the angels were sent to seal the children of God in their forehead, O how I longed to know if I ever would be sealed; and when I got to where John saw that great company which stood before the throne and before the Lamb, and all the angels standing round about the throne, and worshiping, saying, "Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever," I could not read any more, for I was weeping, and my eyes were blinded with tears. I could almost see heaven, and God sitting on the throne, and the angels giving him all the glory and honor, and O how I longed and desired to know if my name was written there. As I went to put up the Bible, a calm feeling came over me, and these words came to me, I will be your Shepherd and guide, and I was so happy. I said, Bless the Lord, O my soul, for he is my Shepherd and I shall not want. I then went out in the yard, and all nature was praising God; even the leaves on the trees were quivering with joy. I said, Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name. That was a sweet day of rest to me, but since then I have had many doubts and fears. I feel to be such a great sinner in the sight of a just and holy God, who is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are opened to the eye of him with whom we have to do. I am often made to fear and tremble before the all-wise and righteous Judge. Then I can only say as David did, "Hide not thy face far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation."

Your unworthy sister in hope of a better world,

B. A. CROWLEY.

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WE have only four self-pronouncing Bibles left in stock, as follows; three of No. 8313, one of No. 8701, and only two Testaments. These books will be sold at the usual prices. For description and price see any SIGNS for 1903.

Owing to the advance in price of such books, and the few calls for them, we have decided not to handle them after these on hand are gone.

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1904.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

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JOHN VI. 44.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR SIR:—If not asking too much I would like you to answer fully the questions proposed below and give your views upon the portion of Scripture named. It has been upon my mind for some time past. I am desirous of knowing the truth upon this subject, and any light that you can throw upon it will be greatly appreciated. The Methodists and New School Baptists claim that every man has an equal chance to be saved. I have been unable to find any portion of God's word in accord with such teaching as some of the modern denominations teach. I am a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and you can, if you will, give your views through it at your convenience. I wish my name withheld from publication, and so please use "Subscriber" in its place. I hope that you will pardon me for asking this of you. Though a stranger in the flesh, I hope not in the Spirit.

The text is in John vi. 44: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."

From the above Scripture I understand that no man can come to Christ unless the Father draws him. This implies that all men are not drawn, and those not drawn are left to everlasting punishment. I understand the Scriptures to teach the final and everlasting punishment of all who die in their sins. Now if this is the case, why should they be punished for what they could not receive? I would like you to be particular in explaining this last part, and cite Scripture to bear upon it, if there be any. Also will you please state if God is responsible to man in any degree for his soul's salvation? Or is man in any way responsible to God for his salvation? If so, how and in what way are either responsible?

SUBSCRIBER.

APRIL 5, 1904.

While we do not know that we fully understand all that is implied in the questions propounded by "Subscriber," we feel like trying to present some thoughts upon the subject named in general. "Subscriber" does not wish his name used, and so we withhold it, though it is known to us. We fully believe that the writer of the above request desires to know the truth which makes free. Perhaps also some others have been led to ask similar questions regarding the same things, and it may be that some of them also may find something in this reply suited to their need; it will be so if God wills.

"Subscriber" is certainly right in his conclusion from the text named that no man can come to Christ except he is drawn by the Father, and he also is certainly right in his conclusion that all who are not thus drawn are left to everlasting punishment. The Scriptures, as he says, do certainly teach the final and everlasting punishment of all who die in their sins. Concerning all this we do not need to multiply words, but we feel to add that the foreknowledge, predestination and everlasting decrees of God, together with the doctrine of personal and unconditional election, the special atonement and effectual calling of the people of God, as well as the doctrine of their final preservation to glory, are all in perfect harmony with the doctrine taught in this Scripture, as seen by our friend so clearly. All these principles of doctrine form one harmonious whole; if one stands, so do they all; if one falls, so do they all as well.

But one or two questions occur to us that it may be well to allude to for a little. Why can no man come to Christ except he be drawn by the Father? The sufficient answer is, that men are dead to God, literally and really dead, and not

figuratively so, and therefore cannot move toward God in any sense of the word any more than he that is dead in his grave can move toward the sunlight in the heavens above him; there is no movement in the dead toward life. So he that is dead to God cannot move toward everlasting life, or toward Christ who is the life of the chosen vessels of mercy. Therefore if any man does come to Christ it must be because drawn by a power outside of himself entering into him and working in him effectually; life must be imparted to him, else he will never be drawn toward Christ in any way whatever.

Remember also that the word is "drawn," not "try to draw," but "drawn." The word itself necessarily means to move forward. A man may try to draw another to Christ, but all men will fail. Trying to draw is not to draw. No man can be "drawn" except by the Father; almighty power must be exercised in this work. If any man deny this, his controversy is not with us, but with the blessed Redeemer. We have no desire to side with him who would controvert his Maker. Woe to the man who hurls himself against the shield of the Almighty.

But what is it to come to Christ? It is not to go on a pilgrimage over land and sea to some shrine where he may be supposed to more especially manifest himself. It does not imply any movement of the body through space. Were Jesus on earth in the body of his flesh today, and were some one, hearing of him, to journey from the ends of the earth to his presence in the flesh, that would not signify coming to Christ in the sense of the text. The Savior meant coming to him in fellowship, in love, in conformity to his will, as our Helper, Savior and Redeemer, as our Guardian, Guide and Friend, as our All and in all. No man can thus come to him except by the work of repentance, of godly sorrow for sin wrought in the heart, of faith in him as the sin-bearer and sacrifice for sin, and by the revelation of him to the soul as the One altogether lovely. All this is the work alone of the holy Spirit; no man can have any part in this miracle of grace except to receive it, as the parched ground receives the rain, or as the dead receive life from the dead. All this we do not doubt is plain to "Subscriber," as well as to all in whom this coming has been wrought.

Now we come to the first question of our friend, Why should they be punished for what they could not receive? We do not doubt that by this question is intended to set forth what is a very common position among Methodists and New School Baptists, viz: that men are finally lost because they have rejected the gospel. We have heard it said that the damning sin is the rejection of Christ. It is the common theory among all of those who hold to what are called Arminian sentiments, that Christ died to save all men, if all men will accept him when he is offered to them. There never could be a greater perversion of the gospel than this idea; the gospel is not an offer to any man; Christ is not offered to any man. The gospel is simply a proclamation of the fact that Christ has died, and has risen again to redeem and justify his people from all their sins. He himself said, "It is finished." Again, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." By him we are freely justified from all things, from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses. "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Surely we do not need to refer

to more Scriptures in proof of this truth. To preach the gospel is to set forth, not an offer of salvation, but salvation itself, completed for the needy; it is to declare to the debtor that his debts are paid, to the sinner that his sins are washed away, to the lost that he is found, and to the perishing that mercy is on the throne forever. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" "It is Christ that died." See all the rest of the language connected with this in the eighth chapter of Romans. It is but a statement of a simple but awful fact, that all men were lost and under the curse of a broken law from the beginning. The work of grace in the heart of a sinner in which he is convicted of his sins does not teach him that he is in danger of being lost, but that he is lost already, and when the law appears in its awful majesty, that soul hears its thunders, and confesses its justice in his condemnation. The coming of Christ was not to seal the condemnation of any, for the condemnation of all was already sealed by the law. The coming of Christ was to redeem those who were under the curse of the law, and therefore he became a curse for them. The gospel is not the ministration of death to any man, but the ministration of life, where it comes at all. The law is the ministration of death, and the law alone. Therefore men are not punished for not receiving the gospel, they cannot be, for already they are under the full wrath of God, which abideth on them by reason of their sin against the holy law.

We have often shuddered as we have heard in former years from the pulpit and from the press that the gospel rejected was what sealed the final doom of men. In what does the gospel exceed the law, if this be so? Wherein is the new covenant any better than the old, if this be so? If obedience to the law could have brought life, and disobedience death, and if believing the gospel works life, while disbelieving the gospel works death and condemnation, what is the real difference between them? The gospel, in this case, is as much the ministration of death and condemnation as is the law, but thanks be to God, the gospel speaks only of life from the dead, secured in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. To preach him as the full, sufficient and perfect Savior, without our human works, without even our acceptance of an offer, is to preach the gospel; to preach anything less than this is to preach another gospel, which after all is but a modified form of the law, and not a gospel at all; it is not a gospel because there is no good news in any such system, and the gospel means good news.

The question which our friend has propounded is a pertinent one, Why should they be punished for what they could not receive? We assure our friend that such is not the case. Men are lost forever already through the fall of Adam, as by one man's transgression "sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." This is the testimony of Paul, who wrote by divine inspiration this great truth. Men, all men, are by nature already lost, but grace in Christ seeks out and saves the elect of God. Here is sovereign mercy exercised where God will exercise it according to his sovereign will. All others are left to perish in their sins forever, not for rejecting the gospel, but because they have sinned against the law of God and are justly condemned by it already.

In the next two questions proposed by "Subscriber" we suppose that he uses

the word "responsible" as it is commonly used by most religionists of the day. As used by them, it is a word in harmony with the thought that the gospel is offered to men, and will save all who choose to accept it. First, we will say that our God is under no obligation to any man; he can only be under obligation to himself, and to his own word of sure promise. Our God owes nothing to man in any way, least of all does he owe anything to sinners who have become enemies of God by wicked works. Our God will fulfill all his word, because it is his word, and he is faithful and true, but the dear Redeemer declared that if we have done all that was commanded, we are still unprofitable servants, and have done only what was our duty to do. So far is it from being true that our God is responsible to sinners, he is not under any responsibility to men who are in the greatest degree obedient to him. He gives no account of his affairs to any creature that he has made; there are none in heaven or in earth to hold him to an accounting; he never owes or can owe any man anything; whatever he bestows upon men is simply free grace. If any sinner is saved, it is of grace, and grace all the work shall crown through everlasting days. The topmost stone shall be brought forth when the building of mercy is completed, with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it. Our God is under no obligation to any man to save him by reason of any goodness in him, through the sure covenant of grace alone can any be saved, and in grace there can be no obligation. If there be obligation anywhere, there grace cannot enter. And man is not responsible to God for his salvation, if we understand the use of the word aright. Man is not responsible, because all his salvation is by grace; he has no part in this great work save to receive it passively, and then rejoicingly enter into it by faith, which is also the gift of God. The saved owe their salvation to God, and so they all join in the song, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain," "and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation, under heaven," "to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

In conclusion, we desire to add that the soul who has experienced this great salvation will from that time desire to walk worthy of this salvation; he will feel a warfare within twixt reigning grace and striving sin; he will feel that he cannot do the good that he would, and that he does the evil that he would not; he will see occasion to adopt the cry of the apostle, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And when faith's victory is given he will exclaim with Paul, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Such an one will work, not to save himself, but because he is saved; not to secure life from the dead, but because life is already his from the dead. He will love God because God has first loved him, and shed his love abroad in his heart. He will now choose the ways he once abhorred, and depart from the places, pleasures and friends which once charmed him. He will long for the courts of the Lord's house, and he will count one day there better than a thousand. We trust that our friend has felt this great salvation, and that these things have been wrought in him. May God give us all clear views of the salvation that is by grace alone. All the heart exercises named above are evidences of that drawing of God by which we have been brought to Christ, and are still brought there in every time of need.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

REVELATION XXII. 14.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Will you gratify me, your unworthy brother, by giving your views on Rev. xxii. 14? "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." More particularly on the *city*. What city? Where is it? And when do we enter it?

Yours, as ever,

HIRAM CAMPBELL.

BRUNSWICK, Maine, Oct. 31, 1861.

REPLY.

The names and description of the city as given in the connection, leave no room to doubt that the city mentioned in our text, is the holy city, New Jerusalem, which descended from God out of heaven, and is a presentation of the church of the living God, which is also called the bride, the Lamb's wife. It is also called the tabernacle of God, with men, in which God dwells, owning the citizens as his people and manifesting himself to them as their God; wiping away the tears from their eyes, and shielding them from sorrow, crying, pain and death. In this case we have a singular combination and blending of figures. A city, a bride, a wife, a tabernacle, &c., all of which are elsewhere in the Scriptures used to represent the church of God in her union with and subjection to our Lord Jesus Christ. We should not forget that figures familiar to us are employed by the Spirit to set forth and illustrate to us things of a spiritual and heavenly character. The figure of a city presents the subjects of grace as a congregation of the Lord, in their congregational capacity, as fellow-citizens in the church or city of God, and of the household of faith, and all under the regulations of a well disciplined community, under the same government, protected by the same walls and bulwarks which fortify and defend all who have the privilege of citizenship. And in this city are the common provisions which are so amply provided, for meat and drink, for light and comfort, for protection and safety. In this city the laws of naturalization exclude dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers and idolators, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie; admitting only those who are blessed of the Lord, and who as a manifest evidence that they are blessed, cheerfully take Christ's yoke on them, and show their allegiance to him by doing his commandments. As he said, Then are ye my disciples indeed, if ye do whatsoever I command you: and for a more manifest token to all, if they obey his new commandment: for, By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another. As citizens they all have certain rights of citizenship, such as the right to the tree of life, which is in the midst of the street of the city, and on either side of the river, which bears twelve manner of fruits, and yields her fruit every month; the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations. Instead of being forbidden and kept back from the tree of life by the cherubim and flaming sword, which turneth every way to keep the way of the tree of life, as under the legal dispensation, in the earthly paradise, or in the Jerusalem which is in bondage with her children, in this New Jerusalem all who are written among the living in Jerusalem, whose names are registered in the book of life, have a right to the tree of life, and to the pure river of water of life, which is clear as crystal, which proceedeth out of the throne of God and the Lamb. For unto all such the Spirit and the bride saith, Come, and they have the privilege of taking of the water of life freely. While as citizens they are a

multitude which no man can number, as the bride, the Lamb's wife, they all make but one bride, one church, one body. For ye are all one in Jesus Christ. There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are all called in one hope of your calling. Here then is identity, Christ himself is the Head of the body, the church, and the church is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. As the bride of Christ, her creation was in him, as the creation of Eve, in the figure, was in Adam. She is one with him, They twain shall be one. Bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh; and she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. She is not merely the bride, but the married wife of the Lamb. For thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of hosts is his name, and thy Redeemer is the holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called. The testimony of John the Baptist, when he identified and pointed out the Husband, saying, Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, was, He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom standeth and rejoiceth because of the bridegroom's voice; thus my joy is fulfilled. This city is the city of God, and Ezekiel says, (xlviii. 35,) The name of the city shall be, THE LORD IS THERE. And God has said, by Isaiah, And they shall call them the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord. And thou shalt be called sought out, a city not forsaken, (Isaiah lxii. 12.) From this last mentioned passage we learn that the city is composed of the redeemed of the Lord, whom the Lord has not only redeemed, but whom he has sought out; he found this people as he did Jacob, in a waste-howling wilderness, and led him about and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of his eye. These are redeemed from among men, out of every kindred and tribe of mankind, and they are redeemed to God, and made priests and kings, and they shall reign with Christ on the earth. They shall all of them come with singing to Zion, the holy city, and they shall sit down in the kingdom of God with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and they shall sing this song, We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and for bulwarks. God himself is a wall of fire round about, and the glory in her midst. This is the city of which God has said, Here will I dwell forever; for I have desired it for an habitation. He will abundantly bless her provisions, and fill her poor with bread. The Lord God is her Sun and her Shield; he will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved. God will help her, and that right early. Truly, glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God: not one of her stakes shall ever be removed, not one of her cords shall ever be broken.

"Her ancient walls appear to be
The workmanship of Deity.
Founded in grace, they still appear,
Without a flaw or chasm there.

Oft has this city's strength been tried
By mighty foes on every side;
But all in vain it yet hath been,
She baffles Satan, hell and sin.

Count ye her towers, how high they rise,
Her golden spires, they reach the skies;
Her golden streets are fair to view,
Her palaces and bulwarks, too.

Then round her walk, her turrets tell,
Mark all her brazen bulwarks well;
Spread far and wide her deathless fame,
Her pearly gates, and walls of flame."

Much more might be written in answer to the first inquiry of brother Campbell, What city? But we trust enough has

been said to show that we understand the city mentioned (Rev. xxii. 14,) to be the holy city, New Jerusalem, which John saw in his vision, coming down from God out of heaven, and which he describes in and throughout the last two chapters of the New Testament, and which is designed to describe her in her gospel organization and primitive purity, as the spiritual kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Second. Where is it? We reply, it is where two or three are gathered together in Christ's name. It is in all places where God has revealed his name. It is in the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. Of her locality the psalmist has said, Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north. Her locality is marked by stakes that shall never be removed, and confined by cords that shall never be broken. The sacred records of eternity show that God has been her dwelling-place in all generations. She dwells in the secret place of the Most High, and abides under the shadow of the Almighty. Her life is hid with Christ in God. Her place of defence is the munitions of rocks. The eternal God is her refuge, and underneath her are the everlasting arms. We find her in the eternal, immutable love of God; she is found in his decrees, wrapped up in the bundle of eternal life, which is in his Son. She has her place in the eternal purpose of God, which he purposed in himself before the world began; which purpose shall unshaken remain when the world shall be no more. She is found in the election of grace, chosen of God in Christ before the foundation of the world. She has her standing in the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, and in his justifying righteousness she outshines the sun, is more fair than the moon, and terrible as an army with banners. She inhabits the Rock, is in the secret places of the stairs, and she sits in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

But in regard to the house of her pilgrimage, God has chosen her in the furnace of affliction. In this world she has tribulation, but in Christ she has peace. The place assigned her by the world is as the offscouring of all things, unto this day. Hated by the world, tried and tempted by the devil, opposed by the flesh, a jest and a by-word to all the children of the bondwoman. But her home is in Jesus Christ, and in the earth she has no abiding place or continuing city. As to her sorrows, trials, persecutions, and her triumphs and victories, she is sometimes encompassed about by the armies of Gog and Magog; but sometimes she is seen upon Mount Zion, with the seal of God indelibly marked in her forehead, or on the sea of glass, which is mingled with fire, singing a song which none but the redeemed can learn or sing. She has had a place prepared for her in the wilderness, to be nourished and protected from the serpent. Whatever of sorrow, affliction, persecution or tribulation may be appointed for her here below, she has the assurance that she shall ultimately triumph through the blood of the Lamb and the word of his testimony. For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Third. When do we enter the city? As we view the whole church of God, existing in Christ, and chosen in him before the foundation of the world, according to Eph. i. 4, we regard the citizens as natives of the holy city. Sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and

called. (Jude 1.) Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. (2 Tim. i. 9.) Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. (Gal. iv. 26.) And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her; and the Highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there. (Psa. lxxxvii. 5, 6.) Judicially the saints entered when they were quickened together with Christ, in his resurrection, when they were raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places. For they are risen with Christ and are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. (Heb. xii. 24–26.)

But in what we regard as the immediate sense of the text proposed, (Rev. xxii. 14,) the saints come when they do his commandments; and thereby manifest that they are the blessed of the Lord. This coming in through the gates, is an experimental matter. Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God; and, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (John iii. 3–5.) The city in which the tree of life yields her fruits is a spiritual city, and can only be entered by the gates which are called *Praise.* (Isa. lx. 18.) The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. (Psa. lxxxvii. 2.) David says, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together: whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord."—Psa. cxxii. 1–4. As the tribes of Israel went up to the Old Jerusalem to worship, and entered the city by the gates of that city, so the tribes of the Lord go through the gates of the New Jerusalem, experimentally in their devotion, to worship the Lord in his holy temple in the spiritual Jerusalem. As the names of the tribes of Israel are written on the angels of the gates, (Rev. xxi. 12,) we learn that the ministry of praise, embracing gospel experience, gospel doctrine and ordinances, and all gospel privileges, belong to the tribes of the Lord, to the children of God, and to them exclusively. The gates of Zion which are called Praise, are used to signify wisdom, honor, power, counsel and peculiar privileges. And when the hearts of God's people are led by the Spirit in their heavenly exercises of worship and praise, they enter into the spiritual privileges of the kingdom, into the counsels of wisdom, and contemplate the glory of their Redeemer's kingdom, and talk of his power. "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in."—Isaiah xxvi. 1, 2. The gates of the holy city are only open to the righteous nation, for who else can enter by the gates of Praise? They are not accessible to those who love and make a lie,

but to the righteous nation that keepeth the truth.

"Those holy gates forever bar
Pollution, sin and shame,
None shall obtain admittance there,
But followers of the Lamb."

"Blessed are they that do his commandments." The commandments of him who says in the preceding verse, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." Who also says, in verse sixteen, "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." He is the King of Righteousness, the King eternal, and our only wise God and Savior. His commands are proclaimed from his throne in the holy city, and are applicable to all who are under law to Christ. Their faith and obedience are the evidences that they are his disciples, and that they have a right to the tree of life, and to enter into their peculiar privileges through the gates of the city; for the gates are open to the righteous continually, and his blessed people who know the joyful sound of his voice, shall go in and out and find pasture. They have right to the tree of life, and eat of its fruits freely, and live forever: for their right is a birthright, it is their inheritance, and it is their Father's good pleasure that they shall inherit the kingdom. There is a manifest entering into the holy city, by the gate of christian recognition and fellowship, not only when the new born babes in Christ declare in Zion what God has done for them, and when they publicly espouse his cause and take on them the profession of his name, and by the gate of baptism, declare their allegiance to Jesus as their King.

Finally, whenever the saints are enabled to worship God in the spirit, to rejoice in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh, in their social songs of praise, their prayers and supplications, in their love and fellowship, union and communion, in walking in the ordinances and order, the doctrine, discipline of the house of God, then we conclude they enter in through the gates, and enjoy their right to the tree of life.

We have been somewhat lengthy in our remarks, and perhaps have failed to meet the wishes of brother Campbell, but if any of our readers are edified or comforted in what we have written, our labor will not be in vain.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., November 1, 1861.

(See obituary notice of Hiram Campbell on page 348)

CHURCH NOTICES.

WASHINGTON, D. C., May 9, 1904.

SHILOH Primitive or Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., have noticed in several Baptist periodicals an appeal for aid in building a church-house here for the Primitive or Old School Baptist. Thinking perhaps some who may notice this appeal will think it is Shiloh Primitive or Old School Baptist Church, we wish to state it is a church recently formed by what is known as the Clarke Baptist. Shiloh Church was organized on June 20th, 1830, and has had as pastors among others, Elders Polkinhorn, Leachman, Trott, Purington, Chick, (the present editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES) and Elder J. T. Rowe, our present pastor. Shiloh Church is still without a building of its own, (meeting in a hall at 509 G St., N. W.) We have long felt the need of such a place to worship in, and hope before long to try and build one, when we may have to call on our brethren throughout the country to aid us, as we are a few of the Lord's poor, we trust, and there are members being added to the church as the Lord wills.

W. E. FRAZIER, } Deacons.
JOHN T. WALKER, }

POETRY.

ENCOURAGEMENT TO BELIEVERS.

O LORD, do thou direct my steps
In righteousness and peace;
Whatever blessings are withheld,
Wilt thou not grant me this?
The joys of earth, its follies, too,
How quickly speed away;
Our smiles and tears, our hopes and fears,
Are only for a day.

In that eternity of years,
Beyond the space of time,
If all the joys of heavenly bliss
Will be forever mine,
Why need I pine though sorrows come,
And thorns infest the road?
I travel through this wilderness
While on my way to God.

What if I travel much by night?
My feet shall rest secure
Upon the promise of my God,
His mercies shall be sure.
I've loved thee, little one, he saith,
From all eternity;
Although a mother may forget,
I'll still remember thee.

Though trials press thee from without,
And all thy foes within,
Fear not, for thou shalt overcome,
Ye are complete in him.
Your life was hid with Christ in God
Before the hills were made;
Your every sin was counted, too,
And all the debt was paid.

When Jesus hung on Calvary,
He suffered in your stead;
He washed away each guilty stain,
That not a spot should spread
Upon your soul. O fearful one,
His blood availed for thee;
Thou art all fair, beloved one,
No sin of thine is seen.

For evermore your surety stands
You and your God between;
For one with him your sins were his,
And all his merit thine.
He wrought a perfect righteousness,
And made an end of sin.
Who can condemn? 'tis Christ that died,
Who every lamb will bring.

Before his Father's face they stand,
And of his mercy sing.
O shout aloud, ye saints of earth,
And join the hosts above;
We'll sing through all eternity
His saving power and love.

JOIE E. WICKHAM.

CODDINGTON, Ohio.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, May 12th, 1904, at the home of the bride, C. H. Pickard and Miss Ida Williamson, both of Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, at the residence of the bride's parents', May 10th, 1904, Joseph S. Myers and Miss Bertha Strahl, both of Reynoldsburg, Franklin Co., Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

WE have been requested to prepare an obituary of **Elder Hiram Campbell,** as it was our privilege to know him for many years in the State of Maine. He was the son of George and Martha Campbell, and was born Jan. 18th, 1823, in Bowdoin, Maine. When twenty-three years of age he married Mary B. Elliot, of Bowdoinham, Maine, daughter of Enoch and Elizabeth Elliot; he died Feb. 12th, 1904.

We have many pleasant recollections crowding upon our mind of days spent in his company, and in hearing the word of the Lord from his lips. For many years he lived in or near Bowdoinham, Maine, and served with full acceptance that church and other churches in the Maine Association until age and increasing infirmities compelled him to give up the labor of the ministry among them. At the time of his death he was 81 years of age. We do not know the date of his baptism, but learn that he was ordained to the full work of the ministry about forty years ago. We met him for the first time a little before his ordination, at the association at Whitefield, Maine, and an acquaintance then began that was always pleasant and profitable to ourself. Some years ago he left his home near Brunswick, Maine, and moved to Somerville, Mass., and spent his last days with his daughter, Mrs. Mary McManus. The end, we are informed, was calm and peaceful, without a struggle or a groan. He was confined to his bed but about a week.

Elder Keene writes us as follows regarding the funeral service: "I attended the funeral, and at the request of his daughter preached from 2 Tim. iv. 6–8. It was one of the most sad, sacred and blessed seasons that I have ever experienced. It was sad to me because of the condition of sister Campbell; she would not have it that brother Campbell was dead, or that it was his funeral; she scorned and mocked such an idea. It was pitiful indeed, yet all was so sacred, for as I attempted in simplicity to expound the text, I felt that the Lord was with me, giving me utterance, and the rapt attention of sister Campbell, and my conversation with her immediately after speaking about the glorious theme, and her own experience and hope in the gospel, all made it sacred, sadly sacred, for she would repeatedly say, 'Yes, that is what Hiram believes, but he is not dead, and

this is not his funeral.' Then as I thought of our brother's exodus from the world, I felt that a very blessedness pervaded it all."

In addition to what has been already written, we desire to add that as long as we were associated with brother Campbell we never knew him to in the slightest degree waver from the truth of salvation by grace. For this he contended as one who had felt its power, and rejoiced in it. This was his special theme, although we have heard him treat well and often of other themes connected with this; yet here he was most animated and most deeply solemn. Many who have heard him can witness to this. Elder Campbell was a loving, affectionate man with his friends. It is to us a joy to remember the cordial greetings with which we have been favored at his hands so many times in the past. He was a man of many sorrows during his life. As we remember he has been called to part with nine or ten children, only one, Mrs. McManus, surviving. As brother Keene has intimated, sister Campbell has been sadly afflicted for a number of years, and this has been a grief and care to him. But his cares and griefs are ended forever, and all tears are wiped away from his eyes. He had in past years visited several times the associations and many of the churches in the eastern states, and was well known and received cordially. May God comfort the bereaved wife and daughter, and the churches of which he was the loving pastor so many years. For ourself, we can but say that we are sad that we shall see his face no more on earth.—ED.

BY reason of my own ill health the following obituaries have been deferred, but I hope the friends will make all due allowance. So sad is the task and so inadequate the pen to express what seems meet, that I will attempt to write only a few words, and the most of them I will copy from letters of the afflicted.

Our dear brother, **J. W. Garrett,** died March 1st, 1904, near Philomont, Loudoun Co., Va., aged about 70 years, I think. He was baptized by Elder R. C. Leachman, in 1868, in the fellowship of Ebenezer church. Not long after his baptism he was chosen deacon, which office he filled most acceptably until the time of his death. Brother Garrett was very decided and firm in his views of gospel truth, always ready to give a reason for the hope within him, and he loved the doctrine he contended for. In the latter years of his life he was heavily pressed by financial misfortunes, but these seemed to result in more spiritual mindedness and fruitfulness in the word. His love for his brethren and their love for him seemed to increase with increasing years and afflictions. He was blessed with a faithful wife, who was a helpmeet indeed in the long years of his wasting infirmities, and God blesses her to-day, and his presence is felt in comforting and holding her up. It is in suffering and in affliction that the God of Israel makes himself known, and his power and presence felt to his people. He touches them, and their hearts melt like wax within them. Again he puts forth his hand, and they are healed and rejoice in their afflictions. This truth has no counterfeit, nor can it be counterfeited. So it was and is with the precious ones of whom I write. Paul's words are so very full, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." We grieve not for those who left us, but for ourselves. Our numbers are decreasing, but thank God our love and faith are not. May God comfort the mourners.

ALSO,

Our beloved sister, **Mrs. G. G. Galleher,** wife of our dear brother G. G. Galleher, departed this life March 22nd, 1904, near Hickory Grove, Prince William Co., Va. Her death was very sudden; she had undergone a severe surgical operation on Saturday previous to her death, at the Columbia Hospital, Washington, D. C. The surgeons pronounced her condition excellent, and all symptoms pointed to a speedy recovery, even up to a few moments before she died, which seemed to be without the movement of a muscle or a solitary pang. The shock was terrible to us all, for we all loved her very dearly, especially to her devoted husband, who had just received a message from the hospital that she was doing finely. In a letter to me he writes: "When you feel like it I would be glad if you would send a notice to the SIGNS, as she was known by many of the brethren. None knew her but to love her; none named her but to praise. She was born Jan. 16th, 1847, the daughter of Wm. M. and Mary Fairfax Lynn. Was married to the writer of this Feb. 2nd, 1870; received a hope in Christ and was baptized in the fellowship of Mt. Zion church, Loudoun Co., Va., on the fourth Sunday in October, 1873, by Elder Joseph L. Purington, and passed into the full fruition of that hope March 22nd, 1904." Though her death was entirely unexpected by her friends, it seems she did not share their confidence. She wrote a note to her husband on Friday, to be delivered to him in case she was taken. I copy: "A few requests I wish to make before leaving this world of sin and sorrow, pain and death. I feel gloomy this morning, and I think there is doubt of my ever recovering, but Dr. Stone and Birdie have been in and tried to cheer me up. But alas, only God knows what is in the future. I feel reconciled at times. * * * If it should be the Lord's will to take me, may we meet in heaven, where parting is no more. Bury me at dear old Mt. Zion. No need of a funeral, both of our ministers are sick. My love to the dear members; tell them I died as I have lived, no goodness in the flesh, but strong in the doctrine of predestination and election. May God bless you, and farewell, my dear, good husband. By a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all."

The thoughtful, unselfish breathing throughout this brief note was characteristic of sister Galleher

in the church and in the world. I cannot write of her as perhaps I ought; I loved her so that if I allow my pen to run my readers might think I was indulging in fulsome praise of a poor fellow-sinner. I will only say I often rejoice that I have loved and do love with all my soul such ones as brother and sister Galleher. My life for the past twenty-eight years has been wonderfully blessed and helped by them. I do not wish to intrude myself into this notice, but my obligations are so great, the wound my own heart has received, and my loss in connection with the church, constrains me thus to write. God is very good to brother Galleher in his affliction. They had no children, and he is left lonely indeed. God help the needy. J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., May 4, 1904.

MEETINGS.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Welsh Tract Church, at Newark, Del., beginning Wednesday before the fifth Sunday in May, (25th, 26th and 27th,) 1904, continuing three days.

Those coming from Philadelphia and other points north will please come via B. & O. R. R. Wednesday morning, on train leaving Philadelphia (at Twenty-fourth and Chestnut Sts.) at 7:40 o'clock. Those coming from Baltimore and points south will come via B. & O. on train leaving Baltimore (Mt. Royal station) at 8 o'clock Wednesday morning, and all get tickets for Newark, Del. Those coming from Delmar, Del., and points on the Delaware Division R. R., will come on Tuesday afternoon and take train leaving Delmar at 2:15 p. m.; get tickets for Wilson and change cars at Porter. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, and to our ministering brethren in particular. All will be met and conveyed to the meeting and to our homes for entertainment.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Hopewell Church, at Hopewell, N. J., to begin Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (1st, 2nd and 3rd,) 1904, and continue three days.

Trains reaching Hopewell by Reading R. R. from both New York and Philadelphia, at about two, four and five o'clock on Tuesday before the association will be met and friends cared for. Those who come from either direction on Wednesday morning will come directly to the meeting-house, which is about ten minutes walk from the depot. A cordial invitation is hereby given to all ministers, brethren, sisters and friends to be with us at that time.

ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

THE Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church has appointed her yearly meeting to be held the first Saturday and Sunday in June, (4th and 5th) 1904. A cordial invitation is extended to ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

A. COOK, Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is expected to be held with the Warwick Church, at Warwick, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1904.

All trains arriving at Warwick, N. Y., on Tuesday and Wednesday, June 7th and 8th, will be met as follows: 8:06 and 11:54 a. m., 3:56, 5, 6:40 and 7:44 p. m. Trains leave Chambers St. ferry, Erie R. R., 9:15 a. m., 1, 3, 4:30, 5:30 p. m., Twenty-third St. ferry five minutes earlier. Those coming from the west can make connection at Greycourt for trains to Warwick at 7:42 and 11:26 a. m., 3:22, 4:38, 6:18 and 7:22 p. m. The old and infirm need fear no hardship in attending. Meeting-house in village one and one-half blocks from the depot. Entertainment close by. Every lover of the truth welcome.

JOHN McCONNELL.

THE Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon and Washington, will be held this year, the Lord willing, with the Luckiamute Church, at or near the residence of Elder V. J. Turnidge, about six miles south of Sheridan, Yamhill Co., Oregon, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in June, (17th) 1904, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continuing the two following days. Those coming by railroad via Portland, Oregon, should be at Portland so as to take the train Thursday evening, June 16th, at 4 o'clock p. m., arriving at Sheridan at 8 o'clock p. m., (present schedule) where they will be met and conveyed to the place of meeting. All lovers of truth are invited to attend.

N. J. SHANKS, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 72. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1904. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., 1903.

DEAR BROTHER EDITOR:—After carefully reading the good editorials of August 15th, and also the one of August 1st, headed, "The responsibility of man," I believe that they are in accord with the teaching of the word of God, unless I am wonderfully deceived, and I indorse them heartily. Man is dead to righteousness and truth by nature, and, as you have truly said, all are responsible to God. Unless quickened by the holy Spirit, man is dead to spiritual things, and not able to think a good thought or do a good act. Man, by nature, is prone to evil, and seeks out many inventions. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. We must have the imputed righteousness of Christ, none other will be acceptable to God. When this righteousness is given, man can be said to be righteous, and in no other way. This may not seem possible to carnal reason, but it is scriptural truth, as you have well said. I notice another editorial headed "Extremes," antichrist comes with deception, trying to lead off disciples with another gospel, which is not another, but a perversion of the true gospel. Such do not want to believe the true gospel which has been taught, preached and published in the SIGNS, and which has been indorsed by those who are in the faith. Elder Gilbert Beebe was one among many who stood firm, with the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Upon this firm foundation the SIGNS has not failed to set forth the same truth ever since its inception. I feel thankful that the SIGNS is still publishing the same truth which I hope the Lord has given me to realize. There is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. The religious world is ever ready for a compromise, wishing to spy out our liberty, which we have in Christ Jesus, that they may bring us into bondage; but true followers of Christ will have no compromise, because they cannot yield the truth in any degree. Let us not be weary in well doing; let us be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, watch and stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong; let us all be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might; let us put on the whole armor of God, so that we may be

able to stand against the wiles of the devil; let us put off the works of darkness, and put on the armor of God; let us not compromise with flesh and blood, which is all darkness. Be ye separate, touch not, handle not, which all are to perish with the using. Come out from among them, and I will receive you, saith the Lord. God knows no compromise. And, as you say, my dear brother, the peace of Zion will never be attained by compromise of the truth.

I feel so much my unfitness and unworthiness in the presence of a just and holy God, I must often ask, "Am I his, or am I not?" I am a sinner saved by grace if saved at all; I have nothing to compromise in this faith, but I am in his hand, to do with me as he pleases. It is as brother Chick has said, in his editorial upon repentance and remission of sin, it is a precious gift to be able to discern between truth and error. I hope that this gift has been bestowed upon me, I did not seek it, nor buy it, yet I trust it was bought for me, through the suffering of our Lord. In him are we justified, and in him salvation is secured and completed, and in no other way. Christ declares that he is the door; he that entereth not by this door is a thief; no man cometh to the Father but by him; there is salvation in no other; no works of man will avail anything.

There was an agreement between Elijah and Baal's prophets. Elijah was a prophet of the Lord, and Baal had many prophets. They were such as pleased worldly religionists, which were worshiping Baal. This agreement was consummated in this way, The prophets of Baal built an altar, and laid on wood, but put no fire under it, they were to call on Baal, and Elijah was to call on his God, whichever one should answer with fire, he was to be God; all agreed to this. Baal's prophets called upon their God for help, as legalists do now, but though they called, from morning until noon, there was no response, and they still called, "O Baal, hear us." They were as the blind leading the blind, all together will fall into the ditch, with their legality, their conditional worship of the idol, or god, who cannot save. But Elijah mocked them and said, Cry aloud, for he is a god, he is pursuing, or he is on a journey, or he is asleep and must be awakened, and they cried and cut themselves with knives and lancets till the blood gushed from them. But Elijah, the faithful prophet, the preacher of the truth, believed there was a God in Israel, and it was put into his heart what to do and what to say. He believed there was a God in heaven, who was able to do all things without help from man. God gave Elijah the faith to believe in him, and he prayed, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy prophet. He had done what God commanded him to do. Then fire from the Lord fell and consumed all, even the water that was in the trench. When they saw this, they fell on their faces and said, "The Lord, he is the God." Then Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal, and let none escape. They all had seemed to wish for a compromise between the true God and Baal, but now let them bow their heads and acknowledge the Lord, that he is God. Baal could not at all hear their crying nor save them. It is the same class of men who are making so much trouble in the camp of Israel to-day. They are claiming obedience as their own free-will offering, but as Elijah said, How long will ye halt between two opinions? If con-

ditionalism be true, follow it alone; if grace be true, follow it. The legalist says, "Do and live," but Christ who is the end of the law for righteousness, says, "Believe in me." This is sufficient for salvation, without any conditions of obedience in man. God Most High has given us the word, let us be satisfied. Let us not claim this obedience for ourselves, it is the obedience of faith, suited to the man in Christ; this excludes boasting. If Christ only made salvation possible, and we must execute the plan, if successful, the honor thus far must be our own. But the true gospel gives all the honor to the Captain of our salvation, he alone bore the burden and heat of the dreadful day, and made reconciliation to God, and brought in everlasting righteousness, and the salvation is finished. He who perverts such a glorious doctrine, shows that he never really believed it. So long as we live by the faith of the Son of God, we shall not fail to bring forth the fruits of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ. We no longer obey in order to lay the foundation; it is already laid. The foundation which is laid, and which no other could lay, is for pardon, reconciliation and everlasting salvation, it is for peace of conscience, for access to God, and for every other spiritual and eternal blessing. The legalist asks, What kind of a foundation? We answer, Without any works to be performed by man, it is a foundation in all respects perfect, and that cannot be enlarged nor improved, it has omnipotence for its establishment, it is a foundation for sinners, yea, for the vilest sinners, sinners may cast their burden upon this Rock of Ages. What a pity that such truth should be clouded with such ungracious sentiments, or with conditions, saying, We must obey in order to our final acceptance. If will-worship be in order to our final acceptance, then eternal life must be expected in this way also. Then the worship will be not toward God, but to these works of obedience, hoping by their influence to win the good will of Jehovah; but this is opposed to Christ's imputed righteousness, and this imputed righteousness will not allow any partnership. This self-obedience for righteousness is contemptuous of that heavenly voice which said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." How blessed was the Son of God to receive the sanction of the Father; God was pleased with him in all his affliction. What part of the work do we attempt? Shame belongs to us whenever we look to ourselves, all our comfort and hope is to be derived from him who is the only righteous One. Legalists know not their own meanness, or lack of power to do that which is pleasing to God. Christ has done all that is necessary for our perfect and everlasting acceptance in life or death, or in the final judgment. All is done by a far better hand than our own; infinity is better than human obedience. In Christ Jesus we are created unto good works, and by good works we glorify our Father in heaven. There is a vast difference between the use of grace, and the works of the law. Obedience should have its proper place. The obedience which the legalist proposes is that of the bond man, and not of the free man. One obeys in order to be accepted, the other because he is beloved, and is the heir, and all that the Father hath is his. It is all a free gift, and not bought. Such are the true, faithful servants to-day. Are we willing to give up that which was bestowed upon us by our Lord Jesus Christ, and return to the weak and beggarly elements of the world, and work

for acceptance? Nay verily. Let God be true, and every man a liar. Paul warned Timothy against conditions and other like doctrines. He had told them that their acceptance was through Christ alone, and that they were already accepted in the Beloved. Does he now retract that blessed truth, and advise all to raise clouds of golden dust, that it may cover their sins, and waft them to the skies? Has he now grown ashamed of God's gospel, which he declares, in Romans, to be the power of God unto salvation? Are the true, faithful servants now growing weary of that pure doctrine? Are we willing to give it up and return to the legal covenant of works? Did not Paul assert a justification absolutely free effected by the righteousness of God in Christ? Was there, according to Paul, any free will of man in this work, or in the adoption? Paul again said that the law was established through the obedience of Christ, and in his life and death he magnified and honored it. On this rock a poor sinner may rest. Here is peace and pardon, and a full justification. The legalist advocates many justifications, many salvations, but we know of but one justification, one salvation. Christ is our surety. There are no conditions to be performed by man in any degree whatever. The Scripture acknowledges but one faith, one baptism, one justification. Isaiah said, "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day." I will repeat the words of Elder Gilbert Beebe, who stood as firm as a rock for so many years: "No man can come to God but by his Son Jesus Christ. He is the only way, the truth and the life. We cannot be saved in any other way; and all embraced in this salvation shall be saved." If salvation be upon conditions, it cannot be by grace, for there is but one way. Salvation is through the Lamb slain. This salvation will redound to the glory of his grace. Let the world their virtue boast; I am a sinner saved by grace; I disclaim all other titles. This alone is my plea, Jesus died for me, a sinner. To claim justification upon conditions performed by us, is to deny the righteousness of Christ. He said, "It is finished." Salvation is finished from first to last. I am glad it is so. Jesus is the friend of sinners, and he leads them through green pastures, and protects them from all harm, and the poor in spirit, and they alone, enjoy such privileges as to follow Jesus, the Shepherd of his flock. To all who are halting between two opinions it is said, Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you. I do hope that God has given me a right understanding, and that it will redound to his glory. Paul said of some that they added nothing to him, and so all legal teachers add nothing to me. It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Nothing but grace can cure a sin-sick soul.

I will now close. I trust that this is from the love of God shed abroad in my heart. My love reaches to the household of faith, and I desire to write of his goodness and mercy and redeeming love to poor sinners. I feel to thank him for his wonderful blessings and the privilege of writing to ascribe to him all praise and honor. Please pardon me for writing so much; my mind was drawn out by the good editorials and good communications in the SIGNS. May God, beloved editor, strengthen you in the inner man, that you may be able to discern all error and

expose it, to the comfort and safety of all the children of God. Stand firm in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. Farewell.

Yours, I trust, in hope of immortal glory,

O. B. HICKERSON.

FRAGMENTS.

You know a certain plant which grows only in some terrible mountain wilderness; you are well acquainted with the fearful region where it is found, having been lost in those indescribable desolations and wandered there for days alone. Some day you meet a man who holds that plant in his hand. "I gathered it," he says in reply to your question. Without another word from him you know in what awful places he has been, and what dangers and troubles he has passed through. He need not tell you of the dizzy heights he has climbed, or of the dark and terrible gorges and dangerous precipices among which he has been. You know them well, and your heart goes out in sympathy to him. So in spiritual things: if one who knows Jesus meets another who shows that he has seen that "Plant of renown," how quickly and easily they know each other's spiritual travels and history. A word, sometimes, even a look, will open to us a view of the trials and struggles of the soul that have extended through months, perhaps, and even years, which it would be impossible fully to tell in words. When we see thus an evidence of an experience of grace in one, and recognize that Christ is in him the hope of glory, we know where he has been in his inner life, wandering in the desert and lost in the waste-howling wilderness of a sinful nature, coming into terrible depths of depravity and finding horrible pits of corruption in the heart. We know where he was when he gathered that Plant of renown, when he first saw the rose of Sharon; we know where he was when he first found Jesus, "or rather, was found of him." He was at the "end of the earth," and his "heart was overwhelmed," and he was crying unto God in his trouble, feeling as helpless as a little babe surrounded in the darkness by roaring and ravenous wild beasts. The wilderness and the solitary place was first a place of fear and anguish before it was made glad for him, and the desert was a place of desolation and weeping before it began to "rejoice and blossom as the rose."

How pleasant it is for those to meet who have traveled the same journeys, and experienced the same desolations and sorrows, and have come into the same deliverance through the sufferings of him who was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." How easy it it is for such people to become acquainted with each other.

You ask me to explain 1 Cor. xi. 29: "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." The Lord's body there referred to is the church, which is called in several places the body of Christ. His body of flesh represented in a sense the church. He is the life of the church, and it is said, "Ye are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones." Again, in 1 Cor. x. 17, "For we, being many, are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." When the church comes together to engage in the communion service they thus say that they are as one in Christ, and that they love one another, and in that ordinance they show forth the Lord's death, and as they take that bread and wine they do it in remembrance

of Jesus. Now if any one should engage in that solemn service to gratify his appetite, or with hatred in his heart toward one of the brethren, he would be eating and drinking unworthily, and he would thus manifest that he was not at the time in unity with the body, and would thus eat and drink damnation to himself. The word damnation means condemnation. He himself would be condemned as the unworthy one instead of the one whom he hates. One who feels himself unworthy to partake of this ordinance cannot at such a time eat and drink unworthily. He feels to be less than all others, and esteems them as better than he. That sense of unworthiness is one of the best evidences that he truly belongs to the body as one of its living members, and that the life of Jesus is moving him. He loves the brethren, and this is the great evidence that one has passed from death unto life.

If I am in the everlasting arms at all I am like a child in its mother's arms. It is constantly reaching out after something it does not need, and which it must not have. It spends a good deal of its time in trying to get away and creep off by itself, and yet it knows and feels that safety and true comfort are to be found only in the restraint of those arms, and that when rest is taken it must be there.

How I have struggled at times to obtain some fancied good, and have known afterward that it was the everlasting arms of grace and love which held me back. If ever I have known true thankfulness to God, it has been for the hindrances that caused such disappointments. It seems easier to be thankful for the pleasant attainment of right things desired than for bitter disappointments; easier to thank God for a bright and lovely day than for a dark and stormy night, but it seems that a deeper experience and a broader, higher knowledge causes the latter, and a more solemn feeling attends it, if there is any difference. The apostle says, "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

We do not know what is best for us, but the Lord does, and as he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," it is blessed to "know that all things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose." The three Hebrew children had great reason to be thankful for the wrath of the king and the fiery furnace, and Daniel for the night in the lion's den.

Nothing that grows out of earthly soil can satisfy a hunger for righteousness; a thirst after righteousness cannot be quenched at any worldly spring. If a man owes one debt he cannot discharge or lessen it by refraining from contracting another debt. A man who has committed one crime cannot plead in defense of that any number of crimes that he has not committed. The conscience upon which there is the guilt of one sin cannot be cleansed in any degree by freedom from the guilt of a thousand other sins. If the man could live ever after without committing one transgression, still he could never be righteous; he must suffer the penalty of the law for that transgression. Therefore, because man is a sinner, righteousness cannot be his through any work of his own. The only good work he can do is to suffer the penalty of the law. But then he is dead. So another must obey that law unto death, and one so related to the sinner that he is responsible, as the Shepherd for the sheep's

trespass, as the husband for the wife's debt, as the Head for the body's sin. One also who can not only lay down his life for the sheep, but take it up again. So Jesus lived a perfect life under the law, and died for his people's sins, and is risen again, and so has fulfilled all righteousness. He is our Righteousness; our hunger and thirst for righteousness are satisfied in him; we eat of that Bread and drink of that Fountain. This is that "righteousness which is of God by faith in Jesus Christ."

THOSE who are born again know that the unlawful indulgence of their appetites and lusts is sinful. While they see in themselves the same sinful nature they had before they received a hope, they abhor themselves for it, and do not feel that they can excuse themselves for any indulgence on the ground that it is in their nature, and that they cannot restrain themselves. There will be a check of conscience, and punishment will follow transgression. Paul says, "But I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest having preached to others I myself should be a castaway." Castaway from the fellowship of the church, from usefulness to the brethren, and from the comforts and blessings of the gospel.

THE apostle says, "Hereby we perceive the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."—1 John iii. 16. And you ask, "Have I ever laid down my life for the brethren? In looking back I cannot recall any single instance of having done so." Yet I know that there is in your experience, and I hope in mine, that principle to which the apostle refers. No one but Jesus ever has laid down his life, or ever can, as he did to redeem any from the curse of the law and from eternal death. But has there ever been in our experience a sacrifice of any comfort or hoped for benefit of a temporal nature for the benefit of another? Have we ever felt willing, and even glad, to lay down some present personal good and valuable thing belonging to this life, that we might be of advantage and help to some brother or sister? Have we felt glad to visit some one who is in affliction, and to mitigate that affliction by the gift, *not of something we do not need ourselves*, but of that which cost us much, and which is very dear to us? And if some child of God is in the depths of trouble, and we are favored with an opportunity to visit and help him in his affliction, do we limit ourselves and say, "I will go so far; I will give so much to relieve the suffering, but no more; I cannot be expected to do more?" No; you would do to the extent of your ability, my sister or brother, to bring up the poor soul out of the depths; that would be your desire. I think that is what the apostle meant when he said, "We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." That is the principle which belongs to the Spirit of Christ. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." That Spirit is the same in us as in him; it always seeks the glory of God and the good of his children; it leads us to be followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, and teaches us to love one another. In ourselves we see only evil and selfishness, which causes us to mourn, but that would not be the case if we had not the Spirit of Christ. The apostle says, "All that is reproved is manifested by the light." This light is the life which was in the Word, and which is the light of men. (John i. 4.) The apostle tells in the next

verse what he means by our laying down our lives for the brethren, for he says, "But whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

THE Lord's day. This expression occurs only once in the Bible, Rev. i. 10. Why should we think this refers to Sunday, or any other particular day of the week? I see no reason. One day of the week is no more the Lord's day than another; he made one as well as another. Under the law the Sabbath was called especially the Lord's Sabbath, a day of rest for his people. That was the seventh day of the week, and only that; it was, like all other holy days, new moons and other ordinances of that legal dispensation, a figure or "shadow of good things to come." The Sabbath, then, means rest, and points, as a type or pattern, to the rest that Jesus secured for his people by finishing all the work demanded by the law, and which they who believe enter into. (Heb. iv. 3, 10.) The psalmist says, "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." This is Jesus, as the preceding verses show. (Psalms cxviii. 19–24.) He is the light of his people. As the natural sun makes the natural day, so the Sun of Righteousness, arising upon his people with healing in his wings, makes their spiritual day. This day which the Lord hath made may well be called the Lord's day. In that day we rest from the works of the law; we rest in Jesus. It seems to me that this was the sense in which John was in the Spirit on the day of the Lord Jesus, when he heard and saw the glorious things of the gospel. It is only in the light of Jesus, our spiritual day, and only when we are in the Spirit, that these glorious spiritual things can be seen.

There is nothing, so far as I can see, in the New Testament to indicate that the Sabbath was ever any other day than the seventh, nor that the Sabbath was continued as an ordinance after the legal dispensation was ended. But the apostle Paul does declare that the Sabbath is not to be observed in the gospel church. (Col. ii. 16, 17.) But he does tell us that we are to be careful and loving toward each other when there is a difference between us in regard to our understanding of this subject, and not to judge one another. One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. It is to the Lord that one regardeth the day and the other regardeth it not. We are to be kind and charitable toward each other, and not try to have dominion over one another's conscience, while we try to present our own understanding of the subject, and walk according to the light given to us.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April 29, 1904.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March 11, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have intended writing you ere this, but have been very neglectful of my duty; but now that I have some good matter, as I consider it, for the SIGNS, I will send it to you. I enjoyed both of the letters very much. I have not asked their consent, but I feel free with regard to this, as both are willing, I am sure, to give a cup of cold water to the thirsty, and I am sure that these letters will be like that. I think that I know from sad experiences that this darkness of soul is often times the spot where we most clearly examine ourselves, and when we find ourselves so much wanting, how sad and

desolate we feel. We are like one lost at sea, who has reached some rock of safety, but the waters are near on all sides, and we can see nothing to save us. Then do we cry unto the Father of all mercies to help us out of our distress, and in his own most holy time he lifts us up out of our distresses and perils, and gives us joy for sorrow. We are wanting in all things, but in Christ all our fullness dwells, and when we see with the Spirit we see only Christ, and then all is love, peace, joy, long-suffering, meekness and gentleness, which are all the fruits of the Spirit, and of the Spirit only.

We were at the Wilmington meeting yesterday; we have been there four years in succession, and each meeting has seemed to increase in numbers and interest. Elders Meredith, Eubanks, Grafton, McConnell and Mellott were there. We heard from them all, and also from brother Coulter and brother Rounds. Elder Durand came down for Sunday evening, but we came home before night. I have looked back upon the meeting as a time profitably and well spent; it was good to meet and mingle with the dear ones, and exchange our joys and sorrows, and to hear the dear ones who are lingering near telling their desires, but waiting for more evidence. But they will hear the words, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," or "Follow me," or any other words which may be given them. Then the light will accompany the command, and then will they see their way clear, and will follow Christ into the watery grave. One dear old sister said, "I would like to have a day like this every week," and so would we all like such a feast; then we could and would forget this tenement of clay, this earthly tabernacle in which we groan, being burdened. I will speak especially of but one sermon, or rather of the meditations which I had from it. Elder Grafton's text was Psalms civ. 24. His sermon was short, but O it contained so much for meditation; it seemed as though he had but just read the verse.

My own state of feeling at the present time is of trust, as it seems to me, stronger than ever before; I feel as though the everlasting arms are underneath me, and that no harm can come near me. But I am so changeable that ere another day has passed I may be questioning whether there is any such support as the everlasting arms. I am aware of my own nothingness in these great matters.

Now accept my love for yourself and family.

MARY HILL TERRY.

WILTON, Maine, Feb. 25, 1904.

MRS. MARY TERRY—MY DEAR SISTER IN HOPE:—A portion of your letter in the SIGNS of Feb. 15th, reaches my own cold heart. You seem to have been where I live a greater part of my time, yet there seems a great difference between your own experience and mine. You mourn over your gloomy state of spiritual darkness, while I am so careless and indifferent. O how stupid I am! While on my bed, and often when this body has been racked with pain, (as I have been quite ill for the past three months) I have tried to meditate upon some precious portion of Scripture, but it would vanish, and I could not even repeat it. I would try to meditate upon some precious hymn, and that would be gone from me, and some worldly theme would take possession of my mind, and mingled with this doubts would arise, and I would ask, What right have I to hope that I am a subject of rich and reigning grace? Such were my feelings

the night that has just passed. Previously it has seemed that there was no growth in grace, no fruit of spiritual life, yet I felt the assurance that had been given me in the past that my name was written in the Lamb's book of life, and that now it had been his righteous will to withdraw his manifest presence, and that in his own good time he would again reveal himself as my Savior. Only two days ago I saw my nearest neighbor, who has been from early life a Free-will Baptist, but has not been satisfied with them for many years. She has searched the Scriptures carefully for a long time, and they have been wonderfully opened to her understanding, which seems far beyond mine, and the zeal and love which she manifests for the truth, and the interest which she takes in the SIGNS, all make me feel very small and ignorant; yet I do rejoice to see the bright evidence which she gives that she is among the redeemed of God. I have never known one who had a greater sense of unworthiness, or seemed more humble. Do you wonder that I feel so ignorant and weak?

Doubting my love for the brethren has troubled me greatly; I have so often feared that it was merely admiration, and all of the flesh, for those who were naturally congenial. I have spoken of this to some, who replied that they had not had this trouble, but that they were sure that they loved the brethren; but in your letter I read that you doubt your love for the people of God. How good and profitable these heart-searchings are for us; it seems as if I am too careless to search my own barren self.

March 2.—My dear sister, I am alone, and have not heard a human voice for several hours. It seems as though I might have some profitable meditations, but it has not been so; I am in a desert land, with no spiritual food. One week ago I tried to write you, but it was so poor in every way that I could not finish it, and yet to-day I cannot improve upon it; I will send it, believing that you will be charitable with me in my weakness and imperfections, and perhaps some time write me a few lines in reply. How much, O how much would I like to mingle with those who have been taught that salvation is of the Lord, through his grace, and the love that the Redeemer bore for his chosen, and who have been shown all the glorious attributes of our God. But I must not murmur or complain.

> "The steps that I take, and the station I fill,
> My Father determined and wrote in his will."

The bounds of our habitation are all set, and we cannot pass them. The Lord is able to reconcile me to his holy will; I would hope and trust and patiently wait. It cannot be many years at the longest that I shall stay here, and as the months go by there seems less and less to look forward to in this life, and the beyond now looks dark to me; yet I have no doubt that the body of Christ will dwell with him who is their living Head.

I almost live over again my visit in Hopewell and at Southampton last winter and spring; I felt at home, and that I was with my precious kindred. It seems as though I can never forget the Saturday meeting when brother Lefferts was given liberty to exercise the gift which it was so plainly evident the Lord had given him; and the little evening meeting at brother Durand's, how rich it all was. In Philadelphia at the meeting I had a rich feast. My short stay with you was so pleasant that I would like to repeat it.

Remember me in your prayers, and when you have opportunity write to me.

May you be supported and sustained in every trial and conflict through which you are called to pass, is my desire.

Your sister in sorrow, tribulation, love and fellowship, I hope,

MARTHA K. HUBBARD.

TOPSHAM, Maine, March 22, 1904.

MY DEAR SISTER TERRY:—I did not intend to be silent so long, but have been traveling in a place I could not seem to describe. I have not felt the power of divine things in my heart as I once did, so I could not write of spiritual things with any sweet assurance that I had tasted and handled them. I knew the truth was just as precious when it was proclaimed, but I could not feast upon it, and have even forgotten the text in a short time, and as for remembering portions of the sermon, it would seem more as if I had not heard one sentence clearly. I could not reach out and grasp any of the past joys and think of them again, for they were far beyond my reach; no reading of marked passages of Scripture brought back any of that former enjoyment; I have almost wondered why I marked them. One thing has not failed me, and that was my love for the people of God; it has sprung up when I have met them face to face, and I have had no desire to seek another people, or hear any of the preaching which surrounds me. I have been made conscious of my sinfulness, and unworthiness to be with this people, and yet I have felt to say, "Your God is my God." I do know that I need just such a Savior as Jesus Christ, one mighty to save. It is all of grace, for there is no other way for a sinner like me to be saved. I have not wanted to complain because the light that was in me was darkness, and the darkness was great, but it seems as if many times I have been a fretful child. I have desired to be made thankful for past precious seasons, and remember that I am being led in the right way. God does not change, does not even know a shadow of turning. I have felt many times that the hope which has been wrought in my soul (Jesus) was an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, and no matter if I did sink beneath the waves and billows, that could never be overthrown, never perish; it would outride every storm, and bring me to my desired haven. The words of David, "Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God," have seemed to spring up at times, and still not bring the sweet assurance I once had, but they brought a calmness. The Lord blessed me many years with a heart filled with praise and thanksgiving, and led me into the truth, so I did rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. "Jesus all the day long, was my joy and my song." I cannot sing any other song now, but if I attempt to sing it is in such a mournful, minor strain my voice trembles, and falling tears testify that I cannot sing the Lord's song in this strange land I am in. I am confident that there is not one foe for me to overcome in my own strength, for "God giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Jesus trod the winepress alone, and his own arm brought salvation. Sometimes I feel it is all right if I never have any more of those times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and I want to be made thankful for all past blessings, and continue to praise him for his goodness and mercy. I have surely got to talk about a salvation finished for a people prepared of the Lord, when I speak or write to those of like precious faith, no matter what my feelings may be, nor how great the dark-

ness which surrounds me, that blessed truth never changes, "Salvation is of the Lord."

March 27.—Five days ago I began this, and have had no words since to write. I have tried several times to write for the SIGNS, but could not finish the letter, and finally cast it aside. I have wanted to express my sorrow in the loss of brother Beebe, and my gladness in being assured that brother Ker will assist brother Chick in the publication of the SIGNS. I have read the good letters from your pen, and the others who have written, and wished I could have something given me to write for the edification and comfort of those who read. I have sometimes wondered if I shall ever write again for the dear old SIGNS. I believe I am being led in the right way, and it is just as much to the honor and glory of God when I am destitute of spiritual things, and mourning on account of sin, as when I am rejoicing in the sweet assurance that he is mine and I am his, and the new song is put in my mouth, even praise unto God. He does lead his people, loves them with an everlasting love, upholds them in every trial and sorrow, has made his grace sufficient for them, has put the everlasting arms beneath them, will never leave nor forsake them, and will be their guide even unto death. How precious and sweet these promises of God are! If I could only write as I once could it would be easy to cover page after page concerning the beauties in God's promises. I know the beauty is all in them, and it is impossible for me to express it unless the Lord gives me the ability; I am dependent upon him for everything. "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him," for he is too wise to err, too good to be unkind; he is just in all his ways. All his works shall praise him. I am afraid I have been able to tell you but very little of the place I am in; I do hope it is not a place that you know nothing about.

We have not had any meetings this winter, as it has been extremely cold and very stormy, and we are so scattered. The few of us left are looking forward and hoping to be gathered together in his name before many more weeks pass away. I do feel that I must continue to tell them of the goodness of the Lord to me, that I must still stay with them if they can have me, and try to make them understand how much I prize their love and fellowship, unworthy as I am of it, I want it more than anything this world can give. If all the wealth and pleasures of this world could be given me, they could not satisfy nor give the joy that the clasp of the hand, the lighting up of the face, the spoken assurance, "I am glad to see you, sister Attie," of those whom I believe to be God's people. Truly this fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, and can never perish. All earthly things must pass away, but the word of the Lord endureth forever.

I know this letter is not worth taking your time to read, but it is the best I can give you now. Perhaps the Lord has more in it for you than I can know; he is able to do all things. I want to write to others I love, but am waiting for more ability to express my exercises. Give my love to all you meet, and tell them I have them in loving remembrance. I do not expect to attend the associations this spring. I would like to see you again and many others. I shall be glad to hear from you. Love and sweet fellowship for you and brother Terry.

Your loving sister,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

KALAMAZOO, Mich., May 1, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I send the inclosed letter for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, feeling that it will prove a comfort to others as it has to me. Her humbleness shows forth the true spirit; but do with it as you think best.

With much abounding love to all the household of faith, your brother,

D. D. McALPINE.

ALDBORO, Ontario, March 25, 1904.

MY DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER:—I will now make an attempt to answer your kind and very welcome letter which I received some time ago, but feeling my unworthiness and darkness it is with fear and trembling that I make this attempt. Your letter gave me much comfort; you were always dear to me in the flesh, but now we are bound with cords of love that cannot be broken, for it is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts that binds us, for we are taught by the same Spirit, I humbly trust, although I am often made to cry, O my leanness, my leanness.

I will now try and tell you a little of the travel of my mind. I had convictions of my lost state in my young days, but thinking I could do good and live a different life I was quite a pharisee. When I would hear Elder McColl preach all I could hear was the law, and I was trying to do and live that way, but alas, my vows were easily broken. When I would hear my mother and my sisters and brother saying how much they enjoyed Elder McColl's preaching, I would think, O, if I could only say the same. I thought I must be the black sheep of our flock, if a sheep at all. When I would hear of one being taken into the church I would go into a place by myself and weep tears of joy. I continued in this way for years, until Elder Piper came to preach here, when I heard him tell of the love the Savior has for poor, lost sinners, who feel to be lost. (O, was there one drop of his precious blood shed for me?) His text was in Hebrews: "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." O, I thought I could stay there forever listening to him. In after years whenever I would hear or read this text my mind would go back to that day. Then when Elder Pollard, our dear pastor, came and preached foreordination and predestination, O how my heart rejoiced, for if ever I could be saved it was because it was ordained so to be. After this such coldness came over me that I would not go to meeting. It was suggested to me that it was the truth I was hearing, but that I was not one of God's children, and that I was only adding sin to sin. My daughter asked me what was coming over me that I would not go? I told her to go, and perhaps she would reap the benefit. O, I thought, if I were only a bird, so that I could fly away from self and be at rest. I saw the dear Elder coming, but I thought there was no hope for me, when the words came to me, "Who can tell?" With these words in my mind I went to meeting. When the Elder took for his text, "The chosen vessels and the vessels of wrath," I was the vessel of wrath fitted to destruction. O, I thought, if the floor would open so I could be out of sight where I could give vent to my feelings, when my mind was brought back to hear what the Elder was saying. He was just telling my feelings then; he said, "Poor, tried one, if you are here to-day, and have any of these feelings, take courage, for every declining sun brings the day of grace one day nearer to you." The words came with such power, "Wait patiently till thy

change come." If the Lord's will was to enable me to wait patiently, even though it might be in my dying moments, he would make himself manifest, and have mercy on such a poor sinner. After this I got into deep trouble again; I felt there was no hope for me, such a vile sinner as I was. I sank so low that my strength was all gone. I said, If my soul were sent to hell would he allow me to praise him there? when the words came with such power, "Thy sins and iniquities will I remember no more." O, could it be possible that these words were for me? When I thought of the sermon Elder Piper preached the words came to me, "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days." A calmness came over me, and I was made to rejoice that my many sins were pardoned, that I would have no more trouble, as I thought. But alas, doubts and darkness came. I felt a desire to be with God's children, but was so unworthy. The Lord enabled me to go and tell God's dear children, but O how I grieved afterwards for fear I was deceived and had deceived the dear people that I united with. I prayed if it was the Lord's will to show me what to do, when the words came to me with comfort, "Arise and be baptized." I was baptized in 1889, at the May meeting. I still feel unworthy to be with them, but I love to meet with the dear brethren, and I love to see others coming into the fold telling what the dear Lord and Savior has done for them. We miss our dear pastor, Elder Pollard, but our loss is his eternal gain. The Lord, who is ever merciful, has blessed us with Elder Carnell, who preaches the same doctrine, for which we are glad.

Brother and sister, I hope you will throw the mantle of charity over such a wandering letter. I have tried to tell you a little of my mind, but I am afraid I will weary your patience, and will draw to a close. If ever saved, saved by grace alone.

Ever your sister in hope,

(MRS.) M. MURRAY.

CATTAHOULIA, La., April 8, 1904.

DEAR BRETHREN IN LOVE:—I desire to write a few lines in behalf of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I always want to feel what I am trying to write. I do not feel worthy or competent to write, but I want to give a few thoughts on the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I hear it said by some that we ought to read nothing but the Bible, that the SIGNS is only the work of men. I fear such people do not read the Bible much, and do not understand what they do read, for the dear old paper sets forth the Bible doctrine. It is as the handwriting on the wall, it is hid from the wise and prudent and is revealed unto babes. The wise men could not read the handwriting on the wall, and so to-day the wise and prudent cannot read and get anything out of the word of truth; it is directed to babes, to the poor and needy, for it is the hand of God that keeps it, and will keep it till time shall close. Fear not, dear brethren and sisters, write on, dear brother editor, the Lord will bless you. It made my heart rejoice to read the precious letters that were in the paper, seeing that they were all of one mind, walking by the same rule, minding the same things in the bonds of peace and in the unity of faith. While reading the precious letters do not our hearts within us burn with love? It makes the little ones walk together in the house of the Lord in sweet communion. It is the work of Jesus to draw his children, not only close together, but

to make them one. Sometimes when I read the dear old paper my mind runs all over the world, and I want to shake hands with all the little ones, for I believe that when they write they are like Daniel when he read the handwriting on the wall; he read it through the Spirit, and the precious letters are written by the same spirit; they are written by the spirit of love; they are read and felt by the same spirit. O what a precious gift God has bestowed upon his children, to call and qualify men to publish such a paper, and to prepare the hearts of his children to read and understand the precious truth, the glorious doctrine set forth in it. Twenty-five years ago I stood alone; there were no Primitive Baptists near me; I did not know what they believed. I had a name among the Missionaries; I did not believe their doctrine, and they all said I was wrong, and I went almost heart-broken; nobody believed like I did. An old friend handed me a number of the SIGNS which had been published thirteen years, and when I read it I found it set forth exactly what I believed, and it still sets forth the same truth as it did then. The SIGNS are only for the poor, and I hope that I am poor. I love the poor in spirit. The Lord has directed the SIGNS to the poor, to those that cannot feed and clothe themselves. The church of God is the place for the poor and afflicted, who cannot work; the Lord feeds them on the precious things that are hidden from the wise and prudent, and clothes them with salvation. It makes my heart rejoice when I go to a place and see the dear old paper lying on the table; it makes me feel like I am at home. I know they love the truth, or the SIGNS would not be there.

Dear brother, I leave this to your better judgment. I will close with love and good wishes to the household of faith.

Your brother,

HARDY HILL.

SOUTH FALLSBURGH, N. Y., May 8, 1904.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I feel so disappointed to-day at not being numbered among your listeners that I cannot refrain from telling you, feeling it may relieve my mind and possibly be a trifle encouraging to you to know there is a poor soul here that I sometimes hope and trust does indeed hunger and thirst after righteousness, yet I scarcely dare write it for fear I am mistaken. If I do hunger and thirst for it, the promise is I shall be filled, and if so I am an heir of God and joint-heir with Jesus Christ, which does seem too much for me to claim, knowing as I do the depravity of my wicked heart, and also how far short I come of following in his meek and humble footsteps. It seems I do nothing aright; I search this sinful frame in vain for one mark of a christian, though to-day I did wonder if I did indeed hunger and thirst for the hidden manna, of which if we once partake we shall never perish. I do just now as I write you feel everything else sinks into insignificance compared with this prize of great worth, namely, of knowing and being known of him whom to know is life eternal. I do truly wonder why it is we are so situated that it is so inconvenient for us to meet with you to worship; why you must preach such comforting sermons to such a little handful while there are so many, or at least a few more just far enough away to be hindered by a little distance from coming. I did expect to be at New Vernon yesterday, had so planned for weeks, but about three weeks ago I caught a severe cold, such a cold as I seldom have, and have had such

a cough that I thought it imprudent to leave home. While being hindered and situated as I have before mentioned seems against us, and we feel to say it is evidence we have no part or lot in the matter, still it must be his way; he rules, we believe, in perfect wisdom, and we desire to feel even this may be for our good and his glory in some way we in our limited understanding cannot know.

I saw by the *Press* you had gone to Waverly to preach the funeral of a son of Elder Vail. My heart goes out in sympathy to him; I know how he must suffer from such a loss. The consolation he has tried to give to others on similar occasions so many times he is now in need of himself. I hope God will in mercy strengthen him in this his hour of trial.

I always feel great fear in trying to write or speak of any of what I hope are the Lord's dealings with me; it may be because I am afraid others will know how wicked and depraved I am, and how ignorant of these things. Still if it is all a mistake you are the very one who should know it, as I have no desire to deceive the church, of that I feel sure. This hope I speak of at times seems wholly gone, and yet I find I cannot at all times rid myself of it. I do desire God will in his own way and time strengthen and confirm it, and weak and feeble though it seems at times I have felt I could not live without it. I do think I covet a hope in God above all things.

With love to you all, your most unworthy sister,

MARY M. DUTCHER.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., Feb., 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—If you can bear with me, I would like to talk a little to the dear correspondents who write so ably for our paper. I feel, when I read their consoling letters, as though I would like to tell them how they cheer me on my lonely pilgrimage. Often, when my way is so dark that prayer a task and burden proves, some dear brother or sister sends me a message through the dear old SIGNS, and I take it home to my heart, that we all belong to the same family spiritually.

"One family we dwell in him,
One church above, beneath;
Though now divided by the stream,
The narrow stream of death."

Dear brethren, you who have all the cares of mortal life to contend with, let me say to you, Write on, cheer the disquieted ones, cry aloud and spare not. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." Say to this people, Live in peace one with another, so that there may be no strife among us, for the Canaanite is still in the land, and our enemies always near at hand.

Dear children of the most high God, whose goings forth are from everlasting to everlasting, I was in great darkness lately and awoke with this word "Victory," on my tongue. I could think of nothing else but the word "victory." Then I wondered what it could mean, that this should be upon my mind, with nothing else for some time. Then the whole scene of the temptations of Christ, forty days and nights, was presented to my mind, and then I could say, Victory through Christ, "who was in all points tempted like as we are."

I trust that you, dear editor, and the publishers may be spared long to carry on so good a work, and that your labors may be acceptable in the Lord, and that as your day, your strength may be. Do with this as you think best.

Your sister,

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

DUTTON, Ontario, May 10, 1904.

I HAVE received a very kind letter from brother Wilkes, of Alabama, informing me that certain statements made by me in the SIGNS in my account of my trip to Alabama last fall were incorrect; that I was mistaken as to who baptized the two unfortunate men referred to. I am sorry for any inaccuracies that occurred in that report, and should have investigated the matter more thoroughly before publishing it. But the main points at issue were true; the two men who came to such a deplorable end were members of Ramah church, and were opposers of the doctrine of predestination, and did take an active hand against those who believed it. I would not have published the matter at all but for the reason that many claiming to be Old Baptists, in their malicious attacks upon the very doctrine which has always distinguished the people whose name they claim from the Arminian world, have charged falsely against predestinarians the very thing which they themselves commit.

H. M. CURRY.

[IT will perhaps be remembered by many that in the second number of the SIGNS, present volume, was published an article from the pen of our brother Elder H. M. Curry, giving a sketch of a visit to the state of Alabama, and of the seventy-sixth session of the Conecuh River Association, which he attended there. In his article occurs the following statements: "It was among these brethren that one (whose name is known) writing to Elder Chick, reported that all kinds of gross conduct was tolerated, and themselves justified upon the ground of predestination. The one who wrote this to Elder Chick knew at the time that it was a well premeditated falsehood, as he himself (the one who wrote it) formerly labored among these brethren, pretending at that time to be a Primitive Baptist himself. Now in justice to the cause of truth and righteousness I wish to report a well authenticated occurrence which took place in that country among those who oppose the doctrine of predestination, and yet claim to be Primitive Baptists. In old Ramah church, located a few miles from Troy, a division took place upon the doctrine of predestination, resulting from an ingathering during a protracted meeting held by the man who wrote the report to Elder Chick. Two men, who were baptized by the man above referred to, and who were very much opposed to the doctrine of predestination, have come to grief in the following ways: one was convicted and hanged in the town of Troy for the vilest murder and robbery in the annals of crime in that county, the other, who was suspicioned as an accomplice in the horrible deed, committed suicide by tying a stone about his neck and casting himself into the water. These two men were converts of the man who wrote that report to Elder Chick, and were baptized by him, and both of them exhibited great zeal in clearing the church of those who believed in predestination upon the ground that such doctrine tended to sinful action and iniquitous conduct."

Since this letter was published we have received a letter from W. H. Wilkes, who writes as clerk of Ramah church, in which he says that brother Curry was imposed upon by some person or persons while in Alabama, and misinformed as regards the facts in the case. In his letter he speaks with great kindness of Elder Curry, saying that when in former years on a visit in that section Elder Curry was present when his family was in sore affliction, through the death of the wife and moth-

er, and by his kind words and sympathy greatly endeared himself to brother Wilkes. Therefore he can have no ill feeling toward Elder Curry, but on the contrary kindness and affection.

Brother Wilkes makes the following statements in reply to brother Curry's letter:

First, there has never been a protracted meeting at old Ramah church, and consequently no ingathering as the result of one.

Second, the two men referred to by Elder Curry were not received and baptized at the same time, nor by the same man, there being seven years difference in their reception. The man who committed suicide was received July 28th, 1889, by Elder J. T. Russell, and baptized August 25th, 1889, by Elder R. Jenkins. The murderer was received August 22nd, 1896, by Elder C. W. Harden, Elder R. Jenkins being present, and was baptized by Elder C. W. Harden.

The man who committed suicide was excluded August 21st, 1896, and was never restored, and committed suicide in January, 1899. This was three years and some months before the division at Ramah. The man hanged for murder was excluded Dec. 24th, 1898, at the first conference after his arrest. He was hanged in March, 1899, three years and four months before the division at Ramah. Neither of them had anything to do with the division referred to by Elder Curry, and being dead could not have exhibited great zeal in clearing the church of those referred to by him, the division taking place July 22nd, 1902.

The above is signed by W. H. Wilkes as acting clerk of Ramah church, and he adds that he stands ready to substantiate the above statements by the records of the church, and by brethren who have been here all the while.

We deem it but just that brother Wilkes and the church of which he is a member should have the privilege to correct what they deem to be incorrect in the letter of brother Curry's, through the same medium in which the alleged misstatements were made. We can know nothing personally regarding this matter. We are sure that brother Curry would be the last man to willfully make misstatements concerning any one. We desire most earnestly to keep the SIGNS clear of statements regarding difficulties and divisions in the churches. We feel sure that ninety-nine one-hundredths of our readers do not desire to see such reports of strifes and debates in our columns. Very many have so expressed themselves to us, and not one has ever said the opposite in our hearing, that is, that they do want such strifes to be published. We have of late refused to publish some matter of that kind upon this ground, and upon the ground that when one side is allowed to make charges in our columns, at once counter statements appear, demanding as a right to be also heard, and justice would seem to us to demand that they should be heard.

We do not in this undertake to decide regarding the different statements made by brother Curry and brother Wilkes; we simply allow this statement from brother Wilkes space in the SIGNS, because it seems to us only right to do so. We hope that this will be satisfactory to all, and that the matter will be closed in this way.—ED.]

JACKSON, Mich.

DEAR EDITOR:—Once again I feel impressed to write a few lines to the dear ones scattered north, south, east, west, far and near, as the dear blessed Master

said he would call them from the uttermost parts of the world. O what a blessed medium our dear old family paper is to the scattered ones, when so weary of earth, and their minds and hearts as cold as ice and snow. We have especially enjoyed the dear old SIGNS for the past three months. My heart goes out to see and hear from the dear family, and O what sorrow fills our very hearts when such soldiers of the cross have fallen as our dear and beloved editor, Benton Beebe. We all very well knew that he was greatly afflicted, but hoped for his good advice, soul-cheering, firm and God-honoring communications to last for years, and his great work as an editor to be continued, but when the blessed Lord calls we must go, and O, if we can fall as he did, a glorious victory will be ours. As I said before, the dear family paper has been so good this very cold and long winter. When our pastor could not reach us for snow and ice and high water, we could sit by our own firesides and read the unadulterated gospel, (not another gospel which is not to be received in our houses, but the sweet sound the Master's servants so comfortingly unfold, the blessed wine of the kingdom,) and we soon forget the cold and piercing wind and the storm, and are feasting upon the gospel. I am deprived of the company of the dear, loved ones of my home church only as the weather and my health will permit, and I get very hungry for communion with those of my faith and fellowship. But now and then the dear Master sweetly gives me a morsel, and drops fall on my unworthy head of the many mercies that he still gives me, for which I make such poor returns. If he was not merciful and eternal, and righteousness and truth his habitation, I, a poor, unprofitable one, would not be here; yet I hope that he gives me tokens of love. His blessed word says that in the world we shall have tribulation, and sometimes we meet the lion, and he frightens us much, (as Bunyan says) and we get in doubting castle, and we worry and the giant nearly kills us before we remember that we have the key. We know not how to pray as we ought unless he gives us utterance and tenderness of heart. I shudder sometimes to think that I live so cold, and how to perform that which is good I know not, but this much is true, I do love to think on the heavenly Canaan. There will be no Canaanite in that land to molest or mar our peace, but am I one that shall sing the song, Glory and honor to his blessed name forever and ever? Mine has not been a flowery path; but one thing he has given me to know, he is a God of justice and mercy. Jesus was a stranger, too, in a world of sin and sorrow; no one seemed to understand his mission, and at the last his dear disciples did not understand, even after the many signs that he showed, raising the dead and healing the sick of every disease; yet they knew him not, and the last terrible night all forsook him and fled. So if we are his called ones we must not expect to be carried to heaven on flowery beds of ease, but must suffer in some way as the blessed Master did.

I commenced this long ago, thought it was not worth reading, but I am sure if I tried it over it would be like the unworthy writer, unprofitable. I can indorse that beautiful poetry written by Elder Badger. During the past winter my mind has been very dark, and O how I have desired a visit from the high courts of heaven; O that he would visit me with his lovely countenance, as in times past. I cannot forget when the dear Master gave me the loving earnest that made me

rejoice, and the sweet assurance that he would never leave nor forsake me, and we read,

"E'en down to old age all my people shall prove
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love."

And I can but hope against hope that he will come, and not cast me off forever.

Unworthily yours, the very least,

M. P. LEWIS.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the church at Black Rock, Md., May 18th, 19th and 20th, 1904, to the brethren composing this association sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—While it is the custom to address a letter to you by this association, we feel that in so doing to be governed by the law of love, and not by any authority over you, as an admonition to us all. We will therefore call your attention to these solemn words: "Let brotherly love continue."—Hebrews xiii. 1. Let us remember that these words are the foundation of all peace and fellowship in the church of God, and were and are now addressed only to the children of God, the heirs of salvation, spiritual children, children born of God, sanctified by God the Father, and cannot be comprehended by the natural mind, but are revealed to the renewed mind, so "Let brotherly love continue."

The first word signifies something already existing, and we are admonished to let it remain, which we do well to consider, and carefully compare with our experience. There is nothing in the word "let" to indicate that we should or could originate love; it is the gift of God. Let, means to not hinder, or hide, or put obstacles in the way. The child of God does not love from a sense of duty, or even from choice of the natural mind, as that would be a resolution, and is not love at all. God has an elect and chosen people ordained or set apart from the foundation of the world, to show forth his praise, to whom he manifests his love and choice, and they are precious in his sight, perfect in the Lord Jesus Christ, (but not in their own sight) "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people," called out of darkness into his marvelous light, and manifest his salvation and his love shed abroad in their hearts. Here is love beyond the power of man to originate. God is love, and we love him because he first loved us. Of his own will he begat us, and if we love him that begat, should we not also love those who are begotten of him? In our first experience our love embraced the whole household of faith; we took in our arms of love the church of God, all looked alike good and lovely, and we would stay in just such a frame as this, and inquire in his temple; no fault-finding with our brethren. We then loved as little children, full of charity, and charity suffereth long, is kind; charity envieth not, charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up; charity beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things; every other thing may fail, but charity or love of God never fails. But while this little child is basking in the sunlight of God's love a cloud hovers over it, and it opens its eyes to another law in its members, and realizes a strife within, the flesh lusting against the Spirit; temptations appear, and sooner or later we feel a disposition to listen to the suggestions of the flesh. Now "Let brotherly love continue;" resist the devil and he will flee from us. We might name many things that come up in our mind that are hindrances to the continuance of brotherly

love, but this comes forcibly to our mind: On Saturday meeting days we feel somewhat cold in our feelings, and see so many things to be done that I will stay at home to-day, I will not be missed; then again, on Sunday it is either too hot or too cold, I will not go, and thus we put an obstacle in the way of brotherly love continuing; so coldness increases, and we lose interest in the church meetings and the brethren, a sad condition to be in, our conscience all the time condemning our course. Put off the old man, (the flesh) and put on the new man, (Christ Jesus) and let brotherly love continue.

There are many temptations along the christian's way that lead him in by and forbidden paths. The world has many allurements that attract the fleshly mind, and among them are so-called "innocent games" of pleasure, which have the appearance of evil, if not evil in themselves, which we do well to shun. If our brother objects to our course let us listen to what Paul says: If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend. If I see my strong brother do so and so, I being weak can do the same. The flesh is weak, and we are liable to be drawn into contentions with our brethren; let us keep before us this admonition, "Let brotherly love continue." Let love have its perfect work, work it out, manifest it, love one another, not with feigned love, but with love that is pure, that thinketh no evil; let each esteem others better than ourself. It is well for us to keep in mind this question, Is this in accord with my first experience? Be slow to hear and slow to speak and to act when trouble arises, and pray for wisdom and patience from above, and follow the admonition of the apostle, "Let brotherly love continue," and where charity exists the graces of charity will manifest themselves. There are many such admonitions in the Scriptures to which we do well to take heed: "Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good." "Love worketh no evil to its neighbor." "Therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." "Be kindly affectioned one toward another with brotherly love, in honor preferring one another." We do well if we walk soberly and orderly as becometh the saints of God, that we give no offense to the brethren, nor even to the world that may see our order, and give God the glory. The Old Baptists are praised by the world because of their order, but persecuted because of their doctrine and experience. Then how important that we keep ourselves unspotted from the world and all its allurements, which all "have the appearance of evil," and poison the minds of the brethren and hinder brotherly love. Paul says to the church at Ephesus: I therefore the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace. Therefore, "Let brotherly love continue."

"Now the Lord of patience and consolation grant us to be like minded one toward another, according to Christ Jesus, that we may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

May the God of peace be with us all. Amen.

WM. GRAFTON, Moderator.

MILTON DANCE, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1904.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

2 PETER II. 22.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Please give your views upon 2 Peter ii. 22, as soon as you can, and have space in the SIGNS. In particular I wish to know what character "the sow" represents. By complying you will greatly oblige an unworthy brother and reader of the SIGNS.

FRANK, W. Va., Dec., 1903.

To the above no name is signed. The Scripture referred to reads as follows: "But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire."

Our brother requested a speedy reply, but many things have occurred to hinder us, and so we must ask pardon for the delay. We are told first that this language is a proverb. If anything be clearly intended by the proverb, it must be that no matter what outward reformation may be wrought in evil men, for any reasons whatever, they are still evil; the reformation is only on the surface, and when the promoting cause is removed they will again do evil with the old greediness. A proverb is a common truth of general application, and so well noted among men that a terse saying, like this of the dog or the sow, expresses it fully to the minds of men. For instance, a thief at heart might, for some reason, for a time quit his stealing, but yet have experienced no change at heart, and after a time resume his thieving. This proverb would then apply to him.

The use made of this proverb by the apostle would have no force unless we understand him to have been speaking beforehand of unregenerate men who had made a profession of godliness, while they did not know anything about its power. It is parallel with the going out of the unclean spirit in the parable spoken by the Savior. There may have been an outward profession of godliness, accompanied with a reformation of the outward life, in language and conduct. For a time there may have been all the appearance of true godliness, so that men were deceived in the profession that had been made; yea, there may have been more zeal manifested than is common with true believers, but after all the heart has not been touched by the Spirit of God; there has been no communication of divine life, with the love, faith and hope that belong to that life, and so when the present excitement has worn off, or the purpose designed has been accomplished, and the real nature has an opportunity to come once more to the surface, such persons return with greediness to the very things which in their profession they had discarded, as the dog returns to his vomit, or the sow to her wallowing in the mire. It is expressly stated that the last end of these men is worse than the first. This does not mean that they are any worse by nature, for that could not be, since by nature all men are totally depraved already, but in feeling and in speech and in conduct these men go to still greater lengths in evil than before. It is as in the parable referred to before, they are possessed of seven other spirits

more wicked than the first. The apostle speaks in the connection of those who speak evil, using great swelling words of vanity, and of those who are ensnared by them, but both the ensnarer and the ensnared are not really believers. Both are alike in the flesh, and so those who speak from the flesh can easily ensnare those who are of the flesh. How much fleshly religion is in the world, and always has been. Those in whose heart true godliness and the true doctrine has found no place, are easily led to follow any false teaching, especially that which fosters the pride of the flesh and exalts the dignity of man. These return not only to unrighteous living, but also to unrighteous doctrine. They, like the dog, swallow their own vomit, in receiving the false doctrine which exalts man, and, like the sow, they wallow again in evil conduct. We know that good brethren, and some who have been much more deeply led into the sweet savor of the truth than we have ever been favored to experience, have thought that all this related to real children of God, but we have never been able to see that the language of the text and of the chapter could ever apply to the Lord's own dear children. The contrast seems to us too great between the words of this chapter and what is true of those who are called to be saints, and who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. This chapter does not relate to the inward warfare, or the soul-conflicts with sin, which all the children of God know and which makes them constantly cry out for deliverance, but to the willing return of reformed men to their former evil life. He that has experienced the grace of God in truth can never again come to rest upon his works for salvation, and he that has come to hate sin can never again but abhor it and hate it, and bemoan himself when he is overtaken by it. But the dog loves his vomit, and the sow loves the wallowing in the mire.

MATTHEW XXV. 15.

WILL you kindly explain through the SIGNS Matt. xxv. 15? and oblige an unworthy sister, if one at all,

(MRS.) BELLE RUPERT.

ALTOONA, Pa., March 14, 1904.

The text referred to is included in the parable of the talents. In compliance with the above request we feel willing to suggest a few things which seem plain to us, but we do not feel like writing at length upon it at the present time. Sometimes our thoughts may become confused as regards this parable in this way: we often hear or read of some man as being a talented man; this word "talented," in common use, must not be confounded with the word talents in the parable, the talent there means a sum of money. In this verse it is said that the man gave talents to his servants according to their several ability. The ability of the servants would be what we mean by the word talented, and the thought is that the different sums of money were given to each servant according to the talents or the ability which each one possessed; this would be precisely what any man would do in the affairs of life. An employer has many workmen, and to each he assigns such portions of his business or labor as he deems each one capable of attending to well. Bearing all this in mind, let us say a few things about the kingdom of heaven, to which this parable relates. The man who owns the goods and who travels into a far country is the Lord of life and glory, as presented in the incarnation; the servants are the true followers of the blessed Master, who know and love his name. To each one has been given some ability, and accord-

ing as the Lord sees the ability which he has himself imparted to each, developed in each, he, during this gospel dispensation, commits some field of labor or service to each one. In the parable the five, two and one talents present to view the places which he has assigned to each of his servants in his church. Each has his place, and each has his service committed to him, as much, and no more or no less, than he has ability to attend to, to the glory of God; all this fits in exactly with the parable. Some entered into the field assigned them, and attended to the things required there, and made gain of their Lord's money, but one hid that which was committed to him in the earth. He tells the Lord the reason when he is called to an account: I was afraid, for thou art a hard man, lo, here is thine. This describes the legal mind that still dwells in believers. The talent is removed from him and given to him that had ten talents; this shows that the ability, as we use the term, was not meant by the talents, but rather the field of usefulness, or labor, or service, for ability is not transferred to another. The parable illustrates a common experience in the kingdom of God under this gospel dispensation. The others gained other five or two talents, and let it be noticed that the one who gained two talents to his first two was commended equally with the one who returned other five with his original five talents. Notice also that the other five talents or the two talents gained are not spoken of as a reward for these men, they represent simply wider fields for cultivation, and all is the Lord's, and not theirs. They had no claim upon the Lord, for they were his slaves, his own property, of whom he had a right to demand all things that they were capable of. Having gained other talents they still could not boast, and they did not boast. The Lord commended them, but they did not claim commendation as their right. No doubt they felt as the Lord had told his disciples to say, After having done all, we are unprofitable servants, we have done only what was our duty to do. The children of God when led by the Spirit always say just what the Lord told his disciples to say, "We are unprofitable."

Now what was the result with these faithful servants? It consisted in two things, added service and care: "I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Literally, this last clause means the joy which the Lord himself knows, or which is his. The first clause of this sentence signifies added service; it does not mean a period of ease, or a holiday, as we would say, but it means added burdens. There is no furlough in the warfare of the believer, his is an unceasing care and toil and conflict, the doing of one thing faithfully only opens the door for still more exacting service. Faithful men in the church of God will always find wider and still wider fields opening before them, and that, too, without any seeking upon their part. Indeed, it may be and will be often that they will not know how to bear such care and labor, they will not feel sufficient for these things at any time, they will shrink and tremble often, but still it is the law of the kingdom that he who is faithful in little will soon find more burdens laid upon him. This was the result with the faithful servants in the parable, and the Lord said that this was setting forth things in his kingdom. To rule over many cities will not be a place of retirement and ease, the cares will be many, and the anxieties not a few. This will apply not only to the

public ministry, but to all the faithful children of God. But the text shows us that these added burdens and cares are accompanied with help. There is an entering into the joy of the Lord. This means communion with him from whence comes wisdom and strength to go on, and to do wisely his will in his kingdom. The joy means that the servants know his will and delight in his commandments. This joy does not exalt any man, as though he has deserved it as a reward, but on the contrary, humbles him in the dust, and makes him feel how little he deserves anything in the way of delight at the hand of God. "Thou, O Lord, hast given me all things, the ability, the talents, the place for their use, and what have I that I have not received?" The words of his heart will be, Let God be praised, from whom all these my blessings flow. Earthly gladness is produced by earthly and fleshly exaltation, and this gladness is felt by all legalists of whatever name, but the joy of the Lord is felt by the child of God, and is produced in him by the exaltation of his Lord. Such an one does not say, I have done good, and I am worthy, but, "Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown him Lord of all." Here is the joy of the true servant, when he can make mention that the Lord is exalted. The blessed Lord blesses his servants; blessed indeed is the man whom the Lord blesses, but that man who blesses himself in himself is under a curse.

We will close by adding one thought more. These two servants were not afraid, and they did not regard their Lord as a hard man during all the time of service as they used the talents given to them. In their service for their Master there was a gladness, because love reigned. True service carries with it its own joy, because it is the service of love. No matter what labor men may perform professedly for God, no matter what suffering men may endure for this service, if slavish fear and not love be the source of it, it is not true service in the sight of that God who searches the heart and tries the reins of the children of men. How often will the humble child examine himself, and fear that some selfish fear enters into his service. He is not like the legalist, who openly acknowledges that all that he serves God for is the reward offered, either here or in heaven. Children of God who have tasted his love know that this is not true service, and fear lest they should be found resting in it.

We will leave these thoughts with all who may read them. Though but feebly expressed we know that they are true.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

SOLOMON'S SONG II. 15.

"TAKE us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes."

Vines are often mentioned in the inspired Scriptures in a figurative manner, and the figure is used in the illustration of a variety of doctrinal, experimental and practical subjects. In John xv. 1–18, our Lord Jesus Christ applies the figure to himself, saying, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman," &c., and in this application, showing the vital relationship of the branches with the vine, and their dependence on the vine for life, vigor and fruitfulness, and strikingly setting forth the impossibility of his members glorifying God in the production of fruit, except they abide in him. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I

am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." The false church or churches are compared to vines, but "their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah; their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter: their vine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps."—Deut. xxxii. 32, 33. But the church of God is also frequently brought to view in the Scriptures under the figure of a vine, a vineyard, &c., as in the eightieth Psalm, "Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt; thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it. Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land. The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars. She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river." "Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold and visit this vine; and the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch that thou madest strong for thyself." "Sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine. I the Lord do keep it: I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day."—Isa. xxvii. 2, 3. We might multiply references to passages both in the Old and New Testaments where this figure is applied to the church of God as a vine of his own hand's planting, but in this Song the figure is so frequently used that we can safely rely upon its application to the church of God, in the text which we have under consideration. Foxes are a wild, cunning and mischievous animal, and greatly to be dreaded in the culture of vines, not so much from their power or disposition to destroy vines, as for their thievish disposition to rob them, by stealing the grapes. The saints are represented as being deeply interested in the prosperity of the vine, as representing the church, and their spiritual privileges in the church, and their vigilant watchfulness to guard against every influence that is prejudicial to the prosperity of the church. By foxes we presume all enemies of the cause of God and truth may be intended, as our Lord called Herod a fox, but the charge in our text is more especially in reference to the little foxes, that spoil, or rob the vine, by depredations on the tender grapes. Herod was not a little fox, and his object seemed to be not merely to rob or spoil the vine, but if possible to destroy it, root and branch. We are not sure that we understand the precise meaning of the little foxes in the figurative import of the text, but we will assume that it is intended to signify all such things or influences in and about the church as are calculated to prevent the fruitfulness, and mar the beauty of the church of God. Not only disorderly members, including hypocrites, false professors, and those of God's children who walk disorderly, are like foxes in despoiling the church of much of her beauty, vigor and fruitfulness, if they be not taken, or arrested in their pernicious course by the discipline of the house of God, but there are some foxes which seem to be so small as to cause but little or no apprehension by those who are keepers of the vineyard until they have done immense damage to the tender grapes. For instance, pride, arrogance, selfishness, jealousy, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, whisperings, back-bitings, envies, negligence, disobedience, indifference, wordlymindedness and self-gratification. Has any christian church or vine ever existed long in any place with-

out being molested with some little foxes of this description, more fatal to the peace and harmony of the church than Samson's three hundred foxes were to the Philistines' standing corn?

If we may regard the fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance, against which there is no law, if these be the tender grapes which cluster on the vigorous vine, are not the works of the flesh, as adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emolation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings and such like, the foxes which spoil the tender grapes?

But what shall we do to protect the vine and the clusters of tender grapes? Say some, "Let us shoot them, or stone them." But our text says: "Take us the foxes," &c. If we shoot or stone them, we may miss our mark, and only wound the vine. Let us beware that our zeal to destroy the foxes does not itself become a fox, and a very sly one, too, to hurt the tender grapes which we attempt to protect. Take them. How shall we take them? The idea seems to be that we are to detect them, and in such a way as shall not hurt the wine nor the oil, the vine nor the clusters. When Samson took his three hundred foxes we suppose he had some way of entrapping them without violence, and so if the word of truth dwells richly in our hearts, and we walk in the Spirit and do not fulfill the lusts or desires of the flesh, it is fair to believe we shall detect and take nearly all of these little foxes.

Our application of the figure of foxes may seem speculative, but could we take, that is, detect and arrest all the works of the flesh which war against the Spirit in and about the church of God, shall we have any farther occasion to fear from the depredation of foxes? For who or what shall harm you if ye be followers of that which is good? If ye be led by the Spirit, ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. It is the candid opinion of the writer of this article, that the little foxes which spoil or rob the vine, do burrow in the earthly nature of the children of God. Then if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, or if thy hand or foot offend thee, cut them off, or

> "The dearest idol I have known,
> Whate're that idol be,
> Help me to tear it from thy throne,
> And worship none but thee."

Whether we have correctly applied the figure in out text or not, we will not pretend to say, but we feel confident that there are foxes little and big, of the kind which we have described, and we would wish every child of God were a Nimrod, or mighty hunter before the Lord, to take the foxes, and to protect the tender grapes.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., November 1, 1861.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—This another session of our association about to close, has been one to be remembered by us as blessed of the Lord. He has sent his ministers to us filled with the rich blessings of his grace, that salvation is entirely and alone of God, and our hearts have been opened to receive these glad tidings of great joy. Your messengers have been gladly received in love and fellowship, and we hope you will continue this much desired correspondence. Our meeting has been a pleasant and harmonious one, for which we desire to be thankful to the Giver of every good.

Our next session will be held with the church at Harford, at the usual time,

when we hope to meet and receive your messengers and messages of love.

May love, fellowship and peace abide with you and all the saints everywhere, is our great desire, and God be glorified. Farewell.

WM. GRAFTON, Moderator.
MILTON DANCE, Clerk.

INFORMATION WANTED.

BASIN, Wyo., May 10, 1904.

IF there are any Old Baptists in this part of Wyoming I should like to hear of them, I know of none. We have a nice country here, and homes are easily obtained; the climate is very healthful and invigorating. I would be glad to correspond with any Old Baptist or lover of the truth who may want to locate here.

I. D. SCHENCK.

OREGON CITY, Oregon, May 19, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—Is there any Baptist brother or sister living at or near Fresno, Cal., or does any reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES know of any living there? If so I would like to hear from them. I will be at Oregon City a few weeks yet, and would like to have them write me in regard to above information. There are many Old Predestinarians in Oregon and Washington, and I would like to find some in California, too. C. M. BRUCE.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS.

WAVERLY, Pa., May 30, 1904.

I WISH to thank the many friends for their kind and sympathizing letters received since our dear son's death, as I could not answer them separately. I send this to be published in the SIGNS, if you will oblige me. It is the most heart-breaking affliction we have ever been called to experience, the killing of our son Arthur by the cars. Why, O why must it be? God knows.

Yours in prison, D. M. VAIL.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Arthur Vail departed this life May 3rd, 1904, after a shocking accident which occurred at Clarks Summit, Pa., two miles from his home, which was at Waverly, Pa. Arthur was the eldest and much beloved son of our dear brother and sister, Elder D. M. and Sarah Vail. He had returned home the week before his death, from Trenton, N. J., where he had spent most of the winter. April 30th he secured a position in Scranton, Pa., in the office of an architect, which profession he had almost mastered. Tuesday morning he started from home, delighted with the prospects before him of an honorable and useful life. When nearing the railroad station at Clarks Summit his train was approaching, and in his hurry to cross the track in order to get a ticket was caught by the train, which passed over his body. He was taken to the hospital, but died soon after. He only lived two hours after being hurt, never regained consciousness. He was born Feb. 12th, 1884, therefore was 20 years old February last. He was especially bright and ingenious, a natural musician, companionable to both the old and young; he left a host of friends. From early childhood he had an inquiring mind, but especially so the last three years with regard to salvation. He believed what the Old School Baptists preach, and said it was in perfect accord with the teaching of the Savior and his disciples; he had no use for any other doctrine, but seemed fearful that it had not been revealed to him, but that what he knew he had learned in a natural way by association. He often asked his father questions concerning evidences of spiritual life, and the afflicted father says, "I have no doubt in my mind that he is now with Jesus and already like him, while I, a poor, broken-hearted old sinner, must suffer and struggle on in this vacant, sin-cursed body, God knows how much longer. O, could I be resigned to God's ways and God's dealings, but I cannot. Why must our dear son be killed, O why? No answer comes; I must wait, but O how hard to wait."

The writer was called to conduct the funeral services, which were very largely attended; text used, Job vii. 1, "Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? are not his days also like the days of an hireling?" We did the best we could to exalt God in all his ways, and tried to give evidences why his children should be still under his mighty hand, but long since have we learned that at such times all words of man are empty, and fall to the ground without an echo. God himself can only help in such deep waters. The interment was in the cemetery at Waverly, Pa.

Our dear brother and sister have the sympathy of all who know them, many of whom know how to feel for them, they themselves having passed through the same ordeal. May the Lord be near unto our brother and sister in this time of need, is our prayer.

ALSO,

Mary Beatrice Beebe, the only child of Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Beebe, and granddaughter of the late Benton L. Beebe, departed this life May 20th, 1904, aged 7 years and 3 months. She was taken ill with measles four weeks before her death; this disease was followed by pneumonia, from which she was a great sufferer until it pleased the Lord to release her. She was unusually patient for a child, and for several months had asked many questions about heaven and God, such questions as could only be answered by the spiritual mind. "Mollie," by which name she was known, was a remarkably bright and interesting child, loved by all who knew her, and the idol of her father's and mother's heart. Her little heart was kind and generous. The world has an emptiness to the family that can never be filled.

The funeral, which was held in the Old School Baptist meeting-house in Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., Sunday, May 22nd, was very largely attended, the flowers were many and beautiful. A solemnity seldom witnessed filled the house while the writer tried to speak to the comfort of the heartbroken family from the words, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." After which the remains were interred in Hillside Cemetery, this city. The power and mercy of God to sustain and comfort the broken-hearted have been known and felt by our dear friends, Mr. and Mrs. Beebe, for which we bless his holy name. Our hearts go out in sympathy to them, and our prayers are for their comfort and guidance. H. C. KER.

It becomes my painful duty to send you the obituary of our dear brother, **John Broders,** who died at his home in Fairfax Co., Va., May 5th, 1904, in the 73rd year of his age. His funeral was held at the old homestead Saturday, May 7th, when a comforting discourse was preached by Elder J. T. Rowe. He was baptized June 19th, 1881, in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Alexandria, Va., and remained a consistent member until the church was dissolved, then he united with the Shiloh Old School Baptist Church at Washington, D. C. Brother John was married to Virginia Woodyard, Nov. 2nd, 1865, who preceded him to the grave sixteen years ago. He has left to mourn their loss six children, three sons and three daughters, and five sisters. While looking over the family record I find a long line of ancestors who have defended this precious faith; some have been asleep over a century, but our wise Counselor and Friend has left witnesses who still cry, Alleluia: the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Our grandfather, Elder Joseph Broders, was born in London, England, Sept. 2nd, 1754, and came to America when this country was in its infancy. He was associated with Elders Berton, Buck, Fristoe and Jeremiah Moore. Some of these old defenders of the Lord's precious truth suffered imprisonment for preaching against the church of England, and later, in the home of our dear parents, John and Elizabeth Broders, this same watchword has been handed down. May it please our gracious Lord to continue this great blessing. I felt when we looked on our brother's face after death that he was resting. There seemed to be a feeling of sweet peace surrounding him, as though this old tenement or body of clay held the image of that glorified spirit that I believe is resting in the New Jerusalem. In his last illness he was patient and cheerful, bearing his severe pain with the fortitude of a true christian. His mind was unusually bright on spiritual subjects, and his faith steadfast and unmovable. Lazarus seemed to be his favorite companion; he would repeat this verse: "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." One Sunday evening as the night shades were gathering he requested us to sing, and selected the dear old hymn commencing, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord," and though death seemed very near, his feeble voice joined in songs of praise to that precious Savior who has promised to never leave or forsake us. May those who mourn for this dear father and brother feel that they are protected by that gracious God who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind.

HIS SISTER.

Another of the old fathers in Israel has fallen asleep, gone home to the "land of pure delight" beyond this vale of suffering and disappointment, a change long and patiently waited for by the old brother whose faith in Christ remained unshaken to the very last. He had been a faithful reader and patron of the Signs of the Times nearly all the years of its publication, and through his last illness, which continued several months, he would have his daughter or some one else to read the paper for him.

Brother **Wesley Spitler** was born in the State of Virginia, Oct. 19th, 1811; died May 8th, 1904, aged a little over 92 and a half years. He grew up to manhood in his native State, and on the 19th day of September, 1833, he was united in marriage with Ann Varner, who with himself united with the Primitive Baptist Church in about the year 1832. The beloved wife, companion and mother died in the full triumph of the faith of God's elect in 1879, which faith was her strong tower and anchor throughout all the days of her earthly pilgrimage. The subject of this sketch with his family moved from Virginia to western Indiana, and located in Jasper Co. in about 1835. Soon after a church of his choice was constituted in that section, where for thirty years he and his wife were faithful and active members, and their home was ever a pleasant resting-place for the Lord's people. Brother Spitler was deacon of the church for many years, and he magnified the office. His untiring zeal and

faithfulness in church matters was a conspicuous characteristic of his life. His earnest and thoughtful care for the church continued until the day of his death. The subject of religion was always a welcome topic of conversation; he never grew wearied of hearing the name of Jesus magnified and his righteousness exalted. With him Christ was "Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." In 1865 he with his family moved to Effingham, Ill., near which place he lived, making his home with his son, David, and after his death, fourteen years ago, up to a few months since, with his widowed daughter-in-law. During his last illness he was tenderly cared for by his daughter, Mrs. George Shull, of Montrose. Two sons, Abram, of Mattoon, and George, of Mount Zion, Ill., and two daughters, the one above mentioned and Mrs. Lacrone, of Effingham, with many grandchildren, survive and were present at the funeral on May 10th, when the writer tried to say a few comforting words to the living assembled to look for the last time on the placid face of the now sainted father, devoted friend and faithful citizen, who "rests from his labors and his works do follow him."

The God of all grace be with the afflicted.

JOHN G. SAWIN.

MATTOON, Ill., May 16, 1904.

Miss Sarah A. Walker departed this life April 14th, 1904, after a long and tedious illness. Miss Walker was a regular attendant at our place of worship, in Duart, Ontario, where her mother is a faithful and esteemed member. During her illness she was patient and resigned, and toward the close of her life her fervent cry was that the Lord would take her home. She left satisfactory evidences of a living interest in Christ. The family, who deeply mourn their loss, were enabled to bear their sorrow with resignation to God's will, feeling that their loss is her happy, eternal release.

The funeral service was held in our meeting-house in Duart. A large congregation of relatives and friends were present. The writer tried to speak from the words, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

ALSO,

DIED—**Angus Grey,** in Orford township, Ontario, aged 70 years. The deceased was a friend of the church, though not a member; he attended the meetings in Aldborough. He died April 16th. He leaves a wife and sons and daughters to mourn.

The funeral took place from the home on Monday, April 18th. The writer tried to speak on the occasion from Psalms xxiii. A large concourse of friends followed him sorrowing to the grave. May God remember the bereaved ones.

H. M. CURRY.

IN much sadness we record the death of a beloved husband and father, **Samuel Thompson Crooks.** He was born in Illinois Dec. 26th, 1846, and died near Albany, Oregon, March 22nd, 1904. In 1848 with his parents and brothers he crossed the plains in an ox-wagon to Linn Co., Oregon, where he has since resided. He was united in marriage to Lydia Pursifull April 21st, 1872, who with two sons and four daughters survives him to mourn the irreparable loss. His father, John Turley Crooks, died Jan. 31st, 1896, and his mother Sept. 17th, 1876. He has two brothers and two sisters living. He was not a member of any church, but was a firm believer in the doctrine of the Old School Baptists.

The funeral service was held at his home, and was conducted by Elder Silas Williams. The remains were interred in the Miller Cemetery to await the resurrection morning. May God reconcile us who are left.

His daughter, (MISS) JOSIE CROOKS.

ALBANY, Ore., May 9, 1904.

Martha M. Rhodes, the subject of this notice, was born at Hindsburgh, N. Y., Dec. 11th, 1830. She was the eldest daughter of Nathaniel and Sally Rhodes. Feb. 26th, 1856, she was married to Geo. W. Bartlette. To this union two daughters were born, one died in early childhood; Ida, the older, is left to mourn a kind and devoted mother. The husband also is left, he lives at Fillmore, Ill., where the remains of my sister were interred April 30th, 1904.

The funeral was preached by an Old School Baptist. She was firm in the faith, a believer in predestination and salvation by grace. She was born again when in her teens, but was not baptized. She attended the Old School Baptist meetings with father and me years ago at Riker's Hollow, N. Y.

(MRS.) G. W. BREHM.

LOGAN, Ohio.

RECEIVED

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Previously acknowledged	$936 65
Mrs. Kate Kessler, Md., $1.00; Mrs. C. A. Norwood, Ark., $1.00; Thos. W. Records, Mo., $1.00.—Total	3 00
Total to date	$939 65

BOOK NOTICES.

I have a few of my "Meditations" yet on hand, price $1.00. Also a few of the Mary Parker book, price reduced since her death to 50 cents.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

MEETINGS.

THE Sandusky Regular Baptist Association will be held with the Vanburen Church, beginning on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1904. All lovers of the truth are invited.

H. D. BISHOP.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is expected to be held with the Warwick Church, at Warwick, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1904.

All trains arriving at Warwick, N. Y., on Tuesday and Wednesday, June 7th and 8th, will be met as follows: 8:06 and 11:54 a. m., 3:56, 5, 6:40 and 7:44 p. m. Trains leave Chambers St. ferry, Erie R. R., 9:15 a. m., 1, 3, 4:30, 5:30 p. m., Twenty-third St. ferry five minutes earlier. Those coming from the west can make connection at Greycourt for trains to Warwick at 7:42 and 11:26 a. m., 3:22, 4:38, 6:18 and 7:22 p. m. The old and infirm need fear no hardship in attending. Meeting-house in village one and one-half blocks from the depot. Entertainment close by. Every lover of the truth welcome.

JOHN McCONNELL.

THE yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held, the Lord willing, in the usual place, Aughrim schoolhouse, in the township of Brooke, Lambton Co., Ontario, five miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1904, and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited. ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

THE Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon and Washington, will be held this year, the Lord willing, with the Luckiamute Church, at or near the residence of Elder V. J. Turnidge, about six miles south of Sheridan, Yamhill Co., Oregon, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in June, (17th) 1904, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continuing the two following days. Those coming by railroad via Portland, Oregon, should be at Portland so as to take the train Thursday evening, June 16th, at 4 o'clock p. m., arriving at Sheridan at 8 o'clock p. m., (present schedule) where they will be met and conveyed to the place of meeting. All lovers of truth are invited to attend.

N. J. SHANKS, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

717 HOWARD ST., DETROIT, Mich.

BI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

OF THE

WELSH TRACT CHURCH.

The bi-centennial of the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., was celebrated Oct. 20th, 1903. After some delay it is now published in pamphlet form, and on sale at this office. Price 15 cents. The pamphlet contains photographs of the Welsh Tract meeting-house and Elder J. G. Eubanks, the pastor, the proceedings of the anniversary, letters of greeting from sister churches and a historical sketch written by Dr. B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., and read on the occasion. Some of the brick in the meeting-house was brought from Wales to this country, and hauled on mules' backs a distance of ten miles. The pamphlet is very interesting and full of information.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 72. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1904. NO. 13.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HABAKKUK III. 7.

"I SAW the tents of Cushan in affliction: and the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble."

The language of this prophet is poetry indeed. He sings in this third chapter of the manifestation of the glory of God: "God came from Teman, and the holy One from Mt. Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise." The magnificent splendor of God's glory as revealed in the death and resurrection of Christ is here the poet's theme, nor does he change his subject when declaring the words of our text, but affirms there shall be affliction and trembling at the glorious coming of the Lord. Isaiah says, when foretelling the incarnation: "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." Habakkuk's view of the glorious appearance of God in the salvation of his elect tells the same thing, but in a different manner. He is not looking at that side of Christ's character which shows him to have been a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, but is viewing him as the first begotten from the dead, the victorious warrior, the glory-crowned victor over the enemies of the church. We will prove this. "Tents of Cushan." This is highly figurative. The word "tents" is used, signifying those that dwell therein. Cushan refers to Chushanrishathaim, (see Judges iii. 8.) Cushan is used by the poet in place of the entire word, to preserve the meter. This is perfectly allowable in poetry, in fact must be resorted to at times in poetical composition, so as not to destroy the melodious rhythm. How many, many times rebellious Israel turned from the Lord! How many, many times did God deliver her from her enemies, yet she would slip back again. In Judges, third chapter, we find recorded one of these instances. We read here that Israel did not keep herself separate from the heathen, as she was commanded, but married the daughters of the idolatrous nations, and even gave her own daughters in marriage to them. Therefore God's wrath was kindled against Israel, so that he delivered them into the hands of King Chushanrishathaim, whom they served eight years. But when at last they became sorely oppressed, Israel cried unto the Lord, and he raised up Othniel, whose name signifies the lion of God, to be her deliverer. Othniel girded with power

from God to deliver the oppressed, proves too much for Chushanrishathaim, and the heathen king with his followers is in turn put under affliction. Othniel is a shadow of the Christ, the lion of the tribe of Judah, who gained the victory over all the enemies of the saints. "I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction," breathes in every word the victory of our Lord over death, hell and sin, and says unto Jerusalem her warfare is accomplished, her enemies terror-stricken before the resurrection of Christ.

"The curtains of the land of Midian." By the word "curtains" is meant the tent-hangings. Once again a figure of speech comes into play, for the prophet uses the dwelling to represent those that dwell therein. "The land of Midian." The Midianites were the descendants of Midian; they dwelt in the region stretching from what is now known as the Persian Gulf, to the plains of Moab, but the more civilized dwelt in the vicinity of Mt. Sinai, and carried on a trade with Egypt. Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, was a Midianitish priest. They were heathens worshiping the false god, Baal-peor; they were therefore enemies of Israel. Soon after their deliverance from Chushanrishathaim, the Israelites slipped back into their old idolatrous rut; they blasphemed the true God and served Baal and the groves. This time God used the Midianite as a rod of correction. Every year for seven long years, just at the time of harvest wandering bands of Midianites would swoop down upon the valleys waving with ripened grain, and would encamp there until every single grain was gathered; they then passed on, leaving desolation behind them. You may imagine the condition of Israel after seven years of this experience. They must have been reduced to poverty and humiliation. However, at the end of the seven years God raised up Gideon their deliverer. Gideon, like every other one whom God has called to serve him, felt very keenly the lack of necessary qualification on his part for a leader; but God had called him, he must obey. Without repeating in detail this very interesting recital, we will glance at but a few things necessary to a right understanding of our text. Because Gideon felt to be so insufficient for the work set before him, he asked God repeatedly to give him a sign whereby he might be assured of his calling. One of these evidences is worthy our attention. The night before the battle Gideon went near unto the encampment of the enemy, and heard a conversation between two of the soldiers. One was telling the other a dream; he had dreamed a cake of barley bread had fallen into their ranks, causing great havoc and confusion. His fellow-soldier immediately interpreted the dream to mean that the God of Israel was about to deliver the hosts of Midian into the hand of Gideon. This rumor spread throughout the camp, and created great terror among their ranks. God has chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise. By such a simple thing as a dream, and that, too, of a cake of barley bread, the hosts of Midian were already seized with fear and trembling, even before Gideon with his army appeared. Gideon with his three hundred men divided into three companies repair to the battle. Their weapons are not the sword and spear; no, but they carry in one hand a pitcher, in which is a light, and in the other hand a trumpet. Gideon is at the head; he says unto each of his three companies, "Look on me, and do likewise." So Jesus is at the head of the three great dispensations: the patriarchal,

the legal and the gospel. They all look unto him, testifying of him alone. With this seemingly weak equipment they surround the camp of the Midianites. At the right moment, following Gideon's example, they break their pitchers, holding their lamps on high and shouting with their trumpets, "The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon." The enemy flees before that sound, and fades away before that glorious light exalted by Gideon and his little army. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." The pitcher of Gideon is the earthen vessel of the humanity of Christ. "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me." The light in the pitcher is the treasure in the earthen vessel, which is "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God," which fills the earth as the waters cover the sea. By the breaking of the pitchers and the exaltation of the light within, the Midianites were vanquished. So by the ending of the natural life of Christ upon the cross—the breaking of the earthen vessel—his light is unconfined, it is exalted, shining forth unto the Gentiles, unto every nation under heaven, and into the heart of every creature of his grace, putting to flight the enemy of darkness, the evils of our own nature. Thus Habakkuk saw the curtains of Midian trembling. This is but expressing the victory of Christ over all the enemies of the church, and the establishment of his prosperous and glorious reign as the King of saints.

It is only through the breaking of our own bodies, the destroying of all confidence in ourselves, that the light of Christ is manifested in us.

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., May 30, 1904.

PSALMS CVI. 15.

"AND he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul."

We do not always remember the one great truth of our life of faith in Christ Jesus the Lord, as embodied in the words of the apostle: "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." If it were so we would have no need of the words of Scripture at the head of this communication. By reason of the lusts of our flesh our weakness and our natural life service to the law of sin causes us to often disregard the vital principles which embrace our hope in Christ Jesus, wherein we have confessed our alienation from the world, and professed an humble following in the footsteps of our gracious Redeemer. The psalmist, in this one hundred and sixth Psalm, is rehearsing the mighty acts of the God of Israel, and his merciful loving-kindness to the children of his choice in their many weary wanderings. He prays earnestly to the Lord, saying, "Remember me, O Lord, with the favor that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation." He acknowledges his own sinfulness as being as great as that of the fathers in Egypt and in the wilderness, saying, "We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly." He confesses the shortcomings of the fathers in Egypt, how that they understood not the wonders of God in that place, neither remembered they the multitude of his mercies, "but provoked him at the sea, even at the Red Sea." And now he confesses in a wonderful way, which we do well to take into our own heart's experi-

ence, (which applies equally to us, as to the fathers) saying, "Nevertheless, he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known." Does this not show how completely we are led by his loving hand, crowned with his precious love and blessed with his divine mercy, and how he establisheth all our works in us, by which we work out our own salvation with fear and with trembling? And so the psalmist's song of woe proceedeth, wherein he confesseth that when they witnessed his mighty acts, "Then believed they his words; they sang his praise." However, and we must confess the same to our shame, "They soon forgat his works; they waited not for his counsel; but lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert." Are not these a typical people, and do they not set forth in the type the travel of the members of the body of Christ? Is not that your daily experience, my brother, my sister? Is it not with bowed head and a contrite spirit that we make humble confession of our insufficiency in the service of our gracious Master?

"And he gave them their request." In the wilderness they cried for meat, the heavenly manna became insipid to them, and the Lord sent them quails in such an abundance that they became loathsome to them, and came out at their nostrils. Who among us does not remember with sorrow and heartache the times in our own experience when we forgot the works of God, and waited not for his counsel, but lusted for and sought out the beggarly elements of the world, and cried for the fleshpots of Egypt? And God granted our request, (his own way of bringing us back to the courts of his lovely kingdom) and we became more foul than the beasts of the field; and when (by the exercise of the spirit within us) we come to the realization of our own foulness and depravity of heart, how we did loathe and abhor ourself, yet through this avenue the Lord brought repentance to our soul, for with the disobedience, which brought abhorrence of self, we discover that the Lord has also sent leanness into our soul, and now as we grope in the darkness we behold how we have outraged the Spirit of the living God, and with shame and contrition we beg and plead for mercy. As the thunders of Sinai now come down upon us, and we are cast into a fretful sea of trouble and distress, and the waves and the billows flow over us, we hear a voice from heaven saying, "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." Immediately with deeper contrition, prostrate in dust and ashes, we behold the pitying eye of the loving Redeemer upon us, and with loving hands "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." During the pilgrimage journey of the saints in Zion there seems to be upon each one of Zion's children a fear and a dread that at some time and in some way they may injure the cause they so much love, and so bring reproach where sweetest love and harmony should reign supreme. David feared that he would one day fall by the hand of Saul, and in the same way we fear that our besetting sins will overcome

us. There is one thing however we may be well assured of, and that is, if indeed we are Zion's children, no matter how low we may be brought down, every problem of our life will redound to the glory of God, and to the lifting of Jesus on high. And we may be assured also that if in our weakness we constantly desire that our lusts of the flesh be gratified, we will find that God will give us our request, but O the dreadful penalty; he will also send into our soul that awful calamity so greatly dreaded by every lone traveler in Zion, "leanness, leanness," a living death, dead to all the comforts that build up and nourish the hungry wayfarer, dead to all spiritual thought or emotion, a feeling of guilt and shame in the presence of our brethren. May we ever be kept by the power of God, sustained by his grace and upheld by his Spirit, to the praise and glory of him who hath begotten us again unto a lively hope; who hath delivered us from darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

FAIRFIELD, Texas, July 22, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I am in receipt of a letter from Elder Asa Howard, he has also written some to the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I indorse the sentiment of his letter, it has been of great comfort to me, and I think it would be to all the household of faith. I would be glad to see it in our family paper, but do with it as you think best, and all will be right.

Yours in love,

I. W. BOWERS.

WACO, Texas, June 18, 1903.

ELDER I. W. BOWERS—DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER IN CHRIST:—The yearning of my poor heart no one knows, and how anxious I am to see you all again, and to refresh ourselves in the sweet and precious hours of last fall. They are evergreens that linger in my heart, that bloom again and again with renewed interest of a season so full of joy and consolation, never to be forgotten, notwithstanding the many sorrows that have encompassed us round about, and the sharp arrows of fiery contention that have been thrust at us since we separated. However the dear Lord in his mercy cast forth the life-line of sovereign grace, and saved us from the tempter's power, guiding us by his pillar of fire by night, and his pillar of cloud by day, exemplifying his purpose that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," and as the Lord leads us through floods and flames his word is a light to our pathway, as the sound of the golden bells upon the priestly Aaron in the tabernacle signified to the Hebrews the presence of their high priest, that he lived, so does the Lord of Sabaoth manifest himself to his church, spiritual Israel, signifying that all our times are in his hand, and all events at his command, working in us to will and to do according to the good pleasure of his will, saving, preserving, keeping and overshadowing by his undying grace, upholding by the word of his power the sheep of his pasture, in love and mercy to them dispels the dark storm of blind unbelief, and maketh a path through the angry floods for our peace and rescue from the hand of our assailants, that long since would have swallowed us up. But the King of kings, the heavenly Potentate, is underneath Zion, and round about her as a refuge, a wall of fire and the glory in the midst, saying, "Be not afraid, it is I." Hence we at once see the absolute necessity of

the righteous decrees of God in all things, which excludes chance and uncertainty from the universe, demonstrating the fact that God is omnipotent, and that his righteous law or determinate counsel extendeth itself to the first fall, and to all other sinful action, both of angels and men, a positive certainty of his whole providential ruling over the governments of the world and the coming to pass of everything, both good and evil, which he purposed (or predestinated) from eternity, from the monarch on his throne of earthly power, down to the least thing that crawls upon the earth, or that traverses the deserts or wilderness of the entire world, embracing in the purpose of God all things whatsoever come to pass, so that he is not the author of sin, neither hath fellowship with any therein. The judgments of God and his providences are so perfectly arranged in his eternal wisdom that nothing takes place by chance. Thus the whole volume of inspiration teaches and describes so definitely that God Almighty rules the destiny of all generations and nations that ever have or ever will live upon the earth, and sovereignly determines all events according to his most wise purpose and unchangeable will, because "justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne," and is therefore the righteous disposer of the earth and all its fullness, based upon the fact of his predeterminate will, efficiently controlling all action, "visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers." "He is before all things, and by him all things consist."—Col. i. 16, 17. This is true of God, who speaks and it is done, and his word is truth, the rock and high tower, the foundation of his church, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. We cannot preach or speak of the great power of God too often, for the prophets and apostles rejoiced in it in the days of yore; it was their meat and drink, a subject in the gospel fraught with superior interest to the humble followers of a loving Savior, the most momentous that ever engaged the attention of men or angels. As declared by "The four and twenty Elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshiped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned."—Rev. xi. 16, 17. I realize in this great power of revealed truth is the experience of every poor, humble, contrite soul that ever has or ever will believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, because so many as were ordained to eternal life believed, no more nor no less, a perfect ownership, satisfaction to every requisition of the law fully rendered in lieu of an inheritance purchased by his own blood. I believe in the special providences of God, and the train of circumstances attending in every particular is so hermetically fixed by the wills and shalls of the eternal God that will not admit of the least possible confliction, but all working throughout the great drama of this universal world some great end, in fulfillment of some wise design or noble purpose worthy of himself, who created all things by Jesus Christ, bringing forth in all its complicated form everything after its own kind, producing the seas and spheres and the fountains of waters, the germ of every plant before it grew in the earth, and the laws of perfect adaptability to both the animal and vegetable kingdoms, giving life and breath and all things necessary for the support and perpetuity of his creatures to the end of the world, "When he shall

have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." —1 Cor. xv. 24–26. Forever, O Lord, is thy word settled in heaven.

Just here my mind by the Spirit has been carried away, as on a long journey, in heavenly contemplation of the glory of God and his eternal power, in wonder, praise and admiration of all the works of a just and holy God, whose counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure, even the thoughts of his heart, to all generations, at his command. The wind and the seas obey him, whose salvation shall be forever, and his righteousness shall not be abolished, then it is the Spirit of God that quickens and prompts to obedience, the efficient cause of our being reconciled to God to sweetly sing, Amazing grace, the new song of redeeming love. In view of the resurrection life of our glorious Lord, any doctrine other than the imputed righteousness of justifying grace in Christ, that would tend in any sense to minimize the grace of God, I have no forbearance with, and can never fellowship. This is a time of trouble so portentious in our midst, to break up the rest and peace so long enjoyed by the church in this land of America. However God said to Israel of old he would stir them up an adversary, which resulted in the secession of ten tribes, leaving but the small remnant of two tribes of the church. So let us not become discouraged because our number is so diminished; there is a needs be for all these things, "That they which are approved may be made manifest among you," as spoken by the apostle. The time it seems has come when there must be another falling away, a filtering out the surplus growth of the church; this also is the work of God, and the means to execute his purpose is at his command.

Now a word for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and I am done. I feel so grateful to the Giver of all good for putting it in the hearts of the brethren to so liberally donate to the SIGNS, and I pray God to continue their generosity as the Lord has prospered them, till the paper is fully relieved of all encumbrance, because it has been a great blessing to the Old School Baptists for these many days and years, and has so faithfully defended and maintained the true principles of Bible doctrine for its seventy-one years of existence, standing solid where it began in 1832, contending firmly for discriminating grace and the predestination of all things, against all the isms and new things of the day, believed and accepted by all sound Bible Baptists then, and yet believed and promulgated by all the sound element of Predestinarian Baptists. O that I were able to lend a helping hand in donating for the SIGNS. However, I feel that the Lord will continue to prosper and bless the publication of the paper to the good of his people and his own glory.

Now, dear brother, these few thoughts are submitted for your consideration, and all who love the Lord Jesus in truth and in sincerity, and if there be any comfort or any praise, give it all to God, and I shall feel more than compensated for this feeble effort. May the Lord of Israel be pleased to pour out a blessing upon you of spiritual life and peace, and they of your precious charge, and all the dear children of God everywhere, is the prayer of your brother in gospel bonds. Remember me at the throne of grace.

Affectionately,

ASA HOWARD.

LIMA, Ohio, March 22, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—By the consent of the writer I send you a letter of brother Peters'. It was a great comfort to us, for it is what we believe to be the truth, and it is only the truth and righteousness of God that will do poor, lost and ruined sinners any good, and we feel that we ought to share the blessings with the brethren. We have been comforted by the many private letters that were sent and published in the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

May the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob bless you and all of the children of the most high God.

C. GILBERT MILLER.

PORTLAND, Ind., March 17, 1904.

BROTHER AND SISTER MILLER:—It has been some time since I received your good letter, and the subject you asked me to write upon has not fastened upon my mind, for I have possessed a barren mind most of the time so far as spiritual things are concerned, but when it comes to carnal things my mind has been very fruitful. I have been a sufferer from rheumatism for about three weeks, so that I could not write without pain, and now I am suffering all the time that I am writing; I can be easy only when lying down. I send you a subject that I had written upon some time ago, and finished up to-day, Romans v. 19: "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

The above quotation sets forth in most positive language a truth that is overlooked by most Bible students, for in that verse and the four preceding verses is embodied the doctrine of God our Savior, to wit, that it is not what we have done that condemns us, and it is not what we have done or can do that makes us righteous, for by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death hath passed on all men, for that all have sinned. We are to understand that all of Adam's posterity were made sinners by what Adam did, for "as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners." Hence we see encouched in Paul's language that what we do is not what condemns us, and what we do is not what saves us, for sin entered into the world by Adam, and death by what Adam did, and thereby death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. How have all sinned? Death passed upon them certainly by what Adam did. Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. When was it lost? Certainly in Adam's sin, so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned; all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. These declarations are all in the past tense, and hence it is the truth that all of Adam's posterity was lost in what Adam did, even though they had never personally transgressed any law. Hence the truth that as by one man's (Adam's) disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one man (Jesus Christ) shall many be made righteous. Then we are to learn in these quotations that those who have been born into the world since Adam transgressed, have Adam's sin entailed upon them, he being their head. They were all in him and were a part of him when he transgressed, and therefore were all in the transgression. Therefore we sinned in Adam, we fell in Adam, and we were lost in Adam; death hath passed upon all men, for all have sinned. By man came death, and by man came also the resurrection of the dead, which means that by Adam came death, and by Christ came the resurrection of the dead. "For

as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive;" meaning that all of Adam's posterity die in him, and all of Christ's posterity was made alive in Christ. But every man in his own order, in the order named, that is, in Adam all his posterity die, and in Christ all his posterity is made alive. Paul says we thus judge that "if one died for all, then were all dead," and if we be dead with Christ we believe we shall live with him. This being dead with Christ sets forth that as Adam's posterity was in him, even so all of Christ's people were in him, chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. I in you and ye in me. Because I live, ye shall live also. Therefore Christ's people being in him, and he being their life and spiritual Head, when he was put to death they were dead. Paul says, "As many as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death. Therefore they were buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life." And "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." We were all lost and ruined in Adam our head nearly six thousand years ago. We were in Christ, chosen in him as members of his mystical body before the world began, and therefore we were crucified with him, buried with him, raised to newness of life, redeemed from the curse of the law two thousand years ago, or nearly so. Hence by the first Adam we were all lost, and by the second Adam all his generation are saved, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. Therefore our relation to Christ was prior to our relation to Adam. Paul says, If by one man's offense death reigned by one (Adam), much more they which receive abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. The apostle qualifies those who reign in life with Christ as being those that receive abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness. And also this verse sets forth that death reigned over Adam's generation through Adam's offense, and they that receive abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life by Jesus Christ. Therefore it is plainly set forth by Paul that the death and curse of Adam is inherited by his posterity. All the obedience that Christ rendered for his people as their legal Head and representative was no personal act of theirs; they were not consulted in it. It was done prior to the personal existence of many of his children, hence they can take no glory or praise to themselves; it was done without their knowledge by their spiritual Head and representative, and all they enjoy as the fruits of it is by the relation they bear to Christ. Had they not been members of his mystical body they could claim no redemption or salvation, but they, bearing a similar relation to him that Adam's posterity bears to Adam, claim all through Christ. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin, and there is to be no more offering for sin. Hence all our salvation was nearly two thousand years ago, before we had any personal existence; hence the curse and the redemption from the curse were long before we existed personally. Our condemnation was applied to us through our natural head Adam, and our salvation was applied to us through our spiritual Head, Christ, and all the glory

that is due for the salvation of Christ's members is due to him alone. All praise and adoration is due him continually, for the battle was fought by him, and redemption from the curse of the law was by him. For the law hath concluded all under sin, that the righteousness by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight. But after all who knoweth these things? Who hath felt these things and known them to be true from actual experience? Christ prayed to the Father, and thanked him that he had hid these things from the wise and prudent, and had revealed them unto babes, and all this because it seemed good in his sight. Had I the pen of a ready writer, or had I the tongue of angels, I could not reveal the truth of these things to even one poor mortal man. Therefore I feel to multiply words and set forth these facts by the skill of all the worldly wisdom man can grasp would avail nothing, for the apostle Paul hath said the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, and that God would destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Paul says that he was sent to preach the gospel, but not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ be made of none effect; for after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. The Jews always required a sign of some kind, and the Greeks seek after worldly wisdom, but Paul says, We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness, but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but to us which are saved it is the power of God. Therefore Paul says, You see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many noble, not many mighty are called, that no flesh should glory in his presence. Hence what does all this writing and preaching amount to? It teaches no one anything save those called and qualified by the Spirit. It is labor in vain, for it is a stumbling-block to some and foolishness to others; but after all it is to them that are called the power of God and the wisdom of God. Paul says we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden mystery which God ordained before the world unto our glory. And from the effect it has on the unbeliever, I must conclude it is a hidden mystery indeed, but I take comfort in the thought that God ordained it before the world unto our glory, which none of the princes of this world knew; for Paul said if the princes of this world had known this hidden mystery, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory, and I have wondered how man could have been redeemed from the curse of the law, or any atonement have been made for sin, if they had not crucified the Lord of glory. It is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God, and the things of God knoweth no man but by the Spirit. The Lord seeketh such to worship him as do worship him in spirit and in truth, for God is a Spirit. The apostle Paul said of the gospel that he preached, that he did not receive it of man, neither was he taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ; for the carnal mind is enmity

against God, and not in any way subject to his law, and Paul says, never can be. Therefore how can I make man understand this truth? How can I teach? What am I, or what was Paul? especially when Paul has so forcibly declared that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them. Why teach, or try to teach or preach? All the answer I can give is as Paul has given: We preach Christ and him crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those poor, humble souls who are called, it is Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God, and not many mighty and noble are called, but those whom he foreknew he predestinated, and those he predestinated he called. Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling. O bless that holy, holy calling.

N. PETERS.

LOVELAND, Colo., May 15, 1904.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been a number of years since I saw or read a copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I presume that Elder G. Beebe's Sons are still the publishers of it. I have in my old age gotten so very low down in poverty's vale that I could not keep my subscription to it paid up, so I had to stop taking it. I am now in my seventieth year of age, am entirely blind of right eye, otherwise am still blessed with fairly good health. In years past I was a frequent contributor to the SIGNS, but as I could not take the paper and pay for it, I felt it was asking too much of the editors to have space in its columns for my poor, imperfect writing, hence I ceased to write altogether. This morning while reflecting over the past, my mind led me back to the days when I used to read the SIGNS, and of the comfort and edification I enjoyed in reading the many precious letters and editorials it contained, even in my youthful days, and I felt that I wanted to write at least this once more, and say to the readers of the dear old SIGNS that I still live, and hope I can say truthfully, too, that I have in no wise departed from the "old landmarks" of the truth which my forefathers earnestly contended for. I have during the latter part of my life passed through many changing scenes, many sore trials and temptations, too, yet in all my trials and troubles of life I have clung to my little hope and faith in Jesus as a whole and complete Savior, which I received when but a boy. The doctrine of the predestination and sovereignty of God over all his works is just as precious to me now as the day I first believed. I believe that our God is a God of purpose, he doeth nothing in vain. Then he has a purpose in casting my lot in this part of earth where I am cut off or deprived of all privileges of meeting with any of his dear children who "worship God in spirit and in truth." There is no one near me who knows or loves the truth as it is in Jesus with whom I can converse upon the eternal truths of our God, so that I often feel very lonely and disconsolate. There are many professed religionists here in our town and the country around, with large and elegantly furnished edifices in which to worship. They think it strange in me that I cannot nor will not join them in their great effort to "convert the world to Christ," as they claim to be doing. Notwithstanding the boasted good that they claim to be doing in bringing "souls to God," I cannot see but that the world is growing worse and worse, and that sin and iniquity abounds in the world more and more. These

things do not move me, but it does pain me to know of the discord that exists among our people, the Old School Baptists, in some places. If we lay aside all our differences, which in a great measure have been brought about by the "disputation of words to no profit," and compare each other's travel or experience from nature to grace, we could and no doubt would truthfully say, Thou art my brother or sister in deed and in truth; thy people are my people, and thy God my God. There is one command of our Master we often seem forgetful of, and that is, "Watch and pray." We sometimes do the watching, but fail to pray, and to pray aright, and in our watching we often do not watch aright, for instead of watching over our brother for good, if we are not very careful we will be found watching for evil, and as "every spirit begetteth its own likeness," our brother may be watching us through the same spirit. Brethren, how careful we should be to watch over one another for good.

It is, if I remember rightly, just forty-four years ago this month since I united with the Old School Baptists, and was received in the fellowship of the Blue Grass Church, in Indiana. It would seem if such a thing were possible for a poor, finite creature like I am to "do good and get good," I ought to have made some headway in forty-four years, and be a better man in my old days, but,

If you want to know of me,
How I am or what I be,
Here I am, behold who will;
Sure I am a sinner still.

Weak and wounded, sick and lame,
All unholy, all unclean,
Worse and worse myself I see,
Yet the Lord remembers me.

J. H. YEOMAN.

[WE are glad to hear again from our esteemed brother Yeoman, and we have no doubt that our readers who remember his writing of years ago will also be glad. Since he has written before for the SIGNS, great, and to us sad changes, have taken place, as he will discover by the copies of the SIGNS which we have sent him. He will no doubt grieve to know of the departure of our dear brethren, Elder Wm. L. and Benton L. Beebe, former editors. We feel glad of the kind feelings which he has toward the SIGNS. We assure him we desire that the same doctrine which before made his heart to rejoice shall continue to be published in the SIGNS. Like brother Yeoman, we do not doubt that in very many cases at least, the differences which have sprung up between brethren have been more seeming than real, and we do not doubt that if the brethren could clearly understand each other, in very many cases it would result in mutual confidence and fellowship in the truth being re-established. And we desire to say here that while we do hold and expect to hold fast to the doctrine of unlimited predestination, and to remain steadfastly opposed to all forms of conditionalism, as we understand the word "conditional," yet we have not at any time declared non-fellowship for brethren who cannot see clearly what we believe the Scriptures teach in these matters; neither have we at any time made a hobby of these special things. When opposition to predestination has shown itself, we have felt that we ought to present it from a scriptural standpoint as clearly as we could, and with our limited ability do so. We have felt that those who insisted upon the use of the word "conditional" were standing upon dangerous ground, and have striven to show them that it was so, and we have felt well assured that if brethren could see to what necessary conclusions conditional-

ism, even in our present salvation, would lead us, they would be among the first to drop the word. In writing upon these themes we have always desired to present the truth in love; that is, in love first to the truth, and to the God of truth, and then in love to all who love the truth. We hope to be kept from all departures from the truth, and on the other hand from all strife about mere words. May God bless our dear, aged brother in all things.—ED.]

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Dec. 28, 1903.

MY DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—While I sat musing and meditating upon eternal things, with my mind harrassed by tormenting doubts and fears, feeling that I had no right to deem myself a child, because of my sinful life and carnal mind, suddenly my mind was startled by a queer but comforting thought, namely: Comfortable meditation is not always profitable, and often that which condemns us does us more real and lasting good than that which encourages us. With these meditations came the impulse to write, and now I am penning my thoughts. I feel myself unworthy the least notice of God's dear people, and know that I am a very unprofitable servant, if indeed one at all, and yet if you were all with one accord to turn your backs upon me, I would be a stranger indeed with nowhere to go. I know that I am undeserving of your love and esteem, still my heart longs for you, your God is my God, and your people my people. Entreat me not to leave thee or to return from following after thee, for where thou art, there I want to be. I sincerely hope that all of God's saints who may read this will find it in their hearts to pray for me that I faint not.

While I feel that my writing will be worthless, yet I am constrained to write. I am willing to let God's children be the judge, and if indeed this is the dealing of the Lord with me, let his name have all the praise, for he is worthy of it all, and I am worthy of nothing but condemnation. May the grace of God be with me while I write, and may what I write be blessed to the comfort of poor mourning and troubled saints, such as I feel myself to be. These doubts and fears were not caused by my appearance to my brethren, but were caused because I stand naked before God. Sometimes I wonder how it is that my brethren do not detect the fact that I am deceitful and sinful. I hope that God, whose eyes are as flames of fire to search out the secrets of men's hearts, has searched my heart and made me in sincerity and truth plead unto him for mercy. I am conscious of this fact, that I am a miserable, vile worm of the dust, saved by grace, if saved at all. The earth with all its wealth and charms has none so dear to me as the name of Jesus. I would rather know that I possessed one little grain of divine life or teaching than the highest attainments of human excellency, or all the wealth that earth can produce.

It is a mystery to me why God has made us to be the offscourings of the world and to be hated by it, but it is certain that we need not expect to follow Christ in honor, respectability and amid shouts of praise, but in shame and contempt, hated by the world, despised, persecuted and falsely accused. But what need we care for all these, if God is for us?

I have been doubting very much the reality of my experience, because of my sins, my vile and deceitful heart and corrupt and carnal mind. I feel at times

that I am deceived and many times that I am deceiving the brethren. I know that it is impossible to deceive God. It is this that causes me to mourn and groan and grow sick at heart, for I know that I am naked before him, he knows that my heart is evil, and that continually, that in my flesh there dwells no good thing, that my imaginations are vain and my thoughts evil and corrupt, and I cannot understand how he can justly save me, but it does give me some comfort and encouragement to know and believe that the blood of Christ cleanseth one from all sin. Sometimes the thought is suggested to my mind that my experience is a strong delusion, but if so, it is of God, and he is just, holy and good. I must believe and hope that it is a divine work, lest I do despite to the spirit of grace. I knew at one time, only what it was to love sin, but I believe now I know what it is to hate sin, and my own life because of sin. It gives me encouragement to know that I am one who cannot do the things I would do, because evil is present with me, but O how wretched it makes me feel, and I ask, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Now a ray of light appears, because it is light which reveals the man of sin, who now stands naked before God trembling and afraid, and yet pleads for mercy. It does not cast out hope as we are made to realize more fully our just condemnation and the exceeding sinfulness of sin, but causes us to plead more earnestly for mercy and forgiveness. All this is some evidence of a mighty power at work within us. Though invisible to our eyes and beyond our ability to comprehend, it continues its wonderful workings, tearing down our idols, destroying our self-righteousness, pride and conceit, humbling us in our own estimation, turning our carnal mind into filth and corruption, and revealing the heart as deceitful and desperately wicked. It shows that there is nothing to be found in this cold, lifeless, sinful heart of man but pride, sin, idolatry, envyings, covetousness, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, wrath, witchcraft, hatred, strife, seditions, heresies and such like (all this in the heart of man). No wonder that he mourns, groans and hungers and thirsts after righteousness, and exclaims, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" or I am undone, a man of unclean lips. "Unclean! unclean." We are not surprised now that inspiration tells us that man is nothing, less than nothing and vanity, or as the grass of the field. Thus shall he ever be in the sight of God, who accepteth the person of no man, unless we are "accepted in the Beloved." If we are thus accepted by God, we stand before him holy and without blame. And is not this our hope? Yes, for our hope enters into that within the veil, because we were begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled. And what a mercy to be kept by the power of God and so inseparably connected with the inheritance that neither life nor death, principalities or powers, or things present or things to come, or any other creature is able to separate them, the inheritance and the heirs. If I did not believe this I would be without hope and without God in the world, but I do believe it, and my trust is in God and not in man; he is the hope of my salvation.

I fear that I have no gift for writing, and lest I weary you with my wandering thoughts, I am going to close. I know that sound experience and gracious teaching, however roughly wrought, will out-

shine all the heights of human eloquence and the wisdom of this world. I will let you judge whether this is the dealing of the Lord with a subject of grace or not.

Yours very affectionately in the Lord,
J. CORDER MELLOTT.

MARSHALL, Minn., Feb. 22, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I take the liberty to say a few words to you, to let you know that I weep with those who weep. My heart was filled with grief at the death of brother Beebe. I cannot find words to express the depth of my sorrow; but God knows what is for the best.

I want to send you a letter that gave me much comfort, and if you see fit to publish it, I hope that you may do so.

I remain your sister in hope,
PARTHENIA PATTERSON.

NEWARK, Del., Feb. 14, 1904.

MRS. PARTHENIA PATTERSON—DEAR SISTER IN HOPE THROUGH OUR PRECIOUS LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST:—I have most always a feeling of hesitancy in thus addressing one of the Lord's dear ones, and this is especially so when addressing one whom I know to be established in the doctrine of God our Savior, and those who are indeed fathers and mothers in Israel, and before whom I feel to be such a little child of grace. Often, as is the case now in addressing you a letter, I feel that I come before one of our Lord's precious ones, with nothing in my hands to bring. Yet since reading your letter to father and mother my heart overflows with love to you, which compels me to try and send you a few lines; I feel as though I come as one poor in spirit indeed. I am convinced that if I am enabled to write you anything of comfort it must be because of death in myself and life in Christ, for I am daily more and more convinced that if I indeed do have life spiritually, it is alone in Christ. I am, I think, daily made aware of this death in myself, and, dear sister, when one is made to hate the unrighteousness, and ungodliness, and death which is in the flesh, and in the natural life, and has also been brought to a knowledge of the spiritual life in Christ, which is holiness, righteousness and godliness, such an one is completely stripped of all hope and confidence in self. This flesh is, without question, a body of sin and death wherein it is impossible to work the works of God. Dear sister, I am satisfied more and more, day by day, by this painful experience, that if there be aught in me of spiritual life, it is in the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ must be all and in all to me, or I have no hope of godliness, either in this life or the life to come. But in spite of the mountains of fiery trial, of doubt, fear and unbelief, because of the flesh, I yet find that my hope continues, though many times I am scarcely able to lay hold of it. Then I find myself looking the more to Jesus, whom I cannot but trust has brought me all the way I have come. I find myself still hoping that I have had evidence given me, which gives me the privilege of uniting with the dear ones in the same precious hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. I feel at times that I am joined with them in the same precious hope in the Lord, both in the life that now is and that which is to come. Yet if I do join with them it must necessarily be in weakness and humbleness of spirit before the blessed Lord, for I am daily more and more painfully aware that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing, and were it not for the continual comforting, consoling and life-re-

viving manifestations of life in Christ continued unto me through the love, mercy and tender forbearance of God, I must indeed be most miserable. As it is, I can sometimes adopt the language of the beloved apostle, "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." Dear sister, when we can by faith behold our way, our life, it is indeed all our light affliction, which worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. But I cannot always see things in this way. When this death within me is manifested, I am at once ready to doubt and question my right to hope in the dear Redeemer with his saints.

Your letter to my parents was a comfort to me, and was precious, it was this that made me desire to write to you. You spoke of wishing to write a letter for the SIGNS, and your letter to us was so good, I want to ask if you are willing that we should send it to the SIGNS? I believe that it would be a comfort to many.

I surely send you much love, and hope that I am your sister in the fellowship of the gospel,

LAURA A. HAMILTON.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, held with the First Hopewell Church, at Hopewell, Mercer Co., N. J., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1904, to the churches of which she is composed sends this her annual greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—According to our long established custom, you will no doubt at this time expect some word from us in the way of what is called a Circular Letter. It has been our custom from the first to speak in such letters of some one or more of the principal things which belong to the faith of God's elect, the faith which we have professed to love, and which furnishes the ground of the hope upon which we rest. Very many of these precious things have been presented in former letters, until it seems impossible to write without some repetition. Perhaps this is not to be regretted, for the things of the gospel are always good, and the same truth comes to us again and again in its various forms and applications with the same power that it came at the first, comforting, strengthening, reproving, rebuking, warning or teaching, as the case may be, and as the needs of the children may require. Our covenant God and Father knows just what we all need, and he supplies all our need through riches of grace in Christ Jesus. In this Circular it may be his will to supply some one's need, though the same things be presented that have been presented many times before. We all

need the daily bread of the word that we may grow thereby. Does not this mean growing in knowledge of the will of God as revealed in this word, growing in faith, hope and love, growing in an understanding of the doctrine which is according to godliness, and growing up into Christ in all things, until we all come to the full knowledge of him, and unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ? One peculiarity of this living bread of the word, which is from heaven, is that it always supplies just what we need at the time, though it may be given to us by the words of some Scripture which have come to us in other ways and under other circumstances before. The truth of God is many sided, and the Scriptures are many sided, so that the same word may come to one as a word of comfort, to another as a word of reproof, to another as a word of instruction, and all to edification and growth in grace and knowledge.

From these and other considerations, we are encouraged to write again, presenting it may be, the old themes in the same old way, believing that all is in the hand of our all-wise God and Father, who will apply his truth as seems to him good for us to receive. It is this encouragement, is it not, that enables the ministers of Christ to continue their ministry, though they may often feel that their preaching contains so much sameness that all must be weary of hearing them, and that no one can be benefited by their ministry of the word? It is this consideration which encourages the people of God to often attend upon the sanctuary, knowing that they will receive the same precious doctrine (and be built up in it) that has been their strength for so many years past. It is receiving and ministering daily bread. And all this is in response to the prayer in the heart of the needy, "Give us this day our daily bread."

We will, brethren, write to you at this time of the word "Brethren," the word by which we have addressed you at the beginning of this letter. This is a word belonging especially to believers, and expressing in a peculiar way their relationship to each other. But more than this, it also includes in its meaning our relationship to our Lord Jesus Christ, the Elder Brother, the Son of God, in whom we also have our sonship. The foundation of this relationship, which is often urged in the Scriptures of truth, is of course that we are sons of one common parentage. God is our Father, and the Jerusalem, which is above, is our mother. It is in recognition of this sonship with Jesus and of God that believers are addressed in all the word as brethren. It is this solemn relationship that is meant when we address each other as brethren. In proportion as we come to realize this great truth, we shall use the word with earnestness and feeling, and not as a mere formal term. As believers use the word "brethren," it is a declaration that both the user and the receiver of it are the children of God, and heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ, and that the Holy Spirit dwells within them. If these things are realized, we shall never use the term lightly, or as a mere form, but with a giving of the heart as well as the hand. We trust that we have here used the word "brethren," with some realization of what it signifies. The word is a discriminating word, as is every other gospel word. All men are not brethren in this sense, all men are not the children of God, all are not heirs of glory. Election has divided among men, and as the day of the gospel shines more and more, the righteous discern more and more clearly between the righteous and

the wicked, between him who serves God and him who serves him not. The life-giving work of the Spirit goes hand in hand with the election, so that the Spirit works in and for the elect only, bringing them to know the need of salvation, of cleansing from sin, of daily grace to keep them and to give them the final victory. Thus the heirs of glory are made manifest, and those who were once aliens are brought near, those dead in sin are made alive, those once far off become dwellers in Zion, and the children of wrath are saved by reigning grace. Only those who are born of God are or can be his children, no others are called his children in the word, no others have any right to be taught to call God their Father. No man can teach another that he is a child of God, and that God is his Father. The Spirit which is of God, and which is sent forth into our hearts, there cries, Abba, Father, and by it we, who were once aliens and strangers, are enabled to also cry, Abba, Father. The heart comes to feel this dear relationship, and to recognize it before we can frame our lips to utter it. The longing desire that God should be our Father, given before any assurance comes that we are his children, is one of the fruits of the Spirit in us, which cries unto God, Father! Father! Every lifting up of the faintest desire toward God comes from this Spirit, which is the Spirit of the Son of God, the Spirit of sonship, and in this uplifting of the heart toward God there is full evidence that that soul is born of God, and is his child. As the heart of God is turned toward them so they are drawn unto him. The mutual acknowledgment of this relationship is felt in the experience of each and every desire for God. Very many, perhaps most of those who are thus wrought upon, are full of hesitation, and it is often long before anything like a full assurance of this relationship is given, but there are evidences of the indwelling of the spirit of sonship in every case. Some of them are these, there will be a sense of fear lest this relationship of sons of God should not belong to us, there will be in the heart some consciousness of what a wonderful blessing it is which has been vouchsafed to those around us, who manifest to us that they are the children of God, there will be sorrow because our sin seems to put such a barrier between us and God, and because we are so unlike him, there will be longings of heart to be permitted to say, "Our Father." Perhaps some may recall that as they have seen others engaged in public prayer with the confidence of faith, the deep desire has arisen in their hearts that it might also be their privilege to thus come to God as his child. The name, the blessed name of Jesus, will sound sweet to all such ones. Every title of the blessed Redeemer will seem wonderful and glorious to them. The love of God will dwell in them. They will feel as though the children of God are most near and dear to them. Their hearts will cling to those who love God, and will bring them to the assemblies of the saints. They will love to hear that preaching which exalts and glorifies the God whom they love, and will feel sad and depressed at all that preaching which exalts the creature rather than the Creator. They will gladly receive the word which testifies to the praise of God, though that same word may condemn themselves. They will be found in distresses calling upon the name of the Lord, humbly and brokenly, as sinners pleading favor from him against whom they have sinned. They will read the Scriptures, as did the eunuch, hoping to understand them, and desiring to be

led into them. Their hearts will turn away from the light and trifling things of earth, and in the very midst of mirth and gayety will feel that their hearts are longing for something better and more enduring. They will mourn over that heart of unbelief which so much keeps them away from communion with the dear Redeemer. These are some of the things which the Scriptures make known as being peculiar to the children of God.

But the children of God not only come to cry, Abba, Father, recognizing their relationship with God, they also come to love each other as brethren, children of one common family. This must be so. Indeed, we are told that if we love not our brother whom we have seen, it is impossible that we should love God whom we have not seen. And here we are further told that love is one sure evidence that we are born of God: "We know," says the inspired apostle, "that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." This is divine testimony, and we need not think it a question to be argued in any way. But where this brotherly love exists, it will, as an active power, seek to express itself. And in the word we have given the channels through which this principle of love to God and the brethren may properly manifest itself. It is to be made manifest in the church which he established for his own glory, and our good upon earth. "If ye love me," he said, "keep my commandments." And under the gospel the first commandment given to him who has come to rest in the finished work of Jesus, is to arise and be baptized. And this is the entrance into the visible church, and into the privilege of communion with saints in all the ordinances of the Lord's house. The desire of all such ones, though they may be much hindered by many fears and temptations, will always be to walk in this way. They will look upon the ordinance of baptism with longing eyes and hearts, because their dear Savior once led the way in this ordinance, and because it comes to them as that which will be a testimony of the faith and love that is in them. They will look upon all the order of the house of God and upon all who dwell there as bearing upon them the beauty of the Lord. This desire for companionship and for the tokens of fellowship in the church will not be denied, it can never be driven away, its impressions upon the mind and heart may ebb and flow, but its resistless tide always goes onward. There will be no true rest found until the cross is taken and obedience to the word of the Lord is rendered. The love of the brethren in the heart will not allow of rest until it is expressed, and expressed in the appointed way.

Those who thus come to the house of God are brethren indeed. Their joy is the joy of the Lord, and each shares in it. Naomi and Ruth were moved of God to go and return to Bethlehem, but it was also true that the whole city was moved toward them. It is a mutual attraction, and there is mutual rejoicing. The church rejoices to see her children come home, and the children rejoice that they have found such a home, and henceforth it remains that they dwell together in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace. Thus we trust, dear brethren, that you and we have dwelt together for these many years, and that it may please God that we continue to dwell together in all the years to come, but it must be remembered that there are hindrances which mar the comfort of thus dwelling together, hindrances which arise out of

the flesh, and which only grace can overcome. Therefore we are bidden to watch lest some root of bitterness should spring up and trouble us. The root of bitterness may be some false doctrine, some departure in the order of the church from the truth, some evil course pursued by one who has given place to the devil, some pride, envy, jealousy, hatred, malice or worldliness of mind, or it may be some wrong done by one to another, either thoughtlessly or willfully. All these things grow in the flesh, and when they have sprung up they hinder the growth and comfort of all the true plants. Because of this the apostle exhorts his brethren to watch diligently lest such things do arise. Because of the bond of love between brethren, they are to strive to dwell together in love, keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. When this love reigns, each one will weigh carefully what he shall say or do, lest this love be hindered in its manifestation. Great carefulness becomes us all. Paul said that he wrote thus to his brother Timothy, that he might know how he ought to behave himself in the house of God. The best behavior is that which love produces, for love worketh no ill to any one, but rather good. Self and self-interest produces strife and debate and every evil word, but love of the brethren, loving each other better than ourselves, will produce all patience, forbearance, kindness, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness and truth in all our behavior toward each other. These things are to be taught, and all exhorted to seek them and do them. The spirit of brotherhood dwelling in the heart will cause great desires for the welfare of all whom we thus love, and we shall not make that one an offender for any trifling cause. We shall pity those who err far more readily than we blame them. We shall seek to save, rather than to cast them off. It breaks the heart of one who loves his brother to see that brother destroy himself. In spite of all, he is our brother, the child of our Father and of our mother. He is as dear to God as any of the children, and it is as hard for him to be cast out into outer darkness as for any one else. If these thoughts fill our hearts we shall earnestly seek to save him, knowing that if one does err from the truth and we convert him we do save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins. If we have the spirit of a brother we shall seek to hide his faults, rather than to proclaim them abroad, yea, we shall mourn for our brother because he is forsaking his own mercies when he regards lying vanities. These things belong to all the brethren in Christ. We have but touched the wonderful theme. We leave these considerations with you, may they be blessed of God to us all.

Finally, brethren, farewell. Live in peace, and the God of peace shall be with you. Be pitiful, be courteous, love as brethren.

F. A. CHICK, Moderator.
ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Welsh Tract Church, near Newark, Del., May 25th, 26th and 27th, 1904, to the churches composing the same sends greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—In this our annual Circular Letter we present for your consideration the words of the apostle Paul recorded in Romans viii. 2: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

The apostle in the text is expressing his own experience, and voicing the expe-

rience and desire of all the manifest subjects of saving grace, and at the same time announcing the ultimatum and complete work of redemption and salvation. The prophet Isaiah and the apostle Paul in the unity of the Spirit see eye to eye upon this subject, and with the voice together they sing, "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory."—Isaiah xlv. 25. In considering the law of sin and death we desire to be very careful lest we confound in our minds holiness and unrighteousness. The law of the great Creator which was given to Adam, his creature, was a holy law, established upon the eternal rule of righteousness, and was not a law of sin and death, but still remains holy, perfect and pure. Therefore we turn to the examination of ourselves and the testimony of the Scriptures, in order to ascertain a more clear knowledge of what is termed the law of sin and death. Experience has taught us that in our natural condition we are sinners, and until quickened by the Spirit (for it is the Spirit that quickeneth) we are dead in trespasses and sins, walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Sin is the transgression of the law, and death is the penalty, while the law itself remains holy, just and good. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," is the testimony of Ezekiel xviii. 4. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," is the testimony of the apostle Paul, Romans v. 12. This testimony corroborated by our experience should furnish us with all we need to know of the origin of sin.

If we are led to inquire as to how came death, the answer is plain and positive: "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." —1 Cor. xv. 21. Or as before expressed in the same chapter, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Therefore we conclude that the law of sin and death is a principle, or law, contrary and opposed to the holy law of God as promulgated in the garden of Eden, and antagonistic to the edition added at Mount Sinai, which law was added by reason of transgression. In our experience we find a law that when we would do good evil is present with us, although we delight in the law after the inward man. However glorious the law of the Lord may appear to the inward man, we still realize our corrupt nature, and are made to see another law in our members warring against the law of our mind, bringing us into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members. In this experience we learn to know something of the law of sin and death, and are made to cry in fellowship with Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Naturally it is not the just precepts and admonitions of a kind and faithful parent that causes the disobedient child to drop his guilty head, and with shame and confusion dread to meet his offended father, but it is a feeling sense of his wrong doing and disobedience that has brought him down to shame and disgrace. Even so it is an experimental sense of sin that produces the terrors of the law, for "the strength of sin is the law." The poor, sin-sick soul to whom sin appears exceedingly sinful, desires to be delivered from sin and all its baneful consequences. The enlightened child of God will not be satisfied with a simple pardon of past offenses, but desires a removal of every guilty stain. A simple forgiveness of

past offenses will not satisfy the longing desire of the child of God. Nothing but a complete deliverance from every vestige of sin and every claim of the law which appears against them will satisfy the anxious desire of the enlightened child of God. The judgment is set and the books were opened, out of which all are judged, and another book was opened. The law given to Adam presents us in the high court of heaven as sinners. The law of Moses, which is a law of God, indicts us with numerous offenses, to all which we are compelled in honesty to plead guilty, for having failed in one point we are guilty of the whole. With honest heart the poor soul cries,

"If my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well."

But another book is opened, which is the book of life. The Lion of the tribe of Judah has prevailed and opened all its seven seals. In this book is written the names of every one for whom Jesus died to save, and arose from the dead for their justification. This book brings life and hope to the child of God, and he is heard singing,

"In thy fair book of life and grace,
O may I find my name
Recorded in some humble place,
Beneath my Lord, the Lamb."

The wonderful Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father and Prince of peace now appears in our behalf with another law, an older law, an everlasting covenant enacted in eternity before the foundation of the world. The law in Eden and the law at Mount Sinai were promulgated in time, while the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus is a spiritual law, enacted before time began, and by our heavenly Intercessor is entered as a plea of *supersedas* (using a law term) in the case of every one of the elect of God, saying, "Deliver him from going down to the pit, for I have found a ransom." Not only a ransom from the consequences of sin, but a justifying righteousness whereby the lawful captive is lawfully delivered, for "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." The unlimited foreknowledge of our God, his infinite predestination of all his purposes in time and eternity, his specific election, preservation, redemption and complete salvation of all his people "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord," affords an abiding hope to the children of God of a complete justification, being assured, "*It is God that justifieth.*"

Briefly and condensed we present this subject, desiring our mutual edification. To the churches of this association and all our people everywhere we would say with the prophet Isaiah, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee," and the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death forever.

J. G. EUBANKS, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Warwick Church, Orange County, N. Y., June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1904, to the churches composing this Association sends greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Following our usual custom we will address you with what is called a Circular Letter, by which we desire to have our minds refreshed concerning the things of the gospel kingdom of our God, and as a foundation of what may be said will quote 2 Peter i. 13: "I think it meet, as long as

I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance." The order of the house was established by the Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles, and during their ministry no change in doctrine, order or practice was ever made, and if departures have come in these last days they are as erroneous and unwarranted as they would have been at any time since the day of the apostles. Peter told the brethren though they knew these things and were established in the present truth, it was meet as long as he was in the tabernacle to stir them up to remembrance of the things pertaining to gospel order and practice. He felt there would never be a time in his ministry when this would cease to be necessary, but that as long as he lived he must continue to keep these things before them. James tells us that there must be a doing of the word as well as a hearing, otherwise our religion is vain. Is it not as needful and right to-day that we stir each other up to remembrance of the gospel ordinances, order of the house and to the practice of virtue? We deem it so, and there will never be a time during the militant state of the church when it will be unnecessary. The better established we think we are, the more need we have for instruction, admonition and correction. Do the servants of God ever neglect these things to their own discomfort and hurt of the church for fear of hurting or offending some who are peculiarly constituted or sensitive? If so, is this following the faithfulness of Peter and the other apostles, together with Timothy, Titus and many others? Can we be faithful to him who has called us to this holy work, when this special part of the ministry is neglected? Paul made for himself enemies in the church at Galatia, by telling them the truth (their faults). If the truth offends is it not right for us also to make enemies, rather than make friends by never seeming to see or speak of the wrong doings of the church? There are special qualifications necessary to those who are ordained to the ministry. We should be stirred up to remembrance of this. Many mistakes are made and grave troubles brought into the church by not observing this law. He must be found faithful, another important qualification being apt to teach. No church should ordain a man to the work of the ministry that has a better understanding than the one ordained, he could not teach them. No church should ever call a preacher to serve them when they feel able to teach him in word, doctrine, order and practice. That man never can serve such a church acceptably. Have we not seen such mistakes? Is it not necessary therefore to be stirred up to remembrance? If one qualification is lacking, as given by the inspired apostle, we have no more right to ordain a man than though he lacked them all. Let us ever be assured that the man is called of God and qualified. We cannot try the spirit too carefully that says, Separate unto me this or that man. There is a growing tendency in late years for private members to have views of their own of Scripture, and when crossed by a minister they do not hesitate to tell him so, and present their view in opposition. This is not confined to the man, but is also true of the woman. We do not understand that the minister is infallible, but if the qualifications are observed, he must be recognized as a teacher. In the early church brethren were teachable, and the women were to learn in silence, with all subjection, as become the gospel, and this order was never changed. When we disagree with what our minister presents, we are apt to ask

the views of another if we have opportunity. This is done to justify ourselves, but in so doing we manifest a lack of confidence in our minister's judgment and ability to expound the word of God. Gospel ministers should not jump at conclusions, but should carefully and prayerfully consider the subject before making positive assertions, then if the church, or any part of it, should disagree with him, would it not be better to follow the ancient custom to search the Scriptures diligently, to see if those things be true? Let us remember this. Many times the hearer does not get the understanding of the speaker, and sometimes things are understood that were not in the speaker's mind at all. We cannot be too slow to differ with a brother until we know what his view really is.

Some things concerning deacons we should be stirred up to remember. They also are required to have certain qualifications, and each qualification should be observed. No man should be appointed to the office who is not a deacon. No church should have a deacon upon whom they cannot rely in everything pertaining to the office. The temporal affairs of the church should be placed in the hands of the deacons, and the church should have perfect confidence in them and be perfectly agreeable to all that the deacons think best to do. But instead of this are there not sometimes others who assume the duties of the deacons? and all that is required of the deacons is to pass the emblems ordinance day. We should remember that women are not to be officers in the church in any sense of the word, and thus usurp authority over the man. They are commanded to worship with their heads covered, and to be in subjection, for Paul tells us that Adam was first formed, then Eve, and that the man was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Should not this order be observed? Does not the King's business require haste? Then let us be stirred up to remembrance that every act of disobedience and every transgression should be dealt with at once, and thus keep the house clean, instead of dragging along year after year hoping that this or that may be better. The church is suffering to-day from a lack of discipline. Every act, as well as the lack of action of the church, is being watched, not only by the enemy, but also by the friend. Let us be stirred up to carefulness of speech concerning church trouble, either at home or abroad, where we may in providence visit. It is best to keep trouble at home, but should we hear of such things let us be silent in the matter rather than publish them. Let us, who minister, remember that after careful and prayerful consideration we decide that our work is done in this or that church, we should quietly and meekly resign, and not wait for the church to ask us to discontinue our services, which is very embarrassing to all concerned. A pastor should know as well when his work is ended at a place, by his feelings and impressions, as he knows by the same that he must labor in this or that part of the vineyard. May we take heed to ourselves and to the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made us overseers, that when we are called to lay off this armor, we may say with Paul, "I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house." Let us not shun to declare the whole counsel of God, and thus seek the glory of God and the welfare of his church. Farewell.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1904.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PSALMS CXXXII. 11, 12.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I would like to have your views upon Psalms cxxxii. 11, 12. The SIGNS is the only paper called by the Baptist name that altogether suits me. I read others occasionally, but find some expressions in them which do not seem to be according to my experience. The SIGNS is a dear paper to me. I am in my seventy-second year; I was born in the same month and year as was the SIGNS. I am well pleased with your editorial for October 1st, 1901; it came at a time when I needed it, for I had an argument with some of the ministers about the walk in the Spirit. Now, my brother, my time in this world is nearly out, when I shall be no more here, but I do trust that the Lord will spare you long, if it be his will, and that he will fight all your battles for you. So farewell.

Unworthily yours, W. A. J. WALKER.

JASPER, Texas, Jan. 21, 1904.

It is our desire always to comply with such requests as the above when we can do so, and when we do not it is either because we do not feel that our mind is led into the theme, or because we do not have the time to do so. For both reasons answers to such requests are sometimes delayed, as has been the case with the above. This whole Psalm is filled with wonderful things, prayer and praise, struggle and victory, desire and the fulfillment of that desire, are all included in this not lengthy Psalm, but chiefly the joy and love of David for the house of the Lord is described. Up to and including the tenth verse we have a description of the inmost thoughts of David's heart toward the house of the Lord, and then there is given to us the response which a merciful and faithful God has given to this desire. Humble prayer and confession fills up the first half of the Psalm, and the gracious reply of a sovereign God fills up the last half. No human pen could set forth one tithe of the beauty and glory that appears in each and every verse of this most gracious Psalm. We do not and cannot even glance at the wonders inclosed in them all.

The verses specially referred to set forth the infinite purpose of God, toward David first, as the king of Israel, and then toward his children under the old covenant which God had made with that people, which covenant they brake. It is the one distinguishing mark of the old covenant, and of the people that were under it, that it is never said that they kept it, but "they brake it." It must and will ever be so with any and every covenant which may be made with men, which in any way depends upon their obedience or their fulfillment of any terms demanded of them, whatever those terms may be. For this reason Paul was very insistent in writing to the churches of Galatia, that they should not seek to go back under conditions of their performance. If indeed circumcision were all that was demanded of men, that condition might easily be kept, but he expressly states that he that is circumcised is debtor to do the whole law, and this means that they shall not have one single evil purpose or desire, one covetous principle, one moment's departure from the commandment to love God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength, and their neighbor as themselves, and this must, under that covenant, be done without one particle of help from any other source

but their own resources of strength and goodness. Therefore men could never keep that covenant, and never did keep it for a single moment of their lives. "Which my covenant they brake" sums it all up; all the miserable record of failure and falling; and to-day we are all failures when left to ourselves, not one of us has ever or can ever obey God, except in the Spirit and by the Spirit working its own glorious fruit in us, and this is the reign of sovereign grace, and grace alone, made manifest in those where it is found.

It is solemnly true that the children of David literally did not keep the covenant which God had made, in which were conditions demanded of them, therefore they did not sit on the throne of David literally for evermore. Yet the faithfulness of God was not impugned at all, there was no failure in him, neither was there any in all his word. He had indeed chosen David as king, and he had sworn to him that of the fruit of his body should he set upon the throne of David, and that promise was sure to him. (See 2 Samuel vii. 12; 1 Kings viii. 25; 2 Chron. vi. 16.) So Solomon his son reigned gloriously, and he was followed by his children. But soon departures came, and with them came a declension in the glory of that literal kingdom. In all this God was not disappointed, for he knew what was in man, and that he would not, and because of his sinful nature could not keep the righteousness demanded under that legal covenant. All this was to try men, and to show what utter failures they are, and must ever be, when brought to the test of the perfect law of the Lord. All this was to prepare the way for the revelation of salvation by grace, and to show that in no other way could men be saved. It was to show that while the law of God must be fulfilled in all its jots and tittles, yet man could not himself keep it, and that therefore Jesus Christ must come in the flesh to fulfill the whole law for those who could not fulfill it, and so save his people in the only way in which they could be saved. It is true still that each and every saved vessel of mercy must come to Christ through the work of the law in the heart, convincing, convicting and condemning. By the work of the Spirit of God in the law men are convinced of sin, righteousness and judgment, and this is so, that the ground may be prepared for the revelation of Christ in the gospel as the sin-bearer, and our righteousness, who has borne the judgment for us in full, and with whose stripes we are healed. There is no way to Mt. Zion but by Mt. Sinai, and thus through the law we become dead to the law, that (in Christ) we may live unto God. The people of God come to know both the law and the gospel, and they learn that the law can only curse them, because they are sinners against it, and that in the gospel is revealed to them in their condemnation a fulfilled law, fulfilled by and in Jesus Christ, and so salvation is in Jesus free to all the heirs of promise. Jesus has been made a curse for them, that they might receive eternal blessing in him; he has been made sin for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him; here is salvation, and here alone.

So far as relates to the present obedience under the gospel, it still remains true that if any man shall strive to merit any blessing, such as peace of conscience, the comfort of the Spirit, the joy of the Lord, or any other spiritual blessing by any special effort to be obedient in heart and life before God, he shall find that after all he has failed, failed first in the

obedience demanded, so that he shall have shame for his failure, and failed in the reception of these blessings. With a willing and glad heart he who is in communion with God through the Spirit, goes out to his daily life, doing what his hands find to do as to the Lord, and not to himself, thankful that he is counted worthy to walk in this way, worthy even to suffer for Christ's sake. His joy is not in any meritorious obedience which his hands have rendered, but in the fact that he is the Lord's free man. His grief will be, not that he cannot earn a blessing such as he believes others to possess, but that he cannot wholly be the Lord's in feeling and in spirit, and that he comes so far short in all that he says, does and feels, from being what his blessed Master was. It is all his desire to be conformed to the image of Jesus. For this he feels that an eternity will be none too long to praise God, the author of all that he is by grace, and all that he has. This is not legal service, but free gospel service. If a little child be naturally careful of his clothes, desiring above all things to keep them clean, he will need no threat nor whip to keep him out of the mud, and if he shall by any means stumble and fall into a slough, his grief and shame will be more bitter than any punishment would inflict upon him. God's dear children desire clean hands and clean garments; it is the cause of bitter grief and tears when they find that their garments are not clean, and they must learn that when unclean the law cannot cleanse them through any future obedience of theirs; here again must the glorious gospel news come, that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.

This much we have said concerning the conditions of the old covenant, under which the seed of David did not long inherit the throne, but there is another seed of David who did keep all the covenant and testimony of God, and who, with his children, does and shall forever sit on the throne given to him. David's greater Son, as some one has used the expression, is foreshadowed here, as he is in so many of the Psalms and prophecies which relate at the first to Israel and the throne of David literally, but through this dimly pointing out the true throne and the true people of God. Under this new covenant all the conditions have been fulfilled by him who is our surety, who lived and suffered for us. Not one remains unfulfilled, he kept the whole law, he magnified the law and made it honorable. This must be done, for the law of God is holy, just and good, and it cannot be laid one side; it is not abrogated, but fulfilled in Christ; it is not abrogated, but the righteousness of it is fulfilled also in the people of God, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. It is so fulfilled in Christ that not one jot or tittle remains for us to fulfill; it is so fulfilled in us, through the indwelling of Christ, by the Spirit, that it is not over us any more. We are not under the law in any sense of the word, but under grace in every sense of the word. The law is in Christ fulfilled within us, and all of that righteousness which is apparent in our lives and conduct is not to our credit, but to the praise of sovereign grace. God gives his people a willing mind in every gospel way, and from their willing mind comes an obedience that is accepted as the fruit of God's own precious grace within them. What the law could not do, Jesus Christ did in his life and crucifixion, and what the law cannot do, Christ does do, as he by the Spirit dwells within. This true light humbles and abases us, so that we never say how good I am, and we can never, when hav-

ing this view of the matter, praise any one, as though credit was theirs, but we shall always magnify the grace of God in them, as did Paul. In this finished work of Jesus then is his security in the throne, and here in this same finished work is our source of security also. Brethren, let us join in the praise of this grace.

We leave these remarks to the judgment of the writer of the request, and to all our readers. May God evermore bless his truth to us all.

JEPHTHAH'S VOW.

SISTER Parthenia Wright, of Texas, has asked for some thoughts concerning the narrative of Jephthah, recorded in Judges eleventh and a part of the twelfth chapter. She especially refers to the vow which he made, that if the Lord would grant him success in the warfare against the Ammonites, then would he offer as a burnt offering the first thing that should come forth from the doors of his house to meet him when he should return from the battle.

We can say no more than is said in the narrative. It has seemed to many a horrible thing, impossible to be believed, that he should have fulfilled his vow and slain as an offering his only child, who in her gladness and joy came forth first of all to meet him as he returned. It is a horrible thing indeed, but yet it seems to us that the plain words of the narrative compel us to believe that it was so. That such a vow should have been made in the first place, either shows that he contemplated a human sacrifice, or else that he made it recklessly, for the first creature which came forth to meet him might have been, so far as he knew, a dog which was unclean. It is also evident that this vow was one kept secret in his own breast, else care would have been taken that his own daughter should not have been the first to come forth to meet him. His vow must have been in his mind as he returned, for at once, when his daughter met him, he rent his clothes and said, "Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me very low, and art one of them that trouble me."

It is not needful to remind our sister that such a sacrifice was not only not required by any law of God, but was denounced as an abomination to him. But Jephthah's trouble was not at the idea of a human sacrifice, but that by the terms of his vow that sacrifice must be his own daughter. The last verse of the chapter seems also to shut us up to the view that he felt compelled to fulfill his vow, and offer his child as a burnt offering, for it is said that the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year.

Jephthah was the son of Gilead, by one who is denominated a harlot in the narrative, and was afterward cast out by his brethren who were legitimate, but it would seem that he was a man of great force and ability, for when Israel was about to be invaded by the Ammonites they sent for him to come to their defense, and though his birth was what it was, and it is evident that he himself was of a rash disposition, and possessed of but little understanding of the will of the Lord, or of the teachings and requirements of the law which God had given Israel, yet the Lord chose him, as he did Sampson and others, to be a judge in Israel, and to lead them against their foes, and the foes of God, and by Paul in Hebrews he is numbered among those who wrought wonderful things by faith, that same living faith that was possessed by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and by all the saints of God in every age.

One consideration occurs to us here, viz: that men of faith, as referred to in Hebrews xi., were not perfect men, either in knowledge or in what we call good morals. Sampson's life was stained with folly and vice; Noah was, once at least, drunken with wine; Abraham did not always confess frankly the truth, and Jacob was a supplanter and deceiver once in his life; Moses once grievously erred, and could not therefore enter the promised land; Rahab was a harlot, and David erred grievously more than once, though it is said of him that he was a man after God's own heart. We have never been glad that men have sinned at any time, but we have at times been glad that it is recorded of men of faith in the olden time that they did err in many grievous ways, and yet were men of God and acknowledged by him as his servants, and blessed of him with sweet communion at the mercy-seat, and given to speak and write comforting things relating to salvation, and to do wonderful things in the service of God and for his people. We have been glad at these narratives of failure and error, because we by this have found our own hope strengthened. We have from these narratives believed at times, that full of errors as we are, we yet may have hope in God as did they. So, as we read that Jephthah was a man of faith, though here he did a grievous wrong, our hope is strengthened and our confidence is increased. May it be so with our sister, and with all who love God, and who doubt because they so often fall into sins of heart and life. We are told that all that was written aforetime was written for our learning. These things were written for us.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder James Wagner was born Dec. 25th, 1820, in Franklin Co., Tenn., and died of dropsy at his home near Blanco, Texas, March 25th, 1904, aged 83 years and 3 months. His father was an early pioneer settler of middle Tennessee; his mother, whose maiden name was Russell, was for many years a zealous Old School Baptist. When brother Wagner was twenty-two years of age he was married to Miss Mary A. Hudson; to this union were born four sons and six daughters, of whom seven are living; six belong to the Old Baptist Church. He and his wife joined Macedonia church, near his home, and were baptized by Elder John P. Walker, in 1854. Soon after he joined the church he was liberated to speak in public, and in about 1856 was ordained to the full work of the ministry. His faithful wife died July 21st, 1862, and in February, 1864, he was married to Mrs. Margaret A. Champion, who was also a firm Old Baptist. To them were born eight children, four died in infancy; two sons and two daughters are living, only one belongs to the church. Elder Wagner emigrated to Texas in September, 1886, and the following November he constituted Providence church, and served as pastor most of the time up to his last illness. His last wife died August 31st, 1901, and just three months from her death his daughter, sister Sarah Jones, died. He has seventy-two grandchildren and forty-two great-grandchildren living. Elder Wagner was the beloved pastor of several churches in Tennessee for about thirty years, and was for many years the leading doctrinal preacher of that country. Indeed, it seems that from the beginning of his ministry he was set for the defense of the doctrine advocated so long by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. For his able, faithful and unwavering defense of the doctrine for forty years he has with others had to suffer much the last fifteen years, but the end was peaceful. The day before he died he asked his daughter to sing for him, but as she could not she repeated two of his favorite hymns, Nos. 17 and 20 (Beebe's Collection). His last words were, "I am going home." At 11:30 a. m. he gently passed away. May God comfort the bereaved.

W. L. ROGERS.

BLUM, Texas.

BY request of sister Mattie Richards I send the notice of the death of her sister, **Catharine Richards,** who died at their home near Bloomfield, Loudoun Co., Va., April 28th, 1904, aged 70 years. She was the daughter of Barton and Maria Richards.

I quote from a letter of sister Mattie Richards; "She had been afflicted for nearly twenty years with paralysis, which came on gradually. The last year of her life she was almost helpless. She bore her sufferings with great patience, never murmuring or complaining of her lot. She never made a public

profession of religion, but we sorrow not as those without hope, for we believe our sister had experienced the power of God's saving grace years ago. She talked but little at any time, and after her affliction could not express her feelings, but could join with us in singing. Her favorite hymns were 'Amazing grace!' and 'O land of rest.' She would often say, 'How sweet those words are to me.' She looked so lovely in death, so calm and peaceful, I could but feel she is asleep in Jesus. She leaves to mourn their loss one brother and three sisters."

J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., June 10, 1904.

MEMORIALS.

(WARWICK ASSOCIATION.)

IN the death of **Deacon Benton L. Beebe** we feel that this Association has sustained a very serious loss. He united with the church at about the age of fifteen, and at a very early age he began to assist his father in the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, in which work as publisher and editor he continued to spend his time and energy as long as he lived. As editor and publisher he was faithful to the truth and order of the gospel, and to his understanding of his duty, and was very highly and deservedly esteemed on that account by the brethren scattered abroad. Since the death of his father, Elder Gilbert Beebe, and very especially since the death of his fellow-editor, Elder Benton Jenkins, that faithful care in his work and responsibility as editor has been more particularly manifested. To the brethren of this Association he was more and more endeared by his devotion to the interests of the churches, and by the love he manifested to them and to the cause of truth. We give this expression of our sympathy to the brethren, and to our dear bereaved sister, and to the son and daughter and other relatives.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

WE, the members of Sharon Church, of the Regular Primitive Predestinarian Baptist faith and order, desiring to preserve the memory of our beloved sister, **Sarah Ann Meece,** adopt the following memorial of her, and authorize our clerk to record the same on our church book. She was born in Webster (old Choctaw) Co., Miss., Jan. 24th, 1849; was married to Elder G. W. Meece, Dec. 25th, 1870. She with her husband and children moved to Texas in 1900. She was taken sick Jan. 4th, with black jaundice, died Jan. 11th, 1904. We feel that in her death our church has lost a kind and worthy member, one whose life and character were adorned and made beautiful by virtue, meekness, gentleness, humility, peace and love. She greatly desired the peace and prosperity of the church. She was prompt to attend her meeting days as long as she lived in reach of the church. She was feeble in body, but strong in the faith. Truly a good woman has fallen in Israel, but we mourn not for her as those that have no hope, for we believe she has fallen asleep in Jesus, and will be raised in the resurrection in the image of her Savior, and we hope we will meet her again in the sweet bye and bye in heaven, where there will be no more death or sorrow. We tender to her bereaved husband and children our warmest and tenderest sympathy, praying that our heavenly Father may enable them and us to bow in humble submission to this and every other dispensation of his kind providence.

This done by order of the church, in conference May 14th, 1904.

J. P. OSTENE, Moderator.

C. W. MORGAN, Church Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Please say through the SIGNS that hereafter my post-office address will be Weatherford, Parker Co., Texas, instead of Authon, Texas, as the rural service has discontinued the Authon office.

ASA HOWARD.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO AN APPEAL OF BRETHREN TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$939 65
Mrs. Olivia Hastings, Del., $1.00; Mattie A. Ware, Ky., $2.00; Mrs. Drusilla Wheeler, N. Y., $4.00; Mrs. Charlotte Hill, Mich., $3.00; Mrs. Geo. C. Nethaway, N. Y., $1.00.—Total	11 00
Total to date	$950 65

MEETINGS.

PEACE VALLEY Association will meet this year, the Lord willing, with the church in Blum, on Saturday before the third Sunday in August, and continue the two following days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to come and be with us.

W. L. ROGERS, Pastor.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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BI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

OF THE

WELSH TRACT CHURCH.

The bi-centennial of the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., was celebrated Oct. 20th, 1903. After some delay it is now published in pamphlet form, and on sale at this office. Price 15 cents. The pamphlet contains photographs of the Welsh Tract meeting-house and Elder J. G. Eubanks, the pastor, the proceedings of the anniversary, letters of greeting from sister churches and a historical sketch written by Dr. B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., and read on the occasion. Some of the brick in the meeting-house was brought from Wales to this country, and hauled on mules' backs a distance of ten miles. The pamphlet is very interesting and full of information.

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EDITOR:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 72. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1904. NO. 14.

POETRY.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

I WAS walking in the valley,
Gathering clouds hung o'er my head;
Hushed were all the songs of Zion,
And my heart seemed turned to lead.

But to-night my thoughts were centered
On the wondrous love of God,
And my eyes from earth were lifted
To the hills the Savior trod.

In my soul was felt the power
Of his sweet, refreshing grace;
Richest streams of love and mercy,
Only perfect resting-place.

On the wings of faith I hovered,
Filled with peace no tongue could tell,
For my spirit in that region
Longed to bid this world farewell.

Where were then the cloudy vapors?
Where the valley dark with sin?
Why such swelling songs of triumph?
Why that strange sweet voice within?

'Twas his smile dispersed my shadows,
Filling all my darkened soul
With a glorious inner radiance,
Clothing me in garments whole.

In such moments, O my Father,
Can my heart restrain its song?
Though the least of all thy children,
I would praise thee heart and tongue.

LIZZIE McCOLLOM.

WALLACETOWN, Ontario, Canada, January, 1904.

A SONG OF TRUST.

I CANNOT always see the way that leads
To heights above;
I sometimes quite forget he leads me on
With hand of love;
But yet I know the path must lead me to
Immanuel's land,
And when I reach life's summit I shall know
And understand.

I cannot always trace the onward course
My ship must take,
But, looking backward I behold afar
It shining wake
Illumined with God's light of love, and so
I onward go,
In perfect trust that he who holds the helm
The course must know.

I cannot always see the plan on which
He builds my life;
For oft the sound of hammers, blow on blow,
The noise of strife,
Confuse me until I quite forget he knows
And oversees,
And that in all details, with his good plan
My life agrees.

I cannot always know and understand
The Master's rule;
I cannot always do the tasks he gives
In life's hard school;
But I am learning with his help to solve
Them, one by one,
And when I cannot understand, to say,
"Thy will be done."

[SELECTED.]

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE ARMOR OF GOD.

WHILE God's people are spoken of as a people of peace, and have for a leader the Prince of the house of David, who is the Prince of Peace, and of the increase and peace of his government there shall be no end; yet, they have a warfare, and may properly be called warriors. In their experience, or trials after the light has shined in their hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, there is war, for they immediately have fears within and foes without. There is wrestling, a resisting, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, one is contrary to the other, so that they cannot do the things that they would. Now this seems to make the poor creature helpless, for when he would do good evil is present with him; this is opposite to what he desires. Now this picture which the apostle has drawn of the poor and afflicted child, is a true and sorrowful one, here is room for vain man to boast over the poor, helpless creature who feels that he "was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." It does seem strange that God's people who have obtained a good hope through grace, should be so tempest-tossed as to be powerless, in regard to doing things that they desire to do. In view of this matter, there is no wonder that the legal religionist boasts of his power to do just as he wills to do, that he has full and complete control of his will and actions, he is led captive by the devil at his will, he walks "according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the Spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." He is dead in sin, separated from the light, which is the life of the afflicted and poor, he is in darkness, it is all night with him, but he calls the night day. The true light has not shined there to manifest the darkness, ignorance and unbelief that reign supreme within him. There is no opposition to his carnal or fleshly mind, he is a strong man armed and keeps his goods in peace. There is no wrestling within him; he is satisfied with self. In his dignified state he can say, "Come, see what I can do." Also he mutters, "If God does not bless me for what I do and have done, then he is unjust." This is a proof of his complete darkness of mind and ignorance of the wisdom of God. How this character speaks great swelling words of vanity if he hears the poor and needy one exalt the power of God in his presence, when he speaks of the "hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory," for he speaks "the wisdom of God in a mystery," "which none of the princes of this world knew." He who is dead to the knowledge of these things, and in the kingdom of Satan, abhors all this, and his cry is: "Foolish, foolish, away with him." When it pleases God to reveal his Son in one of these dead rebels, who is armed with all the armor of Satan and man, to keep his goods in peace, before he is aware of it he is bound, and the armor in which he trusted is taken away, and "his goods are spoiled." In his sorrow day has dawned, knowledge breaks forth on the "right hand and on the left," he is now enabled to "speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom." This seems to be the order in which revelation comes to him who was dead, but is now alive. First comes wisdom, for Christ of God "is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and

sanctification, and redemption." The mighty Conqueror hath taken away the armor in which he trusted, self-righteousness, free will, &c., he is now delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. He does not hear the invitations of the gospel, as some say, but he hears the commands of his Lord and Master. His commands are certain, sure and ever abiding. All are summed up in the one, the new commandment that he gives them, which is, "Love one another." The apostle exhorts the saints to the same commandment, which, says he, "Ye also do." The followers of Jesus cannot force love, nor exercise love at pleasure, there must be a great incentive to cause them to love one another. Paul was aware of this, still the exhortation was, Let love be without dissimulation. He also exhorts to be at peace among themselves, and to live in peace with all men, or with those "that are without," as much as was consistent with the doctrine and order of God's house. It is a well established fact that the Lord's people are to obey God rather than men. It is not expected that they shall sacrifice the truth or order of God's house, nor compromise in the least degree with the world for the sake of peace with it, but they are to stand firm in opposition to the world, the flesh and the devil. This certainly signifies that God's servants are all warriors. When I say servants I do not mean his ministers alone, but all his saints; I think that there is a sense in which all his redeemed and called people are his servants. Then there is a great company which follows him who sat on a white horse with a battle bow in his hand, he is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make *war*. This great company is also likened to a great cloud of witnesses. John says the armies which were in heaven followed upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. Here again is presented the Captain of our salvation, with the armies following. Is not this Christ and his redeemed? The apostle Paul enjoins these soldiers to "fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life." Also to "war a good warfare." Again the same apostle says: "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible." We as cross-bearers must of necessity be fighters, "As a good soldier of Jesus Christ." A good soldier is no terror to any except his enemies. I have often heard brethren speak of certain preachers as being fighters, that it was distasteful to them, that they would rather have them present the doctrine in a milder way, so that their preaching would not give offense to the world. I have always felt that so long as a minister kept close to the testimony of the word, that he was not too much of a fighter.

I shall now try to consider briefly, the *armor* that is furnished the soldiers of this vast army. Paul in his closing address to the church at Ephesus, says: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."—Eph. vi. 10–12. He again insists that they take unto themselves the whole armor of God, that they may be able to withstand in the evil day, and "having done all, to stand.

Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith. * * * And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."—Eph. vi. 13–17. From the above we have for a girdle of the loins, truth; for a breastplate, righteousness; for the feet, the preparation of the gospel of peace; for a shield, faith; for a head covering, the helmet of salvation, or as it is stated in another place, "For an helmet, the hope of salvation;" for a sword, the word of God. These weapons are all furnished by the Lord, and are not carnal, but are mighty through God, to the pulling down of strongholds. How very important is the girdle that encircles the body at the loins, it is truth, it is like a band around the earth in the center, embraces all. This girdle is the truth in Jesus, and the truth is always important. The Scriptures in many places speak of the loins, as being an important part of the body. This truth is the faith of God's elect "once delivered unto the saints," and they are to earnestly contend for that faith. In contending, they are contentious, signifying opposition, or a state of war; they are to resist evil. In this warfare the Lord is among them as in days of old. "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels." This knowledge of God's presence and power with his people, and his love for them, is too wonderful for mortals to grasp, but it is the truth written in "fleshly tables" and testified to by thousands, yea, "a cloud of witnesses." This truth that encircles the saints, is like a drawing band, which by its pressure continually reminds the wearer of its importance. Men in olden time were commanded to gird up their loins, thus preparing them for battle, or for mourning, or for some notable event. David said that the Lord "hast girded me with strength unto the battle." The saints cannot take any of this armor simply of their own will. It is true it is all for them, but he who furnishes it, also must put it on them in the sense that he makes them willing in the day of his power, made willing in the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning. It certainly is of great strength to God's called children to know that he absolutely reigns supreme over all, and controls all creatures and things just exactly as it pleases him. Then if he takes all temporal government in his hand, will he not much more take especial care of "his elect people," and keep them as "the apple of his eye"? Truth is wisdom, the wisdom of God, it makes the recipient free, and he "is free indeed." Free from the bondage of the law, and free in the glorious liberty of the gospel. All that he receives by the graces of the Spirit, signifies his freedom in the bounds of the kingdom of Jesus, and his kingdom is from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. He that has this truth is wise unto salvation, it is hid from the wise of this world and revealed unto babes, sucklings, outcasts and fools. Upon the truth of revelation the church is built, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. It is all important to have the truth, for all the graces of the Spirit follow in its wake. It is this way; to whomsoever the Lord will reveal it. Wonderfully blessed is the man who has the truth, "it endureth forever." The Word is full of grace and truth, he is the way, the truth and the life. She (church) is the pillar and ground of the truth. We can do

nothing against the truth, but for the truth. Those who worship God must worship him in Spirit and in truth, for he seeketh such to worship him. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."—Isaiah viii. 20. "He that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." There is a text that speaks about rightly dividing the word of truth, this seems to indicate that there is a division of truth. The truth which we have spoken of, is the gospel truth, or the truth of the new covenant. There is truth of the old covenant, or law (legal truth) that must not be confounded with the truth of freedom. The law truth is of that covenant that gendereth to bondage, and all that are guided by it are the children of the bondwoman. Paul, in speaking of the law, calls it, "The law of a carnal commandment." It appealed to the carnal mind of man, and could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience. "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God." The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. This letter of the truth is the ministration of death. It had glory which was to be done away, by reason of the glory which should far excel it. This contrast is sublime and forcible, leading us to conclude that even the glory of the Old Testament is hid because of the vail. A carnal commandment to a carnal mind excites no quickening power in the heart, hence it is said, "But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart." The above presents the law and the gospel, but they are to be rightly divided. Jesus says, "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."—John xviii. 37. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Satanic influence has been exercised over the human family from the beginning. This power is the spirit of murder and of falsehood, he uses this so adroitly over those who are in his charge, that they willingly consent that he is right. They deceive themselves and the truth is not in them. These have not been sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, but are led by the prince of darkness, who goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. The result of this prowling around among the inhabitants of earth is, that many follow his pernicious ways. They have the poison of asps, destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace they know not. The child of God is to wrestle against these "wicked spirits in high places." They have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin, because their weapons are not carnal. Their weapons are spiritual, mighty weapons, because they are of God. One rebuke in the name of the Mighty One of Israel is enough to put the armies of the aliens to flight. These armies are noted for their great numbers, they boast of this as an evidence of right, but the Lord has espoused the cause of the few, the poor, the needy and the weak, to bring to naught the proud boasting of their adversaries, and bring to his redeemed the victory that is theirs by right of birth and marriage vows; she being one with him in vital life standing before Satan was known among God's creatures. She was borne by him and carried by him all the days of old, in his love and pity he redeemed her, and with his stripes she was healed. What shall separate her

from his love? Shall persecution, nakedness, peril or sword? Nay, none of these things, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate her from his everlasting love in Christ Jesus, the Lord of all.

I have extended this article to considerable length, but feel that I have only hinted at the subject. If you, brethren, see fit to publish this, I may in the future continue the subject.

As ever in the hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

CARMEN, Okla., March 10, 1904.

MANASSAS, Va., June 14, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—My mind is somewhat burdened with a subject which perhaps I am not fitted to handle, for I may not be as conservative as the times upon which we are fallen seem to demand. I am thinking of the support the SIGNS OF THE TIMES should receive from all those Old School Baptists who believe and still profess to contend for the doctrine and order of the church of Christ as promulgated by the convention at Black Rock, Md., in 1832. We know full well that of late years many papers and periodicals have sprung up over the land, all of which claim to be advocates of Old Baptist principles. Some of these publications make a specialty of denying and opposing a fundamental truth of the gospel held and defended by all Old School Baptists until comparatively recent years. I refer to predestination, unlimited and absolute, as expressing the sovereignty of the God of Israel. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was the first, and for many years of persecution, discouragement and darkness the only publication in this country to advocate the truth held by all those who separated themselves from the worldly institutions and religions of those days, and came to be known by the name given them by their enemies as "Old School Baptists." It seems, brother Chick, that the years immediately following our baptism were times of revival in our churches, from Maine to Virginia. All the churches and preachers in those times, as far as I have heard, advocated and preached the same doctrine, and every principle which the SIGNS advocated, and which was defended and preached by Elder Gilbert Beebe, and all the mighty gifts which the Lord raised up in and for those times, which tried and tested the faith and faithfulness of the people of God. But the church of Christ never could endure what we call prosperity. Ambitious men and perhaps more or less unfaithfulness in many of the churches, opened the door to unsound doctrine and ungodly practices. However that may be, we know that unsound doctrine got a foothold in some sections, and in some cases whole churches departed from the simplicity of the gospel. Then we began to hear the sovereignty of God, his unlimited and almighty power, brought into question by many who still claimed to be Old School Baptists. So far have many of these people wandered from the faith of the fathers, that the fundamental principles of the truth, predestination, the eternal life or vital unity of Christ and his people, their everlasting oneness and the "birth of the spirit," or "new birth," are called "heresies" in those who contend for the primitive faith.

But it was not my intention to write of this in particular, so much as to call attention to the inconsistency of some of our people at least, who profess to believe in and love the doctrine of the real Old School Baptists to which I have referred, and who, in words at least, condemn every departure from that doctrine, and yet they give their support and counte-

nance not to the SIGNS, but to some other paper, claiming they are too poor to take two religious papers. It seems perfectly clear that the SIGNS has hardly a peer in all the country in soundness of doctrine, and in faithfulness in defense of that doctrine, whether it pays or not. It commenced and continued in the defense of the truth when its supporters were few indeed, and when the publication of the periodical seemed a well nigh forlorn venture, Elder Gilbert Beebe setting the type and running the modest sheet through the little hand-press with his own hands. It did not pay in those days to publish or print a paper advocating the principles of the SIGNS. Its editors today may well take pride in pointing to its files, from its humble beginning down to the present day, and challenge any one, friend or foe, to point out a single instance where the paper has swerved in the least from the principles published in its prospectus nearly three-quarters of a century ago. For the last quarter of a century, at least, many publications have sprung up over the land. If these were all "clean through the word," and all published "the truth and nothing but the truth," no one would have occasion to find fault, though one might question the wisdom of printing so many periodicals in these times of postal and telegraph facilities. We cannot condemn a man for publishing a paper, providing he does no mischief by it, even if he does no good, nor can we condemn a man or woman for supporting all of the so-called Old School Baptist papers in the country, if he or she chooses and has the means; but the inconsistency of some very zealous professors shows itself in ignoring the one and faithful medium and representative of Old School Baptist doctrine and practice, and giving of their substance and encouragement to papers of later origin to the neglect of the SIGNS. If desert enters the question at all, is not the SIGNS more deserving of the support and countenance of all who have any right to the name of Old School Baptists, than any other paper circulating among us, especially when we consider its history and the fierce conflicts through which it has passed? The SIGNS has from its beginning been a faithful and consistent exponent of the faith and practice of all Old School Baptists in the whole Atlantic seaboard. It may be pardoned in us if we boast a little in the fact that the SIGNS is the only Old School Baptist paper north of Mason and Dixson's line; it has been from its inception and still is the household paper in every Old Baptist home from Maine to Virginia, at least, and we have reason to believe in thousands of other homes through the south and west. The reason for this is the unflinching devotion of its management to the truth of Scripture and its constant defense of that truth. I wish to be very plain, and yet very gentle in what I write in this line. A man is known by the fruit he bears, by his work, more, far more, than by the words which fall from his lips. We hear one of our people express great love and zeal for the doctrine in his conversation, but the pure and clean truth appearing in every number of the SIGNS is neglected as unworthy of any sacrifice. A man must be judged by his works, not by his words merely. If I am very much in love with anything I want that thing, nor am I willing to accept a substitute for that thing, though some may say "it is just as good." Pardon me, brother Chick, what I write is for home consumption. We in this eastern country are a favored people; as Old School Baptists we are favored in having

a medium of communication, a proved and faithful medium, which twice every month comes to us with food for the hungry soul, with a defense of the mighty work of God in the salvation of his people, with a trumpet call from the walls of Zion to the provisions God has made for her safety, her sustenance and her everlasting defense against all her foes within or without. The little child finds the "sincere milk of the word," the strong man finds the armor of his warfare burnished with humble love and sweet faith in the mighty God of Jacob. Our very thoughts are revealed to us in the letters of professed followers of Jesus, the humble poor, whose words fill many columns of the paper. Again, our editors do hold themselves responsible for what is spread upon the pages of the SIGNS, a responsibility no editor or publisher of a paper circulating among our people can free himself from. But our editors, like ourselves, are fallible men, and may err; none are more conscious of that fact than they are. So again we might boast just a little in the fact that the average reader of the SIGNS measures what it contains of doctrine, of experience, &c., by the infallible word of God, accepting it only so far as it agrees with the "law and the testimony." At any rate it must be conceded concerning the people for whom that paper speaks, that though any man, no matter how gifted he may be, even though he be an angel from heaven, proclaim any other doctrine than that already received in the soul's experience, and in the clear word of God, they will not receive it. We are sometimes called "Beebe Baptists" by those who do not know what they are talking about. Our people have followed Elder Gilbert Beebe only so far as he followed Christ; so far are they justified in following him, but no farther. The SIGNS is not the leader of the Old School Baptists in the east, or anywhere else, nor does it desire to be; in no sense is the faith of its readers led or shaped by what may appear in the paper. I am confident that no class of readers in the world are less governed by what the editors or correspondents of any paper may write than are the habitual readers of the SIGNS. They do not go to it to find out what they ought to believe, either in doctrine, experience, order or deportment, or any essential thing pertaining to the kingdom of God. I have been forcibly impressed of late years with the fact that the visible church of Christ cannot long bear an appellation or popular name which distinguishes her from all other peoples or sects. As an illustration of this, men no older than you and I can remember when the name Old School Baptist meant and distinguished our people, and they were the people who by messengers, &c., proclaimed the doctrine and order of all Bible Baptists, and renewed their allegiance to the faith and practice of the Baptist church, as she is described in the New Testament, at Black Rock. Now most fearlessly do I challenge any one to show an instance wherein we have departed from that faith, or where the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has advocated any other doctrine. The brethren north of us here may wonder why I write all this, the brethren west and south will well understand me. My desire is to call upon every lover of the old, old truth (old as eternity) to stand by that truth. I do not know how many sects or companies have assumed the name, the name of Old School Baptists, which had a vital meaning once to every one who knew and loved the truth as it is in Jesus. I mean that when a man or a people first bore the name, all knew that reference

was made to a people who believed in "absolute," unlimited predestination, unconditional election, eternal life unity, &c. This is still the doctrine of the church of God, and with the humble hope and faith that we poor, unprofitable and often unfaithful servants are lovers of the God of this truth, we do most earnestly and emphatically contend for it, and support and call upon all in our churches to support to the extent of their means the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in its faithful and unswerving advocacy of this pure doctrine or teaching.

I remain as ever your unworthy brother, J. N. BADGER.

[WE feel to thank brother Badger for his kind words, his commendation means much to us, whether he refers at any time to our preaching, or to the conduct of the SIGNS. We were baptized near together, and began preaching about the same time, and were ordained within a few months of each other. We saw him baptized, and he assisted at our ordination. Many other things also have conspired to knit us together with him, which we need not here mention. If there has ever been any real difference in faith between us we have not known it. We have always loved him as a brother and minister, and feel more glad than we can say that he can feel a degree of fellowship toward ourself. Like ourself, brother Badger has been acquainted with the SIGNS from childhood. We are glad indeed that he can so unreservedly testify that there has been no departure from the old faith in its columns. As brother Badger says, we are indeed fallible, and we do not want to be in any sense a leader of the people of God, but only want to walk with them, following one Leader, the Lord Jesus. We are often humbled as we remember our unfitness for any place in the Master's vineyard, and our hope and strength is and must be that the Lord will strengthen. "Who is sufficient for these things?" "Our sufficiency is of God." We hope this for ourself. May God keep us steadfast to the word of truth, may we be enabled to so conduct the SIGNS as to receive the willing support of all who love the truth. We would not have any one support the SIGNS because it is our first paper in the order of time, but we do ask support for it so far as it shall contend for the Bible ways and the Bible faith. We can but appreciate the good will and forbearance which have been shown us, and more especially since the death of brother Benton Beebe. We have often felt lonesome and oppressed, and we expect to feel this in years to come, if it shall please God to spare us. May he alone be our hope and help.—ED.]

FALLS ROAD, ROLAND PARK, BALTIMORE, Md., June 10, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—With your permission I will say a few words to the readers of the SIGNS, and for a subject will call attention to the third verse of the first chapter of the first epistle of Peter, which reads as follows: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." The fourth verse reads, "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." The principal thought in my mind is the begetting again. This word "again," presupposes that the strangers addressed had been begotten to a lively hope before. The disciples had such a lively and strong hope that they said we believe

and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the true and living God. Jesus said, flesh and blood did not reveal this truth to them, but his Father which is in heaven. This to my mind, is the first begetting to a lively hope. So lively was their hope that they could not fast while the Bridegroom was with them, so full and perfect was their joy in beholding his works and listening to his gracious words that no doubt seemed ever to enter their minds that he was the one of whom Moses and the prophets did write. But when the Father delivered him into wicked hands, and they had crucified him, to all human appearance he had gone as others who had risen up before him, and now their hope was blighted, they said, This was he which we hoped should have redeemed Israel, and they go mourning, and no power on earth could comfort them. I often fancy I see them with their heads bowed down as a bullrush, their hearts aching while their eyes were ashamed to look up, but still deep in their affection was the memory of their loved one, and they would anoint his body, though lifeless, with precious ointments and spices, but at the proper time, blessed be God, he raised him from the dead, and showed him to two who were on the way to Emmaus. They were so overjoyed that they returned to Jerusalem and told their sorrowing brethren, and as they told the glorious news, Jesus himself appeared in the midst and proved to them beyond the possibility of a doubt that he was the same Jesus in whom they trusted, and after forty days ascended to heaven in their sight; they returned to Jerusalem with great joy. Is it any wonder now that they should break forth in the language at the head of this writing, "Blessed be the God," &c.? Now they have a lively hope again that this is the Redeemer of Israel, and this hope is given them in the knowledge of his resurrection from the dead, and their hope is not for this life only, but also for that which is to come. Paul tells us that if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, the Spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. So lively and glorious was their hope that they, though persecuted, go everywhere preaching the word, determined to know nothing among the people of God, save Christ Jesus and him crucified. They rejoice that they are worthy to suffer for his sake, and though crosses and afflictions awaited them on every hand, their Lord and Savior promised that he would not leave them comfortless, but would come to them, and he did. When they were hungry and could catch no fish, Jesus came and told them where to cast the net in order to find, and when bound in the common prisons, Jesus came to them and enabled them to sing, and also brought them out. Is it any wonder they should bless his name for such mercies shown? And all this, my brethren, is in our experience. The Lord in his great mercy and for his great love, has quickened us into life by Jesus Christ. How sweet the hope of a soul in its earliest love, but when the tempter comes and persuades us to believe that it is all imagination, how utterly we are cast down. We had thought our troubles over, and like the apostles we could not understand that he must go away. Now we fear we are deceived and have deceived others, and O how dreadful we feel at the thought of having deceived the dear people of God. But as the disciples still loved Jesus and lingered about his grave, so we revere the mem-

ory of those blessed days and perfect joy, and pray to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that if we are deceived to undeceive us and show us his glorious truth and give us the joy of his salvation. In his own way and at his own time he shows us his glory and gives us joy and gladness in the same Jesus we knew in our first hope, for there is not another name given under heaven among men whereby sinners must be saved, salvation is only through and by Jesus Christ, and this is the resurrection of Jesus Christ to us, his manifest return into our hearts the hope of glory, and how it does enliven the heart and make the tongue sing, Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name be glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth. This begetting is to an inheritance that is incorruptible. It is pure and shall always remain so, and neither shall it fade away, but grow more and more glorious in our view, until the perfect day, when all the redeemed by the precious blood of Christ shall come around his great white throne, to see him without the vail between, and praise him in that perfect way that they desire here. Well did Peter use the term "abundant mercy," for the experience of all of the Lord's children is like that of David, his mercy endureth forever. What could poor sinners like we do if this were not true? What mercies we have enjoyed in the daily renewal of our hope and faith, when the world, the flesh and the devil threatened to overcome! Jesus appears again, and so exhibits his strength, that we say, I know that the Lord is great and that our Lord is above all gods. I will trust him and not be afraid.

May God preserve us from all evil and to his name be all the praise.

Your brother, I hope, in the love of Jesus, J. T. ROWE.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., June 6, 1904.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I think this letter from brother Rounds will be good for the readers of the SIGNS. I think the same of many letters that are never sent to you for publication.

Yours as ever,

SILAS H. DURAND.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 21, 1904.

MISS BESSIE DURAND—MY DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—After a long delay I will try to answer your sweet little letter, which I received on my thirtieth birthday. I received twenty-nine letters, and reread most of them. O how good it is to know you are held in loving remembrance by the dear saints of God.

"Midst scenes of confusion and creature complaints,
How sweet to my soul is communion with saints."

What a great help the people of God are to one another; they bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. How important it is that we should speak often one to another; when we do this the book of remembrance is often opened before us, and we read therein what great things the Lord hath done for us in the past, and are made to thank God and take courage, and go on our way rejoicing.

Of late I have thought much about the words of Abraham when he said, "Jehovah-jireh," which is, being interpreted, "The Lord will provide." It is said that this is seen in the mount of the Lord to this day. How true this is. Each and every child of God realizes that the Lord will provide. It is seen by them. We are brought to that point where no earthly arm could help, even to the end of the earth, and lo, we are at ease ere we are aware. We cast all our care upon the Lord, who careth for us. The Lord did it. Yes, we know that nothing short of

the power of God could have wrought this wondrous change, and it is indeed wondrous in our eyes; wondrous that the Lord should condescend to notice a poor worm like me, and provide comfort, for this is what the troubled soul wants, and the Lord will and does provide comfort for those who are in distress. I often think of those disciples when they were on the sea and the storm arose. It was not until the last extremity that they came to Jesus and awoke him. You remember they had just come down from the mount, where Jesus had been preaching to them. So we come down from the mount, down, down, down, until we reach the sea and enter thereon, and the wind begins to blow, and we find ourselves driven and tossed by the wind like a wave of the sea. O how weak and unstable we are. Surely without Jesus we can do nothing. But like the disciples we must be taught this by experience. The Lord controls the winds, he holds the wind in his fist. Therefore the windstorm that tossed the ship to and fro came from the Lord, as well as the word that caused the great calm.

"The Lord will provide." "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Shall we hold out our hand for good and close our hands to evil, or that which is contrary to our desires? Hezekiah, in speaking of his dreadful affliction, said, "By these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit." When Peter saw the sheet let down from heaven, knit at the four corners, behold all manner of four footed beasts, fowls of the air and creeping things, and the Lord said, "Slay and eat," Peter was ready to refuse. Peter was hungry, the Lord provided food for him, and he did not want to take it. When we are hungry and the Lord shows us the hidden evils of our heart as an evidence of our acceptance with him, do we not want something better than that? Do we get it? Has not the Lord sanctified these things to be evidences of our acceptance with him, and do we not have to live of them? "The Lord will provide."

Your very unworthy brother,

EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

RENSSELAERVILLE, N. Y., June 12, 1904.

VERY DEAR SISTER:—Your good kind letter of May 19th, was indeed a surprise to me, as the little I wrote you I thought hardly worth your time to read, and now I feel I would like to write a few lines to you again, but I doubt if you find anything in it worth your time to read. Your letter was much to me; so many things I could witness to. How true that God, who is rich in mercy, and is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, sees fit to afflict his people with "wave upon wave." O how hard for us to say at all times, "Thy will be done," but the dear Lord does not permit his children to have any idols, as I think I well know, and Elder Vail is in sorrow, too, no wonder he cries out, "O! why must it be so?" but the Lord is able to bind up the broken-hearted, and to make all his works praise him, and to-day not far from here is the funeral of a young man, an only child, *drowned*, the stay and support of his parents, how many are made to cry with Elder Vail, "O! why?" but happy indeed are we when we can say, "Though he slay me yet will I trust in him."

I have just been reading in the SIGNS, and have read the two pieces written to sister Terry, with much satisfaction, and feel that I have traveled the same road and know most of the places, yet I have many doubts about my knowing any-

thing about a spiritual road, for when I hear the saints tell of their great joy, I have not been there, neither have I experienced such great sorrow for sin as some, yet I know full well there is no goodness in me; neither can I tell the time when I passed from darkness to light, from death to life, (if I know anything about such a change) but for a long time after I saw myself a sinner, and felt the need of a Savior, I seemed to have a hope that I would some time have a hope in God's mercy, but I was looking and expecting a bright evidence that I might know that my sins were forgiven and that I had been born again. During this time I had attended a meeting at Otego, and at Schoharie, and all looked so good and happy to me I did not have a doubt but what they were the children of the living God, and I wanted to be as I thought they were. At one time dear sister (Webb) Kinney was here, and we had been talking quite freely and she said, "Addie, I think you will have to go back and take up with the evidence and hope you have." I was indeed surprised, I thought I had deceived her, it had never occurred to me that I had any evidence, I was only hoping that I might have; but if it was the work of the Lord in my heart, in his own time he made me willing to accept what he had given, and I told my little story to the church of Middleburgh, was received and baptized the next day, November 11th, 1877. I was then young, not twenty, and thought I would grow in grace and in goodness, but alas! alas! how far short I have come from living as I then thought I could and would, but it seems that my hope, little as it is, is like an anchor, for it has held me and I have not been able at any time to give it up, and sometimes I have felt that it is enough. I feel many times that the everlasting arms are underneath, and that I can trust myself and all that I have to God who created all things, governs and controls all things, who is too wise too err and too good to be unkind, and although it has not been given me to experience such great joy, I trust I know something of the rest, peace and trust, yes, and the love that the world knows not of and can neither give, and thank God cannot take it away, and I desire to be thankful for all the many blessings I receive from his bountiful hand; but how well you expressed my own feelings when you said you were "too weak to even know if you were thankful."

One week ago was our yearly meeting, and I think we had a good meeting from beginning to close, but Elder Clark's sermon Sunday morning seemed suited to my case, his text, 1 Kings xvii. 14, with the connection, the Lord's promise that the barrel of meal and cruise of oil should not fail, has been verified to me many, many times. It seems so many times I am just ready to give up, feel that I know nothing of God and his grace, in fact I never seem to have a great supply, just a little handful, but it seems to last from day to day, and sometimes I feel that I can trust my God for all things. I am entirely too weak and helpless to find any comfort in conditional salvation, either for time or eternity, if I am saved, it is by grace alone, "nothing in my hand I bring."

Now, dear sister, why have I written all this to you, a stranger in the flesh? but your letter to me made me feel that we were not strangers.

As Elder Durand says, how easy it is for people who have traveled the same journeys and experienced the same desolation and deliverances to become ac-

quainted with each other, and I think we have had many of the same experiences and have had the same Deliverer, even Jesus, and I believe he will yet deliver. We must expect trials and conflicts all through the journey. God has never promised his children that their path would be strewn with roses, but they must come up out of great tribulation, but if with the trials and afflictions he will give the needed grace, strength, wisdom and patience, then we can bear it, yes, all comes from him.

Now I hope I have not wearied you. I have several letters unanswered, but some way I felt like writing to you, but did not think of writing as I have. I do not ask for a reply, but if you find time and feel that you could still have fellowship for me, I would be very glad to hear from you. I enjoy reading the SIGNS very much, would not want to do without them, have read them ever since I cared for such reading.

Yours in bonds of love,

ADDIE COOK.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., March 28, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—It has been a long while since I had one of your good letters, but I am content to read your writings in the SIGNS, knowing how many calls you have on your time and patience.

I felt so sorry when brother Beebe was called home, not for him, but we could not very well spare him; he is at rest, but we need all the truth and light we can get. I know, too, that behind the dim unknown stands the same unchangeable God, watching over those who love and trust him; but sometimes he seems so far away, and those whom he has called and fitted to expound his truth to us are a help and a blessing.

I could ask no higher earthly privilege to-day, than to be where I could hear you, or any other minister sound in the doctrine, proclaim the riches of God's grace. I am at times cast down and disquieted because of my isolation, and such a dearth of spiritual things. I know that all this can be overruled to my good, but I long for the preached word, for the companionship of a few kindred souls; yet brother Badger says he thinks of me as one favored above many. I know I have been in some respects, and if this unrest, this hungering and thirsting means that I am alive in Christ, then I am blessed above and beyond all I deserve.

My dear brother, when I wrote to brother Badger, about Christmas time, I closed by saying, "When you read this, please send it to Elder Chick." I never thought for one moment that it would be inserted in your paper, but what you do has always been right with me, so I have no complaint to make. Inclosed you will find money for the continuance of the SIGNS, and I have prayed daily that you might be equal to your added burden, and be strong in the power of his might, realizing that the darkest day, lived till to-morrow, will then have passed away. Here we have the sigh, the sorrow, the falling tear; but of life this is so small a part. There if we are numbered among those for whom Christ died, we will know no more sorrow, no more crying, for he shall wipe all tears from our eyes, and we shall live with him forever. What a blessing for those who diligently seek him!

I am writing these lines that you may know I am as firm in the faith as when I first believed; that he is still the fount of every blessing I receive, and that most of the time my harp is tuned to sing his

praise. I pray not for the things of the world, nor do I ask that I may escape affliction or trials, only that I may have resignation and fortitude, coupled with faith to endure to the end, believing that they will work for me an exceeding weight of glory. My brother, my heart is full to-day, and I wish I could express myself as I would like. It is all there; my gratitude to God for loving me before the foundation of the world, and for manifesting himself to me when I was dead in trespasses and sins, my desire to be with his people, my great love for them, and my thankfulness that I had the privilege of being baptized in his name; O the grief and sorrow, that I am so unworthy of it, and that sin is mixed with all I do. Pray that the Spirit may abide with me, and that the fruit of it may not be dwarfed, but that all around me may know that great is the Lord our God. It is not my wish to be greater or better than any one, but there is a great desire to honor the Master, and to adorn my profession.

Have been addressed by two parties who saw my name in the SIGNS, relative to the climate here, and prospects for work, one was from a sister who lives in Santa Rosa, this State, but that is a long way from here.

I spent last Wednesday with brother Hushands, and I trust it was spent profitably. He is a godly man, and well versed in the Bible. I had loaned him several copies of the SIGNS, which he appreciated; spoke particularly of "The scarlet line in the window." I asked him if he thought any of the preachers here could have explained it so beautifully; it is needless to give the answer.

I hope this will find you well, and that God will fit and strengthen you for all that has been put upon you, and that he will put it in the minds and hearts of the dear brethren to assist you in every possible way. My love and best wishes are extended to yourself and family, never forgetting sister Atkinson. That God may spare you in your usefulness a long while yet, is my prayer. You have comforted me many times, and I thank God, when I was bowed down in trouble that I was directed to you.

Your sister in hope,

B. E. WRIGHT.

ASLEEP IN JESUS.

THE words are very sweet as used in connection with those of our loved ones who have passed away, but I never felt the sweetness of them as I did when I looked upon the silent features of my dear sister Alice, as she lay "asleep in Jesus." My sister was the wife of Calvan Cubbage, 1934 Thirty-first St., Philadelphia, Pa., daughter of the late Job M. and Catherine Frazier, and to her memory I dedicate these few lines.

I felt very sad because of her death. She was the first of us children to go, seven in number, and being the only sister it made our hearts feel very sad as we gathered in old Welsh Tract burying-ground to lay her earthly remains tenderly away. But in the loneliness of my heart there seemed a still small voice saying, "Asleep in Jesus."

Dear sister Alice had much to live for, a loving husband, three nice children, a nice home and a large circle of friends; but the summons came, her inheritance was ready and she entered therein. She was a dear, good woman, endowed with qualities such as make good wives, mothers and friends. These qualities were God's gifts to her, for natural qualities are as much God's gifts as spiritual ones. Her natural qualities were good, such as

made her a dear, lovable woman, but they were not those that made my heart rejoice, and that still small voice to say, "Asleep in Jesus," and had they been her only evidence, I do not believe I could have been as well satisfied. I believe my dear sister furnished evidence that she lived in Jesus; I believe that when sleep overtook her, when death, the leveler, released her spirit from its tenement of clay, and she was taken home to her dear Redeemer, and entered into rest, that it was not an entirely new condition to her. I believe that she had felt that rest before, though perhaps in a very minute degree. I believe the Spirit of God had dwelt in her, and had comforted her, and that she desired to be comforted by that Spirit more than any other joy. Therefore when my sister's spirit was wafted home, it was entering a condition that it had tasted of before, but she was now passing into the full realization of her joy, and of what her soul had desired. But what evidence have we that such was the case? It is easy to believe things that we want very much, but when we look for evidences they may not be so plentiful, and the case not so clear. Natural qualities do not furnish evidences of spiritual life, although I really believe that natural qualities are sweetened and made brighter by the existence of spiritual life, but things of the flesh belong to the flesh, and are carnal, and things of the Spirit belong to the Spirit, and such only can we regard as evidences that spiritual life exists, although in no case can we sit in judgment, leaving that to him who judges the heart and not the surface. But what evidence had we that our sister knew the things of the Spirit? She was a faithful and devoted member of Salem church, in Philadelphia. It was the greatest pleasure she had to be with that church at its meetings. She felt herself to be one of the least of the members of that church, or of God's saints. She was fearful that her walk was not in accordance with the cause that she had professed. She felt the burden of her sins, and felt herself unworthy of the least of God's mercies. She loved the things of the Spirit, and to talk upon them. She loved to hear the Scriptures expounded. These things are some of the evidences we have that our sister had the understanding and the knowledge of the love of Christ, and a desire for them, not only in death, but in life. Hers was a living religion, a religion that had hold of her and ruled her. It was something that permeated her whole life and being, and so when I walked away from her grave I felt what blessedness was hers, now she could see God in the fullness of his glory, now nothing stood between, and so I felt to say, God's ways are best, she is now "asleep in Jesus."

W. E. FRAZIER.

WASHINGTON, D. C., April 12, 1904.

RIVERVIEW, Ala., June 21, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR:—I inclose you a letter from Elder Morgan Brown, which you can publish in the SIGNS if you think best. I enjoyed the letter very much, and think there are things in it that are of general interest to the household of faith. I was comforted to learn through this letter that the brethren sympathized with me, and also remembered me in their prayers.

In afflictions, H. J. REDD.

NEWARK, Del., June 13, 1904.

ELDER H. J. REDD—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I will try to write you a few lines at least. I am well, and have been gra-

ciously blessed of the dear Lord to enjoy my visit up here among these good people, just the best kind. I will never be able to properly and fully express my joy and appreciation to the Lord for all his benefits toward me, a poor sinner. I have enjoyed trying to testify of my blessed Master's goodness to his poor, tried and afflicted people, and I have never had a heartier reception, or a fuller indorsement in all my life anywhere than up here. I shall not try to tell you much of my trip now, but will say that my whole trip has been an unbroken chain of gladness. O how I wish you could have been with me.

I have read and enjoyed your good letter to me several times, and to several of our good brethren up here. You surely have their love, prayers and tender sympathy. May the dear, gracious Lord deal mercifully with you in all things. I wish I were able to offer an effectual prayer to God for you, but I am so poor, and needy, and blind, and foolish, that I am not worthy the hallowed name of my dear Lord in my poor, sin-polluted lips. I truly feel that I need the prayers of you and of all the dear, tried saints of God. I would prize such prayers more than all the gold of Ophir. I would say again, precious and tried brother, may the dear Lord bless you, he can save, and none can hinder, and his love, mercy and grace are just as infinite as his power and wisdom. How good to think that the leading characteristic of God, as was manifested in his Son Christ Jesus, is to help the helpless, and to befriend the friendless, and to give a good hope to the hopeless, and in fact to minister to the "outside" cases. When there is "no eye to pity, and no hand to save," then and there was where Christ came to bless most fully. Even when our father and our mother forsake us, the Lord will take us up, and is not forgetful, as a mother may be of her child. What trials it takes to prepare us for the proper reception of all the rich mercies of our God, but O how sweet they are when they come. Truly we forget the sorrow and anguish of soul as soon as so great a deliverance comes.

I hope to see you this summer, and enjoy several days with you somehow and some way. I may try to come over there.

I was at the annual session of the Delaware, Delaware River and Warwick associations, and it was pleasant to meet with so many good brethren and sisters and friends. I met Elders Eubanks, Chick, Durand, Vail, Hubbell, Grafton, Meredith, Poulson, Francis, Ker, McConnell, Badger, Gore, Rowe, Mellott and Lefferts, besides Elders Gold, Jones and Adams of North Carolina. I do feel to truly love these good people for the blessed Redeemer's sake.

Will close. Love to all. Write to me soon, at Helena, Ga.

Yours in hope,

MORGAN BROWN.

PINEHILL, Texas, April 1, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—While reading your last editorial I felt that you were speaking in my own tongue, telling my experience better than I could tell it myself. Well did you describe my feelings when you said, "When alone they think, O, if some of the people of God were here I could now say much to them of the goodness and glory of God, but when the time of meeting comes they are dumb." When I look back to the time (about a year ago) when my joy in the Lord was full, I remember how hard it was to hold my tongue. I was then with

the Missionaries, having been made a proselyte by them about six years before. My new found joy would rise at times until I could scarcely contain myself. Often would I quit my work and go into my neighbor's field and unburden my mind to him. He was an Old School Baptist, but seemed to enjoy being with me, and sometimes would say, "How can you claim to be a Missionary and advocate such stuff as you do?" I knew what he meant by "such stuff," and knew also it was the same "stuff" he loved so well, but I did not think I ought to leave the Missionaries because none of them agreed with me. Then I felt that my tongue would ever be loosed, and that my duty was to remain with the Missionaries and teach them, for they seemed to be in such darkness and needed so much instruction. But O, foolish wretch that I was, I would quit my work to go anywhere to find some one to talk to, so that I was called crazy and many other hard names. Such was the beginning and end of my Missionary efforts. I soon found myself standing alone where I was, and then I went out in search of my brethren. I had been called a "Hardshell," and I had a great desire to hear one preach. My "Hardshell" neighbor told me where his pastor lived, and I went to see him. He came to my house and preached, and the next Saturday I went to his church and was received as a member. Truly these are my brethren, and such a joy in the manifestation of brotherly love I had never known before. But no longer did I feel my ability to teach, but rather my need of being taught. A sense of weakness and utter helplessness seems to overcome me when I come to the time and place of meeting, and I am dumb, as you say. I have heard only a few sermons since I have been with the church, but I enjoy reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

If not asking too much, I would be glad if you would write me when you are not too busy. May God bless you in your work.

Your unworthy brother,

R. S. PACE.

PSALMS LXV. 4.

"BLESSED is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple."

The above language was spoken by David, the sweet singer of Israel. The people of which he spoke here are already a blessed people, from the fact that they were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. And "blessed is the man whom thou choosest" in this present dispensation of time, and "causest to approach unto thee." This people who were unconditionally chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, in process of time are born into this world separately and individually, and are chosen individually from among the sons and daughters of Adam's race, and who were by nature the children of wrath even as others, and are separated as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats. This dividing is now going on, even as the Lord chose them and now causes them to approach unto him, as he does not the world. It is as the Lord said, "Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left." "Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left." Of the two dying thieves, one was taken and the other left. Had the impenitent thief on the cross felt as did the one who had been blessed, he would have acted the same as did the other. God singled out the one dying

thief on the cross, and left the other one still an enemy to him, just as the chosen one would have been had he been left to his own carnal will. This is election in manifestation. One is regenerated, and another, just as good by nature, is left out. The one regenerated is the one chosen from the rest in time. This, in other words, is a manifestation of that choice which was made in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world.

And he causes them to approach unto him. I believe in a religion that is felt in time, and that causes men to approach unto God. This is felt individually, after we are born of the flesh, and eternal life has been given, or after regeneration has taken place. Regeneration is the beginning of the work which moves men unto God. When eternal life is given, they feel as they have never felt before. This causes them to cry for mercy, because they feel condemned as they never did before. They feel too much condemned to even think that they are approaching unto God; this pure and holy being they have insulted all their lives. During this work of the Spirit they do not realize that thus they are approaching unto him, yet they cry out for his mercy, although they feel that eternal banishment from his presence is their due. Thus God leads them in a way that they do not know, and in paths that they have not trodden. Notwithstanding they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, in time must this choice be made manifest unto them by singling them out, and separating them from the world, and causing them to approach unto him.

That they "may dwell in thy courts." I in them, and they in me; I in the Father, and the Father in me. It is all an inside work from first to last. They dwell in his courts, because they dwell in him, and thus "we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple." This house or temple is that building of God not made with hands. Here we have a city whose builder and maker is God. This city has foundations, and God builds on this foundation. This foundation is Christ, embracing God's immutable purpose, which he purposed with himself before the world was. There we shall be satisfied. This work is fully completed when we awake with his likeness, as David said. Here we groan, being burdened, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. When we are raised up fashioned like unto his glorious body, we shall receive the adoption in its fullest sense, and then indeed we shall be satisfied with the goodness of his house, even of his holy temple.

We are told that God's people are the temple of God, or his house. O that eternal union between Christ and his people! "I in them, and they in me." How closely we are identified with God, even our Father in heaven. Jesus said, "I am in the Father, and the Father in me." No wonder that we shall be satisfied, because our vile body shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body, and then we shall forever dwell with our loving Savior, who died to redeem us. Then we shall be perfectly free from sin, and from all temptation to sin. There we shall see that innumerable company which no man can number. Will not this be enough to satisfy us? There shall be no sickness, pain or death on that healthful shore, and we shall be enabled to praise God unmixed with sin.

"O land of rest, for thee I sigh,
When will the moment come,
When I shall lay my armor by,
And dwell with Christ at home?"

"We shall be satisfied with the good-

ness of thy house."

I am a poor sinner, saved by grace if saved at all, J. M. DULEY.

CAPRON, Okla. Ter., May 8, 1904.

BONO, Texas, June 2, 1904.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—Methinks I can see the many dear faces of kindly remembered friends and brethren as they sit tonight in the church-house in Hopewell, listening to the voice of, I wonder whom, as he proclaims the unsearchable riches of our heavenly Father. I think I can see the happy look on each upturned face as they drink from the fountain that never goes dry. In my imagination I see the faces of Elders Gold, Sawin, Keene, Eubanks, Durand, Roberson, Rowe and numerous others whom I met at Southampton just one year ago. O how I long to be with you, and to partake of the feast spread before you. I wonder if any one of you remember me while you are enjoying the royal feast. It would be a pleasure indeed to know that one of my Father's children cast one thought after me, or remembered to say, Sister Ray was with us last year. All day long has my heart been with you; I cannot keep the tears from flowing when I think of the pleasant meeting I had with you last year, and now I am so far away, yet in spirit am in your midst. Again, it makes me sad when I think of the many precious ones that have been called home since your last association, yet we should sorrow not, we will follow soon. Brother Chick, I wish it was in my power to tell you, and all the loved ones whom I met, just how well I did enjoy my visit in your midst, especially the Delaware River Association. Never while life lasts will I forget that time, particularly the last day; it was a sacred season of unspeakable joy, and full of glory, such as I had never seen before, and will never see again, an oasis in a desert land, a well of water in a dry place.

I wish to let all of the dear children of God whom I so pleasantly met in the east, know that I have not forgotten them, but can recall how each and every one looks, their dear faces being indelibly imprinted on my memory. I have received many precious letters since my return home, which I greatly appreciate. Perchance, if the Lord wills, I will visit your associations next year.

May God be with you to bless, is my prayer in Christ's name.

LYDIA C. RAY.

AMWELL, N. J., April 29, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—As I feel like writing a little, I will do so, hoping that you will pardon me for taking the right, for I am sure you must get tired of reading my letters, for they are so much like the writer, very imperfect. But when these things get on my mind, I cannot help writing. Then I am made to know that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, at least, it is not in me to direct my steps, and knowing that God has taken the foolish things of this world to confound the wise, I take courage and try to write sometimes. I do not know what I can write now, but last night as I lay thinking of Jesus bearing our sins, and being crucified for us that he might save us sinners, I thought how this had to be done to fulfill the law. Then I thought I must be crucified with him daily, and so come to know that there is no soundness in me. I do feel so helpless, and do understand that it is the finished work of Jesus, foreordained before the foundation of the world, that saved us, and it came to pass as was appointed. I also

understand that the change is wrought in the heart before we can have a desire to follow the Lord in baptism. If I am taught right, baptism is a command of the Lord to change our associations in the world, and to give us a right to the supper, and to all the privileges of the church. I must confess that I do feel very unworthy, yet I do not want to leave the church with all its privileges, for there is no other doctrine that I love. When this gospel was, as it were, applied to me first, I wanted to follow, and could say with Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee."

This is the year for the association, and I hope that we may be blessed to have a good meeting, and if it be the will of God, may we all meet to worship him who changes not.

I will close. Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

DELIA HOAGLAND.

FORDYCE, Ark., May 12, 1904.

EDITOR SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I noticed an inquiry from some one in the north wanting to come south to Arkansas, and by your permission I would like to say through the SIGNS that at this place we have a fairly good country. We have a considerable lumber industry, farming, plenty of cheap lands, unimproved lands from one to five dollars per acre, improved farm lands from two to fifteen dollars per acre. Our people here are generally in easy circumstances, and are as liberal and generous-hearted people as live. There are several Old Baptist churches, four within a distance of sixteen miles of Fordyce. We would be glad to have any genuine Old Predestinarian Baptist move here, and would aid them any way we could. We would be especially glad to have some preachers move here. There is one place that needs a pastor badly, and the brethren would do a good part by him. Should there be any one desiring to come, and will write me, I will give them all the information I can.

I am, I hope, your brother,

V. R. HARRIS.

CUMMINSVILLE, Neb., June 7, 1904.

EDITOR SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—There has been a new homestead law passed to allow a man or woman entitled to a homestead to take 640 acres in Nebraska. The law covers thirty-six counties and embraces about 3,000,000 acres. The land is sandy as a rule, but one can do well on a section. I hope that a thousand Old Baptists will get a home here, as we are few. The law takes effect July 26th, 1904.

Will you please print this? for I long to see a few Old School Baptists get themselves a home in Nebraska. This land runs from South Dakota, south line, to the north line of Kansas, and much of it is worth ten dollars an acre now, but do not think all of it worth that amount.

Love to all the household of faith.

J. S. HAM.

TO DISCONTINUE THE SALE OF BIBLES

WE have only three self-pronouncing Bibles left in stock, all No. 8313, and only two Testaments. These books will be sold at the usual price. For description and price see any SIGNS for 1903.

Owing to the advance in price of such books, and the few calls for them, we have decided not to handle them after these on hand are gone.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1904.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE SPRING ASSOCIATIONS.

It has been our great privilege to attend the four eastern associations which were held in May and June this year, and we feel like saying a few things concerning them. All were pleasant meetings, as we think, to all who attended. There were not as many visitors from a distance as has often been the case before, and this we all regretted, as such visits by brethren and sisters and friends are much appreciated by the members of the churches composing these associations, and it is the hope of us all that next year may see more visitors with us. The Baltimore Association was held with the church at Black Rock, Md., where the notable Black Rock convention of 1832 was held, and at which meeting the separation from the modern Missionary Society, Sunday School, Theological Seminary, Tract Society, Arminian Baptists, was formally announced. The causes of separation had been working in the body that held to the Baptist name long before, but there and then the division came. Old School Baptists everywhere have reason to-day to bless and praise God for this meeting, and for the holy boldness which he gave to the few who then and there protested against the false doctrine and the non-scriptural practices which had taken such deep root among the Baptists since the time of Andrew Fuller. Would to God that every one who bears the Old School Baptist name were altogether such as were these men of God in faith and in the order of the church. These thoughts, with a multitude of others, were in our mind while we remained in the session of that association. We felt fully persuaded that the preaching all through the association was in full harmony with that done at the meeting referred to in 1832. Elders Trott, Beebe, Poteet, Scott and others who were at that meeting lived many years afterward, and it is the testimony of those who heard them all often, that their preaching was the same as it is among us now. In those early days it may well have been that their discourses and writings were more in the way of discussion and argument against errors than is now the case among us, but then this was very needful under the circumstances, and the Spirit of God led their minds into this manner of preaching. In these later years it may be that more is said in preaching with direct reference to the daily experiences of the children of God, either of joy or sorrow, of trial or deliverance, but this has been not because of any departure from the faith of the fathers, but because the holy Spirit has so led the minds of the servants of God. Yet we feel that we ought to always remember the necessity of keeping in mind, and of urging upon the minds of all who believe, just what the Scriptures do say regarding the doctrine which we believe, and of laying before all who hear, the arguments of the Scriptures regarding the truth. The experience must be preached, but also the Scriptures by which all experiences must be tested,

must be kept in mind and presented. It ought to be remembered that one of the marks of the ministry which God has indeed called to this work, is that they are able to expound the word of God. It has been the glory of Baptists that they have always demanded a "Thus saith the Lord," in the Bible for everything that they have been called upon to believe or to practice. We trust that this may still be our glory and our joy, and the glory and joy of all the generations to come, who profess the Baptist name.

At the Baltimore Association, as at all the others, there could but arise sad and yet pleasant memories of the days past, and of those who were then accustomed to meet with us and mingle in all that made the associations pleasant and profitable to us. It is sometimes hard to rise above the things that are seen, and behold the unseen things. Only the present experience of the presence of God through the Spirit can at any time enable us to forget that which is of earth, and therefore transient and perishing, and look up to the heavens, from whence must descend all the dew and rain which make the plants that our heavenly Father has planted to flourish and grow. We must miss the forms and faces of dear ones gone, and we can but feel lonesome and sad as we miss them, yet we know that they have but gone before, and that in deed and in truth we are not divided from them, but that they with us make up one army of the living God, and that they with us worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus our common Lord. It is only as we are brought in feeling near to the dear Savior of sinners, and realize his presence and favor with us, that we can rise above any earthly thing, whether of joy or sorrow, and realize the fellowship of saints, and that we are sitting down in the kingdom of God with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and with all the saints on earth and in heaven. Then we cannot be lonesome, since we are now come to Mount Zion, and to the city of God, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to an innumerable company of the angels of God. This is glorious companionship. Paul and Silas had this companionship in the inner prison at Philippi, and it made them rejoice and sing praises to God. A portion of the time at the associations we were enabled, as we believe, to enter into this sacred fellowship and companionship with all the redeemed, and then we could lose sight of these earthly abodes, and sorrow was left below. But there arose in our heart at all the meetings from time to time a solemn desire that we all might be kept steadfast, abiding in the truth, even as our fathers and mothers in Israel were kept to the end.

Preaching the truth in love is the apostolic expression of what constitutes a good and faithful ministry. Preaching the truth first and foremost, and preaching it in love. Does not this mean that love which embraces God, even the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost which is sent of the Father in the name of Jesus, and which also embraces the truth itself, with every principle of doctrine which the Bible teaches, and the people to whom the ministry is sent? If the truth is really preached at all, it must be in love, since the God of truth is love, and Jesus Christ is the expression of that love in the highest, and the truth is that in which the fellowship of the people of God lives and abides. Fellowship is but another name for the love of the brethren. Truth must have love, and love is of no account without truth as its basis. Do we say that one is

a good brother? What do we mean by saying this? Is he a good brother unless he abides in the doctrine of God? He may be a kindly, affectionate man, (naturally he may be so) but does this make him a good brother? It is certain that he cannot be a good brother without love, and kindness, and gentleness, but must there not also be an abiding in the truth of the doctrine of God our Savior? Let us hold to the force of both words, "truth and love." Love without the truth is but a mass of flesh, without bone or sinew, and truth in the letter without love is but a graven image, interesting to look at it may be, but a thing which no one wishes to embrace. O that all our churches in this day of declension might through the holy Spirit's teaching be enabled to adhere closely to the letter of the truth, but yet not without that love which binds the hearts of the Lord's people together.

It appeared to us that at all the four associations which we have attended, there was this one thing clearly seen, viz: a desire to preach the truth clearly, and with love to all. It is good when ministers of the word can feel the solemnity of the place which they occupy. Like Elijah, when led by the Spirit they must say, "As the Lord liveth, before whom I stand." Then will be felt what the prophets so often call "the burden of the word of the Lord." Nothing will make the servants of God sober, careful, earnest, faithful and solemn in their preaching, as will this solemn realization of him in whose presence they stand. This of itself will take away all desire to indulge in levity, amusing stories or laughable remarks; it will give the dignity of soberness and earnestness to their manner in the pulpit, and will, in short, correct all that is amiss in their manner, as nothing else can.

We have mentioned the association at Black Rock because that was the first, and because we desired to call attention to the convention held there so long ago, but what we have said about the pleasantness and profitableness of that meeting is also true of the Delaware Association, held with the old historic church at Welsh Tract, Delaware; of the Delaware River, held with the equally historic church at Hopewell, N. J., and with the Warwick, held at Warwick, N. Y., which church is as widely known as are any of our eastern churches, as being made up of sound and faithful Baptists. The ministers (with now and then an exception) who attended one attended all. One brother came from Georgia. Elder Morgan Brown, to whom we here refer, came as a stranger among us, but we all soon found that he was not a stranger in the kingdom and patience of our Lord. We speak of him especially because all the other ministers are accustomed to being with us at our yearly meetings, and are what we call our standbys. Elder Brown's preaching commended him to us all, and so also did his conversation and manner at our homes. As he returned to his home he carried with him the brotherly regard of us all, and we had assurances from him that he had never made a more delightful visit anywhere. May the dear Lord grant every needed blessing to him and to all his people.

We have here written what has been in our heart, and trust that it may prove of interest to some of our readers.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

BROTHER John W. Caudle, of Robert Lee, Texas, has written to us asking the following questions: Was John Hart, one of the signers of the declaration of independence, a member of the church at Hopewell, N. J.? Is the church there what is called an absolute predestinarian church? Are you identified with the church at Hopewell? Is there any other church there that could be claimed as Old School Baptists? Brother Caudle states that an effort has been made in Texas to prove that what are called absolute predestinarians are no part of the Primitive church. He also asks us to reply through the SIGNS.

First, we will say that John Hart, to whom reference is made in the above request, lies buried in the cemetery attached to the meeting-house of the First Hopewell Baptist church, and that he was a member of the congregation, but we think not a member of the church. Very many who bear the name of Hart, or who are of that family, are residents of this section, and some are members of the church. It has been our privilege to be identified with this church as their pastor for the past eight years, and we have known many members of the church intimately for the past thirty-seven years. There is no other church in this borough that can claim the name of Old School or Primitive Baptist. There is a church called Second Hopewell about six miles away, which belongs to the same association as the First Hopewell, viz: the Delaware River Association.

Now replying to the chief inquiry, "Is the church there what is called an absolute predestinarian church?" we will say that it is. We say *what is called* an absolute predestinarian church. We have no objection to the word absolute, but do not think it needful to use it in connection with predestination, for all things which our God has predestinated must of necessity be absolutely predestinated. Of course the word absolute only means certain or fixed. Our predestination is not certain, but the predestination of God is, since he is all-wise and unchangeable, and his purposes are all eternal purposes. The church as a body believes this. The church also believes that God has predestinated all things whatsoever come to pass. It believes that nothing is outside of the eternal purpose of God. We are informed that Elder John Boggs, who was the loved and faithful pastor of the church from 1807 to 1847, was a firm believer in this doctrine. His only remaining child, sister Lizzie Boggs, of Raton, New Mexico, can bear witness to this statement. In his day the doctrine was not especially assailed, and hence was not contended for in the way of argument as it has been since. Elder Philander Hartwell, who was pastor of this church for the twenty-five years preceding his death, and who began his pastorate about 1852, was also a firm believer in this doctrine. Elder Wm. J. Purington, who succeeded him and was pastor here for fifteen years, until his departure from this life, was a very firm believer in this principle of doctrine; he passed away from earth ten years ago. As the present pastor of this church, we want to say that while the former pastors were more able to present this doctrine clearly and forcibly than we are able to do, none of them believed it more positively than ourself.

Thus we have tried to answer the questions of brother Caudle, and hope that our reply may prove satisfactory to him, and at the same time interesting to our readers in general. It is not our

purpose here to enter into any discussion of the doctrine, but simply to present the information desired with regard to the position of this church with regard to this matter.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

HEBREWS IX. 27.

BROTHER BEEBE:—If not too much trouble, I would like to read your views on Hebrews ix. 27. If death is the penalty of the law, how could it precede judgment? This may seem to show weakness in me, which I know is so, but please excuse.

Yours in bonds of love,

JOHN NOSLER.

WINTERSETT, Iowa, Oct. 27, 1861.

REPLY.

The text reads thus: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." The sentence is not perfect without the next verse, as follows: "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation."

If we consider the general mortality of the human family to be here intended, we should understand the demise or death of our earthly bodies, which is clearly an appointment of God. As he said to man, "For in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." And again: "For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Regarding the execution of this sentence, as the penalty of the law of God, there was clearly a judgment preceding the execution of the penalty. And Paul says, Rom. v. 17, 18, "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation." Thus we see that the infliction of death is the execution of judgment, and this judgment by the stern decree of God has become an appointment, extending to men, and to all men, as death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. This judgment however passed on all men from the date of the first transgression, "In the day," he ate of the forbidden fruit. But the Scriptures speak of a *judgment to come.* By which however we do not understand that God has not already adjudicated the case of all the human family, and fixed their everlasting destiny, for he is of one mind, and none can turn him. But the term judgment, in its scriptural sense, as relating to God's judgments, means the execution of the penalties of his law. Hence we read, He that believeth not is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him; and of some at least it is written, "Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not." Hence when the inspired writers speak of a judgment that shall take place after the death of our mortal bodies, we understand the execution of the righteous decrees of the eternal Judge, even as the decree of God now stands and hath forever stood. We cannot, without disparaging thoughts of God, suppose him less capable to adjudicate the state of all men before the world began, than he will be when the world shall be no more. Can we conceive that he has learned anything that he did not always know; how then could he declare the end from the beginning, which he says he has done? Nor could there possibly be any less of equity, righteousness, or purity in his decisions maturely existing in his mind before, than subsequently to the existence of this world.

Paul speaks of an appointed day, when

God will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath appointed; but he also tells us that this judgment shall be according to my gospel. Not on some new plan, law, or the development of something new to him. The judgment of all, both saints and sinners, is recorded in the Scriptures, just as it shall be executed. The wicked shall receive the judgment now in store for them, when God shall turn them into hell with the nations which know him not, and the saints shall also receive the judgments or what God has already decreed for them, when they shall be raised up from the dead in incorruption to be forever with the Lord.

But although we have thus written our views on the subject of the final judgment of the last day, we cannot understand the text proposed by our brother to be treating on the subject. The whole connection shows the inspired writer engaged in illustrating the Mediatorial work of our Lord Jesus Christ as the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, and in regard to how he was once offered to bear the sins of many. Now if brother Nosler will observe the figure used in the tenth and eleventh verses of this chapter, he will, if we mistake not, find the key to this text. "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." The law of testaments then in requiring the testator's death to give validity to the will, recognizes the appointment unto men once to die, and once dying is sufficient to make his will or testament perfectly valid. So Christ was once offered, not as Moses required the frequent offering of sacrifices, and shedding of blood under the Levitical priesthood, but he was once offered to bear the sins of many. How? As it is appointed unto men once to die, in order that their testament shall have force. Well, when a man has made his last will and testament, the document remains without strength until he, the testator, is dead. Then the testament is brought into the proper court for judgment, and upon the establishment of the facts which prove first that this is the last will and testament of the testator, and that the testator is dead, judgment is legally pronounced, the testament is judged, recognized and comes in full force. So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many. Justice and law received the offering, and acknowledge the force and validity of the will, and therefore the heirs identified in his testament look for the complete execution of the will of the testator. And as the will of the testator in this testament was to bear the sins of many, and to put away their sins by the sacrifice of himself, this will is established beyond all controversy, and therefore to the saints, for none others are looking for him to appear in the glory of his resurrection, and triumph over death, hell and sin, nor do they look in vain, for unto them he shall appear the second time, but not with all our sins laying upon him, and law and justice still demanding the payment, for having put away sin, and all the sins which he bore, and all the iniquities of his people which were laid on him, he shall appear without sin, unto salvation. He dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. He has the keys of death and hell. To them who look for him he shall appear, it cannot be otherwise, and they shall see him as he is, holy, harmless, separate from sinners, and higher than the heavens; and what is more wonderful, is

that when he shall appear, they shall be like him, for whom Jehovah did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. The enraptured psalmist could sing, and so can all who are looking for him, and who love his appearing, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness."

"O glorious hour! O blest abode!
I shall be near and like my God;
And flesh and sense no more control
The rising pleasures of my soul.

My flesh shall slumber in the ground,
'Till the last trumpet's joyful sound,
Then burst her bands in sweet surprise,
And in my Savior's image rise."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., November 1, 1861.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Welsh Tract, New Castle Co., Delaware, May 25th, 26th and 27th, 1904, to the several associations and meetings with which she corresponds, Greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—With sincere pleasure we embrace this opportunity to address you in this our annual letter, and also with gratitude to our dear heavenly Father, who has granted us the high privilege to meet again in an associate capacity, and that we have had some evidence of his presence with us, that our hearts have been made to feel "it is good for us to be here." Your ministers have come to us with "their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace," and we have seen how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that preach the gospel, that bring glad tidings of good things. We wish a continuance of the correspondence that has existed between us and you for so long, greatly to our profit and comfort. Our desire is that the peace of Zion may be preserved, that nothing shall ever arise to disturb that peace.

Our next session is to be held with the church at Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa., to commence on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, 1905, when and where we hope to meet and greet your ministers and messengers again.

J. G. EUBANKS, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the First Hopewell Church, to the associations, corresponding meetings and churches with whom we correspond, sends greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—The eternal love and unfailing promises of God have brought us together to unite in praise and thanksgiving for the riches of his grace and abundant blessings bestowed upon us, in permitting your ministers to come to us laden with the precious fruits of the Spirit, proclaiming the gospel of the Son of God for our comfort and edification in the truth. We have received your messengers with Minutes of your meetings, containing expressions of love and fellowship for the household of faith, with evidences that you continue steadfast in the truth and are proclaiming the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the only way of life and salvation.

Since we last addressed you the churches of this Association have bowed to the will of God, and laid in the silent tomb loved brethren whose long and faithful lives in the church and in all the walks of life called forth the appropriate words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord." The additions reported from our churches, although few in number, inspire us to

praise and thanksgiving to God, who remembereth Zion and fulfills his promise to her in his time.

Our next meeting is appointed to be held with the Kingwood church, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., New Jersey, to commence on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1905, at 10 o'clock a. m., when we hope to receive your Minutes and messengers in the love and fellowship of the gospel.

F. A. CHICK, Moderator.

ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

The Warwick Association of Old School Baptist churches, in session with the Warwick Church, June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1904, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Since we last addressed you the past year records many sad bereavements in the decease of strong and substantial members of our churches. When it seemed we could least spare them they were called hence. But we have in remembrance infallible proof of God's goodness and mercy to us throughout the year. Our churches are in peace and order; no discord or strife exists; all are of one mind, have all things in common, and are in unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. How good and pleasant it is to thus dwell! Your ministers and messengers have come to this meeting prepared of the Lord, we believe, to deliver messages of comfort and assurance that the Lord is for us, and none can therefore be against us. We earnestly desire the continuance of your correspondence and the visits of your messengers.

For particulars of this meeting we refer you to our Minutes.

In love and fellowship.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—Friday, April 15th, 1904, at her home near Hopewell, N. J., **Mrs. Martha M. Vannoy,** aged 71 years and 6 months. She had been a sufferer from weakness of the heart, and other causes, for several years, and for two or three years had been able but seldom to attend the meetings of the church to which she belonged, at Hopewell. The end came rather suddenly to the family. Her maiden name was Hunt. She was married to our brother, Andrew Vannoy, about fifty-one years ago. He preceded her to the home above, as we have full evidence to believe, about seven years ago. She was baptized by the late Elder Philander Hartwell, fifty-one years ago, in the fellowship of the First Hopewell church, in which fellowship she has lived ever since. She leaves eight children, several of whom are members of the church to which their mother belonged. Two sisters also remain out of a large family of sons and daughters.

The funeral service was held on Tuesday, April 19th, at the meeting-house in Hopewell, where the presence of many friends testified to the love and respect in which she was held throughout all this community. The text used was in 2 Tim. iv. 6-8. We can but say that this Scripture was appropriate, as all her brethren can testify. All her children were present at the funeral service except one, the youngest daughter, Mrs. Adra Rogers, who has been in England for nearly the past two years. Her mother was very dear to her, and it was a great grief to her that she could not be present at the last sad rites.

To this we can but add that sister Vannoy has always been a firm Old School Baptist in her faith, and a steadfast believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. She loved her church and its meetings, and the preaching of the word, and the association of her kindred in Christ, and the name of the blessed Redeemer was always in her lips. We were favored to know her for the past thirty-five years, and were never in her company long that she did not say something about the name that was so dear to her. She loved the songs of the sanctuary, and to hear the word of God read was her consolation. During the past two or three years we have called to see her as often as we could, and always came away with the feeling that her spiritual life was much more manifest in faith, and in hope and love through her affliction, than it can ever be in the time of prosperity. She lived a life of trust. Her presence was always welcome to all the brethren that knew her, and when she could not attend the sanctuary her presence was missed, and we all knew that there was some good reason for her absence. Much of her life she was oppressed with doubt and questioning, not with regard to the truth, or to the power of the salvation that is in God, but with regard to her own interest there. A favorite hymn with her was the one beginning,

"When thou, my righteous Judge, shalt come." Yet in the main she would show that she did rest in the salvation of God, notwithstanding the questionings which arose out of her view of the great unworthiness which she felt. We all do miss her from our meetings and from our daily associations together. May the blessing of God abide with her family, with the one dear daughter who cared for her mother especially, during the past few years, and with the church.—ED.

SISTER **Joanna Corwin V. Wilkison** departed this life at her home, 117 West Main St., Middletown, N. Y., June 2nd, 1904, aged 64 years, 8 months and 21 days. She was the widow of James A. Wilkison, and a daughter of George S. F. and Harriet Newell Corwin Vail, and was the last of a family of seven sisters. She is survived by three children: Lewis Wilkison, of New Haven, Conn., Mrs. Jennie Knickerbocker, and Miss Bessie F., of Middletown. Sister Wilkison united with the Middletown & Wallkill Church June 14th, 1885, and was baptized by the late Elder Benton Jenkins. She was faithful in the discharge of every duty to the church, and was much beloved and honored for the truth's sake. During her last illness, which was of more than two years duration, her mind was upon heavenly things; it was inspiring to visit her. She was perfectly resigned to God's will concerning her, ever praising him for his goodness and mercy and sustaining grace. Not one murmur was ever heard from her. Her faith and hope entered into that within the vail, therefore death had no sting to her. Most of her life was filled with clouds and darkness, trials and crosses, but she endured until the end, firmly believing all her sorrows were appointed unto her, and with meekness she drank of the cup of which Jesus said his followers must drink, and at last entered into the glory of God without the glass between. While we miss her, we rejoice for her that her sufferings, which were beyond description, are over, and that she has entered into the rest and peace prepared for her by the Savior of sinners.

The writer tried to speak at the funeral, which was held in the church of her membership, using the subject of the storm and the calm, as recorded in the fourth chapter of Mark, at her request. May the Lord comfort the children and reconcile the church to this dispensation of his providence.

H. C. KER.

Daniel F. Winfield died at the State Hospital for the insane at Middletown, N. Y., Jan. 23rd, 1904, of general debility and old age, aged 76 years. He was a member of the Middletown & Wallkill Old School Baptist Church, was baptized by Elder Benton Jenkins, June, 1891.

HATTIE A. WINFIELD.

OUR baby girl, **Christean,** was born Oct. 27th, 1903, and died Jan. 6th, 1904, was buried on Saturday, the 9th. Elder H. C. Ker, of Middletown, N. Y., preached the sermon at our home at Shohola, Pike Co., Pa. God gave her to us and he has taken her away. We desire to be reconciled to his will.

Her father, HUGH McKEAN.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO AN APPEAL OF BRETHREN TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$950 65
Sallie Lowe, Md., $1.00; W. H. Wicks, Pa., $1.50; Nancy Stathers, W. Va., $1.00.—Total	3 50
Total to date	$954 15

MEETINGS.

A TWO days meeting has been appointed to be held with the Harford church, Harford Co., Md., commencing at ten o'clock on Saturday before the fifth Sunday in July, 1904. A cordial invitation is extended. Those coming by way of Baltimore take train which leaves North Avenue at 3:30 p. m. on Friday before, for Long Green or Forest Hill. Those coming from the north take train that leaves York at 2 p. m. for Forest Hill.

NATHAN GRAFTON, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Lackawanna Co., Pa., nothing preventing, will hold a two days meeting on Wednesday and Thursday, between the second and third Sundays in August, 1904. Trains on Delaware & Hudson and Ontario & Western railroads will be met on Tuesday at Olyphant, Pa. Those coming on D., L. & W. R. R. will come to Glenburn, Pa., and come on stage one mile to my place. An invitation is extended to all.

D. M. VAIL.

PEACE VALLEY Association will meet this year, the Lord willing, with the church in Blum, on Saturday before the third Sunday in August, and continue the two following days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to come and be with us.

W. L. ROGERS, Pastor.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet, the Lord willing, on Friday, Sept. 2nd, 1904, with Mt. Zion church, six miles east of Astoria, Fulton Co., Ill., on the St. Louis branch of the C., B. & Q. R. R., and continue the two following days. All trains will be met at Astoria during the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, especially our ministers.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing on Friday, Sept. 2nd, 1904, and continuing three days. We shall gladly welcome all who desire to come. Those coming will be met at the North Berwick railroad depot on Thursday before the time appointed for our yearly conference.

FRED. W. KEENE.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 72. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1904. NO. 15.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOWING TO THE FLESH, AND SOWING TO THE SPIRIT.

(Gal. vi. 7, 8.)

SOWING to the flesh is seeking the gratification of our natural or fleshly desires in what we do, whether these desires pertain to the mere animal propensities of our nature, or to the more exalted qualities of the mind and heart. When we sow wheat we are looking forward to what we shall receive as the result and reward of that work. So when we do something with a view to our own advantage in a worldly sense, we are said to be sowing to the flesh.

The apostle uses this figure of sowing and reaping with reference only to the manifested people of God. He is talking only to and of those who have been made alive spiritually; those who have been born both of the flesh and of the Spirit, and so are partakers of both natures. A natural man is not spoken of as one who may sow either to the flesh or the Spirit, for all he does or can do is from a fleshly motive. He is dead spiritually, not having spiritual life, and his works of a religious nature are only "dead works." He cannot sow to the Spirit, and the apostle speaks of living souls, and not of those who are dead, as sowing to the flesh.

Those who can and do sow to the flesh are those who also can experience a sowing to the Spirit. For this is all an experience, through which we are brought to know the wonderful workmanship of God. Those who can sow to the flesh must be those who know the fruit of that sowing to be corruption. The natural man does not know these worldly things as corrupt, but as the highest kind of good for him. It is only those upon whom the Spirit of the Lord has blown who know and realize that all flesh withers like the grass, and all the glory of man fades as the flower of grass, (Isaiah xl. 7,) only a living soul who knows the goodness of spiritual things, can reap corruption from fleshly works.

To seek the honor and glory of God in what we do is to sow to the Spirit. This the natural man cannot do, for he knoweth not the things of the Spirit, and this the spiritual man can only do by the grace of God, and by the power of the Spirit working in him mightily. It is as impossible for a natural man to reap cor-

ruption in his experience as it is for him to sow to the Spirit and reap life everlasting. What a wonderful work that is which must be wrought in a poor sinner's heart before he can say truthfully, "Behold, I am vile," "I abhor myself." What a divine and holy principle that must be which causes one to see that in him, that is, in his flesh, there dwells no good thing, and that in his best state he is altogether vanity. This is the man who hears with solemn concern, and who well knows that God is not mocked. There can be no turning aside by any of his people from the way of holiness, and from the truth of God's salvation, without an experience of pain. The chastisement will surely be felt for every transgression. It is as sure under the gospel as it was under the law of Moses, but in a different way. The living member of the natural body will feel pain if it touches the fire. So a living member of the body of Christ cannot feel a movement of sin without pain. A conscience made tender in the fear of the Lord is sure to suffer from the touch of sin. Such a conscience is an unspeakable blessing.

This is the cause of so much suffering on the part of the Lord's children. A sinful nature, a carnal mind, a deceitful heart, what a constant source and cause of sorrow these are. How they make the poor soul cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But the answer will come from time to time with soothing power: "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." There is, through the Spirit, a constant desire on the part of the new creature to be delivered from the bondage of corruption. (Romans viii. 21.) It is only a living soul that feels this nature of ours to be a "bondage of corruption."

If one can sow to the flesh without reaping corruption, what evidence is there of divine life in him? If one can enjoy and be satisfied with the vanities and frivolities of this world; if one can indulge the vain "desires of the flesh and the mind" with no check of conscience; if one can seek his own advantage in what he does, even in religious work, with no thought for others; if one can walk in evil ways and seek to cover his work from human eyes, but feels no grief for it in the sight of God; in a word, if one, while professing to be a follower of Jesus, is at rest and satisfied with the sinful and flesh-pleasing things of the world, reaping no corruption in a sad and sorrowful heart, that man is not alive unto God, but is dead in sin while falsely professing to be a christian.

I well know the power of temptation upon a vile heart, and the weakness of the flesh, and I know that a child of God may go far astray, not only in thought and word, but also in deed; and I know how often the child of God is at the ends of the earth, and ready to give up all hope, crying with a last gasp, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." But I know that the evils of our nature must cause sorrow and self-loathing in a quickened soul, and I know that a living soul cannot go astray from the truth with impunity, for "God is not mocked." While a man of God, if left to himself, will surely sow to the flesh, I know that he will as surely reap corruption.

What shall we think of the religious professions of that man who feels at rest and at home in the vanities of the world? Can he be esteemed as a follower of Jesus? What kind of enjoyment of the world did the dear Savior have while here? His "days were spent with grief

and his years with sighing." He was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" because of our sins which he bore, and for which he died, and all the waves of God's wrath went over him. And what shall we think of one who professes a hope that Jesus suffered untold anguish for his sins in order to deliver him from them, and yet who openly declares himself to be in love with the vanities and gayeties of the world, and determines to seek out and obtain as much of the world as he can? We know that this is just what our vile nature would lead us all to do if we were left to be led by it. But we know that in the case of the dear people of God, when they turn away from the truth in word or practice, they shall reap corruption to such an extent as is necessary to sicken them of the world, and cause them to "look again toward God's holy temple."

How many poor souls are writing bitter things against themselves, and ready to give up all hope, because they see only evil in themselves, and feel that because of that evil they are justly cut off from the enjoyment of the world, having no comfort in this life, and, they fear, no good hope of a life to come, when this very condition is one of the clearest evidences that they, even now, have everlasting life, and are following Jesus. They are following in the path of sorrow which he trod, and are coming daily into the fellowship of his sufferings. They are not seeking the good things of this world, though they often fear that it is a just judgment of God upon them that they cannot be satisfied with these worldly good things even when they have them. But the world cannot satisfy the hungerings and thirstings of living souls. They want the favor of God and the love of Jesus, and his love felt in our poor hearts is the best evidence that his love and favor are ours.

Many times I have been asked, "Do you think it is wrong to dance?" A dear child who is, I believe, a child of God, writes me: "Do you think it wrong for young people to dance? Of course if one's heart is on nobler and better things he will not care to dance, at least that is the way I feel. I really do not care much for it, because nothing seems to be gained from having done it." This dear young girl answers her own question. I could not say there is a sin in the act of dancing. If any one really wants to dance I would raise no objection, if the society is good. But if that one is a professed christian I might ask a few questions. Will one who is really in the path of sorrow that Jesus trod feel like joining in the dance of those who make merry? When one is weighed down with a feeling of the sinfulness of his heart, will he feel like dancing with worldly minded people? When the sweet sense of forgiving love fills his soul with a solemn joy and peace, will he seek the vain society of the world, and feel at home with them in the dance? But though we may not feel a wish to join in the vain and trifling amusements of the world, and though we may have been graciously kept in a great measure from temptations to do things that are evil, yet we wonder, and at times are dismayed to find ourselves reproved by the words, "Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not." We often feel that we have not even one thought that is not sinfully selfish. O how abundantly we are forced to reap corruption as we look over our life from time to time. But as we thus reap to our sorrow we are crying in our spirits unto God; we are seeking his face sorrowing; we are looking long-

ingly upon Zion; we are longing for the company of the saints; we are asking of the dear Redeemer where he feeds, and where he causes his flock to rest at noon; we are confessing before him all our sins and sinfulness, and breathing out our prayers for his mercy, and that we might feel again the joys of his salvation, and above all, that he would crucify our flesh, and enable us to do what we do with an eye single to his glory. We little thought that in all this experience we were sowing to the Spirit. But right here we find ourselves reaping life everlasting; reaping the fruit of the Spirit; reaping love and joy and peace and long-suffering, and all the rich cluster of the fruit of the Spirit; filling our bosoms with the precious sheaves as we reap and bind them, and tasting with inexpressible comfort the sweet and healthful fruit.

We had not thought we were sowing to the Spirit; we had tried so often to do so, but could do nothing good, nothing deserving God's favor; we could only weep and cry. But here was the sowing. We must sow in tears. It was Christ in us that brought us into this experience. It is he that works in us, and we do not know it until we reap. We cannot see him coming in his work, but we see the result. We cannot see the face of God as he comes in his salvation to show us his glory, but we see his hinder parts, and behold the glory of the rainbow after the storm has gone by.

We sow in the fall. The day of sowing may be dark and stormy, and then comes the winter before the harvest. But the changes come quickly in spiritual things. The winter seems long, but it may be but as a moment. We do not wait four months for the harvest; it is at hand. While we are yet looking for long days of winter, suddenly, to our surprise and joy, our Beloved tells us that the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, and we wonder and rejoice to find the spring in our heart, and to see the flowers on the earth, and hear the singing of birds and the voice of the turtle dove. We do not know that spring has come till Jesus tells us. Then we know that we were sowing to the Spirit in that sorrowful time, sowing in tears, as Jesus did when he went forth under the law, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and we are coming again with him in his finished work in the gospel and in his glory, and we reap with him in joy.

Now we can begin to understand how "if any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him." We felt the love of the world in our fleshly heart, and when we followed after that love we came into a region of death. No love of God was felt while we were thus swallowed up in the world, living after the flesh, but thanks be unto God that we felt the crucifying of the flesh; "crucified with Christ." Then came the winter, the darkness, the coldness, the death; but thank God we were given life to feel the winter, the death. Then we proved that in the Spirit we loved not the world. Then we knew that all our self-seeking all our selfish longings and efforts, al our fleshly ambitions, all our seekir great things for ourselves in religio work, had resulted only in making us more and more the corruption of fleshly nature.

Now the cross is our boast; we ca glory in any work or merit or pow our own, but only in the cross of ("by whom the world is crucified u and we unto the world."

We constantly feel convicted ing to the flesh, even in much th

in regard to the things of the kingdom, of seeking great things for ourselves, and we feel condemned as we reap the corruption that results. We take all the blame to ourselves, even when we see and feel that we have no power in ourselves to overcome that fleshly principle. But when we have sown to the Spirit and are graciously privileged to reap of the blessed fruits, we do not, cannot, take the praise to ourselves, but ascribe it all unto the Lord. By the grace of God alone have we been kept from acting out our vain and selfish propensities, and enabled to have an eye single to the glory of God in what we do. We realize that there is selfishness and sinfulness in our acts, except as faith prevails and shows us that Jesus is our life and righteousness, and that only in him can we appear before God.

It is not by a voluntary work of ours that we sow to the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit, and work out our own salvation, but it is by the cross of Christ, by being crucified to the world, by having our own will thwarted, and the will of God wrought in us, "who worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure." And so it is only in the cross of Christ that we can glory, and not in any power or goodness of the flesh. The grace of God is all our dependence and all our hope. The Galatian churches had in a measure removed from him who had called them into the grace of Christ unto another gospel, which was not another, but a perversion of the gospel of Christ. They were sowing to the flesh in their religious work, seeking to be justified by the law. They "observed days and months and times and years," and other beggarly elements of the legal world, whereunto they were once in bondage, and their fleshly natures desired that bondage again. Having begun in the Spirit, they foolishly thought to be made perfect by the flesh. They were fallen from grace, and were seeking to exalt fleshly pride. It pleases the flesh to think we can do something for ourselves, and sowing to the flesh is a self-pleasing work. It is a pleasant, cheerful, morning when we sow to the flesh, and our hopes are bright. But what we sow is corrupt seed, and the soil in which the seed falls is corrupt, and therefore when the reaping time comes, as it surely will, we shall have only corruption to reap. Reaping does not make the harvest ours, it only puts us in possession of it. In nature we may let the field go unreaped if it does not suit us, but not so in this; the reaping must be done. "Whatsoever a man [of God] soweth, that shall he also reap," and that is a dark day when we reap of the flesh. It was sown on a bright day with self-confidence and boasting; it shall be reaped on a dark and cloudy day with affliction, tears and self-loathing. But when we sow to the Spirit it is in tears on a cloudy and dark day, with affliction of soul and sorrow of heart. The reaping, however, of this spiritual harvest is on a bright day, and with joy and peace and heavenly comfort, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May 28, 1904.

LAURELVILLE, Ohio, June 5, 1904.

ELDER G. N. TUSING—DEAR PASTOR:—I have been wanting to write to you for about a month, but when I had time, which was so very seldom, I was in darkness, and when I felt like writing I had

not time. I do not see what use it is that I should write, but it seems a relief sometimes when I can express the thoughts of my heart. If I know my mind, nothing affords me more pleasure than spiritual converse with the children of the living God. If I were only so situated in worldly matters I would try to be with them the most of my time. I tried to get a chance to tell you at our meeting how I enjoyed the sermon by Elder Waddle, at Laurelville, the Sunday before; I thought it was the best that I ever heard from his lips. He mentioned about the children of Israel traveling from Egypt to the promised land, and since then I have had what I hope were spiritual thoughts on the subject. I will try to give you some of them in a brief way. I know that you can tell the story so much better than I, that I almost fear to undertake it, but will try. First. The children of Israel were not natives of Egypt, but like spiritual Israel of which they were a type, placed themselves there. This is what we all often do when left to ourselves; yet it was God's will concerning them. God grant that we may not be left to our own choice. They were the children of Israel, God's chosen nation, when they went down into Egypt, (darkness) they were God's while there, and they were his when he took them by the hand to lead them out. Before they came out what did they do to influence Pharaoh's mind to let them go? Nothing. When Pharaoh pursued them the mountains were on either side, the Red Sea in front, Pharaoh and his hosts (captivity) behind. What did Israel do to deliver themselves from certain death? Nothing. God divided the waters so that Israel was made to pass over dry shod, which Pharaoh essaying to do was overthrown and drowned in the depths of the sea. In the wilderness who guided them day and night? Notice, he guided them by day and by night, for night overtakes us all; but always that pillar of fire was over them. So with spiritual Israel; spiritual night overtakes them. But God was over them as well in darkness as in light; darkness is essential to make us appreciate the light. If our journey through life was all light, we would finally cease to appreciate it at its full worth. Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation. (Deut. xxxii. 15.) In the day when all was visible to them, a pillar of cloud went before them. God provided all their food and drink for their daily need, and none could hoard of the gifts of God, no matter how much he gathered. He healed their infirmities, preserved their clothing that it waxed not old. So with spiritual Israel, God supplies their every need, and covers them with his robe of righteousness. They had no road to travel, and if God had withdrawn his presence they would not have known which way to go. They had many wars with the tribes of the wilderness, but God conquered their enemies. Finally after forty years wandering in the wilderness, Moses (law) died, and Joshua (the Lord, the Savior,) led them across the river Jordan; they then inhabited a land "flowing with milk and honey," but there were many different tribes to be driven out. So it is with the church, some tribe always rising up to dispute her possession of the land, but God always fights her battles for her when she goes forth in his name, and takes none of the golden wedges or the garments of her enemies. The spies which were sent over into Canaan brought back the report that while it flowed with milk and honey, there were giants there. I think that some of the spies who are re-

porting of the spiritual land of Canaan fail to tell the children that there are giants there, but wish them to think that all is smooth sailing. Caleb and Joshua were true witnesses, saying that although the land is full of the different tribes, "they are bread for us: their defense is departed from them." We think that the children should be told that though there are giants in the land God is able and will vanquish the foes, and that life is a continual warfare.

This is very imperfect, and I doubt if you find it worth reading; much that I thought on the subject at the time is gone, and does not come back to me. I wish so very much that you could be with us at our meeting next Saturday. It seems so long between meetings, and when meetings do come they are so brief. Please answer, or get some one of the family to write to me. Tell them that you think there is a poor, weak, little mortal down here that needs comfort and encouragement, and that they might thus help to strengthen a weak worm. You promised to send me your experience of grace, let it be forthcoming, and I will try in my weak, faltering way to give you my grounds for hope, if indeed I have any.

Do with this letter as you think best; if you think there is any food in it for any child of grace that you know, give it to him. Remember the poorest, weakest, most unworthy one of your flock at the throne of grace.

With love unfeigned, I am very unworthily your brother, I hope, in Christ,

GEO. W. HARTSOUGH.

P. S.—I am very happy to tell you that my wife's sister was led down into the liquid grave by Elder Peters to-day. Thus another mind is freed of one great burden.

"O how happy are they,
Who their Savior obey."

G. W. S.

ADRIAN, Mich., April 1, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—As I sit this afternoon and look out of the window I can see nothing but the gray sky, and hear the cold chilly wind as it goes moaning by, the little song birds have for the time ceased their glad carols, and so all looks gloomy, and I compare this with my own poor heart, which is so cold, and cheerless, and destitute of everything good; no singing of birds is in the land of this old tabernacle of clay, which seems so frozen. I would, but cannot pray. But how can any one dare to pray with such a cold, unfeeling heart? Yet I do believe that the Lord's little ones do pray without ceasing. They are ever calling on him for mercy, and that he would abide with them, they wait for him, they watch for him, they long for his presence with them, and as the hart panteth for the water-brooks, so their soul thirsteth after the true and living God. Shall I be one of the number to whom he will say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"? Where is my evidence? The only thing that I have left is this, I believe that I do love God and his dear people; they are all there is in this world. But when I look over my past life I see nothing but a wicked and deceitful heart manifest in it all, and then death with all its terrors comes up before me, I can but be afraid that all that I have hoped may prove but a delusion. Elder Chick, do you believe that one who has been born again fears death? We read that Jesus has conquered death, hell and the grave, if he has, why should any of his children fear them? Surely he is able to bring them off more than conquerors over every foe, and none can pluck them out of his hand. I have no

doubt of his ability to save, for his power is unlimited, and he doeth all things well.

In the removal by death of dear brother Benton L. Beebe, you have lost a good support, and it must be a great trial to you, but you are left, and we believe that the dear old SIGNS will continue as of old. Surely it has been a highly favored periodical, the Lord has raised up the fearless and gifted to send the glad tidings which the SIGNS contain, all over the land. O how many sad hearts they have gladdened and cheered on in their weary journey through life. I know how just a few words from the pen of a brother or sister will make the heart leap for joy; I speak from experience, as many others have done. They teach that Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life, the bright and morning Star, the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the valley, he is the Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace. Is he not everything to his little ones who are so fearful that they do not know him? Still they are precious in his sight, and they shall never perish.

"In ties of blood, with Zion one,
The Breaker is to glory gone;
Hath all his foes to ruin hurled,
Earth, Satan, sin, death, hell and world."

Of myself I cannot boast, but of one thing can I boast, and that is in the God of power and majesty, who declared the end from the beginning, he knoweth the way that I take, and my thoughts when they are afar off.

I cannot go to meeting, and therefore hear no preaching, but I have two sisters who live near me, and who often visit me, both are sound in the doctrine of salvation by grace. One of them had most wonderful exercises of mind in her experience, and has a good understanding of the Scriptures, and it is good to hear her talk, the other says she has no experience that she dare claim, yet little as it seems, she would not exchange it for all the gold of Ophir, and her talk is very sweet to me, she is like a little child at our feet, with tears after running down her cheeks. So with these two sisters and the dear old SIGNS, I am not left comfortless. I have written of them because of the different ways in which they have been brought, yet both by the same Spirit. So I believe the Lord leads his people, some of them in a mild and gentle manner, so that they can hardly tell how or where the change came, while others must pass through deep waters, not eating or sleeping because of the feeling sense of their awful condition. I cannot tell why it is so, only that it seems good in the sight of God, and he cannot err or be unkind, and whatever he does is right. I wish to be reconciled to all his dealings with me whatever they may be, but it is hard to say, "Thy will be done," when sick and afflicted. Two years ago I had "la grippe," and it left me an invalid for life, and sometimes it is very hard to bear. I think of dear Mary Parker, and then feel that I ought to be content.

Dear brother Chick, I trust that you may long be spared to fill the place which you now occupy, and may he who is able keep you from falling, is my prayer.

I am lingering on the threshold,
O God, why do I wait?
The shadows fast are lengthening,
Life's sun is nearly set.
I am nearing the dark river,
Why linger on its shore?
O Lord, my trust is all in thee,
And now what wait I for?

I pass my days in sorrow,
The nights are dark and lone,
The world has lost its every charm,
O why is life prolonged?

What vantage for a few short years
To stay and suffer here?
They are but vanity and smoke,
Like mists they disappear.

But still with patience will I wait
Until my change shall come,
And if perchance I am his child,
Will be with Christ at home.
At home forever with the Lord,
In that bright, glorious world,
With streets of gold, and gates of pearl,
And glories all untold.

I remain your sister in a precious hope,

(MRS.) H. TUTTLE.

[OUR sister, in the above good letter, asks us, Do you believe that one who is born of God fears death? In reply we can but say that all whom we have known, who have spoken to us about the matter at all, have confessed that it was so with themselves, and very many have doubted whether they were born of God at all upon this very ground. We frankly confess that it is so with us, but it is the pain, the suffering, the conflict with disease, more then the thought of death itself; we all dread suffering. Death could appear none other than our most dreaded foe were it not for the resurrection of the blessed Lord with glorious victory over it. It is only when and as we see Jesus the Conqueror that we are able to say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" We once heard the fear which the children of God still have of death illustrated in this way: the child who has been stung by a bee will still dread the bee, even though the father has captured the bee and taken away its sting, and tells the child so. Our heavenly Father has taken away, in the victory of Jesus Christ, the sting of death, and has told his little children so, and yet they, in their weakness, still dread the presence of death, even as the child would the bee. As, however, faith in the father might grow strong enough in the child, so that he would not shrink at the touch of the bee, so God at times gives to his children such strong and living faith that they can rejoice even in the hour of death, and cry, "Victory," and "O death, where is thy sting?" But we do not need dying grace until that solemn hour shall come, and it is sure that if grace has been ministered to us sufficient for our daily support in life, that grace will not fail us in the hour when death shall approach. May we all feel the comfort of this assurance.—ED.]

MARENGO, Ohio, June 27, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I often feel that I would love to tell you all how much I enjoy reading your precious communications. The glorious truth and doctrine is portrayed in such plainness and firmness, yet in all simplicity and kindness, and with the precious experiences of the many dear writers, often fill my heart with loving fellowship to all the poor and afflicted of the dear household of faith; thus I am often comforted and strengthened by your sweet testimonies of the goodness and mercies of the Lord. Surely, dear ones, you are highly favored of the Lord in being blessed with that precious gift, "the pen of a ready writer," to rightly divide the word of truth, and to tell the sweet story of Jesus to the comfort and edification of the dear family of God, and to the praise and glory of him who has hid these things from the world and revealed them unto you. O may you all continue to thus speak often, for the dear old SIGNS is a precious medium by which many receive all their preaching, and there are so many "lo heres and lo theres" even among those

of like precious faith, that it surely becomes each one to watch and pray and stand firm, and "ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein." "Blessed are they who know the joyful sound." Your unworthy writer often wonders if I indeed know the joyful sound. O, I feel so sinful, and my proneness to evil, my shortcomings and wanderings from God cause me many doubts and fears, and often I feel to be without hope of being included in that covenant of grace, and thus cannot claim any kinship to the dear children of God. Yes, I am so void and barren of the fruits of the Spirit, and in thus viewing my soul's depravity, so poor and needy, lacking all the graces of a true disciple of Jesus. Yet somehow there are times I am made to look away from self, above the temptations and sorrows of earth, and sweetly meditate upon the atoning blood and righteousness of Christ and his sufferings, my hope is renewed, my faith strengthened, and somehow a calmness fills my tempest-tossed soul, and I feel glad that the Lord has given me a heart to love his truth, to hope in his mercy, to love his people, to rejoice in the sweet gospel, and to desire the welfare of Zion, and surely if I am the recipient of these heavenly blessings I should praise the name of the Lord, for it is from his hand alone that I enjoy all these rich bounties, and O are they not of far more value to me than all the gold of Ophir, or the cattle of a thousand hills, yea, or all that this world can give? Truly the Lord has done great things for us, and his all-seeing eye is ever watching over his children wherever they are, and his power and grace uphold them through all their weary journey in this unfriendly world. What a precious promise he has given, he will never leave nor forsake his people; he provides all things for their comfort; his wisdom comprehended the end from the beginning, and his power is sufficient to bring all his wisdom to pass; he works all things after the counsel of his own will; there is no such thing as chance or emergency with him, for as he has purposed it, so shall it be, and as he thought, so shall it come to pass. O how great is our God, great in power, mercy and love, and yet how little we comprehend of his goodness and greatness, but, dear ones, it is a blessed heritage if indeed we know anything spiritually relating to the Lord and his glory and our salvation, but be it ever so little, that little is infinitely precious, and it is all the gift of the Spirit of God, and without it we could not know the things of God, and while we feel it is in a very small measure we have attained to the knowledge of divine things, O how can it be otherwise when the riches of Christ are unsearchable? How weak are all our efforts to praise him; truly the more we behold of the beauty of the Lord, and of his tender mercies and infinite power and glory in all things, the more we feel and see how exceeding sinful we are by nature, and how we desire to be clothed in the beautiful garments of his righteousness and adorned with the graces of his Spirit. But while we struggle on through this life of trials and conflicts, feeling so poor and helpless, we feel to look to the Lord and his never-failing promise, for he says, "Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." What a precious promise indeed; O may he cause us to put our trust in him, for he is rich in mercy; we are weak, but he is mighty; we hope in his everlasting love, and may his all-sufficient grace lead and guide us all to the end.

I have copied the inclosed lines, which

I would like to see published in the SIGNS. I do not know who wrote them, as there was no name with them.

I have several volumes of old SIGNS, as my grandparents took them for many years, and I treasure them and often re-read them with joy in the thought that the same truths are yet loved and earnestly contended for. May you, dear brethren, be given grace to speak forth those precious truths for many years to the comfort of the saints and glory of the good old cause.

With love to all, I am yours unworthily,

BELLE GORSUCH.

SIN.

"O LORD, subdue this hateful monster, sin,
Which doth so tear my restless heart within.
I cannot check its black Satanic power;
It works from day to day, from hour to hour.
Thou holy, bleeding Lamb, I come to thee;
No other power, I know, can set me free;
No other balm can ease the deadly smart,
Or cure the ulcers of my sin-sick heart.
To thee, the good Physician, I would come,
Tell my complaints, and be no longer dumb.
Hast thou not said thou wilt not turn away
The needy soul who at thy feet would stay?

No fancied malady I bring to thee,
For well thou know'st I'm full of leprosy;
No spot is clean in this vile, carnal heart,
For sin has tainted it in every part.
I sometimes hope I have a heart within
Which cleaves to thee and hates this deadly sin;
But ah, it meets me every step I go,
And often plunges me in bitter woe.

Two armies in my soul I daily find;
Each to its sovereign leader is inclined:
The new man with his graces, loves my Lord,
And always yields obedience to his word.
The old man in my flesh with cruel power
Assails my better feelings every hour.
This makes a conflict and a bitter strife,
A constant warfare each hour of my life.

Sometimes I feel my sin was put away,
Atoned for on the cross, on that great day
When Zion's sins were on her Surety laid,
And all her dreadful debt in blood was paid.
Then faith can triumph in my risen King,
Adore his name, and his sweet praises sing,
Desire his holy precepts to obey,
And run with patience in the narrow way.
But soon, alas, my wretched unbelief,
That infidel, of all my foes the chief,
Will question all, will reason, and will pry
Into those things for reason's sphere too high,
Object and stumble at the truth of God,
And bring upon my soul a smarting rod.

Sometimes sweet love my spirit will renew,
And heavenly grace all evil will subdue.
Then I my precious Savior can adore,
And long to see his face and sin no more.
Love to his people in my breast will glow,
Yea, every one who does my Savior know,
Is to my heart most dear; I love them all—
His chosen sheep and lambs—however small.
But O, when Satan stirs up hateful pride,
And discord rages sore on every side,
Strife and contention quench love's glowing flame,
And plunge the sinful child in guilt and shame.

Lord, check these tumults in thy church below;
Let thy pure love in every bosom glow;
Make thy dear children live in love and peace,
And bid this bitter strife and discord cease.

Humility will bring me to thy feet,
And make me glad to take the lowest seat;
Let others thrust me down, and never care,
But feel my proper place is to be there.

But soon again self-love and hateful pride,
In thought or word or deed, will start aside;
Troubles will then press heavy on the mind,
And I no comfort in the Lord can find.

When shall the weary conflict, Lord, be o'er,
And I be troubled with this foe no more,
But through thy merit shall the victory win,
And be forever purified from sin?"

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I herewith send you the letter of which I spoke to you. When done with the manuscript please return the letter to sister Rogers.

Your brother in hope,

J. T. ROWE.

BALTIMORE, Md., April 28, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER ROGERS:—You will no doubt be surprised to re-

ceive these lines, but I feel as though I must write to you, I hope that you will excuse me for troubling you, I have tried to keep from writing. When I think of what I am, I feel as if I am deceiving the Lord's people, and that I ought to tell them so. Now I will leave you to judge whether I am doing wrong in penning these few lines to you. My desire has been to tell you of the goodness and mercy of God to a poor, unworthy worm of the dust. At this time last year, I was confined to my bed, and suffered at times what tongue can never tell. I did not think many times, that I ever would walk again. If my life were spared I could not see why the Lord should spare it, so unprofitable, and of no good to any one, but it has pleased him in his all-wise providence to raise me from the bed of affliction, and to give me strength enough to go about the house, and who has greater reason to be thankful than I have? My desire is to walk softly before him all the days of my life, and to praise him for his many blessings bestowed upon me. Many times during my affliction I felt that I could not stand another day, but he gave me strength, or I would have sunk to rise no more. Words fail to express to you how much I enjoyed the sweet company of my dear brethren and sisters while I was sick, and since I have been able to be up, the loving-kindness of you all I will never forget. How could you all be so kind and faithful to a poor creature like me? And then I think of our dear brother, Elder Rowe, and how often he came and preached the blessed gospel to one that feels to be nothing, and less than nothing. The sermon that our dear brother preached last Sunday night was wonderful, it was meat and drink to me, and I think that it was to all our kindred in Christ. I was made to forget my poverty, and to look away from myself to him who I hope died for me. For two and a half days it seemed as if my poor soul went out in praise to his great name, although all of that time I was alone and not one word uttered. If I only could express to you what I desire, and what my mind passed through during that time, you could tell me if you think it was the Lord working in my poor heart, drawing me with the cords of his loving-kindness. During this time of peace it would come to my mind that perhaps this might only be some of my own kindling. Sometimes I would think that it was only because I had been feeling better in body, but then I knew that I did not feel nearly so well those days as I did last week. One night in particular I suffered badly with my head, and could not sleep, yet all was peace and joy within. I felt as if I could say, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters."

Last Sunday night was one long to be remembered. I wonder that our dear pastor should ever doubt. I know that no one could ever preach as he did unless called of God. How sweet his words were to us all. Yes, "how loath we are to leave the place, where Jesus shows his smiling face." Many times I get very low down and feel as if I have no hope, and I cannot think that I know anything about spiritual things, or that I have been born again, else I would not feel so miserable. There are times when these words seem to be a comfort to me, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Yes, if my poor heart does not deceive me, I do truly love them. I love to meet with them all, and to hear them tell of

their joys and sorrows. These are my dearest friends in bonds of love, yet I do not feel worthy of a place among them, and if they could see me as I see myself, they would have no love or fellowship for me. I am as prone to sin as the sparks are to fly upward. I think if I were a christian I would show it by my daily walk and conversation, which I do not. O that I had the true marks of a child of God, as I can see all of you have, then I could go on my way rejoicing, but I am so much of the time in the slough of despondency, and in doubting castle. I travel so much of my time by night, and I do not feel as I did a few days ago; I feared the fall; I feared that I could not stay in the blessed frame of mind, and that I must again come down in the valley. I feel sometimes that I would not exchange my place among the Lord's dear people for all the world calls good and great.

This hymn has come to my mind,

> "From east to west let others roam,
> And search in vain for bliss;
> My soul is satisfied at home;
> The Lord my portion is."

Christ is all and in all.

Now I ask one favor of you, when you have read this please burn it up. It looks so much like myself that I am almost ashamed to send it. I often think of dear sister Rowe, and of how kind she was to come and spend the day with me when I was sick, and I hope that she will come soon again.

I will now close, hoping that these lines will find you well, and enjoying the smiles of your heavenly Father. When it is well with you remember me. With much love to you all, I remain as ever your aunt,

LIZZIE A. GRAFTON.

CLAY VILLAGE, Ky., 1904.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—As I have been comforted in reading the experiences of brethren and sisters in the SIGNS, I will send you a sketch of what I hope is my travel from nature's darkness into the light and liberty of the children of God, or my experience of grace.

I was born, like all the posterity of Adam, a totally depraved sinner; for the stream cannot rise higher than the source. My mother was a member of the Old School Baptist church, and since my earliest recollection, she taught us to be moral, truthful and honest. She also would tell us that religion cannot be taught, for the religion of Jesus was known only by direct revelation of the Spirit of God, the Lord of heaven and earth; and that it is not by power or might, but by the Spirit of God.

My mother was a good singer, and it was my delight to hear her sing in my early youth. It is still my delight to sing, and to hear the songs of Zion sung. I traveled along in my youth, a careless and unconcerned boy. I would read the SIGNS for my mother, and as time passed on I came to like to read them on my own account, as I felt that they contained the truth.

I do not know the exact time when conviction commenced with me. I cannot say that I hated the Old Baptists, but rather liked them, as they appeared to me to be an humble, God-fearing people, but I was naturally of a quick and hasty temperament, and my older brother seemed to take delight in teasing me, and when I would get angry and call him ugly names, he would laugh at me, and tell me that the Bible said that he that calls his brother a fool is in danger of hell fire. This would frighten me some, but it would soon wear away. At about

the time of my eighteenth year, one of my schoolmates died of whom I thought a great deal. She met with what we call an accident by being thrown from a horse, and died in a short time. As she was a good girl, and was taken away so suddenly, I thought of the uncertainty of life, and realized that I was without God or hope in the world. I also realized the certainty of death, and tried in my weak way to pray to God to forgive my sins. The publican's prayer seemed to suit me best, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." But my prayer seemed only an empty breath, my faith being so very weak.

Time passed on, and I did not gain much relief until I was given to believe that the Lord had had mercy upon me, through a dream. I thought that I was walking through a woodland near the house, and I passed by an old stump, where a tree had been uprooted by the wind, and I noticed a small snake in the roots of the old stump. I had not walked far when I looked back, and the snake had become very large, and was coming toward me very rapidly. My first thought was, I cannot kill it, so I fell upon the ground, and though I felt too unworthy to repeat the name of the Lord, this prayer seemed to come from my inmost being, "O, for mercy to me, a sinner." The serpent came to where I was, immediately disappeared, and I found myself at Old Bethel, and my grandfather, Elder J. F. Johnson came toward me with outstretched hand, and said, You have come home at last. Then I awoke and felt relieved, believing that the Lord had pardoned my sin.

Two years after this I was at an old brother's house, and we were talking upon religious matters, and he advised me to go to the church. I told him that I was too unworthy, and he still advised the more. I offered myself for membership, and told something of what I have here written, and was received. Since then I have had many ups and downs. In 1889, as I think it was, myself and family went to California, and were in the golden west about five years. To make a long story short, I will say that I tried to throw the whole matter away. I thought perhaps that I had caught the shadow and missed the substance, and that it all was a delusion. I wandered far off in the briars and thorns, and sowed the wind and reaped the whirlwind; I sowed to the flesh, and of the flesh reaped corruption. It is only of the infinite mercy of God that I was spared, "for his mercy endureth forever." For five years I was not inside of a meeting-house in that land of gross idolatry. Some of it is as beautiful a country as ever the sun shone on, but darkness covers the land, and gross darkness the people. No doubt the Lord has a people there as he has everywhere, a remnant saved by grace, according to election, but the large portion of the people care only for the treasures and pleasures of this life. I wrote to the church at Bethel to exclude me, but they would not do it; they were disposed to cast the mantle of charity over my failings. So we came back to Kentucky, and are once more blessed with church privileges. And now to sum it all up, "It is by the grace of God, I am what I am." I know that it is all of grace that his people are saved. And, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." God hath chosen the things that are not, to bring to naught the things that are, and this is so that no flesh should glory in his sight. "He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord." The doctrine of sovereign grace is God-honoring, and it is the only doc-

trine that places the whole posterity of Adam on an equal footing, the heathen and all; all alike sold under sin, and if saved, saved by grace alone.

The church at Bethel gave me liberty to speak in the name of our Lord and Savior, but it is my firm belief that many a good exhorter has been spoiled in trying to make a preacher out of him. Every gift and every member should be in his proper place. We will get along poorly if we attempt to place the foot in the place of the hand, and the gift of exhortation is also necessary..

Now, dear brother, if you think proper, you can publish this letter.

From a sinner saved by grace,

WM. F. SLOAN.

PATASKALA, Ohio.

"BURY me at dear old Mt. Zion." I quote from the obituary of sister Galleher in the SIGNS of June 1st, 1904. Strange text this, strange words to have ringing in my heart hour after hour, until it is made to overflow in silent praises to the good Lord of us all. I do not know if I knew her or not, think I did, but it does not matter now, she is gone, and we, too, shall go soon. In that wonderful sweet way of his, her heavenly Father relieved her of all earthly cares, made her feel she was about to be gathered to her Father's, knew better than the doctors or nurses, and with her hands, as it were, on the door, she turned to say those words, said them resignedly, and to me it seems cheerfully. O the glory of God in death!

"Bury me at dear old Mt. Zion!" As these words come to me over and over, in a sweetly solemn way, borne on the breeze of the celestial morn, I am carried away to another scene, away back through the cycle of the ages, far away to another country and clime, to another death-bed scene, this time a man, but dying, I hear him say, "Bury me with my fathers." The man that God said he loved before he was born, the man he never cast off, cast out or cast away, Jacob, in that rich oriental chamber, with his twelve sons, strong in manhood, standing around his bed. He has just finished the "blessing." Then Canaan comes before him, it is far away, where he had so much trouble, and evil, and famine, one might think he would never care for it again, but listen, hear him. There are precious things to him there, the "old burying ground." "Bury me with my fathers," is the command of Israel, (a prince of God) a command that the powers of Egypt bowed to, it was God's eternal decree; Abraham and Sarah are buried there, Isaac and Rebekah also, "and there I buried Leah." The people were about all gone that he knew, he was too old to ever get back there again alive, so about all he could expect was to be buried there. It may be some will read these lines who have a "Mt. Zion" in their minds, a place where they want to be buried, it is a dear place to them, there is where I buried that little blue eyed baby boy years ago; God gave him to me, and just as he was entwined in our hearts he took him away; I never could understand why it was, and for years and years I used to visit the little grave and care for it, until now I have gotten too old and feeble, but let me be buried there. Or it was the husband, taken in early life, and as the mother struggles to raise and train the children I hear her tell them of their father, whom they do not remember, but there is a place for me, bury me beside him. Is it wrong to think and talk thus? If so, then I am wrong, most all the saints were also, for many of them talked of their burying place, but it is the old Jacob, and

we are all Jacobs, people of the living God; where they die, let me die, and there let me be buried.

Old Mt. Zion! There comes to my mind, and in my view, that hot summer Sunday more than forty years ago, when that first battle was fought, and the things that took place around and in that old meeting-house, until it seemed as though all was to be destroyed, but God caused the cloud to pass over and away, peace and quietness came and reigned around, and now for forty years the birds have built their nests and reared their young in the trees around the old house, and the saints have gone up at their stated times to hear of him who said he had all power both in heaven and in earth. It all comes back so clear to-day, most all are dead who were there that day. Some are living who have not forgotten the sound of war, and all these years God has had a few there to call upon his name, and has put brother Badger at Aldie to preach to me in the obituaries he writes. Brother Badger, what if they all die in our time, and churches go out, does that make the faith of God of no effect? Does that prove that God is feeble? No! no!! no!!! But when, like our sister, they sound the silver trumpet as they go, my heart catches up the music of glory to his holy name.

I feel that I have failed to express here the things I see in it. I wish I could make them plain.

FRANK McGLADE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, June 12, 1904.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—It is my turn to ask forgiveness for not having written sooner. I wrote but two letters, except my weekly ones home, for two months this spring, and I have felt so utterly unfit, in every sense, to write to you since I have come home that I have not done so.

Sister Hubbard's letter in the last issue of the SIGNS expresses my own feelings well, and sister Attie's, too, tells of the same things that I have felt keenly for three months. Indeed, it was these two letters that caused me to think that I might write to you, and the sermon I heard this morning decided me. Your letter was and is sweet to me, and I have desired to write to you, but the fear of saying things which would be of no comfort or use, things which, if sincerely told, would only pain you, have kept me from obeying the dictates of my heart.

I, like sister Hubbard, have known what it is to feel indifferent to the things of God, and to not care, apparently, whether I was indifferent or not. Like sister Attie, "I would not reach out and grasp any of the past joys and think of them again, for they were far beyond my reach. No reading of marked passages of Scripture brought back any of that former enjoyment, and I have almost wondered why I marked them." I have looked back upon my experience, and have wondered if after all it has not been a delusion of the mind (as the learned think). The Bible has afforded but little comfort, for I have been so critical that the letter only has appealed to me, and doubts and misgivings have given to my criticisms a decidedly worldly and unbelieving cast. I heard my father preach twice in May, but all was dry to me. I heard him again at a funeral some two weeks ago, and my mind, as before, drifted off into more interesting subjects. I have but seldom felt grief at this condition of heart; I have tried to pray, and the "heavens were as brass." My voice, if I spoke aloud, seemed so devoid of feeling that I have felt condemned by it alone, not to mention the reproach of my

conscience, yet I have desired to experience again the sweet mercy and fatherly guidance of God, and have tried to pray for help.

Father's sermon this morning was on the love of God. At first I seemed uninterested, but before many moments I tasted again that the Lord is gracious. I could again rejoice in a Savior's almighty and redeeming love, could praise the Lord for mercies past, and feel that here was indeed the house of God, and here the gate of heaven. "I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications." "Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee!" The people who love this doctrine are again dear for fellowship's sake, as well as that of old association. Their God is certainly my God, their joys and sorrows are mine.

"How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
When those who love the Lord
In one another's peace delight,
And thus fulfill his word.

When each can feel his brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part;
When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart."

I was shocked and grieved to hear of Elder Vail's son's death, and wished I could write to him, but feared that I would but aggravate his sorrow. I have thought very much of him since I wrote to him in February and received a precious letter in return. I have prayed for him without any trouble, for I have never had the slightest doubt that he was one of God's redeemed.

I hope the dear Father will continue to bless your work in the SIGNS and in the pulpit, and bless you with abiding faith in himself, who is the giver of all spiritual gifts.

With love and prayer in Christ for you, and with loving regard for all of your household, I am, I trust, your very little sister in a precious hope,

RUTH KEENE.

HAMPSTEAD, Md., May 20, 1904.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—You cannot know how much I was cast down because I did not get to the association at Black Rock. A great deal has been written about them, but I cannot see why they cannot be conducted in a scriptural manner, as well as any other meeting, and therefore be edifying and of comfort to all who love God. I felt that if I could have been there just for one day and have seen you all, I would have been satisfied. On Wednesday I just felt hateful, though I do not suppose you know what that means. Then the evil one tempted me by telling me that I had wished for rain. But I was comforted then by the words of Jesus to Peter, "I have prayed for thee." But yesterday though cloudy without was sunshine within, and I could enjoy reading, and in the evening the SIGNS came, and this morning I have read the editorial. I read brother Scott's letter first. Elder Keene is one of my favorite writers. Brother Scott, like myself, seemed to be looking away from self to the great Shepherd for all righteousness. Is it faith that has caused me to rest so confidingly in the loving Savior, and to behold in self nothing clean? How great is the mystery of godliness! If this is of faith why cannot I have more faith in temporal things? Reading the SIGNS has brought this thought forcibly to my mind. I know that I am fully in God's hands, and I think you believe that this is where I desire to be. His word says, Having food and raiment, therewith we should be content. I desire so to be, and often ask for release from those wants when I have

not the means to supply them. Do you say, Foolish child, she forgets the loaves and fishes, and the various other proofs that all things are possible with God? If he gave the one who was dearest to him for the redemption of his people, it is sure that he will withhold naught that is best for his loved ones.

This evening I found myself singing, "Jesus lover of my soul," and then I drifted into "Sweet bye and bye." Then came the thought, Now the friends at Black Rock are giving the parting hand, but such will not be the case when we reach "our desired haven," and then not a part will meet, but all; all God's people, to praise him evermore.

Since I wrote the foregoing, I have read "Isaac a type of Christ," written by Wm. McEwen, and I thought it beautiful. But I seemed to realize how feeble was my faith. But does it not read, "Jesus Christ the author and finisher of our faith"? And again, is it not written, "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ"? I do believe that I am truly thankful, even though I do not show it in my daily walk, for being kept from great crimes, knowing that it is Christ that has prayed for me, and that keeps me in the trying hour, and that maketh me to differ from another.

"Let not your heart be troubled,
  Was the message that came to me,
After a night of tossing
  On a dark and stormy sea,
And although the words were olden,
  And so might have lost their might,
They came as a message golden,
  As if they were new that night."

It seemed as if it came as a message to me.

It is now June, and our sister Emma Kelley wrote to me on the 5th, as she was not able to go to meeting. I was glad that if I could not be present, still I was remembered. She also sent me the Minutes. She wrote that Elder Gore preached on Sunday after the association, and she wished so much for me to be present. I understand that Elder Ker was called home for a funeral. The afflictions of the people of God are great, but he delivers them out of them all. Sister Emma said that the blind man Brown was baptized. It is very kind of them to let me hear from my people, and to desire that I might be with them, even though it cannot often be so. I believe now that the weather is pleasant I could go if I had the way, but our God is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind, it must therefore be best for me as it is.

The SIGNS has again reached me, and all in it is good; but you know that some just express our feelings, and the article under the heading "Fragments," comes to me in that way. It was a comfort to me, coming as it did from one who has from his youth been wielding the sword of the Lord and of Gideon. Then also sister Attie Curtis' letter. I have so often wondered why she did not write, for I have always enjoyed her writing so much. It seems that she is not enjoying the sweet assurances that she once did, yet I have enjoyed her trusting, submissive spirit just as much as the former letters. I suppose you know her personally. I also think the Baltimore Circular Letter good, and often wonder if I could have become indifferent about going to the meetings if I had had the opportunity. I feel as if I must say something about dear old sister Lizzie Kemp. She enjoyed the meeting so much the last time she was there, but like you, I think that it was a blessing to her when the time came for her to depart and be with Christ.

I have here just put down my rambling thoughts, and you know that to exercise the gift bestowed upon us is all that we can do. Now with your heavy responsibilities may you ever be made to feel the words, "As thy day, so shall thy strength be." Then will the weight be lightened. Elder Rowe has written me such a kind letter in behalf of the church. It ought to be answered, but I get along slowly with writing.

With love to all, your sister,

GEORGIA D. ENGLAND.

[WE give this letter to the readers of the SIGNS, feeling sure that it will prove good to many hearts. We have known this dear, afflicted sister for many years. It was our solemn and glad privilege to baptize her nearly twenty years ago, in the fellowship of the church at Black Rock, and she has ever since been loved and honored as one of the faithful. She has been able to meet them hardly at all, living, as she has done, some distance away, but the Lord has been with her, and his grace has been sufficient for her. —ED.]

CLAYTON, Ala., May 8, 1904.

EDITOR SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BROTHER:—From some cause I feel inclined to offer a few thoughts upon "Christianity" for the consideration of the Lord's people, feeling very dependent upon the Lord of hosts, knowing that there is nothing known of him save by revelation. Since God is a Spirit, and seeketh such to worship him as do worship him in spirit and in truth, it is plain that there can be nothing known of him in his holy character but by the Spirit of God, which liveth and abideth forever. Christianity then is a hidden thing to humanity. Jesus says, "My kingdom is not of this world," and "cometh not by observation," so with the same propriety it may be said of christianity. Christianity then is a gift, it cometh not by the will of man, and it is not regulated or governed in the least by the will of man. That degree of love and fellowship to which we attain in this kingdom is governed by the will of God. All of our trials and persecutions are measured by him and assigned to us before we have our natural existence in this world. It should be remembered that there are many kinds of religion, but only one kind acceptable with the Lord, and that is his righteousness. It takes nothing less than the righteousness of God to constitute christianity. If any know the righteousness of God they have the knowledge of christianity, and are justified in the sight of God, but if they have not this knowledge they are unjust. The just shall live by faith, without which there is no righteousness save of the law, which cannot give life, but takes life. This was demonstrated in the death of the Son of God. And on that notable day the moon, which represents the law, turned to blood, and the sun refused to give her light. The sun here is in representation of the Sun of Righteousness. It is written, "The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." The letter is the law; it is invariably so. When antichrist is given reigning power, the Sun of Righteousness refuses to shine. It was not only so with Jesus, but with all his true followers in their tribulations. Christianity is as foreign and distinct from humanity as light is from darkness, and yet they are joined together as the day and night, and the darkness comprehends it not. If our eyes were blinded and we were made to believe it was day, it would remain dark. The disciples were first called christians at Antioch. What was the cause of this?

Was it from any natural qualification? If so, why were they not called christians before? Jesus made them his apostles. Their natural deportment or qualifications had nothing to do with it; the same work that made them apostles made them christians; it was by a manifestation of the Spirit and power of God working mightily in them which then, as now, could only be discerned by faith. Then who shall judge a christian? We are commanded to judge with righteous judgment. What an awful and fearful thing to judge without this judgment, yet it is often done, even in the house of God. If men could know that they were destitute, surely they would remain dormant until the Lord come. But here the evil comes in. Righteous men have suffered from the days of Abel to the present, because of foul judgment, which always exerts itself in the absence of faith. Christianity does not belong to the things of human progress, yet it is progressive in its nature, according to the will of God. We have a growth in grace. While it is progressive in its nature, it is to the reverse of human progress; consequently the world denies the progress of the true church. A man in this town told me recently he would like the Primitive Baptists finely if they were progressive. I told him their progress was of the Lord, and referred him to the promised Isaac. Nothing is plainer to believers than that the progress of the Lord's people depends upon God's will. The Lord says by the prophet Isaiah, As I have purposed so shall it stand, and as I have thought surely shall it come to pass. This embraces every event in time or eternity; christianity is not a manufactured thing, as some would have it. I am truly sorry that some Baptists seem to have this view of christianity, that it is a composition of the best human qualities and the holy Spirit of God, well compounded together, and that it is kept up and lived out principally by good moral culture. This is not true, for "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Again it is written, "Perilous times shall come." The prophets foretold these very things that are so trying to the faithful.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

J. E. FINCHER.

OREGON CITY, Ore., June 23, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK:—By request of Elder G. E. Mayfield, and others, I will send you a brief account of the fifty-fourth annual meeting of the Siloam Association, which it is desired to have published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

The association convened with the Luckimute church, near Sheridan, Yamhill Co., Oregon, June 17th, 1904. The entire entertainment was provided at the residence and farmhouse of Elder Vincent Turnidge, where a company of more than 130 individuals were cared for during the meeting; more than one hundred members of the Primitive Baptist church being present, among whom was brother James Chamberlain, who has seldom missed one of the meetings since the organization of this association.

Of those who were present at the organization of this association five are yet living: brother and sister Chamberlain, of North Yakima, Wash., sister S. J. Cummins, of Touchet, Wash., sisters L. S. Pitman and J. Earnest, of Salem, Oregon.

The moderator, Elder W. S. Mathews, was detained from the meeting on Friday, to attend the funeral of brother A. J. Pitman. The preaching service was rendered by the eighteen ordained Elders present, and was not with enticing words

of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and in power. "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

Visiting brethren and sisters present were from churches located in Kansas, Nebraska, Washington, California and Oregon. These all met in unity of Spirit, and received with rejoicing the gospel of the glad tidings of great joy.

Of the ministering brethren present, we may say their mouths were opened unto us; their hearts were enlarged, and God that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by their coming as of old by his servant Titus. Proving their ministry by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness, on the right hand and on the left.

The service of hymns and spiritual songs was observed at the opening of each session and during the intermissions. The singing was led by brethren Gilmore, Hess, Aydlotte, McQueen, and others. They sang the songs of Zion with the Spirit and with the understanding; many believers rejoiced. They came with singing unto Zion. The prophecy of Isaiah came to my mind with renewed and extended view: "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." There were assembled the saints of the true and living God, coming as pilgrims and strangers, yet made to sit together in heavenly places, and thus to attest the goodness of God in the land of the living, by their merciful remembrance of the stranger, the fatherless and widow, thus delighting in the law of God, and this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us.

Yours truly,

(MRS.) M. J. LEE.

HELENA, Ga., June 30, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I have just found time to write you, as I promised to do when I left you at Warwick. If you wish, you may also let this letter appear in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as a letter to all the beloved saints who may read it, and especially to all those whom I met while on my pleasant tour up in your country.

I am well and returned home safely, finding all well here. I feel encouraged by the many kind words I received while laboring in my Master's kingdom among you all up there. Truly the Lord has been very good to me, and the more I consider my unworthiness of "the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant," I am made to say as David: "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" How much I am convinced of God's goodness to me, a poor sinner, by the many acts and words of kindness shown me while among you all. Ought not I to recognize God's goodness, though it be clothed with a veil of flesh in his dear children? The love shown by the children of God helps to fully convince us of the certainty of the great love of their Father. How I do enjoy thinking and trying to speak of the many evidences of God's goodness and mercy to poor sinners "who are made nigh by the blood of Christ." For truly we are not left without abundant proof of his wonderful wisdom, power, riches, grace and glory, if indeed our poor eyes could be opened by faith to see it all, as were the eyes of the

servant of Elisha. How safe ought the children of the most high God to feel while serving and trusting him; and how blessed are they who are given to trust in and serve him. How impressive is the language of Paul to such blessed characters as the fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians describes, saying: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." I delight, after the inward man, to labor in love among God's dear children, to try to comfort them with the things wherewith I have been comforted, for I find that as I am given to so labor for the upbuilding of my brethren, that I, too, am built up. So, in like manner, as I seek to encourage others through Christ, I am encouraged through Christ. So also is it in rebuke or reproof which I in faithfulness have to administer to others; I am forced to partake, too, of its corrections.

I shall never forget the unmistakable signs of love and christian fellowship manifested by the dear Primitive Baptists in your country. I hope to be remembered in prayer by you all, and by all of God's dear children everywhere. Love to all, and may God bless you all.

Yours in hope,

MORGAN BROWN.

HAMILTON, Texas, May 23, 1904.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE PRECIOUS FAITH ONCE DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS: —It affords me pleasure to be able to send you the amount due to renew my subscription for the SIGNS, please move the figures up for the inclosed amount. I love the doctrine that the SIGNS has ever unwaveringly contended for since its inception, more than seventy years ago. I believe that our God gave it existence, and I have no hope in any other power for its continuation. Because of this I feel bound not only to continue my name as a subscriber, but also, as much as in me is, to try to increase its circulation among others who give evidence of their love for it. The consolation which I have had in reading it, as a subscriber, for over twenty years, convinces me that it is right for me to try to encourage others who love the truth to add their support. And while I have succeeded but poorly in my efforts to induce others to subscribe for it, I do feel thankful that it has pleased God to bless a few, whom I have assisted thus, to continue in the word as disciples indeed. And they still love to read, and prefer to pay for it themselves, rather than allow others to do so for them, as long as they are able to do so at all.

I know that nothing short of grace can cause one to love the true doctrine of grace, and the sovereignty of God, as the Bible teaches, and for which the SIGNS has always firmly contended for nearly seventy-two years.

But I am consuming space, while I keenly feel my lack of power to express myself as I would wish. I greatly desire your success in the publication of the SIGNS, and I much desire your prayers for the weakest of the weak of all who have a name among the true worshipers who contend for the doctrine of unconditional salvation by grace alone, and for the unlimited predestination of God.

I want to add to the above that this morning's reading of the number of the SIGNS for June 1st, embracing the two editorials, with brother Goble's article on "God as revealed in nature," is worth more to me than the whole year's subscription.

I remain yours in hope, with love from myself and Little Sardis church, which stands firm as a rock in the faith,

W. D. WOOD.

MARDELA SPRINGS, Md., April 10, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I have delayed sending my remittance for the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES longer than I thought to have done, but it has not been neglect or carelessness, but I have been hindered through other causes. I always wish to be prompt in sending my remittance, but I cannot do all the time as I would wish, for when I would do good evil is present with me, and I do know and fully realize that in me (that is, in my flesh,) there dwells no good thing. It seems to me I cannot do without our family paper, and if it is not asking too much, I will copy a few verses of poetry I found several years ago in a piece of newspaper; they have been very comforting to me, and especially so of late, and if they meet with your approval, and you think them suitable matter for the SIGNS, you can print them, and if not, all will be well with me.

"Keep me very near to Jesus,
  Though beneath his cross it be;
In this world of evil doing,
  'Tis the cross that cleanseth me.
Should there come distress and darkness,
  Let this hope with me abide,
After all the gloom and sorrow,
  Light shall be at eventide.

Bring to mind my past experience,
  That shall take my fears away;
For thy goodness and thy mercy
  Shall be mine till close of day.
Through the tears, the clouds, the tempest,
  Shine on me, O crucified;
There's a promise in God's rainbow,
  Light shall be at eventide.

Lead me onward to the future,
  Where I fear one step to move;
Still the love of God will keep me,
  Love beyond a mother's love.
Calvary has said sufficient,
  Hear them sing on yonder side;
Though the cross stand in the pathway,
  Light shall be at eventide."

Your little sister, if one at all.

SUSIE L. GILLETT.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., July 8, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I notice in the SIGNS for June 15th a communication from brother C. M. Bruce, dated Oregon City, Oregon, saying that his home was at Fresno, Cal., asking whether there were any Old School Baptists living at Fresno. I wish to say that brother George Rucker and family live there, and that brother Bruce would do well to meet with them. Brother Rucker has a family consisting of a wife and two daughters. They are old friends of ours, and formerly lived here. They were members of the Colledge St. Primitive Baptist Church of this city, and I am not sure but that their membership is still with us. Sister Rucker and children have been visiting Nashville friends this spring, and have recently returned to California. They said to us that they had not as yet met with any of our people out there. I spoke to them of taking the SIGNS, as it was so full of good things, and she talked as though they would do so. I cannot say too much for the SIGNS, as it has been of great comfort to me; I read and reread them. I trust that these two brothers may get close together, and that they will also find others who are of the same faith. May the Lord bless you in every way that will be for your good, and for the excellency of his glorious name. May he be with all the household of faith in every place where they call on the name of the Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Your brother,

W. P. HOOD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1904.

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EZEKIEL XXXIII.

BROTHER D. D. Allen, of Yantis, Texas, desires the views of some brother upon the thirty-third chapter of Ezekiel, specially regarding the warning embraced in that chapter. While not wishing to forestall any one else who might desire to write upon the subject embraced in this chapter, we feel like suggesting a few thoughts concerning it.

It must not be forgotten, first, that the people addressed was Israel under the law, and the subject is the way in which God dealt with them under that legal covenant. God spoke to them often in the language of reproof and warning, showing them the results of transgression, and the results of repentance and obedience on the other hand. God sent them wise men, scribes, prophets and priests, ministers in that worldly sanctuary; of this the Savior spoke while in the days of his flesh. But this people grossly disregarded the word of the Lord again and again, and thus proved their stubbornness and rebellion of heart. No doubt many whom God had raised up as teachers in Israel, many who were called to be prophets, and to whom had been given the word of the Lord, often were discouraged and disheartened at the want of regard to their warnings and teachings, manifested among the people, and often they would seriously question as to whether they had themselves been faithful, and if so, why so little regard was paid to them. Often it might well be that the true prophets would feel oppressed as they saw the people still continuing in their folly, notwithstanding all their warnings and reproofs, and knowing that the frown of God would rest upon the disobedient, and that his judgments would fall upon them, they would seriously question as to what should be their own situation in the midst of these judgments.

It would seem from the first six verses of this chapter that Ezekiel himself thus questioned before God. He had warned the people of approaching danger, and they had disregarded his cry, and sorrow and trial should surely be theirs at the hand of God, but how should it be with himself in that hour? Should he also be condemned with the people? In response to this inquiry the figure of a people who had chosen a watchman from among themselves is given. This watchman sees the sword coming, and blows the alarm upon the trumpet for the warning of the people, then if one did not heed the warning, and the sword came to him and took him away, his blood should be upon his own head, and not upon the head of the watchman, but he that heeded the warning should deliver his soul from that sword. But on the other hand, if the watchman sees the sword approaching, and gives not warning, and the sword comes and takes away any person from among that people, his blood should be required at the hand of that watchman. This is the substance of the first six verses of this chapter. The Lord appeals to what is regarded as right and just among all men. This is the judgment

which every right thinking man would always give in such a matter.

Now verse seven to verse nine, the Lord said to Ezekiel that all this should apply to him as a called watchman in Israel. He said to the prophet, "So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me." First, the prophet is reminded that it is not the voice of the people, but the voice of God that had called him as the watchman of Israel. Like Elijah, he is to remember that in his labor of warning and reproof he stands before God rather than before men. It is not his own, but the word of God, that he is to speak. He is the servant of God, and if the servant of the people, he is so for the Lord's sake. Remembering all this, how solemnly would the heart of the prophet respond when given a word for the people. From the preceding figure used in the first six verses, he would know that there was but one thing of which he was to be careful, viz: to see that he declared the word of the Lord faithfully when it was given him. He was not in any sense responsible for the reception which this word might meet, but only for the faithful declaration of it. If wicked men did not heed the word of the Lord, those wicked men should die in their iniquity, but he should be clear. If, however, he did not declare the word of the Lord, and that wicked man should die in his iniquity, then that man's blood should be required at his hand. This one thing then he was to do, declare the word given him faithfully, and the result, whether to the salvation of that wicked man or not, would be that he should be clear of all blame. As it appears to us, Paul believed the truth taught in this place, for he said once, "I am pure from the blood of all men." That is, he meant that he had faithfully declared the truth among the churches; the truth not only as regarded the way of salvation through Christ, but also as to the order of the church, and the individual walk of the believer, and so was pure. This was all that he could do, and it was all that God had required him to do. Paul did not blame himself for the disorders that were in the churches, because he had faithfully pointed out the right way to them, and had not ceased to warn them day and night, as he says. So the prophet was told here that all that was required of him was that he should speak what God had bidden him. This is all that is to-day required of the servants of God, and what a solemn responsibility rests upon them before God; this belongs especially to those who are called to the ministry, and to be pastors in the churches. We are to reprove and rebuke and warn with all long-suffering and doctrine. If our word is not heeded, when it is according to the Scriptures, there is no place for feeling slighted personally, because we are not rejected, but the word of the Lord is; it is not the servant, but the voice of God which is disregarded. If the churches heed not our word, still God smiles upon us, and we have his praise, but chastisement will fall upon those who give no heed. But if we see the evil approaching and do not lift up the trumpet warning of the gospel, then we ourselves are guilty, and the evil done will be required at our hands. All this is as true under the gospel as under the law. All this was exemplified more than seventy years ago, when what we call the division took place among those who had borne the name of Baptists. Some faithful ministers preached faithfully and warned the people without ceasing, and

yet the churches heeded them not. Those churches were engulfed in error, but the ministers who had been faithful were held in honor among the followers of the Lamb, and are to this day. Some saw the danger approaching then and were not faithful, though they saw it and deplored it in their hearts, and their names are not numbered among the records of the faithful to-day; they went down into darkness and death with their churches.

These words are full of solemn warning to us all. God's servants are never called profitable, but they are called good and faithful again and again in the word, where indeed they have proved faithful. In the morning they are to sow their seed, and in the evening they are not to withhold their hand. In some way God will give the increase. After many days they shall find the bread that has been cast upon the waters; it is all in the hand of God. How blessed was Paul when he at the end of his ministry could say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." The servants of God to-day, men like Elder Gilbert Beebe, Elder Trott, Elder Leachman, Elder W. J. Purington, Elder J. L. Purington, Elder Wm. Quint, and a host of others, with whose names our more aged readers are familiar, all felt their weakness, and often complained of their failures, but still they all could look back and confidently say that they had kept the faith, and faithfully warned and instructed the people of God out of the word of truth, and in this there was a blessing to them. What a blessing to feel pure, as did Paul, of the blood of all men. We are not informed of the effect of the teaching of Paul among the churches of Galatia. We do not know whether they heeded his warning and returned from their legality or not, but we do know that Paul was faithful, and that he was free from their blood, in any event. We do know that when Paul warned the brethren at Corinth, his word was fruitful in them to some extent at least, and that both he and the church escaped the judgment which follows transgression. Peter was not faithful at all times in his dealings with his brethren, and Paul says of him that he was to be blamed. It seems to us that these things illustrate what the first nine verses of the chapter named by brother Allen signify.

Now from the tenth to the nineteenth verses of Ezekiel xxxiii., the dealings of God with the people themselves are stated. If Israel had sinned, the Lord said that he had no pleasure in their death. That is, he did not deal with them as a tyrant who loved suffering, and who inflicted it wantonly, but rather it was his pleasure that the wicked should turn from his way and live. And then the word of the Lord goes on to say that past obedience should not deliver him that sinned from the judgment due him, and past wickedness should not condemn him that repented and did righteously. This is the substance of all these ten verses, which we will not here quote. If any one will read them carefully, we think he will be satisfied that this is the substance of them. Our God thus has laid down the principles of judgment upon which he will deal with Israel. This was not a new thing, God had always thus dealt with them. Instances might be multiplied, from the history of that people in the former ages, in which this same principle was made manifest. It was always true that their past obedience did not shield them from the result of present disobedience, and it was always true that when repentance was

manifested in their lives, the judgments of God were stayed from them.

Let it be remembered that this does not enter at all into that other most important question as to how they came ever to be obedient, or to turn away from their disobedience. Here the Lord is revealing to the prophet, for him to declare to the people, the principles upon which he had dealt with them, and upon which he would continue to deal with them as his people. Past willingness and obedience could not atone for present transgression so as to keep back the chastisements of God. And, on the other hand, when repentance was manifested in their lives, past transgressions were so blotted out that the judgments of such transgressions did not continue to fall upon them. We see the same principles manifest under the gospel dispensation. The churches and brethren were often reproved and warned, and when the fruit of these warnings appeared among them, the judgments of God were removed. It was expressly taught that when one who was a transgressor returned from his transgression, he should be forgiven, and he that converted the sinner from the error of his way saved a soul from death, and did hide a multitude of sins, and it was in the spirit of the gospel that the erring should be restored, in the spirit of meekness. All the discipline of the church was to be remedial, and not for destruction. It was only when the discipline of the church did not avail to restore the evil doer that he was to be regarded as a heathen man and a publican. If restored to the right way of the Lord he was to be received as though he had not wandered at all. In this we have the same principle presented as is found in this thirty-third chapter of Ezekiel.

In the practice of the churches to-day the same principles are involved. It matters not how far astray one has been, when that one shall depart from his iniquity and walk in the way of the Lord again, his transgressions are not to be counted against him. On the other hand, if one has been obedient for years, and then departs into sin, the past righteous life will not save that one from the reproof of the gospel, or from alienation from the fellowship of the church. No length of obedience in the believer's walk can excuse after transgression. The spiritual may and will remember the past righteousness of his life, but only to grieve all the more for the present departure. The most faithful brother, for many years it may be, in all that pertains to the christian's walk, is not thereby licensed to go astray for even one brief moment; sin is sin, let it be found upon whose skirts it may. Paul said some did run well, but that did not remove the necessity of reproof when they ceased to so run.

Under the gospel there is a revelation of where lies our strength to do his will, as the poet has said. Still further, it is most blessedly revealed that all transgression has been covered by the atonement, so that none shall perish for whom Christ died. Under the gospel all these dealings of God with his disobedient people are seen to be in the way of fatherly correction, and not in anger. The believer loves these fatherly corrections as the evidences of the love of God, according to the word of the apostle: "If ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." And, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." His dear people are corrected, but with mercy and love, and the love of the dear Father above will not allow

his children to go uncorrected. In correction there is a blessing.

We leave these partial thoughts to the consideration of brother Allen and our readers.

KNOWING that many of our readers are anxious concerning the health of our dear brother, Elder E. V. White, we quote the following from a letter received by us from sister White: "Elder White is improving very slowly, has been in bed the past week, took a little cold, but is dressed this morning. I feel, as the nurses say, it will be a long time before he entirely recovers. Neither of us have been to meeting since last February. It will truly be a thanksgiving service when we can again mingle with the saints and once more listen to the gospel's joyful sound.

Affectionately yours,

M. B. WHITE."

LEESBURG, Va., July 19, 1904.

INFORMATION WANTED.

MRS. Charles E. Dill, of Davis, Tucker Co., W. Va., desires to know whether there are any Old School Baptists near her home. Will some one who is acquainted in that section write to her, or if near enough go to see her? She is a member of the Old School Baptist Church at South Gardiner, Maine. With most of the members of this church we are personally acquainted.—ED.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, June 15th, 1904, B. Erwin Writer and Miss Antoinette M. Harding, at the home of the bride, in Otisville, Orange Co., N. Y.

By Elder Silas H. Durand, June 27th, 1904, at the home of Mr. Elias Hogeland, the bride's grandfather, at Southampton, Pa., Joseph H. Williams and Miss Estelle A. Hogeland.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Ansel Hard, son of Deacon Elisha and Jemimah Hard, was born near Dublin, Ohio, June 25th, 1816, and died May 22nd, 1904, aged 87 years, 10 months and 27 days. He resided on the home place since 1828. Two brothers, Samuel and Alonzo, and a large number of nephews and nieces, survive him. He was held in the highest esteem by all who knew him. He was a faithful and devoted member of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church for more than sixty years, and honored his profession by an honest, just and upright life, blessed with that meek and quiet spirit which in the sight of God is of great price. He was a fervent friend of the SIGNS, having been a constant subscriber for fifty years, and was firmly settled and established in the doctrine and faith advocated by the SIGNS from its first issue. He was always cheerful and happy, although at times he suffered severely, for his trust in the Lord was complete, and he often remarked he was waiting his Master's call. Deceased never married, but was very kindly and tenderly cared for by his near relatives. His brethren always received a hearty welcome at his house.

The funeral services were held at the Clinton church, where he was a member. The writer having been so intimate with him, and having spent so many days and hours with him conversing about the things of the kingdom of our Lord and Savior, was called to preach his funeral. After repeating the fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians, called on Elder G. N. Tusing, who spoke very feelingly in prayer, after which the writer spoke with such ability as the Lord gave, on the subject of the resurrection. The body was then laid to rest in the cemetery near by.

Sleep, gently sleep, dear brother, until the resurrection morn, when you will arise to behold your King in his beauty, be clad with immortality and crowned with a crown of glory. Elder Peters, the pastor of his church, spoke in prayer at the grave.

L. B. HANOVER.

WESTERVILLE, Ohio, July, 1904.

DIED—**Mrs. Maria Hillings,** May 30th, 1904, at her late residence, Ridgewood, N. J., aged 73 years, 10 months and 29 days. She was born in Preakness, N. J., July 1, 1830; was married Feb. 5th, 1852, to Wm. H. Hillings, who died some years later. She had three children, two of whom still live. Sister Hillings was baptized in the fellowship of the Ebenezer church, New York city, in August, 1871, and proved a most faithful and profitable member to the end. The manner of her tongue was according to the matter in her heart, abounding in the praise of the glory of God's grace. Through years of discouraging trial and affliction she was sustained, and grew in the knowledge and fear of the Lord. It was a blessing

and comfort to know her. Her views of doctrine were clear and experimental. No gospel but Christ crucified, the power of God and the wisdom of God, could satisfy her longing desire, and she surely knew him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death. A year ago last Christmas time she sustained a fracture of the hip by a fall. She never fully recovered, and thereafter was confined to the house. Her final illness was unexpected and of short duration. The last letter she wrote her pastor requested his views of John v. 28, 29. The text was used at the funeral service. The remains were buried in the cemetery near Ridgewood.

She is not waiting. The mighty power of that life-giving voice spoke hope and everlasting life in her mortal body many years ago. It raised her from the grave wherein she had sinned, and brought her into the holy city, there to praise God day and night in his temple. The life which she lived in the flesh she lived by the faith of the Son of God. In Jesus she was complete. By the faith of the Son of God she was perfect and entire; she is none the less so now. The change she so longed for is come; she knows now as she is known; faith is lost in sight and hope in fruition. Perfectly satisfied in the likeness of her dear Redeemer she waits no further perfecting.

JOHN McCONNELL.

BROTHER **William Baily,** of Brookdale, Pa., died June 9th, 1904, aged about 75 years. He had been suffering for several months with a cancer, and bore his affliction with that patience characteristic of christians, continually acknowledging the justice of God in afflicting him, and felt that if strict justice should be meted out to him his affliction would have been much greater. Brother Baily was baptized about twenty-five years ago, with several others, at Osborne Hollow, by Elder Balas Bundy, uniting with the church at Otego, N. Y. Several years after, a church was organized at his place, called the Old School Baptist Church of Brookdale, Pa. He with several others constituted the little church. Shortly after he was appointed deacon, which office he filled with satisfaction to his brethren. In prayer and conference on the subject of salvation he was solemn, and his words weighty. Though naturally of a very jovial disposition, from which he suffered keenly at times, he was firm and unwavering in the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty over all things, visible and invisible; believing this, he said that he had room for but one salvation, which was eternal. Meetings have been held at his house for a number of years, and all that came were made to feel at home. He enjoyed them very much up to his death. He loved his brethren dearly, and was glad to do all that he could for their comfort. His last communion with the church was while lying on his bed, about two weeks before his death. He longed and often prayed to go home to be with Jesus, and be like him, which prayer we firmly believe is fully answered now, for where he is it is eternal now, no to-morrow, no yesterday. He leaves a dear companion, who has been a helpmeet in every sense for many years, two sons and other relatives, with the little band of brethren, about three or four in number, to mourn his absence. May God be merciful to dear sister Baily, even as the widow's Husband, and to the children a Father; where great grace is needed we believe great grace will be supplied.

The funeral was largely attended Saturday, June 11th, the writer speaking to the people on the occasion, after which the earthly house was laid to rest.

D. M. VAIL.

Charles D. Wood, of Slate Hill, N. Y., died May 19th, 1904, after a protracted illness of a complicated nature, in his 71st year. Brother Wood received a hope in the mercy of God and was baptized in the fellowship of the Brookfield Old School Baptist Church by Elder Wm. Benedict a number of years ago, and at the time of his death was deacon and the last male member of the church. He left his widow, son and daughter and other relatives, beside the church, to mourn. I have partaken of the hospitality and church interests with brother Wood, and much enjoyed his company, but it is at an end forever on his part, and I am left to suffer awhile as well as his dear ones. God bless the afflicted ones.

ALSO,

Peter W. Decker, of Clovesville, Delaware Co., N. Y., died May 25th, 1904, after a short illness of pneumonia, leaving a devoted wife, son and wife, and grandchildren of his house, together with one brother and sister, to mourn. He was not a professor of religion, yet was a general attendant at Old School Baptist meetings. He was a hard working, honest and industrious man, and leaves a vacancy in his neighborhood not easily filled. I personally feel his departure to be a loss in a social sense, as we were boys together; yet I do not mourn as one that is without hope, believing that while there is such a vacancy, and friends, widow, children and all are mourning, the loved one is at rest. May the favor of God be to the widow, and all find rest in Jesus.

ALSO,

Mrs. Sally Slauson Jenkins, wife of Alonzo Jenkins, of Union Grove, Delaware Co., N. Y., died July 3rd, 1904, after several months illness of complicated diseases, in the 69th year of her age. Sister Jenkins received a hope in God's mercy and united with the First Church of Roxbury by baptism forty years ago or more, I think, and so far as heaven and salvation were concerned, lived and died in hope of the glory of God. She was a devoted wife and a good stepmother to two motherless girls left by the former

wife of brother Jenkins. And now we believe she is in paradise with Jesus Christ, who will raise up that which was sown in corruption at the last day, or when he comes the second time without sin unto salvation. What is loss to earthly friends is we believe gain to the departed. Sister Jenkins leaves to mourn, beside brother Jenkins and his two daughters, three brothers and two sisters and three half-brothers, with many other relatives, as well as the church, but I do not think with all her affection any would wish her to have continued on earth, because of her extreme suffering.

Her funeral was quite largely attended by relatives and friends at the Union Grove Old School Baptist church-house. May the Lord comfort all mourners, is my sincere desire. J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLY CORNERS, N. Y.

ANOTHER one of the old fathers in Israel has fallen asleep, a change long and patiently waited for by the old brother, whose faith in Christ remained unshaken to his death.

Uncle **Henry Smith,** as we always called him, was born in Madison Co., Ga., Feb. 17th, 1819, and departed this life June 20th, 1904, aged 85 years, 4 months and 3 days. He lived all his life in Madison county, with the exception of one year. He told the writer if he ever underwent a change, it was on the road leading from Athens to Monroe, in the year 1842, and in May, 1843, he offered himself to the church at Moriah, was received, and on Sunday baptized by Elder D. W. Patman, and remained with the church till the church at Union was constituted, in 1848. He was the only male member who was in the constitution, and the meeting following he was elected clerk, and served the church as such for twenty-four years, also as deacon.

August 20th, 1846, he was married to Elvira Johnson, of Oglethorpe county; to them were born eight children, five boys and three girls, one of whom, D. P. Smith, is an Elder of the Primitive faith and order, and the three girls are members. All of them survive him but a son, James Monroe, who died at the age of two years. We can faithfully say that our loss is his eternal gain, as he was a consistent member, ever endeavoring to discharge his duty, and was generally known and looked upon as a standard among the Baptists. He was a devoted husband, kind father and a good citizen. It was the pleasure of the writer to visit him a great deal for about six months before his death. His mind was very scattering at times and quite weak, but he kept up till about ten days before his death, when he was taken with something like a spasm, and grew worse and worse till his death. Thursday, before his death on Sunday night, he called his wife to him and said he wanted to talk to her, saying they had lived together for fifty-eight years, but he would have to leave her. And then he prayed to the Lord to take him out of this world, and never spoke any more except when some one spoke to him.

His body was laid to rest at the old homestead to await the resurrection. The funeral service was conducted by Elder C. H. Anthony, with a few closing remarks by the writer. A large concourse of relatives and friends were present.

I wish to say to the good old mother in Israel and devoted children, father rests from his labors, and his works do follow him.

M. J. O'KELLEY.

MEETINGS.

A TWO days meeting has been appointed to be held with the Harford church, Harford Co., Md., commencing at ten o'clock on Saturday before the fifth Sunday in July, 1904. A cordial invitation is extended. Those coming by way of Baltimore take train which leaves North Avenue at 3:30 p. m. on Friday before, for Long Green or Forest Hill. Those coming from the north take train that leaves York at 2 p. m. for Forest Hill.

NATHAN GRAFTON, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Lackawanna Co., Pa., nothing preventing, will hold a two days meeting on Wednesday and Thursday, between the second and third Sundays in August, 1904. Trains on Delaware & Hudson and Ontario & Western railroads will be met on Tuesday at Olyphant, Pa. Those coming on D., L. & W. R. R. will come to Glenburn, Pa., and come on stage one mile to my place. An invitation is extended to all.

D. M. VAIL.

PEACE VALLEY Association will meet this year, the Lord willing, with the church in Blum, on Saturday before the third Sunday in August, and continue the two following days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to come and be with us.

W. L. ROGERS, Pastor.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet, the Lord willing, on Friday, Sept. 2nd, 1904, with Mt. Zion church, six miles east of Astoria, Fulton Co., Ill., on the St. Louis branch of the C., B. & Q. R. R., and continue the two following days. All trains will be met at Astoria during the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, especially our ministers.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Mt. Pleasant Association of Primitive Baptists will convene with Beech Creek Church, near Waddy, Shelby Co., Ky., beginning on Friday, Sept. 2nd, and continuing three days. Those coming by rail, either from Lexington or Louisville, will get tickets to

Waddy, via Louisville Southern. Friday a. m. trains will be met. Any one expecting to arrive before or after this had better write brother Abram Hedden, Waddy, Ky. P. W. SAWIN.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing on Friday, Sept. 2nd, 1904, and continuing three days. We shall gladly welcome all who desire to come. Those coming will be met at the North Berwick railroad depot on Thursday before the time appointed for our yearly conference.

FRED. W. KEENE.

THE Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the Olive and Hurley Church, the second Wednesday and Thursday in September, 1904, commencing at 10 o'clock the first day. All brethren and friends coming by train will please come to Shokan; if strangers, inquire for Alvah Bogart, only a few rods from depot, and they will be taken care of. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

ALVAH BOGART, Clerk.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church, Friday before the second Sunday in September, (9th,) 1904, and continue three days. All seekers after the truth are cordially invited to attend. Those coming by rail will be met at the Bowdoinham station and cared for.

J. C. CLARK, Clerk.

THE Licking Association will meet with the church at Mt. Carmel, about eight miles north of Winchester, Clark Co., Ky., beginning Friday, Sept. 9th, and continuing three days. Those coming by rail will be met at Winchester. The Thursday p. m. and Friday a. m. trains will be met. Any one desiring further information write brother M. B. Hadden, Winchester, Ky. Winchester is on C. & O. R. R. east and west, and L. & N. R. R., north and south.

P. W. SAWIN.

A TWO days meeting has been appointed to be held with Cammal Old School Baptist Church, the Lord willing, the last Saturday and fifth Sunday in October, 1904. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. Those coming from the south will take the New York Central train at Williamsport, and those coming from the north will also take New York Central train. Ample accommodation for all who live out of town. Trains will be met on Friday and Saturday morning. Elder John McConnell, of New York city, Elder J. T. Rowe, of Baltimore, Md., and our pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, will be present.

ALVA B. CALLAHAN, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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POETRY.

ONE LITTLE SONG.

When darkness comes o'er me,
And tears are my meat,
Knowing naught that's before me,
Or bitter or sweet;
O then may I ever
Look up and adore,
And wait for thy morrow
On heaven's bright shore.

The years in their gliding
Sad changes have wrought,
And now as they're sliding
How lone is my lot;
But still may I ever
Look up and adore,
And wait for the morrow
On heaven's bright shore.

How can we forget them,
Those friends of the past?
Nor sigh for the sweetness
Their love round us cast;
Yet still may we ever
Look up and adore,
And wait for thy morrow
On heaven's bright shore.

How soon will be over
Life's good and its ill;
Feed our souls with thy fullness,
And cleanse by thy will;
That so we may ever
Look up and adore,
Till we wake in thy likeness
On heaven's bright shore.

(MRS.) J. STREET.

Brantford, Ont., May 4, 1904.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LAW AND GOSPEL.

It seems strange to us when natural reason is in exercise, how such a wonderful revolution could take place in God's dealings with his people under the gospel, from that of his dealings with them under the law, without God himself changing. But when faith is in exercise we understand. The old covenant was not made over, nor does it still remain with the gospel added, but an entirely new covenant and kingdom have been established. "Behold, I make all things new."—Rev. xxi. 5. The same King reigns in righteousness that reigned in the old covenant and kingdom, which was natural, and only a pattern of the spiritual kingdom, but no part of it whatever. The new covenant has better promises, an ever abiding Priesthood, commandments written in the heart, spiritual repentance and forgiveness of sins by the blood of Jesus Christ, rest that remains to the people of God, spiritual love and fellowship. It is a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. But God is the same yesterday, today and forever, without variableness or

shadow of change, but an entirely new government is seen and felt. Under the law God dealt with Israel upon legal principles. The law said they should do certain things, and also said they should not do certain other things, and prescribed punishment for every transgression. It was the punishment inflicted upon Israel that caused them to turn from their wickedness. There was no such thing as gospel (spiritual) repentance under the law, no such thing as godly sorrow for sin. Law and gospel are as separate and distinct as night and day, therefore we should always endeavor to rightly divide the word of truth. Good and evil, life and death, were ever kept before Israel; the prophets were continually telling them to turn away from idolatry and other wickedness, and said, If ye do well ye shall be blessed, but if ye do wickedly ye shall be killed by the sword, go into captivity, serpents shall be sent into your camps, &c. Thus we see the legal principle of government. The words repent and repented as they appear in the Old Testament should not be thought of in the same sense as used in the gospel. There is a vast difference between turning away from sin because of punishment, and yet have the same love for it, and in turning from it because we hate it, and because of love to God and his righteous law. While Israel did repent from time to time, it was not because of hatred of sin and idolatry, they loved those things as much as ever, and did return to them, thus manifesting their love for them rather than love to God. There was no heart work, but rather sorrow because they could not continue in those things. We are not justifiable in saying that repentance under the law was the gift of God, or of grace. The judgments of the law caused Israel to repent, and not the Spirit of God, or the gift of grace. They were a carnal people, their blessings were temporal, the commandments given them were carnal, their sanctuary was worldly, and the afflictions of the law were felt externally. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Legal repentance and legal obedience belonged to the old covenant, and were rendered for reward, and from fear of punishment. Grace did not come until the manifestation of Christ in the flesh. Under Moses it was the law that demanded service, and all service was according to the law. But under Christ, our spiritual Law-giver, grace reigns, and the service of spiritual Israel is according to grace; God working in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. We do not understand the apostle to mean (even though our bodies be the temple of the Holy Ghost) that it is God, in the man, doing the works, but that he works their works in them, as it is said in another place, "He hath wrought all our works in us." The command to repent that came by John the Baptist when he preached in the wilderness of Judea, was different from any word of the prophets, who said repent, because the law demands it. John said, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Jesus also preached, not saying, Repent and obey the law, but, Repent and believe the gospel. John speaks of the kingdom of heaven, and Jesus speaks of the gospel; these are found together, and Mark tells us this preaching was "the beginning of the gospel of the Son of God." "Of his fullness have we all received, and grace for grace." In him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily, therefore of his fullness have we received, for by the Father we received natural and spiritual crea-

tion, blessed with all temporal and spiritual blessings, by the Son we received redemption and everlasting justification, by the Holy Ghost we receive teaching and guidance into all truth. Grace therefore is given by which God is served in this gospel (gracious) dispensation, as the writer of Hebrews says, "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." The worship under the law consisted in ordinances, forms and ceremonies, and "never could make the comers thereunto perfect." Under the gospel those rites, forms and ceremonies are not observed or enjoined upon spiritual Israel, "For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well."—Acts xv. 25. No longer is the Lord worshiped in the mountain of Samaria or at Jerusalem; "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." God is not served by his redeemed people today for reward nor from fear of punishment in this life, or in the world to come. The very moment we think of serving for reward, or from fear of punishment, we manifest the legal idea of God and of worship. Such service in the gospel kingdom *cannot* be rendered, because it is not acceptable to God, the legal day having passed away. But, says one, did not Paul say, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live"? Yes, but is Paul presenting a reward service, and telling us that we can exercise the Spirit? or is he showing the nature of man to live after the flesh, and the work of God in causing men to walk after the Spirit? because the next verse reads, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Does Paul mean here to contradict his statement made concerning himself in the same letter, chapter seven, verse eighteen, when he said, "To will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is *good* I find not"? Would he tell the brethren at Rome to perform good works by exercising the Spirit, when he says of himself, "*how* to perform that which is good I find not"? Does not this prove conclusively that the mortifying of the deeds of the body is because of the leading of the Spirit of God? Is not this blessedness instead of reward, and is not such service rendered in love and praise to God, rather than for reward or from fear of punishment here or hereafter? God "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Can any service we may render (even though our works be wrought in us) add one blessing to those already bestowed upon us in Christ before the world began? On the other hand, can the lack of service (when not led by the Spirit) make the blessings less in number, or in joy? If we say yes, that very moment we present the law, because when Israel rendered the required service they were blessed, but when they did not, blessings were withheld, and punishment inflicted. Their blessings were bestowed because of service, but our blessings come because of the riches of God's grace, through Christ. Will not the Spirit of God cause his children to do his will? Is God deceived in man? Is God mistaken in his works? Are there more blessings than man will receive? Has a manifested heir of God more abil-

ity to perform good works than our blessed Savior had when in the flesh? Remember that he said, "I can of mine own self do nothing, but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." Did he not give praise to the Father for all the works he did? Is he not our example in all things? All good works are of God, and men walk in them because of God's ordination that they should, being led by the Spirit, rather than by the power or will of man. Repentance in the gospel dispensation is not wrought by judgments, such as the sword, fiery serpents, captivity in Babylon, &c., but by the purging of the conscience by the blood of Jesus Christ from dead works to serve the living God. (Heb. ix. 14.) Repentance under the gospel is a gift of God, through Christ, gently turning spiritual Israel individually and collectively away from the law, from all hope of justification by its deeds, from the life and righteousness that we thought were in it; also turning us away from sin and the love of it; not only from the overt acts of ungodliness, but from the thoughts of sin which proceed from our depraved heart. Spiritual repentance is the hating of our own life because of indwelling sin; this hatred is turning away from it; also it causes us to desire to shun or turn away from the very appearance of evil. What a blessing is godly sorrow for sin, and a desire to present our bodies, through the Spirit, a living sacrifice, (a living death) holy, acceptable to God. Under the law if Israel did not actually steal, kill, lie, commit adultery, worship idols, &c., they were not transgressors. This was the understanding of "Saul of Tarsus" (Paul) of the matter, therefore he said, "As touching the righteousness which is in the law I was blameless."—Phil. iii. 6. But when the commandment came in the Spirit, "Thou shalt not covet," he knew that he was a sinner within. It is by the law, spiritually applied, that we, like Paul, have the knowledge of sin, but by its carnal deeds "shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God." In the gospel, Christ tells us, as Paul was taught, that to desire and think evil is sin. How many more are the transgressions of the child of God with the carnal mind than by the deeds of his hands or the words of his mouth. We are just as dependent upon God for repentance or the turning away from acts of sin, as we are for repentance from our wicked and depraved thoughts. We must be "kept by the power of God." "Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."

"Once by the law I vainly thought
Salvation to obtain,
Till under Sinai's thunder brought,
And there my hopes were slain.

I saw the law the strength of sin,
Which filled my soul with fear;
The legal works I trusted in,
Most wretched did appear.

My tattered rags aside I threw,
That linsey-woolsey dress,
For that best robe forever new,
The Savior's righteousness."

This at his hands did I receive,
Which angels never wore:
A God-like spotless vest, and weave
The spider's web no more."

We feel willing to submit the thoughts presented in this article for the consideration, and we hope comfort of the household of faith.

H. C. KER.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

DUTTON, Ont., Dec. 29, 1903.

DEAR ELDER DURAND:—In accordance with your request, will write you my experience, feeling sensitive lest I should cause you to think differently of me than

the unworthy worm which I feel myself to be.

From my earliest childhood I was deeply concerned regarding my conduct through life, death and a never-ending eternity. I felt keenly over the sinner's awful doom, and was very anxious to die a christian, and in my childish way was very penitent over my errors. I did most firmly believe that my meritorious conduct had all to do with my eternal salvation. I would hurry through my work in order to have time to devote to Bible reading and prayer, usually quoting the prayer of some pious person, always careful that no other member of the family would find me thus engaged and make light of my devotion. It mattered not how much I strove to do right, I felt that I was the worst living one in my father's home. At the age of sixteen a severe fever came in our family; I feared death very much. While at the barn with my father I began to sing, "When I can read my title clear to mansions in the skies." O how sore I did feel. I thought if my dear, innocent-minded brother, who was very sick, would die, his title would be clear, but for me there was no hope. I took the fever, and lay very low with it. Volumes would have to be written to tell you the travel of my mind; I was very anxious lest I should die unsaved. The next deep impression of mind which I can remember was at the age of eighteen, after attending the funeral of a very dear aunt. Next day while engaged doing the family washing out doors I was reflecting over the lovely words sang at the funeral:

"The saints of God, from death set free,
With joy shall mount on high;
The heavenly host with praises loud,
Shall meet them in the sky.
Together to their Father's house
With joyful hearts they'll go," &c.

I pondered long over that joyful meeting, and was so wrapped up in thought that I could almost fancy I could see them gathering home, but felt that I would have neither part nor lot with that happy throng. As I came into the house to prepare dinner, a very loathsome worm crept over the path; I felt I could not crush its life out, for the same hand had created us, and I must be meaner in God's holy sight than the worm was in mine, and if God would without warning cut me off I would be lost forever. We had company for dinner, and I tried to be as entertaining as possible. For the next five years I tried to dismiss such thoughts from my mind as much as possible. I felt that I was certainly a curious minded person, so I tried to mingle with cheerful companions and have a brighter time, although at the same time I felt conscientiously condemned, yet I would over exert myself in order to fulfill my duties at home and take in a fair share of worldly amusement. During those years I did wish my parents would quit going to hear those dry Old School Baptists, and go to hear Methodists, being anxious to learn the latest hymns, and considering the advantages in many ways. I often wondered why my sister, Mrs. Robbins, cared so much to hear Elder Pollard, but thought he was so plain and sober that he suited her. When asked by my parents to go to meeting I would frame some excuse to stay at home. Surely I have been led about in a wonderful way. It is a candid fact that I did not discern the difference in the doctrine. I knew that the one immersed and the other sprinkled. I never would talk on religion, feeling that it was too high a subject for discussion. My veneration for my parents' opinion caused me to believe they were right. I did be-

lieve they were true christians, and was very careful not to dictate to them, nor oppose them at all. Still I did love to get away to other meetings with my companions, being more concerned about the musical part than the discourse. When I heard real young people talk on the belief of each denomination it is strange to state that I did not discern the difference, until I do humbly hope that it pleased God to open my blind eyes and unstop my deaf ears. I do trust that I know the joyful sound. My heart burns within me when I hear the watchmen on the walls proclaim the glad tidings, that Jesus came into the world to save sinners, and give all the glory to God, who sent his only begotten Son to suffer and die on Calvary's cruel cross; not for his own sins, but for the sins of his people.

I think I never was so taken up with the beauty of this world as in the summer of 1881, that is twenty-two years ago. I would stand on a lovely elevation of ground and admire the four beautiful front fields in a row, with such grand crops; everything looked prosperous, and I certainly forgot my own dependence on the divine Creator. On the 18th day of September, 1881, while my father was threshing those fine crops, his barns took fire and were a total loss. The next morning about 3 o'clock I left all my young friends and walked out on the veranda to look at the last embers of our burning buildings. The irons of the machinery were still coiled and twisted with the intense heat. While I stood gazing, the thought came to me with power, When the earth shall all be wrapped in flames, how will it be with me, will I be coiling like those irons throughout eternity? O what a terrible state of mind I was in, cut right down to the very dust of the earth. I went into the house and to a dark room, but not to rest. I longed to be left alone, and tried to avoid every one. My mourning was very bitter over my lost and undone condition, without God and no hope of salvation. My constant prayer was, "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner;" "Lord, save, I perish." Some of my companions said to me, I cannot bear to leave you alone; believing, naturally enough, that I was fretting over our earthly loss, and until this day they do not know the reverse, for I could tell my sorrow to no one. The perishable goods of this world did not concern me, any more than to try to do my duty. I tried my old plan to read my Bible and try to lead a better life. While perusing its pages I read, "He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth;" also that there is forgiveness for all sin, but the sin against the Holy Ghost. I felt that I was a hardened sinner, and had surely committed the sin against the Holy Ghost. The condemnation weighed heavily upon my mind, and do what I would, or go where I would, I could not remove my burden; I did not know that any one had ever traveled through that dark vale of tears but myself. Pen cannot depict the sorrows of my poor, benighted, sin-sick soul. Night after night I would plead for mercy, without a ray of hope, feeling, as an earthly comparison, that if I were a poor, dirty beggar girl asking admission into the queen's palace, that it was more likely to expect a grand reception there than that such a vile, unclean worm of the dust would be welcomed among the saints of God. I felt that if I were lost forever, God would be just, but O, again the prayer would arise from my heart, "Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean." My gay companions told me how changed I was, and asked me to

cheer up and be as in days gone by. I tried to do so, and even went to parties to get rid of my load, but that only made me ten-fold worse. I always tried to conceal my sorrow by acting cheerful; at the same time I longed for perfect solitude, to devote my whole time to supplication. The thunder storms of that summer to me appeared terrible, I would tremble, and feel certain that I surely would be cut off and cast into endless perdition, and the words

"When thou, O Lord, will stand disclosed
In majesty severe,
And sit in judgment on my soul,
O how shall I appear?"

would keep sounding through my mind. When the storm would cease I would try in my weak way to thank God for sparing my life a little longer. When I would be walking through the fields the dry, parched, open cracks would make me mourn, feeling that it was a fair representation of my thirsty soul, and it seemed to me that everything in nature exalted his holy name but me. I have gone to revival meetings to try to brace up, and while there my own conscience kept saying, "What brought you here? What are you doing here?" I made up my mind I would never go to such a place again. While in such deep distress of mind I heard that my confidant, companion and schoolmate was to be baptized into the Regular Baptist Church at Dutton. While hastening my work in order to get time to go and spend the Saturday night previous to her baptism with her, I sprained my ankle and was unable to walk for some time. I was indeed very sorry, and as soon as I could walk went to visit her. When we retired for the night I told her of my disappointment. I had always considered her a good girl, and was very much surprised when she told me all about her distress of mind, and was real glad that the darkness hid my emotion from her. At last I ventured to say, "I wonder if I am one of those anxious ones of whom you speak." She replied, "I often thought you were, Effie." My feelings at that moment I never can describe. It is like the sorrow of death, none can understand but those who have experienced the same deep and sore trials. Then these words came as a cool draught:

"Why pourest thou forth thy plaintive cry,
Despairing of relief;
As if the Lord o'erlooked thy cause,
And did not heed thy grief?"

I felt wonderfully consoled. I never told her a word, and she now lives in Brooklyn, N. Y., or I would certainly tell her of that night's experience. Still I continued to work, and continued my daily formality. In fact "do and live" was my belief. I was very earnest, and went with her as often as possible to the Regular Baptist Church. One Sunday, while they were receiving candidates, her sister said to me, "Why don't we stay in?" I replied, "I wish I were fit." She was shortly afterwards received and baptized, and is now a great worker, but I never felt fit. About that time my companion made up her mind to go to college. She pleaded with me to go, and I was very anxious to do so, but when I saw that the thought of my going away grieved my parents, I concluded to do my duty to them at the sacrifice of my own comforts. I tell you I did feel alone and desolate; my mourning was bitter and sore both night and day. My cry was, Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thy flock feedeth? and O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, let me hear thy voice, &c.

(Concluded next number.)

THE RAINBOW.

Its beauty is unsurpassed; a spectrum of the seven prismatic colors obtained from the perfect prism. The necessary conditions to produce it are, a dark background, a prism and a ray of light. It is thought by some that the conditions to produce a rainbow did not exist before the flood. Whether this be true or not, can only interest the men of science. The believer in the truth of God is willing and glad to take a "thus saith the Lord" for every condition in nature and in grace. There is no discrepancy at any time between the truth in the science of natural things, and the truth of holy writ; they harmonize always. God uses natural things to present spiritual at such times as it pleaseth him, and as is necessary for our enlightenment and our comfort in the gospel. Inasmuch as God is not a creature, and the people to whom he has sent the Scriptures are not creatures of time, (but subjects of faith,) God could say at any time between the beginning and the end of time, "I do set my bow in the cloud," and it would not conflict in any way with scientific facts existing before or after, and we cannot necessarily infer that a rainbow was not seen before the flood, on the strength of such declaration; but we can say that the nations of the earth have never been in sufficient trepidation of a second deluge, to give us cause to believe that God's promise was given to them as a solace to their fears, but the promise was to his chosen people to show unto them wondrous things in righteousness. Neither do the people to whom this promise was sent regard the promise in a natural sense, which says: "Neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood, neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth," but by faith they see the promise of God, concerning the flood, fulfilled in their experience. After a lapse of more than sixteen hundred years, in the course of time, it pleased the Lord in his infinite wisdom to destroy every living thing from off the face of the earth, (save eight souls, and a sufficient number of living creatures to preserve the seed of their kind,) after which he established his covenant with the man (Noah) and his sons, and with every living creature that came out of the ark; and he gave them a token, saying, "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth," "And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth." Through faith Noah was saved by the same waters which destroyed the rest of mankind, (save his own house). In him the covenant (or promise) was established. An hundred years did Noah labor in the building of the ark, thus becoming a preacher of righteousness, he endured the jibes and sneers of the ungodly as they laughed him to scorn in the progress of his work, and when the time had fully come, he and his family passed into the ark. "And the Lord shut him in." So also, in the antitype, the church of Christ is saved by grace, through faith, hidden (shut in) from an ungodly world, in Christ Jesus, the Ark of safety, who is that covenant which God established with his church (Noah), and of whom it is declared: "Whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged

our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." How perfectly the wisdom of God is made manifest to the children of men, through faith, in every age of the world. All created things fulfill and accomplish the work which was ordained for them by the wise Creator; nothing was created in vain. Even from the infinitesimal to the great, each created thing fills his little niche in the economy, both of nature and grace, for surely there is nothing in all God's handiwork in nature but has its antitype in the spiritual world.

"And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it." Please carefully notice the reading of this Scripture. God does not say that you may look upon it and remember my promise to you, but that he would himself look upon it, that he might remember. When Jesus was baptized the voice of God came down from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." When do we see the bow in the cloud? After the storm, when the beating rain has ceased and the dark cloud has passed over, leaving a black background in the east, a little sprinkle of refreshing rain drops from the lightened edge of the disappearing cloud, with the sun shining in the west, the sun's rays piercing the transparent globules, breaking up the prism into its seven beautiful colors, and printing them upon the dark canvas beyond. This completes the picture which holds the enraptured eye of the onlooker, and God from eternity's heights, his holy mountain, looks down upon this entrancing scene, and remembers the everlasting covenant which he made with all living. Now let us glance at the antitype in the spiritual firmament. In Zion the discouraged pilgrim is wending his weary way; the dark clouds have gathered thick about him; he is famishing for thirst, and there is no water; he is hungry, but the heavenly manna is not; the little hope that he had yesterday seems almost gone; his doubts and fears have gathered thick about him; with the psalmist he cries, "But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well high slipped." In doleful echo his heart whispers, Surely I am deceived, and I have deceived those whom I so dearly love, woe is me. Remembering past mercies, his soul takes up the song of the night, "Will the Lord cast off forever? and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? doth his promise fail forevermore?" He feels that for him it were better had he never been born. The storm increases; he sees nothing but destruction before him; he faints and falls by the wayside; he exclaims with one of old, "All thy billows and thy waves passed over me." With sorrow he feels that this is the end; when he thought good should come unto him, behold evil became his portion, and adversity came upon him from every side; but when he is down at the bottom of the mountains, ready to give up, he feels a little thrill, (as of rain drops) a refreshing from the Lord; he looks up, the dark clouds are passing, the light breaks in upon him and he rejoices again in a risen, living Savior; and now instinctively he looks upon the face of nature, and his eye rests upon the bow in the cloud, and he remembers God's promise, his everlasting covenant; his heart echoes the glad cry: My dear Redeemer liveth, he is the promise, the covenant, the blessing, praise God from whom all blessings flow. When in retrospect we look back over the days and nights of the christian journey, what do we see? A life of ease and pleasure, with no stumbling or ob-

stacles? No indeed, but we see a thorny way, a rough road and stony, made up of long, dark valleys, and shorter hills, with a little scintillation of brightness at the top; a life made up of conflicts, yet, to be seen is a scarlet line in the window, promising deliverance and safety, from the divine power that is able to deliver. Who would exchange this life of hardships and suffering for a life of ease and pleasure in the world? Not one of the blood-bought throng, no, not one. Then let us sing the songs of Zion, and rehearse the blessings of the Lord, one to another, with glad voices and hopeful anthems.

B. F. COULTER.

FINAL PERSEVERANCE.

THE tenth chapter of John is the true key to the prophecy of Ezekiel concerning the shepherds. Woe unto the shepherds of Israel, who feed yourselves, and feed not the flock. A close comparison of the words of the prophet with the sayings of Jesus would reveal the depths of the divine goodness and wisdom of God, as manifested in the plan of redemption through our Lord Jesus Christ, the good Shepherd, who gave his life for his sheep.

In the words, the "hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep," the hireling is without interest or property right in the flock, he being only a hired servant. He could not therefore have a life-interest in them, and his contract with the owner did not bind him to imperil his life in protecting the sheep from the destroyer, represented by the wolf in the parable. Therefore he fleeth, because there is no life-bond to care for the sheep beyond his agreement in the covenant with the owner, and self-preservation would be pleaded in law to screen the hired shepherd from punishment. This shows the relation of the shepherds of Israel under the legal covenant, that conditional covenant of the law, under which every man should die for his sins, or be justified by his own righteousness. The idle shepherds were held to account under that system for unfaithfulness in service by neglecting the sheep, or for profiting themselves beyond the wages agreed upon, in feeding themselves or in clothing themselves by the wool of the flock. "Ye eat the fat and ye clothe you with the wool." There is also a very remarkable difference between the condition of the sheep under the law dispensation, and under the new covenant in the blood of Christ. Under the law every man stood accountable personally, without a life union with the Head of the covenant, and upon the righteousness of his own character. Though Noah, Job and Daniel stood among you, they should but deliver their own souls by their righteousness. It is by such waymarks as these that we distinguish between the shepherds of Israel, and the good Shepherd of the parable, which is under review. It is well to mark this difference in order to a correct understanding of this far-reaching parable of our Lord and Shepherd, the Bishop of our souls, who (unlike the hireling, which fleeth leaving the sheep to be caught and scattered by the wolf, because they are not his own sheep, and no life-bond exists between them that he should give his life for the sheep) is the owner and master of the flock, and was in covenant of old bound, as said the prophet, to meet the wolf with his own life, saying, I will rebuke the destroyer for thy sake. The thief cometh not but for to steal and to kill and to destroy, and the good Shepherd giveth his life for

the sheep. He said, "I lay down my life for the sheep." This shows the depth of meaning in the parable, in contrast with all that ever came before him, whom he styles thieves and robbers. He said, I "know my sheep, and am known of mine." "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

Within the sacred precincts of salvation which God hath appointed for walls and bulwarks, Jesus has included every sheep and lamb of the flock, saying, My Father gave them me, "I and my Father are one." Thus it is seen that the gift of God to his Son is the inheritance of the Father. Behold, I will give the heathen for thine inheritance, and the ends of the earth for possession. We learn also that in the unity of the Father and the Son, both are equally concerned in the procuring of the fulfillment of every stipulation of the agreement contained in the covenant of the gift to the Son. And because they are one it was said to the Son, "I will hold thy hand, and give thee for a covenant of the people." It was in this life-union with God, and with his people that Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Son of man, laid down his life for the sheep, that they should not perish, but have eternal life. Thus in faithfulness to his Father's will, the Son of God through his covenant of blood, made secure the life-interest of his sheep in a covenant of redemption, so that the sheep are not only his by gift of the Father, but also by purchase of his blood. They are so safely gathered by the will, purpose and predestination of God the Father, and so environed with the righteousness of the Son of God, that no wolf or other destroyer can approach the fold. Therefore, said Jesus, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." Yes, rivers in the mountains and streams in the desert.

By so much, and more, is the final perseverance of the saints secured by the death and resurrection of Christ. And "no lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast," but "the righteous shall dwell therein forever," are the words of the prophet. Here is the same everlasting security by the grace of God, and by the blood of his Son, and he is the Shepherd of the sheep, and he has eternal life-unity with them. And who shall say, nay? Only the spirit of antichrist, who denies both the Father and the Son in the covenant of eternal redemption. "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." In the mountain of the heights of Israel shall their fold be. They shall lie in the fields, and shall sleep in the woods, and the prophet declares that nothing shall hurt or destroy in all the holy mountain. How safe then is that eternal life which is hid with Christ in God, and though the outer man perish, the inward man is renewed day by day. Yea, as said Paul, "For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." But "in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us." It is then in all these heavenly things that the evidence of final perseverance of the saints is secured to them who worship God in the spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh. Even enlightened reason revolts at the thought that one who is the portion and lot of his inheritance, and the price of his blood, should ever fall and perish from him who is the good Shepherd.

Your brother,

I. N. NEWKIRK.

East Dixfield, Maine, July 12, 1904.

Elder F. A. Chick—Dear Brother in Christ:—Your kind letter of the 7th arrived in due time, and it is needless for me to say, was joyfully received. It is useless for you to offer apologies for delay, for each time that I receive your letters I am inexpressibly thankful for the manifestation of this blessing of our heavenly Father, in that it brings me nearer in heart to the household of faith and to the visible kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It creates a boldness in claiming kindred, and my heart goes out to the dear ones who so kindly remember the scattered of the flock, whose boast is alone in the Lord, and who put no confidence in the flesh.

You have written of your pleasure at the spring associations. I felt they would be marked with joy; I knew the gospel of God concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord would be proclaimed with no uncertain sound, and I felt an earnest desire that the hearing ear would be given, and much good be done in feeding the sheep and lambs. As I have before written you, I delight in reading the circular letters, and I much enjoyed the one from the text, "Let brotherly love continue," as also the one from the word "Brethren." I think in my life I have never felt any increase in my faith from the text so often applied to others: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," but I do know that when one applies this as I feel to, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life," I feel as though a sin-poisoned mortal desires to join in ascribing salvation to Jesus our King, and if I might claim relationship through his cleansing, and become a follower of him, I have this desire that I might claim the privilege of loving the brethren. I am often encouraged by the words of our Lord and Master, "I command you to love one another." And again, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

I find great comfort in the Signs, both from the explanation of Scripture and the letters; often they are like a cup of cold water to the thirsty. Especially have the subjects of the summer numbers cheered me. The writing from Deuteronomy iii. 26, led me to feel the force of the text, "Be still and know that I am God." It is so necessary for me to be still, with no questionings. The editorial from the pen of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe was so comforting in every way. And the city that John saw, near two thousand years ago, is still seen by the eye of faith by weary, sin-stricken watchers and waiters who long for the appearing of our Lord to open the prison doors, to remove the heavy burden, to fill the mouth with laughter and the tongue with singing, "O for a closer walk with God, a calm and heavenly frame." On a scrap of paper penciled 1902, I found inscribed most assuredly my constant needs:

"Holy Spirit, Dove divine,
Warm and cheer this heart of mine;
Lead me to the cleansing stream,
Which alone can make me clean.

Purge my earthly dross away,
Bathe me in the new-born ray
Of the glorious spotless One,
Who for us the victory won.

With the armor ever bright,
With the garment pure and white,
Be for me the guiding star,
Lest I wander, straying far.

I am weak and full of sin,
Shed thy influence within;
Keep me in the narrow way,
To the perfect, endless day."

I have many times found consolation in the first clause of Psalms xxiii. 5, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies," and my feet are lifted often thereby from the horrible pit and miry clay, and placed upon the Rock, and the new song is put in my mouth, even praise to the living God. How needful is the prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread." We can lay up nothing in a spiritual sense, more than the children of Israel could of the manna in the wilderness, but our spiritual Joseph has an abundant store, and keeps us in time of famine. With the psalmist I can say, The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice. "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne." "Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness." "Glorious things of thee are spoken, Zion, city of our God." Her stakes shall never be removed or her cords broken. It has been my privilege in the past to look upon Jerusalem, a quiet habitation, and if my eyes are holden, that I cannot see, her provisions are the same, and in oaths and promises and blood the foundation standeth sure, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his."

I am reading from your pen about your trip south. If the truth is preached at all, it must be preached in love, and if believed, it must be in love. Ye are dead, says the word, and your life is hid with Christ in God; it is first a crucified, then a risen Savior; first pardon, then peace that we obtain. "Not as the world giveth, give I unto you," says the dear Redeemer; and we must suffer the warfare to obtain the rejoicing of victory. I often look with wonder at the persistency of the old Adamic nature, which when flesh and sense decay, instead of yielding in its goadings, is just as alert, just as ready, as it seems to me, to harrass the saints of God as before. With the poet I feel to say, "Strong were thy foes," but the hand that subdued them and scattered their legion was mightier for pardon and peace. How sweet to feel even the hope, if not the power of it.

How very appropriate were the remarks of brother Badger in the SIGNS; how much satisfaction it must bring to every heart who contributed to lighten the burden of brother Beebe, which with ill health was pressing him sorely. I truly desire that the tried and true family paper, the SIGNS, may still be blessed, and that you will find strength equal to your day, and that years of usefulness may be granted you.

Your unworthy sister,

ELIZA WHEELWRIGHT.

RATON, New Mexico, July 14, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—Your welcome letter of the 6th inst. came duly to hand; we were very glad to hear from you. I know you have very many letters to write, besides your editorials, and I do not expect you to answer all my letters, but I must write from time to time, to keep you in remembrance that here in the south-west Rockies you have staunch friends, as well as in old Hopewell.

In looking over some papers yesterday I was reminded that my father was ordained in Wilmington, Delaware, July 4th, 1802.

Your gathering at sister Terry's on the fourth must have been a delightful meeting. I remember sister Terry's great-grandmother, a great friend of my father, and a pillar in the church.

As I hear of one and another of the Hopewell members that have been baptized since we left home, I can trace them

back four and five generations, and their ancestors, steadfast in the faith. A lady said to me recently there were no more Old School Baptists in this age of modern improvement. I explained to her that she was mistaken. I understand that when the elect family are all developed the use of this world will be done. When I was a child it was quite a common thing to hear a class of people say they expected to hear the funeral sermon of the last Old School Baptist. Poor, ignorant boasters, they did not know that such a thing was impossible. "The dead in Christ shall rise first." I distinctly remember when the first session of the Delaware River Association met at Hopewell, the common remark was, "There are no preachers but Father Boggs and Chris. Suydam to be there," but Gilbert Beebe, Samuel Trott and others were there, but I do not remember the others. The Central Association preachers all went with the New School but my father and Elder Suydam.

Elder Fetter left this morning for Syracuse, Kansas. A three days meeting was appointed some months ago to take place the third Sunday in July, and Friday and Saturday before it, to constitute a church and ordain brother D. B. Nowles. They sent for brother Fetter to be with them and assist in the work. He joins me in kind christian remembrance to you. I realize that your duties are very arduous. The church membership is widely scattered, giving you much labor in visiting them, beside your regular appointments, funerals and other calls, and your editorial duties must keep you very busy. All the friends we meet seem well pleased with your work on the SIGNS. I can only say, may Israel's God be your support and stay in all your trials, for trials must be the lot of the Lord's chosen ones, and it is not the strength of man that can do any good. Remember us to sister Martha Phillips. May the Lord be her stay. To all the household of faith we send christian greeting. We are few in number, and widely scattered, but we have some glorious meetings. The promise is to the "two or three." If our Lord deigns to be with us, then we have the enjoyment. I have heard Mrs. Eliza Ann Van Buskirk say that the greatest sermon my father ever preached, he preached on a very rainy Saturday afternoon, to her and a Mrs. Bowen, who lived near brother Zephaniah Stout's farm. They walked to meeting, took a lunch and started about 11 a. m. In the afternoon it commenced to rain very hard, but my father, as was his custom, went to the meeting-house; he met these two sisters there. The storm so increased that no one else got there, but he preached, and they heard. I suppose they had the hearing ear; she often told me of that sermon. Yes, I would like to be there and talk over with you the old times at Hopewell.

I think I had better stop writing. If not asking you too much, will you send me the Minutes of the four associations?

What a confusion the world is in; wars here and wars there, and troubles everywhere. But the Lord rules, rules in wisdom, rules in goodness, and all must subserve his purpose; hence we need have no trouble about it.

Yours in christian love,

E. H. BOGGS.

MEMPHIS, Tenn.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—While I admit myself to be unworthy, there is in me a principle of great interest, spiritually I hope, and otherwise, in the prosperity of those who

believe the truth as advocated in the SIGNS, and in all those who are not ashamed to own their Lord or to defend his cause. If I could be sure that this interest was love for the brethren, it would console and encourage me to strive to enter in at the strait gate again and again. But with such bundles of sinful words, thoughts and deeds, as seem to possess me, I can scarcely hope to walk the strait and narrow way. I was forty-seven years of age the twelfth of February. I have read the Bible to learn the truth for the past twenty-nine years. At that time, twenty-nine years ago, I hoped to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth, but if those precious fruits, faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity, ever were in me, they seem not to have abounded. Therefore while I love the words and writings of the brethren, the words that become sound doctrine, yet I feel within myself that I am barren and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus I must fear that I lack these things, and am blind, and cannot see far off, and have forgotten that I was purged from my old sins. Perhaps I am as were some angels of old who had left their first estate, and perhaps, like them, I am reserved in everlasting chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day. I think it is well to notice that while these chains were everlasting, the angels who were bound in them, were bound unto the judgment of the great day. My opinion regarding the angels named in the text is, that they were God's messengers among the Jews, under the law, and that these angels were among those Israelites unto whom blindness had happened. God had, according to his purpose, given them the spirit of slumber, eyes, that they should see not, and ears that they should hear not. Thus, according to the purpose of God, blindness happened in part unto Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be gathered in. Then all Israel, these angels included, should be saved. The great day of judgment is, I think, that day when all, both Jew and Gentile, shall receive the judgment, which is peace and joy, by virtue of the righteousness of Christ. Thus I may at last be brought to realize that what I thought was a hope, twenty-nine years ago, was a genuine one.

Wife and I are exceedingly glad that the SIGNS continue, and we subscribe to everything good in the words of encouragement and condolence with regard to that departed soldier of the cross, B. L. Beebe, for he was faithful indeed. We should but feel to rejoice if it should yet please God to raise up another Gilbert Beebe to be upon the editorial staff of the SIGNS. We know that it is a very responsible position, and the power, wisdom and grace of God is the only perfect way in which one can be fitted to be an editor of such a paper as the SIGNS. All its editors, beginning with Elder Gilbert Beebe, to the present, have been thus qualified. It is encouraging to know that the SIGNS has the assistance of Elder Chick, with that of Elder Ker, and a host of others as correspondents. Of course we know that when they have done all that they can do, they all will feel that they are unprofitable servants; they feel in all their labor, it is not I, but the grace of God which is with me. Thus they admit that the good work done, is just what Jesus has wrought by them.

It does seem to me that if all Primitive Baptists could behold the lilies, how they grow, and thus come to know that it is only God's own work that the lilies grow at all,

they would all give all praise to God, and remember that it is the living lilies that grow, and not stones. They are by God's own power living, growing up unto his name's praise. Even so, by grace, through faith, do the people of God grow up in God's grace. It is said in another figure that they are stones. But contrary to nature, they are by grace, lively stones, growing as the lilies do, being clothed with the righteousness of God through Christ Jesus. When we behold and consider this growth in the people of God, by which they glorify their Father in heaven, it is to the praise of God in us also. It is the sight of this growth in our brethren that often converts us from the error of our way, and thus in proportion to the grace of God manifested in our brother, we are converted by him, and so saved from death, as the apostle testifies; and when our faithful brother thus converts us, he will admit gladly, it was "not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Therefore he will not dare speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought in him, to make him obedient in word or deed. The grace by which my brother has converted me was measured out in him before the foundation of the world. This grace is eternal, and this eternal grace by which my brother converted me from the error of my way, saved me in time. There is one salvation, and all therefore of grace. Yet I am sorry that some in avoiding a false theory say, after many years of labor in the ministry, that they have never done one good thing. Why if God hath called, qualified, chosen and ordained us, that we should go and bring forth fruit, must it not be that we have done that to which we are chosen? Then is it not wrong to say that "we never have done one good thing"? Our disposition to be humble does not justify us in denying what God in Christ hath wrought by us. Let not false teaching alarm us so that we fear to speak of what God hath wrought by us. We are not boasting when we declare that the grace of God, which has been with us, did labor in us, and that by it we have labored. There is nothing conditional on our part in doing what God hath wrought by us, nor if we grow, and are clothed as the lilies are.

Yours in truth,

DAVID L. McNEES.

KANSAS, Ill., June 13, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—In some of my meditations to-day of times and things that have passed, I recall some pleasant things that took place while my wife and self were visiting you and the brethren and sisters in Hopewell, a few years ago. My wife very often speaks of that as one of her most enjoyable seasons through life. It has been my happy lot to spend many enjoyable seasons among the dear people of God during the last sixty-one years since I was received among them. On the fifth Sunday in May I filled an appointment which had been made for me at the old church-house where I had been baptized by dear old Elder Thomas Threlkeld, on the third Sunday in March, 1843. O how solemn was the occasion to me; not an individual was there, except myself, that was then present, all have gone to their eternal home, and I knew I, too, would soon be gone. I thought, Could it be possible that my "works would follow me," as some of the works of the dear ones whose bodies lay in the old cemetery close by the meeting-house where we were then assembled? My dear brother, can it be that I have been mistaken all these long years, and have

not known the truth? Sometimes I get so low down in my feelings that I almost lose hope, yet again with Job I feel to say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and with Jonah when in the depths of the sea, I can say, "Salvation is of the Lord." I know if it were not so there would be no salvation for me.

As I before stated, I have had many pleasant seasons with the dear people of God, some specially so. When reading of the way the Lord has led the writers, I am also often made to take some courage while reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I find so many of the writers are being led the same dark way that I am so often traveling in. This calls to my mind the prayer of one old prophet, when he was shut up in the cave, and said, Lord, they have "thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." So we may be shut up in utter darkness, but the Lord has reserved unto himself seven (a perfect number) thousand that have not bowed the knee to Baal. Yes, we may doubt, but the Lord "is in one mind, and who can turn him?" This is the reason we are not consumed.

I find I cannot write very lengthy, I am so nervous. Often when writing I think it is probably my last, then again I desire to say to the dear brethren and sisters, Write on, your epistles are food to my soul. Your editorials are also much enjoyed by us.

Your brother in hope,

JAMES M. TRUE.

WAVERLY, Pa.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—This letter from Elder Z. M. Beal expresses what I have tried to express many times. Would like it published if it meets your mind.

D. M. VAIL.

BOWDOIN CENTRE, Me.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—MY DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER:—The reading of your request to the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in No. 4, of 1903, created in me a desire to write you a short letter. I was somewhat surprised in relation to what you said in regard to hearing from many sources that there is a report circulated that you "do not believe in the resurrection of the dead, or devil, or hell, or eternal happiness." I have listened a number of times to you when preaching, and by what you have preached I have been satisfied and convinced that you believe in Jesus. Are there any promises in the law, or in the prophets, or in the gospel of Christ, that are not embodied in the fullness of Jesus? If there are I have never found them in my experience. My dear brother, I am satisfied that if one believes in Jesus that his faith cannot go beyond him, for it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell. Is he not of God made unto his children wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption? The writer to the Hebrews uses the following language, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."—Heb. i. 1, 2. This is the tried stone that God laid in Zion for a foundation, and other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ, who ever liveth. "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death." Can God's children get beyond this eternal Jesus? Can they stand upon any other foundation? No, they

cannot, because if they are upon any other foundation they will surely fall. The people of God are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, (the city that John saw coming down from God, out of heaven,) and to an innumerable company of angels, ("but are as the angels of God in heaven,") to the general assembly and church of the first born, (Jesus) which are written in heaven, and to the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel; old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new, therefore if any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature, he dwells in a new and living way, no death in this way, but there is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death, but we hear Jesus saying, I am the way, the truth and the life, "I am the resurrection, and the life: [this is in the present tense,] he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."—John xi. 25, 26. Because they are born not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. And again, "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: and because I live, ye shall live also." Brother Vail, what wonderful and glorious things are revealed, not to the wisdom of this world, nor to the imagination of the heart, but to the faith of the followers of Jesus.

I do not know as this letter will be of any comfort or consolation to one that is born of God, but I have no desire to write or say anything that will edify or puff the flesh, for the flesh profiteth nothing, it is the Spirit that quickeneth. I do at times hope that I have been born of the Spirit, so that I can call Jesus the Lord; I also hope that I by the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ have been crucified unto the world and the world unto me. I rejoice at times when by faith I can behold all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden in the Godhead. I want to say as Peter said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." But I know that I cannot say this unless God reveals it unto me, for "no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." I am a poor, ignorant, helpless sinner, and the only hope that I have, if any, is in Jesus, for he came into the world to save sinners.

May God bless you with the mercies, comforts and consolation of the gospel of his Son, for his name's sake. Remember me to sister Vail. My wife sends love to you both.

If you think this poor letter is worth a reply, I would be rejoiced to hear from you.

Your poor brother, in hope of mercy,
Z. M. BEAL.

PINE BLUFF, Ark., May 2, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR:—The time has come that I should again send on my remittance for the SIGNS. I was very sorrowful at brother Beebe's death, but I feel assured that God has another to fill his place, all things work together for good to them that love God, and who are the called according to his purpose. It is according as his divine power has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of him who hath called us to glory and virtue, and neither is there salvation in any other,

for there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. This is set at naught by worldly preachers. Our Lord Jesus Christ said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." Again he said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me," and that through evil report as well as good report. Thus we see there is no way from earth to heaven but through the Lord Jesus Christ, he is the way, and he is the door into heaven. John came preaching, saying, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." The Lord Jesus Christ and his kingdom was at hand, he is all in all to his people. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." He loved us with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving-kindness has he drawn us. No man has ever come to the Savior, except the Father has drawn him, and all who come to him are drawn by loving-kindness and the holy Spirit. He places us in the house of God, just as it pleases him. Jesus said, "Upon this rock will I build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." I am glad that this is written. He will build the church, not churches, but church. And one of old said, We "are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone." And all the building grows together unto an holy temple in the Lord. Dear children, I am so glad it is in the Lord that this building grows, and not in self. So it is by grace that we are saved, through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is not by works, but by grace; for the grace of God brings salvation. This salvation teaches us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world.

Your brother,

D. WESTALL.

CUMMINSVILLE, Neb., July 27, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I wrote you some time ago with regard to the bill passed to open thirty-seven counties in Nebraska, to homesteads of 640 acres each, and from the letters I am getting am sure you published it. I have not time to answer each separately. If not asking too much, will you please publish the following statements? First, the land is sandy, and is better adapted for grazing purpose than farming. Second, a man or a woman can make a living on 640 acres. Third, we have plenty of rain in this part of the State. Fourth, the land as a rule is all taken up, except some odds and ends. Fifth, there are lots of people who want to sell their claims cheap. Sixth, a man or a woman living in the State and over twenty-one years of age, not owning more than 160 acres, can take a homestead. There is room for one thousand Old School Baptists in Nebraska. I am not posted as to how much of the land is taken up in other counties, but in Wheeler County there are but three whole sections left, but there are many small pieces of land that can be bought from two to twenty-five dollars per acre, owing to the improvements and location.

This answers the most important questions asked me by the letters which I have received.

Your brother, I hope,

J. S. HAM.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1904.

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EDITOR:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

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1 JOHN III. 9.

DEAR BROTHER:—I would like to have your views upon 1 John iii. 9, if it is not asking too much. I have never heard any one preach upon or try to explain this verse. If you deem this worthy of a reply, answer when it suits you through the SIGNS.

Your unworthy sister,

JENNIE ARMSTRONG.

GRAEFENBERG, Ky., April 25, 1904.

The Scripture referred to reads as follows: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

We feel willing to present such thoughts as we have upon this subject, although in past years very much was written and very diverse views were presented regarding it. It seems to us sure that there are some things that it cannot mean. First, it cannot signify that believers in Christ, or those born of God, do not err in life and conduct at any time, for to claim this would be to contradict the general tenor of all the Scriptures, and it is sure that one portion of the word is not a contradiction of any other portion. To admit that such is the case would be to deny the infallibility of the word of God, or in other words, that the Scriptures are the word of God at all. In this very epistle it is written, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." In the same connection it is said, "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." All might however say it is true that we have sinned, but we do not sin now. In refutation of such a claim as this John has said, as quoted before, "If we say we have no sin," in the present tense. Paul, long years after he became an apostle of the Lamb, said concerning sin and sinners, "of whom I am chief." Job, that man whom God approved as one who was a perfect man, yet said of himself, "I am vile;" and "If I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse." It is from a perverted nature then that any man can say, I am perfect. It does not however seem needful to pursue this line of scriptural quotation any further here.

Second. The text does not read, whatsoever is born of God, but "whosoever." This is not a distinction without a difference. The text does not say, and neither does it mean, that one portion of the believer does not sin, while another portion may sin. It does not say that the soul, or the spirit, or the body of the believer does not sin, and neither does it say that the new man does not sin, while the old man does sin. The word "whatsoever" would be the right word to use in either of these supposed cases, but it is not whatsoever is born of God, but "whosoever." It is as though John had said, The man that is born of God does not sin, for his seed (that is, the seed of God) remaineth in him, and he (the man born of God) cannot sin because he is born of God. "Whosoever" always means persons, men and women, when it is used either in the Bible or anywhere else. "Whatsoever" never is applied to persons, but to things.

Third. It is needful to call attention to

this one thought also, viz: that the text not only says he that is born of God does not sin, but that he *cannot* sin, and this because he is born of God. This in itself would do away with the claims of those who are known as Sanctificationists. Even they admit that they *can* sin, although they claim that they do not, and have not for days, months or years, as the case may be. But inspiration here says that such as are born of God cannot sin.

Fourth. Notice also that the reason given is two-fold, "He is born of God," and "his seed remaineth in him." He that is born of God partakes of the divine nature, and as God is love, so love dwells in him and abides in him who is born of God also. Love is shed abroad in the heart by and in this birth of God. As the seed or life of Adam is in his posterity, and always abides in them while they live the life of Adam, so the seed or life of God, the divine nature, remains in all those who are the children of God by this heavenly birth. Men and women of Adam's fallen race are the elect of God, and are those who are born of him. The Savior so testifies when he said, "Except a man be born again," or born from above, or "born of God," he cannot see the kingdom of God. So we read, John i. 13, Which were born, not of blood, but of God. The relative pronoun "which," at the beginning of this verse, refers to those who were believers, and to whom power has been given to become the sons of God. These were men and women of Adam's fallen race, just like ourselves. In 1 John ii. 29, we read, "Every one that doeth righteousness is born of him." This manifestly refers to all who believe, and who produce fruits of faith, which is "doing righteousness." In 1 Peter i. 23, we read, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." This "word of God" which liveth and abideth forever, is the same thing as the word "seed," in the text to which our attention has been called; and it is the man who in verse twenty-two is exhorted to love his brethren with a pure heart fervently. In other words, men and women who are called by grace and who believe in Christ are they that are born of this incorruptible seed, the word of God. The word "seed" in the New Testament, when used with reference to divine things, always means the life which is of God. Of this life the dear Redeemer spoke when he said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and I give unto them eternal life." This eternal life abides, and never shall or can depart from them; it would not be eternal life if indeed it could cease. Our natural life does not continue to dwell in us, and so it is not eternal life. This principle of divine or eternal life is the thing that is intended by the "seed" named in the text. Under the figure of living water, it is said to dwell in men, springing up into eternal life. Whatever figure of speech is used to present this divine life in the word, it always has the thought involved in it (and nearly always expressed) of abiding. So John here says of this seed that it abideth in him.

Whosoever then has been born of God has eternal life from God as his Father, and this life cannot cease to be in that man or woman. It is a holy life, and as such will produce holy affections, desires, longings and all hatred of sin, and abhorrence of that which would tempt to sin. Under its power, reigning in the heart, he that once hated holiness and loved sin, now loves holiness and all holy ways and abhors sin. Love is the oppo-

site of hatred, and John in all this epistle sets one over against the other. In the view of the holy Spirit, speaking through John, all men either hate God, holiness and truth, or they love God and all goodness; there is no half-way ground. Jesus also said, "He that is not with me, is against me: and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad." No man can occupy neutral ground in this warfare. It is impossible that he that is not born of God should love God, and it is impossible that he who is born of God should hate God. He that is born of the word of God will love that word, while he that is not born of the word of God cannot love that word. Therefore, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," and whosoever hateth his brother, abideth in death. Men either abide in death or they abide in life. Hatred of all that exalts and glorifies God marks the one, love to all that exalts the God of grace marks the other.

Now it seems to us that if we but bear in mind this broad but simple distinction between the two principles of hatred and love, as declared by the inspired apostle, much of the apparent difficulty of the text will disappear. All sin is, in the view of John, summed up in hatred, hatred of God and what he has revealed, while all holiness is summed up in love to God and to all that is like him. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." If we do not love our brother whom we have seen, how can we love God whom we have not seen? is the unanswerable reasoning of John. Reading the text in the light of these reflections it seems clear that John is teaching just what every child of God finds to be true in himself. Does he that is born of God commit the sin of hating God or his beloved people? Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, that is, he does not hate God. The life of God remaineth in him, and he cannot hate God, or godliness, or the people who are partakers of the divine nature. He cannot hate God, because he is born of God. Nothing can hate that which is in harmony with its own nature. Sinners cannot hate sin, because they are sinners by nature, and by practice as a result. Partakers of the divine nature cannot hate that nature, for to do so would be to hate one's own self, and no man can hate himself when left to himself. It seems to us that it is in this sense that he that is born of God does not sin, and cannot sin, and this, too, notwithstanding he may and does err again and again. But does not that man hate his sins and abhor that fleshly nature which remaining also in him wages warfare against the Spirit? It is one thing to love sin and to run after sin greedily, and quite another thing to hate sin and yet to be overtaken in faults. It is one thing to run after sin with all of one's might, and quite another thing to run away from sin with all of one's might. A little girl once, coming to an Old Baptist church for membership, was questioned somewhat closely, and among other things it was said to her, "Do you see any difference between what you formerly were, and what you are now?" "O yes," she said, "then I was a sinner running after sin with all of my might; now I am a sinner running away from sin as hard as I can." She could not have told the whole matter better had she used a thousand words; and this last expression of hers also tells just what John meant by saying that he that is born of God doth not commit sin, and cannot sin. That man still is a sinner, but

he is not in love with sin, but hates sin, and runs away from it as hard as he can.

It seems to us that John here is only saying in other words just what Paul has also said regarding this matter. In Romans vi. 11–22, we read there in substance just the same things John is saying here. In that connection Paul says, "Sin shall not have dominion over you." Mark, he does not say sin shall not have a place in you, but it shall not reign over you. Sin in you is like a rebel company in some kingdom. These rebels trouble and annoy, and cause the inhabitants of that land great loss from time to time, but they do not reign after all, and they never can reign unless the inhabitants of that land submit to them, and the rightful king be dethroned. But believers shall never submit to the reign of sin, and the rightful King Immanuel shall never be dethroned from that dominion. Believers are said by Paul, in the same connection, to be free from sin and to have become servants of righteousness; free from the dominion, as the connection shows, but not from the presence of it. Its reign, its condemning power, its dominion over the affections are gone, but it still plagues and annoys us. Again, Paul in the same connection says, "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." The fruit is not any longer hatred, but love, just as John has been saying. In fact the whole of the sixth chapter of Romans is an inspired commentary upon this language of John. Paul in that chapter sets forth the indwelling life of Christ on the one hand, and that death to sin which is wrought in the believer on the other hand. He says, "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" All, according to Paul, depends upon the work of the Spirit in the heart. And so also John presents the same things when he calls attention to that love of God which is shed abroad in the heart and which is the opposite, as said before, of love.

To sum it all up, it does not seem to us that John meant, first, that the people of God do not err; second, the text does not say whatsoever, but "whosoever" is born of God; third, it says that such an one not only does not, but cannot sin; fourth, the reason is just this, such an one is born of God, and this new life remaineth in him; fifth, John presents love as the fulfilling of the law of God, so that he that loves sins not, while he that loves not God is a sinner, and it is in this sense of loving God as opposed to the hatred of the natural man, that the one born of God does not and cannot sin; that is, he cannot cease to love God. The warfare will be felt as long as that man shall live this lower life, but the victory is with the new life of love begotten in his heart, and so in one sense, according to John, the believer does sin, while in another sense he does not sin, and cannot sin. This is not to his credit, but to the praise of the new life dwelling within him and reigning there; and so John sees the same truth expressed by Paul when he said, If then I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

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EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

JEREMIAH II. 33.

ELDER BEEBE:—Please give your views on Jer. ii. 33, and oblige an

INQUIRER AFTER TRUTH.

REPLY.

The passage proposed for consideration reads as follows: "Why trimmest thou thy way to seek love? therefore hast thou also taught the wicked ones thy ways."

This searching appeal was made by the Lord God of Israel to Jerusalem by the mouth of Jeremiah the prophet, after having rehearsed some of the wonderful works of God in his dealings with Israel, in breaking for them the Egyptian yoke, and conducting them in safety through the dreary wilderness, and putting them in possession of the promised land, and their ingratitude to him for his signal mercies, and their rejection of him as their God, their transgression of his laws, and their abominable idolatry. This righteous reproof, though in interrogative form, clearly implies a charge of inconstancy, a departure from the Lord, and a restless desire to secure the love of strangers, and to impart the knowledge of her ways to the wicked.

In the few remarks which we design to make on this text, we will notice that the Jerusalem which is addressed and reproved in our subject, is a type of the church of God under the gospel dispensation, and her wicked lewdness and idolatry prefigures the waywardness of those under the present dispensation, who having espoused the cause of the Redeemer, and professed allegiance to our Lord Jesus Christ, have, like their prototype committed the same two evils which are charged on Israel in the thirteenth verse, namely: "They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." If we would read the rebukes which the Lord administered to national Israel to profit, we should remember that these things were written for our learning, and examine carefully whether we are not to some extent involved in the abominations by which Israel was polluted. If we are the spiritual Jerusalem, of which the former was only the type, then we also have been redeemed from an house of bondage, and led forth by the mighty hand and outstretched arm of the God of our salvation. We also (but in a spiritual and experimental sense) have been preserved from the perils of the wilderness; we also have witnessed the awful majesty of almighty God, as he displayed himself from the clouded summit of the trembling mount which was convulsed at the presence of Jehovah, and we too have heard in thunder tones the proclamation of his fiery law. We have also professed to have entered into the land of rest, the gospel kingdom. "For we which have believed do enter into rest." We have ceased from our own works, as God ceased from all the works which he had made, when he rested on the seventh day. We have renounced all hope in every other name, we have solemnly engaged to take on us his yoke, and learn of him who is meek and lowly; and like Israel, we have repeatedly said, All that the Lord our God has commanded us, that will we do. But how have we kept the pledge? As individuals, every saint is heard to confess with deep contrition his short-comings. But the reproof was applied to Jerusalem, collectively, when in a state of deep degeneracy, when her priests had ceased to inquire after the Lord, and they who handled the law were utterly ignorant of God. We cannot conceive that this state

of things is always applicable to the whole church of God, neither was this at all times the case with the old Jerusalem. If we understand the bearing of this subject in its typical bearing, it is applicable to the church, or to any branch of the church of God, whenever and wherever they depart from the Lord as their only fountain of living waters, either in doctrine or practice, in faith or in order, in departing from the precepts, ordinances or spirit of the gospel of our salvation.

The special charge implied against Jerusalem was that she trimmed her way, or shaped her course with a view to seek the applause of the world, or to seek love. Not satisfied with the love of God which passeth knowledge, which is unspeakable and full of glory, but seeking for the illicit love of strangers. Jerusalem, in the type stood in matrimonial relation to the Lord, and hence whenever she went into idolatry, or after other gods, or whenever she fell in love with and worshiped the works of her own hands, she was charged with the crime of adultery. So the New Jerusalem which John saw coming down from God out of heaven, was called the bride, the Lamb's wife, and bound by the most solemn obligations of fidelity to our Lord Jesus Christ, bound to love and serve him only, and to be satisfied with his love. When, therefore, the church or any of her branches become fascinated with the world, or the fashions thereof, and desirous to become popular and pleasing to the world, or to be in league with antichrist, her desire betrays an adulterous inclination. When that inordinate desire predominates, she shapes her course, or trims her way to seek their applause, and secure their love, although the Husband of the bride has plainly admonished her, that if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Can he whose love for his bride was so great that he for her sake became poor, that he bare her sins in his own body, that he gave himself for her, that he might redeem her from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works; can he whose love for his bride was stronger than death, be satisfied with the divided affections of his bride in return? Or will he allow her to seek for love among strangers? Except a man hate his father and mother, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple, saith the Redeemer. It may seem strange that the bride of the Lamb of God should ever find it in her heart to depart from him when well she knows that in his presence is fullness of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures for evermore, but so it is; though the ox knoweth his owner, and the stupid ass his master's crib, yet Israel doth not know, the Lord's people do not consider.

But let us consider the symptoms of inconstancy: How do churches, when in pursuit of unlawful love, trim their way? Their legitimate way is the way of holiness, it is to follow the footsteps of Christ, it is to worship God in the Spirit, to rejoice in Christ Jesus, and to have no confidence in the flesh, but to be pleasing and fascinating to strangers, her ways require trimming. This term implies both cutting off and putting on. As when we trim a tree or a vine we lop off some or all its natural branches, but when we trim a dress, or a person, or a house, or carriage, we put on such ornaments as we may fancy will please the taste and command the admiration of beholders. The term in both applications is appropriate in setting forth the degeneracy of churches, and individual christians when *suffered* to depart from the simplicity of the gospel in order to gain the applause

of the world, or to be at peace with antichrist.

First, there is a lopping off. We perceive that those whose treacherous love and favor we are lusting after, cannot bear our way, as it has been plainly marked out in the divine rule, and as long as we so tenaciously contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, we cannot have their company; we must be a little and despised flock, our name must be cast out as evil, and we must be regarded as the offscouring of all things; and in that case, the noble ones of the earth, the learned, the wealthy and the great, will not mingle with us; but if we will trim our way by avoiding those things which never fail to make diviners angry, say less about the divine sovereignty of God, the total depravity and utter inability of men, lop off eternal unconditional election, predestination, the special irresistible work of God in regeneration, the infallibly efficacious calling of all the chosen and redeemed people of our God, and the special atonement of Christ, as being exclusively for the elect, and even if we are obliged to believe in our hearts that all these are clearly demonstrated in the Bible, as the truth of God, still quit giving offence to the enemy by preaching them publicly; trim a little and perhaps we may convince the world that we are not quite so bad as they have taken us to be. When we have succeeded in trimming down the preaching so as to prevent any offensive doctrine to ring from our pulpits we may next set about trimming the ordinances. Baptism as instituted by Christ himself is objected to by those whose love we court, but what they have substituted in its place is so modified as to suit the world. Then as we would gain the esteem of strangers, let nothing be heard in defense of truth, nor in opposing or exposing error on that, or on any other subject. And as the world regards us as too tight-laced in regard to our communion, so long as we exclude from the table all unbaptized persons, and all others who do not walk in the faith and order of the divine rule, by being more accommodating, we may fill up our churches, and compare favorably in members and in respectability with other denominations around us. It has been the practice of the gospel church in all ages to require an evidence of a regenerated state of all whom they admit to baptism and church membership, but if we would please the world that practice must also be trimmed, and if applicants cannot enter in among us by the door, what harm, if we just let them climb up some other way?

One source of annoyance to the strangers in the untrimmed way of Zion has always been that our watchmen, whom God has set up on the walls, have been in the habit of sounding an alarm whenever they have seen the enemy approaching. How uncourteous that practice seems! Why not let them come, who knows but they would be good friends, if we would only let them come in peaceably? When we see the wolf coming, if he has wrapped himself snugly in sheeps' clothing, does not that show that he loves the sheep, and desires their company? Why then scare them away by our alarm; who knows but what if we let them in, they will conclude to become sheep themselves some day? Can there be any reasonable doubt that this kind of trimming would cause the offence of the cross to cease? And if the world cannot be persuaded to join the church, the church would join the world, and so the distinction so much complained of would cease.

As *trimming* implies a putting on as

well as trimming off, it may imply such decorations as the carnal mind may suggest to attract the attention and fascinate those who could never appreciate the beauty of the church of God as her Savior has arrayed her. In Isaiah iii. 16–23, the daughters of Zion are described in their fancy trimmings, Haughtily walking with stretched forth necks, and wanton eyes, mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet, displaying the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon, the chains and the bracelets and the mufflers, the bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the head-bands, and the tablets, and the earrings, the rings and the nose-jewels, the changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins, the glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils, &c. Inspired wisdom has employed the foregoing figures to set forth the folly and wickedness of the church, or any of her daughters, or branches, when dissatisfied with the garments of salvation in which God has clothed his church, and desiring to be fashionable, and to please the world, and to allure and draw to her embrace those who have never passed from death unto life, she trims her ways to seek love.

Look at some branches of the church which stood on gospel grounds forty years ago, were *then* satisfied to dwell alone and not be reckoned with the nations. Where are they to-day? Abroad and seeking love. See how they are lumbered down with tinkling ornaments, with Missionary Societies, Tract Societies, Sabbath School Unions, Theological Schools, and educated ministry, cringing to antichrist, and mincing as they go to seek for proselytes. Why have they put on all the fashionable institutions common to the daughters of Babylon, if it be not to seek love, aye, forbidden love? Their necks are stretched forth with haughtiness as they mince along, tinkling with the ornaments of their feet to attract the adulterous gaze of a wicked and adulterous generation. In short, everything attached to the name of religion, which is not divinely authorized by the great Head of the church, has been thus put on, by way of trimming, whether it be in doctrine or practice, and all to secure popularity, to make converts, to fill up churches, and gratify a wicked propensity to worship the works of men's hands.

Wherefore hast thou also taught the wicked ones thy ways? Many, if not all of these tinkling ornaments, especially Sunday and Theological Schools, Bible Classes, Tracts and Missionary Societies, are put on for the avowed purpose of *teaching the wicked her ways.* That is, for teaching religion, for saying every man to his neighbor, and every man to his brother, "Know the Lord." The professed object is to make converts, to evangelize the heathen, and teach the ways of Zion to the world.

We might enlarge upon this subject, but our time and space will not allow us to pursue the application of the figures in all their bearing. But in closing our remarks, suffer a word of admonition. To the ministers of the word, we would repeat the solemn warning given by the apostle, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."—1 Tim. iv. 16. To the churches we would repeat the solemn warning, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If

any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."—Gal. i. 8, 9. "Ye did run well; who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." —Gal. v. 7–9. To all the saints we would repeat the command of the Lord, "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., January 15, 1862.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Covenanted Old School Baptist Church of Canada, to the Baltimore, Delaware, Delaware River and Warwick Associations, sendeth greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Our church met in Ekfrid, in her regular quarterly meeting, in June, 1904, and Elder Silas H. Durand being present, was received as your messenger. And being desirous to continue our friendly correspondence with you, we send you this our epistle of love and fellowship.

We are favored to continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and the Lord is from time to time adding unto the church such as shall be saved. During the last three years thirty-four have been received into our church, without any of what legal worshipers call exhortation; yet we have continued to exhort one another unto love and good works, according to the gospel, that is, we have "exhorted with all long-suffering and doctrine."

We are glad when the dear Lord is pleased to send to us his ministers, to labor among us in word and practice. For many years we have had yearly visits from Elder Durand and Elder Eubanks, (now in your midst,) and recently we have been favored with some very pleasant and (to us) profitable visits from Elder Chick. We now have Elder H. M. Curry located in our midst, who comes to us regularly, preaching Jesus and the resurrection, so we are now favored with regular preaching from this gifted minister, as well as from our beloved pastor, Elder W. I. Carnell, for which we hope we feel thankful to the Lord of the harvest, that he has sent these laborers among us.

May the Lord bless and prosper, comfort and keep you unto his everlasting kingdom, is the wish of your sister church in Canada.

W. I. CARNELL, Moderator.
ROBERT SCATES, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At the home of his eldest daughter, in Otego, N. Y., brother **Peter Bundy,** after an illness of three and one-half years, which confined him to the house and bed most of the time. Brother Bundy was born July 25th, 1811, and died July 7th, 1904. He always lived in the vicinity of his birthplace. He was the second child of a family of twelve children of James and Polly Bundy. He is survived by the youngest sister and brother of his father's family, beside his two daughters, Mrs. J. R. Thorp and Mrs. John Enderlin, of Otego, N. Y., his son, J. H. Bundy, of Providence, R. I., grandchildren, great-grandchildren and many relatives, who attended his funeral July 11th, which was held at the Old School Baptist meeting-house at Otego, N. Y., where our brother had been a highly esteemed and devoted member since March 5th, 1871, at which time he was baptized by Elder S. H. Durand. He was troubled on account of his sinful condition early in childhood, and was very unhappy from his sixteenth year until his twentieth year, when he was delivered in a remarkable way; he often referred to the time and place. Three weeks before his death, when conscious though very weak, he sent love to the church, and said, "Tell them I have a good hope, just as good as when I received it at twenty years of age." He often said when suffering, "I desire to be reconciled to my lot, and to wait patiently the Lord's will, but I cannot get reconciliation or patience, it has to be given me." In early life he taught school, followed farming and also lumbering; he lived a very active life. His wife died January 31st, 1887, leaving him very lonely. He was

able to go about among his friends and relatives until nearly ninety years of age. He was deeply led in the Scriptures; the Bible used to be his daily reading till sickness came, and his principal theme in conversation. His home had been with Mr. and Mrs. Thorp, his daughter and husband, for several years, who did all that they could do for his comfort, serving faithfully both night and day almost incessantly for more than three years. May God, if it be his will, give reconciling grace to all the mourning ones, is my prayer.

I tried to talk at the funeral to a large and attentive congregation about a good hope through grace, after which the clay was buried in the earth, from whence man was first taken. He is perfect in glory with Jesus, not waiting to be.

ALSO,

Brother **Mahlon Hulsizer** died at his home July 18th, 1904, aged 88 years, 10 months and 3 days. He had been a sufferer for several years, but was confined to his bed only about two weeks previous to his death. He wife preceded him about five years. He was baptized by Elder B. Bundy, at Locktown, N. J., about twenty-two years ago, and remained a faithful and orderly member of the Kingwood church until death, and was held in the highest esteem by all of his brethren, whom he also loved dearly for Jesus' sake. He was the father of eight children, six of which survive him, four daughters and two sons, beside ten grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. His father and mother were David and Ann Hulsizer, who were Old School Baptists. He was the last of seven children. He selected hymns 807, 881 and 20 to be sung at his funeral, which request was carried out. The experience of his wife, sister Hulsizer, is in the SIGNS of Nov. 11th, 1891. He would often say when awaking out of sleep, "I wish I had passed away, but I must wait God's appointed time." God's time came, and he went to his eternal home to live with Jesus. Perfect rest, peace and eternal happiness are his. A good neighbor, citizen, father and christian is at rest. God bless the mourning ones with reconciling grace for Jesus' sake.

The writer spoke at the funeral to a large company. Interment near by the home.

D. M. VAIL.

OUR esteemed brother, **Henry Miers,** departed this life at his home on Schoharie Hill, April 30th, 1904, aged 70 years, 6 months and 6 days. Brother Miers was born at Middleburgh, N. Y., Oct. 24th, 1833. He was married to Ellen Burton, Sept. 9th, 1854, to which union were born five sons and four daughters; the widow and three sons and two daughters survive. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie, April 25th, 1886, by his late pastor, Elder David Earl, of Griffin's Corners, N. Y. His last sickness, during which he suffered intense agony, was borne with christian fortitude and resignation to the will of God, and he meekly waited for the change to come to release him from a world of trials, sufferings and temptations, and translate him to an eternal life of peace and rest, to be forever with the Lord. He is greatly missed by his widow, sister Miers, children, brother and sister, and half brother and half sister, a number of grandchildren and many distant relatives, all of whom are left to mourn the loss of a kind husband, a devoted father and brother. His seat is vacant in the house of worship, and his counsels and services are at an end. As the writer of these lines was received and baptized at the same time brother Miers was, the relation between us in our experiences seemed to be stronger if possible than it otherwise would have been.

His funeral, which was held at his late home, was attended by a large circle of neighbors and friends, who met to pay their last respects to one they held in high esteem. The services were conducted by his pastor, Elder John Clark, of Halcottsville, N. Y., after which his remains were laid at rest in the Lutheran Cemetery at Schoharie, to await the final resurrection. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." P. S. K.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y.

APPOINTMENTS.

ELDER Silas H. Durand will, Providence permitting, fill the following appointments: Mt. Pleasant, Boone Co., Ky., Tuesday, Sept. 6th; Mill Creek, Ohio, Wednesday, Sept. 7th, 10 o'clock a. m; Georgetown, Ky., (Mrs. N. B. Hall's) Wednesday night; Licking Association, Mt. Carmel, Sept. 9th–11th; Mt. Sterling, Sunday night, Sept. 11th; Farmdale, (Mrs. Farmer's) Monday night, Sept. 12th; Little Flock, Tuesday, Sept. 13th; Shelbyville, Tuesday night; Bethel, Wednesday, Sept. 14th; Mays Lick, Thursday, Sept. 15th.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO AN APPEAL OF BRETHREN TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$954 15
Mrs. A. Adelaide Galley, Neb., $1.00; "An Unworthy Donor," N. Y., $3.00.—Total	4 00
Total to date	$958 15

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Lackawanna Co., Pa., nothing preventing, will hold a two days meeting on Wednesday and Thursday, between the second and third Sundays in August, 1904. Trains on Delaware & Hudson and Ontario & Western railroads will be met on Tuesday at Olyphant, Pa. Those coming on D., L. & W. R. R. will come to Glenburn, Pa., and come on stage one mile to my place. An invitation is extended to all.

D. M. VAIL.

PEACE VALLEY Association will meet this year, the Lord willing, with the church in Blum, on Saturday before the third Sunday in August, and continue the two following days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to come and be with us.

W. L. ROGERS, Pastor.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet, the Lord willing, on Friday, Sept. 2nd, 1904, with Mt. Zion church, six miles east of Astoria, Fulton Co., Ill., on the St. Louis branch of the C., B. & Q. R. R., and continue the two following days. All trains will be met at Astoria during the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, especially our ministers.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Mt. Pleasant Association of Primitive Baptists will convene with Beech Creek Church, near Waddy, Shelby Co., Ky., beginning on Friday, Sept. 2nd, and continuing three days. Those coming by rail, either from Lexington or Louisville, will get tickets to Waddy, via Louisville Southern. Friday a. m. trains will be met. Any one expecting to arrive before or after this had better write brother Abram Hedden, Waddy, Ky.

P. W. SAWIN.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing on Friday, Sept. 2nd, 1904, and continuing three days. We shall gladly welcome all who desire to come. Those coming will be met at the North Berwick railroad depot on Thursday before the time appointed for our yearly conference.

FRED. W. KEENE.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church, Friday before the second Sunday in September, (9th,) 1904, and continue three days. All seekers after the truth are cordially invited to attend. Those coming by rail will be met at the Bowdoinham station and cared for.

J. C. CLARK, Clerk.

THE Licking Association will meet with the church at Mt. Carmel, about eight miles north of Winchester, Clark Co., Ky., beginning Friday, Sept. 9th, and continuing three days. Those coming by rail will be met at Winchester. The Thursday p. m. and Friday a. m. trains will be met. Any one desiring further information write brother M. B. Hadden, Winchester, Ky. Winchester is on C. & O. R. R. east and west, and L. & N. R. R., north and south.

P. W. SAWIN.

OUR yearly meeting at Rock Spring, Md., will commence on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1904, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue over Sunday. Those coming from Philadelphia and intermediate stations will take train to connect with 4 p. m. train at Perryville, on the Columbia & Port Deposit R. R., for Conowingo. Those from Baltimore will leave there to connect with same train on Friday, Sept. 9th, arriving at Conowingo at 4:30 p. m., where they will be met and cared for. We hope to see a goodly number of brethren and friends with us.

D. M. THOMAS, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the Olive and Hurley Church, the second Wednesday and Thursday in September, 1904, commencing at 10 o'clock the first day. All brethren and friends coming by train will please come to Shokan; if strangers, inquire for Alvah Bogart, only a few rods from depot, and they will be taken care of. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

ALVAH BOGART, Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting there will be a meeting of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church of Albany & Troy, N. Y., Thursday and Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1904. All who desire to come will be made welcome. Come to Albany, N. Y., and take electric cars at the union depot for Troy, N. Y. At Troy take electric car for Alba, change and take electric car to West Sand Lake and inquire for Mrs. Moul, who lives about five minutes walk from the electric car depot. Those coming on Wednesday can go to 423 Sheridan Ave., Albany, N. Y., where they will be cared for until Thursday morning, when they will go with brother Charles and George Schade to the meeting. Those coming Thursday will go direct to Sand Lake from depot. Meeting is at the home of Mrs. Moul, by her request, who makes every lover of the truth welcome, for she loves them for Jesus' sake.

D. M. VAIL.

A TWO days meeting has been appointed to be held with Cammal Old School Baptist Church, the Lord willing, the last Saturday and fifth Sunday in October, 1904. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. Those coming from the south

will take the New York Central train at Williamsport, and those coming from the north will also take New York Central train. Ample accommodation for all who live out of town. Trains will be met on Friday and Saturday morning. Elder John McConnell, of New York city, Elder J. T. Rowe, of Baltimore, Md., and our pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, will be present.

ALVA B. CALLAHAN, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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The bi-centennial of the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., was celebrated Oct. 20th, 1903. After some delay it is now published in pamphlet form, and on sale at this office. Price 15 cents. The pamphlet contains photographs of the Welsh Tract meeting-house and Elder J. G. Eubanks, the pastor, the proceedings of the anniversary, letters of greeting from sister churches and a historical sketch written by Dr. B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., and read on the occasion. Some of the brick in the meeting-house was brought from Wales to this country, and hauled on mules' backs a distance of ten miles. The pamphlet is very interesting and full of information.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 72. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1904. NO. 17.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MT. VERNON, Texas, April, 1904.

DEAR BRETHREN, EDITOR, CORRESPONDENTS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Having such a sound and comforting medium of correspondence as the SIGNS, through which we have the privilege of talking with each other for mutual edification and comfort, I desire this morning to submit a few thoughts for your consideration on 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6: "For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many and lords many,) but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

Ancient Israel was surrounded by nations who were worshipers of false gods, or idols, and although the children of Israel were by the only true God separated from them and given the commandment, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," they were continually manifesting a tendency to the worship of other gods, and hence often brought in idols, the kings of Israel building places of worship, planting or setting apart groves in honor of Baal. The natural tendency of all flesh is and ever has been to idolatry; this fact is abundantly evidenced in the history of this people. They had committed to them the only divinely enjoined and authorized system of worship, and the Lord had made bare his arm in their behalf in many wonderful ways from the very beginning of their history, and they were continually being taught that in cleaving to the Lord their God consisted their peace and prosperity individually and collectively; yet they were ever proving themselves to be "a stiff-necked and rebellious people," guilty often of mixing and commingling with the idolatrous nations around them, in violation of the laws of God, and hence were charged with fornication and whoredom numbers of times by the Lord through the prophets. In all the revelations which God was pleased to give his people of himself, as to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua and all the patriarchs and prophets, he is represented and acknowledged by them to be the only true God, who was alone eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, who existed independent, who himself was the creator, possessor and disposer of all things, who

in all his works was independent, subject to no influence, and acted in all his works according to his own sovereign will. In all the parts of worship of the God-given system committed to this people, of which Moses was strictly enjoined, "See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewn thee in the mount," and which we might say consisted in a perfect and complete array of testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ and his spiritual house, presenting all the different phases of his relationship to that house in the various types and symbols, as well as the prophecies by word of mouth, there is nothing but what signifies wisdom, justice, power and immutability on the part of God, and contradicts the idea that he is to any extent weak or mutable, or that he is, or ever was, or ever will be subject to the very least extent to any kind of influence, or that Jesus Christ, his Son and his own appointed Savior and Redeemer, King, Husband, High Priest, Sacrifice and Chief Shepherd of the sheep, failed in anything to answer the purpose or fulfill all the Father's holy will concerning him. On the other hand, he was endowed with power to accomplish his Father's will, and his Father's will was that he should save his people, and he himself tells us that he came down from heaven, not to do his own will, but the will of his Father which sent him, and this is the will of him that sent him, that of all he had given him, he should lose nothing. Again he says, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do," and his dying words were, "It is finished." The law given to the children of Israel not only required them to strictly adhere to the worship of the Lord their God, but to hold themselves entirely separate and aloof from the worship of the idolatrous nations around them; they were even forbidden intermarriage with them, lest their hearts should be carried away into their idolatries. The systems of worship held by those nations, though so attractive to the world and to the carnal mind of men that even the Jews could not refrain from a participation in them from time to time, represented nothing but weakness, ignorance and mutability on the part of their gods; they must of themselves originate the theory, give form to the system, create the laws and direct their execution, fix their penalties; they must build their temples after their own design, make their god and set or stand him up in the temple, where he must remain until they move him; he is dependent upon his devotees for his existence and maintenance; he only acts as he is acted upon, as he is a god subject to and governed by influences. How small a portion of the human family (only a remnant in Israel) did not to some extent worship "the gods." The Jews, though subjects of the Abrahamic covenant, and by the God of heaven separated from the world to their own worship, and given the sign of circumcision, and were children of the promised son Isaac, ever had in them that carnal mind which all men have ever possessed, beginning with Adam, which is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. As this mind in these, as in all other men, was not removed or destroyed, so with the spiritual Jew or quickened sinner; although there is a wonderful work done for him and wrought in him, for he is a "chosen vessel," having been predestinated unto the adoption of a child, saved and called with an holy calling, and has received that circumcision of the heart in the spirit and not in the letter, whose praise

is not of men, but of God, yet his fleshly nature, or carnality, is not taken away or destroyed, though measurably subjugated. As around and within national Israel existed every false idea and imagination of God, so with the Israel of God in this dispensation; the church of God is surrounded with (denomi) nations whose idea of God is no better than those nations that surrounded Israel of old. The theory of a weak and mutable god is as good as the carnal mind of man has ever been capable of originating, and all along the line of history from time immemorial men more or less learned and wise have organized and given form to systems compatible with their idea of God, with a greater or lesser view of course, to the establishment and maintenance of their own fame for wisdom, goodness and honor. So the theory of the old harlot, the (Roman Catholic) order with all her protestant daughters presents God as entirely dependent upon her. The head men and leaders have organized and given form to their various systems, claiming of course to have for them the divine pattern. (In this is the prophecy, Isaiah iv. 1, fulfilled: "And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.") All these hold and teach that God is subject to influences, means and works within their own control; hence their gods act only when acted upon. Upon this idea is based all the institutions called "helps to the church," such as Sunday Schools, Foreign and Home Mission Societies, also schools, the object of which is to qualify men to preach their doctrine, whose prime object is to save souls and fit them for heaven, and otherwise advance and promote the interests of (their). god's kingdom on earth; all this, and kindred things, constitute the Babylon of our day. "Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth," is indelibly stamped on her forehead, and of the wine (doctrine) of the wrath of her fornication have all nations drunk, "and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies," and "her sins have reached into heaven, [the church] and God hath remembered her iniquities." The worshipers of the "gods many and lords many" cannot understand why there should be a church or a ministry if there is no sinner to be saved by them. They say if God is unchangeably the same, never has or never will change, and nothing can be added to the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and he has fully and completely saved all that have or can be saved, what is the need of preaching or service? Like Satan said of Job, "Doth Job fear God for naught?" so they cannot understand why any should serve God, where nothing is gained to promote self-interest; no hope of reward as an inducement. Now if the idea that God is subject to influences is correct, then it follows that he is changeable, and therefore does not, or never has, known the future, hence there is nothing certain with him until it takes place. If God ever was, either before time began or since, influenced by any thing or consideration, then it logically follows that he is a being subject to influences, and therefore subject to change, and if this be true then Jesus Christ is only a partial and imperfect Savior, and the Arminian theory of gods, lords and salvations is correct, and it follows as a logical deduction that it is not true that

"to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." If the Arminian theory is true in the least degree, and God is to any extent subject to influences, then they are justifiable in the use of their various machinery for the purpose of getting God to do what he would not otherwise do, viz: save souls. This being logical, it should not be surprising that whenever a son or daughter of the Lord begins to imbibe this wine of Babylon (if by the grace of God he or she is not prevented) they become more or less intoxicated and confused. Hence when he yields the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty, by questioning his creation of all things, and his purpose in all things, and his unlimited control of all things, his absolute (uninfluenced) predestination of all things, he will, if he follows the same line of reasoning, gradually come to question the immutability of God and his perfect foreknowledge. Thus we have seen them go on step by step, until they were ready to contend that the gospel must be preached alike to the regenerate and the unregenerate. Thus adopting the working order of Babylon, they were ready to bring in protracted meetings, a salaried ministry and other stuff from Babylon's storehouse. Following, a denial of the perfection of God's attributes is the denial of the perfection of Jesus Christ as the Savior, and a claim that at least some part of salvation depends upon the creature, and therefore is conditional.

"Her sins have reached unto heaven." Whenever the doctrine and practices of Babylon are introduced among the people of God, we may look for confusion. In the early history of man it was written, "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth." From the amalgamation of the church and world there have sprung up mighty men, giants, men of renown in different ages of the world, and we need not wonder that it is so to-day. Great wickedness was in the days of old, is it not so to-day?

"He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Dear reader, are we indeed of that class who come to the worship of God in faith and with reverence, feeling that he alone is God, omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent, eternal, invisible, immortal, the only Sovereign of the universe, "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast? While we ourselves are poor, weak, sinful, ignorant and dependent creatures of a day, who feel that we know nothing as we ought, yet have in our hearts the humble hope, and sometimes the joyful assurance, that we are accepted of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, his own appointed way. If indeed this be our happy lot, "To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." Let us then take courage; "Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith," coming boldly to the throne of grace that we may find help in the time of need, believing that we are the subjects of gospel exhortation, praying that the gracious God may grant us according to the desire that he hath given us, that we may live devoted to him, be kept from every false way, and walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he hath called us. May we be enabled to abstain from the appearance of evil in doctrine and walk,

seeking the peace of Zion in every consistent way, with sound doctrine and Bible order, remembering the word of the Lord, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

In love and fellowship, I hope, your brother, H. B. JONES.

(Continued from page 487.)

About that time, my memory fails me as to the exact date, I attended the Ekfrid meetings. You spoke on Sunday; I cannot remember your text nor the words of your discourse, but remember well where I was seated. My meditation was, Is not that lovely preaching for christians? It must be lovely to be one. When all at once you remarked, "Perhaps there is sitting in this congregation one who is saying, Is not that lovely preaching for christians? Let me tell you, little one, you are one of them." I cannot describe my feelings. How did you know my thoughts, and could it be possible your words were true? I felt so unworthy, and did wish myself away from there, yet to my knowledge that was the first gospel sermon I had heard. As near as my memory guides me it was twenty years ago last June. No one could induce me to go to hear other denominations after that, only in case of worldly respect. I loved to go to hear the Old Baptists, they all preached the same glad tidings. I loved the people, but always felt myself a stranger, and not fit to be among them. I could say yea and amen to all they said, and to all the experience which I read, until they told of that wonderful deliverance, and then I was as Lazarus, bound hand and foot; sometimes hoping that God at his own time would deliver me out of my low state, and again fearing and feeling as an unworthy outcast; all this time feeling that my salvation depended on my earnest prayers. During my sojourn in this dark state of mind I had many wonderful visions, but as time and space will not permit me to define, will only refer to a few.

My mind being very much exercised I had read my Bible until I fell asleep, and dreamed of standing by our garden gate, gazing at the beautiful north star, when I saw it begin to fall slowly, and I heard a loud voice saying, "I am the lily of the valley, and the bright and morning star." It fell at my feet, and the exceeding brightness overwhelmed me with fear. I felt that my end had come, and if I have ever prayed in earnest it was then in my sound sleep, "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner." I awoke trembling and in great trouble of mind. Next Sunday I went to hear Elder Pollard. He took for his text Rev. xxii. 16: "I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." He did preach an able sermon, but I wished myself under the building, hidden from view. I thought that asleep or awake I was always getting the Scripture mixed up in my mind. There was certainly

nothing in me but the darkest sin. For a long time I lingered in that very dark valley of despair, until one Sunday while alone reading over an old faded SIGNS OF THE TIMES; in it was stated the names which Christ is called in the Songs of Solomon: "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys." I went to my Bible, and there found the words of my dream. My joy was very great for a time. Shortly afterwards I was at Ekfrid meeting, and while feasting on the first sermon these words passed through my mind with strength: "God is our refuge and strength," &c. You got up and spoke from those words. I was carried away from earth, and was soaring beyond this vale of tears. Shortly afterwards I dreamed of standing on a solid platform with a small company, all facing the east; you stood erect and tall on the van, and I was last and least. Around us was a wall breast-high, about a foot wide, and it served the same protection for the large and small. Out of a dense forest, a short distance away, came a semi-circular army of people, with bodies and faces blacker than any colored people I have ever seen; they appeared to me to be worldly people, all anxious to destroy our company, and take me in particular; they were all babble and confused voices, and I was sore afraid, when I heard a voice say, "Fear not." Now, although this was a dream, I cannot explain the strength of mind that those words with their different connections have given me. From time to time, when sinking down with burdens grievous to be borne, I have been made to rejoice in the midst of my sorest affliction, and with the poet could sing,

"Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed;
I, I am thy God, and will give thee aid," &c.

Also knowing that he will not lay upon me more than he will give me strength to bear, and that "perfect love casteth out fear."

In those days I was much perplexed if any person spoke openly to me on the subject of religion. I well remember one night of our quarterly meeting, about fifteen years ago, we had a number of friends with us; all were engaged in spiritual conversation. I was a silent listener, when Mr. McAlpine, of Mosa, turned to me and said, "I have often thought by your countenance that you had a deep interest in these things; have you a hope?" I was afraid lest any one present heard him, so I gave him an evasive answer and abruptly left the room. I was ashamed of my ignorance, and in the morning when he was alone told him that my only hope was that Jesus died to save sinners, and I felt myself the chief of sinners. I longed to tell him the exercises of my mind, but could not do so. I was sealed up, and my thoughts ran thus: What can any one see in me? God sees my imperfections; I am helpless and undone, poor, lame and blind, begging by the wayside. Those words which came to me from time to time were as a little nourishment to the sick, strengthening me along the solitary way, but still I lacked the one thing needful; I was still trusting in an arm of flesh. My own prayers and the prayers of man ranked high in my mind; you were an ideal preacher in my estimation. As near as my memory guides me, I was about eleven years in this burdened state of mind, when one night I was racked on the billows of despair; I felt that I could do nothing more, but like the poor, shipwrecked creature, floating on a bark in mid-ocean, in the dark hour of midnight, with the heaving waves rolling over her, my sins appeared to me like mountains,

yet I felt that I must await the mercy of God, but expecting every moment to sink forever; my throat was dry and parched with grief, and I felt for the poor, lost wanderer on the great Sahara desert, longing for food and water, as I longed for mercy, and I could cry in deep anguish,

"My thirsty soul longs vehemently, yea, pants thy courts to see;
My very flesh and blood cries out, O living God, to thee."

At about two o'clock in the morning I arose from my bed, to try once more to pray. I went on my knees, but could not pray any more. I felt that my prayers were of no avail, but felt certain I was in the right frame of mind, if only Elder Pollard or some good christian were beside me to pray for me, when at that moment I saw Christ on the cross between me and heaven, and in that dark and very solemn hour it was revealed to me that Christ was the Mediator between God and man. I arose fully satisfied, and rejoicing so much I could hardly restrain myself from awaking my dear mother to tell her what a wonderful Redeemer had been revealed to me. That great burden was lifted from my mind, and I do rejoice ever since that it is on the mercy of our God that all our hopes depend. One thing I do know, that if the work was not all finished on the cross I would be lost forever. My nature is all imperfection, but God's mercy endureth forever. Sometimes I am away down in the valley of despair, and again soaring beyond the cares of this world, daily rejoicing that thy grace, O my Savior, is sufficient for me.

My father and mother were both unwell at that time. Mother's health was slowly renewed, but it pleased God to take my dear father from us, which to me was a very sore trial. The morning after his burial I sat down grief-stricken, and was gazing out the window at his handiwork; was thinking, How can I ever go to work again? Everything I look at is the labor of his hand. Such a dark curtain hung over our home, when the words sounded through my mind as if spoken to me, Is not all that thine eye beholdeth the works of thy heavenly Father? Such a change came over me, my strength of mind was a wonder to myself. He has upheld me and strengthened me day by day, yet he has brought me through deep and very sore trials, which undoubtedly have been for my good, for he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind.

One after one of my near and dear ones have been called away, and one of the number was my first-born and only son; I was very much attached to him. Before he was taken sick I dreamed of standing on a very high summit, when all at once I began to slowly fall, and as I fell the cross of Christ as slowly rose high over me. When I reached the ground I thought, How often I have longed to be at the foot of the cross to ask for pardon, and here I am. With that thought I awoke, and I can assure you that during my child's sickness, when I saw that I had to give him up in the cold embrace of death, I was brought to the foot of the cross, for it was the first time in my life I humbly asked to be made submissive to his holy will; my own nature was weak and selfish. The morning after his death I felt as though I could not live without him; I was much fatigued and very weak, watching over him so long, but that still small voice whispered, "I will not leave you comfortless;" "as a mother comforteth her children so will I comfort you." I did not know those words were in the Scripture,

but was afterwards told where to find them, and I rejoiced to know that he was at rest, and had gone to praise the dear Redeemer.

Last September one year ago my mother was called to rest. Her spiritual conversation strengthened and built our minds up for the separation which we knew was her gain, yet we miss her very much.

For a number of years my mind was much exercised in regard to telling the church what I do humbly hope the Lord has done for me, but a strong sense of my own unworthiness held me where I was. I did firmly believe that at the Lord's own time, if I were one of the redeemed, every barrier would be rolled away. Many a time while witnessing the baptism of others, the question would arise in my mind, Am I ashamed to own my Lord? No, I was not ashamed, but fearful and weak, and felt that I was willing to wait patiently the Lord's time. I felt that I must go to Lobo meetings, but did not know what a joyful returning was in store for me, yet I am the same weak, sinful worm of the dust. Many a time it cost me a great effort to keep from telling you how many times my poor, hungry soul had been fed from the bountiful table spread for the weary and heavy laden.

Accept our united love in your home.

(MRS.) JAS. FRENCH.

P. S.—I omitted mentioning that seven years ago last May I was much harrassed by worldly care, and thought I would stay home from the May meetings, when it just seemed as if the words were spoken to me, "I will make darkness light before you," &c. I went to church, Elder Eubanks took that portion of Scripture for his text, and surely he did preach to me. The world with all it cares seemed to vanish, and I felt strong for some time after. E. F.

CALLED OF GOD.

THE events of fifty years ago to-day are written in my heart. It was the lovely first Saturday in June, 1854. A large and solemn assembly and a band of Elders were gathered together in the name of Christ in a pleasant grove in eastern Indiana, to set apart four of his servants to the gospel ministry, by prayer and solemn ordination. The four were brethren Carter, Connor, Millspaugh and Wright. Each in turn related upon the stand his experience of grace, call to preach and belief in the doctrine. Brother Millspaugh, a very humble man, the third one on the stand, told the council that for a time he could not understand the nature of faith, but supposed that it was the condition of justification, or possessed justifying merit. He said that when the faithful brethren had tried to show him that justification and all merit is in Christ, and faith so receives him as our only righteousness, he had told them that his heart was so hard and dull of understanding he could not receive it unless the Lord revealed it to him. These words sank deep in my heart, and I then felt that this was my own state in regard to the sacred oneness between Christ and the church. Elder McQueary had recently talked to me about this union, but I had no understanding of it, except very dimly. At brother Millspaugh's words, my heart was greatly burdened with a prayerful yearning that God would graciously show me the truth of the holy relationship between the Lord Jesus and his body, the church. Well, when brother Wright followed in his relation, my burdened heart was joyfully relieved, the Bridegroom and bride were shown to me, and my soul was enraptured.

The ministers and deacons soon withdrew in counsel, leaving the large con-

gregation at the stand, but no one in the stand to preach Christ to us. So intense was my longing to hear his precious name proclaimed I could scarcely hold myself back from going on the stand and speaking of the glories of Christ as the Savior of his redeemed people. But as I was not a member of the church, a young man and a stranger to nearly all, I arose and walked away to keep from going on the stand, and sat down on a log. The pent up emotions of my heart were now oppressive, and a small still voice was felt in my soul, saying, "Go, preach Jesus and his righteousness." No longer could I keep still, but walked up a little valley, out of hearing, and praised the Lord aloud.

As the bright sun arose Sunday and lighted up the beauties of the earth with a brilliance of glory, I walked down from brother Millspaugh's house on the green bank of White Water, and all nature poured forth the happy praises of God in unison with my own rejoicing spirit, and with sweet power the words came in my heart, saying, "Unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." The next Saturday I was constrained by faith and love to tell the old home church of my departed parents what great things the Lord had done for me, and the next day the pastor baptized me in the lovely river Flat Rock. My peace was then perfect, and my Lord's rest was glorious. I thought my troubles were all past, and I should henceforth rest in his perfect love. But before we reached home the question arose in my mind, What is your place in the church? I decided to refer this to the Bible for an answer, so on entering the house I took it in my hands, closed my eyes, let it fall open, and asked the Lord to show me my place in his house. Lo, when I looked it was open between the Old and New Testaments, and I felt rebuked. But I longed for the Lord to show me and guide me, so I sat down, turned to the Acts of the apostles, and read from the first to v. 20, which says, "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." I could read no more, but closed the book and walked out in the yard, and reasoned with myself that these words were not spoken to me, but to Peter and John, by the angel of the Lord. But in vain did I try to banish them, for they kept echoing through the chambers of my soul, "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." There followed a deep conflict in my soul that I cannot now speak of. All my insufficiency and unworthiness seemed to make it impossible, while my natural ambition to succeed in the world as a physician made me bitterly opposed to bearing the cross of Christ. But suffice it to say here, he subdued me, humbled me, and made me willing in the day of his power. Yea, he gave me faith and trust and peace in him, and became more precious to me than all else.

The first meeting after my baptism the church called for a relation of my call to preach Christ, then licensed me, and made an appointment for me to preach there the third Sunday in July, 1854. My first text was Isaiah xxxv. 10: "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." The text was true in me, and in the brethren, many of whom wept tears of joy while I spoke, for the Lord was with us. My divine

call was to preach Jesus and his righteousness, and as he has given me his sufficient grace I have endeavored to be faithful to the heavenly calling through all the fifty years. With Paul I must truly say, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

Three weeks ago my right foot caught under an unseen wire, and the violent fall broke the right arm at the shoulder, and bruised me seriously, but the Lord preserved my life, and his restoring mercies have been very tender, so that I have been comforted and peaceful. I hope to write of this later.

With some pain I have written this with my right hand, as I wanted to record those memorable events of fifty years ago. I am deeply grateful to our merciful Father that it has seemed good in his sight to enable me again to write to my beloved kindred in Christ.

Your companion in the kingdom and patience of our Lord Jesus Christ,

D. BARTLEY.

ST. PAUL, Ind., June 4, 1904.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., April, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MUCH ESTEEMED BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Another year of my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has closed, and the good Lord has been so mindful of me in my pilgrimage in this life as to give me the privilege of reading its columns. It seems to me ably conducted by its editor and publishers, and is filled with able correspondence. I feel thankful and do rejoice to know that there is such a medium through which we are fed upon the crumbs that fall from our Master's table. You will find inclosed money order for another year's subscription. I am often low down, and wandering, and fear that I am nothing. I am in my seventy-second year, and still feel by nature to be a lost and condemned sinner before the just and holy law of God, and not able to fulfill it in any respect whatever.

"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" Have I received or believed the report, or have I been made willing in the time of his visitation, as I have felt to hope? In Jesus Christ was righteousness and obedience; these he had of God, and he cried out, "Not my will, but thine be done." In his suffering and affliction he opened not his mouth, but with humbleness and obedience to his Father's will he suffered the death of the cross for such a poor sinner, I hope, as I feel myself to be. It pleased the Lord to bruise him, and he hath put him to grief that he should make an offering for sin. He shall see his seed, who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and none can be counted worthy unless their names are found written in the book of life. If we have not Christ's righteousness, which is imputed to us, and his obedience, we cannot be counted worthy. So condescending was the "exalted Son of God," as to carry our misery and our sins. He yielded to the stroke in doing his Father's will, and that without a murmuring word. He did not reply as does the wisdom of the world, but the blessed Son of God knew that the redemption of his people required the shedding of his blood. Thus he is exalted a Prince and Savior; he does not let his redeemed forget his love, as manifested in the great agony which he endured for them. O may our hearts rejoice and adore his precious name; his name is above every name.

God forbid that we should boast of anything in ourselves; without the righteousness and obedience of Christ we

have no part in the resurrection or immortality; our only hope is in God that he might direct our steps. He directed the steps of his only begotten Son, and gave him the will to do his good pleasure; in no other way can we enter into rest. Poor, mortal man who is made of the earth, would stand up before God and claim a reward for their good deeds, and this is pleasing to the natural heart, but the prophet Jeremiah said, "The way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." That soul which is exalted does not believe the report spoken by John the Baptist. Paul believed it, and proclaimed that he was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, and this gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, and this is to believe that Jesus Christ was to come and did come, and saved his people (sinners) from their sins, and like Paul said, so all say, "Of whom I am chief;" all who possess a hope through the blood and righteousness of Christ feel this way. As the Son came to do his Father's will in all things, he opened not his mouth, though scourged and spit upon by his enemies. The arm of the Lord held him up in all his afflictions, just as he now holds poor sinners up, and saves them to the uttermost; that is, all that deny self and acknowledge him. Christ did not come in his own name, but when it was God's will, it was his will that he should come and do the will of God, and when he cried out, "It is finished," salvation was finished for poor, lost sinners. I know that without his imputed righteousness I am forever lost.

Isaiah prophesied of the coming of the Savior, (and only by the shedding of his blood could there be remission of sins,) and he asked, Who hath believed our report? Even some of the disciples did not believe. They were told of his sufferings to redeem his bride, but still did not believe; they, for a time, looked to their own works. It is the same way today, men claim it is by our works of obedience that we are to be rewarded. Paul knew that great trials awaited him, but still stood firm in the faith that salvation is of the Lord; thus he taught how man is justified before God.

We trust that the Lord has still blessed us with faithful servants who will stand firm as did Paul, though great trials may await them from worldly religionists, who want to build partly upon the rock, and partly upon the sand. But worldly religionists will not be counted worthy of the kingdom of God. Our God does not reward any man for obedience, it is all through the suffering and resurrection of Christ. What Christ has done is the foundation of our justification, we cannot be justified by our own works, which are all imperfect. God's grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life. This free love of God brings us to all things, justification and sanctification, and to final glory, we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. These are they who believe the report, and to whom the arm of the Lord is revealed. Christ fulfilled all the jots and tittles of the law, and did not confer with flesh and blood; he fulfilled the whole law and made it honorable; this was all done to demonstrate his sovereignty, mercy and grace. This obedience and righteousness is and will be acceptable before the throne of God, before which nothing unclean shall ever stand. The obedience which we owed he rendered. This is what we understand by the righteousness of Christ. This was the appointment of Jehovah according to his eternal decree. How can poor, mortal

man, who was born of the earth, rise up and claim to be rewarded for his own obedience, when he cannot think a good thought? We can only say, "Lord, save, I perish." As we come to know that nothing good dwells in us, we come to know also that all our goodness must come by the obedience of our dear Redeemer. "The Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he." Jacob was like all the family of Adam, but he was a chosen vessel. Christ is made unto us the One altogether lovely. When this is done, we have a new name, even as the new name was given to Jacob, "Israel," and now is proclaimed, "The Lord of righteousness;" in no other way can we claim this new name. Jacob did not possess such a name as Israel until the Lord had wrought in him, and had given him a will to do the good pleasure of God. Now he hears the report that Jesus came to save sinners, and no other way is made for the redemption of poor sinners, lost and ruined by the transgression of Adam, and so I feel to hope that through his sufferings I am saved; he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. In my flesh dwells no good thing, and *how* to perform that which is good I find not, and I cannot find it but through the Spirit which guides into all truth. Having this, I am counted worthy of a name above all names, even the name of the ransomed of the Lord, and thus I would give to God all honor and praise.

In closing this letter, I will say that I have trusted in God to direct my mind what to write; without him all is as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. If not deceived, it is my desire to be kept humble before him. I feel my nothingness and inability to do the things that I would. We are not able to direct our steps in the right way, but will go backward if left to ourselves, nothing but the light of his countenance can light us on in the paths of holiness. I feel too unworthy to talk of his goodness and wonderful blessings. Remember me, dear brethren, when it is well with you. I am getting old, and cannot remain here long. My desire is to seek the things pertaining to eternal life, for I feel that here I have no continuing city, but I seek one to come.

Do with this as your judgment directs. May God bless you, my brother, in your labors, is my prayer.

Your brother in hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

PRATT CITY, Ala., Aug., 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—The SIGNS comes to hand regularly, setting forth the same old principles of gospel truth that strengthen, comfort and edify the household of faith. I have been a reader of the paper about twenty-nine years. I have read the prospectus and books of editorials, and if there has been any depreciation or retrograding in the principles of doctrine by the editors or correspondents, I am unable to detect it. The SIGNS is to be commended from the beginning. It has been faithful to contend for the government of the church, separate from State or any other institution of this world. It is also to be commended for refusing to be a "tale bearer" for both sides, where confusion and divisions have gotten in among our people. I have read some reports in papers and pamphlets written by some of our brethren, that were damaging to us as a denomination. The SIGNS has been a Predestinarian paper from the first issue, and it is to be commended for

omitting to reply to all that has been written falsely against it; I do not believe I could have exercised such patience and forbearance. I have been made to wonder why it is that so many have singled out God's predestination for an object of revenge and abuse, especially when "all things" are embraced. God's wisdom, power and purpose are all parallel, and it seems to me that there is just as much reason to complain of his wisdom and sovereignty as of his predestination. The Scriptures teach us that God is all-wise and knows all things, and Isaiah says, "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass: and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Some one might say he was speaking of certain things at that time. But he is all-wise and must have always thought of "all things," and he says, "I change not." The Scriptures also teach that God has all power, and that he is the Creator of all things, "visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist."—Col. i. 16, 17. Paul penned these plain and pointed Scriptures, showing the sovereignty of God, and he did so without using any adjectives concerning the things created, and I am of the opinion that there must have been and are yet some evil thrones, dominions, principalities and powers, as well as good ones. Elsewhere Paul says, "He upholds all things by the word of his power," and "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," and it does seem to me that if we are to complain of God's purpose, that we had just as well find fault with his wisdom and power. But some one might say there is no objection to either, it is this phrase, "predestination of all things." Well, the Scriptures tell us that God knows all things, is before all things, made all things, upholds all things, and "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," and it does look to me like all this would be as objectionable as his purpose of all things. Predestination of all things looks just as harmless to me as to say, God upholds all things, and works all things after the counsel of his own will. Some who object to the "predestination of all things," seem to appreciate the old London Confession, which virtually declares that God "hath decreed all things whatsoever come to pass," but I am unable to see that anything is bettered by that phraseology. All decrees must be the result of a previous purpose. When Cæsar sent forth the decree that "all the world should be taxed," he had the taxing already settled in his own mind and purpose; and if God has decreed all things, it is a sure evidence of his predestination of all things. Some who oppose the predestination of all things profess to believe it in reference to the eternal salvation of the church, but this does not better anything. One of the most infamous, diabolical and fiendish crimes of sin was perpetrated to perfect that salvation. I have the statement that some of our order believe that God decreed to permit sin, but there is no relief in this. If God decreed to permit sin, he must have previously purposed that it should be. So after considering all the different views upon the subject, the SIGNS is as scriptural and as evenly balanced as any, and the position of the SIGNS upon the subject of predestination will never be disproved.

I have written more than I intended in the outset. If you should decide to bear

with my infirmities and publish this, I hope it will do no harm, for not a word is intended for offense. In all that has been said and done here and elsewhere against the subject of predestination, I have not taken it in my mouth to say I had no fellowship for this or that one. There is something good about every one that is born of the Spirit, and we ought to watch for it, and be very particular about declaring non-fellowship.

Yours in hope of a better life,

P. J. POWELL.

HALLWOOD, Va., July 15, 1904.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have for the last few days felt that I would like to write, if I only could write as I would like to, but it is seldom that I can. I never had the gift to take up any scriptural subject and elucidate it, but if I write at all it must be some of the exercises of my own mind, and if they are not in harmony with the teaching of the Scriptures of divine truth, such thoughts as I might give expression to would be of no profit to myself or to any of God's dear people, and owing to the fact of the great fear I have (much of my time) that what I might say would be so utterly worthless, I am often kept from making the attempt. I sometimes am made to adopt the language of the poet:

> "'Tis a point I long to know,
> (Oft it causes anxious thought,)
> Do I love the Lord or no?
> Am I his, or am I not?"

If deceived in hoping that I am his, what a terrible thing it is, but what is still more terrible is to be deceiving others. Sometimes I can say that I know the truth; that is, I know that I am a sinner, and that salvation is of the Lord, but the question with me is, Do I really know anything as I ought? Sometimes I claim that no one can really know these things except as the Spirit is pleased to reveal them, and that such revelations are made only to God's humble poor, whom the apostle declares are "A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." But can I, a poor, vile sinner, claim such a high distinction as this? Dare I do such a thing? My only hope is in the fact that it is the prerogative of the God of heaven alone, and, as I trust, his purpose, to lift a poor beggar from the dunghill and set him among princes. Yes, my brother, I know that I am poor and needy, destitute of even one good thought, much less being able to perform one good act that I might merit divine favor. It is all of free sovereign grace from first to last, and sometimes I am made to rejoice that it is so, and that no flesh shall glory in his presence, but "he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." But O what painful experiences we are called to pass through in order that we may glory in him. The flesh with all its affections and lust must be crucified before we are raised up to the enjoyment of heavenly things.

Brother Ker, I commenced this more than a week ago, but laid aside what I had written, feeling that it was impossible for me to write; surely I must know something about what is declared of the wicked, that they shall be kept silent in darkness. In days gone by I have felt that surely I did love God's dear people, and it was my delight to communicate with them; I trusted that I had an interest in spiritual things, but now, O how cold, lifeless, barren and indifferent. "O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when

his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness." Then it was that he kept my feet, now I feel that surely I know the truth, that the wicked are kept silent in darkness. For I cannot speak of his goodness as I once did; am made to fear at times that I dare not claim a hope in his mercy, yet I know he is merciful and kind, and infinitely good and gracious, and ever faithful, but has he really promised good to me? as I hoped he had. Is my hope clean gone forever? Am I not altogether deceived? I sometimes am made to greatly fear that I am, and fear that I have deceived others, but what must I do that I may not further deceive them? Sometimes I feel it is best that I am kept silent, unless I could say something so that others would know just what I am.

I only send you this to let you know that I desired to write to you, but you can see the failure as well as I can.

Your brother (if I dare claim relationship with one of God's people),

MARTIN D. FISHER.

KNOEBEL, Md., July, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—My mind has been very much stirred up since reading the Warwick Circular Letter, and my love goes out to the writer and every one connected with its adoption by that association. It is timely and important, and should be read by every Old Baptist in the land, and not only read, but strict heed given it. Strict discipline in the church of God does no one any harm; it not only strengthens the church, but each member, and causes brotherly love to continue, and shows a united body. Even little trespasses (so called) may grow big if let go on. It is often "the little foxes, that spoil the vines;" a small break in a stream soon grows into a flood, and so in church matters. One may be found walking disorderly, or he may be reporting things that are not strictly true, or he may be indulging in strong drink, or swearing, all of which are hurtful to the church, as well as to the individual concerned. One brother goes to another and tells him that such a brother is guilty of some such fault, or it may be he goes to the deacon or pastor with the same charge. Is this in accordance with the Scriptures? I think not; but the last one has become just as guilty as the first transgressor, he having also transgressed the law of Christ, and each one needs reproving. Just look at this squarely in the face, and see what a momentous subject it is. There is nothing connected with the welfare of the church demanding so much attention as strict discipline therein. Any brother that is a brother indeed would be glad to be told of his faults or mistakes if it comes from a proper source, and in the proper spirit, but to come in an unlawful way may cause hard feeling, and he be found still further in disorder, and the whole body become involved in disorder. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." It is an old saying, "like begets like." It is much easier to stop a little leak than when it gets larger. So let us all, every one, take these things to heart, and pray for guidance from above, and act according to the law of love laid down in the Scriptures.

I feel very much impressed to go on and speak of some other things spoken of in the Circular Letter mentioned, but if it is read carefully it cannot be improved upon, or anything added thereto.

Unworthily yours,

MILTON DANCE.

HUNTINGDON VALLEY, Pa., July 7, 1904.

ELDER CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I feel like dropping you a few lines, though I know that your time is too precious to stop to read anything that I may be able to write. But since the pleasant time we had at brother Terry's, on the 4th of July, some thoughts have passed through my mind, and I feel like expressing them in my feeble way. There were so many good things said that day, and the Lord was given all the praise. Now this true and living God has made his people free from sin, by the death and resurrection of his Son. It was said, "Washington made this country free." Yes, but we must have war ships in our deep waters, equipped with brave men for protection and safety. This nation which God has made free has no ship guarding it, but we see the strong arm of God, and his mercy and love surrounding them; their breast-plate is his word of promise; no foreign nation can come in and harm one of them, or pluck one of them from his hand; his loving-kindness keeps them and draws them and sustains them from everlasting to everlasting. This nation can never be in bondage again, no, never. Their sins are put as far from them as the east is from the west; the gates of hell cannot prevail against them, and all the armies of this world cannot break through and carry this nation into bondage again. While I am in doubt about myself being one of this nation, I feel sure that every one of his people will be protected by his strong arm. I do know that I love this nation above all others in the world, and feel I can say that I love the God they love, and him that died on the cross, I feel that love which comes from the deepest recesses of my poor heart.

With love to all, I remain your brother, I hope,

C. S. BOND.

COLUMBUS, Neb., July 21, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I write to send in my subscription for the dear old SIGNS, as I am in a position now which enables me to pay for it; and I want to tender my heart-felt thanks to the dear ones who have so kindly contributed of their means to send it to me for so many years when I was unable to pay for it. If they only knew the great comfort it has been to me all through those years of trial and affliction, they would feel rewarded for their kindness. I have often felt while reading the many good communications from the dear brethren and sisters that they were written specially for my comfort. And I doubt not that many tried and afflicted ones have felt the same. No later publication can take the place of the SIGNS in my estimation, I esteem it because it has ever fearlessly contended for the truth and for the faith once delivered to the saints. It contains all the preaching I get, for I live so far from any of our meetings and my health is poor, I am unable to go, so that makes its coming doubly welcome. I long to be able to meet with the saints, but the Lord knows what is best for us all, and may he reconcile us to his righteous will. I often feel a desire to speak a word in season to them that are weary, through the medium of the SIGNS; but realize my weakness and unworthiness so deeply, fear that I may darken counsel by words without knowledge. I inclose post-office money order for three dollars; two for one year's subscription for the SIGNS, and one to be applied on the debt against the SIGNS. Wish I were able to send ten times more.

With love to all the saints everywhere, I am, I hope, your sister in Christ,

(MRS.) A. ADELAIDE GALLEY.

ROMANS VIII. 14.

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

God's elect were elected according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. They were blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he had chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. In this sonship they are spiritually heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. The created man in Adam, and that fell and died in him, while in the flesh, receives the spirit of adoption, whereby he cries, Abba, Father, or Father, Father. God is their Father by spiritual generation, and also by adoption, as the firstfruit of the Spirit, giving birth to that hope which enters into that within the veil. This hope enables us to endure, though we groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. The Spirit of God not only leads us, but likewise it helpeth our infirmities. For we know not what we should pray for as we ought. But thanks be to God, the dear Son of God tells us that the Comforter which the Father should send in his name should teach us all things, and bring all things to our remembrance whatsoever he has said unto us. The man that God created, or the creature itself, shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. This the creature with earnest expectation is waiting for; and this is nothing less than the manifestation of the sons of God. What a grand and glorious contemplation is this, that the created man, first a partaker of flesh and blood in Adam, in whom he sins and is corrupted and receives the spirit of bondage and dies, shall not again receive the spirit of bondage to fear, but does receive the spirit of adoption, and is made an heir of God and a joint-heir with our Lord Jesus Christ. What a thought, that man, created and fallen, should be received into the family of the uncreated God, and be made heir of all things. How unspeakable it is, and what a great mystery the Spirit of God is leading the sons of God into, and unfolding its sublime spiritual beauties to their faith. What ecstacies of soul, what unspeakable delight this produces. No wonder that one who called himself the chief of sinners could say, We having the same spirit of faith, we believe and therefore speak according as it is written, I believed, and therefore I have spoken. And he goes on to say, "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might, through the thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." That is, the earthly image shall fade, but that which is Christ in you the hope of glory shall continue. Then he says, "For our light affliction, [which only causes the earthy to perish,] which is but for a moment, worketh for us [the creature] a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Truly "where sin abounded, [in the flesh] grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, to condemn sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might

be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. And these are led by the Spirit of God, which guides into all truth. Is not God the root, Christ the vine and the children the branches? Christ came from God, and the children are of God through Christ the vine, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord, and in him we who are led by the Spirit of God are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit, and our fruit is unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

With love to all the saints, I am as ever, your brother,

W. W. POLK.

San Francisco, Cal.

Wilmer, Ark., June 12, 1904.

Dear Editor of the Signs:—Let us turn to the Scriptures and see what Jesus said to that predestinarian apostle Peter. The words are "Feed my sheep." It is not said here, and neither is it in any other portion of the word, Make sheep for me. If it were so, then we would be called upon to do more, and make a heaven, or place, to put them in. But no, the Master said, "Feed my sheep." What shall we feed them with? There are some things which sheep like, and some things which they do not like. Literally, they do not like anything impure; it makes them sick; such a mixture will not do for sheep. So likewise creature works and grace will not do for the sheep of the Lord, they want their food pure; that is, they want grace, pure grace.

"Feed my sheep." What other food is it that we can feed the sheep with which will strengthen and build them up on their most holy faith? This they can drink down deep into their souls and hearts, and will make them to say, "Amen and Amen." It is the doctrine of predestination and election. The sheep do not like husks, which are nothing but a cloak for the high-flying, broad-spreading banners of that religion which has this motto in large letters in front, "If you will accept the terms of the gospel, you can be saved," thus denying the Scriptures, and giving God the lie. But the sheep would rather have the corn, the hard flinty corn, predestination and election of God.

Another kind of drink which the sheep do not like which tickles the itching ears more than anything else, is this, "More members the more money." And this, too, is policy potent and prevailing. Its stream is wide, and growing wider, and is gathering in the trash as it pours forth its streams of falsehood into the gapping mouths of the daughters of mystery, Babylon. They stand aloof and above the genuine Predestinarian Baptists, and because we will not come in with and assist them in sending this spurious gospel to the heathen, we are stigmatized as "hardshells," and the finger of scorn is pointed at us, and it is said we will all be gone, and they will have all things their way then. "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Thus we are led to believe, and come to know, that salvation is alone of the Lord, and we are thus made to trust in him who is our all and in all, believing that he shed his blood on Calvary for those whom he loved with an everlasting love, and they alone, who are brought to say, "Save, Lord, I perish."

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

C. G. IRWIN.

COALDALE, Ark., July 20, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I have thought for some time that I would write you, and now I will make the effort.

I have been a member of the Primitive Baptist church eleven years the fourth Sunday in this last June. I fought against the doctrine for some time, until the Lord convinced me of its truth, and I now believe that the Old School Baptists hold the true doctrine; I believe that it will stand forever. I traveled many years in trouble, and it seemed to me as though there was no rest for my poor soul. I would often get into doubt and think that I was deceived in my hope, and that there was no hope for me. I would often go to sleep praying for the Lord to open my blind eyes that I might have a brighter hope. One night while praying, I asked the Lord to show me if my name was written in the Lamb's book of life, or if I was deceived. I prayed the Lord to show me something whereby I might have a better evidence that I had been brought from nature to grace. I went to sleep praying, and it seemed that I heard a footstep, and I said, The Lord has come. It seemed that I heard a voice saying, Thou art close to heaven. My brother, no tongue can express the sweet comfort and peace which I then enjoyed, it seemed to me as if I could tell the world of my joy. I have not time to write all I would like to.

I live way out here where I cannot hear any preaching, and it seems sometimes as though I cannot endure it. I have not heard any preaching for three years. My dear father and mother write me the sweetest letters, which fill my soul with joy. I am the only Old School Baptist here, and I have no one to speak with but some Missionary Baptists, and we are directly opposite one another. The Bible tells us to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. As I have not the privilege of going to the meetings of the church, I receive joy in reading the experiences of God's dear children. The Lord knows best what circumstances to place me under, and he says that he will not leave or forsake us. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness."

I will close, asking the dear Lord to be with us, and to forgive all our sins. I hope I have not wearied your patience with the reading of this letter.

I remain sincerely yours,

(MRS.) ELLA DAVIS.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., July, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have just read and reread an article from Elder S. H. Durand, and have feasted upon it; it is grand indeed; O that I were worthy to receive it; it is wonderful how one can write and tell the experience and travel of another. Brother Durand, you have comforted me greatly, let me say to you, dear brother, keep on writing, you are as a father to me in your writing. The dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES is my favorite paper. It does seem to me a great mystery how the scattered ones can be of so much comfort to each other. Is not this of the Lord? I often read sweet words of comfort from the pen of dear brethren and sisters. I am unworthy, and must cry, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." I feel to be my own worst enemy. I abhor myself, and feel "O wretched man that I am!" All grass, grass, grass. I become so hungry, and so tired and weary of life. I have a dear family, a good wife and an aged mother, soon eighty-two years of age, yet I often feel weary. I know of some few who

are troubled like myself. I feel to cry, O Lord, turn again to us.

Dear brother Chick, I know your cares and afflictions, but also know that the Lord will deliver you out of them all. All the writers in the SIGNS are dear to me. I will not attempt to personate any more, except to say that the SIGNS is the best printed matter I get. The daily news is nothing to me, I hear too much of trouble, trouble, all the time.

With much love to all the flock, yours unworthily,

W. P. HOOD.

GRAEFENBERG, Ky., March 21, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—We are strangers in the flesh, but I hope not spiritually. As I read the dear old SIGNS they are so comforting to me, for they assure me that the Lord has a people, and that, as the Scriptures tell us, they are a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These words are so consoling to such a sinner as I realize myself to be from day to day. Without the help of our Redeemer I can do nothing, and these words are so consoling to me: I will bring them in ways they have have not known, and in paths they have not seen. I realize that of myself I am nothing, and without the help of God I can do nothing acceptable in his sight.

When I read the account of the trip east of brother Sawin and sister Goldie, his daughter, last year, it made me rejoice, for it made me feel that the Lord has a people called the Old School Baptists in the east. I think, from their experience and travel through the world, as published in the SIGNS, they must have been thoroughly tried.

I have been able to attend meeting at my home church but once in four months, on account of ill health. My church is six miles from my home.

I had better close, as I do not wish to weary your patience, and there are so many more worthy brethren and sisters who write for the SIGNS.

I remain your unworthy sister,

JENNIE ARMSTRONG.

YEADON, Pa., Dec. 1, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed you will find two dollars for renewal of my subscription to the SIGNS; it is my best visitor; I receive so much comfort from it. I get so dark, my sins, the flesh, doubts and fears, O how dark and gloomy. I fall in the valley so low; I see myself so vain and sinful. I hope he will lead my mind into the path of truth, and guide me. I think I can say that I desire the company of my kindred in Christ Jesus our Lord. Sometimes there is a sweet singing so peaceful within, I feel the God of all grace and mercy watches over me, and his faithfulness will not fail; he will not change in his everlasting love towards me, but he will make darkness light, and my steps are all known to him. Christ told his apostles, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." I am under such a cloud of darkness I cannot write. I feel like burning this note.

In hope of eternal life,

MARTHA J. BAILEY.

TO DISCONTINUE THE SALE OF BIBLES.

WE have only three self-pronouncing Bibles left in stock, all No. 8313, and only two Testaments. These books will be sold at the usual price. For description and price see any SIGNS for 1903.

Owing to the advance in price of such books, and the few calls for them, we have decided not to handle them after these on hand are gone.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1904.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

LUKE XIX. 10; GALATIANS IV. 4, 5.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Will you give your views through the SIGNS upon Luke xix. 10? "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Also Gal. iv. 4, 5: "But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

Now was the whole human family under the law? If so, did he redeem all that were under the law, or did he come to buy back a part of those who were under the law? Was the whole human family lost? Did he come to seek and to save a part of the lost? Did the law of Israel bind any one else? Were any lost except the chosen in Christ? Were not his chosen the sons and daughters of Adam? Must not the sons and daughters of Adam be born again in order to see the kingdom of God? Or is it only a spiritual being in them that is born again? I believe that Christ is a complete Savior. I understand that he saved the lost. I believe that he did redeem or buy back those that were under the law. Will you give your views through the SIGNS?

Your unworthy brother,

RILEY BEAN.

SILLER, Okla., March 21, 1904.

While we do not know that we fully understand just what is in the mind of our brother regarding the texts named, and the questions which he has propounded, yet we do not feel like withholding such views as we have regarding these matters. Our mind has been settled concerning the great doctrine of salvation, including the principles of that doctrine called total depravity of all men, and their fall in Adam, the father of all mankind, election of a portion of the lost to be called and saved, and the work of the holy Spirit in the hearts of all the elect, by which they come to know themselves, and then to know the Lord in their salvation. We have never felt able to bring forth out of the Scriptures the things presented there concerning these and all other principles of doctrine involved in salvation by grace for the elect as clearly as we have desired to do; and some portions of the word we have felt that we had little light upon, though sure that they do not contradict the great principles of doctrine named above.

With regard to the first text named, we will simply call attention to the fact that it is the language of Jesus concerning Zacchaeus the publican. He is said to have been chief among the publicans, and rich. Publicans were Roman tax-gatherers. Taxes were farmed out to them often; that is, the government assessed a certain district for a specified sum of money, and some man paid to the government this sum, and then was given authority to collect it out of the people of that country or district. Such men would be sure to collect it as speedily as possible, and in the easiest way possible. The temptation would be to extort money from rich men unjustly, and this was often done. This man filled such a place, and beside was evidently placed over other men who were also publicans. No doubt he had dealt unjustly, and taken money by false accusation against men who would pay him liberally to avoid prosecution where they would have no rights that would be respected. His own testimony shows that this was the case, as seen by his words recorded in verse eight. Now for some reason he desired to see Jesus, and being small of stature he climbed into a sycamore tree for the bet-

ter view. To him Jesus spoke and bade him come down, saying, "To-day I must abide at thy house." To our mind there was now wrought in the heart of this publican that wonderful and instantaneous work which was afterwards wrought in the penitent thief, and in Saul of Tarsus, and which at some instant is wrought in the heart of all who are called to salvation by grace. The outward call to come down was accompanied by the inward call which prepared his heart to respond with gladness, and which led him to sincere repentance for all his injustice, and a purpose to restore that which he had obtained in that way, even to the full extent that the Roman law demanded, which was four-fold.

The multitude murmured that Jesus should go to be guest with a sinner like this man. This called forth the wonderful confession of Zacchaeus, as recorded in verse eight. Then the reply of the Master, "This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham." That he was a son of Abraham made his offense in the eyes of the Jews all the more heinous. It would have been bad enough to have been thus oppressed by a Gentile, but to be oppressed by one who might well be called a traitor among themselves was much harder to be borne, and indicated greater hardness of heart in the oppressor. So they called him a sinner in the sense that he, as they thought, was to be called a sinner above others. Now the words of the text named fully meet this objection on their part. It is as though Jesus would say to them, You say that this man is a sinner above others. Granted that it is so, he is yet a son of Abraham literally, and beside I have come to save the lost. You who do not feel to be sinners and do not judge yourselves to be among the lost, need not think strange that I do not come to you, since my mission is to the lost, and this you yourselves say is the case with this man. Beside, Zacchaeus has acknowledged himself to be a sinner, and in his confession has shown true penitence, why then do you think it strange that I should visit his house with salvation? In perfect keeping with this are the parables of the lost sheep, the lost piece of money, and the prodigal son, recorded elsewhere in the gospels. Jesus came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Should they not have rejoiced, rather than find fault, since this man who had done all this wrong was also a son of Abraham literally, as well as they? We know what they did not know, that he was a son of Abraham in a sense in which they were not his sons, viz: by faith.

Now with regard to the text in Galatians, fourth chapter, we desire first to say that it presents just that same truth that is presented in all the New Testament regarding the lost estate of man, and the redemption through Christ which has been provided for the elect of God. In chapter three and verse thirteen we read the same truth set forth in similar words: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." And in verse fourteen we read: "That we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." This corresponds to the words "the adoption of sons" in the text. This text in brief seems to us to teach, first, that there was an appointed time when Jesus should come into the world, and we know that all God's appointments must be eternal appointments, according to his eternal purpose which he purposed with himself before the world was. Second, it teaches

that God sent forth Jesus Christ, his Son, both in the sense that he came from heaven to earth, and also in the sense that he was made flesh, in order that he might dwell among men. This is expressed in the clause, "made of a woman." Upon this we need not dilate, for in the gospels we have the record of his wonderful birth of the virgin. Third, the text teaches that he was made under the law which was over all mankind, and which was transgressed by our first parents. He was to be the Savior of Gentiles as well as Jews, and therefore he must be made under that law which Gentiles had transgressed as well as Jews, and by which Gentiles as well as Jews were condemned to everlasting death. The law of God had its first revelation in the garden of Eden, and by its transgression by our first parents all the race were plunged into both guilt and condemnation. The law given by Moses at Sinai was promulgated to the chosen people (the Jews) only, and Gentiles were never under that law at any time; the ceremonies of it were for that typical people alone to observe. Could it be possible that Paul in this Scripture intended the Mosaic law, then it would follow that Jesus did not come to save any Gentile, and on the other hand, that he did come to save all Jews. But as we know from many other Scriptures that this was not the case, it follows that Paul in this Scripture does not teach it either. Christ was made under that law which has condemned all mankind, and by the power of the law, applied to the conscience through the Spirit, Gentiles as well as Jews are to-day convicted of sin, and cut off from all hope of salvation by its deeds, and so come to Jesus, who is the end of the law for salvation to both Jews and Gentiles.

If to-day a Gentile who believes, comes to the church to narrate his experience of grace, he speaks of the work of the law in his heart, which is summed up in love to God and to the neighbor, and of the condemnation which he has felt under that perfect law, and then of the hope which has sprung up in him through the revelation of Jesus Christ in his perfect life, and meritorious death, and triumphant resurrection for him. If a Jew by natural descent comes to the church, he also tells of conviction and condemnation wrought in his soul by the work of the same law, and of a blessed hope wrought there, just as has been wrought in the heart of his Gentile brother. It has been our happy privilege to baptize one brother who is by natural descent a Jew, and it is the witness of all who know him that he testifies to the same experience under the law and under grace that we all as believing Gentiles confess. Fourth, Paul teaches still further here that Christ redeemed them that were under the law, that is, that he fully accomplished that which he came to do, and that he secured to all who were thus redeemed all the blessings belonging to the adoption of sons. So that all alike, Jew and Gentile, are fellow-heirs of God, and joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ. The adoption refers to the complete and final glory, when the people of God shall be satisfied, awaking with his likeness, as says David.

Now, in closing we will notice the special questions proposed by brother Bean, although in substance they are answered in what we have already written. "Was the whole human family under the law?" Most certainly so. "If so, did he redeem all that were under the law, or did he come to buy back a part of those who were under the law?" He came to redeem the elect of God who were given to him in the covenant of redemption.

Not all who fell in Adam, and who were accursed by the law, only those who were elected to salvation were given to him. "Was the whole human family lost? And did he come to seek and save a part of the lost?" These questions have been answered in what has been already said. "Did the law of Israel bind any one else?" No, only the Jewish nation to whom it was given; Gentiles are not under that law. Both Jew and Gentile believers have been redeemed from the curse of that law which *all* men were under, the law of sin and death. "Were any lost except the chosen in Christ?" All mankind died in Adam under the curse of the law of God, and all were by nature the children of wrath; that is, the wrath of God abides upon them, and abides forever, unless redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. The chosen in Christ are saved simply because chosen to salvation, while all the rest of mankind are left to perish. "Were not his chosen the sons and daughters of Adam?" Most assuredly this is so. "Must not the sons and daughters of Adam be born again in order to see the kingdom of God?" The testimony of Jesus, as recorded by the evangelist John, settles this matter, and shows that if any child of the fallen Adam sees the kingdom of God, or enters that kingdom, it must be by a spiritual or heavenly birth. "Is it only a spiritual being in them that is born again?" We do not know just what our brother means by this question, but that does not matter specially, so far as the presentation of the subject is concerned. It is the man, the sinner of Adam's race, who is the subject of redemption, and that redemption includes the atonement wrought upon Calvary for that portion of Adam's race who were chosen to that end before the world was; it includes their justification through that atoning sacrifice; it includes the work of the Spirit in their hearts by which they are prepared to know the Lord in this great salvation, which is spoken of as being born of God, or of the Spirit, and by the word of God; as a new creation unto good works, and as a resurrection from the dead, and a quickening of the dead. All these figures of speech set forth this one truth of redemption experienced in the soul by the work of the holy Spirit. It includes the preservation of these redeemed and quickened persons by the power of God through faith unto salvation; it includes the final victory over death, and the resurrection at the last day, and the final glory. Redemption means all this, and redemption is for the sinner, and for nothing else. So that part of the great work of redemption called the new birth is also wrought in the sinner, and men and women are born again.

We leave these reflections to our brother's consideration. We trust that they may prove of some satisfaction to him, and to all who may read them.

PLEASE BE SURE,

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ISAIAH XI. 1.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Please give your views on Isaiah xi. 1: "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots." Particularly the rod, and oblige an

INQUIRING MIND.

REPLY.

Jesse was the father of David, the king of Israel, the anointed of the Lord, the man after God's own heart, and although we find nothing of a very extraordinary character recorded of Jesse as a man, yet as the father of David, and as a link in the pedigree of Christ, he occupies an important position among the types which pointed to the coming and work of our divine Redeemer. He is very prominently presented in the text, his stem, rod, branch and roots are designed to set forth figurative the advent, kingdom, power and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. The description of the rod and Branch in the succeeding part of this chapter can only apply to Christ as the anointed One.

Jesse, as we have remarked, was the father of David, according to the flesh. His stem may denote his extremity, as a stem is diminutive compared with the root, the trunk or the branch of a tree; so Jesse, as a man, was small among the thousands of Israel, or even of Judah, that from him should descend a lineage of powerful princes and kings, yet God was pleased to bring forth from his loins a succession of mighty rulers to sit upon the throne of Israel. The *stem* is exemplified in the anointing of David, when all the sons of Jesse had passed in review before the prophet of the Lord; the tall, atletic Eliab first. But the Lord said to Samuel, "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." Then Jesse called Abinadab, but Samuel said, Neither hath the Lord chosen this. Then Shammah passed before the prophet, but he was not the man. And "Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, The Lord hath not chosen these." Thus all the towering branches of Jesse were rejected. "And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither. And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the Lord said, Arise, and anoint him: for this is he." While the strong and stately boughs were refused, this youngest and most diminutive son, the very stem, was chosen of the Lord to sit upon the throne, and rule the tribes of Israel. A *rod* is used in the Scriptures to signify power and divine authority. As Moses demonstrated his divine commission by the rod with which he wrought wonders in the land of Ham, and at the Red Sea, in the wilderness, at the rock in Horeb, and throughout his history. The rod of Aaron and his sons was used when Dathan and others contested the priesthood, and brought their rods and laid them before the Lord; while all their rods were barren and fruitless, that of the divinely authorized priesthood blossomed, and brought forth almonds, and it was laid up in the Ark, as a memorial before the Lord. Hence we see in the anointing of David, and his brilliant reign over Israel, what a rod of strength God brought from the very stem of Jesse. From this stem

of Jesse, David, a long succession of kings were raised up to wield the sceptre, and bear the rod of government; and from his roots a royal Branch was developed in the house of David. Thus the development of the stem of Jesse, in the person of David, became a spreading and fruitful Branch, far excelling Eliab, Abinadab, Shammah, or any of the seven sons of Jesse which to the prophet's eye were at the first appearance more imposing than the stripling shepherd boy.

Thus far we have only considered our subject in its literal bearing, as applicable to David and his house, but the surpassing glory of our subject is only found in him who is the Root and Offspring of David, and the bright and morning Star. David was an eminent type of Christ, and so clearly prefigured him in his whole history that Christ is frequently called David; for he being both the Root and the Offspring, he was David's Son, and David's Lord. "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David." "For David speaketh concerning him, [Christ] I foresaw the Lord always before my face; for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved. Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life," &c. But David is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne. He seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. (Acts ii. 25–31.) David in prophesying of Christ, said, Psalms cx. 1–3: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the *rod* of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power," &c. The rod of the Redeemer's power, which God has sent out of Zion, answers to the rod of Moses, setting forth the investment of all power in heaven and in earth, in Christ; power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him. And as Moses in leading Israel subdued all their enemies, and wrought salvation in Egypt, at the Red Sea, at Horeb and in the wilderness with his rod, so Christ shall rule in the midst of his enemies, and break them to pieces, as a potter's vessel. (Psalms ii. 9; Rev. ii. 27.) This *rod* of Christ's strength also answers to that of Aaron and his sons, signifying the oath by which he is made a priest, not by the law of a carnal commandment, but by the power of an endless life; and shewing also the success of his priesthood, in that the power of his atonement blossoms and bears fruit. It is also antitypical of the *rod* of David's regal or kingly strength, by which he was established on the throne of Israel, by which his holy anointing, his divine commission and reigning power were demonstrated. So Christ in demonstration of his high authority referred the Jews to the works which he had performed. See John v. 36, 37: "The works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me." The rod of his strength, as the right sceptre of the spiritual gov-

ernment of his church, is laid up in the Ark of the Testament, as a memorial forever, and every son shall feel it. "For, whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son that he receiveth;" and all shall have occasion to confess to him, "Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me."

The stem of Jesse, out of which this rod should come, may refer to the time and circumstances of Christ's advent. The *rod* in its application to David, as the *stem*, the smaller part of the family tree, grew to be a mighty branch, but like all natural branches of a tree, they taper to a mere stem; so at the time of Christ's birth, the house of David had dwindled to a very small *stem*. Ichabod had been written, and the glory of the house of David, after the flesh, had faded, and very few of the lineal descendants of David were found, but still the promise of God was secure. It was written, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."—Micah v. 2. Here then we see, not what Doctor Watts calls "The stem of Jesse's rod," but what the Scriptures present as the rod of Jesse's stem. For this rod came forth out of the stem of Jesse, according to our text.

"And a Branch shall grow out of his roots." Christ is frequently called a Branch. "Hear now, O, Joshua the high priest, thou and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at; for behold, I will bring forth my servant, the BRANCH."—Zech. iii. 8. Again, "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is the BRANCH: and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."—Zech. vi. 12, 13. (See also Psalms lxxx. 15; Isaiah iv. 2.) The man whose name is the Branch is the Messiah, and according to the prophecy has grown out of the roots of Jesse. The roots of a tree are the parts which literally lie buried in the earth. So at the time of Christ's advent Jesse and nearly all his sons were in their graves, but notwithstanding the apparently hopeless condition of the family of Jesse, and "Although my house be not so with God; yet" saith David, "he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow."—2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

But it is said, "A Branch shall grow out of his *roots*." In the sense of this subject, Jesse has a plurality of roots; as also it is written of David, "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star."—Rev. xxii. 16. In this application of the figure the root signifies the germ, or origin from which the tree grows, and the roots of Jesse may here denote, in their two-fold application, the natural and the spiritual origin of David. First, after the flesh, it was in Jesse; as David was literally the son of Jesse, after the flesh. Second, his spiritual origin and life was immediately from God. And Christ in his Messiahship developed both these roots, growing out of them. First, as the Son of God he descended from heaven; he proceeded and came from God. (John viii. 42.) He did not receive his divinity from Jesse,

nor from David, but came down from heaven, and John saw and bare record that he was the Son of God. "And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."—John i. 14. Hence his root, as to his divinity, was in the Father, in whom also is the root and source of all spiritual life and immortality of the church through him. For this life was with the Father, and was manifested. (1 John i. 2.) "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."—1 John v. 11. And when Jesus had finished his mediatorial work on the earth he said to Mary, "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God."—John xx. 17. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren; saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."—Heb. ii. 10–17.

We have endeavored to show that the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ was from his own self-existent, independent and eternal Godhead, and that the spiritual life of Jesse, of David, and of all the saints, is from the same divine root, fountain or source, and that in being made flesh, or manifested in the flesh, he evidently sprang out of Juda, through the loins of Jesse and David. So that although he was David's Son after the flesh, he was David's Lord, David's Root, and the Horn of his and of our salvation.

Volumes might be written on this sublime subject, but what we here present we hope may meet the desire of an "Inquiring Mind," and be blessed to the edification of all who love the truth.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., February 1, 1862.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904, &c.

ORDINATION.

THE Primitive or Old School Baptist Church at Harris Springs, Newton Co., Ga., set brother R. L. Cook apart to the full work of the ministry, June 24th, 1904, in the presence of a number of visiting brethren.

The following named ministers composed the presbytery: Elders J. F. Almand, J. F. Moss, J. D. Curtis, D. S. Gower and the pastor of the church, Elder J. T. Jordan.

The examination was conducted by Elder D. S. Gower, laying on of hands by the presbytery, and prayer by Elder J. F. Almand. The charge was given by Elder J. F. Moss, after which the right hand of fellowship was extended by the presbytery.

We commend our young brother to all brethren with whom in Providence he may be thrown, praying that he ever may be found contending for the faith which was once delivered to the saints.

J. T. JORDAN, Moderator.

D. J. ADAMS, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—**Mrs. Olive Phebe Hewitt Birdsall,** widow of Jeremiah Birdsall, at the home of her daughter, Elida M. McAuslan, at Hamden, Delaware Co., N. Y. She with her husband united with the Old School Baptist Church at Otego thirty-two years ago, and was baptized by Elder Durand, who was pastor of the church at that time. She loved the doctrine of salvation by grace. It was her great pleasure to serve the different members of like precious faith, esteeming others better than herself. The bright evidences left that mother has made a glorious exchange in yielding up life, mitigates the weight of this profound sorrow. She had suffered much for the last year with heart trouble; marks of pain and suffering were depicted on her countenance, but O how calm and peaceful in death. This plainly spoke, "All is well." The words, "Asleep in Jesus," were never so impressive; it is truly "a calm and undisturbed repose." Mother was born at Middletown, Delaware Co., N. Y., Dec. 21st, 1819, and died July 3rd, 1904, aged 84 years, 6 months and 11 days. She was married to Jeremiah Birdsall Dec. 27th, 1838, who preceded her to the grave nine years. She was the mother of ten children, seven sons and three daughters; the fifth son died in childhood, the remaining children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, with one sister and the church, mourn the loss of a loved one. Her six sons acted as pall-bearers.

Elder D. M. Vail, her pastor, spoke very comfortingly and appropriately at the funeral.

Her daughter, URSULA SANFORD.

OTEGO, N. Y., July 10, 1904.

DIED—**Isaiah Mathews,** June 9th, 1904, aged 77 years and 5 months. Brother Mathews was a faithful member of the Old School Baptist Church at Springfield, Huntingdon Co., Pa. He was twice married, and leaves a number of children and grandchildren.

The writer tried to preach the funeral sermon; text, "I am the resurrection." His body was buried in Springfield churchyard.

ALSO,

Miss Margaret Chilcote, of Three Springs, aged 64 years, 9 months and 16 days. She never married, she and her sister Prudence living together since the death of their parents. She was not a member of the visible church, but had a good hope through grace. She was a great sufferer for years with lung and heart trouble. She was buried the second Sunday in July, 1904. Their message did not reach me, therefore I tried to speak to the comfort of the afflicted on the third Sunday, from Ephesians ii. 8-11. She leaves one brother, one sister, niece and nephew to mourn. May the Lord comfort them.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

DIED—At the residence of her parents, in Rock Grove, Iowa, July 30th, 1904, **Miss Sylvia Jane Roberts,** aged 17 years, 4 months and 25 days. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. O. B. Roberts. She was born in Floyd Co., Iowa, March 5th, 1887. She was a very exemplary girl, always caring and doing for others before thinking of herself, and no one who knew her could help but love and respect her. She was taken sick about the middle of May, and everything possible was done for her. She was a great sufferer, but bore it all without a murmur.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral service at her home on Sunday at 2 o'clock p. m. Read as a text 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18. A very large congregation was present. Her remains were interred in the Rock Grove cemetery to await the resurrection. May the God of all grace reconcile her dear parents, sister and brother who are left to mourn, besides many relatives and friends, is our prayer for Jesus' sake. E. A. NORTON.

HAMPTON, Iowa.

ERRATA.

IN the obituary of Deacon W. Baily, on page 477, current volume, it reads: "He leaves a dear companion, who has been a helpmeet in every sense for many years, two sons and other relatives, with the little band of brethren, about three or four in number, to mourn his absence." The membership is nineteen, two having died the past summer (brother Baily and brother Luce). Nine having united within the last three years brought the membership to twenty-one previous to the death of the two mentioned. D. M. VAIL.

APPOINTMENTS.

ELDER Silas H. Durand will, Providence permitting, fill the following appointments: Mt. Pleasant, Boone Co., Ky., Tuesday, Sept. 6th; Mill Creek, Ohio, Wednesday, Sept. 7th, 10 o'clock a. m; Georgetown, Ky., (Mrs. N. B. Hall's) Wednesday night; Licking Association, Mt. Carmel, Sept. 9th-11th; Mt. Sterling, Sunday night, Sept. 11th; Farmdale, (Mrs. Farmer's) Monday night, Sept. 12th; Little Flock, Tuesday, Sept. 13th; Shelbyville, Tuesday night; Bethel, Wednesday, Sept. 14th; Mays Lick, Thursday, Sept. 15th.

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Total to date	**$962 15**

MEETINGS.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet, the Lord willing, on Friday, Sept. 2nd, 1904, with Mt. Zion church, six miles east of Astoria, Fulton Co., Ill., on the St. Louis branch of the C., B. & Q. R. R., and continue the two following days. All trains will be met at Astoria during the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, especially our ministers.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Mt. Pleasant Association of Primitive Baptists will convene with Beech Creek Church, near Waddy, Shelby Co., Ky., beginning on Friday, Sept. 2nd, and continuing three days. Those coming by rail, either from Lexington or Louisville, will get tickets to Waddy, via Louisville Southern. Friday a. m. trains will be met. Any one expecting to arrive before or after this had better write brother Abram Hedden, Waddy, Ky. P. W. SAWIN.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing on Friday, Sept. 2nd, 1904, and continuing three days. We shall gladly welcome all who desire to come. Those coming will be met at the North Berwick railroad depot on Thursday before the time appointed for our yearly conference.

FRED. W. KEENE.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church, Friday before the second Sunday in September, (9th,) 1904, and continue three days. All seekers after the truth are cordially invited to attend. Those coming by rail will be met at the Bowdoinham station and cared for.

J. C. CLARK, Clerk.

THE Licking Association will meet with the church at Mt. Carmel, about eight miles north of Winchester, Clark Co., Ky., beginning Friday, Sept. 9th, and continuing three days. Those coming by rail will be met at Winchester. The Thursday p. m. and Friday a. m. trains will be met. Any one desiring further information write brother M. B. Hadden, Winchester, Ky. Winchester is on C. & O. R. R. east and west, and L. & N. R. R., north and south.

P. W. SAWIN.

OUR yearly meeting at Rock Spring, Md., will commence on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1904, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue over Sunday. Those coming from Philadelphia and intermediate stations will take train to connect with 4 p. m. train at Perryville, on the Columbia & Port Deposit R. R., for Conowingo. Those from Baltimore will leave there to connect with same train on Friday, Sept. 9th, arriving at Conowingo at 4:30 p. m., where they will be met and cared for. We hope to see a goodly number of brethren and friends with us. D. M. THOMAS, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the Olive and Hurley Church, the second Wednesday and Thursday in September, 1904, commencing at 10 o'clock the first day. All brethren and friends coming by train will please come to Shokan; if strangers, inquire for Alvah Bogart, only a few rods from depot, and they will be taken care of. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

ALVAH BOGART, Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting there will be a meeting of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church of Albany & Troy, N. Y., Thursday and Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1904. All who desire to come will be made welcome. Come to Albany, N. Y., and take electric cars at the union depot for Troy, N. Y. At Troy take electric car for Alba, change and take electric car to West Sand Lake and inquire for Mrs. Moul, who lives about five minutes walk from the electric car depot. Those coming on Wednesday can go to 423 Sheridan Ave., Albany, N. Y., where they will be cared for until Thursday morning, when they will go with brother Charles and George Schade to the meeting. Those coming Thursday will go direct to Sand Lake from depot. Meeting is at the home of Mrs. Moul, by her request, who makes every lover of the truth welcome, for she loves them for Jesus' sake. D. M. VAIL.

THE yearly meeting of the Cow Marsh Old School Baptist Church will be held at their meeting-house in Kent Co., Del., beginning on Saturday afternoon at 2 o'clock, and continuing all day Sunday, Sept. 24th and 25th, 1904. All brethren and friends are requested to come to Felton, on the Delaware Railroad, on Saturday morning, where all morning trains will be met, the last train arriving there at 10:20 a. m. We hope to see a goodly number in attendance.

J. B. MEREDITH, Church Clerk.

THE Old School or Primitive Baptist Church of Columbia, Jackson Co., Mich., the Lord willing, will hold her yearly meeting commencing Friday evening, Sept. 30th, and continuing the two following days. All lovers of truth are welcome, and we hope the good Lord will be our Leader all through the meeting. Those coming from the north, south, east or west will be met at Cement City depot, near by the church. M. P. LEWIS.

THE Old Baptist Church called First Roxbury, at Vega, Delaware Co., N. Y., has appointed a two days

meeting to be held the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (5th and 6th) 1904. All who love the truth are cordially invited to attend.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Juniata Association of Old School Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, with the Fairview Church, in Fulton Co., Pa., on Friday, October 7th, 1904, and continue over Sunday. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth. Those coming by railroad will come on the B. & O. road to Hancock, and pass over the bridge to the Hancock side, where they will be met and conveyed to places of entertainment. Come on Thursday and be there about 1 o'clock.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

A TWO days meeting has been appointed to be held with Cammal Old School Baptist Church, the Lord willing, the last Saturday and fifth Sunday in October, 1904. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. Those coming from the south will take the New York Central train at Williamsport, and those coming from the north will also take New York Central train. Ample accommodation for all who live out of town. Trains will be met on Friday and Saturday morning. Elder John McConnell, of New York city, Elder J. T. Rowe, of Baltimore, Md., and our pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, will be present.

ALVA B. CALLAHAN, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 72. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1904. NO. 18.

POETRY.

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

HEAVENLY Father, just and holy,
Wilt thou hear a sinner pray?
I'm so weary, sad and restless,
Tossed upon life's stormy way.

Many times rude billows threaten,
While the sky grows overcast,
And the bitter winds encircle
My frail bark at every blast.

Cruel, slippery rocks I've tested,
With their surface cold and bare;
Not a vine nor pleasant cluster
Could I find or gather there.

And the wilderness, I know it,
Pathless, lonely, wild and drear;
Not a song or precious message,
Only sighs there greet my ear.

Oft I roam the burning desert,
Where the hot sands press my feet,
Longing, seeking for an Elim,
For some shady, cool retreat.

Far away from earth's vain turmoil,
From its sorrow, sin and strife,
To the quiet of the valley,
Where is found the bread of life.

In that place where weary pilgrims
Find a sweet and sure repose,
In the secret of his presence,
I would hide from all my foes.

There beside the sparkling waters,
Breathing fragrance from above,
Would I ever stay and wonder,
Resting in thy smile of love.

Then I'll hear thy gentle whisper,
Bidding all earth's sorrows cease,
And I'll rise with thee, dear Savior,
To behold God's face in peace.

LIZZIE McCOLLOM.

WALLACETOWN, Ontario.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GENESIS IX. 27.

"GOD shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem."

The will of God concerning the world and its people is revealed in the events that occur from day to day in its history. History is a record of past events. Prophecy, however, dares more than history, and looks into the unrevealed future, declaring what is yet to be brought forth from the womb of time. Noah's words quoted above are prophecy, and are an instance of God's method of communicating with the fathers of old by the prophets, and not by his Son, as now. (See Hebrews i. 1, 2.) This one bit of prophecy is fraught with deep significance; it contains the key to much of the world's history, but much more, it contains the secret to the history of the visibility of the church of Christ. I hope we may be able to obtain a glimpse of both meanings of the text. Noah does not deserve

any credit for unusual sagacity and foresight, for his saying is the fruit of faith. Noah did not understand what he was talking about any more than the people of the Lord in this day understand fully their own thoughts and emotions when under the exercise of this same faith. Noah was warned of God of things not seen as yet, and moved by fear builded an ark to the saving of his house. How was Noah warned of God? By faith, that mighty principle which has moved the people of God aright in all ages of the world. Faith is the magnetic needle of the soul's compass which points always to the same star—the Star of Bethlehem, and will not let us go wrong. Noah could not warn others of the coming disaster, because none had this faith, and the things of God are revealed "from faith to faith," and not from faith to *no* faith, assertions to the contrary notwithstanding. The lessons taught in all these faithful sayings of old, instead of being wasted upon the world of that day, were reserved for us unto whom the better things of the gospel are come.

Certain circumstances surrounded the utterance of this prophecy quoted at the beginning. Noah was drunk with wine, and lay naked in his disgrace. His son Ham discovered him in this condition and exposed it to the two other sons, Shem and Japheth, who, instead of gloating over the incident, spread a garment over their father with their faces turned away. Upon awaking, Noah, aware of Ham's treachery and of the faithfulness of Shem and Japheth, cursed the offspring of the one but blessed the others. The blessings are promises unto us. So is God's will made known. He makes use of wicked things and base to further his purpose concerning his elect. Who dare question the predestination of God in these things, or who, acknowledging his predestination, dare lay the charge of guilt before his throne? These circumstances which accompanied the utterance of this truth by the lips of Noah furnished an unworthy setting for so precious a stone. Truth is a gem often found in the most unlikely places, and in settings unworthy of it, yet devoid of its habitation its brilliancy would not appear so wonderful nor its rarity be appreciated.

Shem was the forefather of Terah, the father of Abram, whose name was afterward changed to Abraham, who was the father of Isaac, the father Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel, from whom sprang that nation of old so singularly favored of the Lord above all nations of the earth. Japheth had seven sons, whose posterity divided the "isles of the Gentiles," every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations. From Noah sprang both Jew and Gentile. Japheth, the father of the Gentiles, was to be enlarged by the Lord, and should come to "dwell in the tents of Shem," meaning that his posterity should so increase in power and influence as to gain the ascendancy over the sons of Shem, and dwell in their dwelling-places. For many centuries the Jews were the ruling power in Jerusalem and the "land of Canaan," but finally passed under the government of Rome, and were gradually borne down under the yoke until their national identity became lost, about 70 A. D., when the temple at Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman army and many of the Jews were put to the sword, resulting in the massacre and banishment of hundreds of thousands of the unhappy people who were scattered among their brethren in all parts of the world. Josephus estimates the total number slain

to have been no less than 1,356,460. This is the *historical* fulfillment of Noah's prophecy concerning Japheth. This is also the "abomination that maketh desolate," spoken of in Daniel xii. 11. It is also the fulfillment of the prophecy in Hosea i. 4: "I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel." Jezreel, meaning "God's seed," prefigures Christ the only begotten Son of God. Historically speaking, the widespread desolation that came upon the Jewish nation in the year 70 was the awful vengeance of God upon that people for the crucifixion of Christ.

Now, with the help of God's Spirit to give us understanding, let us turn from the external to the internal or spiritual meaning of the text. Note the language, "tents of Shem," not land of Shem. Quite a decided difference. Not only was the seed of Japheth to possess the land of Shem, but the home of the Israelite was to be the home of the Gentile; he was to have the same roof for a covering, and be protected by the same wall. Israel dwelt beneath the wings of the Almighty. God was his covering and his wall of salvation. He was eyes unto Israel and a strong arm. Who was it that for Israel's sake caused the Red Sea to become a way of escape from the bondage of Egypt? Who was it satisfied their thirst with water from the smitten rock, and who sent manna from heaven in time of great hunger? Even the Lord God Omnipotent did all this, and more, for his mercies unto that rebellious people are beyond recounting. This same God gave them by the mouth of his prophets many sweet and precious promises whose fulfillment was treasured in the Savior to be revealed. But the Israelites blundered, they based their right to the promises upon endless genealogies, establishing their lineal descent from Abraham. That they were altogether wrong in so doing is clear from the words of John the Baptist to them, as recorded in Matthew iii. 9: "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our Father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." We have also the direct words of Christ concerning this matter in his address to the Jews, as recorded in John x. 26: "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." Now, as to who are the heirs of the promise, ask the great apostle to the Gentiles and he will tell you: "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Since we are Gentiles, my brethren, we have great reason to thank God that our right to the promise does not depend upon our being able to trace our descent from Abraham, for we could never do that, being descended from Japheth, and not from Shem. The whole thing depends upon the election of God in Christ before the foundation of the world. If we are included in that election, then are we heirs; if we are not so elected, then all the genealogies in the world will not make us heirs. Christ did not permit his disciples to bear this news unto the Gentiles until after his death, but sent them only unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. After his resurrection, however, he sent them on the great apostolic mission: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." "All the world," meaning Gentiles as well as Jews. By the way, permit me to say that this mission was finished prior to 63 A. D., when Paul, while a prisoner in Rome, wrote his letter to the brethren at Colosse, in which he said that the word of the truth of the

gospel had come unto them as it had "in all the world." So now it is clear that God no longer gives unto the Jew his peculiar care and providence, but has brought the Gentile to trust in him also. Thus Japheth dwells in the tents of Shem. The election of God in Christ includes both Jew and Gentile, all whom the Holy Ghost has circumcised in heart, for the circumcision of the flesh avails nothing.

"God shall enlarge Japheth." "Enlarge," according to the marginal reading, means to persuade or convince. This convincing is the work of the Spirit in the heart of the sinner, whether Jew or Gentile, and brings him to dwell beneath the love and mercy of an all-wise God, to know his gracious providence disposes each event, and to trust in that everlasting arm which is able to save unto the uttermost, thanking his heavenly Father through Jesus Christ our Lord that he has redeemed his soul from destruction and keeps his feet from falling.

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., August 10, 1904.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Aug. 5, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR:—I send you two letters from sister Lina W. Beck, of Crawfordsville, Ind., to my sister Bessie, having obtained her consent. Her name will be remembered by your readers. We have corresponded with her for many years. The extended reference to her experience in this letter, and the difficulty with which she writes at present, have made us feel that this letter should be given to the friends at large.

It is perhaps thirty-five years or more since I first met this dear sister at her pleasant home. Three times I visited that church and some of the other churches in that vicinity, and enjoyed those visits very much. The churches and brethren appeared to be in a warm and spiritual condition. Elder M. M. Vancleve, a dear and faithful pastor, then served that church. My visits among those brethren were very pleasant to me, and are good to remember. The names and faces of many dear brethren and sisters come to my mind, as I write, whom I loved for the truth's sake, and I love them yet, though most of them have gone home. Sister Lina Beck was at all the meetings she could get to, and her conversation was always upon spiritual things. Her mother and father, Chillion Johnson and Ann Johnson, were there on my first and perhaps on my second visit. The latter was baptized by Elder Samuel Trott, in New Jersey, before the separation in 1832. It was like listening to the sweetest music to hear her talk. I think I had her experience published in the SIGNS about the time of my second visit. I cannot now remember the dates, and have not time to look them up.

I would love to meet once more on earth with our dear sister Beck and others who remain, and those who have since been gathered in, where we had such sweet meetings so long ago, if it were the Lord's will; but it is not likely I shall. All other things change, but the love and truth of God never change. The experience of grace does not change. He from whom cometh down every good gift, and every perfect, does not change. With him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. We in our natural feelings change, but in the love and fellowship which bind the children of God together in the bond of perfectness, there is no change. When all the varying things of time and sense have gone by, with all the cares, vexations, variance, heart-burnings, strifes and sorrows that

pertain to the flesh, this "charity, which is the bond of perfectness," will the more clearly appear in its unwavering and unending nature. The appropriate expression has been denied it many a time, yet it has been there, down deep in the soul all the time.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., June 12, 1904.

MY DEAR SISTER:—My heart is drawn out to you this beautiful, perfect morning, a morning without clouds; and my mind seems less cloudy since reading the present number of the SIGNS (June 15th). I was up by five o'clock to read my favorite paper while all was still and peaceful. I cannot read by lamp light on account of my sore eyes. I have had a feast reading everything in the SIGNS. The "Fragments," were very sweet to my taste. I was made glad by the explanation of the text, "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily," &c. I used to be kept away from the Lord's table by my unworthiness, until I saw the worthy one was he who saved us. It was in the hymn given out by dear Elder Southard, commencing,

"Great God, from thee there's naught concealed,
Thou seest my inward frame."

And I liked where your brother talked about our "laying down our lives for the brethren;" and I liked very much what he wrote about "the Lord's day." All these things stir up my sluggish mind, and are words fitly spoken, and they make me want to search the Scripture, and not prevent me from reading my Bible, as some say. A brother said, "O, don't ask me to take any religious paper, and have me waste my time from the book of all books." But I must examine myself instead of my brother.

I love the dear writer Mary Hill Terry, and would be glad to clasp her hand. She said, "I feel as though the everlasting arms were underneath me now, but am so changeable that before another day has passed I may be questioning whether there is any such support as the everlasting arms." O how often I am in doubting castle, doubting everything, and am sure I have no title to "mansions in the skies." I am glad the dear sister was willing to divide her letters with us. In the one from Martha K. Hubbard I find much of my own experience, which encourages me to hope I have an interest in the sufferings and death of the blessed Savior.

I read on and on. In the next letter, from Topsham, Maine, were my own thoughts expressed in a much better way than I could possibly do, and before I reached the bottom of the first page I had to turn over to see who the writer could be who had walked in my same pathway, and then I found dear Attie A. Curtis, who had comforted me before many times. Dear, precious soul, how I would like to rest my eyes on her face.

Well, I am taking the second sheet to say what I intended to say in the first. Two weeks ago to-day brother Montgomery Canine and wife took me down to old Union church, where I had joined fifty years ago the fourth Sunday in May (1854). There I heard four interesting sermons from Elder Ragan. My heart was made glad over the joyful sound of the gospel, but very sad when I saw the many empty seats of loved ones now gone to that blessed home, who were in the church at the time they received poor, unworthy me. I went in the churchyard, where rested Aunt Phebe Montgomery, one of the faithful mothers in Israel, Keziah, her daughter, and Edna,

grand-daughter, all so good to me; Edna I taught to read; I was a teacher of a school in the neighborhood two years. At the time I write about, I boarded with Cornelius and Keziah Canine, father and mother of Montgomery. One Saturday morning while I was boarding there, Keziah said, "This is the church meeting at Union, [we always went,] husband and I are going to offer ourselves to the church and you had better go along." I said, "O no, I am not fit to be in any church; but if I should ever join I would want to be at home with father, mother and grandmother." We went, and on the way stopped at grandfather Canine's, where we met Elder M. M. Vancleve, who had just arrived from Crawfordsville. He shook my hand and said, "Lina, I have come to baptize you." I said, "O no." He then gave me a note from my mother, and she said, "If you long to go to the church, your unworthiness need not make you linger, nor because papa and I are not there. You must forsake father and mother and all for Christ." We went on to the old church, and there were my dear parents, come to see us walk in the path of duty. I had told them of my change long before that happened, in 1850. I waited four years, trying to lead a christian life, but could never succeed. Well, I entered that house of worship determined not to offer my poor, polluted self to that Godlike company of saints. I sat far back in the corner, trying to get out of sight. Elder M. M. Vancleve preached, then gave the opportunity for candidates to talk to the church. When Cornelius and Keziah went up and related their experience and were received, I trembled in every limb, and when dear Elder Vancleve said, "We have done as we were commanded, and yet there is room," I started without remembering that I would not; I seemed compelled to go. I do not remember what I said, but aunt Margaret Canine took me in her arms and blessed me. That night I could not sleep for fear I had deceived that good people; I prayed to be hindered from going into the baptismal waters if I should thus disgrace the cause of my blessed Master, whom I desired to honor; I so feared they had received me because I was the child of such worthy parents. From seven years old till then I had tried to shun evil, hated sin, loved to be with God's people, but seemed to be a failure of all good. The next morning was calm and bright, and a large company of brethren (perhaps twenty carriages,) wended their way to the river. I thought as others joined us, It looks like a funeral procession, and that was a good comparison. I felt calm and peaceful, the water looked beautiful, and I had no fears; the overhanging rock on the opposite shore spoke of God's majesty, and the hymns they sung were solemn to me. I came out of the water happy, and felt I should always be peaceful. That was a day long to be remembered. If I have an experience of grace, it runs through my whole life. If I could talk to you I would tell many ups and downs.

Last summer Lovia Elmon told me she was very anxious to belong to our church, and had been for several years, said, "Now I am so feeble with heart trouble that I fear I would lose my short breath should I be baptized." I tried to encourage her; told her all fear would be removed and she would be strengthened for her duty. She became very sick and sent for me, and wanted to be carried on her bed to the river, two miles away, to be baptized. I told her, Jesus is your Savior, and you are baptized, because you

love him and are an obedient child, but now you are so weak it seems impossible for you to go. She died, still regretting she had not done that duty. This is the fourth person that has talked to me in the same way in several years. Advise me as to my duty in such a case.

Another thing I want to ask of your brother, and he may write it in his next "fragments," if he is so led: "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." Please, if convenient, give some of your thoughts. Is the leaven the grace of God? Is the meal dead sinners?

Please excuse me for writing so much and saying so little, but do write to me again if you can, I love your letters.

I miss brother Beebe from the SIGNS, he blossomed out just before he left us. I enjoyed his writings much; but the SIGNS is sustained still; Elder Chick is a brave soldier. The Lord be praised, for he is faithful to us poor, needy pilgrims.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

LINA W. BECK.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., July 29, 1904.

MY DEAR SISTER:—My eye is sore again, and I am most of my time under a cloud, too gloomy to write anything worth reading, but I do want to thank you for your comforting letter, and hope you will remember me while I remain in this low ground of sorrow. It cheers me to have your sweet fellowship, and although I am unworthy, I hope I know something about the love of God shed abroad in the heart.

One morning, not long ago, I was out early, gathering raspberries, my niece, who had lately lost her husband, had asked me, "Aunt Lina, where is heaven? tell me about it." I told her what little I could remember of the Scriptures on that subject. This morning I was thinking earnestly upon that all-important question, Where is heaven? Will I ever meet my Savior and the blood-washed throng? I seemed in an agony of gloom, groping in the dark, when these words came to my relief,

> "'Tis a heaven below,
> The Redeemer to know,
> And the angels could do nothing more,
> Than to fall at his feet,
> And the story repeat,
> And the Savior of sinners adore."

> "He hath loved me, I cried;
> He hath suffered and died,
> To redeem such a rebel as me."

And I thought of good old Bunyan in prison, praising God.

> "Prisons would palaces prove,
> If Jesus would dwell with me there."

The little birds in the apple tree over my head were very busy with their young, and singing praises all the time, why should I be so cast down?

> "Awake, my soul, in joyful lays,
> And sing thy great Redeemer's praise."

Thus I had a foretaste of heaven. I went in to breakfast with my children, my heart full of love and song, the gloom that so long covered me seemed lifted for a time, and I longed to get my Bible and read the Psalms.

What you said of Attie Curtis was very interesting. Even she, who always seemed on the mountain top, can dwell in a cloud. I would love to see her, as well as yourself; I do prize you both for the blessed Master's sake. But if I were with you, sore eyes, deaf ears and lame hand, I fear my bodily appearance would prove contemptible.

Now in regard to that last letter I wrote, you can do as you please with it, Elder Chick can judge it. I know he

will not print, or suffer to be printed, anything that will injure the cause. I love the SIGNS.

Love to all. Write again. Lovingly,
LINA W. BECK.

NEWARK, Del., March 17, 1904.

MY DEAR COUSIN:—What a sad time you have been passing through since we last heard from you. We feel a deep sympathy for you in your time of sorrow and loneliness, which those near of kin must feel, I think, one with another, and when to this nearness of relationship is added union of belief in the precious Jesus, the tie is doubly near and precious; at least I feel so toward you, dear cousin, and I believe I may also say sister in belief and hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, which means hope in him in the life which now is, and in that which is to come; into which life and rest you hope that your dear grandmother has already entered in its fullness. In this life we only know these spiritual things in part; we have a hope of the Christ-life begun in us, by the indwelling belief and love of Jesus and his blessed and glorious truth. We have also the body of sin and death; that it is a body of sin and death, I think we daily realize. The beloved apostle said in one of his letters, The presence of this body causes us to groan, being burdened. Do you not realize this body of sin and death in yourself? It is not as you think, the faults of all your ancestors, centered in yourself. Paul says there is none that doeth good, no, not one. You are no worse than all the human family, who by the sin of one were made sinners. It is the new birth which causes this to be manifest in you. John says, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." Jesus says, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. * * * Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Notice the different origin of the two lives, and the entirely separate and distinct character of the two lives and births; one of man and the other of God. When one would try to tell a little of what the new birth and life in Jesus means and is to those called of God out of darkness into his marvelous light, it opens a vast and inexhaustible subject, a subject made of God to me more precious than anything else, and I have found (and especially so about the time I was baptized) it difficult to keep my interest in anything else. When the Lord gave me ears to hear and a heart to understand the precious things of his kingdom, they were made more precious to me than I can tell. My greatest desire is that I may indeed have a hope in these precious things. I go on, I find, with others, hoping, yet often doubting and fearing my right or reason to hope; burdened often with the unrighteousness of the flesh in myself, and burdened with unbelief, yet I often receive little evidences which cause me to still hope in Jesus. I can say of a truth with the apostle "that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing," and also I must say that if I am indeed one of God's elect and saved children, it must be through the mercy of God, by Jesus Christ, and if there be the least thing about me that would mark me as a christian, it is alone of God, and of his power and grace in me, a sinner saved, I sometimes hope. I have surely reached the end of all perfec-

tion in the flesh, knowing that I can in no wise work the good and acceptable works of God, except the power of God's Spirit worketh in me both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Is it a wonder that I love the doctrine of Christ and the beloved apostles? In this I find evidences of hope for such an one as I. It is spoken of the Lord by the apostle, "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." And in another place, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." These Scriptures do not leave much room for the religions of the world, do they? The world talks of working for Jesus, but I find comfort in telling what God has done for his chosen people; his finished work of salvation in Christ Jesus; not a work which rests with mortals to fulfill, but God's finished work of salvation in Christ Jesus, and we cannot well learn of this without God's Spirit in us giving us a knowledge of death in us and life in Jesus, for we have no need of salvation, except we know first our lost condition by sin. This is the work which God works in his people, and which work is continued in us until we are released from this mortal body of sin and death. This work which God works in us is the knowledge of sin and death in our mortal bodies, and the hope of life and righteousness in God himself by Jesus Christ. Heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ of the kingdom of heaven. Is not this work above all the works that man is able to work, and utterly beyond man's power to work? I can say I know it is, of a truth. You are blessed of God in that you are receiving in yourself this knowledge of sin and death. Do you know that not every one has this knowledge and hatred and sorrow because of unrighteousness, in their hearts? It is God who gives this knowledge and hatred of self, and he who has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. The hope of the Lord's people for righteousness is not in themselves, it is in the Lord Jesus, and surely a sure and precious hope it is; "The christian's hope shall never fail." You will perhaps ask me, if I know and believe these precious truths of God, and the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, why then do I have doubts and fears and unbelief of my right and reason to hope in the Lord? As I write, I, too, wonder why. This has been one of the proofs to me, in myself, of my complete weakness, helplessness and separation from God, in and of myself, that is, in my flesh. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. The Lord's people can only know these things by the Spirit. These doubts, fears and unbelief must be entirely of the flesh, for unbelief cannot come of the Spirit of God. Death in us, life in God. "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." Though it may and must be for good that the children of God are brought into the knowledge of the death in themselves, by experience, yet God will not suffer them to remain therein; their coming forth by the power of his Spirit must redound to the praise and glory of God, and to a renewal of rest in Jesus, and

hope in the righteousness of God, with which the children of God are clothed in perfect holiness in the sight of God, in their unity with Christ Jesus their Savior, in whom they were chosen before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, God "having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise and glory of his grace." This subject is inexhaustible.

I have written you a long letter, and only of the things of Jesus; I know that in these things is comfort, above which there can be no greater. I believe you will find the comfort which you are so much in need of in looking over those old copies of the SIGNS which you have. They contain many excellent letters of God's called ministers of the gospel, and also interesting letters of the experience of God's children called out of darkness into his marvelous light. Look for letters of Elder Wm. Montgomery, of Georgia, and see if you do not love him and them for the truth's sake; also look for letters of Elder Wm. J. Purington, Elder Durand and others. There is another letter I especially want you to find and read, which I love. I am not sure I know who is the writer, but I know it is the truth, and I love it, and it has given me much comfort. It is in the SIGNS of July 3rd, 1889, and signed "A Halting One." The text is of Jacob. Read the testimony of Jesus and his called apostles in the New Testament, and prove what you read by the word of God, and believe nothing of any man's writing, except it conforms to the Scriptures. It is written in the Acts that the people searched the Scriptures daily, to see if these things which the apostles preached among them be so, that is, were they according to the word of God?

May the Lord bless you and lead you into the full understanding and comfort of his blessed truth, is my earnest desire for his dear name's sake.

With love,

LAURA A. HAMILTON.

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER A. D. BOURLAND.

OUR dear brother, Elder Bourland, made a profession of religion while in the State of Alabama, and for a time united with the New School or Missionary Baptists, but after moving to Texas a spirit of investigation came into his mind in reference to the propriety and operations of Missionism, and the Bible marks of church identity. During this time, while prayerfully and carefully engaged reading the holy Scriptures, he became overwhelmingly convinced that the New School or so-called Missionary Baptist order was of human origin, contradictory in itself, and without a "thus saith the Lord" or precept to maintain their claims, and it was revealed to him in the forgiveness of his sins that salvation is by grace, and not by works, and that the atonement made by Christ is unconditional, and exclusively for the heirs of promise, embracing all whom the Father gave the Son in the covenant of redemption. Therefore seriously pondering the matter in his heart, he was led by the Spirit to throw off the Missionary yoke of the doctrines and commandments of men, and to look about to see if he could find a people who believed as he did. Soon thereafter he learned that there was an Old Primitive Baptist Church some twenty miles away. He was prompted to visit them to hear them preach and to see their order. When he heard them preach-

ing the power of God in the conversion of a poor, helpless sinner, he at once recognized them to be the people he was hunting for, saying they preached what he believed, and that it harmonized with his experience and the testimony of the Bible, and notwithstanding the opposition that confronted him, both by relatives in the flesh and neighbors, he was made able to forego all these things, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season, his dear Savior showing him how great things he must suffer for his sake; therefore being fully persuaded in his own mind by the distinguishing grace of God, he surmounted every difficulty and united with the Caney Church of Old School Baptists in 1867, and was baptized by Elder John E. Deatherage. After this he was dismissed by letter from the Caney church, in Fannin Co., the second Sunday in July, 1872. He then moved to Tarrant county, and located near Keller, Texas, his home at the time of his death, where he joined by letter the Denton Creek church of the same faith and order in May, 1873. At about this time he became seriously impressed on the subject of preaching the gospel, which he thought he never could bear, and sought to put it from him, but necessity was laid upon him, and he began to exercise his gift in a public way, and was liberated by the church Saturday before the first Sunday in May, 1879. He was ordained to the work of the ministry on Saturday before the first Sunday in July, 1886, by a presbytery composed of the following Elders: W. P. Mothershed, Samuel McKelvy, J. D. Loving and J. S. Collins. Since that time he has almost constantly been engaged serving from three to four churches and preaching the gospel in destitute places. He was chosen moderator of the Trinity River Association, which place he filled to the comfort and satisfaction of all the churches of that body for nearly ten years, and assisted in the ordination of a goodly number of ministers and deacons, also baptizing a great many people and performing many marriage ceremonies. The writer and Elder Bourland have been closely associated in ministerial labors for nearly a quarter of a century. He traveled with me to the Rocky Mountains, assisting me in the organization of a church at the famous Dawson Ranch, now under the pastoral care of Elder G. M. Fetter, of Raton, N. M. In his death the church has lost a loving brother and a faithful, devoted servant in his Father's house, willing to spend and be spent in the service of his brethren, knowing nothing among them save Jesus Christ and him crucified. He was an exemplary brother, a safe counselor, one who did not shirk duty to please men; one who was ready to cry aloud and spare not; to meet the enemy at the door; to give the warning voice when he saw danger approaching, and when he was preaching (he being so gifted and forcible in his arguments) it would have the effect of stopping the mouths of the gainsayer, while at the same time a meek, humble spirit was discernible, and the light of joy and peace shone in his countenance. In the late troubles among the Baptists of Texas he was ever ready to defend the right and to condemn the wrong, and to meet the false charges circulated by covert enemies against the absolute predestination of all things. He was a warm friend and supporter of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for over thirty years, and when speaking in veneration of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe would say that he was the greatest writer among the Bap-

tists whom God had called to wield "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." He often would refer to the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in high esteem, and with appreciation of their judgment in conducting its publication, also the faithful discharge of their duties in such a responsible position, continuing to affirm the Bible doctrine of the Old School Baptists as proclaimed by apostles and prophets in olden time.

He was a lover of the late departed brother Benton L. Beebe, sympathizing with him in his affliction, and his untiring devotion to the cause; also Elders Jenkins, Chick and Durand. I here insert the editorial remark of our dear brother Benton Beebe after the news of our dear brother's sudden stroke reached the office of the SIGNS: "It is one thing to contend earnestly for the truth when surrounded with brethren in full accord and fellowship with us, and it is quite another thing to stand firm and unmovable amidst the persecution of false brethren, as brother Bourland has done." Truly it can be said of him, a great one in Israel is fallen.

A volume could be written on the life of this dear man of God, yet I feel assured that the readers of the SIGNS will never regret the space this will occupy when reduced to print. Being limited in space compelled me to omit many interesting events that would be valuable to the reader, and which connected Elder Bourland and the writer in ministerial work over twenty years, and though his voice is still in death, he yet speaketh. So farewell till we shall meet again in the heaven of eternal felicity, to praise God in endless day.

Your brother in tribulation,

ASA HOWARD.

WEATHERFORD, Texas, August 15, 1904.

(See obituary in this number.)

GOD AND MAN.

CHRIST said unto the unbelieving Jews, "Before Abraham was, I am." How long before Abraham was he? No tongue can answer the question, as he is without beginning of days or end of life. Before the highest dust of the hills was fashioned he was God; and he is a God of eternal purpose, which he purposed with himself before the world began. "With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?"—Isaiah xl. 14. These questions show that he took counsel with none save himself, the only self-existent being. We hear Isaiah again saying, "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Hence it is sure that God had thoughts concerning his eternal purpose before the worlds were. Were it not so, it would follow that he went about his work in merely a rambling way. In eternity God thought of making this world, and of everything that he would put in the world, even down to the smallest insect; he thought of making man upon the earth, and he purposed to give this creature that he would make, a law, and he knew that being made subject to vanity, as Adam was made, he would fail to keep this law. Consequently he knew that man would fall under the curse of the law, and he knew that this man would need redemption from the curse of the law, and he saw that there was none to help. So the Lord undertook this great work himself, and though he thought it not robbery to be equal with God, he assumed the nature of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh. So Christ according to the

eternal mind and will was sent to be the propitiation for the sins of his people. Now, mind you, this was all fixed way back in eternity, before man was made, in the eternal purpose of God. It seems ridiculous to say that man was made able to stand, though liable to fall, in view of the fact that God in eternity purposed to make man subject to vanity, and to give this creature also a law, and knew that he, being made subject to vanity, would fall, and also knew that man would need the sinless offering of one made like unto his brethren, and he himself bare our sins in his own body on the tree. All this was in God's thought in eternity. Then if indeed man was able to stand, what would have become of this sinless offering which was appointed before man was? God's purpose was fulfilled in all this evidently, else why was man made subject to vanity? And had he not have been thus made all the devil's power could not have caused him to fall. And had God not given Adam a law, then there would have been no sin, for where there is no law there is no transgression; sin is the transgression of the law.

It is sure that our God was not thwarted in his undertakings when man fell, but all was according as he had thought. "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Now with regard to man, it is said his days are determined, and the number of his months are with the Lord. His bounds are appointed that he cannot pass. (Job xiv. 5.) Our bounds are set, but how unbelieving poor mortals are. There is no one on earth independent, there is not one man who came in the world of his own accord, and there is not one who will go away of his own accord; our God has brought all men here, and our God will remove us all without consulting us. It makes no difference as to how we go, it is in his way, set to our bounds on earth. Trouble belongs to Adam's fallen sons and daughters, and there is no way out of it, only in the peace that Jesus gives. When one experimentally feels this peace, then trouble gives way, and for the present this peace cheers the soul. It is not merely a duty, but it is a sweet privilege to cast our troubles upon Jesus. We poor, weak worms are not able to bear them, so it is given to us to cast our every burden upon him. Sometimes I almost sink, as did poor Peter, and the waves come over me, but then he says, "My grace is sufficient for thee." "I will not leave thee nor forsake thee." How blessed the Savior's assurance, that even the hairs of our heads are numbered, and one sparrow cannot fall without our heavenly Father. One of God's humble poor in possession of this sweet, God-given peace, is by far richer than though he owned this world. O let us bless the Lord for this sweet peace. The riches of this world will all be left behind, while this eternal inheritance is kept for the heirs of God, and the heirs are kept for it, and it is sure to all the seed; there is nothing doubtful about the heirs receiving their inheritance.

This is the time of our monthly meeting, and I am debarred the privilege of being there, and my heart felt as though it would burst this morning, so I took my pencil and began to write, but I have not written as I intended. How different we would have things from the way our Lord has appointed, if it were in our power, but as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways and his thoughts higher than our ways and our thoughts. I feel that if I could only speak words to the comfort of the little ones of the Lord, or write to the comfort of the saints, I

would not be so near a blank, but all of this privilege is denied me, and I am often made to wonder whether my life is not a complete failure; yet my life is not a failure, since it is in complete accordance with God's purpose. A smiling face is often hidden behind a frowning providence. I am so glad that God rules over my steps in this life. I would like to go far and near and see the household of faith, and enjoy their company, but that is not God's way, else it would be so. If I could see all the dear brethren after whom I read, it would seem that things were more evenly balanced, for some have that pleasure, while others must remain at home and combat with their own sinful selves. I am so unworthy that it is a wonder I ever have a smile from my dear Lord; but he was made sin for me, that I might be made the righteousness of God in him; here is where my righteousness is. God looks upon Christ, and in him finds all righteousness.

I submit this to your judgment, do with it as you deem best. I am a poor old hobbler in spiritual things, at the best.

Your brother, J. M. DULEY.

CAPRON, Okla., July 31, 1904.

LANCASTER, Ohio, August, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have thought that I would keep my pen still, but in reading the number for August 1st, present volume, I am made to feel that I must write a few words for your better judgment. First was the letter from Elder Durand, and it seemed that it had all been told, but no, it can never all be told. Then came the name of brother G. W. Hartsough, and he was given words which were as a cup of cold water to a thirsty soul. I also wish to hear an account of the travels of Elder G. N. Tusing. I have before asked him to write out such a narrative, but his answer has been, "O no, my actions and my narrative will not agree." I cannot doubt the great and marvelous change, and that Jesus has revealed himself to me as my Savior; I never realized anything more plainly. I saw his kingdom and people, and I felt to be no more a stranger, but a fellow-citizen. Yes, I was made to hear the joyful sound of the gospel, and the next day, at the water side, I was shown my duty to follow in the footsteps of the Master as he went down into the river Jordan. That was in November, 1851, but I was not buried in the watery grave until October, 1852. Then for years, when I would hear the gospel proclaimed, what a feast it was to my hungry soul.

> "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
> In a believer's ear!"

Death had no terror for me then. That was in my first love, now I ask, Will one who is a child of God fear death? At times I feel as though I had crucified the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. I am made to examine my heart, and what do I find? Uncleanness, uncleanness! I am not fit to be called a christian, but still I want to go with them wherever they go, and do wish it were with me as it was in times that have gone by. O, is there no balm in Gilead? Yes, sometimes when we read what the dear Savior said: "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." Then again, he was exceeding sorrowful even unto death. But then the tempter comes to us and says, "He knew where he would go; he came from the Father, and knew that he was going back to the Father; he knew all about it, and you do not know. You ought to know better

than to think that you are one of the redeemed family of God. Your actions prove that you are not a child of God." These are some of the tempests that toss the bark in which I ride. Then it comes to me again that "if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart." O how fearfully I walk the most of my time. I often fear that I am a castaway from the dear Lord. All this I know is just, for if a child of God I am the least of all.

Then comes as I read, that dear sister, Belle Gorsuch, and not the last or least. It seems to me that if I could write as she can I should not hesitate to do so many times. She speaks as one who has been taught of the Lord, and I sincerely believe she has. I am sure that the one who composed the poetry she sent knew the plague of sin. And so the SIGNS all through was a feast. I gave the paper to a dear sister, who lives close by, to read, and she shared the feast with me, and said it was all good, and that all the writings were comforting. There is no paper I have ever read that I can appreciate as I do the SIGNS, and the correspondents of the SIGNS. There are many doctrines which are called Baptist, but there is but one true Bible doctrine, and that is the doctrine which all true believers should esteem and contend for. But poor mortals wander still in the wilderness of this world. When the Savior hungered the devil became very bold, and said, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." Then, "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down." He quoted what was written in the Scriptures. I have not the least doubt that Jesus could have wrought all that the devil told him to, but it was not the devil who was to be obeyed. So also the devil makes all manner of suggestions to the people of God as to what they could do if they are his people indeed. But Jesus said, "Fear not, I have overcome the world." He did this for his people.

But I shall have to stay this rambling letter; I feel that I ought not to send it. I hope that you will be charitable.

Brother Chick, will you be kind enough to give your views upon the parable of the ten virgins, five of whom were wise and five foolish? Five had no oil in their vessels with their lamps. All had lamps. It seems that all ten trimmed their lamps, and all slumbered and slept till the hour of midnight. When the cry came, the lamps of the five foolish virgins had gone out. If pure oil means the grace of God, where did they go to buy it?

With love to all the household of faith, I am unworthily your sister,

SARAH B. PEARCE.

[AT some future time we will try to reply to the above request, if the Lord will.—ED.]

LOVELAND, Colorado, July 10, 1904.

PUBLISHERS AND EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I will try to write more frequently for the SIGNS should I feel that the Spirit of the Lord directs, yet I do not know that I am a competent judge as to whether the Lord is directing me or not, for often during my life have I felt impressed to write upon some subject; a text of Scripture would fasten itself in my mind, and I could find no relief until I would write my thoughts upon it, and when I would review it I could see so much imperfection in it, that instead of sending it for publication as I had intended, I would commit it to the flames, and I would be left in doubt as to whether the good Lord had any part in directing it or not.

With your permission I want to correct

an erroneous impression of some who read my letters, i. e., that I am not a preacher or an Elder. Very frequently I receive letters from strange brethren (in the flesh) who address me as Elder. It makes me feel that I have in some way in my writings deceived them, which I have no intention of doing; to be called an Elder makes me feel out of place. I will make this confession however, that I have been twice liberated to exercise my gift in public; once by Rich Valley church, in Kansas, and once by the Antioch church, in southern Colorado. Each time I set a seal upon my lips, for I felt the churches erred in the matter. As to my preaching in public, I tried it but once, and a more fruitless and complete failure never did mortal man make than I did, of which I might some time write for the columns of the SIGNS, if I thought it would be of comfort or profit to any one.

Paul to the Corinthians says, "There are diversities of gifts." Now, dear brother Chick, I have been for more than forty years of my life trying to decide what my gift is, if I have any, and I am no nearer a satisfactory conclusion to-day than I was forty years ago. I know that I have been a very disobedient child to the commands of my heavenly Father. Often have I been called to pass through sore trials, and have often stooped and kissed the rod of my Master.

Sometimes when low in spirit, mourning on account of feeling the absence of the blessed Savior, I would take up my pen and write to some precious brother or sister, or to the SIGNS, and when I would review it I could not see how any one could receive comfort in reading it, yet I have received in response some most comforting letters. This would encourage me to write again, so that I sometimes conclude that if I have any gift of profit among the dear saints, it is to write of my own experience; tell them of the dealings of the Lord with me, and in so doing some one who is traveling the same path with me, led by the same Spirit, will be comforted, and I am amply repaid for my writing.

Yes, as you say, brother Chick, many changes have taken place since I used to write for the SIGNS. Some of the able defenders of the truth as it is in Jesus have passed away, yet the Lord has not left himself without witnesses, others have been raised up to fill their places who are not ashamed or afraid to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and I believe he will continue to raise them up as long as time will last. Notwithstanding there are many self-righteous people to-day, saying that there are but few of those illiterate Nazarenes left, and they pray for the time to hasten when they will all become extinct in the world. O such poor, deluded souls to thus pray; they are more to be pitied than blamed, for little do they know that it is for the sake of the treasure (these hated and despised Old School Predestinarian Baptists) that this earth is held in place. I do believe that when the last one of the elect people of God is brought to a knowledge of the truth that this time world, with all timely things, will be brought to an end, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, for the Lord will have no further use for this sin-cursed world.

I see I am making this too lengthy to ask for space for it in the SIGNS, so will stop writing for this time. May the good Lord bless and sustain you, is my prayer. Pray for me that my faith in Jesus as a full and complete Savior fail me not in my declining years. Farewell.

J. H. YEOMAN.

NEW VERNON, N. Y., August 12, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I wish I possessed the ability to write in reply such a letter as I feel yours so richly deserves, but you are no stranger to my weakness in giving expression to my thoughts by use of the pen; I feel however, it would be an unkind act on my part if I made no attempt to answer your most welcome letter. I do want to tell you something of the comfort it brought me in those hours of suffering and loneliness which were portioned to me. I feel that I never can for one little moment call it an accident, for I must and certainly do believe nothing comes to us by chance. I feel God's purpose embraces everything that transpires, however dark and mysterious it may seem to our weak, finite minds, yet his loving parental hand is directing and guiding in all the events of our life, for he is known to the subjects of his grace both as Father and God, and let the afflicting strokes of the rod come as they will, it is all done in gentle tenderness and in love, pitying our weakness, knowing we are dust. The prophet Isaiah makes mention and says to the comfort of the little ones that, "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them: and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." Then how safe and secure are all his dear people in the sweet assurance of his promise to them, although trials and sorrows may come, which is the common lot of all. It is well to remember in truth (as you made mention in your precious letter, also in the article you sent,) that God is in all things that transpire; and I was made to believe it with all my heart, and how it rejoiced me to feel that his presence was near, and that the dear Lord knows me just as I am. The psalmist in the sincerity of his heart prayed to the Lord, saying, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." I think when we are brought lowly at his dear feet, it is our prayer, too, that we may walk humbly and softly before him all the days of our life, trusting only in our dear Jesus as our all in all.

My dear brother, one night when suffering severe pain, the words of the poet came as if spoken by a loving voice:

"Not all the pains that e'er I bore
Shall spoil my future peace;
For death and hell can do no more
Than what my Father please."

When morning came I asked my nurse to bring me the hymn book, and I read the whole hymn, and it came as a rich and glorious promise in those hours of trial and sorrow, when the future looked dark and fearful about my ever walking again, but I am glad to write you that the Lord is better to me than all my fears; for the past two days I am happy to say I have gained so that about the house I can walk without the aid of my crutches, and I think I can say out of a heart of gratitude and thankfulness to the Giver of all our mercies as did the psalmist, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." Truly the Lord has been merciful and gracious to me all the days of my life, notwithstanding my oft forgetfulness of him.

Saturday and Sunday it was my privilege to attend meeting, and how good it again seemed to meet in the assemblies of the dear kindred in Christ, after being shut in some weeks. On Sunday Elder Ker read a text in the first chapter of

Songs: "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest," &c., and if not mistaken, my poor, hungry soul fed upon the rich morsels as they fell from his lips, and they still abide with me, to my comfort and joy.

My dear brother, I want to thank sister Chick and yourself for the kind sympathy expressed in my recent affliction, for it touches a tender chord in our hearts when remembered by those we love.

I received a good letter from Elder Durand at the time yours came to me, and how closely it drew the sweet bond of christian love and fellowship to think two that have known me since youth could still extend to me the endearing name, sister, when I feel so unworthy to be thus addressed.

I find I am writing you a long, rambling letter, but will grant you the liberty of putting it aside until some convenient time to read.

I am now stopping with sister Minta Mapes, getting the pure, fresh air from those beautiful hills of the Shawangunk mountains.

Please throw that brotherly mantle of christian love and charity over this, which covers all.

Your sister in hope,

CELINDA J. JENKINS.

GOIN, Tenn., August, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR BROTHER:—After reading your editorial of August 15th, I felt like I wanted to write you a few lines, not in any way to oppose your views, but rather to ask you if it might not be interpreted in still another light, which would also strengthen the ideas already advanced by you? Yes, my dear brother, when John said, "Whosoever is born of God," &c., he surely did have reference to men and women twice born, once of the flesh or water, and once of the Spirit. And John, when he said "whosoever," did not have reference to some particular part or nature in such characters, but to the man or woman who had been born of God. He did not say such a one was without sin, but such a one "doth not commit sin." He also says such a one "cannot [making it absolutely impossible] commit sin," and then assigns two reasons why he "doth not commit sin." "For his seed [Christ] remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." And as you have said, it will not do to say we are without sin, for our own experience teaches us that when we would do good evil is present with us. And so many times we are made to cry out like Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Hence it will not do to claim that we have arrived at a state of sinless perfection in this life, and yet it is true that "whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." Then it must be in some particular sense, and not in the sense that we do not err in our deeds and thoughts. David says, "Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity," and John says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." So we will have to interpret it in some particular sense that we do not and cannot sin. John says, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." It seems to me that "the law" is a different law, "the law of sin and death," and if we are not under that law we cannot transgress it; consequently we cannot commit sin in the sense of transgressing the law of sin and death. Now the question is, Are we under that law or not? Paul says in

Romans viii. 2: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Now, my dear brother, Paul makes it clear that we are not under that law. (See Romans vi. 14, 15.) Consequently we cannot transgress a law that we are not under, though we might do many things that such a law forbids. Paul says to the Galatians, "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." Paul also says, "Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." He also says, "Ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ." Therefore it seems clear to my mind that this is one of the principles upon which "whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." Nor can he commit sin. It is said, "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." I do not want it to be understood that I am contending that God's children cannot or do not do many things that they ought not, but I do believe that God has arranged his matters so as to not impute sin to them; as it is said, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Christ has once satisfied this law in his own person; he paid the penalty that was due all his people by reason of their transgression, consequently the law can demand no more. Then in view of all this, we can speak "comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."—Isaiah xl. 2.

I will close for this time. Desiring that the Lord will continue to bless you in your labor of love, as ever, I remain your brother in the common faith of God's elect,

P. N. MOYERS.

DECATUR, Texas, 1904.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—It is with fear and trembling and much hesitancy I undertake to address the saints of the Most High, feeling that what I might write would be of no comfort or interest to them; nevertheless my mind is burdened with unrest in trying to overrule the impression to write. Sometimes I am made to wonder why the great God of heaven allows me to trust in him as my God and my Savior, when I cannot speak to the praise of his glory. He says he seeketh such to worship him as do worship him in Spirit and in truth. Then if we have not his Spirit to guide us we cannot speak the truth, for his Spirit leadeth into all truth. There is no error or false doctrine taught by the Spirit of Christ, so when we hear one denying the doctrine of God our Savior we know he is prompted by the spirit of antichrist, as Peter was when he said, I know him not. But when the Lord showed Peter his weakness he was made to weep. So it is with all the children of God when they look to their own strength in being able to stand, as Peter did; when the Lord shows them their weakness they are made to weep, because they trusted in their own works. May the Lord enable me to look to him at all times for strength to shun all evil, and cause me to go in the way he would have me go, and guide me in the way of all truth, that I may not err therein, but that I might speak the truth concerning his dealings with the children of men. The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil, and the prep-

aration of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue are from the Lord; then we see that prayer only prevails when the object sought is in harmony with the will of God the Father, and this is the confidence we have in him, that if we ask according to his will he heareth us. So if what I should say would comfort one of the little ones, it will be to the praise of his glory, and not to sinful me, for without the Spirit of the Lord to direct us, our writings and sayings are an abomination in the sight of the Lord, and will not comfort one of the poor in Zion.

Dear readers, I hear much of late said and written about eternal salvation and time salvation. Eternal life was given to all the heirs of promise before the world began, and it was hid in Christ from the foundation of the world. There is only one salvation spoken of, and it is all of the Lord from first to last, without any conditions whatever, for as Jonah says, "Salvation is of the Lord." I hear one saying, By our voluntary obedience we may keep ourselves in the love of God. If that be the case, then our will would be the moving cause of God's grace, but Paul says it is not of works, lest any man should boast. Again, some one may say it is presumption to ask the Lord to keep us. Now if that be the case, I will have to plead guilty to the charge, for my very breathings to the Lord are that he will keep me from all evil temptations, and guide and direct me in the way he would have me go. It does seem to me if it were left to my own volition of will, that I never would live in obedience.

Dear editor, I have received several sample copies of periodicals claiming to be for the benefit of Primitive Baptists, but I find none of them standing firm on all points of doctrine like the old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I hope and trust that the Lord who has sustained the publication of the SIGNS will continue to be with it, and may it not fear to declare the whole counsel of God, as did brother Gilbert Beebe and his son, B. L. Beebe. May the Lord guide and direct you to hold up the standard of truth for the comfort of the Lord's poor in Zion, for the truth that the SIGNS has always contended for is the only hope of the Lord's poor people. I hope you will bear with me for these scattering remarks.

I remain as ever, your unworthy brother, M. B. F. JONES.

CARDINGTON, Ohio.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—VERY HIGHLY ESTEEMED IN THE LORD:—I hesitate to say brother Chick, for I feel so unfit to address you at all, but I am forced to confess to myself that your editorial in the SIGNS of February 1st was comforting to me.

I have been so cast down, so cold and sinful, that I felt a letter from me would annoy you. Indeed, I find it impossible to tell you of the depth of darkness to which I have been subjected, but as I read your address in the SIGNS it seemed that you stooped down low enough to reach me with a helping hand, and I thought that perhaps you felt as unworthy to write of these things as I do, and though feeling as weak as ever, I feel like telling you how you encourage me by the way, and that I do feel interested in you, not only as a brother in the Lord, but that God will sustain you and guide you in the future conduct of the SIGNS. How many times a ray of comfort has reached my troubled heart while reading the SIGNS. If you can understand from what a lowly source it comes when I tell

you that I like the editorials especially, you will not feel proud on account of it; and indeed there are but few letters in your paper that do not give comfort. Elder Durand, in the letter about Jacob, reached down to my low condition, even to the "least of my Father's house." Just now the expression, "less than the least of all saints," seems to be too good for me, and yet I hope I can claim this humble place by hoping for that which I see not. When I search in myself to find the likeness of Christ, I find nothing but sin and selfishness. I can find comfort only when I leave self entirely out of sight, and view Christ as all in all; and if I understand the SIGNS this is the doctrine it proclaims, even Jesus. He is the foundation and the topstone, the first and the last. According to his word, "He that hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." This sweet promise was impressed upon me early, and is still a sweet comfort, for I know of a truth that I can perform no good work, though I greatly desire to live godly. What I have written of my great unworthiness is true, and I know it. Indeed, I would not wish to let you see the corruption of my heart, and yet in spite of all this I do sometimes feel proud. Yes, I will confess that sometimes when some one has praised me, I have felt a gladness which I fear was not all holy joy. Indeed, there are times when praise sinks me down into nothingness, knowing how unworthy of praise I am. I wish it were always so. Pride is sweet at the time, but afterward it is quite otherwise. But just now the picture is too dark to excite any feelings of pride.

Pray for me, if you can feel any fellowship for me. I have need to be often reminded that my trials are all appointed of God, and if I am his they will all be for my good. I pray that God will abundantly bless you and yours.

It is hard to be willing to say, "Thy will be done," because of the love we felt for brother Beebe; but your new helpers will no doubt be sustained by the same God in whom he trusted. If it is God's will to bless the SIGNS to the comfort and strength of the saints, he is able to do it. There is no doubt in my mind as to the future success of the SIGNS.

Dear brother, please forgive me for writing so much.

From the least,

JOIE E. WICKHAM.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR PASTOR:—Some time has elapsed since I wrote to or heard from you, and I am not now in a frame of mind to write of spiritual things. I fear that I know nothing of the things pertaining to Zion. Why this coldness and indifference? O, do I love thee, Zion, city of our God? To be in a place where the world has no charms for one and no spiritual light or comfort is given, is to be in a wilderness indeed. To realize the vanity of all things worldly, and when one's hope grows so dim that it can scarcely be called a hope, is to be shut up in prison walls, where one must remain until bidden to come forth. The christian life is not all a "heaven below," as I once fancied. In years gone by I thought that all a person had to do was to comply with certain conditions and that one was made a christian at once. How different is the reality. One is often in doubt about the whole matter. We can claim God as our Father with the brightest evidences, but when there are no evidences at all, and coldness and indifference are added to doubts and fears, the way seems very obscure. There

are exceptions, of course, for it has pleased God to permit some of his followers to dwell upon the mountain top a part of the time, at least, and shows them his glory. Could I have my desire, it would be more spiritual knowledge, a stronger love to Christ, a more humble spirit, and to be more submissive to him in all things. These blessings I think would be the greatest that he could bestow upon me in this life. But it has pleased him to give me a dwelling-place in a heathen land, as it were, apart from my kindred in Christ. It has pleased him to lay the hand of affliction upon me, and to remove all spiritual comfort from me that I once did enjoy, yet I would not question his loving-kindness and tender mercies. One so polluted must need the refiner's fire. The dross must all be burned up, and when the Father sees the brightness of his beloved Son shining forth, the work will have been done, and the christian ready for glory. I know that God can give me the heavenly manna here as well as elsewhere. I had not the slightest knowledge of this road the christian walks until I entered upon it, and have my doubts now whether I am really on the King's highway, or on a byroad, but I hope that I see a few of the landmarks that the redeemed of the Lord have passed this way. This road is peculiar and different from any other road. No one that is defiled can walk therein; all must wear the garment suited to the inhabitants (Christ's righteousness) of the country to which all travelers on this road are going. How these weary travelers will rejoice when the journey is ended, and they are at home in their Father's house to go no more out forever. With this end in view what are a few trials here on earth which last but for a moment? They will all be forgotten when we are in the embrace of our dear Lord.

I know you have many burdens, and so do not like to add another one, but is not the back fitted for the burden?

With love to yourself and all the brethren, I am yours unworthily,

M. E. FISHER.

RALEIGH, N. C., Aug. 7, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR:—I inclose herewith my check for the SIGNS. I enjoy reading its columns very much indeed, and I wish every sound Baptist in our nation could read it, for I feel sure it contends for the faith once delivered to the saints, and the blessed doctrine of salvation by grace in the best way and manner, and I cannot see how any one who has been born of the Spirit can object to this doctrine; as for myself, I have often said it is the only true doctrine preached, and I still say the same; it drops as the rain from heaven upon the plants of the garden of grace, and to me it is refreshing.

Dear brother, I hope you can come to our country again and preach; I feel since reading from your gifted pen a great desire to hear you. May the Lord bless and prosper you in your labor of love.

Very affectionately,

W. A. SIMPKINS.

SHELBYVILLE, Ind., Sept. 3, 1904.

EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I wish to renew the subscription of my poor, blind, helpless mother, Julia Ann Trees. If she lives until Sept. 21st she will be eighty-five years old, and is patiently awaiting the Master's call. Will you say that she received many letters in answer to the little note you published in No. 15, Vol. 71? They were highly appreciated, and she would be very glad to receive more. Her address was Fenns, Ind., it is now Shelbyville, Shelby Co., Ind., R. D. 8. (MRS.) W. L. McCARTY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1904.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ARE THERE INVITATIONS IN THE PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL?

It is so asserted by nearly all religionists of the present day, and therefore perhaps it is well to ask whether it be so or not. With regard to this question, as with all others pertaining to the religion of Christ, the word of God itself must decide for us. We wish first of all to say that the word "invitation" does not occur in the New Testament at all, and in the Old Testament in the three places where it is used, the meaning is that of calling. The word translated "invite" in those three places is generally elsewhere translated calling. It is well not to use the word when it is not used in the Scriptures. One of the poets has written, "The trumpet of the gospel sounds with an inviting voice." Here the word is not objectionable, if the meaning of the poet is understood. He evidently intended what the word attractive would convey, and this is true; there is that which allures and attracts the humble, penitent heart in the gospel. But it is nowhere said in the word that our God invites any man to be anything, or to do anything, or to come anywhere. Our God calls men, and when he calls the message is made sweet to them, and when he says, "Seek ye my face," their hearts do not fail to reply, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek." But are not such Scriptures as these: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" "If any man thirst, let him come to me, and drink;" and "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," invitations? We refer to these three Scriptures because they are most frequently alluded to as invitations, and if they are not, it is sure that invitations are not found in any other Scriptures. If all the circumstances be considered which stand connected with such texts as the above, it will appear that the word invitation will hardly measure up to the meaning. For instance, these words in all these Scriptures are addressed to those who are already crying out in their need, if not with the voice, yet with the heart; the thirsty want water, the weary and heavy laden want rest. Man may not have heard any cry from their lips, but God has heard the cry which issues from their hearts; the thirsty man calls for water, the weary man is calling for rest with the calling of the heart. Now to that weary man Jesus says in the gospel, There is rest to be found in me alone; I possess that which gives rest; poor, weary soul, do you want rest from all your burdens? Yes, that burdened soul replies. Then to that soul Jesus holds the rest, the very thing that is needed, and that is being sought. Is this an invitation to that soul? It is much more than an invitation, it is a call; it is a response to prayer; it is a gift of that which is being sought. A beggar comes to our door; his appearance shows that he is poor, and he says, "I am hungry." He asks for bread. When you make known to him that you have a provision laid up on purpose for just such hungry people as he, and set that provision be-

fore him, is it an invitation? It is not in any sense an invitation, but a blessed answer to his need, a wonderful privilege conferred upon him. Your child or servant, toiling all the day to provide for himself in some strange vineyard, finds no place of rest there; he is wearied and burdened, and sees no prospect of relief, and after all his toil he finds but husks for his living, and no time of resting, yet he longs for rest; "O where shall rest be found?" he cries. "Surely I shall attain to it if I toil hard and long enough;" but no, there is no end to the toil and burden. Now to that child or servant who must have rest or fall in despair you come and say, "I have rest; I will give you rest; come to me." Is that an invitation? Is it not much more than an invitation? Is it not a response to his cry? Is it not an assurance given to him who longs for such an assurance? To the child of God all such precious words from the Lord come with power. They come not as something offered to him, but as something given him in response to his great need. He is not invited to partake, but he is given to partake, and it is a wonderful thing to this poor and needy sinner that such precious things should be pressed to his lips and refresh his soul.

The word invitation conveys a meaning which is contrary to christian experience, as we have tried to state that experience above. The word in itself does not convey the thought of need upon the part of the one invited. One may invite his neighbor or his friend, his equal, to come and dine with him; this does not convey the thought that the neighbor is in need of help, or that he has made any plea for food. In fact, to imply in the invitation that such was the case would be a gross insult to that neighbor. Still further, it implies that each one, the inviter and the invited, are equal, so that the invitation carries with it no obligation on the part of him who is invited to come, and no thought of charity conferred upon him by the inviter. But when God says in his word, "Come unto me and drink," or when he applies that word by the holy Spirit to the heart of a thirsty soul, there is need and poverty on the part of that soul, and the word comes with healing power and heals his hurt, as water quenches thirst. The water itself is not inviting (to use the word of the hymn writer referred to before) to any man when that man knows no thirst, but to the thirsty the water is in itself inviting. Such a heart longs for the living waters, but such a heart does not see any ground whereby he can claim this water; he feels unworthy of it; he is unworthy of it, but he wants it; he must have it or perish. What a gracious gift it becomes to him when the Master holds it forth and presses it to his lips, and he drinks and lives. The dear Lord has not invited him to drink, but has given him to drink. Is there not a vast difference between such an experience as this, and a simple invitation? The man who is my equal, and who needs nothing, may be invited, but the beggar stands upon different ground. I do not invite him, but respond to his cry for help, and I place food and clothing in his hand. So we are all beggars in our relation to the things belonging to the eternal world. Our God does not invite us near, but he brings us near; he does not invite us to eat and drink, but he answers our need by giving what we need, and he makes his revealed word precious to the soul, and comforts the soul with its revelation of salvation, the salvation which in all its parts is of God.

We do not doubt that some, perhaps

many, have used the word invitation, meaning nothing else than what we have here presented, and we have not called attention to the word that we may find fault with any who have thus used it, but because we are told to hold fast the form of sound words. When those who deny the doctrine of salvation by sovereign grace make common use of any word not used in the Scriptures, it is time to examine that word well, lest we become ensnared by unsound doctrine, which may be brought in by the use of even a word. Let it be far from us to make any brother an offender for a word, yet let us be careful not to use unscriptural words. We do not say that we ought to confine ourselves to words found in the Scripture, but let us see that the words we do use are scriptural, that is, in harmony with what the Scriptures teach.

It is sure that our God does not invite men dead in sins to arise and live; he speaks and they live. Neither does he invite the living to eat and drink, any more than a mother invites her new-born babe to eat and live. The mother gives food to her babe, and the child eats as provided for of God, and grows and thrives. God gives heavenly consolation to his little children, and they eat, and drink, and live, and grow, and thrive. Should they live on earth a thousand years, they are all the time little children; God gives to them, and they receive what he gives.

We have not thought on the other hand that in this connection the word "command" is applicable, only from within. The beggar does not realize any compulsion laid upon him to eat and drink from without. The compulsion is within, his hunger commands him to eat. The giver of food does not give to him as though he uttered a command to him, but as one who in pity supplies his need. If one of us could give to another a hunger for anything that we had to give, then in giving that hunger we should be giving a command, a command which would not be disobeyed; he would under the stress of that commandment be compelled to eat. When this degree of hunger is within him it is itself the commandment dwelling within him, and to eat becomes a sweet and gracious privilege. The food is given to the hungry from the hand of love, and no message can be quite so delightful to his ears as the word, Eat, O friends; eat and drink, O beloved. The command to eat is in the very life of that man, and here is the gracious provision to satisfy that command. Every word of God in Christ Jesus is that bread, and that water, and that wine. From the wells of salvation, that salvation which is in Christ, such seeking souls draw water with joy, as said the prophet. To men and women thus prepared every promise is bread, every principle of doctrine found in the word is bread, and every commandment is bread. Jesus said, It is my meat and my drink to do the will of him that sent me. To do the will of God is to eat if we possess the Spirit of the Master. So far as we do possess that Spirit we shall find our most satisfying food in his service. Then we shall realize what is meant when it is said that his yoke is easy and his burden is light. To such hearts the commandments of God are not grievous. What a soul-satisfying thing it is when some gracious commandment is sealed upon the heart, and we come to feel that the commandment is love, and that love is its fulfilling also. Here is meat indeed, and here is drink indeed.

It is written, Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the man-

ner of some is. Perhaps we read this and feel as though we must obey this commandment; we abide in the assemblies of the house of the Lord; we go up to the place of worship regularly, and do so because we desire to be obedient; perhaps we remember the poor liberally, as we are bidden in the word of God to do, and feel that in this we must obey; perhaps we contribute our full share, as the Lord has prospered us, to all the expenses of the church, of whatever nature. This we do, as well as all other things that seem to be demanded in the word, and yet all these things do not seem to be meat and drink to us. Outwardly we have done what we were commanded as followers of Christ, yet in it all there has been no comfort of love, no joy in the Lord, no witness of the Spirit, and we seem to ourselves to be doing all these things just as the pharisee might do them, to be seen of men, or at least, for some selfish end, and we are not near to the Master in the experience of finding all this to be our meat and drink. Such a state as this must and will be a grief to all who love the Lord, and there will of necessity be great searchings of heart for something more than all this outward righteousness; we want to find the commandment a joy, and not a burden; bread and water, and not a weariness; and when the power of the Spirit of Jesus is felt within, then we will long to do all the will of God, both in inward love and in outward obedience. Commandments will then all of them be as our daily bread, and obedience will be a privilege conferred. Then indeed will we find the commandments not grievous, but pleasant. What a wonderful work is that which can bring the soul to enter into the power and meaning of the word of the Lord which has said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." By every word.

It is the glory of the gospel that it reveals where lies our power to do his will. In Christ Jesus all is fulfilled. As he dwells in us the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us. The apostle does not say it is fulfilled by us, but in us. As it comes to be fulfilled in us, we come to see more and more clearly that this righteousness is not and cannot be fulfilled by us. The revelation of light within shows more and more clearly the greatness of darkness in which it shines. This is a good work, in this is our humiliation, and in this is the exaltation of Jesus. Thus we come to make mention that the Lord alone is exalted. Those in whom such experience is found will go softly on their way; their life will be found as they are brought near to Christ by heart-felt experience, and in their daily walk before God within and without; their death is when they are found living after the flesh. As they have come to love life and to desire to see good days, so will they strive to abstain from evil and refrain their lips from all guile. This will not be bondage, but liberty. The bondage will be found by them when they cannot do the good that they would.

TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

We wish by this brief note to remind our subscribers and friends of the fact that the good of the Signs as it is blessed to the comfort of many weary hearts, depends greatly upon you, as the paper is made up largely of your communications. Please do not forget this. Write as often as you can, and as the Lord may direct your minds, whether it be of his dealings with you in your experience, or exposition of Scripture. We desire that each number of the Signs be filled with matter of comfort and instruction to the household of faith.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ROMANS XIII. 11.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Please give your views on Romans xiii. 11: "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed."

ELIZ. BRICE.

JUNIUS, N. Y., Jan. 18, 1862.

REPLY.

OUR Redeemer said of the Pharisees and Sadducees, "Ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?"—Matt. xvi. 3. But the apostle implies that the saints addressed in our text know the times. There are times in the spiritual kingdom, as well as in nature, for every purpose of God to be accomplished. In nature there is seed time and harvest, summer and winter, day and night, and as the wise man has said, There is a time for all things under the sun: a time to be born, and a time to die: a time to sleep, and a time to awake: a time to be merry, and a time to mourn. So in the spiritual kingdom, everything is appropriate in its appointed season. When the Bridegroom is present is not the time to fast; but when he is absent then the children of the bride-chamber shall fast. The time indicated for the church of God to buckle on the armor and confront the enemy, is very inappropriate for her to sleep. Paul says to the Thessalonians, "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, * * * and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Thess. v. 1–9. The time for sleeping, drunkenness and rebellion, was with us when under the power of darkness, before we were translated into the marvelous light of the kingdom of Christ; but now in our manifestation as the children of the light, it does not becomes us to sleep, as do others. When christians do sleep, in a spiritual sense, it is with them a time of darkness, as their fleshly powers are carnal and worldly, so the powers of darkness on them produce drowsiness, inactivity, stupor and insensibility, in regard to the things of the kingdom. All this Paul says the saints know perfectly. Therefore, knowing the time, they were aware that with them it was high time to awake out of sleep. When men sleep, their mind wanders at random in baseless visions and unreal dreams. So christians, when at ease in Zion, lay off their armor and become vain in their imaginations, and their minds are with the fool's eyes, traversing the ends of the earth. When we have taken on us the name of Christ, have renounced the hidden things of darkness, it is time to awake, to watch and be sober, and never be caught sleeping on our post.

The admonitions given to the saints in this chapter show that the saints are surrounded with manifold temptations, and liable to be overcome of evil; where-

as, they are exhorted to overcome evil with good. In their relations to the world, in the revolutions and changes of earthly governments, let every soul be subject to the higher powers, as children to parents, servants to masters, as citizens to rulers, knowing the powers that be are ordained of God, and we cannot resist them without resisting the ordinance of God; for, he says, in the third verse, "Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil." "Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake." After setting forth many of the obligations which rest on christians, he says, "If there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." He then adds, "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." From the connection we infer that the saints in regard to some of these obligations, had been sleeping, dreaming, or inattentive, if not directly violating these precepts, they had neglected them, or had failed to discharge them with that degree of assiduity and promptitude which their importance demanded. As an incentive to vigilance, the apostle not only shows the liability of the saints to fall into temptation, and be drawn into present difficulties, but he urges the approximation of the day of the Lord, or the day of their deliverance from all the cares, duties, responsibilities, trials, vexations and turmoils of this mortal life.

"For now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." The term salvation in this text, means deliverance. The apostle says, Rom. viii. 19: "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God;" and in the same connection adds, "And not only they, [the whole creation] but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Thus the salvation which is nearer than when we believed, is that wherein we are saved by hope, the redemption of our body from a mortal to an immortal state; when death shall be swallowed up of victory; when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall be clothed in immortality. That happy period, that glorious day is drawing near, and is now nearer than when we believed; that is, it is nearer now than it was when we first became believers. You have progressed thus far in your pilgrimage; you are thus far nearer to your great deliverance, "the night is far spent;" your struggles, toils and labors will soon be over; "the day is at hand," the perfect day, when clouds shall no more obscure the Sun, nor hide from you the refulgent glories of your inheritance above. This being the case, "Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provisions for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., February 1, 1862.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO AN APPEAL OF BRETHREN TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$962 15
Mrs. Itha L. Bone, Ill., $3.00; Olevia Vannatta, Ky., $5.00.—Total	8 00
Total to date	$970 15

MARRIAGES.

By Elder D. M. Vail, at the home of the bride's parents, August 31st, 1904, Louis T. Hull, of Candor, N. Y., and Miss Grace A. Whitley, of Ithaca, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder A. D. Bourland was taken away by death on Monday morning, August 1st, 1904, at his home at Keller, Texas, aged 64 years, 4 months and 10 days. He was born in Caswell Co., N. C. He died from paralysis, with which he was stricken over one year ago. When quite young his father died, and his mother removed from North Carolina and settled in Calhoun Co., Alabama, where he grew to manhood and married Miss M. L. Ray, in 1859. The Civil war soon followed, and he enlisted in the service of his country, serving through the war, a brave, efficient, honorable soldier. He afterwards moved to Fannin Co., Texas, in 1867. To them were born six children, four sons and two daughters; his wife, one son and one daughter preceded him to the grave. He married again, but his second wife died after about one year. He married his third wife, Miss M. E. White, July 1st, 1872. To this union were born ten sons, five lived to manhood. Thus nine children survive him. All his married children, save one, lived near their father, and three sons are yet living with their mother at the old home place. One son, W. S. Bourland, and one daughter, Mrs. Fanny White, are members of the same church to which their father belonged. Elder Bourland was a good financier, and through industry and economy accumulated considerable property. His house was a home for the Baptists, and he delighted to see his brethren come, and to care for them. He was a useful man in his neighborhood. People all through the country had full confidence in his integrity, sincerity and general deportment.

The funeral took place at his late residence in the presence of a large concourse of neighbors and friends, who met to pay their last tribute of respect to the departed. The service was conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder R. Keith. We sung, "Blest be the tie that binds," &c. Solemn remarks were made from Job xiv., after which the remains of our loving and God-fearing brother and faithful fellow-servant were interred in the family cemetery, to await the resurrection.

The church and association extend their sympathy to the bereaved companion and sorrowing children. We pray God to lead them by his Spirit, and to sanctify this dispensation of his providence to their good and to his own glory, remembering that of him it is true as Paul said, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain," and that our brother is now basking in the light of the eternal city of God, beyond the turbid waves of sin and sorrow.

ASA HOWARD.

(See experience of Elder A. D. Bourland on page 554.)

Herbert Blackwell, eldest son of Ira and Catherine Blackwell, died on Saturday evening, May 14th, 1904, at his father's home near Glenmore, N. J., after three weeks of extreme illness from measles, followed by typhoid fever. It was at a time of multiplied affliction in the family, the mother and two other children being ill at the same time. Through the mercy of God all these recovered. On the following Tuesday the burial service was held at the home, where a few friends gathered to show the deep sympathy they all felt for the bereaved and sorely afflicted family. Very many came to the cemetery who could not attend at the house because of the illness of the family there. We endeavored to speak as best we could for the comfort of the family, from a text selected by the mother, found in Col. iii. 1-4. The interment was in the cemetery attached to the Old School Baptist place of meeting, in Hopewell.

It is sad when those of youthful years are called away by death. Especially is this so when a young man or woman of rectitude, bright intellect, whose life is full of promise for usefulness and honor, and who is known and loved by many friends, is removed from the circles which have known them, and which shall know them no more on earth. No young man in this vicinity had brighter prospects for usefulness. Although his age was but 17 years and 8 months, he had already secured a place in a bank in Trenton, and it was the testimony of the officials of the bank that no young man of his years had ever commanded their approval and confidence so entirely. He had been a studious boy, thoughtful and careful, associating only with those who were respected and esteemed. From some things that he said, and from his manner at times, his parents feel that they have good ground to hope that grace had wrought that work in him which fits one to either live or to pass away from earth to the life beyond, at the right hand of the Father above. The sympathy of the whole community went out to the dear parents during all the time of their anxiety, and afterwards at the loneliness and sorrow of bereavement. The mother is a member of the church at Hopewell, and the father also knows and loves the truth, and both are sustained by that faith which is the victory that overcomes the world.—ED.

DIED—In Tehuacana, Limestone Co., Texas, Aug. 16th, 1904, our beloved daughter, **Vandellie Lulu Elizabeth Bozeman.** She was born in Whitfield Co., Ga., Jan. 28th, 1884. She was 20 years, 6 months and 19 days old. She was bitten in the night while asleep by a spider, but we did not know what had happened her until it was too late. Medical aid was rendered, and we did all possible for her, but the messenger called and she had to go. She was a dutiful and loving child, agreeable to her large circle of friends and associates, and was loved by all who knew her. She professed a hope in Christ three years ago, but was never baptized. When in health a short time before her death, she said she had no fear of death, and that if she should be taken first she did not want us to weep for her. We cannot help but weep and mourn because of our great loss, but rejoice in the hope that she is at rest where parting is no more.

Brethren, pray for us, that we may be reconciled to the will of God.

JOSEPH HILL BOZEMAN.
MARY FRANCIS (EVERETT) BOZEMAN.

MEETINGS.

PROVIDENCE permitting there will be a meeting of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church of Albany & Troy, N. Y., Thursday and Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1904. All who desire to come will be made welcome. Come to Albany, N. Y., and take electric cars at the union depot for Troy, N. Y. At Troy take electric car for Alba, change and take electric car to West Sand Lake and inquire for Mrs. Moul, who lives about five minutes walk from the electric car depot. Those coming on Wednesday can go to 423 Sheridan Ave., Albany, N. Y., where they will be cared for until Thursday morning, when they will go with brother Charles and George Schade to the meeting. Those coming Thursday will go direct to Sand Lake from depot. Meeting is at the home of Mrs. Moul, by her request, who makes every lover of the truth welcome, for she loves them for Jesus' sake. D. M. VAIL.

THE yearly meeting of the Cow Marsh Old School Baptist Church will be held at their meeting-house in Kent Co., Del., beginning on Saturday afternoon at 2 o'clock, and continuing all day Sunday, Sept. 24th and 25th, 1904. All brethren and friends are requested to come to Felton, on the Delaware Railroad, on Saturday morning, where all morning trains will be met, the last train arriving there at 10:20 a. m. We hope to see a goodly number in attendance.

J. B. MEREDITH, Church Clerk.

THE Old School or Primitive Baptist Church of Columbia, Jackson Co., Mich., the Lord willing, will hold her yearly meeting commencing Friday evening, Sept. 30th, and continuing the two following days. All lovers of truth are welcome, and we hope the good Lord will be our Leader all through the meeting. Those coming from the north, south, east or west will be met at Cement City depot, near by the church. M. P. LEWIS.

THE Old Baptist Church called First Roxbury, at Vega, Delaware Co., N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting to be held the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (5th and 6th) 1904. All who love the truth are cordially invited to attend.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE next annual meeting of the Lexington Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie, N. Y., at her meeting-house on Schoharie Hill, meeting to begin at 10 a. m. on the first Wednesday in October, 1904, and continue two days. Ministers and brethren of our faith and order of other associations and churches in good standing, and all lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Trains will be met at Howe's Cave on Tuesday before the meeting. Those who come to Cobbleskill will call on brother J. E. Livingston.

G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

THE Juniata Association of Old School Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, with the Fairview Church, in Fulton Co., Pa., on Friday, October 7th, 1904, and continue over Sunday. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth. Those coming by railroad will come on the B. & O. road to Hancock, and pass over the bridge to the Hancock side, where they will be met and conveyed to places of entertainment. Come on Thursday and be there about 1 o'clock.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Corresponding Meeting of Virginia is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, Loudoun Co., Va., Oct. 12th, 13th and 14th, 1904. Brethren and friends coming by railroad will be in Washington, D. C., in time to take the train on Tuesday at 1:30 p. m. for Bluemont, on the Washington & Ohio division of the Southern R. R., where they will be met and cared for. We extend a hearty invitation to all who may wish to meet with us.

J. N. BADGER.

A YEARLY meeting will be held with the Olive & Hurley Old School Baptist Church the last Wednesday and Thursday in October, (26th and 27th) 1904.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

A TWO days meeting has been appointed to be held with Cammal Old School Baptist Church, the Lord willing, the last Saturday and fifth Sunday in October, 1904. A cordial invitation is extended to all

lovers of the truth. Those coming from the south will take the New York Central train at Williamsport, and those coming from the north will also take New York Central train. Ample accommodation for all who live out of town. Trains will be met on Friday and Saturday morning. Elder John McConnell, of New York city, Elder J. T. Rowe, of Baltimore, Md., and our pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, will be present.

ALVA B. CALLAHAN, Clerk.

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IN

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10:30 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

BI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

OF THE

WELSH TRACT CHURCH.

The bi-centennial of the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., was celebrated Oct. 20th, 1903. After some delay it is now published in pamphlet form, and on sale at this office. Price 15 cents. The pamphlet contains photographs of the Welsh Tract meeting-house and Elder J. G. Eubanks, the pastor, the proceedings of the anniversary, letters of greeting from sister churches and a historical sketch written by Dr. B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., and read on the occasion. Some of the brick in the meeting-house was brought from Wales to this country, and hauled on mules' backs a distance of ten miles. The pamphlet is very interesting and full of information.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 72. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1904. NO. 19.

GIFTS IN THE CHURCH.

I SEND for publication in the SIGNS the following extracts from a private letter written over ten years ago.

The gifts of our dear Savior to the church have all been named in the Acts and letters of the apostles, and their order and purpose fully set forth. The apostles, first in order, had peculiar authority, which they made known to the saints on their first coming to them, claiming obedience to their judgments, not because of any superior merit in themselves, but because of their appointment as apostles "by the will of God." They were prepared by the inspiration of the holy Spirit to render infallible judgments, to declare the doctrine of God in the only form of words in which it can ever be expressed by men with absolute accuracy, and to set in order every ordinance of the Lord, and every gift given to the church, and all the forms of worship and service. They have taught, as Jesus commanded them to do, the observance of all things whatsoever he commanded them, so that nothing is lacking in the Scriptures of the New Testament that is necessary to show to every true seeker his place and privilege and duty in the church of God, and to regulate his conduct in the world.

In regard to every other gift beside that of the apostles the church is the judge. "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" No one but the apostles can say to the church, "I am sent to you by the Lord, and on this account it is your duty to receive and obey my words." In regard to all other gifts the judgment is with the church. Not only is the first recognition of the gift by the church, but also the call by which its character and exercise are to be acknowledged. The gift will often be seen by the church while the man in whom it is seen does not as yet know the nature and meaning of his own exercises, and he is often surprised and rebellious when informed of the mind of the church concerning him. Aside from the judgment of the church there is no reliable evidence of a gift.

The church is presented by the apostles as having possession and control of the members and gifts, not they of the church. The authority by which the gift is upheld is in the church, which is there shown, in figure, as a candlestick, upholding the candle. The gift thus recognized and

upheld by the fellowship of the church reflects its light upon the body, and rules over the church with all the authority of the Word which has established and defined the gift and its order and province. The rule and authority are in the office and in the word administered, not in the man as having superior qualities. Of this also the church is the judge as to whether the word is rightly administered and the office used well. The church set apart the seven. (Acts vi. 3.) The church, by the command of the Holy Ghost, separated Barnabas and Saul unto the Lord for a certain work unto which he had called them. (Acts xiii. 1, 2.)

To any one who comes to the saints claiming to be sent to them of God they can say, "Tell us your message, and we will judge whether you are sent unto us from the Lord." Even in the peculiar work of the apostles there was a manifestation of their power and authority in the consciences of the saints, by which they were commended unto them as sent to them of the Lord. (2 Cor. i. 2; iv. 2; v. 11.) It is a man's gift, not his intellectual power, personal attractions or exalted position in the world, which makes room for him in the church of God, and "brings him before great men." This is true when one comes to the Lord's people in written communications, as well as when he speaks in their presence. We are to bear in mind, however, that there is no gift presented in the Scriptures whose ministration to the church is by epistolary communication but that of the apostles. There is much value in the written works of experienced men to edify and comfort spiritual readers; but the peculiar authority of a gift of Jesus to the church does not attach to that exercise. At least I find no intimation in the Scriptures that anything which has been written since the last of the apostolic writings has any such authority over the saints as do the inspired writings, and as does the proper exercise of the divinely appointed gifts in the church. For in the orderly meetings of a gospel church, and nowhere else, authoritative gospel work is done. Christ is in the midst of the church, even where two or three are gathered together in his name, and there is his judgment-seat.

The call came from Cornelius to Peter, not from Peter to Cornelius. Neither knew at first the purpose of God, who was directing each, but when Peter, who was an Elder as well as an apostle, had arrived, and each had recounted his experience, then Cornelius announced the authoritative conclusion: "And thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God."

And not only as to the gifts, but as to their proper exercise, the judgment is to be given by the church, not by the one exercising the gift. "Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge."—1 Cor. xiv. 29. No man or church can direct as to what message shall be delivered, but they shall judge as to its character and authority after it has been spoken. There is authority in the gift, but its exercise is *in*, and *through*, and *with* the faith of the saints, not *over* their faith.

The judgment of the saints when they judge angels is not the cold conclusion of natural wisdom and knowledge, but the warm experience of the word of truth in the new heart and in the cleansed conscience, coming "in power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." It is a sweet and blessed privilege thus to sit in judgment of angels, and of their mes-

sages and work, if they are truly the Lord's messengers; for even when the message is one of reproof to the soul it is a sweet token of the remembrance of our faithful and loving God. But when the power is lacking, and there is no commendation of the word spoken to our consciences in the sight of God, it is a dreary and desolate time with the soul of the hearer.

I do not speak of these things because I think you do not know them, nor as apprehending a different view on your part concerning them, but I call your attention to the scriptural teaching concerning the gifts in the church, in order that any course which is inconsistent with that teaching may more clearly appear.

Wherever errors are seen in the doctrine proclaimed by any with whom we stand in church relationship, or in their walk, I regard it as a duty to take such a course with regard to them as is directed by the Savior and his apostles. In the proper performance of this most solemn duty divine authority will be felt, and its effect seen. The conversion of the erring brother is the only right motive for approaching him on the subject of his faults, and the salvation of others from the error is the only valid reason for speaking of his faults publicly, when their public character has made that course necessary. It is only by *causing one to see his error* that he can be converted from it, not by an assumption of authority to declare that an error is held, or has been committed, and only a plain exposition of the error by the Scriptures, not by the decision of councils, will be effectual for good to the brethren.

The communications of a minister of the gospel with regard to spiritual things should and will receive careful consideration from brethren generally, because of his office, in which he is called to devote his life to attendance upon such things. Yet we must remember that what he says, either from the pulpit or the press, can only be commended to the saints by its own intrinsic value. The convincing power and authority with which it is given him to teach, rebuke and warn, will appear in the words spoken, as they are seen and felt to be according to the oracles of God.

To the above, which I find among my unpublished letters and fragments, I will add a few sentences. It seems to me very important that every member of the church of God should remember and feel his or her own individual place and responsibility as one of the members of Christ. While regarding all the gifts in the church as from the Lord, and esteeming them at their true value, and while humbly obedient to the gospel rule which the pastor has over the church, each member must stand before God in his own experience of Jesus as his life and righteousness. He is not lost, swallowed up, in any gift, but has an individual standing. He cannot take any sentiment or truth merely upon the assertion of another. He must have an experimental knowledge of it for himself, and whatever duty is laid upon his conscience by the Spirit he cannot throw off upon another, but must attend to himself. And in this sense there is neither male nor female, Jew nor Greek, but all are members of the body of Christ, and members one of another, and all one in Christ. When led by the Spirit they all dwell together in unity, each one profiting by the exercise of all the gifts which the Spirit divideth to every man severally as he will, because by the same Spirit each

member of the body is taught the same things which are embraced in the ministry of the various gifts. While regarding very highly every gift, and especially those that have the rule over us, we must each be faithful to our own consciences, and speak only what we can see as the truth. But while we can take no sentiment merely upon the assertion of any man, we must hold fast the form of sound words, which we have heard of the apostles, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. We cannot set up any sentiment of our own contrary to any word of inspiration.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., July 6, 1904.

MARKED PASSAGES.

BY examining the outward appearance of the household book, the Bible, we can form some idea as to the time it has been used, the manner in which it has been cared for, and the frequency of its being handled. But it is more interesting to note the leaves which are finger-worn, the pages with turned down corners and the marked and underlined passages. Here we find a field for investigation and reflection, and of never-ending amazement. Who can tell the thoughts that passed the reader and prompted him to mark this or that passage? When looking over the pages of our own Bibles, observing the many passages which we have marked in days gone by, can we always bring to memory the reason why such passages were marked, or of what particular interest were they to us at that time? Some marked passages we have entirely forgotten, some have lost their special interest to us, and we wonder why such passages were marked, but there are others which bring back memories of the past, sometimes of joy, sometimes of sorrow, sometimes of hope, sometimes of despair, sometimes of praising and sometimes of prayer.

To-day, while viewing some passages which I had marked in years past, my mind has been led back to those days, and much of my experience of that time has come up before me with a mixture of sadness and joy and many perplexities.

I was past twenty-one years of age when I first had a Bible of my own; I had read but little of the Scriptures before that time. I had then been a member of what I thought was the church more than two years. I joined that church in hope of finding relief from my troubles on account of sin. When I presented myself for membership and was called upon to relate my experience, I told them my feelings on account of sin, and that I had decided to join the church and live a better life. I went home from the church that night a miserable sinner. My burden was greater than ever before, but I thought I would feel better when I had been in the church awhile and had lived up to their requirements. This was my only hope at that time, and I set about to do what I could. I thought if I had been a great sinner outwardly, I could do a great deal in reforming, but I was not such an outrageous sinner as some had been, and this I felt to be to my disadvantage. I was not as blameless as Paul, concerning the law. The reformation I made seemed not to meet the requirements of God's holy law. My sins without did not trouble me, as did my sins within. My heart was impure, my mind corrupt, and all the evils I could imagine seemed to dwell in me, and I could not get rid of them or deliver myself from the burden they caused. With these feelings within, and all the time acting the hypocrite in the church, I be-

came more miserable than ever, yet I held on to my hope that I would do better until I found relief. I was still in this sad condition when I bought my Bible, in March, 1900, and began to read it with the determination to follow its teachings as best I could. About this time my mind became enveloped in Unitarian Infidelity. I had a desire for religious reading, and bought some books of my own selection from a catalogue, not knowing anything about what I was getting. One of the books was titled, "The greatest thing ever known," by R. W. Trine. It was the first I read that interested me. The writer presented man as being essentially equal with God, that man's life was a part of God, and was God himself in man. In short, he said the consciousness of this divine relationship between God and man was "the greatest thing ever known," and the secret of holiness was to live in conscious realization of this union with God. To my deluded mind this doctrine seemed well supported by the Scriptures. This seemed nearer Bible teaching than anything I had ever heard preached, and for a time I was completely absorbed in the delusive theory, but I was not disposed to let any one know the thoughts of my mind, or tell what I was reading. In this state of mind I read much in my Bible, and would mark such passages as John xiv. 17; Phil. ii. 5; 1 John ii. 27; John xv. 4; Acts xvii. 28, and many others which I thought supported "Trine's" doctrine. Just how long I remained in this condition I cannot remember. But when it all proved a failure in my case, and I saw the same burden was upon me and the same troubles within, I sought relief by reading books of the Revivalist Office, by M. W. Knapp and others. These men of the Holiness sect could describe my feelings about as well as I could, but they would tell me the only way of deliverance was to turn away from all my sins within, as well as without, and live a life of sinless perfection in the flesh, and when I had thus consecrated myself then the Lord would bestow the "second blessing," which was a pure conscience. The Scriptures seemed to require this much of me, and I was trying with all my strength to do that. I would read the experience of those who claimed to have found relief in that way, but what proved successful in their case proved destructive in mine. My every effort seemed to sink me lower and lower, but this was my only hope and I could not give it up. I would read my Bible, and wherever I found a command to "be ye holy," or "sanctify yourselves," I would mark or underscore it. I would try to pray and ask God to bestow the second blessing upon me, when at the same time I did not feel to have ever received the first. I could not pray the Lord to restore unto me the full joy of his salvation, but my cry was, "Lord, teach me what are the joys of thy salvation;" for in all these long days of sorrow and mourning I had known no joy. Thus my sorrow continued. I could talk to no one about my troubles, and was ashamed for any one to know what I was reading, in hope of relief. I had failed in every attempt to do that which I thought must be done in order to enjoy the blessings of salvation, but I did not give up. I went on in this way until the fall of 1901, at which time I began reading the *Baptist Sword and Shield.* There was a great fight going on between the Gospel Missioners (an opposing faction of the Board System) and the mother body, the New School Baptists or Missionaries, as they call themselves. This

paper interested me, and my mind became less concerned about my troubles within. All I had ever read before claimed for itself the support of the Scriptures, and I had tried to comply with its teachings, but here was a subject under discussion that was claimed to be unscriptural, and I found some relief in reading the reports of this warfare, and was not so often reminded of my burden. I was not reading much in my Bible at this time, and was not interested in what I read. This went on for some time, and I became very indifferent to experimental religion. I had come to the conclusion that I would have to be content with my experience, and not trouble myself over the matter any longer. All the doctrines and systems of religion I had ever heard or read had left the same impression upon my mind, that I must do something; accept Christ, believe in him, trust in him, and many other things, none of which I was able to do or knew how to do. In this state of mind I remained until the spring of 1903, when first I read the doctrine of unconditional salvation. The doctrine of election was a new doctrine to me, in it was revealed to me the mystery of salvation by grace. I could now look upon Jesus as the Savior of his people, and not as one offering salvation to sinners, and pleading with them to accept it. I could now see that the God of heaven and earth was an eternal Sovereign, that he doeth all things after the counsel of his own will, and that he had set his love upon his chosen people before the foundation of the world. This was a revelation to me, in which I saw Jesus as the special atoning sacrifice for all that the Father had given him, and that he was the righteousness of them who were redeemed by his blood, and all these blessings were freely bestowed upon them, not because of what they had done, or could do, but because of the great love of the Father wherewith he loved them from all eternity. I could now see that Jesus had already done what I was trying to do and found I could not do. This was glad news to me, and unlike all the other doctrines and theories which I had tried and kept secret from others. My first thought now was to show what I had read to my neighbor, who was a "Hardshell," and see what he thought about it. He said it was the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists, and the doctrine they preached.

Day after day I would meditate upon these things, and dream of them by night. As my thoughts deepened, the mysteries of the eternal God and his wonderful power and wisdom and glory seemed to be revealing themselves unto me. Gradually my joy in the Savior's love increased until my very thoughts by day were one continual song of praise unto the Lord, and whether awake or asleep my meditations and dreams were seldom upon anything else. If I had had only one dream, or if this joy had come all of a sudden, I might tell something of the time and place of my deliverance, but as it was I could not tell, nor cared I to know. It was enough to know that my burden was gone. I was satisfied with the blessings I then enjoyed, and it did not trouble me because I knew not the time or place of my deliverance. Nor did my joy end here, but continued day after day; my Bible now was the most interesting book of all books, and I could no longer mark the passages that were comforting to me, for everything I read was a sweet message of joy and love.

Those were happy days; words cannot express the joy that filled my soul all the day long, nor is language sufficient to

describe the pleasures I spent by night in the land of dreams; all was joy and gladness, peace and happiness; no doubts or fears came into my mind to disturb my calmed breast reposing in a Savior's love; but those days are past. It is not needful that I should have marked passages to remind me of those delightful moments, the very darkness that now encompasses me about reveals to me that the day of gladness is past. The coldness that I now feel speaks more forcibly than words could tell that the summer of rejoicing is over. O that I might once again feel and realize that peaceful assurance of abiding in my Redeemer's presence, supported by his grace and protected by his everlasting arm.

Just how long I remained in that blessed condition is unknown to me; time was of no interest to me then. Whether I was laughed at, or whether I was mocked, it troubled me not in the least. When I came to the church in August, 1903, I was still rejoicing in full assurance of peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ, and it seemed strange to me how any one who had known this unspeakable joy could ever fear and doubt their salvation. In this exalted state I could say that those who have a hope based upon the finished work of Christ do not doubt their salvation, and I knew not how to fellowship those who were cast down in darkness. But the night came on, the winter's chill drove away the delightful remnants of summer, clouds of sin and rebellion darkened my pathway, until I am made to cry, "The Lord is righteous; for I have rebelled against his commandment: hear, I pray you, all people, and behold my sorrow." This is my condition at present. The Old Testament is now of more interest to me than ever before, and I sometimes mark such passages as Dan. iv. 35; Jer. xvii. 7, and others which specially exalt God and abase man. In all my sorrow and trouble of mind, my hope is still in him who has all power, and doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. As in joy I learned that when he giveth quietness none can make trouble, so in sorrow I have realized that when he hideth his face none can behold him. My experience teaches me that the blessings of the Lord are not at our command. Sometimes I am comforted by reading or hearing the travels of mind of some of God's children, but sometimes I feel to have traveled out of the road. Sometimes I find comfort in viewing my past experience, and sometimes I do not feel to have had any experience.

These are some of the thoughts which come to my mind while looking over the places in my Bible which were marked in times of trouble. While my troubles are not yet over, still they are different from the troubles of those days. There are many passages and several entire books in my Bible which I have never read, though some have been read time after time.

I will now close for the present. From outward appearance one would not see anything unusual to attract his attention, but on examination he would find marked passages therein as sign posts to the road in which I have traveled. Am I traveling this road alone? Tell me, is it thus with you? May the Comforter abide with all who are cast down.

R. S. PACE.

PINEHILL, Texas, Aug. 8, 1904.

BALTIMORE, Maryland.

DEAR EDITOR:—Will God visit his children with the rod for their transgressions? and is it not experimentally true that many sorrows shall be to the wicked, but he who trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about?

I would like to examine this subject, and hope to do so without building up a theory by throwing one truth against another truth, and thus obscure the truth. First. Has the child of grace a new and spiritual life? Christ said, "Ye must be born again." We know about the natural birth, that which is born of the flesh is flesh. Man was in the creation given a body which was capable of dressing and tilling the garden, and of enjoying the creatures which were given unto him, and he was a man of action. The same is true of all the creation of God, so that he opens his hand, and satisfies the desire of every living creature. See how varied is this creation, and these desires. Now, has God not given to his people a new and spiritual life over and beyond this natural life, with new and different aspirations, and with powers beyond those of this natural life which are also capable of action? Christ said to the disciples, "Let your light so shine." Was not this for the new life, or man, to do? So the man with the two natures is addressed, and is he not capable of doing what is commanded? It is said, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not."

The natural man is sustained by eating the fruits of the earth; and to the spiritual, Christ said, Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, ye have no life in you. Thus this new man partakes of the words of Christ, who makes them, in time of need, living words. If the natural man does not plow in the spring, because of the cold, he shall beg his bread in harvest. His life in this world depends upon his obedience to the law of his being. Jesus said that every one that heard his sayings, and did them, should be as a man who builded his house upon a rock; such an one suffered no loss by the storm. But he that heard his sayings, and did them not, was likened unto a man who built his house upon the sand: when the flood came it carried that house away, and the man suffered loss. The child of God who does not take heed to all the sayings of Christ, though saved, suffers loss. Thus if they are not in their place on meeting days, hearing and talking of the things of the kingdom, they do not learn, and neither do they enjoy the meetings.

Christ also said to his disciples, "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." Shall we say that he commanded more than his disciples through grace could do? Again he said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness." Now both those who hear his sayings and do them, and those who hear them and do them not, are alike the children of God. The latter are like the characters spoken of by Peter, who did not add to their faith the things which the others did add. To one, he said, should be administered an abundant entrance into the kingdom of God, while to the other this was not administered. "But he that lacketh these things," said the apostle, "is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." Such an one has forgotten his first experience, while he who has added to his faith, or has gone on to know the Lord and the things of the kingdom, has become neither barren or unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Scriptures are given to us, and are able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith, which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine and for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. All this is for the church in time. Is not the ministry for the church in time, and the gospel also, that we may be instructed and worship God while here?

I will present one other witness, Psalms xxxii. 1, 2, speaks of him whose transgression is forgiven. Then it presents the experience of the man and his need of the presence of God, and then his confession of depravity. Then again he speaks of sins forgiven, and of prayer. Then he says, For this cause shall every one that is godly pray unto thee, and he who has delivered will deliver. Then comes the answer from God, "I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." That is, he says in substance, I have answered thy prayer, and will continue to do so, but "be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding; whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee." That is, do not be like the brute, after all that I have done for you. Now here is practical proof of the dealing of God with his children, and of his warning and instruction to them, even after the first assurance that their sins are forgiven. Then later comes the cry for help in times of need, and to this the Lord replies that he will continue to instruct him and to teach him in the way that he shall go, and that he will even guide him with his eye. Now he says, Remember, and walk not in sin and disobedience, and do not be like the horse and mule, for many sorrows shall be to the wicked.

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." It is the child of God here spoken of. It is thus that he is delivered over to Satan that he may learn not to blaspheme; that is, he is delivered over to his sinful lusts, so that now he can neither enjoy the world or the things of the kingdom of God. A man in Christ Jesus, born of the Spirit, now lives the new life by the faith of the Son of God, or by the teaching and guidance of the Spirit. "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." This is the present worship and rest on earth.

Is this man that is born again capable of obedience? We say, yes, but all his ability is of grace. In nature the man is addressed with admonition, concerning natural things, to labor for the food that he eats, &c. In the kingdom of God, it is not the spirit upon which the man lives that is addressed, but the man who has and needs the Spirit to guide him. See how many able ministers have become castaways in the kingdom of God here below because of disobedience to the divine law; but others who were weak in ability at the beginning have become strong, and have not turned aside to vain questions of no profit. Let there be more of the gospel and less contention.

I remain in hope of the life that now is, and of that which is to come, your brother,

JOHN THORNE.

[It is good to have our attention called to the admonitions in the word of God, thus our pure minds are stirred up by way of remembrance of them. All truly spiritual men and women will desire to walk as becometh children of God. If saved

by grace, they will desire to magnify that grace by a godly conversation, because grace so teaches them to do. The motive of such ones will not be for selfish reward, but the love of God will actuate them, and they will see cause to praise him for a heart to walk in his ways, and for the very doing of his commandments. We know of no one who has in this life more clearly exemplified the truth that the obedience of the believer is not for reward, but out of a willing heart and from love to God and his people, than has brother Thorne. Hundreds of brethren, for the past forty or more years, have been entertained at his home, and we know that it has been gladly done out of a willing mind; and service done from a willing mind, we are told, is acceptable to God. Brother Thorne has been most faithful to his meetings, no one has been more so; and yet we know that he has been in the sanctuary because it was his delight to be there. Such service does not need to be hired by promises of reward, or by threats of punishment. Brother Thorne has served in the vineyard freely; this is gospel and not legal service. It is good to have our minds stirred up in such true service.—ED.]

CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA, Cal., Aug. 18, 1904.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN GOSPEL BONDS:—You would pardon me for intruding upon you if you knew the loneliness and the yearning of my heart as I sit here by the sea, thousands of miles from where I want to spend the few remaining years of my tabernacling here in this vail of tears, hungering after righteousness. I thought when I came up out of the water with the late and revered Elder T. P. Dudley, on the 24th day of August, 1856, in Georgetown, Ky., that my hungerings were satisfied in that tranquil peace which passeth all understanding, as I was rejoicing in the gift of the Holy Ghost which was shed on me abundantly through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as I showed my faith in a once buried but now risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, by my works; who though once dead is alive again, and alive for evermore. But since that bright and glorious Sunday morning, when I was led from the water to a stable to change my clothes, where I then thought and still think of the glorious privilege I had of changing my clothes and starting out to walk in newness of life from a stable, it was so much like the blessed Lord coming into this world at the appointed time to start out in that greatest of all work known to man, the work of redemption, wherein he redeemed every child of the heavenly Father from all their sins, and saved his people with an everlasting salvation. But alas, what conflicts, what sorrows, what disappointment, what by and forbidden paths I have experienced since that bright morning nearly forty-eight years ago. How oft have I had to sing in my weakness, coldness and oft repeated hungerings after righteousness,

"'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought,)
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?

If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse
Who have never heard his name."

Humbled as I am this morning, with a deep felt sense of my unworthiness, in the very depths of darkness, cast down as I have many times been, I still feel that hungering after righteousness that gives me a hope that I am not destroyed. Though after having preached to others I find that I have been cast away. Like

Job, in all my afflictions I have, I hope, maintained my integrity, though while doing so I have asked, "How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?"

I was licensed to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ in July, 1866; was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry July 6th, 1878. So isolated was my life, so barren of fruit, that I was twelve years laboring under great difficulties, working at the carpenter's trade, trying to provide first for my household, which was large. I was twice married; we had ten children to raise, and some of them after they were grown, to look after. So my riches gathered with much labor and often in much pain, have often taken wings and left me. So amid sickness, deaths in my family and fire, I was cast away in 1884, and never heard a gospel sermon until 1901, except on two or three occasions. O the leanness of the soul that would fain fill his belly with the husks that the swine did eat, and no man gave unto him. Surely that is being a castaway, my transgressions were having a just recompense of reward. I lived after the flesh, and died that death that leaves its sting in the living, sensible, suffering prodigal. I remember that the servants in my Father's house have bread enough and to spare, and cry in my soul, O "who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Sometimes my soul leaps with joy when by faith I see Jesus exalted at the right hand of God, and I cry out, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." I have been many times before 1884, and since 1901, blessed with spiritual blessings in heavenly places, not according to my obedience, but according to God's own choice in Christ before the world began. Yes, God's choice was before the world began, but we receive those blessings in heavenly places, in the faith once delivered to the saints, in singing the new song, even praise to God, whose arm brought salvation. My meditations while alone in Arabia, (the wilderness) when none but God was near, were of coming home to our Father's house and eating at the King's table, and joining with the children of the heavenly King in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs of everlasting joy, making melody in our hearts unto the Lord, who hath fought our battles for us, and hath dealt with us not according to our sins, and rewarded us not according to our iniquities, but bare us and carried us all the days of old, and redeemed us from sin and made us accepted in the Beloved.

Since 1901 I went back to my little church at Troy, Illinois, and we all joined together again in love and fellowship, and I am now in my weakness laboring under their watchcare, and make from time to time my reports to the little sister in Zion so far away. There is no church that I know of in California that holds regular meetings. I have baptized three at Yuba City, but have not yet been able to organize a church there. I have held meetings in Santa Rosa and at Santa Cruz, Cal., and talked to a sister in Oakland and one sister in San Francisco, who has since gone to Woodlands to live. There is but one sister in Santa Cruz, and one brother in Seabright, near by. I have traveled for thousands of miles up and down the mountains and plains of the Pacific coast from Los Angeles, Co., Cal., to North Yakima, Wash. In Oregon and Washington there are several churches, constituting Siloam Association. I have attended that association twice, their two last annual meetings, where we enjoyed spiritual blessings which were heavenly

places, blessed to us according as we were chosen in Christ before the world began. I found the brethren all through Oregon and Washington united in that one faith, which was once delivered to the saints by revelation of the Father, who writes his law in their hearts and puts it in their minds. And working out what God has worked within them, they are striving to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and may God help them.

I read this a. m. your interesting letter in the SIGNS of August 15th, so I direct this to you.

In christian love, I am your unworthy brother, if one at all, saved by the free, sovereign grace of God, through the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to whom be all praise. Amen.

W. W. POLK.

TOUCHET, Wash., Sept. 16, 1903.

DEAR EDITORS, AND ALL OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—A little more than a year ago I sent a short communication to our beloved editors to consider the advisability of its publication, and to my surprise it was published. It had not more than started on its long trip east ere I was astonished at myself that I should have thought of sending such a hastily written scrap for publication, yet all it contained are the true sentiments of my heart. So now as it has pleased the gracious Lord to preserve my life to the present moment, I seem to be impressed to write again. Why this is, I do not know, save that I realize that I surely do maintain true fellowship for the household of faith, the saints of the living God, and the followers of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

It is not needful that I should mention the ups and downs of the past year, for such things are the legacy of all that walk the road which leads through great tribulation. These are they that have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

For some reason I have been impressed with the subject of our Lord's temptations in the wilderness. By him were all things that were made. He spoke, and the stars came forth. Here was the first choir and the first music of which we have any account. "The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." We read also that, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Again we read, "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." For these reasons, could the temptations have been such as would be accompanied with desire to possess that which was his and which he had made? He had made the whole world and all that was therein. We surely realize that the love of money is one of the besetting sins of mankind, one that is among the first in our poor, fallen nature. The desire is not to possess what we have, but what we have not, even as our mother Eve coveted what she was commanded not to touch; it seems that there was an abundance of other fruit in the garden. Could Satan tempt the dear Lord with something which was forbidden him, seeing that all things were his? Yes, because Jesus was found in fashion as a man, and was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. His flesh was subjected to the will of his Father to such full extent that the temptation for the kingdoms of the whole world was to him a light burden compared to his knowledge of the heinousness of sin and the sorrows of his suffering people. On every side they thronged him, and

often he sought a place of solitude, that he might pray to his Father.

Often I ask myself the question, Do I go to my Father for help when burdened with grief? Do I lay my complaint at the feet of the Savior, as did Mary, do I wash them with tears of contrition? or is it to some sister or brother that I tell all my affliction? Surely every saint is brought near to the dear Lord, humbly pleading for mercy and to be kept from sin, and begging for a spirit of forgiveness. Peter once asked, "How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?" The answer was "until seventy times seven." Luke records it thus: "And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him." The apostles felt their weakness, and said unto the Lord, "Increase our faith." The foregoing shows our weakness as well as our duty. I must cry when I view these things, Holy, holy, just and true art thou, O most high God, the Lord of glory. On one occasion he said, "O faithless and perverse generation! how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? And he commanded to bring the afflicted one to him. Here was suffering in the flesh, and groaning in spirit for the sins of his people. In Luke vi. 12, it is recorded that he went out into a mountain and continued all night in prayer to God. Here was suffering for the sins of his people, yet he was by this to fully realize the power of Satan over God's children. Did not their sin and their suffering agonize him daily while he was here in the flesh? The apostle said, "Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of his people." "We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities." "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered."

May the Lord of heaven and earth strengthen his children to follow him, so that when they are reviled they shall not revile again, and strengthen them to go on their way rejoicing, is the desire of one of the least, if indeed a child at all. I am seventy-five years old this day.

Your sister,

(MRS.) S. J. CUMMINS.

[THE temptation of our Lord is a great and blessed mystery, as is all that pertains to his manifestation in the flesh. Yet it is sure that he was one with us in the flesh, that he could with all truth be called the Son of man, as well as the Son of God. Thus he could feel all our sorrows and endure all our temptations. Thus he comes into full understanding and sympathy with us, and thus he knows how to save us in all our afflictions, and from all the snares of the way. He thus knows our frame, and so can pity us as a father pities his children. What a blessed truth is the incarnation of the blessed Son of God. As the Son of man, he is one with us, and as the Son of God he is almighty to save us. The strong, the self-righteous, the boastful pharisee and the carnal worldling know him not, because they have not come to feel their need of him; but what a Savior he is to the weak, the unrighteous, the humble publican, and to him who is cut off from this world and feels himself to be a stranger and a pilgrim here below. Thank God we have such a Savior, such a High Priest to save us and to receive us to glory when we die.—ED.]

"WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT?"

WHERE wanderest thou, lonely traveler? From whence hast thou come? Travel-stained art thou, and thy feet are bruised and bleeding; in thy face are lines of care and sorrow, thy whole demeanor bespeaketh dark places through which thou hast passed; surely sore trials and deep troubles have been thy portion in this thy solitary journey. Thou lookest not as one who seekest earthly treasure or earthly comforts. Thine eyes sparkle with an heavenly lustre, though weary and footsore, and heavily burdened. Ever and anon one like unto thee comest this way, seeking, he saith, an heavenly country. But whence comest thou? Out of Seir, sayest thou? from the wilderness, by the mountains of Sinai? The burden which thou bearest then, is "The burden of Dumah." Thy country is Edom, the place of thine abode is silence, darkness, while thy clothing denotes thee as of the nativity of Esau. Thy speech also is the speech of him who sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, and who was a cunning hunter in the mountains round about Hebron. It is then out of this darkness and silence of the dark dispensation under the law that thou callest in tones of despair to him that standeth upon the watch tower, saying, "Watchman, what of the night?" "Watchman, what of the night?" or in other words, the desires of thy flesh hath consumed thee, thou hast lusted for the fleshpots of Egypt, thy candle hath gone out, and thou art poor, and naked, and blind, and wretched, and miserable. Thy face hath turned from Jerusalem, and now thy footsteps are toward Jericho. But thy blinded eyes are now opened to thy folly, repentance taketh up its sweet abode in thy heart, in consequence of which thou lookest for the watchman, and when thou hast found him, thou callest unto him out of Seir, "Watchman, what of the night?" "Watchman, what of the night?" The watchman never turneth a deaf ear to the penitent, sorrowing soul, so in sweet assurance he answereth thy appeal, saying, "The morning cometh, and also the night." How gracious are the words of promise, "The morning cometh." Thy heart longeth for the morning. In all the annals of time, has there ever been a soul that hath not longed for the coming of the light of the natural day? Or one who has not looked and longed for the coming of day, the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, during the long, black night in Seir? And each one in its appointed hour has received the same sweet word of promise, "The morning cometh," but with it always comes the gentle note of warning, "and also the night." After the night has passed and the morning light has come, how soon we forget the hardships through which we have passed, and forgetting begets carelessness, and soon we find we have slipped back into by and forbidden paths. But, lonely traveler, what cheer? Thou hast found the watchman, and received his words and signs of promise, why inquirest thou at every milestone? What is the burden of thy inquiry? Does Dumah still oppress thee? Is thy neck still unseemly bent beneath the yoke of thine enemy? The watchman, sayest thou, taking note of thy condition, with pity and sympathy he has looked upon thy sorrow and repentance, and now he kindly whispers in thine ear, "If ye will inquire, inquire ye." So thy hope is revived, and thou art again inquiring the way to Zion, saying, Although I am not worthy, yet I will return to my Father's house, craving forgiveness and a servant's place. Does the watchman say

more unto thee? Does he further encourage thee? Why those tears that courseth down thy cheeks? Art thou still unhappy? No, no, many times no, sayest thou; my tears are tears of thankfulness and joy, because the watchman (notwithstanding my unworthiness and depravity) hath embraced me, taken me by the hand, saying, "Return, come." My faith is revived, and answers to the faith of the watchman, Therefore I, even I, with the "ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they [and I] shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Thy song has greatly changed, O traveler, since first I spake with thee; it is no more a song of the night, but in the morning light art thou. Light and knowledge and great gladness have come into thy soul, and dost thou ascribe praise and glory to the watchman for this transformation? O no, the watchman is but my fellow-traveler, to God, the Father of all, the glory belongs, and unto his glorious name do I ascribe all praise. Adieu.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Aug. 9, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR BROTHER:—This is the second attempt I have made to write to you in the last month, and by the time this is finished I may discard it as I did the other one.

How blessed we are in the able ministers and their gifts, each different from the other. But thus it is that the word of God is fulfilled, and his promises made steadfast.

I feel that I know so little, and even if I should live till the end of time, I could never know all, for "the half has never been told." But O, sometimes every word is so dark and mysterious, and I cannot understand. My mind is constantly on something else that is nothing but foolishness, and it grieves me to think I am so worldly. I think sometimes that surely I am not one of God's children, and I have never been born again. The dear ones are deceived, and it is I who have done it.

"Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

I think I know what it is to love God, he has been so merciful to me, I feel utterly unworthy of his blessings. If indeed I am one of the chosen of God, pray for me, dear brother, that I may be led in the "strait and narrow way," and kept ever low at the feet of Jesus. Even in darkest hours my soul ascends in praises toward him who is the Author and Finisher of our faith, and he has kept me submissive. At all times I am able to say, "All things work together for good;" and this is for some good purpose. I know what he does is just and right, and may I always have his arm to lean upon, and his promises to comfort me all my life.

I have rambled on and on, and said nothing; cast over this the mantle of charity, for it is full of imperfections like the writer. If it is not asking too much, will you not write me when your mind so directs you. And remember, brother Chick, that whenever you can visit us, we will be so glad to have you.

Our family is well, and my grandmother, who is almost ninety-six, is with us, and enjoys splendid health.

Pray for me when it is well with you, and accept our warmest love. May the God of peace and love abide with you, and spare you many years to the good of his cause.

Your little sister in much tribulation,

INA GOLDIE SAWIN.

CENTERBURG, Ohio, Aug. 9, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I often feel that I would love to tell you all how much I enjoy reading your precious communications; the glorious truth and doctrine is portrayed with such firmness, yet in all sympathy and kindness, and the experiences of the many dear writers often fill my heart with loving fellowship to all the poor and afflicted of the dear household of faith. I am comforted and strengthened by your sweet testimonies of the goodness and mercy of the Lord. My poor heart is made to rejoice to think any are so highly favored of the Lord in being blessed with that precious gift, the pen of a ready writer, to rightly divide the word of truth, and to tell the sweet story of Jesus to the comfort of the dear family of God, and to the praise and glory of him who has hid these things from the world and revealed them unto you. May you all continue to thus write; the dear old SIGNS is a precious medium by which many receive all their preaching. There are so many lo heres and lo theres, even among those who profess like precious faith. Stand firm, and ask for the old paths. I feel so sinful, and am so prone to evil; my shortcomings and wanderings from God cause me many doubts and fears, and I often feel to be without hope of being in that covenant of grace. I feel myself so sinful, yet sometimes I am made to look away from myself, the temptations and sorrows of earth, and meditate upon the goodness of God. How thankful I ought to be to love his truth and hope in his mercy. Truly the Lord has done great things for me. His all-seeing eye has watched over me these long seventy years. Sometimes I feel my sins are put away, atoned for on the cross, for that great day. O happy day it will be for unworthy me.

This is the third letter I have written for the SIGNS; if you publish it, all right, if not, all right.

Now may the good Lord so guide the dear editor and all the writers as to keep them from evil in this dark and trying time, and may he uphold you in the future as in the past, is the prayer of your unworthy sister,

JULIA A. BOYD.

LARNED, Kan., Aug. 21, 1904.

ELDER CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I notice in the SIGNS for August 1st that brother W. P. Hood answered my inquiry from Oregon City, in regard to Baptists in or near Fresno, Cal. I would say that my home is not there, as brother Hood understood it, but I was there last April, and would have been glad to have met brother Rucker. I left there and went up into Oregon, and at the time I made the inquiry alluded to above thought I would go back through California and stop at Fresno again, but did not. I was out in the coast states for my health, and stopped in Oregon two months. While there I met with a number of Old Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon, and from Washington, and, brother Chick, I am happy to say that I did not meet with one that did not ascribe all glory to God for salvation, both now and in eternity. I attended a number of their meetings, and was made to feel that their God is my God, and rejoiced with them in a Savior's love, feeling that the same free grace reigns out there that does here, and that God knows them that are his. I was at the association of which sister M. J. Lee, of Oregon City, wrote an account, and I never was at a meeting of Old Baptists where every one seemed to en-

joy himself so well as they did at this association. My dear brother, I would to God that I could remain in the same feeling as I had when assembled with the dear saints at that time, but alas, my sky is covered with darkness to-day, and I cannot get a glimpse of my dear Savior; my harp seems to be hung on the willow, and I am made to exclaim, O is there any one like me?

Please insert in the SIGNS the above correction in regard to brother Hood's letter, and oblige a poor, weak brother,

C. M. BRUCE.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Old School Baptist Conference of Maine, to the associations with whom we correspond.

BELOVED OF GOD:—Once again we send you our annual epistle of love and fellowship in Christ Jesus. The year that is past, like the years that preceded it, has abounded in vicissitudes to those who fear the Lord, but amidst them all our consolation is this: all the times that pass over Israel, and over all the kingdoms of the countries, (1 Chron. xxix. 30,) are only such as the Lord has ordained, and as we contemplate the character of our God, that he is just and holy, gracious and almighty, we may well bow in acquiescence to his ways, and sing, "Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Happy are we when in such a state of mind. The saints in times past looked unto God and were lightened, and their faces were not ashamed, and shall we in our day look in vain unto the Lord our God? It cannot be, for with the God of our mercy there is "no variableness, neither shadow of turning," and he loves his own with an everlasting love, his mercy endureth forever. God is the eternal fountain of all our mercies, he is the confidence of the church, and to him in these our times we would turn, saying with the congregation of old, "Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up forever."—Psalms xxviii. 9. The Lord is the rock of our salvation. If this be so in truth it may well be said of us, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places." Our Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to save his people from their sins. He gave himself a sacrifice for our transgressions, and unaided, by himself, he purged our sins; Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. He has ransomed his people by his precious blood, ransomed them from the power of the grave, redeemed them from death, redeemed them unto God. He has gone into heaven itself, having obtained eternal redemption for us. This now is the hope of believers, and in his salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, they greatly rejoice, "though now for a season, if need be, they are in heaviness through manifold temptations." This is our rejoicing, beloved brethren, that Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded, world without end.

During our earthly pilgrimage salvations without number (Psalms lxxi. 15,) are needed, and no other Savior have we than he who hath loved us and hath washed us from our sins in his own blood. To him therefore our song shall be ascribing "salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."—Rev. vii. 10. As then we view the

children of God encompassed with temptations and adversities our hearts are moved in their behalf, and our prayer is, "Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance." The Lord has a people, as he says, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." They are his, for he hath chosen them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. They are his, for he hath redeemed them, and very blessedly speaks to them, saying, "Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." They are his, for he hath put his Spirit within them, and they are born again, born of his Spirit; his fear he puts in their hearts, that they shalt not depart from him. He will say, "It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God."—Zech. xiii. 9. The people of God need, while here below, continual salvation from the power of their enemies. The world, the flesh and the devil are all combined against them, and the saints endure much damage and affliction from their foes. So subtle are our adversaries that we are often ensnared and wounded, and cannot discern that it is an enemy that hath done it. Our foes put on a friendly aspect, we are allured and become their prey; Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Our natural heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. We read of the deceitfulness of riches, and of some coveting after money who have erred from the faith and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows. (1 Tim. vi. 10.) We need salvation from men of corrupt minds, who wrest the Scriptures, and by their perverse disputings would pervert the gospel of Christ. They privily bring in damnable heresies, and their words are as a canker eating away the health and happiness of the household of God. The churches, dear brethren, today are being tried. O Lord save thy people. Every day, also, we need salvation from the indwelling lusts of our flesh, that we may walk holily and unblamably, glorifying our Father which is in heaven, in our body and spirit which are his. Whatsoever distresses may befall the people of God, so dear are they to us that our cry shall be, O Lord, save thy people, cause thy face to shine upon them, and they shall be saved.

The psalmist continues his prayer, saying, "Bless thine inheritance." The world is God's, and the fullness thereof; all the beasts of the forest are his, and the cattle upon a thousand hills, the gold and the silver are the Lord's. But, "The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."—Deut. xxxii. 9. "The Lord hath chosen Jacob for himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure." —Psalms cxxxv. 4. This is a very gracious revelation, for did not the Savior say, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also"?—Matt. vi. 21. Then if Israel be the peculiar treasure of the Lord, there is his heart also. O wonderful! Has he not said of Zion, "This is my rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it"?—Psalms cxxxii. 14. Yes, unto Solomon God said, "I have hallowed this house which thou hast built, to put my name there forever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually."—1 Kings ix. 3.

"Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance." Bless thine inheritance with sweet peace and fellowship in the gospel. Send down, O Lord, a bountiful rain of thy loving-kindnesses to confirm thine inheritance when it is weary. Though all the powers of darkness curse them,

"Let them curse, but bless thou."—Psalm cix. 28. How light shall be their curse when the blessing of the Lord is our portion. Look, gracious Lord, upon the dry, parched places, and pour forth showers of blessing, (Ezek. xxxiv. 26,) then shall thine inheritance flourish as the garden of Eden, and thy land shall be called Beulah. (Isaiah lxii. 4.)

"Feed them also, and lift them up forever." This also is our prayer to God for the church of God. We need our God himself to be our Shepherd, then we shall not want, for we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. The church of God needs continual nourishment, and only the Lord can afford us that food upon which we can thrive. The flock of God which he hath purchased with his own blood craves the green pastures, and the Lamb in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and lead them unto living fountains of water. The Lamb of God is our Shepherd, and our Shepherd is our Husband, the Head of the church, our Mediator, our Sacrifice, truly he is our all. O, it is through him that there is revealed unto us all the glorious and comforting things of God; they shine forth in his face. He declares to us all the excellencies of the high and holy One that inhabiteth eternity. In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

"On his fullness in believing,
Daily we receive supply;
He, our glorious head, is living,
Sure his members cannot die.
Precious Jesus, O how sweet to live on thee."

Thus saith the Lord, "I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land."—Ezek. xxxiv. 29. Truly this is our Lord Jesus Christ, he is our food, the green pastures, the bread of life, his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed. The saints delight to feed upon the mercy and love of God, yea, all the attributes of God are to them most precious and nourishing to their souls in their meditations when the Holy Spirit feeds them. And where shall we find the green pastures of God's attributes? Creation affords us glimpses of God our Creator. His provinces over all his works excite the admiration of those who fear his great name, but O it is in the glorious doctrine of the gospel of Christ that all the fullness of God is made known. Here Jehovah in all his infinite and eternal excellencies is revealed, and here he feeds the people of his pasture, the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.

"And lift them up forever." Viewed in themselves the people of God are sinful and poor, and are often in consequence of their felt disabilities found abased in the dust. Sometimes so minished and brought low are they through oppression, affliction and sorrow, that they are as those trodden down beneath the feet of the enemy, as the mire of the streets. Poor, sinful and unworthy, shall they be despised, neglected, forgotten? O no, for this is the word of the Lord: "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." "I will bring my people again from the depths of the sea." And the Holy Ghost shall inspire their hearts in faith to say, "Thou which hath shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth." Our God is ever mindful of his inheritance. "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory." O Lord, lift them up forever, lift them up above the condemnation of the law, exalt

them in thy righteousness, O Savior, lift them up above the cunning craftiness of men who lie in wait to deceive, lift them up to the highway, above every false way, above all the heresies of men and devils, exalt them in thy truth, lift them up above their fears and unbelief, lift them up above the power of Satan, above the cares and vanities of the world, that they may live unto thee and set their affection on things above, and not on things on the earth. When faint and weary and ready to perish in their warfare with sin and Satan, shew them thy victories, O Christ, our Redeemer, over our sins, over death and the grave, inspire their souls to believe in thee, then shall they be lifted up, and by faith shall sit with thee in heavenly places. Blessed earnest, blessed foretaste of the eternal exaltation of the church in everlasting glory. Then indeed shall the ransomed be lifted up above sin and sufferings, death and the grave, above corruption and mortality, and we shall be like our ascended and glorified Savior, for we shall see him as he is. "Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up forever."

Dear brethren, it has been with pleasure that we have received your messengers and correspondence, and desire the continuance of your fellowship.

We have appointed our next annual conference to assemble with the church at North Berwick, Me., on Friday before the first Monday in September, 1905, when we hope again to receive your messengers and correspondence.

FRED. W. KEENE, Moderator.
JOSEPH HALL, Clerk.

The Licking Old School Baptist Association, in session with Mount Carmel Church, in Clark Co., Ky., Sept. 9th, 10th and 11th, 1904, to the churches composing this Association, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In our annual Circular Letter we wish to notice some of the principles which distinguish the Primitive Baptists from others, and the reasons for these distinctions. The apostle says, "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." This exhortation was given by Peter to the scattered strangers, who were the elect according to the foreknowledge of God. These scattered strangers are the peculiar ones we wish to search out from among the multitudes of the earth, and to note some of the differences between them and the rest of mankind. All persons, according to natural attainments, inherit the same inclinations and affections for earthly things, differing only in the extent or degree to which these make themselves manifest by the actions of different individuals. But as far as the knowledge of true religion extends, they have not the least idea of it as a principle possessed by them as children of Adam's race. This is something that is hidden from the natural man. Paul says, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Then it is a scriptural truth that all men in a state of nature are equally ignorant of the attributes of God or his great work of redemption, and its application to lost descendants of Adam. They are all under the same condemnation, but do not know it. They are all dead in trespasses and in sins, and do

not know it, for they have natural life and natural faculties, and cannot feel this condemnation or death, nor comprehend the meaning of sin.

Christ said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," or enter therein. Hence we must conclude that in this second birth the difference is made manifest. Those who are born again begin to learn the things of the kingdom, because they are born in it, spiritual children in a spiritual kingdom, yet possessing while in the flesh the same old nature, but it is now brought under a new law, by which it can discern its true character, as it is brought under the searching influence of the light of the heavenly kingdom, which now shines in the heart and reveals all things. By this light sin revives and they die; the weight of condemnation is felt, and all natural goodness is destroyed, the judgments of God are acknowledged in the soul, and the pleading for mercy begins. They here learn their first lesson of the greatness of God. They now understand that God knows all things from the beginning, even to the corruptness of their own evil hearts, and they need no one to teach them of the foreknowledge of God, or that they themselves are sinners. They need no protracted meetings or the so-called evangelists to arouse them to the true knowledge of their condition, but they need one prepared, as was Ananias to instruct Saul of Tarsus, to tell them what the Lord had revealed concerning them. They need a perfect salvation proclaimed, one that was begun, wrought and finished by Jesus Christ, with none of their works necessary to make it effective. Why not have their works also? Let those who know themselves and know the true character of sin, and have also tasted the righteousness and peace that is in the salvation of Christ Jesus, answer.

The good works that follow the revelation of the salvation of Christ are humility, meekness, patience and thanksgiving, interwoven with charity, and founded upon the faith that God gives and nourishes by the never-failing hope which as an anchor of the soul, entereth into that within the veil.

These wonderful changes being wrought in the heart of certain ones, while others have no change, bring the doctrine of election plainly to our knowledge, since it is God's work that has made this change, and some have it and some have not. No one can recognize the doctrine of election until he is plainly taught that God is the author and finisher of his faith, and that nothing he has done has in any way assisted to make the salvation of Christ effective. This is a precious doctrine to those who are taught it by the Spirit, but they must pass through many tribulations and conflicts of soul before they can see it. Peter was desired by Satan and sifted as wheat, disputed his Master's word, denied him with cursings and swearing, and then with weeping and remorse endured untold agony of soul, until his Master permitted him to confess his love for him. He no longer doubted his foreknowledge, his unconditional election, or his predestination, and was made to know him as King of kings and Lord of lords, and he himself as an unprofitable servant. His elect people to-day are brought along the same way, and taught to have no confidence in the flesh, but to glory in the Lord. Those not thus taught do not believe in election, but must depend to a certain extent on their own good works, and in mixing their works with grace they claim that God bestows grace where the

person gets himself in a condition to receive it, or that he must accept it to be effective, and their election is of such a character that God elects those to salvation who obey in a certain way the precepts of the gospel, their obedience being the point on which the election depends. But the scattered strangers whom Peter addressed, and also those of the same family to-day, must put the election and calling first of all things in their divine life, and whatever obedience they ever render to their just but merciful God is the result of their election and calling. These strangers are also pilgrims who are seeking a city whose builder and maker is God, and while in this world they continue to be strangers and pilgrims, not knowing their way or what may befall them in trials and tribulations in their journey here, and are not known by those of the world, as the world only knoweth her own, she cannot know these strange sojourners who have been changed in heart and mind from the love of sin to the love of holiness.

Dear brethren, strangers and pilgrims, we salute you with the assurance that the perfect salvation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is our only hope and comfort, and is the only kind preached in our churches, and we trust that it may still please him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, to keep us in his love and faith so long as we remain strangers in this world, and that when this life ends he will bring us unto our home, where all is peace and love and joy in his ever blessed presence for evermore.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.
J. T. McCoun, Clerk.
T. J. Ratliff, Assistant Clerk.

The Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Olive & Hurley Church, at Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., September 14th and 15th, 1904, to the churches composing the same sends christian greeting.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:—According to an established custom we send you this annual greeting, that we may stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance of former things of interest to us all as professed followers of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who has said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Showing to us as an association of churches that large numbers were not taken into consideration by our Savior, (although he fed the thousands) but the manner and spirit of the little flock or stray sheep came under his judgment and received comfort and encouragement, feeling abased before him, proving what Paul said to the Galatian brethren: "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." He also said to them, "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another." There is no middle ground to be taken in this important matter, for except we have the Spirit of Christ we are none of his. It is by his Spirit that we are prompted to action. This shows the meaning of Peter's admonition to the brethren to add to their "faith [the God-given principle of life and spirit] virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity." Saying, If these things be in you, and abound, they make you neither idle "nor unfruitful in

the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lackest these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." Thus Peter and Paul agree with James in their expression of the necessity of proving their faith by their works, to show that they are dead to sin and alive to God. Therefore "if we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." This admonition we believe to be by the word of the Lord, or as a "thus saith the Lord." Thus we see the necessity for the servants of the Lord to take heed to themselves and to the doctrine, continuing in it, thus saving themselves and them that hear them. If this had always been so by the servants of Christ they would have continually shown not only that they lived in the Spirit, but also that they were walking in the Spirit, without desire for vain glory, not envying or provoking one another. But perilous times must come, Judaizing teachers must come and bewitch the dear saints in the Galatian church, which is antitypical of the last chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah, and declared by Paul to the Thessalonians. In all this our God is glorified, not by the carnal desire of a preacher to sow discord among the brethren through sophistry, headiness or high-mindedness, but because God's will is shown in giving Israel his way and sending leanness into his soul. Paul in coming to his Galatian brethren was moved with bowels of compassion for their welfare. He brings before their minds the death of Christ as their only hope of life and salvation, telling them that Christ was made of a woman, and made under the law, and that he fulfilled every jot and tittle of that law; and to believers in all the world Christ becomes the end of the law for righteousness, and they have no further need of times or customs, but show their love to God, his cause, and to the brethren in their willingness to endure hardness as good soldiers, and to fight the good fight of faith, laying hold on eternal life. A designing man may mislead the real believer by combining works and grace in a way that appears to the weak consistent, and cause the offense of the cross to cease. Because of this Paul rehearses his own experience as a turning point in his own life, by the power of the Spirit, from a persecuting Saul he is made a faithful preacher of the gospel of the Son of God, and he assures the brethren that it was by the grace of God alone. From the testimony of Paul to the churches in his time, he no doubt lived as near his Elder Brother as any in gospel times, yet he felt himself to be a wretched man whom none but Jesus Christ could deliver. Therefore as risen with Christ, he set his affection on things above; things the gospel so fully set forth as an everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, and could with fullness of interest and fervor of desire say, "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." Exhorting the Lord's people to consistency, and constancy in the cause of truth, without partiality or hypocrisy, without vain glorying, or envy, or provoking one another.

Dearly beloved, the truth is our safety. What can we render to our God for his kindness shown us in the past? It is true our numbers are decreasing, but our stronghold as prisoners of hope is the Lord of life and glory. If we live in the Spirit, this alone should stimulate us as it did Paul to desire to walk also in the Spirit; to show consistency in connection with the profession we have made, else we have believed in vain. It is a gracious provision that our Redeemer has

made for his erring people in the saying, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." Again, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." These are necessary marks to show the characteristics of the child of God; if we bear them we are a happy people. So be it.

J. D. HUBBELL, Moderator.
J. B. SLAUSON, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Olive & Hurley Church, Sept. 14th and 15th, 1904, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends christian greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—One more year is numbered with the past, and through the mercies of our covenant-keeping God we have been gathered in an associate capacity to receive tributes of your love and fellowship as followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God. Your ministers have come among us preaching the gospel of Christ in its purity, exalting Christ and giving praise to whom all praise is due. We feel to praise God for this one more blessed privilege of being gathered in his name, and also for putting it in the hearts of our ministering brethren to come among us. We desire a continuance of your love, fellowship and correspondence. Let brotherly love continue.

Our next session will be held with the First Roxbury Church, at Vega, Delaware County, N. Y., to begin at 10 o'clock a. m. on the second Wednesday in September, 1905.

J. D. HUBBELL, Moderator.
J. B. SLAUSON, Clerk.

The Licking Association of Particular Baptists, now in session with Mt. Carmel Church, Clark Co., Ky., Sept. 9th, 10th and 11th, 1904, to the associations with whom we correspond, sendeth christian love.

THROUGH the wonderful mercy of God, who rules in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, we are again permitted to meet in an associate capacity. We have been greatly cheered and comforted by the messages of fellowship and love from the several churches composing our body. Peace and fellowship abounds. The ministering brethren came to us in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, and they knew nothing among us but Christ and him crucified. We hope to be favored by your further correspondence by way of Minutes and messengers. May the love and grace of God constrain us to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he has called us, and enable us to run with patience the race set before us.

Our next association is appointed to be held with our sister church at Goshen, Anderson County, Ky., commencing on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1905, when if it be the will of God, we again hope to meet and greet your messengers and letters of fellowship and love.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.
J. T. MCCOUN, Clerk.
T. J. RATLIFF, Assistant Clerk.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1904.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

GENESIS III. 22–24.

SISTER Lucinda Brewster, of New York, has requested that we present some thoughts editorially through the SIGNS upon the Scripture found in Genesis iii. 22–24. These verses read as follows: "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever; therefore the Lord sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden, cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

To come directly to the text named, without preface, we will say that in these verses we have the narrative of the infliction of the lawful penalty upon man for his sin. In these first three chapters of Genesis we have the only true account of the creation of this natural universe, consisting of the heavens above, with all their hosts, and of the earth, with all that lives, moves and has being in it. We also have the only inspired account of the transgression of man against God, and of the coming of death and all sorrow and affliction into the world. While much of the language used in these three chapters is symbolical, yet the narrative is literally true. To question that this is so is to assert that language cannot be depended upon to present facts. It is to assert that our God has not spoken to men in plain terms which can be understood by men. It is literally true then that in this text we have a narrative of what did actually take place with regard to our first parents. They were driven out from the garden of Eden, they were forbidden to enter it again, and cherubims and a flaming sword, as it is called in the text, did stand between them and the garden, and the sword did turn every way to keep the way of the tree of life. Whatever these things might mean, and of this we hope to write directly, we have here a literal narrative of literal things. There is a tendency in the world to deny the literal meaning of all these Scriptures, and it is because of this that we here have insisted upon this account being a narrative of things that did literally take place, but all these things were symbolical, and of this we desire to write.

We suppose that the last verse was what was especially in the mind of sister Brewster, and of this we hope to write more at length, but we desire to call attention to one or two things preceding the last verse. First, Satan had said to the woman, "Ye shall not surely die," "but ye shall become as gods, knowing good and evil." In the first verse of the text, the Lord God said that man has become as one of us, knowing good and evil. In this Satan had told the truth, but with evil design; but in the other thing he had lied, for he had said, "Ye shall not surely die." The assaults of the archenemy against man, and against the Son of man also, have always been by asserting a portion of the truth, but

with a perverted application. Thus Satan quoted the Scriptures to the Savior in the time of the temptation in the wilderness, but the application which he made was a perverted one, and beside, he but partially quoted the word. It is true that a half truth is often more dangerous than an open lie. Counterfeit coin to pass at all must have an element of pure metal in it. While no lie is of the truth, yet in the mouth of Satan and in the lips of men truth must be mingled with it, else its deformity will be so apparent that none will be enticed by it. So the Judaizing teachers in Paul's day did not profess to reject Christ, but rather they did profess great zeal for him and his cause, and while under this cloak they sought to introduce every principle of legality, and thus enslave the free in Christ again. They would not in words reject Christ, while yet they sought to bring in that which would lead away from grace to works for salvation. In this day great profession of zeal for God is made, and under it, as a cloak, men and men-made measures are exalted as the true saviors of men. If men would come right out into the open and say Christ has died in vain, and all depends upon men whether they are saved or not, the falsehood would be so glaring that no child of God could ever be ensnared by it. But when it is said in hymns and prayers, and at times in preaching, that Jesus is the all-sufficient Savior, this catches the ear and wins the hearts of thousands of the little ones of the household, and they are easily ensnared to think that it is reasonable to believe that after all something remains for men to do if they would be saved everlastingly. And if men will say in words, "By the grace of God I am what I am," they may add to this a thousand words concerning conditions to be performed by believers, in order to secure present peace, happiness and growth in knowledge, and thousands of little ones will be ensnared. Satan thus tempted Eve, the mother of all living, and thus he continues to tempt her children.

But leaving this, let us speak of the sword and the cherubims. Two things are here to be considered, the flaming sword and the cherubims. By the flaming sword we are not to understand a sword of steel, such as the hands of men use in warfare, but it is, as is said, a sword of flame. The thought involved in both words is that of brightness, and that which burns and destroys. This flaming sword, placed at the east of the garden of Eden to keep the way of the tree of life, so that our first parents could not approach unto it, and eat and live forever, was symbolical of the holy justice and judgment of God against sin. Justice and judgment forever bar the way to life, and salvation, and heaven to the sinner. Turn which ever way we will, seek to come to the tree of life by whatever course we may, while sin remains unatoned for we shall find the justice of God forever barring our way. As our first parents could find no way of approach to the tree of life in the midst of the garden after they had transgressed, so now and always since then when men convicted of their sin against God, and seeing themselves driven out from life and salvation, have endeavored to come nigh by works, penances, rituals or birthrights of their own, they have found that justice has demanded death, and forbidden them to live. This is what it seems to us in brief the sword here signified. It turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life. By life is not only meant unending existence, but the life of holiness and of God, the life which is heaven-

ly, and which when possessed unites its possessor to all that is holy and divine, so that they to whom it is given are said to be partakers of the divine nature. But we hope to refer to this again a little further on.

We desire to call special attention to the cherubims who were placed here with the flaming sword. What place do they fill? What do they symbolize here? We must remember that they were seen in the sanctuary, the most holy place both in the tabernacle and in the temple. Frequent reference is made to them in connection with the worship under that old covenant. It is clear whatever their special significance might have been, that they were important in that old covenant worship; they rested over the mercy-seat in the most holy place; between them the light which manifested the presence of God shined forth. Thus we read in one of the Psalms, "Thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth." Here was an intimation of the abiding place of God manifest to Israel, and here also was an intimation of the brightness of that presence. It seems clear to our mind that in the narrative in Genesis, which we are contemplating, there is an intimate connection of thought and meaning with the cherubims in the sanctuary afterwards, and also that the flaming sword in Genesis is one with the Shekinah seen between the cherubims there. God said to Moses that he would commune with the people from between the cherubims, and the glory of God is spoken of as going up from between the cherubims. The name cherubim signifies, "fixed or fastened ones." It would seem that they were especially connected in the sanctuary with the revelations of the favor and mercy of God. Here in Genesis they were connected with his just judgment against sin. Whether they appear in judgment or in mercy, they are the fixed or fastened ones. That is, they represent the certainty and fixedness of all the purposes of God, and of all his work. Our God is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. Thanks be to God, it is also revealed that Jesus Christ, his dear Son, is the same yesterday, to-day and forever.

In the garden there is then the revelation of a sin-avenging God. Here is no revelation of Jesus in the gospel as yet, but simply of sin, and justice, and holiness, and truth, which all demand the death of the sinner. God's presence here as a flaming sword in justice forever bars out all who as sinners would approach to the tree of life. Thus the enormity of sin and the perfect holiness of God are made manifest; thus also the hopelessness of man's lost condition is made clear; that he cannot approach to God by methods of his own is also made clear. Here we have revealed no way of approach unto God, but simply judgment and justice forever barring the way of the tree of life, and that this is fixed and settled is made clear by the presence of beings whose name signifies that which is fixed or fastened. How vain then for men to talk about being saved, or coming to God by any forms, services, sacrifices, fastings, self-denials or labors of their own. The sword turns every way to keep the way of the tree of life. Thus we are taught that no amount of future good deeds, repentance, penances or works of any kind can atone for one past sin. Yea, we are taught here that before sincere sorrow for sin can be felt within, justice must in some way be satisfied; yea, before spiritual blessings can be given to any man, the atonement must be made that puts away sin forever. The

flaming sword of justice must not be dimmed or quenched, but it must gain added brightness by perfect obedience and a perfect sacrifice for sin.

Now notice in the holy place in the tabernacle in the wilderness, and in the temple afterwards erected, we find the same wonderful emblems, the cherubims and the flame of fire between them, as the manifestation of the presence of God, but now no longer do they repel or turn every way to keep the way of the tree of life. Now "all is mercy, all is mild," as the poet has said. Now a welcome is found here for the High Priest in behalf of the people, and for the people through him. But why this difference? Just because a ransom has been found, a sacrifice has been offered. God has not changed. Justice has not stepped one side and given place for mercy to come in, but justice and mercy are at one, and all is peace between them. Justice and mercy have met together, the debt has been paid, a sacrifice has been found, and the way into the holiest has been made through this sacrifice. The cherubims are the same, and the brightness of the glory of God is the same, but sin that shut man out from all favor and blessing has been put away; and sin alone is that which shuts man out from the blessing of everlasting life. No Israelite could of old approach the sanctuary until the sacrifice of atonement through blood had been made, then they were permitted to draw near. The sword no longer threatens, and the cherubims fixed and settled in their place between the sinner and the tree of life, now are also the fixed and settled avenue by which God appears to redeemed men and manifests his love and mercy, together with his justice and judgment.

All this points to Christ, our great sacrifice. In him justice has been satisfied and the law fulfilled; now in him all righteousness is fulfilled for his elect people, and in him now justice as well as mercy meet. This all considered together, teaches that men are not saved at the expense of divine justice, but rather, men are saved in perfect accord with justice. Justice welcomes those who come through the atonement. The light, glory and justice of God, which shined forth in the flaming sword with terror in its flame to the sinner, now shines forth with joy to the sinner, who feeling his sins none the less, yet comes to God through the atonement of Christ. The sacrifice of Christ makes all the difference; man is a sinner still, and must come as a sinner; and justice is justice still, and the divine judgment has not changed, but Christ has come, and because Christ has come, salvation is brought nigh, and through him the sinner is brought nigh to God. The flaming sword of divine holiness and justice no longer keeps the way of the tree of life, but dwells between the cherubims, receiving and welcoming the redeemed sinner, and conferring upon him all the fullness of eternal life and all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus our Lord. And lastly, we will add that election is seen in this theme, since all by reason of sin were shut out from life; it is sure that none can ever come nigh save through the blood of Christ, and he gave himself, not for all men, but for his people alone.

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MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at his residence, Hopewell, N. J., May 11th, 1904, Walter A. Hixson and Miss Sadie A. M. Golden, both of Hopewell, N. J.

By the same, at Zion, Hunterdon Co., N. J., August 17th, 1904, W. Herbert Fowler, of Trenton, N. J., and Miss Essie A. Wyckoff, of Zion, Hunterdon Co., N. J.

By Elder James M. True, at the home of the bride's parents, Sept. 7th, 1904, James M. Hayes and Miss Hester A. Kirkham, both of Edgar Co., Ill.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

My dear mother-in-law, **Elizabeth Johnson,** departed this life August 2nd, 1904, in her 80th year. She had been in poor health for some time, her trouble being dropsy and heart disease, from which she suffered intensely at times, yet I never heard her murmur; with great patience and resignation did she bear her afflictions. One week before she died I spent a night with her that I can never forget. Surely, I felt, it was good to be there, for her tongue was loosed as I never knew it to be before, for she was a woman of a meek and quiet disposition, and seldom ever expressed herself in regard to the things of the kingdom, for she had said to me many times in our conversations she did not feel fit to be in company with those whom she believed to be the children of God. O how insignificant I felt when I would hear her talk like that, for I felt she was so much better than I; it seemed to me she walked with Christ so much in spirit, so self-sacrificing, so humble, always for peace and willing to endure anything for peace sake. I will not try to name her many virtues, for it would occupy too much space. I think I can say none knew her but to love her; none named her but to praise. The night I spoke of, when all was still, and she seemed to be resting quietly in her chair, all at once she commenced to speak to me of the glorious things that were passing through her mind. She spoke of her bodily afflictions the day before, but the clouds that had obscured the light of her dear Savior so long had been removed, the mists had cleared away, the presence of her dear Savior had been so clearly revealed to her, like Job she could say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." She said, "What a glorious thought; such feelings of resignation and comfort I never had before; the Lord will not put upon me more than I can bear;" made willing in the day of his power. O, how we do miss her when we go to the old home, for she always came out to greet us with a hearty welcome, in her quiet and humble way, but we have every assurance that she is at rest with her dear Redeemer, where sorrow and suffering are unknown. Last February her dear companion, father Johnson, passed away. She felt impressed then she would not survive him long. They lived together nearly fifty-five years. Four children survive her, three sons and one daughter, one sister, Aunt Mary Beckley, who is now more than four score years, and many friends to mourn their loss, but "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." During the time she was talking to me that night that dear old hymn, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord," &c., was presented to her mind; she repeated it, and especially the last three verses did she emphasize, it seemed to do her so much good. The presence of the Lord seemed to be round about her; there was no dread of death, and the grave had lost its victory. She felt she could pass over the river safely and joyously with such a staff to lean upon.

Our much loved pastor, Elder Joshua T. Rowe, spoke comfortingly to the sorrowing ones.

MARY E. S. JOHNSON.

Baltimore, Md., Sept. 5, 1904.

It was my privilege and pleasure to know sister Johnson for the past five years, and I can testify to her christian character; a woman of few words, but of lovely disposition, and the few words she did say were to the point. I have acted in the capacity of pastor of her church (Patapsco) for five years, and always found her earnestly devoted to the church and cause generally. I visited her home at different times, and always enjoyed myself with her. In her last illness, which she bore with true christian fortitude, she was made willing to depart and be with her Savior, he having given her renewed evidence of her acceptance in him. A few days before her death I visited her and found her more talkative than usual, and it was good to hear her speak of her assurance of the Savior's love. She said to me, "All the past winter the clouds were dark, and I had little light, but last Sunday they all passed away, and it is all right." There seemed to be nothing to hinder her from laying hold on the hope that was set before her, and in this calm and peaceful state of mind she passed away. I spoke on the occasion of her funeral to a large gathering of people, who met to pay their respects to one they loved for the beauty and sweetness of her christian character. To the bereaved family I would say, Cheer up, for your mother is with her loving Savior, in whom she trusted while in this world of sin and tears, the trials of this life can never trouble her again. May God graciously give each of you the same grace that so wonderfully sustained her, is the desire of your brother and friend,

J. T. ROWE.

[We were requested to add some remarks to the above obituary, as we have known sister Johnson for nearly forty years, and it was our happy privilege to baptize her about thirty-four years ago, in the fellow-

ship of Patapsco church, but as the notice written by sister Johnson and Elder Rowe is already full and quite lengthy we will only add that none too much has been said concerning this dear and faithful wife, mother, sister and friend. We can but feel an added loneliness as we thus think and write of another dear friend who has gone on before.—ED.]

BROTHER **S. H. Starr, Jr.,** was taken away by death at his home, Starrsville, Ga., March 28th, 1904. Heart trouble, from which he suffered, was the cause of his death. He had every attention that loving friends and a faithful wife could give him, but it was the purpose of God to remove him, and we desire to be reconciled to his will. Brother Starr was born August 25th, 1838, and was married three times. His first wife, whom he married at Dallas, Texas, in 1868, was Miss Fannie A. Tarver, who died in 1873. His second wife, Miss Fannie Butner, whom he married in Cobb Co., Ga., in 1880, died in 1887. His third wife was Miss Nannie Childs, who, together with one daughter by each of his first two wives, survives him. He enlisted in the service of his country in 1861, as a private in Co. H, 3rd Ga. Reg't, and was promoted to rank of captain, which position he held at the surrender at Appomattox. Having professed a hope in Christ while in Texas, in 1868, he returned to Georgia and united with the church at Holly Springs, Newton Co., June 7th, 1879, and was baptized by Elder J. G. Eubanks, who was pastor of that church at the time. He was a faithful member to the time of his death, and was clerk of the church for a number of years. He was a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and a firm believer in the doctrine advocated by it. His home was always open to the brethren, and their company was much enjoyed by him and his dear companion.

His funeral was attended by a large number of brethren and friends. Elder J. F. Moss spoke to the comfort of the bereaved family, after which his remains were laid to rest in the family cemetery at Starrsville, Ga.

May God in his great mercy sustain and comfort his sorrowing wife and children, and give them the spirit of reconciliation to his will in this sad bereavement.

G. D. HEARD.

DIED—June 2nd, 1904, **J. Gilbert Dance,** in his 17th year, seventh son of E. S. and S. R. Dance, and nephew of the writer. It is always sad, but more so in some cases than others, when a promising youth is stricken down when just entering manhood; this is so in this case. The cause of death was acute Bright's disease, of only about three weeks duration, developing rapidly into convulsions, of which he had thirty-seven in the last twenty-seven hours. The subject of this notice was a very remarkable youth, his mind developing far beyond his years; more like a man of twenty-five years in knowledge and judgment. We are not left without evidence that he knew something of the glorious life beyond the grave, and while we all feel this bereavement, may those that feel it more keenly be blessed with the presence of the Lord, and feel to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Elder Wm. Grafton spoke comforting words to the sorrowing family and friends, after which his body was consigned to the grave.

MILTON DANCE.

MY mother, **Mary E. Murty,** widow of James Murty, niece of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, (daughter of his sister Maria) died on the 8th inst. at the residence of her son, Otis G. Murty, 301 Pulaski St., this city, after a lingering illness. She lacked eight days of being 75 years old. She was buried Sunday, the 11th inst., in the plot with her mother, in Greenwood Cemetery. She leaves three children; her daughter, Mrs. E. B. Reed, is a resident of Closter, N. J. She was a good, kind and faithful mother, and will be greatly missed by us all. She was a member of the Ocean Hill Baptist Church, this city. Her pastor, E. Lukes, officiated at the funeral services.

JAMES MURTY.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., Sept. 12, 1904.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Lexington, N. Y., of the Lexington Association, has appointed a yearly or two days meeting to be held at their meeting-house in Lexington, the first Saturday and Sunday in October, 1904. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. Those coming via Ulster & Delaware R. R. can come to Lexington with our stage, which connects with the morning trains at Shandaken, or I will meet the afternoon trains if requested.

FLETCHER MACKEY, Church Clerk.

THE Old Baptist Church called First Roxbury, at Vega, Delaware Co., N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting to be held the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (5th and 6th) 1904. All who love the truth are cordially invited to attend.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE next annual meeting of the Lexington Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie, N. Y., at her meeting-house on Schoharie Hill, meeting to begin at 10 a. m. on the first Wednesday in October, 1904, and continue two days. Ministers and brethren of our faith and order of other associations and churches in good standing, and all lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Trains will be met at Howe's Cave

on Tuesday before the meeting. Those who come to Cobbleskill will call on brother J. E. Livingston.

G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

THE Juniata Association of Old School Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, with the Fairview Church, in Fulton Co., Pa., on Friday, October 7th, 1904, and continue over Sunday. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth. Those coming by railroad will come on the B. & O. road to Hancock, and pass over the bridge to the Hancock side, where they will be met and conveyed to places of entertainment. Come on Thursday and be there about 1 o'clock.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Corresponding Meeting of Virginia is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, Loudoun Co., Va., Oct. 12th, 13th and 14th, 1904. Brethren and friends coming by railroad will be in Washington, D. C., in time to take the train on Tuesday at 1:30 p. m. for Bluemont, on the Washington & Ohio division of the Southern R. R., where they will be met and cared for. We extend a hearty invitation to all who may wish to meet with us.

J. N. BADGER.

THE Salisbury Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Association will hold her annual session this year with Snowhill church, in the town of Snowhill, Worcester Co., Md., commencing Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, (19th) 1904, and continuing three days, when and where we hope to meet and greet a goodly number of brethren, sisters and friends. We extend a cordial invitation to our ministering brethren to come and see us and behold our order. We bid all lovers of truth a welcome; do not shrink for fear that we will be overburdened, for we feel amply prepared to make all comfortable that wish to come. We think this one of the good points for the association. We are not prepared to inform you how the trains run, or when they leave certain points, but get tickets on Tuesday before the meeting for Snowhill, arriving in the afternoon, and the train will be met and all cared for. If any should come on any other train and are not met, inquire for Mary R. Pernell or George Coulburn.

T. M. POULSON, Pastor.
JOHN H. TRUITT, Clerk.

A YEARLY meeting will be held with the Olive & Hurley Old School Baptist Church the last Wednesday and Thursday in October, (26th and 27th) 1904.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

A TWO days meeting has been appointed to be held with Cammal Old School Baptist Church, the Lord willing, the last Saturday and fifth Sunday in October, 1904. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. Those coming from the south will take the New York Central train at Williamsport, and those coming from the north will also take New York Central train. Ample accommodation for all who live out of town. Trains will be met on Friday and Saturday morning. Elder John McConnell, of New York city, Elder J. T. Rowe, of Baltimore, Md., and our pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, will be present.

ALVA B. CALLAHAN, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 72. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1904. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NEWARK, N. J., August 4, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—When I think of the loving-kindness of my heavenly Father, and remember the kind, protecting hand that has encircled me from the earliest moment of my earthly existence to the present, a feeling of thanksgiving arises from my soul, and I feel to say and to sing with David, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits," for, "He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities;" and "from the rising of the sun, unto the going down of the same, the Lord's name is to be praised."

The following narrative of what I hope is the gracious dealing of the Lord with me, a vile sinner, was written, as you will see, some thirty-six years ago, to a dear sister, in response to her request that I would give her a narration of my experience. A deep feeling sense, not only of my unworthiness, but a very dissatisfied feeling with what I had written, prevented me from further writing, and I laid it aside, and consequently it was never sent. In looking it over and thinking how wonderfully God had led about and instructed many of his dear children, as seen in the rich, varied and interesting narratives that had been my comfort to read, I felt that what I had written was little indeed, and would prove uninteresting to my dear sister. Still I did not wish to be understood as finding fault, no, God forbid, for I was well aware that I possessed all I deserved, and much more, for if I had my just deserts, instead of ever having had such overflowing of soul as I hope I had in days past, I should have been banished from the everlasting presence of the eternal God, and the glory of his power. Some few years since, I added the few closing paragraphs, and when I read and re-read the interesting narratives of brother and sister Yard, of Hopewell, N. J., published in the SIGNS of September 15th, 1903, and also read from your accompanying remarks, brother Chick, that "we would like to see in the manuscript that comes to us for publication, more frequent narratives of personal experience of grace," &c., I felt that it was wrong in me to longer withhold from publication the narrative of what I humbly hope were the dealings of the Lord with me, thinking

there might be some one who had been led in the same path, who, if so, would undoubtedly be comforted thereby, although I then felt, and still feel, that I am one all alone in my feelings. And if there is one who may read these lines who has felt as I have, I would be glad to know it. With the psalmist, my breathings to God are that he will not rebuke me in his wrath, neither chasten me in his hot displeasure. "In thee, O Lord, do I hope."

"Through troops of foes he'll lead me on
To victory and a victor's crown;
In him I hope, in him I trust,
His bleeding cross is all my boast."

Affectionately yours,

GEORGE D. CONKLIN.

BAPTISTTOWN, N. J., March 16, 1868.

MISS TILLIE E. HANNA—MY DEAR FRIEND AND SISTER:—Your excellent letter is received, and now you want me to give you a narration of my experience. I believe we are told in some part of the Bible to be ready at all times to give a reason of the hope that is within us with meekness and fear. I feel it is with great fear that I now attempt to tell you some of the feelings I have had by the way.

"How often have I thought,
Why should I longer lie?
Surely the mercy I have sought
Is not for such as I.

But whither can I go?
There is no other pool
Where streams of sovereign mercy flow,
To make a sinner whole."

O how often, too, I have thought of that very feeling hymn beginning with, "'Tis a point I long to know." Could I joyfully meet the saints and choose the ways I once abhorred, if I did not love the Lord? There seems to be a plank here on which the trembling and doubting like myself can stand. When for a moment I consider how wonderfully God in his goodness and mercy has led you about and instructed you; how much he has caused you to experience, as well as others I have read after and conversed with, I feel almost ready to say sometimes, I have no experience; that the feelings I have, perhaps, are ideal, not real ones, and fear that I have not had trouble enough, and in consequence feel at times very much cast down. But in my darkest moments, when in the lowest valley, and almost ready to despair, there is something that holds me, and it is worth more than ten thousand worlds like this to me. Even then I can sing,

"There's nothing round this spacious earth
That's worth my large desire;
To solid joys and lasting mirth
My nobler thoughts aspire."

When I am enabled to look back to the pit from whence I was digged, and to the rock from whence I was hewn, I cannot but feel it is the work of an almighty hand. My feelings then undergo a change, and I am enabled to hope that he, for Christ's sake, has forgiven my sins, and has, as I hope and trust, given me a name and a place among his redeemed family, and if so, it was all on account of God's everlasting love. I am certain of one thing, and that is, I am a great sinner, one who sins in thought, word and deed; I was born in sin, and that Adamic nature will remain unchanged to the day of my dissolution, I fully believe; but I hope a principle has been implanted within that hates and abhors sin. It seems to me, dear sister, that I am unlike any one else in many respects, and am afraid often I come far short of giving that evidence of a change of heart that is necessary for my brethren to see, in order for them to fellowship me as one of the kindred in Christ. While some are able to tell not only the year

and month, but even the day, and almost the very moment, when they trust the quickening power of God was felt, and with the same precision can tell when they were so joyfully relieved of their burden of guilt and transgression that had been bearing them down so heavily and so long, I am not able to tell in either case the time or place, so gradually was the work performed. If I am what I hope I am, a quickened sinner, I can unite with you in ascribing the whole work to an all-wise and merciful God. Whether I was quite young when I was first touched by the finger of God's love or not, I can hardly say, but I have been led to think I might have been, and a peculiar incident in my early life leads me also to look with favor upon this pleasant idea. I would invariably address one of the aged members of the Brookfield church, who was a frequent visitor, as "Brother Cary," and he in the fullness and warmth of his heart would address his young friend as "Brother George." I cannot call to remembrance any time when I was particularly opposed to the doctrine of salvation by grace, or to those who believed it and advocated it.

At the age of sixteen I was sent away from home to attend school at the "Seward Institute," in Orange Co., N. Y., and remained there eighteen months. Sister Mary E. Crissey and family lived within four miles of Warwick, where we attended meeting, sister Crissey being a member of the Old School Baptist Church there. During my stay at that place the church was destitute of a pastor, but was frequently visited by ministering brethren from a distance. Some time during this period a professed minister of the Baptist church, by the name of Thompson, (not Elder Wilson Thompson) sent them word of his intention to visit them and preach for them. He was unknown to any of the Warwick church, either personally or by reputation. Sister Crissey was a person of good understanding in Bible matters, I thought, and a lady of talent; she was a zealous advocate of God's eternal truth, being rather reserved, yet very candid, and very decided, too, in her conversation, and possessed of excellent judgment. Hearing that this minister had sent on an appointment, and not knowing who or what he was, she very naturally entertained and cautiously expressed some doubts and fears as to his being what he pretended to be. I listened to what she said concerning him with considerable anxiety, for I was fearful that from what I had already heard, he might not be one of those under-shepherds who have the good of the flock always in view. Now I often look back to that time, and wonder why I was so concerned about them; why I was so uneasy about the safety of the little flock which is looked upon in the world with so much contempt and derision, and is everywhere spoken against; and why would I not rather have hailed with joy the advent of that day that would have consigned them to utter oblivion? In looking about for the evidences of my being a child of God and an heir of glory, I have to look at those circumstances and things, feelings, &c., that seem to embrace, as I hope, my love of the truth, and the dear, loved and tried ones that hold and maintain it; in so doing I have referred back as far as I can particularly remember, and when I recall the things that transpired at that time, the conversation that took place, and what were my anxious though pent-up feelings, those questions that I have already cited and many others arise in my inquiring mind for anxious solution. I thought at that time this poor, despised

and afflicted people were the ones who worshiped God in Spirit and in truth. The doctrine also that was set forth by those bold heralds of the cross, who faithfully went forth at the command of their Lord and Master, amidst opposition and discouragements, proclaiming salvation to lost and perishing sinners, in King Immanuel's name only, was pleasant and agreeable to my listening ears. Why I thought and felt so then I cannot tell, unless God's mercy had been bestowed upon me, for I do not know as I entertained a hope at that time, nor am I able to say that I did for several years after, for it seems as though the hope that I have been in possession of, if I have any, for many years, has been a hope that God would some time give me a good hope through grace. I greatly desired to be a christian, but thought I was very far from being one, so much indwelling sin I possessed, which I vainly imagined the christian was rid of. I thought that christians were so changed that they did not have those sinful feelings and thoughts that I was constantly experiencing, yet I would often hear those I looked upon as such, tell of feeling the very same things. I felt at such times to take courage, thinking perhaps there might have been something begun in me, knowing also that I took such a deep interest in the very things that they said were so comforting and interesting to them. Many a time when I have been thrown into the christian's society, and the conversation would be on christian experience, it would affect me very much, and sometimes to that degree that I could not suppress my emotions. I then would feel badly, for I was fearful of being noticed, and something directly said to me on the subject. I would often contend for Bible doctrine, yet was exceedingly careful to avoid saying anything about myself. I did not seem to realize fully that christians did not know they were such, notwithstanding their oft repeated declarations to the contrary. Often when at meeting, after the text had been read and preaching had commenced, instead of my thoughts being upon the subject, I would find them, like the fool's eye, wandering to the ends of the earth, and in vain would I attempt to bring them back, and keep them where they ought to be, but ere I was aware they would be roving as before. This was a great trouble to me, for I thought the christian ought to be and was so interested that his thoughts would refuse to wander. Many of the wicked thoughts, too, I fancied would be banished from my mind when I became a christian. But should I undertake, if I were able, to give you all my serious thoughts on religious subjects during the last fourteen years, it would make this too long, and I greatly fear it would not be interesting; I cannot persuade myself that what I have already written will be. During the last eight years there have been many times while attending associational meetings and others, particularly at the close, and when about to return home, when I hardly knew how I should ever go to work again, so greatly had my enraptured soul been feasted upon those things that appertain to that kingdom that is not of this world. O how small and mean was everything of a worldly nature and character, but with considerable exertion having resumed my work, that feeling seemed to wear away to a great extent, and I became interested with whatever I was doing, as I had before. Then I thought I could not have been born of the Spirit, else I should constantly feel as at first expressed. But, my dear sister, I think I can see why the

children of God are not permitted to always be in that extremely happy frame of mind, for if they were, I think they would be entirely disqualified to discharge the duties of every day life. Well, during the many years that have passed I have had my seasons of inexpressible joy, and I have had my seasons of sorrow also. At one time and another I have had a great deal of trouble, yet have feared my trouble was not the right kind, for I have never felt that deep trouble that some have had, that is, a feeling of impending destruction hanging over me at some particular time. This kind of trouble I have often thought would have caused me to rest secure, and I would not feel to doubt as I do now. But I have really thought that if I were entirely sure that an angel from heaven had been sent down and should appear before me to-day and furnish me undisputable proof that my name was written in the Lamb's book of life, (showing me my very name) to-morrow I should doubt as before. O, it cannot be possible, it must be some other person by that name.

"I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

I am fully persuaded, therefore, that I have to live by hope, if I am a child of grace. For a number of years previous to 1860 there seemed to be a gradually increasing desire to mingle with that people whose God is the Lord. That gospel which brought to view a whole and all-sufficient Savior; one that could and did save "to the uttermost" sinners, the vilest of the vile, seemed pleasing to my ear. Since 1860 my feelings have been very warmly enlisted in the same truth, and my attachment for that peculiar people has steadily increased, and my language has been, and now is, that of Ruth to Naomi: "Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee." Often I have heard my dear and honored father say, when conversing with some of the dear children of God, "I don't know how it will be with me at last, but I hope that I'm a christian, though I have great fears sometimes. But of one thing I am certain, and nobody can persuade me otherwise, and that is, I'm a sinner." I had great love as well as respect for my father, and I pondered much upon what he said, for I felt that he must be telling the truth. Could it be possible, I thought, that he doubted about his future state, since he had been a member so long, and a sentinel upon Zion's walls, too, where for so many years he had been trying to speak comforting words to the tempted and tried ones, and to encourage those who were bowed down? The expression of Paul, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given," struck me with a great deal of force, and also encouraged me much. If the great apostle Paul could feel himself so small, and none can get any lower in the scale, certainly there is great room for encouragement. But I was greatly troubled for fear I had learned these things of my parents. I thought, if this were the case, why does the recital of another's exercises so affect me? The thought would arise sometimes, perhaps I am ashamed to own I love this much despised truth, and the poor people who receive it and rejoice in it. But this did not seem to trouble me, for I felt I did love the truth I was accustomed to hear. I think this passage of Scripture gave me a stronger assurance than any other: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "If ye love me, keep my commandments," was a portion of Scripture that had been pre-

sented to my mind, and upon which my thoughts had been occupied much for some time previous to my uniting with the church. Do I love the Lord? was an anxious inquiry with me. I felt that I loved the people of God, and I think I loved them for the truth's sake. The doctrine of salvation by grace, and that alone, was a very comforting doctrine, for that was the only doctrine calculated to comfort and encourage poor, dependent, helpless sinners as I felt myself to be. At the close of one of the sessions of the Delaware River Association, at Southampton, a few years since, Elder Gilbert Beebe was sitting in the door of the sexton's house, and as I passed through the room and out at the door by him, I smilingly remarked to him, "Elder Beebe, there is a good deal of the 'old man' in me," to which he very pleasantly and quickly replied, "And is there not some of the 'new man,' too? This remark coming from one upon whom I felt the Lord had bestowed his grace in such a wonderful manner, and had endowed him so richly with such rare talents as enabled him to dig deep into the sublime mysteries of the everlasting kingdom, was a source of much comfort to me.

Some three or four weeks previous to my baptism, my father preached one Sunday morning from the subject embraced within the paragraph that commences with the eleventh and ends with the twentieth verse of the seventeenth chapter of Luke, more particularly the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth verses, the last one of which reads, "And Jesus answering, said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?" It was a very interesting as well as a very touching sermon, and it fell so gently upon my tender feelings as to have a very pleasing effect. That these ten men, who had asked the Lord to have mercy upon them, should be cleansed of their foul leprosy, and then be so ungrateful and unthankful (all but one) as not to return and give glory to God, was certainly very remarkable, and in the exposition and explanation of the subject, as touching the work of God in cleansing the vile sinner of his sin, which is compared to leprosy, I was melted down in my feelings, and my eyes that had so often wept during the last two years under my Father's preaching, were now swimming in tears. Is it possible, I felt, that I, a vile sinner, a sinner in thought, word and deed, and unworthy of the least of heaven's unnumbered blessings, should be so highly favored of the Lord as now to hope that God for Christ's sake had forgiven my sins, and blotted out mine iniquities, and enabled me to hope in his mercy, yet could not honor and glorify him for all this by acknowledging him in a public manner as my Savior and Redeemer, and walking in obedience to his commands? O no, it was too much for my poor, sinful heart to reply no, and I was ready to go. But while this was my feeling, still I felt that it was a great undertaking, and wondered if it was right. I felt to silently pray to God to keep me from doing anything that was wrong in this matter, and felt to hope that he would put some obstacle in the way of my baptism if it was not in accordance with his will. This feeling was with me up to the very moment of my receiving the ordinance; but I was now permitted to feel that God was so overruling in this event as to make the day and time one of solemn joy, and one long to be remembered. It was the fourth Sunday in September, 1867, and a large company of brethren and interested friends had gathered at the house where

we changed our apparel, and when we walked to the water, a distance of some three or four hundred yards, in solid column, five or six abreast, it did indeed seem like a company of friends going to the place of burial. It was joyfully solemn as we approached the water's edge, singing the song of redeeming love, where we were soon to be buried in the watery grave, around which had assembled a large concourse of people to witness the administration of this solemn ordinance, by father, some seven months before his death. Although he was quite feeble in body, and to some of the brethren it seemed like too great a work for him to perform, (six being baptized) yet he seemed to have strength given him for the occasion, and his quick step with which he led us from the house to the water was particularly noticed by many. It was indeed a joyful day to him, and he seemed to be lifted in his feelings entirely above the fleeting things of time and sense. It was also a matter of much rejoicing to us, his children, to know that the Lord in his kind providence had been so good and kind to us in affording us strength to acknowledge him thus publicly while our dear father was yet living, that he might not only see his children "walking in the truth," but that he might also have the sweet and pleasant privilege of administering to them this solemn ordinance. Sisters Mahlon Hulsizer and R. Shepherd, and brother Stacy Risler, with my two sisters, Jane and Sarah, and myself, were the six baptized at that time. If I am not entirely mistaken in my hope, I must have been brought by the smooth and loving way of Mount Calvary, and not by Mount Sinai, for it would seem that the thunderings and threatenings of that dark way were never heard in my inmost soul, for, as far back as I can remember, I seemed to feel that the love of God was always shed abroad in my heart, to a certain degree at least, which forever shut out from my view the blackness and darkness that accompanies the terrible thunderings from Mount Sinai, and my inmost soul lay passive under the smiles of a loving Savior. I cannot remember at any period of my early life, or later on, when I felt any opposition rising in my bosom against my heavenly King or his righteous government and laws; and while I felt a long time ago that the line was irrevocably drawn between the righteous and the wicked, that a portion of the human family were eternally saved, and the others were eternally lost, the thought arose in my mind that it did seem a little hard that if there were some who wanted to be saved they could not be, for it was eternally settled in Jehovah's mind; yet I thought if it was so it was all right, for it was according to the eternal mind, and no wrong or injustice could be charged there. But my feeble mind did not then know and could not yet comprehend the glorious truth that all who desired to be saved with an everlasting salvation would be saved, and not one single sensible sinner would ever be lost. The impending danger and seemingly swift destruction that seems to await and threaten the poor, guilty, sin-sick soul, as he hears the awful sounds from Mount Sinai's terrible thunderings, was not mine to experience, and while on that account I have been worried and troubled much, still I am aware I have escaped many sore and heart-rending troubles in being brought as I have. I certainly have envied those who have been brought through such severe trouble. I am firmly of the opinion that not one of all the redeemed family of God ever has been or ever will be

brought through this wilderness world without being assailed to a greater or less extent with doubts and fears as to their interest in the pardoning blood of the Savior, and of their ultimately reaching the haven of unclouded light and eternal rest.

Very truly your friend and brother, in hope of eternal life,

GEORGE D. CONKLIN.

LEESBURG, Va., Feb. 18, 1900.

MRS. BENTON JENKINS—MY VERY DEAR SISTER:—I do not remember of ever having been kept home from my Valley meeting before, but to-day the snow is so drifted from last night's wind I do not think it prudent to attempt the trip, besides I hardly think any one will be there.

Please excuse pencil, as I find it more comfortable to sit close to the fire and use pencil. I know it is not style you want, but demonstration of the Spirit, and it is this that I desire in writing you these lines. Your letter of Jan. 14th is before me; I have read it over again this morning, and enjoyed it fully as much as when first received. But you expect an answer. Before attempting, however, I want to thank you for writing to me. I would like to refer to several things in your letter, but to comply with your request as to my views on the sixth chapter of Revelation will perhaps give you as much or more reading than you have time to give to me. You say your mind rested especially on the red horse and the hurting of the oil and the wine. My mind leads me to speak of the horse in a general rather than a specific way, hoping in so doing it will be more satisfactory to you, and you may find it easy to give special application to each horse. You will observe that it was only when one of the seals was loosed that one of the four beasts said to John, "Come and see." The purpose of the seal was to keep secret the contents sealed, and the power of the seal rested in the name of him that seals. In the last chapter of Daniel, who was among the last of the Old Testament writers, the Lord said to him, "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Daniel inquired of him "clothed in linen," "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" The reply was, "time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished." Daniel asked again, "O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?" The reply was, "Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." And that Daniel should stand in his lot at the end of the days. Thus we see by the command of God, that the word of the fathers, by whom he spoke at sundry times and in divers manners, were sealed until he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, until the time of the end. The prophets themselves did not understand, though they inquired and searched diligently, "What, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." It was by God sealed from them; it was left for them who preach the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, to behold the wonderful things that had been kept hid from all ages. It was left for the Holy Ghost to take of the things of Jesus and show them unto us; to put all things in order, to put Daniel in his "lot" with

all the other fathers, to show God's purpose in all things, both good and evil. Christ alone is the preacher of the circumcision for the truth of God. In the face of Jesus Christ alone is the glory of the Father to be seen; in him dwells the fullness of the Godhead; all the works of God are accomplished by and in him; in him and by him were the promised blessings and the eternal purposes of God fulfilled and made true. The Spirit that was in the prophets testified of his coming, but it did not enable them to do the work; he alone could do that. It seems from the reading of Revelation v. 4, that there was bitter grief among the saints because there were none in heaven nor in earth nor under the earth to open the book and loose the seals. In other words, nowhere in heaven, earth, nor under the earth, could be found one who could understand what God had said by the prophets. Let me call your attention to the conversation between the disciples after Christ's crucifixion: It was he whom we thought would deliver Israel; all our hopes are dead; "I go a fishing;" just as well go to our old trade to make a living for ourselves; it is all over with us now. What did they know of what the prophets had said? How much wiser are the learned Jews of to-day? What more convincing evidence have they? Does not this show that the Father must reveal, and that upon this revelation the church is built? While there were none in heaven, nor in earth, nor under the earth, God was not at all disconcerted. He who had declared the end from the beginning, to him all things were open. Though sealed to man, and that for the purpose that they might do his pleasure, it was all known to and ordained by him, that the lion of the tribe of Juda should open the book and loose the seals. In the chapter you call my attention to we read of the opening of the seals, which opening finishes, as recorded in the eighth chapter and first verse. These seals were opened in their order, not all at the same time. According to Daniel knowledge shall be increased. We shall grow in grace and knowledge of the truth. But all this seems to me had special reference to the increase of knowledge as believed from the beginning to the coming of Christ. We see little by little God opened his purposes until he made it fully known in Christ. The horse I understand is used symbolically; he was used in war, also in olden times, and still in some parts of the country now as means of transportation of merchandise; he was used also to carry the king's commandments to different parts of his domain. It is in this symbolical signification I understand the horse is used in the chapter under consideration. The prophets themselves, the men of God, were the horses, the means by which God sent his word wheresoever he would. As I understand it was revealed to Zechariah. He saw by night a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom. Behind him were red horses, speckled and white, and he asked the Lord, What are these? And he told him, These are they whom the Lord has sent to walk to and fro through the earth. (Zech. i. 8–10.) This must have been a revelation to Zechariah, for he saw it "by night," and besides they were in the bottom, a dark place. In Hebrews i. 14, we read, "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" A horse is indeed to my mind a very striking symbolical representation of those who are sent to carry God's word to the heirs of salvation. Wild in the open

plains, would he ever think of carrying God's message? He needs to be broken, to be tamed, to have his will made subservient to his Master's will, and even then, when the Master would have him do his bidding he must put the bit in his mouth, and take the reins in his own hands, and drive him where he will. So John saw not only the horse, but he that sat on him. Not one of the old prophets would have ever carried a message had it not been for him that sat on him, neither would one to-day. It is he that sits on the horse that holds in his hands the reins of universal government, and turns the king's heart as he does the rivers of waters. Not a mountain, however great, that he has not opened to make a way for the rivers of waters. Even admitting that these horses would of themselves have been inclined to go, would they ever of themselves been inclined to carry such messages as they sometimes did, indicated by the color of these horses? Now you will see by comparing these horses with the messages God sent at sundry times and in divers manners, what I understand by these horses, and he that sat on them, and the opening of the seals.

I would like to dwell much longer on these horses, the rider and the things seen, and especially the messages they carried, but I am somewhat tired myself, and fear I will tire you. I want to say, however, when the seventh seal was opened (Rev. viii. 1,) there was silence in heaven. Here the half time spoken of by Daniel had come; the two witnesses lie dead in the streets, both the Old and the New Testaments. That is what God had said by the prophets, and what he had said by Jesus Christ was a dead letter, so far as the public (in the streets) knew. But it was only for a half a time this state of things existed.

I think I had just as well stop, for you see, my sister, it would take a whole book to explain these things I have hinted at. Now that the seals are broken and the book opened it is given unto us to know the things that were before written. Both the Old and the New Testament is an open book to them to whom it is given.

May the sweet consolation of the promises of our God rest and abide with you.

Your brother, I hope,

E. V. WHITE.

NEAR LEXINGTON, Ky., Dec., 1857.

MY DEAR SISTER:—Your very kind and appreciated letter of the 4th instant was duly received, and but for engagements rather pressing upon me should have met an earlier response. So far from upbraiding you for the liberty taken in asking my views of the text quoted, I am exceedingly gratified when I find the children of God inquiring for the truth, as designed by the inspired writers of the holy Scriptures. It is to me evidence of a healthy state of mind in matters of the last moment to us, while in this wilderness of sin and sorrow. How much more rational for christians to be employed in searching the mind of the dear Redeemer, as declared in the record God has given of his Son, than in descanting on the faults of their brethren, or upbraiding the unregenerate for their unbelief.

The text to which you invite my attention is found in Ephesians i. 12: "That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ." The following two verses will be found in close and inseparable connection with the one you have quoted, and make the solution of it less difficult. Those verses, being part of

the paragraph, read as follows: "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." You will not forget that when the Savior delivered the commission to his apostles, he expressly commanded them to "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." The apostles of the Lamb were all Jews, and received their commission to preach directly from the Redeemer. They were limited in their first ministry to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel;" in other words, to the Jews, who were nationally God's chosen people. Nor was the commission enlarged until Christ had by his obedience, suffering and death, broken down the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles. After his resurrection he enlarged the field of their labors; hence, "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world. Amen." Although the Savior was so explicit in the commission, and although, as we might suppose, the language of the commission is so clear and unmistakable, yet we find it was not without a miracle being wrought; the prejudices of the apostles against the Gentiles were so far broken down as that they became convinced that Gentiles as well as Jews were made participants in the mediatorial work of the Lord Jesus. Hence, "Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." Read on including the forty-third verse of the tenth chapter of Acts, "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision [Jews] which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost: for they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord."—Acts x. 44–48. Hence Peter's former conclusion, that the Gentiles were common or unclean, and consequently excluded from gospel privileges and ordinances, was corrected, and he could now join Paul, in the revelation made to him, "That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel." Allow me to invite your attention to the following: Acts xi. 1–16, and then hear Peter, "Forasmuch then as God gave them [the Gentiles] the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I, that I could withstand God? When they [the apostles and brethren, who belonged to the circumcision, or Jewish family,] heard these things they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." The following verse shows conclusively that the apostles, up to this time, preached

"the word to none but unto the Jews only." Allow me to call your attention further, to Acts xiii. 45–47, when the following occurs, "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed." From all which it is most palpably manifest that Jewish believers trusted in Christ before the gospel was sent to the Gentiles; and I had formerly believed that the correct rendering of the text would be as follows: That we Jews who first trusted in Christ, should be to the praise of his glory in whom also ye (Gentiles) trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. The apostles and early christians trusted in Christ before the Gentiles to whom the apostle was writing, yet I have some doubt whether it is what the apostle designed.

On a close examination of the chapter, with the grammatical construction of the language used, I am led to doubt whether by the term "who," the apostle did not mean the "God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," as brought to view in the fourth verse of the chapter.

It is worthy of remark, that the apostle does not associate with himself, as writer of the letter to the church at Ephesus, any one. "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ," in the singular number, not apostles,in the plural. He addresses himself to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus. In the fourth verse he combines with himself, the saints and faithful, which constitute the us, in the plural: "Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us [who? Paul an apostle, the saints at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus] in him, before the founda- of the world, that we [the plural, who? Paul an apostle, the saints at Ephesus and the faithful in Christ Jesus] should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated *us* [who? Paul, the saints at Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus] unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Whose will? The answer is, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ. Who are we to understand the *he*, in the singular number, alludes to, but the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ?

If this be a correct criticism, it will follow necessarily that the text you have asked me to explain will read thus, "That *we* [Paul the apostle, the saints at Ephesus and the faithful in Christ Jesus] should be to the praise of *his* [the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ] glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye [the saints at Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus] also trusted;" &c., "in whom also, after that ye believed ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our [who? Paul the apostle, the saints at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus] inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his [the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ] glory." All which I submit with a hope that you may find something to confirm or set aside your present opinion on the text.

With kindest regards to your mother and all friends, I subscribe myself most truly, your friend and brother,

THOMAS. P. DUDLEY.

[IN looking over some old manuscript we found the above good letter, written by the late Elder Thomas P. Dudley, which we think will be of interest to our readers.—ED.]

APPIN, Ont., August 28, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK:—Dear brother in the afflictions of this life, and may I hope, in the faith and patience of the children of God. But O, as I write the words "children of God, I must say I fear the evidence of my being among that blessed number seems weak and faint, and I can only say my hope of such being my lot is so faint and small that I often fear what the end will be, but like one of old I hope I can say, Though I am faint, yet I am still pursuing, and am not left entirely to despair.

Your last letter was received in due course of time, and read with pleasant satisfaction to both self and wife; she always expresses much satisfaction, if not comfort, in your letters. It should have been answered long ago, but how can one write when the heart is cold, dead and barren in spiritual things? I love to write when my heart is full of love and fellowship for the people of God and for the truth of God, but I have felt so destitute of these things for such a long time, and so full of every evil principle of darkness, that I often wonder that the feeble spark of life is not completely quenched. The Savior when talking to the woman of Samaria was asked the question by her, Whence hast thou this water, for the well is deep and thou hast nothing to draw with? O how expressive of my condition. The well of joy, of hope, of salvation and of fellowship is deep, and I have nothing with which I can draw any of these things into my heart; I am weak and powerless and full of everything that is evil, and not one feature in my whole makeup to merit a single favor from a holy God. Nothing but a wild waste of desolate desert on every hand, so that I feel to say, My tongue faileth for thirst, and I dwell in a dry, parched land; and how can one in such a condition, and amid all this desolation and isolation of soul, write anything pleasant, or cheering, or comforting? Yet these very things, I find, are written about, concerning and by the children of God in all ages of the world, and I suppose will be to the end of time, for the inheritance that Jesus promised to his followers as long as time shall last, is tribulation, and sorrow, and persecution, and affliction. We are further commanded to beware when all men speak well of us, for such was the case of the false prophets of old. But O how my flesh cries out against the daily crucifying of this body of sin and death; and on the other hand, I do hope my spirit groans and cries out under the terrible sinful thoughts and propensities of this old, carnal, hateful and desperately wicked heart of mine. Surely I am ground between the upper and nether millstones, and it is truly a warfare of a deadly nature, and so often do I fear that I shall fall in the conflict and go down to eternal misery and destruction; but like the burning bush that the Lord revealed to Moses, that was not consumed, so I am not entirely consumed; still a faint hope lingers down deep in the recesses of my heart, and may I not hope it is eternal life? if so it can never die. There are many people who believe that one may be a child af God one day and not be a

child the next. How impossible such a conclusion naturally, and why then spiritually? And so one cannot cease to be a child because of disobedience, neither can eternal life die, or if any life can die, it only proves it is not eternal, and Jesus said he gives unto his children eternal life and they shall never die. The important question with me is, Have I eternal life? If so, all will be well with me in the end; but between now and the end it often seems that I shall sink beneath the load of this body of sin and death.

Elder Curry preached to-day concerning the poor widow and the unjust judge, and spoke of the elect crying unto God day and night, and though not comforted as I have been many times in the past, yet I could not help but acknowledge in my heart that I knew what the crying day and night meant, and I hope I do cry from a sense of the weight of sin and iniquity that I feel in this evil heart of mine, but, dear brother Chick, it is a great mystery, as well as a seeming contradiction to me how it is that I profess to hate evil, and every moment of my life seems filled with it, and I cannot keep away from it. How very unaccountable such an experience is, and the wonder is that I do not give up all hope; and here comes in the experience of the apostle, who says, The good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I hate, that I do. O blessed words to me, for it is my daily experience. It seems so strange that I can only write of my own feelings, instead of something of more general interest, but such is my selfish nature, I did not intend to write in this way.

We will expect you to our meeting in Lobo the first Sunday in October. I hope to see you then, though I only expect to be at the meeting on Sunday.

The Master has commanded to seek first the kingdom of God, &c., but alas, with me it seems to be the world first, and if there is leisure time, then I can attend to the things of the kingdom. Is it any wonder that want and famine is my lot in spiritual things? I profess to love God, his truth and his people, but where is the evidence? Do I show forth the praises of him I profess to love, or am I a good soldier of Jesus Christ? How dare I say, as did the apostle, "I have fought a good fight," &c., when I have been a base deserter, or if not a deserter, at least a shirker of duty? But while I realize all this, yet I also realize that I can do nothing only as grace is given me, and that of myself I can do nothing.

Dear brother Chick, I feel I must stop writing this selfish way, and hope you will forgive my weakness and inability.

I have only heard twice with comfort all summer, and that was Elder Scott, at the June quarterly meeting, yet it is the same truth that is preached every time. I think of the Scripture that says, "Whom shall he teach knowledge?" &c., and so I am taught my perfect weakness and helplessness to do anything to change my condition, or attain to a state of comfort, or happiness, or a knowledge of an interest in the salvation that is in Jesus. We walk by faith, and not by sight; and faith is the gift of God, and not attained to by works. And now as I lay aside my pen I feel that I have written very unsatisfactorily, and this, too, is necessary for the crushing of my pride and humbling me, but it seems the more I am crushed the more my proud heart rebels, but the Lord will do his will concerning me as well as all his creatures, and I must bow to that will.

I will not further try your patience. Hoping to see you face to face before

long, with kind regards from Mrs. Scates and myself, I remain your unworthy brother, R. SCATES.

KANSAS, Ill., Sept. 15, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —Though feeble and trembling, I have a desire to write for the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

My wife and I do much enjoy reading the comforting truth as set forth in the editorials, and also by the correspondents of the SIGNS. When we go to some of the Baptist meetings near here, we so often hear means and other conditionalisms set forth, that we return home much discouraged; but not so when we have read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

In a few days, if I live, I will be eighty-one years old, and since my first recollection of spiritual matters, the SIGNS has constantly contended for the gospel truth. If there is any salvation for me, either in time or for eternity, it must be wholly of grace; I have so fully and completely been shown that "in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing." No indeed, but I find that the good that I would I do not, and the evil that I would not that do I.

I was reading this morning in Paul's letter to the Romans, and came to where he asks the question, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" &c., when in answer he said, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." It gave me great comfort, as I had been fearing the wicked one had separated me from the love of God. I know so far as I am concerned, my love is often very weak, if indeed not all gone, but O what a blessed thing it is that it is not man's love, but "the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus." This dear Jesus has said to his disciples, "Because I live, ye shall live also." Then it does not depend upon poor, feeble mortals to keep themselves, but the chosen of God are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." Yes, and the apostle said, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his (God's) own purpose and grace, given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. If it were not for the unity of Christ and his people, as taught in the Bible, it seems that sometimes such weak creatures as I am would surely give up in despair. The poet has said:

"Amidst ten thousand dangers,
Which everywhere abound,
The pilgrims and the strangers
Alone secure are found."

Peter, when he came down out of the ship to walk on the water to meet the Savior, found these words true. How secure when Jesus took his hand and prevented his sinking. Cowper said in one of his poems:

"When darkness long has veiled my mind,
And smiling day once more appears,
Then, my Redeemer, then I find
The folly of my doubts and fears."

May it be God's will to so lead me the few remaining days I stay on earth, that I may trust him for all things, and may he lead us all in straight paths, is my prayer. JAMES M. TRUE.

[WE desire to add a few words to the above testimony from our dear, aged brother True. We recall meeting with him more than thirty-five years ago, at the funeral service of sister Towles, in Washington, D. C., and a few years since it was our privilege to meet him and his companion here at Hopewell. We have

long read the words which his pen has indited with interest and true comfort and satisfaction, as has been the case with very many others. It is good to receive such testimonies from the aged pilgrims and servants. They have borne the burden and heat of the day, and still in old age bear fruit to the glory of God. Especially do we prize the words of our brother regarding the comfort which the SIGNS brings to him. We pray that it may ever contain the certain sound of the gospel of grace, and grace only; we know that nothing less than this can do any poor sinner good. Conditional salvation is of the flesh, and to the praise of the flesh, and not of God. Let us always hold forth the doctrine that exalts the work of God, and not of man. May the blessed Lord be with and sustain our brother in his old age; we do not doubt that it will be so.—ED.]

BORN OF WATER AND THE SPIRIT.

"JESUS answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."—John iii. 5.

A friend in Canada who desires spiritual light, asks me to write soon on this text for the SIGNS, especially what it is to be "born of water."

Jesus is the life and the true light. O may he give us all the light of life, that we may know the truth as it is in him.

He first said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus asked, "How can a man be born when he is old?" Jesus answers and tells how, in the words of the text. A man (any one of the race of man) must thus be born again, or he cannot see and enter into the kingdom of God. For God is a Spirit, and his kingdom is spiritual. His Son says, "My kingdom is not of this world." But man, as born of the flesh, is of this world. This world is distinct from "the world to come." A man is born into this world, this is a natural birth and is of the flesh; so a man is born into the kingdom of God when he is born again. This last birth is spiritual, and is of the Spirit. So Jesus further explains and defines these two births, saying, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Thus our Lord plainly teaches that there are two births, and only two; and that a man is born first, and he is born again. A man who is born of the flesh has natural life, ("the breath of life,") and he sees and enters into the world. So also, a man who is born again, born of water and the Spirit, has spiritual life, life itself, and he sees and enters into the kingdom of God. As born again, the life of Jesus is made manifest in his mortal flesh. As born of the flesh, man is one with Adam and is earthly; and as born of the Spirit, man is one with Jesus and is heavenly.

"Born of water," refers to the water of life, pure and holy, the life of Jesus, which he gives in the birth of the Spirit.

"The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life," is the blessed word of our Lord. "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." The letter of our inquiring friend shows me that he thus thirsts. Again Jesus says, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." Christ is the holy fountain of life, he is the well of salvation, he gives eternal life to as many as the Father gave him. When he gives it to a man, that one is then "born of water and of the Spirit." (The last "of" is a supplied word, and so marked in italics.) Born of water and the Spirit are one, and cannot be separated. A man thus born, is passed from death unto life,

and he is a new creature in Christ, and is in the kingdom of God. This one is saved by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. "And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her; and the Highest himself shall establish her."—Psalms lxxxvii. 5. O how blessed the man who is born in Zion, the holy city of our God. "For there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."

D. BARTLEY.

JUNE 14, 1904.

FOREST HILL, Md., Oct. 8, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I know, and believe my friends who know me best are aware of the fact, that I have no gift at all as a writer, and it is but seldom that I inflict upon you any of my poor productions. Just this once however, I desire to ask for a little space in your columns, in order that I may thank my many dear friends who remembered me so kindly on my birthday, October 5th, 1904. I received in all eighty-eight letters, all containing the most kindly expressions of christian love and fellowship, which I appreciated more than I can express. Besides the letters, on the morning of the 5th about sixty of my friends came in a body to my home, all carrying well filled baskets. This was all a complete surprise to me. My family had been let into the secret, but I knew nothing of it until they drove up to my door.

Among the letters were a number from the various churches. These were read aloud by Elder Rowe, who was one of our guests. After this we partook of a bounteous dinner, prepared by the ladies of the company. The day was a most enjoyable one to me, one that I shall never forget while memory lasts. I seem not yet to be out from a sort of vision which rested upon me all that day. I feel that I cannot call in question the sincerity and faithfulness of those who have expressed themselves so favorably in my behalf. If I could only see in myself the qualifications to fill the high office to which I am appointed, I think I should be a happy man; still I am willing to serve with such ability as the Lord has given. I am not, however, without some evidences by the way that the hand of the Lord has directed me in my course in the ministry, and that I am where I ought to be.

I have had substantial brethren and friends here all these forty-seven years, who have borne up my hands in my weakness. Now again, I want to say to those dear friends everywhere who remembered me so kindly on the fifth of October, either by their loving letters or by their presence, that I do most sincerely thank you for your words of love and encouragement, as well as for the pecuniary aid which you have bestowed upon me. I feel altogether unworthy of so much kindness, and feel, too, that this is a very feeble return to make for it, but it seems the best I can do.

I have taken this plan to reach you all, as I presume all are readers of the SIGNS. The letters, which were read with so much interest, will be preserved to be read in the future by myself perhaps, and by others after me.

I am your brother in Christ,

WM. GRAFTON.

PATASKALA, Ohio, June 1, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR:—Something over a year ago I was taken ill and despaired of ever recovering; the Lord did not tell me if I was to live, but he graciously eased my mind about it all, so that I had no fears. When it began to appear that I

would get well again, I firmly resolved to devote more time to the reading of the Scriptures than I had ever done before, but alas, how frail I am, it was not long until I was as busy as ever in carnal things, the deceitfulness of riches, cares of this world and the lust of other things entered until the word was choked; when one day my promise came to me, with a desire to read the Scriptures, but try as I would, I could not read them. The Lord gave me a hunger for them, and then shut me up from them, and shut them out from me, and made me repent of my sins. O how poor and weak we are. I never have read the Bible as much as I used to think I would, I do not read it as much as I ought to. It is not because we have none, for we have a half dozen or more of different shapes and sizes about the house, and often I find one lying on my table, in a convenient place, put there by loving hands with hope that it will come in my way and will I read it; but no, I will reach over it for the miserable daily paper, and spend the whole evening reading it, until my soul is sick with every day's report of wrong and outrage with which this earth is filled. I am then too sleepy to read more, and with a sigh of regret at my depravity I retire, leaving the Bible unopened, but promising to read it tomorrow night, but it is the same thing over and over again, until I am so distressed I am ready to cry out in despair. O the blessed, pure and holy word of God, the only real truth in the world, neglected by one who professes to be a child of his. When I began to preach, years ago, I thought I would make the Scriptures my constant companion, and be thoroughly furnished by them, and well acquainted with them, until I would be noted for my knowledge of the Bible. But alas, I am fifty years old, and am ashamed of my ignorance of it, when I stand to speak in his name, I tremble, I am so unskillful in the use of the Scriptures. I am afraid of them, as if they were a two-edged sword, cutting two ways; the people must be ashamed of me. I know that if I were to read the Bible so that I could repeat every word of it in regular order, and am not elected, that would not elect me; but I want to read it. I know that if I would read it over every week of my life and am not a child of God, that would not make me one, and yet I want to read it, am hungering and thirsting for the sincere milk of it, it is a light to my feet, and a lamp to my path. Will I ever learn to do good? No, not until the leopard can change his spots, for I am accustomed to do evil. This is only another way the good Lord has of leading us to see and feel the need of the Holy Spirit to guide, uphold and sustain us in all our wanderings everywhere; it requires the assistance of divine grace to read his word, just as much as the power of God to make a world, for in him we live, move and have our being.

It has been impressed on my mind to write these thoughts for the SIGNS, I cannot get rid of them only in this way. God is able to save by many or few. If he is to bless some one by giving this poor sinner a message for them, to him be all the glory.

FRANK McGLADE.

ACTON, Texas, August 24, 1904.

EDITOR SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Once more through the tender mercies of our covenant-keeping God I am permitted to write a few lines to the household of faith, notwithstanding I feel my unfitness and unworthiness.

I have just returned from our Peace Valley Association. O how wonderful, to see the brethren and sisters greeting each other, manifesting the love of God shed abroad in their poor hearts, but when the time comes to take the parting hand, we see the tear stealing down the check, and the clasping of each other's hand with a tight grasp, not knowing whether we will ever meet in this world of sin, sorrow and afflictions again. Yet our hope entereth into that within the vail, whither Jesus our forerunner hath entered, who is at the right hand of God, making intercession for his dear children, according to the will of the Father. If we should never meet again here below, we will meet on the banks of sweet deliverance, where parting will be no more, where pain and sickness never come; the weary will be at rest, yes, that rest that remains for the people of God. The preaching by the brethren was wonderful, and in demonstration of the Spirit and power of God. O how good for brethren to dwell together in unity and love, and to hear the unsearchable riches of Jesus, who is the full and complete Savior of his people. He is their life, and he is their all and in all; he "saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us [his people] in Christ Jesus before the world began." O how wonderful it is to be blessed to believe in a finished salvation for all the elect family, but the denominations of the world, who are antichrist, are continually begging the people for money to help the Lord save souls. Brethren, these are perilous times, the wise and the prudent are teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, and would deceive, if it were possible, the very elect, but they are not to be deceived by those cunning and crafty fellows, for they are not their own keepers, they are kept by the mighty power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

I have been afflicted with complicated diseases for several years, was taken sick while at the association; started home on Sunday evening, reached home Monday noon with a high fever, and have been very poorly since. My desire is to be reconciled to the will of my Master; I want my will to be his will.

Now, brother Chick, publish this if you think it worth anything to the household of faith, if not, cast it aside.

I am yours in affliction and hope of immortality beyond the grave,

W. L. McPHERSON.

OXFORD, N. Y., Oct. 21, 1903.

SUSIE C. F. GUERNSEY—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I have long thought of writing you, and have as long delayed it, feeling incapable of saying anything that would be comforting, only to bemoan my sad condition, with a feeling sense of my exceedingly sinful, depraved, hard and rebellious heart, full of every unclean thing. It seemed that my case was hopeless; I feared I had never known the reality of divine things, but had been mistaken; I felt that I was the vilest creature living, and in reading the Bible found no comfort. I seemed to have sunk so low in deep waters, the waves had gone over my head, in the valley of the shadow of death, in the belly of hell, and the words, justice and judgment are the habitation of God's throne, seemed ringing in my ears. I seemed too sinful to raise my eyes to cry unto him, he seemed so far from me. It seemed I was shown the evil of my inmost heart in a peculiar way, I who had thought I had experienced a

Savior's love and forgiveness; it seemed I was not the same creature, and brooding over my sad and helpless condition I fell asleep, and was awakened with the words, He brought me up out of an horrible pit, and miry clay, and put my feet on a rock, and established my goings, and put a new song in my mouth. O what a change, I who had lain groaning in the silent watches of the night; but my dear Savior heard me and broke the bars of my prison house, and gave me the oil of joy for mourning, and beauty for ashes, and many other endearing assurances of his divine favor, until my poor heart seemed melted with love and thanksgiving and praise.

"The Lord can clear the darkest skies,
Can give us day for night;
Make drops of sacred sorrow rise
To rivers of delight."

To-day the ninety-eighth Psalm seem suited to my feelings. I feel that he has loved me with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness has he drawn me. The hymn 840 expresses my feelings.

I felt a desire to tell this, my great deliverance, to my brethren and sisters, the Lord's own peculiar people, that trust in him and have no confidence in the flesh. I feel that my time here is short, but my desire is that he will give me grace according to my day, that I may live soberly and walk humbly before him all the days of my appointed time, and to him be glory, honor and power, both now and forever. Amen.

Your sister, in hope of eternal life,
LUCINDA B. BREWSTER.

BURDETT, N. Y., August 14, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have often felt that I would like to tell you some of the Lord's dealings with me, and how I enjoy reading the letters and editorials in the SIGNS, but thought I could not write so as to be interesting to any one. It seems to me like this: some feel the gospel and the working of divine grace in the heart, and can express their feelings, while others feel and cannot tell their feelings. I weep for joy when I read, and love the brethren for their testimony; and it strengthens my belief that if God commences a good work in the heart, he will perform that work till the day of Jesus Christ. In every cloudy and dark day which I have to pass through there seems a silver lining for me, and I look up in hope, and am made to believe that to them that believe it is given to know the riches of his grace. He saved me, I hope, and called me out of Babylon with an holy calling, to suffer, that I might reign with him. But as some say, often it seems only a delusion. It makes me feel to ask, Has God commenced the work of grace in me? I believe that God speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. He brings his sons and daughters from afar, even from the ends of the earth, and they all praise him. I feel like one of the least of his little ones, and can say, His will be done. I desire to be a meek and lowly follower of my Savior, and to be grateful for what I am receiving.

Yours in hope,
NORMAN BROWN.

TO DISCONTINUE THE SALE OF BIBLES.

WE have only one self-pronouncing Bible left in stock, No. 8313, and only one Testament. These books will be sold at the usual price. For description and price see any SIGNS for 1903.

Owing to the advance in price of such books, and the few calls for them, we have decided not to handle them after these on hand are gone.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1904.

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EDITOR:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

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ROMANS XIV. 19.

"LET us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another."

These solemn words may be regarded as an entreaty by the apostle, or as an admonition, or as an expression of desire; they seem to include all three meanings. They are intended to stir up the pure minds of the church at Rome, and yet involve the feeling of dependence upon God, the giver of all good, without whose presence no one will ever feel any desire for these spiritual blessings, nor any striving toward them. The word "let," as used in the Scriptures, always involves desire, warning, admonition, and at the same time, a full sense of dependence upon God, through whom alone any one can follow after the things that make for peace.

We need do no more here than to briefly refer to the things of which the apostle is speaking, and which led him to write these words. He had said, "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations." By this it seems clear that the apostle did not mean receive him who does not receive the truth of Jesus and his salvation, or who denies that salvation is through the Lord Jesus, or who in any way rejects the doctrine held and taught by the inspired apostles, but receive him who is not fully informed regarding the liberty which is in Christ, and therefore regards days and seasons, and has scruples regarding the things which he may eat and drink. This seems clear, because the apostle goes right on to speak of these two things. No doubt the admonitions to the brethren concerning these two things especially, would also apply to other things which do not affect the doctrine of Christ. Paul admits that those who did eat, and those who did not, those who regarded the day, and those who regarded it not, were alike the children of God, and his brethren, and brethren to each other, and urges upon them that they so feel and act toward each other. He declares that they are mutually needful to each other, and that they should also be mutually helpful to each other. They all were the servants of Christ, and all of them loved God and sought his praise and glory; but some were weaker than others. The strong were those who had come to see clearly that in Christ Jesus all differences in days had been abolished, and that it did not matter what men did eat and drink, since all were clean. The weak were those who had scruples still, regarding these things, and were not risen above keeping days and abstaining from meats because of these scruples. He said, verse second, Another who is weak eateth herbs, while one believeth that he may eat all things. This last one is strong in the apostle's view. The strong must however bear with the infirmities of the weak. No one must please himself in these matters. "Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not." That is, let not that one say within himself, I am wiser than my brother, and be puffed up

with a sense of superiority. What has he that he did not receive? On the other hand, "Let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth." This he would be prone to do, saying, This man is not so strict as I; he does not regard the commandments of God so carefully as I do; he is not therefore so good a man as I am. To both classes Paul says, God has received both of you, why then reject each other, art thou holier than God?

Also let each remember that his brother, as well as himself, stands or falls to God as the servant of God. Has God made one servant the judge of another? Still further, Paul says that each one ought to remember that the other does what he does with an eye to the glory of God. He that eats, eats to the glory of God, and he that eateth not, does so to the glory of God. The strong, by his eating all things, declares his faith, that in Jesus all things are made clean for the use of man, and that the law of ceremonies which forbade the eating of certain things has been fulfilled in Christ, so that there is no more need of the type being kept up; while on the other hand, the weak brother has not come to see all this as yet, and so with equal desire to glorify God, he abstains from eating these things still. Among Gentile believers, him that is strong knows that though meat may have been offered to idols it is not thereby rendered vile or unfit for use, and so he in all good conscience eats of it; and this, let us remember, is true, as Paul here testifies. But the weak brother fears still to eat of it, lest he thereby seems to pay respect to idols, and so may dishonor God. Therefore, to the glory of God, he does not eat; his motive is the glory of God. If the motive of him who eats, and of him who does not eat, of him who regards the day, and of him who does not regard the day, be alike to glorify God and exalt the blessed name of the Redeemer, then surely they ought to bear with each other, and love each other as true disciples, equally earnest in their desire to exalt the name of Jesus, and thus honor the word and work of God. No matter how weak in the faith a brother may be, no matter how many questions may arise in his mind, no matter how many hesitancies may appear in his life because of his weak understanding of the liberty which is in Christ, if he shows that he loves God and the Lord Jesus Christ he is to be loved by all who love God, and to be borne with by all.

Now in the text quoted at the first, some things plainly appear in connection with these thoughts. First, Paul places himself right along with his brethren at Rome in the first clause of the text: "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." He with them desired that he might thus strive to follow these things. Is it not well to mark the example of the apostle in this matter? Some things are plain in the course followed by Paul. He did not for a moment conceal any truth. Right here, where he especially exhorts to that which tends toward peace, he most clearly announced the truth. Those who did not eat, and those who regarded days, were weak, the others were strong. The day was nothing, and the meat was nothing in his view. Days under the gospel were abolished, and all meats were free to all through Christ and his work. This he did not conceal, but insisted upon it. Let all the strong insist upon the truth still. There was nothing in following the things that make for peace that would involve any concealment of truth;

there is nothing in making known everywhere the truth that can possibly work against peace, such peace as the apostle urges upon his brethren.

Second, Paul did not think it needful to take back any portion of that truth which he had always taught among them. Neither did he say to his brethren, Yield any portion of the truth that has made you free in your following after the things which make for peace. Preach and teach all that belongs to the liberty which Christ has brought to you. In this chapter, and in the connection, Paul withholds nothing for fear that he shall wound the weak or drive them away. He says, Bear with each other, and especially the strong (that is, those who do not regard the days, and who do eat all meats) must bear with the weak, but still bear clear and undeviating testimony to the truth. To do otherwise would be to confirm the weak in their weakness, and soon the whole church, the strong as well as the weak, would become weak together, and the faith of Christ would be smothered out of sight in the church, which is to be its pillar and ground.

Third, Paul did not say, Bear with him who fights against the faith, but bear with him that is weak in the faith, and receive him. We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, but not the assaults of opposers of the truth. Had Paul said any such thing his teaching would have contradicted his practice. He at all times opposed all untruth boldly. He once even withstood Peter to his face, because he was to be blamed, and then afterwards wrote to one of the churches about it. Paul taught and acted as did John who said, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." If the truth in Christ is assailed, then we ought to speak out boldly in its defense. Let our testimony be clear at all times regarding the truth.

Again, Paul did not contend for the truth with any anger or malice against men who opposed the truth, or toward his brethren who were weak in the understanding of the faith; there was no call for anger or ill-will on his part, there is none on our part. He did not hasten to say, Reject all such as are weak, but he said, Bear with them. He had no word of reproach for the weak in the chapter under consideration, but rather, words of warm commendation for their desire to glorify God, though it was mistakenly, as regarded the days and the meats. He plainly told them that they were weak in the faith, but he did not do this superciliously, or arrogantly, or angrily, but with earnestness, and loving-kindness, and meekness, and fear, as in the sight of God. He spoke as a faithful watchman who desired to be clear of the blood of all men, and so was bound to warn them when he saw the danger approaching.

Fourth, Paul does not include in this exhortation to follow the things that make for peace, forbearance toward opposition to the great principles of the faith. To stand by them, to proclaim them faithfully, will not make peace, but warfare. And with regard to these things Jesus himself came to send not peace, but a sword, so that parents should be against children, husbands against wives, brothers against sisters, and neighbors against neighbors, and a man's foes should be they of his own household. He does not say in the beginning of the chapter that he who has no understanding of salvation by grace, or who questions elec-

tion, a finished atonement, effectual calling and final perseverance, is to be received. It is not concerning these things that he is here speaking, and in all his writings he never says such things as are said in this chapter with regard to these cardinal principles of truth. He that is a heretic after the first and second admonition is to be rejected, not received. The heretic is he that denies Christ and the doctrine of Christ; but these things that pertain to ceremonials do not come under this head. Brethren may be much in ignorance concerning these things, and yet hold the faith of salvation in Christ, yet even here there is to be no doubtful disputation in the matter. That is, no contention against the truth of freedom in Christ from all these things is to be allowed; that would not make for peace. If the brother is weak concerning meats and days, let him quietly go on his way; let him do as his understanding leads him to do, but do not receive him if he be disposed to be contentious about these matters. Let him follow the things which make for peace, as well as the strong. On the other hand, the strong must not seek to override his weak conscience, or to dictate to him what he shall or shall not do in these matters. He is God's servant, and to God he stands or falls. Rather let each one be helpful, by showing brotherly love and kindness. The weak cannot be made strong by coldness and fault-finding, but they may come to see the truth more clearly as it is presented in love and tenderness to them, and as their brethren give them heartily the hand of fellowship.

Following the things which make for peace and whereby one may edify another, therefore, means first, a faithful presentation of the truth, and then a patient forbearance with each other in the things that are not a denial of the truth, in themselves considered. Paul has set the example both in this fourteenth chapter of Romans, and also in the epistle to the Galatians. There he faithfully warned his brethren as regarded their departure into legality, and yet said not one word about rejecting them from the fellowship of the church. Paul in that epistle certainly sets forth the things which do make for peace, true peace, and by his teaching there the brethren had set before them that which would edify the spiritual. Let it be remembered by all, that to edify is to build up. What a blessing it is to have faithful teachers whose teaching tends to a growth in understanding and knowledge of the truth; this is edification.

All the children of God love to see peace, when led by the holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of peace. When Jesus, the Son of peace, dwells in their hearts, then they will seek peace, and strive to avoid all confusion. This they will do after the example of the Master himself. Peace with him did not consist in avoiding the giving of offense, by keeping back the truth; he spoke it always boldly. If there be any peace, it will always be found in the truth, and not outside of it. It is vain to urge peace when the things which make for peace are wanting. The first essential to true peace is love of the truth in the heart. It is truly a shameful thing when brethren who do love the great principles of grace, are so given up to the flesh that they fall out about any trivial thing which may occur in their association with each other, or about some customs in the churches when those customs do not deny the Lord Jesus Christ. Among ourselves, in these modern days in different sections customs differ much. Customs as regards receiv-

ing members, the order of worship, the frequency of the administration of the supper, the order pursued in the transaction of business, and many other things, differ widely among those who yet are one in the doctrine of grace. How foolish, how contrary to God's word and the Spirit of Christ it is to make such things bones of contention. But when any great principle of the doctrine of God our Savior is assailed, the matter is altogether different. Then loyalty to the God of salvation demands that there shall be no compromise, no concealment of the truth, no yielding of its defense, and no receiving those who bring another doctrine, or bidding it God speed. The things which make for peace do not involve any yielding of the truth. Contend for it, but yet with gentleness and patience is the rule given in the word of God.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, Sept. 9th, 10th and 11th, 1904, unto the associations, meetings and churches with whom she corresponds, grace be to you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In writing this our annual letter to you, we do not propose to try to propound or elucidate any particular portion or text of Scripture, but we desire to call your pure minds to remembrance of the work of Jesus in the salvation of sinners. There is no theme that is nearer or dearer to those in whose hearts God hath shined to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Their feelings are in fellowship with David, whom God had chosen and declared that he was a man after his own heart, and the language of the heart of the poor and needy sinner cries out, as did the psalmist, saying, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."

Dear brethren, what a wonderful being is the Savior of sinners. Wonderful is one of the names by which the Savior of sinners is revealed in the heart of his elect. He is not only wonderful to those that know the joyful sound, he is also their Counselor, to them he is the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of peace, and the poor, tried and needy soul rejoices that the government is upon his shoulder, and that it does not in any way, nor by any means, depend upon them to establish or maintain it. The government shall be upon the shoulder of this wonderful Child and Son, that is born and given unto them. We do not doubt that this child is the same that was testified of by the angel of the Lord that came upon the shepherds that were abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night, as it is written in Luke ii. 9–11: "And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." He is that wonderful being that came into the world to save sinners, and of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace; and, my brethren, we might ask, What is there that is needful for the salvation of sinners that they do not receive of the fullness of Jesus? We have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of

God, "and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." Jesus died for his people while they were yet sinners, "being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," all the waves and the billows of God's wrath passed over him, "he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth," "he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed;" "by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." The foregoing is the work that Jesus has wrought for the salvation of poor and helpless sinners, and the following are the marks by which these needy sinners shall be known: they are poor in spirit; they are mourners; they are meek; they hunger and thirst after righteousness; they are merciful; they are pure in heart; they are peacemakers; they are persecuted for righteousness' sake; men revile and persecute them, and say all manner of evil against them falsely for Jesus' sake. Brethren, do we bear these marks? If we do, we rejoice and are exceeding glad, knowing that our reward is not in this world, but it is in that kingdom where the Prince of peace reigns. If we do not bear any of these marks, it is certain that we are not entitled to the blessing that is coupled with them, because we cannot receive the one without being partaker of the other. These peculiar characteristics are found only in God's people; they compose the church of Christ; they are his body, and members in particular; they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. As it is written "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." These we believe are what compose the church, the house that Jesus built upon the rock, and declared that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. We do not wonder that all that are built upon this rock should exclaim as the apostle did and challenge the world, saying, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" God has declared by the mouth of Isaiah, saying, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Christ "of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." This wonderful being is our Redeemer; he is our Life and Light and Joy; he is our Passover, and he is our High Priest; "the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." He came into the world to do the will of his Father, and Paul says, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," and they include all that his Father gave him, and he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him. There is none other name given by which those that are heavy laden and weary must come unto God but the name of this wonderful Child, this Son that is given, this Counselor, the

mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace. What more shall we say concerning the salvation of the poor, needy, weary and heavy laden? My dear brethren, we know of no better words to write you than the words of the apostle of our Lord and Christ that are recorded in the last two verses in the eighth chapter of Romans; he says, "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." This is a wonderful work, this work of Jesus. He said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish the work;" and when that wonderful and mighty Being bowed his head and gave up the ghost, he said, "It is finished," he had satisfied all the demands of God's holy law, he was then accepted with God, and God has exalted him above all principality and power, and hath "given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." So let it be.

ZACHEUS M. BEAL, Moderator.
JAMES E. HUBBARD, Clerk.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription s paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904, &c.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Mt. Zion Association, now in session with Sardis-Bethlehem Church, Henry Co., Mo., Sept. 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1904, to those with whom we correspond, greeting.

DEAR SAINTS:—Through the riches of God's all-abounding grace our lives have been spared through another year, for which we feel under renewed obligations to praise the great head of the church, and pray him to be our leader through the many trials that await us in our march through this dreary world. We feel to praise the Lord because of the coming of your messengers, who come to us bearing the glad tidings of salvation.

Dear brethren, we earnestly desire a continuance of your correspondence, and hope you together with your little sister may by faith look to him from whom all help must come, that we may live in honor to the cause that is clear to us. Come again, dear brethren, and may the Lord be with you and us until we meet again. Fare ye well.

M. R. AMICK, Moderator.
J. W. RUSSELL, Clerk.

The Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Baptists, now in session with the church at Beech Creek, Shelby County, Kentucky, on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th days of September, 1904, to the several associations with whom she corresponds, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is with joy we greet you with this our annual epistle of correspondence. The letters from the churches composing our body indicate that peace and harmony and sweet fellowship abound throughout our bodies and in our midsts, for which we give thanks unto the Lord our God, who is

the author of peace and not of confusion.

Dear brethren, our hearts have been made glad by the coming of your messengers and messages of love. We desire a continuance of the same. The ministers sent to us by the Holy Ghost are proclaiming nothing among us save Jesus Christ and him crucified, the way, the truth and the life, for which we feel thankful to the giver of every good and perfect gift.

The next session of our association, the Lord willing, will be held with the Cane Run Church, at Turners Station, Henry County, Kentucky, commencing at 10 o'clock a. m., on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1905, when and where we hope to see your messengers and hear from you again. Till then farewell.

C. F. DUDLEY, Moderator.
G. R. TURNER, Clerk.
L. K. SMITH, Assistant Clerk.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, in Bowdoinham, Maine, September 9th, 10th and 11th, 1904.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—By the eternal goodness and mercy of that God who has declared the end from the beginning we have been gathered together in association, according to former appointment, and to mingle our prayers and praises to him who hath saved us and called us according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Our meeting has been pleasant and harmonious, and we hope also that we have profited in meeting together. Your messengers and messages we have gladly welcomed, and we earnestly desire and fervently hope for a continuance of your correspondence with us.

Our next association, the Lord willing, will be held with the Whitefield Church, in Whitefield, Maine, commencing on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1905, and continuing three days, when and where we hope to be remembered by you, and welcome your messengers again to mingle their praises and prayers with us.

ZACHEUS M. BEAL, Moderator.
JAMES E. HUBBARD, Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

SISTER S. J. Gainer has changed her address from Santa Rosa, Cal., to Sebastopol, R. F. D. No. 2, Sonoma Co., Cal.

ORDINATION.

PURSUANT to a call of the Old School Baptist Church at Cow Marsh, Kent Co., Delaware, for the ordination of brother Benjamin E. Cubbage, a member of said church, to the full work of the gospel ministry, a council composed of the following brethren met:

Cow Marsh—Elder W. W. Meredith, pastor, deacons Benjamin C. Cubbage, John C. Gruell, Jacob B. Meredith, James Cubbage, Samuel T. Cubbage, Willard Cubbage, brethren Wm. W. Meredith, Ezekiel Meredith, Thomas L. Cooper, Alexander C. Meredith.

Harford—Elder William Grafton.

Southampton—Elder Silas H. Durand.

Little Creek—Elder A. B. Francis, brother Thomas J. Hastings.

Salem—Brother Jerome Frasher.

Bryn Zion—Elder W. W. Meredith, deacon David Cloud.

London Tract—Elder A. B. Francis.

Rock Springs—Elder Wm. Grafton.

The council organized by the choice of Elder W. W. Meredith, Moderator, and Elder A. B. Francis, Clerk.

The candidate, brother Benjamin E. Cubbage, was presented to the council by the pastor, in behalf of the church.

By request of the council he gave a relation of his christian experience and call to the ministry, which being entirely satisfactory to the council it was unanimously agreed to proceed with the ordination to-morrow.

Sunday, Sept. 25, 1904.

In accordance with the decision of the council, the ordination was proceeded with in the following order:

Ordination sermon by Elder A. B. Francis, from Matthew xxviii. 19, 20.

Laying on of hands of the presbytery, composed of Elders Wm. Grafton, Silas H. Durand, W. W. Meredith and A. B. Francis.

Ordination prayer by Elder Silas H. Durand.

Charge by Elder Wm. Grafton.

Right hand of fellowship by Elder W. W. Meredith.

Closed by singing hymn No. 613, and benediction by the candidate.

This young brother manifested to the satisfaction of those who have heard him that the Lord has called him and set him for the defense of the gospel; is of good report of them that are without, of exemplary deportment, and we bespeak for him a kindly reception and favorable consideration of those among whom in the providence of God he may be thrown.

W. W. MEREDITH, Moderator.

A. B. FRANCIS, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at the home of the bride, Sept. 14th, 1904, William Corcoran, of Rome, N. Y., and Miss Abbie Collard, of Winterton, N. Y.

By the same, Oct. 5th, 1904, at the home of the bride, in Jersey City, N. J., John M. H. Coleman and Miss Hattie E. Dolaway.

By the same, Oct. 5th, 1904, at New Vernon, N. Y., Edwin H. Greenleaf and Miss Jessie P. Graham, both of Orange Co., N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon Hudson D. Plummer departed this life at his late residence in Laurel, Del., July 28th, 1904, at the age of 72 years, 5 months and 23 days. He was married to Miranda Hitchens July 12th, 1854, and they had celebrated their golden wedding just sixteen days before his death. He with his wife was baptized by Elder Thomas Waters, in September, 1862, in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Broad Creek, Sussex Co., Del., of which church he continued a faithful and useful member until transferred from the church militant to the church triumphant. He served the church in the capacity of deacon and clerk for many years with great acceptability. In truth he was a very faithful man in everything that was required of him, constantly manifesting his love for his divine Master in ministering to the necessities of the brethren. He leaves a widow and seven children, five daughters and two sons, with a number of grandchildren, besides the church, to mourn, but not without hope, for we believe that when Christ shall appear, he will also appear with him in glory.

ALSO,

JULY 23rd, 1904, at her residence near Black Rock, Baltimore Co., Md., **Mrs. Eleanor Cole,** relict of the late S. Howard Cole. She was not a member of the visible church, but we have no doubt was an experienced person, and by divine grace prepared for the change from this to a better, brighter world on high. She was a devoted wife, and conscientiously sought to fulfill the arduous duties of step-mother to the five children of her husband's by a former wife; she never had children of her own. She was the daughter of Samuel and Urith Shaul, who were in the organization and constitution of the church at Black Rock, in 1828, and were largely interested in and assisted in the building of the substantial stone meeting-house at that place. Mrs. Cole leaves two sisters, five step-children, all grown up, (of whom the present wife of the writer is one) quite a number of nieces and nephews, and numerous other relatives and friends, who all greatly respected her, but they have hope in her departure from this world of sin and sorrow.

The writer tried to minister the consolations of the word to the bereaved ones in both the above cases.

ALSO,

THE little grandson of the writer, **Hoyt Barton Francis,** of congestion of the brain, August 31st, 1904, aged eleven weeks. His bereaved parents, Ernest and Marian Francis, have our sincere sympathy in this great bereavement in the loss of their firstborn. May the Lord comfort the hearts of all the mourning ones.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., Sept. 30, 1904.

BROTHER **J. G. Farmer** entered into rest May 15th, 1904, at the home of David Clark, his father-in-law, Clay Village, Ky. He was the youngest child of Silas C. and Huldah Farmer, born May 12th, 1843, near Farmdale, Ky. He had been a patient sufferer for a number of years, having had a severe sunstroke, shocking his system; then his stomach and pulmonary organs were attacked in chronic form, and though he had the patient and loving care of his devoted wife and friends, and the best of medical skill, he had to yield his mortal life to the will and power of his God who gave it. He was twice married; his first wife, Miss Edna Clark, was a daughter of Willet and Lizzie Clark, to whom he was married Nov. 19th, 1873; she departed this life July 10th, 1896. He was again married, to Miss Ida C. Clark, daughter of David and Jude Clark, June 28th, 1900, she being a double cousin of his first wife, to whom was born one son, Joseph Benedict, June 28th, 1901, and what a trial of his faith it must have been, knowing he must go away and leave him without an earthly father's care. Brother Farmer and his first wife were Old School Baptists, uniting with the church at Little Flock at the same time, and were baptized by Elder P. G. Lester, Dec. 5th, 1894, and were consistent, meek, exemplary and faithful followers of their Lord and Master, lovely, dutiful, humble members of their

church, and held the sweet fellowship of the entire brotherhood where known. Brother Farmer was during all his years an affectionate brother, a trusted companion, a conscientious, noble gentleman, a true neighbor, upright, honest citizen, a true, devoted husband, and in all these varied relations modest, retiring and charitable. Brother Farmer was a confederate veteran, belonging to the command of Gen. John H. Morgan, of calvary fame, making a true soldier; being captured he remained a prisoner for a time at Chicago, Ill. Brother Farmer had a long and severe conflict under the law; his reasoning powers and natural determination to succeed by the law caused days and nights of terrible struggle. He told the writer his whole vessel and armor of self-righteousness were, as it were, torn into shreds, and he only left amid the ocean of life, holding on to his little hope as an anchor to his soul, sure and steadfast, entering into that within the vail, whither he now realized Jesus his forerunner had gone. This and other like experiences and revelations he related to me in his earnest manner, showing his wonderful trust and perfect realization of the new and living way, the complete righteousness of Christ and his kingdom, were again and again shown unto him amid the struggles and conflicts of this life, and remained until he in the triumph of his faith fell asleep in Jesus. He leaves behind to mourn, but not as those without hope, the devoted widow and little son, two brothers, J. D. and G. M. Farmer, living near his birthplace, and a sister, Ann Ewing Sargent, of Missouri, besides the church and many relatives and friends.

Elder P. W. Sawin preached a comforting sermon at the Methodist meeting-house in Clay Village, where his widow's membership is, to a large concourse of brethren, relatives, neighbors and friends, and his remains were laid to rest beside his first wife in the family burying-ground at the home of sister Lizzie Clark.

By request of his widow I write this tribute of affection and obituary of my true and loyal friend of a lifetime, and faithful, loving brother in Christ, realizing I cannot do more for him, knowing he is enjoying that more glorious inheritance for which to die is gain, while I remain to again and again be taught to live is Christ.

Now may a merciful God guide and help us all, and be very near the widow and little son, is my prayer for Jesus' sake. J. T. McCOUN.

FARMDALE, Ky.

A YEAR ago we were called to suffer the loss of our only child, our darling little **Thirsa.** We had been strongly impressed that we could not have her with us long, and feel that our grief would have been greater had she been permitted to stay longer than the seven short weeks. She looked bright and well the last month, until the last two days. She suffered severely a short time of stomach and bowel trouble. The Lord very mercifully gave us strength for the day when she fell asleep in the arms of her mother.

SAMUEL J. MEREDITH.
MARTHA GOODEN MEREDITH.

MORAN, Va., July 22, 1904.

CHURCH RESOLUTIONS.

THE Old School or Primitive Baptist Church called Mt. Pleasant, at her regular meeting Saturday, Sept. 24th, 1904, passed the following resolutions:

Whereas, the death angel has again entered our fold and removed from among us one of our number in the person of **Edward Lancaster,** who fell asleep, as we hope, in the blessed Savior, June 9th, 1904, be it

Resolved, That the church, in the death of our beloved brother, has sustained a loss which we deeply feel, and we extend to the family and friends our condolence and sincere sympathy.

Resolved, That these resolutions be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and *Messenger of Peace,* and that a copy be sent to the bereaved family, and that the same be made a part of the records of the church.

J. M. AMSBERRY, Church Clerk.

RECEIVED

IN RESPONSE TO AN APPEAL OF BRETHREN TO RAISE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CLEAR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" FROM DEBT.

Previously acknowledged	$974 15
Mrs. U. J. Peck, N. Y., $3.00; Mrs. E. C. Candler, N. Y., $2.00; Elder I. N. Newkirk, Wash., $1.00; J. C. McAlpine, Ont., $3.00; A. McGugan, Ont., $1.00.—Total	10 00
Total to date	$984 15

MEETINGS.

THE Salisbury Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Association will hold her annual session this year with Snowhill church, in the town of Snowhill, Worcester Co., Md., commencing Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, (19th) 1904, and continuing three days, when and where we hope to meet and greet a goodly number of brethren, sisters and friends. We extend a cordial invitation to our ministering brethren to come and see us and behold our order. We bid all lovers of truth a welcome; do not shrink for fear that we will be overburdened, for we feel amply prepared to make all comfortable that wish to come. We think this one of the good points for the association. We are not prepared to inform you how the trains run, or when they leave certain points, but get tickets on Tuesday before the meeting for Snowhill, arriving in the afternoon, and the train

will be met and all cared for. If any should come on any other train and are not met, inquire for Mary R. Pernell or George Coulburn.

T. M. POULSON, Pastor.
JOHN H. TRUITT, Clerk.

A YEARLY meeting will be held with the Olive & Hurley Old School Baptist Church the last Wednesday and Thursday in October, (26th and 27th) 1904.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

A TWO days meeting has been appointed to be held with Cammal Old School Baptist Church, the Lord willing, the last Saturday and fifth Sunday in October, 1904. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. Those coming from the south will take the New York Central train at Williamsport, and those coming from the north will also take New York Central train. Ample accommodation for all who live out of town. Trains will be met on Friday and Saturday morning. Elder John McConnell, of New York city, Elder J. T. Rowe, of Baltimore, Md., and our pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, will be present.

ALVA B. CALLAHAN, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 72. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1904. NO. 21.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE UNFOLDING OF THE BOOK OF LIFE.

WHEN you open a book hitherto unread by you, and peruse its pages from beginning to end, the book is not in the least changed since its contents are unfolded to your understanding. No matter how you may receive its sentiment or its theory, the plan of the author, as it was conceived in his mind, remains the same. So far as that book is concerned, it never can undergo any change. Although the author may rewrite the same work, revising it, and making changes therein, yet the original book will remain unchanged, so long as it is in existence. The minds of men are subject to change, but the Author and Writer of the book of life is unchangeable. With him "is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." During the ages that have passed since the beginning of time, the leaves in the precious book of life have been, day by day, turned over, and will so continue until the end of time. Looking back over the many events that have transpired, in their proper time and order, and observing those which have endured, and distinguishing between the perishable and imperishable, our mind lights upon one object in particular that has withstood the contumely of every passing age; that object is the Bible. It is the oldest literal book in existence, and its pages record events from the beginning of time to the end of time. All the means of men have been brought into play to banish it from the face of the earth, yet the light of its testimony grows brighter and brighter. It has been hidden, and buried, and burned, yet its lustre has not been dimmed. Enemies of the truth of God have assailed it in every conceivable way, yet without avail. It is the book of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and while it belongs exclusively to the church of Christ, yet it is useful in the world, because of the great moral power and influence it wields over an ungodly and unregenerate world. There is no book that has ever passed through the hands of a printer that is in any sense like it. All other literature has its use in this world, but the Bible, written by holy men of old as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, stands alone, because its record and testimony do not belong to this world, but to a kingdom which is

above all worlds. Yet the Bible is *not* the "Book of Life." It is the letter of the word, and not the word itself. Jesus is declared to be the word of God, in *him* is life. Therefore the "Book of Life" is the work and substance of Jesus, embracing all the salvation of God. The Bible is a transcript of that wonderful book whose pages are written in indelible characters in the hearts of the children of the living God. In this natural life we are creatures of time, and the reading of the pages of life's treatise is subject to time conditions, and understood throughout the passage of time in the life of each saint. The name of each and every child of God, with their individuality, is recorded in the Book. To the world, (with its learning, its science, and its knowledge in natural things) the "Book of Life" is a sealed book. With all the power of cunning reasoning possessed by the mind of man, he has delved and searched and pondered, but the key to unlock this storehouse of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God he has never been able to find. The secret, to whom power and worthiness was given, to open the book and to loose the seven seals thereof, was revealed unto the apostle John, on the Island of Patmos, of which he says: "And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." Now the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, is Christ Jesus the Lord, who hath undertaken for us, and prevailed, becoming the victor over death, hell and the grave, giving his life a ransom for us, that we might behold all the beauties of holiness and grace in that book which he was found worthy to open. And now, as we turn its leaves and read therein, we behold Jesus set forth on every page, for by that life of himself which he has vouchsafed unto us, we are enabled to read and behold his gracious work. This great wonder of wonders is made manifest in the truth that it is in our own hearts that this great work has been accomplished. As we read along we note with joy and gladness the changes in condition and relationship which take place in the pilgrimage journey of the children of our great King. Every man who enters within the portals of this natural world is the offspring of natural parents, and as they are born into the world the relationship of father, mother and child begins. Even those natural children, who were before the foundation of the world ordained to eternal life, are simply children of the flesh, for they are not yet born of God, and the relationship of father and son cannot exist until the child is born. Therefore as we begin to scan the pages of the "Book of Life" we see at the outset of the natural life of each name that is recorded in the book, that they were the children of wrath even as others, and as says the apostle: "At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the

world." Is it any wonder then that Nicodemus could not believe when Jesus said unto him: "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again"? So, as has been said, the changes of condition and relationship are made manifest along the journey, and each change is recorded in its own proper time and order. Does it not behoove every one of us who have hope in God's mercy, to walk softly before the Lord all the days of our life? For Jesus while preaching to his disciples said: "But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment: for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." The first condition, then, finds the foreordained subject of God's grace enshrouded in nature's darkness, living and revelling in all manner of sin, and boasting of his evil propensities; he is satisfied with his surroundings, he knows no god save his sensual appetite and selfish desires. It is his own country and the only home he knows, his friends are there, and the seductive woman beckons him to her house. But in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the scene changes, a gleam of light breaks in upon his soul, it pierces the darkness, but the darkness in his soul becomes so deep and dense that it can be felt. The light is the light of truth, which enlightens him as to his true condition under the violated law of God, and presents him justly condemned under that law; the polish and glare of his old life in nature has faded, and now he is looking for an intercessor between God and himself; his heart searcheth for a "daysman" that might come betwixt them, and lay his hands upon them both. Great waves of sorrow pass over his benighted soul, and in his agony he begs and appeals for mercy. He cannot cry to a loving father, as a child who can claim a father's love, but he sees only a drawn sword demanding justice. The same voice that spake to Abram in Chaldee spake to this soul, telling him as he did Abram, to leave his native country, and go to a place that he would show him. So he begins his troublous journey, and he wanders down into Egypt, and while there his burdens becoming almost unbearable, the Lord delivers him from thence, and brings him into a vast wilderness, yet under the frown and terror of the law. He is not yet under the care of his heavenly Father, but under the watch-care of the God who loves him and cares for him night and day, who leads him about and instructs him; and the leading in this wilderness journey brings him to the "ends of the earth;" in other words, to the end of all his creature strength and self-confidence. And again the scene changes, a bright page in the book of his life is opened to view, a great flood of light has come into his soul, he has found the Intercessor for whom he has been looking through all the dark and fearful night, the Sun of righteousness has arisen in his soul, Christ is revealed to him as his gracious Redeemer. He finds now, that "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us." Now he has come into the full light of the liberty of the gospel of Christ, he is born again, born from above, he is now a child of his heavenly Father, who is God over all. He is born "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." He is born of incorruptible seed, "by the word of God, which liveth

and abideth forever." Now he can say out of a full and thankful heart, rejoicing in the spirit, with his gracious Redeemer, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." He is now a recognized member of the Father's family, and does approach the throne of grace with humble boldness and much assurance, saying, "Our Father who art in heaven," &c. Yet there are times in the experience of the dear soul when he seems to be forsaken of God, that he cannot say, Father; it would seem that he dares not utter the name. Jesus, when he hung upon the accursed tree, and all had forsaken him, even he could not call upon his Father, but said: "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" But while he was in the garden, and his soul was exceeding sorrowful unto death, he fell on the ground and prayed, and he said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt."

It would take volumes to tell of the many perfections of beauty to be found in the Zion of our God, and in the record of the pages of the "book of life." A few of the important changes have been noted in passing; the experimental relationship also has been set forth, that our pure minds may call to remembrance some things that have occurred to us in the passage of time. May our souls be refreshed with the dews of heavenly love from time to time.

I will close by calling your attention to hymn number 1037 (Beebe's collection.)

"How strange is the course that a christian must steer,
How perplexed is the path he must tread!
The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
And his life he receives from the dead.

His fairest pretentions must wholly be waived,
And his best resolutions be crossed;
Nor can he expect to be perfectly saved,
Till he finds himself utterly lost.

When all this is done, and his heart is assured
Of the total remission of sins,
When his pardon is signed and his peace is procured,
From that moment his conflict begins."

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Oct. 5, 1904.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Sept. 7, 1904.

DEAR KINDRED IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—Again will I share a portion of the letters received within the past few months from our invalid sister, Mrs. Edwards, of Georgia. It is never without hesitation that I send for publication anything that is personal. But this dear sister, on a bed of languishing from day to-day, till the days have passed into years, her thoughts going out to her kindred in Christ, has no other way of communicating with them, as she uses a pencil and writes with difficulty. She has lately expressed a desire that those who write for the SIGNS should know how they had comforted her, and what sweet companionship she had found in their epistles of love. I have no doubt there are many who can participate in her expressions, and sympathize in her afflictions, and thus they will come together in fellowship, which is a comfort, for often out of the deepest sorrows spring the sweetest joys. What a blessed boon has the SIGNS OF THE TIMES been to many who are shut in from the common walks of life, and also to those who are scattered and dwell far from the assemblies of the saints, and cannot with them listen to the gospel's joyful sound. When the view of some helpless one is confined to a little patch

of sky, or a glimpse of some distant mountain, through a pane of glass, the mind cannot be confined in so small a compass. The inner view broadens, gathering in all of like precious faith, and the heart is filled with longing to meet once more in the courts of the Lord and join in songs of praise in the sanctuary of God.

"When each can feel his brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part;
When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart."

With these pantings for the water-brooks, what a glad welcome does the little household messenger receive. Those afar off are brought nigh, and they in spirit are sitting together in the kingdom of God, telling of his wonderful works and talking of his power, which is without limit, and his love which is infinite. How sweet this union and communion among those who have been gathered together in the name of Jesus, for they have the assurance that he is in their midst. What a traveler the mind is, reaching out over land and sea, folding in one fond embrace all who love the truth which is so dear, and who are "heirs together of the grace of life." How often we read communications which bring the writers very near, and our hearts go out in tenderness to many we have never met; and is not this "the tie that binds our hearts in christian love"? Sometimes the writer is aged, and by faith looking with longing over into the promised rest, having come through great tribulation, is about to enter that blessed home where there is fullness of joy and pleasures for evermore. Often we read the lispings of a child who has just entered the fold of Christ, the great Shepherd, with joy to be enrolled with that people to whom it is said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

In the SIGNS for July 15th there appeared some verses by Lizzie McCollum, of Ontario, which seem a very clear expression of that love which is better than wine, a sweet song of praise to our blessed Redeemer, and I have heard that this dear young sister is shut out from the light of day, but she must be blessed with an inner radiance that is beyond the sunshine of earth. Some there are among these "hidden ones" who have greater affliction than physical pain, a night time of the soul, and they feel shut away from these heavenly courts, where they once entered with gladness and unspeakable joy. With them there is a constant cry from the depths of the soul, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." And O what a bitter experience to feel with Jeremiah, He hath covered himself with a cloud, that my prayer should not pass through. He hath hedged me about with hewn stone. But how the scene changes when again we are favored to realize with David that "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble;" that he maketh the clouds his chariot, and walketh on the wings of the wind. Surely,

"The Lord can clear the darkest skies,
Can give us day for night;
Make drops of sacred sorrow rise
To rivers of delight."

O that we could always "praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! for he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness."

With the greeting of love to each of this scattered family circle, I remain unworthily your sister,

BESSIE DURAND.

LE GRANGE, Ga., Nov. 11, 1903.

BELOVED SISTER:—Your letter is received, and you know my appreciation without my trying to tell you. How

good of sister Lawshe to think of me so kindly. Please thank her for me, and I pray the Lord will bless her. I know she is his, for "By their fruits ye shall know them." Her contribution came so acceptably, for soon after I wrote you last I was taken very ill, and have been so weak, until the last few days, that I could scarcely turn myself in bed. I am suffering now every day, and have no relish for food. I wish, dear sister, that I could always welcome pain, but I cannot. I feel sometimes that I am perfectly reconciled to my condition, but the more I suffer the more I shrink from it; yet I know that to be brought into communion with my precious Savior I must follow all the way.

Your last letter was a great comfort to me. I was glad to hear what you said of the meeting, and how you enjoyed the good preaching. How I have longed to go to the house of God once more. I have many precious visits from the dear ministers, and have heard many sweet sermons, but it does not give the full satisfaction like mingling with the saints at the meetings. But I trust there are other blessings that come into my life to make up in a measure for these happy privileges which are denied me. I often think of my home church, and the many sweet seasons spent there. When I united twenty-nine years ago it was composed of nearly one hundred members. It will hardly number twenty now, and there are but four living who were members when I joined. How sad the decline, yet I love to think of those happy bygone days.

"I have been there, and still would go,
'Tis like a little heaven below."

Dear sister, I would love to be able to write you many things that come to my mind, but am too weak. What a pleasure it would be to hear the sound of your voice and feel the pressure of your hand. What shall I render unto the Lord for leading you across my pathway of life? Remember me to your brother and family, and to our aged sister Miles. I hope it will be light with her at evening time.

With more love than I can express, I am still your afflicted sister in hope,

NANNIE B. EDWARDS.

JANUARY 1, 1904.

WELL, dear sister, we have been spared to see the dawn of another year, and I feel an endless gratitude to our heavenly Father for bringing me thus far, and I desire to live nearer to him in the future than I have in the past, but O how prone to wander I am. It does seem like I have suffered enough to have purified the greatest sinner in the world, yet I feel more imperfect to-day than ever before, and my cry is, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. During the past week I have gone through a world of retrospection, and in this I feel that my life has been almost a complete failure. In all my reflections not one good thing could I see that I have ever done; my whole life seemed to be nothing but leaves. I know that we have no merit of our own, and I am glad that it is so, but I often yearn for a life of usefulness. Is this irreconciliation, or just the longing for a better life? I hope I am reconciled, for I know I am filling the sphere that God sees best for me, or it would not be this way.

Dear sister, I began this yesterday, but had to lay it aside, and to-day I feel less like writing than I did then. While it is a great task for me to write a letter, I consider it a labor of love to try to write to you.

I learned this morning that one of the

most prominent citizens of our town died last night. Yesterday he was on the street in perfect health, and was stricken last night with paralysis of the heart. What a mystery is death; it is a problem that none can solve, yet all must succumb to its power. Often in thinking of death I am made to exclaim, O Savior, am I thine? I wonder if the waters will be chilly when I am called to die. I have stood at the death-bed of some of the best saints I have ever known, and it seemed to me that Jordan overflowed its banks, and this fills me with trembling to think of the close of this life. But doubtless,

"Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er,
Not Jordan's stream, nor death's cold flood,
Could fright us from the shore."

Pray for me that at evening time it shall be light.

Wishing you all a Happy New Year, your loving sister,

NANNIE B. EDWARDS.

MARCH 21, 1904.

I HAVE been very, very sick for the past three weeks, and O, my dear sister, I cannot tell you what I have suffered, and such a sadness would come over me when I thought of leaving my loved ones. My cry is, Lord, reconcile me to thy will. I am reconciled to my afflictions, but am not reconciled to die, and this one thing gives me so much trouble. I loathe sin, and sometimes think it would be so sweet to depart and be with Christ, where all is tranquil and serene. I realize that I cannot remain much longer without a change in my condition. The Lord knows what is best for me, and I do hope to be resigned to his will.

I would have been so glad to have met your brother when he was south, for I do enjoy his communications so much. You do not know what a comfort the SIGNS are to me. I wish its correspondents knew how much I love them. Often while reading their communications I long to tell them what a responsive chord they touch in the heart of an invalid sister, if such I may call myself, lying day after day shut in, mingling her tears of sorrow and joy with theirs.

I was grieved to learn of brother Benton Beebe's death. They rest from their labors, and their works do follow them. My father has been sick, but is better; he will be eighty-two in June; he is so precious.

I cannot write more. I long for a letter from you, and hope to get one soon.

In much weakness and tenderest love,

NANNIE.

JUNE 30, 1904.

SINCE I wrote you last we have moved. This is the first time since Vera was an infant that we have lived by ourselves, and you can imagine our loneliness for quite awhile after moving, especially at night. But, dear sister, we are not alone, for God is with us; I know he is not confined to multitudes, and there is a sweet consolation in the thought. I pass through many dark hours, and wonder if ever any one felt as sinful as I do. Here I have been on the bed of affliction nearly sixteen years, and feel more imperfect than when first taken sick. I was telling a dear brother, a few days ago, how I felt, and he said, Paul felt to be the chief of sinners, and that ought to comfort me. I used to feel that when I drew near the grave I would be ready to go, and better prepared to meet death, but time has only added more sin to my imperfect life. How often on my bed have I exclaimed, Purge me, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

The circumstance of a sickness you once had and related to me in your letter, written in March, was such a comfort to me, where a sister told you that when death came you would be reconciled. I do hope it will be thus with me, and sometimes I believe it will. I often find myself repeating, "How vain are all things here below," and "Here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."

I have been a long time writing this, and now it is unsatisfactory. In love and thankfulness, your little sister.

N. E.

JULY 18, 1904.

WHEN your last message reached me I was in great gloom, and had tried to pray all that morning for some evidence of grace, and while pondering over our spiritual, physical and temporal welfare, my husband came in and handed me your letter, and while reading it I was made to rejoice, and could say, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not." If I only had the confidence in myself, sister Bessie, that I have in you, I think I should never doubt again. Like you, I do not behold the light of his countenance as in my early experience, yet I, too, trust that my faith is stronger; that is, knowing God has all power in heaven and in earth, that what he does is for the best, and none can stay his hand or say unto him, "What doest thou?" Believing this I am trying to wait patiently on him, and think, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." And while I do not understand his dealings with me now, I hope to know hereafter.

"Till then I would his love proclaim
With every fleeting breath,
And may the music of his name
Refresh my soul in death."

Yes, sister Bessie, I met brother Morgan Brown about eight years ago, which I think was soon after he was ordained. He spent a night with us, and preached at our home church. I am glad you enjoyed his preaching. I was not well enough to have him preach for me, yet his talk was all preaching, I thought.

I forgot to tell you how I enjoyed Elder Leffert's communication in the SIGNS. How wonderful for one so young to be led so deeply in the Scriptures.

Love to you and every member of your household, and may the Lord bless you, is the prayer of your afflicted little sister in hope,

NANNIE B. EDWARDS.

WILTON, Maine, Sept. 4, 1904.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been more than thirty years since older members, who have long since passed away, requested me to write for publication what I hope have been the dealings of the Lord in bringing me from nature's darkness into the marvelous light of the gospel of Christ. Many times I have attempted to comply, and have destroyed what I had written.

I cannot remember when so young that I did not have serious impressions about the salvation of my soul. When a small child, if left alone for a short time, I would play meeting, and go through all the forms of service. When a little more than six years old my dear mother was taken to her last and longed for home, leaving me alone with my father. The days of my childhood were somewhat sad and lonesome. I thought to attain to true happiness by living a good moral and religious life. Often did I read the Bible, and go through forms of prayer, but could never be as good as I had anticipated. I was constantly doing and

saying many things wrong, but thought that when I got older it would be easier to do right, and then I would atone for all my past sins.

At that time there was an Old School Baptist church in Jay, of which my father was a member. Elder Joseph Macumber was the pastor, he was old and feeble and soon passed away. The church was then supplied by Elder Whitehouse, Elder John A. Badger and Elder J. L. Purington. I often attended with my father, and could discern that the preaching was like that of Christ and the apostles. Yet I thought that they were not as charitable toward other denominations as they ought to be. When no Old School Baptist preacher came, I would go to other meetings. I never united with any other church, but I did join in the Sunday School, thinking to make myself better, yet I found that all the good that I could possibly do was less than my evil words and deeds. My father taught me to reverence the God of heaven and earth as my Creator and preserver; also he taught me that every blessing came from his bountiful hand, and that without any merit of my own. At one time my father said to me, "I do not care how much you read the Bible, but do not think that reading the Bible and going to Sunday School will make you a christian, for it never will." To me then, this seemed a hard saying, but years after I felt it to be a true and wise admonition. I think then, young as I was, that it was the earnest desire of my heart that I might have grace to discern between truth and error, and to be led experimentally into an understanding of the word of God. Still I was ignorant that grace was a free and unmerited gift, and thought that if I would, or rather, could obey every command, then I would obtain the blessing that I so much desired.

Thus time rolled on until I was nineteen years old, when I went to Massachusetts to seek employment, fully determined to have religion, and that I would not wound my father's feelings by attending other meetings. Yet I went first to the Methodist, then to the Baptist, (so-called) then to the Congregationalist meetings, but no gospel sound could I hear. I was all the time getting more and more discouraged and dissatisfied with myself, and with all that I could do; instead of becoming better, I seemed to be daily getting worse; sin was mixed with all that I did, and all my good resolutions were broken; I had transgressed God's holy law, and I read that whosoever offended in one point was guilty of all. In vain did I search the Scriptures for comfort, and often would I close the Bible feeling, "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" It was a sealed book, and I had no ears to hear. I was then in Woburn, Massachusetts. I had heard there was an Old School Baptist church in that place, and I felt that I would like once more to hear an Old School Baptist sermon, so I inquired where the place of meeting was. I was told that I would not care to go to that meeting, as they were not popular, or hardly respectable, but they could not tell me where their place of meeting was. Some days after I heard the person I had inquired of, ask a lady where the "Jug Baptists" held their meetings. The answer was, that it was in a distant part of the town. In going there I would have to pass four other meetings, and here my pride came up; could I be seen going to a place that was not respectable? Then it came to me that the church of Christ had always been persecuted, and I resolved if God would give me strength, to go there the

next meeting. Sunday came, and my feelings I cannot express. I had no strength of my own, but most earnestly did I ask the Lord to lead and guide me to that place where the gospel of Christ was preached, and that he would give me ears to hear and a heart to understand. I started in great weakness, and walked on until I came to the house, but could see no way of entrance. I soon saw an old man coming from the opposite direction, and felt sure that he was one of this people, and so followed him around and up the stairs. Yet I felt that I could not go in, feeling that this was a band of true worshipers of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that I was not fit to go among them, but some one saw me and took me in and gave me a seat. About this time the minister read, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." This was just my desire and asking; it seemed that every word was spoken directly to me. I cannot recall the faces or any one of the members present. I could not raise my eyes from the floor, and as soon as the service ended I hastened out and home, feeling sure that the truth had been spoken, and that I must go again in the afternoon. The ice had been broken, and I was glad. As I reached the home where I had been stopping, I was asked if I had been to the Baptist meeting, to which I replied, "To the Old School Baptist meeting," with no fear of reproach of finite man; my trouble was with my own wicked heart. I was not fit to mingle with the people of God, and to go with the world's people I could not. I often wandered in a secluded pasture, where no human form was to be seen, nor human voice heard, and there I would listen to the singing of the birds, and look upon the beauties of nature, only to return with the burden of sin increased, if possible. I would open the Bible, hoping to find some word of comfort, but it all seemed a sealed book. I had no ears to hear, no heart to understand; I believed that God was a holy and just being, and that he could save his people with an everlasting salvation. With much force the words would come to me, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." I felt that these chosen ones were safe, but I had no evidence that I was among the number.

Week after week passed in this way, and all I could say or do was to beg for mercy. After a time I felt to rest, and to leave it all with him whom I believed was too wise to err and too good to be unkind. One day the words of the leper came to me: "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Then came the desire, O, if I only could hear the reply, "I will; be thou clean." I retired in a calm, peaceful frame of mind, and lost consciousness in sleep, soon to awaken with the assurance that my sins were all washed away in the blood of the Lamb. It appeared that the Spirit of Christ was there in my room, giving me this assurance, and all that I could do was to rejoice in this glorious salvation. I had no desire to sleep, my whole being was filled with praises to my Savior and Redeemer. The hours passed quickly, and soon the day dawned, and the birds of the air were praising their Maker; the sun was soon shining in all its splendor and beauty. This was Sunday morning, and all my work went easy, and as I went to the chapel the faces of all looked so happy that I wanted to say, Surely you can rejoice with me. This ever-to-be-remem-

bered and joyful day was in May, 1853. Then came the desire for a home with the people of God, but my unfitness, and the fear that I might be deceived, were in the way. Now and then some word of encouragement would be applied, such as, All the fitness he requires is to feel the need of him. Surely I did feel my need of him, and had long done so. I had long felt my utter helplessness and dependence upon the God of all wisdom and power, and in his great mercy he had saved even me, the chief of sinners. It was my almost constant cry to God for guidance, that if I was indeed a subject of his redeeming love he would give me strength to go and tell the church what I hoped he had done for me. Most earnestly did I ask that the church might not be deceived in me.

Thus the days passed until July, when I with fear and trembling started out and called upon one of the sisters, who asked me if I was not going to the chapel. I replied that I feared that I had nothing to say. She said, "You can go and hear the others." Thus encouraged I went on. To my great surprise, as soon as the meeting was open, the minister, who at that time was Elder Leonard Cox, asked me to tell the brethren the dealings of the Lord with me. I could not speak until some one asked when I first thought about these things. Then all fear was gone, liberty of speech was given me, and I do not know how long I talked or what I said. I was received and baptized the following Sunday, July 3rd, 1853. But that day to me was not what I have heard of others enjoying. The hymn sung at the water begins, "Jesus, and shall it ever be." The next day, July 4th, in the evening I had occasion to go to the post-office, and as I was returning the fireworks were over my head, but in them I could see no real beauty; in one little star I could see more beauty than in all the works of man. The mercies of the Lord looked so wonderful and precious to me, and the words came to me, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." I could not think that sin would ever trouble me as it had done, but still sin is mixed with all I do. "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." I still have to cry, Lord, save, I perish.

My unworthy name is still on the Woburn church book, and that place is still dear in my memory, and I hope that it may again be my privilege to meet there with the few scattered ones, and to hear the name of Jesus exalted above every name. O if there are any lambs outside the fold, may they be gathered in and find a home.

If any portion of this narrative should be published, will all who read cast over it the mantle of charity, and at the throne of grace remember a poor, weak, helpless sinner, whose hope is in sovereign grace alone?

MARTHA K. HUBBARD.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., Sept. 23, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I feel my inability to say anything to the comfort of the children of God, but it is my true desire to glorify God in my body and in my spirit, which are his, although there is such infirmity in every part of me that actually there is not one sound spot. Last Sunday I was comforted while speaking, in the thought that the bed which the infirm man, whom the Lord had healed, carried, was the bed in which he had lain in his infirmity. Even so this body which I now carry is that same body in which I have had all my troubles and

sorrows since I was seven years old, or for forty-four years, yet I have to carry this bed of infirmity wherever I go. Like that poor, helpless and friendless man, I could not go if the Lord had not said, "Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk."

I do not know just how others are, but as for me, I am as passive in the hands of the Lord to-day as I was before he gave me a hope in his blessed salvation. The expression, "We are the clay, and thou our potter," certainly did not cease to embrace me as soon as my burden of sin was taken away. Here also I have found comfort in fellowship with Jesus our dear Savior. He said, "Of myself I can do nothing." Again, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." He came to do the will of his Father. This shows that even Jesus was passive in the hands of the Father, and surely his followers have gotten ahead of him, and become leaders now, if they are living and active, except as he lives in them and moves them to action. The apostle Peter tells us that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Here the Holy Ghost was the actor, and the holy men of God were the passive matter acted upon, and as they were moved by this active power, so they wrote and so they spoke. Their teaching has always been of great use to the household of faith, because it was not made up of words of their own, but of the words which were dictated by the Spirit of God in them. If all the teaching we have among us to-day was by those who spake only as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, how good and how pleasant would be our dwelling together. However those things have ever been in the church, Paul had them to contend with, and the Lord said they should be, and we know they are. This world is not the christian's home, but he seeks a country, a building not made with hands. The Lord said, "My kingdom is not of this world;" therefore the children of God need not seek it here. Adam is of this world, for of the ground did the Lord make him. What need we to expect of Adam but to be always looking downward, from whence he came? Could he look upward, nature could rise above itself, the Ethiopian could change his skin and the leopard his spots; the brier could become a lily, and a world of chance would be supreme. But there is no such thing in any part of our makeup; we are of the earth earthy, and in that direction we must look till this veil be rent and we delivered in our Mediator, Daysman. For this cause we cannot look to Adam for any good thing. Christ Jesus the Lord is all and in all to the christian. It is he who performs all our works in us, and by the moving of his Spirit we work out our salvation, to the praise, honor and glory of him who worked it in us. All is done for his mercy's sake, therefore the praise is all his, while we receive the benefit. This is the hope in which I live, and can see no place where I can take any honor to myself.

I have been trying to preach in the name of Jesus for thirty years, and if there is any difference, I feel more dependent to-day than I did in my first attempt. As I grow older I see more infirmities in myself, and feel more the need of mercy to forgive, and of the justifying blood to cleanse me from every foul stain of which I am so full. I am made often to pray the Lord to quicken me from every dead word and work, and give me life and light to do his will. I feel a desire to thank the Lord that he has given me companionship with his children, for I know that this blessing

can be enjoyed only in Christ Jesus. Adam must be crucified with the affections and lust of his flesh, but if the Spirit of Christ dwell in us we shall be neither barren or unfruitful. His Spirit is the moving power, and thus we serve in him.

I have had many crosses since last we met, for they are almost daily occurrences with me. I often think I see Peter's spirit in my own life. The Lord had said, "All ye shall be offended because of me this night." Peter was quick to dispute this divine word, and declare that he would go with Jesus even into death. How often it has been so with me; I have been in deep trouble and the dear Lord has delivered me; how soon I have said, I will never doubt him again, I will always trust him, even in death; it may be no sooner said, than a trial comes, and of much less magnitude than the former one, and I am found shrinking again. I think of that look the Lord gave Peter when the cock crew the third time, what a rebuking he felt in his heart; how severe and yet how kind; the goodness of God led him to repentance, and he wept bitterly. Even so the chastisement of the Lord is our peace, and thus another evidence is written in the heart that I am the Lord's. Praise his holy name forever.

The Lord bless you in your labors of love, and may he make you of quick understanding as the servant of God.

Your brother in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., July 20, 1904.

TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH AT HOPEWELL—DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I can hardly realize that another year is so nearly at a close since I wrote you last. But as it is, and I cannot be with you at this time, it is my desire to let you know that I have not forgotten you. I send greetings to you in love and fellowship, and desire for you that peace and harmony may be found in your borders, with each one in love with the others, and with no strife and confusion among you to disturb your order. How sweet it is to see brethren dwelling together in unity and peace. May no enemies invade your borders and carry away your little ones, or tear them from the truth, or from their firmness in the Lord. May all things be done among you decently and in order, and may you be able to give a "thus saith the Lord" for all that you believe and practice. If there should come any misunderstanding among you may you look to God for understanding, for it is said that if we ask of him in faith, he gives liberally.

Once more death has taken one from your number, but I believe that it was gain to her. May it be the divine will to give you strength in your losses, and submission to his will, and also may he loose the chains from the prisoners and set them free to come and ask a home among you. May you be delivered from all temptations, for there are so many on every hand. May you see clearly the work of man and the work of God, and give no glory to man, for man is as the flower of the field, which soon is cut down and dies, while the work of the Lord is eternal.

It seems to me that I have never seen the handiwork of the Lord as I have for the past few months. I have at times been made to exclaim aloud, How wonderful! How wonderful! Some time ago I was filled with admiration while looking upon a tree, and through it my mind was taken away back to the formation and creation in the beginning. All seeds must have been in the earth, for in the

beginning the Lord made all things, and all these years has kept them, and the seasons have come and gone and have given to the trees growth. As I thought of it I felt to say with David, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." But when so filled I can only say, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty." Then at times I am made to see how gracious the Lord has been to this poor, trembling vile one, in that he has shown me these wondrous things. As I think of it I can only compare it to a vile worm partaking of angels' food. At times I am greatly melted when I can see how his loving-kindness has favored me all my journey; how he has given me opportunities of gathering with his loved ones, times of hearing and understanding, and also times of praise and of prayer. Sometimes, and indeed very often, my hope is so low that it does seem out of sight, and I am made to mourn, and to turn again to him to know if I have a good hope at all. In his own time and way some precious promise he gives me, which imparts renewed strength and hope, and then I can see that it has been from an all-wise source that I was made to turn and to seek his mercy, for thus all trust in self was taken away.

Yesterday brother B. E. Cubbage was with us at the hall and spoke for us. He read the thirty-fifth chapter of Isaiah, and spoke from nearly all of it, to our edification. Elder Purington used this chapter, the three or four last verses, twenty-five years ago, on the Saturday that I was permitted to come before the church. Elders Mellott and Lefferts were also with us and took part. At noon, at brother Coulter's, the subject was chiefly religion, and in the evening, as we met at the home of Frank and Rosa Frazier, the same theme was continued. Several of the brethren and friends took part, and it was one of the good times when we can say, I am glad that I am here. It seemed that all were speaking of the Lord and his great mercy, his care and his protection. I came away with delight that I had been permitted to be gathered with them. I do believe that it is our real desire not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, and that thus love's chain is knit closer and closer.

Just now, (as I was thinking, What shall I say next?) I looked in upon you in memory as you come together, and O the number that I missed of those good faces that we all loved so much. But the Lord is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, and I feel sure that he has but taken them to himself. May it be the will of God that a good name may follow us all, as it has those who are gone. May we all evermore earnestly contend for the faith. May we never be ashamed of Christ, let us be where or with whom we may.

It seems as though I have written much and said very little. Should there be in it a word to the weary, a word of encouragement to any, a word that shall call out some feeling of love in return, to God give all the praise, for in him all fullness dwells, and from him it all comes. May the Lord be with you in your down-sittings and uprisings. If there be any who feel a desire to ask a home among you, may they be gathered in, if it be the will of God. If it be a feeling of nothingness that hinders them, I am sure that they are just the ones who have a right to come, and whom the church wants to receive. Should any say, "We feel worthy to come," the church could not receive them. If any are waiting for a better assurance, remember that we can-

not in this world live beyond hope. May your pastor, who goes in and out before you, be sustained and supported by the love, mercy and power of God. May you help to stay his hands, for he must often grow weary. May you grow nearer and dearer to each other as the time passes onward; if so, you will help each other to bear all burdens.

Now, to one and all I send love, and desire that the blessing of God may be upon each and every one of you. Mr. Terry joins in love and fellowship to you all.

Unworthily, your sister,

MARY HILL TERRY.

NEWARK, Del., Sept. 15, 1904.

READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—As I sat reading the good old SIGNS this evening I felt a strong impulse to write. The next thought was, What shall I write? And even now that I am writing I have not a thought upon my mind to express. Did any of you, dear readers, ever have an experience like this? Did you ever feel impressed to write, and yet have nothing to say? I do wonder where this impression comes from. I have thought that the best way to try the spirits, whether they are of God, is to watch the result of the spirit or impression. No doubt the Lord's dear people have many impressions that are not of the Spirit of Jesus, and they do not always know what spirit they are of. The spirit of the flesh will often be found in our prayers, and the way to try what spirit we are prompted by in prayer is to watch whether the prayer is answered. If not, we must have asked and received not, because we asked amiss that we might consume it upon our lusts.

I have heard brethren say that they did not think of the Lord for a whole day at a time; this has not been my experience. Every day, and many times a day, I have felt to look to the Lord in prayer. I feel daily and hourly the need of his guidance and providence and protection. But the question with me often is, whether I am praying for self-aggrandizement, or for self-abasement that Jesus may be glorified. I fear it is too often the former, and seldom the latter. But I cannot manufacture true prayer, and neither can I avoid my desires going out to God for things to make me comfortable and happy in this life. Brethren, is this your experience?

I love to talk with those brethren whose religion goes right along with their every day life, and not simply on Sunday or meeting day. It is true with us all, perhaps, that we become more animated or stirred up when we get with the brethren, or hear good preaching. This is one reason why we should meet together, and it is good and profitable to do so. We need stirring up once in a while, yet communion with the Lord is not any more in effect at such times than at other times, as it appears to me. It may be that we are not in communion with the Lord as much when together as we are at times when alone. We do not commune with the Lord, but the Lord communes with us, and this at such times as he sees fit. How often when partaking of the Lord's supper have we tried to fix our thoughts upon Jesus, who loved us and gave himself for us, and our mind, like the fool's eye, was wandering to the ends of the earth. At other times, while at our work perhaps, or lying on our beds, our hearts are softened, and the tears begin to flow, thinking of his great love to us vile sinners. Sometimes we mourn on account of our indifference, and our blindness and

ignorance in spiritual things, and yet at the same time we may have the Bible in our hands looking for something to stir us up. If our brethren then were to see us they might think how spiritually minded we are. For instance, they might say, See brother Eddie, how constantly he reads his Bible, how spiritually minded he is. But this does not mean anything, for unless we can realize that the good Shepherd is leading us, we wander about like lost sheep, and refuse to eat though we may be in a good pasture. The most desirable thing that a christian can have is to know that the Lord is leading him; then he can say, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." Therefore it is useful and highly important that we should investigate and scrutinize ourselves, whether our spirits and desires and impressions are of God. If we find that they are, then we can honor the Lord with our substance, and then our barns will be filled with plenty, and our wine-presses will burst out with new wine. In other words, if we know the Lord is our preserver and benefactor, and are made to confess that all we are and all we have is from him, then we can say, It is enough, I want no more. He has, and I hope will, fill my barns with plenty, and cause my wine-presses to burst out with new wine.

I have written as my mind has been led, I submit it to your judgment whether it be of God.

Your brother,

EDWARD ROUNDS.

PRENTICE, Ill.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST:—As I sit in the twilight my heart goes out in christian love for the precious saints scattered over this broad land, and how I would love to see them and talk of God's love and goodness, instead of writing these words. O, dear ones, could you only know how unworthy I feel as I tremblingly write, but I want to tell you all how I love you, and how much I enjoy reading your sweet words of comfort in our family paper; may it be God's will for you to continue to write for the comfort of his tried children while in this world of sorrow. When we are sick and deprived of meeting with the saints, it is then our drooping hearts are made glad while reading your communications. For nearly a year I was not able to go to my meetings, but God in his mercy blessed me again with health and strength to meet with the saints; after so many long months of darkness and gloom I was made happy by God's love and presence. What a feast it was to my poor, hungry soul; surely God was with his servants, and the gospel was proclaimed in its purity, and was a sweet pleasure to those who love the joyful sound. O if I could express the fullness of joy I had while at that meeting, as I thought of the many blessings God bestows upon his children.

He has blessed us with a precious gift in our young pastor, John L. Scott, who is indeed a soldier of the cross; living far from us, he comes through heat and cold, preaching sound doctrine from first to last, in meekness and lowliness of spirit. I felt that I could not praise God enough for his goodness in putting it in the hearts of the dear brethren to leave homes and come to preach for our comfort the riches of God's grace. While I was happy in listening to the blessed gospel, my heart was sad to see the vacant places. I longed for the dear absent ones; words fail to tell how much I miss them. I never knew how dear they were to me until I was deprived of meeting

with them. Often have they told me how they had missed me, and how dearly they loved me, and I felt so unworthy I could not tell them how deeply those kind and cheering words sank into my poor heart, and how happy I felt when they would come so far to see me. Then for a few fleeting moments I could feel that I was a child of God, for I could see a beauty in the Scripture, "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Twenty years have passed since dear Elder I. N. Vanmeter led me down into the watery grave, and as we came up out of the water I realized the true meaning of that blessed Scripture. O how lovely those dear ones looked to me as they stood on the bank, and how I loved them. I felt so happy I said to Elder Vanmeter, Will I ever have any more sorrow? How true his words, "Tribulation will be ours as long as life lasts." His kind and comforting words I hear no more, and how I do miss him, but sometimes have a hope that when time is with me no more, I shall see face to face, and know as I am known, in a sweet home where the golden chain of love will never be broken.

Dear brethren, may God in his mercy bless you with his grace, and may it be his will that we shall love one another more and more, cause us to forsake this fleeting world of care when meeting time comes, and make us love to sit at his feet and worship in spirit and truth, refreshing us with his love.

Christian love to each and every one. Affectionately your sister,

ELLA PARROTT.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904, &c.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

To the Elders, messengers, brethren and sisters of Hazel Creek Association.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—Another year has passed with its joys and sorrows, and we are yet permitted to meet in an associate capacity, for which we feel to praise the God of the universe for sparing us for a purpose best known to himself.

As the Association has said that I should write the Circular Letter, I will call your attention to Revelation xxi. 3: "And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." Now, brethren, we understand that this is speaking of the church that our Lord and Savior set up while he was on earth. Again, he says, "And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write; for these words are true and faithful." Now, brethren, I feel the blessed assurance that the enjoyment that we enjoy here on earth is a very small foretaste of what is to follow. Now, brethren, I understand that the spiritual life we now live, is the same life that our Lord and Savior gave to his disciples, and he said, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." We understand that the church is all that our Lord and Savior came on earth to save, and he has said that he finished the work he came to do, and ascended up on high and sat down on the right hand of the Father, having the same care of his church that he had when he was on earth. We know that he has all power in heaven and in earth, that having the care, we feel the blessed assurance that his people will be safely

housed in the kingdom of ultimate glory. No wonder David said, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." Again, David says, "Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." Again David says, "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion." "God is known in her palaces for a refuge." "Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves: we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture." Now, brethren, is not this enough? The Lord is not slack concerning his promises, every word will be fulfilled in due time. "In your patience possess ye your souls."

Brethren and sisters, remember us in your prayers."

S. B. JONES, Moderator.

J. M. CATE, Clerk.

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, convened with the church at Schoharie, Schoharie County, N. Y., October 5th and 6th, 1904, to the churches composing the same, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have abundant reason, amidst the lo heres and lo theres, to be grateful to our heavenly Father for his kind protection in the preservation of our lives, and for permitting us once more to meet in an associate capacity.

Now, dear brethren, we will mention for this time for our consideration, that which was spoken by the angel of the Lord to Joseph: "Thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."—Matt. i. 20, 21. We find that this Jesus that shall save his people from their sins, was prophesied of a long time before he made his appearance here, that he should come to redeem his people from the curse of the law that they were still under. "The Holy Ghost this signifying that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: * * * which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation."—Heb. ix. 8–10. But when he cometh into the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, "then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." Now, brethren, this is he that shall save his people from their sins. We read in the prophecy of Isaiah, forty-third chapter: "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." It tells us in the same chapter: "Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. * * * For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior." Then "Fear not; for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; [O yes] I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth. Even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him." Isaiah still brings this child to view as the Son that has all power in heaven and in earth to do the will of his Father, saying, "For unto us a child is born, unto us

a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord will perform this."—Isaiah ix. 6, 7. So, brethren, we find that this was prophesied of what should come to pass or take place for the comfort of the people of God. Now we find in Paul's letter to the Romans xv. 4: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." We also find in this same chapter, twelfth verse, "There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust." This is he of whom the angel spoke to Mary, and told her: "And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." "For there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord. And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior." "As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed forever."—Luke i. Now we find it written in the third chapter of Acts, how Peter exhorted the people, telling them that it was not by their own power or holiness they had made this man to walk; having faith given by him who is the author and finisher of faith, "and his name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know; yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all." And we find that Peter wrote in his first epistle and first chapter to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, &c., "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

Now, dear brethren, in conclusion, may we ever prove all things, and then hold fast to that which is good; "in all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works; in doctrine shewing uncorruptibleness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you;" and that we may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things; to as many as walk according to this rule, peace be multiplied.

JOHN CLARK, Moderator.
G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Fairview Church, Fulton Co., Pa., October 7th, 8th and 9th, 1904, to the churches and associations with which we correspond, sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—We are once more privileged to meet in an associate capacity, to enjoy christian greeting and the sweet fellowship of God's poor and afflicted people, to strengthen and encourage one another as we journey through this wilderness of trials and afflictions. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

As it has been a long standing custom at these meetings to prepare what we call a Circular Letter, you will expect the same again.

What is the hope of the christian? Is it not the blessed hope of the resurrection of this Adamic sinner? It seems there were some in Paul's day that denied the resurrection of the dead, which stirred the apostle to write such a strong defense of the resurrection of the dead: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." As Christ is the life of his people, his obedience to the law of God, his death on the cross, his burial and resurrection from the dead, are all imputed to his people. When Christ arose from the dead his people were raised with him from under the condemnation of the law. Receiving the spirit of this first resurrection, it enables us by a God-given faith and hope to wait with patience, "to wit, the redemption of our body." Paul, in writing to the Corinthian brethren, says, "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised. And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." —1 Cor. xv. 12–20. The same power that raised the body of Jesus will raise our bodies from their graves, for Jesus says, "The hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." David says, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."—Psalms xvii. 15. "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."—1 Thess. iv. 13–18.

A. MELLOTT, Moderator.
J. E. GORE, Clerk.

Virginia Corresponding Meeting of Old School Baptists, in session with the church at Ebenezer, Loudoun Co., Va., to the churches composing the Association, greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Because "the Lord is good concerning Israel," and "his mercy endureth forever," we are permitted to assemble again in this year 1904, at old Ebenezer, as in the days of old. We hope for a pleasant meeting with all of you, and we want to ascribe all the glory to the Father for whatever good may result and whatever christian fellowship may be manifested. Many changes have come into our lives here since last we met, and death has taken some of our best and brightest from our earthly fellowship, and sometimes Job's query, "If a man die, shall he live again?" comes plainly before us, but we have glimmering lights, even in nature, pointing the soul to an endless life beyond what we can by reason see or know.

The ants are a people small and frail, but we see them toiling on while sunny summer days endure, bearing their precious burdens home, and yet the ant has no reason to know of the coming winter night of the year, when summer days are done. "The conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks." They can know nothing of weakness or strength, although by instinct—faith, they make their homes in craggy clefts, where they can safely hide their timid heads. The bee has no reason, and has made no improvement or change in its manner of labor or construction through all the ages, nor was it taught its wondrous building art in any school. The bees that found the honey stores of the blossoms in Eden's bowers knew just the same art of storing their sweets as do those of to-day. Many years ago the Indian roamed the valley of the Potomac, and the whole land was his; he had never heard, as we so often have, the gospel of Christ preached from the pulpit; no minister had ever told him of the crucified Christ and the resurrection, and yet his faith taught him of "Manito," (God) who had created for the just (elect) a home beyond this life, and bright visions of "happy hunting grounds" stretching away in endless charm, where softest breezes blow; where forests are always green; where the dreamy radiance from the throne of his God sheds always a delicious light, and the season was an eternal rosy June. What was the foundation and where the fountain of his faith? Did not he, the simple-minded child of the woods, know quite as much, and from the same spring, as did the polished philosopher, Plato, whose visions of eternal life embraced a heaven of thought where the good and wise would hold unending converse beneath the splendid skies and stars of paradise? The same glimmering light has danced along the path of all the children of Adam, and their wanderings have led them over every mountain, valley, plain and ocean of this earth, but through it all they have never lost their faith in a brighter land, or home, than this, beyond the bound of time, nor their hope of rest eternal after all; this has remained with the race from the beginning, giving faint but sure answer to the question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" But the glory, streaming from the cross, and the new tomb of Joseph, where our Lord and our Redeemer suffered, died, was buried and rose again, reveals to us the answer, and opens this heaven in our hearts, we "know that our Redeemer liveth," and because of that we live also. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep

in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." How sweet to know this: "that the Lord is good concerning Israel;" that Israel's (his chosen, call it election if you choose,) ways are "ordered in all things and sure," and salvation is certain, by the power and mercy of Israel's God.

We miss the bright and precious ones who met us unfailingly at these meetings, but they are not far from us, and the chain of holy love which bound our hearts to them here still holds, no matter if their mortal bodies be "buried at dear old Mt. Zion," or elsewhere. "The Lord is good concerning Israel," and though our precious ones during this time year have been brought by disease and bodily infirmity to the shore of death's river, so close that its waves have lapped their feet, we thank the God of all grace and love that those strong ones in the gospel, Elder White and Elder Badger, are with us yet for a little longer on earth. Do we not know that the "Lord is good concerning Israel," and that "his mercy endureth forever"? Forever with the Lord. And now, closing, let us add the words of the apostle to the Thessalonians (1 Thess. iv. 9): "But as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you; for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another."

Our meeting, while to many peculiarly sad, has been peculiarly sweet, and the preaching has been in demonstration of the Spirit, and with power, to the glory of God and the upbuilding of his people on their most holy faith.

Our next annual meeting is appointed to be held, by divine permission, with the Bethlehem Church, Prince William Co., Va., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1905.

J. N. BADGER, Moderator.
G. G. GALLEHER, Clerk.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Snowhill, Worcester County, Maryland, October 19th, 20th and 21st, 1904, to the churches and messengers composing the same, sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Time with its rapid wheels has brought us again to the anticipated time of our annual meeting in an associated capacity, and if we follow the line marked out by our fathers, and observed from year to year by this association in preparing this Circular, we shall have to cite you to some portion of the word of God, and to what we may discover it contains for the help of the Lord's people. To this end we will refer you to the first, second and third verses of the fourteenth chapter of the gospel of the evangelist John: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." These sayings of Jesus no doubt were intended to minister comfort to his disciples after he should be taken away from them in person. He knew what was in store for

them, though they did not, any more than a heaven-born soul does to-day, while yet in his earliest love. Jesus knew that the time was coming when the disciples would be overwhelmed with disappointment, and that this would involve them in trouble. They were to be soon driven from their present mansion, which was one of hope, of rest and perfect peace; for their hope was that he would redeem Israel literally, though not by the shedding of his blood, but in some other way. So he speaks these words to them as an antidote when it should be needed by them. When their present hopes were gone, and the sun of his presence was blotted out, and they came into a second mansion, what wonder and surprise seized upon them. They could not mourn before, but now they could do nothing but mourn over their sad experience in passing from the first to the second mansion. Now they can remember that he said to them: "Let not your heart be troubled." Why? For "ye believe in God." That is, ye believe in what holy men have written concerning him; and these holy men spoke of my sufferings, and the glory that should follow. We understand the mansions spoken of to represent the different dwelling-places of the disciples all the way through this life; and not only of the twelve, but also of all his disciples in all ages of the world. "In my Father's house are many mansions." The number will not stop with the two that we have named, but there are many. The disciples must be reminded that these mansions are all in the house of God, and are not found anywhere else, and all they that are in that house are they that dwell in these mansions, and each one must at times dwell in all of them, even though they are many, in order to have fellowship, and to be one in experience.

We judge that when the scales, as it were, fell from the eyes of the apostle Paul, he never thought of any other mansion, for he saw the glory of God, and went right on preaching what he had seen. But how soon was he brought to see another law in his members, warring against the law of his mind, which made him cry out, "O wretched man that I am!" Here is another dwelling-place, another mansion. And the same man was caught up to the third heaven, above the legal and the gospel heavens, into the full consummation of it all. What a delightful mansion. These things are spoken with reference to frames and feelings. In taking up the history or testimony of Paul during his life, see what a description he has given, not of one, or two, or three, or five, or twenty-five different conditions of mind, but of unnumbered conditions, forming the many mansions wherein he had dwelt. He does not say how long in each. Also take the life of the psalmist David, and see the many mansions or dwelling-places of which he speaks. All the holy men of old are still living examples of this, and all these dwelling-places, and all who dwell therein, are in the hand of God.

We do not think it would be instructive or edifying to the people of God to present these mansions as though one mansion applied to one child and another to another child. This would be to say that each one dwells but in one part of the house of God. Why is it that the Lord's people are brought so closely together and become so endeared as they give an account of the road they are traveling, and of their differest dwelling-places? It is that each one's heart responds, and says, I have dwelt there and there. Here is one of the ways by which we find out that we are in the house of God. We

have found so many dwelling-places when faith is triumphing and Jesus is near. What blessed mansions are these. But when one is left in a state of questioning and unbelief, what a different mansion. When one's path seems to be lit up with the light of life how beautiful does the way appear. There is a mansion when darkness, such as can be felt, falls upon us. Then how desolate we feel, and we say, There is no one like me. When all know more or less of these things for themselves then each is a witness, and the same gospel is glad tidings to each one. Then having these marks invisibly when the visible house is in order, and its order is declared, each one finds himself or herself dwelling there, having passed in and out, each in his measure, in all these different mansions.

The author of this writing, during the fifty-three years of his pilgrimage, has been in and out of all these peculiar dwelling-places, sometimes rejoicing, sometimes mourning, sometimes believing, sometimes doubting, sometimes the spiritual sky clear and beautiful, and at other times dark and fearful, sometimes caught up to the third heaven, and seeing the glory of God beyond the power of tongue to express, and at other times feeling that the pains of hell have taken hold on him, sometimes wanting to read the Bible and yet cannot, and at other times no interference can hinder, sometimes seemingly in prison and unable to come forth by all the effort that he can make. These and many other changes to our mind make up the many mansions, and if we did not believe, as we have for a long time, that these different places constitute the finishing of the house of God, we should have sunk in despair. So much for the mansions.

He said, "I go to prepare a place for you." We do not think that he meant here the heaven of immortal glory, but to open the way by which we are prepared for that world. Heaven has been the home of the elect of God from all eternity, as was Canaan the home of the seed of Abraham. But the law with its demands must be met, and the sword of justice taken out of the way, and then the Spirit begins to make its call, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of God is risen upon thee." Now the house of God is set up within these scattered pilgrims and strangers in the land; he has come without sin unto salvation to set up or establish the place which he has prepared for them; we call it the church of Jesus Christ, the pillar and ground of the truth. There he has established his name as a King who shall reign in righteousness, and here he has authorized his twelve princes to rule in judgment. His glorious reign and the sweet decisions or judgments of his princes, form the drawing magnet of the place thus prepared; and this magnet has more power or control over the circumcised in heart and ears than all the pipe organs and well arranged music can ever have to the natural mind, because Jesus is there; and Jesus lives in them, and walks in them, and dwells in them. Thus he is fulfilling his word, steadily drawing and receiving them unto himself. While his church is in the world it is not of the world, but is separated from it. These sorrowful strangers are brought together, and find that their lives for a certain length of time have been alike, dwelling in tabernacles, as it is declared, with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and with each other in all these varied mansions. How they love to talk with each other of the glory of these places to which they have been brought, and also to speak of

the power which has caused this great wonder to appear with might. The psalmist said, Beautiful for situation is Mount Zion. All these things, brethren, does God do for his people here in time to bring them and to keep them in touch with the fullness of his glory, that glory which awaits them in the realms of immortality, when he shall finally bring them to himself. They come to remain, for his glory holds them as the magnet does the needle; they cannot get away from the magnet. They are drawn by the power of God, kept by the power of God, and all will terminate in never-ceasing praise to his great name.

T. M. POULSON, Moderator.
JOHN H. TRUITT, Clerk.
GEORGE W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Schoharie Church, October 5th and 6th, 1904, to the associations with which we correspond, sends greeting.

THIS, another session of our association about to close, has been one to be remembered by us as blessed of the Lord, and we are spared to again send you our epistle of love and fellowship, and unto that God who neither slumbers nor sleeps, and who has promised to be with his little ones to the end, be all praise, honor and glory. We are, as it were, only a handful of believers, poor, weak and ignorant, but our only hope and trust is in that great and wonderful God who has all power both in heaven and earth, who speaks, and it is done; commands, and it stands fast. Our meeting has been, on the whole, harmonious, and the spirit of brotherly love has prevailed throughout. Your Minutes have been received, and we desire a continuance of your correspondence.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Lexington Church, Greene Co., N. Y., on the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, 1905, where we hope to meet your messengers again.

JOHN CLARK, Moderator.
G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, to sister associations with whom she corresponds, sendeth christian salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Through the goodness and mercy of God we have been permitted to meet together in an associate capacity. We cannot cheer your hearts, dear brethren, by informing you of great additions to our churches, yet we rejoice to know from God's precious word that he will not give his glory to another, and that all power is in his hands. We do earnestly desire a continuance of your brotherly love and fellowship. Brethren, pray for us, that the blessed Lord will raise up and qualify able ministers to come among us, of the New Testament to proclaim the faith once delivered to the saints, relying upon the promise that the Lord will be with them to the end of the world.

Our next association, if God will, is ordered to meet with the Providence Church, Bedford Co., Pa., on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1905, where we hope to meet in christian love.

A. MELLOTT, Moderator.
J. E. GORE, Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER H. J. Redd has changed his address from Riverview, Ala., to Jacksonville, Ala., where his correspondents may address him.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1904.

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EDITOR:
F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

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BRIEF REPLIES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ELDER A. R. McPherson, of Jasper, Ark., has written desiring some thoughts with regard to the parable recorded in Luke xviii. 1–8.

The intent of the parable is declared in the first verse of this chapter. It is to the end that men ought always to pray and not to faint. Whatever difficulty there may be in understanding the different expressions of the parable, this one thought is the uppermost, and we will add, the only thought in the Savior's mind when he uttered it. It is clear that it is intended as an encouragement to the tried, tempted and persecuted children of God, who in their sorrows, burdens and trials are driven to God in prayer, and who do not find deliverance at once. Often they become discouraged, and vile unbelief suggests that God does not hear, that he is indifferent to his children, that he does not concern himself with the affairs of men, that even if this be so, they themselves are not the special objects of his care; Satan suggests to them that God has forsaken them, or that they never knew him, and that he never knew them as his children. If they were known of him why does he not heed their cry, and come down and deliver them? Like the psalmist, their souls are cast down within them, while the enemy says continually to them, "Where is thy God?" With the disciples then, and for generations afterward, there was bitter persecution, and they were subjected to the loss of home and property and friends, to imprisonment, or banishment, or death, and in these straits they often cried unto God for help and for deliverance, which yet did not come to them. Unbelief would say, What is the use of prayer? It is all in vain that we cry to God in our distress. Surely he has forgotten to be gracious. At such times the disciples needed all the encouragement which the word of the Redeemer, spoken in this parable, could give. And Jesus, knowing all these trials which should come to them, with compassion on their sufferings and weakness spoke these gracious words to them, and under the illustration of the poor widow and the unjust judge he sets before them the certainty that God does hear and will hear when his distressed children cry to him, that he is not unmindful of their petitions, even though his response may seem to them to be long delayed, and teaches them that God will help them, and that right early.

In the parable is described a judge, unjust, regarding not man and fearing not God, and a poor widow on the other hand, unknown to the judge and of no account in his sight. If he regarded not man, certainly he would have no regard for this poor widow, who could not possibly have any influence with him. A striking contrast is here drawn between the judge and the poor widow. Yet this judge, hard, selfish, careless of the rights of others, mindful only of his own advancement or ease, is driven into hearing her cause against her adversary, because poor

as she is, weak as she is, without friends as she is, she ceases not to importune him. In his heart he is represented as saying, Though I fear not God, nor regard man, yet because she wearies me I will avenge her. He is represented as deciding to avenge her of her adversary for the sake of his own ease, and not because he desires to do her justice, or even because he has any sympathy for her. A hard, unfeeling man is urged into taking this step solely out of the desire to avoid her importunity. Now if this hard, unjust judge can be moved by the continual crying of this poor widow into acting as she desires, and avenging her of her adversary, how much more will the merciful, kind, loving Father hear his children when they cry unto him. Though the answer may seem to be long delayed, and though many of them suffer even unto death for the faith that is in them, they may be sure that deliverance will come, that he will indeed avenge his own elect which cry day and night unto him. His people cry not unto an unjust judge, but unto a loving Father and Friend, who is represented as bending down his ear to hear their cry, as one who listens that he may hear what to him is most precious. All this is most encouraging to the afflicted and distressed. Yet how unbelieving are we all. This is expressed by the Savior's solemn question, verse eight: "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" That is, this kind of faith, the faith that waits for the Lord, and is patient under the great tribulations of the way. How sore is the conflict between faith and unbelief, between the flesh and the Spirit. How much we need continued encouragement, and how tenderly does the dear Redeemer minister that encouragement in times of need.

BROTHER Riley Bean, of Siller, Oklahoma, desires some reflections on the words found in Hebrews ii. 14, 15.

The meaning seems to be, that the people of God are men and women of Adam's fallen race, and as such are partakers of flesh and blood with all the rest of mankind, so that all are by nature alike children of wrath, deserving of death and everlasting punishment. There is no difference by nature between the elect and the non-elect, all are alike earthen vessels, but all are not vessels of mercy. The words also teach that as the people of God are men and women, and thus partakers of flesh and blood, and as in this flesh and blood they sinned in Adam their head, and also have sinned personally and actually, and are defiled altogether; in order to redeem the objects of his love and his choice it was needful that Jesus also should become a man, and be clothed with flesh and blood, that he might bear their sins and suffer in the flesh for their sins. As they had sinned in the flesh, so must the penalty be inflicted in the flesh, and he who suffered freely for them must therefore suffer in the flesh, that he might redeem his vessels of mercy from death and hell, that they might be justified freely by his grace and live forever.

It is through his death that he conquered death itself in behalf of his chosen, therefore death can have no dominion over them. He took not on him the nature of angels. This is all a great and wonderful mystery, but it is the plain testimony of the word of God, and it is true, and must be received in faith. What a deliverance is here presented; they who are partakers of this grace are delivered from the bondage of sin and death, and from fear, and from the power of Satan, unto God. All this is wrought

through the one atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ, who thus has abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. This is the sum and substance of the gospel message; it is gracious and glorious, and upon it the hope of the believer rests. This it is that upholds him in the present trials, and that gives him the victory over death; it is in this that he hopes under all the temptations and trials of this life, it is this that alone has power to cheer the sick and dying. Jesus has, through death, conquered death, and conquered it for the poor, vile sinner. Hence the apostle could say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" To the believer in this salvation death ceases to be dreadful, and comes to be desired, as one who is weary desires sleep, sleep from which the weary awake refreshed when the morning of a new day shall come. It is this hope of waking again that robs death of its terror. This hope we have through the atoning work of the Redeemer. The Scripture referred to by our brother contains all this and more than we could say were we to continue to write upon it at much greater length.

Is it the duty of all men to repent and believe the gospel?

Some time since this question was asked in our hearing, and ever since then we have felt like saying a few things concerning it. We are not sure that we know just what the question signified in the mind of the friend asking it. We have seen it stated all our life, in Arminian publications, that this was the duty of all men, and that the one thing that finally condemned men was that they rejected the gospel and did not repent. Of late we have seen it asserted by some who bear the name of Old School Baptists, in some sections, that the above assertion of Arminians is true, and that it is the duty of all men to repent and to believe the gospel. We can but judge, as repentance is named as a duty, that it is intended to assert also that it is the duty of all men to accept the gospel, and that by "believing" the gospel it is intended to mean "to accept" it. In other words, the meaning must be that the non-elect are in duty bound to believe that Christ died for them after performing the duty of repentance. Men are thus told that it is their duty to become sorrowful for their sins, and to turn away from their sins, (for repentance means this) and then that it is their duty to believe or accept the gospel, which of course must mean that they must accept the work of Christ in the redemption of sinners by his death and resurrection from the dead, for the justification and final salvation of his people. This must mean that the non-elect are in duty bound to believe a falsehood, since Christ did not die for the non-elect, and it can be no man's duty to believe a falsehood.

The question as to whether repentance is a duty or not for the non-elect, does not seem to us to belong to the ministry of the gospel at all. To preach the gospel is to preach a finished salvation in and through our Lord Jesus Christ; and to preach the gospel is to preach that salvation is a gift from first to last. In this gift of salvation is included repentance and faith, according to the testimony of the word of God. These things are for the elect alone. God does not give repentance, the remission of sins and faith to any but his chosen. Those who preach the gospel are in so doing to declare the lost condition of all men by reason of transgression; they are to preach not that

all men will be lost if they do not repent and accept the gospel, but that all men are already lost, already condemned; no man of all Adam's race is awaiting future condemnation, but is already condemned. There never has been a greater perversion of the word than that which declares that there is any condemnation outside of the law of God; it is to pervert the very design of the gospel to say that there is any provision in it to condemn any man. Men are not lost, and do not perish for not believing the gospel, but because they are already under the curse, and have been so ever since the fall of their first father, Adam. To rightly understand this is needful before any one can understand or preach the gospel. He who seeks to place the element of condemnation anywhere in the gospel, seeks to destroy the very essence of the gospel, and takes away all liberty from it. The gospel is thus made to appear another yoke of bondage. By this teaching every gospel principle is eliminated from the gospel, and only a dry and dead husk remains. The swine will eat this husk, but the poor prodigal will starve upon it. The fact that any man does not believe the gospel, and finds no beauty in it, shows that he is still abiding under the condemnation of the law, which he has been under all the time. But when God shows a man his need of salvation, through the work of the law upon his conscience, then he is prepared to receive the glad tidings of full and free salvation through Jesus Christ, as presented in the gospel. Then as he comes to believe and rejoice in the gospel, it is manifest that he is no longer under condemnation, for he has been redeemed by the blood of Christ, and has passed from death unto life.

It seems clear that it is not the duty of any man to believe what is not true, neither is it the duty of any minister or believer to exhort men to believe an untruth. Therefore it is not, and cannot be the duty of any man to say to another, You must believe that Jesus died for you, because Jesus did not die for all men. If any man not chosen to salvation is induced by any human argument or excitement to believe that Jesus died for him, he is not therefore a child of God. To so believe does not prove that it is so, but that he is deceived. But when the gospel comes as glad tidings to a sorrowing sinner, there is evident the work of the grace of God in his elect, and there is full testimony that Jesus died for that one, and that his faith is of God, and is not in vain; the hope of such an one is not the hope of the hypocrite which perishes.

It is not the duty of the gospel minister to preach morality to the dead in sin, but the gospel to the living in Jerusalem. It is not a part of the ministry which God has given to his ministers to urge natural men to practice morality. Moses has those who preach him continually, even in this age of the world. Let the followers of Moses attend to this work, but let gospel ministers preach the gospel of salvation. Let the followers of Moses continue to bind heavy burdens on men, but let the ministers of the gospel continue to show forth him who has borne all burdens and all sorrows for us. Let us preach deliverance to the captive, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, through Jesus Christ.

If it be the duty of unregenerate men to repent, it is sure that they cannot perform that duty. God's own living children know that if it be the duty of themselves to repent, they are not able to fulfill it, hence they rejoice in the glad tid-

ings that Jesus is exalted a Prince and a Savior to give repentance to them. Be it their duty or not, they know that they can never repent until it is given them of God, and it seems but reasonable to say that if the living children must have repentance as a gift, else they will never repent, much more is it impossible for the dead in sin to repent and believe. All these good and perfect gifts are in Christ for his elect people, but all the rest of mankind are justly left to perish because of their sins, as without Christ and his glorious work of redemption the chosen would also perish, being by nature the children of wrath even as others. If these seem to be hard sayings, they are the sayings of God in his word, and if any have any quarrel with them, their quarrel is with the God who has spoken them, and not with those who reverently receive his words.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder John McConnell, at the home of the bride, June 15th, 1904, Louis F. Higinbotham and Miss Katherine J. McConnell, both of New York city.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, at the home of the bride's parents', near Wango, Wicomico Co., Md., August 11th, 1904, Elmer J. Johnson and Effia E. Lenord.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Ann Wheatley Byrd departed this life at the home of her grandson-in-law, near Atlantic, Va., Sept. 15th, after a lingering illness, since July, with dropsy and heart trouble, aged about 80 years. She told me that as her physical powers grew weaker, her faith and hope grew stronger. She filled her place well as a companion, mother, neighbor, and also in the church, as long as she was able. She had been a member of the Old School Baptist Church at Messongoes, Accomac Co., Va., fifty-nine years, being baptized by Elder Thomas Waters. The SIGNS was one of her loving companions. Thus the Lord is removing his children from the church militant to the church triumphant, leaving now only one that was a member when the poor writer of this notice joined, in the year 1852. When one drops out we miss them so much from our little company, but we want to be submissive and say, Thy will, O Lord, be done. We have hope that she is taken from the evil to come. She leaves to mourn their loss one daughter, one son, three grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, with the church.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer; text used, 1 Peter i. 5, after which her remains were laid to rest until the resurrection morn.

T. M. POULSON.

IT becomes my sad duty, by request of relatives of our sister, **Indiana Wyatt,** to send a notice of her death for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Our sister was born in Louisville, Barbour Co., Ala., May 25th, 1852, and died in Upshur Co., Texas, Sept. 15th, 1904, making her stay on earth 52 years, 3 months and 21 days. Her maiden name was McClendon. She was married to George F. Wyatt, June 18th, 1868, who still survives. To them were born thirteen children, two dying in infancy. Sister Wyatt joined the New School Baptists in Alabama at the age of fifteen, but becoming dissatisfied with them (having with her family moved to Texas in 1877) she united with the Old School or Primitive Baptists at Beulah church, in Lee Co., Texas, in 1877, and was baptized by Elder S. R. Woods. We are informed by her husband, brother Wyatt, that she continued steadfast in the faith of salvation by grace alone until death ended her mortal career.

For the comfort of the bereaved I would drop the thought, that one who believes in salvation by grace alone must themselves have felt the need of, and personally experienced, grace in salvation; must have seen and felt themselves lost, ruined and undone, utterly without power to relieve their distress, and in this extremity the hope of pardon administered by the holy Spirit is the first experience of grace. When one joins and is received into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptists, having failed to find a resting-place elsewhere, it is evident that they have a personal knowledge of salvation by grace. Then if this be true, it is evident that they are special objects of God's love and mercy, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, who has prayed for them thus: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."—John xvii. 24. At the grave of Lazarus Jesus thus addressed his Father: "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always." If Jesus has thus prayed for all his, and his Father always hears him, and they have left us abiding evidence that they are his, can we not comfortingly believe that they are now in spirit at rest with Jesus? And though we mourn our loss, we may still rejoice in the hope and belief that in spirit they are at rest, and in the day which God hath appointed they shall

awake in the likeness of the blessed Jesus, no more to bear the image of the earthy, but to for evermore bear the image of the heavenly. We are told that our vile body shall be changed, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. (Phil. iii. 21.) Again, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."—1 Cor. xv. 51-53. When all this has been accomplished, then shall be manifest the truth of the saying, that "death is swallowed up in victory." The world to which we pass is not a natural one, but spiritual, hence we are no more to know and be known as fathers and mothers, wives and children, and brothers and sisters, for our relationship to this natural world ceases when we lie down in death. But we awake in the resurrection day which God hath appointed, in the likeness of the risen Savior; then shall we be satisfied.

May these and like thoughts comfort those who mourn. H. B. JONES.

MT. VERNON, Texas, Oct. 12, 1904.

MEETINGS.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 72. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1904. NO. 22.

POETRY.

OUT OF THE DEPTHS.

Out of the depths of the weakness of sin,
Where I am quickened to wrestle in prayer,
Lord of my heritage, let me begin
Sweetly to rest in thy guardian care.

I am polluted in action and thought;
Thou art most holy, supremely benign;
Thine is the merit for all thou hast wrought;
Base and deceitful this nature of mine.

Out of the depths of this woe I would call,
Hear me, O Lord, from thy glorified throne;
Thou in thy righteousness ruleth o'er all;
Let me thy kingdom and sovereignty own.

Teach me, submissive, to love thy decree
In this vain earth, as in heaven 'tis done,
Giving this day daily bread unto me;
Through thy shed blood is the victory won.

Father, forgive me, in meekness I call,
Teaching me patience and pardon to give
Freely for trespass and debits to all,
E'en as thou grantest this debtor to live.

Out of these depths I must constantly call,
Weak though my thoughts are and faint my desire,
Halting and weeping, though daily I fall,
Weakness and needs my petitions inspire.

Out of the darkness when heaven seems barred,
Shut from my hope by the clouds in the sky,
Still my petitions they cannot retard,
The voice of my pleading thou hearest on high.

Let but thy sweetness of mercy be shown
Here in the shades of the valley of death,
Then are the gleamings of light from thy throne
Piercing the darkness that hovers beneath.

Still from these depths I incessantly call,
Till the last shadow shall break in the sky,
Then shall I see thee, dear Sovereign of all,
Unveiled in thy glory, eternal on high.

Thine is the glory and kingdom and power,
Thine be the praises of angels and men;
Thine be the worship each infinite hour,
Thine be the glory forever. Amen.

[Selected.]

CORRESPONDENCE.

Baltimore, Md., Oct. 16, 1904.

Elder F. A. Chick—Dear Brother in Christ:—I have some manuscript which I wish to send you for publication, and I find it necessary to write a few lines in explanation as to how it came to be in my possession.

Dear sister Lizzie Grafton met with a severe accident nearly two years ago, since then she has not been able to go to meeting. Elder Rowe is a faithful pastor, and preaches at her home once in awhile on the night of the fourth Sunday. Last April, on the night of the fourth Sunday, many of us were there, and he spoke from the hymn, "Come, thou Fount of every blessing," and we all could say, It is good to be here, for we realized it was a heavenly place in Christ Jesus. It reminded me of the words of Joshua when

he spake to the children of Israel: "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee this forty years in the wilderness." Yes, to this poor sinner, who it seemed to me had been shut up in gloom, and almost without hope and without God in the world, and had almost lost sight of the waymarks of the past, and without a sign that the Lord would ever again be gracious or show unto me the joy of his salvation, it was an opening of the prison doors, giving liberty to the captive, and was like a blessed, refreshing shower to the thirsty ground and withering grass. As he began to speak from the words of that beautiful hymn, the darkness began to melt away, the gloom dispel and the waymarks came again in view, and I could say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." It was this discourse that was so sweet to sister Grafton that she had to write to her kindred and tell them some of her feelings; the letter which she wrote was published in the SIGNS of August 1st. It was one of the most pleasant of meetings to all present. Elder Rowe was at my home a few days after, and as we were speaking about it, I told him I wished I could have it written; I did not think of such a thing as to ask it of him. He said it came in his mind that morning (before he preached that evening,) with very much sweetness, and he could not get it off his mind, and that was why he spoke to us from that hymn instead of taking a text from the Bible. Some time after he was here it came to his mind again, but not with the same sweetness as before, and then he wrote it for me. He did not know that I wanted to send it for publication. This is not exactly the same discourse, but the substance is the same. He talked, I think, very nearly an hour, and this is only a short sketch on the same subject, but it is very good and comforting to the weary, and I hope you will think proper to give it a place in our household paper, the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. This paper has been wonderfully sustained by the Giver of all good, for as one faithful soldier of the staff after another has been called home God raises up others, so the dear old paper is still kept up to its first standard, and may you, its present editor, long be spared to the cause, to wield "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," is the hope and prayer of your most unworthy sister, if such a sinner dare claim spiritual relationship,

(MRS.) P. J. DRYDEN.

"COME, thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing thy grace."

The poet must have known something of the fullness of God, for he is indeed the giver of every good and perfect gift, and he alone can come to a poor sinner, for he is the only true and living God; and he who sees his fullness and glory desires to praise him, but seeing his own weakness and sin realizes that his heart is out of tune, and therefore the prayer: "Tune my heart to sing thy grace." How often we have desired to join in his praise and could not, even though others right in our midst were full of his love and praise; but our hearts were so humbled we cried to him in our low estate to restore unto us the joy of his salvation, that we might indeed praise him for his grace.

"Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise."

Yes, as we look back over the past, we see that his mercy has been one constant stream, and how fitting it is that we should continually bless and praise his holy name. So we ask him again to

"tune our hearts to sing his praise," for we now see how true it is that without him we can do nothing, no, not even to praise him for the mercy we daily receive. His untiring love calls for the loudest praise. This does not consist in loud noise and false pretense, but in perfect devotion in walk and conversation, which is impossible without the presence of his gracious Spirit, which makes our hearts merry and sets our tongues at liberty, and then our souls go away in songs of praise, and our feet delight to walk the path that the lowly Jesus trod.

"Teach me some melodious sonnet,
Sung by flaming tongues above."

This acknowledges our ignorance, and shows our feelings of dependence upon our God to teach us to sing the glory of his blessed name; and when the Lord enables us for a moment to get away from self and fleshly desires, Jesus is in our souls and we sing as do the flaming tongues above, God is glorified, and his will is now done in earth as it is in heaven.

"Praise the mount! O fix me on it!
Mount of God's unchanging love."

Is not this a mount indeed to be thus raised up from dust and ashes by God's almighty and loving hand? Praise the mount, for it is Christ in you the hope of glory. Peter, James and John found it good to be here, and wished to stay in this lovely place. Yes, they wanted to be fixed on it, for it is the mount of God's unchanging love. He who has loved thee, poor sinner, will love thee to the end.

"Here I raise my Ebenezer;
Hither by thy help I'm come."

It is in this mount of God's love that we can raise a song of praise, and nowhere else, because we realize that it is alone by the good pleasure of Jesus our Lord that we have come to this mount of his love and his name is now glorious, and having done such great and glorious things for us, as saith the apostle, he hath delivered, he doth deliver, and in him we trust that he will yet deliver us. Hence the saying:

"And I hope, by thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home."

Though many storms and tempests rise Jesus will be with you always, even to the end. His power is over all flesh. He has conquered all the powers of darkness, and has said, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." He says, "Because I live, ye shall live also." Then whatever may oppose, his children shall arrive safely at home.

"Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God."

O what a wonder! Yes, wonder of wonders, that the perfectly holy God should love vile and imperfect man, a stranger to his grace, wandering from his fold, saying, We will not have the man Christ Jesus to reign over us; and yet he, the God of the heavens and the earth, comes as a man, saying, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost," and because of his everlasting love, his cleansing blood is applied, and ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the household of faith, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. For

"He, to save my soul from danger,
Interposed his precious blood."

Which blood cleanseth from all sin, and as there is nothing in our hands to bring, the Father is pleased with nothing else. How glad we are, and ought to be, that Jesus died for us. Bless his holy name.

"O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be."

With what force this expression strikes

the child of God who realizes his many short comings. O how far short he does come, and cannot give thanks and praise equal to the many mercies he daily receives from the hand of God. He feels that he owes himself and his all to the meek and lowly Jesus who has done such great things for him. He died and rose again for him, that he might have eternal life, and sustains life by giving himself to the poor sinner as his bread, water and raiment. Could his mind be always on the goodness and mercy of his Savior, and his tongue always speaking his praise, he could never make equal returns for the great love wherewith the Lord has loved him; he would still feel to be a debtor, unable to pay, and therefore would pray in all his prayers,

"Let that grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee."

O that the grace, love and truth of our God would fetter our hearts, bind them closer to the dear Savior, and keep them from wandering away on foolish and unprofitable things as they often do, to our shame and the dishonor of the blessed cause. Let Jesus and his wonderful love be our theme while in this world we stay. "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life;" "with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin," hence the feelings and exclamation:

"Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it!
Prone to leave the God I love."

This is awful in the mind of the child of grace, that he should in any way or for any cause be inclined to stray from such a loving Father of mercy; the thought often makes him sigh, and say, "O wretched man that I am!" Yes, in this tabernacle we groan, being burdened, but there is hope for such a miserable sinner. All men in their nature are prone to wander from God, but all men do not feel it. Then to feel it is a sure evidence of life, and life is the gift of God, and the life that God gives to the sinner is eternal life; it is Christ in you the hope of glory. Do you see yourself far separated from God by wicked works? Do you see him just and holy in your condemnation? Do you see that if you are saved it is purely his mercy? Then blessed are your eyes, for they see. Do you hear the sentence of death in yourself because of sin? Do you hear the kind words of Jesus speaking to you, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden"? Then blessed are your ears, for they hear. And O what a comfort to know that our God knoweth all things. Then as well as knowing your proneness to wander from him, he knows that deep down in your heart you love him and hate the sin that makes the breach between you and your Savior, and he, being tempted, is able to succor them that are tempted. He feels your infirmities, and says, The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak. He is so kind in every way: he bears our sin and pleads the merits of his blood before his Father, that we say, and feel the power of our words in a heart overcome by love,

"Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it;
Seal it for thy courts above."

This can but be the feeling of every child of God, since he must leave this world of sin and tears, where in the midst of all this sorrow and pain, disappointment and sin, the dear Lord sometimes shows us his glory, on the mount of his unchanging love. If the manifestation of his love is so full of joy and peace, and makes us forget our misery as it sometimes does, what must the fullness of that glory be that eye hath not seen nor ear heard? The heart then could say nothing more

pleasing than Take my heart and seal it for thy courts above. Sometimes the question arises: Are such glories as these for such sinners as we? Yes, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." Sinners lost and ruined by the fall; deaf, dumb, blind, and dead in sin; but "you hath he quickened;" glorious thought, made alive in Christ, and Christ lives in you, and you shall live in and with him forever. Holy and reverend is his name. Amen.

J. T. ROWE.

[THE former article from brother Pace, in which he gave such an interesting account of his experience of grace, will be remembered by our readers we doubt not. That which here follows was sent to us in connection with the former, but as both together were too lengthy to appear in the same number, we have delayed this to the present time. We trust that brother Pace will excuse us.—ED.]

As a starting point I will begin with June 1st, 1903. This you will remember was a little more than two months after I had realized deliverance from my burden on account of a felt sense of sin. I cannot describe the joy that possessed me all that day. About 10 o'clock, as well as I can remember, the impression came to me that the Lord required me to comfort his people with the comfort wherewith I was comforted. At first I was startled, then the thought of rebellion came into my mind. I tried to put away the impression, but it grew stronger and heavier the more I tried to get rid of it, until I was compelled to say, Lord, I am willing, only enable me to do the work whereunto thou hast called me. Then was my joy full, and for a time I could hardly keep about my work. While at work my mind was upon the things of God continually, and I was never at a loss to bring to memory any passage of Scripture I desired. In this exercise of mind I was often lost to the things of this world, and would have no thought of the work I was doing. (For more of my experience along here see SIGNS OF THE TIMES for July 15th, 1904, page 433.)

After joining the Primitive Baptists I realized my weakness and unworthiness more than ever before, but I was still confident of my calling, and felt that the Lord would enable me to go forward in the discharge of my duty. Our pastor, Elder W. M. Bryan, was in very low health when I was baptized in August. In September he was hardly able to come to our meeting, and a few days before our meeting in October the thought came to me that brother Bryan would not be able to preach at that time, and I felt sure of being called upon to say something. While these thoughts were in my mind, the first verse of the fortieth chapter of Isaiah came to me, and I thought, If I were only at the church I could speak much to their comfort. I thought it would be the greatest privilege and blessing ever bestowed upon man to be enabled of God to speak in his name to the comfort and edification of his beloved people. So the time of meeting came, and brother Bryan was not able to be there, and I was called upon for the first time to exercise my gift. I made the attempt, but soon had to sit down. I felt that I was such a failure, and not receiving a single word of encouragement from the brethren I was discouraged, and after that whenever called upon I would refuse. The more I thought of their manifested indifference toward me, the more

cast down I felt, and I sank lower and lower until I could not realize the blessed assurance of my Savior's presence, and could no longer feel the impressions which were once so clear to me. O the troubles that came upon me from every hand. How often would I say to myself in grief that was too deep for tears, "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow." In this sad condition I determined to speak no more in the name of the Lord until I obtained greater evidence that the Lord was guiding me, and that his everlasting arms were beneath me. I had about concluded that I was deceived in my calling, and sometimes I felt that I had never known the Lord. Eight months in sorrow passed by without my making another effort to talk in public. On Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1904, the brethren manifested an unusual interest in me, and I was persuaded to make my second attempt to speak to an assembly of people. I stood but a few minutes, and was left in the same darkness and unfeelingness of mind I had been in all the time. I tried to be content in this joyless state of mind, but there was no quietness for me. We had no meeting at our church in July. I had found no relief from my troubles when I wrote to brother Chick on Friday night, August 12th. After folding what I had written to him together with the first part of this letter, I lay down with a burdened heart, and my troubles were so great I turned on my face and began to unburden my soul unto the Lord. My supplication was, Lord, if I am deceived in my calling, and thou hast not put this burden upon me, undeceive me and deliver me from all my troubles. But if not deceived, and thou hast called me unto thy work, strengthen my evidence and deliver me from this spirit of rebellion, and enable me to go forward in the discharge of my duty. My supplication continued until I was in a deep sleep and was dreaming. I was at a place of meeting where I recognized only two men: Elders J. A. Hill and W. S. Dotson. When the preacher had read some Scripture he sat down, and from some cause I was deeply impressed to speak, but I had been standing only a short time when my mind was left in darkness, and I stood there in silence. While thus standing I realized that in my hand was a table of stone, which I felt was given me as a sign of my calling. I had no thought as to when it had been given me, but I was assured it was given me by the Lord as an evidence that he had called me to declare his gospel. While realizing these things I heard brother Hill talking to brother Dotson in regard to the interest they had manifested toward me. I do not recall the words of brother Hill, but brother Dotson's reply was: "Yes, we were intending to liberate him at our August meeting." By this time I was ready to speak on two passages of Scripture (Dan. iv. 35, and Jer. xvii. 7,) which came into my mind, but before I could quote them I awoke from this part of my dream. I was yet asleep, but felt that I was awake, and began to rejoice because the Lord had given me the assurance that my impressions were his dealings with me. I was shouting aloud and praising God for this revelation and deliverance, and I remember only these words, which I repeated several times: Lord God of heaven and earth. My joy was full; I was happy in him once again, and I felt that I would ever be willing to speak in the name of the Lord if he gave me utterance. While in this joyful state I came to another place of meeting, and the first man I recog-

nized was Elder E. W. J. Adams. I was so glad to meet him, and wanted to tell him my joyful deliverance. The last time I had heard brother Adams preach my mind was in such a state of darkness I could not enjoy his preaching. I had heard him preach only three times before this, and it was the best preaching to me I had ever heard. But when I heard him on Saturday before I began this writing on Monday, it was not comforting to me as his preaching was before. I make mention of these things that you may know why I was so glad to meet brother Adams at that place of worship, and this was why I wanted to tell him of my joy. He seemed to know my feelings, and wanted me to take his Bible and begin talking at once. I did not want to take his Bible at first, but when he insisted I took it and was going to read the two passages of Scripture which appeared to me in my dream. But I was interrupted as before when I was going to speak from these Scriptures. I awoke and found that I had been dreaming all the time. At first I wondered what it all could have meant, for I had never had a dream to leave such an impression upon me, but I realized my troubles were all gone, and my doubts and fears were no more, and I felt to rejoice that this was the dealing of the Lord with me. My first thought was to thank God for deliverance, but I could only say, Lord, thou art righteous, for I have rebelled against thy commandment, and began to weep for joy. My wife was disturbed, and wanted to know what was the matter. I tried to tell her my feelings, but could not. I told her I had been dreaming, and then said, "You know the burden that has been upon my mind for some time; I have been trying to get rid of it. I wish I could tell you some of my feelings now. O, I wish brother Adams was here;" and again I began weeping for joy. This was the first time in my life that I was so full of joy I could not control myself. It is useless for me to attempt to describe my happiness at that time. This was the first change of all my experience (except the impression I received June 1st, 1903,) which was sudden enough for me to tell when and where it took place. The impressions I received over a year ago came upon me suddenly, but I have been denying this call whenever I have said I could not tell the time and place of the changes of my experience. This rebelliousness caused me a great deal of sorrow, much more than I am able to tell, but I trust it was for my good, and for the good of God's people, because I was thereby brought into fellowship with others who are cast down, which could not have been done in any other way, since this is the way the Lord had determined to make his power known in delivering me out of all my troubles. This was just a week before our August meeting, but it seemed a month to me. I was anxious to meet the brethren, and I wanted to tell them of my rebelliousness, my burdens on account of it, and my wonderful deliverance. Time seemed to pass so slow, yet I was happy all the day long. I realized my weakness and unworthiness as much or more than ever, but I rejoiced to feel that the Lord had manifested his loving-kindness and tender mercy toward me once more, and I was willing to take up my cross and follow him wherever he led, trusting in him alone for support and the ability to do his will. Not that I expected a reward for what I might do; the very thought of such a thing was as far from me as the doctrine of conditionalism is from the doctrine of grace, but

my desire was to praise God and honor his holy name for what he had already done for me. In this blessedness and peace I spent the long-to-be-remembered week. Brother Adams came to our meeting, and I was again comforted by his preaching, after which I related some of my experience, speaking from these words: "The Lord is righteous; for I have rebelled against his commandment." The church then formally declared my liberty to speak in public wherever the Lord directed me. On Sunday I attempted to speak from the Scriptures which appeared to me in my dream, but was not enabled to say much, and I felt that what I had spoken was unprofitable. But the Lord will see to that. I trust I shall ever be reconciled to the failures I may make, knowing that "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I know I am nothing, and without him I can do nothing, but my heart's desire is to be used of God to the comfort and consolation of those who are strangers and pilgrims here in this world, trusting I may be traveling with them in the footsteps of the flock.

Brethren, I deserve nothing at your hands, neither at the hands of the Lord, but I humbly ask your sympathy, your prayers and your forbearance in my weakness and sinfulness.

Your little brother,

ROBT. S. PACE.

WARWICK, N. Y., Oct. 22, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR:—Some of the brethren wish me to write and send my experience to the SIGNS, so I will inclose what I wrote to Elder Wm. M. Mitchell in July, 1881. Do with it as you see proper.

WARWICK, N. Y., July, 1881.

ELDER WM. M. MITCHELL—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I enjoyed your epistle of christian love, which I received yesterday, so much that I took it to our little meeting to-day, and read it to the brethren and sisters who had gathered together for worship; they also enjoyed it with me.

I sat down thinking I might try to write some of my first experience. I cannot say, like some, that I ever hated the old order of Primitive Baptists. Some years ago, when they were in church trouble, I tried to hate them as others seemed to do, but could not. This makes me think perhaps I never had a christian experience. I cannot tell when I first began to love the dear people of God. Ever since I had any religious reflections or impressions, I have had a great desire to be an Old Primitive Baptist, if I ever should be anything. But trouble came among those churches with whom I was best acquainted, and I began to go among other sects; I loved to hear the truth preached from any of God's under-shepherds. At times it would come to me with great power, and I desired to cast in my lot with the poor and afflicted people of God, but it would be suggested: You are not fit, you will bring reproach upon the cause. I was waiting, thinking to get better, but that time never came. When the church here at Warwick was passing through sore trials, some fourteen years ago, previous to 1881, I went to many different places to see if I could find a place among some of them, as those with whom I had desired to live were in trouble; I found no resting-place. At one time I concluded that I was doing nothing; that if I wanted the Lord to save me I must begin first to do something for him. Some of the "do and live" people rather urged me to take a Sunday School class, and I began to think that I should do so, as I must do some-

thing, and here was a good opportunity to do that something. My sister in the flesh had a class; she was doing and I was not, so I remarked to her one day that I must take a class also. But she said, "If you take a class I will have to give mine up." Mother's health was not good, and one of us was needed at home to perform home duties. I saw that it was better for me to stay home and let her continue her class. It also occurred to me that I was myself in great need of a teacher to instruct me, so that I might be competent to give right views of the Scriptures. I went here and there seeking a home, hearing some say, "Lo here," and others, "Lo there," but still no rest for me. Time rolled on until between Christmas and New Year's of 1866 and 1867, I went with a lady friend to Middletown to spend a gay season of two weeks. I had great plans and expectations laid out to fill, and the first part of my visit was a gay time. New Year's morning I met with Elder J. Bicknell, and I was very glad to meet him, as I had not seen him since I was a small child. After a little conversation with him I returned to my gay companions, and he went to organize a few members into a church that had left the Middletown church. This little body, newly organized, seemed to be in peace. I felt a great desire to be with them. I had anticipated a delightful time in the vanities and gayeties of the world, but in my mad career of sin I was arrested and convicted under a sense of guilt. The Lord, I trust, brought me out from the world, and placed my feet upon a rock, and established my goings, put a new song in my mouth, that I could cry, Bless the Lord, O my soul; bless his holy name. Then these words came to my mind: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Also these words: "Why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." But all these hardly seemed to be sufficient for me, as mine was an outside case. I was as a ship tossed by the angry waves, and it seemed that I could do nothing to extricate myself, but must sink to rise no more. But as that little company expected to have baptism on Sunday, I did not go home, but attended their meeting. One or two related the dealings of the Lord with them, and I found myself in the number, and they received me as a member. What I said I do not remember, and I little thought that they would receive me. Sunday morning came, and I had not had much sleep for a week past. After having a short, refreshing nap I awoke; the sun was shining in my face. It seemed as if I awoke in newness of life, and that everything was praising God. With great force these words came to my mind:

"What more can he say than to you he hath said?
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled."

I felt that I could not stay alone any longer; it seemed that the appointed time for me to walk in the delightful way of the Lord had come. I was baptized January 7th, 1867, and for two years I was satisfied, and felt that I had a home, until Elder Walker was called as pastor; I could not vote for him, as I did not think him to be sound in the faith. About this time the church here at Warwick gave brother J. N. Badger a call, and arrangements were made for his ordination as their pastor. I attended his ministry and ordination, and enjoyed his preaching much better than where I was, so I gradually stopped going so often to Middletown, and went to hear Elder J. N. Bad-

ger. Very soon I had a desire to have a home in the Warwick church, and could not see why they should not fellowship me at the communion table, as my sentiments were the same as theirs. I asked the Lord many times that I might know what stood in the way. While on my way to the Delaware Association, in 1875, Elder Badger and I had a long and to me a pleasant talk. Arriving in Jersey City we met with Elder G. Beebe, and we also had a long talk together. It was then and there made plain to me that my baptism was not valid, as the administrator was not in order. I could see it was necessary for me to put my case before the Warwick church, and obey the commandments of the Lord. The last Sunday in June, 1875, I was led into the liquid stream by Elder J. N. Badger and baptized. He spoke that day from Isaiah xxxv. 10. If those who are living in disobedience could only see what great and blessed privileges they are denying themselves, I do not think they would tarry long, they would arise, be baptized, take up their cross and walk in the delightful path marked out for them in the Scriptures. Since I have made a public christian profession I have had many things to try my faith, many afflictions and sore trials, but yet in a certain sense the Lord has thus far made the burden light; it is nothing compared with the burden of sin and guilt which loaded me down before I received a hope in Christ. In my deepest distress I am comforted to feel that "the Lord is my Shepherd." For that reason, "I shall not want." "He leadeth me beside the still waters," and "maketh me to lie down in green pastures." The Lord is always very near and precious to his dear people in times of trouble and sorrow. They may go to him in confidence, and he will pity them as a father pitieth his children. As to being fully satisfied, I never expect to be until I awake with the likeness of Jesus.

May the Lord be with you and all the household of faith. Others often write my own feelings better than I can myself; so write on, brethren and sisters, you know not by whom your writings are read and appreciated. I beg you to remember me, a poor, unworthy worm of the dust, in your prayers. I wish to be remembered by all the dear writers of the dear old SIGNS.

In christian love and fellowship, very affectionately your sister in Christ,

M. E. SAYER.

DANIEL III. 17.

"IF it be so, our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king."

The special point set forth in the text is the strong faith of the three Hebrew children, that God was able to deliver them out of the hand of the king, should it be his will to do so. When they informed the king that they would not worship the golden image that he had set up, the king was filled with fury, and commanded the furnace to be heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated, and commanded that the three faithful servants of the Lord be bound and cast into the fiery furnace. But we see verified the truth of the Scripture that the wrath of man shall praise God. The king is soon convinced that there is no god that can deliver like the God of heaven. He is astonished to see four walking in the midst of the fire, and the fourth like unto the Son of God. And he calls to them to come forth, and they came out with not a hair singed or the smell of fire upon their garments. Again we see in this wonderful book of Daniel

the ability of God to deliver, in the case of Daniel himself. There had been a plot fixed up by those in high places to have this faithful servant of the Lord destroyed, because he faithfully worshiped the God of heaven. But see how wicked men and devils unwittingly work their own destruction. Although the king was an actor in this plot against his wishes, he seems to have been blessed with faith to believe that God was able to deliver Daniel, for after Daniel was cast into the den of lions he comes early to the mouth of the den the next morning, and asks, O Daniel, is thy God able to deliver thee from the mouth of the lions? Daniel is quick to confess that his God is able, for he says, "O king, live forever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths." Then the king commanded to take Daniel out of the den, and that his enemies be cast into the den, and they were immediately destroyed ere they touched the bottom of the lions' den. Thus we see in these two cases, and in many others recorded in the Scriptures, that God is able to deliver his people out of all their trials, and from all of their enemies. He has delivered them through all the ages past, he does deliver them in this age; he will deliver them through all ages that may be yet to come, for his work he never forsakes; for says Jesus, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end." To the end of the mortal pilgrimage of each one of his people, and to the end of time with all of his people; not one will ever be lost or plucked from the almighty hand of the Father. Again, when we look over the wonderful prophecy that the Lord showed unto his servant Daniel, and see the exact fulfillment, we see that God rules over the kingdoms of men, and sets up over them whom he will. The swift he-goat with the notable horn was undoubtedly Alexander the Great, and on down to Julius Cæsar. The God of heaven would set up a kingdom that should never be destroyed, but should break in pieces and destroy all other kingdoms, and should stand forever. This kingdom of our Lord and Savior was set up on the day of Pentecost, and it stands to-day, and will continue to stand until the angel of the Lord says that time shall be no longer. Then shall all earthly kingdoms be broken in pieces and destroyed, for then will have been accomplished the purpose of Jehovah in their creation. When the historian looked over the rise and fall of nations, and thought how fleeting a bubble is all earthly glory, he said, Alexander after having conquered the world and wept that there was not another to conquer, died in a drunken revel. Hanibal, after having crossed the Alps and defeated the Romans, and stripped three bushels of gold rings from the fingers of her slaughtered knights, died in a foreign land by poison administered by his own hands. Cæsar, after having crossed the Rubicon and defeated his enemies in a pitched battle, returned to Rome and was stabbed to death with daggers in the hands of those whom he thought to be his best friends. So profane history with all its volumes hath but one page, the rise and fall of nations. It is a fact that all flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass; the grass withereth, and the flower falleth away, but the word of the Lord endureth forever. Hence the kingdom of our God stands, all the subjects of his kingdom are securely sealed, for the Lord knoweth them that are his. He is their deliverer, their strength, their high tower, their everlasting all and in all; he will bring them off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him

who loved them and gave himself for them.

With love to all who love our Lord in sincerity, WM. F. SLOAN.

CLAY VILLAGE, Ky., August 14, 1904.

LOVELAND, Colo., Sept. 11, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—This morning I have a desire to write to the dear saints scattered abroad who are readers of the SIGNS, but my mind is wavering as to what I should write. I know and feel to realize my departure from this time world is near at hand, that this earthly house of mine in which I have been tabernacling for seventy years will soon be dissolved, but I have a hope that I have an interest in that building of God, that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. If I had not such an hope I should be of all men most miserable. It seems natural that mankind should desire to live in this world as long as they can, and often seem to forget that they cannot live always, but I feel this morning that I can truthfully say, I am glad I cannot live always in this world. I have no terror in the thought that I must die, I know that then I will be free from all the turmoil of this world, free from all aches, pains and sickness of body and sorrow of mind, and above all, free from temptations and sin. Then why should I not "desire to depart, [from this life] and to be with Christ; which is far better"? When I look back over the seventy years of my life, I see many things that I have done that I ought not to have done, and many things that I ought to have done I have not done, and yet I have no desire, were it possible, to live my life over again. During the early part of my life, after I made a public profession of my hope in Jesus as my Savior, I had many pleasant seasons of joy and rejoicing, which I can look back to as the bright spots in my life, and they are pleasant for me to think of in my old age, and especially so, as I have no hope that I will ever be permitted to enjoy such joyful seasons again among the true followers of Jesus. Three weeks ago to-day I had a little taste of the refreshing seasons of years ago: a true, genuine Old School Baptist brother, whom I never had seen, visited me. Some one sent him a copy of a paper which contained a letter I had written, and he hunted me up. It has been years since I spent so pleasant, and, I trust, profitable a time as I did with this young brother the two days and nights he visited with me. This brother, A. G. Johnson, is a licentiate preacher from a church in Michigan of the Old School Baptist faith and order. He came to Colorado two years ago, on account of his poor health, and having to some extent gained better health, has concluded to remain. Although he is located where he is isolated from his Baptist brethren, he is preaching in his vicinity, the Lamb of God as the Savior of sinners, while he has no knowledge of a single one among his hearers (save his wife) who knows or loves the truth as it is in Jesus. Truly such an one needs encouragement; I must confess that he has more courage than I ever possessed. Jesus said unto his disciples, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." It seems that all my life I have been too much like two of the disciples of Jesus (Luke xxiv. 25,) "Slow of heart to believe." Sometimes I think that my most besetting sin is my unbelief. One of the greatest desires of my heart has been that God would make known unto me my duty to him, that he would lead me in the path of duty. This has been my continued prayer all my life, and yet in the face of continued mani-

festations of the blessed Master's approval I have been found doubting.

Dear brother Chick, the foregoing is at your disposal, if you think any of the readers of the SIGNS will receive a crumb of comfort from it, publish it, otherwise cast it aside. It is not what I thought to write when I took up my pen.

Pray for a poor sinner, who if saved must be saved by grace and grace alone.

J. H. YEOMANS.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Sept. 20, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —I inclose a letter from brother Nuckols for your better judgment, and if of interest to the household of faith publish in the SIGNS. His membership is with a little church some 120 miles away, which I visit twice a year, spring and fall. This is all the meeting they have, except some one is passing that way. Though so few, they are a lovely little band of true, devoted believers. It is one of the places to which I go that there is meeting from the time I get there till I leave, as all try to be together.

Our associations passed off very pleasantly. While the attendance of either brethren or Elders was not as large as in former years, yet all was peace, love and fellowship, and the attention to preaching most profound. We are hoping to see you at our associations again.

I will not trouble you with an extended letter this time. Our family is well. My dear, aged mother (ninety-six next Friday) is with us. While very feeble in body, her mind is strong and clear.

With much love to you and yours, I am most sincerely,

P. W. SAWIN.

CAVE CITY, Ky., Sept. 11, 1904.

ELDER P. W. SAWIN—DEAR BROTHER: —I arrived home safely on Monday and found my wife a little better than when I left, for which I desire to be very thankful to our God.

Dear brother, I would love to write you some of my thoughts on the fellowship of the saints of the most high God, into which they are called by the gospel of his grace as ministered to us through Jesus Christ, our dear Elder Brother, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

As a starting point I will take the Savior's language to his disciples, who were believers, called out of the Jewish family or nation, who had received the stewardship of God under the law, and were unfaithful in it as a nation. And the time had come for the stewardship to be taken from them, and for the establishing a better covenant upon better promises. Now he says to his believing children who were called out of that old covenant into the new: "And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." This is to say to them: I have broken down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile, thus to make of twain one new man in Christ Jesus, thereby making peace. Now his instruction is to preach the gospel of this new covenant to the Gentiles, thereby making friends of them, that they may receive you into the everlasting habitations of the fellowship of the gospel of the grace of our God. This instruction of our Master was manifestly obeyed when Peter went down to the house of Cornelius and preached unto them Jesus, and they did receive them into those everlasting habitations of fellowship. Dear brother, I would love to write you, if I could, of some of the joys of the saints in dwelling together in those

heavenly mansions that Jesus said he went to prepare for them, that where he is, there they might be also. Then they have the sweet assurance when they are dwelling together in love and fellowship that Jesus is in their midst. For, says he, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst." It is the spirit of love and fellowship that gathers them together in his name. The apostle John says, "And truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." And again, "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Methinks it is the spirit of fellowship and oneness in the gospel that gathers the saints in their meetings to worship God in the beauty of holiness, they having no confidence in the flesh. It is this that caused me, a poor sinner, to leave my sick companion and take my journey to your association, that I might meet in the assemblies of the saints with those of like precious faith, that we might be made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, or in those everlasting habitations of love and fellowship. And truly there was a sitting together in love, for everything was done in love, and I, poor sinner as I am, felt much comforted and strengthened to bear the afflictions and trials of the way.

Dear brother, I must close lest I worry you with my poor, scattering thoughts. Please remember me to each member of your dear family, and to all the dear saints that you meet. If you think this poor, rambling letter would escape the waste-basket, you can send it to the SIGNS. I will submit it to you, it is yours.

In love and fellowship, I am the least of the little ones,

J. A. NUCKOLS.

HALLWOOD, Va.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—It is with a degree of timidity, after a silence of about three years, that I again attempt to address you, but feeling very lonely, as my wife and children are absent, I venture to make the attempt. I hope that you will pardon me for this intrusion, for it is often the case with me that I have misgivings when attempting to address any of God's ministering servants, and especially yourself. I was engaged in corresponding with you longer than with any other who is a stranger in the flesh, and this gave me opportunity to make manifest to you my weakness in the flesh. While your letters were always highly appreciated, and tended greatly to my comfort and encouragement, yet I felt myself to be so weak, little and insignificant, that many times I thought it better for others that I should be silent and not annoy them with anything that I might say or write; but I cannot always thus content myself.

Brother Vail, it does indeed seem strange to me, yes, it is indeed a mystery, why such an unprofitable sinner as I should be drawn towards the people of God, as I sometimes feel myself to be. If I were only like them, and not like myself, there would be nothing strange about it; some are so much more Christ-like, so much more like their Master, who went about doing good. But everything before me looks dark, I am afraid to take one step by myself, and I am so hedged in that I can turn neither to the right hand or the left, and to go forward seems utterly impossible. But if it is ever his will to speak the word, then I know all will be easy, for if I really am a child of grace, I think I know by past experience that when it is his pleasure to direct any of his children, and cause them to take up

their cross and follow him in the discharge of any duty whatever, they do find that his yoke is easy and his burden light; but sometimes all is so dark and vain and wild that I fear I really know nothing about these things. Still there are other seasons to which I can look back in my past life, at least more than twenty-six years of it, and say, The Lord has been my helper. For he it is who called me by grace; who has caused me to follow him; to run and not be weary; to walk and not faint; who alone caused me to choose the way I once abhorred, and who caused me to do things that nothing but his own almighty power and goodness could have caused me to do; things which were averse to my own nature, and carnal way of thinking. After this was done what sweet peace and comfort I found. It was a peace that this vain world knows nothing about; a peace that passes all understanding. O how glad I was then that it was not left to my own understanding, but that it was the grace of God that caused me to walk in wisdom's way, which is indeed as Solomon declared, a way of pleasantness and a path of peace. But O, I find myself so much of the time out of the way, and that darkness follows which is felt only by the subjects of God's grace. In this darkness we must remain until the Sun of righteousness arises with healing in his wings. O how very merciful he is to us poor, miserable sinners, who have never done any good thing to merit his favor, but only his righteous displeasure. Yet he it is who forgives all our sins and passes by all our imperfections, and loves us freely for his own dear name's sake. When we are enabled to contemplate these things, and what a loving and merciful God is ours, is it not enough to cause us to consider what manner of persons we ought to be in all holy conversation and godliness, and to create a desire within us to walk humbly and uprightly before God all the days of our life? Yes, my brother, if I really know anything about these things as I ought, I believe it is the desire of my heart, and of every heaven-born soul, to be found living in obedience to each and every command of the Master, their King and Lawgiver. This is not in order that he might bless them with eternal life and happiness, but because they are already blessed.

But I must stop right here. Forgive me for intruding on your time and patience. I cannot ask you to write to me, for I know your cares must be many. May the Lord direct you according to his will.

Yours unworthily,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

PENDLETON, Ind., Sept. 17, 1904.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—Inclosed please find post-office money order for two dollars, my subscription for the SIGNS for another year. It was a sorrow to me indeed to learn of the death of brother Benton L. Beebe, a true soldier of the cross. I thought, O, what will become of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES? but my next thought was, The Lord will provide, underneath are his everlasting arms. I have passed through the greatest sorrow of my life in the past year, and have often felt to sing,

> "Jesus, lover of my soul,
> Let me to thy bosom fly."

> "Other refuge have I none,
> Hangs my helpless soul on thee."

I have been in great darkness and distress of mind at times, until I could not read the Bible, the SIGNS or anything of the kind, yet I have clung to the hope that I am a saved sinner. Blessed be the

grace of God that passeth understanding. I was often made to feel that "All things work together for good to them that love God," and I tried at all times to feel, "Thy will be done," though I was crushed to the very earth sometimes, and my burden seemed heavier than I could bear; however at last I received great comfort and peace of mind. I had heard no preaching by Old School Baptists for about three years, until in June I visited a church not far from Carmen, O. T., where brethren J. F. Beeman and J. M. Duley (both writers for the SIGNS) belong, beside thirteen or fourteen other members, who helped to make my stay among them a refreshing season long to be remembered and appreciated as one of the bright spots in my life. As I traveled by private conveyance from one side of Woods county to the other, I often thought, O how fortunate are they who are permitted to live in such a mild, pleasant climate, where the winters are so short, and the sunshine is seldom obscured by clouds for more than a day or two at a time. They are abundantly blessed this year with crops of wheat, oats, alfalfa, native grass hay, the finest of vegetables, melons of all kinds, corn, broom corn, cane and many kinds of stock food. The country is filled with a thriving, industrious set of people, who seldom if ever have entire crop failures. The country is full of railroads, sometimes two running parallel for miles, and only a few miles apart. Many thriving towns are being built, where three or four grain elevators towering above all else can be seen for miles around.

I visited a few weeks at Perry, Noble Co., Okla. Then I attended the great World's Fair. After a short visit at Springfield, Ill., I came to the old home of my grandparents, Henry and Jane Riggs, who were both Old School Baptists, as were also my other grandparents, Elder J. F. Johnson and wife. I shall make my home with a widowed cousin here, and a happy home it bids fair to be, but no Old School Baptists unless I learn of some.

Now if you have room in the SIGNS to publish this or a part of it, I hope any Old Baptists living near Indianapolis, especially east, will write to me and let me know of any association or regular churches near me; I will try to visit them occasionally. I only know of one church near here, and that is old Lebanon, near Springport, that I intend to try to visit some time this fall. There I joined the church seventeen years ago, but many changes have taken place since then, and many of its members have died.

I pray earnestly for the continuance of the SIGNS in the same old steadfast way of setting forth the plain truth as given us in the Scriptures. May the editor, publishers and readers of the SIGNS be made to feel that "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." May we not be forgetful to show our appreciation of all earthly blessings, and may we continue to worship God in truth and in spirit. God grant that his children everywhere may be greatly blessed.

Yours in the love of Christ,

(MRS.) EFFIE J. BOLTON.

SACRED HEART, Okla., June 26, 1904.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Although a stranger in the flesh, and living a great distance from you geographically, yet your name is very familiar to me, having heard from you time and again through the SIGNS, and I hope well acquainted with you in the Spirit, and living very near

you in that sweet love and fellowship that the dear Lord blesses all his children with, which the world knows not of. I have often thought that I would try to write to you or dear brother Chick to let you know how your epistles of love fly almost across our continent and comfort some poor hearts, and make us feel that we are one family though scattered.

Dear brother, I have long since desired to see you and hear from your own lips the news of the wonderful works of our wonderful wonder-working God. My hope and faith is that the Lord will in some unexpected way bring us together before we are gathered together in death. When I read the good letters in the SIGNS from the dear saints in the east, my mind crosses the broad expanse of prairies, and mountains, and dales, and dwells with you for days, unknown to you. May the Lord bless you and keep us all humble; for without him we can do nothing.

As this is my introductory to you, I will try to tell you some of my travels. I once lived with, and tried to preach for, the New School Baptists, and had as high aspirations for worldly renown as any one, and it seemed that fortune smiled on me, and I persecuted the Old School Baptists and said hard things about them, never dreaming that one day my lot would be cast with them. But somehow the Lord, I hope, tamed my rebellious spirit, and humbled my proud heart, and gave me such a love for his dear people that I could not rest day or night until I went to those same people whom I had persecuted and maligned, confessed all, surrendered and begged a home with them. They freely forgave, and gladly, it seemed, took me in, and O how humble I felt, and I hope have until this day, about twelve years since. I have been trying to preach that same power and love that I hope subdued me ever since. Is it any wonder then, brother Durand, that my love seems to embrace you all, east, west, north and south?

Dear brother, whence cometh all this confusion among us? Is it not of the flesh? Yea, it truly is. But thanks be to God, we are permitted to live in peace, our little church is enjoying some sweet seasons. The Lord is adding to us at almost every meeting. We baptized a precious brother at our last meeting, and a sister the meeting before. We number in the forties. Our association is "The First Association of Oklahoma," and meets on Friday before the fourth Sunday in August.

I will close lest I weary you. Remember us at the throne of grace. It may be some time I will try to write some for our beloved SIGNS if the Lord will enable me to write something worth the space.

Love to all who love our God.

G. M. SNIDER.

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1 PETER II. 2, 3.

"As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious."

The new birth is a new principle within this earthly house of flesh and blood, and all that pertains to natural life. All things in nature are typical of the spiritual. We see what the new born babe is when its eyes are opened to this sinful world. Its little, weak existence here is solely dependent on a stronger one; its language is only a cry. What is more helpless than a little infant? We come forth in this world and are dependent on others for help, nourishment and all that sustains life. So when the new birth is made manifest in the flesh we are as helpless to do anything or get nourishment as in nature. We cry to God for help; the milk of the word is here meant

as the food that can nourish the life that is before prepared to receive it.

When our eyes are opened, or the new birth takes place, what a desolate condition, a new born babe without a home, it looks around with a cry, it sees all the horrors of sin. God alone can minister to the wants of this new born babe, and until he reveals himself as a loving Savior how desolate the condition. Every heaven-born child knows how weak and helpless they felt, and how far from God they seemed to lie.

There are many quotations with regard to this meek and child-like spirit, such as: Except ye become as a little child ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven; out of the mouth of babes and sucklings God hath perfected praise; suffer little children to come unto me; a little child shall lead them; and a young child shall lay its hand on the hole of the asp. A little babe is the strongest of the family, all of the others are in subjection to its wishes, because of its weakness. Goodness is stronger than evil, so is light stronger than darkness.

Jesus said, I thank thee that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes. We know that in our flesh there is no good thing, but at times our carnal nature is in subjection and we are at peace; the lion lies down with the kid. Jesus is in every vessel of mercy, and he must reign till all is subdued unto himself. To read this might sound like an outside thing, and that he was reigning over the universe with vengeance, but his gentle Spirit reigns in our hearts, overcoming the lusts and the evil of our nature; all through life he must reign till he shall have put all enemies under his feet, the last enemy is death. This is the oft repeated story, but it is sweet to us only as it is realized in our own hearts. It is the meek and lowly Jesus in the heart that is strong to conquer, and he alone can overcome; without him we are depraved and helpless.

"Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." It does seem that we could be kind to this child and not grieve the holy Spirit, but our natures are prone to evil, and are continually doing that which grieves the holy Spirit within us. This is Christ suffering in the flesh. He was not at home in the body. And it is said that if we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. This new creature cries and groans for the manifestation of Jesus and his gospel to overcome the flesh, which is opposed to all it requires to nourish and strengthen.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled;" and "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." The flesh must be crucified, and instead of becoming great and mighty, we are made humble and brought low.

Who of us have not watched by the bedside of a dear departing friend and marked their helpless, child-like spirit? They seem to be resting in the arms of the blessed Redeemer. O may it be my lot to become as a little child at that sacred hour, and be resting on his bosom. What a wonderful thing is life; we are brought forth and then return to our mother dust. Our life is not "altogether vanity," because all things are in the purpose of God. Ye must be born again to see the kingdom.

I wrote the above some weeks ago, and I have just read the editorial, and in it I read the following: "It is sure that God does not invite men dead in sins to arise and live; he speaks and they live.

Neither does he invite the living to eat and drink, any more than a mother invites her new born babe to eat and live. The mother gives food to her babe, and the child eats, as provided for of God, and grows and thrives. God gives heavenly consolation to his little children, and they eat, and drink, and live, and grow, and thrive. Should they live on earth a thousand years, they are all the time little children; God gives to them, and they receive what he gives." How it strengthens our hope when we in doubt and fear speak what we hope we have realized for ourselves, to read the same thoughts and feelings expressed by those whom we are sure are the servants and ministers of the sacred things of the kingdom; this is sweet fellowship indeed.

Your little sister,

(MRS.) G. B. MELSON.

WARRENTON, Oregon, Oct. 15, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I am like one alone in a desert land, and long to hear of, read of, or see some of those whom I love so much, the dear Old Baptists, who are the most blessed people on earth, for they are the chosen of the Lord, and so long ago, even before the world was made, or time began. How I love to think of this blessed people, unconditionally chosen and caused to approach unto their Lord and Master, and who were by nature the children of wrath even as others, but in God's time were brought out or separated from the world. And the world hates them, and persecutes them, and knows them not, because it knows not their Father, and has not been caused to approach unto the Lord as those whom he has chosen and led in a way they had not known and in paths they had never trodden; and loud for joy they sing the new song which they had never known before. To be led by the Father does indeed drive away every fear, and at which times there is no stumbling along and falling, and blundering over all the rough and thorny places in darkness and doubt, for he is the life and light of his children, and makes the crooked straight, and rough smooth, and when they find him near their joys are supreme, and their strength is renewed, and hope brightened for heaven and immortal glory. To feel the assurance that I am one of that blessed number would bring unspeakable joy to my lonely heart, and to know that the Baptists had love and fellowship for me would be a comfort, unworthy although I feel I am, for I am alone in my belief here in this far western coast, in sound of the Pacific Ocean, where I never hear the gospel preached, and very seldom see the two sisters who live elsewhere in this county. It is over thirty years since I attended meeting, that is, what I believe to be the true church of God, and where the gospel is preached, and where the dear ones meet to sing and pray with and for each other, and talk of and hear of the goodness of God in bringing them from nature's darkness into his marvelous light, giving them all the blessed privileges which they can most enjoy in this dull mortal life. You blessed ones in the eastern States, O remember us who are deprived of so much which you enjoy, the hearing of the gospel preached regularly, and meeting each other in church capacity, grasping the hand of each brother and sister, and watching over each other for good, and helping to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

O that brotherly love may continue, and peace abound among all the dear people of God, is the earnest wish of my poor, sinful heart.

Inclosed is a money order to pay for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the coming year. I feel like it would be a comfort to read the dear old SIGNS, and ever wish it well, with future prosperity to all; and may God help and keep us all for Christ's sake.

Your sister in hope of immortal life,

S. L. H. STUART.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1904.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

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MATTHEW XXV.

SOME little time since, sister Sarah B. Pearce, of Lancaster, Ohio, made the request that we should give such thoughts as we have upon the parable of the ten virgins, recorded in Matthew xxv. She wrote as follows: "The five foolish virgins had no oil in their lamps' vessels. They had lamps. It seems that all ten trimmed their lamps, and that all ten slumbered and slept till the hour of midnight, when the cry went forth, and then the lamps of the foolish virgins had gone out. The word virgin means pure. Oil is the grace of God. Where did they go to buy it? is the query."

Since then sister J. F. Jordan, of Dardanelle, Ark., has written, seconding this request. She says: "Dear brother, pardon me for intruding myself into the already crowded number of your correspondents and questioners, but I want to second the request of the sister who asked you to give your views upon the parable of the ten virgins. As sister Pearce says, they all had lamps, but the foolish had no oil. They that were foolish took their lamps, but took no oil with them. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. This seems to be about the only difference between the wise and the foolish. There is nothing said in the narrative about the foolish having any vessels with their lamps. They all slumbered and slept, and when the cry came, Behold the bridegroom cometh, they all arose and trimmed their lamps. It seems to me that the inference is that they all had access to the oil, or could have taken it, for it just simply says that they took no oil in their vessels with their lamps, and while they went to buy, behold, the bridegroom came. Afterwards they came, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. Again the inference is that now they had the oil, but did not have it at the time that they needed it. But enough on that line; the first verse of the chapter is what I feel most anxious for you to write about: 'Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins.' In what sense is the kingdom of heaven like the foolish virgins? I have no doubt in my mind that John the Baptist made the cry when he came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand; and the midnight spoken of was the winding up of the legal dispensation, though I may be mistaken about it. I would not presume to know anything about the Scriptures, but am an anxious inquirer for their true meaning. I close in humility, but with hope of life beyond the grave."

Very many different views have been set forth regarding this parable; in all the different things which we have seen written about it there has been much that has commended itself to us. We cannot hope to so write about it as to bring all to the same conclusion as to its meaning. In fact, like all the Scriptures, it no doubt opens out into many different fields of truth, and so all who have written or spoken about it may have been given

some one or more consoling truths, differing from all the others, and yet all in harmony, in the sense that none really were in contradiction of the others. Yet in honesty we must say that some things written about this parable which we have read have seemed to us mistaken and far-fetched. Sometimes we have believed that truth has been written, but not the particular truth set forth in the parable. Surely when a Scripture is used as a text it is not enough that truth in general be presented, but the special truth of that Scripture ought to be set forth. Every sentence in the Bible is intended to set forth some one particular truth; we ought then to seek for that one truth, and when speaking or writing about that text confine ourselves to the one truth set forth by it. With all our care we shall often, no doubt, make mistakes regarding the meaning of Scripture, but this is what we ought to strive for, at least.

From the reading of the first verse in this parable, it is clear that the application of the parable is in the future, or was in the future when the parable was spoken. It was spoken not long before the crucifixion of the dear Redeemer; it could not then relate to things which were already past. This parable, for the above reason, could not apply to any period under the old dispensation, for that was all in the past; it could not apply to the coming of the forerunner of Christ, John the Baptist, for that was already past also; it could not apply to the time when Jesus sent forth his disciples, two and two, to preach the gospel of the kingdom, for that also was already past. The parable reads, "Then shall," this is future time always. Again, the phrase, "kingdom of heaven," or "kingdom of God," never is used in the Bible with reference to the old Jewish economy, or the old legal covenant; in all the Old Testament Scriptures it is spoken of as in the future. When John the Baptist came he declared it to be in the future, though in the near future. When Jesus sent forth his disciples while he was yet in the flesh, to preach, this was also to be their testimony: The kingdom of heaven is at hand. It was not yet, but was near by. It seems a mistake to ever apply those parables which speak of the kingdom of heaven to the old covenant, or to the people under that covenant; the kingdom of heaven or of God was not yet. This is no denial that our sovereign God reigned from the beginning, and especially ruled among the people of Israel, but yet that rule is never called the kingdom of God in the word, and therefore we think that it is a mistake to so apply the phrase at any time.

Many things are said in the New Testament of the kingdom of God or of heaven: it is "not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost;" it "is not in word, but in power;" it "cometh not with observation." It is like many things, as for instance, "leaven in meal;" "as if a man should cast seed into the ground;" and in the text, like ten virgins, five of them wise and five foolish. It is always the kingdom of heaven that is compared to all these things, and we must not go outside of the kingdom of heaven to find their application and meaning. Some of the things said about this kingdom present the inward power and life of the kingdom, and some present the working of that power and life in men, and manifesting itself among them outwardly. In this outward working the weakness of the flesh appears, and the kingdom of heaven is but dimly seen. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." So in the

manifestation of this kingdom in the lives of men, some are foolish and some are wise; some manifest the indwelling of this kingdom more than others; Christ himself is manifest in some more than in others; this is because of human infirmity and weakness. The kingdom of God is not weak. Why this kingdom does not appear so manifestly in some as in others, we have no need to discuss, from the testimony of the Scriptures and from daily observation we know that it is so, and we know that this arises out of the weakness of the flesh. So in the parable, the one difference between the virgins (that difference which gave rise to the different courses of conduct pursued by them) was that five were wise and five were foolish. Because of this difference, which was innate in them, they differed in their conduct. But we desire to call attention to this one thing, viz: that the words wise and foolish do not mean on the one hand absolute knowledge, or on the other hand absolute ignorance, but rather, the one word signifies thoughtfulness, prudence or carefulness, while the other word means dullness, slowness, thoughtlessness, or want of prudence. How dull and lacking in prudence the children of God very often show themselves to be. As among men in the things of this life, there is a vast difference between him who is a fool and him who often acts foolishly, so here the foolish virgins are not said to be fools, but foolish. Indeed, they knew many things; they expected the coming of the bridegroom, they knew the need of the oil to burn, and where it could be obtained, but they were not prudent or careful as were the others. Confining our thoughts to the mere narrative of the wedding, all can readily see that this was true, all were alike interested in the wedding festivities, and all alike were the friends of the bridegroom, but all were not alike prudent. So far as the incidents narrated in the parable are concerned, they are all perfectly natural, and such as would be likely to occur at any wedding festivity.

Now the blessed Lord applies this to his coming as the Bridegroom in the coming kingdom of heaven. To his disciples, and to them alone, he said at the close of this parable, "Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." He had said the same words in substance at the close of his prediction concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, verse forty-two in the preceding chapter. He had said practically the same to them in verse forty-four of the same chapter, and now again, as said before, he repeats the same admonition. Mark especially that he said this to his disciples who had come to him, as recorded in verse three in the chapter before, asking to know when the things of which he had been speaking were to come to pass. All this preceding chapter and all this chapter is a response to these questions of the disciples. It is all addressed to them, and it all belongs to disciples, and to no one else. And clearly the words at the close of the parable of the virgins belong to disciples, and to no one else. To them he says, "Watch," &c. If then disciples may not be as the foolish virgins are described, why any need of this admonition to "watch therefore?" The Jewish people, as a people, were not here bidden to watch, neither were Gentiles as such bidden to watch, but disciples, both Jews and Gentiles, are addressed. No doubt especially do these words apply to the twelve who had come to him with their questions which he now was answering, but the twelve stood not alone in the

kingdom as disciples, and what belongs to them belongs to all disciples, each in his own place, and each under his own peculiar circumstances of trial, of temptation or of weakness.

Now, returning to the preceding chapter, it seems clear that the Savior intended to convey to their minds that soon all that had belonged to the old dispensation, together with the city of Jerusalem and the Jewish nation, was about to pass away forever, and that another order of things was about to be ushered in. This he calls the coming of the Bridegroom to his waiting bride. The Jews always looked for the Messiah to come to them. Jesus now says he is coming, but at such a time as ye are not expecting. He is coming, but not in such a way as you have expected his coming. He comes to establish a new kingdom, not to re-establish the old. The kingdom of heaven is at hand. The disciples had some dim visions of this new kingdom upon the mount, and when they said, "Thou hast the words of eternal life," &c., still their minds were not clear as yet. In this sense they were all dull and heavy of understanding. Some were ready to say, Is he coming at all? And growing doubtful, they were slothful and faint-hearted. Now to these disciples, who all needed his words, Jesus said in substance, The Son of man will come; the promise of his coming is sure, watch therefore. It may be now, it may be in time to come, it may be earlier, it may be later, but he will come, and as ye do not know the day nor the hour, give heed and watch. While this parable no doubt relates to the time of the first setting up of the kingdom of God on earth, yet this kingdom is spoken of as coming, continually coming. In Hebrews it is said, "We receiving a kingdom." The word receiving implies continuation, not completed action, and John in Revelation is said to see the holy city "coming down." Here also is implied that which continues to come; and so the kingdom of heaven is coming all the time. Therefore this parable specially relates to the setting up of this kingdom in its beginning, yet also it will apply to the kingdom of heaven all the way along down to the end of time. In the kingdom of God always are the wise and the foolish. Probably there is not a church in the world to-day in which this is not exemplified. Some members are wise or prudent, and some are unwise or imprudent. This is the one thought, as it seems to us, that the Savior intended to enforce upon our minds. The parable is intended as a warning to the unwise, and in fact to all the children of God; if not, why should he have said to his disciples at the close of the parable, "Watch therefore"? There seems nothing in the words of the parable that would contradict this conclusion. The foolish took their lamps as well as the wise, and they all had oil in their lamps. Whatever the lamps and the oil may specially signify, they all had them. If the lamps signify a profession, as some have thought, all made the same profession. If the oil means divine grace, then all alike had that in their lamps at the first, and all alike went out to meet the bridegroom, and accompany him into the wedding feast when he should come. Thus all were regarded as his friends. All alike slumbered and slept, the wise as well as the unwise. Thus far no difference is to be seen between them, and there is no intimation that any of them were wrong in thus slumbering or sleeping; if there were wrong in it, all alike were guilty. When the cry went out, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh," all alike awakened and trimmed their lamps.

But now in this one thing that follows appears the difference between the two classes, the wise and the unwise. We said, if the oil meant divine grace, all alike had it in their lamps. Many have thought that this is what the oil signifies. It has not seemed so to us, because divine grace is not in the keeping of men, but keeps them. It has seemed to us that here the oil signifies not indwelling grace, but the manifestation of that grace in believers, in providing things needful to the good and well being of the church of Christ, and needful to the manifestation of indwelling grace; it is the working out of the inward salvation with fear and trembling, and all carefulness and prudence. Perhaps it might express the thought to say that the oil represents divine grace as it manifests itself in the solemnity and thoughtfulness, and in the anxiety of believers to walk consistently and worthily in this heavenly calling. But how often we fail in this carefulness, and are forgetful of the things of the kingdom, and so very often the lamp goes out. That is, the outward profession grows less and less, until in some cases even the profession is lost. There has been a decrease of zeal and earnestness, and carelessness of heart and mind has grown up, and soon even the light of profession goes out. Where is there a church in which it cannot be said some who did run well have ceased to run?

But now in the parable there is an awakening. The cry that the bridegroom comes is that which awakens. This cry comes when it is not expected. All were slumbering and sleeping, yet some have been thoughtful, and have oil in their vessels with their lamps, and so the lamps are supplied again, and they are ready to receive the bridegroom, and to go in with him to the wedding. There comes a time of refreshing in the church; Jesus makes his presence manifest to his people. Some enter in and rejoice in the joy of the Bridegroom, and some do not; some cannot enter in. It is along these lines of thought that we will find the real meaning of the parable. The words, "Watch therefore," apply to the church to the end of time.

Some difficulty has occurred in the minds of many children of God by the use of the words, "Go to them that sell," and buy, but this would be the proper course in the literal event depicted in the parable, and the words do not at all imply that anything belonging to the grace of salvation can be bought by any price that men can pay. The words under consideration are no more difficult of understanding than the words in Revelation: "I counsel thee to buy of me gold," &c., or the words in the prophecy: "Come, buy without money and without price." The words imply only this, go and obtain it in the only available way. This oil must come to you, or be obtained by you, as it was obtained by us. The wise could not impart it to the foolish; neither the one nor the other could obtain it in any other than the one way. "If we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption." They that sow to the Spirit and reap life everlasting, cannot remedy the case of those who sow to the flesh; they cannot impart this life everlasting to the others. So in the parable, the wise cannot remedy the folly of the unwise. Pity may be indeed in their hearts, but they can only point out the one way in which any of these blessings can be obtained.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

EXODUS XIII. 17, 18.

"AND it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt: but God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. And the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt."

When God delivered the Hebrews from the house of bondage and broke the Egyptian yoke of their captivity, his wisdom as well as power was most strikingly displayed. Such is the unlimited power of God that he could have released his people from bondage by the waving of his hand, or the utterance of a word; he could have instantly crushed the power of Egypt, and stripped the imperial throne of Pharaoh of all its regal strength, or he could have softened the heart of Pharaoh as easily as he could harden it: but his wisdom, as well as his omnipotence was to be demonstrated before the world. And having humbled Pharaoh and effected the release of the Israelites, he was able to conduct them in what way he pleased to their final destiny in the promised land. Having all power and all wisdom he was abundantly able to execute his design in any way that seemed good in his eyes. But in the redemption of Israel from the house of bondage, and their conduct through the wilderness, and their ultimate possession of the promised inheritance, God evidently designed to show forth the redemption of his chosen people from the bondage of the law and their ultimate entrance into the glorious liberty of the gospel. He therefore chose to lead them about. Instead of selecting the shortest route, or that in which the least impediments to their journeyings would require to be encountered, it was his pleasure, for a purpose worthy of himself, to lead them about in a circuitous and meandering course, which would constantly require the display of his power and wisdom, his cloud by day and his fire by night, to guide and protect them, and to show their entire dependence on him in every step of the way. Thus setting forth in the figure, first, that the salvation of his chosen people was in a way by him ordained, and their redemption from the curse, the bondage and dominion of the law, from the guilt, pollution and consequences of sin, and from the powers of death and hell, was altogether above the wisdom and power of men, and in a way in all respects baffling the wisdom and humbling the pride of the sons of men; showing that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Second, agreeing with the experience of all the saints, every saint can witness with the inspired psalmist that when God broke their yoke of bondage and released them, in a spiritual sense, from the grasp of Pharaoh, and set them free from their bondage; when he took them up out of the horrible pit and miry clay, and put a new song in their mouth, and set their feet upon a rock, that he also established their goings. Had he allowed us to choose our own way, perhaps we would have desired to be conveyed by the nearest way, and on flowery beds of ease, immediately to the mansion of glory. Perhaps all the saints have struggled more or less against the way the Lord has been pleased to lead us about, especially when he has led us by the hand of Moses by the way of the Red Sea, hemmed in on every side, the sea before us, the enemy in hot pursuit behind, and towering mountains at the right and left. We, too, have murmured when led to the bitter waters of Meribah, and we were terribly afraid

when he led us near to the mountain that might be touched only on pain of being thrust through with a dart, or destroyed. Like the Hebrews, we have feared that we were brought thus far to be destroyed, but still God has led us in a way which we knew not, and in paths we had not known. Truly he has found us in a waste howling wilderness, like Jacob, and he has led us about and instructed us, and yet he has kept us as the apple of his eye.

"God led them [the Hebrews] not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although it was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt." The Philistines were a people with whom Israel was never on good terms of friendship, they were enemies, and always on the alert to draw them into difficulty, and bore about the same relation to Israel that the Arminians do to the church and people of God; and although, according to the natural geography of that country, a straight line from Egypt to Canaan would cross the land or territory of the Philistines, it was not the pleasure of the Lord to lead them that way, as it was a way of temptation too strong for the resistance and fidelity of the Hebrews, therefore to avoid the influence of the Philistines on the Israelites which God foresaw would have a tendency to ensnare them, and to bring them again into bondage, he led them by another way. How happy for the children of God is the lesson here taught, that God has established the goings of his redeemed people, and that he knows exactly what amount of temptations his grace shall enable us to bear, and orders our course accordingly. So it is said of the saints, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."—1 Cor. x. 13. God provides against all *peradventures*, chances or uncertainties, in all the provisions which he has made for the deliverance and salvation of his people. This form of expression cannot imply that there are peradventures or uncertainties with God, but that he has provided infallibly against them. He knew, as he only could know, what would have been the consequences if he had led them through the land of the Philistines: they must have seen war, and they would probably have been tempted to repent that they had left Egypt, and inclined to return thither. So in the way of life and salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, God has ordained that none can come to him but by Christ, who is the way; there is salvation in no other way. Men cannot be justified in God's sight by any works of righteousness which they have performed, by any obedience to the law which they have or can render. When they are delivered from bondage and the yoke of their captivity is broken, the saints frequently show an inclination to lay their course through the land of the Philistines, that is, they have in them a natural inclination, after having received the Spirit, to be made perfect by the works of the flesh. The Arminian conditional system presents to their inexperienced eyes a smoother path, a shorter distance, and there are many allurements to draw them into the popular thoroughfares of the legal system, but God by his Spirit never leads his people in that way. Paul said to the Galatians, "This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you." If for any purpose God suffers his

children to become entangled with the yoke of bondage, and to sojourn in the land of the Philistines, they always see war; for as certainly as the Spirit of truth is in them, they will find a principle of opposition to the corrupt principles and works of the flesh, and all the hosts of the Philistines will oppose the law of the Spirit of life which they possess, and all the powers of their flesh will adhere to the legal tendencies of the Philistine or Arminian doctrines, and, as the poet has very justly remarked, they

> "Strive with a Do this and live,
> To drive them to Egypt again."

"But God led the people about." He leads them, it is not his method to drive them. When he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and they hear his voice, and they follow him, but a stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers. As God led the Israelites from Egypt, and through the wilderness, going before them in the cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, so he goes before his spiritual Israel, by day and by night. Instead of scaring or lashing them along, after the Philistine or Arminian fashion, uncapping hell, and showing them the horrors of the damned, to urge them on, he goeth before, and causes them to behold in him such irresistible attraction that they feel sweetly constrained to follow where he leads. He gives them such confidence in his wisdom to lead them, that they desire no other leader, and their experience enables them to say, He leadeth me into green pastures, beside the still waters. But he leads them by the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea, not because that way is the nearest, or smoothest, or most flowery, but because in that way he will be glorified, and his people shall be taught many important lessons which they could not so well learn in any other way. What important lessons did he give them in the wilderness and at the Red Sea? How was his mighty power and discriminating grace displayed, when he made a path for them through the Red Sea, on dry ground, and when the same miracle by which their deliverance was accomplished, destroyed all their enemies? As he led the Hebrews, so he leads his spiritual people, often into wilderness trials, where the beasts of the forest prowl, and where their howlings sometimes alarm them, and to the sea where their way seems, to all human sight, cut off, the enemy advances, and they are hemmed in, and they think there is but a step between them and death, but how seasonably his help comes; his rod is extended, the sea divides, the way of escape is opened, and a song of deliverance breaks forth from their joyful tongues.

"The children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt." Not in the panoply of military warfare, for God himself fought their battles, and gave them victory. The manner of their harness is described in chapter xii. 11, "And thus shall ye eat it [the passover]; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste; it is the Lord's passover." In this manner of harness they ate the passover, and immediately left the land of Egypt, and their harness did not become old, or require to be repaired or replaced during the forty years of their pilgrimage in the wilderness. Here again we have a vivid figure of the way in which the Lord strips his people for the race, and in which he harnesses them for the christian warfare. They are not clad in the armor of men, in coats of mail, nor armed with implements of car-

nal warfare, for they are not to fight against flesh and blood; the warfare is a spiritual warfare, and their weapons are spiritual, and mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strongholds. They are well harnessed at the outset, for they have on the whole armor of God, having their loins girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness, and their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, and, above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith they shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked; and the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. (Eph. vi. 13–17.) As the Israelites went up out of Egypt harnessed, and wore the same harness all the way in which the Lord their God did lead them until they had accomplished their whole journey and entered the promised land, so the redeemed family of God whom he has redeemed from sin, death and hell are called to be marshalled under the banner of the great Captain of their salvation, and all their armor is of God, their weapons are spiritual and mighty through grace, and they cannot decay or wax old, nor will they ever require to be superseded by any newly invented armor. As the Hebrews went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt, we may rest assured that not one of all the sons of Adam shall ever go up out of the land of Egypt, or be delivered from the house of bondage, in any other harness, nor without this harness. True, men may make profession of religion, they may display much zeal and courage, they may impose on the saints, but until God breaks their yoke, and puts on them the harness, they have no discharge from bondage, and can never know experimentally the glorious liberty of the sons of God; they are all Ishmaelites, and under the covenant that gendereth unto bondage.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 1, 1862.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Association of Old School Baptists, in session with the church at Snow Hill, Worcester Co., Md., Oct. 19th, 20th and 21st, 1904, to the several associations and meetings with whom she corresponds, greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We take pleasure in addressing you this our annual letter of love and fellowship, in which we desire to express our gratitude to God, our heavenly Father, for the abundance of his mercies toward us as an association. Our meetings have been well attended, the interest manifested has shown that the Lord has given the preparations of both tongue and heart, enabling his servants to declare the word, not with enticing words of man's wisdom, nor with excellency of speech, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. Our present session is one to be long remembered by all who have attended, for the ability and power with which the word has been proclaimed, the large attendance, the earnest attention paid to the preaching, the comfort and joy realized by the saints, the loving hospitality of the brethren, sisters and kind friends of the Snow Hill church and congregation, and the exceptionally pleasant weather, all of which has been evidence to us of the kind care of our gracious Ruler. We regret that the severe illness of his dear companion has prevented the attendance of our esteemed brother and faithful minister, Elder Silas H. Durand, who has for years served the Salisbury church as pastor, and has rarely missed a session of this association for the past forty years. We tender to him our sincere sympathy, and hope and pray the Lord may have mercy on him in restoring our dear sister to health.

The next session of our association is

appointed to be held with the church at Salisbury, Wicomico Co., Md., to commence on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1905, when and where we hope to meet and greet you by messengers and letter again.

T. M. POULSON, Moderator.
JOHN H. TRUITT, Clerk.
GEO. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

ORDINATION.

PURSUANT to a call of Bethel church, Prowers Co., Colo., for ordained help to set apart to the full work of the gospel ministry David B. Nowels, the following churches responded by sending Elder J. J. Rowland, of West Liberty, Haskell Co., Kansas; Elder G. M. Fetter, of Shilo, Colfax Co., N. M.; Elder W. C. Perdue, of Bethel, Prowers Co., Colo.; Elder J. B. Hardy, of Kingman Co., Kansas; Deacon H. Burch, of Bethel, Prowers Co., Colo.

The said churches of the Predestinarian or Old School Baptists, by their ordained help, did assemble according with said call at Hatton, Kansas, at the home of brother Henry Holdren, where said church did by action appoint her said meeting.

The council chose as her moderator, Elder J. B. Hardy, as her clerk, Elder G. M. Fetter.

The call for the candidate was responded to by Deacon H. Burch, presenting the aforesaid David B. Nowels. The relation of his christian experience being satisfactory, he was then called upon to relate his call to the gospel ministry, which he did to the satisfaction of said council.

The council chose Elder G. M. Fetter to offer the ordination prayer, and Elder J. J. Rowland to deliver the charge of the gospel ministry, which was done in gospel order to the best of their ability.

After the right hand of fellowship was given by said council, the hymn, "Awake, my soul, in joyful lays," was sung, and the right hand of fellowship was given by the church and sister churches present.

We desire this to be known by all churches of our faith and order, praying that the God of heaven may bless our brother's labors wherever his lot in Providence may be cast.

Dated this 16th day of July, 1904.

Elders { J. B. HARDY.
J. J. ROWLAND.
W. C. PERDUE.
G. M. FETTER.

Deacon H. BURCH.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Lydia C. Ray, Texas, $3; Mrs. W. W. Darby, Md., $1.

APPOINTMENTS.

BY request, Elder J. G. Eubanks will fill the following appointments: Harford, Nov. 20th; Warren, Nov. 22nd; Broad Run, Md., Nov. 23rd; Nov. 24th as brethren may arrange at Leesburg, Va.; Hughesville, Nov. 25th; Frying Pan, Nov. 26th and 27th; Bethlehem, Nov. 29th; Broadrun, Va., Nov. 30th; Mt. Zion, Dec. 1st; Ebenezer, Dec. 2nd.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER W. W. Polk has changed his address from Monterey, Cal., to 126 Taylor St., San Francisco, Cal., and requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

John Wesley Riner was born in Preble Co., Ohio, Jan. 3rd, 1832, came to Knox Co., Ill., in 1854, was married to Miss Rachel Thurston in 1856, and settled in Brimfield township, Peoria Co., Ill., where they spent the active portion of their lives (except a few years spent in Fulton Co.) on a farm, until advanced years and infirmities compelled them to retire from life's activities, when they took up their residence in the village of Elmwood, where they passed their last days. In company with sister Riner he united with the Old School Baptist Church in September, 1861, and was baptized by the late Elder James B. Chenowith, and was soon after chosen as deacon of Harmony church, and discharged the duties of the office to the full satisfaction of all concerned. They became the parents of eight children, (one dying in early childhood) consisting of two sons, Wm. E. and Albert J., and five daughters: Mrs. Elolia Porter, Mrs. Ida Riner, Mrs. Allie Riner, Mrs. Laura Drinock and Miss Emma Riner. These survive to mourn the double stroke that bereft them of their loving parents. Brother Riner is also survived by two brothers and three sisters, two brothers and two sisters having passed on before.

ALSO,

Rachel Thurston Riner was born in Franklin Co., Ind., August 18th, 1838, came with her husband to Illinois in 1856, and until the day of their death their life and life-work was devoted to each other, to their family and the cause and kingdom of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. She leaves one brother and seven sisters. Her father was the late Elder John Thurston, of Mixersville, Ind. Both brother and sister Riner had been in failing health for a number of years, and a short time before her death she suffered a paralytic stroke, and lingered until about 12 o'clock on Friday morning, Sept. 2nd, 1904, she passed quietly and peacefully away. Brother Riner was very deeply grieved, and for a time refused to be comforted because of his sore affliction, but finally consented to lie down and try to take some needed rest and sleep,

About 4:30 a. m. one of the family saw him lying on the sofa, and to all appearances was asleep. About 5 o'clock his daughter, sister Allie Varnes, saw him pass out the back door toward the barn, but thinking nothing strange of this, proceeded to prepare breakfast. It being ready in from twenty to twenty-five minutes, and he failing to come in, search was made for him, and he was found hanging to a rafter of the carriage-house dead. There was no known cause for such a rash step. All of his relations in life, domestic, social, financial and spiritual, at least to all outward appearances, were perfectly satisfactory.

The writer received a message while attending the Missouri Valley Association in Iowa, to come to Elmwood and conduct the funeral services. The burial occurred on Monday, Sept. 5th, from the residence, and was very largely attended. After singing, the fourteenth chapter of Job was read; also from the nineteenth verse to the end of the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians, and prayer by B. Y. George. The writer spoke to the sorrowing family and the large gathering of friends and neighbors, of some of the things suggested to his mind by the portions of Scripture that had been read. Then the bodies were conveyed to the beautiful cemetery quite near the residence, and were placed side by side in one broad, deep grave. Then they were left to mingle their dust to dust, ashes to ashes, until God shall bid them arise. Many of the broken-hearted ones ask in bitterness of soul, Why, O why this terrible stroke, this cruel, crushing blow? We must say we do not know, but surely God knows, and some day he will cause us to see that "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

SMITH KETCHUM.

CHESTER, Neb., Nov. 1, 1904.

William Campbell, second son of brother Archibald and sister Regina Campbell, died Oct. 19th, 1904, aged 19 years. Willie (as he was familiarly called) and his elder brother Robert were hauling wood to Dutton, each driving a team. Willie was ahead of his brother, and was descending a little hill when the wood on which he was sitting fell on the horses, causing them to run away. Willie also fell with the wood, the wheel of the wagon passing diagonally over his body. Neighbors hurrying to the spot found him lying on the road alive. He was carried into a nearby house, and a physician sent for, but the unfortunate young man died before the doctor arrived, having lived only an hour after receiving the fatal injury. His parents were away from home attending a funeral. Willie was an amiable young man, and a favorite in the community. Besides his parents he is survived by three brothers and two sisters. His sudden and unexpected death was indeed a sad and awful stroke to brother and sister Campbell, but the dear Lord gave them strength to bear it. Believing as they do that the Lord holds the issues of life and death in his own hand, and that not even a sparrow can fall to the ground without him, they seemed calmly submissive in the midst of great grief. Although Willie made no profession of religion, yet from some of his actions noticed by his mother we are led to feel that he was a living child, and we know that if the life of Christ was in him it will be well with him forever.

The writer spoke at the funeral from Romans viii. 28: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." After which he was laid to rest in the Fairview cemetery to await the coming of the Lord in that day when the graves shall give up the dead who are in them.

W. I. CARNELL.

SISTER **Ella Tucker,** beloved wife of Wm. W. Tucker, departed this life Sept. 3rd, 1904, aged 45 years, 9 months and 27 days. She was born in British Columbia, the daughter of Martin and Malisey Bailey, with whom she moved in early childhood to Oregon. June 2nd, 1880, she was married to Wm. W. Tucker. To this union were born four boys and five girls, one boy preceded her to the grave. The others with the father are left to mourn the loss of a loving mother and faithful wife. She professed a hope in Christ in the spring of 1890, and with her husband united with the Coast Fork church in September, 1891. She led a very exemplary life, and was worthy of the high esteem in which she was held by all who knew her. Her death was due to consumption. She told her husband that she felt the full assurance of faith.

Her remains were laid beside her son in the cemetery at College Grove, Oregon, in the presence of a large company of sorrowing relatives and friends.

Written by one who long admired her meek and humble walk. G. O. WALKER.

WALKER, Oregon.

IT is my sad task to chronicle the death of little **Wiley Neva Unger,** daughter of J. R. and Cora Unger, of Casket, Navarro Co., Texas. She was born August 11th, 1903, and died Sept. 28th, 1904. The father and mother are both Primitive Baptists of the Predestinarian faith and order. When God called the little darling home a heart-stricken family was left, but they can still say, The will of God be done, and "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." The father and mother both have children by previous companions, but the little babe united them all in the bonds of an almost holy love, for if ever a little one was loved, this babe certainly was. The bereaved ones have my heart-felt sympathy, mingled with grief, for the mother is my sister in the flesh. JOE MEECE.

DELIA, Texas.

MEETINGS.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

717 HOWARD ST., DETROIT, Mich.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

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Meetings every Sunday at the Hall, corner of 19th St. and 8th Ave., fifth floor. Elevator entrance on either 19th St. or 8th Ave.

10:30 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

AT A GREAT REDUCTION.

PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD.

A NEW BOOK

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 72. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1904. NO. 23.

POETRY.

THE ROD OF GOD.

(Ezekiel xx. 37.)

How trying the process by which we are brought
  To bow to the will of our God;
What care he bestows, and what wisdom and love
Are seen in his dealings, while making us prove
  That 'tis well to pass under the rod.

He knows that when all things go smoothly along,
  We recline on this wilderness sod;
And therefore he chooses, by crosses and woes,
Bereavements, temptations, afflictions and foes,
  To make us pass under the rod.

O discipline painful, yet needful, that we
  May constantly wait upon God;
If necessity drive not we seldom should go,
And less of his spirit and presence should know,
  If we did not pass under the rod.

How often we look on the worldlings around,
  Each making some bauble his god;
And in moments of darkness the flesh seems to say,
As we watch them carousing, 'Tis well to be they,
  For they never pass under the rod.

But the blessed One smiles, and the murmur is hushed,
  And we weep at the throne of our God;
And we breathe, as we're bending, If thou wilt be near
In thy chastenings, to strengthen and cheer,
  I would rather pass under the rod.

Ah, then we've no wish for a trial withheld,
  Or less thorny the path to be trod;
The saints in all ages this pathway did rove,
And if we rest with them on the bosom of love,
  We must surely pass under the rod.

Great Head of the household, since thou hast ordained
  That the heirs of the kingdom of God
Should obtain it through great tribulation below,
O teach us much kindness and succor to show
  When our kindred pass under the rod.

And let us take courage, since all our concerns
  Are safe in the hands of our God;
For we soon shall have done with the sigh and the tear;
No more have life's conflicts to face or to fear,
  And no more shall pass under the rod.

K. L. BLACK.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOLOMON'S SONGS IV. 12.

"A GARDEN inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed."

Solomon is among the holy men who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, of whom Peter speaks. Holy men, moved by the Holy Ghost, wrote holy things, therefore there is something in their words deeper than that which appears in the letter of the word. Paul says we are made "able ministers" of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit. By the term "able ministers," we do not understand the apostle to mean great or wonderful, but prepared by revelation and experience to use the mattock in God's word, and thus bring out for the comfort, encouragement and instruction of the people of God the hid-

den "things from the wise and prudent," but revealed unto babes. In this Song of songs we have a dialogue between the bride and Bridegroom, each expressing their love for and mutual interest in the other. We have no doubt that in these characters are represented Christ and the church. A woman in figure is many times in the Scriptures used to set forth the church; at one time barren, and afterwards the mother of many children. This figure is seen in Sarah, the wife of Abraham. She was a garden inclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed; but in God's purpose and time, according to his promise, she brought forth the son, Isaac, the father of Jacob, the father of the twelve tribes, of whom the fourth part could not be numbered. Thus Sarah, who was a garden inclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed, is the mother of all the seed of Abraham. The apostle speaks of this in his letter to the Galatia church, when he said, We are not the children of the bond woman, but of the free woman. Sarah was the figure of Jerusalem, which is free, and the mother of us all, while Agar is in bondage with her children. In Isaiah, chapter fifty-four, we have another figure; there is a woman who had been barren and desolate who is called upon to "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: * * * enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes: for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more." "For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God. For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." In the above quotations we see another garden inclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. For she who had been barren breaks forth on the right hand and on the left. The place of the tent must be enlarged, and the cords extended, and the stakes strengthened. She who had been barren becomes the mother of many children, and all of them shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be their peace. What a blessing to be taught of God in the school of experience; indeed this is the way God reveals himself and makes his power known. In experience the children are taught their need of God and his salvation; yes, taught that they are sinners utterly polluted, justly condemned by God's righteous law, separated from God by wicked works. Thus being taught, they come to Christ for forgiveness and justification, and being drawn by the Father, Jesus will in no wise cast them out.

Great shall be the peace of these children. This does not mean that they shall always be upon the mountain top, singing the song of Moses and the Lamb, but great is the reconciliation; the children were reconciled to God by the death of his Son. "Great peace" indeed, never again to come into condemnation, but

have passed from death unto life.

The text under consideration is another figure of the church of God. Under the law "my sister, my spouse," was indeed a garden inclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Only a type could be seen in that dispensation, the bride was not yet manifested. But after the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there was no more sea (law), John saw the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Hence in the gospel the bride appears and the type is passed away. Now she who had been "a garden inclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed," breaks forth on the right hand and on the left. "A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation." In her manifestation and development we see God's purpose, which was shut up and hid from the beginning of the world, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs with the Jews of the glorious things of God, partakers of the only salvation, and children of the free woman. If we are Christ's, then are we Abraham's children, and heirs according to the promise. The church in God's sight has ever been the same in number, not one added nor one taken away since the choice was made in Christ before the world began. But now the garden inclosed, the spring shut up, the fountain sealed, is opened, and "my sister, my spouse," the spiritual church, is the mother of a host which no man can number.

The question is asked in this Song of Solomon, "What will ye see in the Shulamite? as it were the company of two armies." The name Shulamite is feminine to Solomon, and signifies queen of peace, therefore if Solomon represented the bridegroom, the Shulamite represented the bride (church). The two armies now seen in the church are Jews and Gentiles, but remember *all* compose *one* company, "all one in Christ." In this beautiful figure we see the meaning of the language of Isaiah when he said "the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid." These opposing nations, Jews and Gentiles, are made one, and dwell in peace and harmony. The lying down together signifies rest, rest in the work of Christ; they feed together upon the broken body of their Lord and Master, with no more enmity between them. To this woman who was once inclosed, shut up and sealed, but now delivered, the Bridegroom says, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come." Arise from under the curse and condemnation of the law, and come away, it has no dominion over you, for the debt is paid. "The winter is past," that barren and desolate time when no fruit could be manifested; the dark, rainy and "cloudy day" is over and gone; "the flowers appear on the earth," the manifestation of life; the plant so barren and naked in "winter" is now bearing beautiful flowers; the time of singing is come. "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud." This singing is done by the church collectively, and is found in the individual experience of each member of the body of Christ. How they sing for joy when called upon to "awake" and put on their beautiful garments, in which they appear before God clean and white, and without which no man can see the Lord. There is a sense in which the church is inclosed, shut up and sealed now. Isaiah said, "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of

Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." The day referred to is the gospel day; therefore the church sings the song of praise to God for his salvation, which is walls and bulwarks, and that which incloses, shuts up and seals the holy city. The ungodly cannot enter, the unrighteous are kept out, no worldling or hireling can enter there. The gates are opened, however, to the righteous, to the redeemed, to the sanctified of God. This is the invisible kingdom, therefore "a garden inclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." The Lord is the Husbandman, and not one plant that he hath planted shall be rooted up. A spring shut up; yes, shut up to the world of antichrist, but opened to the thirsty, and they drink without money and without price, from time to time, during this journey to the land of rest. A fountain sealed, yes, sealed, and none but the Lamb of God can loose the seal that the weary and tried soul may find a home and kindred. How often they are made to cry,

> "Here my best friends and kindred dwell,
> Here God my Savior reigns."

All these things in the experience of the child of God are seen and felt.

H. C. KER.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Nov., 1904.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Aug., 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Your editorial of August 15th is good. Light was given you of God to write in connection with the word given to Ezekiel in the thirty-third chapter. He was given a word of warning to the disobedient children of Israel. The word is still being given by the revealed word of God, to warn the disobedient whither they are drifting in the worship of idols. In the thirty-fourth chapter Ezekiel was still bidden to warn the faithful and the disobedient of the danger of seeing the flock scattered. So in the gospel dispensation there are still faithful watchmen chosen of God to feed the flock and to warn them.

Our dear Elder J. K. Womack is one of the faithful in sounding the alarm, and also in proclaiming the year of jubilee. Taking the shield of faith, God will cause that they all shall resist the fiery darts of wickedness in high places. Our faith is the victory that overcomes the world, and this faith is the substance of things hoped for. The watchmen are still exhorting the faithful to stand firm against those that "pervert the gospel of Christ." Some are standing firm to this day, trying to convince the disobedient of their error, and if any will not heed, the faithful can say, as did Joshua of old, "As for me and my house we will serve the Lord." I will say that no one, who has ever felt as did the poor publican, can serve God with this free-will worship. This could not be fully done under the old covenant, and it is impossible under the new covenant. The law is now put in the mind and written in the heart. The Lord sent his only begotten Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them who were under the law and its curse. This was the true doctrine taught of old, when prophets warned the children of Israel. Under the gospel dispensation Paul warned the brethren day and night, and the faithful servants of God still warn, even with tears, pleading with the people of God to stand fast, and not be carried away with every wind of doctrine. Elijah, no doubt, wept sorely when he saw such

falling away, but the Lord appeared to him with the glorious news that there were seven thousand men who had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. And, dear brother, I do feel to thank God that he has not yet left himself without witnesses. Ezekiel was firm, and prophesied as the Lord gave him utterance, but the false prophets scattered the flock, and caused confusion and strife in the camp of Israel, and the work of false teachers is the same now. The diseased are not strengthened, but instead, these false shepherds put burdens upon them, and scatter them, they wander here and there, seeking food and rest. The Lord is against such shepherds, but is with the true servants, and will by them search the scattered ones in his appointed time, out of all places wherever they may be scattered, and will gather them and place them in green pastures, and none shall molest or make them afraid. He will strengthen them that are sick, and that have wandered away from his fold through false teaching, but he will destroy the fat, or self-righteous, who come in their own strength; and they shall be fed with judgment, but the faithful shall feed upon that doctrine which was, and is rejected by the legalist. The poor feed upon this rich heritage, and are made to rejoice.

You remarked of the Elders who have gone before, that some of them stood firm, continually warning the people. Elder Leachman once said to me, "Tell your father to not forsake me." This was before the Lord had, as I trust, opened my blind eyes, but now I hope that I know how the dear Elder felt, he felt as did Elijah, lonely. But still there were those who did not worship idols then, and I am glad to say that my father stood firm, and trusted in God to direct his steps; he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. I well remember those old faithful servants, and heard several of them preach. Yes, the same doctrine that was preached then, is preached now by the faithful servants. The dear editor of the SIGNS is still contending for the same truth, with warning, through the medium of the SIGNS. Yet the SIGNS has been frowned upon by some who in former years indorsed it. Our own dear pastor is still warning the little flock. I trust the Lord has called him to watch over us, and to warn us of the danger of designing men coming in and scattering the flock as of old.

Elder Badger says in his communication, The SIGNS has not changed since the first publication. I indorse that declaration; but man changes. The prophet Ezekiel was told to prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, and to say, Woe to them that feed themselves; thus the warning was given them. Paul utters the same warning; and the SIGNS from the first has not ceased to give warning by its able editors and contributors. God has shown the immutability of his counsel, and confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation. Upon this let us build our hope, which is an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast. This is a firm foundation, which no thief or robber can break down; it is sealed by the precious blood of Christ, and nothing unholy shall ever be able to abide there. The watchmen stand upon its walls with warning, crying that salvation is by grace. This is what the faithful servants contended for more than seventy years ago. Our beloved editor is following in their foot-

steps, and contending for the same faith, regardless of what man may say. I rejoice to see no evidence that he is seeking to be exalted in the sight of man, but rather, with humble heart to contend for the truth, and to bear the responsibilities placed upon him, especially in judging such matter as will be for the good of the household of faith. There is much hypocrisy in the religious world, but God will judge between the fat and the lean, as he has said. O may we have peace in the camp of Israel. He has set up one Shepherd, and declares there is one fold; he will cause showers of blessing to fall upon them, and will break their yoke, and will deliver them from those that serve themselves. If indeed I am a believer, I was made so by the application of the blood of Christ in experience. If this be true, I have imputed righteousness and obedience in him. I mourn on account of my imperfections after the flesh, and feel condemned, and say with Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I feel unworthy in the sight of a holy and just God; I am not worthy to claim him as my Benefactor and Preserver. Dear brother, is this the road the faithful must travel? So many were put to death for contending for the truth of God. Paul suffered great persecution, and was burdened with the thorn in the flesh, which buffeted him, and which also buffets us, and causes us to feel our unworthiness.

The many good editorials and communications in the SIGNS cause me to feel as though I wanted to cast in my mite, if it be ever so small. I am in my seventy-third year, and have been a reader of the dear old SIGNS more or less for forty years. The more I read them, the more I like them, they give all the praise to God for our salvation through the sufferings of Christ, and also as the Sovereign who absolutely rules in all things; we are all in his hand to do with us as shall please him; there is no condition or compromise to be made with finite man, who cannot think a good thought of himself; they that worship God, must worship him in spirit and in truth. Thus the wilderness shall blossom as the rose, and the fragrance shall be sweet.

Dear editor, may you continue strong, giving warning as the fathers did, they had many trials and hard sayings to endure, but thank God, the SIGNS has stood firm, contending for the truth. You have in God's purpose been spared to contend for God's unconditional salvation. May God bless you in all your labors.

I hope to be able to secure more new subscribers to the SIGNS. It is the firmest and best Old School Baptist periodical published. I knew the dear old editor, Elder Gilbert Beebe, who stood firm, and made no compromise with worldly religionists. Brother Benton L. Beebe was also blessed with great spiritual understanding, and contended for the same old landmarks for which his dear old father contended, and you, brother Chick, have been spared to assume the responsibilities of editor, and I find your editorials are all good and sound, contending for the same truth which was first published by our former beloved editor.

The SIGNS has been looked upon by some claiming to be Old School Baptists as indorsing fatalism, but they are not our judges. We with meekness bow to the will of God in all things, knowing that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, therefore we need not care what men shall say, for Christ was persecuted unto death, Stephen was stoned to death, and Paul said that he knew that great

trials awaited him. So it must be with all the true followers of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we must not expect to pass through this world without being condemned by men. But the good Lord has made a way for our escape, and he has promised never to leave nor forsake his little ones. Though they pass through deep waters, and fiery trials, and the very shadow of death, they will still be his true followers, who put no confidence in the flesh. In no other way can a poor sinner be saved, only through the shedding of the precious blood of our Savior Jesus Christ, which cleanseth us from all sin.

I only intended to write a short letter, but my mind has led me away from earthly things to those which are most glorious. I trust that you will pardon me. Do with this as your mind may direct.

Yours in gospel hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

SANCTIFIED AFFLICTIONS.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Your letter came as a comfort to my chastened spirit, and I am grateful that such helpful words were in your heart. Our King says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Let me speak to you of my experience in this affliction, hoping it will minister to your spirit. Two hours before my hurt, in closing a letter to brother Hite, of Nashville, Tenn., I said, "Cast down, but not destroyed." This word seemed so prophetic and true in the extreme suffering that so soon came upon me. When the doctors told me that my case was serious, and that I could never have good use of the arm again, it seemed that such restraint must cause me much impatience and worry, for I had been quite active till then, and had thought to so continue. How quickly and painfully all was changed with me. Was it a sad accident, which should have been avoided by greater caution, or was it in the purpose of God, "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will"? Faith in him led me to believe the latter. This soothed and quieted me, and it was not in my heart to murmur or fret. Trust and hope in God sustained me. His goodness and mercy through all my long life passed in review before me, and I was often moved to tears of peace and solace. Even through the many nights of great pain, so unrestful, a spirit of peace was given me, and with the early dawn the birds of song would cheer me, and my spirit would join them in praising God. To comfort and help me the more, the mails brought to us letters full of faith and love. These my wife would read to me, while I would try to keep back the tears of gratitude and comfort. So, my dear brother, I was sweetly constrained to both feel and believe that all this affliction, and its results, were in the counsel and love of God. To suppose I might have escaped injury would have changed all this experience that has come to me through the hurt. My deliverance from a violent death was a little less than miraculous, as a train of cars was near when I arose. But if I had been killed, then again the results must have been different we know, yet, unless the counsel and purpose of God established the certainty of all things, then all might have been different. Let me mention a few things to show you this. My son wrote: "If father could only have been a little more careful, how much better it would have been." But I was trying to be careful, and the thought in my mind

(with my sight on the rails) was, "I must step carefully, and not stumble and fall before the onrushing train. Just then my right foot struck an unseen wire, and the force of the fall was fearful, and for the moment I was stunned. The next thought in my mind was, The train is near, I must get up quick. I do not know how I arose, but found myself on my feet, out of the way of the train, and badly hurt, but felt that the Lord had delivered me from so terrible a death. My right arm hung powerless at my side, and with my left hand I felt that it was partially dislocated at the shoulder, and I hoped that was the worst, though a long gash was cut in the bridge of my nose, in which the doctors took seven stitches to close the wound. They found the arm broken at the shoulder, and set it, but would not admit the dislocation, to which I called their attention. O how grateful I felt, even then, that my life was precious in the sight of God. Dr. Wilcox, who attended me, said the arm could not be put in place unless I took chloroform, which at my age would be at the risk of my life. We then decided to leave St. Paul, Ind., and see Dr. Bedford, of Indianapolis, and did so June 18th. He called Dr. Haggard, Professor of Surgery, in consultation. They said there would be no risk in the chloroform, but the risk would be of breaking the arm again, or of rupturing a blood vessel. So they declined to operate on me, advised me to let well enough alone, and told me I had come off well at my age. The next day we went to Olney, Ill., to visit my granddaughters, and to consult Dr. Webber at his sanitarium, for he had sent me word to come there and he would put my arm in place. He did this safely on June 21st. Trusting in the Lord and without fear I laid down on the operating table and inhaled chloroform. The next thing I knew I found myself lying on a sofa in another room, with acute pain in my shoulder. Soon Dr. Webber came in and asked how I felt. I told him, and said, "Doctor, you haven't put my arm in place, have you?" With a smile he answered, "Yes, my friend, your arm is all right." O, brother Chick, the relief and gratitude I felt was too deep for utterance. About forty days my suffering had been severe, in which time the broken arm had firmly united and my lacerated nose was nicely healed, and most admiringly and thankfully had I watched this good physician which the all-wise and beneficent One had placed within me, and now, by the skill of a kind surgeon, my helpless arm would again help its fellow arm. O how wonderful are the provisions of God in nature! How could I have realized all this goodness of mercy and comfort of love in the absence of the attendant suffering and need? How otherwise could the Head of the church perfect his body, and enter into his glory, only through suffering? He must first drink the bitter cup his Father gave him, and be baptized into death. He thus fulfilled all righteousness for his members, and is in oneness with them. So likewise must we be made partakers of his sufferings in the flesh, that we may also be glorified together with him; and so the reproaches and sufferings of Christ have been my consolation in affliction. God is rich in mercy, but only through suffering do we need his mercy and bless him for it. He ordained both the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we die, we shall also live with him. Surely then these are sanctified afflictions. I would not have chosen them, but God hath chosen us in the fur-

nace of affliction, and in his Son, and thus through the sufferings of Christ he refines us.

"Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will."

My spirit rejoices in him that it is so, and that none can stay his hand. Now I am in his hand, waiting his will, and praying, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" I have wanted to write to you and the beloved in the Lord of these trials and consolations, and testify that "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble." To his suffering and buffeted servant Paul he said, "My grace is sufficient for thee," &c. This is true of us also; it is Christ's strength in our weakness.

Now, with love to all the saints, farewell.

D. BARTLEY.

WILLOW HILL, Ill., July 18, 1904.

HOW I BECAME A PRIMITIVE BAPTIST.

MY DEAR BRETHREN IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—Before the close of this mortal life it has been my desire to pen a brief sketch of my past life for your consideration, and tell you how the good Lord led me to see that the Primitive Baptists are the true church.

I was born August 17th, 1830, in Jackson Co., Ala., and at the tender age of twelve years my dear father died. The spring following, my widowed mother left the land that gave me birth and emigrated to northern Arkansas, where I have remained until the present. In 1867 it pleased the good Lord in his tender mercy to quicken me into divine life, and show me my lost and helpless condition. O how wretched and miserable was my awful condition. While agonizing and crying for mercy I viewed the blessed Son of God nailed, hanging, bleeding upon the cross, and in his languishing and mournful condition he said unto me, Your sins caused my sufferings. O, it seemed that my poor heart would burst with grief and sorrow. I will never forget his mournful look. Glory and honor to his blessed name, by his mercy he led me along for about eight months in this awful condition, when it pleased the dear Father to reveal his dear Son unto me as the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely. I never shall forget those sweet moments. While all alone on a high pinnacle on the Boston mountain, under the dark cover of the night, poor and unworthy as I felt myself to be, I felt my burden gone. I viewed the stars in their silvery sockets, and all nature seemed to be rejoicing and praising his holy and blessed name. Glory and honor to his blessed name for such glorious blessings bestowed upon his chosen ones, that were given the Son in the covenant of grace before the foundation of the world.

During the late war some of the Old Baptist ministers died, others moved away, and Old Baptist churches were about all gone, save a few scattered members. The Free-will Baptists sprang up and became very numerous. For awhile I joined them, and very soon felt the impression to preach the gospel. After a hard struggle I entered into what I thought was my duty, but never felt worthy of such a high calling, and do not until this day. I had become a studious reader of the Bible, and therefore could not believe the doctrine they preached. Finally I told the church that I was not of them, as I did not believe the doctrine they preached, and I at once left them. I had read the Bible, and knew God had

a church on earth, but how could I find his church? I was in great trouble, being all alone in doctrine, and feeling to be a poor, weak vessel. I was like Abraham's servant of old, when he set out to hunt a bride for Isaac. With my Bible in hand I would resort to the silent grove, and upon my knees I would ask God to lead me to the true church, many times bathing my Bible in tears, and praying to him, the great Head of the church.

As the Old Baptists are called dreamers, I will now relate a few of my dreams. In my first dream, near the old church site, the house being destroyed in time of the war, I saw a grove of very old oak trees, all about the same height and size, all bending towards the east. I wondered what this could mean. The impression was that they represented the Old Baptist Church. In my second dream I saw nearly the same place, and I was in company with a host of the old brethren who, when alive, belonged to the church. We were walking on a highway, with our old pastor in front. I looked in an eastern direction; I saw a path of blood gradually ascending towards heaven; I was made to wonder what this vision could mean. We walked in silence until we came to the path, when the old pastor stepped upon the path and moved on until we all were on the path of blood, when the old pastor turned and spoke to me, and said, "This is the path that was marked out by the blood of the Lamb; it leads direct into the city." From these dreams, and others I could mention, I began to believe the Old Baptists were the true church. But to make my article as short as possible. I was still asking for brighter evidence, and one night while the family was asleep I lay praying to God for a brighter evidence that the Old Baptists were the true church, when I heard a choir of the sweetest music I ever heard; it seemed like many voices. The thought struck me, This music is a token of your death, when an answer came, No, you go where God has commanded you, and some day you will be in the midst of this sweet music. I was wide awake, I felt a sweet calm, and for some time lay listening to the sweet music. But I wanted to be fully satisfied; I asked the Lord if it were his blessed will to show me so plainly that I would doubt no longer. A few nights after I heard this sweet music, while on my bed praying for a brighter evidence, all at once I saw a brightness in the shape of a golden tube. It looked to be about twelve inches in diameter, and it seemed to me that I could see into the heavens, and a voice said, You see the works of the Old Baptists shine from earth unto heaven, what more can you ask? O how thankful I felt that the good Lord had led me to the true church. I conferred not with flesh and blood, but at once joined them, and was baptized on the 29th of November, 1869, and was set apart by a presbytery on the same day. I have no hesitancy in saying the Old Baptists are the true church.

Brethren, I have given you a brief outline of my travels; in all my labors I have felt to be the least of the flock. My race is almost run; being now in my seventy-fifth year I soon will lay my armor by, and this old body will return to the dust to await the resurrection, but if I am one of the elect I will join those that are gone before, and sing redeeming love, giving God all the honor, power and glory. O blessed thought of that rest that awaits the people of God.

Yours in hope of life eternal,

A. R. McPHERSON.

JASPER, Ark., Oct. 1, 1904.

CHRIST THE SON OF GOD AND THE SON OF MAN.

THE formation of the body of the first created man of the dust of the earth, and the animating of that body, and the sending forth of a human being with a soul, body and spirit, is a mystery that none of the philosophers or scientists of this world have ever been able to explain. About all that any of us can say of it, is, that it was done by the mighty power of God. "The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost," were all agreed in this miraculous work, "and God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." "So God created man in his own image." This man was the figure of him (Christ) that was to come; and he did come in the flesh, and the formation of his body, "made of a woman," in a way that inspiration declares that "The Word was made flesh," and "God was manifest in the flesh," is a mystery that none of us will ever be able to explain. "The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost," were all agreed and engaged in this holy work. The Virgin Mary was troubled, and no doubt surprised, at the presence and message of the angel that appeared to her, and the mystery was so great she inquired, "How shall this be?" "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." According to prophecy and the words of the angel, the virgin conceived of the Holy Ghost, and "the days were accomplished that she should be delivered, and she brought forth her first-born son." This narrative, though short and concise, brings out the truth that Christ is the Son of God and the Son of man. The eternal Word was one with the Father in the unity of the one God, he bowed the heavens and came down; and was "made of a woman," and is called the only begotten Son of God; he was one with the Father in all of his heavenly wisdom and power; all the fullness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily; he was the only begotten Son of God, possessing all the eternal, vital and heavenly attributes of the Father; no others ever possessed such fullness. "Now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be." Christ was called the Son of man because he was made of a woman that was the descendant of the first man, and the descendant of Abraham and David, the last named "being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne." Therefore it is written that "he was made of the seed of David according to the flesh." God also made promises to Abraham, saying, "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Abraham is the father of the faithful, and he was the friend of God, and these blessings must come on all of God's people through Jesus Christ, who was the seed of Abraham in the flesh. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." And Paul says to the Galatians, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Christ was related to his people, or bride, by the strongest ties of love and spiritual affinity, and in order to fulfill the figure or type of the first man, and to be a proper Priest for his

people, to redeem and save them, he must be related to them by the ties of consanguinity, and be made under the law. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." "Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." "Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me." "This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one." This one must be Christ, the Son of God and the Son of man. The Spirit bears witness to his heavenly identity with God the Father, and the water and blood bear witness to his human identity with the flesh of man. It was through the eternal Spirit he offered himself without spot to God, and it was in the flesh he suffered, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God; he was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens," in all of his functions as a High Priest. It pleased the Father that in him all fullness should dwell, and his manhood was sanctified by the divinity of the Godhead; none of the corruption of nature could touch him, and "his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption." His invisible immortality could not suffer or die, therefore a body was prepared him to suffer want, temptation, sorrow and death; he was put to death in the flesh only, he was quickened by the Spirit, and was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead," and the promise of God was fulfilled, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. The centurian that witnessed the commotions of the heavens and earth at the time of the crucifixion, was forced to exclaim, "Truly this was the Son of God."

P. J. POWELL.

WINNSBORO, Texas, August 29, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR AND CORRESPONDENTS:—I am not satisfied, and it seems that I cannot be; I have seen but little peace during the past three years. It seems as if a dark cloud has been over me, and it grows darker and thicker the longer I live. I know there is no mortal living that knows how I have suffered, for it seems like all have forsaken me, which only makes it the harder for me to bear. I never say the things that I love to say but that some are ready to persecute me; I never go anywhere and enjoy myself as others seem to do; I never prepare to do anything but that some obstacle is in the way to prevent me; I have been chastised more, it seems, than a poor, weak sinner could bear; am I to go on in this way all the days of my life? Will the cloud never be removed? Are these things the trials of a sinner, on the road from nature to grace? O if I could but trust in his promise. David said, "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt

revive me; thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me." "For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness. Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron." "Because thy mercy is good, deliver thou me. For I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me." "I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me they shaked their heads. Help me, O Lord my God: O save me according to thy mercy." Did you ever read the Bible and find yourself condemned, and go on in this way until it seemed all hope was gone; then again read and consider your case, when every word did you good? I can say from the depth of my heart, I hope, that above all things I love the Lord and only Savior Jesus Christ. "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear." I am bitterly condemned for believing as I do, but thank God it is better to put your trust in God than to have confidence in men, for woe unto him that trusteth in the arm of man. I am accused of being weak and ignorant, but they that exalt themselves above the poor, weak and ignorant ones, are promised their reward; God says it were better for them had they had a millstone tied about their necks and drowned in the sea. I am glad that what I do know of God (if I do know anything) was not revealed to me by flesh and blood, but by the Holy Ghost. "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." Friends, let not vain words deceive you, for the Lord has given his promise, and it has never failed; he is our rock, our fortress, and the horn of our salvation. We must trust in something that is stronger than fallible, finite creatures like man; you can feel assured that all things are under God's control, and that Christ will bring every one the Father gave him safely home to glory. I am in deep waters; if I could only cast away the thought that I am deceiving the people of God, I would go and do what I have felt to be my duty. The spirit says, Come, and I have stayed away as long as I can, it seems. Come unto me, all ye that are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. I have always thought that I would be deceiving this good people if I joined them, but I find this to be the case with all that I have had the pleasure of hearing express themselves. I know that I do not want to bear their name just to hide my reproach, as is quoted in Isaiah iv. 1. Those of the primitive faith and order bear the name of Jesus because they are the children of God. Jesus Christ made complete and everlasting satisfaction to the law when he died on the cross. The world denies this truth, and is ashamed of Jesus as a Savior, and is substituting mourners' benches, altars, prayer meetings, Sunday Schools, money and every other machine that man is capable of inventing. I am sure the Bible does not teach such works. Such people want only to be called by his name to take away their reproach, but are satisfied with their own bread and apparel. The works of man cannot stand; man can only know God by the Spirit of God. We find in the Scriptures that we are all by nature the same, we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God, and thereby were justly condemned. We are saved according to his mercy, and not by works which we perform. The reason that he saved some and did not save others is, he loved his chosen from all eternity. He is un-

changeable, steadfast, the same yesterday, to-day and forever. How could he hate any one now that he loved from all eternity? We can plainly see that it is not for any good thing accomplished by us here in time, but because he loved us. These words often come to me:

"Come, we that love the Lord,
And let our joys be known."

How sweet they are to me, how glad I am that they are to them that love the Lord. Why do we love him? Because he first loved us. We did not have to do something first to court his love, did we? Read what the Scriptures say about these things in Ephesians ii. 1–10. If it were not for the resurrection of Christ, what hope would we have? We have the witness: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I am weak and hungry, and cannot say what I would like, but if ever the time comes that I can feel my burden removed, I feel that I shall praise him forever and ever, and never tire of telling his praises, his works and ways to all.

May the Lord bless his loved ones everywhere, is the sincere prayer of a poor sinner, saved by grace if saved at all, RICHARD DYKES.

LEWIS COUNTY, Wash., Aug. 12, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I will send you some thoughts for the SIGNS upon man, God, redemption and Satan, in connection with the words, "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree?" The subtle essence of all moral evil is in the words just copied, with all the subtilty of the carnal reasoning of Satan. Thus Satan attempted the work of seduction and corruption of the mother of mankind, in the garden of Eden. It is needless to speculate about the origin of the devil, or to inquire beyond the fact that he was there in the presence of the woman, who was innocent and upright. She had been pronounced very good, and had received in Adam the law of God. She was convinced of the truth of the righteousness of the law as a sovereign mandate of God her Creator and Judge; and in reply to the consciousness of truth, unexpressed as yet by the woman, the artful serpent essays to transfuse his own evil and subtle spirit into her innocent being, into the secret thoughts of her mind and the passions of her heart, corrupting them, as regards the knowledge of the truth which was in her mind, in the sense of creature intelligence.

It seems that Satan answers in the affirmative, admitting the fact in the saying, "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree?" He answers her words, as yet unspoken, which were still in truth and loyalty to her sovereign God. The words of the serpent imply that notwithstanding the perfect liberty to eat of all other trees in the garden, God has forbidden one, and in this one there is an abridgement of freedom, and in this God has reserved to himself the seal of power and divine judgment, saying to man in substance, Thou art not free to think, act and choose for yourself concerning good and evil. The woman now put her thoughts into words, as the serpent expected, and said, We may eat of all the trees but one in the midst of the garden. This commands the center of the domain of Eden, and reserves the right of God to rule over all within the domain of Adam. But, calling in question the right of God to rule alone in the garden, we have the words of Satan, "Yea, hath God said, Ye shalt not eat of every tree?" He now impeaches the truth of God in answer to the cogent and reasonable words of the woman, and says,

God doth know that thou shalt not surely die, and thus he thought to transfuse his own spirit of falsehoood into the woman by accusing God of falsehood. He then follows with subtle rage the next step, denying in the mind of the woman that unity of the Godhead and that power which nature itself declares, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, saying, "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." That is to say, Ye shall be able of yourselves to judge in matters concerning good and evil without accountability to God, or to his judgment as regards the penalty of his law which has said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." In these words of Satan we have a very clear statement of the Arminian doctrine of free-will agency in its essence. No theologian can lay down a more complete and comprehensive statement in as few words, thus crystalizing the whole in one expression of human phraseology. If we take these words in their legal bearing, even in the courts of men, we shall see that a man cannot be free to violate the terms of his agency; then how much less in the court of heaven. This system of free agency is the basic principle of every false religion, all of which emanates from the father of lies; and these things are the lies of which he is the father, if I know anything of the use of language, or the force of law as an enactment of men, or as a divine decree of judgment, inflicting a penalty. The words, "Thou shalt not," hold the subject of them bound. "Thou mayest," is a sovereign grant, but without independence.

To sum it all up, in the garden the creature man was surrounded by the most favorable conditions, and there proved himself to be a fallible being, and recreant to every trust, under temptation by the enemy, the devil. Under the covenant of works man showed himself entirely unable to redeem himself from the snare of the devil by all the works or offerings which he could offer to God, with Moses and the prophets to lead and show him the way. Man made a stupendous failure all the way along, leaving God in full power, and giving full opportunity to grace to save Israel through the operation of the divine plan alone, to his everlasting glory.

As ever your brother,

I. N. NEWKIRK.

BLACK ROCK, Md., Oct. 19, 1904.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—Inclosed you will find a letter written by brother Thomas H. Scott to sister Georgia England, just after she had written to the church. We all thought it so good, she has asked me to send it to you, and if you think it good reading give it a place in the SIGNS. She spent a week with us not long ago, and had several good letters to read to us; this was among them.

Elder Ker preached last Sunday at Black Rock; we all enjoyed the service; the congregation was very good.

We all join in sending much love to you all.

Your unworthy sister,

EMMA KELLEY.

BUTLER, Md., April 11, 1902.

MISS GEORGIA ENGLAND—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—Your most interesting and greatly appreciated letter was received in due time, but on account of the inclemency of the weather, was not read to the church until the regular meeting the first of the present month, there having been so few out at the preceding

meetings. It was read by our pastor, Elder Rowe. When he had read it he said, "It is a good letter," and it was so considered and expressed by the church. Our christian love and fellowship went out to you greatly when we heard the rich experience contained in it. This is in proof of the loving words of the dear Savior, "I am the vine, ye are the branches."

We are told that John saw the holy city coming down from God out of heaven, the new Jerusalem, adorned as a bride for her husband. Then John describes her definite proportions, walls, gates, foundations, street, provisions, &c., and among them he describes the supply of the water of life, which in its quality was pure and vital. It was the same of which Jesus spake to the woman of Samaria, which shall be in them that drink of it a well of water, living water, springing up into everlasting life; in quantity, it is a river, we know. Rivers flow on from age to age without diminishing the fullness of the fountain from whence they flow. This teaches us that the dispensation of the fullness of life and salvation from God can never impoverish him or lessen his resources. This is that river the streams whereof make glad the city of God, the new Jerusalem, which is adorned as a bride for her husband. As to its channel, or the medium through which it flows, Isaiah said, "But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams." All spiritual blessings and the divine life flow down to them through the mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ. This water is described as "clear as crystal," perfectly transparent and unmingled with any of the filthy waters which flow from the polluted fountains of poor, depraved nature. Its purity and transparency is to be inferred from its place of emanation, and the channel through which it flows, proceeding, as it is declared, out of the throne of God and the Lamb.

The city which is supplied with this water also proceeded from God, and all her supplies must be congenial with the purity of its heavenly origin. "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life." The pronoun "it" is thought by some to refer to the city, but I think it refers to our dear Savior, who is the way, the truth and the life; for how can the head be separated from the body? Christ is the head of his body, the church. Is she not one with him ever, even as he is one with the Father? Who then shall separate that which God hath joined together? He said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." As all the branches of the vine grow out of it, even so all the members of Christ, being many, are one body; even so is Christ. To settle this beyond all controversy we have the words of our Lord: "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches."

The church sends love to you.

Your brother, T. H. SCOTT.

BRANTFORD, Ontario, Nov. 4, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER IN THE FAITH:—My object in sending this line is to ask if you have on hand any copies of the SIGNS in which you published my little song? If you have, please send me two copies, for which I inclose the money. But the wish to get them has another wish at its root, which is, that I may send them to my kindred in England, who are not Baptists, but some of whom I have good reason to believe are members of the church spiritual, and this has led me to ask myself the question, What motive prompts me? Is

it merely that they may have my little verses, or is it the hope that they might be edified by something they might read in the paper? This has been a life-long inquiry with me, What spirit is leading me? I often recognize two distinct currents, and at other times not even a thought beyond the impulse under which I act. I took up my Bible and turned to the Psalms, with the desire to find the passage: He maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire. (Psalms civ. 4.) My mind was centered on the distinctive statement, "his angels." Are there any other angels? And you know thoughts revolve; then I turned to Psalms lxxviii., which records God's wonderful dealings with the church under the law in their wilderness journey, and I found that among the terrible judgments God sent on them because of their lack of recognizing him as the only true God, "He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels among them." So there are evil angels, whom he does not call his; yet he sends them. (Psalms lxxviii. 49.) Who were these evil angels? I found the connection in Exodus xxxii., where the people, finding Moses did not come down from the mount when they thought he should, grew impatient, and commanded Aaron to make them gods to go before them; and Aaron was too weak to resist, so when Moses came down from communing with God he found them dancing round a golden calf. This led to the consecrating of the Levites to the Lord, by smiting with the sword every one who was not on God's side. And there fell in one day three thousand men. After this atonement follows Moses' intercessory prayer and God's answer, verse 34: "Behold, mine Angel shall go before thee," which God afterwards (verse 14, chapter following) explains as his presence. Is not this angel the Son of God, as revealed in the New Testament, in all his perfected work of redemption? And this living Spirit testifies as to these truths concerning him, even the Holy Spirit shed into the hearts of his saved people of to-day. I cannot help thinking the evil angels, who urged Aaron to make them gods, were the men consumed by the sword, and their counterpart now is found in the persons who advance teachings which glorify the fleshly works of man, instead of that pointed out by the Spirit of truth. Is not this invisible but ever present holy One the angelic deliverer of even the weakest of his chosen ones? What about our sins, do they prove too heavy for him, or does he lift us right where the sweet shining of the Savior's face reflects its own peace into our hearts? I want his leading, do not you? I do not want to grieve this blessed Spirit, though the sword of the law cuts off my natural, fleshly mind. O that he may lead us, and bless us, and be our portion forever, so death shall be a sleep that only wafts us into the eternal morning of joy with him.

I never meant to write all this, only it seemed to come.

Yours in the best of loves, the love of God, (MRS.) J. STREET.

PINEHILL, Texas, Nov. 10, 1901.

DEAR EDITOR:—I trust the inclosed letter from sister Newton will excuse my intrusion. I have read and enjoyed it, and feel that it should be shared with the readers of the SIGNS.

The least one, in hope,

ROBERT S. PACE.

SPARKILL, N. Y., Oct. 14, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER PACE:—I wrote that card on the impulse of the moment, to let

you know you were not alone; not expecting a reply, but was very glad to get your letter yesterday.

Do you remember reading the obituary (I think in March 15th number of the SIGNS) of brother Arthur W. Rittenhouse, also a letter to me, written the day before his death? Well, I am boarding with his widow. Being almost helpless and almost blind from paralysis for the last five years, my husband and daughter having to go out to work, it is best for me to board.

I was born in the year 1841, in Orange County, near Middletown, N. Y., and have known of Elder Gilbert Beebe all my life. Received a hope thirty-seven years ago last January, in New York city, but can tell of no wonderful deliverance like some. Joined the Methodist church, and had a great desire to grow in grace, which I then thought meant to grow better; but soon great darkness came, and I thought I must have made a mistake, for instead of getting better I was getting worse. I now see it was the light shining in my heart, showing me things I did not think could possibly be there. My one desire was to live without sin, as I heard some did. It is impossible to tell all the ups and downs. I tried to walk with them for ten years, but long before I left them all the comfort I had was in the words, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners," &c. Having learned I was the sinner, therefore I had a little hope. My dear old mother visited me about this time, she was an Old School Baptist, and I always made a way for her to go to her meetings, so I sent my little boys with her; have been so ashamed that I did not go myself. That week old friends came to see her, and their conversation so interested me that I asked some questions, and decided to go with her myself the next Sunday. How surprised I was to hear my own feelings told better than I could have told them myself. Of course I could go nowhere else after that, but I did not mean to join the church; they were so good and I so vile, I did not want any one to point the finger of scorn at the church on my account, but the time came (brother George Conklin's article in the present SIGNS, October 15th, gives my feelings,) and I was buried in the Hudson river, twenty-five years ago the third Sunday in December. I was on the mountain top all winter, and forgot I ever had any doubts and fears. In June I went to the Warwick association for the first time, and O what a fall; I have not had much else but doubts and fears ever since. I had the pleasure of visiting with Elder Gilbert Beebe before he died, and was well acquainted with Elder Wm. L. Beebe and brother Benton L. Beebe, the late publisher of the dear old SIGNS. His wife and son were his helpers long before he died, so are quite capable of continuing the publication, with Elders Chick and Ker as their helpers. I see no change in the paper. What would we do without the SIGNS?

Since I have been afflicted I have been highly favored with visits from Elders J. G. Eubanks, D. M. Vail, Wm. Grafton, A. B. Francis, H. C. Ker, and often our beloved and faithful pastor, Elder John McConnell, who is very ill at the present time, but I hope the Lord will restore him to health.

I feel this is very imperfect, but you will not expect much when you know it is written in bed, and a little at a time. I think I am thankful that I can see to read or write at all. I think I know something about the pains of hell David speaks about. I will now close.

Your unworthy sister in love of the truth,

(MRS.) M. NEWTON.

SPARKILL, N. Y., Oct. 28, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER PACE:—I was quite startled when I received your card, asking my consent to having my letter published. I said, O no, no. If I could have recalled it as soon as it was mailed, would surely have done so, it was so disconnected and unsatisfactory to me. When I call to mind the times I have had in my mind what I would say to the church to show them that my name was not fit to be on the book with theirs, it came like a flash, Yes, you know very well that when you hear any one talk like that, you have fellowship for them, what is the use of telling them that? so my mouth was closed. Now the language of my heart is, "Entreat me not to leave thee," &c. Remembering all this, and knowing I cannot judge myself rightly, I consent that you send it to the SIGNS, and if they decide not to publish it I shall be more pleased than offended.

Now, dear brother, I have written a great deal in my mind since I began this yesterday, but it is impossible to put it on paper; it must be right, or the Lord would give me strength to write it.

We are accused of not caring to see sinners saved, but I think there is not a people in the world so glad to hear the cry of one hungering and thirsting, for we know that the Lord has begun the work, and will as surely finish it. I heard a woman preacher say, "I believe one can be a child of God to-day and a child of the devil to-morrow." Thank God we have not so learned Christ.

Your sister, but the least of all,

(MRS.) M. NEWTON.

THE FIRSTBORN OR THE FIRSTFRUIT.

CHRIST is the firstborn, and he is the firstfruit. Paul, in Col. i. 15, says he is the firstborn of every creature. The first acceptable offering that was made after the transgression by our first parents of God's law, was made by Abel, and the offering was of the firstlings of the flock. Why did he not offer the youngest lamb instead of the firstling of the flock? Because every offering must resemble and typify the great antitypical offering. Christ was the firstborn of every creature, and he also was Mary's firstborn child. Therefore from the beginning of time every offering must be of the firstborn, or the firstfruit. When Israel reaped their harvests they were commanded to take a sheaf of the firstfruits of their harvest. I have heard it said that they were to take the first sheaf and present it unto the priest as a firstfruit of their harvest, in order to be sure that the harvest was coming on, but I fail to find it reading that way. In Leviticus xxiii. 10, we read thus: "When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest." I do not understand that the presenting of the firstfruits was to insure the harvest, for the harvest was already reaped before the firstfruits were taken to the priest. When ye "shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest." The expression, "a sheaf," means no particular bundle, so that it be of the firstfruits of the harvest. There was a much greater significance here than merely that of the harvest being secured to them thereby. The harvest was already reaped before the firstfruit was presented, as I have said before. To what then did the offer-

ing of the firstfruit point? It pointed to the great, spotless, first offering of the immaculate Lamb of God; he was the firstfruit of them that slept.

But it is unnecessary to enumerate all the places in which the firstborn and the firstfruits are mentioned as that which was to be offered, but all certainly pointed to the offering of our Lord Jesus Christ, and not to the ingathering of the future crop. This idea that the firstfruit pointed to the ingathering of the future crop looks well at first sight, but it will not hold out when measured by the great rule which is to measure all things, and up to which all must come. When the children of Adam are born again, born of God, they receive the firstfruit of their inexhaustible inheritance. Christ said, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." This eternal life is the firstfruit or the first manifestation of the Spirit; it is the life or spirit of adoption; it is the earnest of the inheritance; it is the translation of the children of God out of the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son, and into the marvelous light of the Lord. The eternal life given to the children of God is presented under many names in the word of God.

We often get so low down in the slough of despond that we hardly dare claim a hope, yet we still hope against hope; we see so much indwelling sin that we are driven to think that all our hope is but a delusion. Dear child of God, have you ever received this gift of eternal life? You will answer, I hope so. Is there a period in your life when you knew that you had not received eternal life? I know that there was such a period in my life. So the child of God has hope now, and like Paul, he would be of all men most miserable if this hope pertained to this life only. But he has hope that when this old clod tumbles down his hope will be turned to glad fruition. Then, dear child, you will be fully capacitated to enjoy this eternal life far better than while here below. This is because all will be then unmixed with sin, and you will be like Jesus there, for you shall see him as he is, and see him for yourself, and not for another. O the grandeur of that righteous home above. There we shall see Jesus, the firstfruits of them that slept. The greatest pleasure of which I can conceive is to spend eternity with all the blood-washed throng, free from all sin, and to join with them in endless praises to him who died "my poor soul to redeem."

O how spiritually footsore we get in our pilgrimage below; O how we long for home; but be patient, dear child, a few more days, or years at most, and your long and tedious journey will come to an end. The blessed summons will be, dear child, Come up higher. Blessed be his holy name, he will himself raise us up to that higher life. It makes no difference where we die and are laid to rest, for God will watch over us, and at the last trump we shall be raised, fashioned like unto his glorious body. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

"O when shall I see Jesus,
And reign with him above,
And from that flowing fountain
Drink everlasting love?"

Some are longing to meet their natural kindred there, but such desires as these will never be gratified, for all natural ties will then have been done away; the tie that binds in that fair heaven of eternal rest will be a spiritual one.

Brethren, I am all alone, and I have written to pass away a few lonely hours.

Sometimes I am tempted to believe that God is unjust to make such a difference between his children. I know that no one living desires to be among the Baptists more than I do, but God sees fit to order it otherwise. I think it is because I am so unworthy of such a blessing, but he has said, I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities I will remember no more forever. This is good enough, is it not?

From your lone brother, if I can claim that relationship,

J. M. DULEY.

CAPRON, Okla., Oct. 9, 1904.

[WE do not any of us know why God does make such differences to exist between the natural surroundings of his children. But two things are plain, however: first, that he has ordered all for each one, in his infinite wisdom, just as is best for that one, and as shall be most for the glory of his name in that one, and second, that in Christ, and in all that is secured to them through Christ, there is no difference; all are alike sinners saved by grace. He loves all alike, and the same glorious inheritance is reserved in heaven for each one; and in that world all shall be like their Lord. Much is dark and mysterious to us here, but all is light in the Lord, and finally in his light all mysteries shall be revealed and his name shall be glorified.—ED.]

WAVERLY, Pa., Nov. 15, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER EDITOR AND READERS OF THE DEAR OLD SIGNS:—I will ask for a little space in our family paper. I am still trying to serve several churches, but they are very poorly served. I do wish the dear Lord would raise up or send some real gospel preachers to serve them as pastors. I would dearly love to go to meeting every Sunday and listen to the glorious doctrine of God's rich and sovereign grace, but I seldom hear preaching. I did hear good preaching at three associations and three or four two days meetings the last summer and fall. We had at our two days meeting at West Sand Lake, N. Y., Elder Hubbell and Elder McConnell; at Justus, Pa., Elder John Slauson and Elder H. C. Ker; at Cammal, Pa., Elder Eubanks, and had excellent preaching at each place. The churches are about as last year. I have baptized a few during the past year. As far as I know the brethren accept with gladness of heart the doctrine that I advocate, and show the same friendship and fellowship for me, a poor sinner, that they ever have since I first came among them. I have never felt worthy of the fellowship of the dear saints, but I do crave their love and forbearance. I am a poor, erring, blundering, short-sighted, ignorant, sinful worm of the dust, and as such I am destined to crawl along in the dust of my depraved nature while I live on the earth. I am sure that I will never be of any use to any one, and often ask myself, Why am I living here on the earth? I do not know, is the answer always; God knows. I am crushed with trouble almost continually, either with the sin and depravity of my nature, or some natural affliction. O the cruel hand of death, how can I bear it? Four dear children snatched from my heart, no, torn from me. First, dear little Maud, O how sweet, not quite a year old, taken away by cholera infantum; second, Noah Bundy, a precious little boy nearly three years old, died with blood poison, a lovely, bright child. I was attending an appointment nearly one hundred miles from home when he died. What a crushing blow, God only knows the sorrow of my poor, broken heart. Third, the death of our dear daughter

Pearl, thirty years old, died from eating glass in canned fruit. I said, O my God, what will be the next terrible affliction? I cannot bear it, I cannot bear it. I said, There can be nothing worse; my God, withhold thy hand, I am dead, I am killed all the day long. The dear Lord only knows how I was kept up under that terrible, crushing trial. Fourth, the cruel death of my dear, dear son Arthur, who was killed by a railroad train three miles from home, the third day of last May, on his way to the depot. He was employed in an architect office in Scranton, Pa., but the second day must be killed. O my God, what shall I say, what can I say; why, O why must it be so? O, my dear brethren, I can never, never tell what I have suffered in mind since. This seems more crushing than all the rest; my life seems to have gone out, the end of the world has come. I feel this way so much of the time. Go where I will I can find no resting-place, and God only knows what will come next. O, if I did not believe in the glorious doctrine of the unlimited predestination of God over all things and events, where would I be? I would be on the sea of despair, but I do find a little substantial comfort in the precious truth at times. God reigns, but so much of the time I feel to be all alone, and inquiring, Why must it be so? At the same time I know it is right; God is just. I do not want to rebel against God and his ways and works, but yet I do; I long for perfect reconciliation. O to be perfectly resigned to God's will in all things, and remain in that condition; would it be heaven? I pray, I hope for it, I sigh for it, I cry and groan for it. O, if I were a christian then I would have it, but I am not, I cannot be, never will be I fear; this God knows. I am in his hands, I have a hope, but why do I hope? I cannot throw it away, neither do I get much comfort from it, so I spend my days in silence, mourning and sore broken. May God have mercy.

Yours in sadness,

D. M. VAIL.

WILMER, Ark., Oct. 19, 1904.

EDITOR SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BROTHER:—As I have returned from New Hope Association of Predestinarian Baptists, which convened with Harmony church, Calhoun Co., Ark., Oct. 14th, 15th and 16th, I want to tell you and the many readers of the SIGNS, our dear family paper, that I am full, full, full, and overwhelmed. With what? The preaching of predestination, election and the eternal love of God, salvation by grace and not by works. The preaching was all of a piece from first to last. It was one glorious theme, with no uncertain sound. There were no harsh tones, and no time, limited or conditional salvation. O how brother James' sermon on election did fully harmonize with our experience, as he carried us back into the annals of eternity, showing how God, in infinite wisdom, did choose his people, having loved them with an everlasting love, and how Jesus left the climes of immortal glory and came down here in these low grounds of sin and sorrow to suffer the awful death of the cross, not to try to save his people, O no, but to save with an everlasting salvation his beloved bride, and to give unto her eternal life. He did not choose them because they were the greatest in number of any people on earth; they were a remnant. Not only in the doctrine did he delve down deep in God's word, holding forth its eternal truths, written and revealed, but he also admonished and exhorted the brethren to be kind and tender-hearted one toward

another, to bear and to forbear, to remember how frail we are, and how prone we all are to sin, how apt we are to go in forbidden paths, and how, if we are what we profess to be, genuine Old School Baptists, we mourn and sigh on account of our short comings, and that when we would do good evil is present with us.

He also spoke of the truth that notwithstanding all these things, we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus who died, and in the garden before this, sweat as it were, great drops of blood, that all his chosen people might live. Then on Sunday brother Meece took up the same subject, and showed us the bride, the Lamb's wife, Mount Zion, the city of the great King, beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, the perfection of beauty; and he showed how the glory of God shone around her, and how she is protected by electing love, the love of God, and how she was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. As he went on and on, and up still higher and higher, and richer, and sweeter, and more full in the gospel of God, and stirred up our pure minds by way of remembrance, as the eagle stirs up her nest and fluttereth over her young, we were filled with joy and love, and we could not help giving vent to our feelings, and the tears trickled down our cheeks.

Then we listened to brother Little's farewell sermon. This was within itself a delightful feast. He warned the brethren that they should continue steadfast in the faith, unwavering in doctrine, adhering closely to the commandments of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and loving one another. Then the parting hymn was sung, and the parting hand was given. I must say it was a time of joy and love never to be forgotten. Bless the Lord, O my soul. Yea, Lord, bless all thy chosen people. Amen.

C. G. IRWIN.

CARDINGTON, Ohio, Nov. 3, 1904.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have just read the SIGNS for November 1st, and O how comforting it was. How my heart reaches out to the contributors and to all the readers who, with me, yes, blessed thought, who with me, rejoice in reading the dear letters. O how I love you all to-night! How sweet it would be to meet every one, and clasp hands in the fellowship of the love of God.

Often, when much cast down, the SIGNS cheers and helps me on the way. It is sometimes as if I were walking up a slippery hill, and kept slipping back continually, not seeming to get on at all, when the precious SIGNS comes as a friendly hand to help me. Then trials are forgotten, or I thank God for them, and hand in hand with the whole family circle, all borne up in the everlasting arms, then can I run and not weary, walk and not faint; yea, I mount up on wings as eagles. O, brethren, is it not sweet and glorious when we can remember that Jesus finished it all; that he ever lives and intercedes for us; that the Father himself loveth us; that we are Christ's, and Christ is God's? What a wonderful fellowship this is; and what we enjoy here is but a drop in the great ocean of heavenly love and joy; O what will it be up yonder, when all are gathered around the throne, in the presence of God and the Lamb, with perfect love and joy flowing in the midst? There will be no sighing for absent loved ones, no lonely ones cut off from the company of the saints; but all who love God sincerely, together with all the saints from Abel to the end of time, will be there, with Jesus, blessed Savior, in the midst. O, dear ones, it is joy overwhelming to contemplate it; although we may not meet here, we will meet there, never to part,

and there will be no dark seasons, but all will be light, and love, and peace. O I long to be there! Language fails in expressing the hunger of my heart for your fellowship, or to tell of the joy of it. I am so glad that you know just what I want to tell, and that you can rejoice with me and understand me, though I can but poorly express the beauties of these heavenly things; we can praise and magnify him together. Write on, dear ones, and you who have never written, can you not send a message of love?

I have moved with my son to the village of Cardington, Ohio, that he may attend school here. There are just the two of us, he and I. I know that I am asking much, but I am far from my church and do not expect to have the privilege of meeting often with the saints, and I would be so glad if some of the dear readers of the SIGNS could find it in their hearts to write to me. Several of you have written to me, from whom I would be glad to hear, as well as from those who have not written. I know it is a bold request, but I love you so much just now that I feel that perhaps you will pardon my presumption. May I have remembrance in your prayers?

The least of all, if one at all, your sister, JOIE E. WICKHAM.

ODELL, Ill., Nov. 21, 1904.

EDITOR SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR SIR:—Will you kindly notify me of the amount still due on the thousand dollars indebtedness on the SIGNS OF THE TIMES? as I did not see any clear account of it in the last two papers, and I will send with my renewal sufficient to discharge the debt. In your next issue you may notify the brethren that the full amount still due is pledged by

A FRIEND OF THE "SIGNS."

[IT will be remembered by our readers that about two years ago an appeal was made by a brother, to the friends of the SIGNS, to raise a thousand dollars to liquidate the debt then resting on the paper, which has been very generously responded to, the total amount contributed since then being $988.15, leaving a balance of $11.85, which "A Friend of the SIGNS" kindly offers to contribute, as will be seen by the above letter. We ask each one who has in any way helped make up the amount, to accept our sincere thanks for your kind assistance, and we assure you your kindness is very highly appreciated by us. The SIGNS is now nearly free from debt, and we hope, if it be the Lord's will, to be able in the future to keep it so. All contributions received for the purpose of sending the paper to those who are unable to pay for it themselves, have for the past two years been included in this fund (but have been applied, and the paper sent as directed,) but in the future will be credited to the "SIGNS Fund" for indigent subscribers. —ED.]

PLEASE BE SURE,

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1904.

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EDITOR:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

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THE ROD OF THE SHEPHERD.

SISTER K. L. Black, of St. Thomas, Ontario, has asked that we write about the rod of the Shepherd, under which the people of God are to pass, and wishes to know if the rod means the same thing in Leviticus xxvii. 32, Psalms xxiii. 4, and Ezekiel xx. 37, and we feel willing to give such views as we have.

The text in Leviticus reads as follows: "And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord." The expression in Psalms is, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me;" and the language in Ezekiel is, "And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant." In Micah vii. 14, we read the prayer, "Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage."

In reply to the question of our sister we will say that we think the rod means the same thing in all these places. In all these places the people of God are presented under the figure of a flock of sheep. We do not need to call attention to the fact that in the Scriptures this figure is frequently used, and in all the Scriptures it is again and again asserted that the Lord Jehovah is the Shepherd of his people; the rod was the insignia of the Shepherd's office. In all the places named above, the rod is translated from the same word that often signifies a sceptre, the symbol of rule and authority. Sometimes in the word the rod is used as a symbol of chastisement or correction. In the places named above it presents all that care, and bounty, and guidance, and kindness, and authority, and protection which the good shepherd would extend to his flock of sheep. Nothing could more forcibly set forth the great and good Shepherd of Israel, in all his tender pity and love for his flock, and in all that he does for them all their journey through these low grounds of danger, sorrow and sin. As a Shepherd, he bears the rod, the signet of his office, and it means that he is present with his people, that he protects, guides and provides all that they need. We read of the rod of correction, of the rod of his strength, of the rod of violence, and of the rod of his inheritance, in the word. In fact, the rod is used as an emblem of many things in the Scriptures, but in those Scriptures referred to by our sister, the rod of the shepherd is specially presented. Through the medium of some beautiful songs, in later years the rod has come to signify in the minds of most of us the one thought of affliction or chastisement, but this is in reality but one of its significations in the word, as we have before shown. Indeed, so far as the figure of a shepherd and his sheep is concerned literally, there is no such thing as chastisement known. No one ever heard of a shepherd literally afflicting or chastising his sheep. The rod, as used in the Scriptures, so far as relates to this relation, does not have in it the thought of chastisement or affliction at all; the rod comforts the sheep rather than afflicts them. They are afflicted by their ene-

mies, and by the dangers that surround them, and without the Shepherd's rod they would sink in despair often, but the Shepherd is near, and the Shepherd is known by his rod and staff.

We will say a few words concerning each of the Scriptures named at the head of this article. In Leviticus the thought is of the tenth of all the flocks and herds being devoted to the Lord. The expression, "whatsoever passeth under the rod," there relates to the counting of the sheep as they pass under the rod of the Shepherd, so that one in every ten might be selected as being holy to the Lord. Here is no thought of chastisement, but of counting or numbering the flock, and the object is that some may be so highly favored as to be the Lord's special heritage. The rod in this case would be a blessed thing to those chosen to this high privilege. How highly favored is the election of grace, those who are called as the Lord's peculiar heritage through grace; these all have passed under the rod, and have been singled out for the service of God.

The expression in Psalms xxiii. sets forth the rest and peace and safety of the flock under the care of their great Shepherd. Dangers are all around, hunger and thirst are with them; they are called to enter the very valley of the shadow of death, and they are all weak and helpless, so far as defending themselves and providing for themselves are concerned. They know this, and if left to themselves might well despair, but it is their comfort that the Shepherd is with them, and the Shepherd is known by his rod and staff; these distinguish him from all others. Therefore the language is, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." The meaning is, the care, love, watchfulness and strength of the Shepherd are my support, and with these about me I can fear no danger; even in the valley of the shadow of death itself I will fear no evil, since the Shepherd is with me.

In Ezekiel the text referred to relates to Israel first, literally, and signifies that the Lord will restore them from their wanderings and exile, and number them as his own, which is signified by causing them to pass under the rod. As sheep are numbered in that way, so the figure is used to signify that the Lord will number his people, and not one of them shall fail to be included in this covenant. So all the Lord's spiritual Israel shall be numbered, and one by one shall be brought under the bond of the covenant. That is, all shall be called by grace, and brought in heart and spirit to know what the new and everlasting covenant signifies. This covenant has a bond in it, and this bond incloses all the sheep, and secures their safety here and their salvation hereafter. This bond cannot be broken, since it is secured by the full and perfect work of the blessed Shepherd himself.

We will also add a word concerning the text in Micah, to which we referred in addition to those named by sister Black. Here the rod is used as the emblem of all that care which the Lord will and does have over his people. The word "feed," as used here, and often elsewhere in the word, signifies rule, rather than just the thought of supplying food for the hungry. It is a broader word than just feeding. The thought is that of sustaining, comforting, protecting, guiding, in fact all that a shepherd can do for his sheep, or all that they can need.

There is no question that one of the ways in which the blessed Lord cares for his flock is by affliction or chastisement, and so the rod may well be considered an emblem of fatherly correction to them.

David considered affliction a blessing from the hand of God, and so have all the holy men of old; and all the people of God in all ages have seen the blessedness of affliction, and have counted it all joy when they have met with temptations, because thus they have been humbled and brought near to God, their great Shepherd. One of God's ways of bringing and keeping his flock, who are men and women, near to him, has always been through sorrow, trial and affliction, and so in a very high and exalted sense they have been comforted by his rod. But after all, affliction is but one of the things which are signified by passing under the rod.

GALATIANS IV. 6.

BROTHER David McNees, of Memphis, Tenn., desires some reflections from us upon Galatians iv. 6: "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

The apostle treats in this chapter, and in the connection, upon the difference between the legal covenant and the gospel covenant, and especially in this immediate connection sets forth the blessedness of those who have been translated from one to the other. These have all ceased to be servants, and have become sons; they had been in bondage, but are now free. They had been in bondage to the elements of this world, but now have come into the liberty of Christ in the new world. All this wonderful change had been wrought out for them and in them through Jesus Christ, who had come in the fullness of time, under the law, and made of a woman (that is, made flesh,) to redeem them, that they might receive (not the bondage of servants again, but) the adoption of sons. Therefore he says, "Thou art no more a servant, but a son." What a wonderful translation to them, and to what exalted privileges had they been begotten. Now the apostle says that as they have been thus redeemed and made sons of God through the indwelling Spirit of God, God has now sent forth his Spirit, the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

This sending forth of the Spirit is not the new birth, but follows the new birth. None ever have had any right to the title, "sons of God," until born of God. To them which were born, gave he power to become the sons of God. The natural man is not a child of God, but he that is born again, born of God, born of the Spirit of God, has this right to call God his Father. Jesus Christ was declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead, and it is the Spirit of the risen Jesus which dwells in his people, and in them cries, Abba, Father; and it is by this Spirit that they cry, Abba, Father, as well. It is because these are sons that God has sent forth into their hearts the feeling sense of sonship, so that they look to God as their Father, and cry to him with all that the word crying means. How different a thing it is to come before God as a slave would come to his Master, and coming as a dearly loved and loving child. In this there is liberty and no bondage. We truly have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but we have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. There could be no sense of sonship under the old covenant. Moses was faithful as a servant, but Christ as a Son. We are not now Moses' disciples, but the disciples of Christ. The law is no longer our schoolmaster, for we have come to Christ, the end of the law to every one that believeth. God had re-

served this better thing for us in Christ. And the pledge and evidence of this new birth is that God hath now given to us the Spirit of sonship, and from the depths of heart-felt experience we come lovingly before God as our Father, and claim and receive all the blessedness of that relation, and all the privileges that belong to it. What may not a son claim from his father? "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him?" are the words of the only begotten Son of God.

Brother McNees also asks if a brother says, "My service in the ministry is so hard, and such a heavy burden," is he bearing Christ's yoke, or rendering legal service?

Jesus said, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." We recall once hearing a brother who had been long in the ministry say that he had often become weary *in* the work, but never weary *of* it. Ministers are men of like passions with other men, and are subject to temptation and trial from without and within, from the world, the flesh and the devil, as are other children of God. For ourself, we can say that we have never felt that our service in the ministry was hard, or a heavy burden, in the sense that we would have been glad to have gotten rid of it. There have been heavy burdens to bear, and much of care, anxiety and hardness to endure all the way along, but still we have not felt to complain, but have rather felt to complain of ourself and our unprofitableness, and to count ourself not only unprofitable, but often unfaithful as well.

To that one who enters the ministry because of the hope of reward only, we can well see that the service would be hard and the burden heavy. Such an one would count any service hard, and this would be because there would be no love for the service in him, but only hard tasks to perform. Love makes all things easy, and every burden light. But if self-gain be the incentive, then all is indeed a weariness to the flesh. True ministers do not serve under bondage, but with delight. The service is itself their joy, and all their burden and sorrow is that they themselves are so unfit and unworthy. Not only is this true of ministers, but it is true of all who serve in the house of the Lord in any capacity. If we do not find the service of the house of the Lord a delight, it is sure that something is wrong with us; not wrong with the service, but wrong with us. How much do we love the cause? Are we so in love with it that we count it joy to bear burdens for it and in its service? Do we do what we do grudgingly or joyfully? Do we feel as though we belong to the Lord, and do we count this as our chief glory and delight? Then we shall feel that it is our meat and drink to do our Father's will.

We know what it is to go to the performance of some obligation, such as visiting the sick and afflicted, preaching the word, or attending to something belonging to the order of the house of God, with weariness of body, darkness of mind, and with no sense of delight in our heart, but still we have not felt the service itself a burden, nor the ministry placed upon us a task, but rather, that we ourself were unfit. Still we have counted it a joy to serve our brethren at all times, if we could only serve them truly.

We have given here this expression of our own feelings, and will leave the theme.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder D. M. Vail, at his residence, Waverly, Pa., Thursday, Oct. 20th, 1904, A. F. Tripp and Mrs. Augusta C. Akerly, of Olyphant, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Annie M. Smith died Oct. 22nd, 1904, aged about 68 years. Sister Smith's residence was in Washington, D. C., though her death occurred near Centerville, Prince William Co., Va. She was baptized by Elder E. V. White, Nov. 8th, 1896, in the fellowship of Frying Pan church, of which church she remained a worthy member until her death, which occurred suddenly from a stroke of paralysis, which she suffered but two days before. She had attended the Corresponding Meeting, and from its sweet comfort, which all who were there will long remember, she was soon taken to the unalloyed joy of an eternal meeting. How sweet is the knowledge that we must die; great and unspeakable the joy of those who depart this life, but sadness, loneliness and woe for those who remain. At times the thought that we must die is sweet; at times, I say, for in much of our life here in the flesh we feel and acknowledge the claims of our mother, the earth, and we cling to her, whether wisely or not, as a child clings to the breast of its mother. We see our kindred depart, and feel to the depths of our soul it is well with them. But we who remain are not comforted; the place once occupied by the loved one is vacant; a strange loneliness comes into our life, and reason as we may, sad, bitter thoughts come into the mind, and questionings concerning the providence of God, the things of faith and matters too deep and too far off to soothe the fearful, the present wound we feel in our poor, stricken hearts, which pain goes down to the lowest depths of our nature, and will not be soothed by platitudes as old as the race, or rather as old as sorrow and disappointment in the earth. We mourn as Rachel mourneth for her children, and will not be comforted because they are not. I am sorry for that man whose deepest feelings of his loss or suffering can be assuaged by the common phrases of the day or times, and though he may seek to hide his soul's anguish out of a sense of duty or kindly interest in those who suffer as well as himself, yet cannot feel the broken heart, the unpitying stroke upon the finest, the most tender strings of heart and soul, that causes him to writhe in anguish in his secret moments, as his soul is made bare in its wounded, bleeding, uncomforted isolation. A soul in such a condition is the awful dwelling-place of God. The clouds which envelop it are the "thick clouds," where God reveals himself. No man can draw near to him but by great suffering. It is a mercy when God thus comes near to us, not in those common phrases we so often hear, and which, alas, have no meaning often in the stricken heart, but when he comes near and we feel him by the weight of that hand under which we cry out with Job, "Have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me." Such knowledge of God comes only from God himself, and only the hand that wounded can heal.

Somehow I am constrained to write these thoughts in this obituary of sister Smith. I trust God has a purpose of love and comfort to her family and friends in their severe affliction. To her sons and daughters I would say, It is not wrong to grieve, it is not sin to mourn; it is blessed to mourn, especially if the mourning is for the soothing, helpful, comforting presence of the almighty God, who reigns in earth and heaven, in the heart of those who love him. The sign or token of that reign is where it can be read in letters of living fire, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Where that sentiment is, God reigns. No one with lightness can give utterance to it. The slaying must be realized, and also the assurance that there is nowhere else to go save to the suffering, the crucified Jesus, who came near to the Father by his own intolerable sufferings, but whose reward was so strange "angels appeared ministering to him" in his agony. Strength from God the Father in his sore need crowned him with glory and honor, and here is the glory of his followers. "O God, give me strength to endure," is the prayer going up to God out of the heart of his afflicted people.

J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., Nov. 22, 1904.

IT becomes my painful duty to write the obituary of my beloved husband, **William H. Dickson,** who departed this life after a very painful and protracted illness, July 15th, aged 66 years. The cause of his death was valvular heart disease, which made its appearance about six months previous. The last four weeks he was a great sufferer, but bore his sufferings with patience and resignation, manifesting that his trust and confidence were in the Savior of sinners. We are consoled only by the great assurance he left us that for him to die was gain. When asking me to read the Scriptures he would say, "Read about that faith that will endure to the end." Once when sitting in his easy chair, I asked him to recline his head to rest. He said, "O no, I want to hold up my head to see the beauties of the new Jerusalem as they unfold to my gaze." His constant prayer was that the Lord would take him home; he would say, "Will not that be a glorious exchange?" In early manhood he served his country in the Civil war. Before the war he united with the Presbyterian Church. We have been married thirty-seven years, and he has attended Baptist meeting with me whenever he could; he said he liked the Baptists. He requested Elder J. D. Hubbell to preach his funeral sermon, which he

did, from John xiv. 1: "Let not your heart be troubled," &c. He leaves to mourn, his lonely widow, one daughter, two sons and one sister, beside numerous relatives and friends. He was a kind, devoted husband, an affectionate father, a noble-minded citizen, highly respected by all who knew him, as was evidenced by the immense concourse of people who attended his obsequies. I feel he has only gone on a little before, soon we must follow. My desire is that the Lord will reconcile us to his will in all things, and help us to say, "Thy will be done." May he sustain us in our great affliction, is the prayer of the unworthy writer, JULANA H. DICKSON.

ARENA, N. Y., Nov. 22, 1904.

DIED—August 13th, 1904, **Mrs. Olive T. Johnson,** wife of brother Ellis Johnson, of Justus, Pa., aged about 50 years. She had been in poor health for nearly twenty years; her last sickness was from heart failure. She was married to brother Johnson Feb. 19th, 1876, who is now left sad and lonely, with father and mother, (who are brother and sister Russell) an adopted daughter, Mrs. May Tripp, of Scranton, Pa., one brother and two sisters, and many other relatives, to mourn for one they loved. Sister Johnson was baptized by the writer of this notice August 1st, 1885, uniting with the Old School Baptist Church called Abbington, at Justus, Pa., living in the esteem, love and fellowship of the church until called from time to eternity. We miss her much at our meetings. She was sound in the faith of the gospel of grace, firmly established in the doctrine of the unlimited predestination of all things, eternal vital unity, the resurrection of every chosen vessel of mercy from the dead, mortal to immortality, corruption to incorruption, time to eternity. One after another are taken from the little band of brethren, until there are only nineteen or twenty left. May God grant comfort to the dear mourning husband, family and friends for Jesus' sake.

The funeral service was held at the meeting-house August 16th. The writer spoke to a large congregation, after which the remains were interred in the cemetery near by. D. M. VAIL.

WAVERLY, Pa.

DIED—At the residence of her son, in Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., Oct. 7th, 1904, after a lingering illness, sister **Mary Elmendorf,** wife of brother Peter Elmendorf, aged 75 years. Sister Elmendorf united with the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church many years ago, and always manifested a living interest in the church by walk and conversation, and delighted in filling her place among the saints until failing health deprived her of the privilege. We will miss her from our midst. A more energetic woman, wife or mother could not be found. She was a kind friend and good neighbor. As a farmer's wife she filled the place with mind and anxiety indoor and out. But all is at an end now, and the place that knew her so well knows her no more forever. We believe the eternal life that was given her as a child of God, by which she was prepared to worship God in spirit and truth, was hid with Christ in God, and the sealing by the holy Spirit of promise of the body as an Adam sinner assures its resurrection in the likeness of her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ when time shall end and all the saints are gathered home to die or be separated no more. Our dear sister leaves a husband, three sons and one daughter, a number of grandchildren and other relatives, with the church, to mourn. May Israel's God reconcile them all to his holy will for Jesus' sake. J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLY CORNERS, N. Y., Nov. 17, 1904.

DIED—At her home near Appin, Ontario, Oct. 19th, 1904, my dear cousin, **Mary McLean,** the beloved wife of Hugh McLean, in her 58th year. In my remembrance she never seemed very strongly constituted, but was always able to be around till this summer, when she was stricken with an inward disease. She was of a mild, unassuming, beautiful christian character, and very much beloved by those who had the pleasure of being acquainted with her. She loved the Old Baptist preaching, and though not a member, her conduct and conversation gave evidence of Christ in her the hope of glory. Besides her husband, she leaves one sister, one brother and a host of relatives and friends to mourn her death; but she is at rest. As she lay in her casket death seemed robbed of its terror. She was taken from her home and gently laid to rest in the silent city of the dead.

We hope that God will grant us grace and strength to bow in humble submission to his will. We know that God is wise and righteous in his dealings, and worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and we desire that he will sanctify this bereavement to her husband, relatives and friends.

(MRS.) GILBERT McLEAN.

MELBOURNE, Ontario.

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BI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

OF THE

WELSH TRACT CHURCH.

The bi-centennial of the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., was celebrated Oct. 20th, 1903. After some delay it is now published in pamphlet form, and on sale at this office. Price 15 cents. The pamphlet contains photographs of the Welsh Tract meeting-house and Elder J. G. Eubanks, the pastor, the proceedings of the anniversary, letters of greeting from sister churches and a historical sketch written by Dr. B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., and read on the occasion. Some of the brick in the meeting-house was brought from Wales to this country, and hauled on mules' backs a distance of ten miles. The pamphlet is very interesting and full of information.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 72. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1904. NO. 24.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ROMANS VII. 1.

"Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?"

What the apostle has declared in this, and the few following verses, has for a long time been pondered over in my mind, and I have thought, Do I now, or have I ever known anything about it? I can see plainly that no law could have any dominion over a man after he is dead, and the verses following embody something that I sometimes think I can see a great beauty in. But again, when I look at the same Scripture, I think that I do not understand anything of Paul's meaning in it. There is no Scripture that I have pondered over more than this, yet my mind is clouded concerning it. I confess that I look at this Scripture in a different light from what was the case formerly. But do I now understand it? Sometimes I am given light when writing, and if now it is God's will to unfold the hidden truth to my mind, I shall confess it did not come from my store-house of wisdom, but from above.

The law of course has no dominion over a man after he is dead. "For," says Paul, "the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband, so long as he liveth." This all is plain in a natural sense, but the question is, How is it true in a spiritual sense? Paul goes on to say, "But if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband." This I can also see in a natural sense, but how is it to be understood in a spiritual sense? The husband and wife are bound by the law to each other, while the death of either releases the other from the legal obligations wherein they have been bound. Paul goes on to say, "If, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress." This also is true in a natural sense, but how shall it be spiritualized?

The Lord said Israel was his dove, his spouse, his undefiled. "She is the only one of her mother." He says of her that she has dove's eyes, and she is fair to look upon, and that he is married to her, but she had committed fornication and had bowed to idols. Because of this he gave her a bill of divorcement, and gave her over to be a servant to those after whom she had gone, until she should

cry out in slavish bondage unto her lawful Lord and Husband; and though she had been false to her husband, yet he declared that he would hear her cry. His love for her was everlasting, therefore he sent her deliverance. He said, Cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, her iniquity is pardoned, and that she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. She is sometimes compared to a backsliding heifer, but again her iniquity is pardoned. How awful it is to hear the complaint of the Lord against his spouse. For Israel, to whom he is married, his mercy endureth forever. In a little wrath he hid his face from her, and for a small moment he forsook her, but with great mercies he has promised to gather her again to himself. He heard her cry, and redeemed her from all her bondage. How strong must be the love of God, the Husband, who so often had mercy when his spouse deserved death. He suffered not his faithfulness to fail, nor did he utterly withdraw his loving-kindness from her.

But to return to the text. The statement is that if her husband is dead she is loosed from that law, and can marry whom she will. Paul adds to this, Likewise, my brethren, ye are dead to the law by the body of Christ. He says again, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." How is this? Does he mean they are dead in such a sense that the law hath no dominion over them, and that they have entirely escaped from its power or its demands? It certainly does appear thus, for he says that sin hath no dominion over them, because they are not under the law, but under grace. He says, We are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held. We are dead, and therefore cannot be any longer accountable to the law. We are dead to the law by the body of Christ; we are crucified with Christ; as many as have been baptized into Christ have been baptized into his death. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." We are free from the law through the death of Christ; he blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which was against us, nailing it to the cross. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (The law was not weak in itself, but it could not fulfill itself through the weakness of the flesh.)

Paul declares that if before the husband is dead the wife be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress. What then shall we say of those who while yet not freed from the first husband are seeking to be married to a second husband? How can we spiritualize this? Paul said to the Ephesian brethren, "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." They are now dead to sin, but alive unto God. This is true of every child of grace who has been quickened; they were dead in sin, but are now dead to sin; and "he that is dead is freed from sin." Every child of grace has been delivered unto death, and then delivered from death. Death is a very sorrowful condition, and when one can see one of God's little ones in this state it is a pitiful sight to behold. But those who have passed through this trying ordeal have died to the love of sin, self, the world, and all that they had trusted in before. The hearts of such as these go out to those who are dying, in greatest sympathy, and when they see

that the last struggle is over and the sinner cries, "If my soul were sent to hell, thy righteous law approves it well," they understand that deliverance is at hand. Such as these can go down no further, they have sunk to the lowest depths. Then God takes them out of the horrible pit and miry clay; he speaks peace to their troubled souls. The soul now will say, He hath spoken peace to me, he hath heard my cry, he hath given heed to my supplication. I was lost, but now am found; I was dead, but now I live. "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." "For the just shall live by faith." "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith." Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith alone. "To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Such subjects of grace are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them, for it is God who worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. "Our sufficiency is of God." Faith is a gift of God, and so is belief. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." "The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is of the Lord." Without faith it is impossible to please God. And "before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterward be revealed." When faith comes the child feels his sins rise up before him like a mountain, it seems to him every person must see him as he is; how shameful, he feels, is his condition. He strives to cover himself with a robe of his own manufacture, but behold it is only figleaves. But as God made Adam a garment from the skins of slain beasts, so Christ was slain and his robe of righteousness was wrought on Calvary for every one whose sins have been uncovered. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Their sins are imputed to Christ, and his righteousness is imputed to them, and they do not desire to be found having their own righteousness, but the righteousness which is by the faith of Jesus Christ, which the righteous Judge gives to all that love his appearing; and the life that they now live in the flesh they live by the faith of the Son of God.

There is still another verse which I ponder over which reads thus: "For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members, to bring forth fruit unto death." "When we were in the flesh." Can it be that there has ever been a time

when we have not been in the flesh? What does the apostle mean here? In the next chapter he says, "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." I can perhaps see what Paul means when he speaks of the time that they were in the flesh. He seems to refer to the time when they had not the Spirit of God in them. "All men have not faith." The apostle Jude says, "These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit." Thus it begins to dawn upon my mind that Paul had reference to the time when they were without Christ, having no hope and without God in the world, until the time when he could declare of them that they were not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwells in them. He adds, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." And thus we learn that if he has that Spirit he is not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. When we were in the flesh we walked after the flesh, and warred after the flesh, but now if the Spirit of Christ be within us, we are considered by Paul as not being in the flesh, but in the Spirit, and when we are thus favored we are freed from sin. This does not mean that we have no sin, but that we have been delivered from its dominion. Our sins were laid upon Christ, and his righteousness given to us, and we have no other. He is our righteousness, for he is our life.

N. PETERS.

PORTLAND, Ind.

[IF we may judge from the many things said about it in the Scriptures, there is in the judgment of the holy Spirit no more important subject than this treated of by brother Peters. Paul will not allow for a moment that the law has any salvation in it, he insists that salvation is by grace only. He will not admit that the grace of God and human work or merit can mix in the salvation of men. It is as abhorrent to God that man should try to mix grace and works in their salvation, as it is for a woman to marry a second husband while her first husband is living. So one must be dead to the law before they have a right to be married to Christ. He who looks in the slightest degree to his own work is an adulterer, if at the same time he claims Christ as his Savior.—ED.]

WINONA, Wash., Oct. 26, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—Having been requested by a precious brother to write some of my travels for the SIGNS, I will now try to do so, begging the Lord to direct me to the comfort of some of his little ones. I have never felt that I could write anything that could be used by any paper without excluding better matter, but it is no more than right, if I have one talent, that I should put it on exchange. I have often wondered if there is another one like me. I was so young when the Lord, as I have hope, showed me that he was my Savior, that I fear sometimes I was mistaken; not that I doubt his ability to save. At such times I am made to go back over the things which I have experienced. I once loved to be amused by anything that pleased my fancy; I enjoyed dancing and all the vanities of this life, and had not a thought of anything eternal, except that I thought that after awhile, when I got ready, I would do like the rest who were old, I would get religion. I commenced going to dances and parties at a very early age. When I was fourteen years of age, one day my mother left me at home, telling me to come on after her, as she was going to one of my sister's not

far away; but instead of following her, I took the gun and started out hunting, which I had promised not to do. I shot a rabbit and started to reload the gun. This much I remember well. The next I remember was, that the powder horn was empty, and what powder would not lay in my hand was on the ground. Brethren, you who have seen the exceeding sinfulness of sin, know how this poor boy felt as he went back home and then followed his mother with a conscience accusing him at every step, and how he resolved never to do anything wrong again. And with this was a feeling that I was not going to live long, and thought, What will become of me if I do this way all my life? I think that I saw the need of what is called religion, as a preparation for an eternal hereafter. I tried to do good; I begged the Lord to help me. It seemed to me that if I did more good than I had done I would be saved. I began to study, and I found things different from what I had thought they were. A corrupt fountain sends forth corrupt water. A sinner can do nothing but sin. I knew that I was a sinner, and I could not get so good but what I would transgress in at least one thing; then I was guilty of the whole law. Then I began to beg to know what to do. All that I read condemned me, and all that I could do did not help me. This caused me much trouble. I could see that I was a sinner, and it seemed that I was becoming worse and worse. I tried to pray, but that did me no good. I began to think that it was wrong for me to pray, and then I would try to stop praying; and all the time it seemed as if the time of my stay here was getting shorter. I began to go from place to place, hunting some secret place to cry and mourn over my condition, and at times my very breath was a cry for mercy. I thought, Surely if I do not find some help I must die, and then go to torment. I did not think there was any one who could help me but God, and I did not see how God could save such a sinner as I was, unless he saved every one else. But my cry was, Lord, be merciful to poor me; all else had failed.

I was sitting in the room at home, my head bowed down with my grief because all hope was gone, when in a moment the room was full of light, and I was praising God, and all was peace and joy; I had found him whom my soul loved. The blessed Son of God was made manifest to me as the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely One, and in him my righteousness exceeded that of the scribes and pharisees. This was a blessed time. The angel that told the shepherds of the goodness of God had told me the same, and I rejoiced.

Eight months after this I was received into the church. I have had many dark and gloomy times, and some seasons of joy. If it were not for these rests along the way surely I should fall. How sweet it is after being out, as it were, in the great desert, to come into the shadow of a great rock to rest, and to come into the banqueting-house and be fed, or to have a draught of water from a pure fountain. When we are almost ready to give up, and conclude that we are not what we have hoped we were, if our blessed Lord comes to us then and says, "It is I," we are filled in a moment with joy and praise, for it is written, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Surely it is a glorious state to be in the presence of our God.

Thus I have traveled for twenty-four years. I cannot tell of all the blessings

that I have received, the least of which I did not merit. But let me tell you of one of the greater blessings that I have received. The fourth Sunday in last August my wife was enabled to tell what the Lord had done for her, and was baptized. While at the water the opportunity was given, and my two oldest daughters at home came forward and were joyfully received. I was made to ask myself, What am I that the Lord should so wonderfully bless me as to give me to witness that which I had so greatly desired? My heart was full, and I was enabled to shout forth praises to the good Lord. I was satisfied, as were the brethren, for two years that my wife had a good hope, and while she was able she was particular to have me ready to go to the meetings, and when she was in bed, for nearly three years, she was anxious that I should go, and I went twice a year, about one hundred miles. When I would start she would ask me to remember her. Often I went with a heavy heart, thinking, Surely the Lord has not required this at my hands, but when I would get there they all would seem glad to see me, and when I would be trying in my poor, weak way to tell them of the precious promises of the Lord, and that he who had promised was fully able to perform, I would be made to rejoice to see them rejoicing with the silent witnesses of their tears running down their cheeks. O, it was good to be there.

But I must close, lest I weary you. May God bless his Israel.

Yours in hope of a better life through the blood of Jesus,

T. E. ATTEBERY.

THANKSGIVING DAY.

To-day over a land containing about seventy-five millions of people is proclaimed by the rulers thereof a fast of thanksgiving and prayer. The observance of this day did not originate from any rule of life given in the testimony of the word, but through the teaching of a religious sect which has been influential with the rulers of the land to such an extent that it has become a part of their policy to ordain a "fast" once every year. As far as my observation extends, the day is one of feasting and jollity, even among the strictly "pious" religious teachers. It is true there are many religious meetings to-day, but see the vain show displayed. Will-worshipers will say, We thank thee, O Lord, while God's poor and afflicted people will say, Lord, make us thankful, for we doubt as to our ability to know our hearts that they are truly thankful to God for the many blessings bestowed upon us. The observance or non-observance of this day is immaterial to the child of God. Certainly the observance of it as it is generally kept cannot teach him to be thankful to the great Giver of all good. We are to be in subjection to rulers, for the powers that be are ordained of God, "for there is no power but of God." Kings and governors cannot bind or control the conscience of a child of God; this work belongs to a different government, the Ruler of which has complete jurisdiction over his conscience and all the secrets of his inner mind, to rule in him "both to will and to do of his good pleasure." The poor, dependent subject of this higher and better government relies upon the Governor to qualify and animate him to offer praise and thanksgiving unto the Most High. In his worship, whether praise, thanksgiving or prayer, he is

amenable alone to him who bears the government, for "the government shall be upon his shoulder." His government shall increase and shall be peaceable, because he has unlimited power in all his domain. He bears the key of his Father's house upon his shoulder, having absolute control over all things; he opens and none can shut, he shuts and none can open. He that bears allegiance to this royal Governor cannot bear allegiance to another power in the things controlled by him, but must look to the highest for comfort. How then can a child of God be dependent upon an earthly potentate for an order how or when to worship? It is the same principle that has ever moved antichrist to dictate to men in regard to their worship. What a contrast this is when compared with the Spirit of Christ as it is manifested in his children. This spirit of meekness forbids that any should presume to bind the conscience of his fellow-creature, or rob God of his glory.

A day of thanksgiving. Every day to the "lively stones" of God's grace is a day of thanksgiving. "In all things give thanks." It is one continuous day of thank-offering to God's quickened sons and daughters, who are sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. These are told to pray without ceasing, and I am persuaded that they do by the spirit or holy desire given them, which is not of man, nor after the manner of men. This spirit is against the flesh, and it is contrary to it, hence not of the same origin, if it were, it could not be said to be contrary to the flesh. In this respect we see the difference between those who worship God and those who cannot worship him. Those who have the spirit of grace worship God in spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. God's worship must be pure, not adulterated with works of the flesh, but adorned with the fruits of the Spirit. God seeketh such to worship him as do worship him in Spirit and in truth. They that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in truth. How then can a man of the flesh worship God? It is impossible. If a man of the flesh cannot worship God, how can he pray to God? Again impossible. If a man cannot pray to God, he is dead to God and to all spiritual things. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for these are spiritually discerned, neither can he know them, simply because he is flesh, without any spiritual life, light or being. Who but God has made this distinction in giving life, light and liberty to some, while others are left dead to the quickening power? If we are alive from the dead, or are risen with Christ, let us seek those things which are above, seek the substance and not the shadow. Days and seasons in olden time were but the shadow of coming events. The apostle would have us to know that days or seasons were unimportant. We are to let no man judge us in respect to a holy day, feast day, new moon or Sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ. May all of our days be a day of praise and thanks.

In hope,

J. F. BEEMAN.

CARMEN, Okla., Nov. 24, 1901.

MELBOURNE, Ont., Sept. 19, 1901.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—Noticing by the label on my paper that another year has passed away, I inclose two dollars for the renewal of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Two of my family have been ill recently, and the SIGNS was like a lovely visitor, coming with good tidings

of great joy to my children, as well as to myself. It has pleased a kind Providence to restore them to their usual health, for which I am truly thankful. During their illness I prayed for submission to his holy will, that at least sometimes I might be enabled to say, "Thy will be done." I was comforted with the assurance

That our God is good;
His mercy is forever sure;
He hath at all times firmly stood,
And shall from age to age endure.

To-day I feel blessed with a spirit of praise to the Lord for his goodness and kindness to me, and as we live in a beautiful country crowned with flowers, fruit and vegetables, and every comfort that a mortal could desire, the twenty-third Psalm seems so sweet:

My table thou hast furnished
In the presence of my foes;
My head thou dost with oil anoint,
And my cup it overflows.

We have meeting twice a month in the meeting-house that is a mile from our home. Elder Carnell continues to preach with great liberty to the comfort of those who love the truth, and also Elder H. M. Curry, who is gifted in church order as well as in the doctrine of our faith, has the courage to stand by the convictions of his conscience, even if he should stand alone. My mind goes out in love to the dear ministers who have visited us in our home: Elders Gilbert Beebe, William L. Beebe, Silas H. Durand, Johnston, Biggs, Bundy, Sawins, our late beloved pastor, Elder Pollard, Elders Lines, Frazee, Vail, Eubanks, Scott, Boaz, Jenkins, and if I have missed any name the love is the same to them. Some of those mentioned have passed away from our midst, but I believe they still live in a glorious world, to which, if it is the Lord's will, we will be taken to dwell with them.

How delighted we are to read the letters in the SIGNS, and I feel so reluctant to write anything myself.

One evening after retiring the words came to my mind, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Work, work, what shall I do? I asked. Write; to whom shall I write? Write to Silas H. Durand. What shall I write to him? Write the thoughts and exercises of your mind. I felt so alone, so sorrowful, so full of error, and asked, Was it ever laid on any human being to write? The angel commanded John to write, and he wrote to the seven churches of Asia, and they were all in error except one, and that one needed no reproof. These were the very churches of God, and they were in error and needed reproof; but when the redeemed shall be gathered to the Father the church of Christ will be perfect. These things are too wonderful for me to understand; I have no right to touch or handle them, but like the Shunammite of old I have tried to express my love to those who I believe are the servants of the Most High.

The seventh chapter of Luke tells us of a woman who kissed the feet of Jesus, and anointed him with ointment, and washed his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. And we read, the Savior loved her, and blessed her, and said to her, "Thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace." When I think of our dear Savior, can I ever forget when I saw myself a sinner, and felt and believed that Jesus was my righteousness? Jesus is the regeneration of his people, their righteousness, sanctification, justification and their redemption, and also their resurrection. "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he

live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Jesus is the wonderful counselor, the only example which is perfect. How humbly he walked, different from the "I am holier than thou" attitude.

How happy and privileged I am to be a member of the Old Baptist Church. There never was a happier bride, and I rejoiced in the honor of motherhood, but the joy of being baptized I could never express. As Elder Carnell took my hand as I stepped into the water I thought, This is the river of baptism; when I cross the river of death will my Savior be with me? The testimony was sweet.

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are;
I lay my head upon his breast,
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

As we walked up from the river bank, my clothing wet and draggling, some one behind me said: "I often wondered what the scene was like when John baptized Jesus, but that view came before my eyes to-day." My tears are my meat, the psalmist says, and this is my portion many a time. Looking up into the beautiful sky, where the firmament proclaims his handiwork, and the stars speak his glory, I feel to say, What are thy ways, O Lord? But the way of the Lord is past finding out. "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he will direct thy paths." And what are thy paths? Humility. Lord Jesus, create in me a clean heart. Then the command comes, Love your enemies, love them that hate you and spitefully use you. But the answer in my heart is, The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. But a sweet peace comes, a joy that passeth understanding; everything looks more beautiful, even the flowers seem filled with meek submission; there is a harmony in the universe, the silence becomes strangely eloquent, and with a thrill the very air seems to breathe a spirit divine. Teach me, O Lord, and I shall surely be taught; and when the Lord makes peace no one can make trouble. The years are going by, the shadows are falling; soon we will enter the portals of never-ending day. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be," but I have the faith that I will see my Savior and be like him.

Dear brethren in this precious faith, it is not our privilege to be glad over anything earthly very long. The sentence passed on us is that our days are few and full of trouble, but the Lord will not put upon us more than we can bear, and with the great Captain of our salvation leading us on, it will only be a few days more, when the burden will be lifted and we will sing, Glory to our Redeemer, in a world without end.

Lovingly,

(MRS.) GILBERT McLEAN.

COALDALE, Ark., Sept. 20, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF LIFE ETERNAL:—I can certainly say that the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been a great comfort to me while living in this low ground of sin and sorrow. I have been afflicted for several months, but now my health is improving. This world seems so dark and dreary, but we must travel in dark and rough places, and bear our afflictions as passively as possible; the Lord knows our every weakness. At times I feel like one alone. Is there any one like me? Sometimes my troubles seem more than I can bear. My husband is a sickly man, and for months the care of my family depends solely upon me. But I am thankful to the all-wise God that it is as well with me as it is. The Scripture says, "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content."

I work by day and read the dear SIGNS at night. I do enjoy reading the dear letters of the brethren and sisters. John said, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." That love must be of God. But if any man hate his brother, the love of God is not in him. O how could it be any other way when God is love, and so loved us that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life? Thus they all love one another with the same love; this love is peculiar; it is a love that cannot be feigned. While in this life there have been many troubles for me, a poor worm of the dust, yet something seems at times to say to me that I have been blessed with many blessings, for it was his loving-kindness that gave me, if I am not mistaken, an eye of faith to see the condition that I was in, and he has, I hope, lifted me up out of the mire, and put a new song in my mouth, that I should sing redeeming love; and this has been my song, and shall be till I die. My prayer is that the good Lord of heaven and earth may give me grace, that I may walk in the light, not the light of this world's vanity, but in the beautiful light of God; O may my walk be close with God.

I feel this morning that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing, and every good and perfect gift comes from God, the Father of all mercies, and the Giver of every good and perfect gift. He has said in his word, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." In another place he has said, "For many are called, but few are chosen." The great question with me is, Am I among the chosen of the Lord? He said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

I find great comfort in reading from those who are so much better acquainted with the Scriptures than I am. I believe the Lord reveals his truth to each and every one, but still if I had a Bible I could read more, and I should rejoice to do so, and I doubt not that I should have more understanding than I do now.

In a dream the other night these words were spoken so plainly to me, Keep the sword of God with you. It was so plain that it awoke me; it has been a comfort to my soul. May we all ever keep the sword of God with us, and earnestly contend for the faith that was once delivered to the saints. The world may point the finger of scorn, and persecute, and say all manner of evil of us, but may we stand firm, and endure all things for his name's sake. What is this world, and all that is in it, in comparison with the sweet promise our blessed Savior gave us? and not only to us, but to as many as Christ died for. Some will say, In thy name have we cast out devils, and in thy name have we done many wonderful works, to whom he will say, Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you. But to the just he will say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Are not the first those who claim that their good works, and their trying to save souls, are their righteousness, instead of Christ?

I believe in one God, and that he is the Savior of all who ever will be saved. By grace are ye saved through faith, and not of works, lest any man should boast.

I have written much more than I expected when I began writing, but I hope that you will pardon me; I do not want to weary you with reading my scattering

words. If I have written anything that is contrary to truth, please correct me. When it goes well with you, dear brethren, pray for me. May the good Lord give me grace, and guide me, and give me strength that I may walk in the strait and narrow way, according to his holy calling, and when I come to die, may I still be composed by grace.

Now do with this as you think best. May the Lord be with you and bless you, is the prayer of your little sister, if not deceived,

(MRS.) ELLA DAVIS.

MARGARETVILLE, N. Y., Nov. 21, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I missed you at the Vega meeting this fall, although we had a most excellent meeting, they all talked so good; and then the night meeting at sister O'Connor's was also very comforting to me, a poor, vile worm of the dust, so weak and insignificant, for vile and full of sin I am; God is full of truth and grace, he is our Shepherd, our salvation, our all, and having him I sometimes feel that I want no more, for he maketh me to lie down in green pastures beside the still waters. When his banner over me is love, then I can praise him for his goodness to me, yes, praise him from whom all blessings flow, praise our great Redeemer, sing praises unto the Lamb for his wonderful works to the children of men. O come let us sing unto the Lord, and in God our Creator rejoice. In psalms of thanksgiving record his praise with one spirit and one voice, for great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised. He has taken us up out of the pit and the miry clay, has put a new song in our mouth, and having loved his people with an everlasting love, he draws them with the cords of his love, and keeps them as the apple of his eye, and saves them with an everlasting salvation. O, is not this wonderful, this love of Jesus for his people? We cannot comprehend the height nor depth of it, but we can love, wonder and adore our Maker for the blessings we enjoy, which are innumerable, and having food and raiment we should be content, but instead I am often repining at my state of health, instead of being grateful that it is as well with me as it is. I have such a deceitful heart and wandering mind, running after the things of this life, when I should like to have it set upon things above, upon Jesus and his love. Once he was my joy and my song all the day long, now I hardly know my own mind. I am a mystery to myself, yet I think I do enjoy meeting with the saints and hearing them tell of their joys and sorrows, for this is a world of tribulation. Here we have no abiding city, but hope for one to come. Surely the Lord has been good to me all my days, he hath done great things for me, whereof I am glad, yes, glad that I have been strong enough to attend our home meetings, as well as the Vega meeting. Why should I complain of want or distress, temptation or pain? he suffered no less; the heirs of salvation I know through his word, through much tribulation must follow their Lord.

Please pardon me for writing this to you, as I feel poor, weak and worthless, and that I ought not to write to one of the Lord's chosen ones.

From a little one,

PHEBE J. FAULKNER.

HAMPTON, Iowa, Sept. 17, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR, PUBLISHERS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—It has been a long time since I have written anything for publication. I have just read the last number of the SIGNS, and

have read every article in it, and my mind has been carried back many years. My father was a subscriber away back in the fifties, when I was a boy. At that time I was not interested in it, but often wondered at it. When father received a number he would read it the first one of all the papers which he took. He would read it aloud to mother, but I was not interested, but when he took up the *Saturday Evening Post* I could sit and listen, as it gave all the general news and happenings at that time. But there came a change in my feelings; then I would get the SIGNS and read them, and I loved them. I want to say that I have never changed in this since. I have taken several religious periodicals published by the Old School Baptists, but none have stood as firm as the SIGNS. I have always believed the doctrine it advocates, but O the changes that have taken place among the Baptists. There have been divisions upon doctrine and order, conventions and councils have been called to arbitrate differences, thus, as it seems to me, conforming to the world. These general meetings called for these purposes have but made the matter worse. Now, dear editor and readers of the SIGNS, I am glad that the SIGNS does not care for or yield to the opinions of men. Our only refuge is the eternal God, the ruler of all things. Jesus is the head over the body, the church; he asks no counsel of men, nor their opinions. Be of good cheer, the dear old SIGNS has stood the storms of persecution for nearly three-quarters of a century. Our God has raised up men to fill the places of those who edited its pages in the past and who have gone to their reward, and I feel to believe that when the present editor and publishers are called home, others will take their places. When I look back over my early years, when such men as Elders Gilbert Beebe, Wm. L. Beebe and brother Benton L. Beebe were editors, and writers like Elders Samuel Trott, J. F. Johnson, the two Puringtons, I. N. Vanmeter, Thomas P. Dudley, and many others, who stood firm on the doctrine of unlimited predestination, and who helped fight the battles against the new isms of their time, including the mission system and other worldly auxiliaries to the church, filled the columns of the SIGNS, I rejoice to see that the SIGNS still stands firm as a rock. Others have taken the place of these old soldiers as editors and writers, their motto has been, and I hope will continue to be, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." So write on, dear brethren and sisters, it does your poor old brother so much good to read your communications. I have been in the warfare nearly fifty years, and have tried to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, that salvation, from first to last, is of grace, and no conditions in it. We have "Can help its," but I am a poor "Can't help it;" by the grace of God I am what I am.

I remain yours to serve, in gospel bonds,

E. A. NORTON.

RALEIGH, N. C., Nov. 19, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —Ever since I received the last number of the SIGNS and read your article on the ten virgins, I have desired to write and tell you how much I enjoyed it. I verily believe what you wrote, and have believed it for years, but I did not know of any one else who held to the same view; it does me good to know that you also believe the same. I enjoy reading the SIGNS so much, and my desire is that its writers may be blessed to continue in the

faith, and be given the humble boldness of the Spirit to contend for it.

I have thought many times of the charge delivered by Paul to Timothy, to preach the word. He charged him before God and the Lord Jesus Christ to preach it; and then gave as his reason that the time would come that they would turn away their ears from the truth and be turned unto fables, and they should heap to themselves teachers having itching ears, &c. He continued, and said, "But watch thou in all things, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." I think that every truly called minister desires to make full proof of his ministry, for we feel that we must give account unto God, and not unto man; and this is now, right here in time. Every time we preach our conscience either commends us or condemns us. I think if the church ever needed a faithful ministry it is now, for so many evils seem to be in our midst, and so many false teachers are afloat. These are the ones called by Paul, grievous wolves, not sparing the flock, and they draw away disciples after them. Dear brother, if I know anything about it, a truly called servant has much to endure, and were it not for the sufficiency of God's grace, how could one stand? I think Paul uttered a blessed truth when he said, "By grace are ye saved." This means in time as well as in eternity. I hear some preach who seem to think that we are saved in time somewhat by our obedience, and while I think they mean well, yet I can but think one is saved, even in time, only because God's mercies fail not. I know I used to think in some things different from what I do now, and I feel a desire to praise God for showing me in my own experience what I could not learn in any other way. He is the wonderful Teacher, and his teaching is unlike all others; for all earthly teachers teach their pupils that there are many things to be done by them after they are fitted for their tasks, and their ideas are that they can do more and more as they advance in their studies. But not so with the great Teacher, he shows his people as the years go by that they can do less and less, until at last they find his words true: "Without me ye can do nothing." I felt at Raleigh to-day, while speaking to the church there, surely it is God's grace performing this labor; and not from any other cause can we preach, pray, sing or hear, or in any way worship him who sits upon the throne, and declares that all nations are as nothing to him, and less than nothing, and vanity.

I hope you will be blessed to visit us at some not far distant day, and that you may come to us in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

In love I am yours,

W. A. SIMPKINS.

WINONA, Wash., Sept. 18, 1904.

DEAR BRETHREN OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—This faith is the substance of things hoped for; if we possess this substance it is because we were chosen in him; it is not that we are to be chosen in him by accepting him, or by being conformed to traditions, or ordinances, or maxims, or forms, or rules, but chosen in him before the world was; in him we have an inheritance according as we have been chosen in him, that we should be holy, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. It is not alone the most agreeable things that are worked after the counsel of his will, but the Spirit says, All things, and this is according to his own purpose and

grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began. Then it is because of this choice and gift that we are manifested in regeneration; and it is written that it is of his fullness that we all have received, and grace for grace. Being confident, brethren, that you are of the household of faith, I have presumed to trouble you with a feeble effort to transfer to paper, by the medium of the pen, some of the leadings of my mind, yet at the same time I fear that it may supplant some brother or sister burdened with more profitable things. I venture into your midst feeling as one born out of due time. In Elder Gilbert Beebe's day my father, D. A. Jones, was a subscriber to the SIGNS. I remember with gratitude hearing him read the glorious truth communicated by the then correspondents, of whose names only one appears in the number of the SIGNS before me, and he as editor. I have been so long separated from the little circle of correspondents, let me ask what has become of them? I recall the names of F. W. Keene, S. H. Durand, Wm. F. Jones and F. A. Chick. I am surprised to receive a copy of the paper without a communication from either of the above. Yet in reading the paper I am not disappointed, for the Lord is yet pleased to remember his promise that he will not leave himself without witnesses. But it has seemed at times, when designing men are coming in to spy out our liberties which we have in Christ, and so bring in damnable heresies, teaching perverse things to draw away disciples after them, as though all true witnesses were gone. It seems as though the day of Christ is at hand, for there is such a falling away, and the man of sin is so revealed. I am made to ask, Who shall abide his coming? But after the storm is over and we can see his bow in the cloud, then we can rejoice that he has not forgotten his covenant, and we are encouraged to stand still and and see the salvation of the Lord. Our enemies still exist, but they are separated from us, that it might be made manifest that they are not of us. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Heaven and earth shall pass, but when they do it will be according to the predestination of God, even as it stands according to that predestination. If one of his purposes shall fail, then all might fail.

I would like to meet you all once in this life, to hear you tell of your hope in him, and of the fulfillment of the purposes of God in him. May the ever-blessed Spirit be with you to guide and comfort you, is the prayer of one unworthy of your fellowship. Pray for me when it is well with you. Farewell.

A. G. JONES.

[ELDERS Keene, Durand and Chick, the last as editor, are still writing for the SIGNS.—ED.]

BURDETT, N. Y., Nov. 28, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR:—Please find inclosed money order for three dollars for renewal of the SIGNS and help to aid the cause. I very much enjoy the regular visits of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; the editorials and other matter published therein bring to me life, happiness, health and rest.

I have heard some of our Elders say they had preached many years, but what had it amounted to? I feel to say that God's purpose has been accomplished therein. He speaks through his servants to the comfort of his sorrowing children, and many are made to rejoice in a living Savior, the needs of the hungry and thirsty have been supplied, and many sons and daughters have been called from

afar and from the ends of the earth by the gospel of the grace of God. What a blessing to be brought up out of the horrible pit and out of the miry clay and have our feet placed upon the rock. On this rock, the sure foundation, Christ Jesus said he would build his church, and all the powers of darkness cannot prevail against it. Surely he has brought me by a way I knew not, and in paths I had not known; my goings I hope have been established by him. In days past I have been enabled to sing the new song, even praise to God. O that we could ever praise him from whom all blessings flow. When our hearts are filled with his love we do praise him, and then it is that each can feel his brother's sigh, and with him bear a part. These blessings are not because of the works of man, lest we should boast of our works and lose sight of God's goodness and mercy. I love to hear the power of God proclaimed, for he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. He goes before his sheep and calls them, and they follow him, but the voice of strangers they know not. In the new covenant made with the house of Israel a new commandment is found: That we love one another. I believe we do love one another, and thereby dwell together in unity.

These few broken thoughts I have written as they have been presented to me. I would like to see you all face to face and speak with you rather than try to write, but God's ways are not my ways, nor his thoughts my thoughts. I have the privilege of meeting with the people of God here at Burdett, and also to hear the gospel of the grace of God preached; I love the joyful sound. I trust I have a grateful heart for all blessings bestowed upon me. May God bless you all in the future as in the past, is my prayer.

NORMAN BROWN.

KALAMAZOO, Mich., Nov. 8, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—You will find inclosed two dollars to pay for the SIGNS another year. Many thanks to you for sending it as you have this year, for it is a source of comfort to us, as we live some distance from any brethren of the Baptist order, only a little few here. Others I have met in person, and thus have learned to love them; others of you I have known only in spirit, but feel to love you because of the evidence given in your published or written articles, testifying of the love of God dwelling within your hearts. To all of you I come in my weakness to talk of the brevity of life, and of our hope in Jesus. Job says, "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble." When we realize the brevity of this life, and see how soon, yes, how very soon, we all shall be called to dwell in the city of the dead, and that the place which now knows us shall know us no more forever, what carefulness we should use in all our daily walk and conversation, seeking to honor and glorify our Father in heaven, and live in love and fellowship with the saints, having that charity for each other which will a brother's failings hide, and with him bear a part in joy and in sorrow.

Dear brother editor, I have often desired to write for your valuable paper, not that I think myself in any way worthy or competent, for my feeling of unworthiness and inability to write have kept me from doing so for some time. I so often feel far away from the fold, the bypaths become so frequent that before I am aware I am growing faint-hearted, weak and fearful; I look back over the track I have just traveled and wonder if it can be possible that one so careless, so unconcerned, can be one of the sheep

that belongs inside of that happy fold. I believe it is spoken of in the Bible that the wayfaring man is one who is longing for rest and peace and love. How sweet it is to bring that burden to the place of refuge, the church, and receive the sympathy of the dear people of God; such are my feelings often. Pray for us. O may we be ready and waiting when the Master calls.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

MR. & MRS. D. D. McALPINE.

KELLER, Texas, Nov. 12, 1904.

EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed please find money order to pay the renewal of subscription for my mother, Mrs. A. D. Bourland, Sr., to the beloved old paper, the SIGNS. You will remember publishing recently the obituary of the late Elder A. D. Bourland, our kind, affectionate and revered father, who has been a constant reader and subscriber of that paper for thirty years; believing and preaching as the paper contends, that salvation for the poor apostate sons and daughters of Adam comes alone through the atoning blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that there is none other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved; that God is a Sovereign, and the embodiment of perfection in every attribute, and works all things after the counsel of his own will; "declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." This doctrine of discriminating grace that has been so ably defended so long by the faithful servants of the Most High, is the doctrine of God our Savior; it exalts and extols the matchless name of our blessed Redeemer for his goodness, mercy, loving-kindness and long forbearance to us poor worms of the dust; it shows us that God is holy, yea, thrice holy, and that he has promised to remember our sins and our iniquities against us no more forever; that he purchased us with his own blood, (though dear was the cost) and redeemed us by the sacrifice of himself, and that he ever liveth to make intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Dear brother, this is my hope, that the Lord has been and will be merciful to my unrighteousness, and that he will love me freely for Jesus' sake, and not for anything good that I have done, for I realize that my righteousness is as filthy rags, and instead of growing better and purer I seem to grow worse. Beloved in the Lord, pray for us in our affliction. Our heavenly Master has seen fit to remove from us our father, counselor, instructor and companion, and O how dark and desolate are our homes, and how disconsolate are our poor hearts, that fond and gentle father's voice is stilled in death, but we have the blessed assurance that our loss is his gain, that the dear Lord has called him home to his reward, and that he will, with all the redeemed host of God, sing praises unto his matchless name forever and ever.

Your unworthy brother in much weakness, W. S. BOURLAND.

BENTLEY, Ill., Aug. 25, 1904.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST:—I feel as though it may be my duty to write, as it is the request of some sisters in the church, and tell of the trials that I have seen in this vain world of sorrow and sin. When I was five years old my little sister died, and my mother told me that I must be good or I would never meet her in heaven. I never forgot those words. I moved with my par-

ents from Floyd County, Va., in 1844, when ten years old. Then it seemed to me that I must say the little prayer, "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep," and I went to Sunday School and meeting. When about eighteen years of age, it seemed to me that I was compelled to say, Lord, have mercy upon me, a sinner. I went to the Methodist meetings, but was not content. I saw so many going back from their religion, and I wanted the kind that would never fade away. I went to the mourners' bench, but found no good. I thought that I would go to the Baptist meeting, as my mother belonged there. Every one was surprised to see me come, and said, What is going to happen? Now it seemed that their doctrine just suited me, I liked it so well that I went often. Trouble got hold upon me, and I thought I was going to die; nothing was of any pleasure to me; I could hardly stay in the house when company came; I wanted to be by myself, to ask my dear Lord and Savior to have mercy upon my poor soul. When I went to bed at night the tears would drop upon my pillow, and I was asking for mercy, and that my aching heart might be relieved. O the groans and sighs of my poor soul. One morning I started for the barn, and something came over me so that I did not know anything for a time, then I found my trouble was all gone; I was so happy and I loved everybody; I felt so light and free. I united with the Middle Creek church; Elder Warren baptized me; he baptized six of the Lord's children. I was as happy as I needed to be.

Brethren and sisters, give me a share in your prayers if you can feel to do so. I hope to meet you all where parting will be no more. By his grace are we saved. I hope that you may deem this worthy of a place in the SIGNS. Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) J. COX.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—As I have been many times comforted reading the many precious letters in the SIGNS, I will say to the dear ones, Write on. The Lord is indeed merciful, he has spared you to keep watch upon the walls of Zion. O how I prize the dear letters in our beloved paper. When sorrow falls, and when all is dark, how it revives the drooping spirit to hear of some one who has experienced the same things.

I have lately been to see our dear sister H. Tuttle, though feeble in body she is strong in faith; all her comfort is from the Lord. I often feel when talking with her, O that I could feel such faith. Her countenance seems to reflect the image of her heavenly Father. Also sister Kate Swartout, who is confined to her room, still possesses the same faith that has been hers all these long, dreary years. So we know that our God will never forsake his own; though his children pass through deep waters, he is still with them there, and he will keep all that is committed to his charge.

Elder Lines still comes to Cement City, Mich., ladened with gospel truth. He spends most of his time among the dear children of God.

We were much pained to hear of Elder Bartley's broken arm; we do so love his letters, and hope to see his name again. I am pleased with remarks upon church order, for without it nothing is gained. Our God is a God of justice, and although his loving-kindness fails not, yet order, as I believe, is his first law. O that we could always obey his laws, and cast aside all worldly allurements, and live to his honor and glory. This is the earnest desire of your unworthy sister,

SARAH WYMAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1904.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:
F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

CLOSE OF VOLUME SEVENTY-TWO.

WITH this number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we reach the end of the year nineteen hundred and four, and the close of volume seventy-two. We trust that it is with emotion of gratitude to God that we review the events of the past year, as relates to the SIGNS. The ever kind and indulgent Father of all our mercies, the God of all grace and consolation, has prospered the publication of the SIGNS to the end of another year, both as regards its financial support, and especially with regard to the matter which has filled its columns. It has seemed to us that our correspondence has been rich in those things that pertain to godliness. Some time during the early part of this volume we suggested that we would be very glad to see more narrations of christian experience coming from the brethren and sisters, and there has been quite a response in that direction of late. Such narratives are the best of testimonies concerning the truth of salvation by grace, as election, effectual calling, final perseverance, with all other principles of truth, are all included in every experience of grace. It is true that many little children of God may not have come to an understanding of what their own experience does include in the way of the great principles of the doctrine of God our Savior, but still one cannot narrate an experience of grace without involving all these principles. Even the ordinance of baptism is set forth in all true spiritual experience, for in all such experience there is a death and resurrection, and this is precisely what baptism sets forth; so that if a child of God shall listen to the teaching within, he cannot be satisfied with sprinkling or pouring, but must rejoice in baptism by immersion and emersion from the water again. We trust that similar narrations may continue to be forwarded for publication, and also expositions of Scripture.

We have not only held our own in the way of subscribers this year, but there has been some increase. This has been most encouraging to us, especially for the following reason: When our dear brother Benton L. Beebe was removed from his labors, last January, we felt very anxious as to the future of the SIGNS. He had been connected with its publication nearly all his life, and was known as a faithful brother and editor, and beside, was perfectly acquainted with all that belongs to the conduct of the paper. This, all our subscribers knew, and knowing this they had confidence in him, and we felt that it might be that many would feel like ceasing to support the SIGNS any longer. In this fear we have been agreeably disappointed, and we hope that our readers have still found the same doctrine set forth in its columns as before. One thing we can say with a full heart, that we do not feel able or sufficient for these things, and yet we do desire to continue to proclaim the same doctrine in the future that has been set forth in the past. We love the doctrine of grace, because it glorifies God, exalts

the dear Redeemer, and is the sure foundation of every poor sinner's hope, for time and for eternity.

It seems but right that we should call attention to the fact that quite a number of our subscribers are from one to five years behind with their subscription. We know that all Old School Baptists, who are Baptists indeed, are desirous of owing no man anything, save to love one another. These sums are small when considered individually, but in the aggregate they amount to several thousands of dollars, and the need of this goes far to cripple the usefulness of the SIGNS. Will our subscribers who are from two to five or six years behind, at least send us word whether they wish the paper continued, and if not, please remit what is due before ordering it discontinued? Each one has but to look upon the pink slip on the margin of his paper, or upon the wrapper, to see just how his account stands. Surely we do not ask much when we ask to hear from you all who are so far behind, in this way. Were all past dues paid up on the SIGNS, we should be able to send the paper to very many who are too poor to pay for it. We desire that all such should have the paper, and would send it to many more if we could. We suggest these things for consideration.

From all the past we feel encouraged greatly to believe that the Lord still has use for the SIGNS, and as he has prospered it, we hope and feel encouraged to believe that he will still sustain it. We know that it will be sustained so long as he has use for it to comfort and feed his people. Just as he sustains in life all his faithful ministers until all their work is done, and then removes them from the field, so we believe it will be with the SIGNS, it shall accomplish God's will. What a blessing to a servant of God to feel that the dear Lord has had use for him in his vineyard, and that when the harvest is full and ripe, and not until then, will he put in the sickle.

The former editors of the SIGNS, together with the publishers, each filled the place designed for them, and ceased from their labors at last; just so will it be with the present editor and publishers. What joy it will be to us, if it shall be our blessed privilege at the last, to hear the welcome plaudit, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. As the former editors felt to magnify rich and reigning grace for all that they did, and for the hope beyond, so do we feel to do. Surely no one has better right to testify than we, "None of self and all of thee."

We doubt not that all our readers have been able to heartily commend the work of the publishers of the SIGNS in sending out each number on time all the past year. None but those who are acquainted with such work can tell what an amount of labor is necessary in getting out each number of a paper like the SIGNS. Good paper, clear print and good workmanship have been apparent in each number, and we think that as few mistakes in the wording of communications have appeared as can be found in any publication whatever. We have been blessed with the valuable services of Elder H. C. Ker, who, after the death of brother Beebe, consented to assist in office work, and since which time has aided greatly in proof-reading, and preparing copy, as well as in writing, and giving counsel and advice. Being pastor of the church at Middletown, N. Y., he is in a position to be of much use to the paper, and we hope he may feel willing to continue the work.

We desire that in the future, as much as possible, all such things as contentions between brethren, and all notices of unpleasant things in the churches, shall be avoided, and that only such things as edify, instruct, and comfort the people of God may be found in our columns. As long as we are in the flesh, there will arise more or less difference in opinion about various things in the order of the house of God, and in our present imperfect state there may be, and will be, more or less of misunderstanding and contention. It was so in the early days of the church, and we need not be surprised that it is so now; but it is surely best to keep all such things as closely at home as possible. It seems sure that if brethren at hand, and who know all the circumstances, cannot settle the difficulty, whatever it may be, brethren at a distance cannot. We hope that the SIGNS may not be asked to publish local difficulties broadcast. Such a course will not cause irritation to any one, while to publish one side of a story will nearly always call out a reply, and if the reply is not published, it is but natural that the authors of the reply should be offended. Sometimes it may be necessary to publish some unpleasant thing of this kind, but we are persuaded that such instances are rare; and we do hope that but little, if any, of such things may appear in our columns.

We owe much to our correspondents for their kindness and consideration toward us during the past year, and have very greatly appreciated your communications, and have been often strengthened and built up by them. We owe thanks to our readers for their kind forbearance towards us, as the burden has seemed heavy and the responsibility very great, we have needed your compassion, and we feel that we have had it in no small measure. For this we desire to render acknowledgment to you, and would give thanks to God, the Author and Giver of all.

We look forward to the coming year with increased hope, and desire that the next volume may be of comfort to the saints, and that each number may come to our readers as a blessing from the Lord. Brethren, pray for us, that we may be sustained in the truth.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MATTHEW II. 2; LUKE I. 31–33; JOHN I. 49.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Although I do not wish to be troublesome, still I have a desire to have your views on the following Scriptures: "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?"—Matthew ii. 2. In Luke i. 31–33, it is said: "And shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Again, John i. 49: "Nathaniel answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." Now my particular inquiry is, In what sense is he the King of the Jews, sitting upon the throne of David, and reigning over the house of Jacob, as the King of Israel?

Your unworthy brother, J. E. SETTLE.

NEW HOPE, Ky., March 14, 1862.

REPLY.

The passages presented, especially Luke i. 31, identifies our Lord Jesus Christ as the illustrious personage of whom the other passages testify, and of whom Moses and the prophets wrote, and of whom God had spoken by the prophet Micah, v. 2, saying, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

The Jews, the house of Jacob and Israel, all mean the same thing. Literally these names were applied to the twelve patriarchs and their descendants according to the flesh, as the house or family of Jacob, which was also called by his name Israel, including the whole commonwealth, as redeemed from the house of bondage, and brought out of Egypt by the high hand and outstretched arm of God, led through the wilderness, and into the promised land, where subsequently God raised up David and gave him to be a king over them. This same people were called Jews, which name they derived from Judah, the patriarch of that tribe to which David their king belonged, and after the division of the house of Jacob, by the secession of ten tribes, which were afterwards called Israel, the two tribes which still adhered to the government of the house, or descendants of David, were called Jews, in distinction from the revolted tribes which had organized a separate and distinct government.

Israel under the old dispensation was the type of the church and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, in its gospel organization. But in the gospel church, "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh."—Rom. ii. 28. All that constituted a man a Jew, nationally, was outward. If born in Abraham's house, or bought with his money, and circumcised with the circumcision made with hands, as an outward rite, in the flesh, such an one was a Jew outwardly, but no fleshly birth, or outward rites, can constitute a person an antitypical Jew, or one inwardly, as the church of Christ is a kingdom which is not of this world, and in which no man is known after the flesh. For "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Those, therefore, who are born again are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; and, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever;" they are made manifest as a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people. These are the seed that shall serve him, and be accounted to our Lord Jesus Christ for a generation, and these alone constitute the true, spiritual, or antitypical Israel of our God. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. iii. 29. When John the Baptist saw many of the Jews, who were only Jews outwardly, who had not been born of the Spirit, and therefore could not show fruits meet for repentance, come to his baptism, he gave them to understand that although they were undoubtedly Jews outwardly, they could not be received into communion with those who were Jews inwardly, as subjects of the spiritual kingdom, on any such claims. He said unto them, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."—Matt. iii. 7–9. "But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."—Rom. ii. 29.

Having briefly shown the distinction between the outward Jews, who are Jews outwardly in the flesh, and those who are Jews inwardly and spiritually, we proceed to show that Christ was born King of the Jews, according to the latter classification. Thus one of the Gentile churches, in Asia, is recognized as Jews in this inward and spiritual sense, while those who were of the synagogue of Satan, who said they were Jews, but were not, (that is, in this inward and spiritual sense,) but did lie, were disowned and denounced as deceivers, intruders and liars. (Rev. iii. 9.) Paul very clearly elucidates in what sense Christ is King of the Jews, and in what sense the subjects of Christ's government are Jews, in his arguments to the Galatians. Hear him, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law," &c. "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ: that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."—Gal. iii. 13–16. Also verses 6–9: "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all the nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." As David, therefore, was king over the carnal Israelites, so Jesus Christ, who is the antitype of David, is King of all the Israel of God, who are Israelites indeed, in whom there is no guile, for he has washed them from all pollution in his own atoning blood, and clothed them with the garments of his salvation, and covered them with the robe of his righteousness. David was in many respects the most eminent type of Christ, especially of him in his kingly office, and as the Son of David, in lineal descent, he bears his name, and from his loins, according to the flesh, was raised up to sit upon his throne. Isaiah recorded his advent in prophecy, as a child born, a Son given, "the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even forever."—Isa. ix. 6, 7. The sublime language used in Psalms lxxxix., can only be understood in its application to Christ, although the name of David as the type is used: "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations." Again, "Then thou spakest in vision to thy Holy One, and saidest, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people. I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him: with whom my hand shall be established; mine arm also shall strengthen him. The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him. And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him. But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him; and in

my name shall his horn be exalted. I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers. He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation. Also I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven." "Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me." On the day of Pentecost, Peter in preaching to the people, spake freely of the patriarch David, and proved conclusively that the declarations made to David were prophetic, and were not fulfilled in David as a man, personally, nor in his natural posterity, but that they were spoken of and fulfilled in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne; he, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption." According therefore, to all the prophecies going before, God has set his King upon his holy hill Zion, and has said unto him, Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. And unto his Son he saith, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom: thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."—Heb. i. 8, 9.

We have briefly considered the spiritual kingdom and government of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the King of the Jews, showing that his subjects are Jews spiritually, and of the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, discarding the flesh, and having no confidence in it. We have also pointed out some reasons why the throne of the spiritual kingdom is called the throne of David, namely: Because it was typified by the throne of David, and the Mediatorial throne of the Son of God is to the spiritual Israel the only legitimate place and center of power to the church of God, as the throne of David in the type, was the center of all legislative, judicial and administrative power for the government of the carnal Israelites. As no other department of the commonwealth of Israel had any right to resist, supersede, amend or alter any of the orders of the throne of David, so the power of the Wonderful, Counselor, who sits upon the throne of David in this spiritual or gospel sense, alone has power to order it and to establish it with judgment and justice from henceforth, even forever.

We have also shown that as God had promised and sworn with an oath to David, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne, so in the resurrection of Christ, his inauguration, coronation as King of Zion, setting a Priest upon his throne, to rule and bear the glory, we have the verification of the promise and oath. Thus showing in what sense he is King of the Jews, who the Jews are over whom he reigns, how he sits upon the throne of David, and how his sceptre is swayed over the house of Jacob, and his reign of righteousness as the King of Israel.

We may have failed to comprehend the design of our brother's inquiries, and consequently to satisfy his mind, but what we have written we will submit to his consideration, and to the consideration of all our readers, praying that what we have written as our views may be carefully and prayerfully tested by the standard of truth, and only indorsed or accredited so far as they shall be found sustained by the holy Scriptures.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., April 1, 1862.

CHURCH LETTER.

ASHLAND, Ill., Nov. 9, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Our letter to the Morgan Association we would like to have printed in the SIGNS, so that all can see where we stand. We are not ashamed of the doctrine we advocate, for I think that unlimited predestination has been advocated for the last seventy-nine years in this church. D. S. KOONTZ.

The Primitive Baptist Church, of Morgan County, called Union, to the Elders and messengers of the Morgan Association, and to the churches comprising the same, when in session with the South Fork Mauraisterre Church, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been some time since we have met with you; we hope we may all meet in peace and fellowship, if it is the Lord's will. We come to you with nothing new, but come believing the same old doctrine: salvation by grace for time and eternity, and we need his grace every hour to keep us from the evils of the world. We believe what the old prophet Jeremiah said: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Jesus also says, "Without me ye can do nothing," and surely without him we can do nothing. We believe in the unlimited predestination and foreknowledge of God, and that he made all things, and without him there was not anything made that was made. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." And we believe he does his will in heaven and in earth, and none can stay his hand, and that he works all things after the counsel of his own will. The same old prophet says, Ah, Lord God, behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee; "There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God;" and he is of one mind, the same yesterday, to-day and forever.

Dear brethren, may it be the will of our heavenly Father that peace may abound throughout the association, and may the preaching be to the glory of God and to the edifying of the saints.

Jesus, when he was on the earth, said, In the world ye shall have tribulation, and Paul says that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. So these things must come to all his people, and all churches will have them, and they are for some good in some way, for "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." And we believe that God had a purpose in everything he created, and everything that he has made and created is fulfilling the purpose he created it for.

Elder J. L. Scott still attends us regularly once a month, and preaches the gospel, not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and in power, not tossed hither and thither as a wave of the sea, after every wind of doctrine. "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

JOHN L. SCOTT, Moderator.

D. S. KOONTZ, Church Clerk.

ERRATA.

IN the SIGNS for Dec. 1st appeared a piece of poetry called "Passing under the rod," and signed K. L. Black. It should have read, selected by K. L. Black.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Willis J. Durand, oldest son of Horace W. and Mabel T. Durand, departed this life May 28th, 1901, aged 19 years, 1 month and 13 days. He was teaching school sixteen miles from his home, which was in Herrick, Bradford Co., Pa., and had nearly finished a seven months term, when he was stricken with pneumonia in the schoolroom. His father went to him, and was with him during the nearly ten weeks of his sickness, his mother being unable to leave home on account of ill health. She waited at her home in great distress of mind to hear the progress of the dread disease. He was strong in body, but that strength was soon wasted. His mind was clear and bright, and he was very highly esteemed and loved by his many friends. The family in whose home he spent the days of his sickness were kind and sympathetic, and rendered every possible help. While he was sick this kind family had to part with a dear little girl after a short illness, which made them broken-hearted; but the Lord's sustaining grace comforted them.

Brother Horace says: "I asked Willis concerning his state of mind. He said, 'I have a hope that I may have a hope.' Instantly I felt drawn to him by a closer tie than ever before. After this he talked freely of all that was in his heart, asking many searching questions, which I believe the Lord enabled me to answer to his comfort. One night, while trying to get a little rest, the words of Jesus dropped into my mind as if spoken to me by the Lord: 'This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God.' At that time I felt that our poor boy would live. He did live nearly two months, to the surprise of the doctors. A few days before the end Willis asked me

if I thought he would get better. I replied, 'I do not know; the Lord knows.' He said, 'The Lord knows best.' Seeing my deep sorrow, he said, 'Do not cry, papa, it is better for me to go than for you,' thinking undoubtedly of our family at home. He suffered but little toward the last, sleeping quietly, and always calling for me when he awoke. About an hour before he died he awoke and said, 'Up in the air; we go up in the air,' evidently seeing that which Paul expressed: We 'shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.' While the rain was falling steadily at 11:15 Tuesday evening, May 28th, our dear boy fell asleep in Jesus."

Horace is my nephew. I was able to be present at the funeral May 31st, and spoke to the family and a large congregation of friends from the words of Job: "If a man die, shall he live again?" I believe Willis is in glory. He was a very excellent young man, and was a general favorite; he was quiet, and of a sober and thoughtful mind. He appeared to be exercised upon spiritual things. His death was an affliction which it was hard for the dear family to bear; but the reconciling power of God's grace was felt in a good measure.

ALSO,

Mabel Turrell Durand, wife of Horace W. Durand, departed this life after a brief illness at her home in Herrick, Pa., Sept. 14th, 1904, aged 54 years, 4 months and 14 days. Brother Horace writes: "Her health had been very poor for a number of years, and she often felt that her time on the earth was short. Many times the end seemed very near. She was often in great distress of mind for fear she would have to leave her children while they were so young as to greatly need her care. But the Lord was better to her than all her fears, as she lived to see them all grown, the youngest being in his seventeenth year. She was baptized June 15th, 1878, by Elder Balas Bundy, at Brookdale, Pa., in the fellowship of the church at Otego, N. Y., of which Brookdale was then a branch. She was deeply exercised upon spiritual things, and greatly enjoyed the clear and plain preaching of the word, but was at times greatly disturbed by questions about heaven. We believe that the Lord has answered all her questions, and that she is now at rest in her heavenly home."

She was married March 21st, 1881. Her experience, signed "Mabel Turrell," was published in the SIGNS of May 15th, 1879. It is a clear and well expressed statement of the exercises of her mind through which she came to experience "a good hope through grace," and the kind of reading which is most interesting and comforting to the exercised soul. Her letters and her conversation showed a continued exercise of mind upon spiritual things. The loss of their eldest son, whose obituary notice I send with this, was a great shock to them and the remaining children, one son and two daughters. It seemed that sister Mabel could not recover from it fully, but the Lord graciously helped and sustained her, and of late seemed to be more reconciled to the great bereavement. During the past summer she was not as well as before. About three weeks before her death her mother-in-law, my brother William's widow, passed away. It grieved her much that she was not able to attend the funeral. Her old throat trouble returned, and did not yield to medical treatment, though her physician felt confident she would soon be better. Monday, Sept. 12th, she was taken very sick, and said, "I guess I am going home." She gradually grew weaker, but remained conscious to the end, which came at 11:15 Wednesday night, the same hour of the night at which her son passed away over three years before, while the rain was falling, as it had fallen then. The loss of the dear wife and mother is sadly felt in the home, but they are enabled to rejoice in their sorrow, believing that she has entered that glorious home above, where no sickness or sorrow can ever come.

The funeral was on Saturday, Sept. 17th. I was unable to be present. Brother Bogardus, their pastor, was not able to go. Some remarks and a prayer were made by a friend, the twenty-third Psalm was read, and the mortal remains were laid to rest in our family burying ground in Herrick, by the side of her boy, Willis. May reconciling grace abound to the bereaved family.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

DEPARTED this life at the home of her son, brother Alonzo Jenkins, at Union Grove, Delaware Co., N. Y., Oct. 9th, 1904, after a gradual decline from old age, sister **Mary Jenkins,** in the 92nd year of her age. Sister Jenkins received a hope in the mercy of God and united with the Abbington Old School Baptist Church of Pennsylvania when in her fifteenth year. She afterward removed to Delaware Co., N. Y., being a member of the Andes Old School Baptist Church when she died. She was a true follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, established in word and doctrine, and generally filled her place in meeting unless providentially hindered, until infirmities and age prevented. She lived a widow's life nearly twenty-one years, retaining her natural faculties mentally until near the end, and was a mother indeed to her invalid daughters, as two of the four surviving her had much sickness at times, and one (our dear sister Huntley, of Union Grove, where the Andes church is located) is now sorely afflicted with a dropsical affliction. Sister Jenkins leaves four daughters, three sons and a step-son, with their families and the church, to mourn and sorrow on awhile after her. May they have the presence of God as their comfort.

ALSO,

Departed this life at her home, Union Grove, Delaware Co., N. Y., Oct. 14th, 1904, after an illness of

one week, sister **Lissie Brower,** wife of Anthony Brower, aged 56 years. Sister Brower received a hope, and united with the Andes church in January, 1874, and always maintained an upright walk and conversation in the church, and was nearly always in her place as a lover of the truth to within a short time of her death, although she had been gradually failing in health for a year past. Her death makes a sad place in the church, and we miss her voice as a sweet singer, one who sang with the spirit and understanding; but we must bow to the inevitable, God's will is done. Sister Brower leaves her husband, an adopted son, a sister and brother, and other relatives, beside the church, to mourn.

Thus within a week two burials of members of the church of Andes have taken place. Both funerals were largely attended at their church-house, where the writer tried to comfort the mourning friends with the same comfort wherewith he hopes he has himself been comforted of God. May all the tried and afflicted children of our heavenly Father be able to recognize his hand and be still before him, is my desire.

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLY CORNERS, N. Y.

Mary C. Adkins, formerly Halloway, departed this life Oct. 15th, 1904, after a lingering illness with what was supposed to be Bright's disease. She had been an invalid for years, due to a fall, and was compelled to get around on crutches, but seemed patient and cheerful under her affliction. Her death came very unexpectedly; the afternoon preceding the night she died she complained of a strange feeling in one of her thumbs, soon after this a pain in her arm. She with the family retired at night, and during the night her husband asked her how she felt. She replied, "No worse;" he then fell asleep, and when he awoke he again asked how she felt, and receiving no response found that she was dead. It seemed as though she had not moved since she answered her husband. O what a sad moment for brother Adkins. Sister Adkins was baptized by the writer of this notice, May 5th, 1878, in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Indiantown, Wicomico Co., Md., and was held in high esteem by the church, as well as by all who knew her. Though dead, she still lives in our memory. She was born May 5th, 1849, hence was 55 years, 5 months and 10 days old. She was married to brother J. J. Adkins Dec. 20th, 1870. To this union were born ten children, eight of whom survive her, five sons and three daughters. One daughter, with her husband, is a member of the same church. Besides her husband and children she leaves the church, four brothers, six sisters and five grandchildren to cherish her memory.

The funeral service was held at her late home, and was conducted by the writer, her pastor, using as a text: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope."—1 Thess. iv. 13. A large number of friends were present. Her remains were interred in the family plot at home, to rest until her God shall call her forth. The family has my heart-felt sympathy.

T. M. POULSON.

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EBENEZER
OLD SCHOOL
BAPTIST CHURCH,
IN
NEW YORK CITY.

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10:30 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 73. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1905. NO. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HOW THEY GROW.

"CONSIDER the lilies of the field, how they grow." To his disciples the dear Savior thus taught precious things concerning his people, how they are manifested, how they are provided for, how they are clothed in beauty and purity by no power of their own, and how their confidence and trust must be alone in the Lord.

The church is called a lily by her heavenly Husband, and is distinguished from all other religious organizations "as the lily among thorns."

The Lord says of Israel that he shall grow as the lily. (Hosea xiv. 5.) Therefore we are sure that when we consider how the lilies of the field grow we shall be considering in this beautiful and striking figure that peculiar experience and doctrine of the Lord's people which distinguish them as "a peculiar people."

Growth in vegetable or animal is a great mystery. We cannot fully understand *why* things grow, for it is a part of the unsearchable mystery of life; but we can consider, and in some measure understand, *how* they grow. Growth cannot be regarded as an act, for that would imply that it depended upon an exercise of will. It is not an act of the thing growing, but it is a movement which is a necessary consequent of life. The will of the person or thing growing has nothing to do with the growth. It is an experience. The plant grows because of the life that is in it, not because it wills to grow. If that growth is to be increased it must be by the work of the one attending it in enriching and stirring the soil and giving it water and light and warmth. A man may affect his own natural growth, under certain circumstances, by attention to food and drink, while the principle of life that causes growth remains beyond the possible power of his will or his understanding.

In the figure of the lily in the text, and in similar figures throughout the Scriptures, the subject of God's spiritual work is regarded as a plant or tree, moved and controlled and exercised by the power of the life within, but not exercising in the least degree any power over that life.

When a poor sinner, "who knows the plague of his own heart," considers the lilies of the field, so white, so pure, so beautiful, and then looks into his own

heart, so sinful, so full of evil, how can he think of himself as one of those whom the dear Savior would represent by the lily? With what grief and consternation he sees the absolute contrast between the lily in its unspeakable loveliness, and himself. Where can he see in himself any principle or feature which can answer to the purity of the lily? In every respect they seem to him to be "contrary the one to the other." The poor soul cannot realize at such a time that only by the power of the Spirit can he see and feel the evil of the flesh. The natural man does not receive the truth that he is sinful and depraved; that is one of those things which can only be known by the revelation of the Spirit of God. That sad knowledge is an evidence of life, but the Spirit alone can make the poor soul see that evidence. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."—John i. 4, 5. "All things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light."—Eph. v. 13.

But let us consider how the lilies grow. The first work in order to the growth of a plant is the preparation of the soil. This is the work of the gardener. The first movement made by the seed after it has been put into the soil prepared for it is to send roots downward. The roots will be working and extending into the ground for several days before the plant appears. This order in the work of growing, both in natural plants and in the Lord's plants which grow in the garden of grace, is recognized in the words of the Lord by Isaiah: "And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward."

The soil for plants generally must be broken up and rendered soft and fine, so that the roots can easily work into it. The soil for lilies of some kinds needs much softening by water, and in some kinds to be covered by it. There are a great many things of a most obnoxious kind that need to be gotten together to make a good rich soil for the lily. We speak of the soil as "good," and "rich," but put some of it out of place, on the face or on a white garment, and we pronounce it vile and loathsome.

What a sad, dark, fearful time that is for the poor soul when his thoughts are engaged day and night in searching his own vile heart and finding nothing but evil there. He cannot tell how he first came to see himself so sinful, cannot tell how his thoughts first began to be engaged in such a doleful search, in which he finds no good, but deeper and darker depths of evil.

This broken heart, this depraved and sinful nature, this mass of corruption felt in the soul, is the soil which the Lord has prepared. It is he, the heavenly Husbandman, who has broken up the heart, who has made its corruption appear to our startled view, who has made us sick of sin, and sick of self because of sin.

Into this vile soil our thoughts are working downward, like roots from a good seed which the Lord has planted. This vile nature, this corrupt heart, is the "good ground" into which the good seed has fallen. It is "good ground" because it is well broken up and pulverized and made soft and tender. It is not the corruption, the sinfulness, which makes it good ground, but the knowledge of that corruption and sin, and the hatred of it. All men are corrupt and sinful, but until the law of God enters into the heart no one can know and feel it, and until that knowledge of one's just condemnation comes to him by the quicken-

ing power of God his heart is hard like the rock, the wayside or the thorny ground.

When the thoughts are working down in the darkness of our heart, and observing the sinfulness of all our life, trying if they can find some good thing there, what terrible anxiety and distress we feel. We cannot give up the search for something to give us hope, some good thing to relieve our anguish, some way of escape from the sin and evil that everywhere so afflict us. But we can find no relief, no way of escape from evil, for we seem to be all evil. Think of the roots that are working downward and abroad in the depths of the earth; what hopelessness we may imagine is theirs as they work in the darkness, the mass of fine, minute rootlets struggling, pushing themselves down into the soil, which grows more and more mellow, creeping and forcing themselves outward, to find they know not what. But they are doing the work appointed for them, and it is through the work done by them that the tender blade finally appears in sight.

It is through the work done by the thoughts down in the broken soil of the heart that finally the tender hope appears. The thoughts have been working downward, but the hope is reaching upward. In proportion to the thoroughness of that search downward is the strength and beauty of that blade looking upward. The search must be exhaustive and in vain. Again and again we must learn the sad truth: no light, no hope, no good thing down there in the earth; in the flesh no good thing. That must be learned deeply again and again.

But the tender roots with their mysterious, delicate life-power are taking up something from that dark, obnoxious soil which will be conveyed by the miraculous processes of nature upward and cause the appearance of the blade, the flower and the fruit. So the thoughts have gathered the sad assurance that there is nothing but evil in us, and because there is left no question of that truth, and because we are cut off from all hope in ourselves, we are prepared to wonder and adore when a blessed hope is given unto us reaching upward instead of downward. What a glorious surprise when the hope in Jesus appears to us! What thanksgiving and praise fill our poor hearts!

So the lilies grow, and the corn and the vine. "They shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine." "I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon." —Hosea xiv. 5, 7.

When at any time the roots cease to be sent forth downward and outward in the soil, then the plant or the tree will cease to grow. When the thoughts cease to work in the soil of a sinful, broken heart, then the growth in grace ceases. When we lose sight of our sinfulness in any degree, and begin to feel some contentment and satisfaction with our own condition, then we may think that we have attained to some excellent growth, but we have truly not grown at all in a spiritual sense, but have really diminished. "Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord."

So from time to time the Lord sends a winter time upon us, when we can only send roots downward; when we can only think of our vileness; when our life looks to us utterly unworthy; when we can hardly see anything in our heart and life to take any comfort in. The things that we have been enabled to do in obedience to the Lord we are thankful to him for, but we have still to think of our own unprofitableness as servants. All that was

of ourselves in every work seems to display our own weakness and sinfulness. We feel a tender thankfulness to the Lord for his goodness in leading us in the paths of righteousness, but we feel also that "the sins of one most righteous day might sink us in despair."

How many a time I have seemed to be at the point of giving up, assured that my hope was not good, because for days I could seem to think of nothing but my own sinfulness and depravity. It was not long ago that while in this dark state of mind, my thoughts active, but active in a downward direction, when all at once I saw them as the roots of a plant working downward that the plant might grow upward.. What a sweet comfort that was.

Think of the pure, white flower of the lily looking downward at the black mud out of which it has grown! Think of the Spirit contrasted with the flesh. In the same person the flesh is felt lusting "against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." No wonder that the Lord's people feel conflicts within themselves. There must be a warfare where there are two contrary principles. None but quickened souls can feel that warfare.

The lilies, how wonderfully beautiful they are. Do they know of their beauty? Do they not feel ashamed as they look down at that black, uncomely soil where they live? Could they grow otherwise or elsewhere than they do? Could they transfer themselves to some whiter, cleaner ground? Can they by exerting some power of their own grow more rapidly, or by neglect can they cease to grow? Can they cause themselves to be more or less pure and fair and lovely? Consider them, how they grow, and then you will see how the Lord's children grow in grace. It is by no effort or power of their own, and yet they are constantly, when exercised by the Spirit, anxious to grow, and feeling that something depends upon them, and are chiding and condemning themselves for their lack of growth. But all their efforts are vain, and they only show them how helpless they are, how unable to make themselves any more worthy in the sight of God. Then they come again to the knowledge that all their goodness and power are in Jesus; that he is their righteousness. Then they truly grow, not in themselves, but in Jesus. Then they grow, not in their own works, but in grace. Then it can be said of them:

> Blessed are you when you strive in vain,
> And all your works no comfort yield;
> For when you cease to toil and spin,
> You are as lilies of the field.
> And he who richly clothes the flower,
> Which passes almost as a breath,
> Will show his richer grace and power
> In you, O ye of little faith.

The plants in nature grow in the night. I have measured the growth of corn. Once from six at night to six in the morning it grew thirteen inches, and only an inch during the following day. It is authoritatively said that corn will sometimes, under most favorable circumstances, grow sixteen inches in one night. It is in the night time of sorrow and affliction that the Lord's plants grow in the knowledge and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is while under a distressing sense of their own weakness that they grow in the knowledge of Jesus as their Strength. It is through an especially dark and oppressive experience of their own sinfulness and depravity that they grow in the knowledge of Jesus as their Righteousness. When their thoughts have long been working and groping, like the roots of plants, in the dark depths

of their earthly nature, and have found no good thing dwelling there, but only evil, then with what glad surprise they see the same thoughts reaching upward and coming beautifully into flower, and rejoicing in the pure light of the Sun of Righteousness. Then they learn that all their sad and weary night work has not been in vain. Those creeping, searching roots, those struggling, groping thoughts, have brought up into the soul something that was necessary to the real growth of the true plant of grace. Their work down there in the darkness has caused the growth to be away from the earth, away from self-confidence, and have caused the blade to reach upward, and the flower to bloom in the sunlit atmosphere of grace. The poor soul can now see that by the faith and hope and love that are now blooming in their hearts, and filling them with the beauty and perfume of Jesus' blessed name, they are even more gloriously clothed than are the lilies of the field.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 10, 1904.

RIVERVIEW, Ala.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS:—Last week I was Jacob's companion, and derived much comfort from his conversation and surroundings, but I soon almost lost sight of Jacob. The only thing I could hear of him was, "It is even the time of Jacob's trouble."—Jer. xxx. 7. This followed me all the past week, till this morning I fell in company with Samson; not Samson as he slew the lion, nor as he slew the Philistines with the jawbone of an ass, but Samson shorn of his strength, and eyes plucked out. In this respect I feel to be a veritable Samson. My experience has been indeed to me a mystery. I am a profound mystery to myself. Whether I am a child of God, and a called minister of the gospel, I know not, but I do know that in my experience I have been a companion of almost every prominent character mentioned in the Scriptures, and at the time when I was with them I felt that it was I, as well as they. I fellowshiped them, and was one with them in all their varied experiences, and in my experience I have been with the wicked as well as the righteous, and yet when with the wicked I could have no fellowship for them. I have been with David in all his varied experience. I have thought I felt what he did when he wept over Absalom and said, "Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" I have been with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in all their trials and afflictions. I have read the book of Job, and felt that he was my brother, and that his experience was mine, and as I read I wept. I have been with Daniel in Babylon; the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace; Daniel in the lion's den; Jeremiah in the dungeon; Mordecai before the king's gate, clothed in sackcloth; Christ in his temptations in the wilderness; John the Baptist in prison; Peter denying the Savior; Paul preaching among the Gentiles the "unsearchable riches of Christ;" Stephen being stoned; with Paul in all his sufferings, hunger, nakedness, peril and sword; in perils on land, on sea, among false brethren, among his own countrymen; privations, sorrows, prayers and tears, night and day. The same accusations that were hurled against Paul, have been hurled against me. I have been with John on the isle of Patmos, and with all the ancient saints in their pilgrimage. I have also felt to be like Esau, "who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright;" I have also felt to be a wandering star, a

raging wave of the sea, foaming out my own shame, and to whom the mist of darkness was reserved forever; a tree whose fruit was withered, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; the accuser of the brethren; the unfaithful, unprofitable servant, and instead of giving them their meat in due season, smiting the men servants and the maidens; eating and drinking with the drunken, for which cause I am cast out into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth; having my portion with the hypocrites. Sometimes I am a murmurer and a complainer, walking after my own lusts; a man of corrupt mind, destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness, and as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do I also resist the truth. I eat with the wicked, and drink with the drunken. I feel that I am an impostor, a hypocrite, a stench in the nostrils of the Lord's people, and that instead of the Lord preserving me unto his heavenly kingdom, he is only reserving me unto the day of judgment to be punished. Then again I am like an owl of the desert, a pelican of the wilderness, or a sparrow upon the housetop.

Now I come to an experience that I hesitate to mention, but it is my experience, and if deceived in this I am deceived in all. I have been brought into such close fellowship with the sufferings of Christ that I have felt that in a measure I have suffered for the sins of his people. I would not be misunderstood here; Jesus is the only Savior, he bare the sins of his people in his own body on the tree, but what does Paul mean when he says, "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church"? Again, "I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." Other Scriptures might be cited, but is it not true that the people of God still sin, collectively as well as individually? Moses, Samson, David and all the prophets suffered for the people of God, and often on account of their sins the apostles likewise suffered for the errors of the people, and is it not true that all true ministers to-day have to suffer for the errors and sins of the Lord's people? Is it not true that a gospel minister has an experience that no other man under the sun has, or can have? I believe that all the prominent characters are set forth in the Scriptures as a type of the true gospel minister, and their trials and experiences are recorded for the comfort and encouragement of such. Samson was a chosen servant of God to deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines; his strength was in his long hair; the Spirit of the Lord moved him; he slew many of the Philistines; his marriage to the Philistine woman was of the Lord. But when his hair was shorn he lost his strength, then the Philistines bound him and put out his eyes and cast him into prison. But it seems that his hair grew out again, and it is said of him that the "dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life." Is it not true that a gospel minister may be "shorn of his strength," and his eyes put out? Are not the Philistines a type of the sins of the flesh, or the works of the flesh in the Lord's people? "For at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel." Do not the Philistines now sometimes have dominion over Israel?

When I take a retrospective view of my past life, and the changing vicissitudes through which I have been called to pass, I am utterly astonished, and can

but feel that the Lord has graciously and mercifully preserved me all the days of my life. I was born and brought up in rags and poverty, and have lived (as the saying goes) from "hand to mouth" all my life, and labored at almost all kinds of drudgery until this day, and aside from spiritual trials and temptations and afflictions, I have been a constant sufferer from nervous dyspepsia, heart trouble and other ailments for a number of years, often feeling that death was at hand, even at the door; have buried eight children, one of them a grown daughter killed in Opelika, Ala., by a car; I have once been shot at by an incendiary, because he thought I was watching him set fire to a barn; I have had a long knife drawn on me by a convict; I have had a man abuse me and threaten me with death because he said I owed him ninety cents; I have fallen from treetops and housetops, and I cannot recount all the dangers through which I have passed, and still I am here. I have preached in private houses, in hovels and huts, schoolhouses, under trees and bush arbors, in my own house, standing, sitting and lying down. I have preached in fine structures in many places, and surely the Lord has been with me and preserved me for some wise and glorious purpose. "It is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it."

I can but wonder if this sketch of my life and experience be published, will it be of any comfort to any one? I have told the truth.

In tribulation, yours,

H. J. REDD.

AVONDALE, Ala., Dec. 4, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I will have to ask you to again change my paper from Jacksonville, Ala., to Avondale, Ala., 4631 First Ave. I received one copy while at Jacksonville, but have missed the others. We only stayed at Jacksonville, Ala., two weeks, as we could not get a house to live in at any price. We then went to Anniston, Ala., and stayed seven days, and from there here. The last six weeks have been the most eventful period of my life, and trouble and sorrow have been my lot. We were doing very well at Riverview, but for some cause (I hardly know what) we broke up there and started on the move, and continued till our funds ran short and we had to stop, but as yet I have not found a resting-place for my weary feet and heart, but somehow or other I believe that our God has a purpose in it all. It is said that "experience teaches a dear school, and fools will learn in no other," and I certainly feel that this is true in my case. Here in this Birmingham district we are surrounded by all kinds of sin and iniquity, and every conceivable species of wickedness, and I find it hard for me to adapt myself to my surroundings. There are a few Old Baptists here, and there is a little church out at Pratt City, some ten miles from where I am located, with Elder P. J. Powell as their pastor. I have been with them twice in the last six weeks; they have services on the first and third Sundays in each month. The church is located near the car line in East Pratt. There is hope of organizing a church at East Lake, seven miles east of Birmingham. I do not know whether we can live here or not, as it is very expensive; I can only trust in God, who has cared for me all my past life, and to him I look for help and strength in the future.

I ask you to please publish this in the SIGNS, so that the readers may know where to find me. A gold palace would

fail to satisfy me aside from the love, fellowship and communion of my brethren.

My two eldest daughters are employed at a store in the city of Birmingham; I am trying to work at the carpenter's trade, but my health is bad.

The Lord bless all his poor and afflicted people for Christ's sake. Amen.

H. J. REDD.

RENSSELAERVILLE, N. Y., Dec. 7, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR:—I was surprised when I saw my letter published in the SIGNS, and a little later when I received the inclosed letter from a perfect stranger I felt to thank God and take courage. I felt I would like to share it with the readers of the SIGNS, and asked her consent to do so. She replied that she did not remember what she wrote, but was willing to leave it to your judgment to publish or not, if I felt to send it to you.

I inclose money order to renew our subscription, and would be glad to send some new orders if I could. I often think no Old School Baptist can afford to do without the SIGNS.

May God still continue to guide and direct the editor and publishers in the future, as he has in the past, is the desire of one of the very least of the flock, if one at all,

ADDIE COOK.

MARENGO, Ohio, July 31, 1904.

DEAR SISTER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I know you will be surprised to receive these lines from one whose face you have never seen, but in reading your precious letter in the July 15th number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES my heart is made to glow with love and sweet fellowship toward you, and I feel that I would love to tell you how comforted and strengthened from your experience I am. Somehow you express my feelings so touchingly when you say you have so many doubts about your experimental knowledge of spiritual things, because you cannot relate such bright evidences as other brethren. This, my dear sister, has so often caused me to question the reason of my hope, if indeed I have any. I became interested in those things when very young, and have been led along in such a rambling way that it seems I have always doubted the reality of what I have felt as I have journeyed along all these years, but sometimes as I meditate over the many past blessings bestowed upon unworthy me, indeed I feel I have so much for which to be thankful, and reason to praise the precious name of the Lord. I realize that I am a poor, wretched sinner in the sight of God, and without his mercy and grace I am ruined and lost forever; indeed I am one of those who cannot tell when or how my troubles over my sinful condition began, but I was so very young that I often wondered why I felt so troubled. As the months and years passed by this trouble of soul grew to be such a burden, yet, like you, I did not seem to feel such great grief and sorrow over my sin as many others. Often when I heard them tell their travels of mind, of how they were led along, and of how the Lord delivered them, and they saw some beautiful vision, or heard a sweet voice from heaven, and were made to rejoice in the pardon of their sins, and felt to hope in Jesus, I thought the Lord would in his own good time lead me thus, too. But, dear sister, I have learned that the Lord's ways are not our ways; truly he leads us in ways we know not, and in paths we have not seen. Thus it was I was led so tenderly along for several years, when there was a feeling of sweet

reconciliation came over me, just how or when I could not tell, but somehow I felt if I were saved, I was a poor sinner saved by the sovereign mercy of God; but if lost, I felt it just. I somehow felt so sweetly resigned to his will, and gradually there came a calm, sweet rest into my troubled heart, and peace and love filled my soul. I did not think of claiming this as a hope in Christ, or an experience of grace, or any evidence that I was a child of God; no, as you say, I thought I would yet be led to see and realize some bright evidence of my sins forgiven, and that I was truly born again. I had always been associated with the Old Baptists, and was used to hearing them preach, and I had great love and respect for them, and hoped that at some time I could claim the blessed things they talked about as my own, and could have a home with them. These things deeply impressed me, but I tried to keep my thoughts all to myself, and although I was often approached by brethren upon the subject of experience, yet never a word would I say to any one; but I was very tender, and often the unbidden tears would flow when I heard those sacred things talked about. I sought every opportunity to go to meeting, and was an earnest listener. I dearly loved the brethren, and was often comforted by their kind words, yet often shunned them because they would question me and encourage me to duty. I felt I was not worthy of their confidence and love manifested toward me. I felt I had no evidence I was a fit subject of the church, for I could not tell an experience such (as others related) that they could receive me into their fellowship, and I did not wish to deceive them, yet I desired to be baptized, and those things pertaining to the church were so very sacred and beautiful to me. I was young, and I wondered why I should be so concerned about those things; I thought perhaps it was because I heard them talked of so much, and so I concluded this was all I knew about it any way; yet somehow I seemed so very different from my young associates, I cared nothing about the pleasures which they enjoyed; I was sorely troubled and very unhappy. I went away on a visit among some of our relatives who were strangers to me, and who were not Baptists, but there was a Baptist church near them, and my cousin said we would go to meeting, and as we were going I thought, Here will be a good opportunity to test my love for the Old Baptists, I will see if they talk and preach like those brethren at home, and if I love them the same. All were strangers to me, and there were four ministers present, but somehow they did not seem like strangers. I was very much touched in listening to the preaching, and of the many brethren relating their travels of mind and experiences. O, I thought, yes, these are God's people, and my heart went out to them in such love. Yet while I felt to love them, I could not feel that I had a hope as these dear people talked about; no, I was so sinful and unworthy of being in their midst. I left the meeting in much darkness and perplexity of soul, feeling without doubt these are the people of God, but I am a poor sinner without hope and without God in the world. We went again the next evening to meeting; Elder Frank McGlade preached; (perhaps you have heard him, as he has been east) he used these words as a text: "My soul is full of troubles." Psalms lxxxviii. 3. He said these were expressive of his feelings, that he was in darkness, and unless the Lord lifted the veil he would be unable to preach at all. I remember how astonished I was at these

remarks; I wondered why he should be in such darkness and feel his soul was full of troubles, for it seemed to me he was surely a servant of the Lord and possessed a hope in Jesus; I felt he ought to rejoice, but he told the people of his doubts and fears and conflicts of soul, and indeed it did seem he would have to sit down, failing entirely in his attempt to preach; but by and by his countenance brightened, and he spoke with much power and feeling. Now perhaps it was only me, but I never heard such preaching, it seemed to pierce my very soul, it seemed every word was to me. I wondered how he came to know anything about me, for I never had my feelings told so plainly. I was all broken up, and wept bitterly, for I just felt he was reading my death sentence. How long he preached I know not, I seemed to lose all consciousness, and was sinking down to everlasting despair. When I again came to myself Elders McGlade and Curry were singing that beautiful hymn, "A poor sinner like me." O, such beautiful singing I had never heard; it seemed to me they were the angels of heaven singing God's praises for saving a poor sinner like me. A lovely golden light shone about us, and peace and love filled my soul to God and his dear people. I cannot express what I here realized, but it was only for a moment, like a beautiful sunbeam, it came and was gone, for it vanished and seemed like some lovely dream. Services being over, we were leaving the house when Elder McGlade came to me and said that when I returned home he wanted me to do my duty and be baptized. What more he said I know not. I was a stranger to him, and I was so astonished and wondered how he came to know anything about me or my duty, for no one had ever heard me say one word. I returned home with my cousin that night, shrouded in darkness and troubled in soul. The rest of the night I spent in tears and prayer to God to give me light and understanding of what I had seen and heard. I arose the next morning feeling I must come home, and returning home the memory of what I had experienced during my visit deeply impressed me, yet I questioned it all, and for weeks and months, yes, for almost four years, I stumbled along amidst doubts and fears and soul temptations which no words can express, and it would make this letter too long, dear sister, were I to relate some of the circumstances which led to my baptism. Many were the stripes of the chastening rod, for I certainly was a very rebellious and unbelieving wretch, yet how indulgent and compassionate was the Lord, how tenderly he led me as I humbly believe now as I look back over the way. Yes, he was surely very gracious to me, O so very unworthy and undeserving, but in his own good way and time I was made humble and submissive to his will, and I bowed in humble obedience to his commandments. I was received into the fellowship of the dear old church at Mt. Pisgah, near my home, and was baptized by Elder Frank McGlade, the fifth Sunday in July, 1893, and truly that was a happy day, peace and rest filled my soul, such as I long had sought, as I came up from beneath that liquid grave praising the Lord.

Well, dear sister, several days have passed since I began this letter; somehow it seems presumptuous in me to assume so much liberty to thus write you, and I assure you it is with a feeling of delicacy that I have done so, but so often when reading the many precious letters in the SIGNS I feel I would love to take

each writer by the hand and tell them how much their words have comforted unworthy me, especially when some trembling one like you expresses what I have realized. I hope, dear sister, to see more of your writings. Those who are gifted should write often, for you know not how many are comforted from what you may feel to be very imperfect and uninteresting. I know that I have been comforted and much encouraged in receiving a few lines of appreciation from brethren who have read my imperfect letters published in the SIGNS. Several of my letters written to my private correspondents have appeared in the SIGNS, sent without my knowledge or consent; which to me is very humiliating, and I have felt I would never lift my pen again, then I would often receive letters from dear ones expressing their love and fellowship for me with all my trials and soul perplexities, and I would feel humbled, yet strengthened in my little hope, to know I was not alone; but many others have experienced the same conflicts. Thus, my sister, I hope I have not wearied you with my long scribble, yet I have not written as I desired to. I realize I have no gift in expressing my thoughts, and it is so very little I have or can comprehend of those things which I have learned, that I often feel that I have never been brought to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, at all. The Lord only knows, and I feel sure that my only hope of salvation is treasured in him, he is my all in all, and if indeed his love has ever been bestowed upon me, I feel sure he will never take away that love, for he is God and changes not; precious thought.

Pardon me for addressing you, and may the Lord continue his tender blessing upon his little ones, keep us near the bleeding side of Jesus, that we may never bring reproach upon our sacred profession, or his precious name, and when done with the cares and sorrows of earth may we be found among the redeemed when the Lord shall come to make up his precious jewels; then unto him shall all the praise and glory be given forever, is the prayer of one who is less than the least if one at all.

Sincerely yours unworthily,

BELLE GORSUCH.

JESUS AS A SHEPHERD.

AMONG the many names by which Jesus is recognized by his people, in his multiplied relationship to them, is that of "Shepherd," and in that relationship they are likened unto sheep. In the tenth chapter of John the Savior himself points out with peculiar clearness the difference between the Shepherd whose own the sheep are, and the one who tendeth the sheep as an hireling, at the same time presenting himself as the true Shepherd. The sheep follow the Shepherd because they know his voice. A very clear evidence that one is a follower of Jesus, is that he knows his voice. The apostle John, in the Spirit on the Lord's day, saw Jesus, and heard his voice, and described it as "The voice of many waters." Elijah, at the mouth of the cave, heard the same voice, and he describes it as "A still small voice." The Israelites heard it in the wilderness at Mount Sinai, and to their ears it was a voice of thunder, yet they all knew it and recognized its import also. Observe how the sheep follows its natural owner, willingly, gladly, without a doubt or question, or a moment's hesitancy, aught but obedience is not thought of, because love is the incentive, and obedience is the result. Hark, saith the bride in the song, "The voice of my be-

loved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills." It is the time of love, and now we hear the divine Shepherd calling to his sheep, it is not a command, there is no need of that; it is love calling to love, "deep calleth unto deep," the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith. You hear the voice in your heart saying: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." And immediately we become his true and faithful followers. Some one will ask, How do I know when Jesus speaks to me? What are the signs of his beloved presence? Satan is so cunning that I am often deceived. Well, in the first place, the apostle tells you what to do, he says: "Beloved, believe not everv spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God." Then he gives you the evidence that will convince you of the truth, he says: "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God." On the other hand, all those spirits that confess not that Jesus is come in the flesh, are antichrist and false prophets. Again, you are not ignorant of your own condition, you know that if you are alive to righteousness, you are dead to sin. The voice of the messenger from God that speaks to you, brings with it life, and peace, and quietness, and joy in the Holy Ghost; while the messenger from Satan brings confusion, and evil thoughts, and a discontented mind. When you can say out of a full heart, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want," then you may know that the Spirit of the Lord dwelleth in you. This Spirit within you is of faith, and enables you to say: This is the voice of my beloved. Added to the loving voice of the Shepherd is the tender care which he devotes to the sheep; of him the prophet says: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." In every vicissitude of our life the pitying eye of our tender Shepherd looks upon us. He does not look down upon us as though he were far above us, but he lifts us up by his very presence; he is right with us, and our afflictions are his afflictions, we are weak and he is strong, but he becometh weak that we may be made strong. In our fleshly lusts and wordly ambitions, our backslidings and uncomeliness, we are made to realize his long and tender forbearance toward us. We also observe that this watchcare is so persistent that he never leaves nor forsakes us. When Israel traveled in the wilderness the Lord was with them, and as a shepherd leadeth his sheep and careth for them, so the Shepherd of Israel led his sheep about in the wilderness and instructed them in all the way he would have them go. He was unto them a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night; his vigilant eye was always upon them. The helplessness of sheep to care for themselves is well known; when separated from the shepherd they are utterly incapable of protecting themselves from the enemy, or of taking care for themselves in any way. The shepherd being fully aware of this fact, constantly watches over them, he knoweth all their weakness and frailties, and so nourisheth and cherisheth them as a father careth for his children. As sheep of the fold of the flock of God, we are under complete control of our precious Shepherd, of ourselves we can do nothing, left alone for a little time we become scattered from our fellows, and soon fall into the hand of the enemy, and

are lost. But the watchful Shepherd leaveth the ninety and nine that are safe in the fold, and goeth out into the darkness to seek the lost one, and he seeketh until he findeth and restoreth the precious one to the fold. Thus do we die daily, and thus are daily delivered. As the natural sheep are found in flocks, so also the Lord setteth the solitary in families, whence they organize themselves into bodies that they may worship the Lord, and maintain the order of God's house. Ever since the visible church has been set up this has been the case, but in order to maintain which, they have had to suffer many trials and undergo much persecution. These little groups, or families, called churches, have, when available, an undershepherd who ministereth to them in word and deed, but the spirit of the Shepherd is with them, according as he (Jesus) has promised, that where two or three are gathered together in his name, he is in their midst. They are to be distinguished from the religionists of the world, in that they continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship; they manifest the faith of God's elect, they use not humility as a cloak, but with fear and trembling they worship God in spirit and in truth; they preach not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. The way and the works of man all lead unto death, but the way of God is unto life eternal. Like sheep their trust is in their master who leadeth them and careth for them. Of Joseph it is declared: "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall: * * * from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel." Of David he saith: "And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd." Joseph and David both being lively types of our Lord Jesus Christ. The gospel assurance also comes to us with much sweetness: "Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ." Again: "For ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." And also both assurance and promise: "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." Wondrous Shepherd, blessed sheep, how strong is our hope, and how secure our inheritance, and how faithful the promise.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 25, 1904.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Oct. 21, 1904.

DEAR LITTLE ONES:—I do not know what I will say to you, but I have taken up my pen and addressed you, with a desire that I may be guided by the Spirit of God, so that I may enter into the heart of each reader, and that each one can say, Surely that is I. I have no one especially in my mind as I make this attempt, but embrace all who have a desire to be classed with the little ones. This could never be to those who trust in the flesh, for they are never little. When one is little, that one is like a babe. Look at the babe, where is its support, its strength, its trust? Just so with the little ones of whom I desire to speak, they have to look to other strength than their own for support and help; and there is a full support for these little ones who believe in Jesus. Jesus said that it

is better for any one to be drowned in the midst of the sea, with a millstone hanged about his neck, than to offend one of these little ones that believe in him. Again, Christ says, Whosoever shall give to one of these little ones a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, shall in no wise lose his reward. Then again Jesus said, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones." Again, he said, It is not the will of your heavenly Father that one of these little ones should perish.

Now it seems to me that all these Scriptures refer to the same little ones. If they are in the will of the Father, and Jesus is near them, are they not in a safe place? It seems to me that I can positively say now, as I write these things, that I do know them; and how closely have I been drawn to you in this writing. O what a flock, what a host, they can but ascribe all glory to God in the highest; how little and insignificant they all feel themselves to be at times; all their trust is in the Father of all mercies. Let us travel with them in mind for a little way. It may be some old bowed-down person, it may be one full of strength and vigor, it may be the young who enjoy all the mirth of youth, it may be a child who is trying to secure an education in the things of this life, or it may be a still smaller child who clambers upon his parent's knee, who have thoughts that they do not understand. A fear takes hold upon them, some eye seems to rest upon them of which they never had knowledge before, and it gives them a dread of doing wrong, and this feeling is with them wherever they go. A dread comes upon them that they do not know what to do with, and they try to get away from it. Sometimes they do for a time; sometimes worldly pleasures seem for a time to overbalance these feelings, and they go on. But again, these sad feelings return, and they must heed them, and they see themselves sinners in the sight of God, who is just and mighty. Some are more filled with trouble than others, but this does not separate them, for after all, they are having the same soul troubles.

A sinner? Yes, a lost and undone sinner, one who finds that in himself, (that is, in his flesh,) there dwells no good thing. Now they try from day to day to so live in the sight of God that their conscience will not trouble them, but they find that when they would do good evil is present with them, and how to perform that which is good they find not; sin is mixed with all they do. They continue on in this way, more and more polluted with sin they feel to be. Finally there comes a ray of light; it may be with some word from the Scriptures; they may have been turned to search the Scriptures and found some sweet promise to cheer them, or they may have read some exercise, written by some other one, which gave them a ray of hope that they were traveling in the same way. It may have been that the words of Isaiah attracted their attention where he says, "I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips," or David's words where he asked the Lord to have mercy upon him, and to wash him thoroughly from his iniquity, and to cleanse him from his sins, or the words of Paul where, after he had breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, he heard a voice saying unto him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" he inquired, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Yet some travel on, feeling too unworthy to come to the Lord's table, while some seem strengthened to come and ask a

place with the church, and are buried with Christ in baptism. This visible acknowledgment does not make the believer any more a little one, but how it relieves the mind, and then how they desire to see others come, whom they believe also know and love the commandments of the Father. How does the word talk to them? Christ said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Now this must mean the little ones, for the little ones surely are heavy laden with the burden of sin, and they are weary, too. I hear them now, as I write, as with one voice, speaking of their unworthiness. John the Baptist said, speaking of Christ, "He it is, who coming after me, is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose." The centurian did not feel worthy to have Christ come under his roof, and so on all through time, has this feeling of unworthiness come to every one who loves the truth as it is in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I feel as though I want to say here to the little ones who have not felt strength given them to come and acknowledge before God and man that they believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that I do not think that any more questions were ever asked than Philip asked the eunuch who had desired to be baptized, and that was, if he believed with all his *heart* that Jesus is the Son of God, he might be baptized; and this the eunuch did believe. But does one who has become grounded in the faith, and strengthened and established, ever cease to be a little one? I cannot see that they do. Even though they are strong in the doctrine, and are given strength in the Lord to wield the sword of truth, and to fear only the Lord, if you ask them how large they are, their answer will be, I am less than the least of all saints. Does not this class them with the little ones still?

For a long time my mind has dwelt much upon the little ones. I have wished that I might be enabled to write some of my thoughts, but here I have but poorly touched the subject. The name little one is so sweet to me, and when I see them with tears coursing down their cheeks, and with quivering lips, as they listen to the word, my heart turns to them at once, with this feeling as though I would like to say to them, O you little one. I felt this fear when only a small child, then again I felt it in my youth, but mirth and gayety carried me away for a time, then when it was given me again, I could but stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. One thing the little one loves to give all glory to God, to whom it all belongs. I am unworthy to claim the name.

Yours unworthily,

MARY HILL TERRY.

LEOTA, Ind.

DEAR BROTHER EDITOR:—Inclosed find two dollars for the renewal of my subscription for the SIGNS. And now while seated to write, this Scripture comes into my mind: "Let no man beguile you of your reward." This is the language of Paul to the Colossians, second chapter and eighteenth verse. There can be no mistake that we are now living in a day of great delusion and religious blindness, and we need everywhere, more than ever before if possible, to give close attention to the word of God. He also said, "Be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because

of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." And again in another epistle he said, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there be a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." There are now, as in the days of the apostles, many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers. If we would be a happy people, let us give heed to the things which we have heard, let us see that by no means we let them slip, for as certainly as we turn aside our ears to seducing spirits, we shall be turned unto fables, or that which is false.

Sanctification is extensively taught in the Scriptures, but not as some teach it. Those who, with great self-reliance, boast much of man's ability, and God is hardly known in their system, profess to be able to consecrate themselves to a holy and sinless life, and to make themselves holy and free from sin, and to cleanse themselves from moral corruption and pollution, and to fit themselves for the society of heaven. Such teaching rejects Christ as the sacrifice for sin, and counts the blood of the covenant as an unholy thing, and it is dishonoring to God; no child of God should ever be deluded by such hypocrisy in religion. Webster defines the word sanctification, thus: To make sacred or holy, to set apart to a holy or religious use, to consecrate by appropriate rites, to hallow, to cleanse from moral corruption, and pollution, to make fit for the service of God, and the society and enjoyments of heaven. Who is it that makes sinners holy? "He hath made him [Jesus] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Hence sanctification is that work of God's grace by which we are created in Christ Jesus, set apart for his service, and enabled to live to the honor of his name. But it is so far from being our work, that the apostle tells us that God's divine power hath given us all things that pertain to life and godliness. Sanctification then, is a divine work, and is not begun or carried on by the power of man. But it is said, "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Thus we see that all this is by and of God, and does not consist in outward profession or outward morality. God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it. That is, he set it apart. Believers are said to be sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus, and called. This we could not do for ourselves, God must do it for us. If we know our weakness and insufficiency to stand in our own strength, we will not be easily deluded by this fancied self-righteousness which trusts in self rather than in God, who carries the lambs in his bosom; but we must know this constantly. It would seem that after the taking away from us of all confidence in the flesh, until we came to esteem it as dross, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field, we never could hope to find perfection there again, or to attain to perfection while in the flesh, and yet we find that the church at Laodicea, addressed in the beginning of Revelation, said that they were rich, and increased in goods, and had need of nothing. How much better it would have been for them to have known that at that very time they were wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. Self-reliance is al-

ways dangerous, for sooner or later we must fall. Wherefore it is said, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." When we stand, it is by faith, and that not of ourselves; therefore we should not be high-minded, but fear. Assuredly if we have ever been entirely shorn of all confidence in the flesh, or in creature ability, worthiness and fitness, and have seen self in the vile dress of human depravity, we will be very slow to believe that we can make ourselves pure and spotless, and fit for the companionship of the Lord of life and glory. Rather, through the weakness and unprofitableness of the flesh, we shall still feel the necessity day by day of lifting our cries to God for mercy, pardon and grace. We will then not get so far beyond the beloved and worthy apostle that we shall have no reason for saying, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" We are not likely to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think, if we do sensibly feel our weakness and dependence upon God. O may he teach us our insufficiency, keep us from presumptuous sins, humble us in his presence, and in the presence of one another, that we may not trust in an arm of flesh, but in him alone who can keep us from falling. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

Your brother,

T. J. MOUNT.

LOVELAND, Colo., July 23, 1904.

MUCH ESTEEMED BROTHER CHICK:—Upon reading brother J. N. Badger's article in the SIGNS of July 15th, I feel like writing a few words, which I submit to your better judgment as to whether what I write is worth space in the SIGNS. Brother Badger speaks of the name of Old School Baptists being assumed by different sects, or companies, &c. Well do I remember the time, no matter if I were among entire strangers, or in any part of our country, if any one was pointed out to me as an Old School Baptist, I knew what that man's faith was, just what he believed. I call to mind a time when I was traveling through a strange part of the country, and stopped at a house to stay over night, and while waiting for supper, I saw a copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on a stand in the room. I cannot express the feeling of love that sprang up within me toward those strangers that were so kindly entertaining me for the night, for I knew that some of that household were of my own faith, and I could but love them. But how is it to-day? If one tells me he is a Baptist, the first question I ask is, What kind of Baptist? Like brother Badger, I do not know how many orders there are to-day that are claiming the name Baptist, but there are at least seven, or more. "In that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach."

There is one thing I have observed of late, and that is there are a great many churches scattered over our country that claim they believe the doctrine of God's predestination, foreordination, election, and that sinners are saved by grace, through faith, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God, and yet they call themselves, not Old School, but Primitive Baptists. The name Old School Baptist was given or adopted by those who opposed Missionism, to designate them from those who were Missionary in

belief. Of course the word "Primitive" signifies old order, but here is the trouble, most all the Missionary churches have assumed the name "Primitive." In this I think I can clearly see the fulfillment of the Scripture I have quoted, of the seven women laying hold of one man. The church with which I united when I was baptized, was the Old School Predestinarian Baptist church of Jesus Christ called "Blue Grass." I may be somewhat partial as to the name, but if all Predestinarian Baptists would adhere to the name Predestinarian Baptists, all would know just where they belonged. There would be no stealing our name by the horde of other religious sects, for they all, without an exception, abhor and despise the doctrine of God's predestination. When at the age of seven years I had a severe spell of sickness, and I believe that when I began to recover from my sickness that God was pleased to reveal unto me, though but a mere child, the truth of his predestination, and sovereignty over all the works of his own hands, but I grew to manhood before I met or even knew that there was a person upon the earth that held to the belief of predestination as I did. I could find no one that would agree with me upon the subject, not even among those who called themselves Predestinarian Baptists. In the year of 1858 or 1859 there appeared an article in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES over Elder S. Trott's name, headed "The Absolute Predestination of all Things." O how eagerly I read that old father in Israel's letter. After reading it over and over again, (for it was a feast to me) I turned to my wife and said, "I thank the Lord I have found one who believes as I do." Some years after, I found there were others who were contending for the same eternal truth. I say eternal truth, for all truths and attributes of Jehovah are eternal, for God is eternal. I had not at that time of my life seen Elder Gilbert Beebe's views written upon the subject of predestination, yet I knew from his editorials that he held to such views. Later on such able writers and defenders of Bible truths as Elders W. J. Purington, S. H. Durand, F. A. Chick, and others, boldly contended for the doctrine of God's predestination in their writings in the SIGNS, which doctrine to me is food indeed; something that never grows old.

In conclusion I will say that I regard the publication of the SIGNS as a great blessing as a medium of correspondence for all who believe and love the doctrine advocated in its columns. I want to here thank my unknown friend for the kindness in paying for a year's subscription for the SIGNS, in order that I might be blessed with the privilege of reading its pages. I take it for granted from the expression of the letter which I received, that my unknown friend does not belong to the church militant as a visible member. Let me say to you, if you love those people for the truth's sake, they are your friends, and may the Lord direct you home to your friends, to tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, in giving you to hope he has pardoned your sins, and to trust in his name; in so doing you will find peace of mind that all this world cannot give or take away; and not only so, but you will enjoy the sweet fellowship of your kindred in Christ Jesus, which you otherwise cannot enjoy. May heaven's blessing rest upon you, my friend, and all who love the Lord out of a pure heart, is my earnest prayer.

J. H. YEOMAN.

KANSAS CITY, MO., Dec. 3, 1904.

DEAR PUBLISHERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—We are entire strangers in the flesh, yet I feel to know you from a spirit of love. I have written many letters to you in my mind since the death of dear brother Beebe; how I loved him for the truth's sake; though his voice and pen are silent, he will always live in my memory. I shall never forget the last letter I felt impressed to write to him, when I was in sad affliction; I felt that I could pour out my thoughts to him, and they would find a lodging-place in his heart. Before I got through with my letter I felt to rejoice in a Savior's love. Though he was so far from me, and a total stranger, my heart went out in sweet communion and prayer to God that he would stay the hand of affliction upon our dear brother, and overshadow him with his love. I felt so anxious about the indebtedness on the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, did all I could, and gave the widow's mite, in prayer to God that he would put it in the minds of some dear brethren to pay all off. When I received the last number and read the article from "a friend of the SIGNS," I gave thanks to God, for he works and none can hinder. I do believe there is no one on earth who has more love and prayerful desire for the success of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES than I, because it honors God and gives him all the glory. I wrote brother Beebe how the paper fell into my hands. I was at a debate between an Adventist and a Campbellite; during the time of the debate a great many were expressing their sentiments. A little girl was sitting near me. I do not remember what I said, but the little girl said to me, "You talk like grandma." Next morning an old lady rode up to my gate; I went out to meet her; she told me what brought her to my house. I had never met her before; she said, "I have come to bring you good news." She had a bundle of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES with her, she wanted me to read them. After we had talked together we were no longer strangers, though I belonged to no church. After I left the Missionary Baptists I never expected to unite with another church; my prayer by day and by night was, I believe, Lord, give me a heart to pray and to know the sound of the gospel, and the church of the living God. Back in the eighties I was sitting up with my sick children; I was living then in the State of Kansas, with so many cares, and a heavy burden, I had little time to read. While waiting for the time to give the medicine, I would read in those papers the dear old sister brought me. The first letter I read was from dear old brother Jesse Cox. John Stipp and others told my feelings better than I could tell them. It was a night of rejoicing with me, and sadness fled away. The next time I saw the dear old sister we could shake hands and sing together. She soon passed away. This is why the SIGNS is so dear to me, it teaches the doctrine of the Bible, I feast on it, I expect to take it as long as I live. May it please the Lord to keep me at the foot of the cross.

I must tell about our church in Kansas City, Mo. We have a membership of over forty, a good pastor, W. T. Brown, of Richmond, Mo. The Lord has greatly blessed us this year; we have had preachers from the extreme east and west; all came preaching Jesus, the way, the truth and the life. We have a good house, and hope to soon have it paid for. On our last meeting day, the fourth Sunday in November, we had four preachers from different States; all came laden with good news, and when they were preaching I

felt, This is none other than the house of God. My mind was taken back to the prophet Isaiah, when he said, "The wilderness and solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose." During the few years that we have had services in Kansas City we have been wonderfully blessed in many respects. I trust the Lord will keep us at his feet and teach us of him, and keep our feet from going astray.

Remember me kindly to brother Chick.

I enjoyed talking with Elder Morgan Brown, of Georgia; he had been with so many of the brethren whose writings I had read that it seemed almost like a visit. How my heart goes out in prayer for brother Chick, that he may long be spared on the walls of Zion, to cry aloud and spare not, and that grace may be given him to bear his burden. When all is darkness may God speak to him, saying, "Peace, be still," for he can calm the troubled waters; he rides upon the storms and says, Be not afraid, it is I. May God keep him under the shadow of his wing day by day, is the prayer of the least one, only trusting in Jesus. I can sympathize with those who are burdened with cares. I have been a widow over twenty years; my family is grown, all go to their place of business, and I am left alone in the day. I often feel like a sparrow on the housetop. We are commanded to live for one another. When it goes well with you remember me.

I remain yours, unworthy I know,

KATE FORBES.

HERNDON, Va., Dec. 5, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—As the time of my renewal for the SIGNS is at hand, I thought I would write a few lines to you, as it has been my custom for some years past in sending in my remittance to write some thoughts in regard to the good news our family paper brings me when I am favored of the Lord in that respect. But, dear brethren, should I go on now and tell you of the darkness of my mind, you would no doubt think at once that the Lord had forsaken me entirely. It seems to me that about all the comfort I can get is in remembering the past, when I felt that the Spirit of the Lord was with me, when I could claim him as the chiefest among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely. It seems to me now that he has left me altogether, to grope my way in darkness the balance of my days on earth, and I am often made to inquire, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?" O yes, I cannot see the way, I am all the time turning aside; I cannot even rest in the brightness of the day (at noon) with those I call my brethren; I see marks of their footprints by the way, but O, I cannot follow in the way of my brethren. I can often see in their countenance that they have been with Jesus and learned of him, and are following in his footprints, but down deep in my benighted heart is a feeling sense of guilt and shame that often bends me low, and I cannot come forth. I often have to cry out in the language of the apostle Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I am fully convinced in my mind that without Jesus I can do nothing; all my help must come from him; he must first speak, then it is done; command, and it stands fast. When he speaks to us and we hear his still small voice, there is a calm, and our

hearts are made to rejoice and burn within us while he talks to us by the way. But alas, I am all darkness now, shut up in nature's night, feeling the most of my time that perhaps the whole thing is a delusion with me, and I am yet in my sins, and without hope and without God in the world. O the depravity of the human heart, it "is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." The older I get the more and more I see of my depraved nature. I was told once by an Old School Baptist, to feel to know such things of yourself was growing in grace and in the knowledge of the truth, growing out of self and rejoicing in Christ Jesus, and having no confidence in the flesh.

Those of our little church at Frying Pan are going through a season of darkness and gloom on account of the lingering illness of our dear pastor, Elder White. He is still weak, and not well yet, at his home in Leesburg, Va. He has not been with us since February last, and O how we all miss his kind and affectionate words of love and sincerity. His illness has caused a dark cloud to hang over us, and around about us, but we must try to be still and know that the Lord's will must be done, for he works and none can hinder. Elder J. G. Eubanks has preached for us two or three times since brother White has been sick, also Elder John Gore. Brother Eubanks was with us the last fourth Saturday and Sunday, and for a short season on Sunday I thought I heard the joyful sound which made me feel that salvation is of the Lord. The Elder's text on Sunday was the comforting words of our Savior: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," &c. O what a wonderful gift we can see in our brother Eubanks in presenting the gospel in its fullness, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

I will now close this imperfect letter, lest I weary you. I trust you will cast the mantle of charity over all that I have said amiss, and believe me to be a well wisher of the dear old SIGNS. I wish I could write like others who write for the SIGNS; I feel to be behind the least of them, and often feel sorry in exposing my ignorance to the people of God. Pray for me, all ye saints, that the good Lord may brighten my way, and cause the Sun of Righteousness to arise and shine once more upon me, for I am all darkness and have no light.

Your poor, unworthy brother, if one at all, JOHN F. OLIVER.

FOREST HILL, Md., Dec. 2, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—The inclosed most excellent letter is one of the number that father received on his eightieth birthday, and as it so beautifully portrays the experience of a child of God who is waiting for a brighter evidence, we cannot feel satisfied until we have shared it with God's children. We have not asked the writer's consent to have his letter published, but feel sure that he will not object to being a comfort to others who are traveling the same path.

Yours unworthily,

LINA GRAFTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

DEAR ELDER GRAFTON:—On this the eightieth anniversary of your life, I beg to add my name to the many offering congratulations, not that I feel that I have an offering or testimonial, but rather a memorial. You hardly know me to call my name, much less to feel to appreciate anything in particular that I might write, but on my side it is very

different, I feel that I shall ever appreciate many things that I have heard from you; while they were intended for others, and no doubt were cherished by them also, I, too, cherish many things that have fallen from your lips, and am many times made to say that I am glad I heard it from you; particularly you, because of your age, both in the ministry and your long experience, together with the wide knowledge of the experience of the saints. One thing in particular I wish to mention: in relating your experience, it was the lack of assurance that you mostly felt, that with all the searchings, together with the examination of self, that it was only given you to hope. While this seems surprising to me in examining you from my standpoint, I cannot express to you how much comfort and consolation it gives me, or how much it strengthens my hope. Many years ago, when I felt that I had been given to see myself a sinner in the sight of God, I was much troubled, but felt that I could in some way turn from my ways and it would be different with me. Then it seems I was given a view of the church and its purity, and that I must be changed wonderfully ever to be even near it. I hoped, because I felt that some things pertaining to the kingdom of Christ and his gospel had been revealed to me, and that it was an evidence of life; and I seemed to trust that a good work had been begun and would be performed unto my salvation, and felt that the time would come when I would be assured of this in my own feelings at least. But I have gone on and on, and have never found that assurance, yet the hope is with me that I do sometimes hear the gospel preached and feel that it applies to me, even me, in this condition, feeling and believing as I do that it is necessary for me to see Christ as my Savior, as I see him to be the Savior of the church, his people, and never being able to confess even to myself that I have ever had that assurance so that I could bring it home to myself in such an expression as to say, "I feel that he is my Savior" (and yet I have no other). I ask, is it any wonder that I can take a degree of comfort from one who has all his life been, and still is, a father in Israel, meek, gentle, loving, kind and forgiving in his own disposition, one whom I have been brought to believe knows all things pertaining to the church and her experience, when he quotes my experience in comparison with his own? I must beg your pardon for going on thus far, but feel that that great charitable heart of yours will cover my imperfections, and take out of this only that which is intended.

My best and earnest wishes for your welfare both here and hereafter. I beg an interest in your prayers, and trust that your God will sustain you in many more years of usefulness.

W. T. CUBBAGE.

OXFORD, N. Y., Aug. 12, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—As I am sitting here in my room, feeling in a cast down, gloomy frame of mind, and longing for a glance and a word from some one of my kindred in Christ, I feel a desire in my heart that I might live near you all; but no, God has ordered it otherwise, and how wicked I am to feel so determined to change it and have it my way; but I have to come right back, and ask God to be merciful to a poor sinner, such as I am. Who am I to complain of the ways of God? I hate my natural life, and feel that it is of so little account. I have spent all these years away from my

loved ones. I hate the world, and yet I must take a part in it, doing what I can. The question comes to me, What is it all for? Who can tell? And how will it all end? Six years ago the 28th of last month I was baptized. Can I ever forget that sweet but solemn day, when it seemed as though a voice had said, "Be still, and know that I am God," and, "If ye love me, keep my commandments"? And yet I am growing worse and worse every day, more doubtful, more forgetful of his precious promise, "I will never leave nor forsake thee."

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone of sin,
I fear that I'm not born again.

When I experience call to mind,
My understanding is so blind,
All feeling sense seems to be gone,
Which makes me fear that I am wrong."

"So far from God I seem to lie,
Which makes me often weep and cry,
I fear at last that I shall fall;
For if a saint, the least of all."

Also the sixth and the seventh verses fit my case.

Elder Chick, you have been so thoughtful of me, also the dear church at Hopewell, and I am so undeserving of your love and fellowship; it seems to me that you all must know it. I send christian love to the church. My mind wanders back to the dear, sacred place where I first heard the truth as it is in Jesus, from dear Elders Hartwell, Purington, and then from yourself. How I have been comforted as the word from our dear Savior flowed from the lips of his ministers. I was at Otego, April 1st, have not been there since, but hope to go soon again. In April we had an excellent meeting. Soon after that Elder Vail's son was killed. O how sad for them! Some are afflicted in one way and some in another. The Lord's people are a poor and afflicted people. I was disappointed in not being with you at the time of the association. I hope to come down before next winter is passed, if the Lord will.

This is a poor letter, but I felt that I must say a few words to you. My husband wishes to be remembered to you and family.

With christian love to the household of faith, I am your unworthy sister,

MARY TITUS BREWSTER.

WORTHINGTON, Minn., Nov. 24, 1904.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I would like to say to all who write for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, Write on. You tell the feelings of my heart in your epistles. I feel like saying "brother," but I am too unworthy. I feel to be the greatest sinner on earth. When I look back over the path through which the Lord has led me in this world, I must say that I have added sin to sin from my cradle to this day, and the holy law of God condemns me every hour; so what good thing can be in me? I can freely say with Paul, that if I am a christian, I am the least of all. I fear that I am not worthy to be in the church, because it has pleased God to set me away out here in Minnesota, among many languages, and for what purpose I cannot tell. I know it is his will so to do, for it has pleased God to show me that it is not within man to guide his own steps, and to go where he pleases. It is as his holy Spirit directs. Jesus said, "Without me ye can do nothing." No, not even think one good thought.

And now as I have told you that I am a sinner, I will also say that my hope is in Christ Jesus the Lord. If I am ever saved, it will be the Lord Jesus Christ that will do the work, and not me; it will be by grace and grace alone, and not of works.

Your brother, HENRY JAMES.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1905.

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EDITOR:
F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

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INTRODUCTORY TO VOLUME SEVENTY-THREE.

FROM the first volume of the SIGNS to the present one it has been a custom followed by the successive editors to present to our readers some reflections especially called out by the beginning of a new year and a new volume. We have no wish to omit the custom now. It seems but natural that at the beginning of a new year and volume we should have many reflections concerning the past, and many thoughts regarding the future. There are occasions in the lives of men, and in the history of nations as well, when the past and the future will crowd themselves upon the thoughts of men with special force. There are such seasons in the life of believers and in the history of the church of God. So now we can but remember the past record of burdens, trials, crosses, reproaches, cares and anxieties on the one hand, and of helps, comforts, encouragements and victories on the other hand, which have been along the pathway of the SIGNS more or less thickly scattered during all the past seventy-two years, and with the remembrance of all these things we can but praise the goodness and mercy of God for his unfailing grace manifested to all who have been connected with the management of the SIGNS, supporting them in their anxious labor all along through these many years. From all this we can but look forward with hope, and a measure of confidence to the future, remembering that

> "His love in time past forbids us to think
> He'll leave us at last in sorrow to sink."

The solemn words of the apostle come to our mind as we write these words: "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come." And remembering the past goodness of God, we are encouraged for the future, and are led to trust that as the SIGNS has been blessed to very many in all these past years, in that troubled hearts have been made glad, and downcast souls have rejoiced, and the tempted have been given the victory through words written for the SIGNS, so will it continue to be the messenger of good news in the time to come to very many of the tried and distressed children of God. For all these past mercies, and for all that we hope for, would we give all praise and thanksgiving to God. Whatever may be the service which we render to him in serving his little ones, let it always be remembered that to him belongs all the praise. Paul once said, "I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." All praise to grace then for all things. From the God of all grace comes down every good and perfect gift. He gave the SIGNS to his people at a time when it was needed, and he has continued it because it has been needed, and he gave grace to all the former editors, and to all who have been moved to contribute to its columns, and he gave

every word that through its pages has ministered to his people in every way, and he has spoken the word of admonition, of exhortation, of reproof, of warning, of consolation, of comfort; in short, every word that has edified in any way his needy children. God forbid that any of us should take one atom of praise to ourselves for any of these things. If we have labored, after all it is not we, but the grace of God.

It seems well at this time to call attention to some things that pertain to the order of the house of God. We mean the general principles of that order as laid down in the New Testament. We say the New Testament, for only in the New Testament Scriptures can we find that order laid down. The ceremonials enjoined upon Israel under the old covenant have no place in the order of the house of God under the gospel; they were shadows of things completed and perfected in Christ; they are not the rule of outward life to the church now. We need not pause to argue this here, supposing that all our people are well settled in this one thing at least, yet it is well to call attention to it now and then, since we are all so prone to forget. In the New Testament, however, our God has seen fit to lay down that order which will be to the good of his people and to his glory in this gospel day. In its place to know this order is just as important as to know that salvation is by grace. We all dwell much upon the travel of the child of God under the law and in the gospel; we also dwell much upon the personal obligations of believers toward the church, and in all the relations which they hold in life; we dwell much upon the strong doctrine of salvation through Christ, with each principle of that doctrine, and this is all well and needful. It is also our solemn obligation to ask after the order of the church, what it is, as a body ordained of God to administer the affairs of his kingdom on earth.

One thing we desire to call special attention to here. This one thing is, that each special body of believers stands by itself, subject to no other body, and subject alone to God and the word which he has revealed in the Scriptures. This has ever been the ground occupied by the Baptist churches in all ages past. So much has this been the case that for centuries it was never questioned among them; and ever since we can ourselves recollect, this has been one thing continually maintained among all Old Baptists whom we have known. The people of God have been very jealous regarding this one thing, because they have believed that the glory of God, the relation of the church to Christ her Head and Lawgiver, and all that simple, plain, spiritual service which God requires of his people could be fulfilled in no other way. Baptists have recognized but one Head and Lawgiver, and so have been zealous that nothing should obtain a place in their order that would come in between them and their one King.

It is but reasonable to believe that our God would not leave his people uninstructed with regard to their order as his house on earth, and in fact he has not, for in the New Testament all that is needful is revealed. It is ours to come up to that rule, and not to go beyond it. With reference to this one thought, the dependence of each body of believers upon God, and their independence of each other, so far as maintaining the order of the church is concerned, we desire to appeal to the testimony of the word itself. In the Acts of the apostles, and in all the epistles, we shall look in vain for one

word that would imply that each church was not sufficient unto itself for the transaction of all its affairs. In all the exhortations of the apostles to the churches regarding what we call discipline or order there is not the slightest intimation that any other church was even to be called upon for advice or counsel in any matter. They all had one Counselor, one Guide and one Judge; each church ought to appeal unto him. It was not only true that if any man lack wisdom he should ask of God, but the same was true of any church as well. Many things required setting in order in the church at Corinth for instance, but there is no intimation that they should call in the church at Ephesus, or at Rome, or at Jerusalem, for help, or even for advice in any of their differences. We know that they were divided in feeling, and that dissensions existed among them, but still they were all to look alone to God, and all such matters were to be dealt with among themselves, subject alone to the apostolic authority. The only reference recorded in the Bible of church differences or misunderstandings to any other body of men, is that recorded in Acts, fifteenth chapter. This was beyond controversy to the apostles alone. To the apostles alone ought we still to go in all matters of difficulty. If we should be so presumptuous as to say that God has not or will not give wisdom to any one church in the administering the order of the church, or in dealing with any matter of difference, it is equally uncertain, to say the least of it, that he will bestow upon a church at a distance that wisdom whereby they shall judge righteously. The longer we have lived, and the more we have seen and thought upon all such matters, the more have we been convinced that the great lack in all cases of difficulty unsettled or unhealed, has been that the church involved spent more time discussing the matter among themselves than they did in looking to God for guidance as to the meaning of his word, and for a proper spirit to dwell in their midst while considering the difficulty. The dear Lord has said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst." Has the church come together in his name? is the important consideration. If so, he is with them, and if so, wisdom is there to deal with all that may present itself. To undertake to refer questions that may arise to another body of the disciples of the Lord, is to say that we do not believe that our God will be with us and give us wisdom, or that we are not his disciples gathered in church order.

But we need not pause to reason or argue in the matter, it is enough that in the New Testament there is no record of any church, or minister, or body of believers of any kind, being chosen to administer the affairs of the churches, or to settle any difficulties. This is enough for all who believe in the perfect wisdom of God, and that the people of God must not be wise above what is written. We are here writing in this way because it is always needful that our pure minds should be stirred up to remember all that pertains to the cause of God and truth, and surely this is one of those things, if anything is. Another reason is, that we have seen it intimated that in some sections of our country there is a move on foot to destroy this plain, simple order of the church, and substitute a sort of federal government in its place, a government of a few men who shall be a sort of court of last resort to settle all questions and difficulties that may come at the last, before them, and whose decision shall be

final. First, we have no fear that when the attention of the God-fearing children of God is called to the unscripturalness of this move they will give it their indorsement at all; yet the watchmen are to watch, and to give warning, for there are always unwary ones who yet do love and fear God, and whose desire is to glorify him, but who may be ensnared before they know it. Second, like Israel of old, the church of God is a theocracy, and must acknowledge no sovereign but her God. This proposed plan would turn the government of the church into an aristocracy instead. It is proposed in this way to furnish a way to heal all dissensions, whether in doctrine or practice. We do not here judge the motive of those who are making this move. It may be that they are truly grieved at all difficulties and dissensions, and truly desire to do what they may to heal all such things as annoy and grieve the children of God, but we must say that it is a poor way to strive for peace by methods which are in plain violation of the law of God in Zion. Can strife among brethren be healed by rebellion against God? And this proposed plan is rebellion if anything is. If the law of Zion has been broken, can that break be healed by causing a still more serious break of that law? The streams may have become polluted in many places; will that pollution be cleansed by visiting the very fountain with a still worse pollution? Such a federal government will do for Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcopalians, Romanists, and even for New School Baptists, but it will not do for the simple, humble-minded children of God, who know no king but Jesus, and who respect the authority of his word alone. But suppose that such a move should prevail among us, who would be the chosen men to sit as a court of final resort? If, for instance, all the churches in one or more States or sections of the country should adopt this plan, who among them all would admit that upon him had fallen the mantle of judgment above his fellows? Not the truly humble among them. If any were proud and desirous of occupying the highest seats, such would no doubt seek the honor, but the humble would not, and what is more, could not be brought to believe that they were wiser than any of their brethren, or more capable of judging righteously in any matter. Such humble ones would not so sin against God as to either seek or accept such a place. Then if, still further, all these various sectional boards should have over them one national board, as we have understood has been contemplated, the matter would be still worse. Is any brother, any minister in all our land who has been known as an Old School Baptist, willing to come forward and say, I will accept such a position? If so he is presumptuous and self-willed, heady and high-minded, and not fit to judge anything in the church. Still further, when such boards in sections, and such a board in the nation, shall have been appointed, when and where shall they meet, and by what machinery shall difficult cases be laid before them? Who is to pay for time and for expense that must be incurred by any such gatherings? Brethren, let any such plan be adopted, and soon we shall have all the elaborate machinery in use among all the different denominations of people named above. Wherein then will our order differ from theirs? We are sure that it will differ from the plain, simple government laid down in the New Testament, as much as night differs from day or truth from falsehood; as much as the nations in the

olden time who were governed by despotic kings, differed from Israel when they had no king, but acknowledged the Lord alone as their Ruler and Judge.

Thus far it has been in our mind to speak here, and here we will leave this matter for the present, at least. We have written in a general way, desiring to call attention to the truth that each church must attend to their own affairs, subject alone to him who is their Lawgiver and Judge.

Now, in conclusion, we desire to express our gratitude to God, and to our brethren for their kind forbearance toward us, especially during the past year, since our beloved brother Benton Beebe was removed from his work in the conduct of the SIGNS; and we ask that the brethren will remember during this coming year that we still shall need much forbearance and help from them. We hope that such matter will come to the office for publication as will edify the readers, as has been the case in the past. May the blessing of our covenant-keeping God be with us all, those who conduct the SIGNS, and those who are correspondents, and those who are subscribers. May all strive for the things that make for peace, and the things whereby one may edify another. All this, with every needed blessing, our God will bestow for Jesus' sake.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904, &c.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS."

John T. Walker, D. C., $2.00; Philemon Stout, Ill., $12.00; Mrs. G. W. Crawford, Ohio, $1.00; W. H. Chaney, Texas, $1.00.—Total, $16.00.

POETRY.

ROXBURY, N. Y., Nov. 1, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Inclosed you will find some verses written by our aged sister, Betsey M. Bouton, in her eighty-eighth year, which we would like to see published in our family paper if you think best.

Yours in gospel love,

M. E. ENDERLIN.

BEFORE the wheels of time were run,
The Father purposed that his Son
Should have dominion on the throne,
And choose a people for his own.

Obedient to his Father's will,
He came his precepts to fulfill;
Suffered and died, and rose to be
Disposer of God's wise decree.

The church of Christ, she was the bride
For whom the precious Savior died;
He died to set them free from sin,
All that the Father gave to him.

He now sits by his Father's side,
To welcome home his chosen bride:
He knows the trials she endures,
And daily her poor heart assures.

Ten thousand thanks his children owe
To him who did their case foreknow,
And gave his only darling Son
To die for crimes that they had done.

Upon this errand Jesus came,
To prove himself and people one,
And when the last is saved by grace,
The wheels of time have run their race.

THOU precious Lamb of God,
Who art to me most kind,
To keep me in the way of truth,
And soothe my troubled mind.

What shall I render for thy love
That seems to me most plain?
Since every good comes from above,
And must return again.

And what have I to give?
Only to beg and cry
That I, in thee, might live
Until I'm called to die.

When life is done, and all is o'er,
Thy name must have the praise,
For every righteous step I take
Comes from thy wondrous grace.

I have no righteousness to plead,
For I am nothing worth;
To me I do appear indeed
The weakest one on earth.

BETSEY M. BOUTON.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

BROTHER W. M. Little has changed his address from Beene, Texas, to Donie, Texas, R. F. D. No. 2, where his correspondents will please address him.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Oct. 5th, 1904, Alexander Hadaway, of Claiborne, Md., and Helen D. Hearn, of Delmar, Del.

By the same, Nov. 30th, 1904, John D. Culver and Elizabeth E. Culver, both of Delmar, Del.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At his residence at Occoquan, Va., Dec. 4th, 1904, **Mr. J. W. Davis,** aged 67 years. Brother Davis was baptized Dec. 3rd, 1880, in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Bacon Race, Prince William Co., Va., by W. M. Smoot. He was one of the number who was kept by the faith he received in the beginning, true to the profession of that faith which he made in baptism. Nothing but praise of him was to be heard from those who received him into their fellowship. All rejoiced in his steadfast faith, his consistent and orderly walk, and his clear views of the doctrine and order of the church of Christ. His subsequent course showed very plainly that the faith he had received and professed was not a mere matter of theory, confined to the head, leaving the heart entirely untouched. On the contrary it was a living power in him, and when called by it to make his choice, whether he would follow man with his selfish ambitions, or the persecuted Jesus with all his afflictions, he chose the latter, and was received into the fellowship of the Bethlehem church, near Manassas, Va. He lived twenty miles from the meeting-place of the church, but the distance, with the difficulty he had in this country of getting to his meetings, together with the evident hatred of those who seemed to be his brethren of former days, and his lonely isolation, none nor all of these things moved him to deny his Lord or to turn back from following him.

His funeral was attended by a large congregation of his neighbors and friends, showing in many ways the high, and we are sure the deserved esteem in which he was held by all who knew him.

In writing this outline of brother Davis' life I feel that those who turned their backs upon him have more need of the prayers of God's people than his own immediate family. Thank God a religion of hatred can never supplant the pure religion of the almighty love of God. Brother Davis leaves a faithful wife and ten children, seven sons and three daughters, most of them grown up. It is a comfort to write that they all are an honor to their parents, and that the wife and mother in her lonely widowhood can feel to the depths of her soul what wisdom has said concerning the parents of a numerous progeny: "Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them." May God bless the sons and daughters, and make them worthy of their father, and the mother who bore them. May God comfort the afflicted.

J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., Dec. 9, 1904.

BY request of Mathias Burgher, I send for publication a notice of the death of his mother, sister **Elizabeth Davis Burgher,** who was born in the town of Olive, Jan. 4th, 1830, and died Sept. 9th, 1904, aged 74 years, 8 months and 5 days. At the age of eight years she came to live with her grandparents, Mathias and Sally Montross, on the same farm where she died. On arriving at womanhood she married John M. Burgher, who preceded her in death some three years, and whose obituary appeared in the SIGNS. After receiving a hope in Christ she united with the Old School Baptist Church of Olive & Hurley, and was baptized by Elder Jacob Winchel, together with three sisters, Sally, Mary Olive and Hannah; Hannah still lives. One other sister, Polly, has since united; all have honored their profession. Sister Burgher leaves a son and daughter; the son, who lives at the homestead, with his family, faithfully cared for her. She had been afflicted with rheumatism for years, and was compelled to go about with a crutch and cane. With all her affliction her place in the meetings of the church was seldom vacant. About two weeks before her death she had a shock, but not sufficient to destroy her speech or mind entirely. Her daughter and sister Polly were with her most of the time till she was released from this pilgrimage life to her eternal home. Services were held at her home. Elder John Clark, by her request, preached, using 1 Thess. iv. 14, as a text, followed by a few remarks by the writer. The Olive church was mostly present, also a large concourse of friends and neighbors.

As a tribute to her memory too much can hardly be said. Her devotion to the cause, faithfulness to her profession and welfare of the church was shown by her presence with the brotherhood in songs and words of praise for the mercy shown her by the Redeemer of sinners; she truly showed her faith by her works. Her door was always open to receive her brethren; her hospitality has been enjoyed by visiting brethren from every point of the compass, aided by her husband, (while living) together with her son and family. For nearly half a century she had rejoiced in the faith of the Son of God, who loved her and gave himself for her. In hope she had patiently been waiting to be like her Redeemer; hope is now changed to sight, faith to fruition, complete in the likeness of Christ and in the glory of the Father, which was given her in Christ Jesus before the world began.

R. W. SANFORD.

Miss Lizzie Johnson, of Frenchtown, N. J., was born Feb. 21st, 1847, died Oct. 18th, 1904. She lived with her two sisters in Frenchtown, N. J., sister Nancy and Hannah Johnson. She suffered with stomach trouble for several months, in fact she had been ailing for several years, but the past several months she was confined to her bed most of the time, and suffered much, but was very patient all through the severe sickness. She was finally taken to a hospital in Trenton, submitted to an operation on Saturday, lived until the following Tuesday and passed away. Some months before she died I was sitting with her at her home, and I said, "Lizzie, I have noticed for some time past that you show a different feeling toward the Old School Baptists than you used to; I would like to hear you talk about it." She said it was not long since she had no love for the Old Baptists or the doctrine they preached, but was quite satisfied with the "do and live" doctrine; but a wonderful change took place with her, and she saw herself a poor, lost, ruined sinner, and then Jesus was revealed to her as her Savior, and soon after she received this hope of salvation, she loved the Old Baptists and their doctrine, and nothing else would satisfy her. She tried to get something at other places of meeting, but she said there was nothing for her, though she did go at times, but would come home empty. I feel satisfied that Lizzie knew the grace of God in truth, and that she is in glory. Mortality is swallowed up of life, and she is in the likeness of her Savior and Redeemer. Therefore time and eternity will not change her condition; nothing will be added, nothing taken from. Amen. She leaves two sisters, one brother and one half-sister of a family of eleven children, together with friends, to mourn their loss. May God in his own good time heal the wound, giving great grace to all that feel the need of that grace.

The writer spoke at the funeral to a large company of people assembled at her home in Frenchtown, after which the earthly house which was dissolved was laid in the tomb.

D. M. VAIL.

It again becomes my mournful duty to record the departure of one of our dear old church members. Sister **Ruth Shleppey** was born in 1829, died November, 1904, aged 75 years. She leaves two sons and two daughters and several grandchildren to mourn their loss. She was a faithful member of the Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church at Crawfordsville, Ind., about forty-five years. Since the death of her husband, several years ago, she made her home with her daughters. She told me the last time she visited me that she had a good home, but there were no Baptists of her kind in the town where she lived, and she missed her church privileges. She loved the assemblies of the saints. Many years ago when my parents were living, the mid-week prayer meeting was held at my father's house, and after singing and prayer some of the sisters told of their every day joys and sorrows. My father asked sister Shleppey if she had a word for us. She answered, "Nothing that I could say would be interesting, but there is a hymn that expresses my feelings." She then sang:

"O for a glance of heavenly day,
To take this stubborn stone away,
And thaw with beams of love divine,
This heart, this frozen heart of mine."

She sang all that expressive hymn. Then my father said, "The sisters have told their experience, and sister Shleppey has sung hers, and I feel it is good to be here."

The children have lost a faithful mother. May the Lord comfort them in their bereavement. The church has lost a devoted member, but I feel she has gone to the church above, to join in the everlasting songs of praise to the precious Redeemer.

LINA W. BECK.

MEETINGS.

Elder Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

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BI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF THE WELSH TRACT CHURCH.

The bi-centennial of the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., was celebrated Oct. 20th, 1903. After some delay it is now published in pamphlet form, and on sale at this office. Price 15 cents. The pamphlet contains photographs of the Welsh Tract meeting-house and Elder J. G. Eubanks, the pastor, the proceedings of the anniversary, letters of greeting from sister churches and a historical sketch written by Dr. B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., and read on the occasion. Some of the brick in the meeting-house was brought from Wales to this country, and hauled on mules' backs a distance of ten miles. The pamphlet is very interesting and full of information.

The edition is limited, and orders should be sent without delay in order to secure a copy.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 73. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1905. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE COMFORT OF THE SCRIPTURES IN THE TRIAL OF FAITH.

DEAR CHILDREN OF GOD:—The holy Scriptures are a divine store-house of heavenly treasures and a pure fountain of spiritual health and peace, but the Prince of the house of David has the keys, and he must set before us an open door. But he first prepares the souls of his saints for the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, and then he opens to them the sealed fountain of his love. The Lord does this in the way that nature would not choose, and that man's wisdom would refuse as impossible. For the way of the Lord of life and peace is through fiery trials and great tribulations. His word to us is, "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." In this furnace of suffering he purifies and refines his chosen ones, whom he loves, that they may know the power and preciousness of his perfect love and worship him in the beauty of holiness. This love casteth out the fear which hath torment, and it uplifts the children of God's love above the rage of their enemies, who reproach and persecute them. Through such tribulations and afflictions, unto which God has appointed us, as Paul affirms, he ministers to us patience, experience and hope, which maketh not ashamed, because he sheds abroad his love in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. Thus the sufferings of Christ are fulfilled in his members, his brethren, who are baptized with him into his death, and also quickened and raised up together with him, made partakers of his divine nature, saved by his life, and serve God in newness of spirit.

The carnal and legal religionist would condemn all who are thus exercised, afflicted and tried as suffering the displeasure of God, as the legal and false friends of Job condemned him, and would say, If you will live as you should, and be obedient to the commandments of God, you may be at peace with him and enjoy his smiles. All worldly wisdom and legal religion says, Serve God, and he will then reward you with salvation. This way that seemeth right unto man, passes by the poor and suffering, the needy and helpless, the sick and lame, who are without goodness and strength, and who bemoan their leanness; but it flatters and

pleases him who thanks God that he is keeping his commandments, doing much good, and so receiving the rewards for his obedience. This one is without chastisement. He is a stranger to the truth that the true child of God, who in heart both fears and obeys him, yet is called to walk in darkness and have no light, and that the loving voice of the Father bids this tried child to trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon his God. It is a strange doctrine to the self-righteous religionist, who pleases himself, to be told that the only way of perfection and obedience is through suffering and loss of all things, and the only way of life is through death. In this way the holy Son of God himself learned obedience and entered into the perfection and power of endless life and eternal glory. Thus, too, must we follow him in his steps, die his death, and rise up with him in his holy life.

Now, my dear brethren, in him and in his righteous life is all true obedience, righteousness and salvation; nothing else is salvation; nothing else will God accept. This, this only fulfills the holy law of the holy God. We must be in Christ, and he in us, and his suffering obedience for our sins unto death, and resurrection unto life for our justification unto righteousness, must be wrought in us and be ours, or else we have no obedience, no righteousness, no salvation, no life; nothing but sin and death.

To be brought into this oneness with Christ and fullness in him, we must suffer with him and bear his reproaches; we must drink of his cup of sorrow and woe, and be baptized with his baptism of death. There is no other way into the perfection of God in Christ Jesus. God has ordained this way, and predestinated his chosen people to be conformed to the image of his suffering and dying Son, that he might be the Firstborn among many brethren. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." The Spirit's witnessing evidence with our spirit that we are the children and heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, is, "If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." To every one of us, my dear brethren in Christ, God gives to believe on him, and also to suffer for his sake, for the trial of our faith, that it may be found unto the praise and glory of God. Through such revilings and persecutions for the sake of Christ and his doctrine, which many brethren, with myself, have been called to suffer in these latter times, Christ has been made exceedingly precious to me, and he has thus prepared me to understand and with deeper comfort than ever before enter into the precious Scriptures, which faithfully record the reproaches and persecutions which the dear Son of God and his devoted followers were called to endure for the truth's sake. With new and warm interest have I just read the Acts of the apostles, and my heart is more tenderly united with them in their persecutions and sufferings, doctrine and fellowship in the gospel of Christ. And with sorrowing love and clinging faith I have followed in the sacred footsteps of Jesus from the manger to the cross. In

all his life, and in all the lives of his true disciples, there came continual reproaches, false accusations and deadly persecutions, for the purpose of destroying them. All this was brought against them, not because they were dangerous or bad men, but for the doctrine they taught—the truth of God. For they were all men of God, whom he sent, and they spoke the words of God, and he was with them. To God they ascribed the kingdom, the power and the glory.

The one startling and most prominent fact in the fearful persecutions against the Son of God and his church, as plainly shown in the Scriptures, is, legal religionists were their persecutors. Never before had this fact so deeply impressed me as now. Persecutions against me from the same legal spirit made me go and tell Jesus, and turn to the sacred oracles for comfort, and he opened my eyes to see that I am brought into the fellowship of his sufferings for the truth's sake, and he tells me to "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

In spirit I have been drawn near to Jesus when he was falsely accused in the temple, and in Pilate's hall, and on the cross, and legal religion incited and led to it all. With deep emotion have I heard the dying sermon of the faithful Stephen before the priestly council, who gnashed on him in their legal rage and stoned him to death. I have followed Peter and John, when brought before their persecutors, and heard the charges and threatenings against them. At Antioch I have witnessed the controversy between Paul and the legal preachers, and in Jerusalem have I rejoicingly heard the final decision of the apostles and church upon the doctrine in dispute. With deep sympathy and intense anxiety I have journeyed with Paul in his gospel ministry, persecutions and perils, until he was dragged out of the temple, fearfully abused, and forced to appeal to Cæsar to escape death. And to my amazement, it was shown me that all this raging and death-dealing persecution against Christ and his brethren arose from the self-sufficient spirit of legal religion, and was relentlessly waged by the most strict and zealous religious people, who were the professed moral worshipers of God. They expected to obtain salvation by their obedience and good works. But the doctrine of Christ and the apostles was, that salvation is by the mercy and grace of God alone. This greatly offended the legal and self-righteous worshipers, and for this doctrine of God's sufficient and sovereign grace (not of works) in salvation, the legal religionists hated and persecuted Christ and his church, as we have seen.

As it was then, so it is now. Principles never change. There are only the two principles: law and gospel, works and grace. Salvation is of one, to the exclusion of the other. My beloved Lord gives me the comforting assurance that I am made to suffer persecution and be spoken against for his sake. If I could have fallen from grace into conditional rewards for works, and so divided salvation into parts, and held that it is both by grace and of works, as all do who hold to conditional salvation in part, then I would have been approved and spoken well of by them. But the reproaches of Christ are far more precious to me, and my choice is to suffer for his sake. Paul says, "But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." All persecution against the children of God

arises from the legal religion of the flesh, for all fleshly religion is legal; it is based upon rewards and punishments; the love of God is not in it; the exaltation of Christ and the glory of God is not its purpose; but its highest aim and supreme end is the self-happiness and self-glory of the religious man. Take this away and he would not worship or be religious, for there would be no active incentive or prompting motive to his morality and religion. His is strictly a religion of works and rewards. His religious works are all performed to obtain salvation. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." This the legal religionist accepts; to him this only seems rational and good; his religion consigns the grace of God in salvation to eternity, and sets up instead the works of man for salvation in time. Works honor and glorify man, and this is quite suitable and self-pleasing. It is therefore very popular, for it comes near to man's strong love of self, and presents to him a powerful motive to join the so-called church and be religious. It will pay him to do this, he will be happier, more respected and honored, and so multitudes embrace this religion. There is no offense in it, but the world esteems it and is pleased with it, for it is the pride and glory of man.

The gospel of the grace of God is not so; in it man is cut down and abased as less than nothing, but the Lord alone is exalted, and his is all the power and glory. Salvation by free grace only is therefore a religion of suffering, of cross-bearing and of the loss of life. Here man is nothing, that Christ may be all in all. The cross of Christ is an offense therefore, and the legal religionist can never love it nor embrace it, and so the religion of grace is very unpopular, has but few friends, "a small remnant," a "little flock," "a sect everywhere spoken against." They are called "Antinominians," "Extremists," "Fatalists," "Let us continue in sin, that grace may abound," and many other hard speeches, by legal religionists. So the prime object of all legal and flesh-pleasing religion is, that the offense of the cross might cease, and ceased it has among all conditional religionists; for conditional salvation, salvation by works, has ever been a popular religion in the world, both among the Jews and the Gentiles; therefore if Christ and his apostles had taught this doctrine, the Jews would not have crucified him, neither would they have persecuted his suffering followers. And so at this present time it is solely because the remnant according to the election of grace ascribe all dominion and power, salvation and glory, to God and his grace, to Christ and his death and life, that we are falsely accused, reproached and persecuted, and our names are cast out as evil.

It is in this way that our God sifts and tries his people, and separates his own elect from false and carnal religionists, who are of the world, brings his dear children through suffering into a peculiar and blessed nearness to himself in the risen Christ, and keeps them by his power through faith unto salvation, that they should show forth his praise. "Trials make the promise sweet." Therefore, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil

spoken of, but on your part he is glorified." O how preciously true this is! We bless and glorify God for his eternal power and Godhead, his sovereign purpose and grace, but for this he is evil spoken of on their part, his sacred truth is slandered, and his reverend and holy name is reproached by them. "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?"

In the deepest trials and sufferings of the obedient Son of God in the wilderness, and in the garden, God sent his angels to minister to him. So when Stephen was cruelly abused and being killed for the testimony of Jesus, his face shone as an angel's, and the Lord opened the door of heaven to his tortured servant, and he saw Jesus in his glory standing on the right hand of his Father. So it is in all the evil that men think to do against the Lord's Christ and his church. And Joseph's words to his humbled brethren are the divine key to open and reveal the holy purpose of God in all the afflictions, trials and persecutions that shall come against the children of his love: "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good." Nothing great or small can escape his notice. "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell." In this God reveals his power and love to his chosen, "to the praise of the glory of his grace." Bless his holy name.

In the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, yours, D. BARTLEY.

APRIL 12, 1904.

BLACK ROCK, Md., Dec. 20, 1904.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—Some time in the past (at your request) I made you a promise that if I could get the consent of my mind to do so, I would write something of the way in which I have been led, and which at times I feel to trust is an experience of grace, in being led out of darkness into light. In making this attempt I must go back to the beginning of my earthly existence. The family record says that I was born the 31st day of October, 1825, thus making me at the present time to have entered my eightieth year. Was born and raised in a rural and sparsely settled neighborhood, no school within easy reach, consequently I obtained no early education. What little schooling I got was in our lowly home, mother being able to teach us children to some extent in reading and writing. As well as I can now remember our family library consisted of the Bible, a blue covered primer or child's book and Comly's Speller, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES being added thereto a little later, when I was about seven year old. In reading our lessons to mother I have no recollection of her trying to teach us religion, as is said to be the object of Sunday Schools, which were then in their infancy, and I have no recollection of anything in the New Testament making an impression upon my infant mind until reading in Revelation xxi., where it is said, "All liars," with other characters named, "shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone." Why it was I know not, but this made a deep and lasting impression upon my mind. I suppose I had been in the habit of saying things that were not true, which father and mother taught us was very wrong, and I supposed that lake of fire was some place

where I would be punished for my wrong doing. I also had read or heard of a place where the good would go and be happy. I have referred to this incident in my child-life, because it seems to me that right here the Arminianism, as it is sometimes called, which is in our nature, began to manifest itself. I knew of no way to escape that dreadful punishment but by being very good, and if the good overbalanced the bad then it would be well with me; and O what a failure that system proved to be in my case. Although it was said I was a very good boy, not guilty of outbreaking wickedness like some of my associates, I could never feel to be gaining headway in my determination to be good and be happy. My thoughts would come up before me as sinful, my refraining from outbreaking sins was only fear of punishment, and I was just as much a sinner as those who were sinning openly and outwardly.

In order to be as brief as possible, I will skip over my childhood and write but little of my early life. Suffice it to say I grew up to manhood trying to do, or trying to find out something to do, to escape the awful fate which awaited me. In coming to mature years there is a space of time, some years indeed, in which I have no recollection of what was the state of my mind in regard to my eternal welfare. I was anxiously and earnestly engaged in the effort to provide a comfortable little home for myself and family, was proud of being considered a good citizen and moral man, was elected and appointed several times to minor places of responsibility and trust in the community in which I resided; indeed it seemed I was entirely absorbed in the things of this world, with scarcely a thought, so far as I can remember, of things pertaining to eternity; but this state of feeling did not last. Again my former troubles about my future state returned, but somehow my confidence in my good deeds being of any avail began to desert me. What to do I knew not. It seemed to me it would be sinful for me to dare ask the Lord to have mercy on me, feeling so sinful and so far away. Being anxious to find relief, I began going to hear preaching more frequently, and reading the Bible, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and in fact anything professing to be of a religious tendency. Sometimes I would read, or hear in a sermon, something from others who had been troubled in the same way; that for a time would seem to give me hope that the Lord was leading me, and that some time in the future he would make me to hope in his mercy, for by this time I began to view as of no worth all my good works or right living to recommend me in his sight. How long I continued in the this frame of mind, hovering between hope and despair, I cannot tell, but I do know my anxiety about my condition was causing me almost as much trouble as did my former fears of that "lake of fire and brimstone," the terror of my childhood days. While in this unsettled state of mind a circumstance occurred which gave me some relief for a time. One night as I lay upon my bed pondering over my condition, and desiring of the Lord that he would give me some token by which I might know my true condition, all at once, as sudden as the lightning's flash, a bright light shone in the little room in which I lay, and with the light came these words as if spoken by some one, "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."—Isaiah xxxv. 10.

For a little while I believe I was perfectly happy, believing as I did it came directly from the Lord in answer to my prayer. In this happy frame of mind I fell asleep, only to awake in the morning with doubts and questionings. The words were yet in my mind, but not with such startling effect. I began to argue thus: I suppose I have read them some time in the past, or heard them quoted in a sermon preached, therefore it is natural that they should come to my mind, and as to the light, that could be attributed to some natural cause, as a meteor dashing through space, or some electrical disturbance in the clouds, or a phosphorescent light, or something in nature I could not account for, and in many ways I tried to put it from me thus, virtually saying, I will not believe unless I have some further evidence; but for all this, that bright scene is engraved on my memory, and banish it I cannot. But I must pass on. For several years I was hoping and looking for brighter evidence before I dared acknowledge that I had passed from death unto life, or had anything I might claim as a christian experience. I had a desire to be a christian, not now as formerly, in order to escape punishment, but more because I could see a beauty in holiness, and wished that I could live a holy life here, even if there were no hereafter. Formerly I had no wish or desire for a better world than this if I could stay here always, but now I desired "a better country, that is, an heavenly," and as yet I had told no one of the state of my mind. About this time our dear brother, Elder F. A. Chick, came to our State and settled among us. Occasionally I went to hear him preach, trying as much as possible to keep every one from suspecting that I was interested in these things. Finally I was caught however, something like as was the Ethiopian by Philip in the chariot. We were driving along the public highway one day and somehow he began to draw me out as to the state of my mind in respect to spiritual things, so I told him something in my blundering way, perhaps some of the things I have written here, or it may have been some of the exercises of mind I have failed to write; but be that as it may, he advised me to go to the church at Black Rock, and tell the members there what I had told him, for he was confident they would think as he did, that it was my duty to be baptized and unite with them. I followed his advice and told the church something, I know not what, and they received me for baptism, and on a cold, chilly Sunday morning in November, 1873, if not mistaken, I was led down into the flowing stream, near the old meeting-house at Black Rock, and baptized by our dear brother Chick, and after services at the house was received into full fellowship with the church, and unworthy as I am they have not withdrawn that fellowship, and it is my desire they may allow me to remain with them the few days I may yet remain in this world of sorrow and affliction.

Now, dear brother Ker, in conclusion will say I have written but few of my remembrances of the way in which I trust the Lord hath led me. If I have been led of him I have been led in the right way, and it is all of sovereign grace from first to last. Sometimes we sing,

"'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed."

But I have not told you of the hour, the day, or the year, neither can I. The all-important question with me is, How is it with me now? Do I love the things of the kingdom of God and his righteous-

ness better than the things of time and sense? If so then all is well, and to his name be all the praise.

In love, I hope, your weak brother,

JOHN P. KELLEY.

WAVERLY, Pa., Dec. 12, 1904.

ELDER KER AND ELDER CHICK—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find two letters, use your own judgment about publishing them. Mr. Birdsall is a real friend of the Old School Baptist Church, but not a member. Elder Bundy's sounds just like him.

Yours as ever,

D. M. VAIL.

OTEGO, N. Y., Feb. 15, 1893.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—You have been in my mind much of late, and I am of a mind to write you some of my reflections. I have been cut off from several of my appointments this winter, from ill health and other hindrances, and now I am fearful whether I will be able to go to Kingwood this month. But why do I feel so unhappy and restless when my way is hedged up? If you shall say, Because you are selfish, and wish to be of account among the churches, and not incur the title of an idler in Israel, &c., I then shall feel to take your judgment as good, for I see so little unselfish interest in me for the general good of Zion, and the prosperity thereof, that I fear I am wrong altogether, and have never known God or his people, or had the good of the cause of truth in my heart. For the last several times I have attempted to speak, it has been in impenetrable darkness and deadness, with no prayer in my heart for the return of light and love to cheer my dark and benighted soul. I sometimes think it is the wisest thing for me to enlist in some worldly enterprise, but that, too, is so very empty, unattractive, barren and desolate, that I find nothing there to seize hold of, and if I do (according to former experience) everything of that sort goes to pieces in my hands, and comes to nothing, and just the truth is, I am nothing, and vanity. But the more I write the further away I get from telling you what I wanted to. I hope you went to Canada, and that the Lord was with you, to help you speak to the people of the glorious victory of reigning grace in honor of his high and adorable name. I have always found it sweet to mingle with that dear people, and if ever my bondage shall be broken, I hope to meet them again. Did you meet other preachers, and did you have liberty in speaking?

Well, to sum up, I must say I am extremely unfit to live with the dear Old Baptists, or to have their love and fellowship, and to be a castaway from them, to me would be the most cruel of all forms of death. So if you ever had any fellowship with me I still crave a continuance of the same.

Yours in deep bonds of darkness,

B. BUNDY.

EAST MASONVILLE, N. Y., March 25, 1900.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER IN CHRIST:—If I may be allowed to thus address you. I feel that if you could but know my feelings this morning you would forgive me for daring to write you. I feel so shut up, but I must speak to some one. To whom shall I go? there are none here who have any sympathy for such as I. While one of those great revival meetings has been going on for the last five weeks within a stone's throw of where I live, and I have been to hear them several times, there was not a morsel for me; it seemed as if I was an outcast in a foreign country, and had not where to lay my head. It

made me feel badly at times to think that I could not say a word for the Savior that I sometimes dare to hope died for me and called me with an holy calling in Christ Jesus, not of works, but by grace, free, unmerited grace. But what could I say? If I raised my voice it would be in very opposition to what they were preaching and giving testimony of; it would be all of Christ and none of me, while it seemed as though with them it was all of self, and none of Christ. One testimony in particular I can remember, it was this: "I, too, was going that downward road at a rapid rate, when I saw where I was going, and turned right around, and am now going the other way, and intend to keep on going that way." Not a word about that Savior who has all power in heaven and in earth, and none can stay his hand or say, What doeth thou? O, it makes me feel sad to hear them say, "The Savior is doing all he can to save you, but cannot unless you will make the start, then he will save you if you only prove faithful." How thankful I am that my hope is on a surer foundation than that; if it were not, O what would become of me? for I have long ago found that there is no goodness in me; that all is vile and sinful, and I often feel that there cannot be another poor, miserable worm of the dust like me. But thanks be to God, who knoweth all things, there is a people with whom I can feel at home, who think of themselves as I do of myself, although I can hardly believe they have sunk so low in the sins of the world as I have. Often at the meetings I have mentioned, my mind would wander to the little church at Otego, where I have passed so many pleasant hours listening to Elder Bundy, yourself and several others that I have been permitted to hear, and O what a difference. Here I was near my earthly home, surrounded by my family and neighbors that I had always known, still I was not at home; but while there among those with whom I was not nearly as well acquainted I was made to feel at home. How strange to the natural mind that it should be so; truly "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." Now this is what I want to know, Have I done right? am I doing right? As you probably know, I am in the store at this place, and come in daily contact with those in the neighborhood, and while not one of the members of the church have said a word to me on religious subjects for a long time, there are some others that seem to have serious thoughts, who have talked with me, and while they do not believe in the glorious doctrine of predestination and foreordination, I could not help telling them very plainly that was my only hope. One said to me: "According to your belief, a man can go on and be as wicked as he has a mind to be, and it will make no difference; if he is born to go to heaven he will go there, and if not he cannot; and if that is the case we might as well be just as bad as we can, and get all the pleasure out of this world we possibly can, and it will be the same in the end." I answered, "Yes, all will be the same in the end, for God knew the end from the beginning, and he changes not." He has said man's wrath shall praise him, and the remainder he will restrain. We can go so far in wickedness, but no farther; then again, if a man is a child of God, I believe he will desire to do right at all times; not roll sin as a sweet morsel under his tongue, but will abhor it, and loathe himself for committing the sin he does in the flesh. Then if it were possible for mortal man to live a perfect life, how could he bring

God under any obligation to him? He would only be doing his duty, only what was right, and should we expect pay for that? God forbid. They want the children to go to Sunday School, I do not, and while I do not feel like strictly forbidding their going, I do feel to let them know I do not believe in them. Now, as you see, I am surrounded by worldly people, who worship worldly gods. There is that within me that says, No, no, and there is another voice that says, Yes, do as others do, go to their meetings and help support the preacher, it will help your trade, so you can get a living easier, and perhaps keep your family from coming to want; your wife would be better satisfied with you, and the neighbors would look up to you, instead of down upon you; would it not be better to follow after their way? I feel to say, No, I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

I have made this too long, I must close. I have not written at all as I wanted to, but it has relieved my mind, and I hope it will not distress yours.

Yours truly,

E. C. BIRDSALL.

DECATUR, Texas, Dec. 2, 1904.

EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BROTHER:—Knowing that my subscription for the SIGNS is due, and as I do not want to miss a number, I thought I would write a few lines and send on with my subscription for another year. Dear brother, I know that I am nothing but a poor, ignorant sinner, and I feel my inability to write in such a way as will comfort and instruct one of the poor in Zion. I feel assured that without the guidance of almighty God we cannot write the truth, and nothing but the truth will comfort a child of God, and in setting forth the truth we must bear in mind that we cannot blend truth and error together, for the one contradicts the other, but there is no contradiction in the Scriptures of divine truth; so all error is of antichrist. Jesus said to his disciples, "Without me ye can do nothing," but the invention of men says the child of God is capable of obedience. Capable means ability and power within the thing itself. But Paul says, It is "by the grace of God, I am what I am." It seems to me that the two Scriptures named above, plainly teach that the child of God is not active, but passive in obedience.

I have heard this creature obedience and ability taught all my life by Arminians, but of late we hear of some claiming to be Primitive Baptists trying to help the Lord do his work; I do not know that they are trying themselves, but they are trying to teach others that the child of God is active in obedience. It seems strange to me if they are active that they would ever live out of obedience. Dear brethren, I believe that the dear Lord works all things after the counsel of his own will, not just a part of the things, and then leaves the rest for man to work, but the Lord works in his people both to will and to do of his good pleasure. His people shall be willing in the day of his power, when he sends forth his reigning grace into their hearts, then they are willing, made willing in the day of his power.

Dear readers of the SIGNS, let us hold to the faith once delivered to the saints, not turning to the right hand nor to the left in order to please men. When we try to set forth the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, we must not try to conform the Scriptures to the views of men, but rather

examine them to see if the views of men are conformed to the Scriptures. If we are reading after able writers and find some of their sayings without a "thus saith the Lord" for them, we must reject that part; the truth is what we are searching for, and nothing but the truth will comfort a child of God. If then, we make a mistake in trying to set forth the truth, and some one will tell us of it, we will receive it as a kindness in that one, for the Lord's servants will seek after the truth rather than for pre-eminence. When the Lord's servants are moved by the Spirit of Almighty God they will make no mistakes in setting forth the truth, for the Spirit of God leadeth into all truth, so when they make mistakes, we know the Lord is not with them in making the mistake, but they are left to themselves, for man in his best estate is altogether vanity, we are all unprofitable servants without the Spirit of God to lead us.

Dear brother, since reading what was written upon the parable of the ten virgins, by the two sisters and yourself, in the last number of the SIGNS, my mind has been impressed to write a few things about the same parable. I know that all that can be written about it will not change the meaning of the parable. If I understand it, the kingdom of heaven spoken of here means the place of rest prepared in heaven for the redeemed of the Lord, and the bridegroom represents Christ at his second coming, and the five wise virgins are the redeemed family of God, and the five foolish virgins represent the non-elect. Now, in the first place let us notice the lamps and vessels. The vessel is that part of the lamp which contains the oil. The parable says that the foolish virgins had no oil in their vessels with their lamps. Now I can find nowhere in the parable that the foolish had any oil, for it says they had no oil, and neither does it say that they had access to it, or that they got the oil when they went to buy, but it does say they came crying, "Lord, Lord, open to us." But he answered and said, "Verily I say unto you, I know you not;" that is, he knew them not as his. Now it does seem to me that the oil represents the preparation that the Lord prepared his people with, to meet him in heaven, and he will not shut the door and leave any of his children out.

Dear brethren, if I have written anything contrary to the teachings of the Scriptures of divine truth, do not publish it. I hope that you will pardon me for taking up your valuable time in trying to read this, and I trust that the Lord will lead us in the way of all truth, and continue to bless the editor and correspondents of the SIGNS, to the comfort of the poor in Zion.

Your unworthy brother,

M. B. F. JONES.

[BROTHER Jones' view of the parable of the ten virgins is not our view, as we have before shown in the editorial to which he refers, but he has written in all kindness and brotherly love, and we feel like commending this spirit in him. We wish that we could possess more of the same meek and gentle spirit; it is in the sight of God of great price. We trust that we have come to realize that charity is the greatest of all things in the sight of God, according to the testimony of the word. We think it well to converse concerning the Scriptures, and for each to freely present the view that seems to him right.—ED.]

EAST DIXFIELD, Maine, Nov. 20, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your kind and precious letter arrived in due time, and its contents were a source of joy to me, and in reply, first I desire to thank you, for I know how closely your time is occupied, and how many calls are made upon it, it is a source of wonder to me that so great a portion is devoted to me. I greatly enjoyed the last, more especially the last page. How tender is the hand of our most gracious God. He leads me (I was about to say us) in a way that we knew not; sometimes on the top of the mountain, and again through the valley of the shadow of death, and I am constrained to cry out, O "my leanness, my leanness." Truly we can say, It is of his mercy that we are not consumed. "In my flesh dwelleth no good thing." And the hope that the Spirit of life and love in Christ Jesus takes of the things that are his and shows them unto me, even me, is truly a well of water springing up into life eternal.

Your favor was dated on the seventy-seventh anniversary of my birth. As I read, from time to time, communications from the aged ones, in the SIGNS, I think there is one, as it seems to me, from the ends of the earth, who can respond to the goodness of God, who through his almighty power has kept us through faith unto salvation. With the poet I have felt to say,

"Salvation, O the joyful sound!
'Tis pleasure to our ears;
A sovereign balm for every wound,
A cordial for our fears."

While we were yet sinners Christ died for the ungodly. This is a wonder which mortal man cannot fathom, and while we groan from time to time under the burden of sin and unbelief, we have fellowship with this sacred mystery, and can in accordance with the injunction of the apostle, "Rejoice evermore," and in all things give thanks.

But while we groan under the view of the hidden depravity of the human heart, its depths have never been sounded, and as great as is the mystery of godliness, so great is the mystery of iniquity. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" But the magnitude and efficacy of the atoning blood of Christ, our High Priest and Redeemer, presents us spotless before the throne, and at times we are privileged to have a view of the glorious rest beyond.

I was pleased to hear that Elder Badger, and also yourself, so much enjoyed the meetings in Maine; the part of them that came under my notice was good to me. In a special manner I enjoyed the letter on John xiv. 2, it opened a very comforting view in my mind. I was glad to hear of a fair attendance at the meetings. Many are becoming aged, and some perhaps are cold. O our infirmities, those of the body are not the worst, our questionings, our unbelief, our repinings are the worst.

"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain."

I have enjoyed the account of the meetings this fall, I think, in a greater degree than usual, but it is always good in any manner to hear of the household of faith. If not in the flesh, I have precious meetings with them in the Spirit. We are heirs of the same inheritance, children of the self-same God. My own travel, my own mourning, my own desires, are so often penned by others, that I thank God and take courage. I feel as though my sheet is about filled, I was about to say, "with nothing," but I will say instead, "not as I wish," but you

will, I know, excuse. How much I would like to express more and better.

Dear brother, I failed to mail my letter this morning, and will add a few more lines. It seems that there is more that I should say of the tender mercy of God, whose mercies are every morning and every evening new. If there is nothing else to add, I wish to tell you how refreshing it is to receive kindly messages, and to feel that I am not cast out from meeting with the saints in an epistolary manner. The hope is sometimes buoyant within me that I shall some time again meet with them in the flesh, but if it be not so, God is the same, and his watchful eye neither slumbers nor sleeps, and he knoweth the way that I take. His knowledge is wonderful, and of his goodness to me I would make special mention. I desire to mention also your own kindness to me in my closing years.

In the last page of your letter, you made mention of the eternity and sovereignty of God, and of the manifestation of these things in the flesh. This is a theme that never fades and never grows old. This God is our shield, our joy, our rest, we can never sink with such a prop.

As I took my pen to resume, these words of David occurred to me, "In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God. Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your hearts before him." And just as I am, I desire to commit myself to his gracious keeping, knowing that all my times are in his hand. I desire that you may be strengthened and comforted in every way, and also sustained in your arduous duties, and find always underneath the everlasting arm.

Yours in hope,

ELIZA WHEELWRIGHT.

THE HIGHWAY OF HOLINESS.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—After reading over the SIGNS to-night of November 13th, I found myself possessed of a feeling to write. The thirty-fifth chapter of the book of Isaiah came sweetly into my mind, especially the "highway" that is brought to view there, and the assurance that is spoken, "The wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." I thought how well this suited such as I. After reading the first article in this number, I reflected for a time over it, thinking how beautifully our dear sister Sarah Runkle had written, and it brought very vividly to my memory many of the precious things I had heard her dear old father, Elder Vanmeter, talk about when it had been my good privilege to be with him. How faithful was he, but his work is over, and he is now in possession of the crown Paul said was laid up for all that love the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. In her article this sister speaks of that other old faithful soldier of the cross, Elder S. L. Dark. It has been my happy privilege to listen as he ably told of the glorious truth of the gospel of Christ. Then when I had read Elder Chick's editorial on "The Divine Sovereignty," it seemed to me, surely all God's dear children ought to thank God, and take courage. It filled my soul with rejoicing, and I thought I would just write, at least some of my feelings, to bear testimony to the truths therein contained. I have since the 14th of last month been living in my seventy-third year, fifty-three years of this time I have had a name among the people that compose a part of the church of God, and am to-day more firmly settled in the belief of the doctrine of God's sovereignty than ever, if possible; I have always believed

and rejoiced in it since, I hope, God gave me eyes to see, and a heart to understand the truth. It is my earnest desire to set that doctrine forth in my efforts at preaching or writing at all times, and with it the unity that has and will eternally exist between God and his people.

"I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."—John vi. 35, 37–39. Some of our brethren, even, try to set aside this glorious, soul-cheering doctrine of our Savior, the doctrine of the unity that has from before the world existed between God and his people, nevertheless it stands as true, and cannot by the efforts of feeble man be set aside.

But I am leaving the subject I commenced to speak about, that is, the sweet comfort drawn from the articles found published in the SIGNS. Following the articles I have called attention to are the letters of our dear afflicted sister Nannie Edwards, of Owensbyville, Ga. How wonderfully blessed with the Spirit of Christ is this dear sister; I could but feel to ask that my faith should be increased. She is so afflicted in body, yet so patient and resigned to the Lord's dealings with her.

But I need not call attention to special articles, for nearly all I read in the columns of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES are as "cold water to a thirsty soul" with me. The same prophet from which I quoted at the head of this article has said, "Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped: then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing," &c. Have we not had evidence from, not only the ones referred to as writing for this last number of the SIGNS, but from many a poor, lame one leaping in their joy, and singing praises in their hearts to God when they have been made to see by their eyes being opened, and their hitherto deaf ears unstopped? With the poor, blind man they can say, "Whereas I was blind, now I see," then they with him, and all other ones that are healed, can with Paul say, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." We can but say in conclusion, "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."

I will close for fear of wearying some with many words, feeling that my imperfect writing is about done. As ever, desiring that mercy and truth, may be, and abound with the people of God forever and ever. Amen.

JAMES M. TRUE.

KANSAS, Ill., Nov. 15, 1895.

[As will be seen by the date, this letter was written several years ago, but is as good now as it was then.—ED.]

PERSONVILLE, Texas, Aug. 7, 1904.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—After reading so many good articles in the SIGNS, I have been somewhat impressed to write you a few thoughts with regard to myself. This is not that

I feel capable to in any way interest or instruct you, but something seems to say, "Write," and I cannot be satisfied without doing so. The question with me is, What spirit is it that is actuating me, the spirit of truth or the spirit of delusion?

I was born in Grimes Co., Texas, June 24th, 1869. Being left without a mother at a very early age, I was raised by my uncle, that venerable servant of God, Elder J. P. Osteen, who was a Primitive Baptist from about my earliest recollection. I was brought up to be moral and upright. I began to have some serious reflections about my future welfare at about the age of ten years, but I would pass such reflections by as being a kind of tradition that came over me from being with the Old School Baptists so much. I would often say to myself that if I had been raised by any other order, I would have been different in my feelings. I seemed to love the company of the dear Old Baptists, and was very glad to see them begin to congregate at my uncle's. I would sit in some obscure corner to listen to them telling of their hopes and fears, and was often made to shed tears; but I seemed to know that I was not fit to be one of them. Very often it seemed to me that I would have given all the world to have been one of them, they seemed to me to be the dearest people on earth, but how could so vile a sinner as I ever expect to be counted as one of them? I was troubled day and night over my condition; I would resort to the woods, and all kinds of secret places, and in my weak, feeble way, try to pour out my soul to God in prayer, but it seemed that my prayers did not rise higher than my head. I became so troubled finally, that I did not want to see any one, and tried to avoid company entirely. It seemed that I was but a deceitful hypocrite, and that all the people of God knew it. For more than six months I was in this frame of mind. I would often repeat the following verse,

"Poor, mourning soul in deep distress,
Just wakened from a slumber;
Who wandered in sin's wilderness,
One of the condemned number."

One morning in May, 1891, I retired to the woods as I thought for the last time on earth to plead with God for mercy; I did not think I would ever see the sun go down again; I felt that my guilt was too plain in the eyes of the Lord for him to ever think of pardoning me, yet all I could see, that gave any hope for relief, was to continue to beg him for his mercy. I shall never, no, never in my life, forget the spot. I kneeled beside an old log, thinking it was my last chance to plead with him for mercy. The last thing that I remember saying was, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." And, dear children of God, right here is a space of time that I cannot remember; I know not what happened until I awoke and looked around me, and then behold, all things appeared divinely new. The birds sang, O so sweetly, the sun shone much brighter, and I was filled to overflowing with joy. I arose and clapped my hands, and thanked God for his mercy. I thought that I would go to the house and tell it to my folks, but before I had gotten to the house, something seemed to say to me, "Wait and see if you are not deceived." And so I kept it from them for some time.

One night I dreamed that I was at a wedding feast, and was the only visitor present, and could not see anything to set before the guests, until all were seated at the table. Then upon looking around I noticed three very pretty angelic forms standing beside me, with

waiters full of all manner of delicious food; they would hand it to me, and I would set it upon the table for the guests. I awoke, and with the awakening came the desire to tell my feelings to the church. So in June, 1892, I went before Ebenezer church, in Brazos Co., Texas, and related something of what I have here written, and to my surprise was received, and baptized by a minister whom I afterwards found to have been in disorder. Then in April, 1903, I was received by experience and baptism into Sharron church, Limestone Co., Texas; of which church I am still a poor member, the weakest of them all.

Brother Chick, if this is worth anything, use it; if not, all will be well with me.

Your little brother, in hope of life eternal,

JAMES D. TRACY.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., Dec. 18, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I am thirty-seven miles from the church to whom I usually preach on third Sundays, but I am snowbound at home. It is the first Sunday I have had at home this year, except the fourth Sunday in February, when I was confined to my bed with "la grippe."

Yesterday and this morning I have been thinking of the readers of the SIGNS, and have felt that I would be glad if I might be made able to communicate unto them something of the "Sure Word of prophecy" of our Lord Jesus Christ. "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." If I could tell my experience as well as it is expressed in the above words I would not hesitate to write often, but it appears that the psalmist knew how I would feel here in the end of the world. This makes me believe the children of God in all ages have the same experience, and are all taught in the same school. He must have said just what he felt, and I know it is just what I feel. If he was thirsting after the water of life even so am I, and if eternal life was his, may I not feel that I have an inheritance in the same glorious, eternal blessing? For whom did he thirst? Was it not for the Lord Jesus? It was he who stood on the last and great day of the feast and said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." Again, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." This is the water for which the famishing thirst; water which insures eternal satisfaction and peace with God.

The hart is pursued by the hounds, they are seeking his destruction, and he is ready to faint with thirst; the waterbrooks are just before him and in full view, but he sees death pressing upon him if he stops to drink. Thus he thirsts, and continues to flee from his carnivorous pursuers. So is a child of God as he sees the enemy just at his heels, ready to destroy him forever, with the Fountain of life in full view, but he has no power to get to it. What could render one's condition more anxious than to be in full view of good succulent food, with its odor coming directly to him, he in a starving condition, but with no power to get to that which he so much needs to satisfy his necessities? This is often my condition. and I often lie thus and weep. But I have a consolation in this: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." This word of the Lord is sure, and the hungry shall eat of the living bread, and the thirsty drink of the Fountain of living water, and it shall be in him a well of water springing up into eternal life. Here our sin is in full view,

and we are made to loathe ourselves, and to repent in dust and ashes. We put our hands on our mouths and say no more. Seeing the corruption of this old man who is so corrupt with his deeds, we are made to flee from him with our might, for we know that if we are left to his mercy our end is death. But a poor soul who has felt the power of God cannot want to die; he must live. This is why he thirsts for that living Fountain of water of life, for he knows to drink that water is life forever. He does not want to draw water from the wells which fail, nor from those whose waters do not satisfy, therefore he says, "Give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw."

To come to Jesus is to drink this water, for he said, "He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." How shall we come to him? We cannot stop, for the enemy is with us ready to destroy us. Thus we must be dependent on a power above ours, and one who can destroy the enemy as well as to save us. What power is this? Our Lord said, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." This is it, our Father is ever careful for us, and he cares for us, we never get so faint that he is not at hand to strengthen us, never so hungry that his food is not sufficient. With this food and water we live, and as it is one eternal supply we shall live forever; it is a dear, blessed hope.

The end of 1904 is near. The dear Lord has abundantly blessed and sustained the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I pray that he will continue to do this, and give you grace to understand and write his solemn truth, and also that those who write for it may have nothing in view but to present Jesus and him crucified as the only way of life and peace.

Again, the Lord bless you. Your brother in a blessed hope,

L. H. HARDY.

PETERSBURG, Ill., Dec. 4, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—As it is about time to renew my subscription, I will now remit it, and I want to talk some to my dear brethren and sisters. I have been reading the two November numbers of the SIGNS, and they are so full of good letters and editorials; my poor soul has been so much comforted by your precious letters. I am sitting in sight of a Methodist meeting-house, just across the street, and preaching is going on now, but I would not hear such preaching. Brother Coulter's letter is such a feast to our hungry souls. He pointed out the way in which we have been led, and told us how it behooves us to walk softly before God. Yes, brother Coulter, even if the Lord sees fit in his wise purpose that we should walk in darkness, and withholds the joy of his salvation, yet we are not left dead in our sins, or to run greedily after the carnal ways of the world. The Lord says, "My loving-kindness I will not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." And though we cannot see in the dark to run on our way rejoicing, yet we do not run the downward road, but stand still and see the salvation of God. My soul's desire is to honor the Lord by an orderly walk and godly conversation, but O, so often I am cast into darkness, and all my imperfections shine out like a panther's eyes in the night, and then Satan says, Now look at yourself, just as you are, you have been deceiving the people of God by a pretended pious walk. Then I cry out, O Lord, I know that I

am a poor sinner. Then Satan says, While you confess before God that you are such a sinner, why do you not try to do some good to gain his favor? And O how his cruel darts pierce my helpless soul, until the sweetest voice that was ever heard, the voice of Jesus, speaks once more, saying, "Get thee behind me, Satan."

Brother Coulter, and all the dear ones, you know what joy fills our souls when Satan is bidden to leave us, by the blessed Jesus. Sister Bessie Durand's letter was such a precious one; and the letters of the dear, afflicted sister to her are of much comfort to me; she has described my own feelings better than I could myself, except in one thing, viz: I do not fear death. I have been twice upon a sick bed, and I felt as certain that I was dying as I could be, but it did not terrify me; I was so happy; while severe pain racked my poor body, my soul was filled with joy. It is the prayer deep down in my heart that my last hour may be as happy as then. Yes, I am willing to suffer afflictions if it be the righteous will of God. Now do not fear, dear sister, for he has promised not to forsake you, even in the last trial. I do pray that your last hour also may be a happy one. He will not forsake us then, and though it is in his wise purpose now to allow the dark clouds of doubt and fear to arise between us and himself, it is for our good, the flesh must be crucified; we must come to see ourselves poor, helpless sinners, without his sovereign grace.

There are so many good letters and experiences in these two November numbers that I cannot take space to name them all, they are all so soul-cheering. Write on, dear ones. But one more name I will speak of, that is brother P. W. Sawin; I have so often sat under the sound of his voice with delight, out at dear old Bethel church, in Johnson County, Indiana. The membership of both of us was there, and there dear old Elder Bartley preached the preaching that the Lord bade him, and I was made to see the truth. I remember one Saturday in particular, all was so dark in my soul, the manifestation of God's grace was gone, and without that grace I was such a poor, vile sinner, altogether helpless. And ever since the Lord, as I trust for Jesus' sake, gave me a sweet hope in his mercy, and even when I could not see the doctrine of election and predestination, I never thought that I could think even one good thought without the grace of God. But, as I was going to say, on that Saturday I went to the meeting cast down, and brother Sawin preached, and in his discourse he said, "I do not feel worthy to claim a home with you, but where can I go? I cannot go back into Egypt again." My heart cried out within me, No, no. In a moment the darkness had fled. I wonder if he remembers it.

I was glad, brother Sawin, to know that you were well, and also your dear old mother, heaven bless her, how I would like to see her again.

Well now, brother Chick, I must stop lest I weary you; yet I would like to mention sister Ella Parrott's letter, so full of comfort. I had not the pleasure of going where she was sick, but I have visited her church and home, and her conversation was heavenly. Now, if there is anything in this letter contrary to sound doctrine, either correct it or throw it away. I wanted the dear ones, all who write for the SIGNS, to know how their letters comfort me, a poor sinner saved by grace in time and in eternity, if saved at all. May the Lord be with you

and spare you long to send forth the dear SIGNS.

Your sister,

(MRS.) SOPHRONIA B. THOMPSON.

[OUR sister said above, that if anything was contrary to sound doctrine, either to throw it away or correct it. We can but say that all that magnifies grace and abases the creature is sound doctrine, and the above letter is full of this self-abasement, and of the exaltation of the grace of God, and the God of grace. What an infinite variety of expression there is among the people of God, yet all in harmony. So also there is an infinite variety of expression in the Scriptures, yet all is the word of God; holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. When men speak or write according to that word it is because the light dwells in them. Our sister writes as one who walks in the light of God.—ED.]

PLYMOUTH, Illinois.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—If one so unworthy may call you brother. Inclosed please find post-office money order for two dollars, my subscription for the SIGNS another year; I cannot do without it, the best and soundest of all religious periodicals. I am glad to see its correspondents hold forth words of sound doctrine. It does my very soul good to read communications that give God all the glory, and that do not pin their faith to the arm of poor, puny man. I read an article the other day on man's good works, and the writer said in the raising of Lazarus that the Lord told the disciples to roll the stone away. He said it looked as if man had to have something to do with it, and he made many more such assertions. I hear and read of men until it makes my head dizzy to think they would take the crown from the Lord and wear it themselves, if it were possible so to do, but thanks be to the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, who is Head over all, through all and in us all, he reigns and rules from everlasting to everlasting. O how glad I am that man cannot thwart God's purposes; he commands, and it stands fast; he speaks, and it is done. If they could only stand still they would see the salvation of the Lord; he will come in due time, not a moment too soon or too late. O, could we only wait all his appointed time, till our change comes.

I have been asked time and again to write some for the SIGNS, but I have been so afflicted that I can hardly write so that one can read it; but I do not wish to complain, I want to be submissive to his will, for I am glad that it is as well with me as it is. I can go to our meeting sometimes and hear most of the preaching, which I am very thankful for. I am very hard of hearing most of the time, and cannot hear one word sometimes. I often think of Elder H. M. Curry and Elder Dobbs. I have read after H. M. Curry, and often told my husband that I would like to hear him preach. It pleased the good Lord to send him this way; it was when I had one of my deaf spells, and was more so than usual, so I did not go, but told my husband to bring him home with him, for I wanted to see him if I could not hear him, for I liked the soundness of his writings; so he came, and brother Dobbs, too, and the next morning they both wished me to go to church with them. I said no, I could not hear, and it was of no use to go. But they said, Yes, it will do you good to see them, and them good to see you. So I went, and behold, I could hear Elder Curry preach. It was the first time in

my life, and it did me good. O how blessed I was to be permitted to hear him, he is one of God's noble workmen, who needeth not to be ashamed, for he rightly divides the word of truth. Brother Dobbs also has been here many times, and stirred up our pure minds by way of remembrance, but none better than our own pastor, Elder L. E. Frazee, who has been going in and out before us for many years. How glad we feel that God hath raised up young men to take the place of our dear old servants that have gone to their reward; and we hope that they will long be spared to wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon. I do not want to give them more praise than they deserve, but we esteem them highly for the truth's sake. Many others I might mention (but space will not permit) who come to us in the fullness of the gospel of Christ; even one old Elder, John Rily, whom I have known all my life, who is now in a manner blind, and cannot read any more, but comes to meeting every time an opportunity is offered, and enjoys the truth in its purity, in preaching and singing, and joins us in praise to the Giver of all, who does not leave himself without witnesses, but raises up young men in our midst who tell the same old story of Jesus and his love, just as it has always been told in all ages, down to the present time. May the Lord bless him and his good wife to their good and his glory.

Dear brother Chick, do with this as your judgment dictates. I am so glad that the dear old SIGNS still has a faithful editor of the Beebe type. There was none more faithful, and I hope that you will long be spared to tell the good old story that the SIGNS has always advocated. My christian love to you and all its correspondents and readers.

(MRS.) S. G. FRAZEE.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., Dec. 8, 1904.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I desire to write just a few lines as I send my subscription to the SIGNS. It has been a comfort to have it; many times in sorrow and distress I have been strengthened to go on. I wish I could have sent on more subscriptions, but I seem to be as much alone as ever among those at home, and more so, for in the illness and death of my beloved father it was made manifest that he loved the things that I sometimes hope that I love, and that because, I trust, the Lord is dealing with me. The fear that it is not so with me, is very great, and yet to-day as I write I feel to say, Surely this must be the mercy of the Lord to me, or I would not have this privilege, or that of being among this people called by the name of the Lord, which surely implies that they are one with him who spake as never man spake; O what a solemn place Zion is. How wonderful to write or speak of these things, that the thoughts and intents of the heart are in all these ways set forth. One is comforted, or cast down and searched by this unerring word, as they listen or read. And this family is brought together in a bond which all earthly ties but faintly set forth, and yet in the order of things the life that must perish comes first. O what a mystery. How surely must the natural mind ask, Why?

I did not mean to write this way, I wanted to tell you in a very few words, for I know I am sure to take up valuable time if I say much more; but I have felt, ever since I sent you the letter that was lost or delayed, as if the trials I have passed through, and the way altogether, was sure to prove me, as I wrote then, a hypocrite; but I am brought now to a place (can I say it as our dear pastor,

Elder McConnell, is given to set it forth ?) that this contradiction, this suffering way, is the evidence of his coming to me. To me it seems that I am as one left to myself, but O the longings, that I do not want to do away with, and which lead or drive me where he feeds his people, and so I am not consumed. This is the marvel to me as I go, or return, or read, that he is long-suffering to me, even vile as I feel to be; and when in an unexpected way something comes home to me, as did that editorial of yours on the atonement, I am strengthened. I felt sure as I read it that my case was a hopeless one, yet I was made to meditate upon it often, and brought to say, A guilty, weak and helpless worm, on his kind arms I must fall; if he is not my righteousness, my strength, my Savior, my all, I can do nothing. This and all else connected with his dealings with me while alone, and in hearing and reading these precious things, cause me at times to feel like a little child. But I must wait for the adoption, as you and the rest of his dear people are waiting.

I hope that you will forgive my boldness; a little hope has given me courage to write these things.

Unworthily,

JENNIE C. BOWERS.

[THE atonement is sufficient for all our need in the way of righteousness and justification. In Jesus' finished work we cease from work; in his complete redemption nothing can ever destroy us. What a sure refuge for the sinful and condemned sinner, and how this ministers strength to the weak. Our sister speaks of a little hope; we all speak in the same way from time to time, and yet how great is the hope that rests upon Jesus and his work; it is the hope that one day we shall be with and like our Lord. No wonder that this hope moves the children of God to speak or write. How can they hold their peace ?—ED.]

SENECA FALLS, N. Y., Sept. 26, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I have been wanting to write to you for some time, but have been waiting until I was in the right frame of mind to express my feelings, but alas, I sometimes fear that I know nothing of the things pertaining to Zion. To be in a place where the world has no charms for one, or no spiritual light or comfort is given, is to be in a wilderness indeed. I find that the christian's life is not all a "heaven here below." You know in your letter to me of long ago, you advised me to go before my nearest church and ask for a home with them. Well, after you wrote me, Elder Bogardus, of White Church, saw my experience in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and came to see me, and asked me and my sister (of Clyde, about fourteen miles from here) to come up there to his meeting. Well, I prayed earnestly all summer, night and day, that if I were a fit subject the good Lord would open a way for us to go. So all things seemed to shape around right, and the 21st day of August my dear old mother, Mrs. E. Candler, my sister, Mrs. Brown, of Clyde, and myself went up there to meeting, and found Dr. Coulter there, and O how much we all liked him. My sister and I went before the church, were received, and baptized by dear Elder Bogardus. Then we both felt so happy that I thought my happiness was complete forever; but ah, different is the reality, we can claim God as our Father when there are bright evidences, but where there is so little evidence, and doubt and fear are added, the way seems very obscure. There are ex-

ceptions, the good Lord has permitted my sister to dwell on the mountain top most of the time, while it seems his will to leave me so low down in the valley. Brother Chick, I do hunger so after more spiritual knowledge and a stronger love to Christ, and my constant prayer is that I may have a more humble spirit, and serve him better every day that I live; pray for me, that I may grow in grace and in the knowledge of him. My dear sister dwells so much on all the blessed promises, while I am continually asking, Are those rich blessings for me? for I realize how unworthy I am.

I want to help the indebtedness of the SIGNS a little, and would like to do more; you will find inclosed a post-office order for five dollars, three dollars for myself, and two dollars for my mother, Mrs. E. Candler. She has sent you some before. She is eighty-two years old, and has taken the SIGNS for forty-five years, and feels so anxious to live to see the debt cleared.

The editorial of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe in the last SIGNS, September 15th, was written forty-two years ago, and if you remember, was a reply to a request made by Eliz. Brice; well, what I want to say is, she is my mother, and is now Mrs. E. Candler, so you can see how long she has been a most faithful follower; we were so surprised when we read it.

I will close. Affectionately your sister in hope,

(MRS.) W. J. PECK.

CAMMAL, Pa., Nov. 1, 1904.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Through the goodness and mercy of God we were permitted to meet together in brotherly love at our two days meeting which was held October 29th and 30th. Elder John G. Eubanks and our pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, were present and preached for us, much to the comfort of the church. We expected to have had Elders John McConnell and J. T. Rowe, but both were prevented by sickness, which we very much regretted; in this life we all must bow to the will of God concerning us. There have been no additions to our church recently, but we rejoice to know that God will not give his glory to another, and that all power is in his hands. All the membership of our little church was present at the two days meeting except two sisters who live quite a distance from us. God is everywhere, although I cannot feel his presence with me as I did when I first experienced a hope. I have been in all the peculiar places, sometimes rejoicing, but more times mourning; sometimes believing, but more times doubting; sometimes the spiritual sky is dark and fearful, but at other times I see the glory of God beyond the power of my poor tongue to express; sometimes I feel as though the pains of hell have taken hold of me. I want to read the Bible at times, then again I cannot read, and feel as if I were bound in prison and cannot come forth. This morning I feel as though I would sink in despair, the Spirit does not manifest itself. The words of the prophet are in my mind, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Yet I am in total darkness. O, is there another person like me? When shall I be delivered from the body of this death? How can a poor sinner like me rise, or even look up? I am in fellowship with the poor publican who dared not look up, but smote upon his breast and said, "God be merciful to me a sinner." O I so much long for days of yore. If you see fit you may give this space in our dear old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if not, all will be right, as it is so much like myself, not worthy of notice.

Your brother in hope,

ALVA B. CALLAHAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1905.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

COLOSSIANS I. 23-27; MATTHEW XXIV. 14; XXIII. 37.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR SIR:—There are some two or three portions of Scripture which have been upon my mind for some time past, and I have heard them mentioned by different ministers in so many different ways that I am somewhat at a loss to get a satisfactory idea of them. Now, if not asking too much of you, I would like you to write upon them when you find it convenient to do so, through the SIGNS. The first portion is found in Colossians i. 23-27. In this twenty-third verse Paul says that the gospel had been preached to every creature under heaven. The Missionaries of to-day tell us that they are succeeding in accomplishing what the apostle claims was done in his day, as I understand it. We find in Matthew xxiv. 14, that this gospel which I presume Paul mentioned, should be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations. The question in my mind is, Did not the apostles fulfill this command in preaching the gospel in their day? Our Missionary friends tell us they are fulfilling this command now. I want you to dwell upon this particularly; state what you think concerning the fulfillment of the command. Christ told his disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel unto every creature. These two portions of Scripture have some bearing upon one another, I think, but this part I will leave with you. The other portion of Scripture I have in mind is found in Matthew xxiii. 37, the last clause of this verse: "And ye would not." Does this imply that these pharisees had the opportunity to accept salvation and would not? Some years ago I heard a Methodist minister say this meant that those people had an equal chance with God's people to be saved, but they would not accept. I am interested very much in these passages of Scripture, and any light you may throw upon them will be a great help to me. I hate to trouble you with this letter, for fear you may have more important matter to occupy your time, but if you can see your way clear to reply to each one separately through the SIGNS, I hope you will do so at your first opportunity.

SUBSCRIBER.

BALTIMORE, Md.

IN trying to respond to the above requests of "Subscriber," who is known to us, but who desires his name withheld, we desire to say first of all, that whatever the Scriptures referred to may signify, they do not at all justify modern Missionary efforts. In all those portions of the word which relate to the ministry of the word there is not one word which can be construed into a support of men-made organizations of any sort for the furtherance of this purpose, and least of all is there authority for societies made up of the ungodly or of the godly, in which the membership is based upon the payment of money. Our God has never said to any man or society of men, not even to his church on earth, Send men to preach anywhere. On the contrary he has said to certain men individually, "Go, and preach." He sent out his own disciples, first of all the twelve, by two and two, and again he sent out the seventy in the same way, and at the last, just before his ascension to glory, he said to the disciples, "Go." He still calls and qualifies his servants to preach his word, and sends them in his own name and by his own authority through the operation of the Spirit. This is all a personal matter. God deals with his servants as his servants, subject to his orders, and his only. Woe to that servant who is disobedient to the heavenly call, for that servant shall be beaten with many stripes. But still he stands or falls to his own Master. Nothing in the Scriptures referred to by "Subscriber" at all contradicts the above truth. It is indeed true that God has made it the duty of those who are ministered to in the word to communicate of

their carnal things to him who thus labors among them, but they are also the servants of God, and not the servants of any one else. Each of them also is accountable to him for the use which they make of their Lord's treasure committed to them. No minister individually, or any board of men, has any right to dictate to his other servants what, or when, or where, or how much, they shall do in this direction. In all these things each one is the Lord's servant alone. They are not, any one of them, or any number of them, to take the matter into their own hands and begin to beat their fellow-servants for what they may think is a failure to do what they ought; the Lord reserves all chastisement in his own hand. It seems sure from the testimony of the word that the Lord will surely honor his call to the ministry of his servants, by seeing that they shall want nothing. The word teaches this, and our observation personally justifies us in this faith. The testimony of the disciples, when they returned and Jesus asked them whether they had lacked anything, is convincing, for they said, "Even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." Because the Lord would provide for them, they were bidden to take no purse nor script with them. Was not this unreasonable, carnal reason would ask, seeing that they are going forth among enemies? How shall they be supported, fed, clothed and lodged? If they shall go empty handed must they not in the end starve? Human fears would argue thus, and unbelief still says the same, but the blessed Lord would show his servants in all ages that the hearts of all men are in his hand, and that wheresoever they might labor he would see to it that they should lack nothing. It is evident that their support must come from those whose hearts he himself should stir up to that work in his name, and for them. If the people among whom they labored were not thus moved, sometimes other churches or people were moved of God to contribute to their support, and sometimes they labored with their own hands, as did Paul when he engaged in the trade of tent-making. It may not indeed be in our way, but in his own way the Lord will provide. Paul, and Silas, and Timothy, and John, and Peter, and all the rest went forth in this way, strong in the Lord, and they all could at the end say that they had obtained all needed help of God. Missionary societies of the modern type are an insult to God, for they in reality say that God will not be as good as his word, and that it will not do to trust him.

The disciples were to go forth fearing nothing, and the one rule which they were to be governed by in their journeying was that when any city or house did not receive them, they were to shake off the dust from their feet against that city. If the Son of peace were first dwelling in any house where they might come, there they were to abide, but if he was not there they were to depart. There was to be no effort made to introduce the Son of peace, or to induce the people to accept him into their hearts or homes, but where he was already found, there they were to feel welcome and there abide. Thus the Lord would go before them and provide a place for them, and for their ministry. This rule has not been changed so far as we have any testimony in the word, it remains the same to-day. Let his servants go as their hearts are impelled by his Spirit, and it is sure that in every place where he shall send them he has some testimony for them to bear, and some heart prepared to receive it, and when their testimony to the peace of God

should be received, it would be manifest that the Son of God, by whom this peace always comes, was already there. If their peace found no abiding-place in that house or city, it would be manifest that the Son of peace was not there, and that there in that place their word would not be received. Where Jesus dwells, there his servants will always find a welcome. This is the rule still in all our ministry; no servant of God is bound to remain where there are none to welcome the Savior whom he preaches; let that servant go on. The Lord will in the right time bring his Philips and his eunuchs together; his ways are wise and equal; he holds all hearts in his hands, and can and does prepare men to preach the word, and other men to receive it gladly. If the Lord has not put it into the heart of a servant of his to go here or there to preach his word, it is manifest that we cannot create this impression in the heart, and neither ought we to try to do so. Missionary societies are an open denial of the above Bible truths, from first to last. The Lord does not need them, since all hearts are in his hand. Such societies, of the modern sort at least, have no use for the Redeemer's own word: "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." It is better to pray God than to try to send the laborers our own selves; this is the Lord's way.

So far as the text referred to in Colossians i. 23, and the commission given to the apostles to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, even though they might be supposed to cover all the ministry of the word in all time, they yet relate only to the ministry. The church is not bidden to go, nor yet to send others, men chosen from among themselves. All that the church can do is to recognize the gift which God has conferred upon any servant of his, whether it be that of pastor, teacher, evangelist, or any other gift. The church has no right to say to any servant of God, You must labor here or there. This is as the Lord in his providence may open the way, and as his Spirit may incline the heart of his servants. If the Lord to-day should impress upon any one of his servants the duty to go to the ends of the earth to preach his word, it would be the duty of that man to go, and that man need fear nothing in doing so; it is sure that the same God who called him to thus go would open the way. It might be that he would send him a prisoner, as he sent Paul to Rome; it might be that he would stir up the hearts of other disciples to further his journey; our God can do all things. We repeat that these Scriptures contain no justification for modern societies invented by men, and leading to the glory of their makers rather than the glory of God. God has never organized but one society on earth, and that is his church. Let us all be satisfied with what he has done. The temple of God has no need of booths for money-changers to be attached to it.

The gospel has always been preached, as it was preached then, to every creature under heaven; it is still so preached, and in the same sense as was the case then. This did not then mean, and neither does it now, that every man, woman and child on earth have heard or do hear the gospel preached by the servants of God. It has seemed to us that as the commission reads, Go preach the gospel to every creature, the apostle in Colossians also recognizes that at once the disciples had begun to preach, and were still preaching in every place where God called them to labor, and to all whom he had prepared to receive

it; the gospel is still being preached in the same way. No one has a right to say, This man or that man must not be admitted to hear the preaching of the word; we are not the judges of men. It is our business to preach everywhere that the door is opened to us. Each servant is subject to the command of his own Master, he must not accept the voice of any board of men as the voice of God. Again, we repeat that in these Scriptures there is not the shadow of a reason for modern Missionary societies.

We will now briefly notice the second text: "And ye would not."—Matthew xxiii. 37.

It is not necessary to say very much with regard to this text. There is not in it the slightest reference to the atonement of Christ, neither does it refer to the final salvation of Jerusalem, or of its inhabitants in any sense. The whole connection shows that Jesus refers to the past dealings of the Lord with them in their national history. He speaks in this connection of sending them prophets, wise men and scribes, whom they had rejected, and whose testimony and warnings they had despised. God had dealt with that people as he had not dealt with any other people. They had been favored with the revelation of his law upon Sinai, with men chosen of God as their leaders, with prophets inspired of God to speak his word as no other people ever were favored. What did it all prove? Just this, that with all their advantages they were still ignorant of God, and were still the servants of sin. It was clearly shown in all the dealings of God with them that without his holy Spirit dwelling in the heart men do not and cannot know or love God or serve him in spirit and in truth. In all their record what a total failure they were considered with regard to the love and service of God. Yet all these teachings and warnings and reproofs were given to them through the called servants of God all the way along. They as a vineyard were watered as no other vineyard ever was, and yet they bore wild grapes. All this proves that reading the Scriptures, preaching, attending upon the service of the sanctuary, engaging in all manner of forms of worship, has no power to cleanse the heart, or to renew the will, or to shed abroad the love of God in any man. They still would have none of his reproofs, and instead of loving the fold which he had appointed they went in strange ways; they emphatically "would not," as the Savior declares.

This language is in exact keeping with the similar words of the Redeemer on another occasion: "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." This was spoken to the pharisees, who made great account of the Scriptures, yet these same Scriptures, he said, testify of me, "And ye will not come to me." Paul was of this number once; at last he came to Christ, but it was not until Christ came to him and a miracle of power and love was wrought in him. There is no wooing and beseeching here, but a display of divine power; this is the case with any who ever do come to him.

Now all the dealings of God with Israel and with Jerusalem under the old covenant show forth this, that no amount of outward teaching will ever make any man or any people willing to obey the Lord. The rebellion that is in the heart of every man by nature was only shown forth more emphatically in Israel of old by all the way in which God led them and dealt with them. Left to themselves men will not gather together unto the Lord in any sense. It must be borne in

mind that the Savior in the text does not allude to his great work of salvation from sin and death and hell, but simply to the way in which he had led that ancient people as a nation, chosen of him for the one special purpose of first showing forth man's alienation from him, and then the necessity of the atonement, and the work of the Spirit in the heart in the new birth.

We trust that "Subscriber" may feel satisfied to some extent at least with the thoughts here presented.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Elders and messengers composing the Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, now in session with Mt. Zion church, Fulton County, Illinois, Sept. 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1904, sendeth this our annual epistle of love to the churches composing our body, and all that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ.

DEAR BRETHREN:—According to our custom, you will expect a Circular Letter from us, therefore we will call your attention to the language of the angel of the Lord to Joseph, "And thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." This Scripture tells us that he has a people, and that they are sinners, and are described in holy writ as without understanding, all gone out of the way, "destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace have they not known." Again, "All we, like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Dear brethren, think of the love God had for his people to give his Son to die for those he came to save. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" First, to redeem us from the sentence of a just and holy law, the penalty of which was death. When he came into the world he said, In offerings and burnt offerings thou wouldst neither had pleasure therein, because the blood of beasts could not take away sin. But Christ by his own blood entered once into the holy place, having obtained redemption for us. (Heb. ix. 12.) For by one offering he hath prepared forever them that are sanctified. (Heb. x. 14.) Wherefore the Holy Ghost is a witness unto us. (Verse 15.) When he said, It is finished, and gave up the ghost, the law was satisfied, he having redeemed his people from its curse. He will also give them eternal life. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."—John x. 27–29.

Remember, dear brethren, God is a Sovereign, and works all things after the counsel of his own will. This is God's plan of salvation through his Son, not only to die for us, but to quicken us into life: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."—Eph. ii. 1. "As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." So, dear brethren, it is not of him that runneth, nor him that willeth, but God that showeth mercy. Again, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signify-

ing what death he should die," knowing that he must die for his people to bring them to God. He said, All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and he that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out, but raise him up at the last day.

Now, dear brethren, in conclusion allow us to offer a word of admonition in regard to strife and contentions. Now when it comes to salvation by grace, according to election and the special atonement by Jesus Christ, we all agree, but on these mooted, unrevealed mysterious questions we are not, or never will be. This has been the case in past ages, but if we could all be contented to remember our experience and our first love and follow after the things that make for peace, we certainly would have less confusion. Dear brethren in the Lord, let us try to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace, not striving about words to no profit, but for the peace of Zion. May the God of peace bless you all.

R. L. BLOOMFIELD.

POETRY.

SPIRIT VOICES.

(CHRISTMAS GREETING FOR THE "SIGNS.")

They are breathing through the paper just the things
I long to hear;
Their bodies are so distant, their blessed thoughts so
near;
They are telling me of Jesus, and the griefs that him
befell;
They are talking of his wondrous grace, his wondrous
power as well.

I have asked them if they ever heard of anything so
pure
As his love for poor, lost sinners, by his covenant oath
made sure?
In full chorus to my heart they have answered me
again:
There is nothing like unto it, 'tis eternal life. Amen.

(MRS.) J. STREET.

BRANTFORD, Ont., Dec. 20, 1904.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder D. M. Vail, Dec. 29th, 1904, at the home of the bride's mother, Elmer Clayton Sloan and Miss Cora B. Stilwell, both of Onconta, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At Vega, Delaware Co., N. Y., Nov. 17th, **Mrs. Mary Slauson,** wife of brother Ira Slauson, in her 70th year. Mrs. Slauson had been gradually failing in health for a number of years because of an apparent lung trouble, but was quite suddenly afflicted with stomach trouble and lived but a few days. Thus another breach is made in our society as Baptists. Mrs. Slauson was an ardent believer in the theme that salvation is alone of the Lord, and although she made no profession of her faith in Jesus, she manifested a living interest in the cause of truth, participating in the companies of the saints at home and abroad wherever she was privileged to meet with them. But the place that knew her in life among her friends knows her no more forever. Our dear brother in his declining years is left sad and lonely, and his dear children, one son and three daughters, mourn the loss of a good mother. So it is with all earthly ties of husbands and wives as heads of families, there is nothing lasting. However good they are, all are of the earth, earthy. "For all flesh is as grass," and must die, but the word of the Lord endures forever." "And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." All true believers love God because he first loved them and gave himself for them. My desire is for the resignation and reconciliation of those that mourn the loss of loved ones, though all do not mourn as those that have no hope. What an anchor hope is.

ALSO,

Mrs. P. L. or **Rosetta (Cole) Vandyke** died at the home of her son-in-law, Addison Cronk, in Roxbury village, N. Y., Dec. 12th, 1904, after a lingering illness, mostly from the effects of age; she was 85 years old. Sister Vandyke was the last of a large family of Coles, two of which, Elders Loran P. and Ambrose, were formerly well known in Schoharie, Delaware, Ulster and Green counties, especially Elder Loran, who was one of the soundest and best preachers ever raised up among the people of God in these parts, both in word and doctrine. Sister Vandyke was not favored with her mental faculties fully for a year or more before her demise. But her hope and confidence were alone in the Lord, and although her mind was beclouded her God is unchangeable, and knew her as she was. For all that are experimentally dead to the law by the body of Christ, and dead to sin and the rudiments of the world, are alive to God, and the life of all such is hid with Christ in God. All such are, by faith, looking for his second appearing. Such

was the hope, joy and comfort of our dear, aged sister, who was one of the best of wives and mothers, beloved by all who knew her. Though not privileged to meet with the church for some time before her death, her mind was much exercised in its behalf. All interested miss her: children, step-children, grandchildren, neighbors and the church. But she is at rest. The rest that our dear, departed sister entered into in her youthful days yet remains to the people of God.

May the Lord sustain and comfort mourning ones everywhere, is my desire for Jesus' sake.

ALSO,

DIED—Dec. 16th, 1904, at Arena, Delaware Co., N. Y., at the home of her sister, **Miss Anna Travis,** aged about 40 years. Miss Travis was a suffering, crippled orphan; her mother died when she was a young child, and she was brought up by a step-mother, who still lives as the widow of the late brother John Sweet, who was injured in a runaway, the horses being scared by the cars; she is crippled for life, and lives in a lonely way. Miss Travis we believe has left a sorrowful life for a better and brighter one beyond, sleeping in Jesus, from which none ever wake to weep. For the benefit of all survivors of the departed, as they realize the needed help of the Lord, it is written: "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."

ALSO,

Very suddenly, Dec. 19th, 1904, at his home in Oneonta, N. Y., brother **Edgar Stilwell,** in his 50th year. Brother Stilwell was home from his work on the railroad, nursing what was apparently a common cold, and on going down stairs was attacked with heart failure; though he rallied sufficiently to know his friends he expired within an hour. He was at meeting with the church of Otego but a short time before his death. How uncertain our lives are. Brother Stilwell leaves his wife, one son, three daughters, six brothers, three sisters and other relatives to mourn. Sister Stilwell was very sick at the time of her husband's death. May the Lord comfort all, and reconcile them to his will.

The unworthy writer tried to comfort the mourners on the above occasions.

J. D. HUBBELL,

KELLY CORNERS, N. Y.

BY request of my highly esteemed sister, Mrs. Naomi A. Dryden, I will try to write a notice of the death of her husband, **Peter J. Dryden,** who departed this life very suddenly Nov. 2nd, 1904, aged 54 years, 6 months and 14 days. He was united in marriage to Naomi A. Morris, Sept. 12th, 1892, by Elder T. M. Poulson. Mr. Dryden's business was that of a mariner, at which he made a comfortable living. He was of a quiet, amiable disposition, and kind to all around him. It was my privilege to know him for about six years, and I was always glad to number him among my best friends. I have been with him different times on his boat, and never heard him speak in an unkind tone to any of his employees, but he was the same quiet, good man wherever he was. Once as I was sailing down the bay with him he pointed out to me about where his boat was lying some years ago at night when the Lord gave him to hope in the merits of his crucified Son, and from that time on he turned away from man (whose breath is in his nostrils) to the grace of God in Christ Jesus as the only way by which sinners are saved from sin. He loved to hear the truth preached, and always came to our meetings when in the city, if able to do so. I had several perfectly satisfactory talks with him on spiritual things. I had hoped all along that he would join our church, and although every member would have welcomed him at any time, he never offered for membership; a feeling sense of his unworthiness kept him away. I remember asking him once if he did not feel that he ought to be with us in the church? He said, "If I was fit to be; I feel it is a great favor that you all allow me to come in the house and hear the preaching." While he felt thus, we all felt that we were favored to have him come. We loved him, and we feel that he loved us for the truth's sake. He was strong in the faith, and he was our strong friend. In his death both church and pastor have lost a friend upon whom we could depend to help us if we had need. We feel our loss, and shall miss him from our assemblies, and also the pleasant home now broken up by his death, and the departure of his widow, our dear sister, from the city, but we do not mourn without hope, for we firmly believe that our friend, Captain Dryden, is with his loving Savior, free from all pains, doubts and fears. For him therefore it is far better, but in sadness we miss him, but truly not so much as our beloved sister, his dear wife, to whom he was so devoted, and she to him. They had no children, and so they lived only for each other. I would comfort her if I could, but realize that her God who has so greatly blessed her with life and spiritual understanding, is the only one that can comfort her in her sore bereavement. May he work in her that which is well pleasing in his sight, grant her his glorious presence and protecting hand, and give her more peace than she now feels she can ever enjoy.

Written by her unworthy, but affectionate pastor,

J. T. ROWE.

DIED—At her home near Broad Run, in Fauquier Co., Va., Dec. 17, 1904, **Mrs. Lucy A. Lewis,** in the 93rd year of her age. The readers of the SIGNS must be interested in her, as she has been a faithful and consistent member of the Old School Baptist Church the larger part of her life. She was baptized by Elder Locke in the fellowship of a church called

Goodvine, in Fauquier Co., Va., I think. At the time of the troubles she cast her lot with the churches and brethren of the Corresponding Meeting of Virginia. This I know, that sister Lewis cast her lot where her heart was, with the people of the Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, at that time represented by such men as Elder Gilbert Beebe, Elder Trott, Elder R. C. Leachman and others who maintained the doctrine and order set forth by the Black Rock convention of 1832. When I came to Virginia in 1876, sister Lewis was a loved and faithful member of the Upper Broad Run church, in Fauquier Co., and remained so until her death. She surely delighted in the assembly of the saints, and when her place was vacant at their meetings we all knew there were good and sufficient reasons. Even when deprived of hearing to a large extent by the infirmities of age, she still loved to meet her brethren in their regular meeting, and entered into their joy. For more than a year she was confined to her bed from the effects of a fall, but the last days of her life were rather painless and peaceful. She experienced the truth that "though the outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." The last time I saw her, a month before her death, in speaking of our ministers who attended the Corresponding Meeting in October, and others, she exclaimed, "O how I wish I could see them." Her mind was upon spiritual things. Such a life is worth the living, and what can we say of such a death? Sister Lewis leaves two daughters of her own, and two sons of her husband, born to him by a former wife. The four children only knew her as a faithful, devoted mother.

The little remnant at Broad Run see their numbers decrease year by year as one after another is gathered home. We ask the question, Does the Lord intend that his name shall be no longer known among the people of that neighborhood? He only can answer. May we all bow to his will in heart and in spirit. J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., Dec. 21, 1904.

DIED—**Mrs. Ellen Gaunt,** at her home in New York city, Oct. 27th, 1904. Sister Gaunt, whose maiden name was Hardmann, was born in Manchester, England, Sept. 19th, 1849. She was the mother of seven children, all of whom are living. By baptism she was received in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Baptist Church, of New York city, April 21st, 1901, and continued a faithful and devoted member to the end. Her happiness consisted in the care of her children and the exercise of her church privileges. Bad weather, weakness and other discouraging conditions failed with her as excuses to justify her absence from our meetings; proved disability alone was responsible for such absence. She delighted in association with God's people, and sought no other company. As an example of consistency and zeal in well-doing she had few equals; her light so shone that we saw her good works. We miss her and mourn our loss. What better evidence can there be of one's profit and usefulness in the church than to have the church feel a sense of real loss in our absence? May the Lord graciously comfort and sustain the bereaved family and sorrowing friends.

The funeral took place from her late residence, Elder A. B. Francis conducting the service. Interment at Greenwood Cemetery.

JOHN McCONNELL.

Mary Priscilla Carey was born in eastern New York July 2nd, 1835. She was united in marriage to Thomas **Lewis** July 1st, 1855. To this union were born eight children. In November, 1858, she was baptized by Elder James P. Howell, in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist church of Columbia, Mich. She departed this life Dec. 22nd, 1904. In all these years of sorrow, trial and suffering she was a most faithful and devoted member. She resided here at Cement City, Mich., the greater part of her life; a few years ago she moved to Jackson, Mich., where she lived at the time of her death. She usually came to meeting each month, and seemed to enjoy being with her brethren, and was always ready to give a reason for the hope that was within her with meekness and fear; she was often heard speaking of the goodness and mercy of the Lord. She had been in failing health for some years, and at times subject to severe spells of sickness, one of which finally brought release to her from all suffering and sorrow of this life. How good after the weary struggle to enter into that rest and peace with God. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Our sister was one of those who fear the Lord and that think upon his name. Besides her husband and family she is survived by one sister, brothers, two grandchildren and many other relatives and friends.

Her funeral was preached by Elder A. F. Hone, of Van Buren, Ohio, and from the second chapter of Hebrews he brought out the consolation of the gospel.

KATE SWARTOUT.

CEMENT CITY, Mich.

CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

ELDER W. W. Polk has changed his place of residence from 1625 Taylor St., San Francisco, Cal., to 1017 Vallejo St., same city, where his correspondents will please address him hereafter, and where he will be pleased to have visiting brethren, especially Elders, call on him.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS."

Thos. Pittman, Kan., $.50; Richard Waller, Mo., $1.00; Isaac Larowe, N. J., $2.00.—Total, $3.50.

MEETINGS.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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BI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF THE WELSH TRACT CHURCH.

The bi-centennial of the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., was celebrated Oct. 20th, 1903. After some delay it is now published in pamphlet form, and on sale at this office. Price 15 cents. The pamphlet contains photographs of the Welsh Tract meeting-house and Elder J. G. Eubanks, the pastor, the proceedings of the anniversary, letters of greeting from sister churches and a historical sketch written by Dr. B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., and read on the occasion. Some of the brick in the meeting-house was brought from Wales to this country, and hauled on mules' backs a distance of ten miles. The pamphlet is very interesting and full of information.

The edition is limited, and orders should be sent without delay in order to secure a copy.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 73. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1905. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, Dec. 23, 1904.

MILLIE A. LITTLE.—MY DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD:—I have been much hindered in writing to you, and when not hindered I so lacked the inclination for any letter writing. I much appreciate the letters of my dear kindred in Christ Jesus, and sometimes even a glance at their handwriting stirs up affectionate remembrances. Still there are writings that are more wonderful and precious by far than all that all the saints have written, and when I can have a glimpse of and read these writings I have blessedness indeed. Look at this: "Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven."—Luke x. 20. "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people."—Jer. xxxi. 33. "Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshy tables of the heart."—2 Cor. iii. 3. "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads."—Rev. xiv. 1. I "will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."—Rev. ii. 17. "I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name."—Rev. iii. 12. These writings are infinitely glorious and incomparably precious. Contemplate with me awhile these writings of the high and holy One that inhabiteth eternity. "Your names are written in heaven." These names written in heaven are the names of the church of the firstborn. (Heb. xii. 23.) Christ is the firstborn, as it is written: "I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth."—Psalms lxxxix. 27; Romans viii. 29; Col. i. 15, 18. Then as a farther insight into the divine mystery of our names being "written in heaven," it is declared their names are "written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."—Rev. xiii. 8. And the book of life was opened, "and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."—Rev. xx. 15.

The names written in the book of life are the names of God's elect.

"O wondrous grace and mystery profound,
In God's eternal purpose I was found;
His sovereign love, his grace, his deep decree,
In some mysterious way included me."

The eternal purpose which Jehovah purposed in Christ Jesus embraced this, the exaltation of his chosen one in immutable holiness, and to immortal happiness in union with his incarnate Son, Christ Jesus our Lord. But the subject is far better expressed in the language of inspiration: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved."—Eph. i. 3–6. As I muse upon the deeps of the doctrine of God I say in my soul, Did the Lord look through the ages and the generations of mankind and see me one of Adam's race, and write me in the book of life? Was I, in his eternal purpose, given to Christ and accounted one with him, and in him promised (Titus i. 2,) and given (1 John v. 11,) and ordained unto eternal life? (Acts xiii. 48.) The date of all this writing is eternal, before the world began. "Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." God in his everlasting love wrote them there, and is there any power that can erase them? O, is it not

"Sweet to look back and see my name
In life's fair book set down;
Sweet to look forward and behold
Eternal joys my own"?

Then how full of consolation to us poor sinners is the revelation that the book of life in which God's elect are written is the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. His goings forth in the everlasting covenant both as the Shepherd of his people, (Micah v. 2,) and as the Lamb, (1 Peter i. 19, 20,) show how from eternity the thoughts of our eternal God were set upon the exaltation, redemption and regeneration of his people. For our election in Christ Jesus, and being blessed in him with all spiritual blessings, our acceptance in his sight, our redemption and the forgiveness of our sins, our adoption and predestination to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, are all declared to be embraced in and according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in himself. (Eph. i. 9.)

But the inquiry arises in my thoughts, How shall a poor sinner read his name written in the Lamb's book of life? It is only in the experience of the new covenant being written in our hearts by the holy Spirit that we read our names written in heaven. This brings me, dear sister, to put down a few thoughts upon God writing in the fleshy tables of the heart. He gives to his chosen ones in his decreed times a new heart, and a new spirit. (Ezek. xxxvi. 26.) "I will put my fear in their hearts," saith the Lord. This is wonderful writing to be found in a sinner's heart, but the Lord, who hath loved his own with an everlasting love, and who wrote their names in the book of life, will have them fear him, love him, believe him, trust him and confess that he is their exceeding joy. The Spirit of God gives this new heart, and the favored sinner touched with this heart is no more dead in trespasses and sins; he is now alive in a divine life unto God, and the writing begins. If the writing were in tables of stone, the tables of stone might

be broken; the ravages of time might at length obliterate what was written, and the very stones themselves crumble into dust; but the fleshy tables of the heart, in which the Spirit of the living God writes the ministration of life, is that new covenant heart (Jer. xxxi. 33,) that pulsates with spiritual, eternal life from God, and therefore forever this writing shall endure, and all the throbbings of this heart shall find its consciousness in the writings that are written therein by the Holy Ghost. Sacred, wonderful is the experience as the Lord is writing. He writes love there, love to himself, the just, the holy and gracious God. We find our hearts moved with longings after the Lord, to know him, to taste that he is good. As poor, sin-stricken, condemned transgressors we feel we must have his friendship or we must perish in our sins and grief beneath the curse of the law. We are led to think upon God's infinite greatness and majesty, and that he is just in all his ways, and then as we are led to contemplate that he is kind and gracious, rich in mercy, our heart pulsates with yearnings, and that language is no exaggeration which says, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?"—Psalms xlii. 1, 2. All this declares that God has written his fear and his love in our heart. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy Spirit which is given unto us. "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." In the gracious fulfillment of this promise God's revealed will becomes dear to us, and our affection flows forth unto the doctrine of God our Savior, and we are described as believing with all the heart; for our faith in God, in our precious Redeemer and in the gospel worketh by love. The faith of God's elect is an affectionate faith. It is very wonderful that a sinner who in his natural estate is alienated from the life of God, and an enemy of the holy One, should be so turned to the Lord, to seek his face, to yearn with an aching heart for tokens of his compassion, and find also his delight is in the law of the Lord after the inward man. What is the source of all this? It is because of the writing done by the Lord in the heart. The writing goes on; he is still writing, and will continue to write in the hearts of his chosen ones all the days of their pilgrimage. Would we see one in whom God has written his law? A very true likeness is found in that precious 119th Psalm. All through this Psalm one feels the throbbings of the heart in whose fleshy tables the Spirit of the living God has written. Although I am a poor, unworthy sinner I will tell this, that I have read this Psalm a number of times when my heart has panted, thirsted, longed and grieved, and delighted and throbbed in unison with this wonderful Psalm. "I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved. My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes." O, I must repeat it again, that the writings of the holy Spirit in the fleshy tables of the heart are wonderful. Not only wonderful, but so blessed, for when we are sin-stricken and tempted, and our hearts are bleeding and contrite, then he takes of the things of Christ, the blessings of the new covenant, and writes them in the heart. Mercy, forgiveness of sins, how sweet, how healing is this to the wounded heart. This writing by a figure of speech may be said to be written upon the humble heart in the red ink

of Jesus' precious blood. We have forgiveness of sins through his blood according to the riches of his grace. (Eph. i. 7.)

"What stream is that which sweeps away
My sins, just like a flood,
Nor lets one guilty blemish stay?
'Tis Jesus' precious blood."

The holy Spirit writes the promises and the sworn mercies of God in the hearts of the elect, and the effect of such writings is that the heirs of promise have a strong consolation and a gracious sanctuary in the gospel of Christ. (Heb. vi. 17–20.) Thus writing in our hearts the things of Christ is called in the Scriptures, sealing us. The sealing of the Spirit, whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption. (Eph. i. 13; iv. 30.) My soul still holds its soliloquy, and I say, Has my heart in very truth felt the impress of the things of Christ? Is Christ himself graven upon my heart? Surely it must be so, for does not my heart cry out, "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm"?—Solomon's Song viii. 6. And can I not say, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee"? Though I write this, a feeling comes over me of "love and grief my heart dividing," and I am saying,

"Lord, it is my chief complaint,
That my love is weak and faint;
Yet I love thee, and adore;
O for grace to love thee more."

O let my heart know more and more of thee, more of thy loving-kindness, which is better than life; O write deeper and deeper the acts of thy love, and thy mercy and grace in the fleshy tables of my heart, that wherever I go, and whatever my state, I may know thee and love thee and never forget thee, but ponder affectionately in my heart thine almighty and gracious acts in behalf of thy church in all the relations and characters that thou sustainest unto them.

What the Spirit writes in the fleshy tables of the heart is always in agreement with the Scriptures of truth, for it was as they were moved by the holy Ghost that holy men of old spake, and so they were inspired by God to write for the comfort and learning of the church of Christ. It is of no avail for me, or for you, or for any one to say, I have experienced this; I was taught it of the Lord in my experience; I love this doctrine; I find much comfort and pleasure in it; it is written in my heart, if that doctrine is contrary to and is not found in the holy Scriptures. No matter how logical it may appear, no matter how lovely and satisfying it may be, if it has not the "thus saith the Lord" for it in the Scriptures it is very vanity, a cunningly devised fable, a lying diviniation, the deceit of that heart that is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. (Ezek. xi. 6; Jer. xiv. 14.) Let those who would pervert the gospel of Christ, (Gal. i. 7; Jer. xxiii. 36,) who corrupt the word of God, (2 Cor. ii. 17,) who wrest the Scriptures, (2 Peter iii. 16,) who make a lie, and love what they have made, (Rev. xxii. 15,) let them sport themselves with their own deceivings, (2 Peter ii. 13,) but may my heart and your heart only have affection for and delight in what is verily taught in the word of God. What the holy Spirit writes in the fleshy tables of the heart is never contrary to, but is ever in sacred agreement with the testimony of the holy Scriptures. Sometimes there are things written in our hearts by the Spirit, but we have not yet been able to read with understanding what is there written. Then it may be in the providence of our God we hear Christ's gospel preached, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance; then we read with understand-

ing what God has taught us, and we say, I know that my heart has tasted these glorious, precious things of the covenant ordered in all things and sure. And at times also when we read the Scripture, in what grateful surprise and comfort we find what is written there is in sweet accord with what has been wrought by the Spirit of the living God in our hearts. The Scriptures therefore are for the comfort and learning of Christ's body, the church, and are able to make them wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. (2 Tim. iii. 15.) The redeemed of the Lord have the name of their heavenly Father written in their foreheads. (Rev. xiv. 1.) Christ says, "I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name."—Rev. iii. 12. This writing is sealing them as the children of God, it is giving them power to become the sons of God. (John i. 12.) It is sending forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts crying, Abba, Father. (Gal. iv. 6.) The Lord writes and thus he speaks, "Thou shalt call me, My Father; and shalt not turn away from me."—Jer. iii. 19. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Jesus said to his disciples, "When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven." We cannot realizingly do so until Christ tells us to say, "Our Father." But the gracious covenant work of the holy Spirit is to bring us into intimate relations with the dear Savior; he brings us to know him as ours, through whom we are forgiven, and justified and redeemed, and in whom we are predestinated unto the adoption of children unto God. And because God is our Father we love Jesus. (John viii. 42.) Christ is all our heart's desire, and our faith is all in him. Being thus in intimacy with Jesus Christ we find his doctrine confesses to us the Father's name. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." As it is written, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."—Heb. ii. 12. We are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. (Rom. viii. 14–17.) The word also says, I will write upon him the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem. This seals us as citizens of Zion, the city of God. Even now there are sacred seasons when the feet of our faith stand within her gates, but this is but the earnest of our inheritance. We are destined for the heavenly Jerusalem, and like the dear saints of olden times, we are looking for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come. We are pilgrims on the earth, but upon our foreheads is (I hope) written the name of our God and the name of the city of our God.

"Jerusalem, my happy home,
Name ever dear to me;
When shall my labors have an end
In joy, and peace, and thee?

Reach down, O Lord, thine arm of grace,
And cause me to ascend
Where congregations ne'er break up,
And Sabbaths never end.

When wilt thou come to me, O Lord?
O come, my Lord, most dear;
Come nearer, nearer, nearer still,
I'm safe when thou art near."

I had not intended writing you so long a letter, but I think I shall be safe in promising you that I will pen you a shorter one next time. Thousands of

miles intervene between our earthly abodes, but the God of Israel is near to all that fear him wherever they may be. May the Lord comfort you and bless you, and lift up upon you the light of his countenance.

I am your brother in hope of eternal life,

FRED. W. KEENE.

ROBERSONVILLE, N. C., Jan. 6, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —My remittance for the SIGNS is some little past due, and I trust that you will excuse the delay, and place the inclosed check to my credit for the continuance of your much esteemed paper, the SIGNS. Inasmuch as I am sending you this remittance, I feel inclined to say just a little to you about an old man down here in North Carolina, that gives me a great deal of trouble. I hardly think that it would be right to call him neighbor, though he lives in the same town and the same ward that I do, and I would not miss it if I were to say that he claims to have a right to the same house that I live in. It may be that I would not object to this so much if I could keep him down in the basement where I think he belongs, but he is so often on the same floor with me, as I saw in a dream once. Sometimes it is *vice versa*, and I am down in the cellar. Perhaps, brother Chick, that I best not say too much about this old man, for I have heard that you hope to come to our association next fall, and of course I would expect you to my home, and I feel sure that you would not like to fall in with bad company. I do not like it myself, but I have to put up with it very often, because I for the time cannot do any better. We are told, as you know, to shun every appearance of evil, and to walk worthy of the vocation whereunto we are called, and this I desire to do, and often think, or rather feel, that I might make better progress in the right way, and in obedience to the blessed command of our heavenly King if it were not for this old man. He makes so many suggestions that attract my attention in various ways; in fact I do not know him every time that he approaches me. He is a great one for speaking very loud, or else whispering at times, so before I am aware I find myself following him to find out if possible what it was that he said. And while I have learned that this is one of his ways of leading me astray, (for his nature is thus to do,) I have never known him to even make the attempt to rectify any wrong, and I often think that I will not let him deceive me so again; but he is too shrewd for me, and I am made to cry out to my God for his mercy, and think surely that I will be more watchful in the future. He is so changeable, notwithstanding he is an old man, he often looks as though he were a young one, and well dressed, and becomes very religious, also quotes many Scriptures, one of which is, He that provides not for his own, specially those of his own household, is worse than an infidel, and has denied the faith. He also at times becomes (apparently) very strong in predestination, and contends that if one is saved it does not matter about going to church so much, or attending to every religious duty, as it takes up too much time and hinders his progress in the world in matters of business; that if you are saved, you are saved anyhow, and that Christ died for his sheep, and he is unchangeable. While he says some things very near right, yet they are without gospel consistency, so I have to contend with him about that phrase "saved anyhow," that it is not the term to use. The Lord has but

one way to save his people, and that is "by grace," not by grace and works; neither is it in an indifferent way, but in a perfect way, and that devised by our God. This grace constrains its subjects to live in obedience to the one faith, and not an "anyhow" living.

I tell you that this old man is very treacherous; after I was enabled (by grace, I hope) to unite with the church, he argued to me that I would never see any more trouble, and that there was no need of my ever sinning any more, and I really believed it, and thought surely that all trouble was then passed, but after the first slip or two I made (for such was the case,) things began to look quite different. He then changed his tactics and came at me in a different way, and would contend that I was no christian at all, because christians did not sin, so he nearly got the best of me, for I thought so myself. But as the Lord would have it, I began to call on his blessed name again for mercy, (for I had ceased to call for a little while, as I thought all was well) and I hope that he heard me and delivered me out of my distress, so I have been trying to thus call on his most glorious name ever since in my weak way, but admit that I am forgetful. Well, after that he did not give me any serious trouble, (though I do not mean to say none,) until I began to be impressed to preach, for my first thought was, Suppose you have to preach. I could not tell then where that impression came from, and it is often a question in my mind yet. But at times I feel sure that it is of the Lord; you may depend upon the fact though that this old man put in his reasoning, and brought all his forces to bear, and we agreed pretty well, for he said, and kept on saying, that I could not preach, and I knew it was true. But the impression continued, so this battle lasted about four years. I do not mean to say that it is ended yet, but it was four years before I made any attempt to speak in the church, and the many groans and tears during that time it is impossible for me to enumerate. He would so often rebuke me for having such thoughts as preaching, and yet I could not help it. He would not let me enjoy the common comforts of life with my family, and would frequently have me off among the tombs, or in the woods, crying for some relief. Then again he would chide me for being so silly, and say, Why not be like other people, and quit thinking about that which you cannot do? So I thought the reasoning was good, and would dry up my tears the best I could, and get back in company, but not to enjoy it long at a time.

I well remember that on one occasion when some brethren were at my house for the night, that he would not let me enjoy their presence, for he kept whispering to me, saying I was not worthy of them, as they were not thinking about preaching, and they knew more than I did about heavenly things, and I or he, I hardly know which, soon had them off to bed, and I found myself walking the road late in the night, trying to ask the Lord to guide me, and if it was his will that I should preach to make it plain to me, as I did not want to attempt such a thing if it were not his will; neither do I yet. Well, without going into all the details, will say that after many struggles I was enabled by the help of the Lord, as I trust, to begin to speak in public in a small way, (and have not gotten out of it yet.) It seems a little strange to me now that during that long struggle when the old man would contend that I could not preach, that I did not think to tell

him that while that is true, yet the Lord could speak in me if it were his will. But we live to learn as you know, but for the life of me I cannot learn all about this old man, for he is more changeable than the moon. If I by grace was enabled to fortify against him when he came last, the next time he comes in a different direction, and before I am aware he has his fortifications built. So if I have some liberty in speaking he proves to be very friendly, and tells me, That is hard to beat; and of course (at the time) it is very agreeable to believe that, so before I am aware he has me down again, and has the better of me. So you see there is much scuffling done, and before I can break his hold I do not feel much like a preacher, or like I think one ought to feel. I am not saying much about how I called on the Lord during these times, but you may be sure that that was thrown in for good measure, as I hope it proved to be. But soon he is very friendly again, or I with him, I hardly know which, so he continues to go with me to meeting even without an invitation, and is first saying that I cannot preach, and then again that I can, and I am often puzzled to know the truth of it. When I hear such ministers as yourself, my brother, I often feel that I had better never try again, for I know that I want the cause of our God honored.

I now feel sure that it was the old man that made Paul cry out, "O wretched man that I am!" &c., and many others whose names are recorded in the Bible, and no doubt all who have their names in the book of life. It seems that I ought to be able to get along without this old man, but I cannot do so; I cannot move on without his company, so you see that I am in a strait, and badly mixed up, and if it were not for the mercy of the good Lord I do not know what would become of me. But after all, he at times behaves very well, and gets me to feel that things will go on better. I think I have found that he does better when I am in the company of my brethren, for he then puts on his best clothes and behaves fairly well. But O how he chides me when they are gone, for talking too much, or not enough, or that "you brought up the wrong subject, &c., that every one does not enjoy the subject of religion like you do, and that you ought to make yourself agreeable with your company;" then when I conform to that he will say, You are not letting your light shine.

Brother Chick, I trust that what I have said about this old man will not discourage you from coming to our association next fall, for I do hope to see you in our country again, and it may be the Lord's will that this old fellow will be down in the cellar where you cannot see him.

I will close by stating an incident that I heard when young: There were two men in a neighborhood whose hap it was to have ill tempered wives, and at a gathering one day, their neighbors were saying if they had ill tempered wives what they would do with them; the two men said, one to the other, "Our neighbors would know what to do with their scolding wives, but we who have them do not know what to do." So there are those who know what to do with this old man, to hear them talk, but I doubt whether they know him, or themselves either. As for my part, I have him, and like "the two men," I do not know what to do with him, but I feel sure that in the end all will be well. May God enable me, together with all those who love his appearing, to put off the old man with his deeds. Yours in hope,

G. D. ROBERSON.

FOREST HILL, Md.

DEAR BROTHER EDITOR:—If you will publish the letter which I send I will take the responsibility, as I have it not from him. If I could write as well as Elder McConnell I have no doubt the readers would have heard from me much oftener than they have. The brother has been in poor health; this together with the matter given on the subject of his experience justifies the liberty I have taken in sending it for publication.

Though faint, I am still pursuing, as was the case with Gideon's men. We are in usual health.

WM. GRAFTON.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Dec. 31, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER GRAFTON:—When your letter was received I was still too weak to engage in letter-writing, but I was improving fast, and as your daughter was informed of my improvement I knew you would be informed speedily. I have attempted several letters to you, but illness has affected my nerves to such an extent that I cannot apply myself for any length of time, and after writing a little I would defer continuing till another time. Letters like that are seldom finished.

I cannot tell you how welcome your letter was. Knowing what a burden letter-writing usually is to you, I well appreciated the love and thoughtfulness which inspired the inquiry. My health is unusually good just now. I am growing stouter and heavier, and think I enjoy life better than ever before. But with my improved appearance and more satisfactory state of health I do not increase in strength as I should, and a very little exertion or excitement puts me on my back. The doctors say it will take time to recover my former activity.

Your letter stirred up my mind in remembrance of the way I have come since we first met. What unexpected things have transpired. No man could reasonably expect the things to come to pass in my life which are now matters of remembrance. Eighteen years ago I came before the church at Hopewell, with no experience to relate further than I felt I would never be happy with any other people. The most ignorant mortal on earth knew more about the doctrine than I: yet they received me. For a few months I zealously attended meetings, but little by little my interest waned, and before a year rolled round I was to all intents and purposes a dead member, and so I continued for over two years, careless, indifferent and thoughtless. My waking up was due to the unfailing faithfulness of brethren in Salem church; they visited and followed me continually until in desperation to escape their importunities I began to attend meetings regularly again. After a time I awoke to a realization of how dead I had been, and since then I have never dared to miss an opportunity of meeting with the saints. I wish I could say that my attendance has always been a labor of love and delight; it has often been a weariness and burden, but remembering the evil experience in my life, through forsaking the assembly of the saints, I feared the very appearance of the temptation, and much more feared falling into it. So there is no credit due me for anything. I am surprised to learn that you felt years ago that I would yet be set aside to the work of the ministry. Elder Purington said the same to his wife and others the day he baptized me, though I did not know it until long after his death and my ordination. I am glad I did not know these predictions before it came to pass. Your judg-

ment of such gift as I may possess is too exalted, I am not of deep discernment as you think. The little understanding I have, if I have any, has been in the revelation of God's power in my own travel. I am a dull scholar and learn slowly. At the time of my ordination you counseled me to watch the providences of God and observe them in my life. This advice has remained with me and has many times proved a comfortable assurance that perhaps the Lord hath me in mind. The providences of God are not empty things: the least one may yield instruction, as well as the most unlikely one: out of the eater comes forth meat, and out of the strong, sweetness. Is there not a cause for all things, though we see it not? The Lord does nothing in vain. Neither are things contingent: a sparrow falls not without God's will, the hairs of our head are all numbered. David was dumb, and opened not his mouth. Why? Because thou, Lord, didst it: and Shimei's cursing he bore patiently on the same account; it may be the Lord hath bidden him; and he lost nothing by it. Often there is great confusion of things, and our expectations are delayed or frustrated, and we cry out, Why falls it alike to all? why to the just, according to the work of the wicked, and to the wicked according to the work of the righteous? Or, why one event to them all? But in his own good time the Lord makes us to know and understand that he had need of them, that he had occasion to use such a providence to fulfill a word. There is suffering in learning obedience to God's will. Though we are not conscious to ourselves of any particular cause or miscarriage, besides what is common to men, we must lay our hand upon our mouth, as Job did; the Most High doth according to his will. This, even the proudest of kings acknowledged when his understanding returned to him, and so will we. (Dan. iv. 34, 35.)

There have been events in my life which the remembrance of cause me wretchedness and misery. I can understand now that those events had to be in order to teach me some truths; but that fact does not reconcile me in the least to the sin. I am glad there is no invitation for us to consent to the will of God being done. I love the doctrine of his sovereignty; of the absoluteness of his election, predestination, effectual calling and perseverance of the saints. It is all founded on grace; or, the good pleasure of God's will is the only original cause of these things.

I will not weary you with further writing. Remember me in love to your family, and believe me affectionately your unworthy brother in faith and hope,

JOHN McCONNELL.

MACOMB, Ill., Dec. 30, 1904.

TO THE EDITOR AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEARLY BELOVED KINDRED IN CHRIST:—Another year is nearing its close. We count the days as they go by as we number the pages of a book; and as we turn back the leaves, one by one the deeds, thoughts, aspirations, disappointments, hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, trials and tribulations, all that go to fill up the year that is nearing completion, will be numbered with the past. But our lives, unlike the book, cannot be gone over again, and what is done or said to-day cannot be recalled. This is a time for solemn reflection. How have we spent the year that is passing so swiftly? Have we lived it in honor to Christ and his cause? Have we done what we could in denying self, and living peaceably with all men?

Have we endeavored to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace? Have we been faithful with our brethren and sisters, bearing one another's burdens, holding up the hands of our faithful ministers, confessing our faults one to another, forgiving trespasses as we hope to be forgiven? Have we walked softly in the footsteps of our Savior, suffering the contempt and scorn of the world for his name's sake? Have we been content with the "good old way," and with the ancient landmarks which our fathers have set?

These, and many more serious questions crowd into my mind while I write; and as for myself I must confess that I have come far short of living one day as I would like, which has heen a source of deep grief and sorrow.

When I look back over the year that is passing and see the crooked path I have made, the many wanderings from the right way, I see so much I should have done, and recall so many things I should have left undone, and down in my heart I view nothing but sin; truly sin is mixed with all I do. Some soul-searching questions arise within me: Have I really a desire for holy things?

"Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

I am brought low, and can see no hope for such an one while thus viewing self.

But, dear kindred, when we are enabled to lift our eyes a little and behold Jesus as our righteousness then there is joy and hope, for he hath mercy to our unrighteousness, and our sins and iniquities he will remember no more; then for a little time we have hope.

I must acknowledge that many times during the past year, and all along my pilgrimage journey, he hath been mindful of me, though so unworthy, and brought me past dangers, through sore trials and deep waters of affliction, and delivered me from days of darkness and trouble. His hand still leads me; his mercy is still over me; his grace still saves me.

I know not what the new year may hold for me; but O, to be submissive to God's will. I feel that to have a spirit of resignation to the divine will would be the greatest blessing, yet I am not always submissive, I grieve and complain when things do not go my way.

"I find myself out of the way,
My thoughts are often gone astray;
Like one alone I seem to be,
O! is there any one like me?"

"I seldom find a heart to pray,
So many things come in my way;
Thus filled with doubts, I ask to know,
Come, tell me, is it thus with you?"

Yes, my dear brethren and sisters, are you my companions on the pilgrimage journey, or am I one alone? My greatest enjoyment is meeting with you, and I feel I do love you all for the truth's sake, and with one of old I would say, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for wither thou goest I will go, * * * thy people shall be my people, and thy God, my God." Yes, while I live I hope to have a name among the dear Old Baptists, with whom I have lived twenty years, and whom I believe to be the people of God; and though they may be accounted the offscouring of the earth, yet how blessed are they, for it is written, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," and, They shall be mine when I come to make up my jewels, and also, "These are they which come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white n the blood of the Lamb." O, to be counted worthy to be numbered with

God's little ones. May God give us all grace to live in honor to his cause; may this be our greatest desire; may we walk worthy the vocation wherewith we are called; may God give us grace and strength to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, that blessed faith which was the stay and support of our dear fathers and mothers who have gone before; may our right hand forget her cunning, and our tongue cleave to the roof of our mouth ere we add to or take from the precious faith of God's elect.

Our association passed very pleasantly, the weather was perfect, there was a good congregation and close attention, nine ministers were present, and the preaching was able and harmonious, not a jar or discordant note was heard; Christ crucified and salvation by grace was the theme, which always feeds and comforts God's little ones. How pleasant to thus meet in unity where nothing mars the peace of our coming together. When the Spirit of Christ rules and reigns in our heart, we are at the feet of each other in love, esteeming others better than ourselves; we then have no time or desire for contention, but hunger and thirst after the good things of the kingdom of Christ.

I have finished reading the last two numbers of the SIGNS, and think they are especially good. Dear Elder Vail, I do sympathize with him from my heart. We poor, finite creatures cannot understand how these hard, bitter trials must come. If we could only see our loving Father's hand in all things, and realize that it is for our good and his glory, but O, we are but flesh, and these stony griefs and great sorrows seem more than we can bear. May God make these things plain to his grief-stricken children.

Dear brother Chick, we were made sad by hearing of the death of dear brother Beebe. We felt that a double burden was laid upon you, may you have grace and strength for your day and trial. The Lord has been with you in the past, he will not forsake you in the future. Your editorials are always comforting and edifying to me, the truth is presented in a clear, forcible manner that cannot be mistaken, yet in the kind, brotherly spirit that tends to heal wounds and unite God's people in love and fellowship. The SIGNS truly has an able helper in Elder Ker, who writes such precious letters.

My mother, Mrs. I. N. Vanmeter, who is now in her eighty-fifth year, receives the SIGNS regularly, and prizes it most highly. She reads a great deal for one of her age, and is very well for her.

My dear kindred, I have made my letter much too long, I must ask your forbearance, but I felt like writing this by way of loving remembrance. May God be with and bless you all in the coming new year, is the desire of your unworthy sister,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

BROOME CENTRE, N. Y., Dec. 20, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR:—I am more than pleased with the course pursued by you and the publishers of the SIGNS; they are sound, and if they do not set forth and advocate the doctrine of the Bible, then I am blind and cannot see or understand. I believe that for this cause came you into the world: we all have, and will fill our mission and then be called home to see Christ as he is and be like him. Do you not often feel that some unseen hand is leading you, sustaining and upholding you? Sometimes some barrier mountain-high is before us, and we have

great fear that we shall never be able to overcome, but as we approach it all is cleared away and we go smoothly over. In looking back I see so many, many times if some unseen hand had not led me, surely I would have been shipwrecked and come to naught. Why I should have a name and a place among God's chosen people is, and always has been, a mystery to me: if I could only hide myself from everybody and yet hear the gospel preached and God glorified, I sometimes think I would be quite well satisfied. I have been reading to-day about Christ and his crucifixion, and also about his disciples; O how wonderful it has appeared, more so than ever before. In my experience I am drawn very closely to them, but my mind is questioning, "From whence doth this union arise?" I am so tried and perplexed at times to know the origin of my feelings: I am afraid sometimes, upon close examination of myself, that they grow in nature's garden; there is so much self in them. Yet, what is it that takes me from home to meet with those that are dear to me, and who have a warm place in my heart? It is of the flesh, I feel so certain at times, that I am harrassed and often cry out, "O drive these vain thoughts from my mind." I wish I could write you of the joy of our dear Lord, his loving-kindness towards his chosen generation, that royal priesthood, instead of so much of my unworthy self, but it is not given me. When writing or speaking of the things pertaining to our God or his kingdom a deep feeling of solemnity takes possession of my mind, and I fear to write or speak, and ask, Who am I that I should attempt any of these things? Surely I am nothing, and less then nothing, in his sight; the nations are before him as only a drop in a bucket. I would that I might know my calling and place, and be made able to fill it and be content therewith, but like Jacob, I go hobbling along, my walk so very uneven; but with all my wanderings up and down through the earth I must acknowledge that his loving-kindness has overshadowed me; surely his mercy endureth forever. I hope I am made to rejoice in a little season of refreshing now and then as I journey to "Emmaus." I would not forget his mercies, neither his favors: his unseen hand has led me all along, and I feel that I see more and more each day of his wonderful ways in leading and guiding not only myself but all things, especially his bride, the Lamb's wife. When I look back to about 1852, and come along up to the present time, truly I am surprised and astonished how I have been led, surely it is a wonder of wonders, and now I am asking, What will the end be? My blessings are great, both for this time state, and I hope for the beyond; I do believe I shall see him as he is and be like him; not because of my own merits or works done by me or man, but through the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. When I read the promises of our covenant-keeping God, made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the covenant he made with the house of Israel and Judah, as recorded by Jeremiah, I say when I read these truths, I have no fears, no doubts; like the sailor's son I can say, "My Father is at the helm;" glory to his name; he has all power; he speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast, yea, he doeth his whole pleasure in heaven and in earth. O what a wonderful God his children have; how often and how wonderfully he has opened up the way for all his little ones. May his mercy and wonderful works continue.

Yours in love, hope and christian fellowship,

D. M. LEONARD.

ALL THINGS NEW.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We are on the eve of a new year, which brings us nearer to the new heaven and new earth, nearer to our new home, of which the Maker of it says: "Behold, I make all things new," and nearer to the hour when our bodies, which are now old, like the old year, shall be made new. This will be the fulfillment of the glorious new covenant, which is infinitely better than the old. How blessed for us that the old must give place to the new. Yet our nature is to cling to the old, not only to the old year, the old life, the old body, but the old law, the old covenant, the old heaven and the old earth. All these things are as natural to us as the old earth we dwell upon and the old atmosphere we breathe, for we are born to them, and they are our heritage in the first man, the old Adam. All these old things are our mother religion, and at this shrine we bow down and worship. Left to our old will, which we boast of as free, we would never give up the old for the new. And when the new Master comes to destroy the old master and take away from us the old religion, we verily think it is to our everlasting destruction. We therefore strive with all our might to keep alive the old, and when we must die to it we die hard, for of a truth we give up all that is old just because we "can't help it." This is the experience of all the people of the new covenant. When the Lord comes in his mercy to make a new covenant with us, we resist and fight against all his good work in us, because it all seems against us, for he is taking away from us all that we trusted in and held as dear and sacred as life itself. So do the little eagles cleave to their old nest when the mother so cruelly (it seems) takes it away from them, not knowing that it is to the end that they should mount up to the skies far, far above the old earthly nest.

Seeing, beloved, that all this is true, why do we so much wonder with sorrow that so many, even of those called by the name we bear, the name of the Lord, so zealously cling to the old covenant religion, and either strive to mix it in with the new, or else make war upon the new? For even Paul, the apostle of the new covenant, said, "The commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death." This was an experience of the loss of all things, and verily a bitter death, which his own will would never have chosen. It was Paul who said of the Maker of the new covenant, "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." This he does in our experience, and to us it is a continual and most painful taking away, even of life itself, a dying daily. The Lord killeth, and he maketh alive. This way of salvation no one, no child of the new kingdom, will ever voluntarily choose, and all men in the flesh fight against it. The old legal covenant, with its conditions, rewards and punishments, is the religion of the flesh and of the world. So the children of the old covenant have ever hated and persecuted the children of the new covenant, because the flesh wars against the Spirit. As of old, "He that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." The wise and holy counsel of God is in all this, and it is unto his eternal glory and the bringing away of all his new covenant people from all that is old into the blissful possession of all that is new. "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." Thus it is with the old year,

with the old life, with the old world, with all that is legal and old. God himself has ordained it so; man would resist and reverse it, and perpetuate the old, but he cannot. The new subdues and takes the place of the old. When in the Spirit, we bless God that it is so; for death is in the old, but life is in the new. Terms, conditions, works, rewards, punishments, belong to the old; but promises, gifts, grace, mercy, forgiveness, belong to the new. Wrath and curses are in the old; love and blessings are in the new. Therefore, my beloved, let us glory in tribulations and give thanks to God that he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up to heaven; maketh poor, and maketh rich; takes away the old life of sin, and gives the new life of holiness. "And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done." None can undo it or alter it; no conditions nor possibilities can add to it or take from it; it is ordered in all things and sure; it is not yea and nay, but yea and amen to the glory of God. The blessed children of the new covenant, the happy people saved by the Lord, are glad and rejoice that "It is done."

Burdened and weary with the old, waiting and hoping for the new, your brother in the new life,

D. BARTLEY.

LAKELAND, Fla., Dec. 28, 1904.

CARMEN, Okla., Dec. 18, 1904.

EDITOR OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BROTHER:—I have been thinking much about speaking to you in this way of the value of the SIGNS to us in this newly settled country. In using the word *us* in this connection, I mean the Old School Baptists scattered over this Territory and adjoining States. I could mention many instances where we have been brought together by correspondence and personal contact through the circulation of the SIGNS in this country, but I forbear to speak of all these particular cases. When I receive a letter from a "stranger," whether a brother or sister, saying, "I am a reader of the SIGNS, and I have found your address through it," I feel confident that I have fellowship for the writer, as he would not be a reader of the SIGNS unless he was at least near the truth as it is in Jesus. Especially is this impressed upon my mind as being about this way, because this is a day of sore and severe trials to the old order of Baptists; I do not think that our brethren in the east have the same trials about who they can fellowship as our brethren in the west and south. There are a great number of churches over this district claiming to be of the oldest order of Baptists, and generally now calling themselves Primitive Baptists. Many of these churches have a large membership, and are now increasing at a greater rate than formerly; they hold to many of the important points of doctrine and order peculiar to the genuine Old School Baptists of forty years ago. The majority of the membership believe in the experimental training of the mind by the Spirit of God, as in former times. When they speak of God's power over his children it is somewhat limited, and makes the quickened sinner or saint a sort of "free agent" in time. Some of their ministers have actually used the phrase, "free agent," in preaching, to show the relation existing between God and his quickened people. Considering the relation of individual christian experience, setting forth God's leading and care over the poor, condemned sinner, and that it was realized to be of

grace in the first work that he knew anything about, I am often made to fellowship that experience; but when we go a little further and speak of the doctrine as the Scriptures teach it, there is a difference. Now, can I feel to fellowship one because he has told me of his poverty by nature, and of God's bounty by grace, but who holds God to be limited in his power over things generally, and specially over the "lively stones" of God's building? As much as I desire to fellowship such, (and sometimes I have thought I did) I am prevented because it is apparent to my mind that these hold the truth of God in unrighteousness. There is no doubt in my mind that a goodly number are children of God led away by teachers, "having itching ears," who love the praise of men more than the praise of God. These teachers are wise for the sake of numbers in the church, and popularity with the world. There are certain outside evidences that they are now being "reckoned with the nations," having adopted some of their ideas and ways, and are being persecuted less on this account in many localities. If I am permitted to view the church of God and her adversaries in the proper light throughout our country, I feel to say that I cannot point to a period of time since the division of 1832, when true gospel preaching and writing is needed more than at the present time.

We cannot expect any periodical to be perfect. Some brethren seem to think that the greater part of the troubles among the Baptists of America have been caused by the papers. I demur from this opinion. The testimony of prophecy is, that offenses must come. I have thought, and I am still of the opinion, that the truth, written or printed, is of great value to believers in "confirming the souls of the disciples," "that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."

I feel sorry to think that so many of the subscribers of the SIGNS are so behind in paying for it. I have thought of this for many years past, when it occurred to my mind that the many brethren and friends who were in arrears are thus embarrassing the publishers. The SIGNS stands to-day on the rule of furnishing the paper to those who desire to read it, on time, the same as when it first appeared. When accounts run for five or six years, and many are finally lost, it certainly seems wonderful that its publication has been sustained so many years. Remember, dear brethren and all lovers of the truth, you who are behind in your payments for the SIGNS, the need of the publishers for the small amounts that you owe. Do not, please, if you can possibly avoid it, let your accounts fall behind more than one year at a time. If this were the case, it would take a great burden off the editor and publishers. What is lost to the paper in the past years amounts to thousands of dollars, may it be different in the future. I agree with the editorial in Dec. 15th number, that as few mistakes in the wording of communications have appeared as can be found in any publication whatever. For years I have noticed that the typographical errors were few indeed, while many periodicals and great newspapers had many of them. I greatly appreciate the present form that our paper appears in; I possess many of the old volumes of the SIGNS, and I have wished that they all were in pamphlet form.

I hope I have not been too assuming in the few hints in this letter; do with it as it seemeth right, and I shall be satisfied. In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

DELMAR, Del., Jan. 6, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—In the SIGNS for January 1st, current year, I notice an obituary written by Elder Badger, of brother J. W. Davis, of Occoquan, Va. As I have enjoyed an intimate acquaintance and association with brother Davis from the time of his uniting with the church until my removal from Virginia seven years ago, I would like to add a few thoughts, facts and incidents of his life to what Elder Badger has already well said. His baptism occurred on the 30th day of December, 1880, as cold a day as has been felt in that part of Virginia within the memory of the oldest people now living in that locality. With snow on the ground three feet deep, the river frozen over to the thickness of about ten inches, and the mercury below zero, the warmth and zeal of brother Davis did not waver, though he was a very frail, delicate man. He asked a place in the church, and notwithstanding the apparently adverse circumstances, like the eunuch of old said, "Here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" The ice was cut away, and he with the administrator both went down into the water and he was baptized, and coming up out of the water, with his clothing frozen on him by the time he reached the house, but a few yards away, his heart was rejoicing in God his Savior. The name of the church of his first membership was Occoquan, "Bacon Race" was only a local name for the place where the meeting-house stood, about eight miles from the village of Occoquan, where brother Davis lived. When that church, in 1889, departed from the Corresponding Meeting, brother Davis remained firm and unyielding, devoted to the precious doctrine of salvation of sinners of Adam's race through the blood of a crucified Redeemer, and regarding the Occoquan church, with its pastor, (whom it had followed) in gross disorder, obeyed the apostolic injunction and withdrew himself, uniting with the church in Alexandria, Va., (which had given me a call to be their pastor, said church having unanimously refused to separate from the Corresponding Meeting of Virginia,) his membership remaining with the church in Alexandria until its dissolution, about four years ago. He then united with the Bethlehem church, near Manassas, Va., continuing there till his decease.

Brother Davis was very much afflicted in body, having received an injury in his boyhood which caused a deformity of the chest, and made him a weakly man all his days. At the time of his baptism his health was so poor that many of his friends were apprehensive that his death would be caused by his immersion in such cold water on such a cold day; instead, however, his health began to improve, and he became stronger than he had been for years, and lived to within a few days of twenty-four years afterwards. The truth of the couplet of John Leland's hymn,

> "Christians, if your hearts be warm,
> Ice and snow can do no harm,"

was fully verified in his case, and also in the case of every true believer in Jesus Christ.

Yours to serve,

A. B. FRANCIS.

KANSAS, Ill., Dec. 14, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Though I am this day eighty-one years and two months of age, I still feel very frequently like writing for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so that I may still be borne in mind by the dear readers of its columns. I have this evidence that perhaps I have passed from death unto life, because I love the

brethren. Is it possible that unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given? I have now been in possession of the hope that has remained with me, though sometimes very dimly, for sixty-two years, and it seems, if possible, sweeter to-day than ever before in the long years that I have been blessed with it. I am more and more firmly settled in the doctrine advocated by the Old School Baptists, and that is, and has been for seventy-two years, contended for in an unwavering way by the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES. If salvation is not entirely by grace, then I am a deceived creature, for I know, as Paul said, that "in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." Recently I have read some articles in the SIGNS upon the new birth that have comforted me. Surely one must be born again to see the kingdom of God. I hope that I have seen, and that I am in the kingdom, the church militant, and if so, O how soon will I be in the church triumphant, and see Jesus for myself, and not another. "O happy day, when saints shall meet to part no more." Here we have doubts, and sometimes differences arise among us as to the correct teaching of the Bible, but as David said, Psalms xvii., Then shall I be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness. Last night while on my bed I did not sleep well, and I thought much about the night of death, and it came into my mind, how sweet the glorious morning would be to awake in eternity with all the glorified angels as companions. As Paul said, "I am now ready to be offered." May I be enabled to say, Come, welcome death.

If you never hear from me again, pray for me, and may God still be with all his chosen ones, is the prayer of one of the least of all, Amen.

JAMES M. TRUE.

HALLWOOD, Va., Jan. 1, 1905.

EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BROTHER:—As another year is numbered with the past, I am reminded that my subscription to our family paper has expired, and as I desire to owe no man anything, (only to love one another) inclosed you will find two dollars for which you will please continue to send the SIGNS to same address as heretofore. I do not want to do without the paper as long as I am blessed with the means to pay for it, and would be glad to do more than just simply send my remittance, but cannot now. If I could only offer a word of encouragement, would be glad of that, for I feel that is also due you, but I have always had a poor way of doing anything; I have been much helped by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Surely I feel that it is indeed an inestimable blessing to be identified with God's dear people, although I do not feel to be worthy of their love and fellowship, yet this is what I crave. And while they have been so much help to me, I have felt a great desire that I might be of some little service at least to them, but owing to a feeling sense of my own unworthiness and entire unfitness for these things, I am made to refrain from attempting anything in that direction. Surely I feel at times that I have been made to love the truth just as it has pleased God by his holy Spirit to reveal it to me, and how greatly I have desired and longed to see the day when I could make mention of the goodness and infinite mercy of our God and King, to talk of his almighty power, of his eternal purpose in the salvation of his own elect people. But ah, these things are far from me, I cannot speak of them as I have so greatly desired to, but sometimes I have felt some comfort, at least, that the Lord had blessed me to the ex-

tent that it was mine to meditate upon the things of the kingdom. Yes, that I, even I, had been made to think upon his name, that name which is above every name, the only name in which there is any salvation either in time or eternity for any poor sinner. In that name I fully believe there is salvation for each and every poor sinner who have realized their poverty and need, and have seen their lost and ruined state in consequence of sin, and are made to acknowledge the justice of the law of God in condemning them. These are called to repentance, and not the righteous: "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick."

Yours unworthily,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

CONWAY, Ark., Dec. 18, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS:—Please accept my sincere thanks for sending me the dear old paper. I call it old, for it is the oldest Baptist paper, I believe. It is so dear to me, for it is about all the preaching I have. It is seldom a preacher comes to our church, so the SIGNS is a welcome visitor at our home. I know one thing about them, they have stood the test; never have changed in the least. I have yet some of the old copies, and I see the new ones are still contending for that precious faith that the old veterans contended for. Its doctrine is sound and will stand when all others fail, for Jesus is the foundation; it is unmovable, so all the isms in this world will never shake it. O what a wonderful thought that we have a God that does not need the puny arm of man to help him, wisdom hath built her house, not yet to be built. Of course there are many builders in this world, but our good book tells us what will become of their house, for it has a sandy foundation; so their rock is not our Rock. Dear readers, I do not know whether I am anything or not, but something has caused me to love and contend for that blessed old doctrine called "hardshell" doctrine, and "I can't help it," for I believe I have been taught it in a school where never man taught. I have been made to wonder why God would even look upon such a rebel as I am; sometimes I am made to rejoice, and then I am almost ready give it up and think I am mistaken in the whole matter, and then I am made to think that God brings his children down to make them know that he is God. The Bible says he that is without chastisement is not a son. I know he is our salvation from beginning to end. I am so glad it is that way, for if our salvation depended on our work we would be forever lost. Thanks be to God there is no other name given in heaven nor among men whereby we must be saved, so if I am embraced in that great covenant, it is through the mercy and grace of my blessed Redeemer. One thing that gives me a little hope is, Jesus never died to save good people; if he had died to save good people I would have been left out, for I am like old Paul: in my flesh dwells no good thing. I have had people tell me, If I believed as you do, I would just go on and get my fill of sin. But O my dear readers, my greatest trouble is I am so sinful, I fear I have not been born again. I know that God works all things after the counsel of his own will, and will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, so we can do nothing, not even make one hair white or black.

I will close, for fear I will weary you. May God's grace be with you all, is the prayer of an old sinner saved by grace if saved at all,

(MRS.) LOUISE GLENN.

CHAGRIS, Ind. Ter., Nov. 10, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR:—It is now time to renew my subscription for another year for our good paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for they contain all the preaching I get. I received my last number the first of this month, and as long as I am able to pay for it I want to read it, for it is a great comfort to me in my old age. It is a feast for me to read after such writers as those who write for our good paper. It comes to me with precious fruit from the Father, who "is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham," and surely the writers for the SIGNS are some of those whom he has raised up to minister comfort to the little weaklings, of whom I feel to be one. O how often I wish I was worthy, and had the pen of a ready writer, but the good Lord knows my needs before I ask of him. I think if I could write as some of the dear saints I could comfort them as they have me, then again I feel thankful that the dear Lord placed me here, and gives me the rich feast that I get in our paper. Bless the Lord, O my soul, for all his benefits to me, a poor, old sinner. As one of the dear sisters said, there is one thing I do know, and it is this: I know I am a sinner, and if saved it will be by grace alone, for my sufficiency is of the Lord. Why I am cast off here is known unto the Lord; known unto the Lord are all his works from the beginning. I feel that his purposes embrace all things in heaven and in earth; all things are according to his will. He chose his people in Jesus his Son before the world began; "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." Yes, my dear friends in Christ, I am so glad that the good Lord rules over all our steps in this life, and if I have any righteousness it is in Jesus, the author and finisher of my faith, for faith is the gift of God and purifies the heart, and if I am a child of God it is because he was made sin for me, that I might be made the righteousness of God in him; this is my hope.

Now, my dear kindred in Christ, I want to say to you all who write for the SIGNS, remember me in your prayers in my lonely state. It is true that we are strangers in the flesh, but I hope not in the Spirit. To tell you in a few words what I believe: he is the God over all worlds, and his church is fitly framed together in him, and he is over all and in all to the church. May the Lord remember his people, and may the SIGNS be upheld to comfort the poor, is my desire.

Your unworthy sister, if one,

NANCY CREEL.

DELPHI FALLS, N. Y., Dec. 11, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BROTHER:—It is with a feeling of trembling and unworthiness that I write you, but I feel constrained to do so because I love you for the truth's sake, as well as the SIGNS, and all those who write for it, together with each one who loves the eternal truth of salvation by the grace of God, and by his grace only. I do not like daubing with untempered mortar, for "it is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." I would like to give some reason of my hope in the Lord's love and mercy, though a poor worm of the dust. "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." I hope this knowledge has been given me by the Lord who gives unto eternal life. Well do I know that except I am led of the Lord I can do nothing aright, and I

am constrained to look to the Lord continually to guide me in my thoughts as well as in my daily walk and conversation, because I have no confidence at all in the flesh. Therefore feeling as I do, and knowing these things as I do, I sometimes take courage and look upward in hope, though it is often with much fear and trembling; but O, dear brother, I have nowhere else to go but to the God of all our blessings, who hath the words of eternal life. I have not been taught these things by man, but hope it is of the Lord; for surely he teaches as never man taught, therefore do I hope in his mercy. I feel to praise the name of the Lord because he has enabled me to inclose once more the two dollar postal order, and that without grudging. My desire is to take the SIGNS as long as I live. I feel it is like seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. I will trust him for all that I need.

In fellowship of the truth in Jesus,

J. E. TAPNER.

CLAIRETTE, Texas, Dec. 16, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR:—As my subscription to the dear old SIGNS has expired, I want to renew it, and to save often renewals I inclose five dollars, four for the SIGNS two years and one as a contribution to the paper. I like the editorials and the correspondence. In doctrine and practice it contends for the "old landmarks." If it has ever departed I have not been able to detect it; I have both volumes of editorials of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe to compare the present writings of the SIGNS with. There are very few of us here who hold to the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

We have a little church here, mostly sisters, and generally poor and quite scattered, though we have regular preaching by our young brother, Elder W. J. Stephens, who is sound in the faith. I am well pleased with the present editorials, and hope you may live long to comfort the saints of God. I feel sometimes that perhaps I am one; then again I am filled with doubts and fears. I am now nearly sixty years old, and have had many sore trials, and this morning feel greatly cast down; have been afflicted nearly all my life, and I reckon for my good, to keep this poor, old sinner in subjection. I have greatly desired that some of the able ministers of the east would visit us; though we are poor, we will do all we can to assist you on your way. We have some able preachers in Texas. We have been visited by Elder Bartley, and we esteem him highly for the truth's sake.

Yours in hope,

W. H. CHANEY.

KNOX CITY, Texas, Sept., 1904.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—The apostle says, "There is therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." And again, he says, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." And, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." And, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." And, "The children of the flesh, these are not the children of God." And, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." Now this shows that if any die, it is because they have not the Spirit of God. It is certain that where the Spirit of God is, there is liberty and joy in the Holy Ghost. God is love, and we love God because he first loved us. If God dwells in us we also have the love of God dwelling in us, then we can rejoice in

God our Savior, not from a natural standpoint, but from a spiritual standpoint, for the wisdom of this world knows not God, who is love, and in whom is joy in the Holy Ghost.

Dear brother Chick, sometimes I get very low down in the valley of doubt, and fear that I know nothing that is good, my thoughts are many, and I cannot control them; I could control the wind just as easily as my thoughts. I am made glad sometimes, though I am so sinful, yet I fear that all is of the flesh, and not of God; but I have a little hope that I would not exchange for the world. "So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." My brother, I am, I hope, a strong believer in God my Savior, after the inner man. We are told in the Bible that Christ is our salvation, and if Christ is my salvation that is good enough for me. "In him we live, and move, and have our being." How could he work in us, except he dwell in us? How could I work in a house except I were in the house? And he does work in his people to will and to do of his good pleasure. May God grant to uphold the SIGNS in his love and by his mighty power, for it is good to us. May it be sustained for the good of his people and for his glory.

I remain yours to love and serve,

J. J. YARBOROUGH.

YORK, Neb., Nov. 29, 1904.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please find postal order for two dollars to pay for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as my time is nearly out for the past year. I will say we like our new home here at York, and have been greatly comforted in meeting with the Baptists in the little new church. Elder C. M. Cooper has been pastor for the past fourteen years, but his health, we are sorry to say, is not good. He is highly respected by all that know him, and if I know the truth, he preaches it. We moved from Gaylord, Kansas, last March, to live where we could meet with those of the same faith, and we feel we are greatly blessed. I like the dear old SIGNS the best of all papers, and as one Baptist said a few months ago, "I am not much afraid of those that read the SIGNS." I have again and again been comforted by the writers, and they never knew anything about it. I am not gifted in writing on spiritual things, so have to be content that I am blessed in reading and enjoying the good things written by others. How glad I was to read letters of recent date of J. H. Yeoman, of Colorado. He has had a lonely life away from the church of his choice.

May the Lord be with you in publishing the SIGNS. If it will not crowd out something better you may publish my letter if you think proper, but it is all right if you do not.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) MINA HANSON.

PLEASE BE SURE,

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1905.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—What is your opinion regarding parliamentary usage in the assemblies of men, in those cases in which the silent are counted with the majority when no negative voice is heard in a given case? I admit that under parliamentary usage this rule is considered binding on the silent members of the assembly in council, but of what moral force is such a rule in parliament of any assembly?

Was Joseph of Arimathea accountable to God by his silence before the council at Jerusalem when Jesus was delivered to Pilate? What was the status of his case before God, and not before the council? Was he a just man, notwithstanding his silence or failure to give his consent to the act of the council? If he spoke a word or performed an action it is not recorded in the testimony of the witnesses of Jesus in the gospels. Your opinion is not required on any other case in this request of mine than that of Joseph the Hebrew, in whose new tomb Jesus was laid after he was crucified and slain.

Your opinion, brother Chick, on this case, in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, will be of great importance to me.

Your brother, I. N. NEWKIRK.

ST. JOSEPH, MO., Dec. 2, 1904.

Brother Newkirk asks only the opinion which we may have of the case of Joseph of Arimathea. From all the reading we have done in the Scriptures concerning his course, our conclusion has been that he from the first was a friend of Jesus, and believed on him, but that like Nicodemus he was timid and fearful about declaring his faith. While Jesus lived they both seemed to keep out of sight as believers in him, but when he was dead they became more bold, and sought to pay honor to his body. In our mind both were real believers before his crucifixion, but through timidity had held back from confessing openly their faith. Perhaps they were hindered from coming out openly because they, like all the disciples, did not understand why he should go about in such a lowly way and fail to assume the authority and power that belonged to him as the King of the Jews.

Joseph was a member of the sanhedrim, and evidently a man of some note in that sanhedrim. Nicodemus also was a ruler of the Jews; both were men of standing and note. This also might have stood in the way of a public acknowledgment of Christ. This course to us would seem wrong, yet how many thousands have been weak, and with far less reason than they.

As a member of the sanhedrim which must decide the fate of Jesus, Joseph was called upon to act with the council. He had a vote with them, and a voice in all their deliberations. It was his privilege to give his opinion, and his reasons for that opinion, upon any matter which might come up. It was his privilege also to cast a vote upon any matter that might come to vote before them. If the usage in that sanhedrim was to count the silent ones as having voted for any case that was to be decided, it would be understood that if any one was silent that he did approve what was done. In that case it could not be said that he did not consent to it. If silence is understood to give consent, then if he was silent he was understood to give consent, but the text says that he did not consent. According to our understanding he voted and spoke against the action of the majority of the sanhedrim. It seems to us that the ex-

pression, He "had not consented to the counsel and deed of them," fully implies that he both spoke and voted against it. It is true that the writers of the gospels do not say that he spoke or acted against the rest, in so many words, but the text referred to does imply that he withheld his consent in such a way that it was known. Had he been silent, or had he absented himself from this meeting of the sanhedrim, his views would not have been known at all. Let his course have been what it may, he was not silent in the sense of keeping his views to himself; the council knew that he was not in agreement with them. Was not this all that was needed before God who sees the heart?

It is not likely that Joseph gave before the sanhedrim all his reasons for declining to consent to the death of Jesus, but we think that the words of the text imply that his voice was raised publicly against what they were doing.

This is the one question proposed by brother Newkirk, but we feel like adding a word or two in a general way in connection with this subject. Perhaps there is hardly a question of any importance that ever comes up for decision in the business of the churches concerning which there is not some division of opinion; it must be so as long as men remain what they are, and as long as we see but in part; some will feel to favor a certain thing, while others will feel to oppose it; both will be desirous of doing what is right and according to the revealed will of God in the word, yet all will not see alike upon the question being discussed and to be acted upon. There will, in nearly all cases, also be some who do not see clearly in their own mind what is right and wise to do; one is ready to vote for, and one against, while the third does not feel prepared to give expression to his opinion at all, not feeling sure what is right. It seems to us in such a case that the one not decided in his own mind ought not to be compelled to vote at all. First, time ought to be accorded him for a more searching investigation of the matter, and to clearly know what the mind of the Lord is; the church if led by the right spirit will be glad to wait. We have known cases where some of the brethren never felt as though they were clear in their own mind what to do, and so they could not vote in any way. In such cases they have often said, and it was right in them to so say, We will submit to the view of the church, and feel reconciled to do so. In all such cases time should be allowed to all who are undecided. Perhaps during the time of waiting the Lord may show them all more clearly what is right. But when action is once taken, all who have said that they were satisfied to let the church decide, and that they would be reconciled to the action of the church, should then be careful to silently go on their way without questioning that particular thing, whatever it might be. In such a case it would be manifestly unjust and untrue to count those who have not voted as though they had voted, since all understand that they do not act because they are undecided.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904, &c.

ROMANS V. 14; V. 10.

BROTHER Fletcher Mackey, of Lexington, N. Y., has requested some thoughts from us in connection with the words found in Romans v. 14, especially the last clause, and sister Lucinda Riley, of Bowen, Ill., has preferred the same request with regard to Romans v. 10.

We feel willing at all times to comply with the wishes of our brethren as far as we can, and we wish to add also that we often do so with great hesitancy, because of the feeling of poverty which is ours most of the time. We do not understand all the Scriptures, and feel that we but partially understand any of them.

Romans v. 10, reads as follows: "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." This Scripture presents the certainty of the final salvation of all for whom Christ died. It declares first, that men are enemies of God by nature; second, that those to whom the apostle was writing had been reconciled to God; third, that the channel through which this reconciliation had been brought about was the death of the Son of God upon Calvary; fourth, that being thus reconciled, they should much more be saved; and fifth, that the medium of this final salvation is the life of the risen Savior. Some things ought to be noticed especially in connection with these words. The ninth verse declares that we are justified by his blood, and since this is so, much more shall we be saved from wrath through him. The word "reconciled" is the same word in the Greek as the word atonement in the eleventh verse. This reconciliation is an at-one-ment. We are said to be reconciled to God, but God is never said to be reconciled to us, and the medium of this at-one-ment is the death of Christ alone. It could not be true that God is reconciled to us, for that would imply a change in the unchangeable God; and our reconciliation to him is declared to be not by any choice or work of our own, but solely by the death of Jesus, who was given to us by the Father, because he already loved us; and God loves his redeemed ones no more since they were redeemed than he loved them from eternity. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee," is his own word by the prophet; and this reconciliation, or atonement, was accomplished when we were enemies: "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us;" and the love of God to us was manifested in this wonderful work even when we were enemies to him.

In experience we learn that we have not become reconciled to God by the repentance or the faith which he has given to us, but that we are brought near to him in redemption by the work of Jesus on Calvary. For ourself, we can say that we can never forget the time, or the place, when it pleased God to bring light, and comfort, and peace, and joy, to our mind, one day in September, when in the field at work, by showing to our mind the finished work of Christ. How suited to a poor sinner's need it seemed, and we could but praise God for the wonderful plan, finished in Jesus. All that stood in the way of access to God in the holiest was removed through his death and resurrection, and although we felt just as vile within as ever, yet there was righteousness in Christ, and this righteousness was imputed to his people. The plan seemed wonderful and glorious then, and it seems to us no less so now. The reconciliation or atonement is accomplished fully, and was as effectual for chosen ves-

sels of mercy down here in this twentieth century as for those who lived then. But sinners dead in sin and the uncircumcision of their heart, though reconciled already by his death, and justified by his blood, do not know this truth, and feel no need of this grace until the life of Jesus dwells in them, and they are made alive to God by the quickening power of his Spirit. When this work is accomplished in them, then the power of his life begins to work in them, and so they come to experience the salvation already wrought out for them. They "receive the atonement," as said in verse eleven.

The final perseverance of the saints, as it is generally called, is declared in the closing clause of the text to be secured because of the death of Christ; and the argument of the apostle is, that if God loved us when we were enemies and justly condemned sinners so that he gave his only Son to die for us, it is sure now that we are no more regarded as enemies, but friends, and that he will much more keep us while we live on the earth, and receive us at last to glory. The expression, "much more," does not signify that anything is more sure to God than the atonement of the objects of his electing love. This was as sure as the counsel of Almighty God could make it from the beginning, but speaking as we speak of things, the argument of the apostle is that since he has done so much for us, we may be much more assured that we shall not now perish. The apostle wrote by inspiration these words for the strengthening and comfort of poor, erring, doubting ones, who feel so much of the time that they have little claim upon the promises of God. These words secure to them the assurance that since Christ died for them, under no circumstances can they ever perish. Neither life nor death, nor any creature, shall ever separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

Now, turning to the fourteenth verse, to which brother Mackey has called attention, we will say first that the expression, "Who is the figure of him that was to come," is the one specially named. This expression occurs in a parenthesis which embraces the words from the beginning of the thirteenth verse to the close of the seventeenth verse. This parenthesis is brought in as an explanation of portions of the argument preceding and following. Man's transgression through the sin of Adam, and redemption through Christ, is the theme in general, and in this parenthesis a more full explanation of the word of redemption through Christ is given. It is not needful that we should undertake to give an exposition of the whole connection. Adam was the figure of him that was to come. Notice first, that the expression is the figure. It is not *a* figure, but *the* figure. No other man ever was the figure of Christ. There are types and shadows of Christ and his work scattered all through the Old Testament, but Adam is the figure. But in what is he the figure of Christ? It appears to us that in the immediate connection this question is answered. On the one hand is the offense of one, bringing condemnation upon all men; on the other hand is the obedience of one, bringing salvation upon all his chosen. All the children of Adam die in him, while all the children of God are redeemed through the death of the second Adam. Through the offense of one man, Adam, many are dead; through the obedience of one, Christ, grace hath abounded unto many, that is, the grace of life, of life everlasting. The judgment is by one to condemnation, but the free gift is

also by one unto justification. By the one man's offense death reigned by the one man, Adam, and so on the other hand by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. Is it not clear that the figure intended here by the apostle consists in the oneness of Adam, and all who fell in him, compared with the oneness of Christ and all who are redeemed by him? Whatever else may be said concerning Adam as the figure of Christ, it seems clear to our mind that the one thought of the apostle in this connection is what we have just presented. And the argument of the apostle is, that just as all the posterity of our first father, Adam, partook of his sin and his condemnation through that sin, so all the children of God partake of the righteousness of their spiritual Head and live in him. And just as surely as all died in Adam, so surely shall all who are chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world live in him. And thus Jesus said, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

How much there is in all this wonderful chapter to encourage and cheer the trembling sinner's heart; a sinner saved by grace. First a sinner saved, and second, a sinner saved by grace. Thanks be unto God for such a free and full salvation; thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Dec. 28th, 1904, at the home of the bride's father, in Salisbury, Md., Levin T. Price and Miss Annie M. Smith, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

By the same, Jan. 4th, 1905, at the residence of the bride's grandfather, near Salisbury, Md., George Francis Adkins and Miss Laura Ann Adkins, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, Dec. 28th, 1904, at the Old School Baptist meeting-house at Nassaongo, George P. West, of Worcester Co., Md., and Miss Eva May Sermon, of Wicomico Co., Md.

By the same, Jan. 8th, 1905, near New Church, Va., John W. Bundick and Miss Susan S. Bloxom, both of Accomac Co., Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

It becomes my sad duty to send you the death notice of another loved one. One by one they are taken from us; this time it is our dear father, **Nathaniel D. Borthwick,** who died Dec. 15th, 1904, at his home near Rensselaerville, N. Y. He was born March 1st, 1823, being 81 years, 9 months and 14 days old. He was married to Roxanna Crippen Dec. 25th, 1845, who died Nov. 20th, 1894, and whose obituary appeared in the Signs. To them were born four daughters, two having preceded him to the world beyond. In the spring of 1847 he bought and moved on the farm where he ever after lived till the day of his death. He was a good, kind-hearted man, a neighbor to be trusted and relied on, ever ready to lend a helping hand in times of need, especially in sickness and death. He was respected and esteemed by all who knew him. He had been in very feeble health for four years, and the past year mostly confined to the house, but not confined to his bed; he gradually grew weak and helpless till the end for which he had so long wished and longed came so peacefully. "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep." I cannot wish him back, but O how I miss him, what a vacant place in our home. Father received a hope in Christ in the year 1853, (I think) and united with the New School Baptists at Rensselaerville, but in a short time he found he was not one with them, either in doctrine or experience, and was free to tell them why and where he differed. I have often heard him relate with much feeling and clearness some of his experience, and he has ever been a firm believer in God's predestination of all things, election, and in fact all Bible doctrine as believed and preached by the Old School Baptists. He had been a subscriber and reader of the Signs for many years; he enjoyed attending the meetings and associations of the Old Baptists, and his home was ever open to receive them. Two of his favorite hymns were 700 and 807 (Beebe's Collection). He was ever ready to help bear the burdens of the church, and although his name was not on the church book here, I fully believe that it was written in the Lamb's book of life, and I think I can safely say that the Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church feels that it has lost one of its best friends. He leaves to mourn, two daughters: Mrs. Peter Weidman, who is also a sister in the church, and the unworthy writer, together with six grandchildren, three brothers, three sisters and a host of relatives and friends, but we mourn not as those without hope, for we believe for him to die is gain.

Funeral services were held at the meeting-house Sunday, the 18th, when Elder John Clark spoke very comfortingly from Philippians iii. 20, 21, after which his body was laid to rest by the side of our mother. I believe they will awake with the likeness of the dear Redeemer, and they with us will be satisfied when we awake with his likeness. May we be reconciled to God's will in all things, knowing he doeth all things well.

ALSO,

Rebecka Matilda Borthwick Stanton (sister of the above) was born June 2nd, 1827, and died at the home of her son-in-law, Mr. George Palmer, Dec. 2nd, 1904, aged 77 years and 6 months. She was married to James Stanton, who died June 15th, 1882. To them were born four children, one son and three daughters, the son died a few years ago. Since the death of her husband she has lived with her children, being with her youngest daughter, Mrs. Palmer, near South Westerlo, N. Y., by whom she was tenderly cared for through her last sickness, which lasted several months. She leaves to mourn, three daughters, eight grandchildren, brothers, sisters and many relatives and friends, and while they have lost a good, kind mother and friend, we believe she has a home free from sin and sorrow, where pain and sickness never enter. Aunt Matilda was received in the fellowship of the Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church, and baptized Oct. 14th, 1860, where she remained a faithful member till death. She attended the meetings of the church when circumstances permitted, which was not often in later years, as she was usually quite a distance from the place of meeting. Another one of our little church has been called to their long home to realize that glorious change that you and I are waiting and hoping for; yes, glorious change, to leave this world of sin and sorrow, with all its cares and disappointments and afflictions, and ever be with the Lord.

ADDIE COOK.

RENSSELAERVILLE, N. Y.

IT becomes my painful duty, by request of the afflicted ones, to send you the following obituary notice for publication in the SIGNS. Many of your readers will remember the subject of this notice as a kind entertainer of the Old Baptists in her father's home in Delmar, and later in her own home in the city of Wilmington, Del., where she went to housekeeping after her marriage to Mr. John G. Jones a few years ago.

Died, at the residence of her father and mother, brother and sister Levin Hastings, in the village of Delmar, Del., on the 21st of November, 1904, **Mrs. Alice Elizabeth Jones,** wife of Mr. John G. Jones, of Wilmington, Del. She was born in Delmar, Del., Dec. 20th, 1877, making her 26 years, 10 months and 29 days old. She was married to Mr. Jones Nov. 5th, 1901. Too much cannot be said of the kindly, noble and affectionate qualities of this amiable woman, but it is not upon these that we base our hope for her as an heir to that unfading and incorruptible inheritance reserved of God in heaven for his saints, but upon an assurance that he was pleased to show mercy to her as a sinner of Adam's race, forgiving her sins and showing to her the path of life through faith in a once crucified but now risen and exalted Savior, who died to redeem her from the dominion of sin and the curse of the law, and to give her a place at his own right hand in glory. Some years ago she related to me her experience and testified her faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ, and her desire to unite with the church, but to her view the church was so holy and pure, and she herself such a vile sinner, she could not consent to offer herself, but her love to her Savior was constantly manifested by acts of love toward his disciples. It was her delight to serve the brethren in every way that she could. Her illness was typhoid fever, of which she was sick fifty-nine days. About the middle of August she came to her father's to assist in nursing her young brother, who was very ill with the same disease. Having been with him about four weeks, and seeing his convalescence begun, she was on the eve of returning to her own home in Wilmington, when she was stricken. All that medical skill and the loving care of her devoted husband, who faithfully attended her night and day, her loving parents, sister and other friends, was done for her, but without avail, God had ordered otherwise, deeming it best to take her to himself. We have this hope for her, that through the superabundant mercy of an ever gracious God, she now dwells with him in eternal glory. She leaves a devoted husband, father, mother, two brothers, one sister, a large circle of relatives and numerous close and intimate friends, all of whom feel their loss deeply, but would be submissive and say, "The will of God be done." To me Alice has been almost as one of my own children ever since I began to serve the church here as pastor, when she was but eleven years of age, and her early death has cast a gloom over me, but I know the Lord has done it, and that he orders all things well. May the good Lord comfort the weeping, sorrowing ones with the blessed consolations of the gospel.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., Jan. 6, 1905.

IT becomes our sad duty, by the request of the niece of the deceased, to record the death of our sister, **Miss Mary Beckley,** who passed gently from this life at her lifetime home in Reisterstown, Md., Sunday, Dec. 11th, 1904, in the 83rd year of her age, from the effects of bronchial pneumonia. She was a member of the Patapsco Old School Baptist church for many years. She was baptized about the year 1861, by Elder Kidwell, of Virginia, who at that time was serving that church once a month. For years

before this time her interest had been altogether with the people of God, and she delighted to be found in the courts of the Lord, and ever since her membership with the church she has been a most faithful, earnest, humble-hearted and sincere disciple of the Lord Jesus. It was our privilege to live in the same village with her for twenty-eight years, and to see her at her home almost every day of that time. She was always the same gentle, patient, lowly-minded woman, yet firm in the profession of her faith and ready always to confess her Lord. She had a very clear view of the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ, and was always firmly settled in the principles of doctrine which are inseparably connected with the atonement. She was not what would be called a great talker, but was a most pleasant companion to her friends, and was altogether respected by all who knew her. God in his providence gave her to pass a quiet life, and prolonged her days to a good old age. Grace reigned in her to the glory of God. We have heard her often deplore her own failures, not only in outward life, but in the very thoughts and feelings of her heart. She loved the assemblies of the saints, and to hear the word of God proclaimed was a constant joy to her. If she said but little about the preaching, her face was the witness of the satisfaction which she felt in listening to the word of God. For twenty-eight years it was our privilege to hold service in her house on the first Sunday afternoon of each month. The little gatherings there we shall never forget, nor the many times when we all realized that the presence of the Lord of the feast was with us. Her house was always open to all Old School Baptists, and nothing rejoiced her more than to welcome her friends to her home. In former years Elder Trott, Elder Grafton and others preached for the little church at Patapsco, with many brethren who would attend those meetings from time to time from the vicinity of Black Rock church, made her house their home on their way to and from these meetings; and to us her home was a home indeed, and we must testify to hundreds of tokens of kindness received at her hands during the many years in which we lived near her. Her family, nephews and nieces, and especially the one niece who spent the past many years with her, (Mrs. Mollie E. Erb) will miss her sadly, yet they, and we all, feel well assured that it was gain for her to die. It was often the case with her that she would speak of her approaching end, even years ago, and when she would do so it was without fear, and with an expression of her sure hope that at the last day she should be raised up from the grave and be forever with the Lord.

Elder J. T. Rowe, her pastor, was present at the funeral service, and spoke gracious and comforting words, as we are informed, to the comfort of the living. Her favorite hymn, No. 1225, (Beebe's Collection) was read upon the occasion. We desired greatly to be present, but in providence it was ordered otherwise. Paul said once, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." We doubt not that the same words apply to this dear, aged sister as well.

ALSO,

Departed this life on Thursday, Jan. 12th, at her residence in Hopewell, N. J., of diabetes, **Mrs. Jane Wyckoff** (formerly Voorhees), aged about 85 years.

The funeral service was held on Sunday afternoon at her late home. The text used by the writer, 2 Cor. v. 1, had been selected some three years ago by the deceased, and a favorite hymn, "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!" was read by request of the family. She leaves two brothers, three sisters, one son and one daughter to mourn her departure, yet in her death they have hope, therefore they do not mourn as those who have no hope.

Our aged sister was baptized into the fellowship of the church at Hopewell nearly fifty years ago by the then pastor, Elder Philander Hartwell. She lived a quiet, orderly, humble life all these years, and held continually the regard and esteem of the church and the community. Just a little before her departure she said to her daughter, "I am waiting to go." Then she said, "I want to go home." Her daughter said, "Mother, you are at home." "Yes," she said, "but I do not want to stay here." She was a woman of few words as a general thing, and would say but little as regarded her thoughts concerning the hope which she possessed, but now and then she would give expression to her confidence in the dear Redeemer and his salvation, to those who spoke to her of these things. When she was by herself she read the Scriptures, and evidently found strength and consolation in her old age in them. The dear daughter who is left will especially miss her presence, because she has spent all her life caring for her mother, and especially in her declining years. May the blessed Lord grant unto her and to all the family such grace as is needful to sustain under affliction and trial.—ED.]

Azariah James Pitman was born in Cooper Co., Mo., Nov. 7th, 1827, and grew to manhood in that State. At the age of twenty-one years he was married to Miss Louisa Savage, and with her father (the late Dr. J. M. Savage) and family crossed the great plains to Oregon with ox teams, in the year 1850, starting from Jackson Co. in April, and six months later arrived at The Dalles, after a long and perilous journey, in which they faced the hostile Indian, the scourge of cholera, and felt the pangs of approaching famine. From The Dalles they reached the Willamette Valley by way of Columbia River, in hand boats, rowed most of the way by Indians, and settled in the famous Waldo Hills. He lived in Oregon until 1879, when with his family he moved to Klickitat Co., Wash., where he made his home for twenty years,

then returned to a beautiful suburban home, where (near the city of Salem) his remaining three years were spent in peace and quiet in the sacred companionship of his faithful, loving wife, and the ministrations of his precious children, passing away on the 15th of June, 1904, full of years and brightest hopes, aged nearly 77.

He was a pioneer in its fullest sense; one of those brave, stalwart souls, whose life-work seems to be to beat down the impediments to a higher and nobler civilization. He was a useful and forceful factor in any community, laboring always for the betterment of society. Not being satisfied with Methodism, in which he was reared, and having that faith both sure and steadfast, he found a home with the fold, that little flock known as the Old School Baptists, and for fifty years was a faithful member. Its doctrines were refreshing to him as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. As he grew in age, his faith grew stronger and his hope grew brighter, and with joyful anticipation he awaited the summons that called him to the rest of the fathers and prophets, regretting only to leave his dear ones, especially her who had for nearly threescore years so faithfully and lovingly shared with him the joys and sorrows of a life containing a full measure of toil, hardship and privation, yet he felt that his life had been crowned with loving-kindness, and he fell asleep gently as one who "Draws the drapery of his couch about him, and lies down to pleasant dreams."

H. H. SAVAGE.

DIED—At her residence near Harrisonville, Fulton Co., Pa., the fourth Sunday in October, 1904, **Christiance Reed,** aged 62 years, 1 month and 14 days. Sister Reed was baptized in the fellowship of the Sidling Hill church about thirty years ago, by the late Elder Joseph Correll, of which she remained a faithful member, always filling her seat when her health would permit. She had been a great sufferer for about twenty-one years; first afflicted with epilepsy, and afterward being paralyzed in her limbs; her speech was affected to some extent. She leaves a husband, one son and one daughter to mourn their loss, beside the church, but our loss is her gain. "Be still and know that I am God."

The writer tried to talk to those that assembled, from a portion of Scripture she had chosen to be used at her funeral: Matthew vi. 19, 20.

ALSO,

At his son's residence, near Pleasant Ridge, **Sampson J. Mellott,** aged 75 years, 11 months and 13 days. Brother Mellott was baptized by the late Elder Thomas Rose, in the fellowship of the Fairview church, over thirty years ago, and served the church as deacon. He was as faithful to his meetings as any man that ever lived; he was always a very hard working man, but fortune never seemed to be his lot; he died a poor man as to this world's goods, but rich in faith. He leaves ten children, five sons and five daughters; one son and three daughters are members of the Sidling Hill church, and one daughter is a member of New Valley church, of Virginia. A number of grandchildren are also left, besides the church, to mourn their loss, but our loss is his gain. Many will remember the kindness of the family which is now broken up, for it was one of the very best of pleasures for them to entertain the people who attended our meetings.

The writer tried to preach to a large congregation at the Sidling Hill church on Friday, Jan. 13th, 1905, from 2 Timothy iv. 6–8, after which the body was laid to rest, asleep in Jesus till the resurrection morn.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

SISTER **Emily Booker** came here to live with me the 24th day of November, Thanksgiving day; she was taken sick with pneumonia Dec. 12th, and died Dec. 21st. The funeral was held here at my home. Elder Beal read the twenty-third Psalm and spoke from it, and "Rock of Ages" was sung; then she was taken to Libby Hill cemetery, in South Gardiner, and buried beside her husband, James H. Booker, who died in 1901. Two faithful, loving sons were with her through her sickness. There was no hope from the first. She was 75 years of age, and had been a member of the Bowdoinham church about thirty-five years. She was an earnest christian and a lover of the truth. She leaves three sons, Marshall and George, of New Rochelle, N. Y., and Herbert, of Richmond, Maine, where her home was. I feel that sister Booker only came to me to die, and it was all in the purpose of our wise and loving God.

ELLA RAYMOND.

BOWDOINHAM, Maine, Jan. 10, 1905.

[SISTER Raymond has requested us to prepare an obituary of sister Booker, but we deem it needful to add but a few words to the above; her words are appropriate and true. We have known brother and sister Booker both for the past thirty-five years, until God called them home. They were both earnest and faithful members and sincere lovers of the truth, and lovers of those who love the truth of salvation by grace. While decided in their faith, both of them had very soul-humbling views of themselves before God. We always felt that it was good to be in their company, and to see them in the house of God, and to hear them speak of Jesus and his salvation. We have in past years often visited their home when at South Gardiner at the meetings held there. We rejoice in the assurance that they are at rest in the Lord.—ED.]

ON Thursday, Dec. 15th, at 5:30 p. m., **Maud Louise Waddey,** beloved daughter of B. F. and the late Henrietta Waddey, of Washington D. C.

B. F. WADDEY,

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 6, 1905.

Mary M. Hunt, widow of William H. **Battershall,** died at West Davenport, N. Y., of pleuro-pneumonia, April 23rd, 1904. She was born at Kaaterskill, N. Y., April 21st, 1826, being the oldest child of Jehiel and Maria Hunt, and was married to W. H. Battershall in 1863. Before her marriage she was much troubled on account of her sins, and searched the Scriptures continually, hoping to find something to bring her encouragement or relief. I do not know just when she experienced peace and comfort in Jesus. It was many years before she felt to ask a home with the people of God. Believing in salvation by grace, and grace alone, she was drawn to visit the Old School Baptist Church at Otego; hearing there the doctrine she believed, and feeling a love and fellowship for the people, and being encouraged by them, she had strength given her to speak of her trials and travels and desires; was received, and baptized the following day, Sept. 6th, 1896, by Elder Balas Bundy. She talked little herself, but enjoyed sound preaching, and loved to hear others talk of the things of the kingdom of God. Her illness was short, and her death a severe shock to me, as she was my sister in the flesh, and the only one left of my father's family beside myself. As I stood by her bedside a few moments before she passed away, every trace of suffering had left her face.

Her sister, M. J. HALLENBECK.

My only grandson, **Edward Pembroke Dorsey,** died on the morning of Jan. 16th, 1905, of internal tumor, aged nearly 36 years. His sufferings were long and intense, which he endured without murmuring. In every relation in life his conduct was most exemplary. Besides his aged grandmother, he left a faithful, loving wife, six children, a devoted sister and a large circle of relatives to mourn their irreparable loss, yet we mourn not as they without hope, for we have every assurance that for him to die was gain. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

HARRIET M. LARUE.

Wickliffe, Va.

God has taken from our little church at Macedonia our dear old brother, **M. D. Cox.** He was born May 5th, 1826, and departed this life Oct. 6th, 1904, at the age of 78 years, 5 months and 1 day. He joined the church about twenty years ago, and served the church as deacon as long as he was able. Brother Cox was faithful, and a firm believer in salvation by grace in time and eternity. He leaves eleven children, five boys and six girls, all of whom are grown. In the resurrection he will have the image of Jesus. I say to the bereaved children, Weep not for your dear father, for he is asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep. Fond nature must be broken for better ties above, where we shall be complete in everlasting love.

J. W. KERLEY.

Currie, Tenn.

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H. J. O'Bannon, Va., $1.00; Mrs. John Pettet, N. Y., $2.00.—Total, $3.00.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 73. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1905. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

REVELATION XVII. 5.

"AND upon her head was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth."

DEAR BROTHER H. B. JONES:—In compliance with your request, and with the help of the Lord, I will try to write upon the above quoted Scripture. To go into it, as it appears to me, fully, would subject any man to the wrath of the world or Babylon. I believe, if I have a right mind on the subject, and it was fully detailed in all respects, the avalanche of wrath against me would certainly be overwhelming; but the will of God be done.

To begin with, my mind leads me to Daniel; he said, "I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. [I interpret the great sea here to mean nations, languages and tongues.] And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another."—Dan. vii. 2, 3. Daniel mentions the sea in both verses. If we follow closely the reading of this vision it will be seen that it is a continuation of the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, and the angel explains to him that this vision was four kingdoms, including Babylon, which was then ruling over all the people in the world. "The first beast was like a lion, and had eagle's wings." He said, "I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made to stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it."—Dan. vii. 4. In this verse are reflections to the mind that are sad indeed, when led by faith, as was Daniel. The human mind cannot comprehend the dire results that followed the consolidation of church and state, or the incorporation of the methods and practices of old Babylon into modern Babylon. Daniel foresaw the swallowing up of his own people in this voxtex of despair, and that they would be included in these abominations. "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."—Dan. ix. 27. Paul says, "But he who was of the bond woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which

things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children."—Gal. iv. 23–25. So then Daniel's first beast, which represented old Babylon, was like a lion which had eagle's wings upon him. History informs us that the Assyrian emblem upon their flag was an eagle; and this Assyrian or Ninevite government being destroyed by Babylon or the lion, partook of their religious superstitions and adopted their man-made gods, and man-made customs, and man-made worship. Thus we have the eagle's wings, or the religious doctrines of Nineveh incorporated in him. I will add that here on the Euphrates and the Tigris rivers were all men-made religions, and here, too, from the earliest dawn the true God had his worshipers, for down these valleys journeyed after the flood, Noah and his descendants. It was here that the tower of Babel was built, and the confusion of languages took place; it was here, according to the best information that can be obtained, that Noah was buried at Calneh; it was here that Abraham was called of God to leave his own native land, and sojourn in a strange land; in fact, it was here that the flow of people to all parts of the world began, carrying with them their Cainish idea of hand-made religion, which I think is referred to in Genesis chapter two, verses ten to fourteen: "And a river went out of Eden to water the garden." Read in Genesis as named above.

These four rivers, described as they are, and being in Asia and Africa, the first part of the world settled, became the source from which flowed out all the isms created by the mind of man, for upon their banks the first nations sprang up, and the first altars were erected to hand-made gods, and upon their waters sailed the first crafts that went in search of wealth and commerce, and there, too, contending hosts came in contact with each other, until all were finally swallowed up by Nineveh on the Tigris. Then the eagle was supreme mistress of the world until the lion Babylon arose and destroyed Nineveh. Then, inheriting the superstitions of Nineveh, the wings were given to it. For changing from the Tigris this universal empire with all the religions of the world, flowed steadily onward and centered in Babylon on the Euphrates river, and from hence, believe me, it has permeated the whole world, and is in full force to-day. I do not know that I am right, but I am trying to show in as short a way as possible, that as all temporal power in the world centered in Babylon, so also did all religions centre there, and as they all flowed from there first, after the flood, and centered back there before its downfall, so they all started from her accumulated wealth and greatness, polished by man to suit human reason and the human ear, to traverse the world again. Hence all these visions point to Babylon that was, and is not, and yet is. And the Scriptures, almost exclusively, in dealing with false religions and governments, call them Babylon.

But I must proceed. "And behold another beast, a second like to a bear."—Dan. vii. 5. This beast represents the Persian empire which overthrew Babylon. "After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads." This represents Alexander the Great, or the Grecian empire which succeeded Persia. Had I time to

detail the matter, I believe that it could be made to appear what these wings and heads represent, and how closely connected they are with that mystery as we approach nearer to it. Now listen, Daniel says, "I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth."—Dan. vii. 7. Here centered all the other beasts, with every known idolatry of man included. Every Pagan relic was manifested in him; he was the legs of Nebuchadnezzar's image, with ten toes, and represents the Roman empire in her Pagan state. Then Daniel says, "I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things."—Dan. vii. 8. What a vision! What a transformation! Pagan Rome changing to Papal Rome, though all customs are retained and delegated to all her harlot daughters. My brother, it is terrible to think about, and may we not be like Daniel, for he says, "I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me."—Dan. vii. 15. It troubled him, for in this beast he saw the enemy and adversary that would destroy his people and Jerusalem. And in this little horn he saw the rising of the "Mystery Babylon, or Papal Rome which should destroy the saints of God, and persecute with relentless fury the Jews through all ages. What a terrible history could be written here as to how this little horn poured out the blood of the people of God, and burned them at the stake, waging war and strife against any and all who opposed her dogmas.

Daniel again says, "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy."—Rev. xiii. 1. Notice the similarity to the vision of Daniel. Here we have Mystery Babylon. Here modern Babylon enters the arena under a disguise, and proclaims her abominations as the gospel of the Son of God. Now, my brother, listen: "And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, [the Grecian emblem,] and his feet were as the feet of a bear, [the Persian emblem,] and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: [the old Babylon emblem,] and the dragon [Pagan Rome] gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority."—Rev. xiii. 2. So you see that this Scripture confirms all that I have been trying to say, viz: that old Babylon bequeathed all her idolatries to this new Babylon, and we see them every day practiced, if I am correct. John on Patmos saw what Daniel saw, and when he saw the mystery of Babylon, or Papal Rome rise up, he describes her as having the same features as Daniel's four beasts, or kingdoms had: for instance, the bear, the leopard, the lion. Some object to the little horn being called a religious order, and say it represents a government; this is why he is so dreadful, and has done so much harm. It is a well known fact that the church of Rome claims temporal power as well as spiritual, and for hundreds of years she waged war on all that opposed her.

I have written this much for the sole purpose of locating this Babylon, and have tried to impress upon you this idea that from Cain to the present time, all men-made creeds have centered in this Babylon and her harlot daughters, the only difference being that ancient Baby-

lon worshiped idols openly and altogether, while modern Babylon pretends to worship the true God, while yet retaining all the idolatry of the former.

We read again in Revelation, "And they worshiped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshiped the beast."—Rev. xiii. 4. It seems useless to tell of the union of church and state by Constantine, it was then that the dragon gave his seat and power to the beast, then began in earnest the confusion of the world. Having inherited the wealth of the world, and being backed by the arms of a world's empire, Babylon with her wise men, her soothsayers and astrologers, compounded all the religions of the world to their own liking; taking from Pagan Rome the custom of putting women forward in her work, also Easter and Christmas. They adorned Babylon with holy days, and saints days, and pleasant tales woven and spun for every occasion, offering salvation and eternal life to all who would accept her dogmas, and death to those that refused; dead relatives were brought into remembrance to turn the wayward, and every imaginary tale is told to swell the number of her legions, the wealth of kings has flowed into her coffers, and penitents at her shrines heap millions of gold into her treasuries. With this wealth she builds her fine temples and plies her craft in every part of the world; flattery where flattery is needed, and condolence for her mourners, abound in her; such is Babylon in her greatness and beauty. John said, when he saw her arrayed in her beauty, "When I saw her, I wondered with great admiration." Thus the beast that was and is not, even he is the eighth. This is Babylon, the eighth great world empire.

But let us return to Daniel: "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them."—Dan. vii. 21. I merely quote this to sustain the ideas presented above, and I may use it again. "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and shall stand forever."—Dan. ii. 44. "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars."—Rev. xii. 1. See the difference, the kingdom of God is in men's hearts, and it seeks no support from any government on earth; on the contrary, the faith and hope of his people are in him, they trust in him entirely for guidance and help, thus breaking in pieces and consuming all these kingdoms. While reference may be made in this, to temporal power, I think rather it refers to denominational kingdoms, which, when the child of God comes to see the truth, are consumed in his heart: and all that was beautiful and pleasant to him before now becomes obnoxious. The temples and palaces of Babylon now allure him no more, and with all the fascinating appeals of the wise and subtle in Babylon, there is no longer anything attractive to him, all her glory and greatness have departed from him, and though entreated by parents and friends, he now turns his back upon this Babylon and her idols, and goes home to his real friends, and tells them what the Lord has done for him. All other kingdoms are consumed within him, and he has heard the voice which says, "Come out of her, my people." He had been raised up to love the winning ways of Babylon, to believe in her sor-

ceries, be enthusiastic in her support, to love her institutions, and zealously pray for her prosperity in the saving of souls, with a sympathy world-wide, so much so that he took in with one grasp all the heathen. But now the time has come for this child of grace to come out from the four beasts, and he regards with sorrow the place of his former abode, and says, "Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls."—Rev. xviii. 16. His eyes are now opened and Babylon is fallen. And here, my brother, is the mystery: that one should turn against reason, and the judgment of the world, yea, even against father and mother, brother and sister; a wonderful mystery that no man can comprehend or accomplish of himself. The power of God alone can accomplish the downfall of Babylon in any man's heart. Then the child of God is in that state where no voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall any more be heard, and no craftsman of whatever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee, and the sound of the millstone shall no more be heard in thee. (Rev. xviii. 22.) Now this child of God has had plenty of her arts, and her former practices are not found in him; he never will again hunt out any of her craftsmen to console him: he shuts his eyes and ears to her allurements and her crying, for Babylon is fallen, and her flatterers are heard no more in her. The mystery is complete, and he wonders the balance of his days whether the change is real or not.

"And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee; for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived."—Rev. xviii. 23. I think the light of the candle is Babylonish preaching, and the bridegroom and bride represent men-made gods, and the churches and societies that follow them, and claim to be saved by them. But when the child of God, who has been caught in her meshes, is made to see the truth that has been delivered to him, he can never again come to see by the light of this candle, or to hear the voice of this bridegroom or this bride, and this brings an answer to your last question. When the child of God quits Babylon, her merchants and craftsmen mourn over her misfortune and lament her calamity, for they cannot sell him any more merchandise, or get any more money out of him, for he is tired of her sorceries, and she is forever fallen with him.

I will now close; please cast the mantle of charity over all this.

Your brother in hope,

W. C. ROBINSON.

TATUM, Tex., April 24, 1896.

[THE above article was found not long since, among some papers of the late Elder Benton Jenkins, where it had lain ever since his death, several years ago. We take pleasure in presenting it to our readers now. The above explanation will account for the long delay in its publication.—ED.]

[THE two following letters will speak for themselves, they were sent to the SIGNS for publication, not by the writers, but by the recipient of each. We publish them in order, according to the dates upon which they were written. Explanatory notes came with each one, which we omit publishing. We do not doubt

that many others will find both letters good and profitable, as well as the dear brother and sister to whom they were written.—ED.]

FARMINGTON, Ill., Nov. 20, 1904.

MY DEAR SISTER:—I will this evening try to pen you a little in the form of a letter, and in answer to yours that I received some time ago. I was glad to hear from you, and I hope that you will overlook my delay in writing to you, the main reason has been that I have had nothing to write. I feel dead to all spiritual life, so much so that I feel to be a perfect blank. I could only tell you the same sorrowful story of which you also speak, that through fear of death I am all my lifetime subject to bondage. As Elder Chick said in his last editorial upon the ten virgins, I am one of the foolish ones. I feel satisfied of one thing, viz: that the children of God are not all tried in the same way.

I see in the last SIGNS that a brother by the name of Yeoman has written from Colorado; he said that he had no fears of death. I remember that Elder Staton once said he was glad that he was born to die. I sometimes think that the reason I am so much left to doubts and fears is that I am so sinful, more than others, and have a more wicked heart. If I am a child of God, I have to suffer the chastening rod daily, and am left to go mourning on account of my wicked heart, but the Lord knows all about it.

Dear sister, I now take my pen to write some more; I have been looking over your letter this morning and thinking of you. Well, I feel to say that though you feel you have no hope, if you have none, then I have none. I want you to believe that I am led just as you are, and now, dear sister, I shall try to give you some of the evidences that I have, and which are founded on the experience of the ancient saints of whom we read in the Scriptures. Let us search them, and if our spirit bears witness with theirs, we shall not cast away our confidence that has great recompense of reward. "For ye have need of patience."—Heb. x. 36. "Ye have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin."—Heb. xii. 4. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." "But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." The apostle says, "The law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin." We find John saying, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves." Another says, There is no man liveth and doeth good and sinneth not.

Now, my dear sister, if we look into the body of flesh we find no good thing there, but every one who is born of God has Christ in them the hope of glory. There are two principles then in the child of God, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. It is sin that causes the warfare; sin and holiness. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." It is this light that makes manifest to us as a light shining in a dark place; by that light in us we see all manner of sinfulness and corruption in our nature; we have the thorn in the flesh, and are not able to eradicate it. Therefore the apostle says, "The good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." And then he says, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Then he says, "I see another law in my members, warring against the

law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." And so he cries out like you and I, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Now do not we feel the same? And are we not companions with the apostle? He said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." And again he said, I am less than the least of all the saints, for he still had in remembrance that he had persecuted the saints; and so we still have in remembrance our cruel sins, and as David cried out, so we say, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned." Yet our sins were laid upon the Savior when he suffered on the cross, and he, too, like us, felt forsaken, and cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Shall he suffer and we go clear? Could the head so suffer, and the body escape? We are bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh; he was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief; he was tempted in all points like as we are.

The apostle has said, "We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen, is not hope: * * * but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Faith is the evidence of things not seen. Now seeing that we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us, my sister, lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race set before us, looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. I think the sin of unbelief is my most besetting sin. We find that God's literal people, the children of Israel, murmured even when the bread was in their mouths. They said, Give us flesh to eat. He granted them their request, but he sent leanness into their souls. They were a rebellious people, so are his spiritual people; they denied their leader Moses; they did not know what had become of him, and so John, the forerunner of Jesus, who baptized him, when he was cast into prison sent messengers to know whether he was the Christ, or whether they looked for another? And they were commanded to go and tell John again that the dead are raised, that the blind see, and that to the poor the gospel is preached; thus was the power manifested to his unbelieving heart. So unless we have the power of God manifested to us in raising us from the dead state in which we are by nature, and in opening the prison and bringing us out, as was Peter, we have no power. The man that was born blind, had the bright evidence that whereas he was once blind, now he saw, so you could not realize that you are a sinner unless your eyes had been opened. Then, dear sister, this Scripture is left for our encouragement, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." Is not this strong evidence? We love them because we see the image of Jesus in them. This love far transcends all creature love, because we hear them testify of Jesus, and they all have been taught by the same teacher to know that they are poor sinners, and that their only hope is in the almighty Savior. Some seem to lie closer in heart to us than others, because they have been led along through the wilderness, of which dear brother Scates in Canada speaks; he comes so near to me in his writings. All are led by the same Spirit, but some travel more down in the deep waters than others, but I believe that all feel as little, helpless children, depending alone upon the almighty

Redeemer, with all praise to him in time and in eternity.

Dear sister, do you not feel poor in spirit? Then indeed you are blessed. Do you not hunger and thirst after righteousness? Then you are blessed. Do you not feel poor and needy? Do you not feel sick of sin? The "whole need not a physician; but they that are sick." He did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Are you not repenting every day, crying, Lord, save, I perish? If we could do anything to make our salvation sure to us so that we would have no reason to doubt, would we not do that thing? But we know that our arm is too short, so we have to do as did the children of Israel at the Red Sea, "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord."

I feel that my time here is not long, I hardly expect to live the winter out. I have outlived my allotted time long ago, and have been living on borrowed time. I am now past my three score and ten years. The Lord has ever been good to me, and I often wonder why he has permitted me to live so long, while so many who have been useful have been taken away. My lot has been cast in pleasant places, I have a good wife and eight children, five of whom belong to the church of which I am a member. We are alone now; three of our daughters are in Iowa, one is in Greely, fifteen miles west of Denver, Colorado, one is in Chicago, and three live here, so you see that we have much writing to do. I hope that you will excuse me for delaying in writing you, but however, I have written enough, such as it is, to weary you, enough to cause you to say, It is enough. Should there be anything in this poor letter that is of any comfort to you, give to God all the praise.

Your unworthy brother,

E. D. VARNES.

BALTIMORE, Md., Dec. 8, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER:—This morning I will write you a few lines, that you may know I received your most excellent letter on Thanksgiving day, and it was surely good news from a far country. I have read it over and over again, time after time, and believe me, it seems sweeter each time I read it; O that I could write a little like your letter. I can say that no one could have written a letter like yours to me unless enabled by the Lord. Words fail me to tell the beautiful and comforting things that were in it for your poor sister, and I shed tears of joy while reading it.

I read it to dear sister Ennis, she came to see me on Tuesday, and she thought it so good. Both her husband and herself are members, and I love them dearly, and I believe that they love me, yet I cannot see why. There were so many things in your letter that came home to me. O how it all seemed to raise my little hope, which appeared to be gone. Your experience is so good, I am glad there is some one else like poor, unworthy me. It is not that I want any one else to feel as I do, but I hope that you, who are more worthy than I, have the same trials that I have. Thus I have reason to hope that I am one of the little ones, though less than the least of all. Yes, I feel poor in spirit, and less than nothing, and vanity, I cannot of myself so much as think one good thought; and if it depends upon myself, or anything that I have done, or can do, to save myself, then I know that I am lost forever, for I am the chief of sinners, I freely own with Paul, and if I am a christian, I

am the least of all.

There are times when these words are sweet to me, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." Yes, dear brother and sister, if my poor heart is not deceived, I do love them, their company is sweet, their union is dear, it is my great desire to be with them, and hear them tell of their joys and sorrows.

"How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
When those who love the Lord
In one another's peace delight,
And thus fulfill his word."

Once when dear Elder Rowe was here at night, and there had been preaching, and afterwards all were talking, I told him that I would love to hear them sing the hymn beginning, "My dearest friends in bonds of love, whose hearts the sweetest union prove," as that hymn seemed to express my feelings, and they sang it. Sister Johnson said she did not remember ever seeing it before; and we all did enjoy the meeting so much. While I was afflicted and could not meet with them, they came to me. While the Lord afflicted on the one hand, he graciously sustained on the other; it was good for me to be afflicted. It was not pleasant at the time, but afterward it seemed to yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness. I did, at that time, enjoy some of the most pleasant seasons of my life. When I would get low down in the valley the dear brethren and Elder Rowe would often come and I would tell him how I felt, that I had no right among the Lord's dear people, and how beautifully he would explain things to me, and how encouraged I was to hear him tell of these things.

I want to say to you that I would never tire of reading a letter like the one that you wrote me. Whenever you feel like writing, do so. Please let me send it on to the SIGNS for publication, it no doubt will reach the heart of many a poor child of God, I shall want the letter back again, for I want to keep it while I live. I think sometimes that this will not be long, as I have trouble with my heart, and have a bad cough. I have been at the meeting but twice since I came home. I am not able to go, and I am very sorry; but the Lord knows what is best for us. May he give to us strength equal to our day. O that I could at all times say, Thy will be done, and not mine. May I never bring reproach upon the cause I love. Pray for me, that the Lord will be with me in six troubles, and in the seventh not forsake me. If we meet no more on earth, may we meet where parting will be no more, where there will be no more sin or sorrow. I firmly believe that this will be your happy lot when you are done with earth and earthly things. O what a happy thought that there we shall see him for ourselves, and not another. As you have borne the image of the earthly, so shall you bear the image of the heavenly.

"Jesus died and rose for you,
What more could the Redeemer do?"

Yes, he suffered and died, that poor sinners might live. Was ever love so great? Was ever grace so free?

I hope these lines will find you both well, and enjoying the smiles of your heavenly Father. Please excuse this lengthy letter, when you have read it, commit it to the flames.

With much love, I am your unworthy sister,

LIZZIE GRAFTON.

WINCHESTER, Tenn., Dec. 17, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER:—I inclose five dollars for the renewal of my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the next two and a half years. I do this notwithstanding the little hope I have of living through so long a period as that to enjoy the able and sound reading matter published by both its editor, our very dear brother Chick, and its able corps of correspondents. My trouble is not old age so much as the feeble state of my health, the result of a case of "la grippe" contracted last April. It was about the fifth or sixth time that I have had it, and this makes me think that the end is not far off. This feeble state of my health is the only excuse I have to offer for allowing three or four months to elapse since the expiration of my subscription, before renewing. My memory was always deficient, but grows more so as old age comes upon me, and it often fails to carry me to the execution of my purposes and plans. I suppose this would not be quite so much the case but for the feeble state of my health. I am only a little past sixty-five years. I have but little expectation of reaching the allotted three score years and ten. But I have a hope, and I trust that I am resigned to the will of the Lord God of heaven and earth. That hope I would not exchange for all the wealth and splendor of a hundred such worlds as this, feeble and flickering as it often seems. I dare not assert more than this hope.

I cannot understand how any one professing to be a follower of the Lord Jesus can take issue with the position held by the SIGNS, and especially is it strange that any Primitive Baptists should differ. All professors of the christian religion claim to believe in the divinity of the triune God. If he is God he is certainly the Sovereign of the universe, absolutely so, and omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. All who claim the name of christian profess to concede all these attributes to Deity. Upon what other foundation can the christian religion rest save upon his divinity and sovereignty? We are told that he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." If anything is left out of his unlimited predestination and purpose, it must come to pass by chance, and this world is then, in part at least, a chance world; surely none of them will admit that. But this is where their own premise, reasoned to a logical and consistent conclusion, carries them; they cannot escape this conclusion. It will not at all suffice to say that God does not decree some things, but rather suffers or allows them to transpire. If he allows an event to transpire and it is not embraced in his purpose, there must be another sovereign being in the universe other than the God of heaven, a being co-equal and coeval with him, or at least sufficiently so to be able to cause his will to stand along by the side of the will of God. A theory that presupposes the existence of such a being is destructive to a belief of the divinity and infinity of the only true and living God, the great I AM, the first and great cause of all things, and who created all things. It is akin to sacrilege and profanation, because it divides and abridges the sovereignty of God. To say that he allows or suffers the existence of a thing, in no wise lessens or removes his responsibility for its existence, if we have any right to speak of responsibility at all with regard to the God of heaven. Just think of the idea of God's responsibility. To whom is he responsible or accountable? The expression is but a part of the readiness of the religious world to sit in judgment

constantly upon the mighty and perfect work of the Almighty God. They are very much afraid that predestination in its fullness makes God the author of sin. In Isaiah we are told, "I make peace, and create evil." But it is said that this means affliction and punishment for sin, &c. Can there be such a thing as affliction, punishment or evil consequence of any sort that is not the direct effect of sin, or that does not in itself manifest the fruit of sin? If then our God is the author of the consequence of sin, must not the sin itself be predestinated? I cannot conceive of the existence of sin outside of his divine and holy decree. It is a part of the economy of the universe, else it would not be in the world. As to why it is so, dare any man ask? "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" Why men are not content with ascertaining the revealed facts in relation to God without calling into question the reason or purpose that moved him to execute or decree these facts, passes my understanding. A fact once ascertained to be of God, or by his decree, ought to be accepted implicitly, without doubt or misgiving, as being right, just and holy. We ought to be content with the things revealed, without inquiring into the things unrevealed.

Any theory that limits the decree of God to the things that are pleasing in the sight of men in their weak and vain conception of holiness, has in it all the germs of Arminianism. From it springs all their proud enterprises for capturing the world for Christ; it leads into Missionary boards, Sunday schools, Theological and Sectarian schools, a salaried ministry, and all other man-made schemes to popularize the churches so-called with the world, and it is as illogical and unreasonable as to address the gospel to alien or dead sinners, such as in nature are utterly unconcerned about heaven, except from a sense of fear, the fear of the evil one and not the fear of God which is the beginning of wisdom. With all their literature, science and worldly learning generally, it is not in their philosophy to know how impossible it is for man in a state of nature to take the first step in the work of salvation. They all, except the Campbellites, are agreed that the first step in the process of salvation is repentance, and yet it never occurs to them how impossible it is for one of the sons or daughters of Adam to repent. All are agreed that repentance means sorrow for something. The very last thing that man in a state of nature will wish to do is to make himself sorry on any account; he loves pleasure, the pleasures of sin, too well for that; he is too much in love with himself to be sorry on account of anything that he has ever discovered in himself. Again, it does not occur to these false teachers, who preach another gospel which is not another, that the true gospel defines repentance, that repentance which is necessary in salvation, as godly sorrow that needs not to be repented of. So then, repentance is that to which man would never voluntarily betake himself; repentance will have godly characteristics or elements in it, and whenever it comes into the heart or life or soul of man, it is because Christ has already come into that soul as the hope of glory.

But why pursue the subject further? The popular religions of the day are full of absurdities, but your valuable space will not allow sufficient length to this article to essay the exposure of others. Now let me say that as long as I am able to pay for the SIGNS and to read it I must have it; there is no periodical equal to it. This is said not with invidiousness

toward other deserving and representative journals of our faith. In this connection I desire to urge earnestly upon the brethren and sisters to continue to write those humble, contrite narratives of experience, which never fail to interest deeply, even so weak and wicked a wretch as your correspondent. And those who write those able expositions of the deep, spiritual truth of our holy religion as it is set forth in the holy word, surely will not desist. Let the good work go on. As for the editorials, their merit cannot be measured.

Now do with this as you may judge best; my love for every one who is connected with our dear family paper is such that you need have no fear of offending me.

I remain your unworthy brother, if one at all, WM. P. TOLLEY

APPIN, Ont. Jan. 12, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER EDITOR:—I inclose some thoughts I wrote, that you may dispose of as you think best, and I shall not feel the least offended if you send them to the waste-basket, as I am well aware they are but very weak, feeble expressions on spiritual experience, and not what I had hoped to be able to write when I took my pen. They were written some time ago, and I hoped I might have been able to write something that would have better satisfied my mind, but since then I have had no desire, or rather, no feeling to write; my mind seems entirely barren. I do not wish my name published with it if you think best to publish it at all. I am glad that you are given strength, ability and the will to continue to publish the SIGNS; may you be given strength as your day and need. How often I think of dear brother Benton's last article: "Let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him." To me it was a heart-searching article. O the cross is hard to bear, and I feel that to you it must be doubly hard since your companion has gone and left you, as it were, to bear it in a measure alone, and yet I realize, as I hope, I have experienced in days that are past that God is able to supply all your needs according to his riches in Christ Jesus. He is able, as is said, and I hope the poor, unworthy writer has experienced it; when you pass through the waters they shall not overflow, neither shall the flame kindle upon you; but these bright experiences of the long ago with me seem very dim, and I fear they will never return. May the Lord prosper and comfort you in your work and labor for the truth's sake, is my desire.

Some time ago in replying to a short note I sent you with a friend's subscription, you said in acknowledgment, "Write for the SIGNS again," with some other encouraging words, which surprised as well as comforted me. I did not then think I would write again for a long time, if ever, but I find I cannot control my mind, actions or thoughts, but am controlled by a power other than self in natural as well as spiritual things, and find the truth of Jeremiah's words: "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Many times have I laid out plans for worldly and natural things only to find them all frustrated and turned aside by the great Ruler of all things. In spiritual things my former hopes of growing better and stronger as I grew in years and experience have been blasted, even more sadly and bitterly than my worldly hopes and aspirations, so that after thirty years of making an open profession of faith in Jesus Christ, and love for the brethren and the cause of truth, instead of my

faith and love becoming stronger, it seems at times as if the last faint spark of life was about to be crushed out, and my walk and conversation, which I had hoped would be an example to believers, is such that no good can be said of it, and I can truly say I am ashamed of it. Full of vanity and worldly-mindedness outwardly, and inwardly too bad to be expressed in words.

A short time after receiving your note, one night as I lay in bed, the words of the psalmist came into my mind with comfort and power: "But as for me."—Psalms lxxii. O, I felt, here is one like poor me, he feels himself different from the rest of God's children. Truly God is good to Israel, but I am not like the rest; they have clean hearts, but I am all unclean, full of envy and every other foolish and hateful thing. I look around me and see how good and prosperous and happy they can all be, but my life is almost crushed by the weight of sin, as well as the many conflicts with the world, the flesh and the devil, so that I have many times said with rebellious Jonah, "It is better for me to die than to live." But the psalmist is not the only one in the Scriptures who expressed their feeling of being, as it were, alone, for from the beginning of time the people of God have been, as it were, isolated from the world in their feelings, and often have I felt support and comfort in calling to mind how the Lord called Abraham "alone," and how it is said he went out, not knowing whither he went, and O my soul, how it seems to me I know not whither I am journeying, and though at times I hope I am being led by a kind and merciful God in the right way, yet it is a dark, dreary pathway, in which there seems snares and pitfalls at every step, and it makes me fear I shall one day surely fall by the hand of the enemy. I have been comforted also by the words of Ruth when she says to Boaz that she was not like one of his handmaidens. O how different I feel I am from the real children of God, and yet I love to glean in the same gospel field with them, and though often feeling unworthy to be numbered with the children of God, yet when meeting time comes I want to be gathered with them, peradventure the husbandman may drop a handful for me, that my starving soul may be fed; and then I thought of what seemed like boldness in this virtuous woman to go and lay at the feet of Boaz, and this has brought to my mind the feeling I have had as I have dared to go before the King of kings to plead for mercy and favor to me, a poor, vile wretch. How can he look upon one like me? O, will he not rather spurn and despise me? I hope there have been times when he has spread his skirt (righteousness) over me and sent me away with a blessing; will it ever be so again with me? Jeremiah seems to have had the same feelings as the psalmist, for he says to the Lord, Thou hast filled me with bitterness, and made me drunken with wormwood; he felt so utterly forsaken that he said his strength and his hope had perished from the Lord. These things are written for our comfort. I have heard some, whom I hope are children of God, say it is wrong to feel so cast down and give way to such sad, despairing feelings, and that we ought rather rejoice and be full of praise to God for all his goodness and mercy. This puts me in mind of a certain sect of persons who call themselves "Christian Scientists," who say, O just believe you have no pain, or trouble, or sickness, and it will all be gone. How foolish this sounds to a person of good sound mind.

It seems strange and mysterious that the Lord deals so differently with his children, but such was the case from the beginning, and it seems to be the case now; it is so naturally as well as spiritually, and strange though it may seem, I believe I can say truthfully that I do not desire (when in my right mind) to change places with the vain, giddy, frivolous ones of the world. I think of our dear Savior and Master being a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; is it not enough to be like him? O to be like him in all things may well be our crowning hope, and I think with wonder and amazement, Can it ever be that this poor, vile sinner will be like the blessed Jesus? What a transformation that will be to my poor, sin-burdened soul; it does seem an impossibility, but if we believe the Scriptures, this will be the glorious blessing of the children of God, for the apostle says he shall change our vile body, and fashion it like unto his glorious body. Mark, it is our vile body that is to be changed. My poor, finite mind cannot understand this, but I hope my faith embraces it and looks forward to it as the blessed consummation of all my hopes in an eternal world of joy.

I am afraid I have written more than will be acceptable, and if so, cast it into the waste-basket, and all will be well. I have not written as I expected when I took my pen; I thought to write only some meditation on the words, "As for me," for they came to me by day and by night, and I just wrote to relieve my mind, and regret if I have taken up your time to no purpose, as I am aware your time must be well taken. I am glad the Lord blesses and sustains the SIGNS, and I hope he will comfort and strengthen you for your labor in the blessed cause of truth.

Yours, A POOR SINNER.

PALESTINE, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—For some cause I feel like doing what I said I might do at the close of my last published letter, viz: write with regard to my call to the ministry. This thing called preaching began to trouble me soon after I became a member, then my first thought was to keep it to myself, but I was soon asked by brother Trawick, our deacon, to take the books and go forward and open the meeting; I was struck with surprise. After a little, however, I told him that I would try, but I cannot say, as others do, that I felt any relief. From this on, when I would meet with the brethren they would insist that I should go forward in this way, which I often did, but after each effort I would declare to myself that it should be the last. I went along in this way for some time; finally I got to where I was afraid to go to our union meetings, lest I should be called upon to take part. Then I thought the brethren at these meetings know nothing about my feelings, and the brethren of my home church will not tell them, but to my surprise my name was often called, and I was appointed to go before, or to follow some minister.

Brethren, perhaps some of you know some of the feelings I then had. On one occasion an aged brother after supper walked out with me and said, "They are going to put you up to preach." I said, "Well, I cannot get home under three days and nights, and I had rather be just as Jonah was than to stand before the preachers that are here;" there were six or seven of them. However they pushed me forward. Finally I got the matter fixed in my own mind how I would get rid of speaking. I thought that I would move. I was poor as to this world's goods, and had a large family and no

home. These thoughts were all with myself, even my wife did not know of them, for she was not a member of the church. I told the church that I was going to move, then they proposed to give me a letter; I told them not to do this, as I was going to rove around for a time, and did not know where I would stop, and that when I settled down I would let them hear from me, and then they could send me a letter. I went to Williamson county, and after a little got some work to do. I thought that I had now left behind all thoughts of preaching with the brethren in Cherokee county, but I did not want to lose sight of the Old Baptists. I found some near Georgetown; there was no church there at that time, but a little band would meet each month, and a minister by the name of Wood came and preached for them. I met with them and enjoyed the meetings. After having met with them a few times, on one occasion just before the hour for service, brother Whitely said, "Brother Bell, do you ever take part in the service?" I said, "No," and passed on. But soon after this I was alone walking the road, when the impression came with more power than if a brother at my side had spoken the words, You must preach, and you must go back to the place from which you have run away and there begin. But I was rebellious, I did not know what awaited me or what I must pass through.

I went to Eastland county, but was taken sick. After getting better I went to work, but had a relapse, and was near to death. When I came to myself my family was around me weeping, but this did not trouble me, for then, for the first and last time, I wanted to die. Then it seemed that I was left all alone to grope my way in darkness. Finally I got better, and the impression about preaching was before me again with great weight; my family saw that I was troubled. I thought it would be better for me to go back, and so we started, although I was too weak to get in and out of the carriage without help. I was then willing to try to preach, but the great trouble was, I did not know how. Soon after I got back, a bad spirit, as I think, got into the church and it was divided; this was in Nacogdoches county. The part with which I was united was received by the association as being in order, but it seemed to me like a death blow to all, so that I stayed at home. In the summer of 1868, some few brethren moved near me, and we desired to be gathered into a church. I was put forward to speak, and some seemed to enjoy my speaking and encouraged me. So at last ministers were called to come and constitute us into a church, which was done. Soon the brethren asked for my ordination, but this was not responded to. In about three years we ceased to meet. I then moved to this, Anderson county, but here my preaching and theirs was not the same, and I did not hasten to secure a home among them. I found that they were doing things that I could not indorse. By this time I was preaching for a church that the association had cut off, and they seemed to me to be right in faith and practice. I united with them, and soon they called for my ordination, and then chose me as their pastor. This was in October, 1883. I am still trying to serve them, and have baptized several. The church and myself have had many trials. I am not a popular preacher, but the brethren that are Old School Predestinarians seem to indorse me. The Missionary Fullerites are in the lead in this section, but the worst enemy that I find outside of this old corrupt self is this

enemy who is all the time abusing the doctrine of predestination, and also of late urging us to believe that salvation is conditional. It is now nearly twenty-one years that I have been serving Fort Houston church. Many moves have been made to tear up the church and destroy my usefulness, but here I still stand upon God's foundation, Jesus Christ, as the prophets and apostles have declared in the Scriptures. But for what this eternal, all-wise, all-powerful God has done, all with me would be nothing. O man, what are you? Let inspiration tell. The smallest dust of the balance, a particle of nothing, and in his best estate altogether vanity. Deplorable as it is, this is just where man is found. Now of all the people in the world, religiously speaking, who believe this statement concerning man? I most certainly do believe it, and not only this, but man's days are numbered, the die is cast, all is fixed, all is settled with and for all mankind. Who hath done this? The righteous Disposer of all events. And yet you say that he is just? Yes, and the only just One. I believe all this, for Christ, and the prophets, and apostles have so declared concerning him; and I further believe our God has a people that he hath saved, and not merely will save, and they were already his before they were saved, and the very subtilty of the serpent was the opening of the channel for mercy, and all was for the lifting of Jesus on high; I believe that the plan of salvation was all complete and perfect with God before the foundation of the world. Our God has always eternally been just as he is now, there never has been anything new with him, and Jesus is a ransom, a sacrifice, an offering, an atonement, provided of God as a gift. O is not this wonderful? Yes, but it is God's way, though it be marvelous. Our God, O vain man, gives no account of his matters. It is enough for me to believe his testimony, because God has so declared it. Jesus said, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world." So Jesus is the fulfillment of the design and purpose of God.

Now in closing this letter let me say that some seem to think that Babylon is composed of people who have gone out from the church of God. I do not believe this. Yet some of his people are in Babylon, and to them he says, "Come out of her, my people." Babylon has always been just what she is now, a mocker, the mother of harlots; she has her lords and her gods many. This God ever has been and ever will be our hiding place, and if Jesus ascribed all honor and praise to him, shall not we also? for he alone is our refuge.

Now, dear brethren, this is yours, do as you think best with it. Pray for me. Farewell.

Your brother,

U. J. BELL.

CENTERBURG, Ohio, Dec. 19, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR:—Another year with its many changes is about to close; the much talked of Christmas is at hand: many presents are provided for that day. I am thinking of the unspeakable gift of our heavenly Father to poor, unworthy sinners; and of the many blessings we have in our Lord Jesus Christ. One of my many blessings through him is the SIGNS, for surely it is kept and sustained by him. I hope I am not forgetful of those who have the care and burden of its publication. Inclosed you will find two dollars, renewal for 1905. I feel they were never better. I have the old SIGNS from the year 1850, and both books

of editorials of Elder Gilbert Beebe; the writers express my mind better than I can do it myself. It seems my time for writing has passed; in days gone by I wrote oftener; in April, 1881, my first letter telling what I hope were the Lord's dealings with me, was published. I met many of the old and faithful witnesses of whom nearly all have been called home, but their works do follow them. May the holy Spirit guide us into all truth. I want to tell all the dear ones who write for the SIGNS that my heart goes out to you in love and fellowship; all of you can write better than I, who am now feeble in body and mind, yet many are more afflicted. I have had in the past year an experience somewhat like Elder Bartley's. While at my brother's (William Biggs) in Iowa, a year ago, I fell down stairs and cut a gash in my head that required several stitches, beside receiving many bruises; but it was a mercy that no bones were broken: surely the Lord is good. The 26th of February last I had another fall, this was in the yard at my home. I fell with my left arm and hand under me.

"The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will."

My children thought however, that I had gone a little out of the way, as I was doing work which was not expected of me. I did not know I was hurt until I found my arm helpless. My husband telephoned for the best physician in our reach; he decided the bone just above my wrist was broken and the wrist out of place; I thought there was something wrong with the bone just below the elbow, but he could find nothing wrong. He gave me some tablets for my heart, which was not acting well, and something to make me sleep. In five weeks the braces were all removed, but still I suffered great pain; thus I suffered until I could endure it no longer. During this time my daughter and son-in-law had gone to Marion, Ohio, to be treated by a doctor of osteopathy; they were anxious for me to go and see this doctor. With my arm in a sling, and with a pillow to lay it on, my husband started to take me to Marion; this was the seventh day of May. When we arrived, the doctor said my fingers were badly sprained, a small bone out of place in the back of my hand, a bone out of place at the elbow, my shoulder hurt and a hurt just back of my heart. He gave me a general treatment, which quieted me; I rested that night and from that time on: he gave me nothing whatever in the way of medicine. He put the bone back in place in my hand in a short time and also replaced the bone in my elbow, and on July 5th I came home. I continued to take treatments for one month, and from August 15th I have been able to use my arm. I am thankful that it is as well with me as it is. After reading Elder Bartley's account of his afflictions I felt impressed to write a little of my own, and give testimony to the truth of "Sanctified Afflictions." "Each opening leaf and every stroke fulfill some deep design."

Elder Chick, your editorial on the ten virgins was a comfort to me. It is my privilege when the weather is pleasant, to meet with the dear little band of brethren here, where we have the gospel preached that gives all glory to God: may it be his will to continue his blessings to us all. May the SIGNS be sustained. I ask an interest in your prayers.

We miss dear brother Benton L. Beebe, but we know he rests from his labors: his words were "like apples of gold in pictures of silver." It was in tears that I

read of his death.

If you think this will be of any comfort to the afflicted, you can publish it.

Your sister in hope, love and weakness,
SARAH C. BOYD.

BYRNSIDE, W. Va., Jan. 10, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —Below I give a brief sketch of what I hope have been the dealings of the Lord with me. I did not write it for publication, but some of my brethren insisted on my sending it to you to be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which you may do if you deem it worthy. I love the doctrine this paper contains.

My parents are both Old School Baptists, having joined the Providence church (of which I am now a member) about three years before I was born. They are sound and steadfast Baptists. My father has been a regular subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years, and he believes and loves the doctrine it advocates, and also its editor and the many writers who write of the rich things of the kingdom of God; so much so that when I was born, Feb. 7th, 1882, they named me after the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. They have tried, and I am glad to say, have so far succeeded, in raising up their children to respect the people of God. My parents have very strict discipline, and at times, in my younger days, through fear of their mild chastisements, usually in the form of appropriate talk and loving advice, I was restrained from gratifying my carnal appetite, which was always for sin. But since that time, as I hope, through the mercy and grace of God, I have been enabled to see and know that their discipline was for my good, and I have been made to reverence my dear father and mother who are going down in declining years. May the grace of God be with them to sustain them, is the desire of an unworthy son.

When at the age of twelve years I had a dream which time can never erase from my memory. I dreamed that I was standing above my father's house with W. B. Melton, (now a member and preacher) when my attention was attracted by what appeared to be a living human body suspended between heaven and earth, and from this being, who seemed to be suffering great agony, there went forth from every side rays of different colored lights, that illuminated all surrounding things; and while gazing at this vision this friend seemed to say, "This vision shows forth the sufferings of Christ Jesus the Lamb, for sinners slain." When I awoke, O the dreadful feelings of that moment, for I felt to be a sinner indeed; I felt I was not one for whom he suffered to redeem. Before this time I knew when I did wrong, but until then I did not know the blackness of my sin; I could see myself a mass of corruption, a poor, lost and ruined sinner, and instead of getting better as I lived day after day, I grew worse, (at least in feelings) and seemed to get farther from God and his righteousness; it seemed there was no pardon for such as I. One day as I was returning home from my work with the team, feeling worse than ever before, if possible, my whole thought and mind was, Be merciful to me, a sinner, O God, when a still small voice whispered to my poor soul, Thy sins and thy iniquities shall be remembered against thee no more. I leaped to my feet, my burden was gone, I was lifted above sorrow and this world of sin; there was a new song put in my mouth, even praise to Israel's God. I could and did sing the dear old hymn, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound." All things seemed to

join with me in my feeble effort to praise my blessed Jesus, who had manifested himself to me, (as did Joseph to his brethren in Egypt) the fairest among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely. I did not tell this to any one for a long time. Brother McClanahan, when at my father's house, on his way to the Providence church to preach for us, asked me to take a walk with him, which I did. When we were talking upon the Scriptures, all of a sudden he broke off from our subject and asked, "Have you a hope in Jesus?" I at once answered, "No," but before I knew what I was doing I related to him in substance what I have written above, and he said, "Is not that enough, brother Gilbert, what more could you wish than such a sweet and precious promise?" I told him I sometimes thought it enough, but at other times it seemed so little I feared I was deceived. Then he talked, and preached comforting and cheering words to my poor, doubtful soul, exhorting me to my duty, to follow Christ in baptism, which I could not feel worthy to do. But in June, 1900, after the regular meeting of the Providence church, on the fourth Sunday, the church assembled at the water to baptize brother Joel Stanley (now an ordained preacher). When I saw him baptized I could see more beauty in the ordinance than ever before, and I felt a desire rising up in my heart to be baptized, too, and I went up to the pastor as he lead brother Stanley out of the water, and was the first (they afterwards told me) to give him my hand. I said that I wanted to be baptized, too, would the church hear me talk? Then he told the church of my desire, and asked me to relate the dealings of the Lord with me, but it seemed that I could not talk; in a moment's time all was darkness, but at the next moment this was all removed and I was enabled to speak a few words of what I hope have been the dealings of the Lord with me. I was received as a candidate for baptism, and brother J. H. Terry led me down into the water and baptized me, and I can never express the light and joy that filled me to overflowing as I was raised from this liquid grave, and a part of that joy and a precious consolation has never left me at any time since. I shall never forget the sweet season of joy and peace I had the following week, and though I feel to be a poor, sinful, unworthy mortal yet, it is sweet to be in fellowship with the children of God; they are my best friends in this world of sorrow.

Yours in hope, G. B. BIRD.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 14, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—I think you will be glad to publish this interesting letter, and that your readers will be glad to see it. Sister Stevenson's father, to whom she refers, is over eighty years old, if I am not mistaken. I met him first on my first visit to that church, in 1867, and I believe he had at that time been for some years in the possession of a precious hope, but he was not given liberty of soul to confess that hope before the church until at the Ekfrid meeting last June, when it was my privilege to hear him tell his experience. He was baptized by brother W. I. Carnell, the pastor of the church. It was a season of solemn joy, and a time of refreshing to many from the presence of the Lord. That meeting was also made very solemn by a sorrowful event, which is referred to in the letter I send. Mrs. Duncan McColl was present, she was not a member, but had manifested a deep interest in spiritual things, and had expressed that in-

terest in a conversation I had with her in the meeting-house; her face showed her solemn concern, and her great interest in the preaching and other exercises of the meeting; she was taken sick and unconscious just after the morning service, and passed away that evening, I think. I have no question but that she was taken home to glory, to dwell with Jesus forever. "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform."

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

MELBOURNE, Ont., August, 1904.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—If one so unworthy may address you thus. Since being allowed the privilege of reading the good and comforting letter you wrote our dear father, I have felt a desire to write you a few lines. It was comforting when you spoke of so many of the saints having gone to rest since you first saw our dear father and mother; then you added, "But it is the same church." I believe since a child I have been made to love the dear Old School Baptists, and since having bestowed upon me the high honor of having my worthless name among them, feeling my sinfulness, have been made to doubt or wonder if the dear old saints had such sins to contend with; but we have to be tried in the fire that we may come forth as gold. Christ will come again to receive his elect.

We were glad to hear you had such a good talk with Mrs. McColl. I wanted to tell you the lines that came to me and filled my soul with love as I gazed on her dear face (which seemed to me to have a smile) the morning of her funeral.

"Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep,
From which none ever wake to weep;
A calm and undisturbed repose,
Unbroken by the last of foes."

I felt to be given a revelation of that sleep after death in my baptism. The enemy had come in like a flood, I could not feel to have said anything satisfactory before the church, I was so forsaken and in such darkness, and as if Satan alone was with me. There have been times since when I have been made to feel every word was supplied. How good when made submissive to our heavenly Father's will, when we can say, Thy will be done; and, Let me be the clay, and thou the Potter; and that every step and word is marked out, and he knoweth our thoughts afar off, and hath set the bounds of our habitation. It is when down in the depths of hell, as was Jonah, we say there are those who do business in great waters, and that surely salvation is of the Lord. It is only as the light of God's countenance shines in our hearts we are made to abhor ourselves, and to see that all flesh is grass, and at our best estate we are altogether vanity. If ever one was made to see a black, sinful heart, it was this poor worm of the dust. While feeling such a desire and command to follow my dear Lord and Savior in that glorious ordinance of baptism, at the same time feeling such unfitness and unworthiness and much darkness, no one can tell what I passed through. May he uphold us by the right hand of his righteousness; his grace is sufficient for us, and he is able to keep that which we have committed to his trust against that day. There was need that I should suffer to be shown that wonderful revelation, for it is only out of the rock we get the honey, and the oil out of the flinty rock. But when our beloved pastor raised his hand to speak, there was much peace and calmness came over me, and when I closed my eyes to be buried in the liquid grave there was given me such

a long breath, and with that breath I felt myself going into a peaceful sleep, and I was in that sleep till I came up out of the water, then there was nothing to trouble me; the words came to me, The Lord has triumphed gloriously. There have been times since, while rejoicing in the love of Christ, that I would not mind dying if I would go to glory. I can see nothing in this world to look forward to, only to see more of the work of the Spirit upon the church, and that the dear Lord might show me more of the hidden riches of secret places. The words came after being baptized: I will give you the treasures of darkness and hidden riches of secret places. At times when tempest-tossed, the waves and billows going over me, I have been willing to rest or sleep in Jesus. There was for a time last fall such an outpouring of the Spirit upon me, with much Scripture and heavenly sounds; my natural mind could hardly bear up, I did think these were the last days; I could not begin to tell what I heard. In Lobo at the communion there was such a power of it upon me with the words in Acts ii.: In these days will I pour out my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams, &c. Surely the Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God. The words have just come to me, "For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was anything kept secret, but that it should come abroad."

I have not written as I would like, as I wanted to tell you some of my first exercises of mind, but have had much rejoicing while writing. Will tell you of a dream I had shortly after I was baptized, which made me feel my dear father would be given strength in the day of God's power to follow his dear Lord and Savior in that glorious ordinance of baptism. I thought I was down home and out on the veranda; I saw a hind; my father was standing beside it, and the words came, I will make your feet like hind's feet. On Friday before the June meeting there was such a brightness around, with the words, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord." The power of the Most High overshadowed her. My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. Also, He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied. On Saturday morning the words were with me, I found them in Isaiah: I give rivers in the wilderness, and streams in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen; we did have a good meeting. On Monday a dear sister, Annie Gillis, of Bismark, was joyfully received. A week ago Sunday we were over to Duart and had two good meetings, Elder Carnell was given great liberty. In the morning there seemed to be such a power of the Spirit upon us. After the Elder closed the meeting dear sister Annie Gillis, of Muirkirk, leaned forward and said, "Elder Carnell, I believe I will have to stay in." She was held with a power, and could not leave her seat. She was gladly received, and baptized that evening in the lake. It was good to be there. That same day brother John Walker, of Duart, who was so much loved by all, slept away to rest. He was at the morning meeting, and just lived two hours after. His age was over eighty years. We had two good meetings in Ekfrid last Sunday, Elder Curry preached; his text in the morning was: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another," &c. I trust it is the fear of the Lord that has made me write this, and hope he will keep us in his fear and in his

love, and to his great name shall be all the glory, not unto us, not unto us, but unto him, for his mercy and for his truth.

Well, Elder Durand, it is some weeks since I wrote this letter, and while I can but speak the things which I have seen and heard, I have fears about sending it.

My husband joins me in love to yourself and wife and daughters, also to your sister Bessie; I have read some of her precious letters in the SIGNS.

Your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) JAS. STEVENSON.

HERNDON, Va., Jan. 8, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Please find inclosed money order for two dollars, the same to be credited to me for one year's subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have not been a constant reader of the SIGNS for about ten years. My grandfather Thompson took the SIGNS from the time they started until his death; my father took them from early manhood until his death; after the death of my father I took them for fifteen years. I have been thinking for several years of sending for them again, but have put it off from time to time; just recently a dear sister sent my wife and me some to read, thinking we would appreciate them, and we certainly did, so much so that I am now writing to subscribe for them again. I have read so many experiences in them so like my own, that I have been made to rejoice beyond measure; so many can tell it better then I can. O how I wish I could write like they do. I am thankful that God has given me the spirit to rejoice in the experience of his people; such experiences are very sweet to my memory. I love to call to remembrance the times in my experience when the season of rejoicing from the Lord had come to me, when the glory of his presence shone round about me, and I felt to be very near unto him. I love also to call to remembrance other times when I was sorely tried, and in deep distress and great darkness of mind, when the candle of the Lord was extinguished and I wandered in deep, dark places, seeking rest and finding none; for it was in the midst of my distresses that I recognized the hand of the Lord in my deliverance, being made to realize that in my then sad condition there was no power among all the powers that be save the power of God that could deliver me. It is very comforting to know that the Lord does not deal with us according as we deserve, but according to his tender mercy and loving-kindness. In his pity and his love he suffered, the just for the unjust; in his wonderful plan of salvation he gave to his people the law, that sin might abound, then he purged the sins of all that the Father had given him: he himself became subject to the law, and fulfilled every demand of the law, hence redeemed them that were under the law. As the penalty of the law was death, he must necessarily die, therefore he suffered all the horrors and tortures of an ignominious death upon the Roman cross, laid down his precious life, and his body was placed in the bowels of the earth, that all might be fulfilled according to the will of the Father, for the love wherewith he loved us. By his perfect knowledge and fullness of grace he justified many; by the measure of grace which he has bestowed upon us, we can in that same measure understand how Jesus was without sin in a sinful body, like unto our sinful flesh, born as he was of a woman, because he was perfect in wisdom and knowledge, and filled with grace, so that he was enabled to over-

come all sin, and to resist every temptation. Having the grace of God in ourselves, only in measure according to the gift of God, we are subject to temptation, and of ourselves cannot resist it, but Jesus has undertaken for us, and as the High Priest of our profession has entered into the holiest of all, where at the right hand of the Father he does continually make intercession for us. O, "how sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear." How precious to us are those who believe these things, but the One altogether lovely is Christ, who builds and establishes the church, world without end; to them that believe, he is precious. The thought often comes to me, Do I believe in the sense the Scripture speaks? John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Surely I love the brethren, the happiest hours I spend in these low grounds of sin and sorrow are when among the brethren, and under the sound of the gospel. God has blessed me, for which I feel thankful, in setting me down where I have been able to hear the doctrine of God our Savior in its purity, ever since I believed on him as my Savior.

Our dear pastor, Elder E. V. White, from whom I hear such glad tidings of great joy proclaimed, has been very ill nearly one year. O how we all do miss him here at Old Frying Pan church; our prayer is that he may be restored to us again before long, but not our will, but God's be done, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

Brother Chick, I have written more than I expected. With much love to you and yours, and all the household of faith, I remain as ever your brother in hope of life eternal,

W. A. THOMPSON.

LEESBURG, Va., Dec. 15, 1904.

MY DEAR SISTER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE: —What a sacred, serious and blessed thing it is to write a letter to one of God's children, concerning the things pertaining to his high, holy and exalted character in his wonderful works among the children of men. The thought comes, What shall I write? I remember the answer to these words of old, Write, or cry, all flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. How humiliating, how hurtful to the pride of man. Well might it be, since "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" One of these expressions is as wonderful as the other, for we know God is mindful of him, that he watches over him every day and night, yet man is but grass; he cometh up, he abideth, he passeth away, and the place that knoweth him now, will know him no more forever. He is grass; what a striking expression to show the wonderful, incomprehensible character of our God. Does it not teach us, my dear sister, that we should not despise the day of small things; that any condescension is too great for us; that none can possibly be so great as his God, blessed for evermore? There is never a heart so hard, but must melt when viewing the condescension of our God to look upon man, though grass, with such love, such pity as to give his darling Son to live, to suffer, to die, to live again for this man's eternal and everlasting blessedness. With tears of gratitude let me say, "O for a thousand tongues to sing my dear Redeemer's praise." "How can I bear revenge or pride with Jesus in my view." Ah, my dear sister, I am persuaded the deeper in affliction we go the nearer to God we are, your precious letters tell me so, as well as God's awful judgments upon me. These were among

the very first thoughts that came to me when my mind began to be restored: this is God's righteous judgment, not to destroy, but to save. His judgment in the law is justice; justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne; but bless his holy name, for he has made us to know that his judgments in righteousness are mercy and peace. In this our safety is; to this we look, as did the Israelites, to the brazen serpent, to atone for all sins, to cleanse from all diseases. Hear the gracious words spoken by Isaiah, "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, [what for?] to revive the spirit of the humble, [what else?] and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." And does he not do it? A thousand, yes, ten thousand thousands of tongues will shout the glad hosanna, Yes, yes, he comes in the triumphs of his word, for he has revived my poor heart many, many times, for my heart has been revived when none but God was nigh.

December 21st.—I commenced this letter, as you will see, Thursday, and intended to write you a long letter, but I found the attempt was too much for me; Thursday night I scarcely slept an hour; both mind and nerves too weak. Have not been down stairs since the first of September last. The doctor says I must keep my room until spring.

This is the second letter of the kind I have tried to write. The first my feelings did not get into, as in this. May God bless you, dear sister. Please remember me to Elder Ker, and all others who ask after me; the brethren and sisters in your churches are dear to me.

Your brother in hope,

E. V. WHITE.

[KNOWING that many of our readers will be glad to hear from our dear, afflicted brother, Elder E. V. White, we have obtained the consent of sister Jenkins to publish the above good letter, and hope brother White will pardon the liberty we have taken in publishing the two last letters from him without his consent. It is good for us to be made to know "all flesh is grass," though the experience is always a sorrowful one. May the Lord be merciful to our dear brother, and restore him to health again. May he realize the presence of the dear Savior in all his affliction.—ED.]

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 2, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—Inclosed please find two dollars to pay the renewal of the subscription now in the name of Mrs. Laurelia C. Brent. Dear mother passed away the 16th of January, 1904. She was a member of Shiloh Baptist Church in Washington, D. C., Elder Rowe conducted the funeral services. Mother had been a member with the Old School Baptists for about thirty-five years. She had been a reader of the SIGNS during my life, now more than thirty years; the SIGNS was a great comfort to her. Through the mercy of the dear heavenly Father she was true to her belief, and was never more happy than when hearing the gospel declared from the stand, or talking with the members of the glorious doctrine they so firmly believe. Mother was one of the only two colored members of the Shiloh Church. She was quite deaf, but by sitting near the Elder could hear much of the preaching.

I have been reading the SIGNS for quite awhile, and earnestly desire the paper to be continued, they are truly very comforting to me. I trust I firmly believe in the Old School Baptist faith, and long some day to be counted in the fold with the true and tried believers.

(MISS) M. C. BROWN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1905.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

2 KINGS IV. 18-36.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Please give your views through the SIGNS upon the Scripture found in 2 Kings iv. 18-36.

Your sister in hope of eternal life,

MARY E. LAKE.

HURRICANE, W. Va., Dec. 31, 1904.

This Scripture records the sickness, death and restoration to life of the child given to the Shunammite woman, according to the promise of the prophet Elisha. Her great trouble is recorded, and her haste to go to the prophet with her sad story; also the firm and steadfast faith which was hers is recorded, by which she could say, It is well with my husband, it is well with me, it is well with the child. This is one of seven instances recorded in the Scriptures when by divine power the dead were restored again to life. One instance is recorded (1 Kings xvii.,) when a similar miracle was wrought through the hand of the prophet Elijah. Three other instances are the raising up of the widow's son, the ruler's daughter, and Lazarus, at the word of the blessed Redeemer in the days of his flesh; and the other two are recorded in Acts, the one in the ninth chapter, where the raising again of Tabitha is recorded, and the other in the twentieth chapter, where the raising again of Eutychus is narrated. In all these instances the power of God is made manifest in honoring his faithful servants by accompanying their testimony with signs and wonders, according to his own will, and in the case of the divine Master giving testimony to the power of the Godhead which dwells in him. All these were brought back again to this same natural life, and all these must live out the same life in the flesh, sharing all sickness, pain, sorrow, decay and finally death again, as must be the case with all men, until the end shall come. These were all notable miracles which could be wrought only by the power of God, and they all testified to his majesty and glory, and his alone.

So the one chief consideration connected with the Scripture to which sister Lake calls attention, is the manifestation of the love, grace and power of God, who will have mercy upon his servants, and who will make bare his almighty arm in their sight from time to time, as their needs require. This woman was already a lover of God and his servant, as was manifested by her regard for his servant Elisha. None but those who love and revere his name can have such love and reverence for his servants as this woman manifested. The fellowship it seems was mutual, for the prophet was wont to abide at her house. Idolatry was running riot throughout all the land of Israel at that time, and the worship of the true God was almost forgotten, but here was one who still feared the Lord and honored his servant. Thus it is recorded in the New Testament that Lydia, when she had received the word of the apostles, entreated them to come into her house and abide there, counting it an honor to minister to the servants of the Lord, because the Lord had opened her heart to attend to the things spoken by them.

Thus the Lord's people are united as one by the power of that living word in the heart which produces faith and love and every heavenly grace in them.

We also have no doubt that in this narrative is shadowed forth that still greater and more glorious work which by the Spirit is wrought in the appointed time in the hearts of all the chosen vessels of mercy, by which they are called out of the darkness and death of nature into the light and life of the gospel. So this child is presented as one dead, but raised again to life through God's appointed servant. In considering this the prophet Elisha stands forth as an eminent type of the dear Savior, through whom alone any soul can receive life, and who died that we might live. The meaning of the name Elisha, as given in the list of Bible names before us, is, "To whom God is salvation." And it is preeminently true that God has committed all salvation into the hand of our dear Redeemer, having raised him again from the dead. Our God was salvation to him when he raised him from the dead, and God is salvation to all the chosen vessels of mercy in him.

When the servant of Elisha came and put his staff upon the face of the child, the child was not made to live. So when the servants of the blessed Master come into the presence of the dead and present the power and authority of the Lord, which is signified by the staff, it has no power to raise the dead. The dead in sin remain dead in sin, as they were before. Thus Lazarus was dead before the disciples rolled the stone away, and he was also dead afterwards as before. Only the voice of the Lord could break the bands of death and cause the captive to go free. And as the prophet came up into the chamber which the woman had prepared for him, and where she had laid the child upon his bed, and touched the mouth, eyes, hands and body of the child with his own mouth, eyes, hands and body, so the blessed Lord comes to his redeemed ones in all their needs, and gives them life from the dead, and manifests his oneness with them, so that they live because he lives. The full and blessed hope of the christian is declared to be Christ in him the hope of glory.

These are some of the things which seem to us to be set forth for our learning and comfort in this wonderful narrative.

ROMANS V. 18, 19.

BROTHER CHICK:—I wish that you would give your views through the SIGNS upon Romans v. 18, 19, and greatly oblige an earnest inquirer after truth.

J. W. CAUDLE.

EDITH, Texas.

There have been different views of this Scripture among the servants of God in the past, and we suppose that it is so still, but the general view, and that which seems to us the right one, is that the word "many," in verse nineteen, limits the expression, "all men," in verse eighteen. Indeed, the whole connection shows that the substance of the apostle's meaning is that as all the children of Adam, our first parent, fell in him, and died in him, and were condemned through his transgression, and made sinners by his sin, so on the other hand, the children of God are all made righteous by the righteousness of the dear Redeemer. As all who were in Adam died, so all who were in Christ were made alive; as all who were in Adam came under his condemnation, so all who were in Christ receive the free gift of justification of life. The many who were made sinners by one man's disobedience are all the one man's descendants, while the many who are

made righteous by the obedience of one, are the people of God who are redeemed in Christ. It ought to be noticed that the apostle in this connection draws out and presents a contrast as well as a likeness between the effects of the transgression of Adam and the obedience of Christ. He does not speak of the sin and death which involves mankind through the fall as a gift at all, but he does speak of the righteousness which is ours through the obedience of Christ as a free gift to all those who receive it. This agrees with what the apostle states in the last verse of the sixth chapter of Romans: "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Notice here on the one hand is wages, that is, the proper and just reward, while on the other hand is gift, a word which contains in it no thought of reward, or of just payment for service rendered. Now all this is in full harmony with all heartfelt christian exercises. The dear Lord leads his people into such a knowledge of vital truth that in heart and feeling they come to know that on the one hand are the wages of sin, and on the other hand is the gift of eternal life. All this is so, not only as respects final glory or final and everlasting punishment, but it is also true of the present joys of salvation, and of the chastisement of sin. Many years ago a dear sister wrote to us in this way, she said, "Why is it that when I am cast down in mind, and feel that the presence of the Lord is far from me, and I am walking in darkness, I always feel if I had not done so I should not feel so? But on the other hand, when I am walking in the light, and feel that the presence of the Lord is with me, I never feel that I feel so because I have done so?" To this question we remember we replied that the solution was to be found in this very text, "the wages of sin," and on the other hand, "the gift of God." This one text sums up and explains all the varied travel of the child of God; he is chastised for his disobedience in heart and in word and deed, but he is never rewarded for his obedience. And our God by his Spirit always so instructs the hearts of his children that they never can for a moment feel that their growth in the graces of the Spirit, or their comfort of mind in the Holy Ghost, comes to them because they have been doing good; it is always a gift of God, and "a sweet and glad surprise," as one of the poets has well said. The spirit of the pharisee imagines that all his blessings are measured out to him because of some obedience or faithfulness of his own; that spirit perverts even the grace of God into ground of self-exaltation. Instead of being humbled at the favors of God bestowed upon him, he is exalted, as though these favors were his due, and given because God is pleased with his service; but the true believer sees in all these blessings only added proofs of the mercy and grace of God bestowed upon one who never has and never can merit the least of all his blessings. But when affliction or trouble of any kind comes upon him, or when he feels the rod of chastisement, he always confesses his own ill desert. Thus the child of God decreases, while the mercy and grace of God in Christ Jesus increase all the time. At the first it is all of self and none of Christ, but at the last it is all of Christ and none of self.

In conclusion, the matter may be summed up thus: salvation, whether present or to come, is always the free gift bestowed, not through the righteousness of many, but through the righteousness of one, even Christ.

MATTHEW XXV. 31, 32.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Please give your views through the SIGNS upon Matthew xxv. 31, 32, and by so doing you will oblige one who wants to know the truth. I like to read the SIGNS.

Yours truly, J. N. HEMBREE.

LIBERTY, South Carolina.

The text embraces the opening words of the parable of the sheep and the goats. As much has been written upon this parable in the past few years, we will but briefly indicate what seems to us the meaning of these two verses. There can be no doubt that by the expression, "The Son of man," Jesus intended to present his own holy person, and to declare that as "the Son of man," a glorious reign in a glorious kingdom was before him. When he spake this parable his lowly earthly ministry in the flesh was drawing near its close. It is noteworthy that the nearer the end of his mortal life approached, the more clearly and the more frequently he presented that end in his discourses to his disciples, and also set before them the glory that was to be his after the time of his humiliation was finished. It is also manifest that he had not yet come in his glory, for the word reads, When he shall come. It seems clear that this time of humiliation continued until the death which he accomplished upon Calvary, concerning which it is said, "He was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God." Then the time of his humiliation was ended and he arose in power, and the glory of his holy nature began to be revealed clearly. Then, and always afterward, throughout all the gospel dispensation, the holy Spirit began and has continued to exalt his name, by taking of the things of Jesus and showing them unto men. It is also true that now we see in part and understand in part, but when the end of all things below shall come, then will his full glory dawn upon the enraptured eyes of his saints. The foretaste is now ours, if we are among those who are chosen and called. But all that we now know is but a foretaste, (a taste beforehand) but then the full glory shall be unveiled; hence David said once, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."

The throne of his glory must not be understood as signifying such a literal throne as some earthly monarch occupies before men, but that exalted position which he occupies in the sight of God, and in the hearts of his redeemed people, and in the presence of all the holy angels, as the once crucified and humiliated, but now risen and exalted Redeemer. The word "throne," as applied to the Son of God, or to the Father in glory, must never be understood in any other sense than purely figurative. The one thought is that of high exaltation, and Jesus in this gospel day is now exalted, and shall ever be exalted while time shall endure, and forever in the eternal world.

The sitting upon his throne indicates that his work of salvation is finished, so that nothing remains to be done; all the battles have been fought and the victories have been won, and there is now rest and peace, so that he is the King of peace. It is also the time of judgment, and so all nations are represented as being gathered before him. A separation is now taking place, so that it is now discerned who it is that serves God, and who it is that serves him not; his unerring eye sees both. Men may be deceived, but he is not deceived, and before him a full separation takes place. That separation is now taking place, and the division places one upon the one side and the other upon the other side with infallible precision. His word searches the

hearts of men, and one is gathered by it and the other is repelled.

Elsewhere in the word there is full proof as to how and by what power this division is wrought in the hearts of men, but here in this parable the results of that divine work are presented, and those upon whom the power of grace has wrought have come to be lowly, humble, meek, as is expressed lower down in the parable, where they are represented as saying, When did we ever see thee hungry? &c. How glorious and exalted in mercy and in grace did the King appear to such as these when he said, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Thoughts of human merit always blind men to the glory of grace, but human demerit always opens the eyes to that glory. If we have in any wise deserved what we receive, or if we think that we do, we shall magnify our good desert, and not grace always.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

BROTHER William S. Speer having changed his address from Guthrie, Oklahoma Territory, to Benton, Saline Co., Ark., requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder W. W. Meredith, at the home of brother John R. Rittenhouse, Nov. 30th, 1904, Charles E. Willard and Mrs. Annie Kershaw, both of Wilmington, Del.

By Elder J. T. Barnes, at the residence of the bride's parents', Jan. 22nd, James F. Binford and Miss Nannie E. Cumins, both of Walla Walla Co., Wash.

By Elder Silas H. Durand, at the home of the bride's mother, in Philadelphia, Pa., Jan. 31st, 1905, Benjamin W. Mace and Miss Elizabeth Yawger both of Philadelphia, Pa.

MEMORIALS.

To the memory of my loving and much loved niece, **Maud L. Waddey,** whose obituary, written by her father, was published in the last number, Feb. 1st, of our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

This dear one was well known by many of the dear brethren and friends who have been entertained in the hospitable home of her parents, Mr. B. F. and Henrietta Waddey, of Washington, D. C. She was always glad to meet the friends, and often seemed disappointed if none accompanied us home from meeting. She was not strong of constitution, consequently had very little girlhood. She could not attend school, but had a teacher in her home, from which she acquired a good education. Some five or more years ago she had a severe stroke of paralysis, from which she never fully recovered, which with stomach trouble and spinal affection kept her weak and nervous, requiring the attention of a nurse and doctor to the time of her departure to a better world. I have often thought of her with so much energy to keep up, walking around on the first floor, sleeping none through the day and very little at night, and eating no solid food for so long. She loved to read the Bible and hymns, and would ask her mother to sing that soul-touching hymn, "Jesus, lover of my soul," and other ones to her. She was glad to have ministers of our order to preach in that home, and would say to me, "We are going to have preaching here." When Elder P. W. Sawin had an appointment in Washington, being entertained in that home, she asked for him to come up to see her ere he left. Elder Sawin told her mother that the very grasp she gave his hand proved to him the feeling in her heart. During her last illness, about ten days in her bed, she asked her dear ones to pray to God to have mercy on her. The last words she was heard to utter in a whisper were, "Lord, have mercy on me." She knew her dear ones till her last breath. When the nurse laid her down, seeing that she was nearly gone, her eldest brother walked up to the bed, took her hand and said, "Maud, do you know me?" Being too weak to speak, she answered by a smile, then with one little sigh (her elder sister wrote us) her spirit took its flight to our God who gave it, and she was left without mother or sister. That baby sister had been her care for nearly thirty-one years. The weather was too cold and stormy for me to go and look upon that face, with a smile of happiness that to me indicated peace, a peace the world cannot give or take away.

Our pastor, Elder J. T. Rowe, preached the funeral sermon. Her dear form was laid to rest amidst a heavy fall of flakes of pure white snow, fair emblem of the spotless Lamb of God, who only can wash vile sinners in his own precious blood and make them whiter than snow.

Her aunt, RUTH ADAMSON.

ROCKVILLE, Md., Feb. 1, 1905.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Seaman T. Christian departed this life Thursday, Jan. 19th, 1905. He was born May 15th, 1827, and always lived in or near South River, N. J. His mother was born in Wales, and lived to the age of about 89. His father was born in Stockholm, Sweden, and lived to be 80. Mr. Christian married about the year 1854, and his wife was for many years a most faithful, devoted and dearly loved member of the Old Baptist Church at South River; she died in 1886. He was not a member of the church, but was as regular in his attendance at meetings and as devoted to the interests of the church as any member could be. During the past sixteen years that I have been serving that church he has had charge of the meetings and of the meeting-house, and has been most kindly attentive to everything that required attention. The little company of believers who attend the meetings at that place will greatly miss him; he was very helpful to them, and was greatly endeared to them. His kindness to me will never be forgotten. I loved him dearly as a friend and as a child of God. He was a most devoted lover of the truth, and his daily walk was most exemplary. The little family where he lived during the past few years feel deeply their loss. In the community where he had always lived no one could be more sadly missed or more deeply mourned. He was a kind, thoughtful and helpful neighbor and friend, and most fair and just in all his dealings. He was a member of the board of trustees, and treasurer of the Washington Monumental Cemetery Association. At a meeting of that association held Jan. 21st, they passed resolutions expressing their high regard for him, and their sincere sorrow at his death. But the greatest loss is to the son and daughter who are left, and whose hearts are filled with mourning for a dear and honored father. The daughter, Miss Anna, has been for a few years an invalid, and could not be present at the funeral. The son, Mr. Edward D. Christian, lives in New York city. The frequent visits of the father to him and his family, and to Miss Anna in Plainfield, N. J., were dearly prized. May the Lord comfort them in this time of great sorrow, which words cannot express.

The funeral services were held in the Old School Baptist meeting-house in South River; brother Chick was present with me and took part in the exercises.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 1, 1905.

Miss Martha J. Vandervort departed this life Dec. 4th, 1904, at her home near Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., aged 63 years, 2 months and 17 days. She was the daughter of John and Fannie Holbert Vandervort. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Warwick Old School Baptist Church by Elder J. N. Badger, Sept. 29th, 1872, of which church she remained a faithful and steadfast member to the end. The church feels its loss very keenly. She loved the cause of Christ, and loved those whom she believed to be the children of God. Since the death of her parents she and her brother lived together on the homestead, where sister Martha took delight in entertaining her brethren and friends. Many no doubt will remember with pleasure their pleasant entertainment at her home. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of God our Savior, and while firm in her convictions and ready to express herself as she believed was best for the church, she was of an humble and quiet spirit. She was a noble woman in disposition, and the many acts of kindness rendered by her will not soon be forgotten. She leaves one brother, John Vandervort, who is left lonely indeed; he was devoted to his sister and misses her sadly; also one sister, Mrs. Cornelia B. Clark, of Campbell Hall, N. Y., whose untiring care and devotion in her sister's illness was very marked; several nephews and nieces also survive her.

The funeral services were conducted at her late home by the writer, and were largely attended; the words Grace, Mercy and Peace were used as a text. The image she had borne of the earthy was buried in the Warwick cemetery. "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." This was her confidence and hope. May grace, mercy and peace be ministered to the family.

H. C. KER.

DIED—At the residence of her sisters, the sisters Campbell, near Newark, Del., **Mrs. Elizabeth Findly,** in her 72nd year. The departed was not generally known among the Baptists as were her younger sisters. I believe she was a member of the Presbyterian Church, but was fond of hearing Baptist preaching. I have met her frequently; she seemed of a quiet and rather reserved disposition, given to thought, and of rather a sad countenance, ever anxious to know that her hope was a good hope through grace, and to die the death of the righteous, and when questioned by those who were her attendants when near the close of her life, expressed herself favorably, not afraid to die. The Lord is good, and his mercy endureth forever. The closing scenes of mortal life, to those around her, seemed encouraging, that hope entered where there is no death. She had been a widow for many years, but had no family.

Her funeral was attended Nov. 23rd, 1904; Elder A. B. Francis was present, with the writer. The service was at the house, after which her remains were followed by a sympathizing procession to Welsh Tract, where she lies with many who have gone before. The family are afflicted, and have the sympathy of all who know them. It is pleasant to visit them at their home. The Lord be with those who remain.

WM. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md.

Rebecca B. Brenenstall Wood was born in Leon, Cattaraugus Co., N. Y., Nov. 15th, 1833, and came to Earlville, Ill., with her parents when nine years of age. She was one of a family of fourteen children, only two of whom are living: Mrs. Clarissa Bedillion, of Manley, Ill., and Mrs. John Cline, of Tulsa, Indian Ter. She was married in 1850 to James Wood, of Earlville, Ill., becoming stepmother to four children of Mr. Wood's. Three children were born to them: Elisha F., who died in 1896, Martha J., who died Oct. 12th, 1863, and Jennie W., (Mrs. Epla) who resides at this place. Mr. and Mrs. Wood removed from Earlville to Paw Paw in 1876, and about one year later to Mendota, where they resided seventeen years. Mr. Wood departed this life May 29th, 1897. Mrs. Wood then came and lived with Mrs. Epla two years, since which time she has occupied her late home in this village. She was stricken with apoplexy Sunday last at 6 o'clock, and passed away Thursday morning, Jan. 19th, at 1:30 o'clock. She loved the old, the middle aged and the young. All children loved Grandma Wood, as they familiarly called her. They were always coming to see her, and during her late sickness many were the children who inquired anxiously about her. Two grandchildren were present at the funeral, and also two step-grandchildren, who were just as dear to her as her own.

She never identified herself with the church in its membership, but was a firm believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine. Her greatest comfort was attending religious worship and reading her religious papers and magazines. Mrs. Wood has been a good friend and a kind neighbor, and will be greatly missed in this community.

The funeral was held in the Presbyterian meeting-house Saturday afternoon, J. A. Greene officiating. The burial took place at the Frantz Grove cemetery, beside her husband.

DIED—In Utica, N. Y., Feb. 2, 1905, **Janette McLean Akehurst,** in her 81st year. Sister Janette was born in Glascow, Scotland, in 1824, and came to this country when twenty-two years old, and always lived in this neighborhood. She was baptized by Elder Thomas Hill, in 1866, I think, and married by the same in 1869, to Mr. Charles W. Akehurst, who died fourteen years ago. For the past five years, since her infirmities increased, she lived with her sister, Mrs. McLean, a few doors away. It was always profitable to visit sister Janette, she was well versed in the Bible, her converse spiritual, seasoned with salt. It was her delight to magnify Jesus, for whom she has been waiting since the death of her husband to call her unto himself. The earthen vessel is broken, dust returns to dust, her spirit returned to him who gave it, it dwells forever with Christ her Lord in paradise. (Luke xxiii. 43.)

JOHN M. BOES.

UTICA, N. Y.

Charles Ross was born in McDonough Co., Ill., Jan. 28th, 1857, died in Canton, Ill., Dec. 15th, 1904, aged 47 years, 10 months and 17 days. He was married to Carrie McMickle in 1878. To this union were born 2 children. Mrs. Ross and one of the children died in 1881. He was married to Mary McClain, in Kansas, in 1886. To this union were born seven children, one dying in infancy. The other seven children, with their mother, his aged mother, two brothers and four half-brothers are left to mourn for him. "Charley," as he was always called, did not make a public profession of religion, but a short time before he died, while in conversation with his mother and friends, expressed a desire to depart and be at rest.

A large company of friends met at the Methodist meeting-house in London Mills, and were addressed by the writer on the subject of death and eternity. Sister Ross (his aged mother) is just on this side of the vail, awaiting the summons.

ALSO,

Eliza Ethel Ross, daughter of Charley and Mary Ross, was born in Linn Co., Kansas, Oct. 28th, 1889, died in Lewistown, Ill., Jan. 13th, 1905, (only one short month after her father's death) aged 15 years, 2 months and 16 days.

Funeral service was held at the Christian meeting-house in Lewistown, and her remains were laid to rest by the side of her father in Pleasant Hill cemetery. The above was a granddaughter of sister Ross. Surely she sees days of sorrow in her declining years. May the Lord give her grace as her day and trial.

S. H. HUMPHREY.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 73. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1905. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MERRIFIELD, Va., Dec. 29, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —You will no doubt be surprised to see a letter from me, but I assure you it is not that you have gone out of my mind that you have not been troubled with my writings, but as years go rapidly by I write less, and in my daily experience I find less and less to say, and yet a deeper thought than ever is present with me concerning the kingdom of our God; not that I am deeper, but the thought is deeper and more (it seems to me) to be avoided by me. I feel now, and have long felt, that if I am what I am by the grace of God, how precious is that grace, and how thankful I would like to be for it. But as I now grow old, I feel I have never been thankful for it, but I have felt sometimes that I was made thankful in it and by it. A long time ago we used to write to each other, and I felt glad indeed to get a letter over your signature, and would be glad now to do so. Then I could talk with you and enjoy it, but now I would have no words, for I am a complete failure from beginning to end, and I feel that a kind letter from you would have to be left in silence. I have grown on down to nothing, and yet Paul said he was there before me, and even less than that, but the Lord gave him power of speech, and he was enabled to comfort the saints. He had the thorn still, it is true, but the Lord showed in him the power of his grace, and dear, aged Paul was ready to be delivered up, but as for me, I am not ready for anything. Dear brother, it looks like this to me: the grace of God is sufficient for all purposes, that I can declare, but does it embrace me in all that the grace of God implies, the everlasting salvation of his dear people? that is the point with me.

I have just read in Matthew from the second to the sixth chapter, and as I opened the Bible ere I had read a word the last ten verses of the sixth chapter seemed to strike a thrill of delight in my very soul. Not that it came in a flow of words, but those expressions used there are enough to clear up the fears of any benighted soul, and cheer the troubled breast of every dear one who is longing to see and know and worship Jesus, that name which is above every name. Those who, even now, have with them those

sweet spices of his love in their heart rejoice when they see the star of attraction, as that "great grace" which is given unto them.

Dear brother, no matter what I have written in the foregoing part of this letter, I must go back to a time in years that are past, and tell of a poor, benighted wretch who heard of the child Jesus. I am writing now of that child whose name means so much to a poor sinner, and that sinner who knows that his condemnation is just, that has been tried and found guilty, who knows that outside of a Savior there is darkness and death; such an one has heard and has seen through the eye of faith, a light, it is little, but it is great, a twinkling star of hope. Such a poor wretch, I say, many years ago found that dear babe, guided by that star, and did fall down and worship, and offered many sweet and precious things to him, and then passed into his home country by a different way than by which he came, and his way can never be retraced. But strange to tell, when that dear babe grew to manhood and went about his Father's business, he came into that country where that wretched sinner was, and then and there they communed together; some days the poor sinner recognized him, and some days he did not. And well does he remember one day trying to tell the brethren how on one occasion he was sorrowing and sad, and with tired footsteps and sore in heart he was wending his weary way to a people despised, and for what he hardly knew, when One unknown began to teach the Scriptures as never man taught, and his heart began to burn within him, and that bright star again was leading him. It led and he followed on, lo, where one of God's servants was baptizing, and there was the little babe, sweet as ever, and while the servant did not feel himself worthy, the Spirit of that meek babe said, "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." What a glorious privilege to worship at his feet, and rejoice in his grace. Time has passed since then, and that poor sinner has been in the wilderness time and again. I hear from him, but it is in groanings which cannot be uttered; he owns he is a sinner yet; but there is one thing, and that alone is all he has to comfort him now, that star is still the hope of his life, and no matter where he roves, it is true to the heart of a poor sinner.

As I said in the beginning, I read from the second to the sixth chapter inclusive. My mind was caught up in the ten last verses of chapter six. "No man can serve two masters." I wonder now if there can be any mistake if I tell Old Baptists what I felt after reading those ten verses, closing this sixth chapter of Matthew; I do not use them as a text, for every one that knows me knows I have no business with a text, but I just felt I would like to tell in a childlike way what were some of the things that sank deep in my heart as I read, and as I was casting about for something to write, I thought I had just as well write what appeared to me while reading these words; I do not expect to tell all, but hope some little one may find a crumb among the crooks that I may make. I know the Lord alone can make the crooked straight, and teach the poor sinner where to look for the star of hope who "shall save his people from their sins," and therefore I wish to say a few words to the dear, trembling ones who are scattered here and there in a wilderness of perplexity, and are looking for something they fear they have not, and while I talk to them, I cannot lose sight of my own wretched

condition, therefore it is strange to me that I will talk to others, while I myself am in the way with them. Now, as for serving two masters, I wonder if many of us are not trying to do that very thing; let us examine into this. In the first place it is not well to even think of two masters in any matter of business, for as the Lord has so ordered, there are no two men alike in disposition or thoughts, or even in action, it would be no satisfaction to labor for them knowing these things; indeed, it would be toil and pain, trouble and sorrow from morn till night, and each night there would come up a thought, I fear I have this day lost favor, and perhaps my living, by trying to please or serve two masters. I am confident that the poor sinner who longs to see the child Jesus in his or her own experience is in vain trying to serve two masters in the sight of this Scripture referred to. Thus one feels that he would love to obey and serve the Lord in all of his commands, for he knows beside him there is no Savior, yet he feels that he must have a brighter evidence that he is a child of the Lord's special care, then he goes to work to establish himself more fully in his knowledge of the letter of the word, for so reads the letter, "Search the Scriptures," and in so doing he shows what the thought is, that in them he has eternal life. Many are the dark nights spent in meditation on the condemnation that comes to the poor sinner in the knowledge thus found in those researches, of how far short he has come in becoming such a child of God as he would love so much to see himself. He has found no soundness in himself; he cannot do the things he would, and his thoughts all the while have been evil. I know the law of God is too holy for me, it condemns me, and it is just and good, but I am vile. I have tried to mend my ways, to bridle my unruly tongue, but to no purpose, and I have tried to serve the Master of to-day with respect to his commands, and I know I have failed, and if I survive this night the light of another day will only reveal the truth that my house is unkept, and I am worse than an infidel. Where are the garments to hide my shame? The way is dark, yet there is a love the poor sinner still feels that abides in the secret recesses of his poor heart that no one but himself could think of, and that is an untold and impenetrable love for the saints of God, those who have the likeness of that child Jesus, whom he saw many years ago. Would to the Lord he could see that star now, as then, to guide again to the place where the child lay. He is now sorrowing and sad, it was he whom he had thought (when he looked on that dear, sweet face years ago) was sent to redeem such poor sinners as he, but alas, I fear lest I myself am left out. I love the company of that poor and despised people, in this day called Old School Baptists, and in days past "little ones," I will go to them and pour out my heart to them, for I cannot cease to love them, although they are despised by the world and hated of all men, for the sake of Jesus.

My mind is now caught up in thought of one poor sinner of Winnsboro, Texas, whose letter I read in the SIGNS for December 1st, 1904. I have now reread it, and my tears and sorrows run together with his; and if any who may have followed me thus far will just reread that letter, it will save me writing, and will do them more good than anything I could possibly say. Just here let me say, I have long felt I have tried to serve two masters, and I have learned by sad experience that I do despise one, and

that star of hope still causes me to cling to the other. I have always loved the sweet face of that babe, so helpless, yet so confiding, lying in his lowly bed, from which scene I went my weary way, not by the way I came, no, no, for there was death in that way. I thought not of it as I came, but I knew it from the moment I beheld the face of Jesus; so you, too, fellow-sinner, cannot go back. Oft have I even tried to do so, but darkness is surely in that way; the way of man is not in himself; he cannot direct his steps; he cannot go feeling worthy, he must go unworthy; he cannot go feeling sure he or she is a "fit" subject for fellowship, but unfit; he cannot go the way that he has already trodden, he must go the way he has not hitherto known, and above all he must go guided by the star, a light derived only from the Father of all lights; a light that penetrates every recess of the heart, and discovers unto the poor sinner all the filthy rags he has tucked away in his old wardrobe, the like of which he has for so long forgotten that he owned, and when he now sees, he is ashamed. Dear soul, do not be afraid to tell all these things to those who bear the image of Jesus, they could call you brother even if you felt you were a Saul of Tarsus, and no doubt the scales would, in a measure, fall away from your eyes, that there would be around you brightness, the glory of which could be felt, but could not be told. The flesh wants to shine, but it cannot, the Spirit alone is light, and it alone can search out the evil way in us. Which of these do we serve? Which do we despise? The poor sinner turns in with the people despised, and would weep with those that weep and rejoice with those that rejoice, and while poor, yet makes many rich in joy and comfort in the Spirit of Jesus. Indeed Jesus comes to you without sin, it is taken away, and new garments deck the bride, and now (but we cannot tell how) we are feasting, and Jesus himself is breaking the bread, and there is perfect love, and fear cannot abide, and we hear the sweetest music ever sung, and the poet, like all the dear saints, has tried to express it in language like this:

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see."

And yet the half cannot be told. Take no thought of how you shall be clothed, do not attempt to look upon those old rags lying back there, no, nor for your life even, for the Lord knows your need, and his promise is to be a present help in time of need, and he therefore knows what you need better than you know how to ask, and then, to illustrate as it were, he calls attention to the lilies how they grow, and then to Solomon in all his glory. The lily toils not, neither does it spin, and yet Solomon was not clothed like one of these, and if the Lord does all this for the lily, how much more he will look after his dear children. Wonderful indeed are his words, they are soft and gentle still as a little infant, to remind us of the little babe that we first saw, yet there is a strong power as of a mighty King in them, which speaks deep down in the heart, and finds every thought, and whispers to each separate one, O ye of little faith, are you not of more value than all these things that I have shown you? Yes, yes, in him we have all things, but in this lesson we learn that in the world we shall have tribulation, but in him peace, for he is to his dear people the Prince of peace.

I find this theme has no end, but time and space are now run into each other, and I, with time, must go down, yet the

doctrine of God our Savior will ever rise, and the babe I have tried to talk about will ever be manifested in the fullness of the Godhead bodily, in the experience of all the poor little ones, for they must first believe that he is, before they can know his life, and to know that, they must see and feel the helplessness of a little child; and as the child clings to its mother, so the child of God clings to the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife, that new Jerusalem, the mother of us all.

Last May I received a card from a brother which said the Lord had blessed my former letter to his comfort, and it made me feel so little I could not say another word; I felt, Lord, it is enough, let me stop ere I say too much, but if I did wrong, then I have done worse this time; I have no excuse to make, and feel that my heart's desire is that the brethren may be comforted, and that is what led me to this little talk on paper. I think I know you well enough to leave you this to do with as you think best, and I think you know me well enough to believe I would do better if I knew how.

This is my New Year's greeting for you and the saints abroad.

As ever, your little brother,

ELI T. KIDWELL.

MANASSAS, Va., Jan. 18, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—In reply to your letter to me I will honestly say that my mind has been more or less burdened with a subject of very searching importance to me, and I have had an impulse at times to try to express some of the thoughts which have stirred my own heart at least. If any particular Scripture embodies the subject it is: "Try the spirits whether they are of God."—1 John iv. 1. If I write of my own experience it is by way of illustration, and to show how I came by the views and impressions I have in regard to vital truth. That the truth of God, and that that truth is revealed in the experience of the saints as it is recorded in the Scriptures, I have no manner of doubt, unless I doubt all revelation. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," can only refer to absolute knowledge, which is only obtained in individual experience. I know nothing that I have not either seen, heard or felt, the only way absolute knowledge comes to mortal man. Even the dear Savior must obtain knowledge by experience, experience in his own soul. In that way and no other he came to his own people. When Job said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," he did not speak from a theory of redemption he had imbibed by reading or study, &c., but he spake out of a living power in his own soul which the Scriptures call faith. So to come to the subject in mind, when the Savior says, Except a man deny himself and take up his cross and follow me he cannot be my disciple, he expresses a fundamental, an experimental truth. It is not he who says, "Lord, Lord," that shall enter the kingdom. How easy it is to make a profession; no particular sacrifice is required. It is very easy to say, "Lord, Lord," especially if one's friends applaud the saying. That is, it is very easy to be wordy and zealous for what we conceive to be "doctrine." It is a sad and an awful truth that we may be led to think a wordy contention for the principles of truth give us a standing as zealous Baptists. It is sad to be forced to the belief that there are those among us even who seem to conceive that a clamorous contention and a zealous hatred of all that do not accord with our sentiments is the sure mark and qualification of a sincere child of God and a follower of the meek

and lowly Jesus. I have cried out of the depths of anguish for the wisdom and the power to try the spirits leading me, guiding me and quickening me. Am I governed by a spirit of party, that contentious spirit which when closely examined is nothing more nor less than a devilish spirit of contention for the mastery? I say "devilish," for it is an accursed spirit of the flesh that seeks to justify self, self, self. Its cry is always, I, me or mine, while deluding us into the belief that we are accepted with God for our abundant zeal. We delude ourselves with a sham religion, a sham humility, which touched by the finger of God vanishes into air, which it really is. I am led to the conviction that the apostle's words where he says, "A remnant shall be saved," has a different and more significant meaning than is commonly attached to them. A remnant of what? Take the little company of "professors," and they are few indeed, God knows, apply the touchstone which discovers the spurious and the genuine, and how many will stand the test and be found followers indeed of the meek and lowly Jesus? the flesh crucified and self denied, professing humility, ignorance and all that, but in reality claiming a wisdom and knowledge above their fellows, and condemning to ignominy every one except themselves. Some one in reading this article may be led to say, Can any one who claims to be an Old School Baptist go to this extreme? If they could not, this article would not have been written. It is in the tremendous difference I see and feel between a knowledge of self as we stand before our God, and the common profession we make and hear on every hand, that my mind and heart are much exercised. God knows my heart, I write in faithfulness and love; not love for hypocrisy, though it show itself in my dear brother, but love for that eternal truth by which we are all either justified or condemned. My experience constrains me to the belief that there is power in the genuine religion of Christ, or in other words, the almighty love of God, that can and doth subdue even the love of self in the human heart. It is in this power it shows its divine origin. Love is the very essence of God; not love of ourselves, which came into the world with the first man, and seduced our common mother, Eve, to its accursed, Satanic gratification, but the mighty love of God we see in a glimpse merely in the triumph of the Man of sorrows in Gethsemane, and on Calvary, and all the way from Mary's arms to Joseph's tomb. Here is seen a glimpse, as "through a glass darkly," of what the mighty love of God can do. As it accomplished those wonders in Jesus, shall we limit its power in the sons of Adam? We seek and must find the traces and marks of that omnipotent love in those who claim to be born of the Spirit, or in other words, who have the Spirit of Christ. The apostle is emphatic in the declaration that if ye have not the Spirit of Christ ye are none of his. This glorious truth is not a theory, I repeat, a mere profession of the head by which we may be led to have our name recorded in some church book, but a living and mighty power in the heart, for "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." In the heart and mind it abides, the sweetest treasure that mind ever conceived. Self is a willing sacrifice: all I have, all I am, I joyfully surrender. My soul! how can one whose soul has ever been filled with this heavenly love ever think of himself again? Alas, here is the trouble, right here is the cause of our groanings. But there must be groan-

ings; crucifixion is always the cutting off of the flesh, painful dying, real self-denying, not merely a lip quotation of some Scripture, which too often I fear is like a jewel in a swine's snout, calling attention to our holiness or righteousness. The spirit that confesses that Christ is come in the flesh is the manifestation of this terrible crucifixion of self, of the flesh. That soul that cannot give up all for Christ, that has not the love of self and its ways dead within him, and is not constrained and glad to be accounted as nothing for Jesus' sake, makes a sad mistake in professing a knowledge of God. To know him is to know the fellowship of his sufferings, to know the crucifixion of the flesh or self, to know the power of his resurrection, or the conquest of self in a heavenly or glorious life that comes not from the triumph of self, or any selfish impulse or spirit, but that comes from a complete denial of self, and an acceptance by living faith of the love and the spirit and the power coming into the soul as cold water to one perishing with thirst, that compels, so sweetly compels the complete submission of every thought of every desire of the whole man. My God, he says, I am nothing, thou art all things. This almighty love constrains us not only to confess, but to rejoice that we are nothing. We compare ourselves with our fellows, we are in full and sweet fellowship with the apostle, for we are "less than the least of all saints." We feel it, we know it. Why? Because we are alive unto God, and of course dead to ourselves. My pen seems tipped with fire as I write these glorious sentiments. The religion of the Bible presents to us man abased and Christ exalted, and yet the wonderful and glorious mystery of that same man, exalted as an heir of heaven. In this flesh man is and must be abased. It is the knowledge of this that constitutes the experience of God's children, but in the resurrection they are found in the very image of God. Abasement and humiliation here in the flesh, but kings unto God in glory. God crucifies the old, fleshly, carnal man, and brings him to the dust whence he came, but in a glorious resurrection "mortality is swallowed up of life."

I here submit a mere outline of my thoughts; if you think them of any profit use them, they are at your disposal, written in much confusion of mind.

In much love, but very unworthy,

J. N. BADGER.

[IN the past we recall hearing a dear brother say frequently, "I like to hear preaching that tells me my faults." Of course the brother did not mean he wanted the minister to stand up before the people and say, Brother so and so is guilty of this special fault, or that special fault, but that he wanted to hear that preaching which is searching, and that presented the hidden evils of his nature to his own understanding. We have always felt that to this we could respond with a hearty "Amen." Such preaching comes to one, when it comes in that way, as an answer to the prayer, O Lord, search me, and know me, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. The above letter from brother Badger is of that kind; the Lord has given him to write of the hidden evils of the heart. Well is it when we come to know these things as being true of our own selves; it is not the outward life that troubles us so much as what is seen within. Paul, when he complained of the warfare which was of such a kind that he could not do the things that he would, did not mean so much the outward words and deeds of

his life, as the inward motives, affections and desires. Paul, for instance, did not mean that he could not stand up and preach the gospel according to the command given him of God, but that he could not preach with a single eye to the glory of God as he would. We may give the cup of cold water to the needy, but yet cannot give it with the heartfelt spirit and motive to glorify God, instead of self, as we would, and here is the grief and sorrow of the child of God; this was Paul's grief and complaint. So brother Badger has in the above letter touched the hidden springs of the heart, as it seems to us, and we can but say that we do know some of the things of which he has written. We do have fellowship with him in these heart complaints.—ED.]

"I MUSE ON THE YEARS THAT ARE PAST."

I AM thinking of the past because it is all I have now, and doubt if my thoughts will be of profit to any one except myself, however, I will try to write of a few things that were joy, peace and gladness in days gone by. In order to reach the experiences upon which "I muse" it will be necessary to mention some things which preceded, and also some things which have followed. When I was about thirteen years of age there came to my native town (Quantico, Wicomico Co., Md.,) a man by the name of Shaffer, a good, conscientious man, I believe; he made his home at my mother's and preached for the Missionary Baptist churches of that county. During his stay with us he held meetings in the school-house in the village; these meetings developed into a revival (so called) and I, with six or seven others professed religion, and was baptized. For a time I tried to be good and avoid all evil, but after awhile I found myself drifted away from all called good and great. I often felt badly because I had made the profession, for I thought it was a great sin when one afterwards denied it by walk and conversation. At the age of about seventeen I went to Washington, D. C. After spending several years there in business, I went to Chicago, Illinois, and spent fifteen months: during this period my life was one of anything and everything except a religious one; never having a thought of God or my own condition as a sinner. In 1885 I returned from Chicago and located in Delmar, Delaware, there I soon became associated with Old School Baptists, but had no use for them, as I had heard all my life that the doctrine they believed and preached was worse than infidelity. In the spring of 1886 I was married to a daughter of Old Baptist parents: through respect to them I would occasionally go to hear their minister, who at that time was Elder E. Rittenhouse, afterwards Elder A. B. Francis. When the minister had finished his discourse I did not know any more than I did before he began; I confess I did not know what he was trying to get at, neither did I believe he knew: it was all a strange mixture to me. Once I went to hear Elder Wilson Housel; during his remarks he said, "It is a grand thing that the division took place in the church in 1832, for it separated the wheat from the chaff:" he then took up the "Old School" as the wheat and the "New School" as the chaff: this I understood, for he really did ridicule the New School; (I now know he preached a good sermon,) this offended me, and I solemnly vowed never to hear another Old Baptist preacher; for a long time I kept my word. Several years after this a strange feeling came over me which I did

not understand, a feeling of wretchedness, a feeling of depression, a craving for something I did not know what, a feeling of guilt, a feeling of loneliness, for no one was like me; never had I heard of such an experience: my only companions were the dragons and owls of the wilderness. My life seemed completely changed; the earth was empty and void. I found myself occasionally reading the Bible, but to what end I did not know, for I did not understand it. At times my reckless life would come up before me with condemning force, and I thought every one knew me and could read me like a book: this cut me off from society, because I did not feel worthy to mingle with those who had been my company. About this time I was taken dangerously ill, and for some time lingered between life and death: no one around me knew what I was suffering in mind because of my sins, neither can I describe that suffering here. I was at the end of all my works, and "What will become of me?" was the one question with me. One day when all hope seemed gone that I would ever recover and my very soul in despair, there came a voice (not earthly) which said, "God has saved you;" darkness and fear fled away, and the joy of that hour no tongue can tell. "I muse on the years that are past." I was ready then to depart and be with God, but instead I began to recover from that very hour, and in a few weeks was able to be around my room. When I was able to get around again I went to hear Old Baptist preaching: it was no longer a strange mixture to me, but salvation by the grace of God; this suited me because it fitted my case. I plodded along outside of the church until May, 1894, when I was received in the fellowship of the Little Creek church, Delaware, and was baptized by Elder A. B. Francis. We had preaching only once a month; the time seemed so long to wait to hear the gospel proclaimed, of which every word at that time filled my soul with, it seemed, an heavenly rapture. "I muse on the years that are past." The way of life and salvation seemed so clear and plain that I verily thought I could tell it to all men, and I tried to do so, but after awhile I learned that I could not raise the dead nor open the eyes of the blind. From the day I was baptized I felt impressed that I would have to preach; the burden became heavier and heavier; often subjects would be presented to my mind, and for relief I would write, and some of these writings appeared in the SIGNS. After a time I was called upon to read a hymn or speak in prayer or make a few remarks at our regular meetings; sometimes I could and other times I could not. Often when I knew I had to try to speak on the morrow I would spend a sleepless night; my appetite would fail me, and often I had to hold on to the desk to steady myself because of physical weakness. In 1896 the church licensed me to exercise my gift wherever in providence a door might be opened, and in 1897 ordained me. During my first experience in the church and in the ministry, visions came by night and revelations by day; my soul was filled with wonder, praise and zeal, but I have grown older in years and in sin since then, and now "I muse on the years that are past." The shades of night have fallen; if there is *now* a day of the Lord, surely it is one of darkness, in which is no brightness at all. There are no more visions by night, no more revelations by day, no more zeal. It seems that I have ceased to have spiritual emotions; no lead of mind into those glorious truths of the Bible, no more

pleasant meditation upon the secret of the Lord, no more comfort in hearing the word preached, no more inclination to read the Scriptures, and if I have that *real desire* for the welfare and prosperity of Zion that I once had, it is not in exercise. I am dead to everything called spiritual, and the worst of it is I fear I am indifferent to it all. That heart of feeling I once had is now stone; that fountain of tears which once so freely flowed is now dry; the tongue that once freely spoke of the glory, goodness and mercy of God is now silent, except when I try to preach. Days and nights pass without a word of prayer; I am indeed at times afraid to try to pray, afraid to take the holy name of God in my sinful lips; I feel at times that I fear God as I would an angry monarch in whose presence the transgressor cannot stand; then on the other hand, when the time of our regular meeting arrives I am afraid not to try to pray. I am not worthy to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, and at times tremble at the thought, yet I am afraid not to make the attempt. How many, many times I have said, I will give it all up, and often have thought I could if I were not afraid. I am often questioning if this kind of service is acceptable to God; it is the best I have *now*, but it was not so in my first experience; then I would have owned my Lord, I believe, at the sacrifice of my own life; "I muse on the years that are past;" but now I feel sure, were I brought to the test, I would say, "I know not the man." No mystery is so great, it seems to me, as the "mystery of iniquity." O the bottomless pit of the human heart. Views of Scripture which once seemed so clear and full, are to me now cloudy and dark; texts that I have used in days past with liberty, as I thought, are now sealed; my very soul seems chilled with the atmosphere of winter. No more can I "sing with the spirit and with the understanding also;" there seems no life in the good old hymns of the past. All that I do or say that has the appearance of religion, seems to me to be only mechanical. I am a tree without fruit, a cloud without rain, a well without water. In many of these bitter things I feel alone; my brethren are living and walking in the Lord, and when I see it I am glad for them. Should I have been told years ago, when all was joy and peace, that such a change could come in my feelings, I could not have believed it, and should I be told now that I will again experience the joy, peace and love which were mine in the years that are past, I could hardly dare hope for it. Well do I remember those days when I longed for meetings that I might hear the Word preached, and to visit the brethren that I might hear them talk of spiritual things, but those days are gone. Surely if the path of the just is as a light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day, I do not belong to that class. I cannot see the clear sky of God's wonders to the children of men. If I could not muse on the years that are past I would be hopeless, but there is some comfort in remembering *now* my Creator in the days of my youth; when no evil days came, and when the clouds returned not after rain: then I could read and sing with joy and gladness of heart, and drink in the truth as the parched earth drinks in the rain which comes seldom upon it. "I muse on the years that are past." Can it be possible that blindness, destitution, nakedness and poverty of soil are evidences of our sonship with God? How gladly we would lay hold upon them as such if we could; they seem rather to cut us off.

All my hope and ambition of years ago, that I might grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, have been blasted, and I am brought to grief and disappointment.

I hope it may not distress the mind of any one who may read this letter; surely it is not written for that purpose. We are told to bring all the tithes into the storehouse: we can bring only what we have, this I have done in this letter.

H. C. KER.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

RIO, Ill., Nov., 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I send the following for your better judgment, should you think it would be of any comfort to the readers of the SIGNS, it is at your disposal. May our God still uphold and maintain the managers of the SIGNS, as well as the correspondents who are comforting the household of faith.

For the instruction and comfort of the mourners, friends and hearers of the sermon preached by Elder Humphrey at the Henderson meeting-house, Aug. 14th, 1904, at the funeral of Wm. Davis, son of brother John Davis, which was very comforting to the children of God, and seemingly well received by the audience in general, Elder Humphrey preaching the gospel very ably, I write this letter to you. I would have you keep in remembrance the finished work of Christ: "Salvation is of the Lord." And, "we are his workmanship." Not far hence, it would, we hope, be appropriate and applicable to brother John Davis, and to the writer of this, both of whom are hastening to a brighter world where sorrows never come, and both of whom, I trust, can say as did one of God's servants of old, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." May those who read what I write, be made to rejoice in a finished salvation. I also hope that those who sing his praises, may sing with the spirit, and with the understanding also, and that they may receive the indwelling of the Spirit of God. "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." See also the first chapter of Ephesians.

Many years ago I was present when two preachers met, one a U. B. Circuit Rider, and the other a Primitive Baptist. There are a number living in the community who were acquainted with both. They, with a number of others met in the house of Elder Hahn, taking shelter from a thunder shower. I allude here to the thunder shower as pointing to the all-ruling power of God. The U. B. preacher alluded to, was going to the Wright school-house to fill an appointment, the Primitive Baptist was going to preach at Henderson Baptist meeting-house, where it still stands, and a few meet in the name of the Lord each month. Though nearly forty years are indexed upon the cycle of time since then, I well remember the incidents, and some of the conversation, which was in a large measure between the preachers. One subject noted was salvation by grace: all that Christ died for would finally be saved; God had an elect, chosen people, whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world; all that the Father had given to Christ would be raised up at the last day. The U. B. preacher all the while was contending for salvation by the works of man, and that the death and resurrection of Christ only made salvation possible for every man, and that the means must be used, the

gospel must be preached to save souls, money must be raised; that God blesses a willing giver, that means must be used to spread the gospel, that thousands were dying daily, and going down to endless torment because they had never heard the gospel. I was not a stenographer then, but am repeating the sum and substance of the discussion. The U. B. preacher said, You believe that there is final salvation for some, no matter what they may do? The Primitive Baptist replied, Yes, I do believe that all that Christ died for will be saved finally; for we read, The redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion. The rain being over, each prepared to go and preach about salvation, but in what different directions; they had come to the parting of the ways. It was fully understood, salvation by works, salvation by grace. "By grace are ye saved." The U. B. preacher said, If I believed as you do, I would take my fill of sin. To-day this remark needs no comment at my hands, for those that are born of the Spirit. I had heard both of these men preach. I did not then know that I would ever be a "Hardshell," as the U. B. preacher called the Baptists, but I did know that his remarks were repulsive How could a man who felt sure of escaping the torments of hell, think of loving sin, of rolling sin as a sweet morsel under his tongue, of loving the lusts and vanities of the world? We feel sure that the child born in the kingdom of Christ hates sin; hence the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit. Paul said, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." It is the thorn in the flesh that buffets, hence arises the warfare, and the desire for that change, when this mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption, when we shall see Jesus and be like him. To think of one claiming to be in Christ's kingdom, helping to build up his kingdom, with a desire to take the full measure of sin. How could a minister claiming to preach the gospel find it in his heart to utter such language, in the fear of the Lord? Could such a man preach the gospel of Jesus Christ who came to set the prisoners free to preach salvation to the poor, and who said to his disciples, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of heaven"? We are taught that God is from everlasting, his decrees change not, he is without variableness or shadow of turning. There is a people whom Christ called scribes and pharisees, hypocrites, who have no love for the saints, who try to make the outside appear clean while within is all manner of corruption. These love the pleasures of the world, drink down the pleasures of sin and vanity, and for a pretense make long prayers on the Sabbath days; these will find no comfort, no love for the gospel as presented by the called servants of God, while to the children of God it is manna from the upper world, provided for the sheep of the fold who go in and out and find pasture.

I sometimes think, from my experience, that this going in and out somewhat represents the warfare of the flesh and the Spirit. God's temple is composed of tabernacles of clay. We have the treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. Yea, the saints do love the gospel, and love the great Shepherd of their salvation. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me," but they know not the voice of strangers. How sweet to sit at the feet of Jesus, bearing the cross, despising the shame,

and listening to the wondrous truths of the gospel from the blessed Master's undershepherds, who are not strangers to grace. How comforting to hear from God's witnesses that it is sweet to fall asleep in Jesus. Friends, look by faith back to the time when Christ was here on earth, hear the anguished, the sorrowful words of the sister of Lazarus to the blessed Master: "If thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Jesus had said to his disciples, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well." "Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead." Then Thomas said, Let us go with the Master, that we may die with him. Now read on, ye that mourn. Jesus said to Martha, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" Martha went out to meet Jesus, and when she had called her sister Mary secretly, saying, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee," she rose up hastily. Now when the Jews who had come to comfort Mary saw this they followed her, saying, "She goeth unto the grave to weep there." And when Jesus saw her and her Jewish friends weeping, "he groaned in spirit, and was troubled, and said, Where have ye laid him?" They said unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept. My dear friends, he wept because we weep. Each sin demands a tear. In heaven above no sin is found, and there is no weeping there.

Dear saints of the household of faith, having entered in by the door, which is Christ, we do feel that we have passed from death unto life, having love for the brethren, and for the witnesses who testify of the grace of God, the Master's servants, the undershepherds, by the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, proclaim that all is well with those who cry, "What of the night?" Again would I say, ye who are Gentiles after the flesh, but who are sons and daughters of the Lord, ye who are saints, and members of Christ's body, the church, the glory of God, be ye comforted. As Gentiles after the flesh, ye weep and mourn, but through faith by the holy One of Israel, ye shall be comforted. As members of his body, ye shall rejoice in the ever living Head. He said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Ye redeemed, this language is for you, for every one whose name is written in the Lamb's book of life, not one shall be forgotten, not one shall perish. The same Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." The aged cannot have long to wait, but the promise is not alone to them, young men and maidens, too, are passing away; decay may not have set any visible mark upon the brow, in the vigor of life we may think only of life's charms, with visions of long life before us, but sin is our Adamic inheritance, and the wages of sin is death. The sinner must be born again, or sink in endless woe. The young are hastening on in the cycle of time, just as fast as are the hoary headed; time is not waiting. While in the roseate bloom of young life the sickle may be hidden among the flowers, and the

reaper may come forth as a flash of lightning, and this mortal wither as the grass, and as the flower thereof. Brother Davis' son was a young man, but we are told that his hope was in Jesus. Friends, brethren and sisters, your departed brother is silent, and the grave closes over him; we shall hear his voice no more on earth; with sad hearts we view the vacant chair; his seat is filled by another in the house of worship; we may visit the covered mound where lies the silent lump of clay until Jesus calls him forth in the resurrection. The blessed Redeemer is the resurrection and the life; the Father is all and in all. The son and brother is dead to us in time, but in the Spirit he has seen the beautiful city.

"Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep,
From which none ever wake to weep."

We that remain are prisoners in the flesh, we mourn and we weep until freed from this prison of clay, then with immortal wings we fly away, the last enemy, death, is swallowed up in victory.

Farewell, dear pilgrims, your pilgrimage will soon be over, and there is rest.

Your brother,

JOHN B. BLOOMFIELD.

WILLOW GROVE, Del., Jan. 13, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Inclosed you will find a letter written by brother Willard Cubbage, of Blackbird, Del. We all enjoyed it so much we thought to share it with our brethren and sisters. If it meets your approval give it a place in the SIGNS.

Your unworthy brother,

JAMES F. CUBBAGE.

BLACKBIRD, Del., Dec. 7, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER JAMES F. CUBBAGE:—As I have a few moments to spare I will improve the time by writing to you in reply to yours of some time back, though I do not feel competent to answer it. I want to say that I read it with satisfaction and comfort, it was to me good news, and I wish I were able to write in such a manner that it would be a comfort to you. Brother Benjamin E. Cubbage stopped over night with us on his way home from Southampton, and we certainly did enjoy his visit, although it was short. He seems to be relieved somewhat from his dark and gloomy forebodings of the past, and the light of the truth is now guiding him on his way. He is blessed with the gift of understanding, together with utterance to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ, to God's mourning and afflicted poor. There is no better gift that can be bestowed upon man, though with it there is a burden to carry through all the wilderness as they journey along. But the glory of the one is so great that the burdens are borne with rejoicing, the servants of the living God rejoice that they are counted worthy to suffer affliction for Christ's sake.

Your request was for me to write something upon the parable of the mustard seed. I have thought a great deal about it since reading your letter, but seeing that you have so ably handled it, and fitly applied it, it seems presumptuous in me to undertake to present any thought upon the subject, but we are told to be ready at all times to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in us. Therefore, when asked to give our view of any portion of the word, I think it is best to comply, though it be with weakness, to the best of our ability. Therefore, if in accordance with the will of an all-wise God to take of the things of the kingdom and

show them unto me, I will endeavor to present a few thoughts, and leave them for your consideration. When reading the Scriptures we want to know to what they refer, and whether they are in accord with our experience, and present to our understanding Jesus Christ and the work wrought by him in the experience of our own tried hearts. Unless Jesus is presented unto us from the word, and in our experience, the Scriptures are to us dry and unmeaning; but on the other hand, if Jesus is presented in the word and in our experience, we are comforted and edified in reading.

When we read this parable the question is, What does it present to us, and how are we to apply it? I understand a parable to mean, "something like unto." Jesus used some things in nature, which even the natural man could understand, to present or illustrate spiritual things, and so here the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, and which is indeed the least of all seeds, but when grown is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the fowls of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof. A kingdom signifies one or more countries which are under the sovereign rule of one king or ruler. So the kingdom is under the sovereign power, dominion and glory of God, in which he rules supreme. Here also is manifested the power, dominion and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, his Son, for in him dwelleth the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and the spiritual and visible church of God, under the gospel, is where Jesus reigns supreme, and where the grace of God is in the hearts of his people, who compose his church, which is the bride, the Lamb's wife, the new Jerusalem, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Now in this parable I am inclined to think is presented Jesus and the work which he should accomplish in redeeming and establishing his church in the earth. This is what all the old patriarchs and prophets spoke of and pointed to in all their writing. Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and the prophets did search what and what manner of time the Spirit that was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Hence we read in Isaiah, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even forever." Thus Jesus Christ, and what should be accomplished by him, is presented. Those old prophets looked for a Savior who should fulfill the law and redeem them who were under the law, and John the Baptist by faith saw the end of prophecy, and came preaching, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." Repent ye, turn away from the law and its types and shadows, for there is no life in them, and the end of all these things has come. Here is the substance, for there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; he it is, who cometh after me, and who is preferred before me; he must increase, but I must decrease.

Here is the seed planted in the earth, the man Christ Jesus, born of a woman, made like unto his brethren, who took upon him the seed of Abraham, in him

heaven and earth met, for he is the only begotten of the Father, and the eternal God was in him, and was declared so to be by John; for when he saw Jesus coming to his baptism he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I spake, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me." Our God also declared the same from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The son of man and the Son of God. Surely he is the kingdom of heaven planted in the earth, like unto a grain of mustard seed; and as the mustard seed is small, compared with all other seeds of the earth, so his kingdom appears small, compared with the kingdoms of the earth; but as the mustard seed grows and increases, so Christ increases. He was taken by the Spirit into the wilderness, and there all the fiery darts of the enemy were hurled against him, but he comes forth untouched, and goes about preaching, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He immediately begins to perform miracles, the blind receive their sight, the dumb speak, the deaf hear, the lame walk, and the poor have the gospel preached unto them. Those who were possessed of all manner of diseases were brought to him, and he healed them, that the Scripture might be fulfilled which reads, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." He called and qualified his apostles, and sent them forth prepared to preach the gospel. Thus he established his church in the earth, laying the foundation, himself being the chief corner-stone, for he is the Rock upon which the church is built, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. This is the rock that was cut out of the mountain without hands, as in the vision of the king, which Daniel interpreted by saying, In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, and it shall break in pieces all other kingdoms. Thus we see this kingdom continuing to increase.

Then he began to say to his disciples, that he must go up to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the chief priests; for he said, It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come; but if I go away, the Comforter will come, and he shall take of mine and show it unto you. Again, he said, I am the vine, ye are the branches; abide in me. Having fulfilled his work, and laid the foundation of his church, he leaves them and returns to the Father. The way is appointed, and the disciples go on in the work appointed for them, preaching the gospel, and the Lord added daily unto the church such as should be saved.

Then, following the history of the church down, we see how the church has grown and branched out until it fills the earth. The fowls of the air, to my mind, represent, as you have explained it, the works of the flesh that harrass us, causing us to doubt and fear and groan, being burdened, until by the grace of God we are enabled to find rest and peace and joy in the shadow of the branches, the church of the living God, for the kingdom of heaven is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and joy, and peace in the Holy Ghost. Every church that worships God in spirit and in truth is a branch of the vine, the church of God, and Jesus Christ is the head, and is over all, and in you all. Again, it is said, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation," and neither shall it be said, "Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." This

signifies to my mind the same as the expression, "All in all," and it is the work of grace in the heart, or as Paul said, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Therefore, if we have the love of God in the heart, we have there also our Lord Jesus Christ, and God the Father, and the church, full and complete, and there is the kingdom of heaven. God is love, and it was love that sent Jesus into the world to save sinners; and he is love, and his church is love, and love is the fulfilling of the law. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." If we love the brethren, we love Christ, and the Father, for they are one. The infirmities of the flesh are not taken away from us, therefore when we come under the shadow of the branches they lodge there with us.

But I must close. I have been bothered and have not written just as I had thought to write, because my line of thought has been broken, and I could not take it up again, so you will perhaps find some disconnection and mistakes. I have only outlined the subject, but perhaps you may grasp my meaning, though it is presented in a weak manner.

With love from all to all, I remain unworthily your brother,

WILLARD S. CUBBAGE.

DAYTON, Wash., Jan. 13, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I inclose a letter just received from our beloved brother, Elder W. H. Gilmore, of North Yakima, Wash. This letter I am sure expresses in a clear and able manner the steadfast faith of all the churches of the Siloam Association, of which he is an able and acceptable minister of the gospel, as well as the opinion of all the Primitive Old School Predestinarian Baptists in this western division of the United States of America, so far at least as my knowledge of them extends, and I am sure that they will all greet this letter with joy and hearty approbation in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if you see cause to give it publication. As I myself am of the same mind with brother Gilmore, I thought the letter well timed and an able defense of the Old Baptist cause, so far as the order and government for which they contend, and for which they have suffered so much persecution in ages past, are concerned.

I want all the readers of the SIGNS, and all lovers of simple, unadulterated truth, to read this letter and compare it with the word of God, which is the standard of judgment, as he presents. It is needless for me to say more than give brother Gilmore my hearty indorsement in all that he has so well said.

I wish in a short way to express to you and the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES my hearty approval of every word you have written in the number for January 1st, 1905, for it has become necessary of late that every Old School or Primitive Baptist church should be informed and come to know their true relation to the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only head, and to the apostolic churches of the New Testament, whose rule of action is alone to be found in the inspired word of God, and pre-eminently in the New Testament Scriptures, having the broad seal of the Holy Ghost. The restless spirit of confederating in the past has ever sought to overturn the churches of the saints, by robbing them of the liberty which they have in Christ, in the

right of choice and freedom of expression, through assumed or delegated powers, which the churches have no right given them to surrender to other bodies, or to new tribunals which may be placed over them, but they are commanded to stand fast in the liberty of Christ, and not to be entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

The council at Jerusalem was in the church with the chosen and ordained apostles, whose words are still to be heeded and carried into effect, as was ordained by them in the council. Their words and works are still extant, and in the hands of the true ministry, elders, bishops, pastors, and evangelists and stewards, and before the eyes of the members, as documents legislative, judicial and executive, and nothing more is needed for the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace. Let us keep the ordinances as they were first delivered, striving together for the hope of the gospel; more than this is antichrist.

Your brother,

I. N. NEWKIRK.

NORTH YAKIMA, Wash., Jan. 8, 1905.

ELDER I. N. NEWKIRK—VERY DEAR BROTHER:—I received your short note a few days ago, also the minutes of the second meeting of the National Council of Primitive Baptists of the United States of America, and as you have requested me to write you a letter, I take pleasure in improving the present opportunity. I am glad to hear that you have returned safely to your home and friends. You have doubtless had a pleasant visit, besides quite a lengthy trip, and I presume you mingled with the great throng of admirers of the world's great achievements in sciences and arts up to the present time. But it appears to me while the world is making such a great display of her wonderful advancements, that this ambitious spirit has also seized upon some of our Primitive Baptist brethren to seek out new inventions. I cannot call to mind any Scripture that would warrant the establishing of any higher tribunal than the orderly organized churches to settle church difficulties, or to maintain sound doctrine, for I reason that a duly organized church has the approval of the Spirit, and stands as one of the seven candlesticks spoken of by the Revelator to John. It seems by the account given by John that the Lord has reserved the right to himself to establish or remove churches, according as his wisdom dictates, as is seen in the case of the church at Ephesus. But in each of the five churches in which he found errors, he held them responsible as individual churches for those errors, and commanded them to duty. Paul being taught by the same Spirit of Christ, admonished the church at Corinth to correct her errors; likewise the church at Galatia; it is true he told them what to do, but he did not give them the spirit of obedience, Jesus must give that; but we must be doers of the word, and not hearers only. It seems to me that the churches at the present time have a great advantage over the primitive churches in those days; they had the occasional preaching of the apostles and others, but we have the benefit of their experience left on record, with the teaching of the apostles, and a perfect free access to the whole Bible at all times, yet it seems that some brethren wish to go beyond the rights and privileges conferred upon the churches by Christ and the apostles, and endeavor to set up unscriptural concerns without the authority of the word of inspiration. This action of the brethren at

St. Louis calls to my mind the expression of Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace. Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the Lord. Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein."—Jer. vi. 14–16. It appears that this warning was given to Israel just before they went into captivity. Now we read that "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning; that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Now if I am permitted to judge in these matters, my conclusions are these: that the deepest and most learned men we have in the doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ are the most humble and contrite in spirit, and they are never found inventing some new theory in order to lead off a party after them, or to cause a division among brethren. They seem to feel that what they understand of the mysteries of godliness was given them of the Lord, therefore they cannot boast as though they had not received it, neither do they become exalted, because the very nature of the knowledge carries with it a spirit of humility. The apostle Paul as a wise master builder could exhort his brethren at Colosse to "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering: forbearing one another, and forgiving one another." Now, brother Newkirk, it is evident to my mind that if we always had those lovely christian virtues well stamped in our hearts, we would not need to go to St. Louis, or any other remote part of the United States, in order to negotiate for peace, for there would be peace, both at home and abroad, and the Lord God would be exalted in our hearts, Jesus would at all times be glorified, and peace would flow as a river.

This year Christmas came on Sunday, and as it was our regular time for meeting, we had a very pleasant Christmas service; all were in peace, and we decided it was not necessary to go away to some popular place to observe Christmas, for Christmas would come to us as well here as yonder. So it is with peace, the proper dates for the arrival of peace come just as regular as the church or its lovers are prepared to receive her; but she will not dwell alone, she always requires her companion, love, and where love does not exist, peace cannot enter. So it becomes our solemn duty to examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith; prove ourselves. "Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"—2 Cor. xiii. 5. So it appears that this examination is not only an individual matter, but is to be conducted right at home. Again, we are commanded to confess our faults one to another, and pray one for another, that we may be healed. Now, my brethren, my home church, knows what my faults are, and right here at home is where my confessions should be made. Again, if I am a lover of peace and the prosperity of Zion, while I am acquainted at my home church, knowing her needs and what is lacking there, she is justly entitled to my prayers and labors in her behalf at home. I do not think it is possible for me to fulfill this Scripture in

waiting until I get off into some strange community, and then make loud confessions of my faults and long prayers for her peace. It is true we are commanded to pray for all men, and David says, Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, but as God is omnipresent, he can be approached by the peace-loving child of grace at any time or place, without establishing stated national assemblies for the purpose of invoking divine wisdom, and at the same time ignoring the plain teaching of the Scriptures, and attempt to establish an institution unauthorized by Christ and the apostles, not even named in the Bible. Yet Paul declared to Timothy, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Then let us ask ourselves the solemn question: Are we men of God in the sense that Paul means? If so, then the Scriptures are a thorough furnisher to us, containing all the information and instruction for the government of the church of Christ, and the perfecting of the saints.

Now, brother, I will close this imperfect letter, asking you to cast over it the mantle of charity, and remember your weak brother when it is well with you.

Yours in the fellowship of the gospel,

W. H. GILMORE.

[WE desire to add our approval to the indorsement of brother Newkirk. Elder Gilmore's article is well worth the reading by all lovers of the order of the church established by our Lord and revealed in the Scriptures of the New Testament. We have seen nothing clearer or stronger than the foregoing article.—ED.]

MODESTO, Ill., Dec. 15, 1904.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I wish to write at this time upon the subject of deacons and their duties to the churches, and the duty of the churches to them, because I believe there are duties belonging to the churches toward that office which ought to be faithfully carried out. There can, I believe, be no disputation as to what those duties are. I also believe that the Primitive Baptists come nearer to following the plan laid down in the New Testament than any other order of people. Still when it comes to the practical workings of the office, there are many things in which I think we come short. All agree as regards the kind of persons by which this office should be filled, they must be grave, not double-tongued, and ruling their own houses in an orderly manner. But what are the duties incumbent upon them? Judging from the course of many churches (and actions speak louder than words,) their only duty would seem to be to preside over and pass the emblems in the time of the communion. Now if this be their only duty, I think that the office could be dispensed with, because any member could attend to that part. But the question arises, What were the first seven deacons called to attend to? What were they appointed for? To relieve and aid the pastor, and to take charge of the church funds, and to attend to the wants of the sick and the poor and needy. But right here, when a church fund is mentioned, an objection comes up from some. Some accuse us of Missionism and a desire for a salaried ministry. It is not denied that it is our duty to aid the poor, and assist the pastor when he needs it, but they say that they would rather slip their gift privately into the hands of the needy ones themselves than to put it into

a public fund, and rely upon another person's judgment. Sometimes the following Scripture is quoted to support such a position: "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." Now I think that if this Scripture is rightly looked into, and its meaning really understood, such a course as that named above would be rather disobeying this Scripture than carrying it out, because to privately convey the gift may be from a fleshly desire to let the needy one know who it is that is helping him, in person. But now, admitting that all are agreed upon the duties that are incumbent upon a deacon, I would ask, How can he attend to those duties unless the church maintains a fund in his hands to do with? The deacon may be (and many are) poor financially, and therefore can do very little in and of himself. It has been said that to place all the funds into the hands of one or two, and then trust to their judgment, is not good policy, but let each member be his or her own judge as to how or where the money which they bestow shall go. But is this the scriptural way? If there be no one whom the church deems qualified, and can trust to take care of and distribute the funds of the church, what is the use in ordaining a deacon?

Now I have learned that the life of a deacon, as well as that of a minister, is a hard one, and unless aided by the church neither can accomplish anything, comparatively speaking. The deacon should do all in love, not trying to do aught by force, but trying to teach each member to understand that there must be some system about maintaining church expenses, as well as all other financial matters. The yearly expenses of the church should be ascertained as nearly as possible, and this should be divided among the number of members so as to ascertain what each one should pay toward these expenses, if they are able. In every church there will likely be those who are not able to pay their part, but there will be others who are able to pay more, and in this way they can help each other. Suppose the expenses for repairs to the house of worship, janitor, fuel, lights, help for the poor and needy, and for the pastor, the associational expenses, &c., would require one hundred and fifty dollars, that, for a church composed of forty members, would be three dollars and seventy-five cents per year, or thirty-one and one-quarter cents per month.

But nothing should be done by force, and no motion should be made to adopt this as a rule, but do everything by kindness and in love, and let example speak. Let the deacons be firm, laying before each what he ought to do, and then leave the matter to the conscience of each one. I am aware that some will say that they would rather not put down any amount against their names, but prefer to hand it over when they have it, but this would leave the deacons sometimes in a strait, they may run out of means, and if there is nothing promised what can they do? but if something is promised, they can go forward, either furnishing the means themselves or borrowing until the promised amounts are paid in.

Brethren, I would be glad for all to think of these things. At an ordination, it is customary for some one to give a charge; this is given to the deacons, but nothing at all is said to the church concerning her duty. When the question is asked about the churches, and it is said, Have you no charge for her? the answer sometimes is, O she is supposed to know her own duty. If that is the case all around, there is no need of a charge

to the deacon either, because he may be supposed also to know his duty. He is a member of the church, and surely cannot be supposed to be the most ignorant member.

Now, dear brethren and sisters, in love and fellowship the above thoughts are submitted for your careful consideration.

Yours in hope of a blessed immortality,

J. R. SPIRES.

[WE are, generally speaking, in agreement with brother Spires in what he has written above. It seems sure to us that the office of deacons is to take care of the tables in the church; the poor especially are their charge. The qualifications, named by the apostle, show that they are to be men of good judgment and careful management. The church cannot bestow the qualifications, but she can recognize them in any of her members. The church cannot make a deacon, but she can recognize the gift. A man who has not the qualifications of a deacon should no more be inducted into that office than one who has no gift of expounding the Scriptures or of teaching, should be put into the place of the ministry. When such a member is found in a church, it may be supposed that the church will feel altogether willing to entrust that man with the management of her public funds; if she is not thus willing she should not put that member into the office. A deacon should not be a deacon in name only.

We also think the Scriptures teach that there should be order and system in the financial affairs of the churches.—ED.]

ALLENTOWN, Pa., Jan. 1, 1905.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—Once more I will try to address you in the way of a little New Year's greeting. I cannot promise that it will be spiritual, as none but God can tell that. My mind has been dwelling of late on past experience, and how I was led to become a lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. In reading the SIGNS of January 1st, I found therein food sweeter than honey to my taste. Elder Durand's comparison of the spiritual growth of the soul to that of the lily was exceptionally good, and as I read on, I drew more and more nectar from this sweet text. In penning those beautiful thoughts he was in the companionship of Jesus, he was enabled by him to draw water from the well of salvation. Blessed be the holy name of God, he enabled me to quench my thirst with this water. It shall be a well of water in you springing up unto everlasting life. By the columns of the SIGNS I am fed and nourished, as I am not permitted to get it any other way, yet I am content to have it so, as it is my dear Lord's way it is the right way.

I well remember the time when I detested the SIGNS. In self-sufficiency I compared it to a patent medicine almanac, little thinking that I would ever love it so dearly. There was one thing particularly objectionable to me in the SIGNS, and that was the word "sinner." It seem foolish to be always calling one's self a poor sinner. I simply did not believe that any one would say so but for effect. Also election was hateful to me, as I read it in this paper, and I was determined not to believe it, so I joined the Methodist church and severely let the SIGNS alone. I used to wonder how grandmother could pour over that gloomy paper all Sunday afternoon, when it was so lovely out of doors. Dear friends, I now know the reason why. If I am correct, it is about ten years ago when I first read the SIGNS with the understand-

ing heart; it was at the home of my dear mother, who has since gone to that land from whence no traveler returns; I carelessly took the paper from the window and began turning over the leaves, my eye was caught by the word "sinner." There is that hateful word again, thought I, nevertheless I began reading about that sinner, and stranger than fiction, in reading what he said I first knew that I had an experience. Then my soul-trouble began, I read that in order to be saved one must see one's self a ruined sinner. O, I thought, do I see myself such an one? I had wished for a long time that I were a christian, and tried hard to become one, yet had never seen myself a sinner. I had studied upon this question. I read a number of authors and pondered a good deal over "Dante's Inferno," illustrated by Dore, and every one knows what a horrible work that is. Finally I got hold of Bunyan's writings, and selected the worst of them all, called "Sighs from Hell," and my hair rose up, so to speak, with the horror of it, yet I could not see myself a sinner. I began to envy those people of the SIGNS who could call themselves sinners. I attended all the revivals that were going on in the different churches, thinking I might possibly get some help, but did not. How I did envy those most fortunate ones, as I thought them, who got religion at the altar. I even tried that, too, but nothing softened my hard heart. I thought, If I could only see myself a sinner I could then be saved, for the Bible said, sinners Jesus came to save. I thought it was hard that God would take no notice of me when he was saving those around me. I began to be troubled about election, now fearing that I was a reprobate indeed. In the course of time I had a view of myself, and then the little hope I once possessed disappeared quickly. I was led back to my childhood days and there shown, I think, all the sins I had committed at that period of my life. Then as time went on I saw the sins of my youth, and so on to middle age, and at times now they like mountains round me rise. It is needless to say that any efforts of my own in the way of salvation were futile, as every child of God knows this truth. When I was brought to a knowledge of the truth I do not know, all I can say is, that whereas I was once blind, I now see. I was comforted by this passage, when feeling despondent because of lack of evidence. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." So I am given a hope in his mercy if not in the joys of his salvation.

Dear fellow-travelers, do you wonder that I have a peculiar love for the SIGNS? The Lord will take care of this precious medium by which many of his children are nourished and sustained.

In closing, I wish you all a happy new year.

Lovingly, but unworthily,

MARY E. FISHER.

ADRIAN, Mich., Jan. 17, 1905.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—The old year has passed away, it has gone with all its joys, sorrows, temptations, trials and cares. The new year comes full of life, beautiful to look upon, but transient as the one gone; time with its sickle will put an end to all things, and when I think of the brevity of life, O how I long and pray to the Lord that he will give me brighter evidence that I am walking in the highway of holiness which is cast up for the ransomed of the Lord, then sor-

row and sighing would flee away, for "No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon; * * * but the redeemed shall walk there." How they sing and shout as they travel along; no harm can come to the poor, little, wayfaring children of God as they are journeying in this highway of holiness. O that I might be found walking in that way, the strait and narrow path that leads to life, the Lamb in the midst of the kingdom for its light. I am poor and needy, and know not how to walk as I should; at this moment I feel to be the greatest hypocrite on earth; I cannot do the things that I would, and would not do the things that I do; would not be so cold and indifferent, and would have more the spirit of prayer. Sometimes I can but weep because of my hard and stony heart, like the adamant rock that nothing but the love of God can melt, but he treasures up our tears, and the sighs and groans of his little ones he will remember, and will not despise their prayers. O wondrous love of God, I know not how to write of it; am not worthy to speak of it in any way, and yet what a glorious theme, how I would love to write and talk about it if I only had the ability, and how I love to hear the dear people of God talk of Jesus and his love, and the wonderful plan of salvation.

Now my mind goes back to my happy childhood home, living with my dear father and mother, who were Old Baptists, but long since have gone to their reward. Their home was a home for the Old Baptists, and they very often came to stay with them all night, and that was a feast to me, child as I was, I would get in a corner and listen to them talk, with a strong desire to be like them; O how lovely they looked, and have ever since. I cannot say, as some do, that I ever hated the Old Baptists; I cannot remember when I did not love them. It seems I can see the image of the Master reflected in their faces, and how sad we feel when we hear they are in trouble. It was with heart-felt sorrow I read in the SIGNS of the painful accident that dear Elder Bartley met with. O, I do love him for the truth's sake, and am glad to hear he is so far recovered. How my heart went out in sympathy to Elder D. M. Vail in his great affliction in the loss of his dear children; I could not keep the tears back when I read his sorrowful letter in the SIGNS, and I said in my heart, Lord, comfort him, for vain is the help of man; none but he who rides upon the storm in his majesty, and commands the raging waves of the sea, and says, "Peace, be still," can do him any good. I can truly say God has been good to me all the days of my life, or long ere this I should have been consumed. Truly he is the God of love, of long-suffering and great mercy, for surely I do not know why I am left and those so much more useful taken.

> "O God of love, when shall I meet
> The saints around thy mercy-seat,
> And join with them free grace to sing,
> And see my Savior and my King?"

O, could this be my happy lot in the great beyond, then would I be satisfied.

I will close this poor, rambling letter; in looking it over it seems utterly worthless, but will say I want the dear old SIGNS to continue to come to me, for after reading them I love to see them in my house. If I should go into a stranger's house and see the SIGNS, I should feel at once they are my kindred, for no one can love the doctrine the SIGNS sets forth unless they have experienced it, for I believe they teach the true doctrine of the Bible; therefore the world hates

them, and will not have them in their houses, but I would say to the writers of the SIGNS, Write on, your letters are God-honoring, and it is soul-cheering to read them, and I am glad and feel to rejoice that God has raised up such a noble defender of the truth as the present editor, as well as those that have passed away and gone to their reward; they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.

Yours unworthily,

H. TUTTLE.

HERNDON, Va., Jan. 4, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Inclosed find post-office money order for four dollars, for which please give credit on subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to M. F. Snider, of Daysville, Va.; he gave me the money and requested that I should send it to you. I always feel glad to know that the brethren love the SIGNS so well that they are willing to pay for it. I feel satisfied in my mind that all the old time Baptists get more out of its pages than the price they pay for it. I would like to say to every subscriber of the SIGNS, Let us pay up our dues on it and keep it going, for should we neglect it and cause it to stop going forth, surely we could never get another like our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for it brings us glad tidings from the scattered people of our Father's family all over our land, which tells us truly that we "are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." I do not feel worthy to be numbered with the people of God, still I love them and the dear old SIGNS with all my heart, and "can't help it." I believe I know this, and it brightens my little hope, as it is written, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren," and this love must be of God, for "God is love." All the writers of the SIGNS testify to the same things; they tell their brethren what great things the Lord has done for them; not like the Arminian world, telling the people what they are doing for the Lord. God's little children do not want to take any credit to themselves, but love and fear the Lord for what great things they have received at his hands.

Your brother, I hope,

J. F. OLIVER.

GREENWOOD, Colorado, Dec. 28, 1904.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—It is time for me to renew my subscription, and I will inclose the amount for my paper, the SIGNS. We may be strangers in the flesh, but I truly hope that we are not strangers in the Spirit, and when I become old and frail I hope that my love for my dear brethren and my faith in my blessed Redeemer may grow stronger and stronger. It is the truth that salvation is all of the Lord that brings us near the cross of Christ Jesus. We rejoice together in a most precious faith, and the hope of salvation by grace, which God hath for us wrought out, without works or means or help of ours; it is all free and sovereign grace. What a glorious theme to observe or think upon, that Jesus has given us knowledge and a spiritual understanding, that his grace is sufficient to bear us up under all our trials and sorrows through life; in this world he will not leave us comfortless or without hope.

These few lines are only intended by way of greeting.

With much love and wishing prosperity to all, I remain as ever yours,

M. J. DUNCAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1905.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

DAVID A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART.

OUR dear brother, E. D. Varnes, of Farmington, Ill., has requested that we present some thoughts with regard to the scriptural declaration that David was a man after God's own heart. He desires to know whether it was David as a type of Christ, or David as a man personally, of whom this was said. He asks, "Was there any difference between David as a child of God, and all others of his children?" He says, "We find that David stepped aside, even after God had so wonderfully blessed him, and that if a child of God should now do as did David and Solomon, we would be apt to say, I have no more confidence in them." He asks, "How was Christ David's son?" Brother Varnes also speaks of greatly missing the names of many who once wrote for the SIGNS, most of whom are gone from earth, but some few remain. Brother Varnes closes with warm expressions of love to the managers of the SIGNS and to all who love the truth that it contends for.

We do certainly appreciate and prize all the kind words used by our dear, aged brother, and we feel like trying to respond, as far as we can, to his request.

In Acts xiii. 22, Paul is recorded as having said in the synagogue at Antioch, "And when he had removed him [Saul] he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will." In verse twenty-three we read still further, "Of this man's seed hath God, according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Savior, Jesus." The first expression, "I have found David my servant," is found in Psalms lxxxix. 20, and the second expression, to which brother Varnes especially refers, is found in 1 Sam. xiii. 14. This expression is in the words of the prophet Samuel, addressed to king Saul, in which he declared to him that his kingdom should not be established because of his disobedience to the commandments of God, and that the Lord had sought him a man after his own heart, and that the Lord had commanded this man to be captain over Israel. This is all, so far as we have been able to find, that is said regarding this expression in the Scriptures.

From what has been quoted above it seems that both as a man who was declared of God to be suitable to reign in Israel, and as a type of Christ, David was indeed a man after God's own heart. Saul as a man and as king over Israel was not a man after God's own heart, for he was not careful to regard the word of God, and was disobedient to his commandments. Saul was filled with pride, and from the first we see no evidence that he chose God as his God, but rather sought to walk after his own vain desires. For all these things Samuel declares that the kingdom shall not be confirmed to him, but shall be removed to another more suitable. Saul was not a man after God's own heart, and so was it

the case also with the brethren of David, all of whom were comely men who would be admired of men because of the outward appearance, but were not God's choice, because he regards what is in the heart. Even Samuel had not looked for such as David to be the chosen of the Lord. But the Lord had already conferred upon David the spirit of worship and service, and had filled him with humility and all other heavenly graces. Because of this God looked upon him and chose him to be king rather than those who even pleased the prophet Samuel. Now in this sense he was a man after God's own heart, as Saul was not, and as David's own brethren were not. In agreement with this we know that in all the dealings of God with his people some are commended and some are not. Those whose hearts were filled with love and reverence toward God, out of which always will spring all obedience, are commended and declared to be approved of God, but those who depart from the right way of the Lord are reproved and chastised of him. David, moved by the spirit of inspiration, himself said, "If his children forsake my law, * * * I will visit their transgressions with the rod," &c. We recall once to have heard the expression concerning a child who had manifested docility, and who was cheerfully obedient to his father, This child is a son after my own heart. The father meant that he found in his child just that docile, obedient spirit that his heart desired, and that commended his child to him with especial nearness of affection. David in heart and life toward God was all that Saul was not.

Now as king of Israel, as one who had formerly been a shepherd, and who in both relations was a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, he also was a man after God's own heart. In these relations and in the faithfulness which was manifest by him in them both he was a striking type of Christ, and thus he was approved of God, or, which is the same thing, he was after God's own heart. In our Lord Jesus Christ, as King, Shepherd, Priest and Prophet, such perfection is manifested that it can be said of him in the fullest, most absolute sense of the word, that he was the Man after God's own heart. "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," was the testimony of the Father to him. As he came forth from the throne of God there was in him all the perfection of Godhead; but on the other hand he assumed a perfect manhood, (perfect in the sense of holiness we here mean) and as a man he always had the testimony that he pleased God, and his perfect obedience was pleasing to God also. He said, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." Thus both in his divine and in his human nature he always pleased God; he was the man indeed after God's own heart. Yet, as said before, it is our mind that David also as one who was diverse in mind and heart from Saul, was a man after God's own heart. But it must be remembered that all that he was diverse from Saul God had by his Spirit made him to be, and God was but approving his own work in David, as it was made manifest in his devotion and love to God and fear of the name of the Lord when he said that he was a man after his own heart. True, the prophet Samuel said this, but he knew and spake the mind of God.

"Was there any difference between David as a child of God, and all others of his children?" As the chosen of God,

loved with an everlasting love, and therefore drawn with loving-kindness, and kept unto final glory through faith in the Redeemer, there was none, and there could be none, and in this one thing there can be no difference between any of the chosen of the Lord, all are alike the subjects of rich and reigning grace, and in this new covenant relation all are holy through Christ, and are perfected by his one offering forever. But there is a difference between the obedient, loving, humble-hearted believer, and that one who has been left to become boastful and high minded and disobedient. There was a vast difference between Peter boasting, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee," and the same Peter going out and weeping bitterly when his Lord had turned and looked upon him. It cannot be reiterated too often that as relates to the redemption of the people of God, and God's great love to them, even when dead in sins, there is no difference. All the children of God clothed in the imputed righteousness of Christ are men after God's own heart; that is, they are all in Christ, righteous, holy, perfect, and our God has said that their sins are cast behind his back, and that he will remember them no more. But in our daily life, outwardly, and inwardly also for that matter, we all know by sorrowful and bitter experience that sin still is with us, and so with us that we cannot do the good that we would; and we also know that there is this difference between the children of God, viz: that some manifest his likeness in their daily life much more than others: one is faithful to be at his meetings, to assist in all ways that he can in the support of the order of the house of God, to speak of the goodness of God and his mercy to him, a sinner, to walk with lowliness of spirit in all that he says and does, while another forsakes his meetings and becomes swallowed up in the world. The life of Christ is made manifest in the mortal body of the one much more than in the other. But as between David and all other children of God there was no difference; if they depart, so did he; if they are given sore repentance, so was he; if they mourn because of their sins, so did he; if at times they must in sore distress cry out for the restoration of the joy of his salvation, so did he. He and they all alike had common trials and deliverances, conflicts and victories; in whatever sense he individually was a man after God's own heart, in the same sense they are the same. As said before, all of them, as seen in Christ, are men after God's own heart, and when any are found departing, upon them will abide the displeasure of God. On the other hand, when any obedience is wrought in them, and being wrought in them is wrought out by them, in that sense they may be also, as it seems to us, spoken of as men after God's own heart; that is, they are walking as he has commanded them.

David did indeed step aside, as our brother has said, even after the Lord had blessed him; so also do the children of God, often. Not one of the churches to whom Paul wrote but had need of reproof and admonition. All but two of the seven churches of Asia were reproved, and warned to forsake the evil that was found in them, either of practice or doctrine; and like our brother, we have often thought that such brethren and such churches now would be cast away from the fellowship of us all; but we have been glad many times, not that holy men of old sinned, but seeing that they did sin, it has been recorded for our

learning and comfort. What an important thing it is to come to know about the warfare that abides with the believer all the way along. Perhaps almost all the children of God in their first love feel as though sin within them is forever put down, and perhaps cast altogether out from their hearts; they feel such a victory through Christ that they ride on the very sky, and cannot believe that they ever shall grieve, that they ever shall doubt him again; then when at some unexpected time sin within shows itself in some one of its multitude of forms, they are surprised and overwhelmed, and on the other hand are ready to conclude that they never have known the Lord at all in the redemption of the soul and in the pardon of sin. This is their first experience of the warfare, and they are ready to throw away the hope that has been theirs, in despair. This experience is sure to be repeated again in their after experience, but when they have come to learn something about the doctrine of the warfare, as stated in the word, they will not be again so utterly overwhelmed in despair. Peter denied his Lord, but soon he went out and wept bitterly, and a few days after we find him in response to the heart-searching questioning of his Lord, saying, "Thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." He had begun to know what the warfare meant, and he could never be quite so boastful again, neither could he sink quite so low in despair, because of the warfare.

It is considered by Arminians that our doctrine is a terrible one because it declares that the elect alone are saved, but what of a doctrine that, if true, would insure the final destruction of all the race without remedy? If no righteousness will avail a man but his own, and if there be no such thing as a caused righteousness, as is asserted by all Arminians, who know what they believe and why they believe it, then it is sure that not one of the race of a fallen head will ever possess righteousness, without which no man shall see the Lord.

We can fully enter into the feelings of brother Varnes when he speaks of the names now seen in the columns of the SIGNS no more. We do indeed miss them more than we can tell. We have read the SIGNS for more than fifty years, and as a child held them in reverence; the names of the old writers were as household words in our father's home. But one name has not passed away from the columns of the SIGNS, nor, we are persuaded, from the hearts of the Lord's people, and that name is the name that is blessed above all names, the dear Redeemer, the precious Lord Jesus Christ. All other names may, yea, will fail, but his name abides the same, our Friend, Brother, Companion, Savior, forever.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904, &c.

VIEWS WANTED.

WILL some of the brethren give their views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on Revelation vi. 16, 17? It has been fifty years or more since I have heard an Old Baptist preach on that subject, and I would now like to see it in print.

Z. WARD.

BEAR WALLOW, Va., Feb. 6, 1905.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS."

First Ind. Baptist Church, Woburn, Mass., $6.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder John E. Gore, Sept. 7th, 1904, at the home of the bride's parents, Rowland F. Hill and Miss Cora E. Blythe, both of Washington, Co., Pa.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY HOPEWELL CHURCH.

WHEREAS, it hath pleased Almighty God to remove by death from our midst our dear beloved brethren, Deacon N. E. Bozeman and Elder John E. Carter, we, the church at Hopewell, Texas, feel to say in the language of our Savior, Not ours, but thy will, O God, be done; and we will bow in humble submission to thy dealings with us in all things, and ascribe all praise and glory to thy holy name forever. Amen. Therefore be it

Resolved, That we, as a body, the church at Hopewell, hereby set forth in these resolutions as a sacred and solemn duty our sincere and heartfelt respect, love and true devotion to the memory of our departed brethren, and desire that in this dispensation we may still have grace given us to fear and serve the Lord in the beauty of holiness. Be it

Resolved, further, That the church tender her love, sympathy and devotion to the bereaved families, and also that suitable obituaries be prepared of each of our brethren and sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, *Advocate of Truth* and *Gospel Messenger* for publication.

R. R. RADNEY, Moderator.

A. E. HARRIS, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Valeria Smith was born in Hamilton, Ohio, Dec. 18th, 1819. In 1825 she moved with her parents, John and Mary Young, to Crawfordsville, Ind., where she married Job Dewey. To this union five children were born, one of whom, Mrs. Angeline Haynes, of Brawley, Cal., survives. Having received a hope, she at the age of nineteen years, with her husband, Job Dewey, united with Sugar Creek Primitive Baptist Church. In 1849 she with her family moved to Des Moines, Iowa, where her husband died. She afterwards married John Nosler, and bore him two children, one of whom, Peru, now lives at Pasco, Wash. Death having claimed Mr. Nosler, she married J. E. Smith, and with him moved to Genesee, Idaho, in 1892, where, after burying her last husband, she died Nov. 18th, 1897, having attained the age of 78 years, lacking one month. All through her pilgrimage she lived a consistent christian life, and was sound and firm in the doctrine of grace, as was shown by her calling her two surviving children, who cared for her in her last sickness, to her and saying, "Children, I have never followed after any of the isms of the day, and when I am gone I do not want you to bring any but a Primitive Baptist minister to my house to preach the funeral." Although a great sufferer, she bore her sufferings with patience, waiting only the summons of the Master to come up higher.

W. J. HESS.

MEETINGS.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

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The bi-centennial of the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., was celebrated Oct. 20th, 1903. After some delay it is now published in pamphlet form, and on sale at this office. Price 15 cents. The pamphlet contains photographs of the Welsh Tract meeting-house and Elder J. G. Eubanks, the pastor, the proceedings of the anniversary, letters of greeting from sister churches and a historical sketch written by Dr. B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., and read on the occasion. Some of the brick in the meeting-house was brought from Wales to this country, and hauled on mules' backs a distance of ten miles. The pamphlet is very interesting and full of information.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 73. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1905. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A FUNERAL SERMON.

I HAVE been requested by some of the relatives and friends to write for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the sermon I preached at the funeral of Seaman T. Christian, in the Old School Baptist meeting-house at South River, N. J., January 23rd. His obituary was published in the SIGNS of February 15th. It would be impossible for me to recall and write what I said on that occasion. The best I can do is to write as my mind may now be led upon the portion of Scripture which I then read as a text, and express as nearly as I can some of the things I said concerning the life and character of our friend.

"Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."—Romans v. 20, 21.

My introduction was somewhat as follows: We have come together here today, my friends, to manifest our high regard for a neighbor and friend who has been removed from our midst by death, to express our sympathy for those immediately bereaved, and to pay the last tributes of friendship and love, and give the last tender attentions which he can receive in this world. Scenes of mourning like this have been common since the world began, but we never get so used to them through their frequent occurrence that they lose any of their bitterness. Each occasion of the kind bears its own peculiar features of sadness to those who are bereaved, and their mourning is just as deep and their crying and tears just as strong as though such partings and such anguish had never been before. Their grief is none the less because during all the past ages, day by day, man has been going to his long home, and the mourners have gone about the streets.

To-day the loss of a dear and loved and honored father is deeply felt by children and grandchildren. Such grief is sacred, as were the intimate relationships that death has broken. We have all felt it by some sad loss in such measure as to know that we can sympathize, but not intrude. We look on reverently and are silent. Others as relatives, and many not bearing ties of earthly relationship,

feel an especial sorrow in the death of our dear friend. His kindness, his thoughtful care for others, his noble character and his blameless life, endeared him to many, and to some he was dear because of an experience of grace, which was felt to be his even by those who had not heard him express it in words. This spiritual relationship constitutes a tie even sweeter and stronger than the ties of earthly relationship, for death cannot sever it. How sadly will our dear friend and brother be missed by the little company who meet here for worship. I feel that the appropriate place for me to-day would be among the mourners rather than here conducting these solemn services.

I have known Mr. Christian for nearly forty years, and quite intimately for about twenty. His wife was a faithful, devoted and dearly loved member of this church. Most of you remember her as a lovely christian woman. He has been since her death, as he was before, devoted to the interests of the church, though not a member. His mind was clear in the truth, and he loved the doctrine and order of the gospel. He was firmly opposed to the doctrines and commandments of men, and to all their institutions and works which are not found directed in the inspired Scriptures of truth. He believed in salvation by grace alone, and that the chosen people of God are saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation, and he would not encourage by his presence the preaching and works which declared or intimated that God is dependent in any possible degree upon man to secure the salvation of one soul.

It was by Mr. Christian that I received the invitation of this church, sixteen years ago, to visit and preach here. I have been coming more or less regularly ever since. During all of this time he has had charge of the meetings, and mostly of the house, and I do not remember but three times when he was absent from meeting, unable to come. He was a most attentive and interested listener. The last time I was here, in December, he manifested strong feeling while I was speaking from the words, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want."

The preaching at a funeral is, or should be, the same as on any other occasion, for it is "Christ and him crucified." I have dwelt somewhat at length upon the man whose funeral we attend to-day, but it is as one whom I regard as a child of God, a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said of the believer, he "hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." And again, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." I will now call your attention particularly to the subject presented in the language I have read as a text, in which we shall see the doctrine of salvation, which our dear friend believed, the experience of that doctrine, which we believe the Lord had given him, and something of the exercises of mind through which that experience comes.

"The law entered, that the offence might abound." When Moses at the command of God entered the court of Pharaoh and said, "Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my first-born: and I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me," then the oppressive hand of Pharaoh came down with double weight upon the Israelites. Moses represents the law, and Pharaoh may represent sin; so when the law is sent home into the sinner's heart he first knows the terrible nature and condemning power of sin. Paul says, "I was alive without the

law once, but when the commandment came sin revived and I died." "By the law is the knowledge of sin." After Moses demanded the release of the Israelites Pharaoh increased their burden of work by making them gather stubble for straw, so that they could never again do their tasks. So when the law comes to us, showing what a holy God requires, from that time all our efforts to obey it are vain. There is every day unfinished work, work that we cannot do, but which must be done, until the burden presses us down to the earth. We are laboring and heavy laden. The law can only show us what is required, but cannot show us any way to fulfill that requirement. A measure laid upon a piece of timber will show that it comes short, but cannot bring it up to the required length.

So the purpose of God in causing the law to enter was that the offence might abound. This offence through which death came upon all the race of man, was by one man. All his descendants come into the world sinners because of that one offence, but none of them know it until the law enters. They are dead in sin through that offence of one, and the dead know not anything at all. They may, and do, enter upon works of religion, but they are dead works, being of the same nature as those who do them. They cultivate the fields of their nature, sowing to their flesh in self-confidence and pride, and reap the same. It is for their own glory that they work, and they bring of the fruit of the ground, the results of their own labor, unto the Lord for an offering, as Cain did. There is natural goodness, and kindness, and zeal, in this religion, and a natural comfort and a kind of self-sacrificing spirit, but it is all of the earth, earthy; there is no holy fear of God in it, no seeking of the glory and honor of God in it. It is self-seeking, self-glorifying; it begins and ends with the earth, and the end of it is everlasting death for all who continue in it to the end.

But in the case of all the elect of God there will be an experience of the law entering with divine power. Then for the first time will the true nature of sin be seen and felt in the soul, and the poor sinner will be found guilty in the sight of God. Then will sin abound over all our works, over all our fancied righteousness; it will be like a flood overflowing all the fair fields that we have so confidently cultivated and planted with our own plants of goodness and zeal. We shall see all the luxuriant growths of which we were so proud beaten down and covered from our sight by the vile flood of sin. Then are we hopeless indeed, and in despair. No power of ours can cleanse these fields and bring the fruits of our labor again to view; they have gone forever, and with them all our hope. This is the end of the earth for us, the end of all confidence in the flesh.

But now comes the wonder of grace to our astonished view, and we are wrapt in joyful amazement at the miracle of salvation. In our former works there was no sense of being lost, no feeling of guilt and just condemnation, and therefore no seeking on our part for a way of salvation from sin, but only an effort to show our merit, and to appear in the clothing of our own righteousness before the Lord. But now we feel that we are already lost; we see no way of escape; the floods of sin and of God's wrath overflow us, and we can only cry, "Save me, O God, for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire where there is no standing." Then the wonder of grace appears. "A new and living way of ac-

cess unto the Father" is opened up to our view, not through works and merit of our own, but through the flesh of Jesus. Grace was only an unmeaning word to us before, but now it is a glorious, living thing; it is life and salvation. O wonder of mercy. Grace comes flowing on toward us, over us, over our souls, over all the sin-covered fields of our nature, a clear, pure, cleansing flood, washing, cleansing, purifying; coming upon us and over us with a power never known or dreamed of before.

"Where sin abounded grace did much more abound." This is a declaration of wonderful and far-reaching import. Think what it means to the poor sinner who sees himself only as a fit object of God's wrath. The magnitude of his sins, their peculiarly vile character in his sight, make him feel that it is useless to think of trying to approach the Lord with supplications for forgiveness. He is holy; we are unholy. How can he look upon such a sinful being? "He is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look upon iniquity." The more we look upon ourselves the more sin we see; it covers us; it abounds over all our cherished hopes on account of works that we have done and expected to do. But this is just the case reached by this wonderful provision of grace. This store of grace is not for those who are good and righteous; they do not need grace. It is not where righteousness abounds that grace much more abounds; grace superabounds over the aboundings of sin. It is this same poor, justly condemned sinner who is on the borders of despair, in whose behalf this superabounding grace appears. If sin had not abounded in him this precious word of salvation would never have reached him. It is those who see themselves as the chief of sinners in whom grace is magnified. This grace is never expected, never hoped for. How can it be? It always comes as a blessed surprise; it is always "amazing grace!"

The apostle has just declared that "As by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." As the sins of the first many did not make them sinners, but were committed because they were already sinners, made so by the disobedience of the earthy Adam, so the obedience of the second many, the elect, does not make them righteous; but when they do works of righteousness it is because they are already righteous, made so by the obedience of the second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now in the words of the text the apostle is telling how their dreadful condition as sinners, which the offence of one man brought upon them, is made known to them by the entrance of God's holy law, causing sin to abound, and how the same ones are made to experience, through the superaboundings of grace, the righteousness which became theirs by the obedience of one, even Christ Jesus.

"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." The apostle Paul said, "I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came sin revived and I died." The coming of the commandment to him, the entering of the law into his heart, caused sin to be manifested to him as alive and abounding. It had not been dead before, only dormant, so to speak, not known and felt in its true character and power. Now by the coming of the commandment to him personally sin revived, showed what it is, and death followed at once. Sin takes occasion by

the commandment to show its reigning power, and the sinner feels his death in sin. It is not the commandment that was made death to the sinner; the commandment is holy, and just, and good; but it was sin that worked death in him. This is a wonderful experience of the Lord's people which the apostle thus by inspiration explains. He shows to the poor, convicted sinner what this strange experience of sin means; shows why and how it is that sin in our experience has taken on such a dreadful appearance, and has become so exceeding sinful; shows that the law is spiritual, and its entrance into the heart, giving light, has made us to see and feel that we are carnal, sold under sin.

When the reigning power of sin has thus done its full work in us, reigning unto death, then a greater power appears, and the glorious grace of our God begins its triumphant reign.

Let me illustrate briefly the nature of this reigning power of sin. Suppose one has committed a crime, and is convicted. The sentence of death is about to be pronounced. He begs of the judge for deliverance; he pleads his sorrow for the sin; he promises whatever restitution the nature of the crime will allow, and promises never to sin again. The judge says, All this can avail nothing; your crime prevails against you and must send you away. The law must be honored and magnified; pardon will not cleanse away the guilt; forgiveness cannot come to the help of the sinner. It is the crime rather than the punishment which the sinner hates, and for which he loathes himself, and forgiveness cannot take that away. Therefore the psalmist says, "Iniquities prevail against me." It is because of the holiness of the law and its just requirements that sin has its power to reign unto death.

And now, when grace takes the field against sin it must reign by a superior power; it must show the commandment by which sin had its power to reign unto death satisfied; it must show the righteousness of the law fulfilled. Jesus was "buried by baptism into death" in order to "fulfill all righteousness." In his death he thus made an end of sin for all his people, abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Now the righteousness of God appears, and through that righteousness grace reigns to the final and eternal overthrow of the reigning power of sin. In the death of Jesus the Shepherd has paid the trespass of the sheep, the Husband has paid the debt of the wife, the Head has died for the sins of the body, and all the members of the body are dead with him. The holy law of God can ask no more; sin can do no more; death and the grave can make no further claim; they are both destroyed, and now the wonders of the reign of grace appear, for the sinner that was dead in sin, and was slain by sin, with the full approval of the law, is now dead with Christ to sin, and is alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Thus eternal life appears as the blessed and holy and amazing result of the reign of grace. Not one item of the power by which grace reigns can be gainsayed by any of the enemies against which the warfare is waged. It was a fair battle, and the victory is fairly won. Eternal justice approves every part of the work,

and declares the glorious result to be in behalf of every one for whom Jesus died, and that includes every one in all the world and throughout all time who feels sin abounding in his heart and reigning unto death; for wherever sin abounds grace does much more abound, and wherever there is an experience of sin reigning unto death, there shall be an experience of grace reigning through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

In the belief and love and experience of this blessed truth I am persuaded that our dear friend lived, and that he fell asleep in Jesus and is with him in glory. May it be ours to say with the psalmist, while still here in this world of sorrow and death, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 20, 1905.

"A PLACE BY ME."

"AND the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: and I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts; but my face shall not be seen."—Exodus xxxiii. 21–23.

What a gracious intercessor was Moses; what affection he had for Israel; how jealous he was for the honor and glory of God; how fervently and effectually he prayed for his sinful brethren. In all this he was a precious type of Jesus, our divine Mediator, our beloved Intercessor before the Majesty in the heavens. When the Lord returned an agreeable answer to his cries, and again said unto him, "Thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name," then his heart wells up with enlarged longings to know more and more of God, and he said, "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me, and live." One thing has laid most sacredly upon my spirit as I have perused again and again the scenes portrayed in these chapters of the Bible, that is, the evident reality of the communion of a frail, sinful creature, man, on the earth, with the almighty, holy, invisible God, whom the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain. To-day this self-same mystery of godliness continues. It is wonderful, wonderful. If we were pure and holy as the holy angels in heaven, if we were gifted with omniscience, it would be understandable, it would come within the range of our natural intellect. We hold communion with our fellows, and in a few instances, as in the case of David and Jonathan, of the queen of Sheba and Solomon, and the all-confiding husband and wife, the communion is very intimate. But it does not attain to that intimacy of communion of the quickened sinner and the holy One that inhabiteth eternity. That the communion of the Holy Ghost (2 Cor. xiii. 14,) with the called of God surpasses in intimacy all mere creature communion, is again that which is beyond the reason and belief of one that is not born of God; but to the soul that has tasted this nearness and communion with the Lord there is nothing so real, so consolingly precious, even though it be only "The upward glancing of an eye, when only God is near." I will not now enlarge upon this subject, but will come to the words at the beginning of this letter, for in them, as a type,

is presented very blessedly the things of the gospel of Christ.

"And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me." This place is holy ground, the place provided in the eternal counsel of the Lord; it is that place where God's loved elect are a people near unto him. (Psalms cxlviii. 14.) Here all the chosen stand holy and without blame before him in love. It all centers in Emmanuel, the incarnate Son of God, for it is in Christ that the Creator and the creature meet. The yearning heart of Moses cried, "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory." Responding to his desire the Lord answers, "There is a place by me." Here Jehovah displays the fullness of his glory, it is all in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. iv. 6.) In the holiest of all was the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant, and over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy-seat, and there will I meet with thee, saith the Lord. (Exodus xxv. 22.) Our Jesus is the Place. "There is a place by me." The sinner whom the Lord quickens into divine life is taught by the holy Spirit how wretched and dreadful is his condition as a vile transgressor of the law. Then as a fountain of life the fear of the Lord springs up within him, moving him to depart from iniquity and the snares of death. Though feeling to be justly condemned by God's law, nevertheless a gracious power moves him to reverence the Lord, and he longs for that place where he can dwell in friendship with the Almighty. But all is dark and hopeless. "They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in," and when tidings of the gospel enter the thoughts of the contrite sinner, at first, perhaps, it appears to be as a report of a delightsome land that is very far off to one sick, and languishing, and dying, and his sighing heart says, O could I be there; O could I be healed and dwell in the beautiful land.

"There is a place by me." Yes, O when shall I come to that place? Will it ever be the lot of one so ignorant, a poor, sin-harrassed one, to find access into such a place, so near the high and holy One? Alas, I wander as one forbidden to come; the righteous curse of the law is upon me; I am driven away in my wickedness; I would come, but could there be a place for me? I am justly condemned, cut off for my parts, a desolate, sin-cursed outcast from the Lord.

"Behold, there is a place by me." "Behold!" Till thus apprehended by the glad tidings of the gospel, poor, guilty sinners see no place of salvation, blessedness and friendship with God. When the Lord in his truth says, "Behold," we are drawn to his voice, we are attentive to his speech; then eyes are given us to see, we look unto him, and as he speaks so it is, "There is a place by me," a sanctuary for a sinner. O the voice of the Lord in his teaching is full of graciousness, captivating our hearts; we see the place, we see the rock, it is Jesus, and we long to be in him, to stand upon him as our rock. "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I." Ah, poor soul, thine unbelief, the powers of darkness, thine own conscious vileness, have all been forbidding thee to think that there is a place of acceptance with God, but thus saith the Lord, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." "There is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock." Christ is the rock of the church of God; her only standing before the Lord is in her Head and Hus-

band, the incarnate Word of God. Once we stood in Adam, innocent, upright, sinless, but we fell. What a fall from that estate in our creation when "God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." O so fallen is man, in an abyss of iniquity he lies. How deep is the import of the inspired language describing his condition: "dead in trespasses and sins."—Eph. ii. 1. Then David declares the dark scene, saying, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: there is none that doeth good. God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Do you complain that the picture is too dark, too humiliating? Were your eyes opened to see the depravity of your own nature you would stand aghast at the sight, your mouth would be stopped and humbled, crushed in spirit and with a blushing face before God you would say, "Behold, I am vile: what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth."—Job xl. 4. Since sin entered the world all the attempts of sinful man to stand upright and pleasing in the sight of the Lord have utterly failed. "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." We have no place to stand, and Adam can give us no legs to stand; all is quicksand, and the deep, miry clay of our sins where there is no standing. It is with humiliating grief that quickened sinners find all their attempts to stand in the first Adam to be failures; we stumble and fall to be plunged in the ditch of our sins. But thus saith the Lord, "Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock." David says, The Lord "set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings."—Psalms xl. 2. A rock is significant of stability, and where shall we find this immutable standing-place for guilty creatures? It is all in the gospel of the grace of God. Here are given us exceeding great and precious promises. The first and greatest promise is the promise of eternal life in Christ Jesus, "which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."—Titus i. 2. This is a glorious revelation, that God before the creation of the world gave us eternal life in his Son. (1 John v. 11.) This was not given us in our creation in Adam, therefore when Adam transgressed it was not forfeited; it was safe, immutably secure and sure to all the election of grace whom God ordained unto eternal life. (Acts xiii. 48.) Ordained unto eternal life! What an inheritance, what a destiny for a poor sinner! As I sit here with my pen in my hand musing upon it, I find no words to express the eternal weight of glory it contains. The sinful, mortal life that we have now in the earth has innumerable ills attending it, yet it is our nature to cling to it, and seldom even with favored believers in Christ do they look with fond anticipation to dying. The apostle Paul was inspired to say, "To die is gain," and he was found having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better. (Phil. i. 21–23.) Aged Simeon having the infant Christ in his arms said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."—Luke ii. 29, 30. Yes, we naturally shrink from the dissolution of our trembling house of clay. But O the precious promise of eternal life in Christ Jesus. This rock is a glorious hope, and as fellow-inhabitants of the rock we

would declare our happiness to be that we stand in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began. It is in the gospel that we stand. (1 Cor. xv. 1.)

"I stand upon Christ's merits,
I know no other stand,
Not e'en where glory dwelleth,
In my Emmanuel's land."

Christ Jesus is the covenant head of the church, and in him we find all those new covenant mercies, called "the sure mercies of David."—Isaiah lv. 3. In him as our rock we stand, lifted up above our enemies round about us; he is our place of defense, the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given us, our waters shall be sure.

"Thou shalt stand upon a rock." This a sinner is in himself unable to do, for in Adam he has no legs, no ability to get upon and stand upon the rock. How then do contrite souls stand upon the rock? By faith and love in Christ Jesus. These are the only legs by which we can stand, and the Lord gives us this precious faith and love. We believe in Jesus according to the working of God's mighty power, and our faith, which is the gift of God, is described as "faith which worketh by love." O yes, the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy Spirit which is given unto us. He, in due season, very graciously opens up to the heirs of promise the truth of the gospel, and empowers their hearts to affectionately believe in Jesus; he is all our trust and the rock of our salvation.

"And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift in the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by." "A clift in the rock." This will signify unto us that there is a gracious opening into the very heart of the rock, a sanctuary for the children of God in the truth; this is their divine retreat from the stormy wind and tempest, the righteous runneth into it and is safe. Forgiveness of sins, this is a blessed refuge for humble sinners. O so heavy-hearted is the quickened sinner when his conscience is burdened with unpardoned sins. I can remember when I was a child, and had done wrong, and my bad conduct had been discovered by my mother, and she had manifested her displeasure at my behavior, how a gloom settled upon my spirit; when I came into her presence I came with shyness, I felt it became me to be quiet, to sit by myself; I would hang down my head, and scarcely look up into her face; her troubled countenance increased my trouble, I felt it was not a time to play or to laugh before her, I feared a look of censure would be mine, but when my parent smiled upon me again, when instead of words chiding me for my faults she spoke to me in cheerful tones, then I knew she had passed by my transgressions and once more I was forgiven; O, then I could go forth to play with my fellows, and laugh and shout with the merriest. "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing."—Psalms cxxvi. 1, 2. Well may the psalmist say, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." Forgiveness!

"This is a treasure rich indeed,
Which none but Christ can give;
Of this the best of men have need,
This I the worst receive."

Then what an inner sanctuary in the "covenant ordered in all things, and sure," is the experimental knowledge of the doctrine of justification. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea

rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Here everything pertaining to our justification is immutably sure, and this blessed sanctuary is in the clift of the rock, Christ Jesus. By his obedience many were made righteous, and having purged away the guilt of his people by the shedding of his blood he rose again for their justification; he was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him, all of which flows from the tender mercy of the Most High to unworthy worms of the earth, such as those who are taught of God feel themselves to be. We therefore sweetly acquiesce in the doctrine and hold it fast with ardent affection that we are justified from all our offenses freely by God's grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and this is most efficaciously experienced when the Lord, by faith, puts us in the clift of the rock. We are washed, we are sanctified, we are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. (1 Cor. vi. 11.)

(Concluded next number.)

OUR INHERITANCE.

THE Lord's people are endowed with a possession which belongs not to this world, it is the gift from our heavenly Father, by and through which we are made joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ in an inheritance of priceless value, which is eternal life. This inheritance embraces first the love of God, which he hath vouchsafed unto the children whom he hath chosen in his Son Jesus Christ. It is declared, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." It embraces also all of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God. The apostle speaks in wonder and astonishment when he says, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" We also partake of the mystery of the divine nature, which mystery is wrought out and made manifest in us through an experience of the grace of God, as we are exercised by the Spirit of holiness and righteousness unto all good works; this is the divine nature. The apostle Peter speaks of the inheritance on this wise: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." Therefore the inheritance is secure for time and eternity.

The foundation which establishes our claim to the sure mercies of David, is our relationship to the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ; we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with his Son Jesus Christ because we are his children. Those who claim to be children of God because they have established certain reforms in their daily life, are sadly mistaken in their reckonings. One cannot make himself a child of God by anything that he can do, any more than one can make himself the child of a natural father. A natural father may disinherit his child, but the act makes him no less a child. Our inheritance does not depend upon the uncertainties of a finite mind, or of the faulty temperament of an un-

wise father. "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." His love toward us is an everlasting love, and like his promises, cannot be changed. In nature we are creatures of time, and all time things and time conditions are subject to change and decay; but when the promise of the Father that we shall inherit eternal life, has been fulfilled in the Son, then with us time shall be no longer. Our inheritance is secure, it is founded upon the wills and shalls of our covenant-keeping God. "Yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure." The most important chattel in the inheritance which comes to us is the love of God which is bestowed abundantly upon each one of the heirs. If by reason of weakness in the flesh, the lusts thereof temporarily superabound, then do we die, and as the salt which has lost his savor, "It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out." This is the beginning of great tribulation; the poor soul is lost to all the comfort and consolations of the gospel, he cannot go back into the world, he is trodden under foot of men: therefore is he stranded and stands alone, desolate and in despair; yet he is still a child, and the loving Father still loves him and is faithful in his love, and has provided some good thing for him. As the man who was traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among thieves, and was left half dead, was visited by the good Samaritan, (as he journeyed) and who helped him on his way, so to this poor, desolate, suffering child the Father sends the Spirit of his Son in answer to his despairing cry; oil is poured into his gaping wounds, and now where sin abounded grace doth much more abound, and the dear little one is ushered back into the family circle with his heart filled to overflowing with the love of God. Upon one occasion during the ministry of our Lord, a certain lawyer of the pharisees in order to tempt him, said: "Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." But now that we have entered richly into our inheritance, these two commandments are engraven upon our hearts; this precious love is the incentive and the principle by which we walk in the fear of the Lord. It is also the rule of our deportment in life, the subject and inspiration of our conversation, and a lamp to our feet. All the riches of our inheritance, the wisdom and knowledge of God are entwined about with the endless chain of God's boundless love. The children of the Most High also inherit the earth, for "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." As joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, the earth is also ours and all its fullness, the world and all that therein is. All things in the earth and in the world work harmoniously together for the fulfillment of the whole way of salvation according as the Lord has appointed before the mountains were brought forth. Again, we inherit the earth, inasmuch as our natural bodies are of the earth, and are nourished and sustained thereby. Again, we inherit the earth in the sense that the church of Christ was planted in the wilderness place of this world, and in that wilderness does

she travel throughout all time; for did not the Lord say unto Jacob when he arose from his pillow of stones in the wilderness, where he saw the heavens opened, "The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed"? Our inheritance therefore embraces all things, both the heavens and the earth. The experience of the saints which includes the travel both in the light and in the darkness. Tribulation is an essential part of the inheritance, persecutions also are our portion in this life. Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life." Notwithstanding the fact that trials and afflictions and persecutions are a part of the pilgrimage life of the saints, yet they gladly and willingly endure all things for the joy that is set before them.

Let us now concentrate our minds upon the source and fountain of our precious inheritance. Jesus, the beloved Son of God, is the gift of the Father unto his children; he is the author and finisher of our faith; he is our life; he gave his precious life-blood that we might enter upon the inheritance of the elect of God; he is the Mediator of the new covenant, by which we are made kings and priests unto God; he is the High Priest of our profession, by which we enter into the holy of holies by a new and living way, with whom we are bound together in the most holy bonds of husband and wife, and jointly possessing the inheritance. May we all sweetly enter into the earnest of our inheritance while here in these low grounds of sorrow.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 13, 1905.

APOSTASY.

AN article written by a Methodist advocate on the subject of apostasy and final perseverance, examined by one who holds to unconditional election to life eternal, and who is bound to believe that we are saved by grace, and grace alone, and that if we are saved from sin by grace, the moment we receive this grace, or in other words the moment we receive life (spiritual life) we are placed on a plain of never-dying grace, for Jesus says, "I give unto them eternal life." And eternal means without end. This article upon apostasy is written by a party who would have us believe that there is no certainty in our final salvation outside of ourselves, but Jesus says, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." I am satisfied with this only true and living way, and am sure that if we are not kept by God's power unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, we would all be lost. God says, I speak and it is done, I purposed it, I will also bring it to pass. Now if he purposed to give me eternal life and I received this life, and he also purposed that I should finally be saved, and has also brought it to pass, does it not appear that we cannot fall from grace? Thus if we are once in possession of life it is eternal.

I will now notice some of the arguments in this letter of our Arminian friend. First, on page twenty of this little pamphlet these words occur: "If regeneration secures to the soul the impossibility of final apostasy, why such an outlay of divine power in building defences when there is no danger?" We

would say to this, Do the Methodist people believe that we have to be born again or regenerated to be saved? If so, and we are regenerated and fall, is there any promise in the Bible that we can be regenerated the second time? If not, and you believe that God's work shall stand, and commences to save you by giving you life eternal, do you not believe he will perform it unto the end? If so, is there any danger of our falling out of his work? Why did he say, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die"? and why is it said, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law," and "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish," and "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God"? Now as I understand sin to be presented by our friend as the cause of our falling from grace, Christ has redeemed us with an eternal redemption, and has given us eternal life, I cannot see any danger of falling. We will now look further into this article; he says, "If there was no danger in Moses losing his way to Canaan, why trouble the divine presence to go with him?" We would say that it was because without him we can do nothing. Again he quotes Mal. iii. 7, "Even from the days of your fathers ye have gone away from mine ordinances," does this prove falling from grace? I would say that it is as impossible for one to fall from grace, as it is for a natural child to be born the second time naturally; if I fail to obey my natural father am I any less his son? I think not; well, if I fail to obey my spiritual Father (if I am a spiritual born child) do you think I could drift back into an unregenerated state? Impossible. Next we find this language, "The Savior himself was subject to temptation." Dear readers, is it a sin to be tempted? It is the yielding to the temptation that is sin. Some might say that the text, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God," does not prove that we cannot sin, or fall from grace. Well, we find that "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." I think that the law here spoken of is a different law from that which he says we cannot sin against. I think it is the law of sin and death, for we who are born of God are now under grace, and if we are not under the law how can we transgress it? We cannot sin in the sense of transgressing this law, but some may say, "How do you know we are not under that law?" Paul says, Rom. viii. 2, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Does not Paul make it clear that we are not under that law? Now if we sin against any law it must be against a law which we are under, and if we are born of God it must be the law to Christ. Paul says, "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." Sin shall not have dominion over you. "Ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ." Now does not this show clearly that it is the law of sin and death that we cannot sin against? "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit lsin;" you see it does not say whosoever is not born of God cannot sin. This shows to my mind that before we are born of God, we are under the law of sin and death, and therefore we can and do

sin against that law. When we die to sin, we are no longer under the law. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Christ satisfied the demands of the law and paid the penalty that was due all his people for their transgression, hence the law can demand no more. If we are free from sin, and sin was the cause of our fall, can we fall any more? God says, "My grace is sufficient for thee;" "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." We believe that God knew before time was, just what would take place and what would not, and that he planned everything, and that everything will come to pass just as he planned it. Are there any that will be saved beside Israel? We have no promise of it, for Israel is God's chosen people. Does everlasting mean unceasing, continual, and without end? If so, we have proof that he who is born of God cannot be finally lost. Isaiah says, "But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end." Confounded with what? After once being adopted into the family of Christ, we cannot be confounded with the powers of this world again. (Talk about falling from grace.) See Psalms xii. 7: "Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation forever." "For the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved forever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off." Read John xiv. 19, 20. Also Paul says, "And ye are complete in him, [Jesus] which is the head of all principality and power." Again Paul says, "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Now I say, if we are complete, and our life hid, and shall appear with Christ in glory, is it not evident that we cannot fall? To be more plain, if it is said that we shall appear with Christ in glory, and that no man is able to pluck us out of his hand, and then at last we can be forever lost, would it not appear that God would be thwarted in his purpose? But not so, "We are more than conquerors, through him that loved us." Read Romans viii. 37–39. Christ is in his saints the hope of glory. We know God is spiritual, and that he seeketh such to worship him as do worship him in Spirit and in truth. Surely he is not mistaken in his works, for "his work is perfect." If those spoken of in 2 Peter ii. 20–22, are the ones referred to by our friend to prove falling from grace, we will see if they fall from grace or not. First, we find by reading the first verse of this chapter, that there were some who had crept into the church unawares; that is, they professed to be saints, when in truth they were not. See also Jude's letter. This Scripture shows that there were certain men appointed to this condemnation, and that they speak evil of things they know not, and woe is pronounced unto them, and he says to the church, "These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you;" they walk after their own lusts. I am at a loss to know how any one can say we have to be good before God will save us, when in Isaiah xl. 1, 2, it says, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." He does not add to this, If you will live up to your duty, and fulfill every com-

mandment, and work for the Lord, your sins will be forgiven and you will receive a blessing, but if you fail in these things he will not love you, and at last you will be lost. No, no, far from that. Listen to what the Scriptures say in regard to man's salvation, and see if Christ died for all men indiscriminately; He shall save his people from their sins. They are made willing in the day of his power; are found of God and led about; led in paths they have not known; darkness is made light. He gives the blind, sight, the dead, life; he writes his law in their hearts and puts it in their minds; no man cometh to Christ but by the drawing of the Father; all that the Father giveth me shall come; I lay down my life for the sheep; you believe not, because you are not of my sheep; the ransomed shall come. God foreknowing man's fall, and the helplessness of his posterity, determined before the world began that Christ should be the Savior, having chosen a people in him before the foundation of the world; there can be no choice where the whole is taken. To these chosen he gave grace in Christ. If he purposed all to be saved according to the idea of our friend, and some are not saved, his purpose surely will fail. Our friend says, "The Calvinists argue that a saint is a sheep and a sinner a goat, and that a goat cannot be changed to a sheep." I never heard of a Primitive Baptist claiming any such view. I believe that we were all goats by nature, the children of wrath even as others: and are not counted sheep until after the spiritual birth, and this is unconditional justification, and those thus born are sanctified, and preserved in Jesus Christ to eternal salvation.

In conclusion I will say that to deny God as being all-wise, all-powerful and unchangeable, is to believe in "conditionalism," which is false in the extreme; but to believe God to be the sovereign Ruler over all things, that he declared the end from the beginning, that his purpose shall stand, and that he is unchangeable, is to believe in predestination and election, which are according to the word of God. I love this doctrine, may all the saints contend earnestly for this faith.

Yours to serve for Christ's sake,

RICHARD DYKES.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., July 28, 1868.

ESTEEMED AND DEAR SISTER IN THE KINGDOM AND PATIENCE OF OUR DIVINE LORD:—It gave me great pleasure to receive your letter of the 25th, which has just come to hand. I am glad to be informed that your late visit has been pleasant and comforting to you, and that you think of the season with pleasure; I can assure you that it afforded much pleasure to your kindred in Christ at this place. To know in this degenerate age, in this trying day in which so much delusion is sweeping over the earth, that those of the dear flock of Christ, who have been called by grace and gathered into the kingdom, are standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath make them free, and that they are not entangled with the yoke of bondage, is good news indeed. Not that we indulge in apprehensions, suspicions, or misgivings as to their steadfastness in the truth, or fear that our good Shepherd will suffer his precious flock to stray from the rich pasture he has prepared, but because it is so grateful to our spirit to be informed, and frequently reassured, that however far removed from the company of the saints, and the privileges of the house of God, that they do still remember the church with affectionate regard, and still prefer Jerusalem above their chief joy.

While writing your very welcome letter to me, last Saturday, you were not mistaken in your impressions in regard to the church meeting in the Hall. We had a precious season, and your dear sisters, Harriett and Sarah, were with us, and greatly enjoyed the banquet. My dear daughter, Phebe Ann Carmichael, was constrained to come forward and declare in Zion what God has done for her. She gained the fellowship of the church, and on Sunday last I led her down into the baptismal water, at the same place where it was my happiness to baptize you and your dear sister. I cannot express to you my feelings on the subject. Three of my daughters, and two of my sons, are now walking with myself and my dear wife, in the fellowship of the gospel of Christ. Surely salvation has come to my house. And with good old Simeon, I can say, Now, Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation. Not that I am impatient to die, for I neither feel anxious to live, nor in a hurry to depart, but rather in a strait between the two, and like Paul, at a loss to know which to choose, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." I wish to leave all in the hands of our dear Lord, trusting that he will prepare me for whatever he has prepared for me.

But perhaps I am writing too much about myself; as pastor it would seem more appropriately my work to attend to the state and comfort of the flock.

You say you took back home with you, your old stubborn and sinful nature. That you will not be able to put off until the time appointed by your heavenly Father. If we were not in the flesh we should have no warfare, and if no warfare, no victories. "But, thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Yes, "I must fight, if I would reign." But I am glad to know that you experience the conflicting elements of flesh and Spirit, these are contrary the one to the other. But until you were born of the Spirit, you knew nothing of the christian warfare; and the very conflict is therefore a demonstrative witness that you are a subject of both births. It takes two opposite parties to make a war, and in every christian will be found these two armies.

Young christians are very apt to conclude in their early joys, that their whole nature has become spiritual and holy, they do not expect to encounter any more of stubbornness or of sinfulness; but they are not allowed to progress far in the spiritual life before they are greatly surprised to find passions, propensities and pollutions in them which they not only thought had been fully purged out, but such as they hastily conclude no real christian can retain. Hence doubts arise, and fears are cherished that they have been deceived. If our nature were cleansed and made pure and holy, what would be left for us to war against? Why has our God then "taught our hands to war, and our fingers to fight?"

"Are there no foes for me to face?
Must I not stem the flood?
Is this vile world a friend to grace,
To help me on to God?"

But, my sister, do not be discouraged, your warfare is not an uncertain one, victory is already secured for all the members of Christ. Be of good cheer, Jesus has overcome the world, and he has given us a reliable pledge, that he will bring us safely through.

"Yes, they to the end shall endure,
As sure as the earnest is given;
More happy, but not more secure,
Are the glorified spirits in heaven."

Please present my best respects to

your dear husband, and accept the best wishes of your sincere friend and pastor,

GILBERT BEEBE.

[THE above letter was written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe to sister Emma Halstead, of Unionville, N. Y., in the year 1868, and knowing it will be gladly received by the readers of the SIGNS, we herewith publish it.—ED.]

WAVERLY, Pa., March 2, 1905.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In reading March 1st number of the SIGNS this morning I felt a desire springing up in my heart to tell you how glad I am that the writers wrote as they did; I felt that I was helped very much by many things in the different communications. Is it not strange that other people can trace out your own life and experience so much better than you can yourself? For the life of me I could not tell it one-half as well as Elders Badger and Ker have done, and others also; any of my brethren can tell it better than I can. Strange, but true, that such preachers as Elders Ker and Badger should be brought down to feel themselves to be as weak, helpless, ignorant, base, mean and low down in feeling as we; I really feel that they have hit me right where I wanted to be hit. The dear Lord knows what we poor weaklings need, and so he brings such men down where we feel to be perishing, to encourage us. How good it is to be a companion with such ones; how it encourages and strengthens the poor, halting, blundering children; it seems that they are almost eyes to poor, blind sinners like me, but the poor souls do not know it of course, it would spoil them if they did, they can only minister comfort to us out of their own experience. The sweetest and most comforting things to us, as declared by the servants of God, come from a crushed heart; yea, bitter, bitter experiences. Only as the servants of God live with the saints experimentally will their gift make room for them, and a mutual benefit be derived. Each one of God's servants must be prepared by grace divine to minister comfort to the saints, and every attempt to qualify themselves to come before the church in a more acceptable manner is a failure, because that much would be natural, therefore would not be to the edification and spiritual comfort of the living in Zion; it would please the carnal minded only. There is a variety in the gospel, also in christian experience, but one Spirit; spiritual hunger can only be satisfied with spiritual food. That which is food to the child of God is death to the world, they hate it, and *vice versa*. It might please the natural mind of the believer to hear the doctrine of predestination preached in the letter, plain and clear, but the hungry soul would starve under such preaching; the same in regard to election, the resurrection of the dead, or any other principle of truth; the letter kills, but the Spirit giveth life, and every principle of truth is a living principle in the hearts of God's believing children, and when they are preached in the letter, they do not come home with spiritual comfort. The doctrine of the Bible can only be savingly known by experience, for example: "By grace are ye saved;" those who know this truth are saved by grace, hence are witnesses of it. We are witnesses only to the truth as it is revealed to us in our experience, all outside of this is carnal reasoning, however plain the letter may seem to us. Studying up and reasoning out a point of doctrine, and preaching the gospel, are different things entirely, and a spiritually exercised soul will detect the difference

very soon If these things are not true, I am ignorant of the truth. I am still in love with the old SIGNS and its correspondents; I hope to always feel so, and I believe that while I am between the upper and nether millstones I will be. Grain must be crushed before it can be cemented together in a loaf; whole grain cannot be. To be crushed to powder is a bitter experience, but this is the way that the life of Christ is manifested in his people, and the way that they are brought together in love and sweet fellowship with each other; it is also the way by which they are rooted and grounded in the precious doctrine of Jesus Christ. This is God's way, not ours, therefore it is the right way; then why the question, Why must it be so? I am a rebellious sinner. God be merciful, is my prayer, to me, a poor sinner, when I can pray, if I ever do pray, God knows.

The chief of sinners,

D. M. VAIL.

ROMULUS, Oklahoma, Jan. 1, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER:—I take pleasure in writing you once more. We moved to Oklahoma the twenty-third day of December last, and I was taken sick before we got through, and am not yet so I can keep up all day, but I hope if it is the Lord's will that I shall regain health soon. Now, dear brother, I can truly say that the dear SIGNS has been a comfort to me, for I thirsted and hungered, and you fed me. O the glorious truth proclaimed by the dear little children of God. Pray for me when at the throne of grace, for I feel so little, so faint, so weak, and so prone to err, and sin is mixed with all I do. Like Paul, I must say that when I would do good, evil is present with me. But I must soon close, as I am too weak to sit up and write much, and I have written more than I thought I would when I began. I can but feel that the Lord has been with me during this little writing, for had it been left to me I could not have written, as I am so weak. So give God all the praise, for "in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing."

I inclose a letter which I received from sister Peck. I wish to add that some one, I do not know who, sent me a Bible, and I was glad to get it. Surely every good and perfect gift is of God. Pardon me for this letter; if there be anything in it to the comfort of the little ones, give God all the praise.

From one of the least of all,

(MRS.) ELLA DAVIS.

SENECA FALLS, N. Y., Nov. 9, 1904.

MRS. DAVIS—MY DEAR SISTER IN THE HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE:—About a month has passed away since I received your good letter; I did enjoy it very much. I love to hear from those of like precious faith. It is as you say, food to my hungry soul. I took your letter down and read it to my dear old mother, and she also enjoyed it much, for we do not have preaching here, you know, to comfort us. Still I feel that I do wrong to complain, for if it were the will of God that it should be otherwise, it would certainly be so; but I am so sinful that I find it hard at times to say, "Thy will be done." You spoke in your letter of never having partaken of the communion; neither have I. When sister and I were baptized last summer, it was not the time of their communion, and it is so far away that we have not been up there since, and therefore we have never partaken of it. I do hope, if it be the will of God, that we can go next summer, and then we will try to go on their commu-

nion day; although sometimes I think that I will not dare to partake of it, for I am so prone to sin that I sometimes fear I have not been born again. O, I am continually examining myself, and I fail to find in my flesh anything good. My evidence is so faint, and my assurance so weak, that at times I am made to cry aloud to my Savior and ask if indeed I have found favor in his sight. I thought that I would grow in grace, but find that I seem to grow weaker and come to know less of Zion all the time. I am praying continually for a closer walk with God; I do want to love him more and more every day. But I am brought to see that without him I cannot even think a good thought, or feel or do anything right. Yes, dear sister, it is all of him, and all I ask is to serve him better every day that I live, and when he calls me home that I may dwell with him is all I can ask, and far more than I deserve.

You did not tell me of your family. Have you a family, and are they professors? Or are you like me, all alone? No one knows what I would give if my family were with me in feeling, so that we could travel together in christian love. Mother wishes to be remembered to you, she is eighty-two years of age, and has all her children to write to, and that is about all she can do. Dear sister, pray for me, and write to me again, for I love to hear from you.

From your sister in christian love,

MRS. PECK.

EDITH, Texas, Dec. 22, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life. I am and have been detained in the house for several days because of bodily affliction, a portion of the time at least, the hand of affliction has laid heavily upon me, and I thought that the time of my departure was at hand, but God, who doeth all things well, saw fit in his mercy to spare my unprofitable life until now, and so I can say that goodness and mercy have been following me. I have been reading some old copies of the SIGNS to-day, and have found in them sweet comfort, as I am way out in west Texas, and seldom get to mingle with Old School Baptists. I find by reading the SIGNS that the theme "salvation alone by grace" was taught by our forefathers, as I most sincerely believe the Bible also teaches.

I am glad to know that there are some left yet in the north, south, east and west who are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. I am so glad that there are so many yet who are willing to count all things but loss for the cause of our Master. I am glad to know that there are some yet who are contending, as I trust, earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. There will be as long as time lasts, some servants of God ready and more than willing to work in the vineyard of the Lord, who will not compromise with error. This seems to be a great day of falling away, and we may well ask ourselves, Who shall be able to stand? Dear kindred in Christ, let us be steadfast in the faith of the primitive saints, let there not be found in any of us a heart of unbelief in departing from the living and true God. No doubt many of the Lord's elect and chosen people, who once knew the way and walked in it, have departed and gone after strange gods. Why should it be so? The God of heaven and earth alone knows. I will let him judge, for unto him all judgment

belongeth. I know that as for myself I am slow to understand the Scriptures, and if I know anything about them at all, (as Paul said of some,) I know nothing as I ought to know. If I have any spiritual understanding of any part of God's word it is not of myself, but it is the precious gift of God; if I have ever made any growth in grace, I still have not whereof to boast only in the Lord. God forbid that I should become boastful of anything that I may do, or have ever done, but, like Paul, let me say if I should ever perform any good work, It is not I, but the grace of God that was with me. O why should one so vile as I claim any blessing as payment for my imperfect service? I know, if not deceived, that I want to live a more humble life the few remaining days that may be mine here, than I have ever done in the past. I hope that the Lord in his mercy may see fit to keep me at the feet of my dear brethren and sisters as long as I may live in this life.

Brother Chick, I wish to say that I enjoy your editorials. I wish so much that you could visit Texas, and preach the pure, simple truth of our dear Savior. In places it seems that confusion reigns among God's poor and afflicted people here in Texas; the destroyer has got in his work. Just how long this will be our condition, the Lord alone knows. He is able at his own good time to cause the lion and the lamb to lie down together; he is able to bring peace out of confusion, for he is the Author of peace. Satan is the author of confusion, and he appears to be doing his work now, but he can go no further in his vile work than God in his wisdom sees fit to suffer him to go.

I do not see how I could do without the SIGNS, so send them on, if you will, to my address. If you see proper, you may publish what I have written. I have not written as I thought I would when I commenced. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

With love to God's children everywhere, I remain your unworthy brother,

JOHN W. CAUDLE.

PRATT CITY, Ala., Feb. 24, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER EDITOR AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Many have read the pathetic and sad letter of brother D. M. Vail in the SIGNS, and in their hearts have deep sympathy for him and his in the loss of dear ones, and in the sudden death of his son. As we have lost four of our loved ones, two boys and two girls, in years gone by, we feel for him. For his benefit and others, I thought of writing of several in this district whose trials were equal to his; one in particular, an old friend and acquaintance, had an only son between twenty-one and twenty-two years old, who had married in October, and was instantly killed by electricity in the mines last spring. They had raised an only daughter, she had married and had four little girls, and last fall her husband was killed the same way; the daughter and her children are back at home with her parents. I did not write then, but now it is with a heart filled with agonizing grief and sorrow, and with a trembling hand I write you a little of our two only sons we raised to manhood, who were instantly killed by an explosion in the mines last Monday at 4 p. m. The older, Samuel Kirby Powell, was twenty-eight years old the 26th day of last July. He had married the first time when between the age of nineteen and twenty years, but had separated from the woman and left with her one child, a boy now about five years old. He had married again, but had no chil-

dren by the last wife. Ira Gilbert, the younger, was twenty-six years old the 9th day of last September. He was married the 1st day of June, 1900; he leaves a wife and two little girls. He was as devoted to his family as any man I ever knew; he had built a good house next door to us, and made his family comfortable, and provided for them well. The older son lived in one of our houses, next door to his brother, and we all enjoyed the last year together so well. But they are gone, and we now mourn. They worked together, died together and were buried together in one grave. We tried to hold the funeral service at the residence of Ira Gilbert, but the house would not hold half the people. The Methodist minister came down and offered us the use of their meeting-house; we accepted, but there was not room to seat all who were there. Elders Redd and Owens of our order and two Methodist and one Missionary minister were there; brother Redd conducted the short service.

Every man in that fated mine was killed, and one hundred or more homes have been made desolate; all the bodies have not been recovered yet. There was a strike at this place beginning the first of last July. Our older son attended the business college in Birmingham for four months before Christmas, the younger did short jobs where he could work, until about Christmas; they both became weary waiting for a settlement here, and went to this dangerous mine about fourteen miles away, and had just gotten a room opened, and had a fair prospect of making good wages; they only intended to work there till a settlement was made here. Neither of them made any religious profession, but when an opportunity was offered they would refute the Arminian theories. The older was a good singer, and he enjoyed it much. They were able-bodied young men. We loved our boys. O how sad to have them taken from us so suddenly in the prime of their young manhood. Of the nine children born to us only three daughters, all married, now survive.

Brethren and sisters everywhere, pray for us. P. J. POWELL.

LEESBURG, Va., Feb. 14, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—The inclosed letter signed "F.," was written by our beloved brother, Frank M. Myers, of Lincoln, Va. I wrote him I would send it to the SIGNS without asking permission; I feared his modesty might rebel, and it is a gem too precious to bury. He was with me from 1861 to 1865. It was my great pleasure also to lead him down into the liquid grave. I know none braver in either cause than he.

Your brother, I hope,

E. V. WHITE.

LINCOLN, Va., Feb. 8, 1905.

ELDER E. V. WHITE—DEAR BROTHER:—So glad to have your favor of yesterday, but not glad you are in gloom; no wonder that you are though, and yet I wonder if that condition is not one of the "many mansions." I can faintly understand that more of real nerve, game, grit, courage, is required to rise and ride as you do, above the clouds of dark despondency, naturally banked and piled about you in the fearsome siege you have suffered, and defence you have put up, for this, the longest and most weary year of your life, than to lead your people in all the battles and horrors of a four years war. Port Arthur is hardly a comparison, because its defenders were all the time able to do something, and to end it

by honorable surrender when the time came. You are winning your fight, too, and when the winter is gone the forces of nature will rally under her flag of green and gold, (leaf and sunshine) and you will see your weakness and gloom rolled among the dead wreckage and weary lumber of the past. Jere Clemens puts it: "When Pandora's box was opened, and the thousand ills which it contained flew shrieking from its open lid, hope followed on glittering wing, and dropped a charm for every woe." Take from our lives the substance of that one little four letter word (hope) would even this fanciful, weak human span be worth living? What comfort I find in reading the Book or the written experiences of others seems held in place in my heart by hope. Without God, without hope, and by this anchor kept from drifting into "outer darkness." Bound, handcuffed and shackled, but "prisoners of hope," with Christ in us the hope of glory. When we can reach up from our little knee-high standing-place, and grasp ever so weakly the strong, life-thrilling hand of hope, the gloom must drop from our shoulders and the weight of despondency no longer hold the prison key. But "The [each] heart knoweth its own bitterness;" I do not know yours, know my own, but yours, as I think, should be attuned to sweet songs in the night of affliction, because of what the Lord has done for you and permitted you to do for his people.

F.

LOS ANGELES, Cal., Jan. 3, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER AND EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—As best my memory serves me, this is the fiftieth year of my acquaintance with the SIGNS, and I can look back on the sorrows and joys of those years; I can look back on my being then in belief an Arminian, yet not without hope, but despising the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS and the *Southern Baptist Messenger*, published by Elder Wm. L. Beebe, in Georgia. My father subscribed for both papers in the year 1855. But,

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

Yes, all praise is due to his sovereign will and purpose, supported by his power and foreknowledge. I will say that all the enmity my perverse and wicked nature was master of only served to bring me to search the Scriptures for the truth of these things, as advocated by the SIGNS and its able correspondents. I found them supported by the word, such as predestination of all things, salvation by grace only, baptism by immersion only, the final perseverance of the saints through grace to glory in the perfect likeness of their ever living Head, so that now I am styled by some as an extremist, or as the Arminians have it, a fatalist, they not knowing what a fatalist is, but because predestination is an incomprehensible truth to them they know no better term to apply to it.

I must say in conclusion that the SIGNS is a welcome visitor, and I have often impatiently awaited its arrival, in the hope of comfort by the pen of some ready writer.

With love to the household of faith, I am, I hope, an heir and joint-heir with Christ Jesus our Lord,

A. H. HAGANS.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1905.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ACTS II. 42.

"AND they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship."

A dear brother, who wishes his name withheld, has asked that we write something for the SIGNS upon the subject embraced in these words. The special question presented by him was the connection between the doctrine of the apostles and the fellowship of the apostles. While we feel incompetent, yet we feel willing to comply as best we may with this request. We are willing, both because of the regard in which we hold this brother, and because the subject itself seems most important, especially in these times when there is so much unrest and so much tendency in some places to disregard the doctrine of the apostles, and to count it of small concern. It has become a very common thing to hear it said that it does not matter so much what a man believes, so that he lives right. On the contrary, it does matter what a man believes more than anything else, because all a man's living, whether for good or ill, depends entirely upon what he believes. One of the evil signs of the present time is this tendency to believe nothing with any certainty; not only is it true that men do not know what they believe, but they believe nothing. Professions of religion are made, people unite with religious sects, attend upon the public services which are provided, and yet have not the faintest ideas as to what the faith of those with whom they are united may be. This is the general state of affairs everywhere, and more than this, professed ministers of the word encourage this very thing. Instead of insisting upon the doctrine which they claim to be taught in the word, it is ignored as a thing of small consequence; this is not the way of the Bible. The deep doctrines of the depravity of man, of his death in sin, of the redemption which is and can be only through Christ, of the incarnation of the Son of God, of his righteous life in the flesh, of his death in atonement for sin upon Calvary, of the resurrection of his crucified body on the third, the appointed day, the ascension into heaven, and the intercession of the blessed High Priest for his people at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, the new birth, including the quickening of the sinner dead in sins, to divine life, and the communion with God through Christ, and the fellowship of saints with one another, as partakers of all this grace, are the constant and prominent themes of the Bible. Admonitions are there also in abundance, but still the most prominent themes are these named above. Beside all these, that which lies underneath them all, the everlasting, unchangeable love and purpose of God, is always kept in view. It is because these themes are so constantly set forth in the word, and because through the perversity of fallen nature in us there is such indifference to them almost everywhere, that it is needful that all who love the word of God, and reverence the Author of it, should constantly affirm and set forth these things in

their ministry. Also, because the admonitions and exhortations of the word can have no force at all unless first of all the doctrine of redemption with all that it involves be written in the heart of him who hears, these principles of the doctrine of the apostles ought to be always kept in view. It is all-important to believe that doctrine which exalts the grace of God, because there can be no right thinking, speaking or living without this. All the difference between doing for our own advantage and glory, and doing for the glory of God, is involved in a right understanding of the doctrine of the apostles. Doing for our own glory, or doing for the glory of God, marks the difference between him who serves God and him who serves him not.

In the text suggested, two things are set forth, the doctrine and the fellowship of the apostles. First, it must not be forgotten that the fellowship of the apostles was in those days inseparably connected with the doctrine of the apostles. It was not without design that the Holy Ghost, who inspired Luke when he wrote these words, placed the doctrine first. These words come up in our mind in connection with these other words of John: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye may have fellowship with us." And these other words of James: "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable." Fellowship then must be based upon the pure word of truth if it be real Bible fellowship. Of this we desire to say more after a little further consideration of the word fellowship itself.

What is fellowship in the Bible sense of the word? Perhaps it will help us to see first what it is not. It is not such union as may exist between members of political parties, where after all selfishness reigns supreme, though there is perhaps an appearance of oneness of purpose and sentiment. It is not the union of men in some society, secret or otherwise, which yet at the bottom is purely selfish; it is not that kindly good feeling which may exist among neighbors who are mutually neighborly and helpful to each other; it is not the good will which kindly, pleasant-mannered people always will produce wherever they may be among men; it is not a mere love which may spring out of the fact that people are themselves loving and affectionate in feeling and manner; and it is not merely an agreement in sentiment upon even Bible teachings, for we all have known some men who believed in the very doctrine which we believe to be taught in the word, but whose life showed that all the knowledge and belief they had was in the head, and not in the heart; that they had never felt the power of the truth, or their own great need of it, and that it was not precious to them, except as any notion may be precious to any man who may believe in it.

All this is not fellowship. But on the other hand, perhaps it is enough to say that fellowship, Bible fellowship, must be in Christ, and that it is fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, and that it consists among the people of God in a belief and heart-felt experience of the truth. True fellowship means equality, oneness in all that makes up that fellowship. All they who by the inward teaching of the Spirit of truth have come to a personal knowledge of the truth, are in this fellowship. No child of God can have this fellowship for any one in whom contriteness of heart, and a broken spirit, and humble trust in Christ, do not appear. These things are not taught in the schools of men, but in

the experimental school of Christ. He who denies the truth as it is in Jesus, cannot be in fellowship with him who believes the truth; the child of God may pity such an one. As his child, father, brother, sister or mother, he may love him dearly, and desire his welfare; he may even long to see in that one some evidence of the work of the Lord, but he cannot hold that one in fellowship until he can see manifest in him the same work which he has felt in his own heart; and he who has this work of the Spirit wrought in his heart will know and love the doctrine which is called the doctrine of the apostles. Thus in that early day they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship.

The word doctrine, as used in the Scriptures, sometimes means the teaching of the apostles, or of Christ, and sometimes that which is taught. Perhaps both shades of meaning are in the word wherever it is used. Here evidently the word signifies what the apostles taught, and it is the necessary conclusion that to continue in the apostles' fellowship it was needful that they should continue in their teaching, or rather, the things that they taught. Now in this very chapter we have the substance of that which they taught, and which the children of God gladly believed or received. Perhaps it will be well to give a synopsis of what Peter had been preaching to them. First, that Jesus of Nazareth, a man, had appeared among them, and had been approved of God by signs and wonders and miracles. Second, that by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God he had been taken and slain. Third, that they did it with wicked hands. Fourth, that God had raised him up according to prophecy, which Peter proceeds to quote. Fifth, that now Christ is not only raised up, but sits on the throne of David, and is exalted by the right hand of God, and has received the promise of the Father, and now has shed forth the Holy Ghost, as they did see and hear. This is the substance of the preaching of Peter as recorded in this sermon, but the doctrine of the apostles, or their teaching, is intended to include all that they afterwards proclaimed as to the doctrine or order of the house of God, and all those that believed upon that day continued in all that they taught. These same apostles are still the only judges in Israel, and in the Acts and in the epistles we have their infallible judgment in all that ever will call for judgment in the house of God.

Now let us call to mind how important it is that we to-day continue in the doctrine of the apostles, if indeed we wish to continue in their fellowship. Let us also remember that the beloved John said that their fellowship was with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. If then we find ourselves believing the doctrine of the apostles, we are in fellowship with all who also believe, and with the Father and the Son. On the other hand, if we are not in fellowship with the doctrine of the apostles, neither are we in fellowship with them, nor with the Father, nor with the Son. If the holy Spirit dwells within us it will surely teach us the truth, for it is called the Spirit of truth. It never takes of the things of men and shows them to us, but always of the things of Jesus; this is according to the words of the Master himself. If then any thought of our hearts is to the exaltation of any one or anything save Christ in all our salvation, it is not the revelation of the Holy Ghost; he always testifies of Jesus. The fellowship is in the doctrine, first of all; this should never be forgotten. May not some of us at times mistake a feeling

of good will, of sympathy, of pity, or of admiration for some man, for this fellowship? Because of this danger we are told not to have men's persons in admiration. One may be lovable, kindly, full of feeling, and seem at times to be deeply moved with feeling, and our hearts may go out to them with similar warmth, but all this is not in itself true fellowship. One may possess all these things in large measure, but if he denies the doctrine of Christ he cannot be in the apostles' fellowship. He that is weak in the faith indeed must be received, but not to doubtful disputations. If he denies the doctrine and fights against it he must not be received. Very many of the Lord's dear children have not been led deeply into the principles of the doctrine of Christ, but if any have had heart-felt knowledge of themselves they will not deny the grace of God, but will be found ascribing all their salvation to him.

What will arouse and excite this fellowship? We answer, the doctrine of the apostles. Why will this produce fellowship? Because the doctrine is the experience of the apostles, recorded by them, and it will meet all similar experience in all the children of God. This John taught when he said, We declare to you the things which we have seen and heard, that ye may have fellowship with us. Thus it was upon this day of Pentecost: "They that gladly received his word were baptized." Thus it was with the eunuch when Philip had preached Christ to him; thus it was with Lydia when the Lord had opened her heart so that she attended to the things spoken by Paul; thus it has been in all ages of the gospel day. It is the doctrine that binds together, and it binds together because it is the doctrine of Christ the Savior preached to poor sinners who have felt their need of him, and have found him in their need. How many have heard this preaching for the first time, and have said, You have been preaching just what I have felt and seen. One said in our hearing, "If that man is a christian then I am one, and if I am one, then he is." The preacher had been preaching just what that man had felt. His words were words of fellowship. There can be no fellowship outside of the doctrine of Christ. He that denies Christ cannot be in fellowship with him who confesses Christ. He that says, "I thank thee, that I am not as other men," cannot be in fellowship with him who says, "God be merciful to me a sinner." He that counts his blessedness as the result of his own worth, or worthy deeds, cannot be in fellowship with him who says, "By the grace of God I am what I am," and after having labored much says, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." There may be, and there are, often misunderstandings of portions of the word, and brethren may not all see clearly the truth, and there may be differences about some of the principles of the doctrine of Christ, or concerning some of the order of the church, which do not and ought not to lead to withdrawal from each other, but yet just so far as oneness of doctrine is found, just so far is there union and oneness of fellowship one with another, and just so far as it is wanting will there be a weakness of fellowship. To abide in this fellowship then it is needful that the doctrine of Christ be held forth in simplicity and experimentally. In no other way can fellowship abound, than by confession of the truth. He that preaches Christ as all and in all in a poor sinner's salvation, will at once be in the fellowship of all who love the Lord and confess him as their Savior. If some

poor sinner comes to the assemblies of the church asking a home with them, if his daily life be correct, all that is needed is that he bear witness that he is nothing and that Christ is all in all. We say this is all that is needed, and this we repeat with emphasis, because in just this confession is the confession of election, predestination, the everlasting love and purpose of God, the atonement of Christ, and justification through that atonement, the effectual call of the Spirit, and the confession in short of the whole doctrine of salvation from first to last, and in this is the fellowship of those who receive this testimony. The doctrine of God our Savior will appeal to all true experience, because it is the narrative and explanation of all true experience. If one tells our travel of mind and heart, we must be drawn to that one, we must be one with that person, and this travel is the doctrine of God our Savior, given to us as our own. So Paul could call the gospel "our gospel," and even "my gospel." It is ours, our very own, when we have come to hear it and know it and live it.

If then we would strive for increase of fellowship and love among the people of God, continue to hold forth the truth, the doctrine of the apostles, there is no other way. It is in vain to urge fellowship, and union, and peace, unless the ground of all true union is presented. If Christ be lifted up, all will be drawn to him; there is no other way. All, we mean, who know him indeed and in truth. To preach Christ is to hold him up, and to preach Christ is to preach all that doctrine which is God-honoring and man-abasing.

CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

ELDER W. A. Thompson requests his correspondents to address him at 1323 South First St., Springfield, Ill.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at the residence of the bride's parents', on Saturday evening, Feb. 4th, 1905, Wilbur G. Sortor, of Princeton, N. J., and Miss Jennie B. Reed, of Cedar Grove, Mercer Co., N. J.

By the same, at his residence, Hopewell, N. J., on Wednesday a. m., Feb. 15th, 1905, Alfred J. Hunt and Miss Anna M. Campbell, both of Hopewell, N. J.

By the same, at his residence in Hopewell, N. J., on Wednesday p. m., Feb. 22nd, 1905, Warren F. Hart and Miss Annie E. Chick, both of Hopewell, N. J.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, at the home of the bride's parents', Feb. 22nd, 1905, Bates Pilchard and Miss Bertha Byrd, both of Worcester Co., Md.

By the same, March 1st, 1905, near New Church, Va., Ray T. Lewis and and Miss Annie Ida Reeder, both of Accomac Co., Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At her late home in Cecil Co., Md., Dec. 31st, 1904, sister **Sarah Elizabeth Matthias,** beloved wife of Mr. John J. Matthias, with whom she had lived happily in the relation of husband and wife for forty-four years, having been married to him Jan. 1st, 1861. She was the only daughter of Deacon John Tawresey, who with his wife was baptized in England, emigrating to this country about the year 1830, landing at Norfolk, Va., but as business in his line (that of merchant tailor) was very dull there, and they found no Baptists, they shortly moved to Lancaster Co., Pa., where they settled and reared their family of four sons and one daughter (the subject of this notice). They continued their search for Baptists whom they could fellowship, and were almost despairing of success when it occurred in the providence of God that Elder Thomas Barton preached in their neighborhood. Sister Tawresey went to hear him, and (from what has been related to me by sister Matthias) must have felt a good deal as Philip when he said to Nathaniel: "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Not long afterwards both brother and sister Tawresey united with the Mt. Hope church, near New London, Pa., under the pastoral care of Elder Thomas Barton. Some years later that church was dissolved, and they united with the London Tract church, still having Elder Barton for their pastor, continuing their membership to the time of their death, sister Tawresey passing away about 1866, and her husband about 1874.

Sister Matthias was born in Lancaster Co., Pa., Jan. 20th, 1837, being the youngest of the family. There were four brothers who lived to manhood, James and Robert were born in England; James died

at an early age, Robert lived to be an elderly man, dying in November, 1898. He was a useful man in the community, and in the church, having been baptized by Elder Joseph L. Staton about ten years before his death, at the Welch Tract church, (Iron Hill) New Castle Co., Del., but united with the London Tract church, and was chosen deacon, and continued to serve as long as he was able. The other brothers were Joseph and William, born in America; Joseph was a faithful member of London Tract, but now deceased; William (the only surviving member of the family) is a member and deacon of the Wilmington church, having been baptized at the same time and place as his brother Robert. Sister Matthias was baptized by Elder Thomas Barton, in the fellowship of the London Tract church, the second Sunday in July, 1866. At the time of her death she had been a member about thirty-eight and one-half years. There never was one more true and faithful, manifesting her interest in the welfare of the church continually by the faithful fulfillment of all her obligations. We shall miss her sadly at our little meetings, as the number is now small and growing less as they are called away one by one. She has left her aged and afflicted companion, one daughter, who has ever been a faithful and dutiful child, two sons, kind and respectful to their mother, one brother and other relatives, beside the church, to mourn, but not without hope, as in life and at death she gave evidence of the power of God, who works mightily in sinners unto their salvation, and who wrought in her unto the manifestation of his electing love and eternal purpose to save her. May an ever-gracious God visit the bereaved husband and children with the blessed consolations of his word, giving them comfort and peace in their affliction.

I could not attend the funeral on the 4th of January on account of other engagements, and Elder Eubanks was prevented by sickness, so the service was conducted by Mr. Gilfillan, her husband's pastor, Presbyterian. She was laid to rest in the cemetery at the Head of Christiana to await the sound of the last trump. A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., February, 1905.

DIED—At his residence, Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., Feb. 19th, 1905, after a few days sickness, **Mr. Jacob Bishop,** 68 years of age. Mr. Bishop had been ailing for a number of years with gastric trouble, yet was able to be about until within a few days of his death. He was not a professor of religion, yet he was one of the steady attendants on the preaching of the word, and a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and a special lover of the peace of the church. When near the end he said he was separated from the world with all its charms and cares, and wanted to be with his Lord, who had cared for him all his days. He has left behind to mourn their great loss, his widow and two daughters, son-in-law and grandson, six brothers, one sister and other relatives, with the neighborhood and church.

His obsequies were attended by a large concourse of relatives, friends and neighbors at the Old School Baptist church-house in Olive, on Feb. 22nd, where the writer tried to preach to the congregation from the words: "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." After which the body was conveyed to the cemetery and borne to the tomb by his six brothers, to await the second appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who shall change the mortal body to an immortal body, by the same Spirit that dwelt in it, as Christ was formed in the mortal body the hope of glory. May God bless the mourners.

ALSO,

Departed this life at her home in Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., Feb. 20th, 1905, after a lingering affliction of shaking palsy, our sister, **Mrs. Lorenzo Eckert,** wife of brother Lorenzo Eckert, in the 72nd year of her age. Sister Eckert made a public profession of her faith many years ago, and her one desire through her pilgrimage was to glorify her God in her body and spirit, which were his, and being barred by her affliction from attending meeting with the church the words of the poet would fit her case well:

"O land of rest, for thee I sigh,
When will the moment come
When I shall lay my armor by,
And dwell with Christ at home?"

She often said but for the hope of life through the dear Redeemer she would have no lasting comfort. Although she was not much of a talker about spiritual things, yet a deep thinker. I shall miss her so much, as I used to take special pains to get to see both brother and sister Eckert when in their usual health years ago, as they had sickness and deaths in their families, and after our dear sister's health failed I felt doubly obligated to visit them. Our aged brother is left lonely and alone in regard to companionship, although a son with his family live in the same house, who with other children and relatives, as well as the neighborhood and the church, mourn because of the loss they feel, yet none can mourn without hope that for the dear and loved one to die was gain. O how good it is to think and believe in our most trying times that there is a future for the afflicted and poor people of God. If only in this life they have hope they are of all people most miserable. Although as believers in this life they are dead or separate from the world, yet their life is hid with Christ in God, and when mortality is swallowed up of life and they sleep in Jesus, their hope is to awake in his likeness and be satisfied. So may it be.

The funeral of sister Eckert was on Thursday, Feb.

23rd, at the Old School Baptist church-house in Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., where the writer of this obituary talked to the people from Romans viii. 16, 17, after which the body was conveyed to the Winchell Hill cemetery. J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLY CORNERS, N. Y., March 6, 1905.

IT is with much sorrow I send the obituary of **Walter P. Jeffers**. The circumstances surrounding his death, which occurred Feb. 9th, 1905, are very sad. He was employed by the Armour Company buying poultry; he attended a sale four miles north of this city, his brother accompanying him. After the sale was over his brother wanted him to return home, but he said he would go on further and buy some chickens. His brother returned home. He was last seen alive about 5 o'clock; he had bought a crate of chickens; the man he purchased them of tried to persuade him to stay over night, as it was very cold and the wind blowing very hard and the air full of snow, but he said he must get home. He was seen afterwards walking behind his team; his team got away from him, and he left the road and wandered through a field and crossed a creek, and a few rods from there his body was found next morning where he had frozen to death; his team was found near this city. A searching party found his body four miles north of here.

His funeral was held at his home on Sunday, the 12th, Elder Lamon of the Christian church officiating, after which his body was laid to rest in Hillside cemetery.

He was born July 26th, 1855, making his age 48 years, 6 months and 14 days. He leaves to mourn their loss a wife, one daughter, an aged mother, two sisters, four brothers and many relatives. He was a hard working man. May the God of all grace reconcile all those left behind. He was a first cousin of the writer. E. A. NORTON.

HAMPTON, Iowa.

Miss Maria Knapp departed this life Feb. 18th, 1905, at the home of her niece, Mrs. Ann Knapp, in Sugarloaf, Orange Co., N. Y., aged 94 years, 6 months and 12 days. She was the daughter of Nathaniel and Deborah Teed Knapp. Sister Knapp spent her entire life in Orange Co., N. Y. She was well and favorably known by hundreds of people, was a kind-hearted and faithful friend, a devoted member of the Old School Baptist Church in Warwick, having joined that church by baptism May 29th, 1842, Elder Richard Pickard administered the ordinance. During the sixty-three years in the church she was ever faithful to the law and ordinances of the house. Aunt Maria, as she was so familiarly known, was a firm believer in the doctrine of God our Savior in all its fullness, she was well indoctrinated; nothing pleased her as well as to hear "Christ and him crucified" preached, She prized highly the visits from her brethren, especially those in the ministry; though feeble and somewhat deaf in her last years she always requested her ministers to read a chapter, speak in prayer and talk to her of Jesus and his love to poor sinners, thus manifesting that her thought was of God and worship to him. A good woman is gone, we shall all miss her, but the change is glorious for her; in her last illness she longed for rest and peace, the Lord took her unto himself, and she now realizes the fullness of rest and peace which she had here in part. The death of sister Knapp has brought sadness again into the Warwick church, but they know and believe that what the Lord does is ever best. Our dear friend, Mrs. Ann Knapp, was a most tender and faithful nurse during the illness of our departed sister; she was devoted to her aunt, and will sadly miss her.

Elder John McConnell and the writer were called at the special request of sister Knapp to conduct her funeral services; it was impossible for brother McConnell to be present. The writer served at the funeral with such ability as the Lord gave, using as a text, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Hymn 1256 was read. The earthly house in which she had tabernacled here so long was buried in the family graveyard at Sugarloaf.

May the Lord reconcile us all to his will in all things. H. C. KER.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

Martha Ellen Ferguson Hurst was born Nov. 2nd, 1854, died Feb. 2nd, 1905, aged 51 years and 3 months. On a farm in Vigo Co., Ind., sister Hurst was born, and was the youngest but one of a family of five children, three of whom survive her. Here she grew to womanhood, and on Nov. 2nd, 1871, (this being her seventeenth birthday) she was married to Albin G. Hurst, who is left to mourn. To this union were born two children, a son, George Otis, July 25th, 1873, and a daughter, Cora May, August 6th, 1875. The son was killed at Denison, Texas, in a railway accident, June 13th, 1902. His death was a terrible shock to the mother, who almost idolized him. The daughter survives her.

In 1873, at the Honey Creek Church of Primitive Baptists, near the home or her girlhood, sister Hurst confessed before the world her love for her Savior, and was baptized, together with her husband, into the fellowship of the church, by Elder James Whitlock. In March, 1888, the family removed to Hamilton Co., Kansas, where she has since resided. The church membership of herself and husband was transferred about four years ago to Bethel church, in Prowers Co., Colo., of which body they both were esteemed members at the time of her death. Truly she was of a lovable disposition. Through all her long and severe suffering she was uncomplaining. In

all her life she ever put the welfare and comfort of others before her own. In her last sickness she longed to depart and be with Christ, yet patiently and with complete resignation was she willing to wait all the days of her appointed time.

At last she has been called from pain to eternal peace and rest, and from the cross of suffering to the crown of everlasting life at God's right hand. Thy will, O God, be done. D. B. NOWLES.

Peleg W. Doud was born May 29th, 1811, died June 10th, 1904.

The funeral services were held from his late residence June 12th, consisting of reading the twenty-third Psalm, prayer and comforting remarks by Mr. Stoker and singing by the choir, after which the remains were laid to rest in the State Road cemetery by the side of his wife. The same loving hands lowered the casket for him that performed the office for her eleven years ago, (also the second Sunday in June) viz: the sons Warren and Omar and son-in-law D. F. Rumsey, except that the oldest grandson took the place of the son Hobart, who had passed away.

Born not more than half a mile from where he died, he was the son of sturdy Vermont parents, who came to Sullivan a few years before. On Dec. 25th, 1832, he was married to Amanda Rose Packard. They had five children: Warren, Hobart, (deceased) Omar, Annie, (deceased) and Helen, Mrs. D. F. Rumsey, who has cared for both mother and father during the last years of their lives. Though his chosen occupation was farming, he was for years a preacher in the Baptist Church, well known in Tioga and Bradford counties. Positive in his convictions, strong to denounce whatever he considered wrong, yet withal quiet and unobtrusive, one with whom it was necessary to be closely acquainted in order to fully appreciate; those who knew him best loved him most.

(Published by request of the family.)

William Barbe, of Monongalia Co., W. Va., was born in the valley of Virginia May 17th, 1823; moved with his parents, six brothers and three sisters, on the farm where he died, in 1832; married Eleanor Linch, May 21st, 1844, who preceded him to the grave five years. She was a member of the Baptist Church fifty-one years. He was baptized by Elder Rose, and joined the Baptist Church called Indian Creek, in Monongalia Co., W. Va., one of the churches of the Redstone Association (which is to hold her one hundred and twenty-ninth session near the old home of the deceased next September). Died Feb. 21st, 1905, in his 82nd year. He was a firm believer in the doctrine the Baptists advocate, was well read in the Bible; was well able to meet any ordinary opponent to the truth when necessary, firm in the discipline of the church of his choice. In his declining years and last days he often asked if it was meeting day, and would look for some preacher, and name many he thought might come. He leaves one son and a daughter-in-law, who cared for him as a daughter only would do, four grandsons, two great-grandchildren, one sister and many nephews and nieces. He passed away as one going to sleep, after the third stroke of paralysis. ELZA BARBE.

At the request of the bereaved husband, brother W. T. Slayden, of Clinton, Ky., I send you for publication in the SIGNS a short obituary notice of his wife, sister **N. A. Slayden.** Sister Slayden was born August 4th, 1840, died Dec. 21st, 1904, aged 64 years, 4 months and 17 days. She joined the Primitive Baptists in 1889. When the conditional time salvation heresy developed among us her church went almost solidly with it, but she could not go; she remained on the grace side and died in the full triumph of grace. Sister Slayden was a great sufferer, and had been for years, but her faith failed not. She has left to mourn, her husband and other relatives, also her brethren and sisters of the Primitive or Grace Baptists, but we mourn not as those who have no hope, for we believe that our loss is her gain.

R. H. BOAZ.

FULTON, Ky., Feb. 8, 1905.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS."

J. W. Shelburne, Ky., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting of the Wilmington (Delaware) Old School Baptist Church will be held, the Lord willing, on the second Saturday and Sunday in April, (8th and 9th) 1905, to begin at 2 p. m. on Saturday. All lovers of the truth will be welcome.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m., in the Red Men's Hall, in Troy, N. Y., and at 2:30 p. m. in West Sand Lake, N. Y., at the home of Mrs. Moul. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

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The bi-centennial of the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., was celebrated Oct. 20th, 1903. After some delay it is now published in pamphlet form, and is now on sale. Price 15 cents. The pamphlet contains photographs of the Welsh Tract meeting-house and Elder J. G. Eubanks, the pastor, the proceedings of the anniversary, letters of greeting from sister churches and a historical sketch written by Dr. B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., and read on the occasion. Some of the brick in the meeting-house was brought from Wales to this country, and hauled on mules' backs a distance of ten miles. The pamphlet is very interesting and full of information.

The edition is limited, and orders should be sent without delay in order to secure a copy. Send all orders to P. M. SHERWOOD,

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 73. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1905. NO. 7.

POETRY.

A PRAYER.

Out of thine unbounded fullness,
Give us of thy saving grace;
From our hearts pray banish trouble,
Let us see thy smiling face.

Heads are bowed and hearts are breaking,
Children crying for their bread;
Storms of life our barks are tossing,
We are quaking, Lord, with dread.

While we toss on troubled waters,
Dost thou care, O Lord, for us?
Please to manifest thy presence,
Lest our ship be surely lost.

REJOICING.

Past the clouds that flashed and thundered,
Now we hear the rippling rills;
Sunlight gilds the highest mountain,
Peace and love the valley fills.

Dear Desire of all the nations,
King of peace and love appears;
Clouds of trouble shine like blessings,
False indeed were all our fears.

Grant, O Lord, when we are burdened,
Swiftly to reveal thy hand;
Make us feel in all our troubles,
By thy grace we surely stand.

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.

LAWRENCEBURG, Ky., Feb. 23, 1905.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TIME SALVATION.

BELOVED:—The Old Baptist people have long been troubled with the confusing doctrines of "means of salvation," "means of grace," and such like; but not until the present young generation rose up, who assume to be wise above all the fathers, has the confusing and uncertain sound of "conditional time salvation" been trumpeted forth in almost all the camps of Israel. The last ten years this strange and startling blast of trumpets has echoed and reechoed with exciting and bewildering effect, and great has been the widespread confusion and division, where peace and good will prevailed before. This dividing of salvation, and subdividing it into fragments and parts, partly eternal salvation, and partly time salvation, (as the teachers of this yea and nay gospel call it,) they boastingly claim, is "rightly dividing the word." It certainly has a dividing quality, for it has scattered the flock. Yea, it has brought bitter strife and alienation into the rank and file of the conditional Baptists themselves. Thus has God confounded their language, and they can-

not understand one another. And, as did the confused Midianites, they are now falling upon one another in deadly strife. But the remnant according to the election of grace, the little band with their spiritual Gideon, break their earthen pitchers that the light may shine out, and shout, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." By this they conquer, for the Lord fights for them and gives them the victory.

Let us now consider salvation in the light of the Lord as revealed in the word. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." "Salvation" is a Bible term, and it runs all through the divine book, being used very many times, yet it is always the one single, simple word, never plural, complex or compounded. "Salvation." The plural word, "salvations," is not in the holy Bible. This term, "salvations," so common and popular now, belongs to the literature of a yea and nay gospel, but it is not in the gospel of Christ. This late word, "saltions," is incomplete without another word, "conditional," joined to it. For the recent salvations, so much talked of, which depend upon creature obedience, are necessarily conditional. Any conditional salvation is necessarily of works, and entitled to a reward, therefore all conditional salvation is legal, yea and nay, and most uncertain. There is no grace at all in any conditional salvation, because the grace of God is free, unconditional, never sold and never bought. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." "And if by grace, then is it no more of works." All conditional salvation calls for works to obtain it, for something must be done. So grace is entirely excluded from the yea and nay doctrine of conditional salvations. The teachers of conditional salvation have not yet presumed to say the grace of God is conditional, and so all conditionalism is a denial of salvation by grace.

Conditional Baptists, however, seem to think that they take away the objectionable feature of Arminianism or conditional salvation, by confining it to time, and so they qualify this legal doctrine of salvation by works by inserting the word "time" between the two words, conditional salvation, and make it read, "Conditional time salvation;" that is to say, salvation in time is conditional. If so, then salvation in time is not by grace, nor of the Lord.

Now it behooves us to know what salvation is, when it is, and who it is to. Salvation is redemption, deliverance; it is always in time, and it is always to the lost. No one who is not lost can be saved. The one who knows what to do, and can do it, is not lost. So doing conditions is not salvation at all, but merely working for a reward. We never go to salvation, because salvation is righteousness and justification, and we are sinful; but salvation must and does always come to us as lost. Salvation has no meaning to the one who is not lost, but claims ability to do and obtain the desired good. It is hypocritical to call that which is within our own power salvation. So long as Peter stood on the water, he did not pray, "Lord save me." Such a cry would have been false then; but when he had no power left, then the prayer was one of need, and salvation came to him.

When is salvation? Does it take place in eternity? or in time? It is important that we understand when salvation is. While the Bible clearly shows that God's purpose to save his chosen and predestinated people in Christ is

eternal, the divine testimony is abundant and clear, that all the work of their full and glorious salvation unto holiness and a blissful immortality is begun and ended in time. This triple work of the Father, Son and Spirit, three in One, consists in redemption, regeneration and resurrection. The resurrection of all the redeemed and heaven-born people of God shall take place at the last day of time. And so Christ said of all the church, that the Father's will is that "I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." And of every believer in him he says, "And I will raise him up at the last day." The last day is a part of time. The resurrection of all the dead, who sleep in Christ, is the completion and crowning glory of their salvation. This is in time. Redemption from the law of sin and death, by the death of the Son of God, is in time. So is salvation by his risen life in time. Paul says, "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." This salvation by his life includes being born again, and passing from death unto life. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." All this is wrought in time. Paul therefore says, "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." That is, until the full revelation of Christ in you in his resurrection, power and glory. Until that glorious day, God will perform the good work of salvation in you. O this is assuring and blessed, my beloved! In this faith Paul said, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." This is the full glory of our ascended Lord Jesus Christ. God, who exalted him at his own right hand of power, will perform his blessed work of salvation in us until the redemption of the purchased possession. "Then we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

All the work of salvation is fulfilled in time. But the adjective, the long and dangerous handle, "conditional," is not found in the Bible as belonging to our time salvation. But this is true: "Salvation is of the Lord," and salvation is in time. All the redeemed of the Lord shall be saved in time. "Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord!"

All legal teachers, who strive to burden the salvation of the Lord's people with conditions, are putting a yoke upon their necks which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear, but which is a curse and snare to the people, and a reproach upon salvation. But when they think that they have improved upon Arminian conditional salvation by inserting the word "time" in it, they are deceiving and being deceived, for this is the day of salvation. "(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)" So any one who is not saved in time has no salvation. Therefore, the modern term, "conditional time salvation," means no more nor less than conditional salvation. To prove this, they must first prove that Jesus is a conditional Savior. This they dare not attempt to do. Salvation is of the Lord and in Christ. Yea, he himself is Salva-

tion. "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation." "Neither is there salvation in any other." Then there is no salvation in conditions nor in man. "For by grace *are* ye saved: * * * not of works." "Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation. * * * My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence; I shall not be moved. In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God." David here personified the man Christ and every member of Christ. As this was true of David and Christ under the law, is it not equally true of us under the gospel of grace? Since God only was the rock and salvation of his people under the old covenant, which was conditional, is he any the less their only rock and salvation under the new covenant in Christ Jesus, which is free from all conditions?

The Lord said, "For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." This is a perfect description of conditional salvation; for it can hold no water of salvation.

But blessed be the Lord of salvation, Jesus saves his people from their sins, gives them the water of life, and says, "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." This is all my salvation and all my desire.

And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

D. BARTLEY.

LAKELAND, Fla., March 12, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—My desire is to give an expression of my abiding and prayerful interest in the success and great usefulness of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; and my fellowship for you and all the Old School Baptist household of the paper. While lying here helpless in the hands of God, he has given me the fullest assurance that they who believe what the SIGNS advocates are the called and chosen remnant whom God hath reserved to himself; that they should glorify him alone, as the God of their salvation. They are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that they should walk in them.

The Old School Baptist church is the church of the living Rock, and the eternal God is her refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES and its family household have from the first, stood upon the unlimited sovereignty, eternal purpose and reigning grace of God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Thus this standard which the Lord hath lifted up as an ensign, and its true supporters, have stood out against the blackened night of sin and darkness and gross delusion as a city set upon a hill, reflecting the glorious light of God upon the children. That this will continue to be so, I have faith to fully believe. To all your readers let me express fellowship in Christ Jesus, in whom is all our salvation and all our life. In all my afflictions and trials I desire to ask an humble interest in the fervent prayers of all this dear household of God.

If it be his will to raise me up, to his name shall be the praise; if not, my

heart says, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."

A letter from any brother or sister would be a comfort.

Farewell in the Lord.

D. BARTLEY.

[THE above letter, which has just been received from brother Bartley, was written on a bed of affliction; he having been critically ill for ten days or more with a complicated attack of "la grippe" and malarial fever, but we are pleased to say that he is now improving.—ED.]

"A PLACE BY ME."

(Continued from page 170.)

"A clift in the rock." This more expressly points to the smitten rock, (Num. xx. 8,) the rock that was cleft, Jesus, who was bruised, wounded and stricken of God for our transgressions. (Isaiah liii. 8.) The sword of divine justice awoke against Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts. (Zech. xiii. 7.) That smitten rock was Christ. (1 Cor. x. 4.) Have you viewed the Rock of our salvation in Gethsemane's garden and on Calvary's cross, how he was put to grief? "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Being put into the clift of the rock typifies that divine mystery that the chosen, blood-bought church of God has a sanctuary most sweet in the wounded side of Jesus. "One of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came thereout blood and water." Precious blood, (1 Peter i. 19,) that cleanses us from all sin, (1 John i. 7,) that justifies us from all iniquity, (Romans v. 9,) that sanctifies us unto God, (Heb. xiii. 12,) that has made reconciliation, (2 Chron. xxix. 24; Rom. v. 10,) peace (Col. i. 20,) and atonement for us. (Lev. xvii. 11.) His blood has redeemed us, (Eph. i. 7,) redeemed us from the curse, (Gal. iii. 13,) redeemed us unto God. (Rev. v. 9.) O Christ's blood has made us nigh to God, (Eph. ii. 13,) and we shall be triumphant over all our foes by the precious blood of the Lamb. (Rev. xii. 11.) Then from the cleft side of Christ, our smitten rock, there also flowed the water. Is this not significant of the washing of water by the word? (Eph. v. 26,) of the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which God sheds upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Lord? (Titus iii. 5, 6.)

> "Rock of ages, cleft for me,
> Let me hide myself in thee;
> Let the water and the blood,
> From thy wounded side which flowed,
> Be of sin the double cure,
> Cleanse me from its guilt and power."

Precious Jesus, thy wounded, bleeding, pierced side shall be my sanctuary, here will I abide till all calamities be overpast.

"I will put thee in a clift in the rock." Are we not repeatedly learning that it is only the Lord who can put us into that vital experience of the divine realities of the gospel? The bare outline we may see and talk about, but to be put in, to have our soul's sanctuary in the doctrine of God our Savior, can only be by the gracious power of the Holy Ghost. O how good the Lord is to us unworthy sinners! He so graciously teaches his called ones that they are brought to affectionately rely upon the finished work of the Savior.

I "will cover thee with my hand while I pass by." The Scriptures present us

with a variety of instances in which the Lord is said to cover his people. David exclaims, "O God the Lord, the strength of my salvation, thou hast covered my head in the day of battle."—Psalms cxl. 7. And how blessed is that word, "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler." Then Isaiah sings, "He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness."—Isaiah lxi. 10. And the Lord declares, "I covered thee with silk."—Ezek. xvi. 10. And even when under his chastening hand the Lord covereth the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger. (Lam. ii. 1.) How sacred are his chastenings! But let us betake ourselves to some glimpses of the signification of this word of the Lord, I "will cover thee with my hand while I pass by." Moses had said, "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory." He did not understand the full significance of his request, for the gracious answer of the Lord was, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live." Once before, when the Lord spake out of the burning bush, "Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God."—Exodus iii. 6. Elijah, when he heard the still, small voice of the Lord, "wrapped his face in his mantle."—1 Kings xix. 13. The Seraphims covered their faces while they cried to each other, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory."—Isaiah vi. 3. O, it is but a little portion of the knowledge of God's glory that it is possible for us to attain to in our pilgrimage. So overpowering was the vision given to Daniel of "a certain man," that he tells us, "There remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength."—Dan. x. 8. And the apostle John beholding in vision the glorified Redeemer says, "When I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead."—Rev. i. 17. Could we, dear children of God, live a thousand years on the earth, and every day be learning more and more, it would still have to be said, "We know in part," we have only the earnest of our inheritance, we yet only see through a glass darkly; our yearning hearts would still be found pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus to attain unto the resurrection of the dead, well knowing that we had not yet already attained; O, our ravished souls would still be exclaiming, "That I may know him."

Then the hand of the Lord covering Moses while in the clift of the rock portrays to our faith the pity of the Lord toward his believing children, for he knoweth our frame, and that in our present time state we are not capable of enduring those manifestations of the unveiled glory of his Being. Now it must suffice us to see as through a glass darkly, but when we are gathered home, to our home in heaven, "then face to face" we shall see and know our God. (1 Cor. xiii. 12.) O this, beloved of God, is embraced in our hope that is laid up for us in heaven. "They shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads."

God's own kind, almighty hand put Moses in the clift of the rock, and this self-same hand covered him, shut him in while the Lord in his glory passed by. The Lord has his own way to answer our heart yearnings to know more and more of his glory. He covers us with his hand,

covers us with adverse providences, afflictions and temptations. Is it while thus covered by the hand of the Lord that the glory of the Lord shall pass by and I shall learn more and more of my God? Ah, these dark dispensations, these conflicts and trials that come upon us would appear to obscure our knowledge of God's glory. But in the dark cloud the rainbow is seen. O, our blind unbelief is sure to err and scan his work in vain, for it is while the hand of the Lord covereth us with trials, both internal and external, that he passeth by; proclaiming his glory, declaring his name, and safely abiding in the clift of the rock, and shut in by the covering hand of the Lord, we shall hear the voice of our God that passeth by.

"And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation. And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped." The voice of the Lord has efficacious penetration, it enters and speaks in the heart of the one to whom God proclaims himself. In his gracious power he makes himself known to quickened sinners, his called ones. That favored sinner is awakened, painfully awakened, to the knowledge that God is in very truth. Before one is born again he may have thought he knew and believed that God is, but it is when divine life is given a poor sinner that he knows, in a way before unknown, that God is, that he is the holy One inhabiting eternity, whose name is Holy. Yes, and this persuasion takes possession of us, and we believe that he is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and that he cannot look upon iniquity. (Hab. i. 13.) And what are we? what am I? a sinner, a vile blot, deserving the everlasting wrath of God. The Lord announces himself, "The Lord, The Lord God," and we respond to his quickening voice, and our trembling, believing heart says, The Lord is. (Heb. xi. 6.) Before he was called by grace the sinner may have been a fool, saying in his heart, "There is no God." But now he knows in his soul that God is, of a truth, that he is the I AM, the eternal, almighty, omnipresent God. So near. Thou compasseth my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. O, God is so nigh to the quickened sinner. "For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." God is so nigh in majesty and holiness, and yet O how far, far off am I, a guilty sinner, from the Lord. As the Lord passeth by proclaiming himself, the one covered with his hand in the clift of the rock, thinks upon his name. (Mal. iii. 16.) The Lord says, "My people shall know my name."—Isaiah lii. 6. But how shall we attain to the knowledge of the name of the Lord? It is through our Lord Jesus Christ. He, the glorious Head of the church, is our beloved Mediator; through him the church learns of the Father. Christ says, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."—Heb. ii. 12.

"Merciful and gracious, longsuffering." How suitable, hope-inspiring and healing is this to the contrite in heart! God is rich in mercy to all that call upon him, and the taught of the Lord are so taught how sinful they are, and are so divinely

exercised by the Lord proclaiming himself "merciful and gracious, and longsuffering," that they cry unto him for mercy. Their hearts mourn over their iniquities. O to them sin is no trifle, no mere skin-deep wound, but their hearts ache, and in fervent yearnings they cry for the compassion of the Lord. As for me, I can but acknowledge that my life has been distinguished by the gracious longsuffering of God, and instead of lifting up my eyes in hell, being in torment, God has so shined in my heart that my eyes have been lifted up to see the beauty of the Lord in the face of Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God. Truly the longsuffering of the Lord is salvation. (2 Peter iii. 15.) Had it not been for his longsuffering we had in his divine justice been cut off from his sight, and everlasting punishment had been our just doom. But in his love and pity he hath redeemed us, Jesus our Surety hath died for our sins. He gave himself a sacrifice for us, and poured out his soul unto death, and delivered us from the wrath to come. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.

"On him almighty vengeance fell,
That must have sunk a world to hell;
He bore it for the chosen race,
And thus became their hiding-place."

If longsuffering were not an attribute of Jehovah's name, what hope could there be for us? "About the time of forty years suffered he their manners in the wilderness."—Acts xiii. 18. Times without number we stray away, and sometimes are found going on frowardly in the way of our sinful heart. Surely, "To us belongeth confusion of face," and never could such sinners have any other face before the Majesty in the heavens only that he in everlasting love to us helpless, sinful worms proclaims his name, "The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering." This takes hold of us, we are drawn to it, we believe it, and thus encouraged we pray, we confess our transgressions unto him, and our iniquities we would not hide from his eyes; O no, for in our heart's abasement we cry, "O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee."—Psalms lxix. 5. And when once more we taste that the Lord is "abundant in goodness and truth," then our confusion of face is chased away, and our countenance is happy before the Lord. O, to taste the forgiveness of our sins through Jesus' precious blood will put health and beauty upon us, and our faces will shine in grateful love and praise before the throne of our gracious God.

As the child of God pursues his journey to the "better country," encountering temptations and afflictions, and finding the way oftentimes most rugged, beset with conflicts that would, if possible, impede his way, he will find himself poor and weak and faint, and his soul much discouraged because of the way. (Num. xxi. 4.) But the Lord has said, "Therefore, my people shall know my name," and this belongs unto his name, "abundant in goodness and truth." Are we amazed, ashamed and mourn because sin so abounds in our poor lives? God's grace doth much more abound. (Rom. v. 20.) Do our sin-wounded hearts cry out for forgiveness? He is rich in mercy unto all that call upon him, and he will "abundantly pardon."—Isaiah lv. 7. In all our necessities we shall prove that his grace is exceeding abundant with faith and love in Christ Jesus. (1 Tim. i. 14.) His mercy is great unto the heavens, and his truth reacheth unto the clouds. He will abundantly bless the provisions of Zion and satisfy her poor with bread.

Then in all our straits, notwithstanding all our infirmities, sinfulness and unworthiness, the Lord will draw us to himself proclaiming this in our hearts, that he is "abundant in goodness and truth." And at the end of our journey if we are asked, "Lacked ye anything?" our grateful answer will be that we found the God of our salvation able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we asked or thought, according to his power that wrought in us. (Eph. iii. 20.)

"Till then I would thy love proclaim
With every fleeting breath,
And may the music of thy name
Refresh my soul in death."

This inquiry comes into my thoughts, Do I know the Lord, know him as he is? Has he proclaimed his name to me? If so, what effect has it wrought? We shall be found looking unto and confiding in our God. For "they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee."—Psalms ix. 10. The Lord still proclaims his name, saying, "Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation. And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped." In this we have discovered to us that God has treasured up mercy and forgiveness for his people, and that he also will chasten them for their iniquities, all of which is precious to those that fear him. Moses acquiesingly bowed his head and worshiped; may the same grace be upon us, and then our language to one another will be, "O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand."

"And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts; but my face shall not be seen." When the Lord took away his hand Moses could look forth, and he could say, The savor of his name perfumes all the land; my dear God has been here, I see the footprints of the Lord, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth in all his dealings to me, a poor sinner. And now, "My soul followeth hard after thee, thy right hand upholdeth me."

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

COLOSSIANS III. 1.

"IF ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."

The author of the above language was an apostle of Jesus Christ; he was called of God to be such; his mission was to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ among the Gentiles. To this end he was a chosen vessel, and he was constrained by the love of God to obey the Master. His love for Christ and great zeal for God was not derived from any human source. The knowledge he had of the righteousness of Jesus and the "glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," together with the blessed gospel which he preached so faithfully and so ardently, was not the product of worldly wisdom or the fruits of self-righteousness, for Paul certifies that it was not after man, that he did not receive it of man, "neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Thus he was made a minister and a witness (not of himself) according to the dispensation of God. Now he is fully equipped for the momentous work unto which he was called of God. As a servant of the most high

God, and being made willing in the day of his (the Lord's) power, he was determined to know nothing among men save Jesus Christ and him crucified. The church at Corinth, at Ephesus, at Rome, at Colosse, and the saints in general, were instructed and comforted by him in holy things. That his messages of love, of admonition and encouragement were made direct to the churches and faithful brethren in Christ, is fully confirmed by his own testimony. He addresses his epistle to the Colossians thus: "To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse." Then not to make them so, but because they are "lively stones," he proceeds to instruct them in things pertaining to righteousness and true holiness. He desired that they might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being faithful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God, "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."

Both Paul and his brethren were alike recipients of this heavenly calling, redemption and deliverance.

"If ye then be risen with Christ." That they whom Paul seeks to edify and instruct were risen with Christ, is all-important. The believing Colossians were alive to Christ, but were dead to the rudiments of the world; they were buried with him (Christ) in baptism, and were also risen with him through the faith of the operation of God; they were now risen with Christ as their Head, and as members in union with him, when he arose from the dead and ascended to the right hand of the Father. As members of the body of Christ, and of one another, they are known as the royal priesthood, the holy nation, the peculiar people, and the nation whose God is the Lord. The body is composed of many members, and these members are set in the body as it pleased the Lord. It is a fact, too, that these many members receive all their life and strength and vitality from the Head. This is Christ, who is "Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." When he laid down his life as Head over all, every member of his body went down into death with him; there were none exempt. Long before Christ was born in Bethlehem of Judea the prophet had said, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust." When Christ went down into death, was crucified and slain by wicked hands, and his life taken from the earth, he bore his children, (members of his mystical body) carrying them with him in all his humiliations and sufferings.

> "But lo, what sudden joys we see,
> Jesus the dead revives again."

The grave holds him no longer, he is risen from the dead; in the glories of his complete triumph his children have an eternal interest in an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away. They came forth triumphantly with the victorious Head, who bare them and carried them all the days of old. In the book of God's sovereignty and prescience all the members written being yet unperfect, (undeveloped) when as yet there were none of them. But Christ is risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. Now he calls his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out; and because of this heavenly relationship

Paul admonishes the Colossians to "seek those things which are above." Being no longer dead in trespasses and in sins, but alive to God by the Spirit, they are to turn away from the sordid and corrupt things of life, and put on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, &c., and being alive to Christ, Paul's exhortation is very appropriate; its effect is readily seen. Because of the new or heavenly birth a wonderful change has taken place; the subject is turned from the love of sin to the love of holiness, old things have passed away, new and beautiful things are opened up to view, faith looks upward, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. They have a desire to walk humbly before God; they love the temple (church) of God; his commandments are no longer grievous or hard to be borne. All that pertains to Christ, his church, his kingdom, both in time and eternity, is far above all principality and power; every good and perfect gift cometh down from above. The poor and despondent child is made to turn away from self and look upward for joys the world cannot give. All true and incorruptible blessings, as said before, are from above; the suffering child seeks them from that source, because things heavenly and divine do not flourish, or cannot be found in our corrupt natures. The saints are compelled to look upward and seek those things which are above. Mount Zion or the heavenly Jerusalem is a city high and lifted up, it is free, and is the mother of us all. "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities." Her bulwarks and defenses are broad and high, yet in seeking those high and holy things we are not to forget our dependence on the everlasting arm of God; without him we can do nothing. When we actually seek those things which are above it is because we are in sore need of them, are really hungering and thirsting after righteousness; the wells of fleshly righteousness have gone dry; the poor and needy are seeking living waters, and there are none. The Lord hears them, knows the desires of the heart. "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." The soul mounts upward, and the poor in spirit see God. They love God because he first loved them and gave himself for them. Christ said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit." There is a divine impulse, a desire and wish of all God's children who are risen with Christ in the regeneration, to have their affections set on things heavenly and divine; there is a moving of the inner man both to will and to do of the pleasure of the Lord, but often the deceitful lusts of the flesh are in the way. The carnal mind, ever at variance with the Spirit, brings its train of evil and corrupt things, which war against the law of our mind, and this brings us into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members. Our chief joy, and hope, and comfort, therefore, are in the things that make for peace.

"Where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." In that blissful place there are pleasures for evermore; there is no solid, lasting joy anywhere else. To know that we have an advocate with the Father in the person of the loving Savior, seated at the right hand of God, making intercession for us, is better than all the riches of the world. When assured of this the joy of the saint knows no bounds; and while they only see in part and know in part, as they journey through this storm-stricken vale, yet they know full well

that the blessed Master will in his own good time call them home, that where he is they may be also. Then, too, they shall see him as he is, and be like him. The warfare will then have ended forever; then a song of complete triumph will be rendered unto the Lord before the heavenly sanctuary in Jerusalem, which is above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.

JOHN G. SAWIN.

MATTOON, Ill.

JOHN XVI. 33.

"THESE things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation."

What a contrast between what we must have in the world and what we have in Christ. How completely a power not under our control can shut out the world, or shut us in, so that we rest in peace; and this peace is always more or less a wonder to us; because the things that a moment before were troubling us may still be the same. Although our environment has not changed, yet in spite of all hinderance we have peace. Earthly joys do not bring it, nor can any of the tribulations of the world keep us from that peace which passeth understanding, and O how sweet it is. Sometimes we feel that we know what it is, then again it seems too much for a sinner to claim.

Once a man on an electric car in a large city was rejoicing in his heart, and could but marvel at it, he felt so separate from the things about him; the "sky-scrapers" darkened the street, there was the roar of the great city, the clatter and grind of wagons, and shouting men, the sidewalks were full of people who were rushing like the last car of prosperity was about to leave them to starvation and ruin, the officer with his club was for moving some on and keeping others from rushing to death under the wheels of a car, amidst all this, and the clang! clang! clang! of various gongs, the man on this car was in peace, and his heart was humming a song of praise to his Maker; for the time he was in the world, and yet not of the world. This same man to-day after having passed through some sore trials was again resting; half consciously he heard the talk of busy men, and others not busy, and the low regular call of check, check, check, from the book-keeper's desk, the click, clack, click of the type-writer, while in his heart he was hearing the words: In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me peace; and he was at peace.

It does seem too much to believe that God would be mindful of a little, insignificant looking sinner, who seems to have made a failure of everything, but is it not written that, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him"? At any rate, notwithstanding his feeling sense of unworthiness, this man had reached a place of peace, where all the philosophy of the world could not come; a haven of rest that no one can enter of his own accord; a refuge where God shuts the gates in the face of our foes. Though sometimes it seems as if our bed is made in deepest hell, (torment) and its gates shut out the remembrance of peace, yet in God's good time we find that even the gates of hell cannot prevail against him, for he breaks the bars asunder, and we know the sweetness of his presence.

Looking at the past and present we think we know what tribulation is, our afflictions have been so heavy, so varied, and our sorrows so bitter, that we cannot often talk about them. We know what it is to suffer alone, but if we could know

that this is what Christ meant when he said, "In the world ye shall [not may] have tribulation," I think we could glory in it, seeing that "tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts." If we could know that ours is the tribulation Christ said ye (his disciples) shall have, we could be sure of that final place of peace, and know that he overcame the world for us; but that would do away with hope which brings the peace.

If I have written too much about my trials, it is because I wanted to tell you, my brethren, something of what I hope the Lord has done for me. If I ever tell even a little part of it, it must be when, like to-night, I am resting in peace. When he has made the darkness light, and has cast something into a bitter life and made it sweet; when there was nothing but death in the pot, and he has put in something so that we eat and drink without fear; when there was no way open and he has said, Go forward; when he has given strength to bear a burden that we could not touch; when he has done all these things, and more, we know something of his blessed peace, and the sufficiency of his grace.

Peace to the household of faith.

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.

LAWRENCEBURG, Ky:, Feb. 17, 1905.

PHILADELPHIA Pa., Feb. 19, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS, AND BRETHREN:—Some time ago brother Everett R. Kinney, of Glens Falls, N. Y., wrote requesting my views on Hebrews ix. 28, as submitted by me to the church of Albany and Troy, Sunday morning, November 27th, 1904, at the Red Men's Hall in Troy, N. Y. This is not by any means an easy thing to do, and I have been trying my very best to forget his request, not because I wished to ignore it altogether, but the task is entirely too big a one for me to handle as it deserves. One thing I cannot do, and I may as well confess it at the start, I cannot reproduce here the sermon of that Sunday morning in November in Troy to the very attentive brethren gathered there; I will not attempt such an impossibility. The best that I can do is to state here my present view of this subject, nor am I aware that this has in any way changed since the time referred to. Much controversy has occupied the mind of many able men, both in and out of the gospel, as to the second coming of Christ: what it is, how it is, and when it is. Truth can alone hush babbling tongues and soothe us with the assurance of what it really is. The words in Hebrews ix. 28, are these: "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." If I want to know the real truth about this matter, I would rely upon the testimony of those who have thus looked for Christ, and unto whom he has appeared unto salvation; these could certainly tell me about it; none others possibly could. To be more definite, I would go to those who have experienced these things; experience is the only key to the understanding of divine things. The natural mind cannot help us any, it is enmity against God. Sin to be understood, must be experienced; salvation to be understood, must be experienced; the second coming of Christ to be understood, must be experienced. Is this last a matter of present experience with the saints? Undoubtedly, yes, and just as certainly, no. I will endeavor to explain what I mean

before I am through.

This ninth chapter of Hebrews, as well as the entire letter, is a connected whole, and to be rightly understood must be so handled. The apostle uses the things of the Old Testament to illustrate the things of the New, he shows here the Old Testament was dedicated with blood, likewise the New; he brings to our mind this truth, that "a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." A man may make his will leaving all his possessions to his heirs and discriminating among them as he chooses, but as long as the man lives, his will thus written is only so much paper, no more. In order for the conditions in the written document to be fulfilled, the man must die; by his death the paper becomes a thing of power, it maketh rich or poor, according to its contents. In order for the will of God to be made known unto his heirs, Immanuel (God with us) must die. As Moses dedicated the law with the blood of calves, and goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, so did God dedicate unto his children the gospel in the blood of his only begotten Son. Every heir of God is judged in this New Testament just as in a man-made testament, or will, the father judges each of his heirs. Not until the father dies, can the children know how the father has judged them. His death however looses the seal, the will is opened, unto all the heirs it becomes known what the father has apportioned unto each.

"As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Some have thought this to refer to a final day of judgment some time in the future, when the world shall come to an end. To read such a meaning in these words would be to disconnect it entirely from the theme which the apostle is here considering. "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return," is a decree of God, and concerns all men. After the fulfillment of this decree, then comes the judgment. What judgment? That which is in their wills concerning their heirs, or whoever is interested therein. As I have before said, after a man dies, and not till then, his will is opened and the judgment which he has written there is made known.

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." As all men die in obedience to the decree of God, so Christ also died. Why? That the new covenant which was in him from the Father, might be made known unto all the heirs. There are many things in this New Testament of our God made forcible in the death of the man Christ Jesus.

"It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." What more do we want? Having, therefore, shed his precious blood that the will of God might be secured unto all the children, he will appear the second time unto them that look for him, without sin unto salvation. His first appearance was with sin, his second, without sin. "He hath made him to be sin for us." "God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." This first appearance of Christ as being made sin for us, considered as a separate and distinct event in time, occurred during all the time of his sojourn here as a man. Considered experimentally, his first appearance is in the law, as it is consciously applied unto every quickened sinner and causes him to know his errors, his wickedness, his condemnation. This first appearance of Jesus is always one of condemnation. The second appearance of Jesus is unto salvation, apart

from sin. The experience of this is one of love and joy and the losing sight of one's iniquities for the time being. "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." Experiencing this, is to know Jesus at his second coming. When speaking unto his disciples of his approaching death, he promised them the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, which should be their guide, teacher and reminder. If this is not the second coming of Christ, then I do not know what is. It certainly is the messenger of the new covenant which comes unto every heir of God wherever he is and in whatever condition he may be, searching him out, bearing witness with his spirit that he is a child of God, that he is interested in the will of his heavenly Father, and apprising him of what is his Father's will concerning him. It makes known unto us the judgment of God concerning us, and we do not have to die the death of the body in order to find it out, but Christ died this death in order that we should find it out; these blessings are hinged upon his death, not ours. This coming of the Holy Ghost unto us as a Comforter, Instructor, Guide, &c., is unto every one that looks for him. With what eyes do they look? With the eyes of faith, of course. They hunger and thirst for righteousness, looking for a new heaven and a new earth, weary of sin, they long to be delivered from it; unto such comes the Holy Ghost without sin unto salvation, apprising them of their purity before God, of their eternal blessings in Christ. You see how, therefore, this second coming of Christ is a matter of present experience, and yet it is not. What I have said above, presents it as a matter of every day life with the children of God who dwell in the fullness of the gospel. We do not yet know what it is to conquer the grave, to triumph over death, but, by the grace of God, we will some day know this, each for ourselves, and then will we also know the fullness of Christ's second coming, which is unto salvation.

Now I have told you all I know about it.

Yours to serve in the gospel,

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

LOVELAND, Colo., Jan., 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I am just recovering from a spell of sickness, and am feeling quite poorly in body, but have a mind to write a few things for the consideration of the household of faith, if you consider them worthy of space in the SIGNS.

I have before me the proceedings of the second "National Meeting of the Primitive Baptists," held in St. Louis, Mo., October 24th–29th, 1904. I have carefully, and I trust, prayerfully, read and reread it, and I must say I think that I see in it a twin sister to that illegitimate child Missionaryism, which made its appearance in 1810, and which lived but a few years among God-fearing and God-honoring brethren; this one may live as long or longer, the Lord only knows.

This "peace convention," as some call it, appears to me to be more dangerous to the prosperity, peace and harmony that ought to exist within the borders of Zion than Missionaryism ever was. How strange it does seem to me that the old fathers in Israel, who have now gone to their reward, and who labored in the word and doctrine of Jesus, the only Savior of poor, helpless sinners, never made the discovery that this St. Louis meeting has done, that is,

that the disciples of Jesus were an organized body as a church, while yet Jesus lived with them on earth. Suppose we should admit that they were, we shall also have to admit that there was a devil among them, for the Savior said, "Ye are not all clean." Has this St. Louis meeting promised us anything better? They deplore the strife and division among the churches in the country, and as the first step toward peace and unity, they propose to establish one big, grand, national publishing-house, and to wipe out of existence all our Baptist periodicals at one stroke. This national publishing-house, it is true, is to be under the immediate supervision of the churches.

Now they have established, as they think, the fact that the apostles were an organized body, and that the commision, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," was not fulfilled in the apostles' day, but is resting upon the churches to-day. But let me call attention to the apostle Paul's admonition at Miletus, when he had called the elders of the church together, he said, Acts xx., "Take heed therefore [that is, for the reasons before given] unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Then he gives as a reason for this solemn charge the following, "For I know this, that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."

Now it does seem to me that if the commission was not fulfilled in the apostles' day, it would have been a fitting time for Paul to so have charged the elders when he called them together. If the minds of the people can be bewildered so as to admit of the establishing of one grand national publishing-house, though it be under the supervision of the churches, we cannot tell what the end will be. The prophet Isaiah has said, "The leaders of this people cause them to err." Somebody had to be a leader of this St. Louis meeting, and there will, no doubt, be many to seek to be leaders of this peace movement as long as it lives.

I doubt not that I shall be severely censured for writing the foregoing, for I am asked in the introductory of the record of the proceedings of this St. Louis meeting, to not make public my objections to the unanimous opinions of the meeting. Upon one occasion Jesus said, "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."

There is one other thing that I wish to notice in the proceedings had there. It is said that the discussion of the subject of the distracted condition of our cause in some places was conducted on the lines of inquiry and investigation of the apostolic understanding and practice as it would relate to our present situation, and as to how we could the most speedily and yet judicially return to God's ways. Here I want to ask, Is it possible that the Lord has left himself without a witness? If so, the situation is deplorable indeed.

But I must desist from writing further, as my physical condition will not admit of it. Believing that God is able, and that he will uphold his eternal truth in

opposition to all error and every false doctrine, I am yours in hope,

J. H. YEOMAN.

(See editorial reply on page 216.)

CARMEN, Okla., Jan. 8, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—I herewith send you a copy of a letter written to me by a dear young sister, giving a sketch of her experience, and if you see proper I would like to see it published in the SIGNS. I have not her consent, but feel certain that she will not object if you think it worthy of a place in our family paper. Our sister, Cora Hodges, is scarcely seventeen years of age, but I was agreeably surprised, when on a visit at her father's home, about a month ago, to find her so firm and well established in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, and of the sovereign power of God, being so young in the cause of Christ.

There are in the vicinity where this sister lives about eight dear brethren and sisters, and it is only occasionally that they have any preaching at all. This is in the south-western part of Comanche County, Okla., about two hundred miles from where I live. I paid them a visit on the second Sunday in December last, and preached three times while there. I truly enjoyed my visit among them, and found them sound in doctrine. They are anxious to be organized in church capacity, and the only obstacle that seems to be in the way is to get a preacher to serve them regularly. There is a prospect of other brethren locating there. If any of our preaching brethren think of going to that country, they will be gladly welcomed, especially so if they can indorse and preach the doctrine as advocated through the SIGNS. Those desiring information, write to brother W. H. Vancleave, Frederick, Okla.; he lives four miles west of Frederick.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

J. F. BEEMAN.

DAVIDSON, Okla., Dec. 28, 1904.

ELDER J. F. BEEMAN—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE:—I will try to write you a few lines in answer to your kind and welcome card of the 13th; I was glad to hear from you. You asked me to write my experience, I will try to do so, but it seems that a dark cloud has been drawn over my mind of late. I have been studying about earthly things so much that it seems I have no spiritual thoughts at all.

In 1903 I began to study about my lost condition; I felt that I was lost and condemned; I would try to pray, read the Bible, and go to all kinds of preaching, but nothing seemed to do me any good, I grew from bad to worse. It seemed that all I did was wicked. I would try to live better, for I thought by so doing I could be saved, but the more I tried to do better the worse I got. In July last, the Missionary Baptists held a meeting on father's farm, and I attended. They would try to get me to go to the mourner's bench, but I did not believe that was right, so I would not go there. On the 23rd, while they were praying (or so they called it,) I began to cry, for I could not keep from weeping any longer, and after they ceased praying they all gathered around me, and told me that all I had to do was to say, "Here, Lord, am I, take me just as I am," and I would be saved, but all I could say was, O God, save me, I am dying. I went home that day with the intention never to pray again, for I felt the great omnipotent God could not have mercy on such a vile, wicked wretch as I. I felt that I was

dying unsaved, and also felt that my condemnation was just. I lay down on the bed and dropped off into a stupor, from which I was awakened by my mother calling me to dinner; it seemed then that my burden was gone, that God had pardoned my sins. I wanted to tell mother, but feared that I was mistaken and had been deceived, but the impression that God had forgiven my sins grew stronger every moment, and that night at preaching, when the preacher said for all those that had received a hope during the day to rise to their feet, I did so. O how happy and joyful I felt! Then I wanted to be baptized, but I did not want the Missionaries to do that, for they did not quite suit me, so I did not join them. On the 30th, brother Riggs came from Altus, Okla., and preached near us, so we all went and heard him. I thought it was the best preaching I had ever heard. Those two sermons he preached for us that time showed me how shallow all Missionary preaching is. On September 18th, father, mother and I went over to Wilbarger County, Texas, to preaching at Cresant Cove, there I was received into the church, and was baptized that evening by brother J. A. Campbell. O, joyful moment, when I arose from the watery grave, as I hope, with my dear Redeemer; it was the happiest moment I ever knew. O what a joy it was to clasp the hands of the dear children of God, and feel welcome in their midst. But I feel so unworthy to be among them, I sometimes fear that I am deceiving the dear children of God, and that I have no part nor lot with them; but when I am permitted to meet with them and hear them speak of his mercy and love to usward, I feel so rejoiced that I sometimes feel like shouting aloud, Great and mysterious are thy ways, Lord and Master. Sometimes it seems to me that I am for a few minutes permitted to look, as it were, through a veil, upon the glorious countenance of the great eternal God. But it is only a few moments till I have drifted again into the dark valley of sin and wickedness. Some say, "It is by our works that we are saved," but if it is not by free grace, then I am lost; for if in my works is all the hope of heaven I have, then there is no heaven for me.

Hoping to hear from you all soon, I remain your unworthy sister if one at all,

CORA HODGES.

SABINAL, Texas, Feb. 24, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—By your permission I wish to say a few words through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I am spending the winter here, for my health, in southern Texas, near the Rio Grande River, that noted demarkation line between Texas and old Mexico. The climate is so mild that vegetation grows here even during the winter season. This makes it pleasant and congenial to our natural desires. We have the inhalations from the gulf breezes, which are very bracing to weak lungs, affording strength and vigor to those whose health is much impaired. I shall perhaps remain here until about the first of May. By that time Fort Worth, Texas, will be in full bloom, sending forth the rich fragrance of garden, field and grove; these things temporally are very animating to our natures. But O how far beyond all earthly adornments are the assurances and sweet influences of the Spirit of God, which bloom forever. They bloom in the hearts of his redeemed family, who are deeply rooted and grounded in the love of God and in the faith of Christ, who is the Head of all

principalities and powers, the foundation of our hope, the author of eternal salvation, and of a finished righteousness through his death and glorious resurrection.

During last year the dear Lord favored me with many precious seasons of comfort and encouragement while I was among the churches of Pilgrim's Rest, Big Creek, Trinity River, and Peace Valley associations. All of these are well established in the Old School Baptist doctrine, and mutually correspond; they are of the same mind and the same judgment. Many of these brethren are subscribers of the SIGNS, and love the declaration of principles therein contained. But notwithstanding the union and firmness of these associations, it seems that with the sweet we must also have the bitter, for they are confronted with much opposition, and are slandered, slurred and misrepresented by false brethren; but I believe that there is a remnant here in Texas who will never bow to the image of Baal.

Now, dear Elder Chick, I have thought for several years that it would have been better, in all probability, for the Old School Baptists of America, had there been but one religious periodical among us; but perhaps in this I am too selfish, for my predilections have all my life been toward the dear old SIGNS, and I have felt that we needed no other medium of correspondence. I love its supporters, and my fellowship is particularly drawn toward them. The name Beebe will be near and dear to me as long as the mind and memory hold their place. The same is true toward all the dear brethren of the east whose names are familiar to me, and have been for nearly forty years.

Therefore, brother Chick, I pray God's special blessing upon you, to be your guide and wisdom in conducting the publication of the one true, old, predestinarian paper. I heartily indorse your remarks in the introductory of the present volume; O that we may strictly heed the advice and good graces of that editorial, and observe the New Testament by following Christ. I remember Elder Ker in connection with yourself, in all the arduous labors and responsibilities of your position. Only the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is sufficient to sustain you, and to clothe you with holy boldness in defence of the truth.

I hope that you will have room to insert this in the SIGNS, that the brethren may know my whereabouts, and that all that can will write to me while I am here in this lone, distant region, among strange faces of a motley crew, and so remote from all the churches; it would be so cheering to me in this isolated condition.

I will now close with the words of Paul to the church, "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

Yours to serve in the gospel of the Son of God,

ASA HOWARD.

ELGIN, Oregon, Jan. 18, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I have always believed that it would be in harmony with the teachings of Christ and the apostles, and with their practice, for a minister who should be traveling and preaching where there was no church organization, should he meet with any who could give a reason of their hope in Christ, and who desired to be baptized, that that minister should baptize them. And should a minister re-

ceive a letter from those who live far from any church, who desire him to visit them and preach for them, and such ones wish to be baptized, and he deems them worthy, it would be right for him to baptize them. Now am I right in my view? Again, would it be in harmony with the teaching of the Scriptures and the practice of the apostles, and of those who labored with them, for a minister who in his travels should find persons so situated, and who desire to be baptized, to advise them to wait until they could go before the church; and if there was no opportunity for them to do that, then the ordinance was not required of them, as the ordinance belonged to the church, and could not be performed outside of a church organization?

Again, would the baptism performed under the condition which I have named, by a minister where there is no church, be valid, or would such persons, should opportunity be given afterward to unite with some church, be required to be rebaptized?

Now, brother Chick, I would be glad to have your views upon these questions, for if I am wrong in my position I want to know it. There are others who would like to see your views on this subject. In this country churches are few and far apart, and ministers often find one here and there, far from any church organization, who knows and loves the truth; and sometimes our ministers receive letters from such isolated ones, desiring that they visit them and baptize them. Now, I am anxious to know whether it would be good order, or not, to do so.

Please publish what I have written, and reply if you think it best.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

(Editorial reply on page 218.)

JUSTUS, Pa., Jan. 30, 1905.

EDITOR OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BROTHER:—With sister Joie E. Wickham's consent I send you a copy of one of her letters. It has been of real comfort to me. If you think it would be of interest to the readers of the SIGNS, please publish.

Your unworthy brother,

GEORGE GOODRICH.

CARDINGTON, Ohio, Aug. 7, 1903.

MR. GEORGE GOODRICH—MY DEAR BROTHER IN TRIBULATION:—Hoping against hope, and waiting for that which I see not, being troubled upon every side, groaning under a weight of doubt and sin and unbelief, walking in darkness as I have for some time past, so dark the way has been I have been sorely tempted to deny the existence of God, and say that the faith of all God's elect is a delusion. It was some comfort to me to read your letter in the SIGNS which came to-day. I feel constrained to tell you that way over here in Ohio there is a poor, tempest-tossed one who can sympathize with you in your trials. There are times when I am greatly tempted as you describe, and yet, dear brother, we know in whom we have believed. That saying of Jesus to Peter, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not," is at times a comfort to me. In the beginning of my travels (if I have any) that passage, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you," was often impressed upon me so forcibly, that it frightened me at times, and my trials have been many and severe, not only the corruption of my heart, but have had natural trials in worldly matters, and we are in perilous times now in church matters, having our love and confidence shaken, being wounded by famil-

iar friends, but if I have ever been given to taste of the goodness of God, he is able to sustain me. Though flesh is weak, I would say, "Through floods and flames, if Jesus leads, I'll follow." I cannot of myself follow him one step, but desire grace to do his will and to suffer for his name's sake, Pray for me, I have learned by bitter experience how vain and worse than useless are all creature efforts; Jesus must be all my salvation, if I have any.

I was tempted to lay down my pen after sitting down to write, feeling that I could not comfort you, or write to satisfy myself. I feel too low down to be of any good to any.

I have long been wishing that I might visit the eastern associations, but God only knows whether I shall be blessed to do so.

I fear that I am very presumptuous in writing to you, although your letter might be taken as an invitation for any to write if tempted with like sin of unbelief; I fear that it were better to have let others write, but if this letter is no comfort just burn it, and forgive the writer.

Yours in affliction,

JOIE E. WICKHAM.

BOGART, Ga., Jan. 1, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I feel impressed to pen you a few lines for your disposal, and I know that except the Lord direct my pen I cannot interest you nor any of the household of faith. In looking over some old numbers of the SIGNS to-day, I became much interested in an article in the number for November 1st, 1903, under the heading "Influence," which has given me much thought. I know now that I am influenced by one of two spirits to write this to you, either good or bad. But this I cannot decide for myself, I will leave you to judge from what I write. My experience is that when I would do good, evil is present with me.

I remember that the Lord hath said, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Then, O my soul, how I ought to tremble at the thought of trying to pen my thoughts to any of his dear children. Yet, dear Elder, I feel that I want to tell you how I do at times enjoy your editorials, and many of the letters of correspondence through which I find so much comfort; though the writers are perfect strangers in the flesh, I hope not in the Spirit. When my poor heart yearns after their fellowship and love, I take courage and hope is renewed. Then, dear brethren and sisters, continue to write as the dear Lord may direct you, to the edification of his saints. I feel assured that nothing hurtful to the household of faith will be allowed in the columns of the SIGNS under the present watchcare of Elder F. A. Chick, who is a servant of our dear Lord.

I find that I have not written as I thought to do in the outset. I think I have learned of a truth that the Lord can shut and none can open, and he can open, and none can shut. I hope I do feel thankful to our gracious Lord for the gift of his dear servants who so ably set forth the God-honoring and soul-comforting doctrine of predestination, and salvation by grace, for time and for eternity.

I subscribe myself a poor sinner, saved by grace both in time and for eternity, if saved at all,

W. J. BOLTON.

MARCH 10, 1860.

MY DEAR DAUGHTER:—It is not best to get too worldly, it is not right to pay too much attention to this short life; I hope you will remember this, and may the Lord bless and keep you and manifest you a branch of the true vine. I know God's power and grace is sufficient to accomplish this, and to him I commend you with all that is near and dear, and to the word of his grace to sanctify and bless you and give you an inheritance among all his sanctified children. But while I am writing to you the question arises, What do I know about the grace of God? and it is with fear and trembling that I look back over my unprofitable life: can it be possible I know anything about the change of heart? But this I know, I have never seen an end of God's goodness and mercy to us, and if I have any hope it is in him, and this I can say of a truth, If saved at last, there will be one more sinner saved by grace. I suppose the world judges me harshly, but it is a comfort to know while the world looketh on the outward appearance, God looketh on the heart, and to him I commit my cause, who has said, "My grace is sufficient for thee." I have his word to direct me, and that tells me, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," and, "Where I am, there ye may be also."

Fannie, I suppose this is not a very interesting subject to you, but it is to me, and one I love to dwell upon whether I know anything about it or not.

I went to Jane Masterson's funeral, and the sermon I listened to I cannot tell you anything about, but this I know, that discourse fell on my poor, hungry soul, like the rain and the dew on the dry and parched ground: I hope it was a season not lost, but I am slow to learn and slow to believe.

I have written more than you will have patience to read, when I sat down I thought only to write a few lines.

Your mother,

K. B. STUBBS.

[THE above letter Mrs. Axford received from her mother in her early married life, and she felt there were a number who would read it with much interest.—ED.]

ASHLAND, Ill., Jan. 17, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—Another year has passed and has brought many changes. When writing my last letter to brother Beebe, I thought if he should be taken from us, the dear SIGNS might cease to come to us, and O I thought how much we would miss them. I wrote my dear brother I did hope that God in his tender mercy would spare him to us for many years, but God knows best, he took him to himself before another paper came to brighten our home. But is not our heavenly Father better to us than all our fears? Our precious paper has come to us just the same, and how my heart goes out in love to you all in your labor in the publication of the SIGNS. I often wish I could find words to express how much I appreciate our family paper, it is very near and precious to me; it is next to the precious Bible. O so often have I hoped God would comfort and bless you, and the dear ones who are helping you to keep our dear paper as it always has been, a blessing to all who love the truth, when we so often feel cast down and are made to say, "Is there any one like me?" But when we read in the SIGNS the same testimony, O does not our heart burn within us? Yet the love of God is past understanding, he gives us so many blessings. A spirit to understand his word is one of the sweetest blessings given.

For a few weeks past this Scripture has been so dear to me, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." "And his banner over me was love." To love God and his people, O is not that a sweet peace of mind which the world cannot give?

Dear sisters and brethren who write for the SIGNS, may God bless you all with his richest blessing, is the sincere prayer of your little sister,

ELLA M. PARROTT.

THAMESVILLE, Ont., Jan. 16, 1905.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—Inclosed find order for two dollars for SIGNS for this year, if I did not receive it I would miss it so much: it has been only a few years since I knew there was such a paper; brother John Duffus loaned me some, and as I read them I thought I had never seen such words; they told my travels in darkness and hope better than I could tell them; so I hope the writers will write on. I might say it comes laden with the rich fruit of Canaan, and as I partake thereof I feel to say as one of old, He brought me to the banqueting-house, and his banner over me is love, and then again I feel that this life is a continual warfare. I used to think that when I got old the warfare would be all gone, but to my sad disappointment I find sin is mixed with all I do, and I hate the life I now live in the flesh, and if I have a hope at all it is in the free mercy of God; in no works of my own. I might say I have heard but one Old School Baptist preach, and then only one sermon.

Excuse my boldness in writing you, but I seem acquainted with you through your writings.

I remain, yours in hope,

JOHN CUDMORE.

STONY CREEK, Conn., Feb. 4, 1905.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—Many times have I read dear Elder Bartley's communication in the January 15th issue of the SIGNS, recalling and renewing so much of my early experience, when I was called to find a home among the dear, chosen people of God, over forty years ago. Having to dwell alone all these years, with no spiritual kindred or preaching near, with many doubts, trials and tribulations, lest after all I had "grasped the shadow and missed the substance," growing worse rather than better, yet finding through our faithful messenger, the SIGNS, that I was not alone in these things, have taken courage, and sometimes found myself rejoicing in a hope that maketh not ashamed, for I trust it was no longer I, but Christ in me the hope of glory, which is dearer than all else beside, and I do feel to praise his most holy name. Had I the pen of a ready writer I would love to dwell more upon the preciousness of these things. Write on, dear brethren and sisters, as you have liberty.

Yours in a precious hope,

(MRS.) SARAH J. CLARK.

PLEASE BE SURE,

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1905.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REPLY TO BROTHER YEOMAN.

(See communication on page 207.)

WE are glad to find that brother Yeoman stands firmly by the old ways and the old faith. We have no wish to judge the motives of any man, and neither do we seek to judge those who attended and took part in the St. Louis convention, so-called, but we all must judge concerning the works of men, and are bound to reject all that we find to be unscriptural. We have no desire to say much through the SIGNS concerning the recommendations of that meeting, and do not wish to have our columns filled with writing upon that subject, but think it is our duty to let it be understood once for all that we do not approve of the recommendations of that meeting, and believe them to be altogether contrary to the teaching of the Scriptures, and subversive of the old established order of Baptist churches everywhere.

In the SIGNS for January 1st, we gave some expression to our views upon the notion of a federal government for the churches, as it has been called, and will only add to those remarks the one thought that there will be found no stopping-place, if we forsake the present scriptural order of discipline in the churches, short of an entirely centralized government, as is the Presbyterian, the Episcopalian, and still further, the Romish sects. Then what would become of the Master's word to call no man Master? How natural it is to want to sit in the highest seats, and yet he who desires such a thing is not fit for it. As regards the call of the church to preach the gospel, rather than the disciples individually, we know that it has always been the special claim of Old School Baptists that they believed in a personal call to individuals from God, and by his Spirit directly made to their souls, to the ministry of the word. The churches only recognize what the Lord has wrought in any one of her members, when he has thus called that one.

There were many other disciples of Jesus beside the eleven when he gave to the eleven the commission, as it is called, to go everywhere preaching the gospel. It is not anywhere written that any of these other disciples were included in that commission at that time. Further than this, the first gospel church was organized as a church upon the day of Pentecost, and not until then. In the second chapter of Acts we have the pattern of all gospel churches given us in the organization of that first church. Therefore the commission must have been given to the disciples as the apostles of the Lamb, and not as an organized church. It is not recorded that the eleven ever were united as a gospel church. Indeed, they could not have belonged to the same one local church, because the field of their labors was very far divided, and it is not likely that after the persecution arose at Jerusalem, which scattered them abroad, they ever all met in one assembly again. Still further, there is no record that any church anywhere in the New Testament times took it upon herself to send men abroad as though they were under her

authority in this matter. Churches indeed aided those called to this work, but it was the call of the Spirit that sent men, individuals, to preach here and there. Thus Paul in a vision saw a man of Macedonia who said, "Come over into Macedonia, and help us." And the Spirit said to Philip, Join thyself to the chariot of the eunuch. This was the order then, and it ought to be the order now.

So far from getting rid of troubles by consolidating all our publications under one control, we should be guilty of the folly of centralizing power in the hands of two or three, or perhaps a dozen, men. As long as our fallen nature is as it is, power will be dear to men, and the temptation to use it in oppression of others will be strong; and beside, what man or what number of men are wise enough to judge what is best for the churches all over the country? We cannot believe that these three notions will spread among careful thinking brethren. Evils no doubt exist, and it is painful to all that love the peace and prosperity of Zion that it is so, but it was so in the apostles' day, and to a far greater extent than is the case now, yet the apostles evidently did not think that the churches banded together under a federal government would be more likely to keep clear of disorders than if they remained independent of each other, and only dependent upon the guidance of the holy Spirit. At least the churches were never told to send delegates to some one place to consider all the evils in faith and in practice that existed in the different places. Let us depend upon God rather than upon conventions or councils. The longer we live the more we are convinced that calling in others seldom helps to a better feeling where strife exists. One thing is needful in all cases of difficulty, and that is a patient, humble, prayerful waiting upon God, with anxiety to be still and hear his still small voice making known his will. The best way to strive for the things which make for peace, and whereby we may edify one another, is to confess the truth and steadfastly walk in the truth. Saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace, will not produce peace. Rather preach Christ, and hold him forth as our all and in all, and those in whose hearts the Son of peace dwells will be drawn to that one who thus preaches, and to all others who are drawn in the same way.

We will add that we did not learn that the St. Louis meeting adopted any resolutions by formal vote, but that all who attended seemed of one mind. We were surprised at this. It seemed most strange that among the many ministers who were at that convention, not one was found to speak up in opposition to the new things advanced there, or in defense of the old ways. We were surprised, and still more saddened that this was so, and have been made glad to find, since that meeting, that almost universally there has come from all over the land protests against the recommendations made there. We trust that those who were there, and united in the recommendations made there, will hear and heed. We are not fond of debate, strife or division, and all such things cause us sorrow of heart, but we do hope that we love the old ways and the old truths more than all else, yea, more than even peace itself.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904, &c.

REPLY TO BROTHER MAYFIELD.

(See communication on page 211.)

As we grow older, we come to realize more and more the need of carefulness in responding to requests for our views upon the order that ought to prevail among the churches; it is so easy to say too much or too little.

Speaking generally, our understanding of the matter is in harmony with that of our brother. We believe that a minister under the circumstances named has a right, and that it is his duty also to baptize such as give evidence that they know the Lord, when they come to him desiring it under the circumstances named. If he meets them in his traveling and preaching, or if he receives a letter from some one to the same effect, in either case it is his right and duty to respond. It would not be right to say to them that they should wait until they could come into the bounds of some organized church, when no prospect of such a thing was in sight, and neither is it true that the Lord does not require this at their hands, unless there should be some church organization to receive them. Still further, such an one when coming to live in the bounds of some church should not be required to be baptized again.

Having said this much, we desire to add some reflections to the above, in the way of caution. First, it is to be supposed that when a church has called for the ordination of a man to the work of the ministry, and when that church bids him Godspeed, as he goes about his labors in that ministry, she has confidence in his experience, in his call to the work, and in his judgment to act wisely, to some extent at least. If such a minister goes about his Master's business it will be with humility, carefulness and an anxious desire to honor God, and for the good of the cause. It is not likely that such a man (and none others ought to be set apart to this work) will be found admitting to the ordinance of baptism any who would not also be acceptable to the church. We know members in the churches whose judgment we would be willing to abide by in all such cases, and the churches everywhere no doubt feel willing to abide by the judgment of their pastors, if indeed their pastors are truly pastors.

But on the other hand, it should be borne in mind that ministers thus alone, and thrown on their own responsibility in such a case, should be exceeding careful, and be fully satisfied that the candidate is a fit subject for the ordinance, and that he or she would be likely to prove a faithful member of some church, if that should ever be their privilege. We think that when it is possible, in all such cases, some of the members of some church should accompany the minister and hear the testimony of the candidate. It seems to us that in this no hard and fast rule can be laid down, however, each one ought to move forward carefully, and in the fear of God. We have known instances in this part of the land where the churches have appointed some one or more of their members to accompany the minister and act for the church in hearing the confession of the candidate, and if satisfied, they were authorized to receive the candidate in behalf of the church; and when they reported the baptism of such distant ones to the church, the church at once had their names entered upon the church book as members with them. In the circumstances named by brother Mayfield, it is our judgment that the minister should give a statement in writing to the candidate, telling the circumstances under which the baptism

was performed, so that the candidate might be received anywhere among the churches, if in Providence it was his privilege to visit them afterward. We also think that the minister ought to report what he had done, to his own church, and that his church could cause the name of the person baptized to be entered upon their church book as a member with them; we could see nothing out of order in such a course. In such a case the one thus baptized would be assured of having a home, and of being held in remembrance by brethren where his name might be.

So far as the teaching of the Scriptures of the New Testament are concerned, (and to this we must all be subject) we do not recall any instance where any person is recorded as having narrated an experience to the church before baptism was administered, and we do have instances recorded where evangelists baptized believers alone. Witness the instance of Philip and the eunuch. Confession of faith was made in all instances, but we do not in any instance read that it was done in a formal manner before the church. We do not mean by this to say that this is not now right and wise, and that it ought not to be continued. We do think that it is wise and conducive to good feeling and order, and to that oneness in fellowship, without which church membership is but a mockery and a mere form. They that gladly received the word were at the first baptized at Jerusalem, and all such have a right to baptism now.

We wish to also say that where those desiring baptism can possibly come to some church and there tell of the dealings of God with them, it is always best. It comforts the church to hear such testimony, and it will comfort the candidate to find that the Lord's dear children cordially receive him to their number. One who was received at one of the churches which we were serving many years ago, as the brethren and sisters came to her afterwards and gave her such cordial welcome, turned to ourself, as we were standing near at hand, and said, as though she could hardly believe it, "O how cordially they all receive me, don't they?" In all such cases pastors will desire that the church shall rejoice with them, and churches will rejoice also in the joy of the candidate, and in the gladness which is felt by their pastor. For these, and for other reasons, it seems to us best that candidates should come to some gospel church for the narration of experience, and for reception, when it is at all possible; but still, when not possible, we are in agreement with brother Mayfield.

INFORMATION WANTED.

If there are any readers of the Signs of the Times in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Thomas A. McKay, Central Fire Hall (Winnipeg), would like to hear from them.

APPOINTMENTS.

If the Lord will, I will attend appointments as follows: at Washington, D. C., Sunday night, April 9th; at Salt Lick, Bath Co., Ky., Monday night, April 10th; Mt. Sterling, Tuesday night; Little Flock, Wednesday, 2:30 p. m.; Salt River, Thursday, 11 o'clock a. m.; Lexington, 27 Walton St., Thursday night; Sadieville, Friday morning; Georgetown, Friday night; Winchester, Saturday night and Sunday night, April 15th and 16th; Mt. Carmel, Sunday morning; Mays Lick, Monday and Tuesday, April 17th and 18th; Mill Creek, Ohio, Thursday, April 20th.

SILAS H. DURAND.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at his residence, Hopewell, N. J., Wednesday p. m., March 15th, 1905, Harry J. Doyle, of Somerville, N. J., and Miss Margaret A. Kintner, of Hopewell, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Drusilla Wheeler died near Stevensville, Sullivan Co., N. Y., Feb. 21st, 1905, aged 94 years, 1 month and 22 days. She was born in Southeast, Putnam Co., N. Y., Dec. 30th, 1810. Her maiden name was Smith. She came with her mother, sister and brother to North Settlement, Sullivan Co., N. Y., in 1819; she taught school, beginning at the age of sixteen, until she was twenty, when she married Sylvester Wheeler, of Monticello, a widower with five children, three of whom are living. To this union were born ten children, three of them died in childhood and one son in the Civil war. After living in Monticello two years they moved to a farm near Stevensville, where he died; she continued on the homestead with her youngest son, James S., until her death; she lived seventy-two years on the one farm. The following children survive her: Mrs. Wm. E. Smiley and Mrs. Gilbert Thompkins, of Newburg, N. Y., L. S. Wheeler, of Liberty, N. Y., James S. Wheeler and Mrs. James W. Edmonds, of Stevensville, N. Y., and Mrs. Mary E. Brome, of Butte, Montana. One step-sister, Mrs. C. S. Starr, of Monticello, N. Y., and one half-sister, Mrs. C. Wicks, of Detroit, Mich., are also left to mourn the great loss. Sister Wheeler experienced a hope in Christ when fifteen years old, but was not baptized until shortly after she was married; she and brother Wheeler were baptized together, we think by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. Sister Wheeler united with the Middletown & Wallkill Old School Baptist Church in 1882 on profession of faith, and to the end of her mortal life was a most faithful and devoted member in every sense of the word. Although she had to ride four miles by private conveyance and forty miles by rail, she continued to attend her meetings several times a year; her last visit to us was in September, 1904; she was then almost ninety-four years old. Such zeal and love for the gospel of Christ and the church of God are seldom found in those who have been long on the way. It can truly be said of her, she was a mother in Israel. She was held in the highest esteem by the church, and much respected by all who knew her.

The funeral was held at her late home, conducted by the writer, and was largely attended; text used, 2 Cor. v. 4, 5: "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit." Hymn 17 (Beebe's Collection) was read. We tried to speak to the family and friends of the wonderful works of God, who wrought all blessings both temporal and spiritual, and that wrought us also to enjoy and inherit them; thus is presented the full and perfect work of grace here and hereafter. May the Lord bless her family and the church of her membership with the spirit of humble submission to his holy will.

ALSO,

Drusilla Wicks, granddaughter of Sylvester Wheeler, born Feb. 8th, 1849, died August 14th, 1903. Although she never united with the church, her life was such as to convince her friends that she was a child of God. She was of a mild and even disposition. She is sincerely mourned by friends and neighbors.

ALSO,

Minta B. Finkle, wife of Bernard S. Finkle, departed this life at her home, 175 Chaspin St., Binghamton, N. Y., March 2nd, 1905, after a brief illness, aged 28 years. She was the daughter of sister S. W. Hoyt, of Highview, N. Y. Her father, Salmon W. Hoyt, one brother, Fred, and one sister, Hattie, preceded her to the grave. Her husband, her mother and the following brothers and sisters are left to mourn their sad loss: Zelotas and Delia, at home; Nettie, wife of Virgil Godfrey, and William J., of Highview; Salmon W., of Middletown; Carrie, wife of W. A. Horton, and Addie, wife of George Brown, of New York city.

Funeral services were held at her home in Binghamton March 3rd, conducted by her pastor, Mr. Phillips, of the New School Baptist Church. Her remains were brought to her mother's home in Highview Saturday. Sunday morning, March 5th, services were held in the New Vernon Old School Baptist meeting-house, conducted by the writer, of which church sister Hoyt has been a faithful member for years. The burial was in the New Vernon cemetery. The flowers were many and beautiful, which were tokens of esteem and friendship of many who prized her worth. She had all her life been a favorite; in her childhood she was loved by all her companions; as she grew to girlhood and womanhood her loving and kind disposition was more and more developed. She was a dutiful daughter, an affectionate sister, a faithful, devoted wife and a true friend; she leaves a host of friends. She had been married four years, and had just gotten settled in her new home only a few weeks before her death. She had much to live for, but was reconciled to the Lord's will concerning her. The morning before she died in the evening, she read Psalms xxxi. 15, 16: "My times are in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me. Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: save me for thy mercies' sake." These words were used as a text by the writer at her funeral.

May the grace of God sustain the husband and each member of the afflicted family in this dark hour of trial and grief.

H. C. KER.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

Mrs. Ola Simms, daughter of brother and sister L. E. Johnson, was born in Chambers Co., Ala., August 5th, 1866, and died at her home in Bowie Co., Texas, Feb. 14th, 1905. She was married to Mr. L. A. Simms about sixteen years ago, and with her husband moved to Texas, settled in Bowie Co., where they built them a beautiful home. They were devoted to each other. She was not a member of the church, though she had a sweet hope in Jesus. Her only excuse for not offering herself to the church was her extreme unfitness. She was afflicted for four years with stomach trouble; all was done for her that could be done, but she gradually grew worse; in all her affliction she endured with great patience, cheerful to the last hour of consciousness. She was attended the last two months of her life by her devoted mother, sister Johnson, of Alabama, who was untiring in her devotion. There was one thing that seemed to distress her mind, and that was her desire to be baptized, but in the last conversation we had she seemed satisfied in mind to some extent. I feel that I cannot say too much for her, as I have been intimately acquainted with her for thirteen years. I never knew a more humble, devoted, orderly christian in all my life, nor a more devoted wife or loving mother; she had but one child, a daughter thirteen years old. She realized that her little daughter needed a mother's care, and she desired to live for the sake of her husband and daughter, but felt the Lord would take care of them.

I was called to conduct the service on Monday, the 16th. We followed her remains to Prospect church cemetery, where a very large company of sorrowing relatives and friends awaited us, and after a brief discourse, in which I tried to speak to the comfort of the living, we laid her body in the tomb to await the redemption.

I will say in conclusion to the dear ones from whom she has been taken, Grieve not, she is at rest, gone from the evil to come. May you all be reconciled to the will of God. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

J. E. KNIGHTEN.

AGAIN it becomes my sad duty to send the death notice of another loved one. Just one short year since I sent the notice of my dear mother's death, and now it is our dear father. Thus one by one our loved ones are taken from us to that heavenly home where partings are no more, and from whence none ever return. **Edmund Waller Hartley** died Jan. 7th, 1905, at his home near Macleay, Oregon. He was born Feb. 6th, 1825, was therefore 79 years, 11 months and 1 day old. He married Ann Eliza Whitlow, Dec. 29th, 1847, who died Jan. 2nd, 1904, and whose obituary appeared in the SIGNS. To them were born twelve children, four sons and eight daughters; one son and two daughters preceded them to the world beyond. Father was born in Hardin Co., Ky., and with his parents, Elder Joseph and Polly (Singleton) Hartley, moved to Jefferson Co., Ill., in 1841, where he lived till the spring of 1865, when with his wife and family he crossed the plains to Oregon, arriving in the Willamette valley, in Marion Co., at his late home, in 1865, on October 17th. The journey consumed six months. He and his wife set about to make a home in this new country. He resided on the same farm till the day of his death, almost forty years. Father was well respected and esteemed by all who knew him. His health had been poor the past five years, owing to a severe spell of pneumonia, but his death was caused by a fall from a ladder on Sept. 27th, 1904; he was gathering apples. He suffered almost fifteen weeks in body and mind. During this time he was confined almost constantly to his bed; blood poison set in his head, and the last ten days he became partially paralyzed. He longed for the call of his heavenly Master, that death might put an end to his sufferings. About one month before he died he related his experience with much feeling and clearness, and expressed such a bright hope of a home beyond. He was ever a firm believer in God's predestination of all things. He often told us he was going to die soon, and for us to do the best we could when he was gone. How we miss him; vacant our hearts and home. Father did not unite with the church till late in life; in December, 1898, he offered himself to the Old School Baptist Church, related his experience and was received, but owing to sickness was not baptized till April, 1899. He always enjoyed their meetings and associations, and was a firm believer in their doctrine.

At Father's request the funeral services were conducted by Elder W. L. Matthews, at the home, and were attended by a large number of relatives and friends, after which his remains were laid to rest in the Macleay cemetery by those of his loving wife. Our dear father and mother are sweetly sleeping side by side. We feel that our home is broken forever; gone are the jewels that make a home. We know our loss is their eternal gain. There is one blessed thought and assurance that we hope to meet where partings are no more; they have only gone before. Father and mother read the SIGNS for many years.

IDA M. HARTLEY.

MACLEAY, Ore., March 9, 1905.

DIED—**John C. Holley,** at his home 265 East Main St., Middletown, N. Y., Sept. 25th, 1904, of paralysis. He had been in failing health for more than a year. He was the son of Richard and Mary Jane Miller Holley. Had always lived in Middletown. He was a mason by trade, and had done considerable contracting; he had charge of the work on the State Hospital at Middletown; was an expert workman. He is survived by his widow, Mary H., and one son,

Clarence, also by one brother, George, of Circleville, N. Y., one sister, Mrs. Samuel M. Mapes, of Middletown, two half-brothers, Everett and William, and one half-sister, Mrs. Bertha Decker.

The funeral was held at his late home, Elder H. C. Ker officiated, text: "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." The burial was in the New Vernon cemetery.

ALSO,

Helen M. C. Holley, the only child of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence T. Holley, and granddaughter of the subject of the above notice and Mary H. Holley, died Tuesday, Feb. 14th, 1905, aged 1 year and 27 days.

Funeral service was held at the home, 265 East Main St., conducted by Elder H. C. Ker, text: 2 Samuel xii. 22, 23. The interment was in the family plot at New Vernon. Helen was a lovely child, and we all loved her dearly, but the Lord took her, and we believe she is better off.

MARY H. HOLLEY.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

Miss Rebecca May Varnes, daughter of sister Martha Varnes and the late brother Mitchell Varnes, was born Sept. 18th, 1880; died at her home near Mifflin, Juniata Co., Pa., Oct. 2nd, 1904, aged 24 years and 14 days. A year or more previous to her death she seemed very much troubled, and the pleasure and enjoyment of worldly amusements seemed gone, she sought pleasure in another way: was frequently seen reading the Bible. Her mother grieves the fact that she did not talk to her about eternal things, for her trouble seemed to be on account of sin, and she acted as though she wanted to talk about things which she felt she had no right to claim as her own. All our little band at Tuscarora believe that the work of grace was wrought in her heart.

Funeral service was held at the Tuscarora meeting-house, and was conducted by the writer. The Lord be with those who remain to mourn her departure.

J. C. MELLOTT.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting of the Wilmington (Delaware) Old School Baptist Church will be held, the Lord willing, on the second Saturday and Sunday in April, (8th and 9th) 1905, to begin at 2 p. m. on Saturday. All lovers of the truth will be welcome.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 73. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1905. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PSALMS CXXIV.

"If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, now may Israel say: if it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us: then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us: then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul: then the proud waters had gone over our soul. Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth. Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped. Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth."

The mighty God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in all ages has been the confidence of that peculiar and favored people called Israel. This name applies to every heaven-born son and daughter of Adam's race; that is, he who is born of God is an Israelite. Circumcision (which signifies a cutting off) was a sign or token of God's covenant established with Abraham, and as this sign or token belonged to a figurative people, so it itself was figurative. An apostle tells us, Romans ii. 28, 29, "For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." See also Col. ii. 11–13; iii. 3. Thus we understand that circumcision in its spiritual significance is the work of the Spirit cutting off from the sinner his confidence in the flesh, or works, as conditions of acceptance, and is a sign or token of, or belonging to, the covenant of God in Christ, the evidence of which work when we see it in one, assures us that he is a subject of this covenant "which is ordered in all things and sure." Although in the wisdom of Israel's God it is ordered that in this world we should be a "poor and afflicted people," and in the world should have tribulation, he has also vouchsafed to us "exceeding great and precious promises," all of which he in faithfulness fulfills. For the benefit of his people all the blessed promises in the Bible are written. The New Testament, which gives account of the fulfillment of all the prophetic promises in Christ Jesus, begins, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ." When we consider Jesus the King, Husband, High Priest and atoning Sacrifice, our wonderful Law-fulfiller and Satisfier, and the recognition and acceptance by his and our divine and heavenly Father of him in all of these

different phases of his relationship to Israel, we can well adopt the language of one of old: "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." The confidence and assurance of faith in this people enabled them at times to realize as did the apostle, and with confidence to say, "We know that *all things* work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." This is true because the God of Israel hath determined and causes it to come to pass. If it were true that God's people are appointed only unto joy and peace, and comforting assurance of acceptance with him, and leaving out the temptations to doubt and fear, with trials and tribulations and various difficulties of the way, there could not be so much comfort to them in this last quotation; nor could they look back to their many deliverances and say, giving to their Lord the praise, "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, * * * then they had swallowed us up quick." The children of Israel could not have looked back to the Red Sea, when they were sorely pressed by the cruel Pharaoh and his mighty army behind, and the great Red Sea just before, when from a human view standpoint there was no escape, the mighty power and providence of God appearing in their behalf and making a dry way through the sea for them, and have said, "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us: then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us." Then all through the dreary wilderness their God accompanied them in a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night, thus affording them protection by day and by night. Then he supplied them with bread from heaven, and water out of the rock, and finally brought them safely through Jordan into the land of promise, giving them mighty deliverances from their enemies on either side of Jordan. In all this he faithfully fulfilled his covenant promise to Abraham; in all this they could not look back and say, It was because we were good, or mighty and powerful, we have overcome the difficulties, endured the trials and gained wonderful victories, and the waters have not overwhelmed us; but with the psalmist must say, "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, * * * they had swallowed us up quick." When to-day the spiritual Israelite looks back to the time when he was pressed down as a cart with many sheaves, when the sins and evil propensities of his nature pressed upon him as Pharaoh and his hosts upon Israel, and the sea of justice intervening between him and the shore of safety, and remembers the revelation of Christ the living way, he may now say, "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side," &c. So they may say, too, of every deliverance from doubt, sin and unbelief, trial and temptation, since that time, "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men [foes within as well as foes without] rose up against us: then they had swallowed us up quick."

Often the Israelite (and I believe none others have such questionings of mind) questions in his own mind, If I am what I have professed to be, and hope I am, a child of God, why am I thus? why so cold and indifferent to spiritual things, so dead, and yet alive to so many evil propensities of the flesh? O how troubled I am for the want of life and light; I fear that I shall one day fall by the hand of the enemy. Ah, what do I hear? The words "troubled," "want," "fear." The very evidences of that life for which

you are longing, the fruits for lack of which you are pining. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." "Blessed [already blessed] are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." What gracious words; none but the circumcised in heart, the true Israelite, really know this poverty of spirit, this hungering and thirsting, and this mourning.

"When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark and vain and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?"

Then comes a knowledge of my necessities and utter helplessness, a longing for a restoration "of the joy of thy salvation." Am I not then at once poor in spirit, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, (not mine own, but Jesus my righteousness,) and a mourner? If so, how greatly blessed. Yet for a time perhaps I cannot feel that I am one of the blessed; mine is an outside case, there is none other like me; but after a time a little light is given, perhaps it is I meet with some brother or sister who has had the same exercises of mind, and how my fellowship is strengthened for such an one. Why is it that there is so much more tender sympathy, love and fellowship with me for one whose carriage and words show humbleness of heart on account of a felt sense of vileness, corruption and unprofitableness, with an exalted view of God's holiness, (I believe humble views of self are generally accompanied by exalted views of God,) than for one who has much to tell of wonderful visions and revelations, with more or less confidence in his own ability, will power, &c., unless it is that they are so much like myself? This is the more mysterious when I consider that I am seldom, if ever, satisfied with self.

As Israel of old was harrassed and often distressed by foes within (Canaan, their given land,) and foes without, so is Israel now; the sinful propensities and inclinations of the flesh, "the old man," are as so many different foes within; and of the same corrupt nature the origin and dwelling-place of those foes within is all the world without made up. With these foes the Israelite is called to battle from the beginning of his spiritual life until he lays down in natural death, and at any time he can well say, "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us: they had swallowed us up quick." God's covenant provisions were all on Israel's side. It was according to this wonderful provision that Jesus came into the world as Israel's King and Head. "The Captain of our salvation," "made of a woman, made under the law," was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, was made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, bore our sins in his own body upon the accursed tree, suffered the just for the unjust, was buried and rose again the third day, according to prophecy, having forever gained the victory in behalf of Israel over all her foes, having made a complete and satisfactory atonement, to which nothing has ever been added or taken away, nor ever can be. In prayer to his holy Father he said, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." Again, as he gave up the ghost on Calvary's cross, he said, "It is finished." Then it is not in any sense as an atonement for sin (to claim which is to deny the word of Jesus as being true) that God's children must suffer on account of sin, and for their sins here in the flesh, but as the members of Christ's body, as such identified with him and he with

them in his humanity, they realize the "exceeding sinfulness of sin," and suffer for sin, and are thereby brought into close fellowship with their Savior and Redeemer in his suffering for sin. If pain is felt in the Head all the members must suffer in a measure, so it is written, "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Again, it is written, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." As Jesus has identified himself with Israel under the law and under its curse, so he has secured for, and vouchsafed to her, identity with him in his glory. This, in a measure, is realized by faith now, but when we are called to "lay our armor by," when our allotted experience in the battle is ended, then we shall no longer see in part and know in part, but we shall see and know Jesus our Redeemer in the fullness of his glory and be like him. Then when the battle is ended and we realize our glorious victory gained by our Captain, Israel will evermore rejoice and praise the Lord who was on our side.

H. B. JONES.

MT. VERNON, Texas, Feb. 19, 1905.

EXPERIENCE.

I HAVE often been asked why I did not write more for the SIGNS. There is only one answer to this: I have nothing to write. Whatever I have written has never been to my own satisfaction; not but what I believed it to be truth, but in the manner in which it was set forth; but when we write of experience we can only declare what we have seen and felt.

For many months I had existed (not lived) in a lukewarm state of mind, neither hot nor cold, yet craving one or the other, but I could not bring about any change, or get rid of this indifferent frame of mind. All the while I could and did feel different toward the brethren than toward those of the world; I could hear the gospel preached, and believe it to be the truth, but could not feel it as I thought I once did, so I traveled along in this very dead state of mind. Occasionally my mind would turn back to some former experience when I felt differently, and try to apply that experience to my case now, but it would not apply, so I realized that each day has its own experience, without any effort of mind, and each experience must be for some special purpose. This travel in apparent death went on until the 17th day of February, when after retiring for the night, feeling as well bodily as usual, at about 10 o'clock I was instantly seized with a severe chill that lasted about two hours, when a high fever set in, with my pulse at near 100, and a severe pain in the upper part of the pleura surrounding the left lung. But to leave that; then came the darkest hour of my life, and it did seem strange to me that seemingly all the sins of my youth, and up to now, came into my mind. Such an array caused me to shrink from myself; and here I lay for seven days, could not sit up or lie still, and without hope of life or death. As to the experience I passed through in that time I never can tell. The name of Jesus seemed more like cursing than praise. Here was the place for prayer, not praise. Did I pray? I do not know; I had asked for hot or cold, and received the cold. On the morning of the 24th I was helped up and dressed, and took a seat near the window where I could look out, and when I saw the beautiful sun I compared my dark and gloomy condition with the bright and cheerful sight in nature. All vegetation was covered with snow, and apparently dead and

out of sight. There stood all the trees of the forest, and the shrubbery in the yard, all apparently dead; their leaves, bloom and fruit had fallen to the ground dead, and lost to sight. The trees were barren, yet their life was not gone out entirely, their life was hid. Where? In the root, the foundation; and when the springtime should come and the warm sun should shine down upon the earth, the cold and icy earth would be broken up and warmed, the life that was hidden in the root would then be manifested by the bud, leaves, flowers and fruit that we should see on what seemed to be a dead tree. And now we can again rejoice in the living beauty of the trees, and in that rejoicing we praise God; and it seems to me the very trees rejoice, and the birds and all nature praise God. While contemplating this beautiful view in nature, and learning a great lesson, faith seemed to have taken hold and viewed all this as the work of God in the creation of the earth, and as purposed in himself, that winter and summer should exist in his creation, with night and day, which fully represent or typify the experience of his people in their travel here in this world; at least it was so to me in this case, and in my experience.

Brethren, how does this experience suit you? When the Lord shuts, who will open? When he opens, who will shut? We are his workmanship, and when he shuts us up in impenetrable darkness, and the beasts of the forest come forth, who shall open to the light? He that shutteth only. Now when my eyes were opened to this view a little hope sprung up, and I was led to see the necessity of just such an experience in me. I could now see that winter and summer were as needful to the children of God as to the vegetable kingdom. While we are (I say we, because of the little hope felt) held in the icy embrace of winter, without any light or hope, the Lord is preparing us to give glory to him when the springtime comes, and we again hear the singing of birds, "and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." Then the long winter is past and forgotten, the Sun of righteousness is risen with healing in his wings, and we bask in the sunlight of his love, our songs of praise go up in joyful strains to him who has raised us out of the grave unto the resurrection of life. In this experience we realize that our life is hid with Christ in God, (as the life of the tree is in its roots) and we have hope. And by this life the fruits of the Spirit appear; first the bud, though bitter, then the leaf, flower and fruit, all manifest without the knowledge of the flesh. What a wonderful God this is that saves his people from themselves. This word salvation is a wonderful expression, with power to perform all that it expresses. Salvation controls the children of God from the beginning of time to the end. They have not the power nor the will to control themselves in any sense whatever, because God's will stands in the way.

But I am getting away from what I first intended to write, viz.: to tell of the little experience I had about the life of the tree. I have not yet been able to go out, only just outside of the door. I have just entered my seventy-eighth year, and am somewhat shaky, and my writing rather bad for me. I am not yet strong, but hope to be when the weather gets warmer.

My love and fellowship abounds for the great body, the church of God, but joy and sorrow travel together, one set over against the other. There are many things that came up in my mind while

writing, but this letter is too long already, so I will close, with much love to the household of faith everywhere.

MILTON DANCE.

KNOEBEL, Md., Feb. 28, 1905.

[WE desire to say that we are glad that brother Dance has felt drawn to write this narrative of recent experience. If it shall instruct and edify others as it has ourself, many will be glad. We trust that our dear brother may again be fully restored to strength as the spring advances, and that above all the candle of the Lord may shine round about him, enlightening his pathway and dispersing every gloomy fear and doubt. Such letters as the above will always meet a response in the hearts of all who believe.—ED.]

LIBERTY, Ind., March 14, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I have been requested by different ones to write something for the SIGNS concerning my recent visit to the Baptist church in Canada. Such letters are apt to be only of local interest, if of any interest at all; but there are some things that came under my observation that are of general interest to the saints, if I could write them in such a way that they could be appreciated. I have been so much depressed of late with a sense of my own weakness and sinfulness that I hardly dare to speak or write. When I received the request from the brethren in Canada to visit them at their quarterly meeting, in Duart, last month, I was low in spirit, thinking that my labor in the gospel was worthless, and that I might as well give it up. But having had a desire to visit those people, I did not hesitate to write them that I would be there if it was the Lord's will. My wife expressed a desire to go with me, so we left our home and greenhouse in the care of brother and sister Berg, and on the evening of February 2nd boarded the train for Detroit, where we caught a belated train which landed us in Dutton three hours in advance of the train we expected to go on. We went immediately to the home of Elder Carnell, where we were lovingly cared for and entertained by himself and family and Elder Curry, who took charge of us and looked after our welfare so carefully that we can never forget their kindness.

We went to Duart Saturday in time for the forenoon services, and, although the weather was cold and stormy, the large house was crowded with attentive hearers. I think I never saw so many people who knew and loved the truth in any one congregation before. I have seen larger gatherings in fine weather, but such crowds are usually made up of all classes of people; but at that meeting they seemed to have met together in one mind. There were four discourses Saturday, four Sunday, and two on Monday, yet there was no indication of restlessness; indeed, the congregation grew larger at each successive service, until the last, when all could not be comfortably seated in the house. It was estimated that there were over six hundred present.

The ordinance of communion was attended to in a solemn and impressive way. Mrs. Dr. Davies applied for membership, and after the relation of the dealings of the Lord with her, which was full of evidences of kinship with God's people, she was joyfully received for baptism. No other part of the meeting furnished such a feast for my poor soul as did this experience.

We visited, and I tried to preach also, in St. Thomas, Ekfrid, Lobo, London,

Dunwich and Detroit, Mich., and everywhere we met the same warm welcome, and found the same earnest zeal and love for the truth.

The church in Canada is abundantly blessed of the Lord in his providence and grace, and in an able and sound ministry.

There is one thing that I wish to speak of, that to me is of special importance, that is a living refutation of some of the charges that Arminians, and some who claim to be Old School Baptists, often make against the doctrine of unlimited predestination. The church in Canada has held that doctrine from the time of its organization, yet it has not led them into "licentiousness." On the contrary, they are more exacting in discipline and have had less trouble with disorderly members than those who oppose that doctrine.

My mind is often running back over the past to determine the truth concerning the charge that "unlimited predestination is a dangerous doctrine." Here and there along the path of my pilgrimage a familiar face comes before me in memory as having once been prominent among our people, but afterward became a reproach to the cause they professed to love. Then there are others who have left our company and joined one or another of the Arminian organizations. Then I ask, What were their views on predestination? The answer fully settles the question as to which is the dangerous doctrine. I wonder if those who make this charge against unlimited predestination have ever examined this line of evidence?

The life and character of the church in Canada as successfully refutes the charge that the doctrine of unlimited predestination tends to destroy the church, and that protracted meetings and much lively music, and pathetic exhortation (?) are necessary to build the church.

Not long ago a man, claiming to be a Primitive Baptist, was preaching in a meeting-house a few miles from here, and he railed on unlimited predestination with all the Arminian railing; charging especially that it was killing the churches, and at the same time he was preaching to a congregation of fourteen, made up from four churches, three of them holding frequent protracted meetings and denying the doctrine of unlimited predestination.

I have written more than I had intended, yet in such a bungling way that I fear it will be of no interest.

We left Detroit Monday night after our last appointment, and should have reached home the next morning at 7 a. m., but the night was very cold and we were several hours late, but found all well at home.

W. N. THARP.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 25, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—In reading over the inclosed letter, written more than a year ago, I feel inclined to share it with the readers of the SIGNS. It seems to me that the Spirit of Christ shines forth in every expression, and that is what is comforting to the household of faith, the Lord's dear people, who are "chosen in the furnace of affliction." Our dear sister, in the midst of her distress at having her precious little one torn from her embrace, was enabled to realize the soothing power of the balm of Gilead, and there was poured into her bleeding heart "the oil of joy for mourning," so that she could feel with one of old, "It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good." It is wonderful how the Lord

has led this youthful sister, even from a child, into the secret of his presence, and caused her to rejoice in his most holy name, and how, in this great bereavement, he has supported her. I trust that others, in the midst of some severe sorrow, will be comforted and encouraged by her words.

Affectionately,

BESSIE DURAND.

TRENTON, N. J., April 15, 1903.

DEAR SISTER:—Your letter just received, and was read with pleasure; I feel very unfit to answer any letters. I cannot write concerning natural things, for they have become very burdensome to me. I daily realize that there is no perfection under the sun, everything is vanity and vexation of spirit. The life of Christ is the only perfect thing that I know of, and where his life is, there is manifested the perfect love of the Father toward us, a poor, rebellious people. I am not rejoicing in the glorious sunshine, but am like a helpless child, feeling only the protecting care of a mighty power beyond my own self. I am not in deep darkness of despair, but though I cannot see his face, yet I feel that I am in the cleft of the rock, and will behold his glory as he passes by. I cannot see why I am not perfectly well, but I learn that it takes a furnace heated "one seven times more than it was wont to be heated" to make me know that I am not my own, but am bought with a price. I feel to-day like saying, The God whom I love is able to deliver me out of the burning, fiery furnace, and I shall come forth with no smell of fire upon me. I fear at times that I get too sure of heaven; it often troubles me, yet I cannot bring myself to doubt the hope that has been mine these last twelve years. I have been made to realize the hand of the Lord so many times in my life, that if I doubt, I am made to weep bitterly on account of my forgetfulness. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance." I do not know why I am not singing praises unto his holy name, for he has dealt kindly with me, yet there is a sweet, sad feeling of quietness I cannot describe. "In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in the Lord."

I feel to tell you a little of the dealings of God with me in the last sickness and death of our darling. For a long time before she was taken sick I had a feeling of fear, my very life seemed filled with dread, and in all her sickness there seemed to be a looking ahead with terror, and on Friday morning, the day she died, these words came to me:

> "O, thou Gracious, Wise and Just,
> In thy hands my life I trust:
> Have I somewhat dearer still?
> I resign it to thy will."

I was made to feel then that she was to be taken from me, and it was like the tearing asunder of my heart, but like David, I felt to "be of good courage, for he shall strengthen thine heart." I spoke aloud,

> "Not a single shaft can hit,
> Till the God of love sees fit."

I was instantly filled with sweet trust and resignation to his holy will, and it has never left me.

> "How can I bereaved be,
> Since I cannot part with thee?"

Her life to me was one of sweet submission to my will. There was a feeling of fellowship for her that was like the love for the brethren, and I never felt that I could keep her long. Before she was born I was made to say, like Han-

nah, "I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit," and I felt that the child was given me of the Lord to keep only a short time. I was not worthy to teach her, for in her life she taught me the sweetness of submission to a power higher than my own, and to me she was a loving and devoted little daughter. I cannot wish her back, for I know that it is his glorious will that I should suffer in the flesh. It is very needful for me to be brought low, yes, and kept low, for I am a disobedient child. I know what I have been taught, yet I fail to obey.

If the Lord spares me, and gives me strength to prepare, I expect to be at the association; if not, I know that whatever he does is best. I am weary of my life, for it is nothing but sin, and I am ready to put it all away, for when I awake I shall be satisfied; I shall then know what heaven is. Here I have had only a foretaste, but "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come."

"Fain would my raptured soul depart,
Nor longer here remain,
But dwell, dear Jesus, where thou art:
For me to die is gain."

Dear sister, this is now yours; may the love of God cause you to forgive all that I may have said amiss. Write again.

I am yours in the bonds of fellowship,
ELIZABETH P. FETTER.

BRANTFORD, Ont., Feb. 2, 1905.

DEAR ELDER KER:—In writing you this morning I am breaking a sort of unwritten law, which has guided most of my correspondence with the SIGNS. I have avoided personal mention of articles which have really done me good, fearing perhaps I might break the harmony of spiritual testimony by singling out one hand, through which it passed more than another, which might have a tendency to depress those who might be overlooked. Now if we were perfect, we could neither be depressed or exalted; but though the whole body is perfect in Christ, its manifestation in his poor followers is very imperfect, subject to tidal waves of joy and sorrow, for we know that in us (that is, in our flesh,) dwelleth no good thing. Now I know as far as I am able to follow the SIGNS, the spirit of its testimony is true, and its foundation sure. At times, however, a law which is good in itself is better broken, a fact we can trace from the beginning of creation, and I have felt I wanted to break this law of my own, by telling you I reaped a little harvest of comfort from your opening up of the words of Solomon: "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." It just perfectly fitted my case, and I have wanted to tell you so. I sometimes wonder whether I am an oddity on the Scripture question, because I can never remember the time when I did not love it, neither can I ever remember feeling it a task to read it. It seems as if it had been imperceptibly woven into my life's thread, and has taught me naturally, morally and spiritually. I can dimly recall periods when certain passages were not so interesting as others, and afterwards I loved those same ones (which inwardly I classified as dry) better than others. The mysterious ones I have desired to see through, and have hovered round them with a longing which I might explain by the words, I could not help it. There is one feature also I must mention, because it is the basis of my few lines. I have had Scripture applied to me in what I would call a prophetical light; that is, they would either come to my mind, or turn up in my reading, with a sort of unfinished hope in them that induced me to mark them, and after years

the Spirit substance seemed to appear like a Bethel to my soul. That same verse you so beautifully dwelt on came to me and abode with me more or less for about the space of two years, and I often quoted it, and wondered why it was sent, and what it meant. Of late I have felt inwardly, it was taking the place of a substance in my life travels; so it was like meeting a friend to drop a few happy tears over it. There is this I will say, the text of Scripture is a perfect grain, with all its needful clothing of husk, therefore it holds the place of honor to the saint of God; yet its opening, and dividing, and applying, is all the work of the holy and living Spirit of truth; he shutteth, and no man openeth; he openeth, and no man can shut; and this to our flesh is a humiliating lesson.

I must not finish without saying that I have had much joy in the Lord lately, yet the morning without clouds is still in the future.

Just now I will send you a little wilderness song.

JOURNEYING.

THERE is a lonely thought within,
  It mars my sunshine day by day,
Because I'm here, so far from him;
  Why is it? He alone can say.
It must be so, and yet we meet
  In some unlooked for, blessed spot,
And that one moment is so sweet
  All other moments are forgot.

Some busy traveler buzzes past,
  Thoughtless I turn myself around,
And when I turn me back again,
  My soul's loved spouse is nowhere found.
I take my pilgrim staff once more,
  My leathern purse and half worn scrip,
And murmur to my heart so sore,
  Why did I let my comfort slip?

And as I weep the shadows fall,
  And darker grows the starless night;
I am so weak I cannot call
  To tell him of my lonely plight.

All this for gossip that I hate,
  Or husks I starve on and despise,
That haunt me like an evil fate,
  Shutting his beauty from my eyes.

O can it be that such as I,
  Who long thy glorious name to praise,
Must 'neath this bondage helpless lie,
  And mourn o'er all my crooked ways?
One only hope by faith I see,
  Shining within this darksome place,
Is that this travail proveth me
  A sinner ransomed by thy grace.

In hope of a better life, yours sincerely,

(MRS.) J. STREET.

SODDY, Tenn., Feb. 20, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—By way of commendation, I feel to say that of late the SIGNS has been blessed, if I am not deceived, to my comfort and edification, and while I earnestly desire that the paper may continue as long as God in his infinite wisdom is pleased to bless its editor and correspondents with wisdom from on high, and enable them to write comfortably to each other of the things of the kingdom, I lament because I cannot feel able to contribute, either financially or otherwise, to its support. I cannot say as some of the brethren have been enabled to say, "Place the above to my credit." However I desire to be made to feel and realize that the Lord omnipotent reigneth over all, and that he knoweth better than we what is best for us. Therefore many things are settled in a way which is anything but what the unworthy writer desires or hopes for; and even though I am given a foreboding in a measure, and see his hand in the accomplishment of some purpose which I am aware subjects me to cutting changes, and enfolds an order which is contrary to my preconceived notions of the fitness of things, and like Jonah I murmur and say, It is better to die than to live, yet somehow I feel to say that I

am enabled by the God of Jacob to triumph greatly, and to rejoice in his perfection. If that degree of perfection was manifest in me which would show me forth as delighting in the way of the Lord Jesus, both in public and in private, manifesting by my conversation and behavior in the presence of the brethren, and those with whom I consort daily, that I have been taught not only how to behave in the presence of the church in public assembly, but also showing piety at home, I should rejoice. "But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked." But God, the mighty God of Jacob has, as I trust, brought to my view his purpose, so that I was made to say with David, "So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee." My comeliness was consumed, as is the down with which he dresses the delicate wings of the moth, when it is brought into contact with the flame. I could do nothing more than to proclaim abroad my weakness and wickedness. "Woe is me! for I am undone." "I am more brutish than any man." I need no long drawn sermon to teach me the truthfulness of the depravity of man, or of the sickening things that distress my soul within and without, and that vex me daily, associated as I am with the vain conversation of the Sodomite, which is as destitute of comfort and instruction as the husks which the swine did eat were destitute of nourishment to the poor prodigal when he had come to himself. Added to this, when he came to himself the evidences of depravity within were so overwhelming that he must exclaim with one of old, "Behold, I am vile." And, "In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." Such is the living evidence of this truth brought to view in my own person, that I abhor myself and cover myself with sackcloth of repentance, and sprinkle myself with the ashes of sorrow upon my head. "How to perform that which is good I find not."

"O could I but believe,
Then all would easy be;
I would, but cannot, Lord relieve;
My help must come from thee."

May the Lord be entreated of you in my behalf, and that right early.

Take heed, brethren, and suffer a word of exhortation. Let us not use any forms of words which are calculated to set aside, or cause the brethren to fear that there is a readiness to set aside, sound words or sound speech that cannot be condemned. Let us be careful to use such words as are given under the ministration of the Spirit to confirm us in the truth of Jesus, and to mutually edify both the hearer and the speaker, or writer, as the case may be. But who is sufficient for these things? I must say I feel that I am not. Therefore, may the God of all grace and comfort, who comforteth those who are cast down, help my infirmities, and also bless you, giving you grace for your day and time, thus enabling you to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please yourselves in anything contrary to the truth of Jesus.

How often we must be reminded that the talk of the lips tendeth to poverty, and that a multitude of words wanteth not sin. However, if I have shown my folly by writing a longer letter than I intended, it but stands as another evidence of my depravity. And cannot that God who lifts up those of low degree, help the depraved? Yea, can he not heal all their diseases, and set them at his feet, clothed and in their right mind? I believe that many such things are done by him. I believe in God's sufficiency, and in this

does my hope rest, if I am not deceived altogether.

But I must close for want of space, and other equally cogent reasons. Continue the SIGNS to my address, and when God prospers me I pray that I may not be suffered to forget the favors you have already shown me; not that I would glory in men, but rather, thank God on your account. I have been greatly comforted by thee, brother. May God continue his mercy to you and yours, uphold you in this life, and in the life to come bring you, together with the unworthy writer, into the fullness of eternal glory, for the sake of Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Your brother,

T. D. WALKER.

FRANKLIN FORKS, Pa., Jan. 29, 1905.

DEAR CHILDREN OF GOD:—For several weeks, at times, I have felt so strongly drawn to write I felt I could hardly resist, but this morning I feel such an irresistible love for the truth springing up within, I cannot do contrary than try to write. First I believe all Scripture is given to us by inspiration of God, and can only be understood by man as the Spirit of truth interprets it. It has been quite some time since I was made to know my strength was weakness, my wisdom folly, my righteousness as filthy rags. Early in life I was made to believe there was a God, and to desire to do right. Quite a number of years I kept looking to those whom I thought were good people, and whose instruction I then doubted not was to be trusted; but there came a time when I heard a voice saying unto me, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." I replied, O, I am so ignorant, I cannot understand it aright. Then these words were spoken to me, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God." From that very time I began, as never before, to search, to read and to ask God for wisdom to make me understand aright. Since, with me it has been line upon line, and precept upon precept; here a little, and there a little; and now I feel, O how little I know, compared to what there is to be known. But thanksgiving and praise be given to God that he has given me to see that many things I had treasured up as truths were lies, (plainly speaking) and how great and glorious did the truths taught me seem. Yea, the light of truth that shined within has many times filled me with a joy unspeakable and full of glory; and now my prayer is, God grant that I write only the truth as he has truly taught me by his Spirit. I cannot tell how much I desire to honor him who has done so much for me, by a well ordered life and godly conversation. Well do I remember when a voice spoke to me, (as never man spake) saying, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." Again, when I was made to know that he had all power, and worked all things after the counsel of his own will, when the Spirit taught me that God made all things, it agreed with the word which declares he made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. Although I have to acknowledge, to me, he "moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform," I am lost in wonder, love and praise, while I think upon his wondrous love, his matchless grace that saves a wretch like me. Paul spoke my feelings when he said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into

the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." I am made to know "that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing," but a carnal mind which is enmity against God, and not subject to his law, neither can be; but blessed be the name of the Lord from this time henceforth, and for evermore, I am just as assuredly made to know that God has begun a good work within, Christ formed within, the hope of glory, whereby I am made to know he is the resurrection and the life; the two in one, yet perfectly separate. The first Adam is of the earth earthy, of whom it is said, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." The second Adam is the Lord from heaven, pure, holy and undefiled, Jesus, the name that calms our fears and bids our sorrows cease, he only is the way, the truth and the life, no other can be found. While mortal life shall last there will be with me the flesh and the Spirit, the sheep and the goat; but when mortal life shall cease, I am fully persuaded the Spirit shall possess within the veil a life of perfect joy and peace, where flesh and blood can never enter, so again I feel with Paul to say, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Just think of it, his tender mercies are over all his works. Lord, we believe, but how far short our mortal eyes come of being able to see it. Man judges from the outward appearance, God from the heart. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron," &c.—1 Tim. iv. 1, 2. Again, in another place it reads, Because sin doth abound, the love of many wax cold. Now please turn to 2 Peter ii. 1, read the whole chapter. False prophets, false teachers, "who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them," &c.; and yet an all-wise, all-powerful God rules and reigns. Can you understand all the mysteries? To speak for myself, No. Of one thing I am fully persuaded, that in God's time, as the psalmist said by inspiration, All nations whom thou hast made, shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name.

As I have written all that comes to me, will close, but wish to say, I thought to write a little to put in the SIGNS, if thought best, after receiving and reading, but now I am sorely tempted not to send it; I cannot see what profit it can be to any one.

With love,

ELIZABETH TURRELL.

KELLY CORNERS, N. Y., March 9, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—The following letter was found among the effects of our dear, departed, aged sister, Mary Jenkins, of Union Grove, Delaware Co., N. Y., (whose obituary appeared in the SIGNS of Dec. 15th, 1904,) written, it appears, about two years before her departure from this life. The friends thought she intended it for publication, so I send it to you, abiding your judgment. She was indeed a mother in Israel.

J. D. HUBBELL.

UNION GROVE, N. Y., 1902.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I have felt for a long time a desire to write some of my exercises regarding the truth of the writings in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Although I feel very unworthy and incompetent to write anything for publication, yet I do feel to bless and praise God when I think of his gracious

care over me at so great an age, as I am now in my eighty-ninth year, and still able to wait on myself. I often say, How wonderful to be spared so long, and yet not be able to see that I have made any progress in the church of Christ. Still I believe the Giver of every good and perfect gift has led me about and instructed me, as he did dear old Jacob. How have we as professed christians any knowledge of divine things only as the divine Spirit teaches us to understand what the Scriptures mean? I do feel to rely on the sure promises of God, I feel they are all sure and steadfast, not one will fail. If I am what I profess to be, I need not fear, though I have had many doubts and fears, but my God, I trust, has brought me out of them, and caused me to rejoice in his mercy and goodness; and these words came to me, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God;" thou shalt live to praise him. They came with sweet assurance and drove all my doubts away. Soon I was made to see some of my children come to the church and tell what great things the Lord had done for them in forgiving their sins, and they wished a place in the church, and some of their companions saw how God's promises were fulfilled, for they read, I will and you shall. His love and mercy bring us, his willing subjects, in the day of his power. If it was not for his great love and mercy all would go down to eternal ruin. His mercy, who can fathom it?

I will now speak of the SIGNS; they are so instructive to such a poor, weak one as I am; they have been such a comfort to me in my long pilgrimage; when reading and seeing the same experience in others that I have had, and the same trials and conflicts, I have been made to take courage and press forward and trust in the grace of God, believing he would support me to the end, often feeling as I did in my first experience, that nothing but the mercy of God could save me, and I feel the weight of that to this day. I do feel that I cannot do the least thing, for my righteousness is compared to filthy rags, to be loathed and cast aside; but the righteousness of Christ, that beautiful robe, wrought on Calvary, is a perfect robe to cover all our sins. I thought at the death of Elder Gilbert Beebe, Who will take his place? If it is the will of God that the paper shall be continued some other one will be found. I have been made to rejoice in the continuation of the publication in that same doctrine of salvation by grace, through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, I can see no difference. The doctrine of God's choice of his people in Christ, the doctrine of his foreknowledge and predestination, presenting both the promise and oath of God concerning the seed that should serve him, are all set forth in the SIGNS, as I read them in his holy word, and as I have been given to see, I trust, by the light of his countenance in the face of Jesus Christ, the word seemed opened to my understanding, and made me rejoice to believe God's holy counsel should stand, and all his pleasure be done, for he is just and righteous in all his ways. Though he afflicts me, yet will I trust in him, for I well know all our blessings come from him. Although no chastisement for the present is joyous, but rather grievous, yet it works the peaceable fruits of righteousness as we are exercised thereby, or recognize God's hand in his dealing with us; teaching us to acknowledge his righteous will in all things whatsoever we have to pass through to bring us at the feet of Jesus, and to ask

for patience to endure all things we may have to pass through. Hence our pride and prosperity is often brought low to show us we cannot attain to what we desire. And as we are brought low, and feel the helping hand of our Redeemer, at his feet we acknowledge our unworthiness. Thus we realize it is by grace we are saved, through a living faith, which God has given us, therefore it is not of ourselves, but the gift of God.

MARY JENKINS.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Jan. 2, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—The SIGNS seems necessary to my existence, for "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." We have Bibles, and they contain revealed words that proceedeth from the mouth of God, and the dear SIGNS explains those words, so that we can feast on what the Bible contains.

I inclose the address of two Baptists, if they are not subscribers for the SIGNS perhaps you better send sample copies to them. You of course know best which copies to send. I suggest the Jan. 1st, 1905, number, I like it very much; and Dec. 15th, 1904, is also good, as it contains the index and shows who the correspondents are. We cannot do too much by way of advertising the SIGNS to lovers of truth, for it is steadfast in the apostles' doctrine, turning neither one way or the other from the line of the plummet, and while contending for God's unlimited predestination, and salvation by grace, it includes, without a single failure, exhortation to good works, for it is Christ himself who hath wrought exhortation by the writers. We like Elder F. A. Chick's editorial relative to a federal government, in Jan. 1st, 1905, number; his words are timely and well spoken, and are like "apples of gold in pictures of silver." We need just such able watchmen on the walls of Zion to give the alarm when errors approach; and especially if avowed enemies approach. We had information regarding the erroneous proposition to organize a federation, &c., and had thought concerning its inadvisability, because we know that God's regenerated people constitute spiritual Israel, and that while the apostles are corporeally dead, by their works of faith they yet speak, just as Abel does. Thus in faith we accept the twelve apostles as still abiding with us, occupying twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Their judgment is true, and it is our only safeguard. Thus we have no room for, nor need of, a federation of men to formulate laws and by-laws for our adherence thereto. We have ever delighted to hear (or read) when the Elder says, "This is what the apostle says about it," when deliberating on Bible topics, and that is sufficient, because we regard what the apostles say as the oracles of God, for they spake as the Holy Ghost gave them utterance. Thus we have rules and regulations direct from God; can we then improve on God's government? Of course not. We hope the suggestion to organize a federation is but an error, and not a willful, malicious act to substitute man's wisdom for that which God hath given. If it is argued that the object of the suggested federation was simply to adopt means to further promulgate the discipline of the Bible, we also esteem that as erroneous, because God omnipotently, omnipresently and omnisciently reigns, and it is to him we are commanded to pray that he send faithful laborers into the harvest. Therefore we need only such men as are commissioned and sent by our heavenly

Father, and when he sends them they go, and the grace of God, which is with them, does the work. A federation of men can in no wise bind or loose the grace of God, or by any effort make grace more effectual; therefore let us look unto God only for grace, and the work of grace to guide and save us from all errors. We do not design to flatter Elder Chick when we say he is the right one in the right place, just as the former editors of the SIGNS were, because it is God who hath prepared him. He has repeatedly let us know of his own felt sense of dependence upon God to guide his pen. As we thus speak of him, remember we do not speak disparagingly of other correspondents of the SIGNS, for we think we can say as much for them as we do for Elder Chick, according to their gifts and callings, thus we praise God for them as we do for Elder Chick. Mr. Gilbert Beebe, we can speak our sentiment encouragingly to you for your careful and perfect manner of conducting the printing of the SIGNS, we scarcely have ever seen an error in your work. The dear SIGNS are commendable from first to last, from the beginning to the end, may God ever sustain them.

We trust what we have written will not weary you.

We are yours, as ever,

MR. & MRS. DAVID L. MCNEES.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 9, 1902.

DR. B. F. COULTER—DEAR BROTHER:—Your very precious letter of the 19th ult. received, and I have thought each morning that I would surely answer before night, but as the day passed by I had so many things to attend to that I never could compose myself, or feel as I would like to, while trying to write to you.

I do feel grateful to you for the kind words of encouragement you wrote, but they at the same time humble me in the dust to think how unworthy I am of such an expression of love and fellowship from one so highly esteemed as yourself by all the brotherhood, for the truth's sake. I cannot help but feel myself a hypocrite to deceive you as I have, for while I have thus far been restrained from overt acts that would require the brethren to cast me off, for the sake of the cause, yet within I am just as full of carnality as I ever was, if not more so. And when I see a brother who is blessed with physical health, and prospered financially, walking blamelessly, and whose life is exemplary, I cannot help feeling that if the Lord had blessed me temporally as he has that brother, how soon I would show the brethren what an impostor I am; but as it is, I am not able physically or financially to indulge my carnal propensities, and therefore make a virtue of necessity, and act the pious hypocrite before the brethren. Sometimes it comes over me with such positive, certain, convincing evidence, that I feel that I can say, I am sure that I know nothing about spiritual things, and still worse, I think I can say, I know that the whole matter is a myth, and only another form of the many superstitions in the world. But just as I was writing the last few words, there seemed to be a still small voice whispered, "Do you love brother Coulter?" I cannot have any doubt as to this emotion, and why is there such a burning of my heart within when this question is presented to my mind? It must be by that wireless telegraphy you so beautifully describe in your letter. This mysterious influence, which as you say, is communicated without any artificial means, was experienced by the two disciples on their way to Em-

maus. They did not know Jesus, and yet his presence made their hearts burn within them, and how often the saints are traveling with head bowed, hope gone, and convinced that they have been deceived, even while Jesus is right with them, yet their eyes are holden at the time, so they cannot behold him; yet when he does reveal himself to them, they can look back and see that their hearts did burn within them with holy love all through the trial the Lord brought them, although they did not know at the time that they were experiencing this heart-burning. Have you not, dear brother, passed through deep trials, and at the time felt as these two disciples did, and after you had been delivered, been able to look back to those very seasons, and see how you were walking in closer companionship with the blessed Savior, and realized that though at the time you thought your hope was gone, that your heart was burning within you; and can you not now look back to those very trials, and draw from them your strongest evidence that Jesus has been revealed to you as your Savior?

But I will not try your patience further. I cannot hope to write anything worthy to be called an answer to your letter, but I can at least show a disposition to try and prove my appreciation of your kindness.

I fear I shall not be able to attend your association, as much as I should love to do so; my health is so uncertain I dare not go far from home.

With love and fellowship, I am, I hope, your brother in Christ,

B. L. BEEBE.

[THE above good letter, written by our dear, departed brother Beebe, was sent to the office by brother Coulter. It was a comfort to him and has been to us, and no doubt others will be encouraged by reading it.—ED.]

GRANBURY, Texas, Feb. 19, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—While sitting at home alone to-day, and viewing everything enshrouded in ice, it has brought to my mind the child of God when shut up in darkness. At such times all is cold and gloomy, and with all his strength and effort to dispel these gloomy and dreary feelings he finds that all is unavailing. He can no more remove the dark clouds which are hovering over him than he can control the sun. God, who commanded the light to shine at first in our poor hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, must still control the darkness and the light.

My health has been very feeble all the winter, and the weather has been extremely bad for this country, so I have been shut up at home pretty much all the time. My mind has been continually running from one thing to another, and I have been greatly perplexed with fears and doubts; I have feared that I am mistaken in what I have professed to be; I cannot entirely throw away my little hope in Christ, for I have no one else to whom I can go, nor can I go to him until he bids me come. If his righteousness has been imputed to me, then I am included in the "all" who have been given of the Father to Jesus, as he said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me: and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

Now, brethren and friends, readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES I want to tell you that if I could help it I would never be tormented with fear and unbelief, but I would always enjoy the smiles of Jesus.

But these are things I cannot help, and I believe they are all for my good, for they bring me to the feet of the Lord in humility. I believe that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." He who created all things is certainly able to control all things. But some say, You can turn to God and repent, and accept Jesus as your Savior, and he will come and save you, and you can enjoy religion all the time during the rest of your days. It has not been that way with me, poor and unworthy I am.

Now, brother Chick, if it is not asking too much, please give your views upon what the two women in Ezekiel xxiii. represent.

This is just like the writer, it does not amount to much. I am, I hope, your brother in the sweet promise of eternal life, W. L. McPHERSON.

(Editorial reply on page 243.)

ARENA, N. Y., Feb. 1, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—As I write to renew my subscription for our family paper, I feel it both a duty and a pleasure to speak a word of encouragement to you, and also to the many brethren and sisters who contribute so many excellent and instructive articles, thus assisting in filling the columns of the good old SIGNS. I have carefully perused its pages more than forty years, and I see no change, only it grows better and better, if possible. Elder Gilbert Beebe was truly a zealous and fearless advocate of the fundamental truth of the gospel. I dearly loved to hear him expound the Scriptures, also to read his writings. His son, brother Benton, seemed very tenacious to keep the paper fully established in the same principles and doctrine that his father had maintained, and our present editor, though kind and courteous to all, and respecting the opinions of each brother and sister, is steadfast in the apostles' doctrine, making no compromise whatever with error; I hope and pray that our heavenly Father will give him health and strength sufficient for the great responsibilities that devolve upon him; and I hope and trust the SIGNS OF THE TIMES may be sustained and published so long as there are any of our Father's family left to read them. I would like to mention some of your correspondents whose writings have been so edifying and comforting to me, but when all write so well, it is difficult to particularize.

Trusting you will continue to write as the Spirit gives you liberty, and wishing you all a Happy New Year, I remain your sister in the hope of eternal life,

JULANA H. DICKSON.

AMANDA, Ohio, March 1, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—Have just read the March 1st number of the SIGNS. To enumerate the names of all the writers would be tedious. To reject any one communication is with me impossible, they all, to me, speak from the heart, and seem to reach down to the level of even me. For a long time I have had, as it were, a nightmare, and how good it is when it passes off and I read after those who deal in the merchandise of wisdom, which is better than that of silver, and the gain thereof than that of fine gold. What pleasure it must be to those who possess the pen of a ready writer.

I join in the request of brother Z. Ward to have some one write their views on Revelation vi. 16, 17.

Yours in tribulation,

THOMAS COLE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1905.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REPLY TO BROTHER McPHERSON.

(See communication on page 242.)

In reply to the request of brother McPherson we will just say a few words. It seems that the two women named Aholah (his tent or tabernacle,) and Aholibah (my tabernacle in her,) are used in a figure to represent the divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah. This division took place nearly four hundred years before, under kings Rehoboam and Jeroboam. From that time forward this division continued with more or less of enmity between the two kingdoms. Sometimes there was a partial union against some common enemy, but soon the fires of hatred and jealousy would break out again; the one kingdom boasted over the other. Judah especially exalted herself against Israel. Jerusalem remained in the hands of Judah according to prophecy, and Judah boasted against Israel, claiming superior sanctity and a stricter observance of the law of God than was found in Israel. With Judah in this division was the half tribe of Manasseh. The ten and one-half other tribes were numbered with Israel. In the chapter to which our brother has called attention, Judah is represented by Aholibah and Samaria or Israel by Aholah.

Now a careful reading of the chapter will show that Judah had boasted of more righteousness than Israel, but that this was denied by the Lord, speaking through the prophet. On the contrary, the inspired prophet declared (verse 11) that Judah was more corrupt than Israel in her inordinate love for the nations round about her. Israel had made a covenant with the nations round about, which was an abomination to the Lord. This is in the narrative called a committing of whoredom. But when Judah would seek to denounce Israel, the Lord said to her that she had committed still worse whoredoms, and had in this departed further from God than Israel had ever done. Neither of the two had remained faithful to the covenant which had been made with them, that God alone should be their God and King, their Husband and Savior. The Lord had espoused them alone of all the nations of the earth; he was to be their all. They were to seek all their help, all their defense, all their supplies of bread, and all riches, and the power to overcome every foe, alone in him, as a faithful wife looks to her husband for all that she ever shall need. But they had departed in their folly and unbelief from God, and were seeking their help and hope from Egypt, or Babylon, or from Assyria. In this way they were unfaithful to their Husband, as a woman who should look to some other source for that which she might desire or need. This is the general thought presented in the chapter.

How often the people of God in this gospel dispensation fall out by the way, as did Israel and Judah. Israel was more to be blamed, because she departed from the place where alone worship could be rendered in an acceptable manner under that dispensation, but the dispute involved wrong between both of

them. Judah boasted, and thought God was on her side, and that he saw no fault in her, because she retained Jerusalem and maintained the formal worship of God there, as he had commanded. But Judah was, after all, filled with evils, even as was Israel, and to a greater extent, as seen in verse eleven. Neither one had any right to exalt herself over the other; both ought to have been humbled before God, confessing their sins, and upon both, in this chapter, does the Lord denounce his judgments. They both should be filled with their whoredoms; that is, they should drink to the full the results of their agreement with their lovers, the heathen nations round about them.

In most difficulties now among the people of God there is blame belonging to both sides. Even when one side adheres to the order and walk of the house, while the other side departs and divides from the former, it is so easy for boasting to creep in, and the Lord sees still greater evils in the one who has remained at Jerusalem, than in those who have in a formal way departed. We all have need to lament and confess our sins, and no one of us has any right to say, I am holier than another. Let Judah remain at Jerusalem indeed, and continue the worship of the Lord there, as he has commanded, but let her not boast over Israel. And let both remember that they have sinned, and return to the old ways. Jealousy, which God hates, divided the twelve tribes in the first place, and jealousy, and the thousand evils which spring out of it, kept them apart. By and by both kingdoms fell and disappeared from the earth as kingdoms. God's purpose was indeed in all this, but still the things which wrought out their destruction were the evils that sprung up among them. That which they sowed, that they also reaped; it is always so.

If we feel these things, and realize these evils to be in our hearts, it will put us upon deep heart-searching, and our prayer will be, O Lord, search our hearts, and see if there be any wicked way in us, and lead us in the way everlasting. "Cleanse thou me from secret faults, * * * let them not have dominion over me." These seem to be some of the lessons presented, among many others, in this twenty-third chapter of Ezekiel.

WERE ALL MEN EQUAL BEFORE ADAM'S FALL?

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—In conversation recently with a gentleman who has a strong leaning toward the Primitive Baptists, he advanced the following idea, to which I have given much thought, and upon which I very much desire your views through the columns of the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Was the entire human race in Adam equal before God before Adam's transgression? If so, and by Adam's disobedience death passed upon all men, why did not the obedience of Christ remove all men from under the curse? If, on the other hand, all men were not equal before God prior to Adam's transgression, what effect did that sin have upon those of his posterity who were not chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world?

Your brother in the hope of life everlasting,

W. C. JONES.

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas, Feb. 17, 1905.

All that any of us can know concerning the relation of men to God must be gathered from the testimony of the inspired word. From that word it may be lawful to draw inferences which may seem plainly to be involved in the plain statements of the word, but yet even our apparently just inferences must be given up if they are in contradiction with some other plain portions of the word. There must to our limited minds always be mysteries in all the testimony of the Scriptures, because we are limited in understanding, and cannot know God or his ways to perfection. There will also

be found apparent contradictions in the word. We say apparent, but not real. All this is because we can see but in part. We must be sure that every word of the Bible is an inspired word, and that it all is true, and when it may seem to us that one portion involves a contradiction of some other portion, it is not really so, but our understanding is always at fault. The words are very solemn, "Let God be true, but every man a liar."

Now, as regards our brother's questions. First, Paul's language in Ephesians seems to settle once for all the truth that all men by nature are alike: Believers "were by nature the children of wrath, even as others," is his testimony. And, "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." This is also the testimony of Paul in Romans. This would seem to settle the one fact that all men transgressed and fell from their first estate in Adam, and with him, and the conclusion would seem to be irresistible that before the fall all men were upright in Adam. This we will leave upon the above scriptural testimony, and come to consider the chief question of our brother, viz: "If so, and by Adam's disobedience, death passed upon all men, why did not the obedience of Christ remove all men from under the curse?"

There is but one answer to this, and this one answer is sufficient: "Election" makes all the difference. Our God did not choose all men; Christ did not die for all men; all men are not born again; and all men are not saved, simply because God did not so will. He said, "I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy," and Paul adds, "whom he will he hardeneth." The doctrine of election is not only taught in the word directly by plain statements, but it is in full harmony with all the principles of doctrine involved in salvation by sovereign grace alone. This is so much the case, that if election be not true, salvation by grace is not true; and if salvation by grace be true, then election is true. Still further, election is involved in every heart-felt christian experience; for quickening the dead is according to the will of God, and by his power, and unless he performs this work all remain dead in sin. The only reason that some live unto God and enter eternal glory, is that God willed to save and quicken them; and the only reason that some remain in the death of sin and in condemnation, is that God did not will to save and quicken them. If any one dislikes this doctrine, we have no dispute with him, but turn him over to dispute with the word of God. We shall not fight with him, but leave him fighting against God. Paul settles all this matter in the ninth chapter of Romans, and from this chapter we learn that to fight against election is to fight against God.

All men fell in Adam, and all men are alike in him condemned, and all alike must finally perish in their sins (if the law of God has any meaning or force in it,) unless election comes in and saves some. Election has come in, let us thank God. Election has secured the salvation of some men who are no better by nature than others, and some of them worse by practice; election fixed the number for whom Christ should die; election fixed the number who should be made alive unto God by the Spirit; and election has fixed the number of those who shall finally join the redeemed in glory; election answers all our brother's questions, or rather the questions of his friend. Our blessed Lord saw all his loved ones as he hung upon the cross, he died for

them, and he died for no others; this is plain Bible testimony. A thousand questions may occur to us, or to the minds of men in general, but all these questions do not affect the truth of this testimony in the word; if we cannot answer these questions that does not matter. Our questioning is a small thing, but the word of God is truth.

It seems absurd to say, as some have done, that the blood of Christ was sufficient for the redemption of all men. We mean it is absurd and foolish to argue about that at all. We know that Christ did not come to die for all men, and that he did not die for all men; why then waste time arguing whether his blood was of sufficient virtue to have atoned for all men, had he so willed? With us the great question always has been, Did he die for our sins? Our whole life since we were a child has been much occupied with a searching for some evidence that his atonement was for ourself. We have never had one doubt concerning the efficacy of his atonement, we have never had one doubt concerning the truth of personal, unconditional election, we have never questioned that this election was before the world began, and that it was not based in any sense upon any foreseen good works in the elect. If he did die for us, we know that his blood was sufficient for all our need of cleansing, and that in that blood we are clean before God; this is enough to consider. If we are in debt ten thousand talents, and have not one farthing to pay, our chief concern is to know whether our surety is able to pay that debt. Whether he is able to pay all the debts of all other men in this case will not be our chief concern. His ability we may not doubt, but what is his will? In the word we are told that Christ's will is to save his people, no others are embraced. Here then we must leave the whole matter. It is utterly profitless to argue that his blood possessed sufficient virtue to cover the sins of all men; we know from the word that it did not do so.

We trust that this may prove of some satisfaction to brother Jones, and his friend also, should he read what we have here written. Let the word of God be the final arbiter of every question.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

REMARKS ON RELIGIOUS REVIVALS.

It is always cheering to the saints of God to witness the outpouring of his Spirit in quickening and bringing into his gospel fold the subjects of his saving grace, and the more clearly we can trace the work of God in revivals of religion, the more abundantly we rejoice. But wherever we detect the finger-prints of men in their production, our joy is dampened, and our confidence in them shaken. We have been a member in the Baptist church more than fifty years, and in that time have witnessed many revivals. Some that have afforded us inexpressible joy and gratitude to God, and others which have filled us with the most fearful apprehensions. That men, by their activity and zeal, can get up revivals of religion, or religious revivals, by stirring appeals to the passions and to the natural judgment of unregenerated sinners, which will attract and gather them in excited crowds, and produce intense excitement, and ultimately draw large numbers into the church, we cannot doubt, and for a time the cause may seem to flourish, but when the net has been drawn to the shore, a large proportion of the fish are found to be of no value to the

church of God. Every plant, says the divine Master, which my Father has not planted, shall be rooted up. From this declaration we infer that every one that comes into the church without his saving grace, shall be expelled without his favor.

Well do we remember the old fashioned revivals, in which God's holy arm was made bare for the salvation of sinners, when such things as protracted meetings, anxious benches, coming forward publicly for prayers, and the like, had not been introduced in the Baptist churches. Then the Baptists were one people and one communion the world over. When we heard of a revival among the Baptists we knew what the term signified; and those gathered into the churches were not offended at the doctrine of God's sovereignty in the election, predestination irresistible calling, and complete salvation of his children; nor with the faithful exposure of all manner of heresy, will-worship, delusion and idolatry abounding in the world. Then the Baptists, as a distinct people, were not reckoned with the popular denominations of the earth. Then they desired no revival that was or could be gotten up; they delighted only in those revivals which come down from above, in which they had the evidence that they were seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. But after the importation from England of a theory which was labeled "Fuller's Gospel," very soon the poison of Fuller's heresy began to spread, and many Baptist churches, which about that time began to enjoy some respite from the oppression of the New England Puritans, began to show symptoms of infection. The truth is, the Baptists never could endure prosperity to any great extent, without, like Israel of old, running into idolatry. Following an under current of Fullerism, which had promised to raise the Baptists from the degredation of a dunghill (to use Fuller's classic language,) to a respectable position among the popular religious denominations, came in stealthily at first, but more openly afterwards, a lusting after the leeks and onions, and especially the fleshpots of Egypt. This *manna* from above, on which the saints had been so long and so miraculously fed, began to be regarded as light food. The Anakims, their neighbors, who lived on the productions of the earth, grew up to be giants, and looked down with contempt upon the poor, little, dwarfish Baptists; and under these circumstances many of the Baptists betrayed a desire to become like the nations round about them. Thus hardening their hearts, as in the day of provocation, became vain in their imaginations. This spirit of discontentment and rebellion soon produced a wide-spread murmuring among them; that the place where they dwelt was too strait, and some were heard to say, Go to, let us make brick, and we will build a tower, &c. The more enterprising and zealous complained that their brethren were too inert, inactive, and withal, too tight-laced, folding their hands and waiting for God to build up his cause. But their active and sprightly companions sprang forward to steady the ark of God, which seemed to them to jostle on the new cart. A new era had begun, the law of Christ, as the only standard for faith and order in the house of God, was ignored by the enterprising, for they said, "If we wait for God to do the work, it will never be done. The day of miracles is past, and we must 'Up and make us gods to go before us.'"

The ministry which God had hitherto given and sustained among the Baptists,

came to be regarded as inefficient, they were too illiterate, too slow, too tight-laced; or, in other words, too confident that what God had begun he would himself perform until the day of Jesus Christ, and so inert had they become that they declared that even if the olive should not blossom, and there should be no herd in the stall, they would still trust in the Lord, and even though he should slay them, they still would trust in him. The wise and prudent ones, therefore, determined to get these sleepy drones out of the way, and soon Baptist colleges began to arise, Theological Schools were instituted, Baptist State Educational Societies were chartered by the Legislature, Sabbath Schools and Bible Classes, for teaching "Every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord," were multiplied. Missionary Societies were organized, and plans matured for collecting Missionary funds. High sounding titles of a flattering kind were given to men. Presidents, directors, life membership, &c., became merchantable commodities, and were bought and sold in the market. The antiquated notion that it required grace to save sinners, where money was plenty, and that "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," was thought to belong to a former age, was not adapted to this day of improvements. Baptist meeting-houses now began to wear steeples and towers, or domes of imposing dimensions; bells were found necessary to drive the bad spirits away and call the multitudes together; a learned but graceless ministry filled the pulpits, and the Baptists began to look respectable in the adulterous eyes of the world. Now to fill up these costly and splendid edifices with paying converts something more attractive to the world than the preaching of Christ and him crucified, was deemed necessary. Protracted meetings, anxious benches, exciting appeals to the carnal passions of men, women and children were regarded as the most effective agencies, and hence they were brought into requisition. Much experimenting was required to demonstrate the comparative efficiency of the new inventions. Union prayer meetings, monthly concerts of prayer, with numerous other contrivances of men, were tried, with a view to either scare people into religion, or to scare religion into the people. At the time of the introduction of these new things among professed Baptists, the party in favor of them was in the minority, but with all this machinery under their control they were soon multiplied into an overwhelming majority, and as there was no legitimate affinity between the old primitive order and these machine-made Baptists, a formal separation became inevitable, and ultimately took place. In the division the old order were called by a number of names, among which were, Old School or Primitive Baptists; the new order are known as New School or Missionary Baptists. These two kinds of Baptists have become so distinct that neither claim any relationship to the other. Indeed, the Primitive Baptists have no greater opposers or more bitter enemies to contend with on earth than are found in the ranks of the New School.

Perhaps brother Strickland and others are ready to ask us, What has this recital of past history to do with the revivals of which that brother writes? We reply, Simply this, to hold up the history of the past as a beacon upon the walls, that our dear brethren in the ecstacy of their feelings caused by the revival, may remember the rocks on which the Baptists of former

times have been wrecked, divided and split.

By no means would we utter a word to dampen the spirits of precious brethren who are enjoying the gracious smiles of their covenant God. We have greatly mistaken the characters of brethren Strickland and Hume, if they would designedly depart from the ancient landmarks of Zion, or forsake the footsteps of the flock of our Redeemer. But, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall," is an apostolic admonition. May we all heed it. There are a few expressions in brother Strickland's account of the revival that we feel constrained to notice, not in a fault-finding spirit, but in all love and tenderness. At our time of life, being now more than three score years of age, and about half that time have conducted the publication of this paper, we are aware that the time of our departure is not very far distant. We feel desirous, before the grave shall close over our mortal body, to faithfully, but affectionately, warn all our dear brethren in Christ to shun the appearance of evil in all things. Adhere strictly to the precepts and examples of our Lord and Master in all your religious deportment, and we trust that neither of our ministering brethren, nor any of the precious converts of their late revivals, will be hurt with us, or mistake our design in reviewing the expressions to which we have alluded.

First. Brethren, your meetings have been *protracted.* Now, where the Spirit of the Lord is manifested, drawing the hearts of the saints together, and in the display of his quickening power and grace, in causing the dead to hear the voice of the Son of God, and they feel disposed to protract such meetings for the worship of God and the edification of the saints, as did the apostles in the early days of christianity, we have not the slightest objection to offer. At such seasons we have sometimes felt to say,

"My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this;
Would sit and sing herself away
To everlasting bliss."

But to appoint a protracted meeting as a means of grace, or for the purpose of getting up a revival, or producing an excitement, is, in our view, like attempting to do by our enchantments that which we know can only be done by the mighty power of God himself. A meeting was once protracted at Jerusalem, after the ascension of our Redeemer, because Jesus had commanded the apostles to tarry at Jerusalem for a specific reason. And they, with other disciples, were in one place, and of one accord, until the day of Pentecost was fully come. A glorious revival took place while they were together, not as a result of their being together, but as the result of the Mediatorial triumph of the Son of God. They did not claim that they had gotten up this revival, but they assure us that it did not come up, but it came down. While they, in obedience to Jesus, were all of one accord in one place, "suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting."—Acts ii. 2. Thus we have the testimony that this reviving sound came from above, and God poured out on them of his Spirit. So all spiritual blessings are given the saints in Christ, according as he hath chosen them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. (Eph. i. 3, 4.) And every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning. On this occasion a vast multitude were quickened, and made to gladly receive the

word; and they were baptized, and added to the church. The apostles did not claim this as resulting from anything they had done to produce it, but told us frankly that this was something God had long had in store; it was that which had been spoken of by Joel more than seven hundred years before, and some seven hundred years before any of them were born. The protraction of the meeting in Indiana, we should judge, was like that at Jerusalem, were it not for a remark of brother Strickland in another part of the letter, which seems to reflect severely on ministers who have not enjoyed similar revivals, as dull, cold and inefficient, under whose labors no church can prosper. Now we must in all candor, and in kindness, contend that revivals that are at all profitable to the church of God, are not the result of the vivacity, warmth or efficiency of the minister. All the ministers of Christ are in themselves dull, cold and inefficient, until animated with a live coal from off the altar of the Lord. Paul, with all his inspiration, disclaimed all efficiency in himself, and exclaimed, "And who is sufficient for these things?" Or what is efficient? Jesus has said to his disciples, "Without me ye can do nothing." Where then is the efficiency for these things?

Again, brother Strickland remarks, "Neither can any minister of Christ be profitable and fully efficient as a minister of the cross of Christ unless the church does her duty."

Does our dear brother mean that the will or works of men or angels can give efficiency to the preached gospel? That the success of the gospel really rests upon duties faithfully performed by the church? How then did Paul affirm that the excellency of the gospel is not of us, but of God? Why are we told that Paul may plant, Apollos may water, but God alone can give the increase? We have no reason to doubt that the church, and all the saints, ministers included, are sometimes, if not at all times, remiss in the discharge of their duties, but we would greatly prefer to hear our brother say, When God pours out his Spirit upon the thirsty hill of Zion, the plants of his right hand planting will be revived, the church will awake to a sense of neglected duties, the dull ministers will lift up the voice with renewed energy, sinners will be pricked in the heart, and the redeemed of the Lord will be gathered into the fold, and all will be the result of those seasons of refreshing which come from the presence of the Lord.

We also believe that God has intimately connected the prosperity of his church and kingdom with the faithfulness of her members and her gifts, but we do not believe that connection is such as to make the prosperity of the kingdom to depend on the faithfulness of either the members or the gifts. For, "Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." But when God's set time to favor Zion comes, God sends her prosperity, and in a way that she shall see, and feel, and confess, that it is "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." And when God gives prosperity to his church, then, and only then, her vine will flourish, and her pomegranates will give a goodly smell. When he commands the north winds to blow, and the south winds to come, then the spices will flow out. This will enliven the dull minister if he be a servant of God, and this will wake up the sleepy spouse of the Redeemer, and thus the connection of faithfulness in the church, and her prosperity is effected, so that the praise is not of men, but of God.

That there are ministers and members

of churches who are worldly, and allow much of the precious time allotted for social religious intercourse to be spent in worldly conversation, talking of politics, or of the war, is very probable; but it is an exciting time, and we are yet in the flesh, compassed with infirmities, so that it is hardly to be expected that we can divest ourselves from all anxiety on the subject. But it is to be hoped that the saints will, as far as possible, divest themselves from these cares when we meet to worship God, and with the poet say,

"Far from my thoughts, vain world, be gone,
Let my religious hours alone;
Fain would my faith my Savior see,
But wait a visit, Lord, from thee."

When Paul says we are laborers together with God, we are not to understand that we are fellow-laborers with God, or co-laborers, for we, that is, Paul and Apollos, were laborers together. They were not laboring to help God build the church, for his church is not made with hands, it is God's building, an house, which stands eternal in the heavens. We are God's husbandry, or plantation, or garden, where he implants the seeds of grace, which spring up and bring forth fruit to God. Paul and Apollos were laboring together in planting or preaching the word: "So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase."

One remark further of brother Strickland we must notice, wherein he speaks of a class of preachers who have too much to say against error, especially the abominable, God-dishonoring and heaven-daring doctrines of Arminians, who give their (the Arminians) errors more attention than they give to the errors of their own brethren. (Brother Strickland will not probably classify us with that sort, as we sometimes pay some attention, as he will perceive, to errors of our brethren.) These, he complains, "Dwell long and loud on the doctrine of predestination and election, to the exclusion of practical and experimental religion."

Now we are somewhat puzzled to know how to understand this complaint. What more exalted theme has ever moved the tongues or thrilled the hearts of men or angels, than that of the doctrine of predestination and election, we cannot conceive. Is not the predestinating government of God worthy of our loudest, longest notes? Why should they not dwell long and loud upon the doctrine affirmed by the Holy Ghost, proclaimed by God himself, reiterated by patriarchs and prophets, heralded by inspired apostles, and lying as the basis of all our hopes for heaven and immortality? How the preaching of this doctrine can exclude practical or experimental religion, we cannot understand, since no practice or experience can be worth having in its absence. If God has not chosen us in Christ, and predestinated us to the adoption of children, and if God hath not before ordained us to walk in good works, all our practice and all our experience will leave us far short of heaven and eternal happiness. "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." If there be no election and predestination, then there can be no inheritance of glory for us or for anybody else. Then let the brethren shun not to proclaim election and predestination, and expose the abomination of antichrist, and exhort the saints to stand fast in the doctrine of God our Savior, and to walk in all his ordinances, and see that in the excitement of revivals none

be admitted to fellowship who do not love the doctrine of salvation by grace alone.

We trust that our brother will not be offended with us for the candor with which we have remarked on his letter, but carefully examine the points to which we have called his attention, and may the Lord give us all the light and wisdom we need, and crown us in his kingdom. Amen.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 1, 1862.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, at the residence of Mrs. Keefer, in Columbus, Ohio, March 22nd, 1905, Wm. Henry Phalor, of Columbus, Ohio, and Miss Carrie May Birkhead, of Commercial Point, Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

[IN compliance with the request of Mrs. Maria Hodgson, of Washington, D. C., we publish the following obituaries of her three sisters and her husband. Mrs. Hodgson has been a long time lover of the truth, and a subscriber to the SIGNS. Though her name is not numbered with the visible church, yet we are sure that her name is written in the book of life of the Lamb. We very willingly comply with the request, and trust that the blessing of God may abide with this, the only survivor of a family of twelve, as she has informed us.—ED.]

Mrs. Ann Smoot departed this life May 27th, 1886, at her home in Occoquan, Va., in the 75th year of her age. For several years before, she had been in failing health, and for the year preceding her death the decline was very rapid. She seemed to have a premonition of her death, and constantly affirmed that her departure was at hand. She was a woman of vigorous mind, and one of the firmest and most uncompromising of Baptists. Blessed with a rich experience of gospel grace, her faith laid hold upon the deepest things of eternal truth; yet with her there was constant fear with reference to her personal interest in these things. This kept her from making a public profession of religion until late in life. She was baptized by the late Elder R. C. Leachman, Aug. 30th, 1868. She came to the church after a long and weary struggle, under a sense of her natural unworthiness of a place among the saints, and among them found the one desire of her life answered in their holy and blessed fellowship. The brethren frequently gathered at her home, and a precious fellowship was experienced among them. Most of them preceded her to their long, eternal home. They, like her, have done with the things of earth, and have entered forever the portals of rest. They were a precious company of Baptists, children of conflict and care, devoted to the truth of God. The ministers serving the churches after her mind was exercised upon this subject were Elders Trott, Kidwell, Leachman and J. L. Purington. These all passed away before her to wear the heavenly crown.

She was born in Prince William Co., Va., June 19th, 1811, and was married to Mr. Wm. H. Smoot, June, 1837. For the few months preceding her death she suffered very much, and her sufferings increased toward the close. For many years she struggled with the thought of death, knowing well what a fearful thing it is to die without sustaining grace. This peculiar fearfulness of death is experienced alone by those who are born of the Spirit of God; one ignorant of the righteousness of God will rush on like the unthinking horse into the conflict. The blessed Jesus in the sixty-ninth Psalm, as the Head of the church expresses the experience of the members of his body; he says, "I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me." This truth was fulfilled in her experience when the waves of death rolled around her, and she met the fearful shock. "Make haste, O God, to deliver me; make haste to help me, O Lord," was the cry of her soul. "Would it not be a great blessing," she remarked the night before she died, while in agony of pain, "to be delivered from all this suffering?" The Lord graciously prepared her for the closing scene; she gently fell asleep in her God. Her words of encouragement and comfort, so often heard in conflict and trial, can be heard no more. Her cherished form and features can be seen no more among us, her voice is silent in death. But faith looks beyond the grave, the resurrection of the dead to holy, immortal light rises above the gloom of the grave, and the weary are forever at rest, there is no mortal pain, no doubts or fears, and no sickness nor death. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." The king of terrors has met the King of kings, and lies vanquished at his feet. The eternal curtains are lifted, the everlasting doors are opened, and the weary sufferer upon the shores of time enters the peaceful and eternal joy of unending rest.

The funeral took place on the 29th inst. Elder White preached a comforting sermon.

ALSO,

DIED—At the residence of her sister, in Washington, D. C., August 28th, 1891, **Miss Susan Langfitt,** aged 74 years. The deceased was born in Prince William Co., Va., and was the last but one left living of twelve children. She came of a family noted for their love of the truth and their devotion to the Old School Baptists. Several of her sisters and her mother were members of the church, and the deceased, while not making a public profession of re-

ligion, was a firm friend of this people, and attended the meetings of no other denomination. The best years of her life had been devoted to the care of her sisters, she having waited upon several of them in their last sickness. She also appeared conscious of her condition as a justly condemned sinner in the sight of a just and holy God, manifesting a knowledge of the fact that the blessings of immortality were all in his power to withhold or to grant, as seemeth good in his sight, remarking a short time before she died, that while she endeavored to pray to the Lord for his mercy, yet, she said, "He has showed me no promises." The deceased had been sick for some time previous to her death, but was thought to be improving; she died, however, very suddenly. Her funeral occurred August 31st.

May the God of all grace and comfort sanctify her death to the good of all who mourn. With him alone are the issues of life and of death, and we rejoice in the knowledge of his unbounded power, and that all things and events hang upon his irrevocable decree.

ALSO,

DIED—At the home of her sister, Mrs. Maria L. Hodgson, in Washington, D. C., July 4th, 1887, sister **Mary Spillman,** in the 81st year of her age. The deceased was born in Prince William Co., Va. She experienced a hope in early life, but it was not until a few years past that she was baptized in the fellowship of the church in Alexandria, Va., by the late Elder Joseph L. Purington. She was punctual in her attendance upon the meetings of the church, and delighted in a clear, faithful, discriminating proclamation of truth. The world and its vanities had no charms for her, but the glory of the eternal kingdom was with her a theme of continued delight. To attend the meetings of the saints, to visit them and converse upon the things of the kingdom, seemed to be her only object in life. She calmly awaited the summons from on high. She talked freely of her death, and cheerfully expressed her desire to depart and be with Jesus. Death was to her a welcome deliverance from earthly suffering. We shall miss her much in our solemn feasts, her fervent love and earnest hope, but we must bow before him who doeth all things well. She leaves two sisters, besides other relatives, to mourn our loss. May the gracious arm of our God sustain us.

ALSO,

Joseph F. Hodgson, one of the oldest citizens of the district, a prominent member of the G. A. R., died yesterday morning, after a long illness, at his home, 1108 Thirteenth street northwest, Washington, D. C. Mr. Hodgson was born in Washington seventy-seven years ago, and had lived there all his life. He was one of the first volunteers to offer his services to the country in 1861, and was a member of the President's Guard at the time of Lincoln's inauguration. The deceased leaves a wife and three children, all of whom reside in this city.

IT becomes my sad duty to chronicle the death of our dear brother and fellow-servant, **Elder B. L. Landers.** He was born in Gwinnett Co., Ga., August 23rd, 1828, and died at his home near Emmet, Ark., March 1st, 1905, making his pilgrimage on earth 76 years, 6 months and 6 days. He was given a good hope through grace in his early manhood, and was received into the fellowship of a church I think in Union Co., Ark., but I am not informed as to the time, nor by whom he was baptized. Soon after he united with the church he became burdened as to his duty to preach the word, which was soon discovered by the church, and he was therefore liberated to exercise his gift so far as granted by the church, and July 29th, 1871, he was ordained to the full functions of the gospel ministry by a presbytery consisting of Elders T. J. Foster and D. B. Almand, at Ephesus church, in Nevada Co., Ark., of which he was a member, and which he served continuously and faithfully until his death.

We feel that in the death of our dear brother we have sustained an irreparable loss. He is and will be sadly missed by the church and by his friends, but most of all by his dear wife and children. His uprightness and honesty as a citizen, and his exemplary and faithful life as a minister, gained for him the respect and confidence of his fellow-men, and the confidence and sincere love of the church. He was deep and profound in thought, yet his gift was such as was adapted to the comfort of babes in Christ, as well as to the comfort and edification of those who are of "full age." I never knew a more gifted brother in conversation. I never met him but what he had something to say about the things pertaining to the kingdom, and he would always in faithfulness and kindness tell me of my faults. He was widely known, and until a few years back served several churches faithfully and acceptably, having to ride long distances on horseback to serve them. While sick he expressed no fear or horror of death, but rather desired to depart and be with Christ; his only regret was to leave his dear companion. I feel assured his spirit has gone to God who gave it, while his time-worn body is resting from its labors, and I believe when Jesus shall come the second time without sin unto salvation, it will be changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body; then he will enter into eternal rest in that house made without hands, there to unite with the blood-washed throng in anthems of praise to their loving Redeemer around the throne of glory forever.

His interment took place on the 2nd inst., in the burying-ground near Ephesus church, and was attended by as large an assembly as I ever saw at a burial. The poor, unworthy writer of this notice tried to speak some words of comfort to the bereaved family and friends. May the Lord reconcile them to the just dispensation of his providence.

P. H. JAMES.

DIED—At his home, in Halcott, Greene Co., N. Y., March 18th, 1905, of "la grippe" and an enfeebled condition from shock and age, brother **Thomas J. Streeter,** in his 81st year. Brother Streeter made a public profession of faith in Jesus many years ago, and at the time of his death was a member of the First Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., and as long as strength allowed he was glad to meet the brotherhood, and delighted to see the brethren in peace. His last days were spent in meditating on the goodness of God to poor sinners, such as he felt himself to be. He has left to mourn their loss, his widow, one son and two daughters, and their families, with other relatives, and the church of his membership. May the Lord comfort the mourners.

ALSO,

DIED—At the residence of her daughter, near Arena, Delaware Co., N. Y., March 22nd, 1905, from the effects of old age, sister **Elizabeth Robinson Haynes,** in her 97th year. Sister Haynes professed faith in Jesus and united with the Old School Baptist church sixty years or more ago, and retained her spiritual interest as long as reason lasted to talk of her loving Savior and his mercy to her. Her location was such that she was for many years deprived of the privilege of meetings. Four years ago she sent for me to come and see her: accordingly myself and wife visited her in what then appeared to be her last sickness. At that time she requested me to attend her funeral. She revived however, and lived four years. Her funeral was held at Arena, on Saturday, March 25th, and her mortal remains were laid beside her husband, who preceded her to the tomb a number of years. Sister Haynes leaves several children, and other relatives, to mourn, but from the knowledge of their mother's faith, and the good old age their mother lived, we are assured they mourn not as those that have no hope.

According to request, both brother Streeter's and sister Haynes' funerals were attended by me under rather trying circumstances, on account of distance, bad roads and poor health.

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLY CORNERS, N. Y., March 26, 1905.

Jerusha Cann Hiltabrand Hartenbower was born at Springfield, Tenn., August 22nd, 1825, and died at her home at Tonica, Ill., Sept. 15th, 1904, aged 79 years and 23 days. May 25th, 1848, she was united in marriage to Christian Hartenbower, in Putnam Co., Ill. Seven children blessed this union, viz: Henry F., George F., William Franklin, Emily, (who is the wife of G. J. Williams, of Des Moines, Iowa,) John E., Catherine C., (wife of A. B. Grant) and Simeon (deceased). Deceased united with the Primitive Baptist Church about fifty years ago, and lived a consistent member until called to her final reward. Her death is mourned by a very large circle of relatives, including twenty-seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. She was the eldest of a family of twelve children, all but one living to mature age. One sister and three brothers still survive.

Elder W. A. Thompson spoke at the funeral as one who had known the deceased for thirty-six years; had known her in her home life and in the religious duties of the church. Language simply failed him to express his appreciation of the life she lived, her quiet yet always faithful performance of her duties in the sphere of domestic relations. With more than his usual fluency of speech the Elder proceeded to set forth the joys of the glory land where sickness and sorrow and death are unknown, assuring the friends that the one for whom they mourned had already entered into rest, to be forever with her Lord. The funeral was attended by a large concourse of people, affording abundant evidence that the deceased was widely known and highly esteemed. But her real worth was best appreciated in the community where she had lived so many years. The body was laid to rest in the Tonica cemetery. Friends and relatives from abroad were: Elder W. A. Thompson, of Springfield; Mrs. James Matern, of Franklin Grove; Mrs. James Wood, of Paw Paw; T. Keegan and A. W. Hoberg, of Peru; B. F. Hiltabrand, of Bloomington; G. W. Hiltabrand, of Henry; and Mrs. Alma Hartenbower, of Des Moines, Iowa.

DIED—**Mrs. Phœbe Jane Arnow,** March 5th, 1905, at the residence of her daughter, in West Farms, N. Y. Sister Arnow was born May 10th, 1824, at City Island, N. Y., and was therefore 80 years, 9 months and 25 days old. Her maiden name was Horton. Three children survive her. Many years ago she was baptized in the fellowship of the Ebenezer church, of New York city, by Elder S. H. Durand, and continued a beloved and faithful member to the end.

The funeral service was held at the residence of her daughter, Mrs. D. Mapes, West Farms, N. Y. The text spoken from was Col. iii. 3. The remains were interred at Westchester, N. Y.

JOHN McCONNELL.

NEW YORK, N. Y., April 4, 1905.

DIED—At the home of her sister, near Salisbury, Md., Nov. 19th, 1904, **Mrs. Mary Riggin,** aged about 50 years. She was received into the fellowship of the Nassaongo Baptist church June 2nd, 1879, was baptized by Elder T. M. Poulson. She was a faithful and consistent member. Her remains were interred in the family burying ground to await the coming of him who was her hope and resurrection.

A FRIEND.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. T. V. Richardson, Md., $3.00; A Friend, D. C., $5.00.—Total, $8.00.

APPOINTMENTS.

If the Lord will, I will attend appointments as follows: at Washington, D. C., Sunday night, April 9th; at Salt Lick, Bath Co., Ky., Monday night, April 10th; Mt. Sterling, Tuesday night; Little Flock, Wednesday, 2:30 p. m.; Salt River, Thursday, 11 o'clock a. m.; Lexington, 27 Walton St., Thursday night; Sadieville, Friday morning; Georgetown, Friday night; Winchester, Saturday night and Sunday night, April 15th and 16th; Mt. Carmel, Sunday morning; Mays Lick, Monday and Tuesday, April 17th and 18th; Mill Creek, Ohio, Thursday, April 20th. SILAS H. DURAND.

MEETINGS.

There will be a three days meeting held with the Sidling Hill Old School Baptist Church, Fulton Co., Pa., commencing at eleven o'clock on Friday before the first Sunday in May, 1905. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth, and we hope to be remembered by our ministering brethren. Those coming by railroad will come on the B. & O. R. R. to Hancock, on Thursday, about one o'clock, and pass over the bridge to the Hancock side, where they will be met and conveyed to place of meeting, a distance of twenty miles.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

The Baltimore Association is appointed to be held with the Harford church, Harford County, Md., beginning Wednesday before the third Sunday in May, (17th) 1905, and continuing three days. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth to meet with us. Those coming by way of Baltimore will take train leaving North Avenue station, Md. & Pa. R. R., on Tuesday before, at 3:25 or 4:20 p. m. for Long Green or Forest Hill. Those coming by way of York will take train leaving there at 1:30 p. m. for Forest Hill, on the same railroad. Passengers are advised to be at the above named stations in time, as there will probably be some change in the time-table about the first of May.

NATHAN GRAFTON, Church Clerk.

The Lord willing, the Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Rock Springs church, Lancaster Co., Pa., commencing on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, (24th) 1905. Those coming by way of Philadelphia will take train over the P., W. & B. R. R. to connect at Perryville with the 4 p. m. train on the Columbia & Port Deposit R. R. for Conowingo, Md., on Tuesday, May 23rd. Friends coming from Baltimore will make the same connection for Conowingo, where they will all be met at the same time and cared for. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us, especially the ministering brethren, and hope we may have a pleasant and profitable meeting, and that the Lord may grant us his presence.

D. M. THOMAS, Clerk.

The Delaware River Association will be held with the Locktown Old School Baptist church, near Frenchtown, N. J., beginning Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (May 31st) 1905, and continuing the first two days of June. Brethren and friends are cordially invited to attend.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the New Vernon church, Sullivan Co., N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1905. All of like precious faith with us will be cordially welcomed.

Elder Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in Hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

717 Howard St., Detroit, Mich.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m., in the Red Men's Hall, First and Congress Streets in Troy, N. Y., and at 2:30 p. m. in West Sand Lake, N. Y., at the home of Mrs. Moul. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at the Hall, corner of 19th St. and 8th Ave., fifth floor. Elevator entrance on either 19th St. or 8th Ave.

10:30 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 73. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1905. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LOOKING BACKWARD.

I HAVE selected the motto at the head of this article as a foundation, to review my life since I received a hope in Christ, about forty-four years ago. It is suggested to my mind to dedicate these few thoughts to the aged believers in Christ, those who have been long on the road Zionward. The young believer just starting out on the christian journey has all before him, but the aged can look back. The words of Scripture in my mind are found in Deuteronomy viii. 2, the language of Moses to the children of Israel: "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness." I feel what I may write will be more or less scattering; I do not feel able to write a clear and concise article, but such as I have give I unto you. If God should enable me to write anything that would be of benefit to one of his aged pilgrims, give him all the glory. Paul, the apostle of Jesus, in writing to the church at Corinth, (2 Cor. iii. 5,) says, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything, as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;" so I feel my ignorance in divine things unless God is pleased to lead me into the knowledge of his truth. I ask you, dear brethren and sisters, to pass by my imperfections, I am very imperfect in thought, word and deed.

We have just entered upon a new year: as we look back over the past year doubtless you, as well as I, find much to be thankful for; God has bestowed many rich and precious blessings upon us; I feel very unworthy of all the good I have received from the Lord. In the year upon which we are just entering God only knows what it shall bring to us; we can look backward, but not forward. I have been taking a look backward over my life since, I trust, God gave me a hope in Jesus Christ. Israel of old was told by Moses to remember all the way God had led them, so I wish to look back over the forty-four years since I united with the Old School Baptist Church: I am led to recall the way I have come in this wilderness of sin and sorrow; how crooked has been my path, how many things I have done that caused me shame and grief, and which caused me to go to God and beg him to be merciful to me, a sinner. It is through God's mercy and

compassion I live and enter upon this new year. I think how kind and forgiving the saints have been to me, to bear with me these long years in the church. About forty-five years ago, on a certain Sunday afternoon my soul was lifted up out of a horrible darkness and distress, in which I had suffered severely for probably three years, expecting hell to be my portion forever; but on that never-to-be-forgotten afternoon, peace like a river flowed into my soul, joy unspeakable was mine; on the wings of his love I was carried above, nor envied Elijah his seat; sin and sorrow fled away, and joy unspeakable filled my soul. I just felt then that I wanted to go to Jesus and tell him how much I loved him for the love he had bestowed upon such a vile sinner as I. O the joy and comfort I enjoyed, for some time no trouble at all; perfect peace filled my soul; the name of Jesus when mentioned would bring happy tears to my eyes. The words recorded in the prophecy of Isaiah i. 18, came to my mind when I was suffering: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." I felt that was for me, I was a scarlet sinner; the burden fled away, scarlet sins were washed as white as snow in the Redeemer's blood; precious hour, the happiest hour I ever experienced before or since that time.

Right here I wish to notice my first great mistake during those happy days; I said to myself, I shall see no more sorrow, sin is gone forever, my Savior is with me, and I will live a pure and holy life as long as I am in this world; no more trouble with sin and Satan; I shall just worship and adore the name of my dear Savior all the days of my life; but how mistaken I was. Not many months had gone before to my surprise the flame of love died down, troubled thoughts took the place of joy, the light of God's countenance was withdrawn, and again I was in trouble, and wondered if I could have been mistaken in regard to that time of joy I had felt, whether it was just a fancy of a disordered mind, and not God's pardoning love. I was just entering the school of experience as I trust, I thought the carnal mind was gone, no more to trouble me; I had not learned at that time that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that the carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be; there was my mistake. Dear brethren and sisters, have any of you been there in your experience? Some of us have been traveling in this wilderness many years, and I trust we have been learning many things we did not know when we first started on our pilgrimage.

I notice another great mistake I made: I said to myself, I find by painful experience I am not what I had hoped I would be, living a christian life, but when I get old then I can be what I want to be, and live a holy life. As I looked into the faces of the old christians, and their faces as they sat in the house of God looked so heavenly, so calm, they had no evil thoughts, I said, When I get their age I will be like them, so good. But to my surprise, when they talked of their experience they spake of being such poor sinners, unable to think or perform one good act, and said they were not worthy of a place in the church of God. In my latter years I have had a very painful experience of the depravity of this Adamic nature; sin, hateful sin, will be in our flesh, and will pursue us till death releases us from this mortal flesh, then we shall be

free, and not before. Paul, the apostle of Jesus Christ, in Romans vii. 23, says he finds a law in his members warring against the law of his mind, bringing him into captivity to the law of sin, &c. Under a deep sense of that captivity he cries out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Sin is an indwelling companion that will be in us in spite of all our groanings to be free from it, and it often spoils all our enjoyment when we try to engage in the worship of God, at least I find it so. Dear, aged believer, do you have such an experience of the depravity of this fallen nature? If you have, we are traveling the same road. I hope for rest in God in eternal glory at last.

These are some of the things I have experienced in these forty years I have been traveling, as I trust, Zionward. Dear friends, this life is not all dark, light has shined out of darkness and shined in our hearts, and we are at times enabled to rejoice in the dear Savior of sinners. The apostle Paul comes with this comfortable assurance in his letter to the Romans, (vi. 14,) that "sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Hence sin cannot destroy the believer, and though sin is still in our members, and causes great sorrow, yet it shall not have power over us to destroy us; Jesus died and rose again, and destroyed him that had the power of death. How sweet grace sounds to the believing sinner, the poor pilgrim buffeted by Satan, as he often is.

"Grace, 'tis a charming sound,
Harmonious to the ear;
Heaven with the echo shall resound,
And all the saints shall hear."

The apostle declares in Romans v. 20, that, "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." So the sweet thought comes that though sin does abound in us in our fleshly nature much to our sorrow, yet grace does much more abound to our joy and comfort. Here are some sunny spots along this road we are reviewing; therefore the keynote of the song of joy is grace. Some professors of religion have no use for grace, they have found a better way they think, but the saints of God must have grace as their support and comfort as they tread the thorny road. As we grow in years we grow in experience; many of the things the young believer does not know, he learns afterwards; in the purpose of God the deep things of God are taught the saint as he is able to bear and understand them. At first the young christian knows nothing but Jesus' saving love to him; perhaps he may think that is all there is to learn, all they need, but as the spiritual mind expands under the influence of the Holy Spirit, new and glorious truths are brought to their minds, they begin to realize why it is that they have been brought to trust in the dear Jesus as their Redeemer; it all flows to them from the electing love of God, given them before the world was, and that they were predestinated to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. How wonderful does all this appear to the children in the school of Christ, to think that their names were written in the Lamb's book of life before God created this world, and in this time they are made to know and realize that glorious truth: they find themselves citizens of the spiritual kingdom of Jesus Christ, as a result of their names being written in heaven; how wonderful to the child. The apostle speaks of a growth in grace, and the apostle John in the

first epistle, second chapter, writes unto children, young men and fathers, showing degrees in their spiritual education. The preaching of the gospel is ordained of God as that by which the children of God are instructed, and under a sound, faithful ministry how their spiritual minds expand as the wonderful plan of salvation is unfolded to them, till they become fathers and mothers in the church of God. "They go from strength to strength; every one of them in Zion appeareth before God."—Psalms lxxxiv. 7. That is, they that dwell in the house of the Lord, being babes, young men and fathers represent growth. The food of these characters is different: babes require milk, the fathers strong meat to give them strength of spiritual character, it makes them discerners of spirits, they are enabled to try the spirits whether they be of God or not. John says, "Try the spirits." This food gives them strength to endure trials and temptations which beset them on every hand. So they must have the strong consolations of the gospel to support them as they journey in this wilderness here below. We hear the prophet speaking in the name of the Lord, saying, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." Perhaps, dear readers, in the course of your pilgrimage you have at times realized that you were walking in darkness; then if the prophet's comfortable words came to your mind how consoling it was to think that the eternal God would let poor sinners in their darkness and distress take refuge in him and stay themselves upon him. O how good God is to his poor, tempest-tossed children. The writer of Hebrews says, "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." So you see, beloved, that we need a place of refuge and strong consolation in this sorrowful world. I hope I have passed through some of these experiences in these forty years. Our experiences will come up before our minds as we look back over the way the Lord has led us, and when looking over the way we have come, will doubtless see many deliverances which God has granted unto us, and feel like singing a song of praise, as Moses and the children of Israel did at the Red Sea: "The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation." David says, "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord." So the believer travels on toward his heavenly home, sometimes mourning, at other times rejoicing, but they have a blessed hope that their sorrows shall end at last in the full fruition of eternal glory; God shall wipe all tears from their eyes. How sweet the thought to the troubled ones, that soon the burden-bearing will be done, and sorrow and sighing shall have fled away. The road which the child of God travels here in this world is not, as some would have us believe, strewn with flowers, joy everywhere; no, but with trials and much suffering. The Scriptures tell us if we would reign with Jesus we must suffer with him, but, my dear, believing friends, may we be enabled to say with the apostle, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." So let us as we go forward come boldly to the throne of grace to obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need. "Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come." Yes, looking for that glorious city of God,

where the blood-bought throng shall go no more out forever. I have thought these changes which come to us are helpful in the providence of God. In times of distress we often see the hand of God in our deliverance, and we gain strength by the conflict. The great tree of the forest the storms hurl themselves against, causing it to bend and sway to and fro; under the power of the tempest it looks as if it would hurl the tree to the earth, but instead, under the power of the tempest it takes deeper and firmer hold in the earth; thus its power of resistance is increased. So God's people under the power of temptations and trials are made stronger, taking deeper root in the eternal power of God, and thus bear up under the sorrows they are called to pass through as they press forward to their eternal home.

My beloved brethren and sisters, though strangers in the flesh we shall not be found strangers in the Spirit, if this review of the way I have come these forty years in the wilderness finds a response in your hearts. I feel that it is scattering and disconnected, but it is the best I can do.

In conclusion, the best I can wish you is that it may be your and my happy lot through grace to outride all the storms of this life, and anchor at last in the fair haven of eternal rest.

Yours in the fellowship of the gospel,

E. S. CULY.

FRANKLIN, Ohio, Feb. 6, 1905.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 5, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have been wishing for a desirable frame of mind in which to write you, but a long time has elapsed, and there has been no improvement, but rather, if anything, I lack more than ever. I have been in a gloomy state of mind for a few days, and yesterday was an extremely sad day in a natural sense, and a dark night spiritually; I felt so alone within and without, and so sad. I am in a calmer state of mind to-day, but still longing for a cheerful ray of light, and more manifestation of the love of God, and of his mercy to one so vile and so wretched as I feel myself to be. I am filled with envy of the brethren, for they do not seem so sad as I feel, and if there be long, weary nights in their souls, they seem to be patient, to wait the coming of the dawn of another day, or else seem to be able to tell just why they are in their present state, and can seem to manage without being so sad, and do not show their tears.

How different I am from what I expected twenty-five years ago; then it was all light with me, I did not understand the meaning of affliction as I do now, or what it is to be chosen in the furnace of affliction; but I sometimes feel that I do positively know the meaning of that now. How much enjoyment I had in the preaching then, and in meeting and mingling with the brethren in Christ. It seems to me that my sense of unworthiness was less then; but now I can fully indorse the words of the poet:

> "Marks of grace I cannot show;
> All polluted is my breast."

To-day this verse has seemed so forcible to me:

> "Where is the blessedness I knew
> When first I saw the Lord?
> Where is the soul-refreshing view
> Of Jesus and his word?"

Many years ago I thought my light would shine more and more unto the perfect day, but it seems to me that if ever I have had any light it grows more and more dim. At times I have felt the strength of the promises. How sweet this came to me one time in great trouble,

"As thy day, so shall thy strength be." I find myself anxious for the strength before the day; but as it came to me yesterday, so comes to me now the word, "O ye of little faith." I know that I should not murmur or complain, but should all the time give thanks to God because his mercy endures forever. He has so promised, and I know his promises are all sure, and that no case can be too vile for his mercy. I do know that he rules all things, and that every blessing comes from his bountiful hand. My trouble is much as brother Roberson wrote in the last SIGNS, he told my case better than I can write it, except with me the old man does not seem to go to the cellar, but stays right by me, ready to advise, or to condemn me or to urge me forward in some way that I am sorry for.

I received a letter from sister Attie Curtis some time ago, and in reading it over again to-day I have received more comfort from it than when I first read it, and I do not want to be selfish with it, so I inclose it to you, as it may comfort others as well. I also send part of a letter from brother Francis, which I enjoyed much. I truly desire that it may be the will of God to give him more light, or if it is his will that brother Francis should remain in darkness, give him also reconciliation to the will of God. I will also inclose a letter from sister Ely, and one from sister Thomas, do with them as your judgment tells you, and may God grant his blessing to remain with you, my dear brother.

Monday morning.—We met at Mr. Kindardine's, at Fox Chase, last evening, and had a very pleasant time. Eighteen of us from the Salem church were there. The singing was good, and the speaking I enjoyed much. I feel that it has strengthened me somewhat; I can see many things this morning which give me comfort. I did not go into the meeting yesterday morning, and I do feel that I needed to meet and mingle with the church to break this sadness and to renew my strength. How much those whom we believe to be the true followers of Christ strengthen us by their presence and words. O if I could know that I do have light and make it manifest, as their light is manifest to me! I know that it would not be as well for me to know it, as it might stir my ambition, and so the light be put out.

Now I will soon close. Dear sister Thomas' letter is the very breathing of faith and trust, in her sad time, and sister Ely's manifests her whole dependence upon God, and upon him alone. Brother Francis has never written his experience, I think, and he is so sad at times, I felt that it would be good for the brethren to see how little he feels when it comes to experience, and yet how strong in faith.

With love to yourself, and to all the household of faith, unworthily your sister,

MARY HILL TERRY.

TOPSHAM, Maine, Nov. 13, 1904.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER TERRY:—It is not right for me to neglect speaking to you, even if I cannot write of spiritual exercises as I once could. I have been hoping to have something that would interest you, and the thought comes, How do you know but the condition of your mind may interest them more than a song of deliverance? The children of God are chosen in the furnace of affliction, this world is not their home, they walk by faith, not by sight. The natural man cannot discern spiritual things. The truth is not searched for and found in books written by men, and can be recalled when we wish to enjoy it;

it comes only by revelation. We pass through many changes while on our journey here, but the truth never changes: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." Although there is no sweet feeling of joy in my heart, I do believe Jesus is the Savior of sinners, and surely I am the very sinner who needs such a Savior. There is nothing but the blood of Jesus which can cleanse me from all sin, his righteousness is my only garment. It seems many times that I have wandered far away from him, and yet I am made to know that all things are naked and open to the all-seeing eye of our God, that I cannot flee from his presence. He holds me, and leads me, and guides me with his eye. I cannot enjoy reading the Bible as I once did, and try many times to find those chapters which were so full of the precious things of the kingdom, but I have to close the book, and find myself weeping, and sometimes wonder I am so sorrowful when I know it is all right, and do not want to murmur or complain. I find myself wishing for a different frame of mind, even when assured that the way I am being led is the right way, and among the all things that work together for my good. Am I as great a mystery to you as I am to myself?

"How strange is the course a christian must steer,
How perplexed is the path he must tread:
The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
And his life he receives from the dead.

His fairest pretensions must wholly be waived,
And his best resolutions be crossed;
Nor can he expect to be perfectly saved,
Till he finds himself utterly lost."

I received your letter, and have read it many times, and felt glad of a companion walking this same path. I did not see anything in your letter to indicate that you were going to give mine to all the readers of the SIGNS, and when I saw it in our dear family paper I could not help feeling you must have seen something that you thought would be of interest to those we both love. I never had such a hard time writing a letter as that one, for I was so shut up, so destitute of anything to write, and yet since it was published I have been made to feel and know that the Lord can use me to comfort his people regardless of my poverty and darkness. Not one atom of praise can be given to me, but it all flows out to him who knoweth my frame, who remembers that I am dust. I do have a hope that I fear the Lord, and desire to speak often with the children of God, and to think upon his name. I have had more liberty in writing for the last week or two, and last Sunday at our social meeting words were given me so it was easy to speak. I do think I realized more than ever before, it was the Lord's work. When he gives me words to speak it is impossible to keep quiet, and when he withholds them it is impossible for me to obtain them, for I cannot even remember what I said the time before to repeat it, and cannot even call to my mind a passage of Scripture, or the verse of a hymn, or even what a loved one has said that comforted me greatly at the time. How dependent we are upon him; how helpless, and yet strong in him; how sad and sorrowful, and yet rejoicing in the Lord. "As having nothing, and yet possessing all things."

I heard from sister Annie Chick that you and Elder Badger had been at Hopewell. How pleasant it would have been for me if I could have been there, too. I do love to meet with God's people, though vilest of them all, yet hope I shall be kept; I shall always desire no other company but theirs. If that love is not springing up brightly I hope to be made to remember that it was shed abroad in

my heart by the Holy Ghost, and not by my own works.

Our association was a very pleasant season, and the preaching greatly enjoyed. Elders Badger, Chick and Keene did not shun to declare the whole counsel of God. I was not feeling as I once did, but seemed to be standing outside in a dark place, having a glimpse of the precious truth now and then, and yet vanishing before I could express what passed through my mind. I wonder, my dear sister, if you will understand me. I cannot seem to express what I would like to. I was glad to see the faces of those I love in the truth, but could not say much to them, as I was experiencing that leanness and barrenness of soul that only God's people know. What a comfort it is to feel assured that the mercy of God endureth forever; it can never fail us.

November 21.—All this time I have been unable to write anything, and have wished many times I could finish this letter and send it on its way. It seemed as soon as I wrote that I had had more liberty in writing, my mind was at once destitute of anything to say. Have you had like experience, and so are able to understand me? I felt as I wrote of the mercy of the Lord enduring forever, and would never fail us, that I was going to write something beautiful that flashed into my mind, but it was gone in an instant, and all was dark and desolate. The Lord comforted me greatly at one time while listening to Elder Keene's preaching, as he spoke of the Lord's mercy enduring forever. How much I am obliged to ask for his mercy, as I see so much sin reigning in me, and mixed with all I do. We have to cry for mercy all through the journey. It does not come only once in our experience to say, "God be merciful to me a sinner," but times without number the prayer arises in our hearts. Sometimes I am so cold, stupid and indifferent there seems to be no life in me; I cannot mourn on account of sin; I do not feel troubled because I cannot do the things I would; I cannot recall any past precious seasons, and seem to be unable to tell the condition I am in. I am often comforted in reading the SIGNS, as I find companions traveling in this same place, and am made to feel it is the way God's people walk, solitary, alone.

I hope soon to be able to write to all my kindred in Christ, but when the darkness settles over me I do not seem to be able to write about it. It does seem as if I neglect my many correspondents, and I do not want to, I love and prize their letters, and would gladly write if I could, but when I am so completely shut up, lifeless, my mind a perfect blank, it is impossible for me to write. Time passes so quickly months are gone before I realize it. Does it ever come into your mind to write to a certain one, and you are busy so you cannot just then, and perhaps it will be several weeks before you think of that one again? I do not mean that they are forgotten, or esteemed less highly, but the condition of my mind is such that I do not have that love in exercise, and what thoughts I do have I would not dare to express, they are so vile and sinful.

I have written you a long letter, and it seems to me that you will find it very poor reading; I cannot tell, it is true, how much the Lord has in it for you; if you should not find even a crumb, I know it would be all right. I cannot write anything to comfort you unless the Lord gives it to me, and then by the same power you are comforted, and all the praise belongs to our God. I do not

want to forget for one instant that all praise and all power belongeth to the God of my salvation. I shall be glad to hear from you, and please remember me to all the brethren and sisters when you meet with them. I hope to meet you and others again some time. I have had a good letter from sister Bessie Durand, and it seems almost strange that she enjoyed the one I sent her a short time ago; the Lord is able to do all things. I desire so much not to forget all his benefits in whatever state of mind I may be passing through. May God make us submissive to his will is the desire of your loving sister in hope,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

NORFOLK, Va., Jan. 8, 1905.

MY DEAR SISTER:—I have just read your letter over again, and as I am alone in my room will try to answer it, and I do hope that you will excuse my long silence, for it has been unintentional, my hands and heart are full from day to day. I received a letter from brother Coulter, and fully intended to write you by the same mail, but some interruption prevented at the time, and I had no idea that so many days would pass before letting you hear from me. I thank you for your comforting letter, and only wish that I could write in like manner; but I write such poor letters, and always have the feeling that they amount to so little. I know that your kind heart will overlook all my failings. You are speaking of a famine, not of food or water, but of the words of the Lord. How true that is in my case, I do feel such loneliness and such hungering and thirsting for some word of comfort from him who alone can give sweet peace and quietness of soul. So often I feel to say, "Is his mercy clean gone forever?" And bowed down with sorrow and sin, I feel to say, Is there any one so hard-hearted and unthankful as I am? But his tender mercy and forgiveness are shown to me in so many ways that it seems I must have an interest in his sweet promises, though I am so full of doubts and fears. I am low down so much of the time that, my dear sister, I fear at times I am almost forsaken. It is such a privilege to be able to mingle with those of like precious faith, who feel for us in our affliction, and help us bear our burdens. How often I have felt so happy with the dear ones in Philadelphia. You have all been so unspeakably kind to me, and have said and done many things to help me and to give me sweet memories when I am compelled to come back to my worldly affairs in this city. How I miss each one of you when I leave, and though it is my great affliction that has providentially led me to you all, I have been helped wonderfully. I feel so lonely most of the time, but he that wounds can heal. I know that in all sorrows and afflictions he can speak to me when it is his will to do so, and I desire to be resigned to his will. I believe I desire this more than anything else, but, as you say, I know that trials and afflictions keep us at his feet, yet how we shrink from the pangs of the flesh, and would have it another way, but he knows what is best for us, and we will know some day, when his strong arm reveals it to us. I feel every day his hand guiding me along all through my sorrows. I cannot see light in anything else, all is dark and dreary outside of his mercy and love. He has spared us and kept us all through the past year, and now we are entering upon the new year. During this past year, very many days in the morning I have thought, How will I ever get through with this day? and yet I am spared, I

hope, for some good purpose. I have much to be thankful for, and to cause my heart to overflow with gratitude to the only source of help. I hope that you, each one, may be kept and strengthened by our heavenly Father, and that he will give you quietness of soul; how often do I long for this one thing.

How gladly would I have been with you to-day at the prayer meeting, for I am sure that many of you were there, as you are almost every Sunday, and I wish myself there also, but my heavenly Father knows my heart, which is so sinful, and he knows what is best for us all. I do not know when I will have the blessed privilege of mingling with the dear ones again, as so many changes are constantly occurring. How often has my mind gone back to my visit at your home, and I trust that I may have that privilege again.

Remember me to brother Terry and all the dear ones in Philadelphia.

Lovingly and affectionately your sister,

FANNIE THOMAS.

DELMAR, Del., Jan. 10, 1905.

MRS. MARY H. TERRY—DEAR SISTER:—I received yours of recent date in due time, and have been trying to feel like answering it ever since, but the effort has been a complete failure. The Lord never bestowed on me "the pen of a ready writer," consequently what I have ever written has been "labor and toil," by the sweat of my brow. For me to undertake to write a good, spiritual letter, would be an herculean task truly. My standing complaint all these years that I have been numbered with the Old School Baptists has been, "My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me," &c. I sojourn in Meshech, and dwell in the tents of Kedar most of the time, and never have any of those special seasons of sweet, spiritual enjoyment that I hear others speak of. My attitude in the presence of God has ever been that of the publican suppliant, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Sometimes I have a faint hope that I have access with him through Jesus Christ, then again I do not know that my prayer has ever reached the ear of sovereign grace. The wonder to me is that the Lord is so long-suffering to a poor worm like me, a cumberer of the ground, as to have permitted me to maintain a connection with the church these forty years as a member, and thirty-nine as a sort of a preacher; and why the brethren have not silenced me years ago is more than I can understand. So you see that all the little experience I have (if any at all) is of a negative character, without a single positive point or affirmative evidence in my whole travel. Do you think one can be a child of God and a true minister of the gospel with such a blank experience? If so, I may continue to hope, and try to serve still in my weakness, and in fear and trembling.

Your brother in hope,

A. B. FRANCIS.

WELLSBORO, Pa., Jan. 8, 1905.

DEAR SISTER TERRY:—I feel a desire to talk a little with you and tell you how I have been made to rejoice in the hope that I am numbered with those people (though I am the lowest and least) whose words and travels I have just been reading in the SIGNS for January 1st. The article by Elder Durand gives comfort, for have we not felt that we were dwelling in darkness? O if we could but hope that we might grow, this darkness would not seem so terrible to us, but I know that I shall have to pass through many, many trials to consume the dross. Then your letter to the "little ones," surely there is none more helpless and little

than I, yet I do hope I am one of those that believe in Christ; but we know that if we are only the very least of these little ones we are rich, for is it not to these little ones that it is said, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"? Are not the names of all his children written in the book of life from before the foundation of the world? It does not rest with us, but some say, If we will do so and so, our names will then be written there; but what is written is written. O what a comfort to think that all things are fixed and controlled by the wisdom and power of God, and that he rules and reigns. We cannot praise and adore him enough for his love and wonderful works. I cannot express things as I would like, it seems that what I feel and what I can tell to others are two very different things, but it may be you will understand something of what I would say.

I attended the meeting at Cammal, of which I wrote you; was sorry not to meet Elder McConnell as I expected, on account of his sickness he could not be present. Elder Eubanks came, and I was glad to meet him, and thought the preaching was good, but I was not permitted to enjoy it to the extent that I have at some other times. Do you not find that sometimes you hear and feel that it is good, yet it does not do you the good it does at some other time?

Dear sister, please pardon this blundering and imperfect letter, for my words fail to express the love that is in my heart for the Lord and his dear people. Write me, if you can find it in your heart to do so. May this new year bring you many blessings.

Your loving but unworthy sister,

FLORENCE ELY.

SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON DELIVERED AT TURNERS, KY., SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11th, 1905.

THE very unfavorable condition of the weather has no doubt prevented a goodly number from being present to-day, who yet are no doubt present in spirit and heart, enjoying and beholding the order of God's house. My mind seems to be barren and unfruitful this morning. I have endeavored to concentrate my mind upon some portion of the Scriptures, but nothing has seemed to present itself. When brother Turner suggested that we sing hymn No. 1203 in Beebe's collection, I turned to it, and as we began singing the words seemed most precious indeed. It seemed to be food for thought, and my mind was most solemnly impressed. I shall therefore try to offer some thoughts upon the precious things in that hymn.

We are told that anciently believers spoke one to another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs. Our dear brother has spoken to us of the sentiments of his heart by suggesting this hymn, and no doubt others also will join in heartily with the same sweet sentiment. Did you ever think of or notice the particularly rich sentiment of gospel truth outlined generally in the hymns used by our people? It is all that which exalts God and abases man. We can only sing in the Spirit that which is God-honoring, all else is not divine worship. I have been long convinced that no service is more to the praise of God than the singing of such hymns with the spirit and understanding also. One thought I will name here: You may not be able to sing orally, and yet may make melody in your heart to the Lord.

"Great God before thy throne,
We joyfully appear."

What sublime language, what benign

influences bring our minds to contemplate the deep, solemn and most profound meaning of these words, and to feel what it is to bow before the great God with whom we all have to do. What reverence should fill our minds and souls as we bow before him who is the Searcher of all hearts, who knows our mind, and every thought. In the Scriptures we find the most excellent titles or names given to him, all of which are highly significant and characteristic of him who was, and is, and forever shall be.

What can mortals do? Vile, sinful worms of the dust as we are. When angels veil their faces in the sublime glory before him, mortals like ourselves can but bury our faces in the dust, and cry unto him, "Glory to God in the highest." O the condescending goodness of our God, that he should take upon him the body of this flesh, that he might be one with us, so that we might meet God face to face and live, else we should have been cut off forever. Have not our hearts been made glad in our gathering together, and in being gathered together this morning? Has there not been a sweet response in our souls? Though few in number, as David has said, (and I believe it is true today) we can say, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." So I feel in some way that it is good to be here, and we joyfully bow our heads and hearts before the Lord.

My mind seems to expand upon the wonderfully sublime things in the two first lines, and I could spend the entire time allotted upon these words.

"In songs to make thy glories known,
And thus begin the year."

What is more appropriate or becoming? This is our first meeting for this year, as we failed to get here the January meeting time. I repeat that the worship of God in songs of praise, when we are favored thus to sing, is most divine, but we cannot always do this. There are times when we make a loud noise, which may be pleasing to the natural ear, but still it is not a song of praise, it is not in the Spirit. I call to mind that Israel when captive in Babylon was asked to sing one of the songs of Zion, and the response was, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"

Dear child of God, you realize this often; but I feel sure you are not in a strange land to-day; it has seemed to me that you have sung with the spirit and with the understanding also, and have made melody to the Lord, and thus we begin the new year.

"What favors all divine,
What mercies shall we share."

Let us look about us and retrospect the past, and we must exclaim, O the superabounding goodness and mercy of God. Yes, what favors all divine. I am constrained to believe that if a single morsel of comfort was dependent upon the things we do, O what destitution there would be indeed. Nothing is merited; all is divine favor. The poet expressed the truth according to the spirit of the gospel in these words.

"What blessings all around us shine,
To open the new year."

What is it, dear friends, faithful followers of the Lamb, that impresses you, and prompts me to take the long fatiguing journeys that we do? It is because of what he has been and is to you and me, feeling that in his love and mercy he has guided and prompted us to thus open the new year.

"Indulgent goodness spares
And still preserves us here."

O what a kind, beneficent and indulgent Father in heaven. Had he dealt with us according to our merits, or our

demerits rather, we would certainly sink in despair, we would be utterly without hope, and without God in the world. What compassionate goodness! What long forbearance! What a mercy that our God changes not, and that he is of one mind, and none can turn him, else the enemy would prevail, and we would be consumed.

"And bounty all divine prepares
Supplies for this new year."

O dear, trembling one, what rich provisions are made for you. He that adorned the lily, provided for the raven and has determined the little, insignificant sparrow's fall, has also blessed and provided for you. If he cares for the lily, for the raven, and for the sparrow, how much more does he care for you, O ye of little faith. Then lift up your heads that are bowed down, and sing, O mourning one, for all things are yours, and ye are Christ's. He that is the builder and upholder of the universe has provided for you, and all is in Christ, placed there in his keeping, and all is safe and secure for you, in time and eternity. "Let no man beguile you of your reward [or merit in Christ] in a voluntary humility and worshiping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind." I cannot think that one single blessing treasured up in Christ will fail, or that you will fail to receive it. So David, when he said in the twenty-third Psalm, "I shall not want," viewed all in Christ, and was sure that he would receive it.

"Our follies past forgive;
Our souls divinely cheer."

As we look back over such a poor, misspent life, and read each page of life's record, how many of them are blotted and blurred. Dark pages of our life's history we would forget or would obliterate, but they are too indelibly written. O the follies of the past! But we come again unto our merciful God to plead. Are you not glad indeed that we have such a merciful High Priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities? Anciently, the high priest could make no allowance for Israel, but our High Priest, Jesus, who is over the house of our God, has met all our follies, has borne all our griefs, satisfied every demand of the law, and was given to us as our covenant of mercy, and we come day by day to him. Do you, or can you, lay down upon your bed a single night to rest, but that you feel constrained to plead for mercy, or that he would forgive your follies, and your soul divinely cheer, that you might glorify his name?

"And help us more on thee to live,
Dear Lord, in this new year."

All our help must come from the Lord; the poet who wrote these words realized this; "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Therefore he that wrote these words must have felt and known the things which he wrote; he must have felt just like you, else he could not have outlined your feelings so well. In this hymn he confesses that he is helpless, and you feel the same. You and the author are companions along the same rugged way. We accept the sentiment of this hymn, as it accords with the spirit of the gospel. The gospel presents to us a sinner helpless; helpless along the journey of life; and also the fullness of Jesus. It declares that he is a very present help in time of trouble. Therefore we feel to pray the Lord to keep and guide us through the new year.

"Prepare us for thy will,
Whatever may appear."

I am sometimes afraid to pray, for I have realized what David said, "By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation." I re-

member a dear sister who prayed to be humble, she prayed to the Lord because she could not humble herself; and neither can you. Her prayer was granted, but it was in such a way as no mortal would have thought or desired. Did you ever think what it was to say, "Thy will be done"? We cannot, it is impossible until we come into the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ, being made conformable unto his death. It is easy to say, "Thy will be done," when all is well, but to go in Gethsemane's garden as Jesus did, and take the cup of salvation, calling on the name of the Lord, is another thing altogether. "Thou shalt make them to drink of the river of thy pleasure." In no other way will we, or can we do it.

"And let thy loving-kindness still
Preserve us through the year."

The Lord by the psalmist said, "How excellent is thy loving-kindness O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings." Mercy, mercy, mercy, is stamped upon every line. According to his mercy he saves us. David said, "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever." David represented Christ, and you being members of his body, will also sing in that way. This song is perpetual along down to the end of time. The hills of Zion still reverberate with the songs of mercy. The living trees, the planting of the Lord, shout forth praise in the sweet, sacred, solemn song. O how God-honoring to see every child of God walking as becometh the gospel of Christ. Dear Lord, preserve us through this year. We are weak, but thou art mighty, hold us with thy powerful hand.

"Confirm our souls in thee,
In faith and holy fear."

One of the blessings of the gospel is to confirm our faith; God has ordained it so; it is a revelation from faith to faith. The gospel, as preached by the servants of God, comes with power, and not in word only. If it came in word only, then there would most likely be no failures realized to mourn over, but in a most wonderful sense Jesus is the one Preacher. It is the power of his Spirit that carries the word to the heart, and that binds up the broken-hearted and strengthens the feeble knees. May we ever remember the words of the Redeemer, "Without me ye can do nothing."

"And let a precious Jesus be
Our song throughout the year."

What else have we to sing of? Patriarchs and prophets sang, heralding the name of Jesus, he was their consolation, they with the watchmen lift up their voice together. Is not this an incentive to inspire us not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, that we may forget the cares of this world for a time, and go into the house of God? For there "our best friends, our kindred, dwell, there God our Savior reigns."

Much more might be said upon this most glorious, soul-cheering theme, but I have already extended my remarks too much. I have written the above because my mind remained sweetly burdened with the precious things of the hymn. I submit it to you for your disposal.

In the fellowship of the gospel, yours,
P. W. SAWIN.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., Jan. 12, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—To-day my mind has been on Repentance, and I want to write a little for your consideration.

"The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and for-

giveness of sins."—Acts v. 30, 31. "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"—Rom. ii. 4.

The beginning of the gospel kingdom on earth was repentance. John came preaching, saying, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." To whom did he say this? Was it not to those who were prepared for the Lord? He came to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. Was not this preparation the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart? Then that must precede repentance. One cannot prepare himself to repent, there must be conviction of wrong committed, and one cannot convict himself. When one reproves himself and condemns himself it surely is because he feels that condemnation in himself. This feeling within is a sure evidence of the work of a power above himself that has taken deep hold in the inward parts. This, the apostle calls the goodness of God, and it is given us to lead us to repentance. Then there is something given us from God which always, on every occasion, precedes repentance. I do not know a better name for this "goodness of God" than is expressed in the word "faith." The same eye by which we look to God for his blessings is the eye by which we see our sins, and it is the knowledge we have of our own nature that makes us cry unto God for his mercy. The kingdom of God is set up in our hearts. If it could have been possible for us to have repented otherwise it would have been a useless work for power to have been given the Savior to give repentance. One said, "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." This is similar to the other. Then repentance is the gift of God and is of grace.

Salvation from its first principles is all of grace. Man has no more power to repent with godly sorrow than he has to make a world. When the words, "Repent ye" were spoken, it was an absolute command from God, and there was nothing that could hinder the fulfillment of this word. It was spoken to those in whose hearts life had been implanted and a necessity was felt, therefore they could do nothing but repent. That repentance led them from wicked works to the footstool of sovereign mercy. That people was made up of the lost sheep of the house of Israel, to whom the word of salvation was sent. The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost, therefore wherever he gave repentance he gave also the forgiveness of sins. It appears to me that life, eternal life, is given, then faith to see and know our condition as sinners; this leads us to loathe ourselves and to repent in dust and ashes. Thus is given the contrast between life and death, light and darkness. Then the commandment to choose life and live is in our heart, and we are made to flee from death and the powers of darkness. One whose heart is thus opened cannot choose death and darkness, for they are the trouble of his soul, and light and life are the desire of his heart. Thus he hungers and thirsts after righteousness. I cannot believe that one such soul ever perished; for the first blessing manifested of God, is eternal life, and that life is in his Son; this is the foundation of all the blessings of God, laid in the heart, and all that follows are upon the same principle. Instead of the blessings of God giving us more power to do good works of ourselves, it shows us more of our inability to do those things

Thus we are constantly convinced that there is no good thing dwelling in our flesh, and that we are the clay in the hands of the great Potter.

We are told that if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Where do we confess them? Nowhere but before the judgment-seat of Christ. As we are brought into his court and accused, we confess, and there we stand acquitted in his presence. In every case where repentance is given, he gives the forgiveness of sins. Thus repentance leads directly to justification through our Lord Jesus Christ, in him we have peace with the Father, for he is our peace. If the christian could repent at any time in his pilgrimage, he would lose his feeling of the need of Christ, and become self-confident; our own experience teaches us that voluntary repentance is impossible. When we are in darkness and anxious to come into the light, so that we hunger, weep and mourn for the light, and for peace, and it can be nowhere found, we see that our salvation for the present is altogether out of our reach: thus our minds are turned from ourselves to the Lord, who is all our salvation and all our desire, and in our weakness cry unto him for strength. His ears are ever open unto the cries of the poor and needy, and his eyes are over them, his arm is made bare in their salvation, and he reveals his love to them in renewed evidence of his loving-kindness and tender mercies. I can see mercy nowhere but in Christ Jesus; no one can forgive sins but he who has paid the debt. Thus it is in the perfect satisfaction of justice that divine mercy is given us.

How we do love to bring forth the royal diadem and crown Jesus Lord of all; his people are a diadem of glory in him. What a blessed unity this is, and how sweet to hope we are in it to the glory of God the Father.

In this blessed hope I am your brother, I trust, in Christ Jesus,

L. H. HARDY.

DADE CITY, Fla., March 19, 1905.

BELOVED ELDER BARTLEY:—I had hoped I would meet you at Dade City yesterday and had you with us at the Bethel meeting. As I have heard nothing from you since I left your bedside, my anxiety increases day by day to hear that you are convalescent; I trust you are growing stronger. It was with deep emotions and a sorrowful heart that I had to leave you when you were so sick and weak, but I could rejoice that you were strong in faith, hope and love.

While I have sometimes believed I have felt the strength of the Spirit and the power of God, I believe I know full well the weakness of human nature. Our old nature is subject to temptations and afflictions, but the faith of God's elect embraces that word of truth that afflictions work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, and by this experience we are brought into the fellowship of the Son of God, and to walk humbly in the path of life. We can often bless God for temptations, when by his grace we are enabled to overcome them, and by them made to run to him like a little child runs to its mother's arms in the time of trouble or danger. God's children run to him as a strong tower and are safe; safe simply and only because he saves them. Truly is the Lord "a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall,"

Can we not both more or less say that through peril and storm, temptations and distress, through many joys and many sorrows, the Lord hath brought us to the present hour, while his gracious promises assure us that he will be with us always? As his doctrine distils in our hearts as the dew, we are enabled to see eye to eye and speak the same thing: that salvation is of the Lord. O that all the prisoners of hope might be led by the Holy Spirit into all truth, and be no more blinded by the gods of this world, and that his grace may so abound in them that, having sufficiently in all things, they may abound in good works to his praise, glory and honor. But who is there among us of the faith of God's elect will not have to say, retrospectively, few and evil have been the days of their pilgrimage? For the trying of our faith we must have wilderness fare; there is no abiding city here. When Israel was traveling through the wilderness they did not count it their home. Sometimes they came to bitter places like Marah, when the waters were bitter; they could not rest there. Sometimes they would come to sweet, refreshing places, like Elim, with seventy palm trees and twelve wells of water, yet they could not sit down and say, This is my rest. Most gracious the state when the manna fell around the camp every morning, and when the waters followed them, yet it was a wilderness, and a land of drought, and the shadow of death. While it is our lot to often have to drink of the waters of Marah, yet here and there we have sweet plots like Elim, when we have gladness of soul.

In bidding farewell to you, perhaps for the last time in this world, I sorrowed, but have felt to rejoice that it had been my lot to meet you, to have your christian friendship. Those who are sharers of our spiritual secrets, those who mingle prayers with us before the throne, those who never forget us within the veil, make us recall every feature of their gracious acts and kindly countenance. It is a union and communion of souls that the world knows nothing of. So I feel that our relations have been heart to heart relations, inasmuch as I feel that we are partakers of one grace, washed in the fountain, filled with the same Spirit, having one heart, and members one of another. So, dear brother, if we should never meet again on earth, I praise God that we have met, and that our communion has been an earnest of heaven, but not heaven. Withal my hope is that we shall meet again in the full fruition of eternal joys, where farewells shall be spoken no more. Now may heaven's choice blessings go with you, and enable you while you sojourn here, to preach and comfort the Lord's humble poor with the gospel of our salvation.

Your brother, I hope,

M. L. GILBERT.

GILMER, Wash., Jan. 12, 1905.

EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed find post-office money order, for which please extend my subscription on the SIGNS; I trust to send more when this is exhausted. I have thought on account of finances I should be forced to discontinue, but feel to be benefited so much by their perusal that I cannot afford to do without them. I wish I could tell Elder Durand how much his article on "How they grow," cheered my wife and myself in our solitude. I hear no preaching of the gospel of the grace of God at all, being over fifty miles from Goldendale, where the people of God took us in, after we had tried

every refuge and had found no congenial home. I feel to be, if a child of God at all, one of the most unprofitable, and long ago I should have been in the place of everlasting woe, had it not been that his mercy endureth forever. If I am indeed one of the blood-bought, it is because of the mercy of God, and because it seemed good in his sight. Eternity seems near at times, and I often feel uncertain. Sometimes the song of the birds, the "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," and the multitudinous declarations of love and mercy, are made so precious to me. But Judas Iscariot was numbered with, and took part in all that which the followers of Jesus did, and carried the purse also. But what saith the testimony? He was a devil. Now whether I am deceived or not is a question that mightily concerns me. The companionship of that people who are not reckoned among the nations, I desire more than gold or silver. The miserable bombast and ungodly teachings of those who preach themselves, money, means, schools and kindred topics, are a nuisance.

Now, in a single sentence let me say, God bless you and all his children, and may he continue to open to you the hidden mysteries, enabling you all to feed the flock which he hath purchased with his own blood. One thing is noticeable in all the contributors of the SIGNS, viz: they speak the same things. Yes, Jesus is the Christ, and there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved.

I hope you will excuse me for writing this letter; in the flesh we are strangers, but to the heavenly Jerusalem, the church of the living God, I trust we are come, because the King hath brought us, and he will finally bring all for whom Jesus died, for in him we live. This is not what I intended to write. In my opinion the Bible Baptists are the church, but I do not think that all the children of redemption are in it, or will ever come there, but "the Lord knoweth them that are his," and he knows where to find them, whether Jew or Gentile. He will gather home all the children of his choice out of the sea of earth's population, and not a hoof shall be left behind. But if I could I would say to all who are hungering and thirsting, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life,

ALEX. CHEYNE.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., March 2, 1905.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—After reading your most excellent letter in the SIGNS of March 1st, entitled, "I muse on the years that are past," I felt I must write and tell you what a comfort it was to me to know that I am not alone in my experience; I am with you and can fellowship nearly every word you said. I often think of the days when I first felt my sins were forgiven, and of the blessed assurance I had of a hope of heaven, but those days are past and gone; I cannot go back to them now and take comfort from them, neither can I entirely give up the hope I first received, although when I try to go back to the time when I first received a hope I am led to fear it was all imagination: if it had been a reality it seems to me I would have lived a better life than I have, for I cannot see anything in my life that is Christlike, and the older I grow the more sin I see in myself; about all that I have now to base my hope upon is the desire for heavenly things. I fear that I

never was brought down so low with the weight of sin and condemnation as you say you were, and all others that I hear speak of their experience, and this has caused me to doubt the reality of my ever knowing anything about spiritual things. I have heard some say when they first felt themselves to be sinners they would have willingly changed places with the beasts of the field, or the fowls of the air, or anything on earth: troubled so they could not sleep at night, and would lie in bed and cry, feeling as though they could not live another day; I fear I have never been there, it seems to me that it was more the fear of future punishment than the weight of sin and condemnation that caused me to seek Christ as my Savior. I had been taught in Methodist Sunday Schools to fear hell as a place of everlasting punishment. I knew that I was a sinner, but when I look back to that time, I fear I only knew I was a sinner because I had learned it in the Sunday Schools; that it had not been shown me by the Lord. It seems to me that I am troubled more now with a feeling sense of sin and condemnation than I was before I first received a hope; sin is mixed with all I do. How my heart did go out to you when you said, at times you were afraid to try to pray. I think I know what it is to be in that condition: how often I have tried to pray when I could not utter a word, I felt it was only mockery for one so vile and sinful as I am to call upon the holy name of God. It seems strange for us to take comfort in hearing a brother tell of his destitution of the things of the Spirit, when we from our hearts are praying that he might be restored to that joy and peace which he had received in his earliest love. If you had been on the mountain top praising your blessed Savior I could not have derived the comfort I did from your letter. Write on, dear brother, and if it is the Lord's will, I hope when you write again you may be on the mountain top praising your blessed Savior; even if I cannot be with you there I will feel glad to know you are resting in the promises of Jesus.

I will close this imperfect letter, as I have already written too much.

Your brother in hope of life eternal,
R. N. GIBBONS.

OXFORD, N. Y., Dec. 5, 1904.

MRS. CARRIE DRAKE—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—This morning my heart seems to go out to you in sweet christian love and fellowship, and a desire to drop you a line in loving remembrance of the pleasant hours and sweet converse which we had together last summer, in talking of spiritual things, is with me. I feel these to be great privileges, and I hope that the Lord has given me a thankful heart for them, and I think I can say, as some have written in the SIGNS, I desire no other company. Still, I am left to wonder why it should be so, I seem so unlike them, so barren of everything that I love and admire in them, the favored people of the Lord; yet my desire is with them, and if they can bear with me, I feel to follow in the footsteps of the flock.

I know that the dear Lord has said it is a pathway of tribulation to have fellowship with his sufferings, and I believe that the nearer the saints are favored to live to him the more they experience these things. The Lord by the prophet has said, "I leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." I have no confidence in the flesh. This is the heritage of the Lord's people here in time, but he says, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world," and, "Because

I live, ye shall live also;" and, "Your life is hid with Christ in God." The Bible abounds with great and precious promises, and when we can feel that they are applied to us, what comfort they bring. This is very seldom with me, I am mostly groping in the dark. I think that I had a sweet manifestation of his love one night not long since; I was in a most despairing condition of mind, and feeling an earnest, prayerful desire that he would give me some evidence that I was not deceived, when suddenly I heard singing, such as I never can express, and the sweetness, joy and love which filled my poor heart was joy unspeakable and full of glory. I listened in rapture; I felt, this is heavenly; I thought, If such the sweetness of the streams, what must the fountain be? O, eye hath not seen, neither hath the ear heard, the joys that are prepared for them that love him.

I feel of all creatures to be a poor, vile sinner, but I desire to be thankful to him. I have been thinking much of death; how near it is, as the poet says, "Death, like a narrow sea, divides this heavenly land from ours."

Elder Vail has been to visit us, and preached to us in the evening. He seemed like a ministering spirit sent to minister to us. We were so thankful that we could sit here in the quiet of my room, far from strife and confusion, and listen to his words, which seemed like cold water to a thirsty soul. He is a tried servant of the Lord passing through deep waters, but one of the faithful ministers of Christ. I think of you there in Hopewell. O what privileges are yours in hearing the word, and in meeting often with the Lord's people. I know that the Lord reigns in heaven above, and in the earth beneath, and works all things after the counsel of his own will. I desire to be submissive to his will.

I remain your sister in hope,

LUCINDA B. BREWSTER.

SORROW UNTO DEATH.

I AM fully convinced that there are as many different kinds of sorrow as we are given patience to bear; God gives the sorrow. There is no God-given sorrow without patience to bear it. These thoughts came into my mind this morning after I had felt as never before the "sorrow unto death." No, I never had this experience before. There is no complaint or regret in this sorrow; whatever befalls, Thy will be done. A separation from all things here below. To know in truth, solemnly to know, that all things here below are vanity. As we have believed it to be true in Christ, so we are soon to know the end of the law for ourselves. All that we have lived in the faith of, all that we hope for through faith in Christ, we must and shall realize true in ourselves. To realize this we must know the sorrows of death, the pains of hell. I am now convinced that neither this sorrow, nor the pains of hell, is as the sorrow or pain of this mortal flesh. One is earthy, the other godly; a separation from all things here below, however strong, however tender. This is sorrow. But patience in the looking forward. Then O the pains of hell! God-forsaken! But soon, into thy hands I commit my soul, to be raised in the likeness of our dear Redeemer; I know it not, but shall know when I see him. This much I believe: we shall never know him after the flesh again; no, nor any other man, but after the Spirit. There is just the difference between man and God as there is between man and Spirit. Neither Christ nor the apostles ever tried to ex-

plain, but called it by such names that we may have some little experience of, but are utterly powerless to explain: Life, Spirit, Immortality. Let every mouth be dumb, then will all dispute about the resurrection forever cease. We all believe in the resurrection; it is not about this we dispute, but what we are after the resurrection, about that which no man living knows anything, that is, to describe. If brethren will persist in describing the hereafter, I will have to be excused. The wisdom that God has given us is for this world, "the life that we live in the flesh." It is said we shall be like him. Then we shall have the wisdom of that world, or Life, Spirit, Immortality. Not one single expression man has ever made describing the appearance of man in the hereafter is, in my opinion, authorized by the written word.

Dear brother Durand, I thought of you this morning while meditating on the sorrow I have spoken of, but I had no idea of writing as I have. If it meets with your full approval, and you think the SIGNS would publish it, and that it would do good, you may send it.

Your brother, I hope,

E. V. WHITE.

LEESBURG, Va., March 24, 1905.

PRAIRIE PLAINS, Texas, Dec. 27, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR, PUBLISHERS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—It has been a long time since I have written anything for publication. I have just read the last number of the SIGNS, and my mind has been carried back many years. My mother was a subscriber; she was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church before the division took place in 1832.

When I look back over my early life, I then believed the doctrine the SIGNS advocates, and I still believe it is the true Bible doctrine. Being in poor health I am deprived of hearing sound preaching, only about once or twice a year, the distance to the meetings being twenty-five miles. So much of my life I feel to be in gloomy darkness, but thank God for the little hope that shines all along my pathway, it keeps me from falling by the way. May all of our days be days of praise and thanksgiving.

I have not written as I wished; I wanted to write something good, but it is like myself, not worthy. Please throw the mantle of charity over all my imperfect thoughts. I am alone, no one to talk with; I have to praise God alone; I do not hear any one in these parts giving God all the praise. If I live I shall some day write a long letter to be published.

Remember me, a lone pilgrim,

(MRS.) BETTIE THOMAS.

SARATOGA, N. Y., March 6, 1905.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The above date records the sixty-seventh year of my sojourn on earth, and I feel to say with one of old, Few and evil have been the years of my pilgrimage, &c., and although disappointments, afflictions and sorrows have been my portion during my brief stay here, yet I feel like one of old to set up another stone marking my journey as an ebenezer, declaring, Hitherto hath the Lord helped me. (1 Sam. vii. 12.)

I wish it could be my privilege to say or write a word of comfort to the household of faith, but as I am so completely overwhelmed with a heart-felt sense of my own depravity and weakness, I feel utterly unfit to speak a word to a weary traveler, yet I know in my own experience that from those who were cast down in their minds I have received comfort

by the assurance that I have traveled only where many others have and are still journeying. While we are receiving comfort and encouragement through the medium of our family paper by those whom we believe the Lord has qualified to speak comfortably to Jerusalem, let us not neglect that which is our due in support of publishing a paper that semi-monthly comes to us richly laden with treasures, both new and old, out of the Lord's store-house. Dear readers, let us not embarrass the publishers of the SIGNS by withholding that which is their due, in order that it may continue its visits to our homes in the future as in the past.

My wife and I have been spending the winter with our daughter at Saratoga, but expect to be at our home at Schoharie, N. Y., April 1st.

Yours, I hope, in "faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

P. S. KINNEY.

APPEAL FOR AID.

TO THE BRETHREN AND FRIENDS OF THE CAUSE OF CHRIST:—We, a little band of Predestinarian Baptists at Shellman, Georgia, are trying to build us a meeting-house, and we ask you to aid us if you see that you can. We are poor in this world's goods. Send any remittances to

R. F. IVEY.

SHELLMAN, Ga.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905, &c.

POETRY.

SEVENTY YEARS A BAPTIST.

ENDUED with mercy from on high, beloved by Zion's King,
Long three score years and ten ago glad tidings thou didst bring;
Drawn by electing grace divine thy duty to attend,
Equip the armor of thy God, enduring to the end,
Remembered in affliction sweet by thine afflicted Friend.

Joined vitally to Christ, preserved through perils, raging wars,
O we, thy brethren, see thee now, a soldier full of scars;
Sure five and sixty years employed in preaching Christ the Truth;
Hosanna to the name of names, that blessed thee in thy youth,
Upheld and poured the oil of joy upon thee all along;
A monument of mercy saved, free grace has been thy song.

So hast thy strength been as thy days, through him who wept and bled;
In cold and hunger thou hast gone, and oft with bowed down head;
Miraculous has been thy life, sometimes by ravens fed,
Mount Calvary before thy sight, the victory has been won:
O 'twas a secret something sweet that softly pressed thee on.
Now that thy years are four score five, unclouded joy is near,
Since to depart and be with Christ we know is better far.

Consider how thy pleas for peace have to the saints been blest;
O when the warfare here shall cease there is for thee a rest.
Reviewing all thy days on earth, the present and the past,
Determined by thy God have been thy times from first to last;
Emmanuel's land appears in view, inheritance divine:
Redeemer, God, for evermore, all honor, praise be thine. S.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1905.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

BROTHER J. F. Kilgore, of Dacula, Ga., asks the following question, desiring an answer through the SIGNS: If a brother comes from a church to another with a letter, and this letter declares that he is in full fellowship, and the second church receives him upon this ground, and afterwards he reaches back and brings up an old charge which he had against a brother before he came to the new home, has this church any right to take up this charge? He adds that he thinks not.

We have no desire nor right to attempt to pass judgment through our columns upon any matter of difficulty which may exist anywhere among the churches. We cannot know all the circumstances, and so would be disqualified from all right to judge in such cases. Churches must decide in all cases for themselves, and all ought to do so in the fear of God, and without haste or passion. Our brother has not written any particulars of any trouble in the letter of which the above is the substance, and if he had we could not undertake to judge that trouble. We can only give some general reflections in reply, and hope that what may be said will be in full accord with the word of the Lord, and with that spirit of love which ought to characterize all that we do and say in the things of the kingdom. First, it seems that if this brother had a charge against another, he should have made it known before he accepted a letter in full fellowship from the former church. Fellowship means fellowship both ways; that is, from the church to him, and from him to the church. If, however, he did not think it of sufficient importance to be made public, or to be handled by the church, and so was willing to say nothing about it before getting his letter of dismissal, it seems that he would have been wise to say nothing about it afterward.

Second, it does not seem right to come into another church and bring trouble with him. The church that received him had a right to believe from the letter announcing that he was in full fellowship with the church from which he came, that no one had aught against him, and that he had naught against any one else. To bring up such a matter afterwards would, of course, break into the peace and comfort of the church. That brother would thus become a trouble rather than a comfort to his brethren. If it could be possible that one should come to some new home in some church just because he was not allowed to urge charges against some one where he had belonged, with the object of finding a place where he could urge such charges, that brother was doing a grievous wrong to the church that received him, and committing a sin against God in this thing. The wise and brotherly course for such a brother to pursue would be to withdraw these charges from the church and not to trouble it with them any more. Let the matter be between him and the brother with whom he is at variance.

If, however, the matter be such that there is scandal upon the cause, and he

feels that it ought to be handled, that the scandal may be removed, let him present his charges to the church where the other brother belongs. This is our judgment from the question proposed, and we cannot go beyond that; if there are other considerations, we have not been informed of them. Above all, if the spirit in us be to destroy a brother rather than to save him, then we are all wrong ourself, and need to confess our sin before God, and to plead for forgiveness at the throne of mercy. The whole of the law of Zion is for the purpose of saving a brother who errs; the whole spirit and motive of the law of Zion is love. In attending to the discipline of the church is our motive healing or destruction? This is a solemn question, and we often fear and tremble because we do not always know what our spirit is, in what we say or do.

JOHN XII. 31.

BROTHER J. N. Hembree, of Liberty, S. C., desires some thoughts upon the words found in John xii. 31, which read: "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out."

No mortal man can tell all that this wonderful language signifies, yet from the connection the general meaning seems clear. In verse 23 Jesus said, "The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified." The time of his humiliation was well nigh passed, and soon he should enter into his mediatorial glory at the right hand of God. Still further, the hour was at hand when the fruit of all his suffering, toil and reproach should begin to appear. We read in verse 24, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." He was himself that corn of wheat, and he had fallen into the ground and must die, that the fruit which he came to bring forth unto God might appear. This fruit was his own redeemed church, made up of all humble-hearted believers, together with all the fruits of faith, hope, love and all other graces of the Spirit, which should be made manifest in their mortal bodies. But the dying must precede the living and the bearing fruit in them. Concerning himself more than concerning his people, as it seems to us, he said, verse 25, "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." And moreover, all that would serve him must follow him. With them also death must precede life; with them also he that loveth his life shall lose it. Thus he has spoken of his coming death according to the will of God.

In verse 27 he expresses that weight of sorrow that oppresses him in view of the end that must come. More fully still, a short time afterward in the garden he cries out in agony under this grievous burden, and said, "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour." It is the expression of the same shrinking and the same submissiveness to God that he expressed in the garden in prayer, and here, as there, the summing up is, Let God be glorified; this is the one needful thing. In the garden he said, "Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done." Here, verse 28, he said, "Father, glorify thy name." Through all the conflict and struggle he has come at last to this one thing, Let God be glorified at whatever cost to me. Then we are told that a voice came from heaven, audible to the people so that they said it thundered, but, as it appears, not understood by

them, and the voice said to him, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

Now out of all this vision of sorrow, and the resulting glory, Jesus uses the words to which brother Hembree has called attention. Reading verses 31 and 32 together, we see that Jesus came for judgment and for salvation. Being lifted up, he should draw all men unto him; and this is salvation. But through his death and resurrection unto life everlasting there is also brought to view the condition of men as sinners, and as sinners condemned under the law of a righteous God. By the death of our blessed Lord the condemnation of the world of the ungodly is declared, seeing that he bore the penalty of sin, and showed indeed that that penalty is death, and by his death for and in behalf of his people he has saved them everlastingly. When Jesus died the world was judged. Also, when Jesus died and rose again the dominion of sin and Satan was broken forever. When Jesus was about to be crucified the world that judged and condemned him was itself judged, and Satan ceased to triumph in the very hour of his triumph. The world of the Jews at that hour thought that he was judged and condemned, but instead they were themselves judged. This word "judgment," here implies condemnation as well. It appeared at this hour that the prince of this world was the conqueror, but instead his dominion was broken, and he was cast out of the kingdom. Jesus' apparent defeat was the defeat of the enemy, and through his death not only Jesus triumphed over death, hell and the grave, but all his elect people as well. This, in substance, seems to be a portion of the meaning of this wonderful language, but we feel now, as we have always felt concerning it, such knowledge is too high for us. We feel that we see but little of its meaning, and can say less.

ACTS III. 21.

SISTER Sarah B. Pearce desires some thoughts from us upon the language in Acts iii. 21. She says, What do you understand the restitution is?

First, literally the word "restitution" signifies a change of anything from worse to better. We have always understood this language of the apostle Peter to mean just what would be meant should any one say, Until the fulfillment of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began. It does not seem needful to speak of the general narrative of the chapter, any further than to call attention to the fact that these words occur in the midst of a discourse by the apostle Peter, which grew out of the healing of the man born lame, at the Beautiful gate of the temple. The people would have greatly exalted the apostle because of this miracle, but this Peter would not suffer. He calls attention that this had been done in the name of Jesus, whom they had crucified, but whom God had raised up. And now God had honored their ministry of the word by giving healing to this man, at the hand of his disciple. Still further, he tells them that he knew it was through ignorance that they had demanded the crucifixion of the holy and just One, and it was also through ignorance that the rulers had fulfilled the purpose of God that Christ should suffer. These men to whom he was speaking he calls brethren, but we understand from the connection that it was as a Jew among Jews, and speaking to fellow Jews, that he uses this term. Now he says to them, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your

sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." And Jesus Christ, the apostle declared unto them, should be sent, who had before been preached unto them. Jesus, the dying and risen and ascended Savior, had been preached to them as the only Savior and Redeemer. This dying and risen Redeemer was received into heaven, and must there remain until all that the prophets had declared should be fulfilled. The sum and substance of all their testimony was Jesus and his salvation. Included in this salvation was the death of the Redeemer, and his resurrection from the dead. The prophecies are full of exalted expressions concerning the glory of the kingdom of Christ. All is not yet fulfilled, the people of God desire perfection in righteousness and in glory; this perfection shall be theirs. Each one personally by faith is enabled to say, Then shall I be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.

This same Jesus, said the angel, whom ye see ascend, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. Jesus then has gone into the heavens until all that is written of him and his wondrous work has been fulfilled. The word "restitution" is a common one in the Scriptures, in some of its forms. David prays, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." He said again, "He restoreth my soul." Again, it is said, "Then I restored that which I took not away." The Jews once said, Elias must first come and restore all things. Jesus' work was to restore righteousness to his people, and from this arises the thought of restoring or redeeming all his people from all the consequences of the transgression. Jesus on the cross finished the work of the atonement, and now during and through all this gospel age, by the work of the Holy Spirit, men and women are being brought nigh experimentally to God. The work will go on until the last ransomed sinner is gathered into the fold who lives in the blessed Lord, saved and justified. That these are the things spoken by all the holy prophets will be evident if our sister will read from the text to the end of the chapter.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, at the home of the bride's parents at Union Furnace, Hocking Co., Ohio, Wednesday, April 5th, 1905, William Lester Holliday and Miss Harriett Jane Hartzell, both of Columbus, Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Samuel R. Meredith died March 19th, 1905, at Willow Grove, Kent Co., Del., where he made his home with Mrs. Elizabeth Cohee and her daughter Maggie. He was 65 years of age, having been born in March, 1840, at Petersburg, Kent Co., Del. He was the youngest child of the late Elder Peter Meredith, and a brother to Peter Meredith, (deceased) Ezekiel Meredith and Elder Whiteley W. Meredith, of the Cow Marsh Baptist Church, also to sister Sarah Sherwood, of Wilmington, Del. He was never married. In early life he was a teacher in the public schools of Kent Co., Del., afterward engaging in the mercantile business, in which he remained until three years ago, when he became so afflicted as to necessitate his giving up all business cares, and was more or less a sufferer from that time until his death. As a man he was always quiet, rather retiring, moving in the midst of the wide circle of his friends and relatives with the full confidence, love and high esteem of all. He seemed rather to devote his life to others than himself. He was never given to unite with the church, yet all his life followed in the wake of the Old School Baptists, taking special interest in all our meetings; was one of our most regular attendants to both regular meetings and the extra meetings held with sister churches, gathering the crumbs that fall from the Master's table, loving the truth and beloved in the truth. The writer has in his possession a letter received since the funeral from a dear brother in the Lord, who states that at an association held at Black Rock church, Md., thirty-four years ago, he roomed with our friend, and heard him there in the lone hours of the night tell of his love for the children of God, how he had been brought along under

the law in its force and power until compelled to throw himself on the mercy of God, and had received evidence of his acceptance in the Beloved. The brother following him all these thirty-four years, met him for the last time at Welsh Tract last spring, at the association, when and where he still told him with tears how precious was his hope. Our friend never confided this experience to any one else, and the brother that writes us for the comfort of brethren and friends adds: "But I feel if he did not glorify God for his eternal salvation, then have not I." Thus we felt to assure the brethren and friends of that comfortable hope which we have in Christ Jesus that while he was not a visible member of the church, yet he was and is one of the house eternal in the heavens.

The funeral was held in the Cow Marsh meeting-house, conducted by the writer. After reading hymn 15 (Beebe's Collection), used as a text Romans viii. 1, 2: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." I tried to draw therefrom the truth in Christ Jesus, that the brethren and friends might be comforted and given to feel that the dear Lord hath gathered our friend, whom we loved as a brother, home to himself, in whom is the fullness of eternal glory.

BENJ. E. CUBBAGE.

FELTON, Delaware.

WITH mournful feelings I proceed to chronicle the demise of **James W. Corder,** who departed this life Thursday evening, March 16th, 1905. With total resignation to him who appeared to Moses in the burning bush, he passed down into the deep waters of death. He was prostrated to the earth in his yard by a paralytic stroke on the first day of February, and was helpless to the day of his death. He was born Jan. 15th, 1824, on Hacker, where the writer now lives, and was married by the same to Mary C. Bond, in April, 1854. To this union were born five children, two boys and three girls; his third daughter died young. He received a hope in the Lord Jesus Christ in the pardon of his sins soon after marriage, but his troubles began about his eternal welfare in the year 1847, when he was confined to his bed with typhoid fever for eleven weeks. He realized that he was a sinner unprepared to die; he felt the terrors of death and the pangs of sin; he never forgot the wormwood and the gall. But God in his own time raised him up far above the mists and fogs of condemnation into that element of love and sweet peace found only in Christ. He came before the church May 23rd, 1858, told of his hope in Christ, was received, and baptized by the writer. He was well established in the doctrine of salvation by grace through the blood and merits of the ever blessed Redeemer. His four children and one granddaughter belong to the same church; his second son, Wm. A. Corder, is a deacon of the church. He was never heard to murmur or complain of his affliction, but was patient to the very last. He often put his arms around my shoulders he said for the truth's sake, and said that he never forgot what I once told him, to trust in God in all his trials, for he was a stronghold in time of trouble. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." He spent his last days under the care of his widowed daughter, Mrs. Isaphene Woodford, who discharged her duty in a faithful manner. When we lost our church-house by the Civil war, brother James paid in over $250 to build a new one. He was useful in his church; loved to feed his brethren.

His funeral was largely attended; sermon on the occasion by Elder J. Floyd Cole, from 1 Cor. xv. 54. Elders J. N. Bartlett and S. A. Cleavenger made some remarks, after which he was laid away in the silent tomb by the side of his wife till the great resurrection day. Brother James was delighted with the good preaching of our ministers when they paid us a visit.

J. S. CORDER.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., April 3, 1905.

Elder William Pulaski Burks, the subject of this memoir, was born Nov. 7th, 1834, and died Feb. 25th, 1905, aged 70 years, 3 months and 18 days. He was born in Georgia, and died in Chattanooga, Tenn., having been a citizen of Chattanooga only a few years, but being a resident of Montgomery, Ala., for a number of years. He was added to the church at Union, Bullock Co., Ala., during the war, while at home on a furlough. He was once steward among the Methodists, but when he by grace was made to see and understand the truth, he bitterly repudiated his former relation, and became a staunch, uncompromising, Primitive Baptist, and stood firm in the truth until death, and it is true of him that he fought the good fight and kept the faith, henceforth there was laid up for him a crown. He was fearless in exposing false systems of religion, and was devoted to his church and his brethren, who now delight to do him honor and hold him in high esteem. He was a consistent member of Cottage Hill church, and became its clerk, and was afterwards ordained deacon, and was a deacon indeed. He was afterwards, contrary to his own wishes, ordained to the work of the gospel ministry, although he never took the charge of churches, but as occasion furnished he ably defended the faith of God's elect. There are many things to his credit, but as obituaries are not histories of men's lives, we necessarily have to abbreviate. He was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years, and had clear ideas of the truth.

He was well posted in the Scripture, and that was the man of his counsel. He attended his meetings regularly, and was zealous for truth and order. His house was a home for his brethren, where they found a welcome. His favorite hymns were: "A child of Jehovah, a subject of grace," "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord," "O land of rest, for thee I sigh," "Rock of ages," "My God, the spring of all my joys," "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep." He suffered much in his last days from liver trouble, and did not murmur, but patiently bore and endured, as seeing him who is invisible. He was a kind, provident husband and father; had twice been married, his last wife survives him. He leaves also three sons, one sister and other relatives, many brethren and a pastor to mourn our loss, assured that our loss is his eternal gain. We would say in humble submission, The will of the Lord be done. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord. Among his last expressions was, "My Lord and my God."

He was buried in Montgomery, Ala., Feb. 28th, 1905, Elder J. S. Baxly officiating. May God comfort and sustain his widow, and if in the province of his will, enable his sons to see, love, believe and defend the same principles their father so much loved, is my humble and sincere desire.

HIS PASTOR.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., March 27, 1905.

"WHAT is your life? It is even a vapor."—James iv. 14.

Jacob V. Hickman departed this life at the home of his brother, James T. Hickman, one mile south of Springport, Henry Co., Ind., Feb. 7th, 1905, aged 62 years, 9 months and 27 days. He was the seventh child of Joshua L. and Juliet Hickman, who raised a family of eight children, six boys and two girls, to manhood and womanhood. Three brothers survive. Jocob died at the old homestead, only a few rods from his birthplace. He was married to Miss Sarah A. Smith May 14th, 1890. During the latter part of their married life both suffered from ill health, she dying Jan. 20th, 1901. Jacob's health continued to decline, and about six months previous to his decease he became so poorly that his brother brought him to his home, where he received the kindest care and best nursing that a loving brother and his sympathetic wife could give, until the end came. He spent the better part of his life in farming and teaching. As a man he was temperate, industrious, truthful, moral. His conversation was clean, chaste. No one's morals were ever impaired by associating with him, yet he had the frailties, infirmities, weaknesses and faults common to corrupted humanity, which he frankly acknowledged and greatly deplored. He was a great reader, and his reading was select, consisting of sound, instructive books; they were his companions. He was a Bible student, and had strong convictions as to its teaching. He believed in the sovereignty of God, and that salvation is of the Lord, by grace, through faith. He was an Old School Baptist in faith and belief, but he never united with the church. He freely confessed himself a sinner in the sight of God. But we have the comfortable assurance that God had given him a good hope through grace, that Christ had atoned for his sins by the sacrifice of himself. His hope was in Christ, therefore we take comfort in our sorrow. May the God of all comfort enable us to be submissive to his will.

On February 10th appropriate services were held at the house, conducted by Elder John M. Thompson, of Greenfield, Ind., after which his body was conveyed to Mt. Summit cemetery and interred near the grave of his wife, where we trust his dust shall rest until "the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible," "meet the Lord in the air," and so ever "be with the Lord."

A token of kind remembrance by

HIS BROTHERS.

DIED—Sept. 9th, 1904, **Mrs. Matilda M. Johnson,** near Rikers Hollow, Steuben Co., N. Y. Funeral Sunday following, conducted by Mr. McGhee and Mr. H. Brown, of Prattsburg, N. Y. April 12th it was thought that she had a paralytic stroke. This was followed by liver trouble, terminating in a severe case of jaundice. Sister Johnson was born March 23rd, 1834; her parents were Almerion and Maria Farr Graves. She was married to Edwin F. Johnson, Jan 26th, 1853. Ten sons and three daughters were born to them; five sons, one daughter and husband have gone before, leaving five sons and two daughters, also one sister, Mrs. Eliza Fox, of Wheelerville. Sister Johnson experienced a hope in the mercy and grace of Jesus Christ in early life, and united with the Methodists, and remained with them about two years. Becoming perfectly satisfied that the doctrine and practice of the Methodists were not in harmony with the Scriptures of eternal truth, she left them and came to the Old School Baptist Church at Ingleside, N. Y., living in full fellowship with the church and they with her the remainder of her life. A faithful, God-fearing christian has gone home, a great vacancy is therefore made in the church, the home and neighborhood. God bless the mourning ones.

ALSO,

DIED—April 2nd, 1905, **Deacon Edward Drake,** aged 73 years and 6 months. He was sick fourteen months with nervous prostration and softening of the brain; was married in 1861; united with the Old School Baptist Church at Rikers Hollow, now Ingleside, N. Y., in 1868. He leaves a widow, seven children, two brothers, twenty-five grandchildren and many other relatives and friends, with the church,

to mourn the loss which to him is gain. Yes, mortality is swallowed up of life, and he is now in the perfect likeness of his Savior; to him the end of this world has come, never, never to return. A good, reliable, honorable neighbor and citizen is gone, a kind husband and father. He served the church as deacon for many years, and was highly esteemed by his brethren. I am glad that I can say that he, with the church, stood firm upon the foundation of the unlimited, absolute predestination of God over all things, unconditional salvation, eternal oneness of Christ and his bride, the resurrection of the dead from mortal to immortality, and eternal joy and rest beyond this vale of tears; in all these things we saw eye to eye. May the dear Lord bless the sad, lonely widow, the dear children, and all that mourn, with great grace, is my prayer.

The writer of this notice addressed a large congregation at the meeting-house April 6th, after which the body was laid away.

D. M. VAIL.

DIED—At the home of his son, Z. G. Fogerson, in Silverton, Texas, my husband, **Jacob A. Fogerson,** March 19th, 1905, aged 65 years, 5 months and 23 days. He was born near Lebanon, Mo., and was married in his 23rd year. He was the father of twelve children, three boys and nine girls. Artie, aged sixteen years, preceded him to the grave. Three of his children that live here, and the two at home, attended him in his sickness, and did all that they could for him, having the best doctors here, after returning from the sanitarium at De Leon, but all failed. His death was caused by Bright's disease. His suffering could not be told, yet borne with great patience, no word of complaint was ever heard from his lips. He was not a professor of religion, but believed, as he often expressed, in the will and purpose of God in all things here and hereafter. O it seems so hard to know we will see him no more. He leaves eleven children, fifty grandchildren and the writer, his poor wife, and many friends, who mourn his departure.

He was laid to rest in the burying ground after a few appropriate remarks, and singing of his favorite hymns, ("How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord," and "Am I a soldier of the cross?") to await the resurrection of the dead, when all the redeemed shall be changed into the glorious image of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

E. C. FOGERSON.

BY request, I send for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a notice of the death of **Willie R. Owens,** who died at the home of his parents, in Hopkins Co., Texas, on the 25th day of November, 1904, aged 19 years, 10 months and 2 days. The disease from which death resulted was typhoid pneumonia. Willie was the son of Mr. J. N. and sister H. A. Owens, who feel their loss very sadly, for Willie was a devoted and obedient son. While he had made no profession of a hope, he seems to have left some consoling evidences of passing to a better world. This is a sad and heavy stroke on father, mother, brothers and sisters, but he who wounds is able also to heal. May the Lord bless the bereaved, and enable them to bow in humble submission, and say from the heart, "Thy will be done," is the sincere desire of their friend and brother,

H. B. JONES.

MT. VERNON, Texas, April 3, 1905.

T. J. Baldwin, my father, died April 2nd, 1905, aged 69 years, 2 months and 28 days. He was a Bible student, hence was familiar with the Scriptures. He was a firm believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine. He was reconciled to the will and counsel of God, realizing that he knows best. We feel deeply the pangs of grief, but we feel that he is not dead, only asleep in Christ. He loved much to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, they were a great comfort to him, no other paper gave him the same pleasure.

(MRS.) A. E. LOUNSBURY.

PACIFIC JUNCTION, Iowa, April 12, 1905.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER David Bartley having returned from Lakeland, Fla., to Lebanon, Ohio, requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

Elder Morgan Brown wishes his correspondents to address him at Cordele, Ga., instead of Helena, Ga.

Martin D. Fisher has changed his address from Hallwood Va., to 53 Irving Place, Jamaica, N. Y.

MEETINGS.

THERE will be a three days meeting held with the Sidling Hill Old School Baptist Church, Fulton Co., Pa., commencing at eleven o'clock on Friday before the first Sunday in May, 1905. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth, and we hope to be remembered by our ministering brethren. Those coming by railroad will come on the B. & O. R. R. to Hancock, on Thursday, about one o'clock, and pass over the bridge to the Hancock side, where they will be met and conveyed to place of meeting, a distance of twenty miles.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Lord willing, a May meeting will be held with the Frying Pan church, Fairfax Co., Virginia, on the second Sunday and Saturday preceding in May, (13th and 14th) 1905. Those coming by way of Washington city will take an afternoon train Friday for Herndon, on the Southern R. R., where they will be met and cared for. Our brethren, sisters and friends

are cordially invited. We hope our ministering brethren will favor us with their presence.

E. V. WHITE, Pastor.

THE Baltimore Association is appointed to be held with the Harford church, Harford County, Md., beginning Wednesday before the third Sunday in May, (17th) 1905, and continuing three days. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth to meet with us. Those coming by way of Baltimore will take train leaving North Avenue station, Md. & Pa. R. R., on Tuesday before, at 3:25 or 4:20 p. m. for Long Green or Forest Hill. Those coming by way of York will take train leaving there at 1:30 p. m. for Forest Hill, on the same railroad. Passengers are advised to be at the above named stations in time, as there will probably be some change in the time-table about the first of May.

NATHAN GRAFTON, Church Clerk.

THE Lord willing, the Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Rock Springs church, Lancaster Co., Pa., commencing on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, (24th) 1905. Those coming by way of Philadelphia will take train over the P., W. & B. R. R. to connect at Perryville with the 4 p. m. train on the Columbia & Port Deposit R. R. for Conowingo, Md., on Tuesday, May 23rd. Friends coming from Baltimore will make the same connection for Conowingo, where they will all be met at the same time and cared for. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us, especially the ministering brethren, and hope we may have a pleasant and profitable meeting, and that the Lord may grant us his presence.

D. M. THOMAS, Clerk.

THE Delaware River Association will be held with the Locktown Old School Baptist church, near Frenchtown, N. J., beginning Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (May 31st) 1905, and continuing the first two days of June. Brethren and friends are cordially invited to attend.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the New Vernon church, Sullivan Co., N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1905. All of like precious faith with us will be cordially welcomed.

THE Sandusky Association meets with the Columbia church, Jackson Co., Michigan, the Lord willing, on Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1905, and continues the two following days. Trains will be met at Cement City, on Cincinnati Northern Railroad, which is but a few rods from the meeting-house. All who desire to meet with us will be welcome.

Done by order of the church.

DAVID TITMUS.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in Hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

717 HOWARD ST., DETROIT, Mich.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m., in the Red Men's Hall, First and Congress Streets in Troy, N. Y., and at 2:30 p. m. in West Sand Lake, N. Y., at the home of Mrs. Moul. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at the Hall, corner of 19th St. and 8th Ave., fifth floor. Elevator entrance on either 19th St. or 8th Ave.

10:30 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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The bi-centennial of the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., was celebrated Oct. 20th, 1903. After some delay it is now published in pamphlet form, and is now on sale. Price 15 cents. The pamphlet contains photographs of the Welsh Tract meeting-house and Elder J. G. Eubanks, the pastor, the proceedings of the anniversary, letters of greeting from sister churches and a historical sketch written by Dr. B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., and read on the occasion. Some of the brick in the meeting-house was brought from Wales to this country, and hauled on mules' backs a distance of ten miles. The pamphlet is very interesting and full of information.

The edition is limited, and orders should be sent without delay in order to secure a copy. Send all orders to P. M. SHERWOOD,

NEWARK, Newcastle Co., Del.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 73. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1905. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE THORN IN THE FLESH.

It matters not what was Paul's thorn in the flesh, just as there is one body, but many members, so there are many besetting sins to which the flesh is heir. The besetting fault with which I am most troubled does not chiefly trouble the most of my brethren, and there are some besetting sins that trouble them more than I am troubled by them. We all have our peculiarities to contend with, and these peculiarities are all for the benefit of the humble poor. Could Paul have had a smooth road to travel all along his journey, and then we all after him have had the thorn in the flesh, there would be no comfort to us in reading after Paul. Though his life and ours are so unlike, yet like two drops of water, in trials, we do not differ, for all are alike tried, and this produces the same humiliating effect in all.

Paul said, "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Jesus then is our all. And Paul tells us again that he (Christ) of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption; he is all that a poor sinner needs in time or in eternity; his grace is sufficient for all our defects; and where sin abounded, grace does much more abound. O, heir of heaven, what a glorious truth! Where is there any comfort in hearing a legalist say that he lives perfectly sinless, and that he has not sinned in such a long time? Suppose Paul had talked that way, you, dear child, would have been compelled to resort to some other source for comfort; but instead, Paul said, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." Think of this. Less than the least! This thorn was given to Paul lest he should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations; and it is through the abundance of the revelation of Jesus Christ that we are given to feel our need of him. The thorn in the

flesh is the messenger of Satan; the faults that cause us so much pain, are the messengers of Satan, to sift God's little ones, as Peter was sifted, so that they may not be exalted above measure. Our God controls the mad waves of the raging sea, saying, Thus far shalt thou go, but no further, and the power of the devil is limited as much as the waves of the raging sea. A strong man armed keeps his goods in peace, but when a stronger than he cometh, he binds the strong man and takes away his armor, wherein he trusted, and spoils his goods. God saw a great glory for himself, and great benefit for his people in spoiling their goods, that his people might be continually reminded where their strength really lies. Were there no thorn in the flesh, we should begin to think that our sufficiency is in the flesh; like Peter, we would think that we were able to live perfect in ourselves. In olden times the Canaanite was not driven out of the land; he was not only permitted to remain, but he was allowed to retain a portion of the land.

Now, dear child of God, here is where the battle ground is, and this is why we are commanded to put on the whole armor of God, not our armor, but the armor of God. Mind you, the armor belongs to the God of Israel, and so, dear child, be glad, for your God has said, "I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children." Fear not then, poor, frail child, for the mighty God has promised to contend with your strong foe and to save you. But you say, I am so sinful, I am always yielding to my strong enemy, and how can I claim any right to heirship in the great inheritance which our God has in store for his children? Then I hear you pray, O Lord, keep me pure, and remove my besetting sin from me. In this, dear child, you are praying Paul's prayer, you are beseeching the Lord to remove the thorn out of the flesh, but God's answer to you is the same as he gave to Paul. He says, "My grace is sufficient for thee." And you say, What, Lord, thy grace sufficient for me, when I, with eyes wide open, run into sin? But he says, I know the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. And he says, I will be merciful to your unrighteousness, and your sins and iniquities I will remember no more against you forever. I nailed all the harrassing sins, which so pierce your heart, to the cross, and I was made to be sin for you, that you might be made the righteousness of God in me. Therefore, he says still further, I will not impute your sins, which hurt and grieve you so much, unto you, but I will, on the other hand, impute my righteousness unto you, instead of your sins; "My grace is sufficient for thee." O then be not dismayed. But this miserable thorn caused Paul to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "I thank God," Paul says again, "through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." Again Paul said, "I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death." The law to which the apostle was alive once, which was all the time prior to receiving it, was that which revealed the disposition in him to sin. Then he found a law in himself to be like God, and another law to be as he had always been before, and now the things he would not were the very things that he did, and the things he would were the things that he did not. O look at this poor old "can't help it,"

for he said, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."

I am sorry to use the term, "can't help it," but there has arisen a disposition of late, even among some Old School Baptists, to censure the doctrine of the inability of the people of God to do as they would. I know that this is of late origin, and I am surprised that some who were once able defenders of the cross, are now fighting that for which they once contended. But we are informed of them beforehand, for it is said, "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." One of them informed me he is rejoicing that he can now preach what he believes; by this, confessing that he has not been preaching what he believed before, while in the Old School Baptist Church. The brethren there are preaching still the doctrine which he used to preach, but he says that he was restricted in preaching what he really believed.

Paul speaks of enduring perilous times: perils by land, and perils by sea, and perils among false brethren. All these things were indeed as a thorn in the flesh, but more especially perils among false brethren. Give me any other peril before this last. O to be in love and fellowship with a brother, and then to be cast down to the ground, this is the greatest thorn of which I can conceive. But if there were false brethren in Paul's day, we ought not to be surprised if there should be false brethren in our day, and the more hidden such false brethren are, the more dangerous to the church. But all these things are needful in our pathway for the fulfillment of the Scriptures, yet woe unto him by whom the offence cometh; it is better that a millstone be tied about his neck, and he cast into the depths of the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones that believe in Jesus. I feel so sinful that I am not worthy of a place in the church, but I have no place on earth to call home, only among the dear Old Baptists, and if they sever me from them, I am homeless in the world. I want to live with them, because they confess to feeling sinful and unworthy.

Dear brethren, this is at your disposal, and you can use it if you think it will prove of any benefit to the household of faith.

I remain your afflicted brother, in hope,

J. M. DULEY.

CAPRON, Okla., Jan. 18, 1905.

"HE SHALL SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS."

THIS is the positive affirmation of the messenger, the angel of God, unto Joseph announcing the advent of the holy Son of God into this world, and his mission to save his people from their sins. It is thus evident that the Lord has a people, and that this people are sinners, and Jesus came to save that people. Now let us search for the people who are saved by the Lord.

Moses spoke of this people, saying, "The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." Here it is testified that the Lord has a portion, which means a part, and Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. Then who and what is Jacob? In finding Jacob we shall find the Lord's portion, or his people. Jacob was the twin brother of Esau, the younger son of Isaac, the son of Abraham. According to the custom or law of man, the Lord's chosen portion would have been Esau, for he was the legal

heir to all the inheritance. But the testimony is that the Lord overruled the custom of man, and manifested his love, will and favor in making Jacob heir to the inheritance, and the Lord established his covenant with Jacob and called him Israel. Thus it is evident that Jacob was the chosen vessel of God's mercy, and that he was thus chosen before he was made the heir. Jacob was that portion, a part of mankind, and was so before he was manifested as the heir to the inheritance, as said before. Jacob represents the Lord's chosen people in their sinful relation to the world. Now let us follow this line of thought and see if God's holy word will bear us out in this conclusion. Isaiah said, "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name: thou art mine." Here it is declared that the Lord created Jacob and formed Israel. The Lord created man, chose Jacob, formed Israel; thus Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. Thus he also forms the true Israel, the church of God; thus he makes manifest his love, will and purpose concerning his chosen portion. The people of God are represented by many figures in the word of God, far too many to be all mentioned. I will however call attention to one such figure. Ezekiel forcibly represents this people in the vision of the valley of dry bones. The Lord said to him, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel." What lessons do we learn here? First, that the house of Israel is but a valley of dry bones. They are dead and very dry. Second, we learn that the Spirit of the Lord moved upon them, and they came together, bone to his bone. Third, that breath came into them and they lived and stood up a great army. This army is formed from dry bones. Here is the true Israel of God, the church of which Paul speaks in addressing the saints at Ephesus, calling them the faithful in Christ Jesus. Now this people are first dead in sins, walking according to the course of this world. Paul also says that this same people were blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ, according as they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, and these he has also predestinated unto the adoption of children. Thus in the dispensation of the fullness of times God hath gathered together in one all that are in Christ, thus making them manifest as heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. Thus it is evident that the Lord Jesus has a people, and it is further evident they are a chosen people, the portion of his inheritance.

But at first they are not developed as his, they are dead in sins, and by nature children of wrath, even as others. Thus they are without merit, and are sinners against God. But now the glad tidings, "He shall save his people from their sins." There is no condition, no uncertainty about this salvation, it is a positive, certain, unfailing salvation from sin. To enter into this great plan of salvation would make this article too long. Paul sums it all up when he says, In the fullness of time God sent his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. Thus we see that he saved them by redeeming them; that is, he paid all the demand of the law which was against them. This demand was their life, and so he gave his own life a ransom for sin; thus the demand of the law was paid, and they are saved from sin. Now in consideration of all this, Jesus said, "I came not to call the

righteous, but sinners to repentance." Thus not only the redemption of his people is based upon his death, but their calling unto repentance is also the result of his work, and is his work. This he does. How? First, by implanting life, and this life enables them to see that they are sinners, and to consider their true condition as sinners. Now then, let us sum up some of the grand truths which are embraced in the gospel of the Son of God: Jacob is the lot of his inheritance, he found him in a waste howling wilderness, and led him about and instructed him. He also found you and me in the same deplorable condition. As he led Jacob, so has he led us; as he instructed Jacob, so has he instructed us. Thus we have fellowship with Jacob, and do we not also have fellowship with the prophet when he said that the Lord had created Jacob and formed Israel? And then do we not have fellowship with Ezekiel, as he beheld the valley of dry bones? We were also dead and very dry, the Spirit of the Lord moved upon the dry bones, his Spirit moved us and caused us to come together each in our place, and by the Fountain of life we were enabled to stand up, and were made manifest as the army of the Lord. Then also our fellowship is with the saints at Ephesus, and all the faithful in Christ, for we all were first dead in sin, and by nature the children of wrath even as others.

The Lord loved Jacob before he was born, and chose him. It is said, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." And Paul said, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved.)" As God raised up the dry bones in the valley so that they stood up, a great army, so has he raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ. Thus it is evident, dear ones, that you have fellowship with the saints and with all the household of faith, and having fellowship, you are led by the same Spirit, and kept by the same power as was Jacob. You are moved by the same Spirit that moved the dry bones, and are quickened by the same Spirit as were the saints at Ephesus, and all the faithful in Christ Jesus. Thus you are made manifest the heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. Thus the church is formed, and is raised up together, and is made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ; and this is all of the Lord. Can we not all say with Paul, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began"? Now I would love to follow the church in her manifest state, and speak of her final deliverance from the power of sin and death, when this mortal shall have put on immortality, but space forbids.

I have given here but a sketch or outline, it is a grand subject to me; if you see anything in it that is not according to sound doctrine, cast it aside, as from one who is imperfect.

Yours in bonds of love and fellowship,

B. S. PATE.

DAYTON, Wash., Jan. 29, 1905.

HERNDON, Va., Jan. 30, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Inclosed you will find a letter I received a short time ago from dear brother Eli T. Kidwell, of Merrifield, Va. It gave me much comfort to receive it, and came at a time I most needed it.

In the darkest hours of our nighttime we sometimes receive messages of love from our loved ones, telling us that they still hold us in fond remembrance, when we felt that we neither had a friend on earth or in heaven. This was my condition when I received brother Kidwell's letter, for it came to me as good news in the nighttime, and for a small moment I felt to say, It is good to be remembered by the little ones of our Father's kingdom. Can any other love exceed this, to be loved of God and loved by the brethren? I think not; it is a love that the world knows nothing of, for it comes from God; we cannot go to it, but it must come to us. John says, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." Oftentimes I feel destitute of this love, but this morning while meditating upon the suffering of our dear Savior while in this world of sin and sorrow, a feeling was kindled in my poor heart, which makes me feel willing to suffer for his name's sake; a poor, suffering man; "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;" had not where to lay his head; and all this suffering for the sins of his people. O that I could be made willing to suffer at all times for his name's sake, and say in spirit and in truth, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

I submit the inclosed letter of brother Kidwell's to your good judgment; I have not his consent to have it published, but know it will be all right with him.

Your brother, I hope, in Christ Jesus,
JOHN F. OLIVER.

MERRIFIELD, Va., Jan. 14, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER OLIVER:—I thought I would drop you a line to let you see I still think of you, notwithstanding all my silence. You know that silence is no proof that thought is gone. No; there is but one kind of silence that proves that thought is gone, and that is the silence of death; while we have trouble and sorrow we may be sure that we are still alive.

As I read your letter in the SIGNS I felt sure you were yet alive. How plaintive the cry, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth." That cry cannot come from the lips of any other than he who is still alive, and who is in trouble, and this embraces all the dear children of our Father's kingdom, who in this world shall have tribulation. Just here let me say this, that this word "tribulation" to my mind has a meaning that to me transcends all others in this way; that it is like that which is very filthy, and which after being submerged in water and rubbed in a rough manner, becomes, to our surprise sometimes, free from great stains. What a field for thought is here manifested. The Scriptures are fulfilled in our daily experience, and that in such a manner as to exclude self and all vain glory. We are being washed, and are in tribulation, and thus see the fulfilling of these sacred Scriptures in Jesus. As you say, there is nothing good in us, and yet we would not have it otherwise, for our heart's desire is that God may be glorified in us, or in other words, that his glory should be made manifest in our daily experience. We also desire to walk in the footsteps of the flock, and better still, we know that we are following in this way the footsteps of Jesus. Let us stop and think what all this implies. Does it not include all the blood that was shed from Abel down through all the ages of types and shadows? Ah, dear brother, what do we see? One who has

stepped aside. Tears begin to trickle down the cheek, and we begin to ask, "Lord, is it I?" And often it is that we are answered not a word, but the tribulation or washing goes on, and to us who thus groan it appears that all the blood of Jesus is being poured upon us, staining us in livid hues, showing that we are sold under sin. But, dear, doubting, trembling child, although you are turned aside, you are only in that strait where two ways meet, where mercy and truth kiss each other. Here "tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope." Are not these the very things which we see in the wayside place? But the last named in the list we feel that we have not. From one standpoint we feel far distant from Jesus and his flock. Our garments are stained, and we feel as a gazing stock to all the world, and we feel to say, Would to God we could hide away. Our tongue cleaves to the roof of our mouth; we cannot write to our brethren, if indeed we have any brethren; we wish that we were in the way with them, but the night is upon us, and knowing that we have turned aside we are frightened, for we feel that we are lost; all the evil beasts come forth, and our hope seems very small indeed. But all this makes us not ashamed to own our Lord, or to defend his cause, too, if need be. If the doctrine of God our Savior is assailed, we will defend it to the very best of our ability, even if we condemn our own lives, which is often the case in my own individual experience. I am forced to ask the question, Why is this so? I will venture to answer this for you, and feel free to do so. It is because you love the truth for the truth's sake. And what is truth but Jesus himself? So, loving the truth, you love Jesus, and to love him means to deny self. Thus it is made manifest that he is within you as your life and light. All this is learned in your daily experience as you find yourself turned aside, when our loved Savior seems to be gone, then we are turned to him whom our soul loveth. O, my dear brother, none but those who have seen his face and felt his cleansing blood, which alone can and does wash and make us white, can thus cry to him. Blessed thought: "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." But you and I must needs go through the process of washing, not only as we are already bathed in his blood, but each day also, for it is through great tribulation that we are to enter the kingdom. Thus all that we suffer here is but a cleansing or purifying process to remind us that this is not our home. I feel to-day that I would rather call you brother in view of your sojourn here with me in the valley, than if you were way beyond me on the mountain top.

I will now leave this with you. Could you write to me some time? You do not know how I long to have some one to talk to, and if I fail to answer, do not think that I have stopped thinking about you; this will not be while I live. For the present, good by.

Your little brother,

ELI T. KIDWELL.

BLUE SPRINGS, Mo., March 20, 1905.

EDITOR OF THE SIGNS—VERY DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed you will find a copy of a letter I received from an old colored brother, whom I have known for more than a half century, and whose life is a living epistle of the gospel of the grace of God. He is respected most by those who know him best, and see his daily walk. Having been a slave in his early life, his education is limited, but his

knowledge of heavenly or spiritual things is abundant, as I think his letter will show to all those who have been taught in the same school, and though the dear old brother is surrounded by those who teach for doctrine the commandments of men, yet he is not turned away from the truth, but is firm in the faith, magnifying the goodness and grace of God. His letter was of so much comfort to me that I felt (with others) it would edify the dear readers of the SIGNS, of which he is a subscriber, in that it is another living manifestation that they are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." I have labored with him in natural fields while he was a slave of a fleshly master, and do hope we have labored together for the last forty years in spiritual fields. He speaks of the good times we had together when we had the gospel preached in its purity by the following Elders: T. P. Dudley, S. H. Durand, J. F. and Joseph Johnson, D. Bartley, Buress, Thomas. Then we had Bible doctrine, which was edifying and instructive, and the church was a unit in belief of the apostles' doctrine, and fellowship abounded. I have sent for the SIGNS for him with my own subscription for the last forty years. If I live until the 20th of June I will be eighty-six years old, and though it may seem strange to some, I am just as sinful as when I was young; the same sinner pleading for mercy and grace.

The SIGNS has been in our family from the first number to the present time. I still go to preaching when some friend takes me. We have very good preachers in this section, but some I do not think love the doctrine of God's unlimited sovereignty. I will illustrate. I went last summer to a meeting; the pastor, who is a sound preacher, was not there. A visiting minister was there, who claimed to be a Primitive Baptist. He preached infant purity; he said they were sinless until they came to the age of accountability. If I am not mistaken, the night of December 26th, 1852, the Lord showed me that I was a sinner, and I learned from the same source that I had always been a sinner, conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity, and that grace is the only salvation for the infant as well as the adult. I had never heard a Predestinarian Baptist preach otherwise before. We have sometimes evangelists, or they claim to be, that preach strange things; they endeavor to excite the carnal mind, and in many places it seems they are received into the churches, causing much sorrow and confusion, and not unfrequently they get enough bewitched and add worldly minded ones, who know nothing of the doctrine of God experimentally, and hate the pure doctrine of our Lord; so that the children whose God the Lord is are cast out as evil. These things make me feel very sad, and were it not that I am assured that the "foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his," I would give up. O how glad I am that the Lord reigns supreme, having all power, working his will in heaven and earth, and though men may think they are working wonders, and laugh at his humble saints, yet they cannot harm one of them, for the Lord is their shield and strength. Brother Chick, while there are many that claim the name of Old School or Primitive Baptists in our State, I fear there are few that are in fellowship with the apostles. There are false teachers traveling through the country, and they scatter discord, and there is a falling away. I look back to the time when the brethren loved to hear the doc-

trine preached; it was their meat and drink. Then love and fellowship abounded, and we were strong in the Lord. Brethren were at meeting every appointed time, unless providentially hindered, and if a brother was absent the whole church was anxious about him, and would find out if he was ill. Now so many preachers are afraid of preaching doctrine, and are preaching what they call practical godliness, duty, &c. Fellowship is dead; a little shower, or a little business, and any flimsy excuse is offered if asked why they were not at meeting. The real reason is that there is no food there for the children of God, and they have been disappointed so many times that they dread other disappointments. O that I might see the dear saints once more on this earth rejoicing in love and feeding on the pure gospel of the Son of God. May the Lord bless you, keep you steadfast in the faith, not fearing to declare the pure doctrine, as he has in the past. The SIGNS is nearly all the preaching I get; I am not afraid to pick it up lest I shall see something that will make me ashamed. O I wish I could say it of other papers that claim our name.

I must close. I am near the end of my earthly pilgrimage, and I hope to read the SIGNS the rest of my time here. It is likely this will be my last attempt to write you. I would love to see brother Waller's letter published, as I love him for the truth's sake, and feel sure he is one of God's humble saints.

In love and fellowship your brother, I hope,

THURSTON KNIGHT.

LIBERTY, Mo., Jan. 13, 1905.

MR. KNIGHT—DEAR BROTHER, AS I HOPE, IN THE LORD:—Will you please allow me to have a little conversation with you this morning? I feel lonely; my mind keeps wandering back to the many pleasant days we spent together forty or more years ago in the little church on the farm where your beloved old father lived. Those days are gone, but cannot be forgotten by me as long as memory lasts. I often think of you and your wife; you are the only two beside myself now left, and I do not get to see you nor any one of that order, and I do not know of any one in Clay county that takes the SIGNS OF THE TIMES except myself; yet none of these things move me to the right or to the left, I am willing to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, looking to Jesus, not to man, nor to the help of man, nor to any good works that I have done or can do, but alone to the power of the all-wise and covenant-keeping God. Yes, my dear brother, I think I can of a truth say that we have tried our good works, and all have come to naught, and left our naked souls exposed to God's eternal wrath, expecting to hear the sentence, Depart, thou cursed. If I know anything about it, now comes the trying time. When it pleases God by his almighty power to open the blind eyes to see, we become like the children of Israel at the Red Sea; they had gone as far as they could without a stronger power. Here I am, I cannot go forward; the sea is in the front, the enemy behind me, and O my sins, my sins, they stand as mountains on either side. Then we are stripped of all our self-righteous works, and we are made to cry out, Lord, save me, I perish. Then it is that the arm of the Lord is made bare, and Christ is revealed as the way through the sea. You know that I was raised a slave, and have no schooling, and cannot explain as I would like, but thanks be to God, I have a little hope

that I have been and am still being taught in the school of Christ, which hope I would not give up for all that this world could give me. I learned of this man Christ that "there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." I learned of him that "Without me [Christ] ye can do nothing." It would take the pen of a ready writer to tell all I have learned in that school.

You ask my age. I was born in March, 1828, am therefore seventy-seven years old. I hope I was born of God in 1860, and from that time there has been a warfare, the flesh against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. Truly the strong man armed keepeth his palace, and his goods are in peace, till a stronger than he comes and binds the strong man, then the warfare commences. We never hear of Paul saying, "O wretched man that I am!" until that One that has all power took possession and bound the strong man. I go back to 1860, and from then on my journey through this wilderness of woe have had many a sore conflict by the way; it is a strait and narrow way. I have found many a pleasant cluster of grapes, most pleasing to the natural eye, but they all have a hook, so like a fish my soul partook; I saw the bait, but not the hook. But I can say that Jesus is able and strong to deliver, a present help in time of need. Though I have passed through tribulations, he hath delivered me out of them all.

"Ye tempted souls, reflect
Whose name 'tis you profess;
Your Master's lot you must expect,
Temptations more or less."

Yes, beloved in the Lord, endure hardness as good soldiers for Jesus' sake.

"The soul that would to Jesus press,
Must fix this firm and sure,
That tribulation, more or less,
They must and shall endure."

I had better quit. My wife joins me in love to you and yours. Farewell.

From a lone brother,

RICHARD WALLER.

ISAIAH LI. 7.

"HEARKEN unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings."

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have been thinking of the above Scripture this morning, so much so that I have decided to suggest a few thoughts concerning it, and send them to you for your disposal.

This text is very definite, and has reference to a very definite and peculiar people, a people who know righteousness, or that know Christ, for Christ is himself their righteousness. Now the inference is plainly and truly here that there is a people who know not righteousness, or know not Christ, whom to know is eternal life; neither are they commanded to hearken, for they could not hearken, for they have no life in them, that is, no eternal life. "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."—1 John v. 12. There are two classes of characters or people plainly manifested in the text: one is a people in whose heart God has put his law, and in consequence they all know righteousness, from the least of them to the greatest of them; and the other class reproaches and reviles these humble few that know righteousness. These two classes of characters have been from the morning of time, and I presume will be till the dawn of eternity, and they are very unlike. This class which is ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, reviles, reproaches, persecutes and slays, and have slain some, yea, many of

these people who know and follow after righteousness, the Lord Jesus Christ; and the Scripture gives us the reason they do these things to the humble few: it is because their own works are evil, and the others righteous. But this blessed people, whose God is the Lord, who know righteousness, are told by their dear Redeemer to fear not the reproach of men, men who know not God. Therefore they reproach and deride God's people who follow him who is the Lord their righteousness, and the Lord has not only told his people not to fear them, but has plainly told them what shall become of these reproachful and reviling people. He says, "The moth shall eat them up" like a garment. Now the nature of a moth-eaten garment is that we cannot well know that a garment is moth-eaten until it is shaken, then it will fall to pieces, all go to naught. The apostle James, with reference to the same class of people, says, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. * * * Ye have condemned and killed the just," &c.—James v. 1, 2, 6. Now these moth-eaten garments that are woven of spider webs are not at all durable, and cannot stand the test of shaking; they must and will give way and be no more; for the Lord says by the prophet and quoted by Paul, "Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things that cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved," &c.—Heb. xii. 26–28. Therefore the kingdom that God's people who know righteousness are receiving cannot be moved, it cannot be shaken, hence must and shall remain. And according to the above testimony of Scripture, nothing can remain that can be shaken; everything that cannot bear shaking must and will give way, and will be revealed and made manifest. The people that know righteousness, in whose heart is God's law, are the people who are receiving (momentarily) a kingdom that cannot be moved; it is the power of life within, and is "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil."—Heb. vi. 19. Hence it never can be shaken and never can be moved. May the Lord enable us all who know righteousness to follow after righteousness, after the things that make for peace, and the things wherewith one may edify another; and fear not the reproach of men who know not God nor his righteousness, for the moth shall eat them up, but my righteousness shall be forever, saith the Lord our God.

W. J. MAY.

PINSONFORK, Ky., Feb. 17, 1905.

MOWEAQUA, Ill., January, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—I inclose a letter written by my dear niece, which I would love to have published in the SIGNS.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) LYDIA SLAUGHTER.

WINONA, Wash., Jan. 1, 1905.

DEAR AUNT LYDIA:—Once more the tidings are spread far and near telling us that another year has vanished, we know not where; it has come and gone almost as a pleasant or unpleasant dream, whichever we have been blessed to pass over. We are made to realize the blessings of our all-wise, holy Parent; we are made to wonder and think how he has guided us through so many trials and

temptations, and how wonderful are all of his works, and truly may it be said, all "his work is perfect." When we look back over the time gone by and see how sinful and polluted we were, and are at the present time, how our time was spent in wandering and sinful thoughts and actions, and that holy Master who died on the tree has blessed us all the while "notwithstanding all," we are made to cry out, "Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; let thy glory be above all the earth."

Dear aunt, as I write I also fear, not because I am afraid I can ever say too much in trying to praise that most precious, most beloved Savior; no, no; were I to live for years and talk all the time, do not think I could even start to tell of his wondrous love and tender mercies to all such poor, unworthy wretches as I am. When I read the SIGNS and see the many letters of the brethren and sisters, I wish I could write like they do. I think it would be so sweet to meet face to face with the dear people, and hear them tell of their travel of the same road that you are in. I have started to write to you many times, but never finished a letter. Papa has belonged to the Baptists ever since I can remember, but I never attended meeting until I was nine years old.

In the summer of 1898 I was made to see my sinful condition; it was on a very hot day; mamma and we children were alone. In the evening there was as severe a thunder storm as I ever witnessed; I thought surely my time had come, and I was most miserable, too corrupt to die. I went on for two years in the most miserable state, I thought I must be losing my mind. The people would come to meeting, and as we were the only family that lived near the meeting-house we always had a most enjoyable visit; I enjoyed their coming very much. Effie, my sister, older than I, would talk to me, and I to her, of how much we loved those dear people, but we said it was quite natural that we should love and respect them, because papa and mamma did.

I went on in this way till the spring of 1901, I had a most pleasant dream: I thought I was crossing a lovely river, the water was so clear that it sparkled; I thought I fairly walked on the water, and was so happy. I have never felt the same since; would that I could have that same feeling once more. Last summer in August I learned that old brother Showalter, the pastor of the church where papa belongs, was coming from Idaho to baptize mamma. He came, and on August 28th all our family, brother A. G. Jones and family and a few others went to the river. I was sitting in the back of the wagon thinking of mamma; I wished I were in her place, but at the same time I was thinking what a lot of trouble she was making, could she not wait till some future time? When we arrived at the river they sang a hymn and offered an opportunity for any one to talk to the church who felt impressed. I was seized with something that made me weep, and I thought, If I could only go. I hardly know what happened, but the next I knew I was at the water's edge, and my dear sister with me. O how I rejoice that we went together; mother, sister and I were buried together in the watery grave at the same time by Elder Showalter and papa. O the glory of God, his unceasing care and tender mercies; his love and care over such as I, surely can be only pity.

O Aunt Lydia, I am so young, only sixteen, and so ignorant I am afraid to write; every one older than I will criti-

cise my writing, and I fear I am wrong; but if I am it is right that I should know it.

I will close for fear I weary you with my miserable writing.

Your unworthy niece,

FLORENCE ATTEBERY.

BLACK ROCK, Maryland.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—It has been a long time since I made an attempt to write you a line, although I may truthfully say there are but few days in which I am not thinking about you. I have about concluded that in my old age, being weak in body and mind, it is foolishness in me to expose my weakness and folly unnecessarily; so if this should be the last you should receive from me you must attribute it to my inability, and not to the lack of a desire to write you.

I think that in your musing on the years that are past you have at times been led in memory back to some of the pleasant times we have had together, both at the old church-house, (Black Rock) and at our lowly home. I at least remember those pleasant times, and when low down in darkness and gloom the remembrance seems to do me good. I have read and re-read your musings in the SIGNS, and if possible it seems to bring me nearer than ever in love and sweet fellowship. It may not for the present be as pleasant when those dark clouds shut out the clear shining of the Sun, but then for a time it gives us dwellers in the valley the benefit of your company for a time at least. I believe the Lord directed those musings on the years that are past, and also directed your mind in writing as you did and giving them to the readers of the SIGNS. I think there are some among us little ones that were "hit," as Elder Vail says, although we have never been far enough up the mountain to be above the clouds. The apostle Paul was caught up into the third heaven, and heard wonderful things, but he was not given language to communicate them to whom he was writing, and if he had attempted to do so they could not have understood him, but when he is lower down on the mountain side and can say, "O wretched man that I am!" then we are with him, and when he says, "To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not," then he is talking in language the low down, the weak and sinful can understand. No doubt the Lord has a wise purpose in bringing his servants through these dark and trying experiences; in them he shows them their helplessness, and that all their help must come from him. David, the sweet singer, got pretty low down sometimes, and at times thought he would be overwhelmed, but he remembered the days that were past when he went with the people to the house of God with the voice of joy and praise, with the multitude that kept holy day. In remembering and musing upon past comforts and blessings David was enabled to look to the source of all the joys and blessings he had received, and exclaimed, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance." And the same almighty power that could raise up David and all the ancient servants of God from their low estate, is yet able to raise up his servants in this day, and will do it in his time. Please give us the benefit of your musings through the same medium as often as you feel to do so. As for me, I find it labor in vain to keep working at the pump when the well is dry, so will not

write much more. I feel that my time is coming to a close, and ought to feel thankful that it has been better with me than I deserve, yet I have been a murmurer all my life. I sometimes can look back and meditate on scenes of the past, I think, with pleasure, and can say, O that it were with me as in months past.

We missed two appointments at Black Rock the past severe winter; wife and I were down the first Sunday in March. Several of the members were absent, but did not hear of any sickness among them except brother Fawble, who had been quite ill at one time. Although I cannot hear the preaching any more, I like to meet with those I think I love for the truth's sake. Brother Rowe and brother Scott have visited us twice at our home, and we enjoyed their visits very much; also sister Rowe spent a pleasant week with us in the fall.

And now I must really close. We are all moving around as usual, although all are more or less under the weather, so to speak. I know you have enough to do without writing individually to us, but if time and inclination favored we would appreciate it highly. Remember us to those of your household.

Yours, I hope, in christian love,

JOHN P. KELLEY.

KERENS, W. Va., April 3, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Inclosed you will find a letter written by brother Gore. We all enjoyed it so much we thought to share it with our brethren and sisters. If it meets your approval give it a place in the SIGNS.

Your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) R. TRIPLETT.

BROWNTOWN, Va., March 20, 1905.

MRS. R. TRIPLETT—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I will now try to write you with reference to a few thoughts which are at this time in my mind: "I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me."

Literally speaking, we would have to know that to be in a state of poverty, it would be not only very humiliating, but very distressing and painful in such a state, if we were unable to reach forth and bring to our own assistance the necessary provisions of life, either by our best efforts or tears, when we knew that death would be sure without them. How thankful we would feel to a friend who would think upon us and render assistance in such a time of need. Surely we could not say in such a case that one who had been merciful and gracious to us in our dying condition was or could be under obligation to us, to have caused such an one to have had compassion on us. Could we say that it was by the strength of our own arm that we were delivered? Surely not, but would be bound to give thanks to the one that thought upon us and had shown kindness. If we were possessed with our reasonable and intelligent faculties we would have to say with gladness of heart and soul naturally, I was poor and needy, yet my kind friend thought upon me. So with the poor and needy child of grace; they have been made to know what real poverty is, they are poor, naked, blind, ignorant and powerless within themselves, deeply in debt and not a farthing to pay. They are made to cry, Have mercy on me, thou Son of David; I am poor, but thou art rich; hide not thy face from me, for I am poor and needy, think thou upon me. What a blessing it is to know the need of a Savior, and to know that he is the hill from whence cometh our help. O what blessings come to us in this low ground of sorrow from the "river, the

streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." What costly treasures we are brought into possession of when manifestly we are brought into his banqueting-house, where we can realize at least for a moment that his banner over us is love. How mindful the good Shepherd is of us, he never slumbers nor sleeps. When we are cast down, bruised, naked and destitute, he is there, always present, ready and sufficiently able to pour in the oil of joy and consolation. What does Levite or priests amount to when one is in such a state? We then need more, we want more than a chance to be cared for. Such as we would reach forth to grasp as blessings seemingly, fade within our sight, they wither and die (pass by on either side). For "all flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field." But when the rain of heaven is showered upon a poor worm, hope is renewed, his prospects are brightened, and he is raised above earth and earthly things so high that he can now deeply realize for himself that every good and every perfect gift is from above, that they come alone from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. It is only when we are made to wait upon the Lord that our strength is renewed, and that we are permitted to mount up with wings as eagles, run and not be weary, walk and not faint. Blessed thought, we have "a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." He is a present help when all others fail, a balm for every wound, a rest for every weary soul. How can we sink with such a prop as our eternal God? Cast all of your care upon him, my dear sister, he careth for you, for in the midst of our deepest distress and sorrow he thinks upon us and arises with healing in his wings. He is our hope in life, our comfort in death, and then everlasting righteousness in the world without end.

Yours in hope,

JOHN E. GORE.

WINNSBORO, Texas, Jan. 26, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I inclose a letter from an aged brother, written to me some time ago, and as it was comforting to me, as well as encouraging, I feel sure that it will also be to others. If you deem it worthy a place in the SIGNS I would be glad to see it in print.

Yours in the bonds of grace,

RICHARD M. DYKES.

GARRISON, Texas, Dec. 5, 1904.

MR. RICHARD DYKES:—I feel to say, dear brother in the Lord. I have been a regular reader of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES for twenty-two years, though I have always felt too unworthy to write for its columns, while I have often been impressed that way. But your letter in the SIGNS of December 1st touched a tender chord in my heart, and I felt that I would write to you. You began writing like one under conviction for sin, who had not been relieved, but before you got through, you preached Jesus the only way of salvation to poor sinners, and I felt to say, My dear brother. While reading your letter the assertion of the apostle Paul came into my mind where he said, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." All of God's children are taught this one lesson, that it is the Lord who begins the work in them, and that no other power can finish it, and no other power can show a dead sinner his lost condition, save the God of Israel. When he reveals this to them they become, as

you say of yourself, discontented and in debt, and feel that they have nothing with which to pay the great debt they owe, and then on in the darkness the good Lord leads them, until he is pleased to reveal his Son in them as their Savior. Then they learn what Christ has already done for them, just that which they have been trying to do for themselves, and that is the accomplishment of their eternal salvation. Yes, he has by one offering forever perfected them that are sanctified. Sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called. They are called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. This is the only preaching that will do a poor sinner good, for such a poor sinner has tried all his own strength and has failed in it all. Dear brother, I have been trying to tell it this way in my weakness for seventeen years, and this is the way I know it, and no other way. When I read your letter, I told my dear wife that I felt sure you were a chosen vessel of the Lord, to proclaim his salvation to his people, and my prayer is that the God of Israel will be with you in all your trials. No doubt you will be surprised to get this letter from one you have never seen or heard of, but it is from one who loves you because I "can't help it." If this reaches you and interests you, I would be glad to read a letter from you. So I will close and subscribe my name,

E. W. J. ADAMS.

WAVERLY, Pa., March 8, 1905.

TO THE EDITOR OF OUR FAMILY PAPER, THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Inclosed you will find a letter containing the experience of a young brother, Scott W. Drake, whom I baptized about two years ago; it is short and expressive. You are at liberty to publish it if you see fit I love to read experiences of grace; I love to hear them told, and I love experimental preaching. The gospel is the power of God; preaching the gospel is declaring the power of God.

I am requested by several brethren to answer two questions through the SIGNS, and by your permission I will endeavor to do so.

First: Do the churches that I am serving receive or hold in their church fellowship those that belong to oath-bound secret societies?

Since I was ordained I have served seven churches in the State of New York and five in Pennsylvania; am still serving four in Pennsylvania and four in New York State. Since my services began I have not known of one belonging to those twelve churches that was a member of such a society, neither do I believe that one belonging to such a society could possibly get in one of these churches if it were known by the church. I will now present one argument against a heaven-born soul uniting with such a society. Every society of the kind is supported by its members. The name and support signifies an indorsement of the actions and rules or laws of that society. Every such society has various forms and pass-words. Among the different forms there is a form or show of religion; there must be a chaplain to pray on certain occasions; Scripture must be read at certain times to satisfy the desire of the self-righteous among them, and every living soul among them is supporting and upholding what they know is an abomination in the sight of God, and which their own experience and belief absolutely condemn. Touch not,

taste not, handle not the unclean thing. A formality of religion without the spirit of it is a very unclean thing; but what is the poor soul to do who has been in such a society for years? There is just one of two things: stay with and support the society, get what money you can out of it and swallow down what you are supporting, upholding and indorsing, or get out.

Second question: Is it according to gospel order for a member of a church while in fellowship with the church to refuse to unite in communion with them?

I answer, It is not. The sacred ordinance of communion was given to the church by the Head of the church (Christ), to be observed by them, and a refusal is to ignore the Author of the ordinance, and therefore is an open or public transgression against the church, and should be dealt with by the church as such. Good discipline in a sense is the life of the church visible, and a church is dead without it, though there may be many members in it.

D. M. VAIL.

INGLESIDE, N. Y., Sept. 14, 1902.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR FRIEND:—It has been on my mind for a week or more to write you what I understand to be the dealings of the Lord with me. It seems like an impossibility, and I have tried to give up writing, but I cannot.

Four years ago this fall, the latter part of October, something came over me that I cannot describe; I was guilty, everybody and everything condemned me; I thought I never could look any one in the face again; I was sure I never could carry it around, and I knew I never could wear it out. I thought I never would have the presumption to go to an Old School Baptist meeting again while I lived, that seemed the worst of all. I tried to drive it away, but it only made it worse; every way of escape was cut off; the days seemed weeks in length. I thought it was a judgment of God upon me; I was guilty, wherever I went everybody was looking at me, and their eyes were so sharp and piercing. I could not sleep nights; I do not think I slept more than two or three hours for eight days and seven nights. I think it was the third night that it seemed that everything that I had ever done was right before me; it made me shudder to see what I had done. I was in a horrible place, and it seemed that every struggle that I had ever made in my life had been to get in the direction of that horrible place; I had been warned time and again, but had been stubborn and rebellious, and had been determined to get there. For the first time in my life I tried to pray; all I could say was, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. For about three days and nights when I would realize my awful condition I would go to some secret place and cry unto the Lord for mercy. My voice sounded strange to me, and it seemed that God did not hear me; I thought I knew and thought everybody knew that I was past help, but I was sure that God could take me out of that awful place if it was according to his purpose; I told some one so, and I told them it was my only hope.

Sunday morning I felt some better, and did not think I was going to die; I began to think I would be all right again in a few days, until some time in the afternoon, when all at once it seemed as though the sentence of death was pronounced upon me, and about an hour after that I gave up in despair. If I ever was made to see what a wretch I am it was then; I thought that God would

not hear the prayer of such a wretch as I saw myself to be, and I went to bed to die. I thought I would be banished forever from the presence of God, and go to some low, loathsome place. I was in this despairing condition only a short time, I think it was less than an hour, when something affected my mind, and I was not in so much despair. I began to think I might possibly live awhile yet, and perhaps I would get so I could work some. That night I said I would try once more to sleep, and late in the evening I did fall asleep. When I awoke it was nearly morning; I had been awake a few moments when I thought I saw some one standing in the room; I was looking in another direction, but I could see some one standing near the door. I hesitated for a few moments to look in the direction of the person, but I finally did venture to look. The instant I looked the person closed the door and passed along near where I was and into another part of the house. The first impression was something beautiful, but the wonderful beauty and grace seemed to come to my mind gradually. It was soon daylight, and I arose and walked around out doors, and all I could think of was, O the grace and beauty; I never imagined anything so wonderful, graceful and beautiful. It was some time in the forenoon before I thought of my troubles, and when I did think of them I found they were all gone. It was cold and stormy, but I never saw such a beautiful morning, everybody and everything looked so lovely and beautiful and serene. This lasted about three days, when trouble came again, but I have never felt that terrible burden of sin from that time to this.

I have been a week or more trying to write to you, and I believe this is the best I can do, and will send it.

Yours truly,

SCOTT W. DRAKE.

BROOME CENTRE, N. Y.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel to try to tell you some of my feelings during the past seven weeks. I know I shall be unable to tell you so you can see or feel as I do, yet I wish to try. For a long time I had felt that something uncommon was about to overtake me, and I was drawn to look to him from whom all our help comes, and the more I tried to look and ask, the darker all seemed to be, and no Savior could I find. When I came to be confined to my room there was no peace; I was compelled to cry unto him for his mercies and for the returning of his joy all my waking hours, but his ears were closed to all my pleadings; over my head just a little hung O such blackness and darkness. That surely was his dwelling-place, and all my crying and pleading could not penetrate one iota. This continued for some four weeks, and I began to despair, feeling I should never see his smiles again. (I had no fear of death, I had an assurance that I would recover and have more trials and afflictions. Surely they are in store for me. O if I can only be prepared for what is in store for me.) But there has come a time when the severe black darkness has measurably cleared away, and as it were, I now and then get a little of his beauty and glory. Sometimes it seemed and I felt as if I were almost enveloped in this blackness, but here I am; surely his mercies endure forever. O, could I have a thankful heart for all his benefits. I feel at present that he has searched me and knows me, and has tried me and knows all my downsittings and uprisings, yea, my thoughts afar off, and that in my flesh dwells no good thing. All I am and all I have is in him. O that I might be able in some way or some manner to render unto him some praise or thanks

giving for all his goodness and mercies shown me all my natural life. It impresses me more and more as I grow older, and for the last few weeks O how my worthlessness has weighed me down; surely I am no good, a dry tree. He has blessed me so much, so largely, and I am so ungrateful. If I know anything of the things pertaining to the kingdom of our God, I know I can indorse the language of King David: It is good to be afflicted. O how it will humble one, it brings us down to the feet of our dear Savior, confessing our sins and looking unto him for all our strength, our very life. I have not and do not murmur for the light affliction that has been placed on me; no, no; if the affliction had been meted out according to my transgressions I would not have been able to have cried unto him, and would have been like unto Sodom and Gomorrah, but bless his holy name, he fits the back for the burden. What a blessing it is to poor, mortal men (his children) that they are enabled at times to call on his name and pour out their very heart's desire; here they find a relief that is found nowhere else. How different my feelings have been for the past few weeks than they were fifteen years ago, when I was confined to my room eight weeks; then all was bright, I seemed to feel his presence all the time, and I have often felt I would gladly go through the same trials if I could have the same experience. During the early part of my illness I kept looking continually for something like what I saw and felt before, but to my surprise all for weeks was black darkness; at times I can feel it now, just over my head. I am unable to account for it, but surely it is for some good, all his works are for some purpose. I do hope and pray that he will keep me from murmuring, and cause me to be submissive to his holy will. You know full well, much better than the humble writer, what affliction is, and also what sustaining grace is, so it is not wisdom for me to try to tell you.

Yours in christian love and fellowship,

D. M. LEONARD.

BALTIMORE, Md., March, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—In looking over your remarks in reply to my article on time salvation, I see that you say, "It is not true, as a matter of fact, that those who walk most obediently are the happiest;" and you cite Job, David and Jeremiah as instances in point. I feel like saying that while I have never seen the darkest day, yet in my darkest hours the light of hope has been seen, directing me to the port which cannot be seen by sunlight. You would not give up all this for every earthly joy, not even in the darkest hours. No, but you look back and call to mind the waymarks in the wilderness, even the places where he opened rivers where there had never been one before. Our God has given a promise, and our hope is anchored in the promise. "He that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about." There is obedience and disobedience, but surely there is no self-praise in the obedience; but in being instructed and led in the way in which we should go, and in being guided by his eye, there is enjoyment. In disobedience there is no instruction in the way of salvation; these are they who are delivered unto Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme, and for the destruction of the flesh.

It has been my experience that when I have been reading the Scriptures, or speaking with the brethren, or hearing the word preached, or sitting together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, I have

enjoyed it all above all that the world has ever been to me. I have been amply rewarded for all my time, money and trouble which I have ever taken. I have so enjoyed the things of the kingdom, and have never been left to myself in the time of need, that I have had to wonder often. We all have our feeling of hungering for communion with the Lord, but even in the bitterness of long waiting there is a sweetness in hope, the hope that he will never forsake us. This is not like the worldling; O no; I would rather be a door-keeper in the house of God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. I came seeking a servant's place, and he received me with open arms, and covered me with the robe of righteousness. I remember it still, and still stand in the Spirit by which we cry, Abba, Father. In this I can and do rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

I remain as ever, your brother in Christ,

JOHN THORNE.

[WE are glad to receive the above excellent and experimental letter from our aged brother Thorne. He refers much to his own personal travel; this is always interesting and suitable to be told. It is in experience that God reveals to us his truth, and it is in experience that the doctrine of God comes to live and have power. It is this experience of the truth that excludes all boasting, even from the obedient. In our observation, the most careful as regards their daily walk and talk, have also manifested the most lowly opinion of themselves. It will ever be so. When did we ever see thee needy and render help to thee? is always their testimony. So brother Thorne well says, even the obedient cannot boast.—ED.]

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Indiana.

DEAR EDITOR:—Please publish the inclosed letter written by our beloved sister, and read to our church at Crawfordsville, Ind., the first Saturday in February, 1905. She is now with the church triumphant, and is satisfied, awaking with the likeness of the blessed Redeemer. The church appointed me to write the obituary of sister Kenworthy while I was sick in bed at home. I loved her, and felt willing to write it, only I was so weak and incompetent; now I would copy if I could hope to improve it.

I also send the obituary notice of General Wallace, who was our near neighbor, married one of my schoolmates. I was at their wedding fifty-four years ago. He was a remarkable man in many ways. His wife was a Methodist when he married her, and wanted him to go to her meetings, but he would rather go to the woods and worship God there. He was an early riser, passing our door at 5 o'clock a. m., gazing at the trees, listening to and noting birds, and drinking in morning sweetness. He was a musician, and painter of wonderful pictures; he was kind to the poor. I have just been reading hymn 1290 (Beebe's Collection), it corresponds with my thoughts of General Wallace. The first verse would close my writing beautifully.

Tell Elder Ker I am glad God put it into his heart to write his musings. Gertrude, my daughter, soothed me with reading while I was very sick with fever. I thought to write him about it, but was too trembling.

I wonder who will write my obituary. No need of any; nothing added to nothing, nothing remains.

Your weak little sister,

LINA W. BECK.

To the Regular Baptist Church of Jesus Christ at Crawfordsville, Indiana, greeting.

BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—I have no doubt you wondered why I went so far from home to join your church. I knew at the time that I could not meet with you very often on account of the distance, besides my health will not admit of it. I think of you, my kindred in the Lord, and would enjoy meeting with you if I could. I came to you, dear friends, because I wanted a home where my father and mother had theirs so long ago. They with others, nine altogether, on December 23rd, 1823, were the charter members of this church, the first Regular Baptist Church, and I believe the first of any kind organized in Montgomery county, and it was their home until death. I never can be the exemplary member my father was, so you must bear with me. I never was a member of any church until I came to you; I always had a desire to be, but felt my unworthiness too much. I come to you as I go to the Lord, just as I am, and put my trust in him who has promised, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." As for me, I shall behold his face in righteousness, and shall be satisfied when I awake in the likeness of my Savior.

With kind regards and christian love, farewell.

ELIZABETH KENWORTHY.

THORNTOWN, Ind., Jan. 4, 1905.

(See obituary on page 316.)

BLACK LICK, Ohio, April 17, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—Inclosed find post-office money order for four dollars. I am feeling as well as I have for some time, and am trying to preach with such ability as the Lord is pleased to give, for without him I can do nothing. Preaching Christ and him crucified the only salvation for any poor sinner, either in time or eternity, and am endeavoring to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of the same. The doctrine and faith that the SIGNS has so ably and faithfully contended for from its very commencement, and it is for the truth that it has always stood, in opposition to all the inventions of men, is the reason why I have felt a deep interest in its publication. I have been a constant subscriber for fifty years, so that the very name Beebe is dear to me, and I do hope that the good Lord may still bless the publication of the SIGNS to his glory and to the comfort of his poor and afflicted people while here in these low grounds of sin and sorrow, and I do hope that the God of all grace in his infinite wisdom may still continue to abundantly bless the editor and publishers and all that may write for its columns, with that wisdom which is from above, that all their adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist. O how often I have thought of those very pleasant visits that the dear Lord in his great mercy enabled me to make when I attended your associations, and how very kindly and tenderly the brethren everywhere received me and cared for me, and I have never been able to express the deep gratitude and thankfulness of my poor heart for such abundant mercy bestowed upon such a poor, afflicted sinner.

With much love, best wishes and kindest regards to you and all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, farewell.

L. B. HANOVER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1905.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REVELATION III. 20.

OUR aged sister, Mrs. Lucinda Brewster, of Oxford, N. Y., some time since requested us to write upon the twentieth verse of the third chapter of Revelation. We have somewhat delayed a response, not because we were unmindful of the request, but for the reason that we have been much occupied in various ways, and have had quite a number of similar requests on hand.

The verse proposed reads: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

Very solemn are the words which were addressed to each of the seven churches of Asia in the opening chapters of Revelation; admonition, warning and reproof, with precious promises, are mingled in them all. It is the Spirit which thus speaks to the churches through the servant of God, who was in the isle of Patmos, for the testimony of Jesus. Of these seven churches no two were in the same condition. The things spoken to them were suited to their several needs. At that one time all these churches existed as organizations, and at that one time they were in, not one and the same condition, but in these seven different conditions. It has been so in every age since, and it is so now. The churches scattered in all the world differ in their needs at this time, as the seven churches of Asia did then. Some have supposed that these seven churches were representative of seven successive ages of the church under the gospel dispensation. We always feel to defer greatly to the mind and judgment of other and far abler men upon matters of this kind, but still we must say that we do not know where there is any scriptural proof that this view is correct. Neither do we know where there is any proof that the church, regarded as a whole, was in the condition of the first named of these seven churches during perhaps the first hundred or two hundred years of the gospel day, and then under the condition of the second named church for the next two or three hundred years, and so on to the present time. Rather, it has been our mind that now, and in every century since these addresses were given to the churches, there are and there have been in different places churches in all these different conditions. So that the address made to the church at Sardis, for instance, would be applicable to one church, while the address made to the church at Pergamos would suit another church in another place, and so on through them all.

To come to the church at Laodicea, to which the words at the beginning of this editorial were addressed; it is no doubt the case that now in some places there are churches of Christ which are lukewarm and self-satisfied, as was that church, while other churches are not in this condition, but have some other evils among them, which are described in substance by the fault found with some other of the seven churches. It is no

doubt true that some churches are walking humbly in obedience to God, and like the church at Smyrna and at Philadelphia, no censure is visited upon them in the word. Blessed indeed are such churches, they may be poor, but they are rich indeed. Blessed are all the churches of God in this one thing, that notwithstanding all their errors and failures they are still churches of God, and his thoughts toward them are thoughts of peace, and not of evil. But still for transgression and departure, either in faith or in practice, and often in both, God says the candlestick shall be removed unless there be a turning back again to the truth of God. To-day in some of the cities named here, there is not even the semblance of a christian church, and in all of them there is no church which would be recognized as a true church when judged by the standard of the New Testament; all are dead as true churches, though in some of these places the name exists. This church at Laodicea was neither cold or hot; this is what we would call a state of lukewarmness. As lukewarm water is sometimes given to produce vomiting, so the Lord says that because of their lukewarmness he will spue them out of his mouth. This lukewarmness appeared in their works: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot." They were rich and prosperous in things of this world, and therefore were self-satisfied. They evidently had come to suppose that gain was godliness, as Paul has testified of some others. They said, "I am rich and increased with goods." It was not only so, but they said so, they boasted of their prosperity, as though they were better than others, and this prosperity was the evidence of it. What a deplorable condition! Had they been really poor in spirit and rich in spirituality they could not have boasted of their riches, but would have been humbled, remembering who was the Giver. Their eyes were blinded by the god of this world; they were deceived, and therefore self-satisfied. How differently God sees from men; when men say they are rich and increased in goods, God says they are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. When men say, I am poor, then God says they are rich in faith and in all heavenly graces. When men say, I have been serving God, God says it has not been so, but when men say, When did we ever serve thee? God says that they have been doing so. So the voice of the Lord declares here that this church is wanting in all true riches; the fruits of the Spirit were woefully wanting among them; love, joy, peace, long-suffering, faith, and all that glorifies God in his people, were not to be seen in this rich and self-satisfied church. Instead of being prosperous and noble in character, they were wretched; instead of being in a happy state, they were miserable; instead of being rich, they were poor; instead of walking in the light, they were blind; and instead of being clothed with righteousness, they were naked. Let us remember that all this relates to their works (verse 15), it does not relate to their standing as saved sinners in Christ. Thus it was said of Ephraim, (Hosea xii. 8,) "And Ephraim said, Yet I am become rich, I have found me out substance: in all my labors they shall find none iniquity in me that were sin." So Paul also accuses the church at Corinth in his first epistle, (1 Cor. iv. 8,) "Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we might also reign with you." Verse seven in the same chapter shows that Paul was de-

claring that they had become self-sufficient also, and yet Paul saw that this church was really not rich, and that it did not really reign; although they had become self-sufficient, yet they were self-deceived.

Now the Lord declares to this church at Laodicea the only remedy for this state of things. Their help must all come from him, and when they should be convicted of their folly and sin, then they would be found coming to him for cleansing and healing. When it is said to the church, "Buy of me," the word does not at all signify that the grace of God can be had for a price, but it is like the word of the Lord by Isaiah: Come, buy, yea, buy wine and milk without money and (also) without price. Being poor, they needed pure gold tried in the fire; being naked, they needed white raiment that they might be clothed; and being blind, they needed eye-salve to anoint their eyes that they might see. This all signifies sovereign grace, sovereignly and graciously bestowed. When they should become poor enough and blind enough and naked enough in their own sight, as they were in God's sight, then indeed would they once more flee to this storehouse of all riches and healing, and find full supply without money and without price. It must be without price if it is to be theirs at all, for the word of the Lord has declared that they were poor, and wretched, and blind, and naked. It is not only good when a poor sinner comes at the first to know that he is poor, but it is good when a church has been self-deceived into boasting and pride, that she also be humbled and find out once more her poverty. When Jeshurun waxed fat he kicked, and this has been the sad record of Israel in all ages.

Now the Lord gives them a comforting word: "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." As many as I love. The dear Lord would not have us to despair because of his rebukes, therefore in the midst of the rebuke he declares his love; yea, more, he declares that the rebukes and the chastening both are full evidences of his love to them. But how gracious this word is right here, it is not when we are obedient that he speaks it, but when we have been disobedient and altogether unlovely, and when he corrects us with judgment that he speaks such dear words, lest we should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. "As many as I love." That takes in all of them, the weakest and the most wandering ones, and each disciple in his sorrow because of his sins may say, Since it says as many, it takes in even me.

All this that has gone before leads up to the words proposed by sister Brewster. It is still the church at Laodicea that is addressed, and the reference still is to the works of which that church had been guilty in her lukewarmness. It is not at the door of the dead sinner's heart that the Lord stands and knocks; nothing in the connection could possibly be construed that way; the language is figurative. As one stands at some door and knocks because he desires to enter there, and that his desire may be known to those within, so the Lord declares to this church that he loves their dwelling-place. The knocking is just the things that the Lord had been speaking to this church, as recorded in the preceding verses, and the knocking presupposes the indwelling of living men and women who are given ears to hear, and hearts to understand, and longings that they might hear his voice and feel his presence and have him at their table as a welcome friend, to eat and drink with them. He does not say,

If any man WILL hear my voice and WILL open to me, but, If any man hear and open. It simply means if any man loves me and feels poor, and wretched, and miserable, and naked, without me, and that the feast is no feast to him without me, when I knock that man will hear my voice, and will open to me with joy, and with him I will sup, and he with me. I will give him of the new wine of the kingdom, for he shall drink my blood and he shall eat my flesh, and thus shall his faith and hope and love and all the graces of the Spirit be renewed, and the chief joy of all to that man will be that I am with him. The warnings, the reproofs, the admonitions, the promises, and all the word of God when presented by the Spirit to the churches, are a knocking at the door. The knocking is not at the door of the dead, but the door of the living. Many of the servants may be saying, My Lord delayeth his coming, and so be eating and drinking with the drunken, and some may be smiting their fellow-servants, but there will be some, even in such a church as this, who will be sorrowful at all such things, and who will be longing for the presence of the Lord, feeling that they need him, and that there is nothing for them without him. When his word comes to them in any way, either in the preaching or in the written word, whether it be some promise or some admonition, it will be to them a token that their dear Lord is at hand, and how eagerly will they open the door, or in other words, receive him in his word and feel that in communion with him they have more than meat and drink. At such a time what matters it to them whether they be rich in this world or poor? they have all heavenly riches as theirs. Then, like David, they can say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee." Thou art the strength of my heart and my portion forever. Who can find words to describe the sweetness and power of that knocking to such a heart? How it appeals to all the warm affections which dwell there toward Jesus their King. If he but put his hand in at the door their heart wakes, and they eagerly run to welcome him. How good it is to have an ear to hear his voice, the voice of his knocking. He has come to his friends, and his friends hear and gladly receive him, and their communion is mutual. I "will sup with him, and he with me." But if there be some who do not long for him, but are swallowed up in their own vanity, with them he does not sup, neither do they with him. When they shall have eaten their own doings, and shall have found out what mere husks they are, then indeed will they be prepared to listen once more to the voice of the Bridegroom; then, and not till then, will they hear and open. It all must proceed from heart work, and heart work is the Lord's own work. Blessed indeed is that man whose heart is so prepared that he has ears to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. When David said, "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise," the word "fixed" literally means prepared. And if prepared, we know that it must be of the Lord, for "the preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is of the Lord."

Here is the test, the dividing line. Do we hear his voice? If so, with all such the blessed Lord eats and drinks. Do departures and troubles exist in many churches in our land now? If so, these words apply to all such as in those churches are troubled and waiting a visit

from the blessed Master. Not to all are these words spoken, but to them who hear, and hearing open. It is still true that wherever any one in any church, no matter how far that church may have departed from the right way of the Lord, mourns over the condition of things, and especially mourns over his own want of all that is good, that one will be waiting and hearkening for some evidence that the Master is at hand, and will mourn so long as he seems to be absent, and that one will rejoice with unspeakable joy when the Master's knocking is heard, and his heart will run out to the blessed Lord.

No doubt even at Laodicea there were some who had ears to hear what the Spirit was saying to that church. These were the ones who would hear and open the door; these would have a joyful welcome, and these would know what it is to sup with the Savior. These few would have been mourning over the condition of things in that church; their very mourning would show that they were listening for the Master's voice, and how unspeakably sweet his coming and presence would be to them in the midst of the general lukewarmness, pride and vain glory in the church.

We hope that these reflections may prove of edification to our aged sister, and to all who love the coming of the Lord in deed and in truth.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905, &c.

TO OUR DELINQUENT SUBSCRIBERS.

MUCH as we dislike mentioning the fact that many of our subscribers are in arrears with their subscriptions, at times it cannot be avoided, and such is the case now.

About the first of March we sent notices to subscribers whose subscriptions were back from June, 1903, and so far have heard from but a very small percentage of them, and in a number of cases we have learned through the postmaster that the parties have left the place without notifying us, so of course the paper has been going on just the same as if the parties were still there. This we think is unfair to us, for if the paper is not desired any longer, we think the least any one should do would be to notify us, and it would then be discontinued, for we do not wish to force the SIGNS upon any; but if we should adopt the plan, as suggested by some, of discontinuing the paper at the expiration of the time paid for, we would offend a great many of our subscribers, who would think we were afraid to trust them.

There are now on our list many subscribers whose subscriptions are from three to eight years in arrears, and we have no way of knowing whether they are receiving the paper or not.

While the individual amounts due us may seem small, when multiplied by hundreds they make a very large amount we lose each year.

We have a large and ever increasing free list, and while we are glad to send the paper to as many as we can possibly afford, we cannot send it to all we would like to on account of our heavy expenses and not being able to collect the amounts due us.

After this number we will discontinue all those to whom we sent notices in

March and from whom we have received no reply, and should any be discontinued who still desire the paper, if they will write us to that effect we will again put their names on our list.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, March 22nd, 1905, at the bride's home in Delmar, Del., G. L. Lewis Fields and Annie E. Hancock, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

By the same, April 5th, 1905, at the bride's home near Newark, Del., Frank G. Dennison and Mary E. Vought, both of Newcastle Co., Del.

By the same, April 26th, 1905, at the home of the bride, in Salisbury, Md., M. Kinzer Dryden and Bertie Sirman, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

By Elder Asa Howard, at the bride's parents', in Brooklin Heights Addition, Fort Worth, Texas, April 22nd, 1905, H. E. Smith and Miss Pearl Pennington.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Mary Pollard, relict of the late Elder William Pollard, departed this life March 8th, 1905, aged 75 years. She was married to William Pollard May 19th, 1847. She was for a time a Methodist, but the light of grace dawned upon her and taught her to know that there was no salvation for her in the doctrine of that people, nor in all their works, and in 1852 she was made to hope in the mercy of God and in the finished salvation which is in Christ Jesus, and in 1853 she was received into the church, and baptized by Elder George Patton. About this time Elder Pollard began to preach, and they walked together in the faith of the gospel of Christ until January, 1901, when he finished his course and was gathered unto his fathers, leaving her to wait all the days of her appointed time. Sister Pollard was clear and strong in the faith, and was steadfast unto the end. Though aged and in poor health for several years before she died, she seldom missed a meeting. Truly a mother in Israel has fallen. She leaves to mourn for her, four children, two sons, John and Levy Pollard, and two daughters, Mrs. John Sharing and Mrs. Archie Campbell, all members of the church except Levy, and he is a believer and lover of the truth. She also leaves a number of grandchildren and many devoted friends, who will sadly miss her. In the death of sister Pollard her children have lost a loving mother, the church a truly faithful and devoted member, the community a kind and obliging neighbor. During her last illness she suffered a great deal, resulting (apparently) from a fall which she had last October, and from which she never recovered. She was in her affliction calmly resigned, frequently expressing her willingness to abide the Master's will. During her last hours she was often heard to say, "O I want to go home and be at rest."

Her funeral took place on the 10th, from her late residence, at the meeting-house, thence to Fairview cemetery in Dutton, where her mortal remains were laid beside her husband to await the resurrection at the last day. The funeral services were conducted by Elder H. M. Curry and the writer.

Dear children, weep not for her as others who have no hope, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. We laid her in the grave, but she shall rise again; the same body that was sown in weakness shall be raised in power and glory.

W. I. CARNELL.

General Lewis Wallace, honorable statesman, author and citizen, was born in Brookston, Ind., April 10th, 1827, died in Crawfordsville, Ind., Feb. 15th, 1905. I feel moved to offer this tribute to the memory of a kind, good neighbor and friend, as well as honorable citizen. My daughter was his trained nurse for five months before his departure, so I had good opportunity to know of much of his last days of extreme suffering and pain. His disease was indigestion, could not retain his food, so starved for want of nourishment. The last day of his life he called his family to his bedside, his faithful wife, one son and his wife, and two grandsons. He told them, "I must soon leave you," gave them some good advice and bade them a calm, cheerful good by, as if to start on a usual journey in this life. He said, "I did want to finish my book before I left you, but the Lord knows what is best, his will must be done; I am ready to go at his bidding." His wife said, "Are you not afraid?" "O no, why should I be? I believe in God and Jesus Christ his Son, the Savior of sinners. Jesus said unto Martha, 'I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.' I believe in him, and will trust all to a merciful God. I lie helpless in his hands, of myself I can do nothing, but he is all-powerful, and full of wisdom and mercy. He has promised me a better home than this; I have a good home here and many friends, but to depart and be with Christ is far better." He was a great lover of nature, and could often be seen sitting under his native beech trees that surround his dwelling, letting squirrels and birds feed from his hands. He wrote most of "Ben Hur" under one of these trees. Two weeks before he left us he said, "I will wait till next summer before I finish my book." He called my daughter to him and said, "I want to thank you for your patience and kindness to me." "The Lord's will be done," were his last words. He folded his hands, closed his eyes as if in peaceful rest, and was

no more, for the Lord took him. My heart says he is at home with God; he has fought his last fight, and through Christ won the last battle. No sound can awake him to glory again, but the glory revealed to him now so far exceeds all earthly honor and glory that I am lost in rapture and ecstacy in contemplation.

ALSO,

In compliance with the request of our church at Crawfordsville, Ind., I will offer a tribute to the memory of dear sister Kenworthy.

Mrs. Elizabeth Kenworthy, widow of Allen Kenworthy, died at the home of her only child, Squire Kenworthy, in Thorntown, Ind., Feb. 11th, 1905, at the age of 80 years and 5 months. Her last illness extended over two weeks, and she was very patient and willing to depart and be with Christ.

Elizabeth Long, daughter of David and Phœbe Long, was born in Crawfordsville, Ind., Sept. 11th, 1824. All of her young life was spent in or near the place of her birth. She was left without a mother at the age of nine years, and helped her father care for her five brothers and sisters. January 23rd, 1843, she was united in marriage to Allen Kenworthy, and they went to his farm near Thorntown, where they lived together fifty-four years. He departed this life May 24th, 1897; since then her home has been with her son and his kind wife. This beloved sister came to our church Nov. 5th, 1904, told how little and unworthy she felt, and how good God was to her; she was received and baptized the same afternoon. As we led her to the water's edge she whispered to me, "Sister, pray for me, that I may go through the ordinance without falling." I said, "Never fear, Jesus has promised to be with you, all is well." When she came out of the water her face shone as the sun, with a happy, satisfied look. Next day she met with the church again, and I talked with her. She said, "I feel better in health this morning, and I am so glad to be here and numbered with the saints, though least of all. I live so far away, and my health is so poor, I may not come again before next summer. For many years I have desired to talk to this church, but my unworthiness kept me away. Last spring I had a hard spell of sickness, when my friends thought I would die. When consciousness returned I said aloud, I must be baptized. All summer my strength came slowly, at length I could walk a few steps. All the time in my mind, O to walk in the baptismal waters, to follow the commands of the blessed Master. How good the Lord has been to me; I am now ready to go to him if it is his holy will." The neighbors of this dear, retiring woman say she was a great Bible reader. Like the Bereans of old she searched the Scriptures daily, and the greater part of every Sunday afternoon found her with her precious Bible. In all times of affliction and trouble she was always willing and anxious to help her neighbors in any way she could. Her work is now over, her sickness and pain ended.

LINA W. BECK.

(See communication on page 309).

Mrs. Susan Lucas died Jan. 19th, 1905, aged 85 years, 11 months and 18 days. She was born in Spencer Co., Ky., Feb. 6th, 1819. At the age of twelve years she moved with her parents, William and Ellen Payne, to Clay Co., Ind. In 1835 was married to Hiram Lucas, also a native of Kentucky. In 1841 she experienced religion, and united with the Primitive Baptist Church near Eel River; was baptized by Elder John Case the fourth Sunday in October of that year. In 1853 she moved with her husband and family to Boone, Iowa, where she has since resided. She was a faithful member of the Old School Baptist Church for sixty-four years, and attended their meetings when able or near enough to do so. In late years the Elders of the church visited her home and held many interesting meetings, which were greatly appreciated by her, as it was her greatest delight to be with her brethren and listen to the preached word. Her faith in God was firm, never wavering when assailed by the trials and tribulations of this life. Her confidence and faith in the Lord bring to my mind the twenty-third Psalm. She was a devoted wife, a kind and loving mother. She always gave us good advice, and spoke cheeringly to us, and pointed us heavenward to the One who had carried her over so many hard places in life, and bade us look to him in our trials here on earth. She was taken to her bed Dec. 29th, with heart trouble; Jan. 15th "la grippe" set in, and she grew worse. On Monday night before she died, she prayed to be relieved of her suffering, and said, "My Savior is always with me." After that she grew quiet and went into an easy slumber and never awoke in this life, passing peacefully away, having lain down the cares and sorrows of this life for the joys and blessings in that house not made with hands. Though bowed with deepest sorrow at the loss of our dear mother, we mourn not as those who have no hope, for our mother rejoiced in the hope of salvation by grace through Jesus Christ our Lord; her daily walk through life only served to strengthen our faith in her belief. She was the mother of fourteen children, four of whom have passed to the better land, a daughter who died many years ago, a son who died about two years ago, and two in infancy. She leaves her aged husband, three sons and six daughters, many grandchildren and numerous relatives and friends to mourn their loss.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder John Cline, of Highland Park, Des Moines, and the remains laid to rest in the Boone cemetery by the side of her daughter.

FLORA LUCAS.

BOONE, Iowa, April 26, 1905.

Mrs. Mary E. Morris, relict of the late Wm. R. Morris, was born Dec. 26th, 1834, in what was then Worcester, now Wicomico County, Md. Was married to Wm. R. Morris in May, 1854; was baptized by Elder George W. Staton in the fellowship of the church at Nassaongo, Md., in the year 1868, of which church she continued a beloved and faithful member till called to the church triumphant the 21st day of December, 1904, aged 70 years. Her husband, brother Wm. R. Morris, preceded her to the upper and better world about three years. She leaves two sons, four daughters, two grandchildren, one sister and three brothers, besides the church, to mourn, but not as those who have no hope, for we believe God has called her from the sorrows of this world unto everlasting joys at his own right hand in the realms of eternal glory. We commend the bereaved family to the care of him who is the Father of the fatherless in his holy habitation.

ALSO,

Brother **Caldwell W. Hastings,** a true and faithful member of the Little Creek church, in Sussex Co., Del., departed this life March 5th, 1905, aged about 75 years. Brother Hastings at the time of his death was one of the oldest members at Little Creek, and always filled his place in the church faithfully and well until a short time before his death. He was afflicted with heart trouble for several months, from which he suffered greatly, but bore all his afflictions without a murmur, in sweet submission to the divine will. He leaves a lone widow and six children, three sons and three daughters, besides several grandchildren, and other relatives, and the church, by all of whom he was held in high esteem. May the Lord comfort them, administering to them the consolation of his word in their sorrow. Five of the six children are worthy members of the Little Creek church.

A. B. FRANCIS.

Mr. Ezra S. Brewster died in Oxford, N. Y., March 22nd, 1905, aged 49 years, 8 months and 6 days. He was sick about seventeen days with congestion of the brain and symptoms of spinal meningitis. We had three home physicians and his brother, Dr. Guy O. Brewster, of New York city, and also Dr. Lynn Emerson, of Orange, N. J., his brother-in-law, but none could save him from death. I feel that not a single shaft can hit till the God of love sees fit. Mr. Brewster was married when twenty-two years of age to Miss Fanny Bundy, of Otego, N. Y.; she lived but a little over two years, and left a little daughter, who died eight months afterward. In 1883 he married Miss Mary D. Titus, of New Jersey, the writer of this. His aged mother, four brothers and two sisters also survive him to mourn their loss. How we all loved him; he was ever thoughtful and doing for his family. When quite a young man he told his experience to the little church at Otego, but never united with the church, always saying that he was not good enough, and not fit, but we have not a doubt that he has fallen asleep in Jesus. O blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep; a calm and undisturbed repose, unbroken by the last of foes.

Elder D. M. Vail preached a comforting sermon from the words found in John xiv. 18: "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." The hymns read were 1216 and 238 (Beebe's Collection). The hymn commencing, "The day is past and gone," was my dear husband's favorite. I can but think as did Elder Vail about his son's death, Why is it so? Why am I left to mourn the loss of my dearest earthly friend? God knows best, and at times it seems that I hear a voice saying, "Be still, and know that I am God." I feel almost crushed.

MARY D. TITUS BREWSTER.

OXFORD, N. Y., April 13, 1905.

Jesse A. McIntosh departed this life March 31st, 1905. He was born near Springfield, Robinson Co., Tenn., Feb. 2nd, 1823. When five years old moved with his parents to Jonesboro, Ill., thence to Marion, Ill. Served in the Mexican war in 1847. Was married to Miss Caroline Wilkins in 1862; to them were born four children, three of whom, with their devoted mother, are left to mourn. The youngest son, Robert L., was killed in December, 1901, by an engine. He had related his experience of grace to me some months before his death. Brother McIntosh received a hope in Christ in 1867, and was baptized in the fellowship of the old Bethlehem church by Elder Gough in 1869. In 1877 moved to The Dalles, Oregon. United with the Pleasant Grove church at Goldendale, Wash., in May, 1888, and continued a faithful member till death. He became mentally deranged, and was in an asylum for over three years. Through the mercy and love of God he was restored to his right mind during his last sickness. His children brought him home, and with loving hands and tender hearts ministered to his comfort. At his request a message was sent for me, and I reached his bedside three days before his departure, and found him strong in faith and waiting for his summons. I tried to speak words of comfort from 1 Cor. xv. 19.

W. J. HESS.

DIED—At the home of his son, in Benton County, Oregon, March 14th, 1905, **William Butler,** aged 97 years, 3 months and 29 days. He was a native of Kentucky; was born in 1807. He was married to Miss Elizabeth Liggett, in the State of Missouri. Twelve children were born to them, of whom only two sons survive him, William T. and Martin, with whom he lived at the time of his death. He came to Polk Co., Ore., from Kansas in 1864, crossing the plains with an ox team; it took five months to make the trip. Recent deaths in the family were T. L.

Butler, of Polk County, three years ago; C. R. Butler, of Benton County, two years ago; Mrs. Wiltroit, his only daughter, of Goose Lake, four years ago. The last four years of his life he was blind. He and his wife joined the Primitive Baptist church soon after their marriage; each lived a godly life. She died in 1872, aged 62 years. The writer of this notice visited the dear old brother the last days of January before he died; had been personally acquainted with him for nearly half a century; found him in his right mind and well versed in the Scriptures; was able to teach me in the doctrine of eternal salvation. O how I enjoyed his company and godly conversation. We often met in the house of God to worship at church meetings and associations. He talked about his time on earth being almost over, and was just waiting the Lord's time; seemed willing to go; all his trust was in his dear Savior, had no confidence in the flesh. He left a good example for his two sorrowing sons to follow. His funeral will be preached later. His remains were laid to rest in the Newton cemetery near by. W. S. MATTHEWS.

DIED—April 6th, 1904, **Miss Mary German**, at Burdett, N. Y., aged about 55 years. She was baptized by the writer after being received in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church, at Burdett, N. Y., March 16th, 1879. She lived in the love and fellowship of the church until called to her eternal home. Elder Charles Bogardus, her pastor, officiated at the funeral.

ALSO,

Moses Hurlburt, July 1st, 1904, aged 62 years. He was married Nov. 22nd, 1865, to Miss Terry, of Trumansburg, N. Y. Brother Hurlburt was baptized by the writer about twenty years ago, uniting with the Old School Baptist Church at Caroline, Tompkins Co., N. Y. Served as deacon fifteen years or more. Sister Hurlburt told me that he was sick two years, but was very patient through all his sufferings. He loved his brethren and enjoyed good sound preaching, and was always ready to contend for the truth. Dear sister Hurlburt has lost a good, kind husband, the church a good brother. May God bless our lonely, sad sister, and all that mourn. He is in glory at rest.

ALSO,

Mr. H. B. Elliott, of Burdett, Schuyler Co., N. Y., April 25th, 1905, aged 70 years. He was baptized by Elder Burrett about forty years ago, uniting with the Old School Baptist Church at Burdett, N. Y. He served as church clerk for many years; was a lover of good sound doctrine and had no use for any other. He was sick ten days, and passed from time to eternity, leaving a sad, lonely widow, the church, children and grandchildren to mourn; God bless all that mourn for Jesus' sake. Elder Charles Bogardus preached on the occasion of the funeral to a large company. D. M. VAIL.

INFORMATION WANTED.

NORTH YAKIMA, Wash., R. D. 3.

WILL Elder H. E. Purris, or any one who knows, send me his present address? When last heard from he was at Bellingham, Wash. Formerly lived at Bloomville, Ohio. W. J. HESS.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS."

Nancy Stathers, W. Va., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Association is appointed to be held with the Harford church, Harford County, Md., beginning Wednesday before the third Sunday in May, (17th) 1905, and continuing three days. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth to meet with us. Those coming by way of Baltimore will take train leaving North Avenue station, Md. & Pa. R. R., on Tuesday before, at 3:25 or 4:20 p. m. for Long Green or Forest Hill. Those coming by way of York will take train leaving there at 1:30 p. m. for Forest Hill, on the same railroad. Passengers are advised to be at the above named stations in time, as there will probably be some change in the time-table about the first of May.

NATHAN GRAFTON, Church Clerk.

THE Lord willing, the Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Rock Springs church, Lancaster Co., Pa., commencing on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, (24th) 1905. Those coming by way of Philadelphia will take train over the P., W. & B. R. R. to connect at Perryville with the 4 p. m. train on the Columbia & Port Deposit R. R. for Conowingo, Md., on Tuesday, May 23rd. Friends coming from Baltimore will make the same connection for Conowingo, where they will all be met at the same time and cared for. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us, especially the ministering brethren, and hope we may have a pleasant and profitable meeting, and that the Lord may grant us his presence.

D. M. THOMAS, Clerk.

THE Delaware River Association will be held with the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., beginning on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (May 31st) 1905, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continuing three days.

Those coming by way of Philadelphia or Trenton will take the Express train leaving Broad street station at 3:34 p. m., and leave the train at Stockton or Frenchtown, where they will be cared for and taken to the meeting. Those coming from the east can take the New Jersey Central at the foot of Liberty street, New York city, at about 1 p. m., arriving in Flemington at 3:30, where they will be met and cared for.

A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

C. RISLER, Church Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the New Vernon church, Sullivan Co., N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1905. All of like precious faith with us will be cordially welcomed.

Those coming by the way of New York city, take train leaving West Twenty-third St. at 4:25 p. m. This train leaves Jersey City at 4:45. Get excursion tickets for Howells, N. Y., Tuesday, June 6th. Train leaving New York (Twenty-third St.) at 7:25 a. m. Wednesday, June 7th, will also be met at Howells. Those coming from the west will be met at Howells Tuesday on train arriving at 7:30 p. m. Those coming from the north and Kingston over the O. & W. R. R., will be met at Winterton, N. Y., on train arriving at Winterton at 5:24 p. m. June 6th. Train leaving Wickham Ave. O. & W. depot, Middletown, N. Y., at 8:25 a. m. will be met at Winterton Wednesday, June 7th.

H. S. COLLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Sandusky Association meets with the Columbia church, Jackson Co., Michigan, the Lord willing, on Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1905, and continues the two following days. Trains will be met at Cement City, on Cincinnati Northern Railroad, which is but a few rods from the meeting-house. All who desire to meet with us will be welcome.

Done by order of the church.

DAVID TITMUS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

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10:30 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in Hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

717 HOWARD ST., DETROIT, Mich.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m., in the Red Men's Hall, First and Congress Streets in Troy, N. Y., and at 2:30 p. m. in West Sand Lake, N. Y., at the home of Mrs. Moul. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 73. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1905. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE HEART AWAKE.

As I write this heading several things throng through my mind, all bordering upon my subject, so that I scarcely know just how to begin. However, we will catch at one of these many threads and start to unravel our skein and see where it leads us. The years have rolled backward, and we stand on the wayside beside a country road in the land of Palestine, about the year 33 of our Lord. The road is one leading out of Jerusalem toward the setting sun, over the mountains of Ephraim, to a village situated some miles distant, called Emmaus. Up the road toward us, coming from Jerusalem, walk two men with heads bowed down, speaking together almost in whispers, so that we can scarcely hear what they are saying. Occasionally they turn and look back toward the city whence they have come; now they point their fingers toward the east, in the direction of the Mount of Olives; again they halt, and with faces turned thither they silently stand, gazing toward that summit as though expecting some one. Altogether their actions are so mysterious that we join ourselves to them, resolved to keep them in view and see what all this may mean. As they get farther and farther from the city their conversation grows louder, so we can now hear plainly all that they are saying. They seem to be discussing the events which have just transpired behind them, and conjecturing with regard to what it all may mean. It seems that they have been deeply in love with one who has proven himself many times to be their friend. They call this friend Jesus. They had expected this Friend to one day come to the throne of Israel and rule all the land wherein we now are. Contrary, however, to these expectations, his enemies through jealousy and hatred of him had contrived to gain the ascendency over him, and had hurried him into the presence of the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, who, though he could find no fault in the man, nevertheless delivered him over to his enemies to be crucified, which crucifixion had but just taken place. Our companions are much discouraged at the outcome of events, and seem inclined to doubt the good intentions of their Friend, and even seem ready to forget, if they can, many promises which their Friend made them

while alive and walking with them; and now occurs the strangest thing of all this journey. These two men after a time cease talking with one another, and take to acting in a very peculiar way, and uttering very strange things. From their talk any ordinary mortal would think them mentally deranged, for now, instead of talking with each other, they seem to be communing with a third person whom we cannot see. They ask question after question, and frequently they break forth in amens. Their faces shine, they look to be supremely happy. Thus talking and communing with this personage they come into Emmaus, and having come to their house they bid their companion abide with them, as the night is at hand. Thus constrained, he tarries with them, and even sits at meat with them. As he breaks the bread, instantly a look of remembrance mingled with surprise flashes over their faces, followed by a look bordering on disappointment, for their visitor has gone from them as mysteriously as he came. Now they doubt not, nor question with regard to the meaning of the events of the last two days, for they say, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scripture?" From this expression we comprehend that Jesus is their heart within them. The bride in the Song of songs, which is Solomon's, says, "I sleep, but my heart waketh." The bride is the church; the heart of the church is Christ. What our heart is to our natural body, even that and more also is Jesus to his body, the church. If our natural heart should cease its action, our natural life would cease also. We may and do lie down upon our beds at night and lose ourselves in slumber, but though our bodies sleep, not once through all the silent watches does the heart cease its action. There has never been a time in all the history of this old world of ours that the testimony of Jesus was not in the earth; the heart of the church is ever and will ever be awake. The church may be, and has often been, asleep, but not once has the eye of her Maker slumbered and slept. Through all the tortuous windings of Israel's backsliding way, Jesus had his witnesses in her, and though they persecuted them sorely and cast them into the dungeons, yet was Christ preached. Even in those days, when God saw that wickedness had multiplied upon the earth, and it repented him that he had made man, even then Noah was a preacher of righteousness; and in those days of wicked Queen Jezebel, who put to death numbers of the Lord's prophets, Elijah was kept from her snares; he defied her in the name of his God, he triumphantly cast the lie in the teeth of the prophets of the false god and preached "Jesus and him crucified," the immortal theme of all ages. Even though Israel forgot her God and went astray again and again in the satisfaction of her lusts, Jesus, the heart of the church, was awake, his testimony was ever in her midst; he is her life, her sole dependence. She may grow weary many times, and fall asleep from sheer weakness of the flesh, but Christ never; he is always on the alert, and his prayers are for the prevalence of her faith. Though the night before the crucifixion the disciples might sleep, Jesus in agony prayed for them. He knew their weakness, they were yet to learn it. I have heard individuals, believers in Christ, tell of being cold and indifferent to all spiritual things. It may be so, but their heart is awake. If this is not the case, I would like to know how they would know they are

cold and indifferent? How could they thus pass judgment upon themselves if Jesus was not alive within them? Do you ever commit an act which you know to be wrong at the time you commit it, and yet you go right on and do it? In other words, do you ever sin "willfully"? I am sure you do. Well, how do you know you are doing wrong? Because your heart is awake. You yourself are asleep, and thus slumbering fall into temptation. But what about the time when you yourself wake up and find out where you have fallen to, then how do you feel? I will tell you: "If we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Our organized churches sometimes fall asleep and yield to temptation, even though there may be evidence of their heart being awake. In such a church there may be one or two alert brethren who are much exercised about the conduct of the church, who realize the danger ahead, but who are unable to cause the church to heed their warning. In these one or two alert brethren the wakefulness of Christ is evidenced. O that God would give us more such, and give us also therewith strength to heed their cry before the danger is upon us. When will we ever learn to behave ourselves in the house of our God? A church may become over confident as to her soundness, and then beware! Along comes a wolf in sheep's clothing, Satan as an angel of light; he gives us a strange mixture of gospel and law, so subtle that it soothes our senses, puts us to sleep, and though one or two stanch brethren raise their voice in alarm, we say, "O don't be so foolish, he's all right." But some day the church will wake up, and what then? There will come divisions, pain and great sorrow, repentance will come upon that church, the tares which sprang up in the night will be uprooted, but great will be the anguish of that purification. False doctrine is not the only thing to be feared, however. What a confusion it makes in the order of our little church to wake up sometimes and find a dear, good brother has joined a secret society. Instantly the question is asked, Why did he do it? Go ask him, he will doubtless say, I was not aware this thing was contrary to your practice. He did it to increase his worldly prosperity. The brethren never told him they did not sanction such things, he never heard the Elder say a word about it, not a question concerning it was asked him when he joined the church. I wonder who is asleep in this case? The church, of course; it never mentioned such things because they were unimportant, non-essentials if you please; but thus it is always these non-essentials that cause the most of our trouble. However, the heart of the church is not asleep, and you may be sure that your sin will find you out. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

Much more might be said along this line, but because I cannot say it all I may as well stop now as any time.

Yours in desire of the "heart's" animations,

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

JUSTUS, Pa., March 6, 1905.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—Since reading your letter in the SIGNS of March 1st I have felt a desire to write you a few lines. A feeling sense of my nothingness, my inability to write in a way that I could hope might be of interest to you, and a fear of trespassing on your time, have kept me from following the impression of my mind. I want to say that your letter was of comfort and encouragement to me. In writing of your early life it seemed so much like my own in many respects that I hope you may pardon me for writing you this brief sketch of the life of the chief of sinners.

I was born of Methodist parents, and until I was fourteen years old my religious associations were with people of this faith. From my earliest recollection I went to their meetings and was a regular attendant at their Sunday Schools. When I was twelve years old I became a member of the Methodist Church. I did not yet know that I was a sinner, but by nature, and from the influence of my early associations I believed in the existence of a God, and had a vague notion about a system of rewards and punishments, which led me to try to be a good boy. When I was fourteen years old I came to Scranton to work in a store. The church of which I had been a member for about two years gave me a letter, but as my new employer was an avowed Atheist, and my fellow clerks non-professors, through fear of being ridiculed and a natural desire to be popular with my new associates, this letter was carefully hid in the bottom of my trunk, and there it remained for many years, until it was consigned to the flames. The evil influences and temptations which surrounded me soon had their effect on my boyish mind; I soon became a scoffer of religion, and finally a confirmed Atheist. For several years I led a reckless, sinful life; I will not attempt to describe it to you. At times it troubled me, but my trouble was all natural; resolutions were made and broken; I was prompted from mere worldly motives to lead a different life; I knew nothing of my condition as a sinner before God. If I attended religious meetings it was from a feeling of curiosity, or out of respect for others. When I was about fifteen years old I heard an Old Baptist minister preach for the first time. I had no more than a natural interest in what he said. I had no desire to hear the gospel preached, and did not know whether he preached the truth or not. I had heard that the Old Baptists believed in the doctrine of election and predestination, but I knew nothing of the meaning of such terms.

In 1876 I married the daughter of Rufus Miller. Her parents were members of the Old School Baptist Church at this place. I was then a clerk in a store in Wilkesbarre, Pa. In 1881 we moved to this place. About this time there was contention in the Old School Baptist Church here, the subject of this contention being the doctrine of eternal vital union and the new birth. This led to a division, which left but four members in the church of which I am now a member. About this time Elder Vail made his first visit to this place. I remember going with my wife to the school-house where he preached. I had become very much prejudiced against the Old School Baptists on account of the doctrine, and from hearing of the trouble in the church, and remained outside until the meeting was over. After this Elder Vail came here once a month; out of respect I went with my wife to the meeting occasionally for

a number of years. If I had any settled convictions at this time I was an Atheist. In the fall of 1888, while at work in the field, a strange feeling came over me, a feeling of guilt and condemnation, a feeling of wretchedness, and loneliness, and gloomy depression, which I did not understand. Not only did my life seem wholly changed, but everything in nature looked dark and gloomy; fear and trembling seized upon me, and I felt that I was doomed to die in this wretched condition. I had never read or heard a christian experience, had never talked with any one on the subject of religion; I could not believe any one ever felt as I did. During the long, dreary months that followed I read the Bible much of the time; it was a sealed book to me, no comfort there. I dared not try to pray, and could not if I had dared. I was afraid to meet any one, and spent my time alone. I lost all interest in worldly affairs, and was a burden to myself and those around me. I thought of death as a welcome relief from my wretched condition. One night as I lay in bed these words were spoken to me: Trust in the Lord. No great joy came to me, but a feeling of rest and peace filled my soul. I had come to the end of all creature efforts, and was made to look to God for salvation. I had not yet experienced a hope, but I became troubled about going to the church. This was a strange experience to me, I did not understand it. I could not get rid of the impression, but I felt in every way so unfit that it seemed wrong to have such thoughts. The next time Elder Vail came here I attended the meeting. He presented the experience of a child of God while under conviction in such a way that I wondered how he could know so well what I had passed through. I felt somewhat comforted, but could not say I had a hope. My wife borrowed some of the SIGNS, which I read, and to my glad surprise I read of others who had passed through such trials as my own. I felt a love in my heart for the Old Baptists, but I felt to be the most ignorant being on earth in regard to the doctrine they preached. I could not believe that one so ignorant would be allowed a home with them. I searched the Scriptures in vain for an understanding of these principles. Another difficulty troubled me: since the division in the church there were two Old School Baptist churches here. My wife's parents, with a number of others, held meetings near my home. My wife's father had been licensed, and was to be ordained in the fall of 1885; he died before the time fixed for his ordination. Her mother was still a member of this church. Out of respect for my wife and her parents I felt it my duty to ask a home with these people, yet my mind was being strangely drawn to the church at Justus. All my natural feelings led me in one direction, or to one church, and yet in my heart I was being strangely and irresistibly led in love to seek a home with the other people; this troubled me for some time. My mind at last became settled on this subject in a way that may seem strange to you. In a dream I saw myself, with the members of the church at Justus, in the schoolhouse where they held their meetings. On looking around the room I saw to my surprise my wife and her mother, and also my wife's brothers, Charles and Merenos Miller, and their wives. The effect of this dream, or vision, not only convinced me that I would have to go to the church at Justus, but that my wife and the members of her family I saw there would soon become members of this

church. I will say here that soon after I became a member of the church they were all numbered with the little company of God's people at Justus. My wife's mother, who had her membership with the other Old School Baptist Church, was reinstated two years after I became a member. After this dream my mind was impressed more strongly about going to the church, but my feeling of unfitness kept me away, I did not believe I yet had a hope. While in this condition there came a voice to me saying, "Made white in the blood of the Lamb." The joy that filled my soul no words can express, it was unspeakable and full of glory; I felt that my sins were washed away in the blood of Christ; revelations of the truth came to me in a way that filled my soul with wonder and praise; the way of salvation was made so clear to my mind that it seemed a little child might understand it, yet I knew that I could never have gained this knowledge only by the revelation of God. What a mystery it all seemed to me; O what joy and peace were in my heart. I attended a meeting of the church soon after this. I had never told any one of my feelings, not even my wife, nor had I ever spoken to any one on the subject of religion. If I were asked why I went to this meeting I would have to say, because I could not help it. Much to my surprise, before the meeting closed Elder Vail asked me if I wished to say anything? I said little, but was received, and baptized the next day. I thought then my troubles were ended, but the joy and peace that I was experiencing at that time lasted but a short time. I was soon assailed with grave doubts and fears as to whether I had known anything of the grace and mercy of God. The thought came with crushing force that I had deceived the people of God. I could not hear the gospel preached with any comfort, lost all desire to meet with the brethren, was destitute of any spiritual desires or emotions, and sank down into the horrible pit of unbelief and infidelity. For a short time after I became a member of the church my mind was exercised to some extent. I wrote a little to some of the brethren in other parts. I could no longer write, and at my request the correspondence ceased. The publishers of the SIGNS were asked to send the paper no longer to my address. I no longer read the Bible, and firmly resolved I would never read or speak a word again on the subject of religion; but I cannot tell you, dear brother, of the horrible depths in which I was plunged. In a letter to Elder Vail, in the summer of 1903, I wrote of some of my wretched feelings. Much to my surprise this letter was sent to the SIGNS, and was published in the month of August, 1903.

The purpose of this letter is to try to tell you of the way I have been led. I am not much of a believer in dreams and visions, yet I do believe the Lord does instruct his people in the truth through the revelation of dreams or visions of the night. Early in my experience visions came to me which seemed to show me what I was to experience in the future, more especially in regard to the trouble I must pass through. The nature of this trouble was not made known to me until I had experienced it; even then I could not understand it. In one of these visions I saw myself journeying through a strange country, a bleak, barren desert, destitute of any form of life, a dreary, desolate land that was devoid of any living thing; there were no beaten paths for me to travel, many obstacles were in my way, but I

could not avoid them, for I must travel in one direction, I could neither turn to the right or left; I became weary and footsore, but found no place of rest. My steps led me to a dark valley, where I came to a river; the waters were dark and uninviting, but I must pass through them, for my path led this way. I wanted to turn back, but could not; I was wretched and lonely, and I thought no one had ever traveled in this way before; I was alone, alone. After struggling along in this dark water for awhile my strength failed me, I was ready to perish, when I was lifted up and placed upon a rock that was directly in my path, or the direction in which I must go. This rock was pure white, and rose high above the water. I thought it very strange I had not seen it before. I experienced a wonderful feeling of rest while on this beautiful rock. I had been seeking a place of rest, but could find none. I tried to cling to the rock, but could not; I soon found myself in the dark and troubled waters. Again my strength was gone, I was helpless; I thought, Surely I must perish now. I looked for the rock, but in vain, when I was again lifted up as before and placed upon a rock which I knew to be the same as before, having the same appearance and rising high above the dark waters. But I soon found myself struggling along until I reached the other side of the river, where the water was clear and pure. Again, I saw myself to be the most miserable looking worm I ever saw. I crawled along in the dust, full of wretchedness and misery. I was being crushed by some invisible power, and worm-like would turn upon the hand that crushed me. Each time I was crushed I became smaller, until there was nothing left of me.

Dear brother, have you ever traveled in this barren land, this desert, these dark and muddy waters? Have you been lifted up and placed upon this rock? Do you know what it is to feel that you are a worm and no man? Have you ever felt that you were not fit for the company of the vilest of God's creatures? If so, you are my companion. I have traveled this way most of the time for about fifteen years.

Your unworthy brother,

GEORGE GOODRICH.

"DECLARING THE END."

(Isaiah xlvi. 10.)

After months of self-examination, trials, failures and a sense of uselessness, a gleam of light will come to reveal that this is God's way of declaring the end of all our troubles, and that thus shall it be in the final consummation of all things; he giveth us the victory. It is his way of showing us that we in all these things are more than conquerors through him that loved us, and that in him only is peace. How prone we are to seek for peace in the affairs of the world, but in vain we try to satisfy our longings with the wisdom of man. Hungry, lonely and poor, we endeavor to feast at the table of fiction, or seek the phantom figures of literature for company, and for a moment live in the dream palaces of the writer's mind, then in utter disgust we turn away crying, What is the end of it all? "O that I might have my request; and that God would grant me the thing that I long for!" "What is my strength, that I should hope? and what is mine end, that I should prolong my life?"—Job vi. 8, 11. What a desolate waste we must be led over before we can cry in anguish of spirit, "Lord make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am.

Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth, and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily man at his best state is altogether vanity."

When tired out completely we look back at the rubbish we have turned over in our search for peace or forgetfulness, and hear Paul say, "What fruit had ye in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death."—Romans vi. 21. It is only in the spirit that we can say, "But now being made free from sin, and become servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."—Romans vi. 22. Do we not have to wade through these things again and again to learn that "the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord"? And in it all is not God declaring the end to us? Has he not been doing so from the beginning of our experience? Has he not been showing the things not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure"? Not if ye will be obedient, but, "My counsel shall stand," and without an if. There is something sweet to me in the expression, Declaring the things (themselves) that are not yet done. Before Abraham's day he was declaring the end, all through Israel's day he was declaring the end and showing the people that his counsel should stand, and proving again and again that he would do all his pleasure. We read the Scripture and think that we believe it, but there comes a time when we learn in a moment that we have been living in unbelief. Thus we come to know his power to save and his power to declare the end from the beginning unto us, in our hearts, and that end is peace and joy in him. In the sweetness of his presence all other things are put from us, and we rejoice because God is declaring that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."—Romans x. 4. Now we know that as our God has power and goodness to come to one hungry stranger, so has he power to appear unto every one of the elect according to the foreknowledge of God, hence we do not try to ignorantly take the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, to the heathen, because we know that he is able to speak in them as we hope he has in us. They, like all mankind, are dead in sin until God calls them from the cold tomb of the world. How foolish man is in his unholy zeal to save sinners in a far away land, when he cannot save any even in his own country. As our God declared of old, Men "lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, hire a goldsmith [workman]; and he maketh it a god: they fall down, yea, they worship. They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth; from his place shall he not remove: yea, one shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble."—Isaiah xlvi. 6, 7. Then they ask for battleships and gatling guns, saying to the heathen, Keep quiet until I convert you. But those whom God enlightens hear Peter say, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world." We must indeed cry unto God's wayward children, the stray sheep among them, to come out and be separate. "Remember this, and show yourselves men: bring it again to mind, O ye transgres-

sors. Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me."—Isaiah xlvi. 8, 9. It is natural for us to trouble over the fact that so many who love the truth are outside of the church, but we rejoice over the faithful few who do not forget the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is. We long for the home coming of the one who stands without; he is like two men in one. Having hungered in a far country for the things of the Father's house, he returns and is taken into the Father's arms and led into the banqueting-house, and is feasting at the table of the Lord, but yet in a sense he is out of the door, while the other one who seems to think that being obedient and keeping the law entitles him to all these things, is saying to him, You have not lived right, and you ought not to be taken in. But when the Father speaks, saying, All that I have is thine, because he is a son, and not because he has been obedient, then he cannot tell what has become of the stubborn one, but at once he is feasting in the Father's house, and his heart is full of peace. It is only when we are again in darkness that we are troubled at hearing the jealous one say, You have wasted your substance; then we fear that a dog has eaten the children's bread. But in God's own time love and hunger bring even the prodigal back. By faith he enters his Father's house, and we hear God declaring, The end of that man is peace. And every time that we are feasting upon spiritual things God is declaring the things that are not yet done, as we regard time and the things of time. But in the light of faith and with God there is no time, it is with him an eternal now.

Thus our salvation is as real in the dawn of our hope as it will be when the last sigh is spent on earth, and although after this first realization we may be led through flood and fire, in the light of that first revelation we can say with Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." God hath declared this in our hearts, and it is for us done. He speaks in our hearts, and it is done. We receive now the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls; Christ is come, he is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, and he is so declared unto us. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Your brother, as I trust, in him,

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.

LAWRENCEBURG, Ky., Feb. 2, 1905.

TIME AND ETERNITY.

As the posterity of Jacob is embraced in the things and conditions of time, so also, being embraced in the things which are eternal, their interest and aspirations lead them to seek out the higher sphere of life. The beginning, the growth and the perfection of all animated creation, follows a rule of harmony and order, according to the wise provisions of an overruling Creator, so also in all the creation of God all things work together in perfect harmony and order. The face of all nature presents to our finite understanding the work of the wise Master-builder of the universe. He has set the order of time for all things and all events, the day and the night as ruled by the heavenly bodies, the seed time and harvest. The voice of wisdom says: "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." We then, being subject to time conditions, must fulfill the requirements of the passage of time. To consider the subjects of "Time and Eternity" we must take them in their regular order, as they concern us. It is declared, "Howbeit

that was not first that was spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." This is as it relates to man's progress in time, in the works of man which are natural, and in the fruit-bearing of the same man according to the Spirit. Time necessarily has a beginning and an ending. We cannot speak of eternity before time and eternity after time, for eternity has neither beginning or ending, but an ever-blessed now. God inhabiteth eternity, we inhabit time. All that we know outside of the boundaries of time is revealed to us by the Spirit of God, therefore the knowledge we have of eternal things is by the faith of God. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God; so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." Then if we take up the travel of the church of Christ, or the experimental travel of the individuals composing that precious body, it must be as they travel through time. In the experience of both, certain conditions prevail at certain times. The church of Christ belongs both to time and eternity. In its passage through time it is called the church militant, and as we behold it (by faith) in eternity we speak of it as the church triumphant. The church militant has existed in three distinct epochs or dispensations from the beginning of time, the first from Adam to Moses, under an unwritten and unpublished law, a condition in which sin abounded only in the consciences of the subjects of grace, who were at that time called "The sons of God." From Moses to Christ the law entered and was published that sin might abound, and they who came under that published law became conscious of the sentence of death pronounced upon them, of their condemnation under the law, and of the just judgment of God concerning them. The condition of the church was in these two epochs, mystical, sacredly obscure by reason of the darkness through which she must travel, also emblematical of wondrous things in righteousness which were to be revealed by God's love and mercy. And now the third epoch of time, no more mystical, but visible; by faith we behold her as did the bride in the Canticles; when looking over the field of battles fought and victories won, she asks the question: "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" Being immersed in clouds of darkness under sin for four-thousand years, time recording upon its pages her history, and the word of life which kept her alive indelibly registered in the heart of her people, she emerges from the long, dark night into the refulgent glory of the risen Sun of righteousness, and as time goes on one by one, all over this broad land, the sons of glory are, by an experience of the grace of God, brought into the fellowship of the sufferings of our risen Redeemer. Now, as never before, in visibility and in reality, time life and life eternal inhabit the same body of the creature of Adam. Of those who were blessed in the gift of the Father, Jesus saith: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life." This blessed condition is vouchsafed unto us in time, by which we fulfill our days in the hope of the resurrection, having a foretaste therein of the joys of eternity. Doors leading into the temple of our God stand ajar, and by faith we are permitted to glance for a moment at a time into the wondrous and glorious riches of the treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of our God, to the full fruition of which we are looking when the vail of mortality is removed. Time and eternity as they are made manifest in the travel of

the children of God, are so closely interwoven that only the understanding of faith can distinguish the one from the other. All things of time are subject to decay and death, and all perish with the using, while on the other hand, it is declared, that, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me [the Lord Jesus Christ] shall never die." The law of an endless life is in direct opposition to the law of sin and death, and this constitutes the conflict in the christian warfare. This is why we suffer and are humbled, "for we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." The days and years of our life in the flesh are then but the working out (by faith) of our own salvation with fear and trembling the thing which God hath wrought in us. In other words, all the days and years of our pilgrimage are made up in manifesting the life of Jesus in our mortal body, first, how he came under the law to redeem us from under the law, and how that work was accomplished through his death, his burial and his resurrection from the dead. In this life in the flesh, where time never for a moment stops or turns back, we also go on through darkness, discouragement, suffering and all tribulation, impelled by the invisible power of God's love, never wavering, with no thought of turning back, "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Therefore do we "run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." These are foretastes of the joys of eternity. Now we look through the vail of the flesh and behold the face of our Lord as through a glass darkly, but when the vail is removed we shall behold such things as are not now lawful for us to utter. May we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of our hope firm unto the end.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., April 12, 1905.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 2, 1905.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel a desire to let the readers of the SIGNS share this letter with me, and do not think the dear sister will object. Here is another instance of the Lord's tender and abundant care over all his scattered little ones, under all their varied circumstances of trial and affliction. How graciously he suits his blessings to their needs. How easy it is for the dear Savior to give a spirit of resignation to every dispensation of his providence concerning them, such as is manifested by this dear sister.

I have seldom felt willing to publish letters which referred so particularly to my own writing, however suitable I might deem them for publication in other respects; but I am thankful for the comfort the Lord gave her, and many others who have expressed it to me, in reading my article entitled, "How they Grow." I had great comfort in it myself, and my heart was filled with thankfulness to the Lord while I wrote it. The trials and afflictions and cries unto the Lord out of the depths, through which the Lord's ministers are prepared to comfort his people, are very bitter, but when the Lord's purpose in them is fulfilled, and a glimpse is had of the eternal weight of glory which they work for us, how the heart of the poor, tried servant swells with gratitude and praise to the God of grace. The ability to tell to the Lord's

people their trials has come through a deep and bitter experience of the same, and every word of comfort the servant brings to them has been first the joy and rejoicing of his own soul. He comforts them who are in any trouble with the same consolation wherewith he himself has been comforted of God.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

STEWARTSVILLE, Va., Dec. 29, 1904.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—MUCH ESTEEMED BROTHER IN HOPE OF LIFE ETERNAL:—If I may so address you again. I just wish to say a few words to you concerning the comfort that I derive from your writings for publication I received the SIGNS last night, and have just read your communication entitled, "How they Grow," hence the oft repeated desire to again write you a few lines returned. O, if I knew how, and could, I would tell you something of the enjoyment to poor, old, unworthy me while reading. I would read awhile, then stop to give vent to tears, and begin again; not tears of sorrow, but of thanksgiving and love to the dear, merciful Savior for so directing your mind and enabling you to write. The words, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound," were brought comfortingly to my mind, and I felt to thank the Lord for the precious comfort and encouragement received. I had never thought of the lily as being so beautiful and striking a figure of the experience and doctrine of the Lord's peculiar people as you have so beautifully brought to light; had not thought at all of the necessity for the roots to work downward; O it is so experimental and comforting. I have long believed that the trials and afflictions of the Lord's people are necessary, and for their good in some way, though often unseen by them at the time. The apostle says, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." These words have long been very comforting to me, notwithstanding the important question often arises, Am I one of those, or not? Be that as it may, I know that all blessings are of the Lord, and I desire to look unto him and trust in him for all my needs, and to lean entirely on his everlasting arm. But now comes in the warfare: cannot do the things I would. I fall far short of bearing the image and of walking in the footprints of our dear Savior, as I would wish, but the apostle's words have been and are still very comforting. He tells us how it is; so have you, not long since. Owing to my poor health and strength I have heard no preaching except under this roof the last seventeen years, and only two sermons elsewhere since 1868. I have only mentioned this, not feeling to murmur; O no, but that you may have a faint idea of how much I enjoy reading the SIGNS, and how precious the writings are to me, so comforting and instructive. Tongue cannot express, or pen describe, how much I enjoy and appreciate them, probably the more because of my loneliness and afflictions, since the Lord saw best to take my dearly beloved, kind, devoted husband from me about four years ago. He alone knows the severe trial I then underwent, and have since, yet I sorrow not as those without hope, verily believing he is sweetly resting in Jesus, and that the Lord knows and does what is best. I try as much as in me lieth to look forward to the happy period (thinking it will be very soon) when I hope by the mercy of God we will meet again;

not expecting to know each other as dear husband and wife, or in any way after the flesh, but as the redeemed of the Lord, to part no more, but ever be with the Lord; precious hope, if so be that I am not deceived and found wanting. I feel very lonely, and often think of the lonely sparrow on the housetop, yet I feel that I am wonderfully provided and cared for, that the dear Lord is good and merciful, and has been with me in much mercy all the days of my life (a little more than three score and ten years), and will not forsake his little ones, "For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." Though much of my life unable to bear much sound, he has graciously enabled me to hear fourteen ministers of the gospel preach here under this roof in the last thirty years, a few of them different times, including my kind, faithful pastor. He says he desires to visit me once a year, though I think he lives about sixty miles from here. The dear brethren and sisters are wonderfully kind and good to me, but none live very near. Those meetings are very precious to me, and treasured up in mind as such with only my shortcomings to regret. Though I feel all unworthy and undeserving of them, I hope I am thankful, I desire to be for all blessings bestowed; all thanks and praise unto the Lord.

I did not intend writing all this to occupy so much of your valuable time; I hope you will not think me presumptuous, but pardon all amiss, for I have long felt that if I could just write you a few lines and tell you something of the comfort I receive from your writings, it would be a relief to my mind, but I see so much imperfection in what I write that notwithstanding the almost constant desire, for days in succession, it is with much fear and hesitancy that I try, or have it mailed after writing.

My health is poor, never well, but better than when I wrote you in 1900. Your good, comforting letter was thankfully received, much enjoyed and appreciated. I hope your wife has recovered from her late illness and all of you are well. I desire to be remembered in your prayers, and be favored to read your writings, as in the past, while I am here, if the Lord will.

JANUARY 28, 1905.

You see from the inclosed letter when I commenced to write to you, but after writing and reading I thought it not worth your attention to read, so laid it aside. Now I have concluded to send it, poor as it is; what a changeable creature I am. I enjoyed your communication entitled, "The Revelation to Babes." Now the question comes into my mind, Who am I, that I should be expressing all this to one that knows so much more of such things? If you can see that I have done wrong, please let me know, I do not wish to.

May the precious blessings of the Lord be yours to enjoy, is the wish of your unworthy, weak, little sister, in hope of eternal happiness beyond this life,

S. JULIA BASHAM.

PERSONVILLE, Texas, March 10, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I notice in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for March 1st, 1905, a request from brother Z. Ward, of Bear Wallow, Va., for some one to give their views on Revelation vi. 16, 17. While I am too ignorant and imperfect to throw any light upon the subject, I felt when I read the request that I must write such views as I had, and such as I have give I thee. It would take much more space in our valuable paper than I would like to occupy to give my full understanding of the sub-

ject; we would have to go back to the first chapter and come on down to the sixteenth and seventeenth verses of the sixth chapter to do so.

This book is "the Revelation of Jesus Christ [not John], which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John." God in his divine and just providence gave the Revelation to his Son Jesus, who in like manner sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John. So you see all things were eternally and unconditionally done, Christ giving the gift from the Father, commissioned his angel to signify it to his servant John. Then John being a servant of Christ was only commissioned to bear record of the word of God and of the testimony of Jesus Christ. Now for the above reason he was exiled in the isle that is called Patmos. Patmos, according to Cruden, means squeezed, persecuted, and this to my mind is a most beautiful figure of the church of God, because an island is a body of land surrounded by water, and water in a spiritual sense means people, and to my understanding John was simply in the church of God, commissioned by Jesus Christ the Lord to preach the unsearchable riches of his glory. The beauty of it is, John was not there of his own accord, but as a witness for the word of God and testimony of Jesus Christ, and he was there on the "Lord's day" (not John's). John of course had to know the truth before he could testify to the truth, and just in the very identical way that God educates his ministers to-day was the way he prepared John to speak unto the churches, viz: by revealing things to his ministers through his Son Jesus Christ and the Comforter, the Holy Ghost. "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Then John saw no more and knew no more than the God-called ministers of to-day, who are continually upon the walls of Zion and crying aloud.

The seven candlesticks represent the seven churches, the seven stars represent the seven angels of said churches, one for each church, which I understand to be the ministry.

Now we come on down to the fifth chapter, where we find that John "saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals." (A seal for every attribute.) No man was found worthy to open the book, neither look thereon. It is so to-day, no man of his own free will and accord is able to open the book and loose the seals. When we poor, weak, frail creatures try our best, exhaust our strength, apply all our skill, and then fail, as I once did in my search for religion and grace, then we see that no man is found upon the earth worthy to open this book, and when we see this, we, like John, begin to weep "much, because no man was found worthy to open the book." According to the carnal desire, we would like to be able to save our own selves, and mark out our own paths, but, like John, we cannot do so, and therefore a great weeping takes place, yet spiritually speaking, this is the most important epoch with us, for it is the time when we become willing subjects unto the Lord; it is the time when we beg for his mercy; it is the time when we say, "Lord, save us: we perish." It is the time when we come to brother Ward's Scripture, that saith, "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond-

man, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" Dear child of God, did you never view this awful scene? Did you never use the language of the text? Did you never feel that the great day of his wrath had come? Did you never feel also a calm, serene rest that you had never felt before? And right at this moment we heard, as John did, one of the elders saying, "Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." Then comes our rejoicing, for when Christ opens the first seal the first thing we view is the white horse, which represents purity, and on him is the man with the bow and the crown, which represents reigning power, Christ Jesus the Lord. After this comes our christian warfare, which is represented by the red horse, and the power that is given him who sat thereon to take peace from the earth; just as it is to-day, the rider of that horse is in the churches and after the poor pilgrims. He has "a great sword."

The opening of the third seal reveals to us the blackness of our crimes and the unjustness of our stewardship, and Belshazzar like, we are now weighed in the balances and found wanting; we get so much wheat and so much barley for a penny, but we are not allowed to hurt the oil and the wine (the virtues of Christ).

At the opening of the fourth seal we find the man on the pale horse, which is death. Yes, we have been spiritually slain, we must die before we can live. Death and hell are with the rider of the pale horse. Yes, the road to heaven leads through the valley of death and the slums of hell. This is not a natural death spoken of here.

Now at the opening of the fifth seal we find that it lands us beyond mortality, and into the realms of the beautiful beyond; we find an investigation of all that had previously departed now begun; we find the souls of the beheaded clothed in white robes, and all things pointing to a final consummation.

Now comes the opening of the sixth seal, which I understand to be the resurrection from the dead, and here we have a rehearsal of our quickening. We are in this resurrection like we were when we were awakened from the dead in our mortal state. Then comes the same cries spoken of in the foregoing part of this article, the language of brother Ward's two verses, and after this comes the judgment, which is represented as the sealing of the tribes with the seal of the living God.

The seventh seal continues to show forth the beauty and grandeur of a never-ending eternity.

This is in part my view on Revelation vi. 16, 17, and you can publish it, brother Chick, if you see fit, if not, all will be well. Pray for me.

Your little, unworthy brother,

JAMES D. TRACY.

GRANDVIEW, Texas, March 25, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I have failed to answer your esteemed favor, written some time ago, in reply to my inquiry concerning Old School Baptist literature, but I will delay no longer. By way of encouragement to you and the many writers to the SIGNS I will say here that I am well pleased with the paper, for it contains about all the gospel preach-

ing I get, and I do heartily indorse the principles of doctrine, fellowship and faith, which has characterized it ever since the publication of it began under the faithful and able management of that father in Israel, Elder Gilbert Beebe, who though dead yet speaketh. I have both volumes of the books of editorials, and prize them highly for what they contain; as well as the many editorials and letters of correspondence which have been and are now published in the SIGNS. I have been interested as well as comforted in many numbers recently; especially is this so in your last editorial, which so clearly and forcibly sets forth to my mind the relation between doctrine and fellowship, and upon what fellowship is founded, and what will produce a steadfast continuance in them; also your comment, some time since, upon 2 Peter i. 1-8, clearly manifests the abounding of grace, and the fruits produced thereby; also that upon Romans v. 18, 19, in which you have shown how the whole human family fell in Adam, and became sinners by his disobedience, because they were in him when he sinned, and how in like manner God's chosen people were in Christ, and when he died were made righteous by his obedience, redeemed by his death and saved by his life. It was also comforting as well as interesting to read Elder Durand's good sermon upon Romans v. 20, 21, in which he so clearly demonstrated how God's holy and good law must enter the heart of the sinner before he can know that he is under its condemnation, and his hopeless condition as to salvation ever being obtained by anything that he can do, and how the law shows the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and how God uses the law to bring his children to Christ, being slain by the law, and brought, as it were, to the ends of the earth, and there made to see the wonders of atoning grace.

Now I honestly believe the truth as set forth in the articles referred to, as well as that set forth by the many correspondents of the SIGNS, and I feel that the editor and the correspondents have all been highly favored of the Lord in having a clear knowledge and understanding of the plan of salvation as manifested in the gospel of Christ given to them. But the great question in my mind is this, Have I any interest in these things? Have I ever really been brought to the ends of the earth? When I look within I find nothing but sin and a proneness to evil, and that continually, so much so that it seems the very height of presumption in me to claim anything of the kind, and yet I have a craving desire to be able to bring forth some fruits meet for repentance, but alas, I feel so lean, so poor and destitute of everything good, that I often have to say with the poet,

> "'Tis a point I long to know,
> (Oft it causes anxious thought,)
> Do I love the Lord or no?
> Am I his, or am I not?"

While I have this craving desire to be reconciled to God in all things concerning me, I often feel that I have a rebellious, or at least a murmuring heart, and want to know why I am so desolate and lonely, and why I cannot manifest some life and feel as a christian ought to feel. Again, I am made to say, like Jacob, "All these things are against me."

I think it would be a great pleasure to be permitted to hear the gospel preached, but it is seldom that I have that privilege. I do occasionally go to what is popularly called preaching here, but I cannot get any benefit from such preaching, for it is nothing more than a conglomeration of free will and human power. Work, work, give, give. This is all sickening to one who feels poor and unable to do anything good, as I do.

Yet there was a time in my early life when I gloried in similar preaching, but I think it is worse now than it was then; that is, the Missionary folks have become bolder and more emphatic in denying the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, and by the all-sufficiency of the work of Jesus for the salvation of his people from their sins. They insist more upon the use of means, and a conditional salvation by our works, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, than they formerly did.

Now while I believe that it has pleased the Lord to lead me in his providence, and I hope sometimes by grace through the Spirit, to see the error of such teaching, and that he has made me to some extent see more clearly the beauty of the plan of salvation as wrought out in the Lord Jesus Christ alone, and I trust that I have been led and instructed in the way of the Lord more perfectly, it has been by a way that I knew not, neither would I have chosen it for myself; yet I fear it is only a head knowledge which is mine, and that I am not really in fellowship with the apostles. You have clearly shown to my mind that it is possible to be united in belief and yet fail to be in fellowship in the Spirit, yet my heart goes out to you, brethren, in love, because of your fearless advocacy of the very things that I do honestly believe and love. I am glad when I read where it is said, He that walketh in darkness, and hath no light, let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay himself upon his God. He is all the stay I have, I know that he alone can save me. If I am saved it is not through any works of my own, but through the merit and work of Christ, by the abounding of grace alone. If I am lost it will be just.

Now, dear editor, I hope you will excuse me for trespassing upon your time to so great a length; I have felt for some time that I wanted to write you of some of my feelings toward you, and if possible encourage you in your efforts to publish the truth. I have not written as I wanted to, but I have done the best I could, and I hope you will pardon all defects, and accept it as an offering of love. May you be enabled to pray the Lord to have mercy upon me, a poor sinner. May God's best blessings be continually upon you, is the desire of a poor sinner.

G. E. KEYS.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—It has been in my mind for some days to pen a few thoughts on the above sentence. David said in Psalm cxxix., with reference to God's perfect knowledge of himself, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." How wonderful to contemplate a being who, before anything was, knew all things, and so perfect was his knowledge that, notwithstanding the changes through which all created matter would pass, and the many acts of his creatures that draw the breath of life, not one thing has or ever will be a surprise to him. Think of the confusion in the earth, the many changes of the mind and manners of men, the means to which they resort to hinder the work and purpose of God, and then remember that God has perfect knowledge of all their thoughts and words, and has devised means to overthrow all that he does not see fit to cause to work to the praise of his own glorious name. The evil intentions of men have many times been turned by him to his praise and the good of his humble poor, and nothing is more wonderful to the humble soul than that God takes knowledge of him and

knows all his thoughts and intentions, whether evil or good. He knows how his people when quickened by his Spirit hate sin. He knew this before the world began; then, of course, before man had an existence, for he had no existence before the world was made; but God the Father from all eternity saw Christ Jesus, and in him all the members of his body, when as yet there was none of them. (Psalms cxxxix.) We can know that which is present with us, but our God knew us when we did not exist; knew our names and wrote them in the Lamb's book of life; upon his heart and arm (his affection and power). He knew what our needs would be when we did come into being. For being created of the dust of the ground, we are therefore very weak; made subject to vanity, and so we have sinned and far separated ourselves from God by wicked works. God knowing all this has graciously made provision for us in his Son; and knowing the weakness of our nature, and the many temptations to which we are subjected in this life, hath made him a present help in time of need; and knowing the despondency and gloom produced by the company of two armies, he has provided and sent the holy Comforter to take of the things of Jesus and show them to us. Well did the apostle say, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" This perfect knowledge of God is of untold value to us poor sinners. Think of our hopeless condition as lost sinners had not God foreseen the evil and provided against it in Jesus Christ. What would the people have done in time of famine had not Joseph prepared for them during the years of plenty? But God saw the coming need and prepared for it, else they must have died of hunger. So he saw the need of those chosen in Christ Jesus before he created them, and made a full and glorious provision in Christ for them. So when the day of their need comes there is fullness of grace in him to meet the demand of every poor soul. So perfect is his knowledge that not a groan or sigh comes from the heart of his children, notwithstanding their number is ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, but what he hears, and so tender are his feelings for them that he feels the pain and sorrow they endure; and though all of the vast multitude cry at once he is not confused, but his perfect knowledge comprehends the needs of each, and he will supply them according to his riches in Jesus Christ. Is this not wonderful to contemplate? and is it not as glorious as it is wonderful? When we find that we are such miserable sinners we are troubled because of his knowledge of the fact; but when we hate sin and desire holiness, and wish to walk with his Son Jesus Christ, we are glad that he knows the humble desire of our hearts and pities our weakness and forgives our sin. How sweet to remember that he is perfectly aware of all our burdens and the cause of them, and that Jesus is our great burden-bearer, and he will never leave or forsake us. Blessed be God for his unspeakable gift.

J. T. ROWE.

ROLAND PARK, Md., March, 1905.

HUTCHINSON, Kan., Feb. 19, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I notice my subscription to the SIGNS is past due; I usually attend to this the first of the year, but there are many reasons for the delay; the reverses in my business and afflictions in my family have been many. Two years ago I had typhoid fever, and have had several severe spells since. Last August my business was consumed by fire, causing me a loss of one thou-

sand dollars. Soon after, one of my sons had a stroke of apoplexy, and has not yet recovered, and there is not much hope for him. My wife is just recovering from a four weeks severe attack of "la grippe." In all it reminds me of Elder Vail's afflictions, as published in the SIGNS some time since. I have tried to endure it patiently, and wonder when the turning point may come for the better, but it must be the will of God to have it so.

I could write many pages if I could find words to put it together. You will note that my name has not appeared in the SIGNS for a number of years, but I appreciate the writings of others to the fullest extent. I believe the Old Baptists are the only people who esteem others better than themselves; each seems to himself to be the vilest and most sinful. It is well it should be so, they only know themselves, and cannot know the sins of their brethren. Could they look into the hearts of some of their brethren it might look different to them. "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?"

It is not my purpose to write a long letter, but I have an object in this, as there are some correspondents that I have not heard from in seven or eight years who will know where to find me if they have a desire to write again. I am almost alone in a city of ten thousand, only one or two Baptists here. When I go to meeting I have forty-five miles to go, and it has cost me about five dollars for every sermon I have heard in the past twelve years. Many would think this high, but truth comes high often. The isms I could hear three times a day, but they are less than nothing, vanity of vanities.

I hope you may be enabled from above to continue the SIGNS in as satisfactory a manner in the future as in the past. Remember me when it is well with you.

Your unworthy brother in a little hope (but great is that little),

A. McINTURFF.

BLUM, Texas, April 19, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—Inclosed I send you two dollars, to be placed to the credit of Mrs. Bettie Harris, of Morgan, Bosque Co., Texas. My wife and I went down to McGregor, Texas, last Friday, to a meeting at Elder Nance's church; had a good meeting, but the weather was rather too cold for my wife's health, and she has been sick ever since we came back. I think I will get some subscribers for the SIGNS down in that country. I think the SIGNS is just as good as ever, I cannot see how it could be improved upon. Elder Chick is one of the ablest ministers in the United States, at least all the faithful here in Texas think so.

We wish to be remembered by all the faithful in Christ. My wife joins me in sending kind regards to all.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

W. L. ROGERS.

PLEASE BE SURE,

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1905.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

TITHING.

BROTHER G. E. Keys, of Grandview, Texas, has requested that we write upon the subject of tithing, saying that it is strongly contended by some in his section that the law of tithing given to Israel under the old covenant is still to be the law of the church. He sent us a little pamphlet in which this is contended for, and some thirteen reasons are given as proofs that it ought still to be the practice of all christians. He asks us to notice these reasons, and reply to them for his satisfaction, and that of others also. While we feel to reply when we can to such requests, and to give such thoughts as seem to us scriptural upon subjects presented to us, yet brother Keys, and all others, can read the Bible as well as we, and are as well able to understand its teachings as are we, and we feel always like urging upon all who may read what we say, that they should carefully examine the Scriptures for themselves. We all need the Holy Spirit to open to us the meaning of the Scriptures, and to make plain the will of God in them.

Much is said about tithing, or literally "tenthing," in both the Old and New Testament Scriptures. To tithe means to give the tenth of one's gains to sacred uses. Before the giving of the law upon Sinai, Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedec, and Jacob vowed to pay the tithes to God should he be prospered of the Lord. Under the law one tithe of all their increase was to be devoted to the services of the sanctuary for the support of the Levites who served there and who had no inheritance beside this in the land, except cities to dwell in, and one-tenth was to be given for sacred feasts and other purposes, and every third year another tenth was to be given for the poor. Beside this, provision was made for free-will offering, as each one felt to do. Thus instead of one-tenth of their income, fully three-tenths were required under the law for sacred and charitable purposes. We have noticed that this has often been lost sight of in what men have said about the matter. The little pamphlet which was forwarded by brother Keys, however, names this fact. Now this was all true under the law of the old covenant, and concerning all this there is no dispute or question raised by any one; the one question of importance to us is, What is the rule under the new covenant? What does God require of those who are his true followers now? It is contended in the little pamphlet sent us by brother Keys, that the same law rests upon the church of God now. Some reasons for this claim are alleged; Malachi iii. 10, is quoted in support of this view: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, * * * and prove me," &c. But this was addressed to the Jews alone by the prophet, and was an exhortation to them to observe the law which God had given to them alone, and so, manifestly, it cannot be used to enforce the idea that believers now are under this law; this Scripture applies alone to that people under that law. The death of Ananias and Sapphira is also referred

to in proof of this position, but as the narrative says nothing about tithes or tenths, but rather the giving up of ALL their possessions, and as they were not destroyed for not giving up all, but for saying that they had when they had not, it is hard to see what force this has as an argument for the practice of tithing.

Paul's language, 2 Cor. ix. 6, "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly," which refers especially to alms-giving, is quoted as another proof that tithing ought to be continued under the gospel; but it seems to us that this Scripture enjoins the very reverse of giving by a special law, limiting the amount to be given; it seems to place this matter upon the ground of what it is in the heart of one to do, rather than upon the ground of a special amount enjoined by special commandment. There is manifestly no argument to be drawn for the support of the old legal tithing from this Scripture.

Christ's language, Luke xi. 42, "These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone," meaning by the last, the tithing of mint, anise, cummin, &c., is referred to in support of the contention by the writer of the pamphlet. But as this was addressed to the hypocritical pharisees, and not to his disciples, and was manifestly intended as a rebuke to them for straining at gnats and swallowing camels in their treatment of the law of God (that is, hesitating not to violate the really weighty matters enjoined by the law, while closely observing the mere forms of outward sanctity,) it is hard to see what application it can have to the church under the gospel, or to believers in any way whatever. It is added in the pamphlet in connection with the last quoted Scripture, that the Savior did not say much about tithing, in fact, not as much as he did about the Sabbath. This is true, but it is altogether an unfortunate reference for the advocates of this plan, and for its obligation upon christians to-day. Since the old Jewish Sabbath has been totally abrogated, and the church of Christ sees it fulfilled in Christ, our true rest, it is manifest that tithing can gain no support from this argument drawn from the Sabbath.

It is argued in this pamphlet that we should, according to the injunction of the New Testament itself, give systematically and proportionately, and that as tithing was God's own system under the old covenant it cannot be improved upon now. While Paul enjoins giving, he enjoins cheerful giving, and liberal giving, which must mean freely and willingly, and he says not one word about the tenth part or three-tenths. Why did he not plainly say to his brethren, The Jewish law of giving is still binding upon you, and you are commanded of God to give at least three-tenths of your income, or your possessions yearly, to his special service? This would have settled at once the whole matter. Paul taught not in this way, but rather left each one to the guidance of the Spirit, and to the solemn decision of his own conscience before God in all this matter.

It is also argued that both in the Old and the New Testaments we are taught to make free-will offerings, above or beyond the tithe or tenth, and that we cannot do this unless we have first given the tithe. This was certainly true under the old covenant, but what proof is there that this is enjoined under the new covenant? Our reading of the Scripture for many years has led us to believe that under the new covenant all the gifts and offerings of the people of God are to be free-will offerings; that is, gifts and offerings

cheerfully and willingly presented; for this is what the word "free-will" signifies, as used in the Old Testament. In this very thing the superiority of the new covenant over the old is shown. The tithing was commanded, and must be met whether men were willing or not. Therefore, for this very reason, the Lord made provision under that covenant for those who were possessed of a willing heart to do what their willing heart desired beyond the tithing. But under the new covenant he requires willing service, and provides the willing heart to that service, and no other service is acceptable before him. What a great blessing we have under the gospel bestowed upon us above what men had under the law. What a blessing to have a heart free, and loving, and willing, bestowed upon us.

The old Arminian argument that it is the duty of the church to give the gospel to the whole world is also used in this pamphlet, and tithing is presented as God's plan for furnishing means by which this may be done. No doubt if tithing was universally practiced the treasuries of Missionary societies would be much better filled than they are; and it is stated in this very pamphlet that only about one-third of the members, and about one-third of the churches do contribute anything to this end. We suppose the writer knows what he affirms, and we also suppose that he means that only one-third of the churches contribute, and that only one-third of the members of this one-third of the churches make up the amount that is contributed, or one-ninth of the whole membership. If this be God's intent, and if tithing be God's plan for carrying out his intent for evangelizing the world, there is no escaping the conclusion that there has been a most lamentable failure in the whole matter. Tithing has failed, and the evangelization of the world has failed altogether miserably. But it is NOT God's will to evangelize the whole world, but to gather out his people from the world, one by one, and it is still as true as it was at first that as many as were ordained to eternal life believe, and our God will see to it now, as he did then, that his gospel shall be preached as a witness in all the world, but it will be a witness to hearts before prepared to hear and receive it.

A closing argument in the pamphlet is, that while the ceremonial law is abrogated, the moral law is not, and that tithing is one of the items of the moral law, and therefore is not abrogated, but is still in full force. We ask, By what right does the writer of the pamphlet say that it did not belong to the ceremonial law? The priesthood was a part of the appointment of the law relating to ceremonies under that covenant. All Jews were not priests, one tribe among all the rest was given that place, and to them all the rest must contribute for their support. But under the gospel every man, woman and child who has faith given him is a Jew truly, a child of faithful Abraham, and a priest unto God. The tribe of Levi was then a type of the whole church of God, embracing every true believer as a priest unto God. There is therefore now no Levitical priesthood; that part of the ceremonial law is done away, being fulfilled in the glorious antitype. With the passing away of that part of the type it must be manifest that so much of the tithes as related to the Levites at least, is also done away; and as the feast days and holy days of that covenant are fulfilled in Christ, and so are done away as ceremonies, that part of the tithes that related to those days must of necessity be done away also.

There is absolutely no support for the system of tithing to be derived from the ceremonial law, and there is not one sentence in the New Testament spoken to believers that enjoins its continuation. But while we feel compelled to thus write, we do not desire for a moment to be understood as saying that under the gospel, and in the order of the church, the support of the ministry and of the things needful for the stated worship of God, according to his own commandments, and of the poor which we have always with us, must not be provided for. This is expressly commanded in the New Testament, and the church transgresses the law of the new covenant when she neglects to attend to all these things. It has been our privilege all our life to live among brethren who regarded all these obligations as sacred, and who not only considered them to be obligations resting upon them, but sacred privileges by which they might show forth their faith and love to God for all his mercy and grace to them. The minds of the brethren have been stirred up of God in all the churches where we have labored so that we have lacked nothing in all these past thirty-seven years. We are glad here to say this to the praise of that God who holds all hearts in his hand, and who turns them as the rivers of water are turned. There has been no tithing, in a legal sense, thought of once among us. We can well understand however that in the world of professed religionists where the love of God does not dwell, and therefore there can be no cheerful giving, it is most needful that legal means shall be adopted, and the stress of some outward law be invoked to compel the members to do what they will not do willingly; and what a difference there is between being compelled to do what one does not want to do, by stress of law, and doing what one is blessedly made to want to do and finds it a blessed privilege to do; the one is legal service and the other gospel service; the Spirit of the Lord is in the latter, the spirit of the flesh is in the former. Let it be remembered also that if we have the Spirit of Christ dwelling and reigning in us, like him we shall feel that our place is to serve and not to be served, and we shall, when led by his Spirit, be not hired servants, but servants born in the Master's house, and joyful to be considered members of the household. Provision was made under the old covenant for a servant who should refuse to be made free, to become a servant forever. But this was of his own will, and in it, to that servant, there would be no feeling of bondage, in his service he would be free. That servant's ear was bored, and this was the token of his willing service forever. So Jesus, the chief Servant, said, "Mine ears hast thou opened." This word "opened," means "bored." Thus it was signified that Jesus made himself a willing servant of the church and unto God. This spirit of willing service must dwell in all hearts where Jesus dwells, and out of this free spirit will issue all willing service and all willing giving, and such an one will not need the law of tithing. There is no room for tithing in the gospel, but if one does not cheerfully and willingly give as the Lord has prospered him, where is the evidence that this free spirit dwells within him? There is none, if the word of God be true.

THE brethren everywhere will no doubt be pleased to learn that Elder E. V. White, of Leesburg, Va., has so far recovered as to be able to attend the May meeting of the church at Frying Pan.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

FELLOWSHIP.

In our last number we copied the Circular Letter of the Delaware Association, written by Elder E. Rittenhouse, on the subject of Gospel Fellowship. It is a well written article on that subject, and worthy of the serious consideration of all the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ. It contains many important suggestions, arguments, demonstrations, admonitions and exhortations which are of vital importance. In reperusing and admiring that letter we have been led to extend the consideration of the subject of fellowship to the numerous branches of the kingdom of our Redeemer. In the letter referred to, the fellowship of the saints, and that in their relation to the church, has been as fully treated upon as could well be in the limits of a Circular Letter, but it may be useful to consider the relation which exists among sister churches of the same faith and order. The entire kingdom of Christ, embracing as it does the whole mystical body, of which Christ is the Head, is known in the Scriptures as the general assembly and church of the firstborn. (Heb. xii. 23.) And although some of the constituents of it are now in heaven, some on earth, and some yet unborn, she is a unit.

> "The saints on earth, and all the dead,
> But one communion make;
> All join in Christ, the living Head,
> And of his grace partake."

Paul says, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."—Eph. iv. 4–6. The same relationship exists throughout the whole church of God, and all her branches, as that which exists between each branch and its members. The union is vital, it is a union of life, and the life of this union is God himself; for he, as we have seen, is over all, through all and in all the branches and members. Christ is the life, and our life is hid with Christ in God. This spiritual and divine life is the foundation of fellowship, and constitutes each branch and each member the fellow of every other branch or member. Thus the smitten Shepherd is the fellow of the Lord of hosts. (Zech. xiii. 7.) And through him our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. (1 John i. 3.) It is therefore impossible to extend this fellowship, as shown in the Circular, beyond the body of Christ, to any foreign substance, however closely that substance may be attached by art or by nature. The christian is himself, while in the flesh, an illustration of this. He cannot fellowship his own depraved, wicked nature, which is so very closely connected with his spiritual identity, but has to crucify the old man with its affections and lusts. There is no kind of discipline he can apply that will bring his flesh and spirit into fellowship, for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to the other. Flesh is born of the flesh, and spirit is born of the Spirit—is born of God. The flesh has low, groveling and earthly propensities, appetites and desires, but the spirit loathes them, and only has heavenly, spiritual and holy aspirations. How then can there be any fellowship between parties so opposite and hostile? Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor the things of the Spirit of God. (See 1 Cor. ii. 14; xv. 50.) Neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. "For what fellowship hath righteousness with un-

righteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial?"—2 Cor. vi. 14, 15.

This gospel fellowship being based on immortal life in Christ, permeates all the branches or individual members of the church of God, because it cannot be separated or divided from Christ as its vitality. In this fellowship all who are born of God are members of Christ. (1 Cor. xii. 27.) "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many."—1 Cor. xii. 12–14.

If then every individual member is an integral part of the church of Christ, and every branch of the church of Christ is an integral part of the body of Christ, wherein do the several branches of the church of Christ differ in their relation to each other, as churches, from that of one member of the same church to a fellow-member of the same?

So far as fellowship is concerned, the several churches are but the several branches of the one church. Churches or branches may hold a kind of nominal connection together, without being animated by the same life, or joined together in the same judgment, but gospel fellowship cannot exist where this foundation for it is not found. The evidences required of an applicant for church fellowship are such as shall satisfy the church to whom such application is made that the applicant has passed from death unto life, and has received of God that life which alone can unite to the church. The fruits of this life are joy, peace, love, faith, &c., and when presented are satisfactory, and those who show them are welcomed, through the ordinance of baptism, into the church. This makes the baptized convert not only a member of the branch of the church into which he is received, but he is baptized into the whole body of Christ, and comes manifestly into the fellowship of all sister churches of the same faith and order. If this were not so, he would be required to be baptized in every branch of the church with whom he communes, or whose fellowship he desires to enjoy. If the church to which he has applied be a gospel church, and in gospel order, and in that order has received and baptized him, he is no more a stranger or foreigner, but he is become a fellow-citizen with the saints, with all the saints of God, in heaven and on earth, and is of the household of faith, and built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the foundation and chief corner-stone. (Eph. ii. 20, 21.) His fellowship is with the holy city, new Jerusalem, which came down from God out of heaven, and not merely of some part of it; it is in common with all the saints of God, and as a citizen he cannot be lawfully disfranchised, except by the same law of the city which is binding on all the citizens of the same commonwealth. His standing is upon the same one foundation which bears up all the building, and it being the foundation of the apostles and prophets, no delinquency on his part, or action on the part of a church, can deprive him of the fellowship of the saints, that would not, were the circumstances otherwise alike, expel from fellowship the apostles and prophets. When a church is in gospel order, and in the Spirit, and according to the laws of

Christ, receives into or expels from fellowship, what is thus loosed in earth we believe is loosed also in heaven; whatsoever she binds on earth is also bound or approved in heaven.

Much is said of the independence of churches; but let us tread softly here. In what sense, and to what extent, are churches independent? These are very important inquiries. We believe she is, when considered in her indissoluble union with her divine Head, and acting under his law, according to its letter and spirit, independent of the world, the flesh and the devil. She is independent of popes, cardinals, friars, of kings and potentates of the earth, and of ecclesiastical courts, councils and dictators of all sorts and kinds. But is she independent of Christ and of his laws? Has she any right to transcend or to transgress any of them? Has she a right to do wrong, or to transact a particle of business, either in receiving, governing or excluding her members, without a warrant from the law of Christ? Nor is any branch of the church, as we understand this subject, any more independent of her sister churches than one member is of the other members of the same church. Can one church say to another church, We have no need of thee? "For the body is not one member, but many. But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you."—1 Cor. xii. 14, 18–21.

The saints and the churches are not only members of the one body of Christ, but they are members one of another; so that they can no more be independent of each other than they can be independent of the body. Remember, God hath set the members in the body as it hath pleased him. It hath, therefore, pleased God that the members of the body shall be mutually dependent one on another. The hands and feet and all other members are dependent on the eye to see, the eye dependent on the ear to hear, the feet to walk, and the hands to do what the other members are not qualified to do; but all these gifts belong to the church, and all are for the edifying of the body of Christ. That the whole body may travel, it is indispensably necessary that there shall be harmony in all the members, each duly appreciating the importance of all the rest. The perfect harmony and symmetry of the body has been clearly set forth in the Circular alluded to, but we wish to apply the same idea to the whole Zion of God, which is in her gospel order the perfection of beauty. No branch of the church of God is or can be independent of all the other parts. No member of the whole body detached from the body can independently subsist. How would an eye, an ear, or a hand or foot, see, hear, labor or walk independently of its union and fellowship with the whole body? Separated from the body, they cease not only to perform their functions for the common benefit of all the body, but in their disconnection they cease to participate in the vitality of the body, and therefore perish. "Where two or three," saith the Savior, "are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst." Ten thousand may voluntarily assemble together of their own accord, without being gathered together in his name. However large or small the gathering may be, the essential points are that it is in his name, by his authority, and that Christ himself is the grand centre of attraction;

that he, as their Life, gives vitality, by his laws, as their rule of government, and by his Spirit, having a desire to walk in all his ordinances, of one accord, of one mind, of one spirit, and all in one hope of their calling. Such is the church of God.

We are led to examine this subject from a consideration that a wrong impression has prevailed to some extent in regard to the independence of churches. The impression seems to be entertained, at least by some, that each branch of the church of God is invested with a right to act for itself in all matters of faith and practice, without reference to the approval or disapproval of the other branches of the same church. If this impression be correct, where is the Scripture to sustain it? How is fellowship to be maintained on that principle? The church of Christ in all her departments must be of one mind, of one heart and of one judgment, or their professed fellowship for each other is deceptive and hypocritical. If all the churches, as we call them, meaning the branches of the one undivided church of God, are led by the one Spirit, ruled by the same law of Christ, and joined in the same judgment, all the acts of each will be the acts of the whole. This will, we conceive, apply to the reception, government and exclusion of members. But if some churches hold themselves so independent of the others that they do not desire or respect the concurrence of their sister churches in their action, the one may receive members, and such members be denied fellowship and communion with sister churches, or they may expel members, and the expelled members still be held in full fellowship with the other churches; but how then can all be called sister churches, of the same faith and order? Whatever faith they may profess to hold, their order is far from being the same.

To avoid such confusion and irregularity it has been the practice of the churches of the same faith to maintain a correspondence with each other, through associations, conferences and other meetings, and by dismissing and receiving members by letter, and such other friendly correspondence as may be convenient from time to time. And when difficulties arise in which there is an important diversity of judgment among the members of one church, which involves a question of the common order of the house of God, if such church desires to maintain the union and confidence of her sister churches, it has been our practice to say to them, "Come and behold our order." Or to call on them to send approved and faithful brethren to aid the church in the adjustment of her difficulties. Whenever churches decline this course, and refuse to be advised, or to exhibit their order to their sister churches, suspicion is excited that something is wrong, and will not bear investigation without exposing disorder. "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."—John iii. 20, 21.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., July 15, 1862.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905, &c.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY COTTAGE HILL CHURCH.

WHEREAS, it hath pleased almighty God to remove by death from our midst our dear, beloved brother, Elder W. P. Burk, we, the church at Cottage Hill, Montgomery, Ala., feel to say, in the language of our Savior, Not ours, but thy will, O God, be done, and we will bow in humble submission to thy dealings with us in all things, and ascribe all praise and glory to thy holy name. Therefore be it

Resolved, that we as a church, at Cottage Hill, hereby set forth in these resolutions, as a sacred and solemn duty, our sincere and heart-felt respect, love and true devotion to the memory of our departed brother, and desire that in this dispensation we may still have grace given us to fear and serve the Lord in the beauty of holiness. Be it further

Resolved, that the church tender her love, sympathy and devotion to the bereaved family, and also that our pastor, Elder Wm. Lively, prepare a suitable obituary of our departed brother and send to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication, and also a copy of the same be sent to his family.

W. L. DEAN, Church Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

OUR brother, T. H. Barker, of Waverly, Ky., has written us, asking that we prepare an obituary notice of his aged companion for the SIGNS, from statements which he has forwarded to us, and we willingly comply. While we were not personally acquainted with either the departed sister or with brother Barker, yet for a good many years we maintained a constant correspondence with her. We recall distinctly that she wrote us at the time of her baptism, reference to which follows, giving an account of the services, and of her own joy and gladness of heart that at last she was so greatly favored of the Lord. Her letters were always full of deep, spiritual matter, and showed a clear knowledge of the teaching of the Scripture; and what is still better, they showed that her heart loved the word, and that she found her comfort and salvation in it. For a number of years she had not written to us, and we often wondered whether she was still in this life, or had departed to her everlasting home. Since 1878 they have been readers of the SIGNS, and the aged brother writes that he hopes to read them as long as he lives. We feel to extend our heart-felt sympathy to him in his loneliness and sorrow. The Lord has been his strength in times past, and will not fail him in old age. Upon learning of her death we wrote to the aged husband, and received from him the request with which we now endeavor to comply.

Pamela Rachel Hosman Barker died Sept. 1st, 1904, at a good old age. She had been an invalid for fifty years, having suffered a severe illness in 1864, from which she never fully recovered. Her parents were Old School Baptists. She professed a hope in Christ about the year 1863, but as there was no Baptist Church of her faith in that vicinity she could not unite with the church, which caused her great trouble. It was fifteen years before she found a Baptist Church, and that a distance of thirty miles away. As soon as possible she and her husband went to see them, but finding them in disorder she did not unite with them at that time. About the year 1888 she felt that she must be baptized, and her husband arranged for some of the brethren of the church to visit them and hear her experience. They did so, and she talked with them nearly a whole day. All was fully satisfactory, and it was so reported to the church, which voted to receive her upon this report. On the second Sunday in October, 1888, her husband carried her in his arms to a carriage and drove to a pond one mile and a half away. After resting awhile she was carried to the side of the pond in a chair, and her husband and Elder Morgan carried her down into the water and she was baptized sitting in the chair. She came up out of the water praising God. A nephew said to her, "It will kill you to go into the water," for the day was cold. She said, "If our hearts be warm, ice and snow can do no harm." After resting she went home, and no ill effects followed. After dinner she asked Elder Morgan to preach her a sermon, as she said that she never expected to go to meeting. There were about a dozen present; he preached from John vi. 38, 39. After the service was ended she called Elder Morgan to her side and said to him, "This is the first sermon that I ever heard, and it is the doctrine which I heartily indorse."

ALSO,

Mrs. Hannah A. Drake departed this life at the residence of her son, A. Johnson Drake, near Pennington, N. J., Tuesday afternoon, April 4th, 1905, after a few hours illness, of paralysis. She was the widow of the late Wilson Drake, who died some eighteen years ago. They were married about the year 1862. Her home had been at Harbourton until she was married. Her maiden name was Hart. She leaves one brother, one son and one grandson. She was in the 77th year of her age.

The funeral services were held at her late residence Friday afternoon, April 7th. Her favorite hymn, No. 651 (Beebe's Collection), was read, and as a text the Scripture in 2 Corinthians iv. 13, 14, was used. The interment was in the cemetery at Pennington.

For many years she had been a constant attendant of our meetings at Hopewell, and among all who found comfort and gladness here there were none more faithful in their love to the truth and to the cause defended by the pastors of this church. She loved the house of God, and was glad to mingle with

all those who love his name; but for many years a deep sense of unfitness kept her from confessing her faith in a public way. In this she was a companion of many who love and fear God; and this very hesitancy only made more manifest the meekness and humbleness of mind which is always a characteristic of true believers. In July, 1897, she was given strength to present herself to the church, with a narration of her experience of grace, and was gladly received. Indeed, there would have been no need that she should have said anything whatever in order to obtain the fellowship of the whole church, for that she had long before. It was a day of gladness to her, as was also the baptism the next day. From that time she has walked in all sincerity and truth, and in all faithfulness to the truth. It seems hardly needful to multiply words when we speak of the death of a true believer, yet to do so may sometimes strengthen the weak and halting ones who may read. What wonders grace can work in bringing the lofty to be low, and in exalting the lowly in the name of Christ. Naturally, our dear sister possessed a gentle, kindly spirit, and no one ever could have aught against her. Grace came into her heart and bore fruit there to the praise of God, so that she was lowly minded, and could never see aught that was good in herself. Her testimony always was to the grace of God bringing salvation to a poor sinner. It was good to all lovers of grace to meet her and hear her at times speak of the mercy and goodness of God. The heart-felt sympathy of all who know them will go out to the only son and his beloved companion, who filled more than a son's and daughter's part toward her in all her declining years, and to the only surviving brother in his older years, and to the grandson who was so dear to her heart, and who revered her in return. As a church we shall sadly miss her presence among us, but we feel well assured that she is forever with the Lord, who was her delight while she lived on earth.—ED.

Frank Laytham was born May 20th, 1827, and departed this life March 25th, 1905, making his appointed time in this life 77 years 10 months and 5 days, all the days of about fifty years of which time he faithfully, patiently and expectantly waited till his change came. On the 9th of April, 1857, he was married to Miss Martha Owens, who survives him, and by the same faith through which he was kept unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, she counts that which is an irreparable loss to her an infinite gain to him, to which blessed gain she, too, fondly expects to attain when her change shall have come. To this union were born three daughters: sister Anna, who preceded her father into the fullness of a better resurrection, sister Bettie Turner and Miss Josie. Brother Laytham made a good profession of a hope through grace in Christ, and in the year 1857 was baptized by Elder Samuel Jones. He was chosen and set apart to the office of deacon, which for many years he faithfully and efficiently filled, purchasing to himself a good degree and great boldness in the faith. I feel that it could be truly said of him that he was a deacon indeed. He knew the functions and virtues of the office, and fearlessly, faithfully and humbly maintained them at all times and under all circumstances. There were times in his pilgrimage which were perilous, and there were afflictions deep and sore, from which nothing but the victory of the good fight of faith could have succored and delivered him. He was the last of a number who were yoke-fellows with him in the faith and affairs of the Licking Association, whose characters and labors shone brightly in the doctrine and order of that association, which by their departure has sustained a great loss, but to them has come the greater gain. In all his years in the church brother Laytham was absent but twice from the sessions of the association, and his attendance at his church meetings was exceptionally faithful and commendable. For a number of years he was clerk of the church, and readily and promptly led in the business of the church, therefore at no time or place will he be more sadly missed than at the church meetings. Brother Laytham was a plain, unassuming man. For the transaction of the business affairs of life he was possessed of the rugged honesty and integrity worthy of true manhood, and his dealings with men were in the light of plain, simple truth. His words were earnest and candid, and clearly indexed the thoughts and intents of his heart. His affections, though unparaded, were strong and tender, and his friendship when once matured was deep, firm, binding and hard to be shaken. To have his fellowship and love gave much assurance and strength to those thus favored. His home was a welcome, pleasant resting-place to the weary servant in the vineyard of his Master. He retained the force of his faculties to the end, therefore he knew the near approach of the end of this life, and at the command to depart and be with Christ, which for him was, as he no doubt realized, far the better thing, he was ready, and in the triumph of that faith which is born of God and is the victory he overcame and came up with Paul when he said: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith," and quietly, calmly and peacefully passed under the crown of righteousness laid up for him and all them that love the appearing of the blessed Lord. Thus ended a long life well rounded up. I feel that a life made so by the grace of our God can be but feebly portrayed by words at my command, but for such lives I hope I am thankful.

Elder P. W. Sawin read appropriate words of Scripture and hymn, and engaged in prayer, and the

writer spoke in memory of our dear brother with the doctrine he believed and loved as reflected in the above Scripture, and closed with prayer, after which in the midst of many relatives, brethren and friends his remains were buried in the beautiful cemetery at Mayslick, Mason Co., Ky., near where he lived and died.

P. G. LESTER.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Middleburgh, Schoharie Co., N. Y., have appointed their yearly meeting the first Saturday and Sunday in June, (3rd and 4th,) 1905. A cordial invitation to all lovers of truth.

A. COOK, Clerk.

THE Delaware River Association will be held with the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., beginning on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (May 31st) 1905, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continuing three days.

Those coming by way of Philadelphia or Trenton will take the Express train leaving Broad street station at 3:34 p. m., and leave the train at Stockton or Frenchtown, where they will be cared for and taken to the meeting. Those coming from the east can take the New Jersey Central at the foot of Liberty street, New York city, at about 1 p. m., arriving in Flemington at 3:30, where they will be met and cared for.

A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

C. RISLER, Church Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the New Vernon church, Sullivan Co., N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1905. All of like precious faith with us will be cordially welcomed.

Those coming by the way of New York city, take train leaving West Twenty-third St. at 4:25 p. m. This train leaves Jersey City at 4:45. Get excursion tickets for Howells, N. Y., Tuesday, June 6th. Train leaving New York (Twenty-third St.) at 7:25 a. m. Wednesday, June 7th, will also be met at Howells. Those coming from the west will be met at Howells Tuesday on train arriving at 7:30 p. m. Those coming from the north and Kingston over the O. & W. R. R., will be met at Winterton, N. Y., on train arriving at Winterton at 5:24 p. m. June 6th. Train leaving Wickham Ave. O. & W. depot, Middletown, N. Y., at 8:25 a. m. will be met at Winterton Wednesday, June 7th.

H. S. COLLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Sandusky Association meets with the Columbia church, Jackson Co., Michigan, the Lord willing, on Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1905, and continues the two following days. Trains will be met at Cement City, on Cincinnati Northern Railroad, which is but a few rods from the meeting-house. All who desire to meet with us will be welcome.

Done by order of the church.

DAVID TITMUS

THE yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held, the Lord willing, in the school-house in the township of Brooke, Lambton Co., Ont., five miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1905, and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in Hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m., in the Red Men's Hall, First and Congress Streets in Troy, N. Y., and at 2:30 p. m. in West Sand Lake, N. Y., at the home of Mrs. Moul. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at the Hall, corner of 19th St. and 8th Ave., fifth floor. Elevator entrance on either 19th St. or 8th Ave.

10:30 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

BI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

OF THE

WELSH TRACT CHURCH.

The bi-centennial of the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., was celebrated Oct. 20th, 1903. After some delay it is now published in pamphlet form, and is now on sale. Price 15 cents. The pamphlet contains photographs of the Welsh Tract meeting-house and Elder J. G. Eubanks, the pastor, the proceedings of the anniversary, letters of greeting from sister churches and a historical sketch written by Dr. B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., and read on the occasion. Some of the brick in the meeting-house was brought from Wales to this country, and hauled on mules' backs a distance of ten miles. The pamphlet is very interesting and full of information.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 73. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1905. NO. 12.

POETRY.

(Selected by Miss Fannie Brittingham, Salisbury, Md.)

WHEN all the wheels of life are running slow,
And all the fires of life are falling low
And flickering to an end,
Then in death's dawning light we seem to know
What it all means, why things must happen so,
And not as we intend.

I thought to keep my life both good and fair,
Now, broken, blotched and ugly, it lies there,
Spread, like a map, to view.
I made the blots, the blunders, everywhere,
The bitter disappointments in full share,
The sorrows, old and new.

But though fresh failures come with each fresh day,
Though pain persists, and will not pass away
Till life itself shall cease;
Taught by this gleam of death's keen searching ray,
"No human life is whole," I've learnt to say,
"But of God's plan a piece."

Each individual life is not our own,
'Tis in God's building just one little stone,
Chiseled to fit one place;
Useless if crude, uncut and left alone,
Useful if when its proper place is known,
It fits it, by God's grace.

All through God's temple rise in noble state
Smooth marble blocks of wondrous form and weight,
And polished pillars tall;
But there are other stones, not smooth nor great,
Seeming despised, thrown out, yet soon or late
Wanted, however small.

O, builded in his house, if him it please,
I would be found, though small and rough like these;
Poor in my puny might.
Just of his house a stone, if so be he
For his own use has chosen me.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"I KNOW YOU NOT."

(Matthew xxv. 12.)

THESE words were spoken by the Bridegroom to the five foolish virgins in the parable. He and the five wise virgins had gone in together to the marriage, and the door was shut. Afterward the foolish virgins, who had been away buying oil, came to the door, "saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us. But he answered and said, Verily, I say unto you, I know you not."

Different views concerning the true application of this parable have been expressed by brethren who do not differ in any degree concerning the truth of salvation, and who in discussing this or any other scriptural subject do not depart from the doctrine of grace. Yet I believe there is a power and comfort in every parable which comes to us only through a right understanding of it.

I have heretofore expressed some views concerning this parable, though very inadequately, but as the subject is now upon my mind I am impressed to present some suggestions with reference to it for the consideration of my brethren. The

view has been entertained by brethren whom I most highly esteem for their clear mindedness in the truth, that the five foolish virgins represent christians who have been neglectful of gospel duties, and who are punished by being denied admittance for a time into the joys of their Lord. While I believe that every child of God who sows to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, and that those christians who neglect this great salvation shall not escape the just recompense of reward, (Heb. ii. 1–3,) yet there are questions in my mind as to whether this parable is intended to show this distinction between the obedient and disobedient christian.

The principal thought now in my mind is the language at the head of this article. Is this ever the language of the Bridegroom to any of those who have been manifested as true members of the gospel church, which is his bride? Does Jesus speak thus to his people after he has given them the sweet assurance that he has loved them with an everlasting love? No matter how far astray they may have gone, no matter how disobedient they may have been, when he has given them grace to return in sorrow and true repentance, humbly begging to be received again into his favor, does he ever say to them, "Verily, I say unto you, I know you not"? Does he not always receive all of his returning prodigals graciously, mercifully, lovingly?

I have thought that the door which was opened to the Bridegroom and the wise virgins, and was closed to the foolish virgins, was the same as that spoken of in Luke xiii. 25, which evidently represents the separation between the legal and the gospel character: "Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are: depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity." Abraham and Isaac and Jacob are in this kingdom of God, and so are all the prophets; these to whom he says, "I know you not," were also in that same kingdom, in its legal state, but now *they are thrust out*; there is no place for them in the kingdom of God in its gospel state. (Luke xiii. 28.)

By the legal character I mean the one, now as well as in the former dispensation, who depends upon some work done by himself, or upon some reason existing in himself, for entrance into the favor of God; and by the gospel character I mean the one whose only hope is that Jesus died for him, and that he passed with the Bridegroom from under the condemnation of the law into the kingdom of his grace and glory.

Those who shall seek to enter in and shall not be able, are those who seek righteousness, not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law. (Romans ix. 32.)

All of those who are referred to in parables, and other forms of teaching in the New Testament, as legal, worldly, carnal professors, are presented for the admonition of the Lord's people, and also for their assurance and comfort, as they are thus shown the real difference between a fleshly and a spiritual hope.

Thus the people of God are often tried by questionings in their own souls as to whether they are not stony ground, thorny ground, or wayside hearers; or dissatisfied laborers, wanting more wages than was given to those who have worked less; or laborers in the legal field, contented with that work, like the elder son, and jealous of those who confess to having no good works, and yet claim that Jesus loves them; or like those who are knocking for entrance into the Lord's favor because of some merit they possess. The legal professor is not troubled with such doubts and questionings, but the christian is, and in all the dear Savior's teaching the living soul is made to feel the powerful but tender and loving admonition: "Take heed therefore how ye hear;" "Strive to enter in at the strait gate;" "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure."

This parable seems to present a proper sleeping time. No reproof is suggested because the virgins all slumbered and slept. It was night, the right time to sleep. But I do not understand how this could be applied to the gospel church; no time is allowed there for sleeping. The exhortation is, "Let us not sleep, as do others." Some may sleep, but it is disapproved of. Those who sleep are reproved. But here they *all* slept, and there is no word against it. The Bridegroom tarried; he had not yet come, therefore, it seems to me, the legal dispensation must be intended here. The virgins had gone forth to meet the Bridegroom. This would answer to the whole nation of Israel. They were promised the coming of the Savior, and they, as a nation, were all waiting for him, though not all waiting in faith. They were all recognized as heirs of that promise. "To them belonged the promises," and in this sense, as concerning the flesh, of which Christ was to come, the whole of Israel were as virgins waiting for the Bridegroom. It was a night dispensation, and they all slumbered and slept. They were all, to all appearance, alike. There was no way to tell which of them had oil in their vessels till the time should come to light their lamps. There was no way to distinguish between the righteous and the wicked while they were all under that fleshly covenant; all asleep. But when the Bridegroom was announced, when the gospel dispensation was ushered in, then they could discern. (Mal. iii. 18.)

The midnight is the turning point between two days. The announcement that the Bridegroom is coming is an assurance that the legal dispensation is at an end, and that the gospel morning has come. "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Now all are awake, and in the opening of gospel light all Israel is seen. But now also the difference is seen between the wise and the foolish, between the legal and the gospel character, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. The wise have the required oil for light, and they go in with the Bridegroom. He goes in but once to the marriage. There is no other going into the marriage. When Jesus arose from the dead and entered into his glory, he shut to the door between the legal and the gospel dispensation, and it is never to be opened again.

The Jews who are only Jews outwardly are now made manifest by not being ready to go in with the Bridegroom to the marriage, but seeking entrance on their own account. The wise virgins had oil with them because they were wise. The taking of oil did not make them wise, but was an evidence of true wis-

dom. Whatever the oil may represent, it was the gift of God. Grace had been given them. They had received that life which "is the gift of God," and "is the light of men." Theirs was that circumcision which is "of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." They represent, according to my understanding, those through all time who are Jews inwardly, not because of any merit in them or their works, but because of electing love and saving grace. These all go in with Jesus. To the end of time, as they are called by grace, they will all see that their entrance was in that one entrance of Jesus.

The other five took no oil because they were foolish. They had no oil. The lamps they had would not give gospel light. They did not see the Bridegroom at all. When they did come and ask for admission it was upon the legal plea of merit in themselves. They represent the Jews after the flesh. The Lord says to them: I have no pleasure in you, neither will I accept an offering at your hands. (Mal. i. 10.) Those whom I understand the foolish virgins to represent seek to enter in by the works of the law to-day as well as when Jesus was in the flesh. To them he says: "I know you not, whence ye are: depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity." Would he say that to those whom he has called by his grace, and whom he loves?

How often I have feared that to me the dear Savior would say—had already said, "I know you not." What searching of heart this fear has caused me; what searching of the word to see if there I could find any support for my hope that he was my Savior; what prayers and cries unto God for evidences of his love and favor. It has seemed sometimes that I had to cry, with Jonah, "I am cast out of thy sight," but I have still felt to look again toward his holy temple. If he should say to me, "I know you not;" "Depart from me," I could not feel to argue the case with him, could not show him any reason why he should open the door to such as I felt myself to be; not worthy of the least favorable notice from him. But O how this questioning, and this longing for his love and presence, have caused me to take heed how I heard, and to plead with him to "show me a token for good," to manifest himself as mine, and to guide me with his eye. Such deep soul-troubles are still mine at times, and many a dark night my soul is crying unto God, and thirsting for him. And so far the sweet answer has come, though it has at times appeared long delayed. The answer has never been to open the door, but to show it to me already open; to show me that I had been privileged to go in WITH the Bridegroom; to show me that I was accepted, not because of any kind of merit in me, but "accepted IN the Beloved."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May 5, 1905.

BOSTON, Mass., April 20, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have just been reading the epistle of James, and have found in it many rebukes which have humbled me before God; many things which have made me sad, not only for myself, but for God's church, or people, on earth. I think we are too liable, as a people, to talk much about our iniquities, bewail them, and perhaps sincerely mourn over them, and wish we were better; too liable to make so much of election that we do not find time to think upon whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report,

upon virtue and God-approved praise. We would give our bodies to be burned for the doctrine of original sin, but will go for days, for weeks, for months, without saying one word about Jesus Christ, or uttering a real prayer. This seems so strange to me. I am thinking of myself, of my own incomprehensible, often despised, yet God-created body and soul, more than that of others. Perhaps if I look again at the wonderful epistle I have just been reading I may be able to give you my line of thought this evening; not that this, my thought, is new or valuable, but because I have it, and feel like trying to tell you some of it.

James writes very clearly, there can absolutely be no misunderstanding what he has here expressed. I have read this letter often, yet to-night it affected me as never before. In the first place, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations. * * * Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." This is beautiful, but when I am in the midst of fiery trial I am too prone to despair; evil thoughts dart into my mind; I am confounded, broken in heart that I should have had them. I think, Am I not a child of damnation? Why, if I am a child of the pure and holy God, do I have such ungodly fancies and imaginations? I am brought to throw myself in abject humiliation before my heavenly Father, for such I cannot but think he is, and cry for his support, for his guidance, for his love to scatter the hosts of evil. I can see now how this does bring me nearer to God, but in these seasons of trouble we generally think only of the present distress. Other trials, too, bring my wandering thoughts to God: sorrows, sickness of friends, loss of cherished ones and disappointments. Then, too, I think trial is often to be found in our very happiness, our very joy, causing us to examine ourselves whether we recognize God's hand in it all. My college is justly precious to me; not so much the mere book learning I receive, as the associations I have formed and am forming day by day, yet I often lose sight of the fact that it is God's providence which has placed me here, which has enabled me to enjoy the companionship of good and earnest men and women, to read good books, to see beautiful paintings and buildings, to hear grand music. When I do think of these things as being gifts of God, I am overwhelmed with the sense of my own utter undeserving of them all; I am then, as in times of sorrow, bowed down in genuine prayer to God. I sometimes wonder what my life is for, to what purpose I came into this world. Is it that I may help some fellow-creature? Is it that I may show in very deed that I have been with Jesus, and to walk here on the earth showing out of a good conversation my works with meekness of wisdom? If so, I have not begun to live. I certainly do not believe that I was put upon the earth to do works of iniquity, yet if my very heart were open to the world I am afraid iniquity would be there.

James exhorts us to receive with meekness the engrafted word, but also to be doers of this word, and not hearers only; this is what I forget. I often hear a chapter or two read from God's word; I engage in singing and prayer; I sincerely think of these divine things at the time; an hour later I am perhaps angry at something, perhaps am in a flippant mood, and say things which, if not counted wicked, are certainly neither edifying or peaceable; I am carried away by my

own desires, ambitions, hopes and plans, and all thought of responsibility as one who professes to be a lover of God is far away from my mind, and I become engaged in the things of the world. I had a letter from a dear brother a week or two ago, in which he cautioned me against worldly-mindedness. His loving admonition struck home; far from wounding me, in the ordinary sense of the word, it inspired me with prayer to God against this sin. His tender words are good; I wish more of us had the love and courage to speak such things one to another. Wrong ideas, wrong deeds, carelessness, indifference, actual sins, are often said nothing about by those who cannot but see them in us, and who might be the cause of our seeing the error of our course. For that dear brother, whose letter I have mentioned, I have only an increased gratitude and love, and I hope his warning has not been ineffectual.

James speaks much of the tongue as a member which it is most important to have control over. "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, * * * this man's religion is vain." I do believe this; I do not think it applies to the expression of ill-temper alone, (often such manifestations come from conditions of pain and disease,) but also to the indiscriminate airing of our own dogmas, theories, doubts and evil imaginations. We (and I mean by this myself) set down as a fact indisputable that, for instance, every believer in the Lord should immediately be baptized, by immersion, by a Primitive Baptist preacher, forgetting that perhaps that person is as truly walking in newness of life as ever he will, but has not yet come to the full meaning of his salvation, hence cannot appreciate the beauty of its symbol. We theorize on the nature of the Godhead, or of the resurrection, or on the doctrine of predestination, or of good works. We proclaim our doubts to the world at large, and to God's church in particular, as to the authenticity of the Bible, or of a future existence, or of the reality of any religion under the sun. We gossip about our neighbors, we speculate as to their moral and religious characters, and perhaps unconsciously fill the town or county or world with slander.

I do not know why I write all these things to you, dear Elder Chick, you must think me presumptuous to do so. I certainly do not mean to be so, however, but this is part of what the reading of James to-night has put into my mind, and I have written on in my own thoughts, regardless, I am afraid, of propriety. Forgive me, dear brother, for I have not meant to show forth my "exceeding great" wisdom, of self-conceit.

I am getting along well in college, so far as mere recitation and study go. As to my spiritual welfare, it is with God, and not in my hands. It is good that it is not in my keeping, for I should utterly ruin it. My God has watched over me, leading me as ever in unknown paths, teaching me by repeated humiliations to look to him alone for guidance, for all. I know that without him I can do nothing, and with him all that may be required. I am such a little child though, in the things of God, repeated lessons seem but to be learned and then forgotten. The same stumbling-blocks are ever a snare to my feet, the same heights of pride I climb and fall from. It seems that if I grow in grace, it is only in that I daily need more of the grace and mercy of God, and realize this need. Pray for me as one of the least in God's flock, that the God of all power and love may lead

me in ways pleasing to him, and that I may glorify him in my body and my spirit, which are his. Remember me to your dear wife and children.

I am, I hope, your little sister in Christ,
RUTH KEENE.

FRANKLIN, Ohio, Feb. 22, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I send you a letter from a dear sister; it is in answer to one I wrote her. I feel it contains some rich experience from a spiritual-minded woman, and thought it would be a comfort to some of Zion's pilgrims. I shall take it as a favor to me if you will publish it when you can spare space in the SIGNS.

Yours in the love of the truth,
E. S. CULY.

DAYTON, Ohio, Feb. 8, 1905.

E. S. CULY—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—Your letter of January 2nd received, and was most highly appreciated. I assure you I read and reread it with tears of joy and much gladness of heart, yet with a deep sense of humility, realizing the goodness of the Lord in putting it in the minds of his dear saints to write such sweet messages of comfort to one so very unworthy as I feel myself to be. But I do know that every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is neither variableness or the shadow of turning, so I am constrained to give all the praise to the Lord, from whom all blessings flow. We are yet in the beginning of the year of 1905, and it will be as in former years; we are such short-sighted and finite creatures we cannot look into the future to know what is awaiting us; only he who knows the end from the beginning, and "the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," knows what is in store for us. Dear brother, I rejoice in the Sovereign who is all-powerful, and I trust he will reconcile me to his holy will concerning me in the days and weeks and months of the present year, as in former ones. I look back over my life and realize the many blessings bestowed upon me all along the pathway of life, although I have had some chastenings from his loving hand, and trust I was made to feel it was good for me to be afflicted. The apostle to the Hebrews in the twelfth chapter and eleventh verse (dare I say?) expresses my feelings when he says, "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." These words are sweet to me; so often they have been verified in my unworthy self.

If I am not mistaken it is fifty-seven years last May since I made a public profession of religion, and I fear many times I have not honored it as I desired to do. If I know my heart, I trust the dear Lord will keep me from bringing reproach upon his dear name and cause. I am so glad the Lord knoweth all our frames, that we are but dust. Jesus said to his disciples in the garden of Gethsemane, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Brother Culy, many of your exercises have been so in accord with my own mind that while reading them I was made to say, Brother Culy has a christian experience, if I know what a christian experience is, and I was made to rejoice in the blessedness of our having the same Teacher and the same lessons, the burden of sin and the great need of a crucified Savior, and when he manifested himself to us as our Savior our heavy bur-

den of sin was removed; we were filled with praise and thanksgiving; his love filled our hearts to overflowing, and we felt like telling to all around what a dear Savior we had found. I continued in this comfortable frame of mind for some time, and expected to remain in that state, but how disappointed I was when to my sorrow the suggestion was made that I might be mistaken. O, I thought, it cannot be. I got the hymn book, and the first verse my eyes rested upon were the very same words that came so sweetly to my mind when I was relieved of my burden of sin, and what a thrill of joy it brought again to my doubting heart. The words of Scripture found in Col. iii. 3, 4: "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory," bring sweetness and assurance to my poor heart that the Lord has been gracious to me, and I am made to love and trust and abide in him, that he will even while I journey down the hill of life bring me in green pastures and beside still waters, and if I should stray away from his loving care he will restore my soul.

Dear brother, you see how scattering my letter is, but just for a moment or two I have felt the presence of the Savior in my poor heart; my eyes are overflowing with tears of joy; it fills my soul with love to God and to the dear saints. How long the loving Master will permit me to remain in this delightful frame of mind I cannot tell; it may be only for a short season. These foretastes come at his bidding, so when they are withheld it is all for our good and, I trust, to glorify him. Our lives, both temporal and spiritual, are a checkered scene of light and shade; it has always been so, and will continue to be the same while time lasts. But the apostle called the afflictions of the people of God light afflictions, 2 Cor. iv. 17: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." May we be "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."—1 Peter i. 5.

I must close. I hope sister Culy has recovered her usual health; how much I would enjoy being in the company of you both. How blessed it is for brethren to associate together and help bear each other's burdens when our thoughts are mutual. How pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.

In conclusion I must confess that my answer to your much appreciated letter seems to fall so far short of what I would like it to be that I feel diffident about sending it. I have written as ideas have presented themselves, hoping you will excuse all mistakes. No doubt you will notice the infirmities of age by my unsteady hand, but I must not murmur or complain; the Lord is very kind to me. Dear brother and sister, remember me in your prayers.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) PARTHENIA TAYLOR.

PRATT CITY, Ala., Dec., 1904.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—The subject of the unity of Christ and the church is a great mystery, and it is difficult to explain in a way to save ourselves from misrepresentations. Sometimes it seems plain to me, and then the fear comes that I am not one of the heirs, and I get in doubt and trouble. Paul has given us about as plain an exegesis of the subject as any of the inspired writers, and anything outside of inspiration is of little

value in spiritual instruction. Paul makes an illustration of the first man as the figure of the second. He shows that all the natural family were identified with him in the creation, in receiving of the law, and the transgression. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." "By the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation." "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Adam must have been the head and father of all mankind, all were in him, and blessed with all natural blessings, and freely ordained to be the inhabitants of this earth. God "hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation," and to this day it is witnessed that all are in the possession of these earthly blessings by reason of the relationship they bear to the first man. We are legal heirs not only to natural life and the fruits of the earth, but also to sin and death, and to return to dust. This is denied by many, but it is too plain, it cannot be refuted.

Paul shows next that all the people of God are related to Christ so closely that they were all one with him before time, and were all blessed "with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he [God] hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, * * * having predestinated us unto the adoption of children;" and they were all identified with Christ in all that he did while he was here in the world, and since he returned to the Father in heaven. "By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." "By the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." It must be by reason of our relationship to Christ that we are heirs to all spiritual blessings that we shall enjoy in this life and also in eternity. We all know that our natural bodies were not in Christ, neither were they in Adam, but all the natural germs by which we are generated and born of the flesh and made manifest as his children were in him, and our natural life was in him, and it has been transmitted from generation to generation down to the present day, and will be to the end. There is neither Jew or Greek, neither bond or free, neither male or female, but what were one in Adam, and all shared his natural estate. Our natural bodies were not in Christ, but the Spirit by which we are regenerated and born again, born of God, and made manifest as his children, was in Christ from all eternity, and we all had one eternal life in him, and that life is given direct from him to us: "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." Paul says we are predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ; and he says, "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption." As there is only "one body and one Spirit," I conclude that the spirit of the new birth is the Spirit of adoption, and all who receive that Spirit are raised from death unto life, from darkness to light, from under the law to grace, from the kingdom of darkness and Satan into the kingdom of Christ, and as we are waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body, we shall be adopted from earth into heaven.

The first man, Adam, multiplied, according to the command of God, and he spread out into all parts of the earth; but with Christ it is different, instead of spreading out he was gathering in: "By

one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." So "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus," and Jesus says, "I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." This is a complete and perfect union, ye are complete in him, which is the Head of the body. Some contend that there is only a covenant relationship between Christ and his people, but I have thought that the covenant that God made with his Son, and that which he makes with his people, was only an evidence of the relationship that already existed. God made a covenant with, and promises to Abraham, but his people existed in him before the promise was made, and the promise of God insured to him the bringing forth of that people, and the covenant of God with Christ was the same. The covenant did not create the relationship; and the covenant God makes with his people in the new birth is an evidence of the relationship that existed long before: God was the Father of his people forever.

I will leave the subject for the present, and trust to your better judgment whether to publish or not.

Yours in hope of life eternal,

P. J. POWELL.

PRENTICE, Ill., Jan. 1, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—Through the kindness of friends we have the pleasure of reading the precious SIGNS, the pages of which are filled with good thoughts and truth.

As we are entering upon the new year we can look back over the year just passed and feel thankful that the Lord has blessed us, and has been mindful of us in many ways.

Elder John L. Scott is still our pastor at Yatesville church, called Union. At our meeting to-day we had the pleasure of hearing Elder J. B. Dobbs preach Jesus, the same blessed truth, the precious doctrine of God's love and mercy, with no room for conditional salvation, which, if this was the case, would certainly leave me out, as all work of mine would fall short of glory. It was a season of rejoicing, a good meeting indeed, and we were all made to feel that it was good to be there. Blessed are they that know the joyful sound.

People find fault with the Old Baptists, and say hard things against them, but it matters not what the world says; "If God be for us, who can be against us?" When I joined the little band at Union church I felt there could be no more trouble in this life; but this is not the case. I often find myself out of the way, my thoughts are often gone astray, but the Lord's arm is not shortened. It is still indeed a pleasure to me to meet with the loved ones who can feel each other's sigh. We are commanded to speak often one to another, and help bear each other's burdens. I cannot visit with the world with as much comfort as I can with Old School Baptists. So many hate the doctrine of predestination, this is however but a fulfillment of the Bible. I cannot live to please the world, neither can I live to please myself; if so, I would live a blameless life, free from sin, prejudice and all uncleanness. There are seasons of trouble, sorrow, doubting, cast down but not destroyed; depressed but not forsaken.

On the fifth day of last August it pleased the Lord to remove from our midst my beloved niece, and while the tender cords of love were so dear, so binding to this sweet girl, I was made to say, "Thy will be done." When the sudden news came, and I went to her home and looked on the

sweet but lifeless form of one so young, so beautiful, so fair, the sunlight of a happy home, surrounded with all the comforts of life, I felt this was too great a sorrow for me to bear; but God says, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." "I will not leave you comfortless." She has gone where there is no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither can there be any more pain. May the blessed Redeemer give his love to the dear parents and the lonely brother, and comfort them as none other can, in this their deepest sorrow. It is sweet to trust in him whose promises are sure.

My mother is now past seventy-four years, and for more than fifty years has been a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. When I was a child it was a pleasure to me to go to meetings with her, and see dear old sister Stout, and sister Sinclair, and sister Harding, who would ride miles to church on horseback. Sister Stout and sister Sinclair, along with many others, have since been called home, but there are still many thus clinging to the same faith, sitting at the feet of Jesus, and inquiring in his temple.

On the third Sunday of last June, the church met with Grandma Dunlap, a dear old mother in Israel, who has passed her three score and ten, and for many years has loved and still loves the doctrine of God our Savior. We were favored with two excellent sermons by Elder Scott, which grandma enjoyed. It is a comfort and a satisfaction to me to meet with the loved ones at Union church: after days and weeks of busy toil to lay down the cares of life and hear them talk of Jesus. I would not regret my name being on Union church book only from the feeling sense of my unworthiness. I ask myself many times, Why is it that I, a poor, weak worm of the dust, am permitted to sit together with them? Should I be excluded from among them it would certainly destroy my happiness forever, and rob me of much comfort.

"Let the sweet hope that thou art mine,
My life and death attend;
Thy presence through my journey shine,
And crown my journey's end."

May he guide, direct and keep me in the way of peace and truth. We know not what is before us, but we hope that this may be a pleasant year to all, and that comfort and peace be with each and every one. May the publication of the dear SIGNS ever continue.

Yours in hope,

FRANKIE S. McDANIEL.

ELGIN, Oregon, Oct. 1, 1904.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I send you the inclosed letter from Elder I. N. Newkirk, by request of Elder J. P. Allison.

Yours in gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

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1 JOHN IV. 23.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER ALLISON:—Your request of me is a great one, involving the history of nineteen centuries, for there have been many antichrists. John said, verse second, "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God," and then he laid down the infallible rule by which the spirits may be tried, whether they be of God. The reason given is, "Because many false prophets are gone out into the world." But notwithstanding the many false prophets this ample rule is sufficient to try them all, for the Spirit of God is always true to all the divine attributes of the God of truth in the perfection of his holy nature as Father, Son and Holy Ghost; and whatever doctrine militates against this unity of wisdom, power and holiness, proceeds from an opposite source.

The trial of the spirits consists in a comparison of the doctrines and commandments of men with the doctrine of God our Savior, which finds its only true expression in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in grace and truth. "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Hence the standard of measurement or balance in the true sanctuary is recorded in the third verse: "And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God." No other rule is needful when this one is faithfully and judiciously applied. We have now the broad platform, Jesus Christ and him crucified, in the foregoing premise as the only foundation of the sinner's hope, and to detract anything from this foundation comes up from the spirit of error, or antichrist, and from the mouth of the false prophet, including all ungodliness in all ages. This false prophet, or man of sin, after the working of Satan is multiform in all his manifestations, and therefore it is said, "Many false prophets are gone out into the world."

All religious falsehoods propagated in the name of Christ proceed from the spirit of antichrist, under whatever disguise may be assumed by the teachers of heretical doctrines. It matters not about the profession of superior piety or holiness, it matters not though they profess to be wiser than Daniel, meeker than Moses, more righteous than Job, and to know whereof they affirm, being personally righteous and sinless in the flesh, professing to have done great things in the name of the Lord; nevertheless insomuch as they detract by their professed knowledge, goodness and sanctity from the glory of Christ as the Savior of sinners, they are antichrist, denying the Father and the Son.

"Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." Were no other words spoken by the angel at the conception of Jesus Christ in the flesh, at the dawn of the kingdom of righteousness? Yes, he said, "That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." He was made of a woman, made under the law, that we might be redeemed and secure the adoption of sons, being born again of incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. Thus we are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ, to an inheritance which is undefiled, and which fadeth not away, and which is reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. This, brother and sister, is the doctrine of God, and not of antichrist; giving, as it does, all glory to God and to the Lamb forever. The resources of the children of God through the Spirit spring from the immortal Fountain, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who is come in the flesh, and in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." John further says that this is the true life that came down from the Father; therefore the saints are heirs of God through Christ.

For four thousand years the world groped in darkness, without a ray of the true light, until Jesus Christ had come in the flesh, being the only begotten of the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness or shadow of turning. Not a man was there who could penetrate into nature's darkness and hail the rising Sun of righteousness till Jesus Christ, the seed of the woman, came in the flesh to redeem the sons of Zion and purify them by the shedding of his own precious blood, by

which he obtained eternal redemption for them, having entered once into the holy place, an offering and sacrifice pleasing to God. The law of Moses could only condemn the sinner, to the glory of God's justice and judgment. Thus the letter killeth. The sword of divine judgment fell on the Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh for his people, even as his name implied, for "he shall save his people from their sins." This gives the true status of Christ to his people, and of his people to him, in this world of flesh and blood, as that of sinners saved by grace. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation." Whatever spirit teaches otherwise is that spirit of antichrist which ye have heard should come into the world, and is even now in the world.

Now, my dear old brother and sister, let us together fall down before the throne of righteousness and judgment, the throne of God our Father, at the feet of Jesus, and confess our sins, never daring to offer another plea than that Jesus Christ has died and risen again in behalf of poor, perishing sinners like ourselves.

Your brother,

I. N. NEWKIRK.

ROANOKE, Texas, April 1, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—BELOVED BROTHER IN BONDS OF FELLOWSHIP:—Our subscription having expired some time since, together with that of our mother, Mrs. A. D. Bourland, Sr., we will send inclosed money order for four dollars, for which kindly give us a continuation of our old family paper for another year. May the Lord be pleased to bless you as editor, together with those who contribute to its columns (as of old) with that deep spirit of meekness and humility that so fittingly becometh the followers of Christ. If we have a correct knowledge of our experience and the teachings of the Scriptures, we are made to confess, like one of old, that "salvation is of the Lord;" that "there is none other name [Christ] under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved;" that man is fallen, depraved, condemned and dead, and not only dead, but twice dead, and plucked up by the roots, and nothing short of that full and complete atonement which was wrought on Calvary for all the heirs of promise will ever be able to extricate one of Adam's fallen children from the powers of that death. We learn from the Scriptures that in the fall of man his mind was so perverted that he put light for darkness, and darkness for light; sweet for bitter, and bitter for sweet; that he has eyes and sees not, ears and hears not, heart and understands not. We are told again that his throat is an open sepulchre; with his tongue he has used deceit: the poison of asps is on his lips: misery and destruction are in his way, and the way of peace he has not known. This, my dear brother, I understand to be the universal condition of the unregenerate: they have together all become unprofitable. There is none that doeth good, no, not one; but God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even while dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved) not of works, lest any man boast. For ye are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, that God hath before ordained that ye should walk in them. Then it is by the free, unmerited, sovereign grace that poor, sinful worms of the dust like we are permitted to meet the Lord in peace, and hear that welcome plaudit, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." O

what a blessed thought, that after we are through with the sinful conflicts of time, and it is ours to go hence, (if indeed the Lord has been gracious to us) that we have an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

With love and christian fellowship for you and all the household of faith, I remain your unworthy brother,

W. S. BOURLAND.

KELLY CORNERS, N. Y.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Some time past I received from our dear, aged brother Travis the following letter, which speaks for itself in regard to the church, the preaching of the gospel and the worth of the SIGNS to him, which, if you see fit, you can publish in the SIGNS at a convenient time.

J. D. HUBBELL.

STAMFORD, N. Y.

DEAR ELDER HUBBELL:—You said to me the last time I saw you, I must remember you. I have love and fellowship for you, and the doctrine you preach; it would be impossible for me to forget you. I often think if I could pass away and be at rest it would be better, but I have great reason to be thankful that it is as well with me as it is. At my home in Roxbury, my daughter-in-law is good and kind, and here in Stamford I have as good and kind a daughter as any man ever had. I have all the care, attention and respect I could wish.

I do not forget when your meeting days come; whether I will ever be there again will be as the Lord wills. I do not forget when Elder Slauson's regular appointment comes. I have been there when he has preached at different times when there were not more than eight or ten present, when I have felt that the Lord gave me an ear to hear and heart to understand. If I should attempt to tell of the love I have for him for the truth's sake I should fail for words to express it. I know salvation is of the Lord, both in time and eternity.

All the preaching I have had since I left Roxbury has come through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; I do know I love the doctrine it advocates; I receive it regularly. Often in one number there seems enough to pay the cost of the whole year. The people in other churches are getting waked up here; they have held meetings every evening for three or four weeks; whether their lord is awake or not they are warming themselves with sparks of their own kindling. I have no doubt but that all the chosen people of God will be gathered in, because they are already saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation, world without end. I do not believe the wisdom of this world, nor all the institutions of this world, will add one, neither will the opposition take one away. But the question with me is, Am I an heir? When I look to myself I know that I am a poor, sinful worm of the dust, and I do not see anything to encourage me, so if I have any righteousness, it must be of Christ. I know there can nothing transpire to frustrate or disturb the foreknowledge of the Giver of all things, and I have a desire to be reconciled to God's will, yet I find another mind that would like to have so many things different from what they are. I am a wonder to myself, yet there are times when I can read the Bible and hear with some understanding, which gives me comfort and hope.

I have been thinking of late about the ten virgins; five were wise and five foolish. If I am a virgin, I am one of the foolish. If I ever received anything spiritual, it must have been one talent.

If I have been born of the Spirit, I have also been left to myself often, with love for this world and things of the world, and I have more fault to find with myself than any one else. So without righteousness or goodness of my own of which to tell you, my faith and hope rests on free, sovereign, unmerited grace. I feel that time is near to a close with me; I have lived almost eighty-five years, and sinned against a holy God every day of my life, in deed or some other way, yet he has fed and clothed me and given me every breath that I have drawn. At times I think it is enough to rouse up a dead sinner, to contemplate the mercy of God to him. I read we are chosen in the furnace of affliction, and I have proved the truth of it.

I am a poor writer, excuse all mistakes. Remember me to your wife, and in your petitions at the throne of grace.

NATHAN J. TRAVIS.

SEDALIA, MO., Jan. 29, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—I have never been a subscriber to the SIGNS, but having been given some copies by a dear friend, Elder John Teague, I read them, and found much comfort in them, and I have often thought I would like to write to the SIGNS, because it seems that the writers know the things that I know, and on receiving two copies of the paper through the mail, sent by some friend, I felt I must write and thank that friend for them, for I did appreciate them so much, and I do thank God that he puts it into the hearts of his people to do such kind things. As I have often felt prompted to write, I have also felt a delicacy in doing so, for I am a member of the Missionary Baptist Church, and was afraid I would not be welcomed in the columns of the SIGNS. But notwithstanding where my name is, if I know anything about myself I am one that loves the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. O, but to know that truth, is my prayer. I sometimes think if I only knew the truth, and knew just what God wants me to do, how thankful I would be. And then, in such a short time, I find myself doing things that I know are wrong. Then I think, What would be the use of God revealing more truth to me, when I make such poor use of what I have? When I do things that I know are wrong it seems to me like willful sin. Then I take my Bible and read in Hebrews x. what a fearful thing willful sin is, and I am filled with fear and sorrow. But this does not keep me from doing the same things over and over again. O what a strange creature I must be. What is the matter with me? Do I not strive hard enough against sin? O that I could always praise God in all that I say and do, but I am so forgetful, so prone to wander. Let things be as they may with me, God knows best; he can work, and none can hinder, and I am so thankful for that.

I leave this to your better judgment.

From a friend and a brother, I hope,

ELMER D. BOTTS.

[THIS dear friend has now become a subscriber to the SIGNS, and we hope he may be blessed in the reading of it in all time to come. His experience is not a strange one to the household of faith. It was Paul's testimony that he could not do the good he would, and the evil that he would not that he did. Many children of God have been sorely perplexed by the warfare within, and it has been only when given the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, that they have been able to overcome in the conflict. For by the word they learn that this war-

fare is peculiar to a believer, and to no one else. May the blessed Lord lead our friend still further into the truth, for the truth alone makes free. His true place is with that people who have experienced the same things through which he is being led. To him, and to all who feel as he has expressed himself in the above letter, we would say that it is to such ones that the blessed Lord has said, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."—ED.]

AUGHRIM, Ontario, Canada, Feb. 13, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—One more year has passed away, and it becomes not only my duty but privilege to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, and as I have become very dilatory in corresponding privately with my dear brethren, I wish in this way to let them know that I am yet in this time state.

Not long since our dear pastor, Elder Carnell, took as a text, "Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building," and he seemed to enjoy liberty, and spoke very well. Since that my mind has been led to contemplate the wondrous glory, love and mercy of that one whom we humbly hope is our Husbandman. None but the God of Israel, who is the God of the whole earth, could ever make such a precious husbandry, such a glorious house, out of such dead and lifeless soil, yea, worse than lifeless soil, for we were enemies to God by wicked works, but you hath he quickened, who were dead. O what a wonder-working God, that brings life out of death, light out of darkness, love out of hatred, the fruits of righteousness where there were only the fruits of unrighteousness. Well may we exclaim, Who is a God like unto our God? for he not only works these wonderful changes, but he also keeps his husbandry (his house) perfect; for it is a glorious husbandry, a glorious house, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; kept by the power of God unto salvation, for he commands, saying, Bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth, for I have redeemed them. I see by the writers in the SIGNS that the above command is being fulfilled, for they do come from far, yea, from the ends of the earth, for they were the children of wrath, even as others; they were without God and without hope in the world. They, like the messengers of John, come to me and tell me in that wonderful way that declares the honor of God, what things they see and hear, that the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. This is why I love the writers in the SIGNS, and pray for their prosperity. The only enduring comfort that I have is the company and love of the children of God. May the love of God rest upon you one and all, is my heart-felt desire.

Your unworthy brother,

R. CASE.

MARCH 19, 1905.

MR. H. C. KER—DEAR SIR:—I have just been reading your letter in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and as the Scripture you quote came to my mind this winter in a different way than I had ever thought of it before, I felt drawn to tell you about it, hoping it might comfort you a little in your darkness.

"The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." I have heard that the inner prison into which Paul was cast was a dark, miry, filthy place, not fit for

a human creature to be put in, and I suppose if he could have had a small electric light in there which was gradually increased in power, it would not have made any difference in the prison, only to show what a terrible place it was. So in your experience, you would not know that you were cold and indifferent if it were not for the light. John said, "The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."

It was a comfort to me to read your letter, for I have had a little of that experience, and I often question if I ever have known what the love of God is.

I do not know now whether I have written this for your consolation or for my own glory, but I trust it can do no greater harm than to humiliate me.

A READER OF THE "SIGNS."

MANORKILL, N. Y., April 10, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have been pleased in hearing you preach, and in reading your editorials, and my mind is inclined to talk with you a little this morning by way of the pen; yet I fear to write, for my mind is dull generally, and especially so at this time. This you will see, if this letter reaches you. My mind has pondered much of late upon Hebrews x. 26, 27. Do the words, "If we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins," mean that such an one shall never be forgiven, and he be as one that has never been born of God? And does the language in verse 27, "but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries," signify a present destruction of the comfort and fellowship of his brethren, or does it signify the destruction of both soul and body in hell? I have thought it meant as Paul said elsewhere, to deliver such an one unto Satan, that he might learn not to blaspheme, or for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of Christ. In connection see Matt. xvi. 22, 23. The point is, did the Savior intend to rebuke Peter in the same manner that he would an unregenerate man or Satan, or was it the act of the fleshly mind, which he designated as Satan, when he said, "Get thee behind me, Satan," or when he said to Peter, "Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice"? Again, we read that all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, save the sin against the Holy Ghost.

Now if you shall be so led, will you give us an editorial upon the above? I am in fellowship with the editorials and the writings of the brethren generally in the SIGNS. I frequently read an article that cheers me very much, and want to say, Fight on, faithful soldiers, you will soon be discharged, the war will be ended and the bounty enlarged. Most of the time I am enjoying the smiles of my Savior, and with Jonah rejoice that salvation is of the Lord. How good it is to feel that we have a Friend that loves us at all times, and who is good when he gives, inexpressibly good, nor less so when he denies, and crosses from his sovereign hand are blessings in disguise. My mind is dull and weak, yet at times I can exclaim when I look back over the way in which the Lord has led me, For thou art my lamp, O Lord! The Lord will lighten my darkness. For by my God have I run through a troop and leaped over a wall. Now if you can get at what I mean, and discourse a little upon it, all will be right, and if not, all will also be right.

Your brother in hope of the gospel,

D. S. ELLIOTT.

(See editorial reply on page 370.)

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1905.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

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REPLY TO BROTHER D. S. ELLIOTT.

(See communication on page 369.)

BEFORE trying to write upon the questions proposed by our brother, we will first arrange them in order.

First, he asks, Does Hebrews x. 26, 27, mean that such an one shall never be forgiven, and he be as one that has never been born of God?

Second, Does the language in verse 27 signify a present destruction of the comfort and the fellowship of the brethren, or does it signify the destruction of both soul and body in hell?

Third. In Matthew xvi. 22, 23, did the Savior intend to rebuke Peter in the same way as he would an unregenerate man, or Satan himself, or was it the act of his fleshly mind which the Savior designated as Satan?

Fourth. Our brother refers to the Scripture in Matthew xii. 31, 32: All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men except the sin against the Holy Ghost.

We desire to say first of all that we are not unmindful of the fact that good and able expounders of the word of God have differed very much in their views of these different portions of the word, therefore we would tread softly in presenting such thoughts as have seemed to us to be involved in these Scriptures. Still further, we are not unmindful that as all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, so the same Spirit that inspired the word must illumine our minds as we read, else we shall not understand the word. Natural things may be understood by natural means, and by natural minds delving into their meaning, but spiritual things must be understood by the mind that is spiritual, and that not by digging and delving, but as the subject of grace is led into it by experience. We may grasp the force of the language used in the Scripture, and yet fail to feel the power of that word. This we need above all other things. Still we ought to carefully examine any given Scripture with its connection, and we may be sure that the truth when made alive to the soul will not be opposite to the letter of the word, but in full harmony with it. If what we think to be our experience shall differ from the word written in the Bible, our experience is not then an experience of the grace of God, but arises from some other cause.

A child of God may differ in his understanding of some portion of the word, while at the same time he is in full experimental fellowship with the brother from whom he differs. One may have what is the real meaning of some Scripture in his heart, and yet not know that it is so until the Lord sends to him some messenger who shall tell him, as the high priest Eli told the little Samuel, that the voice which spoke to him was the voice of the Lord. We all need to have our understanding opened again and again that we may understand the Scriptures. Because of this the children of God do differ in their understanding of the word, while yet each one has that word written in his heart. It is good to remember this when difference occurs regarding the sig-

nification of any portion of the word. Perhaps this long preface is unnecessary here, but we felt like giving expression to this line of thought as we have done.

Now to reply to our brother's questions in the order in which they occur.

First. It has never been our understanding that the words in Hebrews x. 26, 27, mean that such an one is not a saved sinner, and being a saved sinner, that he shall cease to be so and be as one never born of God. It will be noticed by the careful Bible reader that the special thing of which the apostle was speaking in the verses before this language, was an exhortation not to forsake the assembling of themselves together. Then right after this he uses the words of the text, implying plainly that to forsake the assembling of ourselves together would come under the head of sinning willfully or voluntarily. How many seem to think that not to attend the meetings of the brethren is a small matter. How many will allow very little things to hinder them from fulfilling this solemn obligation. But the apostle says it is willful or voluntary sinning to do so. Of course there are other ways in which voluntary sin may rest upon us. Now for such sin there remains no more sacrifice, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. The words in the connection are very solemn. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses, and the children of God who sin willingly, and so tread under foot the blood of the covenant, &c., shall meet more severe chastisement still. Now, in response especially to our brother's question, we will say expressly that the text does not in our judgment mean that such an one shall lose his title in the kingdom of God. Notice that under Moses' law none but an Israelite could suffer such punishment as it inflicted. When one died under that law he did not cease to be an Israelite and become a Canaanite, he was still by name and by nature a Jew. This law was not for any Gentile nation, but for the chosen people of God. So under the gospel no such penalty is annexed to unbelievers, unregenerate men are not under this law at all, and as an Israelite who transgressed and suffered the penalty did not therefore cease to be an Israelite, so the children of God do not cease to be the children of God, though they willfully sin. But there is judgment, fiery judgment, which comes to them, and comes to no others, and it comes to them because they are the saved of the Lord, and is intended not to devour them, but the adversaries. They are saved, while the adversaries, their willful sins of heart, mind and life, are devoured. These are the things which oppose God and godliness in them. The wood, hay and stubble are burned up, but they are saved, yet so as by fire, as Paul says in Corinthians. What child of God is there who has not felt the burnings of this judgment when he has transgressed? To feel this judgment is a mark of salvation, and that of God. How blessed that it is the adversaries who are devoured. The true believer wants above all things that his transgressions should be devoured. In his willful sinning he comes to realize that there is no further atonement; Christ shall not die again; his death has performed all the work of final redemption; but still there must be judgment against transgression, and this he feels in his own conscience, and the result is shame and self-condemnation. Then the prayer will arise, "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God."

Now, in reply to the second question, we need only say that it cannot mean final destruction of both soul and body in hell. The language is not, There remaineth judgment and fiery indignation for such, but "a certain fearful looking for" of these things; and again, it is not said that the transgressor is devoured, but the adversaries. This is a very broad difference indeed. No doubt many precious souls who have felt the bitterness of transgression (as did David in the time when Nathan the prophet came to him, and he was convicted of his sin, and cried out, "I haved sinned,") have read these words in Hebrews with despair well night reigning in their hearts because they had not come to see clearly these two things, viz: "a certain fearful looking for of judgment," and that it is the adversaries, and not the transgressor, that are to be devoured. It is all, as it appears to us, presented in Psalm li. Read this Psalm, and we will see what the fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation signifies to the transgressor. Paul could say elsewhere "But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak." And, "We are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." These words also will apply to the subject of which we are speaking. Our God reserves the wicked to final destruction, but here he visits his people with chastisement and convinces them of sin, and through the sorrow of the heart he brings them to repentance, and then to a sense of what free and full forgiveness means. He does not deal so with others. He corrects his people, he destroys his enemies. The language is plain when carefully read. May some troubled soul be led to see that it is not himself, but his adversaries who shall be destroyed.

In reply to the third question concerning Peter and the Lord's words, "Get thee behind me, Satan," addressed to him, this has long seemed to us to be true. Peter had just said to the Lord that it must not be that he should go up to Jerusalem, and suffer, and die, as the Master had told him. Now the Savior in reply to this said, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offense unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Literally, the word Satan signifies an adversary, and here this disciple had been opposing as far as his own will and words could oppose, the very purpose for which the Father had sent his Son into the world, viz: to die and be raised up again, that thus his chosen ones should be redeemed and saved. To die upon the cross was the very purpose for which Christ came. It was the holy will of God that he must die to save his people from their sins. Now Peter, in his ignorance, puts himself in opposition to this perfect will of God by saying this shall not be unto thee. Was he not unwittingly an adversary to God indeed? God said, Jesus must die, Peter said, he must not die. Now Jesus was in full accord with the Father in all his purpose of grace and mercy, and for this end was he born, and to this end he said, Thy will be done, at the last. Therefore, when Peter so hastily speaks forth the horror of his heart in this manner, the heart of the blessed Redeemer rejects this counsel, and bids Peter to cease to tempt him. It was Peter who was thus rebuked, but it was because he was now an adversary to the will of God, and Jesus would have nothing to do with such opposition. It is my meat to do the will of my Father, he said. That is, this is my joy and strength; all that opposes God's will must be placed behind me. As

our brother has expressed the matter in his question, it was the will and act of the fleshly mind in Peter which was rebuked. But as Peter here was actuated by this fleshly mind, he was himself addressed as an adversary and rebuked. Peter's language was that of love to his Master, love which could not brook that suffering and death should come to him; but still it was natural, fleshly love, else he would have said at once, "Thy will, O God be done." Human nature, at its best, is opposed to God. This is one lesson which we are taught in this portion of the sacred word.

As regards the fourth question concerning the sin against the Holy Ghost, we will say that while there have been several different views presented by many brethren, yet we do not know that we have been fully satisfied with any, and we do not feel like claiming that such thoughts as we have cover the ground. But one or two things seem plain to our mind. First, it seems sure to us that no one who has ever committed this sin, will or can ever be troubled about it. David had sinned most grievously; but yet there came a time of trouble, when the Lord wrought conviction in his heart by the words of Nathan, and sincere confession and pardon were accorded him. His sorrow for his sin was a manifest evidence that he had not sinned against the Holy Ghost. Once it was our lot to call to see one who was in deepest distress of mind because he feared that he had committed this unpardonable sin. We never witnessed greater evidences of bitter grief and despair, and we felt fully justified in saying this one thing, viz: that sorrow for sin, and the fear that it was unpardonable, was full evidence that this sin had not been committed. Whatever this sin might be, he that was guilty of it would never know sorrow or repentance for it. Second, it has seemed to us that the very thing which the enemies of Christ had charged upon him, viz: that he cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils, was that sin at that time, and for them. If any man can be guilty of that sin now, it would seem that when men deny the work of the Holy Ghost in the new birth, and attribute all to natural endeavor, or natural excitement, to say the least of it, they come very near to the same sin of which those carnal Jews were guilty. It is also our understanding that our God will never suffer any whom he has chosen to redemption to thus sin. Also, we feel like saying that it is not in the province of finite man, limited as he is in knowledge and judgment, to say of any man that he has committed this sin. God knows, we do not know. We have also thought that the expression of John, "There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it," presents something of the same truth. Our God will not suffer his dear redeemed ones to thus transgress. This is but our own imperfect view. We feel like treading softly along these things, and we would not be understood as speaking positively. But we have made these suggestions, hoping that they might afford some consolation to some feeble, doubting one.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905, &c.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(WRITTEN BY JOHN T. WALKER.)

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the church at Harford, Harford Co., Md., May 17th, 18th and 19th, 1905, to the brethren composing this association sendeth greeting.

WE are glad to have this, another opportunity to greet you, and may our meeting together be one of peace, love and joy; where there is peace in a family gathered together, who have been separated for a time, love and joy will flow from one to another, and this is one of the fruits of our annual meetings. How many times have we met those of like precious faith at these associations, whom we have not seen since a year before, and our hearts have been made glad and we have rejoiced together and given thanks to our heavenly Father, who has brought us together again as one family. Yet we are mindful at these times that some with us are deprived of that joy that once was theirs. The past year has brought them trials and sorrow; some have had to pass through dark and lonely paths, "for 'tis decreed that most must walk the darkest paths alone;" the joys that once they knew seem to have gone forever, then they cry out with the psalmist, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." What a precious state to be in when we are conscious of One who can restore to us something we have once enjoyed; that One is able even to the uttermost to save and restore; how good to be found at a place where the family meet; when each member can hear of the joys and sorrows of each other and when they can rejoice with those who do rejoice and weep with those who weep. In these gatherings we have the gospel preached to us, and what case is there that there is not a balm for? "Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?" Truly we have found balm, and the good Physician has often bound up our wounds, and this he will do again. How often have we heard from the Lord's sent servants that, although we may be passing through deep waters they shall not overflow; what encouragement have we received at such times, and soon realize that he has restored unto us the joy of his salvation. We in a natural sense wish for joy, and are not content until it is attained; how much more are those who have tasted of the joys of God's salvation? How often are we made to cry out in prayer to God for this joy, joy we have lost on account of our sinful natures. We have wandered into the desert of sin, have grown cold in our desires for those things we once loved; we are conscious of the loss of that joy, yet are so cold we do not then desire it; how strange not to feel the need of it, of something that has given us joy beyond measure. The consciousness of the fact that we do not now feel interested in these joys, teaches us that it is not of ourselves, for we can do nothing, not even desire any good thing. Sometimes we feel the need, but no desire to seek it; sometimes the desire given, but cannot ask for it; when this joy is restored it is given us at times unheralded; sometimes "as a still small voice," at another "like a mighty rushing wind;" but come as it may, we have been prepared to receive it. Just before the dawn, when we are in the deepest distress, when we are made to cry out, Where are the joys that once I felt when first I loved the Lord? when the joys of thy salvation are restored, then all things become new, even earthly things look brighter, all nature seems to be rejoicing, "the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land."

"They that feared the Lord spake often one to another." This should be a feature of our meeting together, especially at these associations, for it is said, "And the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." We can never tell but there may be some little one among us who is anxious that some crumb may fall that will give them hope, some encouragement. Some of us know how fearful we were lest we had quite mistook the way, yet how our hearts were made glad when we heard that for such as they the Savior died. Brethren, let us be very tender with these little ones, these seeking, trembling, doubting ones; you know how glad we are made when we see these lambs totter to the fold, fearful if they belong there, doubting if they are numbered with the lambs of Christ's fold. Let us, shall we say, encourage them? Yes, "like as a father pitieth his children," that pity is love, and those whom the Father loves he does not spurn, so we as his children should not show any coldness or indifference to these lambs, for God's servants are told to feed the lambs, as well as the sheep. The great Shepherd gathers his lambs unto his fold, there to be fed with the pure milk of the word. The milk must be pure, hence a watchful care must be taken that no adulteration is allowed to enter. It is so easy for self to creep in; the narrow way is too narrow for self; Jesus is the only way, and if we walk in him self will not be there. May each one when in need have restored to them this joy of salvation. Every day this salvation is needed to save us from ourselves and the temptation of the wicked one, and may we be blessed at all times to hear these joys of salvation proclaimed to us as faithfully as in the past.

WM. GRAFTON, Moderator.
MILTON DANCE, Clerk.

(WRITTEN BY EDWARD F. ROUNDS.)

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa., May 24th, 25th and 26th, 1905, to the several churches of which this association is composed, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Following our long established custom we again address you with what we call a Circular Letter, in which we desire to call your attention to the words of Solomon as recorded in Proverbs iii. 5, 6: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Happy is the man who trusteth in the Lord. What worriment and discouragement would be spared us if we could but heed the voice of wisdom and trust in the Lord; surely he is trustworthy. We know there is nothing too hard for him. He has all power in heaven and earth. He is able to fulfill all his promises. His promises to his people are exceeding great and precious. "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God." He has promised to be a wall of fire round about her, and the glory in her midst. He has promised to fight all her battles for her, to make her bed in all her affliction, to comfort her in all her troubles, to feed her as a shepherd feedeth his flock, to gather the lambs with his arms and carry them in his bosom. He has promised to keep her as the apple of his eye, to lead her about and instruct her, to allure her and bring her into the wilderness, and there speak comfortably to her. He said: "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin." He assures his people that he will clothe them as he clothes the grass, telling them to take no thought for the morrow, as much as to say:

Thy way is marked out and all thy anxiety is spent in vain. Man's heart deviseth but God directs, his steps.

"Wait, O my soul, thy Maker's will;
Tumultuous passions all be still,
Nor let a murmuring thought arise,
His ways are just, his counsels wise."

"And lean not unto thine own understanding." O how ignorant and short-sighted we are, how dull of comprehension, how slow of understanding. What a precious thought it is that we have such a wise Counselor, one who can adjust the most complicated straits and difficulties.

"What a friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear,
What a privilege to carry
Everything to him in prayer."

We are weak, but Jesus is strong. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." We are ignorant, but the Lord is wise. He will lead us about and instruct us, make crooked things straight and rough places plain. It is strange but true, that we never call upon the Lord except in dire necessity. "The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble." When the disciples were crossing the sea and the terrible storm arose, they spent all their strength in trying to bring the ship to the shore, and in their last extremity they came and awoke the Master. He arose, rebuked the wind, and there was a great calm. The Lord always gives good measure; he maketh our cup to run over. We must drink of the cup that Jesus drank, then comes the cup of thanksgiving, which is the feast of the soul. Sorrow is the seed which produces joy, and affliction yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby. The Lord leaves his people to themselves sometimes, to try them and to show them how weak and frail they are, as in the case of Peter, and to make them trust in the Lord, and lean not unto their own understanding.

"In all thy ways acknowledge him." Paul acknowledged the Lord when he said: It is "by the grace of God I am what I am." A little farther on in this third chapter of Proverbs, Solomon says: "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." We are not our own keepers, we are not free agents, and it is a presumptuous sin to act or to attempt to act as such; it is contrary to the teaching of our text. A wise and obedient son will acknowledge his father's superiority in wisdom and judgment before plunging headlong into any business transaction or occupation. Thus the Lord's children will acknowledge him and look to him in prayer for wisdom and guidance. Perhaps the first question that arises with a heaven-born soul is: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" It was so with Paul, and doubtless it is so with all the Lord's dear people, but how different it was with Paul before he was stricken down, on his way to Damascus. Then he thought he knew just what to do, and did it with all his might. Now he desires that not his will but the will of the Lord be done. When the apostles were enabled to perform miracles, they were frank to acknowledge that it was not by their own power or holiness, but in the name of Jesus Christ. How dare any mortal claim any glory in the salvation of sinners when all the disciples of Jesus turned their backs upon him and left him to fight the battle alone? Let us acknowledge him not only in our eternal salvation, but as well in *all* of our ways.

"And he shall direct thy paths."

"How strange is the course that a christian must steer,
How perplexed is the path he must tread."

What a comfort it is to have the

assurance that our paths are directed of the Lord, for then we know that they are right. Moses greatly desired that his path should be thus directed, and the Lord assured him that his presence should go with him. He kept his promise; all through the wilderness his path was directed of the Lord, and the angel of his presence saved him. Thus are our paths directed by the Lord, he leads us in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though he should in some way make known to us the path we are to tread, we could not walk alone, no, not for one moment; but he leadeth us, and his word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Jesus is this path, and as we grow in grace and in the knowledge of him our path is directed. We can see Jesus as the way, the truth and the life only as he is revealed, pointed out or directed to us. Cannot he be said to be more than one path? As he is the path of righteousness, is he not also the path of wisdom, of sanctification, of redemption, of life, of strength, yea, of all the christian graces? Are not all our needs supplied by Christ Jesus? This glorious truth is hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. May we by divine grace be enabled to trust in the Lord with all our heart, to lean not unto our own understanding, to acknowledge him in all our ways, and may he direct our paths. May we be given to see not only our own deficiencies made up for in Christ, but those of our brethren as well. Thus viewing every man perfect in Christ Jesus will we learn to be charitable.

J. G. EUBANKS, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

(WRITTEN BY ELDER SILAS H. DURAND.)

The Elders and messengers composing the Delaware River Association, in session with the Kingwood Church, May 31st and June 1st and 2nd, 1905, to the churches whose messengers we are, send christian salutation.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We will in this letter call your attention to the words of the apostle Paul in 2 Cor. xiii. 11: "Be of one mind." This most important exhortation or command of the inspired apostle is a part of his farewell expression to the church at Corinth, in which he manifests his great interest and tender care for them. The whole sentence reads as follows: "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you." These two most wonderful letters are well closed up by this comprehensive sentence. The word "farewell" is intended to express a desire for the welfare of those addressed, and here it expresses not only the apostle's wish for the good and comfort of his brethren, but also his confidence in the provisions upon which they are to fare, which he has pointed them to as spread before them on the Lord's table, and his assurance that they will fare well upon them. He has in these two letters covered much gospel ground; he has attended to doctrine, and order, and walk, and conversation; has preached the word, exhorted, reproved and rebuked, with all long-suffering and doctrine. Now he comprehends all in these few short sentences.

"Be perfect." How can such poor sinners as all the saints feel themselves to be obey this command? When they have to say before God, "Behold, I am vile," "I abhor myself," and their cry from day to day is, "God be merciful to

me a sinner," how can they be perfect? The answer is, only as they walk by faith in Christ; only as they walk in the order and ordinances and doctrine of his church. The apostle says, "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."—Col. i. 28. That is the only way in which any man can be presented perfect; and it is the desire of every quickened soul to be thus found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. (Phil. iii. 9.) To say to the saints, "Be perfect," implies a certain ability in them to obey; but it is not natural ability, but the ability of faith, and it is God-given ability. We are not able or sufficient of ourselves to even think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God. (2 Cor. iii. 5.) The same God who made the apostles able ministers of the New Testament must work the ability in his people to obey these commands, exhortations and admonitions of the apostles. But while this obedience is an experience in all the saints, for which they give God thanks, there is a sense of holy responsibility resting upon them; and when they neglect the obligations of this great salvation, and turn into by and forbidden paths, they feel the blame resting upon themselves. When they turn to the right hand or to the left, they hear a word behind them saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it."—Isaiah xxx. 21.

"Be of good comfort." This exhortation calls the mind of the quickened soul to the only source of love and lasting comfort, and to the nature and cause and effect of that comfort. This gospel comfort does not appeal to the desires of the natural mind. There is nothing selfish in it. It is not presented as a reward for obedience. It is not held before our eyes as an object which we are to strive to obtain by doing works which otherwise we would not do, and making sacrifices which we otherwise would not make. All the principles and powers and capacities of the life of Christ are involved and embraced in this holy and heavenly comfort. This gospel comfort does not remove trouble and affliction, but is brought out into clear view by them, even as the value and enduring qualities of gold are manifested by the fire. The comfort comes from above the region of trouble, and notwithstanding the trouble. The Lord gave such comfort to Daniel, inspiring him with such absolute trust and confidence in his God that the night in the den of lions was probably the sweetest season he had ever before known. The fire shut the three Hebrew children away from all worldly hope or comfort, but it brought to them the only true source of comfort in the dear Redeemer's blessed presence and power. Right in the midst of the affliction, while the flesh and Spirit are in direful and deadly conflict, and while we are sadly contemplating the withering and fading of all the goodness and glory of man, as the grass withers and the flower fades, there comes the proclamation that our warfare is accomplished, that our iniquities are pardoned, for we have received of the Lord's hand double for all our sins. The prophet of the Lord has been commanded to declare this for the comfort of his people, and therefore when it is declared in the soul the comfort comes. It cannot be prevented. It comes into the tired and still struggling soul, and there is rest in the midst of labor, peace while still the conflict in a sense goes on, and comfort in

the midst of trouble. "Be of good comfort" means that there is comfort in all the doctrine and order of the church, and comfort in walking in all that order, while still dying daily; being daily crucified; daily rendering the body a living sacrifice; daily "bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifested in our body." This is *good* comfort; not fleshly or natural comfort, but the comfort of heavenly love, and the consolation of the Spirit. Faith and hope and love are essential to this comfort. Out of the darkness of this nature of ours faith sees the blessed fulfillment of every spiritual desire in the revelation of Jesus in glory, hope embraces it all, and love fills the weary soul even here "with all the fullness of God."

"Be of one mind." This most important injunction follows in true spiritual order. The *good* comfort, which is the subject of the preceding exhortation, pertains only to the spiritual mind, and is as distinct from the comforts of the carnal mind as are any other of the powers, qualities and capacities of the natural and spiritual minds distinct from each other. When therefore the brethren in Christ are in the experience of good comfort, they are prepared to understand the importance of the exhortation to be of one mind, and to endeavor to obey it. In the early days of the church it is said that "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul." —Acts iv. 32. This evidently was the cause of the oneness that was manifested among them in regard to temporal things. Spiritual things were all important to them all at that time, as they always are to us all in our first experience of salvation by grace, and as they are ever after when we are in a spiritual frame of mind. But when the spirituality begins to fade, and faith and other graces of the Spirit lose their power in the soul, just in the same degree the self-assertion of the carnal mind appears and prevails. That is the time of danger to the peace of the church. It is then that the power of this word of the apostle to be of one mind is needed. It is then that each one of the saints needs to set a most rigid and careful watch, not over his brother, but over himself. It is then that we greatly and most urgently require all the sufficiency of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is then that we are so prone to put forth our own carnal mind as the mind of Christ, and to give our own views, and insist upon them as the truth. It is then that we are so likely to assert and reassert our opinions, and insist, and persuade ourselves, that they are the truth, and that setting them forth is but setting forth the truth of the gospel, while all that is said in opposition to them is regarded by us as controversy. It is then that we will zealously and with fervor present our own understanding of whatever subject is before us, and then urge our brethren to come together upon those views we have presented, and gravely ask them why they will engage in controversy, and why they will persist in vain jangling, and in striving about words to no profit. When we are in this carnal state of mind we seem not to be able to see that one side of a question is as much controversy as the other. At such a time differences arise, and dissensions occur among dear brethren, and heated disputes and conflicts are excited. But the apostle says with solemn fervor and most affectionately, "Be of one mind." How shall we go about that? This is something to be most carefully and prayerfully thought about and entered upon.

To know when we are in a carnal state is most important, but impossible to us of ourselves. We must have grace to do this, and the enlightened discernment of the Spirit. When we find ourselves heated and angry with our brother we may be sure we are in a fleshly state of mind, even though we should be right upon the subject in controversy.

To begin to be of one mind we must go back to the time of the experience of perfection in Christ, and of the good comfort that was then ours, when "Jesus all the day long was our joy and our song." So the apostle, instead of scolding or threatening us, calls our minds back to the remembrance of our first love, and our first joy, and of the sweetness of that first fellowship with the saints, when we were bound up with them in the bundle of life, and experienced love to be "the bond of perfectness." "If there be therefore," he says, "any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves."—Phil. ii. 1–3. This tells the story of how we are to be of one mind. Put away that wrath and clamor and evil speaking in yourself, and whatever is in the other man will disappear. Let us go back to the time of love, and see how we agreed most sweetly then.

When two are at variance they find it almost impossible to talk of experimental things. Let them do that, let them once get to telling each other their experience of grace, and the difference is healed at once.

"Live in peace." This is the last of these affectionate admonitions. The very fact that the apostle gave it is an evidence that it is needed. It would appear as though those who are born of the same Spirit, who have been brought out experimentally from under the condemnation of the law, and have been made to rejoice in hope of the glory of God, would not need an exhortation to live in peace. But our old natures are as full of evil as they ever were. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Therefore every one of these tender and forceful exhortations and admonitions is very much needed. If the apostle's varied, clear and comprehensive instructions throughout these two epistles are heeded the saints will live in peace. It is said to Zion, "I will also make thy officers peace." An officer is appointed to keep the peace. In Zion the effect is put for the cause. It is the peace of God in the heart that rules among the saints of God, or that should rule. The apostle says, "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Here is the true officer in the church of God. By this officer only can dissensions and wounds among brethren be healed, and true fellowship be restored. If the peace of God does not keep the brethren in love, and peace, and fellowship, nothing else can. But it *will* keep them. In the end that peace will prevail to restore and keep peace among them.

Brethren, let us apply these things to ourselves, and each look well into his own heart. "And the God of love and peace shall be with you." Nothing more can be needed in this world of sorrow,

and sin, and strife, and trouble. To feel the presence of the God of love and peace in our hearts is happiness here. When we can have a measure of that wonderful experience we surely can bear and endure all things, and hope all things. No earthly thing seems of enough importance then to contend about. We want, above all things, fellowship and love. And we know that to walk in the perfection of the dear Savior's house, to feel the good comfort of his love, to be of one mind with his saints, to live in peace with them, and to feel the God of love and peace with us, is better than all this world can give.

D. M. VAIL, Moderator.

ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Harford Church, Harford Co., Md., sendeth greeting to the churches and associations with whom we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED:—It is through the mercy of an all-wise God, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, that we are permitted to meet again in an associate capacity to praise that God who rules all things after the counsel of his own will. We feel that our coming together has been in love and fellowship, and the servants of our God have come laden with the precious things of the gospel. Their theme has been Christ and him crucified, who arose for our justification, and who is the end of the law for righteousness. Our hearts have been made to rejoice, and we have felt that it is good to be here, and that we have been built up on our most holy faith, that faith which is the gift of God, and without it it is impossible to please him. We feel encouraged to press on toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. May the dear Lord still permit us to meet in the sweet fellowship and love of his children, and to join with them in singing his praises, and to speak and hear of his wondrous love for the poor and needy ones.

Our next session is to be held with the Ebenezer church, of Baltimore, Md., in May, 1906, when and where we hope to meet your messengers and our friends again.

Brethren, remember us when it is well with you, and may the God of all comfort keep us all and bring us off more than conquerors through Christ our Lord.

WM. GRAFTON, Moderator.

MILTON DANCE, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Jane E. Hall departed this life April 3rd, 1905, at the home of her son, L. A. Hall, in Powellville, Md., aged 77 years, 1 month and 10 days. Her last illness was long and distressing, the effects of nervous prostration and other complications, which finally wore her away. Sister Hall was widely and favorably known; in her married life her home was a place of entertainment, and for many years she had control of the home of her son, brother L. A. Hall. This brought her in contact with a great many Baptists; this will refresh the memory of many, and they will know that another of the old and faithful of the cross has been called home to rest from her labors. She was a great sufferer; all was done that loving hands could do, but the end came.

Sister Hall was received into the church at Nassaongo, Md., by experience, June 14th, 1873, having been a member of the Old School Baptist Church called The Head of the Sound; this church lost its visibility in the year 1885. She took a letter of dismission from the Nassaongo church and united with the church called Indiantown, of which she remained a steadfast member till death.

The writer, her pastor, was called to conduct the funeral service, and used as a text, "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better."—Phil. i. 23. We can all say, She is taken from the evil to come. She leaves to cherish her memory, one sister and seven children, four sons and three daughters, besides the church. Five of her children are members of the Old

School Baptist Church. After the funeral her remains were laid away near the Indiantown church to awake in the morning of the resurrection.

May the Lord lay the hand of help upon all that mourn. T. M. POULSON.

MASSEY, Va.

DIED—April 8th, 1905, at Washington, D. C., **Mrs. Mary A. Langfit,** aged about 92 years. Her maiden name was Bonthron. Little is known of the early life of sister Langfit, coming to this country from Scotland when but a child. She was baptized by Elder Gilbert Beebe, Oct. 2nd, 1832, in the fellowship of Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., making her membership in the church seventy-two years and six months. Sister Langfit has always shown by her walk and conversation that she was a steadfast believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. When in her company her mind would soon turn to spiritual things, and being well versed in the Scriptures, it was a pleasure to listen to her. Although much afflicted for some years before her death she would not complain, but felt blest and resigned in her affliction.

The funeral services were held April 10th, conducted by her pastor, Elder J. T. Rowe. Her body was laid to rest in Congressional cemetery, Washington, D. C., being carried to the grave by friends who had known and loved her for many years. A mother in Israel has been gathered home.

J. T. WALKER.

[IN addition to what has been written by brother Walker we desire to say that for the past thirty-five years or more we have known the aged sister named above. She was faithful in her attendance at the meetings of the church as long as she was able, and nothing gratified her more than to be with those who loved to converse of the things of the kingdom of God. We can recall that when it was our privilege to call upon her from time to time she would say much of the grace of God, and again and again would express her sense of her own sinfulness, and of the mercy of God in such a sinner's salvation. For more than seventy-two years she has been united with the people of God on earth, and we feel well assured that she is now still more closely united with that glorious company which praises God day and night in his temple. What room is there here for mourning? Rather that she has reached the end of the long and toilsome journey is an occasion for gladness and rejoicing and praising God.—ED.]

Elder R. C. Morrison, the subject of this notice, was born in Tennessee June 19th, 1831; was married to Elizabeth Whitfield at the age of twenty-one; to them were born ten children. He afterwards married Catherine Phillips, and she bore him four children, making in all fourteen; twelve are now living. He joined the church of Christ when he was about twenty-one years old, at Shiloh, Clay Co., Ala., and was soon ordained as a deacon of that church, which office he filled satisfactorily for several years, and was ordained to preach the gospel Sept. 27th, 1878, by E. Gassett, B. Gassett, G. B. Knightlet and others, T. M. Lipham acting as moderator, N. M. Daniel church clerk. He served as an ordained minister for twenty-eight years among the people known as Primitive Baptists, and was esteemed very highly for the truth's sake among this people. He would have nothing as a means of salvation but Christ and him crucified. He was a kind and affectionate husband, a loving father, a good neighbor and an esteemed citizen in the neighborhood and county in which he lived. On the first Sunday of April, 1905, he preached his last discourse and farewell sermon; he was very feeble at the time, and Elder M. V. Gibson, who followed him, remarked that he felt it to be the dying testimony of Elder Morrison, and it was but a few days until he was called to his eternal home.

His mortal remains were carried to Mt. Carmel cemetery, in Montgomery Co., Ala., and there deposited to await the resurrection morn. He departed this life April 27th, 1905, heart failure being the cause; he lived but a few moments after he was taken. O how we all shall miss him, though we ought not to weep over such a father in Israel, for he is at rest. God help his dear wife and children to not weep, but press on, looking to him who is the God of the widow and the fatherless.

May God bless you all, and preserve and keep you, is our prayer for Christ's sake. Amen.

ELDER W. N. HAYS, } Members of Eben-
DEACON J. E. WILLIAMSON, } ezer Church.

MONTGOMERY Co., Ala.

Henry Davis died at his home in the town of Stamford, N. Y., March 18th, 1905. He was the only son of the late George W. Davis, and was born in Roxbury, N. Y., March 30th, 1858. He was married May 21st, 1882, to Miss Kate Clute, daughter of Erastus Clute, of Margaretville, N. Y., Elder Isaac Hewitt, of Halcottville, performing the ceremony. He leaves his mother, Mrs. Roxy Leonard, to mourn the loss of this only and dutiful son. His wife and one daughter, Bertha, now Mrs. Robert McFarland, survive him, and deeply sorrow for this loving husband and kind father. Four sisters also are left: Mrs. Wm. M. Griffin, of Halcottville, N. Y., Mrs. Horace Boice, of Kingston, N. Y., Mrs. Willis W. Hubbell and Mrs. John Raab, of Roxbury, N. Y. We all realize what we have lost in the death of this dear brother, it has taken much from our lives. We know that he saw the best of life, and will never feel the infirmities that time brings to all. He was ill but one short week; his sufferings were intense, but the end was peaceful.

The funeral was held from the Gould Memorial

meeting-house on March 21st, the pastor speaking from Psalms xciv. 19. The burial was in the Reformed cemetery, at Roxbury.

We try to be resigned to this great affliction God has seen fit to send us, but we find it very hard.

(MRS.) HORACE BOICE.

KINGSTON, N. Y.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS."

Thomas W. Records, Mo., $1.00; Elder Dudley G. Johnson, Ky., $1.00; S. R. Campbell, Ill., $4.00.—Total, $6.00.

MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held, the Lord willing, in the school-house in the township of Brooke, Lambton Co., Ont., five miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1905, and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting, the next meeting of Peace Valley Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of the Primitive order, will be held with Poolville church, Poolville, Parker Co., Texas, instead of Friendship church, Acton, Hood Co., Texas, as per Minutes of last meeting, commencing on Friday before (at 10 o'clock a. m.) and embracing the third Sunday in August, 1905. Those coming by railroad from any direction will be met with conveyance at Weatherford, Texas, Thursday before the meeting. All lovers of truth attend.

W. O. RUTLEDGE, Association Clerk.

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ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in Hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

717 HOWARD ST., DETROIT, Mich.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m., in the Red Men's Hall, First and Congress Streets in Troy, N. Y., and at 2:30 p. m. in West Sand Lake, N. Y., at the home of Mrs. Moul. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 73. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1905. NO. 13.

POETRY.

A DROP OF MERCY.

We were on the fast express,
Rushing on to sunny climes,
The morning light revealed the clouds and rain;
I was weary of the journey,
And my heart a little sad,
As I watched a drop of water on the pane.

It would stop and start and tremble,
Then shoot a zigzag course,
And swallow up the little drops of rain;
But an unseen power drew it
Ever nearer to the dust,
As I watched this drop of water on the pane.

With all its zigzag journey,
To its resting-place in dust,
It pictured true the things of hill and plane;
Each house and tree were rendered true
In this ever shifting scene,
And I watched it in the drop upon the pane.

So I thought, This little drop
Tells the story of the world,
May we picture things in passing just as plain;
And though dark the scenes of earth,
May the light of heaven shine
As the light within the drop upon the pane.

With a pleasant, passive yielding
To the power that drew me on,
I felt the rush and rumble of the train;
And I thanked the God of heaven
For the things he made me see
As I watched the drop of water on the pane.

Early one morning while traveling to the associations in the east on the train, I noticed the reflections in a drop of water which was on a window pane, and wrote the above verses. I give them to you.

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE ATONEMENT.

Atone means to make reparation, satisfaction and reconciliation. When this is done, the injury is atoned for. Atonement applies to sin or wrong doing. Sin is violation of law, either divine or human. To every transgression of law there is a penalty. The laws of God are so strong and perfect that every sin must receive its just penalty. God is holy and he will never pardon the least sin, unless it is atoned for. To do this, the broken law must be fulfilled. Perfect obedience only will fulfill and satisfy the law. No sinner can do this, because he is already imperfect and disabled or weak. Sin entails guilt, condemnation and death. The whole world is guilty before God, because all have sinned. "The wages of sin is death," and every sinner must die. God is just and holy, therefore, in the condemnation of all men under his holy law. Right here is where the truth of salvation by free grace alone comes in, and every mouth is stopped, because there is none good, no, not one. None have any claim upon God for justification, or any blessing. "Therefore by the deeds

of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." All men in the flesh are forever condemned by the law, and are under its curse. Mercy and grace only can save any sinner. Yet all men in the flesh depend upon their works to obtain salvation, and they claim the blessings of God as rewards for religious service. They make salvation conditional in part upon their supposed obedience to the holy commandments of God. Thus they must either hold that their obedience is perfect, or that the divine commandments are imperfect and will accept of faulty obedience. This was the fatal blindness of the Jewish pharisees, who trusted in themselves and their self-righteousness. They therefore did not believe in Christ as the Savior of sinners, nor trust in his atoning blood to cleanse them from all sin. Nay, but they depended upon their boasted ability and good works to make atonement or satisfaction to the law of God, which is holy. Just so does every doctrine and principle of conditional salvation on man's part virtually deny both the complete fullness and sufficiency of Christ's atonement and the need of it; for every feature and sort of conditional salvation necessarily claims to save us from some sin and its punishment or wages. This is nothing else but making atonement in part for ourselves, by our works of conditional salvation. It is evident, therefore, that the doctrine of conditional salvation, in any part, is a denial of the perfection and fullness of Christ's atonement for all the sins of his people. For a full and complete atonement for all our sins, is full redemption, free justification and perfect salvation. Conditional salvation from any sin, either of commission or omission, contradicts this full and perfect salvation through the atonement of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and charges imperfection and failure in part to his perfect work of obedience unto righteousness and full justification and salvation. Conditional salvation denies that all salvation and its joys and blessings come to us through Christ's atoning suffering unto death for our sins, but claims that salvation in part comes to us because of our own obedience; that is, the atonement for our sins of disobedience is in part conditional, and depends upon our good works of obedience. There is no escape from this fatal consequence of conditional salvation, for all salvation is from sin and death, and that which brings salvation is an atonement for sin; if this is our works, then it is not the blood of Christ that obtains our salvation and God's blessing. Unitarians deny the divinity, vicarious sufferings and atonement of our only Lord Jesus Christ; therefore they depend upon their own works of supposed obedience to the commandments of God to atone for their sins and obtain salvation for themselves; that is, they hold to personal atonement by works of obedience, and to conditional salvation either present or future; for it all depends upon works, and is not by grace.

With thanks to God for his unspeakable gift, we turn away from this bloodless atonement and faithless salvation, to the "fountain filled with blood, drawn from Immanuel's veins, and sinners plunged beneath that flood lose *all* their guilty stains," and in joyful faith and praise we say, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

Let us notice, 1st. The necessity of the atonement. We read, "Without shedding

of blood is no remission." "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." "There is none righteous, no, not one." "And so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "For the wages of sin is death." The Savior of sinners, therefore, must give his life-blood and die for their sins, as the atoning sacrifice and price of their redemption. Christ thus gave himself for all his people, and made this perfect offering and sacrifice of himself. "By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

2nd. The completeness of Christ's atonement. Atonement must cover all sin, pay all the debt, redeem from all iniquity, remove all guilt and every curse, and justify from all things, in order to fulfill the law and satisfy justice. Should the least stain of sin remain upon the body of Christ, the church, then both he and his people for whom he died must have remained forever under the curse of the law, and the dominion of sin and death. Paul shows this in 1 Cor. xv. But blessed be God, the obedience and death of his holy Son possessed this perfection and infinite merit and saving power. So we read, "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."

3rd. Since the atonement of Christ removes all guilt and cleanses from all sin, it freely justifies us from all things, and none can condemn or lay anything to the charge of God's elect. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."

4th. Paul testifies that God raised Christ from the dead for our justification, and that whom God justifies he also glorifies. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." This full and free justification not only makes us forever free from all sin and guilt and condemnation, but it also brings us into righteousness and salvation and eternal life, as heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

5th. The atonement of Christ, then, makes an end of sin, destroys death, and brings in life and immortality for all who are his. This is the holy and blessed estate of all for whose sins Christ died. Their sins are all blotted out forever for Jesus' sake, and they have free and full and everlasting forgiveness from God their Father. Yea, they are born of God, have passed from death unto life, and shall live for evermore, because Christ lives in them. His fullness of grace and glory is theirs in him, and in him is their full salvation and all spiritual blessings, both for time and eternity. "If Christ is mine, then present things and things to come are mine." When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.

D. BARTLEY.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., March 20, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I am admonished by the date on the wrapper of my paper that it is about time to renew the subscription. It comes to me as a friend, as an adviser, as an exponent of all that I believe and hope for, and as long as I live I desire its presence and its communications.

I am so lonely, and get so hungry for food, that I believe I would be dwarfed worse than I am, spiritually, were it not

that I find so many who are thus tried, and who are similarly situated. In looking over my past life I find nothing to recommend me to God's mercy, nothing for which I can claim the least favor, but much to be justly condemned for, much that under other circumstances would separate me from his presence forever.

Someway, somehow, I came into the belief that my sins were forgiven, and the world says that I ought to be happy all day long, but I am so rebellious, so disobedient, so sinful, that I grieve more than ever to know that I am continually crucifying him afresh, that I cannot love and serve him as I desire to do. If I had no other evidence than the above I would not be able to say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," but my love for the brethren which passes understanding, my hunger for the bread of life, my desire to live among you, and to be buried among you, cause me to think that there is a spark of life in my being, which even death will not extinguish, but which will burst forth therefrom more radiant and beautiful than anything I have ever known here, and all because he purposed it before the foundation of the world. It seems almost too wonderful to contemplate, almost too joyous to hope for, but by the indwelling of his Spirit we are permitted to claim his precious promises, and for awhile we look away from self and sin to the Author and Finisher of our faith, and have confidence that we will awake with his likeness. What manner of love is this that he hath bestowed upon us, and how little we understand it, but by and by we shall know as we are known, and shall praise him without ceasing. How glad I am that it is not reckoned unto us according to our works; how thankful that Jesus paid the debt which makes us free, and how delighted that his promises are yea and amen. None but Jesus can do helpless sinners good, therefore I rejoice in a Savior who saves to the uttermost all for whom he died, and who will keep all his promises concerning us, whether we pass through fiery trials, through the waters of affliction, or through seasons of great doubt and darkness. He will manifest himself in due time, will roll the burden away when it gets too heavy to be borne, and out of our affliction will cause us to glorify and magnify his name.

Truly our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us an exceeding weight of glory. Therefore we should feel thankful that we are counted worthy to suffer with him.

I think of the coming association at Bethlehem, in Virginia, so often, and always with a great desire that I might be present. How I would like to hear dear brother Badger preach once more. The last sermon I heard was preached by Elder White at sister Waddy's; I think she is sleeping that sleep from which none ever wake to weep; and the dear Elder has been to the brink of the stream across which lies the city, new Jerusalem, but thank God, it seemed good in his sight to spare him awhile longer, for the little flock has need of the faithful undershepherd, and I pray that he may be spared many years to minister to them.

I had a short letter recently from brother Badger; the very postmark opened my heart for a warm reception of its contents, and I lived over again my acquaintance and christian fellowship with him. Not only does the name of the great Shepherd sound sweet to a believer's ear, but those of the undershepherds as well. All the names are dear to me, because I believe they have

been bought with a price, and that they are one with God the Father. I am drawn in christian love very near to all who write for the SIGNS, and would like to meet each one, that I might tell how very comforting and assuring their communications have been to me, thus encouraging them to continue. Occasionally, some brother or sister whom I have never seen, addresses me so cordially that I begin to search myself to see if I am worthy of it. If they could see and know me, I am afraid their letters would be those of reproof, instead of commendation. Still there must have been one or two responsive chords in my writings, because of a testimony of salvation by grace; of the efficacy of the blood of Jesus to clean us from all sin.

My husband and I are alone, our nearest child being one hundred miles distant, but we are blessed with fairly good health and means by which we are enabled to obtain the necessary bodily requirements. I pray that I may be thankful, and that I may continue to rejoice in the Name that is our hope on earth and that will be our joy in heaven.

I wrote to brother Badger some time ago, and wrote so confidently that I have wondered at myself ever since. The Lord must have led me to say just what I did, for I would never write that which I do not feel; still as I remember it, he might construe it into boasting, which I hope God will forbid, for with my sense of unworthiness, the knowledge of my sinfulness, I am surprised that I ever take up my pen. His letter in the last volume of the SIGNS made me search my heart as never before, and if I am one of the redeemed, it seems that even in heaven I cannot help but feel less than the least of all. Brother Chick, I sometimes wonder how you can have the patience to read all the letters sent you, when you have been given so many talents, so much spiritual understanding, but since beginning this paragraph I have found out the more grace and love and knowledge God bestows upon you, the more sympathy, and patience, and forbearance, and love, you have to bestow upon us; unto him must we ascribe all majesty, all dominion and all goodness.

Now why have I written all this? I knew I could not say much of interest, but it was on my mind, and I shall feel better for having done so; that is my only excuse.

Remember me to your wife and to sister Atkinson, never once forgetting yourself.

Sincerely and truly your friend, and with the hope that I am a sister in spirit and in truth,

(MRS.) J. L. WRIGHT.

TOUCHET, Wash., March, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Once it seemed that I was sailing heavenward; suddenly I fell; the fall awoke me; I was in great agony bodily. Soon after this I was at a Freewill Baptist meeting; I sat quiet and was unconscious of anything around me. In my childishness I thought that preachers were all holy men of God, as I had read of the prophets sent by the Lord. Suddenly a voice stronger than that of man (not louder, but stronger, for it brought me down with penitential tears,) said to me, "Ye must be born again." This sounded loud and positive, it brought my poor frame low with grief and anxiety. At length it pleased the dear Lord, after he had fully shown me the utter impossibility of my bringing myself near to him, and when I had given up all hope of receiving the evi-

dence which I so much desired that I was born again, to whisper peace to my soul. O the sweet comfort and peace of a soul in its earliest love.

"If ye love me, keep my commandments." For about two years this word seemed to be with me constantly, and I was anxious to find a people that believed Bible doctrine. None of the preaching I had heard agreed with Bible doctrine as I understood it. Alas, where could I go? Now we come to see the wisdom and power from on high, which directed Jacob's hand when, being blind, he was directed to lay his right hand on the head of the younger son. So God in his infinite mercy directs the steps of man. In the year 1847 there was a church organized in Marion county, Oregon, fourteen miles from where we lived. My husband, B. Walden, was at the organization, and united with the church and was baptized. O the grief it gave me that I was not there also, yet the precious Lord so ordered it. I soon had the privilege to go, riding fourteen miles on horseback, carrying my six months old babe. Then and there I heard the doctrine and an experimental sermon preached. O, thought I, these are the people I have been seeking to find, for they surely understand the doctrine which the Bible teaches. I went home rejoicing that I had found a people with whom I could unite. It was not long before I had the privilege to go again. The distance appeared but a little way. We arrived in good time at the place of meeting. Dear old Elder Simpson preached again an encouraging sermon, at least it seemed so to me. When he called for any one who wished to unite with the church, before I was aware I gave him my hand, with my heart, bowing at the feet of my Lord and Master. I was received into the number, and the next day was baptized, and received in full fellowship. Of all the days of my life that was the happiest. There were several men and boys who had climbed up into the trees on either side of the bank; a brother young in the ministry spoke at the waterside, his name was John Stipp. Several mocked him, and I thought, If they should throw mud in my face I would rejoice just the same.

The dear Lord dealt gently with me for years, teaching me the truth as it is in Christ. Now I see that I was a poor, little, weak lamb of the flock. Surely he leads in ways that we know not of; he orders our steps, and has appointed our destination. He gave us proof of this when he told Peter by what death he should die, and many proofs are given us to show that he leads us, and that he keeps us and gives us strength as our day; O how often I have realized this. Every day he teaches me the fact that by terrible things in righteousness he will answer us. Again, he says, "Come and see the works of God: he is terrible in his doing toward the children of men."

I will say that for many years I sailed, or soared, heavenward; in other words, joy was mingled with all my sorrows, but the time of the trying of my faith came. I began to see more of humanity, more of my own weakness, and sometimes I doubted whether there was anything in religion, and for a moment the thought would come, Is there a God in Israel? O, is there any one like me? I seem not to be able to turn one cheek when smitten on the other; I seem to try to defend myself. So my sailing ceased. This caused me serious thought, and I wondered if I had been led by the devil transformed into an angel of light. I mourned and grieved much about such a state; I could not control my emotions and feel the for-

giving spirit that I wished. I was in prison many days, when it pleased the dear Lord to give me strength to stand, and to pray for my enemies, or any that might despitefully use me.

"By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation." I have learned daily that all these things are needful for me. We must have soul trouble, it must needs be, else how could we be crucified with him, or in what way could it be said, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb"? It is not given to the children of the kingdom to sail smoothly, else how could we drink of the cup of which the Lord and Master drank? If there is any evidence in the foregoing which shows that one has been born of the Spirit which comes down from the Father of lights, and has tasted of the Fountain of living water, of which if one drink he shall never thirst, then these are the things needful for the child of grace.

I beg an interest in the prayers of all the dear ones, for shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, being in my seventy-seventh year. I have been stirred within to testify of my hope, or rather to speak of the way in which I have been led on and on, in and through this vale of tears. With fellowship for all the household of faith who give to God all the honor and glory, crowning him Lord of all, I will close.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

S. J. CUMMINS.

WARRENTON, Ore., March 23, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN A BLESSED HOPE:—I want to tell you that I enjoy the dear old SIGNS very much, and wish it came weekly, for I am always so very anxious to get my paper that I can scarcely wait for it, and when I do get it I am like a hungry wretch at a feast, and truly it is a great feast to me, of which I partake most heartily. O the glorious truth of the gospel of Christ, how good it is to helpless sinners who feel their need of him; to them it is the power and wisdom of God, and O that he would give me an humble, contrite heart, and write his name thereon, and help me to see more and more of the beauties of this God-honoring and creature-abasing doctrine, and help me to understand and admire, reflecting on what God has done for his little ones. How I long to hear the preaching of the dear Old Baptists who still continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. How grand this theme, and I love it most dearly, if I know my heart. If I did not know that the Lord must plant his grace and make his glories known, I should almost be wondering how any intelligent person could be blind to the beauty and comforting satisfaction there is in this blessed doctrine; to the world it is foolishness, hated and despised, and if the wise ones of the world had the power, as they have the will, it would be blotted out, with all who love and believe it. How glad I am that God rules and reigns on earth as well as in heaven.

But I only wanted to tell you how good all the editorials are to me, and that I read them many times, as I do all there is in every number, and when I feel such loneliness, and the longing to be with the people of God, this reading of the SIGNS revives the love in my heart for them, and fills the aching void as nothing in the world can. There are many dear ones who write for this much loved paper who tell my trials and tribulations much better than I can, and while it is

great encouragement to me, it astonishes me as well, as I feel that none can carry such a load of sin as I, and I am often in Egyptian darkness, stumbling, falling and groping around for the Father's hand, which I cannot find. My peaceful hours are then only memory, and often that, too, is gone from me, and I fear that I have never known anything of a dying and risen Savior; if so, I have lost the way marked out by his blood. The little hope which I hope has been given me, and which has helped me in many troubles in this life, seems to fade away, and I have nothing but tears; then comes the much loved SIGNS like a messenger of rest, love and peace, cheering and comforting, bringing near to me all the household of faith in love and sweet fellowship of the Spirit, and out of the fullness of my joyful heart I can say, My brother and my sister, thanking the Father for all his mercies to one so unworthy. Then these lines come:

"Cheer up, ye trembling souls;
On Jesus' aid rely:
He sees us when we see him not,
And always hears our cry."

O the love and faithfulness of the thrice blessed Jesus to permit his grace to shine upon us, and there is nothing now nor anything to come that can quench that divine spark. O that he would guide me in the way as I journey on, a pilgrim and a stranger here, to find him my Rock of defense in time of need, and my Safety from all the wiles of the enemy, then I could boldly face the raging Satan and the frowns of the world with a smile. How the world glories in its much loved and esteemed "head" religion; this is what I call it since I was told that they think the head is the place to carry their religion, and perhaps it is, but I cannot think that there is much love in such religion. One of my chief troubles is, I fear I cannot love enough. I want the love for God and for his people to so fill my heart that there will be no room for hatred, malice, anger or any such thing, which only tend to trouble. There are none near me who can at all understand me when I wish so much to talk of things which interest me more than all things in the world. All the preaching I have is in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and the good letters which I receive from the dear brethren and sisters in the east, and nearer home; their letters are very enjoyable and comforting to a lonely sinner, and I am always glad to get them, and hope they will continue to write, and many more also. There are none near who can talk to me of the wonderful wisdom and power of God as can the great rolling Pacific Ocean; it, by its continuous roaring, speaks of the ceaseless love and goodness of God to his children, and nothing but contrary winds and storms can deafen the sound of its roaring and blot out its beauty and majestic grandeur for a time. How often we lose sight of the goodness of God and his many mercies when storms arise and beat upon us, and we feel that our frail bark will be lost unless the Master speaks, then it is calm, and we can smile at our fears.

Dear brother, I did not mean to write so much in this wandering and imperfect letter; I hope you will excuse me, as I seem to have gone to you in love and in the spirit of truth, and to have forgotten myself. I hope you may long be spared to wield "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon," and be a help and comfort to all who love to read your good editorials. May the Lord be ever with you, helping you to cry aloud and spare not, and when you have served his righteous purpose here he will call you to come up higher. Such is the prayer of your unworthy sister,

S. L. H. STUART.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., March, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I inclose a letter from sister Thompson, which to my mind is full of marrow and fatness, wine upon the lees, well refined. You are at liberty to publish the portion of it that pertains to the good of Zion and the glory of God. All are in our usual health, and hope that the same is true of you. Cold, icy winter is, as we hope, about over, and how we long for the bright sunshine and the warmth of its enlivening rays; but how much more is this true spiritually.

With love to all sincerely,

P. W. SAWIN.

FRANKLIN, Ind., Feb. 3, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER SAWIN AND FAMILY:—I will now try to answer your good, welcome letter. I am now in Indiana; my sister wrote for me to come, her husband, David Poe, was very sick. I received her letter the night I received yours. Her husband is better.

Brother Sawin, the comfort and consolation your letter has given me makes me feel sure it would comfort others, may I send it to be published in the SIGNS? I feel that others ought to have the privilege of reading it. Ah, dear brother, in all my dark trials and deep afflictions, if I did not feel that there was a wise purpose in it all, and that he means it all for my good, I surely would sink in despair.

I was at Simeon Riggs' nearly a week, we had a feast nearly all the time; he preached sitting down, as we often say. Once he quoted the hymn, "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform;" and also hymn 15. When he came to the words, "Not Gabriel asks the reason why, nor God the reason gives," I thought, How true the words are; God does not give the reason why we are called to suffer such deep affliction, except in one thing, that we are partakers with Christ in his sufferings; and that is enough, my dear kindred, to silence our murmuring. If we can only be permitted to suffer for his sake we ought to rejoice, for it is written, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." Suffer with him; my mind fastens upon these words. Dear ones, if Jesus were not with us, could we suffer with him? And O what a consolation it is to feel that Jesus is with us in every needed trial. Yes, dear brother Sawin, as you said or quoted in your letter, God meant it for good. God means all our sorrows for our good, but our poor minds cannot comprehend it. We cry for God's grace to bear us up, and make us submissive to his righteous dealings with us, for in our weakness we often cry with Jacob, "All these things are against me," but when Jesus manifests himself to us again, all is well, and we say, It is all for our good in some way. Often the beautiful verse comes into my mind:

> "Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
> But trust him for his grace;
> Behind a frowning providence
> He hides a smiling face."

O how it melts my heart to think that God would smile upon such a poor, unworthy creature as I am; it prostrates my soul as Joseph's brethren were prostrated before him. O, if I can but feel the tender compassion of my dear Savior as they felt it to be in Joseph; what words of tenderness he spoke. To feel in all our afflictions that God means it for good is soul-cheering; in this blessed belief my soul has been made happy under deep tribulation.

My son started for California, and I have not heard from him for so long, O, if it were not for God's sustaining grace,

and knowing God means it for good in some way, I surely would have lost my mind. My comfort is that ever since he has been gone I have had, as it seems, more spiritual enjoyment. You, dear brother, were trying to get some means whereby you could travel and preach, God meant it different, and so he has provided for you to go and preach. My intentions were to live with my son, and perhaps I may have placed my dependence too much upon him, and did not trust in God to rule, but now my trust is entirely in the Lord. I do not worry about food or raiment, my pleasure is to talk or write upon the Scriptures, or better still, to read from or hear others talk, giving God all the power and all the praise; food and raiment are supplied me, and my faith is that he will never leave nor forsake me.

I did not think of writing so much, only to ask permission to send your letter to the SIGNS; I feel it will comfort many poor souls in their sore trials. When I feel so impressed to write for publication, I feel surely God has a message in it for some one; and that is the way I feel about sending your letter: it has comforted me, and there are others who need comforting.

Dear kindred all, I would be glad to see you, but we all have a hope of meeting above.

I will close, hoping to hear from you very soon.

Your unworthy sister,

SOPHRONA B. THOMPSON.

HAMPTON, Iowa, March 2, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed you will find a letter from sister S. E. Runkle, of Macomb, Ill. It is so interesting that I would like to see it in the SIGNS, if you think proper. Your kind letter was of great comfort to me. We keep up our meetings regularly, although we are but few. We feel encouraged to believe the Lord is with us. May our God enable you by his grace to fill your place as editor of the SIGNS, is my humble prayer.

Yours to serve in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,

E. A. NORTON.

MACOMB, Ill., Feb. 22, 1905.

ELDER E. A. NORTON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I received your good letter some time ago, and will now try to write something in reply. I have not forgotten the good letters you wrote me some years ago, and I guess you are right about writing to me last, if I remember aright. But for the last two years, and especially during the past year, my health has been poor, so much so that I could not write at all part of the time. I am feeling some better now, and will try to write something in response to yours, and to other good letters I have received from my dear brethren and sisters. I have quite a number on hand unanswered, and I trust the dear ones will not think hard of me for delaying so long in writing, for I do love to receive their dear, precious epistles of love, though I do not feel worthy of their notice. Yet O how it would pain and grieve me to know I had not the confidence and fellowship of God's dear children. I have waited quite awhile, too, about writing, to see my mother, who I know would send some word to you and your aged mother, but I have not seen her for some time, and as the weather and roads are bad, it is not likely I will see her soon, therefore thought I would not wait longer. She lives at the old homestead, about three miles from me. She is very well, and

not at all feeble, and aside from being hard of hearing she seems as well as she did ten years ago. She raises a nice garden, has a great many flowers, and also chickens, which she tends herself, and will not let any one wait on her, but will help others. She reads four of the Baptist periodicals, several newspapers, magazines, &c., can read some without glasses. She takes great interest in spiritual things, and is firm and sound in the faith. I am sure she remembers your father and mother, and would wish to be remembered to you and her.

Yes, I remember well when your father passed away. When I think of so many of the aged ministers whom I used to know and hear preach so often, I feel sad and am made to wonder who will fill their places. But when I go to meetings or associations and hear the same truth preached now that was so ably contended for in those days, I am made to rejoice and thank God, who hath declared he would not be without witnesses, and I do feel to say that I have never heard the truth preached more ably or the doctrine of the Old School Baptists set forth more clearly and forcibly than at our association and other meetings I have attended in the past two years. We have not been troubled here with any strife, and I feel we ought to be thankful that it is so, for there is no enjoyment like that of the children of God dwelling together in peace and unity, meeting in love and fellowship and hearing the gospel preached in its purity. But O how different when anything steps in to mar the peace, how soon our spirits droop and we feel cast down, and there is no enjoyment in our meeting. We do not feel edified or built up. But when two or three meet together in the name of Christ he has promised to be with them.

You write of seeing my dear father in 1855, and hearing him preach, and remembering his text. I can remember well when I was a young girl of hearing certain ones preach, their text and the sermon, and how I feasted on the precious things of the gospel. To this day these blessed, glorious things are sweet to me, they never grow old or worn, but are a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Many times the only evidence I have of a hope in Christ is the love of these things. I do feel I love God's people, and love the joyful sound of the gospel. May you and all God's ministers be enabled to go on preaching his word, not fearing man, but rather fearing God who hath promised to be with his faithful servants to the end. May he be with you, to strengthen and uphold you, keep you in the declining years of your life, is the wish of your unworthy sister.

Remember me in love to your mother, and excuse this uninteresting letter.

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

[WE will add to this note from brother Norton, that sister Runkle, whose letter is published above, is a daughter of Elder I. N. Vanmeter, whose name was so familiar to the readers of the SIGNS years ago. Her father was a steadfast friend of the paper, and of the doctrine advocated in its pages. Many of our older readers will well remember his able articles which for many years from time to time appeared in the SIGNS. Personally, we remember meeting Elder Vanmeter but once, when he attended our eastern associations one spring. We recall how pleasant he was in manner, and how firm he was in presenting the truth which he, and we all, loved. It is good to have the memory of the old soldiers of the cross brought up from time to time. The Lord

has been wonderfully good to the aged widow of Elder Vanmeter. May his goodness continue, both in all temporal and in all spiritual mercies, is our desire. His people shall still bring forth fruit in old age, to show that the Lord is upright.—ED.]

DADE CITY, Fla., Feb. 6, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—I have not seen anything from the pen of our departed brother Beebe in the SIGNS for a long time. I will inclose you one of his letters for publication, which has been a source of great comfort to my poor soul. I believe it will be read with mingled gladness of soul and sorrow of heart by many of its readers. I have some other very precious letters from him that I may send for publication some time.

Your brother, I hope,

M. L. GILBERT.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., July 25, 1902.

ELDER M. L. GILBERT—DEAR BROTHER:—I beg your forgiveness for so long delaying the acknowledgment of the receipt of your picture. I have been too ill most of the time since I received it to be at the office, and am always buried in work when able to be there. I would not have allowed want of leisure time to keep me from writing, for I would have taken time, and let something wait; but I cannot in the midst of hurrying work command the frame of mind I would like to have when writing. Indeed, I ofttimes seriously doubt whether I ever have been anything but carnally minded. When I attempt to write the brethren, or converse with them, there is such a feeling with me that I am deceiving them, that I feel I am the worst hypocrite on the face of the earth. Then again if I attempt to say anything in our meetings, the thought will nearly always suggest itself, How will that make you appear to the brethren and sisters after you have shown your hypocrisy and been cut off from their fellowship? Strange as it may seem, although I would so dread to have the brethren know the hidden evils of my heart, yet it is a source of comfort to me to think that known unto God are all my ways, and I cannot deceive him. If I believed that my acceptance with God either in time or eternity depended on any good that I could do, I would be without hope. It is only in the righteousness of Jesus that I have any hope, but I see so little of the fruit of the Spirit manifested in me that it causes great fearfulness and trembling lest my hope in that righteousness is vain; but I am sure of this one thing: "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and not one of the elect vessels of mercy can ever be lost; his love is as great as his power, and once embraced in that love nothing can separate us from it. Another thing that comforts me is that I do feel that I love the brethren, and when I hear them tell of their spiritual exercises, there arises a feeling of love and fellowship over which I have no control, and a witnessing within to their testimony, and this gives me hope that I do have the Spirit within. As I have told you before, this was the case when I read the first article I ever remember reading of your writing, and every communication I have received from you since then has increased that love and fellowship for you, until a strong desire has taken possession of me to meet you in the flesh.

I am now fifty-eight years old, and very much broken in health, and it is not likely I shall remain much longer on the shores of time, and I do hope I may have the pleasure of seeing you next spring,

if not before. I will send you the Minutes of our four associations in succession, each commencing a week apart.

I have strung this letter out in hope that it would improve as I proceeded, but it is far from what I wish it was, so will close by saying I received your letter of July 18th, and that I would be glad to receive for publication articles from your pen whenever you might feel impressed to write.

Yours in hope,

B. L. BEEBE.

KANSAS, Ill., Feb. 8, 1905.

PUBLISHERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I herewith send a good letter recently received from Elder J. G. Sawin, with the request that you publish the same. Such letters are worth a place in our dear paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

I remain yours to serve,

JAMES M. TRUE.

MATTOON, Ill., Jan. 30, 1905.

ELDER JAMES M. TRUE—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Reading your letter in the SIGNS, which came to us to-day, I was reminded that I should write you, and now seat myself for that purpose. Whether my thoughts may interest you or not is not for me to say. In fact I know not on what lines my pen may run. One thing I feel glad of, and that is you can write occasionally and tell us something that we already know by experience. Of course it is more effectual and of greater moment to us to hear about things we do know and understand, than to hear of ten thousand things that we do not know or understand. John said to his brethren that he did not write what he did because they were ignorant of them, but because they did know and understand them. These things were the glad tidings of salvation; the joyful sound they recognized as soon as they heard it, for this secret is with them who fear the Lord; and from the way you write and talk I am persuaded that you have this wonderful secret, and you fear the Lord, because he has given you the secret. Then you know the joyful sound when you hear it, and because of this attribute you are blessed and can truly say, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Such food, such rest and such joy and hope as came to us when we sat with great delight under the shadow of the Almighty, were not the fruits of our fleshly labor and toil, of this old corrupt and sinful nature of ours, but the blessed fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, gentleness, meekness, faith, &c. Whether I know anything about these or not, one thing is sure, I love to hear the name of Christ exalted as a Prince and a Savior, full, complete and victorious in every respect. Man may boastingly claim great wisdom and power in reaching out after the kingdom of heaven, but the Savior forestalls his way by saying, "No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him." Paul adds, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Every one who has heard and learned of the Father knows this, but the world cannot receive it because the world did not receive Christ; his words have no place in them.

But I am jotting down too many of my rambling thoughts. This leaves us in common health. We shall try when the weather improves a little to get over and see you once more, if the way opens. My wife joins me in sending love to you

both. Remember us to sister Lillie and family.

Your brother in hope,

JOHN G. SAWIN.

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215 LEXINGTON AVE., ALTOONA, Pa., Feb. 21, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Inclosed you will find money order to renew my subscription to the dear old SIGNS. I hope you will pardon me for not sending it sooner, but it was just put off from time to time. It was not because I do not love the SIGNS, for I can hardly wait for the coming of one to another. It makes no difference what I am doing when one comes, I must stop and look through it; it contains all the preaching I get. Sometimes I stop and think that I am like the children of Israel, murmuring against God, but I know that it is his will, and for some wise purpose, and that in his good time he will bring me home to his children, if indeed I am one of his children. But O, I feel myself such a poor sinner that I am often afraid I am deceiving the dear children of God by wanting to be numbered with them. Dear brethren and sisters, I cannot help it, I do love you all, and how I would love to meet you and hear the truth preached. There have been different denominations wanting me to join with them, as my church is not here, but it would be like tearing my heart in twain to leave the dear Old Baptists; I cannot do this. Some say that I ought to join some church where I could take my children with me, but O I cannot. Am I doing right or not? God knows I want to do his will.

Will some one please tell me the nearest Old School Baptist Church to Altoona? If there should be any Old School Baptist preachers going through Altoona who could arrange to stop, we should be so glad to have them preach for us at our home, the address of which is at the head of this letter. Tell me, is there an Old Baptist Church at Los Angeles, Cal.?

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

(MRS.) BELLE RUPERT.

[As regards the nearest church to Altoona, will Elder Vail write to this sister, giving the information she desires? We do not know. Perhaps he or some other one can stop there. We do not know of any church in Los Angeles, Cal., but we will here give the addresses of some subscribers to the SIGNS in that city: Elder A. H. Hagan, 110 E. Washington St.; Nellie A. Little, 2920 S. Flower St.; Mrs. Luella E. Bray, 626 Ruth Ave. Of the above we are personally acquainted with sister Little, and have often received letters from Elder Hagan. Our sister does only what the Lord requires at her hands in not attending the services of people who do not believe or preach the gospel of grace; she is serving God by so doing, and by not taking her children to hear false doctrine proclaimed. We do not see how she could do otherwise, with a conscience void of offense before God. Be encouraged in this conflict, for the Lord smiles upon those who love and revere him too much to even seemingly stay up the hands of those who pervert the gospel of grace. To dwell alone is better than to dwell with those who reproach the truth which we love.—ED.]

FORESTBURG, Texas March 9, 1905.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In sending my remittance to the dear old family paper, which is all the preaching I get in this desert land, I want to thank our kind editor and publishers for their kindness and forbearance in sending the paper to me when I am so far behind, but I want to assure you, dear ones, that it was not be-

cause the paper was not appreciated or the doctrine was not what I love, for if I know my own sinful heart, it contains the doctrine I was made to love many years ago. Yes, dear ones, the Lord's people shall be a willing people in the day of his power, and I do feel it was so in my case, for no other power could have caused a poor, sinful creature to love that dear people as I do, though separated many miles from them, and never hearing a sermon preached, I feel that I love them all the more, for they bear the marks of my blessed Master in humbleness and meekness. O I feel that I love a people who esteem each better than themselves; I feel to be so little and insignificant, but they seem to have fellowship for me, and that is something I do crave above everything else, though unworthy. I wanted to write a word by way of appreciation to our dear editor and to all the household of faith for the kind and encouraging words they have written in the SIGNS, and tell them how much comfort they have been to a poor, unworthy mortal, who never sees an Old Baptist. I see that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, neither can I control my mind and thoughts to comfort any of God's little ones; if I could I certainly would before I closed this rambling letter. I will only say to them, Write on, and may the good Lord bless all your labors to his own glory.

Many have expressed my very thoughts in the loss of brother Beebe; may the good Lord uphold you, and all the household of faith. If you see proper publish this. I ask an interest in the prayers of God's people.

As ever, your little sister,

S. E. ELLIS.

SILVERTON, Texas, March 30, 1905.

EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BROTHER:—I herewith inclose post-office money order for three dollars for the dear SIGNS, which I feel I cannot give up as long as I can get the money to pay for it.

O the many ups and downs I have had, downs that have sunk me to the lowest depths, where it seemed no other had ever been, yet have been made able at times to feel and say, I know that the Lord liveth, and that he that waiteth on the Lord reneweth his strength. O that I could cease to look for comfort and happiness in this old, sin-cursed world that I sometimes hope I have been crucified to; but each trial seems to be new and comes in such a way that I feel unprepared to meet it, and feel that with such weakness as mine I must surrender at last; yet this morning I feel to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done in earth as in heaven, and teach me the measure of my days. O, if I did not feel to know that all my changes are wrought for me by an unchanging God, what would I do? I want always to feel that all things that befall me here are for the best. I am in my sixtieth year of natural life, and it is over forty years since, I hope, the Lord spoke to me and said, Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven. Then with this blessed assurance I felt I could never sorrow for sin again, but O how mistaken, for my sins weigh me down at times like mountains, and the billows of despair sweep over me, and I am made to cry out again, Lord, save, I perish.

I saw the earth close over my dear husband the 19th day of this month, and perhaps some know who read this how I feel as to earthly comfort. Will my dear kindred pray for me? for it seems I cannot for myself, feeling such great weak-

ness spiritually. I feel I am asking too much, and that I am trespassing on valuable time, so will close with the best of wishes for the SIGNS as a means of comfort to the little ones scattered abroad.

Your unworthy sister, I hope, in much sorrow,

E. C. FOGERSON.

UNION, N. J., March 31, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER EDITOR—BELOVED IN THE LORD:—I want to add my feeble testimony in behalf of the SIGNS. I do not think there has ever been a time that its columns have been more precious to me. I thought as I read sister Fisher's piece, How many of us there are who can testify that it is the only way in which we are fed and nourished; each have their own way of telling it, but it is the same sweet story, salvation by grace.

"Salvation! O the joyful sound,
'Tis pleasure to our ears;
A sovereign balm for every wound,
A cordial for our fears."

I can truly say goodness and mercy have followed me, and underneath are the everlasting arms bearing me upward and onward; blessed be his name.

I long to meet with the dear ones. I have not been to meeting since the association. A gentleman said to me he thought a *good* christian could worship anywhere. I agree with him, "but ye have not so learned Christ;" none are good, no, not one.

I had been thinking before our last paper came of the complete nothingness all over the land, but as I read our pastor's piece my heart responded a hearty amen. Here we are a little band, and how the dear SIGNS does bring us together into oneness of spirit. I am glad I love the doctrine my parents advocated, and their paper. Father had not been able to read in many years, yet so eager to listen, and said, First of all, tell me who the writers are, and it seems to bring them so near to me. Elder Durand gave us such a good piece to begin the new year. Sisters Terry and Brewster and myself are so glad to hear again from Elder Vail. Now, dear ones, write on for the comfort and edification of the saints.

I leave this for your disposal, and send love to the household of faith.

Yours unworthily,

MARY A. HAINES.

HAMILTON, Texas, April 16, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—The April 15th number of the SIGNS just received, and after reading the two editorials my soul has surely had a feast. Brother Chick's reply to brother McPherson's request was just suited to my taste; it was full of comfort to me. Elder Gilbert Beebe's editorial in regard to religious revivals is grand; surely nothing could have been more timely and profitable for the consideration of the church. It seems impossible for me to write for publication as some others do to profit; may I be allowed space however to say in my humble judgment that I have long thought that it is wrong for any true gospel church to ordain a man to the work of the ministry until he is fully established in the doctrine of God's sovereignty. If that doctrine can be erased from the church then I say there is no church or life. The fool says there is no God. I feel like I am the weakest among the weak who bear the name of Primitive Baptist, and desire the prayers of God's dear children that I may ever trust in Jesus.

I have been a reader of the SIGNS for twenty-two years, and I try to compare it with my experience and the Bible as I have understanding, and my love for it

seems unabating; it has been advocating the doctrine of God our Savior all these years, so I do not know how to do better than to keep my subscription paid up as long as I am able. I send my love to the editor and the many gifted writers for it, and bid you all Godspeed in his service. I believe it is about as impossible for me to stop loving the true grace and grace alone Baptists as it is for graceless hypocrites to love them.

I am your friend in hope of a better world,

W. D. WOOD.

ROMULUS, Okla., June 10, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Somehow I feel a desire to write you a few words, although if it be left to unworthy me there will be nothing in it that will be of any profit. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps;" neither is it of him that "willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." I praise God for this, for I do feel that had it been left for me to direct my steps, and to have followed my own will, and to have walked as I felt to desire, I would still have been in my lost condition, and could never have said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." How can any one say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost?

The Savior said, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." Now, dear brother, has not this already been the case with us poor worms of the dust? I feel assured that it was the voice of the Son of God that showed me that I was a lost and condemned sinner, else I would still have been traveling in that broad road that leadeth to destruction. Thanks be to God, there is no other name given under heaven and among men whereby we must be saved. I feel too unworthy to be called an Old School Baptist; I am so little and blind that I fear, at times, I have been deceived and am deceiving the children of God; but then when I have the happy privilege of meeting with those whom I love so dearly, I can but feel as John said, that I know that I have passed from death unto life, because I love the brethren. Love heals every wound and drives away every fear. It was because Jesus loved us that he was nailed to the tree; it was not because we had done any good thing, for he died and paid all our debt before we were born into the world. He loved us even before we loved ourselves, and he loved us when we were dead in trespasses and in sins; and I feel to rejoice that there is nothing whatever under heaven that can separate us from that love. I hope to be spared to be with the dear brethren and sisters, and to live with them the rest of the time which I have to spend in this low ground of tribulation. I have experienced what it is to be cast away where there is no one to talk with or to comfort me, but yet he gives me strength in time of need. I felt that I was not able to go to meeting, but still went, and it seemed to strengthen me so much that I felt better and stronger than before. We now have the pleasure of attending the meetings of the church close to us, and have able ministers who preach the blessed gospel in all its purity. I feel so glad that the dear Lord has spared my life, and at last has led me where I have the happy privilege of coming into these green pastures. What a great blessing it is to be with those of the same faith, and who have been led by the same Spirit. I am sure that our doctrine will stand all the tests. Although I may be

deceived in myself, yet the doctrine is sound.

I have written more than I thought I could write when I began; I did not feel as though it could be of any benefit to any one, yet it was my desire to write, and when I go on in what I feel to be a duty, there is peace of mind. Now do with this as you deem best. I hope that you will judge it, as you are more acquainted with the letter of the word than I am, for I am nothing but a poor sinner, saved by grace alone, if saved at all. May the blessing of God be with you and yours is my prayer.

In christian love, your sister,

(MRS.) ELLA DAVIS.

WILMER, Ark., Feb. 1, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Since the death of my four little children, or babes, four years ago, three being dead in the house at the same time, and all dying in less than one week, I have not felt or seemed to be the same being that I was before, but with bowed head and drooping spirit I go about, not caring to see or to be with any one, save a few special ones, my brethren. But when I begin to think and realize how our Savior died, and how he suffered, sweating, as it were, great drops of blood, and that, too, for his chosen people, his children, whom he loved with an everlasting love, I am then made to see the beauty of predestination, the wonders of electing love, and that, even, in that mournful hour and in the agony of death. There was left a sweet smile upon the cold and pallid lips of my children, and their innocent faces reminded me of the Savior's smile, when he says to his little children, "Come home." O then, as the heavens are garnished with God's eternal glory, I believe also that these little ones are happy in the bosom of their loving Savior, who called them home so early in life, out of this troublesome world of sin and sorrow. With this glorious assurance that they are at rest and free from the cares, trials, disappointments and follies of this unfriendly world, I can say with a full heart, and with full confidence in that God who doeth all things well, who commands and it stands fast, who works and none can hinder, who hinders and none can work, Thy will, O God, be done. Then again he said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." I trust then that my children are a part of that glorious kingdom of which Christ is King. Ought not I then to be fully satisfied, reconciled and content to sorrow on while in this world of sin, with a hope that I shall one day meet them beyond this vale of tears, where the parting hand is never given, and sorrow never enters? I have no confidence in the flesh, nor confidence in or fellowship for those who believe in Sunday Schools, Christian Endeavor societies, or in sending the gospel to foreign lands in order to save the heathen (so-called). I had rather believe, and I do believe that God is able within and of himself to raise up of the stones, whether Jews or Gentiles, believing children, in his own way and manner, and at the right time, which is the fullness of the time in which he has appointed that his chosen people, his children, shall come forth, and shall show forth his praise. Then the work of salvation must be all of God, and not, as Arminians say, partly of ourselves. Then this being true as the Scriptures abundantly teach, does not our God deserve all the praise, and man deserve none? As he has done all the work, and

has all the power, then let him that glorieth glory in the Lord.

Your brother,

C. G. IRWIN.

[BROTHER Irwin has certainly passed through sore affliction; the sympathy of all who read this letter must go out to him; but out of the affliction he has been sweetly led into the comfort of God's predestination, and has come to see more and more clearly that all power to save is God's, and so can have no confidence, as he has said, in the flesh, either his own, or in the fleshly efforts of others to do the work of the Lord. Neither predestination, or any other principle of the doctrine of God our Savior can be of comfort to any soul only as that soul is led by the way of affliction and trial to see their need of this doctrine, then, out of the hard and flinty rock, such souls can suck honey. The doctrine of God seems to us all a hard and flinty rock, until we are brought to see our need of just such a rock, and then how sweet is the assurance, the honey, which is hidden in that rock against such a time as this.—ED.]

LAWN, Texas, May 15, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I feel sad and lonely to-night; it is now near two o'clock in the morning; my husband is absent, sitting up with his mother, who is sick, and I am up with my sick babe; it is thundering and lightning, and a storm appears to be at hand; I feel impressed to write a little for the SIGNS, if the dear Lord will give me anything to write. While no eye can behold me, save the eye of Jehovah, and I see the lightning flash and hear the thunder roar, it brings to my mind the wonderful power and might of the Most High, who has all power in heaven and in earth, and among the inhabitants of earth, and none can stay his hand or say, Why or what doest thou? O, my dear kindred in Christ, how glad I am that it is so; the predestination of God, his overruling power and his control over all things and events, are beautiful to me; I rejoice in them. I feel that it is one of the greatest blessings that our heavenly Father has bestowed upon me, that I have been kept by his power from going away from these truths, with those who would limit the predestination of God. It is not because there is any goodness in me, but I am "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

We came to Texas five years ago, and I have not been in an Old Predestinarian Baptist meeting since we came here. There is no church anywhere around here, and so my husband and myself are holding our letters. O how I long to go home to my friends; where they live let me live, and where they die let me die. I feel like a little child that has been away from home for a long time, and is crying to go home. I feel sometimes as though I cannot stay away from home much longer. There is a church not far away of those who limit the predestination of God. If it were the will of God to send one of his ministers near us, I believe there would soon be a church constituted here. O how I long for a home; but if it is the will of God for me to live the rest of my life without a home here on earth, let me say, His will, and not mine, be done. I am so sinful and unworthy, perhaps it is best for me to be situated as I am, for I am not worthy to be with such good people. I have a little hope that cannot be bought with such corruptible things as silver and gold, that when I am done with time and time things, I have a home prepared for

me above, eternal in the heavens, where I shall never cease to sing God's praises throughout the endless ages of eternity. I feel that I cannot praise him enough for his goodness and mercy to unworthy me. "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

Now, dear brother, do with this as you think best. Your sister,

(MRS.) J. H. GRIFFIN.

WARWICK, N. Y., June, 1905.

DEAR ELDER KER:—About six years ago I began this article, then thinking I would send it to the SIGNS, but could not make up my mind to do so until now. Several of the churches in our place united, and with the aid of an evangelist held revival meetings, where night after night they tried to get the people to accept Christ. My idea is that Christ accepts us before we can accept him. I would have accepted him long ago if it had been in my power to do so, and I think I would be the happiest creature on earth if I could feel that I were a christian, and that my sins were forgiven me. One of my friends called and wanted me to go out to the meetings; I told her that the Old School Baptists did not believe in these exciting meetings, and that the Bible says, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." I think that Christ is able to do his work, and will save his people, it matters not where they are or of what nationality. I feel that all I have comes from Christ, and that he will do with me as he sees fit, as he is the author and finisher of our faith. While these meetings were going on I came to this passage in the Bible, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." This morning while I was about my household duties these words came in my mind, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." Why these things come in my mind I cannot tell.

Yours sincerely,

MARY A. DREW.

ASHLAND, Ill., April 8, 1905.

EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BROTHER:—I have felt for a long time that I would write for the SIGNS, but I feel so unworthy; I will try, however, to write a few lines. I love to read the SIGNS, and to hear from the brethren and sisters, for I think it is a great privilege.

We still have Elder John L. Scott to serve our little church at Union, better known as Yatesville. I do not get to attend our meetings very regularly, as my health is very bad in winter. I was able to go to meeting the first Saturday and Sunday in April. I know the Lord knows best, he is the one in whom I put my trust; he says, I will never leave nor forsake thee; I feel that this is too good for me. O how good it is to believe in the predestination of all things; some of our people to-day try to get around this strong doctrine; it is to-day preached at our church strongly; it is the true doctrine, and I enjoy hearing it. I am a believer in the Lord Jesus, he rules all things in heaven and in earth.

DELIA BURACKER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1905.

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EDITOR:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PROVERBS XXX. 12-15.

BROTHER W. H. Chaney, of Clairette, Texas, has called attention to Proverbs xxx., especially to that portion embraced from the twelfth to the fifteenth verse, and asks that we present such views as we have regarding this portion of the word of God.

First. The whole book of Proverbs is as much the inspired word of God as is the prophecy of Isaiah, or the four gospel narratives of the New Testament, and is to be handled with reverence, as is all other Scripture. If we know our own heart at all, our desire is, and has been from our youth, to search the Scriptures in order that we may know the mind of God in them, and not to sustain some view which may have been taken up by ourself. We have in our later years become more and more impressed with this one thing, viz: that the Scriptures must be given their full primary meaning, regardless of any difficulties which may appear in so doing. If there seem to be difficulties it is sure that they are only seeming, and not real. If we are not able to solve these difficulties it is because of our short-sightedness, and not because there is any real difference or contradiction to be found in the word; of this we feel sure. It may be that we mistake the meaning of some given portion of the word, but still the principle just named is right, and we ought to seek to abide by it in our reading and interpretation of the word. It has become very fashionable in these days to regard some portions of the word lightly, and to call the inspiration of some portions of the Bible into question. We should not think it needful to name this were it not that professed christian teachers engage themselves in this unholy criticism. We want to say with all the force and strength that is in us, that no man is fit to be called a believer, much less a christian minister, unless he accepts the Bible, from the beginning to the end, as the inspired word of God. It is becoming in one called to the ministry of the word to admit that he does not understand all things in the word, and that it is not in the grasp of his powers to trace out the divine harmony that is in all the word, but it is not becoming for any servant of God to cast doubt upon any portion of the Bible as being God's own word to men; no humble-hearted servant of God will do so. For ourself, we have long felt, and often have said, that could it be proved to us that any portion of the professed Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were but the record of man's thought, and man's judgment, or of man's observation merely, we could never again preach anything in the Bible as the eternal truth of God.

Perhaps before leaving this subject it might be well to explain more fully what we here mean by the inspiration of all the words of the Bible. We do not mean that, for instance, the words of Job's friends proceeded out of divine inspiration in themselves, or that the words of Satan were in him inspired, or that the words of the pharisees spoken to the

Savior, or to his disciples, or that the words of heathen kings or false prophets, or even the words of the very children of God were inspired at all times of God when they were spoken by them, but that the writers who recorded these things in the Bible were inspired so that they have given us an infallible record of what was said by all these various men, and that the record of their deeds is also absolutely correct. Historians all make mistakes, and all history outside of the Bible is to be read with a knowledge that the writers, though painstaking and careful and honest, were yet liable to be misinformed and mistaken. But the record of the Scriptures is not so; every word is just as the Holy Ghost would have it recorded, and there are no mistakes in the Scriptures. If there appears to be, it is our ignorance that makes it to so appear, and not any mistake in the word itself. Satan was not inspired of God to lie, but Moses was inspired so that he recorded just the falsehoods which the father of lies uttered. Job's friends were not inspired, but the writer of that book was inspired of God, so that we have an infallible record of just what they said. We trust that this will make our meaning plain.

The reason why we have here said these things is, that some who ought to speak better things have cast reflection upon this very book of Proverbs as being only a collection of human sayings, such as any uninspired man might get together, and that God was not in the writing of these things at all, in any other or deeper sense than he is in the writing or speaking of any sober and earnest man who strives to speak or write what seems good and true to him. If we believed this, we should not try to respond to the request of our brother, but because we do believe that every word in this book is as entirely the product of the moving of the Holy Ghost in him who wrote it as is any other part of the Scripture, we will try to present some thoughts upon the portion named by our brother. We feel sure that deep and true and wholesome lessons are here presented for the instruction and edification of all them that love and fear God. Still further, we desire to expressly say that the things recorded in this wonderful book were given to King Solomon in response to the desire of his heart before God when above all other things he desired wisdom to be given him. These words are the words of that wisdom which he desired from the Lord.

The verses named by brother Chaney, and almost all the rest of this book, contain general truths, applicable, as it appears to us, to many of the things which we meet with in this life as pilgrims and strangers who are seeking and journeying to a better country. Fallen human nature is searched into and probed, and its various failures and deceitfulness and unbelieving questionings are presented to view; and these things are true of all men, and in all ages of the world. Happy indeed are those to whom these things come as revelations of themselves to themselves, through the light of the Spirit in their hearts.

Let us take each verse of the number named by our brother. The statements of each are descriptive of some men everywhere and in all time. In verse twelve it is said, "There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness." It is evident that it was so in Solomon's day, for the text says so. "There IS a generation." It was so in the days of the blessed Savior, for he said much in that

way concerning the pharisees. It is well to say also that there were pharisees among the Gentiles as well as among the Jews, although among the Gentiles they did not bear the same name; not only was this true of the sect of the pharisees among the Jews, but also of thousands of them who were connected with other sects, such as the Sadducees, the Essenes and the Herodians. Phariseeism is found everywhere that a fallen man is found; phariseeism dwells in and plagues the heaven-born themselves, so that under it they cry out, "Who shall deliver me?" and in the case of the churches scattered throughout Galatia and the countries round about, so much of it was found that they were easily led away and bewitched when the doctrine which ministers to pharisaical pride was proclaimed among them, and it is as true as ever today among men, for boasting is rife among all classes of professed religionists, and creature merit and creature goodness is exalted in all directions, and on every hand. Much is said about the great improvement that has been made in the world in point of purity and goodness, but the text is still true: they that are pure in their own eyes are not washed from their filthiness. It is as true now as ever that men wash the outside, while within all is unclean; whited sepulchres men call them, and so the Savior called them; beautiful without, but within dead men's bones, and all uncleanness. This uncleanness may not be outbreaking sin in the words or in the conduct of men, but the boastfulness and self-pride which can exalt its own purity is the filthiest kind of filthiness. The pharisee of old was not half so free from his filthiness as was the sinner whom he despised. Job said, "If I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse."

This twelfth verse then speaks of self-righteousness among men in all ages, then as well as now, and now as well as then. The men that are pure in their own eyes are really filthy. One must be washed from his filthiness ere he can know that he is not pure. The eyes are blinded in him who says, I have no sin, I am pure. Such an one is filthy and does not know it. Brethren, let us take heed lest we also be again ensnared by the devil, and so come to believe ourselves purer than others. He that says, I have not sinned, is blinded by his sin, but when sin is put away then he confesses himself vile; and all his life on earth he will say, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." All the way along he will say, "Behold, I am vile." When men compare themselves with their fellow-men they may exalt themselves, but when they are given to compare themselves with the holy One, then they will not be able to speak, since they are men of unclean lips.

In verse thirteen we read, "There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up." This is the same generation as in verse twelve, and loftiness of heart and loftiness of look are but the firstborn child of self-righteousness. Such as these have no regard for the poor sinner, they pass him by, drawing their garments closer around them, that they touch him not; they see him not, even when he is at their very feet, because they carry the head so high. The lofty look, the lifted eyelid, are but the outward index of their self-esteem and superior excellency. "I am holier than thou," is written in their every look and gesture; Solomon said there were such men in his day. There always have been such men, and there are such men now. How great a mercy it is if any of

us have been humbled by grace so that our eyelids are not lifted up, but cast down in shame, and self-abasement, and self-contempt, and our eyes look to the earth rather than to the skies. The lofty ones can have no compassion for a poor sinner, since they are not sinners themselves, and even among disciples of the Master such self-esteem may find a lodging-place for a time: Peter was once boastful. What good could he have ministered to a poor sinner when he said, Though all men deny thee, yet will not I? What comfort and strength can any one now, who has it in his heart to say, I am walking obediently, and I can walk obediently, minister to such as Peter became when in that long and sorrowful night he denied his Lord with cursing and swearing? But Peter, after all this, could minister to his brethren, and so the blessed Savior said, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." His fall was needed to convert him from his still greater curse of pride and self-sufficiency; the lofty eyes and the lifted eyelid fell in Peter when he denied his Lord.

This very generation is still further described in verse fourteen. David said of them, They speak loftily oppression. To be full of self-esteem, and to despise others, is but the easy road to oppression and entire disregard of any rights that others may have. This is so in the common every day affairs of life. It is so with the ruling classes among men, in pursuit of their aims they may trample others as worms into the earth. Once we remember reading of one who had climbed to a high estate among men, in his pride and arrogance saying, What are the lives or the comfort of a thousand such as these, the rabble, compared with my great plans and purposes? This man's teeth were indeed like swords, as the text says, and his jaw-teeth like knives, to devour the poor and the needy. This is to-day the spirit of the great mass of the rulers among mankind. James said to some who would obsequiously humble themselves to show special favor to the rich, Hearken unto me, do not rich men oppress you? James could have written this at this very time with almost deeper force than ever before. What an abhorrent spirit then must the spirit of self-esteem and self-glorying be, since it leads to despising others and to devouring them; what a terrible spirit to find a lodgment in the church of God. If we bite and devour one another the root of it all is self-righteousness. I am wiser, and better, and holier than thou; I walk more consistently; I am sounder in doctrine; I am more faithful both in faith and practice than others; such a spirit is abhorred of God and it is evil, and works grievous harm among men; it may exist among the poor in this world's goods as well as among the rich, and is equally abhorrent to God in both. And so James said both to the rich and to the poor, "Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned." It is equally evil when the rich man boasts over the poor, and when the poor man thinks himself better than the rich. In either case their teeth are like knives and swords, to bite and devour each other. But we do not forget that the text refers especially to the lofty and the proud devouring the poor, and here comes in that which will be manifest wherever this self-righteous spirit exists. Such as are possessed by it will have no mercy upon such as are publicans, who can only plead for mercy upon a sinner. Mercy will never come to them through the mouths of such as are full of self-righteousness, but all the words of such will

be to their condemnation. If our brother has sinned, as long as we are not in a frame to consider ourselves lest we also be tempted, we shall never be able to restore him. If indeed we ever do restore him it will be when we ourselves are fully possessed of a spirit of meekness, and this spirit comes only where there is a heart-felt knowledge and conviction of our own sin.

As to the figure used in the next verse, the horse-leach, we do not know just what special thing this name represents, but this much is clear at least, viz: that the thought is that of being insatiable. Her daughters have but one cry, and that is, Give. Let much be given them, still the cry is for more, and it would seem that the desire is only fed by what is supplied to it, and grows more and more insistent and insatiable. Principles rather than particular men, or parties of men, are intended here, and wherever this desire for more and still more is manifested, there is the horse-leach and her daughters. Among natural men it shows itself in the reckless disregard of the comfort of the people by imposing higher and still higher taxes upon them, professedly for the support of the government, but really to line the coffers of those who have such things in charge. The spirit of insatiate greed has always been and still is in the world, and love of this world, of its praise, honor, glory and wealth, work more harm among the children of God than almost all things else put together. The Spirit of Christ does not cry, "Give, give," but rather, Bestow. It is not the spirit of the master, but of the servant that is inculcated in all the life and teaching of the Master. May the Spirit of the blessed Lord search us, and know us, and show unto us all our secret sins, and cleanse us from self-seeking and self-righteousness, that we may not despise others, that we may not devour with teeth like knives and swords the poor and needy, and that we may have the spirit of service rather than that of demanding service; this is the spirit, whether in our own heart or in others, that is still crying, Give, give, as do the daughters of the horse-leach.

We will here leave this theme for the consideration of brother Chaney and all others who may read. These are very solemn words of the wise man. May the Lord grant us a spirit to hear and to heed them.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(WRITTEN BY ELDER JOHN MCCONNELL.)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the New Vernon Church, June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1905, to the churches of which this meeting is composed, sends salutation with love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED:—In this our annual epistle of love and fellowship may we be comforted together in the assurance subscribed to by the apostle, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."—Rom. viii. 28.

Next to the glory of his grace God has purposed the good and blessedness of his people as the chief aim or end of all he does, or ever will do, in this world. It was not according to his wisdom to leave them to the conduct of their own understanding and will; but he prepares them for that salvation he has chosen them to, by revealing his Son in them by the Holy Ghost. To prevent any defeat of his purpose, and that the purpose of his grace might stand, he prepares them to

the appointed end by a giving of all things pertaining to godliness. All things whatsoever necessary to salvation are given of God freely to us, and wrought effectually by his power. Salvation in this sense we understand to be the perfecting of the saints in blessedness, and the things necessary to that salvation, or which accompany salvation, we understand to be all gifts, grace and operations which will assure us of that salvation; God working these things in us in that ability which he has reserved to himself, and this power is not moved or governed by the creature's act, but by the good pleasure of God's will. Of all the things which work together for good to the called according to God's purpose no exception can be made; it is absolutely all things. "Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Let us briefly consider some of the things which must be evident in our presentation before the Father in love. After election, the first thing to be done for us is to be redeemed from sin. The justice of God must be satisfied; all righteousness must be fulfilled: the devil must be destroyed and his works of darkness dissolved, that immortality might be brought to light. None of which could ever be done but by one of the same nature as the party transgressing, and yet equal in power with the majesty offended. For this purpose God sent forth his Son, made of a woman and made under the law, &c., that what the law could not do, because of its weakness through the flesh, the Son of God in the likeness of sinful flesh, might perform, and so condemn sin in that flesh which gave it entrance. In God's Son we have redemption through his blood (the forgiveness of sins). "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us:" "blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." And, if reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more shall we be saved by his life. It may truly be said of every one he died for, "He is just, he shall surely live." No man is actually justified till he actually believes; but repentance and faith being purchased by Christ, they shall as certainly be made to repent and believe, as that Christ died for them. That faith which was purchased by Christ empties us of our own righteousness by discovering our uncleanness and showing the necessity of a better. It reveals in whom this better righteousness is to be found, and that this better righteousness and our own cannot stand together. It also empties us of our own strength; that is, of all confidence in self to obtain this better righteousness. It convinces us of impossibility to keep the law, but assures us that nothing is impossible with God, and makes us therefore lay hold of the hope set before us. It is faith which works (by love) all the while, though we know it not till afterward. Another necessity is sanctification. Justification is a righteousness imputed: sanctification is the righteousness of God infused. The first is in order of nature, but they commence together in order of time. Sanctification is the divine nature imparted, or communicated, by which the old man is put off with his deeds, or is subdued and brought into subjection. So we are said to be translated out of Satan's kingdom (or

government) into Christ's. Christ is formed in us; we are given dispositions according to God, or a heart after his own. It is also termed, the putting away of old things, and a becoming new of all. There is a change of principles and aim of a man's life. The old faculties are not blotted out, or destroyed: the same understanding, will and affections remain, but they are now disposed and qualified to walk in the way of holiness.

The calling of God is unto faith and holiness. These things are necessary to salvation, for without faith it is impossible to please God; and without holiness shall no man see God. The new creature is God's workmanship entirely and alone. Not born of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man: but born of incorruptible seed, of the Spirit, which is plainly to be the offspring of God. It is he that hath made us his people, and not we ourselves. "Of his own will begat he us." The genuine import of salvation is broad and comprehensive. It extends to and includes all things which conduce to the perfect accomplishment of the thing itself. The promise of salvation implies and carries in it all things pertaining to safety. Of these things, redemption, faith, holiness and holding out to the end, are absolute essentials to salvation; any of these being absent would invalidate the rest. God's people are chosen unto salvation, and faith and holiness is the way of actual possession. These things they must be ordained to, as well as to salvation itself; for, to be predestinated to the adoption of sons, and to be conformed to the image of Christ, they must be predestinated also to all intermediate dispensations and grace which is needful. They are therefore said to be chosen to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. God wills the end first; then the way. The end is the cause of the way, and election the cause of them both. God has no delight in the things of a man. Self-pleasing, self-justification, and all that the the spirit of man can conceive as wisdom, shall not glory in his presence. The gift of faith and call unto holiness work death to a walk by sight, and lying down in sorrow always results to them who fall into such temptation. But what so often seems evil and hard to be borne works for our good. In the trial of our faith Jesus is revealed in a fullness of grace and truth, and we are made able to bear hardness like good soldiers. All the power of Satan cannot work evil to one of God's little ones: none shall hurt in all his holy mountain: none can pluck them out of his hand. He is faithful in all his promises. Faithfulness was the necessary qualification he must have to do the will of the Father for which he came into the world; and this was his will, "That of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day:" that is, that he should give them eternal life. And we find him declaring that he will do it, according to his promise so often repeated in John vi. 39, 40, 44, 54, and he keeps them in faithfulness to his truth; viz. that the Scripture might be fulfilled. He could have kept Judas as well as the rest had he been committed to his charge, for he gives to every one according as he received for them; (see Psalms lxviii. 18, and Eph. iv. 8.) In one place it is said he received gifts for men, and in the other he gave gifts to men. These therefore for whom he received eternal life cannot fail of it, unless he should fail of his trust. This he cannot do, for he is faithful in all his house. He will never part with the inheritance of his Father;

he will bring every son to glory. In that he liveth, his life is everlasting intercession for them. Surely there is great weight in the language of Paul, "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." The sum of his intercession is, that those given to him might be kept from evil; that they might be one with him and the Father; and that they might behold his glory. If the salvation of those for whom he died was the aim or end of his death; if it be the Father's will that they should be saved; if also, this salvation be the thing for which he prays, and whatsoever he asketh of God he will give; it needs must follow that the intent of Christ's death can never be defeated. How precious and restful the assurance is that the word of the Lord endureth forever; that his days shall have no end. What he commands will surely come to pass. For his name's sake, for his word's sake, for Jesus' sake, he will never suffer a work he begun to fail of performance to the end.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session May 24th, 25th and 26th, 1905, to the associations and meetings with whom we correspond, sendeth greeting.

AGAIN in the providence of God we have been graciously permitted to meet together as an association of churches. We have been abundantly blessed with the preaching of the word, each in harmonious strain presenting those things which make us to see "what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Christ Jesus." The reports from the different churches show abundance of the grace of God in preserving peace and harmony amongst us. Your messages of love and fellowship extended to us by your Minutes and messengers we greatly appreciate, and desire that the correspondence may continue to express our fellowship one for another. We have been blessed with a good attendance, both of ministers and hearers. We hope we feel thankful for the many good things from the Lord which have been vouchsafed unto us in providence and grace.

The next meeting of our association will convene with the church at Wilmington, Del., at the usual time, next May, 1906, when and where we hope to continue our correspondence of love and fellowship with you.

J. G. EUBANKS, Moderator.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, held with the church at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., May 31st and June 1st and 2nd, 1905, sends greeting to the sister associations and meetings with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—We are glad of the privilege again of writing to you our annual epistle of love and fellowship in the truth. Intercourse between those of like precious faith, who possess the Spirit and are led by it, cannot fail to be edifying and encouraging. From the earliest days epistles of love were wont to be written by apostles and churches to others who were too far away to meet readily or statedly. This custom was good then, and it is no less good now.

We have at this session of our association been made glad by letters from our

own churches, and the coming together of their messengers. We have also again been made to rejoice by the coming of your letters, messengers and ministers to us. Such blessings we are not in any wise worthy to receive; they are given us from the free mercy of a covenant-keeping God. We are glad also to say that your ministers who have come to us have been enabled to preach the everlasting gospel with special light and power. Under the preaching there have been many evidences that the hearts of the Lord's people have been filled with tender contrition, praise and joy. Good is the word of the Lord, and in it is the glory of God manifested, and it is seen by those whose hearts are prepared; all these sing and give praise to his name; this is a sweet employ indeed.

The next session of this association is appointed to be held with the church at Southampton, Pa., to begin, as usual, on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1906. We trust that we shall be favored to meet there again your messengers, and to hear of your welfare as the Lord may prosper and bless you.

D. M. VAIL, Moderator.

ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the New Vernon Church, to the associations, corresponding meetings and churches with which we correspond, sends greeting.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—It has again been our privilege to meet in an associate capacity, and to receive your Minutes, messengers and messages of love and fellowship. For such a blessed privilege we desire to be thankful to our God, whose mercy endureth forever. Our meeting has been harmonious, no uncertain sound having been heard. The preaching has been especially good, glorifying God and comforting his people. We desire a continuance of your correspondence: it is good to be thus acquainted with the order of the house of God.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, in the city of Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., to begin Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1906, when and where we shall again hope to receive your messengers and Minutes.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder John McConnell, April 27th, 1905, at the residence of the bride's parents, 371 Fifth St., Brooklyn, N. Y., Loversa A., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Cudney, and Tracy H. Windrum, of Indianapolis, Ind.

By Elder J. M. True, at the residence of the bride's parents, June 7th, 1905, John T. Hayes and Miss Adelia Kirkham, both of Kansas, Edgar Co., Ill.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At her home, Kelly Corners, N. Y., June 16th, 1905, after a lingering illness of pulmonary trouble, **Mary Stonger Hubbell,** wife of Burr Hubbell. The deceased was not a professor, yet was brought up under the teaching of the Lutheran creed. But as her affliction grew upon her she became fearful of death until the past winter, realizing there could be no recovery from the fatal malady she seemed to be resigned to her lot, and the last week of her life she longed for the change, and finally passed peacefully away to her happy home, as she said she had a view of it as a land of sunshine on Sunday morning before she died on Friday evening. No man could give better attention to a sick wife than did my son Burr; everything that kind hands or physicians could do was done, but to no purpose, God had willed that she should go hence, leaving husband, mother, three brothers and other relatives to mourn, but their grief was somewhat assuaged by her reconciled mind to God's will. We all feel the loss we sustain, and our help is in the Name of him that made heaven and earth.

Elder Slauson preached to the comfort of the afflicted. May the Lord comfort the afflicted.

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLY CORNERS, N. Y.

Dr. John Thorne, of Baltimore, Md., passed away from earth June 12th, 1905. A suitable obituary will soon be published in the SIGNS. His illness lasted, as we are informed, about ten days. He was well and widely known among Old School Baptists. —ED.

ORDINATION.

PURSUANT to a call by New Hope Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, at Greenbush, Warren Co., Ill., for a presbytery for the purpose of ordaining brother B. F. Butler to the full work of the gospel ministry, the following churches and brethren responded:

Friendship church, Winchester, Ill.—Elder Giles Reeder and Deacon Elias Taylor.

Mt. Zion church, near Astoria, Ill.—Deacons Wm. Stevens and J. S. Fisher.

Waterford church, near Lewiston, Ill.—Deacon L. G. Owens.

New Hope church, at Greenbush, Ill.—Elder J. B. Dobbs, pastor, and deacons Alfred Simmons and Joshua Ray.

The presbytery organized by choosing Elder J. B. Dobbs Moderator, and Elder Giles Reeder Clerk.

Elder Rolla Simmons being present, was invited by the presbytery to participate in the ordination.

The matter of ordination and the candidate were put by the church into the hands of the presbytery.

The church appointed brother Thompson Simmons as spokesman for the church.

Brother Butler was called upon to relate his feelings and impressions with regard to his experience and call to the ministry.

The spokesman was then interrogated as to brother Butler's qualifications, as given by Paul to Timothy. All questions being answered affirmatively, and brother Butler's qualifications being satisfactory, by motion and second, the presbytery decided to enter into the ordination of the candidate.

By motion and second, Elder J. B. Dobbs was chosen to deliver the charge, and Elder Giles Reeder to offer prayer.

After prayer and laying on of hands the charge was delivered.

The work of the presbytery being completed, adjourned.

ELDER J. B. DOBBS, Moderator.
Attest: ELDER GILES REEDER, Clerk.
GREENBUSH, Ill., June 17, 1905.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS."

Elder Horace Lefferts, Pa., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

PROVIDENCE permitting, the next meeting of Peace Valley Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of the Primitive order, will be held with Poolville church, Poolville, Parker Co., Texas, instead of Friendship church, Acton, Hood Co., Texas, as per Minutes of last meeting, commencing on Friday before (at 10 o'clock a. m.) and embracing the third Sunday in August, 1905. Those coming by railroad from any direction will be met with conveyance at Weatherford, Texas, Thursday before the meeting. All lovers of truth attend.

W. O. RUTLEDGE, Association Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in Hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.
717 HOWARD ST., DETROIT, Mich.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m., in the Red Men's Hall, First and Congress Streets in Troy, N. Y., and at 2:30 p. m. in West Sand Lake, N. Y., at the home of Mrs. Moul. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 73. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1905. NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WINNSBORO, Texas, Jan. 8, 1905.

DEAR ELDER CHICK, AND ALL THE SAINTS OF OUR MOST HIGH GOD:—It is with a hesitating mind that I attempt to pen a few words for your consideration, for I often doubt as to my sincerity in the profession I have made; but as weak as I feel myself to be, I would not take worlds for my little hope. I often think of my first serious thoughts in regard to my salvation, and wonder why it is that I cannot realize my feelings prior to that time; for I once went into the ranks of the Methodists (Babylon), and partook of their good works, and I verily believed they were right; but often when alone I felt happier, and felt that I was not doing right. This caused me much trouble, and I began to look for a straightedge by which I could try them. All who have been led astray know, when they have an understanding of God's word, that it condemns sin and all its works, and I will tell you I was not long in finding that I was lost in the enemy's camp. When I realized this I turned about to find the church that the straightedge would fit, and found it to be the much hated Primitive Baptists, and on November 27th, (Sunday,) 1904, I asked for membership with the people I hope I love. Does it not seem strange that I lost myself for the time being? I felt that I could tell those people wonderful things that my Lord had done for me; but not so, I only told them that I was a poor, miserable wretch, not worthy of their confidence, then I burst into tears, and to my surprise, a sweet peace was mine for a few moments; but when I came to myself I was afraid they would reject me, but as miserable as I thought myself to be, I was unanimously received. At my request, baptism was deferred one month, and on December 25th, 1904, I was led down into the water and buried in the liquid grave by dear brother Rufus Rodney, who is sound in the faith, and when we came up out of the water I was met by my uncle, brother I. H. Webb, and could go no farther, but lost control of myself and burst into tears, and could only say of my Savior, "Praise his name." Then my dear mother met me, and O how happy she was. Next my aunt and several others gave me comforting evidence of their joy; but let me say, I did not feel worthy a place in their loving

confidence, and felt that I was deceiving them; I felt to say with Paul, I am "less than the least of all saints." Although feeling my infirmities and unworthiness as I did, I was happy, I was glad; glad that I had followed in the ordinance of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I am sending two letters for publication, one from Elder H. B. Jones, the other from my uncle, I. H. Webb. I am sending them without their consent or knowledge; they are encouraging and comforting to me, and I hope they will be to others.

I will say a few words in regard to the dear old SIGNS, and all the saints, not as a judge, but as encouragement to the household of faith. I have read the SIGNS a great deal, and if I know anything about the Scriptures, the SIGNS is in harmony with them, and has been all the while; this should encourage the editor to stand firm, be on the watch, and keep out of its columns everything that has any tinge of Arminianism; we have to be careful, we have to stand firm. If all who bear our name were of like precious faith they would not condemn us for standing in the old paths; but they are not of us, therefore they went out from us. May the God of all grace give his cross-bearers everywhere grace as their day, and may he build up Zion, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

R. W. DYKES.

MT. VERNON, Texas, Dec. 28, 1904.

MR. RICHARD DYKES—MY DEAR YOUNG BROTHER IN THE JOYS AND SORROWS OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST:—I received your loving epistle this morning, which was read with much comfort, and of which I feel so unworthy. I was truly glad to hear of your joy in following the blessed Master; I felt to know that this would be the case with you when I read the first letter you wrote me. I would have been so glad to have been with you all at Hopewell, but it was not so ordered of the Lord.

The relation of your experience in joining the church, and being baptized, calls me back to a period in my own life, some twenty-nine years ago, in the old State of Georgia, where I was born and raised. Serious impressions in regard to my spiritual welfare begun with me when so young that I cannot remember the first. Before I was nineteen years of age I was permitted to try fully all my power to bring myself into a justified state, or to the point where I could feel that I was numbered among the Lord's redeemed. Coming fully to the end of my own strength, every refuge having utterly failed, all my efforts at good works, prayers, repentance, belief, acceptance, which were all more or less intermingled in my previous good resolutions, all having failed to bring me the long sought and much needed relief, I was brought down at the feet of sovereign mercy, so to speak, with a felt sense of condemnation justly deserved, but with the prayer of the poor publican welling up from the depths of a broken heart, "God be merciful to me a sinner," sweet peace, to my surprise, as a heaven-sent messenger, sped as it were on angels' wings, to the perfect relief of my troubled soul. O the simple, childlike love for the Lord and his dear people; my joyful heart turned to them with longing desire to tell them what a dear Savior I had found. Only a few months elapsed before the opportunity, with courage sufficient, was afforded me, and I went before the little church called Mt. Paran, in Crawford Co., Ga., of which my dear, aged mother was a member; I was then

only a little past nineteen years of age. I thought I could relate to this dear little band of disciples all my travels through the darkness of night to the break of day, and the sweetness of that breaking of day to my poor, troubled heart, but alas, I was too full for expression; I could only say, If I am anything, I am a poor sinner saved by grace, and then burst into tears, and sobbed (I imagine) like a child that had been lost from home, father and mother, and had just found them again. Your relation of your experience in joining the church seemed so like my own that it led my mind to write you the above. I will tell you a little more in which, for aught I know, we may part, but if we do we will come together again at the baptismal waters. To my surprise (for I thought I must tell much more than I did before Old Baptists would receive me) I was received into the fellowship of the church by a unanimous vote. My baptism, at my request, was deferred one month, and such a fight of afflictions as I endured up to the time of baptism I can never describe. Saturday evening after I was received into the fellowship of the church I returned to my mother's house, and all that long autumn evening I was pressed down with an indescribably miserable feeling, as though I had committed some crime; and this same miserable, fearful feeling followed me most of the time up to the very time when I was led down into the water. At the waterside, before I was baptized, my sister, several years older than I, related a beautiful experience, but it brought no joy to me; my mind was totally enshrouded in darkness, a dreadful feeling that I could not account for, and yet I still desired to be buried in the liquid grave, and when this was done I came up out of the water rejoicing in heart; my joy and peace were as inexpressible as before my sorrow had been. And now, my dear brother, I feel that we come together again, and I can but feel that we have been together more or less all the while. Is it not so?

Now I will sing you a somewhat doleful song of my life along down the years since the happy days above mentioned. How little I then knew of the difficulties of the way, the sins, the doubts and fears, the trials and tribulations, only a few bright spots, a few elevated places on the long journey, which I felt to rejoice in at the time as a revelation of my Master's face; but down in the dark valley a good portion of my time I have almost lost sight of all these bright spots, and the language of the poet seems to be mine:

> "O once I had a glorious view
> Of my redeeming Lord;
> He said, I'll be a God to you,
> And I believed his word;
> But now I have a deeper stroke
> Than all my groanings are:
> My God has me of late forsook,
> He's gone, I know not where."

So the prayer of the poor publican was from necessity mine many years ago, has been from the same cause mine all along, and is from the same cause mine yet: "God be merciful to me a sinner." Instead of growing better and stronger, it seems that I have grown worse and weaker. I sometimes hope that it is through the light of revelation that the corruptions and unprofitableness of the flesh are made more and more manifest. This I know, that I have become more and more settled in the idea that no sinner of Adam's race can ever meet God in peace save through the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ. I know that if I am saved it is because my sins were laid upon him, and for them he suffered, bled

and died, and his obedience to the holy law of his divine Father, even unto death, was for me, and consequently is mine. But O how the motions of sin in my members harrass and torment me, until I doubt if I am really one of his. I know not what all this is for, except it be that I might be brought into the fellowship of his (Jesus') sufferings; that I might be made conformable to his death, and to know the power of his resurrection. One thing from time to time has been encouraging, comforting and strengthening to me along the journey of life: I know I love my Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, King, High Priest and Sacrifice, Shepherd, Husband, Friend and Brother, the Savior to whom the patriarchs, prophets and apostles bear testimony, the Savior of whom the Old and New Testaments testify, the Savior to whom the experience of saints of all ages bears witness, One who is meek, humble, poor, tempted, grieved, sorrowful, like unto his brethren in all these, yet wise, mighty, powerful, wonderful: "his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, the everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace," &c., one with his divine and holy Father in all these. I love that same Spirit, and I am shown it in the walk and conversation of his dear, humble, cross-bearing followers. If not deceived, to know that I am one of them is the highest aspiration of this poor heart of mine. I have been troubled sometimes about the "foes without," but the "foes within" have all along given me by far the most trouble. I agree with you as to why God's people love one another: they are all born of one parentage, taught by one Teacher, and by one almighty power love is shed abroad in each heart.

In conclusion, dear brother, allow me to say, your kind words to me in your letters, and your clear expressions of gospel, doctrinally and experimentally, coming to me as they have to-day, at a time when I am very much cast down in feelings, have drawn you very close to me in fellowship, if indeed I know what fellowship is; and although I am several letters behind with my correspondence, I have felt to write you these scattered thoughts so soon, which please accept as a token of brotherly love and esteem. Write again when you have a mind and opportunity.

In hope of eternal life, your brother,

H. B. JONES.

WACO, Texas, Jan. 12, 1905.

RICHARD W. DYKES—MY DEAR NEPHEW:—I think of you often, and in many ways, and I feel like writing to you to express some of my thoughts and feelings. I think of your manifested faith, and the wonderful power of sovereign grace in bringing you to see and realize the distinction in the work and power of an almighty God, and the works of the flesh and the devil. In all this I feel to rejoice and praise the Lord for his continued mercy and the fulfillment of his word and promise. He has said he would never leave himself without a witness, and these occasional manifestations that we see of such in bringing the sons and daughters of Adam to acknowledge the sovereignty of his love and power in their redemption from sin is one of the greatest and most glorious evidences that can be produced to keep his believers from falling away into the slough of despondency and discouragement. If we could see no evidences of his promises and his word coming to pass and being fulfilled, then we might with some degree of propriety have good reason to doubt the truth of anything being cer-

tain. We are prone to doubt all these things anyway at times, and it is one of the wonderful mysteries of God's power and the work of grace that keeps his believers from falling. Yes, they are kept unto salvation; they do not keep themselves, but the power that once saved from sin continues to keep, and save, and preserve through time; hence one salvation, and this is Christ the Lord. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." There can be but one true way, and if Christ is that way why should we desire any other way? We salt meat to save it, and if the salt has done the work of preserving in the outset, the same savory power continues to preserve and keep this meat while it remains in its state of preservation. The meat had no power to save itself, neither had it any power to resist salvation (or salt), and neither does this same meat have any power while it remains in time to either extract or replenish this salt, but it is kept unto its first state of preservation by the same power and influence; and there is another beauty arising here I will speak of, and that is, the salt coming in contact with the meat does not make any change in the nature of the meat, whether it be pork, beef, fish, or any other kind, but we see a great difference in its condition. The meat does not become part of the salt, neither does the salt become meat, but the meat does become partaker of the salt, and "can't help it." So in like manner in our being saved from sin we become partakers of that power that saves, and in such a manner that it is effectual through time, and there is no power, principality, throne or dominion that can separate us from this love, this salvation; our life is hid with Christ in God; I in you, and you in me, and I in the Father. All this work is so wonderfully clothed in mystery that no living mortal can fathom or explain it, yet it is so simple in its effects that the babe in its mother's womb could leap for joy and rejoice in the unspeakable fullness of glory. Wonder of wonders! Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, praise his holy name. I think of you being the first of my nephews, and the only one of my parents' grandchildren that has ever united with the Old School Baptists. This to me is mysterious in some respects, yet it teaches me that I must be still and know that he is God, and it is not mine to direct or judge of his ways. I have now passed the meridian of life, and you are young, and I feel to sympathize with you in your situation in life, knowing from experience something of the difficulties along the way, and the many discouragements you will have to encounter, but I feel now like I can say in truth, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." Your situation in life seems to be similar to mine in many respects, which makes me feel like I want to try if possible to offer you some encouragement to press on in the discharge of all incumbent duties. I have been a sluggard, and disobedient to the calling of my Master, and now am lame and a cripple in the camps of Israel, and sometimes feel like I am a stumbling-block and in the way of my comrades, which makes me feel discouraged, and I find myself complaining at my lot in life, but then again when I am revived, and the Sun of righteousness shines forth in my soul, I can sing,

"In all my Lord's appointed ways,
My journey I'll pursue;
Hinder me not, ye much loved saints,
For I must go with you."

Now may God in his wonderful way guide and direct you, and give you grace to sustain you through life in all your

career, that you may be useful in his cause, and an honor to the calling wherewith you are called.

Your devoted uncle,

I. HARVEY WEBB.

PERSONVILLE, Texas, Feb. 27, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—You will find inclosed a letter written by brother Robert S. Pace, which I would like to see published in the SIGNS. It was indeed rich to me, and I would like all the children of God to feast upon it, too. I have never seen brother Pace, but I can say of a truth that he and I are surely related in Christ Jesus the Lord. Brethren, let us all do as brother Pace has done here, write upon the subjects of peace and love, and not upon subjects that tend to strife and confusion. O how thankful we should be to receive such epistles of love.

Your brother in hope of life eternal,

JAMES D. TRACY.

PINEHILL, Texas, Feb. 6, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER TRACY:—I know that you will be surprised to hear from me, but I want to tell you how much I enjoyed your good letter to the readers of the SIGNS, which I have just read. I read many good letters in the SIGNS, and feel sometimes to write and tell them of the comfort they bring to me, but often before I can write my mind is darkened, and a feeling sense of my unworthiness comes over me, and I fear that I am only thankful through the flesh. At the present time I feel shut up in darkness, and not worthy to claim you or any of the Lord's little ones as my kindred. My thoughts come and go like a flash, and I cannot hold my mind upon one thing long enough to write it down; such has been my experience for the past two months. I seem to have lost all interest in things pertaining to Christ's kingdom, yet because of the troubles in Zion I am cast down and go mourning day and night. Again, my sins are ever before me, and I am made to wonder if any of the children of God who have passed from death unto life have troubles like mine. In this state of mind I am left to wander in darkness, with no heart to pray for deliverance. It was the contrast between my experience and yours which caused me to reflect upon the past, and such reflections are always mixed with fears and with enjoyment; there have been a few moments of rejoicing along with my days of mourning, but they are so soon taken away that I am forgetful of all but my troubles; still my troubles are not such as the Lord's dear children are made to mourn under. You spoke of such times of trouble in your experience as caused you to resort to the woods and other secret places, and to pour out your heart to God in prayer. David said, "In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God. Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him." I cannot locate the time or place of the beginning of my trouble, when I first had thoughts of death and its consequences; but it was in my nineteenth year that I became concerned about getting religion, and preparing myself to meet God in peace when I should die. My first step was, not to pour out my heart before God in prayer, but to go to the revival meetings of the New School Baptists, and resort to their public mourning-benches. O how different from the ones who have been convicted of the Lord, who are satisfied with none but the most secret places, there to pour out their souls before God alone. I tried to manifest more interest in their meetings, but my eyes were dry, and I had no heart to mourn or pray.

Then I thought it my duty to join with them, and to be baptized, as that was all that seemed to be lacking in my case at that time; but O what a disappointment, what anguish of soul, what sore trials came upon me when I presented myself for membership. A little girl had presented herself at the same time, and the preacher questioned her first. While I was waiting my turn I heard the preacher ask the little girl how long she had been praying for the Lord to pardon her sins. I could then have wished myself a thousand miles away. I had never cried unto the Lord for mercy, and what was I to answer when this question should come to me? However, the preacher did not ask me that question, but another of which I was still more ignorant and less prepared to answer. No wonder that I went home that night feeling myself a guilty sinner before God, yet I had not the courage to confess my hypocrisy before the church, so-called. This brings me to a time and place which I shall never forget. When I reached my room and was alone, after joining the church, I spoke for the first time; I was so burdened as to fall upon my knees and to pour out my soul unto the Lord, confessing my sins and pleading for his pardoning grace; this was the beginning of my deep sorrows within, and my hypocrisies without; I abhorred myself on account of my sins, and was ashamed of my profession to the church; I remained so until the joy of the Lord seemed to come gradually into my soul, after nearly six years of sorrow and shame, and in a manner that I can neither understand or describe. At the end of that time I found myself rejoicing in the full assurance of God's love and mercy through the Lord Jesus Christ, which blessings were all stored up in him for his people from before the foundation of the world. Before I had this hope I felt alone in the church, without hope and without God in the world, but after I obtained this hope I found that I was still alone where I was, and I was afterward led to see that the Old School Baptists were the only church, and the only home in the world (though not of the world) for such a poor sinner as I knew myself to be.

I have told you of the first time that I was given a heart to pray, but I cannot tell when or where I was given this faith which looks to Jesus alone for salvation for time and for eternity. This heart to pray, like the blessings of joy and gladness, is not at my command; how often would I pray, but cannot. When I would study to show myself approved unto God, I find that instead, I am trying to justify myself before men; when I would try to meditate upon the wonderful things of God, I am absorbed in the affairs of this life, and my mind is turned away from the Lord, and I am made to cry, "O wretched man that I am!" I go about in sorrow and cannot pray; I mourn over the troubles in Zion, and cannot cry unto the Lord for his help; I am grieved over my sins, and do not know how to pray for deliverance. Brother Tracy, if this is not prayer I know not what it is. It is a groaning within which cannot be uttered, yet I fear that it is all of the flesh, and not of the Spirit.

But I am writing more than I intended, and cannot write my thoughts as I would like. I feel that my experience cannot be interesting to any one, and sometimes feel no interest, or at least no comfort, in meditating over my wandering ways myself. Surely there can be no beauty in it to you, such as I find in meditating upon your dream of the feast. What a striking figure of the true servants of the Lord; how beautifully it pictures God's ministers

who have nothing at hand at their disposal with which to feed the flock of God; but, at the hour when they are seated at the Lord's table, gathered together in his name, he supplies his servants with all manner of delicious food to be set before the people. The disciples wondered how the multitude was to be fed when they had only a few loaves and fishes; even so with the ministers of the Lord now; how often they stand trembling, with nothing to set before the people, the little ones who are looking to them for bread, as the Lord supplies it to them; but their trembling and fear only show that they are empty in themselves, and must trust only in the Lord, and the Lord will graciously provide them with necessary food for the little ones. How different from the ministers of other orders of religion, they can tell just what they are going to preach (if it may be called preaching) the day before, or it may be the month before. I was at a meeting once when the preacher made apologies to his town friends, who were with him out in the country, in this way: You will pardon me for preaching the same sermon to-day that I did yesterday; I hope that you will find it interesting still. It is not so with God's ministers, for they look to him for the words they are to speak, and he is as able to supply them with words as they utter them as he would be to give them wisdom to prepare a sermon beforehand, if it so pleases him. Now may the Lord bless you with wisdom, and if I should never see you, or hear your voice, may I often see your letters in the SIGNS. If not asking too much, I would be glad to get a letter from you personally.

Less than the least, your brother,

ROBERT S. PACE.

PINEHILL, Texas, April 2, 1905.

EDITOR SIGNS OF THE TIMES—BELOVED IN THE LORD:—The inclosed letter from brother James D. Tracy is comforting and instructive to me, and I think others would enjoy it also.

I love to read the SIGNS, and have fellowship for those who believe the doctrine it sets forth. I wish the SIGNS well, and may the Lord bless its many readers.

Your brother,

ROBERT S. PACE.

PERSONVILLE, Texas, March 8, 1905.

ELDER R. S. PACE—DEAR BROTHER:—Your epistle of love and comfort came in due time, and gives me much pleasure. It seems to me that you are looking through my glasses, and have the same old book I very often go to for reference. It is an old story made new to me; it is as old as Jehovah himself, and never wears out or grows old, it is the word of God. Our path is laid out for us by him who hath set bounds to the sea, and we will travel it without a single variation.

"The steps that I take, and the station I fill,
My Father determined, and wrote in his will."

Not one little lamb can wander beyond the bounds set for it by the heavenly Father, nor stop this side of its bounds, and at the appointed time all the flock will be gathered into the fold.

"Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways thou King of saints." Our pathway lies through the dark and thorny desert, it is very narrow and strewn with briars and thistles, but all are necessary; not one pain, one trial, one temptation or cross of any kind is in vain, all are according to the determinate counsel, foreknowledge and absolute predestination of God. "For by me kings reign, and princes decree justice." It is just as much ordered of God, that "in the world ye shall have tribulation," as it is that we shall have peace in him. Without grief

we have no joy; without night we have no day; we stumble upon things only as God determined we should, and we cannot avoid the stumbling. I read in my Bible that he is the Creator and Preserver of all things. "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." With his own hand he hath formed the crooked serpent, by him all things consist, whether they be thrones or dominions, principalities or powers, things visible or things invisible, all are made by him and for him. Yea, wisdom hath hewn out her seven pillars, she hath builded her house, she hath mingled her wine, she hath killed her beasts, and Jesus Christ the Lord is this great and wonderful wisdom. We are taught to be subject to the powers that be, for there is no power but of God. This being the case, I can but conclude that our God is Alpha and Omega, the all in all.

Brother Pace, I would like to see you, and hear you talk of these things. It seems to me that there are such a scattered few of us who believe this grand old doctrine, that I want to meet and rejoice with all who do believe it; but when I think of my imperfections I do not want any one to see me. I am cast down sometimes, then again I am exalted; but I find that this, too, is in his absolute predestination, for he abases the exalted, and exalts the abased; he raises up, and casts down; but the question in my mind is, Am I one of those who have in their forehead the seal of the living God? By the eye of faith, and through a glass darkly, I sometimes get a glimmer, sometimes a vivid flash, of what lies beyond this vale of tears, when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, this mortal shall put on immortality; I feel to sing with the poet,

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me."

This is indeed a feast to poor me. I am ready to say with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." "The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him."

Brother Pace, you did not tell me to what association you belong; please send me a Minute of your last session. Write whenever you feel like it, on any subject. I have shown your letter to our little band, and they seemed pleased with it. May God bless you and your little family, is my prayer. Hoping to hear from you soon, I will close. Farwell.

Your unworthy yoke-fellow in the Lord,

JAMES D. TRACY.

WINONA, Wash., March 19, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER:—I undertake a task new to me, and it is with much fear and trembling I begin. I feel as though the expression of the prophet suited my case where he said, "Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name: but his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay."—Jer. xx. 9. Dear brethren and sisters in Christ, because of having been caught between the upper and nether millstones and pulverized, utterly dissolved, and every previous form changed so that it has no resemblance of ever having been grain, you give evidence of the Spirit that agrees with the witness which I sometimes hope governs me, though it seems presuming in me to claim such fellowship, but after having all my former hopes thwarted, dissolved and disconnected, it seems that you and I are brought together and possess that character which I will call

the power to stick together, which power is reigning grace, with which we were blessed before the foundation of the world, in Christ who is our life, our light, our hope, the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Now seeing that we are blessed with such a precious hope, let us run with patience the race set before us, ever looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Let me call your attention to some things that have been in my mind, and which are in my heart as a burning fire, and I am wearied with forbearing. I know there are some, and perhaps all, of this stiff-necked generation who are agreeable to reproof so long as it does not particularly disturb their customs or practice. I am guilty of the same thing, and I believe the Spirit has reproved me in this matter, of which I wish to write. I hope the Spirit will make us willing subjects to the counsel of his will. We find an admonition in the New Testament like this, "Be not conformed to this world." Again, we find this, "Be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine." An expression agreeable to my faith to unhesitatingly denounce everything for which we have neither use nor fellowship among the unfruitful works of darkness, such as Sunday Schools, Missionary societies, secret orders, oath-bound societies, and other things too numerous to mention; these are practices of which I cannot now write. But how about the things which we, as a church, practice, for which in the testimony of the word we have no precept, example, admonition or counsel? This is what is troubling me now. We read in the eighty-fourth Psalm, "For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

After we have tasted of the good word of God, and the power of the world to come, some have instituted protracted meetings to swell their numbers. Is this a good thing? It is written, "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." To some he gave power to become the sons of God, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. This is not the result of the efforts of man. If protracted meetings are a good thing, why is there not an example? Because there is no such precept nor example, I say it is not a good thing; for all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine and instruction, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Again, why are funeral sermons practiced among us? There is neither precept nor example for this in the word. If it be a good thing, why were we not so instructed by the Spirit? I have sought an excuse for its practice, but I cannot find it. The Master, when he was here in the body, reproved service toward God, done to be seen of men. He did not allow his disciples to pray to be seen of men; and I have sometimes questioned whether we are permitted in the word to open our meetings after the custom that is among us. When I have asked some, who should have reason for what they practice, what Scripture there is for funeral sermons, they have simply said it is to show their respect to the dead, which is perhaps true, but I have seen many go to a funeral to show their respect to an enemy. Such funeral sermons are among the most cunning schemes to scare the poor and simple into their ranks. It is a golden

opportunity to work on natural sympathy, and it is a success, and the world practices it. But is it right? There is an admonition to keep one's self unspotted from the world. Let this be in the light of the truth: in his light, of whom it is said, "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." I have no objection to the preaching of the gospel at any time; but when the gospel is preached there is no other reason necessary than to simply preach the gospel; it does not admit of any other cause or reason; there is no other pretence; it has never proposed nor accepted any form of compromise with its work, and has never offered any reason or apology, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes. I know by experience that I have felt and do feel the pangs of a guilty conscience, that I have felt and do feel extremely sorry because of my unworthiness and inability to serve my Master. "For to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." And, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." "The good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" There was a time when I expected to merit the favor of God by doing that which others said that they were doing that was good. But alas, the grain that appeared to be sound had to come between the upper and nether millstones, and my natural hopes were destroyed; the law which I thought was ordained to life I found to be unto death; but in all my afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved me; this same Sun and Shield is my Fortress and Deliverer. In all his dealings with me, he poured in the oil of joy for mourning, and gave me beauty for ashes, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

I have suffered the loss of one daughter, three sisters and four brothers, but out of all my afflictions he has delivered me; but yet neither the Spirit nor the word have ever suggested a funeral service. I am most anxious to hear a gospel sermon, but I am not willing to affix the pretence of a funeral occasion to bring it about. It is not right to compare a natural death to that which once I feared, everlasting separation from the peaceful presence of our God. God was able to deliver such an one as I, and I am persuaded to believe it quite unnecessary to propose such an occasion as a funeral that he may comfort the bereaved; in all the funeral services that I have ever seen, the effect has been to disturb instead of comforting, to revive sorrow instead of quieting it. When it pleased God, "Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness," to shine in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, we were made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

I have written too much, my mind has not run as I expected; if there is anything in it of the Lord, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, and who will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly, weigh it in the balance of the gospel; if it is of the Lord of truth it will stand the test, but if not, it will fall. I do not feel that it is worthy a place in the SIGNS, which I love to read for the truth's sake; I hear in it of some who have learned in the same school that, I trust, I have. Brethren, bear with me in my weakness, and let us heed the admonition that we henceforth be no more children, carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men,

and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. Remember me at the throne of grace.

Yours unworthily,

A. G. JONES.

[WE feel like adding a few words at the close of our dear, aged brother's letter. It must ever be true that the one thing for all the people of God to do, is to seek a thus saith the Lord for all that they believe and practice. This has been the glory of the church of God in all ages, and we trust that it may always through grace be the same. We have no law-giver but Christ. Our brother does well to insist upon this, as he does in the above letter, and we certainly do appreciate his kind and brotherly way of writing what is in his mind. We feel as much opposed as he does to modern funeral discourses whose object is the flattery of the dead, or to stir up and excite the natural feelings religiously, by narrating deathbed scenes, or by appeals to the emotions of those who are already filled with grief. We have heard utterly Christless sermons on such occasions. We mean by this, sermons in which the name of Christ was not named once. All this is an abomination to the spiritual mind, and an abhorrence to God. But we have always felt that it was our place to preach the gospel at any time and place where the people were gathered together, whether at the time of a burial or at any other time. We have preached many times upon funeral occasions, but never a funeral sermon. We have preached the gospel as best we could then, as we try to do at any other time. There is no special command to preach on Sunday, but Sunday is a day most convenient to most people, and so appointments are made mostly on that day. At funerals, people are gathered together, and it is a convenient time, when they so desire, to preach the gospel to them. This is the way we have always felt about the matter: preach the gospel wherever the people will hear it, whether at funerals or any other occasion. We want to commend out aged brother for his desire to walk in the ways of the Lord in all things.—ED.]

CORAM, N. Y., Feb. 10, 1905.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I have this day been reading, or rereading, your letters to me, some of them written two years ago, and they are new to me. I felt a joy and peace while reading, in believing the glorious truth that you hold forth: salvation by grace. In your last letter to me, the reply concerning the resurrection, how glorious the thought that we shall be raised changed into the likeness of Christ's glorious body. If I have been redeemed by his precious blood, I shall see him as he is, in peace, and without condemnation. My hope is in Christ; salvation is of the Lord. I know that I am a sinner, and hope saved by grace. The Lord's loving-kindness has been toward me in all things; he has sustained me through the changing scenes of this present life, even down to old age, and I feel sure that he will not forsake me, but at last receive me unto himself; what a glorious hope, to be forever with the Lord. I love his word, I love the people that proclaim the gospel of the finished work of Christ. The Old School Baptists are the only ones that I know who teach the truth of the gospel as it is written. It is more than human not to err, but God's word is before them and with them. I love to read of that upper room as it is presented to us in the Acts, where the church was first established, and where Peter preached to the multitude a risen Savior, who while on earth had stilled

the tempest, and there was a great calm. Here were the souls who cried out, What must we do to be saved? Here they were told of the Lamb of God who died for them, and, believing on him, they were saved. There was no other way only through Christ, and in him they received that peace which the world cannot give; so our souls are quieted. "Be not afraid, it is I." It is I who lived, I who died that thou mightest live and reign on high. Behold my hands and feet, and my side, and be convinced it is I.

I was very sick the week after I came home from Middletown, with a heavy cold on the lungs, and my heart was seriously affected; for a number of days I did not know but the end was near, but the Lord saw fit to restore me again to quite comfortable health. While I was sick the words would come to me, "My kingdom is not of this world;" "if it were not so, I would have told you." A dear friend came in, and I told him of these words. He said, No, but it will be. Jerusalem will have a temple built, then his kingdom will be set up, and he will sit on the throne of David, for said he, the Scriptures teach this; all denominations, said he, confound Israel with the church; the new covenant spoken of in Hebrews is still in the future for Israel. I replied, I do not understand what you say; I thought all things were settled in Christ, and in him all are ordered and sure. I said that it is said in Genesis that "the sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." In Jeremiah the covenant is spoken of, and in 2 Corinthians it is said, not to be written with ink, but in the heart, and in Hebrews it is said, "If that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second." "Behold the days come saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah," and it is spoken of as an everlasting covenant. I said to my friend, I cannot see an unbroken chain in your view; Christ is all and in all to his chosen people, and as regards the building of the temple at Jerusalem, the Lord said, What house will you build me? for I dwell not in temples made with hands.

Now, dear Elder Chick, I do not expect you or desire you to spend time to reply to any of this letter; could I have seen you, I should not have written any of this to you; forgive me for sending it. I hope that you are all well, and that you will come to visit us when the weather will permit.

With kind regards to you all, I remain your sister in the hope of Christ,

ELIZABETH SMITH.

MAY, 1905.

ELDER CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—The words recorded in John iv.: "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" came to my mind while thinking over my past life. She had seen the Redeemer face to face; when she first came to the well it is doubtful if she had ever had a thought that she would ever meet with one who could tell her of her past and present life; she must have been amazed; O what a change his word can make. As she meditated on his words to her, no wonder that she said to all whom she met, "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" It is said that many believed on him through her word. The Lord said, "I will pour out my Spirit." Through the teaching of that Spirit we

are convinced of our sins, and of the judgment to come; is not this true? How beautiful! Our Lord's teaching to this woman led her to exclaim, Come and see one who knows the innermost thought of my heart, and all the evil of my past life; is not this the Christ? All glory to the name of him who has saved us and called us. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

I well remember, over sixty years ago, of walking over two miles to a Baptist meeting held in a schoolhouse. Elder Philip Brome preached, and he was of the old order, and swept self-works to the winds. My father, Elder Henry Hait, was one of those who walked with them in all the order of the Lord's house blameless; salvation through Christ was all his theme. I was then young, and not well versed in the Scriptures. Those meetings were precious to me, and I hold them in grateful remembrance. (I have more knowledge of the Scriptures now, and what a comfort it is to me when reading the word of God to feel that the Spirit guides me into all truth.) I have passed through many changes since that time, but our Lord changes not; there have been dark seasons, yet I have never forgotten that peace of mind which was given me through the Spirit long ago. I have now arrived at a good old age, and I still rest upon the finished work of Christ.

Your sister,

ELIZABETH SMITH.

[His people shall still bring forth fruit in old age to show that the Lord is upright; they shall be fat and flourishing. What sweet, spiritual letters the above are! Though written to us privately, we greatly desire that our brethren shall share in their richness.—Ed.]

ECCLESIASTES I. 1.

"The words of the Preacher, the son of David, King of Jerusalem."

The Preacher sought to find out acceptable words, and that which was written was upright, even words of truth. The Preacher shows that all things in nature are vain; he says, "Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight which he hath made crooked? In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider. God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him." He gives us the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, to the end that we may learn it is best. Yes, it is better with the godly in adversity than with the wicked in prosperity. The Lord trieth the righteous, but of the wicked it is said, "This shall be the portion of their cup."—Psalms xi. 6. With the righteous there remains a spark of heavenly fire; it may lie dormant in the broad daylight of prosperity, but in the dark hours of adversity it kindles, beams and blazes. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." "He that is ready to slip with his feet is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease." Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud. "Woe to them [it is said] that are at ease in Zion." "Rise up, ye women that are at ease; hear my voice, ye careless daughters." "Tremble, ye women that are at ease; be troubled, ye careless ones." Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart; but as for me, I have many times lost sight of his goodness and mercy toward me, and in the language of David I must say, "My feet were almost gone; my steps had well

nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no bands in their death; but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men." "They have more than heart could wish. They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily." "Therefore his people return hither; and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them." O how often I have thought of the last clause of that verse. Waters of a full cup are wrung out to you, were the words that it seemed were spoken to me one night soon after I had left the New School Baptists and joined the Old School or Primitive Baptists, which was in the year 1888, August 4th, it being my forty-eighth birthday. O this full cup, this bitter cup of which I have to drink, yet it is nothing to be compared to the cup of which our Savior drank. His will is to shew us how great things we must suffer for his name's sake; he gives strength and endurance in all our tribulations, there is a balm for every wound; he makes the wounded spirit whole, and calms the troubled breast; he hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm. (Nahum i. 3.) The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? said our Savior, and with him we must say, "Thy will be done."

Waters of a full cup are wrung out to you. O why was it said to me? I am so vile, so full of sin, which makes me fear that I am not born again. I said before I thought, Lord, shall I be able to drink it? I awoke with a severe headache just as the clock struck two; so severe I felt unable to bear it, when this message was delivered me. Surely it was written in my mind, for I have never forgotten it, and how can I, when there are so many trials, and temptations, and persecutions, pains and distresses for me, I so sorely grieved and vexed about many things? Many who seemed friends while I was with the Missionaries now open their mouths against me, and instead of bearing all in a Christlike manner, I give way to the flesh. In sorrow and sadness I live broken-hearted. O, can there a mortal be found surrounded with troubles like me? In vain I attempt to describe what I feel. I know if my soul were left to starve, it would be what I well deserve, yet I am ever learning that it is through trouble and distress we make our way to God.

"Thy people, Lord, have ever found
'Tis good to bear thy rod;
Afflictions make us learn thy will,
And live upon our God."

O, if I only could at all times follow my Savior, but a wounded spirit who can bear? As said poor Job, my complaints are not causeless, and with him I can sometimes say, "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee." Before honor is humility, and when humbled I can say, "Behold I am vile; I will lay mine hand upon my mouth." "Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." O how blessed when given "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

(MRS.) N. A. SLAYDEN.

CLINTON, Ky.

(Her obituary appeared March 15, 1905.)

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Jan. 4, 1905.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The experiences and trials published in the SIGNS are so much like my own that they loose my prison bonds and make me hope the dear Lord still remembers this poor, doubting worm. I love what Mary Hill Terry

says about the "little ones;" I feel to be in that class. I was a small child when I first knew there was nothing good in me; I resolved to quit doing wrong, to control my giddy thoughts, and tried with all my strength to walk uprightly, but alas, I found in great sorrow that there is no good in me. For many years I traveled this gloomy road without hope. One time I dreamed the end of time had come, I saw the trees and all nature shining like burnished brass; in front of my father's house was an ox whose horns extended to heaven, and people were hurrying from every direction to take hold of a horn and ascend to heaven; but I was helpless, not able to move hand or foot. I stood thus in despair, when a man with a compassionate face turned to me, stretching out his hands, saying, I will help you. I knew it was the Savior, and the joy wakened me. I was then twelve years old, and now am an old woman, but I love to see the spot where I saw my Savior; I often go there and think of that dream; that was an oasis in this barren desert. I travel in clouds much of my way. In 1850 it came to me that Jesus died for sinners, and he was able to save even me. That day my heart was filled with singing, and I felt nothing could trouble me again; but in a few hours the doubts came again, and I am asking myself time and again,

"Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

One thing soothes me: the Lord knows them that are his, and he knows I want to love him.

Last Sunday was the regular meeting of our church, and I was well enough to go. Our pastor took for his text Hebrews vi. 17, 18, and I was comforted. He told who were heirs of promise; talked about our strong consolation, our fleeing for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us, and my little hope that seemed almost out of sight grew brighter, so when we sung, "Children of the heavenly King," I wanted to sing my Savior's worthy praise, glorious in his works and ways. We sang also,

"Why, O my soul, these anxious cares?
Why thus cast down with doubts and fears?
How canst thou want if God provide,
Or lose thy way with such a Guide?"

And another:

"Every moment brings me nearer
To my long sought rest above."

I will send an old letter of mine I found among my mother's papers, to let you see how I am changing.

"Change and decay in all around I see;
O thou who changest not, abide with me."

I like Elder Ker, why does he not write more? All my writings sound lame to me, but if you can cull anything from what I have written to fill up some little corner of the dear old SIGNS, you may be the judge. The SIGNS is like an old, tried friend. Brother Beebe shone in his writings brighter and brighter before he left us.

Your sister,

LINA W. BECK.

SUNDAY, April 30, 1865.

DEAR MOTHER:—We have had a refreshing shower of grace here in Crawfordsville yesterday and to-day, and I thought often of my dear absent father and mother, wishing that they could be here to partake of the sumptuous feast, for we have been to the banqueting-house where the banner over us was love. I long for language to praise my God, who has permitted me once more to behold the light of his countenance, for I had felt like David, that my feet were almost gone, that my steps had well nigh slipped. My soul was almost in Egyp-

tian darkness, which made the light of his countenance now brighter than the noonday sun. Elder Orr drew a comparison in his sermon yesterday that looked beautiful to me: he said, "To-day, as well as several others, perhaps a week, has been very dark and rainy, and when the sun comes out and the sky is again clear, we rejoice that it is so, more than if we had had sunshine all the time." This meeting I have enjoyed as much as I ever have any meeting, for there seemed such a warm feeling among the members, such a shaking of the dry bones. In the morning the house was well filled, and the congregation appeared interested; in the afternoon there was preaching and the house was quite full. There were seven ordained ministers present, two preaching at each meeting, so that I have heard six discourses, which you will think is enough to fill me. I am filled, but I pant for more. "As the hart panteth after the waterbrooks, so panteth my soul after thee O God." While sitting under Elder Nay's preaching to-day (Elder Brady following him with a few appropriate remarks,) I felt as though I could never grow weary while listening to such precious truths. The text was, "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face. Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." When I think of it now, it appears as though nothing was left unsaid; everything new and everything old was beautifully laid before us, and presented in such an humble, Christlike way, that I could say, Surely they come in the strength of Israel's God, for they have no strength of their own. It seemed as if I never could doubt again, for everything was so clearly explained. We sang, "Beneath the sacred throne of God I saw a river rise." Also we sang another song of grace (494, Beebe's Collection,) which was so in harmony with the preaching that I almost cried out, "Grace! grace! from first to last." "A sinner saved by grace," was music in my ears. The psalmist David said, "Because thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee." "My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips."

Elders Nay and Brady took dinner with us to-day. The former has started through the rain in his carriage for home. He lives twenty-eight miles from our place. Elder Nay remembers father, and regrets not seeing him here. We talked of our first acquaintance, about ten years ago, when father and I went to the Conn's Creek Association to meet Elders Gilbert Beebe and J. F. Johnson. That is a bright spot in my memory; I love to think it over now. There seemed such unity in the meeting; they all used the same language, taught them by their divine Master, and all was so peaceful and quiet. I hope that you and father will have the pleasure of meeting with Elder Beebe before your return; and this reminds me to ask, Do you see the SIGNS regularly? What a beautiful letter that is from Bessie Durand; how she does write out my feelings, so much better than I can do myself. If I had language to express myself I would love to tell her how near she is to me, just because she bears the image of the heavenly Father. No matter how much I doubt my own heart, I know that I do love the children of the heavenly King, the society of those I feel sure are christians, and I

know I would rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

One day has passed, dear mother, since I began this, and taken with it many cares. You know what a busy day Monday is with me; but I found time to go over to my old home and get the last SIGNS, and have just finished reading it while I rocked my babe to sleep. I have come to the conclusion while reading of Elder Wm. Beebe's long imprisonment, as well as others, that we, or I at least, am highly blessed above many who are so much more worthy. I hope that I am thankful, and that I will know how to prize my privileges. How Elder Beebe's heart must have bled for the sufferings of his children; but he knows all things work together for good to them who love God; and God alone has power to strengthen him through all these hard trials.

Your affectionate daughter,

LINA BECK.

MORGANTOWN, W. Va., May 10, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS:—If not asking too much I wish you to publish the letter inclosed, written to me by my youngest daughter a short time before her death, which occurred May 1st, 1900. I had three daughters, all grown to womanhood; the youngest lived to be twenty-six years of age; all three lie side by side in the cemetery. It was hard to give up my daughters, but they all left such bright evidences that they were going to a fairer world on high, that I am reconciled and satisfied that they are at rest. I have passed through deep waters, which have nearly overflowed me; it seemed that sun, moon and stars were hidden from my sight for days and weeks, but I am still left as a cumberer of the ground. I am greatly cheered on my way by the writings in the SIGNS, which have come to me for more than a third of a century; nothing cheers me more than a letter from a brother or sister in Christ, or a visit from them.

Elder Cole was with us at our April meeting; he is a young brother highly esteemed for the truth's sake. The Redstone Association holds her next annual session, the one hundred and twenty-eighth, with the Indian Creek church, near our place. I wish the editor and contributors of the SIGNS liberty with the pen. If I had the pen of a ready writer, I would write more.

Your sister,

(MRS.) NANCY BARBE.

GEORGETOWN, W. Va., 1899.

DEAR MOTHER:—You asked me more than a year ago to write you the reason why I possessed a hope. I have thought of your request every day since; many nights I have lain awake, and have written you letters in my mind, but you have never received them. This morning I am going to try to write on paper, but do not know whether I will finish it or not. You will remember that last winter, one year ago, when the meeting was going on here, I went to the anxious-bench. When I went I did not think that I could get religion there, but was willing to go to any place or to do anything. The longer I went the worse I felt, and I could hardly eat or sleep for a week. Some would tell me to have faith, some would ask me who I was, others would ask me why I was crying, as I had never done anything very bad. No one told me to read the Bible, save one; they all seemed greatly interested in me, and told me they would do all they could for me, that they would pray

for me, and I felt glad that they did, for I could not pray for myself, I was afraid to pray for fear I would be struck dead, I felt too sinful to utter a word in prayer. On Monday night, after retiring, I felt that I could not live to see another day. I lay there till the next morning when the hymn, "What a friend we have in Jesus," came into my mind; I began repeating it over, when all at once my trouble was gone, everything looked so changed and beautiful. I lay there, I know not how long, hardly realizing where I was. I thought I must get up and tell Emory about it, but I did not, and soon went to sleep. I awoke in a short time and told Mrs. Lough; she said, "Bless the Lord." She said she did not believe that I felt any happier than she did for me. I went right along to the meetings after that, and believed almost all that the preacher said. I thought I would join the Presbyterians in the spring, as Emory belonged there. I had brought a bunch of SIGNS from home a week before the meeting and would not look at them for fear I would see something that would not suit me. I would not read the Bible much, when I did I would be sure to read something that did not suit my doctrine, or that which I was trying to believe. There were all kinds of papers sent me by different ones, and I read them all. I had decided to join the church soon, and I told them that if I joined the Presbyterians I wanted to be immersed, because I believed that to be the right way. They asked Mr. Buchanan, the Presbyterian minister, about it; he said that he could not, but that the church would take one in after they had been baptized by some one else. I was very much troubled about it, until one night I awoke suddenly, and the words, "Learn of me," came to me with much force. I got up and looked around to see if some one had spoken to me, and it so affected me that I was all of a tremble. From that time I began reading the Bible; I gathered up the SIGNS, and compared them with the Bible, and then saw that the Old School Baptist Church was the true church, but kept it to myself, deciding not to unite with any church; I thought perhaps it would be better so. I lived on in that way very well for a time, until last fall, when I became so dissatisfied I thought that I could not live, and I so much wanted to be baptized; before that time I did not think much about it.

One night about that time, I dreamed that I was at preaching and was sitting with you. The preacher opened the door of the church for any one to unite with them who wished to do so; you asked me if I felt like going before the church; I told you that I was not worthy to sit in the meeting-house and listen to the preaching, and I never could ask for a home with them. Some one behind me seemed to say, If you tarry till you are better, you will never come at all. It greatly annoyed me; I looked back to see who it was that had spoken, but no one seemed to notice me. I then moved to another seat; several people then came up and insisted upon my going before the church. I still pleaded my unworthiness, still some one behind me seemed to be repeating, If you tarry till you are better, you will never come at all. I then dreamed we all went to a stream of water, where several were baptized. I stood by the water and watched them, and thought, O if I only could be one of them, but that I never could be worthy of being buried with Christ in baptism. After this I was in much trouble, I could scarcely do my work; many times I

would be compelled to quit my work, and read the Bible for a time, and then go to work again. I read the Bible through last summer. Often now there will be a passage of Scripture in my mind, which I will repeat aloud, and often when I am in deep study about such things, it worries me if any one speaks to me, for I do not feel like talking. After this I had another dream: I dreamed we were down home; we went down into the cellar for some apples; as we were coming up Mr. Cross came around the corner of the house, and asked us for some apples; he then said, Why not sing a hymn? I said, Sing, "O how happy are they who their Savior obey." When the hymn was finished they all shook hands with me, and he said, You have something to say. I said, There are not many here to hear me. He said, Christ said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." It seemed that I then talked a little, but I do not know what I said; I asked them why we could not go and find some water, for I wanted to be baptized. Elder Cross said, Here is plenty of water, and I will soon baptize you. I looked over under a plum tree, and there was a pond of water, the loveliest that I ever saw. I then went to get over the stone wall; I tried and tried again, and was just ready to give up, and turned around and told them that I had always tried to do everything, but had now found out that I could not do anything without help. I then got down on my knees and prayed to the Lord to help me at all times. I arose, and seemed light as a feather, and got right over the stone wall with ease, and was baptized. Aunt Mollie, it seemed, came up, and I told her what had happened, and that Ella was there. It seemed that she told me that this could not be, for Ella had been dead three years, and she could not see her, but Ella could see me. It seemed that I then went into the room and told you about it; you did not seem much surprised, but Alice did, and asked me who helped me over the stone wall; I smiled and told her that I thought it was an angel, but I did not see who had helped me. This dream is so plain to me that I can never forget it.

From that time on I had a great desire to be baptized, yet I felt that I could never be. One night I went to bed in great trouble, and dreamed that Elder Cross was here preaching. I got as close to him as I could and not be noticed, for I thought that I seldom got to hear preaching, and I did not want to lose a word. At the close of the sermon I thought that he shook hands with me, and said, Sister, you have a troubled road to travel, but take courage, for you will come out all right in the end. I wondered why he called me sister, and how he knew that I was there, and that I had any trouble. After this dream I did take courage and got on very well for a time; soon, however, I felt as badly as ever. The words, If you do not take up your cross and follow me, you are not worthy of me, were on my mind continually. I went on in that way until I did not think I could live another day, and it was then that I wrote you that letter, and I was so anxious to hear from you. If you had not encouraged me, I could not have felt like going before the church. You see my ways are not God's ways; I would have done differently had I been left alone, but I was made willing in the day of his power. Formerly when Emory would tell people that you were an Old School Baptist I would be so

ashamed I would just say you were a Baptist, now I want every one to know what kind of a Baptist you are; you see I have been humbled. The day I was baptized I was so anxious to go to the water I could have gone a hundred miles, if needful; I believe that I would have been baptized had I known that I would never come out of the water alive. While standing there the words, "Be still and know that I am God," seemed very plain to me. I felt so happy when I came up out of the water that I wanted to stay there all the evening; I can never forget that happy day; I felt that I had done my duty. I fall short of living the way I would like to live, but know well that I cannot live in this world without sinning.

I will not write more now, though I could write a long time and not tell all that I have gone through; there are some things that I cannot write or tell any one. Ask Alice to tell me the exercises through which she has passed, I know that she has had more trouble than I have had.

Yours affectionately,

OLGA LOUGH.

ROMULUS, Okla., May 2, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—VERY DEAR AND HIGHLY ESTEEMED BROTHER:—I will try, if the Lord will guide me, to give you a little account of what I believe are the dealings of God with his children in this part of his vineyard. The little church at this place, Romulus, was organized by a presbytery from Shiloh church, on Saturday before the first Sunday in April, 1905. The brethren present were Elders G. M. Snyder, B. M. Green and A. Springer. After we were organized and declared to be a church in gospel order we proceeded to call to the care of the little church our highly esteemed and ever watchful brother, G. M. Snyder. We had good preaching on the occasion, and had an enjoyable time. One month from that time, at our next meeting we commemorated the death of the suffering Savior, who is now exalted as our Redeemer, and truly it might be said the Lord was with us. The theme of the preaching was salvation, both for time and eternity, by grace and grace alone, also the complete sovereignty of God doing all things for his children, and the Giver of every good and perfect gift, and upholding us in all things by the word of his power, controlling all things, and who is not surprised at any event, because his knowledge, wisdom and power are unlimited, and who is entitled to all the glory, and none can stay his hand or say, What doest thou? was clearly presented.

I do believe, dear brother Chick, that every little, humble child of God who feels his littleness and unprofitableness, at the same time feels the greatness of the Most High, and will say in spirit, Great and marvelous are thy works, thou King of saints. Such as these will say with David, "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men."

I will close, asking an interest in your prayers, and those of all the household of faith. I enjoy the reading of the SIGNS greatly.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

WM. E. LINDSAY.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1905.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

2 CORINTHIANS XII. 2, 3.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Will you give some thoughts through the dear old SIGNS upon 2 Cor. xii. 2, 3? Who does Paul refer to? What body is under consideration? Did he mean that his spirit went to the third heaven, while his body did not? Or does the body mean the church?

Yours to serve,

G. W. SNYDER.

MAUD, Okla., May 29, 1905.

We have no doubt that Paul himself was the man caught up to the third heaven, as he has said, whether in the body or out of it, he could not tell, therefore it appears to us that he could not mean by the "body" the church, because no one who is a believer at all and a member of the body of Christ, (church) ever could be out of that body, either on earth or in the third heaven. Paul could not have said of that body that he did not know whether he was in it or out of it. Let us notice the occasion or circumstances under which Paul speaks of these wonderful things. Some had arisen among the brethren at Corinth who sought to make light of the authority of the apostle, and some of the brethren had been ensnared by these opponents of Paul. Because of this Paul thought it needful that he should present the proofs of his apostleship; this he does in the two preceding chapters. We do not feel that it is needful to do more than call attention to this general argument by which the apostle justifies his claim to be an apostle. Some had depreciated him from his personal appearance, as he was among them in meekness, and gentleness, and not arrogantly; to these he said that he would make his power or authority felt among them when he came to them, and, unlike some others, he did not boast beyond his measure; that is, he did not claim more than was his due as an apostle. The Corinthians had seemed to make more account of false apostles than of him, and therefore he says that he was jealous of them, and was obliged to commend himself in many respects to them as the superior of these false apostles. He had preached the gospel to them freely, taking wages of other churches. He asks, Was this an offense to them? He compares himself with all these false apostles, and claims equal natural advantages with them. Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. Are they ministers of Christ? So am I. Though in this he says, "I speak as a fool." Then he records his journeyings, and labors, and sufferings, which had been more abundant than any of them; beside this he had the care of all the churches, so that he was weak in their weakness, and distressed in all their offences. These were proofs of his claim to the apostleship. He goes on to speak of visions of the Lord; this he does not in the way of boasting, which he says is not expedient. The word "glory" in the first verse of the twelfth chapter means to boast. Paul evidently means that it is not becoming in him to boast of anything for his own exaltation, but in all that he has been urging he is but presenting the evidences of the Lord's work in calling him to the office of an apostle. This

claim he could not yield without denying the Lord's own work, and to insist upon this authority given him of God, was not boasting or glorying in the flesh. In verse eleven of chapter twelve he says, "I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me." That is, he would not have asserted all his labors, sufferings, journeyings, persecutions, and lastly, would not have spoken of this wonderful vision and revelation of the Lord had it not been needful to assert and prove to them his claim to be an apostle of the Lord. The whole argument then, is for the purpose of showing that he was indeed an apostle, and that he was endowed with claims superior to those who were striving to turn the minds of the church against him. In all this he has been speaking, not of the evidences that he was a child of God, or a beliver in Christ, but of his ministry, that it was of God. Of course all these things were indeed full proof that he had been called by grace, but still this was not what he was urging here. Many of the things named in these three chapters belonged to him and had been suffered by him because of his public ministry. The generality of the brethren had not been called to labor, travel, suffer and endure persecutions as had been the case with him. In the immediate text and connection he does not speak of the vision or revelation as one that is common to all, or as one that had been his more than once, but as something which was peculiarly his, and which was a special proof of his apostleship. So also we read that only three apostles, Peter, James and John, were taken up into the mount of transfiguration with the Savior, and these same three were taken nearer to him in the garden than the rest. This vision on the mount was but once in all their association with the Savior on earth, and in this vision they could not abide, though Peter said, "Let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias." Paul did not abide in the third heaven to which he had been caught up fourteen years before. According to the chronology given in the New Testament, this epistle was written about the year sixty; Paul was called about the year thirty-five, therefore he could not have referred to his experience at the time of his call by grace. According to our chronology, this vision must have been about the time when, as recorded in Acts xiii., the Holy Ghost said unto the church, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them;" immediately they preached in the synagogues, first at Salamis, and then at Antioch, and when the Jews were angry at the word, and rejected it, they turned unto the Gentiles, as recorded at the close of the chapter. It would seem to be peculiarly appropriate and needful that some special revelation from God should have been afforded Paul at such a time as this, and no doubt by it he was confirmed in the truth that the gospel was designed for the Gentiles as well as for the Jews. Always afterwards we find Paul preaching and writing with no uncertain sound the grace of God in Jesus Christ, and the gift by grace. By this revelation he was shown the truth in the light of heaven itself, and was confirmed in his ministry as one called of God to be the apostle to the Gentiles. To this revelation accordingly he refers in this letter to the church at Corinth, where false teachers and enemies of the gospel and of himself were perverting the minds of the brethren, and seeking to turn them away from his ministry. He does not refer to his call by grace, nor to his call

to the ministry in general, but to his call to preach *among the Gentiles* the riches of grace in Christ; it was fitting and appropriate therefore that he should refer to this revelation in this letter to a Gentile church.

We will now make a few general remarks with regard to the whole narrative given here of the revelations. Visions and revelations are not precisely the same. The Holy Ghost does not multiply words needlessly. Visions signify things seen, while revelations signify the interpretation of the visions by the Holy Ghost. Paul saw things, and then to him was also given the interpretation or the revelation of their meaning. These visions were of the Lord; that is, from the Lord, and concerning the Lord also. The expression, "A man in Christ," simply means that which is true of all the children of God, that they are the Lord's, and live in him and by him. Twice he repeats in the next two verses that he knew this man in Christ, and that he could not tell whether he was in the body or out of it at the time of this vision and revelations; the Lord alone knew. What Paul did not know it is sure that we cannot know, and it would be sheer presumption to speculate upon it. We may say however, without presumption, that this much seems sure from these words, viz: that there is such a thing as being caught up to the third heaven in the body, as was Enoch and was Elijah, and there is such a thing as being thus caught up without the body. How this may be we are not informed, and it seems that Paul did not himself know. The visions and revelations were clear, but the state in which he received them he did not know. Once he says it was up to the third heaven, and once he says it was into paradise. The original words are not the same, and do not mean the same thing literally. The heaven is from a word which signifies, literally, the sky or air, while paradise is from a word which signifies a garden. By both words heavenly things are meant; that is, things above nature, both as to place and kind. The number three signifies perfection, and so it seems clear that to Paul was given visions and revelations of the highest glory, even the glory of God, in which at the end all the saints shall share in full abundance. It is manifest that Paul here does not mean that state in which all believers daily live, through faith in a risen Redeemer, nor that daily communion which they all have, more or less, with Jesus, through the indwelling Spirit of God. This was one experience given to him, and given to him but once, as it seems; at least it had not been repeated during the fourteen years that had elapsed since then, but Paul daily lived by faith upon the Son of God, and daily communed with him at the mercy-seat, as do the spiritually minded in every age and place. It seems to us that the reason why Paul speaks of himself in the third person saying, "I knew a man in Christ," is that he would emphasize the difference between himself as a mere man, weak, tempted, imperfect and earthly, and that state in which he was exalted through the Spirit, so that he was for a time taken away from earthly things to see the things which were heavenly, and to dwell for a time among them. He was caught up to heaven, and caught up into paradise. He did not climb to this state, as though his own strength and merit had anything to do with it, but was caught up.

And of these things it was not lawful for a man to utter. Literally the word "lawful" is "privileged;" man is not al-

lowed to utter such things; the meaning is undoubtedly that man cannot utter them; no language known to man could express these heavenly things. Human language fits this earth, and can express the things of this world, but it falters when trying to express such visions and revelations of the Lord. We may ask, Why was not Paul suffered to tell all about the things that he saw? The answer is that they are simply inexpressible; Paul saw these things, and yet could not utter them; the visions and revelations were plain to him, and were his strength and comfort in his ministry among the Gentiles, strengthening him to endure all the sufferings and persecutions which were appointed to him. May we not learn this much, at least, from this wonderful narrative, viz: that our God gives to each that help and strength that he needs to sustain him and encourage him in whatever circumstances of trial it has pleased the Lord to call him to labor?

Of this "man in Christ" he says he will glory, but of himself he will not glory; self is put in the background here as well as in all Paul's testimony, except with regard to his infirmities, and he does not glory in the infirmities, considered as of themselves, but only because by them is the power of Christ made all the more manifest and is all the more exalted. The glory which belonged, shall we say, to his other self, was not designed to glorify his fleshly self, but rather, by contrast to bring out the infirmities of the fleshly self, that Christ might have all the glory; so in verse six he says that he would not have any man think more highly of him because of these revelations than they ought to think, viz: as a weak, imperfect, sinful man, to whom God had seen fit to give wonderful visions, not because he was at all worthy, but because God so willed, and therefore God must alone be glorified and not himself. Then he proceeds to say that lest he himself should be thus exalted and glory in himself there was given him a thorn in the flesh to buffet him. How dangerous must such self-exaltation be, when even the apostle needed so much to restrain him. Whatever the thorn in the flesh was, it was certainly something personal to himself, causing pain and shame, as the word buffet would signify; the thought is that of a slave buffeted by his master. After the bliss, came to him the sorrow; after the joy of the heavenly revelations, came the pain of the thorn; and Paul realized that this was for the purpose of humbling him, that he might know that he was still dependent upon the Lord.

Still another lesson must he learn by this thorny road, which was that the grace of God is sufficient under the severest trials, and that prayer must not be for the removal of the trial, but for grace and strength to endure. This faith was given to Paul in reply to his prayer, three times repeated, therefore heart-felt and earnest, because his distress and his need were great, and were so felt to be by him. Out of this faith came the power to say, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." Yea, he could take pleasure in infirmities, and reproaches, and necessities, and persecutions, and distresses, for Christ's sake; for he adds, "When I am weak, then am I strong." Weak in himself, but strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Paul thought of nothing, desired nothing, but to glorify the blessed Lord,

therefore he welcomed all the weakness, trials, afflictions, losses and persecutions of the way, because thereby was the grace of God magnified and his power made manifest. These things were not desirable or to be gloried in, in and of themselves considered, but they were occasions for the display of the power of divine grace, and to glorify the grace of God and the God of grace was his one aim. O for just such a spirit of self-denial and self-humiliation, to exalt the blessed Lamb of God in us all. In Paul's case we see that the outcome of all this experience was that he was brought to desire only the glory of God, and to rejoice in all that would subserve that glory, though it might be a grievous thorn in the flesh. It would seem that the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him, was the infirmities, reproaches, necessities and persecutions, in which he at the end took pleasure, because thereby God was glorified in him.

We do not feel that it is ours to understand all that this wonderful experience of the apostle signifies. But we do trust that we have not in any way presented that which is contrary to the word of God.

PLEASE BE SURE,

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, assisted by Elder Wm. Grafton, on Saturday, June 3rd, 1905, at Forest Hill, Harford Co., Md., Abram G. Ensor, of Wilmington, Del., and Miss Florence W. Whittaker, of Harford Co., Md.

By the same, on Thursday, June 29th, 1905, at Hopewell, N. J., Jefferson E. Cray, of Princeton, and Miss Mary Emma Wyckoff, of Hopewell.

By Elder H. C. Ker, in Monticello, Sullivan Co., N. Y., June 21st, 1905, Miner Benedict and Kathryn Leschorn.

By the same, in Howells, Orange Co., N. Y., at the home of the bride, July 4th, 1905, Melvin D. Waldron and Anna Grace Barlow.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Dr. John Thorne passed away from this life at his residence, 633 North Calvert St., Baltimore, Md., on Monday morning, June 12th, 1905, aged 85 years, 3 months and 21 days. Brother Thorne was born in Devonshire, England, and came to this country when about twenty-three years of age. He spent a few years in Philadelphia, and then went to Baltimore, where he spent all the remaining years of his life. His father, Elder Thorne, was well known among the Baptists of the eastern States as a good and acceptable minister of the gospel. He had preached the gospel in England many years before coming to Baltimore. Brother Thorne had been baptized in England by his father, but several years after coming to Baltimore was baptized with the late well known brother, Eli Scott, by Elder W. J. Purington, in the fellowship of the church in that city, where he remained a faithful member until death called him away. His reason for asking baptism the second time was, that he had become convinced that he knew nothing about the work of grace in the heart at the time of his baptism in England, and he fully believed in believers' baptism, and in believers' baptism only. As he became convinced that he was not a believer when first baptized, he could not consent to be received into the church in Baltimore without lawful baptism. In this one thing appeared what was true of him during all his long life, viz: devotion to right and truth as he understood it.

It was our privilege to be most closely associated with him for twenty-eight years. During that time we were with the church in Baltimore two Sundays in each month, and we are sure that he was never absent from the meetings of the church more than a half dozen times in all these years. Brother Thorne was a faithful man in all his relations with his brethren. He was a kind and hospitable man, as

hundreds of our people can bear testimony. His house was a home for those who loved the truth. Nothing delighted him more than to have his brethren come to visit with him. He had the interests of the cause at heart all the time. This testimony we can bear without any reservation, from an acquaintance of well nigh forty years. How greatly he will be missed by the church in Baltimore, and by all who have ever known him. As will be seen in what follows, brother Rowe has written much about his last hours, and we will not repeat what he has so well said. As the aged brethren and sisters pass away, with whom in our youthful years we took sweet counsel, and who were so kindly toward ourself, we cannot but feel a deep lonesomeness and sadness. But they are at rest, and we have hope for them, and for ourself, that one day we shall awake in the likeness of the blessed Lord, and abide in his presence forever.—ED.

I was intimately associated with brother Thorne for six and one-half years, having come to the church of his membership as pastor in December, 1898, and always found him to be interested and interesting in the things of the kingdom of Christ Jesus his Savior. He was faithful in his attendance at all the meetings of the church, either at the meeting-house or elsewhere. For many years he with others conducted a prayer meeting on the first and third Sundays in each month, which he very much enjoyed, and always felt disappointed when only a few were present. He loved to have all speak of the Lord's dealings with them. I was never in his company long without his speaking something about the blessed Jesus and his cause. He was a Bible student, and had good ideas of its teaching. I never knew any one who was more careful to look up the connection of a subject than he, and when he had done this and formed his opinion, he was, in my judgment, apt to be right. I have been comforted and benefited in talking with him. He was a true friend; he could see the faults of his friends and brethren, and would openly rebuke them when he felt it was necessary. This is better than secret love. That he had his faults goes without saying, for he was a man, but there was abundant evidence that our dear brother was given to know and feel the plague of his own heart. I have often heard him complain of a wicked heart, that was prone to wander from the God he loved. Some time last year he was in darkness for some weeks, and felt to be forsaken; it made me feel sad to hear him in his old age complain of such darkness; he would say, "I have had joy and hope, but where am I now?" I called often to see him, and one day I went in and found him shouting for joy, the blessed Jesus had fulfilled his gracious promise: "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." He told me of his happy feeling, and how it came about. He said, "I was sitting here thinking of my wretchedness because I do the things that I hate, when the Lord told me I should have a spiritual body, and in that body I shall not do what I hate, and I shall not say that which I do not want to say, but in that body I shall be pure and free from sin," and raising his hands and eyes toward heaven he clapped his hands together and said, "I am ready to take it any time." He seemed to feed on this to the end, which he seemed to feel was very near. The 22nd of February last he was eighty-five years old; in the evening several of his brethren, sisters and friends called on him as a surprise, and presented to him a new Bible, as a token of their loving fellowship and esteem. This he very much enjoyed, and appreciated the kindly feeling of those he loved for Jesus' sake. The last time he heard me speak was from the last verse of the first chapter of John. When I was through he said, "You could not go wrong to-day." He seemed to feel that the heavens were opened to him. He was in bed nine days, and suffered a great deal, but the Lord was with him. He said of his sickness, "This is my last," and truly we believe it was his last, for he is now where sickness, sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more.

We were glad to have with us at his funeral his former pastor, Elder F. A. Chick, whose long acquaintance with him enabled him to say many comforting things. We were also glad to have his lifelong friend and brother, Elder Wm. Grafton, with us, who spoke of several things that are true and comforting concerning him. The unworthy writer spoke a few words on the line of this writing, after which the remains were laid to rest in Baltimore cemetery to await the resurrection morn; then he shall have that spiritual body. We sadly miss him, he has been a familiar and loved figure among us so long it will seem sad and strange to see him no more. He greatly enjoyed our meetings, but I am sure he is now where the meeting is far more enjoyable than ours. He once told me, speaking of his comfort in the church, that if there was nothing for him hereafter, he had been amply paid as he had come along for all he had done and for all he had spent. His race is run and the victory won, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

Elder George Nelson Tusing was born in Madison township, Franklin Co., Ohio, Dec. 6th, 1821, and departed this life May 27th, 1905, aged 83 years, 5 months and 21 days. He was united in marriage with Elizabeth Harman, Feb. 18th, 1847, and they journeyed together and shared with each other the joys and sorrows of this life for over fifty-eight years. This union was blessed with four sons and five daughters, of whom three sons and four daugh-

ters and their mother survive. One brother of the deceased, Samuel C. Tusing, of New Lexington, Ohio, also survives him. There are also thirty grandchildren and twenty-three great-grandchildren. Elder Tusing was baptized and united with Friendship Baptist Church, at Reynoldsburg, Ohio, Dec. 7th, 1851. He was ordained to the ministry by this same church Dec. 10th, 1853, and he was continuously engaged in the ministry for more than fifty-one years. It can be said of him that few men came nearer than he in gaining the universal love and esteem of his brethren. He made his last pastoral visit and preached his last sermon on the fourth Sunday of last November, at Laurel church, Hocking Co., Ohio, and officiated at a marriage in that county on the 5th day of April, this year. Shortly after this, which was his last trip from home, his physical powers became so weakened and enfeebled that he was confined to his room. For the last six weeks of his life his decline was gradual, but accompanied with but little physical or mental suffering. He fully appreciated that his departure was speedily approaching, and calmly awaited the final summons. He frequently remarked that his work was done, and that he was ready to go. God had blessed him through a long life, and, in the language of the psalmist, had satisfied him. He retained fully his faculties to the end. On Saturday afternoon, May 27th, at 4 o'clock, he simply fell asleep, and his spirit peacefully departed to its Maker. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

By request his funeral was preached by the writer, assisted by Elders L. E. Thomas and L. T. Ruffner. An appropriate poem was recited by Elder L. B. Hanover at his home in Columbus. Twelve of his ministering brethren surrounded the casket during the services, viz: L. B. Hanover, J. C. Hanover, A. S. Shoemaker, L. E. Thomas, R. W. Peters, F. McGlade, J. W. Hoppes, Geo. Waddle, Wm. Lippencott, T. Cole, L. T. Ruffner and Z. K. Holliday. His remains were laid in a new tomb in Reynoldsburg cemetery, to await the voice of the Son of God at the resurrection of the just. May his promise to the bereft wife and children be verified. Farewell, brother, peace be to thy slumber. We hope to meet again in bright glory.

Z. K. HOLLIDAY.

John Moses, the subject of this notice, was born July 20th, 1825, in Augusta Co., Va.; he departed this life August 6th, 1903, aged 78 years and 16 days. At the age of four years he came with his parents to Warren Co., Ohio. He was united in marriage with Margaret Thompson, in 1849; to them three children were born. His wife having died in 1854, he was again married, to Ellen J. Wilson; to them eight children were born. Seven children and three sisters remain to mourn the loss of a loved one. He united with the Tappscott Primitive Baptist Church in 1878. He was a faithful and devoted christian, and was loved much by his brethren. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of grace, and often would say, "If I am ever saved, it is by nothing good that I have ever done." He was of a meek disposition, always preferring his brethren before himself, and when in the company of his brethren was generally talking on the subject of religion. His departure is deeply felt by the church, as well as by his relatives and those of his acquaintance.

A discourse was delivered on the occasion by the writer, to an attentive congregation, after which his remains were laid away in the cemetery at Tappscott to await the summons from on high.

ALSO,

Ellen J. Wilson Moses was born June 13th, 1836, at Poasttown, Ohio, died Oct. 13th, 1904, aged 68 years and 4 months. She was united in marriage with John Moses March 2nd, 1859. She united with Tappscott church, Warren Co., Ohio, in 1878. She loved the precious cause of Christ much, and was always ready to fill her place in the church whenever she was able; she was a peacemaker in Zion. She tried to honor her heavenly Master. Her words of counsel will not soon be forgotten by the brethren. The church has met with a loss that is deeply felt. Her children mourn the loss of a good mother, her neighbors a kind friend.

A funeral discourse was delivered by the writer to a large congregation, after which her remains were laid in the cemetery near by. May the good Lord grant his loving presence to her loved ones that remain, is my prayer.

J. M. STRUBLE.

Mrs. Lillian Ham Allen departed this life on Monday, May 22nd, 1905, at her home in Portland, Maine, aged 38 years. The deceased was the only child of brother and sister John B. Ham, of North Berwick, Maine, who in this their sore affliction have the compassionate sympathy of the members of the church, and of all the community in which they reside. Not only her parents mourn this bereavement, but her three children, Everett Ham, aged thirteen years, Lulu Frances, aged eleven years, and Beatrice, aged seven years, mourn their loss of an affectionate mother. A little over two and one-half years ago these dear children were plunged into sorrow in the loss of their father, Edward C. Allen, an amiable man, and loving, indulgent parent. The deceased was married to Edward C. Allen May 7th, 1890, and his death as a heavy cloud overshadowed her the remainder of her days. Her last illness, though of a few days duration, was full of pain and distress, yet even amidst it all she uttered things by which we gather hope that the Lord was graciously mindful of her. She repeated the words as expressive of her

soul's consolation: "I'll be with you till the morning, I've come to save you, do not fear." Her remains were brought to North Berwick and laid in the grave.

At the funeral services at North Berwick the writer preached from the words, "Until the day break, and the shadows flee away." The children of the deceased are now under the affectionate guardianship of their grandparents. May grace and wisdom and the blessing of the Lord be theirs amidst their loving endeavors in behalf of their dear ones.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

By request I write a few lines in memory of my dear beloved aunt, **Ann Bruce,** daughter of Japheth West. She was born in Delaware Co., Ohio, Sept. 25th, 1834, and departed this life April 4th, 1905, at her home near Chesterville, Ohio, aged 70 years, 6 months and 9 days. She was united in marriage to Joel D. Bruce July 1st, 1862, who preceded her in death Nov. 15th, 1883, leaving her with one daughter and three sons, and four step-children of his former marriage, to whom she was truly a loving, indulgent mother, always sacrificing herself that her children and those around her might be happy and comfortable. In early life she experienced a precious hope in Christ, and was baptized Feb. 16th, 1858, by Elder Zechariah Thomas, into the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Mt. Pisgah, of which she remained a loved and esteemed member. She had been in failing health for some time, yet she died suddenly, but we believe she was fully prepared and resigned to the will of the Lord. Truly a faithful, precious mother and a kind, hospitable neighbor has been called from our midst, but the Lord has only taken his own, and has given us that blessed evidence that she has fallen asleep in Jesus, which insures her happiness, a sweet rest in heaven. She leaves to mourn her death one daughter, three sons, four step-children, three sisters, with a large circle of other relatives and friends, together with the church.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder A. S. Shoemaker, after which she was laid to rest in the cemetery near Chesterville, Ohio, to await the pleasure of the Lord to be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus. May God bless the dear, sorrowing children, who so kindly cared for their precious mother, and manifested such tender watchfulness for her comfort and peace. May they feel his sustaining grace guiding them in the way of righteousness and usefulness through life, and may it be with us all in death.

BELLE GORSUCH.

Marengo, Ohio, June, 1905.

Stephen Thrush was born Dec. 29th, 1821, died June 16th, 1905, aged 83 years, 6 months and 18 days.

HANNAH THRUSH.

Deacon A. G. Loden was born in Marion Co., Ala., Jan. 10th, 1849, moved to Texas in 1866 and settled in Harrison county; he afterwards moved to Johnson county, where he was united in marriage to Miss L. C. Oney, Feb. 8th, 1871. Shortly after his marriage he with his wife united with the Cottonwood Church of Primitive Baptists, and were baptized by Elder Clark. In 1871 he moved to Upshur Co., Texas, and united with Fellowship church, and was ordained to the deaconship of that church, which office he filled with honor to the church and cause of his Master, thereby purchasing to himself a good degree. The church has lost one of her best gifts. Brother Loden was indeed a lovely christian, always ready to give a reason for the hope within him, and magnifying the grace of God by a well ordered walk and godly conversation, and at the end the God whom he loved and served said, Come up higher. During his last illness he often spoke of his departure as being gain to himself; committing his companion and children to the God who had so wonderfully saved him and preserved him, telling them not to grieve for him, but ever look unto Jesus.

The writer of this tried to speak to the comfort of the sorrowing family and brethren from the words: "A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth," fully realizing that our loss was his eternal gain. His body was laid to rest in the East Mountain cemetery, near the church-house of his membership. May the God of all grace comfort the bereaved family and sorrowing church, is the prayer of the poor, unworthy writer.

G. F. WYATT.

Gladewater, Texas, June 18, 1905.

POETRY.

I SHALL BE SATISFIED.

(Selected by Mrs. C. S. Winchell, Brooklyn, N. Y.)

"If I in thy likeness, O Lord, may awake,
And shine a pure image of thee,
Then I shall be satisfied when I can break
These fetters of flesh and be free.
I know this stained tablet must first be washed white,
To let thy bright features be drawn;
I know I must suffer the darkness of night,
To welcome the coming of dawn.

But I shall be satisfied when I can cast
The shadows of nature all by;
When this dreary world from my vision shall fade,
To let the soul open her eye.
I gladly shall feel the blest morn drawing nigh,
When time's dreamy fancy shall fade;
If then in thy likeness I may but appear,
And rise in thy beauty arrayed.

To see thee in glory, O Lord, as thou art,
From this mortal, perishing clay,
The spirit immortal in peace would depart,
And joyous mount up her bright way.
When in thine own image on me thou hast smiled,
Within thy blest mansion, and when
The arms of my Father encompass his child,
O I shall be satisfied then."

MEETINGS.

PROVIDENCE permitting, the next meeting of Peace Valley Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of the Primitive order, will be held with Poolville church, Poolville, Parker Co., Texas, instead of Friendship church, Acton, Hood Co., Texas, as per Minutes of last meeting, commencing on Friday before (at 10 o'clock a. m.) and embracing the third Sunday in August, 1905. Those coming by railroad from any direction will be met with conveyance at Weatherford, Texas, Thursday before the meeting. All lovers of truth attend.

W. O. RUTLEDGE, Association Clerk.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 73. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1905. NO. 15.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WHITEFIELD, Maine, May 22, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Inclosed you will find a letter that I received some little time ago from our beloved pastor, Elder Z. M. Beal. It was very comforting to me, as it came at a time when I most needed it. In the darkest hours of our nighttimes we sometimes receive messages from our loved ones, telling us that they still hold us in fond remembrance, when we had felt so alone that it seemed we neither had a friend on earth or in heaven. Dear brother, this was my condition when I received brother Beal's letter, and it came to me as good news. In this dark and barren state of mind I felt to say, It is good to be remembered by one of my Father's family. Can there be any love like this, to be loved of God and loved by the brethren? It is a love that the world knows nothing of, for it comes from God. It was love, it was wondrous love, the love of God to me. Often I feel destitute of this love, but today as I sat down to rest I took up the SIGNS to read, and the reading was so good that love filled my heart in a moment; love to God and his dear ones, and even to those I never met in the flesh. Their writings were so good, I felt I wanted to take them by the hand and tell them how I loved them and how much good their letters of love did me. O how I love to read such letters. I think if I could only write such letters as my brethren and sisters do I should want to write all the time. But I am nothing, and I feel sometimes that I have no right to even read such letters. How different I am from what I once expected. I thought to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth, but it seems to me that my growth has been the other way; I grow less and less, and the gold that was once so bright becomes dim. In my youthful days in Christ I thought it strange to meet old professed christians, and hear them speak of their financial affairs; it would make me feel so badly that I would sometimes have to leave the room. I would think, How can they talk of things that are of so little account? But, my dear brother, I understand it all now, for I am so cold and lifeless the greater part of my time that I am made to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me

from the body of this death?" I am so dark by times that I question these things. Perhaps all I have passed through is a delusion; and I even ask, How do I know whether there is a God or not? Then I feel to say, "Get thee behind me, Satan," I desire not the knowledge of thy ways. Surely I have to look back to the hole of the pit from whence I was digged, and the rock from whence I was hewn; these are paths I had not known. I used to have so much love in my heart, I felt sure that I loved the brethren, and this passage of Scripture was a great help to me: "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." But I have been so cold I could not always tell whether I loved God's little ones or not. It is a great wonder to me that notwithstanding all this, my hope in Christ remains with me, and right in my darkest times Jesus will appear and fill my soul, and this cold heart will be melted with love to God and his little ones, and hope will be revived, and I will enjoy reading the Bible and SIGNS so that the tears will stream down my cheeks and I will go about my work praising the Lord for his wonderful works to the children of men. O for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer's praise. It is my cry daily that the Lord will revive his work in my heart. I want that love that flows like a river, to fill my heart all the time. Even in my darkest nights I feel to cry unto my Savior to give me strength as my day, that I may be able to bear whatever he is pleased to lay upon me without murmuring; but I am a mystery to myself. I hope God's little ones will bear with me in the future as they have in the past, for surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and I would dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

May the Lord be with you and yours and all the Israel of God now and evermore. Remember us in love.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

ELLA L. PULSIFER.

BOWDOINHAM, Maine, Feb. 19, 1905.

MRS. ELLA L. PULSIFER—MY DEAR SISTER:—For some time past I have been thinking that I would write you. I have been looking over some past numbers of the SIGNS, and in No. 17, Vol. 68, I see your letter to brother Chick, and also one from our dear and beloved brother, James H. Lowell, and another from sister Nellie Palmer, both written to you, and I thought if I could write such good letters as those that I would not hesitate writing to my loved ones. I hardly dare call them brethren, for I do not feel that I am worthy to be accounted as a brother to God's dear children; but I think I know that I do love them with an unfeigned love, and I love to be in their company, for they are very near and dear to me; and if I am not deceived, I have them in this poor old heart, to live and to die with them, and with them to be buried. Where and by whom is this unspeakable love begotten? I cannot believe that it is the work of the flesh, because I can remember a time when I think I hated all those that testified of Jesus and his effectual work in the salvation of sinners. At that time I believed in the works of man, I did not know that I was lost, did not know that I was poor, and blind, and wretched. Then I ask again, Where and by whom was this unfeigned love begotten? If it was not the work of the flesh it must be the fruit of the Spirit. Is it not wonderful? Is not this one of the names by which Jesus is known in the hearts of God's children? What wonderful things are revealed to

the faith of God's chosen ones; none of these wonderful things are ever revealed to the flesh, for no man knoweth the things of God, but the Spirit of God. How often the question comes to me, Am I one of this flock to whom it is God's pleasure to give the kingdom? There are times when I feel that Jesus communes with me by the way; then I feel that he is Wonderful, Counselor, and that he is the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, and I can say, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." Yes, happy is that people whose God is the Lord. I believe if I should be left to do as I please, without restraint, that I should accomplish my own destruction, for "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death." The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death, and at times I have a hope that God has put his fear in my heart and will not let me depart from it. I am confident that if I am not kept by the power of God I shall go in that broad way that leads to destruction. But, dear sister, our Jesus is faithful, he will not deny himself, he will never leave nor forsake those that he came to save, and for whom he gave his life; he has ransomed them from the power of the grave, he has redeemed them from death, they are no longer under the law, but under grace, and they can sing with the spirit and with the understanding also,

"O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be;
Let thy grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee."

I have had many precious seasons in the company of the Old School Baptists; they are nearer and dearer to me than any other people on the earth, and they are in my heart to live and to die. Where does this fruit spring from? It must be from the Fountain of life. God's children are bound in the bundle of life, and where is that life if it is not in Jesus? He is their life, and all things are theirs, and they are Christ's, and Christ is God's. They can never be separated from the love of Christ; God in his wisdom and determinate counsel has ordained it so, and it can never be disannulled.

"This sacred bond shall never break,
Though earth should to her center shake;
Rest, doubting soul, assured of this,
For God has pledged his holiness."

When we feel in the soul these experiences and emotions it will cause us to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Now, sister Pulsifer, I will write you a little concerning my temporal condition. My health has been poor since October, and my wife, too, has not been very well; I have not been to meeting since the fifth Sunday in October; I do not think that the church has met together this winter. I had a letter from sister Raymond, and also from sister Attie Curtis; they were both well; sister Attie is in Lawrence this winter. I have just received a good letter this morning from sister Lowell; I love to get such letters, they do this poor old sinner much good; how kind it is of them to write to me; I feel that I am not worthy of their love or fellowship, but I know that it must be the love of Christ in them. I am getting old, a few months more and I shall have fulfilled the allotted time of three score years and ten, but the Lord has been good to me all the days of the years of my life, and I wonder why it is. It certainly is not because of any merit or goodness in me, then it must be because it seemed good in his sight; he has blessed me with the gifts of a good companion and six children,

and ten grandchildren; they are all living, and we are yet an unbroken family. "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" Please remember me with love to your husband; I think of him very often, and of his carefulness to entertain God's poor and needy, and although his name is not written on any church book in this world, I believe that it is written in heaven, in the Lamb's book of life, and that he is not a stranger to these things, nor a foreigner, but a fellow-citizen with the saints, and of the household of God, and is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. And finally, give my christian love to all the brethren in Whitefield. I should like very much to have a letter from you concerning your welfare, temporally and spiritually. Write me how and where they are, all of our Father's children whose God is the Lord.

May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ bless you with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, is the prayer of a poor old sinner.

Z. M. BEAL.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May 21, 1905.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send this letter to the SIGNS, because I think it good reading. I heard Elder Allison preach in the Northwestern Association of Illinois, on Sunday, August 27th, 1865, nearly forty years ago. I know, therefore, that he is a good preacher of the gospel. I have never seen him since that day, but have enjoyed many precious letters from him and his wife. I would have sent more of them to the SIGNS if there had been less in them about myself. His humility is real and sweet. I feel about him as he expresses himself about me. I love to look up to him. He has told me much about the other ministers in that Siloam Association, which extends over the two States of Washington and Oregon; he speaks warmly of them all. They evidently are dwelling together in love and fellowship. If it were the Lord's will I would love to visit them. I have enjoyed a correspondence with some of them.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

OAK CREEK, Oregon, March 21, 1905.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND—MY VERY DEAR BROTHER:—Your much esteemed letter, dated February 7th, came to us by due course of mail, and has been read with much interest. It is so good of you to even think of us poor, sinful, ignorant creatures, and doubly kind of you to spend time to write to us, and use such kind words, and write as though we were your equals. Well, we do hope we are equally interested in the truth "as it is in Jesus," and in the joys of salvation by grace, and in the fellowship of the sufferings of our dear Savior; and we do hope that we know that we do love our dear kindred in Christ, and love to have a humble position at the feet of our brethren. But O how unworthy we feel of that love and sweet fellowship, yet we crave it notwithstanding all our vileness and weakness, and would be desolate indeed without it. But I can say, and say it with an understanding of it, that, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given;" if it is indeed my joy to have grace at all, or the true knowledge of it.

But I will now try to write some in answer to your letter. We are truly glad to know that you and your wife and sis-

ter Bessie appreciate our poor, weak letters. It seems good for you to say, "Sister Mary." It seems to bring you closer to us. But sister Mary, my dear, faithful companion, does not write letters to any one. I commenced doing the writing of letters for us soon after our marriage, fifty-five years ago last December, and have continued to do so. Not that she cannot write, but she wishes me to do the writing, and I sign her name to the letters I write to the brethren and sisters, because I am writing for us both, and we are equally interested in what I write. You must remember, dear brother, that we are not scholars even in regard to the English language. In regard to your reason for calling my letters good, I do hope that your opinion and thoughts are correct. But O how much I doubt the very facts you name, and often feel that I now have deceived the dear brother or sister who thinks of me as something in grace, when I feel so keenly that I am nothing.

Yes, my dear brother, we are getting old in years; I am seventy-four years of age and my wife is seventy-two. I can truly say that as I increase in years I increase in the knowledge of my inner depravity and nothingness before God, and if I have any growth in grace at all it has been in the revelation to my astonished soul of more and more corruption within me, and in showing me my inner destitution and helplessness, and increasing my faith in the absolute salvation of God's people by rich and reigning grace, through the merits of our dear Redeemer.

I have been a subscriber and reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES since 1861, and it has voiced my faith, and has stood firm all these years in the doctrine of salvation entirely by grace, first and last, and the absolute sovereignty and predestination of God, and has never changed or faltered, for it proclaims and contends for the same clean, unadulterated doctrine of grace to-day that it did in its first issue; so I feel under obligations to use my influence, if I have any, in the endeavor to increase its circulation. For all its enemies inside and outside of the church, with all the chicanery of the devil, have not been able to thwart God's purpose in its publication, and it still lives to gladden the hearts of God's humble poor.

Now in regard to the condition of the churches, I believe I can say that peace abounds generally among them, but it seems that they are all in a cold state. Very few additions are noted. There are a few near this church, or near enough to get here to our meeting in the summer, that are intending to join soon, so two of them have informed me. Then we have one good man that would well represent that dear friend whose funeral sermon you preached, and which appears in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of March 15th. It has been many years since I visited all the churches in this association, but I have visited them all in years past. I have helped to constitute three of the churches: Harmony, in Dayton, Washington; Little Cedar, in Clackamas Co., Oregon, in which I baptized twenty-three, and Coast Fork church, in Lane Co., Oregon. In this church I baptized three, and ordained two ministers. I was pastor of these three churches some twenty years.

Yes, we live, or stay, about half a mile from our church-house here. Years ago this was a strong church, or at least there was quite a large membership. But in the faith of God's elect she is as strong to-day as when there was a greater number of members.

Now, my beloved and wonderfully

blessed brother, I have answered your letter the best I could; but if you ever meet me and hear me try to preach you will be able to take a full share of stock in what I say about my inability. I do not call to mind that I ever said I had any ability in preaching. But should the dear Lord send you among us you will have a warm reception from all the preachers in this association, and also from Elder Polk and others who are not members of the association, together with all the brethren and sisters. Now do not scold me, dear brother, for what I am about to say, for I must praise the gift that is in thee, if you will not allow me to praise him who has the great gift and knowledge bestowed upon him. That funeral sermon I referred to was meat and drink to us. O how good the dear Lord is to us poor, little weaklings, to allow us to understand and feast upon the glorious truths of the gospel, proclaimed by his called and qualified servants.

Now I will do what has been on my mind to do for some time. On account of what you said some years ago I have been timid about asking you to write upon any particular subject; but since I see that you do sometimes answer requests that way, I wish to have you write through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on Matthew xxii. 42–44; and also on Ezekiel xvii. 24, through the same periodical.

With love, I hope, unfeigned, my wife joins me in fellowship to you all.

Your brother in hope,

J. P. ALLISON.

LUKE XIII. 27–30.

"BUT he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are: depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last."

These verses embrace a subject, to which the key is found in the parable contained in verses 6 to 9; this speaks of a fig tree planted in a vineyard, the owner of which came three years seeking fruit thereon, but found none. Then said he to the dresser of the vineyard, "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" But the dresser answered, "Let it alone this year [third year] also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: and if it bear fruit, well; and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down." This fig tree represents the nation of Israel; the three years represent dispensations in which the owner (God) had come to that nation seeking fruit. The third year represents the gospel dispensation, which began with the coming of Christ, but was not fully developed until after the destruction of Jerusalem. The fig tree (Israel or Jews) stood until that time; was digged about, or in other words ministered unto by the apostles who preached the gospel to it, (Jews) but the tree proved to be barren even in the third year, (gospel day) hence was cut down. In verse twenty-three one said unto him, "Lord, are there few that be saved? and he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter it, and shall not be able." "Many" (the Jews) strove to enter the kingdom, but could not enter because they sought upon legal principles: no man can enter except

through Christ. All who have, or ever will enter the strait gate, have done so by the blood of Jesus (the truth, the life and the way). "When once the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity." This casting off or cutting off of the non-elect among the Jews is set forth also in the parable of the ten virgins: those ready, went in with the bridegroom, and the door was shut, and that forever. The foolish wanted to be admitted, but the answer of the bridegroom was, "I know you not." In the text under consideration they are commanded to depart; called workers of iniquity. All works are such that are not the works of righteousness. "Depart from me," is the cutting down of the barren fig tree, or the cutting off of that legal people, and all other who expect to enter in by the deeds of the law. When Israel realized that they were only a figure, and not the real vineyard, there was weeping and gnashing of teeth. When Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets (elect, faithful,) appeared in the kingdom of God, and they themselves cast out, (their house left unto them desolate) how great their disappointment must have been. The "great gulf fixed" (unbelief) is to this day between the elect and the non-elect. The Jews were first the manifested people of God; the Gentiles are the last people manifested as his, hence the Jews (first) shall be last, and the last (Gentiles) shall be first in the kingdom of God, as is and shall be manifest in the earth. "They shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God." This refers to the gathering of the elect from the four winds of the earth into the spiritual kingdom. We do not have to take a journey to be in the kingdom of God, to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, or with each other; it is in Spirit that we are gathered; it is in Spirit that we worship; it is in Spirit that we have communion one with another; our fellowship is in the Spirit. Our King is a Spirit, his kingdom is spiritual, and "through great tribulation we must enter."

Written by request of sister Wolfe, of Albany, N. Y.

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1 KINGS XIX. 13.

"WHAT doest thou here, Elijah?"

Elijah the prophet was blessed with faith in God, and by faith wrought many wonderful works. He prayed that it might not rain, and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. He prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit. He said to the widow of the city of Sarepta, who was gathering sticks to bake the last cake for herself and her son, then die, Fear not, the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth. So it was. When the son of the widow died, Elijah stretched himself upon the child and prayed God to let the soul come into him again: the Lord heard his prayer, the child revived, and the prophet presented him to his mother alive. He prayed to the Lord to send fire down from heaven to consume his offering in

the presence of the prophets of Baal, and fire came and burned up the altar, the offering, the stones on which the altar was built, and licked up the water in the trench. He slew four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal. These are a part of the works, by faith, of Elijah; but when Jezebel sent a messenger to him saying, "So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time," "he arose, and went for his life." When in the wilderness he prayed that he might die, but instead, an angel fed him, after which he went to Mount Horeb (desert), where all of us must go when faith is not in exercise. There he dwelt in a cave (bondage); here it was that the Lord said unto him, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" Where is now thy faith in the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob? Where is that confidence in God which you had when you met the prophets of Baal and all other dangers through which you have been called to pass? Is Jezebel greater than your God? Is not the Lord able to deliver thee and to preserve thy life? Why didst thou doubt? Why was not the Lord thy refuge and high tower, wherein is safety? Was he not with thee in the dangers, temptations, persecutions, to deliver thee, in the days and years of thy pilgrimage? Elijah must answer these questions as we do now (in heart), "The fear of man brought a snare;" I had forgotten thy power, thy mercy and the many deliverances in days past. All this fear and doubt is but the fruit of unbelief: in this condition we all are compelled to offer the prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner." How precious is our fellowship with Elijah: first in faith, confidence and holy trust in God; afterwards fear, doubt, temptation, trial and bondage to the law of sin which is in our members. The rending of rocks and mountains, the earthquakes and fires distress us because the Lord is not in them; but they must first appear and pass away without hurt to us, before we hear the "still small voice" which brings peace to the troubled mind, light to the benighted soul, liberty to the captive and faith to the unbelieving. Then we with Elijah wrap our face in our mantle to hide our shame in departing from the living God. How often we seek refuge in some earthly place or thing when pressed by danger or trial. O that we might ever look to the Rock from whence cometh our help. Helpless, weak and faint we must ever be receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, though we be often carried away, tossed upon the billows of fear and unbelief. But though we be tossed the promise is, at last we shall be brought to our desired haven, where rest and peace are found.

Written by request of brother Donald McKay, of Scotsville, Nova Scotia.

H. C. KER.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

TEHUACANA, Texas, March, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR, READERS AND LOVERS OF THE SIGNS:—It has been in my mind for a long time to write a sketch of what I hope have been the dealings of God with me in my youthful days, but I am a very poor writer, and that has been some hindrance, though the chief hindrance has been that I have feared it would have the appearance of self-aggrandizement, or trying to excel some one else; God forbid that such should be the case. I receive much comfort from the narratives of experience of the writers from all parts of the country. I hardly ever get to see any one with whom I can enjoy

talking of the love and mercy of God, who rules all things after the counsel of his own will, so I feel as if I wanted to cast in my mite in this way; but I fear I cannot make it as brief as I would like to. It seems that it would take a large volume to say what I would like to in regard to this matter.

To begin, I will say that I was born in Houston Co., Ga., December 11th, 1844, and was raised in Webster Co., Ga. From my earliest recollection I heard people talk of heaven, and hell, and God, and the devil, and that good people, or all that would do good would go to heaven when they died, and all bad people would perish in hell when they died. I feared going to that terrible place, as it was described to me, and I tried to shun it by being a good boy, as I was taught. I tried to be a good boy, not through love of God, but through fear of the devil and of hell, and because I was not outwardly as wicked and profane as some of my playmates, I thought that I was a pretty good boy, and so lived at ease till the spring of 1861, while I was going to school. I obtained leave of absence one day from my teacher, but with no particular purpose in view. I had not gone far from the school, and was standing idling and gazing about, when I heard my name called; the sound did not come from the direction of the house. While I wondered what it meant, it was made known to me in a mysterious way that I was a lost, ruined, condemned and guilty sinner in the sight of God, who was just and holy, and all my hope was then taken from me. I returned to the house and got my books and tried to study them, and thought to get rid of the impression that I had, but there was no getting rid of it; let me be where I might, or doing what I might be, it continued to sound in my ears that I was lost without hope. I tried to pray, and it seemed that I got worse instead of better. I tried to be a better boy than I had ever been, and to work myself into favor with God, but I failed in this altogether, and became worse, as it seemed to me, all the time. I would have exchanged life with the brute creation, so that after death I would be no more. I begged for mercy, but it seemed that there was no mercy for me. One night, after bathing my pillow with tears, I fell asleep, and dreamed of walking along a certain road with which I was well acquainted, and I came to an obstruction lying across the road, and there was no way of going around it. It was like a log, and much higher than my head, so that I could not get over it. But it seemed that I was compelled to go that way, and so I went to work to roll it out of the way, but could not even shake it, much less move it. I worked very hard, but at last as I gave up and was tired and out of breath, there came a power and rolled it out of the way for me, and right under it was a light object about as large as a common pin, and as bright as gold. As I awoke, tired and out of breath, I felt that this was an evidence of my deliverance from my troubles; but being a dream, I soon got to doubting, and was in as much trouble as ever. Again I begged for mercy, and prayed to God to forgive my sins, and give me a brighter evidence of my deliverance from my trouble and my sins. It was not long until I had another dream. I dreamed that there was a trestle built, beginning about one hundred and fifty yards south of the house, and it extended in a northeastern direction about one hundred yards, and hen turned west about fifty yards. It

was floored and walled very high on each side, so that there seemed no way of getting out of it. It was very high and extended over the bottomless pit, and a large number of people marched into that trestle and were forced on until they were forced off into that bottomless pit. I also was forced on till I could see them going into that flaming pit, and hear their cries as they went down; but just before I got to the brink I screamed out and woke up in a fright. I then prayed, and thanked God for delivering me from that place, and I felt that I was satisfied, and that I would not have any more doubts, but it was soon suggested to me that I was mistaken, and that there was nothing in dreams, and that I was deluded. About this time, a sister, younger than I, professed a hope in Christ and joined the Missionary church, and in a short time after that my mother was called to her eternal home, and I was in trouble again in a two-fold sense. My sister was saved, as I felt, and my mother was gone to her rest, and I was left without a hope in Christ. I felt to be friendless, although I had a kind father and brothers and sisters; I felt like I had not a friend on earth; I gave up in despair.

One morning as I went out to feed the stock, it seemed that my mother met me and told me not to weep for her, for she was at rest, and some day I would be with her. A short time after this, while in great trouble, feeling that I could live no longer, I left the house as I thought never to return. As I went out of the gate, I said in my mind, Farewell father, farewell brothers and sisters, farewell all, for I am going forever. The elements and all creation appeared to be shrouded in mourning. I went about one hundred and fifty yards, and then turned east for fifty yards, for I wanted to be by myself. I knew not where I would go nor where I would stop. I came to an old pine log, and there I fell to my knees to ask the Lord to have mercy upon me and deliver me from my trouble. I never expected to rise from that place, but determined that if I died there I would die begging for mercy, and pardon for my sins. Right there is a space of time that I cannot describe, for I lost sight of this world. The next thing I knew I was upon my feet praising God for the great work that he had done for me, whereof I was glad. Never till then could I accept Christ as my Savior. Everything in nature joined in one harmonious strain of praise to our triune God. I was made to rejoice with that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory. I believe that I was both killed and made alive at that time. I was killed to the love of sin, and made alive to God, in the Lord Jesus Christ; this was in the summer of 1862. I soon united with the Missionaries, to be with my sisters, and where my mother's membership was at the time of her death. A short time after this I joined the Confederate army, and served there until the close of the war. Then becoming dissatisfied with the Missionaries, I offered myself to the Primitive Baptist Church at Chickasawhacky, Terrell Co., Ga., on Saturday before the third Sunday in July, 1867, and told them a little of what I have here written, and was received, and baptized the next day by Elder William Hubbard.

These are a few of the marks or pillars of memory set up in rivers of living water, to which I go back and bathe my weary soul, when led by the Spirit of the living God. But I am still a halting, hobbling sinner, saved by grace alone if saved at all; it is all unmerited on my part; it is all the gift of a merciful God.

Brother Chick, do as your judgment dictates with this imperfect letter, and forgive me if I have intruded on your precious time. I desire the remembrance of all the household of faith at the throne of grace.

I. H. BOZEMAN.

FORDYCE, Ark., Feb. 5, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —My mind has been on you almost all the time since I arose from my bed. I do not know just why this has been the case, for I have never had the pleasure of meeting you, but there has always been in my heart a love for you that I do not have for people of the world, even those that I have known from my childhood. I hope that the God of all grace has been the great cause of all this, and that it has been because of the testimony to God's love, power and grace to poor sinners, (as I have for the last nine years felt myself to be,) which you have constantly borne. These things you have ably presented, together with the power of God's grace in the forgiveness of sins through the efficacy of the blood of God's dear Son.

I commenced to read your writings in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES nine years ago. I also took one other Old School Baptist paper, but it soon got to advocating "Conditional Time Salvation," and that we would by our obedience be blessed of God. I tried this, my dear brother, and found that it was a complete failure; that my mind would run after things of the world, and that when I tried to do good evil was present with me and was paramount in my mind; and these were the things that I did, though I would sorrow and weep and think I would be on my guard, and not allow such to be the case any more, yet all would fall to the ground fruitless. So I was compelled to give up in great tribulation and distress of mind, and say, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I tried with all my might to live above these things, but found that I could not; but in all this I hope I did learn the things that our ancient brethren taught: that our sufficiency is of God, and that it is by the grace of God I am what I am, and that the grace of God was not bestowed upon me in vain, but was the Lord's perfect gift, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the Beloved. This is what has enlarged my heart, as I hope, toward you and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The doctrine set forth by you, and in them, is to the praise of the glory of God's grace. I will also add that it is in exact accord with the experience of the true child of grace, who has been, as was Paul, crucified to the world, and the world to him. Our dear Savior has said, "Ye are not of the world." That is as true to-day as it was then. The poor in spirit are killed to the love of the world, and to all trust in it, and they are dead to it, and they are now married to another, even Jesus, and they look to, love and obey him. We are dead to the first husband (the law,) but are living the life of him who has so comfortingly said, "Because I live, ye shall live also," and, The life that we now live in the flesh, we live by the faith of the Son of God. It is through him, and by him; there are no conditions on our part at all. O, brother Chick, I want to praise him for all of it, for I am nothing but vanity in God's sight; for man in his best estate is only vanity. All the nations of the earth are to God as nothing, yea, less than nothing and vanity.

But I am a long way from what I

started out to say. First, I wanted to say how much I was comforted in reading the editorial which you wrote with regard to the division between the Old and New order of Baptists. You say, "That was a day for which we should thank God." Yes, my brother, I fully agree with you; they were not of us, and they only brought about strife and confusion. See, to-day, when one preaches a spurious doctrine how it confuses the children of God. I do hope that I feel thankful to God for this separation, for how could two walk together except they were agreed? Where there is no agreement, there can be no unanimity of the Spirit. On my return from one of my appointments, I heard one deliver a sermon (so-called,) and that man did not so much as name the name of Christ. This may seem strange to you, dear brother, but I listened closely, and Christ's name was not named. I thought of what you had witnessed of the separation, and thought, They are not of us; they trust in the law, and in their own good works, and we know them by their fruits; and God has said, Ye are not of the world; they are of the world, and the world heareth them. The world loves only that preaching which honors man. This preaching is of the world, and the world hears it and esteems it, and their trust is in it.

I had a dream last night which is now upon my mind. Whether it is just a dream or not, God knoweth. I dreamed that I was preaching to a large congregation of people, and while I was speaking of the impotency of all the Adamic family, and of their inability, I was interrupted by two men, who said to me, Speak not so any more. This they said with great threatenings toward me. My reply to them was this, I will make you this promise, that anything that does not come into my mind I will not speak, but such as God gives me, that I will speak. Here, my dear brother, my mind runs back to the days of the primitive saints, when there was great persecution and threatenings breathed out against them for preaching the truth, and I am of the opinion that the same things that existed then, will be again. See the hatred that now exists against the true church; is it not the same spirit that has ever existed? I think it is. This church of God has ever had her hardships to endure; the adversary has ever been busy since his appearance in the garden of Eden. I am trusting in him who has put all things under his feet, and who has arisen a Conqueror over all things, and who is the resurrection and the life. Then let us take courage over these things, as these things were charged against our fathers, so must they be charged against us, and hereby we know that we are in the same old path, the good old way which Jesus trod in sorrow, even unto death. My dear brother, may God's grace enable us to be content with this way.

Yours in hope,

V. R. HARRIS.

[INCREDIBLE as it may seem, it is true in this section, as our brother says it is in his, that many sermons are preached in which the name of Christ is not found at all; but we have sometimes thought that even this was better than to mention his name and go on to pervert that name, as is so shamefully done by all Arminians. It is said that once some young man delivered a discourse under the form of a sermon, and afterwards asked some old minister who was present what he thought of it. The old man said, I saw but one thing lacking in it. Well what was that?

said the young man, I thought that I got into the subject all the text called for. Yet, one thing you left out, the old man replied, and that was Christ. But, said the young man, it did not seem that that name was in the text, or that it could find place properly in the sermon. "Young man," said the aged minister, "if Christ was not in the text, I would rake over heaven and earth to find and bring him in there, and my advice to you is that you never preach again without not only naming Christ, but making him your whole theme. There is no other name worth preaching, or that can do any humble soul good." We feel to say Amen to this. Christ is all and in all, and the whole business to which a gospel preacher is called is to preach Christ and him crucified, as Paul implies when he said, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." We greatly appreciate our brother's kind words, and the fellowship in the truth which he has expressed.—ED.

2 CORINTHIANS IV. 6.

"FOR God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

Language is too weak to convey the deep things of God; the natural mind cannot conceive them. The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to his law, and neither indeed can be. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." They are discerned by the Spirit. "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God." The Lord puts his Spirit in his people and causes them to live, and when this is done that man begins to see that the Lord of hosts is holy, holy, holy, and that the whole earth is full of his glory. Then they begin to see that the heavens declare the glory of God, and that the firmament showeth his handiwork. "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge." But then the soul says, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." He now sees the great contrast between God and man. He is the God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he. I am indebted to him ten thousand talents, and have not one farthing to pay. Then the soul says, What shall I do? "I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." Such an one can but smite upon his breast, saying, Lord, be merciful to me a sinner. He sighs, and cries, and groans, and mourns, on account of his sins; he realizes the plague of his own heart, and knows the truth of the proverb, "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death." He now finds that his heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. He seeks, and after awhile he finds; he knocks, and after awhile it is opened unto him, though in some cases it is after a long while. It is because the Lord hath shined in his heart that he sees himself as he really is, a poor, lost sinner, helpless and un-

done; and this shining in the heart also gives him the knowledge of the glory of God, not in the works of his own hands, nor in the teachings of pious parents, nor in the Sunday School, but in the face of Jesus Christ. He hath taken away the handwriting of ordinances which was against us, nailing them to his cross; he trod the wine-press alone; he is rightly called the Captain of our salvation, for he alone fought the battle, and won the victory, and redeemed and saved his people with an everlasting salvation, world without end. He hath secured eternal happiness and immortal glory for us, and we rejoice in hope of this glory when we are permitted to walk in the light of his countenance. We can see the glory of God in no place save in the face of Jesus Christ, and when he appears then do we appear with him in glory.

"In darkest shades if he appear,
My dawning is begun;
He is my soul's sweet morning star,
And he my rising sun."

Such an one no longer feels that he is not much of a sinner; but until he knew the plague of his own heart, did not feel the need of a Savior. To the poor soul who has been made to hate sin, and mourn on account of it, and compelled to say, Where shall I go, or whither flee to escape the vengeance due to me? I would say, in the language of the apostle, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." To believe on the Lord Jesus Christ is to look to him alone for salvation, and to see him as the great peacemaker between God and man, and as the chief among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely. "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." This Zion is composed of sinners saved by grace. Christ Jesus came into the world to save them from all their sins, and they all rejoice in him, and in this glorious truth with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory.

With love to all the saints, I remain your brother,

EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

NEWARK, Delaware.

MALACHI III. 16.

"THEN they that feared the Lord spake often one to another."

This is part of the word of God concerning the coming of Jesus, after the Jews as a nation had spoken against him. Many of the Lord's chosen people spoke against Christ when he was with them in the flesh, and we to-day find ourselves doubting, fearing, walking mournfully before him. (Mal. iii. 14.) Not doubting his power, but fearing he will not be with us in times of need. Such was my condition as I went on my way to visit the associations and churches in the east. But like many a more worthy one, I found a people who fear the Lord, and speak often one to another, to whom he hearkens and hears. The ministers and other members spake to each other in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, and I rejoiced in spirit, I trust, because of the great privilege of meeting with them, and the power to hear the wonderful gospel of God our Savior. It seemed to me that again in the Spirit he had come to make up his jewels, that we might see them by faith; his own in very truth. It really seemed to me that their faces shone with the peace and wisdom of God. It is true, "A man's wisdom maketh his face to shine, and the boldness of his face shall be changed."—Eccl. viii. 1. The wisdom of the Man, Christ Jesus, maketh the faces of his people to shine with the wonderful light of love, and it is a great blessing to feel that love in

our hearts for them that manifestly fear him and think upon his name. We speak often to each other of Christ because he speaks in our hearts. His presence may be manifested by a glance of the eye or a grasp of the hand, and always there is an answer in the heart that causes the face to shine; in that face we see Jesus.

In this letter I wish to speak to each one of the brethren and friends who so kindly ministered unto me in spiritual and temporal things. If I am one of his little ones I can say truthfully, "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in." I believe I did feast upon strong meat, and did drink of the wine of the kingdom. I earnestly hope you took me into your fellowship, and that you as well as myself felt that we were, and are still, sitting together in heavenly places in Christ. May God keep you and all the chosen in Christ, and make us again to meet in love, if it is his will. I desire by this letter to thank each one of the many friends I met for your kindness to me while visiting you, and I trust I am thankful to God for guiding my wandering feet to places so pleasant. I can only write to all through our family paper, the SIGNS, but I trust you will each read this as a personal letter, and feel that when we write to the household it includes all, for we are one in Christ.

God give you peace.

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.

LAWRENCEBURG, Ky., July 4, 1905.

HAMPTON, Iowa, March 23, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I send you a letter from Elder Gilmore, of Washington, which I should like to see in the SIGNS, if in your judgment it would be advisable. I believe you will enjoy reading it.

I remain your brother in the hope of Christ, E. A. NORTON.

NORTH YAKIMA, Wash., March 12, 1905.

ELDER E. A. NORTON—VERY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I received your very kind and instructive letter of the 2nd inst. I was very much surprised at first to receive a letter from my native State, for I was born in Des Moines Co. in 1848, but crossed the plains in 1852. As David said, "I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me," and ever since a certain period in my life my sins and weakness have been so very apparent that I was very much surprised to receive such words of approval and indorsement from an old Elder and soldier of the cross like yourself. I have read your articles in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES with profit and pleasure. I have read many different Baptist publications, but, like you, I have laid them all aside but the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and as long as it holds to the sound doctrine of the Bible, as I believe it has for the last seventy-three years, I hope to be able to read it. I have never written especially for publication, feeling that my limited ability had better seek seclusion, rather than notoriety; but if my letter of which you speak has done any one any good, I hope God will get the glory. The subjects of limited predestination and conditional salvation are not agitating the minds of the brethren out here on the Pacific coast as they seem to be farther east. It seems that offenses must come, but there is a fearful woe to be executed against that one by whom they come. So it appears that we should move cautiously in all matters of difference between brethren. Paul's instruction to Timothy it seems to me would be good for us all to commence with: "Study to show thyself approved

unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness."—2 Tim. ii. 15, 16. No, I cannot limit the Lord in his predestination, his eternal sovereignty or his eternal love. Paul said, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." But it seems that while this work of conformation was in progress with many of the old Bible saints, that there were grievous sins and crimes committed. Some brethren seem to think that all the good things that those old, tried saints experienced were predestinated, but the evil were not. Well, no doubt Joseph's brethren would have said, We sent Joseph down into Egypt, but Joseph said, "So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God." What effect did this series of trials and persecutions have on Joseph? Did it cause him to seek revenge? No, but so completely was his spirit conformed to that of Christ that he forgave all their offenses, and cried, "Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you, to preserve life." By reading this narrative I understand that Joseph's faith was so illuminated that he looked back through the intervening years to where God had caused him to dream that all the sheaves of his brethren did make obeisance to his sheaf; and Jacob could interpret the dream, but could not tell how it was to be brought about. So when the wicked, deceiving brethren brought the blood-stained garment to Jacob, he recognized it, and said, "An evil beast hath devoured him: Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces." And refusing to be comforted by his sons and daughters, he said, "I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning." Now Jacob's ignorance of God's plan of fulfilling his interpretation of Joseph's dreams, gave him room to mourn sadly for his apparently lost son; but God had determined otherwise, Jacob was not to go to the grave mourning. The fiery darts of the enemy were to be hurled at Israel for a few years, then Israel, or Jacob, was to see his typical savior alive. "And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen; and presented himself unto him: and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while. And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive." —Gen. xlvi. 29, 30. Now if the Lord did not predestinate all these evil acts in this narrative of Joseph and Jacob, he certainly did sanctify them (or all of those afflictions) to their good. Paul must have understood the matter in this way, for he said, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I cannot see how all things can work for the good of God's people unless the good Lord sanctifies them ("all things") to that end. Yes, give me such a God as this, who does control all events to the accomplishment of his own purpose, and say to an afflicted Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee;" and the old servant was so built up that he said, "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Now, my brother, I must bring this letter to a close, lest I tire you; I realize that it is poor and scattering. I could heartily indorse all you wrote, and will be glad to get a line from you at any time. The churches here composing the Siloam Association are in peace, so far as I know, but many of them have gone down to a few old members, and seem to be on the decline. Near North Yakima there are about twenty-seven members, but they are not all members of this, Pleasant Grove, church. There are four ordained preachers here, and two licentiates. We are in peace, and hold three meetings each month.

Yours in the fellowship of the gospel,

W. H. GILMORE.

DRAIN, Ore., April 9, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS:—Our subscription is due on our family paper. I want to take it as long as I live, as it is next to my Bible. Our brethren are so scattered that we cannot get together often, especially during the winter season, so we can sit by the fire in bad weather and read the SIGNS, and thus hear from some of our dearest kindred on earth, they that are sound in faith, and have no use for any new theories or strange gods. If I could write as some do surely I would not hesitate, but when I attempt to write or talk of spiritual things there is such a fear comes over me, that I am too sinful and unworthy to even mention such things. These things are too sacred for me, but O how I do love to hear others tell of the wonderful deliverance from their sins, and extol and ascribe all power and glory to our heavenly Father. But we cannot always be in the light, nor can we bring forth that light in and of ourselves, nor can we remove the beam from our own eye, that we can see clearly to pluck the mote from another's eye, but the Lord is able to do all things for us. I often think of Elder Ker's letter in a recent number of the SIGNS, where he spoke of the awful darkness of mind he was passing through; perhaps he just felt like he was the only one that ever had such fearful feelings when he wrote that letter, but it was a great comfort to me, and very likely to many others. I have no idea he thought of what great comfort he was giving others, he was only lamenting his own sad condition; but our Lord has glory in darkness as well as in light; more often his people speak words to his glory and honor when under sad afflictions than any other time. We never feel the need of a Savior only when in trouble, and we all think we have our share, (from a natural view) but when we look within our poor, sinful hearts, I conclude we have yet more blessings than we deserve; we are far more blessed than our Savior was while here on earth; he had no place to lay his head. O we poor, complaining mortals, if we were not kept by the power of God where would we drift? But we that are born of God have hope that when we leave this prison of clay we shall enter into the joys of the Lord and be satisfied.

I hope the SIGNS may be sustained, it is good enough for me; I want to hear the same old story of Jesus and his love. I hope the Lord will keep all his children in the strait and narrow path. How our hearts go out in sympathy to those that have had to pass through deep waters of affliction; I commend them to Jesus, for he is the only one who is able to comfort them.

A poor, unworthy sinner, but I hope a sister,

S. MORNINGSTAR.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1905.

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EDITOR:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

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JOHN XV. 22; X. 9.

DEAR SIR:—Please oblige an earnest seeker by explaining the following Scripture: John xv. 22: especially the first part. Christ said that he came to save that which was lost. Also please explain the following: John x. 9. Do the sheep find pasture both in and out of the church?

(MRS.) S. M. STEVENS.

NEW HOPE, Ark., March 31, 1905.

The first text suggested reads, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin." In the connection the dear Redeemer forewarned his disciples of the treatment which they might expect from the ungodly world in the future, when they should go forth preaching the word, as it had hated him, so it would hate them. (Verse 18.) They were not of the world, therefore that world which loves its own would hate them, because they were not of it. (Verse 19.) He also bids them remember the word which he had spoken to them, that the servant was not greater than his Lord, therefore they must not expect better treatment than he received. (Verse 20.) These evil things they would do to the disciples, not for their own sake as men, but for his sake, and because they were his disciples, and it was their mission to preach him. Now in verse twenty-three he said to them that their hatred of himself was full evidence that they hated God his Father. He came forth from God, he spoke the words of God, and did the works of God, therefore in hating him they proved that they hated his Father also. Just as their hatred of his disciples proved that they hated him, so their hatred of him proved that they hated his Father also. In him was the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and God was revealed in him on earth. So also as the disciples should go preaching Christ and his work of salvation, and should be hated of all men for this reason, it would be proof that their fellowship was with him, even as his fellowship was with his Father. In the text named, he speaks of his words spoken to them, and in verse twenty-four he speaks of the works which he had done among them, which no other man ever did, and says that if he had not done these works they had not had sin. But now he says they have both seen and hated both me and my Father. Thus he unties himself with his Father and with his disciples in the fellowship of suffering, and the reproach of men. This is the general thought of the connection, and now we will give as briefly as we can what seems to us to be intended by the words of the twenty-second verse. First, they cannot mean that unless he had spoken to them, or, as in verse twenty-four, done these works among them, they had not been sinful by nature; for all men, in the word, are declared to be conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity. His coming, and preaching, and working miracles, and their rejection of him, and hatred of him, was not what constituted them sinners; this they were by nature. He did not mean either, that by things that he did or said, and their rejection of his words and teachings, they committed sin for the first time. They,

like all the race of Adam, had been guilty of outbreaking sin from their childhood. He could not therefore have intended either of these things by these words. But what do they mean? He means, as it appears to us, that they had not been guilty of this one striking evidence of their natural depravity and hatred of all that pertains to God. The Jews professed great zeal for God and godliness, but this zeal was a mistaken one, and not real. When Jesus came from God, and lived the life of his Father, and spoke the words of his Father, it became evident that they did not really love God. Without his coming this sin of theirs would not have been so plainly manifest. He does not mean the inward sin of the heart or nature by saying that they had not had sin; but, as it seems to us, he means that just this one outward manifestation of their natural depravity would not have been manifest, as it was manifested by his coming, and his work, and his teaching. By his coming and teaching their sin of heart was made plainly manifest; they had no cloak, or covering, or excuse for it. They could not say, Had we had more light we would have done better; in fact, it is not knowledge in the head that leads to righteousness of living outwardly, but the love of God and righteousness alone produces right outward conduct. This love of righteousness and of God they lacked, even while making great professions of godliness. The vanity of these professions was laid bare by his coming. It was this especial manifestation of what was in their hearts, as said before, that constituted the sin of which the Savior speaks. This they had not had if he had not come and spoken to them, and done his Father's work among them. He was the light that made manifest what was in men. When he had preached his doctrine, the revelation of himself and of his Father, many went away, saying, These are hard sayings, who can hear them? While a few, under the same teaching, said, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." The revelation of himself made manifest the opposition of the one and the fellowship of the other. Grace had wrought in some men the very will and mind of God, and where the mind of God was made manifest in the Savior's work and words, these were drawn to it and rejoiced in it, while the rest were repelled.

Preaching Christ and his words and work to-day, has the same effect. One class of men have the secret thoughts of their hearts made manifest, that they are wrought of God, and in God, while the other class also have their secret thoughts made manifest, that they are of the flesh, and are evil. The love of God and godliness is made manifest in the one, while the love of all ungodliness is made manifest in the other. The inward sin and the inward righteousness appears in outward deeds and words. This inward righteousness or unrighteousness in men is seen chiefly by the reception or rejection of the doctrine of Christ and of God. If Christ's words had not been spoken then, and if they were not spoken now, this outward sin would not have place; the heart would remain the same, "enmity against God," but the expression of this enmity would not be so clearly seen. It is this outward sin that they would not have had if Jesus had not spoken to them the words which no other man ever spoke.

The other Scripture referred to by Mrs. Stevens reads as follows: "I am

the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."

We do not understand that the visible organization of the church is here intended by the fold. If so, then to go in would mean to become a member of it by the way of baptism, and to go out would necessarily mean to cease to be a member of it. This, obviously, could not be the intent of the Savior in this parable. On the contrary, it is our understanding that many who have never become members of the visible church are within the fold, and have come in by the door, and of them, as well as of the spiritual who have become members of the visible church, it is true that they go in and out and find pasture. On the other hand, it is no doubt true that some in all ages whose names have been upon some church book have not been in the true fold at all, and have known nothing about being led in and out by the blessed Shepherd, and neither have they found pasture. The Lord's true heaven-born people are the sheep. They embrace all who have come to know him in the salvation of their souls, all who feel poor, little, weak, defenseless and unable to fight their own battles against any foe. The relation of Shepherd and sheep is very frequently used in the word to set forth the care of God for his people and their entire dependence upon him. So David, the glorious type of Christ, as king and shepherd of Israel for so many years, once kept his father's flock and delivered them from the lion and the bear; and he wrote that tender and touching twenty-third Psalm, in which he speaks of himself as one of the sheep, and of the Lord as his Shepherd. David's language in that wonderful Psalm and the language of the Shepherd in this tenth chapter of John are in full agreement.

A flock of sheep implies a fold, and into that fold there must be a door. The shepherd comes in to his sheep by the door; a robber would climb up some other way, seeking to come in unnoticed and unknown. Jesus came in by the appointed way, the way appointed by the Father. It does not seem needful that we should seek to define the sheepfold, and the door, and the porter too closely; all these things would belong to a sheepfold literally, and it is only natural to name these things in the parable. The general thought is, that as a shepherd would have a flock, and a fold for their comfort and safety, and the fold would have a door for the entrance of the shepherd and the sheep, and for their outgoing and incoming, and there would be some one in charge to see that the door was opened when it was desired, and closed when safety and comfort demanded it, who is called the porter in the parable, so our Lord has prepared all things needful for the welfare of his sheep, his chosen ones, so that nothing is lacking in any way. They are not confined by literal walls, or guided by some visible shepherd, neither is there some visible person acting as porter, but Jesus, walking in them and guiding them as a shepherd, is their guide and leader, and he is the fold, and he is the door, and he is the porter; in short, he is all and in all that they need.

When he said that the shepherd comes in by the door, he means that he came in the appointed way, as all prophecy had shown, and as all the types declared; his mission had the seal of heaven. It was his right to come to the fold, for it belonged to him, and all the sheep were his; therefore he did not come, as others before him had come, without appoint-

ment or calling of God, all of whom were thieves and robbers, coming not for the good of the sheep, but with selfish desire to gain all they could out of the flock, to feed themselves and not the flock. Thus he sets forth the difference between himself and all false christs, and all the hypocritical teachers that had risen up among them in all the ages past.

Jesus calls his sheep by name, and leads them out. The sheep hear his voice; that is, they understand it, and know it, and so follow it, as the voice of him whom they have come to trust; a stranger they will not follow. They will flee from strangers, for they know not their voice. All this is literally true of sheep, and by all this the blessed Savior sets forth the truth that his sheep are spiritual, and their Shepherd is so, spiritually; and in all that is spiritual they know what he says, for to him has been given the tongue of the learned, that he may know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary. All this refers not to outward testimony, such as his ministers bear when they are faithful, but to the still small voice that reaches even to the inmost recesses of the heart of his people and whispers to them of pardoned sin, of peace through his blood, of rest and of bountiful provision which he has blessed and with which he will satisfy his poor. It is the heart-felt experience felt and known in silence and in solitude, when each soul is taken into sacred nearness to him through the Spirit. This the sheep know, and they know that it is the voice of their Shepherd which speaks so sweetly to them. In all the parable the thought is of personal intercourse between the shepherd and his sheep. He is to them all that they need, and they are his. It all expresses that intimate relationship which is included in the language of the bride in the Song, "My beloved is mine, and I am his."

Now, coming more closely to the immediate words of the ninth verse, it is by him, and by him alone, that the sheep go in and out and find pasture. That is, it is by him that the sheep lead their daily life, sheltered at night in the fold, and going out by day, as they are led by their Shepherd, that they may find pasture. The design of the fold was not that the sheep should always be confined in it, but that it should be a place of safety and quiet resting at night. It was provided, first, that the sheep themselves should not stray away and be lost, or come into danger or destruction, and second, that no wild beast or robber should break in among them and devour them. The whole place occupied by the shepherd in herding his sheep would be in one sense a fold. In the sixty-fifth chapter of Isaiah there is an expression which seems to imply this thought: "And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks." Sharon was a mountain noted for its fertility, there would abundant pasture be found, and the flocks would find all that they needed of pasturage there; the whole mountain was a fold for sheep. From this we have a right to say, as it seems to us, that in the large sense of the word "fold," as used in the parable, the sheep would never be out of it. They would go in and out from the special place provided at night for them, but would still be in the fold, in the full and large sense of the word, according to the Scripture quoted from Isaiah. "Sharon shall be a fold of flocks." Again we say "going in and out" surely does not mean going in and out of the visible organization of the church. The general meaning is that the sheep are always under the special care of the Shepherd, who leads them in green

pastures, and makes them to lie down by the still waters, and continually restores their souls. It is a most wonderful declaration of the blessed Master, as to his watchcare over his own people, and of the constant provision which he has made for their wants, even as a shepherd cares for his sheep, and sees that they want for nothing. How often solemn questionings arise in the hearts of the sheep: Is this Shepherd mine? Do I know his voice, and does he know me? Such questionings are of themselves full answer to the questioning. None but the Master's sheep have any anxiety concerning this matter. None but they desire this rich pasturage, or the presence of such a Shepherd.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MATTHEW XVIII.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Will you please give your views on the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, particularly on the subject of church discipline? Can a member of the church be lawfully excluded, except it be done according to the rule laid down in that chapter? Some think it unnecessary to take labor in all cases, especially cases where the offence is committed in the presence of the church. Your views on the subject will be kindly received.

Yours, with esteem,

C. B. FULLER.

ROXBURY, N. Y., January 17, 1862.

REPLY.

We do not feel competent to explain all the questions which may be suggested upon the subject of church discipline, still it appears to us that the subject is very clearly laid down in the New Testament. We have observed in our fifty years membership in the church of Christ, that as a general thing the greatest discrepance in opinion in regard to the laws of Christ have been where churches have been least inclined to be governed by the word and Spirit of our divine Lord and Master. We do not feel sure that what is said by our Lord on the subject in this chapter (Matthew xviii.) was designed to embrace all cases of discipline that should ever occur, but rather to cover the ground embraced in the subject on which our Lord was at that time instructing his disciples, for we find other portions of the New Testament devoted to an extended view of the same subject, and particularizing many cases in which individual christians and whole churches are required to act in obedience to the laws of Christ. Still, it seems to us that no action of a church or of a member of the church can be valid where the general instructions of this chapter are not observed and practiced.

The time and circumstances attending this instruction, show that an unbecoming ambition to excel each other was betrayed by at least some of the disciples, and to settle the matter they brought the subject to Jesus, and put the question in undisguised terms to him, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" This kind of ambition lies generally at the bottom of most, if not all, the dissensions which divide churches, and individual saints, and is prolific in the production of disaffection and alienation; and as that ambitious fiend is still alive, and sometimes harbored in the breasts of christians, it will be well for us all to observe carefully the instructions given in this case. Jesus set a little child in the midst of them. What an example! What a volume of much needed instruction is here! "And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in

the kingdom of heaven. And who shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

Here are the primary instructions in regard to discipline. Deep humility is the very first requisite, and it is indispensable as a qualification to transact the business of Christ's kingdom. Without this childlike spirit the gates of the kingdom are barred against us. The profession of this meek and humble spirit is a passport to the kingdom, and such an humble little child that believes in Christ cannot be rejected or excluded without rejecting and excluding Christ himself. How fearful, too, to offend one of those little ones who believe in Jesus. The term here rendered, offend, has a broader signification than merely to ruffle the feelings, or excite the resentment. We understand it to be in the sense that Peter was on one occasion an offense to Jesus; that is, when he savored the things which be of men, and not the things which be of God. To offend may be understood to mean to lay a stumbling-block in their way; to deprive them of their sacred rights in the house of God; to grieve their childlike spirit by unbrotherly conduct, or to overturn their faith, as did Philetus and Hymeneus the faith of some. The church as a body, and every member should be solemnly impressed with the weight of these instructions, or they cannot be competent to administer the discipline of the church of the living God. Beware then, brethren, how you attempt to meddle with the discipline of the church if actuated or even influenced by a haughty spirit that would strive for the mastery. We answer, therefore, one of brother Fuller's questions. No member of the church can be lawfully excluded from the church without a strict conformity to this rule. Where the supremacy of this rule enjoining a childlike humility on each acting member of the church is not regarded, it were better that they were drowned in the sea, than under any other rule to expel from the privileges of the church of God one of his humblest disciples. Where this rule is observed, and the church is solemnly impressed with a sense of their responsibility, they feel that to expel from communion any who should be retained in fellowship, is to reject the Lord Jesus; there will be no room for thrusting with side and shoulder, but an ardent desire to restore the erring in the spirit of meekness, and in the bowels of Christ.

This consideration is enforced on our minds by a beautiful illustration in the same connection: "How think ye? If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, He rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." A brother who has given us the evidence that he has been converted and become as a little child has been accordingly received into fellowship, but subsequently he is overtaken in a fault. Shall he at once be killed? Shall he be rudely thrust out? No, "Ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one

another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."—Gal. vi. 1, 2. Go in the spirit of humility into the mountain and search diligently for the strayed sheep, remember that it is the will of your heavenly Father that he shall not perish. You cannot fulfill the law of Christ if you do not desire his restoration to the fold, and after all your toil and labor in searching the mountain, if you succeed in reclaiming the wanderer, if you possess the Spirit of Christ, it will afford you more joy to see him reclaimed and brought back to his privileges in the church, than to see all the other members, which have not strayed, in their place in the church. It is not the will of God our Father which is in heaven that he shall perish, and should it be your will to consign him to perish in the wilderness? "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones." Christ would not charge us to take heed if there were no liability of our doing so. Do not underrate them, they are precious in the eyes of him who came from heaven to save that which was lost; and in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. Yet, notwithstanding the full force of all this admonition, there are cases in which exclusions are unavoidable. Woe unto that man by whom the offense cometh! "Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee." "And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee." We are the mystical body of Christ, and members one of another. No sane man would consent to the amputation of a healthy and sound member of his body, for no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ does the church. Should a hand, or foot, or any other member become diseased, bruised or painful, all the sound members would sympathize with the diseased member, and before we could consent to amputation we would exhaust all the healing medicines within our reach; but if mortification sets in, and the inflammation is actually spreading to the centre of vitality, to the heart, as a last painful and dreaded resort we apply the surgical knife. So in the church, if the hand or foot, or even the eye, however useful these members may have been, or may be deemed, as indispensable for usefulness or convenience, if the law of Christ requires us to cut them off and cast them from the body, it must be done, for it is better to enter into life halt, maimed, or with but one eye, than, retaining all these disordered and incurable members, to be cast into hell fire. That is, into confusion, in the sense in which James speaks of the tongue as an unruly member, setting on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell. The discipline of the church of God must be enforced strictly according to the law of Christ, without partiality; but it must be done as well in the Spirit of Christ as in strict obedience to the letter of his precepts, for his word and his Spirit always harmonize and go together. The most essential point is to be guided by his Spirit, for that Spirit will lead us into the truth. Whenever we are led by the humble, loving, tender, forgiving Spirit of Christ, and the law of Christ and health of the church demand that we should pluck out right eyes, or cut off right hands, there will be deep lamentation and mourning, certainly not exulting, and boasting, that we have carried our points. Who ever exulted that he had lost an eye, or suffered the amputation of a hand or a foot? When we see brethren or churches exulting that they have carried their points, and procured

the expulsion of any of their members, we feel confident that the law of Christ has been violated.

Brother Fuller asks our views on this chapter, and we have endeavored to state as plainly as possible what are our views on the first fourteen verses, for we do not believe any brother or any church can possibly obey the remaining part of the instructions unless they are governed by the instructions thus far considered.

We now come to the portion of the chapter to which we suppose Elder Fuller more particularly refers, in which our Lord says, "Moreover," that is, what he is now about to say is added to what he has said, and is to be taken in the same connection; these instructions are not to be separated, divided, garbled, nor handled deceitfully: "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee." Let us observe as we read, he is thy brother who has trespassed, he is still to be recognized in that relation until the whole course of discipline has been faithfully pursued; under no circumstances then is the laboring brother or the church at liberty to apply to him offensive epithets, such as heretic, drunkard, liar, thief, fox, crafty, disorderly, &c., terms which are only calculated to excite angry passions and render a reclaimation more difficult, if not impossible. Although you feel certain he has trespassed against thee, still regard and treat him as a brother, and as a brother dearly beloved, whom you desire above all things to reclaim. Keeping this in view, you cannot go to any one else without trespassing against him, and becoming guilty of the same wrong which you hold against him. Nothing can more clearly violate the laws of Christ than to publish your complaints to others before you have pursued the course here enjoined. Under no pretence are you at liberty to get up a prejudice against him, by whispering, hinting, or in any way insinuating your complaint to others. The instruction is plain: "Go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." If you succeed in gaining him, no other person under heaven should ever know that he has ever trespassed against thee. How often have churches been thrown into disorder and confusion by an aggrieved or an offended brother disregarding and disobeying this divine rule. Instead of going to the erring brother alone, how frequently nearly the whole church, and perhaps the world, become familiar with the matter before the offending brother has been visited alone. After going to A, B and C, asking their opinion on the merits of the case, relating to them the circumstances, exciting their suspicions against the brother, under the pretence perhaps of asking their advice, it is too late to go to the offending brother alone, unless it be to confess your own wickedness in divulging the matter. The object of the private interview is thwarted by your own disobedience to the law of Christ. But supposing you have not communicated the matter to any one, now you are required to go to him. Your errand is to reclaim him in the spirit of meekness; you are not to go as a lion, but as a little child, considering your own infirmities and liability to err. And as old father Thomas used to tell us, "Mind and go alone. Try and leave the old man behind, he will be greatly in your way." You are on the King's business, therefore put off the old man with his affections and lusts, and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness; then you will not seize the offending brother by the throat and demand immediate payment, but you will remember how much your Lord has for-

given you, and how much your brethren have to forgive you; then will ye be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you. If you fail to gain your brother, then take the next step, in the same kind and humble spirit, and if in this the brother cannot be reclaimed, tell it to the church. There leave it with the church, do not try to raise an unjust prejudice against the brother, but let the church carefully investigate the matter, and in the spirit and temper of the gospel make a decision. If all this be done in the manner directed, what the church shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and what she shall loose on earth is loosed in heaven. Heaven has ratified and established this course. But it is wicked and impious to pretend to administer the discipline of the house of God in any other way, or when influenced by any other spirit. We conclude, therefore, and answer brother Fuller, that no member can be lawfully excluded from a church, except it be in conformity to this rule. But while we say this, we do not intend to be understood that private steps of labor are by this rule required in taking cognizance of offences which take place in open church meeting. A disorderly member is to be called to order by the church, when he acts disorderly in the presence of the church, as we understand this rule. But this must be done between him and the church alone. No member is at liberty to publish or even mention it out of the church; and the same childlike meekness is to be felt and exercised by the church as is required by the individual member. As we have before said, there are further instructions contained in the New Testament on the subject of discipline beside those in this chapter, but none which are not in perfect harmony with what Christ has here given. The apostles were inspired to set all these things in order, and to sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. It is perfectly safe then to follow their directions, and not only safe, but imperative; we cannot disregard them without involving disobedience to our King. Every instruction we can require is clearly presented by Christ and his apostles, to apply to all cases that can possibly call for the exercise of gospel discipline among the children of God. The greatest difficulties we meet arise from a lack of that childlike spirit which is enjoined by Christ in this eighteenth chapter, rather than from any lack of clearness in the law of Christ; for when christians are in that humble and spiritual frame they seldom, if ever, fail to settle all their differences; but in absence of that spirit their efforts are vain, for holiness becomes the house of the Lord forever.

The point on which we understand brother Fuller to desire us to be more definite is, whether there are any cases in which exclusion of members is lawful, where private labor in the first and second steps, according to the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, have not been formally taken. We answer, We think there are. For instance, "A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself."—Titus iii. 10, 11. An heretic is one who holds and utters heresy. The church is authorized to judge in this matter. One member shall speak in the church at a time, and the rest shall judge. That is, the church shall judge of what is said by each one, whether it be sustained by the Scriptures and by the experience of the saints; if it

be contrary to the word and spirit of truth, admonish him. The church should admonish him, and all who hear him utter heresy should admonish him, tenderly and in love; and if he heed not the admonition, admonish him again, labor to convince him of his error; but after the first and second admonition reject him, if he be not reclaimed. A man that is an heretic may be a preacher, or he may be a private member in the church, but in either case he should be first admonished faithfully twice, and then if not reclaimed, reject him. We do not suppose that each member of the church should be required to go personally and separately to tell him of his faults between the two alone. If the heresy be known only to one, then let that one take the first, and if need be, the second step of gospel labor, and then tell it to the church. But if the heresy be uttered before the whole church, then let the whole church admonish him, between her and him alone, once, and then again, and if he persists in his heresy, reject or expel him from fellowship.

Further examples may be found: 1 Corinthians fifth and sixth chapters. If it be known that a member be an adulterer, a fornicator, an idolator, a thief, a drunkard, a reviler, or an extortioner, or covetous, we are required to at once withdraw all association with such; and Paul commands, in the name of the Lord Jesus, that such be delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. "Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." But it is to be done when the church is gathered together, "and my spirit." Let us be sure that the Spirit of Christ, which inspired Paul to lay down this rule, is with us, pervading the whole church; and he adds, "with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ." If we have and are actuated by that Spirit that inspired Paul, we may feel an assurance that we have the power of Christ, the authoritative power of Christ, in delivering such unto Satan, or in other words, in putting such manifestly wicked persons away from among ourselves.

Finally, whenever a christian is offended or aggrieved with his fellow christian, so that his fellowship is marred, he is bound to regard it as a personal matter, and go privately and tell him his fault, between him and the offending brother alone, and labor to gain, not to destroy, his brother, and pursue in the subsequent steps laid down, let the offence or trespass be what it may; and if a brother bring his gift to the altar, and there remember that his brother has aught against him, let him leave there his gift, (unoffered) before the altar, and go and first be reconciled to his brother, and then come and offer his gift. Christians and churches are sometimes too backward in attending to what they may regard as but small matters, and allow them to grow and fester until they learn, by painful experience, how great a fire a little matter kindleth. A faultfinding spirit is unbecoming our holy profession, but christian faithfulness is indispensable to the peace of the church, and as members we are required to watch over one another, to exhort and to admonish one another in love. Nor is this obligation limited to any particular branch of the church of God. Although the church is scattered in her locality, and there are many organizations, yet they are all branches of the one church which is the body of Christ. Much is said of the independence of churches; that is, of their independence of each other, and of any ecclesiastical court above the church.

This independence should be carefully considered, for although we acknowledge no pope, or bishop, no synod or association, as having a right to lord it over the churches, we must contend that the whole church is the body of Christ; all who are members of that one body are members one of another, so that the hand cannot say to the foot, We have no need of thee. It takes every member to make the body, and all the branches of the church to constitute the bride of Christ; and although all the several branches, if on gospel ground, have equal rights, still these rights are limited, for no church has a right to do wrong. All are bound to be governed by the law of Christ, and the several branches of the church are as vitally connected to each other as the members of a particular branch are one to another. Hence the duties of the churches of the same faith and order toward each other as churches do not differ essentially in this respect from the relative duties of members in a church. To illustrate: My two feet, though members alike of my body, claim to be independent of each other; one of them resolves to travel eastwardly, the other is equally determined to go to the west, how long can they maintain their independence and pursue their respective courses without dividing the body to which they both belong? A house or a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. How can two walk together except they are agreed? To maintain fellowship and harmony among the several branches of the church of God they all should be willing to compare notes together, to communicate with each other freely, to behold each other's order, and their steadfastness in the faith. Our real fellowship demands that we should be fully satisfied that we are all led by the same Spirit, that we are pursuing the same course, that we, as one body, are of one heart and one mind; for what use has one body of more than one heart or one mind? When churches become reckless of the esteem and fellowship of sister churches, they speak loudly of their independence, and seem to have forgotten that a haughty spirit goeth before a fall; while churches walking more cautiously in the valley of humiliation feel that they need the fellowship, the sympathy and the prayers of all their sister churches.

But as we have already extended this article to considerable length, we will submit what we have written to brother Fuller, apologizing to him at the same time for delaying so long to answer his request.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 15, 1862.

PLEASE BE SURE,

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. G. D. Genung, N. Y., $1.00; S. G. Lomax, Fla., $1.50.—Total, $2.50.

POETRY.

SLEEP.

"So he giveth his beloved sleep."—Psalms cxxvii. 2.

"He sees when their footsteps falter,
When their heart grows weak and faint,
He marks when their strength is failing,
And listens to each complaint;
He bids them rest for a season,
For the pathway has grown too steep;
And folded in fair, green pastures,
He giveth his loved ones sleep.

Like weary and worn-out children,
That sigh for the daylight's close,
He knows they oft are longing
For home and its sweet repose;
So he calls them in from their labors
Ere the shadows around them creep,
And, silently watching o'er them,
He giveth his loved ones sleep.

He giveth it O so gently,
As a mother will hush to rest
The babe that she softly pillows
So tenderly on her breast:
Forgotten are now the trials
And sorrows that made them weep,
For, with many a soothing promise,
He giveth his loved ones sleep.

He giveth it! Friends the dearest
Can never this boon bestow,
But he touches the drooping eyelids,
And placid the features grow;
Their foes may gather about them,
And storms may round them sweep,
But, guarding them safe from danger,
He giveth his loved ones sleep.

All dread of the distant future,
All fears that oppressed to-day,
Like mists that clear in the sunlight,
Have noiselessly passed away;
Nor call nor clamor can rouse them
From slumbers so pure and deep,
For only His voice can reach them
Who giveth his loved ones sleep.

Weep not that their toils are over,
Weep not that their race is run;
God grant we may rest as calmly
When our work, like theirs, is done.
Till then we would yield with gladness
Our treasures to him to keep,
And rejoice in the sweet assurance
He giveth his loved ones sleep."

(Selected by Bettie L. Turner, of Kentucky.)

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. John H. Woodin died at her home on Dingle hill, in Andes, Delaware Co., N. Y., June 25th, 1905, of a complicated disease, in her 78th year. Mrs. Woodin had lived a widow nearly twenty-four years, and although not a professor of religion she was a firm believer in the doctrine of the Bible as held by the Old School Baptists, and in her last days regretted that she had not followed the Savior in baptism. She was a woman of few words, yet of sterling integrity; she will be greatly missed in the neighborhood where she had lived so long. She left one son and three daughters, all the daughters being believers, (and one, our dear sister, Mrs. John Muir, of Stamford, N. Y., a member of the Andes Old School Baptist Church,) beside a step-son and two step-daughters, as well as other relatives, to mourn. One step-daughter is also a member of the Andes church.

May the Lord comfort all mourners with his presence and a reconciled mind, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

ALSO,

Mrs. Chloe Mead died at her residence, near Stratton's falls, Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., after a long, painful sickness, in the 88th year of her age. Sister Mead was a woman of sterling qualities in the church and world, and we shall greatly miss her in the Second Church of Roxbury, where her membership had been for some time. She united with the Baptists before the division was final, and continued with those that desired to maintain the apostolic doctrine. She was left a widow many years ago, with one step-son and five step-daughters; three of the step-daughters remained at home, and another lives near by, all believers in the Old School Baptist doctrine, and two of them at the home worthy members of the Second Church of Roxbury. While we all sustain a great loss, we believe for Aunt Chloe (as she was called) to die was gain. While suffering and sleepless much of the time, she was as much resigned as one could be, and felt a freedom in talking about the future. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of the resurrection of the Savior Jesus Christ, and also of the bodies of the saints in a glorified state at the end of time, or last day, as the Scripture declares. It is sown natural, it is raised spiritual. The home bereft of its aged occupant will be lonely to the three sisters. May the Lord comfort and sustain them and the large circle of relatives, and his name be glorified.

ALSO,

Mrs. Lewis Whitcomb departed this life quite suddenly at a Binghamton hospital, where she had gone for treatment, July 1st, 1905, in her 58th year. Mrs. Whitcomb had been ill for a long time before she was taken to the hospital, two weeks before her death, and after treatment seemed to rally from the effect,

but was suddenly seized with a relapse and died. She was not a public professor of religion, but was a believer in the Old School Baptist or Bible doctrine, and left evidence of sleeping in Jesus. She left to mourn, her husband, one son and one daughter, (wife of Wm. Sanford) and one sister, with her family and other relatives. May the Lord comfort all that mourn.

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLY CORNERS, N. Y.

DIED—At Washington, D. C., May 29th, 1905, **Mr. James H. Silcott,** aged about 85 years. Brother Silcott's home was near Dover, Loudoun Co., Va. At the time of his death he was at the hospital in Washington under treatment for the disease which caused his death. It was my privilege to baptize him a few years ago in the fellowship of Mt. Zion church. He had been a lover of the truth the greater part of his life, I believe, and of course a lover of the people who know and love the truth. He was a regular attendant at the meetings of the church, and had no use for any other doctrine than that preached by the Old School Baptists. He was an upright man, highly esteemed by all who knew him, and without reproach. He was blessed with a faithful wife, who was taken from him by death about four years ago, and several sons and daughters. Two of the former and four of the latter are left to mourn the loss of a faithful and loving father. Brother Silcott died in the triumph of the faith in which he had lived so many years, with a great desire to have a home with the people of God whom he loved for so long a time, but a feeling of his unworthiness hindered him; he shrank from the thought of making a profession which had no foundation in reality, but at last, after four score years had passed over him, the love of Christ constrained him, and he bowed his head to the yoke, which he found easy indeed. May God comfort his children and all who mourn.

J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., July 11, 1905.

William Barker was born Sept. 24th, 1849, at Stoneham, England, and died April 23rd, 1905, at his home at West Park, Ohio. At the age of eighteen years he moved to Ipswich, England, and united with the Strict Baptist Church in the year 1870. In 1881 he with his family went to Canada, but finding the winters too severe, (he being in delicate health) in 1883 he moved to Cleveland, Ohio, where he improved in health, and remained until the winter of 1901, when he moved with his family to West Park, Ohio, on a small farm. He leaves besides his widow four sons and three daughters to mourn his death. We found no church of our faith, but the dear Lord in his own time and way gathered together a few of his chosen, elect, faithful followers, and on the 16th of March, 1902, we met at the home of brother Cyrus Cross and were organized into a church. My dear husband was filled with thanksgiving for this great favor from the hand of the Lord. He was a man of but few words, and of a diffident disposition, but showed by his glowing countenance, more than by words, the joy of his dear Savior's love experienced within, and he ever had a warm welcome at his home for all his dear brethren.

We laid his dear form to rest in West Park cemetery to await the resurrection, when we confidently believe it shall be raised a spiritual body, to dwell forever with the Lord.

JANE BARKER.

WEST PARK, Ohio.

MEETINGS.

PROVIDENCE permitting, the next meeting of Peace Valley Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of the Primitive order, will be held with Poolville church, Poolville, Parker Co., Texas, instead of Friendship church, Acton, Hood Co., Texas, as per Minutes of last meeting, commencing on Friday before (at 10 o'clock a. m.) and embracing the third Sunday in August, 1905. Those coming by railroad from any direction will be met with conveyance at Weatherford, Texas, Thursday before the meeting. All lovers of truth attend.

W. O. RUTLEDGE, Association Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Bryn Zion church, in Kent Co., Delaware, is appointed to meet on the third Saturday and Sunday (19th and 20th) of August, 1905. All who feel an interest in our christian welfare are cordially invited to meet with us. The forenoon trains, north and south, on the Delaware Railroad, will be met at Clayton and visitors cared for.

W. W. MEREDITH, Pastor.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing on Friday, Sept. 1st, 1905, and continuing three days. We gladly welcome all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Those coming will be met at North Berwick on Thursday before the time appointed for our yearly conference.

FRED. W. KEENE.

THE Mount Pleasant Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with Cane Run church, at Turner's Station, Henry Co., Ky., on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1905. Those coming by rail from the north and east will leave Cincinnati (Pennsylvania depot) at 3:40 p. m. Thursday and 7:50 a. m. Friday, L. & N. train. Those coming from the south and west will leave Louisville, Tenth St. station, at 4:20 p. m. Thursday and First St. station at 7:20 a. m. Friday. A cordial invitation is extended to those of our faith and order.

G. R. TURNER, Church Clerk.

THE yearly meeting is appointed to be held with the Harford church, Harford Co., Md., commencing at 10 o'clock a. m. on Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1905. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth to meet with us. Those coming by way of Baltimore will take train leaving North Ave. station at 3:45, for Long Green or Forest Hill, where they will be met and cared for.

NATHAN GRAFTON, Church Clerk.

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10:30 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m., in the Red Men's Hall, First and Congress Streets in Troy, N. Y., and at 2:30 p. m. in West Sand Lake, N. Y., at the home of Mrs. Moul. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 73. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1905. NO. 16.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CAPRON, Okla., Feb. 5, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Inclosed find a letter that I wrote to my dear old blind uncle at Hampton, Kentucky, my native home. As it was not written as I intended when I began, I will write another directly to him some time, and send this to our dear family paper, for which I have been wishing to write at an early date. My uncle has been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES ever since the Civil war. If you think this letter worthy a place in the SIGNS, he will see it.

I am yours in hope of eternal life,
J. M. DULEY.

MR. E. M. DULEY—MY DEAR UNCLE, AND BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Many have been the times that we have held sweet communion together face to face; I will never forget the morning you came to me at my dear mother's corn crib, and caught me, as I hope, in humble prayer to God for my daily needs; I never will forget the tears that flowed down your cheeks while we there talked upon the goodness of God; I feel that I am not half as good a man as I was in bygone days, I see so much of my inbred corruption now, I have lost all hope in the arm of flesh, for this old body is far from being what I would like it to be. I see that the carnal mind in me is as much enmity against God as it ever was; I am so hateful that I cannot think a good thought of myself; like Paul, "With the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." When I see how mean I am I cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But we see that in the new covenant our God says, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Bless the Lord, that he did not say I will be merciful to your righteousness, but to your unrighteousness; like Paul, our righteousness is such a thorn in the flesh that we beseech the Lord to remove it from us; but as the Lord said to him so he says to us, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Why is his grace sufficient for us? Because he went before us and broke all the barriers down which our sins had raised between us and an offended God. "He hath made him to be sin for

us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." It is all free grace; it is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." God loves his people with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness hath he drawn them. O, says one, does God draw me all the way, through these hot fires through which I have to pass? Yes.

"The flames shall not hurt thee; I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine."

We are led in this furnace of affliction to consume our confidence in the flesh, to burn up all our self-goodness. Our God says, "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction;" everything of a corrupt nature must be consumed. Our God leads us through deep waters, but they shall not overflow.

"I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand."

I was speaking of God's love to his people; he says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love;" and I have loved them as thou hast loved me. Let us remember that he has said, I have loved them as thou hast loved me, and thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. Thus this love runs back into eternity; not one of these loved ones will be left out when he comes to make up his jewels; all of them will be there and hear the blessed welcome, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." There is no uncertainty about this inheritance, it is sure to all the seed; it is a consoling doctrine. What can be more consoling than to think that every poor soul that pants for a home with Jesus has a sure home given him j Just so surely as God begets in a poor sinner both the will, and the doing of that will, so surely heaven with all its riches is also his. It is out of the power of man to beget either the will, or the doing of that will, it is God that works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Yes, it is a consoling doctrine to think that our names are written in God's eternal book, and that all devils combined cannot erase them from that book. Jesus said to the disciples, "Rejoice not, that the spirits are subjects unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." "The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, (whose names were not written in the book of life, from the foundation of the world,) when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is." "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." Why then should not this be a consoling doctrine? Why should our God embrace poor, unworthy me, and leave out others who are as good by nature? "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." These words of the dear Redeemer are all the answer that I have to give to-day. As Elder J. B. Hardy used to say, "Our God does not have to do something because it is right, but it is right because he does it;" our God is above all law.

My dear uncle, I know you are not angry because the great God has deprived you of your sight and left others with the pleasure of seeing the things of this world, because you are aware of the

truth that "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose;" and you are not going to call God unjust should you not be one of that happy number; for you believe that you have no claim upon him which binds him to save you or else be an unjust tyrant; you know that one of your sins, without better satisfaction than you are able to render, is sufficient of itself to forever separate you from the pure presence of a holy God.

"O when shall I see Jesus, and reign with him above,
And from that flowing fountain drink everlasting love?
When shall I be delivered from this vain world of sin,
And with my blessed Jesus drink endless pleasures in?"

If it were God's will, I feel ready now to be taken home. I have a desire to remain with you, and I have a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Jesus says, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but he says also, In me ye shall have peace. O what a contrast! in the world ye shall have tribulation, there is no getting around it, but in me ye shall have peace. He has said that his peace he will leave with his poor little ones. Were it not for this peace we should not be able to bear the great tribulations through which it is the decree of God that we must go. Jesus has overcome the world; he has overcome all foes who contend against us. Surely he carried all our sorrows and bare all our griefs. Behold him weeping with Mary and Martha; he is touched with the feeling of our infirmities; this Scripture was fulfilled in the case of these two weeping sisters; he was touched with the troubles of his people, notwithstanding he knew that he would soon raise the dead Lazarus to life and action again. Jesus wept, then said the Jews, "Behold how he loved him." Poor Mary said, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." As our dear brother Chick said, Jesus intended to bestow the greater blessing upon them. It would indeed have been a great blessing to the two sisters had Jesus been there, and healed their brother, but there was a greater blessing yet that he intended to bestow on them. Broken-hearted Martha came to him bringing the sad news as she thought to him, and she said, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Now hear the answer of Jesus, "Thy brother shall rise again." Martha said, "I know that he shall rise again, in the resurrection, at the last day." And Jesus said, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Jesus went before us and conquered our every foe; he died the ignominious death of the cross, and robbed death of its sting, he conquered death and the grave; "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" This victory is given to the heirs of promise, and all the heirs of God shall outshine the sun at noon-day in their clean white garments of righteousness, that righteousness which was wrought out for them on Calvary at the cost of the dear Redeemer's life. He gave his life a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. He not only gave it, but after conquering death he took it again; he rose from the dead for our justification; all our sins were atoned for, and he burst asunder the bars of death, and came forth a triumphant conqueror over all our foes; now he ever reigns and lives to make intercession for us, according to the will of God; he is coming also to take us to himself; he is not going to send for us, but he is com-

ing for us; he loves his bride too well to trust some one else to bring her to him, so he said, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

I am your unworthy brother, if one at all,

J. M. DULEY.

EXTRACTS FROM DIARY OF MARY JANE BOGGS.

HOPEWELL, N. J., 1865.—A new year has dawned upon us; may it be fraught with heaven's blessings. I am still a monument of God's sparing mercy, spared for what purpose is known only to him that seeth the end from the beginning. May we abound in every good word and work. In the presence of God! Who can conceive what it will be to bask in the full sunshine of his presence and be forever with him? He who hath clean hands and a pure heart, he only shall dwell in the presence of the Most High. Who among us can claim that we are clean and pure? Only through the cleansing power of that precious blood spilled on Mount Calvary, shall we find an abundant entrance into his presence, who cannot look on sin with the least allowance. The all-absorbing question with me is, Am I of that number who on the tree of the cross were represented in Christ Jesus? If in him then all things are working for our good, and we shall come off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him who hath redeemed us unto himself out of every nation, kindred and tongue, an innumerable, great company, that no man can number. In thy presence! O that I may feel that I am surrounded by thy blessed presence; that I am resting in the arms of thy love; that wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption have been made mine; that thy wisdom has taught me the knowledge of good and evil; thy righteousness hath clothed me with a glorious robe without seam; sanctification has set us apart and made us a peculiar people, zealous of good works; redemption redeemed us from sin and death, raised us to the glories of an inheritance at the right hand of God, made sons and daughters, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. If so, then shall we dwell in his presence and go out no more forever, enjoying the full fruition of perfect bliss.

February, 1865.—God is a wall of fire to his people, and a glory in their midst. Is not an armor of fire invincible? What can penetrate it? A wall of fire about you! What can come nigh to injure you? It protects, defends and sets at defiance all the enemies that may rise against the saints of the Most High. He protects his children by the fire of his presence, and fire cometh out of his mouth to consume his enemies. Truly great is his power, and his ways past finding out. A glory in their midst! He is revealed in all his glorious perfection in his people. His wisdom, power, justice, love and mercy shine forth in the effectual calling of Adam's sons and daughters from the darkness of nature into the light that is treasured in Christ Jesus for the salvation of his chosen people, a people known before the foundation of the world, recognized in the councils of Jehovah before time began, as bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. Command thy blessing upon us, O God, and may we feel an assurance that thy love is a wall of fire around us.

May 16.—From early childhood I had many thoughts on a future state of existence. Whether such thoughts are common to all children I do not know,

but I have thought that God in loving-kindness and tender mercy was then leading and instructing me. When but a child I was trying to still my thoughts on such subjects by thinking it would be time enough for me to think about the realities of eternity when my older sister should make a profession of religion; and well do I remember when with startling force I was convinced that religion is a personal matter, and that children are called from time to eternity as frequently as grown people; it was a blow never recovered from. I cannot tell when my exercises first commenced, neither can I tell when I first hoped that my sins had been borne by a crucified and risen Savior. My exercises have never been so pungent as many whose experience I have read and heard, and many times I have feared that all I knew was head knowledge, that the heart had been left untouched; but at times I am satisfied that the work must be done in God's own way. It has been a great trouble, the fear that I could not satisfy the church of my knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. How could I expect the church to be satisfied with what I so seldom could rejoice in myself? For the last ten or twelve years the ordinance of baptism has been impressed on my mind, and very few church meetings have passed that I was not present in mind. Much of the time I have been absent from home, but a part of the time in the vicinity of other churches of our faith. Many times I have thought I would never attend another church meeting, but when the opportunity offered, inclination said go, and it was my greatest pleasure to assemble with the saints. Some months I spent in Salisbury, Md., in the midst of an Old School Baptist Church, many of whom I knew and dearly loved; but while their interests were mine, and I could enjoy the same things they did, could rejoice in their joys, sympathize in their sorrows, I felt that they could have no confidence in me; I was outside, and truly I felt that I was. How much I suffered from it those who have suffered the same know. When first brought to rejoice in hope of an interest in a precious Savior's blood, I wondered that professors of religion should manifest at times such indifference to the things pertaining to the kingdom of God's dear Son. Then I never wearied of listening; sermons were never too long; I could not understand why they should be so indifferent; but full well I know what it is to feel that wandering of mind, wandering on subjects sinful and vain, when I would desire them concentrated on things heavenly and divine. For a few weeks past, with peculiar power have the following words been resting on my mind: By this shall ye know that ye have passed from death unto life, because ye love the brethren. Not ye shall hope or think, but know. Precious declaration to the tempted, doubting, sin-sick soul. Surely if I know anything, I know that I love the children of God, and I trust it is with that love which rolled in the bosom of the Father ere time began. Loved with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn you. I have been drawn with loving-kindness; I have not experienced such a dread of hell, but have been drawn to love the things pertaining to the kingdom; I have been led to love holiness and hate sin; I know not that a fear of punishment has mingled with it. I think I have had some view of my utter depravity, that my heart is as a cage of unclean birds, out of which no good thing can come; that I cannot think a good thought or

perform a right action of myself. I know that in my flesh dwells no good thing.

At the last church meeting there seemingly was no obstacle to my going before the church; I desired to go, it would have been the greatest privilege, but something kept me back. I believe that dereliction from duty is followed by darkness of mind, and a loss of that sensible enjoyment which is found in the path of obedience. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come." "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

June 28, 1865.—Last Saturday, June 26th, I was, by the power of God, I trust, enabled to present myself before the church. It seems to me like a dream, I cannot realize it. I feel not the ecstatic joy that many experience in walking in the commands of God, but I feel a rest, a quiet; I seem to have nothing to think about. For the last twelve years the subject of baptism has been impressed on my mind; everything forced it on my attention; it was a constant source of unquiet, and now I cannot describe my feelings in any way, except that I feel like one dreaming. I was wonderfully strengthened; I felt to leave it all in the hands of God, to take no thought what I should say. The assembled world would have had no power to affect me. I said but little, and do not know what I did say. "He giveth his beloved sleep," the precious blessedness of sleep, of rest to the weary. I can but feel that I am enjoying that transcendent blessing of rest, of sleep, that is given to the tired and weary child of God. It seems to be perfect rest, perfect rest from all care. On the Sunday of my baptism, July 25th, for the first time I partook of the Lord's supper. I did not feel any trouble arising from the fear of eating and drinking unworthily. The only question with me was, Am I entitled to a seat among the saints? Examine yourselves, and see whether you be in the faith or not. It seemed to me to be in the faith was to be in Christ, and if we could feel the witness in our own breast that we were born of God, then it was our duty as well as privilege to commemorate the supper in obedience to the command of God.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., May 27, 1905.

BELOVED BROTHER EDITOR OF THE SIGNS:—I received your brotherly card, and it was with much feeling of love and gratitude, though I feel myself to be unworthy. I am saved by grace if saved at all. I trust that God for Christ's sake has given me the spirit of utterance to claim and acknowledge him as my Savior, my all, the bright and morning star. We see as through a glass darkly; but I trust that in the resurrection I may find my name written in the blessed Lamb's book of life, then shall I dwell with the ransomed of the Lord, and be with Christ, our great Mediator and High Priest, where we shall all see face to face and know as we are known.

Dear brother, in reading your able and instructive editorial upon the seven churches of Asia, and your application of it to the present time, it seems that then there were no two alike, then men had different beliefs and different idols, and worshiped them; this was all then the work of the flesh. They were not holding fast to the works of God, which were wrought in Christ, as prepared of God before the foundation of the world. They had gone aside from the truth to the doctrine of Balaam, which taught the casting of stumbling-blocks before the faithful who have no confidence in the flesh. Those evil men ate things sacrificed

to idols, and held the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which is confidence in the works of the flesh, and is pleasing to the world. With such things the Zion of God is wounded, and the faithful hate them. Paul admonishes the faithful to abstain from meats offered to idols. It is also said if we keep ourselves from them we shall do well.

There is great lukewarmness in the churches of the present day. Why is it so? It is because some have departed from God, who bought them with the precious blood of Christ, and have gone into idolatry, trusting in their own strength, seeking the loaves and fishes, thus denying the all sufficiency of God. You speak of the Laodicean church, which was neither cold nor hot. This is a very good representation of the present time when so many have become worshipers of idols. Men have become prosperous and rich, having accumulated much filthy lucre, and are self-satisfied, and are puffed up, claiming that God will honor and reward them for their good deeds and obedience. May God forgive if I should at any time entertain such vain thoughts. I have nothing of myself to offer; as the prophet said, my righteousness is as filthy rags in the sight of God. This Scripture ought to convince any sane mind that we have no righteousness to offer before God. Moses was commanded to take his shoes from off his feet at the burning bush, for the place where he stood was holy ground; and it was the command to take away the filthy garments from Joshua the high priest. This is enough to prove that the Adam-man has no part in the work of saving the soul. If I have any obedience at all, it is all the Lord's, and not mine. I feel to hope this precious gift has been bestowed upon me, a poor sinner. I can claim no reward or honor, upon my part there have been no conditions performed. Our blessed Savior is our all, and without him I am lost. If those boasters had been spiritually poor they would not have boasted, for they would have seen that they had nothing to boast of in themselves. "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." This is his own righteousness imputed to us; it is all his work, and his people shall be made willing to acknowledge this in the day of his power, and not before. Having predestinated his children by Jesus Christ unto himself, they have redemption through his blood, according to the riches of his grace, and have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to his purpose, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, that we should be to the praise of his glory. Dear brother, all our help must come from God, both in things temporal and spiritual; we are indeed the clay and God is the potter, and he fashions the clay to please himself, and we have no right to say to him, What doest thou? The child needs chastening while he sojourns in this world of sin and misery, he must also have the eye-salve to enable him to see and feel and believe that his righteousness is of the Lord, and that all the good that man can do will not help him on the way to righteousness and rejoicing. To hunger and thirst after righteousness is the beginning of sorrow rather than of joy, and it is the mark of the Spirit's work. Paul said, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." O may we find our names written in the Lamb's book of life. We are citizens of a spiritual kingdom, an holy habitation

never to be taken down; it was sealed to us by the precious blood of the Lamb of God. It is a spiritual gift of God, and ordained of God, who gives to his children understanding, and to his faithful servants to minister to the weak, in preaching the riches of his grace. They that dwell in the house of the Lord grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We are told to try the spirits whether they be of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world. I pray, O Lord, keep me humble, so that I may not follow after the Arminian world, which is crying, Lo here and lo there, and Peace, peace, when there is no peace outside of the imputed righteousness of Christ. Jesus said to his disciples, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." This worldly religion has no soundness in it, it has not Christ's imputed righteousness; to them there remaineth no such peace as Christ giveth to his people. He puts his law into their hearts and minds, and says, They shall be to me a people, and I will be to them a God. He said this shall be. When we have this peace we can rejoice, even while journeying in this sorrowful wilderness. O how good is our gracious, loving Lord to look upon such sinners as we, and how condescending and kind to bid us look up and stay ourselves on him. O how good he is to the poor and afflicted. He is a strong consolation to such as have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them. I often look back over my past life and see how the dear Lord has led me, and, as I trust, has directed my steps in the right way, and if it is his will I shall reign with Jesus; if so, I must suffer with him. Let us therefore go forth unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach, for here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come; then shall our sorrows end, and God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes. We are in his hand, as are all things else, and are to be disposed of as seemeth good in his sight. He shall bring his many sons and daughters into the knowledge of his truth as it is in Jesus. Man may invent many ways, but after all there is but one fold, and one Shepherd, and here is the only place where rest can be found to the soul. The same God rules now as when the letters to the churches of Asia were penned, and he commands his true servants to admonish and exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.

Brother Chick, after reading your card and meditating over the goodness and mercy of God, and learning that you have been blessed with the privilege of meeting my people in the flesh, and, as I hope, in the Spirit also, and that from the evidence that you have of their godly walk and conversation you can fellowship them as the children of the heavenly kingdom, strong in faith, I could but rejoice. I felt glad that you have had the pleasure of meeting my sister, Mrs. Hume Francis; she is a dear, beloved sister in the flesh, and is strong in the faith and hope of eternal life through Christ. I am the oldest of a large family, and but three of us are left. I shall be seventy-three the 13th of July, if it be God's will to spare me till then. I am always glad to receive some word of comfort from you. Our little flock is at peace, and for this we feel to thank God. We have a true and faithful pastor, Elder J. K. Womack; he is much afflicted, but is sound in the faith. May God bless you in all your labors, is my prayer.

O. B. HICKERSON.

ROMANS XI. 29.

"For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

This truth, this declaration of the inspired apostle Paul, forever puts to silence the theory of vain men that sinners of Adam's race may be in a saved state to-day and lost to-morrow or next week or some future time in their pilgrimage, and that after receiving a hope in the grace, mercy and pardoning power of Jesus they may yet, by some overt act of omission or commission, fall away and be finally lost. The Scriptures clearly teach that when the Lord shows mercy and bestows peace, and the blessed graces of the Spirit, faith, hope and love, on any of the lost sons or daughters of Adam, it is without repentance or turning away; for whom the Lord loves, he loves unto the end. He says, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." And, "Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." It can be no other way, for he is God, and changes not; the same yesterday, to-day and forever, without the shadow of turning, and we can sing with the poet:

"The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake."

There have never been but two beliefs or principles in the world since the beginning of time, and there are but two to-day: the one is a belief that is peculiar to all of the Lord's chosen people in all ages of the world: that salvation is of the Lord; his work is perfect, nothing shall be added to it, and nothing shall be taken from it; and this class are firm in the belief that Jesus has saved all of his people, even all that the Father gave him, every heir of promise included in the covenant of grace; for the new covenant has not an if or peradventure in it, and is from every condition free; fenced with Jehovah's shalls and wills, ordered in all things and sure. The other belief is the conditional, or do and live system, whereby many are looking for merit in themselves to bring God under obligations to save them. They fast twice a week, they pay tithes of all they possess, &c. This class, when told that God hath mercy on whom he will, and doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, are ready to challenge the justice of Jehovah; they set their mouth against the heavens, and go about endeavoring to establish their own righteousness, and boasting of what they are doing for the Lord. Shall mortal man presume to be more holy, wise and just than Deity? Those who believe in sovereign grace desire to show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light, and to tell of the great things the Lord has done for them, and are willing to trust all they have and are, and all that are near and dear to them, in the hands of the Lord, knowing that the God of the whole earth will do right.

These two beliefs were set forth in Job's day; Job in his sore trial said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Job did not say, I know I am going to heaven for my good works, but simply, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." Job's three friends set forth the do and live system, and it has never been exploited with any more force, logic and eloquence than those three friends preached it to Job. Job informed them that they were miserable comforters, physicians of no value, and forgers of lies. The advocates of the conditional system are no better to-day; they make merchandise of the gospel under the guise of

saving souls, or leading souls to Christ. The Lord himself condemned the theory of Job's three friends, and informed them that they had not spoken that which was right, as his servant Job had. So it is to-day, the whole race of mankind adhere to one or the other of these two doctrines, to whatever creed they may belong. Those whom the Lord hath quickened and caused to trust in him know that where he has begun a good work he will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ, and that wherever his people may be scattered ("The Lord's portion is his people,") the Lord knows his own, and his arm is not shortened. Jesus did save his people, and all shall come unto God by him, not one shall be left out.

"They may on the main of temptation be tossed,
Their sorrows may swell as the sea;
But none of the ransomed shall ever be lost,
The righteous shall hold on his way."

And, "I if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." No purpose of Jehovah was defeated by the fall, it was all for the lifting of Jesus on high. They crucified him, the Roman soldiers and the wicked Jews; so did we. My sins, my cruel sins, his chief tormentors were; each of my crimes became a nail, and unbelief a spear. When poor sinners are quickened by the Holy Spirit, and drawn by the cords of his love, they are at once sealed heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, and they desire to ascribe all praise to the blessed Lamb of God, for by his blood he has redeemed his people with an everlasting salvation out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people under heaven. This is the tabernacle that the Lord pitched, and not man; not one of the stakes thereof shall be removed, or one of the cords be broken. This people trust in Jesus, who has all power in heaven and in earth, and they have no confidence in the flesh. He is our high Tower, our everlasting all and in all, our strong habitation where we may continually resort. (Psalms lxxi. 3.) They are not afraid of evil tidings, for their heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. (Psalms cxii. 7.)

"Then should the earth's old pillars shake,
And all the wheels of nature break;
Our steady souls would fear no more
Than solid rocks when billows roar."

It is a fact that none have ever been saved since the creation of the world, or ever will be saved while time lasts, except through the perfect atonement, imputed righteousness, sovereign grace and electing love of our Lord and Savior. Fear not, ye poor and afflicted ones, whose names are cast out as evil, our light afflictions here, which are but for a moment, will soon be over, and we will reach the blissful clime where temptation and suffering will be no more.

"And if our dearest comforts fall
Before his sovereign will,
He never takes away our all,
Himself he gives us still."

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

Yours in hope,

WM. F. SLOAN.

CLAY VILLAGE, Ky.

EAST DIXFIELD, Maine, May 17, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—Your very welcome letter arrived in due time. Whether the time be long or short, they always come with surprise at your continued favors, for two reasons which I will mention. The first is that I know how fully your time must be employed, and the second is that I feel how meagre a reply I give for your

very comforting tokens of remembrance. I must say, as I have before, that I thank God and take courage, trusting that we are fellow-travelers, and that to each of the Lord's humble poor from time to time he applies his gracious promises as our need requires, and that it is of his mercy that we are not consumed. For myself I sometimes feel to praise his holy name that the chaff is burned up, and the dross separated from the gold, and that the refining must go on as long as we sojourn in the flesh.

I took great delight in reading in the last number of the SIGNS the editorial from the text in Revelation iii. 20. It is a text that for a few years past has been often in my mind. As I was seated at my work one evening, with my mind resting upon the various afflictions to which we are subject, the various thorns in the flesh, I felt disheartened and weary in the conflict, and a longing to lay it all aside and to be forever with the Lord, and then the words of this above named text came so forcibly to me that I involuntarily raised my head and looked toward the door. My next thought was to read the entire connection, which I did; and yet it is only from time to time that its force and beauty are revealed partially. We must always in this life see as through a glass darkly. Your discourse was very comforting to me, as are the various communications in the dear old SIGNS. My desire is that you may have strength to conduct your labors in your position, and not be overtaxed. I hope that the meetings which you are about to attend may in one sense prove a vacation to you; I mean in this, mingling with the brethren, that you with others be refreshed, and that, as has sometimes been said, you may have a pentecostal season.

I very often dwell upon the time when you were here and spoke at Jay, and I have wished that it might prove as a ray of light to some one who was seeking; but of this we cannot tell. How sweet to feel that all our times are in the hand of our most gracious God, and that not even a sparrow falls to the ground without him. With the psalmist I would say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction." I think that as the years go on I find myself more and more dwelling upon the loving-kindness of the Lord; I have nowhere else to go, and nothing to present before him but the perfect righteousness of Christ, the crucified and risen Savior, who came to seek and to save that which was lost.

"Unshaken as the sacred hill,
And firm as mountains be,
Firm as a rock the soul shall rest,
That leans, O Lord, on thee."

I think that I will never again, in time at least, realize the sensation I once did from the text, "Trust ye in the Lord forever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." He is of one mind, and who can turn him? He can wound, and he can heal, he can kill and he can make alive, and best of all, his mercy endureth forever. He knoweth us altogether, and nothing is hidden from his sight. What a strong tower is this to run into and be safe. May each of his believing children joyfully ascribe salvation to Jesus our King.

I feel to thank you for your kindness. It is indeed as a cup of cold water to the thirsty, and deep in the heart of myself and husband is a spring of thanksgiving for your words of fellowship and kindly remembrance. My desire is that in your journeyings you may find peace in th

churches, and that the blessing of the Lord may be with you. It is not alone where great numbers are congregated that his presence is found, the declaration is, that where two or three are gathered together in his name there is he in the midst of them. How tender is the hand of our most gracious God, and I desire to be found submissive to his will, and to be found having the wisdom which is from above, and pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. What emptiness in the sublunary joys of time, all of which perish with the using.

"O for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame,
A light to shine upon the road
Which leads me to the Lamb."

With much love to you and yours, I remain your sister in a precious hope,

ELIZA WHEELWRIGHT.

THE PREDESTINATION OF GOD.

THE apostle Paul in Romans viii. tells us that "Whom he [God] did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son;" and in order to this conformation calling, justification and glorification are necessary, and all these things the Lord does himself; he calls the sinner, he justifies him by the blood of Jesus, and glorifies him through the perfect righteousness of Christ. This leaves the work of man out entirely so far as salvation is concerned. There are none that can predestinate but God. The heart of man deviseth his way, but after all his planning and appointing he often is unable to do the things necessary to the accomplishment of the desired end. None can predestinate in the true sense of the word unless he has the power to work all the means necessary to bring about the end designed; this power God alone has, and he it is that works all the means necessary to the eternal salvation of his people, he is not waiting for others to bring about that which he has predestinated, but he does it himself by his own glorious presence and grace, working by his Holy Spirit in the souls of those predestinated to eternal life. He predestinated before the world was that those chosen in Christ should in time be called to a knowledge of their sins, and then to the knowledge of salvation provided in Christ for the guilty sinner, and so in the fullness of time he himself in the personal appearing of Christ calls the sinner to know himself as a sinner and Jesus as a Savior, and there is no power on earth besides that which is in Jesus Christ that can do this most glorious work. He also predestinated the justification of the sinner, and as no flesh can be justified in his sight by the deeds of the law, he predestinated the death of his Son, by which sacrifice the law is satisfied and the sinner is justified, all because the choice of God made him a member of the body of Christ, and this is manifested by the wonder-working power of his grace, which he shed on us abundantly through our Lord Jesus Christ. He also predestinated to glorify the sinner, and as this could not be done upon their own merits he has given them Jesus, and with his righteousness he is well pleased, and said when he came to die, I have both glorified thee, and will also glorify thee again. Jesus said, addressing the Father, Behold I and the children that thou hast given me. Then he brought them with him, and therefore when he was glorified by his Father the members of his body were glorified in him, and hence are beyond the reach of Satan and all his emissaries except to annoy them in the

flesh, but their life he cannot take from them, for "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God;" so then when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory. Earthly fathers in their minds often appoint great wealth and honors for their sons, but they fail many times through weakness to bring about the desired end, and though they may succeed in doing all that is necessary on their part, the scheme often fails because the son lacks either the will or the ability to do his part, and so all that has been done is a failure. This can never be true with God and his sons. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." Our Father is abundantly able to do all that he has predestinated, and having done all the rest he works in his sons both to will and to do of his good pleasure. The mind of the sons of men may be and often are very different from their fathers, and the father cannot put his mind into his son, but with the heavenly Father it is very different; though the mind of his sons are by nature unreconciled to him, he puts his law in their minds and writes it in their hearts, and when he does this they love the law of their Father and delight to do his will. "We have the mind of Christ;" and "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Is it not wonderful and glorious to contemplate the work he has done for poor sinners, to remember that his thoughts towards us are thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give unto us an expected end? How sweet to know that there can never be any miscarriage in the predestination of our heavenly Father, for he is the sovereign ruler of the universe, and as he is ever present with his people and is himself doing all the work necessary to bring the expected end, he certainly will not allow any one to come between him and his loved ones, and then being present with an all-seeing eye, and an all-powerful arm, he sees all their needs, and will supply them according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus, who is worthy of all our praise, for he has redeemed us by his blood out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people. To him be praise, honor, dominion and power, now and for evermore. Amen.

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

ROLAND PARK, BALTIMORE, Md.

DADE CITY, Fla., June 23, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—I rejoice to know that the meetings of your associations were good and pleasant. It was the wish of our dear brother Benton L. Beebe, for this poor sinner to have visited him and the Baptists of his section during his last days upon the earth. Now that you, as well as some others, have expressed a desire that I should visit your associations, I think that I will go next year, if the way is open, for I have had for some time an abiding desire to do so.

To-day while sitting by the bedside of my afflicted son, who has been for some weeks, and is yet to all human appearances, at death's door, some pleasant reflections have been in my mind from the words, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord," and "Go forward," recorded in Exodus xiv. 13, 15, which I will write you.

Faith infolds these conditions as the product of grace; unbelief waives these conditions, and cries, What must we do? if we stay here we shall all perish Faith answers, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." Faith rests; unbelief is always in a hurry. A prophet hath said, "Their strength is to sit still."

Faith believes that the Lord hath delivered, doth deliver and will yet deliver. If salvation is of the Lord, what help does he need from man? Why will vain man intrude upon the Lord's work? Echo answers, "Why?" No concurrence of man is needed. What need of two acting when one is able and will do all? His glory will not be divided; for he is a jealous God.

Who is there that would light a candle at midday to help the sun give light to the world? If such there be, he might be considered wise in comparison to one who thinks he has to do something to help the Lord, or to do something to get the Lord to help him. It was not said, Stand still and see the salvation of God and man. To be called to see God's salvation is proof that "salvation is of the Lord," complete in him.

Unbelief is consequent to and perfectly consistent with the nature of free will, hence it never could have gone forward at the command, as faith did. The man of faith had to learn to "stand still" before he could effectually "go forward." In the provision of grace he went forward in the wake of the hand and rod, which were stretched over the sea. God opens the way and leads the feet to take the first step. What more could faith ask? "By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land." Evidently the sea through which the Israelites passed was not open throughout at once; if so, sight and not faith would have been the measure of their tread. Most assuredly the sea only opened as they went forward, so that their faith at every step was cast upon God. Thus upon the banks of deliverance they could sing, The Lord hath triumphed gloriously. Only by faith can the Lord's portion go forward, when the eyes of nature stand aghast, hedged in on every side. Such was and ever will be the path under the Lord's conducting hand that the men of faith "go forward." When unbelievers see an open way they may essay to go forward, and like the Egyptians, perish in the attempt. It will ever prove defeat and confusion when the world will try to do what God's elect can only do when lead by faith in the way he directs.

The real condition of the heart is tested by the command; as, "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek." "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

"Holy men of God spake as they were moved [not moved upon or entreated] by the Holy Ghost." It is the same power which leads and guides into all truth to-day. Only when the Spirit has engrossed the thoughts of any of the Lord's people, do they care to walk in the way of Mount Zion. The man of faith does not act in order to receive the blessing, but from it, as the man with a withered hand did not stretch it forth in order for it to be made whole; the extended arm is the evidence that it is whole, else it would have remained inert, dangling at his side. The immediate commands of the Lord are spirit and life, and from the same source comes the power and will to obey. The natural will cannot, though ever so anxious, produce love, belief or a blessing. These are fruits of the Spirit, and flow out spontaneously, constraining us to love and serve him from whom we have received all things that pertain to life and godliness. "From me is thy fruit found."

Your brother, I hope,

M. L. GILBERT.

KANSAS, Ill., Feb. 28, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—I send you the inclosed letter for your consideration, and publication if you choose to do so. Such letters are too good to be kept private.

I remain your servant,

JAMES M. TRUE.

WARRENTON, Ore., Feb. 18, 1905.

ELDER JAMES M. TRUE—DEAR OLD BROTHER IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD:—If it will be no offense for a poor, sinful creature to address you in this way. I have so often read your good letter written December 14th, and published in No. 3 of our dear paper, the much loved SIGNS OF THE TIMES, in which you tell us your age, and your wish to be remembered by its readers. I am one of its readers, and if I know anything, I love and believe the doctrine it advocates, and often as I read my eyes are blinded with tears of joy, and love fills my sinful heart to overflowing, and like you, dear old father in Israel, I hope perhaps I have a little life because I love the people of God so dearly. To know you, an old servant of our gracious Master, wonder if it can be possible that this grace is given to you, one of the least of all saints, gives my lonely heart comfort. Every day I must ask God to have mercy on a poor sinner, as prone to wander as the sparks are to fly upward, and leave the God I love. So often I am asking, Do I love the Lord? I surely must; then why this dull and lifeless frame? But I must not fill this with my doubts and worriments. Dear brother, how sweet to find that years of trials, of darkness and doubts, cannot take anything from that blessed hope, but instead makes it sweeter to the tempest-tossed, as the bright rays of the morning sun appear after the long, dark night, and how good it is to hear you, one of the dear old heralds of the cross of Christ, say how firmly the blessed doctrine believed by the Old Baptists, and preached by them, has become settled in your mind, and that you know by experience that salvation is all of grace, and free to the called, who are the only people who are willing to confess that they are lost without this free grace, this unconditional salvation. I know that I could never do anything to merit this great blessing, no matter how much I might try, but must ever say that if I have ever been made to feel my sins forgiven, it has all been through the goodness of God to a poor, unworthy worm of the dust, which I feel myself to be, and O that I could thank and praise his holy name as I should for all his mercies. O how sweet to our hearts it is, my dear old father in love of the truth, to know that God will not leave his little ones alone or unprotected, but ever watches over them, and guards and guides them. They may not always know that God is near, but underneath are his everlasting arms, and although the poor frame may become feeble and trembling he will not leave nor forsake them. Even when in old age, when the head is whitening for the tomb, they are borne in his bosom as the tenderest lambs, sustained by his eternal, unchangeable love; there is nothing that can separate them from this great love which they have in Christ Jesus their Lord.

I did not mean to write this much, and hope that I have not wearied you, and that you will excuse me, if you think me presuming, for I had such a longing desire to speak to you, and that must be my excuse. Is this love for the people of God and his truth?

I have often thought lately that as we grow older the Scriptures seem to glow

with a light that in younger days we could not see so plainly, as, so to speak, the nearer we come to the station the brighter its light becomes to our vision, and things appear in clearer light and more beautiful.

May God be with you all your remaining days to comfort and bless you, and when you are called home may you awake with his likeness, is the prayer of your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) S. L. H. STUART.

WILTON, Maine, March 28, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I feel like talking with you this evening, as I sit here alone in my quiet home. I cannot say that I am lonesome, or that I feel alone. I hope and pray that it may not be some fancied notion that the unseen Eye is upon me, and that his almighty arm is underneath, lifting me up and supporting me in these quiet days while I am here all alone within sound of no human voice. I often find myself trusting and relying upon the precious promises which are only for the body of Christ, the chosen of God, and while thus resting and trusting, the question arises, What evidence have I that my name is written in the Lamb's book of life, that I am a subject of redeeming love and reigning grace, and how do I know that it will not be said to me, Depart from me into everlasting punishment? I pause and reflect, how could I bear those words to depart from Jesus, who, as it seems to me, has been my best friend all the years of my life, or from my youth, now almost fifty-two years, since he was first manifested as my Savior? But as dear as is that name, and as precious and sweet as is his presence, that sentence would be just.

"And if my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well."

I enjoy hearing of the temporal welfare of my friends, but I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. During the past four weeks, I have been favored with the desire to read the precious word, and I sometimes hope that it has, some portions of it at least, been blessed in some measure to my understanding. The communications in the recent SIGNS, with the editorials, have been unusually precious. I do not mean to be understood that there have been special days of rejoicing, but that a great share of my time my mind and thoughts have been more than usual upon spiritual things, and the things of this world and of time have seemed trivial.

Will you remember me at the throne of grace as a poor, weak, helpless sinner, with nothing to plead but the blood and the complete righteousness of Jesus, the holy and spotless Lamb of God? That same all-wise being who shields and protects you in Hopewell, and as you travel on the cars and on the waters, shields and protects me in this my lonely home. As I awake to see the approaching daylight, and the sun shining in all its beauty and splendor, I am reminded that our God is wonderful in mercy, infinite in wisdom and almighty in power.

I am glad to say that my health has greatly improved in the past few weeks, and my whole system appears to be in better condition than for several years.

Now, may rich and reigning grace be with you, and sustain you, and all who are connected in any way with the SIGNS, is the earnest desire of a very unworthy sister in tribulation, and yet in hope,

MARTHA K. HUBBARD.

BETHAYRES, Pa., June 6, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: I have been asked to write my experience for the readers of the SIGNS. Tongue cannot tell, or words express, what I have experienced, but in my feeble way I will tell the best I can the road I feel the Lord has brought me through. I was born and raised a Quaker, or "Friends," as they are called in this day. It is their rule that when parents are members, their children are members at their birth. I was a member until I was twenty-five years of age. I then was about to be married to Annie M. Duffield, whose parents were Old School Baptists in belief, but not members; I was then obliged to resign from the "Friends" to be married by a minister. That caused my resignation. In 1882, the 22nd day of November, we were married by Elder Purington, of Hopewell, N. J. When I took my wife to the Old School Baptist meeting at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., I would stay outside while meeting lasted, until I felt ashamed of myself, when I went in and heard the preaching. I thought it was the worst doctrine that I ever heard, and I would go away and say all manner of mean things about them and their doctrine. I went so far as to say I could join their church any time I wanted to, thinking they were like the other churches and would be only to glad to take me in; I was like Paul, in thinking I was doing right. I think it was in 1887 I began to inquire about some things in the Bible of Elder Purington, and found to my surprise I was being tossed about in some way, finding myself reading the Bible, and believing just what I said I would never believe. I began to see the wrong was all in me; I was undone, I could do nothing of myself. Not knowing where to go, or what to do, I was in trouble of mind for about two years. On several occasions I found I was talking to people, and believing as I had heard Old School Baptist people talk; I could not understand it. Finally one morning, when in my stable grooming my horses, darkness or blackness came over me, I was going down, as it seemed to me, out of sight of everything, and I thought I was leaving this world. I fell down with uplifted hands and tried to get out of this place, but could not. My arms dropped to my side, I thought I was gone and cried, Have mercy on me, when I heard a voice speak to me, saying, Be not afraid, it is I, rise and follow me. The darkness disappeared and the light was brighter than the noonday sun; for three days I could see nothing but this light. Then I felt that I wanted to go and tell the people at Southampton what I had seen and what Jesus had done for me. The next church meeting I went before the church. Ah, they were, like Ananias with Paul, afraid of me; they knew what I had said about them, so they would not take me in. I felt if they would only let me come and hear that wonderful gospel preached, giving God all the praise and debasing man, it would be much to me. I was made to love these people more and more, and also the doctrine with an unspeakable love. Then, like Job, my friends told me these people would never take me with them. They wanted me to join some other church, but all their preaching was like chaff to my ears; I wanted to hear about Jesus and him crucified. I was left in this trouble for one year, then again I felt I wanted to be with these people. I went to church meeting and asked to be taken in, and yet God had not made them see their way clear, so they said no. I felt very

badly, but I felt it was all for the best. I knew all things worked together for good to them that love the Lord, I never had an angry thought pass through my mind about these people; I loved them still more, it seemed that nothing could break this love I had for them. Then ministers and members of other churches came to comfort me, but it was of no avail, the more they said about the Old School doctrine the more I loved it. I found I was being led by another power than man's; I was made to praise the Lord for his goodness,; I still went to meeting, hearing myself condemned, knowing I was a very sinful man, and no good in me. I found that Elder Durand was telling me all about myself. In this road I traveled one more year, loving these people and their God above all things, then I went before them the third time, and to my surprise they accepted me. Had they known me as I know myself they would never have had fellowship for me. O how I look back over those years and see that the trials and troubles I went through were all for my good. I was completely separated from all I once loved, and made to love the things I once hated. It is my desire to give God all praise, honor and glory, and may his mercies to me endure forever. I know he is a far-seeing God.

Do as you think best with this and all will be well with me.

I hope I am your brother in the faith, unworthy as I am,

C. S. BOND.

HOPEWELL, N. J., May 28, 1905.

MY DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I feel it both a duty and pleasure to tell you how greatly the meetings of yesterday and to-day were blessed to me, they were manna to a hungry soul; a staff to a weak and halting one. And after coming home the meeting is still going on, though I am here all alone. If he is with us, it is all we need, we can have meetings anywhere, and under all circumstances. At these two meetings everything has looked so lovely to me. All the week I had looked forward to them with such a desire to be there, and when the time came the Lord surely blessed me beyond all I had hoped, and I can say, "My cup runneth over." It did me good to see so many present, and among them those who can seldom meet with us. I hope it was as much to them as it was to me. And the aged ones, too, while I love them all, yet those who have reached old age seem nearer and dearer to me, somehow they seem like a link between my mother and myself. How good it is when we can forget for awhile the cares of this world, and meet as one family for a little season. It seems to me after the kind words of admonition you spoke to-day, we never should forsake our meeting unless we cannot avoid it.

Last evening I visited kind friends who insisted I should remain with them to-day, but how glad I am that their influence did not prevail; they meant all right, and could not understand why I must come home, but I could not stay. It was so plain to me that my place was at meeting; and while I feel just as unworthy as ever I did, and possibly more so, yet my blessings never seemed as great.

Why was I ever made to hear his voice? or why have I been kept thus far? Why am I blessed with such unspeakable blessings, living in the midst of my brethren, and hearing the gospel proclaimed, when so many are denied that privilege? Surely it is all of grace from first to last.

"Grace taught my soul to pray,
And pardoning love to know;
'Twas grace that kept me to this day,
And will not let me go."

To-day it came to me, if these meetings here on earth (when we are sinful and polluted) are so lovely, what will it be when we are free of these bodies and meet him in glory? If these little foretastes are so precious, what must the fruition be? Sometimes the losses and crosses of this world seem more than I can bear, but what are they to be compared with the better things which we hope will be ours when we are done with earth and earthly things? If I could always remember that, "He in the thickest darkness dwells." I hope he will make me willing to walk with patience the path that is marked out for me, whether it be strewn with thorns or roses, trusting in an all-wise God, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind.

Sometimes I take myself to task for doubting, when he has been so kind and merciful in the past, but that is where the weakness of the flesh comes in, and I have to say, "Help thou mine unbelief." So the warfare goes on, and the longer I live the more I feel that I am a pilgrim and sojourner here, and that this world is not my home. While I remain I pray to be kept by his mighty power from the snares and delusions of the world; holding fast the profession he enabled me to make, and feeling that his watchful eye is ever over me, and his protecting care about me. With such a God what is there to fear? He controls all things, and will not suffer his faithfulness to fail; and may I ever remember him who is the Giver of every good and perfect gift, and that it is not of works, but all of grace, and, if it were possible, at all times to say,

"My spirit looks to God alone,
My rock and refuge is his throne;
In all my fears, in all my straits,
My soul on his salvation waits."

Your unworthy sister,
ANNA J. SUTPHIN.

VEGA, N. Y., April 21, 1905.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I will try and write you a few lines. I have often thought of you since I received your letter, but have had no mind to write, and cannot write now of anything spiritual, for my mind is burdened with temporal things, and no one knows how I mourn over the loss of my desire to read the Bible, and because I have no desire to meet with people of our Father's kingdom; I cannot tell why this should come upon me. Every day that I live I find in myself more sin, and less evidence that I am a child of grace, and less evidence that I am a servant of the Lord. Where can I look? all is vain, dark and wild. O could I have a little glimpse of light, and be freed a few moments from this horrible pit; surely, my dear brother, I know what a bottomless pit is. How low can a poor worm sink in despair with no ray of light, and hope almost gone? My prayers are become a chattering noise, and I cry, Unclean, unclean. The Scriptures, "Hath God forgotten to be gracious?" and, Is his arm shortened that he cannot save? are often brought to my mind in this dark trial I am passing through. Surely there is no one like me; no one so far from his God; no one so vile and sinful. All I have is to think of past experiences, and call to mind some of his loving-kindness toward me, a poor sinner, without hope and without God in the world, that in his own time he spoke peace to my poor soul, and I was raised above all worldly things. This was after eleven years bur-

den of sin; I thought I should never be released from that burden, and that the lowest hell was my eternal doom. But in the moment you think not, the Son of man appears, and it was in the moment that I thought surely I was lost that he appeared with healing in his wings, my mourning was turned to joy and my burden was gone. Then to praise Jesus all the day long was my joy and song; my delight was to meet with his dear people, and listen to the preaching of the gospel. I well remember the sermon that you preached from these words: "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." It has come unto me, I have experienced that worse thing, that is, to me, to mourn an absent God; yet, dear brother, when I think of the low places I have been delivered from, I hope to be delivered from this darkness of mind and soul. How true the Lord's ways are not our ways. As I look over the past and see how gracious he has been to me, as poor, vile and sinful as I am, and how he kept me during the months of dreadful temptations, and saved me from the hand of the enemy, I am made to praise his name. Truly Jesus is with us alway; O could I praise his name, and could I walk more as a child of God should walk. I cannot illustrate my condition better than by a man that has a life sentence in prison, and not only in prison, but confined in a dark cell, where there is not a ray of light, and he is taken out for a short time in the light and then must go again into the dark cell; the times he is in the light represent the times when I have liberty in speaking, but no sooner am I through than I must go again into that dark and lonesome cell, there to mourn an absent God, where wild beasts at midnight howl.

I must bring this to a close; I have not written at all as I thought to when I began. This leaves us all well, and I hope you and family are well. Brother Ker, write as often as you can.

With love to all the brethren, I am your brother in darkness,

JOHN B. SLAUSON.

CLANTON, Ala., June 16, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed find postal money order to renew our subscription for the SIGNS; we much enjoy reading it; it are all the preaching we have; my wife says that she cannot do without it, and when one comes she never stops reading until she has read the number through. She is sixty-eight and I am seventy-three years of age. We get no help, but we want the SIGNS as long as we live, for it contains the truth, and contends for it.

I see in the SIGNS a request for an explanation of the unpardonable sin. Now if I am not mistaken, our God gave me a clear answer to that about ten years ago; I never had any light upon it before. I had gone into a house one evening where several brethren were gathered together; as I stepped in one said, Brother Chandler, tell us what that Scripture means, and the answer came to me as quick as thought, and I believe it came from God. Now I will give you what came to me: we find in the Scripture that there is but one offering for sin, and that Christ by that one offering has forever perfected them that are sanctified, or his elect, and we find that he never prayed for any others. Our God in his wisdom and power never suffered one of his chosen people to commit that sin, because all their sins are already forgiven; that is, the sin of his bride; and the sins, all of them, that the whole world commits, are embraced in that sin, for there is no more sacrifice for sin.

Now I hope all will understand what I mean, viz: that none of the church can commit that sin, and all the remainder of sin, or the sin of the non-elect, is that sin. Please excuse me for writing this.

Your brother and sister in hope,

JOSEPH & RUTHA CHANDLER.

[WE feel like calling attention to one thing at the conclusion of the above letter. Let the unpardonable sin be what it may, of one thing we feel well assured, viz: that not one of those who feel troubled lest he or she has committed that sin have been guilty of it. We feel well assured that if any man has committed that sin that man can have no trouble or anxiety about it. If one is anxious about it, it is sure that that one is not guilty of it.—ED.]

MONTICELLO, Ark., April 10, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I herewith renew my subscription for another year to the SIGNS, I love the old household paper, it brings me good tidings. Every time it comes it reads just as I see things. I do believe that we all have been to the same school. I know that no man ever taught it to me, nor did I ever learn it of myself. It is the Comforter that must teach the doctrine that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES advocates. It preaches Christ and him crucified, and salvation of the Lord through grace alone.

This salvation has no conditions in it, and so the SIGNS teaches. This is why I like the paper; it brings me news which makes my soul overflow with praise, to think that I hear the same news from so far off. Jesus is the way and the truth and the life, and I do believe that he has paid the debt for his bride.

Dear brethren and sisters of the household of our God, I do crave the prayers of you all when it goes well with you. I pray that God will give the editor and publishers of the SIGNS knowledge and wisdom to maintain the publication, and that he will lead, guide and direct every word that they print. I hope that the old precious paper will go on in truth and firmness, as it has always done. As to the doctrine which I believe, the SIGNS seems to me the soundest paper of which I know; it is next to the Bible with me.

I must bring this letter to a close, for I know it is like the writer. I hope the dear people of God will pray for me. I read many good letters in the SIGNS; they give me comfort. Brother Bartley faithfully points out the error of conditional time salvation. Elder S. H. Durand wrote comfortingly upon the lilies of the field. Brother Roberson, of North Carolina, wrote well about the old man, and all of the rest are good.

Now, dear brethren, please cast the mantle of charity over this writing. If I am saved it is by grace, and grace alone. My love to all who love the truth.

From a poor sinner.

A. TULLAS.

DELEVAN, Cal., Feb. 8, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I sit down this morning to try to write a little, but whether I shall be able to write so you can understand me I do not know. I am now in my eightieth year, and my hand is so unsteady that I can hardly write, even with a pencil, which I hope you will excuse.

I am now behind with my subscription on the dear old SIGNS, and I inclose a postal money order, and also desire one of the pamphlets called "Feast of Fat Things." I had one of them several years ago and loaned it to an old brother, and he lost it, so I want another one.

The task for the Arminians is indeed an everlasting one. It would be useless for me to order any number of them to try to sell them, for I am here in this far western country where anything that is tinctured with Old School Baptist doctrine is considered an abomination. So you see, dear brethren, if one so unworthy may claim such a relationship with those dear people whom I esteem above all others in this world, that I am alone in this country, and while I review the accounts of the good and happy meetings of the brethren and sisters, I almost envy them their happiness.

I find in May 1st number the comment of brother P. W. Sawin upon the hymn 1203, and I think it is sublime indeed.

I hoped when I took my pencil in hand that I could write something that would interest you, but I have failed, so will close.

Will Elder David Bartley give his views upon Genesis ix. 25–27? Tell us how Canaan comes to be a servant of servants unto his brethren. Write about Canaan, and then take up Shem, and place him in his place, and then show how Japheth comes to dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant. I tried to expound it myself some time ago, but was not satisfied.

May God bless you and all the household of faith, is the prayer of your poor, old brother, if one at all,

D. KENNARD.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., April, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR AND PUBLISHERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have received and read with much interest No. 7, present volume. When I read from the pen of the able writers and expounders of the truth, I feel like I want to respond to them all, and tell them to write on and cheer God's poor and afflicted people, whose only hope is in the mercy of the blessed Lord and Savior, who pitieth us as an earthly father pitieth his children; he knoweth our frame, that we are but dust. Looking at the past and present, I think I know what tribulation is. I was so glad brother D. G. Johnson wrote on that subject; many, very many, can respond to his words: "We know what it is to suffer alone." O how consoling it is to read our own thoughts and desires from the pen of those we never saw, but we greatly desire to see them and hear them preach the word of truth; and those little ones who tremble as they write, like myself, I want to say to them, Write on, your words of truth and love cheer some one, or probably many; oft-times it is as cold water to a thirsty soul. Many and varied are our afflictions and trials while we sojourn here in this mortal life, but thanks to our dear Lord, tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; yes, precious hope that he will never leave nor forsake us. May he cause us to walk in the narrow way, that we may enter in at the strait gate that leads to life eternal, where "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." —Rev. xxi. 4.

Brother editor, I have written this letter, as I feel it a duty to cast my little mite into the treasury of our correspondence.

E. JOHNSON.

LAURELVILLE, Ohio, May 7, 1905.

EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BROTHER:—I again send remittance for the SIGNS another year. I bless God for the steadfastness of the dear SIGNS. It does not teach a salva-

tion partly of the law and of works and partly of grace, but of grace, and grace alone. I was much comforted by the editorial of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe upon revivals; we could hardly make ourselves believe that it was not written for the present time. We were much comforted, for it led us to think that the same worldly religion beset the people of God forty years ago, and we believe a long time before.

Our pastor, Elder G. N. Tusing, has not been able to be with us since last November, and we feel that Laurel church has suffered a loss that no man can repair. We have faith to believe God is able to raise up under-shepherds to care for his flock. One dear sister said to me she hoped that the Lord and not man would supply our need. So much of the preaching of the present time I am too ignorant to make harmonize with the words of divine inspiration; they are surely courting the approval of the world. Our prayer is, that God will keep Zion pure by burning the dross, and that the SIGNS may never fail to give a certain sound on the trumpet. We sincerely desire the prayers of the saints in our behalf.

I remain, yours in hope of eternal life,
GEO. W. HARTSOUGH.

ATLANTA, Ga., June 28, 1905.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—Please pardon me for letting my account run over since April 1st. I have not sent in my remittance for the SIGNS in a long time without sending some new subscribers. I think this is the best way to demonstrate to you that I appreciate and love the cause which its columns advocate. I have been taking it over twenty-five years, and expect to as long as I can pay for it. I send you now two new subscribers, also my own subscription; I will try and send more new subscribers, as I have them promised. My dear readers and kin people, I want you to make a little effort and send in a few new subscribers every time you renew. If you never tried it you do not know how easy you can do this, and then you will not have to tell the publishers of the SIGNS how much you delight in reading the precious articles which they contain, and that you do not want any one else to see what a good thing you have all to yourself. I have no contract with the paper, but I am anxious that all christians shall see its contents.

Brother Chick, could you give a little space on what is called exhortation to church members and all christians? and oblige H. H. BENTLEY.

SULPHUR SPRINGS, Texas, April 13, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Please find postal order for two dollars to pay for the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES another year. It is about all the preaching I get. I have been a subscriber three or four years, and I believe the doctrine that it sets forth is as strong as any of the brethren get. I am not a member, but I hope that I have a hope. I do love to read the good letters in the SIGNS, and I love all of the good brethren everywhere, but I feel like none love me.

My dear friend, or brother, if you will allow me to call you brother, I never have written any for publication, because I am not a scribe or scholar, and feel too unworthy to attempt to write, but somehow I desired to write these few words, and if you think it is worth the room in your valuable paper, you can put it in, if not, throw it aside and all will be right with me. J. N. OWENS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1905.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

SOME time since, we received a letter from Burdette, N. Y., in which the writer asked a number of questions concerning the doctrine of election and that of predestination. It has never been our gift to engage in controversial speaking or writing very much, and so we do not now desire to write about these things controversially. Still, it may be that some of the children of God are troubled about the same things proposed in this letter, and for this reason *only* we feel like saying something about these matters here. In doing so, we will take up the different things suggested in the letter to which we have referred in the order in which they occur there.

The writer says, Having read the last number of the SIGNS, and seeing that you positively say that Christ did not die for all men, I wish to ask a question or more: Does all mean all, only a part of the time, when used in the Scriptures? To this we reply that it always means all to whom the subject refers at the time, but it does not always mean all mankind, or all the brute creation, or all the worlds above, or even all the children of God; sometimes it means one thing, and sometimes another. A very cursory reading of the Scriptures will show this clearly, so that we need not argue it any further. We will just suggest two or three texts in point. Paul addressed his epistle to the Romans, "To all that be in Rome," but limited the "all" by adding, "Beloved of God, called to be saints." No one supposes for a moment that all the inhabitants of Rome, to say nothing of all the inhabitants of the whole world, were intended by this address. In 2 Cor. i. 10, Paul says, "I beseech you brethren by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that ye all speak the same thing." Manifestly there the word "all" refers to the church which was at Corinth, and not to all the inhabitants of the city. But this will suffice. There are scores of places in the word where the word "all" is thus limited; indeed it is always limited by the connection; it may mean all the inhabitants of the world, or it may mean all saints, or it may mean but a portion of mankind, or a portion of a city, or even a part of the church, or a part of a family. The connection must always decide how broad the word is in any given place.

The writer refers in the above connection to 1 Cor. xv. 22: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." All Arminians, as well as Old School Baptists, believe that all men are not finally saved. Let the reason for this be what it may, still they hold that some men are finally lost. Manifestly they cannot use the above text against us without involving themselves also in difficulty. But the text does not refer to the question of either universal salvation or of the salvation which is according to election, as a question taken by itself. The apostle is talking of the resurrection, and presents the truth that as all sinned in Adam, and therefore die in him, so it

is only through Christ that redemption (redemption which is completed in the resurrection) is accomplished. Universalists, however, do lay hold upon this text and claim that it supports their contention that Christ died for all mankind, and that therefore all mankind will be finally saved in glory. To such we simply reply as above, that the theme is not the atonement, but the resurrection, and the apostle is showing that as in Adam all fell and die, so it is alone through Christ that life everlasting is obtained by any one, either Jew or Gentile. The verse preceding shows this clearly: "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead."

Our correspondent also refers to the text, "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate." And asks, Did he foreknow all, or only a few? Universalists might use this text, and we suppose do so, but Arminians generally find no support for their theories here. For if he foreknew all men, in the sense of the text, then all men will eventually be conformed to the image of his Son. Our God in his infinite wisdom did indeed foreknow all men and all things, including the animal creation, and all inanimate creation also, but he has not predestinated that all this creation shall be conformed to the image of Christ. The word "foreknow" means here, as it does in some other places, that peculiar electing knowledge which embraces the objects of his love, and presents the thought of intimacy and favor. Our God foreknew his people in the sense that they were his treasure and delight; and he foreknew them individually, and personally. Besides, in all this epistle to the Romans the address is to the saints at Rome. And in the verse before (Rom. viii. 28,) Paul defines those who were foreknown, by saying, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his pupose." These are the foreknown of the text. In the infinite wisdom of God he foreknew all events, and beings, and things, but in the sense of the text, he foreknew only the loved and called according to his purpose.

Our correspondent refers to Acts iii. 21: "The restitution of all things," and says, Does this mean only certain individuals? We are far from sure that it relates to the atonement, and that complete redemption which is in the atonement, at all. Rather, the text signifies the fulfillment of all things spoken by all the prophets. Every prophetic declaration, whether relating to the final salvation of the Lord's people or to other events in the providence or grace of God, will in the end be fulfilled. It has been our thought that this is simply the intent of the apostle in these words.

Our correspondent also refers to the words, "whosoever will," &c. The very expression, "whosoever will," implies beyond question that some will not; and all through the history of the world there have been those who will, and those who will not. "Ye will not come to me." But whence arises this difference of will in men? How is it that some men will come? There is no difference between men naturally; by nature there was no difference between the two thieves who hung upon the cross, both were highway robbers, both were evil minded men altogether, and both of them cast the same in his teeth alike, yet we find one continuing on in his railing, while the other confesses his sin, and prays for mercy. Now to such an one as this penitent thief come the words of

pity, and mercy, and grace, "whosoever will," and these words now meet the will in him, and respond to it, and the will in him responds to these words, as they come with power to his sinful, sorrowful conscience, and in them he finds the revelation of salvation, that salvation that is just suited to his need. Yes, it is most blessedly true that all the riches of Christ are for those who will. But this does not at all touch the question as to how a man who will not today, comes to love these things tomorrow. This is God's work wrought in him by the Holy Spirit, and it is in him an evidence of election, and that of God. God has given him this will, this desire to come, and it is the evidence of God's choice of him before the foundation of the world. But we ask our correspondent, How about those who will not? How shall their will, their love, their desire, be changed into will, rather than will not? The only answer that meets the question and accounts for this miracle is the grace of God.

Our correspondent refers to the words, "Without faith it is impossible to please him [God]." How vain then are all the prayers, praises, alms-giving, sacrifices, and even martyrdoms of the unrenewed man. By none of these things can he please God without faith, and this the unrenewed man has not. Faith is declared to be one of the fruits of the Spirit, and a gift of God. True the Bible speaks of our faith, and Jesus once and again said, "Thy faith," as he healed men and blessed them; but our faith is ours only because God has given it. When he has given it, it is ours indeed. What God gives is more completely ours than the gift of any earthly friend can be ours, because with the gift he gives a heart to receive and appreciate and to desire it.

Our correspondent says, Those who believe in the predestination of all things try to upset much of God's predestination. Why try to so do if all is fixed? Man's inconsistency is no argument against Bible truth; it only proves unbelief and weakness in man. We do not know what it is that God has predestinated in the future, and because we do not know, like those who crucified the Savior, we fulfill God's predestination. Let our correspondent, and all who may read this, turn to Acts xiii. 27, for evidence that men, because they are ignorant of the purpose of God, do fulfill his purposes: "For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets, which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him." We act according to the judgment which God has himself given us, and do not know of any other way to act, but all is, after all, moving unwittingly to us, right on to the fulfillment of the purpose of God, and afterwards we are sometimes permitted to catch little glimpses of the truth that all has been according to the purpose of God.

Prayer, and exhortation, and commandments, are not inconsistent with the predestination of God, as our correspondent seems to say. In all our life we have believed in the predestination of all things that come to pass, and yet this has never for a moment checked any word of exhortation and admonition that we have had to utter, and neither has it thrown any check upon the spirit of prayer when we have, as we trust, at times felt the presence of it. Paul believed and taught the predestination of all things, and no writer in the New Testament utters the words of prayer or of exhortation oftener than he. Besides,

if we believe in the foreknowledge of God, equal difficulties arise, according to human reason, that are met with if we believe in God's predestination. If it be asked, Why warn against a sin that God has embraced in his predestination, or why pray against it? we in return must ask, Why exhort against a sin, or pray to be kept from it which God has foreknown, and which therefore must be sure to take place? In all these things are questions too deep for reason's line to sound. The only question is, What does the Bible teach? If we deny that it can teach predestination, because prayer and exhortation are often used in the word, then by parity of reasoning we must deny that God's foreknowledge is taught there. Will any one undertake to question his foreknowledge?

We do not wish to engage in a lengthy argument regarding this matter, but simply to present a few thoughts and leave the subject for consideration.

Our correspondent asks, Cannot he who hardeneth whom he will, soften the same? We heartily reply, Certainly he can, and does, and this is all his work; no other can control the heart, and either soften or harden. Every heart is in his hand, and he turneth them as the rivers of water are turned. "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." What strong arguments for sovereign grace and election are in these things. He does indeed have mercy upon whom he will, and whom he will he hardens.

Lastly, our correspondent says that she believes in a God who is able to do alone if he wills, but who does will to do by human instruments. We see no reason to question that God is able to do all his will, and that he will do all his will, and neither are we disposed to deny that often he does make use of men and things to accomplish his will. But there is one thing in which he has never used any instrument or human means, but works alone, and in it speaks and it is done, and this is that he never uses any human power in giving life to the dead. His disciples may roll the stone away before Lazarus lives, and they may remove the grave clothes after he lives, but it is not theirs to be used of the Lord to impart life to him. This the blessed Lord does by direct command, a command which has power, the power of life, in it. Preaching is used to turn many from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, but these are living men and women, for the dead cannot be thus affected and turned. Many upon the day of Pentecost were pricked in the heart, so that they cried out, "What must we do?" but they were already alive. Warnings, admonitions, promises, comforts are ministered to the living in Zion through preaching, singing and prayer, and the ordinances of the Lord's house, but never life itself. Our God works always without human means, but he does indeed minister to the living through his servants; and it is their joy that it is given them to minister a cup of cold water to his disciples from time to time.

We leave these considerations to our correspondent, and to our readers. May God bless them to the good of some one.

NOTICE.

Of late many obituary notices containing poetry have been sent to us, and as the poetry has not appeared in the obituaries when published we feel called upon to make an explanation. We have always been ready to give space for obituaries, and are still perfectly willing to

continue this custom, and often have tried to make room for the poetry accompanying them, but as our space devoted to obituaries is limited, have found it impossible to publish all poetry. Should even two or three verses appear in each obituary they would take the space of at least one or two death notices in each number of the SIGNS, hence obituaries would often have to be held over when it would seem expedient to publish them, and to avoid offence if possible, we have thought it best to omit all poetry in obituaries. We hope our brethren and friends will understand and accept this explanation, and feel that poetry is left out for lack of space, rather than indifference to them or disapproval of the verses sent.

RESOLUTIONS.

WHEREAS, it hath pleased Almighty God in his unerring wisdom and divine disposition of events, according to his ancient decree, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," to remove from his field of labor in the gospel ministry our beloved pastor, Elder G. N. Tusing, therefore be it

Resolved, by the Laurel church, Perry township, Hocking Co., Ohio, who listened to and believed the divine truths as published by him to us over fifty years ago, and who still hold fast those same things taught by him in his last days on earth and will not let them slip, that we desire to bow in humble submission to the will of him who doeth all things well, and while our hearts be sad by reason of our bereavement, we desire not to murmur, but like Job we would say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

That we hereby set forth in these resolutions, as a sacred and solemn duty, our sincere and heart-felt respect, love and true devotion to the memory of our beloved brother and pastor, and in this dispensation we pray that we may have grace given us to serve God acceptably and with godly fear, hoping that he will raise up another by his might and wisdom to minister to us in his stead. Be it further

Resolved, that the church sympathizes with our dear sister, Mrs. Tusing, in her bereavement, and commends her to that God who doeth all things well, and who hath said that he will be a husband to the widow. Also,

Resolved, that these resolutions be spread upon the church records as a tribute of love and respect to the memory of our dear pastor, and a copy sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and *Zion's Advocate* for publication.

Z. K. HOLIDAY, Moderator *pro tem.*
M. E. HARTSOUGH, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. N. Badger, at his residence in Manassas, Va., June 29th, 1905, Elder J. Corder Mellott and Miss Alice A. Hagerman, both of Philadelphia, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon C. S. Hefner departed this life at his home in Gilmer, Texas, of cerebro-spinal meningitis, on the 22nd day of April, 1905, aged 75 years, 3 months and 17 days, having been born Jan. 5th, 1830, in the State of North Carolina. He moved to Texas in the year 1849, settling in what was then Titus county. Brother Hefner was married to Miss M. A. Truit, Nov. 8th, 1856. To them was born one child, a girl, who died in early childhood. Through patient and honest toil, coupled with economy, brother and sister Hefner accumulated some property, and while they raised no children of their own, it is said they raised and partly raised fifteen orphan children, who were fed, clothed and schooled as though they were their own. He, together with his wife, joined the Old School Baptist Church called Mt. Zion, Oct. 23rd, 1886, and was baptized by Elder Wm. Caudle, of which church he remained a consistent and faithful member until called hence, serving as deacon nearly seventeen years of that time. In all the walks of life, as a neighbor, citizen and soldier, (served in the Confederate army during the Civil war, belonged to company I, 14th Texas volunteers infantry, McCullough's brigade, Walker's division, Trans-Mississippi Dept.,) language would fail me to speak of his many noble traits, but it is as a husband, brother and friend he is most sadly missed. A writer of a notice of his death in a local paper, though not a Primitive Baptist himself, says of brother Hefner: "He belonged to the Primitive Baptist Church, and was as firm in his belief as the rock of ages, trusting with a full assurance in God's mercies. He never joined any lodge, organization or secret society in his life. He stood as a bulwark of strength and influence in the Primitive Baptist Church, contending honestly for the faith as he understood it. I was personally acquainted with brother Hefner for many years, and looked upon him as one of the best men I ever met in life." Our brother was for many years a subscriber and reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and loved the doctrine for which it contends. He was an humble, quiet man, and his only hope for life and salvation

here and hereafter was in the abounding grace of God.

May the Lord, who is the God of the widow and the orphan, comfort all who mourn, and prepare us, with all the blood-washed throng, for that happy home where sin and sorrow and parting are no more.

H. B. JONES.

MT. VERNON, Texas.

DIED—At his residence at Brown Station, Ulster Co., N. Y, July 17th, 1905, **Mr. Louis Brooke,** aged 81 years. Mr. Brooke had been failing for a number of years, beside being nearly blind. He was not a professor of religion, but we believe he was a possessor of a good hope through grace. He was well cared for by a loving daughter who lived with him, and also a son and his family, who lived in the same house. He has left a number of children, with other relatives, to mourn.

ALSO,

At his residence, after a long illness, **Deacon William Ballard,** of Vega, Delaware Co., N. Y., July 19th, 1905, in his 75th year. Brother Ballard united with the First Roxbury Old School Baptist Church many years ago, and was a firm believer in the truth, and a lover of the peace of the church, being a steady traveler. How sadly we all shall miss him. Truly his late home is one of mourning. His dear companion, one son and his wife, our dear sister, and their son and daughter, all were leaning upon the head of the house. He leaves beside two brothers, one sister and the church. All of us feel the great loss, but we believe our loss is his gain. Our brother was aware of the approaching end, and was quite reconciled to the will of God. May the Lord sanctify this sore affliction to the general good of all the mourners, and his name be glorified.

ALSO,

Mr. Cornelius Keator died at his residence, Lew Beach, N. Y., July 20th, 1905, after a long illness, in his 77th year. Mr. Keator was a firm believer in the doctrine of God our Savior, though not a professor. He has left a lonely widow, one son and family, with many other relatives, to mourn, who mourn not as those that have no hope. Thus within four days three of our fellow clay have been deposited in the grave, and the large attendance of relatives, friends and neighbors have shown their sympathy by paying their last tribute of respect to the departed.

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLY CORNERS, N. Y., July 24, 1905.

BROTHER **C. C. Hubbard** was born in the State of Virginia, in the year 1840; in 1853 moved with his parents to the State of Missouri; in 1855 moved to Atchison Co., Kansas; there he was married to Miss Eliza Swiney. To them were born eleven children, of which six are living to mourn their loss. In the year 1865 they moved to Oregon, where they united with the Old School Baptist Church; in the year 1871 moved to Columbia Co., Washington, where they, with a number of brethren and sisters, were constituted into a church called Harmony, of which they remained faithful members until their death. They were firm believers in the doctrine of foreordination and predestination, believing that God is all-wise and knew all things from the beginning, that he works all things for the good of his true followers that love to serve and honor him. Sister Hubbard was suddenly killed June 9th, 1903, by a horse running away and throwing her out of the buggy. Brother C. C. Hubbard died April 23rd, 1905, in California, at the home of one of his sisters, of the same faith and order, but his remains were brought to Dayton, and laid by the side of his wife, there to remain till the resurrection.

His funeral was preached by brother Barnes, of Tusha Station, to a large number of friends. Brother Hubbard was the clerk of our little church, and also assistant deacon. O what a sad stroke it is to our little church to give up three of her best and most faithful members, all of the same family, in less than three years, but we do not mourn as those that have no hope. Although their seats are vacant when we assemble ourselves together in the house of worship, but few of us in number, to return thanks to our blessed Savior, who has been so kind to us, and blessed us with so many rich blessings, we hope he will still keep us near the cross till he shall see fit to call us home, where we shall be united.

(MRS.) W. R. SAVAGE.

DAYTON, Wash., July 7, 1905.

Cora Lee McCall, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. R. M. McCall, was born Oct. 30th, 1899, died May 14th, 1905, making her stay on earth 5 years, 6 months and 14 days. During the last two years her health was poor, but she bore her affliction without complaint until the last week of her illness, when she said to her oldest sister: "I would like to die, because I feel so bad, but I do not want you all to cry." Her life was short, but we must all go at the appointed time. Many times amid heartaches and toils she has kissed and caressed away her father's and mother's cares. She was a bright and loving child; all who knew her loved her. We must remember the Scripture says, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." She leaves father, mother, two brothers and five sisters, and a host of relatives to mourn, but their loss is her eternal gain. May the dear Lord, who rules and reigns, comfort and strengthen the bereaved family, and prepare them for that kingdom above, where there is no parting, but eternal rest with the Lord forever.

Written by her eldest sister,

BESSIE McCALL.

KENNEY, Fla., July 25, 1905.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS."

Dr. Geo. M. Hite, Tenn., $3.00; Martha B. Fancher, N. Y., $1.00.—Total, $4.00.

MEETINGS.

PROVIDENCE permitting, the next meeting of Peace Valley Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of the Primitive order, will be held with Poolville church, Poolville, Parker Co., Texas, instead of Friendship church, Acton, Hood Co., Texas, as per Minutes of last meeting, commencing on Friday before (at 10 o'clock a. m.) and embracing the third Sunday in August, 1905. Those coming by railroad from any direction will be met with conveyance at Weatherford, Texas, Thursday before the meeting. All lovers of truth attend.

W. O. RUTLEDGE, Association Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Bryn Zion church, in Kent Co., Delaware, is appointed to meet on the third Saturday and Sunday (19th and 20th) of August, 1905. All who feel an interest in our christian welfare are cordially invited to meet with us. The forenoon trains, north and south, on the Delaware Railroad, will be met at Clayton and visitors cared for.

W. W. MEREDITH, Pastor.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing on Friday, Sept. 1st, 1905, and continuing three days. We gladly welcome all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Those coming will be met at North Berwick on Thursday before the time appointed for our yearly conference.

FRED. W. KEENE.

THE Mount Pleasant Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with Cane Run church, at Turner's Station, Henry Co., Ky., on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1905. Those coming by rail from the north and east will leave Cincinnati (Pennsylvania depot) at 3:40 p. m. Thursday and 7:50 a. m. Friday, L. & N. train. Those coming from the south and west will leave Louisville, Tenth St. station, at 4:20 p. m. Thursday and First St. station at 7:20 a. m. Friday. A cordial invitation is extended to those of our faith and order.

G. R. TURNER, Church Clerk.

SPOON River Association will meet with brother John McFadden, (in behalf of Sugar Creek church) six miles west of Table Grove, Ill., on the Rock Island—St. Louis branch of C., B. & Q. R. R., Friday before the first Sunday in September, where trains will be met. A cordial invitation is extended to all.

B. F. BUTLER, Moderator.

THE yearly meeting is appointed to be held with the Harford church, Harford Co., Md., commencing at 10 o'clock a. m. on Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1905. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth to meet with us. Those coming by way of Baltimore will take train leaving North Ave. station at 3:45, for Long Green or Forest Hill, where they will be met and cared for.

NATHAN GRAFTON, Church Clerk.

THE Licking Association of Old School Baptists will be held with the Goshen church, in Anderson Co., Ky., Sept. 8th, 9th and 10th, 1905. Those coming by way of Louisville, Lexington or Harrodsburg will get tickets at either place for McBrayer station, on Southern R. R. All trains will be met on Thursday. Any coming later must notify Jas. E. Paxton, Lawrenceburg, Ky., R. F. D. Lovers of the truth will be welcome.

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON, Moderator.
A. B. BICKERS, Church Clerk.

THE Lord willing, the Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Church of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 13th and 14th, 1905. Trains will be met on Tuesday p. m. at Roxbury and friends taken to the place of meeting and cared for. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

JOHN B. SLAUSON.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Cammal, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting to be held Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 9th and 10th, 1905. Those coming from Williamsport will take New York Central R. R. train to Cammal, Pa. Trains leave 7:10 a. m., 2:10 and 5:25 p. m. Those coming from Corning will take the same road to Cammal. Trains leave Corning at 6 and 10 a. m. and 5 p. m. Would be glad to have a goodly number of brethren and friends with us.

D. M. VAIL.

PROVIDENCE permitting, there will be a meeting of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church of Albany & Troy, N. Y., Thursday and Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1905. All who desire to come will be made welcome. Come to Albany, N. Y., and take electric cars at Union depot for Troy, N. Y. At Troy take electric car for Albia, there change and take electric car to West Sand Lake, and inquire for Mrs. Moul, who lives about five minutes walk from the electric car depot. Those coming on Wednesday will go to brother Charles Schade's, 423 Sheridan Ave., Albany, N. Y., where they will be cared for until Thursday morning, when they will go with him to the meeting. Those coming Thursday will go direct to West Sand Lake from depot, according to directions. Meeting is to

be held at the home of Mrs. Moul, by her request, who makes every lover of the truth welcome, for she loves them for Jesus' sake.

H. SEWARD, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting to be held Tuesday and Wednesday, September 19th and 20th, 1905. Friends coming on D. & H. R. R. and O. & W. R. R. will be met at Olyphant, Pa., Monday at 4 p. m. Mrs. Augusta Tripp, formerly Akerly, lives near each depot, and will be glad to see any who may call at her home. Those coming on D., L. & W. R. R. will come to Glenburn, Pa., and take stage to my house, one and one-half miles. We hope to have a good many friends and brethren with us.

D. M. VAIL.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m., in the Red Men's Hall, First and Congress Streets in Troy, N. Y., and at 2:30 p. m. in West Sand Lake, N. Y., at the home of Mrs. Moul. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in Hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 73. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1905. NO. 17.

POETRY.

NEVER ALONE.

(By Eben E. Rexford.)

"How many times discouraged
We sink beside the way;
About us all is darkness,
We hardly dare to pray;
Then through the mists and shadows,
The sweetest voice e'er known,
Says, Child, am I not with thee,
Never to leave thee alone?

O soul, hast thou forgotten
The tender word and sweet,
Of him who left behind him
The print of bleeding feet?
I never will forsake thee,
O child, so weary grown;
Remember I have promised
Never to leave thee alone.

Take courage, way-worn pilgrim,
Though mists and shadows hide
The face of him thou lovest,
He's ever at thy side:
Reach out thy hands unto him,
And lo, the clouds have flown;
He smiles on thee who promised
Never to leave thee alone."

Chorus:

"No, never alone, no, never alone;
He promised never to leave me,
Never to leave me alone."

(Selected by Mrs. N. M. Owens, Grover, Pa.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., June 1, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR FRIEND:—I would like to address you otherwise, but am not at liberty to do so. No doubt you will be surprised to receive a letter from me, but probably you may not receive this, as I may be ashamed of it before I get through and destroy it. A desire was created within me to write to you, telling some of the ways in which the Lord has led me for over forty-seven years, and his dealings with me. This feeling or inclination to communicate to you, manifested itself at the time you preached the funeral sermon of my brother-in-law, which is nearly two and one-half years ago. Why it should do so at that time I am unable to say, as I cannot call to mind now a single word you said then, but somehow there was a peculiar drawing toward you at that time which I am unable to describe. I have refrained from undertaking the task, as I am so much of the time carnally minded, and it was my desire that when I did write I might be entirely free from all worldly cares or thoughts; but that time never appears to come, and I am made to

repeat the expression which has been repeated so often, that when I would do good, evil is present with me, and always seems to be uppermost in my mind, which unfits me entirely for the task which I have undertaken; nor do I now feel any more fit for the duty than I did two years ago, so if I continue to write now I will have to depend upon the Lord to guide my thoughts; I hope I may be led by him, as I know full well unless he takes me in charge and guides my thoughts this epistle will be of no interest to you.

In viewing my past life it appears like a blank. Of what use have I been upon this earth? I remember Elder Wm. J. Purington made the remark at the funeral of my sister, in May, 1868, that I was spared for some wise purpose (as I was then the only child living out of five). All these years since, I have failed to see the wisdom in that purpose, although there is wisdom in it. I have that faith, even if I am too blind to see it. It appears to me that it would have been better if I had been taken away when I was young like the rest; I know that I would have escaped much vexation and sorrow, which torture me day after day; I know I should not murmur, but at times I cannot refrain; I know I am a very rebellious creature, yet there are times, thanks be to God, when I am quieted for awhile; I am also at times led by the still waters, and made to lie down in green pastures. O what a pleasant place it is to be, no other place is to be compared with it. O could I always remain there, I am loth to leave it; but it is not the will of the Lord to allow me to remain in that place long at a time, nor does he allow me often to enter into such a blissful abode, but he knows what is best for me. He has marked out my road, and I must travel that road, and none other, although at times it may appear dark and gloomy.

This reminds me of an incident that occurred twenty-five or thirty years ago: I was away from home over twenty miles, and when I started for home it was raining, and very dark, too. The first few miles all went well, but it was not long before it grew very dark, and I could not recognize anything along the road; everything appeared strange; I became bewildered, I did not know where I was. I traveled on, passing numerous objects that I had seen many times before, but all looked strange now until within two or three miles of home, when a set of farm buildings that I approached looked familiar; then my mind went back over the road that I had come, and the various objects I had passed, and the numerous turns I had made, crossing over a railroad, turnpike, bridges, up hill and down dale, and at one time I crossed over a very prominent and wide road down into a narrow road with trees upon each side; it looked very gloomy, but on I went, knowing not whither I was going. All this looked familiar when I looked back over the road that I had come, as I had traveled the same road many times before. I felt simple and foolish, and wondered how it was possible for me to travel over that road which I was so familiar with, and not recognize anything by the way. Thus does it appear my life has been spent. As I said, my road is laid out for me, and I must travel that road and no other; I am in the right road all the time, but I do not seem to know it; all the time I seem to want to go some other way, I am not content to travel the road that is laid out for me. To look back over the road, it seems as if any road would be all wrong, but the wisdom of an all-wise God is shown in laying out such a road. But

while I am traveling this road it appears different from any road that anybody else travels: I do not seem to see anybody else in the same road, I appear to be traveling all alone; it is a lonely road for me to travel. True, at times I seem to cross the road that others travel, I see them occasionally, but they are traveling a different road from what I am, which makes me feel as if I certainly am on the wrong road, which troubles me. This brings to my mind the hymn 1033:

"'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought,)
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

But there are a few things that comfort me: one is, I trust that I have a hope, if I did not, I would be much more miserable than I am. Another is, I love to meet and mingle with those who as I believe are the children of God, although many times I feel as if it were no place for me, and that I am not welcome among them. I many times am made to feel as if they had no love for me. But I know not where else to go to receive real enjoyment, and I feel like saying as did Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee," &c. I also feel that if this people knew me as I am, if they knew my thoughts, they could not possibly have any love for me, and they would no longer have any use for me. This road that I am traveling, and in which I am beginning to recognize the familiar objects by the wayside as I am nearing my home, is indicative that I am nearing my heavenly home, (I hope) and that the end of this pilgrimage is drawing near, and that this world is not my home. I feel like saying with the poet, I am a pilgrim and I am a stranger, I cannot tarry but awhile, do not detain me, for I am going to where the streamlets are ever flowing. While I do not wish to hasten the time of my departure, I do not wish it to be postponed, but I wish to wait with patience my Maker's call, wait until he says, Child, thy Father calls, come home. I have no fear of death, but believe it will be a happy deliverance from this vile world of sin and sorrow. There appears to be nothing worth living for; it is better to be at home with my God. My dearly beloved wife and I have been journeying along down through this pilgrimage together happily over thirty-eight years, yet I find I am not traveling the same road that she is. I am very much like the dog that starts out to follow after his master's wagon through the country, and instead of trotting along in the road behind the wagon he is roving over the fields or through the thicket in search of game, and only when he crosses the road over to the other side to continue his hunt is he in the road. So it is with me, I am continually going in by and forbidden paths, gratifying the lusts of the flesh, and occasionally I cross the road that I should be traveling in, and am found on the other side, still continuing my hunt for something to gratify my sinful carnality. Thus does it appear that my whole life has been spent, making resolutions one after another to do better in the future, only to be broken as often as made.

My mind is carried back about forty-eight years, or probably more, when Elder Daniel L. Harding was pastor at Southampton, who preached from the text found in Deut. xxxii. 11, 12: "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." That sermon has come home to me a great

many times since. I am told the eagle selects some crevice among the rocks high up in the cliffs to build her nest and rear her young, and when they become old enough and strong enough to fly, the mother bird begins to tear up the nest, tearing away a stick at a time. In the language of the text, she stirreth up her nest until they are compelled to make an attempt to fly, but as their first effort proves a failure they begin to sink, and down, down they go, and would be dashed to death upon the rocks below, did not the mother dart down underneath them and bear them upon her wings, as is said in the language of the text. Thus does it appear with me; my nest, so to speak, that is, this carnal nest which I have so often nestled in, has just as often been stirred up, and at such times I feel as if I were sinking down, down, each time lower than the previous one, and much deeper than any other mortal possibly can go, and if it were not for his everlasting arm, which is always ready to bear me up, I would give up in despair; but that blessed hope (although very small) still lingers with me and holds me fast. O what would become of me if I should lose that hope? But I have the blessed assurance that this will never be, so my poor soul at such times is made to be still and know that my Redeemer liveth.

Since writing the above I have been reading a few letters in the last SIGNS, and I find in each one many expressions that seem to speak my feelings, and describe my travels through this pilgrimage here below so much better and clearer than I am able to do. This makes me feel as if I had better stop and destroy the whole of it; but I have written just as my mind was led, and if there is nothing in it interesting to you, you may destroy it and attribute all to my ignorance of the whole matter. I hope you will overlook all my shortcomings, which I know are numerous. I know it is impossible for me to even think a good thought, much less to act a good deed, unless directed by my heavenly Father.

I fear I am wearying you with this, but bear with me a little longer; it appears as if I cannot get at what I want in a satisfactory manner, but hope you may be able to glean a little of my thoughts and feelings. I know I am only skimming over the surface, not entering any depth as I wish, and if I should go on and write as much more I would not be able to tell the half; like the queen of Sheba, the half was not told her, as she said. I feel as if this subject is inexhaustible, no terminus to it; it matters not how much is said or written upon this subject, there is just as much left as when we began, in fact it seems to expand, and its beauties seem to loom up with greater brilliancy. The noonday sun appears gloomy when compared with its effulgence.

But, my dear friend, I will close; I find I am not capable of doing as I would like. If you feel like answering this, or can give me any comfort in any way, I shall feel very thankful to you for it. I feel as if I needed support every day of my life, and perhaps the Lord may be pleased to send through you some message to me that will prove a "balm in Gilead" to my soul.

Ever your friend,

C. S. FETTER.

LAMAR, Okla., June 9, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—VERY DEAR AND PRECIOUS BROTHER:—May one so utterly unworthy as I claim that relationship? I have been a long time answering your good and much welcomed letter, which came to me nearly three years ago. This has been because I knew myself wholly inadequate, and felt that it would be an imposition upon you, and so have refrained until now. I do not now make the attempt because I feel to be any more capable or worthy than before, but there are other motives prompting me. First I will say that I did as you advised in your letter: I went to the church and told them my feelings, as I hope, and my desire to unite with them. While my desire was to be with them, if I know my own heart, I did not desire to be an impostor; and, dear brother, somewhat to my surprise, they received me gladly, and I was baptized by Elder W. C. Perdue the next day, the fourth Sunday in November, 1902. Since that time and for a long time before, I have had a hope that worlds like this could not buy, though sometimes like the poet I must say my hope seems so little that I almost lay it by; then again it seems sufficient if I were called to die. Comforting as this is to me, I have something which I doubt not will prove more interesting to the readers of the SIGNS, which I will send to you for publication. I send you the narration of the experience of our dear sister Dessie S. Perdue. Dear brother, in reading what this sister has written of the dealings of the Lord with her, one can readily see how much there is in what she has said to testify of the Lord's work. Yet to know her life, to be acquainted with her walk and conversation, and to see the manifestation of the love of God in her heart, shows that but a small part has been written. There is much to read between the lines, by those who know her.

I must close. Please remember me when at the throne of grace. I hope that we may meet in this life, but if not, may we meet in that never-ending eternity, where parting is unknown.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

J. H. HARDY.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—Although many times I have been requested to write my experience in full, yet it is with a feeling of great hesitancy that I am now making the attempt, for I have so many weaknesses and imperfections; but since it has been said to me, This is not your own, I feel that I have no right to refuse to try to tell my feelings when (as I hope) God saw fit to manifest me a child of his, and if a child, then an heir, and a joint-heir with Christ Jesus our Lord.

I had the usual run of happy, care free childhood, surrounded by my friends and loved ones, although from my eighth year (when I lost my eldest brother) death was a mystery to me. I was in the habit of attending the meetings of various denominations of religion and hearing them speak of the line of accountability; I set about trying to figure out whether I had passed it or not, but could never decide it to my satisfaction. Even then I think religion was sacred to me; and from that time on the thought of death troubled me. But during my sixteenth year my troubles suddenly became much worse. The places of amusement I had been in the habit of attending with my brothers and young friends, all at once grew distasteful to me, and though I still continued to attend them, I took no pleasure in them, and felt convinced I would have enjoyed myself bet-

ter had I remained at home. My young companions noticed this, and chided me for a lack of interest in their sports, and though I tried very hard to take part in their amusements, the more I attended them the less interesting they became. From this time until my twentieth year things gradually grew worse, until at last I had reached the very depths; I saw myself as I was, a poor, lost, ruined sinner, without God and without hope in the world. I was powerless to help myself, and knew there was not one hope for me; I knew my doom, and knew, too, that it was merited. Often I wished for death, yet at the same time when I began to think of eternity my fears cannot be described. It seemed that I could do nothing but beg for mercy, mercy for a wretch that did not deserve it, and my constant prayer was, Lord, have mercy on me. So things went on for several months; then our Saturday meeting was held in August, 1902. There was a visiting minister with us, and he had asked to hear some of the experiences related, and my dear mother in relating hers, told of her great sinfulness, her great trials. O how sweetly she told of the pardoning grace of her Savior, his loving mercy to her and of the little hope that she might be an heir of the home above. As she was speaking the great burden rolled away from my tired heart, a voice was speaking directly to me saying, "Lo, I am with you alway," and I was left rejoicing "with joy unspeakable and full of glory." O the perfect peace of that moment! O that sweet, sweet rest! I was like a tired child that had traveled a long way and this was my first sweet rest. Surely I can never forget the perfect harmony in heart and soul when

"On the wings of his love
I was carried above
All sin and temptation and pain."

There was such a beautiful light surrounding everybody and everything, and O it seemed I was so near the dear Father, even in his arms. All nature was changed, and all faces wore a different expression. It seemed there was never so goodly a company as had gathered at church that day; the mark was in all their foreheads, and God's love was so sweetly surrounding them, and when they sang the following, my joy was inexpressible:

"O how happy are they,
Who their Savior obey,
And whose treasures are laid up above;
Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love.

That sweet comfort was mine
When the favor divine
I first found in the blood of the Lamb:
When my heart first believed,
O what joy I received,
What a heaven in Jesus' name."

I wished very much to be with such a lovely band of his followers, but hesitated until too late. Can I ever describe that beautiful drive homeward? I had gone to church with a storm raging in my heart and soul, and now all was changed, and I felt so sweetly loved and protected by one who was able to pilot me through all future storms, by one who had so lovingly said, "Lo, I am with you alway."

"And I could not believe
That I ever should grieve,
That I ever should suffer again."

Ah yes, it seemed that I would evermore rest in the sweet security of his everlasting arms, that I should always be soothed and comforted by those tender words, "Lo, I am with you alway." Ah, blessed promise to cheer me through all the dark days of the future, for my gloom partially returned after a time, but never quite so deep and overwhelming as at first. Sometimes there was sunshine, some-

times shadow, but round about all (I hope) the strength of his everlasting arms. I told no one of my feelings then, and after awhile I desired to conceal them. This continued for about a year, then I became sick, and all my friends thought I must surely die. I became better, however, and was constantly worried by such Scriptures as these: "He that denieth me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God." "Let your light so shine," &c. My mind was continually worried, for I felt I had left a duty unperformed, yet when I thought of asking for a home among God's dear people, the thought of my own imperfections seemed to make this an impossibility, and so I determined to keep the whole thing to myself; but one day when I lay so sick, the physician who was attending me, and who, by the way, is a brother in Christ, came in, and during my unconscious moments heard me express some of my feelings (which I had meant to conceal). As soon as I recovered consciousness he told me of what I had been talking, asked me several questions which I could not deny, and which seemed to please him. Later we had conversations on the same subject, and he quoted to me the same Scriptures which had been puzzling me, and said to me, Ask for a home among the brethren. I replied that they would not think of admitting me, but his only answer was, Ask and see.

One night in my sick room, after I had suffered terribly and was completely exhausted, I had fallen into a troubled sleep, when O such a bright, glorious light illumined my room, and there was a sweet presence near saying, "Peace be still," and O the beautiful calm which followed the storm which had been raging in my soul but a moment before; I was left thankful and happy for many days. So many of these bright seasons have come to my sick room, and though to some they may have no meaning, yet to me they were a great comfort and consolation, for it was then God seemed so near and hope so bright.

About a month after I had this dream they held meeting at the home of my childhood. Besides the church members there were my brothers, my husband and my sweet little four months old girl present. We listened to such a sweet discourse by D. B. Nowels, (now an Elder) followed by Elder W. C. Perdue, from Luke viii. 43–48. O how clearly brother Nowels spoke of our God as being a refuge, a God of last resort; how after we had used every available means of our own to save ourselves, we would turn as did the woman, to one who is able to heal, comfort and soothe our every heart-ache; to one who would not turn us empty away, but would say, "Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole." O what a comforting sermon, and it seemed appropriate. They had sung that old, old song, "Amazing grace!" and now selected the song of which I had such sweet memories: "O how happy are they;" and though I hesitated until they were almost ready to close, I felt that I could not allow them to go away without first asking for a home among them. I would not have been surprised had they refused me then and there, but instead they asked me to relate the Lord's dealings with me. It is one of my characteristics to say the least when I feel the most, but in all my life I had never been at such a loss for words. I told such a little in such a stammering way I did not see how they could understand me, but I was received. O how unworthy I felt of

this blessing, this place among his children, and O how incomparably unworthy I felt of a home with God himself. I often feel that I have deceived all these good people, and feel tempted to tell them so, yet when a suitable opportunity presents itself I do not, and although I have not been baptized as yet, (my health remaining poor) I hope soon to be buried with him in baptism. My experience and my sufferings bring to mind that sorrowful scene in the garden when he cried, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! [yet with sweet submission] nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." And that cruel death of the cross when he cried, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" O how ashamed I grow of my complaints and murmurings when I think of his great agony. O glorious, O perfect work of redemption, when he set his people free from this terrible curse of sin. O how God must have loved the poor, lost sinners to send his only begotten Son to suffer and die that we might live. After the toil and turmoil of this tempestuous life, which is painful at present, we shall mount to the heavens above to see our blessed Redeemer and be like him, where we are arrayed in spotless purity and made to sit down in the throne and forever sing praises to our blessed Redeemer. O what a beautiful thought it is, this life beyond the grave, where there is "no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain;" for God shall be with us and be our God. O when the summons comes to each of us may we be prepared to say,

"It is not death to die,
To leave this weary load,
And, 'midst the brotherhood on high,
To be at home with God."

DESSIE S. PERDUE.

FRANKLIN, Ind., March 10, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I send you this letter written to me by our esteemed brother, Elder P. W. Sawin. I have obtained his consent to send it to you for publication. He says that if I think it will comfort any one I may forward it. I know that it has by the direction of God, comforted one in trial. I feel unworthy of such tokens of christian fellowship, yet they cheer me on my lonely way, and I feel sure that many others will be edified by this letter.

Your sister,

SOPHRONIA B. THOMPSON.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Jan. 15, 1905.

DEAR SISTER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—You will doubtless be much surprised to receive a letter from me. I have often had you in mind to write you, as I have seen your name occasionally in the SIGNS. Your letters have always given evidence of an abiding faith in Jesus, the only Savior of sinners, and in the doctrinal principles declared by Baptists as being affirmed by the apostles. In both the prophetic and apostolic ages our God has raised up witnesses testifying of his almighty power, love and mercy, to the exaltation of his name, which is called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, &c. As I was reading a few nights since, the history given of the selling of Joseph into Egypt, I wondered how any child of God could deny the absolute control of our God over all things, and in all time. I had been much tried in body and in spirit, and filled with many questionings as to whether the Lord had anything to do with me, and if so, why it was with me as it was. As I read of Jacob's view of the direful situation when he was driven to conclude that "all these things" were against

him (and such had been the breathing of my poor heart,) instantly a light shone upon this page of God's eternal truth as I never had seen it before; I could see and feel the hand of God in it all. Not a single link in the chain of God's providence could be left out and the designed end accomplished. There could be no chance in the matter, or in any part of it. They could not kill Joseph, for there was one to protest. A pit had been prepared, the Ishmaelitish merchants could go no other way, Joseph must be sold into Egypt, "to save much people alive." His brethren say that they will not bow to him, but God has purposed that they shall, and everything is working to that end. Joseph, through intrigue, is cast into prison, but the butler and baker are there to dream dreams. Had this not have been so, then what? They must be there; no other way will do; God has so purposed it. He has purposed in all this, both the evil and the good, because the end cannot be accomplished without it. Joseph is there to interpret their dreams as wisdom directs. The thing comes to pass as he told them. Joseph is forgotten until the time appointed of the Father, then Pharaoh dreams, sees visions in the night when a deep sleep falls upon him; and no one can interpret them for him. But now listen. The chief butler says unto Pharaoh, "I do remember my faults this day." *This day*, not yesterday or the day before, but this day; just now; in due time. Joseph can interpret the wonderful dream; there is to be a famine; such a famine as shall try the souls of men. What will humble a nation more? The treasures of Egypt are all given into Joseph's hands, and what wonderful provision is made and treasured up for the time of need. Joseph is in this a lively type of Christ whom we sold for naught. Hunger now drives Joseph's brethren into Egypt to buy corn there. Little did they know of all the way that God had determined for them. Let us not forget that they had said with self-vaunting spirit, We will not bow down to him. No doubt they started out in full self-confidence and egotism; we will pay for all we get. Here is merit and reward, but now there is a sense of self-condemnation. They feel the stain of their brother's blood; they are accused of being spies; evil seems to compass them on every hand, and their every effort seems to sink them deeper in this trouble. How wonderfully all this portrays the way in which the Lord brings all his poor, sinful, tried ones; and the closing scenes are most wonderful indeed. On the very verge of despair Joseph is made known to them. What shame they feel! How willingly they bow to Joseph as in pity and compassion he looks upon them. Hear him now solve the whole problem. Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. How true the words of the poet:

> "Each opening leaf and every stroke
> Fulfills some deep design."
>
> "God is his own interpreter,
> And he will make it plain."

Jacob can now see that all the things he thought against him are for good. He can now look over all these events, and view them as of God, and like Paul he can now say, "All things work together for good." Now, dear sister, did we not as vauntingly say of ourselves, We will not bow to Jesus, the Prince of peace? And when the famine came, over the which we had no control, we thought to go full handed in a demanding way. But everything goes wrong, and somehow we felt a sense of condemnation, yet thought we could make amends. But no, the burden is still greater. How often we

had thought of the cruel mockings of the Jews against Jesus and the prophets of old, but now we see the stain upon our own hands. Yes, yes, it was my sins, my cruel sins, that nailed him to the tree. Every good deed has become evil in our eyes; we sink in the mire where there is no standing; every legal form proves a failure, and we stand naked, exposed to wrath; the Lord seems to aggravate our woes by bringing all things to our remembrance, and surely they are enough to sink us forever in eternal darkness. But O what compassion in his blessed, loving eyes when he, like Joseph, looked upon us; how sweet the assurance,

> "I died to redeem thee from death,
> And raise thee in glory on high."

Though he suffered at the hands of wicked men, God meant it for good. He died, the just for the unjust. Who himself bare our sins in his own body on the tree.

Now it seems to me that in all the intricate wanderings and meanderings through which the Lord's people are led it is to the manifestation of his grace and power, and no subject of this sovereign and reigning grace will ever justify himself in any of the evil which he ever did, any more than did the brethren of Joseph. They felt to be guilty sinners then, and no doubt ever after; they had no word of self-justification; they knew full well that it was hatred that prompted them; and now how can our brother be so kind? This every poor sinner feels, and feels it from day to day, that every blessing is a divine favor bestowed. My own deep tried experience is a confirmation of the providence and grace of God. O the deep trials in providence which I have passed through, with the loss of all things in this world's goods, as you also know. But all were ordered, I believe, of the Lord, and but brought about and made manifest his purpose. Every link in the chain was needful, but this in no wise excuses or justifies me in my mistakes; no, in no wise. So also Paul must preach the gospel in Rome, He goes a prisoner in chains. That was God's way. So also in my case, he could have sent me to Kentucky in some more pleasant way, but the way I came was God's way; it was my salvation through him. I know of but one salvation from sin, temptation and trouble, and that is by grace, or the standstill salvation, as it does seem. It is mockery in the sight of God to preach do and live as gospel. But I do believe in him, as I trust, who works in his people the living and the doing, or to will and to do.

But, my dear sister, I had no thought of writing along this line, only to mention a few things of which you spoke in the January 1st number of the SIGNS. Yes, I remember well the time of which you speak. I think that I remember my text on Saturday, but to me it seemed one of the most signal failures I had ever made. I thought the countenance of every one read shame for me, and that I should forever after keep silent. I spent the afternoon and night in groanings and cryings, resolving sometimes that I would never open my mouth any more in public. I think that I intended to tell the brethren so the next day. As we drove along to meeting on Sunday, we overtook you, as you were walking to the meeting, and we stopped to take you in; I saw tears in your eyes, and as I reached out my hand for you, you said, "O, brother Sawin, I never did want to see you so badly in my life." Here my thoughts took a rapid flight: Now she is going to score me for my miserable failure, and tell me that I had better quit trying to preach, for it is

a failure. No one can ever know my surprise as you went on to say, "I never want to hear of your saying again that you will not or cannot preach." Then you spoke of the great comfort you had received the day before. I think that we both talked and cried all the way to the meeting, our hearts were touched because of the goodness and mercy of God. Where reason and sense fail God's mercies and wisdom abound. This occurred, I think, in the latter part of the seventies, and there have been many changes since then.

Now I have this cold day written you a long letter, much more than I intended. I hope that you may be enabled to gather a few crumbs from it, but if it fails to bear any real tidings it will be in line with the author. My dear, aged mother is with us now, in her ninety-seventh year; she is very feeble.

With best wishes, I am your brother most sincerely,

P. W. SAWIN.

THE GOSPEL.

It becomes us to inquire into the truth concerning the gospel. That which is of such vast importance to the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, must necessarily call up questionings in our mind as to the true meaning of the word. Not that we would seek out derivatives, roots, endings, and the natural meaning of the letter of the word, for, "the letter killeth," so says the Scripture; but it is the substance that we are searching for; in other words, the spirit of the word, which giveth life, light and understanding. The child of grace would pine away and quickly die were he fed upon the husks of Latin, Greek and Hebrew derivations. Suffice it to say, then, that the word "gospel" signifies "good news," or "glad tidings." But what value would accrue to you or me, unless such messages come directly into our own soul? Only those who are the recipients of good news or glad tidings can obtain joy or gladness from it. That which would come as good news to my neighbor might be adverse news to me. Therefore the application of the gospel is personal, and the substance is Jesus Christ our Lord. It always comes to us by way of revelation, never by searching. But it comes to us in different forms, sometimes in the form of a promise, for example: "And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed," as also do all the promises of God in Christ Jesus come to us. A natural promise from a trustworthy source, of some favor, is pretty sure to give us pleasure. How wonderful then is the good news and glad tidings of great joy when we receive from our heavenly Father the promise of life eternal. The wonder increases in the certain knowledge (received by faith) that in him "is no variableness, neither shadow of turning," and that his word of promise is as the everlasting hills, immovable and eternal. The gospel reveals God's grace in the salvation of the sinner by a new and living way, through the mediatory ministration of the holy Son of God. Under the law, the knowledge of the justice of our condemnation is so clear that we cannot see any way that we can be justified and the law made honorable. Then what joy and rejoicing, when the Spirit of redeeming grace conveys to our darkened soul the gospel tidings that a ransom has been found, a Savior has appeared in the gospel heavens, the law has been satis-

fied, and we are free, and we hear the voice of Jesus, saying, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." The gospel also brings us this refreshing news, that while justice is never tempered with mercy, yet as the sword has been removed from the way of the tree of life, by reason of a completely satisfied law, now the mercy of God to fallen, sinful man is made clearly manifest. The agonized heart has been crying for mercy all of the six days of labor and toil under the law, but the cry brought no relief. The law demanded the death of the transgressor, and here is presented the wondrous love of God, that, "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Of this wondrous grace the gospel comes to us laden with good news; herein is the promise of God fulfilled: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." It being further declared, "The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." The redemption price being paid, through the death of our gracious Redeemer, and the truth of his perfect work is revealed to us in the gospel of the grace of God, through the Spirit of truth, and now by faith we lay hold of the promises, and "being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." It does appear sometimes to our limited understanding that the experience of the revelation of our justification by faith is the beginning of our life of faith, but such is not the case; we are subjects of the faith of God from the time we are quickened into divine life, and become conscious, sensible sinners under the law. For is it not declared of Abraham that, "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went"? Faith, hope and love go with us all our journey through, and thus we go on, not knowing whither we go, and not knowing what invisible, mysterious power is impelling us. The gospel is also preached unto us then, as it was to Abraham in the promise of the blessing of life eternal, which promise we cannot yet grasp, although we enter the race that we may obtain the prize. In preaching this very gospel Paul said: "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory." Let us remember at all times that Jesus is the essence and substance of the gospel, that it is not a simple communication of glad tidings, but that we receive it through an experience of the grace of God, which brings with it in our crucifixion a fellowship with the sufferings of Christ; that it is a reality, and not a chimera of the brain: for those who are exercised thereby are made willing (as was Christ) to endure the cross, despise the shame, for the joy that is set before us. There is no mention of the gospel in the Old Testament Scriptures; all that transpired under the law was a shadow of the gospel day; the law demanded "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth;" it demanded the death of the sinner whom it condemned, yet in its types and shadows it pointed to the atoning sacrifice which should usher in the gospel day; it set forth the great truth that is realized in every christian experience, that, "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Jesus said: "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet

shall he live." In all the doctrine of the gospel of Christ, and in all gospel tidings, there is nothing of more vital importance to the child of grace than the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; it brings into the light of our spiritual understanding all things else concerning our salvation. And so the apostle declares: "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." What does the natural sun give to the inhabitants of the earth? Does it not give to the living, light, heat, energy and all vitalizing influences by which we obtain strength and power to execute the things of time and sense? Upon the dead it has no effect. So also to the living in Christ Jesus, the Sun of righteousness gives light, and every other form of spiritual life, through the revivifying power of the gospel, as Jesus is revealed in our hearts a Prince and a Savior, the author and finisher of our faith. Therefore the apostle declares that the gospel of Christ is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." It is when we have come to know and to feel the power of the resurrection, that the light of divine truth illumines our soul to the knowledge that we have been delivered out of death into life, out of darkness into light, out from under the condemnation of the law, into the light and liberty of the gospel of Christ. And now that we have tasted and handled the good word of God, and possess the earnest of our inheritance, what shall it be when the vail has been removed and we have entered into the full fruition of that which we now hope for? Faith will be swallowed up of love, gospel tidings, the harbinger of our joy and peace, will have accomplished its welcome duty, and then we shall stand in the presence of the Father without a vail between, complete in his wondrous glory, honored and acknowledged as the bride of the only begotten Son of God. To this glorious end the gospel of Christ is preached to the believer. By this faith, and in this hope, we are kept (in these low grounds of sorrow) "by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March 22, 1905.

THE GOSPEL THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION.

MOST people of the world think that the gospel is in the power of man, and if the young man will apply himself in studying for the ministry, and educate himself in that line of business, he can then preach the gospel of Christ. But that kind of preparation will not suit the true minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, for they must be qualified in a different manner, by the power of God. For the apostle states in Romans i. 16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Yes, when the true minister is rightly qualified, it comes to him and to every believer that hears him, as the power of God unto salvation; it is always unto salvation to every believer in Christ Jesus. Peter states that the Lord's people are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Thus we see that no other kind of preaching will suit or comfort the saints of the true and living God, for they can see no other way of salvation only in the power of God. But the thought comes into my mind now, What am I, that I should attempt to write on this wonderful and powerful subject? for I am so ignorant and blind that I feel at times I

must give up the whole. But if I have any hope at all, it is in the power of God, for in me and of myself I can do nothing good. I heard a New School Baptist a few nights ago try to preach; but I do not know that he thought he was trying, for no doubt he felt he had it all noted down, and trying was left out; the words of his text were, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He said in his remarks that the Lord had made waymarks all through the Bible to catch the eyes of everybody, if they would only heed them, but many would not heed and would be lost. Yes, it is always with the Arminian world to catch the eye, but not the heart. When the poor soul is sick and heavy laden with the sins which bring them low, truly then they desire rest, and Jesus says to such, I will give you rest; no rest away from Jesus. The poor soul will say in his heart, I am all undone, "For the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment."—Isaiah i. 5, 6. These are the characters spoken of in the Scriptures, that need rest, for the whole need not a physician, but the sick. Jesus is the great Physician, and unto such he gives rest. O I would starve to death on Arminian preaching, for there is no rest in it; all work and no rest for the weary soul; no gospel of the power of God unto salvation. Pleasant thoughts now run through my mind as my pen runs along the lines of this paper, and my mind carries me back to an incident that occurred over thirty years ago, while I was visiting my brother in the valley of Virginia. The evening that I arrived at his home my brother and I after supper took our seats in the yard to have a pleasant talk, and after sitting there for an hour or more my attention was drawn to the sweetest singing I had ever heard in all my life, which sounded to me like an angel from heaven. The singer began: "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear!" He sang the hymn through, and I turned to my brother and said, "Who is it that sings so sweetly?" "It is old Uncle Sam, the colored man, who lives alone in the log hut over there," he said; "he sings almost every night, and I tell you he can sing, too; I think the old man can give you a good reason of his hope." I felt very anxious indeed to see the man, let him be black or white, that could sing so sweetly and give a reason of his hope. Some days after this I crept out of my brother's house to see if I could find the sweet singer. I found the old man at the hut, and he said to me in substance, You are a stranger in these parts, are you not? Yes, I said, I came here a few days ago to visit my brother, Mr. Oliver. He seemed then to be glad to see me, as he knew my brother very well. I then said to him, The first evening I came I heard some one singing in this direction, and my brother told me it was you. He told me then in substance, that it was he in one sense of the word, and calling me dear child, told me in broken words as best he could all the way the Lord had lead him from nature to grace, and said he could take me to the very spot where the Lord first spoke peace to his troubled soul, which caused him to go on his way rejoicing. I soon found by his talk that it was not he alone that did the singing, but Christ in him, the hope of glory; as it is written, we must worship in the the spirit and sing with the spirit. I soon

found that the old man knew this, and was very much comforted byhis talk, for he did preach to me Jesus, the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. I was not a member of the church at that time, but I wanted to hear and know the truth for myself. The good old colored man passed away many years ago, to that mansion in heaven; not a log hut, but an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, where he sings sweet songs of praise to his great Redeemer, world without end. My brother, also, spoken of in this letter, passed away many years ago, but gave evidence before he died that he had been with Jesus and learned of him, and of the power of God unto salvation. I am the only son of my father's family of five left on earth to tell of the ups and downs of life; I, too, must soon pass away, and the place that knows me now will know me no more forever. O may I confide in his love and his faithfulness to the end, is my prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Dear brother editor of the SIGNS, I submit this letter to your better judgment, do with it as you think best, I am no letter writer. I have only hinted at a few things that came into my mind as my pen ran along the lines of my paper; I do not know that I have even touched the substance of the text.

Your brother in hope,

J. F. OLIVER.

HERNDON, Va., June 8, 1905.

PINSONFORK, Ky., April 27, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—In the SIGNS for March 1st, 1905, I see a request from brother Z. Ward, of Bear Wallow, Va., for some of the brethren to give their views on Revelation vi. 16, 17, which reads as follows: "And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" As I have not seen anything yet from any of the brethren on the text, I have decided to offer a few thoughts on the subject and send them to you, and if you deem them worthy a place in the SIGNS you can print them for brother Ward's consideration, and for the readers of the SIGNS generally; but if not, throw them aside, and all will be right with me. I have not the least thought that I can write in a way that will be of much comfort to any of the readers of the dear old SIGNS, but the text has been lingering on my mind at times ever since I saw brother Ward's request.

Now I will at once try to come to the point with few words, and first will say my conclusion has long been and is now that the book of Revelation is a summary of the entire Bible, and after the introduction and address to the churches every chapter begins alike, all with the copulative conjunction "and," showing that it is but one continued subject. This occurrence took place literally at the opening of the sixth seal, which was at the crucifixion of Christ, the great day of the wrath of God; when "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy water-spouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me."—Psalms xlii. 7. When the wrath of God was poured out on the sin-bearing victim, the loving Lamb of God, who bore our sorrows and carried our griefs, and fully and completely satisfied every farthing that the law demanded or justice required, he forever hushed all the demands of law and justice against the entire election of grace; therefore the great day of his wrath is (now) come, and

the plowman has overtaken the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed.

I am aware of the fact that some of our people believe that this has reference to the closing of time, the end of this material world, but I do not know to what extent this idea prevails. I do not look at it in this way, nevertheless it may be so; but as I have already said, my view of the matter is that it took place when and after Jesus was crucified, and we have but to read the first verse of the seventh chapter to learn that time was still going on after the great day of his wrath had come, and men were crying for the rocks and mountains to fall on them to hide them from the face of him that sitteth on the throne of judgment, to reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment; for he says at the beginning of the seventh chapter, "And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth," &c. It seems clear to my mind that this had direct reference to the time of the opening of the sixth seal, when the old Jewish heaven departed as a scroll, with all its legality and carnal ordinances which were imposed on them till the time of (this) reformation. Those characters who cried for the rocks and mountains to fall on them and hide them from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, had taken refuge in these rocks and mountains, and were in league with them, hoping for salvation or deliverance through them; therefore they cried unto them for salvation from the wrath of the Lamb, "for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" But "Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills and from the multitude of mountains: truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel."—Jer. iii. 23. These kings of the earth, and the great men of the earth, and the rich men of the earth, and the chief captains of the earth, and the mighty men of the earth, &c.; these scornful rulers among God's people in Jerusalem said, "We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves." These mountains and rocks are here used in a figurative sense, and represent the religious institutions of men, from whence their converts are taught to hope for salvation, but as the prophet has affirmed, all their hope from these sources is in vain, for truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel, neither is there salvation in any other; hence none others are or can be saved, none but the Israel of God, a people saved by the Lord. These characters who cried for the mountains and rocks to fall on them when the great day of the wrath of God was being poured out on Jesus, his dear Son, had hid themselves safely, as they thought, in these mountains and rocks, or these institutions of men, and were saying, "When the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves." This is what men have done and are yet doing. Lies make but a poor refuge, and cannot stand, and falsehood never has, no, nor never can, hide any one from the judgment of God; for he says, "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plum-

met: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place. And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it."—Isaiah xxviii. 16–18. Thus we see that "the Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet."—Nahum i. 3. Well might John say, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works."—Rev. xx. 12, 13.

I have held this over from April 27th till to-day, May 11th, not knowing whether to send it to the editor of the SIGNS or consign it to the flames. I cannot see anything in it that seems calculated to comfort any of the Lord's people, but notwithstanding all my fears of burdening the mind of the Lord's humble followers, I feel to believe that the Lord is all-sufficient, and looketh not as poor, mortal man looketh, and can bring comfort and consolation to his people out of that wherein we see none. It has been a mystery to me ever since I have been writing for publication and trying to preach, (thirty-three years) if God has called me, how it is and why it is that I know so little about it, and that I am so short-sighted and carnally minded. I often think that I never will make another effort to preach, or write for publication, and am resolved daily what to do. I would love to know if any one of the called servants of God is like me in these things. Why I am yet trying to preach is a great mystery to me.

As ever, a poor sojourner,

W. J. MAY.

COVINGTON, Ga., June 27, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have been hoping that I might be able to send some message to the kindred in Christ, but because of my unworthiness, and I fear because I am not a true child of God, he refuses to come and make his abode with me, or to send his holy Comforter to bear witness of himself to me. I bow my head and can only say with Peter, "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." Again, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." The precious apostles voice my feelings from beginning to end, but I hunger for the loving and revealed presence of my Savior. It has been so many years since I had an unmistakable revelation from him that I long for him to take me again to his bosom, as he did in the first months of my happy child experience, and to whisper once more loving words as he bears me above the flood-tide of sin that unceasingly rolls at my feet. Lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from evil, I cry, while the battle rages fiercely. The war has been on long, but I have hoped in his word. "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." That was the mission of our Lord, but let us remember that back of all the unspeakable agony necessary for the salvation of his people from the terrors of the law and the awfulness of sin, that the

great inspiring cause that made him willing to lay down his life was love. "Our God is a consuming fire," yet love is of God, and "every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God." I believe the essence of the whole matter, the work that he came to do, is comprehended in this: both to be saved from sin and to the love of God at one and the same time. In their regeneration his people are killed to the love of sin and made alive to righteousness. Those two effects are distinctly produced, and they follow the true believer and are manifesting themselves throughout his life in contradistinction to the world. Now do we love God and his righteousness, and do we hate sin in all its manifestations, "hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." I thank God that even the little babes in Christ can love him, and that they do, and that they hate sin with a perfect hatred. Let us then walk in the light, that is to say, let us in humbleness and obedience daily endeavor to keep his commandments, for we are truly told that they are not grievous. Let us deny ourselves and take up our cross and follow him, shunning the very appearance of evil; let us walk after the Spirit, and not after the flesh; let us so live as to glorify our Father which is in heaven, others seeing our good works. These things do and teach. Let our beloved ministry shun not to declare the counsel of God. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." We all love the grand theme of God's redeeming love, and salvation by grace. There are many things that we are commanded to do, and there are many that we are forbidden to do. Read Christ's sermon on the mount, and see what he bids us do, and read Paul's letters to his brethren, in which he thought it important enough to go into minutest details as to how they should do and what they should do at home and abroad in the world at large, and their specific duties in the church. Just see how many things are denounced as wrong and hurtful. I believe that the word of God is "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Do not misunderstand me, brethren, I do not wish to minimize the importance of our faith that all our works are by grace alone; I like to have the works that are the legitimate fruits of love both preached and practiced, because I understand them commanded by God to be thus preached and observed. Am I wrong? We have to wrestle daily with the sin that is in our members, and the sin that is in high places, and we are made to mourn because of the terrible things we have to witness, and like Paul we pray that the messenger of Satan may buffet us no more, but we receive the answer that he did: "My grace is sufficient for thee." We are looking for the day of full deliverance, when even our vile body shall be changed, and when we shall awake with his likeness, while with our faces turned heavenward we pursue our daily march toward Canaan. What would we do were it not that our loving Father writes his love and will and blessed commandments upon the fleshly tables of our heart? I thank God for Elder Keene's letter on this subject, given in February 1st number of the SIGNS; it was a rich repast because it was altogether the breathings of God's Spirit, there was no impress of the human found in it. How the children love the unmixed food, and taste and see that the Lord is good. Every little babe in Christ, though unlearned in what is

called doctrinal things, will find his whole spiritual being pulsating at the voice of the Father speaking through its pages. In this Elder Keene seems to have dispelled the shadows and clouds before our spiritual vision, and shown us most clearly how the loving Father not only writes upon the tables of the heart in our conviction and conversion, but that he is all along, every day of our lives, by the ministry of the blessed Comforter, writing thereon the things for our guidance and our daily salvation and our comfort and joy, and that he writes when we are in darkness and know not the way, "Be not afraid, it is I," and "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

This disconnected letter is written for you, brother Chick, and I feel that you will be too faithful to allow it a place in your columns if it would be harmful or take up unprofitably your valuable space. God help you in your arduous labors, and daily strengthen and sustain you, and may the blessings of his grace rest upon each contributor and reader of the SIGNS.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) MITTIE DAVIS ROBERTS.

[WE were glad to receive the above excellent letter from sister Roberts, and we feel like saying that we fully concur with her when she calls attention to the importance of exhortation among the children of God. It is worthy of careful consideration that Paul in nearly all his letters speaks first of the strong doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone, and then of the daily conflicts, and trials, and warfare, and deliverances, and victories of the believer, and then of the things that are good and needful to be followed after in the outward life of the child of God. Thus the teaching of the word concerning the one way of salvation, the experience of that salvation in the hearts of his people, and the fruits of this inward work as they appear in the daily conduct of believers, are all joined together; they are one, and ought not in our minds or in our preaching to be severed. The closing chapters of all Paul's epistles are filled with warnings, reproofs and exhortations, and they are all good and profitable to be considered. They stir up the pure minds of the saints to a remembrance of all that the Lord has taught in his word with regard to a steadfast adherence to the truth, whether in faith or practice.—ED.]

FARMINGTON, Ill., June 22, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I still have you in remembrance, with all the writers of the SIGNS. I feel that they are my people, and their God is my God, and where they die there I desire to die. I feel a desire to once more bear my testimony to the love I have for them. It seems to me that if it were not for the testimony that they give in the SIGNS I would be without hope, but they testify to my experience, and can tell it much better than I can myself, and much more to my satisfaction. This gives me hope that I am a child of God, and that we have all been taught in the heavenly school. I get very low down in doubts and fears as to whether or not I have been born of God. I am now near the end of my journey; I cannot say that I want to die, yet I feel tired and wearied of life. My life seems to me to have been such a failure. I have been a member of the Old School Baptists since 1860, and I have often felt like asking forgiveness of all my dear kindred for imposing upon them my poor writings in the SIGNS, and especially the forgiveness of the editor. It is in my mind that this is the last time

I shall write for it. If I could be sure that I had a good hope through grace I should like to depart, for I feel that this world is a wilderness of sin, and I am carnal, sold under sin. I feel that I have lost all interest in the things of time. God has been good to me through all my long journey of life, but I feel that I have come so far short of honoring him for all his mercy ever bestowed upon me.

Dear brother Chick, I have often thought that men like you, with all of God's ministers, should never have any doubts or fears with regard to your hope, but could ever read your title clear to mansions in the heavenly rest. Surely you do not get so low down in the slough of despond as I do. I feel to call upon the Lord continually, as did Peter when he started to sink in the water, and cried, Lord, save, I perish. Also the prayer of the publican, God be merciful to me a sinner, must be in my heart at all times. I have thought much of late about the blessed words when the Master said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." If we felt full of righteousness and were not hungering after it, this would not belong to us. But I do feel so unrighteous and unholy that I am ever hungering and thirsting for righteousness. I know that it is alone through the mercy of God that my hungry soul can be filled. Can it be possible, I often ask, can it be possible that I can love the truth, and all the dear brethren in Christ, and yet be separated from them at last?

I have spent much hard earned money traveling among the Baptists, because I love them as the excellent of the earth, and I have no fellowship for the worshipers of Baal with which I am surrounded; there is nothing among them for me. There was a great evangelist (so-called) that preached in our town on Monday. The large house was crowded. I thought, How they wonder after the beast. There was not a word of gospel in it. The same man held a meeting at Macomb for four weeks. He had thirteen hundred converts, and got three thousand dollars. He is now holding a meeting about thirteen miles from here, and he claims to be saving sinners. What idolatry! It was said of one of old that it vexed his righteous soul to see the unlawful deeds around him. I do not think there was any more idolatry in Sodom when it was destroyed by fire, or in the antediluvian world that was destroyed by water, than I saw as I sat in that congregation Monday, where about five hundred persons were gathered. I wonder if there was any one else there who felt as I did, to be a poor, lonely, helpless sinner. Could they all be right, and I wrong? The Lord knows.

I have just been reading in the SIGNS for 1903. I put each year's numbers together, and in reading them I have found some rich food suited to my hungry soul. I have been reading the SIGNS for more than fifty-five years, and always look for it as I would for a dear friend. I do not like to see a number destroyed.

Now, dear brother, I feel more like burning this than I do like sending it to you; I never have written anything that has been published in the SIGNS that I thought worthy of such a place. I must ask your forbearance for the time it takes you to read this letter. I am well aware that you have many perplexing letters to read, and I cannot ask you to publish this.

I felt that I was with you in spirit at your last associations. I have often met with the dear ones at your associations

I think now, if the dear Lord spares me and gives me health, I will try to attend next spring. We may propose, but God disposes. We will be glad to meet, but sorry to part so soon again.

Pray for a poor sinner.

E. D. VARNES.

ROCK SPRINGS, Md., July 2, 1905.

DEARLY BELOVED EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—It has been in my mind for some time to write something of my travels in this low ground of sorrow, but because of my inability have put it off from time to time, fearing what I would write would be like the writer, full of emptiness; but be that as it may, I will endeavor to write what I humbly trust the Lord puts in my mind. When I look within and see how prone I am to wander in forbidden paths, how dare such an one even call on the name of the Lord? but I am often made to say, Save, Lord, I perish. The Scripture says, "The just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."

"Grace alone can cure our ills,
Sweeten life with all its cares;
Regulate our stubborn wills,
Save us from surrounding snares."

I looked forward as I grew older to grow better, but how can one that is so full of sin and pollution? He who formed all things doeth what seemeth good in his sight; he kills and makes alive; the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations. There are times when I envy the very beasts of the field, I feel so cast down with sin and sorrow. But why do I murmur and complain? I am just as God made me, and he does all things well, so I should thank him and take courage. Christ suffered the ignominious death on the cross, and what for but the sins of his people? Another question is, Am I one of them? The words that fell from the lips of Elder E. Rittenhouse when in the pulpit at Rock Springs often give me comfort; they were, "I mourned because I could not mourn;" but O, poor me, I am of such an impulsive disposition, and how often it grieves me. The Scriptures say, Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and say all manner of evil against you for my name's sake. These words give me great comfort; if we could only say as did Stephen, Lay it not to their charge.

"Creatures of fear, we drag along,
And fear where no fear is;
Our grief we labor to prolong,
Our joys in haste dismiss."

If I could only bind the scarlet line in the window. In my early experience I looked forward for something brighter, but I am often made to look to the beautiful light that lighted my soul with joy unspeakable, and the words that sounded in my ear, "Fear not, I am with thee; O be not dismayed;" and the whole room shone in this most beautiful light, such as I had never seen before. There was no one in the house but myself when I heard the words, "Fear not, I am with thee." They are found in the third verse of hymn 751 (Beebe's Collection). I sang as loud as my voice would allow me; and there is where I go when I get despondent.

There are so many good writers for the SIGNS that I do not know whatever prompted me to try to write, but will say to the dear brethren and sisters, Write on, it is good to see your communications in the SIGNS.

Our association at Rock Springs was something for me this spring, as I was made to rejoice in the Lord that he had given me a hearing ear and a heart to understand. The introductory sermon was preached by Elder H. C. Ker; his

text was, "By grace are ye saved;" it has been in my mind so much of late. Our dearly beloved pastor, Elder Wm. Grafton, comes to us every second Sunday, and on other occasions when called; a faithful pastor he is. My hearing is some impaired, and I do not get the good of the preaching as I would like, but I do enjoy meeting the brethren and sisters. The Scriptures say, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren."

Now, dearly beloved, if I have written anything out of place I beg the Lord to correct me, but with judgment, not in anger, lest he bring me to nothing.

"Trials make the promise sweet;
Trials give new life to prayer;
Trials bring me to his feet,
Lay me low, and keep me there."

There is just where I want to be kept, at his feet. I have more trouble with myself than with any one else to keep this old body in subjection. I feel to express the language of Paul, When I would do good, evil is present.

I have already run this to a greater length than I expected; will draw to a close; do with it as you see proper, and it will be satisfactory to the writer.

SALLIE LOWE.

PUEBLO, Colo., April 16, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—Inclosed you will find money order for three dollars to be credited to my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; I can truthfully say I am well pleased with the SIGNS; I have just finished reading April 15th issue. I value the editorials of Elder Gilbert Beebe above price; O how full and sweet is the one I have just read, remarks on religious revivals. O if we only had many more God-honoring and God-fearing ministers such as he was, who never failed to cry aloud a complete and finished salvation by the Lord. I have never seen an article yet that had too much predestination for me. Give me election, predestination and grace, and the world can have all the isms they can invent. There are no Baptists in Pueblo that I can find.

I will close for this time. Respectfully yours,

J. A. MITCHELL.

WINFIELD, Iowa, May 29, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK:—Inclosed you will find two dollars to pay another year's subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I could not do without it, it is about all the preaching I have. It is so far to my meetings, and I am crippled with rheumatism, so cannot go often. The dear old SIGNS is a great comfort to me; may it be published a long time for the comfort of the Lord's poor and afflicted people. I do wish all would pay up; I cannot see how people can read such a good paper and not pay for it; it seems to me there are perilous times ahead, but the Lord is able to take care of his people.

Your unworthy sister in hope of a home beyond the grave,

CLARA BEAUCHAMP.

MCGLONE, Ky., May 5, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—I wish to express my good wishes to all my brethren and sisters of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. About all the preaching which I believe is the truth, I find in the SIGNS. I could not be contented without your paper; it is always a welcome visitor in my home.

With best wishes for all, I am your sister,

MISSOURI WHITT.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1905.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ROMANS VIII. 10.

BROTHER H. B. Jones, with whose name all our readers are familiar through his occasional good letters in the SIGNS, and whose address is Mt. Vernon, Texas, has written, asking that we give such thoughts as we have upon the Scripture found in Romans viii. 10. This text reads as follows: "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." Brother Jones speaks of there being difference of views among some brethren, and briefly states his own view of the last half of the text; we believe that we are in agreement with him in the view which he has presented.

We cannot say that we have not thought much concerning this Scripture in the past, and in some respects our view has been decided concerning it. Deep things of God are here declared; deep things of true and gracious experience wrought in the heart of every saint are here presented. The text declares just what all who are spiritual know to be true, not only because of the divine testimony in the word, but because this testimony has been made to live in them. When rightly understood, there is no more edifying, comforting and strengthening sentence in the Bible than this text. Believers are often perplexed by the warfare within, and at times are almost ready to throw away the hope that has been put into their hearts as an anchor of the soul, because of this warfare. In this text, as well as in many other Scriptures, the reason and ground of this warfare are given, and it is shown that the state of the believer in this life is such that a warfare must be expected. Indeed, if there be no warfare in a man, that man is not a believer, the Spirit of Christ does not dwell in him.

Perhaps nearly all who have come to possess hope in Christ, felt when that hope was first theirs as though all trial and all danger of ever doing or feeling wrong was now over forever, and that henceforth it should be theirs to walk in perfect peace to the end. Soon we all have found that this was not so with ourselves; sin and doubt and fear have arisen to plague us, and then we were ready to believe that all our hope and joy had been vain, and that we had never really known his salvation at all. This perplexity was because as yet we had not come to know doctrine; that is, we had not yet learned of the conflict within between the flesh and the Spirit. Indeed, we had not at the first of our experience of this salvation believed that anything of the flesh remained with us, but supposed that all within was changed already and made like the holy Son of God. This we must soon learn was not so; and when it pleased God to apply some such Scripture as this to which brother Jones has called attention, we once more walked in utter hopelessness and gloom. But as we were led, little by little, to see the teaching of the word of God concerning this matter, and that this teaching is that we are still in the flesh, and that all is not yet made perfect within, and that

holy men of old, whose experience was by inspiration of God recorded in the word, also could not do the good they would, and did the evil that they would not, we came to be encouraged once more, and our hope once more sprang up and rested now upon a better understanding of the truth than at the first.

How many of us can remember when some such Scripture as this came to us in our darkness and despair because we had found that sin was still in us, and was mixed with all that we did, and being applied to our understanding by the Holy Ghost, was made the medium of relief and comfort and instruction to us. We need to be reminded again and again of those same things. It is needful especially that we should know something of what the word does teach concerning this warfare, which must endure while we remain in this life. The flesh will lust against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, until mortality is swallowed up of life. But thanks be to God, the word declares that there shall be a final victory, after which there shall be no more warfare, and none shall say, I cannot do the good that I would. All those who have had an experience of this warfare, and who have mourned because they do what they do not want to do, and do not do what they do want to do, must look forward to that final victory which is promised, with longing desire. As Brother Thorne, whose obituary recently appeared in our columns, said, Then we shall not do what we do not want to do, and shall not fail to do what we do want to do. In that blessed abode we shall have no will but God's, and there shall be no murmur of rebellion within us against his perfect will.

But we desire to call attention specially to the wording of the text: "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." Notice, it is not the body is death, but "dead;" and it is not the Spirit is alive, but "life," life itself. In the original this word "dead" is very emphatic. It is the body *indeed* is dead. The original requires the word "indeed" to bring out its full force, and the thought is, the body still remains dead, even though Christ dwells in it. It was most surely dead before, and it still is dead, and the indwelling Spirit of life only discovers its deadness to him who possesses this Spirit. As this deadness unfolds more and more in our daily travel and conflict, we come to cry as did the apostle, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Notice also that the apostle says the body is dead for just one reason, "because of sin." Where sin is, there is death; where sin is not, there can be no death. So long as sin remains in the body it must be dead.

Now notice on the other hand the expression of the last part of the text is not, the Spirit is "living," but the Spirit is "life," life itself. In his letter brother Jones presented this, and it is the truth. Manifestly, there is a vast difference between that which lives, and life itself. The believer lives unto God, but it is life, life in Christ, which makes him live. The first man, Adam, was made a living soul, but the second Adam a quickening Spirit. Here is the difference between that which is natural and subject to change, sin, decay and death, and that which is immortal and subject to none of these things. It seems sure to our mind that the word "Spirit" in the text can only refer to that Spirit of Christ which dwells in the redeemed and quickened sinner, and which is the only Spirit of which it can be true that it is "life"

itself. If the text read, The Spirit is living, then we might conclude that it referred to the natural spirit of man, and that the meaning was that it was made alive while yet the body still remained dead. But this is not the language. The Holy Spirit, which inspired the apostle to write all that he has written, has used a word here which definitely fixes the Spirit that is meant: it is the Spirit of Christ which dwells in us, which is life itself.

The verse before also helps to prove this view of the matter: "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." And again, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Manifestly it is the Holy Ghost of which inspiration here speaks. Paul very often uses similar language: "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost." Again he says, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" But this we need not say more about here. It will not be disputed by any Bible reader. This ninth verse then undoubtedly is presenting the Holy Spirit as dwelling in the child of God. It is this indwelling Spirit which cries Abba, Father, and by it he also cries Abba, Father. It is by this indwelling Spirit that he comes into the realization of sonship through Christ, the Son of God, and who by the apostle in Romans is said to have been declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead; and in the Sonship of Christ alone is our sonship.

Again, in verse eleven we have another proof that it is the Spirit of Christ, or of God, of which the apostle is treating. We read there, "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Manifestly Paul does not here mean the spirit of man, which he has by nature, but the Holy Ghost. Why then, if this be the meaning of Paul in verses nine and eleven, should we suppose he changes his meaning in verse ten? There was no reason why he should use the word Spirit differently in verse ten, from its meaning in verse nine, and in verse eleven.

Now then, this Spirit which dwells in us, and which raised up Jesus from the dead, and which is life itself because of righteousness, performs a constant work in us. It is life, and it quickens; it quickens our mortal bodies, which are dead. This Spirit alone can perform this work. Looking at the deadness of the body, as the believer is given to do, there can be no hope arising from it, but rather hopelessness and despair. How can such an one as I ever draw near to God, ever know what the love of God means, ever feel any kindlings of warm desire, any upliftings of heart, any intercession before God? Looking at myself, behold I am dead. Can these dry bones live? They cannot until the Spirit of God comes upon them; then indeed what a miracle takes place; then they stand upon their feet; then they live and move, and their living and moving is toward God. Sometimes there does not seem to be life enough in us to even sorrow that there is no life; the heart is cold and unmoved at the blessed news of salvation. Even when in the sanctuary under the sound of the gospel word, there is nothing but a wandering mind within us, and the story seems but as an idle tale. Perhaps there is life enough so that we are dimly aware of our condition, and there may be some dim regret that it is so, but the heart has no prayer in it, and there is no struggling to get out of the bonds. Perhaps we

feebly realize that this is not right, that we are far away, and that it ought not to be so, but there is no energy to even struggle in desire and prayer. There is no help in ourself, there is no help in the minister who is preaching the word, there is no help by reason of the sanctuary where we are gathered with the people of God. How shall we live again? Here in verse eleven is the answer. This Spirit of God, which dwells in us, shall quicken even these dead bodies, and it does quicken them. Or ever we are aware our souls make us like the chariots of Amminadib. Ere we are aware we are like him who said, "My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God." Once more we say, "When shall I come and appear before God?" Once more we say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." And by this indwelling Spirit, which is life itself, our thoughts are filled with meditations of him which are sweet, our desires embrace all things heavenly, our voices sing his praise or bear testimony to the goodness of the Lord, our hands work out his commandments, and our feet go to the house of God, or visit the needy or the troubled, as he has commanded us. By this indwelling Spirit these things become joys rather than tasks and burdens, and the life of Jesus is made manifest in our mortal body. This is not always with what we speak of as great animation of feeling, or even with great gladness of feeling, but rather most of the time with lowliness, and humility, and confession of unworthiness, and with quiet walking. It is this indwelling Spirit by which men are steadfast and faithful, doing what their hands find to do with their might, though it may be midnight within, and they see no day-star shining brightly before them. How many thousands of the Lord's children have gone steadfastly on in the sight of God, and in the knowledge of his people, who yet cannot speak of much animation, or of frequent seasons of exalted joy; yet they have been firm and constant and clear in all their profession of the name of Christ. The Spirit has been quickening their mortal bodies all along the way. By it they have overcome weariness and weakness, and have fought a good fight, and have overcome through the blood of the Lamb. Thus God their Father has fulfilled his blessed promise to them, and in them, quickening these mortal bodies in the way.

What a wonderful mystery this is! What a wonderful mystery is in all the Lord's work of salvation! Paul said "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Both expressions are true; "I live" is true, and "yet not I," is also true. "I labored more abundantly than they all," is true, and "yet not I, but the grace of God," is also true. Both statements in both texts make up the whole truth. So the body is dead because of sin, and yet it is quickened by the Spirit of God. Both are true, and both are expressions of what every exercised child of grace knows for himself to be true. Reason cannot enter here, but experience does. And, most blessed of all, we know that all this present experience of quickening is but the foretaste of the final glory. One day the warfare shall cease; one day the final victory shall be received; one day we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Then shall have righteousness forever triumphed over sin, and life over death.

"This glorious hope revives
Our courage by the way;
While each in expectation lives,
And longs to see the day."

OBITUARY NOTICES.

My dear sister, **Mrs. Susan Elizabeth Britton,** widow of Eli Britton and daughter of the late Elder Gabriel Conklin, bid adieu to earthly scenes and associations on Sunday, Oct. 2nd, 1904, in the 73rd year of her age. She had been sorely afflicted with rheumatism for a number of years, and though in some respects she was better during the last summer of her life, still the disease had fast preyed upon her mortal frame, and she had become much reduced in strength. This, with some acute throat trouble, had so weakened her that when the closing days of her mortal life had come, and up to within a few minutes of the final moment of dissolving nature, she was a great sufferer, but under the blissful smiles of a kind Providence she was permitted to breathe her last peacefully and quietly, to the comfort of her mourning kindred present, as well as to those unavoidably absent. She was married and left the parental home some fifty-five years ago, and after a very short but pleasant married life of fourteen years the unwelcome messenger of death crossed the threshold of her pleasant home and robbed her of the dear companion of her joys and sorrows, and left her with a family of five children to battle with the world and to meet the stern realities of the unwritten future. Subsequently at three different periods of her life she was called to pass through very deep waters of affliction, in seeing three of her loved offspring consigned to the cold and silent tomb, one of whom was a lovely and only daughter, of sixteen summers, who made the home atmosphere so very pleasant by her cheerful, unselfish disposition, and her unusual musical abilities. This was a crushing blow to my already deeply afflicted sister. While it had been the sovereign and undisputed pleasure of our heavenly Father to cause her to thus drink many copious draughts from sorrow's bitter and grief-stricken cup, it had also been his pleasure to support her with his all-sustaining grace through all those dark and very trying visitations of his inscrutable providence; for we believe, and feel truly thankful to be assured, that it was his pleasure to make known to her the riches of his saving grace more than forty years ago, and while in the mysterious providence of our God she had a name and a very welcome place within the borders of that great but doomed city of Babylon, yet from the testimony she left behind, we feel assured she was a citizen of that glorious and "strong city" Zion, whose mighty bulwarks are salvation itself, the appointment of our God, and having the everlasting arms underneath her she was brought safely through her pilgrimage journey till she had filled up the number of years allotted to man upon the earth, and some over, and then in his own appointed time and way he gently removed these frail garments of mortality, and bade her spirit haste to the blissful climes of endless day; for when she drew her expiring breath, such was the unusual smile upon her face that one standing near said to another, "Why, look, she is laughing," and thus was my deeply afflicted sister lulled into that sweet sleep from which none ever wake to weep.

ALSO,

My very dear and very devoted sister, **Mary Jane Conklin,** the last of our family circle of six, except myself, fell asleep in Jesus on Monday, May 8th, 1905, at my residence in Newark, N. J., having just passed her 75th year. Although never very rugged, still she enjoyed a fair degree of health for the most part, and was quite enduring up to September, 1898, when she was taken seriously ill, having a hard spasm and becoming unconscious, with her left side entirely paralyzed. Contrary to the doctor's expectations she survived, and in the course of two or three days was able to walk out again, the paralysis having mysteriously disappeared, and not returning again for six years. She continued to have those unconscious spells about every two months as long as she lived. On the 23rd of last October she had the second attack of paralysis, from which she was almost entirely helpless for three weeks. On Saturday, May 6th, I assisted her out into the dining-room, as usual, and while dressing she lost her balance and fell to the floor, causing such a shock to her nervous system that death ensued on the following Monday. It was so ordered by a kind Providence that I could give her my undivided attention, which was very comforting and gratifying to her. On the third Saturday in September, 1867, she was enabled to go before the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church, at Locktown, N. J., and relate what she hoped were the merciful dealings of the Lord with her, and on the next day was baptized by our dear father, the late Elder Gabriel Conklin, some seven months before his death. My sister's membership was with the Warwick church at the time of her death. The last time she had the privilege of meeting with the people of God in public worship was at the session of the Warwick Association in June, 1904, at Warwick, which she greatly enjoyed. She also enjoyed the opportunity that was then afforded her of seeing and speaking to so many of her kindred in Christ, and other cherished friends. She was a firm and uncompromising believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and upon that solid foundation which involves the glorious and soul-comforting doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things she rested her comfortable hope for time and for eternity. For some months she had felt that her stay upon earth was short, and in view of the very solemn moment of dissolving nature she was permitted to contemplate that great change with a degree of comfortable calmness and composure. When it pleased God to remove her from time to eternity, it was his pleasure to remove

the frail garments of mortality so tenderly, so peacefully and so quietly, that had I not been watching her face intently I would not have known when her last breath was drawn, it seemed like one going peacefully to sleep.

As very many of her near and dear kindred in Christ, and other intimate and cherished friends, lived in and near Warwick, her funeral was held there in our meeting-house on Friday, May 12th, where and when a comforting discourse was preached by our dear brother, Elder H. C. Ker, of Middletown, N. Y., and on the next day the sleeping dust of our dear sister was taken to New Vernon by carriage, twenty-four miles distant from Warwick, and was there confided to its earthly cavern for safe keeping till that bright and glorious morning when, as we are informed, the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, to awaken the slumbering dead and to raise changed (not exchange) their vile bodies fashioned like unto his most glorious body. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

GEORGE D. CONKLIN.

NEWARK, N. J., July 22, 1905.

Miss Ella Merryman departed this life at Warren, Baltimore Co., Md. Her death is much lamented by very many relatives and friends, and is especially felt by her brother Henry, who is left lonely in the large house where the two lived happily together and entertained many of their friends. The deceased was firmly established in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and was very regular in her attendance at the little meetings at Warren, and none more active in aiming to make comfortable those who met at that place. Her home was open to those who attended there, and others of the old order of Baptists. The deceased made no public profession of her faith in Christ, although living the life of a christian. I am in receipt of a few lines sent by her sister, Mrs. Crain, found among some of her papers, in reference to her departure. Among other things she said, "If saved, it is by grace." I have served that little congregation for over forty years, and of course have mingled with the people long enough to know much about them, and perhaps feel the loss as much as others, as this was my principal stopping-place.

Her funeral was attended on July 18th, 1905, services being held at the old mansion where she was raised, conducted by the writer. Elder A. B. Francis was present, also two other ministers, who took no part in the services. Interment in the family burying-ground on the farm.

May the Lord in his providence be with those who remain of the immediate family, and others who feel their loss. WM. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md., July 31, 1905.

MY mother, **Mrs. Mary Smith,** died May 1st, 1905, after an illness of nine months from the effects of blood poisoning, contracted five years ago, aged 81 years, 7 months and 13 days. She was born in Sangamon Co., Ill., where she was married Nov. 30th, 1847, to C. W. Smith. She leaves four children to mourn a loving mother: Nannie, who lived with her, Matthias, who lives near Farmersville, Ill., Mrs. S. D. McMahon, living in Atwater, and John, of Kansas City, Mo. She is also survived by five grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Although her name was not written on any church book in this world, I believe it is written in heaven in the Lamb's book of life, and that she is forever at rest. Three times in her life she thought she would offer herself to the church, but a sense of unworthiness kept her back. She was a great sufferer, but very patient through it all. She was reconciled to God's will, and ready to go when the summons should come. When friends came in they would say to her, It is too bad you have to suffer so. She would smile and say, No, it is not, it is just right, or it would not be so.

Elder John L. Scott, of Pleasant Plains, Ill., (a cousin of hers) preached her funeral from Romans xiii. 8. Hymns selected by her to be sung were 1228, 368 and 1216 (Beebe's Collection). The morning before she left us the writer sat on the bed beside her and read hymn 900 to her, which described her feelings; it was also read by brother Scott. She had taken the SIGNS for many years, and believed the doctrine it contends for. She was laid to rest on the 3rd in the beautiful Moors cemetery until the morning of the resurrection.

Her lonely daughter,

NANNIE SMITH.

ATWATER, Ill.

BROTHER **C. D. Neal** was born June 24th, 1830, died April 10th, 1905, of Bright's disease. He suffered a great deal, but bore his suffering with christian fortitude. He joined the Little Flock Old School Baptist Church the fourth Saturday in June, 1883, and was baptized by Elder J. E. Newkirk. He was a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone. He always filled his place at meetings unless providentially hindered, but was always resigned to the will of God, never complaining. He was united in marriage to Miss Lydia A. Martin, Sept. 24th, 1890. He was a kind husband. He leaves his wife and three children by his first wife to mourn their loss, which is his eternal gain. He is gone from this sin-polluted world, no more to be buffeted about by sin, but is now resting in the presence of his dear Redeemer and with all the redeemed that have gone before, in that city whose maker and builder is God, where moth doth not corrupt nor thieves break through and steal.

His funeral service was conducted by Elder D. G.

Johnson, who preached a very comforting discourse, after which the remains were put away in the family burying-ground.

ALSO,

My dear little granddaughter, **Daisy Lee Waterfill.** She was born Dec. 31st, 1904, died June 20th, 1905. She was a bright and sweet little girl; she knew nothing of the sin of this world. She has gone where there is no sin, but all is love and joy for evermore.

J. J. WATERFILL.

ALTON STATION, Ky., August 5, 1905.

Mrs. Ann Langfitt passed to her eternal reward on April 8th, 1905. She was a devoted lover of the SIGNS, having subscribed for it ever since its first publication. Her age was 97 years at the time of her death.

GEORGIE WEBSTER.

MEETINGS.

PROVIDENCE permitting, the next meeting of Peace Valley Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of the Primitive order, will be held with Poolville church, Poolville, Parker Co., Texas, instead of Friendship church, Acton, Hood Co., Texas, as per Minutes of last meeting, commencing on Friday before (at 10 o'clock a. m.) and embracing the third Sunday in August, 1905. Those coming by railroad from any direction will be met with conveyance at Weatherford, Texas, Thursday before the meeting. All lovers of truth attend.

W. O. RUTLEDGE, Association Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Bryn Zion church, in Kent Co., Delaware, is appointed to meet on the third Saturday and Sunday (19th and 20th) of August, 1905. All who feel an interest in our christian welfare are cordially invited to meet with us. The forenoon trains, north and south, on the Delaware Railroad, will be met at Clayton and visitors cared for.

W. W. MEREDITH, Pastor.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing on Friday, Sept. 1st, 1905, and continuing three days. We gladly welcome all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Those coming will be met at North Berwick on Thursday before the time appointed for our yearly conference.

FRED. W. KEENE.

THE Mount Pleasant Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with Cane Run church, at Turner's Station, Henry Co., Ky., on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1905. Those coming by rail from the north and east will leave Cincinnati (Pennsylvania depot) at 3:40 p. m. Thursday and 7:50 a. m. Friday, L. & N. train. Those coming from the south and west will leave Louisville, Tenth St. station, at 4:20 p. m. Thursday and First St. station at 7:20 a. m. Friday. A cordial invitation is extended to those of our faith and order.

G. R. TURNER, Church Clerk.

SPOON River Association will meet with brother John McFadden, (in behalf of Sugar Creek church) six miles west of Table Grove, Ill., on the Rock Island—St. Louis branch of C., B. & Q. R. R., Friday before the first Sunday in September, where trains will be met. A cordial invitation is extended to all.

B. F. BUTLER, Moderator.

THE yearly meeting is appointed to be held with the Harford church, Harford Co., Md., commencing at 10 o'clock a. m. on Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1905. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth to meet with us. Those coming by way of Baltimore will take train leaving North Ave. station at 3:45, for Long Green or Forest Hill, where they will be met and cared for.

NATHAN GRAFTON, Church Clerk.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held with the church at Whitefield, Maine, commencing on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1905. Trains will be met on the Maine Central R. R. at Gardiner, Maine, on Thursday afternoon before the meeting. Also all who go by way of the same railroad to Wiscasset, and from thence to Whitefield by the Narrow Gauge R. R., will be met on Thursday afternoon. All who love the Lord in truth are welcome among us.

Z. M. BEAL.

THE Licking Association of Old School Baptists will be held with the Goshen church, in Anderson Co., Ky., Sept. 8th, 9th and 10th, 1905. Those coming by way of Louisville, Lexington or Harrodsburg will get tickets at either place for McBrayer station, on Southern R. R. All trains will be met on Thursday. Any coming later must notify Jas. E. Paxton, Lawrenceburg, Ky., R. F. D. Lovers of the truth will be welcome.

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON, Moderator.

A. B. BICKERS, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Cammal, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting to be held Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 9th and 10th, 1905. Those coming from Williamsport will take New York Central R. R. train to Cammal, Pa. Trains leave 7:10 a. m., 2:10 and 5:25 p. m. Those coming from Corning will take the same road to Cammal. Trains leave Corning at 6 and 10 a. m. and 5 p. m. Would be glad to have a goodly number of brethren and friends with us.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Lord willing, the Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Church of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 13th and 14th, 1905. Trains will be met on Tuesday p. m. at Roxbury and friends taken to the place of meeting and cared for. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

JOHN B. SLAUSON.

PROVIDENCE permitting, there will be a meeting of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church of Albany & Troy, N. Y., Thursday and Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1905. All who desire to come will be made welcome. Come to Albany, N. Y., and take electric cars at Union depot for Troy, N. Y. At Troy take electric car for Albia, there change and take electric car to West Sand Lake, and inquire for Mrs. Moul, who lives about five minutes walk from the electric car depot. Those coming on Wednesday will go to brother Charles Schade's, 423 Sheridan Ave., Albany, N. Y., where they will be cared for until Thursday morning, when they will go with him to the meeting. Those coming Thursday will go direct to West Sand Lake from depot, according to directions. Meeting is to be held at the home of Mrs. Moul, by her request, who makes every lover of the truth welcome, for she loves them for Jesus' sake.

H. SEWARD, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting to be held Tuesday and Wednesday, September 19th and 20th, 1905. Friends coming on D. & H. R. R. and O. & W. R. R. will be met at Olyphant, Pa., Monday at 4 p. m. Mrs. Augusta Tripp, formerly Akerly, lives near each depot, and will be glad to see any who may call at her home. Those coming on D., L. & W. R. R. will come to Glenburn, Pa., and take stage to my house, one and one-half miles. We hope to have a good many friends and brethren with us.

D. M. VAIL.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m., in the Red Men's Hall, First and Congress Streets in Troy, N. Y., and at 2:30 p. m. in West Sand Lake, N. Y., at the home of Mrs. Moul. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in Hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES.

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10:30 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 73. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1905. NO. 18.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JAMES IV. 7, 8.

"SUBMIT yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you."

First, we desire to establish the fact that this letter was written to the "brethren," therefore the language of our text in no wise applies to the unregenerate. It is not according to the doctrine of God our Savior to exhort dead men to live, but it is according to the doctrine to exhort and admonish those born of God to live orderly and godly. If the flesh were not "weak," and the children therefore *liable* to be led into error and ungodliness, admonition and exhortation would have been useless, but the writings of the apostles are filled with them. It was because of unrighteous deeds among the children of God that James wrote this important letter. It appears that they were living after the flesh, and were saying that God tempted them to do evil, therefore they were not accountable or responsible for their ungodly doings. The apostle meets this argument by telling them that "God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man;" that from God proceedeth every good and perfect gift; that with him there is neither variableness or shadow of turning. God is righteous, therefore temptation to do evil proceeds from our own lusts or the devil. We cannot hide our sins by falsely accusing God, nor with the cloak of absolute predestination. Man has always been accountable for transgression against the holy laws of God, even though the very act be predestinated, as in the case of the crucifixion of the Son of God; wicked hands did the awful work, and they who committed the sin were held guilty before God. "All unrighteousness is sin," and "sin is the transgression of the law;" "He that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons."—Col. iii. 25. Any child of God who would hide his sin under the cloak of unlimited predestination, or say that he is tempted of God to do evil, should be preached to in like manner as James has written in this letter. "Them that sin, rebuke before all, that others may fear."—1 Tim. v. 20. Some of us no doubt would be satisfied to have election preached to us every Sunday in the year, while others would be pleased with predestination, others

with effectual calling, others with special and complete atonement, others with the types and shadows, and others with experience, but few indeed want exhortation and admonition. It is deplorable to see how fast such preaching is becoming utterly uninteresting and distasteful; it finds but little favor with the children of God. Often it is said, "Such a sermon was unnecessary, we do not like that kind of preaching." Those who do not like such preaching cannot be very much in love with the New Testament, for every letter without an exception is filled more or less with exhortation and admonitions. If such were right and needful then, why is it not expedient now? when so many are lukewarm, others living after the flesh and vanities of this world, and who sell their "birthright for a mess of pottage," others are asleep, others at ease in Zion, others living in malice and strife, and others departing from the living God. That these conditions exist in the church throughout the land, no one will deny. Never since the day of James the apostle, the writer of our text, have we had more need of this Scripture, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you," than at the present time. "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble."—James iv. 6. Because of this truth the apostle tells his brethren to submit themselves to God; but "some man will say, How" can we submit ourselves to God? We answer, by living according to his law written in our hearts and put in our minds. This law is with us continually, and we are constantly reminded of its power and of its demands. It is not written upon tables of stone and placed inside of the ark, as was the case in the days of Moses. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us [Jew and Gentile] that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." This teaching is acute, and quicker than thought; its teachings are that we should *deny all ungodliness*, and before the thought is finished in the mind to do or say evil, grace teaches us to deny it and live godly; therefore our sins are willful, and for each transgression we must feel the sting of a guilty conscience and experience that "certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." (the flesh.)—Heb. x. 27. In submitting ourselves to God we yield ourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and our "members as instruments of righteousness unto God."—Rom. vi. 13. "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." Again, to submit ourselves to God is to keep ourselves unspotted from the world, "for if we be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though being in the world are we subject to ordinances, (touch not; taste not; handle not.)"—Col. ii. 20, 21.

"Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Again "some man will say, How" can this be done? If it were impossible for the *sons* and *daughters* of God to do this the Holy Ghost would never have inspired the apostle to write the language of our text. We often forget that if we are born of God this seed remaineth in us, therefore Christ being in us we can through him "do all things," even resist the devil. There is no greater way to re-

sist him than by living according to the gospel of the grace of God; this is accomplished by the Spirit guiding us into *all* truth, according to the promise of Jesus. The Savior in the wilderness resisted the devil through the Spirit of the Father. When Satan said to him, "If thou be the Son of God, command these stones to be made bread," Jesus resisted him in not yielding to the temptation to make the stones bread. When Satan said, All the kingdoms of the world will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me, Jesus resisted him by serving God only; it was his meat and drink to do the will of God, and thus it should be to us who take up the cross to follow him. "What is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?" Again Jesus resisted him when he refused to hear his voice to cast himself down from the pinnacle of the temple. It is in like manner that we, the *sons* and *daughters* of God, are to resist the devil. We are not ignorant of his cunning devices; though he be transformed into an angel of light, the Spirit of God which is in the heirs of glory is quick and powerful, and discerns that even this light is not the light of God. Satan now often tells the child of God that he will give him all the kingdoms of the world if he will fall down and worship him. The temptation is presented in this way: If you will forsake the Old School Baptists and unite with some popular religious denomination, you will be taken into society and be loved by the world, which now hates you; your financial interests will be increased and you will be prospered in every way. Again he tells us, If you will deny the absolute sovereignty of God, predestination and salvation by grace, you will be much more popular in the world, and you can still retain the name Primitive Baptist. How shall we resist the devil? By continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, practice and fellowship. This godly life does not consist in making long prayers and the continual singing of psalms and spiritual songs, nor in going about with a long face, nor in giving all that we have to feed the poor, nor in giving our bodies to be burned, nor in forsaking our friends, or families who are dependent upon us for the necessaries of life, to visit every meeting far and near and thereby manifest our zeal for the cause. But let him that stole steal no more; let him who lied lie no more; let him who defrauded defraud no more; let him who was drunken be drunken no more; let him whose conversation was filthy use no longer impure language; let him who gambled gamble no more, and let him who danced dance no more. Whatever was contrary to righteousness in our former life, and whatever temptations we have now, are to be put away. This is the only burden put upon the children of God. (See Acts xv. 28, 29.) This course of life will ever resist the devil, and he will flee from us. "Draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to you." To draw nigh to the devil that he may draw nigh to us, all will acknowledge is to live according to his unrighteous ways; thus we live with him and he with us. Now if this be the way on the side of sin and evil, surely it must be in like manner on the side of righteousness and "good works." In living unto God, in walking in the ways of righteousness and obedience to his holy law, is drawing nigh to God, and in drawing nigh to him we find him drawing nigh to us in holy communion; in giving us a good conscience toward him; in letting us feel his holy presence assuring us of his love in

the forgiveness of our sins through the blood of his Son, and in the separation between the sheep and the goats, we hear him saying, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." The drawing nigh of God to us is not always experienced in rejoicing, but often it is "in the fiery furnace," "in the den of lions," "in the isle of Patmos," in the very darkness of death, when we drink of that "cup" which is his, and of which he said we all must drink, and in being "baptized with him into death." His drawing nigh to us is in no wise reward, neither does it shield us from persecution, for "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution;" but rather it is that we may have fellowship with him and with his Son Jesus Christ.

This article is written by the request of brother Fred Waterberry, of Westwood, N. J. We desire that he and all who may read it try it with an unbiased mind with the writings of the apostles as recorded in the New Testament, and with their own experience. "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."—James i. 22.

H. C. KER.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

FRAGMENTS.

"AND the counsel of peace shall be between them both."—Zech. vi. 13. Not between the Father and the Son, as has sometimes been said, but between the Priest and the King. He "shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel [not council] of peace shall be between them both." A priesthood after the order of Aaron would not cause peace between a holy God and a sinner, for that priesthood was "after the law of a carnal commandment." There must arise a priest after the order of Melchisedec, who was both King and Priest. So Jesus was made a High Priest forever "after the power of an endless life," at the same time that he is King, "and is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." Now here is the counsel of peace. He has made an effectual offering as High Priest, and as King he receives the offering, and here is the way of peace. He is a Priest upon his throne, ruling upon his throne, while he builds the temple of the Lord, and thus "is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

YOU ask me to write upon "worshiping God in the Spirit," and you say: "I am so ignorant and unlearned it seems impossible for me to separate the flesh and the Spirit. When one is at peace the other is sorely troubled. For a long time it was my portion to dwell in darkness, and I greatly feared it was to envelop me forever. Well, this is like me; self creeps into everything. Instead of comforting you in your anxiety and sorrow I am adding my burden, too."

In all this you have spoken for me. How can I say anything to profit upon worshiping God in the Spirit when I am so often at a stand to know whether I know anything truly about it myself? I find self, my fleshly self, in all that I do, in so many different ways, that I often am at a loss to know where I am and what I am. I do know that God is not worshiped with men's hands, nor with the feet, or even the voice; yet the hands, feet or voice are needed to give expression to that which is true worship. I am well assured that in me, that is, in

my flesh, there dwells no good thing; I feel it every day, and at times I am most terribly cast down and discouraged by it. My only comfort at such times seems to be that Paul said that concerning himself. Lately I have been so glad and thankful that he said that, and some other things in the same line. He felt bad about it, and was forced by his grief to cry out, "O wretched man that I am!" But he was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write out these feelings for the comfort of the family of God.

Whether I have experienced the true spirit of worship is often a question with me. It seems to be so exalted a thing, the worship of the true and living God, that such as I am cannot reach that high; yet I remember that the leper worshiped Jesus, saying, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean;" and the Syrophenician woman worshiped him, saying, "Lord, help me." Now if that is worship I must have worshiped him, for I have known for more than half a century that Jesus can, if he will, make me clean; I know he has the power. The natural man does not know that blessed truth; it is only known by the teaching of the Spirit. The wisdom of the world teaches that Jesus will if he can, and that his power depends upon the will and works of man. But the Spirit makes us know that his power is equal to his will. I know that I have cried in my spirit, "Lord, help me." That seems to be an acknowledgment of his power to do all that is needed to be done for our help, even to making us clean from sin, and as pure and white as snow. That is worship. The poor soul who lies helpless upon a bed of suffering, alone, in poverty, in ignorance as regards worldly knowledge and wisdom, can worship the Lord in spirit as fully as one who is in health and endowed with all worldly riches and knowledge and comforts.

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."—2 Cor. v. 10. We must receive the bad things we have done as well as the good. This is a terribly severe judgment for a living soul who hates sin, but it is a just one. We hate and loathe these bad things, they are terribly distasteful and nauseous to us, and to have to carry them along with us wherever we go, to have them in our minds all the time, to be obliged to look at them, to receive their ill odor and to feel their bitter taste, this is indeed a sore punishment, this is reaping in tears what we have sown in self-confidence to the flesh. We might think that the apostle is here declaring that the Lord punishes his people for the bad things they do by taking away their property and their relatives, and afflicting their persons with some dreadful disease. Job's friends thought so, but they were mistaken; the punishments visited upon the Lord's people for disobedience are not such as the world could see or appreciate.

Yes, physical health is a blessing for which we have reason to be thankful to the Lord. Those who have felt great weakness and severe pain of body know better than others the greatness of the blessing. We know the time of pain and weakness must come; this also comes as a blessing of the Lord to his people, for which, or in which, we are still to be thankful; for the apostle says, "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

So while we give thanks every day for every day's blessings of a temporal kind, we must remember that the day of adversity will come, and try to pray for grace and strength against that day, to bear with patience whatever afflictions the dear Savior may see fit to send upon us. "In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him."—Eccl. vii. 14.

It seems hard to wait contentedly till to-morrow for to-morrow's bread; I want to be sure of it now. The form of prayer taught us is, "Give us *this day* our daily bread." There seems no special promise to the Lord's people for to-morrow concerning temporal things, but we are reminded that we know not what a day may bring forth, and are told not to take thought for to-morrow, in respect of temporal things; "for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Our entire trust is to be in the Lord. But I cannot trust of myself. I want to arrange for to-morrow, though I know I cannot. I am worldly minded to a fearful degree. If the Lord did not hold me, and keep me, and hedge me in on every side, and cut me off continually from worldly dependence, I should never manifest any other than a worldly mind, if I ever do.

"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."—Gal. v. 4. It is evident that the apostle is saying this to brethren in Christ. No one can fall from grace who never had grace. It is one thing to fall from grace, and quite another thing to fall from a profession for want of grace. From grace to works is a great fall, but a fall that cannot happen to one who is not a child of grace. A child may fall among the beasts, but it is still a child, though greatly out of place, and away from the protection and comfort of its Father's house.

It seems to me that when one is prepared by the Spirit to write or speak upon the precious doctrine of God our Savior, he will not feel like writing ironically or with bitterness toward those whose views he is opposing. It is wearisome to read after one who ridicules those with whom he is engaged in conference or controversy, and applies harsh terms to them. "In meekness instructing them that oppose themselves," is the apostle's direction.

Mr. Irons says that Romans v. 1, is incorrectly punctuated, that the comma should follow the word justified; that the apostle did not mean to say that we are justified by faith, but that we have peace with God by faith. It seems Mr. Irons must have forgotten other declarations of the same apostle to the same effect as this, as we have it punctuated. Three times in the epistle to the Galatians he says distinctly that we are justified by faith. (Gal. ii. 16; iii. 8, 24.) Faith seems to be the active power by which we receive the justification which was effected by the death and resurrection of Christ, and when we thus experience that justification then we have peace with God.

A dear brother was lamenting his inability to remember the good things he heard in preaching; he feared they were not for him because he could not keep them in mind. "Last Sunday," he

said, "I heard such a good sermon, and felt comforted while listening to it, but I had hardly left the house before I had forgotten it." I told him I saw a beautiful and vigorous stalk of wheat the other day, and it was crying. "What are you crying about?" I asked. "Why," it replied, "a sweet, refreshing shower fell on me yesterday, and now not a drop of it remains in sight." "You silly thing," I said, "the shower is inside of you." The good things that are ministered to the Lord's dear children by his gifts to the church go into the heart, into the life. The memory, however good it may be, can only retain the words, it cannot keep the spirit and life that was in them when Jesus spoke them to our souls. Never mind if you cannot remember the words of the sermon; if you heard it with comfort it was because the doctrine dropped upon your soul as the rain, and its speech distilled as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass, and it has gone into your life and caused spiritual growth.

ANOTHER was lamenting his limited knowledge of the Bible. "It is true," he said, "that I get now and then a lovely glimpse of spiritual truth, and see some new and precious unfolding of the word of God's salvation, and occasionally have a sweet drink of the fountain of the water of life; but there is so much that I do not know, and so very little that I do understand, that I cannot help but cry." "Well," I said, "what would you think of a very thirsty man who has unexpectedly come to a 'brook in the way,' and after drinking till his soul is satisfied begins to cry because so much water is running by that he cannot drink?" You cannot drink that brook dry. Be satisfied and thankful that you can ever have even a sip of its refreshing water.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., August 10, 1905.

WHAT IS "CHRISTIAN SCIENCE?"

HAVING been urged by an esteemed brother to write for the SIGNS upon the modern teaching or doctrine misnamed "Christian Science," I at last comply.

Years ago I read all the large works of Christian Science at the request of a dear young sister, whose mind was deceived by it. One book is their oracle, and it is much more to them than the holy Scriptures; it contains the whole law and gospel of Christian Science.

As to this name, "Christian Science," it is as delusive as it is false. Science is not christianity, neither is christianity science, but it is as far superior to all natural science as heaven is above earth, or as Christ is greater than Adam, or Moses, or Solomon. Science is worldly, but christianity is heavenly. There is no truth in the catching term, "Christian Science." But so far from this book containing a blending of christianity and science, as the name the religion indicates, it slaps both in the face, for it contradicts all the established laws and facts of science, and, worse still, it flatly denies the holy doctrine and sacred truths of the gospel of Christ. Christ's atonement for sin, his redemption of sinners from death, their new birth of the Spirit, and resurrection from the dead to immortality, all are rejected.

If memory serves me correctly, this strange book explains away or ignores the Bible history of creation, the entrance of sin, disease and death, denies the actual or real existence of matter or any material body, and of physical forces, and teaches that mind is the only real

existence. Mind is deified, for the claim is made that mind is God, and God is mind. It is assumed that mind is man, and the only real man is mind. This is the basis and chief corner-stone of this falsely-called science. Upon this baseless premise the claim is made that mind is immortal, even as God is immortal; that as God is free from sin, sickness, suffering and death, so is the real man—mind. Mind is all; man is mind, and mind is God. God is King, and every man is an uncrowned king. In a Christian Science chapel I once listened to a lecture upon the novel text: "We are all uncrowned kings." The reader of it told us that we should rise up above all that is low, earthly and mortal, cast off morbid, sickly thoughts and feelings, and claim our crown and equality with God. It is upon this hypothesis that Christian Scientists claim the power of "divine healing," or of throwing off and rising above the morbid and unreal notions of sickness, pain and mortality. They teach that the real man, the very ego, the selfhood, the immortal mind, may do this, and so cast off disease and death. They trumpet abroad their marvelous success as "divine healers." In this they claim the power that God gave to Christ, and that he gave to his apostles. This claim is preposterous, and it alone should condemn this false science. For with Christ and the apostles it was, "Speak the word only," and the sick were made well and the dead made alive. But those "healers" will visit the same sick one time after time, and in many cases there is no return to health. That their patients often get well is true, but so they would have done if left to the vital force, the healing power of nature, which God has ordained in every living thing, plant and tree, animal and man. Then there is also much help to the sick in giving them cheerful and healthful suggestions to the mind, in right hygiene and nursing, no less than in sanative medication. That sickness and its cure now is through natural causes and agencies, is certainly true. The claims to miraculous and divine healing, as taught by them, are strong delusions, as was the witchery of Simon the sorcerer. It is sorrowful that any child of God should be thus deceived and misled.

It is held that the mission of Christ on earth was to heal the sick; that he gave this authority to his servants to be continued in all the gospel dispensation, even as he healed all diseases by his miraculous power. Unbelief is held to be the cause why it is not. If this claim were true, then Christ's power and word have failed, God's purpose is defeated and the gates of hell have prevailed against the church. Such a position is a fatal error. The risen Christ said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." "My word shall not pass away." The divine mission and work of Christ on earth were infinitely more and better than to heal the natural maladies of the afflicted, for all the multitudes thus healed by him and his apostles must again sicken and die. His work was not to put an end to mortal sickness in the world, or it would be done, but to make an end of sin, abolish death, and bring in life and immortality for as many as the Father gave him. To do this he himself must die, then rise again to live forever in holiness and eternal glory. He must first suffer and die, in order to enter into his glory. So all whom Jesus saves from their sins must also follow him in his steps, drink of his cup and suffer with him in the flesh. It is on heaven's side of the grave only that there

is perfect health, life and glory, world without end. The wisdom and love and counsel of God have appointed it so. The word says, "For if we be dead with Christ, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him." It was for the glory of God and his Son that Lazarus was sick and died, to manifest the power of Christ to save his people from death and awaken them out of their last sleep. This he will do.

What then were the miracles of healing the sick and giving life to the dead for? As wrought by Christ, they were to attest and confirm his Messiahship, that he was sent from God as the anointed One, the Redeemer and Savior, and they proved that he was the Son of God and dwelt in the bosom of his Father. This was necessary to establish the faith of his people in him as the Son and Heir and Salvation of God, the only Savior, as thus confirmed by this great cloud of witnesses. Moreover, every sick and dying one, thus marvelously "made whole," was a type of every sinner saved by the Lord. And as this miraculous power of healing was given to the servants of the Lord Jesus in the beginning of the gospel kingdom, it was done to infallibly prove that the doctrine of Christ was not of men, but of God, and also to forever confirm the glorious central truth of the gospel of salvation that, "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept." This blessed end the miracles of healing accomplished, to the glory of the Father and the Son, and the rejoicing in Christ of his believing followers. This is blessedly shown in their united prayer, saying, "And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, by stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus." And so with great power did the apostles give witness of the resurrection of Christ. But after the new doctrine was fully shown to be of God, and the church of Christ was immovably established upon the living Rock of ages, those outward "signs and wonders" ceased, for they had accomplished God's design. Had it been his will to continue this miraculous power of healing, his servants would certainly yet perform those outward miracles, for there is nothing impossible with God.

The church of Christ, from then till now, has ever had the confirmatory evidence and assuring comfort of all those "mighty works," and this is enough. When tried Jacob saw all the good things from Joseph he knew his son was yet alive, and said, "It is enough." So all that our divine Joseph has manifested to the church is enough to confirm and comfort believers. And so it is verily true, as Jesus said, "And these signs shall follow them that believe," for as they were fulfilled in the church by his servants, to whom he gave this power, every miracle stands as a living witness to every believer's heart and says to him, Christ is the true Physician, the Resurrection and the Life, and whosoever liveth and believeth in him shall never die. This assurance of faith in the risen Savior, by whose stripes we are healed, could not be more fully confirmed than it is, even if thousands of miracles of healing could yet be performed. Every New Testament miracle testifies of Jesus and confirms our faith in him, and glorifies him; but all modern pretended divine healing leads away from Christ, exalts the healer and glories in the works of men.

D. BARTLEY.

JULY 18, 1905.

JUNE 25, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Once more I feel that I ought to write you a few lines to let you know that I am still in the land of the dying, and though cast down, yet not destroyed. I received your letter some time ago, and was glad of its coming, for you express my feeling so well that it consoles me in my heaviness and sorrows to know that others who I feel satisfied are the children of God are subject to the same doubts and fears and questionings that I am. I am also comforted that so many scriptural characters, or as the apostle calls them, "holy men of old," had the same travail and burden of soul concerning their sorrows, sins and trials that I have. Even the dear Savior himself was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and felt the burden of our sins as do we, for he said, "Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing." Further on he says, "O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee." I must confess that this language is too deep for me to understand as being the utterance of Jesus the Savior.*

In the same connection he says, "They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." This clearly indicates the character who is speaking, and while I confess my ignorance in understanding as to how this could be, yet I believe my faith receives it, and it comforts me so that I am made to hope that he was made to be even like me, poor, vile me. This agrees with what Paul says in Hebrews, "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren." O what blessed words! O my soul, why, O why was he so made? It was that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest. O, my dear brother, what a great thing for me it is that there is such a merciful and faithful High Priest to intercede for me, weak and sinful as I am. I just now feel a brokenness of heart and spirit as I meditate upon this great High Priest, and his faithfulness and his mercy. I think of a faithful friend in natural things; a wife who never swerves from faithfulness to her husband, though he may sink ever so low; of a husband to his wife, whose love abides faithful though she may prove unworthy of it; of the mother whose love for her child holds true, though sad to say, oftentimes but little return is made. I think of our dear old pastor, whose love was so faithful and true even to me, who am so unworthy that I did not deserve such love and esteem and such confidence as he bestowed upon me. This is one of the comforts that I look back upon with a satisfaction that I cannot express. Yes, he was faithful and true, but when I was cast down with guilt and fear, even he could not help me. I must then have an Intercessor with God, a Daysman, who could lay his hand upon both and make reconciliation.

When one is in pain and agony can they think of anything else? We have the example of holy men of old who bewailed and bemoaned their exceeding sinfulness. Isaiah said, "Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips." The Psalms are full of expressions like these: "I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long. For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease; and

*[THIS language is too deep indeed for us to comprehend, but this much we may remember: Jesus, through the psalmist, spake these words as our fellow, the man of sorrows, who bare our sins and felt the full pain and shame of them. It is in this relation, we have thought, that Jesus speaks the words quoted by our brother.—ED.]

there is no soundness in my flesh." "I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked." And Paul said, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Peter said, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." In the Song of Solomon the bride says she is black. Jeremiah said, For these things I weep; mine eye runneth down with water, because the comfort that should relieve my soul is far from me. I am glad that there is so much sorrow and grief expressed in the Scriptures over the burden of sin. It is about all the comfort that I have, to read of good men of old being in the same trouble that I am in.

I do not think that we can think or talk too much about the electing love of God, for election carries with it whatsoever things we do that are good, or true, or honest, or of good report. If we are not elected or chosen to these things we have no part in them. The apostle Paul says we are blessed with all spiritual blessings, according as we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. I do firmly believe that all the blessings conferred upon the people of God here in time, as well as in eternity, are according to election, according to the love and purpose of God, which he purposed in Christ Jesus before the world was. The apostle said, "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." It is affirmed in another place that the bounds of our habitation are set, that they were determined of God beforehand. Then let us not be afraid of talking too much of the election or purpose of God. This is the only thing that secures to us all spiritual blessings, and also all the tribulation and sorrow that is in the life of the people of God, and in the world to come life everlasting.

> "The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
> Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown."

I so often think, O, if I had only done or acted differently, how much trial and sorrow I would have escaped. But I forget that our God declares the end from the beginning, and that none could be escaped. I do not wish to be understood as excusing any of my wrong doing, and I do believe that the Lord chastises his people in their going astray from his precepts, and much of my time is passed under the accusation of a guilty conscience, because of my wandering astray from his commandments. I pray and desire and hope and vow to do better every day of my life, but alas, I have the same ofttold tale of helplessness and failure in thought, word and deed to tell, so that I am ready to give up the fight and sink down in despair. But still I keep on, hoping against hope, and like the apostle, I hope that I am pressing on toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling which is of God in Christ Jesus, and not in ourselves.

I wonder why I am writing you all this. It is not because I think it will edify or comfort you in any way; but my mind has run on, and my pen has followed my mind. I hope if it is not of interest or comfort to you, that it is not contrary to the truth. I am glad that I am still kept in remembrance by you, and that you desire to continue our correspondence. It has pleased me to know that in all our talk and correspondence there has never been a sentiment on which we have differed. Like Elder Ker, "I muse on the years that are past." His communication upon those words I read with intense interest and great comfort, for it seemed

to be my exact experience. And so as I muse on the years that are past, I think of your first visit among us, and what pleasure and comfort I had in your company for the greater part of the week that we were together. That time has seemed to me to be one of the spiritual resting-places in my journey, and I wonder will I ever see another time and have another visit as enjoyable and comfortable in this earthly pilgrimage.

I have been thinking of the closing words of the Savior in the parable of the ten virgins: Watch, therefore, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh. To my view this is the key to the parable. Does Jesus ever say to unregenerate sinners, Watch and pray? He said these words to his disciples on another occasion: "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." While I realize by painful experience that I have neither the will nor the power to watch and pray, only as God gives it to me, yet there stands in the word the measuring rod, as it were, the word of God, and if we do not keep its requirements we are guilty; and just as those who violate the law of the land, so must we pay the penalty, and it is of no use to say, I had to do it, and I could not help it. Our laws will not accept such a plea. So likewise if we violate the law of Jesus our King we are guilty. But how good that we have a faithful High Priest who ever intercedes in behalf of his people. This is all my hope. May God give us understanding in all things, that we may be established and settled, and not tossed to and fro.

From A POOR SINNER.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FAITH.

SAID Paul, "Not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith, the righteousness which is of God by faith." In these expressions of the apostle by the Spirit we learn that there is a righteousness which is not of the law, or a righteousness which is above the law, which is of God. This in another place is called God's righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. This is that righteousness which the apostle calls the righteousness of God by faith. This righteousness, he says, is not by the law, but by the hearing of faith, that the promise to Abraham might come on the Gentiles also. Again, the apostle says that the Jews under the law have not attained unto righteousness. "Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law." But "The Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith." Here then is a very notable and marked distinction and difference between the law of works and the law of faith. The law is not of faith. Without this distinction between the law of Moses as a covenant of works, and the gospel of Jesus Christ as a covenant of grace without works, no man living can understand either the law or the gospel. From this high vantage ground of faith in Christ alone above the law of works under Moses and its promises of life and death, the believer may catch a glimpse of the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus by faith, which is not of the law, and may behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and seeing as in a glass, he is changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit; and having added to

his faith virtue, knowledge and all the sublime graces of the Spirit, he may reach into the holy and pure depths of the everlasting kingdom of God, who is upon the sovereign throne of universal empire, and all things past, present and future, he created and subdued to his glory and the good of his chosen people. He gave them grace in Christ Jesus before the world unto his glory, and according to the hope of eternal life, which he also promised before the world began. This we are told by the apostle was made manifest in Jesus Christ, "who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

The grandeur of these visions of faith as opened up in the gospel of Jesus Christ, and in the epistles of this apostle, are truly wonderful to the beholder of them, stretching out far beyond the flight of the most exalted imaginations of men. For "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." There is this much difference between the law of works and the law of faith; it is a difference truly that no philosopher of earth can distinguish, but it is made clear to those to whom the anointed is revealed, even Jesus the Mediator. Jesus has opened through the veil, that is to say, his flesh, a new and living way. O the grandeur and the glories that arise to the eye of faith from the mount of God's eternal power. Seraphims veil their faces before the throne of his glory, crying, "Holy, holy, holy." This the prophet saw in vision, while the Lord's train filled the temple and the whole earth was filled with his glory. These things are seen by faith, which did not come by the law of Moses, the servant of God. It was well said therefore by one inspired of Jesus, "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." The law is justice and judgment, but the gospel is truth and grace, given in Jesus Christ before the world began. Therefore it takes precedence of the law of condemnation unto death by reason of sin; "For the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." The grace of God in Christ before the world was is first in the purpose of God, but was last in manifestation in the world; therefore the apostle said the promise was before the law. The promise of the gospel contains the hope of eternal life, promised before the world, and the promise is made manifest in the gift of Christ, the Sun of righteousness, who in his person and work fulfilled the law and obtained eternal redemption for his people, removing thereby the curse of the law. Thus was life and immortality brought to light through his resurrection from the dead. This finished work of redemption being wrought in behalf of his people, he sends the Comforter to make manifest the heirs of glory. The word of the Spirit with the apostles who are witnesses of these things, testifies of Jesus Christ, that in him alone is salvation and the forgiveness of sins. The witness of the Spirit in the hearts of the children of God who are born of the Spirit, bears witness with the word of the Spirit in the proclamation of the gospel by the apostles in the first place, and gives assurance, the assurance of faith and hope, as we receive the word of truth the gospel of Jesus Christ, who is our hope.

The word preached by the servants of Christ is not that which makes the children of God, but it is that which makes them manifest as the children of God,

The obedience of the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ is made manifest in the world. No amount of personal obedience with a nominal profession could give life to any one, any more than the obedience of the law of Moses in the letter could give life to the dead. It is not in the nature of obedience, either in the law or in the gospel, to give life, but only to manifest life previously existing. There is this difference: the subjects of the gospel are living subjects, but the subjects of the law are dead. The living can work, but the dead cannot. The witness of God in the gospel is that eternal life is in his Son, but the subjects of the law of Moses are all dead in sin and condemned already; the law is powerless to give them life or to show them any favor. And furthermore, the apostle tells us if there had been a law given that could have given life, surely righteousness would have been by the law. Paul said to the Galatians, "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." So much for the law of faith and the law of works, and so much for the folly of them who would mix them in salvation.

Brother Chick, if you feel like publishing this letter you may do so.

Your brother,

I. N. NEWKIRK.

JULIETTA, Idaho, March, 1905.

JUSTUS, Pa., Jan. 6, 1905.

JOIE E. WICKHAM—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—Since I received your very kind and comforting letter of August, 1903, I have felt many times as though I ought to write to you. Since reading your letter in the SIGNS of Dec. 1st, expressing a desire that the readers of the SIGNS would find it in their hearts to write to you, it has been especially on my mind, but the same plausible excuses for putting it off that have formerly come in my way are still present with me. These are a lack of spiritual thought, a realizing sense of my ignorance and inability to write in a way that would be of interest to others, and a resolution made about twelve years ago that I would never make an attempt to write to any one again on the subject of religion. For a few years after I became a member of the church I wrote quite frequently to some of the brethren, among these were Elders Balas Bundy, Silas Durand and D. M. Vail, who was then at Waverly, N. Y., and others. Their letters were a great comfort to me, and I have carefully preserved them, but when I was chosen at the Chemung Association, held with the church at Justus, in June, 1893, to write the Circular Letter for the next year, I was so worried to think how presumptuous I had been in writing to these brethren, and what a miserable failure I should make if I attempted to write the Circular Letter, I just said I would never again make the attempt to write. However weak and foolish you may consider such action on my part, you must agree with me in this, that my impressions about writing must have been of the flesh, when I tell you that since that time I have written but one letter to the brethren, which was written to Elder D. M. Vail in the summer of 1903, and published in the SIGNS of August 15th of that year. It was that letter, dear sister, which led you, a perfect stranger in the flesh, to write such words of comfort and encouragement to this poor sinner. I want to say that though Elder Vail sent my letter to the SIGNS without my knowledge or consent, if it was any comfort to you, or any other poor sinner, I will not find fault with him about having it published, but

at the time I should have strongly protested against its being made public. My inclination to avoid publicity in any way led me to question whether the editor of the SIGNS would publish it if Elder Vail should request it, which I doubted, and I surely thought such a letter would be refused. I do not want to think that the words of sympathy, christian love and fellowship, which you and others were kind enough to send me, were prompted by a feeling of natural sympathy for one in trouble. Yet I am so unworthy of their love and fellowship, I find it impossible, much as I would desire, to receive these expressions from the Lord's people in the spirit in which they were written. When I read from your letter, "There are times when I am sorely tried and tempted as you describe, even to questioning the existence of God, and say that the faith of God's elect is a delusion;" that my letter was a comfort to you, and that you felt constrained to tell me that way over there in Ohio there was a poor tempest-tossed one who could sympathize with me in my trials, I did not question the sincerity of these words, or the motive which prompted them, but from my poor broken heart I thanked God for the comfort they gave me, and for the sweet assurance I felt in my heart that some of the Lord's tried and afflicted ones knew from a heart-felt experience of the horrible pit of unbelief which I am in much of the time. The word "tempest-tossed" you used to describe your conditions seemed to express my own experience, and then my mind went back in an instant to a time when the disciples were on the sea of Galilee, tossed about by winds and waves, with seemingly no hope of deliverance, when above the tempest the voice of Jesus is heard. How soon the troubled waves are stilled, the storm is passed and a calmness is seen where but a moment since a violent storm was raging. Many very comforting things were presented to my mind at the time, but I am aware that my letter is getting too long, so I will not attempt to tell you what I am sure you know from your soul's experience better than I could write. Your last letter in the SIGNS shows very clearly that you know of the power of the voice of Jesus, for you have felt it in times of trials and temptation, doubts and fears, and unbelief. How soon they are gone and in your heart dwells gladness and joy and peace.

Now, dear sister, if you feel it in your heart to write to this poor sinner I should be glad to hear from you. I will try to write a few lines in return for your kindness, but am fearful about asking any one to write to such a being as I feel myself to be.

Your unworthy brother, and the chief of sinners,

GEORGE GOODRICH.

[THE address of Joie E. Wickham is now Mrs. Frank S. Woods, Ashland, Texas.—ED.]

ROMULUS, Okla., June 12, 1905.

F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—If one so little and weak as I feel myself to be may thus address you. I have felt for a long time that I wanted to write something for the SIGNS. I had not read it for a long time until lately, when through the kindness of a dear brother and sister I have the happy privilege, and I find it the same dear old paper that I use to read twenty-five years ago, and that it has stood firm in the doctrine of election and predestination, the doctrine of Christ our Savior, and if my poor, sinful heart deceives me not, the doctrine I love above everything;

but, dear brother and saints of God, I feel so weak and unworthy this evening that I know what little I may say will be a failure, unless guided by the Spirit of the most high God, for I am made to realize many times that without him I can do nothing, for like Paul, in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing. When I would do good, evil is present with me, but I pray that I may never do anything that will bring reproach on the cause or be an offence to my dear brethren and sisters, for how sweet is the love and fellowship of the dear little children of God; he has made them to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. I feel to say with the poet, it is a sweet employ to join in worship here, but how divine will be the joy of meeting each other there. Yes, dear brother, when we are done with all the trials, temptations, doubts and fears of this life, then we shall enter into the happy fruition of our hope, we shall see Jesus and be like him; then we can say with one of old, When I awake with thy likeness, O Lord, then shall I be satisfied. O can it be that I shall be one of that number, and hear the blessed voice of my Lord saying, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"? O happy thought, that he chose us in Christ before the world began. The plan was eternal; Christ came into the world, died for our sins and rose for our justification; we are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ and called. O how sure is the Rock of our salvation; how sweet it is to feel that we have an interest in the blood of the blessed Redeemer, who has promised never to leave nor forsake us. He says, I go away to prepare a place for you, that where I am there ye may be also. Dear brethren, do you realize what a precious promise this is, that when we are done with all the trials of this life we will be with Jesus and we shall see him as he is and be like him? O what a glorious thought! Sometimes my Lord's religion appears my only theme. I do feel this evening to praise and magnify his holy name for the blessings he has showered upon poor, unworthy me. Last winter and spring I was in very bad health, and was made to realize that he was my all, my only hope of recovery, and he saw fit in his mercy to spare me to my dear husband and children. We are very poor in this world's goods, and want to be poor in spirit, rich in faith, heirs of the kingdom. By this ye may know ye have passed from death unto life, because ye love the brethren. I do know I love the dear Old Baptists. We have constituted a little church at this place, and while we are few in number, we find brotherly love abounding, and our dear pastor meets with us every first Sunday and preaches the doctrine of election and predestination in its purity, and the lambs are coming into the fold. Pray for us, brethren, that the Lord may be with us and build us up on our most holy faith, and that we may walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, and that we may ever be found abounding in brotherly love and ever watchful. Christ has promised that where two or three are gathered together in his name, there he will be in the midst of them. If he is with us what more need we want?

I will close this imperfect letter, for it is like the writer; I have not written as I intended. If I ever feel able I will take the dear old SIGNS, as it is filled with glad tidings of great joy; but we have come to a new country and have a large family, and it seems that I cannot afford

it at present. May God bless you and all the household of faith, and give you grace and strength to contend earnestly for the faith. Do with this as you see fit, and all will be well with me.

Your little sister in hope of eternal life, M. J. RILEY.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Feb. 10, 1868.

SISTER IN CHRIST, HIGHLY ESTEEMED FOR THE TRUTH'S SAKE:—Your letter of the 5th instant came safely to hand, and gave me much pleasure to learn of your steadfastness in the faith of the gospel. I feel an inexpressible satisfaction in corresponding with those of our faith with whom we cannot converse except by letter, and more especially so with those who have a right to look to me as pastor. In that spiritual relation I am a servant to the church of God, over the which I trust the Holy Ghost has made me overseer. The charge which was given by our Lord to Peter is unquestionably applicable to all who are called of God to fill the pastoral office. Twice he commanded Peter to feed his sheep, and once to feed his lambs. The children of God in their early experience are compared to tender lambs, which require the faithful care of a shepherd, and more especially so when in the providence of God they are removed from the company of the flock to which they belong, and when in their meanderings they are exposed to the wiles of false shepherds, or to the assaults of beasts of prey, wolves, dogs or bears. Although God has secured them from destruction, their peace may be disturbed and their fears excited by the frightful howlings of the wolves, or they may be allured by the seductive spirits of those who ever lie in wait to deceive. To minister to you, my dear sister, that counsel which you need, and such encouragement, comfort and consolation which the faithful ministration of the word is designed to supply, makes me greatly distrust myself; for although I have been so long in the position which I occupy, I feel more and more of my own weakness and inability to do anything as of myself. But it affords me unspeakable consolation to know that you have the protection and watchful care of the chief Shepherd and the Bishop of our souls. The Lord is thy Shepherd, and with the psalmist you may rest assured you shall not want. He is our Advocate with the Father, and though all the under-shepherds may fail we cannot be left to want anything that will be for our good, or for the glory of God, while the Lord himself is our Shepherd. I do feel a longing desire to be of some benefit to the flock of our Redeemer. It will always be a privilege to hear from you, of the state of your mind and of your spiritual exercises. Having been acquainted with your dear parents almost half a century, and all that time enjoying the most unbroken fellowship and friendship, I can but feel a deep solicitude for the welfare of their dear children; but what are all these considerations when compared with the evidence you gave me and the church that you love the Lord and love his saints, that you love his truth, his ordinances and the order of his house? I am glad you enjoyed your last visit among us, and that any portion of the word preached was blessed to your comfort and edification, and I am glad also that you esteem it a privilege to write and keep me advised of your welfare spiritually and temporally. I know how gratifying it would be for you to enjoy the society and companionship of the saints, but is it not consoling to know and feel that neither distance nor time

nor even death itself can possibly break the union that binds you to the saints? And wherever our lot may be cast while here below, we may be absent in body, but always present in spirit. We meet at the mercy-seat of our Lord, and he is the center of our life and joy and peace.

I am glad that the writings of Elder W. Thompson have afforded you comfort, confidence and assurance. It is good to trace the way in which the Lord has led his children, what darksome clouds have overshadowed them at times, and how they have been delivered from their trials, and how their very trials and afflictions have been made to them blessings in disguise.

You say you feel yourself to be but a babe, and very weak. O that we may ever feel so, for truly we may say with Paul, "When I am weak, then am I strong." We are certainly most exposed when we feel self-confident. "We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." I trust I do not cease to pray for you, that God may keep you from every evil and lead you in the pathway of holiness, and that your dear family may be abundantly blessed in all things, spiritual and temporal, for time and for eternity. I can assure you that you are not forgotten by the members of the church, they often inquire if I have heard from you.

True, my sister, my time is closely occupied, but do not let that consideration deter you from writing as frequently as you can spare the time. I do not expect ever to be so hurried with business as to prevent me from responding to your letters; I sometimes have to write hurriedly, but will do the best I can.

The church is in peace, and our meetings are very pleasant. I have baptized some five or six within the last few months, one two weeks ago yesterday. Our dear Lord remembers us, may his name be praised.

Remember that you have a claim on me as servant of the church, and in any way that I can be of service in counsel, advice or otherwise in spiritual things, command me, and it will give me delight to serve in the Lord.

With fervent prayer for your spiritual and temporal prosperity, I remain with affectionate and paternal regard, your pastor,

GILBERT BEEBE.

[THE above letter was written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe to sister Emma Halstead, and as several have requested its publication, by permission of sister Halstead we herewith give it to our readers.—ED.]

DADE CITY, Fla.

EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—The following is a copy of a letter written to me years ago by my late father, giving a portion of his experience of grace. M. L. GILBERT.

CLEAR SPRINGS, Ky., Dec. 25, 1886.

MR. MOZELLE GILBERT—MY DEAR SON AND BROTHER, I HOPE, IN CHRIST:—By your earnest request I now attempt to write you my travel, as I hope, from nature's dark thraldom of death and sin into the marvelous light of the grace of God, through his Son.

In September, 1850, my youngest brother died. As I stood by his bedside a little before his spirit was borne from earth, the question, Are you prepared to meet your brother in heaven? seemed to pierce me through and through, while my sins rose before me as a thick mist, mountain high. Day after day and

night after night I was made to cry in this sorrowful state for mercy, but it seemed like there could be none for such a sinful wretch of the dust as I felt to be. Many times have I gone to the dense woodland, falling upon my knees to beg for mercy, and would arise feeling that it was a solemn mockery for me to supplicate before such a righteous and holy God. I would often return from those secluded places without attempting to pray, except groaning, sighing and weeping, feeling that there was mercy for others, but none for me. When I would try to plead for the Lord to forgive my sins my speech rebuked me. All this while I did not want any one to know how wretched I was. I would go to hear preaching, and the preacher could tell my feelings until he would tell how the Lord speaks peace to the sinner and removes his burden and condemnation in these low grounds of sin. I was made to struggle until June, 1855, when the last hope of mercy had gone forever. In this woeful state as I was returning from the schoolhouse where I was teaching, it seemed that the awful cloud of darkness had encompassed me, and hell was my portion, when unexpectedly a light shone around me, my burden of sin was gone and I was praising the Lord involuntarily, singing, "I'm not ashamed to own my Lord." I went on homeward, rejoicing in the Lord as my Savior, and praising him for his great love manifested to me, a poor sinner. I went that night to see an old aunt of mine, whom I believed to be a christian in deed and in truth. I wanted to hear her talk of Jesus and her hope in him, and when she had told of the Lord's dealings with her, my cup of joy was so full that I had to tell her what I felt he had done for me, and we had a most joyous time. I thought then I would never see any more trouble, but as I was returning to school next morning the thought came forcibly into my mind that I was deceived, that I had only a shadow, and nothing more. O how miserable and troubled I became in a moment, but not as I had been; my prayer was then, and has been many times since, Lord, if deceived, undeceive me. It has been my consolation from that hour till now, that when faith seems gone, hope has sprung up. I can safely say that if I am saved it is through the mercy and grace of God, and not for any good works that I have done or can do; for if I am to be judged according to the deeds done in my body, the heaven of immortality I shall never see.

Now, dear son, I have only written you a brief cause of my hope in Christ. You know not how overjoyed I was when I heard that you and your dear companion had joined the church. Therefore I pray that you be followers of Christ as dear children, and that you both may ever walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called. May the Spirit of the God of all grace be with you forever, and should we never meet again on earth, may we meet where there will be no more parting, sorrow or trouble.

Yours in hope,

W. M. GILBERT.

(See obituary on page 572.)

MANORKILL, N. Y., March 10, 1905.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—If indeed I may call you such. I feel too weak and fearful at times to claim such a privilege. I am at my wit's end to know whether to send you a few lines or to send my subscription without them. Is it of the Lord or is it of the flesh that I claim to be one of the number whose God is the Lord? At times I feel to

praise him, and again I fear that I know him not. But then faith triumphs, and like Thomas I am led to exclaim, "My Lord and my God." One said, Ye that fear God keep not silent. I have been highly favored at times of God, who has, I feel, led me beside the still waters, and his banner over me has been love. I would be still and know that he is God; I would say as the poet:

"Life, death and hell, and worlds unknown,
Hang on his firm decree;
He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be."

Of late I have been much comforted in meditating on the goodness of God. A just weight and an even balance are the Lord's. How wonderful to feel that he is nigh them that call upon him in truth, and how supremely blessed are they that do thus call upon him. He said of his people, "Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." How good to know that he sees us when we see him not, and that he always hears our cry.

I have been thinking of the words, "What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back?" To me this language speaks the mighty power of God. To the child of God how beautiful to feel that all our times are in his hand. The Lord has triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath he overthrown in the sea, and the children shall not see their sins again forever. This is wonderful to me; I see in my mind's eye more than I can record. It is soul-cheering that it should have been said, "Stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord." Is it not also soul-ravishing to feel as did Jacob, "The Lord is in this place, and I knew it not"? Did not your heart burn within you, when the weight of your sins was laid upon the Lamb of God, and Jesus' blood cleansed you from all your sins? What rejoicing to know that we whom Christ has made free are free indeed; sin cannot have dominion over us, and our enemies, our sins, we shall see no more forever, since Jesus has triumphed gloriously. Jordan is driven back, and you have passed over into the church to go no more out forever. "Glorious things of thee are spoken, Zion, city of our God." How good to know that he is on our right hand, that we shall not be moved. We may doubtless feel at times that Jordan does not run back, but still it does. At times, when you feel that your hope is almost gone, remember that Jordan never was dry but a little above you. You will always see the river a little above you and a little below you. Thus we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. Now, dear kindred, "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks."

Yours in hope of eternal life,

D. S. ELLIOTT.

LAWRENCE, Mass., July 22, 1905.

MY DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—The reason of my long silence is not that I have forgotten one of you, but am traveling in darkness and in desolate places, and do not know how to describe them. I feel at times as if "some strange thing" had happened unto me, and I surely cannot be what I have professed, a follower of Jesus, a child of God. I try to think over my past experience, and cannot recall it with any assurance, or even in a connected way. I cannot even keep my thoughts on it, but find them dwelling on worldly things. Once in awhile a ray of

light penetrates the darkness, and I find the goodness of the Lord still follows me and that his mercy endureth forever. His power has kept me firm in the truth, and not allowed me to wander away from his people. The love which he shed abroad in my heart springs up and comforts me; in a little while it is all gone, and darkness settles over me again, and for weeks the path is lonely and dreary. When I read or hear others relate a like experience there is no doubt in my mind that they are children of God, but when my walk and conversation come up before me I cannot find the evidence for myself that satisfies me; I mourn and cry, and realize I am exceeding sinful, and only the blood of Jesus can cleanse me from all sin; it is only by grace I can be saved. Sometimes the thought comes that the darkness and the light are both alike to him, and I cannot flee from his presence. He is still leading me, and will be my guide even unto death. I love the truth, and desire above all things to exalt the name of Jesus, but my mind is not filled with the sweetness of the gospel, and I cannot sing the Lord's song in a strange land. I would love to praise him, but the new song is not put in my mouth. How fully I realize that the precious things of the gospel can never be found in the flesh; the Comforter must take of the things of Jesus and shew them unto us. It is only when he brings to our remembrance what Jesus has said unto us, that we can rejoice and sing praise to our God.

I have wanted to write to you all for a long time, but could not. I do not know that what I have written will be worthy of space in our dear family paper, and I surely do not want to crowd out better matter, but have tried to let you know where I am, with the hope that it is not a land wholly unknown to you, and that your love and fellowship for me will remain the same. May God bless you all, and enable you to write for the comfort of his little ones.

Your unworthy sister,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

DUPONT, Ind., August 9, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have very often thought of writing to you, and as I want to send money order for the SIGNS another year, will add a few lines. I feel my stay in this poor world is uncertain, and that I will leave it soon is certain. I have felt for a long time much interest in our family paper, and hope it will be published by some of our Lord's people for years to come. I believe if all Baptists will do their duty it will be sustained for all time. I have taken it nearly forty years; it was sent in my wife's name, by my father-in-law, Nathan Loofborrow; he was taking it before we were married, which is now over sixty years. My wife was baptized the third Sunday in April, 1863; I was baptized the third Sunday in September, 1864, both by Elder John Parker, who then had charge of Deercreek church, in Ohio.

I would like to write something good if I could, but cannot, so will close. I want this published to let some of my old friends know I am alive at eighty-four years of age.

J. S. WEBSTER.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1905.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

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JUDGES II. 8-11.

AND Joshua died, being an hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance, and all that generation were gathered to their fathers. And there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Please give your views on the above text. Is it of any practical importance now? I have known Old Baptist doctrine and practice to pass away in some communities where the old ministers and members had died and passed away, by the arising of young and PROGRESSIVE men. Please write us a little sermon on the above words. I am now getting old, and will soon be done with these things, but I believe the Lord will ever have men on earth who are opposed to PROGRESSION.

Your brother,

REUBEN P. THOMPSON.

SHELBURN, Indiana.

How is it possible that we should give a better explanation of the above text than our aged brother has already done in the few words he has written? Certainly the things which were written aforetime were written for our learning, upon whom, says Paul, the ends of the world have come. Brother Thompson is right in saying there can be no progression in the doctrine or order of Christ. Progression is deformity, and retrogression is, to be dwarfed. Still, as our brother has desired it, and as the text and connection are full of lessons, we do not feel to decline trying to do as he desires. One thing is evident, viz: that to avoid the deformity of progression, and the dwarfing of retrogression, it is most needful that we all give earnest heed to the things that are spoken in the word of God, lest at any time we should let them slip. To grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth is not to depart from the truth at any time. This is neither progression or retrogression, but it is to seek to believe and to walk according to the word of God. Both the doctrine and practice of the word are to be diligently sought after with all prayer and supplication at all times. In believing and walking according to the word alone can God be glorified and the good of Zion secured.

The book of Judges is one long commentary upon the weakness and proneness of the Lord's people to depart from him, and the ease with which they are tempted to go astray, and the fatherly chastisements which the Lord deals out to them to restore them, until they are once more humbled and repentant. Again and again they departed, as recorded in this book, and again and again they were brought to cry to God in their distress and captivity, and again and again the Lord sent men to judge them and to lead them out from bondage; still they continued to forget him and his works. The Scripture mentioned by our aged brother records the beginning of these departures. All along through this wonderful history we learn what a complete failure man is in following the Lord when left to himself, and how constantly we all need grace lest we stray; thus the obedient are excluded from all boasting over the disobedient. If Israel at any time walked obediently it was shown that this resulted from no goodness within them at all;

they were taught by all these things to know that if obedient it was not of themselves, but of God. Paul could say, "I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." All boasting then is excluded, not only as regards the matter of final salvation, but also as regards all our present life of obedience and service. While we, like Israel, eat the good of the land if we are willing and obedient, yet all our willingness and obedience arises from indwelling grace, and is not of our own selves at all. The good of the land is bestowed as a mark of grace, and the obedience which is connected with this eating and drinking is also another mark of grace.

We are also taught in this wonderful book the dangers of prosperity, of dwelling at ease and safety. When Jeshurun waxed fat he kicked. It was always so with Israel, and it is so now with all the Lord's people, none of us can seem to endure prosperity. In prosperity we forget God, the giver of all. We are not told how it was with Job before he was afflicted, but we do know that after he was afflicted he said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." After he was afflicted still more he said, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Still further on he said in his affliction, "He performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him." David said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." Again, he said, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." Paul said, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen." All these testimonies of holy men of old tell us of the benefits of affliction, and of the dangers of ease. It was said in the old time, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." Still further, we are taught by all this record of the Lord's dealings with Israel that it is with Israel alone that he thus deals. True, afflictions come upon all men, but all men are not exercised thereby. All men suffer pain, sickness, death, all nations suffer calamities of various sorts, but the people of God learn by these things what they have been prone to forget. The Lord dealt, as we are told, with Israel as he did not deal with any other people. Afflictions were chastisements to them; afflictions reminded them of a Father's love and care for them; afflictions brought them to the Lord in confession, and in pleading for mercy and for cleansing; affliction does not thus result with any other people. As the heat of the sun hardens clay and softens wax, so the unbelieving are hardened by affliction and blaspheme, while the child of God is humbled and caused to remember his departures, and to confess his sin before God. They are the wax, and the unregenerate are the clay; the one is hardened and the other softened. To one the preaching of the cross is the savor of life unto life, and to the other it is the savor of death unto death. The one is driven away by the affliction, the other is drawn near. One goes out and hangs himself, the other goes out and weeps bitterly. The one says, Turn again with me that I may have favor with the people, the other says, I have sinned. God is in the affliction of the one, he is not seen in the affliction of the other. The one beholds the Father's face in all his sore chastisement, the other though filled with calamity

sees not God in it; or if he does, it is as one like himself, angry and acting as a stern judge, and no love can arise in his heart toward the source of his afflictions. But the child of God beholding the Father's love in it, kisses the rod and blesses God.

We see also how needful it is that the people of God should have sound teaching, and sound practice held out before them, by their teachers and shepherds. God has appointed some to go in and out before his people. Timothy was one of these, and to him Paul gave strict charge, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."—1 Tim. iv. 16. Again he said to the same beloved Timothy, "Study to show thyself approved unto God." According to the narrative of which we are writing, we see Joshua and the elders with him leading the people not only over Jordan and into Canaan, driving out all their foes and destroying them, but also teaching them by word and by practice, or example, that God alone was to be obeyed and trusted in. These men whom God had raised up among them were steadfast, and stern, and strict, and allowed nothing that was contrary to God to abide among them. As long as they lived the people followed them, as they followed God. Now Joshua was gathered to his fathers, and all that generation passed away which had with him seen the wonders of the wilderness, and another generation had come on the stage of action; these knew not the Lord or his works, which he had done for Israel. This cannot mean that they had never heard the story, as told by their fathers, but they had not seen these things for themselves. We must see things for ourselves if we are to know God or his works at all. The knowledge of their fathers was not knowledge to them. All that their fathers said about all this wonderful work of God was but hearsay to them. They must know for themselves, and they must know in the only way in which any one can know, viz: by bitter experience of human weakness, and failure, and of the need of God's power and mercy and grace to save. This generation, as their fathers had once done, departed into idolatry. No man can keep himself in the knowledge and love of God; and most surely no man can bring himself into that knowledge and love. Now by failure and by chastisement that generation was brought to repentance once more, and then in prosperity they again departed, and then again chastisement came until God raised up some deliverer to break their bondage. Thus Israel was humbled and abased, and God was exalted. These are most needful lessons. How little could Israel boast over the idolatrous nations around them after such restorations. To God must they give all the praise; his mercy and not their obedience had restored them and made them to differ from others.

What an evil thing it is to depart from the living and true God. This, all these lessons do teach us in this day. There have been departures from God and godliness all the way along. Faithful pastors have passed away, and aged saints have gone home, as our brother has said, and sometimes grievous wolves have crept in, not sparing the flock. Paul saw this, and forewarned the churches. "I know this," he said, "that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock." This was a grief to him inexpressible, and he sought to warn the flock as one who was faithful and would if possible shield them from the

inroads that were to come. No doubt this warning thus given did abide in the minds of some, and so these grievous wolves did not harm them. These wolves would seek to devour their faith, their doctrine and their order as churches, and leave nothing that was heavenly among them. False doctrine and practice contrary to the word of God, would be the bait which they would use, cloaked with an appearance of sanctity: wolves, not in their own proper clothing, but in sheeps' clothing. These would profess more godliness perhaps than others, but within were only ravenous for the destruction of the flock, and the works of all such would eat as doth a canker, and overthrow the faith of some. These wolves were not so much open persecutors, though they would proceed to this also when the time seemed ripe, but they were false teachers, teachers of false doctrine under the form of true doctrine, of false practice under the form of true practice; that is, we mean they would not openly profess to desire any departure, but rather would profess still greater zeal for the good of Zion and the glory of God. Many, we are told, followed their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth was evil spoken of. Often has this been repeated all along the ages past. In the text, we have only one instance of what has constantly been occurring among the people of God. Nearly a century ago the same thing began to take place in our churches. That "Baptists might rise from the dunghill and take their proper place among other denominations," the doctrine of general atonement began to be taught, and appeals to the ungodly to come and be saved, and anxious-benches, and protracted meetings, with all the excitement that could be aroused, and then Sunday Schools as nurseries for the church, and Theological seminaries, and Missionary societies, and Mite societies, and many other things were put in practice. All this was to exalt the church into the minds of men. The teachings of old soldiers of the cross were forgotten and cast aside as being behind the time, progressive religion became fashionable. What was the result? Vital godliness declined, the new birth was seldom mentioned, the atonement was ignored, and the grace of God was but little named. At the end separation could but follow, and the people of God would no longer touch the unclean things.

In these later years other things have sprung up by means of those who have not seen the wonders of God in deliverance of his people from the Egypt of this world. The generation that arose after Joshua, and those who came out of Egypt with him, were passed away and none remembered all the wonder-working power of God. These were they that departed into idolatry then. So, in these later years, men who had never come up out of Egypt, or if they had, belonged to the mixed multitude (see Exodus xii. 38; Numbers xi. 4,) and have not seen the work of the Lord indeed, have sought to build up the church by ways contrary to the simple word of God; and judgments have followed where such things have gained a foothold at all times. The Means doctrine, as it has been called, that is, that the preaching of the gospel is a means of quickening sinners dead in sin into divine life, has been taught, and then Missionism in another form, viz: that the church is, as a church, called to preach the gospel to every creature; and a federal government of the churches, and a consolidation of all our periodicals under one management, this management to be chosen by the churches of the whole

country, have been taught. But we rejoice to be able to say that all these last things have made but little headway among us, so far as we know. We rejoice, too, that stern rebukes have been ministered by many faithful brethren from all over the land. We rejoice that the old soldiers have lived to the present time, so that they could bear faithful witness to the wonders that God hath wrought, and thus warn the people to trust in no other, and to refuse all idols from whatever source they come. We do trust that the faithful Lord of our fathers will still abide with us, and make us willing to be the least of all nations, and to count the favor of God more than all the numbers and riches of this world.

In conclusion we will but add that as Israel suffered when they sought after idols, so shall we when we go after them. Let us beware of all that partakes of the works of the flesh, and be found steadfast in believing.

We leave these thoughts for the consideration of our aged brother. May they do no harm, but rather good, is our desire.

PLEASE BE SURE,

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

It becomes my painful duty to chronicle the death of my dear wife, **Mary E. Poulson,** which occurred August 24th, at 7:30 o'clock, at our home in New Church, Va., after a lingering illness of about eleven months, which finally developed into a cancerous liver. She lingered along, sometimes down in her bed, then about the house, and walked out of doors a little. She seemed to be cut off from the very first from earthly things. She very seldom said whether she wanted to live or die, when she did, she seemed to want to get well to be with her children whom she loved so dearly. She was under the doctor's care nearly the entire eleven months; all was done for her that was possible, but to no avail. Some time during the night of August 16th she was taken with a severe pain in her left side, from which she suffered intensely for three days and nights. It almost took my life to see her suffer as she did. I was sitting by her and she said, "Don't you wish we were both at that sweet meeting?" Perhaps the day before she lapsed into unconsciousness she raised her eyes and hands and said distinctly, "Jesus my all to heaven is gone." She was unconscious nearly three days and nights, and breathed like one in a deep sleep; when the end came it was like the going out of a lamp; it came so peacefully that we could hardly tell when it came. She was born March 21st, 1828, and died August 24th, 1905; was married to the writer Jan. 21st, 1852; thus she became an equal sharer of the joys and sorrows of fifty-three years. She was a faithful burden-bearer. Six children were the fruit of this union, three of whom survive her. She was baptized by the writer, in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Messongoes, in Accomac Co., Va., in the year 1876; from that time till her death she was true and faithful to what she professed. She had a long and tried experience, was deep in her convictions, well settled and deeply rooted and grounded in the doctrine of salvation by grace. She was unyielding in her devotion to the cause she so dearly loved. Her life was one of self-sacrifice, ever doing for the good and comfort of others, but took little thought for herself.

We called Elders Francis, Eubanks and Meredith. Elder Francis, who was the only one of them present, to my mind preached a blessed sermon on the two bodies, first natural, second spiritual. The service was held in the meeting-house at Messongoes, Va., after which her remains were laid peacefully away in the churchyard to rest until the trump of God shall sound, then to be raised incorruptible to enter into the full glory of her Lord and ever be with him.

Pray for this poor old man who is in sorrow and gloom.

ALSO,

Handy B. Shockley departed this life suddenly at 4 o'clock a. m. July 19th, at his home near Snow

Hill, Md., aged 68 years. He worked as usual until night the day before his death. About 4 o'clock he left his bed and went into another room as was supposed for a drink of water. His wife heard him fall and hurried to him, to find him dead. Thus we see that in life we are in the midst of death. He was twice married, and leaves four children, two sons by the first marriage and two daughters by the second, one an invalid. Brother Shockley lived and died in the neighborhood where he was born and raised, in Wicomico Co., Md., near Piney Grove. He was baptized by the writer in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Snow Hill, Worcester Co., Md., twenty-five years ago. He was a man of few words, but what he said on spiritual things had weight; his life was upright in every sense of the word, worthy the name christian. As a Baptist his course in life speaks to us and for us, and although he is literally dead, our hope embraces him as one asleep in Jesus, whom God will bring with him when all things are finished; then will he, with all saints, be called into the fullness of that glory, which is seen now by faith, where there will be no more death, sorrowing and sighing will flee away. We miss our brother very much at our meetings, as we have only one male member left. We trust that his dear companion and children may find an Arm underneath them stronger than the one withdrawn. May we all say in truth it is right, because the Lord did it.

The funeral service was held in the Snow Hill meeting-house, conducted by the writer; text, 2 Tim. iv. 6–8, after which the remains were laid to rest in the grave in the churchyard at Snow Hill. May God be our strength and stay.

T. M. POULSON.

MASSEY, Va.

Mrs. Selina Wright was born in Jasper Co., Ga., June 16th, 1831, and was the youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Robinson, and died at the residence of her daughter, Mrs. J. B. Chestnut, at Savannah, Ga., Feb. 20th, 1905, surrounded by her dear children and devoted husband. In December, 1847, she was married to Franklin Wright, of Newton Co., Ga. On the second Saturday in November, 1865, she united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Holly Springs by experience, and was baptized the next day by the late Elder Joseph L. Purington, who was pastor of the church at that time. She was a member of this church from that day till the time of her death. It was my privilege to know her well, as we were members of the same church, and for a number of years near neighbors. She and her husband, brother Wright, were constant readers of the SIGNS, and firm believers in the sound doctrine that it has ever advocated. For several years before her death she was afflicted so she could not regularly attend her church meetings, but often she would ask the brethren and sisters to meet at her home and have them sing, pray and talk with her; nothing gave her more pleasure than to hear them speak of the love, mercy and goodness of her dear Savior, in whom alone she trusted for salvation. I am told that in her death the manifest presence of her Lord was with her. She said only a short time before her departure, "I love everybody," and was very happy, and sent messages of love to all her brethren and sisters.

She was buried at Covington, Ga. Elders J. T. Jordan and R. L. Cook spoke at her funeral, to the comfort and consolation of the dear bereaved children, and especially to brother Wright, her faithful and devoted husband. May the God of all grace comfort the bereaved family and sorrowing church, and especially our dear aged brother, is the prayer of the unworthy writer.

EDWARD HEARD.

Nancy J. Smith was born Sept. 1st, 1821, in Franklin Co., Tenn., and died July 30th, 1905. She was the daughter of Daniel S. Norman. She joined the Boiling Fork church at the age of seventeen years, was baptized by Elder John P. Walker. The church she joined was a member of the Elk River Association. She was married to R. G. Smith Jan. 5th, 1848. Seven children were born to them, two boys and five girls. She outlived all but two of them, viz: Mary Oliver and Fannie Byrd. She lived with sister Byrd, who did all that she could for her mother's comfort. Sister Smith, with some of her children and husband, moved to Texas in the year 1883. She joined Mount Gilead church, in Limestone Co., Texas, where she remained a worthy member till her death. She never failed to fill her place when she could get there, and she often said when she could not be present in body, her mind was there, and that her greatest pleasure was to meet with the brethren and sisters in the worship of God. Her last time to be with us was Saturday before the second Sunday in May, 1905. She said she wanted to be with us once more in our communion, but was disappointed on Sunday on account of rain. She went home on Monday, and was taken sick in a few days, and was never able to be up again, but she said she was willing to go at any time the Lord saw fit to take her. I went to see her on Sunday evening, July 23rd, just one week before her death, and talked with her till a late hour; she seemed perfectly reconciled. Her first words to me were, "Brother Levi, I will soon be done with the troubles of this sinful world." She was too weak to talk very much, but every word she spoke gave us to understand that she was ready and willing when God called for her. She told me while sitting by her bedside that she was thankful that in the many divisions which had come up among Primitive Baptists she had never been led off

by those who departed from the old foundation, but that God had been her protector in all things.

Written by request of sister Fannie Byrd, daughter of sister Smith.

L. A. GIBSON.

DIED—**W. M. Gilbert,** August 18th, 1904, aged 75 years, 5 months and 2 days. His death was caused by cancer, which made its appearance in one eye about twelve years ago. To get relief and be cured if possible he went to many cancer doctors, as well as other physicians, but every effort thus made was unavailing. During these wearisome months in which the disease was doing its work he was remarkably cheerful; no word of complaint or discontent escaped his lips. He talked calmly and resignedly of the situation; many times he declared in substance that God's will was his. It was not long after he received a hope until he joined the Primitive Baptists at New Hope, a church of the Soldier Creek Association of Kentucky. While he was unable to attend meetings of the church for some months before he died, he would often forget his suffering and weakness when in conversation about the blessed truths of the Bible, such as special atonement, salvation by grace exclusively, predestination of all things, knowing that they work together for good to them that love God, the preservation of the saints, and that our vile bodies shall be changed and raised from the dust like unto the glorified body of the Son of God. The dear ones who so faithfully ministered to him greatly dreaded the coming of the last hour, expecting the final conflict would be painful and protracted, but when it came there was no struggle; he passed into the embrace of death like an infant falling asleep. I believe that my father was the best man I ever knew; I know he had imperfections, but his virtues eclipsed them all and they are lost from view. Death has only embalmed his memory to me, and however much we miss his company and presence at church, at home and everywhere here below, we would not if we could recall him to the sufferings and sorrows of this vale of sin and misery. Let us, dear mother and two sisters, dry our tears, for if by faith we step beyond the tomb we shall view him in his eternal home.

M. L. GILBERT.

(See communication on page 562.)

Felox Grundy McLaren died July 24th, 1905, aged 74 years, 11 months and 7 days. He was a quiet and respected citizen, esteemed by all who knew him; had an humble disposition, and was a very quiet man in all his conversation. He felt his unworthiness and nothingness very much, and appeared to feed upon the rich crumbs that fall from the Master's table in the sanctuary, as spoken to us by our pastor, Elder J. K. Womack. Myself and others often asked him why he did not go forward in the church and tell what great things the Lord had done for him, but he always said he did not feel worthy to do so. I have told him that he was the recipient of God's grace, and if he lingered until he felt worthy he would never go. He believed that truth which comes not from man's wisdom, but from God. His house was always open for the reception of Old School Baptists, and he often would put in his mite to help them on their way. He often said that he was not worthy of God's goodness to him.

Elder J. K. Womack was called to officiate at the funeral, and used for his text 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22. He spoke to a large and attentive congregation at the residence, and to the comfort of the remaining family, pointing them to a higher power than man's ability, and saying, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Our friend believed in the doctrine of election and predestination, and that salvation is of the Lord.

His companion is a strong believer in the doctrine, and is a faithful sister in the church. Let us pray God, if it be his will, his children may be led to see the beauty of holiness and righteousness, and to enjoy his presence. Our friend and brother was laid to rest in Mt. Olivet cemetery to await the resurrection of the body, which shall be raised like unto the glorious body of the blessed Redeemer, when there will be no more pain nor death, but we shall abide in the presence of God and the Lamb. What a comfort to the poor in spirit to realize such a good hope of immortal life. May the blessing of God be upon the bereaved family; he is a husband to the widow and a father to the fatherless. May the family find it so is my prayer.

O. B. HICKERSON.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., August 10, 1905.

Miss Ethel Louise Triplett was born March 3rd, 1887, departed this life July 19th, 1905, in the Keyser hospital, where she had been taken for treatment, aged 18 years, 4 months and 16 days. She was born and raised in Kerens, Randolph Co., W. Va., and was possessed of traits seldom seen in children. She always had a kind word for every one she met, and when she met with the ministers of the Primitive Baptists, when only seven or eight years old, she would address them as "brother." Her dear old mother is a firm Baptist, and the father and most of her brothers and sisters hold the same doctrine. I talked with her about a year ago, and she stated she had a great love for the Old Baptists, and would love to be with them if she only thought she was fit; she loved to hear the truth.

The writer being requested, tried to talk on the occasion of the funeral to a large company at the Leeding Creek meeting-house; the company being so very large the services were held in front of the

meeting-house. After services the remains of the poor little daughter and sister in Christ, as I do hope and believe, were laid in the grave to await the morning of the resurrection. She leaves her father, mother, three brothers and three sisters, and a host of friends to mourn. We believe that our loss is her eternal gain. May God comfort the broken-hearted, is my prayer.

S. A. CLEAVENGER.

POETRY.

(Selected by sister M. A. Beakes.)

"SINCE thy Father's arm sustains thee,
Peaceful be;
When a chastening hand restrains thee,
It is he.
Know his love in full completeness,
Feel the measure of thy weakness;
If he wound thy spirit sore,
Trust him more.

Without murmur, uncomplaining,
In his hand
Leave whatever things thou canst not
Understand;
Though the world thy folly spurneth,
From thy faith in pity turneth,
Peace thy inmost soul shall fill,
Being still.

Fearest sometimes that thy Father
Hath forgot?
Though the clouds around thee gather,
Doubt him not.
Always hath the daylight broken,
Always hath he comfort spoken;
Better hath he been for years
Than thy fears.

Therefore whatsoe'er betideth
Night or day,
Know his love for thee provideth
Good alway.
Crown of sorrows gladly take,
Grateful wear it for his sake,
Sweetly bending to his will,
Being still.

To his own thy Savior giveth
Daily strength;
To each troubled soul that liveth,
Peace at length.
Weakest lambs have largest share
Of the tender Shepherd's care;
Ask him not then when or how?
Only bow."

MEETINGS.

THE Lord willing, the Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Church of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 13th and 14th, 1905. Trains will be met on Tuesday p. m. at Roxbury and friends taken to the place of meeting and cared for. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

JOHN B. SLAUSON.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting to be held Tuesday and Wednesday, September 19th and 20th, 1905. Friends coming on D. & H. R. R. and O. & W. R. R. will be met at Olyphant, Pa., Monday at 4 p. m. Mrs. Augusta Tripp, formerly Akerly, lives near each depot, and will be glad to see any who may call at her home. Those coming on D., L. & W. R. R. will come to Glenburn, Pa., and take stage to my house, one and one-half miles. We hope to have a good many friends and brethren with us.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church at Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting to be held the fourth Sunday and Saturday preceding in September, (23rd and 24th) 1905. We invite our brethren and friends to meet with us.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Church Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Cow Marsh church, in Kent Co., Delaware, is appointed to meet on the fourth Saturday and Sunday of September, (23rd and 24th) 1905. All who are interested in our christian welfare are cordially invited to meet with us. The forenoon trains north and south on the Delaware Railroad will be met at Woodside on Saturday and visitors cared for.

W. W. MEREDITH.

PROVIDENCE permitting, there will be a meeting of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church of Albany & Troy, N. Y., Thursday and Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1905. All who desire to come will be made welcome. Come to Albany, N. Y., and take electric cars at Union depot for Troy, N. Y. At Troy take electric car for Albia, there change and take electric car to West Sand Lake, and inquire for Mrs. Moul, who lives about five minutes walk from the electric car depot. Those coming on Wednesday will go to brother Charles Schade's, 423 Sheridan Ave., Albany, N. Y., where they will be cared for until Thursday morning, when they will go with him to the meeting. Those coming Thursday will go direct to West Sand Lake from depot, according to directions. Meeting is to be held at the home of Mrs. Moul, by her request, who makes every lover of the truth welcome, for she loves them for Jesus' sake.

H. SEWARD, Church Clerk.

THE meeting of the Lexington Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Lexington church, at Lexington, Greene Co., N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday of October, (4th and 5th) 1905, when and where we hope to see as many of the ministers, brethren and sisters of our faith and order as can come. Those coming via Ulster and Delaware Railroad will be met at Hunter, where all the p. m. trains will be met, and those who come will be conveyed to Lexington. We will also meet all at Grand Gorge who will write me requesting me to do so.

FLETCHER MACKEY, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Association is appointed to be held with the Providence church, near Rainsburg, Bedford Co., Pa., beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in October, (6th) 1905, and continuing three days. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. On Thursday trains will be met at Bedford and all visiting brethren cared for.

J. CORDER MELLOTT.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa, Schoharie Co., N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting to be held the second Sunday and Saturday preceding in October, (7th and 8th) 1905. We extend a cordial invitation to all our brethren and friends to meet with us in the worship of God; especially do we invite the ministering brethren. Any attending the Lexington Association who can arrange to remain will be welcomed at our two days meeting.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

THE Corresponding Meeting of Virginia is appointed to be held with the Bethlehem church, near Manassas, Prince William Co., Va., October 11th, 12th and 13th, 1905. Friends coming from the east or north by railroad will take train on Southern road at Sixth St. station, Washington, D. C., at 4 or 4:30 p. m. the day before the meeting, or at 8 a. m. or 11 a. m. the day of the meeting. All tickets should be purchased for Manassas, where the several trains will be met. Trains from the south and west will also be met. An earnest invitation is extended to lovers of the truth, especially to our ministering brethren.

J. N. BADGER.

THE yearly meeting of the Welsh Tract church, Newark, Delaware, is appointed to commence on Saturday, Oct. 14th, 1905, and continue two days. Friends coming from the north and south via B. & O. R. R. will get tickets to Newark, Del. Trains leave Philadelphia at 7:40 a. m., and Baltimore at 8 a. m. (Mt. Royal station.) Those coming via Delaware division will take train leaving Delmar at 7:10 a. m. Saturday, and get tickets to Newark, Del. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

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OF THE

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 73. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1905. NO. 19.

POETRY.

TRAVEL.

"THE way has been dark, and the shadows
Have wrapped me in gloom and fear,
And I've longed that the sunlight of Jesus
Once more in the shades might appear.

I've walked in the depths of the valley,
With the storm-cloud breaking above,
And longed that the hand of the Master
Might give me the promise I read.

I've walked where the thorns are the sharpest,
And met me wherever I turned;
Have toiled with hands that were feeble,
And ate the pale ashes I earned.

I have been in the forest of Marah,
And plucked the bitterest boughs;
Have tasted the gall in its droppings,
Which fell on my spirit below.

I have been on the sands of Sahara,
Oasis in beautiful green,
With feet too weary to struggle
O'er the hot sands uprising between.

I have asked for a cup of cold water
In the pit where no water is;
Have longed for a drop for my thirsting,
From the glorious stream which is his.

I have been on the waves of the ocean,
All pathless with billows of foam,
And heard the loud swells of the waters
Which broke in the tempest of gloom.

A sea which was not Galilecan,
A fear in my heart never still;
For I heard not the voice of the Master
Stilling all at the touch of his will.

I've awaked in the mist of the morning,
In the stillness and darkness of night;
No sunlight to chase the cruel vapors,
No star to make glad my sight.

I have wandered, and fallen, and hungered,
And thirsted for water so long,
And held forth the hands which were trembling
For bread which to others belong.

But I know that my heavenly Father
Giveth good in giving me pain,
And I cling to the last to my anchor
Of hope, that he cometh again.

Through all I have carried my lintel,
Neither valley, nor desert, nor sea,
Could wrest from my soul the one blessing
The Father hath given to me.

The gold of the world cannot buy it,
The pearls in the billowy brine,
The wealth of all lands is but paltry
In lieu of the hope which is mine.

Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him,
And welcome the knife from above,
For I know that the death wound is kindly,
And the hand which will deal it is love.

Let me bear this life but in patience,
And walk where the Father shall lead,
For I know that in love and in mercy
He points me the pathway I tread.

Close, closer than life lies my jewel,
And stronger than death is my gem,
Which enters the shadowless heaven,
And sweetly anchors in him."

(Selected by Mrs. Linda Tator.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

PERSONVILLE, Texas, July 1, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—You will find inclosed the experience of Mrs. Lena Pace, of Pinehill, Texas, wife of Elder R. S. Pace; I would love to see it published in our family paper, it was so comforting to poor, unworthy me, and I believe it will be a comfort to God's humble poor everywhere.

Yours in hope,

JAMES D. TRACY.

PINEHILL, Texas, June 22, 1905.

ELDER JAMES D. TRACY:—I would love to call you brother, but am not worthy to call one of God's children brother or sister, but I do love to read the letters and experiences of the Old Baptists. I began reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES nearly two years ago, and this is about all the preaching I get. Soon after I had passed through my troubles I read the experience of Wm. T. Yard in Sept. 15th number of the SIGNS, and it was a great comfort to me at that time; it was the first experience I had ever read. I had said before that no one knew my troubles, but I have learned since that many have suffered more and longer than I.

Elder Tracy, your letter reached us several days ago, and was read with much comfort. By your request I will try in my weak way to write my experience. This is the fourth time I have made the attempt, and have failed each time; this sometimes makes me believe it is all imagination; sometimes it seems so plain to me that I could write as fast as I could move my pen, then again I cannot write anything; sometimes I am as happy as mortal can be, then again I am anything but happy; sometimes my hope is strong, and again I tremble at the thought of death.

When I was a little child I wanted to be a christian, and knew at the same time I was too bad. I was a rude child, and it often gave me trouble, but the more I tried to do better the worse I got. They would often tell me that bad children were burned forever when they died, and this was torment to me day and night. I would sometimes be sitting by the fire and the heat of it would make me sick; I would think of what they had told me, and would become so troubled about it I would steal out and cry to myself until my heart would nearly break, then I would wash my face before any of them saw me. I thought there was not another girl in the world like me, I never cared to go about like others, and things that were pleasures to others were burdens to me. I went to a Missionary meeting one Sunday when I was only twelve years old, and heard the preacher say, Except ye believe ye cannot be saved; one may say, I do not steal, lie, drink, gamble or swear, yet except he believes he cannot be saved. No one knew what a burden his words were to me, they rang in my ears day and night for a long time, and I would say, What can I do, or what is it I must believe? I went on in this way for several years, and my burden began to leave me, but still I was not satisfied, everything was dull to me all the time.

June 16th, 1901, I married at the age of eighteen. The second Sunday in August after I married, my husband and I went to a Missionary protracted meeting, and this one day I shall never, never forget. About half past eleven o'clock my burden struck me like a flash of lightning; I could see myself the worst one among the more than five hundred

people present. The house was crowded, and I dared not look to the right or left, behind or before me; it seemed to me that every one was looking at me and knew what a wretch I was; this was during preaching. I do not remember where the text is, but I remember the words, "Take ye away the stone." These words were like a sword in my heart, for I could see my sins like mountains before me, and knew that I could not roll them away. If I had been in a den of raging beasts there could not have been more terror about it. I wished for death, and then I thought, Where will I go, where will I go? Some say there is no hell, but it seemed so plain to me then that I could almost feel the heat of the flames, and all I could say was mercy, mercy. The preacher began to call up mourners, and I with more than a hundred others went up and gave him my hand, but went back to my seat with my burden heavier than ever. When dinner came I did not want any, but tried to eat to keep any one from noticing me. There were eight or ten baptized that evening; I did not want to see it, but kept it all to myself. We came home in the evening, (or to my husband's father's house, we lived there then) and that night we all went to another protracted meeting at Pinehill, where my husband and his people, my people and many of my kin folks were members. I had paid but little attention to preaching before this, and I thought that night I would listen, but instead of hearing this preacher, the words, "Take ye away the stone," kept ringing in my ears until I wished I was a thousand miles away, so I could fall down on my face and shed a flood of burning tears which even at that moment I could not conceal. How I wished to be alone no one knew, but the only time I was alone was in the dead hours of night while all the others were asleep. We went to preaching day and night, and on Tuesday night I had made up my mind to join, but wanted some one else to go first. At last one girl joined by letter, then I thought I could face the gazing crowd, so I presented myself for membership. They were singing that old song, "Jesus, lover of my soul," and playing the organ; I thought it was the sweetest music I had ever heard. I had thought that old song was worn out, but then it seemed new. When they stopped singing, the preacher came and sat down by me and asked me to relate my experience; no one knew my feelings at that moment but God. I did not know what he meant, or what to say, and hardly knew where I was; I trembled from head to foot, and could not speak one word. Then he began asking me some questions, as follows: Have you been in great trouble of mind? I answered, Yes. Was your burden great? To which I answered, Yes. How long have you been under this great burden? I answered, Ever since last Sunday morning. Do you feel now that your sins have been forgiven? This question struck me to the heart; I clinched my teeth and trembled it seemed to me for five minutes, then answered, I do, and was received. Then instead of being relieved, as some claim to be, it seemed to me that my burden was tenfold more than ever. If any one ever suffered for telling a lie I think I have suffered for telling that one. Yes, it was a lie, for my sins were not forgiven, and seemed like mountains before me at that moment, yet I had it to bear alone, no one knew it but myself. When I got home that night I tried to pray, but my words did not seem to reach higher than my head. I went to

bed and tried to sleep, but could not; I cried nearly all night. This is all so plain to me now, it seems that it was but last night. I know Robert prayed for me that night. After we retired he spoke these words to me: "Lena, I have been praying for you a long time." I thought they were the sweetest words I had ever heard him speak, for I did not think any one had ever had a mind toward me in that way.

Baptism was put off for the next month, and during this time no one knows what I suffered. I did not want to be baptized, and wished every day for something to happen to prevent it. But at last the day came, the second Sunday in September; there was not a cloud to be seen, (I mean in the sky) there was a dark cloud over me, but I did not think any one knew it, and I could not tell it, so I was baptized (or put under the water) with three others. Then we went back to the house for preaching, and again the next month, and after this I noticed my husband did not care to go to preaching like he always had, and I was glad of it, but would not say anything about it. We went to live by ourselves the last of December, and I was better satisfied for awhile, because I could be alone more. After this I noticed my husband reading his Bible more than usual, and I wished I could read and understand like he did, but it was a sealed book to me, I could understand but little of what I read.

I went on in this way for more than a year. In the spring of 1903 I was in ill health part of the time, hardly able to do my housework, and my burden seemed heavier every day, I felt like I was alone altogether; when my husband was not at work he was either reading or writing all the time. This was my hardest battle; I thought he did not care for me as he once did, as he did not talk to me much, but still he was ready and willing to do anything I asked him. One morning some time in June I noticed he read the Bible till I got breakfast ready and called him; hardly a word passed his lips while we were eating, and after breakfast he read awhile then went out to the field. I did not know then what he meant, but since then I have learned that he had just passed through the trouble I was then suffering. Awhile after he left the house it seemed to me that I could not bear my burden any longer, I felt worse that morning than I ever had, and was almost afraid to stay at the house by myself, and was not able to work. He came to the house about eleven o'clock and began writing before dinner was ready. No one knows how much I cried, I made up my mind to go and tell him my troubles, and that the way he was going on was just killing me. I got up and started for the room where he was, and just as I went inside of the door he looked up at me only for a second; I tried to speak, but there were no words to speak. I do not know how long I stood there, but I remember going back in the dining room, sitting down and weeping for joy; every trouble left me for awhile and I was satisfied. In a few days I thought of my burden, and wondered where it was, and how it left, but it was gone, and that was all I knew. After awhile doubts and fears arose, and for a long time I was afraid I was deceived altogether, and that it was all imagination, but I had a vision last August that has ever been a comfort to me: I thought I was at a large gathering, and there were all kinds of people present, my mother was the only one I knew. I saw some men cutting a sweet gum tree, and

it was the tallest tree I ever saw; they cut it on one side and then bent it to the ground and nailed a cross in the top of it, face downward, and said they were going to tie some one to the cross and let the tree fly up. I thought I was the one who had to go, and when I started to them mamma said, Lena, what in the world are you going for? I told her some one had to go, and it might as well be I as any one else. Then I went up to them and they took me by the left hand; I had no fear at all as they led me to the place where they were going to tie me, and as they were tying me I saw something white as snow floating in the air coming toward me; when it got to me I knew it was Christ. He took me by the right hand and said, I will go with you. The tree flew up, and we came down to the ground hand in hand; when we reached the ground he disappeared.

Elder Tracy, this is all I have to say, and sometimes I fear it is all imagination. There is one thing that bothers me, and I study about it a great deal, that is, I have never had a desire to unite with the church. Pray for me when you can.

If I am your sister I am the least of all.

(MRS.) LENA PACE.

BRANTFORD, Ont., July 20, 1905.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—It is my present mind to send you a few thoughts for the SIGNS. Whether you publish them or not, I shall try to feel satisfied with the providences of God, whose ruling is over all, for he knoweth our feeble frames, which we often do not. The passage round which I hover every now and then is found in Hebrews vi. especially. This epistle is commonly attributed to Paul, being written to his kinsmen after the flesh who had embraced the doctrines of the gospel. The date given is A. D. 64. The gifts of Pentecost are given as A. D. 33. Of course authorities differ by a few years, but I refer to this point to show that on the scale of our short lives sufficient time had elapsed to prove the reality of the profession made by these disciples. The whole style of this letter differs from any other, being plainly fitted for the instruction of Jews, who were familiar with the services of the temple which still remained, not being destroyed till about thirty-seven years after the death of Jesus. Viewing this writing in advance of the letters by Peter and Jude, we see an evident spirit of declension shewing itself, and the spiritual wisdom and need of the full instruction and solemn warnings with encouragement concerning their faith, the fullness and certainty of its truths being brought into bold relief here. The position of the Jewish flock at the time seems to be that they had partially felt the destructive and deadening influence of the things of time and sense working in the carnal mind or body of death; it had drained out the sweetness and enthusiasm of first love. Opposition still existed, though there was a lull in the storm, and deceivers in the form of Judaizing teachers were gaining ground. How popular at that period would be a legalized profession of gospel, this is what poor, sinful human nature craves: the world and Christ together if possible. Yes, I believe it to be true. The narrow way we cannot love unless the Spirit lays hold of us and forces us out of the burning desires of this heart of unbelief and spiritual imaginations of fleshly wisdom, as the angel did Lot, lest he should be consumed with the ungodly. Just for this position of danger through all time this glorious epistle was written; its seeds appear in every church

and in every heart, and its warning in every case means, Is it I? My views on the verses are just as they appear to me now, and not as I have been taught, yet I have no idea that they have attained perfection, but I humbly think they are on the right track of thought, and as they comfort me a little I would like others to taste and discern a little of their substance.

For connection let us look at the chapter preceding, verse ten, and we find the important centre truth is the official work of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving prominence to his priestly position. Looking on this man then as the anointed of God, Paul says, "We [the inspired apostles] have many things to say, and hard to be uttered." Why? Not because of any lack on the side of these faithful teachers, but ye have become dull, (in a lukewarm, drowsy state) so that when they ought to have been teachers of those younger in spiritual life they had gone back to babyhood, needing milk; in plain words, needing again to be instructed in the first principles of the doctrine of God. Now clearly this retrograde motion was backward toward the law. In their scales of good and evil the great and perfect atonement of this High Priest was being weighed down by the deceitfulness of the man of sin outwardly and inwardly. Remember this is the solemn statement of the Holy Ghost through the lips of these humble men. Thus we may gather that what is written concerns those who have made a profession, and not the unregenerate world as such. So the sixth chapter begins with the admonitory word "Therefore," because of the danger hidden in this apparently harmless position. "Let us go on unto perfection." That is, be fully established in the completeness of this great redemption in every detail, and thereby nullify the evil power which was producing barrenness of heart and life. To this end he enumerates the doctrine of Christ as a sure foundation, which ought not to have required laying again, *i. e.*, repentance from dead works, faith towards God, the doctrine of baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. It is on these four last clauses I wish to dwell. Bear in mind the subject: here is Christ as a perfect sacrifice for sin as compared with the law. To get a clearer idea it will be well to turn to Leviticus i. and quietly read for yourselves. The sacrifice was to be a male without blemish, brought by the voluntary will of the offerer to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord. He was to put his hands on the head of this offering, confessing his sins over it, then kill it for a burnt offering, after which the priest serving was to sprinkle its blood on the altar in token of atonement, for the blood represents the life, next flay (skin) the carcass, washing its inward parts, cut it in pieces and lay it upon the wood, put fire under and there consume it as a burnt sacrifice of a sweet savor unto the Lord. None of the sin offering was eaten, showing that only by the destruction of sin can the holy law be satisfied. This chapter brings before us the individual penitent, but to trace the great atoning work of Jesus for his people, Leviticus xvi. brings out the points more clearly; there we have the bullock and goat, representing the sins of the priesthood and people, burnt outside the camp with all their parts, the washings, confession of iniquity by Aaron on the head of the scapegoat which stood for redeemed Israel, and then departed into the wilderness, never to appear in

judgment again, and the sprinkling of the mercy-seat.

Here I will call your attention to the beautiful symbolic teaching found in Exodus xxviii. 30, when Aaron went in before the Lord into the holy place, bearing upon his heart the judgment of the children of Israel continually. On the breastplate was the Urim and Thummim, by which he was to judge, signifying the lights and perfections of God, while on the skirt of his robe, around its hem, alternately was a golden bell and a pomegranate. The sweet sound of these golden bells ushered him into the awful presence of God, lest he should be smitten with death, and to the waiting congregation it would indeed be music, for it told them their high priest had been accepted, and they in him. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound."

We will now return to our Hebrew believers. I take these four clauses as being a condensed reproduction of these symbolic truths so familiar to the Jewish mind. The doctrine of baptisms representing the ceremonial washings which could not take away sin, the laying on of hands, the confession of those sins by the sinner, the resurrection, the acceptance through the priest after the death of the victim, and the consuming fire, which shows the fiery indignation of God against sin. So in the case of the High Priest, the offering of the people was through him and in him, and the sweet savor of the special ointment compounded for the great atonement day, shewing the resurrection gifts and power of the Holy Spirit over sin and eternal judgment, which means that in the sense of atonement. Once for all he was judged for his people, and his people judged in him.

One more thought: failing to see the perfection of the work of Christ and returning to the law, he returned to nothing but the judgment of burning, or death. Only through sacrifice could the law shew mercy, and having been fulfilled in Jesus, only through Jesus could he be saved. So long as he despised the true Sacrifice there was none, and is none. It seems to me that some of God's children pass through the consuming fire of a second death, but none of those chosen in him can ever perish. As you, dear Elder Chick, so plainly and thoughtfully shewed, the purpose is to consume the adversaries, not the poor soul himself, and that I take it is the real purpose for which all these warnings are written, that we may not be ignorant of the devices of this Satanic, sinful mind of the flesh, which can transform itself into an angel of light.

I feel that I have blundered greatly over this very solemn Scripture, failing to give point where I wished to. To dishonor in any way the perfection of Christ's finished work is in my eyes a heinous offence, yet I feel it may be done through ignorance, yet surely true spiritual fruit cannot grow where he is despised. It is well that he is Judge as well as Savior. All I can do is to send this, it is written in all honesty, but I leave it to your judgment, feeling that all will be well.

Most sincerely in the love of the truth, your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) J. STREET.

CRAMER, Ala., July 8, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—In the year 1868 I read for the first time the Bible. I was then seventeen years old. I did not commence reading with the intention of reading it through, but just thought I would read some in it for

the sake of improving my limited education, and just to see what it spoke of in the book of Genesis. I had not read far before I became deeply interested in the historical facts therein recorded; and the more I read the more I became interested in the wonderful things related in the Scriptures, and so continued to read till I had read to the last of Revelation. I thought the Bible was a wonderfully good book, and if any one had told me that I did not believe the doctrine set forth there I would have felt sure that they told a falsehood. I think I read it with as unprejudiced a mind as any natural man ever did, for at that time I knew but little about the differences existing among various denominations, and liked one as well as another. I thought that everybody believed the Bible, and did not think that any one had a different notion from me as to what it taught. I was astonished at the stubbornness and rebellion of national Israel, and horrified at the blindness and cruelty of the Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees, and thought that if I had been on earth in the days of the Savior, I would have followed and obeyed and adored him. When I read of the wicked, profane and unbelieving, it did not once occur to my mind that I was one of them, for I was considered a moral boy, and thought that the wickedness of the human family consisted in immorality.

Upon a certain occasion I went to hear my aged grandfather, a Primitive Baptist, preach. When he took his text I did not dream of his preaching anything contrary to what I believed, and hence was not prejudiced against him, and as I had come to be very much interested in the Bible I was anxious to hear him. But he did not say much before he crossed my notions, and I soon became astonished, and, as it were, shocked at the doctrine he advanced, and was really anxious for him to hush. I thought, Is it possible for a man as old as you are, and who has read the Bible as much as you have, not to know any better than that? I felt sure I could convince him directly that he was wrong; and accordingly we had not gone further than half a mile from the house after preaching before I attacked him about what he had preached, which only made him smile, and tell me that I was blind, and did not understand; but I did not believe a word of it, for I thought that I could see and understand just as well as he could.

The more I reflected upon the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists, or "Hardshells," as they were called, the more I became embittered against it, because I fancied that I could clearly see it was contrary to the teachings of the Bible, and my desire to convince them of what I supposed to be the error of their way was so strong that whenever I chanced to meet them a controversy ensued. I now paid more attention to the preaching of other orders, and found the doctrine of the Missionary Baptists suited me precisely, and in defense of their doctrine and practice I labored with as much zeal, I reckon, as any nonprofessor ever did. When I looked around me and compared notes with the Primitive Baptists I discovered that nearly everybody was on my side of the controversy, and this fact was very encouraging to me at that time, and after carefully considering and investigating the matter I came to the conclusion that the doctine contended for by the "Hardshells" was one of the most unreasonable, hateful and God-dishonoring systems of religion ever advocated in the world, and hence the Primitive Baptists were the most contemptible sect on earth.

Can it be possible, thought I, that these few despised, illiterate people are right, and the great mass of the people wrong? No indeed; and I would dismiss such an idea as utterly incompatible with common sense. I thought they were the most self-righteous, conceited, stubborn and bigoted people on earth, because they set up their opinion and judgment against the majority of the intelligent and educated people of the world, together with the great D. D.'s, and to do that was, in my judgment, the height of ignorance, folly and presumption. When I argued with them it was not with the view of investigating the matter in order to arrive at the truth, for I felt sure that I understood that, but my sole object was to convince them of what I considered their error. Some of my near and dear relatives were Primitive Baptists, but that had no tendency to abate my enmity against them, and I said that if the world believed their doctrine, I, for one, would not, as I did not want to believe it, and was fully determined that I would not believe it.

In the fall of 1870, that beloved minister and servant of the Lord, Elder J. T. Allen, had an appointment at my old settlement in the Missionary meeting-house, and I went to hear him. On Saturday night he preached at my father's, and after he dismissed the people I attacked him before he took his seat, and soon got the Bible and referred to the law to prove that eternal salvation was conditional. He admitted the conditionality of the law, but showed that there was no eternal life in it, and proceeded to show the distinction between the law and the gospel so clearly that I could not gainsay his argument. For the first time in my life I saw that I was mistaken in that one important point, and I humbly hope that it pleased God to open my heart that I might understand some of the things spoken by him. My Arminian platform was shaken from center to circumference. Still however, I had many props upon which I relied with great confidence, but in process of time they fell one by one, till my last prop was gone, and the whole concern, with all its props and stays and braces, fell to rise no more. In sentiment I was turned right about.

On a certain Sunday night, directly after having gone to bed, my repose was disturbed by a sudden and peculiarly dangerous sensation about my heart, which caused me to turn almost instantly in bed, and after lying there awhile it appeared to me that my breath was getting shorter and shorter, and that if I lay there I would die; I got up and went out into the yard, and looking about wondered what was the matter. I went back to bed, and after a time dropped off to sleep. During the week I felt about as usual, except that my feelings were somewhat disturbed on account of what had occurred on Sunday night. On the next Sunday night the same awfully dangerous and indescribable sensation returned. I concluded it was merely imagination, and decided that I would lie still and try to wear it off, but I could not; on the contrary, it seemed to wear on, and I felt that I would die if I lay there, and so I got up, and when I touched the floor I was in a tremble, and could hardly stand. I walked out into the yard and tried to examine myself, and in doing so I felt to be the most wretched sinner on earth, knowing full well that I was not suffering bodily pain, and I felt as I never had before, that the awful hour of death had come and that there was no remedy on earth for me. I felt that I was an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, a stran-

ger to the covenants of promise, without hope and without God in the world. No pen can describe the agony of my soul that night, my distress was so great that I could not conceal it. I kindled a light, and walked the floor in extreme anguish, and in answer to the inquiries of my friends I told them that I could not tell what was the matter with me. I did not tell them that I thought I was going to die, as I did not wish to alarm them. Very little did I sleep that night, and the next day was a dark one to me, and I felt as though it would be my last on earth, but to my surprise I continued to live from day to day, though in much distress of mind. If I could have believed that this was conviction for sin it would have afforded me much comfort, but this I could not believe, yet hoped against hope that it was. In this state I remained several months. In the spring of 1873 there came up a shower of rain, and I lay across a little bed and was meditating upon my desolate, forlorn and hopeless condition when the following Scriptures occurred to my mind: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." It then occurred to me that I had already passed from death unto life, and hope sprang up and I felt relieved. I went to the door and looked around, and with a feeling calm and serene I felt to hope and rejoice in God as my Savior. Still I was not satisfied, for I greatly desired a greater manifestation of love, and a stronger evidence of my acceptance with God. The light afforded was so dim that I was afraid to claim it as a reason of my hope, and I was fully determined that I would never offer myself to the church without a brighter and more glorious manifestation of God's love and mercy. I desired to feel sure beyond a doubt that the Lord had pardoned my sins, and to have his love and mercy so clearly revealed to me that I would be perfectly satisfied, and others convinced that I had been born again. I saw, after this, that the Primitive Baptists had confidence in me as a christian, which made me feel sad indeed, for I thought, If they knew my wretched condition, and how little my hope was, they would not have any confidence in me. In this way I continued for more than two years, desiring all along, however, to live with the despised few, but my sense of unworthiness kept me from attempting such a thing. In the fall of 1874 my desire to go to the church was so strong that I was not satisfied anywhere, and before the regular meeting at Mt. Nebo, Bibb Co., in November, I became really anxious to go to the church and tell them the reason of my little hope, and when the time arrived, with my wife and some others I did go forward, and we were received into the fellowship of the church, and with some of the others I was baptized on Sunday by Elder J. T Allen. My doubts and fears continue with me to this day, often causing me to exclaim in the language of Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Yours in hope of eternal life in and through the meritorious sufferings of the Son of God,

G. W. STEWART.

NASHVILLE, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Your editorial in the last number of the SIGNS is good. It is established by the word of God, and will be indorsed by all Baptists who put no confidence in the flesh. Also brother McNees' good and able communication with reference to the watchmen whom it has pleased God to place on the walls of Zion to give the alarm at the approach of all enemies, was much enjoyed. There is but one true church, which is composed of a poor and afflicted people who were chosen before the foundation of the world in Christ our Lord; the Old School or Primitive Baptists are the ones of whom I speak. The religious world, and some claiming our name, are trying to persecute the poor in spirit, such as are not following the beast, or worshiping his image to have praise of men. But some have left their first love and have gone into idolatry, if indeed they have ever felt the love of God shed abroad in their hearts; they must be miserable indeed. The Lord knows how to deliver them, he will afflict them as he did of old his wandering children; they will then learn that our God is not limited. The knowledge of God is the foundation of all vital religion, and is the true happiness of fallen man; it is not a matter for the present only to know God, but also it is for our eternal life. This is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. Important as it is, how defective we are in this divine knowledge, how little are we acquainted with the excellencies of the Lord Jehovah, his uncontrollable power, his unbounded goodness and long-suffering, his holiness and justice. The question with us is, Have we loved the Lord our God above all else? This is the first and great commandment. Have we at all times entertained the most honorable thoughts of his sublime perfections, who is the high and lofty One, the Ruler of the whole earth? The psalmist said, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever." Those who receive the doctrine of the Most High as was penned by the psalmist here will cast their all into God's hand, even to the saving of the soul; this was the testimony of the apostles. By Malachi the Lord said, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Shall man rob God with his fleshly worship? Paul said that his speech and his preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. Again he said that this treasure is in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. Paul placed no confidence in the flesh, knowing that fleshly worship profiteth nothing. He had engaged in this fleshly worship at one time, until the scales dropped from his eyes by the appearing of the Sun of righteousness, he was then told what to do. He conferred not with flesh and blood, but from that time forth he went in the strength of Israel's God, proclaiming that salvation is of the Lord. He was persecuted all along the line for the defense of God's truth, the truth of God's righteousness, and not man's. The truth of God is still denied, and those that stand firm upon it are still persecuted. Christ was persecuted in the days of his flesh. The Father bore witness to him saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Nothing more was required of Jesus than he did, for he fulfilled every jot and tittle of

the law and made it honorable. Man is dependent in the flesh, and nothing but the grace of God will fit and prepare him for eternal peace and happiness beyond this life. Such poor, helpless ones as these do try to serve the God they love, who is the Friend of sinners. To whom else can we look for peace of soul in all our trials and afflictions? We desire his presence to comfort us in times of darkness. At times we feel to hope that we have had his presence, which has caused us to rejoice, and we have felt that it was good to be in his presence. I hope that I do love the Lord God, who, as I trust, has done such great things for me. We desire to love him unfeignedly above all other objects; and we have still greater obligations to our almighty Benefactor. Hear, O heavens, and wonder, O earth, our God hath not spared his own Son, his only Son, but has delivered him up for the sins of his people, and that for their salvation. O that we may all be kept at his feet feeling our littleness, instead of claiming and offering our own filthy garments as our righteousness. Let us instead praise the God of Zion; praise him for his mighty works. O that men would praise the Lord for all his goodness. How thankful we should be to know that our sins are not remembered against us any more; they are washed away through the blood of the Lamb. He is the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, and is our everlasting strength; he is the God of truth; he is infinitely perfect; he is worthy of all admiration; this God is the Judge of the whole earth. We must renounce all our works and trust alone in the Savior's atonement and in his righteousness; we must plead insolvency in all things, that we may sit down under his shadow with great delight. His righteousness is our only hope and our constant joy. This righteousness is that which he wrought out in his own glorious person. The sanctification of our souls and eternal life are not to be sought or found in any human performance, but all are to be sought and found in Jesus Christ. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." He is our holiness and our High Priest, who hath procured our acceptance before the throne of God. We must rely only upon the merits of the Redeemer, who shall bring us forth in the paths of righteousness, (his imputed righteousness) which are adorned with holiness and watered with the fountain of his consolations, and which bring us into everlasting rest. The legalist may ask, Why may not this way of eternal life be the path of duty, in the way of our own obedience? But such happiness can never result from any duty performed by ourselves, there are no green pastures opened to legal works, but only to those who have been taught by the grace of God. The legalist knows nothing of the still waters; he strives by a troubled and disordered stream which cannot speak peace or comfort. As we pass through this valley and shadow of death, to give us all our blessings is the exalted office of Christ, and on account of his obedience we receive the blessings. Here is righteousness bestowed by Jehovah, and not performed by the saints, but received by the sinner. This is the only solid support of our hope of heaven and of admission into the mansions of eternal day. The psalmist proclaims, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. [The King of glory, with all the heirs of grace.] Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle." When Job saw the Lord he abhorred him-

self and repented in sackcloth and ashes. Looking at his own personal obedience, he had just enough to be confounded, ashamed and undone. They only are accepted who are of a broken heart and a contrite spirit. Well might the sweet singer of Israel, with entire dependence upon God, go forth in the strength of the Lord and proclaim his name, saying, "I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only." This is the raiment of needlework and clothing wrought with gold, which clothed our great High Priest with beauty and glory. "Blessed is the people that know the the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day." This is he who bore all our iniquities on the cross; this is he who fulfilled all righteousness for the justification of sinners. He is our surety, pleading our cause because we have no merit to offer. We are condemned, and not competent to speak a good word, for we are sold under sin, and are in rebellion against God's righteous law, and without his pardoning love and grace we are doomed to everlasting misery; we need the blessed Spirit to direct our minds. When we feel our nothingness it causes us to mourn, and then we will try to ask the mercy of God upon us. We are prone to sin. As the poet said,

> "I am a stranger here below,
> And what I am 'tis hard to know;
> I am so vile, so prone to sin,
> I fear that I'm not born again."

This is the life that I am living, full of doubts and fears; is this the christian's warfare through which we have to pass? If so, let it come, for I desire to be kept at the feet of Jesus, with humility of spirit trusting in him in all things. It is through his great mercy that I am still spared to think of him, and to adore him for such wonderful blessings from the bountiful hand of our God.

You can publish what I have written if in your judgment it will be a blessing to true believers. I think my mind has been directed in what I have written, if I do not misunderstand the teachings of the word of God. Nothing but the grace of God can do us any good; there is no middle ground to stand upon. My whole trust is in God for the saving of the soul, and that without legal works.

I have written a lengthy communication, as my mind was moved to cast in my mite, hoping that it might be of some interest to the household of faith.

Your brother, I trust,

O. B. HICKERSON.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., July 21, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Since the early morning of July 4th I have been mostly indoors because of a severe spell of bilious colic, from which I suffered very much on that occasion, and my mind has run out in many directions to the saints with whom I have taken sweet counsel, and I am sure that I have never experienced a time when I felt more humble and dependent on the dear Lord, or more love for his holy cause and for his people. I do thank him that he has kept salvation in his own hand to dispense as he will, and for his glorious, everlasting gospel which he has so graciously given unto his people through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have access to the Father in prayer and supplication. Whether in sickness or in health it is such a great consolation to know that "Salvation is of the Lord." I have often thought of Jonah and his condition when he was driven to make that expression. He surely was a child of God, and had been blessed with the

gift to declare the word of the Lord, as well as deliverance from sin and its bondage. He had experienced what we commonly call the change from nature to grace, and now the word had come for him to go to Nineveh and preach as the Lord had directed him. Jonah possessed a large share of that nature commonly called "self will," and in that he was determined not to do this thing. His excuse was that God was a merciful God, and at the repentance of the Ninevites he would have mercy on them and spare them. But God must be obeyed, whether Jonah is honored and exalted or not. God never made a mistake, nor gave a commandment that will return unto him void. Jonah's rebellion is nothing, it is so easy for the Lord to purge him, but the purging is a most terrible rebuke to Jonah. He could go his own way, could he not? he had money, and so he would go to Tarshish. He paid his fare and boarded the ship. How little did he know of the approaching storm which would make him confess his guilt and pass the sentence of death on himself; but the storm came. It was another one of God's servants which he had arranged in this line of preparation for that preaching; it did its part of the work. The great fish was not visible to Jonah, but God had prepared him, both as to locality and ability, to swallow the man. Just at the appointed time (like as Jesus was crucified) Jonah was cast overboard, but not to be drowned in the sea as the sailors expected, for he went straight into the fish's belly, where the Lord had ordained to teach him a lesson for three days and three nights that he could learn nowhere else. Strange that he had to go down to the bottom of the mountains and be wrapped about with the sea weeds to learn this important lesson. It was to him the belly of hell, but there he learned the most important of all lessons, that "Salvation is of the Lord," and there he resolved, "I will pay that that I have vowed." A strange place to make such an expression. How was he going to do it? he was yet in the whale's belly, but that lesson he had been taught and the faith in God that was given him there enabled him to look through the darkness of hell to the day of deliverance which God had ordained for him. He could just as easily have perished in that whale's belly as the Lord could have continued in Joseph's new tomb, or that the children of God shall not rise, see Jesus as he is and be like him.

We stop a moment. Did the way of Jonah's deliverance appear to him? Did he know the word of the Lord to the fish? But that word had been spoken, and there was a moving in that fish to the dry land, and to the dry land it went and Jonah was delivered from his grave. The way appeared in the obedience which the word of God had worked in the fish. Does it make any difference if the way is sealed up to me or any other of God's children so we cannot see how these things can be? Will not the way appear in the end of God's doings in us? God's will must be done and his word obeyed, and he works in us to that end. In our disobedience our works become so many fagots piled around us to increase the vehemency of the fire by which we are tried. In this strait we learn the lesson which we could not learn in any other place, that "Salvation is of the Lord."

Let us remember that the verb of the present tense and not of the past tense is used. This shows us that salvation does not at any time go out of the hand of God and become conditional with us, nor

is any part of it put into our hands. All truly indoctrinated saints will declare that grace in every sense of that word is of God, and Paul fully declares that salvation is by grace and not by works. This should settle the question at once and forever in the hearts and minds of all the children of God that salvation, in all its parts, for time and eternity, as revealed in the hearts of his little ones, is of the Lord. But we see that Jonah had to go down into the deep before he could learn this very important lesson. Our dear Lord learned obedience by the things he suffered, and Paul must learn the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ; thus every one who knows the way of the Lord learns it.

The children of God are compared to islands: these stand out above the waters, and each one is a separate body in itself. When the storm rages and the tempest howls each island must withstand the storm (apparently) alone, but if you should be able to trace down the sides of the islands to the bottom of the waters you would find them all perfectly united in one body. Here is one of the necessities of our going down into the deep. Remember that it was there that light broke in on Jonah and he said, "I will pay that that I have vowed." There he learned obedience, and there, too, we are so swallowed up, and the flesh cut off, that we are made willing servants unto God in anything unto which he has called us. What a wonderful work is that wrought by the hand of the Lord, and how sure it is to fully prepare us for the work unto which he, by his grace, hath called us. However insufficient we may be for the task, we are taught that "Salvation is of the Lord," that our sufficiency is of him, and that all of it together will crown Jesus Lord of all, and we shall be a royal diadem in his hand.

Praise ye the Lord, who hath saved us, and called us, "not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

With much love to the household of saints, I am, I hope, your brother in this salvation,

L. H. HARDY.

HAMPTON, Iowa, June 11, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I once more will write a few lines for your perusal, and insertion in the SIGNS, provided you think them worthy a place there. But before I proceed further perhaps the question may arise in your mind, Who are you and what are you? In answer to which inquiry I will say, I do not fully know myself, nor properly what I am, and it is likely if you knew me personally you would be of the same opinion. However, be that as it may, I profess to belong to the family of Old School Predestinarian Baptists, and hope I have been taught by the same Spirit by which they have been taught. I believe the children of God are taught to know each other by a true experimental knowledge of the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, all having been taught in the same school by the same glorious teacher, the Holy Spirit. This knowledge is not peculiar to these latter times, but in every age God has provided a way for his people to know and understand each other; not by a mere letter or external knowledge, but by an internal heart-felt reciprocity of feeling and sentiment. Men may read and hear much of the fame of Jesus Christ and still be very ignorant of his true excellencies, the gospel must come home to the heart in power and in the Holy Ghost before they

will see and feel his divine beauty and efficiency as the Savior of poor, lost sinners. The queen of Sheba had heard much about and of the fame of King Solomon, but when she came to him she acknowledged that the half had not been told her. So a sinner may hear and believe many things about Jesus Christ and still have no saving faith in him, but when they come to behold the King in his beauty by the eye of faith in him, and to contemplate the order and beauty of the house (church) he has built, the attire and waiting of his servants, the magnificence of his palaces, and the richness of his grace, their hearts are melted within them, their strength becomes weakness, and their own comeliness or fancied merit is turned into corruption; divine wisdom alone can give the knowledge of these things. The wisdom of this world may comprehend natural things, but cannot attain to things divine. No man, says Jesus, knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. To ascribe salvation wholly to God from first to last is very unpopular in this day of religious enterprise, and if a man wishes to become a subject of derision and a target to be shot at, let him preach and maintain the doctrine of sovereign, discriminating grace. The wisdom of the world is earthly, sensual and devilish, hence it is the wisdom of God that should be sought for. But men would have the honor of getting religion, as they vainly call it; they should remember however that the religion people have to get is of this world, and when they have gotten it, it often plagues them more to keep it and manage it than it did to get it. Revealed religion from heaven gets and manages the subject, prepares him for the spiritual service of God here and for an eternal weight of glory hereafter; it is a religion that bears him up and supports him under all the fiery trials, privations and persecutions by a gainsaying world, consoles him under all the afflictions of this life, teaches him humility in prosperity and encourages him to trust in God when in adversity. Let the gainsaying world deride, whet their swords, shoot with their sharpest arrows, the child of God can rejoice, not one of their shafts can hit or hurt him, he can hold up his head and breast the storms of persecutions; he knows that salvation is of the Lord's unmerited grace, and that it is by the grace of God that he is what he is, therefore he trusts God and has no confidence in himself, or in any religious invention or effort of men to promote the Redeemer's kingdom, or in Theological schools, Missionary boards, conventions, Sunday schools, protracted meetings or anxious benches. He finds no precept or example for such things in the book of inspiration. The old fashioned Baptists are accused of many things, called all kinds of names; even some who claim to be the old order of Baptists call us "can't help its," "do nothings," "old fogies." Let them deride us, let God be true and every man a liar.

Brother Chick, I have written this under many difficulties and under a severe trial of mind. Our youngest son is now very low with that dread disease consumption, at Prescott, Arizona, has been there since last December; one of our sons is now with him, and if possible will bring him home, but we fear that he will never be able to stand the trip. We know that he is in the Lord's hand, and that he will do right. Pray for us.

E. A. NORTON.

WYOMING, Del., July 2, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—Last evening while reading the SIGNS of July 1st, and enjoying the letters, I felt that I wanted to write something, too, if only to tell the dear ones that I enjoy reading their letters, and hope they will write on, and to others who have never written for publication, that if ever they feel like saying anything through our family paper we all would be glad to hear from them. I would say, Do not stop because you feel that what you write is not suitable for publication, but let your brethren judge that. Now perhaps I had better have let some one else said this, but it came into my mind and so I have put it on paper. I felt last evening the cords of love strong in my heart; I think I was feeling as comfortable in my mind then as I ever do, and even more so than usual. I suppose one reason was that besides all the good letters in our paper, I had just received by the same mail a letter from a dear brother, in which he said, If we want to know how surely and securely we are saved by hope, just let some one say we Old Baptists are wrong, or that we have no hope. It seems that declaration is so true, and I felt I knew it so well, that it gave me stronger evidence, for I well know how I feel if I hear one speak that way of us. But at the same time I could not defend our cause, for I am a very poor conversationalist, can never think of the right thing to say till it is too late, then perhaps it is not the right thing after all.

In just reading and enjoying for the second time the good and interesting letter of sister J. L. Wright, of California, I notice she says, "Now why have I written all this?" I feel to say to the sister, it is for the honor and glory of her heavenly Father, for in it she gives all glory to him, where it rightfully belongs. When I first read her letter I felt that I wanted to write to her personally, but when I read on and enjoyed the others, too, I then felt like addressing all. I understand from sister Wright's letter that she is so situated that she does not get to hear the gospel preached. Often when I read of those that are deprived of that blessed privilege I feel that we who are permitted to hear it every month, and sometimes three or four times a month, do not appreciate it as we ought. Perhaps though others do, but I am afraid I do not. I do know, or think I know, that I desire to be thankful to the great Giver of all good for this one great blessing, even if I am not always given to enter into the sermons so as to enjoy all alike every time. I also hope that I am thankful for all the blessings which he bestows, which are many and beyond my comprehension; I fully realize I am entirely unworthy of the least blessing.

I will close with, I hope, christian love to the brethren and sisters, and all lovers of the truth wherever they may be.

Your unworthy sister,

ANNIE MEREDITH.

MASSEY, Va., Sept. 13, 1905.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS AND FRIENDS:—I adopt this method to acknowledge the receipt of the many sweet and precious letters from every direction which have come to me in my sad affliction. The object was pure and the sentiment sweet; they gladdened my heart and filled me with humble gratitude. I prize the remembrance of this poor, unworthy worm of the dust by such good and dear people. I am glad that my dear wife had the privilege of mingling with you once, so that you could learn what a precious friend I had, ever ready

to extend her arm for my support fifty-three years, but now I am old and feeble, and that arm is taken away. What gloom this world is, it seems that I cannot take comfort in anything long at a time. It is better with her, but it is not with me. I go away to meet my appointments, after these are filled I want to go home, but behold she is not there. There is nothing rich but heaven, there is nothing lives but heaven, I have no home but heaven. I am now nearly seventy-five years of age, am only waiting a little while, then to be laid beside the loveliest object of earth to me. I thank you all for your kind remembrance in my sorrow.

From your poor, afflicted brother, in hope of eternal life,

T. M. POULSON.

TAMPICO, Ill., August 23, 1905.

DEAR KINDRED:—I sit down to write a few lines to relieve my mind. We feel so hungry to hear the gospel preached; it has been three years since we heard the gospel's blessed sound. We tried hard to see our way clear to attend the Spoon River Association, but it seemed impossible. We would be so glad to have some of the brethren come up this fall. Write to us. We do not know your addresses, so take this way to reach you.

Editor, this may be imposing on your time and patience, do with it as you see fit; I will not feel hurt if it is cast aside. We enjoy the SIGNS, but so much of the time my mind is filled with the cares of life I almost forget spiritual things.

I will close. Remember us at the throne of grace.

ANNIE HOPKINS.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder Frederick W. Keene.)

The Old School Baptist Conference of Maine, assembled with the Old School Baptist Church at North Berwick, York Co., Maine, to the associations of the churches of Christ with whom we correspond.

BELOVED BRETHREN IN CHRIST JESUS:—It is with sacred feelings that we send you our yearly greeting. The beloved apostle John wrote, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." So in measure all the members of the body of Christ have divine pleasure in the health and prosperity of the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. It is pleasing, dear brethren, to find it recorded, "Also in Judah things went well."—2 Chron. xii. 12. And when the ways of Zion mourn do not our hearts throb in unison? and we are found in humiliation and supplication before the Lord that he will once more lift up the light of his countenance upon us. While we are passing through this world as pilgrims and strangers we are called upon at times to encounter many things that would impede our progress, and turn us aside from the King's highway, and but for the mercy of the Lord, that endureth forever, we should become very castaways. But he that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, will not suffer us to perish, for he hath said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."—John x. 27, 28. These assuring words, when divinely ministered to us by the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, are sufficient to buoy us up, and to beget in us that holy confidence that we shall

in due time arrive unto our desired haven. (Psalms cvii.) The Lord our God is the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea. (Psalms lxv.) While here in the world God's manifest elect find that their fellowship one with another (1 John i. 7,) is not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, and though God's people are of all nations, and kindreds, and tongues, and people, bond and free, male and female, they are all one in Christ Jesus; they are fellow-citizens, of the household of God. (Eph. ii. 19.) O how highly favored, how rich and sovereign the grace of God to us, if we are among the number of those who are put among the children, (Jer. iii. 18,) and if in our heart God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son, crying, Abba, Father; this one and only family of children of God, and this family relationship will be the only one that will find recognition and endure in that world of everlasting joy, throughout the countless ages of eternity. "The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."—Deut. xxxii. 9. These the Father, in the everlasting covenant, before the world began, gave unto his dear Son. (John xvii. 2–6.) He became their Surety, (Heb. vii. 22,) and in the fullness of time, (Gal. iv. 4,) in due time, (Romans v. 6,) the Son of God was manifest in the flesh. (John i. 14.) He said, "A body hast thou prepared me."—Heb. x. 5. In the Son of God is the eternal life of all the sons of God; their sonship is bound up in Jesus, the eternal Son of God. (John xx. 17; Gal. iv. 6.) O how deep, how wonderful, how exceedingly precious is the mystery wrapped up in the following: "For which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."—Heb. ii. 11, 12. As in Aaron all the family of Abraham were named, (Exodus xxviii. 29,) so in Christ, the Son of God, the whole family in heaven and earth are named. (Eph. iii. 15.) His precious blood was shed for the remission of their sins, he gave himself a ransom for them all to be testified in due time, (1 Tim. ii. 6,) and they shall all with everlasting joy (Jude 24,) be raised up at the last day, (John vi. 44,) changed, (1 Cor. xv. 51,) fashioned like unto the glorious body of the glorified Jesus, (Phil. iii. 2,) and so shall they ever be with the Lord. Not one of "the whole family" will be lacking, none will be wanting in the heaven of eternal glory. The Son of God will bring the whole family, whom he is not ashamed to call "my brethren," unto glory, for he is the Captain of their salvation. (Heb. ii. 9.) O can it be, dear brethren, that we have the right to say, He loved me, and gave himself for me?

"When thou, my righteous Judge, shalt come
To call thy ransomed people home,
  Shall I among them stand?
Shall such a worthless worm as I,
Who sometimes am afraid to die,
  Be found at thy right hand?

I love to meet among them now,
Before thy gracious feet to bow,
  Though vilest of them all:
But can I bear the piercing thought,
What if my name should be left out,
  When thou for them shalt call?

Prevent, prevent it by thy grace;
Be thou, dear Lord, my hiding-place,
  In that most solemn day;
Thy pardoning voice O let me hear,
And still my unbelieving fear;
  Nor let me fall, I pray.

Let me among thy saints be found
Whene'er the archangel's trump shall sound,
  To see thy smiling face:
Then loudest of the crowd I'll sing,
While heaven's resounding mans ons ring
  With shouts of sovereign grace."

If this predestined portion be ours we shall look for and desire no other kin-

dred, no other family, no other relationship in heaven. There will be but one family there, not a part of the family, O no, but the whole family of the eternal God the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost. Amen. They will all have the same standing, (Rev. xiv. 1,) and stand together in the same relationship, the Father's name is written in their foreheads, and they all bear the same likeness, (1 John iii. 2; Phil. iii. 21,) wear the same clothing, (Phil. iii. 9; Rev. xix. 8,) are crowned with the same crown, (2 Tim. iv. 8,) are filled with the same joy; (Jude 24; Heb. xii. 2,) they are one family, one household, fellow-citizens, dwell in the same city, (Eph. ii. 19; Rev. xxi. 21–24,) and will throughout eternity worship in the same temple, and go no more out. (Rev. iii. 14.) They have the same God and Father, (John xx. 17,) and being joint-heirs with Christ, the incarnate Son of God, they shall reign with him in life eternal in the same heaven. Amen.

We have appointed our next yearly Conference to be held, the Lord willing, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, before the first Monday in September, 1906, when we hope to receive your messengers again.

FREDERICK W. KEENE, Mod.
JOSEPH HALL, Clerk.

The Pocatalico Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the Liberty Church, Kanawha Co., W. Va., sendeth greetings to the churches of which she is composed, and the associations with which she corresponds.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It being a custom to offer something in the way of a Circular Letter, I wish to use these words for a text: "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love."—John xv. 9. This is the language of our Lord and Master to his beloved disciples; he tells them, "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you." We understand that the love the Father had for the Son embraced the entire bride, the Lamb's wife, so we learn from the Scriptures and our experience that God is love, and with the poet can say,

> "It was love that spread the gracious feast,
> It was love that made my soul a guest."

Then no wonder the apostle would say, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." Again, we hear him saying, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." Now, my brethren, how careful ought we to be in manifesting this love towards one another, for the blessed Savior has said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples." Again, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Now, my brethren, let us inquire why it is that we love Jesus, and the answer is, because he first loved us. Then we must acknowledge that he is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, the root and the offspring of David. Now, my brethren, this love spoken of in the text was made manifest in Bethlehem of Judea when the Son of God was born of a woman for the purpose of saving his people from their sins, for he is the Savior of sinners. Now have we this love that we would lay down our lives for our friends (brethren)? Again, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." Then, my brethren, with the spirit of love we will not be found backbiting our brethren and sisters, but

to the contrary, we will strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; hence we feel this law of love is higher than the heavens, and is stronger than death, and is written in our hearts with a sure promise that, "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: * * * and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." His love is so great that the Hebrew children could walk through the fiery furnace unharmed, so could Daniel sit in the den of lions and trust Israel's God. Now, my brethren, let us trust the same God of love; may the grace of God be with you all. Farewell.

J. H. TERRY, Mod., Hurricane, W. Va.
G. B. BIRD, Clerk, Byrnside, W. Va.

(Written by Elder Dudley G. Johnson.)

To the churches of the Licking Association.

BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." We call attention to the Scripture 1 Peter i. 2, because of its sweetness; feeling that it embraces the whole doctrine of salvation by grace, not to make you believe it, but because God has made you believe and take comfort in that which presents you saved and called with an holy calling; a calling that separates you from all the world of conditional salvationists, teaching you that it is by grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. This doctrine appeals to all of like precious faith, and we are made to love and proclaim it, that all whom God has taught may hear it as a witness of salvation and realize the coming of the end.

We could not receive the end of our faith (1 Peter i. 9,) until the gospel had been preached in our world where we had seen this doctrine and heard wars and rumors of wars in our own experience. Only those who are made to love the truth for truth's sake can love this doctrine and contend for it, even though they must in sorrow leave loved ones and all else to follow after the flock that is fed by Christ. He only is elect and we in him, he the only servant we must behold, the only elect in whom his soul delighteth. (Isaiah xlii. 1.) God foreknew Christ, and us in him. We are the elect only as we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. We cannot stand before him in our own name nor in our sin, for he cannot look upon iniquity; but in the blessed name of Christ we come boldly to the throne of grace and find that he has removed our transgressions from us. Our transgressions are before him and our secret sins in the light of his countenance, (Psalms xc. 8,) as he is in us. Thus we are made to see ourselves as sinners, and to hate sin in order to be saved from it. Being chosen in Christ we are in God's appointed time brought to a knowledge of the fact; and our knowledge is according to his foreknowledge. God foreknew Christ's power to save us from our sins. This salvation is manifest when we are given the knowledge of Christ, and this knowledge is eternal life; for to know thee is life eternal. God has shined in our hearts to give us this knowledge. (2 Cor. iv. 4, 6.) This knowledge of him is a wonderful thing, it includes the knowledge of all things that Christ has revealed, is revealing, or shall reveal to his people in all ages; it is life; it is Christ in you the hope of glory. We must know him as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, by being made to taste of the cup he drank; we must know something of his burden by our own burden of sin. This knowledge makes us hide our face in

shame from him who is the Light that searches every dark corner of our deceitful hearts.

To be elect according to the foreknowledge of God means to know as we are known in all our sinfulness in ourselves and in all our righteousness in Christ. Knowledge that is of him makes us strive with all the powers of darkness in our flesh; having the sweet hope that he giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, making us see daily that though the warfare continues in us yet in Christ it is finished. It is according to his foreknowledge that we have the knowledge of the assembling of the entire household of faith in Christ; that makes us desire to assemble ourselves together, not forsaking it as the manner of some is. Assembling not only because we love to speak often one to another, but that every hungry one, even those we may not know, may find some one living at the old home, with God's servants to minister to the pilgrims and strangers and the manifest children of his mercy. O, our brethren, do we love these things and his poor, afflicted people? Do we fail to meet because we are few in number? The command is, Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together. Let us do our duty trusting in God. When we are made again to remember all the way the Lord has led us, and to rejoice again at hearing the good tidings, do we not realize how great is the privilege and that some one may be hearing it for the first time? May we be made to go in the footsteps of the flock, feeding beside the Shepherd's tent, feeling that all the trials we endure, the peace we have, the moments of joy, all things that work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them that are the called according to his purpose, are also according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. Nothing can come to pass that is not according to his foreknowledge, and everything concerning his people in time and eternity is according to his divine will. What a rich and sure heritage is this revelation to his little ones. With what loving reverence do we sit together in heavenly places, singing in our hearts as we see him by faith,

"This is my Beloved, his form is divine,
His vestments shed odors around:
The locks on his head are as grapes on the vine,
When autumn with plenty is crowned."

"Love sits in his eyelids and scatters delight
Through all the bright mansions on high;
Their faces the cherubim veil in his sight,
And tremble with fullness of joy."

(Hymn 948 Beebe's Collection.)

This view of Christ is according to the foreknowledge which God had of him in all eternity, and everything we know of God is revealed to us by Christ, for "no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."—Matt. xi. 27. And now to you, little children, members of the Licking Association, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus everywhere, be grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

We still rest in the hope that you in Christ, elect according to the foreknowledge of God, will be ready at all times to answer and obey the sweet command, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest:" for it is according to his foreknowledge that you must. May he keep and build us up, and give you a prayerful heart to remember us and all who look for him.

P. W. SAWIN, Mod.
J. T. McCoun, Clerk.
T. J. Ratliff, Assistant Clerk.

(Written by Elder J. B. Slauson.)

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the First Church of Roxbury, Sept. 13th and 14th, 1905, to the several churches of which this Association is composed, sends christian greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more it is our privilege to send you this annual epistle of love and fellowship in the form of a Circular Letter, hoping that we may stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance, for a steadfastness in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.

We desire to call attention to the words found in Ephesians ii. 10, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." All things that were created are the workmanship of God, he having the power to create, and stand as the great Master-builder, who speaks, and it is done; commands, and it stands fast; and all his works are perfect. God did not create an imperfect (unfinished) thing, therefore his works are perfect. He is the Rock, his works are perfect, for all his ways are judgment; a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he. The earth and the heavens, the seas and all things therein are his workmanship. God made man of the dust of the earth, and as the workmanship of God he is perfect; that is, completely finished. Nothing has ever been added to his work, nor can anything be taken from it. Adam was created a natural man, and as he stood the workmanship of God was perfect, yet he was not spiritual; and as Adam was natural so is all the posterity of Adam. As the life of the Adamic family was in him he stands the head and progenitor of his race. As the life is in the seed, and every seed brings forth after its own kind, therefore that which proceeds and comes forth from Adam cannot be spiritual, but natural. Adam transgressed the holy command of God and the whole Adamic family was in him. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." This brings the whole Adamic family under the law of sin and death. Now the apostle Paul says that we are created in Christ Jesus. As that which was created in Adam was natural, and he was the figure of Christ, so that which is created in Christ Jesus is holy and spiritual; it is the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, and this creation is made manifest in the new birth, when we are born of incorruptible seed by the word of God that liveth and abideth forever. As our natural life was in Adam, and this life is made manifest in a natural birth, so is our spiritual life in Christ, and is made manifest in the new birth. The creation in Christ Jesus is unto good works; the creation in Adam was not unto good works, for all good works must be of the Spirit of Christ; there is none good but God. "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." Paul says, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." Therefore the child of God is a complex character, having creation in Adam which is of the earth, and possesses a carnal mind which is enmity against God, not subject to his law, neither can be; therefore of this earthly creation he can do no good works. As he was created in Christ Jesus he was created unto good works, which are the work of the Spirit, as God works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure, and are acceptable in his sight. The

works of the natural man are works of the law: going about to establish his own righteousness without the knowledge of sin in his heart. Paul also declares that the Jew and Gentile are made one in Christ Jesus. Now if we are in Christ Jesus we are new creatures, old things have passed away, behold, all things become new; all the works and deeds of the law have passed away, we can no longer live in them, for we have become dead to the deeds of the law by the body of Christ. When the commandment came sin revived and we died. We were Gentiles after the flesh and without circumcision in the flesh, walking as natural men, but now are we created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before the manifestation of these good works ordained that we should walk in them, and in the creation in Christ Jesus are created in us by the Spirit of Christ new desires; that which we once loved we now hate, those things which were our chief joy have become bitter to us, that which we once trusted in now has no strength; then we trusted in the arm of flesh, but now we know how weak and how short is the arm of flesh; all the works of man are vain. God has ordained the good works which are the promptings of the Spirit that causes us to love the place where his honor dwells, to meet with the children of our heavenly Father, and to walk as becometh children of God, to be separate from the world and all false religion, to glorify God in our body and spirit which are his, and to walk in newness of life, to love one another with a pure heart fervently. In this new life we find the Spirit prompting us to secret prayer, we have the knowledge of sin, and desire to be free from sin and the cares of this world, our heart's desire is to walk uprightly before the world, that we may let our light so shine before men as to glorify God, to help bear one another's burdens, to minister unto the needy and to visit the sick; if we see a brother in need or distress to minister unto his needs and to comfort him in his distress, to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to the Lord, which is our reasonable service. God has also ordained that we shall not walk as other Gentiles, "being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world," but we are now made nigh by the blood of Christ, in whom we have redemption through his blood. The word says we are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath ordained. To ordain is to set in order, to decree. One who has the power to ordain must have power to control all things that intervene, both in heaven and earth, must be infinite in wisdom; all this we believe the God we worship has. "The powers that be are ordained of God." Therefore as God has all power, he has ordained the way in which we shall walk as his children, we are made willing in the day of his power to be anything or nothing for his name's sake; this could not be unless God has power to control the hearts of men; the preparation of the heart and answer of the tongue are from the Lord.

Dearly beloved, let us take courage in the thought that our God works all things after the counsel of his own will, and "If God be for us, who can be against us?" May God comfort all that mourn in Zion; let brotherly love abound.

J. D. HUBBELL, Moderator.

J. B. SLAUSON, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1905.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

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EXHORTATION.

BROTHER H. H. Bentley, of Atlanta, Ga., has requested that we present some thoughts upon the subject of exhortation through the SIGNS. This is an important theme, and we feel willing to comply with our brother's request as far as we are able. The word is used some thirty times in the New Testament, and not at all in the Old. With two exceptions it is translated from the word *parakaleo*, or some of its forms, and the primary meaning of this word is "to call near," or "for." It includes in this first and prime meaning the thoughts of admonition, persuasion, beseeching, entreaty, and encouragement. It is a gospel word, and does not belong to the legal covenant. Exhortation belongs to gospel subjects, and not to those under the law. In the law the word of God is heard, and in this there is no room for exhortation, but commandments are given. Our God speaks in the giving of the law, and all his words under that law are commandments.

Exhortation is the word of man. Apostles exhorted, admonished, reproved and rebuked, and believers are told to exhort one another, but disciples of the Lord must not be lords over each other, they must not seek to command one another. They all have one Lord who alone is their Lawgiver, and their Judge, and their King; he alone has dominion over their faith; he alone has a right to say, Thou shalt do this, and shalt not do the other; but disciples may and ought to exhort one another to give heed to the commandments of the Lord. Even the apostles who were inspired of God to speak just what was his will could not have dominion over the faith of any so as to tell them what they must believe, except as they presented the word of the Lord, and said to their brethren that this was his word. Even the apostles were but judges, and not lawgivers or kings over their brethren, and they must not seek to be lords over the heritage of God, much less is it the right of any since their day to assume such lordship over others, either in faith or practice. Yet as the apostles exhorted and warned and rebuked, so are the disciples of the Lord to exhort each other to all obedience to the word of the Lord, either in faith or practice.

Exhortation is to the disciples of the Lord, and to none other, that is, exhortation as used in the New Testament, and as relates to things under the gospel covenant. In looking over the thirty-two places where in the New Testament the word is used, we have found that in not one case does it relate to unbelievers. The apostles exhort the children of God, and them only, to many things, to steadfastness, to faithfulness, to firmness, to kindness, to brotherly love, to faithful reading of the word, and in short to all things that are good and pure and that belong to the gospel, and that are for the good of themselves and for the glory of God; these things they present as being commanded of God. The apostles, as those who love God and his people and who desire the things that are to God's glory, that are for the welfare of their

brethren, exhort and entreat and admonish the churches and brethren to all diligence in these things. It seems clear from our reading of the word that exhortation may be used with reference to all that the Lord has commanded at the hands of his disciples. But again we here desire to urge that commandment is the Lord's and not for men to give, while exhortation belongs not to God, but to men. It is nowhere said that the Lord exhorts men, and on the other hand it is not the place of men to assume authority in the gospel over others. The Spirit of inspiration guided those who have written the word of the New Testament so that we know that all they have exhorted us to observe is the will of God. Yet we must remember that not even the apostles claimed to have power over the faith of any, they were merely helpers of the joy of the churches; exhortation, admonition, warning or reproof, coming from their lips or their pen had no more power to reach the heart of any man than do these things when spoken by the servants of God now, except as they were applied by the Holy Spirit. But the Holy Spirit does now, as then, move the hearts of men to speak these things, and does open the hearts of men, as he did then, to attend to the word spoken; only thus can exhortation avail anything; only thus did it avail anything then. As Paul exhorted his brethren, so also did he commit the word of exhortation to Timothy and Titus, and so also did Peter commit this word to all who were overseers of the flock, bidding them to warn, reprove and exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine. This was to be a part of their preaching in all the churches. It was a part of the preaching of all the apostles, and so all who are called to minister in the churches now are to also exhort in all their public ministrations as the churches have need. It is most certainly right for them to repeat the very words of the Scriptures, written by the apostles as the word of God, and declare unto all who have ears to hear that such is the mind of God. Still further, each believer, as well as he who is called to the ministry, has this right, this duty, also resting upon himself. It is the word that we exhort one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching. If Paul said, for instance, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, &c., all who believe and love God are justified in using the same language as the expression of their own hearts' desire, if indeed this be their hearts' desire. When John said, My little children, "love one another," this was God's will as revealed to him concerning the children, therefore he exhorts them to that which God had commanded. If such a desire dwells in our hearts as then dwelt in that of John, it is ours also to say to our brethren, "Love one another."

We have been informed that the last sermon preached by Elder Gilbert Beebe before his departure to his reward was from the words, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." From these words we have been told, he preached a sermon of the tenderest advice and exhortation to the church, where he had so long labored. It was, we have been told, an exhortation to abide in the commandments of the Lord, to be reconciled to all the dispensations of his house, and to all the order of the church as established by the Lord. This is right exhortation, exhortation which will be blessed of God.

Upon what ground must exhortation, to be right and scriptural, rest? This we must learn from the word of God, as we must all else concerning the order and faith of the gospel. Exhortation is not to be urged upon believers upon the ground that by doing what is urged they shall secure their eternal salvation. This could not be in their case, seeing that the eternal interest of all such as believe is already secured beyond a peradventure. We need not urge this at length here, because we are persuaded that all our readers are settled in this truth. Therefore the hope of final salvation can have no room as an incentive to obedience for believers. Their hope is secure in Christ, who alone is their plea before God. On the other hand, it is scriptural and right to urge the fact that salvation is already secured to the redeemed, and that the Lord has done exceeding great things for them, as an incentive to all faithful service. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God," is the incentive urged by the apostle. Not in order to be saved, but because we are saved, calls for gratitude, and love, and all service. Here is all the difference between selfish legality and free gospel obedience. If final salvation be urged as the ground of obedience, that is, if men are urged to obey because thus they shall secure a salvation that they will not secure without it, self is the motive appealed to, and not the glory of God, and this is wholly unscriptural and unevangelical. Neither is it scriptural or gospel service to urge as a motive any present reward that shall come to men if they obey and that shall not come to them if they disobey. Exhortation of this kind says that those whom we address are yet legal in feeling, and must be urged by legal hope of reward, or legal hope of escaping chastisement. It says that love to God and his word, and gratitude for salvation already theirs, is not in their hearts, and that they are yet strangers to the covenants of promise. What would be thought of one who should enter some house where many children dwell, and say to those children, I urge you to always be obedient to your parents, because you will have more to eat and drink, more comfortable pillows upon which to lean your heads at night, and because you will in every way gain more from your parents, and because bye and bye you will stand a better chance of gaining a large share of your parents' wealth? Suppose that one should urge all this as the motive, and on the other hand urge the fear of missing much or all of these things if the children should prove disobedient; we are sure that all this might please such children in that family as did not love their parents, and were only kept in check through fear, or hope of selfish reward; but if there was one child who did love his parents with fervent love, and who longed to show forth that love with constant service and obedience to the slightest wish of his parents, that child would feel hurt that it should be supposed that he needed such selfish appeals, he would say to such a teacher, Sir, you do not know me, and you do not know my parents, they love me, and I love them; I love them, not perhaps as I ought, but I love them enough not to want to hurt them or disobey them, and I am not thinking of any future gain, seeing that they have already done for me more than I can ever repay or even acknowledge as I ought or as I desire. How then must the children of the heavenly Father feel when such low, selfish appeals are made to them? They have higher motives

than these; love reigns and love controls. They serve God not because there is gain in it, (though there is gain in it) and not merely because they must or because they ought, but because they want to serve him. In some small measure they can say as did the blessed Master, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." Anything lower than this as a motive is unworthy of the gospel, and unworthy of the love of God which reigns in his people. It is that love only that suffers long and is kind, that bears all things and that prompts to all service, that is acceptable to God, or that will satisfy the children of God. Love needs no future payment held out before it, it is its own reward; it is a sweet and pleasant fountain out of which flows all sweet and pleasant streams. God's people love to drink at this fountain, and to abide by these pleasant streams, but there is need of right exhortation all the time. One who wants to do his Father's will, will welcome all reminders of that will, because he realizes his proneness to forget, and he does not want to forget. It is as needful now as it was in the days of the apostle that our pure minds be stirred up by way of remembrance, and in this stirring up there is to be a remembrance made of each and every commandment of the Lord, and of all his mercies toward us, and of all the blessed hope which he has set before us. Has our God done so much for us, and shall we not desire to confess his mercy and his grace? Mercy, not wrath to come, is what leads the people of God to repentance. Of some it was said that they did not know that the goodness of God did lead to repentance, but the people of God do know this because his goodness has wrought its perfect work in their hearts, and repentance for sin and abhorrence of themselves and love to God have been the result. There is no conflict between the predestination of God and exhortation; there is no conflict between the foreknowledge and the sovereignty, and the election of God, and exhortation. Paul taught all these great truths, and he filled much of all his epistles with exhortation to the brethren; manifestly he saw no conflict between them. We are safe in following Paul because he had the mind of God. Let us follow him as he followed Christ, and he did, in all things that he taught, follow Christ.

We have been trying to preach the gospel nearly forty years, and we have fully believed in the predestination of all things all that time, and have tried to preach it always, and we have never once felt embarrassed by our faith in predestination when presenting some subject of exhortation as best we could. We feel now as we always have regarding this matter, that our God is a sovereign indeed, and he does work all things after the counsel of his own will. But as Joseph said to his brethren, so we believe concerning all the evil-mindedness and the evil deeds of men: "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good." The wicked are reproved by the word of God, and there is exhortation for all the people of God.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, Sept. 18th, 1905, in Salisbury, Md., John Hermon Perdue and Miss E. May Truitt.

By Elder James M. True, on Wednesday, Sept. 20th, 1905, at the residence of James H. Kirkham, five miles south of Kansas, Arthur S. Hayes and Miss Cloe R. Kirkham, both of Edgar Co., Ill.

By the same, at his residence in Kansas, Ill., Aug. 19th, 1905, Luther E. Cohoon and Miss Callie E. Hussey, both of Kansas, Ill.

MEMORIALS.

(LICKING ASSOCIATION.)

SINCE the last session of this Association two aged brethren have been removed from our society here in this world, and taken, we believe, to the world of eternal glory; they are brother **Frank Laytham** and brother **C. D. Neal.** Both were faithful brethren, highly esteemed and loved, and we think it suitable that we should express our high regard for them, and our deep sense of our loss, and our sorrow.

The former, brother Laytham, was baptized in 1857, and had never missed but two sessions of the Association since that time. On that account, and because of his earnest defense of the truth on all occasions, and his good judgment as an adviser, and his stern and loving adherence to the doctrine and order of the church under all obstacles and opposition, he is especially missed.

The surviving members of the families of our deceased brethren have our love and sympathy in their sorrow.

(ROXBURY ASSOCIATION.)

WHEREAS, It has pleased Almighty God in his divine decree to take from among us our much beloved brother, **Deacon William Ballard,** therefore be it

Resolved, By the First Church of Roxbury, N. Y., that we as a church mourn our loss, but bow in humble submission to the divine will of our heavenly Father, who hath appointed our times and set the bounds of our habitation that we cannot pass. Our beloved brother was a faithful member, walking humbly before the God of all grace, in whom he trusted and unto whom he looked in times of distress. During his lingering sickness he never murmured or complained, but patiently awaited the end. Many times during his sickness he spoke words of encouragement to the sad hearts of his family, and also of his hope in Jesus. We do not mourn as those that have no hope, believing that he entered into that rest which is promised to the people of God, and what is our loss is his eternal gain. For over forty years our dear, departed brother had been a faithful member of our church. May God comfort us, that we may say, Not our will, but thy will be done. We as a church sympathize with his widow and all that mourn in this their affliction, and commend them to the God of all grace, who hath said he will be the widow's Husband and a Father to the fatherless.

This done at our regular meeting August 26th, 1905.

V. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS."

Attie A. Curtis, Mass., $1.00; Elder J. D. Hubbell, N. Y., $10.00.—Total, $11.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Mary J. Purnell entered into rest Sept. 2nd, 1905, at her home in Snow Hill, Worcester Co., Md. There was a decline of her vital forces, though no special disease; her physician did not think her case alarming, but the change came in God's way and time. She was calm and composed till the end. She said, "I want this house to still be a home for Elder Poulson." She passed away like the going out of a lamp. Her age was 79 years, less a few months. She was married to Stephen D. Purnell in 1843; twelve children were the fruit of this union. Sister Purnell was baptized by the writer in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Indiantown, in Wicomico Co., Md., more than twenty-five years ago. She was well and favorably known as a sound Baptist, noted for her sincerity and firmness in the doctrine which had been revealed to her. Her house was a home for Old Baptists; many will remember her kind hospitality; she very much enjoyed having her brethren and sisters with her. It was her delight to attend the meetings of the sanctuary, until her hearing became so impaired that she could no longer hear understandingly. We can say in truth that a quiet woman, a kind and faithful mother, a true friend, a highly esteemed member of the church, has been called home where the weary are at rest. The church deeply feels its great loss; the writer realizes the loss of a true and an abiding friend. We want to assure sister Katie, who was so true and faithful in caring for her dear mother, sacrificing largely her youthful life for her mother's comfort, that she has our prayers and heart-felt sympathy. We believe the Lord has a blessed reward in store for her. Sister Purnell leaves to remember her in sadness and yet with joy two brothers, five sons and one daughter, also sixteen grandchildren, several great-grandchildren and the church.

After a short service by the writer, all that was mortal of her was laid to rest in the family cemetery. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away, and blessed be his name.

T. M. POULSON.

MASSEY, Va.

NOTICE.

NOTICE is hereby given that the Salem Old School Baptist Church of Philadelphia, Pa., has changed the time from 10:30 a. m. to 1:30 p. m., Oct. 16th, 1905, for the council to meet at 1315 Columbia Ave. for the purpose of considering the advisability of ordaining brother B. F. Coulter, M. D., to the full work of the gospel ministry.

FRANK TERRY.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

THE meeting of the Lexington Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Lexington church, at Lexington, Greene Co., N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday of October, (4th and 5th) 1905, when and where we hope to see as many of the ministers, brethren and sisters of our faith and order as can come. Those coming via Ulster and Delaware Railroad will be met at Hunter, where all the p. m. trains will be met, and those who come will be conveyed to Lexington. We will also meet all at Grand Gorge who will write me requesting me to do so.

FLETCHER MACKEY, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Association is appointed to be held with the Providence church, near Rainsburg, Bedford Co., Pa., beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in October, (6th) 1905, and continuing three days. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. On Thursday trains will be met at Bedford and all visiting brethren cared for.

J. CORDER MELLOTT.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa, Schoharie Co., N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting to be held the second Sunday and Saturday preceding in October, (7th and 8th) 1905. We extend a cordial invitation to all our brethren and friends to meet with us in the worship of God; especially do we invite the ministering brethren. Any attending the Lexington Association who can arrange to remain will be welcomed at our two days meeting.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

THE Corresponding Meeting of Virginia is appointed to be held with the Bethlehem church, near Manassas, Prince William Co., Va., October 11th, 12th and 13th, 1905. Friends coming from the east or north by railroad will take train on Southern road at Sixth St. station, Washington, D. C., at 4 or 4:30 p. m. the day before the meeting, or at 8 a. m. or 11 a. m. the day of the meeting. All tickets should be purchased for Manassas, where the several trains will be met. Trains from the south and west will also be met. An earnest invitation is extended to lovers of the truth, especially to our ministering brethren.

J. N. BADGER.

THE yearly meeting of the Welsh Tract church, Newark, Delaware, is appointed to commence on Saturday, Oct. 14th, 1905, and continue two days. Friends coming from the north and south via B. & O. R. R. will get tickets to Newark, Del. Trains leave Philadelphia at 7:40 a. m., and Baltimore at 8 a. m. (Mt. Royal station.) Those coming via Delaware division will take train leaving Delmar at 7:10 a. m. Saturday, and get tickets to Newark, Del. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

P M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church in Salisbury, Md., on Wednesday, Oct. 18th, 1905, and continue the two following days. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Those coming via Baltimore have choice of two routes, either by way of Claiborne, leaving Pier 4, Light St. wharf at 4:10 p. m., arriving at Salisbury about 9 p. m., or from Pier 3, via steamer Virginia, (all water route) at 5 p. m., arriving at Salisbury about 8 o'clock Wednesday morning. Those expecting to return to Baltimore by these routes can get return tickets. Those coming from the north, all take the train leaving Broad St., Philadelphia, about 3 p. m., Wilmington about 3:40. From the south, take express due at Salisbury about 2 p. m. All come on Tuesday. From the east Wednesday morning, train leaves Berlin about 7 a. m. All come.

In behalf of the church,

A. B. FRANCIS.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in Hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

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OF THE

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The bi-centennial of the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., was celebrated Oct. 20th, 1903. After some delay it is now published in pamphlet form, and is now on sale. Price 15 cents. The pamphlet contains photographs of the Welsh Tract meeting-house and Elder J. G. Eubanks, the pastor, the proceedings of the anniversary, letters of greeting from sister churches and a historical sketch written by Dr. B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., and read on the occasion. Some of the brick in the meeting-house was brought from Wales to this country, and hauled on mules' backs a distance of ten miles. The pamphlet is very interesting and full of information.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 73. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1905. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE BEAST THE WORLD WONDERED AFTER.

EDITOR AND READERS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been requested by sister S. E. Ellis, of Dye, Texas, to write for the SIGNS upon the subject of the above title. I have always been afraid to commit myself in regard to just what the book of Revelation teaches. There have been so many different views on this wonderful book that I have been fearful about expressing my views, if indeed I have any. The views of others of which I speak are not alone those of learned men, but the most important of all the ideas expressed by others are those set forth by able brethren who have made the book of Revelation a special study for many years. Finding as I do a vast difference of opinion among the saints of God upon many of the wonderful things contained in this book, I have always wanted to keep as mute as possible, and in writing or speaking I have not felt at liberty to use much contained in the book of "The Revelation of Jesus Christ," for fear of misapplying the language there used. What I shall say now is left to the brethren for just judgment according to the testimony of the word of God; what I say is an opinion only, in some of the things relating to the subject. A few things I want to notice and to compare them as spoken of, are found recorded in Revelation xii.; xviii. The question of sister Ellis is: Who is that beast the whole world is wondering after? If I shall be able to point out that beast in the light of God's testimony, then I shall have answered the query of our isolated sister in Texas.

In Revelation xii. we read of a great wonder appearing in heaven, "a woman clothed with the sun," &c.; further on we read of another wonder appearing in heaven (not a *great* wonder): "And behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads." Without going into detail I wish to say that the *great* wonder that appeared in heaven is new Jerusalem, the mother of us all, or the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven; the mother of all the spiritual race. The great red dragon who opposed and persecuted the woman, and was wroth with her and the remnant of her seed, is the devil, that old serpent Satan.

He is old, for he appeared to the first woman in the garden; he continues to roam about seeking whom he may devour; he is the prince of the power of the air. It appears that he controls or exercises the oldest claim of contention since creation against God's people. It seems from the testimony of Scripture that he had power given to him in such a way that creatures (men) were delegated, moved or controlled to exercise the same nefarious power against the servants of the Most High as is his will to do himself. There is a similarity between the great red dragon and the beast that arose out of the sea; the first had seven heads and ten horns, and crowns upon the heads; the second had seven heads and ten horns, and ten crowns upon his horns, and blasphemy upon his heads. What all the figures may mean I cannot say, but it does seem that the devil's seven crowns agree with the beast's seven heads of blasphemy. The dragon gave the beast his power and his seat and great authority. "And I saw one of his heads [one of the names of blasphemy] as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshiped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshiped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies."—Rev. xiii. 3–5. This mouth speaking blasphemies is the same as the name of blasphemy upon his heads. "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."—Verse 8. They that wonder after the beast worship him. Another beast came up out of the earth, he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon, he exerciseth all the power of the first beast, he causeth the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast, he marks them in their right hand or in their foreheads. These have free and full authority in his jurisdiction to buy or sell, ("free agents") because they have the mark or name of the beast, or the number of his name; here is wisdom. All worship the beast, all wonder after the beast, yes, all who have the right title to do so, and this right is secured by the mark or name or number of the beast. None are excluded from that right but those whose "names were written in heaven," and who cannot exercise the right of "free agency." The second beast spake as a dragon. There is no doubt of his power and authority as coming from the dragon through the first beast. In chapter seventeen another beast is spoken of; this is a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. The dragon and the three beasts spoken of are similar in many respects, and closely related, they are "near kin," and are all working to the same end, as the woman who sat upon the scarlet colored beast, and who was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication, and a name written upon her forehead: "Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." The name mystery, signifies her kinship to the dragon and the three beasts. The angel told John that he would tell him of the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carrieth her which hath the seven heads and ten horns. "The beast

that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is."—Rev. xvii. 8. We have noticed here in Revelation that all the world wondered after the first beast, that all the world worshiped the dragon, and also worshiped the first beast. The Scripture positively says, All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life. The second beast doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire to come down from heaven in the sight of men. He is a deceiver, and causeth them that dwell on the earth to worship the first beast; they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names are not written in the book of life. It does seem that the first beast coming up out of the sea, the second beast coming up out of the earth, and the scarlet colored beast that the woman sat on, are one and the same in principle and essence, and may be named false prophecy. The whole world, whose names are not written in heaven, wonder after false prophecy, false teaching. They all worship false prophecy whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life. False prophecy has borne up the great mother of harlots, she sits a queen upon this scarlet colored beast that has blasphemous titles which agree well with her titles of authority. Her wine of fornication which has made the nations drunk, is idolatry, false worship. This is an easy conquest with her; how tempting is her wine in the golden cup, it agrees so well with the nature of man. There is a great difference in gods in their forms and looks, but not a whit difference in power and excellence. If there had been more power or excellence in some gods than others in days of old, perhaps Joshua would not have been so liberal with the children of Israel to give them a choice of gods, as it did not seem to make any difference with the leader of Israel what idol god they worshiped; if it seemed evil unto them to serve the Lord, he had no more respect for one idol (god) than another. False prophecy has always been on the devil's side, it will always be on that side. All nations that forget God are with him, they have great numbers, are boastful on this account; a great army seems to be stronger than a small band. Babylon is numbered as "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues," whereas the chosen of the Lord are spoken of as a "little flock," "a remnant." How consoling it is to know that numbers in this war are not the sign of power, for the Lord is among the few as in days of old, and says, "Fear not, for I am with thee." This great army sustained by false prophecy may make war with the saints, but the Lamb shall overcome them, because he is Lord of lords and King of kings. The apostle John in letter one, chapter four, exhorts the "Beloved" to "believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore

speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." These seven verses which I have quoted from 1 John iv. are full of meaning to the saints, and they are an infallible standard to test those claiming to be the followers of Jesus.

I humbly submit this to you, brethren. May the grace of the Lord Jesus abound in all the household of faith.

J. F. BEEMAN.

CARMEN, Okla., August 14, 1905.

THE SIN UNTO DEATH.

FROM the reading of the Scripture there seems to be a sin unto death to the people of the old and new covenant. The people of the first covenant were redeemed from a severe bondage in Egypt, where they were made to serve with rigor under cruel taskmasters. They were brought into the wilderness and given a law written upon tables of stone, which was virtually their constitution. In conformity with this law they had divers laws and ordinances given, and the penalty of many of these laws was death at the hands of the proper executors. No offering was specified for these violations; those that give any of their seed to Molech, those that turn aside after familiar spirits and wizards, every one that curseth father or mother, all adulterers, and those who equalized themselves with beasts, "A man also, or woman, that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death," all that are guilty of blasphemy, those who violate the Sabbath of that covenant must suffer death. There were also violations that subjected the offenders to a separation from the congregation of Israel. The redemption of this people was complete, and they were forever freed from all Egyptian laws and obligations, they had from henceforth a house or kingdom with judges, and a place of judgment where all could appear and be judged according to their law and receive a just recompense of reward. The people of the second covenant have complete redemption from the pit wherein is no water, from under the curse of the law and from all iniquity, and all of the handwriting of the ordinances of the old covenant against them was blotted out, and the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus is sent in their behalf to free them completely from the law of sin and death, so that they can sin no more under that law. They are brought under law to God, and grace under the new covenant written within each of them; they also receive the house or kingdom of God, with laws and ordinances; they also have judges and a place of judgment, where each one is to give an account of the deeds done in the body; and it is plainly written that, "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die." "To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey; his servant ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness." "There is a sin unto death." As this people is freed from all obligations to former governments, they cannot sin only against the laws they are under, and this death cannot be any other than a permanent exclusion, being dead to the esteem and fellowship of the household. How sad it is for any to act in such an unbecoming way as to die such a death. In their law it is written that they shall not do as some of the

people of the first covenant did and fell; they are not to be idolators, fornicators, tempters of Christ, nor murmurers, and they are plainly told that neither fornicators, idolators, adulterers, effeminate persons, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. They have been washed and sanctified from all this, and if in the event they turn back to engage in these abominable things they are to be excluded. These are all named in the fifth chapter of Galatians as works of the flesh, and "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." We know that Ananias and Sapphira his wife did sin unto death. There was no time given for prayer in this matter. The man that married his father's wife was delivered unto Satan; he had to be put out of the church; there were no prayers ordered for him. Hymeneus and Philetus made shipwreck of the faith of some (I suppose they denied the doctrine of the resurrection); they were delivered unto Satan without prayer. He that resists the common laws of the state and nation is condemned, an outlaw is not fit for the church. Any sin of a church member that subjects him to exclusion without restoration is "a sin unto death." The walk of the spiritual inhabitants of the kingdom of God is beautifully told in the fifteenth Psalm, and fifth chapter of Galatians. "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor. In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoreth them that fear the Lord." "He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh a reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved."—Psalms xv. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

Brother Chick, I submit these lines to your judgment, for I am liable to be mistaken. We are here in this city, often sad and lonely. I am doing nothing except to go to meeting, and engage some of the time in reading and now and then write a little.

Yours in hope and sadness,

P. J. POWELL.

PRATT CITY, Ala.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

THE apostle Paul in Ephesians ii. 5, tells us that God loved us even when we were dead in sin. This is a wonderful statement, but how much more wonderful is its truth. Men love good people, such as show them kindness, but God loves evil men, even though they fight against him. We love men when in our judgment they do good, but God loves men whose hearts he sees to be desperately wicked above all things. We meet a stranger, and we neither love or hate him, and our love or hatred is influenced by his works, good or bad, as we see them; but God's love or hatred for men is not the result of their works, for his love is like himself, without beginning or end. Before Jacob or Esau had done either good or evil he said, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." None of these things show that God loves or approves of sin, but the contrary is abundantly proven. God hates sin, but he loves the sinner, and he punishes the sinner by giving him a knowledge of sin and a love for righteousness; not that his

love of righteousness is in itself a punishment, but knowing and loving the righteousness of Christ he hates sin, and his continuous sinning is a great burden, and hence the cry, "O wretched man that I am!" One whom we have loved we may learn to hate by their continuance in sin against us; not so with God, he does not allow sin and Satan to come between him and the objects of his love, only for a small moment, that he may give them to feel how awful it is without him; but even though they transgress his law and walk not in his judgments, he will not utterly take away his loving-kindness, or suffer his faithfulness to fail. The devil and all his emissaries can never make God hate one of his little ones, nor can the lust of the flesh, the pride of life, or the deceitfulness of riches keep him from ever and anon manifesting his love. I remember the word of the prophet to Israel, "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God," but this is only in their experience as rebellious children. David asked, and so do we, "Hath God forgotten to be gracious?" "Is his mercy clean gone forever?" God tells us by Isaiah, "In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee;" for he said, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." His wrath is against sin, but his love is to sinners, and because he loves sinners he sent Jesus to die for them, and by his Spirit purges out their sins that he may present them to himself perfect in Christ Jesus. What wonderful love that cast the mantle of righteousness over the imperfections of sinners, and put away that hateful thing sin, and makes men and women as pure as though they had never sinned, and says to them, "Return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." The greatest love possible to man is to die for his friend that he considers a good man, but "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Yes, it was while we were yet enemies that Christ died for us. Can mortal minds comprehend such love? love one that hates you? love one that is all the time doing all he can against you? love one that is all the time saying all manner of evil against you, and that falsely? It is not in human nature, but God loved Saul of Tarsus when he was a blasphemer of his holy name and compelling others to do the same; he said to Ananias, "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles." This bitter feeling against Jesus and his people did not hinder the work or word of the Lord one moment, and when Jesus manifested his love to Saul, then Saul loved Jesus, and not before; and this, dear brethren and sisters, is true in every case; he hates our sins and makes us feel burdened with them that we may know Jesus in the fellowship of his suffering, but his loving-kindness he will not take away; he hath said, "I will never leave thee, not forsake thee." The sins of the redeemed are put away by the blood of the everlasting covenant, and will be remembered against them no more forever; his love is as free and full as if you had never committed a sin in your life. This love of God is that which never faileth, though you often feel that there is just cause for the pouring out of his wrath; yet he suffereth long and is kind, and his love hides the multitude of your sins, and he says, "Return unto me; for I have redeemed thee;" and he is thine everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, and he hears every sigh and pities every

groan and will not leave you comfortless, but will come to you, and every manifestation of his presence is in love, whether it be to commend or rebuke.

"O for such love, let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break,
And all harmonious human tongues
The Savior's praises speak."

"We love him, because he first loved us." May we love him more and more.

Your brother, I hope,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

ROLAND PARK, BALTIMORE, Md., July, 1905.

PINEHILL, Texas, June 21, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—In looking over some of my letters I found one from Elder James West, and reread it with so much joy and comfort I felt to share it with the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if according to your judgment to publish it.

ROBERT S. PACE.

BONHAM, Texas, Oct. 13, 1904.

MR. R. S. PACE—DEAR BROTHER:—Your letter of the 9th at hand, and I have carefully read and reread it. You requested me to give more of my travels "in the way." My dear brother, it would consume a great deal of space to write you of all the sorrows and joys of my pilgrimage, though my days are few and evil.

When I was about eleven years old the Lord gave me light to see myself as I really was, a poor, helpless sinner. For seven years I resorted to the law for relief. I sometimes grew self-righteous and boasted of my own works, and would feel better than others of my acquaintance that claimed to be walking in the narrow way; and again the law would condemn me, and I would feel that it would be just if I should sink into eternal night. This would cause me to plead for mercy, but my pleas were all of a selfish nature: begging the Lord for just what I desired. I passed through many conflicts and tortures of mind during the seven years, often despairing of relief, but at times would feel that the way was smoother. At or near the close of seven years I began to seek relief in a different way. This way was not what I had hitherto been desiring, for I hope that I had been subjugated, overcome, and had lost all self-righteousness; I was indeed a poor sinner, condemned in my own righteousness. I had tried all the physicians and found no relief in any of their medicines. In this distressed condition I would seek the secluded places in the forest, and at one time in my meditations I was made to rejoice, and often in my life I have tried to tell of my joy at that time, but my poor tongue has failed. The stammering tongue of mortals will never sing this praise to the satisfaction of the soul that is truly born of God. Many days of mixture of joy and sorrow have come and gone since that joyful hour; many times I have felt to doubt that which made my soul rejoice, yet I cling close to the hope that when the conflicts of this life are over I shall realize the truth of that expression: Salvation is in no other than Jesus. After obtaining this hope I was persuaded to join a body of people claiming to be Baptists, who afterwards drifted into the practice of Sunday Schools, hired ministry, and conditional means doctrine, and my troubles began to increase. The impression became severe that I must proclaim salvation by grace. I here had a different experience, my sorrows increased until I left home and went to one of the most rapidly growing cities in the south and engaged in the mercantile business to drown my impressions, but found little relief. Then I had a widowed mother to

care for, with several brothers and sisters, and my love for them and their welfare was so great I would offer this to the Lord for an excuse, but when I could not get relief from this I would plead ignorance, and when I could not feel that would excuse me I would say, I do not believe what the people do whom I am with, and they would not believe it if I should preach the doctrine of the Bible; also I felt that I would be slurred because of my ignorance. But my impressions became so strong I went to work to remedy my illiteracy, and started to school to a leading divine among my people, who was to educate me for the ministry. (This was on my way while trying to flee from the presence of the Lord.) I finally quit the school, left the home of my youth and went to a strange part of the country. Here I found the daughters of men (institutions) and joined them. They purported to be charitable institutions, though they would not take into their lodges the charitable objects, but had to have men of sound minds and able bodies, who would not be a charge on their charity. I sought every kind of relief from my impressions to preach, but found none. Having lost all hope of relief among the people with whom I was at that time, and becoming more troubled, I decided to offer myself to a people called "Hardshells," thinking I would in this way find relief from my troubles. But finding no relief as I had hoped, I decided to leave home in search of peace. I came to Texas and here found a people who claimed to be Old School Baptists, among whom there are many believers in the doctrine of the ancient Baptists, true believers in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and the doctrine of predestination; also there are truly children of God, I am persuaded, but like their Galatian brethren, they have been bewitched by false teachers. I expect to proclaim the Lord's goodness and righteousness as long as I have the approval of my Master, who is God. I believe if it were necessary his grace would sustain at the burning stake to testify to his grace.

My dear brother, I could talk to you of his mercies this evening if I had the opportunity, but my pen fails to move rapidly, so I cannot communicate to you all my feelings. My soul has rejoiced in penning these few words, for God can and does work all things together for good to his poor, afflicted people. May the God of all grace comfort, direct and teach you in all things, is my desire.

Very truly,

JAMES WEST.

PLYMOUTH, Ill.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I will try to pen a little concerning my travels, as some of my children want me to write my experience, but I hardly know how to go about it, as I have forgotten dates, so I will begin at the beginning.

When I was quite young, I think ten years old, the first I ever thought about religion was when my mother was baptized, in 1825. I recollect that time very well; I thought I would try and be as good as any of them, but I could not hold out very long before I would do something wrong; then I thought I would read the Bible, but I could not see how I could get religion. I would think sometimes I would wait until I got older; something seemed to say, You are too young, there is time enough yet; then I would try and not think about dying and the judgment. I was very unhappy at times when all alone, I was afraid of the devil, and I thought when I went from one room to

another in the dark he would be there. When I was in my sixteenth year, I think, I did not want any one to know that I was concerned about my salvation, I kept it all to myself; I would take the Bible upstairs and read until twelve and one o'clock. Sometimes it condemned me, and I would have to shut the book; I could not see any promise for me. I thought that the children of Israel were a happy people, and if I could be one of them I would be safe, but I was condemned by the law, and where to go I knew not. I tried to pray, but was afraid to kneel down, I thought the devil would appear to me. Something seemed to say, You are not as bad as some others, but I was not satisfied to believe that. Sometimes I did not think about it, but I could not be at rest in mind long before it would come with greater force than ever that I must die, and I thought if I had the wings of Noah's dove I would fly away and be at rest, and then I would think, Let me go where I will, God's eye is upon me, I cannot hide from him. Some said that any one that wanted religion could get it; I thought I wanted it as badly as any one, but I could not get it; I thought perhaps I had committed the unpardonable sin. I went on in this way for some time, thinking perhaps it was not repentance for sin. I remember that my sister and I went to see one of our neighbors buried, and after we returned home she asked me to go with her to get some grapes; I wondered how she could feel cheerful, I thought if she only knew how I felt she would not ask me to go. I could see no pleasure anywhere, death was staring me in the face, I thought I would die very soon, and where would I go if I died in my sins? I would try to pray, but I thought God would not hear me, but I would say, "God be merciful to me a sinner." I would go to meeting and hear preaching, and see them join the church and go in the ice and snow and be baptized; I thought they must be very good and would have no more trouble. Time passed on and left me without hope until I was in my eighteenth year. I was sewing one night when this hymn came in my mind:

> "There is a heaven above the skies,
> A heaven where pleasure never dies;
> A heaven I sometimes hope to see,
> But fear again 'tis not for me."

I sang this hymn with joy, I felt happy that night, but kept it all to myself, I thought I must see or feel some great change, I must know that I had religion before I would tell any one, or they would laugh at me. So I kept on thinking about it, and thought if it was religion I would not be ashamed; then I thought I would wait until I got better, but I could not get any better. I thought I could convince any one that Jesus was the Christ; I felt sure that he would save all that would look to him for salvation. But I was very weak, I could not put my trust in him very long at a time, I was unbelieving, and looked for something to convince me that I was a christian, but instead of that I got worse in my own estimation; I thought at times, If God had changed my heart I could tell it to every one, but I had not seen trouble enough yet. In my twenty-first year I was married and went on in the world, not thinking what chastisements God had in store for me by deaths in my family; one after another died until I thought God would not deal with me so hard if I were a christian. I felt so miserable I would look at the birds and insects and think how happy they are, for they have no souls; I thought, Surely I am the worst person that ever lived. I would

think of all my past life, how I had lived, and thought if I made a profession of religion people would know by my walk I was not a christian, for I could do no good, I viewed myself to be so wicked. When I would go to meeting I thought every one was watching me; I would think, If I could go and hear the preaching and no one see me I would like to go, but they preached all to me. I examined the Bible and found that the promise was to the lost and ruined; then I thought if I were only fit to be baptized how glad I would be; I was in much trouble about it, I thought if God would save my life until the next meeting I would go and tell them how I felt; but I would go home again and study about it, until in 1860 I went to the church and they received me. I was baptized, and for two or three weeks I felt I had done my duty in obeying God's command, for he says, Come out from the world, take up your cross and follow me. I rest all my hope in Christ and him crucified, for in him all fullness dwells.

NANCY BRUMBACK.

(See obituary in this number.)

NEW YORK, N. Y., Sept. 21, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Your exposition of James iv. 7, 8, in the SIGNS of Sept. 15th has interested and pleased me very much. It is a line of preaching not generally heard. Just why, I have never known. Many preachers, judging from their utterance, seem to want their hearers to rest in quiet assurance that as their eternal salvation is accomplished, they need no longer be fearful and doubting of their calling and election. I have thought sometimes that continual preaching in this vein presents a false conception of the gospel. I have come in contact with some whom many Old School Baptists esteem as deeply experienced in spiritual things, because they testify to almost uninterrupted joy and comfort in gospel travel, and while I love them and esteem them far better than myself, to my sorrow I must confess that I am not drawn to them as companions in the degree that I am to the halting and unbelieving ones. It seems to me that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, and is manifest in flesh; that is, the life of Jesus in our mortal bodies is effectual unto salvation in the fellowship of his sufferings and conformity to his death. "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world." Were Jesus always conscious of his Sonship, his prayers would not have been heard; he "was heard in that he feared." Had he not always been conscious of weakness in the flesh, he could not have been crucified: "he was crucified through weakness." Had he never been tempted, he could not succor them who are tempted. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. He preached righteousness, and when those he calls and qualifies after his own heart to declare whatsoever he has commanded them, when such, I say, find occasions where it is not necessary to reprove, rebuke and exhort, there will be no sinners called to repentance.

The Spirit of God, which moved upon the face of the waters, is the power which wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead. The same power brought light into the world, and "all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

Why, it is the power of the resurrection, is it not? "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is not Christ risen. And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain." "Because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised," and "What shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead? and why stand we in jeopardy every hour?" The Word is life, and is the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world; it preaches righteousness and condemns sin in the flesh, and when we cease to love the former and hate the latter, the word "Seek ye my face" will not find the response in us, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek."

Sometimes I think I would be better satisfied with my labor if I could make my hearers more keenly realize what they are in themselves, rather than have them rejoicing in what they are going to be. The longer I live the stronger do I believe in no cross, no crown; no always being delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, no power of his resurrection; no dying unto sin, no living unto God; no walking with and pleasing God, without walking by faith, for without faith it is impossible to please God; no weakness, no power; no trusting in the Lord, without failure of heart and flesh. "He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death."

Go on, my dear brother, preach and write as you are doing, your labor will not be in vain in the Lord if in word and doctrine. "Be instant in season, out of season." "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."

I have written longer than I expected to, and will now close.

Remember me in love to any who care to hear of me, and believe me still in unabating love and fellowship, your unworthy brother in faith and hope,

JOHN McCONNELL.

EPHESIANS V. 14.

"WHEREFORE he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

Perhaps there has never been a time since the inspired penman wrote the above words when it was more important that they should be emphasized to the church than the present time. It is a lamentable fact that true spirituality is at a very low ebb in the churches throughout the country; strong, robust men who have named the name of Christ are found forsaking the assembling of themselves together with the church. Pastors and deacons let these things go on month after month without asking the reason why; sick members lie in their rooms week after week and are not visited by the brethren, all are too busy or too tired; members stay away from meeting because they do not care for the pastor; others seem to have gotten out of the habit of going to meeting, and do not look forward to going, and meeting day goes by and they are absent, and no one knows why, and do not take the trouble to find out. There are churches with a membership of thirty-five or forty and often only four or five out to meeting,

and occasionally only one. Some stay at home because they are opposed to the special Sunday on which the meeting is held. Something is expected of those who profess something, nothing is expected of those who profess nothing, therefore it is better not to profess anything than to profess something and not honor our profession.

The text at the head of this article applies to those who have forgotten something, to those who are neglecting something, to the unfaithful. The text is very plain and simple, there is no need of twisting it around to mean something that it does not mean.

"Awake thou that sleepest." Does spiritual conversation go on in your presence and yet you feel no interest in it? Had you rather discuss some worldly topic than a point of doctrine or experience? Had you rather stay away from meeting than to go? Do you feel no obligation resting upon you? If not, you must be asleep, and it is high time for you to awake. Have we not professed to follow Jesus? We are certainly not following him when we are following after the flesh. If we profess to follow Jesus and do not follow him, we are acting the hypocrite and the liar. O, brethren, let us be what we profess to be, or else profess nothing. Says one, I do not profess to be a christian, I acknowledge I am a sinner. Have you been baptized? if so you profess to be a christian. The christian should not expect any reward for doing his plain, simple duty, indeed he that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. We should rejoice that we are counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake.

"And arise from the dead." What a deplorable condition it is for us to be dead and yet alive. If one is dead his friends cannot converse with him, he cannot attend to business, nothing of the least importance can be committed to his hands; no, he is dead, his interest is gone, his vitality is gone, his usefulness is gone, though he may once have been a shining light in the church, but now his light is hid, or it has gone out.

> "Dear Lord, and shall we ever live
> At this poor dying rate,
> Our love so cold, so faint, to thee,
> And thine to us so great?"

Dear brethren, have you all felt this ghastly death in your own soul, and yet at the same time have you not heard, as it were, the voice of the inspired apostle in loud and distinct accents saying, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light"? No doubt our ministering brethren many times go forth in the field to labor in word and doctrine in the very jaws of this death, with their eyes closed in this dreadful sleep; but the heart waketh, thanks be to God the heart waketh, and a prayer goes out to the Almighty, and the poor servant is made to realize that there is nothing too hard for the Lord.

"And Christ shall give thee light." O the glorious light that Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, gives, it is above the brightness of the noonday sun, it penetrates to the heart, and the soul is filled with sunshine. The winter is passed, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth again, and we have overcome this awful sleep and this dreadful death through our Lord Jesus Christ.

EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., June 26, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Once more I write you a few lines. Brother Coulter was at Welsh Tract to-day, and the service in Philadelphia was brief, but I felt

that it was good to be there. I felt that my poor, unprofitable life was before me. I have been home from the meetings for two or three Sundays, and I am in sadness because of the way in which I have spent them, O so unprofitably; I have been tempted with light reading, which I feel is a curse to the world in general, because it poisons the mind for better reading and for meditation. It seems to me that the effect of it has not gotten away from me yet, but as I write this, the comforting words have come, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." My flesh truly is weak, I am so prone to wander; this causes me to grieve, and to desire to do better. After I refused to take part in the meeting the thought came to me that if I had told them just how I felt it might have been of comfort to some one there; but you know that I am of such a stammering tongue, and cannot express what I have felt and seen. O, my leanness and barrenness seem at times to make me doubt whether I have ever had any knowledge or light from above; I am made to fear that it is all deceit and vain imagination, yet I do know that the things of the Spirit must be spiritually discerned, and I feel that I would be denying my Lord if I were to say I have not a knowledge of the things of the Spirit. At times it is my greatest comfort to feel that God has given me a knowledge that the world, by great searching and study, knows not of; this is the knowledge of being a poor, vile sinner condemned in the sight of God, and that the blood of the only begotten Son of God alone can cleanse me from sin, and from fear of being cast out and not numbered with the election of grace. A true knowledge of love is also bestowed upon this poor worm of the dust. I hope in his mercy, and have great comfort in his promises. Yet with all these things before me, I am often filled with such terrible doubts that it seems to me that I often deny the Lord; but as Peter denied and then repented, and wept bitterly, so do I. When the eye of the Lord rests upon us we see our wrong, and weep and bemoan it. Often the light shines in our hearts, and we see the great vileness and wickedness there, we then cry, Unclean! unclean! and would hide our vileness from the eye of the Lord, but we learn that there is no way of hiding from that all-seeing eye. It searches the hidden things which we feel are unknown to others, and then we try to make a covering, as did our first parents in the garden, but as then, so now, we are made aware that nothing can be hid from that all-seeing eye. How terrible, and yet how true, and we would not have it otherwise.

I am glad, at times, that the Lord knows me altogether, and that I can hide nothing from him. If I could, then most likely I would be tempted to do even worse, for the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked; the more I know my own heart, the more truth I see in these words. Sometimes I fear that I do not know my own heart fully, for I find myself doing things that I would not have thought of doing, and for which I would have judged others. I have nothing to boast of, for I am as filthy rags, and am aware of my inability to do any good thing or say one good word of myself; I must own that it is all of the Lord from first to last. I had nothing to do with my natural birth, and cannot claim to have had anything to do with my spiritual birth. Right here comes a desire to acknowledge that by the grace of God I am what I am. How that monster self does worry me, it tempts and allures me, and often I am afraid of it.

But why write you all the dull and dark side? I ask myself, Why? I can only answer that it is because I know more of that side, and also because it is so vivid to me at this time. I only intended to write you a few lines, and how my pen has kept on and on. Accept my love to you and your family. May it be the Father's will for us to have a visit from you.

Yours truly,

MARY HILL TERRY.

PSALMS CXXXIII. 1.

"BEHOLD how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

To behold, in a spiritual sense, means to view with spiritual eyes; hence simply reading or speaking these words naturally does not make one see what the psalmist is talking about. To see what he saw is to be blest as greatly as he, in being able to write. Every one who is enabled to glean even a little comfort from the Scripture is blest in the same way and by the same unchanging God who moved the holy men of old to speak. We can only understand and believe in one way, and that is by revelation in our experience. What we understand by revelation, is the giving to God's children spiritual thoughts and interpretations of the written word in their hearts and in their minds. We learn over and over again that these thoughts cannot be brought about by our own power, and yet we try to hunt up a text and study out a sermon. It is not strange that those who have not learned that it is by grace will try this, but it is that we, whose only hope is the Lord, must be taught it again and again. No wonder Paul said, "O foolish Galatians;" and we are foolish when we try to improve the work of grace by the works of the flesh. Surely as it is God who began the work he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. It is only when the light shines in us that we realize how much we have been in the dark, and it is only when we get a glimpse of the true meaning of a text that we realize how little of depth and fullness we have seen. When Christ in you the hope of glory says, Behold, you see the treasures of this dwelling-place. With the command comes the power to behold how good it is. Goodness includes strength, durability, perfection, and so we learn that our dwelling together in the unity of Christ is a strong place, built upon the rock of God's revelation, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it: it is durable, lasting as eternity, and perfect as he is perfect. Pleasant it is as the garden of Christ, with her sweet smelling spices, fruits of the Spirit, flowers of grace; beautiful enough in every way to satisfy every need; pleasant with the singing of spiritual birds that leave the earth on wings of faith, and in the open field of God's love they "sing surprising grace." All things are freely given us with him, and it is all for brethren, children of God, joint-heirs with Christ, who dwell together in him in unity. This dwelling together in the oneness of Christ is so good and pleasant that nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus the Lord. It is like the precious ointment that runs down from the head to the hem of the garment which covers the whole body of Christ, dwelling together with him. Clothed in the righteousness of Christ we can shout in our innermost heart, that holy of holies, where none but he, our High Priest, enters, "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" God give you rest in that eternal dwell-

ing-place, is the prayer of one whose only hope is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Your brother, I trust, in him,

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.

LAWRENCEBURG, Ky., April 23, 1905.

ROMULUS, Okla., May 3, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—VERY DEAR BROTHER:—Can you allow one so poor and unworthy as I feel myself to be to thus address you? From some cause I have felt impressed to write to you and tell you of my high appreciation of the dear SIGNS, and of its great value to a poor and unworthy sinner. It tells my experience, if I am not mistaken in the whole matter, many times over, and brings food and drink to my hungry, thirsty soul. My father took the SIGNS nearly or quite sixty years ago, when I was quite young, and I can remember my father's and mother's high appreciation of it, and the sentiments expressed at that time by the editor, dear Elder Gilbert Beebe; and its contributors also advocated the very same things. The same Bible principles, to my understanding, are advocated by the present editor and contributors, and while I am old and my race almost run, I have been feeling for some time that I wanted and was impressed to write you and tell you of my great love toward you and to all the household of faith, and to speak of the great work that I think the editor and contributors to the SIGNS are doing in comforting the dear little ones, the children of God, and in feeding them with the rich provisions of the Master's table, and in strengthening and building them up on their most holy faith. I do hope, brother Chick, that it is the will of God that you may be spared many years, and that he will strengthen you by his Spirit, and enable you by grace divine to feed the flock of God over which he has made you overseer, and that he will ever sustain you and guide you by his Spirit, and ever keep all his Zion humble by showing them where their strength lies. I trust that he will give to each of his children the spirit of discernment, thus enabling them to discern between truth and error, so that they may not be led away by the cunning craftiness of men, wherein they lie in wait to deceive, if all this be in accordance with his will. We are taught that many false teachers are gone out into the world, and it seems almost impossible in this day of theories to discern between the evil and the good, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. Some will tell you that God's predestination only reaches as far as some certain things, and certain other things are left to poor, puny man to carry out according to his own choice. I understand this to be limiting the holy One of Israel, who inhabiteth eternity. He has all power, and wisdom, and knowledge; he speaks and it is done; he commands and it stands fast; he works all things after the counsel of his own will; then there is nothing left to transpire by chance.

Dear brother, how glad I would be to see the household of faith all united upon the God-honoring doctrine of God our Savior, for he said by one of old, "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." But as there were divisions and strife among the early believers concerning the apostles' doctrine, I am persuaded that it will continue, for a time at least, or until such time as the almighty God of Jacob is pleased to remove all such things, and to give to his people oneness of sentiment in doctrine and in practice.

But I must bring this poor, imperfect letter to a close, as I have already

written more than I intended when I started. I will say in conclusion, that I am nearly sixty-seven years of age, and have had a name among the Old School Baptists for about forty-seven years, and I can say from my heart that I believe they are the church of God, the pillar and ground of the truth. Many times I much doubt my acceptance with him, but as regards the church I have no doubt at all. I feel many times lonely and desolate. It pleased God some six years ago to remove from me my dear companion. I ask an interest in your prayers, that my faith fail not, and that I may be enabled to cast all my care on him who is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him.

Yours in hope of a better life,

W. E. LINDSAY.

OAK CREEK, Oregon, Aug. 25, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I have been reading your editorial in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for September 1st, and my wife and I have been comforted and edified in reading it. How true it has been in my case, as you there say, that nearly all who have come to hope in Christ felt when that hope was first theirs as though all trial and all danger was over. If I am not entirely deceived in the whole matter, that was my experience, but O, how soon I found out that I was mistaken. All you say along this line I can surely witness to. What you have said is nourishing and strengthening to those who are as poor in spirit as I feel myself to be; it encourages us to still cling to our little hope, and it fills our poor hearts with laughter and our tongues with singing, and we both are again enabled to realize the sweet blessing of the restoration of the joy of his salvation.

Now, my brother, I rejoice to know that God has been so good and kind to me as to bless me with an understanding of this subject in the same way that you have so plainly and ably set it forth, if I understand you, and I am fully persuaded that I do. You say, "It seems sure to our mind, that the word Spirit in the text, can refer only to the Spirit of Christ which dwells in the redeemed and quickened sinner." Here is where you come out plainly in the way that I go, and to my mind this is the sinner that Jesus came to save, and the same that was chosen in Christ that he should be holy and without blame before him in love. In plain words, this quickened sinner is the child of God, and the Spirit which you set forth is the life of this child of God, and not the child himself; it is his life, and dwells in the children of God, and shall quicken our mortal bodies. This sinner saved is also the man that is born of God, for "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This is the man also, who cannot sin, because he is born of God. None are thus born unless chosen unto salvation, and these cannot sin, because Jesus has satisfied very jot and tittle of the law in their behalf. The law therefore shall not have dominion over them, and therefore they cannot sin any more in the eye of that law from which they have been made free by the blood of Jesus Christ which cleanses from all sin. This same child of God, being no longer under the law, but under law to Christ, and who being free from the old law cannot transgress it, now does sin against Christ; because if we sin against a brother, or against the church, we sin against Christ. But this sin is not fatal, because if we sin now we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. Thus it is impos-

sible for the man who is born of God to sin fatally, and he cannot commit sin any more in the eye of that law which condemns, and from which he has been redeemed. I think that Paul explains it when he says, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me."

I will not say more, I only wished you to know that I indorse with all my heart all that you have said on this subject in the editorial. May God bless you, my dear brother.

Your brother in hope,

J. P. ALLISON.

GLENS FALLS, N. Y., July 12, 1905.

EDITOR SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Please find remittance herein for another year for the SIGNS, and an attempt to express gratitude for the privilege. All my efforts to thank the Giver of every good and perfect gift have seemed to me to be only attempts, so very far short do they appear to come from an adequate acknowledgment of the benefit. But I am consoled in the thought that the Lord is no more to be repaid with thanks than with any other good work, and while thanksgiving and praise may well appear among the fruits of a subject of grace, they cannot be reckoned as an offset to the value of a berry, for if we attempt to receive the Lord's favor by works of ours, the question confronts us at once, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" We cannot improve on David's way: to simply "take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord," and to offer the "sacrifice of thanksgiving." Now if we truly feel that we do not appreciate the blessings bestowed upon us as we would desire to, it is not likely that we will attempt to merit them by good works. If we are entirely satisfied that it is beyond us to even feel that our thanks are all that we would have them, how very ridiculous it will appear to attempt to add our works to the thanks, for most men are as good at thanking or talking as they are at working, and many are better, so that if thanking does not pay the debt, surely working cannot. So indeed, "By grace are ye saved."

In conclusion allow me to say, if it does not sound too presumptuous, that I have felt edified and instructed in your conduct of the paper, also in its degree of neat and correct workmanship by the printers, but most of all for its freedom from brawling, strife, contention and tradition, and in the letters of its able correspondents, that in them we are comforted with them in the things whereof they themselves are comforted of God. May the Lord grant you grace to continue to supply us with tidings of "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon."

Yours in hope,

EVERETT R. KINNEY.

RIVERSIDE, Cal., May 21, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—I have been negligent in sending my remittance, for which pardon me, because it has been through great weakness and absent mindedness. As the paper was several days late in reaching me, I began to fear there had been some accident to cause the delay; but bless God, it did arrive at last, laden with gospel truth and love, although several seem to be looking back, as Elder Ker and J. P. Kelley, saying, O that it were with me as in months past, which brings to my mind the words of Jesus to his disciples: "The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it."

Remember me as an old sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all.

ELIZA SARBER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1905.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JOHN XV.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Please give your views at some convenient time upon John xv., especially the second verse. How is the branch in him that he takes away? What is the difference between the two, the one that brought forth no fruit, and the one that brought forth fruit? What caused the difference?

Your brother in hope,

J. J. OKES.

RIVERMONT, Va.

The above request has been by us for some time, and our delay in replying has not arisen out of indifference to brother Okes' request at all. We have hesitated in replying because much has been said and written already by many different brethren upon this most striking parable, as it is generally called. There has also been some difference in the views of those who have spoken or written upon it as to the application of it in all its details. It may well be said that in all these different views there has been a portion of the truth involved in it set forth. In what we may write here we do not propose to enter into any debate with any one, or to criticise any one's view, but to simply suggest such thoughts as seem to us in harmony with the word in general, and not opposed to the parable itself. It is a most solemn thing to handle the word of God. We feel, as we well remember hearing the late Elder Wm. J. Purington often say at the beginning of a discourse, "It is one thing to read a portion of Scripture, and quite another thing to correctly elucidate its meaning." It is one thing to quote the Scripture, and quite another thing to preach the gospel that is set forth in it. It is not needful here to say that there is divine harmony in all the Scriptures; but while this is and must be so, yet we may in many things fail to see clearly that harmony. Our chief desire should be, as we read the word of God, to receive just the truth which is revealed in what we read. The word of God is true, let all else be a falsehood.

We recall that many years ago some brethren were conversing in our hearing about this very parable, and some one advanced the idea that the church was the vine and the members were the branches, and that taking away a fruitless branch meant exclusion from the visible church. We mention this because since then we have heard the same view presented. It is not the church which is declared to be the vine, but Christ himself: "I am the vine, ye are the branches." Taking away the branch, does not necessarily mean exclusion from the visible church. Indeed, we have known some instances where men retained their names upon the church book even when they bore no fruit, but yet they were as certainly "taken away," in the sense of the parable, as though they had been excluded from the church visibly.

A second question has sometimes been presented by some dear brethren: Did the Savior intend in this parable to speak alone to the apostles, or did his meaning take in all who bear his name everywhere and in all ages? Concerning this we will say that after long thought over the matter, it seems that it must be intended

to include all his professed disciples in every place and age. It is no doubt true that he then spoke to his immediate disciples, and that all he said was true of them. In nearly all his discourses he spoke to them first, and it would not do to say that all his wonderful parables and discourses concerning his kingdom and his work were intended to be limited to them. There seems to be as much reason for thinking that all the rest of his personal discourses were intended for them alone as that this parable of the vine was so intended; for instance, what he said about taking no thought for the morrow, as to what they should eat and drink, or wherewithal they should be clothed, and about the hairs of the head being numbered, were spoken to the disciples alone at that time, yet surely it belonged to all his disciples in all ages. Why not this parable then as well as the rest? We, in this twentieth century, need the comfort and strength of all these sayings of Jesus as much as men did in the days of his flesh. All his words are living words, and they suit his people in all times, and in all places, and in all circumstances. The fountain of their teachings is for us as well as for those of the old time; at least we shall not, we think, be doing violence to the parable if we so speak of it and apply it. The spiritual oneness of Christ and his people, and his relation to them as the source of all their fruitfulness in the spiritual life, are here most beautifully set forth by a figure that to the ears of his disciples, who were Jews, would be very familiar. Israel had in olden times been compared by the prophets to a vine. Space forbids that we should do more than refer to this: Psalms lxxx. 8, 14; Jer. ii. 21; Hosea x. 1; Isaiah v. 2, contain instances where Israel was compared to a vine, and literally their God was their husbandman. They brought forth wild grapes, or were unfruitful altogether, so that this figure was familiar to the disciples. It was no doubt all the more striking to them as it fell from the Savior's lips. But here he presents to them a closer union, not outward but inward and truly spiritual, not producing outward formality or rituals such as were to be observed by ancient Israel, but spiritual fruit, such as love, joy, peace, faith, hope, humility, with all other heavenly graces in them, as they were one with him in whom all these graces abound above measure. According to what follows in the parable, this fruit in them was to be first of all love, and then all true service, as the product of that love. (Verses 9, 10.)

Jesus said, "I am the true vine." Emphasis belongs to the word "true," all others are but shadows, even Israel of old was but a shadow. "My Father is the husbandman." That is, the great Proprietor, the Lord of the spiritual vineyard. It all belonged to the Father, and was for his glory, as is said further down in the parable. Let it be noticed that he calls God his Father in a peculiar sense. Here he claims to be the Son of God by calling God his Father. He claimed this in all his ministry, in a sense that could be true of no other being in all the universe; he said, "I am the Son of God," therefore men said that he blasphemed. In this they said that he made himself equal with God, and so he did, saying, "I and my Father are one."

Now as in nature, so is it he says in his vineyard, some branches bear fruit and some do not; this is true of all fruit-bearing trees. We well recall that when a child we would wonder why some of the greenest and thriftiest branches upon the trees did not bear apples in our father's

orchard, and we well remember that often we were sent out with saw and knife to prune away the branches that did not bear fruit. Not only were they useless, but they encumbered the tree, and hindered the branches that did bear fruit, taking of its sap and shutting out the sunlight and air, which the fruit needed for its perfection. We do not know yet why some branches did not bear fruit, but we know that they did not. We do not know why some branches in Christ do not bear fruit, but we do know that this is true also. It was so in literal Israel often, and it is so, as the Savior here testifies, in some branches who are in him. Further down in the parable he speaks of abiding in his love through abiding in his commandments. Is there not an explanation of our brother's questions here? Are there not those who are vitally one with Christ, who have been born of him and who possess eternal life, who yet do not abide in him, in the sense of keeping his commandments? Notice concerning this that Jesus said, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." Notice that Jesus speaks of himself abiding in his Father's love by keeping his commandments. Manifestly these words cannot signify that he was not in the love of the Father at all only as he abided in his commandments. The love of God to the Son was eternal love, beyond all dispute. But as God manifest in the flesh, and therefore the Son of man as well as the Son of God, he walked in obedience to the law of God perfectly, in heart, in word and deed, and so abided in the love of God. Twice the Father testified of him audibly that he was well pleased in him. This must have referred to his perfect obedience here on earth, in the flesh, to the will of his Father. It was his meat and his drink to do his Father's will. Thus he abided (in an experimental sense, shall we say?) in his Father's love; he basked in it and rejoiced in it, even though he walked through the valley of the shadow of death. Now just as he by obedience abided in the manifested love of God, so would his disciples abide in his manifested love if they should keep his commandments. Just as a child, obedient and loving, sits under the smiles of his father, so would he smile upon his obedient disciples; he would love them all the time whether they were obedient or not; but they could not abide in his love if in them was found a disobedient and rebellious heart. Five of the seven churches of Asia were cases in point of those who were walking in disobedience, either in doctrine or in practice, and some among them all seem to have been doing the same; to such ones the love of God would not be made manifest as to others, they could not abide in his love. Now is not this to be cast out as a branch and withered? Literally, the proper use of a branch is to bear fruit, this is its one reason for existence; failing in this there is but one thing for it, that is, to be burned, it is no longer of any use. Again, we desire to insist upon this one truth, viz: that so far as vital union to our living Head is concerned, there is here no thought of any one being cast off forever, it simply relates to the willing, loving obedience on the one hand, by which the loving favor of God comes to be realized more and more in them, and that headiness and high-mindedness of the flesh on the other hand, which looks away from Christ, and trusts in the flesh, which is in us all, and appears in us all more or less, and which is the reverse of abiding in

Christ. Such as these can bring forth no fruit to the glory of God, such are cast forth and are withered, they become such things as men gather and burn.

The Savior said to his disciples, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." This was the purging of which he spoke in verse two. His word searches his disciples, and it had been searching them in all their intercourse together, and they had been purged by it from much of the old dross of legality and earthly views of heavenly things. This word was to them, and is to all his disciples, as a refiner's fire. As by the Spirit it is applied to the heart of one of his, it burns up the dross and purges away that which is contrary to the gospel. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." This would be so, because abiding in him and having his word abide in them, they could ask nothing contrary to his will, and so should the Father be glorified in them by their bearing much fruit; all is to the glory of God. The husbandman rejoices in the fruitful vine, and by it is his husbandry measured and known. The people of God can have no higher incentive to steadfastness in believing and in living than to know that herein is their Father glorified; this is the supreme desire of the spiritual mind.

Our brother asks, How is that branch in Christ at all which is taken away? It appears to us that in all the parable there are two senses of the words "in him." From the one union none can ever be severed; it is Christ in us the hope of glory. But there is also presented an experimental, loving union which may be hindered and marred, and from which a disciple may be shut out through his ceasing to regard the word of God. It is the same truth expressed by the apostle when he said, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Again, "He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

There is much force in the word "abide." "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you." "If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love," &c. Eternal life and vital union with Christ lead to this keeping of the commandments and to the abiding here intended. The word "abide" is experimental through and through. David felt the great need of this abiding in the Lord when he prayed, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit." Sin had separated him from this blessed experience of heavenly communion, and realizing this he prayed for forgiveness and cleansing, and for restoration to that which had been his joy and comfort.

Brother Okes' question, What causes the difference between the two? has often perplexed our own mind and heart. Not only is it the question, What makes the difference between members of the church? so that of one it is true that if he be absent from the services of the sanctuary we all ask, What is the matter? and of the other, if he be present we feel like asking on the other hand, What is the matter? But the same question comes right home to our own hearts, Why am I so different to-day from what was the case with me yesterday? Why am I so indifferent now when it was not so a little while ago? Why can I listen no longer to the word preached as I once did? Why do I not feel such close love and tenderness to the blessed Savior and

his people as once crowned me with blessing? It does seem to me, says this troubled soul, that I once did walk with joy in the way, and that I was willing to spend and be spent in the service of God, but now such coldness is with me, and such little things hinder me, and I am listless and almost unmoved when the word of God is presented. Why is all this so? Many a child of God complains in this way, but still why it is so we do not know. Our brother's question, What makes the difference? is indeed hard to answer, whether it applies to different persons or to different states of mind in the same person; but we do know that there are times when we are withered ourselves, and we do know that some who did once run well do not so run any longer, and we do know that some are fat and flourishing and it is a blessed privilege to be with them, while some are lean and withered and we find no spiritual conversation in them, and what is worse, no interest in spiritual conversation.

We feel well assured that we have not solved all the hard questions which come up in connection with this wonderful parable, but we leave these reflections with our brethren.

PLEASE BE SURE,

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

2 PETER I. 10.

(REPLY TO ELDER JAMES STRICKLAND.)

As in his letter he has made several appeals to us on various propositions, before we attempt an exposition of the text on which he desires our views, we will endeavor to respond to them briefly. We say briefly, because it would require much time and space to write elaborately on each of them.

First. We will remark that we were not led to a misapprehension of the general purport of his former letter by his having *unfortunately* used the term "protracted," as by a more careful review of our former remarks it will be found that we did not object to the protraction of meetings when the Spirit so directs, or circumstances require; we objected only to the idea of protracted meetings for the purpose of getting up revivals or religious excitements. We did not understand from brother Strickland's letter that the meeting at Francisco was previously appointed as a protracted meeting for any such purpose, but being assembled, the meeting was protracted. Brother Strickland misapprehends us if he understood us to object to prayers being made for mourners in Zion. All the inhabitants of Zion are mourners at times; sometimes they mourn their own leanness and barrenness, their trials, tribulations or persecutions, and all the saints are at all times in public or private duly authorized to pray for each other, as the word directs and the Spirit indites; but still to call on either saint or sinner to signify by rising up, by coming to some particular altar or seat, or by extending their hand, or by any other sign or signal, is in our view very objectionable. First, because in so doing we as-

sume a mediatorial position between the sinner and his God which would mislead them to rely on our prayers to commend them to God, instead of teaching them that we are just as dependent on God to sustain us as they are for deliverance from their distress. There are examples in the word in which the prayers of the saints are asked for, but if there be any instance where the primitive disciples called on their congregations to signify by motion or gesture, movement or sign, that they desired their prayers, we have overlooked it.

Second. Much mischief grows out of such proceedings sometimes. For instance, at a revival meeting, even if the revival be genuine, there are often those present whose natural sympathies are touched; they feel alarmed for the moment, and on being called on they signify that they wish the prayers of the minister; by their public expression of the desire they feel that they have committed themselves publicly as seekers, or as wishing to become christians, and having done so, after the excitement has subsided they are induced to make a profession of religion, when they would not think of doing so if they had not thus prematurely committed themselves.

We were sincere in saying that we had mistaken these brethren if they would designedly depart from the ancient landmarks of Zion. We did not think they really designed what their practice seemed to imply, and for that very cause we felt constrained to warn them to shun the appearance of evil. What we understand by the efficiency of the ministry, is that they be divinely qualified to minister in holy things, by such gifts, and only such, as Christ has given unto men for the work of the ministry and for the edifying of the body of Christ. If this be what our brother means by efficiency, we agree that the prosperity and benefit of the church is promoted by the gifts which Christ has so bestowed for the benefit of the whole body. Baptist ministers, in common with others, not beyond others, may be too much occupied in discussing worldly subjects, and a faithful admonition to such is seasonable and proper, if it be administered in the spirit of the gospel; instead of admiring errors among the Baptists, which we would condemn in others, we look for nothing else but errors in others, and therefore an error in a professed Baptist is more unbecoming and out of place, in our estimation, than anywhere else.

We may be under the deceptive influence of a beam in our own eye, but we are greatly deceived indeed if we do not discover a mote which we would gladly remove from the vision of our brother. We confess that the different view which we take of some of the same things seems to indicate that there is some defect somewhere in our vision, we do not seem to see the same things precisely alike; this may be owing to beams or motes. May the Lord enable all his watchmen to see eye to eye.

Brother Strickland says: "If our ministers had been as careful in pointing out and keeping before the brethren their errors as they have the errors and wrongs of others, it would have been better for the Baptists, and we to-day would not have had to complain of the cold, lifeless, barren and dead state of religion that we do." This is saying considerable. Well, however derelict other Baptist ministers may have been in pointing out the errors, or what are supposed to be the errors, of brethren, brother Strickland and ourself will not be charged with the sin of altogether overlooking or winking at the er-

rors of each other. But although we have been for many years endeavoring to point out the errors of our dearest brethren, and not insensible that we have many of our own also, which our brethren have kindly borne with, still we feel much coldness, barrenness and deadness. But we have serious doubts if a kind of animation resulting from our own faithfulness, either in admonishing our brethren, or anything else that we can do, would be the kind of life and activity that either brother Strickland or ourself would be satisfied with. Both of us would rather say, If the Lord should quicken our poor, cold hearts, and animate our sluggish minds by the life-giving and life-reviving power of his Holy Spirit, it would make us more active and more faithful in pursuing every good word and work.

"Too much time and labor," you say, "has been given to the subject of doctrinal preaching, and not enough to the practical part of the gospel." And this you demonstrate by the testimony, which to us is new, that there are to-day a dozen different factions in the United States calling themselves Old School Baptists, utterly refusing to correspond with each other; all in consequence of some doctrinal difference. Admitting for instance the whole force of this testimony, we cannot see that it proves, but rather disproves, the correctness of the position, for the testimony only shows that those who are so divided on the subject of doctrine are not sufficiently posted on doctrine. If they were better instructed in doctrine they would be more united. If the difference were in their practice it would look more to us as though too little time and labor had been bestowed on practical subjects. Brother Strickland we trust will not undertake to say that the preaching of the doctrine of the gospel, the doctrine of God our Savior, has a tendency to divide the children of God; if so, we would infer that it ought not to be preached at all.

How many sorts of people may claim to be Old School Baptists who do not believe our doctrine, and who are not in correspondence with us, we do not know, but we did not think there were so many as our brother speaks of; but if there be "a dozen," it to our mind only shows the greater necessity for a more faithful and constant preaching of the doctrine.

Brother Strickland says: "No denomination that I am acquainted with seems to boast of the correctness of their doctrinal sentiments so much as the Old School Baptists, and yet none are more divided among themselves than the Baptists are." Truly, if a dozen or more factions, holding different doctrinal sentiments, and having no correspondence, fellowship or communion with each other, are still but one denomination or church, it must be admitted that there is much division in the denomination. But is it fair to include as any part of the church of Christ any factions or parties who do not hold our sentiments, and who have no correspondence with us, merely because they choose to call themselves Old School Baptists? On the same principle may we not include as belonging to the true church of Christ all who profess to be christians, and so consolidate Catholics, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, Mormons, Quakers and Dunkards, with many other names, as the same one church, only somewhat divided in their doctrine and practice? We hold that all who are not with us are against us, and all who have gone out from us have gone out that it might be made manifest that they were not of us. The church of

Christ is a unit, and though there may be threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, yet Christ's bride is but one, she is the only one of her mother, the choice one of her that bare her.

We admit that the faithful preaching of the gospel presents the gospel in all its excellence, which cannot be done without presenting the experience and practice of the gospel, but we do not think the minister of Christ can dwell too long or too loud on what is called the doctrine, nor that the doctrine can be faithfully preached without preaching christian experience, for all christians have experienced the doctrine of God our Savior, and desire to adorn that doctrine in their deportment and conversation.

We are astonished at the figure brother Strickland has employed to illustrate his views of the nature and tendency of doctrinal preaching. Is it true that the constant and persistent preaching of the doctrine of Christ, with now and then an exposure of Arminianism, stamps the life out of real christians, like the stamping the roots of young trees, as in the similitude used? We do believe that the faithful preaching of the doctrine of Christ will drive away from the church those who have never received the love of the truth, that they might be saved, but we are willing to see all that fire put out which God has not kindled, all those converts driven away from the church which God has not made, and all that life which is not born of God slain by the sword of the Spirit. Let them all die who cannot live on every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God; let them all starve who cannot feed upon the doctrine of Christ, and let them all be stripped of their foliage and fruit whose roots can be killed by the faithful preaching of the doctrine of the gospel. "For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter: their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps."—Deut. xxxii. 32, 33. Of this sort were those "disciples" who figured zealously at the banquet of loaves and fishes. (John vi.) But the vigor was bruised out of their roots on the very next day, by the doctrine which kills so many at this day. When Jesus preached to them the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, that none could be saved except by him, that none could have eternal life except they ate his flesh and drank his blood, &c., this doctrine made a great scattering of the disciples. No doubt if our Lord had kept back this hard doctrine, and in its stead given them such food as they could relish, a few more loaves and fishes, they would have been inclined to remain with him, and to have had him for their King. But the bread of heaven they did not desire, and his doctrine they could not endure; it pinched their roots beyond endurance, because they were not rooted or grounded in him, and we read, "Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him."—John vi. 60, 66. "Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." Here we see that the very doctrine which crushes the roots and drives away nominal and graceless disciples, feeds, comforts, unites and binds more closely together those who are truly born of God and led by his Spirit. Those churches therefore which have withered and died because the doctrine has been preached to them long and

loud, and Arminianism exposed, we are sure were not the churches of Christ, and they cannot die too fast when the truth of God kills them. "Doctrine is good in its place." So brother Strickland admits, but where is its place? In the church of God. The holy apostle has warned us, saying, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."—2 John 10. This admonition is to the elect lady and her children, whom John loved in the truth, and certainly is applicable to all who know and love the truth. Paul was so far from apprehending danger to the saints that he exhorted Timothy to "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." Too much of this would not kill them, nor destroy their spiritual exercises. God says by the mouth of Moses, "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass." —Deut. xxxii. 1, 2. Nothing crushing or violent to the plants which God's own hand hath set, in his doctrine. Even the tender herb, instead of being crushed by it, is refreshed; it comes like the small rain, and distils like the cheering dew, softly descending, with wholesome effect, causing the tenderest plants to sparkle in living vigor and beauty. To those who have an ear to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches, the doctrine of Christ is in its appropriate place, but to anti-Christ it has no attraction; to all false professors of religion it would be like "a jewel of gold in a swine's snout."—Prov. xi. 22. As brother Strickland justly remarks, "It must underlie all the experience and practice of the gospel." Nothing therefore can be regarded as gospel experience or gospel practice that is contrary to or that cannot endure sound doctrine. But our brother seems to think it useless to harp upon it where it is already well understood. The apostle dwelt largely on those things, not because the saints did not know them, but because they did know them, and Peter desired, as long as he should continue in the flesh, to stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance.

Those who possess genuine faith will show it by their works, and where it is not so manifested we have no reliable evidence of its existence. "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak."—2 Cor. iv. 13; Psalms cxvi. 10. Those who believe that the preaching of the truth is for the edifying of the saints will be expected to advocate that kind of preaching, and those who think an exhibition of the doctrine will be detrimental to the cause, and depressing to the spiritual exercises of the saints, will be apt to show their faith by keeping it back.

Brother Strickland inquires, "What good is faith going to do you or me, unless that faith is coupled with good works?" We reply, That faith which is the fruit of the Spirit never fails to work, for it works by love and purifies the heart, and any other kind of faith will be vain, even if it be coupled with what we may call good works, for without faith it is impossible to please God. We do not disagree in regard to the character of those works of which brother Strickland speaks, and we believe that the faith of the Son of God living and reigning in us will be evinced by a care-

ful practice of them all. We may differ in regard to the manner in which the saints are to wash each other's feet. According to our understanding of it, we are now trying to wash brother Strickland's feet, and we presume that he designed to cleanse our feet of some dust by his brotherly letter, to which we are now replying. If we diverge from the pathway of holiness we shall defile our feet, if not our garments, but we should keep our feet when we stand on holy or consecrated ground.

Having occupied so much space in our remarks on brother Strickland's letter, and our replies to his interrogatives, we will now attend to his request for our views on 2 Peter i. 10: "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall."

The saints to whom this apostolic admonition is addressed, we are told in the first verse, had already obtained faith of the like precious kind, as that possessed by Peter himself. It was not therefore a faith in prospect and to be procured, nor a faith that had originated with themselves, but it is that faith which is the gift of God, is born of God, and is the faith of the Son, and which overcomes the world. It is precious from its intrinsic value, from its nature and effects, from its power to conquer the world, quench the violence of fire, stop the mouths of lions, and give ability to endure all things, as seeing him who is invisible. It is peculiarly precious, because it can only come from God as a special gift, and because without it no man can please God; and it is also precious because it is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen; and precious because to it all divine revelation is made to the saints of their election, calling, justification before God, deliverance from wrath and assurance of immortality beyond the grave. With this priceless treasure the apostle assures the saints that God has given them all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue. By this precious faith, together with all things pertaining to life and godliness, which things are all grasped, apprehended or received by precious faith, and by them are given (that is, dealt out to us from our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Reservoir of all spiritual blessings,) to us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these (that is, by faith, and what faith lays hold on,) ye might be partakers of the divine nature. It is not by this faith and all things that pertain to life and godliness, that we are or were made partakers of human or earthly nature, but of that spiritual, immortal and eternal life, which constitutes our new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. We cannot possess this precious faith without possessing Christ, for it is in him, and as Paul says, "Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." By this faith and these attendant graces the saints have escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust, or through the depraved propensities of our earthly nature, being by the blood of Christ purged from our old sins. Now with all this grace, not only in store for us, but given and received, obtained and in possession, we are called to be active. God has bestowed all these spiritual blessings on us in Christ, "according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and with-

out blame before him in love." God has called us to glory and virtue. "Wherefore [for these reasons, this being the case, and this grace being received,] the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure." Instead of this precious faith, and with it all things pertaining to life and godliness, and all the many great and precious promises, and even a participation in the divine nature, having a tendency to make us negligent, careless or indifferent in regard to our high and holy calling, every principle of this heavenly and divine nature implanted is *rather* calculated to make us diligent in the pursuit of the things which become sound doctrine. The child of God thus called and invested with these precious gifts is to regard it as the great business of his life to diligently pursue those things which are in our context enjoined. Not thereby to procure his election, or any or all the things which pertain to life and godliness, for these he has already in possession, but that he may thereby demonstrate for his own spiritual comfort and for the declarative glory of God, that he does already possess them. This makes *sure* their calling, that is, it proves beyond all contradiction that God has already called them to glory and to virtue; and as it proves that they are called, so it proves that they are chosen or elected children of God, for "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called." To make our calling and election sure, is not to procure either, for they are already complete, but to manifest and demonstate the existing fact. "For if ye do these things, ye shall never fall." Do what things? The things which he had mentioned in the preceding verse. "Add to your faith virtue." Virtue is the opposite of vice, and God has called the saints to virtue, that they may show forth the praise of him that hath called them. All the amiability of our nature, in the absence of faith, could not please God, or make our calling and election sure. Faith is first, and virtue, which is in harmony with precious faith, is to be added as evidence to ourselves, and to those around us, that we possess the faith of God's elect. A man may hold a creed which for orthodoxy may be unexceptionable, and he may preach long and loud in defense of it, but if he be not virtuous in his conduct and deportment he only holds the truth in unrighteousness. And again, a man may be a subject of grace, and possess true and genuine faith, yet if he be not virtuous, circumspect and upright in his deportment, he becomes a castaway, so far as relates to the proving of his calling and election, and a castaway as to his usefulness in his high and holy vocation.

"And to virtue knowledge." We are not to conclude that we know enough, and that there is no more for us to learn in the school of Christ. We are to learn of Jesus, search the Scriptures, prove all things, and hold fast that which is good. Ask counsel of God, watch carefully the leadings of his word and Spirit, and follow those things whereby one may edify another. This knowledge of divine things is to be diligently sought after, that it may be added to our faith and virtue. But if we have not the faith and virtue we may be ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

"And to knowledge temperance." If we have not faith, virtue and knowledge, we shall not know what is temperance, but having the former we are qualified to add to them the latter, and to be temperate in all things.

"And to temperance patience." A

restless, murmuring, fretful course illy benefits one who should show forth the praise of the Redeemer. To be patient in tribulation, under sore trials, afflictions, temptations and persecutions, greatly adorns the life of the christian, and this blessed ornament of our profession should be added to the others.

"And to patience godliness." Godliness consists in living in the fear of God, denying ourselves all ungodliness, that we may live soberly, righteously and godly in the world. To live godly is to pursue in all things that course which God has approved in his word, and which Christ has taught in his examples.

"And to godliness brotherly kindness." We cannot attach too much importance to these things. "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." But how do we know it if we do not love the brethren? Brotherly kindness is an important evidence then of our calling and election.

"And to brotherly kindness charity," or christian love, which is to manifest our attachment to God, to his cause, his doctrine, his ordinances, his people, and to all his laws and institutions.

"For if these things be in you, and abound." That is, if precious faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity, if these things be in us and abound, that is, if they be acted out, made manifest in all our walk and conversation, we cannot be barren or unfruitful, for these are the fruits of the Spirit, and give testimony that the tree which bears them has been made good, and hence they demonstrate that our calling and election is of God, and therefore sure.

"If ye do these things, ye shall never fall." Never fall from your steadfastness in the truth, from the evidence that you have been purged from your old sins; you shall never fall into that darkness of mind and blindness in which you cannot see afar off, and in which you forget that you have been purged, washed, cleansed, sanctified and set apart from the world to be a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. When all these things are abounding in us we feel a blessed assurance that we are born of God, a joyful reliance on the great and precious promises which are given unto us.

The apostle adds, "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." In the absence of these aboundings we feel barren and unfruitful, and find it hard to enter into the precious privileges of the kingdom, and we sometimes doubt whether we have any right or inheritance there; but when they abound in us we do sweetly and experimentally enter in through the gates into the city of our God; and the entrance is ministered unto us abundantly by the Spirit, in our spiritual exercises of mind, in our enjoyment of our gospel privileges, and by the brethren and kindred in Christ, who soon discover the evidence that these things are truly in us and abound, and our entrance into their hearts, their confidence, their love and their fellowship is most abundant.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Aug. 1, 1862.

NOTICE.

NOTICE is hereby given that the Salem Old School Baptist Church of Philadelphia, Pa., has changed the time from 10:30 a. m. to 1:30 p. m., Oct. 16th, 1905, for the council to meet at 1315 Columbia Ave. for the purpose of considering the advisability of ordaining brother B. F. Coulter, M. D., to the full work of the gospel ministry.

FRANK TERRY.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Licking Association of Particular Baptists, now in session with Goshen Church, Anderson Co., Ky., Sept. 8th, 9th and 10th, 1905, to the associations with whom she corresponds, sendeth christian love.

GOD in his providence has again permitted us to meet in an associate capacity. The messages of love from the churches composing the association show peace, harmony and christian fellowship. We feel that we have been built up in the faith by the preaching of Jesus and his love for poor sinners. The ministering brethren seemed to be filled with the Spirit's power. We hope for a continuation of your christian correspondence by Minutes and messengers. May God's love bind us closer together as we journey through life.

Our next association is appointed to be held with our sister church, Bald Eagle, commencing on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1906, where we again hope to meet your messengers and receive your messages of love. May the love of God be with you all. Amen.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.
J. T. MCCOUN, Clerk.
T. J. RATLIFF, Assistant Clerk.

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the First Roxbury Church, Vega, Delaware Co., N. Y., September 13th and 14th, 1905, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—We are favored once more in the good providence of our God to meet in an associate capacity as the professed followers of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and we humbly hope we have been gathered together in the name of our covenant-keeping God, for which we feel thankful to the God of our salvation, in whom we trust we live, move and have our being; to whom we must still look. We have had a very pleasant session; the weather has been good, and a goodly number present, and your ministers have come to us and preached the gospel of the Son of God, and it has been in the fullness of truth.

Our next session has been appointed to be held (the Lord willing) with the Second Church of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., on the second Wednesday, and Thursday following, in September, 1906, commencing at 10 o'clock the first day, when and where we hope to be again favored of the Lord with the presence of your messengers and ministers.

J. D. HUBBELL, Moderator.
J. B. SLAUSON, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder John McConnell, at his residence in New York city, Oct. 4th, 1905, Dr. Chas. A. LeCates and Miss Matilda Heath, both of Philadelphia, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Nancy Grove Brumback was born in Page Co., Va., Nov. 5th, 1814, died April 28th, 1905, aged 90 years, 5 months and 23 days. She was married to Jacob Brumback Feb. 5th, 1835. Her husband died Jan. 5th, 1853. Thus she was left a widow to battle with the hardships of life, together with raising her family of small children, which she did well. She was blessed with a strong constitution and general good health through life, which enabled her to see after the business of this life, and to bear the burden, affliction and losses in her dear family as they passed away one by one till they were all gone except three daughters out of a family of eight: Mrs. John Grove, of Page Co., Va., Mrs. Emily Louis, of Missouri, and Mrs. B. R. Cannon, with whom she spent her last days. She was stricken with paralysis Feb. 24th, 1899, and suffered till the end came. She was a member of the Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church called Providence, in Hancock Co., Ill., and all through her sickness she read the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, her favorite paper; she kept it by her all the time. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace; she said she would not give her hope, little as it seemed to be, for anything in this world. She was

ever faithful, and seemed to grow stronger and stronger as she approached the end. She was well read in the Scriptures, and commanded the love and esteem of all who knew her. She was one of the brightest members of our body at Providence; a strong pillar is gone. She was ever ready to give a reason of her hope in Christ. We miss her wise counsel, we miss her everywhere, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. We sympathize with her children, especially Mrs. Cannon. They miss her much, but she lived to a ripe old age, and was so afflicted that it was best for her to go and be at rest. The Lord gives and he takes away, and blessed be his name. Let us pray that we may all be reconciled to every dispensation of his divine will.

MRS. BELLE FRAZEE.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., Sept. 19, 1905.

(See communication on page 616.)

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS."

A Friend, Georgia, $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Corresponding Meeting of Virginia is appointed to be held with the Bethlehem church, near Manassas, Prince William Co., Va., October 11th, 12th and 13th, 1905. Friends coming from the east or north by railroad will take train on Southern road at Sixth St. station, Washington, D. C., at 4 or 4:30 p. m. the day before the meeting, or at 8 a. m. or 11 a. m. the day of the meeting. All tickets should be purchased for Manassas, where the several trains will be met. Trains from the south and west will also be met. An earnest invitation is extended to lovers of the truth, especially to our ministering brethren.

J. N. BADGER.

THE yearly meeting of the Welsh Tract church, Newark, Delaware, is appointed to commence on Saturday, Oct. 14th, 1905, and continue two days. Friends coming from the north and south via B. & O. R. R. will get tickets to Newark, Del. Trains leave Philadelphia at 7:40 a. m., and Baltimore at 8 a. m. (Mt. Royal station.) Those coming via Delaware division will take train leaving Delmar at 7:10 a. m. Saturday, and get tickets to Newark, Del. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

P M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church in Salisbury, Md., on Wednesday, Oct. 18th, 1905, and continue the two following days. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Those coming via Baltimore have choice of two routes, either by way of Claiborne, leaving Pier 4, Light St. wharf at 4:10 p. m., arriving at Salisbury about 9 p. m., or from Pier 3, via steamer Virginia, (all water route) at 5 p. m., arriving at Salisbury about 8 o'clock Wednesday morning. Those expecting to return to Baltimore by these routes can get return tickets. Those coming from the north, all take the train leaving Broad St., Philadelphia, about 3 p. m., Wilmington about 3:40. From the south, take express due at Salisbury about 2 p. m. All come on Tuesday. From the east Wednesday morning, train leaves Berlin about 7 a. m. All come.

In behalf of the church,

A. B. FRANCIS.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie, N. Y., has appointed a yearly meeting to be held on Wednesday and Thursday, October 18th and 19th, 1905. Those who come by rail will be met at Howes Cave on the day previous.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie Hill has appointed their yearly meeting to be held on Wednesday and Thursday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1905. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend.

Done by order of the church.

THE yearly meeting of the Old School Baptist Church of Olive and Hurley, of the Roxbury Association, is appointed to meet, the Lord willing, November 1st and 2nd, 1905, commencing at 10 o'clock. We hope to see many brethren and friends. Elders Hubbell, Slauson, Ker and Chick are expected to be with us.

A. BOGART, Clerk.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at the Hall, corner of 19th St. and 8th Ave., fifth floor. Elevator entrance on either 19th St. or 8th Ave.

10:30 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 73. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1905. NO. 21.

CORRESPONDENCE.

VIOLA, Wisconsin.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR SIR:—I send you a copy of an experience written by my father, D. G. Carter, for you to read, and if you think best, publish in the dear old SIGNS, of which I have been a reader for a number of years, and from which I take much comfort, although not a member of the visible church. There is no one in this part of the country of that faith that I know of, and I am indeed lonely. Father died in 1880, and my wife nearly eight years ago, and last April my dear old mother died, so I am left all alone, as we never had any children, but am trying to trust in the Lord, and feel very thankful to him for my good health. I cannot remember when father was not a reader of the SIGNS. I am fifty-eight years old.

Respectfully,

GEORGE CARTER.

DEDICATED TO MY DEAREST RELATIVES AND FRIENDS:—The time may come when you will feel somewhat interested to know something more definite concerning my christian experience and faith than you do at this time, and being desirous that you should have something to refer to, I thought to write out a brief sketch of the way in which I sometimes hope the kind and merciful Lord has been pleased to lead me, if indeed there has ever been any change wrought in me, which for the most part I am tempted to doubt. The subject is one which I approach with diffidence, fear and trembling, knowing that if there has been a change of heart wrought in me it has been accomplished by a power far superior to and independent of my own; I therefore humbly invoke the guidance of that supreme power to lead, guide and direct me into the way of all truth, for without that I can do nothing.

I will say first that my parents, as I hope and trust, were good christians; however I do not remember much about my father, he having been called home when I was in my ninth year, and my dear mother tried as well as she could to train her children in the fear and admonition of the Lord, but her pious teaching and example did not seem to make much impression on my hard and stony heart, for I was a very wild and mischievous boy; not that I was vicious or criminal in

my conduct, notwithstanding I was possessed of a very unruly temper, which has been my worst enemy all my life. Fond of the world and its vanities, I could not entertain the idea of surrendering my carnal enjoyment for that of the christian religion, supposing that religion was a melancholy affair, better suited to old people, and would cut off totally all my worldly enjoyment, not realizing at that time the truth of what the poet said, that religion never was designed to make one's pleasure less; no, but the pleasures of the world and carnal enjoyments were sweet to me, and I rolled sin as a sweet morsel under my tongue. Such was the condition I was in, and such is the condition that every one is in while in nature's darkness. O how blind, deaf and dumb was I spiritually, dead in trespasses and sin, totally depraved, and yet well pleased with myself; I did not know or feel the need of a Savior, had no love for Jesus or religion, and would not have either were it not to keep me from endless torment hereafter; and all this time I was deluded with the firm belief that I could get religion, as it is often called, in a very short time if I would set myself about it; that it was open to every one of Adam's lost race on certain conditions was the popular theory of the day, and is at the present time; but I found it different, as I believe I found the tree of life was guarded by a flaming sword that turned every way to keep the way thereof, lest man should reach forth his hand and partake of the fruit and live forever. When I was quite young, in fact as far back as I can remember, I would at times have very serious thoughts concerning death and the judgment to come, but have never been able to fully and satisfactorily decide the real cause of these meditations, whether they were the result of pious teachings, natural instinct or the promptings of the Spirit of life; but be that as it may, these serious spells would soon disappear, and I would return to my sports as cheerful and wild as before. I would attend professed religious meetings of all denominations, and often at some of their exciting meetings I have felt very solemn, and my mind very much wrought upon to behold their terrible performances and hear their frightful stories of death, hell and the grave set forth in the most exciting language possible; nevertheless I thought then it was all right and was truly the work of the good Spirit, but from some cause that I have never been fully able to comprehend I did not unite with them in church capacity. I have sometimes thought it was a providential affair that I did not, that it was not the Lord's will that I should unite with them and thereby encourage, by my presence at least, the propagation of their false idea of doctrine. So time passed rapidly on, and I still had my serious thoughts and meditations at times, but did not want religion yet, so I would put it off and promise that at such a time I would seek for the salvation of my soul and become religious. I made several such promises, but would break them invariably, till finally I concluded that this way of doing was only adding sin to sin, and that I had best refrain from these things, and so I did, believing most assuredly (as I before remarked) that the power was in myself; that being a free moral agent (as the popular but false theory was and is) I could get religion at any time, but found I was mistaken, and that I must wait the Lord's time. As Moses at the Red Sea commanded Israel to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, so every chosen vessel of mercy must wait

the Lord's time; he has promised to come and not tarry.

Now I come to the most critical period, in one respect, of my experience, that is to say, I cannot, as Saul of Tarsus and some others whose experience I have heard and read, point to the exact time when I was first convicted of sin and made to feel my need of a Savior, and this fact I will here remark has been a source of much doubt and trouble of mind, fearing I had caught at the shadow and missed the substance. I was at this time, as near as I can remember, about in my thirtieth year, when my mind became seriously troubled concerning the future well-being of my soul, and I set to work in good earnest to get religion, that I had before thought was such an easy task; but O what a failure, and right here I came in contact with the flaming sword that turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life, for I soon found that my best performances availed nothing, and that all my righteousness was as filthy rags. I attended meetings and read my Bible and other good books, but from different motives than formerly; the Bible condemned me, the promises therein were not for me, but for believers, and I was not of that number. I would resort to secret places where none but the eye of God could see, and there try to plead for mercy and pardon, but my prayers did not avail anything, or at least so it seemed to me, and this text would sometimes come into my mind with much force: "The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord." This flaming sword cut me off completely on every hand. At about this period there was rather a strange idea presented to my mind: (strange to me at that time,) it was concerning the resurrection of Lazarus and that almighty power that called him from the grave, in connection with regeneration, or in plainer words, that it required the exercise of the same almighty power to quicken the dead sinner to a spiritual life in Christ that it did to raise Lazarus from the grave; that was the way in which it was presented to my mind. Although I had not to my recollection ever heard any view on the subject expressed, it made such a deep impression on my mind at the time that I have never gotten rid of it, but I found long since that the idea or sentiment is in strict accord with Bible testimony; then what could I do but wait the Lord's good time? My efforts had proven fruitless, I was brought to stand still, and, like the publican of old, all I could do was to smite upon my breast and cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and I do hope and believe that the blessed Lord and Savior did in his own time and way speak peace to my troubled soul in the pardon of my sins, but this, too, came in a different way from what I had anticipated; it was as Jesus said to Nicodemus: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Yea, verily I believe I was made to hear the sound thereof in the voice of my Beloved, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." I believe, too, I have at different times been made to feel the holy influence of that Spirit as the wind that bloweth, which would cause me to rejoice in hope of eternal life which was treasured up in Christ before the foundation of the

world, and is reserved in him for all the heirs of salvation, and it is to them a free gift, he having obtained eternal redemption for them by the sacrifice of himself, therefore justice is satisfied, the law is magnified and his people are justified through the righteousness of Christ.

From the time I received my first encouragement to hope and trust in the Lord Jesus as my Savior and Redeemer, the holy Scriptures, or portions thereof, have at times been opened to my mind, and I have, as I trust, been enabled to understand them in their true import, and have been made to rejoice in consequence thereof, and to say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." The preaching of the word by the Lord's servants has also at times been sweet to my taste, and I have been enabled through grace to feast and rejoice in God my Savior, therefore I sometimes feel a good hope that there has been a change wrought in me, for the things I once dearly loved I now hate, such as the vanities and carnal enjoyments of this world, and sin of every name I hate; they are not substantial joys, but they pass away as doth the flower of the morning, or as the shadows of evening; nevertheless I am not free from sin, and never expect to be while I sojourn in this vile body, "for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." The apostle Paul says, "If I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." So it seems that he was not free from sin in his mortal body, which caused him to exclaim, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Another evidence I have of a change of heart, and which I sometimes think is unmistakable, is that the things I once had no love for I now love above all earthly blessings; the first of which is the blessed promise of life and immortality beyond the grave, which was treasured up in Christ for all the heirs of salvation long ere time began. I can believe now in the promises, and rejoice and take comfort in those that I once thought were not for me; and also the preaching of the word, that I formerly cared nothing for, is now sweet to my taste, and is to me a feast of fat things, of wine on the lees well refined, but it is seldom I enjoy the privilege of hearing it. All the plan of salvation, as presented through a crucified and risen Redeemer, is a glorious theme for contemplation, for it is all of free, sovereign and unmerited grace, without price or reward. My only hope of salvation is through the righteous merits of a crucified and risen Redeemer; I have no merit to plead, no good works.

"Grace first inscribed my name
In God's eternal book;
'Twas grace that gave me to the Lamb,
Who all my sorrows took."

I am confident, too, that wherever the Lord begins a good work he will carry it on to perfection, for he has so promised in many places in the word; he says that he gives to his sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand. He also says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." The apostle Peter, speaking of the new birth, says they are born "not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

"Yes, I to the end shall endure,
As sure as the earnest is given;
More happy, but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven."

The popular idea of utterly falling from grace is one of Satan's delusions,

and should not be believed for a moment by one of God's dear children; but that the best of christians sin more or less at times and fall into grievous errors, there is no doubt. Witness the case of David and of Peter, and hear Paul complaining that he was carnal, sold under sin, and could not do the things he would; but God says, "I will visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." I have been blundering along in disobedience for about twenty-four years, still waiting and hoping (a portion of that time at least) for a brighter and more vivid experience and stronger hope, but it does not come, and I have concluded long since to praise the Lord for the great blessing bestowed upon me, and to content myself with the little hope I have, although it seems very small at times and almost gone, (as at the present time) yet as small as it appears, all the honors and emoluments of this wicked world would not be sufficient to buy it. I often think it is presumptuous for me to claim any relationship (spiritually) with the children of God, nevertheless I have at times felt a good assurance that I have passed from death unto life, for I know that I do love his children, the doctrine, order and ordinances of his church, with a holy and fervent love, and in the blessed promises contained in his word I can sometimes rejoice in and take comfort. I have ever been a very disobedient child, if one at all, continually sinning, and when I would do good, evil is present with me, and this is the principal reason why I have not offered myself to the church long since; a deep sense of my own unworthiness has kept me back when I had an opportunity, and now for the last twelve years (that we have lived in Wisconsin) I have had no opportunity, there being no gospel church in reach of me to my knowledge. O that the good Shepherd would send some of his servants into this part of his vineyard to preach the everlasting gospel; O that he would visit his Zion with the outpouring of his Spirit; O that he would command his light to shine upon my path, as I hope it has in days that are past, and that his Spirit would be with me in all my trials and afflictions, is my prayer.

D. G. CARTER.

WINONA, Wash., July, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I will try to write a few lines, and for all I know they may be different from the views of all others. The subject is the sin against the Holy Ghost. I may be wrong, yet the thoughts that I have had have been sweet to me. I think every one believes that this sin has no forgiveness, either here or hereafter, and I do not suppose there are many who believe this is the sin which men commit that makes them to be of the non-elect, or those for whom Christ did not die. The Old School Baptists all believe that one for whom Christ died can do nothing to make his calling more sure, for it is absolutely certain; neither can such an one do anything to disinherit himself. The apostle says he is persuaded that there is nothing able to separate one from the love of God. How is it with those for whom Christ did not die? with those who were not included in the covenant that is ordered in all things and sure? Can they do anything to make their condition worse hereafter? Now there is a difference between the Father, Son and Holy Ghost in their office-work. God the Father sits on his eternal throne

declaring that he is God, and there is none else, working all things after the counsel of his own will; Jesus Christ, the Son, the Mediator between God and man, sits at the right hand of God, making intercession for the saints, according to the will of God. In John xiv. we find by the language of Jesus that he had been his children's leader, protector and comforter, but that his time was drawing nigh to go away; he is in person going to leave the world and be an intercessor (verse 16); he (Jesus) will pray the Father to give us another comforter, that he may abide with us forever; this comforter was promised to his disciples only. This comforter is the Holy Ghost (verse 26). The Holy Ghost is our teacher. (Luke xii. 12.) He is our comforter. (Acts ix. 31.) The apostles when together concluded to lay no greater burden on the disciples than was necessary, because it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to them. (Acts xv. 28.) Forbidden of the Holy Ghost. (Acts xvi. 6.) By all of these Scriptures, and many others, we are shown that the mission of the Holy Ghost is to guide, instruct, restrain and comfort the children of the living God. Then he that disputes, gainsays or denies the Holy Ghost or his teachings, blasphemes or sins against the Holy Ghost. For an unbeliever to deny or affirm the existence of the Holy Ghost does not change his condition one bit, but let one of the little ones get low down in the valley of darkness, where he continually doubts all the comforts, joys and tender mercies of God through the Holy Ghost, the comforter, and it will be but a little while till he repents and begs for forgiveness; all these doubts are the result of unbelief. Dear brethren, I do not know how it is with you, but I must acknowledge I have done many things that I knew were wrong when I did them, and to all such who pass through the same way I will say, you will find your road marked out in Hebrews x. 26–29. It seems to tell us what we may look for if we do that which we know to be wrong, for there is no more sacrifice for sin. We shall look for judgment and for the devouring of the adversaries. Can we count this as forgiveness? O no. I think I hear every one say, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." For if we disobey his commands and break his law there is sure to be suffering. Are there any who have passed from death unto life who have not felt it to be their duty to be found walking in all his commands? Sometimes when they had the opportunity to unite with the church, they did not, but went home mourning, crying and promising to do better the next time. Not only in this case, but all through life, we hear the old, grey haired soldiers saying that every time they ran from duty they were chastised. We are told that if we know these things we are happy if we do them; but if we know them and do them not, we shall be beaten with many stripes. All these show that there is no forgiveness for those sins which are committed against the Comforter, the Instructor, the Holy Ghost, but that if we are disobedient we must suffer the penalty.

Through suffering we learn obedience. There is no affliction but what is grievous at the time, but afterwards it yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby. In 1 John v. 16, there is a sin named that is not unto death, and if we see a brother commit this sin, and we can labor with him, and pray for him acceptably, (by the Holy Ghost) it shall be forgiven him. But "there is a sin unto death." This sin we

are not told to pray for; for one who is guilty of this sin must die to church privileges and the fellowship of his brethren.

"Little children, keep yourselves from idols." For every form of idolatry is denying Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost, and this sin must be purged from us in affliction and chastisement. I have sometimes thought I knew what it was to be disobedient to the teaching of that blessed Comforter; when I have been impressed to do a thing and did it not, my conscience accused me, and there was no rest for me until I was brought to a condition where I would gladly do whatsoever was commanded me of him. How often does the poor child conclude that he will go to the church; being led by the Holy Ghost he has thought it his duty, and O, if he were only worthy to go forward what a sweet work it would be, but when the time comes he looks at himself and finds nothing good there, and he is so afraid he will deceive the brethren, and so fearful that he is deceived himself, that doubting, he puts aside all the evidence given to him by the Holy Ghost, even denying the work of the Holy Ghost in his heart. Brethren, you who have traveled this road, did your blessed Lord smile on you, or did you grieve and mourn because of the neglect of this duty, and on your knees, a penitent, you begged the Lord, if it was his will, to give you strength to discharge every duty? Truly called ministers I believe can invent more excuses, and often are more stubborn, more weak, more lacking in faith than any others, but do not forget that they also suffer sore chastisement, which works in them repentance. Then they promise that they will at the next opportunity try with the ability God gives them to discharge their duty; it would be hard to tell the many times such promises are made and broken. It seems by Hebrews ii. 2, that every transgression and disobedience shall receive a just recompense of reward. Then "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" says the apostle. We shall be given repentance in suffering. The apostle tells of two such characters in 1 Tim. i. 20. These two here spoken of were delivered to Satan that they might learn not to blaspheme. Surely to deliver one into the hands of Satan would teach him to desire to walk more uprightly. This brings us to our warfare and enables us to say as did Paul, The things I would not I do, and that which I would I do not. Now we know if any be without chastisement they are not sons; there are none holy but God, and those who are born of God. The flesh, and the lust thereof, are the cause of our inability to walk as did the blessed Master; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. We look through a veil (our flesh) now, and our greatest cry is, Lord, enable us to walk in thy footsteps, being found blameless before thee in love. May the Lord bless and gently lead his people, is my prayer.

Yours in hope,

T. E. ATTEBERY.

[WE have never felt to be clear in our mind regarding the sin against the Holy Ghost, as regards the present time and our present experience, but have felt sure that at the time when the Savior spoke these things he included those who said that he had cast out devils through Beelzebub, the prince of devils. In so charging they had sinned against the Holy Ghost; this has seemed to us clear. But we have not been clear as to the present application of what the dear Redeemer then said, and feeling as we have,

we have never thought that we ought to do more in writing and speaking about this theme than to suggest such thoughts as have seemed in harmony with the general teaching of the word, and leave the matter to the judgment of our brethren, and so we have read with interest the views expressed above. Two things (we do desire to say here) are clear in our mind: first, that in no sense are the redeemed of the Lord ever called upon to suffer in atonement for their sins; the blood of Jesus Christ alone washes away sin; his sufferings and death alone atone for sin and justify the sinner. All the suffering of the child of God for transgression is chastisement, not atonement, and the purpose of chastisement, as brother Attebery has said, is to bring to repentance through conviction of guilt wrought in the soul. Atonement is the measure of God's anger against sin, and his just condemnation of the sinner, while chastisement is the measure of his love and pity for the sinner. Atonement is all in the suffering of Christ upon the cross, while chastisement is the daily experience of the child of God, working in him the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Second, it is sure that forgiveness comes to all those for whom Christ died, and it comes alone through the atonement; and our heavenly Father forgives even while he chastises. Chastisement brings the child of God to realize his transgression against the holy God, and this produces the cry for forgiveness, and God always hears and answers this cry. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Chastisement is blessed because its fruit is confession, and confession is blessed because its fruit is forgiveness.—ED.]

DELMAR, Del., Aug. 13, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I feel impressed to write a few thoughts upon Exodus xv. 22: "So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; and they went out into the wilderness of Shur: and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water."

It has been some time since I have had much desire to write anything concerning spiritual things, and I have longed that my mind might be stirred up in the way of remembrance, that I might have once more some sweet meditations as in times past; and as you were talking at the meeting this morning I do hope that my mind was stirred up somewhat. I will say in the beginning that there is more in connection with the subject than I shall be able to write, even were I to be given liberty; but I must write as it pleases the Lord to direct my mind.

I wish to consider some things that precede the text, and that lead up to it. I believe that the Lord's people experience everything that the children of Israel were made to pass through from the time they were born until the day of their death. They are all as other men are by nature until it pleases the Lord to cause a famine to come upon them, then they search for food; something to sustain life. It was so with Israel, and these things were all typical of the experience of the Lord's people to-day, and, as he had always done, so he prepared food for them, but they must go to another country to get it, and, as it is true of all the people of God, they thought they must work for the food or buy it; but they always found the money, the fruit of their labors, in the mouth of their sacks, not at the bottom of them. They get the corn, the food needful to sustain life, they are not allowed to starve, but they find

the money in the mouth of their sacks, so they can see they have not bought these things. Then they are troubled and distressed, and come back in fear and trembling, and when they are called out of the land wherein they have been content in the state of nature, and their brother makes himself known to them, they are no longer starving, but they are ashamed, feeling that they have sinned; they have sold, and, as it were, slain their brother, and they are not worthy of even so much as the least of all his favors, and they are willing now to work to please him. But while he gives them the best of the land, the time soon comes when they are brought to see that all their works will not bring them happiness, for they are in a strange land and all their efforts to please their masters avail nothing, and they, like the child of God, come to see that they cannot return to that land from which they came out. The things of the world that they have lived upon and have enjoyed so much are no more food and drink to them, but, on the other hand, all these things are starvation to them. Here under the law they work day by day, and their tasks become harder, until they stagger under the burden which is placed upon them, but at last, in the Lord's time, they are delivered from this bondage, and they start upon the journey with some degree of comfort, seeing that they have been delivered from this land of bondage, but they do not go far before they are commanded to encamp. All the way that they have gone thus far there has been a pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night before them; they have not seen where they were going at all. It is contrary to nature for one to follow after a cloud or a pillar of fire, knowing that should one enter either he would be consumed, but they must follow this cloud by day and the fire by night; the child of God must pass through this same experience to-day; while it is not so literally, it is so spiritually. When they were encamped, not knowing where they were to be led next, they saw the enemy coming, the enemy that had before troubled them so much, and they cried out that it had been better for them to have stayed in bondage than to perish in the wilderness. Is it not true that the child of God has come to that place where he also thought it better to be back in bondage? But he cannot return, because the enemy is behind him, and the Red Sea is before him, he cannot turn to the right hand or the left. Israel then felt that they must surely perish, but here comes the word of the Lord, saying, "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show to you to-day." This word was not as if you or I should say to some one, Stand still, but it was a command from the Lord, and in it was power to compel them to stand still until it pleased the Lord to lead them on. Right here we are told that the angel that went before the camp in the pillar of cloud and of fire removed from before them and stood behind them, between them and their enemies; it was not now before them, but they could look back and see it. Then the terrible sea that was before them was divided, and with the walls of its waters standing on either side they moved forward, trusting that they might cross this sea; there was no other way of escape; they were compelled to go forward, not knowing what was before them on the other side. So the poor child of God does not know before he is delivered what is next in the journey, but they must travel on, and when they find themselves safe on the other side they are

made to rejoice as was Israel then. This is the first time of rejoicing, and like the children of Israel, they look back and see the enemy destroyed, and like Moses and all the children of Israel they say, The Lord has triumphed gloriously; and, "The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation." But see how soon they begin to boast, saying, "I will prepare him an habitation." They are now delivered, and made to see that it is the Lord's hand that has brought them out, but soon they feel that they must do something for the Lord; little did they think what they should have to pass through. The child of God cannot then be convinced after he has been delivered from his bondage of sin, and has been made to see Christ and his salvation, that he must pass through the wilderness; like Peter, he will say, Though all men forsake thee, yet will not I. But like Peter, all must be converted. There are many other things along here of which I might speak, but I am making this letter too lengthy, so will just say a little about what I first wanted to mention.

Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea, and they went into the wilderness, and so we also are led or brought away from this place of rejoicing. They did not leave this place of rejoicing themselves, but they were brought from it; they were not permitted to remain in that state of happiness, but must be brought away from it, and led into the wilderness; they were not by it, but in it. What a dreadful place to be led into after being delivered and made to sing praise to the Lord who had delivered them. We know that a wilderness is a wild, uninhabited place, with all that would be uncomfortable; they went three days in this wilderness and found no water. What a dreadful place! there was no water; and when, as we read in the next verse, they did find water, it was bitter, and they were not able to drink it. Then they murmured again; they had forgotten how good the Lord had been to them just a short time before. Now again the Lord manifested his power by sweetening the water, and afterward he fed them with manna, and Moses smote the rock, and water gushed out, and the rock followed them. All this the Lord did, and many other things, of which time would fail me to speak, the Lord did for them by his wonderful power, still every time they came to seeming difficulty they doubted again. If this was so with them after seeing so many wonderful displays of his power, should we wonder at ourselves, because with us also doubts arise? We are told that for these things their carcasses fell in the wilderness, because of their unbelief. Of the whole company that came up out of Egypt above twenty years of age, but two were permitted to enter the land of Canaan, across the river Jordan. This, in my mind, is emblematic of entering the visible church, and the number that fell in the wilderness is emblematic of that number whom God has chosen, who never come into the visible church, who also give glory to God in their deliverance, and whom the Lord has also chosen, but who remain outside. Many do thus remain outside, fearing that they are not among his children, yet having once been made to rejoice in his salvation. These have been led into the wilderness where all their lifetime they wander about, not being permitted to enter into that rest which only they know who have been made obedient, and have walked in the ordinances of the Lord's house.

I must close lest I weary you. I have

written as my mind has been led, and will leave it with you.

I remain, as ever, your brother in tribulation,

JOHN L. HASTINGS.

ROMULUS, Okla., Aug., 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I will try once more to write to you, as some of my friends desire that I shall write a narrative of my experience, although as I have often said, I fear that I have none to tell. I have desired to write it before, but have feared that it would be of no comfort to any of the Lord's children. The apostle said, Be ready at all times to give a reason of the hope that is in you, and I would praise God that I am not ashamed of this salvation.

When I was about twelve years of age, one day I was picking cotton, and I was struck with a power which impressed me that I would die, and that I was a condemned sinner and should perish in hell. My dreadful agony no tongue can tell, only those who have traveled this road. I told my little sister that I was going to die, and that I did not want her to tell my father and mother until I was gone. I went home and told one of our neighbors, and she commenced crying, and told me to cheer up, that I would not die, but I told her that I knew it was so. This went on, and I felt a deep desire to go to the meetings and to be with the church members, but they and the preacher all told me the same things. They were all Methodists, and they claimed that the sinner had to do a certain amount of work before the Lord would accept him; but I felt to realize that if I ever had religion it must be heart-felt, and that I would know it. This went on, and I felt that I was the worst person on earth, and that if I should die and go to torment, God would be just; I did not deserve anything better. Finally I united with the Methodist Church, and I thought then that perhaps if I would do better all would be right. I was not there long until I was much dissatisfied, and went out from among them. I thought if they would not turn me out in any other way, I would begin to dance. So I went to dances, and after I would go I would think, I have been trying to live a christian life, and now see what I am doing, engaging in dancing. I traveled on in this way for about two years, and my trouble was so heavy sometimes I would wish that I had died when I was a babe, and then I would have been better off. I would go to bed at night feeling that surely I would die before morning. One day I was in the field, and my burden was heavier than I could bear, I fell down on my knees, where not an eye could behold me but the eye of the Redeemer of sinners, and tried to pray, but all I could say was, Lord, have mercy upon me, a sinner, or I shall perish; and then it seemed as if a small voice said, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life." O the joy that I received no tongue can tell, it seemed as though I never could be troubled any more. It seemed then as though I could tell the world what a Savior I had found, but before I got to the house I could not tell anything. After this I thought that I would unite with the church to which my mother belonged, and father and I were baptized, but in this baptism I found no comfort, and then went on in doubts and fears. In about one year after this my mother died, and it seemed as though all my comfort was gone. She often talked upon religious matters, and so was a great comfort to me, but still I had

never told her anything about my ups and downs. If I had had as bright an experience as my dear mother had, I do not see how I could doubt and fear at all. I read my Bible, and sometimes it seemed a sealed book; then again, I would find a little comfort in reading it.

Father married again, and his wife was an Old School Baptist. Then he and I had trouble as regarded what we believed, for I could not believe that a part would be saved and part lost. I persecuted the Baptists, and I think yet it is a wonder they allow me to live with them. Still I went on troubled, and yet at times I would think it was all vain imagination, and that it was all a delusion, and I was deceived in myself, and that I had grasped the shadow and missed the substance. At last one night I went to bed, and it seemed as though my sins had never been pardoned, and all that was before my eyes were my sins. I went to sleep and dreamed that I saw the blackest cloud arise in the south that I ever saw, and in front of the cloud was a ship; I thought I told my father that the world was coming to an end. In my dream I kept watching the cloud and the ship, and it was a most glorious sight to behold. Jesus, I thought, was walking on the ship, and he told me to come on the ship and I should be saved; I woke up, and my sins seemed to be all gone. Then I began to love the Old School Baptists, and I wanted to join the church. My husband did not want me to unite with them, but it seemed that I could not live anywhere else. I told him they were the people I loved, and I believed they were the true church of Christ; and if not, I did not think there was a church of Christ on earth. So I traveled along, and at last Elder Piles came from Scott County and preached on Saturday and Sunday, but I could not go until Sunday; and when they gave an opportunity for members, something said to me, Arise, and go to thy Father's house, and tell thy friends what great things the Lord hath done for thee. It seemed as if I was carried away and did not realize anything about going forward until the brother told me to relate my experience. I thank the Lord for it all, he showed me the house of his servants, and gave me a will to accept his word, come and live with his people, and gave me to find a welcome home there, and I hope to remain with the dear, little band as long as I live in this low ground of sorrow. I am so prone to sin, that sin is mixed with all I do, and I feel unworthy to be numbered with them at the place of worship; I think if they could only see me as I see myself they surely could have no fellowship for me. I receive letters from sisters whom I have never seen, and they are just as precious as though they were talking with me.

Well, dear brother, I began writing this yesterday, and last night I was thinking, Now I have written several sheets to brother Chick of my travels in this world of tribulation, and there is nothing in it; he receives letters of fewer words, and so much more in them than I can express in many words. I went to sleep, and just before day, the words came to me so loudly that they awoke me at once, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate," and I felt deeply impressed by them. Now, dear fellow-travelers with me to eternity, do we not strive to enter in this way? Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life," he that climbs up some other way is a thief and a robber. I have had many ups and downs, of which I do not think it needful to write; I have written enough. The longer I live on earth the more I feel

like meeting with the people of God for worship and communion. I feel my journey on earth is very short to be with the people I love; but we have the sweet promise of meeting in that better world to praise him eternally, where congregations never break up, and the Sabbath has no end. I want to say, dear kindred, that I long for the day to come when I shall see Jesus as he is, and be with him in glory, for it is written, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." Here I have pleasure in meeting with the dear, little band of Baptists, and it fills my soul with joy. Could it be possible that I could love them if I did not have the love of God shed abroad in my heart? What is there to compare with the sweet assurance of this love? We love to meet together here, and to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. What matters it if I am placed in a fiery furnace, if Jesus will dwell with me there? Then my summer would last all the year.

I want to say that I take great comfort in reading the SIGNS, and am glad it opposes conditionalism. My salvation is not because of anything good that I can do.

"And when I count up all the cost,
Without free grace I know I'm lost."

May God's blessing rest upon you and all the household of faith.

Your sister,

ELLA DAVIS.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Aug. 10, 1905.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I was told that I should write you my experience, having been baptized June 11th last, at Southampton, by Elder Durand. I can see now that it was nothing of my own planning or forethought, for I was on my way to pay a visit to brother Elias Hogeland on Saturday afternoon, June 10th, and when about to the place of meeting, I said in my mind that I would go in and hear the preaching. I went in and heard the sermon; it was about the hand, and the foot, and the ear, and the eye, and that all went to make up the body, and I could see that it represented the whole church in her completeness in Christ. I could see that God was all in all, and that Christ was from God, and God was in Christ, and that his elect, his saints, are in Christ, and Christ is in them. I could see the completeness of them all, and as each one would tell his or her experience, I said within myself, That is my experience in a measure; and I felt that I must do better and make myself a fit subject to be among this people. While in this state of mind Elder Durand asked me if I had anything to say. I stood upon my feet, and as I did so I was shown that in me (that is, in my flesh,) was no good thing, and that there never was, and never would be, and that if I ever was to be one of God's people it was by the grace of God, and not because of anything that I could do; it was only by the mercy of God that I could be forgiven. Afterward Elder Durand asked me when I wanted to be baptized, and I said, Right away, or at any time, and he set the next morning, Sunday. I passed by the water Sunday morning, and I felt that I was not right yet, and that the church did not know me or they would not have received me. I passed on and tried to pray to be shown if it was right, as I felt it to be a fearful thing to take the step I was about to take and not be right in the sight of God, and I felt that it would be just if God should strike me dead if when I went to be baptized I was not doing right. But before being baptized all was peaceful in my mind, and I was happy to think that I was to be joined to the people I loved and be one of them.

Everything declared the glory of God. I was baptized, buried with my Savior in baptism, and raised to walk in newness of life, but O how far short I have come of doing this. Had I been taken from this world to my Redeemer when I arose from the water, I would have then felt secure; but I have found that in this world we must have tribulation and sorrowing on account of sin. I then thought I could withstand any temptation, but I have since been taught differently, and that there is no good fruit from the flesh. Our trust must be in God, who is able to do all things, and it is by the grace of God that I am what I am.

I can look back some twenty-four years, when I read and studied considerably from the Bible, and marked a great many places. This was while under preaching in the Methodist Church and Sunday School at Olney, but I have been led away from them, and in fact I did not care to hear any doctrine except that of the Old School Baptist. I would hear their sermons, and it must have been that it was seed sown where the tares of this world choked it out, for I must say that instead of getting better, I got worse and worse all the time, yet realized that I must account for it at some time. I have a good father and mother, wife and three children, and a prosperous business, and I would say to myself that I was not thankful for all that was given me, and that if some calamity should befall me it would be right. My little boy would get down and say his prayers, and there was also a picture of Christ in prayer hanging on the wall, and I would wish from my heart that I could have the pure heart and childlike faith to pray for myself, but I could not. I can see now that I was praying all the time; it was the prayer that could not be uttered, and God, who searcheth the heart, heard my prayer, and in his own good time lead me in a way that I did not know, and my sinful ways became distasteful to me. When I would hear the name of God taken in vain, I would say to the one who thus used his name, I would not do that, and I could not help thus speaking.

How glorious and how wonderful are the ways of God that he should be mindful of man, and what wondrous love was it that he gave his only begotten Son to bear the sins of his people; truly our God is love. A hymn that seems to bring me into fellowship with the sufferings of Christ is, "O what a sad and doleful night," and the words, "Mocked, spit upon and crowned with thorns, a spectacle he stood." In them I could see our blessed Redeemer standing there, bearing our sins and suffering death that we might escape the condemnation due us. He died that we might live; he satisfied the law, for by the deeds of the law could no one escape; he paid the penalty; he satisfied the debt. Now I ask the question, Can one who has been truly turned from darkness to light, the marvelous light of God, go on and continue in sin? Not if the love of Christ, who is the hope of glory, be in him. How different all things seem to those who are led in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and know of that sweet fellowship that exists among those who serve him in spirit and in truth. It matters not whether we see them for the first time, or whether we have known them all our lives, there is that same perfect love one for another, because of the love of Christ that is in us. Christ says, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." How true the words of our Savior are, and how we can ever repay him, how any one can

ever believe any other than that God has predestinated all things, and that he has chosen them that are his, and that he is able to do all things, and can perform that which he will, is more than I can understand. I desire to live according to the doctrine of God our Savior, as the apostle Paul declares in Ephesians i. 4, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

Now, while I have addressed this letter to you, it is intended for all that love the truth in our Lord Jesus Christ, wherever they may be, and I want to say that my house is always open, and I would be glad to see you all there, as in old times they that feared the Lord spake often one to another. May the love of God abound in our hearts, and his name have all the praise.

Your brother,

J. M. FENTON.

ASHLAND, Texas, Sept. 16, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS:—I hesitate to ask you to let me reply to correspondents through the SIGNS, feeling my inability and unfitness to write upon spiritual things at all. My apology is that so many readers of our dear paper have written to me that it would be difficult work to write to them separately. This letter is personal to all who have ever written to me.

Dear sister Barker, of Cleveland, Ohio, I have longed to send a word of comfort to you. I grieve with you and for you, I, too, felt very sad to know of your loss; brother Barker was a very lovable child of God. How I wish that I might meet with all the little company of saints up there. I shall never forget you and dear Elder Bartley. I know that you and sister Bartley will ever remember the sweet communion of saints which we enjoyed with these people, but O how unworthy I felt of such a blessing, and I feel so now in thus daring to intrude upon any one in my weakness and sinfulness; I feel all the time like stopping, and I hope the editor will deal faithfully and not crowd out other better letters. I would like to mention the name of each one to whom I owe a letter, but it would take too much space.

Brother Shelburn, you shall receive a photograph when we get them.

Several of you knew Elder George Tusing, of Columbus, Ohio; I have dreaded for a long time the news of his departure, I cannot say death, for he lives, and now enjoys the bliss he gave us a sweet glimpse of at the Owl Creek Association, in Ashley, Ohio, last year; O what a sweet, heavenly sermon he preached; I believe I had not been as happy before since my "first love," if indeed I know anything of the love of God. The sweet gospel food came down low enough for the least little lamb, yet seasoned with doctrine deep enough for old saints ripe for the harvest. His faith was so strong, his vision so clear, he seemed just standing upon the threshold of heaven, and as he pictured the way, we, too, looked past him and caught a glimpse of the glory within. Language fails, I can only add, it was a heavenly place in Christ Jesus. He showed so plainly that it is all in Christ, and because of our oneness with him. He was near the end, and faith seemed almost turned to sight.

I wish to send greeting to all the dear ones I have met in the past. I feel a great longing at times to look into your faces once more. My path has had many thorns as well as flowers by the way, but

I do not wish to murmur, God knows best. I know by experience how hard at times it is to say, Thy will be done, but I hope that I, too, know how sweet the joy and peace when we sweetly realize that we are in his hand, that his love has marked out our path and chained the lions and stayed the hand of our enemies. O how sweet to wait upon the Lord; how sweet to know that he knoweth us altogether, and is touched with the feeling of our infirmity, and that he is able to carry us, and will bear us up in his infinite love and power even to the end. Our life is hid with Christ in God; O how safe. I feel like saying to each dear reader, Lift up your head and rejoice, and let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.

If I am not taking too much space I would like to add a few words to my letter this evening. I want to tell you all that though I am separated from the dear brethren whom I have known and loved for twenty years, yet I am not alone, there is a dear little band here that hold meetings only one mile from our home; the sweet gospel truth, as the SIGNS proclaims it, is told very sweetly here. I am so thankful for the privilege of listening to the truth, and for the love manifested to an unworthy one who feels to be one of the least because of manifold sins, not outward crime. O brethren, my heart is so full of all manner of evil, but to the best of my knowledge God has kept me from any outbreaking sin, so that I have enjoyed the unbroken fellowship of the saints for twenty years. I was received at the age of seventeen years.

I was married to F. L. Woods March 29th, 1905. He is a good, kind husband, and a firm old-fashioned Baptist, but not a member.

Dear Elder Jones, of Mt. Vernon, Texas, we all want you to visit us, so please come, I had intended writing to you before this.

I enjoyed the SIGNS of September 15th so much.

Sister Beakes, I am so glad you sent that poetry, it is very comforting indeed.

I feel unworthy, but want to send love to all. I hope to hear from all again.

Your sister,

JOIE E. (WICKHAM) WOODS.

WARRENTON, Oregon, June 28, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER:—I have just lately returned from the Siloam Association of the dear Old School Baptists, which was held with the Oak Creek church, in Douglas Co., Oregon, eleven miles from Roseburg, which is two hundred miles south of Portland, or nearly so, and more than three hundred miles from my home here near the Pacific Ocean. I thought that I was going quite a long distance, but before we started on from Oregon City I had the pleasure of meeting with sister Ray, of Texas, who had come thousands of miles to meet with the dear Old Baptists of the west. I was in company with her all through the meetings, and enjoyed very much hearing her talk of the great privileges she had been blessed with in meeting with so many of the dear Baptists in the east. She greatly interested all with photographs of many of the ministers of the gospel, whose letters in the dear SIGNS I love to read, and which are so comforting. This was the first association I have had the pleasure of attending in many years. I had not heard a gospel sermon in more than thirty years until after starting on my way to this association.

I went to Oregon City on June 12th to

visit brother and sister Bruce, and there I found many dear Old Baptists; all were kind and lovely in their manner to each other, and to every one. I felt that I would like to remain near enough to be with them often, despite my unworthiness. There at brother Bruce's I heard Elder G. E. Mayfield preach the first gospel sermon I had heard in all those years. O, my brother, you must imagine what that was to me in my starving condition; how I did enjoy every word of that sermon; his text was one of my favorites, if I have any: "By grace are ye saved," and how ably and beautifully he talked, and how glorious it was, full of glory to God, and comforting to poor sinners saved by his grace. I thought I had never heard a more able sermon preached in my life. I knew brother Mayfield when he was quite young, and heard his first attempt to preach, and I must say I think that his many loving friends are perfectly satisfied with his gift. The weather was very fine all the time of the association, and O what joy filled my soul to again meet with the dear people of God, and to hear the truth so ably proclaimed by his ministers in attendance, who were Elders Mathews, Williams, Allison, Moffet, Mayfield, Thornton, Hess, Horner, Belcher, Riggs and Newkirk. O what a continuous feasting it was to a hungry sinner like me. All preached the glorious truth of the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, which alone can have the true ring of the pure golden bell. The dear Lord seemed to smile upon all, filling each joyful heart to overflowing with love to God and his people. How good it was to me to see them dwelling together in unity; love in one delightful stream seemed to flow in every bosom, and joy from heart to heart, and each esteemed his brother more highly than himself, an evidence of true brotherly love; sweet it was to hear the songs of Zion sung with the spirit and with the understanding also. I did rejoice to again hear dear Elder Allison preach; I was but little more than a child when I first heard him, that was before his ordination, and before we came to Oregon; here in the west I heard him many times in the first years we were here. How I enjoyed his sermon he can never know, and to see dear sister Allison again was a joy that filled my heart to overflowing; she is a dear old mother in Israel, sweet and lovely in age as she was in youth; I, with many others, was entertained at her house all the time of the association, and I must say that to me the world seems better that she still remains. On Monday after the meeting I, with others, returned to Oregon City, remaining there with the dear Baptists until after their monthly meeting, which was the Saturday and Sunday following the association. Elder Moffet is pastor of the church at Oregon City, which is Cedar Creek, and the nearest one to where I live. I let them know that I desired to be with them, and they very kindly took me in, unworthy as I am. How comforted I am to have a home with the dear people of our heavenly Father, who will watch over us with loving-kindness. May I ever be found humble at the Savior's feet, ever trusting in him, the God of my salvation, who doeth all things well.

Dear brother, I did not intend to make this letter so long, and will close. Excuse all that you may find amiss, and kindly remember your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) S. L. H. STUART.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1905.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

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JOHN XII. 32.

"AND I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

It is not needful perhaps to say that these are the words of the blessed Savior, and they were spoken concerning the death which he should die, as the inspired apostle tells us in verse thirty-three. The expression "lifted up," as applied to the blessed Redeemer, is used several times in the word of God, and relates always to the crucifixion upon the cross; it always signifies what death he should die. He must die, not the death of ordinary men upon their beds, neither could he die by beheading, or drowning, or by any other manner of violence, he must be "lifted up," he must be crucified. This he himself knew, and more than once did he testify of this manner of death before it came. Thus the types of the Old Testament Scripture were fulfilled; thus only could they be fulfilled. The manner of his death was not uncertain, all that pertained to it was declared beforehand by the words of holy men of old; there was no room for chance in this greatest of all events that the world ever saw. "The Son of man goeth as it is written of him," was his own testimony.

The same expression is used elsewhere concerning him: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up," &c. "When ye have lifted up the Son of man." "The Son of man must be lifted up." In all these places Jesus sets forth the same truth as is contained in the Scripture written at the beginning of this article. Twice it is said, "The Son of man must be lifted up." There was no other way by which redemption could be completed and all his people drawn to himself, he must thus suffer in order to enter into his glory. He ought to thus suffer, because he bare the sins of his people, and because it was so written. This last expression does not mean that because it was so written therefore he was under necessity of suffering, but because his death was ordained of God it had been declared beforehand, and as all the words of God were true words, so must they be fulfilled. The declaration did not create the purpose, but the purpose of God caused the declaration of that purpose.

While we do not at all object to the expression which we have heard all our life more or less, that Jesus "must be held up upon the pole of the gospel," because the meaning of it is that Jesus must be set forth, or held up, in all our preaching, yet the words "lifted up" in the gospel, as used by the Savior, do not at all refer to that, but solely to the actual crucifixion upon the tree. Jesus, in the text, does not say, And I, if I be preached, will draw all men unto me, but, "If I be lifted up," (crucified.) True the crucified Savior must be preached as the sum and substance of the gospel, but Jesus is to be preached as not only the crucified, but also the risen Redeemer. Yet this is not that which draws all men, in the sense of the text, unto him, it is the work of the

atonement itself that redeems and saves; it is to Calvary, and not to any preaching of the scenes that took place on Calvary, that we must look for all the blessings of grace. Sermons may be true and clear, but they do not save men; they do not bring men from the ends of the earth to Christ, this work results from the power of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and which by the Spirit is applied in the time of condemnation to the heart of a sinner. Not to him who preaches Christ must the convicted sinner look for healing, nor yet to the preaching, but to Christ himself, who was crucified.

There seems to us great force in the expression "lifted up." Jesus was literally lifted up from the earth in the hour of his crucifixion. It was the hour and power of darkness; it was the hour of his greatest humiliation, and yet he was exalted high above all that was earthly in the work that he came to do. In the sight of men he was humiliated, but indeed and in truth, he was glorified. As he had glorified the Father, so now he must be shown to be, not of the earth, but lifted up above it. The literal lifting up of the body of the Savior was symbolical of that other lifting up, which is his, and which was always his, even when he was in the flesh. In the cross of Jesus, Paul therefore gloried, and that which was regarded as the most shameful thing among men, because Jesus hung there became the most glorious thing in all the world. Jesus used these words, "lifted up," the five times to which we have referred, advisedly. He did not say, If I be abased, but, "If I be lifted up." Although it was the path of sorrow and shame that he trod, yet it was the path to glory, and in the spirit by which he came to the cross at last, he was separated from the world, and lifted up above it, up above all its worldliness, and sin, and folly, and selfishness, and enmity, up to that which was holy, and pure, and heavenly. The crucifixion to him was not a shame, but the humble fulfilling of the will of his Father, and in it, as well as in all his life, he had the assurance of the Holy Spirit, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Drawing all men unto him, does not mean each and every individual of the human race. If indeed Jesus did intend this, then his death has proven a most miserable failure. We speak here with reverence. Jesus declared, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." And at the last he said, "It is finished." And it was declared of him in prophecy, "He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." If indeed the coming of the Son of man was intended to redeem the whole family of man, then the purpose of God has utterly failed. To-day, with the utmost stretch of charity in our judgment of men we must confess that not one in a hundred of the race of Adam believe savingly in Christ. The vast multitudes of men are repelled from him rather than drawn to him. Jesus means by this language that just as Jews will some of them be drawn to him, so will some out of all Gentile nations be drawn to him; Gentiles should be sharers in this grace as well as Jews. This has been fulfilled, and it is being fulfilled now. If Jesus meant this, then his words have been shown to be true; if he intended more than this, then his words have proven untrue. But Jesus was and is truth itself, and all his words are true. Also, drawing does nor mean driving or compelling, in the sense of bringing in the unwilling.

The word draw is a mild and gentle word, but it is also a powerful word. It is not said that he will try to draw, but will draw. Jesus does not try to do, but he does things.

When Jesus said, If I be lifted up, I will draw all men to me, it implied, as it seems to us, that he would draw men up from the earth also. His people are not only redeemed from death and sin, but from the earth. Through his atonement they are lifted up from themselves, from worldliness, from all that is low and groveling, up unto all heavenly things; they are redeemed from sin, and death, and hell; they are redeemed, not only in the sense that they shall not be condemned, but in the sense that sin shall not have dominion over them. Paul expresses this in Romans v. 9, 10: "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." A present salvation is ours, as well as a final world of glory through the lifting up of Jesus from the earth, and so Paul could say in Colossians, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." This signifies in brief, as it seems to us, that as believers are risen with Christ, so should their affections be set on the things whereto they have arisen. Let us love the things which are where we dwell, at the right hand of God, rather than the old, groveling, earthly things, from which believers have been raised; believers are thus raised through the death and resurrection of Christ. In other words, as he, their Redeemer, has been lifted up, so have they been exalted in him at the right hand of God, and as children of God a godly life becomes them.

In John iii. Jesus himself has told us what being lifted up means, and what being drawn to him also means: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." The Old Testament narrative of the fiery, flying serpents, and the brazen serpent, which Moses commanded to be made and set up upon a pole, is familiar to all. We do not need to do more than state its most prominent features. First, the Israelites had sinned, and because of this the Lord sent these fiery, flying serpents to bite them. All that were bitten, unless a remedy should be found, must die. The bite of these serpents was not their sins, but wrought conviction for their sins; they had already sinned; now judgment fell upon them, and these fiery serpents were the judgment of God; they represent the fiery and forceful nature of the law of God when it comes to a man as it did to Paul, and that man, as did Paul, dies. The biting and the pain that followed well represent the sting and pain of conviction in the conscience, wrought through the just and holy law of God. All Israel had sinned, as we are told, but not all Israel were bitten. Some were bitten and were sore distressed; to what shall they flee? Where is there for them any remedy? Now grace and mercy appear in the the brazen serpent for the bitten Israelites. It is erected in the camp of Israel, and the word is, That whosoever is bitten, and looks, shall live. No others save the bitten ones felt any need of looking to the brazen serpent; all who were bitten did feel the need of salvation, the message concerning the

brazen serpent would have no interest to those who were not bitten. So all men have sinned, but all men do not feel the need of salvation, only those to whom conviction has come, by way of the fiery law, do feel their need of salvation; the dear Redeemer came for just such as these. "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Jesus came to heal the sick; he healed the sick by himself taking their sicknesses; he cleansed from sin by himself taking our sins; he was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Serpents bit the Israelites, a serpent brought to the bitten ones healing. Sin destroyed us, and Jesus was made sin for us that we might be righteous and live. The brazen serpent was provided for the bitten ones, not for all who had sinned; so Jesus was provided for the convicted ones, not for all who had sinned in Adam, and in person also. The fiery, flying serpents were sent of God, and they did God's bidding, and went where they were sent. So the arrow of conviction finds every heart where God sends it, and whom the dear Lord thus wounds, he wounds to heal, where he sends the fiery, flying serpents, there also he has provided the brazen serpent for salvation. All these things we have thus briefly referred to, but the one thing which we had in view was this, that Jesus here shows that "looking" means "believing." The Israelites looked to the brazen serpent, and just so men believe on him. There must have been belief in the brazen serpent before any poor bitten soul would look, and so faith in Jesus leads men to look to him for salvation, and that means that they have turned away from every other source of help. It is thus then that Jesus draws men unto him. First, they have sinned. Second, they have been convicted of their sins, and are pained and grieved, and ready to die, and then Jesus is presented as the one way of life and salvation, and the faith which God has given them looks to Christ, and rests in Christ entirely for redemption and eternal life, and all who have come to trust alone in this crucified Savior live, and live forever. Thus are they drawn to him, thus they come to live by him and in him, and thus they come to serve him in newness of spirit, thus making manifest in their mortal flesh the healing which has been wrought in them, and so Jesus comes to be all and in all to every such seeking soul.

Lastly, we feel there is nothing that can or will draw the people of God together like being drawn to Christ first. If there be dissension anywhere among those who love the Lord, to hold up Christ in his salvation is the best antidote of which we have any knowledge. If preaching Christ, if feeling the power of his salvation in the heart, if loving, living communion with him will not heal all breaches and soothe all soreness one toward another, we know of nothing that will do these things. The best way to heal any dissension is to keep right on preaching Christ, and as men are drawn to him, so will they perforce be drawn nearer and nearer to each other in him, and as Christ is magnified before their view, all lesser things will grow smaller and smaller, until they will disappear, and we shall wonder that they could ever have seemed so vast in our view.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Eli T. Kidwell has changed his address from Merrifield, Va., to Fairfax Va., R. F. D. 2.

J. F. Beeman has changed his address from Carmen, Okla., to Helena, Okla.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Hazel Creek Association, Iowa.)

(Written by Elder W. T. Walters.)

VERY DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—It is by, in and through the tender mercies of an all-wise God that we have been spared through another year, and permitted to meet in an associate capacity.

It has been a long established custom of our association to appoint some one to write a Circular Letter. As the lot fell on me this time, poor and unworthy as I am, I will try to write it the best I can. I will call your attention to the first epistle of John iii. 1: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Then this love is of God, for God is love; then this love has no beginning or ending, therefore this love is as old as God himself. It was love, mercy and justice that brought the Son of God into these low grounds of sin and sorrow to suffer and die the ignominious death of the cross for his people, or church. These people were dead in trespasses and in sin, therefore they were in a lost condition, so far as their power was concerned. But Christ came to save that which was lost. The prophet Jeremiah says, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Then the children did not know anything of his divine grace until they were made alive by his Spirit. Paul says, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Then he says, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)."

Dear brethren and sisters, we sometimes think our sins are almost more than we can bear, but our suffering is nothing to compare with what Jesus suffered when he took the sins of the whole family of God on his own shoulders and bore them all, not for anything that he had done, but for the love he had for his people, or church. Then if God so loved us we ought also to love one another; then if we have this love shed abroad in our hearts Paul says it will never be separated from us; it is not by works of righteousness that we have done, but by his mercy he hath saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost. Inasmuch as he hath redeemed us by the shedding of his own blood, let us still contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. Brethren, we are not able to stand of ourselves, but we "are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." John says, It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we shall see Jesus as he is, and be like him. Jesus said, If I go away, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. Dear brethren, is it not enough to always be with him and be like him? Let each one of us who love Jesus and the truth go forward in every known duty which we owe to our Savior, who has done so much for us. Dear brethren, let us meet often, and pray with and for each other.

Now may God guide and direct us in all our deliberations for our good and his glory, and may the goodness and mercy of God be with every member of our body.

Now may grace, mercy and truth be with all the true Israel of God, is my prayer for Christ's sake. Amen.

S. B. JONES, Moderator.

J. M. CATE, Clerk.

(Written by Elder John Clark.)

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Lexington Church, Lexington, Greene Co., N. Y., October 4th and 5th, 1905, to the brethren composing this association, greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We are thankful to God for this another manifestation of his goodness and mercy in permitting us, according to previous appointment, to assemble in associate capacity, and in this our annual Circular Letter we desire to stir up your pure minds by calling your attention to the words of inspiration found in Psalms xxvi. 8: "Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honor dwelleth." In Psalms cxvi. David shows the cause: "I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul." "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock. * * * And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." This brings to mind our own experience when we were made to say, "We love him [the Lord] because he first loved us." This love was made manifest by him: the Lord setting our sins in order before us. Having that view of ourselves we can say, "The sorrows of death compassed me, [not some one else] and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul," which makes a personal experience to them that know the travail and deliverance from what they have passed through. Well we can say, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." "I have loved the habitation of thy house." This habitation is none other than, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple," "and the place where thine honor dwelleth." Romans xii. 9, 10: "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another." "Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." "Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments." "The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

In conclusion we can say, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garment; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing,, even life for evermore."

R. W. SANFORD, Moderator.
G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

(Written by F. M. Myers.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting of Old School Baptists, in session with the Bethlehem church, October, 1905, to the churches and brethren composing the same, greeting in the name of Jesus, we hope.

AND what shall we say to you, brethren, in this our annual Circular Letter? Shall it be something to "stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance"? Yea, if God wills, and we can ask for the witness of that will because of the faith to believe his promise to be "with you alway, even unto the end of the world," which faith is confirmed unto us in our experiences in days gone by of the faithful fulfillment of every promise. You are a "peculiar people" in the eyes of the world, and a stumbling-block in the way of "christian unity and progress," to those who, as they say, "are now engaged in winning the world to Christ," by all means of work and instruction to that great end. This requires an organized union of all religious denominations and societies in a grand crusade against the wickedness of the world, and you are condemned by the united wisdom and zeal of worldly religion because you do not come up to the help of the Lord in "winning the world." They say you ought no longer stand aloof from promoting the many means of grace now organized, and those that are to follow: Sabbath schools of the international brand, "Epworth Leagues," mission work and the many money-gathering schemes to help the Lord to do his will in redeeming the world. They claim the world is more wicked now than ever, and God's power is not sufficient except it be supplemented by the combined power of the church militant; so far as history gives us the story it has always been so. The old, old story, since the ambition of men saw and recognized without understanding the mighty power of the Holy Spirit in the absolute control of his earthly children; those having the grace of God in earthen vessels, and failing to subdue it by persecution, they have sought by wiser means of their own invention to control this wonderful power, and by their means and priestcraft lead the people to see that God's purpose according to election was unjust to man and unworthy of a holy God. By this they "won the world to Christ" by the open door of its own election: God waiting to be gracious; the Son atoning for the sins of the world, and the Holy Spirit wooing by love, and at the same time showing them the kindoms of the world and the glory of them as a reward for mammon-worship on the one hand, while on the other stood persecution and death, with final and eternal damnation in hell. By means, and these the most powerful to control the natural mind, hope of reward and fear of punishment, the "world was won to Christ," they say. Ecclesiastical power has been, to a great extent, burned away by the sunlight of knowledge and the emancipation of reason, but the power of the churches is still a great factor, but by craft rather than by the strong hand

it seeks to still "win the world to Christ."

Not long ago, being much interested in a public school which needed to have the children of the community attend, I asked the minister of one of the churches to use his influence to that end. He responded promptly, "Certainly I will, that is a great part of my work, because the spelling book and the gospel go hand in hand." What gospel did he mean? Surely not that taught by the Nazarine, and preached by the great apostle to our people (Gentiles), wherein we hear and know in our experience that not many wise men after the flesh are called, but God hath chosen the foolish things to confound the wise. The spelling book is good for natural minds, leading on to natural wisdom and development, but the gospel, which is Christ, has no need of the spelling book. This you also know, because you are taught of the Spirit of God, having no knowledge of spiritual things except by revelation of your own utter ignorance and helplessness in yourselves, and the manifestation of Christ in you.

A few years ago I stood beside a dying man, one of my earliest and best friends, as we say; he was full of years, and his years were adorned with good works; he was dying and happy, and said to me, "Tell them all that it is true, I know it now, God is faithful, and not one of his promises has failed; all fulfilled in Jesus my Redeemer. I am nothing, never was, but am confident that the Father is true, and in Jesus only can we be made perfect, not by any work of our own; I am happy and full of content now that I realize it all." That man was not an Old Baptist in his natural mind, but in spiritual knowledge he surely was. God's elect people are not all in one church, and some, we have a right to believe, are in no church, so far as the word "church" goes in a natural sense. The world is already won for Christ, won by himself when he trod the wine-press of judgment alone, none of the people with him, and the work of redemption complete when he bowed his head and gave up the ghost. Some in his day did many wonderful things, but their work was condemned, and so by their own confession to-day is it a failure, they themselves saying and proving that there is more wickedness now than ever.

There is sweet reading in the gospel by John, which only the elect of God can receive: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." "I have chosen you out of the world." And in Mark we read that the Lord shortened the days of affliction for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen. You are justified in your contention for election, because "ye are a chosen generation," if so be you have the witness of the Spirit, but your strength is not in yourselves, and when pride and selfishness (human weakness) develops in our natural minds the light of spiritual fellowship is dimmed, and without fellowship in Jesus with the members of the church here in this life our earthly fellowship is not to us a joy such as in other days was so sweet and precious. Tongue nor pen can neither express or manifest the peace of the Lord which fills the hearts of his children when in enjoyment of his fellowship; it passeth understanding, and no earthly joy can equal, to us, the blessed fellowship of our brethren here, when the Holy Spirit with its love-compelling power reigns in our hearts.

Our next annual meeting is appointed to be held, by divine permission, with the New Valley church, Loudoun Co., Va., to

begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1906.

J. N. BADGER, Moderator.
G. G. GALLEHER, Clerk.

(Written by Elder S. H. Durand.)

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church, to the churches composing the same, sends greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—In this letter we call your attention to the important subject of faith. The apostle names it among those graces which are the fruit of the Spirit, and he declares it to be "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It would be impossible to give a clearer, plainer, more comprehensive definition than this, but it is a definition that the natural mind cannot understand, for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." But the apostle gives a long list of examples of the character, power and province of faith. If we examine carefully these examples, as named in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, we shall see that many things impossible with men are spoken of as having been done by men by faith; as Enoch being translated, that he should not see death; Daniel closing the lions' mouths; the three Hebrew children quenching the violence of fire; women receiving their dead raised to life again, and the like. Now we know that all of these examples presented by the apostle in this chapter show things that are not within the power of man to accomplish, yet they are said to have been done by faith. So Jesus said to the woman who touched the hem of his garment, "Thy faith hath saved thee." Now may we not regard faith as that power by which we receive the knowledge of God's purposes concerning us? Is it not to us the evidence of the things of God not seen by men, so that we are made to earnestly desire them and pray for them, and are said by faith to do them? Faith is to those who have it the very substance of these things hoped for. Jesus said, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also." Not that they should do other works of the same kind, but the same works. The woman did not save herself, but Jesus healed her. But he gave her faith to see and feel his gracious purpose of salvation, and by that faith she is said to have done the same work that he did, so that he said, "Thy faith hath saved thee." There are those among us now who have been given faith to be healed, and who have been given faith to believe that another would be healed, as the father to whom the Savior asked the question concerning his afflicted son, Believest thou that I can do this? And he answered tremblingly and beseechingly, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." Enoch did not translate himself, nor do any part of that work; God did it all, but he gave Enoch the full knowledge of his purpose by faith, so that in the mystery of the gospel he is said to have been translated by faith. So the apostle, speaking to the Galatians, calling their attention to the province and power of faith with reference to the most solemn and important subject of justification, repeats what he said to Peter: "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law." In all this connection the apostle is showing that we cannot be justified by the works of the law, for as it is written, "The just shall live by faith." For, he says, "Be-

fore faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."

The dear Savior "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." It was his blood, his death, that paid the debt of all his people, and caused them to be justified in his sight. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died." But this justification of the Lord's people by the death of Christ is one of those spiritual things that are hidden from the wise and prudent of this world; it cannot be searched out or understood by the natural mind; faith is the only evidence of it that shall be given in this mortal state. This glorious, justifying work was fully done when Jesus died and rose again. But those for whom this work was done are ignorant of it until they are given faith to know and feel it. Faith is not only the evidence, but the substance of it to their souls, so that they are made to rejoice, experiencing peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Until this faith is given to them they are shut up under the law, feeling condemned, although in God's sight there is no charge against them. No peace can come to them until the Lord is pleased to send them that faith which tells them of their justification through Jesus Christ, then they have peace. It is not the payment of the debt which gives peace to the debtor, but the knowledge of that payment. This is undoubtedly the reason why the apostle repeats this phrase, We are justified by faith, in writing to the Galatians, and uses it in writing to the Romans, speaking of Abraham as a wonderful example of faith in the preceding connection in both epistles: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." There could be no peace with God until the knowledge of that justification comes to us by faith.

When a man stands justified by faith, that is, when he has received by faith the knowledge of his justification by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, no mortal can see him as justified except by the same faith. There is no way in which he can show to any one in the world that evidence of his justified state. While he is in this world there is no way in which he can have for himself a knowledge of that justification except by the faith which "is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." That full deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God he hopes for. That hope he has as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast; by that hope he is saved. The things of God which he thus hopes for he loves. Faith, which sees those things, and hope which embraces them, are for this time state, and they will abide to the end of mortality. Faith must be tried as gold. It is in an atmosphere of opposition, and causes us to feel a constant warfare against it, but it will not, cannot fail. It will abide through all the fiery trials, until the end of our mortal state, and then it will be lost in sight. Hope also will abide until our change shall come, when it will be swallowed up in fruition. Love, too, will abide; it has never failed, it never will fail, nor will it cease when time shall cease with us. As it has been our unfailing guide through all the troubles and afflictions of our wearisome way here, always telling us the right

word to speak and the right thing to do, whether we obeyed or not, and has been our sweet support and comfort, so it will go on with us into the unveiled presence of that God who is Love, and be our eternal joy.

S. H. DURAND, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
GEORGE W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Baptists, now in session with the Cane Run Church, at Turners Station, Henry Co., Kentucky, Sept. 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1905, to the several associations and meetings with whom she corresponds, sends greetings and christian love.

AGAIN in the providence of the God of the whole earth, who doeth all things after the counsel of his own will, we have been permitted to meet in our annual associate capacity. We ascribe all praise unto him for this annual privilege. Some have gone from us since our last session that used to mingle with us; they have been called home to enjoy the realization of that life beyond the grave and to be forever with Jesus. Our meeting has been pleasant, and we hope profitable unto us to meet your messengers and to hear your letters of christian love and fellowship. Your reports show that love and peace abound, for which we give thanks.

The next session of our association will convene with the Sulphur Fork church, near Campbellsburg, Henry Co., Ky., commencing on Friday before the first Saturday in September, 1906, when and where we hope to meet and receive your messengers and messages of love and fellowship in the Lord.

Finally, dear brethren, let us put all things, by the help of the Lord, in order; let every member be found at his post of duty; let nothing be found lacking; let us join as one man in ascribing all glory to him who saves us by his free grace. Farewell.

C. F. DUDLEY, Moderator.
G. R. TURNER, Clerk.
E. F. RANSDELL, Assistant Clerk.

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Lexington Church, October 4th and 5th, 1905, to the associations with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the abundant mercy of our God, we hope, we have been gathered together to see each other's faces, and to communicate to one another something of our condition as separate churches, yet as one church composing the mystical body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, which is the greatest enjoyment the children of God can have: to hear of the welfare of those they love. We love to meet in an associate capacity, and renew covenant, as it were, and we are not sick of our old Lexington Association, which was organized by our venerable forefathers many years ago. We, as an Association, have been called to pass through many great and severe trials, have been beset by foes without and foes within. We have listened to the speech of the messengers from abroad with satisfaction, for it is no new doctrine, but the same glorious declaration which has been proclaimed by our home ministers for at least eighty years; we do hope and trust that our coming together has not been in vain in the Lord. We wish a continuance of your correspondence in the future.

Our next meeting will be held as usual, on the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, 1906, when we hope to meet your messengers again.

R. W. SANFORD, Moderator.
G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

ORDINATION.

PURSUANT to a call of the Salem Old School Baptist Church, of Philadelphia, Pa., for the ordination of brother B. F. Coulter, M. D., to the full work of the gospel ministry, a large congregation assembled at the place appointed.

The meeting was opened with singing hymn No. 842 (Beebe's Collection).

Prayer by Elder J. G. Eubanks.

Ordination sermon by Elder A. B. Francis, text, 1 Peter v. 1-4.

The council was called to order by Elder J. N. Badger, pastor of the Salem church, and organized by the choice of Elder S. H. Durand Moderator, and Elder W. W. Meredith Clerk.

The following list of churches were called and responded as follows:

Salem—Elder J. N. Badger and all the members present.

Welsh Tract—Elder J. G. Eubanks, brethren P. M. Sherwood, E. F. Rounds, David Heyd.

Wilmington—Elder J. G. Eubanks, deacons Wm. B. Tawresey, John Rittenhouse.

London Tract—Elder A. B. Francis.

Rocksprings—Elder Wm. Grafton.

Bryn Zion—Elder W. W. Meredith.

Cow Marsh—Elders W. W. Meredith, B. E. Cubbage, deacons Jas. F. Cubbage, Willard S. Cubbage.

Harford—Elder Wm. Grafton, deacon Milton Dance.

Southampton—Elders S. H. Durand, H. H. Lefferts, deacon C. B. Reeves, brethren W. Hobensack, C. G. Fetter, Geo. Leedom, J. M. Willard, J. Monroe Fenton.

Hopewell—Elder F. A. Chick, deacons Elijah Leigh, J. T. Blackwell, M. J. Stout, D. L. Blackwell, Wm. S. Bond, brethren Geo. Yard, John Yard, E. P. Drake, Morgan Blackwell, Wm. Shepherd, D. M. Vorhees.

Second Hopewell—James H. Hill.

Kingwood—Elder D. M. Vail, deacon Cyrus Risler.

Ebenezer, New York—Elder John McConnell, deacon R. M. Strong.

Middletown and New Vernon—Elder H. C. Ker.

Corresponding Meeting of Virginia—Elders E. V. White, J. N. Badger.

Juniata Association—Elder J. C. Mellott.

All the ministers and brethren present of our faith and order were invited to seats in the council.

Brother B. F. Coulter, the candidate, was presented to the council, and related the work of the Spirit in his experience of grace, in which he manifested his gift of gospel ministration to the entire satisfaction of the council. The decision of the council was unanimous to proceed with the ordination, which was done by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

Prayer by Elder F. A. Chick.

Charge by Elder Wm. Grafton.

Right hand of fellowship by Elder S. H. Durand.

The meeting was concluded by singing hymn No. 142.

Benediction by the candidate.

Thus was our dear brother Benjamin F. Coulter ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, and we cheerfully commend him to the confidence and fellowship of all saints and faithful brethren of our faith and order everywhere.

Done by the grace of God in gospel order this 16th day of October, 1905.

S. H. DURAND, Moderator.

W. W. MEREDITH, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

John Armstrong died the latter part of February, 1905, aged 87 years. He had been a strong believer in the doctrine held by Primitive Baptists, and while he never united with the church, yet took as much interest, seemingly, as did the members of the church, where he lived for so many years, in the bounds of the Salamonia church, Jay Co., Ind. His companion, who survives him, has long had a membership in the church. He was a great reader of the Scriptures, and read several Baptist periodicals, and had the courage to contend earnestly for the truth, and would defend it before any one that opposed it. He took much delight in attending the meetings and conversing with the brethren.

The undersigned was called to preach the funeral discourse.

ALSO,

Elihu Richards departed this life at his late home, in Salamonia, Jay Co., Ind., the first part of March, 1905, being 69 years of age. He leaves a devoted wife and two adopted children to mourn his demise. Mr. Richards never united with the Baptist Church, yet he believed the doctrine they advocate, and in former years took great interest in the church, by his attendance and his manifestation of love for the truth and for the brethren; he sometimes rode long distances to meet the brethren. His parents were Old School Baptists. He left many relatives and friends to mourn his departure.

The undersigned officiated at his funeral. A very large congregation was present at Salamonia, Ind.

ALSO,

Sister **Jemima York** was born in Montgomery Co., Ohio, Nov. 19th, 1815, and died at the home of her granddaughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Grove, at Dayton, Ohio, August 28th, 1905, aged 89 years, 9 months and 9 days. The deceased was the daughter of David and Mary Ward, and on March 13th, 1834, was united in marriage to Nicholas York, who departed this life July 1st, 1901. To this happy union were born nine children, of whom remain to mourn their loss one

daughter, five sons, forty-one grandchildren, seventy great-grandchildren, six great-great-grandchildren, one sister and a host of other relatives and friends. She became a member of the Old School Baptist church at an early age, as also did her husband. They settled on a new farm in the woods in Darke Co., Ohio, and with light hearts suffered the privations of a pioneer life. They were deeply devoted to the Master's cause, often walking through the woods many miles to their place of meeting, at Versailles, Ohio, where there was at this early day a prosperous church of some sixty members; but alas, death, separation and moving to other churches, reduced them till this old couple were the last two members of the church, and four years ago, when I preached at the funeral of old brother York, sister York gave me the old church book, as she knew of no one else to give it to, as she was the last living member. None of the doctrines of men swayed her from her faith in her Lord and Master.

I preached her funeral sermon August 30th.

ALSO,

John Harlin Carter was born Nov. 20th, 1880, died Sept. 23rd, 1905, aged 24 years, 10 months and 3 days. He was a son of brother Asa Carter and wife, of Van Wert Co., Ohio. He leaves to mourn their loss his father, mother, three brothers, four sisters and a devoted *fiancee*, who expected to be joined to him in matrimony in the near future. He was an exceptionally obedient and dutiful son, of spotless character, and especially devoted to his parents and brothers and sisters, wherein was woven a union of love and strong family ties, which made it a sad parting. The father seemed crushed beyond endurance, as it were, but we trust the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, will so take its abode in the hearts of all those who are cast down and wounded with this dispensation of God's providence, and will be more to them than a son or brother.

I was called to preach the funeral sermon. A large congregation of relatives and friends were present.

ALSO,

Martin V. Warren was born in Wayne Co., Ind., May 13th, 1828, died July 16th, 1905, aged 77 years, 2 months and 3 days. He was united in marriage to Elizabeth Hinkle on Feb. 22nd, 1854. To this union were born four sons and two daughters; two sons and two daughters preceded him to that beautiful beyond. He leaves to mourn his departure a loving wife, two sons, ten grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, besides a host of relatives and friends. The deceased had been identified with Arminians, but of late years stood alone; he came to our meeting in June and seemed interested, and talked considerably on the Scriptures. He died just three weeks from the day he met with us.

The funeral sermon was preached by the writer.

ALSO,

Sister **Martha Myers**, wife of brother Fred Myers, of Galoway, Franklin Co., Ohio, departed this life August 2nd, 1905. I feel that I would not do my duty if I did not say a few words of this worthy sister. She was a very devoted wife and mother, and in the affections of her husband and children there was a bond of love unexceeded in any family I have ever met, hence the sorrow at her departure was most affecting. This sister was not only devoted to her family, but to the cause of her Lord and Master; her home was always open to her brethren, who often enjoyed her hospitality. The few remaining members of the church at Galoway, Ohio, where she had long held a membership, will sadly miss her. She never allowed her place to be vacant in church unless providentially hindered. She and brother Myers were much in each other's company in going long distances to meet at their yearly associations, and were ever ready to call for the association when it was their turn to have it, and all brethren were requested to meet with them. The broken-hearted husband and children have our deepest sympathy.

Elder Hanover and I conducted the funeral services.

NEWTON PETERS.

PORTLAND, Ind., Oct. 3, 1905.

Levi Findley was born in Taylor Co., W. Va., Nov. 19th, 1826, died Sept. 1st, 1905, aged 79 years 10 months and 12 days. He was married Jan, 25th, 1848, to Emeline Kittle, daughter of Elijah Kittle, of Randolph Co., W. Va. About three years later they moved to Randolph Co., where he lived and died. Unto them were born twelve children, eight of whom survive him: A. L. Findley, L. J. Findley and J. K. Findley, all of Monroe, W. Va.; Mrs. W. J. Rowan, of Mabie; Mrs. G. W. Taylor, of Queens; Mrs. A. J. Workman, of Harding; Mrs. Isaac J. Scott and Miss Minnie C. Findley, of West Elkins, W. Va. These and his aged widow, thirty-two grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, one brother and a host of other friends are left to mourn their loss. He received a hope in Christ in 1852, nineteen years later he was received and baptized in the fellowship of the Tygarts Valley River Old School Baptist Church. In a few years he was elected deacon, and served the church in that capacity the remainder of his life. He was a prominent member in the church, and was firm in all things pertaining to its welfare. He was a firm believer in the foreknowledge of God, and in election, predestination, vital union and final preservation of the saints. He was highly respected in the community where he lived as a good citizen and neighbor. He had been a sufferer for several years with stomach trouble, but was not seriously ill until seven weeks before his death; from that time he was confined to his bed; he suffered a great deal, but was very patient. He realized from the first of his illness that the end was drawing near, but the thought of death had no terrors for him, and he expressed a de-

sire to go home to Jesus. How sad we felt as we watched him and realized that he would soon leave us, and yet how thankful we were for the evidence that he was going to a realization of what he had hoped for so long.

Our esteemed pastor, Elder J. N. Bartlett, preached the funeral discourse at his late home Sept. 2nd, 2 p. m., from the words: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." After which his remains were laid in the family burying ground to await the resurrection.

How sadly we miss him in the church and in the communion where he served his brethren so faithfully, and we shall miss his wise counsel; but saddest of all is the thought that we shall meet him no more in the dear old home, that when we go there one place will always be vacant. But we believe our loss is his eternal gain. May we all be reconciled to our heavenly Father's will.

His daughter,

EMELINE E. WORKMAN.

Miss Ella Coulbourn, the eldest daughter of George Coulbourn, died at the home of her brother Goldsborough, at Smithfield, N. C., Sept. 9th, 1905, after a short illness of peritonitis, aged 34 years. She was a great sufferer, and death came as a blessed relief from her untold agony. Everything that kind hands and medical skill could do was done, but the summons came and laid its claim upon the sweet and precious girl. Sister Ella was baptized by the writer in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church March 14th, 1898, in the town of Snowhill, Worcester Co., Md., where her father resides. Ella was a precious girl; since her mother's death, which occurred some time ago, she has had the care of all the household affairs of her father's house, and was as a mother to the two younger children, and careful as a good burden-bearer to her father, for which she endeared herself to every one who knew her. She was also a beloved member of the church; her understanding of the truth was clear, and her love for the people of God and the order of the gospel was deep and abiding. She was also an attentive listener, and it was a pleasure to the writer of this notice while preaching to look at her face. She surely did purify her soul in obeying the truth unto unfeigned love of the people of God. Her walk and conversation were becoming her profession. We miss her at our meetings, for she was nearly always in her seat. The family has our heart-felt sympathy, but we must all bow to the mandates of our God, who cannot err, hoping that we shall all feel his helping hand.

The writer tried to minister comfort to the sorrowing at the Old School Baptist meeting-house, using as a text John xi. 25, latter clause: "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." After which her remains were laid away in the old family cemetery to await the glorious morning of the resurrection. She leaves to miss her cheering presence, her father, four brothers and one sister, with the church and a host of friends.

T. M. POULSON.

MASSEY, Va.

Ruth Ann Comfort Jordan was born July 7th, 1819, died August 13th, 1905. She was the widow of Deacon Samuel M. Jordan, to whom she was married Oct. 22nd, 1840. She united with the New Vernon church, Sullivan Co., N. Y., Oct. 8th, 1865, being baptized by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. Sister Jordan was a faithful member of the body of Christ, ever ready to give a reason of her hope in Jesus. She attended her meetings to the last. Her interest in the things of the kingdom never grew less, but seemed rather to increase as she grew older. The doctrine could not be preached too strong or plain for her; she delighted to join in singing the songs of Zion. She was the daughter of John and Eunice Harding Comfort. Her sisters were Betsey M. Reeve and Phebe J. Beyea; she had one brother, Oliver M. Comfort. Her mother, brother and sisters were members of New Vernon church. She is survived by three children: Mrs. Harriett M. Corwin, Mrs. Mary C. Wollenhaupt and John B. Jordan, also several grandchildren. One son, Moses W. Jordan, died Jan. 2nd, 1901.

Her funeral service was conducted in the meeting-house at New Vernon, by the writer. Many friends paid the last tribute of respect. Her remains were buried in the New Vernon cemetery. May the Lord grant peace to the children and also to the church of her membership.

H. C. KER.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS."

H. B. Grehan, Va., $4.00.

MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting of the Old School Baptist Church of Olive and Hurley, of the Roxbury Association, is appointed to meet, the Lord willing, November 1st and 2nd, 1905, commencing at 10 o'clock. We hope to see many brethren and friends. Elders Hubbell, Slauson, Ker and Chick are expected to be with us.

A. BOGART, Clerk.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in Hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Z. GILLIES,

717 HOWARD ST., DETROIT, Mich.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 73. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1905. NO. 22.

POETRY.

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

"How can I be a child of grace,
While my affections are so cold?
How could my heart remain so base,
If I belonged to Jesus' fold?

When I enjoy prosperity,
My sinful heart grows proud and vain;
And when I feel adversity,
How apt to murmur and complain.

When I behold the crooked path
In which my roving feet have trod,
And feel the weakness of my faith,
How can I be a child of God?

When I approach before his throne
To lay my griefs and sorrows there,
How oft I find my heart is prone
To rove and wander off elsewhere.

Through doubts and darkness oft I go,
And seem to reach the shades of death.
Ye saints of God, I ask to know,
Have you e'er traveled in this path?

I want to serve the Lord, I know,
But such is my imperfect state,
The things I would, I cannot do,
Yet do the very things I hate.

O gracious Lord, decide my case;
Increase my faith, if I am thine;
If not, O cause thy sovereign grace
In my benighted soul to shine."

(Selected by Miss Martha Fancher, Warwick, N. Y.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

WHERE THE DOVE DWELLS.

(Song of Solomon ii. 14.)

"O MY dove, that art in the clefts of the rock." The dear Savior thus addresses his church in her present state of existence, and thus presents her condition of safety. The dove, pursued by birds of prey, would seek and enter into one of the clefts or fissures in the rocks, where she was safe from her enemy. This figure is used by the heavenly Lover to show in what consists the safety of his bride. He himself is the Rock, and the clefts of the rock represent the sufferings and death which he endured by the stroke of the law for the salvation of his people. When Moses struck the rock waters gushed out; so when the law struck Jesus waters of salvation came forth for all his people. At the second time that Moses struck a rock, in the desert of Zin, which was near forty years after he struck the first rock, he spake unadvisedly with his lips, and the Lord told him that he could not go over into the promised land. (Num. xx. 12.) So when the law struck Jesus, the Rock of salvation, its work was done, and it must die. The law could not take

the Lord's people into the gospel land; its work ends with the crucifixion of Christ.

When the Lord would show Moses his glory, and cause all his goodness to pass before him, he put Moses in a cleft of the rock on which he stood, and covered him with his hand while his glory passed by. A cleft in a rock is not a pleasant place to be forced into, but it is safe.

"I am crucified with Christ," Paul says. He says, "We which live [a spiritual life] are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."—2 Cor. iv. He says, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." Here are the clefts of the rock where the dove is, where the Lord's people find their salvation. It is not in peace and quiet of mind, not while lying on beds of ivory and stretching themselves on their couches, that they find safety, but in affliction and trouble; in suffering with Christ; in "bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus." Here is Moses, held in a close, rough, unpleasant cleft of the flinty rock, trying to get out into liberty and see what is passing by; but for his salvation he is held down in a place he does not like, and covered with the Lord's hand. This is his salvation. If he had been outside of that rock he would have been destroyed. The power of the Lord's name which he pronounced would have been his destruction. No man could endure the last syllable of that name; it would destroy any of Adam's race: "And that will by no means clear the guilty." The Rock only could endure it. No man can see God's face and live, but hidden in Christ, in the cleft of the Rock, we can see his back parts; can see the glory after the Lord has passed by; can see the goodness and blessedness of what he has done.

How we fret, and worry, and complain at this constant trouble; this cutting off and hedging in; this daily crossing of our worldly desires, or the greater sorrow and shame when our fleshly desires are fulfilled; this constant dissatisfaction with ourselves and our works; this self-abhorrence and self-loathing; this "great tribulation;" this withering of the glory and goodness of man like the grass; this lack of joy and comfort in worldly things, and often such questioning as to our interest in heavenly things. But in this is our safety. Through great tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of heaven. All of those who stand before the great white throne have come out of great tribulation.

The dear Savior recognizes his people in this condition, and calls to them, as his dove, seeing them in the clefts of the Rock. Also he speaks of them as "in the secret places of the stairs." The stairs were in the right side of the temple, and it was by winding stairs that the people went up out of the first into the second story, and out of the second into the third story, winding about, hardly knowing whether they are going up or down, often in a dark, secret place of the winding way. But he tells them where they are, they are in the stairs all the time. Every change, every turn, every new trouble and affliction, however it appears to oppress them and sink them down, is really lifting them higher. They are rising, they are in a secret place, hidden from the world, who cannot see them as the Lord's people, and who cannot understand the Lord's way of taking his people up from the world, up from self, up from legal works; but they are still going up

by winding stairs out of the legal into the gospel dispensation, and out of the things that are seen from day to day into "the things which are not seen," into the "building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

So Jesus, the heavenly Lover, speaks to his dear people as an afflicted and poor people, and tells them where they are. He recognizes them as suffering with him, as crucified with him, and lets them know while in the furnace of affliction that "as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."—2 Cor. i. 5. In their feeling of self-abhorrence and humiliation their faces are in the dust; they would not dare to speak to him except in a cry for mercy, nor even lift up their eyes to him, but in infinitely tender and prevailing love he calls to them by this endearing name, and says, "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." That voice is expressive of mourning on account of a sinful heart, but how sweetly it comes up into his ears on that account; that face is full of sorrow, and their eyes are pouring out tears unto God; but the sadness and the tears make the countenance comely in the sight of the dear Savior, for there are expressed a hunger and thirst after righteousness, and a hatred of all sin. That is what makes the face of a poor sinner lovely in the Lord's sight. And when they hear the loving accents of his voice speaking unto them, and with tender power acknowledging them as his dove, his bride, whom he has redeemed from all iniquity, and when they see, by faith, his face looking upon them in love, with "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God" shining in it, how it makes their own sad faces lose the look of sadness and shine with holy and solemn joy because of his love to them. Then are they thankful that they have a dwelling-place in the clefts of the rock, and in the secret places of the stairs, and glad that it is their blessed privilege to suffer with Christ, that they may by that fellowship of his sufferings be more effectually separated from the world, and glorified together with him.

I will send you an extract from a letter of sister Lina Beck, of Crawfordsville, Ind., to my sister Bessie, which will show why the above fragment was written about a month or more ago. She says: "I had a very sick neighbor across the way whom I visited very often. She died July 23rd, and now I miss her much, and think over her sayings. Several times she spoke of a dove cooing in a shade tree near her door. She asked me if I was too deaf to hear it. I said, 'O no, she wakens me every morning with her plaintive notes; I love her, for I feel mournful over the loss of my mate, and she is always mourning. God made the dove for a purpose. The Scripture speaks of it in many places.' I told her of the Savior's baptism, and of the dove sent out of the ark. I said, 'I will go home and hunt some of the places in my Bible where it speaks of doves and read them to you.' The one that impressed me most is the one in Song of Solomon: 'O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs,' &c. Ask your brother to write me a sermon from this text. It stayed with me for days. I read it to the sick woman, and she asked me what it meant, and how I longed for some one to tell us what Solomon was talking about. I said the clefts of the rock must be Christ, and in the hymn we sing, 'Rock of ages, cleft

for me,' Toplady must have had the same thought of the smitten Savior. The dove hidden in the secret places must be the church safe from all fear. Moses smote the rock and waters gushed out.

'The rock gave out a watery flood,
But Jesus poured out streams of blood.'

The suffering woman was so patient and uncomplaining, and looked so thoughtful, I hoped she was leaving this troublesome world for one of unalloyed bliss."

It is now nearly twenty years since I last saw our dear sister Lina Beck. Twice before that time it was my privilege to visit the church of which she has long been a member. I can never forget the precious meetings I enjoyed with her and the other dear brethren and sisters in that church and the sister churches in that vicinity. I realize a spiritual fragrance and melody in my soul as memory brings to me again the voices of those dear saints speaking and singing of Jesus, whose "name is as ointment poured forth," and as I see again in my mind the faces shining with the light of heavenly love and brotherly affection. How well I remember the faces of brother Chillion Johnson and his wife, sister Beck's father and mother, and the face of Elder Van Cleve always beaming with love and brotherly kindness, and sister Van Cleve so cordial and pleasant, with many others. I suppose but few of that loving band remain in these low grounds of sorrow, but others have come in through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in my mind I see that and other churches of the saints that I have been privileged to visit in many different localities, still meeting in love and fellowship to unite in the worship of God, and still putting on "charity which is the bond of perfectness." How well I remember the radiant, motherly countenance of sister Johnson as once, after a sermon, she looked around upon the smiling, weeping faces of the little company and said, "These friends look as though they had been in a shower." It is my wish for those who meet there now that the doctrine of God our Savior proclaimed by his servants may still continue to drop as the rain, and their speech distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass; because they publish the name of the Lord, and ascribe greatness unto our God.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Oct. 26, 1905.

BERKELEY, Cal., Sept. 3, 1905.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN GOSPEL BONDS:—Your highly esteemed letter of August 9th reached me a few days ago; it is hard to get the letter carriers to locate me, I move so often. It was very kind of you indeed to write me such a lucid and able letter. I am all alone here with the exception of one or two others who believe as I do, and your letter seems like the extension of the hand of a loving disciple to the one that has gone astray, wandering all alone in the mountains. My dear brother, you know not the loneliness of a poor, starving, weak, little, stumbling sinner, whose only hope of a better, higher, future life rests in the cross of Jesus and the glorious resurrection of the Son of man from the dead, and I rejoice in the power of that resurrection. "Without faith it is impossible to please him." Abel had that faith once given to the saints when he offered a bleeding lamb of the firstlings of his flock, which was a type of the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. All religions that fail to baptize by immersion those little ones

who are dead to sin by properly authorized authority, if they believe in a risen Lord, fail to show their faith by their works, and so far as the truth of Jesus Christ being raised from the dead, they know nothing beyond a historical belief of the fact that he died, so far as their church ordinances show their faith.

Pardon me, my esteemed brother, my pencil is running away with me, and I am encroaching upon your time without saying anything about your letter, which I will now in much fear and great weakness approach. I am much comforted by your words; I would love to hear you preach, and the Lord willing I will come to Middletown some day yet, as I have wished for over forty years to do. It is by revelation of Jesus Christ that we know the truth, but still I often feel that it is so little that I know, and that little only in part, I never could say that I had declared the *whole* counsel of God.

Yes, my dear brother, I called your attention to the eighteenth chapter of Matthew because I have seen the most worthy and highly esteemed members of the church excluded, and heard the pastor say by way of sustaining the act that, "If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off." I have lately thought that these words of the loving Master might have been misunderstood and greatly abused by the church on many occasions. It is not always the man of the world that offends the little ones that believe in Jesus. I have known preachers to forget the little ones to that extent that they would not give them an opportunity to tell what had been revealed to them, they would not hold their peace as the apostle tells them to. You will pardon me I hope for suggesting that it would be well to read Ephesians iv. 1–25, in connection with verse eight of the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, especially the twenty-second verse of Ephesians, fourth chapter, where you say that verse eight calls the man of the world, whether king, governor, magistrate or private citizen, "thy hand," I would have said thy besetting sin, or weakness. The eye of the "old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts" which looks with evil thought, is that which should be plucked out. I had thought that the admonition was given to the apostles themselves, and placed on record for a lesson to all the saints who should live afterwards in this world. With the above exceptions I indorse your very lucid letter, and ask you to publish it, as it is needed among the Baptists.

With love and esteem, I am your little brother in hope,

W. W. POLK.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., August 9, 1905.

ELDER W. W. POLK—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—Yours of the 4th inst. just received. You call my attention to Matthew xviii. 8–14. My understanding is that we cannot use these verses alone and grasp the subject; verses 6, 7 and 15 are inseparably connected with verses 8–14. Verse 6 tells us who are offended (little ones), and of the judgment of God upon the offender. Verse 7 tells us who the offender is (the "world," or man of the world). Verse 8 calls the man of the world, whether king, governor, magistrate or private citizen, "thy hand," "thy foot." Verse 9 teaches the same thing when the "eye" in figure is used. Jesus never used an imperfect figure, therefore the hand, foot and eye cannot refer to members of the body of Christ, because if cut off or plucked out restoration could never be made; all the skill of earthly physicians can never restore the hand or

foot of a man if it be cut off, or the eye if it be plucked out. The body of Christ would not be perfect if any member should be cut off, or an eye plucked out. Wherefore if thy support or strength, "hand or foot," offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee. "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own." "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." Verse 10 presents a different aspect entirely, viz: that the apostles themselves should take heed that they despise not one of the little ones who believe in Jesus. The apostles were not to be lords over God's heritage, but were to be kind and gentle as a nurse in the care of children; they were to instruct the children rather than "provoke them to wrath." Verse 10 also teaches the standing of the "little ones" with the Father of Jesus Christ; they are his, "bought with a price." Verse 11 teaches us what the work of the Son of man was and is: to seek and "to save that which was lost." Verse 12 presents the love of God to the redeemed, and the tender care and watchfulness of the great Shepherd, and also the tenderness and long-suffering that we should have one toward another. If a little one should go astray we should not seek that one with the intention to wound or kill him, but to save him or restore him to the fold; if he cannot walk for lack of strength, if he cannot return of himself, we should use all our strength (ability) to bring him back. "He which converteth the sinner [a stray little one] from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." Extreme measures should never be resorted to, unless after all of our tenderness, long-suffering and labor, the offender still lives in open transgression and rebellion against the church, then such an one should be turned over "to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." Such an one until repentance is given him should be unto us "as an heathen man and a publican." Verse 13 speaks of the experience of rejoicing when the wanderer or wayward one is found and restored (not killed) to the fold. Surely there is more reason to rejoice over the return of this one sheep than over the ninety and nine which went not astray. "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." Verse 14 shows clearly that it is not the will of God that one of these little ones should perish, therefore it should not be our desire; should our desire be in that direction, it will never change God's will, or word, or purpose: that not one of these little ones shall perish. Though they may go far astray they shall not perish, neither can any man pluck them out of the Father's hand. Verse 15 shows that personal offence may come from a brother as well as from the world, and when such is the case the rule is here given how to deal with that brother, not to cut him off and cast him from thee, as in the other case, but go to him alone and tell him his fault between thee and him, and if possible gain thy brother. In this case we are to use all possible labor, tenderness and long-suffering before telling it to the church.

The lesson taught in these verses belonged to each apostle separately, and to them as a body; it also belongs to each of God's ministers, to each private member, to each separate branch of the church,

and to the great body of Christ, the church, to-day.

Now, brother Polk, I have given you freely such as I have, and leave it with you to judge whether it is according to the word of God or not. May the Lord bless, guide and keep you.

I am your brother in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, I hope,

H. C. KER.

LUKE XXI. 13.

"And it shall turn to you for a testimony."

During all the ages that have passed in time many stirring and important events have taken place, both in the world and in the church; the rise and fall of nations has been a theme for historians from ancient times until the present. "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth forever," are the words of the Preacher. Wars and fightings with an interval of peace have been the order of the day in every generation; darkness and gross darkness hath covered the earth, with an occasional gleam of light from heaven, only a rift in the cloud, and the clouds come together, making the darkness more dense than before. In all this darkness and uncertainty the natural man, (the creature of earth) rears his lofty head, and thinks within himself that he is the light of the world, and the master thereof. But through that little rift in the cloud the faith of God appears, and with its clear shining of divine truth levels all created things, and man, the creature of mighty thoughts, and filled with self-esteem, comes into the whirlwind of the declaration of God, who said: "Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance." Again, "All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity." Then what is the end of man in this natural world of ours? With natural eyes we behold him to-day coming into the light of this world, and he performs his little part on the stage of life, to-morrow we look for him and he is gone, while his place is taken by him that cometh after. Yet notwithstanding the great and wide contrast between the Creator and the creature, the things that make up his life are to him of vast importance, and to God they are essential in the economy and distribution of his grace. Nothing that has been created from the greatest to the most infinitesimal has been in vain. God did not call this world into existence and leave it to acomplish its own purpose within itself, but he fulfilled his own purpose in all things that have transpired in time, while the object of it all was most surely for his own glory, in the salvation of his people by grace, and in the building and completion of his unrivalled temple of mercy. Now, these occasional rifts in the cloud through which comes the light of faith, are composed of wondrous things in righteousness. The cloud separates between the finite and incomplete things of time and sense, all of which belong to the earth and are shrouded in darkness, and the perfect wisdom and knowledge of God, which is exalted far above all principalities and powers of earth. This light of divine faith illuminating the cloud shines into the hearts of the people of God's election, giving unto them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, by which they emerge from the darkness and walk evermore in the light. The transition from darkness into God's marvelous light causes them to continually search for evidence and for testimony of their acceptance in the Be-

loved. Where do we go to search for the evidences of the work of the Spirit of Christ in our heart? Surely in that very darkness wherein we have traversed so long and so painfully. In this twenty-first chapter of Luke Jesus has rehearsed many of the temptations into which the unwary child shall fall, and many of the adverse circumstances which surround him; he shows how all the evil influences of your vile, carnal nature shall rise up against you to draw you away from the light that shineth in you. Out of your own flesh comes a lying, subtle voice, saying, "I am Christ." Contradictions, bringing with them doubts and fears, contend within you, confusing your mind and clouding your heart so that you are made to cry out with the apostle, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" These same enemies shall persecute you, bind you and cast you into prison, and that which should in you be a house of prayer has become a den of thieves. Yet as the Master has promised, all these things "shall turn to you for a testimony." There is nothing in all the experience of your travel through the wilderness of this world but what shall bear witness of the work of grace in your heart, "it shall turn to you for a testimony," for in the dungeon, in the midst of your most hateful persecutions, Christ is your life, and his life is the light by which you are guided in the way of all truth. Ofttimes the very things which you feel sure are dragging you down to destruction, and they are, as far as they can do so, but at the same time they turn to you for a testimony of the love of God that is in your heart. The testimony of Jesus can only be made manifest when the Spirit of Christ produces the evidences, and when the power of it is felt in the bosom of the witness. Testimony is without weight except when its object is both seen and felt. Experience in the things which control our life and action is the revelation of Jesus Christ in the work which shows unto us that we are children of the kingdom, for this is the work of faith, and not of sight. In the early morning of our experience faith suggests a supernatural tendency in the course of our whole life. Naturally we never willingly deny self, but in the christian walk we continually deny ourselves, having lost confidence in the works of the flesh. No man can ever deny self except by the power of faith. We must be killed to all love and desire for the things pertaining to the natural life. The man who abhors himself and repents in dust and ashes is not far from the kingdom of God; it is an evidence that he has seen the Lord of life and glory. In denying self he must necessarily take up the cross of Christ. It means the putting away of one life, that another life may be embraced. Former things have passed away and have been replaced by precious jewels, which consist of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God, deliverance from death by sin and its consequences, the mercy, love and forgiveness of God in salvation, and these all turn to us for a testimony. The testimony of Jesus Christ, as it comes to us in the dark and cloudy day, while we are passing through sore trials and afflictions on account of our lost and ruined condition, when it would seem that all the waves and billows of persecution in the depravity of our vile heart were about to swallow us up, and now, clearly as the bright shining after rain, Jesus is revealed right in that experience, and the very horrors of the night turn to us as a sweet and sure testimony.

We are taught doctrine, but how does that teaching reach us? Surely not through any natural avenue. Our natural senses cannot grasp the things which faith points out: the riches of Christ are unsearchable, yet the natural senses are made alive to the heavenly secrets by being made subject to the higher powers. God works in the heart, revealing the secrets of his treasure-house, setting forth the life and death of our gracious Redeemer in the atonement which bringeth salvation to fallen, sinful man, and all this is made manifest in our mortal bodies: our eyes, our tongue, our hands, our feet, all show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, and, as in all other things which make up our daily life of christian experience, they shall turn to us for a testimony.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

HAMPSTEAD, Md., April, 1905.

MY DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—For such I feel to call you, seeing that you wrote comfortably to me when I sorrowed, and rejoiced with me when I was in my earliest love. I always wish that I could reply suitably to your good and comforting letters, in which you speak of the loving-kindness and tender mercies of our dear Father toward this wayward child, but as I cannot I take some pleasure in writing my rambling thoughts, believing that you will think, as is said of one in the New Testament, "She hath done what she could." This brings me to speak of the beautiful letter from Elder Bartley in the SIGNS, headed "Sanctified Afflictions." I think that only such as I can enter fully into the feelings which he expressed. I often would be so cast down were it not that some portion of the Scripture impresses itself upon my mind, or were it not that I am awakened in some way, which shows me that I am being guided by a hand that is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. Then at times these words present themselves, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

"God's watchful eye not only sees
The griefs we bear alone;
The faintest cry within the heart
Finds echo in his own."

My little sister, Emma Kelley, says, "Why do you not write something for the SIGNS?" The only answer that I can give is, my one talent is used up in my correspondence with my friends. But it does give me pleasure to see my thoughts published in the paper I so much enjoy reading; not that I suppose they will comfort any one, but that you, my brother, seem to wish me to be remembered by the household of faith, and I think that you desire thereby to comfort one of the little ones. There are so many precious promises for all the Lord's people. "Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." I think I ought to be one of the happiest of mortals that my hope is so steadfast, I almost fear it reaches too far, beyond a hope, and you know that hope is all that we can possess in this world, and yet I cannot seem to help murmuring. But you know that perfect love casteth out fear, and as the desire of walking humbly before him in love is all that I am capable of doing, I must still say as in former years,

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

My daily prayer is not so much for help against unbelief, as to be kept from the

errors of this life. I hope that while I am in this wilderness I am fed with manna to humble me, and prove me, to do me good. He says unto me, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." O that I might feel to say with Paul, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." "This God is our God forever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death." "Wherefore should I fear in the day of evil, when the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about?" But when I read such Scriptures as these: "If ye love me, keep my commandments," "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him," I then feel with a sorrowful heart that I am far from all this, yet I realize his dear presence. I believe if we have the desire, he will manifest himself unto us, for he knows the weakness of the flesh. Perhaps you know then my comfort. I can find more comfort from the life of dear old Peter than I can from the beloved disciple.

As I have read, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father," and also, "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear," I have thought how thankful I ought to be that I had given me the hearing ear, as I hope and believe. I so often think of our aged sister Rachel Ensor's remark, "I do not know whether I was ever really thankful for anything." Perhaps you remember it, it was while you were speaking the Saturday afternoon that I was received by the church at Black Rock. My own feelings are such now.

Sister Rowe and I, through the hospitality of brother Kelley's family, spent a very pleasant week together last fall, and later, brother Kelley's family spent the day with me. Such pleasures are rare occasions, and that perhaps adds to the joy. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" I only had the pleasure of meeting with the church once, the first Sunday in September.

I suppose you have learned that brother Luke Ensor's wife desires to unite with the church; I do hope that she will have the opportunity soon. I always did love her, and now all the more for Christ's sake.

I have received the SIGNS one year, and not only thank all concerned in providing it for me, but hope that they all have received a blessing which none but God can give. The editorials sometimes are upon just the themes of which I have desired you would write. In one narration of experience the writer spoke of the name of Jesus being so sweet; it carried me back to the time of my earliest love. I always feel to say, Precious name, O how sweet, hope of earth and joy of heaven; but in later years that name has never seemed to thrill my being as in former times. One paragraph I see used so many times that I do not quite understand is this, "I do not see how God could remain just and justify such a sinner." The Bible record is that Christ came to save sinners, with no limit to their crimes, and there is no limit to his power to save. This is all my hope.

I have been reading your narration of experience in the *Messenger* of 1896, and although yours began at such a tender age, and mine at a much later date, yet they somewhat blend. There is food in Elder Ker's writing, "I muse on the years that are past."

I must now close. I send love to all,

and I would love to meet you all at the association.

I remain, as ever, your sister,

GEORGIA D. ENGLAND.

CLANTON, Ala., Sept. 15, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I herewith send you a letter written to me by my youngest sister. I would like it in the SIGNS if you think best. She is the youngest of six sisters, and I am the oldest. We are all of the family that belong to the original church. Our father and mother were members, but have passed away.

I am your sister,

RUTHA CHANDLER.

DEAR SISTER:—This is the first day of February, my birthday. My husband has gone to meeting, yet I am not alone, for God is with me. I feel as though I want to talk, and so will write my mind. Christ died on the cross, he willingly gave himself a sacrifice, which alone can take away our guilt and sin. He is the only way by which we draw near to God, the only way by which we have eternal life. The most wonderful deed in all the world was when Christ laid down his life that he might save his people. It is the death of our conquering King that saved us from hell, and opened to us the door of heaven. God sent his only begotten Son, the greatest gift of his love, to be rejected and crucified. This was the greatest crime ever committed by sinful men; it was the saddest scene upon which our minds can rest. He is the truth, and in him is love. He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter. How my heart aches to know that it was my sins that helped to nail him to the cross. I imagine that I hear their voices saying, "Crucify him," and I see a few horror-stricken men, and a few sad, weeping women, with his mother, to bid their last farewell to their loved one, Jesus of Nazareth. The Son of the living God hung dying among his executioners, who mocked him gladly. The first words that fell from his lips were, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." And here at the cross let me learn to forgive the vilest of all my enemies. The dying thief believed on him in the dying hour, and Jesus said unto him, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." What a blessed comfort it must have been to him to hear that word. Jesus also turned his dying eyes upon his weeping mother and said, "Woman, behold thy son," and to John he said, "Behold thy mother." It seems as though he gave John to her as a son, and Mary to him as a mother. In his own trouble he did not forget to render aid to others. Darkness lay over all the land, Jesus is bearing the burden of sin, the weight of which is known only to God, the Father's face is for a time withdrawn while in his greatest agony and pain, and our dear Savior cried, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" Jesus though in the place of sinners was yet holy, and in the hour of his agony he cried to God. When our sins overwhelm us, we can cry out earnestly to God through the death of his Son. He forsook Jesus for a time, that he might not forsake us eternally; at the hour of death Jesus cried, "It is finished," "and gave up the ghost." He saw the victory won, and death robbed of its sting. He said through David, "Into thine hand I commit my Spirit," when it was finished; that is, his Spirit departed from his body unto God, May we be able to say through him when our life is ended, our work is finished, and like him may we die able to say by faith, Father, "into thine hand I commit my spirit."

Shortly before his death Jesus said, "I thirst," but refused the stupefying drink that they offered him. He would die in full possession of all his powers, he would pay the full penalty, that we might enjoy the full reward. There are times when we cannot forget our sorrows nor shrink from our sufferings, but Jesus will then give us his cross-bought consolation; let us then cast all our care upon him, for he careth for us. The darkness that was over the land when Jesus was crucified is a figure of the darkness which we must bear when his face is hidden from us. But again the Sun shines out; O if I could at all times feel my Savior as near to me as I do this evening, the darkest night would be light to me. He abode with his disciples when he was here on earth, and he will visit us in the Spirit. When Christ stood side by side with the weeping sisters, Martha and Mary, and wept with them, there was manifest more than human sympathy, there was then shown the tender love of our dear Savior. He came to them when their brother was still and cold in death, but when the darkest cloud of sorrow was upon them, he showed his power. How blessed it is to know that Jesus has a great and tender place in his loving heart for all his sorrowing ones; he sympathizes with those he loves. No man has greater love than this, to lay down his life for his friends. If we have sorrows and heart aches that the world knows nothing of, dear sister, let us carry them to Christ. He stands by our side to-day, as he stood by the side of the sisters of old; as he gave to them blessing and joy, so he is able to give the same to us now, his love is as great to-day as it was then, when he stood by the tomb of Lazarus and wept. He did not weep because he was powerless, for he was there with great power; the power is his still.

YOUR SISTER.

"PREACH THE WORD."

God has ordained the ministry of the gospel, and set the gifts in the church; nothing is lacking in the provisions he has made for the edification of the church which God hath set in order, first apostles, and prophets, and after that pastors, and teachers, and evangelists, for the perfecting of the saints. Those pastors, teachers and evangelists are stewards of the mysteries of the Spirit, and as such are commanded to preach the word, which is able to make you wise unto salvation. This wisdom unto salvation cometh from above, and is first pure, then peaceable, full of love and good fruits of righteousness. They that preach the gospel should live of the gospel; not only living themselves on that true bread that cometh down from heaven, but ministering the same to them that hear them, and to hear is to obey, for this is the love of God, that ye keep his commandments. The love of God in the heart therefore is the spring of action prompting to true and acceptable obedience of the Spirit and through the Spirit. The mysteries of preaching the word are enjoined by the apostle in transferring the gift of the gospel to Timothy to preach the word by the laying on of hands. This is laid on all the servants in the ministry following him in love. There is the same obligation to preach the word in and out of season, and in preaching the word of truth and righteousness they are to preach the ordinances of God, that they that preach the gospel shall live of the gospel, under the commission of the Lord. Freely ye have received, therefore freely give, but the obligation to give and receive is reciprocal, and resting on the churches and brethren to whom they minister, that there may be an equality; not that one

should be eased and another burdened, therefore this reciprocal duty is to freely give. The ordinance of God provides that the receivers of the truth of the word of the gospel should minister of their carnal things, that nothing may be lacking on either hand. "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: * * * it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." The Lord divideth between soul and spirit, joint and marrow, and is a discerner of the heart, and no flesh shall glory in his presence. It is the word of God by the Spirit implanted in the heart of the preacher and hearer of the word that works out the problem of equality in giving and receiving, so that it is no small thing that they who minister in spiritual things should be partakers of your carnal things. But in the light of these Scriptures it is painful to record the proverb of Solomon that there are those who withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth only to poverty, and Israel said, "My leanness, my leanness." True, Elijah was fed by the ravens, but he was fleeing from Ahab and the idolatrous Jews, but the raven is an ill-omened bird in the deserts of Arabia, and was unclean to Israel, and to be driven as Elijah was from the house of the Lord, means a dearth of the word of the Lord in those days. God's ordinance is not to call men to the ministry for a piece of bread, it is a cheerful gift, for God loveth a cheerful giver; not that I desire a gift, but I desire fruits that may abound to your account. How else could the fruits of the Spirit in the loving disciple be drawn out but by a willingness? He that loveth me will keep my commandments, said Jesus. And Paul declaring said, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." Now what was the Spirit of Christ? was it not supremely benevolent? He gave himself for us, and God so loved the world that he gave his Son, and blessed is he that is partaker with Christ in the Spirit of the Father, who raised up Jesus by his Spirit, and if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus Christ from the dead dwell in you, he that raised Christ from the dead will also quicken your mortal bodies. But now we should extend the hand of love in offerings to the Lord, in ministering to the souls and also in ministering of our carnal things to the servants of the church who labor for us in the gospel ministry, and if not, why not? Is it because the Spirit of Christ is not in you, or have you been wrongly instructed? Say not again, dear reader, the ravens fed Elijah when Israel was turned to idols. Yes, Elijah was fed by ravens, and he drank of the brook which was in the land of strangers, and Elijah complained, "They have digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life" to take it away, as did Herod and the Jews the life of the Lord Jesus while God reigned, and the Roman eagle was the sign of protection over Christ and his apostles by the providence of God. But it is not a palace and royal robes, but having food and raiment, for God hath said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." This is the promise and the ordinance of God. Wait not for the ravens to feed, nor the Romans to defend, but minister out of such as ye have, and as you prosper, and thus fulfill the law of the Lord, showing your faith by your works, that men may see, believe and say ye are his disciples because ye love one another. This law of

Christ is written in the hearts of the Lord's children by the Spirit of God. The ordinance of God is the law of love, charity out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and of faith implanted. This is the end of the commandment, and also the bond of perfectness, and it is reciprocal in giving and receiving on both lines, that he that laboreth in hope may be partaker of his hope, for godliness is profitable in all things, having promise not only of this life, but also of that which is to come.

Now I conclude.

I. N. NEWKIRK.

OREGON CITY, Ore., June 25, 1905.

FORT WORTH, Texas.

DEAR EDITOR:—I herein forward to you a letter written by our dear young sister Susie Staggs, who resides with her husband at Marfa, Presidio Co., Texas, near the Rio Grande River, far away from any church of the Old School Baptist faith and order. Her husband, who is a member of the church also, is in the service of the Southern Pacific R. R., which measurably deprives them of the church privileges common to their brethren, and accounts for the manner in which the sister has thus written of her loneliness, discontent, and the fiery trials of their unpleasant surroundings. As long as we are favored with the sweet company of dear brethren, crosses do not seem so crushing and depressing. Although each and every one have their portion of trials in some way, attended with various circumstances, yet the presence of the church makes the burden appear lighter, and we thereby feel more encouraged to endure hardships as faithful followers of the meek and lowly Savior; but when we are cast out so far from the brethren, in the desert or on some lone rocky shore, tossed hither and thither by the temptations of the world and its allurements, we sink so low beneath the angry waves of adversity that we fear ere long we will be swallowed up by the awful abyss of darkness, misery and woe. However, the blessed, holy Captain of our salvation comes walking on the boisterous waves of the wild ocean, saying, "Peace, be still," and at once the wind and sea obey him, the storm subsides, and the vessel (church) is safely moored in the port of faith, hope and charity, we are again revived and assured that Jesus, our great High Priest, eternally lives and says to his sorrowing disciples, "Because I live, ye shall live also." This is enough, our Jesus will do all his pleasure, and will minister in due time gospel consolation to the scattered sheep and the destitute ones whithersoever they may be, and will raise them up to sit together in heavenly places in Christ. His eyes are over his poor and afflicted people, and he never sleeps nor slumbers, God be praised to all eternity.

Dear editor of our faithful old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I send you our young sister's letter, together with my remarks, for publication, if consistent with your judgment. I feel that her letter will be interesting to our people, she having so well portrayed my own ups and downs experimentally. She is a God-fearing sister whom Christ has blessed; she longs to see the time come that she may be at liberty to return home among her brethren to mingle with them in the worship of God, and hear the gospel preached.

In the bonds of a precious faith, affectionately,

ASA HOWARD.

MARFA, Texas, Sept. 27, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER HOWARD:—After some

delay I will reply to your welcome letter. Needless to say I was glad to hear from you. O to be at some of those good meetings, but I fear it is never to be any more. I get so low down sometimes that I fear I will never be able to look up again or see light, even if I ever have. It has been so long since I saw anything but darkness I fear I have never known anything else. But sometimes I have a small hope, and that is all that sustains me, for it looks like I surely have more trials and vexations; things beset me on every hand, until sometimes I feel like giving up, and really would if I could, and would gladly be as I was in the past, satisfied with going on my way no matter how that was. But it seems I cannot do it, there is always a restraint and a conscience so piercing that I cannot resist, and O if I could stop grieving over my isolated condition, which tempts me to say, How I wish I could just give up the thought of ever going to church and being with God's people, for I know I would be better contented if I could, when it seems so impossible, and yet the desire is with me and I cannot get away from it, and yet I would not take the world and all there is in it for the fellowship of the church, which I have for them, and hope they have for me, though so unworthy. However a little handful of purpose by the way keeps me alive and enables me to some extent to realize the riches of God's sovereign mercy, and the glorious promises contained in the gospel.

Not long since, we had a precious letter from brother George Waldrip, of New Mexico; it did my soul good, for it seems that he travels along like the rest of us, and it is such a glorious thing to have some one to talk or write to that you know understands what you mean, and I guess that is one reason I always am writing you such letters as this one. While it may only make you tired to read them, it relieves my mind, as it seems, and always has, that I can write freely to you and always expect a word of cheer in reply. I so well remember one time in particular, where just one word lifted such a burden from my mind: after we had all returned from Bethlehem church to Inez, (after my husband and I had joined the church) the thought came to me that I had not told the church anything, and in fact I did not think I had even told them I had a hope, much less a reason for my hope, and finally I mentioned it to you and uncle, and you just spoke up and said, "Well, sister Susie, we never get done telling it," and I never had anything relieve my mind so much, and I have not been worried over that since. But O, the other things that seem endless!

Now I know you are tired of this, but cast the mantle of charity over it and pass it by. Please write us soon. Husband joins me in love and christian fellowship to you for Christ's sake.

(MRS.) SUSIE STAGGS.

WEISER, Idaho, Aug. 1, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS:—As my subscription is due I will remit for the next year, as I do not want to be without the SIGNS as long as it contends for the doctrine of Christ and the apostles, which doctrine the world hates, and will hate as long as the world shall stand. By this, said Jesus, ye may know that ye are my disciples, if the world hates you. If they have hated me they will hate you also. I have read the SIGNS ever since I was fourteen years of age, and have tried to compare it with the Bible and my own experience, and I do believe that it is

and has been preserved by the power of God as a grand and glorious blessing, so that the children of God should hear from each other, as they are scattered in different parts of the world, yet all telling the same glorious tidings of salvation by grace alone through our Lord Jesus Christ. This is what I understand the SIGNS to have advocated at the first, and if I am not deceived, it advocates the same doctrine still. Many other papers which have started since have departed from the doctrine, and have taken up with the doctrine of the world, and seek to preach that which will please the world, such as conditional time salvation, which must be wrought out by the children of God or they will be chastised, or on the other hand, blessed with the blessings that are in store for them, unless they are disobedient. I can see no difference between this and the old covenant which proved a failure. That was a law covenant which administered death, but the new covenant administers life; in it God declares, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Conditionalists are not the kind of Baptists that Paul was, for he said that if salvation is by works it is not of grace. I believe that Christ is our salvation in time as well as in eternity; he has ever proven himself to be so in the fiery furnace. He was in the fiery furnace with the three Hebrew children, and with Daniel in the lions' den, and with Jonah in the bottom of the sea, and the poet says,

> "He near my soul has always stood,
> His loving-kindness, O how good."

The apostle Paul told the experience of all the children of God when he said, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." And this made him cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." The law made nothing perfect. It demanded perfect obedience, and we are imperfect in all our works, all our righteousness is as filthy rags, and we are ten thousand talents in debt without one farthing to pay. Truly this is a very hopeless case indeed. But hark! I hear the voice of the Son of God saying, I came to save that which was lost. And again it is said, I will never leave nor forsake thee. Yes, he carries the lambs in his bosom, and leads his flock like a shepherd, and causes them to feed in the green pastures of his love, and gives them of the water of eternal life that they shall hunger and thirst no more. I cannot believe that one of his children wants to sin, but none of them are perfect in the flesh, and will not be until this mortal shall put on immortality, then shall they be like Christ; now we, like Adam, are subject to vanity, but when we awake with his likeness, we shall be satisfied.

Now, dear brother, write on, your writing is not in vain. My poor soul has been made to leap for joy when I have read the many good letters from the brethren and sisters of the household of faith, all speaking the same glorious tidings of salvation by grace. I know that my race is nearly run, and I will soon lay my Bible and hymn book by, and be numbered with the pale nations of the dead. O may it be with me as it was with Paul when he knew that his depart-

ure was at hand, he said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

I remain your brother,

G. B. BARTON.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., Sept., 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I received a very kind, christian and interesting letter from sister Sarah E. Runkle, of Macomb, Illinois, which I wish you to publish in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as it may be as interesting and comforting to the brethren and sisters of the household of faith as it has been to me. I have known her father and mother all my life, and often had the pleasure of meeting her father and hearing him preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, at dear old Providence church, and have had the pleasure of entertaining him at our own house many times, and also his dear daughters Mary, Mattie, Susie and sister Sarah E. Runkle, but they were not there as often as he was. I have received many sweet, comforting and edifying letters from their pen. While Elder Vanmeter and sister Susie have gone to enjoy the realities of an unknown world to us, I reread their letters, which give every evidence that they are basking in the smiles of their Savior. We miss them and their good letters, and feel sad that we shall see their faces no more, but say in humble submission, The will of the Lord be done.

With much fear and trembling I want to tell the dear brethren and sisters of the good meeting of our association, especially those that were not here to see and hear for themselves. I thought I never heard more able preaching than was done at our last association. They came preaching Christ and him crucified as the only way given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved. How blessed it is to feel and know that God has ordered all things concerning us. All that I have heard speak of it were well pleased with the preaching; there was no uncertain sound, they stirred up our pure minds by way of remembrance, and made us feel like we were sitting together in heavenly places, and that it was good to be there; we felt lonely for a week after it was over.

I will have to bring this to a close, for my hand trembles so I can scarcely write; I am not very well, and it may be the last that I write for publication, although I may get better and live to a ripe old age. I am in the Lord's hands. He, and he only, knows what is in the future, who declared the end from the beginning.

Brother Chick, I hope that the Lord will hold up your hands and strengthen your feeble knees in editing the dear old SIGNS to our good and his glory.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

BELLE FRAZEE.

MACOMB, Ill., Sept. 20, 1905.

MRS. BELLE FRAZEE—MY DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD:—I will now try to write something in reply to your good and welcome letter. It seemed like old times to read a letter from you; though you never wrote often to me, yet I have read many good letters from your pen, written to father, Susie and Mary, and also in our publications. I have also spent many pleasant hours at your house and in your company. Those times I have never forgotten, and those dear let-

ters have been reread, with many other precious epistles of love from my dear brethren and sisters, my dear kindred in Christ. O how I do love these dear ones of the household of faith who can feel enough love and fellowship for the poorest and weakest one of the flock to write to me. This, my dear sister, is a mystery, how any of God's children can have fellowship for me when I am such a sinner and have no fellowship for myself. But this is God's way, he makes us to see our vileness so we may have no room for boasting, and he brings us low, and brings us to the end of our strength, so we may know when we are lifted up it is all of the Lord. All the praise, honor and glory belong to him, so it is all of grace. Grace shows us our sins, causes us to hate them, then saves us from them; truly "Grace all the work shall crown."

But I started out to tell you why I was not at your association: I did want to go very much, and thought I would be able to, but I was not well enough. I went to ours the week before, and was almost down sick after I came home, so that I had to give it up. I was so sorry, for I wanted so much to be at your house and meet all the dear ones there once more. I always enjoy your association, and think there are many precious Baptists among the churches there. We had a pleasant time at our association; we were all together all the time, which made it so nice. I thought I never heard better or more able preaching. I have heard but little from your association, but I am sure you had a good time, though Sunday was a bad day.

Mother is very well for her.

I am your sister, I trust, in bonds of love,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

ALVINSTON, Ont., March 7, 1905.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—For some cause I feel like writing you a few lines; it may be that I want you to know that I have you still in sweet remembrance in fellowship of the gospel. I do not feel as much like writing as I used to; it seems such a task, and I have had such a dull, lifeless feeling for a long time, and I wonder sometimes why it is; but we are told, "The wages of sin is death," and I am but getting my just dues. Should I receive no more than I deserve I would not even have a ray of hope; but how forgetful I am of the Lord's mercies; what a vile, rebellious being I am. Sometimes I get a little comfort from the words, "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Certainly I do feel dead to the world most of the time, and then when spiritual emotions are not in exercise it seems I am altogether dead; what a mystery I am. If we sow to the flesh we shall of the flesh reap corruption; but here this poor, miserable mortal is so ignorant, and cannot tell what desires are of the flesh, and all I can cry is, Lord, keep me in the strait and narrow path; yes, Lord, keep me and I shall be kept, guide me with thine eye.

When I try to read the Bible it seems a sealed book; O that it were with me as in days that are gone, when I would open it there seemed so much food for my hungry soul, and it seemed in a measure that the scales were removed from my eyes. Instead of growing in grace and in the knowledge of the truth I am more ignorant and I fear more indifferent; or is it rather that sometimes I am found questioning whether my eyes have been opened (by the dear Savior who does open blind eyes,) to see down into the depths of a vain, deceitful heart?

O, how I wish it were my privilege to hear your voice to-day in proclamation of that blessed truth which is in Jesus, whom to know is eternal life. Such comfort and solemn joy I have experienced in the past while under your preaching, but give God all the praise, from whom all blessings flow. Every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down from above, from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. I am glad of it; yes, I rejoice in it. These are glorious truths when we are brought to realize them, that our God is the God that changes not, therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed. He laid on him (Jesus Christ) the iniquity of us all.

Well, I started to write this letter more than a week ago, and now I want to finish it if I can.

Elder Curry came and preached in Brooke for the third time last Wednesday, and is to come monthly, if the will of God be so. Elder Carnell has been over once, I think it was the last Sunday in January. I was at the meeting last Wednesday, and it was a season of refreshing. It seems to do me so much good to converse with the dear kindred in Christ. Elder Curry is certainly a great expounder of the truth.

I have just been reading an article written by Elder H. C. Ker in the last SIGNS, and it does seem wonderful to me that I can see so much of my experience in it. If I could write as good a letter as that I would not hesitate so much. I really enjoyed it; not that it gave me pleasure to hear of such darkness as he felt, but there was great comfort and consolation in it for poor me; I am sure you understand me. The doubt and fear he expresses I believe I have daily; and right here a fear takes hold of me so that I wonder if I know what I am talking about.

"How strange is the course that a christian must steer,
How perplexed is the path he must tread."

If it were not for that terrible conflict I am persuaded my hope would be banished.

Well, I must hasten to bring this disconnected letter to a close; trust it will find you and family as well as usual, though I know you must feel lonely under your late sad affliction; you have my deepest sympathy, but it is the Lord alone can heal the wound and make you submissive to his will, and make you to realize that "all things work together for good to them that love God." We hope to see you in June, and hope that you may be able to so arrange as to have a visit with us.

I will close, with love from one who feels very unworthy.

(MRS.) W. C. YOUNG.

MARGARETVILLE, N. Y., August, 1905.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Inclosed find post-office money order for two dollars to renew my subscription for the SIGNS. As I sit now and think how many times I have written the above for the SIGNS, I am filled with sorrow and joy. With sorrow for the low state of Zion, for the coldness and indifference of those that I believe are the children of God; with joy that I am near the end. I am almost seventy-two years old, and it is quite likely this may be the last time I shall renew my subscription, although I expect to take the paper as long as I can read it, if it be published, and I pray God it may be, and contend for the same doctrine it always has. I have been a subscriber fifty years, and a reader fifty-four years, and have never discovered any change in the doctrine advocated by

the SIGNS. I have had a personal acquaintance with Elders Gilbert Beebe, Benton Jenkins, Wm. Beebe, F. A. Chick and brother Benton Beebe, and I think I have had their friendship, and know I esteemed them very highly, both as men and for the truth's sake. As for the SIGNS, it is impossible for me to tell how highly I prize it; more especially now as it contains nearly all the preaching I get. There have been in this long time some few things that I did not see as the writers did, but nothing to break fellowship. I have sometimes feared lest the paper might not be sustained, but God has kept it, for which I desire to thank him. Sometimes the communications have been dry, but not often, and then I think the fault was in me; but the sweetest writings to me have been the personal exercises of the writers, especially their first teachings; I wish more of them would relate their first exercises, both the old soldiers and those that have just enlisted; I think it would tend to warm the hearts of God's people and bring them nearer their first love. They are admonished in the Scripture to return to their first love; it would bring them more on a level, it would cause them to love each other more, and that is one thing the children of God lack; perfect love casteth out fear. I know that many of them feel they cannot tell as much as others, so they keep back.

Right here I want to say I have been personally acquainted with many of God's children, and have heard many experiences told, and have learned that it is not always those who can tell the brightest and clearest exercises that make the best soldiers, but it is very often the other way. I wish I could say something that would warm the hearts of God's little ones so they would write of the love of Jesus to them, to tell what he has done for them, not what they have done or are going to do for him; how he called them; how he found them, not how they found him; how they felt when they first saw themselves sinners; how they tried to do better, but got worse; this will touch and warm the heart of a poor old sinner like me. Yes, I am an old sinner, and what is more discouraging, I have no hope of ever being any better. When I first united with the children of God I did not understand when some of the older ones talked of being old sinners, but think I do now; I did not understand when they talked of being glad they were near the end, but I think I do now; I think I know what it is to hate sin and long to be freed from this body of death, and what Paul meant when he said, "In me (that is, in my flesh,) there dwelleth no good thing."

I did not intend when I commenced this to write for publication, but only to renew my subscription, but if you think there is anything good in it you can publish it, but not to the exclusion of better matter.

Yours in the love of the truth,

JOHN A. MORSE.

BOWDOINHAM, Maine, August 14, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I write you a few lines and inclose a letter from sister Attie Curtis to the Bowdoinham church, which was read at the close of our meeting Sunday, August 14th. If anything could have added to our day of rejoicing, this letter did.

The Lord has abundantly blessed us in bringing sister Wilson and sister Tedford to the church. The baptism was at noon. Elder Beal performed the ordinance, assisted by Deacon Clark. I felt that this letter from sister Attie would be good reading for all who read the SIGNS OF

THE TIMES, if you should see fit to publish it.

With christian love,

ELLA RAYMOND.

LAWRENCE, Mass., Aug. 8, 1905.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS OF THE BOWDOINHAM CHURCH:—My heart is made glad in knowing the Lord has brought sisters Tedford and Wilson to a home with us to share our joys and sorrows and to experience a good conscience toward God in keeping his commandments. Every one of us knows how utterly unworthy we are of a name and place with God's people, and that we can never find any good thing dwelling in the flesh, and we gladly welcome those who have been made to know their sinfulness and unworthiness, for from our own experience we believe and are sure it is the Lord's work. It makes us rejoice when the Lord brings in his little ones so that they are at home with us, no longer strangers or foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God; Jesus has been made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. It is beautiful to follow him into the watery grave and be buried with him, to rise and walk in newness of life; not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God. I would be glad to be with you next Sunday at all your services, but the Lord will be present with you and with me, even if I am many miles from you, he will bless you and enable you to do all things decently and in order, so that his name will be glorified. It is thirty-three years next Sunday since I united with this people, and although almost every one who was there then has been gathered home, yet others have been brought in, and peace dwells in our midst. Salvation by grace is still the theme. Love and sweet fellowship have been shed abroad in our hearts, so we can say with David, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Hearing the good news of the Lord's work in bringing the two sisters to declare what he has done for them, has stirred my pure mind by way of remembrance, and the new song has been put in my mouth, even praise unto God. I have been lifted out of the dark and dreary place where I have been traveling so long, and given a season of refreshing. How good the Lord is to us! May God bless us all, and make us tender-hearted and loving, one toward another; may he lead our minds into the truth as it is in Jesus, and establish us in it, so that we cannot be moved by any wind of doctrine; may he make us realize that he is our strength, our refuge, our worthiness, our all in all; may the peace of Christ dwell in our hearts, and in all we do and say may the name of Jesus be exalted.

Love and fellowship for you all, from your unworthy sister,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

ALLENTOWN, Pa., August 8, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR PASTOR:—The time has been long since I last wrote you, and now what shall I write? I fear that I cannot write of spiritual things, for what moisture or sustenance can be gotten from dry bones?

I was greatly pleased to see two dear ones from Hopewell last week. Before we realized it we were launched upon the theme we so dearly love, and time went on the wings of the wind. Of late I have been led to see the vast difference between salvation by grace and salvation by works. I hope that I am resting in the finished work of Christ, and not on

the arm of flesh, yet there are times when I must question my interest in these things, and whether I am not presumptuous in claiming an interest at all, and that I may be deceived in thinking I rest on Christ's work, when it may be nothing else than a fleshly indolence or indifference. I have a Methodist woman living with me at present, whose conversation (religiously) is a weariness to my soul. Outwardly she is by far a better woman than myself, and perhaps inwardly, too. I cannot judge that part, and who am I to judge another? Yet I know there is no fellowship between us; she limits the holy One of Israel, and says he has done all a God can do to save a dying world, and that he changes, too. Also that he sends his Spirit to every one of Adam's race, and that those who are unsaved resist his Spirit and will not comply with the conditions. She quotes Scripture to sustain her belief, which I can neither explain nor understand, yet I know it does not mean what she says. These passages are my comfort and belief: "My word shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." My dear brother, the God I love is of one mind, and none can turn him; he is almighty to save to the uttermost; he is worthy of all praise, and all honor is his due in heaven and in earth. I would worship him with all my powers, but I am so vile how can I do it? When I consider his holiness, his almightiness, I feel to say, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?" It seems strange to me that this woman, who is so good and conscientious, should prefer the writings of D. L. Moody, to the SIGNS which I love so dearly. Would not a child of God know the home language when heard?

I do not think my health has changed for the better since I saw you at the association. I realize that it is through much suffering the children of God are called home. I want his grace, that I may be patient in tribulation, and to glorify him in all that he sees fit to send upon me. I fully realize, too, that the flesh shrinks from suffering, however willing the spirit may be.

A letter from you would be much appreciated when you feel to write. Give my love to all the dear ones, not forgetting yourself.

Your sister, I hope,

MARY E. FISHER.

THOUGHTS ON AUTUMN.

ANOTHER autumn has come, it brings to our minds the many autumns that have gone before. The beautiful flowers fade away and return to their mother earth, the trees of the forest are divested of their beautiful mantle of green, the sweet voice of the lonely dove is silent: all this brings to my mind the words, "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but [bless God] the word of the Lord endureth forever."—1 Peter i. 24, 25. "The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more: thine eyes are upon me, and I am not. As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away; so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more. He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more."—Job vii. 8–10. Which reminds us of the fleeting years, and we are growing older, and the memory of happy days when our loved ones that have passed away and gone home is

with us; and they when with us cheered our hearts by their presence, sweet voices and kind deeds. When we call to mind that these loved ones will be here with us no more can we say, O, blessed Lord, thy will be done? Our earthly hopes bloom only to cheer us for a little while, and then pass away as the flying cloud; but our spiritual hope of blessed immortality cheers our drooping souls, and by faith we can view that rest that remains to the people of God. O, my soul, bless God, for his mercy endureth forever. When we meet in that house not made with hands but eternal in the heavens, we shall sing around the white throne of God, and join that great company that John saw, "Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them into living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."—Rev. vii. 14, 17. O thou wonderful counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of peace, glory and honor to thy blessed name forever and forever. Amen. Little children, love one another.

Your brother in hope,

A. R. McPHERSON.

JASPER, Arkansas.

AMANDA, Ohio, Aug. 21, 1905.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Find inclosed money order, for which please extend my time. We seem to live in a dark day. Ignorance, educated ignorance, prevails. Is not our condition set forth by the prophet Nehemiah (xiii. 23, 24)? "In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab: and their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people." When those tribes intermarried with each other no law of God was violated, for they were not under its special provisions as were the Jews. Coming to antitypical days we find a parallel, prophecy is being fulfilled, many shall depart from the faith, many sounds are in the world, lo heres and lo theres abound, divers languages are spoken, that of Ashdod is often heard. Let us be vigilant and always on the alert and mindful of the apostle's word, "Quit you like men, be strong." For you belong to an ancient family, your full history cannot be written without consulting the records of eternity. Altogether unlike the harlot daughters of Babylon whose pedigree dates back but a few hundred years at most. Why should we court the favor of so small a thing? Let Zion's breasts satisfy thee at all times, and be thou always ravished with her love. "And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?" Why carry on a commerce with the world contrary to God's law? You are entitled to the coin of the realm. O brethren, trade in that alone, for the merchandise of wisdom is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is head of no other body whatever. Therefore no man has a charter from Christ to organize or build up anything he pleases and call it by his name, nor conduct it in his name.

To conclude read Proverbs i., last verse particularly: "Whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil."

In hope, THOMAS COLE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1905.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

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EPHESIANS II. 1.

"AND you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."

There can be no weightier statement than this, nor one that more completely sets forth the nature of that work by which sinners come to know God indeed and in truth. The contrast between him that knows the Lord, and him that knows him not, cannot be more completely set forth than it is in these words. That contrast is implied everywhere in the word, and it is presented by many figures of speech, but here it is stated as broadly as it is possible for language to set it forth: on the one hand death, on the other hand life; on the one hand trespasses and sins, on the other righteousness and holiness; on the one hand alienation from God by reason of sin, on the other hand union and communion with God, by reason of the indwelling of his Holy Spirit. In the text, in short, men once dead are declared to be no longer dead, but alive to God.

Every word in the text is weighty and full of meaning. The personal pronoun "you," in the first place, needs to be considered. Who are embraced by this pronoun? The beginning of this letter shows that it means the saints at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus. We desire here to call attention to this, that the "saints" and the "faithful" are words describing the same persons. The saints at Ephesus are also the faithful in Christ Jesus at the same place. Let us notice the order of the two words, the "saints" first, a word signifying that work by which our God sets apart some men unto himself, and then the word "faithful," signifying that faith by which the saints, or the sanctified, enter into a personal realization of this sanctification, or of the fact that they are saints, chosen of God to that end. "Saints," first, and "faithful" afterward. The word "faithful" is no broader word so far as relates to the persons meant, than the word "saints."

It is not needful surely for us to say that this epistle, all of it, was directed to those persons who are thus called saints and faithful. Still further, it is not needful that we should do more than call attention to the fact that the things which are true of the saints in one age are also true of saints in all ages and in all places, so far as the work of God in salvation is concerned. Therefore the text belongs not only to those who then lived at Ephesus who had been called to be saints, but also to all who in every place did then call or should afterward call upon the name of the Lord. The pronoun "you" does not then mean all men everywhere, but saints and faithful brethren there and then, and everywhere, and in all time. These alone have any claim to the language of the text, or to the language of any part of this epistle, and, lest any humble, fearful-hearted saint should from this take ground for discouragement, we desire to add that if the things written in this letter of Paul are weighty in their minds, or contain that which they love, or describe the inmost thoughts and feelings of their hearts, so

they can say they have felt the same things that are here described, in this is full evidence that they are numbered among these saints, and that their names are indeed written in the book of life. If we may speak of the Scripture as, in one sense at least, the book of life in which their names are written, then their names are found there by finding the description of themselves recorded in the word. There is indeed in the word the literal name of John, or Peter, or Paul, recorded with an exact description of their thoughts and feelings, and of their travel of mind and heart as they journeyed along in their pilgrimage, but does Paul write in this epistle our very thoughts and feelings? Does he describe us, as we have found ourselves to be, sinful, vile, dead, and then as grace has caused us to be, living, loving God and hoping in his mercy? Here is then the record of our names also in the Lamb's book of life. Here may we confidently rest in hope and rejoice in the salvation of God.

Let us also notice that the language of the text is in the past: "And you hath he quickened." Lest some should call attention to the fact that the words "hath he quickened" are supplied words, we will call attention to the fact that in the fifth verse of this same chapter the same words (not supplied) are used, and are there also in the past tense. Beside, the very structure of the Greek language demands that these words should be understood, even were it not settled by the same words being found in verse five. So it is clear that Paul was not addressing those who might afterwards be quickened, but who yet were dead; he addresses the living. Many who were still dead in sins were yet among the elect of God, but they were not addressed, for the message is to the living in Jerusalem. These words, and this whole epistle would be fraught with wonderful meaning to those who had already experienced the life-giving power of God, but would be entirely without meaning to those yet dead in sins. How many children of God now can recall preaching or conversation which they heard while they were yet dead in their sins and the uncircumcision of their flesh, and which at the time seemed to them strange, and perhaps distasteful, but which they can recall, and it is to them now filled with life and power. All preaching and all writing of the things of grace must belong to the living, because the dead cannot know anything. It is vain to speak to the dead, but the living can and do hear and receive, and find a blessing in what they hear. All the letters of the New Testament were addressed to believers, and not one word in them was addressed to the dead in sins. The dead in sins are sometimes spoken of, but never are they spoken to.

The word which describes this wonderful work of God is the word "quickened." Of this word we desire to say, first of all, that the primary meaning is to give life. The word "quick" is used a few times in the New Testament, and it always signifies the living. The words "quicken" and "quickened" are used many times in the New Testament, and with perhaps one or two exceptions, they always mean to give or impart life. Yet, the word has a secondary meaning also, and that is to sustain a life already given, or to revive it. The word is used in the Old Testament frequently in this secondary sense. Psalms cxix. 25, 37, 40, 88, 107, 149, 156, 159, and some other places in other Psalms are examples of this secondary meaning of the word. In all these places, and in some others, we find prayer to God for quickening. Manifestly, had the

psalmist been dead in sins at that time no such prayer, and for that matter, no other prayer would have been found in his heart. But having been made alive from the dead, he could bemoan his stupidity, and coldness, and sluggishness, and thus could pray for more animation, more love, more enlargement of heart, more faith and zeal, more nearness to God, and more depth of vital godliness, to be realized day by day in his heart and lips and life. Still, as we have said, the primary meaning of "quicken," is to give life to that which was dead, and in nearly all instances where the word is used in the New Testament, it seems clear to us that the primary meaning of giving life to those who were dead, is intended. Even where the secondary meaning is used or intended, viz: that of reviving or renewing that which has become sluggish, the primary meaning is not excluded at all. One instance of the secondary meaning of the word "quicken," which yet does not exclude the primary meaning, is found in Romans viii. 11. This we wrote about some time ago, and so will not further comment upon it now. But in the text which stands at the head of this article there can be no question as to the meaning of the word, it is not figurative at all, but plain language, it states a literal fact: You hath he made alive from the dead, who were dead, and this takes in the whole man. The apostle does not say, A part of you hath he quickened, but, you. We must not single out any part, or any faculty of a man, and say this is quickened, and the rest is not. The word "you" means just what any of us would mean if we used the word. It means just what we should mean if we should say, you are a child of God, and you have right to all the ordinances of the house of God. Believers are made alive unto God, they are by the Spirit united to him and have fellowship with him, and with his Son Jesus Christ, and in this fellowship, and because of it, they have fellowship with each other. The life of Christ is made manifest in our mortal flesh. It is not made manifest as the light shines in a lantern, but as the bread which we eat is made manifest by giving us strength to rejoice and to labor. Our body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and we are the members of Christ, and we are, because of this, to glorify God in our body as well as in our spirit, for they both belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to us, not as the bread which we hold in our hands belongs to us, but as the bread belongs to us after we have eaten it and have been nourished by it. It is not only that Christ is in us the hope of glory, but in Christ we live, move and have our being.

We must not forget for a moment who is the author of this giving of life to the dead. God, our God and Savior, alone quickens. For this the psalmist prayed to God, who alone could revive the work which he had already begun, and this the word declares everywhere to be the work of God. Preaching of all kinds, whether it be in the way of holding up the law which condemns, or the gospel which presents salvation, or in the way of exhortation, can reach only the living, never the dead. Our God alone has life to give. Jesus is a quickening Spirit; men are quickened by him, but they do not become in their turn quickening spirits, they are only quickened men. How utterly vain and foolish is much that is called preaching in the world, when we have once come to know this one truth, that our God alone has life to impart to sinners. After this life is given, and the

man made alive by it, then preaching comes in for his benefit. Still it imparts nothing to him who is destitute, but it reveals to him who has been taught of God that such is the fact, by the testimony which it brings to his soul from the word of God. The preaching is for a witness, and it witnesses to a work already wrought, it gives evidence to him that is alive to God that he is living and not dead. Preaching can go no further than the life-giving power of God has already gone. We preach to all who will listen, but our preaching is a witness only to the living, and it witnesses what God hath wrought, and that this working has been felt in their hearts; here is the comfort of the ministry of the word.

These men were dead, and of this we desire to say first, that death never means non-existence. Men, some of them, use the word annihilation concerning the future state of some men, but the Bible knows no such thing, and uses no such word. Death signifies simply "separation." One is separated from one state of existence, and that means death to that state, but it does not signify that he is dead to another state of existence. When men are said to be dead to God, the meaning is that they are separated from God. When men are said to be dead in sins, it means that they are reveling in sin, that they rejoice in it, and in one sense, are living in it, the death is to righteousness and to God. When men are said to be dead to sin, it means that by grace they have come in heart and affection to hate it, and abhor its ways, and to turn from it as a dead body, loathsome and horrible to them; they are dead to its dominion from that moment, and it shall never reign over them again. As long as a man loves sin he is under its dominion. When he comes to hate it the dominion is forever broken, and he is separated from it, as that which rules in him and over him. Death never anywhere signifies cessation of all existence, it only means that one has ceased to exist or live in that state to which he has become dead. He that is dead to sin still lives unto God, he that is dead to God still lives unto sin, and in sin. Men die and go out of this life, but that does not signify that they have ceased to exist, or to live in some other state, they have only ceased to live in this world, and in this life. Death means, however, entire separation from that to which we are dead, and the text implies therefore, that natural men are entirely separated and alienated from God, and this is abundantly testified in all the Scriptures. But when God quickens the dead, they live unto him and are one with him, they can no longer live in sin, but find it to be that which indeed kills, sin can no longer have dominion over them, because they are under grace, and grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Natural men, unquickened men, have no thought toward God and holiness, sin has enslaved them in heart and in mind. There is nothing in the natural man that tends toward God or holiness, but in the living man, living by the power of Christ unto God, all his desire and hope and prayers are for God and holiness and heaven. Such as these, like Paul, lament because of the warfare which will not let them do what they desire; their chief trouble is the presence of sin; it perplexes and annoys them, but their joy is the word that it shall not have dominion over them. What a vast difference there is between a conquered rebel, and a conquering rebel. Sin once was conqueror over us, but now through Christ it is conquered, and never shall

reign again, either in or over us. We live unto God, and are dead indeed unto sin, and the apostle bids his brethren to so reckon concerning themselves.

We will close with a word concerning the difference between the word "trespasses" and the word "sins." Sin implies innate corruption, while trespasses imply the words and deeds which proceed from this innate corruption as from a fountain. Men are dead in the inward corruption of their nature, and they are dead in the works which are produced by this corruption within. In heart and life then, Paul means to say, men by nature were dead to God, but now in heart and life the saints, the faithful in Christ Jesus, are made alive to God. Thus they live unto him, thus they love him, and thus they do his will. God has wrought in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and now they work this inward work out, as a man's strong right arm manifests its strength. The innate strength prompts to labor, and the labor manifests the strength.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Salisbury, Md., Oct. 18th, 19th and 20th, 1905, to the several associations and meetings with whom we correspond, sends love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We trust that our hearts are filled with love and gratitude to him from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, for the inestimable blessing wherewith we have been blessed at this time of our assembling together in the one hundred and twenty-third session of this association. We have been favored with the attendance of a goodly number of ministers, who have surely come to us in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, not with excellency of speech, or enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power; not as having dominion over our faith, but as helpers of our joy. The preaching has been of one accord, not a discordant sound; Jesus and the resurrection, the absolute sovereignty and power of the eternal God, has been the unbroken theme from beginning to end. We feel that we have been greatly strengthened and built up in the faith, and thank God and take courage to continue our pilgrimage.

Our next session has been appointed to be held with the church at Messongoes, Accomac Co., Va., Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1906, and the two following days, when and where we hope to greet and welcome your messengers, and hear of your affairs.

S. H. DURAND, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
GEO. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905, &c.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. John Pettit, N. Y., $3.00; W. O. Rathbun, Conn., $3.00.—Total, $6.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Silas H. Durand, Nov. 2nd, 1905, at the home of the bride's aunt, Miss Mary B. Opdike, in Warminster, Bucks Co., Pa., Theodore Hogeland, of Deerfield, Montana, and Miss Emma E. Finney.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon Benjamin C. Cubbage, of the Cow Marsh Baptist Church, in Kent Co., Del., departed this mortal life August 23rd, 1905. He was born of Baptist parents Sept. 30th, 1832. Our dear brother was endowed with an admirable and lovely disposition, that beautifully characterized all his deportment through life, leaving a cherished memory as an inestimable legacy to his children and numerous relatives and friends. Such was the esteem in which he was held that much of the time in the vigor of his life he was kept in public positions of trust and confidence. In early life he married Elizabeth Meredith, who was a faithful companion with him both in their home and in the church until the Lord called her to her upper and glorious home June 10th, 1897. He was stricken with paralysis in May, 1899, from which he partially rallied, and was able to attend the meetings of the church and participate in our worship. In May, 1902, he met with a fall, in which his thigh was broken and his life despaired of, but the Lord raised him up again, and he continued to meet with us and enjoy his church privileges until he was called to his upper and better home. He was highly gifted as a deacon in the church, and was truly what may well be appreciated, a home or fireside preacher. As a deacon he was found faithful, purchasing to himself a good degree and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. In the year 1858 he was led by the Spirit of Christ to seek a home in the church, where he related a good and satisfactory experience, and on July 4th, 1858, he was baptized in the fellowship of the Cow Marsh church by Elder E. Rittenhouse, where he retained his membership and sweet fellowship until his decease. Many of the ministers and brethren who read this will remember his christian hospitality and devotion to the welfare of Zion, for he always sought first the things of the kingdom, and he received his reward, being blessed in the deed. He attended the yearly meeting of the Bryn Zion church on the 19th and 20th of August, going by carriage twenty miles. On the 21st he drove several miles to visit his nephew, Deacon Willard F. Cubbage, where on the 22nd he was taken ill and lapsed into a state of coma, in which he remained until the final change came. In all his affliction and suffering he was always spiritually humble and submissive to our heavenly Father's will. He leaves two daughters and four sons to realize their loss, but he also leaves to them a sweet and precious memory to countervail their sorrow. The children are sister Emily Cubbage, who was his constant companion; Mrs. Mary Hastings, wife of brother Thos. Hastings, of Delmar, Del.; Alfred and Calvin Cubbage, regular attendants with the Salem church in Philadelphia, Pa.; Deacon Samuel T. Cubbage, M. D., and Elder Benj. E. Cubbage, of the Cow Marsh church.

The funeral was largely attended from his home, where Elder J. G. Eubanks spoke in prayer and feeling remarks. From the home we proceeded to the Cow Marsh meeting-house, where the writer of this memento of affection sorrowfully tried to comfort the bereaved from 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." After the service the remains of our dear brother were carried out into the churchyard by his four sons and two of his nephews, and gently laid away to rest beside the grave of his companion.

W. W. MEREDITH.

Ellen F. Martin Startzman was born in Bedford Co., Pa., June 10th, 1829. She was married to Nathaniel Startzman April 19th, 1849, in Clark Co., Va. In 1859 they moved from Virginia to Dover, Lafayette Co., Mo., where they remained until 1863; afterward they secured a home in Delphi, Ind. She united with the Old School Baptist church called Paint Creek, in Carroll Co., Ind., in 1873, and was a faithful, exemplary member. In June, 1886, they returned to Dover, Mo., and there she united by letter with the church called Sinabar, in Lafayette, Co., Mo., and until her death, Oct. 14th, 1905, continued her membership there. She was ever ready to give a reason of her hope, and humbly admonished those with whom she associated with reference to the order and practice of the church. She was truly a mother in Israel. Few indeed were gifted as she in the knowledge of the truth. Four children were born to them. Her husband, one daughter and two sons (the oldest the late Elder Wm. M. Startzman) preceded her in death. She rests from her labors, and her works do follow her. In her life she exemplified the beauty and hope of her trust, and has quietly passed away to enjoy its rich fruition. She leaves one son and one brother, Wm. H. Martin, of Delaplane, Va., with many others to mourn her departure.

ALSO,

In humble submission to God's will I send this tribute to the memory of my dear husband, **Elder William M. Startzman,** who was born Feb. 18th, 1850, at Summit Point, Va., and married Sept. 28th, 1875, at Bloomington, Ill., to Miss Cornelia M. Bowen, and died at his home in Blue Springs, Mo., July 20th, 1905. He united with the Old School Baptist Church called Salem, at Cutler, Carroll Co., Ind., and was baptized by Elder David Bartley in 1884. Soon after he moved to Lafayette Co., Mo., and by letter united with the Sinabar church of the same precious faith and order, which in 1892 ordained him to the full work of the ministry, and called him to serve them as pastor the same year, which place he filled until the time

of his death, beloved and warmly appreciated by that little flock. At different times he served other churches at home and abroad. The last sermon he preached, the Sunday before he died, was from Psalms lxvi. 16: "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." He was well versed in the Scriptures, a constant Bible reader and a firm believer in the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, believing firmly that election and predestination of all things were Bible truths, and he steadfastly adhered to the old landmarks laid down in the Scriptures of truth, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and died a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, unmixed with any works of human origin. His life was a worthy example for all, either as a christian or a citizen. His widow and six children survive him.

Elder W. T. Brown, of Richmond, Mo., conducted the funeral services Saturday, July 22nd, 1905, using for a text Psalms cxvi. 15: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

NELIA M. STARTZMAN.

BLUE SPRINGS, Mo.

Mrs. S. F. Adams was born in Newton Co., Ga., Jan. 5th, 1833, and was married to the late Elder Wm. Adams Feb. 27th, 1849. Together they united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Harris Springs Dec. 15th, 1855, where they remained consistent members until death. To them were born sixteen children, ten sons and six daughters. Two daughters died in infancy, and the seventh son died a few years ago at the age of about thirty-two years. Thirteen still survive, and were present with her in her last illness and gave all the comfort in their power. If one were absent she would seem to realize it, and would ask when he or she would return. It appeared as though she thought that each one could bear a part of the pangs of death. She died Feb. 25th, 1905, at her home in Newton Co., and on the day following her funeral was preached at the family burying ground by her pastor, Elder J. T. Jordan, in the presence of a great number of sorrowing friends and relatives. Of all heroes and patriots that have achieved fame and honor on the battlefield, or in the intricate affairs of nations, none deserve more credit than such a wife and such a mother as was the subject of this notice. As I look back and remember her unselfish deeds and the many sacrifices which she so uncomplainingly made, I realize that her worth was never known while she lived. I do not remember ever hearing her complain of having a hard time, or that hers was a hard lot, rather counting her blessings, often saying they were greater than she deserved, and expressing a fear that she was not a child of God because she had so few trials. Her trouble in this was that she had so little trouble. A few days before her death, several of the children being present she talked freely of her experience in rearing so large a family. This gave each one present an opportunity to confess many of our trespasses and acts of disobedience, many of which had given me much pain. But greatly to my surprise she did not even remember the worst ones. Such was and is the love of a good mother.

Her son, D. J. ADAMS.

COVINGTON, Ga., Oct. 30, 1905.

Deborah A. Corwin, widow of Joshua P. Corwin, was born March 30th, 1820, and entered into eternal rest, through the merits of Jesus Christ, Sept. 7th, 1905. Sister Corwin was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at New Vernon, Sullivan Co., N. Y., many years ago, by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, of which church she remained a steadfast and consistent member to the end of her earthly pilgrimage. She was left a widow in 1864, with a family of children to care for and instruct in honest and upright principles, which duties she performed faithfully and well. Four children survive her: Silas, Mrs. Susan Reed, Mrs. Harriet Ketchum and Deborah; also ten grandchildren. Sister Corwin had many trials and deep afflictions, but God's grace was sufficient for her, and she "endured, as seeing him who is invisible." She was well indoctrinated, familiar with the Scriptures, and had a good understanding of them. It was her delight to hear the gospel preached, and to join in singing the songs of Zion. Her brethren and friends were always gladly received and made to feel at home in her house. She had been afflicted many years with rheumatism, in consequence of which she seldom left home. The immediate cause of her death was paralysis, with which she was stricken several weeks before she passed away. She was perfectly composed and ready to depart. She selected the text for her funeral discourse: Phil i. 23. Many paid their last tribute of respect. The writer served at the funeral with such ability as God gave. The interment was in the New Vernon cemetery.

May the sure mercies of David attend all who mourn.

H. C. KER.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

MY father, **A. W. Bristow,** departed this life on Friday, Oct. 6th, 1905, at the ripe age of 89 years. Since the beginning of the SIGNS he has read it and never wavered in the faith of the Predestinarian Baptists from the time he united with the church, in the twenty-second year of his age. Having been deprived of hearing preaching, the SIGNS and his Bible have been sources of untold comfort to him for a number of years. He retained his mental faculties to the last, and read and enjoyed everything.

NANNIE D. BRISTOW.

UNION, Ky., Oct. 10, 1905.

MEETINGS.

ELDER Carnell, of Dutton, Canada, will preach in Hall, 42 Gratiot Ave., second floor, on the fourth Thursday in each month, at 7:45 p. m.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 73. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1905. NO. 23.

POETRY.

HE CARETH.

"WHAT can it mean? is it aught to him
That the nights are long and the days are dim?
Can he be touched by the grief I bear,
Which saddens the heart and whitens the hair?
About his throne are eternal calms,
And the strong, glad music of happy psalms,
And bliss unruffled by any strife;
How can he care for my little life?

And yet I want him to care for me,
While I live in this world where sorrows be;
When the lights die down from the path I take,
When strength is feeble and friends forsake,
When love and music that once did bless,
Have left me to silence and loneliness,
And my lifesong changes to sobbing prayers,
Then my heart cries out for a God who cares.

O wonderful story of deathless love,
Each child is dear to that heart above;
He fights for me when I cannot fight,
He comforts me in the gloom of night,
He stills the sigh and awakes the song;
The sorrow that bows me down he bears,
And loves and pardons because he cares.

Let all who are sad take heart again,
We are not alone in our hours of pain,
Our Father stoops from his throne above
To soothe and quiet us with his love;
He leaves us not when the storm is high,
And we have safety, for he is nigh.
Can it be trouble which he doth share?
O rest in peace, for the Lord will care."

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE POWER OF GOD—THE WEAKNESS OF MAN.

"FOR there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." This is the central truth concerning God and all power, and he inspired and moved his chosen servant Paul to write it. With all Scripture it was written for our learning, for instruction in righteousness. This truth of God is absolute, unlimited and universal; it includes all power, authority and dominion in all places, all things and all creatures, in all the limitless universe of God. In all boundless space, wherever any being, creature or thing is, whether animate or inanimate, earth, sun, moon or stars, man or beast, spirit, angel or devil, God is there and everywhere, the omnipotent Creator of all. Nothing, either great or small, could exist without God.

"The powers that be are ordained of God." Paul said this of the wicked and oppressive Roman powers or rulers. So Paul quotes what God said to the wicked ruler, Pharaoh: "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that

my name might be declared throughout all the earth." This purpose of God in raising up this heathen king was fulfilled, and the just and awful majesty of God was declared. So it will be declared in his supreme power and dominion over all the world, and his righteous judgments against all ungodly and wicked rulers. The psalmist therefore says, "For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another." Solomon also said, "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." King David recognized this truth in his prayer, saying, "Arise, O Lord, disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword: from men which are thy hand, O Lord, from men of the world, which have their portion in this life." When Pilate threatened Jesus with his power to either crucify or release him, the God-honoring answer was, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." This establishes the text: "There is no power but of God." In this truth is the protection and safety of every child of God. Satan could not kill Job, neither could Joseph's brethren in their hate kill him. Were it possible for the wicked to go beyond the power of God, who restrains the remainder of their wrath, then they might obstruct, overthrow or defeat God in all his holy and eternal purpose, and the people of his love and choice could have no sure refuge anywhere. But in personifying Christ and all his members, David most truly says, "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." More than once the disciples must have perished in the stormy sea, had not the right hand of the Lord been there to hold them up and save them. In all those instances, and in every event of God's providence, both his absolute power is made known, and also the utter weakness of man, yea, of all men; as well the weakness of his people to save themselves, as the weakness of their foes to destroy them. The almighty power of God is over all, and it limits, bounds and controls all, above, beneath, in all times and places. In full evidence of this immutable truth, when the Son of God walked among men, an humble youth, all creatures and things, men and devils, winds and seas, diseases and deaths, all were absolutely subject to the word of his power; yea, not a secret thought could arise in the mind of friend or foe, but what he knew it and restrained its outbreak. Until he said, "Go," the devils could not go into the herd of swine. Until God, who sent his Son into the world, delivered him by his determinate counsel and foreknowledge, wicked hands could not take him and crucify him. When the hour of victory had come, and the buried Christ must be declared to be the Son of God with power, it was impossible that he should be holden of death. When he said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore," neither the Jews nor the Romans, persecutions, prisons nor perils, could stop his servants from going nor defeat his word, for his people were willing in the day of his power. It has ever been so since. With men all this is impossible, but not with God, "For with God nothing shall be impossible," said his holy child Jesus. But the sinful presumption of weak and foolish man is to limit the power of the Almighty, which they do in many ways.

In their littleness men have the pride and arrogance to also assume to be wiser and more holy than God upon his throne of holiness, just because he is omnipotent in power. They would rob the Almighty of his almightiness, deny to him unlimited power and absolute dominion and control. On what pretense do they do this? Their pretext is, that it makes the just and holy One the author of all sin and wickedness. But who or what are they, that they would put themselves in God's stead, and sit upon his throne in judgment against him? "Who art thou that repliest against God?" Weak and sinful, blinded and ignorant are all they who do this. Those who love and fear God will not so reply against him. All who do so thereby manifest their irreconciliation and enmity against the absolute or unlimited sovereignty of God. The deep depravity of the carnal mind of man radically consists in this enmity and irreconciliation to the supreme One, Creator and Ruler of all, and out of this bitter fountain arises all the religions of the world that would limit God in his absolute attributes, and divide the power between the Almighty and men and devils. They would thus deny to God his eternal power and Godhead, and rob him of his Deity and crown of power. The only object men claim in this is, that in the dispensations of God's government, both in his grace and providence, very much is left outside of his counsel and determined purpose, and is left to take place one way, or some other way, or not at all, according to the will and power of man, and that very many things are therefore uncertain, and are conditional on the part of man, both in temporal and spiritual things. Out of this claim springs all the doctrine of conditionalism and man's agency in salvation, which are very popular, and accepted in all the religious world. The small remnant who hold that "there is no power but of God," and cling to the faith that "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth," are rejected of men.

But let us again turn to the testimony of God, and first, his beloved Son: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do." "The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." To Paul the Lord said, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." The weakness was in Paul, but the power was in the Lord and his grace; and what was true in Paul is also true in every servant of Christ. As a man Christ was crucified through weakness, but now he liveth by the power of God. "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell." "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." This fullness includes all grace and salvation, might and majesty, dominion and power. The word therefore says, "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders which

sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshiped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned." "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen." With the four beasts all who truly worship God unite in saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." Thus all who worship the Father in spirit and in truth, with one joyful Amen ascribe all power and all holiness unto God and the Lamb for ever.

Let us now hear what God himself says, both of himself and of all mankind: "It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in, that bringeth the princes to nothing; he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity. Yea, they shall not be planted; yea, they shall not be sown; yea, their stock shall not take root in the earth: and he shall also blow upon them, and they shall wither, and the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble. To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth. Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that hath no might he increaseth strength." "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor, hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding? Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity. To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?"—Isaiah xl. 12–18.

This majestic language of our holy Lord God Almighty should forever rebuke and silence all men who would find fault with the holy One, or limit him in power and might and dominion, or claim any power of themselves, when all the nations of earth are counted less than nothing in his sight. The patriarchs and prophets and holy men of old, who were taught of God, confessed to the truth of this judgment that he has placed upon all men, and testified to their own vileness and weakness and vanity. They

said, "Man at his best state is altogether vanity." Every truly humble, reverential, God-fearing one feels and confesses this truth. They all unitedly join with the heavenly host, who have the harps of God, "And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest."

Submitted in the love and fear and honor of God.

D. BARTLEY.

AUGUST 9, 1905.

CARMEN, Okla., July 13, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—I have thought much about those of God's people who are scattered throughout the different States and Territories, and more especially those of you, dear children of God, who are separated from your kindred and who have not the privilege of meeting your brethren in the public worship of God. But you have the SIGNS to read, which brings you glad tidings as from a far country; and there are times in your pilgrimage when you are made to rejoice in your souls because your minds are led to consider the goodness and mercy of God. Though you are made to feel at times as though the good Lord had forgotten you, and that he would be merciful no more, yet you are not destroyed though many times cast down, and when in despondency the Scriptures have been a comfort to you and a light to your feet, does not the Lord in mercy move your hearts to consider his testimony? Even to be able to read the testimony of God's word with understanding is a precious grace and comes from the Fountain of light. Consider the question, dear people, What would be your condition if you were deprived of the blessed privilege of reading the Scriptures of truth? Would you not be as one in the dark without a guide? You are evidently blessed of God, because your experience agrees with patriarchs and prophets and holy men of old, who were counted worthy to suffer many things for the cause of truth. How do we know of the experience of the men and women of old, which tells of their fiery trials, their sufferings in the flesh, and their sorrows of mind and in spirit, as well as of their prosperity in this life and their rejoicing in the Spirit, save as we find them recorded in the testimony of the holy word? What a treasure we possess in having a sure record of Jesus and his people. Jesus said to the pharisees, "Search the Scriptures," and declared that they should find them to differ from what they supposed them to teach. Instead of giving life, they simply bare testimony of him who is the life of his people, the Son of God. These pharisees were just like many wise men since that day and to-day; they were ever learning, and were never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Their hearts had never been searched by the Spirit of God, else they would have seen the way that leads from death to life. If they had been able to search and find, then they might have been able to say with the apostle through this experience, "And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death." This rule or law spoken of is unchangeable, but is only seen properly by the quickened sinner, the heir of God. The apostle, in common with all saints, was led to trust in him in whom the law was

completely fulfilled for every heir of promise. This commandment of which the apostle speaks was not ordained to life really, it was only as Saul of Tarsus looked upon it, but when the revelation of it came to him, and he saw it by the Spirit which searches all things, yea, the deep things of God, he found it to be unto death. He assuredly was one pharisee who was searched by the Spirit, and was enabled to do just as Jesus commanded, viz: "Search the Scriptures." Darkness was made light before him and he was made to rejoice, just as all God's people are when the darkness is made light to them. This experience can never be forgotten, it may be blurred by the lusts of the flesh, or set aside by human reason, but it shall ever remain that faith which was once delivered to the saints. No doubt this is the cause of your grief, dear children of God, you cannot forget your sins as they were once shown you, and the same mercy which appeared in your behalf so free, full and complete that it almost dazzled your senses by the overwhelming power of the revelation, appears again to you; it was true that your eyes had not seen, your ears had not heard, and it had not entered into your heart, the things which the Lord had prepared for you. How good the Lord is to his people. But by a simple stroke of revelation the knowledge of all this comes to you in power, in much assurance, and in faith. Now about this time perhaps you look to the testimony of the word of God; in this testimony you find a grand center, around which all other things are in subjection; you then are permitted to see from the Scriptures themselves that there is One who is chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely.

What a true and good blessing the saints have in this land and time of ours, to be in possession of the Scriptures of truth, which are confirming evidence to them of an interest in the finished work of the glorious Redeemer. It confirms them in the doctrine of the salvation of sinners by the grace of God alone, without any aid from man, or from any other human source. It makes them wise unto salvation, and causes them to be bold in the cause of truth as it is in Jesus. The Lord by his hand, called providence, gave us this record by which all things are to be measured in our worship of the mighty God, the everlasting Father.

Dear brethren, these lines are hastily written, if they, according to your judgment, will be of any use to the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, you may use them, if not, lay them away.

Yours in hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

[THE people of God have, among other things, been distinguished from all other professed religionists in all ages by the fact that they demand a "thus saith the Lord" from the written Scriptures for all that is laid before them to be believed or practiced. This is, and has always been, the law and the testimony to which they have come, it is a precious treasure indeed, which has been given them from the Lord of glory. To this literal word all our thoughts and experiences must be brought and tested. All men have experiences, but the question is, Of what sort are they? Whether they be of God, or of man, or of the evil one, can only be known by the written word. The saints at Berea were more noble than some others because they did search the Scriptures daily to see whether that which was preached among them by the evangelists was true. Brother Beeman has here called attention to a most solemn truth; it is good to be reminded of it.—ED.]

SHELBYVILLE, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—The inclosed letter from Elder May seems too good to file away, therefore I submit it to you for publication.

Your associations are now passing one by one, and the sessions of this year will soon be recorded in memory. I have thought of the several meetings often; hope they have been both pleasant and profitable unto the brethren, and that peace, love and fellowship hath abounded.

With love to you and yours,

P. W. SAWIN.

PINSONFORK, Ky., April 23, 1905.

ELDER P. W. SAWIN—MUCH ESTEEMED IN THE LORD:—I am at home this fourth (Easter) Sunday, and am thinking of you so much that I have decided to write you once more, although I have often thought that I never would write again, for I am so weak, vile and sinful that I sometimes feel it is a sin for me to write to any of the Lord's blessed family, or even to talk to or with them of the mercies and goodness of God, and yet they are the very ones I long the most to see. How can these things be? I can readily adopt the language of Job, and say, "My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust; my skin is broken, and become loathsome. My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope." —Job vii. 5, 6. In years that are gone by I had it in my mind that if I were not deceived, but was a subject of God's grace, I would get better and better, and would almost or quite know that I was a child of God, and would do but little or no wrong. This is a little of the way I had mapped out that I would live, but alas, my hope is utterly blasted, and as the years go by, and as my sinking sun is setting fast, I can truly say, "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope," that is, without hope of ever being any better here on time's side of eternity. My purposes are broken, my way is hedged in, the Lord has led me into darkness, and not into light, as I had hoped and imagined; I am led in a way I knew not, I am a stranger and a sojourner in a land of great drought, a desert land, a waste howling wilderness, where I must wander round and round without any hope of ever being better, wiser, or seeing my way any clearer, for I have learned by sad experience that "In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing."

Well, Elder Sawin, I have written thus far entirely different to what I had intended. I was not thinking of these things when I sat down to write you, but had in mind to suggest a few thoughts on the language of Adam, which reads as follows: "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid." "And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?" I have thought this penetrating and searching question enters the soul of every one of the Lord's redeemed people at God's appointed time, "Where art thou?" Then is the poor sinner brought to see where he is, he realizes his lost condition; he hears the voice of the Lord and is afraid. This fear of God in the heart is the beginning of wisdom, and with wisdom comes grief also, trouble begins, fear and trembling to him who has heard the voice of the Lord God. I very well remember the evening that I heard the voice of the Lord, if I was not deceived, and that was a little over forty-three years ago, and O how afraid I was. I had some fears in bygone days, but never such fear as I then had. I never knew until

then that I was naked, entirely destitute and depraved, having no hope, and without God in the world. I needed no preacher to tell me I was a lost and ruined sinner, justly condemned; neither did I have to read the Bible to learn it, but that still small, yet all-powerful voice of the Lord God convinced me that I was a sinner, a poor, wretched, naked sinner, condemned by God's righteous law; "I was afraid," and I am yet afraid.

"I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

I must believe that all quickened sinners are afraid; they are unconscious of their condition until quickened or made alive, made to hear the voice of the Son of God; they are dead in trespasses and sins. After the Lord quickens them, or causes his glorious voice to be heard, they are yet sinners, but they are conscious sinners; they are poor, trembling sinners, therefore their sins trouble them. It is the living that are troubled, it is the living that are afraid: those that have heard the voice of the Lord. These characters all desire to hide themselves, for they are justly condemned; "the dead know not anything." There is much about this text that is too wonderful for me, it is exceeding deep, therefore I must not try to speak of it. Yet I sometimes feel that I can embrace it and rejoice and be exceeding glad in God my Savior. "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid." That is, in the inward man, experimentally. The apostle Paul in relating his experience said of those who were with him, They indeed saw the light, "but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me." I do not know to my satisfaction that I am a subject of grace, but there is one thing I do know, and that is, I am afraid the most of my time, and yet I do not know that my fear arises from hearing the voice of the Lord; therefore I am a poor, trembling, doubting creature, and shall be while I sojourn here, I believe.

Dear brother Sawin, I have written much more than I had any idea of when I began, and out of a deep, heart-felt sense of my weakness and sinfulness. I am afraid it will burden you, I cannot see in it any comfort for such an one as I deem you; you seem to me to be on the sunny side, and O how pleasant it is to behold the sunshine of his love.

I see no place to stop, but I must. Remember me to the brotherhood, and to your dear family, Franklin and your saintly mother included. I hope to hear from you at once. Pardon me for such a long, dry and wearisome letter, but of course it is like myself; how could it be better?

Yours in gospel bonds,

W. J. MAY.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

"AND am I blest with Jesus' love?
And shall I dwell with him above?
And will the joyful period come
When I shall call the heavens my home?
Think, O my soul, what must it be,
A world of glorious minds to see:
Drink at the fountain-head of peace,
And bathe in everlasting bliss!

To hear them all at once proclaim
Eternal glories to the Lamb,
And join, with joyful heart and tongue,
That new and never-ending song!
And does the happy hour draw near
When Christ will in the clouds appear,
And I without a veil shall see
The God, the Man that bled for me?

If in my soul such joy abounds,
While weeping faith explores his wounds,
How glorious will those scars appear
When perfect bliss forbids a tear!
Think, O my soul, if 'tis so sweet
On earth to sit at Jesus' feet,
What must it be to wear a crown,
And sit with Jesus on his throne."

A little while ago I sat musing, and

the words I have just penned flowed into my mind, and I found them to be both soothing and animating. O, I find I am one much in need of grace and consolation. I speak for myself, shall I speak also for you? Look which way we will, go where we may, whatever our lot, all of it, without those consolations that flow from the dear Savior, is unsatisfying, we are burdened, and find in the end it all to be vanity and vexation of spirit. Without Christ all is a wilderness. How is this? Multitudes all around us have no such ideas, but come to conclusions far different. They find all they crave in the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. (1 John ii. 16.) But from what cause is it that we are sometimes saying,

"How tedious and tasteless the hours
When Jesus no longer I see"?

It is founded in this sacred fact: "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."—John xvii. 14. The Lord by his divine work in our souls has separated us unto himself. (Psalms iv. 3.) The Holy Spirit has begotten in us cravings after that which the earth can never afford us. We find within us yearnings after holiness, we thirst for God, for the living God. Our heart in its throbbings says, O to know God, to know Jesus, that is, to know his tender compassion, forgiveness, friendship. These things are not airy nothings, castles in the air; O no, we say they are divine realities, more to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold, sweeter also than the honey and the honeycomb. How do we know? We have tasted that the Lord is gracious, (1 Peter ii. 3,) we have had a sip of God's goodness in Christ Jesus, and this so far exceeds all other blessedness that it has become the one and only thing that fully satisfies. "We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thine holy temple." "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." Are we not conscious of having in us a nature capable of taking in all the vanities of earth? I am deeply conscious of it, and this I confess, that but for God's almighty preserving grace I should greedily pursue after all fleshly gratifications. Yet, notwithstanding all this (let me declare a divine mystery):

"I thirst, but not as once I did,
The vain delights of earth to share;
Thy wounds, Emmanuel, all forbid
That I should seek my pleasures there.

It was the sight of thy dear cross
First weaned my soul from earthly things,
And taught me to esteem as dross
The mirth of fools and pomp of kings."

It is, dear kindred in Christ Jesus, that divine work of God's grace in our souls that sanctifies us unto God, and now we no longer wander as enemies and aliens, but he has put his fear in our hearts, he has begotten in us hungerings and thirstings after righteousness, he has moved us with affectionate longings after the knowledge of his truth, we desire to know God and his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, whom to know is life eternal, and thus we are found turning from transgression, (Isaiah lix. 20,) striving against sin, (Heb. xii. 4,) warring a good warfare, laying hold on eternal life. (1 Tim. vi. 12.) He that hath wrought us (2 Cor. v. 5,) and formed us (Isaiah xliii. 21,) to know and to worship himself, hath done it all according to the good pleasure of his will; it is according to the eternal purpose that he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his

grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. O the riches of God's grace! "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" Our soul revolts at such a thought, and exclaims, God forbid. We cry to the Lord to keep us from evil, we sigh and grieve over the evils of our sinful hearts, and draw back with a shudder lest we should fall into outward iniquity. O Lord, hold thou me up and I shall be safe. We are surely taught of God to mortify our members which are upon the earth, and the evidence of our being Christ's is that we have crucified the flesh with the affections and the lusts. (Gal. v. 24.) O abundance of grace is daily needed that we may fight the good fight of faith, and in very truth be found crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts. Ah, poor, sinful, weak and wretched me; instead of the affections and lusts of the flesh being nailed to the cross, where I have crucified them, and would have them crucified, they appear to have come down from the cross, to be walking abroad throughout the land, uncontrolled, committing all manner of depredations, ravaging and making havoc in all the regions of my soul, devouring, like wild beasts, all my peace and comfort and hope in Christ Jesus, intruding and marring all spiritual meditation, interfering with and endeavoring to bring to an end all worship of and communion with the everlasting God. How humiliating is the knowledge of our sinfulness! At times I am astonished and confounded at the horrible and hateful émotions working within me. Ah, so depraved is our flesh. The Scriptures declare man's heart to be "desperately wicked."—Jer. xvii. 9. All unholy passions dwell there, and if by the grace of God working in us they are not arrested, subdued, mortified, and like vile malefactors crucified, nailed to the cross, they will be lively, and with a high hand be found ravaging the land, intruding into, polluting and laying waste all our life. O every day there are lusts of our flesh springing up that need to be quelled and crucified, and our sin-grieved hearts say, Let all iniquity be execrated, accursed, mortified, crucified and slain. Yes, at times we sigh for the time when sins and temptations shall vex us no more, but we shall be like our ascended and glorified Redeemer, for we shall see him as he is. (1 John iii. 2.)

"When that happy era begins,
When arrayed in thy glories I shine,
Nor grieve any more by my sins
The bosom on which I recline,
O then shall the veil be removed,
And round me thy brightness be poured,
I shall meet him whom absent I loved,
I shall see whom unseen I adored.

And then never more shall the fears
And trials, temptations and woes,
Which darken this valley of tears,
Intrude on my blissful abode.
Thus the stroke which from sin and from pain
Shall set me eternally free,
Will but strengthen and rivet the chain
Which binds me, my Savior, to thee."

Sweet anticipation, blessed hope.

I am, I hope, your brother in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

CAVENDISH, Idaho, Sept. 10, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR FRIEND:—Inclosed you will find the narrative of christian experience of a young friend, which we received. I would like to see it published in the SIGNS if it meets with your approval.

B. B. MATTHEW.

WINONA, Wash., July 17, 1905.

MR. AND MRS. B. B. MATTHEW—DEARLY LOVED FRIENDS:—At your request, and also that of brother A. G. Jones, I

will make an attempt to write what have been the dealings of the Lord with me.

I was only a child when it pleased the almighty and all-wise Creator to show me my sinful condition, how utterly vile, wicked and impure I was, it seemed to me that it was a sin for me even to breathe; it was during my thirteenth year that all this was revealed to me. I was reading the experience of Emma Hines, and while reading her confession of her great sinfulness, I thought how awful it must have been to feel like that. Immediately the words, And you are even worse than she felt herself to be, yet it does not trouble you much, were spoken to my soul. O what anguish and terror filled my whole being, for I felt that my sins were so great that I was entirely shut out of the beautiful heaven that I had from early childhood dreamed about and hoped for. In my great desolation, my mind was turned to Christ as my only hope. I was directed by some unknown hand to pray, and to ask the divine Jesus for help and deliverance. But when I attempted to pray, I felt that it was utterly impossible for poor, weak, helpless and sinful me to approach, even in thought, the great, pure and sublime Being, who is the Savior. After many tears, fears and sufferings that are inexpressible, I was enabled by the help of God to say, Have mercy on me, a poor, lost and helpless sinner. But even when I was enabled to ask for help, the certainty that I was too great a sinner to be pardoned was ever before me and uppermost in my mind, until in reading the Bible one day, I read, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." And again, the words of the Savior, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." I felt that there was surely hope for me, for my sins were as scarlet, and I was indeed poor in spirit. Then came a new trouble, that of doing my duty in being baptized, and telling of my deliverance, and of my newly found Savior. I loved the Old School Baptists and longed to be with them, but they seemed so much better than I, that I could not offer myself to them; my doubts, and my knowledge of my great unworthiness, held me back. I would look at my mother, whom I knew rejoiced in the Savior and in a hope of eternal life, and who yet could not feel worthy of a place among that dear people, and think, If she is unworthy, I can never be one of them. I often wished when the opportunity was given that she would go forward, for I felt that I could go with her. Last August my mother made known her desire to be baptized, and Elder Showalter, the pastor of the church to which father belonged, was sent for, and on Sunday, August 28th, a few relatives and friends met with us at the river. While they were singing, I went with fear and trembling and offered myself to the dear people that I so much love, and the next moment was aware that my sister Florence was by my side. O the joy that filled my soul to know that she, too, was one of God's little ones, and that my prayer had been answered, for I had always wished that we could be baptized at the same time. It was indeed a joyful moment to me, when my dear father took me in his arms and cried out, "O the mercy of God to a poor sinner." We were all three baptized that evening, and what a great comfort and blessing it was to feel the restful peace which obedience brought to the soul. Through it all, both joys and sorrows, it has been the dear Savior who has led me in paths I had not known, which are always for the best. O what a great bless-

ing to know that our heavenly Father will be with us through fiery trials and deep waters, and that he will not forsake us, no, not for a moment, and that he will be with us in that great and trying hour when we shall pass through the valley of the shadow of death. I am made to feel and to say, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want."

I have written more than I expected when I began, but hope it will not tire you. Desiring an interest in your prayers, I remain your friend,

EFFIE ATTEBERY.

WILMER, Ark., July 10, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—While we may not see just alike in all things, when we come to the fundamental principles of the doctrine of God our Savior, we are taught in the record of truth, which came through the divine pen of inspiration, that all the children of God shall be taught of the Lord, that they shall see eye to eye, and shall speak the same things. In Deuteronomy we also read, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb." I believe that we can all clasp hands and agree and fully believe in the supreme government of our Savior, and in the command, when he said, "Love one another." Why should we love one another? Not for the sake of worldly emulation or aggrandizement, not for the vanities or frivolities of this vain world, not for what some are pleased to call the higher walks of life, or for literary attainments, O no! What for then? For Jesus' sake.

I have been made to feel (as agents claim for their goods, each for his own, that it is the best, or at least good) that all is good for its place, the place God predestinated each should fill. All is good in the same sense that Cain was good, that is, to fulfill God's purpose in slaying his brother; good in the same way that Pharaoh was good, to try to destroy the children of Israel, that God's power might be thus made known; good exactly and in the same sense that the Jews were good, to fulfill God's purpose in the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ; good as Job's three friends were good, to perplex, and annoy, and to aggravate the troubled children of God, that their patience might be made manifest, as was Job's. All these things appear, like the Roman armies, to stand in solid phalanx against the truth. In the face of all these things, who is able to stand up, either in the pulpit or in the press, and contend for the plain and simple truth as it is in Jesus?

Would you believe me if I were to tell you how these things cause me to bow my head, like the bulrush, in sorrow? I also feel that I have at times, at least, been made to rejoice in the glorious light and liberty of the gospel of God our Savior, and can press, yea, lay to my sin-polluted heart and bosom, the language of the Savior in the mount, when he said, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted," and find that it fits my case exactly. Then, while this part of the vineyard, at least, is languishing, the world, on the other hand, is moving on at headlong speed. She is moving on, and there is more money in what Arminians are pleased to call the Lord's treasury to-day for the purpose of sending the gospel to foreign lands, in order to convert and save the heathen, than was ever known in the history of the world before. Sunday schools are springing up all over our land and country, "Christian Endeavorers" are on every hand, with their societies, and lodges are

innumerable, and their members have not been made to realize that God is God, and beside him there is no Savior.

While these are some of my thoughts and experiences, I am many times down in the dark valley of doubt and despair. Then, in this awful condition, a ray of light sometimes appears, which I believe emanates from the source of all light and life, and lifts me up out of the horrible pit and the miry clay, and places me on the rock Christ Jesus, and puts a new song in my mouth, which was never learned in any school of men. I never read it in books, I never saw it in print, and no mortal man has ever been, or ever will be, able to teach that song to another, but in the early dawn of creation the morning stars could sing it, the hundred and forty and four thousand redeemed from among men, whom John on the isle of Patmos saw, could sing it. None have ever been able to sing it but those who have come up out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and have made them white in the blood of the Lamb. This song comes by revelation, and its burden is, praise unto the Lord.

Your brother,

C. G. IRWIN.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, Aug. 27, 1905.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—Perhaps you will be reminded by this letter of the parable of the laborers and the eleventh hour. Even if it is the eleventh hour, though, I am going to endeavor to write a few lines to you to-night. My experience this summer has been that of one who has continually strayed from the ways of God. While my actions have not been wrong my tongue has caused me many painful minutes, nay, hours. I know perhaps the letter of the teaching of Christ, I can apply it to others and judge them, only to awake to a realization of my own waywardness and backsliding. This has been a bitter summer to me in many ways, in others, indeed a very pleasant one. At our July Conference meeting I felt only too keenly my utter unworthiness and sinfulness. Why had I ever been allowed to link my name with this people if my life could be no better than it has been? Why is there not in me more lively interest in the things of God, a keener desire to be fed upon his word? I try to pray, I read my Bible; sometimes I am comforted, oftener I feel that what I have done is purely formal, and in no wise pleasing to God nor beneficial to myself. I have felt alone this summer so much. It seems to me that no one ever had greater love shown to them than I have had, no one who has made a meaner return. So many times have I lived through the third chapter of Lamentations in my own soul these last three months. My keenest sorrow is like that of David, that thy enemies will have cause to jeer because I, a professed christian, am not different in my life from my worldly associates, or am not as good, as unselfish as they.

As I said before, the July Conference was a day of most keenly felt unworthiness. Several expressed the same feeling. Sister Barnsley and sister Lidie were present, (they have been here since July 7th,) and sister Barnsley, too, spoke of her unworthiness to be among God's people. I felt suddenly at home, the words came into my mind, "an afflicted and poor people." Truly we are an afflicted and poor people, and our fellowship lies in this, and the fact that Jesus Christ is our hope and salvation and life.

This morning as father was preaching he quoted the verse, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear." I had a short moment then of realization that the name of Jesus is sweet to me, that name mighty to save, that name being my only refuge, my only strong tower of defense. Again and again I have to learn this; I think I know it so well, yet I find myself trusting to my own strength and failing, so many, many times. How often must I learn that through Christ all things are possible unto me, that without him I can do nothing? I have to pray the same petition that I first uttered to God: "God be merciful to me a sinner." Beyond that I cannot go for myself. If he is merciful to me I shall not dishonor his name, I shall shew forth from a meek conversation his works.

Father told me to-day that there was some prospect of some coming to the church this association. My heart is stirred within me at the thought; my sister Irene is one. Indeed, I have thought, Will Irene come forward if the others do? I have never talked at any length with her about these things, although many times my heart has burned within me to do so; it is very difficult for me to approach the subject with her. I should truly rejoice could she see her way clear to tell the church of that hope which I feel sure she has, and unite with us. However, God knows the working of his Spirit in her heart, and I am glad for signs of his love in every form.

Give my best love to dear sister Chick and the children.

I am your little sister,

RUTH KEENE.

[WE attended the Maine Conference of which our sister speaks, and all were made glad, as she hoped, by the coming of her sister to the church. There was much gladness and rejoicing at the full evidence of the Lord's work in the heart of one who is hardly more than a child in years.—ED.]

JAMAICA, N. Y., Oct. 29, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—After considerable delay I feel that I should acknowledge the receipt of your kind letter, which was read and reread with much interest and satisfaction, and feel glad that the Lord put it into your heart to write as you did, which tended so much to my comfort and encouragement. Also your editorial in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on "Exhortation;" I feel sure you placed or show where its place is as perfectly as it could be done, at any rate my own view of exhortation for some time is in perfect accord with the way I understand you to present it; surely it belongs to the saints and no one else. None but a child of God can possibly receive a word of exhortation, and they do receive it when presented as the great Head of the church designed it to be presented. Not that the man of God should lord it over God's heritage, but as "ensamples to the flock." God's people are led to obedience, not driven. He says his people shall be a willing people in the day of his power. I feel that I can in truth say that I have been made glad to hear a word of exhortation, I have been strengthened, encouraged and built up by it; surely then it must be profitable in its place, and it has a place, just as much so as the God-honoring, soul-cheering doctrine of God's unlimited sovereignty and predestinating purpose respecting all events, whether they be considered good or evil.

Brother Chick, I sometimes feel much cast down in mind, all is dark, cold and

dreary, but it seems there is left a little hope that stays me up; and although I say little hope, yet I cannot throw it away, for if I have anything at all, it is all that I have, and I sometimes feel that I would not take ten thousand worlds like this for it. At times I am made to greatly rejoice in heart, (not with my tongue) believing that God is ever faithful, performing all his promises. Yes, I know that he is faithful, and has all power both in heaven and in earth and under the earth; but the question often comes up, Has he promised good to me, even me, who am less than nothing and vanity? Yes, there are times that I can and do claim the promises, and at such times I am made to greatly rejoice in spirit, having no confidence in the flesh. What a blissful state to be in, but naturally we are prone to confide only in the flesh, then we are cast in the dungeon, and we cannot any more help it than we could take wings and fly, yet some would tell us that these things might be avoided, but that is false. The devil himself did not preach more of a lie to our first parents in the garden than this. We know it is a lie because we have tried it; the only school in which fools learn is the school of experience. No man has ever as yet come to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus except by experience; this is the way it is revealed or made manifest to me at any rate, if I know anything at all to profit.

But for fear I weary you I will close. May God's blessing continue with you, making you ever faithful in declaring the truth to the comfort and encouragement of God's humble poor as in the past.

Your little brother in hope,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

DECATUR, Ga., Oct. 14, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I have had a desire to write to you for some time, even though we are strangers in the flesh: one reason, I desire to become a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and another is, I love all the true followers of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ.

After I had enjoyed so much good preaching and the communion of the saints at our association (the Yellow River) I felt so pleased and happy that I wanted to sing praises to him who gave me, as I hope, an ear to hear and a heart to understand. I was, so to speak, on the mountain top for some time, enjoying in mind the good things I had seen and heard; I thought I could write and tell it, and my mind was exercised; all one morning while at my duties my mind was inditing a letter to you, laden with much that was good to me, of a complete Savior, a complete plan of salvation, and the littleness and insignificance of self. But, my dear brother, I certainly was made to see the utter nothingness of my own self, and what an utter failure I am, when I did attempt to write that letter, I was a blank; I had feasted, and now all was gone. Then doubts began to assail me, I was left in darkness, so I thought I should not have tried to write or it would have been different, and now I am not certain whether I do right or not, I cannot tell why I have the desire; there is one who knows, the great Searcher of all our hearts.

I had the great pleasure of meeting Elder Horace Lefferts, of Philadelphia, and enjoyed his preaching very much. He married one of our Georgia girls not long since, and we hope to have him visit us often.

Elder John G. Eubanks is a very dear

brother to us, having visited at my father's (A. J. Jackson) house, and also at my home in Kentucky in my first husband's lifetime. We would be glad to hear from him, but do not know his address.

My dear brother, I often find myself searching for evidence that I have been born again, and my heart fails me. What right have I to claim a hope? I cannot tell when I was born again, if ever, but I do know I love the God that saves, not if you will do your part and he will do the rest, but a whole and complete Savior, I want to give him all the honor. I cannot live on the husks, I want the pure and undefiled word of truth. Then again, I know I love the brethren, and the apostle says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." It is when I can really feel this that I enjoy the hope that is in me, and let it be little or much, I would not give it for anything in this world. It is enough.

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name."

With, I hope, an humble desire to be remembered at the throne of grace, your unworthy sister,

EUGENIA JACKSON RISK.

[WE appreciate very much the above letter, and feel to say that we hope the SIGNS may be made a blessing to the dear sister. It is a good blessing from the Lord to know and abide in the truth. The truth only can make us free, all beside the truth as it is in Jesus, leads men into bondage. Let us heed the injunction of the apostle to "stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Elder Lefferts, of whom our sister speaks, is well known and much loved among the brethren here. Elder J. G. Eubanks' address is Newark, Newcastle Co., Delaware. He has always been a most acceptable brother and minister among all our people.—ED.]

EAGLE, Ont., April 29, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—The dear old SIGNS comes richly laden with good and deep thoughts from those heaven-born writers, although many of them strangers to me in the flesh, I hope by God's grace I can understand them in the Spirit. Their language is joyful news to me, it gives our God all the honor, praise and glory, he is the only sovereign or majesty I know of, for "none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" He reigns in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. I hope you will have prosperity, and above all, the grace of God to guide you in all things.

I will inclose a letter sent to my daughter by dear Elder Vail, which I would like to see published in the SIGNS. I have not his consent to publish it, but there are many of his friends I cannot see, and they will be glad to read this letter.

Your poor, unworthy sister,

(MRS.) CHRISTINA MURRAY.

WAVERLY, Pa., Feb. 9, 1905.

MISS ANNA MURRAY—DEAR SISTER:—Your kind and comforting letter came all right, and it was appreciated very much I assure you. I do love to hear from my dear kindred in Christ, living in Canada. I have never ceased to love the dear old Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada; many a pleasant meeting it has been my privilege to enjoy among and with you, and I hope to be permitted to meet you all again some time in the near

future. God's will be done in this as well as in everything else. God's ways are so contrary to ours; this I have learned to my great sorrow so many, many times; the anguish of my poor, crushed, broken heart no tongue can tell or pen portray. I was dumb before his awful majesty, and yet in my mind rebelled against his providence. God knows what I have suffered, no one else can ever know, but I must say that in this dark, mysterious cloud Jesus came, and wonder of wonders, he did bring salvation to even me, he did give me "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." I do desire to praise and adore the mighty God of Jacob for his goodness and mercy to me, a poor, vile worm of the dust. I do feel to be the poorest of the poor, the weakest of the weak, the vilest of the vile, no one like me, and still I love God's dear children, and do not have any desire for the company of others; the company of the giddy, frolicsome world is hell to me, and so I do feel to let the world have their joys to themselves, and I am not only willing, but gladly willing, to touch not, taste not, handle not. I do hope and pray that the good Lord will keep me from participating in anything or with any society that will grieve my dear brethren, for I do crave the love and fellowship of my Father's children. I feel that it would be better that a millstone be hanged about my neck, and I be cast into the depths of the sea, than to offend (hurt) one of these little ones, but O how prone to sin I am, sin is mixed with all I do. "In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." I hope that this knowledge comes from the true Light shining in my poor heart, for light makes manifest.

Remember me in love to your mother, and brethren you meet, and accept a large share for yourself. Write again.

Your unworthy brother,

D. M. VAIL.

FRENCHTOWN, N. J.

DEAR BROTHER COULTER:—I shall not be able to tell you how glad I was to receive your letter. I do feel most of the time unworthy of being remembered in any way by the children of God, and feel that could you all know me as I know myself I should not be favored as I am with expressions of love and fellowship. I am very much afraid of myself, fearing I shall or have sold my "birthright for a mess of pottage." The things of this present world are, I must confess, more alluring than I had ever expected they would be again, when I was given such sweet assurance of the faithfulness of our covenant-keeping God in remembering me, even though I had been so unfaithful, so forgetful of his goodness. To explain, I so well remember when I was first given to hope in his mercy, how in great measure the plan of salvation was opened to my inquiring mind, and how glad I was in the Lord, and yet the pride of my wicked nature seemed to cause me to withhold from my brethren that which I trust the Lord had revealed to me. It seemed I must learn more of myself, although my past life had been one of continual rebellion against God, and all that had appeared before me, and I was a justly condemned sinner, and now Jesus was revealed as my Savior and Redeemer. Notwithstanding I was a witness to the most wonderful miracle ever wrought or ever manifested, yet I would find the pride of my evil and corrupt nature believed by me, rather than the revelation of God. Nor is this all; I have been a willful transgressor; I have time and

again sinned willfully, and just as often looked for fiery indignation, and finding mercy instead of wrath, the enemy has vanished or been consumed.

I have deviated somewhat from what I had in mind to speak of regarding the selling of my birthright, in my walking after the flesh for seven or eight years after this experience of joy and peace in Jesus which passes all understanding. I was made to know much concerning the wickedness of this sinful heart of mine; I found my heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. It seems to me if I ever had a temptation in my life before that was strong, I had it double now; if I ever found myself weak before, I found myself doubly so now, and if any poor soul ever doubted the existence of God and doubted his manifestation as God manifest in the flesh, that one was myself. I trust he came in the power of his grace, and I was given again to be comforted in finding the joys of salvation restored, and so greatly was I moved by this, so greatly was the pride of my flesh humbled within me, that it was with gladness and joy I was made willing to go forward according to the command of Jesus and tell the church as best I could how the Lord had led me. Since then how different has been my experience than I had mapped out. I felt I should walk humbly before the Lord all the days of my life; that now should the enemy come against my hope I could silence him forever with this witnessing to the power of the resurrection of the Son of God; that I could by calling to remembrance how that all the temptation, all the doubt, all the pride and corruption, had been swallowed up in the glory of God as is revealed in the face of Jesus Christ. I felt I could say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him;" and again, that "though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." So great was my confidence that I thought the victory complete, and I should not be vexed and annoyed any more, because the vexation and annoyance were to be silenced by the remembrance of his goodness and mercy, but I have had to learn different; I hope I have learned that salvation is alone of the Lord, unto his children he has given the law of Christ, this law is written in their hearts. Yet we must learn over and over again that we are not our own, but have been bought with a price. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," must be fulfilled in us; we must learn that we are weakness itself, and we grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, in that we learn our weakness, our shortcomings, our humiliation, and all that we do learn of ourselves, and we learn of his power to save in trial and conflict, in the very depths of hell. How glad I am that the keys of death and hell are in the hands of Jesus.

I have written more and somewhat different from what I had in mind when I commenced writing. We shall be glad to have you all visit us, and will try to go again to your meeting. Remember us in love to all your family, together with all who care for us.

Yours in hope of life,

O. R. KUGLER.

FARMINGTON, Ill., Sept. 24, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have just returned with my wife from a long visit to a daughter and many friends in Greely, Colorado. Since I arrived home I have read the SIGNS for September 15th, and it is so good that I have felt constrained, from some cause, to write you. In the first place, Elder Ker's was so good an article. This is the "time sal-

vation," and all the "time salvation" that I believe in, though I will not so call it. It is God's truth, and I could take it home to myself. Also the writer who signs his or her name, "A poor sinner," I would like to know the name; I think that all writers should give their full names and addresses; I felt that I would like to write to him or her, as the case might be. Truly I have been led in the same way, hence the letter gave me much comfort. Also dear sister Attie Curtis, whom I met in Philadelphia three years ago, I was glad she wrote as she did, it was a comfort to me, for I had thought that she was always on the mount. I have often thought in reading her letters, O could I feel as she does; but now she has come into my poor heart with double force. Then dear brother Durand's "Fragments" were so good; in fact, all was good and from the Lord.

In our journey in Colorado we called to see that dear, aged and able brother Yeoman, who lives at Loveland. Also we called to see Professor Ketchum, at Boulder, a son of dear Elder Ketchum, who lives at Chester, Nebraska, where we stopped on our way home, and enjoyed his hospitality two days. He is an able and devoted servant of the Lord, and the Lord has greatly blessed them with many honorable children, who are grown up. Elder Ketchum and I talked strongly that if it were the Lord's will we might attend the eastern associations next spring.

Now, in conclusion, may the God of all grace be with you, and may the dear old SIGNS continue to be conducted with an eye single to the glory of God, and the welfare and peace of Zion; may the love of God abound in the hearts of the people. Our time is short in the world. Fare you well.

Your brother in hope,

E. D. VARNES.

ADRIAN, Mich., July 31, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Ever since reading that beautiful poem entitled "Sleep," selected by Bettie L. Turner, of Kentucky, I have wanted to write and tell you what a comfort it was to me, one of the poorest and most unworthy of all God's little ones that pretend to follow in the footsteps of the flock. The words, "For so he giveth his beloved sleep," to me are the most glorious words ever written, for they came to me when death did not seem to be very far away, and I could not sleep day or night, and I prayed to the Lord that he would give me sleep. He was pleased to answer my prayer, and I slept, and when I awoke these beautiful words, "For so he giveth his beloved sleep," were in my mind, and the beauty I saw in them I am not able to tell. I believe this sleep is the sleep of death, and what a rest to his worn-out and weary children. As the poem says, He touches the drooping eyelids, and they sink into that peaceful slumber from which none ever wake to weep. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Though I dread death's chilling tide, yet still I sigh for home. A dear old christian man I once knew used to sing, Death it is the king of terrors, and a terror to all kings. While I believe this, I also believe that when the time comes he will be with them, and his salvation be sufficient which is ready to be revealed in the last time, "for so he giveth his beloved sleep."

I send you a poem to publish in the SIGNS, if in your judgment it is good enough. It was sent to me by a dear sister from Portland, Oregon; I have enjoyed reading it very much, and I hope some other poor one will if it ever appears in the SIGNS.

Yours in hope of a better world,

(MRS.) H. TUTTLE.

(See poem on page 705.)

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1905.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

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THE CONTENTION BETWEEN PAUL AND BARNABAS.

(Acts xv. 36-41.)

We have thought very many times of this portion of the Scripture, and it has always seemed that there were important lessons embraced in this narrative of contention between these two ministers of the word. We now present some things for the consideration of the brethren in general.

First. It is sure that this portion of the word was recorded by the inspired writer, because it was needful for the instruction of the churches and brethren, and especially of ministers of the word of God. We fear it is too often forgotten that this is a word of inspiration, as well as is all prophecy in the Old Testament, and the four narratives in the gospels, and the epistles. We do not say that all Scripture is of equal importance, but all Scripture is in some way important, and none of it is to be lightly regarded. The portion of Scripture to which we wish to call attention is the word of God in some way to us who believe, and must contain that which it is good for us to consider. In the consideration of this, as well as all other portions of the word of God, it must be remembered that we all need the guidance of the Spirit to show it unto us, and then the power of the Spirit to apply what we come to understand to our hearts, and thus to produce the fruit of this instruction in our own conduct as believers, and especially as ministers of Christ.

Second. The Scripture referred to here declares that Paul, Barnabas and Silas were now at Antioch preaching the word. After some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do. And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark," and who was his nephew. (See Col. iv. 10.) "But Paul thought not good to take him," because when they left Pamphylia to preach in Antioch, Mark went not with them to the work, but went to Jerusalem instead. So there was much contention, and they departed asunder one from the other; and Barnabas, taking Mark, sailed into Cyprus, while Paul chose Silas, and being recommended by the brethren, went through Syria and Cilicia confirming the churches. The Scripture which narrates how Mark departed from Paul and his company is found in Acts xiii. 13. There Mark is called John, which was his first name. In Acts xii. 12, we learn that the home of Mark was at Jerusalem, for it was into his mother's house that Peter came, after the angel had delivered him from the prison. Then in Acts xiii. 25, we learn that Paul and Barnabas, when they returned from Jerusalem, took with them Mark also. It was after this when Paul and the company with him went preaching the word through Syria and Cilicia that Mark went not with them, but returned to his home at Jerusalem. Before leaving this narrative gathered from the Scriptures concerning Mark, we wish to call attention to the fact that though now

Paul was not willing to take Mark, because he had a little while before gone back from them, refusing to share in their labors and in their persecutions upon their first journey through this region, yet thirteen years afterward, according to our chronology, we find Paul saying to Timothy, "Take Mark, and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry."—2 Tim iv. 11. Also in Philemon 24, Paul calls Mark his fellow-laborer; and there can be no doubt that in that time Mark had thoroughly approved himself as a faithful servant of the Lord, though at first, for some reason which Paul did not consider sufficient, he failed to accompany Paul in his ministry. It has always appeared to us that the reason Mark did not go with Paul, to share with him in his labors and sufferings at the time named, was that he shrank from the toil and sufferings of the way, and so Paul judged him to be wanting in zeal and earnestness, and for this reason would not take him upon the second journey. Also, it has seemed but reasonable to conclude that all the brethren through that region must have known of the failure of Mark in the first place, and so would not feel full confidence in him now, which would make his presence with the apostle a hindrance in many ways. Mark himself would be made to feel this, and for his own sake, as well as for the sake of the brethren and the cause, Paul did not think it desirable to take him.

Third. It has always seemed to us that Paul was right in his decision in this matter, and that he was actuated by that wisdom which is from above. He was evidently not actuated by any personal dislike to Mark, nor by any sense of personal wrong received from Mark when he had not gone with them. But when Mark had in after years approved himself as a faithful minister of the word, see how cordially he speaks in his letter to Timothy of him; this is most important to consider. Paul as a man had the natural feelings of a man, and looking at the matter upon the ground of personal friendship, he had room to feel unkindly toward Mark, because he had forsaken him when he really needed him very much as a companion to comfort and assist and cheer him amid the labors and perils and deprivations of his journey among bitter enemies of the gospel. But we see no evidence of personal enmity at all when he declined to allow him to accompany those who went with him upon this second journey. Paul thought only of what was good and advisable for the cause of God among the churches, and what was also good for Mark himself. How important it is to rise above any feeling of personal wrong when we have to do with the things of the kingdom.

Fourth. Is it doing violence to the narrative to conclude that Barnabas was somewhat influenced by the natural relationship which he bore to Mark, his sister's son, in his desire to take him with them? We know that we are all liable to be moved by earthly things, even in our conduct of the affairs of the churches. How much of the flesh does enter into all that we do. Barnabas was indeed a true minister of the word, and so was Mark, yet Mark failed at a critical moment, and Barnabas could not help being influenced by the fact that Mark was his nephew. What great need we all have to watch lest we be governed by the flesh in what we do. What need there is of prayer. The words of the blessed Master to his disciples apply all along the way of temptation and warfare: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation:

the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." No doubt Barnabas also felt that Mark had done wrong in going back at the first, or at least that he had failed to show that zeal and steadfastness that must accompany one who is called of God to the ministry, if indeed he is to be profitable in his ministry, and yet natural affection seems to have led him to be too ready to pass this failure by on the part of Mark, and to desire to take him now before he had proven himself to have repented of the former wrong, or that there was in him this principle of steadfastness and faithfulness so needful in those trying times. But Paul was firm, and so sharp disputation arose between them, and this led to their parting company for a season.

Fifth. We learn from this narrative that even the early disciples were but men, and that all of them were liable to err in judgment, and all of them were liable also to be actuated by the flesh. It was as true of them as it is of us, that sin was mixed with all they did. It was true of them as of us that they needed daily grace to keep them, and the grace of forgiveness from God and toward each other. The fact that apostles and servants of God then could fall out and be led into sharp contention ought not and will not encourage the children of God to do the same things now, but it does encourage the tender-hearted child who has in some unguarded moment given way to some evil thought or word or deed, and who is, because of this, tempted to question whether he or she is a child of God at all, to still hope on, and to seek forgiveness for his faults at the throne of grace, seeing that these holy men of old were also full of errors, and yet were the loved and saved of the Lord; they obtained forgiveness for their sins, and so is our God merciful to us also.

Sixth. The contention of these two servants of God was not about any doctrine of the word, nor even about the order of the house of God, the church. Both Paul and Barnabas, and for that matter Mark also, believed in the same Savior, and in the same grace revealed in him, and they all loved him, and preached him, and desired to serve him. They all also sought to maintain the order of the church as regards baptism, and the supper, and all the ordinances of the church. Upon all these things they saw eye to eye, and all loved and desired to honor the Lord in all their labor in his house. Yet in this one thing these two servants of God differed in judgment as to what was wise and prudent, and as to what course would be most to the glory of God. They each as a result went his way without any thought of breaking their fellowship in the gospel. If the contention was sharp it was not about any principle of the faith or order of the church, and so there could be no need of withdrawing from each other. The word "sharp" has with it, in the Greek as it does in our English tongue, the thought of heat or anger; it means more than simple earnestness. The text means that there was unpleasant feeling aroused by the dispute, but this was not sufficient to break up the fellowship which they had in the truth, nor to lead either one to say, I have lost confidence in the profession of the other. In like manner when Paul felt that he must withstand Peter to his face for his cowardly dealing, he did not intimate that he had lost confidence in Peter as a servant of God, or as an apostle, and neither did Peter withdraw himself from Paul, least of all did he reply to Paul, I am supreme in my authority over you and all the rest of the apostles and ministers of the Lord (as the pontiff at Rome as-

sumes for himself to-day, and as Rome claims for Peter,) and therefore it is rank rebellion against heaven for you to withstand me in anything. It is not every difference between brethren that calls for withdrawal of fellowship, in fact, nothing except denial of the faith, and disregard of the order and ordinances of the church, and immoral living, ought to drive the children asunder from their Father's house.

Seventh. We see in the narrative, as the outcome of this contention, that Paul chose Silas, while Barnabas took his nephew Mark, and each went their several ways as servants of God, traveling and preaching the word wherever they went. Paul and Barnabas could not go together without friction, because of this difference, but both still labored in word and doctrine for the same end, the glory of God and the good of the churches. This may be best in some contentions that may arise in our own time; if there be friction between two equally zealous servants in the same house, it is better that they labor in different departments, or in different rooms of the house. It is better for their own comfort, better for the comfort of the other servants, better for the peace and good of the household that they should do so. In this subject under consideration, the God of providence was overruling it all to his own glory, and so he sent one servant in one direction in his vineyard and the other in another direction. There was width enough in his vineyard that they both could be employed and so the contention should have an end and the vineyard continue to be cultivated. If Barnabas erred after the flesh concerning his nephew, that did not throw any shadow upon his call to this work, nor upon his earnest zeal toward his Master's cause. If Paul was too stern in his denial of the wish of Barnabas and of Mark to accompany him, this did not at all cloud his work as an apostle. Both were acceptable to God, and it would seem that after all, both of them did that which he thought to be for the glory of God. Paul would not take Mark, to the glory of God, and Barnabas would take him, desiring also the glory of God. In this they were like those who did and those who did not regard the Sabbath day: both the one and the other did what they did as to the Lord. We are all liable to err in our judgment, as said before, why then should we when we differ attribute evil motives to him that differs with us? Rather, let us remember what is taught us in this lesson of which we are speaking, and the lesson concerning the keeping of the Sabbath, to which we have just alluded.

Eighth. The one great lesson which has been in our mind all along, and which it seems the subject teaches, is that of forbearance and consideration for others, because there is infinitely more at stake than our own feelings or our own views; more at stake than the welfare of any two servants of the Lord; the peace of the whole house is to be considered. Let there be no brawling, nor strife in anything of this sort. We are persuaded that more than half of the difficulties that are brought into churches never ought to have been considered as matters for public discussion in the churches at all. If there be difference of judgment or of opinion between two brethren, whether in the ministry or not, let it be confined to themselves, and if there continues to be difference in judgment, let each do as did Paul and Barnabas; each one laboring on in the way opened to him in the providence of God, rejoicing that the word of God is preached, and the people of God

ministered to wherever each may labor. There are many things named in the epistles which are wrong, and which are there condemned, but concerning comparatively few of these things do the apostles give directions to withdraw from brethren who may be involved in them. Paul and Barnabas contended with heat over this question, whether to take Mark with them or not to take him, but neither did they withdraw from each other because of this difference of view, nor because of the sharp words which were uttered in the contention. Let us also remember that Paul in all his writing never made any allusion to this matter, and a few years afterward we find him speaking of Mark and Barnabas most affectionately. Perhaps to the end of their lives Paul and Barnabas continued to be each of his own opinion in this matter, but still it did not mar their fervent love and fellowship for each other in the gospel. So far as we know from the word, the matter was never again mentioned; they all continued to labor wherever the Lord called them to go, and each rejoiced in the blessing of God upon the labors of the others.

PLEASE BE SURE,

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

LUKE XXIV. 26.

Brother Beebe:—I wish you would write a discourse on the last chapter of Luke, twenty-sixth verse: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"

A. R. DORRIS.

Webster Co., Ky., Aug. 1, 1862.

REPLY.

Saints and angels may well be amazed at the idea of the blessed Christ of God appearing in the character of a sufferer, and it is not surprising that the two disciples with whom he was conversing when he uttered the words above written, recoiled at the thought that wicked men had been permitted to crucify their Lord and Master. Like all others of the disciples, they could only understand the profound mystery so far as it was opened by revelation to their comprehension. They knew that they had loved him dearly, that they had trusted in him as the Messiah that was to come, and they verily believed that he was the long looked for Deliverer that was to redeem Israel, but how much he was to suffer in the accomplishment of that work they did not realize. They had witnessed his arrest, his trial and his conviction, they had probably followed, perhaps afar off, to the place of execution, saw his writhing agony on the cross, heard his bitter groans, and heard him cry, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" Ah, well they knew that he was crucified, dead and buried, but that he was indeed risen again from the dead they did not know. True they had been astonished at a report of some women who were early at the sepulchre, who averred that he had risen, but how could they rejoice in a risen Jesus until as such he manifested himself to them? So it still con-

tinues to be with the disciples of Jesus, for now we know only in part, we see only as through a glass darkly, but the blessed prospect looms up before us, that as soon as that which is in part shall be done away, we shall see face to face, and know even as we are known.

But our brother desires us to discourse on the text: "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" We do not understand the Redeemer to call his disciples fools by way of reproach, or as implying impatience with their infirmities, but to chide their despondency and dispel their doubtings. A fool is simply a person who is destitute of understanding, and this was their case on that occasion, for if they had comprehended the matter, if they had known that thus it behooved him to suffer and to rise again from the dead on the third day, that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name to Jews and Gentiles, and that this dreadful suffering was now accomplished, that sin and death and hell were vanquished, that the church of God was now redeemed from all iniquity, that now his mediatorial glory was about to break forth in heavenly radiance, instead of desponding they would have rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

"And slow of heart to believe." The apostle says, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." That is, in regard to spiritual things. Carnal or nominal professors of religion may believe their respective creeds with their heads, with their carnal minds and with their natural powers, as evidence is presented, and they may be quick to believe, for they are under no restraint. We see them eager to drink in delusion that suits their carnal lust, and hurriedly they embrace the doctrine of men, because they love it, and because it requires no grace, no teaching of the Holy Spirit to instruct them; but the children of God can only lay hold of the evidences on which their belief in Christ is predicated, by faith, and their faith is not of themselves, it is the gift of God. And it is the work of the Spirit of truth to present the evidences of eternal things to their faith, and they are such fools they can only believe and understand what they are taught of God by his Spirit, for they have not a particle of wit or wisdom, only what is treasured up for them in him who of God is made unto them wisdom, for in him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. They feel and confess that they are slow to believe all that the prophets have written. They were not without confidence in the prophets of the Lord, and undoubtedly believed some of the things which the prophets had written, but they were slow or tardy in believing all. We do not suppose the two disciples disbelieved or doubted what the prophets had written in predicting the coming of One who should redeem Israel, for they referred to that promise, as one bound to their hearts, and although they might confidently believe many things thus written in the Old Testament, their understanding of the Scriptures was so limited that they were slow to believe it all. But what the prophets have written is one undivided and unbroken testimony, beautiful and glorious in its harmony and identity; hence Jesus, fully understanding their deficiency, applied the proper and only corrective. He began at Moses, that is, with the five books of Moses, with which the Old Testament begins, and beginning also with all the prophets, he expounded to them in all the

Scriptures the things concerning himself. So we perceive, fools though these dear disciples were, as also all his disciples still are, (for if any man would know anything he must first become a fool, that he may be wise,) yet they lacked no wisdom or knowledge that Jesus did not possess. When we consider the amount of instruction contained in the discourse of Jesus, embracing all that Moses and the prophets had written concerning himself, together with all that was contained in the other Scriptures on the same subject, all comprised in his discourse to them, is it any wonder that their hearts were inflamed, and burned in them, while he talked with them by the way, and opened to them the Scriptures? These Scriptures had not only predicted his advent to the world, but they had also testified beforehand his sufferings, and the glory that should follow. The prophets themselves did not understand all the glory of their prophecy; there were some things sealed up from their understanding, as Peter says, They sought diligently "what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

We come now to the appeal which Christ made to the disciples: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?" On no such grounds as could justify Pilate in passing the sentence of death upon him, for he had acknowledged that he found no cause of death in him, nor ought he to have suffered in any sense that could justify the Jews and Romans to conspire against him. He was holy, harmless and separate from sinners; he had done no injury to any man, but to the contrary, he had healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, given sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf; he had fed the hungry, and ministered comfort to the afflicted; he had raised the dead, and cast out devils. Was there anything in this to justify their malice? He had invaded no rights claimed by earthly monarchs or potentates, he had paid tribute and custom according to their laws, and taught his disciples to imitate his example. Then why ought he to suffer these things? His enemies watched him diligently, and constantly lay in wait to find some cause of complaint that they might accuse him, but all in vain, for it cost them large sums of money to suborn witnesses to testify falsely against him, that they might procure his arrest. But although he was holy, innocent and pure, though there was no guile found in his mouth, although the eternal Father from the skies had proclaimed that he was his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased, still we are, from Christ's own words, assured that there was necessity for him to suffer these things, for in the forty-sixth and forty-seventh verses of the same chapter he said unto them, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." As it was written thus in the Scriptures, and the Scriptures containing the important record were written by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, it is very evident that the grounds on which it behooved Christ to suffer were to be found in the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and that his being finally delivered up to these sufferings was in fulfillment of what God's hand and counsel had before determined should be done. By a careful comparison of what was written aforetime, with the testimony of

the New Testament, and the record of the fulfillment of what was written, we learn that the necessity of Christ's sufferings was indispensable for the redemption and salvation of his people. In pursuance of the purpose and grace of God, which he purposed in himself before the world began, Christ was set up, or given to be the Head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. Such was the relationship between Christ, in his mediatorial Headship over his body, the church, that all demands of the law and justice of God upon the church were assumed by him, and it was upon this, and on no other ground that we can conceive of, that it behooved him to suffer these things. That people whom the Father gave him, in their earthly nature have all sinned, and were all by nature children of wrath, even as others. But God who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with him. Thus we perceive that the astonishing display of mercy and grace in the redemption of his people proceeded from the great love wherewith God had loved them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and that love was so great, so strong and so immutable, that our apostacy in Adam and our being dead in sins did not change or abate it. For God hath commended his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Truly this love is stronger than death, but in contemplating the unavoidable necessity of Christ's sufferings we must take into consideration the principles of law and justice which were involved, for in this lies much of the mystery of our salvation, how God could be just and the justifier of them that believe in Jesus. No mortal wisdom could suggest a plan that would secure the salvation of sinners, without infringing the justice of God. The law would not admit of the substitution of an innocent sufferer for the transgressions of the guilty, unless there was some just and righteous ground of responsibility involved on the part of the sufferer. Husbands are in law responsible for the debts contracted by their wives, parents for children, &c., but in criminal cases these relations will not hold the innocent responsible, there must then be found a relationship still nearer; we know of no law that will exempt the head from responsibility for the acts of the body, or members of the body. On this principle then we conclude the law could justly look to Christ as Head and Surety for his body, the church, and certain it is that "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." "Surely, he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his

mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." The foregoing testimony from the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah illustrates the subject better than volumes of uninspired comments, showing upon what principle it was just for the dear Redeemer to suffer, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. As the Shepherd he laid down his life for his sheep; for as they were his sheep before they had transgressed, justice demanded the ransom at his hands. He so stood related to and identified with his flock, that all their sins were laid on him, and he was numbered with the transgressors, and the extent of his atonement is forever settled. "For the transgression of my people [saith God] was he stricken." And by his stripes we are healed. The ground then on which he "ought to suffer," was not that we as transgressors had any claim on him for anything good or bad that we had done, or intended to do, but it was as these Scriptures clearly show, by the grace of God, and not the will or works of men, that he tasted death for God's people; himself bearing our sins in his own body. Thus it behooved or became Christ to suffer. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."—Heb. ii. 10. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."—Heb. x. 14. His sufferings were indispensable, not only for bringing many sons unto glory, but also to prepare his entrance into the glory that was to follow. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"

We presume the glory into which Christ was to enter was the glory of his mediatorial triumph over death, hell and sin, in the perfect redemption of his people, the organization of his kingdom, the ascension to his throne in Zion, and that revenue of praise which must redound to his great name to everlasting. It is true he had a glory with the Father before the world began, and as we understand, the glory of eternal deity was his in common with the Father, from everlasting, but his endurance of sufferings was not required to precede his possession of that glory. John says, "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." And the saints of every age have a revelation of this when God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shines in their hearts, to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. For he is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. The glory of which he speaks in our text we conclude must be that of which he spake in his address to the Father, John xvii. 22–24, the glory the Father gave him, and which he has given to his people. It must, we think, refer especially to his mediatorial glory, and that particularly which he has secured by the accomplish-

ment of all the work which the Father gave him to do. The glorious triumph of the Son of God over all enemies, his endless victory over all opposing powers, was to be followed by his resurrection from the dead, his ascension up on high, his leading captivity captive, and the reception of his kingdom, his coronation and his throne, will all be comprised in that glory which he was to enter. Before the organization of his kingdom in her gospel beauty, the subjects required to be redeemed from their captivity, and their redemption could only be effected by his sufferings, hence we are told that he for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down on the right hand of the majesty on high. Thus in the majesty on high he has entered the glory which he had with the Father before the world began. While the things which he had to suffer intervened between him and the consummation of his glory, he was found in fashion as a man, took on him the form of a servant, learned obedience and was obedient even unto death. But the joy was then before him, and he passed through the deeps of deep waters without faltering, and like Jacob, when serving Laban for Rachel, the anticipated bride, made the years of servitude seem as but a few days. So the blessed Savior anticipated the glory that was to follow his sufferings. High seated now upon his imperial throne, his people are not only redeemed from the curse and dominion of the law, and the lawful captives thus delivered, but the Spirit of immortality is sent down in his name to quicken and call all the trophies of his triumph, and his people are made willing in the day of his power. Vested now with all the power of heaven and earth, he gives repentance unto Israel and forgiveness of sins. Repentance and remission are now preached in his name, and his arm is made bare for salvation, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him and his work before him. He gathers now his sheep with his arm and carries them in his bosom, and they shall all know experimentally, when he opens the eyes of their understanding, what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to his mighty power.

In view of all this, ye trembling saints, as ye wade through the bitter waters of affliction, consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your mind. He has laid up in heaven for you a crown of unfading glory, and you are called to know the fellowship of his sufferings and to be conformed to his death. Look steadfastly then to the mark of the prize of your high calling, and press on, your suffering days will soon be ended, your sighing and sorrowing soon shall cease, and God will wipe away all your tears. If it behooved Christ to suffer first and then to enter his glory, shall we complain of the sufferings of the present time, when so well we know that our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, do work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory?

"His way was much harder and rougher than thine,
Did Christ your Lord suffer, and wilt thou repine?"

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Sept. 1, 1862.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

W. M. Little has changed his address from Donie, Texas, to Holland, Texas, and desires his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

My uncle, **Elder J. C. Beeman,** of Blanchester, Ohio, fell asleep in Jesus at 2 o'clock a. m., Oct. 9th, 1905, at the age of 94 years and 27 days. He was born in Greene Co., Pa., Sept. 12th, 1811. His father, Elder Elijah Beeman, moved from Pennsylvania to West Virginia soon after this son's birth. His father died when he was twelve years old. His mother married again, and in 1825 the family moved to Warren Co., Ohio. In September, 1829, he, in company with my father, was baptized in the Little Miami River, in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Providence, (now extinct) by Elder Layman, Elder Wilson Thompson being present. My uncle commenced to preach a few weeks after his baptism. He traveled much in early days through Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana; he was in fellowship and in agreement in doctrine with Elder Wilson Thompson, Elder Thos. P. Dudley, Elder J. F. Johnson, Elder Gilbert Beebe and many others of like precious faith. He was an agent for the SIGNS for many years. I remember early in the fifties that he took my father's first subscription for the SIGNS. He wrote occasionally for the SIGNS, scattered along for forty or fifty years. The last years of his life he did not travel much, but preached occasionally, and especially about the time of his birthday, which occurred on Sept. 12th. The people of his town felt honored because it was the residence of the oldest preacher in the State; they did him honor at his anniversary, not caring for the doctrine that he advocated. His grandson writes me that he preached an able discourse to a large audience on the second Sunday of September last, four weeks before his death, though the day was rainy. A local paper of his town states that he spake with some of his former ability. His health was as good as usual until a week before he died he had a fall which shook him up considerably, but it is not known that this was the cause of his death. He retained consciousness until the last. Age had not marred any of his faculties, except that he was slightly deaf. His was a remarkable life, preaching the gospel seventy-six years, and closing his life with the ministry. He was closely related to several Old School Baptist preachers, viz: his father, his mother's father, Elder Amos Mix, three brothers-in-law, Elder Jacob Cozad, of West Virginia, Elder Woodard Cozad, Elder David Layman, of Ohio. These are all of the generation that has passed away. Of the present generation the writer is his only relative, except a daughter that stands identified with the Old School Baptists. He leaves his widowed daughter, one grandson and great-grandchildren. I learn that Elder I. R. Greathouse was present at his funeral.

J. F. BEEMAN.

HELENA, Okla., Nov. 15, 1905.

Claiborne Webb, the subject of this notice, was born in Giles Co., Tenn., Jan. 24th, 1815, and died August 22nd, 1905. He came to Jackson Co., Mo., in 1834. He was the last survivor of the Seminole war, where he fought under General Zachary Taylor, and also in the war against the Mormons, in Missouri. His record as a soldier was most excellent, naturally as well as spiritually. Uncle Claiborne was married three times. His first wife was Miss Mary Wren Phillpot, and to this union three children were born, James, Sallie and Samuel. Mrs. Webb died Feb. 2nd, 1850. In 1852 brother Webb married Mrs. Elizabeth Harris; to this union six children were born: Susan, John R., Larkin V., Harvey W., Colombus T. and Addie E. A. Mrs. Elizabeth Webb died in 1880. In 1882 brother Webb married Mrs. Mary E. Reynolds; to this union no children were born. Brother Claiborne was the father of nine children, grandfather of fifty-seven children and great-grandfather of forty-five children. Brother Webb joined the Oak Grove Church of Primitive Baptists, and was baptized by Elder Fitzhugh seventy odd years ago. During that long period of time his home was always a welcome resting-place to the weary servants of God. He died at the home of his son, Addison Webb, at the age of 90 years, 6 months and 29 days.

The funeral was preached by the writer at the M. E. church-house, to a large concourse of friends and weeping relatives, using as a text the words found in Job xlii. 16: "After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations." After which his remains were laid to rest in the family cemetery.

THOMAS B. FISHER.

Mrs. Angeline Butler Eslinger was born Oct. 22nd, 1872, and died Oct. 27th, 1905, aged 33 years and five days. She was married to Emanuel E. Eslinger May 21st, 1893; to them were born two sons, Gale Butler, aged eleven years, and Rolland, aged fourteen months. Besides her husband and children she leaves her father and mother, three sisters and three brothers to mourn their loss. The deceased felt herself a guilty sinner for some three years before obtaining the relief so earnestly sought for, after which she fully rejoiced in the Savior's blessed love and tender mercy, receiving full fellowship in the Primitive Baptist Church July 25th, 1896. She was baptized by her uncle, Elder Wm. Stillwell. Having always been a most devoted wife and loving mother, deeming her first duty was to her family and home, she will indeed be sadly missed from among them, whose only comfort can be in looking to the Savior, in whom she showed such faith in her hour of trouble and affliction. When kissing her parents good by on going to the hospital, she said, "Do not grieve for me, it will be all right. God has been with me all the way through, and I believe he will be to the end.'

In a letter written shortly before her operation, the deceased showed plainly how calmly yet reverently she looked upon death. In one place we quote: "I am trying very hard to be reconciled to everything, and I believe the good Lord is with me. You know it will be his will if I get through all right, and his will if I do not." From another place, showing how dear to her were her home ties and near kindred, and yet how reconciled she had become to her heavenly Father's will, we again quote: "While it would be very hard to leave my little family, and all the rest of you, I do not feel now as though I should fear death." Also in this same letter the deceased made all arrangements for the funeral, stating what hymns she desired sung and requesting that brother Fred Elmore conduct the services. The sorely bereaved husband, children, mother and father, sisters and brothers, have the sincere sympathy of the entire community in this their hour of trouble.

The funeral service was held at the house of the deceased's parents, Elder Fred Elmore officiating. The remains were laid to rest in Hillside cemetery.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Oct. 24, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—For over three years I have had in my possession two letters written me by Elder John McConnell. Several times I have read them over, and each time have been instructed and edified. Just a few days ago I got them out and read them again, and feel that now I must share them with all the spiritual household. They need to be read and reread, and that very carefully, if one would derive the full benefit of their contents, for there is a great deal more in them than will appear from a mere casual reading. I leave them to your better judgment.

Wishing you at all times the enjoyment of divine presence in your labors for us, I am, I hope, your brother in gospel fellowship,

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

NEW YORK, N. Y., April 26, 1902.

DEAR BROTHER HORACE H. LEFFERTS:—Your welcome letter of the 23rd inst. is at hand. Your acceptance of an appointment here for next second Sunday will be gratifying to all the members and friends, and I can promise you a hearty welcome from them all. I am glad you are so fearful of making a failure; as long as you feel that way you and I can keep step along the way, and I hope you will never grow more confident of your sufficiency. Lack of confidence in self is always the accompaniment of true liberty, where the Spirit of the Lord is, and I am sure you will live to know that a door of utterance is opened for you, in the power of the gospel, when you have thought your speaking was a failure. I do not like to make failures any more than you do, but I have had assurances that the Lord gave me a word of comfort to some when I was under the impression I had made a miserable failure. I have sat down more than once, humiliated and crushed with shame, and I expect it will occur again. I am sorry I cannot be here with you, that time is my appointment at Warwick. I will write you later concerning the arrangements for coming; it is so convenient to come from Philadelphia that your business affairs need not be interfered with.

In reading over your letter I could not but compare you with myself, and envy your experience. In a year you have

been taught and learned what has taken me so many long and weary years to attain to. My understanding is very limited yet, and it seems such a pity that so long a time should be required to understand the A, B, C, of the gospel. I often wonder why all should not be taught in the same way. I hear brethren preach, no two alike, and I envy their ability; how happy I would be if I could only dwell in the top of the mountain as some of them do: how delightful it would be to have my heart and voice attuned to the singing of birds; but there is little of that with me: very few high and lofty notes in my song. A ministering brother once said to me that in speaking I was inclined to take my hearers down into the dark places and leave them there, and I ought to try and overcome that disposition. Unfortunately for me, the low places are where I dwell most of the time, and no one wants company more than I do, and if I can find any one to travel with me there, I have attained to the greatest height of happiness I know of. If I have attained to any understanding at all in the doctrine of God our Savior, it has been through suffering. All the joy and comfort I have ever known have come in that experience, so naturally I cannot talk about anything but the way that comfort has been ministered. I often covet the aptness of some to comprehend and appropriate truth when they hear it preached. I will agree that it is the truth, but my feeling of belief that it is the truth does not satisfy me, I want to know it for myself in an experience, and the only way a satisfying, comforting hope has ever been given me has been in suffering.

When I lived in Philadelphia I talked very glibly about God's sovereignty, predestination and election. I was credited with being quite wise, but O how little I knew the truth of them then. I know little of it now, but that little is of far more comfort than all theory and notion could afford. In those days I delighted in the meetings, loved to hear preaching, and it was happiness to associate with the brethren, but there was little exercise of mind concerning my title to an inheritance with the saints. I talked about trials and temptations as necessary evils in the christian's travel, but I knew little about it; at least I did not know Satan when he appeared, for he always was clothed as an angel of light. But the time came when my weakness and frailty were made known to me, and in a temptation so deceitful and reasonable that I was overcome; Satan showed me great things and promised me a "time salvation" if I would but serve him; it came about in this way: As a realization of weakness increased upon me I began to question and doubt the goodness of my hope, instead of getting better and stronger as I had expected to, I found the contrary my experience; this was wrong I felt, and I wanted to know the cause. Reason suggested that my ills were only such as are common to all men, wicked and righteous alike, as discomforts inseparable from the nature of man, and that I ought to be resigned to the inevitable. Resignation then appeared to me as a virtue that could and should be cultivated. The conclusion I arrived at was, that while it was decreed man could not avoid the evils which his nature was heir to, yet it was his duty to do the best he could, and in the consciousness of doing so his sorrows would be lightened. It did not then occur to me that God absolutely controlled all things, not only the visitation, but also the endurance, and that I

was trying to live a doctrine of "time salvation." I did not realize that to limit God in any degree was to deny his sovereignty; I forgot that he numbers the very hairs of our head, and that not a sparrow falls to the ground without him. There was no acknowledgment of his sovereignty in my heart, saying, "Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me." But the time came when I hope the Lord made me to see that everything I experienced was at his hand: that my thoughts were not my own: that my questions were told me: that my heaviness of spirit, sorrow of heart and all my temptations were ministered unto me in the fellowship of Christ's sufferings. Then I thanked God I was not able to practice resignation, and that no condition of obedience would alleviate suffering; but that sorrow would increase with increasing strength and knowledge, that it was given me in the behalf of Christ to suffer for his sake.

In my early efforts to be resigned to suffering I tried to console myself with thoughts of future joy and blessedness for all my suffering here. In a certain sense there may be comfort in such anticipation, but alone it can never be perfect consolation; to be perfect it needs a solid foundation. A promise of future happiness is of no value to me if the one who promises it gives no proof of his power and good will in this present life. As Almighty, nothing can prevent or cause our God to forego this manifestation. He makes known his judgments here, and if we are not given to know them now, our hope of future blessedness is unsafely founded. If sin is not already the ruin of Adam's race, then there exists no hell, and if salvation does not accompany righteousness already here, then there exists no heaven. The future is not the beginning. God is not inactive, and he never will attain to a better will or greater power than now. He is from beginning to end the living God, and not a god who only rises to power when this life has ended. A god who has any more work to do, who has anything to make good again, is no god at all. His just recompense of reward for evil as well as good is the everlasting song of the redeemed, and Jesus himself, in describing the blessedness of those who renounce all for his sake, begins with the present life. These views may not suit everybody, but I love the doctrine of a present salvation in an experience of the power of Christ resting upon us in our weakness: that Christ crucified is the power of God and the wisdom of God: that this suffering is the knowledge that Christ is come in the flesh, and in his appearing our salvation is manifest, this is knowing Jesus, seeing him for ourself, and being like him. The best of it all is, there is no condition attached to all this; we have nothing but what is given us. It is appointed that we shall fall into temptation; sometimes strong delusions are sent us, and frequently we try to walk in the light of the sparks of the fire we have kindled in an effort to escape from darkness; but all these things the Lord hath commanded, that we may know he alone is God; that we are insufficient of ourselves in everything. Our lying down in sorrow is an ascription of highest power to him; in causing us to be ashamed for all our ways he shows us his covenant; we are in possession of the hidden treasures of darkness, which he promises his people, when we are enduring temptation, and in this experience we are manifestly receiving eternal life. In this trial of our faith Jesus appears crowned with honor and glory.

When I commenced writing I meant a short letter: one page, not five. I hope I have said nothing you cannot fellowship, for I love this doctrine. I desire to know nothing save Christ crucified: no reigning with him except we suffer with him. I want to believe, and I think I do, that all things, of whatsoever nature they may be, in our life, work together for our good: that the life which we now live in the flesh we live by the faith of the Son of God, and whatever transpires in this life which we now live in the flesh is according to the pleasure and will of God, and will result to his honor, praise and glory.

Affectionately your brother in gospel bonds,

JOHN McCONNELL.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Aug., 1902.

DEAR BROTHER HORACE LEFFERTS:—Expecting to see you last Sunday in Philadelphia I have delayed writing you longer than I otherwise would have done. I trust your visit at Hopewell was comforting to you and others. Your appointment here for the second Sunday in August has been published for several Sundays past, and the brethren and friends are anticipating much pleasure in meeting you again. Your last appointment here was profitable and comforting to the church, and the desire is general for you to visit us often. If I know my own heart the gospel you preach is what I want to be found diligently proclaiming.

Of late years there have arisen among our people some preachers who are inclined to mix works with the doctrine of grace; we hear too much about man's power to obey, and less of God's sovereignty.

I like to hear, in no uncertain way, that there is no power in man by nature, in and of himself, to hear, much less obey the commandments of God, or the exhortations contained in Scripture. To contend that we have any power in ourselves to think a good thought, or do the least thing as we ought, or to believe or obey the gospel savingly in the slightest degree, is to overthrow the gospel and the faith of God's elect in all ages. Not long ago I read in a so-called Old School Baptist paper that it would be unrighteous in God to require obedience of us if there was in us no power to obey; and that it would be unjust to eternally condemn one for this inability. The writer was intent on upholding the doctrine of "conditional time salvation." But Scripture does not assert anywhere that man's destruction is due to weakness or disability; on the contrary, it states positively that condemnation is due to willful sin. Man's destruction is but the fruit of his own ways. Jesus said, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." There is a free and positive act of their will in disobedience, and they but act out the nature of the children of disobedience.

I would not for the world refrain from exhorting the brethren as to what manner of men we ought to be, yet I know that in myself, and in them, there is no power to do the things we would. It is not for me to accommodate the commands of God to man's ability, but to declare in no uncertain sound that without holiness shall no man see God. I find no authority in holy writ to exhort others concerning what they can do, but I do find warrant to exhort as to what we ought to do. To preach that we are of ourselves able to do the things we ought to do is to utterly ignore the grace of God, or at least to give grace glory only for partial assistance. The truth is that obedience is the first fruit of the new creation, the saints

are possessed of life which is "of God." The fullness of that life dwells in Christ, and of his fullness have we received, for he communicates it unto us by his Spirit. Without him, without that life, we can do nothing; that life precedes every vital act. There is no obedience but such as is the manifestation of it. "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." He is the life, and without him we can do nothing.

Conditionalists make great play on the word "duty." It is a word that is much misunderstood. Spiritually defined it is very unlike the natural understanding of it. In life naturally, duty calls us often to do things we have distaste for, but not so spiritually. We do not enter into the kingdom of God's dear Son by duty, by obedience, or by any other act whatsoever. The very principle of life spiritually is hatred of evil and love of righteousness. Salvation itself is the manifestation of God's choosing us that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. When we say, "I would do good," it is not our will naturally that says so, so much as it is the will of God that speaks. That will is written in our heart, and "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," and this experience is obedience unto the will of God. Obedience to the will of God is always and solely due to the effectual working of his grace in us to will and to do. We receive no life or salvation for doing these things, but in doing them there is great reward. Our calling and election are not simply to a future of everlasting bliss and felicity, but is now manifest in the subjects of grace as chosen to be holy; called not to uncleanness, but to holiness; and I have noticed that those who say the preaching of man's impotency tends to excuse an evil life are not much affected by the plague of their own heart. Establishment in the doctrine of God's sovereignty, election, predestination, and the total depravity of man, has a very different effect. I have also noticed that the least infringement on this doctrine by the judgment of man manifests a conditionalist. To limit in the least degree the predestination of God is to deny him power, wisdom and every attribute he possesses. I believe and love the truth of predestination. I cannot limit it in any degree without denying my hope in the mercy of God. To me it means that the will, purpose, counsel and decree of God embrace all things; that whatsoever cometh to pass, the Lord commanded; that all things, of whatsoever nature they may be, glorify him and exalt his wisdom. I firmly believe in the predestination of all things, not simply of all good things, but also of what I may judge to be evil things. God willed the existence of sin, that he might communicate himself to us in a manner inconceivable to the natural mind. He willed it as an occasion to bring forth the mystery of the incarnation and suffering of his Son, our Savior. His holiness forbids his willing its existence as an end; but in regard to his wisdom he willed it as an occasion to draw good out of things which in their own nature are contrary to good. How wonderful such wisdom is!

The greatest blessing the world was ever blessed with, was ushered in by the lust of man. The first promise of a Savior (Gen. iii. 15,) came by the sin of Adam. The sufferings of the dear Redeemer were occasioned by the rage and malice of those he came to save. From the very sin of man and the malice of Satan has been erected to the everlasting glory of God a new creation of all things by Jesus Christ. Lust inspired man to seek his own gratification in the death of

Christ, yet the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God ordered it thus to accomplish his own design of redemption. By the occasion of man's fall a way was opened to raise him to a more excellent condition: in the loss of an earthly paradise the way was opened for the finding a heavenly place. The violation of the old covenant introduced a better; the loss of our own righteousness ushered in a more enduring righteousness, everlasting. Had not the wisdom of God predestinated the entrance of sin in the world some attributes of God would never be experimentally known: grace would be unknown to us. Our love to him could not be so strong had we no enemy to hate for his sake. Humility would have no growth, and godly sorrow no fuel. Even our falling into temptation is predestinated to our good. When we remember his covenant we are ashamed for all our ways, and flee for refuge to the throne of grace. The pleasures of sin do not entice; we remember the time of our first love and say, "I will go and return to my first husband; for then was it better with me than now."—Hosea ii. 7. When we trust and have confidence in our own strength, God lets loose corruption to show us and make us sensible of our weakness, and where our sufficiency is. We would never remember we have an Advocate without some sensible necessity. God orders the hostile acts of sin to increase our hatred of it, for the deeper our humiliation the greater our abhorrence of it. We find by our calamity that the enemy has more strength against us than we suspected, and it causes us to watch and pray the more earnestly that we enter not into temptation.

How incomprehensible is the wisdom of God in the management of evil! How wonderfully he brings forth beauty and discovery of himself out of the greatest contrarieties, making evil serve to show us his glory. If evil were not in the world, we could not know what good is; as without night we could not know the beauty of the day.

God is not the author of sin, because of his holiness, yet in his wisdom he predestinates sin and accomplishes his own purposes by the iniquities of his enemies. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." Growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, is growing in a sense of infirmity and weakness, and God is glorified in his saints. They are made to say, Of myself I can do nothing: all our works are wrought in us. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever Amen."

The few minutes I intended to write have overrun two hours, but I will not often try your patience thus. I wish you could be here for to-morrow and relieve me of the heaviness I feel in anticipating the two services before me. My mind is destitute of anything that can be profitable to the people, and it is also destitute of any hope that my discernment will be any better to-morrow. I wish I could look forward to my appointments eagerly as some do, but I cannot, their approach is a burden and grief to me, for of all that speak in the name of the Lord I am the least profitable servant, if one at all. I love to meet the brethren, but to serve them I am not worthy. I want your fellowship in everything except the realization of an unprofitable ministry.

In love and fellowship I am, I hope, your brother in gospel bonds,

JOHN McCONNELL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Feb. 22, 1904.

DR. B. F. COULTER—MY DEAR BROTHER:—A few days ago I received your welcome letter. For several weeks you had been much in my mind, and I had really been expecting a letter from you, but could not tell why, and now do not know why you should think of me and write, unless you realized in the spirit I am a companion to you in these dreadful and very peculiar exercises of mind and soul of which you speak in your letter. Paul communed in the spirit with his brethren when in body they were separated by many miles. This communion is common to-day with the children of God. I believe, brother Coulter, you and I had such communion these last few weeks, though one hundred and sixty-five miles apart. The Spirit of Christ is one, and dwells in each member of his body, as the natural life is in each member of our earthly body. We are members one of another. This mysterious union is beyond our conception or comprehension, but faith lays hold upon the glorious truth and mystery, Christ manifest in the flesh. Where Christ is, there is communion and fellowship. As we speak or write these things we feel their assurance with power for the members of the body of Christ. But you know when the sons of God present themselves before the Lord, Satan is there also to present himself, (we feel to us more than to God) and he says to us, The body of Christ is perfect, each member as perfect as the head, and you know you are vile, unclean, hateful, deceitful, hypocritical, full of cursing and bitterness; every act you perform is utter selfishness, your walk in the church is merely mechanical, your manifested love is a lie, your humility is pride, your prayers are mockery, for many times when so engaged your mind is filled with some vain or vile subject, your professed fellowship is only for gain, your writings are not from the heart, but of the head, and for the purpose that you may have the applause of men. While Satan is said to be a liar from the beginning, he told Eve the truth when he said their eyes would be opened, and they should be as gods, knowing good and evil. (See Gen. iii. 22.) These above suggestions from him are in my case too true, too true. I believe, my brother, you are my companion in these trials of mind, and to Satan we are compelled to say, No, it cannot be that I am a member of the body of Christ. Where are past evidences, joys, songs of praise and heart-felt adoration to God? Gone, yes, and it seems forever. You say, "At such times we cannot walk in the beauty of holiness, nor can we write in the darkness." Neither can we live without hope, and we long for renewed evidences (daily bread), but learn man is not to live by bread alone. How prone we are to think God is slack concerning his promise, one day, with him, is as a thousand years, and a thousand years are as one day. We can never have better or stronger evidence that we are members of his body than to be with him in the wilderness, in the garden and in prison, to be hungry and thirsty, sick and naked, weary and oppressed, crying with strong groanings and tears because of fear, striving against sin, praying to be delivered from our enemies, and in anguish of soul ask, Why is the way so dark and the night so long? or why hast thou forsaken me? This was the life of Christ while here as a man, and it is his life still in each member of his body. I know well, my brother, what it is to be in the belly of hell, at the bottom of the mountains with the seaweeds wrapped about my head. Well

do I know what it is to groan within myself passing under the rod. With all such I can walk in fellowship, I know little of bright and glorious experiences, and of wonderful visions and revelations. Jonah with his rebellion and running away from the Lord, and Peter with his denial of Jesus and his cursing and swearing, are more companionable to me than John with his ardent affection and love. Is there not a turning over to Satan in our experience for the destruction of the flesh, as well as in the order of the house? Was it not so in the case of Job? While he was perfect in the sight of God through the blood and righteousness of Jesus, Job realized his experience to be needful, that he might be refined, and said, When I am tried (refined) I shall come forth as gold. The destruction of Job's earthly passions represents all the passions of our carnal nature, these must be destroyed (consumed) that the spirit be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. The image of Jesus can never be seen until all dross and tin are burned up, then his image appears in the gold (spirit); it cannot be seen in the flesh, for "the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."

You ask why faith is not always in exercise? Because we do not need faith when we think evidences are so bright and clear that we can walk by sight. Faith is in exercise only when we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, faith is the evidence of things not seen, it is never stronger than when all sight disappears and the darkness of night settles upon us. A few other evidences for the members of the body of Christ I will mention for your consideration and, I hope, comfort. Jesus said to the man sick of the palsy, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." The pharisees complained and said he spoke blasphemies. Jesus answered, "Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?" Hence to say, "Thy sins are forgiven," is to say to the dead, Rise up and walk, and to say, Rise up and walk, is to say, "Thy sins are forgiven." (See John v. 6, 9.) Every child of God realizes, as Paul did, he is dead, yet he lives. This is because his sins are forgiven; he is lame on both feet, yet he walks; he is blind, yet he sees what the world can never see; he is naked, yet he is clothed; he is poor, yet rich in faith and an heir of the kingdom; he is filled with unbelief, yet believes and cries, Lord, help thou my unbelief; he is a leper, yet he is permitted to mingle with the people of God; he is dumb, yet he speaks; he is cast down, but not destroyed; forsaken, but not alone; he doubts and fears, yet is in possession of a good hope through grace; he is cast out by men, yet sits down in the kingdom of God with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; he is vile and unclean, yet loved with an everlasting love. These are evidences of God's mercy to poor sinners, and that we are members of his body. Many times the best evidences of our acceptance with him we count as the things which are against us. When the Lord showed Manoah and his wife wonderful things in days of old, Manoah said, "We shall surely die;" but his wife said, If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have shown us these things. So today, my brother, if the Lord intended to kill us he would not have given us the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ, or manifested himself to us in his wonderful works of salvation. What we feel to be evil to us he intends for good. Then may we not call light darkness, and

darkness light. We may be mistaken in some of the bright seasons of joy and gladness, but the dying of the Lord Jesus is so marked in his members that it hardly seems possible to mistake it.

I am glad of your letter, brother Coulter, it did me good. Did you ever feel that all men had turned from you, and that the assembly of the saints would be perfect without you? This produces a lonely feeling indeed. In such a condition to receive a letter like yours to me, brings comfort and encouragement. Little of my life is spent except in this darkness of mind and soul.

Will now close, as I have already written more than I expected, and have perhaps said more than I should have done.

With love I hope unfeigned, I am your brother and companion in tribulation,

H. C. KER.

HERNDON, Va., Nov. 24, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I am now inclosing money order for two dollars to renew my subscription to our dear old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I do not want it discontinued so long as I can pay for it, for it often brings me glad tidings of good things when I am low in the valley of despond. O, I cannot praise my God enough for this precious medium of correspondence. How I would love to write to each and every one who writes for its pages, and tell them how much I love them for the truth's sake; but my pen would fail to express it as I would wish, for I cannot tell on paper just how I feel towards those I love in Christ Jesus. I know it is a gift from God to any one who can write to the edification and comfort of God's dear children. How poor and unworthy am I, deficient in it all, and often feel ashamed of myself, and think it may be wrong and a sin for one so ignorant and blind as I feel myself to be to attempt to write to the people of the most high God, who cannot look upon sin. This question will often arise, Is it for Jesus' sake and your brethren's sake that you are prompted to write, or is it all of the flesh? Such questions always make me fear and tremble, for if I know my own heart I do not want to deceive God's dear children. But we are told by the apostle of old that "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." The apostle goes on and states, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." Now here comes the warfare, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Yes, this old, carnal man or mind will often suggest, Keep all your thoughts to yourself, and do not tell any one your feelings in regard to spiritual things, for if you do they will laugh you to scorn and make fun of everything you tell them. I think this is one way that the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, at least I feel it so in my case. O that I could claim the right as written by the pen of one of old: "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things." O yes, I would love to communicate, if I had the right understanding, to those that teacheth in all good things, and I now wonder why we should hesitate to communicate to the dear old SIGNS, for we believe it teacheth in all good things, for it supplies us with food from the store-house of our God, of many dainties fresh and sweet.

Well do I remember the bright day in

May, nearly twenty years ago, when I went before the church at old Frying Pan, telling in my feeble way the way the Lord had led me along. Well do I remember the bright face of Elder Wm. L. Beebe, who was present at that meeting, and how he came to me with outstretched hand after I had been received for baptism, saying in a childlike manner, "My brother, I was glad to hear you tell the way the good Lord has led you." It was the first time I had ever met brother Beebe, and I felt to say in my heart, Surely this man is a man sent from God, for I see the mark in his forehead. Next morning I was led down into the watery grave by our pastor, Elder E. V. White, and after I was baptized we all went into the church-house, and Elder Beebe lined that good old hymn, "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform," &c., and they all sang, and I was made to feel, "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." But O, could I then tell of the toilsome journey through which I should be led in the future in the twenty years hence? O no, I did not think about that, for I had Jesus with me then, the Captain of my salvation, and the joy of all my song. I did not think for a moment that it was written of Jesus that soon after his baptism he was led up into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, no, nothing of that entered my mind, for I was lifted high up on the mountain top and witnessed the feelings of the poet:

"I then rode on the sky,
Freely justified I,
Nor envied Elijah his seat;
My glad soul mounted higher
In a chariot of fire,
And the world was put under my feet."

Such were my feelings at that time, but alas, soon after that time the tempter crossed my pathway, and I saw him and heard him say, My friend, do you not know that you are deceived in this excitement of yours, and I call it a delusion? I would advise you at once to shake it off and be a man, not a silly child, and enjoy this world with all its pleasures, and you will be happier by so doing. Here I was brought to a standstill, and said to myself, What can all this mean? for I was frightened almost unto death. While I was thus meditating I was brought face to face with the words of Paul, which read, "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members," causing him to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Dear reader, the above relation of my experience dates back nearly twenty years, and is still fresh in my memory, but the worst of all is I have never forgotten the tempter, neither has he forgotten me; I have many battles with him yet, and wonder to myself when they will end, and I cry out often, When will these battles end? I know they will never end while I am yet in the flesh, and I can see the longer I live that the heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; I know that it would be just as easy for me to live without breathing as to live without sinning in the flesh.

I must close now, for I am sure I did not intend to write in this way when I commenced, I only thought I would make some comments on the SIGNS and say some words of encouragement to the editor, dear brother Chick, who I believe is the right man in the right place. I know nothing that I could say in praise of him would have any tendency to puff

him up, but to the contrary would humble him in the dust of the earth before the great and living God; this is the kind of a man I take him to be. I would like to speak of brother Ker, brother Durand and others whose names would come up before me faster than I could write them, but will forbear to write of them now, as I have already written too much, and hope you will excuse me for trespassing on your time and patience.

Your poor, weak brother, if one at all,

J. F. OLIVER.

WYOMING, Del., Oct. 10, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I forward you the inclosed good letter from sister Wright, as requested. Am sorry it did not get here in time for you to get it before going to the Corresponding Meeting in Virginia this week. But as I hope it will be published in our family paper, the brethren and sisters she wished it to be read to can read it for themselves. It is a great comfort to me, causing me to feel that my poor writing is not entirely in vain, for which I hope to give God the praise, for I well know without him I can do nothing. I would not like to part with the good letter if it were not that I hope to receive it again in the SIGNS. I save the letters I receive from the dear ones, and read them again and again.

Remember me to sister Chick and family. I hope to see you at Salisbury next week.

Your sister in hope,

ANNIE MEREDITH.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., Oct. 4, 1905.

DEAR SISTER MEREDITH:—I received the October number of the SIGNS this morning; when I came to your communication and saw where you had mentioned my poor effort in a former copy, my heart went out to you until I could almost see your face and feel the touch of your hand. The answer has come to "Why have I written this?" and as I thought of knowing you after the Spirit, and of loving you, though in one sense unknown, and thousands of miles away, I could not help smiling, and all day have enjoyed a brighter hope and a deeper faith than for many weeks. These things are not taught us by man, but by the Spirit of God. My mind reverted to the time when I was trying so hard to get religion, when I thought that I had a part to do, and how I went further and further from the Way, the Truth and the Life. I tried until I gave up in despair, and then God in his own way and his own time revealed to me my helplessness, my unworthiness and my great need of a Savior. My mind followed on to the time and place where he, for Christ's sake, forgave my sins. How wonderful the plan of salvation seemed, and how tenderly and lovingly he spoke peace to my soul. Heaven itself cannot be a more beautiful place than the world appeared to me then, and the joy which came to me passed all understanding. But O the trials and conflicts through which I have passed, the temptations and allurements that I have encountered, the doubt and the darkness that have harrassed and encompassed me since that time. I would have given up my precious hope long ago if it had been left to me, that is, if my salvation had depended on good works, but when I would look away from self and sin there was the Morning Star of my existence, the same loving, unchangeable and all-powerful great First Cause, to pity, to uphold, to defend and to save. I do believe that I have been taught of him to love his cause, to

love his ordinances and to love his people. Many are the times that I am cast down and disquieted, but it is on account of being so undeserving, so sinful; because he has done so much for me, and because I am continually crucifying him afresh. I have never doubted my change of heart, for it was made as plain to me as the midday sun; have never doubted that he would save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, and sometimes, with all my follies, with all my imperfections, I am enabled to look up, through faith, and believe that some day I shall reign with him. Presumptuous some may say, yet it is not by or through what I have done, or can hope to do, but he found me wandering away from him, blind, naked and hungry, and he opened my eyes to the truth, clothed me with the robe of his righteousness, and permitted me to eat from his table. Words cannot express how good it all seemed, but the memory of them will live and abide with me while life lasts, and the security, too, that in the end it will be well with my soul. Sometimes I scarcely dare think it, to say nothing of writing it, but today I feel emboldened by his promises, by my faith in a risen Redeemer, by the cravings of my soul, by love for his people, by the anguish my sins cause me, and by a desire to worship him in the beauty of holiness. This hope, faith and belief have withstood the most adverse conditions, for I have been separated from all whom I hold dear (spiritually) for thirty years or more. During all that time have heard but three or four sermons, and have never had but one of the same faith to live near me; no one to exhort, to counsel, to comfort or reprove me; no one to whom I could tell my hopes or fears; no one to instruct me concerning the ordinances of his house. Of course I believe that the great Giver of all good was not unmindful of me, and that he is with me way out here in this golden State, whether obscured by doubt, darkness or unbelief; also that with him is life itself, but my journey has been so lonely; I have longed for companionship, and for the crumbs which fall from the table so frequently spread before you. I am afraid those who have the opportunity to sit at the feast do not appreciate it as they should, but it is only by such a dearth as I have experienced that we can know how peace like a river flows through the whole being, how emotions long pent up become uncontrollable, how desires long cherished awaken to a blissful realization when privileged to hear the gospel in its purity, when we can clasp the hands of speakers and listeners. Four years ago this month I had the greatest desire of my life granted, that of being baptized. It had been my wish for years, and it was a happy day for me. It was in old Virginia, just after the association at Frying Pan, and I am reminded that they will meet again near there in a few days. If I had the wings of a dove I would be there when they convene, for there my God and my kindred will be. I have had the pleasure of hearing brother Durand, but it was before I understood the message he proclaimed. I have had the privilege and pleasure of knowing and hearing brother Chick, and although his face would not be familiar to me now, think I would recognize his earnest, loving, comforting utterances.

Yesterday I had never heard of you, to-day I feel my heart aglow with love for you. We know not what the future holds in store for us, but my prayer is that he may be our Shelter from the storms, that we may be ready when the

final summons comes, and that we may awake with his likeness and be satisfied.

Dear sister, when you read this will you be kind enough to send it to brother Chick? and if he goes to the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, held with the Bethlehem church, I want him to read it to the members some evening when they have gathered together to talk of God and his goodness. They will want to hear from me, for they must know I love them, and I would like to mention them individually if I had time. Never was the child of an earthly king more royally received, never was a stranger so well cared for, and christian feeling abounded until I felt like hiding my head with shame. Was I worthy of it all? No, but God forbid that I should have gone among them save with the cravings that come from the heart of one willing to exalt all others to the debasement of self, to hear the old, old story of his love for such, and to honor and glorify his name.

I have written more than I intended, and it may be more than is profitable, but I had a desire to do so, and yielded to it.

Your unworthy sister in christian love,
(MRS.) B. E. WRIGHT.

BROOKLYN, N. Y.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR EDITOR:—You will find inclosed letters from a dear sister, which have been very comforting to me, and I think they will be to all the readers of the SIGNS. I would like to have them published if you think best to do so.

Yours in hope of life eternal,
(MRS.) J. D. SHAFER.

EAST COBBLESKILL, N. Y., March 13, 1904.

DEAR SISTER LAURA:—I was glad to hear from you. You spoke of being such a sinner, and being so vile. I thought, How can it be you felt like that? O it did me so much good; you told my mind better than I can. I am so vile I have to cry, Unclean, unclean. I am the chief of sinners; I must say,

"Marks of grace I cannot show;
All polluted is my breast;
Yet I weary am, I know,
And the weary long for rest."

So tired of myself and sin, I feel to say, O, dear Jesus, set me free. I think much about the dear ones that have gone before, and as you say, how can it be that I, one so vile, ever can enter in that blest abode? I feel and know you will, you are so much better than I am or ever will be; then sometimes I feel so composed, and feel to rest in the finished work of Christ, knowing he doeth all things well; he has all power in heaven and in earth, and I know if I am ever saved it is by him alone. Whether we live or die we are his, creatures of his care, he does with us as he sees fit, and if that precious blood was shed for us we are as sure of heaven as Christ himself. I have been in the dark of late, and now since I have commenced writing the light is breaking in, I am made to realize how he cares for us, and how gently he leads us through dangers seen and unseen, and even the hairs of our head are all numbered, and not one sparrow can fall without him. Dear sister, what a God is ours, and how I would love to be good, but when I would do good, evil is present, but my hope is in God, and God alone, he is my Rock and Shield; no other source to look to.

I must bring this letter to a close, for fear of wearying you. Yes, my dear mother has passed to the beautiful world on high; she was sick seven weeks; a complication of diseases, but so happy in her mind, and the last week she lived

was painless, and she died like going to sleep. Elder Clark preached her funeral sermon. You know how I feel, you lost a dear, good mother, too. The church here at Echo is getting along just the same. Give my love to all of your family. I hope to hear from you again. We have a love for each other I hope that will never die.

I must say good by, with love.

EFFIE NETHAWAY.

East Cobbleskill, N. Y., June 8, 1905.

Dear Sister Laura:—I received your letter only a few days ago, and I must say it was a feast, for I always esteemed you so highly. What a pleasure to hear from those that are traveling the same road and seeing the same things. Let me be what I am, I do love the children of God, and I do hope I am taught of him who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind; my only trust is in Jesus, the giver of every good and perfect gift. O how frail is man, and so prone to sin. I see more and more of my sinfulness every day of my life, and yet I am made to praise God from whom all blessings flow. How we travel over hills and valleys, but I am so much of the time way down in the valley, and feel so lonely. I have thought much of Mary Magdalene when she said, "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulcher, and we know not where they have laid him." Are there not times when we feel and experience something of that lonely feeling? We mourn an absent God. I walk in darkness, and the way is lonely and dreary, and I dislike my sinful nature. This I do know, I am the chief of sinners, and I cry for mercy every day of my life, and my prayer is,

"If I have never yet begun to tread the sacred road,
O teach my wandering feet the way to Zion's blest abode."

Dear sister, this hymn just came into my mind so sweetly and so unexpectedly, and it does seem glorious:

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

I the Lord do all things. How great and wonderful are thy ways, O God. None but God can heal the broken-hearted and wash our sins away. He died and rose again for his dear children. When I think of his suffering hour; he trod the wine-press alone, what a God is ours, is he not to be praised? Ought we not adore his most holy name for his goodness and mercy all the days of our life? "His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me." The loving care of our heavenly Father, dear sister, is great when we are made to see it; the very hairs of your head are all numbered, fear ye not therefore. How the time is passing away, it cannot be long at best before we will pass away out of this world of sorrow and trouble. I get so tired of it all, I must say I count the world a bubble and vanity. When I read your good letters, and know how patient you are in every way, and I am such a fretful child, I often think, Why am I thus? Ah, if I could be as you are, and father, and sister Tator, and dear sister Helen Kinney, you all look so good to me. If I am a saint, I am the least of all, but God has promised never to leave or forsake his children; though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we shall fear no evil.

Well, I must close this letter for fear I will weary you. Dear sister, I feel so full I cannot find words to express my feelings. The Elder's letter was fine, he says so much in only a few words; I would love to hear him preach. I never thought any one would read those poor,

little letters of mine but you, dear sister, you know just how I am, so plain and small in everything; I am the chief of sinners. I do not care if you pass these letters along to some one, if there is a word of comfort in them to any creature in this world of sorrow, all right, but it does not seem possible that I could write or say a word of comfort to any one. Sister Tator sent your letter by father, and I enjoyed it so much, and he did, too. I think of you and Sophia so much, you live and enjoy yourselves as my mother and I used to, but she is resting. I miss her very much, and only see Jennie twice a year for just a short time, but God's will be done, not mine.

My love to your family. Good by, with love.

EFFIE NETHAWAY.

CAPRON, Okla., Feb. 19, 1905.

ELDER JAMES M. TRUE—MY DEAR, AGED FATHER IN ISRAEL, AND I HOPE BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS SAVIOR:—I seat myself this dreary Sunday morning to let you know that you are still of some use in the world, that is, if comforting unworthy me by your good writing is of any use. Your writing has comforted me. I always feel comforted when I see that some little child has received comfort from reading my poor efforts at writing, and much more when I see that an old veteran of the cross has received consolation in what I have written through the columns of the SIGNS. You did not call my name, yet you used some of my words and told of how much comfort they were to you, where I had written on the subject of the new birth. You were eighty-one years and two months old at the time you wrote. I will, if I live to see the twentieth day of March, be fifty-eight years of age, and I am of no account for a man of that age, either spiritually or naturally.

We read of a wheel within a wheel; how much better can that be illustrated than to see an old man like yourself take comfort in a younger man's writings, and then see the younger man take comfort in that same old man's writings? Each wheel is of some benefit to the other. Here again is the wheel within a wheel, I in the Father, and the Father in me. You see it is all an inside work, one of these wheels is as much in the other as the other is in it. Christ is as much in the Father as the Father is in him, and the church is as much in Christ as Christ is in the church; they are as much in each other as one drop of water is in another in the same vessel. Men accuse us of making man a mere machine, although we do not make man anything. But our God has made one of the most wonderful pieces of machinery that has ever been made, and that is man, who is most wonderfully and curiously made; he is composed of many different parts, and these different parts are necessary; all the members are required to make a perfect man. Each member of the human family born in this world was in the head and representative of the human family, to wit, in Adam, and each member of Adam's race is, according to nature, generated individually, and then the birth follows. This is necessary in order that man may see the kingdom of this world. So also regeneration and the new birth are necessary in order to see the kingdom of heaven. I think that when the quickening or making alive takes place we have the penitent, and I think that when the load of sin and guilt is removed from the conscience, this is called deliverance, or the new birth.

I feel so unworthy to write about the

greatness of our God, and why do I write? is the question with me. Is there not a cause? Why do I seek such men as you to whom to write? I never expect to see you on this earth, and never have seen you, but I hope that we are one in Christ, and Christ in us. Is not this the moving cause which prompts us to write to each other, or to those we have never seen? What a sweet union exists between Christ and his people. If we are united in Christ we are united to his people, because Jesus prayed that we all might be one, as he and his Father are one, and all his people are one. Jesus saw of the travail of his soul and was satisfied. Why was he satisfied? Because by his one offering he forever perfected them that are sanctified. How did he perfect them? By tasting death for every one of them. I am glad that Christ came to save sinners, and not good people. Had he come to save good people I would be without hope. But it "is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief," said Paul. That reaches my case, he is the Savior of the chief of sinners. The older I get the worse I feel to be. I do not suppose that I really am any worse now than I have always been, but I see more and more of it all the time. I see that the heart in man is deceitful and desperately wicked, and none can know it. This is my case, every imagination of the heart is evil, and that continually. I sometimes think that I have the most foolish imaginations of any one living; but our comfort is not in looking to our sins and shortcomings, but to Christ and his finished work. I hope that I look to the finished work of our Lord who spoiled the works of the wicked one, and I hope that these sins that annoy me so much have all been canceled and blotted out of the book of his remembrance, no more to appear against me in time or in eternity. Our sins were laid to the charge of our great Surety, and are not laid to our charge any more. In that trying hour there was none to help him, and therefore his own arm brought salvation unto him. It is too late now for men to offer their help, and if the same help had been offered in that dreadful day he would not have accepted it. Nothing save his life, death, burial, resurrection and ascension would suffice. He paid it all, and all to him we owe. I have nothing to pay, only gratitude, which also he has given unto me; therefore it is grace for grace, and not grace for works. Here is the wheel within the wheel again, grace for grace.

My dear brother, I am making this letter too long, but I pass away many lonely hours in writing upon the subject that I love. I know that your longing eyes are watching for home to appear in sight. You are certainly almost home, and will soon hear the blessed welcome, Come in, thou blessed of the Lord, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. It is yours by an eternal inheritance, you were born an heir to it. O this rich legacy is so grand to meditate upon, and it is sure to all the seed, there is nothing uncertain about it. I hope that I take consolation in it, unworthy though I am. You and I have found that we have no continuing city, no abiding place here, but we look for a city. The inhabitants of that city need not the light of the sun or of a lamp to illuminate it, the blessed Jesus will be the light of that city, and all those whose names are found written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world will be in that beautiful city.

I am, I hope, your brother in the hope of this better world,

J. M. DULEY.

MATTHEW XVI. 26.

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

The word soul here means the man. (See Luke ix. 25.) Had there not been danger surely Christ would not have given this warning, nor have commanded the disciples to follow him; and even then they did forsake him to their own sorrow; they must be taught obedience through suffering. There were those present then who suffered afterward the pangs of the lost and the fire of torment, and we may take a lesson from it. No less than they do we need the warning, for there are some living to-day who are seeking the world and are in danger of losing their souls, and who, if they gain the world, shall be made to cry out, What shall I give in exchange? They shall know what David meant when he said, "The pains of hell gat hold upon me."

When we tread the path of disobedience, and do the things that bring reproach upon the cause, we know that the faithful ones are made to grieve and feel ashamed, for such conduct puts Christ to an open shame. It may be said that in a sense it grieves the Holy Spirit, and a flood shall overwhelm such an one, so that he may again be brought to a knowledge of spiritual things, and the blessings of the gospel. O that his people might remember their God, and walk worthy of their high calling, and be saved from the suffering which surely follows willful sin; for to every one who neglects this salvation must come this question of Christ's; therefore we should give the more earnest heed to these things. The awful sense of being lost causes weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. Let us hope that this question, What shall it profit? may come as a warning to some, and save from error them that believe. If these words come to one who has already come to this fearful state of the lost (that lonely place in this wilderness of sin) where he longs to return to the old home in the church, let him hope in Christ that he may yet find this question, What shall it profit? a blessed consolation, and the place where he is made to feel that he is lost a blessed place. To be lost in this Scripture means to be a castaway, as Luke has it; and Paul said, I keep my body under, lest I should be a castaway. The allusion in the word "castaway" is to a coin that must again pass through the fire, to be refined from its dross. "Lost," here does not mean eternal damnation, because one chosen in Christ can never be lost in that sense, but one may be in that lost condition, from which preaching saves him. Paul said to Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." James said, "He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." It is to these lost ones that preaching comes sometimes with power and consolation. It is the prodigal son that knows the heartache of the homesick boy; and the erring child of God remembers the spiritual riches of the Father's house, and the sweet companionship of the church of Christ, and, cries out for the blessed privileges thrown away. Lost in the wilderness of worldly things, he would return, but knows not the way, and his strength is gone. Now blessed indeed is such an one, if Christ puts into his heart this question, "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" The worthless world cannot buy that which he has lost.

He is alone, in awful desolation, in the furnace of affliction, lost, lost, lost. How he looks back to the peace and plenty of a home in the fellowship of the church. Such has been his walk that his brethren cannot trust him, and he knows it. He feels the words, "Depart from me." He never knew himself as he does now, and it is everlasting fire with him; it is the sifting; it is the refiner's fire. But though he has made his bed in hell, Christ is there, and it is the presence of Christ that causes his sinfulness to be felt; God has given him repentance and sorrow for sin. He maketh the clouds his chariot. He is in the cloud that shuts out the light, so that the poor, lost soul is ready to say, There is nothing I can give in exchange, and all that I have gained is to no profit. No one can feel the hopelessness of this condition but a lost, living soul, who has once heard the sweet words, Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven. The first realization of being a saved sinner did not have the memory in it of peace and pardon, nor of the sweet communion of saints, when his heart first believed. That first sorrow for sin was not embittered by the memory of loving hands once held out to minister. Now he has crucified to himself the Son of God afresh, after having tasted the good word of God. It is impossible to renew him again unto repentance; he has reached his end, to be burned, and he is burning. The last state is worse than the first, and thus Christ is making him to feel the question, What doth it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and what has he to give in exchange for his soul?

Poor sinner, are you blessed again with a hatred for sin? Do you again see how worthless are all things worldly? Do you look across the great gulf, and see Lazarus in Abraham's bosom? You know how pleasant this is, for you were once rich and fared sumptuously every day, now, in torment, you cry for a drop of the water of life, and none of your brethren can come to you, because of the gulf. But, suffering one blessed with grief, Christ is with you. When the devil's sifting is done, and the gold is refined, you shall rest again in Christ; then you shall rejoice and be glad that you could not buy salvation; then you will have learned that your strength is made perfect in weakness, and through suffering. After all the tribulation you will not be ashamed when the love of God is shed abroad in your heart; you shall again fear the Lord. May God give us this fear which is clean, enduring forever; may he make us to know and feel that his judgments are true and righteous altogether; may God pardon error and give us peace.

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.

PLEASE BE SURE,

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1905.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITOR:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

CLOSE OF VOLUME SEVENTY-THREE.

At the beginning of the volume of the Signs of the Times of which this number is the close, from a deep heart-felt sense of our own weakness and lack of wisdom, we expressed the desire that the blessing of our covenant-keeping God might be with us all who had to do with the conduct of the Signs, and with our correspondents and subscribers. We also expressed the fervent desire that all should strive for peace in all things, and for the things whereby one might edify another. Also it was our expressed hope that all such matter as should come to the office for publication might be for the edification of our readers. These desires and prayers have been with us through the year, and still remain in our heart. While there has been failure to come up to this mark on our part, yet we do feel that our God in mercy has remembered us and that now we ought to lift up our voices in praise to his holy name, that he has been faithful though we have been unfaithful. How gracious are the words of the apostle, "For he is faithful that promised." Again, "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself." The words of the great apostle to the Gentiles come up in our mind as the testimony that we must also bear, "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come."

If we have abided in the truth during the past year, it is because we have been upheld by grace divine. This is most solemnly true, both as regards editor and contributors to our columns. We do believe that the truth as it is revealed in the word of God has continued to be presented by all who have written for the Signs. Editorially, we have written in great weakness, and often with much hesitancy, but still, we do know that we have striven to maintain the same great principles of doctrine, practice and experience, that have been the delight of the humble in all the ages past, and that do honor our God and abase the creature; this we have desired to do. We are not satisfied with ourself as we look back over the past, but still we are satisfied that in some small measure at least, God has been glorified in our weakness. Paul rejoiced and gloried in his infirmities, that the power of Christ might rest upon him. Our readers are judges of what has been written by us, and of the matter in general with which the columns of the Signs have been filled. But above the judgment of men, even men of God, is the judgment of God our King. We regard highly the approval of those who love God, but still more important do we feel it to be to have the approval of God. We have desired his approval, both as to the matter that we have been writing, and also as to the spirit in which it has been written. We have wanted to declare the truth, and to declare it in love; of all this God is judge. We believe that we have been upheld in abiding in the truth.

We are also glad to say that financially we have been favored, so that we do not feel discouraged. God has put it into the hearts of his people to sustain us in that way, and we desire to express our appreciation of the favor which they have shown us, and to thank God and take courage for the future. The heart of the king and the hearts of all men are in his hand, and he turns them as the rivers of water are turned. We are sure that only as we have abided in the truth, and only as the SIGNS has continued to contend for the old faith, have we had the favor of those who love the truth, and we are glad that it is upon this ground that we have had such favor from the brethren in general.

We desire at this time to make a few suggestions to our correspondents. Some have written who did not desire their names to appear. We can fully understand, we think, the fear and timidity which has actuated our brethren in this. Some have indeed expressed themselves as desiring their names withheld because of the fear that their motive might be self-glorification rather than the glory of the name of the Lord. These fears truly make manifest that such souls are indeed meek and lowly of heart, through the knowledge of themselves, which God has in mercy given them. But still very many ask who it is that has written, and say they desire to know, they have much enjoyed the writing, and their hearts go out to the writer. Let us urge that our correspondents give consent that their names be published. We urge our brethren to continue to write for our columns as their minds are led, and assure you all who have written during the past year that your correspondence has been most helpful to us, and helpful to our readers in general. Very many write to us, expressing themselves in that way, and often at the close of a business letter such words of glad approval are given a little space, and they are cheering to receive. We would gladly publish all such testimonies to the blessings received by many in reading your correspondence, but this is manifestly impossible for want of space. We do not think that the present volume has been exceeded in the excellency of its correspondence during any year in the past, and hope that this may continue. Articles upon the various themes in the word of God, such as the various principles of doctrine, the order of the church, and narratives of experience, also upon the admonitions of the word, with exhortation, are desirable. There is no trifling word in the Scripture, all is profitable, as we are told by the inspired apostle. There is great variety in the word, and we trust through the guidance of the Holy Spirit there may also be variety in what may appear in the SIGNS in time to come, as has been the case in the past.

We have had an abundance of original matter during the past year. We think that original matter is to be preferred to copied or old matter, as a general rule; not that it is never advisable to publish old or copied matter, but it is the testimony received from our readers that they appreciate original matter more than the other. This is not because old matter does not contain the truth of God as well as new matter, but because of the travel of the people of God side by side, leading their minds to meditate upon similar things, so that they are brought together in writing and reading by mutual heartwork through the Spirit in each one, as Philip and the eunuch were brought together in heart as well as in bodily presence, or as Peter and Cornelius were

brought together, or Paul and Ananias.

We feel that we have reason to praise God for the brotherly kindness manifested in all the communications that have been published during the past year. There have been somewhat different views presented by brethren upon a few subjects, but in it all there has been no disposition to attack the persons of those who have differed. This is as it should be, for there never is any good reason, when brethren do differ upon the meaning of any Scripture, for acerbity to creep in. If brethren are in anything diverse minded it is their privilege to express their minds, but after all, let them all remember that God shall reveal, and he alone, even this unto them. There can be no difference between those who have been taught by the Spirit upon the great principles of the doctrine of God. If one, professing godliness, denies salvation by grace alone, it is manifest that he is not taught of God at all. The same is true if one denies total depravity, or the doctrine that is commonly called by that name. Brethren may and do differ in their understanding of some portion of the word of God, but they must see eye to eye with regard to the doctrine of salvation, the doctrine that honors God and glorifies the dear Savior.

In conclusion, we feel that we wish in justice, and from a sense of gratitude, to make mention of the services of Elder H. C. Ker in the office, in the reading of proof, and preparing matter for printing, and in advice given in such a way and at such times as has been of the greatest benefit to us. We know our readers have greatly appreciated his occasional articles, and it is but right that we should say he has been of the greatest help in many ways. We have regarded it as a special blessing in the providence of God that he is situated as the pastor of the church at Middletown, and of the church at New Vernon, so that he can give attention to the publication of the SIGNS in the office.

Surely we ought not to close without making mention of the proprietors of the SIGNS who have borne the burden of care and responsibility, and have borne it so well. Let us praise the grace of God in their behalf, and let us pray that the help that has been given them since the death of brother Benton Beebe may continue to be given them, to the praise of the glory of his grace.

While we would extol the mercy of God in the past year, we feel deeply that we need great grace for the year to come, if it shall please God to spare us and to continue our present relation with the SIGNS.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder J. D. Hubbell entered into eternal rest Nov. 29th, 1905, at his home in Kelley Corners, N. Y., aged 69 years, 4 months and 21 days. In 1855 brother Hubbell was given to know his helpless condition as a sinner; he was given a good hope through grace in the latter part of 1858. He united with the second church of Roxbury, N. Y., in 1859, of which church he remained a steadfast member to the end of his sojourn in the earth. Soon after he obtained a hope in Christ he became impressed with the duty to preach; later he was licensed to exercise his gift. September 13th, 1872, he was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry. He preached 517 funerals, baptized 58 and married 208 couples. Sept. 22nd, 1857, he married Eliza M. Jaquish, who, with two grown sons, William and Burr, and four grandchildren, survives him; he left also many other near relatives who mourn their loss. He traveled much during his long service in the church, and was widely and favorably known among Old School Baptists of the United States and Canada. He was pastor of six churches, assisted the last three years by Elder J. B. Slauson, who is a member of the Roxbury Association, of which Elder Hubbell was Moderator. His equal in patience, longsuffering, humility, forbearance and generosity is seldom found; he was a friend indeed to the poor, not only in his own country, but wherever he knew want was; he never waited to hear the sad

cry, "Help." No man can be more faithful in the discharge of duties laid upon him than was our dear brother Hubbell. His one theme was Christ and him crucified. He had the implicit confidence of all who knew him, and to know him was to love him. Some months ago his health began to fail because of a complication of diseases, and he continued to decline till the end, which was peaceful and painless. During the months of his decline he was patient and uncomplaining, reconciled to God's will.

The funeral service, which was very largely attended by relatives, neighbors and friends of all denominations, was conducted by the writer, assisted by Elders J. B. Slauson, D. M. Vail and F. W. Keene; text used, 1 Cor. xv. 57, 58. The interment was in the Hubbell cemetery. Thus the end, on earth, of another faithful soldier of the cross. The change from mortality to immortality must be glorious; mortality swallowed up of life. May the grace of God uphold dear sister Hubbell and the sons, and cause us all to bow to his righteous will.

H. C. KER.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

Joanna Hoges Stribling was born in Spartanburg district, S. C., Nov. 18th, 1814. When quite young she professed a hope in Christ and united with the New School Baptists. She was married to the late David Stribling Oct. 16th, 1834; to them were born nine children, three sons and six daughters, of whom two sons and three daughters are living. Soon after the war between the States all the family except two sons emigrated to Hood Co., Texas, and were among the pioneer settlers of that county. Her husband died Sept. 13th, 1883, and as she was left alone her son-in-law and his wife, J. A. and Lucie Tandy, lived with and took special care of their precious, aged mother the remainder of her days. Some time in 1884 our dear sister was baptized in the fellowship of Bosque River Church of Old Baptists by the late Elder E. M. Caudle, of Erath Co., Texas, but soon thereafter she transfered her membership to Friendship Church, Acton, Texas, and was a very active, faithful and lovely member until a few years ago, when her mind began to fail from her great age, but otherwise her health was remarkably good. Our dear sister was a great reader, and read with much interest for many years the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, Beebe's hymn book, both volumes of Beebe's editorials and most all of the Bible, which was indeed a great comfort to her. Dear sister Stribling traveled to Old Baptist meetings far and near for twenty years, and made the acquaintance of many brethren and sisters and made many friends. She never was heard to speak an unkind or harsh word to or about any person, but was very kind to all. She was a firm, uncompromising Predestinarian Old School Baptist, and had been of that faith for about twenty-five years.

Dr. John Doyle, her son-in-law, who was a leading citizen of the city of Grandbury, and of Hood Co., Texas, just before he passed away (1895) also professed the faith of the Old School Baptists, and expressed a desire to be baptized, and sent for the writer to come and baptize him, but his condition was such that we thought it prudent to put it off, hoping that he might get a little stronger in a few days, but the dear, precious brother and friend died in a very short time; the memory will be precious to us as long as we live. The confession related above was a comfort and consolation to our dear sister.

Owing to the death of dear Sallie, wife of my son, M. N. Rogers, who died the same day that sister Stribling died, the writer could not attend the funeral at Acton, Texas, therefore the family requested an old friend, a minister of the New School Baptist order, to conduct a short funeral service at the grave. Thus passed away one of the most faithful pillars of the church, but our loss is her eternal gain.

W. L. ROGERS.

BLUM, Texas, Nov. 28, 1905.

William Edward Frazier was the third son of brother and sister Job Frazier, and was born May 5th, 1866, died Oct. 22nd, 1905, being in his 40th year. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Welsh Tract, by Elder Joseph L. Staton. He later came to Washington, D. C., and by letter became a member of the Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of which he was a beloved and useful member until his death, which the church feels is a great loss, but desires to bow in humble submission to him who never makes a mistake. Brother Frazier was sound and strong in the faith, earnest and true to what he conceived to be right; he was one of those whose every day life showed the religion of his heart. His doctor says that he was one of the few men who had the same religion in his business that he had at church. His neighbors and friends give him a good name, which is rather to be chosen than great riches. Brother Frazier was chosen a deacon the same day that the writer was called as pastor, so that I was intimately and pleasantly associated with him until his death, in which I feel that I have lost a good friend and a dear brother. It was good to hear him talk as he sometimes did in our Saturday meetings, he was not a man of many words, but spoke to the point. He was married in November, 1897, to Mrs. Laura Martin, of Washington, D. C., who was to him a faithful and loving wife. She is not a Baptist, but says she hopes never to lose sight of the Old School Baptists, for they were the people of her dear husband's life. She wants you, brethren and sisters, to visit her, which I hope you will feel to do. I have always esteemed her very highly, and felt very much at home in her home. She, together with her little daughter Margaret, about five years old, survives the husband and father; in their sorrow

they have the satisfaction of knowing that their loved one was honest and straight in all his dealings, and enjoyed the confidence and esteem of the world, and the loving fellowship of the church of Jesus Christ. He was sick about six weeks with that dreadful malady, typhoid fever, and all that loving hands could do was done, but the Father had said, Child, come home. He was conscious of the end, and near his last breath, which was peaceful, he caught his wife in his arms and said, "Laura, I am going home, come go with me, but you will have to come quick."

At his funeral I felt to be one of the mourners, and could say but little. Quite a number paid their sad respects. May God's watchful care and tender mercy be with the widow and fatherless little girl, together with all the bereaved.

His sorrowing pastor,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

Perry D. LeCates was called away from the pains, sorrows, afflictions and sufferings of this mortal state, into the joys of heaven, on the 16th of October, 1905, aged 71 years and 7 days. He united with the Little Creek Church, Delaware, and was baptized by the writer about fifteen years ago. Truly he adorned the doctrine that he professed by an orderly and consistent walk, fulfilling in the most conscientious manner every obligation that fell to his lot. He was twice married; first in his early manhood to Peggy Culver, who was also a member of Little Creek Church, and who passed away about twelve years ago. The issue of this union was ten children, seven sons and three daughters, who grew to manhood and womanhood, besides others who died in infancy. About five years ago he was again married, to Miss Mary Hall, who survives him, also two daughters and five sons, besides a number of grandchildren. We mourn, but not as those who are without hope. May the Lord be the widow's husband and the comforter of all that mourn.

ALSO,

John J. Matthias, husband of the late sister Sarah Matthias, (who was a member of the London Tract Church, Pa., and who died Dec. 31st, 1904,) departed this life Oct. 18th, 1905, in the 74th year of his age. Mr. Matthias was a very kind-hearted, upright and worthy man, and I am satisfied that the love of the truth was in his heart. He was for more than fifty years a member of the Presbyterian Church, and led a very consistent, moral life. I respected him for his kind and devoted attention to his wife, always providing her a way to get to her meetings, generally accompanying her, and giving careful and earnest attention to the preaching, and sometimes giving expressions of approval. He leaves two sons and one daughter, by whom he will be greatly missed. May the Lord comfort them in their great sorrow.

A. B. FRANCIS.

By request of the bereaved relatives, I send for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a notice of the death of our beloved brother ond fellow-laborer, **Elder W. L. Williams,** who died at his home in the town of Gilmer, Upshur Co., Texas, Sept. 21st, 1905, of typhoid fever. He was born in the State of Georgia, Nov. 3rd, 1833, was married in July, 1857, to Miss Henrietta A. Floyd, united with Beulah Old School Baptist Church, Troup Co., Ga., the first Sunday in August, 1882. He graduated at the medical college at Macon, Ga., when about twenty-three years of age, and located at Daviston, Ala., and followed the practice of medicine about thirty years. He lived at Roanoak, Ala., about three years, and from there moved to the State of Texas in the year 1883, and together with his wife united by letter with Mt. Zion church, near Lafayette, Upshur Co., Texas. Soon afterward he began to exercise his gift in public, and on March 25th, 1891, was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry. He was sound, zealous, consistent and faithful in all his ministerial relations. During the last eight or ten years of his life he was actively engaged in the service of the churches of his section of country, very much devoted to his calling and much beloved by the brotherhood. He was bold, uncompromising and fearless in the declaration of truth and the exposition of error. His walk before men was such as became his profession. One near to him has truly said, "He was true-hearted and generous in his dealings with men, a devoted husband and indulgent father." I feel that it is true of him, he fought a good fight, he kept the faith, and he now in spirit is enjoying that crown of righteousness laid up for him and all who love the appearing of our Lord. He leaves to mourn their loss an aged widow, who shared with him the joys and sorrows of life for more than forty-eight years, six children, four sons and two daughters, twenty-four grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, the churches of his care, and many other brethren and sisters and dear friends, but we are all glad to believe that our loss is his eternal gain. May the God of all grace bless and give the needed comfort to all those who mourn.

We laid his body to rest in the Gilmer cemetery on Friday, Sept. 22nd, to await the resurrection summons in the last day, when this vile body shall be changed, that it may be fashioned like unto his (Jesus) glorious body. The writer tried to speak the comforting words of gospel truth at the burial.

H. B. JONES.

MT. VERNON, Texas, Nov., 1905.

Otis Carmichael, a well known painter of this city, residing at 2436 Sixth avenue, was struck and instantly killed by the second section of Northwestern passenger train No. 6, eastbound, about 8:30 o'clock. The accident occurred in the north end of the local yards, where Carmichael had been visiting a relative employed as operator in the yard office. Carmichael

went to the lower yards earlier in the evening for the purpose of visiting Lou Carmichael, the operator in the yard office, whom it is said he had met for the first time Sunday, and who proved to be a distant cousin. On leaving the yard office Carmichael started south along the tracks, and had proceeded but a short distance when struck. It is known that Carmichael had been suffering from poor eyesight, and last winter underwent an operation, but without obtaining relief. It is supposed that the glare of the headlight of the approaching locomotive confused him and he mistook the track on which the train was running. He was thrown about thirty feet and was dead when the train crew picked him up. The lower portion of his body was crushed and one leg was broken. For a number of years Carmichael was employed as master painter by the motor company in this city, and the interior decorations of the first big cars were all executed by him. When the street railway company moved its shops to Omaha he worked over there for awhile, and then went to Monroe, Mich., and worked in the shops of the electric line which C. R. Hanan of this city and others built between Detroit and Toledo. He went there on the offer of a position from W. B. Tarkinton, former superintendent of the line here, who holds a similar position with the company there. On returning from Monroe, Carmichael worked for a few months again with the motor company across the river, but for some time has been unable to follow his trade, owing to the trouble with his eyes. He is survived by his wife, four sons, two of whom work in a mattress factory in Omaha, and one daughter.—*Omaha Daily Bee.*

[Otis Carmichael was a son of sister Phebe A. McNally, of Sugar Loaf, N. Y., and a grandson of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. The sad accident which caused his death occurred Monday, Oct. 2nd, 1905.—Ed.]

Brother **Joseph M. Fowble** departed this life on Friday night, July 7th, 1905, at his residence near Butler, Baltimore Co., Md., aged 81 years and 10 months. He had been failing with the infirmities of age for some time, and at the last passed peacefully away to the home above, for which he had hoped for many years. Brother Fowble had been a lifelong resident of the vicinity where he died. He was well known throughout Baltimore county as an honorable business man, and among those of his immediate neighborhood he was known for his great kindness of heart and for the helpfulness of his life toward all who were needy. For many years, during our first acquaintance with him, he was one of the first to visit the sick and the afflicted and minister what help he could. There was no better nurse in the vicinity, and many families have grateful remembrances of him for help freely rendered night and day in their need. No appeal for help was ever rejected by him, and such appeals were frequent, for the needy knew where to go for ready sympathy and help.

It was our privilege to know much about his christian experience for some years before he became a member of the church, and on Sept. 18th, 1884, it was our privilege to baptize him in the fellowship of the Black Rock Church, where he remained a faithful, loving and well beloved member until the Lord was pleased to call him home. We can never forget the humility of feeling which was manifest before he became a member, in all our conversation with him. He had come to love the name of the Savior, and the brethren in Christ, but felt keenly his great unworthiness, and often would say, "I am weak, and I fear lest I should bring some wound upon the cause." At last it was his privilege to come and confess his faith and hope. Some now living will recall the humble testimony which was given him to bear to salvation through the blessed Lord. In this hope he lived and died. No place was as dear to him as the house of the Lord, and he walked humbly before God and men. He leaves an aged widow and one daughter, who cared for him with kindness and attention until the end of life came, three sons and other relatives, who can but mourn their loss. Neighbors and friends will miss him greatly.

It was our solemn privilege to be present at the funeral service at Black Rock on Monday, July 10th, where a very large congregation gathered to testify their regard for their friend and neighbor. The text used was 1 Cor. xv. 49. After the service he was laid to rest in the cemetery adjoining until the resurrection of the just. A good man has passed away in hope.—Ed.

Robert Davenport departed this life Nov. 25th, 1905. The deceased lived in the neighborhood of Rocksprings the greater part of his life, although born in the city of Philadelphia; but my acquaintance with him reaches back for forty-eight years, and at that time he was living there, and no one more regular in their attendance of the meetings at Rocksprings than himself. He made no public profession of his faith in Christ; like very many others, not good enough, not experience enough he thought to own his divine Lord and Master in the ordinance of baptism, but as decided and firm in the doctrine of salvation by grace as any man. He was a man of few words, but loved to hear conversation on religious subjects. He admired and loved those who bear the image of the Holy One in their profession, consequently he was much of his time among the friends at Rocksprings. He was called to part with his wife about twenty-two years before his death, and from that time to the time of his death seemed without the home comforts of former years, and seemed lonely and disconsolate, making his home principally with a son, and finally died at his house in the 89th

year of his age, leaving, I believe, two sons and one daughter, sister Moon, of Philadelphia. He now lies at Rocksprings, a dear spot to him in his lifetime. They sang the hymn, "Asleep in Jesus," and laid him to rest. I received notice of his death, but was not able to be there. May the Lord bless those who remain.

WM. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md., Dec. 3, 1905.

SISTER **James,** wife of Henry James, died Oct. 23rd, 1905. She was born in Oxfordshire, England, and was married to Henry James in 1953. She was baptized June 9th, 1895. A faithful wife and a loving mother has departed this life in full faith of the Lord Jesus Christ. Her age was 74 years.

Her daughter,

LIZZIE SCHMIDT.

WORTHINGTON, Minn., Nov. 28, 1905.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, Nov. 15th, 1905, at the home of the bride, 44 South St., Middletown, N. Y., Arthur C. Gravel and Miss Josie E. Hyatt.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Sept. 6th, 1905, at his residence in Delmar, Del., Elijah W. Niblett and Clara F. Benson, both of Sussex Co., Del.

By the same, Nov. 22nd, 1905, at the home of the bride, Herbert W. Lowe and Rosa M. Dennis, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

THE NEW TESTAMENT.

(Hebrews ix. 16, 27, 28.)

"AND as it is appointed unto men once to die." The inspired writer is not here merely stating the fact that all men must die; he is not impressing upon the mind the truth that it is appointed unto men to die. The whole force of this sentence is that it is appointed unto men to die once, not twice, not many times, but only once. The apostle has been speaking of the work of Moses and Aaron in the worldly sanctuary in accomplishing the service of God. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins; that is, the death of the sinner is necessary to satisfy the claims of justice. The high priest, in this ceremonial service, represented death when he entered into the second tabernacle alone once every year, not without blood. This "was a figure for the time then present." Of course the high priest could not offer his own blood, for then he could not make another offering the next year. But Christ entered once into the holy place, even into heaven itself, by his own blood. He could not offer himself often, as the high priest did, "for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world [the Jewish world] hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." He could not die often, for it is appointed unto men to die only once.

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Here is the first part of a comparison introduced by the word "as," and intended to illustrate and open up some important thing concerning the sacrifice of Christ and the manifestation of those for whom he died. The second part of this comparison is introduced by the word "so": "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." The apostle has in this chapter introduced the figure of a man's will or testament, to illustrate the mediatorial work of Christ, and to show how by means of death he brought the new testament into force, and secured to them that are called, the promise of eternal inheritance. He says: "And for this cause he is the Mediator of the new testament, that by means of

death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." The next expression proves that the apostle has in view as a figure the will or testament which a man makes, by which he bequeathes an inheritance. "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."

Now it seems to me that the apostle still has this figure in view in the comparison presented in my text. It is important to consider that a man's testament is of no force while yet he lives. He may say to me, I have made my will, and have given to you ten thousand acres of land, and I have given that will into the custody of a bank, and it is safely locked up, and so you are sure of the property. But I do not own a rod of that land. He may make another will the next day and devise the land to another. Also it is necessary to consider that as soon as a man is dead all that was his now belongs to others. But how shall it be decided who are the heirs? It must be by the judgment of the government under which the man lived and held the title to his possessions. It is in this sense that I understand the apostle to use the expression, "but after this the judgment."

We are to keep in mind that the apostle is not merely stating the fact that it is appointed unto men to die once, only once; but he is using this as a comparison. "As"—"so." "As it is appointed unto men *once* to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was *once* offered," &c.

Now earthly inheritances are greatly sought after by many, and the judgment of the government must be carefully rendered before any one can claim them, but this heavenly inheritance is not desired by any but the true heirs; they do desire it, and earnestly long for it, and seek for evidences that it is theirs.

Now all the blood that was used in the works of the law, "sprinkling the unclean," could not wash away one sin, nor could all that legal work cleanse the conscience of one sinner. But when Christ shed his precious blood he thereby obtained eternal redemption for all his people, and secured unto them the eternal inheritance promised in the new testament, which is the new and "everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure."

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." Who are they whose sins he bore? What is the judgment which has been rendered upon this subject? This same Jesus who died to bear the sins of many is now risen again, and is at the right hand of God, and is our Judge, our Lawgiver and our King. He has rendered the judgment: "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." The heirs of this spiritual inheritance, then, are those that look for him. This is the judgment concerning the heirs of God by this new testament.

But to know that we are looking for Jesus Christ! O, if we can only be sure of that. But so often we find our minds and our expectations fixed, apparently, upon worldly things. So often we feel ourselves too depraved, too sinful, too vile, too full of transgressions, to dare to think that we are among those who are looking for him. What right have such as we to look for him to come to us? How dare we say to him, "Come"? yet

he has said with divine and loving authority, "Let him that heareth say, Come." And we are sometimes assured that we have heard his voice saying, "Come unto me." We have heard his words of love to the poor and needy, his words of sweet command to those who labor and are heavy laden. We have from time to time received evidences that he has given us rest. We have at times felt "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding," keeping our hearts and minds. His words have at times dropped into our hearts with holy power, and our hearts have been drawn out to him in love and praise. The doctrine that declares the name of the Lord as our only Savior has sometimes dropped upon us like the rain, and has distilled as the dew; "as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass." Yes, at times we do feel assured that we are looking for him. We can do nothing of ourselves. When we look at ourselves we have to cry, Unclean. We are vile, we abhor ourselves; we have "the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead." But we do trust in him, Jesus is our only trust, our only hope, he is our righteousness, our life; yes, we look for him.

And what is the inheritance we are heirs of? Himself. "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." His appearing so far, and always while we are in the body, has been and shall yet be with sin, as our Sin-bearer, as having borne our sins. In our most exalted moments, while rejoicing in him, we remember him as having borne our griefs, as having suffered for our sins, and we thus know him in measure as having the fellowship of his sufferings, "being made conformable unto his death." We must always while in this mortal state bear "about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our body." As the dear Savior while in the flesh was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, so must his followers be. It is in sorrow, in temptation, in affliction, that we know him while here; it is as having been tempted in all points like unto us that we know him as thus able to succor us who are tempted. But when he appears the second time it will be without sin unto salvation. That salvation, Peter says, is "ready to be revealed in the last time." That second appearing will be with no remembrance of sin; it will be to deliver us "from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." It will be the end of mortality with us. When he appears the second time "we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." He will be admired in all them that love him. Our vile body shall be changed then that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. We do not know what we shall be, nor do we in the spirit want to know. It is enough to know that we shall be conformed to his image, and shall appear with him in glory.

These thoughts are submitted for the consideration of brethren by one who sees and knows only in part.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 7, 1905.

AVONDALE, Ala., Nov. 12, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have felt but little impression for a long time to write anything for publication, but some articles recently published on the subject of the blasphemy or sin against the Holy Ghost, have created within me a desire to

give an expression of my understanding of that subject, which was unexpectedly opened up to me several years ago, after reading and hearing various views of the subject by gifted and able brethren, and I still hold to the views that were then unfolded to me. In the first place, it was the pharisees that were guilty of this sin, and not the disciples of Christ, and the pharisees were the ones that Jesus charged with this sin, and this sin was not the sin of omission in any sense of the word; it did not consist in any of the sins which the children of God are subject to in this time state. Special emphasis should be laid on the word "speaketh." "And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." In the thirty-seventh verse of this twelfth chapter of Matthew Jesus says, "For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." So it is seen that this particular sin consists in speaking against the Holy Ghost. I have no idea that a child of God ever did or ever can sin or blaspheme against the Holy Ghost. No matter what else they may say or do they invariably ascribe praise to God. Now what did these self-righteous pharisees say? They said that Jesus cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils; as much as to say that the Holy Ghost could not cast out devils without the consent of the one out of whom the devil is cast. This is apparent from the Savior's reply, for he says, "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house. He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." Now Jesus has said in substance that Satan has set up his kingdom in the hearts of all men, and that prior to the new or spiritual birth Satan, or the spirit of the devil, is the ruling power there, and that in the new or spiritual birth the Holy Ghost comes not to plead with the devil to vacate his throne and allow him (the Holy Ghost) to take possession and dwell there, but the stronger man binds the devil and spoils his house, &c.

"But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you." The charge of the pharisees that Jesus cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils, is tantamount to saying that Jesus was in league with the devil and worked in harmony with his wishes, and this would be Satan divided against himself, and that was what Jesus denominated "blasphemy against the Holy Ghost." I will add here that nothing else is or can be the "blasphemy against the Holy Ghost;" this is the unpardonable sin, "it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Whether the declaration "world to come," refers to the gospel dispensation or to the future, makes no difference, there is no forgiveness for this sin, Jesus has so declared. Now let us see if there are any people in the world to-day that this applies to, or that are guilty of the sin against the Holy Ghost; I think there are. It seems to me that a man who will publicly declare

that Jesus is ready and willing and wants to save everybody, but that he can do nothing at all without the sinner's consent, sins or blasphemes against the Holy Ghost, for they will all admit that the devil is in the sinner, and that the sinner is under his influence, and if Jesus must get the consent of the sinner before he can save him, he thereby gets the consent of Satan. Hence, Satan is divided against himself, and voluntarily surrenders his power and kingdom to Jesus, and this is just what all Arminians preach. Do we ever see any evidence of forgiveness among this class of men? I say, no, for where there is forgiveness, there is repentance also. Do they show any evidence of repentance? I say, no, for they continue to advocate these things to the end. I know that there are frequently preachers who come to the Old Baptists from the ranks of those people, but are they not those who preached and believed the truth of salvation by grace even while identified with the Arminians? I think so; but how many of those who tell the people that Jesus cannot save a sinner without the sinner's consent, ever repent (turn away) and preach that "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy"?

I could say more, but this I think is enough to show where I stand on the subject. To simply be a sinner is not the sin against the Holy Ghost; to be guilty of doing wrong in word or deed is not the sin against the Holy Ghost, but it consists in *speaking against* the Holy Ghost, attributing the power by which Jesus casts out devils to Satan, or the consent of Satan, instead of the power and Spirit of Almighty God, regardless of what the devil or sinners say, or think, or do. In regard to the children of God, the Lord says, The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." There is but one atonement for sin, and that is the one made by Jesus Christ when he died for our sins and arose again for our justification, and "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise."

I will close, trusting that I have been moved by the Spirit of God to write what I have, and that it may be blessed to the good of the people of God.

As ever, yours in Christ,

H. J. REDD.

MELBOURNE, Ontario, Oct. 12, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—HIGHLY ESTEEMED BROTHER:—During the conversation we had when you were here, you remarked that you thought I had traveled much of the way by day. I will now try to tell you something of the way in which I feel the dear Lord has led me, and while I make the attempt I trust to be guided by his wisdom and mighty power, for without him we can do nothing.

First, I will say that I am a poor, weak, sinful child, if a child at all. I was only a few weeks more than five years old when I was made to see the light of a better day. I was raised up so high that I did not think I would ever have to come back to my old sinful self, or to this vain world again; but before many days had passed by I was back again deeper than

ever in despair. I can never forget that day of gladness. I had been so forsaken within, and now I did not want to come back to this sinful world again. I was for days so overcome with the love of Christ that the words came to me, "I am sick of love." Then the words were given me, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Then, afterwards the words came to me, "These are they which come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." And the vision came back before me of the Savior on the cross, as I had seen him before I had known his love. Then the lines of a hymn came,

"His heart o'erflows with tenderness,
His bowels melt with love."

As you spoke, in preaching at Lobo, about the first gospel sermon you ever heard, it brought my own experience to my mind. I believe that ever since I was a child, naturally, I have been given a love for the truth, and for those who preach it. I almost reverence them, some more than others, as I am given to see the grace of God in them. Since the first time I heard our dear pastor preach, the tears would come, though I could not understand. Before I first felt the love of Christ flow into my soul it seemed as if I was taken up and cast away forever, and that I would never have that love for the Lord's people, nor be able to hear our pastor preach again. Then at once my groaning was turned into rejoicing, and I was lifted up above the world, and the words came from my mouth, Now I can die. I was almost in a trance for the next two weeks, and did not want to talk to any one; much Scripture came to my mind. This was given me, "Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart." This was not long ago. The next time I heard Elder Carnell preach, I heard as never before, for myself, and not another. His text was, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." He spoke in the sermon of the two women who disputed about the child that Solomon proposed to divide between them. The true mother would not have that, but the other had no feeling for the child and wanted it done. He made the difference very plain between those who had true love for the church and those who were of the world. He said that they had fellowship for some who were outside of the church. How I did long for their fellowship, but felt that I could never ask a place among them, for they could not want me, and I had too much love for them to want to hurt them in any way. The next week the words came with power, "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion." Then the words came, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." I had no more rest, but felt a command to be baptized; still I rebelled against it, not but that I desired to be baptized, but I thought I could not walk with the church as I felt one who had named the name of Christ should do. I went down into such darkness, and was made to feel that I had never felt the cleansing power of the blood of Christ. Then the words came, "Underneath are the everlasting arms." And as you quoted while at Lobo, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." As I came before the church I was made to feel the words, "He spake and

it was done; he commanded and it stood fast."

As you have seen in the letter you published in the SIGNS how I rested through my baptism, I will now say that it has been almost one continued line of battle with me ever since, and of late the conflict has been the most trying I have ever gone through; but after the last prayer of Elder Carnell, at Lobo, I felt I had been given a great victory. I was like a soldier after a hard battle had been gained, all worn out, but in the victory I felt like shouting praise to my God. The words did come out of my mouth, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." It was wonderful when you gave out the hymn, "Behold the Savior on the cross," and preached about the crucifixion and resurrection. Dear sister Sinclair spoke of how she saw the veil of the temple rent in twain, from top to bottom, on Sunday. On Saturday night the words came to me, "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting." On Sunday I was in sorrow, but such power of the Spirit came upon me, and the words came, Wait upon the Lord, O my soul, wait, I say, upon the Lord. On Sunday night the words came, Thou hast, in love to my soul, redeemed me from the power of the grave, and from the hand of him who is my enemy. On Monday morning there seemed to be the spirit of prayer. Since the meeting, the words have come with power, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." God had a purpose when Jesus was crucified, and he also has a purpose in all the trials of his children, that they may be conformed to his image. The words have come to me,

"His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower."

I have come through both light and darkness. The words are in my mind, "Continue ye in my love." All is of him; he gave me repentance and fitted me for the great conflict through which he has called me to pass. He will chisel the stones to fit in the building; he has all power over the clay, and his great name shall have all the glory.

I hardly know whether to send this to you or not; forgive me for troubling you with it.

Since writing the above letter we have been privileged to witness the baptism of two dear ones in Lobo, and it was a season of refreshing from our heavenly Father, who will give his children their meat in due season. They were brother and sister Neil Graham, who were both given liberty to tell the wonderful goodness of God. The dear sister wrote me of her experience since the meeting. The baptism of both was lovely indeed. Our pastor was given liberty that day to preach the glorious gospel. Since then the words have come to me, I have glorified thee, and will glorify thee again.

Dear brother Chick, I have felt like writing you this, as you have known us, and I know will be glad to hear.

From your sister,

CASSIE E. STEVENSON.

ELGIN, Oregon, Nov. 25, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I send you an extract from a letter I wrote to sister M. E. Carter, with her reply to the same, to be published in the SIGNS if it meets with your approval. I do this by the request of sister

Tollinger, of Pennsylvania, who is a sister of sister Carter, and no doubt many of sister Carter's friends in the east will be glad to hear from her.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

ELGIN, Ore., May 3, 1905.

MRS. M. E. CARTER—DEAR SISTER:—It has been in my mind many days past to try to write to you, but I have put it off to get in a better frame of mind to write. It seems to me I should learn that such expectation is useless, as I should know by past experience that I will never attain unto that much needed and longed for condition. If you want to know my condition better than I am able to describe it, read Elder A. B. Francis' letter in the last SIGNS. What he says is what I feel myself to be, only I want to say I have never seen an experience penned that describes that condition of perfect nothingness worse than I feel myself to be, and the nearer that condition is described the more heartily can I subscribe to it. As Solomon the wise man says of fallen man that "all is vanity;" and Job's experience is my own experience, "So am I made to possess months of vanity;" and yet it would seem that such a daily experience would teach us to cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils. But it seems so natural for us to look for perfection in the flesh, to try to find something commendable, when each view we have of ourselves only reveals a sepulcher full of uncleanness, so that really we can say in truth, we hate that life in the flesh that is so polluted. But is there not a cause? Is there not a reason why all this is seen and felt? Yes, dear sister, and this is the only reason God's dear yet poor people do not sacrifice to their own net or burn incense to their own drag, for only such an experience can teach poor, fallen humanity that there is salvation in none other than Jesus, and that this is the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved; we rejoice that it is so.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

AUBURN, Wash., May 11, 1905.

ELDER G. E. MAYFIELD—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I received your most excellent letter of the 3rd, mailed the 5th, at Auburn, on the 6th, and brought home yesterday. I know so thoroughly the feeling you complained of, that I could subscribe my name and return your letter as the best possible answer to it. Yes, there is a needs be for it all; if he left us the least shadow of good in the flesh, we would glory in that and not in him, although he hath told us the flesh profiteth nothing, only the words he speaks to us they are spirit, and they are life. "Without me ye can do nothing," though we mourn sore that we cannot; but "I am the way," and it follows that all else is vanity. May we not well call his name "Wonderful," that cares for such hell-deserving sinners as we feel to be? He taught us this, no other power can but the One who said, "Let there be light: and there was light." "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." The gospel of the grace of God is sufficient for us, even when we sink in deep mire in which there is no standing, when all his billows and waves go over our heads, his strength is made perfect in weakness. He was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." "When he putteth forth his

own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice." They follow in the way he trod, for it is in him as the way, that they are put forth; they have come to the end of the law, outwardly; they may have broken no human law, but they have seen God, and no man can see his face and live. In the light of that manifestation they have never thought, spoken or acted aright, for until that revelation self reigned, and their uprightness and whatever in them commendable in the sight of men was prompted by the love of self, and to love God with all their heart and all their soul and all their strength, they could not, nor even desire to, till born of the Spirit. But Christ fulfilled the law for them, and now fulfills the righteousness of it in them; every desire, and the longing to do the things he hath commanded, he gives. At his call they cast away their garment and come and he leads them, orders their steps, raises them when they fall, cheers them when in distress, and with weeping and supplications leads them. The entrance to following him is to deny self, not some few outward observances, but everthing born of the flesh, the whole Adamic man; that means crucifixion. Well, we follow the crucified one, and after denying self, take up the cross, no trampling under foot, but bear it. Behold, we count them blessed that endure. "Follow me." Did he tread a flowery road? Did men praise him? Did he have abundance of earthly riches? Do we spend whole nights in prayer alone on the mounts? He is all our hope, all our help, all our salvation, he bare our sins in his own body on the tree, not some of them, all of them, and though the sun could not shine upon such suffering, and the earth quaked, and the rocks rent, and the graves opened, yet he finished the work, and went into the grave, and was raised again for our justification and there has been nothing against one for whom he died since he arose from the dead, the body clean and pure as the head; but they must needs learn the fellowship of his sufferings, and be made conformable to his death, in their dying daily to any hope, or help, or salvation, but his blood and righteousness; they have a song to sing on their journey and on their arrival home, and they must needs learn it perfectly, so they can sing it clear, and strong, and sweet, and no discordant note ever be heard, for it is not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the praise. All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be their peace; and though our souls be sore discouraged because of the way, yet we may hope that if the Lord had been pleased to slay us, yet he would not at this time have shewn us all these things. (The answer of Manoah's wife to him in regard to the visit of the angel.)

I am glad of the welfare of your family. The Lord meet with you in your meetings at home and abroad, and make the place of his feet glorious.

(MRS.) M. E. CARTER.

SNYDER, Texas, Aug. 18, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I inclose an extract from a letter of recent date, written me by sister Boggs, of Raton, New Mexico, who is so familiarly known among the Old School Baptists of the east, and throughout the United States. Almost a decade of years has passed away since I first met with her at her home, in the city of Raton, in the Rocky Mountains. Well do I recollect some thirty-five or forty years ago reading published articles from the pens of sisters Mary and Elizabeth Boggs. They were then in charge of the

Hopewell Seminary, in New Jersey. I was young at that time, having just begun my religious course among the Old School Baptists. They were precious jewels in common with all the saints, upon whom God has bestowed his grace and mercy, and God had endowed them both religiously and temporally; they were distinguishable and intelligent in their christian piety and other beautiful attainments. If I mistake not, our sister wrote me that last year she completed her fifty-eighth year of school work, having followed her profession as teacher all the years of my natural life, as I am now in my fifty-ninth year. Often when she has been discussing some religious topic I have been spellbound, and felt to be silent as a little child. I have enjoyed listening to her upon any subject; her remarks were always clear, pertinent and conclusive. I believe the accompanying extract from her letter will be interesting to all her numerous friends and acquaintances in the east, and especially so with the readers of the SIGNS, which paper she is devoted to. Her confidence in the doctrine the good old SIGNS advocates is unshaken and unquenchable. I now send the same to you, brother Chick, for publication, if according to your approval. May the God of all grace be with you to bless and to prosper you in all your labors of love for the truth's sake. May he by his Holy Spirit give you strength for many years to come, to wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon. May the Almighty God continue to preserve the old, reliable SIGNS as he has done in the past, according to his word, is the desire of your unworthy brother in gospel bonds, ASA HOWARD.

AUGUST 6, 1905.

ELDER ASA HOWARD—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your welcome letter, from Snyder, reached us in due time, and we were glad to learn that you were in reasonable health. Brother Fetter is able to preach the word to the few that are left here. The Lord can send more if it be at all according to his wise purpose. Our God is a God of wisdom, of power and of mercy; he sets up kings and he puts down kings, and he turns the hearts of princes as the rivers of waters are turned; all the movements of nations are directed by Almighty God. We are living in a day of dire confusion among the nations of the earth; they are but fulfilling the prophecies of old, and when the last elect vessel of mercy is developed from the Adamic head, then the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the Lord Jehovah will gather the sleeping children of God from their graves, and the ransomed host will be gathered to praise him forever. As the scaffolding is removed when the building is finished, so I understand this earth serves but as a scaffolding until the bride, the Lamb's wife, is fully developed from her Adamic head. Great is the mystery of redemption; an eternity will be required to sing the praises of the Lord God Almighty. It is overwhelming to try to conceive of it; it hath not entered into the heart of man to comprehend it.

Brother Fetter, and also the brethren which you have met from time to time, join me in christian love to you.

We all miss Elder Bourland, but we trust he is far better off than he could be in these lowlands of sorrow.

I remember Elders Beebe, Trott, Leachman, and many others whom we used to meet. I have had the privilege of being personally acquainted with over one hundred Old School Baptist ministers. My father was for forty years pastor of

the Hopewell Church, New Jersey, where Elder Chick now is pastor. My grandfather was pastor of the church at Welsh Tract, Delaware, for more than twenty years. I was raised in the midst of Baptist preachers. I was in Washington, D. C., for seven years, right on the line of travel from south to north, and all the preachers going to associations in different sections stopped with us, so you see we met very many. In 1848 I heard Elder Wilson Thompson preach in New Jersey at an association. I remember James Osbourne and many others who were in their prime fifty years ago. I have passed my seventy-sixth birthday. I was baptized at Hopewell, N. J., fifty-three years ago the fourth Sunday in July last. I hoped then that I might grow better as the years rolled on, but the flesh is still with me, and like Paul I must say, "When I would do good, evil is present with me."

I have prolonged this letter very much. May Israel's God be your support in every hour of trial, is the prayer of your unworthy sister,

ELIZABETH H. BOGGS.

OKEMAH, I. T., Nov. 2, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—I have just received a statement from you which was forwarded from Keener, Ark. I will now explain. About the time that my subscription was out, I moved to Indian Territory, and when I was at Keener a short time ago, I found that the SIGNS was still going to that office to me, and being taken out by first one and another of my old neighbors I told the postmaster to order it discontinued. If I had known about it I would have written you myself. While you have been out the subscription, I did not get the benefit of the paper, which I have often wished for, and have resolved many times to subscribe for it. I have had much bad luck financially since my move here, and as yet have not felt able to take it. I do desire to treat my fellow man right, and most especially the dear Old Baptists who have so much to bear. Tell me what would be right in such a case. I do hope to be able to take it again soon.

Yours in hope of a Savior's love,

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[THE above letter shows, in one way, how the SIGNS has suffered for years from a financial standpoint. Our dear brother says, "I desire to treat my fellow man right, and most especially the dear Old School Baptists, who have so much to bear." We are loth to believe that any of our brethren and friends, who are in arrears, feel different from this brother, and no subject has caused more thought than this one. We must believe that the children of God want to do the right thing always, yet we must say some of them are exceedingly careless in their duty to us, and indeed to themselves in this matter. This brother left his former address knowing the SIGNS was going to that post-office; if he did not feel able to subscribe longer for it, the trouble of dropping us a postal card would have given us that knowledge; not being notified we sent the SIGNS to the same address, and knew nothing of his change of address until the above letter was received. Just why the postmaster should forward our statement to him and not the SIGNS we do not understand. Again, this brother asks, "Tell me what would be right in such a case?" We can only answer that we do

not think it just that we should suffer because of his negligence in notifying us of his removal. We have no doubt that many such cases have occurred in the past, and that many exist now. Will our brethren and friends please have some consideration of us in our efforts and arduous labors in publishing the SIGNS? We have many on our list who owe us for the paper many years; quite a number have been notified of their indebtedness for the past three years, but with few exceptions we have heard nothing from them in any way. We now ask as a special favor that all who have received statements from us please notify us of your desire concerning the SIGNS. If you wish it continued say so; if you want it discontinued say so. If any member of a family who took the SIGNS is dead, and that family does not wish the paper, please notify us your wishes regarding it. By so doing you will greatly oblige us and save us much labor and expense.—ED.]

KANSAS, Ill., NOV. 6, 1905.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have been asked by some of the brethren and sisters why I did not write more frequently for the SIGNS. I can truthfully say it is not for the lack of fellowship and love for them, or regard for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I can surely say I indorse the course it pursues, and the doctrine it always has and does advocate, but there is a limit or end to all earthly things, and the time of my writing has about come to a close. The 14th day of October I passed my eighty-second birthday anniversary, so you can readily see why I do not often write. I assure all the contributors to the dear old SIGNS that I still enjoy hearing from them in any way. My wife and I always look with pleasure for the coming of each number of the SIGNS. I want to again assure the dear people of God that my faith has never, in the sixty-three years that I have been trusting in God, changed. I was in the year 1842 made to see what a helpless creature I was, and how sure I was of eternal damnation unless God had pity upon me, and now all these long years have only confirmed me in the belief that the language of Paul is correct where he says, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." He not only makes this affirmative declaration, but then adds the negative, "Not of works, lest any man should boast." How strange it is that any poor, frail creature should in the face of such language teach that people can save themselves. This is not only true of Arminians, but even some who claim the name of Old School Baptists contend that there is a time salvation that the child of God can attain unto. O how strange this is, surely the ones who thus contend have never learned the frailness of their own nature. Conditionalism will do for such as these, but for me I take no comfort in it. I have long since learned that "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," and I have most assuredly learned that there is no good thing in me, that is, in my flesh, and that "the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." With Paul I have been made to say, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I find I am so much like Peter, ready to deny my Lord and Master, and unless the dear Lord looks upon me I am constantly going astray; so you see I need God's time salvation as well as eternal redemption. I am made to think of Paul's language where he

said, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." If this were possible, how sweet it would be.

I find I am extending this letter until it may be too lengthy, so I will come to a close, bidding you adieu for the present at least, if not for all time.

Yours in hope of the resurrection,

JAMES M. TRUE.

PLEASANT GROVE, Texas, Aug. 14, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN LOVE OF A GLORIOUS SAVIOR:—I am in darkness it seems, and have been most of the time lately, but I sometimes feel that it is good to be cast off in outer darkness, for then we can learn something of what our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ suffered, and thereby have love and fellowship with him. Yes, we can sometimes look beyond all these dark hours and see an endless day, where all is light and happiness, where the Sun of Righteousness shines. O what a soul-cheering thought, to see him as he is and be like him.

My wife wrote part of her experience and sent it to a Methodist paper, and they would not publish it, and now she desires it published in the good old SIGNS. She loves the doctrine as set forth in the SIGNS, but does not want to leave her people. But he that hath begun a good work will perform it till the day of Jesus Christ.

In love, R. W. DYKES.

WINNSBORO, Texas, May 7, 1905.

DEAR PROTESTANT:—I thought that I would write a few lines to the readers of the *Protestant.* I have been a member of the M. P. Church six years, and I feel like Paul, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." I felt before I joined that I would get better when I joined, but I was mistaken, I get worse instead of better. I do not feel (as some say they do) like I have done anything for the Lord. I feel like saying with one of old, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" I feel this way because when I think that I am going to do better, something causes me to do evil. This is the reason that we do not know our heart. "Man's goings are of the Lord; how can a man then understand his own way?" "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." "There is none that seeketh after God." Then God is all that is good, and he is the only one that can do good; all righteousness flows from him. I feel like Paul, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." If I keep on in the way I am living, how can I expect to be saved? Only through the mercies of a loving God, for God is love. I believe that all things are in God's hands, and "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Yes, he is at the helm, working all things after the counsel of his own will; then if he condescends so low as to save me, I can praise him for doing so, for I know that I have nothing good to boast of, and like Jonah can say, "Salvation is of the Lord." What a wonderful Savior. It is the goodness of God that leadeth the sinner to repentance; yes, not the goodness of man, for "there is none that doeth good." We are told that Christ is exalted a Prince and a Savior; what for?

"To give repentance and forgiveness of sins." If I could repent, why did Christ have to be exalted to give me repentance? This Scripture is sometimes sweet to me: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." I would love to know if any one else feels as I do, I feel so lonely sometimes. I would like to see more frequent narratives of experience of grace, they exalt Jesus and abase man, so when we glory let us glory in him.

I could write more, but my husband says there is too much "Hardshell" about this for a Methodist paper to print, so I will say this is what I believe, these are my feelings, I "can't help it." I am no "Hardshell," (though I love to read their papers) but as I said, I am a Protestant Methodist, but cannot believe that money or preachers help to save souls, nor do I believe in infant baptism.

Pray for me, for I am in darkness.

JANE DYKES.

LAWN, Texas, Sept. 22, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—It is with much fear and trembling that I again try to write a little for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I had thought I would never trouble you with another of my poor letters; but I have learned that our ways are not in ourselves, and that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." God's people are made willing in the day of his power. This morning the impression came with force that I should write for the SIGNS; and it is a mystery that one so weak and ignorant as I should be impressed to write for publication at all; however I will make the attempt. I feel helpless and dependent upon my heavenly Father to direct my mind; as dependent as a little babe is upon its mother for her tender care. As Abraham went out, not knowing whither he should go, so I begin this letter, not knowing what I shall write, but I feel sure that if it is the Lord's will, he will give me something to write.

I feel as though I want to tell my dear brethren in Christ some of my experience as I travel on in these low grounds of sin and sorrow. I do not know whether there is any one like me or not. I am a "Can't-help-it," and have been ever since I was a child. When I was a child I felt myself to be a sinner in the sight of a holy and just God. I began by being convinced that I was a sinner, but I could not say that I came to Jesus, for I felt that I could not go to him, but that he must come to me, if indeed I was ever to be saved. I did not feel that I could do anything good which would cause me to be saved, but I must be saved by free grace and mercy; and so by free and unmerited grace and mercy I received a hope in Christ, and by grace I have been brought along thus far on my journey in life, wholly dependent upon God for my natural life, as well as for my spiritual life. "By the grace of God I am what I am." I cannot read or sing with the spirit and understanding, only when led by the Spirit of God. I cannot think or meditate on the goodness or mercy of God, only when led by the Spirit of Christ. Many times have I tried to think and meditate upon the wonderful works of God, and I could not; my mind would wander away upon the vain and foolish things of this world, and I could not help it. Then I have been made to know and feel that I cannot of myself do anything good. Sometimes there are given to me sweet meditations on the beauty of holiness, and it is a feast to my soul to think upon the dear Lord, and his wonderful

works to the children of men; and at times I feel to be truly thankful for these silent meditations. I have had some sweet feasts when alone, and yet not alone, for Christ was with me.

I have become reconciled to my lot, being situated as I am, without a home in the church with those that I believe are in the old paths. I believe fully that God has a purpose in it, and at the appointed time he will make a way for me to go home to my friends; and it is my desire to be still and know that he is God. Let him do what seemeth him good. Dear brother, do with this as you think best.

From one of the very least of all the Lord's humble poor,

(MRS.) I. H. GRIFFIN.

SPRINGFIELD, MO., Nov. 4, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Early this morning I had a sweet time in communing with God in the night watches, and I think I felt something as David did as recorded in Psalms lxiii. 6: "When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches." I do not mind being kept awake when I can meditate upon the goodness and mercies of God; his loving-kindness is so gracious to one so unworthy of the least mercy. Between thirty and forty years ago I had the precious promise applied to my soul when I was in great straits, "But my God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus;" and to-day I can, with all the power I have, call upon all that is within me to bless his holy name. How many times since that promise was given me have I been made to rejoice in the faithfulness of such a promise-fulfilling God, of whom I do hope I can say, He is my God. Yes, I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.

On July 4th I started on the Frisco R. R. for Portland, Oregon, to visit my daughter who is living there, and when I read in the newspapers of the many who are injured or killed traveling by railroad, what reason for thankfulness I feel I have, as I traveled nearly five thousand miles in safety. I saw a letter in the SIGNS from sister Stewart, of Warrenton, Oregon, a place I went through when going from Portland to a place called Seaside, on the Pacific coast. I wrote a letter to her, but have never received a reply. I see in the last number of the SIGNS a letter from her, and she says, "I went to Oregon City on June 12th to visit brother and sister Bruce." She adds, "There I found many Old Baptists." I mention this because I feel so disappointed, as I was at Oregon City and did not know of any Old Baptists there; I made every inquiry to try to find some, but all in vain. I have written again to sister Stewart, and hope to hear from her.

Do with this as seems best to you. May the Lord be with you. The words in Numbers vi. 24–26, are my prayer for you.

Your affectionate brother,

JAMES W. FLITTON.

LEESBURG, VA., Nov. 17, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I send you the inclosed letter for your examination. Brother Ball is a man in one respect much like myself, full of the business cares of this world. This letter does show him also to be a meek and humble child of God. You will see it was not written for publication, but if it meets

your approval I would like to see it in the SIGNS.

Your brother, I hope,

E. V. WHITE.

NOVEMBER 16, 1905.

MY DEAR BROTHER WHITE:—I do not know why the impulse came over me to write you, being almost within speaking distance. I reckon it was because my mind was and is running on the past, with all it holds, and the intermingling of you and I as boy and man most all of our lives. Thinking of those dear to you and me as relatives and friends made all along this era of life. It seems, my dear brother, I was more deeply impressed than common with my littleness, the nothingness of all mankind as compared to God. O how little we know of his ways and purposes; how thankful we should be; how contented we should feel to leave it all in his hands, and say, Thy will, O Lord, not mine, be done; make me submissive. If I could put this world, its temptations, its follies, under my feet, and go as I feel and know is God's way, I would ask nothing more on this earth. But how weak is man; how long shall I be kept? "O wretched man that I am!" "When I would do good, evil is present;" the flesh lusting after the world and its idols. Do not we know the grave is just before us? then where the good of the world? Gone, gone forever. Is that the end? O, I hope and trust not; we cannot give up Christ as something real, something eternal, able to save to the uttermost; overriding the devil or sin of the world and taking to his bosom all that his Father gave him.

I am not writing for the sake of words, or expecting to edify you, God forbid. I know he has been with you in a sweeter, closer communion than he has ever blessed me with. I am writing just because I feel like it, whence the feeling I will leave you to judge. Could we live loving our brother and sister, trusting in the Lord, laying aside the sin that doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race set before us, knowing that it is God that willeth, how pleasant it would be. It is not all of life to live, but after death there is life eternal with God for all those for whom Jesus died. You have fought many battles, and I hope, pray and believe that God is filling his purpose with you, and in the end will say, Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the rest prepared for you.

May the blessing of him who is able to bless, rest upon you and yours, is the earnest prayer of your unworthy brother,

J. L. BALL.

WAVERLY, Pa., Dec. 8, 1905.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been my custom for several years past to make a short statement concerning the churches that call me their pastor. I am trying to serve nine, and quite frequently hold meetings in places that are isolated, where there are one or more very old and feeble members not able to get to the places where the church meets for worship, and I can say that I enjoy very much visiting such ones, and feel that they ought not be neglected. As far as my limited knowledge of the churches I am professedly serving extends, they are in peace, and gladly receive the God-honoring doctrine that I in weakness preach to them, the absolute predestination of God, election, salvation by grace, the resurrection of the dead, all of which is preached when Christ is preached as the "I AM." "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." "I am the resurrection, and the life." "I am thy salvation,"

"the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." Not I will be, he has been and will be this to them (his people) while time shall last. If this is not the sum and substance of the christian's hope, then I have surely been badly mistaken for nearly forty years, and am to-day a poor, deceived mortal; I hope I am not.

Five of the churches had two days meetings; Elders Ker, Slauson and Eubanks were the ministers, and preached much to the comfort of the brethren. What a blessing to the church to hear the different gifts, but the same gospel truth. Every good gift and every perfect gift come from God, and are for the benefit of the church, the edifying of the body of Christ. There have been a few deaths and a few additions, and the membership remains about the same as last year.

In darkness and alone,

D. M. VAIL.

MALACHI III. 6.

THAT ye sons of Jacob be not consumed. These were the words that came to me with power, and seemed to me a voice from God, as I awoke in the night. Why such words should come into my mind I cannot say, as I do not recall ever reading them. I will turn to my Bible and see whether the Spirit of God will lead me to write further. In Malachi iii. 6, I find these words: "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

"I am the Lord." What words of power these are to a quickened soul, when he can hear in them the voice of the Lord through the prophet saying to his people, "I am the Lord." By these words of the Lord, through Malachi, it would seem that our God puts emphasis upon the words, "I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." It seems to imply that if he were a changeable God he would consume the sons of Jacob. We do often wonder why he does not consume us for our sins and iniquities, but we have here the assurance that he is not a changeable being, but the same yesterday, to-day and forever. Our God is a consuming fire, and who shall withstand him? We know that we shall be tried as gold is tried, and all that is stubble and chaff shall be consumed. O how we cry out to God to help us, and not deal with us according to our iniquities; and he has promised that our sins and iniquities he will remember no more.

The whole of this third chapter of Malachi is wonderful, in that it points to the coming of our blessed Redeemer, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world. In verse sixteen of this chapter we read, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." Now the promises of God are to them that fear him, and the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Our God is just and holy, a God of love. For it is written, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Jesus prayed for his disciples, and for all that believe. He said in his prayer, John xvii., "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on me through their word." So if we believe that Jesus is the Son of God, we, as believers, have the prayer of our glorious Savior to his Father in our behalf.

Now who are the sons of Jacob? Are

they not God's elect, chosen from before the foundation of the world? Jacob, or Israel, was a chosen people, chosen of God, as it is said of them. "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." These were the words of God in his promise to Abraham. Now the sons of Jacob spoken of through the prophet by the God of Israel are the seed of Isaac, of whom the Lord in due season brought forth our Lord Jesus Christ, and it is through Christ the Savior that we are not consumed. He suffered death on the cross that we might live. Paul tells us that if we through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body we shall live. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." Thus we see that the sons of Jacob are those that believe, who are in Christ, and possess the hope of the resurrection of the dead; and of these our God says, "Ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

O for a closer walk with God, that we may know him as he is. He is the One altogether lovely; he is our Rock and strong Tower. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" The trials and tribulations of the world are as nothing when compared with the glory of God, when we shall see him as he is. May God grant to sustain us by his power through this world of short duration, that at last we may be joined with the heavenly throng, and with Jesus sing praise to God for evermore.

Dear brother Chick, I trust that the Spirit of God has been with me in writing this to you, for I do feel the power of God in my love to them that are of like precious faith, and that serve God in spirit and in truth. We never can thank or love our Jesus, who is the Author and the Finisher of our faith, in any degree as we should. Now to God and our Savior Jesus Christ, be all the glory.

Your brother, J. M. FENTON.

GILBOA, N. Y., Oct. 27, 1905.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I have been so much pleased in hearing of your coming among us that I have had a strong desire to pen a few lines, telling you of the same. I would have been glad to have attended your association and enjoyed the feast with my brethren; but I had the privilege to attend our yearly meeting and hearing the truth proclaimed by his servants, which cheered my drooping soul, as I had been down in the depths as the psalmist said, "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee." So we often get in the same frame of mind that our fathers were, and cry, Lord, help, we perish. How glad we are to be favored so we can say, My Lord and my God. Yes, our heart burns within us while he talks to us by the way, the clouds depart and the sunshine appears when he says, Fear not, it is I. The mountains sink and the valleys rise when he comes unto us leaping upon the mountains and skipping upon the hills. We are made glad, and say, "My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies." He calms the troubled mind and we rest from our labors, but like them we are soon again entangled with the cares and afflictions of this life, and inquire, "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will inquire, inquire ye: return, come." We are come not to the mount that might be touched, "but ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly

Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."—Heb. xii. 22–24. How good to be thus favored to commune, which kings and prophets desired to look into, and died without the sight. But we are come. How? by our own works? No, no. How then? As said, "Sing, O ye heavens: for the Lord hath done it; shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains." "He brought me to the banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love." And we sing, "Glorious things of thee are spoken, Zion, city of our God." We now behold him in righteousness, and his banner over us is love.

"And lest the shadow of a spot
Should on my soul be found,
He took the robe the Savior wrought,
And cast it all around."

And we rejoice and shout from the top of the hills and from the top of the mountains, even the mount of God's holiness. As said, he hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad. "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Dear brother, we rejoice to know that "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." How glad we should be that "known unto God are all his works from the beginning," and we can say, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath gotten us again unto a lively hope." —1 Peter i. 3. D. S. ELLIOTT.

2 CORINTHIANS IV. 17.

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

David said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." Affliction made him keep the word of the Lord; it made the word of the Lord precious to him; the word of the Lord was a comfort to him in his affliction. If we are not afflicted in any way we do not need any comfort: "They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick." If we are without affliction we are contented with the light, vain and fleeting things of time, and we glory in the same. There may be times when this is the case with the Lord's people, at the same time they realize that something is lacking, and there is a desire deep in the heart for that missing something, but it returns through oppression, affliction and trouble: "The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble," and through oppression and trouble they are made to glory in the Lord. The Lord is their strength and portion forever, and he also becomes their salvation. Affliction hath wrought this glorying in the Lord. Why? Because I was afflicted and the Lord comforted me, therefore I know

"The Lord can clear the darkest skies,
Can give us day for night,
Make drops of sacred sorrow rise
To rivers of delight."

The riches of faith and glory in the Lord are exceedingly weighty, and they are eternal, they perish not with the using; this glory is incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away, "and it is reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." Our light affliction, which is but

for a moment, makes us look forward to this inheritance with fond hope, and we can say,

"I would not live alway, I ask not to stay
Where storm after storm rises dark o'er the way."

O Lord, make us to walk in thy paths. Give us just enough affliction to make us seek thee at all times, for thou art only sought in affliction. Thou dost kill, and thou also canst make alive. O Lord, keep us alive, for no man is able to keep alive his own soul.

In sincerity,

EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

KNOX CITY, Texas, Oct. 11, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—Sometimes I feel that I have a hope, and then again I do not know, for all is dark and misty, and gloomy clouds hover around me so thickly that I fear and tremble lest I am wrong, and am deceived, and have deceived my brethren. I know that I cannot deceive God, who knows all about me, and all else. The hairs of our head are numbered.

I receive the SIGNS yet, there is no change in it that I can see. Some papers are still fighting the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as it seems to me, unnecessarily. If the SIGNS is so bad, I would think that they would let it alone. Our God says we are to turn away from all evil. If it is so bad, let it be passed by and let alone. I think the SIGNS is the oldest and the best paper published in the United States. The oldest Baptists love the SIGNS, and its columns are filled with pure doctrine, the doctrine of God our Savior.

I know that all men have not faith. I am so sinful and so low down that I fear I am wrong, but the steps that I take, and the station I fill, my Father determined and wrote in his will. Dear brother Chick, nothing can be taken from his will, and nothing added to it, so it is forever unchangeable, and sealed with an everlasting seal by the almighty power of God. He is the first and the last. The doctrine of the SIGNS is just what I believe. If brother Gilbert Beebe was wrong, I am wrong. Brother Bartley's writings are always good. The SIGNS is generally full of good things. When I get low down in the valley of doubts and fears, and do not know how to do or what to think, I get an old copy of the SIGNS and begin to read of forty years ago, and sometimes I forget my trouble, and rejoice that I do claim a home among God's people, who are called out of the world. I trust I love him and all his saints, but I have many fears and trials. God bless you.

From an old sinner, saved by grace if saved at all,

J. J. YARBOROUGH.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, in Whitefield, Maine, Sept. 8th, 9th and 10th, 1905, to the brethren composing this association sends christian salutation.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—In commencing this letter we will call your attention to the word of the Lord which came unto Zephaniah the prophet, iii. 12: "I will also leave in the midst of thee, an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." We feel like offering some thoughts upon the footprints of these afflicted and poor, as seen along the way, over which they travel in their earthly pilgrimage. As Abraham was called alone, so these travelers must

make this pilgrimage alone, and it is impossible for them to see these footprints or marks by the wayside, only as they are revealed to them by the light of that Spirit that searcheth all things shining in their heart, and upon the way, for there are times when this way leads into dense forests and through the dreary wilderness and the thick gloom of distress and darkness, where the howling of beasts is heard as night sets in upon them, and they feel themselves entirely forsaken, and lost; yet whether in the wilderness, in the valley, or upon the mountain, as that light that shineth in a dark place shines in their heart, and over the way, it makes manifest the waymarks and footprints of those who have passed on before them, who have crossed the river telling the triumphs of their King; and as they travel on in this strait, this difficult way, they find the Slough of Despond, and Doubting Castle with its Giant Despair, and they come into a dark place, they feel alone in their experience, none have ever been there before them, and they think theirs a peculiar case; and so it is, dear brethren, it cannot be but peculiar, because they are of God's peculiar people. But by and by a ray of light that shineth above the brightness of the sun springs up in their heart, and they behold, it may be a solitary track or footprint of some lone fellow-traveler that has passed on this way before them; what joy and gladness springs up in their heart as in the light of returning day they see everywhere around them the footprints of fellow-pilgrims that have gone on before them. When in thick darkness, a lonely wanderer in a solitary way, how refreshing, encouraging, and with what comfort and joy, they receive by faith a promise sent from God; it is as a bright light in the darkness of midnight, a footprint in the sand; it is as a cup of cold water from the fountain of life, to cheer the weary, thirsty soul. Let us consider the experience of brethren in former times as waymarks and footprints, and inquire whether or not they correspond with ours. We hear them complain of feeling destitute and poor in spiritual things, and of their trials and darkness, with occasional seasons of joy and comfort, which come as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion, as refreshing showers from heaven. Do these feelings correspond with ours? Do we feel that our Beloved is like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains? For a moment it appears to view, and is again lost sight of in the surrounding forest. Yet the faint view the believer has of that lovely form more than compensates him for the trials of the way. Everywhere in the word of our God is found the experience of his people, and it is written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Patriarchs, prophets and apostles all witness to these things, these waymarks, therefore let us think with care whether we are traveling on this way. "But I am poor and needy."—Psalms lxx. 5. "O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness."—Job xxix. 2, 3. "Behold my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house."—Judges vi. 15. "All these things are against me."—Gen. xlii. 36. "Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?"—Psalms lxxvii. 9. "O Lord, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear! even cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save!"—Hab. i. 2. "As the hart

panteth after the waterbrooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God."—Psalms xlii. 1. "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God."—Psalms lxxxiv. 2. "I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath. He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light."—Lam. iii. 1, 2. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."—James i. 12. "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"—Romans vii. 18, 19, 24. "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."—Ruth i. 16. "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren."—1 John iii. 14. We have quoted a portion of the experience of the poor in spirit, in conditions of darkness and sore trials, and a calm, abiding hope in God for deliverance, with a heart united to his people in ties that are stronger and deeper than earthly ties. Let us pause here for a moment and consider; let us ask, Have we ever felt any of these emotions? Have we ever felt with David that we were poor and needy? To cry with Isaiah, "My leanness, my leanness"? Or to feel with Gideon, that we were the least in our father's house? Have we ever felt to cry out with Jeremiah, "I am the man that hath seen affliction"? and with David, "Hath God forgotten to be gracious?" To feel like Paul, when he in his trouble exclaims, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Yet in the midst of all this experience, and feeling unworthy of the fellowship of any of the children of God, can we lift our hands toward the people of God, and in our hearts imploringly cry with Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee"? We believe there is not a child of God upon earth, never has been, nor ever will be, but at some time in their travel on this way have experienced some of the power and emotions of these declarations, which express the experience of those that have traveled over this way before us. Dear brethren, the quotations that we have written present seasons of trial and darkness, but we find this experience interspersed with moments of joy and comfort. We might quote from the Scripture declarations expressing these joyful seasons, which would be as applicable to christian experience as those already quoted. We might speak of David, who feeling the joy of God's salvation, could call upon his soul to bless the Lord, and all that was within him to bless his holy name. Of Paul who, caught up to the third heaven, heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of Jacob, who in holy vision, beheld the ladder upon which the angels of God were ascending and descending, and his soul cried out, "This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." Of the spouse, in the Song of Solomon, who sat down under the shadow of her Beloved with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to her taste, who was brought to the banqueting-house, and his

banner over her was love. We might speak of that people to whom Peter writes, who rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; and again we hear the psalmist exclaim in joy and gladness, "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness." We might continue to quote, and yet there would be more. In the way of the children of God which they must travel in their pilgrimage, they find joys and sorrows interspersed along the way; there are moments of joy, which appear as bright spots in the dark places, oases in a dreary desert, times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

Dear brethren, the things of which we have written we feel are waymarks and footprints along the way over which the pilgrims journey onward and upward to an inheritance that is reserved in heaven for them; they may become weary and faint when the way is dark and dreary, but the Lord renews their strength, and they press on, looking unto Jesus, their eternal High Priest; though the outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. We trace them on as strangers and fellow-pilgrims, hated by the world, everywhere spoken against, persecuted unto prison and unto death; but the walls of salvation are around them, the banner of love over them, and the everlasting arms underneath. Time, the great book upon whose pages are written the eternal decrees of an unchangeable God, unfolds his purposes, each in its appointed time.

"Each opening leaf and every stroke
Fulfills some deep design."

To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven. The days of our allotted time are swiftly passing away, and though thousands of years may be to come, yet but a few more days, months or years at most, remain for us; the bounds of our habitation are appointed that we cannot pass; every trial is measured by the rod of his love, and all of our times are in his hand; we can securely rest in this truth. The hope which is set before us of final deliverance from this bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God, animates us with heavenly joy, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. May the Lord, if it be his will, guide us through all our changes and keep us by his power through faith, and by the abounding grace of God may we be brought to that "building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," that we shall at last find rest in the glory of that city, to which the footprints of the pilgrims are leading, in the unclouded realms of eternal glory, where

"The saints of all ages in harmony meet,
Their Savior and brethren transported to greet;
While the anthems of rapture unceasingly roll,
And the smile of the Lord is the feast of the soul."

To the associations and meetings with whom we correspond, we wish to say that our meeting has been a pleasant and we trust a profitable one. The visiting ministers have come to us laden with the unsearchable truths of the gospel of Christ. We have received and enjoyed your messages of love and fellowship, and we desire a continuance of your correspondence.

Our next meeting is appointed to be held with the South Gardiner Church, at South Gardiner, Maine, to begin on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1906, when and where we hope to meet your messengers.

Z. M. BEAL, Moderator.
J. E. HUBBARD, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1906.

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EDITORS:
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A NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

At this the beginning of the year 1906, and the seventy-fourth volume of the Signs, we remember, first, the exceeding goodness and mercy of our covenant-keeping God in Christ toward us in all things, whether temporal or spiritual, and we trust that it is our sincere desire that among all his other blessings the dear Lord has added an humble and thankful heart, for this also cometh from God, since from the natural heart of man can spring nothing but evil, and that continually. This is asserted in the word of inspiration, and this we have also learned for ourselves, as we trust, by the light of revelation. While we would remember the past and the present with gratitude to the Giver of all good, we also would be found among those who look to the Lord for future blessings needed. As all help has come from him in the past, so must it continue to come from him alone in the future. Let us praise him then for all that is past, and trust him for all that is to come. How can we enumerate the blessings of the past? We cannot sum up all that have been bestowed upon us for even one brief day, much less for the blessings of a year, or a lifetime. But we are sure we express the faith of every child of God, when we say that every good gift and every perfect gift has come down from the One who is above all, whose throne is the heaven of heavens, and whose footstool is the earth. Life, health, strength, friends, family ties, neighborly kindness, the blessings belonging to a law-abiding community, rich harvests, the sunshine and the rain, with ten thousand other temporal blessings, have been ours and yours, brethren, in all the year that is past, in rich abundance. If there have been cloudy days, and losses, and crosses, and sickness, and distress, to many of us, these also are among the things that work together for good to us, if indeed we are among those who love God, and are the called according to his purpose.

What greater blessing can there be than to know that our Lord is the God of providence as well as of grace? To him, therefore, we owe all praise for temporal blessings, as well as those which take hold upon eternity. With Job we ought to say under all the changing scenes of this mortal life, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Again, the knowledge that all is from the hand of our merciful and all-wise God, will lead us to say, as did Job, "What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" In such expressions as these the patience of Job was made manifest, and how blessed it is to know that all the changes of this mortal life are the great deep in which God leads his Israel, so that his footsteps are not known. Here is the walking by faith, and not by sight. All this is true, even of temporal things, to the true believer, when faith is exercising him. To all our readers, as well as to ourself, no doubt affliction in some

measure has come during the past year. Yet we are persuaded that they, as well as we, have been so kept and guided in every trial, that all has worked for good, and for the glory of God in some way. But far above all these temporal mercies stand forth the mercies which are eternal. Concerning these mercies Paul said that our God "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Temporal favors may depart from us, but that which is spiritual will not. Embracing them all in one short sentence the Master said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." Paul said concerning the everlasting nature of spiritual things, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen, are eternal." From these Scriptures we learn that all spiritual blessings are in Christ, so that having Christ we have all. As Christ is not ours because of our obedience, or merit, or because of any conditions of our performance, so likewise all the spiritual blessings in him must be without work or merit or conditions on our part. He is the unspeakable GIFT of God, and in him all must be a gift also. From these Scriptures we learn also that the rule by which these blessings are bestowed upon us, is not according to our work, or our faith, or according to anything which we possess either by nature or by grace, but according to the choice in Christ, by the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that before the foundation of the world. Also, we learn that these sheep of his are brought to hear his voice, that he knows them, that he gives to these sheep eternal life, and that they shall never perish. Still further, we learn that afflictions attend these chosen ones in this life, but that they are light and but momentary; that is, compared to the weight of glory and the duration of eternity, and that these afflictions do work out great spiritual blessings, because the believer is by faith made to look rather at the spiritual things, invisible to the sight of mortals, but seen by faith. Here truly are great and wonderful assurances, and the best of all is that they are the promises of God who cannot lie, and who will not repent. What a sure foundation have all who believe in the oath and promises of God. Again we must say, how can we enumerate the blessings of the past and of the present? In these blessings we trust that you who may read, and we who have been writing of them, have a share.

The words of the beloved apostle seem fraught with deep meaning when we remember all these things, "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" We are fully persuaded from the testimony of the word, and we trust that the same has been our own most blessed experience, that it is the grace of God which bringeth salvation that hath taught us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. Right along in harmony with the spirit of the above words of inspiration, Paul said to his brethren at Rome, "We beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God,

that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." If the goodness of God does not lead to repentance and to all obedience in the hearts and lives of the children of God we do not know of anything else that will. It is the love and mercy of God that break the heart, and not the terrors of judgment. As we think of the numberless mercies of God our heart burns within us, and longing desires arise that we might live as becometh those who have partaken of his grace and goodness. We doubt not that all our brethren greatly desire at all times to make manifest the life of Christ in their mortal bodies.

How continually the broken-hearted sinner laments, and has cause to lament, his failures to walk uprightly before God, and in the presence of his brethren. It will always seem to the spiritual mind that he is far from being what the word of God requires, very far from what he would be, so that his life is a life of sorrowing and rejoicing together. He sorrows for his transgressions, in that he does not love God with all his powers, and yet rejoices in the hope of mercy through Christ, in whom are treasured up all the riches that he so much lacks, treasured up for beggars and condemned ones, such as he is. Did any humble child of God ever feel that he had cause to say when some rich blessing of communion with God was bestowed upon him, I was expecting this blessing because I have complied with the conditions demanded of me, and therefore was entitled to the favor of God? We are sure, on the contrary, that everything that comes from the hand of God to all such, comes as a sweet and glad surprise. The astonished soul will feel down deep within to say, Who and what am I, that I should be so favored of God? I have not deserved this favor. I could not have anticipated it from anything in myself. But, on the other hand, such a soul remembering the greatness of the goodness and mercy of God, will feel to say, Why should I be astonished at such mercies, for they are just like the character of such a holy and merciful Being as our God. Looking to self, the soul could not have expected such favor, but looking to God, how could he expect anything short of such abounding mercy?

We have been astonished at God's mercies to us during the past year, in every way, and yet we have not been astonished. Nothing has been too hard for our wonder-working God. He is wonderful in working, and excellent in counsel; he doeth wonders. He hath done wonders during this past year, because he is wonderful; but the glory and superabounding of his grace has been all the more apparent when contrasted with our unfitness. It is our sin that exalts his grace; it is our weakness that manifests his power; it is our poverty that brings to light his riches of grace; it is our wandering that brings the Shepherd to seek after us until he finds us, and so makes his tender care to appear all the more. Thus is always fulfilled his word to Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

We want to say if there has been any excellency in anything we have written or done in connection with the SIGNS, the excellency is the Lord's; to him all the glory belongs. If one soul has been edi-

fied by aught we have written during the past year, it is of God, both in giving power to write and power to receive what has been written. We know that our God can thresh a mountain with a worm. If in the conduct of the editorial department of the SIGNS we have been kept from any great mistakes, if in anything we have manifested any wisdom at all, to God give all the praise. We feel to praise God for the grace which has appeared in those who have written for our columns, and it is our prayer and desire that the same wisdom may guide us, and in still larger measure, during the year that is now opening before us. May the restraining hand of God be upon us when we would run waywardly on; may the constraining hand of God urge us on in the way of truth when we would falter and shrink; may his grace be with all our readers, that they may be forbearing with us and pity us in our weakness; and, above all, may the spirit of prayer be with you all for us, so that, as the brethren helped the apostles by their prayers, we also may be helped in the same way. We do need your prayers, brethren, and many times it would have done us good could we have had an assurance that some among the children of God were moved in spirit to pray for us.

We hope to continue to reply to requests which come from brethren and sisters in the future, as we have done in the past, when we feel that any light is given us; yet sometimes we feel that some theme is upon our mind of which we wish to speak, even though we delay replying to requests which we may receive. We hope that when we do not reply the authors of such requests will believe that it is not indifference nor carelessness that hinders us, but want of time, or lack of understanding of what the texts proposed do mean.

We are glad to announce to our readers that henceforth the care of the editorial department of the SIGNS will be shared by our brother, Elder H. C. Ker. Surely he needs no introduction to our readers, and we do not need to speak in his praise. As nearly all are aware, brother Ker has been in the office of the SIGNS for the past two years. He has given special attention to the preparation of matter and proof-reading, and has borne much of the burden of care which must fall upon all who are connected with the SIGNS. He has consented to have his name placed in the SIGNS as associate editor with ourself. We are sure that all our brethren will welcome him in this relation cordially. In this number he speaks by way of a salutatory to our readers. We certainly feel glad of the division of the care and responsibility of the labors involved in the editorial department of the SIGNS.

May we not ask all our brethren to take an interest in the SIGNS, both in correspondence and financially? May we not suggest that very many could, with a little care and exertion, add one or more subscribers to our list? We shall be glad to send sample copies free to any whom you think would like them. We feel deeply grateful for past favors in this way.

May God bless his truth, and all who love it, and make us all more meek, humble and lowly-minded, more like the divine Master, in all things; this we ask for Christ's sake. Amen. C.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905, &c.

SALUTATORY.

To the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES scattered abroad throughout the land, to you who fear the Lord and trust in his name, grace, mercy and peace be multiplied. We, the family of God, are made to sit together in heavenly places, to walk together, to suffer together and reign together through the perfect work of the holy child Jesus, whom God the Father sent to be the propitiation for our sins. Although many of us are separated by hundreds of miles, we have one Lord, one faith and one baptism, and in spirit are one body, the church, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. We are commanded to be kind and gentle one toward another; to be tender-hearted and forgiving. This is because we are "members one of another," therefore not *one* member is independent of the other members of the body of Christ; the welfare of one is the welfare of all; the suffering of one is the suffering of all; the honor of one is the honor of all. Are we willing to serve one another and bear one another's burdens? It is in this way that we fulfill the law of Christ. Do we always have an eye single to the glory of God in our service one to another? If not, all our efforts are vain.

This greeting I am sending you is, I hope, because of the love I bear to you for Jesus' sake. I feel very well acquainted with many of you through your writings, which have often brought me comfort and assurance in the things of God's kingdom, which is not meat and drink, but righteousness, joy and peace in the Holy Ghost. Hundreds of others I have been privileged to meet face to face. It does not require, however, a personal acquaintance with the children of our heavenly Father that we may be joined in heart and united in bonds of love. This holy union cannot be comprehended by the natural senses of man, but God hath revealed it unto us by his Spirit; it is his to give, ours to receive. Many of you perhaps feel acquainted with me through my feeble efforts to preach the gospel and write of the things which are not seen, but none of you, dear brethren, know me as I am. No one can be as weak, frail, sinful, ignorant and unprofitable as I. Little it is that I know of the mysteries of God, and that little only in part. My judgment is defective, and my ability limited; I hope, however, that my desire for the peace and welfare of the church of God is good.

You will see by the editorial of brother Chick, in this number, the announcement that I am now to be associated with him in the editorship of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It makes me fear and quake to think of it, because I feel of all men in the ministry among Old School Baptists to be less fitted for the position than any of them. I know something of the hardships of an editor of this paper, and of the vast amount of labor connected with its publication. I also know that much knowledge, wisdom, patience and long-suffering are needful.

When it pleased God to take from us our much beloved brother, Benton L. Beebe, former editor of the SIGNS, I at once began to assist in the office, in the preparation of matter for the paper, in reading proof and in advice. This, I thought, was all that would be expected of me, but it seems the Lord has ordered it otherwise, therefore through the solicitation of J. E. Beebe & Co., and Elder Chick, I have consented to have my name associated with Elder Chick's in the editorial work. While I feel entirely unfit and incapacitated for the position, I shall, in the fear of God, endeavor to do my

duty with such ability as the Lord may give me.

The editor, publishers and myself have been very closely associated during the past two years, and our relations have been most pleasant, ever considering each other in our several duties; all striving for the peace and prosperity of the church. We shall, if God directs, continue in the same course. Our desire is to defend the cause of God and truth in the spirit of meekness, yet with such firmness and boldness as becometh those who are watchmen in Zion. We shall, through the grace of God, earnestly contend for the "old landmarks" so well established by our fathers and indorsed by lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus. No corners will be turned to gratify friend or foe; not one principle of truth or fundamental point of doctrine will be laid down. Every essential principle of gospel truth, upon which the SIGNS was founded in 1832, we shall continually keep before our readers, that we may all be mutually edified, built up on our most holy faith and established so that we shall not be carried away with every wind of doctrine, whether it be of men or devils.

I have often felt that some think the editors of the SIGNS know everything, and can explain at any time the most obscure portions of God's word. Nothing is too hard for the Lord, but without divine revelation many things are too hard for his servants. There is always, I am sure, a willingness on the part of an editor to give such information as is requested, and often he is in secret prayer before God for wisdom and knowledge that he may rightly divide the word of truth.

Many questions are asked concerning the order of the house, especially so when disorder or confusion abounds. It should be understood that no one, editor or otherwise, is qualified to answer when both sides of the question are not perfectly understood; even then it is not always expedient for an editor to give advice; grave mistakes can be made along this line.

When any of God's children ask for views of truth they should always give their name, as it shows more real earnestness of desire than to withhold their name. When questions are asked concerning Scripture and we do not understand it ourself, I think it more wise and honorable to frankly confess that God hath not revealed it unto us, than to clearly manifest in our attempt to solve the mystery that we know nothing about it. The children of God often know better what Scripture does not mean than what it does mean, hence can readily discern misinterpretations. If I believe I understand any portion of the word, I shall be glad to give such views as I have, but let it be understood that whatever I may write in the future, as in the past, will be for the consideration of the household of God, believing they will be faithful with me.

Let us remember that the written word of God is the standard of truth, and that whatever stands the sacred test is truth, whether men will receive it or not. On the other hand, if the views of men will not stand the sacred test such views are wrong, it makes no difference who the men are. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

In this new relationship we shall hope, if in the purpose of God, that the SIGNS may be as profitable in every way as in former years. Let us remind you that

much to this end depends upon your writing for its columns, as well as financially. We should all feel a mutual interest in the SIGNS, inasmuch as it has never departed from the faith, and in that it reaches many who have no other comfort in the gospel, being isolated from church privileges. In our efforts to serve you in editing the SIGNS, we greatly feel our need of your prayers and forbearance.

H. C. KER.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, Thursday, Dec. 14th, 1905, at the residence of the bride, Samuel W. Rich, of Philadelphia, and Miss Florence M. Sharp, of Bethlehem, Pa.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, Dec. 14th, 1905, at the home of the bride's parents, near Stockton, Md., Joseph H. Richardson and Miss Emma A. Taylor, both of Worcester Co., Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

OUR precious mother, **Mrs. Caroline Sawin,** sweetly fell asleep in Jesus Oct. 19th, 1905, at the home of the writer, in Shelbyville, Ky. Mother was born, I think, in Seneca Co., N. Y., Sept. 23rd, 1808; came with her parents, Longstreet and Charity Harvey, to Ohio, in 1818, settling near Sharon, just north of Cincinnati, moving to the unbroken forests of Indiana in 1821, settling in Shelby Co. She was married to James H. Sawin (who died in 1872) in February, 1826, settling in the adjoining county of Bartholomew, where she spent a long, eventful life. To them were born thirteen children, ten of them living to grow up, six sons and four daughters. Mother was privileged to see them all baptized in the fellowship of the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, and three of the sons ordained or set apart to the work of the ministry: Elders Isaac Sawin, of Moulton, Iowa, J. G., of Mattoon, Ill., and the writer. She with father united with the old Lewis Creek Church, (now extinct) in Shelby Co., in 1830, and was baptized by Elder Norman. She ever lived a faithful, devoted member. Her faith was not a vain one, nor her profession false; it was the sweet assurance of a living faith and blessed hope that strengthened her for the severe conflicts of the life that was her portion. Hers was an eventful life, fraught with many changing events and vicissitudes during the more than 97 years of her pilgrimage. But few homes in Indiana, if any, entertained more of the household of faith than was done by her. From early childhood we remember the large gatherings at the old homestead, and the preaching of Elders Wilson Thompson, J. F. Johnson, Benny Jones McQuerry and many others. For the past ten years mother was quite feeble, and gave up the cares of life, but it seemed as the body grew weaker her faith grew stronger. It was remarkable indeed for one so frail, yet so clear in mind and memory till the last. She came to our home for a visit in October, 1903, but soon after became almost helpless, and so remained here, saying she could die as well one place as another. She often spoke of weariness of body, but never murmured or complained, desiring to depart and be at rest, yet willing to wait the Lord's time. She said just a few days before her death, if it were the Lord's will she desired when her time came that she might not suffer, but pass away quickly, and truly her desire was granted, she dying of heart failure without a struggle. What a blessed privilege that it was ours to care for her and to be honored with her presence during the last two years of her stay on earth. But she is gone, gone to that home of the blessed; we are fully assured that our loss is her eternal gain.

Short but appropriate and impressive service was held at our home on the morning of the 20th, by Elder D. G. Johnson, after which the remains were taken to Edinburg, Ind., to the home of my brother, F. M. Sawin, where on the 22nd a large concourse of relatives, neighbors and friends assembled, and an excellent and appropriate discourse was delivered by Elder R. W. Thompson, after which the casket with its precious remains was borne by the four sons present and two eldest grandchildren to its last resting-place to await the blessed and glorious resurrection. Of the family but five sons remain to mourn the loss of their aged, devoted mother. Many grandchildren, great-grandchildren and nine great-great-grandchildren survive her and mourn the loss of Grandmother Sawin, as she was familiarly called. But behold, she is not dead, but sleepeth, that sweet sleep in Jesus from which none ever wake to weep. May the Lord in his mercy remember the surviving members of the family, thankful that she was spared to us so long. May they ever remember the wise counsel given by the sainted mother, leading her children to an honorable and upright life. We feel but little has been told of the wonderful life of the aged pilgrim mother.

P. W. SAWIN.

Albert Dolaway passed away on Monday, Sept. 18th, 1905, at Jersey City, after a short illness, aged 62 years and 4 months. He was a son of James and Harriette Dolaway, of Fair Oaks, and is survived by his wife, Angie Comfort, and his only daughter, the wife of J. H. M. Coleman, one sister, Mrs. DeWitt Derby, and one brother, Arthur Dolaway. Mr. Dolaway was an invalid for many years, and unable to

do any work, following an attack of dropsy ten years ago, which left him almost helpless, but through all the years that he suffered no one ever heard him utter a word of complaint, except that he could not work for those dear to him, but no word about pain or suffering escaped him. As a kind husband and father no one could have been any better, and those near him realize the loss that they have suffered, but know that such is the will of him who is above us all, and they are but waiting the time when all will be united together beyond the river Jordan, where once across no one has ever returned to tell of the joy which comes to those that rest on its golden shores.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder F. A. Chick; interment in New Vernon Cemetery, Sullivan Co., N. Y.

Mrs. Mellie Cheyne Stewart, of Gilmer, Wash., died of pneumonia Nov. 18th, 1905. She was born in Scotland in 1868, and emigrated to America with her parents twenty-one years ago. She was married to Robert Stewart, who died nine years ago. Very early in life she gave evidence that the work of grace had been begun in her heart. She united with the S. S. Baptist Church, Milwaukee, Wis. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace alone. She is survived by two sons, Earl and Laurence, aged ten and thirteen years, also her parents, brothers and sisters who mourn, but not without hope; our great loss is indeed her eternal gain.

A. CHEYNE.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS."

Sarah Hawk, Ind., $3.00; John T. Walker, D. C., $2.00; Martha Beardsley, Ill., $1.00; Addie Cook, N. Y., $1.00; T. Knight, Mo., $1.00; R. Waller, Mo., $1.00.—Total, $9.00.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Simon Dishong has changed his address from Pleasant Ridge, Fulton Co., Pa., to Worton, Kent Co., Md.

J. W. Shelburne has changed his address from Little Mount, Ky., to Taylorsville, Ky., Route No. 1, R. F. D., and desires his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

Elder G. W. Stewart has changed his address from Cramer, Ala., to Akron, Hale Co., Ala.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 74. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1906. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., Nov. 27, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I feel that in this day of growing evil, when Satan has set and is setting every snare to catch the little ones of our heavenly Father, that a word of caution occasionally should be spoken to warn them before their feet are ensnared. So far as I know, no Old School Baptist wishes to have any power or authority over the world or worldly religionists as to their manner of life in this world. They are welcome to have all of the aids to their churches and secret societies that they may wish, but the church of the living God, and those who belong to her, should come out and be entirely separate. All these things do the Babylonians and other Gentile nations (denominations) seek after, but the Israel of God is a separate people, called out and circumcised in heart and mind and made meet for the Master's use.

Years ago (perhaps about the time of the assasination of William Morgan by the Free Masons) our people declared non-fellowship for Freemasonry. (See Hassell's History, subject, Masonic Lodges.) What they then said about these lodges is to-day good concerning Odd Fellows and all other secret societies.

The word "church" means "called out," and if we are of the church of the living God we have been called out of the world and all of its institutions, and made a separate and a peculiar people.

The religion of our Lord Jesus Christ is the most precious of all things unto his people, and should, by them, be kept separate from all of the religion of men and devils. All of the leading secret societies are religious, and we have just as much authority to hold in the fellowship of our churches members who belong to the Methodist or any other religious denomination, as we have to hold one who is a Mason, Odd Fellow, Elk, Knight of Honor or any other secret society. The churches generally confess Christ with their lips, even if they deny him in their works, while the secret orders deny him in both word and deed. To profess a religion which denies Christ is idolatry, for there is no true God out of Christ. Both Masonry and Odd Fellowism are copies of the old heathen mysteries. As proof of this see the following quotations: (Grosh is said to be the highest

authority on Odd Fellowism) on page 91 he says, "Among all the mysteries of the Ancients, those celebrated at the city of Eleusis, hence called the Eleusenian mysteries, are the best known. These were copied from the Egyptian, and bore a correspondence to all similar institutions, and hence an account of one is, in the main, an account of all the others." These worships were paid, in Egypt, to Isis and Osiris; in Asia to Mithras, &c.

Warburton's definition of the mysteries was as follows: "Each of the *pagan gods* had (besides the public and open) a *secret worship* paid unto him, to which none were admitted but those who had been selected by preparatory ceremonies, called *initiation*. This *secret worship* was termed the mysteries." (Divine Legation, Vol. 1, page 189.) "The most important of the *mysteries* were those of Mithras, celebrated in Persia; of Osiris and Isis, celebrated in Egypt; of Eleusis, instituted in Greece," &c. These last are from Masonic works. Thus the authorities on both Masonry and Odd Fellowism declare that their orders are fashioned like unto the mysteries of heathenism. Notwithstanding this both are religious institutions, and held above any church. See Grosh's Manual, page 84: "No church in its present state is extensive enough in its fellowship to embrace many good men who need the ministration of kindred spirits, not far reaching enough to reach even its own members when distant from it, and needing aid and protection. But if an Odd Fellow, far away from kindred and home, falls down by the wayside, penniless and faint, he has but to inform the nearest lodge, and hands are reached out to provide, and watchers are at his side to uphold his drooping frame," &c.

In Masonry, Dr. Mackey tells us that the Christian religion is too narrow for Masonic religion; that Masonry must reach out its arms and embrace all of the religions of the world, and that these are not to be known in Masonry. Both of these orders are declared to be religious institutions, and yet the name of Christ is entirely excluded from all of their official work. How strange this is, since our Lord has said, "Without me ye can do nothing."—John xv. 5. Christ is not known in their prayers. In Grosh's Manual, page 180, is the following note: "Adopted by the Grand Lodge of the United States, to exclude prayers offensive to members of the order in many lodges. It also is ordered that on all occasions of the order, the *same spirit* as observed in the foregoing, shall be *strictly* followed by the officiating clergyman or chaplain." And in the Official Ritual, page 13: "The Lodge at its option may open and close with prayer, but if prayer is used, only the forms here provided may be used." In Webb's Monitor, (Masonic) page 13: "No lodge can be regularly opened or closed without religious services of some sort." Thus it is a religious institution. Same book, page 231, under the word "Chaplain:" "The master of the lodge is its priest, and the director of its religious ceremonies. His duty is to select the Scriptures, prayers, &c., and he should be at the burial of the dead." A meeting of a Masonic lodge is a religious ceremony. "Masonry in many features is a religious as well as a moral institution." See again, same book, page 284, under the word "Religion:" "The meeting of a Masonic lodge is strictly a religious ceremony." In Dr. Mackey's "Text book of Masonic Jurisprudence," page 95, he says: "The truth is, that Masonry is undoubtedly a religious institution, its religion being of

that universal kind in which all men agree." Thus the Jew, the Mohammedan, Buddhist, &c., all come in as well as the Christian, and all have one fellowship. The same is true in Odd Fellowism, and yet in both, quotations from the Bible are used, but if the name of Jesus Christ occurs in any Scripture which is wanted to be used, that name is carefully left out lest some of the "brethren" might be offended.

Our Lord has said, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." —John xiv. 13. Again, "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us."—1 John v. 14. Here we have the promise that he will both hear us and give us what we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, who is altogether excluded from the heathen prayers of all secret societies.

In Masonry the new birth is promised, and we are told that it is found alone in the Masonic lodge. Odd Fellowism promises regeneration. Grosh's Manual, page 90: "What regeneration by the word of truth is in religion, initiation is in Odd Fellowship. In this, as in many other particulars, our institution has instinctively, as it were, copied after nearly all secret associations of a religious and moral character. In Egypt, the most ancient among the ancient kingdoms, an institution of this kind existed from the earliest period." Again, page 92: "From the earliest ages to the present day, there have been similar associations, founded upon the same general principles, with similar rites and ceremonies." Again, same page: "These rites and ceremonies were originally of a religious character, copied from a divine institution."

Our Lord said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."—John iii. 3. Again, "Being born again, [or from above] not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." "But the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."—1 Peter i. 23, 25. This birth is from above, it is of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, as revealed by his Spirit, both of which are denied in those heathen secret orders, or secret orders founded on the mysteries of heathenism. They claim very ancient origin. Masons claim that Adam wearing the apron was the first Masonic emblem, and in their Royal Arch degree they go back to Enoch, claiming that he hid the name (Jehovah) of God in an arch to keep it from being destroyed in the flood, but in the Masters degree they claim that this same word, "Jehovah," was lost at the building of the temple of Solomon, when the three ruffians killed Hiram Abiff, and that it is found in the Royal Arch degree, where Enoch hid it before the flood. Yet one of their authors tells us that neither Adam, nor Enoch, nor Moses, nor any of the prophets, nor Christ, nor any of the apostles, knew anything of Masonry. Again, he tells us that Masonry was not founded on the Bible at all, and that if it were it would not be Masonry, it would be something else. What is the use for a Mason of only a few degrees and who has not made it a study, to contradict one who stands from his shoulders and upward above his brethren, and on whose word they all rely? Instead of being patterned after the Bible and the things of the Bible, it comes out of the jugglery of the ancient mysteries of the heathen nations, and was probably founded in the

saloon of the Apple Tree Hotel, in London, in February, 1717, and then had its higher degrees added afterwards, arriving at the third about 1728.

The Odd Fellows have an emblem with Adam the first laying their corner-stone. A. B. Grosh, a Past Grand and Past Chief Patriarch, calls that, "The greatest exertion of tradition." Chambers' Encyclopedia, Art. Odd Fellows, says: "The institution originated in Manchester, England, in 1812, although isolated lodges existed in various parts of the country for some time previously." The American Encyclopedia, Art. Odd Fellowship, gives the first organization in America to April 26th, 1819. Thus we see that the thing goes out with falsehood stamped on its brow. The foundation of the church of the living God is Jesus Christ, and he is laid in Zion, and he is rejected by these moral and religious builders, yet he becomes the head of the corner. He is the tried Stone, the elect and precious that Satan tried with all his power, and all the men in whom he could reign joined with him, and the heathen raged and the people imagined a vain thing against the Son of God, and yet he, single handed, overcame them all and cut off their power. This foundation is the only one that was ever laid in eternity, and the only one that will stand the test of fire, the fire of God's holy vengeance against sin, and the blasphemous wickedness of denying his Son before men. Them will he also deny before his Father and the holy angels.

Their work is done in secret, and very nearly all in the night, but our dear Lord said, "In secret have I said nothing." All his works were done openly. The calling of the apostles was an open thing, and all of their as well as his preaching was in the presence of the multitudes. There also he did his miracles. Both his words and his works were open, and when they took up stones to stone him he went out through the midst of them and did not secrete himself. A religion that will not bear the light of investigation is not fit for any one to profess. Our Lord put his religion before the public, and asked his enemies, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?"

The Mason sings:

> "Hail mysterious, glorious science,
> Which to discord bids defiance," &c.

Again,

> "Onward, and all the world shall aid us,
> Ere our peaceful flag be furled;
> Masonry at last shall conquer,
> And its altar be the world."

The Odd Fellow sings:

> "O what pleasure 'tis to meet
> With friends so blithe and jolly."

And again,

> "Brethren of our friendly order,
> Honor here asserts her sway;
> All within our sacred border
> Must her high commands obey."

Thus both assert power in themselves, and the claim is made that the world shall bow to them. Here is the lion voice of the lamb-like beast. The church sings, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever."—Rev. v. 12, 13. Thus all the world is put under her feet, and she brings forth the royal diadem and crowns Jesus Lord of all.

Every degree of Masonry is bound up in the most terrible oaths, while Odd Fellowism is equally under strong obligations, but in the christian's heart is the secret of the Lord, and he will show them his covenant. What a contrast!

Both of these orders, and other secret orders as well, boast of their charity, while to join the Free Masons one must not be an old man in his dotage nor a young man in his nonage, nor a woman, a madman nor a fool, for in the oath of the Master's degree every Mason is sworn to not be present in the initiation, passing nor raising of any of these. Then one must have both of his eyes to enable him to receive the right of illumination; he must have both of his feet sound and good or he cannot take the necessary steps to be made a Mason; he must have both of his hands or he cannot receive nor give the due guards and signs; in short, he must be a man of full and perfect body and mind. Is such an one an object of charity? In Odd Fellowism, "The qualifications required are that the candidate must be a free white man, twenty-one years of age, of good moral character and sound health, and a believer in the Supreme Being, the Maker and Ruler of the universe." (Donaldson's Pocket Companion, page 19.) Is that charity? According to Mackey, the new birth is found only in the Masonic lodge, and therefore every person under twenty-one years of age, every woman, every old man and all of the afflicted, and those who are not able to pay the entrance fee and keep up their dues must, according to the words of our Lord, be lost, for unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. The word of the Lord is the property of the poor. He was anointed to preach the gospel to the poor, &c. What a contrast!

Brethren, you can get these things and read them for yourselves, just as I have done. T. B. Arnold, Glenellen, Ill., keeps the books for sale at the following prices: "Mah-hah-bone," (Masonic) price $1.00. This book will give you a full description of all the emblems of Masonry and where they originated. Then "Scotch Rite Masonry, illustrated," in two volumes, price $2.00. This gives you a general description of twenty-nine degrees. Then "Knight Templars," six degrees, 50 cents in paper or $1.00 in cloth. "The Mystic Shrine," 25 cents. "Odd Fellowship, illustrated," in paper 50 cents, cloth $1.00. And he will likely send you a little catalogue giving names and prices of many other books. I believe that every man who is raising boys should have these books for them to read, so that they might be on their guard against these wiles of the devil. I believe with Paul that it is a shame to speak of those things which are done of them in secret, and that they are the unfruitful works of darkness that we should shun and avoid.

Brother Chick, if you feel to add anything, Scripture quotations or words of warning, all you may feel to say will be very acceptable, and I feel it would add much in substance to the above.

I could write many more things, but will stop now, hoping the Lord may bless what I have said to some poor, unwary one, that he be not led astray from the way of truth. The Lord bless you in your labors of love and keep you in his holy word to praise him in word and deed.

Your brother, I hope, in Christ Jesus our Lord,

L. H. HARDY.

WILLOW HILL, Ill., Dec. 20, 1905.

TO THE EDITOR AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have had a desire for some time to write a short communication for the SIGNS, but have deferred it on account of my own weakness and unworthiness to address you. But I have just read sister B. E. Wright's letter, of Santa Cruz, Cal., to sister Annie

Meredith, in the December 15th number of the SIGNS. God enabled her to present his wonderful power to save, and it was such a comfort to me. Also brother John McConnell's two letters to brother Lefferts present the sacred truth and doctrine of God our Savior, which makes me feel to thank God and take courage. I desire, if it is the Lord's will, to write some of the travel of my poor soul.

When I was a youth I thought that I was a good boy, my parents always said I was; I never used any bad language. When my associates would use profane language I felt that I was better than they were, for I abhorred and ignored many things that they did. When I first had serious thoughts concerning my future life I believed that it all depended upon my own works. I was under the law, and believed that righteousness was by the law. My meditations were when I grew older I would join a church, live a christian life and be saved. But at an unexpected time God was pleased to show me that I was the greatest sinner that ever lived. I was stricken with horror, and my peace was disturbed; my sins were presented before me as great mountains, black as the tents of Kedar; I was compelled to cry, Lord, save, I perish. They were banished from my vision, but sank deep into my breast. I was brought now where I had to try my legal system of works. I verily believed if I was ever saved that I would have to do something to please God and gain his favor. I resolved to do many good things, and therefore bring God under obligation to save me, but alas, I only made resolutions to break them, and the more I tried to do, the worse I saw myself to be. I was now made to mourn and to weep on account of my sins; I felt to be condemned to die, burdened down with guilt and sin heavier than I could bear. I could no more enjoy young society, but felt to be cast off alone, and was made to see that there was nothing good that I could do. I now felt that I had been deceived in myself; instead of being a good boy, as I had thought, I was the greatest sinner on earth. I could now see that I was more wicked than my playmates that I used to condemn; they were living out just what they were, but I had been deceived; my trouble grew heavier and heavier until I had no rest day or night; I gave up all hope, and felt there was no one like me. I now viewed God as being holy and unchangeable, and he could not remain just and save such a sinner as I; I had violated his holy law, and trampled his mercies under my feet, and the sentence in me was death. O the sorrow and anguish of my soul; I could almost feel the pangs of death upon me. I wished that I had never been born, for I felt that my lot was to be banished from God forever and ever, and to dwell with the devil and his angels. I now desired to read the Bible to see if I could receive any comfort from it, but in place of getting comfort it condemned me. I would seek the solitary places, and there try to pray to the Lord for mercy, yet I felt there was no mercy for me. Sometimes my troubles would wear away for a season, but return with greater force than ever.

About this time I was married, and my troubles somewhat abated for a time, but when they returned again they were with double force, when I would feel that it was only a matter of a little time with me in this distressed condition. The impression of mind was laid upon me that I would have to preach the gospel of the Son of God. This I felt was more than I could bear; I was a poor sinner con-

demned to die, and to have such an impression was only more cruel in me. I felt it was blasphemy to have such feelings. My trouble now was twofold greater than before. Many times I would be absent from the body, as I term it, and present in the spirit, and view myself standing before a great congregation of God's dear people, preaching the gospel unto them as easily as the water flows down stream, and they were receiving it; then I would come to my natural condition in life, and feel that was greater evidence that my condemnation was just, for who ever heard of a man having an impression to preach and have no hope in the Lord as his Savior? I knew it would never be. I lived in this deplorable condition four long years. When I heard the Arminians preach they said we have to do something to be saved. I knew that left me out, for my works had failed. The Baptist brethren preached my case until they came to where they felt the Lord had borne their sins on the cross and felt he was their Savior; they would leave me there, for he had never given me faith that he was my Savior. When I would hear the birds warble forth their songs of praise I desired to exchange conditions with them or the beasts of the field, which have no soul; but at an unexpected time my load of guilt and sin was removed from my breast, and I felt free and happy, and a bright light shone about me. I felt a desire to praise God for his goodness to me; I loved my wife and everybody else with purer love than I ever had before. But alas, the next day I felt I had been deceived, and had no hope at all; Satan told me it was only a delusion, and I could not build upon it as having a hope in the Lord as my Savior. But dear kindred in Christ, I have never felt that burden of guilt and sin that I did before. I was now too unworthy of the Lord's blessings, but my prayer was unto him for his mercy. My impressions of mind still grew heavier in the work of the ministry. This has been the greatest of all my troubles. The Lord was pleased to lead me in this condition four more years. I now loved the Old Baptist doctrine, for it was all of grace for time and eternity, but I was too unworthy to be one of them; I viewed them as good people, therefore I was left out.

About the year 1890 my wife was troubled on account of sin, unknown to me. On the first Sunday in July I came in the house and found her lying on the bed, and looking at her saw she was in great distress. I stepped to her bedside and asked her what was the matter. She said that she was such a sinner that she could not live any longer, and at that moment her life seemed to leave her. I did all I could for her, but all in vain, she seemed to be gone. I gave up, and believed she was dead. I never can describe my feelings at that time, but before I realized what I was doing I fell upon my knees and prayed to God if he could have mercy, to have it now, and blessed hope, he did, my dear wife was raised up clapping her hands for joy and shouting praise unto God for his mercy unto her, a poor sinner. There was an outpouring of his Holy Spirit upon us. At this time the Lord gave me faith that he was my Savior. We both went to the church, were received and baptized by my uncle, Elder D. Bartley. We both felt a peace of mind. I thought my troubles were all over, but alas, how ignorant I was, they had only commenced. Little did I know the ways of the Lord, but if I am not deceived, he has led me as he did Jacob of old, in ways I had not

known, and in paths I had not trod. Many times I have been brought low down in the valley of despair, and felt that the Lord was clean gone, but I was made to cry unto him in my distress, and he heard my cry and lifted me up out of my troubles. I could then view him as my Savior, my righteousness, sanctification and redemption; I now could look away from myself and desire the Lord to lead me. I would read, "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." About this time some of our preachers began to preach that God's people after regeneration had the ability in themselves to keep the commandments of God, and in obedience were blessed and in disobedience chastised. This was not my experience, and I spoke against it, and my name was cast out as evil for the Son of man's sake, and I have been made to walk in the valley most of the time; when I would think it would be happiness it would be sorrow. My wife sickened and died, my home was broken up, and many other grievous things came upon me, and all my hopes concerning this life are blasted, but through them all the Lord has been my strength or I would have been consumed. I used to feel if I should ever have to go according to my impressions of mind that I could not support my family, and would make that an excuse, and I always felt that I was not a fit man for the place, that any other man would be more qualified for such a calling than myself. O how ignorant I was of the ways of the Lord. If I should have been left to myself I would have had things different, but now I can look back and see when I thought all these things were against me it was the Lord's way of delivering me out of self and establishing me in the faith of the Son of God, and reconciling me unto himself in all things. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."—Romans v. 10. Dear kindred, if I know anything about being reconciled unto God by the death of his Son, it is by being made partaker of his sufferings and enabled to view him as our holy and risen Redeemer and saved by his life. He is my Savior now in this present life, as well as in the life beyond the grave, for I feel the need of him every hour to keep me and to save me from the evils of this world, and I hope when I am done with the sufferings of this life, and all my works that God has assigned for me, that there is a crown of righteousness laid up for me, and not for me only, but for all them that love his appearing.

I will now close this long letter; when I commenced I only thought of writing a short letter. Dear editor, if you think this will be of any comfort to the household of faith, give it space, if not, all will be well.

From your unworthy brother,

MARION BARTLEY.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Aug. 6, 1905.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—Once more I have a desire to write you, and also a desire to write that which will be of interest to you, but for this I must trust to a higher power to direct my pen. I do feel that I can say I love you all. I have the great privilege of being acquainted with a great number of Baptists, but my love goes out to them, too, whom I have never seen when I read their letters, and I wish that I knew them. As I write this there comes to my mind the great beauty and strength of that love which Old School Baptists have for

each other. It is beautiful, because when love reigns, so far as they can they will hide each other's faults, and even though they may talk these faults over among themselves, they will keep it from the world. And even though they talk the matter over, the love is there to try to keep them; and so we judge them not. This love is strong, for it will go to prison and to death with the erring and weak ones, and it will cause prayer to come from their hearts, that the weak and erring ones may be strengthened and kept in the right way. This love is so strong that though one has wronged another, the love still abides to excuse him, and to feel sorry for him, and to desire that the Lord will forgive him, and keep him from any other trouble.

But we are all flesh and blood and Adam by nature, and this nature, when not controlled by the Spirit of Christ, is ready to slander and backbite, and to speak all manner of evil, and this nature seems to be void of regret for its doings; but when the Spirit of Christ is again in control it brings repentance and sadness for all the evil deeds, and then love seems to be stronger than ever before, and then we feel that we will never, no never again, be found doing or saying such things. Yet soon we drift again away from the right. How often I am made to regret that I am so prone to wander, as I do so often. Now, as I write this, I feel that I am the very least of all.

Dear ones all, may it be the pleasure of God that the evil doings of men may not take place in our borders or in our hearts; may we ever desire a thus saith the Lord for all our doctrine and order; may we all be found continuing firm and steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, not turning to the lo heres and the lo theres, but know God our Father alone, as he makes himself known to us through Christ. How often I crave more knowledge of him than I have, but it is for my good to desire rather than to know. I have been reading in the SIGNS to-day, and some have written of its being next to the Bible with them. This I did enjoy so much, for it has been so with me in all my knowledge of it, for I was taught in childhood to take good care of them; and when finally I did enjoy their contents, they were more precious, and next to my Bible and hymn book.

I remember well dear Elder Gilbert Beebe's death, and I wondered who could take the work and keep it true and firm as he had done. Then when Elder William Beebe left the staff I felt sure no one could keep it as it had been before. Then dear brother Benton Beebe was so fitted by the Father of all mercies to do that work, with the assistance of brother Chick. Brother Benton Beebe grew richer and richer, until he, too, was called home. But now it has a good staff, and I cannot see a particle of difference from my first knowledge of it. I miss the dear correspondents one by one. The first I can remember of them was when a child of seven. I then enjoyed sister Lucy Heckard's and sister Marianne Murray's poetry much, and would try to commit it to memory. Then Elder Leachman's writings; also Elders Purington, Johnson, Hassell, and the two Beebes, and it saddens me, as I write, to know that on earth we can know them no more. But it is their gain, and it is a great comfort to us who remain to know that he keeps raising up here and there dear ones to proclaim the glorious truth, and to speak to the comfort of all them that mourn in Zion. I do feel sure that

so long as these mourners remain on earth there will be some to minister comfort through the word. Now, as I have read this over, I do not know that there can be much of interest in it, as it seems so rambling. I cannot write of these things as I desire to. I know that it is not the Father's will for me to do so, and I desire to be submissive. Often I read Psalms cxix., and note the word "He;" and I do desire the Lord to teach me his statutes, and to keep me in the paths of his commandments, and to hold my eyes from beholding vanity, and that the word of the Lord might be established in me. But I remain ignorant, and do want to be content, feeling sure that the Lord will in his own time grant my desire. I think I can truthfully say as I am writing this, that there is a feeling of thankfulness to the Father of all mercies, for showing me the ways of evil and sin, and for giving me a love for the people who claim no merit of work of their own as a ground of salvation. How like Paul I once was, telling people, the followers of Christ, that they were wrong, that if they would read their Bible a little more, and not be so bigoted and wise in their own conceit they would find that the heavenly Father sent his Son that through his blood all men should live with him in glory. I hated the Old Baptists so that I would be glad when I heard of the death of one, and rejoiced that there were only a few of them; that it would not be long before all of them would be gone from the face of the earth, and I felt that they were almost a curse on the earth. Not so suddenly as Paul, was I made to repent. I had to learn here a little and there a little, with precept upon precept and line upon line. I felt ashamed, and greatly regretted my terrible deeds. I did repent, and do yet. At last I was made to ask a home among them; and now comes the thought, were it now as it once was, when people were burned at the stake for their love to God and his truth, would I deny him, or let come what might, would I have strength to own my Lord and to confess his name in any distress?

How very weak and sinful we find ourselves to be in self, but in Christ, who strengthens us, we can do all things. How ridiculous it is for man to speak of what he can do. What is he, if the Father does not give him strength, breath, mind, ingenuity, and all the materials for work, let it be stone, wood, silver, or gold, or whatever it may be? How utterly helpless is man, he cannot even think one good thought, and that seems to be a very little thing to do. But when the word declares we cannot, how can we expect it of any one? Poor, worthless man can only do as it pleases the Father to give him strength. If he has any strength, it is not of himself, it is the gift of God. I do feel my dependence upon his mercy in all things. I am very weak and erring, and I need him every hour even in listening to preaching. May we not feel that we cannot hear this one or that one, but that it must be some certain one? This is not the Spirit of Christ in us. Each minister is only a mouthpiece, and there is but one source of truth, and that is from God. It comes as he fills the broken vessels, so that they proclaim the word of God.

In love to you all, I remain unworthily,

MARY HILL TERRY.

ACTS I. 26.

"AND they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias."

A lot in the land of Canaan was that portion or plot of ground which fell to the tribes of Israel by measure and assignment. The portion assigned was the inheritance of the tribes by name and allotment. The head of the tribes represented their inheritance. The will and purpose of each head in the commonwealth of Israel was determined by the use of the lot which represented their franchise of citizenship in the land, being sons and daughters of Jacob, who was Israel. Thus the children of Jacob possessed a natural franchise in the kingdom of Israel.

The word "lot," as employed in the Hebrew Scriptures, represents an inheritance in the land by birth and circumcision. This determined, we proceed to examine the word "lot" in the choice of one to be a witness with the apostles of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The lot as here employed then represents a franchise of sons and daughters in the kingdom of Christ in visible manifestation and organization in the world. The history by Luke narrates, And there were together in the room about an hundred and twenty. These were together in unity of the spirit, but not yet in organic and visible unity as a church, in order of business, but were tarrying in Jerusalem, awaiting the promise of the Father, which was the baptism of the Holy Ghost, by which baptism the apostles were to be endued with power from on high to go into all the world and teach all nations, baptizing them.

But preparatory for this grand spread of the gospel among the Gentiles, Peter rose up and said unto the small number assembled together in the name of Jesus Christ in the room, Of these who have companied with us from the baptism which John preached must one be chosen to be a witness with us of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. This speech of Peter brings out the official announcement that the quorum of the apostles must be filled up to the number of twelve witnesses. Wherefore the congregation set two candidates before the apostles, resulting in no choice, as only one was required to fill the place vacated by the fall of Judas. This brings prominently to view God's way of showing his will and choice in the assemblies of the saints through the lot of the people of the Lord when together in one place in unity of the Spirit and the bonds of peace. Here in this example we find the initial step, and an apostolic precedent, in the manner and form of all church government to be followed by the churches in after times, the members voting in their inheritance or allotment as the children of the mighty God of Jacob, by faith in Jesus Christ, and joint-heirs with him, being born of God. When this right of franchise shall be destroyed the children of the house of God will be brought into bondage, and the commonwealth of Israel be destroyed, and the city new Jerusalem razed from the foundation of prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief Corner-stone (if this were possible).

As the mutual relations of the tribes and their separate interests needed adjustment, the great council at Jerusalem was called into requisition; so when the mutual relations and interests of the local churches are to be determined and regulated, appeal is had to the Scriptures of the prophets and apostles, as the foundation of the ministry in the spirit, with Jesus Christ as the chief Corner-stone in

the same ministry, in proclaiming the gospel under the great commission in all the world, teaching and commanding to observe all things commanded them by Jesus Christ, the head and foundation of the whole church, which is the house of God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

The church, therefore, with the ballot in hand, is the highest ecclesiastical authority on earth, subject only to the Lord Jesus Christ and the commandments of the apostles in their writings. The visible and organic union of the churches can be maintained by a strict adherence to the apostolical Scriptures in the New Testament as standard authority in all the churches in mutual recognition of the whole body of churches, each in local assembly only. No councils are needed to settle general fellowship, which can be done at home by the simple rule of James v.: "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." This being done in the spirit of the commandment, peace, fellowship and union will reign harmoniously, and God will trample Satan under their feet shortly, and they shall be sons and daughters of God Almighty, and manifestly declared to be the epistles of Christ ministered in the spirit by the apostles, though dead, yet speaking in their words on record. When every church shall have obeyed the word of the Lord by the apostles, the witnesses of Jesus, their mutual relations will be peaceable and their union dear; then it shall come to pass "the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day."

As individuals deal with individuals, churches should deal with churches in local and visible organic union, each on terms of a common equality. Let none be puffed up one against another. The custom or habit of sending communications abroad unofficially by individuals of local churches, spreading their complaints abroad, is a pernicious practice, and the offenders should be dealt with by their churches as disturbers of the peace of the brethren, and all churches who permit their members to do this are partakers in their evil deeds. It is wrong. Paul writes to the Gentiles, "Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone." "And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." All other building is on the sand. No expression of opinion, testimony or council of members should have any weight in other churches without the seal of authority by the churches to which they respectively belong, signed by the moderator and clerk; all testimonies without such seal should be treated as rumor, and the tale-bearers held accountable to the church to which they belong. This precaution would save much confusion in the exercise of discipline.

I. N. NEWKIRK.

MERIT, Texas, Dec. 13, 1905.

ELDER H. C. KER—VERY DEAR AND PRECIOUS BROTHER IN CHRIST JESUS:—If you will allow me to thus address you. While we are strangers in the flesh, I hope and trust we are not in the Spirit. I saw in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of November 15th a letter from you to Elder W. W. Polk, of Berkeley, Cal., giving your views on a portion of the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, and I beg leave to differ with you on the 8th and 9th verses, where you say the hand, foot and the eye are the world, whether it be king, governor, magistrate or

private citizen. I understand that the church of Jesus Christ is represented in the Scriptures as a body with eyes, hands, feet, head and ears. (1 Cor. xii. 14–31.) Now in this case in Matthew xviii. 8, 9, the church or body is under consideration, and I do not believe that the world is a part of the church acting as the eye, hand or foot; an eye is to see with, and I do not think that the world sees for the church. The world and the church have no connection, for Jesus says, "My kingdom is not of this world."—John xviii. 36. Paul says, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"—2 Cor. vi. 14. The world is represented as darkness, therefore it would not be much of an eye to see with. The 15th, 16th and 17th verses read, "And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord." Therefore we can readily see that the world has no connection with the church or body of Christ. When Jesus said, "Woe unto the world, because of offences," I think he meant that it would suffer with grief, sorrow, misery and heavy calamities because of one nation offending another, one kingdom offending another, one country offending another, one family offending another, and one man offending another; we can readily observe this to be so. Now Jesus says, "Wherefore [meaning for the same reason] if thy hand or thy foot [not the world] offend thee, cut them off and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire."—Matt. xviii. 8. Jesus is teaching the same lesson, when he says, "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members [not the world] should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell."

You said that Christ never used an imperfect figure, in which I will agree with you, but to take the world or a part of it and join it to the church of Jesus Christ, as a member of the body of Christ it would be imperfect sure enough, and your exegesis of it was that if a limb of our body was cut off all the physicians in the world could not put it back. That is true, but there is a vast difference between the physicians of this world and the great Physician of the spiritual world, for he can take a dead man and make a live one out of him, and the physicians of this world cannot; so you can amputate a limb of the body of Christ and he can replace it again. Do you believe in the resurrection of our vile Adamic bodies that die and are buried in the earth, where men dig holes with picks, hoes and shovels? If so, you certainly believe that Christ is able to replace all the limbs and eyes that his people have been so unfortunate as to lose in this life. If he can do this, which I believe, then he can replace a member of his body or kingdom in this life, and if he does not do it I do not want them replaced. Now I believe that the eye or right eye or right hand is one of the greatest lights, upright, orderly walking members of the church or body of Christ here on earth; if they should offend the church by tell-

ing a lie in the church, or by joining some secret order, or in some other way, and the church labors with them and exhausts all gospel means, and they still willfully and stubbornly go ahead in their act, then it is better to cut them off or pluck them out by withdrawing herself from them, and retain the peace and life of the church, than it would be to keep them in the church and get the church all in confusion and torn up, which would be "hell" for her little ones. This is what I think Christ meant when he said it is better to enter into life halt or maimed, with one hand, foot or eye, than to be cast into everlasting fire with two hands, two feet or two eyes. Now after this is done, and Christ sees fit to replace him by showing him his error and causing him to repent and come back to the church, confessing his error and asking forgiveness of the church and a place in her body, it will surely be done and the wound healed, but if we undertake it without Christ it will be a failure, and will soon decay and mortify the body.

Dear brother, I have not written this for controversy, but to exchange views, I hope in love and for the truth's sake. I think that this is a vital point of discipline, and we ought to find out the truth in it. Where brethren differ on vital points they ought to exchange their views in love and sincerity, and weigh them by a thus saith the Lord.

Now, brother Ker, if it agrees with your feelings I would like to have this put in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so that all may see my views and try them by the word of God. I do not feel to be a criterion for the Baptists, but I want to know the truth.

In love and in hope of eternal life, your unworthy brother,

S. M. DICKENS.

(See editorial remarks in this number.)

PALESTINE, Texas, Oct. 11, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —It has been in my mind for some time to tell the brethren some of my thoughts as to why a man must be born again, and I will now make the attempt. It is a solemn undertaking, and I know that it will prove a failure and be of no profit if it be of myself, yet I want and desire to write, and I hope that now is God's time, and if so it will be in keeping with the Bible.

Jesus said, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." Jesus was talking to a man, a man of natural understanding, and his natural mind and understanding were stirred up to that degree, like thousands of others, that he went to Jesus to talk with him. Notwithstanding that this man went to Jesus and said, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God," Jesus said unto him, "Ye must be born again." This man marveled much at what Jesus said to him. Now notice the conversation from verse three to verse nine. One who is not born again cannot see, hear or understand the things of the Spirit, therefore we must be born again. I know this is what the religious world scoffs at, yet I believe this is the way the Bible teaches that our God has arranged the matter. First of all, the chosen of God, chosen before the foundation of the world in his Son, and not yet quickened, are dead in trespasses and in sins, yet naturally living, so that they can talk, and even tell much of what the Bible teaches; can sing, pray and preach, yet have not been born again. All this suits the dead world, which must have something to live upon, for our God has so fixed it. But to the dead in sin the old time preaching of Jesus as the only Savior of sinners has no tendency to

draw them to him. Why is this so? Because they are not born again; they do not want to hear that salvation is of God our Savior. He is our Savior regardless of our situation, whether we live or whether we be still dead in sins. I believe Jesus is as much our Savior, according to God's appointment, while yet dead in sin, as after we live by the new birth, but we have no knowledge of it. Then see what great and good things God hath wrought for us in the new birth. We could not see or enjoy these things till born of incorruptible seed.

When questioned, Jesus said, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world." We see why it is that we must be born again, it is that we may see, hear and understand what we could not before. We could see, hear and understand naturally before this, for we had natural life. But now, being born again of incorruptible seed, we have eternal life. "Christ in you the hope of glory." We have the Spirit of Christ, and the love of God in the heart, and it is because we are sons that God sends forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts. Those born again know Jesus to be the way, and the truth, and the life, and they come to know that there is no other way given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. So here is a truth, of which the dead in sin know nothing, but the living are brought to a knowledge of this truth, which they could not know until born again. Then should not all these stand before the mockery of false teachers, and false teaching, and declare the counsel of God, and earnestly contend for it, and for all that is written in the Bible, which is of God, and is profitable for them that are born again? Our God from all eternity purposed in himself that his people must be born again, that they might see and rejoice in the things which they do see, and which they could not see while dead in sin. "You hath he [not the preacher, but God] quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." These quickened ones are those born again, and yet, in one sense, these need to be quickened time and again. This, together with all christian experience, the dead know nothing of. To be born again, to me, means that God has something for the people to know, and in order for them to know this they must be born again.

Now brethren, I hope that you will understand me; I have tried to write plainly.

Your brother,

U. J. BELL.

URANIA, La., Sept. 28, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I feel like telling you what I hope the dear Lord has done for my soul. When I was a young man, living in Texas, and about twenty-five years of age, following my wild career, while living with my uncle, Daniel McCalley, and attending to stock, I had a dream: I thought that I was at a Campbellite meeting-house, where there was a graveyard, and I had wings, and could fly all over the graveyard and then back into the house, and over the seats. From this dream I awoke and felt that I would die and go to hell, for I had, I thought, let the time pass, and had sinned my days away. I thought it was too much for me to ask for mercy, and that the good Lord could not be just and have mercy on so vile a sinner as I. I felt that I did not want to be put into that graveyard, or have the Campbellites preach my funeral sermon. For this cause I left my uncle's and went east about twenty miles. But my trouble

was great, and I saw that I was a sinner of the deepest dye, and I looked for death day by day, and I tried to pray. But this seemed to do me no good; no relief could I find; I was nothing but a condemned sinner. Six or eight months afterward I dreamed of the last day. In this dream I saw the Savior, and the nail-prints in his hands, and all the wounds that were inflicted upon him. I saw people climbing trees and up on houses to get as near to him as they could. From this dream I awoke frightened, I did not want day to come, for I thought time would be no more, and I was not good, and hell was my doom.

After this I united with the Missionary Baptists. They would talk to me, and tell me to preach, and I did so. I continued to preach among them for four or five years. At one time in Louisiana, I was helping at a meeting, and one night seventeen came up and gave me their hand and united with the church. My child was taken sick, and I was on my way home and this came to my mind, O you deceiver, you know that you are deceiving good people, and you know that you are a sinner. O how could I live as I was doing? I left the country, I went to keep any of them from seeing me. How could I live? I cried for mercy, but found no relief. At length I dreamed again of the Lord, and that he told me to go to a certain place and there I would hear a man who would preach the truth. The man and place were so plain I thought I would know them, and that I should see the Lord's people, and a preacher sent of him. I do believe to my joy that I found them. Brother James White was the one that I heard preach; I loved the sight of him, yet it was very seldom that I could get to hear him preach. In about the year 1899 these words came to me, All that love me, will love my Father also, and these I will in no wise cast out. This hymn also came to me, "Show pity, Lord, O Lord, forgive," and it was sweet to me, and I thought that it would always be so. Song after song came to my mind with equal comfort.

Now this is a sketch of my experience. Please excuse all that is amiss. Remember me in your prayers.

Your brother,

B. F. PARKER.

Busch, Okla., July 14, 1905.

Dear Brother Chick:—Somehow I feel a desire to write you a few lines. The most of the time I do not feel worthy to write to a christian. If I am a christian I am the least of all. But if I do know myself at all, I do believe the doctrine that is set forth in the Signs. There is no doubt in my mind that the Primitive Baptists are the people that hold and proclaim the doctrine of the Bible, and I am satisfied this is the only doctrine that will stand before God. The elect of God are as sure to be saved as that there is a God; they are already saved in the sight of God; but the trouble with me is, whether I am one of that number or not. Sometimes I seem to be cut off from all hope; then I find myself trying to prove my hope, whether it be of God, and to see what it is worth, and then gold or silver could not buy it.

"It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Neither is it "of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." I praise God for this, for I feel that if it had been left to me to direct my steps, and to follow my own counsel, and to have walked as I desire, I would have still been in my lost condition, and could never have said, "I

know that my Redeemer liveth." "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." The Savior said, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." Now, dear brother, has not this already been the case with us poor worms of the dust? I feel assured that it was the voice of the Son of God which showed me that I was a lost and condemned sinner, else I would still have been traveling in the broad road that leadeth to destruction. Thanks be to God there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. I feel too unworthy to be called an Old School Baptist. I am so little and blind that I fear at times that I have been deceived, and have deceived the church of God. I was born in Tennessee in 1856, and professed a hope in my fifteenth year, united with the church and was baptized and have been a member of the church ever since that time; I have had many ups and downs, mostly downs. If the gospel has not been preached in that church it never has been preached, and never will be anywhere. Although the Arminians call it a dangerous doctrine, (predestination and Hardshellism) still it is the truth. I moved to Oklahoma in 1902, and have not heard a gospel sermon preached since I have been here; I have heard what is called preaching. Some of them will talk very well until the close of the sermon, and then they will come out and say that God wants to save men and they will not let him. This is called in the Scriptures the doctrine of devils. In the word it is said that he loved us with an everlasting love, and with loving-kindness draws us. There was grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world was.

I have written more than I thought to when I began, and do not feel as though this could be of benefit to any one. It was my desire to write this, and as it seemed to be a duty I could find no peace of mind. Do with it as you think best; if it is worthy a place in the SIGNS please give it room. I am nothing but a poor sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all.

Now, may the blessing of God be with you, is my prayer. I will close.

Your brother in hope,

M. D. L. MILLER.

MOULTON, Iowa.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—As there occurred at our home on the 15th day of December, 1905, a very pleasant surprise, gotten up by our children and grandchildren, it being the seventy-second anniversary of my birth, and as quite a number that contributed to the occasion are readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, seemingly my only convenient way to reach them is through the paper, and if the editor can spare space we will certainly feel grateful for the favor.

The children arranged for a dinner on the 15th, as stated, inviting the members of my home church, the Primitive Baptist Church called Fox River, Davis Co., Iowa. They also sent out letters to different States, as they secretly could obtain addresses of our brethren and sisters, requesting them to write us so as to be read on said day. All came about the same time, 11 o'clock a. m. We began to realize there was something unusual. Soon I went to the post-office, and seventy-five or eighty letters were awaiting me from eight different States. I returned home, and in the presence of nearly forty persons began opening and reading them, but could not for want of

time read all, but got the names of the writers. We greatly appreciate the pages filled with good wishes, with love, with christian fellowship, with so many encouraging words, though so varied in expression, that our poor heart was filled to overflowing. At high noon dinner was announced, and to make the surprise more complete, this had been prepared by other hands. As the meal was being served our attention was called to the reading of a message over the telephone: "All wish you health; may God's blessing rest upon you. Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Sawin, Atchison, Kansas." This message was wired to our Wabash R. R. Agt., and telephoned to us while seated at the table, being from our son living in an adjoining State, and the invocation being similar to the many tender expressions in the letters read, and of all those dear ones present, coming as it did and at the time it did, was an added inspiration to us all. Such fragrance, such love, can only be that sweetness and perfume arising from the garden of God's grace, "a garden inclosed," a "fountain of gardens." Again, as Solomon says, "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out." Those love tokens borne on the swift wings of faith, like the aroma or fragrance that filled the atmosphere, were surely pleasant, and will never be forgotten by us in time while memory is retained.

Now, very dear and precious brethren and sisters who may read this, please accept our most grateful thanks for your very kind remembrance, both spiritually and temporally. Your words of commendation are too much for me, but would be right and proper to apply to my brethren. In reading those precious missives tears of gratefulness flow from my eyes, and in deep humility of soul may I, a poor, little nothing, crave an interest in your prayers. Solomon says, "less than nothing and vanity."

With good wishes for continued success of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which I have taken or had access to for fifty years, its editors, too, and all its correspondents. May heaven's best gifts and choicest blessing rest upon all its readers and all the poor of his flock, is the prayer of a poor sinner saved by grace,

ISAAC SAWIN.

A DAY WITH ELDER HARVEY WRIGHT.

ELDER Harvey Wright is a household word with the Old School Baptists of eastern Indiana, among whom he has earnestly and faithfully labored in the gospel for more than fifty years, contending for none other things than what Jesus, the apostles and prophets taught. He has been fighting cancer for fifteen years, but he has now, in his eighty-sixth year given up the fight, and expects to die soon, but not in despair, for he is waiting with fond anticipation for the time of his departure. He is almost deaf, and can see to read but little, but spends his time in meditation and conversation on the Scriptures; he quotes much Scripture and many hymns. I went to see him yesterday, and I was much comforted and strengthened by his conversation and spiritual strength and wisdom. Soon after I arrived he began with the fifty-second chapter of Isaiah and quoted four chapters without stopping, except to make short comments, and sometimes to recover from the emotion produced by the beauty and glory he saw in the words of the prophet. Surely the Lord is with him in this his sore affliction.

In reply to a question I asked him he said, "I do not want to live the year out, I have lived long enough, yet I want to be patient." May the Lord give us all grace to endure affliction when it comes as it has to this dear old soldier of the cross.

The following is a copy of some verses that he wrote some months ago as his farewell:

Farewell, I have but few days more
Until I reach the final shore,
To launch away and be at rest,
Which now for me will be the best.

But patiently I hope to wait
In this my sad and trying state,
Until a brighter day shall dawn,
When all my pains and griefs are gone.

On wings of love in triumph rise
To rest in peace beyond the skies;
The words of truth this hope inspire,
And leads my soul with strong desire

To quit at once this earthly clod,
And rest and dwell in peace with God,
In joys no mortal here can tell,
This then will be a glad farewell.

Your brother in hope,

W. N. THARP.

LIBERTY, Ind., Dec. 20, 1905.

MARENGO, Ohio, Dec. 20, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—It is now again our duty to send our remittance for the SIGNS, which I so much enjoy reading, it is filled with such good, precious truths that I feel a desire to bear testimony of my appreciation of those blessed things so earnestly contended for through its columns, both in the editorials and by all who write for its pages. O, dear ones, continue to proclaim those precious things, you who are so highly favored with the gift to speak and write to the comfort of others, weak as you may feel your labors to be, you know not who is strengthened and encouraged, for O so often I am comforted and take courage to find I have experienced, as I hope, some of the things so humbly described by others, although I am so unworthy and insignificant to claim any kinship to God's dear, believing children, yet I feel I do love them, and like Ruth of old I desire to cleave to them, and entreat them not to leave me nor bid me return from following after them. I often wonder how any subject of God's grace can doubt the truth of the doctrine of God's free, sovereign grace, that salvation is of the Lord, without any conditions whatever, and that Jesus is the only Savior of sinners, the only name given among men whereby we must be saved. I feel, dear ones, I have no other hope of salvation except through the saving mercy and grace of the Lord alone. In all our conflicts of life he has proven a faithful Friend, a precious Comforter. He is precious because he comforts us when all others fail, never leaves nor forsakes us, and has promised to be with us even unto death. O for grace to live a life devoted to his praise and glory.

Christmas day is almost here, the day the world celebrates as the birth of our Savior; may we not only rejoice in that day, but also in the day of his death and resurrection; he rose victorious over death and the grave, and as we enter the new year may we all share the peace and happiness of true love shed abroad in our hearts, which none but God can give, and may we feel his all-sufficient grace to guide and keep us in love and unity of the Spirit, is the earnest wish of your sincere but unworthy sister in humble hope,

BELLE GORSUCH.

BLUE SPRINGS, Mo., Dec. 10, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Inclosed please find a letter received by my daughter Margaret, from dear brother Jeffrey,

who has been called to the care of our church, and whom we esteem very highly. At our October meeting she was baptized by him, and afterward having read the poem "Christian Experience," published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of November 15th, she sent it to him, which suggested this letter. He does not know that we are sending it, but I thought there were many who would enjoy it as we have, however, do with it as you think best.

In christian love, your sister,

NELIA M. STARTZMAN.

BELLAMY, MO., Nov. 26, 1905.

DEAR AND PRECIOUS SISTER IN THE LORD:—Your kind and welcome letter came safe to hand, bearing the fruit of the Spirit of your blessed Redeemer. Your talk in this letter is from the light of divine grace in your heart, teaching the things most needful for you here in the kingdom of your Lord, which things prepare you to love and fellowship those of like experience, for that alone can lead the children of God to the feet of each other. You ask, Can there be any one like you? Yes, my dear child, if I know anything of the truth, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing," and often I do feel like I am alone and there can be no one so vile, none so wretched and poor as I. Oftentimes when I am among the children of God I feel to be a blot on their feast, yes, often I feel that they would be all right if I were only away, that I am a hindrance and a drawback to the cause of my God. I often feel when I go that what I say and do will cause the precious saints to blush with shame, and I feel and surely do think that if you, precious ones, could only see me as I often see myself you would surely say, Stay at home, we want not your company among us. But O, dear ones, let me beg and plead that you turn me not away, for with you alone I wish to be, who have been taught of that new or heavenly way, which leads the saints in sweet communion to meet at their blessed Savior's feet. There alone we are taught of God the way that leads us from self, and prepares our hearts to love each other better than ourselves. Then it is that we can see beauty in the work of God in leading us to honor and glorify his holy name, and this is the work of God in your heart, dear sister, for "blessed are they that mourn."

Hoping to meet you all again, and with love to one and all, I am your poor brother in hope,

W. S. JEFFREY.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER John E. Gore has changed his address from Browntown, Va., to Burtonsville, Md., where his correspondents will please address him.

PLEASE BE SURE,

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1906.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REPLIES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

SISTER Mary J. Cox, of Charlotte, Va., asks our views upon the words of the dear Redeemer recorded in Matthew xxvi. 13, which read as follows: "Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her."

This was said to the disciples when they were indignant at what this woman had done in anointing the head of the Savior, as recorded in verse seven. The same narrative is recorded in Mark xiv., though there the disciples are not expressly named as the ones who were offended. In John xii. it is recorded that Mary, the sister of Lazarus who had been raised from the dead just before, at a feast anointed the feet of the Savior, washing them with her tears, and wiping them with the hair of her head. According to the chronology these two anointings must have been very near together in point of time, both were just before his betrayal into the hands of sinners. There are some points of resemblance between the two narratives, but there are more points of difference. Some have thought they refer to the same event, but after a great deal of thought, we have been constrained to come to the conclusion that there were two anointings, both at Bethany, but one in the house of Simon the leper, and one probably in the house of Lazarus; one was of the head, and one of the feet. In one the disciples generally were offended, while in the other Judas alone found fault. But be this as it may, that is, be it all a narrative of the same event or of different events, the lessons taught are the chief things to be considered. These divine lessons are those of repentance for sin, and of love and gratitude for forgiveness, and of a willingness to bestow all, even the most precious things upon him who has forgiven and cleansed the soul from sin. Thus the wise men brought spices, gold, myrrh and frankincense to the Babe in Bethlehem, and thus, very early the third morning after the crucifixion of the Lord, on the first day of the week, the women came to anoint the body of Jesus. Love, reverence, gratitude and every holy emotion actuated all these who are named in each case. So it was with this woman, whether it was the sister of Lazarus in each case, as it was in the instance recorded in the gospel of John, or whether another beside Mary engaged at another time in this work. Also, we are taught that devotion rendered to the Savior counts in the sight of God along with all charitable deeds to the poor. Judas and the other disciples made the same objection; but Judas, we are expressly told, was a thief, and did not really care for the poor, but as he had charge of the bag and what was placed therein, desired to get possession of the money for his own benefit. But there can be no doubt that the other disciples were sincere in their objection, and that they did really think of the poor, and so wondered why their

Master, who had shown that the poor were his special care, should allow such waste as this when the poor could have been so much benefited by its sale. It seems that they had rebuked the woman directly for this apparent waste, for the Master in reply, said, "Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me." It is good to care for the poor, and it is good to render such evidences of love and reverence directly to the Master. Indeed, to feed the poor in his name was to feed him, and inasmuch as we have done it unto them we have done it unto him, for so he himself declares. We can feed the dear Savior every day in his poor, but he in person was not always to be with the disciples, soon he was to die, and by faith this woman did for him what was considered needful for the dead before burial, she had anointed him for his burial. There was in this that faith which looked forward beyond death. She anointed the living Savior as the dead were always anointed in that day and land. There was in this a sort of prophecy of his death, as all the prophets and types had declared ages before. But his crucifixion meant also his resurrection again from the dead, and the life and resurrection of all his children. The Lord was by his Spirit prompting this act of hers, and so she, with all lowliness and humility, as a sinner saved by grace, and with all gratitude and love for such salvation, performed this deed in testimony of these things; and, as the dear Savior said, this act of this woman has lived in the sacred record, and in all the world; where indeed the gospel has been preached this record has been a memorial of her, and this act recorded of her has come to many hearts as the desire which is uppermost with them. By it this woman has come to them as one of like precious faith and love, and God's people in all ages have been one with her in the kingdom of heaven. They may not have anointed his feet or his head as did she with ointment, but they have poured out before him, and called down upon his sacred head, blessing, and honor, and power, and glory, and have offered unto him praises and prayers, which have come up before him as a sweet savor, from broken hearts and humble minds; and this worship in the spirit is pleasing to God, as are acts of mercy to the poor. Indeed, there is no heart more sure to remember the poor, than that heart that pours out its fullness of love and gratitude to God for all his infinite mercy and love. This poor woman would be among the first to not only anoint the head of the blessed Jesus, but also she would be first and foremost to remember his poor. This last she could always do, but the Master was not always to be on earth, and she had but this one opportunity of rendering this token of her personal love to him. How many hearts have been stirred up, in all the ages since, unto similar gratitude and humility and love, as they have read the divinely inspired narrative of what this woman did; and thus these words of the blessed Master have been fulfilled.

Brother I. F. Camp, of Tularosa, New Mexico, asks the following question: If a brother or sister in the church has committed a sin worthy of death to the church, and he or she has been made to feel and know that their sin has found them out, and yet no one else has known it, and he or she has by God's grace been made to repent of this sin and turn from it, and, above all things, to desire to live right, then would this repentance toward God be sufficient to go on as a church member,

or should such an one, as a member of the church, go to the church and there confess their fault? Please answer through the SIGNS.

We are not competent to answer all questions that come to us from dear brethren and sisters who are perplexed in their minds, and yet we do feel when our mind is satisfied about any such scriptural subject that we ought to reply if it seems expedient to do so. We have at times left some questions unanswered, concerning which we felt clear in our mind, fearing that some circumstances in the section where the writer lived would be such that to reply would make trouble rather than do good. This brother has not stated that he refers to any one in particular, and we feel sure that his feeling, as far as we can judge from the whole tone of his letter, is that he desires a reply for his own help and understanding. We do not hesitate to reply that if the sin be such as is not known save to the sinner and his God, and God has given him sorrow and repentance for it, and he now desires above all things to forsake his sin and henceforth live above it, and to the glory of God, there is no need that he should make it public before the church, thus distressing them, and probably bringing a scandal upon the cause in the neighborhood around. It seems to us enough that such an one is in spirit and in heart ashamed and abased before God. All that God in his word requires of the sinner is that he turn from his sin; in this is life and peace. This is upon the above stated supposition that no one knows of this wrong save the guilty person and his God. If, however, the sin has been open and unto death, then, however much godly sorrow that soul may feel toward God, it is needful that there should be confession, and turning away from that sin openly, and if the transgression be against some individual member of the church, then to that member should there be confession made, as the apostle James testifies, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray for each other." Confession does not mean just words in the form of confession extorted from the lips to avoid consequences, but confession as before God who searches the heart and knows all things. It is sure that he who is convinced of his sin before God will be humbled enough to confess his sin to his brother, or to the church, when it is required of him that he do so. But in this, each one for himself stands before a heart-searching God, who is his judge. To God will such an one confess his secret sins, and all his sins of heart, word and deed. But it does not seem to us to be required in the Scripture that we should confess before our fellow-men such sins as are not against them, or to their hurt. If one has wronged his brother, let him confess his wrong, and make as much restitution as he can. If one has sinned against the church by some flagrant public transgression, let him seek to remove that also; but secret sins are between the soul and God. Romish priests gain much of their power over their dupes by requiring verbal confession to themselves of the secret sins of men and women. This is an abomination to God, and an entire perversion of the command to confess our sins one to another.

BROTHER I. W. Inman, of Gara, Missouri, desires to know whether it is right for a member of any church to marry one who is divorced from a former companion, so long as that companion is living? He speaks of one who may have been a

good man and a faithful member, and who has even filled faithfully and well some office in the church, and asks whether such an one ought to be allowed to do such a thing, and then asks what ought to be done by the church in such a case. This is the substance of his request made to us.

In reply we desire to say, first of all, that so far as we know, in the church of God, in all ages and everywhere, there has been almost universal acceptation of the belief that no one has the right to secure a divorce from a companion, a wife or husband, at all, save for the cause of fornication. This is the faith of nearly every one who in our land and day bears the name of Old School Baptist. We feel sure that not one in a thousand thinks differently, and we feel sure that our God has not left his people to mistaken views of the teaching of the Scriptures upon this important matter; our Savior's words are clear upon it, and to the teaching of the dear Savior and of the inspired apostles we profess to look for guidance in all matters pertaining to godliness. The words of the Savior are these: "It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement. But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."—Matt. v. 31, 32. Again, he said, "I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery."—Matt. xix. 9. In Luke xvi. 18, we have the same language in substance recorded. Paul, one of the inspired judges in our Israel, 1 Cor. vii. 11, exhorts the church there to the same effect: "If she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife." Paul here speaks of those united to unbelieving husbands and wives. Let them remain together, but if they cannot, then they must not marry again.

This teaching is clear, and, as we said, the people of God are practically a unit with regard to this matter. No one has the right to secure a divorce for any cause save for fornication, and under the Old Testament law this was the equivalent of death by stoning. Then indeed, and not till then, was the innocent party permitted the right of marrying again. If then, any member of any church, or any officer of any church, no matter how excellent his life may have been before, marries one who has been divorced for any cause save fornication, that member begins to live in adultery, and so long as he maintains this relation to this divorced woman he continues to live in adultery, according to the law of Christ. There is but one of two results that can lawfully follow, either he must forsake his manner of life, or else he sins a sin unto death, in the sense that he cuts himself off from the church; he is violating a sacred commandment of the Savior, and this must not be allowed in the church. This ought to be kept clearly before the church of God. In this time when men think little of the law of God, the church ought to speak out boldly for her good order, for the honor of her Lord, and for the good of the uninformed and the unwary, that they may escape this snare.

We have here sought to speak plainly and clearly, if any one shall be offended, that one is not offended at us, but at the Lord who has thus spoken in his word.

C.

REPLY TO BROTHER DICKENS.

WE are glad of the good letter from brother Dickens on page 44; we also admire the humble spirit in which it was written. It is brother Dickens' right to differ with us concerning our view of Matt. xviii. 8, 9; it is also right that he should be heard upon the subject. Many differences and sometimes declarations of non-fellowship between brethren occur because of some misunderstanding. It is right that brethren should be plain and faithful with each other, and should never allow bitterness to arise between them because of different views of some Scripture. If we are united upon salvation through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ, grace and grace alone for time and eternity, we should walk together in peace. It is right to exchange views, but it is not the right of any man to set himself up as a standard to which all others must bow. We are all fallible, finite creatures, and at best, in this life, our knowledge and sight are only in part; we know nothing as we ought. Let us not, therefore, be unreasonable with each other, but forbear one another in love.

We are very sorry that brother Dickens misunderstood our view of the hand, foot and eye in Matthew xviii. We long thought, as he does, that these figures were applicable to the most important members of the church. We have learned that it becomes each one of God's children to read the Bible for himself with prayerful desire and with all care possible. In our view of this special Scripture we are not justifiable in applying it to the members of the body of Christ. Please read verses 6 to 17 carefully, weigh every word, and we think, brother Dickens, you will see what we mean by our remarks to Elder W. W. Polk. We did not mean to say that the "world" is a part of the church, nor do we mean to say the church has power to deal with the "world or man of the world" as it deals with its own subjects. The Jews were the brethren of the apostles after the flesh, and at the time and for years after these words in Matthew were spoken, they were the only people to whom the apostles were to preach. In a natural sense (not spiritual) the Jewish nation was the hand, foot and eye of the apostles, because they were members one of another, but if any of that nation received not the gospel, and offended the saints or apostles they (little ones) were to separate themselves from them. This word "separate" means, in our view, to "cut off," have no fellowship for them, do not *walk* with them, do not *handle* the things they handle, do not *see* like they see. Brother Dickens quotes: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?" "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord." This is exactly what we mean when we say "cut off" that which is unholy or offensive. When the disciples were sent out to preach they were commanded to shake the very dust off of their feet as a witness against those who did not receive them and the gospel they preached; in other words, "cut them off." When Paul and Barnabas, on one occasion, preached to the Jews, they were made angry and would not receive them or the doctrine they preached. Then said they, "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us." This is another in-

stance where "the world or men of the world" (unbelievers) were "cut off," the apostles separating themselves from them because of offence. We should also remember that in the days of the apostles when these words in Matthew xviii. were spoken to *them* there were kings, governors and others of authority who did not believe in Jesus. The apostles were taught to fear them not, nor to do after their works, but rather fear God and keep his commandments.

We agree with brother Dickens when he says, the Scriptures are written for the children of God, but our brother is well aware of the fact that the children of God are not always described or meant in Scripture where *men* are named. "Woe unto the 'world' because of offences."—Matt. xviii. 7. This is not speaking of the children of God. "It must needs be that offences come; but woe to that *man* by whom the offence cometh."—Matt. xviii. 7. This does not mean a babe or little one, but a "man." The Savior is not, in our understanding, teaching that little ones will offend little ones, but that offences should come from the "world," or unbelievers. "In the world ye shall have tribulation." Paul tells us, "The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you." If, as brother Dickens thinks, the hand, foot and eye mean the most important members of the church, and we cut them off or pluck out the eye, do we not say in such action, We have no need of you? Is not this contrary to the teaching of Paul? We must indeed keep the house clean, and we cannot be too faithful in the discharge of our duty along this line. Every disorderly member should be dealt with according to the New Testament law, neither should discipline in matters of disorder be delayed. The turning over to Satan, however, of a member for the destruction of the flesh is not, in our view, cutting off the hand or foot, or plucking out the eye. If so, how can it be said of the bride (church), "Thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair, thou hast dove's eyes." "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee"? Or how shall it be said, "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter"? We understand by the expression, "It is better for thee to *enter* into life [new and living way] halt or maimed, rather than, having two hands or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire," that it is better as a "little flock" to receive the kingdom, than to have great numbers and be in confusion and strife. It is better that "two or three" be gathered together where the Lord will manifest himself, than for thousands to *come* together where the God of salvation is not. If God be for us who can be against us?

Another point in favor of our view is, Jesus commands, "If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off" without any intimation whatever of trying to save or heal them, but verse 15 says, "Moreover, if thy *brother* shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." Here is taught the lesson of trying to save or heal the brother, and if the offended one fails in this he is then to call upon other brethren to assist in the healing of the brother, instead of cutting him off.

The import of brother Dickens' question concerning the resurrection is, Do we believe in the power of God? We answer, Yes, we hope, with all our soul, mind and strength. With God all things are possible, and with him nothing is impossible.

We will now leave the subject, hoping that brother Dickens, and all who may read what we have here written, will be able to grasp our meaning. May we all in all things desire the mind of Christ.

K.

POETRY.

THE SWEET OLD STORY.

"TELL me about the Master,
I am weary and worn to-night,
The day lies behind me in shadow,
And only the evening is light;
Light with a radiant glory
That lingers about the west,
My poor heart is aweary, aweary,
And longs like a child for rest.

Tell me about the Master,
Of the wrongs he freely forgave,
Of his love and tender compassion,
Of his love that was mighty to save;
For my heart is aweary, aweary,
Of the woes and temptations of life,
Of the error that stalks in the noonday,
Of falsehood and malice and strife.

Yet I know that whatever of sorrow
Or pain of temptation befall,
The infinite Master has suffered,
And knoweth and pitieth all.
So tell me the sweet old story
That falls on each wound like a balm,
And my heart that was bruised and broken
Shall grow patient and strong and calm."

(Selected by Mrs. P. A. McNally.)

PRAYER FOR GUIDANCE.

"SHOW me the way O Lord,
And make it plain;
I would obey thy word,
Speak yet again.
I would not take one step until I know
Which way it is that thou wouldst have me go.

O Lord, I cannot see,
Vouchsafe for me;
The mist bewilders me,
Impedes my sight.
Hold thou my hands, and lead me by thy side;
I dare not go alone, be thou my guide.

I cannot see thy face,
Though thou art near;
When will the morning chase
Away my fear?
When shall I see the place where day and night
Exist not, for thy glory is its light?

I will be patient, Lord,
Trustful and still;
I will not doubt thy word,
My hopes fulfill.
How can I perish, clinging to thy side,
My Comforter, my Father and my Guide?"

(Selected by Mrs. P. A. McNally.)

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Silas H. Durand, Jan. 1st, 1906, at the house of the bride's uncle, Geo. W. Messick, in Salisbury, Md., J. Ernest Shockley and Miss Mary P. Laws, both of Salisbury, Md.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, Dec. 28th, 1905, at the home of the bride's father, in Wicomico Co., Md., John H. Beauchamp and Miss Cora T. Adkins.

By Elder J. T. Rowe, Nov. 21st, 1905, at Belfast, Baltimore Co., Md., Luke E. Ensor and Mrs. Ella Martin Bouldin.

By the same, Dec. 28th, 1905, at Garfield, Va., James A. Hagan, of Newark, N. J., and Miss Virginia Broders, daughter of the late brother John Broders of Shiloh Church, Washington, D. C.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **Ann Elizabeth Carrier Goff,** wife of Robert Goff, of Durham, Greene Co., N. Y., was born in Liberty, Sullivan Co., N. Y., in 1839. When about ten years of age she came in possession of a hope that the God of Israel had for Christ's sake forgiven her sins, and united with the Old School Baptist Church at Gilboa about 1859 or 1860, and was a very consistent member till her death, which occurred Nov. 21st, 1905. She was married to Robert Goff in October, 1855; to this union were born eight children, three dying quite young; three sons, two daughters and her husband remain to mourn their loss. She was an exemplary christian, a noble mother and a dutiful wife. Truly as a church we mourn, but not as those who have no hope, we feel our loss is her eternal gain. The writer knew her for forty-eight years. The night before her death I rode eleven miles to see her, and was with her at the time the spirit left the mortal body; her request was that I remain with her while she lasted. She asked for her children and blessed them, then her husband, and lastly the writer, bidding all farewell. We feel it is well with her.

Elder John Clark spoke very comfortingly to the friends on the subject of the resurrection. Soon after sister Goff died Huldah Goff, (sister of Robert) 94 years old, living with them, died; both funerals were held at the same time and place.

ALSO,

Deacon Peter S. Kinney departed this life Dec. 12th, 1905, at his home in Schoharie, Schoharie Co., N. Y. He was born in Sharon, Schoharie Co., N. Y., March 6th, 1838, his mother dying when he was about one year old. When about twenty years of age he united with the Reformed Church at Schoharie, and remained a consistent member with them until he was led to unite with the Old School Baptists on Schoharie hill, and was baptized by Elder Earls, April 24th, 1886. He was soon after chosen

deacon, which office he filled with honor and satisfaction to the church. He was married to Cynthia Webb, Oct. 4th, 1862; to this union were born two sons and two daughters: Everett R., of Glens Falls, Mrs. Emily Walrath, of Kingston, O. Frank, of Troy, and Helen Bouck, of Saratoga, all of New York State. Brother Kinney's wife (Cynthia) was called to her eternal rest August 3rd, 1881. He was again married, to sister Helen Webb, Sept. 24th, 1882, who was a faithful companion and helpmeet with him at their home and in the church. Brother Kinney was well known throughout the Lexington Association, and much beloved by the brotherhood; no place was so dear to him as the assemblage of the saints, and no subject so pleasing as that which pertains to the kingdom of our God. It grieved him to see a company of professed followers of the meek and lowly Lamb gathered and visiting ever talking of worldly matters, never mentioning the goodness and mercies of our covenant-keeping God. He was fearless and uncompromising, firm and stable, yet meek, mild and humble, blest with a forgiving spirit, a true follower of our lowly Savior, a kind husband and indulgent father. It was the writer's sad pleasure to be called to his bedside to see him pass away so quietly and peacefully; I feel sad, yet cannot mourn; soon I, too, must pass into the beyond. Truly our loss is his gain. May the God of Israel remember his dear widow and children in much mercy. He leaves one brother and many friends, besides his family and the church, to mourn, but not as those who have no hope.

The funeral was held at Schoharie, Dec. 16th, 1905, by Elder John Clark, and the remains were laid to rest in the Schoharie cemetery. Thus closes the life of a dear brother and a faithful follower of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, mortality swallowed up of life. Truly a good man has left us, tried the realities of the beyond, while we are left yet to pass over. May it be our happy lot to hear it said, "Well done." As ye have done it unto the lest of these ye have done it unto me. D. M. LEONARD.

OUR dear son, **Guy Jeffers Norton,** was born Nov. 8th, 1878, fell asleep in Jesus Tuesday morning, 5:05 o'clock, Nov. 28th, 1905, at the home of his parents in Hampton, Franklin Co., Iowa. He was educated in our public schools, also graduated at Des Moines, Iowa, as a pharmacist. About three years ago he bought an interest in a drug store at Algona, Iowa, at which place he remained till his health failed. He tried the climate of Colorado and Arizona successively without obtaining relief, and returned to Hampton last June to await the end. He was married two years ago the 29th of July, to Miss Helen Sponholtz, who survives him; no children were born to them. His disease was consumption. Everything was done for him that loving hearts and hands could do. He was not a member of any church, but gave us evidence that he was changed by grace. He called me to his bedside on Sunday before his death and said, "Pa, I want you to read some Scripture." I read the twenty-third Psalm, then said he, "Pa, read it again." I did so. He said, "Pa, I am willing to die, I see my Savior." O, his mother and I felt like shouting. From that time till he passed away he wanted to go, and talked to all of us as long as he could speak a word, and passed away without a struggle. He left to mourn, his aged father and mother, three sisters and two brothers; all were present except one brother and sister; one brother arrived here from Salt Lake City, Utah, but too late to see him alive; one sister in Colorado, who was not present on account of ill health.

The funeral services were held Friday, at 2 o'clock, at the M. E. meeting-house, Elder E. T. Grnwell officiating, after which the remains were interred in Hampton cemetery to await the resurrection morn. We mourn, but not as those that have no hope. We do miss him, and if it were not for the sustaining grace of God it seems we could not bear up. He was our youngest, and was much comfort to us. He was so patient, never murmured, and seemed so cheerful, and his prospects in this life seemed so good. Our loss is his eternal gain, and we feel to believe and know the Lord is our Shepherd and will give us sustaining grace during our remaining days. Brethren and sisters, remember us when at the throne of grace.

E. A. AND C. H. NORTON.

Helen Olivia Golden, only child of Abram and Sarah Golden, was born July 12th, 1838, and died at her residence in Hopewell, N. J., Nov. 27th, 1905, aged about 67 years. She had been afflicted for many years, very often being confined to the house during that time. Her last sickness was of about three weeks duration, during which time she was called to suffer greatly, until at last death came to her relief. She was baptized by the late Elder Philander Hartwell, in the fellowship of the church at Hopewell, about forty years ago. Of this church she remained a constant and steadfast member during all these years. She was well known by many of our brethren and sisters, not only of this church, but in other churches throughout the east. Her early experience was full and deep; God gave her very humbling views of the depravity of the natural heart, and of the truth that in the merit of Christ alone must be the sinner's hope. This she clearly saw, and in this salvation she steadfastly hoped to the end. She loved sound doctrine, and at times would express her deep appreciation of the preaching of the word of truth. As her pastor for the past nine years, she has often encouraged me with a word expressive of her edification in the preaching. We shall deeply miss her presence in our assemblies for worship. She and her aged mother have lived together almost alone for

several years, and the mother feels deeply the loss of an only child, who had been her constant companion from her infancy. Truly her lot is a lonely one now, but she feels well assured that the widow's God and Husband is her God, and that he does all things well. He has declared that he will never leave nor forsake his loved ones, and he knoweth how to save.

The funeral service was held at our meeting-house on November 30th, where a large company gathered to sympathize with the bereaved friends. The text used upon the sad occasion was 2 Corinthians xii. 10, last clause. The interment was in the cemetery adjoining our house of worship. She passed away in full hope of the resurrection of the dead, and of final glory through the Lord Jesus Christ. C.

My dear sister, **Elizabeth Ball Johnson Britton,** youngest daughter of Chilion and Ann Johnson, was born in Crawfordsville, Ind., May 17th, 1834, and here she passed the whole of her life, leaving us on the 8th of November, 1905. She was educated in the common schools, and being of an affectionate and lively disposition she made many warm and lasting friends. In 1868 she was married to William P. Britton, and their union was blessed with three children, two of whom remain to mourn the loss of a devoted mother. Two years ago her only son went to bed in usual health in a house alone, Saturday night, was found Monday afternoon apparently lying in a restful sleep, but it was the sleep of death. The physicians said he went to sleep to waken in another world. The shock was great for my sister, who had been suffering with a weak heart a number of years. She was very quiet and sad, and read her Bible a great deal. She told her daughter she was not afraid to die. She manifested the spirit of a christian woman, trying to be good to the poor, to visit the sick, to comfort mourners and to help the church. She loved the assembly of saints, and felt the need of the Savior's pardoning love. Her faith was that of the Old School Baptist, but she lacked confidence in herself to join with the people of her choice. She knew the truth, and would talk of the good sermons she had heard, but when I asked her to come to her home among the saints, she said, "I have no experience to relate." She told one sister: "If I could be as good as my sisters, and could be baptized, I would be satisfied." Dear soul, she lay down to take rest in sleep Thursday night, and could not be wakened next morning. Thus without pain, or sigh, or groan, she continued to sleep till the next Wednesday p. m., 1 o'clock, when she left this weary world for one I hope of unalloyed bliss. It was in the home circle her light shone brightest, and she leaves in the hearts of those she loved best the precious memory of a warm-hearted and tender friend. Her two sisters will miss her sweet company, they are

SUSAN D. BLAIR AND LINA W. BECK.

Jonathan Murphy was born Feb. 18th, 1834, departed this life July 29th, 1905, making his appointed time in this life 70 years, 5 months and 9 days. Brother Murphy made profession of a hope, through grace, in Christ, and in the year 1871 joined the Leading Creek Church, and was baptized by his uncle, Elder D. P. Murphy, Sept. 24th, and was received in full fellowship Oct. 21st, 1871. Brother Murphy was a plain, unassuming man, in the transaction of business affairs of life he was possessed of rugged honesty and integrity worthy of true manhood, and his dealings with men were in the light of plain, simple truth. His words were earnest and candid, and clearly indexed the thoughts and intents of his heart. His affections, though unparaded, were strong and tender, and his friendship when once matured was deep, firm, binding and hard to be shaken, to have his fellowship and love gave much assurance and strength to those thus favored. His home was a welcome, pleasant resting-place. It seems hardly needful to multiply words when we speak of the death of a true believer, yet to do so may sometimes strengthen the weak and halting ones who may read what wonders grace can work in bringing the lofty to be low, and in exalting the lowly in the name of Christ. Brother Murphy was a strong Predestinarian Baptist, holding to the doctrine of election, predestination and foreordination. As a church we sadly miss his presence among us.

ELIHU PHILLIPS.

Mrs. Julia Brawly died at her home in Ekfrid, Canada, Nov. 7th, 1905. Her nephew, Thomas A. Ardies, who lived with her, writes me of her death, and asks me to send a notice of it for publication in the SIGNS. She was born in New York city March 15th, 1823, and was baptized by Elder James Goble in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in that city. I do not know the date of her baptism, but it must have been more than forty years ago. Her membership remained with that church till her death. Although she has not visited New York for a long time, she has manifested a great interest in that church, and would always inquire affectionately about the brethren and sisters there whenever I was at her house, or any brethren who were acquainted in New York. Her home has been for many years near the Old School Baptist meeting-house in Ekfrid, and it has been the custom for the ministering brethren to take dinner at their house once during the June quarterly meeting at that place, so I have met her there nearly every year for, I think, more than thirty years. She was a true, warm-hearted christian. For some years past she has been too deaf to hear preaching, which was a grief to her. She greatly prized the visits of the brethren and friends.

Mr. Ardies writes: "My dear Aunt Julia died Nov. 7th, 1:20 p. m., after nearly four weeks of extreme

suffering. She fell as we were standing by the breakfast table, and broke her left leg up by the thigh. All was done that could be for her, but it was of no avail, and she passed away to her eternal home. I want you to write a notice of her death for publication in the SIGNS, so that the Ebenezer Church may know about her death, for she always had a warm feeling in her heart for them. Mrs. Angus McTaggart called to see her, and said, 'The Lord can make your bed in this affliction.' She replied, 'I hope he will give me his confidence.' A couple of nights before she died, as I stood by her bed a little while after bidding her good night, I heard her prayer, 'God be merciful to me, a poor, helpless creature.' It was a sweet prayer to me."

Elder Carnell preached at her funeral from the words, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 25, 1905.

OUR beloved brother, **Andrew P. Glenn,** was born Sept. 27th, 1838, and married Louise Reynolds Oct. 26th, 1869; he joined the Primitive Baptist Church in 1882, and died Nov. 12th, 1905, leaving a wife, one son, three daughters and several grandchildren to mourn after him. His house was a home for all Primitive Baptists. He was well beloved by all that knew him; but their loss is his gain, as he fell asleep in Christ. He was an humble christian. He died from a stroke of paralysis; he bore his sickness well, giving God all the praise, so when the day comes when God shall call the sleeping from the grave he will come forth in the glorious robe of the riches that Christ has wrought for all that love the appearing of the Lord. For all God's works shall praise him, and his saints shall bless him.

D. WESTALL.

PINE BLUFF, Ark.

John J. Anderson died Monday, Nov. 6th, 1905, at his home in Middlesex Co., Ontario, after a lingering illness of stomach trouble, aged 77 years, 3 months and 9 days. Though not a member of the church, Mr. Anderson was a firm believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. He was a reader of the SIGNS, I think about forty years. His parents were Hugh and Rachel Anderson, they came from county Monehan, Ireland. Mr. Anderson was born on the same farm on which he died. He never married. He took care of his mother, who was in poor health, thirty years. She joined the Old School Baptist Church in Ekfrid, Ontario, when very young. He used to take her to the meetings, a distance of about twelve miles, as long as she was able to go. Mr. Anderson was a dutiful son, well respected, and a God-fearing man. I have lived with him as housekeeper for more than twenty-three years, and was with him when his mother died; his father died a few years before. One sister, Mrs. H. Lockwood, of Delaware, Ont., survives him, and other relatives, but they cannot feel their loss more than I do, but I know that our loss is his gain. He often said to me, How he loved the dear Savior, and he was only waiting his time.

The funeral service was conducted at his house by Mr. Leitch, a Presbyterian minister; text used, "I am the resurrection, and the life."—John xi. 25. After which the remains were laid away in the family cemetery in Delaware, Ont. May God bless this dispensation of his providence to our good and his glory for Jesus' sake.

HARRIET A. GIBSON.

MOUNT BRYDGES, Ont., Jan. 2, 1906.

MY brother, **W. M. Perkins,** departed this life July 1st, 1905, at the age of 78 years and 25 days. He had the pastoral care of Antioch Church, Bigwoods, Calcasieu Parish, La., forty-six years, and was moderator of the South Louisiana Association most of these years. He feel asleep peacefully and now fully realizes the joy he so long hoped for.

Pray for us, dear brethren.

E. A. PERKINS.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am just in receipt of a telephone message giving the sad intelligence of the death of our dear brother and fellow-laborer, **Elder Dudley G. Johnson.** I have no particulars, only he died about 6 a. m. to-day. Please give this space in first number of the SIGNS, as I know he was beloved by all who knew him. A more suitable obituary will no doubt be written later. I feel my loss greatly.

P. W. SAWIN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Jan. 6, 1906.

William Wheat died at his home in Horseheads, N. Y., Wednesday, Sept. 6th, 1905. Brother Wheat was in his 78th year. Besides his wife he leaves two daughters, Mrs. Addie Allen, of Elmira, and Mrs. Anna Brees, of Horseheads; three grandchildren, Mable and William Allen, and Flora Brees; also one brother, Alexander Wheat, of Burdett, N. Y., and an aged sister, Mrs. Mary Uptegrove, of New Vernon, N. Y. Brother Wheat was a member of the Old School Baptist Church at Burdett, he and his estimable wife having united with that church July 20th, 1889.

CHARLES A. DEWEY.

BURDETT, N. Y.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Isaac Larowe, N. J., $2.00; Dr. B. P. Earle, Ky., $2.00; Miss Sarah Sayer, N. Y., $1.00; Charles Schade, N. Y., $3.00.—Total, $8.00.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 74. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1906. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ISAIAH LVII. 17–19.

"For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart. I have seen his ways, and will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners. I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord; and I will heal him."

The history of the twelve tribes of Israel is full of instruction to those who fear the Lord. This highly favored nation had committed unto them the oracles of God, and setting forth their peculiar preeminence Paul says, "Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen." Moses declared that such should be the exaltation of his people in the sight of the surrounding nations that they would exclaim, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." Then he spreads before assembled Israel their peculiar blessedness and exaltation: "What nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?" "For ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and ask from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it? Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live? Or hath God assayed to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the Lord he is God; there is none else beside him. Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee: and upon earth he shewed thee his great fire; and thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire. And because he loved thy fathers, therefore

he chose their seed after them, and brought thee out in his sight with his mighty power out of Egypt; to drive out the nations from before thee greater and mightier than thou art, to bring thee in, to give thee their land for an inheritance, as it is this day. Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else. Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the earth, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, forever." Well may Israel's blessedness be crowned with the song, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places." But they rebelled and vexed God, they often turned aside from him and corrupted their ways, they provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images. Then the Lord pleads with them face to face, and declares that their conduct was more inconstant and shameful than the nations of the Gentiles. "For pass over the isles of Chittim and see; and send unto Kedar, and consider diligently, and see if there be any such a thing: hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit. Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord. For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."—Jer. ii. 10–13. "Hear, O heavens; and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken: I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me: the ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider."—Isaiah i. 2, 3. Shall such a sinful, ungrateful nation be cast aside by God? Let this be the answer of his sovereign grace: "Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the Lord of hosts; though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel."—Jer. li. 5.

Having glanced at this picture of typical Israel, let us come to our text as applicable to the true and spiritual Israel of God. That one born again, called by God's grace unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ, who has been made to feel the burden of sin, and then has tasted the blessedness of the man whose transgressions are all forgiven, should go on in a froward spirit in forbidden paths, is a dark and shameful mystery. That among the children of God such behavior is to be found, is evident from the testimony of the Scriptures. It is humiliating, heart-saddening to read of this and that signally blessed child of God falling into outward iniquities, wandering far away from the statutes of the Lord, but O how our hearts melt and glow with affection to them, and to our God, when with broken and contrite hearts, with cries and tears they are turned to him who forgiveth transgression and sin because he delighteth in mercy. (Micah vii. 18.) Many, very many of the children of God are mercifully preserved from what may be described as outward sinfulness. In the eyes of their fellows there appears to be nothing froward, but among even

these so graciously kept from portraying the depravities of their natures, there are those to whom at times in their invisible life the language of the text is applicable. "The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."

"For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him." "His covetousness." This covers a very extensive field of our sinfulness. The vain delights of earth appeal with much power to the depravity of our natures. The child of God learns that there are lustings in his flesh which, if not restrained, are capable of finding gratification in all that is of the world. (1 John ii. 16.) Having such a nature in us we are easily allured by temptations to walk in the iniquities of covetousness. Ah, unless the flesh is crucified with the lusts thereof, we shall ere long find ourselves numbered with those who "pant after the dust of the earth."—Amos ii. 7. What a picture! Here is one with all eagerness reaching forth, pursuing after lying vanities, till in the chase he is panting with his exertions to grasp the illusive prize, for this covetousness is as a raging thirst which the open mouth, parched tongue and panting breath declare only the dust of the earth can quench. "They pant after the dust of the earth." This is surely the antithesis of "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." If covetousness be not constantly mortified through the gracious power of the Spirit of God, it will grow, and the iniquity of his covetousness will soon be apparent in the life of that one. Covetousness contains in it innumerable iniquities, it will shrivel us up, it will shut up the bowels of compassion, it will at length so harden our spirit, and it will say, It is no matter who sinks so long as I swim; though others are grieved, afflicted and have manifold adversities, of what moment is it so long as I am not touched? We may say we pity the poor and needy, but do we help them? Do we in acts as well as words feel for them? Perhaps we excuse our covetousness by casting the blame of adversity upon the afflicted and needy, saying of them, It is their own fault, they brought it upon themselves, they should have done differently, and they would not thank me if I were to assist them; so in very selfishness we shut up the bowels of our compassion. Shut up! Perhaps at this stage selfishness has so taken possession that it would be hard to find any bowels of compassion to shut up. O, when one is going on as the very slave of the iniquity of his covetousness, there will be no visibility in us of the likeness of the compassionate Savior.

I tell you, beloved ones of God, there are avenues of covetousness that are very hateful, and I have not had to go outside of my own poor life to see and feel them. Little things in my own experience, known only to the Lord, have made me to hate myself, to hang down my head, to blush, to hide my face away from the Lord; I have felt I was too mean for him to look upon. It is not in vain that Jesus said, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness." It is that spirit in us that reaches after that which will benefit us; it is self, first, last and all the time; it is self-gratification, and in its broad aspect covetousness is that which in any degree witnesseth a departure from the fulfillment of "the royal law, according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."—James ii. 8. How do you stand, guilty or not guilty? So comprehensive is the iniquity of covetousness that Paul says, "I had not known

lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."—Romans vii. 7. Well may one exclaim, "I have seen the end of all perfection: but thy commandment is exceeding broad."—Psalms cxix. 96. Though covetousness is in the natural hearts of all the human family, yet through God's reigning grace there are times when it is crucified, and in some Christ-like lives of the dear family of God it is so hidden, so subdued, that they are ever sacrificing themselves for their fellows, ever seeking the comfort, welfare and exaltation of others, and the last thing thought of is themselves; they are so unselfish. Have you not had glimpses of such ones? Are they not lovely? Then by way of contrast look at yourself. Perhaps some of us are blind, and can neither see the beauty of others nor the ugliness of ourselves. "For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him." That the Lord should thus be wroth very plainly reveals the character of God. We behold him the Holy One, who is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and who cannot look upon sin. (Hab. i. 13.) Ah, we could not have faith in and reverence a God that hath pleasure in wickedness. (Psalms v. 4.) Yes, one of the dearest revelations of God to our hearts is that he is holy and righteous, and hateth wickedness. With what affection therefore do those who are taught of the Lord cleave to him, and each one adoringly calls him the "Lord my God, mine Holy One."—Hab. i. 12. "He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."

"And smote him." The chastisements of the Lord are twofold, there are chastenings from within and chastenings from without. The Lord chastised his people with the rod of men. (2 Sam. vii. 14.) The Assyrian was the rod of the Lord's anger. (Isaiah x. 5.) The wicked is his sword. (Psalms xvii. 13.) He smote his people with temporal adversities, and his outstretched arm blasted their possessions with rust and mildew, he sent among them the cankerworm, the caterpillar and grasshoppers, and thus Jacob was made small. (Amos vii. 2.) I hewed them by the prophets, I have slain them by the words of my mouth. (Hosea vi. 5.) Ah, the prophets of the Holy One are not always declaring pleasant things unto Israel, but sent of God and inspired of him they bring heavy tidings, they speak against us. (Jer. xxxi. 20.) The word of the Lord as a sharp axe cuts and hews us, and we are sorely wounded, our sins are shewn us, and as our iniquities are spread before our faces we are cut down and slain by the revealed displeasure of the Lord, and as the slain in Ezekiel xxxvii. 11, we say, "Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; and we are cut off for our parts." The trials and afflictions of his saints are oftentimes the smitings of the Lord, his fatherly chastenings. These trials that come upon us from without all have a voice, and blessed it is to have the hearing ear to hear the rod, and the Lord our God who hath appointed it. (Micah vi. 9.) Then there are the inward smitings, the strokes of the Lord's displeasure in our conscience, the guilt of our lives as a smiting rod removes far from us all spiritual blessedness. What a difference there is between a good conscience and an evil conscience! The one is darkness, guilt and affliction, the other righteousness, peace and blessedness in the blood and righteousness of the Son of God.

Saith the Lord, "And smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart." Truly

the way of the transgressor is hard, for when the child of God transgresses, the Lord his God will shew him hard things. (Psalms lx. 3.) The blessing of the Lord is that he makes his face to shine upon us, (Num. vi. 25,) and the prayer of the humble in heart is, "Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us." O, in the smiles of his face there is comfort, healing and strength. We are animated to worship and praise his name, and prove so wondrously that the light of his countenance is the health of our countenance. But when he hideth himself and is wroth, when his face we cannot see, when we are excluded and shut out from his presence, with no looks of compassion, with no pitying glances of a Father's love, then we are as wretched outcasts. Then also to have the dreadful knowledge that God is wroth, to know we have provoked him to anger with the iniquity of our covetousness, and that our sins have hidden his face from us. What then? Shall we not turn unto him that smiteth us, shall we not bow down and in contriteness of heart seek reconciliation with our God? Is this not becoming us as children of the Most High? O it is becoming us, but so strong are the depravities of our flesh that unless divine help is afforded us we shall be driven headlong, and the terrible testimony concerning us will be, "He went on frowardly in the way of his heart." In spite of the prickings of his conscience he went on in the paths of folly, "in the way of his heart," and he would have gone on and on to perdition if the Lord had not in due time hedged up his way that he should not find his paths. (Hosea ii. 6.) It is a vain thing for one born of God to think to live in fleshly self-gratification, for such paths are the former lusts of our ignorance, (1 Peter i. 4,) so unbecoming; so dishonoring to our God. O what would become of us miserable sinners but for God's reigning grace? Are you going on in the frowardness of your heart? Take a thought, examine and see. Are you striving against sin? (Heb. xii. 4.) Are you crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts? Though you may veil your life so that your fellows cannot know it, you cannot screen your ways from the eyes of the Holy One that inhabiteth eternity. However fair our lives may be in the sight of mortals, to God all things are naked and open.

"Great God, from thee there's naught concealed,
Thou seest my inward frame;
To thee I always stand revealed
Exactly as I am."

"I have seen his ways, and will heal him." One of the sacred, awe-inspiring yet comforting things that has entered into my life has been this, "Thou God seest me." Sometimes amidst afflictions and temptations in my infirmity I have thought God seeth not, he has no regard for poor, harrassed, sinful me. Then it has dawned upon me that the eyes of the Lord are upon me, he seeth, he knows; all my anxieties, all my oppressions, all the rugged, troubled scenes that I am passing through, he knoweth the way that I take. O this has quieted, rested, comforted me, and I have been again strengthened to hope in the Lord. And when my feet were almost gone and my steps had well nigh slipped, when sorely tempted to the indulgence of my sinful appetites, O what a defence, what salvation I have found in the precious thought being given me that our heavenly Father seeth me. Ah, I have been ashamed and pained in his sight, but my wounded heart has turned with all affection to him whose eyes are upon me, and I have said, Ah, Lord, thou seest I am a poor, vile

sinner, so weak, so apt to be enticed into iniquities; have pity upon me, forgive me, hold thou me up and I shall be safe.

"I have seen his ways." His selfishness, the iniquity of his covetousness; I have seen his perverseness, going on frowardly in the way of his heart. How unlovely! Ah, wretched, wayward child, thy feet are not comely now. Where are thy shoes that make the feet of believers so beautiful? (Song vii. 1; Eph. vi. 15.) "I have seen his ways, and will heal him." What! heal him, such an ungrateful, unprofitable, froward sinner? O this is matchless grace, this is the everlasting love of God our heavenly Father. Thus saith the Lord, "Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still; therefore my bowels are troubled for him: I will surely have mercy upon him."—Jer. xxxi. 20. "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem."—Isaiah lxvi. 13. Such Scriptures very blessedly reveal to our faith the depths and tenderness of Jehovah's love to his people. Thou art high and holy, Lord God Almighty, thy glory covers the heavens, and the earth is full of thy praise. Thou art infinite in majesty, O thou art far, far above our highest thought. "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" Mindful of man? sinful, rebellious man?

"Pause, my soul, adore and wonder!
Ask, 'O why such love to me?'
Grace hath put me in the number
Of the Savior's family:
Hallelujah! thanks, eternal thanks to thee."

There is grace in the Lord to heal our foul backslidings, he has his own efficacious ways of turning his wayward children to himself again; he has his way of hedging up our way with thorns, that we cannot find our paths where formerly we walked in the selfishness of our flesh; instead of gratification we meet with thorns that make the way painful. Our very selfishness itself becomes briars and thorns to lacerate our consciences. Thus torn and wounded we become ashamed and humbled over our departures from the Lord and his truth. The Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy, and this is shewn in most graciously bringing our guilty, chastened souls to repentance, and we are brought in godly sorrow to sigh and mourn before him. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."—Psalms li. 17. O this contrite heart is all the fruit of God's graciousness; without his divine work in our souls we should still be going on and on most frowardly in the evils of our nature. But now in the Lord's healing time there pours forth from our contrite hearts sighs and supplications for the forgiveness of our sins.

"Of this the best of men have need,
This I, the worst, receive."

It is in very kindness that the Holy Spirit shews us our iniquities, and so effectually brings us to loathe, to mourn over and to turn from all sinful gratifications. This repentance has very blessed fruits described by the apostle in 2 Cor. vii. 11: "For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge!" During this time of healing, the child of God finds that in himself he has "no healing medicines" (Jer. xxx. 13,) for his wounds, and his soul under divine leading will cry to the Lord, "Be merciful unto me; heal my soul; for I

have sinned against thee."—Psalms xli. 4. Though in our backslidings we have gone far, far astray from the paths of sacred communion with God, yet he will not cast away his people whom he foreknew. One of the most affecting scenes in which the tender, immutable and everlasting love of God to his people is portrayed is found in Jer. iii. 14, 22: "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you; and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion." "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God." This, O believers, is the voice of thy Maker, who is thy Husband; he will not put thee away, he will never write thee a bill of divorcement, for he hateth putting away. (Mal. ii. 16.) And here he is pleased to represent himself to our faith as the constant, loving Husband, who cannot, will not part with his church, and who now in his undying, unquenchable love seeketh after his sinful, backsliding people. He will win back his wife to himself again, though she has treacherously departed from him. Let me present the picture again, and may you with eyes of faith and love look and look and feast upon it: "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you." As fellow creatures one may love another, but here, in the new covenant, is Jehovah, our Maker, and his church, creatures, insignificant, less than nothing and vanity, (Isaiah xl. 17,) base things, things that are not, (1 Cor. i. 28,) unholy, ungrateful, unprofitable, corruptible mortals, and yet to such, his chosen ones, he says, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." O, I am such an unworthy one, I find I am in need of the working of his own divine power in my soul to brace me up, to strengthen me to believe that I am one that God hath so loved. And if we are so loved, who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, "For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

"I have seen his ways, and will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners." Ah, the wayward, the "prone to wander," need the Lord as their Shepherd. He will lead his flock like a shepherd. And where does he lead the humbled, contrite, returning ones? He leadeth them in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. He leadeth us, we are drawn, drawn away from the iniquity of our covetousness, from the follies of our flesh, from that selfishness so inherent in our poor earthly lives. O we need every day, all the time, this divine drawing, or else we are drawn astray, we are pulled back and draw down in the dark paths and realms of the depravities of our fleshly hearts.

> "He drew me, and I followed on,
> Charmed to confess the power divine."

The Lord takes hold of his people by

revealing in their hearts this and that precious truth in the doctrine of Christ, and as their hearts are captivated, feasted and consoled by these openings up to them of the heart of the Lord their God they are constrained to follow on to know the Lord. We are led in the paths of righteousness, led through the wilderness, through our every day cares and vexations, over the rugged and rough places, through temptations and trials, through floods and flames, and thus drawn and led we are found worshiping God in spirit and in truth.

"I will restore comforts to him and to his mourners." Ah, when we are turned aside to pursue lying vanities we forsake our own mercies; our souls are then bereaved of the consolations of the gospel for we cannot be walking after the flesh and in the Spirit of Jesus Christ at the same moment; we cannot be feasting the depravities of our flesh and sitting at the King's table at the same time. The flesh may intrude, it may dare approach us even when we feast at the banqueting-house with our dear Redeemer, but our heart will be shocked and will cry out, Begone! O while we are tasting the comforts of Christ Jesus we shall not be found indulging the lust of the flesh, but in love to our dear Lord Jesus, and in hatred and loathing of all iniquity, we shall be found crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts.

"While we are held in thy embrace,
There's not a thought attempts to rove;
Each smile upon thy beauteous face
Fixes, and charms, and fires our love."

It is truly blessed to have once more the comforts of our covenant God. All is of grace, for these new covenant mercies are restored to God's chastened children without money and without price. God saith, "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him."—Hosea xiv. 4. And while his comforts delight our souls in our fervent gratitude we say, "O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me."—Isaiah xii. 1.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

North Berwick, Maine.

I MUSE ON THE WORK OF THY HANDS.

This is the language of David in the one hundred and forty-third Psalm. The fifth verse of this Psalm reads, "I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands." In another place the psalmist declares, "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom." David was meditating and musing on the wonderful works of God. How often he breaks out in sublime language of praise and adoration declaring the mighty works of God in creation, and his wonderful works to the children of men. He not only created all things, but upholds all things by the word of his almighty power, and in him we live and move and have our being. No other writer in the sacred Scriptures seems to have been given that exalted view of the infinite character of God that David had. In his musings he says, "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handy work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." In contrast to such a Being, whose glory the heavens declare, he says, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers; the

moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him?" Although David meditated so much on the work of God's hands, yet it was given to Moses, the meekest man, to narrate the works of God in the creation of the universe. He was enabled to do this by the revelation of the Spirit of the God of creation, and how grandly he opens this most wonderful narrative when he declares in the first verse of Genesis that, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." This language suggests to our finite minds, When was the beginning, and how did God create the heaven and the earth? The finite cannot comprehend the infinite. The only answer God gives to such questionings is, "Be still, and know that I am God." The God of creation as well as the God of providence and of grace. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of the things which do appear."—Heb. xi. 3.

Moses continues his vivid descriptions of the six all-important days work of creation, and through faith we accept them as truth. Whether these days of creation were our ordinary days in length, or whether they extended through ages, the result is no less the work of God; that which David was meditating upon when he said, "I muse on the work of thy hands."

In contrast to those who, like David, accept the work of creation as the work of the omnipotent and omniscient God, are those who regard it as the result of certain evolutionary processes by which the present perfected conditions of the universe have been brought about through successive ages independent of the God of creation. They reason back to a point where they call it the unknowable, and how far are they in advance of where they began? "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." "The foolishness of God is wiser than men."

The existence of man upon the earth is the result of the sixth day's work of creation, as narrated by Moses. Man was honored by the distinction of being created in the image of his Maker, and with all of the creation was pronounced very good by the Creator. He was the most important of the works of creation on the earth; in fact, may we not infer from the Bible account given of him that the earth was created for the abode of man? "For thou has made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things under his feet."—Psalms viii. 5, 6. The original state of man and condition of the earth as they came from the hand of the Creator may well be regarded as the conditions of the highest earthly bliss. Sinless man in the garden of Eden, planted by the Lord God!

It appears, from the account given by Moses, that Adam (the first man,) and his companion, Eve, (the mother of all living,) remained only a short time in their earthly paradise for which they were capacitated. We soon find them driven from the garden of Eden, and the earth cursed because of their transgression. Those who have never been made to realize the exceeding sinfulness of sin, regard this as of no great importance, believing they can reach forth their hands at any time and partake of the tree of life, which is guarded by a flaming sword turning in every direction. But those who have felt the plague of their own heart, realize the awful consequences of sin. Have we

ever been made to realize its direful effects? If we have, it is because of the work of God's Spirit in our heart, for since the fall of man he is declared to be "dead in trespasses and sins." It is the work of God in providing salvation from sin and death. Although the scheme of redemption was in the economy of God, yet it will not do to regard the Redeemer and Savior of sinful man as a part of creation or the work of God's hands; Jesus was no less than God manifest in the flesh. "But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." He suffered and died on the cross for the sins of his people, he arose from the dead for their justification, "seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." Is this not enough?

Volumes might be written on the works of creation and the dealings of God with the children of men. Well might the psalmist exclaim, "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee." His works shall praise him, because they manifest the infinite attributes of his character, and his saints shall bless him, because of what he has done for them.

These musings were suggested after reading an excellent article in the SIGNS on the subject, "I muse on the years that are past," and I can but wish that this were a worthy companion to it. If the editor knew how little, if any, there appears of the work of grace in the writer's heart I am sure these meditations would not appear in the SIGNS.

Yours, with the desire for your christian fellowship,

G. C. JORDAN.

GALESBURG, Ill., Dec. 26, 1905.

CHAGRIS, Ind. Ter., Oct. 28, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—My time for paying for the SIGNS has arrived, and I must renew, as I cannot do without it, for it contains all the preaching I have, and I feel to praise the Lord that I am favored of him to read what is written by his children, for none can testify of Jesus except he teaches them, none can testify of Jesus except the Spirit of Christ dwells in them; he takes of the things of his kingdom and shows them to his children, he leads them about, instructs and keeps them as the apple of his eye. "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." He is the Rock, his work is perfect, all his ways are judgment, a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he. "When the Most high divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in a waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept

him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." So the Lord has led me with his mighty hand, from a little child he has been my guide and stay. When I was but a little child I felt to know that he had all power and was over all things. When I was quite young my desire was to try to do good. So I traveled this way until in my eighteenth year, when I was made to see I was a great sinner, and my good works naught but filthy rags in the sight of God. Dear friends, what a change. Now I began to cry, O Lord, have mercy. I could see God's vengeance before me, and would think, Hell is my portion, I am forever lost. I never had read the Bible, neither did I have one, but I did want one. After awhile I got a Testament, and I read that, to find comfort, but O, every word condemned me. The beginning of my conviction for sin was in 1861. I was cast into trouble; I would ask the Lord to have mercy on me, a sinner, and sometimes I would think, I need not ask forgiveness, for I will be sent to hell, and it will be just and right. I would listen when old people were talking, to see if I could get any comfort, but alas, I would only sink lower. In 1862 a hymn came to my mind, which I sang day after day; just one verse I knew, and this is the verse:

"In evil long I took delight,
Unawed by shame or fear,
Till a new object struck my sight,
And stopped my wild career."

Yes, my brethren and sisters, this verse did seem to fit my case, for thought I, I have sinned away the day of grace, there is no mercy for such a sinner as I. I cannot use words to express my deep distress. I heard preaching but a few times, and never got any comfort from what I heard, so I thought, O what shall I do to be saved?

One night I slept, and dreamed that I saw the Lord in the sky; he had a white stone in his hand and was writing on it; I could not read it, and this troubled me, for I thought, Surely my name is not written there, for I could not read the writing. One day after that this Scripture came to me, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." I thought, Have I mourned, or is it imagination? Then I was in despair again, and sometimes I felt that I wanted to run, for I felt that the earth was opening to swallow me up.

I went on in this way until 1866, trying to pray for mercy, but I would say, Lord, I do not know how to pray, but be merciful to me, a sinner, for thou knowest how great a sinner I am. I would try not to think anything wrong, but I could not control my thoughts. One day in my deep distress I began to sing, "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand." My eyes were blinded with tears, and there were a few minutes then that my troubles were gone and I could praise the Lord.

In 1868, one day I was so low in spirits that I thought I must die. I ran out in the yard, and it did seem that the whole world was praising God, and my soul was filled with praises, for he had taken me out of the pit and put a new song in my mouth, even praise to God, and I could say, My soul is sick of love, the love of sin. I thought then I would be happy the rest of my life, but ah, the trouble, doubts and fears are still with me, but my hope is in God, and it is an anchor of my soul, both sure and steadfast, and enters into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered.

When this great love was shown me I wanted to be baptized, so I joined the Missionaries, but I was not satisfied there. So, dear children of God, the Lord leads his people, and there is no strange god with them, salvation is of the Lord.

If I write any more for our good paper I shall write of my travel from the Missionaries to the Old Baptists. O praise the Lord, for my hope is in him, and I am still a beggar before the Lord, and I hope a prisoner of the Lord. I die daily, for when I would do good, evil is present with me, but it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwells in me, and I pray the Lord will keep me from evil. I have been persecuted for what I believe, but none of these things move me from the doctrine of Jesus Christ. God raised Christ up from the dead and gave him glory, that our faith and hope might be in him. Dear kindred in Christ, if I am a child of God, it is by grace alone. for he works in me to will and to do of his good pleasure, I can do nothing of myself. So, blessed children of God, I feel that the Lord has been leading me with his everlasting love all my life, yet I know that I have always been a sinful and rebellious child, but I hope I am under his wing, and his banner over me is love; though he slay me I will trust in him, because he first loved me. I was found of him when I sought him not.

"O for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame,
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb."

Jesus is the light, the truth and the way, and he said, If the truth make you free, you shall be free indeed. I came to do my Father's will; thine they were and thou gavest them me, and I will raise them up at the last day, for unto this end was I born. Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

"Jesus! lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly,
While the raging billows roll—
While the tempest still is nigh."

"Satan may vent his sharpest spite,
And all his legions roar,
Almighty mercy guards my life,
And bounds his raging power."

Now, brethren and sisters, I have given you a sketch, a little here and a little there, of the way the Lord has led me. I trust I am not deceived, for I never received it of man, neither was I taught by man, for by grace I am saved, if saved. I want to thank you all for the many good spiritual communications and editorials. O what great comfort and strength I get from the SIGNS. Write on, dear brethren, feed the flock of God. If this finds a place in our paper please examine it well and see if it will bear witness to the Spirit of Christ. Dear friends, pray for me, poor, unworthy me, that I may be kept by the power of God. O may I hear him say, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord." May his love and mercy be over and around you henceforth and forever. Fare you well, my dear friends in the Lord.

In hope of an immortal crown, I am your sister in the sufferings of Christ, I trust, NANCY CREEL.

WARRENTON, Ore., Sept. 4, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I have a request from a very dear one to try to relate what I hope the Lord has done for me, a poor, vile worm of the dust, utterly unworthy of the very least of his kind favors, and knowing this, I can but hesitate to attempt to tell, for fear that I am deceived and will deceive others, of his dealings with me, a sinner who, if saved, am saved by grace alone.

When a child I was full of life and natural spirits, very wayward and willful, and thought that I was as good as any one, and perhaps much better than a great many. My parents were Old School Baptists, and when I was quite a young child they lived in Illinois, and could attend their church meetings; but after going into another and newer State they had not that privilege, and in this new State I grew more willful and impulsive, especially after the death of dear mother, which occurred two years after moving into Iowa. O what a great loss that was to us all, particularly to myself, who needed her precious love and motherly influence and guidance every day. O how I have always missed her love and kind counsel to her poor, impulsive child, whom I hope God was watching over, and in his mercy when I was little more than a child opened my eyes to the awful state of sin and depravity in which I was by nature. O how I loathed myself now. What to do I did not know, all was so dark and dreadful around; my sins encompassed me about like a wall; cry as I would, I could not be heard, and I thought that I surely must die in my sins. O where now was all my boasted goodness? Like filthy rags, self-righteousness was taken from me, and I could see myself a justly condemned sinner before the just and holy God. I would have given ten times ten thousand worlds for one ray of hope that there was salvation for such a wretch. O how vain were all my attempts to pray; I hated the sound of my voice, and could only hide my face while I begged God in pity to have mercy on me. The winter I was in this trouble on account of my sins there was going on in our neighborhood a revival, in the so-called Christian church, which I at times attended, and they wished me to join them, telling me that if I lived faithful I should receive a crown in heaven; so I joined them. I was surely in need of help, but I did not find it there, as my trouble seemed to be made worse by joining them. I had only enough life to know that I was nothing but weakness. Surely the strong man was bound and his house spoiled. In my helplessness I would steal away to the hay-yard and hide among the hayricks and cattle, almost envying them their quiet peacefulness; and in the icy snow of a bitterly cold winter I would fall down before my God begging for mercy if there could be any for one so vile, and when it pleased him, as I hope, to reveal himself to me, and speak peace to my weary soul, my joy was complete, and I could rejoice in the Savior who is able to save, knowing that salvation is of the Lord, who killeth and maketh alive, who bringeth low and lifteth up. O how I now loved to sing his praises, joy like a great wave seemed to engulf me, and I could almost shout, out of the great fullness of my soul in its earliest love. I would go to the meetings of this people; they were all good singers, and sang many of the dear old hymns which I enjoyed very much, but I thought it very strange that I never heard any of them speak of their conflict with sin, like that which I had just gone through. Their testimony, as they called it, was always given in such a self-satisfied way, as if they were on their way to heaven, and bound to get there, if they continued faithful. How very differently I felt, knowing, as I hope I did, that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God who sheweth mercy.

The summer following I heard, while away from home, that an Old School Baptist preacher had been in our community holding meetings, and some had

joined the church, which had arranged to hold her meetings there. A member of the people I had joined was telling this, and as usual made very slighting remarks about the Old Baptists, which hurt me so that I burst into tears and left the house. I had not known anything of the Baptists since I was a very young child, and why was I so hurt? After they had gone away I went into the house again, and the dear lady of the house, who was one of my married sisters, asked why I had done as I did, and with tears again running down my young face I told her because she talked against my people so. She then asked a few questions, which I answered to her satisfaction, for she said, "O how glad I am to know this," and her lovely face glowed with joy which is not of this world. When the dear Old Baptists came again I went home to attend the meeting, and O how glorious was the preaching, and all was to the glory of God and to the comfort of his dear followers. I tried to keep away from them, but as I have said, they were my people, and I loved them so that I went to them for a home, ere I knew what I was doing, and although I was so unworthy I was received by them in a very loving manner. Elder J. P. Allison, a licentiate then, who always came with the dear old Elder, sang in such a spirited way, "Love is the sweetest bud that blows." O the joy of that glorious time seems to now fill my soul, and I can say with a full heart, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." I was soon after baptized by Elder James B. Burch, in the beautiful little river on the banks of which I had played when a little child. O how full of joy was now my life, and I thought that I would always have the bliss of a heaven below in the knowledge of a blessed Redeemer; but alas, I found that I had to take my old sinful nature with me every day, as did the poor man who was told to take up his bed and walk; yes, the same bed on which he had lain so long, but the joy of being able to walk lightened the burden surely.

My poor letter is already much too long. With much love to all the blessed in a precious hope, I am, as ever, your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) S. L. H. STUART.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 15, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—We hoped during the first part of the week that we might be given opportunity to visit you on Wednesday (yesterday), but circumstances prevented, and the disappointment was ours of course. The gathering together of the Lord's people (when they are gathered together in love) is always delightful, and a time of rejoicing, whatever the occasion may be. Naturally, it is a pleasure to bestow that which is pleasing to others, but with the children of our heavenly King there is a voice within them from the excellent glory, which fills their heart with a sweetly blended combination of love, praise and christian fellowship. Much of my time is spent in looking forward to the next time of our appointment for meeting together. There must have been in the heart of Moses as he grew to manhood many allurements and enticements in his Egyptian surroundings leading his natural inclinations to the possession of riches, honor and glory, for it was a time when Egypt was at its height of national glory, (their advance in civilization, in literature and the arts, was a wonder to the surrounding nations,) but how precious are the words of his heart's desire to us, "Esteeming the reproach of

Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt," &c. The companionship of the saints excels in nearness and sweetness all other companionships which have their origin from natural sources, and the reason of its peculiar sweetness is because it comes through suffering. The bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus means crosses and afflictions, the end of which is exaltation in the manifestation of the life of Jesus, therefore our companionship is not propagated on lines which lead to selfish ends, but the humility wrought in us by the Spirit of Christ maketh us to esteem our companions in Christ as better than ourselves. Jesus while in the flesh was a pattern of humility, and he is our Standard, if so be we are followers of him. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ exalts our heavenly Father, exalts our gracious Redeemer, and all things which appertain unto holiness and righteousness in our minds and hearts, while on the other hand it abases the creature, which is but an earthen vessel containing the treasure, Christ in us the hope of glory. When I am low down and discouraged, feeling that I am but an empty earthen vessel, my mind will sometimes go out to some precious, godly brother who has in time past comforted me with the comfort wherewith he has also been comforted of the Lord; then do I take courage, my hope revives, yet still I go halting and limping along as before. Each member of the body of Christ depends upon every other member of the same body, and necessarily so, because all of the gifts which God has given to the church are in the body, and each member has his or her own particular gift, while all the gifts are necessary to each one. May the dear Lord continue to preserve you as a bright particular star in the gospel firmament to the upbuilding of his church, and to the comfort of the brethren.

Affectionately your brother in gospel bonds,

B. F. COULTER.

ASHLAND, Ill., Dec. 19, 1905.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST:—As I sat by our pleasant fireside reading our dear old paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, my heart went out to each and every one in christian love, and as I read, it was just what I believe, and it comforted me. Does not our heart burn within us as we read this testimony? not left alone, as we so often feel, but here they are reserved to comfort God's children. Yes, he has given them the gift to preach his true gospel, given them patience to write, and then put it in print, and it comes many miles to our far distant homes. Our light has burned so low it seems almost out; yet as we read the spark has been touched by God's love and mercy to understand his word, and your labor has not been in vain, but has been to me as a cup of cold water to my thirsty soul. Doubts and fears which have been many are for a season removed for a sweet peace of mind this world cannot give. Dear brethren and sisters, write as often as God gives you the spirit. Words fail to express the heart-felt gratitude I feel to each and every one who writes for our dear paper, and to our dear editor who is so faithful, patient and kind to us all; may God bless him with his richest blessings. May it be his will to spare him for many years, for his words are like apples of gold in pictures of silver. O how exceedingly precious is this truth! O the wondrous love of God to give us the spirit to understand his blessed truth. Sometimes a

heart-felt thankfulness comes over me because we are enabled to worship, as I humbly hope, a whole and complete Savior; I want no other than a finished salvation. How much is contained in this holy Scripture, for truly have we all things given us if Christ be formed in us the hope of glory. Christ is the way, the truth and the life; everything in Jesus is precious, his love he gives his people. "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren."

My christian love to each and every one. Your little sister, who feels to be the least of all,

ELLA M. PARROTT.

KNOXVILLE, Iowa, Dec. 7, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—We would like to commend you for the way you conduct the SIGNS; it comes each month laden with sound doctrine, so far as we are able to judge. We love the paper, I hope, for the truth's sake; we feel that the truth is what it advocates; we love to read the precious letters from our brethren and sisters scattered throughout the United States and Canada. I feel that we can rejoice with those that rejoice and weep with those that weep. We, too, have tasted the sorrows that come to us as we journey through this world, and we feel that we have tasted some of the joys that come to the children of God. We believe that Christ died on Calvary's cross to save sinners; we believe that he saved every one he died for, and sometimes we feel that God for Christ's sake has pardoned our sins, for we are told that "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." Dear brethren and sisters, we love you, we feel that you are our Father's children; your testimony bears witness with ours, which makes us feel that maybe we do know something of heavenly things, for we believe the Old School or Primitive Baptists are the only people that preach the doctrine that Christ and the apostles preached. The Baptists all plead their sinfulness and unworthiness, and did not our Savior say, Why do you call me good? for there is none good but God; and the apostle says, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." Is not this the testimony of every child of God? We cannot do the things that we would, then we cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then we are made to look to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world. Dear brethren, we believe if we are saved it is by the work of the crucified and risen Redeemer, and not by anything we have done.

Brethren and sisters, write on for our dear family paper, as we enjoy your letters very much. May the God of all grace be with you all, is our prayer.

MR. AND MRS. Z. I. JONES.

UPPERCO, Md., Jan. 1, 1906.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—At this season of the year we hear and read of many expressions of desire for the happiness and well-being of friends for the year just ushered in, but it is not clear to my mind that it is more praiseworthy to have or express a desire for the happiness or well-being of our friends on the first day of a new year than at any other time. But be that as it may, in thinking of you this morning I have concluded to write you another of my weak letters, if only to let you know that you are held in loving remembrance, not only at the beginning of this new year, but

throughout the whole year now past, and this has been our feeling since the first time we met till the present time. And now, brother Ker, as I see by the SIGNS of January 1st that you have been placed in a closer and more responsible position in the publication of that dear old periodical, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, it is my desire that your labors may be that of love and pleasure to yourself, as well as comfort and profit to its readers. I do not, and I suppose the readers of the SIGNS do not wish to see any change in the conduct of the paper, and for that reason will welcome you as a co-laborer with brother Chick in the editorial department, thereby bearing each other's burdens, and also sharing each other's joys in your labors of love, comforting and feeding the dear flock of the good Shepherd, scattered throughout this broad land, by means of the pen. I have never lived in a house, either as child or man, in which the SIGNS has not been a visitor, from its first issue to the present time, and now in my old age feel glad that the editorial department is in the hands of those I have been so intimately acquainted with as brother Chick and yourself. Speaking for myself, I think I am voicing the sentiments of the many readers of the SIGNS in wishing both of you God-speed in the new arrangement, and that editors, publishers, readers, and all connected therewith, may have a happy and prosperous year, both temporally and spiritually, if the will of God be so. I do not suppose either of you will be much bothered with suggestions as to what shall be admitted into the columns of the SIGNS; I think all should be willing to leave that to the discretion of its editors, believing as we do their only desire is the glory of God and the good of his cause.

One word more, brother Ker, and I am done. The beloved disciple John, if I mistake not, in his writing to some of the saints, expressed the desire or trusted the way would be opened for him to come unto them in order that they might speak face to face, and no doubt it was joyful news to them he hoped he would be privileged to meet. Now may I bring this home to brother Chick and yourself? There are many I suppose who have been and will yet be reading your writings, who have not thus far had the pleasure of meeting either of you face to face. Now the thought with me is that the lovers of truth having read with much pleasure your writings, will have a desire to hear the same things spoken face to face, and should the dividing of editorial labors enable both of you to do so, it would be a blessed privilege to the patrons of the SIGNS to have each of you visit among them as often as possible, speaking face to face.

Well, I must stop some time, and I think the time has come for me to do so. We had the pleasure of a visit from Elder Cubbage at Black Rock not long since; all were glad to see him. I was sorry that on account of deafness I could not hear the preaching; he seemed to have liberty, and the brethren and sisters enjoyed it. We heard that he and you are connected by family ties, so there seems to be a double nearness.

We go to Black Rock as often as weather and our health will permit, which is not every time in winter. Received a letter from sister Rowe the other day. Brother Rowe has been complaining some of late, missing two or three appointments. If next Sunday should be as favorable as now we may get to meeting. We are all more or less able to attend necessary affairs about our home.

I do not know whether it is necessary to write love from all, to all, for I hope you know it.

JOHN P. KELLEY.

[WE appreciate very much indeed the kind expressions of our dear aged brother Kelley concerning the SIGNS and our connection with it. We are glad also of our personal acquaintance with him. Brother Chick was his pastor for many years, and it has been my privilege to visit often the Black Rock Church, of which brother Kelley is an esteemed member. We have also been kindly entertained in his pleasant home many times. Brother Chick and I would be glad to visit among the readers of the SIGNS and "speak face to face" with them, as our brother suggests, but each of us have many duties at home, having the care of two churches each and two preaching appointments every Sunday. We both shall visit the brethren whenever the way is opened. We are very sorry to hear of brother Rowe's ill health, but hope ere this he has entirely recovered.—K.]

FARMDALE, Ky., Jan. 7, 1906.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—We have just returned home from attending the funeral of our dear brother, D. G. Johnson, who died yesterday morning at 9:30. What a shock this was to us, and I feel that it will also be to the brethren in the east, who were anticipating another visit from him next spring.

Elder P. W. Sawin conducted the services, which were brief and very appropriate, reading the twenty-third Psalm and 1 Cor. xv. 12–23, and making some remarks on verses 21 and 22. The gathering was very large and the churches were well represented. Their countenances showed how full their hearts were of sorrow.

Brother Dudley made a visit to Mays Lick for the Christmas holidays, and was quite sick while there. He returned on Friday, Dec. 29th, to his brother Jesse's home, where he had a sick night, but went down town Saturday morning. He returned soon and took to his bed. All that medical skill and loving hands could do was done for him, but he passed away after extreme suffering from pleurisy and asthma. A little before he breathed his last the look of pain and suffering was driven, as it were, from his countenance, and a sweet, placid smile rested on his face that was heavenly. On the evening before he died he had been dozing, and opened his eyes and said to his niece, Miss Madaline Johnson, "I see such beautiful things."

Dear brother Durand, it is the wish of J. M. Johnson and of the other relatives and friends that you write an obituary notice and have it published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Brother Sawin will send a short notice at once. I will send the data, and I want to suggest that you write a sketch of his life and put in also, as I know you are felt by the family living to be the most suitable one to do so, having been so near to his father, Elder J. F. Johnson, and known him so well; and none knew better the lovely character of the son. You seemed like a father to our late dear brother, for he spoke to me on his return from the east of your tender care for him, and your appreciative notice of his labors among you last spring.

I will have to close, as I am tired, and my mind and heart are filled with gloom.

Affectionately your brother,

J. T. McCOUN.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 21, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have

put together the material sent me by brother J. T. McCoun. I need not undertake to add to the touching expressions of tenderness and love. But I must allude to my own sense of loss and my grief at the departure from our earthly society of this dear brother, and also to the uniform expressions of sorrow from all our brethren here. During his visit to our associations and churches last spring he came right into the hearts of all our brethren and sisters and friends and made himself at home there.

As for me, I enjoyed every sermon and every little talk of his during his visit among us in a very peculiar way. It was inexpressibly sweet and refreshing to me, and more than that. I have seldom, if ever, enjoyed preaching in just that way. The things he said would at times bring to me the luxury of tears, and as I recall him and his words my heart swells with emotions of spiritual tenderness and love. I first met his father and mother in September, 1865, when he was a little more than two years old, and was several times at their house before the death of his mother. I remember when his physical affliction began which caused his serious deformity, how anxious his father was, and what care he took to get medical help in various places. For awhile he was very sensitive concerning his deformity as he grew up, but last spring he told us he was not so any longer. He knew it was something he was not responsible for and could not help.

I have been seeing him almost every year since he was a child, and especially since he came to the church, but I am not prepared to tell anything more of his life. I loved him, and enjoyed conversation with him, but especially enjoyed hearing him preach during the last year or two. I do not remember that he spoke more than a half hour or three-quarters at any time last spring, and I do not remember anything in his preaching that would strike the natural mind as brilliant, pointed, attractive or amusing; it just seemed to me as sweet gospel preaching, such as a poor, hungry child loves to feed upon.

He wrote easily when he would get himself down to the work, and it was pleasant to read what he wrote. Some little poems of his have appeared in the SIGNS during the past two or three years. They are good reading; in each one some striking thought or emotion is expressed in such a way as to show poetic ability.

He had deep feeling, but was reticent, and no one knows how deeply he suffered because of his bodily affliction. To some one who had said to him that in the resurrection we shall look just as we do now, he told me that he replied, "But, my dear brother, I do not want to look as I do now." He has gone to that other glorious state of existence where no deformity or sorrow shall be known any more, for "this mortal must put on immortality," and those who sorrowed here shall be made to rejoice forever there.

SILAS H. DURAND.

(See obituary notice on page 93.)

BLACKLICK, Ohio, Jan. 11, 1906.

MY DEAR AND PRECIOUS BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—Inclosed find post-office money order for two dollars, for which please renew sister Sophia Gorsuch's SIGNS at Westerville, Ohio. With much love, kindest regards and best wishes to you and yours and hoping to be remembered to all those precious brethren that the dear Lord so wonderfully blessed me in permitting me to behold their friendly faces, a number of whom I felt that I

knew long before I saw them in the flesh, from reading the many sacred and precious truths written by them and published in the SIGNS. I am still afflicted, but much stronger than when I visited you. O how good the dear Lord is. What can I render to him for all his benefits, and for his mercy that endures forever?

As ever, your unworthy brother, I hope,

L. B. HANOVER.

CHARLES CITY, Jan. 5, 1906.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Though you are constantly receiving letters from faithful readers of your paper, you cannot, I am sure, receive them often from readers of the very first issue. My great-aunt, Miss Welthy Johnson, who is now in her ninety-third year, has followed the SIGNS OF THE TIMES through all its seventy-three volumes, and looks forward to its arrival now with great interest. She remembers hearing the original editor of the paper speak at Westmoreland, N. Y., seventy years ago. She has been crippled for some years, and reading has been a great pleasure to her. Her Bible, much of which she knows by heart, and the familiar pages of the SIGNS are very dear to her, as she is very seldom privileged to meet members of her own dear denomination; it is especially precious to her to be able to read messages from those who live in other places. We who love her are very grateful that she need not be cut off altogether from the intercourse she so loves, and we wish a long life and prosperity to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Miss Johnson sends New Year's greetings to her brethren and sisters in the Old School Baptist faith.

Allow me to sign myself in her behalf, yours very sincerely,

KATHARINE RUTH ELLIS.

LAKE CRYSTAL, Minn., Jan. 5, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN:—While I am in declining years (seventy-seven the 10th inst.) and without means of support, I ask my brethren for any assistance they may favor me with. There are no members near here that I know of, and I am a stranger to others. I have formerly lived at Canton, Ill., Liberty, Iowa, and several other places where I have been an Elder of the Old School Baptist Church. My eyesight has failed me so I can scarcely distinguish daylight from darkness; have a friend to write for me.

With best wishes, I beg to remain your unworthy brother,

WILLIAM MORPHEW.

[WE publish the above appeal, and hope there may be a willing response to it from those who love the servants of the Lord. We are not personally acquainted with this aged brother.—ED.]

INFORMATION WANTED.

MRS. A. R. REESE, of St. Joseph, Mo., desires to know whether there are any Old School Baptists living in Chicago, Ill., or near there. If any in that locality see this notice they will confer a favor by writing to sister Reese.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

CORRESPONDENTS of Elder I. N. Newkirk will please address him at Waitsburg, Walla Walla Co., Wash., care J. Q. Harmon.

NOTICE.

THOSE wishing to communicate with Elder John B. Slauson by telephone or telegraph will send all messages to Roxbury, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1906.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

DANIEL XII. 10.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—If it is not asking too much, please give your views through the SIGNS on the tenth verse of the twelfth chapter of Daniel, and oblige one who desires to know the truth.

(MRS.) WM. UTTERBACK.

FAUQUIER Co., Va., Nov., 1905.

We are glad to respond to requests like this when we can do so. It is always good to read the Scriptures, and to meditate upon them, and to speak together of them. We are sure that all who love the Lord in truth will join with us in this testimony, that the happiest and most profitable hours of our lives are those in which we are given such meditations, and when, together with our fellow-pilgrims, we converse concerning the things of God, as revealed in the word. Yet, we must confess that concerning many things in the written word we can see but dimly, and can speak but a little concerning even the things which do seem clear to our mind. But very many times disciples of the Lord, like those who journeyed to Emmaus, as they have been conversing concerning the things revealed in the word, have found another with them who has opened the word to them, and their hearts have burned within them. Afterwards, they have known that the risen Jesus has been with them, and that it has been he who opened their understanding of the Scriptures.

We have no question in our mind from the reading of the tenth and eleventh chapters of this prophecy of Daniel, that it was given to him to see and to speak of things which specially related to Israel literally, and which took place not long afterwards. A careful reading of these chapters seems to us to show this. The prophet saw afflictions and oppressions which they must endure: there were to be wars and contentions against them and all around them. We have neither time or abilty to enter into a presentation of all that these chapters contain. While, as we have said, these chapters relate to things which should shortly come to pass concerning that people, there is here, as in very many similar prophecies, a looking onward to the things of which all this was but the type. The travel, in providence, of Israel under the old covenant was all the way along but a type of similar things which should be in the travel of the true spiritual Israel of God under the gospel. The natural events of their life, as a nation, set forth the spiritual things of the church; their afflictions and conflicts and victories were to set forth the afflictions and conflicts and victories that must attend all those who enter the kingdom of heaven.

To Daniel was given a vision of all these things, and he was one of those who did search diligently what and what manner of time the Spirit which was in them did signify when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and the glory which should follow. The vision of these things was given to him, but the special time was hidden from him, according to the words of the Savior, "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no,

not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." The special dates of future events have never been revealed except dimly in any of the prophecies. It has been vain and foolish always to undertake to fix times and dates of future events. When the events have taken place the spiritual have known that that prophecy has been fulfilled. No believer, under the old covenant, knew when Christ should come by all that had been written by those who were inspired of God to write concerning the coming of the Lord, but when he had come, and had fulfilled all things spoken concerning him, then those who were spiritual knew that the prophecy had been fulfilled. It has been so and it shall continue to be so with all prophecy concerning any future thing. Prophecy is fully known only in its fulfillment. This is specially true with regard to the time of the event. God has ordered this to be so in wisdom. Thus his people are kept in the attitude of watching, and from carnal ease on the one hand, and from undue anxiety on the other hand. Thus, as it appears to us, they are to be kept in the attitude of continuing to do what their Lord has commanded, without being disturbed by what must be to-morrow. The things revealed have belonged to them and their children, but the secret things have remained with God until he is pleased to fulfill them.

These purposes of God are sure. Every word revealed to this prophet Daniel was sure, and so, while he could not be given to know the time, he is yet "to seal up the book to the time of the end." And he is told, verse nine, that "the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." The message to him is just this, "Go thy way, Daniel:" that is, the messenger said to him in these words, The future is not thine to seek to know, "Go thy way;" that is, attend to the things which belong to thee as the prophet of the Lord; speak what has been revealed to thee; all is certain of fulfillment at the time appointed, but that is hidden in the secret will of God, seek not to inquire into it. Consider what is revealed; seek diligently to know what these things mean, but the time of them is hidden. To us in this day, no more than to Daniel, is it given to fix the time of any future event; the Father only knows the time. The things which have been fulfilled we do know something of, but if the Son of man did not know the time of the end of the things which he had himself declared to his disciples, surely it is little less than arrogant presumption for any of us to claim to have attained to this knowledge. What a blessed thing it is that our God knows the time of all events, and what a blessed thing it is that we do not know. But let the time or times be what they may, and let the things spoken refer to whatever time they may, the word of God in the verse referred to by our sister, declares that the distinction between the two classes of mankind, the believer and the unbeliever, the righteous and the wicked, still will remain. Wicked men shall not be made righteous, unbelievers shall not become believers, by any of the trials or conflicts that are set forth as certain to take place. On the one hand, under these times of persecution, warfare and tribulation, the wise shall understand, and shall be purified and made white, and tried, while the wicked shall continue to do wickedly and shall not understand. These are the plain statements of the text, let the time of these events be what it may. God rules in all the calamities of the earth, and always will rule; they

shall accomplish his will. But none of these things can give to any man a heart-felt knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus; the wicked will continue to love wickedness and to do wickedly. By none of these things do men come to love righteousness or hate iniquity. Principles of righteousness and true obedience to God are wrought in the heart alone by the operation of the Holy Spirit. Let what will befall, whether of judgment or mercy, the natural man still remains dead to God and dead in sin, and goes right on doing wickedly. When these trials and distresses and persecutions came upon the Jews, as they did shortly after this prophecy was written, the ungodly among them still remained ungodly. When, some hundreds of years later, Jerusalem was besieged, and such suffering took place in the city as never had been known nor ever should be again, madness filled the people, rather than repentance, and they sought to destroy themselves and to blaspheme God rather than to return to him, and in all the history of the world since, natural men have not been brought to love and serve God by all the calamities which have befallen them; they have still done wickedly, according to the words of the prophecy. The wicked, in their ignorance and blindness, see not the hand of God in all that has transpired. In the text it is declared that none of the wicked shall understand. Having no understanding, they do not know when the hand of God is made manifest. They are the wise and prudent in this world, but they are the ignorant ones as relates to the things of God; their wisdom and prudence cannot help them to discern "the signs of the times." The evil heart of unbelief which is in them shuts out all the light, and they walk in darkness and in bondage. The wicked shall continue to do wickedly. How utterly foolish and vain then are the efforts of men to produce repentance and righteousness in unregenerate hearts by appeals to death-bed scenes, to calamities, to afflictions of any kind. Only the Spirit of God can work this great miracle of bringing that man who hates Jesus and persecutes him to love and preach him; only the Spirit of God can humble that man who is so proud of saying his prayers daily, so that it may be said of him in deed and in truth "Behold, he prayeth." But while the wicked shall still do wickedly, unmoved by all the judgments of God's providence, these things do have a blessing in them to the righteous. Through much tribulation do these enter the kingdom. Not only is there no other way of entering this spiritual inheritance, but this is a sure way to the true believer. To these the Savior says yet, as he did to Zebedee's children, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with. To the spiritual, Jesus said, "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." There is no other road into these things, and none but the children of God travel this road, and they, though fools, shall not err therein. Jesus, who entered his kingdom through tribulation, is their leader and guide, and so they shall not go astray nor fail to find the desired haven. Thus afflictions and conflicts, whether outward or inward, do purify, and wash white, and try, all them that believe. Thus David said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now

have I kept thy word." And again he said, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." Paul could testify, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." Again he testified, "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness." So in the text the Lord said to Daniel, that while these afflictions were being accomplished, and wicked men should still do wickedly, others separated from the wicked by the righteous Spirit dwelling within them, should derive benefit. They by all these things should be weaned more and more from the world and its follies and lusts and sins, and should come to see more and more clearly the excellency of things divine.

The substance of the meaning of the words "purified," "made white" and "tried," is perhaps about the same, yet there is a shade of difference between them. "To purify," means to put away all that is unclean, such as filthy teaching and practice; that is, that which is contrary to the commandments of God. "To make white" has in it the thought of making plain or clear to view. The former word, "purify," relates more to the inward life; "to make white," rather to the outward life, and "to try" has in it the thought of refining, as gold or silver is refined by the burning up of dross which may have been mingled with it, in the fire of the refiner. This last word "tried," expresses that process of trial and suffering by which the purifying and making white are brought about.

In conclusion, we desire to call attention to this one thing, viz: that while the whole people of Israel then suffered under the calamities which did shortly come upon them, yet it is only the many, who are in the text distinguished from the wicked, who are purified and made white and tried. So also is it true now that the spiritual are blessed in their afflictions, while the same afflictions leave the wicked as they find them. And so "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." To him that hath shall be given, while from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have. May the Spirit of God and of truth, make all these things live in us and truly comfort all his people by them.

C.

PARABLE OF THE TALENTS.

(Matt. xxv. 14–30.)

"A VOICE from the wilderness" asks that we give our view upon the above subject. We are willing to comply as best we can. The parables are dark sayings, and were not understood by the apostles only as their true import was revealed to them by the Savior. Generally they are intended to show the just condemnation of the carnal Jew or pharisee and the blessing of the gospel to the spiritual Israelite. This one teaches, however, several things, among them is that the kingdom of heaven had not as yet come, but that its coming was sure, though it should be delayed (note Luke xix. 11–26). The nobleman called his ten servants and delivered them ten pounds, saying, "Occupy till I come." He goes into a far country to receive a kingdom for himself, and *return*. The

delivery of the ten pounds assured the servants of his return to them, though his absence should be long. The Savior taught his disciples to pray, saying, "Thy kingdom come." He said also to them, If I go away "I will come again, and receive you unto myself." In the coming of the kingdom it was not only with glory, but with justice and judgment, which are the habitation of God's throne. The apostles had received an earnest of the kingdom of heaven in the appearing of Christ to them in the flesh; this assured them the certainty of its coming, hence they continually looked for it. In our understanding, the application of the parables, generally speaking, to the church experimentally, is secondary. Let us bear in mind that the Scripture does not say the kingdom of heaven is like unto talents, nor like unto servants, but rather "as a man traveling into a far country," who called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods; therefore much importance should be attached to the "man" and what he did and said. This parable is found between the parable of the ten virgins and of that of the sheep and the goats, "when the Son of man shall come in his glory," and like all other Scripture has its connection or bearing upon that which precedes and that which follows.

In the parable of the virgins the statement is positive that all ten were virgins, five were wise and five were foolish. The wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps, but the foolish took no oil with them; this was because of a lack of wisdom in them, hence they are called foolish (not fools). Paul said his brethren after the flesh (Israelites) had a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge, hence were foolish, being *ignorant* of the righteousness of God, and went about to establish their own righteousness. ("Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved.") Paul was found among the wise, and entered with them into the marriage with the Bridegroom.

When the man spoken of in the parable under consideration took his journey into a far country, he called his *own servants* unto him and gave them talents (money); to every man he gave according to "his several ability," which is as much a gift as the talents. To one he gave five, to another two and to another one. The servant who received one talent was as capable of using it to profit as were the others who had received the five and the two; therefore we can make no excuse for him upon the ground that he was not competent to use that which had been given him. Let us remember that all who received were servants, the same as in the case of the virgins. The two faithful servants made good use of that which was given them, but the other one did not; he was slothful, hence an "unprofitable servant." He had knowledge enough to know what should be done, and wisdom enough to do it, nevertheless he acted unwise in the neglect of his duty.

After a long time the man (lord) of these servants came and reckoned with them; the one who received the five talents brought other five, which he had gained in trading (proper use) with the five given. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy lord. The other servant who had received two talents came also and had made gain of two other talents. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

Each of these servants received the same blessing, namely, entered into the joy of their lord. The third servant who had received the one talent said to his lord, "I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine." He also accused his master of being hard and unjust, reaping where he had not sown and gathering where he had not strawed. Having this opinion of his master he should have put the talent (money) to the exchangers, that his lord might have received his own with usury when he came; this his lord tells him. We see his unfaithfulness, hence slothfulness, and his wickedness in accusing his master of being hard and unjust. His lord asked nothing unreasonable of his servants, and least of all did he exact anything dishonest on their part. In a sense, shall we not class this "unprofitable servant" with the foolish virgins? They entered not with the bridegroom, neither did this servant enter into the joy of his lord. And shall we not class the faithful servants with the wise virgins? They entered in with the bridegroom to the marriage, so did the two faithful servants enter into the joy of their lord.

We have no thought that "outer darkness" means eternal destruction, but rather chastisement. "That servant which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes." "Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." He is still a "servant," but unprofitable.

In the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew the Savior tells his disciples (servants) of various signs by which they might know of his coming, (in his glory) and the end of the world (legal dispensation). "But of that day and hour knoweth no man." Then adds, "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh. Who then is a *faithful* and *wise servant*, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, that he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken: the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." The above quotation helps us to grasp the subject more fully. The Savior was about ready to go to his Father, and before leaving his apostles, appoints their labor or stewardship, and gives them to understand that each one of them shall give an account of their stewardship or ministry when he comes again. "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account."—Heb. xiii. 17. "Be ye also ready," means, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; be faithful, diligent in the office to which you are appointed; watch unto prayer; do not sit down to eat and rise up to play, but continue ye in my love, keep my commandments; preach the gospel to the poor and thereby "feed my lambs" and my sheep. Such a servant, at his coming, says the Savior, shall be blessed or made ruler over all his goods. This blessing does not only imply more service, but honor;

faithful servants are to "be counted worthy of double honor." When he comes in his glory (Spirit) the blessing is given, viz: "Inherit the kingdom prepared for you." (Enter into the joy of thy lord.) We do not understand this kingdom to be the realms of immortal glory, but the kingdom that should come, the place prepared in the going away of Jesus, the spiritual kingdom, the heavenly Jerusalem, the new heaven and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. Now all nations are gathered before him, but the faithful servants who feed, clothe, visit and minister unto the brethren of Christ, and thereby minister unto him, are those, and those only, who are thus blessed. (Note Matt. xxv. 31–46.)

Where much is given, much is required, and where little is given, little is required. This is as true now as it ever was, and that each one of God's "servants" is accountable to him for their stewardship, is as true as ever it was. (See Romans xiv. 4.) Of the servant or minister of the Lord who is blessed with a clear, able gift to expound the word of God, much is required, either in preaching or writing, but where the gift is small little is expected, but that little is *required.* He must not, because his gift is smaller than his fellow servants, or for any other reason, bury it, which would be unfaithfulness and he become "unprofitable." The improvement of the one "talent" is all that is required of him, and his "ability" is equal to that which is given him, according to the parable. We have no reason to think that Timothy was as able a minister as the apostle Paul, hence Paul admonished him to neglect not the gift that was in him; he also tells him *how* to improve his gift (talent): "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy *profiting* may appear to all."

Each child of God is endowed with some gift, either great or small. To one is given the gift of healing; to such an one we would say, Use the gift faithfully. To another is given a hand; then whatsoever thy hand finds to do, do with thy might. To another is given an ear to hear; then give attention to what the Spirit saith unto the churches. To another is given a heart to meditate; then think upon the things that are pure, honest and of good report.

We, the children of God, are looking for him to appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation. "And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming."—1 John ii. 28.

We have now given such thoughts as we have upon this subject, and leave them for the consideration of our inquiring friend and all who may read them. If no comfort or instruction is found in what we have written, we hope that at least the pure minds of our readers may be stirred up to meditate upon the word of God, and may his Spirit guide us more and more in all truth. K.

BACK NUMBERS.

UNTIL March 1st we will print extra copies of the SIGNS, and all new subscriptions received up to that time, unless otherwise ordered, will be dated from the first of the year, and back numbers sent, thus giving the full volume. The advantage of having the back numbers will appear when the last number for the year is received containing the index for the whole volume.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

D. S. Koontz, Ill., $1.00; Mrs. Elizabeth Beesley, N. Y., $2.00; S. C. F. Guernsey, N. Y., $2.00; Mrs. T. V. Richardson, Md., $3.00; H. J. O'Bannon, Va., $1.00.—Total, $9.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder W. W. Meredith, Dec. 21st, 1905, at the home of the bride's parents in Delmar, Md., brother Edward E. Gordy and Mrs. Jennie O. Phillips, both of Delmar, Md.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, Jan. 10th, 1906, Edward T. Ross and Cessie A. Byrd, both of Hallwood, Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

FELL asleep in Jesus, on the night of October 13th, 1905, between the hours of 11 and 12 o'clock p. m., our dearly beloved sister, **Lucilla Stanley Nance Woodward,** after a short illness of a few days, in the 69th year of her age. She was the daughter of our late brother C. W. Nance, and the devoted wife of our fellow-citizen B. F. Woodward, Sr. She was born January 23rd, 1827, and united with the Primitive Baptist Church, South College St., Nashville, Tenn., on the second Sunday in August, 1857, and was baptized one month later. She was a bright and shining light in the church of her choice for nearly half a century. Her funeral services were held in this building on Sunday morning, October 15th, 1905, and were conducted by Elder J. K. Womack, the pastor of her church, assisted by Elder P. G. Byers, and attended by a large number of sorrowing relatives and friends. Thus has passed away from the walks of men one of the most devout and consistent christian women, serving her Master throughout a period of nearly fifty years with that singleness of purpose and deep devotion that should characterize the life of every follower of Christ. She was in her seat at almost every meeting of the church, missing none, except when out of the city or detained at home by sickness. She was ever ready to give of her means for the support of the church of her choice, and it seemed to be a peculiar pleasure to her to care for and entertain the ministers of the church, showing partiality to none, but treating the learned and unlearned with the same spirit of christian hospitality. The loss to the Primitive Baptist cause, and most especially this her own church, will be very great, almost irreparable. Aside from being a devoted christian woman, she was a true friend to those who were intimate with her and had her friendship. She was a most kind and loving mother and an affectionate wife. Sister Woodward has left an example of christian piety and sterling integrity that should excite the admiration of every one that knew her, and should cause us to try to emulate her many christian virtues and her constant and never-failing habits as a member of the church of Jesus Christ. Her departure from us causes our hearts to bleed with sorrow, and we weep tears of distress when we think of the great bereavement we are called upon to sustain, but we should know that our loss is her great gain, and we feel assured that our dear sister in the spirit is now with the Christ she delighted to serve so long and faithfully; and if we are what we profess to be, we, too, may meet our beloved departed in that realm of bliss and eternal happiness, in the city of our God and his Christ. Sorrow not, dear brethren and sisters, as those that have no hope, knowing that all things shall work together for good to those who love God and are called according to his purpose, and that our great loss may work to the good of the cause, reminding ourselves and others of the shortness of life and the certainty of death; and how happily the christian dies, for he feels and has an abiding faith that after he has put off this mortal, he shall put on an immortal body, in the paradise of God, for we are informed that almost the last words sister Woodward uttered were, "I want to go home." These words were uttered at the time of her dissolution, and came from a partial view of her future blissful home.

Sister Woodward left many near and dear to her in the flesh, and we commend to them her long and useful life as a sincere and devoted christian woman, and may they all try to follow her footsteps and serve that God she delighted to worship, and may they at last meet her in heaven, where there is no more sorrow or parting with loved ones, but one eternal, blissful existence. We offer to her devoted and bereaved companion, who for fifty odd years has shared her joys and sorrows, our most sincere condolence in his great bereavement, and commend him to the care of that God who alone can give comfort and consolation in days of distress and grief. May he give the remaining days of his life in the service of his Redeemer, and after the toils and sorrows are ended with him may he meet his dear departed in that heaven we feel assured our dearly beloved sister has entered.

And now, dearly beloved sister Woodward, the little christian band that you were associated with in the flesh so long, and yet so short a time, bids you farewell. We will ever cherish your memory, for one of the brightest spots in our christian life has been our association with you in this world. We will ever try to imitate your many christian virtues and your consistent, godly walk. We will greatly miss you at our meetings, for we have often held sweet christian communion with you, have joined in prayer and hymns of praise together, and took the

bread and wine together, and imitated our Lord and Master by washing each other's feet, and this in the house that was built greatly by your means. These things will now cease between us, for you have been called up higher by the good Lord, and after we have served his will and pleasure in this life, we pray we may have an abundant entrance into that kingdom above, when we hope to meet you and all the redeemed host around the throne of God and the Lamb, and jointly to sing praises to God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost forever and ever. Amen.

Done in Conference by the Primitive Baptist Church, University St., Nashville, Tenn., Saturday before the first Sunday in November, 1905, (being November 4th, 1905.)

ELDER J. K. WOMACK, Moderator.

S. J. UNDERWOOD, Clerk *pro tem.*

Dudley George Johnson was born July 11th, 1863, died Jan. 6th, 1906, 9:30 a m., at the home of his brother, Jesse M. Johnson, Lawrenceburg, Ky. He was received in the fellowship of the church at Little Flock, Anderson Co., Ky., Dec. 5th, 1888, and baptized Sunday, Dec. 6th, by the pastor, Elder P. G. Lester. Elder J. G. Eubanks was present at the meeting. He was given liberty on the fourth Saturday in March, 1894, to exercise his gift among the immediate sister churches, and on the fourth Saturday in April following was made a licentiate. He was ordained to the full work of the ministry on the fourth Saturday in April, 1902. His father, Elder J. F. Johnson, was born in Culpeper Co., Va. His mother, Rebecca Ashurst, was born in Scott Co., Ky. She was the widow Lewis when married to Elder Johnson. He leaves one brother, Claude P. Johnson, one half-brother, J. M. Johnson, and one half-sister, Mrs. Mollie Hull, and a number of other relatives, a host of friends and all of our churches to mourn their loss. At his mother's death, when he was about six years old, he was taken by his half-sister, Mrs. P. H. Thomas, to their home. In his affliction for many years he was tenderly and lovingly cared for by them, and by Mr. Thomas after the death of his sister, until he (Mr. T.) left Lawrenceburg to live in Mason Co. He studied art several years in Cincinnati, Ohio, and after that he studied a year in Paris. He taught art for a number of years in the Lawrenceburg High School, until the time of his death.

The following is from the Lawrenceburg paper:

"Prof. Johnson was one of the best known men of this city, and his reputation extended far beyond the limits of the commonwealth where he was born and raised. Debarred by physical infirmity from the more active pursuits of life, he, having a natural talent for painting, traveled to Europe, and under the instructions of some of the most eminent instructors of Paris he prepared himself for that profession, which he pursued until the time of his death, with notable success, especially in the line of portrait painting. For a number of years he was employed as a special teacher of drawing in the graded schools of this city, and his work and influence in that line will be greatly missed by the board of trustees as well as by his pupils.

For many years, Prof. Johnson was a regularly ordained minister of the Primitive Baptist Church, and in this capacity had ministered to many congregations in this and other States. At the time of his death the Salt River, Goshen and Little Flock Churches were under his care.

His personal friends were numbered by the score wherever he was known, and the funeral on Sunday afternoon was attended by a very large crowd. The burial was in Lawrenceburg cemetery after impressive services conducted by Elder P. W. Sawin, of Shelbyville."

SILAS H. DURAND.

Dr. Sebe R. McPherson, an elder brother of Elder A. R. McPherson, of Jasper Ark., was born in Jackson Co., Tenn., March 13th, 1818, and died in Hood Co., Texas, August 28th, 1905. His father was a soldier in the war of 1812, and was in the battle of New Orleans, under General Jackson. Soon after he returned to his home in Tennessee from the war, he emigrated to Jackson Co., Ala., where our dear brother was reared to manhood, and where in 1839 he was married to Eliza J. Allison, and in 1842 he emigrated to north Arkansas, and some time in 1844 he and his wife united with an Old School Baptist Church of that State. Our dear brother was ordained deacon soon afterward, and served in that capacity for many years. In 1861 he with his family emigrated to Texas and were among the early settlers of Hood Co. For many years he was actively engaged in the practice of medicine. His dear, faithful wife, the mother of his children, died in the latter seventies, which great loss was a sore trial to our dear brother. About 1880 he was married again, to Mrs. Johnson, and they some time in 1884 united with Friendship Church, of Hood Co., Texas, and lived happily together until this last precious sister also preceded him to the grave in 1889. Of the eleven children born to him (seven sons and four daughters) only four sons and two daughters are living. After the death of his last wife he broke up housekeeping and lived with his youngest son, Creed, who, together with his wife, took good care of their dear, aged father. Our dear brother was a most exemplary man in all of his actions through his long, eventful life. As a citizen, friend, neighbor or church member he lived above reproach.

Thus another dear, precious member has passed away in the true faith, no doubt into that world of bliss and glory. May God comfort all that mourn.

ALSO,

Bennie Powell Keeble, eldest sister of sister Lydia C. Ray, passed gently and peacefully away near Bono, Texas, Nov. 13th, 1905. She was born near Holly Springs, Miss., Jan. 12th, 1838, and in September, 1855, she was married to John W. Keeble. Of this union nine children were born, four sons and

five daughters. Two sons and three daughters and a dear, aged husband and father are left to mourn the loss of a dear, faithful wife and mother. Our dear sister Keeble professed a hope in Christ and joined the Methodists in 1858, but for many years she did not feel at home with those people, as she believed the doctrine held by the Old School Baptists, so five or six years ago she joined the limited Baptists at Joshua, Texas, and at the September meeting in 1903 she came to the church and was gladly received by relation here at Blum, and continued steadfastly in the doctrine and practice of the Old School Baptists her remaining days here on earth. The dear, precious sister was so ready and willing to depart this life and be with Christ, that we mourn not as those without hope, for we believe our loss is her eternal gain.

The writer conducted the funeral service at the grave, and tried to comfort the bereaved husband, children and friends. May God bless those that mourn. W. L. ROGERS.

BLUM, Texas, Jan. 17, 1906.

Priscilla Huffman, daughter of Charles and Priscilla Harris, was born in Stokes Co., N. C., March 19th, 1819. At the age of four years her father moved to Lee Co., Va., where she grew to womanhood. October 19th, 1839, she was united in marriage to the late John Huffman. To them were born fourteen children, three sons and four daughters survive her. She united with the Deep Spring Church of Primitive Baptists in the year 1836. About the year 1842 they moved to Sullivan Co., Mo., where she united by letter with the Mt. Gilead Church of Primitive Baptists, under the pastoral care of Elder George Baker. In the year 1865 they emigrated to Oregon and settled in Union Co. There they found no church of their faith and order, and lived without church privileges for thirteen years. Though often urged by some Arminian society to go in with them for a home until she could find a church of her own faith, she always said such a place would be no home for her. In the year 1878 there was a church of the Primitive Baptist faith constituted not far from where she lived, and herself and husband and a few others of like faith were constituent members. Since then I have known sister Huffman, having had the pastoral care of the church since its constitution. Sister Huffman was a lover of the doctrine of salvation by grace, and showed her faith by her walk and conversation. She was sound in the faith of the doctrine as contended for by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, of which paper she was a reader many years. Since the death of her husband, who died in 1893, she has made her home with her daughter, sister Mary Long, near Elgin, at whose home she died Nov. 5th, 1905. Her son-in-law and daughter did all they could to make her comfortable.

It was our solemn privilege, with Elder S. B. Moffit, to be present at the funeral services, where a very large congregation gathered to show their esteem for their friend and neighbor; text used, Rom. v. 20, 21. After the services her remains were laid beside those of her husband in the Indian Creek Cemetery until the resurrection of the just.

We shall greatly miss our dear sister in our little church, who was so faithful in her attendance at the meetings, and she is sadly missed by her son-in-law and daughter, with whom she made her home, as well as all the other children, but may we all be able to say, The will of the Lord be done.

G. E. MAYFIELD.

ELGIN, Ore., Jan. 10, 1906.

Leonard Beauchamp departed this life either the latter part of September or during the month of October, 1905, aged 87 years. By reason of the infirmities of age he was quite an invalid, both in body and mind. Death may be considered by us all a great relief. Mr. Beauchamp generally attended our meetings until he became disabled. Let us hope his change is for the best. He leaves a widow and I think seven children to cherish his memory.

ALSO,

Miss Edith Beauchamp fell asleep Nov. 11th, 1905, at her father's late residence near Pittsville, Wicomico Co., Md., aged 32 years. Edith seemed to be a lover of the truth, she gave every evidence of a living child of God. She delighted in attending Old Baptist meetings, and was a good listener. She was a great sufferer from that dread disease consumption. She seemed strongly inclined not to murmur. The writer called to see her a short time before her death; she said she hoped to be able to have a talk with me when I saw her again, but when I saw her again she was cold in death. We hardly think one could love the company of the saints and take such delight in meeting with them as she did unless their heart was in it. Her face always gave expression of delight when listening to the preached word. We have a strong hope that God had graciously dealt with her; if so, sweet be her rest.

The funeral service was feebly conducted by the writer, who knew her from a child. She leaves her mother, four sisters and several brothers to mourn their loss. T. M. POULSON.

MASSEY, Va.

SISTER **Sarah Holt,** wife of Thomas Holt, departed this life Dec. 30th, 1905, in the 69th year of her age, at the home of her daughter, in Livingston Manor, Sullivan Co., N. Y. Sister Holt had been in poor health for three years, and for six months had been a great sufferer. She united with the Andes Old School Baptist Church Feb. 22nd, 1874, was baptized by the late Elder J. D. Hubbell. Sister Holt was a faithful

member, walking humbly before the Lord, and was a kind and devoted mother. She is survived by her husband and three daughters.

Her funeral service was conducted in the meeting-house at Union Grove by the writer. Her remains were buried in the Union Grove Cemetery. May the Lord comfort all that mourn.

JOHN B. SLAUSON.

VEGA, N. Y.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 74. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1906. NO. 4.

POETRY.

THE LAND THAT IS VERY FAR OFF.

We read of a region transcendently fair,
Far away from this valley of tears,
Unmolested by sorrow or cankering care,
Where time is not measured by years.

'Tis said in that land is perpetual day,
That no shadows e'er darken its light,
And clearer than crystal the waters that play
Through that region of boundless delight.

No lion or ravenous beasts roam around,
No famine or plague enters there,
But peace never ending and pleasures abound,
While melody floats on the air.

And those who inhabit that beautiful land
No sickness or suffering know,
And death comes not there, with his unsparing hand,
To lay its inhabitants low.

And 'tis said that the tears shall be wiped from all eyes,
And forever forbidden to flow;
That no wailings of anguish, no sorrowing sighs,
Shall that region of happiness know.

But the way-weary wanderer who reaches that shore
Through trials, temptation and sin,
Will there find temptations and trials all o'er,
And meet the glad welcome, "Come in."

Come, thou blessed, inherit the kingdom prepared
Before earth's foundation was laid,
With the crown and the robe wrought out by your Lord,
In which all his saints are arrayed.

O blissful abode, O to be of that throng,
In harmonious rapture to sing
With all of the ransomed the ever new song
Of our Kinsman, Redeemer and King.

ABBY G. CLARK.

CORRESPONDENCE.

OF ALL MEN MOST MISERABLE.

(1 Cor. xv. 19.)

"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." And why? It must be because we have experiences in this life which no other men have; experiences of suffering and misery which are peculiar to them to whom the apostle is writing, who are "sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints." And it is true that the afflictions of the people of God are such as no other people ever have while in this mortal life. The cause of those afflictions is sin, but the cause of their experience is the light by which that sin is manifested in us, and the power by which we are made to feel and hate it. The apostle says, "All things that are reproved are made manifest by the light; for whatsoever doth make manifest is light."—Eph. v. 13. Also we read that "in him [the Word] was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."—John i. 4, 5.

By this we see that no one discovers sin as a hateful thing in his own heart,

and feels the reprovings of the holy law of God in a tender conscience, except he has the life of Jesus in the soul. For this divine life is the only light that can manifest sin. This light shines in the darkness of our sinful nature, but that darkness cannot comprehend it. But this life by which we are made to know ourselves as sinners is in itself eternally pure and holy, and is forever opposed to sin and all evil. While it manifests sin, it also reveals the righteousness of God, and causes the one in whom it dwells to hate the one and love the other.

The Lord says of his covenant people, "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."—Jer. xxxii. 40. We are also told in the Scriptures of truth that "the fear of the Lord is to hate evil," and that it is "the beginning of wisdom," and "a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death."

Here then is the peculiar misery which the people of God, and no others, have. They hate evil, yet see it in themselves, in their flesh, in their minds, in every imagination of the thoughts of their hearts continually. (Gen. vi. 5; Rom. vii. 18–25.) They love righteousness, and hunger and thirst after it, yet cannot see it in themselves, that is, in their flesh; cannot see there even one good thing to satisfy that craving hunger. What suffering this causes them, what griefs, what sighs and groans before God. What sad exclamations of pain and anguish will at times burst from their poor, sorrowful, longing hearts: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But in the Lord's own time and way there will be such a revelation of God's salvation in all such hungry souls that they shall answer their own sad question in the apostle's joyful language, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." For to every one who has been made to hate sin and to abhor himself because of it, there will be given "everlasting consolation and good hope through grace," because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation. (2 Thess. ii. 13, 16.) This consolation and hope are given through the revelation of Christ as having died for us, as having been "delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification," and as having been of God "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

This hope looks to something yet to be revealed and experienced in the future, which we cannot see fulfilled while we are in this life. "We are saved by hope:" says the apostle, "but hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."—Romans viii. 24, 25. That which we are waiting for, while groaning within ourselves, is the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. (Rom. viii. 23.) Unto the day of this redemption all the saints are sealed by the holy Spirit of God. (Eph. iv. 30.) This hope is a lively hope; a hope full of life and power; a hope in which there is present salvation, although that which it embraces is always yet in the future, always yet to be revealed in our experience.

We are carefully to remember that it is by the resurrection of Christ from the dead that we are begotten unto this lively hope, "to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, [the apostle says] who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."—1 Peter i. 3, 5. In the hope of this inheritance we greatly rejoice, "though now for a sea-

son, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations." All of our rejoicing and comfort are in the things embraced in this hope, which are yet to be revealed. At the same time that we have this rejoicing in hope, we are groaning within ourselves on account of our depravity; suffering on account of the deceitfulness of our hearts; hating our own lives while comforted in the love we feel toward Jesus, who is our Life. Thus we are "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing."

It is through the resurrection of Christ that we have this hope of eternal life, and this joy on account of it. It was by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead that he was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness."—Romans i. 4. It is written in the second Psalm concerning the resurrection of Jesus from the dead: "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." Jesus and his people are one; they are raised up together with him. He says, "I am the resurrection." Therefore he says of them who "shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead," that they "are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."—Luke xx. 35, 36.

The Sadducees did not believe that there was any resurrection, either angel or spirit. (Acts xxiii. 8.) There appears to have been some in the church, Hymenæus and Philetus, who said that "the resurrection is past already." The apostle says they erred from the truth in this, and overthrew the faith of some, and that their word will eat as doth a canker. I am not sure that I understand fully what this error is, but it is surely very important that we carefully avoid falling into it. I suppose it consisted in asserting that there is no resurrection to be looked for or experienced by the believer in the future. I conclude it is the same error held by those to whom the apostle refers in 1 Cor. xv. 12: "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" The apostle appears to regard the doctrine of the resurrection of such vital importance that he dwells upon it here and elsewhere with very great care. He says in Acts xxiii. 6, "Of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question;" and again, Acts xxiv. 15: "And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there *shall be* a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." Concerning the error of those who say there is no resurrection of the dead, he says, "If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." Then occur the words of our text: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."

The hope of the resurrection, of the wonderful change that shall come upon our vile body when it shall be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ, and of the unspeakable bliss and eternal felicity that shall be ours beyond the bounds of mortality—this precious hope is the only source of pure and lasting comfort and joy that the saints have while in this dark and sorrowful life. Shut away from this dear hope we have nothing to contemplate but our own depravity and sinfulness. This is a misery which the natural man does not have. He is not in trouble on this account as those are who have divine life, nor is he plagued like these "other men," for he

does not "know the plague of his own heart."—1 Kings viii. 38; Psalms lxxiii. The natural man is well pleased with himself, as the pharisee was, (Luke xviii. 11, 12,) and satisfied with his own righteousness; he is taught to believe that his good works make him acceptable unto God, and that the Lord is pleased with him. David says of them that "their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish." "There are no bands in their death; but their strength is firm." The chastening that the Lord's people receive, their suffering and affliction on account of sin discovered in their own hearts, these natural men do not know. Therefore the apostle says, If our hope in Christ is only in and for this life, we are more miserable than any other men. For while the ungodly prosper in worldly religion, and rejoice in their own works, and "speak loftily," the Lord's people cannot see themselves any better by nature than before they had this hope. On the contrary, they see in themselves a depth of depravity and an extremity of wickedness which they did not see before this hope came to them. We humbly believe that we have seen and felt the subduing and controlling power of grace, and have realized in a measure the superaboundings of grace over all the aboundings of sin; but still we cannot boast in any works of ours, but again and again the cry of the publican arises in our hearts: "God be merciful to me a sinner." What is said of the dear Savior is true in measure of all his people while in this life: waters of a full cup are wrung out to them. They are plagued all the day long by their evil hearts, and chastened every morning. (Psalms lxxiii.)

"But now *is* Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." And while we are in this life, in this mortal state, our hope is in Christ risen from the dead. This hope brightens this life and saves us from despair and death while here, and is our joy while in this life. "We are saved by hope." But there is no vital change wrought in this sinful mortal life of ours by that hope. It is only as the sunshine falls upon a clod of earth and brightens it; when the sunshine is withdrawn there is left the corrupt clod of earth as before. We are looking beyond, looking to things that are before, looking to the Sun that sends the glorious light. Our hope is not in and for this life only, but in the resurrection life of Jesus. The natural sun cannot change the nature of the clod of earth on which it falls, but our glorious Sun of Righteousness has this wonderful, mysterious power to change the nature of the clod of earth so that all earthiness shall be forever gone, and the natural body shall be, in the resurrection, a spiritual body. Our hope is that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then we shall appear with him in glory. (Col. iii. 4.) How wonderfully and earnestly the apostle expresses his desires, and the desires of all quickened souls, that they may have while in this life the vital, experimental knowledge of the risen Savior, and may both live and walk in him. "That I may know him," he says, "and the power of his resurrection." This comes first in order in the experience of this spiritual knowledge. Until we experience the power of his resurrection we cannot know "the fellowship of his sufferings." A black stain cannot be seen upon a black wall. The whiter the wall, the more easily will a stain be seen upon it. Jesus was absolutely pure and holy, therefore his sufferings on account of our sins were unspeakable. So the more the

Spirit of Christ is manifest in us, the more keenly and painfully shall we know the fellowship of his sufferings, and thus be made "conformable unto his death."

"If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."—Phil. iii. 10, 11. The attainment unto the resurrection of the dead seems to be the apostle's ultimate desire and aim, and is referred to by him as something of the utmost importance to the saint while in this mortal state. It appears to me that by this he means such an experience of the power of Christ's resurrection, such a vivid apprehension of the resurrection of the dead, and such a solemn assurance that Christ shall appear and change our vile body, as shall tend to separate us most effectually from the world, and from its power over us. It appears to me that this aim and desire of the apostle is that he may live and walk in Christ, and not allow the flesh or sin to have any dominion over him.

The apostle does not claim to have attained unto this, or to be already perfect. He never seems to approach to boasting over his brethren, but is with them in all their weakness and fear and trembling. But he says, "I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." So far as one has come toward this attainment unto the resurrection of the dead, or this apprehension of the resurrection life of Jesus, in which Jesus and his people are apprehended as one, so far will he be freed from the dominion and misery of this life, and find his joy and comfort in the resurrection life and power of the dear Savior. So far as he lacks this sweet hold of faith and hope and love upon the resurrection life, so far will he be under the power of the flesh, and so be more miserable than the natural man; for the power and hope of the resurrection do not change and purify this natural life of ours, and give us comfort in that way, but the comfort we have from them while here is in expecting that which is beyond this life, and in looking for the coming of the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ from heaven. It is thus by faith in Christ that he who hath this hope purifieth himself even as he is pure. (1 John iii. 3.)

The apostle does not count himself to have apprehended, but he shows the wonderful effect of that glorious hope upon his mind, for it causes him to forget that which is behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God, which is in Christ Jesus.

This is the attitude of the child of God when exercised fully by the Holy Spirit of God. He is then always looking forward and reaching forth; always looking for the coming of Jesus; not looking for true comfort in the things of this life, but looking while in this life for good things to come. His conversation is in heaven, his walk is in Christ, though still waiting for him to come. If shut out from this hope of the resurrection of the dead, those who know every man his own sore and his own grief (2 Chron. vi. 29,) would be of all men most miserable. But in the light of that precious hope, and with this constant looking for the power and coming of Christ, we have, even in the midst of the darkness and sorrow of this life, unspeakably sweet and holy comfort.

The sacred body of Jesus came out of the grave with no change upon it, not having seen corruption. Thus it was shown that the grave was destroyed and death abolished, (Hosea xiii. 14; 2 Tim. i. 10,) and when exercised by faith the

saint of God has no fear of either death or the grave. "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."—John xi. 26. After forty days Jesus ascended and was glorified, and sat down at the right hand of God, and we know him no more after the flesh. (2 Cor. v. 16.)

"Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." Jesus saw no corruption; there has been no resurrection like his, nor will there ever be, for all the bodies of the saints who die shall see corruption. He became the first fruits of them that slept, making sure the resurrection of all the saints in his own image. "I am" says he, "the resurrection and the life." All the saints shall rise because Christ rose, but not *as* he did, for their bodies shall see corruption. The body of every one of his people is sown in death, in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." It is the same "it" in each case.

We do not know how the dead are raised up, nor do we know what we shall be, for that doth not yet appear. (1 John iii. 2.) It is enough to know that we shall be raised; that which was dead shall rise. It is enough to know that when raised we shall not look as we do now; we are glad of that. Mortality and its fashion will be gone forever. It is enough to know that when we see Jesus we shall be like him.

Our natural minds desire to investigate the wonderful mysteries of the resurrection and understand them. We can just as easily understand how the world was made out of nothing by the power and wisdom of God. Our natural reason sees in the resurrection only the reproduction of a natural body with its defects and deformities corrected. It is also the natural mind that leads some to say the resurrection is past already, and the body is not raised at all. The word of truth clearly and directly opposes both: "It is raised a spiritual body." A spiritual body cannot be seen by the natural eye, nor comprehended by the natural mind; and also, there will then and there be no natural eye to see and no natural mind to contemplate the risen body. It is we who have sinned and sorrowed who are raised. It is our vile body that is changed. It is we who are sinners who have this hope of the resurrection; we who would be of all men most miserable if that hope concerned only this life. It is we, who are reaching forth with earnest longings for precious things seen by faith and hoped for, of whom the apostle says, "Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

When speaking of the end of earthly and mortal things, and of the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men, the apostle Peter says, "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." We need to carefully observe this when meditating upon eternal things. Whenever one comes to the end of this mortal life time is ended with him, and he is in eternity; with him there is no more passing of days and months and years. They who are gone from time are with the dear Savior in a perfect and unchangeable state, and can want nothing more. So Jesus says that Abraham and Isaac and Jacob live unto God, and that Moses showed that the dead are raised up when he called the Lord their God. (Luke xx.

38.) God is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for all live unto him. But we who remain in time are waiting for the very things that they enjoy. It is we, not they, who are waiting. A few more wearisome days, a few more years of sorrow, and we also shall bid adieu to time and be with them in glory. Until then the mystery will remain unfathomable. We hope for it, we wait for it, and while waiting our little day in the darkness of time, seeing only in part and knowing only in part, we are given to rejoice in that blessed hope of the coming of the dear Savior without sin unto salvation. Then shall we hear in our souls the shout of the descending Lord, the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and shall be caught up with all the saints into glory, to see and know no more in part, but to see as we are seen, and to know as we are known, and to be "forever with the Lord."

I have written upon this subject at the request of sister Martha Carter, of Oregon, made more than a year ago, to which has been added the requests of other dear friends. I have not felt at liberty to write upon it before. For the same reason other requests for my views upon portions of the word have not been complied with. I have tried to write only what the Scriptures plainly declare, and believe I have written in the love and fear of God, but O so very imperfectly. May the Lord lead us comfortingly into all truth, and keep us in one mind, and his name shall have the glory.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 23, 1905.

[WE commend the above thoughtful and spiritual letter to the careful attention of our readers, and are glad that brother Durand has so forcefully insisted upon these two things, viz: that the resurrection is not past already, and that it is the body that is raised from the dead. These two things are vital, and must not be gainsayed. They will not be questioned by any who believe the Scriptures to be the word of truth. In these two things rests the final hope of glory to all who believe. Brother Durand speaks of his belief that the change wrought in the body in the resurrection is of such a nature that it is no longer visible to mortal eyes. In our own mind we are willing at least, not to question this view. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." What a glorious transformation indeed! One thing we suggest with regard to this change from that which is visible to mortal eyes, to that which is invisible, is, that so long as the body is visible to mortal eyes the change has not as yet taken place in it. It is manifest that it cannot be visible and invisible at the same time. It cannot be in the grave and risen from the grave at the same time. This thought of the changed body being invisible is one of the strongest arguments that we have ever seen against the heresy spoken of by Paul that the resurrection is past already. Of course the inspired statement of Paul settles that matter beyond all question, as also do the words of Peter on the day of Pentecost, saying that the sepulcher of David was with them at that day. Truth is harmonious, and so there is a divine harmony between the declaration of the apostle against the resurrection being past already, and this truth of the change wrought in the body in the resurrection. Both show that the resurrection has not yet taken place, but that it is the crowning work of redemption, for which, as our dear brother has so well

said, we are waiting. We cannot conceive of eternity, for we are the creatures of time, and have to do with time things. We cannot know *how* one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day; it is enough to remember that it is so. It is so with the Lord, but it is not so and it cannot be so with us, finite creatures of a day. So while the bodies of the dead are not yet raised up from the dead, it cannot be said of those in the world of glory that they are waiting, at least in the sense that we are waiting. This we cannot comprehend, but still, as brother Durand has so forcibly contended and so clearly proven from the word, the resurrection is yet in the future, and for it sorrowing saints hope unto the end, and fall asleep in that hope. In this blessed hope how appropriate is the word "asleep," so often used in the Scriptures, for sleep implies an awakening again of that which sleeps. But it is an awakening again to a new life, that life which is eternal and holy, and to which death can never come. This is for the saints, while for the unredeemed the resurrection is to shame and everlasting contempt. In reading the above spiritual letter some of these suggestions came very pleasantly into our mind, and we are sure that brother Durand will not think us presuming if we present them with his able article.—C.]

MACOMB, Ill., Dec. 30, 1905.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—The year drawing near its close reminds me that it is time to renew for the SIGNS. I have been taking it for over twenty years continuously, and I scarcely know how I would get along without it; its visits are like those of a dear friend that you look forward to with pleasure and satisfaction. I love and rejoice in the doctrine set forth by yourself and the contributors to its columns. The dear ones all testify that "salvation is of the Lord," which is so comforting and soul-cheering to the weak, little ones, who feel they have no strength in themselves.

Dear kindred in Christ, I have a desire to write a little again to you all, though what I may write or where my mind may lead I cannot tell. I feel to be the least of all. I know I am weak and sinful. I feel I am poor and needy, poor in spiritual knowledge and in the graces of the Spirit, and daily in need of divine help and strength; without this I can do nothing. I am nothing, and vanity, and it is only by the unmerited favor of God I continue unto this day. So it is many times when traveling along in darkness, feeling there is no other like me, I receive our dear paper, and there I read letters from God's dear children, telling of the same experience of darkness, of trials and mourning for sin. My little hope is often revived, I feel a love for God's people and am encouraged to press on my way. It is written, "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." Not in a proud or boastful manner, but in a meek and quiet spirit, with the fear of the Lord before our eyes, fearing lest we are deceived, fearing lest we give not his name all the praise. Let us examine ourselves whether we be in the faith. Let us speak often one to another of our hope and the reason we have for it.; perhaps unknown to us it may prove a comfort to some one. When the poor, trembling children of God have been given strength to follow their Savior in baptism all is joy and peace for a season, Jesus, all the day long, is their joy and their song, and they cannot believe that

they ever shall grieve, that they ever shall suffer again; but this happy state cannot last. In a short time, perhaps a few days or even hours, clouds appear, doubts and fears come, and they are cast down in darkness, and they feel they are deceived. They know nothing of the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, and they cannot understand their own experience. They realize they are still in the flesh, subject to temptation, and cannot live as they thought they would, without sin, with their mind continually on heavenly things and always praising their Savior. If such ones hear this same experience from another they feel they are not alone. There are many traveling in the valley, and it is a joy and a comfort to know we have companions even in tribulation. But O, have I a hope in Christ? What is the ground or evidence of my hope? I must pause and examine myself, and I find

"I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

I sometimes fear I have caught at the shadow and missed the substance. Darkness has been my dwelling-place much of the time. I am often brought to a standstill and made to review the past; I feel to hope the Lord has directed my ways. He made me to hate sin and gave me a love for his people when I was a child, and after years of sojourning in a strange land, he gave me strength to go home to my Father's house, where I was received with joy and gladness, and to this day my dear brethren and sisters bear with my weaknesses and shortcomings. I hope I love them with a love not natural; I love to meet with them and hear them sing and talk and preach of the glorious things of God's kingdom, and I long to live more like a christian, but find I cannot do as I would, for sin is mixed with all I do. For twenty-one years I have been on the pilgrimage road, which is a strait and narrow pathway beset with many sore trials, disappointments and afflictions, yet a few times I have been enabled to raise an Ebenezer, a song of praise, saying, Thus far hath the Lord helped me.

"'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

While traveling in the valley Satan often tempts me, and I fear and tremble and think there is no one like me, when I perchance come up with another, and we begin to converse, and ere we are aware we are telling our experience, and O what a comfort, what joy to hear of the dealings of the Lord with this one who has been longer on the way than I. We feel we have been taught by the same Spirit, and find we have a love and fellowship for each other, and we are drawn to each other by the sweet cords of christian affection, our hearts are made to burn within us with love to God and his people. This love for God's people and his cause seems to be all the evidence I have of a hope in Christ, and if you, my dear kindred, have no fellowship for me, then I have no assurance or reason for being one with you. The reason we have a hope is because God loved us even when we were dead in sin, and quickened us, and saved us with an everlasting salvation because it seemed good in his sight, that we should show forth his praise. Then, dear one who has followed your Lord in the order of his house and been graciously received by his dear children, think it not strange when temptations assail, for remember that your Savior immediately after he was baptized was led into the wilderness to be tempted of Satan, and can his children expect or look for an easier way? It is

said, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you." And, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." If we would reign with him, we must also suffer with him. His children must in some degree enter into the fellowship of his sufferings who, though without sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made free from sin and be made to love and adore his name. God's children realize that this world is not their home, here they have no continuing city. "This groaning earth is too dark and drear for the saints' eternal home," but they seek a city whose Builder and Maker is God. In this world we look for sorrow and death, this is our heritage; but in me, says Christ, is peace, that peace which the world cannot give, and glorious thought, cannot take away. May this peace be ours, and may we all be given grace to live in honor to the cause, and to the profession of our faith. May we be more loving and forbearing, and walk as becometh the disciples of Christ.

Dear brother Chick, I am almost ashamed to again send you a letter for the SIGNS; I thought this time I would send my subscription only, but I have done just the opposite, and my pen has run on and on until I have made this more lengthy than profitable. I do feel that the SIGNS has been filled with most precious communications this season, and especially the last ones. Sometimes I see much beauty in a passage of Scripture, but when I take my pen to write I must in my simple manner pen down only such things as I have experienced along the way. We often wonder why Elder Curry does not write for the SIGNS. He used to write once in a while, at least. He has warm friends in Illinois who would be glad to hear from him again.

With best wishes for the household of faith, and a desire that God's blessings may rest upon you all, I remain your sister in bonds of love,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE FLOCK.

"If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents."—Song i. 8.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the heavenly Bridegroom of the queen of heaven, the fairest among women. He loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might present it to himself a glorious church. Of him John the Baptist said, "He that hath the bride is the Bridegroom." It is as his bride, sanctified, adorned and beautified by him, that she is the fairest among women, and to her he says, "Thou art fair, my love." He rejoices over her; she is compared to a beautiful city, the heavenly Jerusalem, spotless and holy, and is the mother of all the children of promise. Isaac was a lovely type of every one of them. Their home is in this holy city, and its perfection of beauty draws them to it in their hearts' sweet devotion.

But now, in another relation and view, they were lost sheep of "the flock of slaughter." In this relation the Bridegroom is "the good Shepherd," and says, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." "The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." He gives them pastors also, as shepherds under him, saying, "And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." To one of the pastors the Master of assemblies said, "Feed my lambs. Feed my sheep." And he in turn said to other bishops, "Feed the flock of God which is among you." Paul, the apostle of the

Lord, also said to the elders "to feed the church of God."

In the Song one is seeking and praying, saying, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?" This one is isolated and desolate, earnestly desiring companionship, food and rest with the heavenly flocks of her companions, yet for the time she is as one turned aside. These are companion flocks of the one heavenly fold. A kindred nature and interest and feeling endears and binds them together, as all belonging to the good Shepherd. How touching therefore the appeal, "If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents." How safe and good this fervent appeal and exhortation! The kids or lambs need the sincere milk of the word, pure and unmixed, and so this fairest one must needs walk in the footsteps of the flock, and not turn aside, but keep beside or near the tents of the shepherds. These are always in the fold and with the flock. Here is where the lambs and sheep are fed. The chief Shepherd himself is here, and his sheep follow him, so his steps are the footsteps of the flock.

Now then, the one in the text is a desolate little flock, a companion flock of the one fold. But till late this one has been held back, fettered and hindered, yet longing to be joined with her companions, who worship the Father in spirit and in truth. For there is a uniting bond in the truth as it is in Christ more powerful and precious than all the doctrines and commandments of men. Those who are united in the girdle of truth will seek to walk in the truth of God, and their companions are God's elect people, who abide in the footsteps of the flock. Like Ruth they will say, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." This faith and love triumph over all opposition, and motives of policy for the gain of numbers and influence are as nothing. For God's dwelling-place is in Zion, with his people, and there he commanded the blessing, even life for evermore, and I must go and be numbered with them, says the heart of the humble one.

Such is the experience of the little flock, the Old School Baptist Church, in Nashville, Tennessee. Through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which its members love as containing the faith of God's elect, they gladly learned of the united and firm standing of the flock of God, the faithful and true Old School Baptists of North America, upon the truth of God in his sovereign and eternal purpose of election, predestination and grace, unconditional and immutable as his eternal Godhead and throne of omnipotent power, and they most earnestly desired identity and companionship with this people saved by the Lord. With this sacred love of the truth in their hearts they are constrained to go forth unto Jesus without the camp, bearing his reproach, and go to their own company, who keep the faith of Jesus and abide in the footsteps of the flock. They therefore published in the SIGNS some time ago their faith as the Old School Baptist Church in Nashville. It has been my privilege to visit them in their church services, which have been to our mutual edification in faith and love in Christ Jesus. They enjoy much comfort and peace in their meet-

ings, standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free. They have several useful, spiritual gifts in singing, prayer and exhortation, and their pastor and fellow-member, Elder C. M. Hood, is loving, humble, devoted and blessed with a good gift. It was the privilege of myself and wife to go with him and their worthy deacon, brother Watkins, to the West Tennessee Old School Baptist Association. This little flock was unanimously and joyfully received into the number as a sister church. The entire body of churches and corresponding associations, Bethel, Obion, Soldier Creek, Original Little River and a list of others in correspondence with these are unconditional Grace Baptists, and not entangled with the yoke of bondage. The attendance at this association was good and attentive. About ten ministers were present, and all the preaching was according to the christian watchword: "Salvation is of the Lord." Each day was good and comforting, but the last day was a wonderful refreshing from the presence of the Lord, who was joyfully realized to be in our midst. While dear brother F. P. Chandler preached upon the words of Paul, "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified," the Lord gave him the unction of the Spirit, and the word was in great power and comfort, as well as in the clearest demonstration of the truth of salvation by grace alone in Christ Jesus as it is experienced in the hearts of all whose glorious Savior he is. I have witnessed many blessed associational meetings, where the hearts of many were made glad, but never have I seen a large congregation of the Lord's people so deeply and solemnly wrought upon under the power of the gospel of Christ, and never have I heard the fullness of Christ and his power to save more blessedly set forth. All felt that there was no room in their hearts for anything else "save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." All else was seen and felt to be as chaff and nothing, and that Christ is all in all. We all felt as good old Simeon said, "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation." All was spiritual, heavenly and solemn, for the power and glory of Christ was felt to rest upon the preacher and the solemn assembly, filling all hearts with the unspeakable joy of salvation, and melting all eyes to tears of comfort, yet there was no noisy outcry. "'Twas a heaven below, the Redeemer to know." We all felt the sufficiency and exceeding preciousness of Christ as the altogether lovely One, as we shall do more perfectly when we awake with his likeness and see him as he is.

D. BARTLEY.

NASHVILLE, Tenn.

MASSEY, Va., Jan., 1906.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS:—It came to me as the last day of my seventy-fifth year was fading away, that I must pen down a few things pertaining to my life, and the circumstances connected therewith. I was born January 14th, 1831. From that date to my twenty-first year many wonderful events transpired, showing how wonderful are the ways of Providence. The question comes to me, Why should I have been reduced to a state of unconsciousness so long, and then raised up to life again at one time? Why should I suffer with white swelling until my thigh bone burst open, and about two inches came out, and then be raised again, without becoming a cripple? Why should I fall down into a well, and while under the water turn and come up again, and be saved from death? Why

should I fall from a tree, and to all appearance be dead, and then come back to life again? Why should I, after that, fall from another tree and break my right arm, and sprain my left, and again be healed without becoming a cripple? Why should I be kicked by a horse and not be killed? Why should I be thrown by another horse on my neck, and be bedridden again, and not die? Why was I so badly bruised and almost mashed at one time and still live? Why should I have several times narrow escapes from drowning? These things are involved in the saying of Moses, "Secret things belong unto the Lord our God." These things bring my mind to see how wonderful are the ways of Providence. Was all this to impress my mind with the truth that not a single shaft can hit, until the God of love sees fit? All the events of which I have spoken took place between my first and my twenty-first birthdays. Now to what end was I brought through all this? For, like one of old, I must say, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been."

But I will continue this narrative from another standpoint, commencing with my twenty-first year, after being brought through a mysterious travel, reaching back into my boyhood days. In August, 1851, I trust that I was shown the only way of salvation for a poor sinner; that it was through the merits of the crucified and risen Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ. Then I was given to hope in him to the exclusion of all earthly power, wisdom or goodness. In March, 1853, I appeared like a little worm, and as an ignorant babe, before the Old School Baptist Church at Messongo, Accomac County, Va., and now while I write this with a heart full, and with tears in my eyes, in my mind I see those old sainted mothers, and how their affections went out toward me, while I stood before them weeping. All but one of them have since then gone to receive their reward. About the year 1866 I began to be seriously impressed to speak of those things that appeared so precious and dear to me. The first thing that dawned upon the minds of the dear people regarding my feelings, was from the first church letter that I wrote to the association; they then began to question me, and to urge upon me to talk a little in the meetings. I have questioned sometimes whether, if I had not had the implicit confidence of the church manifested in these frequent appeals, I ever could have followed my impressions. I was ignorant and weak. In July, 1869, a presbytery was called, consisting of Elders Rittenhouse, Durand and G. W. Staton, to consider the advisability of my ordination. They decided in the affirmative, and in 1870 I was invited and urged to visit the church at Indiantown and Nassaongo, which I did, after a severe trial of mind. I was soon recorded as their pastor, in which relation I stand to them to-day. Soon after, the church at Snow Hill was organized, and they at once extended a call to me to serve them, and I stand in the same relation to them still. I have lived to witness the passing away of all the members of the five churches who were living when I first came among them, with the exception of six. And why am I spared? It is alone because it has seemed good in the sight of the Lord that such a poor worm of the dust should live. Thirty-five years, I am happy to say, has formed an indissoluble bond between this poor one and God's dear people in this part of the Lord's vineyard.

I was made to feel very humble by a remark of Elder Francis' once, when I

had a severe attack of illness; he said, "It looks like a great pity for that man to die," knowing as he did, the feeling of the churches. I do hope that my life has been spared for some profit and comfort to the Lord's people, and for no disgrace to his sacred cause. I have been kept so far, and I do hope for grace sufficient for my day and trial. I have never attained to the standard as a christian that I expected. As a minister I never expected to be great, and now, the older I grow the more wonderful the work of the ministry appears, and the less fitted I feel for it. I cannot say that I desire to be delivered from it, but rather to be prepared for it, for the theme is precious. It seems to me that I cannot preach like my brethren, so that often I am afraid to go to the meetings when they are held. Tell me, if you can, what has made this change in my feelings. I feel now that if I should live I would like to attend the spring associations this coming spring for the last time, if fear and timidity do not overcome me. I know that I cannot do at times the things I would.

I have written this imperfect sketch under the strong impulse of the moment. I felt that I wanted the readers of the SIGNS to know that I still live, and what has been some of the travel of my life. Before closing, I wish to bid the good old SIGNS God speed, for it seems to me that it grows better all the time; the last number seemed to me to be grand. I read and reread Elder Hardy's article with interest; I mention that specially, because it embraced such an important subject. I will now say to you all, Fare ye well, and remember one that has felt the weight of sin for nearly sixty years. I am glad to see Elder Ker's name where it is in the SIGNS. Do not let this crowd out better matter.

Your brother,

T. M. POULSON.

[WE are very glad, and we know our readers will be, especially those who know him personally, to have this record of the life of our dear brother Poulson for publication. It is but right, and is not flattery to say that our brother has always commanded the esteem and love of all his brethren and friends, both as a servant of the Lord and as a brother beloved. May great grace be his in his lonely old age, so that he may still bring forth fruit in the house of God. It ought to comfort his heart to know that all his brethren love him, and love the gospel which he so plainly and faithfully preaches. May the gospel which he has preached to others so long be his stay and support to the end of his mortal life.—ED.]

[WE publish below some extracts from letters sent us recently by sister Abbie Clark, of North Berwick, Maine, from correspondents of hers, written some years ago. From them all we omit purely personal matters. The extracts are rich in spiritual meaning and experience, and we doubt not will prove of heart-felt interest to those who are spiritual.—ED.]

CRESCO, Iowa, Aug. 5, 1888.

DEAR COUSIN AND SISTER:—If such a poor, sinful worm as I may call you sister. I will say first that your letter was very welcome. I have also read with much comfort your poetry in the last SIGNS. I think it beautiful, and it seems to me that every child of God must feel the truth of the words in it: "I cannot hold thy hand, but hold thou mine." How many times have I felt that all I could say was, Lord, take my hand and lead me when the way is dark; and when I

have a realizing sense that I know not how to pray, or what to pray for, I can only say within this poor heart of mine, Lord, take my hand and lead me. I wish I could always realize that this is my prayer, and then be still and know that he is God, and not murmur so often. If a child at all, I am a poor, wayward one, and it will take a great deal of hewing and cleansing to prepare me for that home beyond, where sin and folly cannot enter, and when I am stripped of all I possess that is evil there will be but little left.

Almost two years, with all their changes, have passed since I had the privilege of enjoying the company of the dear christian friends in Maine, and although many miles lay spread out between us, some of you have not been absent from my mind long at a time. And in fancy I have often met and mingled with you there, though most unworthy of a place among you. As in memory I recall each dear brother and sister, I feel that I am less than the least of them all, but I am willing to be that, if indeed I can only be one of that blessed family whose God is the Lord.

I see by the SIGNS that your yearly feast is near at hand again. O how I should enjoy it were it the Lord's will that I should be there, but it must be for the best that I cannot, although a poor, blind creature like myself cannot so see it. I have not been at a meeting of any kind for over a year, and I find that I am treated coldly by some of the members of the New School Baptist Church, who thought their love for me was very strong once, but if the fact that I cannot join with them in all their new fangled notions causes them to do so, they must go. I cannot think them right according to the teaching of the Bible, and if we do not take that for a guide, what shall we take? O that I might be counted worthy to suffer reproach for his dear name's sake.

With love to all,

S. J. LIBBY.

FAIRFAX STATION, Va., Nov. 24, 1884.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I have read your good letter in the SIGNS for November 15th, and whether I am a child of God or not, it has touched a responsive chord in my heart, and I feel a desire to write you a short letter as an expression of fellowship for what you have written.

The Scriptures teach that the Lord fashions the hearts of his people alike. This is why they can comfort one another by the relation of their travels through this wilderness of sin and sorrow. The hymn of which you have quoted a few verses as expressive of your feelings, was sung as I was being led down into the water in 1868 by the New School Baptist preacher. It was the language of my heart then, and is yet, and I have not a doubt that it is more or less the language of every child of grace, for they are all taught in the same school, and learn the same lessons. But I have not heard of one of that "Old School" who has learned that his right to that unfading inheritance is sure beyond a doubt, or of one being like your "neighbor," always feeling confident. You say, O for such faith. But, my dear sister, did you ever think what a condition that would be for you to get into? If you knew beyond a doubt that your salvation was secure, you certainly could claim no part or lot with the afflicted and poor people of God. You would have no cross, no trouble, and no fellowship for them, or they for you. The Scriptures would be of no use to you, for you would never feel the need of the

comfort and consolation revealed in them, and secured only for the poor and needy, the fearful and doubting children of Zion. Should you ever reach that undesirable place in this world you will never feel lonely again. The world is full of such confident boasters.

You say some get to that place where they say, "I know," but I fear that I never shall. Dear sister, I hope you never may, in that sense in which your "neighbor" knows. I would rather have your earnest desire to know (which is an evident token of divine life) than all the boasted confidence of the other. Of course she fails to understand you, because the children of God are taught in a language that none others know or can understand. I know something about that, too, for, like yourself, there is none of like faith very near me, and I have several times tried to tell these wise folks of my troubles and trials, but I have ever found them to be miserable comforters, physicians of no value.

I was brought very low down last spring, and for a time almost concluded there was no God, nor any heaven, and I asked a New School Baptist if he had ever been in that way. He said, No, and that no doubt had ever entered into his mind in all his life, and seemed to think this had been sent upon me as a punishment for leaving them; and that is about all that any of them can tell us. I have been a poor, unworthy member of the Old School Baptist Church for about five years. When I united with them I experienced such a calm, peaceful rest that I thought all my troubles were over, but I have passed through many dark and trying scenes since, and especially within the last ten months. But I have learned some precious lessons thereby, and one is that no matter how low down we get we can never sink below the everlasting arms; they are ever underneath. Each one has to learn alone for himself, and each conflict teaches us that the Lord is the strength of his people, and that of ourselves we can do nothing. May the Lord lead us in the way of truth. I feel to be a poor, faithless, helpless creature, and very ignorant in spiritual things. I think however, I can say, "Whereas I was blind, now I see," for I can certainly see now that unless I am saved by grace alone, I am lost indeed. There was a time that I did not see this, did not believe it nor did I want to see it.

May the Lord comfort and strengthen you, is the desire of your unworthy sister,

SALLIE FENWICK.

LEBANON, Maine, July 21, 1901.

DEAR SISTER CLARK:—Since I received your first kind epistle I have been wanting to write to you, but various causes have prevented until now, and that you may not expect much from me, I must inform you what I am, a poor, barren creature of the desert. The Lord has seen fit to turn the fruitful land into a barren wilderness, and the land which I found flowing with milk and honey is turned to drought, every corner is a receptacle for unclean birds, and in every path is a den of lions. I have often taken up the lamentation of Jeremiah and felt to say in my heart, Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious? will he be favorable no more? are his mercies clean gone forever? and, like Job, I have been tempted to curse the day of my birth. But still the dear Lord has been gracious to me in all these trying and most painful paths of my pilgrimage, yea, very gracious to me, he has fulfilled very many of his most gracious promises to

me under them all. Is it not said, In six troubles I will be with thee, and in the seventh I will not forsake thee? I know that the Lord has been with me in seven very peculiar trials, and shall I not record it to the honor of his name? It is by fiery trials that we are led duly to appreciate his faithfulness and goodness. Should we not be utterly consumed did he not sit as a refiner by the furnace?

You wanted to know in your letter if I ever got to where I abhorred myself. I think that I know all about these feelings, I feel that I am indeed a poor, sinful worm of the dust, and I do not feel worthy to mingle with the people of God at Oak Woods, but I cannot feel at home anywhere else. I think sometimes that I must ask them to take my name from the church book. I am a brother to dragons and a companion of owls, but still I feel to say that Jesus is the door, and he can open and none can shut, and he can shut and none can open. He that climbeth up any other way is a thief and a robber. The words of John the Baptist are ever on my lips, "He must increase, but I must decrease." I am vanity, and worse than nothing.

I thank you for your kind letter, which I have read many times. I am grateful that you think of one whose life is so far away from God. I will close now, and you must excuse all mistakes.

"My spirit looks to God alone,
My rock and refuge is his throne."

Your brother,

A. H. CHICK.

ASHLAND, Ill., Jan. 3, 1906.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—I have neglected to send in my remittance, for which I hope you will excuse me this time, and if it is the Lord's will I will do better next time. I know the SIGNS is the best paper of the Old School Baptists that I have read, and I would rather read it than *any* other paper. Brother Chick and brother Ker each had a splendid piece in the last SIGNS. I am glad brother Ker is to help brother Chick, I feel that it will be a great help to him. I like the way the correspondents write, for they give God all the praise, salvation by grace for time and eternity, and unlimited predestination. I do not believe anything comes to pass by chance, but if predestination was limited I do not see how it could be otherwise. According to holy writ God is the only Creator, and he made the world and all there is in it, and made it for himself and for his own glory, and will not give his glory to another, and it is upheld by his mighty power. God had a purpose in creating everything that he made, and everything is fulfilling the very purpose he made it for, and it is good for that purpose, and all things will work together to his own name's honor and glory. The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain. It does me good to read after brethren Chick, Vail, and a host of others, in writing about absolute or unlimited predestination; how my fellowship goes out to them for being brave enough to proclaim that blessed truth. When we make use of those terms out here we are told by some that they make God the author of sin, or, You should not use that word, it is not a Bible term. Some will say, We believe in the predestination of all things, but we ought not to use either of those terms; but when such find fault with the term it is because they think it limited; but we have quite a number scattered around that rejoice when they hear you use those terms. I cannot help but

grieve about the way the Baptists are divided, but the Lord's will is being done in the matter, so that gives me a little comfort, for he works all things after the counsel of his own will, in heaven and in earth, and none can stay his hand; he is God, and there is none like him, "declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

I have not written this for publication, but you are at liberty to use it as you like.

Brother Chick, will you or brother Ker explain Luke xxii. 35, 36? and oblige

D. S. KOONTZ.

WAVERLY, Pa., Dec. 28, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—You will find inclosed a good letter from brother Walter Reed, Hammondsport, N. Y., R. F. D. No. 1. I give the address so that brethren can write to him. Brother and sister Reed have been known by many Old School Baptists, both in New York State and Pennsylvania, as firm believers in the doctrine of sovereign grace, having a rich experience of the same, and for this reason, though they are surrounded by Arminians, they cannot be moved from the solid foundation (Christ). I am sure that many brethren will be pleased to read his short letter, and I hope that many will feel in their hearts to write a few lines to these poor, lonely, hungry souls; I know they would appreciate it very much. Think of it, brethren, nearly seventy-seven years old, miserable in health, and way off by themselves as far as their dear kindred in Christ are concerned. Many rich and comforting visits I have had with them in years past in different places, and I have not ceased to love them as children of the living God. God bless them, with all of his poor, afflicted people, is my desire for Jesus' sake. I would like to have the letter published, and if you have a little space and think proper you can print the poetry, or as much or little as you please, or return it to me; something can be gathered of his mind from them.

A vile sinner,

D. M. VAIL.

HAMMONDSPORT, N. Y., Dec. 17, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER D. M. VAIL:—Your letter of the 12th inst. is at hand, and brings us word that there is a dear brother residing at Waverly, Pa., whom we have not seen for many years, but we desire to see him. You tell of sad afflictions and trials of your faith. Did not Moses see the bush burning which was not consumed? Is not the fire still burning, consuming the dross that is found with the gold? Shall not all earthly things be burned up? Is not our faith tried as by fire, through which the Lord's saints shall pass safely into eternal glory?

I am in a dark and dismal way, where thorns and briars pierce me on every hand, and I can see no way out, for darkness covers the land. But sometimes I seem to hear a still small voice saying, "Fear not; for I am with thee." When I attempt to rise and walk I sink deeper into the miry clay which surrounds my feet.

There are none of our Father's family that come our way to bring the good news to the Lord's children. For many years past I have not met, to my knowledge, an Old School Baptist. The New School Baptists are numerous; two of our children have united with them.

Now, my dear brother and sister, we would be pleased indeed to visit you at

your home, but our age and health forbid. Could you both, or either of you, make us a visit, I am sure we would enjoy it. We are seventy-seven years old next year; my wife's birthday is April 6th, mine is March 18th. We are unable to ride far in a wagon or sleigh, and we have no one to leave at home when we are gone. We keep no horse, for I am much of my time unable to care for one.

Now, my dear brother, please excuse this rambling note. I will inclose some of my compositions, which seem to express some of my views on Bible doctrine. To you and your dear companion we would express christian love and fellowship.

Your brother in hope of eternal life in Christ,

WALTER REED.

EDEN.

PLEASE bear with me, dear reader,
While I express to you
Some thoughts I have of Eden,
I give you as my view.

In mind I view the garden,
And indeed do perceive
Our father, Adam, there, and
His wife, our mother Eve.

All the trees of the garden
God gave to them for meat,
Save one in the midst of them,
Of that they should not eat.

And the Lord said to Adam,
While he was standing by,
The day you eat of this tree
"Thou shalt [most] surely die."

But Satan appeared to Eve
At the forbidden tree,
Saying, The fruit is good to eat,
"Thou shalt not surely die."

Eve gave the fruit to Adam,
And of the fruit they ate,
And by disobedience
They lost their first estate.

And then they went at work to
Cover themselves with leaves,
And hide away from God in
The garden by the trees.

God drove them from the garden,
Both Adam and his wife,
And he placed an angel there
To guard the tree of life.

Now we find man multiplied,
A mysterious host,
Wandering in the way of death,
In nature's darkness lost.

DESTINY.

GOD inhabits eternity,
In him all things consist,
And he ordained what they should be
Before they did exist.

He made all things according to
His holy, sovereign will,
And from eternity designed
The place each one should fill.

The smallest insect we may see
Dazzling in the sun,
Fills the place God designed for it
Before the world begun.

In his wisdom God formed man
Out of the dust of earth,
And breathed in him the breath of life,
And gave his spirit birth.

God hath created all things in
Heaven and earth, and he
Graciously holds them in his hands
And forms their destiny.

WALTER REED.

JASPER, Texas, Dec. 19, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I am to-day fifty-three years old, and in looking over some old papers and letters I found a letter written by our aged brother, Elder W. M. Perkins, and have decided to send it to you for the columns of the SIGNS, if you think best to publish it.

D. RICHARDSON.

VINTON, La., Dec. 8, 1904.

ELDER D. RICHARDSON—DEAR BROTHER:—I received your kind letter in due time, filled, as it was, with many expressions of christian love and fellowship. I have always felt, my dear brother, that my service as a minister of Jesus has been

very poor; yet I can look back over the years gone by, and see how good, and kind, and merciful, the heavenly Father has been to me. Many have been the times that I have traveled all alone, far away from home and loved ones in this wilderness land, knowing that I should meet good congregations, and be the only minister to preach for two or three days, and now I can look back, and see how it was that I did not fail. My Father's glorious promises have been made good to me all the way along the journey: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Now, at the close of life, and of my ministerial labors, I feel, my brother, that I went forth in the strength of the Lord and made mention of his righteousness, and of his only. I have had a great desire to take a tour among the churches and brethren where I labored in years gone by, and more especially in your section of the country, but it now seems that I shall never have the strength and ability to visit you again. I am growing weaker every day, and feel admonished that my departure is near at hand. I am just waiting on the Lord, feeling that in that change it will be but falling asleep, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep.

There are many things about which I would like to converse with you, especially about our ministerial life, our sorrows, our ups and downs, and afflictions, and of how it has been that, like Paul, we have been cast down but not destroyed. Truly it would be a great comfort to me to be in your company for a day or two before going on to join the great army of the redeemed in that blessed world where sickness, pain or death will never be felt or feared. Could you not send us an appointment for the fourth Sunday in January and Saturday before? Come Friday morning, and we could have all day to talk along heavenly lines, and on Saturday and Sunday you would meet with the brethren and sisters who greatly appreciate your services as a minister of Jesus. We enjoyed very much brother Newton's visit and preaching, and trust that the Lord may send him around this way again, laden with good things of the Master's table. I desire that you will give my christian love to the brethren and sisters who may remember me in your vicinity, and say to them that if I never shall meet them again on earth I hope to meet them in glory, in the presence of God, where there is fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore.

Your brother in gospel bonds,

W. M. PERKINS.

(See obituary notice on page 125.)

HELENA, Okla., Jan. 14, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—If there are any Old School Baptists who love the doctrine as it is advocated through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES who contemplate coming to Oklahoma, I would like to say that this is the best part of Oklahoma, it is healthy, the land is rich, has good water and a fine climate. This country is prosperous in business and in farming, and is making rapid progress in every way. One-ninth of all the land is for public use—school purposes and public buildings. Our little church now holds its regular meetings in this town, which seems to suit us best as a meeting place; four of her members live here, and some not far away. The church has a lot, and may build a meeting-house here some time in the future. This town is about two years old, has one thousand inhabitants, and growing; it has one railroad. The only county high school building in the county is located here, cost seventy-five thousand dollars and has the very latest equipment of any public building. We would gladly welcome brethren of any country who could come here and settle among us. We are in peace, and have been since our organization, over four years ago. Land is worth from ten to fifty dollars per acre, and plenty of it on sale. Any brethren wanting particular information can write to me, and I will gladly answer the best I can.

As ever, your brother, I hope, in the faith of God's elect,

J. F. BEEMAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1906.

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EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE COMMUNION OF THE BODY OF CHRIST—THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS.

THE original Greek word translated in the New Testament "communion," signifies literally, the act of using anything in common. The word is used but four times in the New Testament. In 2 Cor. vi. 14, it is written, "What communion hath light with darkness?" The thought is that things opposite to each other cannot be in agreement; that is, Christ and Belial must always be two; believers and unbelievers can never have anything religiously in common; if our bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost they cannot at the same time belong to the dominion of Satan. The word "commune" is used a few times in the New Testament, always meaning conversing or conferring together. Even in this meaning of the word, oneness of feeling and desire is always signified. We do not and cannot commune with one who hates what we love, who disbelieves what we believe. Communion then, has as its very foundation, oneness, oneness of life, of faith, of hope, of desire and of experience. For instance, soldiers of the same army, one in their recollections of common fightings, sufferings, marchings, campfires, defeats and victories, can, and do in all their after life, come near together, and delight to meet and commune of all the past which they have had in common. Even in natural things there is nothing that binds men together more than the recollections of common dangers, and trials, and sufferings, shared together. Men of opposite tastes, opposite surroundings, opposite ways of life, cannot commune together, they have nothing in common. There may not be any enmity between them, there may be no cause of enmity, but they cannot get together, their lives must blend ere they can be one together. So in the communion of which the New Testament speaks, believers hold no enmity against unbelievers, but rather pity and forgiveness, but yet there can be no communion; they are not one. There could be no communion between Paul, who alone uses the word in his epistles, and followers of the Lamb of God, while he was engaged in his fierce persecution of the church, and while he was filled with hatred against Christ, and went his way breathing out threatenings and slaughter against all who called upon the Lord Jesus. But when the same Spirit arrested him that had arrested them and the word went out, "Behold, he prayeth," at once out of a common experience there was realized among them fellowship or oneness, and they could and did receive him as a brother beloved. So when Paul sent Onesimus back to Philemon his master, he wrote to the master that now he had become the servant of Christ as had Philemon before him, and that therefore he must be received as a brother beloved, rather than a slave. The natural relation of master and servant was not broken, as is witnessed by the very fact that Paul sent him back to his

master, but now a nearer and dearer tie had been created between them, and this was to be henceforth the motive of all their dealings with each other. How kind the mastership, how willing and faithful the service henceforward must have been. In this work of the Lord, wrought in the heart of each, how sweetly could these two live together as heirs of one common inheritance. To them both had been given one faith, one Lord, one baptism, one God and Father of all, one hope, one promise of the eternal inheritance secured to them in Christ Jesus their common Savior.

We have used two expressions at the head of this article: "The communion of the body of Christ." "The communion of saints." These both belong together, though the first must precede the last, and the last proceeds from the first. So the two great commandments of the law belong together, and are inseparable: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor." So the word has said, "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" The question is the statement of an impossibility, but when the love of God has been shed abroad in the heart this love must and will embrace every one in whom the likeness of Christ, who is the image of the invisible God, appears. In like manner, where the communion of the body of Christ appears there will also be the communion of saints, and there will be no communion with whatever is contrary to Christ; that is, there will be oneness with all who bear the image of the Master, who love and serve him, and who make mention that he is exalted, and there will not be any oneness with any who do not love and serve him, or who do not exalt his name. This communion is not complex, but single; that is, not many things enter into it and cause it to abound, but one thing alone. It is not communion of the interests, pleasures, vanities, friendships or relationships of this world which are almost numberless, but the communion of the one thing, the body of Christ. When our Lord instituted at the first, the supper which is the expression outwardly of the communion which is within the heart and life, he said, "This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." And a part of his meaning was, To you I am all and in all, your Savior, your God, your Friend, your exalted King, your Wisdom, your Righteousness, your all on earth, and your perfection in the world of glory. He meant, In me shall be found all your help and hope while you live, and in me shall be all your heaven when you are glorified. If Christ be all this to any heart other things will not matter much. Earthly interests, friendships and ambitions, may be as diverse as are the diverse tastes of men, but all these things matter not if Christ be all and in all to their hearts. Our brother's thoughts, ways and disposition may be diverse from ours, so that naturally we may have but very little in common, but if this oneness in Christ exists there is true communion, and at the supper each one sits down by the side of his brother, and they are brethren indeed, and each does what he does in remembrance of Christ.

But what is the communion of the body of Christ? "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" That is, the apostle would say among other things to us, These are the emblems to us of the one body which was broken for us, and of the

blood which was shed for us. As we come to the supper and eat the bread and drink of the wine we are reminded by these emblems of the true bread of heaven and of the true blood which washes away all sin. Just because it is needful that we should always be reminded of the body and the blood, our blessed Redeemer in infinite pity and love gave us, his weak, forgetful disciples, these emblems, and this ordinance to be often observed *in remembrance of him.* Were this supper to be the eating of the real body which was pierced upon the cross, or of the real blood which was shed there, then indeed the unbeliever could partake of them as well as the believer, and could be nourished by them as well as the believer. Then indeed (and we would speak with reverence) had the Roman soldiers who crucified him have been cannibals, and had they eaten the crucified body, and drank the poured out blood that fell from his hands, feet and side, they also would have lived forever, according to his word that he that should eat of the bread which he would give should never die. What falsehood and blasphemy then is in the teaching of Rome, that those who partake of what she calls the Mass, do eat and drink the very body and blood of the Redeemer. Such eating and drinking as the Savior meant is in the spirit, and by it our faith and hope and love, and every heavenly grace, are nourished, and thus we grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord.

The doctrine of Christ, that is, every principle of truth concerning him who is the Truth, is that true bread from heaven, and as by faith believers hear and receive this doctrine they live indeed, and grow and thrive; and as, by the same faith, the atonement is received, they do commune of the blood of Christ. Whatever is said concerning him in the word is truth, and by it all, as we are enabled to eat of it, we are nourished. So Christ is not ours, as bread which we hold in our hands is ours, but as that bread is ours after we have eaten it in our hunger, and are satisfied and strengthened by it; it is Christ in you the hope of glory. All that belongs to the doctrine of salvation is revealed in Christ, and in him alone. We are said to be chosen in him. The church is in him; our faith is in him; the sanctification is in him; our rejoicing is in him. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. The covenant of grace and mercy is in Christ. We are said to be children of God by faith in him. We are baptized into Christ; we are created in him; we sit together in heavenly places in him. Our obedience is in the Lord; in him all fullness dwells; in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; in him is all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; in short, all things that pertain to eternal life, and to salvation beyond, and to our walk below, are said by the apostle Paul to be in Christ. In about seventy places does Paul use the adjunct, "In Christ," and there is nothing that he omits from this list that pertains to our redemption. Having Christ we have all things, and as these various principles of doctrine are opened to our understanding we grow in the knowledge of him and in grace. To have the spiritual understanding increase, is to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man. "As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." And thus growing in the knowledge of the word there springs up comfort and peace and rest and all good things in the Lord. There is no true growth but as we grow up into him

in all things. To this end Paul determined to know nothing among the churches, or in all his ministry, but Christ and him crucified. In all the doctrine of Christ, then, is this communion of the body of Christ, and of the blood of Christ. As we come to believe the truth, and to know the truth, it becomes our bread, and to eat and to drink of this truth is the communion of the body of Christ. Is all the truth of salvation by grace precious to the soul? Then indeed we have eaten of it, and found it more than any earthly help or hope to our souls.

We desire to call attention to the fact that every principle of the doctrine of Christ is embraced in every christian experience. Christian experience means not so much the varying feelings, which may change every moment within us, but all the way in which the Lord leads us, and by which he makes manifest his will and his salvation. Let us not confound our feelings as we travel along this way with the travel itself. To walk sometimes in the dark and sometimes in the light is the common experience of all true pilgrims of Zion, but how many are the various conflicting feelings under these circumstances. The experience is a revelation of indwelling sin and of outward disobedience, which we were ignorant of until it was revealed by the light of the Spirit, and then of the way of life and salvation through Christ. This is the experience, but what a diversity of feelings of joy and sorrow were ours under that experience. In all this travel, which goes on day by day, the doctrine is more and more opened up to our view. All Bible doctrine is but the travel of all who ever come to know the Lord, and all experience is but the opening up to us of the things written in the word of God. When the things written in the Bible are also written in our hearts, and when the Spirit is pleased to open up the word of inspiration in the Scriptures, so that we are able to discern that it but describes the road by which we have come, then indeed we are established, and grounded, and settled, and can read our title clear to our heavenly inheritance. All christian experience is in harmony with predestination, election, special atonement, effectual calling, final preservation, the resurrection and final glory. If our experience does not stand in harmony with these things, and in fact does not embrace them, then our experience is false, and not from God. Any experience that denies election, for instance, also denies salvation by grace, and puts it upon the goodness, in some way, of the creature saved. To deny election is to say that our salvation depends upon our will, and not upon the will of God. To deny election means to deny the total depravity of man, and asserts that there is some power in man by which he can choose salvation for himself, and this is to deny salvation by grace. In every christian experience is revealed the everlasting love of God, by which any soul must be drawn to him if it ever comes at all. He that has come to know his own death in sin, his depravity, his want of all strength to do good, or to put away his sins, has an experience which must necessarily lead him into a full belief in all the principles of doctrine before named. If man is saved by his choice, or his goodness, or his works, in any sense of the word, then is grace not the way, then election, predestination, effectual calling, special and efficacious atonement and final glory are none of them true, and if they are none of them true then we are without hope.

In conclusion we will say that to see these things, and to rejoice in them, and to feel that our hope, faith and love are built up in them and by them, is the communion of the body of Christ; and to find others of like precious faith, and to converse with them, and sit down with them in the kingdom of heaven, eating and drinking together there, is the communion of saints. Jesus presides at all such feasts, though unknown it may be at the time. So the two disciples communed together by the way, and so Jesus drew near and communed together with them, and by and by he was known of them in the breaking of bread, hence the communion was such as embraced the host and all the guests. If we know this communion at all, we have found that Jesus has come in and has supped with us and we with him, and all who have been at the table have supped together with him. O how blessed indeed is this communion of the blood of Christ, this communion of his body, this communion of saints. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

EZEKIEL XVIII. 27, 31; XXXIII. 11.

ELDER G. BEEBE:—If it will not be trespassing on your time and patience too much, you will oblige an occasional reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES by giving your views on Ezekiel xviii. 27, 31; also xxxiii. 11, or either of them.

Very respectfully, E. G. D.

HOWARD Co., Md., Nov. 22, 1862.

Our friend, E. G. D., must be but an occasional reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES if he has not been able to learn our views on the nature and bearings of the covenant of works, with its conditions, rewards and punishments, as enjoined upon the house of Israel when under the legal dispensation, as we have been frequently called on to express them through our columns during the thirty years of our labors in the publication of this paper. Still, as our object is to set forth the truth, and expose error, we desire to respond to the inquiries of our occasional as well as our constant readers.

The portion of Scripture referred to reads as follows: "Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive." "Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart, and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"

These appeals were not made indiscriminately to the family of mankind, but in both chapters they are addressed to the house of Israel. The house of Israel means the family of Israel or Jacob, those who compose the household. Those who were embraced in the covenant of circumcision, which was a covenant of works, based upon the conditions explicitly set forth in the covenant, which were, that if the sons of Jacob would faithfully, truly and constantly obey all the precepts of the law which was given exclusively to them, they should live, and as a reward for their fidelity and strict obedience God would preserve them from the sword of their enemies, from the famine and from the pestilence; from all the agencies which waste and destroy human life, and they should surely live. As the apostle says, "The law is not of faith: but, the man that doeth them shall live in them."—Gal. iii. 12. This is precisely in substance what God has said to

the house of Israel by the mouth, or pen, of Ezekiel in our text; the man that doeth that which is lawful and right shall live, or preserve his soul alive. None but sinners are mortal, hence none but sinners can die, and sin is the transgression of the law, and where there is no law there is no transgression or death, for the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. The same apostle, in the same connection, and dwelling on the same subject, says, "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith."—Gal. iii. 10–12.

The attentive reader of the Scriptures will not fail to perceive that the law which was given as a conditional covenant to the nation or commonwealth of Israel, was the shadow of good things to come, and consequently typical in all its provisions, precepts and tendencies; it was adapted to them as a carnal people, and all who were circumcised in their flesh were debtors to do the whole law; that is, to obey all its precepts, on pain of death. The death to which it sentenced its delinquents was temporal, to be executed by sword, famine or pestilence, or by depriving the offender of his natural life. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy, under two or three witnesses. The penalty was often executed by stoning the convict with stones until he was dead. The blessings awarded to the willing and obedient were that they should eat the good of the land, they should be protected in their persons and property from sword, pestilence and famine, and their corn and wine and oil should be increased, and their days should be long and prosperous in the land which the Lord their God had given them. There is not in all the law of Moses a promise of one spiritual blessing for obedience, or any other than temporal judgments for their disobedience. Neither heaven or hell were promised or threatened in that law. For if a law had been given that could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. All the Old Testament saints, and all the saints from the days of Abel, depended for eternal life with every spiritual blessing alone on the blood and righteousness of the Savior who was to come; and all mankind, including Gentiles as well as Jews, who were or are not interested in that blood and righteousness, have stood justly condemned to bear the wrath of God forever, from the moment they all sinned against God in their father Adam; from the moment Adam transgressed, not the law of Moses, but the law of God, under which he was, death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. From that hour to the present no other blood has ever had or ever will have the power to atone for that sin, or cleanse from that guilt, but the precious blood of Christ, as of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Rivers of blood of victims offered in sacrifice under the Levitical priesthood could not take away sin, or purge the conscience from dead works, to serve the living God. The law of Moses was not required to consign sinners to hell, for they were already condemned, with the wrath of God abiding on them. In evidence of this the apostle tells us that death reigned from Adam to Moses; that was during the whole space of time from the entrance of sin into the world

until the giving of the law by Moses, for until the law, or prior to it, sin was in the world, and it being in the world, was fully demonstrated by the reign of death. Now, as the law by Moses was not given to give immortality or eternal life, and as the Scriptures affirm that it could not give it, the conclusion is unavoidable that the life spoken of in these passages in Ezekiel was temporal life, secured by obedience to the Mosaic law to the Hebrews who were under it, and not that eternal life which Jesus says he gives to his sheep, or to his redeemed people. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Not given through the law, nor through our obedience to the law, for it is not of works, lest any man should boast. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Romans viii. 3, 4.

Such, then, we see was the nature of the law by which the house of Israel was distinguished from all other nations and tribes of mankind as a covenant of works, resting all its provisions of rewards and punishments on conditions of their obedience, it bestowed all its temporal blessings on them for their obedience, and dealt all its temporal judgments on them for their disobedience. When they did that which was lawful and right, God gave them corn, wine and oil, fought their battles, subdued their enemies, caused their land to yield abundant supplies for their subsistence, and when they rebelled, disregarded the law and committed abominations, these temporal favors were withheld, and they were scourged with such temporal judgments as sword, famine and pestilence, were delivered into the hands of their enemies, and they were made to languish and die, as these were the stern conditions of the law as a covenant of works. Hence the expostulations contained in these passages of Ezekiel, all that was said, was what they knew were the terms and conditions of their covenant. When they sinned they died, when they obeyed they lived; and they were held personally responsible. The unjust parable which they had used, that, The fathers had eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth were set on edge, was shown by the expostulations of the prophet to be unjust and wicked. And such were the provisions of the covenant, that if a wicked man (an Israelite, of course, for none but Israelites were embraced in the covenant,) turned from his wickedness and did that which was lawful and right, he should live; he should be restored to all the privileges of that covenant. But if a righteous man ceased to do righteously, and committed wickedness, his former righteousness should not shield him from the penalty of the law, or save him from being put to death for his wickedness.

These Israelites of the house of Israel, as we see in Ezekiel xviii., had turned away from their obedience to the law, and were exposed to the penalties of the law, which was death, but as the covenant which they were under contained this provision, they were called on by the prophet to reform, and live, to cast away all their transgressions, make them a new heart and a new spirit, and they should live. Thus showing that the salvation which was typified in the law, was such a salvation as could only be effected by that divine power which is required to make a new heart, and to create within

them a right spirit, and that no man can perform this work the prophet shows; in chapter xxxvi. the Lord says, "I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went." "Thus saith the Lord God; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen." "And I will sanctify my great name," &c. "For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God." By comparing Ezekiel xviii. 31, 32, with chapter xxxvi. we see what the law demands. Who is able to make himself a new heart? Who can create in himself a new spirit? Or who is able to cast away all his transgressions? Those who know the law despair of ever being able to meet its requisitions. But God reveals from heaven his method of grace and salvation, and proclaims what he himself will do, and in the Scriptures copied from Ezekiel xxxvi., promises to meet every requisition demanded in Ezekiel xviii. 31, and to do it for his own name's sake.

The passage, Ezekiel xxxiii. 11, is also an expostulation with the house of Israel, in regard to the provisions of the covenant of works, and a full denial of the unjust murmurings of that stiff-necked and rebellious people, in which they virtually charged God with delighting in their sufferings. This imputation is refuted by an exhibition of the provisions of their covenant of works.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Dec. 1, 1862.

A History of Fishers River Primitive Baptist Association from its organization in 1832, to the year 1904, by Elder J. A. Ashburn, is the title page of a little book, in cloth binding, of something over two hundred pages, which we take pleasure in recommending to our readers. This book will no doubt be of special interest to the members of the Fishers River and other associations in the immediate vicinity. It is very interesting reading. The author, Elder J. A. Ashburn, is known to many among our eastern associations, and we believe him to be clear and sound in the faith of the gospel. The book will also be found interesting because of the description in it of the manners and customs of the churches of which it is a history. We think that any of our brethren who obtain and read it will feel that this association is composed of brethren indeed. It can be obtained of Elder J. A. Ashburn, Pilot Mountain, N. C., R. F. D. No. 1. Price, $1.00; six copies, $5.00.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

C. C. Conaway, Ohio, $1.00; Jennie Power, Ill., $3.00; Mrs. Edward Griffin, N. Y., $3.00.—Total, $7.00.

ERRATA.

IN the obituary of sister Woodward, on page 92, first column, current volume of the SIGNS, the year of her birth should be 1837, instead of 1827.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—**Elder W. M. Perkins,** July 1st, 1905. He passed quietly away, like one going to sleep. I visited him in April and again in June; he talked freely and well about many things, giving much good advice, and also his views upon some things that had lately been revealed to him, and of how resigned he felt to the will of God. He said that he had prayed to the good Lord that he might not suffer pain when he came to die. His desire was granted, for he did not suffer. One week before he died he said, "I am a dying man, and I feel no pain at all." He was 78 years and 25 days old. He had been a very thorough-going man in early life; he was a very fearless man naturally. In his earlier life in the ministry he would swim his horse through creeks and sloughs on the river's side to get to his appointments. He served two terms in the Legislature, and the last time he left the White House he felt as if some one had spoken to him saying, You have a greater work to do. Leaving there he looked out into the fields, and, as it were, something said to him, Larger fields than these you have to work. Sure enough he did, for he traveled far and near preaching Jesus to the people, comforting thousands, boldly and ably defending the doctrine of the Old School Baptists, as Bible doctrine. I regarded him as the ablest man that I ever heard on the subject of the atonement of Christ, as he would show clearly the specialty of it, and also its fullness and completeness. But he is gone, and we can say in truth that a great man has fallen. He was for many years wealthy, and assisted a great many poor people in many ways. He had a large amount of stock, and allowed the needy all over the county to milk his cows for themselves. He could truly be called the father of the county. Very many sought his counsel, and he was strongly solicited to run for governor of Louisiana, but like his Master he felt that he must be about his Father's business. I was baptized by him in the year 1873; I have been with him quite often ever since, and I will say that to know him was to love him. I was called upon to preach the funeral sermon at his old home church, Antioch Bigwoods, at their association on the fourth Sunday in November, 1905, though I felt inadequate to the task. The Scripture used was John xi. 15, and 1 Cor. xv. 49. I felt, if not deceived, a burning love in my heart, and a sweet assurance that Jesus lives and reigns, and that all that die in him shall live also with him, and that just as sure as we have borne the image of the earthy, so sure we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. I was enabled to speak of that glorious crown that fadeth not away, which is incorruptible. I felt to have a little foretaste of the glories of heaven.

I will close by saying that he lies near the old church where he lived and which he served all his days as a member and minister, and of which he was pastor from his ordination till his death. If ever there was any charge against him I do not know of it.

D. RICHARDSON.

Samuel C. Shepherd departed this life at his home, Harbourton, N. J., on Friday, Dec. 15th, 1905, after a few days illness, during which he suffered greatly from heart affection. He was in the 67th year of his age. The funeral service was held on Tuesday, the 19th, at the meeting-house where he had delighted to attend upon the service of God in the public exercises of the house for many years. He was baptized by the late Elder Wm. J. Purington, in the fellowship of Second Hopewell Church, Sept. 6th, 1878, together, as we are informed, with his companion, and in all the years since then they have walked closely with the church, bearing their full measure of care and labor and interest in all that pertained to the interests of the church. His walk was at all times careful and humble before his fellow men, so that he bore a good name always. He had been in somewhat feeble health for the past two or three years, so that he could but seldom say that he felt well, yet he continued to attend to all the cares of the farm upon which he lived and to be faithful upon the services of the sanctuary. The last service which he attended was on the second Sunday in December, at Harbourton. The text used upon that occasion was, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." We have been informed by his widow that he often, during the few remaining days of his life, spoke of this, and of the special comfort that was in it for him. During the last two or three days of his sickness he spoke of a desire to remain with his family for their sake, but said that if it should be God's will he would rather depart. In all our acquaintance with him he manifested his deep interest in the things of God, although he was not a man of many words. It was always a great privilege to ourself to be with him, whether at his home or at the place of meeting. He leaves nine brothers and sisters, four of whom are half-brothers and sisters, and an aged step-mother, beside other relatives and friends, and the church, all of whom deeply feel their loss. His dear companion of many years feels altogether alone and desolate. But the God of the widow will be her God and Guide even to the end. She has long trusted in him, and he will not fail to give peace to his troubled ones. The Scripture used upon the funeral occasion is that found in Phil. i. 23, 24. A large concourse of friends and neighbors were together, testifying to the respect and affection with which they regarded the departed friend and brother. The interment was in the cemetery at Harbourton. May the blessing of God be with all who are bereaved.

C.

DIED—At his residence in Camden, N. J., brother **Edgar Moon,** in the 82nd year of his age. It was my privilege to baptize him in the fellowship of the church at Rock Springs, in which he continued steadfastly unto the end of his pilgrimage, Jan. 4th, 1906. My long continued acquaintance with him, as pastor of the same church, gave me opportunity of forming the most intimate companionship with him, both as a man and as a christian in the fellowship of the gospel; as a man, patient and humble and of a forgiving disposition; as a christian, he seemed to possess that love which casteth out fear; a man of peace both in the church and out of it, and but few seemed more weaned from the world than he, or with minds more exercised about their heavenly home. He died leaving no family by the last marriage but the widow, now in a lonely condition and bereaved indeed of a faithful and devoted companion, walking together for twenty-two years in love and attachment. She seems to have lost all on earth. It was my privilege to join their right hands in marriage, and to receive a notice to attend the funeral, but not being able to attend, Elder Lefferts spoke at the house and also followed on and had service at Rock Springs, the place of interment, and saw him laid to rest where he requested to mingle his bones together with those gone before, and where he was faithful in his attendance when within reach. It has been said that those who go are happier than those who stay. The church at this place has lost a father, a counselor and adviser, the widow a faithful companion, and all who knew him could but respect him. But he is gone; may the Lord comfort those who remain and fill up the vacant place.

"And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee."—Psalms xxxix. 7.

WM. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md.

SISTER **Eliza Ann Huntley** passed away on Friday, Jan. 19th, 1906, aged 65 years and 7 months. She was the daughter of James Jenkins, was born in the town of Roxbury, N. Y., was married to James Huntley Jan. 23rd, 1859. To this union were born eight children, five are still living, two daughters and three sons. Sister Huntley united with the Andes Old School Baptist Church June 10th, 1861, was baptized by Elder J. Hewitt. She was afflicted many years with dropsy; during these years she bore her affliction without a murmur, waiting patiently for the end. She was a faithful member of the church, though for many years was not able to get to meeting. Meeting has been held at her home a few times during her affliction that she might hear the word preached, which she very much enjoyed.

Her funeral was held at the meeting-house in Union Grove Sunday, Jan. 21st, and was largely attended by friends and relatives who paid the last tribute of respect to one whom they loved. Besides the five children she is survived by her husband and the church to mourn their loss. May God comfort all that mourn.

JOHN B. SLAUSON.

Mrs. Sarah E. Williams Paxson was born in Loudoun Co., Va., Sept. 15th, 1840; married to Samuel B. Paxson May 16th 1867; baptized into the fellowship of the New Valley Church of Regular Old School Baptists by Elder Joseph Furr, July, 1884; died at her home in Leesburg, Va., May 15th, 1905. Our sister had been a faithful, consistent, zealous member of the New Valley Church for more than twenty years, and her interest in the affairs of the church was ever alive and active, and the church mourns with her devoted husband and children for the loss to us here. Her home and heart were ever open to all who held the truth of the gospel, as revealed to them by the Spirit of Christ, and she was faithful and true in all the relations of life. Her kindly sympathy and help in affliction was sure and steadfast in all her wide circle of neighbors and friends. Her husband, Deacon S. B. Paxson, and one son, Mr. J. F. Paxson, and three daughters, Mrs. A. W. Welsh, Mrs. J. H. Shumate and Mrs. W. George, survive her. We believe that our sister has but changed the mortal for immortality. M.

MEMORIAL.

(Written by Elder C. W. Bond.)

IN the wise dispensation of the God whom we worship, we, the church at Little Flock, must acknowledge our loss in the taking of our beloved and esteemed brother, **Elder D. G. Johnson,** from his place and labors among us to the presence of his Creator, together with all the saints in glory. Our deceased brother was led to make his profession of faith to our church, and was received and baptized in the year 1888, and his walk and conversation from that time were such as to honor and glorify our God, and to gain and hold the confidence of his brethren.

About twelve years ago he began to exercise his gift as a minister, and the church was soon willing to recognize the same by liberating him to this work, and afterward by ordination. He was faithful to every duty imposed upon him by his church or his brethren, and in his ministry won the love and fellowship of his brethren wherever he went. He recognized no power for good save that of God, and had no confidence in the flesh. His faith had the simplicity of a child but the strength of the elect. He was physically weak, but his faith in the might and purposes of his God and the redemption and final preservation of the chosen ones of Adam's race, made him a bulwark against all unrighteousness in the churches, or in those professing the doctrine of sal-

vation by grace. His reproofs in the churches, when necessary, were given in gentleness and meekness. He desired to see his churches prosper, but wanted no membership added unless they had been properly prepared. He also took delight in having his church-houses kept in good repair, and had just succeeded in having some such needed repairing done on the home church-houses.

We will miss him in the ministry, in our church council and business, and in our homes around our firesides, where he was ever a sympathizing and welcome guest and brother; but we do not sorrow as those without hope, for we feel that our loss is his eternal gain, and we feel to bless the name of our God for giving us such a wonderful manifestation of his abiding faith and loving grace as shown in the life of our brother, and trust that we all may be more firmly established in the most holy faith in the memory of our brother and of his splendid example.

Done by order of the church at Little Flock, fourth Saturday in January, 1906.

C. W. BOND, Moderator.

J. T. McCoun, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 74. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1906. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LAMAR, Colo.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I inclose you the experience of two dear sisters who are members of Bethel Church, in Prowers Co., Colorado. They both truly witness in their daily walk and conversation that they have been with Jesus. Kindly publish in your good paper, if you think best, as these experiences of God's children never grow old to the people of God. Controversies or bitterness cannot arise from them, but rather the sweet fellowship of the Spirit, that is so comforting and profitable to the children of the kingdom.

Yours in hope,

D. B. NOWELS.

SYRACUSE, Kansas, July 20, 1905.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I feel impressed to write a few lines to you on what I hope may be called a travel from darkness to light. What I have experienced, and my only hope of eternal life, lies in this little hope, if indeed it is considered by the brethren to be an experience of grace. It is now about nine years since I became concerned about my soul's salvation. I could see myself a sinner, and without mercy before God. I began to search the Scriptures, and I could not find a place where I could be called a child of God. I read that the Lord had a chosen people, but I could not see how I could be one of that number. I was in poor health, and I had the time set to die, but thought if I should die in this condition what would become of me? It seemed to me that such a person as I could not approach the Lord in prayer, but one day I went to a dark room alone and knelt down to try to pray, and it seemed to me that every word dropped to the floor. I came out feeling I had made things worse, for it was only a form I was trying to go through. I was in this condition for several weeks, trying in my weak way to ask the Lord to have mercy on me, when one night I was lying on my bed and there appeared a beautiful light before me, above the brightness of the sun, at the same time I was impressed to be baptized. I arose and thought I would go in the next room and tell my husband about what I had seen, and then I thought, No, I will not, there is nothing in that, I only imagine it, and did not go. A short time after, I was taken very sick, and I

called my husband to me one morning and told him if the Lord should see fit to take me away I wanted him to write to my father and mother, who lived in Kentucky, that I was not afraid to die, for the Lord my God was a just God. He said he would write them what I said. Then I was troubled after having said that, thinking if I was mistaken what an awful thing I had done, to deceive my dear old father and mother on my death-bed. O, if I had never said one word about it; I would have given anything to have had those words back again. I was made to beg for mercy before God all in silence, for I did not want any one to know this, and I became reconciled to the Lord's will; I was willing to die if it were his will.

"And if my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well."

Then I thought of my dear little children, I must stay with them, and I began to ask the Lord to spare my life for the sake of my little child of only a few weeks old, and two other children of only six and four years old. I could not see how they could get along without a mother, but, my dear brethren, the Lord showed me how helpless I was to care for them or do anything for them or myself. I was ashamed of myself to think I had asked such a thing, for I could see his loving-kindness to us was so good and great I did not fear to trust him, his loving-kindness had been over me all the days of my life, and he was able to carry me through, and I felt so peaceful and thought I could ever abide in his love. I do not know how long I lay in this condition. One morning a niece and my husband came to my bed and brought me a nice breakfast, and wanted me to try to eat something. It seemed I never had seen any one look as lovely as they did. I said to them, "I am going to get well, for there is a change," and I heard these words as though some one had spoken them to me:

"I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."

O, I did feel so rejoiced.

"Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

"And I could not believe
That I ever should grieve,
That I ever should suffer again."

When I was able to be around again I thought I would read my Bible one day, and I was astonished at myself, it was not the same book I once read, it seemed so different to me, and it was so plain, it seemed as if a little child could understand it. I would sometimes go to meeting, but we had only the Methodists, Presbyterians and Missionary Baptists here; they did not preach as I felt, and I could not believe as they did. It seemed I was alone in my belief, and was laughed at for believing I was helpless to work myself into favor with God. My parents were Old School Baptists, and we often had preaching at our house several years before I was married, and I longed to meet with them again, I did so much want to hear one Old Baptist prayer; there were none that I knew of in this country. After a few years I met with two or three, and they had formed a little church up in Colorado, and it came about that the preacher came here and preached in the Presbyterian meeting-house in Syracuse. I had been disappointed so many times that I was afraid it would be self all through, and that I could not approve of; but instead, Elder Perdue, pastor of this little church at Lamar, Colo., preached what I believe to be the truth, that salvation is of the Lord, and I never was as glad; it was the first sermon I ever heard that could tell my feelings

better than I could tell them myself. I heard him some four or five times, and could not find any fault with his preaching. They had a three days meeting at brother Holdren's, at Hatton, Kansas, twenty miles south-west of here. There were several ministers and brethren there, and on Friday when the meeting was opened for membership I went forward and tried to tell a little of what I have written, and they received me in christian fellowship without asking me one word, and I was baptized on Sunday by the pastor, Elder Perdue. I have had many doubts and fears since then, I have thought that surely I have deceived them all, that if I were what I professed to be I would be a very different person.

"I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

But I believe I know that I love the brethren, and am so glad when they say, "Let us go into the house of the Lord," for surely it is the best enjoyment I have on the earth, and we have such good meetings when we meet together in the right spirit. They are the friends that cheer me on life's rugged road, and I beg to be allowed to remain with them, and that they will bear with me in all my short-comings, till the Lord shall call me home. O, if I am only permitted to sit at his feet and shout, Holy, holy, Lord God Almighty. He gave his only Son to redeem my soul from its lost condition; if I am what I profess to be, I will see him and be like him; it will be then that my soul will be satisfied. I ask the prayers of all my brethren, for I surely need them.

Yours in christian love,

MAGGIE GRISSOM.

HATTON, Kansas, Aug. 14, 1905.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—I have been impressed to write some things of what I hope have been the Lord's dealings with me, which I wish you to read carefully and tell me truly if you think it is the Lord's dealings, or am I deceived, and have I deceived the church? It seems to me I cannot remember the time when I did not in a vague way feel that I was a sinner, and could not go to heaven if I should die that way, and I used to try to pray to God, even when a small child, to forgive my sins and save me from the bad place, which I had been taught from infancy was a lake of fire in which I would burn forever if I were not good, and that I must live good all the time or I might die and go to that place. I went on in this way till I was about thirteen years of age, when I attended a Missionary Baptist protracted meeting, and during that meeting I was persuaded to go forward to be prayed for, and after I was there awhile some one came around and said, "Can't you trust the Savior and just say, Lord, I believe?" Well, I was made to say I believed, and so I was converted. O, how well I can see now the deception practiced upon me, a child. I was then away from home, going to school and boarding with my mother's distant cousins, and they were Missionaries, and as my parents were Methodists they (the cousins) were very anxious that I should join the Missionaries before my people knew of it, so I was persuaded to join them. I went up with some others of about my age, and we were all asked a few questions, and were told what to answer, and so we were then ready for baptism. There was a baptistery under the pulpit, and we went prepared to be baptized, but there came up a terrible thunder shower and there was no meeting, so I believe by God's intervention I was saved that time.

But now comes another change: a little more than two years from that time I again attended a protracted meeting in the same town, this time at the Methodist meeting-house. I had known there had been no change in me after this other event I speak of, and now, dear brethren, if I have ever had a hope given me it was while attending this meeting, and that is why I so often doubt that I am a child of God. Some time during the meeting, and one night while the aged minister was preaching, I was cut down. I cannot now remember one word he said, but any way I felt that I was certainly the most miserable sinner on earth, and that burden, O I could not bear it, I could not hold my head up or keep from crying, though I knew, or thought I knew, every one was looking at me. Well, when they called for any one to come forward who felt the need of a Savior, I found myself there, and O how miserable I felt, and how I mourned on account of my sins. They would come to me and say, Just trust the Savior and have faith, but, O my brethren, all I could do or say was, God, be merciful to me, a poor, miserable sinner. After I had been there some days and nights, still feeling so miserable all the time, while at school as well as at home, one night while I was sitting there trying to pray, and crying as if my heart would break, I was made to see I could do nothing, and I cried, Jesus, I give myself into thy hands, I can do nothing; and just then I was made to feel that sweet peace which I cannot tell to any one. My awful burden was gone, and instead of weeping I felt rejoiced and full of glory. I did not feel like shouting or raising a great noise, but felt like being still and seeing the salvation of the Lord. It seemed to me, and does yet, that the Savior had spoken to me, as it were, in a still small voice. O dear brethren and sisters, I have wandered away from God so often, and often have been so low down in doubt and fears, that I have been made to think I am acting the hypocrite, yet when I look back to that time I do feel that I received a hope there that will ever be as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and that reaches to that within the veil, where Christ my Savior is. I have said I was raised a Methodist, and I therefore joined them, and had a little water poured on my head for baptism. I never did feel that was baptism, but then I had been taught that any way would do, so I tried to quiet my conscience with that, but I could not do it, and would never admit to myself that I had been baptized.

Now comes the, to me, strange part: the most of Old Baptists are made to see the church at conversion, while I was with the Methodist seventeen years, and I verily believed that if I did not live right, and if I should die then, without some of my many sins that I knew I committed every day being pardoned, I would be lost. I cannot see why I was not taught there that the life I had received (if I had received any) was eternal in Christ.

After awhile I was married, and my husband was not a converted man, and O how much trouble I did see; I felt that I could not live as he then thought that a church member should live, and I could not set the proper example, so I mourned and prayed in secret to live better and be better.

Some three years after we were married we came to this western country, and the first year we were here the news came to me one day that my father was dead, had been suddenly killed. How I

mourned I cannot tell, and what troubled me most was, he was taken away so suddenly perhaps he was not ready to go. One night while I was in this trouble it seemed to me my father came to me and said, Do not worry any more, I am happy, and he also said, You, my daughter, will have a hard time, and many trials and troubles, but in the end you will be all right; and then it seemed he left me and ascended into heaven. I watched him till I could see him no longer, and I have never been troubled in that way since then. Some time after this a Missionary Baptist preacher came here and held meeting near us. My husband attended and was converted, and wished to join them and be baptized. As I have said, I had never felt I was baptized, so I began to study about it, but I felt that I could not join them if I could not believe their doctrine, so I talked with the minister and studied, and was made to see that the life I had given me (if any) was eternal, and how sweet that truth was. I finally concluded to join them, and my husband and myself went down into the water together and were, as we thought then, baptized. I thought then that my troubles in that line were over, but alas, not so. It was not a great while before my husband began to be led to believe the Old Baptist doctrine. Neither of us had heard them preach, but he just seemed to be led that way, and after awhile he asked them (the Missionaries) to take his name off their church book, as he did not feel to be in fellowship with them. I could not then see as he did, and let my name stay there, and went to meeting when I could; but I began to wonder if he or I were wrong; I felt that one of us was, for there could be but one church, so I began to read more, and if ever I did pray it was then, that God would lead me aright. After a time, and before I knew it, the doctrine that is now so sweet to me and so much food to my soul, was unfolded to me, and I could see it so plainly taught from Genesis to Revelation, that I wondered why I had not seen it before. I then went and asked for my name to be taken from the Missionary church book, as I then truly felt that I was not one of them, and it was not a home for me any longer. After meeting, one of the sisters said, I do not blame you; she thought I had done so because my husband wished me to, but he did not know I was going to do it. Now we began to hunt for a church home, but as yet we had not heard an Old Baptist preach, but God had sent us the SIGNS OF THE TIMES through a Missionary, whose aunt was an Old Baptist; she had written her experience for the SIGNS, and his people sent the paper containing it to him. We read the paper, and liked it so well we subscribed for it, and that was all the preaching we had for some three or four years. After some time we heard of the church at Bethel, Colo., and so we determined to make a visit there and find out if they were indeed the people we were looking for. We found them to be the regular Old School Baptists, and the people we wished to have a home with. I well remember how I felt when the door of the church was opened: I felt I could not go, I was too unworthy to offer myself, but before they got through singing I went forward with my babe in my arms and presented myself, but it seemed to me I had nothing to tell; any way they accepted me, and two weeks after my husband and I were baptized by Elder Perdue near our home at Hatton, and I can truly say I felt then that I had been baptized, I then had gospel baptism, and

there was such sweet peace given me, such a rest that I cannot express to any one.

Now, dear brethren, you have what I call my experience, and I wish you to judge me by it. I do not wish to deceive the children of God. I feel to give God all the glory in everything that is done, and if you see fit to cast me from you, which I often feel you would be justified in doing, I would have no other place to go, I would still feel to love the brethren and the doctrine our ministers set forth.

Yours in hope of eternal life through Christ,

MATTIE HOLDREN.

HAMPTON, Ky., Jan. 29, 1906.

ELDERS CHICK AND KER:—Inclosed find the experience of my dear blind uncle. He told me before I had the least thought I ever would be able to go back to my old native home that he would be glad to have his experience written out and sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Little did I think then that I would write it for him. I have certainly had a feast of fat things ever since I came to this country; I have had sweeter liberty than I ever have had. I aim to return to Capron, Okla., February 20th; it seems like leaving home. I have found only one kind of Baptists, and they believe the doctrine contained in the dear old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. J. M. DULEY.

HAMPTON, Ky., Jan. 29, 1906.

VERY DEAR KINDRED IN A MOST PRECIOUS HOPE:—I am now in the eighty-eighth year of my pilgrimage here on this sin-cursed earth, and as I have never troubled you with my weak effort at writing, I feel like I wish to give in my little mite; little as it is, it is all I have to hope in. I have been a subscriber to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES for nearly forty years, and an occasional reader ever since I was quite young, and I have been so much comforted by reading after its able correspondents, and the many experiences that it contains, I feel that I want to write my travels before I leave the shores of time, as I am very feeble and cannot last much longer. I have desired to write out my travels, but have been nearly blind several years, and could not write. As my nephew, J. M. Duley, of Capron, Okla., is out here to visit us, I thought I would get him to write my experience for the SIGNS; it may be that it will help some little babe in Christ.

I was born June 11th, 1818, in Livingston Co., Ky., where I have lived ever since. My parents were Presbyterians. I am not able to date my first serious impressions; as early as I can remember I was easily touched when the subject of religion was talked upon. I remember while a little child I would feel so badly I would get down at my mother's knee and lay my head on her lap and cry for a long time, and was not able to tell my dear mother what was the matter with me, and when I went to school in after years it was customary for the children to read in the New Testament, and when reading of the crucifixion of Jesus I would break down and could read no longer, and my harsh teacher would send me back to my seat to study my lesson over, when I knew full well that I knew my lesson, but could not bear to read of the cruel death that was inflicted on Jesus. These impressions followed me, and every time they returned they seemed to come with renewed force. At the age of fifteen years I was taken very sick, and felt that I must die, and if I died in

that state I was certainly lost, so I tried to pray the Lord to spare me this time and when I settled down in life I would serve him. I verily believed then that I could serve him at my leisure. He raised me up, and I went on as before. I was accustomed to profaning the name of God when things went wrong with me. At last I met and loved the woman I married. Things went on as before, until one day my promise that I would turn and serve God when I settled down, came to me with renewed force. O how miserable I felt, I tried to pray, but my burden became heavier and heavier, and I felt that I was lost, and that God was just in my condemnation. At last there came a Missionary Baptist protracted meeting, and I went up to the mourners' bench, as it was called, and there was so much confusion there that all the feelings I had had left me, and I could not shed a tear, and I resolved that if the Lord would spare me I would never go back there any more; it might do for some, but it did not do me any good, so I did not go up any more. My father held family prayer, and I listened to him and felt that I could not live to see the rising of another sun, and I was lost. My agony was so great I resolved to go out for the last time to a secluded spot, and on my way to that spot I heard an agonizing prayer going up from a poor blind negro boy who was in the same distress I was in. I knelt down near him and plead for mercy, though death was my just due. The boy raised up and went to the house, and so I went on to my secluded, chosen spot, and there I was in the deepest agony; but all at once my burden left me, and I felt very happy. I thought I would go to the house and tell father and mother, and ask them if this was what was called religion. As I was on my way to the house, and was within about forty yards of the house, there I saw father, mother, sister and my young wife, and all the negroes, coming to meet me. I found that I was shouting glory to God in the highest strain of my voice. I never saw things look so lovely as all things looked that night; I felt that surely goodness and mercy would follow me all the days of my life, and that I never would see trouble again. I told my dear sainted mother that I never would be troubled with sin any more; but she said, Ah, my boy, if you have what I think you have, and hope you have, you will be troubled many times with sin, and I found that my dear mother knew more than I did about it. In about three or four months I was ploughing in new ground, and a tough root hung on my plow and broke off and hit me, and before I thought I swore an oath, and then stopped my team and fell down between my plow handles and plead with the Lord to forgive me. I felt that I was deceived and had deceived all the rest of the people. My prayer was, O Lord, if I am deceived, undeceive me. I went to the house and took the Bible to see if I could find any comfort. The first thing I saw was where Peter cursed and swore, and that gave me comfort; not because Peter did wrong, but because I had the utmost confidence in Peter's christianity. From that time to the present I have wallowed in the "Slough of Despond," and battled with "Giant Diabolus," sometimes up and sometimes down, but down more than up. As my parents were Presbyterians, of course I joined with them, but before I agreed to join them I told them I wanted to be immersed, and they agreed to immerse me, so I went with them, but I read my Bible and found that they did not preach like

I thought it taught me, but I thought the preachers understood it better than I did, although I could not help seeing that they contradicted themselves, and it gave me much trouble. I thought I would see if I could find any one that preached like I understood the Bible to teach, so I went to the Missionary Baptists, but they preached the same doctrine as did the Presbyterians, so I tried the Methodists and others, but all preached a conditional plan of salvation. I heard of an Old Baptist association, and resolved to go and hear them, and to my happy surprise I found the people that told it like I understood the Bible to teach. How they loved one another! One old brother saw me some ten or fifteen feet away; I did not want any one to know that I was running after the Old Baptists, but that old brother kept watching me, and at last he came and sat down by my side and asked me if I was a professor of religion? I replied, I am, and I hope that I am also a possessor of it. He said, "You talk like an Old Baptist." After this I went to a log-rolling in the neighborhood; I had heard old brother Crouch talk, and knew he did not preach like any of the others around there, so I got him to sit down with me, and I told him I thought I had found the church of Christ. He looked somewhat surprised, and asked me where I had found them, and I told him that I had been to an Old Baptist association and had heard the gospel preached in its purity. The tears began to trace each other down his cheeks, and he told me if I wanted a home with them he could tell me how I should proceed, and said he hoped to join them, too, and for me to go up to old Muddy Fork Church and they would make a way for me. I went up to my father-in-law's, who was a deacon of that church, and I told him the same as I told brother Crouch, and he laid the case before the church, and they agreed to send an arm of the church down and receive us; so Elder John H. Gammon, being the pastor of the church, came with them, and the door of old Muddy Fork was opened for the reception of members, and besides myself, my wife, my daughter, J. M. Duley and brother Crouch were all baptized by Elder Gammon. Then they organized Zion Church. Brother Gammon wrote for Elder R. Fulkerson and ordained J. B. Hardy as our pastor.

I will relate three dreams that I have had since I joined the church. The first was: I dreamed that I was passing through a valley, and in the valley was a stream; I crossed the stream and thought I saw a grand procession, and they were all singing, and it was the sweetest singing I ever heard; the leader (which I took to be Christ) said to one next to him, Teach that man to sing, and he stepped up to me and waved his hand before my face and said, Sing, and I thought I started singing, and could sing as sweetly as any of the rest. I was so elated that I woke up only to find it a dream, but it is a consolation to me now. I interpret the valley and stream to be the valley and shadow of death; as the poet expresses it:

> "Death, like a narrow sea, divides
> This heavenly land from ours."

The singing procession I interpret to be heaven.

The second dream is this: I dreamed I was crossing another dark valley, and on the right hand I saw an exceeding high mountain, and there was an invisible hand raised me up by the side of this lofty mountain, and in the side of the mountain was a cleft, and out of the cleft came a voice, This is Terries rest.

I ascended higher and higher until I was above everything; then beautiful cities were passed and called by names that I cannot remember. I was so happy I awoke, only to find it as the first, a dream that also affords me much consolation.

The third dream is, that I, with a large procession of people, was traveling in a country, and we came on top of the largest building I ever saw; the building was of a flat top, or roof, and the procession kept marching on and on and one by one kept stepping off, until my turn, and according to the course of the rest, I stepped off, but I went down easily and came to the bottom, where I seemed to be in the house of which I had been on the top, and there seemed to be a thin partition or vail between me and the voice that said, Thou shalt see my face in the morning; then I awoke. I interpret that dream to mean: stepping off that building, is going down in death; and in the morning thou shalt see my face, means the morning of the resurrection of the dead. I feel that if I am so fortunate as to reach that happy place I will have greater reason to praise God than any of the rest, for I am such a sinner I can only cry grace, free grace, first, last and all the time. I also believe in the sovereignty of God.

This is the first time, and I think the last time, I will ever write.

I am your unworthy brother, if one at all, E. M. DULEY.

[We publish below extracts from letters written to sister Abbie Clarke, of North Berwick, Maine, by our aged sister Noble, at different times. Sister Noble was a member of the church at Bowdoinham, Me., for many years, and was well known by all who were accustomed to attend the sessions of the Maine Association. She passed away from earth a few years ago, at about the age of ninety years, leaving the savor of a good name in all the churches that knew her. The extracts are good and deeply spiritual, and show forth clearly the power of the doctrine of grace to comfort and to strengthen, even down to old age.—Ed.]

Brunswick, Maine, March 14, 1893.

My Dear Sister Clarke:—I received a letter from you yesterday, and most welcome it was I assure you. You write bitter things against yourself, and seem to think that you are alone in your feelings, and are ready to exclaim, "O! is there any one like me?" I tell you there is one who has traveled the same way. Had I tried to write my own feelings I could not have told them better than you have done in your letter. When your letter came yesterday it gave me quite a lift, for I often think there is not any one like me, but it assured me there was one with the same hard, rebellious, unreconciled heart, and I felt to say, Surely we must be sisters, we must belong to the same family.

It is nearly sixty years since I professed a hope that God for Christ's sake had had mercy upon a poor sinner like me. I then thought it a good hope through grace, and that my sins were blotted out. But I have been like Bunyan's Mr. Fearing, always doubting and fearing, always stumbling along, and never walking straight, and now at my time of life (eighty-three) when one would naturally think that I ought to be pretty good, alas, I find the same old rebellious heart is here still. As the poet has it,

> "This traitor vile I fain would shun,
> But cannot from his presence run."

And I expect to carry it with me as long as I remain here. But still I have a hope that when I am done with time

things this old wicked heart of mine will not trouble me any more.

Dear sister, you have quoted Attie several times, I used to feel just as you do, and would think if I could write as well how gladly I would write to my brethren and sisters; but that gift is denied me for some wise purpose. Probably I should be proud, but sister Attie is not one bit proud. God has given her this gift to be a comfort to others, and I believe she is a great comfort to many; I wish I could see her this minute.

I had not been out for some weeks, before I came home, but I was fearful I should get worse, and I felt that I wanted to die at home, so they did not object any more to my coming.

Now do not say it is of no use for you to write, if you had written a letter full of hope and encouragement, of course I should have been glad for you, but it would not have met my case. Why, afterwards I even went about trying to sing. You know when it is a cloudy day we cannot see the sun, yet we know the sun is shining all the time. Just so it is with the Sun of righteousness, he is still shining, though we may not see him, and what he does he does forever.

NOVEMBER 30, 1893.

DEAR SISTER:—I have been gone six weeks up country, and when I reached home I found your letter among others. You may depend upon it that I found and read it first, and as I read the tears would come in spite of me. I had been thinking for some time, Here am I, a professed follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, and what am I? I am so sinful and rebellious, and get vexed about little things, and am so unreconciled if everything does not go to suit me, surely these are not the feelings that christians have. I had come to the conclusion that I had been deceived all these sixty years, but as I read your letter I thought, Surely here is one that is much like me, only not so bad; I can say, and tell the truth, that if I am a christian I am the least of all. I am so glad you have a minister that preaches the pure gospel which feeds the sheep and lambs.

I went to Bowdoinham last Friday to stop over for meeting. Two or three of us went to the meeting-house, but there was no service, still I was glad I went, for sister Raymond came home with us and spent the day. I was glad to see even a few of their faces.

While I was away I went to a meeting, but O dear, what was it? I kept thinking of what an old minister once said, "Time was once, when they had wooden pulpits and golden preachers, but now they have golden pulpits and wooden preachers." I think it is about so; the whole aim is to get members. They are doing a great business in that line over in Bowdoinham, a little out of the village. Fifteen were baptized there last Sunday, and still they come. It is said that all the baptized ones have a promise of a Christmas present; it seems dreadful to me; if they are right I am all wrong.

You spoke of writing to Attie, she has been wonderfully blessed in her religious life. She seems to go right ahead, while I am stumbling, ready to halt, I see so much in myself that is wrong and sinful that I am ready to give up all for lost. But where can I go but to him who knows all our infirmities and faults, all our trials and troubles, and has promised to be with his people in all their trials. They will not be tempted more than they are able to bear, but he will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that they may be able to bear it.

AUGUST 1, 1904.

DEAR SISTER CLARKE:—Sister Attie came in yesterday and brought your letter and commanded me to write to you right away. I really did not know that I owed you a letter. I always intend to reply to all letters sent me, and especially yours, even though I have nothing to say. Your letters have been of great comfort to me. When you were feeling the worst, they helped me the most. I often read beautiful letters, and the writers of them are feeling well and happy, and can express their feelings, and I wish that I could feel and write as they do. But still they do not reach me as do yours, when you are feeling your very worst. What a comfort your first letter was to me. I had been feeling that I was alone, and that there was no one like me, so hard and so unreconciled, I was ready to give up all hope, when your letter came. I shall always believe that the good Lord directed your pen, for it reached my case, and I felt there was one, at least, in the world whom I could call sister, only I do not think you ever get as low as I have been.

I will not say anything more about this old self, but tell you how much I enjoyed Elder Keene's visit to us. They sent for me to come down to brother Curtis', and I stayed the whole time Elder Keene was there. His talk was good preaching all the time. Then we went to Bowdoinham, and had a good conference and meeting. I am so glad you have such good preaching all the time. When I am hearing the gospel proclaimed, as I heard it that Sunday (and we do always hear it when we have preaching at all) I think that I never shall doubt again that I have known something about it. The word says, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." But this sinful heart of mine does not let me enjoy the light but a little while at a time. Still, amid all the darkness, hope springs up that in a very short time I shall be where there is no darkness at all, for the Lord will be the everlasting light, and the days of our mourning shall be ended.

APRIL 28, 1895.

DEAR SISTER:—I have just read your first letter to me with the same feeling that I had when I first read it, and it stirs me up to write to you again, and ask you if you have grown any better since then? If you have grown any better, I do not want you to write me, but if not, then I should like a letter very much.

I have been at my son's three months. It was pleasant, only there was no meeting for me to go to. There were plenty of meetings, but none for me. It is a great privilege to me to hear the gospel preached, yet I often think I have no reason to think I ever knew anything about the gospel experimentally, but at other times it has been a joyful sound to me. I hope to go to Bowdoinham in two weeks to the meeting.

Sister Attie and her mother have just gone, she said that she was writing to you. I know her letter will make my effort seem very poor, but where little is given little is required. She speaks of going to North Berwick to the yearly meeting, and wants me to go also. I enjoyed very much being there last, and would like to go again.

DEAR SISTER:—I think there is a great similarity in our feelings, and I can but say in my heart, We are sisters. I know the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, so that

none can know it save the Lord who knows all things, and he is pleased to reveal it to some; his chosen ones. He shows his children a little of the depravity of their own hearts, which often causes them to doubt and fear. This is where I have been the most of my time for over sixty years. There have been times, few and short indeed, when I have been able to look away from self to him who governs all things. Then I have a little hope, but for the most part I dwell in Doubting Castle, subject to Giant Despair, and often I have not been able to find a key to open the prison door. I think if I had the hope of the christian I should not let such little things fret me as they do. When I am with my brethren and sisters in the church I seem to lose sight of myself for a little time, for they talk about their sinful hearts, and I can witness with them, and when I hear the gospel preached I think I can witness with that. I think that I know the sound, and it is indeed a joyful sound, but while I am listening to it sometimes the devil (I suppose it must be) says to me, You must have learned it of man, and think it belongs to you. This is the way I plod along; I cannot do the things that I would. Paul came to the conclusion that with his mind he served the law of God, but with his flesh the law of sin. My dear sister, I expect we shall have this flesh to contend with just as long as we are in the body. Very soon I shall lay down this old body, being eighty-six years old last month. I have a hope, notwithstanding my vileness, that I shall be like my Savior, for I shall see him as he is. Then I shall be satisfied, and not until then.

"Although I dread death's chilling tide,
Yet still I sigh for home."

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THIS is the first of another year, are you well? Have you food and raiment? Are you contented? Can you see as well as you did? Do you see the glory in the cloud? Can you see how sinners are saved? See how all things work together for good to them who love God? Can you see the beam in your brother's eye, or the mote in your eye, or see the Lord in providence? Can you still see yourself a sinner? Do you see things different from what you once did? How is your hearing, do you hear the truth; hear the voice of God? Do you hear the joyful sound? Do you take heed how you hear? Ever try to hear and cannot, and wish you could hear better? Do you ever hear things you would rather not? Ever hear the voice of the Shepherd? Did you ever hear, "These sayings of mine?" Do you do them? Ever give more earnest heed to the things which you have heard? Ever let any of them slip? Are you "Swift to hear?" Were you ever deaf? Have your ears been "unstopped?" Are you ever "dull of hearing?" Are your feet shod? Can you "walk, and not faint?" Do you walk in paths of righteousness, walk in the light? Did you take off your worldly shoes when you came in the church? What have you on your feet now? Do they make much noise? Ever had your feet "set upon a rock?" Are you walking in Christ? Are you satisfied with the way you walk? Ever try to walk better? How many years have you been walking this way? Is your memory pretty good? Do you remember all the way you have been led in the wilderness; remember the hole of the pit from whence you have been digged; remember God? Did it trouble you? Do you remember your faults? Ever remember a brother

has aught against you? Ever forget to go to meeting? Ever forget the text? Ever say you would not forget this time, and then do it? Where is a thing when you forget it? Can you keep from forgetting? Do you want to forget some things? Can you? Do you forget the "Things which are behind?" Ever forget the Lord; forget "all his benefits?" Remember when you were born again, how you used to sing; how easy it was to go to meeting; how good the preaching sounded; remember those old days, when all things seemed as they were?

What do you know? Do you know the Lord? Do you know the truth when you hear it? Do you know how a poor sinner is saved? Do you know the joyful sound? Do you know yourself? Do you know more than you once did? Are you "wise;" know more than your neighbor? Do you know that everything called preaching is not the gospel? Do you "know the plague of your own heart;" know that in your flesh dwells no good thing? Do you know where you were when the "foundations of the earth were laid?"

Do you know "these things?" Do you do them? Are you happy? Do you "know him in whom you have believed?" Do you know you do not live right; know you ought to? Can you? Why do you not? Do you want to? Do you know you cannot in and of yourself? Do you know this knowledge is the best sign you want in some one else of the new birth, why do you not get comfort out of it yourself? Do you know there is a time to be born, and a time to die, and a time for everything between them? Do you know it was given you to know these things?

What do you believe? How do you believe? Why do you believe? Do you believe in election; believe everybody is elected? Do you believe you are elected because you believe, or do you believe you believe because you were elected? Do you believe all men have faith? Do you believe some have? Believe everything you hear? Why? Can you help believing what you do believe? Ever try to believe something else? Ever believe stronger some days than others? Ever feel that it was no trouble to believe, and then at times cannot believe to save your life? Do you believe God has the power and will to work it all right?

What do you think of Christ? Think he was a man, think God was in him, think he came to make a way passable and possible? Do you think he was just a good man; think he went about trying to do good? Think he ever tried to do anything? Do you think he did all he came to do? What do you think that was? Think he saved all he died for? Do you think he died for all, or prayed for all? What do you think Peter did to make Christ pray for him?

What do you think of Adam, do you think he was a natural man? Was he pure and holy? Think God was disappointed in him? Do you think God willed that he should sin? Do you think God willed he should not sin? Do you think God knew just what he would do before he made him? Do you think it was possible for him not to do just as God foreknew he would do? Do you think God's foreknowledge is perfect? Do you think it was possible for anything that God foreknew would be, not to be just as God foreknew it would be, and God's foreknowledge be perfect?

When do you think a sinner gets in Christ, when he is baptized, or when he is born again, or when Christ died, or when David was king, or when Noah entered

the ark, or when Abraham was called, or when Adam was in the garden, or when the foundations of the earth were laid? Do you not think you have been in him too long to ever get out of him? Think the devil can get you out, or think you can get yourself out? Do you want to? Does this make you reckless? Do you want to rock the boat? Do you want to tempt the Lord? Do you want to take your fill of sin? Do you love these things? Have you fellowship for

FRANK McGLADE?

PATASKALA, Ohio, Jan. 31, 1906.

HAMPTON, Iowa, Jan. 17, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—This cold, stormy day my mind has been running on the Scripture, on many different passages, but especially on the first verse of the twelfth chapter of Ecclesiastes: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them."

All Scripture is given of God; all the writers were inspired by the Almighty. Notice the word "inspiration" only occurs twice in the holy Scriptures: Job xxxii. 8, and 2 Tim. iii. 16. The above text was written by inspiration; all the prophets were inspired, and their writings were to a special people, to Israel only; they were the chosen people of God; he protected them, yet they transgressed his law; still our God shewed his loving-kindness and mercy toward them; in all their transgressions he never did forsake them, nevertheless he sent judgments upon them; down to the present day, through the dark ages, they have been his people. Solomon was a preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem, called of God to write, so he gave his heart to search out by wisdom all things done under heaven. He had seen all the works that are done under the sun, and called all vanity.

Now to the text. I have learned by a long experience of nearly fifty years all I know about it; only by revelation of the Spirit of God in our experience do we learn. None know Jesus except by the Holy Ghost, for Paul writes, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." He has wisdom by nature, but cannot, though he may labor, find God; so the Scripture is a dead letter to the natural man. I have heard this text taken as a subject by the Arminians several times, but have not heard any Old Baptist preach from it, so I will give my view.

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not." Dear brethren, do you remember in your experience when you sought Jesus in your prayers for mercy, when you fled to the law to justify yourselves, but it condemned every act? You were ten thousand talents in debt, but not a farthing to pay; your self-righteousness was as filthy rags, you almost gave up hope, yet you begged and plead for mercy, but felt that God would be just in sending your soul to eternal woe; then Jesus appeared unto you by revelation; that heavy burden was gone. Did you not praise him? Did you not think at that time you would never sin again? Did you not think, I will praise him all my days? Did you not think you would never experience any more trouble? You were made so happy, you loved everybody, you could forgive all your enemies. Now, dear child of God, you were a babe in Christ, you did not know anything about the warfare you would have to pass through, you had no

doubts, but you soon got into Doubting Castle and thought you were deceived; but time rolled on, Jesus appeared unto you, then you again rejoiced. Time rolled on and you became a man; age began to creep on you, you had sore trials, evil days came; then did you "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth"? That was your youthful experience; you may try to throw hope away, but you remember those days of your youth; the evil days had not come at that time, neither had the bitter years appeared, you were just learning by experience, as I have said. As you grew older the evil days and years drew nigh. Did you not get low down in the valley, come to the conclusion you never did know anything? You had become cold, did not want to see any of your brethren or attend your church meetings; you may have had so many affairs of this world, sowing to the flesh, you had left your first love.

"When thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." Dear child of God, I have traveled that road shut up in darkness, and have thought I would never try to preach again; but then again my mind goes back to the days of my youth, I remember my Creator, remember how I enjoyed those youthful days and my first experience. So the Lord appears to us, reveals to us his presence and causes us to remember him in our youthful days.

John the Baptist had doubts when he was shut up in prison, and sent two of the disciples to know if Jesus was the Christ or not. How Jesus did comfort him; he then remembered his Creator in the days of his youth.

Dear editors and readers of the SIGNS, you are well aware how the religion of this world applies this text; they apply it to the youth, children naturally, and are trying to teach them to know the Lord; we are the only people who do not teach such doctrine. Paul, with all his wisdom of this world, says his preaching was by revelation of Jesus Christ, not by man's wisdom; so, brethren, let us follow the old paths, preach Christ and him crucified, and feed the sheep and lambs of the fold. The foundation of God standeth sure, the Lord knoweth them that are his.

Yours to serve in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,

E. A. NORTON.

FRENCHTOWN, N. J., Jan. 7, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Having you in mind, and desiring to express some thoughts that have been somewhat comforting to me, I will send them to you.

In Matthew xiii. 35, we read, "I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." Then understanding of these things that have been kept secret from the foundation of the world was not given the church until the fullness of the time should come, when "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law," "but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." The books of the law are now opened, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, having prevailed in the loosening of the seals, we see the church in her travel all the way down, throughout the legal dispensation, under the covenant made with them, (Israel) in the land of Judah. The order of her government, the sacrifices and offerings, the constant watchcare of her God, and yet throughout that dispensation she was in bondage under the law. Israel as

a nation was chosen of God to set forth in types, shadows and figures that which was hidden. God was worshiped in Israel alone, and the offering that was made by the high priest for the sins of the people was for all Israel, both spiritual and natural, there was no distinction. Therefore we must conclude that the church under that dispensation was a natural body. By the sacrifice of the Son of God he delivered the church from under the curse and condemnation of the law and brought her forth a triumphant conqueror over death, hell and the grave, and presented her holy and without blame before God in love. The church being delivered from legal bondage and death, is established in her gospel order upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. With this view of the church in her exalted state under the new covenant, Paul in 1 Corinthians says, "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." And again, "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." I hope you will see what I have in mind, that as the things that have been secret from the foundation of the world are revealed we see the church from the time of Abel until the coming of the dear Redeemer a natural body, but by that one offering by which he perfected forever them that are sanctified, he raised the bride a spiritual body, and he that is a Jew outwardly cannot attain unto these heavenly things and worship God upon the ground that he has Abraham to his father, but that Jesus is the door to the sheepfold, and that nothing avails in our acceptance before God but that perfect work in which the Father says he is well pleased. None but the true spiritual Israelite can ever enter the new Jerusalem because new Jerusalem is a spiritual body.

Yours in hope of life,

O. R. KUGLER.

[WE do not understand brother Kugler in the above letter to deny that there were spiritual men and women in literal Israel under the old dispensation, but that he is speaking of the twelve tribes, as a body, in their typical relation to the coming gospel dispensation; and from those who were spiritual, true spiritual worship was offered to God, as they observed the forms of that covenant. Thus Abraham saw the day of the dear Redeemer, and was glad; and David could write out of his own spiritual experiences the very things that God's people realize of joy and sorrow now. Both the carnal among them, and the spiritual, joined alike in all the outward forms of worship, and no distinction, so far as those things were concerned, could be seen. But the time came when there was a separation between the righteous and the wicked, between those who served God and those who served him not, and this was when the true light shone, and all that worshiped God worshiped him not at Jerusalem, or in any other place that might be deemed sacred by carnal men, but in spirit and in truth alone. Brother Kugler well says that the church being delivered from legal bondage and death is established in her gospel order, but it seems right that we should say that the text quoted from the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians does not seem to us to relate to that change, but to the future resurrection, when this vile body shall be changed; and of this body it is said, "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body," &c. Paul in

this wonderful chapter is all along speaking of the resurrection of the body, and it does not seem to us that he would be likely to forsake his theme, in the text quoted by our brother, to go back and speak of the old dispensation and the new, and of the church under the two dispensations.—C.]

SILVERTON, Texas, Jan. 1, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I herewith inclose my somewhat late remittance to our dear old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and as has been my wont, I will send a few lines to the dear household of faith, subject to your approval. Although my weakness is great, I know your faith is strong in the ruling power over man, giving all glory to whom it ever belongs—to Jesus, our Head and Lawgiver. If I had the pen of a ready writer I might declare unto you the greatness of his name and his goodness to fallen man, even to those who think upon his name, and had I ten thousand tongues to employ in praise to him it would not be enough, for when I am able to look away from the things of this sinful world and catch a glimpse of that happy world beyond, I wonder that I am at times afraid to die, or why I shrink from sorrows and afflictions that abide with me here. I feel alone in many, if not all my trials, feeling they arise from my inbred corruptions, and that I must leave them behind if I should ever look for the little rest I so much need, but alas, each day I find myself the same sinner, destitute of anything good. I have heard good brethren of our faith say they did not fear Satan at all; but not so with me, I fear his wiles and treacherous practices he so often plays with much deception upon me, for what seems right at one time I see afterward to be exceedingly wrong, and wonder why I was so blind as to not be able to see at first that which appeared so wicked afterwards. I try to keep my body under subjection, as Paul testified he did, yet I feel at times I have made miserable failures, and feel I can claim no fellowship with him in this respect, however much I desire to be found according to that great pattern who declared himself to have been all things to Gentile believers, but certainly can answer to the pattern that "When I would do good, evil is present with me," and "how to perform that which is good I find not." In many things I feel I have been able to say that the great love I once had for worldly things is gone forever from me, I hope, and I am made to love the things I once hated. One hateful thing to me has ever been (since lifted therefrom, as I hope, by God's omnipotent hand) the pit of Arminianism into which I had fallen, as a bird goeth to the snare. I now never visit her pews, or seek to taste her dainties; I cannot assemble with those who with long faces deny the absolute power of God in all his dealings with weak and sinful man, for they rob God and limit the Holy One of Israel; they make him less than man, and trample his mercies under their feet.

I have by the kindness of a dear brother been reading Elder Gilbert Beebe's book of editorials, and have been made in reading his great defence of the truth (in places where it seemed his righteous soul was so vexed, his answers so well fitting them that had departed from the faith and simplicity of the gospel,) to wonder if a greater man has ever lived since the days of the apostles, who being dead yet speaketh. Dear brethren, to you who are called upon to write and contend with voice and pen against the

same enemies of truth that have risen up among God's people to-day, I will say, Be valiant, never surrender or compromise truth with error, for they are all daughters of the same mother; she (the mother) was cast out, being a bondwoman, who strove with the mother of the faithful, and laughed at the weaning of the faithful from the law, calling them "can't help its," and glorying in their own shame; yet I believe some of God's children are among them, who cannot doctrinize an experience of grace, thinking they are saved by works, but from all such his children are admonished to turn away, and to come out from among them, that they receive not of her plagues, for it is better to be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

I want to say to Elder McConnell that his letters to Elder Lefferts were very strengthening to me, as was also the letter from Elder Ker in the same number. I had thought myself too poor to try to take the SIGNS any longer, and had thought to ask a discontinuance of it until I should be better able to pay for it, but when the last number of last volume came it was filled with such good things from my Master's table that I began to think I might find some way to pay for it, and I must say in a way unlooked for I found it, for which I am glad, and will say I am trying to get a few subscribers for the SIGNS. All indorse the doctrine of the SIGNS in our little church here.

My letter is getting too lengthy. I have not written as I thought to write, and hope you may cast the mantle of charity over it, and remember unworthy me at the throne of grace.

Will brother Durand please give through the SIGNS his views on John xiv. 12? I hope he will answer at his earliest convenience. I have thought it was his disciple's works to be greater because he went to his Father; others think it was the Father's works referred to.

Your sister, if not deceived, in hope of a better life beyond the grave,

E. C. FOGERSON.

TEHUACANA, Texas, Dec. 30, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—As the time has rolled around for me to renew my subscription for the dear old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I feel I would like to have a little talk with its correspondents, if I know how to talk in a way to be of any comfort, or how to edify any one of the household of faith, but it seems that I am a slothful, dull, disobedient child, or servant, if indeed I am one at all. If I could only write as others do it appears that it would be no trouble, but it seems that if I ever had even one talent given me I have kept it laid up in a napkin, or that I have digged in the earth and hid it; but I feel I want to tell the dear brethren and sisters how much I appreciate their good letters; they are so full of sweetness to me that I seldom get one read before my cup is full and running over, and I am shedding tears of joy when I realize that there are so many that are traveling the same rough and thorny path that I am treading; it does my soul good. It may seem strange to some for one to say that he can and does rejoice when he hears another is traveling a thorny path, but when I feel it is all for Christ's sake, then I can rejoice in persecution, trials and troubles. We learn by reading the Scriptures that it is through great tribulation we enter the kingdom. I sometimes think I have a rough, rugged road to travel, but I find that if there were no troublesome times

for me I could not rejoice in peaceful, pleasant times; if there were no dark seasons we could not know anything about the light; and again, if there were no bitter, where would the sweet be? So I take it for granted that the darkness is as necessary as the light. We sometimes think that it is hard for us to go through what we do, but when we are made to think of what our Lord suffered, and what it was for, then we can rejoice and feel that our affliction is light. We are always ready to follow our Lord when we think the way is easy, but when persecutions and troubles arise then we are so apt to draw back and say it is too hard; then we are left in the dark to grope along, as it were, by ourselves, but our God is there, teaching us a very important lesson; then he is proving us, and showing us our weakness. I travel mostly in the valley of darkness, and often in the slough of despondency. I have felt for several years that I have a work to do in feeding the flock some way, at the same time I feel to be the least of my Father's house, and the most ignorant one of the family.

Brother Chick, do as your judgment dictates with this letter and all will be right with me. May the Lord bless us all with the needed blessing that he sees in his wisdom we stand in need of.

Now may the grace of God guard, guide and direct us in all truth, is the prayer of a poor old sinner.

JOSEPH H. BOZEMAN.

MORENCI, Michigan.

ELDER F. A CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—As my time has expired and I wish the good old SIGNS continued to my address, please find two dollars inclosed for its continuance another year. I also wish to say Godspeed to you and the principles advocated by you and the correspondents of the SIGNS; for if there ever was a time when the unsullied principles of doctrine as taught in the Scripture should be preached it is at the present time; hence I can truly say that so far as my limited understanding is capable of judging, the old SIGNS in the last years has not deviated from the platform laid down by our fathers in 1832. This platform was inaugurated by such men as Elders Trott, Healy, Barton and Beebe, men that have borne the burden and heat of the day. They were men that made no compromise with the unfruitful works of darkness, and to these things let us take heed. Indeed, dear brother Chick, I have never heard the doctrine of the sovereignty of God too highly extolled. He quickeneth whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth. The children of the bondwoman shall not be heirs with the children of the freewoman. Why? Because the children of the bondwoman were of the flesh, while the children of the freewoman were by promise. Now all the elect, children of God, together with their elect Head, were represented in Isaac, for in Isaac shall thy seed be called. Now if we be Christ's, then are we Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise; therefore continue in these things, taking the oversight of the good old SIGNS, and of the churches over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseer. May our God enable you, together with all the correspondents of the SIGNS, to be instant in season, out of season, to reprove and rebuke with all long-suffering and doctrine, taking the oversight of the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. I pray God that he will so order events that the old SIGNS may continue to circulate with messages of comfort to the

weak, the halt and the lame, throughout the length and breadth of the land, for to me it is a great comfort. The editorials and the many good letters make me remember the language of Solomon: As iron sharpeneth iron, so does the countenance of a man his friend.

My mother is yet living with me; she is in her eighty-ninth year, and quite well.

Do with this as your judgment may dictate.

T. J. WYMAN.

BLUE SPRINGS, Mo., Dec. 18, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—You will see by the inclosed subscriptions that I am still joined with the old Ethiopian (our colored brother), but I feel that I am not capable, as was Philip, to commence "at the same Scripture, and preach unto him Jesus," but I feel that he is far more able to teach or preach to me than I to him. Be that as it may, I trust we have both been under the instruction of the same wise Teacher, who has all power both in heaven and earth, and who is able to keep us by his power and love; to his name be all the praise and glory.

Now, dear brother, I have not written this for publication, as I know of the many who are so much better able to occupy the space than I, and I do look forward each time to the coming of the SIGNS, and enjoy each article to the utmost, and while the writers may be more able to defend the truth, they cannot beat me believing it, as I understand it as published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have seen several other publications under the head of Primitive Baptist that do not come up in my mind to the SIGNS. I have seen two pages at a time with not a word of Jesus mentioned, and have turned with sorrow from them, and as I read the SIGNS I am comforted that this is not the case there. I have been a subscriber for over a half century, and I am happy to say it contains the same sentiments that it did from the beginning. I am sorry to hear a brother say that he is not able to take the SIGNS, when to me I often feel that one number is well worth double the price of the subscription. May you be spared to thus comfort the humble poor.

I will subscribe myself the same old sinner, saved by grace if saved at all.

Your brother,

THURSTON KNIGHT.

NORTH YAKIMA, Wash., Dec. 27, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have been thinking of you for some time, in fact ever since I read your letter to brother Coulter, in the December 15th SIGNS, and wishing, if I could, to say a word of appreciation and also of encouragement in regard to it. I had been in darkness of mind so long that it seemed my feet had well nigh slipped, for, seeing so much evil within, I had concluded that instead of being as I had hoped, a child of God, I was a devil in sheep's clothing, walking in a hypocritical profession of religion, deceiving those whom I was well assured were jewels of the Master. Even now, when faith is renewed and hope revived a little, I fear that I will one day perish by the "hand of Saul;" it is this carnal, devilish nature of mine that causes me so much trouble, forcing the cry from my heart to God, to "restore unto me the joy of thy salvation."

But I started out to tell you how your letter revived my drooping spirit and gave me renewed courage to press on toward the mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. In telling you this I hope it will have a tendency

to strengthen your hands in your arduous work as associate editor of the SIGNS, and it is my prayer to God that you and also our beloved brother Chick may in the new year have much of the felt presence of the Master to guide you into all truth, and in all your labors as editors may you both be governed by no spirit but that of the King of kings.

From one who is less than the least, but a well wisher for the prosperity of beloved Zion, W. J. HESS.

WAVERLY, Pa.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—In Paul's epistle to the Galatians, fourth chapter, fourth verse, the following testimony is recorded: "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." In this his first appearing he came with the burden of the sins of his church or people, a sin-bearer. In his second appearing he is revealed to his church as the Savior, not bearing their sins as a sin-bearer, but that he has put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and now there is a revelation to his church of what he is: the Savior, and the work that he has accomplished, saved his people from their sins. This to my mind is the second appearing, beginning with the gospel dispensation and continuing to the end. In the legal dispensation there were Sabbath days; in the gospel there is one spiritual Sabbath, one day, the last day; not a day of twenty-four hours, but beginning with the gospel dispensation and continuing to the end of the same, which will be the end of time; the last saint then will be in the likeness of his Savior and Redeemer, and will be satisfied eternally.

One more thought and I will stop. The resurrection of the dead, with all that are living, is in the future in a sense, and will be while there is one saved sinner on the earth; but with those that are gone it is not, for there is no future in eternity, and I do not enjoy the traditional expression, waiting for the resurrection morn, concerning the dead, though I will not dispute with my brethren over it.

Now, dear brethren, I will say that I am the same poor, miserable "can't help it," and I can't help it, if I could I would; and if "can't help it" is not a principle of truth found in every christian experience and taught in the Scriptures, I am certainly without a christian experience or any knowledge of the Scriptures spiritually.

Farewell for now. A poor sinner, if saved, saved by grace, first, last and eternally. D. M. VAIL.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Dec. 18, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—It would do me more good to send you new subscribers than to notify you to discontinue any, for the SIGNS is so good and sound. Elder Ker's letter to our esteemed brother Coulter I was glad to read, it was good and instructive to a hungry soul, one that feels cast down, living in doubts and fears, wandering in the dark, feeling at times without hope and without God in the world. My prayer is, if deceived, God undeceive me. I love to hear and read the good sermons preached in the stand and published in the dear old SIGNS. It is the doctrine I indorse and believe with all my heart and soul, and I have been made to rejoice and give God all the praise. I know our fleshly mind cannot please God, as it is of the world, and God accepts no man's person in their worship, as we are told we have to become as little children, for of such is the kingdom of heaven; have got to be as dependent as a little child, for spiritual things, as it is the work of Christ's righteousness and not the works of the law, as it is impossible to please God in man's free will worship. These are my thoughts and belief, will you accept them?

O. B. HICKERSON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1906.

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EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
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1 TIMOTHY IV. 12; 1 CORINTHIANS XVI. 11; TITUS II. 15.

SEVERAL questions have been lately called to our notice by different brethren, with requests that we reply to them through the SIGNS. We feel like calling attention to them at this time. First, the expressions of Paul recorded in 1 Tim. iv. 12, in 1 Cor. xvi. 11, and in Titus ii. 15: "Let no man despise thy youth." "Let no man therefore despise him." "Let no man despise thee." What does Paul mean by these exhortations? The word "despise" simply signifies to look down upon, to think lightly of. Let no man think lightly of thee, seems to us to be the special signification of this word in these places. But is it not plainly said in the word that men will and do despise the followers of the Lamb, and the doctrine which they love, and the order which they maintain in the worship of God? Most certainly it is so, therefore Paul in these three places does not mean anything contrary to this. He does not tell Timothy or Titus to avoid being despised by those who have no place for the word. To accomplish this would be to cease believing and preaching the word, and to adopt the theories which glorify the wisdom of men. Yet there is a sense in which those who preach the gospel are to have a good report of those who are without. Even the servants of God may so live as to hold the good opinion of all men, because of their truthfulness, honesty, steadfastness, faithfulness, sobriety, uprightness, and the evident sincerity which is in them, and which appears even to men of corrupt minds, destitute of godliness. When the servants of God so live among men they will command respect and esteem, even though the faith which they hold is abhorrent to those who know them. In this sense the ministers of the cross are reminded by these exhortations to so live that there shall be no room to despise them. If they preach one thing and practice another they ought to be despised, and they will be despised even by men of the world. One of the things which will always be in the mind of a God-fearing man or woman will be, Do I so conduct myself that my neighbors shall have no room to say in their hearts as they see me, There is one who professes what he does not practice? If any one thinks such a thing as this of any minister, in his mind he despises that minister, and what that minister shall say in defense of the doctrine of God our Savior will have no effect upon him. We recall hearing it said years ago, of a minister whom we knew well, one who cared not for the truth, but rather believed the contrary, I do not believe what he preaches, but he believes it sincerely, and he lives out his profession among his neighbors. This man did not despise that minister. If these right things command the respect of men of the world, how much more they exalt such an one in the love and esteem of all who love God. As ministers, whether young or old, walk in the house of God humbly, carefully, soberly, gently,

with truthfulness and uprightness toward all men, they are esteemed. The words of such an one, as he preaches the word may not be eloquent as the world judges eloquence, but his brethren will hang upon his words as the words of one who lives in the presence of God, and in whom the life of the meek and lowly One is made manifest. His simple words will have weight when the eloquence of an Apollos will pass by as the idle breeze, if the daily life of that man be not such as we have named above. To this end Paul said to Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine." In other words, Be careful of your words, and of all your manner of life before men, and take heed that you preach only what the word of God declares. When he said to Timothy, "Let no man despise thy youth," he would say to him, Behave soberly, thoughtfully and humbly, among your brethren. We have known young men, and for that matter older men also, whose lightness and flippancy disgusted those with whom they met, and destroyed all the weight of their ministry; but thank God we have also known, even young men, those whose whole demeanor commended them to all with whom they met. It seems to us that if one be called really to the work of the ministry, one of the marks of that calling will be, such a sense of the weight and importance of the work as will make him sober and thoughtful, and swift to hear, and slow to speak. When the Master's business presses upon any one he will feel that it is weighty, and he cannot feel to follow vanity and folly. If we feel as did Elijah when he said, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand," we shall not be likely to indulge in lightness and foolishness, either of speech or manner. The burden of the word of the Lord sets one apart from all these vain things, and ministers who show that they are really so separated will not be despised, whether they be young or old. Perhaps we all need to be reminded of these things more than we are from day to day.

C.

AMOS VI. 1.

"WOE to them that are at ease in Zion."

Many of the Lord's dear children have been troubled because of a wrong interpretation of this language. Satan has been, and is always, ready to disturb those who are redeemed from his dominion by taking the very Scriptures and presenting them under a false color. Thus he tempted the dear Redeemer, and thus he has distressed many by a false presentation of these words, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." But as it was when he tempted the dear Redeemer, so in this instance also he is careful to omit that which shows the true meaning of the word. Let us read on after these words for a still further description of this character. "And trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nation, to whom the house of Israel came." In verses three to six inclusive it is said, "That put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near; that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; that chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music, like David; that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments; BUT THEY ARE NOT GRIEVED FOR THE AFFLICTION OF JOSEPH." They that then were at ease in Zion were their so-called leaders, their shepherds who cared

not for the flock nor for all their afflictions, but rather how they might live luxuriously, and who trusted not in God, but in human defenses. These were they who then were at ease in Zion, when they should have mourned in sackcloth for the affliction of Joseph. These cared not, either for the sins or for the chastisements of Israel, for Joseph here is used for the whole people of Israel. Zion then was literally the name of one of the highest hills in Jerusalem, and the whole city was sometimes called by that name. In the text it is used to present the nation and polity of Israel; it is a type of the spiritual kingdom of God under the gospel dispensation.

It is manifest that the children of God are not at ease in Zion when the blessed Lord is pleased to give them a time of refreshing and peace. When the dear Savior said to his disciples, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile," they were not then at ease in Zion. When to some it was given to behold his glory in the holy mount as he was transfigured before them, they were not then at ease in Zion. When David could sing with rejoicing the goodness of the Lord, he was not at ease in Zion, and when now to some trembling, doubting, fearing one, who knows his sinfulness and his weakness there is given an assurance in the Lord for a season, and in this assurance he can rest, and is at peace, this is not to be at ease in Zion. Sometimes the Lord's dear people are taken specially near to himself in the experience of their souls, so that they know no anxiety, for a little time at least, and have no fear or questioning in their hearts, but this is not to be at ease in Zion. The dear Lord never brings his people into any state of blessing from his word and Spirit upon whom any woe is pronounced. At the time when these words were written by the prophet there were many who were troubled and afflicted under the oppression of these who were at ease, (who were feeding themselves and not the flock) yet the afflicted trusted and rested in God, and looked to him for deliverance; these were not at ease in Zion. When the Lord showed to Elijah in his trouble that he was not alone, but that seven thousand men in Israel beside himself had not bowed the knee to Baal, no doubt he was glad and comforted, but in this he was not at ease, in the sense of the text. There was no woe upon him for his gladness; there is no woe upon any one who rests upon God, and is confident in him; this is not to be at ease in Zion.

If there be any to-day who are careless of the privileges of the Lord's house, who neglect their meetings, who are much more concerned with the cares or pleasures of this life than for the welfare of their brethren, who do not think enough of the blessed Lord who has paid so great a price to redeem them, to seek to do, first of all, his will, and who are not troubled about their coldness, or about the troubles and trials of their kindred in the Lord, then to these belong the words of the text, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." These are very heart-searching words. Do we indeed seek our own will rather than the will of God? Do we insist upon our own ease, rather than the help that we may render to our suffering kindred? Do we feel satisfied to feast while they fast? Are we content to go on seeking our own things, and not the things of others? Then indeed we may well dread these awful words lest they belong to us. But the timid ones who come to find shelter in the arms of a loving Father, and to whom he is pleased

to give peace and rest, these words do not belong. To all such ones it is right to say, Let not Satan rob you of your rest by a false use of these words.

C.

1 JOHN III. 2.

It is said in the word, "We shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." It has been asked, In what respect shall we be like him? Some things seem plain in this matter. The redeemed shall not be like him whom they worship, with respect to his omnipotence, omnipresence and omniscience. The worship of God consists in ascribing to him the attributes which belong to him, and to ascribe these same things to a creature is to worship the creature. Our God is eternal, self-existent and unchangeable, and these things must be forever his alone; therefore we shall not be like him in any of these things. The Scriptures keep in view one thing when they speak of the redemption of men: it is redemption from sin and its curse, unto holiness and its attendant blessings. When this redemption is experimentally completed then will be perfectly fulfilled the word of the Lord in us, "Be ye holy; for I am holy." It is then with respect to his perfect holiness that we shall be like him, seeing him as he is; and our possession of holiness is because of his gift to us. While our God is in and of himself altogether holy, holiness is imparted to the redeemed, but the omnipotence, omnipresence and omniscience of Jehovah can never be imparted to any creature. Could this be so indeed, then the creature would cease to be a creature, and become an object of worship. Redemption unto God, then, signifies salvation from sin and death, and the gift of righteousness and eternal life, and being like him is to have the Spirit of Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, living in us and manifesting itself in all that we think, say or do. In so far as that Spirit reigns in his people here and now they are like him, but their hope is to be altogether like him in righteousness and all true holiness. This all who are born of God long and hope for, and when this desire is obtained, then indeed shall they be satisfied with his likeness.

C.

PSALMS CL. 4.

"Praise him with stringed instruments and organs."

Will Elder Ker give his views upon the subject of having organs in gospel churches?

DONALD McKAY.

Scotsville, Nova Scotia.

We quote the above Scripture as a basis of such remarks as we may be enabled to make concerning the request of brother McKay. We want to be sincere in all that we do, and withhold nothing that we may have from those who want to know the truth and order of God's house.

Doubtless, in the minds of some, the text above mentioned would establish their idea of having musical instruments in the house of God. Such was the case in olden times, therefore such Scripture is recorded. But the house of God that had instruments of music in it was the house which was made "a den of thieves" by those who worshiped with such things, but knew nothing of worship in spirit and in truth. That people could not sing one of the Lord's songs in a strange land, neither could they use their harps outside of their own country, because their worship was to be performed there.

When God commanded Moses to make the tabernacle in the wilderness, he told him to make all things according to the pattern shown him in the mount. That

tabernacle was constructed in sections, convenient for the time that then was; it was put up and taken down as the Lord commanded; its stakes were often removed and its cords often broken. That tabernacle was not the spiritual house of God, but "a worldly sanctuary." It had its own peculiar furniture, and in it God was worshiped in the burning of incense; in it the blood of beasts was offered by the high priest, once a year, for the sins of Israel. After this, David desired to build an house for the Lord, but could not because he was a man of war, but Solomon, David's son, built an house to the Lord. The house was magnificent; that temple, its furniture and instruments of music all filled their place as shadows of better things to come. Therefore that house was not the spiritual house of God, neither was the worship in it spiritual. The temple Solomon built was the pride of Israel, but the time came when they went into captivity, and their beautiful house with all its instruments of music was destroyed; thus was shown that that house, like the tabernacle in the wilderness, was not to abide; it was rebuilt, however, by Zerubbabel, but at last was destroyed in the final destruction of Jerusalem, never to be rebuilt again, because in Christ all types and shadows are fulfilled. And *now* instead of the tabernacle Moses made, or the house Solomon built, or the house rebuilt by Zerubbabel, we have the spiritual house of God, built by our antitypical Solomon and Zerubbabel, the Lord Jesus Christ, upon the rock (revelation), "and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Our High Priest does not enter into the tabernacle, made with hands, once a year to offer for our sins, but he has entered heaven itself, not with the blood of goats and calves, which could never take away sin, but by his own blood, "having obtained eternal redemption for us."

The spiritual house of God is not built of such material as was used by Moses and Solomon, which required the work of men's hands, but it is built of "lively stones," (men and women) "for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

As the temple, under the law, was a figure, it was right and according to that law to have musical instruments in the *church* which *then* was. But "the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law." The *law* therefore of *this* dispensation demands no such things as were commanded and observed under the old covenant.

The text at the head of this article was in place, literally, as a commandment of the old covenant. The worship of God in the temple was not complete without instruments of music, but let us remember that all such things were destroyed with the temple in the destruction of Jerusalem.

The church of God *now* would be as justifiable in building altars and offering sacrifices to God, or in establishing a priesthood of men, or in burning incense, or in adopting any other form or ceremony of the old covenant, as it would be to put into service stringed instruments and organs, and call them a part of our worship or a *help* in *any* sense of the word.

The harmonious strains of musical instruments in the temple, under the old covenant, were only a figure of the prayers, and praises of thanksgiving of the spiritual stones. These all sing the same song in perfect harmony of voices, saying, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

The nations round about could not enter into the worship with Israel under the law, neither can the unregenerate now enter into the spiritual worship of God, or learn the *new* song.

Some say the children of Old Baptist parents go elsewhere to preaching because there is nothing to attract them to Old Baptist meetings, and to counteract this let us have organs in our churches and train our children to sing; this will make it interesting for them. This idea that organs in our churches would attract our children and young people, and thereby give us larger congregations and help to increase our membership, is but a notion of the natural mind; this is conclusive, since everything pertaining to it is *natural.* If this be the kind of interest it requires to bring them in, would it not be better for the church to have them remain outside? In the training and culture of our children, we should take them with us to meeting, beginning in their infancy and continue to take them while they are under our care. This cannot make them the children of God or cause them to love his doctrine, but it will cause them to *respect* the house of God and also the religion of their parents. If a child, even though grown to manhood or womanhood, respects its parents as it should, it will go occasionally to hear the doctrine they love, even though for the child there is nothing of interest in it. In this, we are glad to say, we speak from experience as well as from observation.

If Christ, the truth, the life and the way, who is preached, is not the attraction which brings men and women into the church membership, it is better off without them. Is God as able now to add to the church such as shall be saved, as he was in the days of the apostles? If so, why not trust in him? believing that every plant must be planted by him, and that he waters them every moment lest any hurt them. Surely every plant that he "hath *not* planted, shall be rooted up." Do, brethren, let us be consistent, and not attempt to remove the ancient landmarks, but let us "ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein." O the pride of the heart of man to desire large congregations to preach to; if we should think for a moment we would *know* that unless the Lord brings them in *prepared* to hear, we had as well talk to as many trees in the forest.

Naomi was a beautiful figure of the church, and Ruth was a perfect figure of all who are brought to love the church of God. Naomi told Ruth that there was nothing to be gained in following her, she was poor, had no sons, was a widow empty and desolate, she had no stringed instruments or organs to attract her, and that if she followed her she could only expect poverty and affliction. This did not turn Ruth away, but instead, her *devotion* for Naomi caused her to say, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Thus is the work of God made manifest. (Moses was likewise blessed: he was made to forsake all the riches and advantages of Egypt to suffer affliction with the people of God.) Such was not the case with Orpah, she did not follow Naomi when she learned there was no attraction, nothing to be gained by going with her; no stringed instruments, no organs, no trained choirs where she could make a display of her knowledge and ability. We rather think Naomi was better off without her; what do you think? If you

agree with us, then you must also acknowledge that the church of God is better off without those who are brought in by the attraction of the organ.

May the dear Lord enable us to look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities; here we shall see a *quiet* habitation, here we shall see our High Priest, his table spread with his flesh and his blood. Under the law, if a man ate of the flesh of the sinoffering or drank of its blood, that man should be put to death, but *now* Jesus, the great sinoffering, says, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." When we look upon Zion we do not see, or hear the sound of the organ or stringed instruments; the attraction there is the "glorious Lord," who is "unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, [creature works] neither shall gallant ship [worldly attraction] pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our King; he will save us."

The apostles entered into these glorious and spiritual things, hence we find no example or authority in the New Testament for instrumental music in the church of God. Without a "thus saith the Lord," we could as well adopt any other notion or idea of man and establish it in the house of God, as we could the organ.

If we abide in the apostles' fellowship we must abide also in their doctrine and practice; to forfeit one means to forfeit *all*. Therefore if the church should institute the organ, sooner or later it would be swallowed up with error; then wherein would we differ from the nations round about?

Our heritage here is affliction, poverty, persecution, hated of all men for Christ's sake, a little flock, our name cast out as evil, not reckoned among the nations of the earth, a peculiar people, doubts, fears, temptations. But the promise is that we shall at last come off more than conquerors, through him that loved us and gave himself for us.

If we could, by changing the order of the apostolic church, become like other people, where would we find evidence that we are the church of God, children of the heavenly King?

In our thoughts of trying to steady the ark, let us not forget the experience of Uzzah, who met death in attempting to *help* the Lord. May the Lord enable us to worship him in spirit and in truth, and to be satisfied with the goodness of his house.

We are glad to say that in our eastern associations the subject of having an organ has not been mentioned by any *church*. May God keep us in the faith, and show others who have been overtaken in the fault, their error.

The church is not to sing *now* "with stringed instruments and organs," but with the spirit and with the understanding also. K.

SMALL HYMN BOOKS.

We have printed another edition of the small type Hymn Book, and are now prepared to fill orders for the same at the following rates: Cloth Binding, per copy, 75 cents, per dozen, $6.00; Imitation Morocco, full gilt, $1.75; First Quality Turkey Morocco, full gilt, $2.75.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Martin D. Fisher, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. M. M. Rounsavell, N. Y., $3.00; Amy Shaddick, Pa., $1.00; Laura M. Baird, Ky., $1.00.—Total, $6.00.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church called Providence, situated in Bedford County, Pa., October 6th, 7th and 8th, 1905, to the several churches of which it is composed sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Again it becomes our duty to send you our annual communication called a Circular Letter, and in so doing we call your attention to the subject of the atonement.

The atonement applies to sin or wrong doing. Sin is a violation of law, divine or human. To every transgression of law there is a penalty. The law of God is so perfect that every sin must be atoned for or receive its just penalty. God is holy; he will never pardon the least sin unless it is atoned for. To do this the broken law must be fulfilled, and perfect obedience must be rendered; this no sinner can do. Sin entails guilt, condemnation and death, therefore the apostle said the whole world is guilty before God, because all have sinned, and the wages of sin is death. The gift of God is eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, therefore the mercy and grace of God only can save sinners, yet notwithstanding all this, men in the flesh depend on their good works for salvation. Good works to have merit must necessarily be good, indeed perfect, and this perfect work none but Jesus could accomplish. This perfect work he did accomplish when he offered himself up to God without spot or blemish or any such thing, therefore there is no condemnation to those whose sins have been atoned for. We are told that he did by the one offering forever perfect them that are sanctified.

J. E. GORE, Moderator.

J. C. MELLOTT, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mary Jane Light Benner, wife of Henry F. Benner, and daughter of John and Louvenia Light, was born in Darke Co., Ohio, Feb. 17th, 1870, died Jan. 22nd, 1906, aged 35 years, 11 months and 5 days. Matie, as she was commonly known, was one whom to know was to love and respect, possessing a sweet, mild, gentle disposition, ever appearing the same under all circumstances, she won the esteem of all who made her acquaintance. Her life was as pure, spotless, noble and faultless as is possible in this world. This exemplary life surrounded her with a very large circle of near and dear friends. She was a treasure in the household of her father's home, cheerfully ministering to the comfort and welfare of all. With true daughterly devotion she, with her two sisters, tenderly cared for their invalid mother until the Master called her from time to eternity. Since then she has cheerfully performed her part in caring for the home and comforting her father. After the loss of their mother, Matie with her two sisters urgently requested the Baptists, who had for years been holding their monthly meetings at their home, not to desert their home, but to remember their father in his loneliness, assuring them that they would care for the church as their mother had done, and for four years they have most faithfully fulfilled their promise. About seven weeks prior to her death, Matie was married to Henry F. Benner. She and her husband were planning for the future, expecting to move to their own home on the 24th of January, but these plans were thwarted by the angel of death. She was prostrated by a severe attack of peritonitis, and after a few days of terrible suffering her spirit was released and the young husband left desolate. Matie had never made a public profession of religion, but the fruit of her life was ample proof of the tree; such fruit does not grow upon thorns or thistles. Her friends feel assured that she has entered into everlasting peace. She leaves a husband, a father, two sisters, two brothers and a large circle of relatives and friends who grieve over their irreparable loss.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Frank McGlade, of Pataskala, Ohio, text, Eccl. xii. 6: "Or ever the silver cord be loosed." After which the remains were buried beside her mother, in the new cemetery at Rosehill, Ohio.

JOHN P. LIGHT.

FT. RECOVERY, Ohio.

DEATH has again entered our home and taken from us another one of our darlings; this time our oldest child, **Etta L. Fetter,** who died of scarlet fever on Jan. 25th, 1906, aged 9 years, 4 months and 20 days. We are left for some purpose known only to the Almighty, to doubt and wonder in these low grounds of sorrow. Three years ago we were called upon to

part with our youngest daughter, a bright child of three years, and we thought then that we could not live if we had to part with another, but the Lord has taught us through a bitter lesson that he is God and beside him there is no other. Our darling was a serious-minded child, and we have had great fellowship for her. She was doubly dear to us, for we have been made to feel that in her the Lord dwelt, and had begun a good work, and though very young in years had revealed unto her his covenant of grace, for even babes can learn that story, and indeed babes are the only ones that ever do learn it. But now the Lord has taken her unto himself, and we hope we may be able to say, knowing that he is too wise to err, too good to be unkind, It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Elder Durand spoke a few words of comfort to us, and we laid her to rest by the side of her little sister in River View Cemetery, Trenton, N. J.

Pray for us that we may be given to see that it is for our good, that we may realize that He is just in all his ways. We need your prayers.

Her sorrowing father and mother,

MR. AND MRS. CASPER G. FETTER.

TRENTON, N. J., Feb. 11, 1906.

MY mother, **Mrs. E. S. Casey,** was born Dec. 31st, 1820, and died Dec. 3rd, 1904, aged 83 years, 11 months and 3 days. Mother was born in Tennessee, and was the daughter of James Wilkins. She with her parents emigrated to Arkansas when she was fourteen or fifteen years old. She and my father, Elder E. S. Casey, were married in December, 1839. As the family record was burned in father's house, I do not remember the exact date. She professed a hope in Christ about the year 1857, and united with Enon Church of Regular Primitive Baptists and was baptized by my father, it being her request, being the first person he ever baptized. She lived a devoted christian life, undergoing many hardships and trials, making any sacrifice of worldly things for the comfort and welfare of others; always doing all in her power to arrange for father to go and discharge his duty as a minister of the gospel. They were among the first settlers in Marion Co., Ark. They endured many trials and hardships, which she always met with christian fortitude, meekness and patience, entertaining many of the brethren, sisters and friends, and it was always a pleasure to her and father to have the brethren and sisters visit them. After father's death she lived with her children, Jesse, John and myself, and one granddaughter, Mary Jane Langwell. She died at my house in the full triumph of a living faith, being ready and anxious to leave this sinful world and be at rest in the realms of eternal bliss, but wished to patiently endure all the trials and sufferings which were in store for her.

The weather was so bad we could not get any of our ministers to attend her funeral. The unworthy writer and son tried to speak a few words, and brother Isam Casey offered prayer. I cannot find language to express the many virtues and christian example of our mother. WM. J. CASEY.

LEAD HILL, Ark., Feb. 5, 1906.

Mr. Elza Barb, who in the providence of God was removed from earth Jan. 1st, 1906, was born Sept. 1st, 1845; was married Sept. 10th, 1865, to Miss Nancy Musgrave, which proved to be a happy union. Her dear old father, mother, father-in-law and his wife were all members of the Indian Creek Church (in Redstone Association). There was not a member in that church who took greater interest in entertaining and helping the brethren than did Elza Barb; he was a lover of the truth, and believed in salvation by grace, and grace alone, and enjoyed preaching. He was greatly afflicted for several months before his death, and was a great sufferer with something like consumption, yet he bore it all with patience. I talked with him some weeks before his death, and he said he would like to be a better man, and that he feared he was not what he would like to be. I asked him (as I had talked with him on former occasions) if he still felt that he had a hope in Christ. He said, "It is so small." I asked him what he would take for that little hope. He said it was worth more to him than this whole world, and that it was his only comfort.

I was called to attend the funeral on Wednesday, January 3rd, which I did, and tried to talk on the occasion in the presence of a large audience; after which his remains were laid to rest in the old family cemetery, there to await the morning of the resurrection. He leaves a wife, four sons and a host of friends and relatives to mourn their loss. May the God of all grace keep and sustain them.

S. A. CLEAVENGER.

BUCKHANNON, W. Va., Jan. 7, 1906.

Mrs. Martha E. Smith died at the residence of her husband, Mr. Will Smith, near Delmar, Sussex Co., Delaware, Dec. 14th, 1905. Her disease was consumption, of which she was sick about four months. Her age was 37 years, 7 months and 10 days. She leaves a husband, five children, her mother, four sisters and two brothers to mourn, but not as those who are without hope. She never united with the church, but professed a hope in the mercy of a compassionate Savior shortly before her death. In a brief conversation I had with her a month or so before she was called away, she gave me very satisfactory evidence that to her, dying was but going home,

May God minister to the bereaved ones the abundant consolations of the gospel of his grace.

The writer tried to comfort them at the funeral on the 16th with the precious promises of the word of God. A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., February, 1906.

POETRY.

THEY SHALL NEVER PERISH.

OUT in the wilderness watching his sheep,
See the good Shepherd, he thinks not of sleep;
He that redeemed them will not let them go,
His piercing eye every wild beast doth know:
His chosen sheep, thrice blessed sheep,
In the lone wilderness watching his sheep.

From the safe fold one hath stolen away
In its wild frolic, fair glows the broad way;
But He is following, silent and swift,
Lo, it has fallen, he stoops to uplift:
Seeking his sheep, poor, panting sheep,
On his strong shoulder he brings back his sheep.

Safe in his heart he is keeping his sheep,
They are so foolish, o'er baubles they weep;
He is forgiving the sins they have done,
Yes, and are doing, he knows them, each one:
Cleansing his sheep, thrice blessed sheep,
Saved by his blood, and forever his sheep.

MRS. J. STREET.

BRANTFORD, Ont.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER W. A. Thompson has changed his address from Springfield, Ill., to Blackwell, Oklahoma, Route 5, where he desires his correspondents to address him and Old School Baptists and friends to call on him.

INFORMATION WANTED.

ELDER L. H. Hardy, of Reidsville, N. C., would like to have the name of the brother at Touchet, Wash., who wrote him a letter and omitted to sign his name, as he wishes to write to him.

MEETINGS.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 74. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1906. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ZEPHANIAH III. 12.

"I WILL also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord."

Notwithstanding the fact that Israel was the chosen people of God, taken out of the world of idol worshipers, and tillers of the soil, to be led about by the hand of the Lord and instructed in the way of the Lord, and to receive their instructions directly from the Lord, "unto them were committed the oracles of God," the presence of the Lord continually overshadowed them; the Canaanites were destroyed that they might inhabit the land of Canaan, yet they were a stiff-necked and rebellious generation, and worshiped gods of their own making, entering into all manner of evil, and forgetting the God of their salvation, who had delivered them from all former troubles. It was not through ignorance that they yielded to the whisperings and temptations of their deceitful nature, and traveled in the path of disobedience, for there were true prophets of the Lord who were with them in all their wanderings, warning them continually that if they obeyed not the voice of the Lord their God they would be cut off from the immediate presence of their God by the sword, the famine and by captivity. Let us always remember that the children of Israel as a nation were chosen of God to show forth in them the power of his might, his long-suffering and patience, his enduring mercy, and also to present them as a type of his spiritual Israel. Therefore whatsoever they did manifest in their walk, whether in obedience or in disobedience, is also manifested in this gospel day, in the walk and travel of the church of Christ, we have not whereof to boast. As it was in the days of Israel as a nation, so it is to-day; there was and there is "a remnant according to the election of grace." There were those in every generation of the life of and existence of national Israel who walked in obedience to the Spirit of Christ which was in them, and not according to the dictates of their flesh. Therefore the declaration of the prophet, of the words which are the subject of this communication, apply to every age of the church, whether under the law or under the gospel. The church in any age has never been without witnesses to the constancy, loving-kindness and continual presence

of the God of Israel. As many days as the natural sun has shined upon the earth, just so many days has the Sun of Righteousness shone in the hearts of the chosen people of God, to manifest and display his glory in the earth. And those who do make manifest his glory and sovereign power are the very characters as described in the text: "an afflicted and poor people." The very first signs of a soul coming out from under the darkness of the law into the open fields of God's grace are, poverty and affliction of that soul, and this is made manifest in the midst of the church, and not to the world. The words of the Lord by the prophet are clear, distinct and positive, there can be no doubt as to their proper application: "I will also leave in the midst of thee [Israel] an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." The Lord had commanded the prophet to pronounce a convincing and direful woe upon the oppressed, filthy and polluted city for her obstinancy, her disobedience and her dreadful depravity. We want to keep in mind that this is Israel, and not the outside world, that has fallen so low and become a bloody city. The apostle Peter says: "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." Were not those false prophets Israelites? and are there not false teachers today of the church walking not after the Spirit but after the flesh? Why do we go out into the world to find that which is so plainly within our own boundaries and in our own deceitful hearts? The Scriptures are the testimony of Christ and his church, and in that church (in time) we can find every element that is found in the world. Hophni and Phinehas were sons of Eli the priest, and according to nature would succeed him in his priestly office, but God removed them because of their lewdness, and raised up Samuel unto Eli.

"I will also leave in the midst of thee." When Jerusalem was about to be overthrown and her inhabitants carried captive into Babylon, there was by the word of the Lord a man in the city "clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side; and the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof." Judah at that time was at the lowest ebb of her adversity, and notwithstanding the woes which had been pronounced upon her, yet in her direst straits the Lord remembered her in love, and so left in the midst of her "an afflicted and poor people," that should "trust in the name of the Lord." How wonderful is the God of our salvation! Wheresoever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is security. The angel of the Lord gave the promise to Abraham that Sodom should not be destroyed by fire from heaven if there were ten righteous found within the city. But the moment all the righteous were delivered out of the city, then was the city destroyed. The question arises in our mind, Why does the world go on in its wickedness generation after generation? We are answered from the cloud of witnesses by the voice of Wisdom, There are left in the midst of it an afflicted and poor people, who trust in the name of the Lord: in other words, there are yet righteous men in the city. The army of Gideon was reduced to three

hundred men (by command of the Lord) to appear before the vast army of Philistines, but that little handful manifested their faithfulness and their trust in their manner of their taking the water from the brook to drink. The Lord declared by his servant, the psalmist, "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this."

"And they shall trust in the name of the Lord." It is not a light thing to trust in the name of the Lord, such a consummation is never brought about by any influence upon the natural senses, they are influenced and made subservient to surrounding circumstances, and things which are seen; but the invisible things of God's kingdom take root in the heart, springing up and making manifest from within. We learn to trust in Jesus through the knowledge of him, and love for him, and the knowledge and love come to us by revelation of him through the Spirit. Our whole experience of grace is a revelation of the work of the Spirit within us, which is Jesus our hope of glory, and in him we trust. All of God's dealings with us lead to trustfulness on our part, because his judgments go hand in hand with his mercies and his loving-kindnesses, because we follow him, going where he went. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and to be a true follower we must necessarily partake of the same. If in a small measure we enter into his sufferings, we have fellowship with him, and with the Father through him. Having been redeemed with his blood and raised to newness of life, (which life is his) we have access to the Father through his mediation. If we have a desire in our heart to walk in the way of holiness, and feel that we have turned from the world and all its seductions, then do we have a hope within us that God has been merciful unto us, even to our unrighteousness. If we feel that we have been deceived in what we had hoped was the work of grace in our hearts, then may we be sure that that work is going on within us, for if it were not, we would have neither doubt or fear. It is our trust in the Lord, and our love for him, that causes us to walk softly and to keep silence before him. If we cry in the desert for water, and there is none, we will ere long discover that the Lord hath caused our emptiness, that he hath created our need, that he hath indited our prayer, that he will hear our cry, and supply all our wants, and we will learn the oft repeated lesson that he is our very present help. This is the people who trust in the name of the Lord and call upon their God.

May we ever remember, as long as the world stands the promise of God will be fulfilled, "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord."

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., Feb. 12, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I send you the written experience of my dear sister in the flesh, Mrs. E. J. Grove, who lives in Knox Co., Mo. I was over there last October, and as I was so deaf I could not hear her tell it, and I love to read the experiences of the saints of the household of faith, and as many of my dear kindred in Christ love to read them, I told her to write it and send it to me and let me have it printed, so we could all read it at our leisure. I think it is a bright experience. She has

had many trials and afflictions to pass through, but from her writings she seems as the lark when loosed from its wintry cage. So was her captive spirit freed from the cage of sin, and rose to heights of joy on pinions of love, and made to exclaim, O the incarnate God, my soul cleaves to him; I knew no other, I was full, my feelings, as a spring tide, overflowed its banks, and my cup ran over. The key of promise had unlocked the door of Doubting Castle. I had never heard her tell it before, and I wanted to read it myself. I presume you, or many of you, have read little epistles of love from her pen.

With love for all the household of faith, I remain your sister, but one of the least, if one at all,

BELLE FRAZEE.

BARING, Mo., Jan. 16, 1906.

MRS. BELLE FRAZEE—DEAR SISTER:—I will try to comply with your request to write what I hope to be my travels from nature to grace.

I cannot remember the time when I did not reverence the church to which our parents belonged, and wanted to be very good when I was there, or when the members would come to our father's house at meeting time, or at any time; I thought all that belonged to them were good people; I did not once think of their feeling other than perfectly safe. I felt that I was as good as anybody. You know that our parents always wished us well, and would not permit us to go in what they deemed bad company, and tried to raise us up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. I thought because we were not allowed to mingle in bad company, or go to places that they deemed improper, we were good. I knew nothing about a change of heart, or that I had to be awakened before I could understand. I thought some time perhaps I would belong to the church, but thought it rested with me when I would join. So I was in no way troubled about my state, and went on very gaily, helping our mother with the children and working at whatever my hands found to do, till in my eighteenth year I was married and started out with my husband to secure a home of our own, and to collect as much of this world's goods as would do us and our children to live comfortably and to enjoy ourselves as others do who are well to do in this world. I went at it with a will, and worked all that I could each day, and sometimes I would wish the day was longer so I could do more. A big farm and plenty of money was the stake that I had in view, besides raising my children right. I knew that people prayed to God for help, and of course thought I must ask him to help with my children. Many are the prayers I invoked in my children's behalf. I went on smoothly for about three or four years. If I had much work to do and wanted to get that done I made no preparations to go to meeting, although I went most of the time; but one summer I was particularly busy, I had not gone to meeting for two or three meetings, and it was getting towards fall, and the later it got the faster I worked, if possible. I was at home at this time, it was Sunday, my husband had gone to an aunt's that day and I was at home all alone; I began to feel lonely, and got up to get a book to read, and on looking over our small library I noticed the Bible. I took it and began to read, the more I read the more lonely I seemed to be. I laid it down and walked out, I thought I never saw things look so desolate. I felt awful, I thought of all the friends I ever had, and

it seemed to me that they had all left me. I wanted my husband to come home, I did not feel that I wanted to see any one but him; I felt that there was something I should have done that I had left undone, but I did not know what; I felt that God was every one's friend, and maybe he would help me if I asked him. I asked him to ease my mind, but afterward I felt worse than ever; I felt that I had done something wrong and he would not hear me; I got terribly in earnest. I could not pray to him any more, but could not help saying, Lord, have mercy on me. While I was standing out of doors I looked up the road and saw my husband coming home. I went to the milking pen, he came there and spoke in a cheery voice, and asked me how I had spent the day? All right, I said, but O I did not want him to know that I had had such a day. I thought it would be all-right the next morning, but O no, I felt no better. I went on about my work, but saying, Lord, have mercy on me, almost every step. I would get the Bible and read, but could find nothing to ease me. I went on in this way for a long time, hunting in the Bible to see what it did say. I did not want my husband to know that I was so distressed, and I would hide the Bible if he happened to come in while I was reading it. I could get no help, and thought there was no help for me. I wanted so much to know what I had done. I thought God would not help me, and that I was doomed to eternal torment. I got very weak and could hardly do my work, and thought my time on earth was short. I was feeling badly one evening and went to the bed and laid down to rest, but had lain but a short time when my father came in and came to me and said, "Eliza, are you sick?" I said, "I do not feel very well." He looked at me for some time, I could hardly look at him, when he said, "Can you not tell something of what the Lord has done for you?" I said, "No." I did not know it was the Lord, I thought I was the most sinful being that ever lived, and I did not want my dear father to know it. He said, "You must not work so hard," and left me. It seemed that I got worse. I was so sure I was doomed that I would tremble at the slightest noise, I thought the wicked one was after me. My husband noticed me and was much alarmed about me, and would ask me what was the matter. I told him nothing; I could not tell what was the matter, and I did not want him to know that I was so wicked. One day my mother and several of the neighbors came in; I was talking to them and trying to entertain them when Elder Jacob Castlebury came in; it seemed to me that God had sent him. I could not talk, and almost shed tears at sight of him. He sat down and was telling about a meeting that he had been to; I thought I would burst into tears. We all thought he was a godly man, and as my prayers had availed nothing, and I thought God had sent him, I asked him to pray for me. He said, "I will do it, but you must pray." I said nothing. He prayed fervently, and said very little to me afterward, but soon they all left. I felt some relieved for a time, but I soon was as bad as ever, and one night I felt that I could not live till morning. I thought I would make one more appeal to my Father in heaven. I prayed to him to let me know my fate, for I thought anything would be better than this. I lay a long time before I slept, but finally I slept, or thought I did, and I was at meeting, and they made ready to commune; I watched them closely, for I never was

so interested before; the minister brake the bread and poured the wine and handed it to the deacon, and, behold, it was Christ, I knew him as soon as I saw him. I thought, O if he would only pass it to me. He did not pass it to all, but skipped a great many and came on towards me. I was trembling so I could hardly sit still for fear he would miss me, but when he came near he passed it to me, and motioned with his head to the right of him, which was at my side; I turned and saw the most beautiful city I had ever seen; I thought he meant that that would be my home when I was done with this world, but he spoke no word. When I awoke the next morning the sun was streaming in through the kitchen window across my bed, and it looked like a stream of pure gold. I was so surprised at the brightness of it I got up immediately and looked around; O the inexpressible beauty of that morning I shall never forget, the birds sang so sweetly and my husband and two children looked so beautiful to me that I was surprised to see that this sad old world had turned around and was showing a more beautiful side than I had ever seen. I spoke of it to my husband; he said, Yes, it is a nice morning. I went to work with a will, I was so light and free; I washed my clothes and hung them out, and did a great deal of work without a thought of what I was doing. It was nearly noon before I thought of my old trouble, then I began to wonder where it was, or what had happened; I saw my clothes hanging out and wondered when I had washed. I wanted my trouble back so I could watch how I got rid of it, but I still did not know how to take it or what it was; I worked along as usual. A few weeks later I said to my husband, "Let us go to meeting to-day." He said, "All right;" he was always willing to take me whenever I would go, so we went. Elder Castlebury was pastor of the church, and he got up and told my feelings better than I could have done, and preached the first sermon I ever heard. I wondered how he knew so well how I felt. He came and spoke to me, and said, "You are looking well." I thought I would ask him how he knew my feelings or who had told him, but I never did until, I hope, I found out without asking. I had not thought of going to meeting much, but now I wanted to go every time. Some began to ask me why I did not join the church? They all looked good to me, and I loved to hear the preaching, and their talk, but felt that I could not join. I read my Bible several years before my mind was settled, and I felt as if I wanted to join the church. I mentioned it to my husband first, and behold, he objected. I said no more about it for a year perhaps, when one day in May, 1866, I think it was, I said to my husband, "What are you going to do to-day?" He said, "Nothing particular, why?" I said, "I thought I would like to go to meeting if you want to go." He said for me to get ready and we would go. This was Saturday before the first Sunday. We went, and I had no thought of offering myself to the church, but when they announced the opportunity, before I knew what I was doing I was seated in front with two or three others, and Elder Castlebury told us to tell the church our feelings and wishes. Before I began to speak somebody touched me; I looked around, and my father had left his seat and came and sat close to me; I was so excited I could talk but very little, but was received, and when we started home I happened to think what I had done, and my husband

was so opposed to it, but he said not a word. I wept much that night, and next morning we were to go to the water at 10 o'clock, and I said not a word about it, I thought perhaps I had done wrong not to ask him first, so I thought I would let him do as he liked about it. When I looked out he was at the gate with the rig ready to go. He came in and I was not ready; he said, "Are you not going to meeting?" I said, "Do you want to go?" He said, "Yes, I will take you." We went, and after I was baptized by Elder Jacob Castlebury, he came and gave me his hand and said, "I did not want you to be baptized, but I am glad now." That was a happy day to me. That was nearly forty years ago, and I have had many seasons of sadness, and have had some joyous ones since then. My mind often reverts to that beautiful golden morning when I arose, I sometimes hope, to walk in newness of life in my Master's kingdom. The older I grow the oftener I go back to that spot to me most dear, and the more I believe the doctrine of salvation by grace, for I know that if I am saved at all it is by grace, and not what I can do.

Now, dear sister, this is a part of my travels; whether it is a christian experience or not you be the judge.

E. J. GROVE.

LEESBURG, Va., Feb. 4, 1906.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—During the latter part of last summer and fall I thought that I was, in a manner, well, but to my sad disappointment, the twenty-third of December brought back my old complaint, in some respects worse than ever, and I suffered greatly. At one time the doctors thought that to save my life I must submit to surgical treatment. To the mercy of a kind Providence I am indebted for partial restoration to health again.

I have read and reread your reply to brother Inman of Missouri on the subject of divorce. Since I have been a Baptist I have always understood that the Baptists were united on that subject, until recently. Probably for that reason I accepted their views as truth without examining the subject for myself. For the past few months I have thought seriously of and have examined carefully what the Savior said. I have also sought the opinion of others, and I am frank to say that the more I seek to know the less I do know.

At our last association I asked a brother if it would be right to marry a divorced man whose wife had left him and refused to ever live with him again, but against whom there was no charge of adultery? He replied that it would be right, as I understood him; and another brother who was present indorsed what he said. Should these brethren feel disposed to do so, I hope they will give their reasons for their views upon the matter. I was not persuaded to their opinion by what they said, though for all that I know they may be right. To be persuaded and to be in doubt are two different conditions of mind. I must confess that my mind is disturbed and perplexed to know just what the dear Savior did mean in all that he said upon the subject of divorce. His command concerning the matter is not inexorable, for he makes an exception, viz: that of adultery; "Except it be for fornication." This was so different from what Moses had said, and so severely exacting that they were no doubt confounded and astonished, and so they naturally replied, "If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry." They (the disciples) knew, as we all know,

that a wife can do many things that would make it as unbearable and intolerable for a husband as fornication would be. Many things a wife or husband can do to make the life of the other beyond the power of endurance, therefore they said, "If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is good not to marry." There can be none who have a better understanding of the meaning of the words of Jesus concerning this than the disciples had, they had spoken of what Moses had said, showing that they understood it as Moses and the Israelites understood it, and Jesus understood also how they received and understood his words, and seeing this he made this reply, "All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given."

What saying? Except it be for fornication. Unquestionably this is what Jesus referred to. Now if he only had in this language a literal meaning, as Moses meant it, all men could understand it. It does seem to me, therefore, that Jesus meant more than his words literally implied; and so much more that no man could understand what he did mean, unless it were given him of God. If I am right about this, then it is removed from the literal signification and is placed among the things that are spirit and life.

This thought, it seems to me, is further sustained by the words, "But from the beginning it was not so." In this last sentence he speaks of that which was true before there was a law or commandment given, therefore it could not refer to that which man was commanded to observe and obey in the law of Moses; and, after saying that all men could not receive this saying, save they to whom it was given, he follows up by saying, "For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb; and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men; and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it." I quote this, not to attempt an explanation, but simply to show that the words of Jesus on the subject upon which he is treating are not to be understood by carnal reason or the wisdom of men. What he did mean is what I do not know, but what I would like to know, and it is what I would like you to explain, if you know; it is light on the subject that we want.

Your brother in hope,

E. V. WHITE.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Your precious letter of January 20th was received, and most highly appreciated by both Mrs. White and myself, yet were it not for faith, which I trust God has given me in my brethren, I could not believe what you have said about myself: that you have never felt worthy of my companionship or fellowship. I cannot see how this can be, yet I believe you spoke the truth as it is with you, for there is that wonderful mystery about the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ which makes one feel others to be better than himself; this I know for myself. I feel in this way, therefore I believe what you said you felt. This is the one reason why we believe what a brother says, or what we read in God's word. To believe it as the Scriptures have said we must have the witness within ourselves.

My brother, Benjamin White, is extremely ill, so his son Harry wrote me today; his sufferings are great. It seems hard to be separated from each other, both sick; but the Lord is in it all. There is peace and rest and consolation in the

belief that he rules, and that all is for the best, though we cannot understand.

E. V. WHITE.

[WE have published these extracts from a much longer personal letter, feeling sure that all our brethren will be glad to read them, and that the sympathy of all will go out to both him and his aged brother who are so dear to each other. Many also know his brother, and that he has been a kind, loving, faithful and consistent member of the church, and unwavering in the doctrine of God our Savior, for many years. If it be God's will, may both be again restored to health, but if not the will of God, we are sure that to both will be given strength to endure, and patience to submit to the will of God in every trying providence. He will not forsake in time of old age. There is no feeling of disputation manifest in the above letter from brother White, and there is no need that there should be when brethren confer together concerning any subject in the word, to the end that they may arrive at the truth. We do not feel that we have any more to say than is said in our reply to brother Inman, to which brother White refers. It may not be amiss for us to say that we have thought that the word "receive," in the expression, "All men cannot receive this saying," did not have so much the idea of failing to understand the meaning, as failure to be able to abide by it. That is, all men could not receive it, in the sense of ability to follow the teaching of the Savior. It was the weakness of men under stress of temptation to resist, rather than lack of understanding, to which the Savior referred, as it appears to us, but in this we may be mistaken.—C.]

ACTS VIII. 35.

"THEN Philip opened his mouth, and began at that same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus."

Philip was one of the seven men of honest report, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of wisdom, chosen by the whole multitude, and set before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands upon them, thus appointing (or ordaining, as we now say) these seven men to the business of serving tables, and attending to the widows in their daily ministrations. Philip was a deacon, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom. These deacons, as all deacons should be, were wise, even though they may have been illiterate. Yes, they were wise unto salvation. A man may be wise and yet not educated, but if he is wise he will not remain illiterate. Peter the apostle was an illustration of this fact.

But it is not Philip, the servant of tables loaded with bread and meat to nourish the natural man, but Philip, the servant of spiritual tables bearing spiritual food, setting in order the King's table, where those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness are filled with the consolation of the gospel, which is Christ, that true bread which came down from heaven, whereof if a man eat he shall never die, of whom I would speak. As he journeyed toward the south, "the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert," he beheld a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority, under Candace, queen of Ethiopia, who had been to Jerusalem to worship, and was returning, sitting in his chariot, and reading Esaias the prophet. "Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet." Philip was not sent by the church, there were no missionary boards

to send him, the angel of the Lord spoke to him, telling him to go. That angel, or messenger, was not the church, or any committee or board authorized by the church, it was not a prophet, or an apostle, or preacher, or teacher, in some way authorized by the church, but, as we find in verse twenty-nine, it was the Spirit of God; or, closer yet, it was Christ in Philip that said to him, "Join thyself to this chariot." Yes, Philip had been in the desert, searching if happily he might find him whom his soul loved, and thus was, by experience, prepared to go near to this man of Ethiopia. Philip was sent, and this case thus brought to our notice, tells us how preachers are sent and by whom they are sent. In Romans x. 13, Paul tells us, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." The interrogation follows, "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?" Now by this it is shown how the preacher is sent, and by whom. It is therefore a fearful thing to seek to hinder, by any means, the preacher from going to the desert places and drawing near to those who are seeking for him whom their soul loveth.

The Lord Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who begins his work in the heart, writing his law there, and imprinting it in our minds, is also sending the preacher, as he did Saul of Tarsus after appearing to him in the way from Jerusalem. Saul was on his way from the temple of Solomon and the law written on tables of stone, down into a desert place. This eunuch was hungry, poor, naked and half dead, reading the prophet, and praying for light to understand. No wonder Paul in Romans, could say, "As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that publish the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." If to this poor inquiring soul the feet are beautiful, how much more beautiful the face and hands must have been. Isaiah said, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings." The beauty is not in the feet of the preacher, as all must know, but it is in the exaltation of the feet, lifting them up out of the mire and clay, and placing them upon a rock, and when we see such an one we are made to cry, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful: but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." When the preacher sent by the Spirit draws near to such an one he sees one whose feet have been washed by the Master, and anointed with that holy anointing which teacheth all things. He who has been prepared thus and sent draws near to the hungry, thirsty inquirer, the little one upon whom the Lord has laid his hand. Here is a unity of heart that brings the preacher into communion with this little one, and the simple story of Christ as the Savior is bread to the eater; yes, the very bread whereof if a man eat he shall never die. The mind of Philip was interested, and with a fellow-feeling, which makes us wondrously kind, he draws very near and asks, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" You know that the apostle Paul said to just such little ones, Ye are our epistle, known and read of all men. So Philip read the eunuch and the eunuch in turn read Philip, and he asked him to come up and sit in his chariot. The place in the

Scripture where he had been reading was Isaiah liii. 7–9: "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth." Here the eunuch had entered into the broad fields of living green, through which ran the pure river of the water of life.

Just such a scene as this between Philip and the eunuch binds together by the bands of christian love, breaks down all barriers, and cements the hearts of both preacher and hearer. So heart answers to heart because they are touched by the great Master, who plays upon these harps of a thousand strings. This caused the great singer of Israel to break out with ecstacy and sing, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garment; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."

It is recorded that Philip began at that same Scripture and preached unto him Jesus. Paul to the Colossians said, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." The psalmist said, "For there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." The wayfaring man led by the Spirit shall not err, as says the prophet Isaiah; in this way no lion shall be. No, my brother, this way that leads to life is not found by lions of free agency, or men of strength, but by babes, wearied, hungry, lame, wounded, suffering and little; and these have lost all their strength trying to obey the law. Here is a blessing commanded of the Lord, coming down from heaven and resting upon the mountains of Zion. How the poor, contrite sinner feels lifted up when he finds himself seated at the King's table and eating of that bread which comes down from heaven. Jesus is this way of holiness, and the prophet says that the unclean shall not pass over it. Paul to Titus says, "It is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, [past tense] by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." In another place the apostle said, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Being therefore cleansed by the blood of the Lamb, the wayfaring man passes over this way to immortal glory. The eunuch was a wayfaring man, and was in this way, which is the way of holiness; not the way to holiness, but the way of holiness. Because of this, the apostle said in 2 Cor. v. 17: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away." Yes, the old covenant of works, with all its ordinances, has passed away, Christ Jesus has taken them all away, nailing them to his cross, where he, as the head of the church, died, the just for the unjust, pouring out his blood. This was the washing that cleansed us from all our sins. This washing of regeneration, spoken of by Paul to Titus, was effectual; it saved; it cleansed; yes, it cleansed all the body, the church, from all sin, and so no unclean person

enters there, and there can be no erring in this way, to impede the progression of the wayfaring man.

The apostle Paul again says, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead." And the law had said, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." According to the above language of Paul, the law is fully satisfied, ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. Here mercy and truth met together, and righteousness and peace kissed each other; here truth did spring out of the earth in the Son of man, who is the way, and the truth and the life; and Righteousness looked down from heaven, and said, This Jesus, the Son of man, is my beloved Son. In him we live, and move, and have our being; and looking to him, he shall set us in the way of his steps.

Philip had, no doubt, told the eunuch that Jesus had said to John the Baptist, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness," and that Jesus was baptized by John in Jordan, and that Jesus had died, and had risen again, and that by his Spirit he himself had been led down into this desert way, and also that the eunuch had been led by the same Spirit in the same way. While he was thus preaching Jesus they came to water. The Spirit of Christ was setting the eunuch in the Master's steps, and so he cried out, "Here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Philip answered, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." And the eunuch replied, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." And the eunuch was baptized and went on his way rejoicing, no doubt crying holiness unto the Lord.

Yours to serve for Christ's sake,

W. W. POLK.

REPLY TO ELDER H. C. KER.

I AM truly glad he expressed his views more fully on Matthew xviii. 8, 9, yet I cannot see but what his language connects the church or body of Christ, and the world or the unbeliever together, though he does not claim to do so, and I do not believe he intends to do so, but if I understand him, according to his language I think that he certainly does. I am an illiterate man, while our brother I presume is an educated man, and understands language better than I do, but I want to notice some things in our brother's letter and weigh them with the meaning of language and a "thus saith the Lord." If I am not correct may the Lord show it to his people, for the truth is all I want, and I hope that the brother will not think that I am contentious, only for the truth's sake, and for the benefit of God's people.

Our brother says, "In our view of this special Scripture we are not justifiable in applying it to the members of the body of Christ," and he goes on to say the Jews were the brethren of the apostles after the flesh, and for many years and at the time these words in Matthew were spoken, they were the only people to whom the apostles were to preach, and in a natural sense (not spiritual) they were the hand, foot and eye of the apostles. For at least three years they were the only ones to whom the gospel was sent, but after Christ's ascension they were to go into all the world and preach to every creature. But let us see what about it. When Christ first sent them out he said, "As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand."—Matt. x. 7. Elder Ker says the Jewish nation was the hand, foot and eye of the apostles. I have never yet seen an eye or a foot or a hand in its proper size larger than the body,

and the Jewish nation was a larger body than the apostles. My suggestion is that the apostles were the eye for the Jewish nation, or the hand or the foot. The eye is the thing to see with, and the apostles had more light and could see deeper into the truth than the whole Jewish nation. Paul says the gospel "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith." Paul said that it was to the Jews first, therefore when Christ sent them (apostles) out he sent them to the Jews first, and then after his ascension he sent them to the Gentiles to preach the gospel. Brother Ker says if the saints or the apostles (little ones) were offended they were to separate themselves from them (Jews). He says, "This word separate means, in our view, to 'cut off,' have no fellowship with them." Webster says also, cut off is to separate, and he also says, separate is to withdraw, and Paul says, "Withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly;" and walking disorderly is offensive to the body of Christ. When the apostles were sent out to preach, and the Jews did not receive them and the gospel they preached, they (apostles) were to shake the dust off of their feet for a witness against them. Elder Ker says this means to cut them off, and he also refers to the case of Paul and Barnabas, when they were preaching to the Jews and they would not receive their preaching, and they turned to the Gentiles, "this is another instance where the world, or the men of the world, (unbelievers) were cut off." Our brother also says, "In the days of the apostles, when these words in Matthew were spoken to them, there were kings, governors and others of authority who did not believe in Jesus." Now all the above people that were cut off our brother claims were unbelievers (which they were), but I ask in all candor, Are the blind, unbelieving Jews the eye for the apostles or the people of God that believe in Jesus? Can the unbeliever whose eyes are shut, as Paul says, "According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear; unto this day."—Romans xi. 8. And again, "Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their minds and conscience is defiled." Can it be that such as these are the eye, hand or foot for the apostles or saints of God? All such as these, if I understand our brother, he has brought up to sustain his position. What is the eye? is it not something that belongs to the body? Are not the hand and foot also members of the body, tied and connected to the body? If I should say to a man, Thy hand is bleeding, would he look at my hand to see if it was bleeding and think that it was his hand? No, he would look at his own, that was connected to him.

Now, reader, take up the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, begin at the first, and you will see that Christ was addressing the disciples, who I think represented the church (or body of Christ), and he says to them, If thy hand, or foot, or eye, offend thee, cut it off, or pluck it out and cast it from thee, for it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands, or two feet, or two eyes, to be cast into hell fire. Our brother says these offenders are the world, or unbelievers. Jesus, in Matt. v. 29, calls the offender one of the members, and he (Christ) advised in that chapter

to cut it off, but Elder Ker seems to think that to cut off one of the members, such as the hand, foot or eye, that in such action the eye would say to the hand, I have no need of thee; or the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Paul was speaking of the church, or her members, when they were in an humble and unoffended feeling, that when that state of affairs exist no member can say to another, I have no need of thee, for if they were to, then that one would virtually say, I am better than you; and we are commanded to esteem our brother better than ourselves. But when one gets to walking disorderly then he offends the body; then what does Paul say? Withdraw thyself from every brother that walks that way. Webster says this is separating, and separating is cutting off. Elder Ker says, "The turning over of one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh is not, in our view, cutting off the hand or foot, or plucking out the eye; if so, how can it be said of the bride (church), 'Thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast dove's eyes.' 'Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee'? Or how shall it be said, 'How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter'?" I presume that Elder Ker thinks that to cut off any of the members there would be a spot in the bride, and he quoted this to prove there was no spot in her. When the above words were spoken to the bride her Husband and Redeemer was looking at her through his own atoning blood, that he had cleansed her from all sin, for the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin; therefore he could speak the above loving words to her, and not that he looked at her while she is tabernacling here in the flesh; if so, and saw no spot in her, then she is wholly sanctified without sin, which is contrary to the teaching of the Scriptures, for Paul said, with the flesh he served the law of sin; then if Paul was correct, every sin that the members of the body of Christ commit would make a black spot. Now he says another point in his favor is, "Jesus commands, 'If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off,' without any intimation of trying to save or heal them." It is true that he did not say anything right there, but goes on in the same chapter, after telling Peter what to do with a brother that trespasses against him, until the matter gets to the church, then if the offending brother will not hear, (will not hear shows that the church is laboring with the offender, for he will not hear,) what then? "Let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." What does this mean? To withdraw, or cut off, or in other words, he is considered no more a member of the church, having no rights or privileges in the church any more than if he had never joined.

Dear brother, you said the import of my question concerning the resurrection is, Do we believe in the power of God? and you answered, "Yes, we hope, with all our soul, mind and strength." In this you left me in the dark, and a great many others that know there are different views upon the resurrection, for in every view of the resurrection there is power, but the question that I asked you was, Do you believe in the resurrection of our vile Adamic bodies that die and are buried in the earth where men dig holes with picks, hoes and shovels?

Now, brother Ker, I have not replied to you just simply for controversy, but for the sake of truth. I am sincere in this matter, for I believe it is a vital point of discipline, and if I am not correct in it I want to know it, and if I am,

I hope that the Lord will bless our controversy to the good of his people, or if you are right, that he may open the eyes of the blind to see it. If I know my heart, I desire to know the truth in all points.

Brother Ker, I desire this to be published in the SIGNS, as you have had two articles on this subject. May the Lord bless you and Elder Chick with his grace as editors of our highly esteemed paper, the SIGNS. May the Lord bless all his true servants everywhere.

S. M. DICKENS.

MERIT, Texas.

(See editorial remarks in this number.)

KNOWN BY THEIR DEEDS.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—In my lonely, desolate state, and amid vanity and vexation of spirit, I have been caused this morning to stop and wonder how it is that we can know a child of God, for it seems that we are so often misled, and many times seemingly entirely deceived in those in whom we once had confidence. In my meditations I was carried to Romans ii. 1: "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things." Now this Scripture does not imply that the saints shall not judge or know the fruits of the Spirit, for, "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" The warning against this judgment is man's judgment. Man has no right to pass judgment: "Thou art inexcusable." Who is it that is inexcusable for judgment? It is man. Why so? "For wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself." Yes, if it is man's judgment, he must also be judged by the same method; so for man to judge man after the manner of man is folly, for he only passeth the sentence on others that has many times been passed on himself. But turning to the second verse of the same chapter we find where just and righteous judgment comes in, and this verse shows us that we mortals are not the judges, but God; yes, Jehovah is the only just Judge, and we mortals are only to know men as God has judged them. The Judge has passed the sentence, the case has already been tried by the highest tribunal, and the record of it left on the blessed docket, and by this docket (Scripture) we can easily detect the criminals, so they are "known by their deeds." "But we are sure that the judgment of God [not man] is according to truth, against them which commit such things." Now there are some plain cases left upon this docket, so plain that a poor wayfaring man, though a fool, cannot err therein. You can by this docket easily detect the guilty and the innocent; for instance, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." Here is evidence on this great docket that some one has been with the Lord. And again, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit," is another witness; the things he once loved he now hates, is another; "to be spiritually minded is life and peace," is another; being "of one mind," is another; seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, is another; "Love thy neighbor as thyself," is another; and there are many others too numerous to mention that mark out plainly to us those who have been with their dear Savior, and like Enoch have walked with God.

With a trembling hand and a timid spirit we turn from this picture to another; that is, to picture those who have never been born again; God is the Judge,

The sad thought is that some of those stand nominally identified with the bride, the Lamb's wife. You can surely detect them, as they are "known by their deeds;" they are men who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. This means lewd, lustful, wanton, and wanton means loose, reckless. O I fear there are such that have crept in among the children of God, some for lustful desire, (to make themselves popular, some to accomplish other ends,) and so turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. Paul says they are men of reprobate minds. Reprobate means, lost to virtue. Have you ever seen them? Did you ever know them? "To disallow," "to reject." Did you ever see any one who would disallow and reject the doctrine in its full sense and receive and indorse anything for order? Some do disallow the full and complete meaning of predestination, some reject a full and complete atonement, others are so lustful that they try to mix works and grace, some have abandoned the true discipline, and reject the true order of God's house; these are men of reprobate minds, and Paul says they are among us, or that they would be after his departure. I am bound to believe he told the truth. Men who "draw away disciples after them." Did you ever witness this? Remember the caption of this article: "known by their deeds." "Heady," high minded, "who go into houses and lead captive silly women;" "who speak great swelling words of vanity;" men who make long faces and great pretensions, who indulge in foolish jestings; men who mystify the Scriptures, and teach for doctrine the commandments of men; men who are building upon other foundations, and who are absolutely ignoring the fact that the "foundation of God standeth sure;" men who come to you in "sheep's clothing," but are "ravening wolves;" men of a smooth tongue and of a long face; those who strain at gnats and swallow camels; offer them a dime and they seem to be very backward, but offer them a dollar and it is swallowed up quickly; "dumb dogs" who can never get enough; "greedy dogs," "false accusers," "despisers of those that are good," yea, they are "known by their deeds;" leaders who cause the children of God to err; men who have a "form of godliness but deny the power thereof;" "unstable souls themselves," having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls; an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children, which have forsaken the right way and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; so they are "known by their deeds." Dear children of God, we are commanded "to cast up the highway; gather out the stones," and I feel the day has come to do this. Paul says, From such men as these "turn away," be not partakers of their evil deeds. The command to the "little flock" is to "Let brotherly love continue;" "be of one mind;" "shun the very appearance of evil;" "let your conversation be godly;" "walk not after the flesh;" and "as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." These and many other things are positive evidences of a true child of God, and a plain distinction between God's children and the children of the flesh, for they are "known by their deeds." God has long since placed a mark in the foreheads of those that are his, that is indelible, and that no one can detect only those who are in like manner marked. They are said to be sealed in their foreheads with the seal of the living

God. They are also a very "peculiar people zealous of good works." They are a separate people from the world; they had rather "suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." They advocate a doctrine that in ancient days was said to be a "hard doctrine;" in Christ's time it was said to be a "hard saying; who can hear it?" In our time it is said, These are "Hardshells." They have been mocked, and jeered, persecuted, stoned, sawn asunder, cast into a fiery furnace and into dens of lions, exiled, beheaded, crucified and tortured in every way, still they stood firm, and continued to speak as the oracles of God. They are to this day undergoing many trying ordeals. We know that God has eternally fixed all things, and that there is nothing left for poor, puny creatures to do; that the beginning and the end were always present with him, our destiny determined by him, and as the poet truthfully says,

"Chained to his throne a volume lies,
With all the fates of men,
With every angel's form and size,
Drawn by the eternal pen."

So by their deeds they are known.

May we all as children of God walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, and prove to the world that we are what we profess to be, and let them know us by our deeds, is my prayer.

May God continue his rich blessings upon us all. Amen.

JAMES D. TRACY.

PERSONVILLE, Texas.

NYACK, N. Y., Jan. 14, 1906.

DEAR ELDER KER:—As I am hindered from meeting to-day with those I hope I love for the truth's sake, I thought I would write part of my early experience.

I was about seven years old when the words were with me much of the time: "God is angry with the wicked." I realized it, knowing I was wicked, and felt the justice of God could not be satisfied with anything I could do. In the doctrine of election I could not see any hope for my salvation, for I could not understand how I could be holy, and yet the Scriptures plainly said, Without holiness none can see God. I was highly favored to hear the gospel preached by Elder Goble many years, sometimes hoping I would be better when I understood more of the truth. I wanted to be established in the doctrine of election and predestination, but it was a long while before I could see my interest therein. I could believe for others, for they were different from me, they were christians, I was a sinner, and much distressed. This continued long, and I envied the brute creation, for they have no soul. The Scriptures I tried to read often, but could see nothing but condemnation most of the time. I felt salvation is alone of God, no creature could help me, nothing could I do to save myself from the wrath to come. I was under the law a long time, until the words came with power, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." I was enabled to believe in the imputed righteousness of Christ as my only hope, and was glad to realize the Savior's dying words, "It is finished."

"The terrors of law and of sin
With me can have nothing to do;
My Savior's obedience and blood
Hide all my transgressions from view."

Thus I was encouraged. The text, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be like crimson, they shall be as wool;" also, "By grace are ye saved," and many precious promises were given to me. Then I was happy for a time, hoping I had a love for the truth of the gospel, and felt the hymns very comforting. Now, I thought, if I were a christian I would have more trouble. Well, the trouble did come, I was to be tried. The church received me for baptism, and I

felt it such a gracious favor to be numbered with the people of God; an unworthy creature like me. I saw no fault in them, but feared I had deceived them. The words came sweetly to mind, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." O I did rejoice, this was a good token; as an evidence I felt it to be mine. But soon after the thought came: Your name is not Simon Bar-jona, and I was cast down indeed. At another time came the words: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Now, I hoped I was indeed born of the Spirit, and made glad, for the new birth was a very solemn subject to me. Still I wanted more evidence, as I was often cast down. Another time when under trial this came: "To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion; to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." This was a very precious portion for me, I could hope I was a mourner in Zion and would be blessed, for the Bible says, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." I wanted a "thus saith the Lord" to me. The Lord has been better to me than all my fears; often cast down, but not destroyed; persecuted, but not forsaken.

"After so much mercy past,
Can he let me sink at last?"

Sometimes I can say, No, never; he that hath begun a good work, will not let me sink at last.

"Why should I complain of want or distress,
Temptation or pain? he told me no less;
The heirs of salvation, I read in his word,
Through much tribulation must follow their Lord."

No, this is not a smooth path that we are to walk in, for we would forget all the deliverances we have had in former trials and sorrows. I often feel the hymn 1007 (Beebe's collection) expresses my feelings: "I asked the Lord that I might grow," &c.; also hymn 68: "God moves in a mysterious way," &c. "Thy way is in the sea," was impressed on my mind; also, "Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope." I felt I was a prisoner when the words were given to me, yet was encouraged to hope faith would be given me to look to the strong hold. My experience is expressed in the SIGNS; and I hope my soul can witness to the experience of those who write for the SIGNS. Sometimes I know that those dear ones are taught by the same Teacher I have had for over fifty years in this journey: learning that it is through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom. I find hymn 225 very encouraging at times:

"O my distrustful heart,
How small thy faith appears!
But greater, Lord, thou art
Than all my doubts and fears:
Did Jesus once upon me shine!
Then Jesus is forever mine."

What a mercy is this: "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself." I desire to be thankful for all my blessings thus far.

Another circumstance which occurred over thirty-five years ago I would mention: being alone, and wondering if comfort could be for me, I took the Bible and searched for the Scripture which had been blessed to me in hearing preaching, or brought to my mind from time to time, when I had felt the promises were given to me. Truly it was profitable employment, for I did prove it was not in vain, for light I trust was given me, and understanding in the reading of many texts, and an assurance seemed granted to me to still hope in the mercy of a covenant-keeping God. So my weak faith was strengthened to endure a while longer, for I find it is "line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little." I have found that as my day, my strength has been. I would not be unmindful of all the mercies thus far, but desire to praise the God of all my mercies when I cannot trace my way in the darkness.

Elder Ker, if you think this is worth space in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES you are at liberty to publish it.

Yours, I trust, in fellowship for the truth's sake,

(MRS.) M. A. HOWARTH.

EDITORIAL.

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ANTINOMIANISM.

OF late we have seen in some places the words Antinomianism and Antinomian used quite frequently by some who were evidently referring to those who have opposed the theory of conditional time salvation, and who believe in the predestination of all things that come to pass. Thus our mind has been led to think somewhat more seriously than before of the words, and what they signify. It seems to us that it may be well to say a few things regarding the words and the things that are intended when the words are used. The things that we have seen written, as referred to above, have led us to conclude that the writers intended to convey the idea that all those who opposed conditional time salvation, and contended for the doctrine of the predestination of all things, are Antinomians. As we do and have opposed the one, and advocated the other, and as we also consider Antinomianism a most grievous error, we have felt like examining the matter more closely to see whether by opposing conditionalism and advocating predestination we have indeed been advocating Antinomianism.

It is claimed that a sect arose in the sixteenth century under the teaching of John Agricola, who claimed that under the gospel dispensation the law is of no use or obligation, and holding doctrines which superseded the necessity of good works and a virtuous life. So far however as John Agricola and his followers are concerned, all that we know of them was written by their enemies, and so it is likely that more than half of it is falsehood; this however matters little to us at the present time. The word "Antinomianism" literally signifies, "contrary to law," or "opposed to law," and therefore those who use the word charge all against whom they use it with opposing the law of God, or with holding a doctrine that would make the law of God of none effect. This is indeed a serious charge, and if such are the legitimate conclusions to be drawn from any sentiment that any of us hold, the sooner we give up that sentiment the better for our own good, and the more for the glory of God will it be.

We recall that many years ago we saw a pamphlet containing an argument between the celebrated John Gadsby, of England, and a minister of another order, as to whether the law was a rule of life to believers. The question was not as to whether the deeds of the law were necessary to salvation. In this, so far as we could judge, both were agreed, both contended that salvation was wholly of grace, but Mr. Gadsby contended that the law did not remain as a rule by which believers were to be governed, or by which they were to order their lives, while his opponent contended that the law was still the rule of conduct to all who believed, although they were saved from eternal wrath by the grace of God. We recall that this minister charged Mr. Gadsby with being an Antinomian, because he

contended that Christ had freed the believer altogether from the old law. We recall that as we read the pamphlet it seemed to us hard to understand how a man who contended that there could be no salvation at all unless the law of God was entirely fulfilled to the utmost jot and tittle, and who also contended that because men could not fulfill it Jesus Christ must fulfill it for us, and must suffer, bleed and die under the curse of the law, that the redeemed might live, and live forever, could be called an Antinomian; or, in other words, could be said to be opposed to the law. Mr. Gadsby was careful to say that all who believe were not without law to God, but were under law to Christ. His contention in substance was that all who were under the old law were still under the curse of that law, but that now all who were redeemed were not only redeemed from the curse, but that the law had no more dominion over them. Now the love of God in Christ was shed abroad in their hearts, and this law written in their hearts was the substance of what the apostle meant when he said that believers were under law to Christ. The law was holy, just and good indeed, and so it must be fulfilled to the last letter, and Christ has fulfilled it for all his chosen ones. Now believers were to look to him as their Lawgiver and King and Judge. Why then should believers be called upon to fulfill a law that had already been fulfilled for them by another? This was the substance of Mr. Gadsby's contention in the debate to which we have referred, and for this he was called an Antinomian by his opponent.

We also recall that, when but a child, we used to hear the same word used against all those who contended for salvation by grace alone. It was said of them that they made the law of little or no account. It was also said: for what purpose was the law given if not to be fulfilled by men; and how could any man be saved unless he satisfied the law of God by obedience to it? It did not then seem to matter how earnestly believers in salvation by grace sought to magnify the law, and to set forth its justice, holiness and goodness, or how earnestly they contended that the law of God, which could not be fulfilled by fallen man, had been completely fulfilled by the dear Savior, and so was magnified and made honorable and fulfilled in behalf of his people, so that it was fully satisfied in all its demands, and that without this no man could be saved, still the same word "Antinomian" was hurled against them, and yet the lives of those who believed in the sovereign grace of God were such as to show that righteousness was their delight and that the righteousness of the law was fulfilled in them. We recall also that then it seemed to us that instead of this word "Antinomian" rightfully applying to believers in salvation wholly by grace, it rather applied to those who contended that men were saved by their own obedience to the law. Very few would contend that any man could render perfect obedience to the law of God, and so would say that if we do the best we can we shall be saved; thus arguing that men could go to heaven although they had not fulfilled the law. What was this but making the law of no effect? Was not this true "Antinomianism," rather than that faith which believed in the perfect fulfillment of the law as a necessary thing to secure salvation? Arminians are the true Antinomians, rather than those whom they oppose and charge with Antinomianism. Would it not seem that Paul must have been charged with

Antinomianism (opposition to the law,) when he thought it necessary to say, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we established the law."—Rom. iii. 31. See also several verses preceding this text. He must also be meeting the same charge when he says in Romans vi. 1: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Again, in verse fourteen, sixth chapter, he says, "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." In verse fifteen he adds these solemn words: "What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid." In the first six verses of chapter seven he shows that one cannot serve God at all while under the law. From all these Scriptures we see that Paul, at least, would not admit that grace did away with the law of God, but rather, that by grace was the law magnified. Thus those who opposed Paul's teachings were the real opposers of the law of God, the real Antinomians. He who contends that the law of God is so holy, just and good, that its utmost demands must be met and satisfied if any man is to live in that way, is not an Antinomian; and this, all who believe in Christ do contend for. The man who contends that he may be saved by partially doing the things that the law demands, despises the law, and is the real Antinomian.

Now, is he that believes in the predestination of all things that come to pass, therefore an Antinomian? First, it would seem plain that if to believe in the predestination of all things is to be an Antinomian, it would follow that he that believes that some things are predestinated of God, is that far an Antinomian. If, for instance, any man believes that Jesus was delivered to the Jews and Romans to be crucified, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, that man is an Antinomian; that is, if to believe in predestination is to be an Antinomian; likewise if any man believes that God raised up Pharaoh for the very purpose which he fulfilled, that man is chargeable with Antinomianism, if the predestination of all things does indeed involve Antinomianism. But these, and thousands of other things in the word, are declared to have been appointed, and therefore these inspired men must have been, according to the charge now made against God's predestination, Antinomians. Every prophecy is proof of predestination, and therefore those who declared the predetermined purpose of God in prophecy are chargeable with Antinomianism. Be it so then; we feel to be content to abide in such good company.

Still further, those who believe in the predestination of all things that come to pass, believe also absolutely in the fixed laws of God, manifested in what we call the relation of cause and effect. Is this to be opposed to the law of God? Does it not rather magnify his law to believe in predestination? To believe in God's predestination is to believe also that his law in every sense in which we may use that word, is unchangeable. All that our God purposes and appoints can have no uncertainty in it. This must be so, because he is himself unchangeable. Those, on the other hand, who deny his predestination of any one thing, or of all things, are denying (whether they so mean it or not) the unchangeableness of God, and the unchangeableness of his law, whether that law be what we call the law of nature, the law of cause and effect, or the law revealed as it was on Sinai, or as it is

written in fleshly tables of the heart. Our God is the God of unchangeable purpose, and his law is unchangeable. What want of harmony, then, is there between his purpose and his law? Believers in the predestination of God are the strongest advocates of the law of God, and always have been. Is this Antinomianism? But if our God has not purposed all things that come to pass, it is sure that nothing can be fixed or settled in his purpose at all, and therefore there can be no certainty that his law shall stand. What is this but to be against his law, or an Antinomian?

Does a denial of the dogma of conditional time salvation involve Antinomianism? We are not well informed as to the manner in which some connect a denial of this last named theory with Antinomianism, but so far as we can see it must be upon somewhat the same grounds that our fathers were charged with this heresy, who contended for salvation without the deeds of the law. They denied conditionalism in our final salvation, claiming that this salvation was wholly wrought out for us upon Calvary, so that nothing remained for us to do to secure it, and that the work of the Spirit in the heart wrought out all our obedience, both in spirit and in outward life, and for this they were charged with denying the law. So, in like manner, when we say that the Lord has wrought all our works of obedience in us, and that the price of spiritual blessings bestowed upon us daily was also paid upon Calvary, it seems that the same charge is held out to frighten timid souls away from the liberty which they have in Christ. But we do certainly think that if Antinomianism is to be charged upon either side, it belongs rather to those who contend that our obedience is in some sense the price of all our present spiritual blessings; for if any blessings are ours at all, they must be ours because of the law of God having been fully satisfied for us. If then, these present blessings do not come to us as the gift of God, because of the perfect righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, they must come to us because of perfect righteousness in and of ourselves. But this last will not be contended for by any one, therefore those who claim that because of our obedience we are blessed here, are really saying that our imperfect obedience is sufficient, and that we may obtain these blessings at the sacrifice of the demands of the law of God; and what is this but Antinomianism? Anything that puts the law of God one side in any degree, or that says that it need not be perfectly fulfilled, upon any ground, is full-fledged Antinomianism.

We hope that all will take notice that we do not charge upon any of our brethren who say such things, that they intend to deny or belittle the claims of the law of God, but what they do say about conditional time salvation necessarily involves a belittling, rather than a magnifying of the law. The only way in which the law of God can be truly magnified and made honorable is by the perfect obedience unto death of Jesus our Lord, and not by any striving of our own to fulfill the law. All our striving comes short, and it is only when we find this out and confess that we have seen an end of all perfection, and that the commandment is exceeding broad, that we do really magnify the law. When this stage of heart-felt experience is reached by the pilgrim Zionward, then indeed he is prepared for the revelation of that perfect obedience of the Lord which must be imputed unto him for his justification and salvation. When, as believers, we strive to follow the Lord in his walk and in his

commandments, and find that we are far short of doing the things that he commands, we magnify the law far more than those who are deceived in thinking that they have kept his commandments and therefore are entitled to the blessings promised in the new covenant. When the poor soul falls down before the Lord and confesses his weakness and inability, he is truly magnifying his Lord's commandments, and if ever he is free from Antinomianism it is then. He that thinks he has fulfilled the law of the Lord is the true Antinomian, but he who confesses his failure is he that is free from that error indeed.

Now in conclusion we will say, that if any man lives carelessly, worldly, evilly, seeking pleasure more than God, and then claims shelter under the predestination of God, that man is an Antinomian of the most radical type; he is an enemy of the law of God; he is an enemy of God.

We leave these considerations to the readers of the SIGNS, and we trust that they will all read carefully and consider well this whole subject. May the Lord give light and understanding in all things. C.

BACK NUMBERS.

ALL new subscriptions for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES are now credited from the time they are received, unless otherwise ordered, but if any wish their subscription to date from the first of the year we will supply them with back numbers.

SMALL HYMN BOOKS.

WE have printed another edition of the small type Hymn Book, and are now prepared to fill orders for the same at the following rates: Cloth Binding, per copy, 75 cents, per dozen, $6.00; Imitation Morocco, full gilt, $1.75; First Quality Turkey Morocco, full gilt, $2.75.

REPLY TO BROTHER DICKENS, NO. 2.

WHILE brother Dickens seems glad that I was a little more explicit in my view of Matthew xviii. 8, 9, in my reply to him, than I was in my remarks to Elder W. W. Polk in the SIGNS for Nov. 15th, 1905, he yet fails to understand how I can say the Jewish nation was the hand, foot and eye of the apostles without joining the world or unbelievers to the church. I am glad, however, of his confidence: that he does not believe I intend to do so, but he says if he understands language I certainly have done so. Did the Lord mean to join believers and unbelievers together when he said to the church, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate"? Certainly brother Dickens will say, No. Then neither do I when I use the term "cut off," if cut off means to separate. There must have been some connection between believers and unbelievers, or the Lord would not have said to believers, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate;" coming out was the separation or cutting off.

When I associate the apostles with the Jewish nation, it is not in the sense of christian union, but national union; that nation was the hand and foot in the sense of power by which the apostles as men the seed of Abraham and members of that nation, moved and acted: "The scribes and the pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do." From a legal standpoint they were the eye because in a sense they had the oversight of all who heard Moses read in that day.

Christ himself was subject to the law; he was not made above the law, but under the law of sin and death, consequently the whole law had dominion over him as a man, he being the seed of Abraham. He was obedient in all things, even unto

death, the death of the cross, therefore he fulfilled the law in every jot and tittle, magnified it and made it honorable.

Our nation, in the same sense, is our hand, foot and eye; it supports us in the sense of strength, it acts for us, it sees for us. Brother Dickens says he wants to notice a few things in my reply to him and weigh them by the meaning of language and a "thus saith the Lord." This is his privilege; no man should write or preach who is not willing that what he says should be investigated.

Brother Dickens says, "I never have yet seen an eye or a foot or a hand in its proper size larger than the body, and the Jewish nation was a larger body than the apostles; my suggestion is that the apostles were the eye for the Jewish nation, or the hand or the foot; the eye is the thing to see with, and the apostles had more light and could see deeper into the truth than the whole Jewish nation." Regarding beast, bird and man he is right, that the body is larger than the feet, eyes or hands, but he will, I am sure, acknowledge that the feet, hands and eyes are the strength of the body, man would be a weak and helpless creature indeed without them.

Therefore, I hope brother Dickens will see that the hand, foot and eye in Matt. xviii. 8, 9, represent powers rather than members of a natural body. He makes the apostles and Jews pretty close kin when he says "the apostles were the eye, hand and foot of the Jewish nation." Naturally, this presents the same relationship that I have tried to present all the time: that they (apostles and Jews) were all members of one body. I hope brother Dickens will see this, if so, it may explain my position better than I am able to do. Our brother says, "The apostles had more light and could see deeper into the truth than the whole Jewish nation." If we are to "weigh language" then brother Dickens says the Jewish nation had some light into the truth; if so, it was not blind, but he asks, "Can it be possible that the blind, unbelieving Jews were the hand, foot and eye for the people of God?" "The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." This light is synonymous with truth, and the Jews comprehended it not, because they were blinded. I do not believe that Elder Dickens means to present the idea that the Jewish nation could see or understand the truth, but "if I understand him, according to his language he certainly does."

Brother Dickens now leaves the things spoken to the apostles nearly two thousand years ago and speaks in the present tense, saying, Can it be that such as these (unbelievers, defiled Jews,) are the eye, hand or foot for the saints of God? We should remember that many things were said to the apostles which are not applicable to any other men who ever lived. The Jewish nation to-day is not the power of the land, neither are the children of God under the law, but under grace, hence they are not to obey those who sat in Moses' seat, but rather be subject to the powers that be, our nation or government. We should, if we can, apply Scripture in its place and time. Brother Dickens says, "If I should say to a man, Thy hand is bleeding, would he look at my hand to see if it were bleeding, and think that it was his hand? No, he would look at his own that was connected to him." No one would deny this, but if the Jewish nation, the strength and guide, according to the law, should have suffered loss or calamity in any way, the apostles would have suffered

with it, being members of it. In the same sense we of the United States would suffer should our nation suffer disaster, since we are members of the union or nation.

Brother Dickens now calls upon the readers of his letter to begin with the first of Matthew xviii., and tells them that they will see that Jesus was addressing the apostles, whom he says represented the church, and to them he said, If thy hand or foot offend thee cut it off and cast it from thee, &c. I will quote a few verses just here to show that Jesus had others, as well as members of the church, in his thoughts and words: "Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee."—Matthew xviii. 2–8. "Little children" represented the church, or characters of the church, these enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whoso should receive such little ones would receive Jesus, but whoso should offend or not receive the little ones who believed in Jesus, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he be drowned in the depth of the sea. Is this character a little one? is he a member of the body of Christ? is he an "orderly upright walking member"? is he "a bright light in the church"? What does the Savior say? "Woe unto the world because of offences!" "Woe to that man by whom the offence cometh." What shall be done with him? it was not the right of the apostles to drown him in the sea; Jesus did not so command them, but did command them to cut him off, regardless of station, and cast him from them, or in other words, separate yourselves from all who offend in denying Jesus to be the Christ, and therefore receive not the little ones in his name.

Brother Dickens calls attention to what Jesus said in Matt. v. concerning the offender being a member of the body. I do not see any material difference in his language there from that in Matt. xviii. 8, 9. The Savior was giving the new law in Matt. v., and tells his disciples, in substance, that whoever of the Jewish nation lived according to the sayings of olden times would manifest that they were not of his, therefore if the eye or hand, members of their body (Israel), should offend, it should be plucked out or cut off, or in other words, the apostles were to separate from all who claimed to be "Moses' disciples."

Our brother says, Paul was speaking of the church or members when they were in an humble and unoffended feeling, when he said, The head cannot say to the feet, I have no need of you, nor the eye to the hand, I have no need of thee. Paul does not tell us that this is his meaning. According to this, few were the times in the apostles day that it could be said, but rather a cutting off and a plucking out would have been almost continually the work of the church,

according to brother Dickens' understanding of the terms pluck out and cut off.

I am glad that brother Dickens tells us Webster says separate means to cut off. Again, brother Dickens says, "I presume that Elder Ker thinks that to cut off any of the members, there would be a spot in the bride. When her Husband said, There is no spot in thee, he was looking at her through his own atoning blood, that he had cleansed her from all sin, for the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin; therefore he could speak the above loving words, and not that he looked at her while she is tabernacling here in the flesh." I ask, is the church now perfect through Christ, or is it looking for another sacrifice by which it can be cleansed from all sin? Let the word of God answer: "By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." If this does not absolutely establish the fact that the church of God is now perfect in Christ, I am deceived.

Brother Dickens speaks of Paul serving the law of sin with his flesh; let us not forget what Paul said of himself: "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." When the Husband said to the bride, There is no spot in thee, he saw her just as she stands to-day, in him, delivered from sin, death, hell and the grave. Our experience of conflict between the flesh and the Spirit should in no wise give us to think that sin has dominion over us.

Brother Dickens admits that the Savior said nothing in immediate connection with Matt. xviii. 8, 9, concerning healing the member that offended, whether it be hand, foot or eye, but says, "In the same chapter, after telling Peter what to do with a brother who trespasses against him until it gets to the church, then if the offending brother will not hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. What does this mean? To withdraw or cut him off, or in other words, he is considered no more a member of the church, having no more right nor privileges in the church than if he had never joined." I want to call attention to the fact that Jesus first mentioned brotherhood in Matthew xviii. in verse 15, by saying, "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee." From this on to the end of the chapter he is speaking of what we call church order, and how to proceed in cases of transgression. Peter does not imply in his inquiry, How many times must I cut my brother off? but rather, How many times can he be healed? and Jesus told him until seventy times seven, meaning times without number. Please bear in mind that no mention here is made of hand, foot or eye, but brother. Jesus said, "If he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind [not cut off] on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." Is there not a difference between cutting off and binding?

From unbelievers the apostles were to separate themselves, but the brother who acted disorderly should be bound. I am willing, however, that brother Dickens should say cut off if he likes that better. No brother should be allowed to sin at

the expense or sanction of the church, but when he repents of his sin he should be restored to the privileges of the house as a brother. You know, brother Dickens, that it is a brother who offends, (in this connection) it is a brother who will not hear the church, it is a brother who is to be as a heathen man and a publican, it is a brother who is bound, it is a brother who is loosed. In the case of the hand, foot and eye they were to be cut off and cast from the apostles, signifying they had no place in the body of Christ. It is different with a brother, we may separate ourselves from him, we may exclude him from the privileges of the house, cut him off in the sense of separation in christian walk and conversation; but does this affect the fellowship that we had for him before as a child of God? We cannot fellowship his ungodly deeds, but if we believe before his exclusion that he is a child of God, we love him as such afterward, notwithstanding his sins. Christian fellowship that can be put on and taken off at will is not worth much. I understand that the fellowship of saints (like faith) controls the man, rather than the man controlling fellowship.

I feel sure that brother Dickens and I would be agreed if we could talk together a few moments. From his standpoint of church order, as he understands Matthew xviii. 8, 9, he is right, but I do not understand that portion of the word to refer to church order in the sense of discipline. He is right, that we should withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly. I should not like to think that brother Dickens or any other man is more favorable to good order in the house of God than I am. My opinion is that the church should deal with every member who walks contrary to the gospel, regardless of age or standing socially or financially. Elder Dickens is, I am sure, viewing the church from the standpoint of order, while I am viewing the perfect church or bride, and it is in the sense of vital unity that I say a member, hand, foot or eye, cannot be cut off or plucked out. This body is gloriously perfect, but it would not be perfect if any member could be cut off. Therefore, to this body Paul says, "Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Elder Dickens seems to think that I misunderstood his question concerning the resurrection; the original question and connection is as follows: "Do you believe in the resurrection of our vile Adamic bodies that die and are buried in the earth where men dig holes with picks, hoes and shovels? If so, you certainly believe that Christ is able to replace all the limbs and eyes that his people have been so unfortunate as to lose in this life. If he can do this, which I believe he can, then he can replace a member of his body or kingdom in this life." If this is not to the end, Do I believe in the power of God? then I am frank to confess that I do not understand plain English language. In this question and connection brother Dickens makes quite a distinction between the body and head, or Christ and the church; he says in his letter that the church should cut off disorderly members, but plainly says, in substance, the church cannot replace the members cut off, but Christ can, and if he does not, then brother Dickens does not want them replaced. How does this correspond with what Jesus said to the apostles (whom brother Dickens says represented the

church) in Matt. xviii. 18, "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven"? This power is given by the Savior to the church, hence we have no more right to say that Christ replaces than to say he cuts off the member.

I will now answer the question of brother Dickens concerning the resurrection the best I can, and hope not to be misunderstood. Just what he means by saying, "Do you believe in the resurrection of our vile Adamic bodies?" I do not know, but his language means, Do I believe in the resurrection of the same identical, vile, Adamic body that goes down in the earth? This would bring up the same body that went down, without change. If this is what he means, then I say no, because it is contrary to the word of God; but if he means that our vile body is changed, if he means it is sown a natural body and raised a spiritual body, if he means this mortal must put on immortality, if he means mortality is swallowed up of life, if he means that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, then I say yes, with all my mind and strength. We have no record of any change taking place after it is raised, "it is raised a spiritual body." If there be no resurrection, then every son and daughter of Adam are without hope, but "as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." Hence it is conclusive that in the resurrection we shall not appear in the image of Adam, or in other words, in our vile Adamic bodies, but in the image of Jesus. What this image is, or what we shall be, "doth not yet appear" to any man who lives on the earth.

Brother Dickens says he is anxious about the matter of the hand, foot and eye, because he considers it a vital point of discipline, and he hopes the Lord may bless our controversy to the good of the church. I hope also that our little correspondence may do no harm. He says if he is right he hopes the Lord will bless it to his people, and if I am right he hopes "the Lord will open the eyes of the blind to see it." Just who brother Dickens refers to when he says, open the eyes of the blind, I do not fully understand. He tells us that the Jews and unbelievers are the blind, I therefore hardly think he refers to that class. If he means the people of God (manifest children) then I fail to understand why he should say "eyes of the blind." The church of God is not blind to the truth, the eyes of their understanding having been enlightened; the sight may not be perfect, but sight at all is not blindness. I think the blindness which is most against us is blindness to our own shortcomings, faults, sins and weakness, but our sight is acute concerning these things in our brethren. I wish we might watch over each other for good and not for evil.

I have tried to reply to brother Dickens as the different points appear in his letter, and I have tried to be plain and pointed that I may be understood, but with no intention of being sarcastic or unkind. I fully believe brother Dickens is sincere in this matter, and I hope that I am equally so. We both have now given our views of the subject as well as we can perhaps, and they stand for the investigation of the readers of the SIGNS. One thing is sure, viz: whatever the Savior meant by the language, stands unchanged to-day and forever, regardless of what any of us may think, speak or write; our opinions will never change the true import of God's word. I am per-

fectly willing that brother Dickens shall have his view of the matter under consideration, and I am also sure that all others are willing, and that many stand with him I have no question, but this does not change my opinion, even though I should stand alone; my understanding of the Scriptures is not a matter between myself and man, but between God and me.

No man is infallible save those who were inspired of God and mentioned in his word by name. To God is all praise due for spiritual knowledge, wisdom and revelation. I ask no man to believe what I try to preach or write only as it is supported by the word of God.

I am not favorable to controversy, it seldom works to the glory of God, but often to an estrangement between brethren; it often makes the difference of opinion wider, it often confuses the minds of God's children, rather than to comfort them. I want, however, to stand firm in the truth, if it be God's will, and earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, but this does not mean fighting our brethren; many men have done this in their daily life more effectually than they ever did in the pulpit or through the press.

I now hope that brother Dickens may be willing to let this question of discussion cease with this number of the SIGNS. I appreciate his desire that God may bless brother Chick and me in our connection with the SIGNS, and I want to assure him that I desire God's blessing upon him in all his labor in the kingdom of God's dear Son.

H. C. KER.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence, Feb. 10th, 1906, Edward H. Pratt and Miss May E. Reeve, both of Orange Co., N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Miss Anna H. Scott, the subject of this notice, was born August 20th, 1825, and died Oct. 14th, 1905. She was the daughter of the late Elder Eli and Elizabeth Cole Scott, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, of Baltimore city, in August, 1860, (I suppose) by the late Elder Wm. J. Purington, he being pastor at that time, and she lived a consistent and beloved member to the day of her death. It was the good fortune of the writer to know her for the last seven years, and I can say that during these years she has been a faithful, loving and lovable sister, her cheerful and sunny disposition always shed its light around her. She was one of those children of God whose very presence made one feel glad to be with her. She was ever true to attend the meetings of her church, even when she was physically unable to do so, she loved the assembly of the saints. I well remember her last meeting with them, which was at Black Rock, how cheerful and glad she seemed at being present; though weak and tottering in the flesh, she was strong and bright in the spirit. She came home a few days later to her sister's, Mrs. John Walker, of 205 N. Fulton Ave., Baltimore, where she became ill, and although all that loving hands could do was done, her time had come and she must go home in obedience to her Father's call. She had no fear of death, and had at different times expressed her desire to go home and be at rest, which desire the Lord granted in his own time.

Her remains were taken to Black Rock Church on the 16th, where the writer spoke for a short time to the many friends that met to express their regard for the deceased.

A lovely sister is gone; we miss her from our meetings, and feel sad at our loss, but rejoice that she sings the song of everlasting praise to him who loved her and washed her from her sins in his own blood. May the meek and Christlike spirit that was ever manifest in her life rest upon the bereaved.

Her unworthy but fond pastor,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

[To the above tribute to the memory of our dear sister in Christ we feel to add a few words of affection and regard. When we were called to become the pastor of the churches in Baltimore city, Black Rock and Patapsco, she was an active loving member of the church in Baltimore. As such she remained all the years since, until increasing years and infirmities deprived her of the power to be as active as in earlier life. No one in all these years loved the courts of the Lord's house more, and no one strove to do that which she felt was incumbent upon her as a member more earnestly than did she. She was of a happy, sunny disposition, always cheerful, but never in any way of a light or trifling manner. She loved

the truth of salvation by grace, and the company of those who believed with her. It was our privilege to be much in her company for many years, and in all this time there is not one recollection but what is most pleasant. We know of but two now living who were members of the church in Baltimore when we went there, nearly forty years ago. We can but be sad at times as we recall the faces and voices of those who were so dear to us then, and remember that we shall on earth see them no more, but their memory is precious, and so the memory of our sister Annie Scott is altogether pleasant, for we received nothing but kindness at her hands at all times, and she was kindly in feeling and in deed to all. May God give to us all, that her mantle of true spiritual light and life may be ours also.—C.]

Mordecai W. Elston, son of Deacon Asa and Catharine C. Elston, was born in Wantage, Sussex Co., N. J., Oct. 28th, 1821, and fell asleep in Jesus Feb. 18th, 1906, being in his 85th year. Deceased married Millicent Wheat Hoyt, daughter of John and Phebe Stiles Hoyt, Dec. 25th, 1841. She departed this life May 24th, 1892. To this union were born eight children: Mary, died in 1869; Joel Nelson, in 1876; John Asa, in 1882. Those who survive him are Mrs. Phebe C. Smith and Miss Fannie A. Elston, of Middletown, N. Y., Dr. G. A. Elston, of Corry, Pa., George B. Elston, of Norfolk, Va., and M. W. Elston, Jr., of San Francisco, Cal. Brother Elston lived where he was born until he was married, when he moved near Mount Salem, N. J., on a farm which remains still in the family and is known as the Elston homestead, and where he remained until seven years ago, when he came to live in Middletown. The old homestead is furnished and unoccupied, except as a meeting place for the family during the summer months. This homestead is a pleasant place, surrounded by many comforts, with pleasant outlooks, and it being the home of the children of the family, is very dear to them. The home of brother Elston was a pleasant resting-place for all of his friends and also for those of his family. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Salem Church by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. He united with the Middletown & Wallkill Church soon after coming to Middletown to live, and remained a faithful, steadfast member till the end of his pilgrimage on the earth. The doctrine of God our Savior was his delight and comfort, and he died in triumphant faith, to awake in the likeness of Jesus. He was well known in Sussex and Orange counties and elsewhere as an honest, upright man, faithful in all the duties of life. He was a kind father, an affectionate husband and a good neighbor. He will be greatly missed in the home where he had spent most of his time of late owing to ill health, and where he received every attention by his dutiful and kind daughters. K.

Deacon Martin P. Cooper was born in Broome, N. Y., Dec. 18th, 1830, (his father dying Nov. 18th, one month previous to his birth.) He was called to his eternal rest Jan. 18th, 1906, after an illness of six days of pleuro pneumonia, being 75 years and 1 month old. He was married to Harriet Townsend Feb. 16th, 1852; to them were born one son and three daughters. In his early life he professed a hope, and went before the Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church and related some of his travels, and was received by them, and baptized by Elder George Slater, July 15th, 1866. He was chosen to fill the office of deacon Jan. 18th, 1868, which office he filled with honor and satisfaction to the church till his death. Brother Cooper leaves his wife, three daughters: Alice Wood, Helen Thorne and Fannie Smith, all worthy members of the Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church, and one sister, Maria Bush, seven grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, besides the church, to mourn their loss, but truly not as those who have no hope, feeling our loss is his gain. Deacon Cooper was a self-made man, and but few are his equal. In humility, patience, long-suffering, gentleness and meekness he manifested the Spirit of Christ. He was firm, uncompromising, fearless, and blest with a forgiving spirit in its true sense, beloved by all who knew him. It was my sad pleasure to be at his bedside the most of the time during the last four days of his sickness. His mind was clear until nearly the last. When asked if he wished to say anything, he said, "I have had my say long ago." Yes, his whole life speaks volumes. Brother Cooper's place in the church was always filled, with but two or three exceptions, at meeting time. His daughter expressed a desire that he might recover; he answered, "His will be done, it will all come out right." We as an association and as a church feel our loss keenly, yet cannot mourn, knowing God doeth all things well. May the Lord remember his bereaved family and the church in much mercy.

Elder John Clark spoke very comfortingly to relatives and friends Jan. 21st, after which the remains were laid to rest in the Middleburgh cemetery.

D. M. LEONARD.

BROOME CENTRE, N. Y.

BROTHER **Corbin Grafton,** whose funeral took place Feb. 23rd, 1906, on his 84th birthday, was our brother in the flesh and also in the Spirit, we hope. He was baptized, I believe, by the late Elder Wm. J. Purington, in the fellowship of the church at Harford, near the beginning of my ministry, I having never administered the ordinance at that time. In full fellowship he continued in this church until the end of his life. He was the oldest of six brothers, all sons of Martin Grafton, who, together with our mother, two sisters out of five, and three brothers out of six, were members of that church, and those

who make no profession are favorable to the doctrine held by the Baptists. Our brother was of a quiet, and rather reserved disposition, patient in his life, seeking peace with all men, and especially in the church. He leaves three sons and two daughters, all in homes of their own, but were all present during his sickness and departure. The beginning of the end was with a chill, followed by raging fever, which lasted as long as he did; he appeared to be struck with death at once, but lingered for several days, being aware of his condition; notwithstanding being encouraged by his physician, he felt that his time had come. He had all the attention that his children and others could give, but he is gone, leaving a widow who is also advanced in years, and five children, but they seem not to mourn as those who have no hope, but the flesh is weak. The bereaved widow has lost a faithful husband, the children an indulgent father, and the church at Harford an old, tried and faithful member. The Lord be merciful to those who remain, and fill up the vacant place, according to his good pleasure.

WM. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md.

INFORMATION WANTED.

IF there are any Old School Baptists near Wagner, South Dakota, will they please write to Mrs. R. T. Stout? Address, Wagner, S. Dak., R. F. D. No. 1.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

ELDER Wm. Morphew, of Lake Crystal, Minn., wishes to state that he has received $11.60 in answer to his appeal for aid, for which he feels very thankful.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 74. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1906. NO. 7.

POETRY.

JUST AS GOD LEADS.

(By request of Mrs. Mary Purington.)

JUST as God leads me I would go,
I would not ask to choose my way;
Content with what he will bestow,
Assured he will not let me stray;
So, as he leads, the path I make,
And step by step I gladly take,
A child in him confiding.

Just as God leads, I am content,
I rest me calmly in his hands;
That which he has decreed and sent,
That which his will for me commands,
I would that he should all fulfill,
That I should do his gracious will,
In living or in dying.

Just as God leads—I all resign,
I trust me to my Father's will;
When reason's rays deceptive shine,
His counsel would I yet fulfill;
That which his love ordained as right,
Before he brought me to the light,
My all to him resigning.

Just as God leads me, I abide
In faith, in hope, in suffering, true;
His strength is ever by my side—
Can aught my hold on him undo?
I hold him firm in patience, knowing
That God my life is still bestowing,
The best in kindness sending.

Just as God leads I onward go,
Oft amid thorns and briers seen;
God does not yet his guidance show,
But in the end it shall be seen
How, by a loving Father's will,
Faithful and true he leads me still.

WM. QUINT.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ROMANS III. 24.

"BEING justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

"How should man be just with God? If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand."—Job ix. 2, 3. The wisdom of the world can never tell us how transgressors can be justified before God. It is only the gospel of Christ that yields us the answer to this momentous inquiry, and the declaration at the commencement of our writing proclaims the good news.

Justification. Glad tidings indeed is this to sin-burdened, contrite souls, for such have come to the knowledge of the hopelessness of their condition if their justification depends upon the creature. Let us then for our comfort and hope look at the presentation of the subject in the text before us.

The first consideration is that it is "God that justifieth."—Rom. viii. 33. What, the righteous God, who hateth iniquity, justify vile transgressors of his holy law? Yes, this is the divine mystery in the gospel. What moved God to such acts? O, he was self moved, it was

his own graciousness, it was the good pleasure of his will, it was according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. "Being justified freely by his grace." This graciousness of the Lord is very consoling to us unworthy ones, and it is all treasured up in the Son of God, the Head of the church. So it is written, "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," and God "hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9. Then, from everlasting, grace was given us, given us, not apart from, but in Christ Jesus. God's love also is declared in this same manner: "The love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Rom. viii. 39. God hath chosen his people in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, and all spiritual blessings in heavenly places were given to the elect in him. (Eph. i. 3.)

"In Christ, from everlasting loved,
The saints were chosen and approved;
Formed for himself, with him joint-heirs,
All things in heaven and earth are theirs.

In Christ they were accounted one,
All known, all blest, ere time begun,
And one in covenant bonds of grace,
They were ordained to see his face."

And as I muse upon this my heart exclaims:

"O wondrous grace and mystery profound,
In God's eternal purpose I was found;
His sovereign love, his grace, his deep decree,
In some mysterious way included me."

It is ever well for the heirs of promise to trace the streams of their present blessedness to the eternal source from whence they all flow. This will abase all our pride, we shall see there is no ground for creature glorying in the sight of God, and while in humility, in nothingness, we are bowed before him, do not our hearts throb with adoring gratitude that grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began? Perhaps the most perfect presentation of Jehovah's abounding and reigning grace in the Scriptures is found in Romans viii. 29, 30: "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." "Whom he did foreknow." Before he gave them being in Adam, when as yet there were none of them, he knew them, he had taken them into heart intimacy unto himself, he loved them, his chosen in Christ Jesus. The Son of God prays unto the Father, saying, Thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. "For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."—John xvii. 24. God predestinated them to be conformed to the image of his Son. This signifies they shall attain to the highest excellency, to be in nearness to Jehovah in all the nearness of the Son of his love; it declares their attainment to immortal beauty, they shall be like the altogether lovely One; it reaches forth to their ultimate glorification when in the resurrection at the last day (John vi. 40,) they shall be raised incorruptible, immortal, then shall they fully bear the image of Christ, the heavenly One. "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." "Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" Read on to the end of the chapter this joyous song, and as

you read may your heart taste that divine inspiration, that you may in faith march on and sing with the loved and ransomed host their triumphant song. O this song is as a mighty flowing river, and yet flowing so sweetly that I, a poor sinner, taste and drink to satiate my sin-wearied, tempted soul. We have read of the animating powers of martial music, of songs that wrought to enthusiasm and inflamed our fellow sinful men to do exploits, to march "to victory or death," such as the Marseillaise hymn. But what are all such songs? they cannot compare with this, they are hushed, they are silent, they perish with the perishing, they sink down into the pit and are entombed to rise no more. O in all human literature there is no martial song that can be heard with this. Would you be familiar with the most preeminent martial hymn? then read this which the apostle Paul penned by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. They who have learned and sing this song are not going forth to "victory or death;" no, they go forth conquering and to conquer, they hold on their way from victory to victory till their last enemy is destroyed, which is death. Christ, the glorious Head of the redeemed, has triumphed, and has ascended on high, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and all the members of his body shall at length in eternal triumph stand with him upon mount Sion, (Rev. xiv. 1,) and reign in life eternal with him. "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." It is well established in the Scriptures that there is no meritorious cause in us that God should justify us, and under divine instruction we learn that by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified in his sight. (Gal. ii. 16.) There being then no procuring cause in us that God should bestow his justifying favor, we are taught then to appreciate the divine revelation that God justifies a sinner "freely by his grace." How rich and full, running over, is this language! It signifies that God justifies us without money and without price, gratuitously justified. How suitable is this to those who have "nothing to pay." Our justification is not of necessity, not reluctantly bestowed, but the Lord very cordially, in all affectionate bountifulness, justifies the ungodly. As in another place, in the new covenant God says, "Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart, and with my whole soul."—Jer. xxxii. 41. There is no half-heartedness in his gracious work, no hesitation, but freely he pours it forth, it is shed upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior.

The apostle having declared that justification is most freely and graciously given by God, proceeds to announce the glorious and almighty acts according to which he is just and the justifier of his justified ones. We are justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be the propitiation through faith in his blood. Christ is the propitiation for our sins, he is our Redeemer from the curse of the law, he only could put away our sins, and this he must do even by the sacrifice of himself; this was the way, this is what it cost to present us faultless in justification of life unto God. Consider awhile with me our mighty Redeemer, and how it became him to redeem us in order to our acceptance and everlasting happiness before the throne of God. "What think ye of Christ?"—Matt. xxii. 42. It is so es-

sential that our thoughts are the truth concerning him.

"What think ye of Christ? is the test
To try both your scheme and your frame;
You cannot think right in the rest
Unless you think rightly of him."

Our Lord Jesus Christ is God and man, he is David's Lord and David's son. (Matt. xxii. 42.) The apostle Paul presents the divine mystery of his person in these words: "The second man is the Lord from heaven."—1 Cor. xv. 47. "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."—1 Tim. iii. 16. He is Emmanuel, God with us. (Matt. i. 23.) The Word made flesh, the only begotten Son of God, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. He is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. (Phil. ii. 7; Heb. i. 3.)

"Some take him a creature to be,
A man, or an angel at most;
Sure these have not feelings like me,
Nor know themselves wretched and lost.
So guilty, so helpless am I,
I durst not confide in his blood,
Nor on his protection rely,
Unless I was sure he is God."

Surely the pleasure of the Father shall prosper in his hand. (Isaiah liii. 10.) Then also it is very satisfying to consider how in every way Christ Jesus was fitted to accomplish the redemption of his people. As our High Priest, Surety and Ransomer he was without flaw; as our sacrifice he is the Lamb without blemish and without spot. (1 Peter i. 9.) He knew no sin. (2 Cor. v. 21.) He did no sin. (1 Peter ii. 22.) In him is no sin. (1 John iii. 5.) He could say, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."—John xiv. 30. "Which of you convinceth me of sin?"—John viii. 46. "Such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens."—Heb. vii. 26. How is it that it became the Son of God to undertake our redemption? It became him to become incarnate and to be found in fashion as a man; (Heb. ii. 17,) to humble himself and become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, because in those transactions in the eternal counsel of God in which the elect were accounted one in the foreordained Christ, the anointed One. For the eternal election of the church by God the Father was not apart from, but in Christ Jesus, the Son of his love. So the elect of mankind were ever accounted, in the eternal counsel of Jehovah, in union and one with the Son of God, the Word, who in the beginning was with God, and was God, and who in the fullness of time, (Gal. iv. 4,) was made flesh and dwelt among us. It became the Son of God then to undertake the redemption of the church, for as he is the Husband and Head of the elect, he is in the very nature of this relationship the Savior of the body. "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the Savior of the body."—Eph. v. 23. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ."—1 Cor. xii. 12. There are other grounds embraced in the eternal purpose in Christ Jesus revealing to us why it became him

to redeem his people; one I will mention: the predestination of the elect unto the adoption of children. (Eph. i. 5.)

"All the Lord's honored, chosen race,
Adopted were by sovereign grace;
As viewed in Christ, they ever stood
The children of the living God."

In Heb. ii. 14–17, we have the incarnation, the ransoming, propitiary sufferings and death of the Son of God declared as flowing from this union. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." He is the near Kinsman, and the right of redemption is his. (Lev. xxv. 49.) I will not enlarge upon this, but would now present some thoughts upon the redemption through which the saints are justified.

Mankind in their creation in Adam were under law to the Creator, and in Adam all mankind fell by transgression under the condemnation and curse of the law. In the redemption therefore of the elect, God "sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."—Gal. iv. 4, 5. Eternal justice must be satisfied, and Christ the Head of the church very willingly came to satisfy all its claims against his chosen. The law demanded obedience, and penal sufferings for the transgressions of the church, and Christ very willingly (Heb. x. 5–7; John iv. 34,) gave himself an offering and a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savor unto God for the iniquities of his people. Having taken upon himself the form of a servant, and being found in fashion as a man, we have then to contemplate those mysterious and infinitely glorious acts of God in which Jehovah laid upon Christ the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah liii. 6.) He was made sin "for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Then was the infliction of divine wrath upon the Lamb, who in himself was without blemish and without spot, but now found bearing our iniquities. "For the transgression of my people was he stricken." He was the victim, the sacrifice, our propitiation. He delivered us from the wrath to come. (1 Thess. i. 10.) He was made a curse for us. (Gal. iii. 13.) "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."—Isaiah liii. 5.

"On him almighty vengeance fell,
That must have sunk a world to hell:
He bore it for the chosen race,
And thus became their hiding-place."

He ransomed his own from the power of the grave and redeemed them from death. (Hosea xiii. 14.) Thus by his mighty acts, his awful, transcending sufferings, he obtained eternal redemption for us. (Heb. ix. 12.) We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. How unspeakably blessed to the soul when with eyes of faith and love we are looking into these God-glorifying transactions of redeeming love. Our sins are purged away, there is no more curse, for now we have atonement and peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and to our hearts the Lord our Savior speaks:

"I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." By Christ's obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, the propitiation for our sins was fully and gloriously made, and the fruit of it is that all for whom he gave himself a ransom are presented in justification of life before the face of his Father. For though we were some time alienated, and enemies in our minds by wicked works, yet now hath Christ reconciled in the body of his flesh through death to present us holy and unblamable and unreprovable in his sight. (Col. i. 21, 22.) We have together traced the meritorious source of our justification to be by Christ's obedience, (Rom. v. 19,) through the redemption in him, (Rom. iii. 34,) and by the shedding of his blood. (Rom. v. 9.) We are therefore saved from wrath through him, he was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification. His resurrection was the manifest proof of his having paid the mighty debt, that he in very truth had purged our sins, and having full atonement made, having magnified and honored the law in behalf of the members of his body, he could not be holden of death, for it is written, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."—Acts ii. 27. If Christ be not risen we are without hope, our faith is vain, we are yet in our sins and are of all men most miserable; but now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. He is the firstfruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. In the gospel there are such wonderful discoveries of the glories of our Lord, and the apprehension of these things by the teaching of the Holy Spirit is very blessed. Even David describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom God will not impute sin. (Rom. iv. 6–8.) We are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. (1 Cor. vi. 11.) Yes, it is the Spirit of our God who so efficaciously reveals in us those divine accomplishments of Christ in behalf of his people, and causes us by the operation of his power to look to, to trust in the obedience and blood, the sufferings and death of the Savior as the only hope of the acceptance of the sinner before the throne of God. (Gal. ii. 16.) How blessed are the justified. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." Is there anything wrong in this, is the law dishonored? No, God is just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. It is the Holy One that inhabiteth eternity who justifies his people, and to our faith he is revealed dwelling between the cherubims, and speaks from above the blood-sprinkled mercy-seat. (Exodus xxv. 22.) God is in his holy temple, the place where his honor dwelleth, (Psalms xxvi. 8,) so all is honorable and glorious in the justification of sinners. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."—Rom. viii. 34. Ah, when my heart is disquieted, when the accuser would cast me down, (Rev. xii. 10,) O then to view the finished work of the Redeemer, and to have it applied by the Comforter to my sin-plagued, tempted soul, how blessed. Then I can sing:

"From whence this fear and unbelief?
Hath not the Father put to grief
His spotless Son for me?
And will the righteous Judge of men
Condemn me for that debt of sin
Which, Lord, was charged on thee?

Complete atonement thou hast made
And to the utmost farthing paid
Whate'er thy people owed;
How then can wrath on me take place,
If sheltered in thy righteousness,
And sprinkled with thy blood?

If thou hast my discharge procured,
And freely in my room endured
The whole of wrath divine;
Payment God cannot twice demand--
First at my bleeding Surety's hand,
And then again at mine.

Turn, then, my soul, unto thy rest,
The merits of thy great High Priest
Have bought thy liberty.
Trust in his efficacious blood,
Nor fear thy banishment from God,
Since Jesus died for thee."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

WINONA, Wash., Dec. 13, 1905.

EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—VERY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Companion in tribulation, neighbor in the kingdom of God, work-fellow in the gospel of the grace of God, pilgrim in a strange land, and I trust of a faithful branch in the vineyard of which I believe God is the Husbandman. As a reader of your esteemed publication, regard me also as a critic, not that I am watching for evil, but for good, but no less is it our duty to investigate or criticise, for he is my brother that shows me my fault, and I am so full of them, without forbearance in my brother I would have no such companion as grace has made of thee toward me. At this junction the language of Paul to Timothy comes to me: "Take heed unto thyself." O what a thought! I must pause and remember, and criticise myself. Another admonition: "Considering thyself lest thou also be tempted." "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"

At a time appointed of him (for I sincerely believe in predestination) I was much concerned about myself, "for I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." "For I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." And "when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." Sin being revived in me, my guilt being under the law, I had, I trust, a felt sense of the need of the Redeemer, and when it pleased God to reveal his Son in me, something said, "Take heed unto thyself;" and the more I could heed the more willingly I cried out, Lost, lost, "I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." No wonder one would say, "What must I do to be saved?" for indeed I was pricked in the heart, and taking heed unto myself I could find that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," and the thoughts and the intents of the heart are evil and that continually, and I must take heed. I cannot help it, corruption abounds in me, it deprives me of my former joys, for the things that I once thought were all right I can see now are evil. I am exposed to God, and also to myself as all evil, and darkness prevails over everything, and as for any way to escape from this condition it is all darkness, and when a desire arises to seek a release or to ask relief, I can but take heed to myself; like Paul, I can but cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" for it does seem to me I must die. As the sunlight shining through the keyhole into a dark room exposes the dust, yes, the very little dust is exposed and looks large, so was all within me, and I could but cry, "Woe is me! for I

am undone." I could but loathe myself in dust and ashes; and to add fuel to the flame was but to read that by the deeds of the law should no flesh be justified in his sight. I knew nowhere else to flee; I could but take heed to myself, and cry, What must I do? what can I do? what shall I do? and it is yet applicable, Take heed to thyself. I could read, "Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound," and for taking heed unto myself I could not see wherein grace could abound, for my time had not yet come; but it was when darkness prevailed over all the face of the earth that the God of mercy said, "Let there be light: and there was light." While I was in this condition, God who caused the light to shine out of darkness, I humbly trust, shined in my heart, and I must yet take heed unto myself. Conditions had changed, for I could see where grace did much more abound: "God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." I could see that he was made of a woman, made under the law, was made to redeem them that were under the law. Then I could with the psalmist sing, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well." Yet I must take heed unto myself, for after I had seen the end of all flesh, had seen that it was not in man that walketh to direct his steps, but the steps of the righteous are directed by the Lord, it being appointed, I could rejoice in the language of the Spirit: "Whosoever shall [not may] call on the name of the Lord shall be saved," (not may be so) for he has wrought in me that blessed condition. I have tasted of the good word of God, and the power of the world to come; I have learned the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and I must yet take heed unto myself. I am wholly, entirely, exclusively, absolutely dependent upon him even to think a good thought; he is the author and finisher of my faith, he is the beginning and the end, yea, he is not dependent upon me, even to ask a blessing in order that he may bestow, much less do something good or be obedient, for it was while we were dead in sins that Christ died for the ungodly, and I want to remember this, for in so doing I can take heed unto myself. While God has thus graciously dealt with me I have learned doctrine, and it teaches me that he has all power in heaven and in earth, and has created all things, both good and evil, and he worketh all things (not the most convenient or honorable things, but all things) after the counsel of his own will, and he "hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us." But we were in him in the Spirit, according as he hath chosen us in him, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; and in this we can take heed unto ourself and the doctrine, continue in them and be saved, or save ourselves; but if we begin to teach obedience to the law to save ourselves, we are to take heed unto ourselves; to remember that in that condition we were lost, but when we came to the end of the law and learned that there was no justification or hope of life in it, then we took heed to ourselves and depended upon him; salvation is of the Lord and not of works.

Well, my brethren, I did not know I was going to write thus, I wished to tell you that I appreciate the SIGNS, I regard it as a manifest workmanship which needeth not to be ashamed. I love to

read it, dear brethren and sisters, and wish it was large enough for all of you to write for each number; but God is too wise to err, he knows what is best; let us lay aside all malice and guile and hypocrisy and backbiting, taking heed unto ourselves and the doctrine, continuing in it, and "run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame."

Brethren and sisters, farewell.

Yours unworthily,

A. G. JONES.

DELMAR, Del., Dec. 4, 1905.

DEAR BRETHREN:—What does the ark built by Noah typify? I believe that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and that every word is in the place which God designed it should stand. In this word we are told that men had corrupted themselves upon the earth. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord, and Noah walked with God. We must not understand that Noah walked with God as man walks with man, but that the Spirit of God was with him, and that Noah was led by this Spirit in the same way as is the case with the people of God to-day; and Noah was commanded of God to build an ark. In Gen. vi. 13, it is written: "And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them: and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth."

Now all these things mean something, and point to something beyond what the world or the natural mind can comprehend. Noah was not commanded to build the ark simply that he, and what went into it, might be saved from the flood, and neither did God destroy the earth simply because he had determined to do so, but it all pointed to something beyond that. Now it appears to me that the ark is a type of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Mary, the mother of Jesus, was told that she should bring forth a son, and that his name should be called Jesus, for he should save his people from their sins. It was not added, if they would let him save them, but he shall save his people from their sins. So Noah was commanded that he should build an ark to save his family. This was typical of Christ, who was "made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." One may say Noah was saved in the ark; and so was Mary, the mother of Jesus, saved in him. The floods that came and beat upon the ark were typical of the suffering which came upon Jesus and the many trials through which he was called to pass, and we are told that the Lord commanded Noah and his family, which typified the church, to go into the ark. Notice, the Lord did not invite them in, but commanded them, and then shut them in, and they were there shielded from all harm in the tempest. And we are told that Jesus trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there were none with him and none to help him. So likewise the ark bore all the buffeting through all the flood and storm, and was lifted above the earth, being wrapped in darkness and gloom.

Noah and his family were hidden from the men of the earth, shut in the ark, as the church is in Christ. He said of his people, Of all that the Father "hath given me I should lose nothing, but will raise it up again at the last day." In like manner there was not one single life lost of all that were in the ark; all were brought safely through. Again, as the

ark was lifted up above the earth, so was Christ lifted up above the earth, nailed to the cross, and his blood was shed to redeem every one whom the Lord had given him. When the message was given to Mary, "He shall save his people from their sins," they were all chosen in him, and he has brought them through the flood, and it was his blood that redeemed them all; when he said "It is finished," the law was satisfied.

We are told that the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat, and Noah offered up sacrifices to God, but we have no record that any one ever saw the ark after the flood save Noah and his family, and neither did any one ever see Christ after he was raised from the dead, save his chosen ones, and did they not also offer up sacrifices? Not in the shedding of blood of beasts and birds, but they offered up the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, and they glorified God.

At the beginning of this letter I quoted the thirteenth verse, and now I will try to say a little about what it seems to me the Lord meant when he said to Noah, "The end of all flesh is come before me." Until Christ came in the flesh there were sacrifices offered for sin, but when he was offered all these things were taken away. It is said in one place, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me." So when it pleased the Lord that he should be offered up once for all, this was the end of all flesh before him. He had no more use for sacrifices and burnt offerings, and any one who now practices these things knows not Christ. The earth was filled with violence through the offering up of these sacrifices by the vain imaginations of the nations, and he now also destroys them with the earth, thus taking all earthly strength from us, showing us that we have no strength at all, and at the same time taking those things which we have, as it were, been offering to God as sacred things, and which we have esteemed as good works, away, and at the same time this earth (this tenement of clay) is filled with violence through these things. When it pleases the Lord to destroy this earth by showing us our nothingness, these things are all destroyed with it.

He did not tell Noah that all would be pleasant in his life, but that he should go forth and replenish the earth, and that while the earth should remain, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night should not cease. Thus we see that after we are safe in the Ark, and have seen him lifted up, and all that is earthy taken away, and we have been made to glorify God, looking unto Christ, the great sacrifice who has atoned for all our sins, we are not promised that we shall escape all cold seasons, and shall have no more night, but that we must pass through both seasons of sorrow and seasons of rejoicing, or seasons of day and night so long as we are in this earthly tabernacle.

Noah was assured that the earth shall no more be destroyed by water, but that when the cloud shall come he will put his bow in the cloud as a token of the covenant between him and his people that he may remember his covenant with them. Thus the poor, trembling child of God when passing through these dark seasons, with the clouds gathering thick around him so that it seems he cannot endure the storm, still has the token of the promise of God that he shall nevermore be overwhelmed. When the Sun of righteousness breaks forth with his brilliant rays, the clouds are dispersed, and as they pass away we see the bow in the cloud. It is not the Sun that we see, for

we cannot behold the Sun, but we do see the bow in the cloud, and rejoice and remember his covenant with us, that he will not destroy us. It is not in the clear sky that we see the bow, but in the cloud.

I hope that the Lord has presented these things to my mind, and so will submit them to your better judgment.

Yours in hope,

JOHN L. HASTINGS.

LITTLE MOUNT, Ky., April 24, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR EDITOR OF THE PRECIOUS SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I inclose a letter written to me by a very dear sister, (dear for the truth's sake) Joie E. Wickham. I very much enjoyed it, and I think that the readers of the SIGNS would also enjoy it.

Yours, the least of all,

J. W. SHELBOURNE.

CARDINGTON, Ohio, Jan. 8, 1905.

MR. J. W. SHELBOURNE—MY DEAR BROTHER:—Your much esteemed letter reached me last evening, and I appreciate your kindness in remembering me. I am glad that you enjoyed my letter in the SIGNS. After I had sent it I felt ashamed of it, and dreaded its appearance in print, but I am glad now that I sent it. Yes, dear brother, it was truth to me, too, when I wrote it. How sweet it would be to meet each one face to face. I suppose that I came near meeting you about three or four years ago: I had my valise all packed to go to the association of which Elder Sawin is the moderator. I did want to go so much; Elder Chick was to be there.

Your letter needs no apology, my brother, and what more can you ask in your experience? You are interested in divine things, and you love the brethren, how can you think of any clearer evidence than that? It is not said we may hope, but we may know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren, and yet after all this we live in hope and have to walk by faith, not by sight. We are too unbelieving to accept the plain declaration of the word. But there seems great reason for doubt in my case, not only that I am so full of sin, but I am a lover of all mankind, and I ask myself if it is anything more than natural that I should love such good people as the Old Baptists a little bit better? But I must confess that I love them considerably better. I shall never forget when I found them at an association about twelve miles from home, it seemed the very gate of heaven to me, and I had hard work to keep from asking for baptism right there. O how beautiful they looked, and I felt that it was Christ in them, and the words of Ruth were in my heart. I went back to the next church meeting and presented myself. Then my dear mother came, and we were received and baptized together amidst great rejoicing. We were both strangers; there were but two or three in the house who knew who I was, but that made no difference.

"If fellowship with kindred minds
Is to our souls so sweet,
What heavenly rapture shall we know
When at his throne we meet!"

So you see I had no way of knowing whether I would have loved the Baptists before or not. The day I was received was the first time I attended a Baptist meeting. But I was, from a very small child, interested in my soul's safety, and I can tell of no beginning of an experience, but for years I was trying to earn heaven through my own righteousness. There came a time when I had a very good view of my own righteousness, and

it was a soul-sickening sight. O how I loathed myself, I felt too vile to be in the company of any mortal being; it did not seem so much what I had done, as what I was. I saw my heart as a sink of reeking iniquity; any action of mine seemed vile, because it came from that vile heart. I saw that I had been trying to be good for selfish motives, which made even good deeds unclean; yes, verily filthy rags; and I am the same vile sinner still. But, dear brother, when I was given a view of the righteousness of Christ, and that it was mine, all my vileness taken away, that Jesus, blessed Jesus, had kept the law in my stead, O this was joy unspeakable. My vileness is unspeakable, but the goodness of God is much more so; yea, we receive double for all our sins. There are so many precious things I would like to say here of the preciousness of the grace of God. O what a change from the reeking depths of sin into the purity of God himself. Yes, his purity is really ours; we cannot tell it here, but I hope that we can tell it up yonder, when we shall be satisfied. When one asks me to tell my experience, I hardly know what to tell, the things which give me hope are so scattered throughout my life I hardly know whether to tell this or that. I cannot tell how old I was when I saw myself a sinner, for I do not know when I first felt it; almost as far back as I can remember anything at all I was at times sorry and quite uneasy on account of my failings. People said I was a very obedient child, but sin was in my heart just the same. I cannot remember when I did not love to hear about Jesus, and would leave my play to listen when the older ones talked "religion." I think I was just about entering my teens when I was given a view of Christ upon the cross. I hesitate to speak of it, for it seems too sacred for me. I saw him as I see this paper, he was upon the cross, and a bright light reached from earth to heaven, and I heard a voice telling me that before I was born God loved even me and that Jesus kept the law for me, it was finished; that he died to pay my debt, that my many sins were forgiven, and Christ's merit was mine. So you can see when I a few years later heard the Baptists preach, it was no wonder I should accept it, for I was taught free grace and election in that glad hour. I felt that I was as pure as the snow, and though I often fear it was a delusion, yet I hope it was real. I know I felt and heard and saw it, but did God give it to me?

As I am now twelve miles from my church, and have no horse, I have not been there since September. Elder H. M. Curry and Elder Frank McGlade used to visit us, Elder L. B. Hanover comes yet; he is a stanch SIGNS Baptist. Elder Bragg, of Alabama, was here last summer, and we had a good meeting. Our association, the Owl Creek Harmony, was very good this year. I am the only one in our church who takes the SIGNS, but there are a number who believe the same doctrine.

I want to thank you again for writing. I hope you can read this. I can scarcely keep pace with my thoughts, and therefore write poorly.

Your sister,

JOIE E. WICKHAM.

ROSWELL, Ga., Dec. 28, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have been thinking for a long time that I would write you concerning the SIGNS, but I do not wish to be a burden to you. I have been trying to arrange to send you some money, but have been

in bad health so long that it seems as though I could not have gotten along had it not been that my aged father provided a home for me. For the past year I have been much afflicted, but for some purpose unknown to me, I am spared and remain among the living. I am very sinful and all unworthy of the favor of God. His favors have been many, and if not deceived I desire to be thankful. I love the SIGNS; I love the editor and the editorials; I love the correspondents; I love the doctrine which is advocated, if I understand it; I love the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, for time and for eternity; I love the doctrine that Christ Jesus was made unto us wisdom, righteousness and redemption, he is manifested to them who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began; and that glorious principle lives in the children of God, and shows them their depravity, and causes them to have no confidence in the flesh, but to put their trust in God who is able to keep them from falling, and to present them before the Father without spot or wrinkle. I wish that I could claim this hope of the children of God, but I so feel my depravity that I almost sink in despair.

Now please pray for me and my family. I live way down here in Georgia, where many people claim to be Primitive Baptists who yet do not preach the doctrine that the SIGNS holds forth. In other words, they have too much "conditional time salvation" among them. I love the doctrine of good works, but I love it as the Scriptures teach it, and, I will say, as experience teaches it: that we can do nothing good of ourselves. It is God that works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure, it is not left to our choice. I believe in the God of all wisdom and power who causes all things to work together for good to them who love him.

I did not aim to write as I have when I began, and I am tempted not to send it to you, because it is so imperfect, like the writer; I only meant to thank you for the SIGNS, and to say that I did not want to be a burden to you. If it be the will of God to prosper me, I will remit what is due you. Please throw the mantle of charity over this letter, and remember me in your petitions at the throne of grace. If it be God's will, I would rejoice for you to visit this country in the near future, and preach the glorious doctrine of Christ Jesus, the way, the truth and the life, and the resurrection. Here is all my hope, if I have any hope that is good. I hope that this vile body shall be changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body, then shall we be with him, and see him as he is.

I have just received the SIGNS for January 1st, and read the editorial, "New Year's Greeting;" it seems to me the best that you ever wrote. I know that it came down from the Giver of every good and perfect gift. May the Lord keep you by his Spirit in the frame of mind and line of thought that is in this address, if it be his will, all the coming year. This is the prayer of one who wishes you all well.

I have written this that you might catch a glimpse of the feelings of my heart, I cannot find language to express it.

Yours with love,

G. R. JOHNSON.

[WE deeply appreciate the prayer of our brother for us, and trust it may be God's will to bestow upon us the blessing which our brother craves for us. We do most certainly need the presence of the Holy Spirit of God to abide in our heart and to control our mind and make us in the

least degree profitable to his flock. We are also glad to hear from our brother regarding his debt on his subscription to the SIGNS. We do not want to oppress any one, and we would be glad could we find ourselves able to send the SIGNS to all the poor and needy of the flock of God at our own expense. We do send it to very many in that way, but all can see that there must be a limit financially to this. We should be glad would all who are in arrears write us as brother Johnson has done, stating their situation frankly, and giving us some idea whether they hope to remit in the future. Both they and we should feel much better if all would do so.—C.]

DAYTON, Wash., Jan. 1, 1906.

ELDER H. C. KER—VERY DEAR AND ESTEEMED BROTHER IN CHRIST JESUS:—Though strangers in the flesh, yet I hope we are near kindred in Christ. I have been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for nearly thirty years, and can say that I truly love the doctrine contended for in its columns. There are many names I see in it that have become familiar to me. I have learned to love those whose faces I have never seen or ever expect to see. In the SIGNS the great plan of salvation is set forth, the name of Jesus is exalted, and the path of the saints is pointed out; so I find much interest and comfort in reading it, and am always glad to meet it at the post-office. By reading it I am brought into sweet love and fellowship with many I never expect to meet in this life.

While reading sister B. E. Wright's letter, of Santa Cruz, Cal., I was comforted, and she was drawn very near me in love and fellowship. I had been very low in spirit, groping in darkness and despair, and every thought was evil continually, and my mind was constantly on imaginary, unprofitable things; I would often try to meditate upon some part of the Scriptures, but before I was aware I would be thinking of something that I had no thought or expectation of seeing or that will ever come to pass, but when I came to her letter her experience and the evidence she set forth were so strong that I felt I knew it was all true. So the doubts and gloom soon disappeared, and my soul was led out to her in loving fellowship in the same mind, in the same hope, in the same faith in the Savior of poor sinners. I love the SIGNS because in it I find the fellowship of the Lord's dear people maintained; not merely that fellowship of love, but that fellowship of suffering and rejoicing, and that true fellowship of christian life and travel. As I read of the many experiences, both in the manifestation of God's love to his people in leading them into the knowledge of his love, mercy and grace, and a knowledge of their own weakness and sinful and depraved condition before God, I see that fellowship of the saints on the housetops and on the tops of the mountains, as they sing praise to God for the manifestation of his love to us in the free pardon of our sins. Not only do we find this fellowship of rejoicing, but in fellowship with the word of God, I will lead the blind in a way that they have not known, and in paths that they have not trodden, we have fellowship with the holy prophets of old at the feet of mercy in supplication and prayer for the Lord's mercy and help in the confession of their sins. We also have fellowship with Jesus, after he had heard the Father saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," in being led of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, and not only have

we fellowship with him in temptation, but in grief, in sorrow, in suffering. With Paul also we say, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." In this fellowship there is the same knowledge, the same will and the same delight; the same law of sin, which produces the same effect, viz: "O wretched man that I am!" We walk with David, being led by the still waters; and we rest with him, lying down in green pastures, we are also with those in the banqueting-house of the Lord when his banner of love is over us.

Now, dear brother, I have tried to tell you why I take so much comfort in reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, because in it I find many in whom I have great confidence as being the children of our God, expressing the same thoughts, the same love for God and godliness, the same love and fellowship for each other, and the same knowledge of their own weakness and sinful nature. In many other ways they are of one mind and one heart. I wish I could write as I feel, but cannot, so I will leave this with you; do as you think best with it.

Yours in gospel bonds,

B. S. PATE.

LEXINGTON, N. Y., Jan. 25, 1906.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—After reading some of the letters written by the dear ones in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, my heart seems to warm toward them and to bring back some of my first love, which seemed to have grown so cold that I have often feared I have never known the Savior's love, or have been called out of darkness into the light of the doctrine of Christ. O how I do long for more of that love that casts out fear, for I feel so cold and indifferent most of the time. It seems I have neither joy or song, and make so many crooked paths, and come so far short of the life I would like to live; I see so little of the Savior's likeness in myself that I am made to cry out, O poor, unworthy me, what am I that God should be mindful of me when I can see nothing in myself but sin and uncleanness? O how must I appear in his sight who cannot look upon sin? I am continually sinning and coming short of his glory, my heart seems to be a cage of unclean birds. I read of others' trials and temptations, but this seems different; mine are of such a sinful nature, and it seems every thought or act is sin; sin is mixed with all I do. Sometimes I almost lose sight of my hope, and feel that I never have had a true hope, still I would not exchange the small hope I have for all of this world, for it is all I have, and I have nothing to lean upon or look to but the crucified Son of God, who said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Last June when I attended the Warwick Association I thought, Can I ever lose sight of the promises again? I was so comforted with the preaching, I thought, Surely I have been taught by the same blessed Teacher, or I could not understand and rejoice so much in the teachings of the blessed Savior. For months I could recall some part of that meeting with joy. I know God does his own work without the puny arm of man, he rules and reigns over all things to his own glory, and to him all the glory belongs for our finished salvation. But poor and unworthy me, all I do comes so far short of what seems giving glory to his name that I am almost afraid to say he has called me by his grace and washed

me in his blood, and unless that has been done for me I cannot stand before him, all I can say is, "Rock of ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee." I am so changeable that I am a mystery to myself.

While reading brother D. S. Elliott's letter it did seem that my heart was filled to overflowing, I could not help saying, Bless the Lord, O my soul, and give thanks to his name for his goodness and mercy in visiting the low estate of his people, and giving them joy for sadness, and raising the beggars from the dunghill to make them kings and priests unto God. Happy is the man whose God is the Lord, and the people who know the joyful sound, and are made to lean on the Almighty God for strength, and to trust in his everlasting goodness, for he says, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." O who is like unto our God? he is the Tower of strength and the Fountain of love. The poet says,

> "How can I sink with such a prop
> As my eternal God,
> Who bears the earth's huge pillars up,
> And spreads the heavens abroad?"

Yet I am so forgetful of his goodness and mercy, and often fret and worry over the affairs of this life, but then I am brought by the Spirit to realize how good he has been to me, who am the least of all his creatures, and how I have been kept by his love and power all the days of my life or I should have sunk in despair many times, when my way has seemed to be hedged up with hewn stone and I could see no way of escape, he has raised me above all my troubles, and given me strength for days to come. I feel to praise his worthy name for all his benefits to me, and am made to pray that he will never leave me to myself, for I know that without him I can do nothing, and should surely go astray.

Now I must bring this letter to a close, and beg pardon for writing so much to take up your time, which I know can be so much better employed than in reading this letter, and promise not to trouble you often in this manner. I have often thought when I have been reading the letters of the dear ones that I would like to write and tell them how much I love them and enjoy their writings, but feel wholly incapable of doing so, and too unworthy, yet I do so long for their love and fellowship, although I have never seen them.

From your unworthy sister, if one at all,

(MRS.) MARY M. FAULKNER.

SENECA FALLS, N. Y., Dec. 11, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—It is some time since I have written to you, or to the dear old SIGNS. I do look for it and read it with much love and interest, but feeling my weakness I have kept silent and let the stronger soldiers fight for the truth; I love to hear them contend so nobly for the truth. In November 15th number I felt comforted in reading the article written by brother John Morse, especially where he said that from personal observation he had seen that it was not always those who could tell the brightest and clearest evidences that make the best soldiers, but it was often the other way. How encouraging to me; O that it may prove that way in my case, for many times through my darkness of mind I am almost ready to faint, and then I feel his loving arm beneath me, gently lifting me up where I can see a little ray of light, in which I grasp a spark of hope, and then I take courage

and go on, trusting in the risen Savior. Brother Chick, what would I do without this little hope, I seem so dead to the world and all its pleasures? All I ask is his love and presence as a clear evidence that I have found favor in his sight.

Brother Chick, it is about two years since I wrote you of my exercises of mind, and about one and one-half years since my dear sister from Clyde and myself united with the White Church, and I was so happy then, as I had such a desire to follow his commandment in baptism. I thought I would grow in grace and in knowledge of him I love, but alas, it does seem that I know less and less, and grow weaker and weaker, for within myself I find no good thing, but my never-ceasing prayer is that the dear Savior will make me a good soldier, ever contending for the truth as it is in Jesus, and that at last I can say, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course.

I am afraid I have made this poor, bungling letter too long, but at the time my experience was published I received so many lovely, comforting letters from the brethren in different parts, and I thought perhaps they would like to hear from me again through the SIGNS, although I fear they will not draw much comfort from what I have written, but I can truly say, I love Jesus, and I love the brethren and the cause, and that strengthens me, for we read that is one of the surest evidences that we have passed from death unto life. May the peace of Christ dwell in our hearts, and the name of Jesus ever be exalted.

With christian love, I am your unworthy sister, if one at all,

(MRS.) W. J. PECK.

TULLOS, LA., Dec. 28, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER EDITOR:—I feel like writing some of the good Lord's blessings and goodness to me, who feels to be but a poor, unworthy wretch. I wish to ask if any one else gets along as I do? Dear brother, if you will allow me to say brother, I am always asking myself how God can have mercy on so vile a sinner as I. I do not see that I can have one good thought, or do aught to bring me into favor with God. This has come into my mind: Jesus said, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; * * * for my yoke is easy, and my burden light." But how can I do this? I cannot go to this yoke, I cannot find it, and I could not put it on even if I could find it. Again he says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden." Once I did not see or know the way; my heart was too hard to pray; when I would try to pray this would come into my mind, Do you not know that you cannot pray? your time is past, so I was afraid to try. But about one year ago this came into my mind, All that do hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled. Then my heart seemed so light I leaped for joy, and this song came to me:

"Show pity, Lord, O Lord, forgive,
Let a repenting rebel live:
Are not thy mercies large and free?
May not a sinner trust in thee?"

Then I could sing, and it was sweet.

I wrote you about my dream to go to hear an old man preach, as I believe I did. But it came into my mind that I was not fit to hear them, to say nothing about uniting with them; yet I would go, though I do not see why. Sometimes I did wish I had not come, for it seemed to me that I was in their way. But in about a year, somehow I offered myself to the church, and was received. I do not see yet how they could receive me. I thought

then I should have no more trouble. But, dear friends, I have been at the meetings since then when I felt that I could not shake hands with any one, because I felt too sinful; at other times I have gone and had a feast. Sometimes the brethren would call me brother, but I would say, I wish that you would not; it will do for the rest, but not for me. When my wife became a member I could only ask, How can as good a woman as she call me her husband? Her words were sweet and good, while I was all unrighteousness. I often go to the meetings and cannot see what I go for. Sometimes after I am there I can say, I am glad that I came, and then again I am in darkness, so that I am made to cry, O Lord, how long wilt thou withhold the light from me, if I am thine at all?

But I will not write any more now. You and all the brethren must know that I am nothing. If any such exercises have been with you, you can pray for me, and will you do so?

Your unworthy brother in hope,

B. F. PARKER.

[BROTHER Parker asks, How can I take the yoke upon me? How can I find it? The dear Savior was addressing his disciples, for none but his own disciples are weary and heavy laden. His yoke is not still more labor and weariness, but rest. The law laid heavy burdens upon all who were under it, and it does so still. If men seek to serve the law, they continue to be burdened; if men are servants of another man, heavy burdens are laid upon them also; but our dear Savior has taken every burden upon himself, he has fulfilled the law of God, and he has done all that it required of his people; nothing, either great or small, remains for them to do; all that remains is rest, rest in him. He that hath ceased from his own works, hath entered into rest, is the inspired testimony. Such as are his grow up into him, in his meekness and lowliness, and so find rest to their souls, for he is meek and lowly of heart; all this is not a burden, but rest. His yoke is not an added burden, but relief instead. What is a yoke for? It is not to add burdens, but to relieve and make the labor lighter. So in Christ all is easy, for he is our strength, and we rest in his strength. Therefore to go forward in baptism and all the ordinances of the house of God, and to show kindness, and pity, and love to his disciples, to minister to their necessities, to walk honestly and faithfully before our fellow-men, ceases to be a burden to such a soul, but is rest instead. To do what love dictates is rest, to be hindered from doing what love dictates is a burden indeed. Like the blessed Master, it is the meat and drink of his disciples to do the will of their Father in heaven.—C.]

WORTHINGTON, Minn., August, 1905.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel unworthy to thus address you. I have had it in my mind to tell you my belief that there is not a child born in this world but that there is a purpose of God in it, and that when that purpose is fulfilled he or she will pass away from earth. God's will is fulfilled with them, and he takes them away, just as he wills to do. We that are spared longer than others are spared for his purpose. Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." So he is all and in all to them that love him. This brings my mind to ask, Do I love him? I can say, if I know my own heart, even heaven itself would be no pleasure to me if Jesus were not there. I do love his doctrine, the predestination of all things, and election; they shine

forth so brightly in his holy word. If I hear a man speak about Jesus I follow his conversation to see if he agrees with the word of God, but I find no one who can say that they love the Lord Jesus Christ in truth here. The Arminian preachers use his name, but it hurts my feelings much to hear his name used in such mockery, so I seldom go to hear them; I have no desire to hear them talk. My wife and I are marked by the members; we see their lofty looks as they pass us by; they say, Do you think that you are right, and all the world wrong? Surely you must be wrong. This causes doubts and fears to arise in the mind, but there is sometimes a still small voice which says, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

O what a loving Jesus is that Savior who has guarded my life all my journey through; may I lie humbled at his feet all my appointed time here on this earth.

I was baptized by Elder Durand, at Fishing Creek, Maryland. I think it is about twenty-five years since I began to read the SIGNS. It is all the preaching we have here, and it is very precious to us now. As soon as it comes my wife looks over the deaths to see if any one has passed away that we know. We love the sweet letters it contains, they tell my feelings much better than I can. I begin to read, and soon my eyes fill with tears and I have to stop and wipe them away, so you may know that we love them. These people are, as I believe, the people of God. At my baptism, when I saw Elder Durand in the water the thought came into my mind, There is a man of God, and I started to go to him.

December 23rd.—I will speak of some things that are the belief of a poor sinner. My faith is in the Lord Jesus Christ, that he has all power to save me if it is his will to do so. He works all things after the counsel of his own will, and my case is in his hands to save or to condemn me. By his holy law my just dues would be eternal condemnation, but Jesus died to save his lost sheep, and I hope that he will remember me in his mercy. I often fear that it cannot be that he will remember me, or that the Spirit of Jesus dwells in my heart; this brings doubt and fear to my trembling soul as I write these words. Some here ask me to come and hear them, and I tell them if they will stop preaching works then I might hear them. They say that I would prosper better. I reply that my bread and water are sure. So I do not go near their meetings. My Lord and Master said, Come out of her, my people, and touch not the unclean thing. I have no desire to be with those who deny the grace of God, and I think it would be a sin to patronize them. Although I am here alone, yet I am not alone, for my Lord and Master is with me in all my trials, and he is present in all that I do in this world.

I have a great desire to visit the east and see some of the brethren. Does the Middletown church meet every Sunday?

Your brother in Christ,

HENRY JAMES.

[THE church in Middletown meets every Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock for preaching.—ED.]

ALBANY, Ore., Dec. 7, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed I send you two dollars for the renewal of my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Much of my early life I spent with the Missionary Baptists, and while with them I labored hard, thinking that I was doing God service; as much so perhaps as did

Saul when he was persecuting the saints. Dear brother, I wish to say that I have a greater love for the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES than I have for any other paper published by the Primitive Baptists, for through the able communications published in that paper, and by God's grace and revelation, I trust that I was permitted to understand the glorious doctrine of grace as revealed in the Bible. When I saw the truth in all of its grandeur and beauty my poor heart was filled with joy inexpressible and full of glory. All the time I was thus laboring in darkness in regard to the truth I was perhaps quickened by God's grace, but I needed a teacher, not to be the means of my eternal salvation, but to give me a correct knowledge of the truth as set forth in the holy Scriptures. Philip found the eunuch reading in the book of Isaiah, which shows that he was seeking for truth and that he was quickened by grace. Philip said to him, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" The eunuch said, How can I except some man guide me? Philip began at the same Scripture and preached unto him Jesus. The Lord opened his heart to receive the truth, and when they came to the water the eunuch said, "Here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" "Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." His answer was, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Philip knew that if he believed this he was born of God, and a fit subject for the ordinance of baptism. The apostle said, He "that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God," and that no man can say Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost. How vain and foolish for any one to argue that water baptism has anything to do with regeneration. Baptism only represents burial and resurrection to a new life, or the burial and resurrection of our Savior. The apostle says, Being buried with Christ "by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

I will say no more on this subject, but will close this letter by talking to you in regard to the sweet comfort and consolation that I have received while reading the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I commenced taking it when it was published by Elder Gilbert Beebe, that bold and able defender of the truth, who has long since gone to his reward. Often has my poor heart been made to rejoice while reading the able communications of those dear old brethren who have long since entered that eternal rest which God prepared for all his redeemed people. The question with me is, Am I embraced in the everlasting covenant of grace? Did Christ make atonement for me? If so, I am as sure of heaven as if I were there. What a glorious thought, my brother, that "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."

I am now in my seventy-second year, and realize that I will soon have to meet my righteous Judge. When I review my past life I can see nothing in me but sin; I fear that I will not be able to say with the apostle that I have fought a good fight; O let me say that I have kept the faith.

Brother Chick, there are a few Primitive Baptists here on this Pacific coast, some of whom are deprived of the privilege of hearing the gospel preached only through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; how important it is that we should lend a helping hand in its support. I hope the readers of the good old SIGNS will be prompt in renewing their subscriptions.

I submit this for your disposal, knowing that all communications, whether good or bad, are safe in your hands, as you will publish nothing that will not be comforting to the saints.

I am yours in hope of eternal life,

SILAS WILLIAMS.

ETERNITY.

DURING the past four months my surrounding circumstances have prevented me from writing or reading, but I have had occasional moments of reflections. At one of these times of meditation my mind was led to reflect upon the vastness of eternity; and the more I tried to comprehend eternity the more I became lost in the maze of bewilderment and wonder. I could only compare the vastness of eternity to that of space, without beginning or end; it is beyond the comprehension of the mind of mortals. There is a beginning and end to time and time things, but not so with eternity.

My mind is led to reflect upon the plan of the salvation of poor, fallen man. There are many professed religious orders, or sects, in this time world, each having a mode or plan of salvation, but they differ widely one from the other, so that they are susceptible of change; old or nonessential things may be stricken out, and, in order to keep up with the times, new things are added. But not so with Jehovah's plan which was laid in eternity, or ever the earth was. In the eye, mind or purpose of God, everything connected with his plan of salvation, every heir to that inheritance which is "incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away," was as surely fixed and determined with Jehovah in eternity as it will be when time and time things shall flee away as a shadow and be no more. God is unchangeable, the same yesterday, to-day and forever, there is nothing new or old with him. He looks upon things which are not, as though they were, (Rom. iv. 17,) so that the future is as but one ever-present now with him. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isaiah xlvi. 10. Jesus said unto his chosen ones, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Again, we hear him saying, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." O what comfort these assurances of the blessed Master have brought to me often in life when I have been tried and tempted, when passing through sore trials, sorrows and tribulations. Often when the sorrows and tribulations of this life come upon us we seem to lose sight of the assurance that it is through much tribulation we enter into the kingdom of God, that tribulation is an inheritance of God's dear children. We often seem to forget that our blessed Jesus has promised us that he will not leave us nor forsake us.

I know full well, according to the course of nature, that my end of life in this world of sin and sorrow is near at hand; this may be, for aught I know, the last time I will write to you, my Father's children, through the SIGNS. I feel to admonish you in all your trials and tribulations in this life, to look unto Jesus, who alone is able to deliver you out of them all. If you lack wisdom, ask of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not; live in peace one with another. "These things I command you, that ye love one another."—John xv. 17. "If ye love me, keep my commandments," is the command of your Master. I pray

God that you all may be found walking in the truth, loving one another as dear children of God. Farewell.

I am yours in hope of eternal life,

J. H. YEOMAN.

LOVELAND, Colo., Feb. 10, 1906.

BARNES, Ark., Dec. 17, 1905.

EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Please find inclosed two dollars, for which continue to send to my address the good old paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which has given me more consolation than all other religious papers I have ever read. My mail arrives late in the evening, and I almost invariably read what the SIGNS contains before going to bed, and I enjoy it very much; it just seems as though composed of fresh letters from devoted kindred dispersed over different countries, and all members of the same family, yet I know they are all strangers to me in the flesh, still, if I know my own heart, I love them; this increases my hope. Unworthy and sinful as I know myself to be, I read so many sweet letters which describe my feelings so much better than I can, that I am constrained to believe we are members of the same family.

In the fall of 1859, at the age of seventeen, I was given to see and realize (for the first time) myself a sinner in the presence of an all-wise God, and I believe to this moment that for many days and nights I surely was permitted to drink of the bitter dregs of the cup of God's indignation against sin. Right here I wish to say that with me the darkest moment was just before day, and often when I remember this occasion I feel like falling upon my knees in the humblest manner and thanking Almighty God that he was mindful of me then and there. O brethren, help me to thank him. In the spring of 1862 I married my present wife. God has enabled us to raise eight children to womanhood and manhood, four of each; they all collectively have forty-six children living, and have buried twelve. We have one great-grandchild, altogether fifty-eight grandchildren. I was a confederate soldier when we married, and doubtless we shared our part of the necessary hardships pertaining to a four years cruel war, yet I often think that few men, if any, have so many reasons to be thankful to Almighty God as I have, yet I am so ungrateful. After the war closed, in the spring of 1866 we were permitted to be baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Enon, Franklin Co., Ark., where our home has been since. Several divisions have occurred since then, still the same old kind exists here yet.

I have written much more than I thought I would. Should this ever appear in print I would ask those who read it to pray for me.

SAMUEL TURNER.

DELPHI FALLS, N. Y., Jan. 8, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have once more, by the blessing of the God of all our blessings, whether temporal or spiritual, been enabled to gather together a little at a time to send for the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, please find two dollars inclosed for the same. I would be glad to have the SIGNS come every week, for I cannot express how much I love and enjoy reading the editorials and the writings of the afflicted and poor people who trust in the Lord, having no confidence in the flesh.

Our much beloved brother, Elder D. M. Vail, was here last spring, but we do not know that he can ever come here again,

and it makes me feel very sad. The Lord knows what is best; I desire to be reconciled to his holy will and look up to him in love and praise, trusting in the name of the Lord. I have taken much comfort in reading the letters written by Elder John McConnell to brother Horace Lefferts, in the SIGNS for December 15th, 1905. The letter to brother B. F. Coulter by brother H. C. Ker, I have thought of very much in the same way, and that they were traveling along the same road. I was with them, and felt the hand of fellowship clasping my hand, at any rate I clasped theirs. I love the doctrine of the grace of God: salvation that saves poor, lost sinners who cannot save themselves. Such letters are good and deep in the doctrine as it is in Jesus Christ our Lord; surely we must have suffering with our Lord if we rejoice with him. We hear much in the world of being happy in the Lord; that will do as far as it goes, but I am looking for my fellowship in those that suffer for their sins, and for Jesus's sake are counted as the offscouring of the earth by those who hope they will soon die out and be gone.

With love and fellowship to all the afflicted and poor people who trust in the name of the Lord, and to you, dear editors of the best paper that I know of on spiritual things,

J. E. TAPNER.

MORGAN CO., GA., Oct. 27, 1905.

ELDER CHICK—DEAR BROTHER, AS I HOPE, IN CHRIST:—I have felt for a long time that I wanted to write a few lines for the SIGNS, to let you know how much I appreciate our dear family paper, which comes to me regularly, and is a great comfort in my lonely condition. Deprived as I am of the privilege of hearing the blessed gospel preached, I certainly do enjoy reading the editorials and good letters in the SIGNS, many of which tell my experience much better than I can tell it. It is a great comfort to me to know that others whom I doubt not are children of God, have traveled the same road that I have, and I feel like claiming kin with them as brethren and sisters in the Lord. At other times I feel very despondent, and fear that I have been deceived in the matter. I know that I am a sinner, and that in and of myself I can do nothing. My only hope is in the Lord, and my daily prayer is, O that I could live the life of the righteous, and my last days be like his.

Dear editor and correspondents of the SIGNS, I am now in my eighty-second year, and have been in failing health for several years, not able to leave the house at all, and know that my time on earth is short; I desire the prayers of God's people, that I may be willing when the final summons cometh. May the SIGNS be supported as long as it continues to advocate the sound doctrine it has for more than seventy years, is my desire.

I must now say farewell, dear brethren and sisters in the Lord.

LUCY L. PERRY.

PRATT CITY, ALA., Feb. 20, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—We visited the grave of our two sons to-day. Just one year ago on this date they were cut off out of the land of the living, and their lives were taken from the earth. They were dear to us and their little families, and they were devoted to us all. Their lives were sweet to them; they were in good health, and had lively spirits, in the prime of young manhood. From all that we could learn, they had completed a faithful day's work and started out, no doubt with wearied limbs and anxious

hearts; they went but a few steps, and met with instant death, and their bodies now rest in the cemetery north of this town, and we trust that their spirits have gone to that world of glory, where all is joy forevermore, and none of the cares or trials of this world can ever enter there.

"No chilling winds, or poisonous breath,
Can reach that healthful shore;
Sickness and sorrow, pain and death,
Are felt and feared no more."

Such is our hope, and we sorrow most of all that we shall see their faces no more in this world. We miss them so much; a sad gloom hangs over us, and will as long as we remain here. I am glad to say that in this sad trial at times we have realized that "The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble," and that he is a present help in time of need. Had we not believed according to the working of his mighty power, and that his providence and purpose is everywhere, we would have given over more to despair. We firmly believe in God's purpose of grace for salvation for time and eternity. This is the only way suited to the helpless and dependent, and it reached such extreme cases as the man at the pool, the wild Gadarene, the thief upon the cross and a raving Saul of Tarsus, and we trust that it reached our sons in the mine and they were saved by grace.

"Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days:
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

Yours in hope of immortality,

P. J. POWELL.

COLEMAN, Texas, Dec. 19, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—Please change the address of my paper from Sweet Home, Texas, to Coleman, Coleman Co., Texas, as I have moved here; and give notice through the SIGNS, that my brethren may know where to address me. I have been sick for several months, and have not been able to read or write, and have just read the July number of the SIGNS. I thought I would have to stop the paper, but when I considered the matter I could not bear the idea of such a thing, for it has been a great comfort to me for forty years; I do not live near Primitive Baptists, and am old and feeble. If there is a Primitive Baptist Church in Coleman Co., Texas, I would like to have some of the members write or come and see me. I live four miles east of Coleman. I am now seventy-seven years of age. My health has improved for the last two weeks.

Yours truly,

W. R. CULPEPPER.

[WE hope brother Culpepper will pardon the delay in publishing this letter, as it has been unintentionally overlooked.—ED.]

BACK NUMBERS.

ALL new subscriptions for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES are now credited from the time they are received, unless otherwise ordered, but if any wish their subscription to date from the first of the year we will supply them with back numbers.

SMALL HYMN BOOKS.

WE have printed another edition of the small type Hymn Book, and are now prepared to fill orders for the same at the following rates: Cloth Binding, per copy, 75 cents, per dozen, $6.00; Imitation Morocco, full gilt, $1.75; First Quality Turkey Morocco, full gilt, $2.75.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1906.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

SOME time since, a dear brother wrote to us asking several questions to which he desired that we should reply through the SIGNS, as he said others with him would be glad to know our opinion of the same. He also desired some thoughts upon the twentieth chapter of Revelation. In reply we will say, that as regards this chapter the limits of an editoral would hardly allow of a complete reply, even though we felt able to do so. It may be that after a time we may suggest some things with regard to it, but for the present we feel like confining what we shall write to the questions proposed. We have often said during the past ten years in which we have been responding to such requests editorially that it is not in our power to explain all mysteries, and that we have desired all our brethren shall, as is their duty before God, search the Scriptures to see whether what we say is in accordance with them. We do desire to be in accordance with the word, and hope that what we write is scriptural at all times, but still we are very liable to misunderstand, and cannot claim any superior wisdom over the least in the Father's house. Still further, it is possible that even while we may give expression to that which is altogether scriptural and true, yet the view of some given text which we present may be a mistaken one. It is possible to seek to defend some truth by Scriptures which after all do not bear upon the subject at all. In both these respects we have felt great need of wisdom from on high, and of forbearance from those who know the truth; and our brethren have been forbearing and kind in their judgment of us, far beyond what we could have expected.

The first question proposed by our brother is this: "Is there any other vile body than this natural, fleshly, mortal body?" There is but one place in the Scriptures in which the words "vile" and "body" occur together, though in other places we read of vile persons, vile men, vile affections and vile things. Job said, "Behold, I am vile." In Isaiah it is written, "The vile person shall no more be called liberal." The one place in which the two words are joined together is Phil. iii. 21; there it is written: "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." The word body here is from the Greek word *soma*. In all but four places in the New Testament where the word body is used it is translated from this one word; and in the one hundred and fifty or more places where the word body is used in the New Testament being translated from this word *soma*, it means primarily this thing which in ordinary speech, we call our body. In a few places it is used figuratively; thus sin is called "a body of death;" the church is called "the body of Christ;" and we read of "the body of the sins of the flesh;" but in every place where the word is used in some figurative

sense, the connection clearly shows it to be so. In all places where the word body is used, without some such qualifying connection, it means just this literal body. When the body of the sins of the flesh is spoken of, and when Paul said, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" no doubt the adjective, "vile" would apply in the full sense of the word. But still it is true that when Paul said in Philippians, "Who shall change our vile body," he did not refer to any other body than that which we mean when we say, "absent in body but present in spirit," or that the "body of Lazarus" was raised from the grave or, "the body is subject to death and decay." So it is clear that Paul means by these words to the Philippians just this body which is natural, fleshly and mortal. We are not told of any other fleshly, natural, mortal body beside this. The apostle thus sets before his brethren the glorious hope that even this "vile body" shall be changed (not exchanged) and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus our Lord. This same faith was evidently in the heart of David when he said, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness;" or as was expressed by John when he said, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Evidently Paul meant the same thing when in 1 Cor. xv. 49, he said, "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

Our brother asks, To what body does the resurrection apply? It evidently applies to some body that is dead, because the resurrection is always the resurrection of the dead, or from the dead; both propositions are used in the New Testament. When the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is spoken of, no one, so far as we know, doubts that the reference is to his body, which was laid in Joseph's new tomb. There was nothing with regard to Jesus to which the word resurrection could apply save to his crucified body. This we do not need to argue, because we have never heard of any one who doubted it. So with the children of men nothing can need a resurrection save the body which dies. It must be with men, as with their Lord, a resurrection of that which was dead. It is in this resurrection that the words of Paul, "Who shall change our vile body," are fulfilled. But we must not forget that while all shall not sleep or die, all shall be changed, and those who are alive and remain until the sounding of the last trump shall not prevent (or precede) those who are asleep. The change of this vile body shall occur, according to the testimony of the inspired apostle, at one and the same instant for all, at the sounding of the last trump. What this glorious change shall be no mortal eye hath seen, and no mortal tongue can tell. What will it be to be perfect, even as our heavenly Father is perfect? What will it be to awake in the likeness of the Lord? Neither can any one know how all this glorious change shall be wrought. We only know that it is wrought by the wonder-working power of God, who is able to subdue all things unto himself. If we ask, How shall that which is sown a natural body be raised a spiritual body? no answer is vouchsafed to us in the book of God, it is only declared that it shall be so. Is not this enough for us to know?

Our brother also asks, What is the connection between predestination, redemption, resurrection and adoption? and he refers to Rom. viii. and Eph. i. We do not feel it is needful to make an

extended reply to this question, for we are persuaded that all our brethren, as well as the dear brother who has asked the question, are fully persuaded that each word is equally broad in extent, and that they apply to the same persons, all of them alike. God has predestinated his children unto redemption, resurrection and adoption. His predestination to salvation secures the certainty of the experience of all these other glorious privileges. He has predestinated that his people shall be redeemed from sin, and the curse of the law, which is death, that they shall, as the result of this redemption upon the cross of Calvary, be raised from the dead, and that they shall receive the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their body. Redemption is secured by the atonement. The work of the atonement, and the sufferings of the blessed Redeemer in that work, are the price of redemption. "Ye are bought with a price." The full price was paid upon Calvary, and nothing either great or small remains undone in the payment of this great redemption price. We are not only redeemed from under the curse of the law, but also from sin and everlasting punishment. We are redeemed from death; and so sinners who have been atoned for are quickened from their death in sin, and made alive unto God. This also is a portion of the work of redemption, secured to them by the atonement price paid upon Calvary. The atonement is the price paid, and the redemption is that which is secured to us by the work of the atonement. In this work of the Holy Spirit in the heart of those who have been redeemed from death by the atoning work of the Lord is included "the Spirit of adoption." Accordingly Paul said to his brethren, "Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." Notice he does not say that we have received as yet the adoption itself, but the Spirit of adoption. Is not this the earnest of the Spirit, the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession? By the presence of this Spirit of adoption we cry, "Abba, Father." It is said in one place that God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts crying, Abba, Father; and then, that by this Spirit dwelling in our hearts we also cry the same blessed thing. Let us carefully notice that it is not said that the Spirit cries, "Abba, Father," anywhere except in our hearts. Still further, notice that we do not cry Abba, Father, except as this Spirit dwells within us. Neither the Spirit without us, nor we without the Spirit are said to feel this cry. We are the children of God through the indwelling of this Spirit, and because we, possessing this Spirit, are sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, it is our privilege, our right, to call God our Father. By the indwelling of this Spirit we come to realize such an experience as none but the children of God can ever know; and although we are oppressed with frequent fears that we are not the children of God, yet there is something within us that recognizes our relation, and that is crying, Father, Father. Sometimes this inward working is so mighty that we cannot help also crying, even in words or in thought, Father, Father. None save those who have this seal of the Spirit, or who are born of the Spirit, have any right, or any real inclination to call God their Father. How sad it is that perverted men and women are teaching their children to utter falsehood toward God, by teaching them to call God their Father, when they have never been born of God at all, and know nothing of this Spirit of adoption by which this cry of "Abba,

Father" is produced. This Spirit of adoption when received produces the hope of the resurrection, and of the adoption itself. The earnest of the inheritance points infallibly onward to the fullness of it. A part of that earnest is seeing in part, and knowing in part; and seeing as we are seen, and knowing as we are known, constitute a portion of the fullness of the inheritance. The fullness of the adoption has not been experienced yet. But to have the Spirit of it secures it to all who have it, beyond any power to hinder. He that hath begun this good work in us, will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ, or unto the day when all the work of redemption is perfected in us, and then we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. This will be in all its fullness, the day of Jesus Christ, for then Christ indeed will be all in all with the redeemed, and they shall all be conformed to him in every power and faculty of their being. This day of Jesus Christ will be also our day of perfection and glory in union with him forever.

Now concerning the adoption Paul said to the Galatians, "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." In Ephesians Paul said, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself." And in Romans Paul said again that believers are "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Thus this adoption of which now we have the Spirit, which we shall receive, and to which we are predestinated, is the redemption of our body; and this Paul in Romans said we were waiting for. This then is the glorious hope which revives our courage by the way, and which is as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters into that within the veil, whither Jesus hath already entered, and where he continually makes intercession for us. To this glorious end God predestinated us before the world was; for the accomplishment of this eternal purpose he gave his Son to die to redeem those who were under the law; and that we might rejoice in hope, he sent forth the Spirit of adoption into our hearts, whereby we are privileged to call God our Father. Having done all this for us, will he fail us now? Just as sure as one poor, seeking, troubled soul has ever felt the stirring of that Spirit within his heart, which reveals our covenant-keeping God to him as the Father in heaven, and that soul in lowliness and yet with wonderful gladness finds a cry rising up in his own heart like that of a child to his father, just so sure shall that hope be realized, and he at last in his redeemed body dwell with God as an heir of God and a joint-heir with our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the adoption, "the redemption of our body," for which believers are waiting.

We have not and we cannot do this sublime subject justice no matter how sublime may be our thoughts, for our highest thought cannot attain to it. What then do our still more feeble words amount to when we try to describe it? So we will leave this glorious theme for the consideration of all our readers, especially of the brother who desired it. May God lead us into his truth more and more abundantly. C.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905, &c.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Juniata Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with Providence Church, Bedford Co., Pa., sendeth greeting to the churches and associations with whom we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED:—It has pleased Almighty God to once again visit our little band of believers and remove from our midst several whom we greatly miss; but while we mourn our loss, we believe that God does all things after the counsel of his own will, and that it is best for us as it is, and for their eternal gain.

We trust that God may be manifestly present with you, and that your meeting may be one of true christian love and fellowship, and that it be blessed by God, who alone is able to bless, to the comfort of your souls. May he by his grace sustain you through all your pilgrimage here below, and crown your journey's end with an ever blessed entrance into the full glory of his kingdom, to awake in his likeness and be forever at rest.

We hope to be blessed with the privilege of meeting with you all again at our next annual association, to be held with the Sidling Hill Church, Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1906.

J. E. GORE, Moderator.

J. C. MELLOTT, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. W. W. Darby, Md., $2.00; J. T. Yerkes, D. C., $1.00.—Total, $3.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Silas H. Durand, at the home of the bride's father, Hartsville, Bucks Co., Pa., March 14th, 1906, Charles S. Kratz and Miss Ettie L. DeCoursey.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon John R. Kearns passed away Feb. 23rd, 1906. Brother Kearns was born July 5th, 1823; 82 years, 8 months and 18 days he sojourned in the earthly house of this tabernacle; it is now dissolved, but he steadfastly believed that he had a house eternal in the heavens that shall never be taken down. Brother Kearns was the last of a family of six children. Mr. John Kearns, his father, came to Fairfax County and married Miss Amy Johnson; to them were born six children, namely: William, Mary, Elisha, John R., Mariah and Martha. Brother Kearns united first with the New School Baptists, and was with them about nineteen years; it was in the days of Elder Samuel Trott, and he (brother Kearns) had many stones cast at him for hearing and indorsing the doctrine preached by Elder Trott, but in it all he contended earnestly for the faith once given to the saints, and after those nineteen years struggle he was called out from among them, together with his wife, who preceded him to the grave some years ago. He was received by the Bethlehem Church, of Prince William Co., and baptized by the late Elder Joseph L. Purington, June 1st, 1873, was chosen our deacon April 2nd, 1881, and all the years of his sojourn with us were thirty-three, and as deacon twenty-five years. I never knew a more steadfast and unyielding one in points of vital truth. His faith was seen in his walk, conversation, and in all his business life. I was acquainted with him fifty-five years, and have often envied that straightforwardness so beautifully made manifest, and as a lover of the truth there could be none more so. May we take comfort in the thought that to depart is far better. He left four children, John, Mariah, David and Edris, together with twenty grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. On none does this sorrow and sadness fall more heavily than on the son David and the grandson and granddaughter, who had the care of him throughout the long days and nights of his suffering. May God sustain and comfort them according to his will and purpose.

Elder J. N. Badger attended the funeral and preached from 2 Cor. v. 1, 2. The hymns used were Nos. 15 and 1252 (Beebe's collection), selected by his son; the first was his father's favorite, the second his own. May the blessing of God sustain us all for the truth's sake.

ELI T. KIDWELL.

FAIRFAX, Va., March 6, 1906.

Deacon Jacob B. Meredith, of the Cow Marsh Baptist Church, in Kent Co., Del., was born July 28th, 1835, and died Jan. 25th, 1906. He was a regular attendant at the meetings of his home church all the years of his natural life. Upon confession of faith in Christ and manifestation of the work of grace in

his experience, he was baptized in the fellowship of the Cow Marsh Church by Elder E. Rittenhouse, Oct. 29th, 1865, in which he continued steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. As a deacon, he was faithful, careful and given to hospitality, and exercised an humble yet an appreciated gift to edification in our meetings and spiritual intercourse. He was chosen clerk of our church Jan. 22nd, 1875, in which office he faithfully and acceptably served until his decease. As a church we have sustained a sad loss, and we may feel it were good for us for him to remain with us, yet faith and hope assure us that for him to depart and be with Christ is far better. Lord, thy will be done. A sad widow is left to mourn his absence, and while she is not an identified member with us, her devotion to the welfare of the church, her christian hospitality and manifest love of our people, entwines itself about our fellowship, and we assure her of our sincere sympathy. He leaves three daughters and two sons to mourn his departure, but they mourn not as others who have no hope. Two daughters and one son are worthy members of the church of his faith and order. The other daughter and son are warm friends, and love the truth of the gospel of Christ. Our dear brother was stricken with his last illness at the home of his daughter, sister Lucy Rounds, in the parsonage house at Welsh Tract. His decline was gradual, and through all his suffering he was patient and submissive. At his request the Bible and his glasses were placed near him, that he might read the Word when his waning strength would permit. His mind was clear, and he was solicitous for the welfare of others until the last two days, when he passed into a state of coma until in his heavenly Father's own appointed time he fell asleep. His remains were brought to his home and conveyed from there to the Cow Marsh meeting-house, where a large number of brethren, relatives and friends were assembled, manifesting their sympathy. The writer tried to comfort the bereaved family and sorrowing friends from 1 Cor. xv. 26: "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

Sadly yet hopefully we laid him in his grave in the Cow Marsh churchyard, feeling that with him all is well through Jesus our Savior.

W. W. MEREDITH.

FELTON, Del., March 14, 1906.

William Robbins departed this life Jan. 28th, 1906, aged 53 years, 11 months and 17 days. He resided in the township of Dunwick, Elgin Co., Ont., most of his life, as did his companion who, with five children, two sons and three daughters, survives him. Twelve years ago he and his wife united with the Old School Baptist Church, and were baptized by the late Elder Wm. Pollard. His faithful devotion to the church was manifested by his daily walk and conversation. He had an amiable disposition, and was highly esteemed by the brethren. Physically strong and energetic, his chief ambition was to provide for the comforts of his home, which was one of cordial entertainment to brethren and friends. He caught cold in the spring of 1904, which developed into lung trouble. In its early stages he expressed a desire to live for the benefit of his family, if it pleased God to restore his health, but as he gradually grew weaker and slowly wasted away his faith grew stronger and brighter. He seemed entirely weaned from the cares of this world and calmly reconciled to his Master's will. Many times I visited him, and very often found him gently basking in the sunshine of his Savior's love. Those were sweet and consoling hours to many who found him thus rejoicing and praising God for his unbounded goodness and mercy to him from day to day. The day previous to his death he suffered much from shortness of breath. When relieved by his physician he slept ten hours, from which his mourning wife and family never expected to see him rally. Suddenly he awoke and asked how long he had slept. When told by his doctor, who stood beside him, he thanked him for relieving his suffering, and with a face radiant with joy turned to his wife and family, advised and consoled them, requested them not to mourn for him, and again assured them that for him to die was gain. To his dutiful companion he bade a last fond adieu and sweetly fell asleep to awaken in joy eternal. The family were wonderfully sustained in their sore affliction. We see our loved ones depart, and while we know it is well with them, such a loneliness comes into our hearts when we see their vacant place that it requires the grace of God to give us the spirit of submission and enable us to say, Blessed be the Lord who giveth, blessed be the Lord who takes.

He requested Elder Curry to preach his funeral sermon, which he did, from Genesis iii. 19, and spoke very comfortingly to the bereaved, and a very large congregation who had gathered to pay the last tribute of respect to the departed.

EFFIE FRENCH.

DUTTON, Ont., Feb. 13, 1906.

Thomas C. Frasher, son of Deacon Alexander and Catharine Frasher, was born in Kent Co., Del., on May 20th, 1828, and fell asleep, that sweet sleep from which none ever wake to weep, near Occoquan, Prince William Co., Va., Feb. 5th, 1906, being in the 78th year of his age. He went to Virginia before the Civil war, and bought a farm in Prince William Co., on which he settled. He soon after married Miss Nancy Millstead, of the same county. To them were born two daughters, Mrs. Mary F. Comstock, at whose home he died, and Mrs. Martha Arrington, of Washington, D. C. He lived in Washington the last few years, until last May, when he and his wife went

down to their daughter's, who is a widow and lives on the farm that had been his until his health became poor, fourteen or fifteen years ago. He never made a public profession of religion, but was a firm believer in the doctrine advocated by the Old School Baptists, and a lover of the truth. He leaves his bereaved companion, two daughters and several grandchildren, one of whom, Mrs. Bertha Alexander, (nee Comstock) was the same to them as a daughter, they having had her with them since she was a few months old until a short time before her marriage last October; also three brothers and two sisters survive him: Peter C., Alex. C. and Wm. J. Frasher, of Petersburg, Del., Mrs. Kate C. Meredith and Mrs. Mary C. Gruwell, of near the same place, beside several nieces and nephews.

His niece, ANNIE MEREDITH.

WYOMING, Del.

Mrs. Samantha Parsons died in the State of Delaware Nov. 3rd, 1905, aged nearly 82 years. Her maiden name was Yeomans. She was married to Daniel Hay in the year 1837. To this union were born two boys and five girls, four of whom preceded her to the grave. She joined the Old School Baptist Church January, 1877, was baptized by Elder L. P. Cole. She was highly esteemed by her brethren for the truth. Her first husband died May 25th, 1888. She was married to D. W. Parsons in 1890; he died Dec. 26th, 1897. She was at our yearly meeting and appeared to enjoy it much. She went to live with her youngest daughter, and was there only about three weeks before she died. She was brought back to her home church, and as Elder Clark could not be had, a Presbyterian officiated at the church. She was buried in the cemetery at Manorkill beside her first husband to rest until the grave gives up its dead.

D. S. ELLIOTT.

RESOLUTIONS.

WHEREAS, It has pleased Almighty God in his divine decree to take from among us our beloved sister, **Clarley Brewer,** therefore be it

Resolved, by Bethel Church, of Wilbarger Co., Texas, that we as a church mourn our loss, but bow in humble submission to the divine will of our heavenly Father, who hath appointed our time and set the bounds of our habitation that we cannot pass. Our beloved and aged sister was a faithful member, walking humbly before the God of all grace, in whom she trusted and unto whom she looked in times of distress. During her husband's lifetime, brother Enoch Brewer, who preceded her to the grave some eleven years, their house was a Baptist home. She was truly a mother in Israel, but let us not mourn as those who have no hope, for we feel that our loss is her gain. She departed this life August 15th, 1905, in her 80th year, at her grandson's, Adam Antry, in Clay Co., Texas, of kidney and heart trouble. She united with Friendship Church, Decatur Co., Iowa, of the Primitive faith and order, in the year 1858, and was baptized by Elder Zion.

Sister, thou wast mild and lovely,
Gentle as the summer breeze,
Pleasant as the air of evening
As it floats among the trees.

Peaceful be thy silent slumber,
Peaceful in the grave so low;
Thou no more wilt join our number,
Thou no more our songs shall know.

Dearest sister, thou hast left us,
Here thy loss we deeply feel,
But 'tis God that hath bereft us,
He can all our sorrows heal.

Yet again we hope to meet thee,
When the day of life is fled,
Then in heaven with joy to greet thee,
Where no farewell tears are shed.

Written by order of the church, in conference Nov. 18th, 1905.

MEETINGS.

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11:00 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 74. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1906. NO. 8.

POETRY.

SOVEREIGNTY.

THE ways of our searching, omnipotent God,
By creatures are past finding out;
Alone he controlleth his works with a nod,
And bringeth his judgments about.

Most holy, most powerful, just and all-wise,
He forms both the clear and the mist,
He reigneth supreme in the earth and the skies,
And gathers the winds in his fist.

His mind who can know, or the works of his hand,
Or who hath his counselor been?
All things in existence, mysterious, grand,
Are ours who his goodness have seen.

In infinite wisdom he stayeth the waves,
In power he speaks and 'tis done;
Most merciful, he to the uttermost saves;
The three in the wonderful One.

He took for his bride the fair lady elect,
Because it seemed good in his sight;
Nay, do not reply, or his purpose inspect,
Or challenge his sovereign right.

A mercy of mercies we are not consumed,
Thus cooeth the voice of his dove;
Hosanna, from hatred we have been exhumed,
And given the banner of love.

Made worthy this love through the blood of the Lamb
That bought us and washed us from sin;
In Gilead there is for our sorrows a balm,
A cure for contrition within.

The light of his countenance shines in our hearts,
Unveiling the depth of our shame;
Sufficiently then his rich grace he imparts,
And helps us to hope in his name.

He chastens in love and in pity forbears,
When slowly his sayings we keep;
When found for his sake to be sowing in tears,
In him a rich harvest we reap.

For of him and through him and to him we live,
Our times are secure in his hand;
To all the redeemed he has promised to give
A home in that beautiful land.

There joys are unceasing, and brightness excels,
The final abode of the blest;
There God in his glory eternally dwells,
The far away haven of rest.

SEMMA E. CORDER.

PHILIPPI, W. Va.

THE LORD KNOWS WHY.

"I MAY not know the reason why
Dark clouds so often veil the sky,
But though my sea be smooth or rough,
The Lord knows why, and that's enough.

I may not know why I am led
So often in the paths I dread,
But trusting him I'll press my way,
The Lord knows why, I will obey.

O yes, he knows, the Lord knows why
These things are ordered from on high,
And though dark clouds may hide the sun,
The Lord knows why, his will be done.

I may not know why death should come
To take the dear ones from my home,
But though mine eyes with tears be dim,
The Lord knows why, I'll trust in him.

So though I may not understand
The leading of my Father's hand,
I know to all he has the key,
He understands each mystery."

(Selected by Mrs. H. Tuttle, Adrian, Mich.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE GREATER WORKS.

"VERILY, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father."—John xiv. 12.

In the SIGNS of March 1st is a request of E. C. Fogerson that I should at my earliest convenience give my views on these words of the dear Savior. Within the past few years I have had published in the SIGNS some thoughts upon this portion of the written word, but I cannot easily refer to the number that contains them now. They are not satisfactory to me, covering a very limited part of this great and glorious subject. I am impressed to express what is in my mind now concerning it, but I approach the work with trembling, feeling such a deep sense of my weakness and inability to tell even what I am enabled to see of the "mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ," which is here presented. (Col. ii. 2.) My dependence is entirely upon the Lord, and my prayer is that he will lead me into the truth, and will give me such liberty to express it as he sees will be best. I think I have never before felt more decidedly my utter insufficiency of myself, to think anything as of myself. (2 Cor. iii. 5.)

In the preceding part of this chapter, in conversation with his disciples, Jesus has declared the oneness of his Father and himself, not as an abstract doctrine, but as something absolutely necessary to their salvation, and as already embraced in their experience and knowledge. In the last of the preceding chapter Peter is told of a terrible crime which he will commit within a few hours, which will bring him to the verge of despair, filled with bitterest shame and self-loathing, causing him to appear to himself as the vilest of men, and as justly cast away from the favor and love of Jesus. This is the condition in which every one of the Lord's people sees himself when his eyes are fully opened to the corruption and depravity of his carnal mind and heart. And this sense of vileness and feeling of self-abhorrence are necessary in order to the revelation of Jesus to his people as the Son of God, and as one with the Father. It is just at this point in their experience, this time of Jacob's trouble, "when all faces are turned into paleness," (Jer. xxx. 6. 7,) that Jesus says, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." This is the way that Jacob is saved out of that great and peculiar trouble, as the Lord by the prophet declares he shall be. It is not by anything that we can do, or that any man can do for us, that salvation comes to us, but by the revelation of Jesus to our souls as the Son of the Father, as having all power in heaven and in earth, and as going away into death, and through death into his kingdom, taking death forever out of the way, and so preparing a place for us. And also it is by causing these Jacobs to believe in Jesus, by the working of the mighty resurrection power of God in their hearts. When Jesus says, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me," that belief is wrought in them by the mighty power of God which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead. (Eph. i. 19, 20.)

When Jesus tells them, "Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know," Thomas answers for them all: "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" But this knowledge is in their knowledge of Jesus, and in that fellowship of his sufferings which all his people begin to have when he calls them. His answer is given in words which cover

the whole ground of the gospel, and all the experience of the saints: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him."

The work of salvation is first wrought in the heart by the holy Spirit of God, and then by the same Spirit it is made known to them. Ye know the way, he says to them; ye know the Father; then in his own time and way he shows them where and what that knowledge is within their souls.

"Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Jesus does not answer by pointing away outside of themselves. He does not point upward to the heavens, but says, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." Here we observe the "words" and the "works" are identical. As soon as the word of Jesus is spoken the work is done. He spake and it was done. No interval here between the spoken word of God in Christ and the finished work.

Here also we see the eternal oneness of the Father and the Son, which is also gloriously declared in the dear Savior's prayer to the Father: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."—John xvii. 21–23.

Here observe that the believer in Jesus is, by that belief, wrought in him by the mighty power of God, brought into manifest union with the Father and the Son. And when Jesus speaks, here and in his prayer, of being in the Father and the Father in him, he has reference all the time to an experience of that union in the hearts of his people. Therefore he says, "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake."

It is the word of Jesus that causes the poor soul to believe, but it is because of the works which have been wrought in him. Those works, for whose sake Jesus tells us to believe, are not works brought to our attention from without, and looked upon by us from a distance; but they are seen, if seen at all, within our own souls. The Father in the Son has done those works there, working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Phil. ii. 13.)

Now all this glorious doctrine of the oneness of Jesus and his Father has reference to the salvation of poor sinners, called by grace, and made to know, in the Lord's own time and way, that Jesus has revealed to them the Father, (Matt. xi. 27,) and that because they are sons "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father."—Gal. iv. 6.

Thus we come to the text, which shows to us that the believer in the work of salvation is one with Jesus, as he is one with the Father; that in all of the experience of grace that oneness of Jesus with his people is made manifest; that while

Christ is in us the hope of glory, we are "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. ii. 10. He is in us and we are in him.

The works that Jesus did while in the days of his flesh were all works that could be seen of men, and in that sense we may speak of them as natural or literal works. But they all had a spiritual significance, as did also all his parables and teaching, and that could not be seen or understood by any but those to whom it was given. So Jesus said to some, "Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word." "Unto you," he said to his disciples, "it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables."

But in all those works of Jesus there was required faith in the one upon whom, or in whose behalf, the works were done. That faith is the evidence of things not seen, upon which belief is founded. Jesus could do no mighty works in his own country because of their unbelief. (Mark vi. 5; Matt. xiii. 58.) To one or more he said, "Thy faith hath saved thee." To a father who asked help for his son he said, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth."—Mark ix. 23. He had power to give the needed faith in a moment. He even spoke of the dead as a believer, when approaching the grave of Lazarus: "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

I cannot understand the words of the text to refer to the power which Jesus gave his disciples to tread on serpents, and that nothing should by any means hurt them, (Luke x. 19,) nor to the signs that should follow those who believed the apostles' preaching, that they should cast out devils, speak with new tongues, take up serpents, not be hurt by drinking any deadly thing, and lay hands on the sick and they should recover. (Mark xvi. 17.) These signs did follow the apostles' teaching, but did not continue after the apostolic work was done, and the church established and set in order by them; nor do I find that we are taught by the apostles to expect those literal signs in the succeeding ages of the church, though I believe their spiritual significance remains in force.

The former part of this chapter tells us the meaning of this. The words and works of Jesus were done by the Father who was in him, and he did them in the Father. So the works of Jesus are wrought in his people, and these are the good works unto which they are created in Christ, and they do them in him. It is the same works which he does that they do by a living faith in him, as it is the same works that Jesus did which he said the Father who dwelleth in him did. Jesus did not say that he who believeth in him shall do other works of the same kind as those which he does, but that he shall do the same works. The meaning of what he says is not that he instructs them in regard to his works so that they can go away from him and do them of themselves. In their works the believers in Christ are never separate from him, but he is with them in all their work always, "even unto the end of the world."

We have no reliable evidence that any one of the Lord's people has ever laid hands on the sick and healed them, or drank any deadly thing without hurt, or cast out devils, or spoken with new tongues, since the apostolic work was finished. These were special signs given to follow them that believed the preach-

ing of the apostles. But in this they were not doing in any sense the works that Jesus did, for he never took up serpents or drank any deadly thing.

Now we are to remember again the power and prominence of faith in all the New Testament. We remember how the dear Savior recognized it in all for whom, and at whose request, he did works of healing and deliverance from peril, and how he ascribed the works which he did in and for them to the faith that was in them. In all this he is exalted, for the faith in them is his gift and work, and they are thus exalted in him. We see also how in all the apostles' works and writings, and especially in that portion of Hebrews which the apostle devotes especially to examples of faith, power is ascribed to this wonderful and mysterious grace of faith, and it is brought continually into prominent view. Observe how many things beyond the power of man are said to have been done by men, not working in any strength of their own, but by faith. All these things are recognized in the Old Testament Scriptures as done by the power of God.

When we are enabled by faith to see these examples of faith, and to observe all the various works ascribed to it, we are made to see that this faith is the power given the Lord's people to see and experience the purpose, power and work of God in Christ; and so by the witness received by Abel that he was righteous; by the translation of Enoch; by the going out of Abraham from his own country at the call of God; by his offering up of Isaac; by the blessing by Isaac of Jacob and Esau concerning things to come; by the hiding of Moses by his parents three months because they saw that he was a proper child; by the passing of Israel through the Red Sea as on dry land; by the falling of the walls of Jericho; by kingdoms subdued, righteousness wrought, promises obtained, the mouths of lions stopped, the violence of fire quenched, the dead raised to life again; by tortures and cruel mockings and scourgings endured; by all these wonders recorded in the Old Testament, and the wonderful works of God in and for his people recalled and presented here by the apostle as the works of men done by faith, we see how faith is the substance in our own souls of things hoped for, and the evidence in ourselves of those things which the Lord has made us hope for.

"And greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." What can be meant by the greater works? Does the dear Savior here or elsewhere compare his own works or the good works of his disciples with each other, and place some above others? Of his own works, is the raising of Jairus' daughter or the widow's son a greater work than healing the lame man at the pool of Bethesda, or causing the dumb to speak? Was the rebuking of the wind and the raging of the water, so that there was a great calm, a greater work than turning the water into wine? It is not in that way, I think, that we are to understand that some works are greater than others. But in the same sense in which Jesus speaks of himself as greater than Solomon or Jonah. They were but types of Jesus, and the reality is always greater than the type; the substance is always greater than the shadow. So these literal works of opening the blind eyes, unstopping the deaf ears, casting out devils, raising the dead, quieting the stormy winds and the raging of the waters, causing a fish to be found with money enough to pay tribute, and driving the money-changers out of the temple,—all these works which men

could see were but as types, patterns, illustrations, of those spiritual works which should be manifested in and to his church and people after he had finished the work of redemption and had gone unto his Father.

These are the greater works which those shall do who believe on him. They are greater as the reality is greater than the pattern, as spiritual and eternal things are greater than things that pertain to this world and the limited and unsubstantial things of time. The coming up out of the state of death in sin by the quickening power of the Spirit of God into eternal life, is a greater work than the coming of Lazarus out of the grave where he had lain four days. The opening of eyes blind to the way of salvation, and of ears that have never heard the truth, so that the poor soul is made to rejoice in seeing the beauty of gospel things, and in hearing the music of Jesus' voice, which the natural eye has not seen, nor the natural ear heard, is a greater work than the opening of the natural eyes and the natural ears. To think of Jesus commanding the winds and waves to be still, and saying to the terrified disciples, "It is I; be not afraid," is an unspeakable wonder, and awakens our admiration and praise. But how much greater the work when Jesus appears, while the waves of God's wrath are going over our souls, so that we cry out in absolute fear as the terrors of death compass us about, and the pains of hell get hold upon us, and says, "Peace, be still." Then we wonder where those fears have gone. Then the peace of God which passeth all understanding keeps our hearts and minds, and we wonder at that. But most of all we wonder to find that when Jesus appears, immediately we are at the land whither we went. When he appears we want nothing more.

Now the first thing in all these wonderful works of grace in the soul is faith. That is the first of the gifts of God to the living soul. It comes with divine life; it sees the loving purpose of God in Christ. By that faith we feel his presence and his power. Through faith the salvation which is by grace comes to us. By faith we live. "The just shall live by faith." By faith we walk. Christ walks in us. I will "walk in them." By faith, as a shield, we fight against the devil, resisting all his fiery darts. (Eph. vi. 16.) By faith we "fight the good fight of faith." Faith, with love, is a good breastplate. By faith in the name of Jesus the lame man at the Beautiful gate of the temple was healed. (Acts iii. 16.) Paul saw that the man who had never walked had faith to be healed. (Acts xiv. 9.) By faith in Jesus the man lame in a spiritual sense leaps like an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sings. Faith is not the product of any human power or wisdom. No man can obtain it by labor, skill or money; it is the gift of God. The word occurs but twice in the Old Testament, but the New Testament is full of it.

Faith often seems weak, and sometimes gone altogether. Then our belief is not a spiritual but a natural thing, and we are about ready (it seems) to go into the doctrines and works of the world. Then the works of faith are at a low ebb, or apparently gone altogether out of sight. But the works of the flesh then begin to assert themselves, and clamor for recognition, and we are very apt to turn in with them. But for all the children of promise, who are the chosen of God, and who can only live by faith, the Lord has graciously and mercifully provided that when they turn to the worldly doctrine, and to the wisdom of the world, and live

after the flesh, they shall die. That death may be sudden and terrible, or it may be slow and prolonged. But in the end the poor soul will feel the lack of all life and comfort, or rather, will feel the stirrings and strugglings of life again calling for spiritual substance, and for a deliverance from the body of this death. Then the works of faith will again appear, and will seem doubly precious. Then how thankfully and gladly we turn again to do the first works, to do the works of Jesus, to walk by faith in his blessed name, to feel a longing for the assurance that the Lord is working in us "both to will and to do of his good pleasure," and to call upon him, and entreat him for power to work out that salvation which he works in us. Then how glorious appears to us the truth of the "mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ." The Father in the Son and the Son in the Father, and all his people one in Jesus, as he is one in the Father, and the works of the Father and the Son made manifest in the works of the believer wrought by faith in Christ. All of our works which we do acceptably are the works that Jesus does in us, and we do them in him. "He that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."—John iii. 21. These works of faith can never be marred, never be corrupted, never be overcome. They are the joy and comfort of God's people here in time, and their only true and unfailing joy, and they present a sure foundation for eternal joy and blessedness; for they show the believer, however weak and trembling he may feel, to be one with Jesus and his Father, and to have been loved by the Father with the same everlasting love with which he loved the Son. (John xvii.)

O what an unspeakable wonder and blessing is that love of God felt in the heart of a poor, self-abhorring sinner; it passeth knowledge. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." It is not merely an emotion, but a holy, never-varying principle, an abiding substance. It never fails to guide us right; it always tells us the right thing to say and do; it never fails to comfort and bless; it never forsakes one in whose heart it has once been felt; it is greater than either faith or hope, for they are only for time, while love is eternal. Paul's prayer for the brethren at Ephesus was that they, being rooted and grounded in love, might be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the length and breadth and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that they might be filled with all the fullness of God. And he assures us of his persuasion that "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March, 1906.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Jan. 17, 1906.

MRS. M. E. CARTER—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I have read your good, loving, christian letter to Elder G. E. Mayfield, and it consoled my drooping mind much. Of late I have been low down in the valley of darkness and despair; I have been feeling to be the least, if one at all; so many doubts and fears come in my mind which make me fear that I am but acting the hypocrite, and deceiving the little flock of God. I am passing through sore

trials, but in reading your consoling letter, giving the trials of a poor sinner in traveling from nature to grace, I am made to feel as you say, "Without me ye can do nothing." Our Lord Jesus has said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life," and he tells us to walk in that way. The great thought with me is, Have I been taught the way? I sometimes have reason to hope so, but then so many doubts and fears come which make me fear that I am wrong, and that I am not what I have professed to be. In my nothingness and unworthiness I fear that I have not been shown the way of truth and life as it is in Jesus. At times I have felt to hope that God has for Christ's sake forgiven my sins, but I do not feel that I have as clear an evidence as some have. You say the gospel of the grace of God is sufficient for us, which I fully believe; what a great consolation to have when we are in the belly of hell, as was Jonah, with the billows rolling over our heads. But God says, "My grace is sufficient for thee." To Paul he also said, "My strength is made perfect in weakness;" and Paul said, "When I am weak, then am I strong." For this I pray, and desire that my heavenly Father will keep me humble before him in love; I desire also to esteem others better than myself. There is nothing good in me (that is, in my flesh,) and I feel very poor and needy; the grace of God can make us rich. Christ was a man of sorrows, and had not where to lay his head, and we, dear sister, have no place to take our complainings and short-comings but to Jesus, the friend of sinners, who was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification. He is our great Shepherd; he goeth before his sheep, and leadeth them into the sweet pastures of his love; the poor in spirit follow in the way where he has led. He trod the wine-press alone, with dyed garments, and decked with his glorious apparel, and traveling in the greatness of his strength and mighty to save. He trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him; he will tread in his anger those who have departed into idolatry. He shed his precious blood, for the time of his redeemed had come. There was none to help, and he wondered that there was none to uphold, and the dear Redeemer's own arm brought salvation unto him; and the psalmist proclaimed, "O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvelous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory." He hath made known his salvation and his righteousness. What a merciful and loving Savior; suffered, bled and died for such a poor worm of the dust as I feel myself to be. All this was done without the intercession of man. He came to do his Father's will and to die for his bride which was chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and with his own arm he brought salvation. This is the only way in which a sinner can be saved, and this is the will of God. The will-worshipers of the earth trust in the works of the flesh. His people will not lie, but acknowledge Christ as their only Savior; he is the friend of sinners. "In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them." The Most High is with them, as it was at the Red Sea. The angel of the Lord went before the camp of the Israelites and delivered them, and so he delivers the bride, the Lamb's wife, from all her enemies, and will deliver them out of all inventions of men, and temptations, because he has promised that he will make a way of escape. What a loving Father

he is, to look down upon the wickedness of man, and still be so condescending and kind. Love brought him down to die for our sins, and he gave up his soul to the stroke without a murmur. He did not withdraw his pity, but the Savior made known the love of God by the shedding of his blood, and now he reigns exalted above every name, and his love is still as great as before, and let not his people forget this great love for them by which he sealed them by his blood. Christ fulfilled the law of God and made it honorable for them, and he fulfills the righteousness of the law in his redeemed; when he begins a good work he performs it until the day of Jesus Christ. He orders and directs their steps in the way in which he would have them go, and as you so faithfully say, my dear sister, he is all our hope and all our salvation. He went into the grave, and rose for our justification; he arose justified, clean and pure, and, dear sister, if we can have the real assurance that we have tasted the goodness of the Lord, and have borne of his sufferings and been made conformable unto his death, then we can sing the song of Moses, the servant of the Lord and of the Lamb, and praise the Savior's name. O let us sing of his rising power, who intercedes above for his children, the children of the heavenly kingdom.

I am now in my seventy-fourth year, and will not, I know, be here long; sooner or later I will be called hence to the realities of another world. I hope for an abiding place in my blessed Redeemer, and to find my name written in the Lamb's book of life, and sing to the praise of redeeming love. I believe that our God is the God of purpose, and none can stay his hand, he is the beginning and the end. I believe in the doctrine taught in the Bible and preached by the called servants of God; I believe in the doctrine of election, predestination and eternal purpose. Had it not been for his eternal decrees we would have been of all men most miserable. He is all-wise, and not accountable to any one. He declared the end from the beginning, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." He is the God before whom I desire to be humble, if I know my own heart.

Your letter did me so much good I felt as though I wanted to talk to you, although we are strangers in the flesh. I hope to see another of your good letters in the SIGNS. All such are a feast to me.

Your brother in hope of everlasting life,

O. B. HICKERSON.

[THE foregoing letter was forwarded to us for publication in the SIGNS by sister M. E. Carter, of Auburn, Washington, and we gladly give it space, feeling sure that it will prove to be of general interest to our readers.—ED.]

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—The day that sister Mary and I were baptized by Elder Balas Bundy, at Otego, N. Y., the first Sunday in September, 1896, he requested us to write our exercises of mind, or in other words, our experience, for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It has been in my mind many times, but I shrank from doing so, as I could not tell of such great distress, or such a happy deliverance as so many can, and was myself for many years in a state of doubt and perplexity.

But to commence. In my childhood I had many serious thoughts about death and eternity, and several times dreamed of signs and wonders in the sky, and that the end of the world was come. As years

passed and I went out with the young and thoughtless, those thoughts and impressions still followed me, and an evening of gaiety and pleasure was sure to be followed by a season of depression and remorse. I did not wish to speak or be spoken to. This state of mind continued for several years, when all at once my mind became exercised on the subject of faith. I read my Bible, but could find no light, there did not seem to be anything for me, and in despair I would close the book. All of this time I was troubled about my sinful condition. My burden was very great, I could see it rising above my head, and wondered that others did not see and speak about the burden of sin that I was carrying.

About this time there was a great revival among the Methodists in the place. I had never attended, but one night in company with my sister I went to see if the meetings that made others so happy held any help for me. The house was densely crowded, and I sat on a bench in the aisle, near the altar. After preaching, they had a testimony meeting. One man arose and said he had been sanctified, he had not committed a sin in two years. Others followed in the same strain. I became frightened; to me it seemed like blasphemy. I thought the earth would open and engulf us all. I arose to my feet, wishing to leave the house, but the crowd was so great that I could not without disturbing many. Fortunately the farce soon ended, and I was much relieved to be once more out the house; there was no one there like me. After I got home I was telling father about the meeting, when all at once my chair seemed to be sinking into flames. I hastily arose, looking about for a way of escape, but said nothing. After a time I retired, but awoke in the night, and, as usual, my mind reverted to my trouble, when the same feeling came over me: the bed was sinking with me into the flames. I could feel them, and it was with great difficulty that I refrained from springing from my bed with cries for help. All this time I was exercised on the subject of faith; I desired it more than I could find words to express; it was the gift of God, should I ever be blessed with that inestimable gift? One night I dreamed I was walking in a certain place where I had often been, on the farm of an uncle, where the path was as hard as rock from constant use for years; something said to me, If you have faith, even the least, you can plunge your hand into this hard earth. I threw myself on the ground; to my joy it yielded to the pressure of my hand, and with a feeling I cannot describe, but that seemed a mingling of fear, surprise and joy, I plunged my arm to the shoulder in the hard, gravelly soil. Then rising to my feet and casting my eyes upward where the sun was shining with a soft, beautiful light, I exclaimed in ecstacy of joy, Lord, God, I do believe, and awoke with a peaceful, restful feeling, to which I had been a stranger. I thought it a singular dream, but did not mention it to any one. Soon I missed my burden of sin and the threatening flames, but never for a moment thought my sins were forgiven, but looked for a return of my trouble, but it never has come back in the same way. I felt a strong desire to read the Bible, and spent much time in that way. I found much that I could not understand, often seeming contradictions, but instead of closing the book as before, I would say, It cannot be a contradiction, because it is the word and wisdom of God, the trouble is in my poor, finite understanding. I think I was indulging a little

hope, yet was hardly aware of it until I was taken dangerously ill. Physicians and friends thought I must die. Mother asked me if I felt prepared to die? I hesitated to answer, I did not know, when these words were given me: "I know whom I have believed." It was a surprise to me, because until then, when to all appearance I was very near death, I had not felt that I could claim Jesus as my Savior. Since that time my life has been a succession of hope and doubt, but in my darkest moments I cannot wholly resign that little hope. I feel that all would be chaos and confusion, that reach out as I might, there would be nothing, absolutely nothing, to support or comfort when trouble comes and earthly blessings flee, or when one by one my dearest friends pass out of this life and leave me alone; I still cling to this faint hope, trusting and praying it may bring me peace and joy at last.

Soon after the incidents related above, my father, mother, husband and I went to River Falls, Wisconsin, to live, where the preceding pages were written more than twenty years ago. We found no Old Baptists there, consequently no meetings, but we always had the dear old SIGNS to read, and I felt drawn to the church at Otego, and resolved if I ever came east again I would visit the people there. After the death of my parents I came back to my native State, after an absence of twelve years, and as soon thereafter as we could, my sister, Mrs. Battershall, and I went to Otego. We were kindly received and entertained, and invited to come again, which we did as often as practicable, being fifteen miles distant. They advised us to talk to the church, and leave the decision with them. This at last we resolved to do, but I felt sure I could not say anything that the church could accept as evidence of the new birth. We decided to go to the September meeting, and were prepared the night before to start next morning, and although I had made preparations I was far from being convinced that I was a fit subject for baptism. After I retired I could not sleep; suddenly I saw an immense building; it was so high the top was veiled in clouds, I could not see it; it was built of stones of peculiar shape, solid and perfect at the top, or upper part, but lower down were places yet to be filled, and one was for me to fill. It was a type of the church of God, and there was a place for me. I cannot tell how I knew this, I saw it but an instant, as if revealed by a flash of lightning, and it was gone, and with it went my indecision. I was satisfied, I would leave it all with the church, and abide by its judgment. The next day we told as best we could the little we had to tell, were received, and baptized the following day, and I have since felt no more a stranger or a guest, but like a child at home.

Dear editors, I send this in fear and trembling; you will know where it belongs, I leave it with you.

Yours in hope,

JENNIE M. HALLENBECK.

WHEELING, W. Va., Feb. 13, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—VERY HIGHLY ESTEEMED BROTHER:—I send the inclosed letter, which I received from brother and sister Carmichael, in response to one which I wrote to them upon hearing of his serious illness. The letter has been such a comfort to me I feel that I want all the members of the spiritual family to enjoy it also. I was granted the blessed privilege of hearing him preach at Enon Church, at Byesville, Ohio, the first Saturday and Sunday in last April,

and again the first of November. If I were able to describe my feelings each time I sat under his voice I should yet hesitate to do so for fear that I might appear extravagant in my praises. I well remember the first time I heard him. When he first stood up to speak, he told us how he felt, that his mind was seemingly blank, and that he had nothing to say. Then he began reading one of Paul's letters to the churches, but had read only a few verses until his voice became tremulous with emotion, while the tears flowed down his furrowed cheeks. Then was the promise fulfilled: "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys. I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." It pleased the heavenly Master to spread such a blessed feast through his dear aged servant that our hearts were made to sing for joy. My poor heart was made to exult in the words of Newton's precious hymn:

"Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God."

Brother B. G. Ford said that his mind was made to dwell upon the verse which reads as follows:

"Savior, if of Zion's city
I, through grace, a member am,
Let the world deride or pity,
I will glory in thy name.
Fading is the worldling's pleasure,
All his boasted pomp and show,
Solid joys and lasting treasure
None but Zion's children know."

Only about one week before, I met for the first time with brother Ford and his good wife; they had moved from Putnam County, Ohio, to Shadyside, a village about eight miles from this place. It would be useless for me to try to describe what their company is to me, unless one could know how hungry I was, and always am, for the company of the saints. It was through them that I heard of dear brother and sister Carmichael, and of his church at Byesville. Through their kindness I have been permitted to read your good paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and find many sweet morsels in the editorials and the correspondence. I read the experience of the dear and precious brethren and sisters, which are so sweetly affecting that I am made to feel a longing to meet with them and enjoy their sweet company.

Now, dear brother Chick, will you pardon this, my first attempt? I have written more than I intended, but my poor old heart will flow out, in spite of efforts to check it, when I am writing or speaking to any of our Old School Baptist people. I feel that I am not worthy of a place among them, but the Lord only knows how my soul is drawn out toward them, and how very precious they are to me. Dear brethren and sisters all, I ask an interest in your prayers; please accept the love and best wishes of your poor, unworthy sister in hope,

FLORENCE PUTTZ.

JUSTUS, Ohio, Jan. 23, 1906.

MUCH ESTEEMED SISTER PUTTZ:—Your precious and interesting letter to my wife came last night, and as she is cumbered with many cares (not only me to care for, but a sick aunt, eighty-six years old, and paralyzed, who has to be cared for day and night,) I will write for her. She has never been accustomed to writing much, and hence asks me to do so for her. She wants me to say for her that your good and kind letter seemed to humble her in feeling, and that she is the

least of all, so unworthy, sinful, weak in faith, and absent-minded. Also she wishes me to say that she cannot live as near the cross day by day as she desires, yet that a secret prayer, as she hopes, goes up to God every day for grace, strength, wisdom and patience to endure. She says that I am to write that I told her of you and dear sister Wheatly after I was last at Byesville, and of your devotedness, in such a loving way that it endeared you to her, and that she would love to meet you and talk with you of these heavenly things.

Now, sister, these things are not fanciful; no, no, our loved ones have gone over to enjoy them, and notwithstanding our feeling sense of unworthiness and our sins, when we have suffered a few more days these tired bodies, now aching and filled with pain, will fall asleep in the embrace of death, and one day, according to his promise, we shall awake with his likeness and be satisfied. When you speak of your tired and aching body, and the care of your home, I understand you. It may be the will of God that we may meet again. My wife says tell you we have talked that if the Lord will strengthen me to go she will go with me more than she ever has done before.

But I must make this letter short, as I am so weak and nervous.

I was much drawn to sister Ford, because she is so humble, meek and devoted. This has prompted her to go far and near, trusting fully in God to guide, keep and direct.

I was taken sick on December 20th, and appeared to go down until January 11th, when I thought I should have to depart. My right lung was congested, my feet and limbs were swollen, and I could scarcely breathe; I was compelled to sit up in a chair fifteen nights and days. On that morning I said to my wife and children, "If you have anything to say, say it quickly." All matters were soon adjusted as to my funeral, and as to where my body should be laid, but for some cause the Lord reversed matters, at least for a time. The remedies given by the doctor seemed to be blest; the pain, swelling and short breathing subsided, and I have been gaining slowly ever since.

I was to be at Elder Hanover's on the 2nd inst., but was then seemingly near the gates of death. My son wrote them, and on Monday Elder Hanover came, and stayed three days and three nights. On Thursday my son took him to the train to go to Cleveland to fill my place on Saturday and Sunday. He will also go in my place to Union Church, in Perry County, on the 4th. He is a precious brother, his whole being is devoted to the Master, but he is so feeble that I fear for him to be from home. I was glad to hear of brother Sylvis and Elder Jefferson visiting you.

Now, my dear sister, as my trembling hand marks these lines, which I fear you cannot read, I feel to breathe a prayer to the God of heaven that he who strengthened Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, may comfort you in your home and in your household, and also bless dear brother and sister Ford, and all their dear children; you all lie near my heart. When I felt it was certain that I must go, in my very being there was something that seemed to desire to stay a little longer with my dear wife and the churches.

Now, sister, I must close. I would commend you to God and the word of his grace, which is able to keep you and present you faultless before him at that day. We pray you to write again. Tell brother and sister Ford to also write to us.

We join in love.

C. J. & MARY A. CARMICHAEL.

CAVE CITY, Ky., Feb. 21, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If I may be permitted to claim such a sacred relationship. I feel unworthy to do so, yet I love the dear Old School Baptists above all others. He who enjoined upon his followers to love God, has likewise commanded them to love one another. This love is my greatest comfort in this life. If I am a stranger to the joys of pardoning mercy, if I am an enemy to holiness, whence arises this union? Once I preferred worldly friendship, now I at times can say, "Thy people shall be my people," and I feel that we are cemented together in love. I need not assure you that the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES is still, and has ever been since our first subscription, a welcome visitor to each member of our family, and affords consolation that the world can neither give or take away. True, we miss the loving editorials of our dear brother Benton L. Beebe, also the writings of many other loved ones who have passed away, but it seems the dear Lord has blessed both writers and publishers, and the SIGNS continues upon fundamental principles the same as it did in former years. I hope, dear brethren, that you may be sustained in the arduous undertaking of publishing the SIGNS.

We have no church-house, only six believers; have no regular meetings. Dear Elder Sawin lives one hundred and forty miles distant; he usually visits us once in the fall of the year and once in the spring; we consider him as our dear pastor; he serves four churches near by his home. Dear Elder and sister Bartley visited us last May; I was very sick during their visit, but he held services at our home several times while they were here, and once at Oak Grove, three miles distant, a schoolhouse where our meetings are usually held. For many months I have been unable to attend preaching away from home. Some years ago we had a church-house, I think it was burned during the Civil war. Most of the members have passed away, and now only a few remain, and we are scoffed at and hated by the worldly denominations. Not long since I heard of a Campbellite lady saying that the members of the Old School Baptist Church had to be soaked in salt water two days and then they became "Hardshells;" but this does not trouble me; there is a blessing promised those who are persecuted for Christ's sake. I treat the different denominations (I mean their members) with respect, but for many years (since 1857, when I left them,) I have seldom heard their ministers preach, unless on a funeral occasion; their sermons contain no food for me, and I feel that it is bidding them Godspeed to attend their meetings. Among all the inhabitants of Glasgow, our county seat, not one is a member of the Old School Baptist Church. O what a mercy that I was made to hear his voice. I do indeed feel that it was the goodness and mercy of God alone.

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

I feel that I have trespassed on your valuable time by my long letter, but I am so often unable to write to my loved ones that sometimes I do not know how to stop. We are expecting dear Elder and sister Bartley on their return north from Alabama, to tarry with us some weeks. I have a farm, and the dear Lord has blessed us with a bountiful living. Our home has been one for the Old School Baptists for more than fifty years, whenever they can stop with us.

Last May and June I was so ill with a complication of diseases my physician

and friends despaired of my restoration to health. It was at that time that sister Bartley composed the lines I have inclosed for you to publish in the SIGNS, if the request meets with your approval. When I bade them both adieu, I truly believed that it was the last earthly farewell, and I requested dear brother Bartley to read a portion of the Scriptures, and to speak in prayer before leaving. He did so, and the faces of all present were bathed in tears; I felt that I should not live long, and my greatest dread was that I should not receive the Father's welcome. It seemed that I would be told, Depart, I never knew you; afterwards I became reconciled. My brethren and sisters spoke many words of loving consolation and the Lord has spared my unworthy life until the present, although I feel to be only a cumberer of the ground. If I live until the 13th of next month I will be seventy-five years of age, and I can truly say, Few and evil have been my days. If saved it will be by the grace of God alone.

I will now bring my letter to a close; please pardon the many errors with which it abounds. After reading it you will know how we appreciate the SIGNS. I trust I feel thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift for our dear family paper. May the richest of heaven's blessings be yours, if it is the Lord's will.

Sincerely yours,

LAURA M. BAIRD.

Though like an atom in the air,
  A leaf upon the stream,
No scene of beauty can compare
With scenes beyond this mortal sphere,
  Of which I sometimes dream.

I'm lost in wonder and amaze
  At all Thy glories here;
Life's deep, mysterious, hidden ways,
Its prayers to Thee, its songs of praise,
  Its pain and falling tear.

Now swifter than the arrow's flight
  Our lives all speed away;
And some were clothed in spotless white,
And filled our hearts with such delight
  We longed for them to stay.

They could not stay, Thou callest them
  To fairer worlds on high,
Away from all that can condemn,
No more the stormy tide to stem;
  In rest their spirits lie.

When Thou shalt come with power divine
  To wake the sleeping dead,
Then they shall in thy image shine,
And all the glory shall be thine,
  Our great and glorious Head.

SALLIE M. BARTLEY.

JUNE 8, 1905.

TOUCHET, Wash., Dec. 29, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—This day has been one of many meanderings of mind, of fears and doubts, and much anxiety, and yet not without hope for that which I see not. I feel like telling you of the enjoyment of our holidays. Some relatives, brothers, sisters and friends came to visit our much esteemed Elder Barnes and his family. They had a Christmas dinner at their home; then himself, wife and others the next day dined with us. For the next day preaching was appointed at his house, and it was filled to its utmost capacity. If I were to answer for all, I should say the Lord openeth and none can shut the mouth of the servants whom he hath called to speak of the unsearchable riches of his love. After a prayer, Elder Barnes arose and said that being called to speak at that time seemed out of season, but with me it did appear that the Lord granted him wisdom, might and power to proclaim the truth of righteousness as it is in Christ Jesus. Not another doctrine, but the doctrine of salvation was delivered, that salvation which was once given to the saints. It was the salvation which Paul and Jude speak of, and, as Peter says, he

did not wrest the truth, as some did, condemning the writing of Paul as being hard to understand. It was surely given him to understand that truth which was from the beginning, which was taught first by our Lord and then by his apostles until the churches were established. All the churches, as well as the seven churches of Asia, were admonished to take heed to none other doctrine, even though an angel from heaven should preach it. Now I pray all the household of faith everywhere to humbly and sincerely pray the Father that, if in accordance with his will, he will strengthen those whom he has called to stand upon the walls of Zion, that they may cry aloud and spare not, and cease not to declare the whole truth, for there are many lo heres and lo theres here in the far west. It seems to me that surely there must be more here than you have in the east, as we are so scattered. If a minister comes among us, many who have not the privilege of hearing preaching often are not prepared to rightly divide the word, and so may be led into strange ideas. O that we may be kept in the unity of the Spirit, and in the bond of peace. If all are exercised as I have been surely they cry for peace. The Adamic man, the flesh, rises against all that is pure, all that is godly, all that is peaceable, striving to destroy our peace in all manner of shapes, and from all manner of sources which we least expect; Satan presents himself and tells us, as he did our mother Eve, that we should be as gods, knowing good and evil, and consequently we begin to judge by human reason, and there cometh strife and divisions and every evil work.

Your sister,

(MRS.) S. J. CUMMINS.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan., 1903.

MRS. L. C. RAY—MY DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—As I read over your last letter to me, I find it is dated September 27th; really I did not know that I had owed you a letter for so long a time, and am now ashamed of myself for not having written sooner. I have been so barren and destitute of all spirituality that had I written I doubt if it would have been of much account. Even now the only reason why I start this letter is because I feel that I must write to you, however worthless the outcome may be, and not because I have any great message to deliver.

I am glad you have met brother Fetter, and have been privileged to enjoy his company; he is a very estimable brother. I am glad you have enjoyed such a feast of fat things, both in New Mexico and at the Trinity River Association. By this time I trust the memory of it still lingers sweetly with you, though you may have forgotten in detail many of the precious things that were said. We are sometimes discouraged because we cannot carry in our memory more of the things that we hear, and reflect upon them at later times. Once in a long while we can do this, but for one idea that we retain in this way, there are a dozen or more that we let slip. I cannot call to mind at this instant just what I had for my dinner on Monday; it is not needful that I remember it; if the food then partaken of has been digested and assimilated into my physical makeup, this is the prime necessity. Just so with the sermons we hear, we rejoice in them at the time we hear them, are built up thereby, strengthened, encouraged and refreshed; this is all that is necessary. It is not needful for us to retain in memory a single idea for to-morrow, or the line of

thought of a sermon; if we have partaken of the heavenly manna to-day, to-morrow will bring us a fresh supply, and we cannot carry to-day's provisions to a future time and make it minister unto our future needs. "Give us this day our daily bread," is the prayer voiced by the spiritual man. "After this manner therefore pray ye," said the Savior. No prayer indited in the heart by the Spirit of God is fruitless, but will be answered according to the petition. The prayer so inspired is in harmony with God's will, and asks only for that which he is willing to bestow upon us, therefore every true prayer is prophetic, and is answered in Christ before the lips or heart frame the petition. So if Jesus commands his disciples to pray in this manner: "Give us this day our daily bread," it amounts to a promise, and coming from such a source is in substance an assurance that his people will daily be fed with bread from heaven. It may not always be the bread that our nature will want to eat. We may sometimes draw back and rebel against our daily allotment. It is all very nice and pleasant when our share is the bread of prosperity and gladness; it is quite the reverse when it is the bread of adversity; but we eat both alike nevertheless, being made willing in the day of his power. There is not a true christian on the face of the earth at this moment but desires to be at all times in communion with Christ, not forgetting that there is but one way of coming into such a communion, and that one way is "through much tribulation;" that alone is the gate of heaven. If we would reign with Christ, we must also suffer with him. The Savior is ever present with us; he never leaves or forsakes us, and never will; he is the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother. If I am a child of God, then is he with me now? Certainly so, for his people are his dwelling-place. Then why can I not apprehend his presence? I reach out my hands, but they only grasp the air. I search with my eyes and understanding, but cannot find him. I listen with my ears for his footfall, but silence reigns supreme. If he be present why can I not touch him? Because he is removed beyond the reach of our finite mind and sense, yet is ever near us; but a flimsy veil separates us from him. In the twinkling of an eye the slender thread that binds us to earth might be severed, and in an instant we would stand before him in his unveiled glory, seeing him as he is and being like him. Ah, but is there no way of touching him while we are still here in this mortal state? Yes. How? He is touched with a feeling of our infirmities. That poor soul who is lamenting his uncleanness, his haltness and his blindness, crying out in his despair, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" is touching the High Priest. In the sufferings on account of sin and creature weakness, his people touch the Son of God, their elder Brother. This is communing with Christ, and such communion is not being carried to heaven on flowery beds of ease; so that to commune with him means to go through the refining fires of the furnace of affliction, to be purged of our dross, to be made conformable to his image unto which his people were predestinated before the foundation of the world.

My mind was a blank when I began this letter to you, and I was at a loss as to what subject I should touch upon, but as I have been led so I have written, and hope something may present itself to you in a comfortable way.

A new year has begun, and I hope the

God of all mercies, the Giver of every perfect gift, will be with you throughout its changing scenes, and sanctify you wholly by his presence for his name's sake. Amen.

With christian love and fellowship, I am yours in a precious bond,

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

KOMOKA, Ont., Jan. 1, 1906.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have put off writing to you until this, thinking that perhaps my mind would be in a better mood. I like to write and tell of my joys, but I hesitate when cast down in sorrow. I do not want to murmur or complain, but I want to be submissive to the will of our God. I have been cast down, but, I trust, not forsaken; my travels have been much by night, and I have a constant fear lest I lose my way or fall by the roadside. O that the Lord would guide my ways, has been my soul's desire these past few days.

Elder Ker's writings in the SIGNS have been food for me, and I pray that God may bless you both as editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if it be according to his will and purpose.

Shortly after your visit to Canada it was our joy to hear brother and sister Graham tell of God's dealings with them. Their baptism was beautiful, I was filled with gladness, for I felt the presence of our Savior, but ere the sun went down my Redeemer had withdrawn, and I became rebellious and all was confusion. It makes me think of Jesus when he was led into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. I was then left in darkness, and I questioned if it were possible for one to know the true and living God and yet walk in such darkness. While in this state of mind I heard one of our dear ministers preach of those who walked in darkness and feared God, and I trust that I was led by the Holy Spirit to know that God works all things for our good and to his glory.

Last spring I mourned an absent Lord for many days. I was in such a state of mind that I was fearful of what the next moment might bring, when the words, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be," came to me. I then rested from my labors for a time. Not long ago I took up my Bible to read, and behold, my eyes fell on the same words. I was made glad, for I did not know that such a passage was in the Bible. I read on and I felt strengthened, and I clung to them as a promise sure and steadfast. Sometimes I get cold and indifferent; I take up my Bible to read, but it is as a sealed book to me; I get impatient, I want to know what this journey in the wilderness means, but I must wait; wait, my soul, upon the Lord. O that we may run with patience the race that is set before us.

I often think of God's goodness to this disobedient child, if one at all. I was humbled beyond measure when you three ministers of the gospel told me you would come to our home; I felt that it was too good, I did not deserve such esteem and gospel love and fellowship. I want the love and fellowship of the brethren, but I do not see how they can have any for me, for I am so vile, so prone to sin.

Now, dear brother, I have written this in much weakness, and unless the Lord will bless the reading of it, it will indeed be a poor letter.

Yours in hope,

LOLLIE M. CAMPBELL.

SMITHSHIRE, Ill.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find two dollars, for which please continue the SIGNS to me. As I am writing, it seems

both a privilege and a duty to speak a word of commendation for the magazine. It seems to me it preaches more and more of the doctrine of love, and less of those conflicting and incomprehensible philosophies that intellectual theologians have so often mistaken for the gospel. There are entirely too many humble and helpful writers for the SIGNS to begin naming contributors, but it certainly is proper to say that the editorials are particularly instructive and edifying. I am writing this because it is our duty to speak often a word of encouragement one to another while surrounded by the evils of this awful world. Not long since, a correspondent in the SIGNS wrote substantially this: He was a subscriber for that paper and changed his residence without notifying the editors of change. The paper continued to go to the old address, and his old neighbors got the benefit of it. By some chance he learned the facts. He wants to do right about it, but seems to be in doubt as to what is right. This is a hard world to live in, and often which is right and which is wrong is a perplexing problem, but in this case there is no question in my mind but that that man ought to pay for the SIGNS all the time, if he is in comfortable circumstances; his carelessness caused the publishers to send it to him. If he is a very poor man he should at least send something to pay the actual cost of sending the paper out. A postal card informing the SIGNS people that it was not wanted longer would not have been much expense, and would have saved them both labor and money.

Unworthily your sister in a precious hope,

(MRS.) GRACE VEECH SMITH.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., Dec. 19, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—I try, and desire when renewing my subscription, to write a few words for your columns, to cast in my little mite with the list of more able correspondents, but as the poet says, "'Tis seldom I can ever see myself as I would wish to be." Feeling that I am not alone in my barrenness of mind, that some dear brother or sister has been along the same dreary road, I make the attempt to tell the dear readers of our dear family paper that "Here I am, behold who will; sure I am a sinner still," yet hoping and trying to live as near (by the help of God) to duty as possible. My pathway has been strewn with thorns and many briars, my feet are often sore and tired with life's rugged journey, yet I have to stay here in this wilderness of woe as long as it pleases my good Master in heaven. My dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, my friends, all in the family or household of faith, some who have written to me personally, I want you all to know my sorrow at present, and want your prayers and sympathy in my present trials. My daily watch is over an afflicted mother, whose life seems passing away as fast as time can move; old age and a dreadful cough are doing their daily deadly work. Though I be left alone, nowhere to call home in this world, I trust I will not be left comfortless. I feel that I have been brought through the fiery furnace, and preserved for this very purpose to wait upon mother when all were gone from the old home but myself.

E. JOHNSON.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1906.

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EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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REPLIES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

BROTHER D. S. Koontz, of Ashland, Ill., lately requested our views through the SIGNS upon the words found in Luke xxii. 35, 36: "And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing. Then he said unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one." There are some things that these words cannot mean. They cannot mean that the spirit of the gospel was to be in anywise different after these words were spoken from what it was before. They did not mean that money, and bread, and shoes, and scrip, would be any more needed for the sustenance of this life afterwards than before. They do not mean either that the gospel was afterwards to be sustained by the sword, as had not been the case before. For this very reason the Lord said, "All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." In verse thirty-eight when they said, "Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough," it is evident that he could not have meant that now they were to depend upon the sword for defense as they had not before this time.

In verse thirty-five, in reply to his question as to how they had fared when he sent forth first the twelve, two and two, into every city of Israel whither he would himself afterwards come, they said that they had lacked nothing. In one place they are recorded to have said in the fullness and exultation of their joy and surprise: "Even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." In other words, they had had all their wants supplied, and the hearts and the houses of the people where the Son of peace had come, were opened to receive them, and even devils did not hinder their ministry. But now he forewarns them that the time of persecution and tribulation was at hand. He was about to be crucified, and the hatred which had resulted in his crucifixion would also follow them as they should go preaching his word. They would find that to preach the cross of Christ would offend, hence let each one that hath a purse or the goods of this world take them, and let each one take his scrip wherein to carry food for the sustenance of life. They should not find that men would gladly receive the gospel, but rather that men would hate it and them also. If we ask, Why should it be so afterwards more than was the case before? perhaps the only answer that we can make is that it so seemed good in the sight of the Lord. He had moved even upon devils so that they could not harm his disciples; he had moved upon the hearts of men so that even the wicked and the godless were restrained from doing his servants any harm in their former journeys throughout the cities of Israel; but now he predicts persecutions, and sufferings, and deprivations, and the anger of men. This has been fulfilled in all ages

since, though in some more manifestly than in others. In the first three centuries of the gopel day the lives of millions were sacrificed because of their faith in the crucified One. They had done these things in the green tree, and now much more they did them in the dry; they had called the Master of the house Beelzebub, now much more did they slander those of his household.

But what can the words mean: "And he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one"? Manifestly it cannot signify that they were to meet force with force; first, because they were expressly forbidden to do so; and second, because they could not do so, being so few and so weak themselves. They were to go forth as lambs in the midst of wolves. It seems clear therefore that the meaning is just this: that now sore trials and persecutions were to be theirs, and dangers were to now beset them on every hand. Saying to them that they should buy swords, was but a figurative expression to set forth the opposition, fierce, deadly and constant, that was before them. Taking a purse, signified not so much that they should seek to guard themselves from hunger with this world's goods, but rather, that they might expect to suffer hunger on their mission. So with taking the sword: it did not signify that now they must wield the sword in warfare, but rather, that dangers of every shape and name should surround them henceforth. If they were to gather from this that they were to literally fight, then he would not have said that two swords were enough; this seems manifest to our mind.

BROTHER T. G. Harris, of Fort Robinson, Neb., asks that we give our views upon the question, Does the Bible teach us to abstain from labor and keep Sunday as a Sabbath?

Most certainly it does not. The Sabbath was an ordinance given to the Jews in their law, no other people were ever commanded to observe it any more than other people were commanded to offer bulls, and goats, and the red heifer, in sacrifice before God. The Mosaic covenant in all its parts belonged to literal Israel and to them only. The Scriptures of the Old Testament will be sought in vain for any command to any Gentile nation to observe any of the ordinances of the Jewish economy. Some Gentiles became proselytes, and were incorporated into the Jewish nation, and took upon them the observance of Jewish ordinances, but this was not commanded of God, by any law-giver or any prophet whose words are recorded in the Old Testament. At the coming and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ all those ordinances ceased, even for the Jews. No Jewish believer in Jesus was henceforth to ever be under that covenant in any of its ordinances again. Most certainly Gentile believers in Christ were not to take a yoke upon them which even Jewish believers were relieved from. New moons, feast days, Sabbaths, either Sabbath days or Sabbatic years, were all but types, and as such were fulfilled in the coming and finished work of Christ; the substance had come, the shadow henceforth had no place; they were all shaken that the things that could not be shaken might remain. But we need not dwell upon this further.

Now to directly reply to our brother's question, we will say that there is not one place in all the New Testament where disciples of Jesus are commanded to place the first day of the week in the position of the Sabbath. This is the simple truth,

and cannot be gainsayed by any one. It was no doubt true that from the first, disciples of the Lord would remember that Jesus arose from the dead upon that first day, and we read of their meeting for worship upon that day, and that they should lay by in store upon that day, as the Lord prospered them, for the poor. But to do this would be the reverse of resting, which the word Sabbath itself signified. The first day was rather a day of activity and service than of rest, therefore it could not have been intended by the early believers to take the place of the Jewish Sabbath day. Jesus rested in the grave over the Sabbath day, and arose from that rest upon the first day of the week. This rising was not resting, but the end of rest and the beginning of endless and never-wearying activity, yet in the gospel all is rest. He that ceases from his own works doth enter into rest, and this embraces the whole gospel day. Does any child of God ever feel as though he wants a day of rest from loving God and serving him in spirit and in truth? So to the believer there is one long rest, and he needs no such special rest days under the gospel; his service is itself rest. The Jewish Sabbath pointed to this inward spiritual rest from their own works which believers have in Christ, who has finished all the work for them.

Why then, it may be asked, do believers observe Sunday as a day of rest and worship? First, because we profess to be law-abiding citizens, and are commanded to be so in the word of God. Second, because it is commanded us that we forsake not the assembling of ourselves together for the worship of God, and for mutual strengthening in faith and love and in every heavenly grace; and for obvious reasons Sunday in our land is by far the most convenient day, since the law of the land commands its observance as a day of rest, and in obedience to this law much of the daily business of life is suspended, thus relieving believers from their worldly service also. This law is beneficial and right, for man and beast alike need such a season for rest, but the day in itself is no more sacred than any other day under the gospel.

BROTHER J. N. Bartlett, of Philippi, W. Va., has written proposing the following questions, to which we will briefly respond. First, he desires our opinion of the tenth and eleventh verses of the second epistle of John. He asks, Does this have reference to our church-house? Does it mean that we should not invite preachers of other denominations to preach in our church-houses? Is it disorderly to permit preachers of other denominations to preach in our church-houses? What is the order generally among Primitive Baptists with regard to this? Are preachers of other denominations permitted to preach funerals in our church-houses?

With regard to the text to which our dear brother has called attention, we will briefly say that it has appeared to us for many years that the simple meaning is that we must not aid or countenance in any manner any one who comes professing to be a minister of the gospel who yet does not bring the true gospel. Certainly there could arise no question if one who is a Mohammedan, or a Buddhist, or a Romanist, should come to a believer in Christ, asking aid upon the ground of his religious profession in any way. Upon that ground he is not to be received even into our homes or sheltered in any way. As a man who may be hungry we are to feed him; if naked, clothe him; if shelterless, shelter him; but this we are to do as to a fellow-being in distress, and not as

to a servant of the true God. It would be treason, and giving aid and comfort to the enemies of God, to minister to him upon the ground of his religious profession. It is, on the other hand, obedience to God's own commandment to relieve him if suffering, as our fellow-man. We have not thought that the house spoken of in verse ten means the place of public worship, but the home where we dwell. But still it would follow, that if we are not to encourage those who come bringing not the doctrine of Christ, by caring for them and ministering to their comfort as ministers of righteousness in our homes, we certainly would have no right to give them the use of our houses of worship to teach their falsehood in. The meaning amounts to this: that no aid or encouragement is to be given to those who oppose the truth in any manner whatever, and no matter how honest or sincere these may be, they must not be received, and we must not bid them Godspeed, because in so doing we shall be partakers of their evil deeds. Because of what is here said, we have never felt at liberty to invite members of denominations who do not hold and preach the truth to pray in our family, or even to say grace at our table. This is sometimes trying, but it is God's command, and ought to be obeyed by his children. We certainly should not invite preachers of other denominations to preach in our houses of worship, or even call upon them to engage in prayer or in any other service there, for the reason that we by so doing would be bidding them Godspeed and so be partakers of the evil which they are doing, in promulgating that doctrine which is contrary to godliness. It certainly is not according to the order of the word of God to permit this. It is very trying when some neighbor, to whom we may be under obligations for many deeds of neighborly kindness, comes asking the favor of us that we would permit the use of our house of worship for some minister, (a friend of his and who is with him,) to preach in, to refuse him that privilege. But is it better to please God or men? We think also that this is the order of Old School Baptist churches generally. There may be some exceptions, but of this we cannot testify. In the bounds of our acquaintance we know this is the sentiment of our people in regard to this matter. As to whether preachers of other denominations are permitted to preach funerals in our houses of worship, we think that the practice has not been altogether uniform in our churches in different places, still it is the exception to allow this, and not the rule anywhere. In some cases where this has been allowed it has been thought that the church did not commit itself to this practice, as a church, because permission was given to the family of the deceased to use the house of worship in burying their dead, and inviting other ministers to hold the service, or to take part in the service, was the act of the family and not of the church. We are only stating the matter as it has been presented, without undertaking to judge whether it is right or wrong. We will suggest however that we do not think that in any of our churches a funeral service would be allowed if it were to be held under Romanist, or Mohammedan, or Mormon control. Why then may such service be held lawfully under the control of any denomination that does not bring the gospel?

All this has nothing to do with neighborly kindness toward all who dwell around us; we are to do good to all men as far as we can. If any man is our enemy, we are not to be his enemy in return. The command of the blessed

Master to his disciples was to love their enemies, to bless those who cursed them, and to pray for those who persecuted them and despitefully used them, and as much as in us lies, we are to live peaceably with all men: but this has nothing to do with holding fast the profession of our faith under all circumstances and among all men. We are to be friendly toward all men in feeling, and in our conduct, but we are at all times to refuse to countenance untruth, even should our dearest friend ask our aid in advancing it. We should be a greater enemy to him to do as he desires us to do than to refuse to do as he wishes. True friendship opposes itself to every false way, seeking to win him that is ensnared by it. To go with him is to encourage him in the wrong way, and to deceive him; it will cause him to suppose that we justify his course, when we cannot because we know it is false, and it is certainly much worse for us to go into what we know to be wrong, than for him to follow what he mistakenly supposes to be right.

C.

INFORMATION WANTED.

P. E. DAHLSTEDT, of El Campo, Texas, wishes to know if there are any Swedish people who take the SIGNS, and if so will they please send him their names and addresses, as he would like to correspond with them.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

BROTHER George D. Conklin, having changed his address from No. 50 Washington, Ave., Newark, N. J., to No. 14 Washington Place, Newburgh, N. Y., wishes his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

SOLOMON'S SONG III. 7, 8.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Some time ago I requested your views on Solomon's Song iii. 7, 8, and I still desire you to give them, and oblige your friend,

WILLIAM P. ROBERTSON.

GENTRYVILLE, Ind., August, 1862.

If we do not in all cases comply with the desires expressed by our brethren for our views on such passages of the Scriptures as they send us, it is not from any indifference felt by us in regard to their wishes, or from lack of inclination to oblige them. Sometimes it is for want of time to attend to so many calls as are made upon us, but more generally because we have no satisfactory light upon the subjects on which light is sought for.

The passage now proposed by Elder Robertson reads as follows: "Behold his bed, which is Solomon's; threescore valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Israel. They all hold swords, being expert in war: every man hath his sword upon his thigh, because of fear in the night."

Solomon throughout this song very fitly personates our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom, as the son of David, king of Israel and builder of the temple, he was a brilliant type, and the spouse is quite as clearly a chosen and appropriate figure of the church of God, which is known as the bride, the Lamb's wife. In the text before us our attention is called to behold Solomon's bed. As Solomon himself is a figure, his bed must also be considered in a figurative sense, and is used to signify something of importance in regard to Christ, which is particularly interesting to the church of God. Beds are commonly regarded as places of rest and comfort for the weary, and are exceedingly useful in the night, when the feeble,

wayworn pilgrim or weary laborer can stretch himself upon it and enjoy a peaceful and refreshing slumber. But there were some peculiar excellencies in the bed which is Solomon's, which, especially to his love, his undefiled, could be found nowhere else. Solomon's bed was in a royal pavilion, possessing elegance and comfort suited to the high position of its august proprietor. It was a place of comfort as well as a place of rest, and in addition to these advantages, it was a place of safety, as we see it was guarded by valiant armed men.

All these figures, we think, are applicable to the glorious gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, which gospel is the place of the sweetest rest that was ever enjoyed by the weary and the heavy laden, who have been permitted by abounding grace to recline upon its ample space for rest and comfort. The gospel is set forth by the apostle as a rest that remaineth to the people of God. It was figuratively set forth in the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, and rested on the seventh day from all the works which he had made, and blessed and hallowed that day. The seventh day Sabbath instituted under Moses, and all the Sabbatic days and years in the ceremonial law, were typical of the gospel as the rest for weary and heavy laden sinners who are called by grace. The inspired exposition of the subject in the New Testament, especially in the epistle to the Hebrews, thus explains their figurative import and design. Every weary and sin-burdened sinner that ever came to Christ is a witness that we which have believed do enter into rest, and that "He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." The prophet foresaw and proclaimed of Christ that his rest should be glorious. We think then that the royal bed of Solomon must refer to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the only place of rest and comfort for those who can rest nowhere else. Taking this then as the correct design of the figure, let us notice this bed of Solomon's, namely, the gospel. First, we observe that it is Solomon's, or, as the figure implies, it is Christ's; it is the gospel of Christ, the gospel of the Son of God. Paul speaks of some who preach another gospel, which is not another, &c., but he would admit of none as genuine but that gospel of Christ, of which he said he was not ashamed. Men may invent a multitude of schemes and theories to rest upon, but their beds are too short for one to stretch himself upon, and their covering is too narrow to wrap themselves in it. The strange woman in the seventh chapter of Proverbs boasted that she had decked her bed very extravagantly, and in a very costly manner, and perfumed it with myrrh, aloes and cinnamon, but with all the allurements of her harlot bed no weary sinner ever found either rest or comfort on it. Her house, we are told, is the way of hell, leading down to the chambers of death, and the prophet of the Lord proclaims in thunder tones that, "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest." No, it must be his bed.

"Behold his bed, which is Solomon's." The bed, or resting-place of Solomon, was the resting-place of his spouse. To her alone belonged the right and privilege of resting with her Beloved in all the pleasures of the consecrated couch. So in the glorious gospel of the grace of God none but the bride, the Lamb's wife, shall rest upon the gospel bed. His marriage bed is undefiled, no stranger ever has or shall be allowed to pollute it. There certainly

is this peculiarity in the comforts of the gospel, none but the members of Christ can possibly rest in them; nor have they in reality any desire, for it is not calculated to be appreciated by them.

"The softest couch that nature knows
Can give the conscience no repose."

But the gospel gives rest and comfort to all who are allowed to enter into his rest, and this embraces the weary, to whom Christ says, "I will give you rest;" and the troubled saints, to whom Paul says, "To you who are troubled rest with us." Even the christian can rest only on this bed, for the spouse says in the first verse of this chapter, "By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not." It is a restless place for the children of God when they get upon their own bed, they cannot find him there who alone can calm their fears and cheer their hearts.

"And whilst upon my restless bed,
Among the shades I roll,
Till my Redeemer shows his head,
'Tis restless to my soul."

The perfect security of Solomon's bed is indicated by the royal guard of armed and valiant men which were stationed around it. It is true the gospel of Christ cannot be endangered by all the powers of earth and hell, but still the gospel church is now in a militant state, or in a state of warfare; hostile enemies have conspired to invade and spoil the resting-place of the church of God, and they sometimes succeed too well in terrifying the timid saints. Doubts, fears, unbelief and lack of confidence often cause the saints to tremble, and forbid their rest, but to protect the saints from these a royal guard is provided.

"Threescore valiant men." These may represent the gospel ministry, they are entrusted with the watch-care of the churches, and made overseers of the flock, and their business is to stand upon the watch-tower, and by the faithful discharge of their duties to meet every invading foe at the threshold, whether such foes approach in the form of men, or devils, or in doubts, fear or unbelief. Hence valiant men are required; those timid ones who leave the flock as soon as they see the wolf approaching are not reliable, for they are not of the valiant of Israel. The number, "threescore valiant men," makes a strong and sufficient guard; it is not to confine the number of the ministry to that number literally, but as in the figure, sixty men, well armed, would seem to be a very strong guard for one bed. So we infer that the gifts for the comfort and protection of the church from surprise or invasion is full and complete, embracing the apostles and all who are called, equipped and placed for the defense of the gospel of Christ.

"They all hold swords." They are prepared for the conflict, and ready to confront any approaching foe. Their swords are not made of steel to shed the blood of their opposers, for the weapons of their warfare are not carnal, but spiritual, and mighty through God in pulling down strong holds. The apostles understood the sword to be the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, as it comes from the mouth of God. John saw in his vision a sharp two-edged sword proceeding out of the mouth of him whose name was written upon his vesture and on his thigh, and whose name is called The Word of God. It is with this sword (namely) the words which God hath spoken, that apostles, evangelists, pastors and teachers are to resist error, contend for truth, and with this two-edged sword, which cuts both ways, offensively and defensively, they are to fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold

on eternal life. "They all hold swords." What would all their valor be to them when assailed if they could not meet the adversary with a "Thus saith the Lord"? They are all expert in war; God has taught their hands to war and their fingers to fight, as he did David and Paul. He makes them expert, for they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful; novices will not do, lest being lifted up with pride, they fall into the condemnation of the devil; not such watchmen as Isaiah described, which were dumb dogs, that could not bark, sleepy dogs, lying down, loving slumber, nor greedy dogs, that can never have enough. The wisdom of Solomon would be impugned by the supposition that he would entrust the security of his bed to an inefficient guard, and behold a greater than Solomon is in the church, to order all things in wisdom and righteousness.

"Every man hath his sword upon his thigh, because of fear in the night." The sword of the warrior is usually fastened on his thigh, as the most appropriate and convenient place, ready to be drawn in an instant. He has not to go to some distant armory to procure a sword, every man on guard has one with him. The word is nigh thee, even in thine heart, and in thy mouth; even the word of faith which we preach. This is very essential, because of fear in the night. The night is the time when thieves and robbers and murderers are busy in pursuing their work; the night is the time for those who love darkness more than light, and it is in the darkness of the night the psalmist says all the beasts of the forest creep forth. It was in the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night, that Solomon saw the strange woman (antichrist) sally forth on her errand of abomination. Naturally, men are more timid in the night than in the daytime, and it is truly so in a spiritual sense with christians; when the light of the countenance of the Redeemer is hidden from their view, dark, dismal thoughts and boding fears intrude, and then the valiant of Israel require to use their swords.

"Happy the church, thou sacred place,
The seat of thy Creator's grace;
Thy holy courts are his abode,
Thou earthly palace of our God.

Thy walls are strength, and at thy gates
A guard of heavenly warriors waits;
Nor shall thy deep foundations move,
Fixed on his counsel and his love.

Thy foes in vain designs engage,
Against his throne in vain they rage,
Like rising waves, with angry roar,
That dash and die upon the shore."

Much more might be written on the subject, if we have not missed the true design of the figure. The subject is instructing, and full of comfort and interest to those who can find rest in the gospel; but none but quickened souls can be weary, therefore none other can truly appreciate rest. The dead can no more rest with the saints upon Solomon's bed than on the stormy billows of the troubled ocean; the gospel is the rest that remaineth, and shall evermore remain to the people of God; therefore we say:

"Go, ye that rest upon the law,
And toil and seek salvation there;
Look to the flame that Moses saw,
And shrink, and tremble, and despair.

But I'll retire beneath the cross,
Savior, at thy dear feet I'll lie,
And the keen sword that justice draws
Flaming and red, shall pass me by."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Sept. 15, 1862.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, March 31st, 1906, at the home of the bride's parents, in Bethayres, Pa., Cornelius W. Van Artsdalen, of Philadelphia, Pa., and Miss Martha A. Pierson.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder J. D. Tracy was born June 24th, 1869, and died Jan. 20th, 1906, making his stay on earth 36 years, 7 months, less 4 days. He was married first to Miss Sarah E. Strackbein, July 18th, 1886, by Elder Jacob Lee. There were born to this union three boys and one girl. On Jan. 31st, 1895, the Lord saw fit to take her from him, leaving him with his little children, but his mother-in-law took them for him. Oct. 15th following he was married to Mrs. Nettie A. Mahaffey. To him and his second wife were born three boys, who are living. Brother Tracy first joined the Baptists who hold the doctrine of limited predestination and conditional time salvation, but becoming dissatisfied he went to the Old Predestinarian Baptists (called Absoluters). Brother Tracy was ordained in 1888, by a sound, orderly presbytery, but concerning his baptism he was not satisfied, as he had been baptized by one whom he considered had departed from the old landmarks. He then joined the Old Predestinarian Baptists, and was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry Nov. 26th, 1905, at Sharon Church, Limestone Co., Texas, by Elders J. L. Taylor, M. M. Gibson and L. A. Gibson as a presbytery.

Dear brethren and sisters, we feel that our loss is great, yet our hope is that God has taken him from the many sorrows of this world, as he left such strong evidences that God was with him. Not long before his death he told his wife that he could not live, and that he had no fear of death, but was willing to go when God called him; all he dreaded was leaving his little family. He seemed to crave to see the brethren, and a message was sent to the writer of this, with other brethren, but the message was not delivered. His faith remained firm to the last, and he spoke many words of comfort to those who are left to mourn, and many words of encouragement to those whom he considered were contending for the old doctrine and order of God's house. May the Lord fill his place with some one who is able to defend the cause of Christ, for many are they who now profane the temple of the Lord.

Let me here say to the dear sister who is left with a broken heart, may the dear Lord comfort you and protect you and your little, helpless children from the many snares of this wicked world.

Written by request of sister Tracy.

ALSO,

Elder J. L. Taylor was born in White Co., Ill., Feb. 23rd, 1824, and died Feb. 14th, 1906, in Limestone Co., Texas. He was married when only twenty years old to Miss Jane A. Smith, with whom he lived for about forty-six years, and raised a large family of children. After her death he married Mrs. Fannie Lee, who only lived to comfort him one year and nine months. Some time after her death he married another widow, Mrs. Hulda Adams. He lived most of his time in late years with his daughter, Mrs. L. D. Wilson, where he died. He lacked only nine days of being 82 years old. Brother Taylor united with the Old School Baptist Church at Cedar Springs, in Dallas Co., Texas, the second Sunday in September, 1852, and was baptized by Elder Gabriel Fitzhugh. In 1854 he began trying to preach, and trying also to keep from it. The war soon came and he had to go. As soon as the war was ended and he returned home, he was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, Nov. 25th, 1865, by Elders Allen Samuel and Jacob Dishoughn as a presbytery. He remained firm upon the principles of the gospel, and often said that if the doctrine of absolute predestination, salvation by grace, and the final perseverance of the saints, was false, he had nothing left to contend for. He lived to see several divisions among those with whom he stood identified, but would never sacrifice principle for the sake of those he loved. He traveled many miles over different parts of Texas, preaching among the churches. In his last days he often spoke of the many false charges which are now being brought against those old brethren who were among the first settlers of Texas. He said they would ride horseback for a hundred miles or more, and often have to camp out with nothing but the heavens as a covering, but when they would get to the meeting many times the place would be filled with people who had come for many miles to hear the gospel of the Son of God proclaimed.

Dear brethren and sisters, we feel that our loss is great, yet our hope is centered in One who is able to fill our dear old brother's place in the ministry, and we desire the prayers of all God's people, that God may send soldiers into the field of battle, as the enemy has magnified himself in the camps of Israel. May all of God's humble poor be blessed, as dear brother Taylor was, to stand firm even unto death. Just one month before his death he preached for over an hour; his mind seemed to run back to many things of the past, which are now being ignored by so many calling themselves Primitive Baptists.

L. A. GIBSON.

Mrs. Amanda Gantz, wife of W. H. Gantz, and daughter of John and Mary Updyke, was born in Hopewell township, Mercer Co., N. J., Oct. 1st, 1835, and died Dec. 29th, 1905. She was married to Mr. Gantz April 18th, 1883, by the then pastor of the First Hopewell Church, Elder W. J. Purington. She was one of a family of ten children, eight daughters and two sons. She leaves her husband, two sisters and one brother, and a large circle of relatives and friends. Her sisters and brothers are: Mrs. Phœbe Kintner, of Hopewell, and Mrs. Mary Anderson, of Cedar Grove, (near Princeton) N. J., and Mr. Peter Updyke, near Skillman. One year before her death she was attacked with "la grippe," which left her in

feeble health. She was able to go about the house until two days before her death; at that time she was attacked with paralysis, and passed away quietly and peacefully on Friday night. Her prayer that night was that the Lord would take her before morning. She has been a good friend and kind neighbor, and will be greatly and sadly missed in the community. For some years before her marriage she made her home in the family of the late Zephaniah Stout, long well known among Old School Baptists, and for many years a faithful and prominent member of the Hopewell Church; this family she dearly loved. She was baptized by Elder P. H. Hartwell many years ago, in the fellowship of the First Hopewell Church, and remained a faithful and loving member there until her death. In her last days of ill health her eyesight failed so that she could not read. I would as often as possible go to see her, and she would get me to read letters from the SIGNS, and from the sisters of the church of her membership, and this was a great comfort to her.

The funeral was held on Tuesday, Jan. 2nd, 1906. Elder Chick, her pastor, conducted the service, using the Scripture found in 1 Cor. xv. 17, as the text. By her husband and family, by the church, and by all who knew her, she will be greatly missed and mourned.

Her niece, (MRS.) ANNA STOUT.

[WE desire to add to this notice written by sister Stout, a brief expression of our own sense of loss in the departure of this faithful and kind-hearted woman. We had known her many years before we moved to this place, and always found her the same kindly, thoughtful woman, faithful to her church, to her faith and to her friends. Since coming to Hopewell we have received many tokens of thoughtful kindness from her, and have heard her speak of her hope in the blessed Redeemer many times. Her faith was unshaken to the end. We doubt not that she has fallen asleep in the Lord. We can but feel a deep sympathy for the aged and bereaved companion left lonely and sad in his old age. May the presence of the God of all comfort be his stay and support.—C.]

Elder John Brown, the subject of this notice, was born in Knox Co., Ill., May 3rd, 1840; died at his late residence, three miles east of Hopkins, in Nodaway Co., Mo., March 15th, 1906, aged 65 years, 10 months and 12 days. His residence had only been in Missouri three or four years.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Ellis in the Advent chapel in Gaynor City. Interment was at Gaynor City cemetery, in Independence township, Nodaway Co., Mo., on Saturday, 17th. I was not able to attend, being ill at the time, which I very much regret on account of my long acquaintance and connection with him and his family. Many friends met to pay the last tribute of respect to the departed.

He was married to Mrs. Mary Kreitzer Jan. 18th, 1866. To this union were born four sons and two daughters, two having passed away in infancy. He leaves many sorrowing friends to mourn his departure, and especially his devoted wife, but we all sorrow not without hope, for we believe all those who sleep in Jesus God will bring with him. Hymn 1257 (Beebe's Collection) was a great favorite with him: "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep." He was conscious to the last moment, talked much of his death as going on a journey, and gave instructions in regard to his burial. Just what time he united with the church the writer does not know, but I think in 1859 or 1860. He joined when young the Henderson Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists, in Knox Co., Ill. So far as the writer has knowledge he never had membership anywhere else, and remained firm in the faith of God's elect until the end. At what time he was licensed I cannot now tell, but he was ordained to the full work of the ministry in 1875, and was only active in the full work sixteen years, having lost his health, being afflicted with kidney and liver trouble, of which he finally died after many years of suffering. He fought a good fight, he kept the faith, his life-work was done, and the time came for him to go to his reward.

I became acquainted with his father and mother in 1847. His father was deacon of Henderson Church many years; he died a member of that church last October or November, aged about ninety years. His mother died some fourteen or fifteen years ago; she was one of the correspondents of the SIGNS in her day. I had the pastoral care of the church from some time in 1862 until 1875. At the time I came to Missouri all of them were strong in the faith of God's elect, and of salvation by grace and grace alone. I visited Elder Brown after he moved to Missouri, and found him very much afflicted in body, but his mind was clear and strong, and I can say of him, although he was held from active work in the ministry by his afflictions and other surroundings, his mind was always reaching out after the doctrine of his blessed Master.

Now to his beloved widow and his four remaining children I extend my condolence, and ever pray that grace may be given them according to their day and time. Elder Brown is the fourth one of his father's family who has died within fourteen months; two more remain, both of them in poor health. May our God bless all who mourn and are afflicted.

An old time friend and companion,

R. M. SIMMONS.

HOPKINS, Mo., March, 1906.

Elder Eli P. Ashbrook passed peacefully away at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Maggie Huber, near Churubusco, Ind., where he had gone to spend a portion of the winter. His death occurred on the 10th

of March. He had been failing in health for two or three years, and his death was not entirely unexpected. His remains were brought to Loxa, Ill., where on the 12th inst., after a short service conducted by the writer, the casket was taken to the cemetery and placed beside that of his dear companion, who preceded him to the grave some three years. Brother Ashbrook was born in Fairfield Co., Ohio, Sept. 17th, 1833, and was in the 73rd year of his age when the death summons came. He with his family came to Coles Co., Ill., in 1864, where he maintained his residence up to the time of his death. He made a public profession of religion and united with the Primitive Baptist Church of Little Bethel in 1871. In February of that year the writer administered to him the ordinance of baptism. Soon thereafter the church granted him liberty to exercise his gift in public, which resulted in his ordination to the full functions of the ministry in May, 1881. He possessed a strong, invincible faith, and contended earnestly for it. This faith proved to be his stronghold in the hour of trial and affliction, and it became a sweet solace and comfort as he approached the deep rolling tide that surged between him and the dazzling shores of immortality. When his brow was touched by the hand of death he feared no evil, for he could say, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." He had fought the good fight, kept the faith, and the crown was his, for he joyfully anticipated the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. He left two sons and two daughters, three brothers, five sisters and a large number of brethren and friends to mourn, but not as those without hope. Their loss is gain to our departed brother.

JOHN G. SAWIN.

MATTOON, Ill., March 20, 1906.

DIED—March 22nd, 1906, sister **Almira Beaman,** widow of the late Elder Joseph Beaman, was born in 1813, and died in 1906, at the home of her son, John Beaman, in Troy, Pa. Though having attained to so great an age, she retained her mind and faculties until the last, there being no perceptible disease, but simply the decline of old age. She continued to take a great interest in the doctrine of her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Just a few days before her death one of the grandsons was reading to her from her family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, one of Elder Durand's pieces, and as a passage of Scripture which he quoted was read she repeated nearly the whole chapter. It was remarked by one of the family that she almost knew the Bible from beginning to end. She could read at her advanced age without the aid of glasses. She leaves one son and two daughters to mourn their loss, together with a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren and the church; but we know that our loss is her gain, and the dear one is at rest.

It was my privilege to attend her funeral at her son's home, on the 26th of March, where a minister, a friend of the family, read from the Bible and made a few appropriate remarks on the occasion. The ministers of her faith and order being at such a distance, it was not thought best to send for them under the circumstances, as the weather was very inclement at that time.

AUGUSTA J. VERMILYA.

DIED—At his residence near Haymarket, Prince William Co., Va., March 23rd, 1906, **Mr. Joseph N. Utterback,** aged nearly 86 years. Brother Utterback, together with his wife, was baptized in the fellowship of Broad Run Church, August, 1877, by the writer of this notice. It is my privilege to certify that his life in the church and in the world has been in accord with his profession. For several years brother Utterback has served the church in the office of deacon, and he filled the office well. He was a man of humble spirit, and a sincere lover of the truth, as he had received it in such a rich gospel experience. Down to infirm old age he was found in his place in the meetings of the church, and bore what to many of us seemed to be more than his share of its burdens, especially in temporal matters. Most earnestly he desired and labored for the peace and order of the church. He and his dear companion lived together about sixty-one years, and reared a large family of children and grandchildren. He leaves to mourn their loss four sons, two daughters and thirty-one grandchildren, and, I believe, one great-grandchild, together with his brethren of like precious faith with himself, and his faithful wife, who mourns a greater loss than all others. We shall miss brother Utterback sadly. It is a time of darkness and trial with our people, but their faith remains unshaken in him who is the Head of his body, the church. We cannot grieve for such as brother Utterback, for we feel he is at rest, but we grieve for ourselves, left here in lonely isolation in an enemy's country. Our only trust is that the Lord reigneth. May he comfort all that mourn.

J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., March 28, 1906.

DIED—At his son's, in Donie, Texas, Feb. 3rd, 1906, **O. F. Beene,** in his 88th year. He was a good citizen and a devoted husband, and was very much loved by all who were acquainted with him. He loved the Old Baptists, and always attended their meetings when he could, and though not a member, his conduct and conversation gave evidence of Christ in him the hope of eternal life. He leaves his dear companion, who is a member of the Old School Baptist Church, three sons, relatives and friends, to mourn their loss, though we hope that God will grant them grace and strength to bow in humble submission to his will. We know that God is wise and righteous

in his dealings, and worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and we desire that he will sanctify this bereavement to the widow, children and friends. Grieve not, relatives and friends, for your loss is his gain, for the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, and blessed be the name of the Lord. It is with a painful heart that I write this sketch, for I was intimately acquainted with the deceased. I feel that I am nearing the end of my pilgrimage on earth, though sometimes I have a hope of that blessed immortality beyond this vale of tears.

I. R. BETTS.

MEETINGS.

THERE will be a three days meeting held with the Sidling Hill Old School Baptist Church, in Fulton Co., Pa., to commence on Friday at 2 o'clock before the first Sunday in May, 1906. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth. Those coming by railroad will come to Hancock, Md., where they will be met on the Hancock side on Thursday about 1 o'clock. We hope to be remembered by our ministering brethren.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Baltimore Association is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, Baltimore, Md., beginning Wednesday before the third Sunday in May, (16th) 1906, and continuing three days.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Wilmington, Delaware, commencing on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, (23rd) 1906, and continuing three days.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the church at Southampton, Pa., beginning Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (May 30th) 1906, and continuing three days.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, at Middletown, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 6th, 7th and 8th, 1906.

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11:00 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

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D. BARTLEY.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 74. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1906. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"CURSED BE CANAAN."

BROTHER Kennard requests my views through the SIGNS on Genesis ix. 25, 26. This chapter is a record of wonderful events; it is the beginning of a new world or dispensation; it is both prophetical and typical. The old world had perished in the flood, for its wickedness. Noah was righteous; God saved him and his family in the ark, with all the living creatures in the ark. With all these God now makes his covenant, and upon the black cloud he sets the beautiful bow of promise, a sure token that he will no more destroy the world by a flood forever. When God brings the dark storm-cloud upon the earth, from whence had come the flood, he also looks upon the bow of the covenant, radiant with light and peace and hope. In all this is shadowed forth Jesus Christ the righteous and his saved people in the new heavens and new earth, with whom God has established his everlasting covenant of life and peace. So John beheld a throne in heaven, and One sat on it, and "a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald."

The three sons of Noah were Shem, Ham and Japheth. Three is significant. The earth was repeopled by these three. Time is measured by three dispensations. "There are three that bear record in heaven." The three apostles saw three men in glory in the holy mount: Jesus, Moses and Elijah—the gospel, the law and the prophets. When the cloud of glory was lifted the apostles "saw no man, save Jesus only." So the law and the prophets were fulfilled and finished in Jesus. In the new covenant he is All in all. Those names are likewise significant. Noah means both wandering and rest. Shem: name. Ham: hot, black. Canaan: low land. Japheth: fair one, spreading widely. These names are truly historic in their several meanings, as applied to the three chief races of men. Noah said, "Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant."—Gen. ix. 25–27.

Noah here spoke prophetically and historically, with the voice of God, and his curse and his blessing were the decree of

God. As a man, he had not the power to curse the posterity of Ham, or to bless the posterity of Shem and Japheth. So it was when Jacob blessed the younger son of Joseph, and when Isaac blessed his younger son, both of which were contrary to the patriarchal blessing. Isaac could not recall or reverse the blessing, but he said of Jacob, "Yea, and he shall be blessed." Thus God has often spoken through his servants. So both the curse and the blessing of Noah were unto perpetual generations. The curse passed over the three older sons of Ham, and fell upon the youngest. We must accept it as it is. This curse has fixed the status or state of this race of mankind for all time. As the name of Ham, the head of the race, signifies, they dwell in a hot climate, and are black. Then they are low or subordinated in their nature, as the name Canaan means. "A servant of servants shall he be." It is so until this day, all the powers of earth cannot change it. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin?" Impossible.

Has this a typical meaning? Yes. The curse of God fell upon the earth for man's sake, and this includes the earthly man, the fleshly being of God's people. In this nature the bride of Christ confesses that she is black, as the tents of Kedar. This is a low land, a land of darkness, and in this state the people of God's covenant were in bondage, and, like Jacob, given to the curse. The unrenewed Jacob represented this outward and fleshly man of the saints of God. Their cry is, "I am carnal, sold under sin." As the sons of Noah were three, and one is a servant to both the others, so it is in the trinity of the covenant people, (spirit and soul and body) the body is kept under and brought into subjection. Shem and Japheth have the dominion, and Canaan shall be their servant; God has so ordained and fixed it; his plan and way are immutable and wonderful. The world would not have it as it is, and desperate have been the efforts to uplift the Hamites to the place of Shem and Japheth, but deplorable have been the failures, both in the political and religious worlds. Canaan is a servant of servants. So, too, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." This is all that proseliters, conversionists and moralists can make of it. Why, even the Son of God himself was a servant in his flesh, and said, I "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." God alone can raise up Canaan from the low land and remove the curse. This will not be here below, but the word of prophetic promise says, "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Then our bondage here shall end, and it shall no longer be said, "I am black."

Noah was a man of faith, a believer in God, and a true worshiper of him; yet Noah was a sinner, a wanderer, and his rest was not in the flesh or on the earth, but in God's covenant and glorious rainbow of promise. In all this Noah represented every heir of promise, whom God has put in the ark of the covenant and shut them in, so that the deluge shall not destroy them. Noah was filled with wine, wherein is excess, and thus his nakedness and shame were exposed to view, and his need of an atonement to cover his nakedness, a robe to take away his shame, was made known. But Ham could not furnish this, because he was unrighteous, a degenerate son of the flesh; so he dishonored his father, laughed at his nakedness

and gloried in his shame. Thus Ham brought the curse upon his own ungodly son, and doomed him to perpetual servitude. In this God is just and holy.

"And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness." This is a lively type of the covering of the robe of righteousness, which removes all our sin and guilt and shame, and presents us spotless and white.

Noah said, "Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; * * * God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem." How wonderful is this blessing of God to Shem and Japheth, and how significant this prophecy! They were together as one in this noble and most gracious act, and the younger one should come and dwell in the tents of his elder brother. Canaan should be the servant of both. All this was and is true.

Whom do Shem and Japheth represent? Our dear, aged brother wants to know this; and so do we all, if God is pleased to show it to us, and we trust he will. Shem means a name. He was the father of the Hebrews, the family of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, the people of God's covenant. In Jacob God gave to this people the new name of Israel, meaning a prince, who has power with God and with men and prevails. This was fulfilled in the meek man Moses, the servant and prophet of God, whom he raised up and made him the leader of the whole house of Israel and the mediator of the covenant of God with his people. It was by Moses that God gave them the priesthood, the sacrifices and the atonement to cover their sins. This was ceremonial and typical. So Shem represented Moses.

Now Japheth, meaning fair one and spreading widely, was the younger brother of Shem, and the father of the Gentiles, the Caucasian or white race, who have spread widely over the earth.

Moses said to his brethren that of their brethren the Lord their God should raise up unto them a prophet like unto him, and him should they hear in all things. This was Jesus, "the Prophet of Nazareth," "the Mediator of the new covenant." He was an Israelite, of the family of King David, and so he was the Brother of the Israelites, the younger Brother of Moses, and one with him in the covenant and the atonement, as the Leader and Mediator of the people of God. Moses was the type, and Jesus the Antitype.

As the Son of man, Jesus was an Israelite in the flesh, the son of Abraham and Noah and David on his blessed mother's side, the brother of Shem and of all the children of God in that covenant. Yet not less than four of his ancestors on his mother's side were Gentile women, among them the blessed Ruth; so that he is the Brother and representative of Japheth and the children of God among the Gentiles, no less than of Shem and his people. So Japheth represented Jesus and was his type, and Jesus is truly the fair One, the salvation of God unto all the ends of the earth, "and in his name shall the Gentiles trust." Most truly has Japheth's wonderful blessing been fulfilled in Jesus: "God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant." For the patriarchs and prophets, Shem and Japheth, Moses and the law, the priesthood and the atoning sacrifices, the old and the new covenants, the Jews and the Gentiles, met in the one Mediator between God and men, the

anointed man Christ Jesus, and found their perfection in him. In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and also all the fullness of the covenants of the promise, and the fullness of the church. In him shall the fullness of the Gentiles come in, as fellow-heirs with the Jews, and so shall Japheth dwell in the tents of Shem. "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second."

Both historically and spiritually the prophecy, the curse and the blessing of Noah concerning his posterity are fulfilled and true. At the first the covenant, and the blessing, and the house of God, the household of faith, were with the sons of Shem, but now they are with the sons of Japheth, and all is changed. The Jews, as natural branches in the tame olive tree, were broken off, and the Gentiles, who were wild by nature, and had no part in the first covenant, the house of Israel, are grafted in, and are "fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." This is the blessing that descended upon the head of Japheth from his father and his God, as the later blessing of Jacob or Israel upon the head of Joseph, saying, "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall," the middle wall, which shut out the Gentiles. "The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors, unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be upon the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren." This is the blessing of God upon the head of his Son Jesus, to whom he said, "I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." When Simeon took this infant Son in his arms of love and faith, he blessed God and said, "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

O how abounding, wonderful and everlasting are the blessings of Noah and Jacob and God upon Shem and Japheth, Joseph and Jesus! The crown of glory is upon the head of Jesus, who sits upon the throne of God, and the rainbow of the everlasting covenant is round about the throne, and within it are all his people, the blessed of his Father.

It is a fact of history nationally that here in America, where Shem once dwelt in tents from ocean to ocean, Japheth now dwells. So God has greatly enlarged Japheth, and fulfilled the prophecy of his servant Noah. The wisdom and power of the Almighty God alone could bring all this to pass.

Dear brother Kennard and brethren all, how infinite is the blessing that we have been brought from the east and west, the north and south, and have been made to sit down in the kingdom of God with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, with Moses and Jesus. "And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." O may we join the song.

The Lord has given me this view and comforted me in it. May he comfort our aged brother on the far coast, with all who dwell in the tents of Shem and are heirs in the blessing of Japheth.

D. BARTLEY.

KANSAS, Ill., Feb. 8, 1906.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—As we sat here tonight reflecting over the last sixty years,

many pleasant things passed our minds, and some not so pleasant. I remember about fifty years ago while listening to old Elder Thomas Threlkeld preaching, in Mattoon, how wonderfully his words cheered my mind; his subject was Abraham offering up his son Isaac. It seemed to me, while I was thus listening, I was ready to be offered as a sacrifice. O how sweet it was, but O how often since then have I been made to weep over my many sins, and have serious doubts whether I ever knew the Lord aright or not.

Another pleasant circumstance comes to mind that took place about nine years ago, when my wife and I were on a visit among the churches in the east: One night at Elder S. H. Durand's house, after I had tried in great weakness to preach to the friends, and had sat down, Elder Durand so clearly and lovingly set forth the work of Christ Jesus that I was made to forget self and rejoice in my heart that God's work is complete. So you see I have had a few ups as well as so many downs. I am truly glad to know "the Lord knoweth them that are his," but it is not of their works that they become his, but as the apostle has recorded it, it is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his own purpose and grace given us in Christ Jesus.

I find I am getting so nervous that I shall have to stop. The words of one of the poets come forcibly to my mind:

"My latest sun is sinking fast,
My journey almost done;
My hardest trials now are past,
My dawning is begun."

O may I sing the chorus now before I close:

"O come, angel band,
Come and around me stand;
Come bear me away on your balmy wings
To my immortal home."

My wife says that trip she took with me among the eastern churches about nine years ago was one of the most enjoyable seasons she ever had in a spiritual sense.

I send you a dear, good letter just received from sister Bloomfield; I hope you will publish it, as it is too good to keep privately.

I hope I have the right to close by subscribing myself your unworthy brother, JAMES M. TRUE.

St. Joseph, Mo., Feb. 14, 1906.

Dear Brother True:—I read your good letter in the Signs, and it took me back in meditation over our acquaintance. The first time we met was in Pawnee City, Neb.; you came there to marry your niece; it was before I had been made to know God. The second time was at the little church in Johnson Co., where my husband was baptized. I had been made to see my need of help from a higher power than the puny arm of man, yet I had no hope. You talked beautifully to me, but my eyes had not been opened to see, my heart had not been made to feel and understand the sweet mystery of godliness, so I could not appreciate the truths you presented to me; but the next time how I fairly flew to meet you. In the few short weeks that we had been separated, God had appeared unto me, made me to know and understand his goodness, mercy, power and love. The same light also showed me my own ignorant, helpless self, my just condemnation, and filled my heart with wonder that such a righteous Being could look with pity and love on a poor creature like me. How my heart was filled with love and adoration. I cried out in wonder, O what a God! Such beauty! I thought of my father, a man of God, and won-

dered why he had never told me. He, like you, had talked to me of these same glorious truths, but neither he nor you could open my blind eyes or unstop my deaf ears. I had not yet known how God only can fill our hearts to overflowing with love, and make our dumb lips to praise him. I only knew my burden was gone, and I loved God more than tongue could tell, and the rest of my days should be spent in his praise and telling of his goodness. So when I saw you again I could hardly wait to tell you I had found the Savior you had tried to tell me of. Do you remember that at brother Stratton's I sat on a little hassock at your feet and told you? My husband was sitting by, and the room was full, listening, but I did not realize or care, I only knew it was sweet to tell it. You took my hands, and with the tears running down your cheeks you said, "O child, you will not be always thus." I could not see then what you meant, but now I know. How often I have thought of that when the dark billows have swept over my soul until I was buried beneath their mighty waves. But to return; what bright days, I was like a happy bird flitting from tree to tree, singing of God's love and sunshine; hardly a shadow or doubt had passed over my mind, and when I heard you and others talk of trials and doubts, I could not realize how it was. When I read of the multitude John saw, arrayed in white robes, "which came out of great tribulation," it made me have fears of myself, I had so few trials. When next you visited us it was in our Missouri home; the murmurings of false doctrine were being heard, some were so sound or strong in doctrine, as they called it, it led them into speculation and heresy. On the other hand, some fought this doctrine so bitterly it led to unsoundness, almost Arminianism. One side said the SIGNS was not deep and sound enough for them; the other faction said they would not allow it in their homes; others of us who stood between could not indorse either; those who believed the faith such as the SIGNS had always presented were counted stiff-necked and overbearing. Strife, envy, jealousy, hatred and even calumny entered, until I wondered if there was a God. If there was, why did he suffer such things to be? I was so shocked and grieved, I wondered if I could be mistaken about there being such a thing as religion. I had always thought the sacred fellowship of brethren meant so much. "To walk to the altar with those that we love," was all that was worth living for. By hatred and revenge that had all been swept away; wrangling and strife had killed all spiritual enjoyment when we met together; there was nothing in the church, so what was there in life? Was the whole thing a hoax? I thought of my dear mother, whose last hours were spent in praising her Savior, was it all a mistake? That which I had so loved, that which made me more than willing to leave all other society, all popular churches, and go to a little Nebraska schoolhouse surrounded with cornfields to hear this sacred doctrine proclaimed, was there nothing in it? I was so grieved and so nearly killed I could not pray. We are commanded to go into our closet and pray; I indeed went into the closet, but nothing but groans and sobs from a broken heart arose. Like Job, I wondered, "Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?" I was sorry I had ever been shown the truth. The way enemies had used my name I felt it was a disgrace to the cause of Christ. If I had not been shown the truth as it is in Christ

I would not have been able to discern the false doctrine and denounce it, and it would have been better for me and the cause. Do you not see I was not thankful for what God had done for me? His way had led me through such humiliating paths I felt that I could not live and bear it. Paul says we should be faithful through evil as well as good report. How sweet to bear the good report, but the evil, how we all shrink from it. But there is One who can remove all fear and silence every murmur, and he came to me. I knew him by no token save the subtle air of joy that filled the place, and the rest that took possession of my troubled soul. As a tired child lays its head upon its mother's bosom and fears nothing, so I was enabled to rest in the love and confidence of my Savior. I said I could not pray; I did not need to pray, he already knew. O how sweet to be with One who understands you without being told. He understood every groan that could not be uttered, made the things plain to me that had made me stagger and fall to the ground in shame and sorrow. I was made to remember what Peter said: "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified." In my grief I had forgotten my first love, but O how gently I was led back to where my soul sang his praises day after day; now was I going to let the little, trivial things man could do come between me and my love for God? I said trivial; yes, O how little they seemed now. The cruel, bitter things that had come from those I loved and trusted, and had almost killed me, seemed now as nothing. They meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. If I had not been wounded, heart-sick and alone, I would not have needed the healing balm, the love and companionship of my Savior. I forgot how he had suffered all that could be heaped upon a mortal man, buffeted and spit upon. Now my suffering only made us the closer companions; I was glad to suffer with him; he somehow seemed so near to me I could indeed touch the hem of his garment. If it took sorrow and suffering to bring me into that sweet companionship with my Savior, I could say with Paul, "We glory in tribulations." It was the love and joy of the presence of their Savior that enabled Paul and Silas to sing praises to their God at the midnight hour of their imprisonment. The poet said, "Prisons would palaces prove if Jesus would dwell with me there." I never could have understood the inseparable companionship they had with their Savior that enabled them to write and sing, if I had not suffered and been comforted by the same divine love and power. Enemies can wound, imprison and kill the body, but they cannot take away that sacred secret companionship that exists between Christ and his people; they cannot give it or take it away. The Savior asked his disciples, "Will ye also go away?" They said, "Lord, to whom shall we go?" The safest and dearest place on earth is where God's people are made to see that there is nothing in life worth having but the smile and approval of their Savior. In my sorrow and darkness I was a poor, doubting, stumbling creature, and tried to forget God, but in my blessed Savior there was not a shadow of turning. I thought he had forgotten me. "Can a woman forget her sucking child?" "Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." What a heavenly glimpse to be shown that he never forgets us, but

watches over us through the most bitter trials, though we know it not. How easy it is to get up, walk on and face a frowning world, with such a companion to lean upon, knowing nothing can come to us but what is for our good and God's glory. I said the world, no, it was not the world; these are the wounds I received in the house of my friends.

"I know as my life grows older,
And mine eyes have clearer sight,
That under each rank wrong somewhere,
There lies the root of right;
That each sorrow has its purpose
By the sorrowing of unguessed,
And to grow means often to suffer,
But whatever is, is best."

How I should love to see you and sister True again, and sit down at your feet and talk as of old. Come and visit us in our little cottage home.

Pardon this long ramble over the past. Some parts still make my heart ache when I recall how I suffered; over other parts I shed tears of joy when I remember how near my Savior's presence was to me. If you feel able I should be glad to read a word from you again. My husband joins in warmest christian love to yourself and sister True.

In hope of a better life, I close.

SUSIE L. BLOOMFIELD.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., Feb. 15, 1906.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I reached home on Tuesday morning and received your precious letter, together with one from a lady in Macon, Ga., also one from a lady in our own congregation, and all of them on christian experience. They were to me as water from a clear, cool spring on thirsty land. How could you say that you are a greater sinner than I am? How hard it is for me to understand this. This very morning I thought of it, and wept. O what a sinner I am; you are so much better than I. Dear brother, if I could not feel I would have no hope, but I know that feeling is a sign of life, and this gives me strength. I think of the sailor on a rough and restless sea, with the clouds thick overhead hiding the sun, the fog gathered around him so that he cannot see his course, or whether he is about to be destroyed by a collision or by running on the rocks or quicksands; he has to depend alone on his chart and compass, and many times he is made to question if his compass may not be wrong. Thus I am and have been for some weeks past, with sometimes a waterspout roaring in my soul, crying unto the Lord for another evidence of his love and tender mercy to me, a poor sinner. My dear brother, does a child of God get beyond the prayer of the publican? I know I have not. It may be that I have a little joy, even days of praise to God, but the first I know of it is that thankfulness in my heart to the Lord for his mercies to such a poor sinner as I am.

I do not know that I ever received a letter that contained so much of my own feelings as the one you wrote to me. For years after I was given a hope in the goodness and mercy of the Lord it was my chief desire to know if this was a real hope, the forgiveness of sins I so much hungered for after thirteen years of crying and begging. This very feeling often comes up in my heart now, and I am made to cry with my whole heart unto the Lord to know if I have received that glorious blessing, or shall I look further. But for several years the chief thing in my mind is to know the will of the Lord concerning me. The prayer of Saul of Tarsus, "What wilt thou have me to do?" comes up in my own soul, and becomes a part of my own life. This is a daily prayer, and sometimes it is almost con-

tinual. I do believe that I want to know God's will concerning me, and that I want to do it in every particular, but there are so many things in the way, and it is so dark to me, were it not for that sweet text, "I will bring the blind by a way they knew not," &c., I should often be worse, but in this text I am given some comfort at times. I know that I desire to praise the Lord, for he has been good to me all the days of my life, but every effort falls so far short of his praise that it sounds to me like vanity. Sometimes I have an opening up of the word of truth, and my heart rejoices, but I look on further, and see that the same truth reaches into an unsearchable place, and I grow hungry to see deeper and to understand more. Thus in everything I am so shallow-minded and my praise is so faint; I cry out sometimes, Lord, when I awake with thy likeness then shall I be satisfied. I know that one day this body shall be sown in this weakness, and this mortal shall be swallowed up in death. This dust must return to dust from whence it came; but I am sometimes blessed to look beyond all of this and view in hope the glorious resurrection from all of this, and see by faith this vile body changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus Christ as he now is with the Father, then this mortal will have put on immortality, and I will have realized that death is swallowed up in victory, and that it hath no more dominion over me; then will I see him as he is, and praise him with my whole being, without any hindrance. There will be no clouds, nor tempest, nor fogs, nor rocks, nor quicksands, nor collisions, nor jealousies, nor anything to distress the saints, nor disturb the eternal worship of him who loved us and gave himself for us. I am surely living in this blessed hope, and looking forward by faith to see that day.

The Lord bless you.

L. H. HARDY.

WHAT IS PREDESTINATION?

It is the purpose of God as declared by the apostle Paul. The predestination of God is according to his foreknowledge of all things which come to pass. It is judicial in effect and declarative in prophecy, telling when, how and to what purpose and end the declared events shall come to pass in time and in eternity. Predestination, therefore, is not only the purpose of God, but a declaration of that purpose to its determined end. In this sense the doctrine of the predestination of all things is a determined principle in the teachings of the Spirit in divine revelation by the prophets who foretold the things that should come to pass; and that, because the Lord had spoken it. The word of God therefore was the foundation of their faith and the confirmation of their hope, both concerning good to come, and the assurance of the certainty of the evils threatened against the wicked. The old prophets expressed the assurance of their faith in the word of God which they declared, saying, We believe, and therefore we speak. Thus we see that the immutable counsel and purpose of God in and through all things was the ground of their assurance of the fulfillment of all the promises and threatenings of God in the Old Testament Scriptures; and this is equally true in the inspired declarations of the apostles in the New Testament Scriptures. In confirmation of this truth Paul testifies, saying, "We also believe, and therefore speak." This one testimony is sufficient reference to establish the same fundamental principle in the New Testament of divine predes-

tination as a doctrine of God revealed in the Bible. To deny this is to deny the God of the Bible, and to relegate the truth of revelation to the shades of darkness, and remove the hope of the gospel to the regions of uncertainty and shame.

But again, let us review predestination as a decree, declaring the will and purpose of God in all things, times and events, whatsoever. Let us understand, if possible, what the word implies, and the ground it covers in the economy of God, the sovereign Ruler of all. First, I would say the doctrine is judicial in effect, and determinate to the end. To prove this let us refer the subject to the beginning of time in the garden of Eden, and apply it to the fall of man, with the curse of death upon him, according to the law of God. Passing by the woman for brevity, I will say that the Lord God said unto Adam, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Then to the serpent he said, "Thou art cursed above all cattle." And also, The seed of the woman shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. I simply name these points to bring out a connection without the use of much time or space. Now what do we find here, and in connection with it? First we find that man has fallen into sin and death; we find Satan, the father of lies, as the agent of all evil; we find him cursed of God, and doomed to destruction, as the embodied essence of all evil; we find that God has intercepted him in his work of destruction, bounded his rise, determined his course, declared his destiny, and determined his end to be destruction by the seed of the woman. What is this but the predestination of God concerning good and evil?

But let us halt and examine the means which God ordained to accomplish the end decreed by him, who is the Judge of heaven and earth, and who is the Author and Finisher of all his works, determined and known to him before the foundation of the world. We ask, How was it foreordained that his predestination should be accomplished upon the devil, the essence of all evil? We will carry the inquiry from the beginning in the garden through the prophets of the Old Testament to the New Testament. First, it is declared of Jesus that he came into the world to destroy the works of the devil. Here we have it fully stated that he came in his Father's name to execute his will in destroying the works of the devil, who is the efficient cause of all sin and transgression.

We called the predestination of God "declarative judgment," we will call the work of Jesus "executive judgment." Now we reach the conclusion that what God declared should be done, which is predestination, Jesus declared that he had come to execute, and so also Peter declared at the day of Pentecost in opening the gospel to the Jews, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Here is a full declaration of Peter, by the Spirit, of the fulfillment of the word of the Lord, spoken to the serpent in Eden, saying, The seed of the woman shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. So we see that what God declared of old should be done was accomplished in the end by his Son Jesus Christ; he finished the work that the Father gave him to do. The Jews, with wicked hands, did to him what God determined before should be done, and these sayings included both good and evil. By these few quotations from the New Testament Scriptures the doctrine of predestination is fully sustained, as

taught all through the Bible, in many other passages not here referred to, and they answer fully the inquiry at the head of this article. We may understand also in what manner it is true, and by whom declared, and by whom the decree was executed. We find that what God had purposed beforehand, Jesus performed in time, to the salvation of his people and the destruction of death, and of him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.

I have not discussed the element of conditionalities or of unconditionalities in this analysis, but will say, if conditions in the predestination of God be admitted, the discussion ends in the negative and the word predestination means nothing, and then faith and hope in God's word of promise ends in the uncertainties of chance, without establishment, as was true of the old covenant of works, which was taken out of the way to establish the new covenant on better promises. See the epistle to the Hebrews. This brings us to the hope of the gospel by a new and living way which he has opened for us by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all, having by his blood obtained eternal redemption for us.

Your brother in Christ,

I. N. NEWKIRK.

WAITSBURG, Wash., March 28, 1906.

WINONA, Wash., Jan. 8, 1906.

ELDER H. C. KER:—I hope it is not presumption in me, and not wrong when I say dear brother, for it is my greatest wish that I may be blessed to call the children of God by the sweet name brother. I have seen those who made great professions, but to think of calling them brother or sister awakened no pleasure, but was rather more of a task than I felt able to perform; they were so much better than I hope to be in this life (judging by what I have experienced) that we were no company one for the other; but with some whom I have never seen it is quite different. I am deprived of the pleasure of meeting the saints very often, and this I think makes the SIGNS more dear to me than it probably would be if I were with the brethren more. Often when reading the communication of some brother or sister it is almost impossible to keep from writing and telling them how the blessed Lord has been pleased to give poor me a morsel by their hands. This, my brother, must be my excuse for imposing this poor letter upon you; not that I can hope to comfort, strengthen or encourage you, but to tell you that you by the blessing of God have clothed and fed poor me, and if I am his, he says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." When I read your letter to brother B. F. Coulter, in No. 24, Vol. 73 of the SIGNS, I was made to rejoice that there was a man that could write and tell the things which are so dear to me, that I hoped I had and was experiencing. They seemed to be filling my mind to overflowing, but I had no words wherewith to give them utterance, and it seemed they must stay until they consumed themselves, or me. I thought there surely was not another who when singing, trying to offer prayer, or speaking, was so beset with vain and sinful thoughts as I am. I have felt that if there was a break for a moment in my subject when I was trying to talk to my brethren, that Satan surely would entice me to say something to my confusion, and to the mortification of the brethren; and I do believe if it were not for the ever-present power of God, he would; but yet, when we are weak then are we strong. I have

often thought when the time began to draw near, when I get out of this one task (for I will have to make the effort to-day) I never will make another appointment, I will go home and stay where I know there is work for me to do. Well, the time would come, and it seemed the people were twice as large as I, and as to knowledge and worthiness, I was too small for any comparison, yet I had to go. O, my brother, did you ever get up with the devil telling you God would surely kill you for being such a hypocrite, all the power gone out of your limbs, so that your knees smote each other, and you were glad to take hold of a chair or desk to help support your poor, trembling body, not a ray of light, and you seemed to be really suffocating? But often under such circumstances or frame of mind one is gradually strengthened, and is able to speak of Jesus and his righteousness with assurance, and what was awhile ago a great task and burden, now is a sweet privilege; nevertheless we had our cross. While we could see nothing but self, with a knowledge of what self is, we were O so weak, but when we are enabled to lose sight of self, and see Christ and his righteousness, then are we strong; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. It does look as if a few lessons of this kind would enable us to more fully trust the blessed Lord, and I believe it does, but with the growth of that trust in the Lord, the growth of distrust in ourselves increases, so that it seems they always remain about even, or else we would become puffed up. I thought at one time that with the growth of grace and knowledge of the truth I would be able to rest from sin, but by this same knowledge we are able to see the corruption within; thus are we enabled at all times to get away from self and look to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Dear brother, I only thought to write and tell you how your letter had comforted me; please excuse me for troubling you with so many words. Remember me when it goes well with you.

Your brother in hope of the resurrection,

T. E. ATTEBERY.

SPRINGFIELD, Mo., Jan. 16, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN CHICK AND KER:—I received the inclosed letter this morning, and it did me so much good I send it to you for publication in the SIGNS; it is from brother Bruce, of Oregon City, Oregon. I hope it may be the means of comforting some poor, cast down soul.

Your unworthy brother,

JAMES W. FLITTON.

OREGON CITY, Oregon, Jan. 10, 1906.

MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD AND SAVIOR:—If indeed I am one of the little ones that were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and redeemed by his precious blood, and called with an holy calling, and have been made to mourn on account of sin, and his love to know. I received your precious letter last evening, and what a comfort it was to poor, unworthy me to get such a precious letter from one of God's humble followers, and to make it more precious, "The Everlasting Task for Arminians," from that dear old servant of God who had such a grand education in the school of Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior who teaches his children by his Spirit, the holy Comforter, whom Jesus said he would send. O dear brother, what great reasons we have to rejoice in his name, seeing he has done so much for us. When we were sinking down in despair, with no hope and with-

out God in the world, when that precious light shined in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not, and caused us to look into the dark chambers of our hearts and see how wicked and deceitful they are, then for the first time in our lives we were made to see the true light. But when it pleased God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, then our hearts were made to rejoice in Jesus our Savior, who bare our sins in his own body, and put them away by the sacrifice of himself, and rose again for our justification, and taught us that glorious lesson that salvation is of the Lord, neither is there salvation in any other. No wonder we love to sing:

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see."

Dear brother, I do rejoice in the doctrine of salvation by grace, free and unmerited by us, richly bestowed upon poor, unworthy worms of the dust, and the glorious gospel of the Son of God has never been preached by any only those that have been taught it by the revelation of Jesus Christ, and this doctrine is hated by the religionist of the world today, just the same as it was when Jesus was here in the world; and those pharisees that call themselves Reverend, Evangelists, saving souls for Christ, would hiss at him and scoff just as they did when he was here. Should we not rejoice that we have been counted worthy to be evilly spoken against for Jesus' sake? Should we not rejoice in the glorious hope of our justification through Jesus Christ the Savior of sinners, seeing that he hath loved us with an everlasting love, and by loving-kindness hath he drawn us and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ? My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me, but a stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Because they were children God hath sent the Spirit of his Son in their hearts crying, Abba, Father. So it was not the putting his Spirit in their hearts that made them his children, but because they were children.

Now, dear brother, pardon me, I am very tired to-night, and have to go over a mile and a quarter to work, and work ten hours every day, and I am getting old. If I live till the 22nd day of next March I will be sixty-seven years old, and still am a poor old sinner, saved by grace if saved at all.

Well, you wanted to know about our church here; we are few in number, twenty-six members in all, but are scattered far apart. There are some that do not live near enough to attend, and seldom can come to meeting, having no conveyance of their own. Elders William S. Matthews and S. B. Moffitt are our pastors. Elder Matthews is seventy-seven years old, and very feeble; his wife died Nov. 9th, with the measles; she was over eighty years old. Elder Matthews lives in Salem, Oregon, and may know Elder Cooper. I have been here only four years.

I will now close, asking you to write again, for I do love to read your letters, and love to hear from those that love the truth. Old brother H. Stipp, a nephew of old Elder John Stipp, is living with us, he is eighty-four years old; he enjoys your letters and so does my wife; they join in sending love and fellowship to you. May the blessing of God rest upon you, is our prayer. Let us hear from you again.

Your brother in hope,

JOSEPH BRUCE.

East Dixfield, Maine, Jan. 11, 1906.

Dear Brother Chick:—As my subscription for our paper has expired I will inclose a money order for renewal for the present year. I wish to say that I am thankful for the added help on the staff. This is not that I thought anything wanting in the past issues of the paper, but I am hoping that your labors will be lightened, and I also hope that years of prosperity may be granted to all engaged in its publication. As I am almost wholly deprived of the society of those who advocate the sovereignty of God to the comfort of saints, the paper is to me a prized companion, and no words can describe my enjoyment in reading its pages. I esteem it as a bountiful gift of God for those who are of one mind and one heart, by which they can speak one to another, so that many are comforted and built up in the faith by those whose faces they will never see in the flesh. The Signs is specially blessed to me at the present time, as I seem, in an unusual degree, to be compassed about with infirmity, and I find in its pages that many are also exercised thereby.

The time of rejoicing and of opening of the prison doors comes, but no sparks of our own kindling can kindle a flame of sacred love; all our times are in the hands of the eternal and all-wise God who doeth all things well, and we have an advocate with the Father, and in his face we do behold the Lord; he has wrought salvation for us and says, "Behold I and the children whom the Lord hath given me."

I found consolation in your comforting letter, in hoping that even I might be found to the praise of the glory of God's grace, that in my trials, in solitude, cast down and forsaken, he careth for me, and that underneath me are the everlasting arms. O that I might ever be found in praise and thanksgiving to his holy name, that he has opened to me the way of life, and that he hath sent forth the Spirit of promise into my heart, and given me hope of an inheritance among the sanctified. So often I am made to cry out, My stupidity! my nothingness! and to wait for the morning; the light often seems so flickering; a single ray lights up the darkness, and is gone. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." How often this declaration comes to me in view of my own wanderings, and unprofitableness, and my dying state, but I find a faithful monitor in the dear old Signs. The light and the joy from the text written upon by Elder Durand seems to embrace all that could be written.

I am not so stupid but that I feel to say I know the way of the child of God, and that darkness and light are both alike unto Him; and, though oft cast down, "I am not forsaken." Paul and Silas shut up in the inner prison, with their feet fast in the stocks, were found praising God; and Daniel, as was his wont, kneeled down three times a day with his window opened toward Jerusalem to offer his petition to the Most High. "Salvation is of the Lord." He opens, and no man shuts; he shuts and no man opens. May I ever be found waiting upon the Lord, who has all power; and may his fear be found lovingly in my heart. It has been a delightful winter so far, and very favorable for invalids and the aged. Mr. Wheelwright is better than he has been. I am fairly well but yet am fatigued easily.

I cannot close without thanks to you for your kind remembrance, and expressing a wish for your joy in the Lord,

and good comfort and consolation in the word. Your editorials always come as a special blessing to myself, and to others also. I find always a great delight in the SIGNS, and many whom I shall never see in this life have contributed to my joy in this desert land. That the paper may always be blessed to the building up of Zion is my sincere wish. Now may God bless and keep you, and cause his light to shine upon you, is the desire of your sister in the hope of the gospel,

ELIZA WHEELWRIGHT.

ARENA, N. Y., Jan. 28, 1906.

TO THE EDITORS AND CONTRIBUTORS OF OUR FAMILY PAPER:—While I am writing to renew my subscription, I take the liberty of writing a few lines to our dear kindred in Christ. Allow me in the beginning to wish each one of you a happy new year, and my heart's desire is that you may continue to write as you have done in the past, with the spirit and with the understanding; your writings prove a great comfort and blessing to all those who are hungering for spiritual food, and thirsting for the sincere milk of the word. As for myself, I am feeling sad and disheartened since the death of our dear pastor, Elder J. D. Hubbell. I felt very lonely before, having been bereft of my dear husband a year and a half ago; now it seems the afflicting hand of Providence is laid heavily upon us. Outside of my own family there was no one I esteemed more highly than Elder Hubbell; a more consecrated, unselfish and devoted christian I have never known. His sole ambition and study was to do his Master's will, he never shrank from dangers and conflicts; when duty called he went fearlessly forth, regardless of any who might oppose; yet I know if he were with us now he would admonish us to be of good cheer, to take up our cross and follow him as far as he had followed Christ, to live soberly and righteously in this evil world, and to work while the day lasts, for the night cometh when no man can work; he being dead yet speaketh. To me his funeral services were very pathetic and interesting. The four ministers present each in turn spoke so affectionately and feelingly of their departed brother it seemed very solemn and impressive. The great interest and sympathy manifested by the assembled multitude who had gathered from far and near, gave a faint idea of the great esteem in which he was held by all who knew him.

Within a few months three of my cousins have been called home, and two weeks ago I attended the funeral of my brother's wife; truly our ranks are thinning fast. Pray for us, brethren, that we may be reconciled to the Lord's will in all things.

Your sister in hope of eternal life,

JULANA H. DICKSON.

MONTICELLO, Ark., Dec. 19, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I see that my subscription is out, and I will now remit to my old household paper for another year. The old man suggests to me not to take any paper, and that I have enough to do to read my Bible, but I hope that I am guided by One who rules all things, and the mind now in me is to take the SIGNS. It is ahead of all papers that I have ever read, and is next to my Bible. I am so sinful and so unworthy, I feel that I am not worthy to have a name among such good and Christlike people.

I have decided that I was well paid in the last number of the SIGNS by brother John McConnell's two letters; he tells it just as I see it. The letters of brethren

H. C. Ker and John Oliver are just as good. The whole paper brings me good tidings all the time when it come to me. It fills my soul full of joy to think that the Lord has one way to show mercy to his people, and that is by grace, and by grace alone; it is not by the works of such a man as I am. I am so sinful that I can of myself do nothing good. If I must be saved by my good works I am convinced that I must be lost, world without end. I must look to One who has fulfilled every demand of the law, and in his salvation there are no conditions, if I have any understanding of the truth. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Then the angel stood one foot upon the sea and the other upon the land and declared that time (conditional) should be no longer. The law was but the schoolmaster unto Christ. He fulfilled the whole law, hence there is no conditionalism, but it is by grace. The Comforter which he promised to send takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us, to bring all things to our remembrance. This grace or truth is the new heavens and the new earth which the prophet declared should come. The new heavens and the new earth were brought in by our Lord, the Redeemer.

Brother Chick, do with this as you think best. If I can obtain some subscribers for you I will do so.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

A. TULLAS.

[WE feel glad that our brother can appreciate the SIGNS as he speaks of doing, and we are thankful for his kind offer to do what he can to add to the number of our subscribers. We do not think we are selfish in wishing that all who love the doctrine advocated in the SIGNS would seek to obtain new subscribers, for we do believe that those who are saved by grace will find in its columns that which will encourage and strengthen them from the pens of those of like precious faith, and we hope that this is the one great motive which actuates us in our labor in connection with the publication of the SIGNS.—C.]

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Jan. 1, 1906.

DEAR CHILDREN OF THE HEAVENLY KING:—This is the first day of the new year, and I have just been reading the first number of our precious family paper. My heart is warmed with love for all the writers, and I want to wish you a peaceful and comfortable journey along life's rugged pathway through this present new year.

"Or if this should prove our last,
And end our transient days,
O take us to thy promised rest,
Where we shall sing thy praise."

The Lord is very good in sustaining the SIGNS OF THE TIMES all these many years. How glad I am to see Elder Ker made willing to come to the help of Elder Chick, who I have feared was greatly burdened. He has had to be instant in season, out of season, writing twice in one month, ofttimes perhaps when he takes up his pen feeling like he was dumb—had nothing to say. Yet even when he feels destitute he is feeding the hungry little children, who trust in the name of the Lord. If he feels poor, "I am the least in my father's house." The blessed Scriptures are full of comfort for the poor and needy. Yesterday I heard a sermon from the words in Isaiah, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." It seemed very sweet to me, yes, sweeter than honey, when I thought, Can I be numbered among the people God claims? It must be so, for I am comforted. "Amazing grace! how

sweet the sound!" What a merciful God is ours.

"Keep silence, all created things,
And wait your Maker's nod;
My soul stands trembling while she sings
The honors of her God."

The old hymns are a great comfort to me, they come to me in my wakeful hours of the night and soothe my doubting, fearful heart. These Christmas giving times I have been saying to myself all of the hymn:

"Hail the blest morn! when the great Mediator
Down from the mansions of glory descends;
Shepherds go worship the babe in the manger,
Lo! for his guard the bright angels attend."

The last verse seems best of all:

"Vainly we offer each ample oblation,
Vainly with gifts would his favor secure;
Richer by far is the heart's adoration,
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor."

Born in a manger, suffered on the rugged cross, for such a worm as I. What wondrous love is this. "O to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be." "O for a thousand tongues to sing my dear Redeemer's praise."

Dear kindred in our blessed Savior, I thank you for the writings you have given us the past year, and I hope you will continue, as the good Lord gives you utterance; Elder Chick's editorials are so satisfying.

Farewell.

LINA W. BECK.

TITUSVILLE, N. J., Dec. 3, 1905.

BROTHER CHICK:—My mind has been with you all to-day as you are assembled together, as it always is, and I can but wish that it were my privilege to be there, and to hear the sweet words of the Lord, and of his love bestowed upon poor sinners, such as I feel myself to be. But why should I murmur or complain, when I read of so many who do not have this privilege of meeting together with the people of God for worship? Their lot is cast far away from any place where the dear children of God assemble together. Then we see and hear of so many who do have the privilege, yet they do not avail themselves of it. How can they stay away if they have the love of God in their hearts?

I enjoyed the meetings so much last Saturday and Sunday. You spoke of so many things that had been on my mind. I had been wondering all the week if I would be able to go to the meetings. It was the Lord's will for me to be there, and he had put these things in my heart. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." We are also commanded not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together. How can any who have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts be contented not to fill their places in the house of God? I do not feel as if I were worthy to be there, but it is the dearest place in all the world, to meet with the dear children of God, and hear his love presented to poor sinners like me. Only those who feel to be poor sinners can love the courts of the Lord, or count it a privilege to be there. The more deeply we feel our sinfulness, the more shall we feel to say, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."

Now another week has passed away since I began this letter, and I will enjoy the day in reading the SIGNS; they are so good. Still my mind is with you all at Hopewell in the meeting, but it is not my privilege to be with you. The editorial in the number for December 15th is good. There is so much in it that I have thought about, and at the last Sunday meeting your text was in Ephesians, and it did seem to me that when we can read

the epistles and feel what is in them we will want to fill our place in the church.

I have thought of you all as you are assembled together. How rapidly time goes by, soon another year will be past. Many sad things have come to some of the dear ones, but all is well to those who trust in the Lord. It is hard for us to see that this is so at all times, and to say, The will of the Lord be done. I know it is so with me, and I am so far from what a child of God should be, if indeed I am a child at all. We read that "we know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." Here is my hope, and it is not because of anything that I can do, for even my thoughts are evil. O is there any one like me? "The Lord is my Shepherd," and I would say, Begone, unbelief, my Savior is near.

Well, my dear brother, I will close this poor letter, and not take more of your time. I trust that you will excuse all mistakes and all that is not right. I do feel as though it is not worth sending you. I told brother Elijah Leigh one time about writing letters and not sending them, and he said that after I had written them they were not mine.

With love to all, your sister,

SARAH E. GOLDEN.

CHEROKEE, Ky., April 4, 1906.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—Having received a copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I desire to know how it stands relative to the absolute predestination of all things. I know that Baptists are divided on this question. I claim to be an old time Baptist, I believe in the predestination and foreordination of God, but possibly not just like some of my brethren; I depend on God for all wisdom and knowledge, I am not my own keeper, but am kept by the power of God. I am seventy-three years old, was called of God when fourteen years old, and have been preaching for a long time; when the weather is good I preach every Saturday and Sunday, but it is all by the power of God.

I am yours to serve,

J. S. THOMPSON.

[IN reply to the question of our brother in the above letter, we are glad to say that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES from its first issue has advocated and earnestly contended for the doctrine of absolute or unlimited predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass. God rules and reigns not only in the army of heaven, but among the inhabitants of the earth. (Dan. iv. 35.) God works all things (not a part of them) after the counsel of his own will. "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things."—Isaiah xlv. 7. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." God has not only known the end from the beginning, but he declared the end from the beginning. (Isaiah xlvi. 10.) There are many things too deep for our understanding, but this does not affect predestination. Those who oppose the doctrine of unlimited predestination have never been able to find a satisfactory dividing line: if they say all good and righteous things are predestinated, the unanswerable question at once arises, How could all the good and righteous things from the beginning have taken place without the unrighteous and wicked things which preceded them? Sin has ever been a link in the chain of events to bring about blessing to mankind. Had not Adam sinned, we poor creatures could never have known God in his true character of love, pity, mercy and grace.

If sin was not in the purpose of God or was not predestinated, why did God provide salvation for his people in Christ before the world began? Had there been no death we could not have had the life of God, because his life is given to the dead; had we not died in Adam we could not have been resurrected (brought forth from the dead) in Christ. God predestinated that his children shall be conformed to the image of his Son; this is brought about through death, and death came by sin. We therefore rejoice in the doctrine of absolute predestination.—K.]

COLEMAN, Texas, Jan. 22, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN:—My father wrote the following in August, 1905, a copy of which he gave to the church. He had lived with us for the last ten years; was in his eighty-second year at the time of his death, which occurred Nov. 17th, 1905.

MARY E. McMAHAN.

I WAS born of Primitive Baptist parents, (John and Tempie Walker) in Madison Co., Alabama, Feb. 16th, 1824. My father and mother lived nine years in that State and County, and nine years in Lincoln Co., Tennessee; they then moved, in 1842, to Ouachita Co., Ark. My father died in August, 1843. Sept. 11th, 1844, I was married to Miss Elizabeth Caroline Warnock, who was a faithful companion till the last day of June, 1896, when it pleased the Lord to take her from me.

In the spring of 1848 I became troubled about my future destiny. In the fall of the same year I received a little hope, which has been a help in times of need. The next spring, 1849, I united with the Primitive Baptists at Bethesda Church, in Ouachita Co., Ark., and was baptized by Elder J. M. C. Robinson. After two or three years the church liberated me to preach, but this I refused to do, and lived in rebellion about thirty or thirty-five years. When the Civil war was over, in 1865, we moved to Washington Co., Ark., but I did not find any church of Primitive Baptists that suited me, and in 1878 moved to Coleman Co., Texas, where a few of us were organized into a little church by Elders J. C. Clark and Jacob Lee. We had brother J. C. Clark preach to us the day the church was organized. I was ordained to the ministry by Elders J. C. Clark and Jacob Lee, and the next meeting brother Whittenburg, my wife and sister Aston united with the church by experience, and brother Clark being absent, it fell on me to administer the ordinance of baptism. Brethren and sisters, I sometimes look back on that meeting as being one of the happiest I ever attended. Brethren, you know what kind of a servant I have proved since I have been with you; if I have filled the place of a good servant you can give God the glory, and if not, pray God to forgive me.

Now may the abounding grace of God be with us all, and keep us from all harm, and when we come to die may that grace be sufficient to carry us to the arms of Jesus, where we will be at rest eternally.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

R. H. WALKER.

BURDETT, N. Y., Dec. 16, 1905.

DEAR FRIENDS:—I inclose two dollars to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, which has been to me a welcome visitor as a medium by which I hear of heavenly and divine things. How I would like to tell the dear correspondents of the SIGNS what a comfort it has been to me to read from time to time of the life which they seem to be living. At times I have been

cast out, and down in a low state of feeling and mind, but at times their correspondence has raised me up to realize that Christ has come, and died that the saints of God might have life, and have it more abundantly. This is the life that he came to give to every lost sheep of his fold, which he knew from the beginning would be lost, and which he came to seek and to save. Thanks be to God the Father that he knows all the while where his children are, and thanks to him for the comfort that he sends, according to his promise; he does not leave his children without this hope in him.

Speaking of this hope which I have in Jesus, it means to me the life of Christ, it means a new creature, it means the eternal life which is bestowed through faith in the only begotten of the Father. To him that believes, it is given to know the riches of his grace, and by this grace are we saved through faith, and that not of ourselves, or of anything that we can do or have done. Our God finished the work of atonement, and will finish and perfect the good work that he begins in every heart where it is begun, and yet the workers of this world tell me that I must do something to possess this salvation. I believe that I have always earned my bread by the sweat of my face. Bread is the staff of life, but God has finished his work, and has made his children to be lively stones; they are fitted in the building, and all his works do praise him.

I do not want to take up too much of your time, but do feel like thanking the ready writers of the SIGNS for their willingness to write what the Lord has done for them. Thus the Lord makes known how he loves his little ones, and many are fed with the crumbs that fall from his table.

I will close, praying that God may strengthen you and all who write, as he did the inspired writers of old.

With love to all,

NORMAN BROWN.

GRANBURY, Texas, 1906.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I do not know that I, a poor worm of the dust, have any right to address you as brother in the Lord. I feel so cast down, so dark and so dejected; "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." If I have been found of him, he found me in a waste howling wilderness, and in a desert land, and he led me about and instructed me, and kept me as the apple of his eye. Yes, he has preserved my unprofitable life nearly sixty-five years, and has brought me out of many dangers, both seen and unseen, for some purpose I do not know, but I do know it is not for my goodness, for I feel that there is no good in me, (that is, in my flesh.) I have thought and hoped that I have been made a partaker of the divine nature of the meek and lowly Nazarene, and have thought I could rest assured that I am one of the household of faith, and could run with patience the race set before me, looking unto Jesus, "the author and finisher of our faith;" but O what a contrast; have I been all these thirty-five or forty years mistaken; have I been deceiving the church all this time, and acting the hypocrite? I can only say, O Lord God, thou knowest. My only hope, if I have any at all, is in the atonement of Jesus upon the tree of the cross, and a finished redemption for all his people, and though I am tormented so much with fear and doubts, and so much of the time have to bear bodily afflictions, if Jesus died to put away my sins, all devils

and the powers of darkness combined can never deprive me of that immortality beyond.

Since the death of my aged father, Dr. S. R. McPherson, and sister Stribling, we have been very sad, and now that Mr. J. A. Tandey, and his wife, daughter and son-in-law of sister Stribling, who were friends to the Primitive Baptists, have moved away, we are still more lonely.

Now, brethren editors of the good old SIGNS, you can consign this to the waste-basket if you think best.

Hoping all God's humble poor will pray for poor, unworthy me, that I may joy in the Holy Spirit once more, yours in fear and hope,

W. L. McPHERSON.

WARRENTON, Oregon, Dec. 28, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER:—I have been low down in the dark valley where the blinding mists seemed to hide all but my unworthy self, and that was what I did not want to see. How distasteful it is to me to see myself, and how I hate the sins which beset me on every hand; with my head in the dust I am ever crying to him, in whom I know there is no shadow of turning, for mercy. Death and darkness were upon me, a poor worm of the dust, and I cried in despair for one ray of life and light of the glorious Son of God to cheer my troubled soul. O how can I tell all that I have passed through in the last few weeks? How I have grieved because of the absence of all that was so very dear and comfortingly sweet in my lonely life as I journey on among strangers in a strange land, no heart to sing a song of praise, no heart to try to pray. I was grieved to think I had ever been so presuming as to send my poor letters to the dear old SIGNS, and that they appeared in the same and were read by the dear Baptists everywhere, deceiving all, as I feared I was myself deceived. O how I suffered in all this! I never have the privilege of attending my church meetings, so I have tried to write to let them know that I love and remember them if I cannot be with them; but what a trial was this previously beloved task. It was just the same when I tried to write to you when I wished to have my dear paper continued, but I had nothing in my heart but despair, and in bitterness and tears gave up the attempt; a friend of mine forwarded the order for me, which I hope was received at the office, for I do not wish to miss one paper. O the peace and joy that took the place of the misery in my soul while reading dear Elder H. C. Ker's letter to Elder Coulter. O my beloved in the Lord, may he give you grace to go on comforting the stricken and binding up the broken in heart. May God bless all who are connected with the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and all who write for the same, is the sincere wish of your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) S. L. H. STUART.

PLEASE BE SURE,

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1906.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

BAPTISM.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—If not asking too much, I should like to have your views upon the subject of baptism. The following questions are on my mind: What is meant by baptism unto repentance for the remission of sins? What is the difference between that, and baptism as an answer of a good conscience? Is it your understanding that Christ baptized his disciples in water? Also, if it does not take up too much time and space, please give your understanding of being baptized into Christ, and baptized into death.

By so doing you will greatly oblige me.

Yours, BUFORD OLDHAM.

FORT BRANCH, Ind., Feb. 23, 1906.

We are glad to write with regard to this ordinance, and in reply to the questions proposed by brother Oldham. We cannot claim to be able to present all that the several expressions referred to above contain, but are glad to present such things as we do see in them. It is important not only to understand what the Scriptures declare to be the mode of baptism, and who are the subjects of it, but also what is the design of it; it is not an unmeaning form, but is full of gospel truth. A full gospel sermon is preached whenever baptism is administered. We used above the expression, "mode of baptism," but in reality that expression conveys an untruth unless carefully guarded, for there are not modes of baptism any more than there are modes of dipping; for baptism itself simply means dipping, and had the word been translated as other words in the Bible were, the translators of our King James' version would have been compelled to use the word dip or dipping everywhere it is found in the New Testament. Nothing else is recognized as baptism at all in the New Testament; and as baptism is requisite to church membership, according to the New Testament, it follows that all who practice sprinkling or pouring are not baptized, and therefore are not churches of Christ, and if not churches of Christ, they are not entitled to any of the privileges of the house of God; they are not gospel churches and their ministers are not gospel ministers. This may seem to be a hard saying, but is any other conclusion possible?

But now let us consider the questions proposed by our brother: "What is meant by baptism unto repentance for the remission of sins?" In Mark i. 4, and in Luke iii. 3, it is declared that John in all the country around Jordan did preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. We have not found any other places where any similar expression is used in the New Testament. In these Scriptures it is said that he preached the baptism of (not unto) repentance. In both places there is no preposition in the Greek original, but simply that form of the noun repentance that shows that the preposition "of" is required when translated into the English. Also the word "for" may be as well translated "unto," or "to the end that." John preached repentance, and his baptism was the baptism of repentance; in other words, the rite was reserved exclusively for those who repented. We know that this must be so, because when some came to him of the Pharisees and Sadducees, seeking baptism,

he rejected them, calling them a generation of vipers, and asked, Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? and bade them bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and rejected the plea that Abraham was their father in any sense that would entitle them to this ordinance. From this we learn that repentance must precede even John's baptism, and repentance must produce its own proper fruit in all who had a right to this ordinance. In the case of these Pharisees and Sadducees it is evident that the proper works, the works meet for repentance, or which true repentance would produce, were that they should turn away from all their vainglorious self-righteousness, all their national pride as Jews, all their forms and ceremonies, and as those who had been humbled under a sense of their sin and nakedness, come, seeking something better than all these things, something which could be found in no man save Jesus only. Nothing is here said about faith in Christ, or being baptized in the name of Christ, because Christ was not yet crucified and risen from the dead, but there was a presentation of the fact that they must have come to see the weakness and unprofitableness of all the furniture of the old covenant, and also to see their own need of that which its forms and services could not provide. When therefore these Pharisees came in their pride as Abraham's children they were rejected, for to them baptism unto repentance would have been an acted lie; but all those who had been given repentance, or a turning away from the weakness and unprofitableness of all the old forms and ceremonies, would bring forth fruits meet for this repentance, or in harmony with it and suitable to it. These humble-hearted ones were not rejected by John; theirs would indeed be the baptism of repentance unto the remission of their sins. Such baptism would be the testimony that they had repented, and that remission of sins was theirs, as these are the blessings conferred upon all who repent. Baptism did not produce either repentance, or the remission of sins, but it is and was the answer of a good conscience toward God, and the testimony that repentance and remission of sins had been given to them.

What is the difference between the baptism of repentance and the answer of a good conscience? In reply we will say, first, that whatever difference there may be, both of these things are involved in the ordinance of baptism; that is, the one ordinance of baptism involves both the expression "for the remission of sins," and the expression "the answer of a good conscience." After John's ministry, baptism is not said to be the baptism of repentance, still it remains true that no one has a right to this ordinance save those to whom Jesus has given repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We have spoken of what baptism for the remission of sins signified, and the same thing is said of baptism after Jesus was crucified and was risen again from the dead and ascended to glory; that is, that it was for the remission of sins. Concerning this what we have before said will also apply. Now, Peter said that baptism was not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God. It seems to us that this means that when by the Holy Spirit the testimony has been sealed to the heart of any one that Jesus Christ has died and has put away the filth of the flesh for him, and by this testimony his conscience has been cleansed so that his soul has peace with God and his conscience has been purged from dead works (which, like

all dead things, are filthy and vile,) and the heart is purged from an evil conscience, then when such a soul desires to know how he can testify in a manner pleasing to God, his love, faith, hope and gratitude, there is set before him this ordinance of the Lord, and he is told to arise and be baptized in testimony of all that the Lord has done for him. Thus baptism is the answer, the response of the conscience which has been so purged from dead works that it has come to see Jesus only, and that his righteousness is the glorious covering of all who are redeemed and saved. In the ordinance of baptism God has appointed that all his children shall walk to the praise of his grace and mercy, which he has revealed in Jesus Christ their Redeemer. All such redeemed ones will desire to respond to his works and words of loving-kindness, and to testify what he has done for them. This ordinance he has himself appointed as their response, and what a joyous response at times it is, and how full is this answer. Baptism means: I have been redeemed by the death, and resurrection from the dead, of Jesus Christ. In baptism I would set forth his gracious work of redemption through his death and burial and resurrection again. Baptism also means: I have become dead to the law, and to sin by the body of Christ, and I have come to live the new and abiding life of faith; I have become dead to all my old hope, and faith, and joy, and now I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. It means: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live;" "and the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." It also means: I have hope of the resurrection of the dead. All this is involved in baptism, and so it is, when thus understood, the full answer of a good conscience toward God.

"Is it your understanding that Christ baptized his disciples in water?" Most certainly not. It is expressly said that he did not, but his disciples did. The language in John iv. 1, 2, is: "When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples.") Beside, John himself said more than once, I baptize you indeed with water, but there cometh One after me who shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. This is all the testimony we need to settle this matter, and we have wondered how any one could contend against this language of the inspired writer. So far as the expression "Jesus himself made and baptized more disciples than John," it is well known that what servants do is ascribed in common language to their masters, and what soldiers do, their battles and victories and so on, is ascribed to the officer in command; so here, the Pharisees heard that Jesus baptized in the same sense, but the evangelist says parenthetically that he himself did not baptize, but his disciples did. The Holy Spirit ruled in the hearts and minds of the inspired writers so that the exact truth should be recorded by them. Here we have a special instance of this care.

What does being baptized into Christ, and baptized into death mean? The Scripture to which our brother alludes in this question is found in the sixth chapter of Romans; Paul said to the church there, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" Read also the next three verses. While we do not doubt that there is an

allusion here to the ordinance of baptism, yet the chief thought is that believers have become dead (through Christ,) to sin, that they might live unto righteousness. See the first two verses of this chapter. Believers are presented as being in Christ, and being in him they go with him down into his death. "He died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." Paul in substance says to his brethren at Rome, Ye cannot live any longer in sin as the members of Christ, for ye are in him, and not in the element of sin, and as he has died unto sin once, so in him ye also have died; and as he is risen from the dead and liveth forever without sin, so ye live in him freed from sin. He says, "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" It is impossible for him that is dead to live in that to which he has become dead. Paul says, "He that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, [that is, baptized into his death,] we believe that we shall also live with him: knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. * * * Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." The same baptism which in a figure publicly brings us into Christ, brings us into his death also. As the old life, to which we have become dead, was wholly evil and vile and sinful, so the new opposite life must be a life of perfect holiness and sinlessness. This the life of the risen Jesus is, and in this is our righteousness. If, like the Galatians, we go back to the weak and beggarly elements of that former life, we belie our resurrection with Christ to newness of life, and forget that we have been purged from our old sins. Water baptism is a symbol of this perfect work, for as we have been experimentally in union with Christ, legally buried with him, or baptized into him and into his death, and risen with him again to walk in newness of life, so we are buried in water and are raised up again. The symbol is a perfect figure of the real spiritual work of Christ for us and in us, and nothing that is called baptism can be a true symbol of this glorious work of the Lord, save burial in water and rising again from it. It is sure that had the members of the church at Rome received sprinkling or pouring for baptism they could not have understood what Paul intended by this language. Paul could not have said to such a body of people, Therefore ye are buried with him by baptism into death. Only to baptized believers could this exhortation and instruction have had any force. It cannot be said to Methodists or to any of those who have been "rantized" instead of "baptized," Therefore ye are buried with him by baptism. Baptized into Christ, and baptized into death, mean, as it seems to us, a complete work of separation from the former legal bondage of sin, and coming with him through death up into gospel light and freedom; freedom from legality and freedom from the dominion of sin. "Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."

These thoughts are but gleanings, the full harvest is beyond the reach of our feeble thoughts. C.

BACK NUMBERS.

ALL new subscriptions for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES are now credited from the time they are received, unless otherwise ordered, but if any wish their subscription to date from the first of the year we will supply them with back numbers.

ISAIAH LII. 3.

"THUS saith the Lord, Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money."

Sister Susie Gillett, whose post-office is Mardela Springs, Md., desires that we give some expression concerning "money" as it appears in the Scriptures. She has mentioned several places both in the Old and New Testaments where the word occurs. We quote the above text as a starting point, with the hope that we may be given something that may be of interest, at least, to our sister and others who love the truth as it is in Jesus.

Never in our experience in the church have we felt more destitute of all things pertaining to righteousness than now; we feel that if our redemption depends upon money, and good works of the creature, we are forever lost. We are glad that our text declares the idea of salvation by money and works to be absolutely false.

Let us now consider the first clause of the text: "Thus saith the Lord." The prophets in declaring the messages of God to Israel said, "Thus saith the Lord." The Savior called attention to these holy things declared by the prophets, and the apostles spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; thus the Old and New Testaments are to us the word of God or the "Thus saith the Lord." And as far as we know, the Old Baptists and those of like precious faith are the only people who accept it just as it is, and believe that the sinner must be saved by grace alone. We are always safe in presenting the way of life and salvation just as the Scriptures teach it; we are safe in declaring predestination, election or any other point of doctrine just as the word of God declares it; science, philosophy and all the wisdom of the world combined, in the salvation of the soul, fall to the earth when weighed by the "Thus saith the Lord."

The text at the head of this article no doubt literally refers to the captivity, and deliverance of Israel from Babylon. By their transgressions against God's law in living in and partaking of the things which perish with the using, they had sold themselves for nought. The same is true in the case of Adam in the beginning; the forbidden fruit was that which perished with the using; only one tree in the garden of Eden yielded abiding fruit, which tree was the tree of life.

The greed for money has taken possession of the entire country; many men of high rank (so called) have fallen into disgrace because of it; some have gone down into the grave with guilt stamped upon them, others are languishing behind prison bars, others living in seclusion and others confined in insane asylums. Wives and children have been disgraced and brought low because of husbands and fathers having sold themselves for nought. Let us beware of this disease and not sell our birthright for a mess of pottage. The love of money is the root of all evil, says the word of God. Some of Israel were called greedy dogs that could not be satisfied; this principle is to-day in the flesh of all men. If a man accumulates one thousand dollars he then wants two; if he accumulates a million he wants more; this appetite can never be satisfied. It sometimes causes the children of God to neglect their church privileges, and instead of worldly prosperity making one more liberal, it often has the opposite effect. When we sell ourselves for nought we may rest assured that money can never redeem us from that bondage.

Israel went into captivity; they had sold themselves for nought, or for the things which perish. The Lord called

Cyrus, a ravenous bird from the east, to execute his counsel in their deliverance; no money was paid as a ransom, but by the mighty working power of God in his servant Cyrus and also in those who followed him, Israel was delivered. In their deliverance they were taught that their money, works or righteousness had not redeemed them, but instead God's mercy according to his promise had done all for them.

The spiritual import of our text teaches us the important lesson that we sold ourselves for nought, in the transgression of Adam, and were beyond the reach of all earthly help, as the transgressor has never been able to undo what he did, by good works or money. If he should give a world of money and live morally till the end of time he is still a transgressor. If neither money nor good works can redeem the sinner, what can? "Ye shall be redeemed without money," saith the Lord. The first representation of this redemption was in the shedding of the blood of a lamb by the faith of Abel, who realized himself to be a sinner, and was taught by the Spirit of God that without the shedding of blood there could be no remission. Cain did not know he was a sinner, hence saw no need of the shedding of blood.

According to the Missionary idea few will be saved without money, and works of the creature; none are preachers in their sight who do not go through the schools of men to be prepared for the work as the lawyer and physician are prepared. Just who they will attribute the faith of Abel to, and the walk of Enoch, by faith, with God, and the preaching of righteousness by Noah, we do not know, but one thing is sure: they had nothing to do with it. The Lord works in the hearts of his children to-day to believe in him and to trust in him as their Redeemer just as he did in the beginning of the world, and as he did in the days of Job, who said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

The idea of the Mission cause is that it requires money to save souls, and that without it and the gospel being sent to the heathen they must be lost. No, not if redeemed without money; the gospel is the message of salvation, but not the means unto salvation, except salvation from error, idolatry and every false way.

God made promise to the first transgressor, manifestly, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, or in other words, the works of the devil should be destroyed, not by money, but by the Lamb of God. The sinner who knew the plague of his own heart looked for the fulfillment of this promise; generation after generation, age after age passed away before the appointed time of God for the redemption of the transgressor, but this did not affect the faith of those who died without the sight, neither did it affect their eternal salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord, neither will one among the heathen or elsewhere for whom Christ died be lost. The blood of the Lamb was the price paid for the redemption of the transgressor; this was all that law and justice demanded; this was God's way and purpose in Christ; no money used in the redemption. Ye shall be redeemed without money, therefore not one penny has ever or can ever be used in the redemption of the sinner. Peter says we "were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold," "but with the precious blood of Christ."

Because of the redemption the Spirit calls upon the church (Zion) to awake and put on her beautiful garments; the

garments of salvation doubtless are meant; these are faith, hope and charity, and every other grace, together with every fundamental principle of truth, such as election, predestination, salvation by grace, special and complete atonement and resurrection. The church clothed in such a beautiful manner is established in the truth and prepared to fight against spiritual wickedness in high places. In this clothing is clearly presented the whole armor of God which the church is commanded to put on that it may be able to withstand the wiles of the devil.

To the thirsty soul the call is, Come and buy wine and milk without money and without price; the poor and needy have neither good works nor money, hence gladly hear and obey the voice of their Shepherd, and drink. The Fountain of life provides every needful blessing for the redeemed, and it is because of the redemption through Christ that every blessing for time and eternity comes to the sinner.

Let us not forget the fact that Christ did not redeem his sheep in order to make them his, but because they were his already; not purchased with money, but chosen in him before the world began. The relationship between Christ and his people existed in eternity, hence how absurd for man in this age of the world to teach that those who are not the children of God can become children if they choose. "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life." There is no middle ground in this matter, we are either the children of God or not his children; we are either redeemed or not redeemed. With us all, faith lays hold upon the finished work of Jesus and we hope in his righteousness. To God the Father, through Christ, belongs all the praise for our redemption and sonship.

K.

TO OUR DELINQUENTS.

On our list are many whose subscriptions are two or more years in arrears, and as we have no means of knowing that the paper is received by them, we request that all such inform us whether or not they wish the paper continued. Many times we have been censured for not discontinuing the paper when the time paid for had expired; but if we should adopt this rule we would grieve many who would think we did not care to trust them, and in this way lose many subscribers. Brethren, please let us hear from you in regard to this matter, for we do not wish to send the Signs to any who do not desire to read it.

We do not wish to distress our patrons, but if any whose subscriptions are in arrears feel they can spare the amount due us, we would be glad to receive it. In any case please let us hear from you.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Sister S. E. Ellis has changed her address from Forestburg, Texas, to Duncan, Ind. Ter., where she will be glad to hear from any of her brethren or sisters, as there are no Old Baptists near her.

Elder John R. Daily has changed his address from Luray, Va., to Haughville station 5, Indianapolis, Ind., where his correspondents may address him.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

The last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906, &c.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. McConnell, March 17th, 1906, at 227 West 141st St., New York, J. Wesley Smith, of Gardnersville, N. Y., and Lucy T. Newton, of New York city.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

John Brown, the subject of this notice, was born Dec. 13th, 1846, and died April 1st, 1906, aged 60 years, 3 months and 19 days. About five years ago he was blown up by dynamite while blasting rock, and lost one arm and the sight of both eyes, from which he suffered a great deal. Brother Brown was baptized in June, 1904, in the fellowship of the Black Rock Church, Baltimore Co., Md., by the writer, and lived a consistent and beloved member until his death. Although his afflictions kept him from the meetings a great deal, he was strong in the faith and enjoyed the visits of the brethren. He died in the triumph of faith, telling his companion and children not to grieve for him, that he was going home, and seemed to rejoice that the end had come. About six years before his death he had requested one of his nieces to see that the hymn, "Jesus, lover of my soul," was sung at his funeral. She called the same to my attention the day of the funeral, April 3rd, 1906, and from that moment I felt impressed to speak on the sentiments expressed in the hymn, so after reading a portion of the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians, I read and commented on the hymn with as much liberty and sweetness to myself as ever I felt on a funeral occasion. The funeral was attended by a large congregation of relatives and friends, who showed their respect for our dear old blind brother, who is no more blind, afflicted or sick, but complete in him who is the Head of all principality and power. May God's blessings be with the widow and children, and may he give to them the same salvation he gave to their departed one. To the bereaved ones I would say, In your sorrow remember he is happy, so be as contented as possible, and may the mercies of the Lord rest upon us all.

His pastor, JOSHUA T. ROWE.

Uriah Holeman was born in the State of Indiana May 20th, 1819. He was raised on a farm by sturdy pioneer parents, who taught him industry and to lead a moral life. In reaching manhood he was married to Miss Mary A. Stockton, of the same State. In the year 1842 he with his wife moved to the State of Illinois, which was then a new State, where he became used to pioneer life, suffering many hardships incident to a new country. Being of an industrious temperament, and having by experience learned the value of economy, he amassed enough competency to support himself and wife down to old age. He was a man of firmness, and conscientious in all his dealings, which won for him many friends. He became interested in the subject of religion, and united with the New Hope Church of Primitive Baptists in Warren Co., Ill., of which he was a member at the time of his death. He was a strong believer in the doctrinal tenets of his church, trusting for eternal salvation only in the sovereign mercy of God. It may be said in truth that he lived his religion, being devoted and generous, as his many acts of charity will testify, and died in the triumph of living faith. In the year 1881 he with his wife moved to Gentry Co., Mo., where he formed new acquaintances and friends. In the year 1893 his companion died, and he was left without children to comfort and care for him in old age. He died on the 31st day of August, 1904, at the home of F. A. Stockton, in Kansas City, at the ripe age of 85 years, 3 months and 11 days, after a short illness. His remains were brought to Stanberry, Mo., where on the 2nd day of September a funeral discourse was preached by Elder R. A. Oliphant, a minister of his faith. A goodly number of relatives and friends were present; after preaching the remains were laid by the side of his companion in Cooper cemetery, near Stanberry, to await the summons of his heavenly Father to come up higher.

Truly a good and noble man has passed over the river, and we feel certain that he is not lost, but gone on before.

It now becomes my duty, though a sad one, to chronicle the death of **Jasper Monroe,** with whom I have been acquainted from boyhood. He was the ninth child of the family, four brothers preceded him to the grave. He leaves four sisters and a baby girl. His wife's maiden name was Hattie Grant, to whom he was joined in matrimony Nov. 10th, 1903; she died August 6th, 1905, leaving a girl baby eight days old, and eighteen days later her husband followed her to the grave. The cause of death of both was typhoid fever. She was 20 years, 1 month and 25 days old at the time of her death. Jasper Monroe was the son of James Monroe, of Hotsprings. All that willing hands and loving hearts could do was done; four of the best doctors were with him, but he had no desire to live after his wife died. He was asked if he did not want to live for his baby? He said, "Mamma can raise the little one." He was not a member of any church, but in his last days he expressed a desire to leave this world of sin and sorrow and go hence and be with Jesus. He said to his mother, It is better to die than to live; all my joy in this world is gone, so he prayed for the will of the Lord to be done with him. Jasper Monroe was well known in this county, and loved by all who knew him. He told his mother that he loved the Old Baptist people. His dear mother and step-father are both members of the Old School Baptist Church in Hotsprings, and to them I would say, Be of good cheer, God is King in

this world, and he can take care of it, and his will with us shall and will be done; he is good, and all he does is right. G. R. HATHCOCK.

DALARK, Ark.

Fanny Gifford departed this life March 6th, 1906. She was born Nov. 5th, 1833. Her maiden name was Hubbell; she was a sister to the late Elder J. D. Hubbell; she united with the Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury about forty-eight years ago, and has been a faithful member of that church ever since. Sister Gifford was loved by all who knew her; she was very kind and generous to the poor, and was always ready to lend a helping hand to the needy. To know Aunt Fanny (as she was called) was to love her. For some years she had been afflicted with rheumatism, and had not been able to attend the meetings for about two years, yet she never murmured or complained, believing that the Lord doeth all things well. Her funeral was held from her residence at Kelly Corners. A very large congregation was present to pay the last tribute of respect to one that they loved. She was laid to rest in the Hubbell cemetery at Kelly Corners. Sister Gifford leaves her husband in poor health, who has the sympathy of all, one sister and one brother, beside the church and many friends, to mourn, but our loss is her eternal gain.

The writer tried to speak on the occasion from 1 Cor. xv. 19. May God comfort all that mourn.

JOHN B. SLAUSON.

DIED—Sept. 24th, 1905, **Mrs. Amy Stremple,** wife of brother Jonas Stremple, of Locktown, N. J., aged 61 years, 10 months and 6 days. She with her husband was received by the church at Locktown, N. J., and baptized by the writer about five years ago. I think her disease was heart trouble. She was a good, faithful sister in the church, sound in the faith, a good wife and kind neighbor. She leaves a lonely, sad husband and some distant relatives, with the church, to mourn her absence; she is at rest.

The writer of this notice attended the funeral Sept. 27th, 1905. May God bless all that mourn.

ALSO,

Sister **Lucy Broughton,** of Broughton Hollow, Tioga Co., Pa., died Tuesday, April 17th, 1906. Sister Broughton was 90 years old, lacking 10 days. She died with lung difficulty of some nature. She was baptized by the writer four years ago, uniting with the church at Cammal, Pa. She loved the brethren, and enjoyed listening to the gospel preached. She left many relatives and friends to mourn. Her home was with Mr. and sister Tomes, who did what could be done for her, faithfully looking after her comfort. Sister Tomes is a daughter. Sister Broughton is with Jesus, at rest.

The writer attended the funeral April 19th, 1906. May God give grace to the sad ones.

D. M. VAIL.

POETRY.

THERE IS REST BEYOND.

How sweet it is when doubts assail,
When all our plans and fond ambitions fail,
When friends forsake and foes prevail,
Ah, then how sweet to look beyond the vail,
And know there's rest beyond.

How sweet the hope that dries the falling tear
With which we mourn for those most dear!
How sweet the hope that conquers every fear,
That brings such peace and glory near,
And whispers, We shall meet beyond.

How often in a gloomy day
Has that sweet hope illumed my way,
Cast through the gloom its cheering ray,
And made my soul long for the day
When we shall rest beyond.

OLIVE PITTMAN.

LAMAR, Colo.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

John Hobson, N. Y., $3.00.

MEETINGS.

THERE will be a three days meeting held with the Sidling Hill Old School Baptist Church, in Fulton Co., Pa., to commence on Friday at 2 o'clock before the first Sunday in May, 1906. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth. Those coming by railroad will come to Hancock, Md., where they will be met on the Hancock side on Thursday about 1 o'clock. We hope to be remembered by our ministering brethren.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Ebenezer Church, of Baltimore city, Md., commencing on Wednesday, May 16th, 1906, and continuing three days. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, and it is the request of the church that those who come to the city on Tuesday p. m. go direct to the meeting-house (which will be open from 1 to 5 o'clock p. m.), where they will be met by the brethren, sisters and friends and taken to places of entertainment. Those coming via the Pennsylvania R. R. will get off at Union station and take any car going south on Charles St., and get off at Calvert and Madison Sts., and walk eastward half a square. Those coming via B. & O. R. R. take St. Paul's St.

cars in front of Camden station, and get off at same place. (Calvert and Madison Sts.) Those arriving on Wednesday a. m. will follow above directions and it will be no trouble to find the meeting-house.

By request of the church in conference assembled on Tuesday p. m., April 10th, 1906.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

DOUGLAS L. TOPPING, Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Wilmington, Delaware, commencing on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, (23rd) 1906, and continuing three days.

THE Delaware River Association is appointed to meet with the church at Southampton, May 30th and 31st, and June 1st, 1906. Those coming via Lambertville and New Hope will be met at Ivyland on Tuesday afternoon. Others will be met at Southampton on Tuesday afternoon on train leaving Reading Terminal, Philadelphia, at 4:23 and at 9:43 Wednesday morning. All who desire to come are cordially invited. It is hoped that all the ministers of our correspondence who can do so will be with us. This is a cordial invitation to each one of them. We shall also welcome any other ministers of our faith and order who may wish to come.

SILAS H. DURAND, Pastor.

WM. HOBENSACK, Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, at Middletown, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 6th, 7th and 8th, 1906.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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D. BARTLEY.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 74. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1906. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MATTHEW XIX. 28.

"JESUS said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Upon this text I desire to express some thoughts. A friend of mine who graduated from Johns Hopkins' University, Baltimore, Md., and afterwards studied in Germany, wrote me that in the original Greek there is a comma after the word "regeneration." Elder Chick wrote me the same. In our translation the comma is omitted; this makes a great difference in the meaning of the words. Be that as it may, I shall try to give my understanding of this text, as I believe and have believed for years the Holy Spirit meant it. I do not believe that regeneration is a work wrought by the Holy Spirit, while yet it is, as all the work of Jesus is, revealed by the Spirit. It was essentially the work of our dear Redeemer in the body of his flesh, and was, as is all his work, fully accomplished when he arose from the dead to newness of life. If there is a regeneration there must first have been a generation, and there could not have been a generation without a generator, one who generates or begets.

In many places it is written that God is our Father, and Jesus is said to be the only begotten of the Father; therefore if God is our Father and Begetter, it must have been in the begetting of Jesus. As we cannot separate the life of the child Jesus from the Father, neither can we separate ours from God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; for to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. I think therefore that the church was begotten or generated by God the Father in Jesus Christ as the covenant head of the church, according to the record that "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."—1 John v. 11. This was before the mountains were settled, when as yet he had not made the earth, or the hills, or the highest parts of the dust of the earth. Even then was Christ by him as one brought up with him. He says, "I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." God speaks here of things accord-

ing to his word, "That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been."—Eccl. iii. 15. He speaks of things that were not, as though they were. The Lord saw his substance when as yet it was unperfect, and in his book all his members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.

The psalmist says, "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." At that time "the Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people." As the Lord shall count, we conclude that there must be a definite number, else he would take them all without counting; counting is to determine the number. These are the sons of men with whom were the delights of Jesus before he had made the highest parts of the earth. These were they who were begotten in Christ, and to whom God promised eternal life. These are distinct from the fleshly children of Abraham, being the children of promise. The eternal purpose of God, the promise of God and the giving of life, all depended upon this regeneration, for by the transgression of Adam sin separated them from God, and consequently from life. "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."—Isaiah lix. 2. They were now dead in sins, dead to God, not God dead to them; that could never be. As they were dead to God, and dead to life, there must be a regeneration, or a re-begetting, else they must be forever separated from life and God. This was the gracious work of our dear Savior. This required that he should obey every jot and tittle of the law for the putting away of sin by the sacrifice of himself, the quickening of us together with him, and raising us up with him so fully and completely from under the power of death that it shall no more have dominion over us. Peter, filled with the blessedness of this glorious regeneration, said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." This is the true meaning of the words "regeneration," "begotten again." Peter's great rejoicing was that by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead we were regenerated, or begotten again. The mysterious and wonderful declaration of Jesus was, "I am the resurrection, and the life." Therefore Jesus said, "They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." This is life from the dead, begotten again, regenerated. When Jesus in the text, answering Peter, said, "Ye which have followed me," he did not mean that they had followed him in spirit, as they did (and we trust we have done) after his resurrection, for the reason that they had not followed him in spirit, and the Scriptures do not so prove; but he does mean, as it seems to me, that they had literally in person followed him, and the question of Peter, as it seems to me, meant no more or less than this. But I freely admit and rejoice in it as a blessed hope, that since his resurrection Peter and all heaven-born souls have in spirit followed him. It should be remembered that only the twelve had followed him when he said this, "Ye which have followed me." His words therefore applied only to them, and it applied to them in the regeneration, putting the

comma after this word regeneration as it is in the Greek. With most of our brethren this word is used synonymously with the words "born again;" others in the far south use it synonymously with the resurrection, but could it be possible that the Holy Spirit of God would use two words of different meaning, and entirely different, to set forth the same thing? To generate is to beget, to beget is to procreate; so regeneration is to generate again, to beget again. This is, as I have shown, from the dead, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Surely the begetting is one thing, and being born again is another and an entirely different thing. There is more difference, if possible, between regeneration and the resurrection than there is between regeneration and being born again. In speaking of being born again, I do not mean when born in Christ from the dead, (Isaiah lxvi. 8,) but "born of the Spirit," as Jesus said to Nicodemus, "born again." It seems to me that if Jesus had meant that regeneration was the exercise of the Holy Spirit in the experience of the child of God only, and not the work of our blessed Lord while in the flesh, he would have said, Ye which have followed me, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel, in the regeneration. But on the contrary, he places this expression before his sitting on the throne of his glory, and before the disciples sitting on twelve thrones. If my informants are right, and I believe they are, that there should be a comma after the word regeneration in the text, then regeneration is before, and not after Christ sits in the throne of his glory, and the apostles upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Indeed, if regeneration means what the dictionary says it does: to produce anew, to reproduce, to give new life, which agrees with Peter when he says, "Begotten again," then it is evident that it must have preceded the sitting of Jesus on his throne, or the disciples sitting on twelve thrones as judges, for the reason that Jesus reigned in righteousness, and the apostles as princes in judgment over those only who had been begotten again, or given new life. With prophetic vision, Isaiah beholding Jesus upon his throne, and the apostles ruling in judgment, said, "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." —Isaiah xxxii. 1. Jesus did not reign in righteousness until he had brought life and immortality to light, until he had saved his people from their sins. This was foretold by Jeremiah xxiii. 6–8: "In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, The Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, the Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land." It does appear from the Scriptures that when the Lord had purged our sins he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, and to him the Father said, "Thy throne is forever and ever." As a Son he rules over his own house, "whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."—Heb. iii. 6. His reign is over those begotten again, made alive from the dead, regenerated, made holy, righteous, without spot or blemish, to whom our dear Redeemer said, "Thou art all fair, my

love; there is no spot in thee."—Sol. Song iv. 7. To accomplish all this for those who were under the law, under the curse, required no less work than the regeneration. In one more place only is the word regeneration used, Titus iii. 5, there it is "the washing of regeneration." The purpose of washing is to get rid of that which defiles, to make clean the unclean, to make the thing that is washed white, holy and without defilement. Where do we find this regeneration? surely not separate from Christ. Our experience is the experience which we have of Christ, it is faith laying hold upon the perfect work of Christ making it ours, that work which washes away the guilt of sin and condemnation, and which presents us holy and without blame before God in love. The work of the Holy Spirit is simply to teach and make known to the faith of the child of God that which the blessed Savior has done for him. There is no washing that can free the sinner from his sin and present him holy before God save that water and blood which flowed from the bleeding side of our dear Redeemer. This washing of regeneration is the application of the blood of Christ by faith, by which we are sprinkled from an evil conscience so effectually that the worshipers once purged should have no more conscience of sin, (Heb. x. 2,) resting in the finished work of Jesus, who when he had purged our sins sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, and we know that he shall reign until the last enemy is destroyed; and he reigns in righteousness, which guarantees to us our final victory. Then "he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father."—1 Cor. xv. 24. While we live in the body of this flesh, our minds so carnal and our heart so sinful, we need the constant application of the water of regeneration, and this the Lord has promised: "It shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning."—Isaiah iv. 3, 4. This is written of them who shall be called holy, who are written among the living in Jerusalem, whose filth is washed away by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning. Surely it is by the unsearchable judgments of God that sin is discovered, and by the spirit of burning destroyed.

"If we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."—Heb. x. 26, 27. I shall never forget while reason is on her throne, reading, not long after I was baptized, this Scripture: "Ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."—1 John iii. 15. What did all my experience amount to? What did my baptism profit? What had I to rely upon? Nothing, no, nothing. I am banished from God, and plunged into eternal woe, the Bible is true and I am lost, forever lost. Brethren, if you have never been there I cannot tell you how I felt; if you have, then you know better than I can tell you. Here it is we learn to know how awful his judgments are, how fiery his indignation is, and that his Spirit against sin is the spirit of burning, and that he came not to send peace, but a sword. I said then, There is no hope, no hope for me. What would I not have

given to know that I had never killed a man. Could I pray? No; and if I did, what good would it do? That would not blot out this damning sin. O the tumult of mind, the awful distress of heart, the bitter sorrow, the deep repentance, all this did not and could not give me one moment of peace, or take away the guilt of conscience, though baptized; I was yet under the law, and under its curse. One day while lying meditating upon my lost and ruined condition, I do believe that God spoke peace to my soul in these never to be forgotten words, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." My conscience was from that moment washed from all guilt by faith in the blood of Christ, nor has that sin ever been a trouble to me since. We have an evidence, and faith is that evidence; the apostle says we have the witness in ourselves. This is the evidence of things not seen, it makes to be true to us that which is true of Christ. There would be none just, and hence no resurrection of the just, but for the fact that in the resurrection of Christ they were justified; neither would there be any washing of regeneration but for the fact that in Christ we were regenerated, and begotten again unto a lively hope by his resurrection from the dead.

Dear brethren, I submit this to your judgment.

Your brother in hope,

E. V. WHITE.

LEESBURG, Va., March, 1906.

DRAIN, Ore., Jan. 21, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I so much enjoyed reading the last copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that I have more than ever been made to know that God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform, and that he uses many ways to supply cold water to the thirsty soul. I have seen brethren who will not subscribe for our religious periodicals solely for the reason that they spread discord and strife, and I will agree with them to the extent that they are means of scattering discord, which is also true of every attribute of the church militant, except the Spirit of Christ itself, which cannot sin, because it is born of God, and he cannot commit sin. Churches as a whole, preachers, lay members and associations are all prone to err, and to spread discord, malice and contention, and it is good that it is so, for if man was not as prone to sin as the sparks are to fly upward, if we were not as Paul, given a thorn in the flesh, even the buffetings of Satan, we would become exalted above measure, and forget to ascribe all majesty and praise to the meek and lowly Jesus, and thus leave out, as do the Arminians, the essential element of the christian religion. It is the wonderful counsel of Almighty God, determined in the ancients of eternity, when man was not yet born, not having done any good or evil, that fixed, ordered or ordained that man and everything in his nature in its best estate is comparatively so worthless that vanity is inadequate to express it, and he says, less than nothing. "Man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven," that his own immaculate Son might stand alone to receive every honor, praise and adoration from those to whom he gives the cup of cold water when the heaven-born soul is parched with thirst for a glimpse of his soul-cheering presence, and it was arranged that this thirst cannot be quenched from any other fountain, although men and women in their vanity have endowed seminaries, traversed the broad ocean, braved the dangerous jungle and the fever-stricken

swamps of far away lands, trying to help their fellow-man to reach forth his hand and take of the tree of life, that they might rob Christ of just one bit of his glory; "compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves." They are ofttimes as persistent as the heaven-born soul is in praising Jesus, to whom we owe everything in this world and the world to come, which is the ultimate object of the whole plan. God in his wisdom gives one the spirit of prophecy, another of preaching, another a gift of writing, and sometimes all these gifts to one; but they are all nothing but a means of carrying his message to his chosen seed. He at one time closed their mouths and spake the truth by the mouth of an ass. Again, he can lift the weight of mountains and speak peace to a sin-sick soul without the voice of preachers, prophets, religious periodicals or Baalam's ass, which proves, though I speak with the voice of angels, I am nothing. I have read many periodicals and heard much preaching, and hope I have been made to rejoice in the precious truths set forth in both; also I have been made sorry for the errors of both, until I conclude the arm of flesh is very short unless God directs the message. As the "preparation of the heart and the answer of the tongue," so also is the preparing and quenching of the thirst for grace, with the outpouring of the preached word through publications, preachers and many other ways. I am often filled to overflowing with thankfulness that he has never left or forsaken us, and that in his great mercy he has long spared the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to stand fast in his praise, and to ever be found ascribing to him all majesty, power, honor and glory, which is the sure end of all the plan of light and darkness, good and evil, life and death, suffering and rejoicing, condemnation and redemption, sin and atonement. I have been a reader of the SIGNS for many years; the downsittings and the uprisings and the many features of the brethren's travels over this parched desert seem to stand as an unfailing signboard on the crooked and thorn-strewn road, and they often point to pure crystal streams of living water in the midst of the great burning desert, where I am led to bask in the smiles of our loving Savior, and drink to the full content of a thirst that I hope is God-given, and the cup runneth over.

If he would only direct my pen, I would like to write something of the beauty I hope he has shown me in Matthew xv. 22–29, and also the first part of the eighteenth chapter. Do you not remember many times in your travels up the rugged road, when your heart was bending low beneath the weight of sin, that there seemed to be no place to hide, no way to turn, that if you were only under the Master's table and could pick up the least crumb of assurance it would satisfy the awful hunger of your lean and destitute soul? And more especially when Jesus has shown in your heart enough to reveal the filth of your self-righteousness, which is as filthy rags? Then you cried, Save, I perish, and he did not seem to hear you, and you cried louder, and called on those you supposed to be his disciples, and every other source where you thought there might be help, and then he answered and said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." When you felt sure your case was entirely hopeless, justly cut off by the flaming sword that turns every way to guard the tree of life, every

other hope vanished, and then you came and worshiped him, feeling more forcibly than tongue can express that it would be wrong to take the children's bread and give it to you, and say, Lord, help me; hardly daring to call on his holy name, yet not daring to go elsewhere for help; worse than the beasts of the field, willing to be only a despised cur if you could have but one crumb from the Master's table, and do one thing that would be to his praise. I felt sure that I must receive my just portion, which is the depths of the bottomless pit, and yet it was for his glory, because he had created me for that purpose. The Lord said unto Pharaoh, "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee." Jesus said to the woman, Great is thy faith (faith is the gift of God), be it unto thee as thou wilt. We are ever taught that if we receive justice we will inevitably pass to eternal punishment; and when we have learned obedience by the things we have suffered, and been made willing to kiss the rod, and to wait under our Master's table, we are fit subjects to bear one another's burdens, we are then divested of the spirit that pervaded the disciples when they asked, (Matt. xviii.) "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" When we feel to be as dependent on Christ as little children, who when under sore chastisement have no recourse but to kiss the rod, no chance for sustenance save from the parent; when we realize that it were better that a millstone were hanged about our neck and that we were cast into the sea, than that we offend one of these little ones; when we know the Master's unceasing watchcare, and that there is more rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance; when we have learned obedience by the things we have suffered, and are as a worthless cur under its master's table, looking wistfully in the face of every one of the family, that we might catch the least reflection of the Master's grace which would be a feast to the starving soul, then we are in a spirit that if thy hand or thy foot (brother) offend thee there certainly is only made manifest in that one a stench of putrefication of earthly works covered with filthy rags, (self-righteousness) without a spark of Christ's Spirit to reflect a crumb of food, and they should be cut off. I have thought I could see great beauty and harmony in the lessons of humility taught by the greatest of all Teachers leading up to this rule of church order in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew. When we thus feel our dependence, and his wonderful glory, we are willing to follow explicitly the rule laid down, to go and tell a brother his fault "between thee and him alone;" the man-fearing spirit is gone, and the fear is rather of him that is able to destroy both soul and body in hell, and we are more than willing to forgive seventy times seven, and to accept the Savior's way of cutting off the hand or the foot, trusting fully in his promise "that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven."

Dear editors, I submit this for your better judgment, and prefer you to treat it entirely as your own, and ask that you will not publish it if you think it harmful to the cause of Jesus. I wish to express a hearty accord with the general correspondence and the editorial work in the SIGNS as published by you and the dear

brethren who have been called to their glorious reward.

Your unworthy brother, who prays for the peaceful welfare of Zion,

G. O. WALKER.

SCOTSVILLE, Nova Scotia, Dec. 18, 1905.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—I have had a desire for a long time to add my feeble testimony to the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which I firmly believe to be the doctrine of the Bible, of Christ and his apostles, and the only doctrine that is any comfort to a sin-sick soul. I have neither a home nor a name among the people of my love, but not from any fault found with their faith or practice, as far as I can judge from their writings. I was taking the SIGNS thirteen years ago, but had it discontinued as I intended to go west, but failed to do so. I did not subscribe again until 1903, when I missed many old names from the field, but thank God, I did not miss one point of the God-honoring doctrine that I found in it eighteen years ago; it is the same that I read in the New Testament. Now I say to the writers of the SIGNS, Lift up your voices, spare not; little you know when you are writing how you may be comforting a poor, old, sinful man on a sea island, down in British North America. Write on, from Maine to California, and from far away Texas to Canada; give us the strong doctrine of grace, and be ye followers of Paul, even as Paul was a follower of Christ; no more, no less.

I was born of the flesh in the year 1839, at North Side Lake, Anslie, in the county of Iveness, N. S. My parents were of the free church of Scotland. I had a respect and love for godliness as far back as I can remember, and was always very attentive at family worship. At the age of nine or ten years I was taken to my uncle's home. My uncle and aunt were very religious people, and would talk the Scriptures over and over. I was very jealous of them, and wished I knew as much about the Scriptures as they did. There was a great cry about the Sabbath, and Sabbath-keeping, and Sabbath-breaking, in the country about that time. I commenced praying in secret morning and evening, but I do not remember feeling any burden except my duty to God, but I remember the burden of my heart when anything would come between me and my prayers. After a time I came home, and my religion began to wear away somewhat, but not altogether. I was now about thirteen or fourteen years of age. The boys of the neighborhood were in the habit of gathering on the shores of the lake on Sunday in the summer time for boating, swimming, fighting, and all such things as boys will do when out of sight. I well remember one day, when in the evening the other boys started for home, and I found myself standing in the sand helpless and hopeless, looking at the setting sun, viewing God in anger behind that red sun; yes, angry at me in person for my Sabbath-breaking, which I considered the greatest sin a man could commit. O the anguish of my heart I shall never forget, and there was no one to blame but myself; the sins of the other boys did not trouble me, but O if I could only recall the day, but that of course I could not do. Here I was ignorant of the plan of salvation, and of all the promises of the New Testament, not able to read one word, and I did not try to pray, as I considered my case beyond pardon from that angry God behind that red sun. I started home in this state of mind, blaming myself for my disobedience to God.

Time went on in this way with me, half dead and asleep, until I came to my nineteenth year, when I started out to learn the blacksmith trade. My master was a good man, and held family worship. I now began to attend the meetings of the church for the first time, also to read and write. Time passed on until I was twenty-nine years of age, when I was married and settled down in a poor country place to make a living. I was not satisfied with my condition in the sight of a holy God, but as I thought grace was to come after duty (do your part and God will do his) I joined the church, and they gave me a token, not of grace, but of metal, to go to the Lord's table the next Sunday. Now I made up my mind to live as good a life as any pharisee; I was bound to please God with my good works. The following questions were always in my mind: Do I love God? Do I believe in Christ? Am I born again? With many more such questions, but no answers were given me. On Sunday before communion I began to feel the hardness of my heart and my unfitness for the solemn ordinance of the supper. I went to the lake to pray, and when I thought I had a good place to kneel down found myself in the heart of a thornbush; I could not turn either way, and could only back out, and to this day it is a mystery to me how I got myself into that bush. When I joined the church and expected new life, I found death, in breaking and forgetting all my promises. I was in great darkness, and was afraid I would bring reproach upon the cause that I loved so much. The darkness continued, but I kept on going to meeting. The preacher was such a clean reaper that Ruth herself could not find one grain after him. Nothing better than work for your soul's salvation, not a word of experience, and the people did not want it either, for when coming out of the house every one was praising the sermon, but I could not even remember the text. I was satisfied with everything, but dissatisfied with myself, and was ready to faint as I felt the fruit was growing less, instead of larger.

Now about this time the lack of duty performed did not trouble me as much as my actual sins in word and thought. I well remember being alone on the mountains and praying behind the hills. O how hard it was to utter a word, for my sins were all I could think of, and I was afraid to look at the sky, lest I should see the Son of man coming in the clouds; not to judge the world, but to judge me in person. These many times are not to be soon forgotten.

In the summer of 1881 I went to Boston to work, and there met a Baptist minister whose name was Anderson, from Mt. Vernon, N. Y. He it was who first told me that my works would not aid in my salvation, and that it was all of grace, without any of my good works, for they were sinful at best. At that moment I thought I was lost forever; I felt that my rotten props were falling on every side. After awhile I was led to see more in the grace of God and less in my carnal works. Surely I could say with David in the seventy-third Psalm, "So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee." I left Boston for the west, and in a year's time was in the Rocky Mountains. There I first met John Walker, of Canada, and there I read the first copy of the SIGNS.

My dear friend, I find it very hard to frame my thoughts into words and put the words on paper, but I give you a little of what I went through, but how much grace there is in it I do not know. I

cannot say, like others, that I love the doctrine I hated before, as I never heard the doctrine of grace preached in full until I found it in my mouth like honey, and like balm to my poor soul; but I can say in truth I have no use for what I once loved, that is, the conditional doctrine.

Now, my dear friend, if you can make this out, which I fear you cannot, you will know more of my travels than any other man living, and it is yours to do with what you will, if you are willing to correct mistakes, but do not change it, for fear of deceiving any one. All I care is that Elder John McConnell, Elder B. F. Coulter and Elder D. M. Vail may know that I am in the land of the living, and among the dead, contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, and am afraid that I am sometimes going too far in its defense, but how can I help speaking what I believe: that salvation is of the Lord?

DONALD McKAY.

PATASKALA, Ohio.

I NEED a new suit of clothes, the one I have on is about worn out. I do not know how I am to get another one, the kind of one I want. I have had this one a long time, in fact it is the only one I ever had; it is so "bad" it is not fit to be worn away from home. I brush it and polish it so as to "appear" respectable, but it is only "I appear to men." It suited me right well for a long time, until one day something came over me, or around me, or in me, and ever since then my clothes looked different; they were bad before, but I did not know it, then I saw how threadbare they were worn. I have been dissatisfied with them, but have had to wear them, for I had no other, and desired not to be "unclothed." My clothes are ragged, in "rags;" they are all spotted, and the "spots" show so bad. I have tried everything I could get hold of which was recommended to remove spots, but all proved a failure; I would succeed in causing them to disappear, so that I would be in hope they were gone, but ere long they showed as bad as ever. I have heard of a Man who has a remedy for this purpose which never fails, and makes them as though they had never been, makes them "like snow" and "as wool," but he does not sell it, keeps it for his "friends," gives it to them "without money, and without price." The knowledge of the condition of my clothes worries me, I am ashamed to go away from home. Some say, You look well enough, but that does me no good, for I know it is only in appearance, I "appear unto men to fast." I want to look nice, "to be seen of men," and this worries me and keeps my mind on "earthly things," "things on the earth," but I would like to have my affections set on things above, and ought to do it, but how to do it I find not. I find myself constantly looking about for something better than I have on, but never have succeeded in finding anything yet. Once I saw a man who was in this business, selling clothes, and telling the people how to get them; many were getting them and going away seemingly satisfied, but when I examined them closely they were no better than what I had on, in fact they were the very same things, and the terms of purchase I could not fulfill, and altogether they cost too much. Why spend money for that which satisfieth not? I told him I would look further, and so got away. I suppose I shall never get a better one as long as I live in this world, must wear this one until I die. I cannot "cast it off" nor "away,"

and so I am discouraged, cast down, burdened, sad and gloomy, heartsick; am afraid my friends will shun me; my condition is on my mind nearly all the time, in my thoughts awake and in my dreams asleep; surely I am about as mean, miserable and wretched as a poor mortal can be; I abhor myself, and hate myself, and mourn daily with cries and tears. When my eyes were opened and I saw how poorly I was clothed, my ears were unstopped and I heard of a better suit, and was given a hope there and then, which has never left me, that it was for me. I have spent much time thinking about it, and the things I have heard of it and read about it make me sometimes forget the things that are behind, or past. This new suit was made a long time ago, and "laid up" for me, "reserved" where there is no moth to corrupt or destroy. I have the assurance it will fit me; I was measured for it by the Man himself when I was "chosen in him," when I lay in the womb of eternity, before Jehovah built the skies, or earth, or seas, or sun; it was done first of all, before anything else was done: "In thy book all my members were written, * * * when as yet there was none of them." In the Lamb's book. The Man came and made up the suit at the proper time, and is keeping it for me, and me for it. It is of a particular kind of cloth, woven on an especial loom, and of a peculiar pattern, "blue and purple, and scarlet." These colors denote: blue, everlasting love; purple, a royal priesthood; scarlet, the blood by which it all came. These colors will never fade away, never become spotted—spotless. There was not enough of it made for the whole human family, only for those whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world; enough so that all of them have a full suit; there was no cloth left, no scraps even; it is warranted to wear a long time —forever and ever, and never grow rusty or old. There is a time appointed when I shall get the suit, but not yet, I must die, that is appointed, too, and until he bids I must wait; until he bids I cannot die, when he bids I must. We must all needs die; it is appointed unto man once to die. This Man is a man of authority, and says to this one, Go, to that one, Come, and to his servants, Do this, and they all obey him; he has but to speak the word. He speaks and it is done, but he never does anything before the time, so when my time comes he will speak the word, bid me, and then

> "This robe of flesh I'll drop, and rise
> To seize the everlasting prize."

I will go to be clothed upon with my house from on high; "garments of salvation," that will be far better for me to depart and be with that Man who loved me and gave himself for me. That new suit will be glorious; never can be told the glory that shall be revealed in us. That suit is bright, shining, sparkling, splendid, and those who have it on will shine forth above the brightness of the sun. As it comes to me this way, I forget the things that are behind, and press on, lean forward toward that day, look for signs of its coming: "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." A change of raiment. For the joy set before me I endure and despise the shame, all evil yet to befall me, the sting of death and victory of the grave are all vanished away, I feel as if I had something to live for and look forward to. I do not know just what I shall be, but I know I shall be like him, in paradise with him. I would comfort my brethren with these words.

FRANK McGLADE.

MASSEY, Va., Jan., 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—While I was in a sleepless condition last night the words found in Ecclesiastes xii. 7, came to me, followed by some meditations: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." The inquiry is often made, What becomes of the man as soon as the breath leaves the body? It seems to me that the writer of the above Scripture has given a better answer than I could give. It is evident to my mind that the writer had the final dissolution of man under consideration. The inquiry is in my mind, first, What is man in his carnal or earthly state? He is represented in the Scriptures as being composed of body, soul, spirit and mind. Now by the transgression is not man in all of his elements subject to death? There is first a natural man, with all these elements, not one excepted or exempted, and this is the end of all men, none can possibly escape. But I think the writer in the text has the child of God under consideration, when all the various things to which the writer calls attention, preceding the verse under consideration, bring man to the close of his earthly career. I believe firmly that the foreknowledge and predestination of God the very dust of which his people are composed was in his mind and before his all-wise eye when he predestinated them to eternal life. Then they all stood before him, as complete as they will be when the very last one is developed and brought forth, and he does not have to put a mark on them as we do our stock. By nature they are all of the earth, and are earthy, (not spiritual) until the fullness of the Lord's time, and are without God and without hope, and subject to return to the earth as they were before they were formed of dust into man. Man is dead to spiritual things, and shut up from the faith which should afterwards be revealed, but God in his own time and place, regardless of blood, or the will of man, or the will of the flesh, sends like lightning his Holy Spirit. He does not ask the permission of any man; if so then he would ask the earth to let the sun rise and shine upon it.

Now this man finds himself in a strange condition, he is stirred up and sees himself full of sin in every part where he never saw it before; this affects the whole man, does it not? We do not believe in quickened spirits, but we believe in a quickening Spirit, and that there are quickened sinners, and that all the power to hear, feel and believe is by the Spirit of God within. This is what causes this man to differ from another, and from his own former self. Now the apostle can talk to such a man, and he can understand him when he says, "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God." This is the gift of God, and is eternal life. God alone hath immortality dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto. What is the spirit? Are there as many distinct spirits in heaven as there are elect vessels of mercy on earth? I think not. Jesus said, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost. In him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, yet it was distinct from his humanity. The same One that came into this earth and took on himself flesh and blood was the same that descended into Joseph's new tomb; and he took again that same body that was laid down, and the same body was glorified and ascended. This is the testimony, he is "the first-fruits of them that slept." Now we can see that everything but the Spirit of God, which

is the light and life of the people of God, returns to the earth as it was. It is sown in all the weakness that pertains to the earthly man, but is not lost, for it is sealed by the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption, with every atom into which it may crumble. This is the state which by the apostle is called asleep in Jesus, and all of these will God bring with him when Jesus shall have delivered the kingdom up to God, even the Father, saying, Here am I, and the children which thou hast given me. Let us remember that all this is spoken of as being in the future: "The spirit shall return unto God who gave it," where it was before. From this we see the needs be of the resurrection of the dead, and that resurrection is still in the future. The resurrection is not past already; the redemption of the bodies of the saints has not yet taken place; that which is redeemed must be in the fullness of glory. Job says of this state, that it is "there the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest." But the resurrection is not yet. Just as the body of Jesus was raised by the Spirit from the grave, so I believe that the Spirit of God will come with power and great glory, and the saints will no more be flesh and spirit both, but will come forth in the fullness of that glory for which they have looked, and which they have desired so earnestly, and over which they have mourned because it was not so here. We are now "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

Could I have penned down, just as it looked to me last night, these thoughts would have appeared much better than they do here.

Dear brethren, I want you to examine what I have written, and if you think it worth anything, give it a place in the SIGNS, if not worthy, lay it aside and I shall not be offended.

Your brother,

T. M. POULSON.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan. 7, 1906.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—It was my intention to write you soon after returning from your place, but time has gone by and the letter has not been written. There have been times when I have thought about writing you, and such beautiful thoughts and words would come into my mind, so that if they had been put on paper you would have said, Surely sister Mary is filled with the Spirit; but after reading this you will not be able to say that, as none of those beautiful things come to me now. I have been in a dangerous place in the pilgrim's sojourn here of late, and that place is being at ease in Zion. We are warned against it. I have felt that it was a pleasant place, but there is not much travel here. I think I know that the Bible is true; that the Old School Baptists are the church of God; that it is the only church which follows the teaching of the New Testament; that there is no salvation for sinners only through God's love and mercy; that election embraces all who shall be saved; that the Lord will have mercy on whom he will have mercy; that every crumb of comfort falls from the hand of the Lord; that no man can find food save from the hand of the Father; that whatever the Lord has predestinated will come to pass in its season; that what he has not predestinated no power on earth or any prayer will avail to produce, and that it all from first to last must be according to the will of the Father. When I come to ask of myself, I know that I am a real sinner in the sight of God, who is just and mighty, but with this knowledge is

this state of mind; I have no fear, for he has in the past given me bread, yes, feasts of fat things, and I can trust him for more. Do I know that death, that dreaded monster, will come? Yes, I do know that, and also I know that it cannot come until its appointed time, and then no man can save from it, but in this one thing the rich and the poor are the same, they all leave this world as they came into it, they brought nothing, and nothing can they take away.

A few days ago I was so sick that I questioned myself, If this should be unto death am I willing? and I could feel that I was resigned to whatever was the will of him who doeth all things well. So even in this I seemed at ease, and so much at rest. Sometimes portions of the word come to me and I search to find if they are Scripture, and do find them in the record of his word. But with all this there is not the same travel on a plain where there are no hills and valleys, but just one continual journeying on, knowing that the road was laid out before us, and that when we have traveled all the time allotted we will be at our journey's end. If all were a level plain all the way what a long, tiresome journey that would be; but when the journey is first plain and then hills, there is a going down in the valleys by the waters, then up to the hilltops and over some rugged rocks, or by some dangerous precipice, where it seems we will be overthrown; then we journey with trust, calling all the time for help to go on through the dangerous way; then we know that the deliverance is from the Father, for no man on earth could have given it, and when we come to the hilltop there is a glimpse of light far above man, and then the song of praise and thankfulness to him who has given us the glorious sight. Often in the darkness of night, without warning, in the deep waves we are given to hear the "Peace, be still," spoken to the waves, and then how good to feel that his hand controls them. Sometimes there is a desire to seek knowledge, and for words to express it, on the mind for a time, then the Father opens the seals and we can never forget that view; it was from heaven. We may hear preaching and know that it is true, and yet not hear from the heart, but when we do hear from the heart and know this is from the Lord, how much more good it does us! I can see that this ease is pleasant, but in the troubled waves is profit. For myself, I desire to be content with whatever the Father sees fit to give me, whether of sorrow or of joy. May I always remember that his mercy endureth forever, and that a sparrow does not fall to the ground without him, much less a child. I have a desire to seek knowledge from the Scriptures, yet I know that unless it is the will of the Lord that I obtain it, my desire is in vain. To be at ease in Zion does not bring much comfort to the soul of one who feels a condemning conscience. I know that I am a sinner, and unless pardoned for all my sins am lost forever. If there is one poor, trembling soul not strong enough to lift his eyes unto heaven, who yet down in his heart is begging for mercy, let him be where he may, still crying for mercy, and if one could hear his groans he would know that in that sin-sick soul the cry is, God, be merciful to me a sinner; I am lost, undone, helpless and hopeless. Is the mercy of God clean gone forever, and is there no deliverance for me? To such a soul how much comfort could come from hearing one speak who is at ease in Zion, but better and of more profit is the desiring, seeking mind. To that poor, condemned soul let

me say, Trust him, for behind a frowning providence he hides a smiling face, his mercy endures forever, he will not let a poor, trembling soul go entirely away from him. Just now it does not seem to me that I can ever doubt his love and mercy again. There have been times when it has been the pleasure of the Lord to give me views which I could not doubt were from the loving Father above; afterward I would doubt whether they were anything more than imagination; it would be suggested that it was vain to think that God would give me, such a poor, undeserving creature, such bright views, and so I may be made to doubt again.

I close this with love to all, and a desire for the sweet fellowship of the household of faith.

MARY HILL TERRY.

ELGIN, Oregon, Feb. 23, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I send you the experience of brother Colwell. I asked him to write it out and send it to the SIGNS, but instead of sending it to you he sent it to me, and I now send it to you to be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES if it meets with your approval. I have not asked brother Colwell that I might do this, but I will assume all responsibility.

I was much pleased with Elder Chick's editorial on "The communion of the body of Christ;" I could but see how wonderful is the truth of God; to know that God's people in their own experience live the very truth of revelation. Jesus said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." Jesus does not say, Except ye do this ye will not have life, but, Except ye do this ye have no life. What seems impossible to sense and reason is a truth in the personal experience of all God's people, and your article, brother Chick, made it seem so plain to me that God's people do the very things Jesus said they must do: eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, all because he is their life. Elder Durand's article on the resurrection, how good it is, and he, too, shows that God's people do in their own personal experience live that life, and in the hope of the resurrection of the dead, for all live unto him who is the Resurrection and the Life.

Wishing prosperity for the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I am your brother in hope,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

KENNEWICK, Wash., Jan. 2, 1906.

ELDER G. E. MAYFIELD—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—This morning I will try to write you a few lines. I have thought many times I ought to write to you, and as many times have felt that I was too unworthy. I told my wife the other day I would like to write to you, but did not feel worthy. She said, No doubt he feels the same way. I am a very poor writer, and hate to write to any one, much less to one of God's dear children, but I get so lonesome here where I do not have a chance to talk with any of the dear ones, that it gives me a desire to write.

You asked me last winter something about my experience; I will now try to tell you some of the Lord's dealings with me, if I have not been deceived in the matter myself. No doubt you remember I joined the denomination called the Christian Church at sixteen; I had never read the Bible much until that time; I thought my salvation depended on my own works. Then I began to read the Scripture to see what I must do, not that I had any love for God, but the fear of

being sent to hell if I did not do right. I found that I had no right to claim religion, as my chances were better not to act the hypocrite, for I thought at that time if a man lived a good moral life he would be better off than the hypocrite. I was worldly, and cared for nothing save the pleasures of the world; at the same time I always had a feeling of love for the people that I thought were christians, and liked to hear you preach, as no doubt you noticed; I was interested in your talk while you were speaking, but as soon as I was away my thoughts were with the world. I went on this way until the death of our first child, when I was made to realize my lost condition, and that I was a condemned sinner in the sight of God. I had read the Scriptures a great deal, but there would be passages come to my mind with a different meaning from what I had ever had in reading them. I think the angel appeared to me as he did to the shepherds of the flock by night, but I was not left in this state of mind long until he said, Fear not, for unto you is born in the city of David a Savior; then I felt that I must be baptized. When we went to Touchet, I told Elder Barnes my feelings. I united with the church and was baptized. I thought my troubles were over, but they had not begun. I cannot tell you my wanderings, and doubts, and fears. This past summer I felt that I was deceived, and was deceiving the dear ones of God, but I knew there was One I could not, was not, deceiving, but I think that I have been learning obedience by suffering; like Paul, I have been made to cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I have been led out of Egypt with a strong arm, if I am not mistaken, and, like the Israelites, when I depend upon God he fights my battles; when I undertake to fight them myself I get hurt. O if I could only feel to be in his love all the time, but this is not right, and I should not wish it, for I know we must suffer the trials and tribulations of this life.

Now this is my experience as well as I can write it, as I am a poor hand to tell my thoughts with pen and paper. I do not feel that this will be of much interest to you, but as you asked me for my experience, and the Scripture says to "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you," so I thought to try to tell you the best I could. I did not want to write to the SIGNS as you requested me, as I am such a poor writer. There are times when I want to mix works with grace, not that I think the Scriptures teach it, neither has my experience taught it, but I think it is the sin in me. I know that if I am saved at all I am saved by grace. Tell me, does this feeling ever come over you? I feel so wretched and low that I think there is no one like me. My family is well.

Well, I am writing too much, it will weary you. I hope you and family are well. Write to me when you can. Love to all. Remember me at the throne of grace.

Your unworthy brother,

MARION COLWELL.

OKEMAH, Ind. Ter.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I am requested by a precious brother in Pennsylvania to write you something of the Primitive Baptists in this country, who are few and scattered, but most all are blessed with the high and happy privilege of meeting and greeting each other once a month. Many

have to go twenty-five or thirty miles to their church meeting, but it only reveals the intense strength of the cords of true brotherly love and affection, which can only emanate from its Head and Fountain, God, the supreme Ruler of all things. There is but one little church in a very wide space of country here, which stands alone, and is dependent on the God of all power to uphold and strengthen her fold, for their heart's interest is in trying to worship that God who has all power, and who does his will in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say, What doest thou? Ministers are few, but are the more precious, and are esteemed as gracious gifts from God when they come laden with the precious fruits of his Spirit, proclaiming the doctrine that Paul, James, John, Peter and Jesus himself preached, that salvation is of the Lord, and like the disciples feed the great throng in the desert; they were without food and no visible means of obtaining it; but we need not doubt or fear when Jesus is with us. We feel to be in a desert land down here, and our ministers are like the disciples in the desert, dependent on God for their supplies, but he never fails to furnish the proper food just in due time for his humble poor. We believe that God has chosen to use men to feed and nourish his little ones, and in every way fitted, qualified and prepared them for that purpose, and called them by the word of his power to do this work (not called at them, but called them). If God has failed in this he is a failure, and would not satisfy those who are as helpless as I am. My little hope is in the mercy of that God who knows no failure. If I believed that a single one of his purposes was hung on my free will and ability I would be miserable, for that would be one purpose to fail; for, if I know myself, every time I am left to walk after my own will I go astray. Then I just desire to be free from self, or natural power, for I have lost all confidence in man. We want to hear men preach God's power, not theirs; we feast on grace and mercies, not on works or justice; so when they come laden with the precious goodness of God's unfailing fullness it is rich and comforting to us, but when they come loaded with stones, pelting the poor, little, hungry sheep, we feel to believe that they are not God-sent, for this is not the way we understand feeding.

Our little church has had fourteen additions in the past year, for which we feel thankful to God, for he lays them on his own shoulder and carries them to the fold, then what a feast of rejoicing it is to see them come in this way. Jesus is the only door, he that climbeth up any other way, he says, is a thief and a robber. Then we understand that the Christ-way is an humble way, no climbing up by human wisdom or ability, but only Jesus is the door; he opens and none can shut, and shuts and none can open. I must say, too, that we are not free of the marks of God's chastening rod, which sometimes is very painful to our mortal lives, but does not diminish our little hope, for he says whom he loveth he chasteneth; he that is without chastisement is a bastard and not a son; chastisements are grievous for the present, but bear the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them who are exercised thereby.

Now, dear ones of this faith and love, if God ever sees fit to pass you this way, we beg you give us a call, for you will find this little flock always hungry for the sweet fruits of the true Vine. Our meeting-house is located just over the line

in Oklahoma, two miles from Belmont, five miles south-west of Prague, on F. &. W. R. R.; W. A. Turner is an old settler and clerk of the church.

Yours in bonds of love,

J. W. LANGWELL.

EPHESIANS II. 5.

"By grace ye are saved."

What a great comfort it is to have such an assurance from such good authority. We are of the earth earthy; like everything else, we are attracted to the earth by the force or law of gravitation. David said, "My soul cleaveth unto the dust;" and again, "None can keep alive his own soul."

"See how we grovel here below,
Fond of these earthly toys;
Our souls can neither fly nor go
To reach eternal joys."

If we are drawn to seek things that the earth does not afford, it is a supernatural power that draws us. If we find ourselves clinging to the earth, it is because we are not drawn by the loving-kindness of the Lord to seek those things which are above. I believe there is a prayer in my heart that is expressed by the language of the bride in the Song: "Draw me, we will run after thee;" but I cannot run after the Lord Jesus unless he does draw me. I do not understand that the heavenly Bridegroom becomes vexed with his loved one and thrusts her from his presence; this may be the case with man, but not so with Christ. You may hold an object suspended in the air, and let it fall; of course it immediately goes straight to the ground, and if it is a very frail object it will go to pieces if it comes in contact with an object harder than itself. This may serve to illustrate how the Lord tries his people when they claim too much praise for where they are and what they are; we fall to the ground as quickly as any other object when the Lord lets us go, and there we lay until he takes us up again. It is by grace ye are saved. We do not have to be desperadoes because we are unable to seek the Lord. Naturally speaking, the attractions of this world are divided into two parts, viz: good and bad. Part of the world seeks the good and part seeks the bad. Naturally some love to make peace, naturally some love to make mischief; but the motive of the natural peacemaker may be just as abominable in the sight of God as the motive of the mischief-maker; all are alike in God's sight, they have all gone out of the way; "there is none righteous, no, not one." "By grace ye are saved." God hath concluded all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. The grace of God teaches us something, it teaches what we should do and what we should not do; it teaches us that denying ungodliness and worldly lust we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. The subjects of God's grace realize that they should so live, whether they do it or not, and if they do not so live they have not the answer of a good conscience toward God. I believe the child of God does about the best he can; he certainly finds as he goes along that it does not pay him to do wrong, for he has to pay dearly for it; he finds that the way of the transgressor is hard. No doubt the child of God is suffered to do things that appear very wrong to himself and others, that he may be taught again the truth that, "By grace ye are saved."

I hope these thoughts may be of comfort to some poor, weak soul like myself, as they have been to me.

Yours in weakness,

EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

NEWARK, Del., Feb. 15, 1906.

ALLENTOWN, Pa., Feb., 1906.

TO THE DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS OF THE HOPEWELL CHURCH, AND TO ALL OF LIKE PRECIOUS FAITH, GREETING:—

Having been spared to see the beginning of another year, I take up my pen to address a few lines to you, as has been my custom for a few years, but I can assure you that it will be the same old story, with no new departures. I hope the theme will be in sweet fellowship with my kindred in Christ, if I am one of them. "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in christian love." Gloom has overshadowed my experience for a long time, I have doubted if I had any love for the brethren at all, and have felt to be a hypocrite of the worst type. I said, O is there a spark of heavenly love in this cold, dead sinner? If there is, I am unable to find it. For months I have felt too indifferent to even try to pray. This is a horrible place to find one's self in; to realize deadness to all spiritual life, and to know something at least of what I owe my Maker, and then be so cold and careless toward him as to not give him one loving thought. O what a worm I am! All I could say was, O Lord, O Lord. I felt that these words were only of the lips, with no meaning attached to them spiritually. I could not so much as say, God, be merciful to me, a sinner, because I could not realize I was one. What a mixture of contradictions I am! One of my troubles was, and still is, that I did not see myself as black as I really am when compared to the true standard, which is God's word. I thought such a view of my vile heart would comfort me because I knew that none but God could reveal it to me, so then it would be the work of grace begun in the heart. The Lord reigns, and he will do his pleasure in regard to me, and should it be his will to bar me from his presence, and to appoint me a dwelling-place with the wicked, it will be just and right, yet, dear kindred, I cannot feel reconciled to being forever banished from his dear presence, but I desire to dwell with him in glory, and sing his praise through all eternity. Eternity, what an endless song it will be. "There's no less days to sing his praise than when we first begun." Dear fellow-travelers, think of his mighty love, and of the sufferings he endured to redeem his bride, the church. O what a wonder of wonders that such a worm as I should hope to dwell with the spotless Lamb of God, yet I know he can wash me whiter than snow, and that his precious blood can cleanse the blackest heart, so that he can see no spot in his loved ones. Is it any wonder that martyrs went to the stake praising him because of his great love to sinners? Language cannot express it.

"Was it for crimes that I have done
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity, grace unknown,
And love beyond degree."

It is but seldom that I can visit you, my brethren, yet I think of you often, and hope that I am one with you in spirit. At this moment I can truly say you have my heartfelt love, and hope that you are in the full enjoyment of church privileges, of which I am denied, in a measure at least. You can do without me, but I cannot do without you; O no, I have nowhere else to go.

I was very agreeably surprised one day last week in seeing Elder Vail enter my door, to whom I laid bare my case. The Lord has been pleased to graciously send me much sweet comfort in this dear brother's visits in my hours of need. Then in December Elder Chick and wife spent a night with me, for which I hope I am truly thankful; such visits are like

fragrant flowers in a desert. One more visitor came to me a few weeks ago in form of a message of love and fellowship from dear sister Weeks, who resides in Gardiner, Maine. Letters from this dear sister come to me always in my hour of despondency, and cheer me when roaming in the valley of dry bones, where I usually dwell. I find a number of fellow-travelers in this rough place of the journey; I suppose we are traveling all the time, even though we do not seem to get on at all.

I must close lest I weary you, hoping that we may all reach that country where the inhabitants never grow weary.

I am yours lovingly,

MARY E. FISHER.

JAMAICA, N. Y., Feb., 1906.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—The Lord is exceedingly good to me, he hath abundantly blessed me, he hath watched over and cared for me, kept me from dangers both seen and unseen from my earliest existence, and granted unto me a sufficient amount of health and strength, with a willing mind to labor, and also blessed my labors so that I have been enabled thus far to procure such things as are needful for my comfort naturally, and for those which he is pleased to bless me with. These are truly blessings bestowed upon unworthy me by the God of providence. But this is not all that I claim I am blessed with, for the God of all grace saw fit according to his own will, pleasure and purpose, more than thirty-five years ago, to show unto me that which was impossible for any created power to make manifest, how poor, naked and blind I was spiritually, that naturally I was entirely destitute of spiritual life, therefore utterly unable to move or act in any way whatever in a spiritual sense, and blessed be his holy name, he has continually been with me, even unto this day, ever reminding me of this one great important lesson. Yes, day by day I must still be made to feel the truth of what the Scriptures declare, that "man at his best state is altogether vanity." And these I humbly trust he has caused me to be thankful for, and consider as inestimable blessings; no estimate can possibly be placed upon them; no longer to be left under the delusion that I am rich and increased in goods, that I am not so great a sinner but what I could make amends for my wrong doings and thereby gain the favor of God. This was once my condition, and would have been until this day except that "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." Being made alive to a true sense of our condition in nature brings into requisition all of our boasted powers, and not until taught fully the futility of all our own efforts to reinstate ourselves, or bring ourselves into a justified state, do we give up all our former hope of being justified by the deeds of the law; for naturally, being ignorant of God's righteousness, we vainly attempt to establish our own righteousness; but now, thanks to our God, in due time we are made to see all of our own righteousness as filthy rags, no better than a fig leaf, no endurance about it, and being made to loathe it and turn from it, we do desire that righteousness which is enduring, that which is spotless and pure, to wit, the everlasting righteousness of our God. Up to this time we were shut up in darkness, and did not know the Lord our righteousness, but now are we made to know him, the chief among tens of

thousands, the One altogether lovely, and to know him is life eternal.

Yours in hope,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

GREENWOOD, Colo., Dec. 19, 1905.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST:—As I am sending my remittance I feel inclined to write to you upon the subject of the love of God to me, a poor sinner, saved by grace if saved at all. I do believe and trust that the Lord has brought me to love and praise his sacred and beloved name. When we have been thus taught we have a desire to speak of his matchless love and kindness, and to crown him Lord of all. I ofttimes feel gloomy, and cast down in doubts and fears, and my faith and hope are so weak, and God's presence seems so far off, that I fear I have deceived the dear ones of God. I feel too sinful and unworthy to even speak or think upon his sacred and precious name, the name of Christ Jesus our Lord. If I am saved at all it is not by anything that I have ever done or can do to merit salvation; it is alone through the precious blood and righteousness of Christ Jesus our Lord that I am what I am. I must say, Praise the Lord, for his mercy endureth forever. May I ever be kept in the bonds of humility, and low at the feet of our Lord Jesus Christ; may the Lord keep me humble, and teach me to know and obey his will. It seems to me as I look back over my past life that I can see how the Lord has kept me by his grace until now, through the very depths of darkness, and almost in the pale shadows of death, when I felt as though the Lord had forsaken me. But he has said, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself." I must say that all the joy and happiness on this earth are as nothing when compared with the manifestation of the wondrous love and pure joy of my weary soul when heavenly things are revealed. With weeping I am ofttimes made to say, Lord, why have I been made to hear thy word? I sometimes hope that the Lord has brought me to love and praise his glorious name, and the precious plan of salvation by grace, by which sinners are saved. I read that Christ came not to save or call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, and I feel as though I could join in with you all, and say that I love the goodness and mercy of the Lord. I love to meet with the dear ones of the Lord, and to hear them tell of their joys, and the mysteries and wonders of God's great love, and I love to sing with them some of the good old familiar songs of Zion.

Please pardon and forgive this imperfect letter. I will close with the prayer that you may be spared many years to send forth the glad tidings of salvation. Remember me at the throne of grace.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

M. J. DUNCAN.

CATATONK, N. Y.

DEAR EDITORS:—A word to all the dear kindred in Christ who may have it in their minds to write for our precious family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. In the love which is given you in Christ Jesus, write on; speak of the dark seasons, of the low places you have been brought through, for by so doing you speak words of comfort to many lone pilgrims like myself, who may feel the vileness of their nature to be so great that they hardly dare look heavenward, or to feel to have any right to a home with the people of God. Words fail to express the darkness through which I

have passed, but this morning the glorious Sun of righteousness arises with healing in his wings. The Lord has triumphed gloriously, and I am made again to trust in the Lord for all things. His everlasting arms are underneath, and he is a stronghold in the day of trouble. O give thanks unto the Lord, for his mercies endure forever. Now it is given me to muse on the years that are past; to remember the days of the gladness of my heart, when all things in nature seemed to join in praise to my Savior, my Redeemer; then it was a heaven below; Jesus all the day long was my joy and my song. I feel deeply my nothingness, my inability to do good, yet I have a desire for the welfare of Zion. I would be glad had I words to express my gratitude for the many precious communications in the SIGNS.

Hoping the mantle of charity will be widely spread over this, and asking to be remembered at the throne of grace, I am, I hope, your sister in Christ,

MELISSA CATOR.

JERSEY SHORE, Pa., Jan. 21, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—If one so unworthy as I feel myself to be may call you by that endearing name. It was impressed on my mind long before I was a member of the church to write to you. I have been negligent in sending on my remittance for the SIGNS, mostly through fear of writing. I am one of the weak ones of the Master's flock, if one at all. I walked in disobedience for many years after I was taught the true way, as I hope, but the feeling sense of my unworthiness kept me from going before the church and asking a home with them. I was baptized October 23rd, 1899, at our little church at Cammal, by Elder D. M. Vail. I travel in darkness most of the time, and am made to cry, Unclean! unclean! and yet how merciful the Lord has been to me in so many ways; I have always had the privilege of meeting with the brethren at Cammal at nearly every meeting for twenty-five years, until the last year, which has been a sad one because of sickness and death in our family, and yet the dear Lord was with us and helped us to bear our troubles. He can heal the broken-hearted, he alone can make us whole.

I have always wanted to try to write my experience, but I see that I am making such a poor effort at writing this time that I do not think I will ever try again. I do hope the brethren and sisters who have written such good letters for the SIGNS will continue to write, for I find much comfort in reading their letters.

Dear brother, excuse me for writing to you, for I know there is nothing interesting in what I have said, but I hope it will relieve my mind.

From a weak sister,

PHILENA VELEY.

TENNILLE, Ga., Feb. 26, 1906.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS:—It seems that I cannot send my remittance without saying a few words to you all, especially to the contributors to the SIGNS. If not deceived in my poor heart, I do love you all for the truth's sake. I do dearly love the precious old doctrine the SIGNS advocates, salvation by the grace of God, both in time and eternity, so, dear brethren and sisters, write on, for you do not know how much good your precious letters do me; yes, I think you do know, too, for you enjoy reading from others as well as I do. Long live the SIGNS, for the doctrine it advocates will live forever.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

JOHN W. BRASWELL.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1906.

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EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Will you give your views through the SIGNS upon Matthew viii. 21, 22? This has been upon my mind for some days.

Your brother in hope,

B. F. PARKER.

LOYAL, La.

Just before this it is narrated that one said to the Savior that he would follow him whithersoever he went. Jesus said unto him, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Then "another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead." See also Luke ix. 57–62. In Luke it is recorded the Master said to the second man, "Follow me," and then he said, "Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father." Luke also narrates that another said, "Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go and bid them farewell which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

It is manifest first, that some things are not intended by the dear Redeemer by his words to these men; one is this: he did not mean that his disciples were to put away all natural affection from their hearts, or that they were not to render all needed offices to the dead of their households. Reverence for parents is inculcated in all the word of God, and Jesus himself wept at the grave of his friend who was dead. Second, he did not teach that no regard is to be paid to those of our own families. He did not come to break up human relationships, or to release his disciples from the obligations of those relationships; whatever these Scriptures may signify they do not mean anything like this.

In the first instance (Matt. viii. 19, 20,) a scribe came, volunteering to be his disciple, and professing great earnestness and zeal. "I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." Jesus knew the hearts of all men, and it seems apparent that knowing the heart of this scribe, that there was no true, real love for the Master in him, and that some worldly consideration was influencing him, he applied to him this test, saying that the foxes and the birds were better off than he. In other words, If thou followest me in this life thou hast the promise of poverty, and shame, and reproach, and persecution, but no promise of any worldly favor. It was saying, as he had said plainly elsewhere, "My kingdom is not of this world." The lesson is, that in the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ there is no promise of any worldly advantage, but rather of loss, and trial, and suffering. The scribes, no doubt, as it was the case with all the Jewish nation, were expecting a Messiah who should overthrow the kingdoms of the earth, and reign in Jerusalem, and exalt his followers to high and exalted stations in his kingdom. Now Jesus tells him plainly that none of these things belong to him or to his kingdom. We are not told what the effect

was upon the scribe, and it is not needful that we should be told, the lesson is plain in itself. Whether this scribe went on or not, we know that all who are seeking some earthly favor in making a profession of religion are not the true disciples of the Lord. If any follow him in reality, it must be knowing that his kingdom is not of this world, and worldly emoluments are not for his followers. So in the Old Testament we have the testing of Ruth by Naomi recorded, and upon the same grounds.

Now one of those who were recognized as his disciples came, and in response, as recorded in Luke, to the Savior's words "Follow me," he said, "Suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God," or, as in Matthew, "Follow me." We have had no question for a long time that the simple meaning was that the disciples of Jesus should learn that his commandments must be first; nothing of an earthly nature, however sacred and commendable it might be, should be allowed to come in the way of obedience to him. We must hold such an attitude of mind and heart with regard to this matter that Jesus must be first; to proclaim his kingdom is of infinitely more importance than any earthly duty or any earthly pleasure can possibly be. It is with this very thought in view that Jesus once said, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." This manifestly did not signify that his disciples are to hold malice or hatred in their hearts toward any man, but that if any of these things come up between any of us and our obligation to obey him, or to follow him, they are not to be regarded; nay, more, they are to be put one side, as one would cast one side a thing that was hateful to him. Naturally, if anything opposes one in following that which is dearer than all the world beside to him, he hates that thing in proportion to the degree with which he loves the other thing. If therefore the love of Christ be all and in all with us it will lead to a casting one side of the dearest earthly thing, as one would cast one side an enemy. So, in the text, Jesus said, "Let the dead bury their dead." That is, let worldlings attend to worldly things, thou hast a better calling. If this be true with regard to that which is accounted of importance among men, the respect due to our beloved dead, how much more clear is it that this also must be true with regard to all other matters that belong to this world. How heart-searching are these words of the blessed Redeemer. O that the Spirit might apply them to our hearts, so that we may be found knowing only Jesus, and following only him in all things.

"No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Every farmer knows that one ploughing, and looking back, will not draw a straight furrow; his ploughing will be of no credit to his workmanship. It becomes a solemn question then to all who are called to the ministry especially, Are we looking back? Is our heart back in the old life with its pleasures, ambitions, hopes, aspirations and rewards, or have we an eye single to the glory of God? Well indeed is it for us if when we read these things they search our hearts and show us what is true with regard to ourselves. At such times as this we shall go softly, and with fear and trembling, and this is well, it is far better than boastful self-confidence.

How greatly do we need supplies of grace, and how great is the grace that supplies our need.

SISTER S. W. Gard, of Russell, Iowa, asks about the words found in 2 Thessalonians ii. 3, 4: "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."

From the connection it seems that even in that early day there had arisen some who misinterpreted the teachings of the apostles, and disturbed the minds of the churches by saying that the end of all things was at hand. In these later days men have presumptuously claimed to know the year, month, and even the day, when the world should come to an end. We ourselves can recall when a child that the report went out that some men had said that a certain day was the one when the end should come; and while we did not even then believe that any one knew, or could know, that day before the time, yet we thought with a great deal of uneasiness about this prediction all that day, and felt relieved when the day was past and gone. Now Paul in this Scripture and its connection bids his brethren not to be thus disturbed by any such teaching as that the day of the Lord is at hand. He urges this upon them by the coming of the Lord Jesus, and by their gathering together unto him through the power of the gospel, and by the indwelling of the Spirit. He beseeches them not to be shaken in mind or troubled, neither by anything that might be said to them, nor by any claim that some one had a letter from himself asserting this thing; he had not so written any one. Still further, before that day could come, as come it would, there must be a falling away first, that the man of sin might be revealed, who is the son of perdition, and "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." Then he said, "Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?" It is evident to our own mind that the man of sin does not mean the ungodliness that is in the world at large, for that had been revealed in all the ages of the past, and this they were aware of, but it, as it seems to us, does mean a revelation of sin and iniquity in the highest degree religiously. It is the revelation of that which in a special sense is called "the son of perdition." Judas was called "the son of perdition," because it was he that should betray his Master for money. So the same title is applied to the coming evil power, because that also should seek to betray the Master even while professing to serve him and honor him, as did Judas; it is religious high treason, carried on in the house of God itself. While professing to serve Christ and God really he opposeth God, and while professing humility exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped, and he sitteth in the temple of God, claiming himself to be God. It is the extreme of religious wickedness that is intended by the apostle. Now all this must be revealed before the end shall come, as Paul here declares; it is not, we again urge, the ordinary wickedness of professedly ungodly men, such as is described in the first two chapters of Romans, but wickedness cloaking itself under the garb of exalted piety. The religion of

the meek and lowly Jesus would be made a cloak to conceal pride and vainglory, and exalted pretensions to sanctity, and superior righteousness. From what is here said about this man of sin we learn that he shall claim to rule men, and to be lord over their consciences, for God alone has this dominion, and this man of sin in claiming this dominion claims to be God. Who then is this man of sin? We have not one iota of doubt in our mind that it is first and chiefly the hierarchy at Rome. It is not some one man, but a power claimed by an organization, and it is a religious power, as said before. What one mark of the meek and lowly Jesus, who was God manifest in the flesh, has this despotic power ever exhibited? We shall seek for it in Rome in vain. Her priesthood, from the highest to the lowest order of it, delights in pomp and show, and in receiving the homage of the people, and no king or emperor ever rules with half so despotic sway. Other religious peoples have persecuted, as well as Rome, but it is reserved for Rome alone to justify persecution upon the claim of destroying the body to save the soul. Rome claims the right to command the consciences of men, the right to coerce men by the sword if need be. The greatest danger to civil liberty in our land to-day is in the Roman hierarchy. Priestcraft and kingcraft go together, the latter the handmaid of the former. Paul was inspired to write of this man of sin, and to show his brethren that the end should not come until he was fully revealed.

SISTER Rena Bell, of Camden Point, Mo., writes, asking as to what is the meaning of Hebrews vi. 4–6, which reads as follows: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."

Not that any one for whom Christ died, and who has come to savingly know the Lord, can ever finally perish, but rather the contrary. It completely refutes the Methodist claim that a man may be a christian and fall away into his original lost condition a half dozen times, more or less, during his life. We have ourselves known of cases where men professed conversion, as it was called, and in a few months were back into the old manner of life, and then in a few months or years professed another conversion, and then again fell away, and so on for any number of times. This Scripture plainly teaches at least this, that if it could be possible that one who had been really saved should fall away, for that one, from that moment, there could be no further hope, for if such a thing could be, in order that he should again be saved Christ must again be crucified, and specially crucified for him; but this can never be, for Christ has died unto sin once, and now liveth by the power of God. This we do not need to insist upon, for no one will deny it, yet this is just what a Methodist must contend for if he believes that he may be a child of God to-day and a child of the devil to-morrow, and then a child of God again the next day. How fearful the conclusion to be drawn from this Methodist practice and faith. One candid Methodist minister once said to us that he did not believe in the possibility of any man passing through a half dozen conversions. Said he, "Either the man was deceived the first time or else he is deceived the second time."

But what does the text mean? Simply this, as we have long been convinced, that it is not possible for one for whom Christ died to fall away, because if it were so then Christ must be crucified again to redeem that man from death and hell. The whole argument of the apostle in the connection is to present the efficacy of the blood of Christ far above that of bulls and goats, whose blood was shed under the old covenant. Those offerings were made often, but the offering of Christ is but once. The effect of those offerings was not to purge the conscience or to put away sin in the sight of God, but the offering of Christ did purge the conscience, and did present its subjects perfect before God without spot or blemish. There needed under the former covenant, therefore, that there should be frequent offerings, but there is no such need under the new covenant. This is the substance of the whole argument of the apostle in this epistle. Now if it were possible that one thus redeemed should fall away, then it would be impossible for that one to be renewed again unto repentance, because to be thus renewed would first require that Jesus should die again, and thus it would appear that his first death was not sufficient, and so by this failure Jesus would be put to an open shame. Shame attaches to any one whose work proves to be a failure, so shame would attach to Jesus were his work proved to be a failure. But his work is not a failure, there is power in it to save, and to save forever.

This it seems is the whole force of the apostle's argument here. C.

EPHESIANS VI. 4.

"AND, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

Brother H. H. Bentley, whose address is 580 Decatur St., Atlanta, Ga., asks that we give "a little talk" upon Sunday Schools, and Old Baptist parents allowing their children to attend the same. We are willing to give such as we have upon the subject, which no doubt is one of importance, and one which has perhaps been neglected. It is good for us all to be reminded often of our obligations to God in all things. Our children are the gift of God to us, and we should endeavor to do all in our power for their welfare. We should instil, if possible, every honest and upright principle in them, beginning in their infancy; we should teach them to honor father and mother, to respect old age, to be kind and gentle toward each other; we should take them to meetings with us, teach them to respect the day of rest, Sunday, (so called) because the law of our country demands it, teach them as far as we can of God and his almighty power. As far as we are able we should educate our children and give them a profession or trade, that they may be independent, prepared to take care of themselves when it becomes necessary. All this is the duty of the Old Baptist parent to the child, but this is not the duty of the Sunday School teacher concerning our children. A believer should never feel that he can trust an unbeliever to instruct his child in the Sunday School.

The original design of the Sunday School was to teach poor children, whose parents were not able to send them to regular schools, to read and write. After a short time the Bible was read to the children, and little by little the original

design of Sunday Schools disappeared until not a shadow of it remains. To-day, children are taught a lie in Sunday Schools: they are taught that God wants to save them if they will only let him; if they will be good God will love and bless them here and take them to heaven when they die. Does not this teaching fill the mind of the child with the idea or belief that God is subject to him in the salvation of his soul? What could be a greater falsehood?

No harm can be done by us in reading the Bible to our children, and in talking to them of God and his power to save, but to send or allow them to attend Sunday School is inconsistent. Why should we be willing for our children to go where we ourselves would not go? It is sometimes said, The Lord is able to keep our children and to bring them out even should they unite with other denominations. None of us doubt the power of God, but this should not make us indifferent concerning the welfare of our children; the Lord is just as able to take our children from the gambling den or the saloon as he is to separate them from the Sunday School, but we do not want them to frequent such places. The idea to let them go and if the Lord wants to manifest them as his he will do so, if not all our carefulness amounts to nothing, is more fatalism than predestination. Sunday Schools, where a lie is taught, and where God is dishonored, and where his people are ridiculed, is no place for our children, hence let us keep them away from such places; if we cannot teach them the truth let us see to it that they are not taught false doctrine. The children of the Israelites were not permitted to mingle with the nations round about or to worship their idols; why should the children of spiritual Israel be allowed to do so?

The text at the head of this writing is the stronghold of those who believe in Sunday Schools, but it has no bearing whatever upon that subject; the apostle is admonishing children to obey their "parents in the Lord;" he tells them it is right to do so. These parents in the Lord are fathers and mothers in Israel, hence it is right for the children to obey and honor them; it is the commandment of God that they may live (spiritually) long upon the earth; if they disobey and dishonor them they die to their confidence and fellowship.

How well we all remember when we were little children in the church, and how at that time we honored and obeyed those older in grace and experience, how we recognized their superior judgment in all things pertaining to the christian life and order of the house of God. The fathers are not to provoke the children to wrath, this is not the way to bring up children either in our homes or in the church. All are children when they unite with the church, though they may be well stricken with years, and all need to be kindly and affectionately dealt with by the fathers and mothers in the Lord; those who were once children are now qualified, through the training of others, to bring up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; it is in this way that the order of the house is maintained. Solomon said, "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Surely this cannot refer to natural children, for many of them do depart from the moral training of good and faithful parents. Solomon and Paul are in perfect accord upon this subject; it is the child in the church to which Solomon refers. If he is brought up in the way he should go, he will not depart from it; to be instruct-

ed in doctrine and in the order of the house is "the way." When he becomes a man, instead of departing he is qualified to instruct others who are young in experience, hence those who were babes become fathers and mothers in Israel.

Let us "be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners," but let us beware of antichrist in all its forms. We know well that it is not in the power of natural men to teach spiritual things, if so, some of us would have known them much sooner than we did. The Scriptures belong to the man of God, that he may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. In the New Testament we find no example or authority for Sunday Schools, therefore whatever is unwarranted by the word of God we may be sure is false, being only the notion of men.

May the Lord deliver us and our children from the snares of the devil.

K.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

The last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906, &c.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Wm. Grafton, March 31st, 1906, at the Harford meeting-house, Belle Grafton, daughter of Elder Wm. Grafton, to Howard Durham.

By Elder F. A. Chick, Tuesday evening, April 24th, 1906, at the bride's residence, Wilmington, Del., Enoch Craig Densten and Miss Mary Rachel Martin, both of Newcastle Co., Del.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Died—April 22nd, 1906, **Mrs. Ann King,** widow of Peter King, at the home of her son, in Brooklyn, N. Y., aged 78 years, 6 months and 3 days. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Church, in New York city, by Elder S. H. Durand, Dec. 7th, 1879, and remained a faithful member to the end. One sister, three sons and two daughters survive to mourn their loss. Sister King was a lovable character, and her life testified in no uncertain way in praise of the glory of God's grace which bringeth salvation.

JOHN McCONNELL.

John E. Wilson was born in Kentucky January 13th, 1836, and died Dec. 16th, 1905. He leaves a widow and three children, two sons and one daughter, to mourn. Brother Wilson was taken sick a year ago last April, and I learn from dear sister Wilson's letter, he suffered greatly with what the doctor called ulceration of the bladder, but bore it with great patience, saying he was in the hands of a just and holy God, who had taken away the fear of death.

May the dear Lord give our sister and her children patience to bear them up under their great loss.

JAMES M. TRUE.

Kansas, Ill., May 2, 1906.

Mrs. Sarah McGregor, daughter of John and Luceria Fuller, was born in Roxbury, N. Y., July 15th, 1815, departed this life April 20th, 1906, at the age of 90 years, 9 months and 5 days. Our sister was married to Robert McGregor in 1857, and for the next nineteen years resided in Stamford township. Her husband died in May, 1868, and in the spring of 1876 she returned to Roxbury and has made that her home, with the exception of two and one-half years which she spent in Kingston with her great niece and her adopted daughter, Mrs. Wm. Green. In 1903 she returned to Roxbury, and her home from that time had been with the wife and daughter of the late Burnett Beebe Bouton, where she was kindly cared for in the decline of health which came with old age. Sister McGregor united with the Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury in the summer of 1843, was bap-

tized by Elder Isaac Hewitt, and was a faithful member of that church; she had not been able to attend the meetings of late on account of ill health, yet she never wavered from the truth; it can be said, she kept the faith, and finished her course, and we believe a crown of righteousness awaited her. For many years sister McGregor had been a subscriber to and a constant reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, was able to read a little in April 15th number. Reticent by nature, yet she was a firm believer in the doctrine of God our Savior. Sister McGregor leaves nephews and nieces, a sister, Mrs. Betsey Bouton, in her ninetieth year, and the church, to mourn their loss.

Her funeral service was held at her late home (Mrs. B. B. Bouton's). Burial was in the cemetery near the Second Church of Roxbury. The writer tried to comfort the friends from the words, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."—Rev. xiv. 13. By request, hymns Nos. 808 and 367 were read.

JOHN B. SLAUSON.

POETRY.

TRUST.

"I LONG for household voices gone,
For vanished smiles I long,
But God hath led my dear ones on,
And he can do no wrong.

I know not what the future hath
Of marvel or surprise,
Assured alone that life and death
His mercy underlies.

And if my heart and flesh are weak
To bear an untried pain,
The bruised reed he will not break,
But strengthen and sustain.

No offering of my own I have,
Nor works my faith to prove;
I can but give the gifts he gave,
And plead his love for love.

And so beside the silent sea
I wait the muffled oar;
No harm from him can come to me
On ocean or on shore.

I know not where his islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond his love and care."

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Ebenezer Church, of Baltimore city, Md., commencing on Wednesday, May 16th, 1906, and continuing three days. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, and it is the request of the church that those who come to the city on Tuesday p. m. go direct to the meeting-house (which will be open from 1 to 5 o'clock p. m.), where they will be met by the brethren, sisters and friends and taken to places of entertainment. Those coming via the Pennsylvania R. R. will get off at Union station and take any car going south on Charles St., and get off at Calvert and Madison Sts., and walk eastward half a square. Those coming via B. &. O. R. R. take St. Paul's St. cars in front of Camden station, and get off at same place. (Calvert and Madison Sts.) Those arriving on Wednesday a. m. will follow above directions and it will be no trouble to find the meeting-house.

By request of the church in conference assembled on Tuesday p. m., April 10th, 1906.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.
DOUGLAS L. TOPPING, Clerk.

THE Delaware Association is appointed to be held with the church in the city of Wilmington, Del., May 23rd, 24th and 25th, 1906. Those coming on the Pennsylvania R. R. on Wednesday take Delaware Ave. car and get off at Tenth and Market Sts., walk east one square and then north half square to meeting-house, which is on King St., between Tenth and Eleventh Sts. Those coming on B. & O. R. R. will take Delaware Ave. car going east and get off at the same place, Tenth and Market Sts. Any coming on Tuesday will please inquire for Mr. E. Shriner, 111 East Seventh St., where they will be taken care of. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, ministering brethren especially.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware River Association is appointed to meet with the church at Southampton, May 30th and 31st, and June 1st, 1906. Those coming via Lambertville and New Hope will be met at Ivyland on Tuesday afternoon. Others will be met at Southampton on Tuesday afternoon on train leaving Reading Terminal, Philadelphia, at 4:23 and at 9:43 Wednesday morning. All who desire to come are cordially invited. It is hoped that all the ministers of our correspondence who can do so will be with us. This is a cordial invitation to each one of them. We shall also welcome any other ministers of our faith and order who may wish to come.

SILAS H. DURAND, Pastor.
WM. HOBENSACK, Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, at Middletown, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 6th, 7th and 8th, 1906.

Erie R. R. trains leave Twenty-third St., N. Y., as follows: 7:25, 9:10, 10:25 a. m.; 12:55, 2:55, 3:53, 4:25, 5:22, 6:25 p. m. Get excursion tickets between New York and Middletown. All who can, use 2:55 p. m. train Tuesday before the meeting, arriving at 5:07. All p. m. trains will be met at James St. station. Those coming Wednesday morning will go direct to meeting-house, which is only a short distance from the depot. Afternoon trains from the west will be met at James St. Afternoon trains of O. & W. R. R. will be met at Wickham Ave. depot. Should any one come on morning trains Tuesday or be missed at depot, go to 21 Broad St.

We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of truth and righteousness to meet with us; we specially invite our ministers who preach salvation through the grace of God for time and eternity.

H. C. KER, Pastor.

G. A. EMORY, Clerk.

THE Siloam Association of Oregon and Washington will meet with this church, four miles north-west of North Yakima, in the Nathez Gap, June 15th, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue the two following days. We extend a cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth. Conveyances will be at the station at North Yakima, and all who contemplate coming by train will please write beforehand, stating when they will come. To those wishing to come by private conveyance, will say there are ample means for caring for teams.

SONORA A. HESS.

THE Lord willing, the yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held in the schoolhouse in the township of Brooke, Lambton Co., Ont., five miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1906, and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

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11:00 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 74. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1906. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WELLINGTON, Colo., March 23, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS AND KINDRED IN CHRIST:—Another year in the providence of God has been added to my pilgrimage life since I have troubled you with anything from my pen. It is not that you have been forgotten by me, but because of a feeling I have that I am unable to write anything either to comfort or instruct one of God's little ones, for I have not been reconciled to the conditions that have controlled my own mind during that time, so how could I be expected to comfort others with the same comfort wherewith I myself am comforted of God? I have been hedged in on every side, and have been as one of little profit, although I have fully realized that it has been only through the abounding mercy of God to the chief of sinners that my life has been spared and I am left as a monument of God's faithfulness, and not in any merit of myself am I enabled to raise here my Ebenezer, and say, Hitherto hath the Lord helped me. How well do I remember the many occasions I have had for gratitude to God in the past year for his faithful watchcare, in that no storm-cloud so dark has been allowed to pass over my unworthy head but lo he was there to direct me to the silvery lining underneath it all, and I have felt, as did Paul, to thank God and take courage. Although much of the time in my wanderings through this wilderness do I find the law of sin in me warring against the law of my mind and bringing this exile into captivity, so that I cannot do the things that I would; and had not he, whose promise is never to leave or forsake those who are dearer to him than the apple of his eye, fulfilled his word in me and been my Preserver and Protector, then my sins would have swallowed me up and I never should have been able to realize that it is for the trial of our faith that we have been made to drink of the bitter waters, that we may the more appreciate the sweet, refreshing places like Elim, where there are twelve wells of water and threescore and ten palm trees, where we may quench our thirst and have our hope revived and remember all the way the Lord has led us. He who first disclosed to us the bitterness of the inbred sin of our natural life, has also caused us to hope that it was the blessed Master who had come and

spoken unto us, else we had not known sin, for all our springs are in him, and "the preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue is of the Lord," and his people shall be willing in the day of his power; they shall all be taught of him, for he speaks as never man spake, and his people hear and understand the joyful sound of salvation by grace alone through the merits of God's dear Son; and why do they understand? Because through faith in him they become faithful witnesses of the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself, and of the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power in us, and it is through him they have obtained an inheritance which shall not fade away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God, being confident of this one thing, that he who hath begun the good work in us will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ, or until Christ be formed in us the hope of glory, through the merits of God's dear, suffering and triumphant Son. This is the doctrine so ably advocated and widely proclaimed by both editors and writers for the columns of the dear old SIGNS, which often gives me a desire to speak through the same medium with those of like precious faith, for the language they speak betrays to me that they have been with Jesus and learned of him; that they are my companions in tribulation and partakers of the sufferings of Christ. For more than twenty years it has seemed to be the will of God that this should be the only way open for me to commune with the faithful and tried ones, which I have endeavored to do as often as I have dared to do so, with such ability as God has been pleased to give me. I have had great cause for thankfulness that the editors of the SIGNS have felt willing to overlook the imperfections and unprofitableness manifested in my writings, and I do feel thankful to the God of all mercies for the gift given unto me, though it be small, that through the medium of my pen I have been enabled to set forth the truth, as I have been given to understand it, in such a manner as to be acceptable to the brethren editors, so I can say, what has been given me in darkness has been spoken from the housetop. Could they but know with what timidity and misgivings I have taken my pen in times past, while I have endeavored to determine satisfactorily the question in my mind as to my legitimate right to claim a part, or lot, or memorial, with the living in Jerusalem, builded together with them on the same foundation, who through faith receive the inheritance. But O, I am such a sluggard, so crippled and lame, and can never make straight paths for my feet, and at the best am but a withered, lifeless plant, a cumberer of the ground, and a usurper of the rights of those to whom belongs the children's bread, and we know it is not meet to take the children's bread and give it to dogs, though I do crave one crumb of that living bread which came down from heaven, accompanied with the assurance that it was the Father's good pleasure to give it me. Jesus said, I am that bread which if a man eat he shall never die. Evermore, Lord, give us that bread; and I do ask of God that I may ever manifest a spirit of meekness, and be kept humbled at the feet of our God and my brethren at all times. My experience of grace, if I have any, has taught me that they who would live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution, and O how often does my wearied, suffering mind

cause me to hope that if I suffer with him I shall also glory with him. There is no other promise given to the children of God while here on this earth than that it is through much tribulation they must follow their Lord; "but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." It is not promised that the road the children of God must travel shall be strewn with flowers, neither do they recline on downy beds of ease, although they are often wearied and worn with watching for the light of day to brighten the pathway, that they may see more clearly to walk in the strait and narrow way that leads to that blessed abode where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. In my desire that I may be a more humble follower of my Lord, has the prayer gone up from my heart that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, that I may be made conformable unto his death; and if my prayer be answered, according to my request, and I am made to drink from the same bitter cup as he drank, and to travel the same thorny road, in my astonishment I say, Not so, my Father, not so; the cross borne by the meek and lowly One is too heavy for me to bear, for I had thought the cross was easy and the burden light; nor do I always remember that in the cross there is a blessing, and in the blessing there is a cross. God often commands a blessing where, and in such a manner, as we least expect it; for God's ways are not as our ways, or his thoughts our thoughts, and we do know that every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights, and should be accepted with thanksgiving, and treasured up as coming from him who has all power in heaven and in earth, and withholdeth no good thing from those who walk uprightly.

I will now bring this part of my letter to a close, and hope I have not wearied any of the readers of the SIGNS with my rambling, disconnected thoughts. Please do not pass harsh judgment, for it is the best I can do, and I do hope it may find a responsive chord in the heart of some poor, wayfaring one, as they travel their lonely way. There are many of the readers of the SIGNS who are personally acquainted with me, and some who in other days were companions of my youth, who may feel interested to know how I am getting on. We have changed our residence from Fremont, Neb., to Wellington, Colo., and as this change has had much to do in controlling my life for the past year, perhaps it will not be amiss that I refer to it here as being a part of my experience, hoping thereby to acknowledge God's right and justice to do as seems best to himself with his creatures, for he created them for his own purpose, and for his own power and glory they are and were created, and it becomes the children of his grace to say, It is the Lord, let him do as seemeth him good; yet I do often find it difficult to yield my hard and impenitent heart a willing subject to the supreme mandate, and say, The will of the Lord be done. For many years have I been hoping that the light that was in me would grow brighter as I came nearer the end of my pilgrimage life, but instead of the light growing brighter I have felt that it grows dimmer, and each day I live reveals to me more of the hidden, secret sins of my heart, and I grow weary of my wanderings, am discouraged that I cannot see that I have grown in grace, and cannot do the things that I would, and have a greater assurance of my interest in the atoning blood

of him who died, and whose obedience to the divine will of the Father was for me, that I might be a living witness of this by manifesting my faith in him, and saying, I am thine, my Father, mould me to thy will. A thought has come into my mind that I have seen the words of Jesus to John verified in me: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not." When I first learned that it was anticipated for me to leave our pleasant home in Nebraska, where I had spent the pleasantest part of my life, I felt that I could not be reconciled to it, yet I knew the hand of God was in this, as well as in all else, directing it by his own wisdom, yet I could not be reconciled to a dispensation that would frustrate my own cherished ideas of spending the remaining days of my life in peaceful quietude in the home I had learned to cherish for memory's sake. Some of the family were pleased with the prospect of a change; I would try to smile and say, It is well enough for you who are young to be anxious for a change, and think it only a pleasure to battle with the vicissitudes of life, and see nothing but victory for you in the end, but I can assure you it is quite another thing for those who have passed the allotted time given to man, to be torn from their moorings and to go out as did Abraham, knowing not whither he went. Abraham went out trusting in God that he was able and would perform all he had promised, but the question in my mind was, Why does God require this of me? why? This seemed to be the question to settle in my mind, and gave me neither peace nor rest. After battling with this one question nearly all one night, as I arose in the morning these words came into my mind very softly, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." And as Peter said on one occasion, What was I that I should withstand God? This was the promise given to me, and in the strength of it I am still traveling on, trusting it is for the best, and I would be an ingrate indeed did I not appreciate all the kindness and thoughtfulness manifested in my behalf. As I review the incidents of the past year as they have transpired, I feel more firmly convinced that each link in the chain of events only more securely binds the testimony that all things work together for good, and that I am in the place and position designed for me. A new and an untried way stretches out before me, a veiled vista. How divinely and wisely ordered it is that we cannot look through the veil of the future and see what it has in store for us of its joys and sorrows; the present is ever with us, and is it not enough? More sometimes than we feel able to bear. And the past; does it not cause sorrow and anguish of heart as we recall to mind so many of the turned down leaves that mark the sad epochs of our past lives? Who would desire to live them over? And what shall we say of the future? The unrevealed things belong to God, and are treasured up in the mind of the great Architect of the universe, whose omniscience and eternal perfections are sufficient for him to judge wisely, in dispensing to each one a portion in due season, according to his own sovereign will. Just for to-day, my

Father, give me power to live to thee; to-morrow is not mine, the future is thine; prepare me, Lord, I pray, just for the duties I must meet to-day. And so it is, in the course of events I am found here in northwestern Colorado, at the foot of the Rocky Mountains, which only a few years ago was known to the world as the Great American Desert, where the buffalo, the antelope and the deer roamed at will, together with the wild and more to be dreaded Indians with their blood-thirsty propensities. Where only such as they dared to try to exist, we of to-day by coming here have seen this Scripture literally fulfilled, in that we see the desert to blossom as the rose. The whole plain, much farther than the eye can see, is dotted with farmhouses and cattle; and in their season the heart of the husbandman is made glad as he reaps the fruits of his labor. We can from our peaceful homes, where there is already a thriving village of nearly five hundred inhabitants, have a fine view of the vast mountain ranges as they rise in perpendicular grandeur, spread out like some huge panorama before our eyes, with their towering heights above the clouds, whose fleecy vapor seems like burnished silver woven in and out among the hills that appear to be bearing the huge monsters about on their silvery wings, floating in midair. With the sun rising upon this grandeur in the early morning and lighting them up, the scene is beyond the power of my pen to describe. Then far below these lofty peaks are deep canyons, and their pellucid waters flow onward from the snow-crowned summit to find their way into the immense reservoirs, where millions of dollars have been expended, from whence they are sent forth through ditches which seem like huge arms extended to dispense with bountiful hands the waters whose streams thereof make glad the hearts of a grateful people that dwell upon the plains beneath, in all their diversified order of existence. Surely we can say, There is no understanding the Mystery through whose mighty fiat these wonderful things have their existence. Who by searching can find out God?

I hope I have not occupied too much space. For some cause that I cannot explain, there seemed to be a strange feeling about me that prevented my finishing this; you will notice it is dated March 23rd. I have ever felt willing to leave anything from my pen to the judgment of the editors, and have felt that it was in safe hands, and I feel to do the same with this. The SIGNS comes regularly, and has been very welcome to me. There are no Baptists here. I have a library of very good books, which I prize much. The SIGNS has been good and comforting to me; none can write of too sorrowful a heart to be a companion for me to travel with in experience, especially those in whom I have such confidence that they are children of God, deeply experienced. May God give grace equal to their day, which has been promised to all by One who will never fail.

But I must close. When it is well with you, try to remember a lonely yet hopeful one, who claims an interest in the atoning blood that cleanses from all sin. This is all the hope I have, that I will meet my God in peace, when I am done with time and the things belonging to time; for in me there is no good thing.

Your most unworthy sister,

ABBIE CODDINGTON.

FRAGMENTS.

AM I afraid to "speak my mind" concerning any point of scriptural doctrine? Yes, certainly, I have often been afraid to assert as truth all that has passed through my mind, but not, I think, for fear of the opposition of men. I do not think I would be afraid to express in the presence of people anything which I was sure of as the truth of the Scriptures. But I have felt afraid that I might express something which the Scriptures would not sustain. I know how liable I am to be mistaken in my thoughts concerning the profound mysteries of the things of God, and therefore I often hesitate to present thoughts that have occurred to me, and conclusions I have arrived at in my meditations upon the Scriptures of truth, lest I might darken counsel by words without knowledge, and so confuse instead of helping the dear children of God. It is my desire and aim to have all my conclusions tried and proven, so that they shall be absolutely sustained by the Scriptures, and shall be commended to every spiritual man's conscience in the sight of God. (2 Cor. iv. 2.)

It is sometimes asked, Do you stand by and sustain such and such a brother in his position? I do not quite like that way of thinking or speaking, as though I or another were of importance in this respect as having some theory or position in our charge. I do not think my call is to sustain this or that man, or myself even, in any position. What portion of truth is given me to-day I wish to faithfully present in speaking or writing, as opportunity is offered, in the fear of the Lord. If any brother sees me in any error, and can show it to me, or if the Spirit shows me to-morrow that I have expressed an erroneous thought, I want to be ready always to acknowledge it, and withdraw from it, and I hope I have been glad to do so. For here we see and know only in part.

In the work of the ministry we are not to seek to conform to and sustain this or that one, as though he were a leader; nor, on the other hand, to be disregardful of those who are as fathers in the church, but each preach the word as given to him. In doing this the one Spirit will be manifest as teaching all, and there will be an agreement, or rather, a oneness, in all the preaching, while there will be a sweet and rich variety in matter and manner.

There is no man, since the apostles, who has been given charge over others in this matter, in the church of God; no one has been appointed a leader whom others are to follow, and to whose position and doctrine they are to be conformed. Each must look alone unto him who has been appointed the Leader and Commander of the people, and look to him for word and doctrine, and also for direction as to the work he is to do. One branch of the Vine cannot direct or control another branch, nor can one be held in higher esteem than another because of a greater amount of fruit that it may bear, or as though its fruit were of a superior quality. The Vine says to each branch, "From me is thy fruit found." When each servant of God has given his own testimony, telling what he himself has seen and heard and felt, then true comfort and instruction will be ministered to the saints, and true fellowship will be experienced with each other by witnesses and brethren, and it will be manifest that one Spirit has directed all the servants, and that all the heavenly testimony has

come from the one Witness, who is faithful and true.

"God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." In the heavens of eternal glory, where the saints shall be after they leave this mortal state, there will be no tears to wipe away. The time of tears is now, in this time state, in the flesh, in this world of sin and temptation and sorrow, and it is now, in this gospel dispensation, that they are wiped away by the dear Savior, who is in the midst of the throne, and who feeds those who have come out of great tribulation, and who are before his throne, and leads them to living fountains of water. (Rev. vii.) Weeping endures for the night. During the night of the legal dispensation those who feel the condemnation of the law have no release from sorrow; there is no wiping away of their tears. All their days are passed away in God's wrath. (Psalms xc. 9.) However great their strength may be, it is "labor and sorrow," never labor and joy, because their works are vain, and cannot satisfy the law. "But joy cometh in the morning" of the gospel dispensation, when the Lord's work appears to his servants; then are the tears wiped away. Sorrow comes again when we feel our sinfulness, and the tears flow, but again and again they are wiped away. While we are in this mortal state of existence there will always be cause enough in ourselves for tears on account of our transgressions, and of our corrupt nature. Only in the continual revelation of Christ to our souls as our sin-bearer and our righteousness can we find abiding joy and comfort. Whenever in our affliction and grief we are enabled by faith to realize his presence, to experience the power of his word of grace and to feel his love in our poor hearts, then sorrow is gone as we appear before the throne, and thus he ministers consolation and wipes away our tears.

How is it that one who has led a good and innocent life in the sight of men should, when made alive spiritually, feel as much trouble and sorrow on account of a sinful heart as one who has been guilty of outbreaking sins? We know that naturally there is a great difference of feeling between one of a delicate taste and a refined disposition, and one who is of a coarse and depraved habit of mind, so that what the one would shrink from with disgust and abhorrence, the other would not dislike at all. But we know that only divine life in the soul can cause one to see sinfulness within himself, and to hate and loathe it. It is the sinfulness more than the sin which fills him with self-abhorrence. By the Holy Spirit of God the capability of wickedness in our fallen nature is made known to us, and under this experience the one who has led a moral life abhors himself, and sees no one more vile than he. So Benjamin, with whom Joseph's divining cup was found, was made in that wonderful transaction to appear as having stolen the cup, and therefore the greatest sinner among them. Yet all of them were viler than he, having committed a terrible crime in which he had no part. When the divining cup of our spiritual Joseph is found with any one, then he feels in his own heart all the sin of the one man by whose "disobedience many were made sinners."

It was not in the hope of getting out of the lion's den, nor after he had been taken out, that Daniel had his greatest joy and comfort, but in the presence of the Lord while he was there, and in the

knowledge that the angel of the Lord had shut the lions' mouths. It was not in the prospect of getting out of the fiery furnace, nor after they had come out, that the three Hebrew children experienced the chief blessing of their lives, but it was in the presence of the Son of God with them in the furnace, and that faith in him which was given them in such measure that by it they quenched the violence of the fire, so that the flames could not kindle upon them.

It is in the tribulation that we are enabled most sensibly to rejoice, for there is our dear Savior most clearly manifest to our souls. It is while bearing about his dying in our body that his life is manifest in our mortal flesh. It is in the fellowship of his sufferings that we know the fellowship of his joy. (2 Cor. iv.)

When those brethren who say that time salvation is conditional, and is left dependent upon the will of the creature, are speaking of their own daily exercises they talk as the rest of us do. They acknowledge their inability to live as they want to live, confess that their life is full of faults, mourn their hardness of heart, acknowledge that they transgress daily in thought and word and deed, and complain of their darkness of mind and coldness in regard to spiritual things. No child of God would think of saying to one whose soul is cast down within him, If you would live better and be more obedient you would not be so cast down and so full of doubts and fears. We have heard from the world that "one can have all the religion he will live for," and that they can win God's favor and be blest by being obedient whenever they wish to, or they can lose that favor by being disobedient. But we do not look for that kind of talk from exercised souls who are sick of sin, and sick of themselves on account of sin, and who have to acknowledge, "When I would do good, evil is present with me," and to cry, "O wretched man that I am!"

When one is truly exhorted to turn from error in walk or doctrine it is not merely that he may "feel better," but that he may honor God. A hunger after righteousness and a hatred of sin are the most powerful motives that can be thought of to influence the actions; infinitely more powerful than hope of reward or fear of punishment. The apostle when exhorting his brethren presented to them as a good motive their remembrance of the consolation in Christ, the comfort of love, the fellowship of the Spirit and the bowels and mercies, which they had experienced. (Phil. ii. 1.) What could there be more likely to move them? Yet we urge others, and ourselves, to do what we think is right, whether it will make us "feel better" or not. Obedience to the Lord's will worked in our hearts by him, and worked out in our lives, may be followed not only by persecution and worldly loss, but by darkness of mind. That ought to make no difference. The obedience of the dear Savior brought agony and death upon him, and we are followers of him even in this. But though we have affliction in the world, in him we shall have peace. We shall, in the exercise of true faith, be enabled to say with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

Did you, in the innermost recesses of your soul, ever come to the Lord with the plea for his favor that you had done some obedient work for which you expected that reward? What Jesus has done is our only plea, and never what we have done. But how thankful we are when we have been enabled to walk in

obedience to the Lord. In the keeping of his judgments is great reward. "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." Daily we learn that we must have grace in order to serve God with reverence and godly fear, and whenever we have done any gospel work we thankfully say, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

"THOU hast magnified thy word above all thy name."—Psalms cxxxviii. 2. The name of the Lord includes all his essential power, wisdom, might, majesty and glory. His word expresses, puts forth, brings into manifestation, all of those glorious attributes and perfections that belong to him, and which are enfolded in his unspeakable name. Jesus is the Word of God; he is declared to be "the power of God, and the wisdom of God."—1 Cor. i. 24. In the name of the Lord was eternally all the power and wisdom necessary to create the heavens and the earth, and to command "the light to shine out of darkness." The Word of the Lord manifested and made known that power and wisdom, causing that incomprehensible work to be done. Thus his word was magnified above all his name in the natural creation. So also in salvation. The Word which was in the beginning with God, and was God, "was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

Here we have that eternal life which was in the Word, and which was the light of men. We cannot look to any other source for light. This Word is the Fountain of light, as it is the Fountain of life. The inspired Scriptures of truth are put forth by the Word. They are the record of the Word. We find in them, and only there, "the form of sound words;" we cannot reason upon spiritual things outside of that written word, nor against it. Upon every point of doctrine and order we are told to "Hold fast the form of sound words" which we have heard of the apostle Paul and other inspired writers. If the Scriptures tell us that "The worlds were framed by the word of God; so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear," we are not at liberty to say that such could not be the case, because something cannot be made out of nothing. We are to take the inspired words and hold them fast against all the opposition of the wisdom of this world, and faith does so take and hold them.

Concerning the work of creation, the work of salvation, the final state of the wicked, the resurrection of the dead, and all the other mighty mysteries presented in the Scriptures, which declare the works of the Lord, how insistently we keep trying to explain how the Lord does his wonderful works, and to fill up what the Scriptures seem to lack in explaining the "how," and the "wherefore." But our efforts are always vain, and our minds are baffled and turned back at every point, failing to understand the wonderful works of God, even when we feel their blessed power; for, "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

How pleasant and restful it is for us, poor and ignorant as we are, to be given an implicit and confiding trust in the Lord, as we read the written word, that we may receive it, not as the word of man, but as it is indeed, the word of God, (1 Thess. ii. 13,) and to trust that the Lord will in his own time and way open its precious meaning to our understandings, and apply it with power to our

souls. How good it is when we contemplate the glorious but inscrutable mystery of the resurrection, which will ever remain a mystery until it is experienced, to feel the solemn assurance of faith that this same poor sinner who sorrows and suffers and hopes and dies here, will in the resurrection be pure and incorruptible in heaven, satisfied with the likeness of Jesus, and eternally filled with joy.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 29, 1906.

AVONDALE, Ala., March 4, 1906.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I have read your editorial in the SIGNS for March 1st, on the subject of instrumental music in Old Baptist churches, and I wish to let you know that I heartily indorse every word you have said on the subject. The recent introduction of organs in the churches, together with other new and popular methods of worship, along with new theories of doctrine, is causing intense excitement and trouble among the Baptists everywhere, and it does seem to me that every true minister of Christ ought to "cry aloud, and spare not;" to lift up his voice like a trumpet, and "shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." I have been warning our people in my feeble way of these things for the past four or five years, and strange to say, just three weeks ago today I dwelt at length upon these things, in the church at Ephesus, in Chambers County, Alabama, and used some of the same words and some of the same Scriptures you have used in your editorial. We need nothing in our churches to attract the poor and afflicted and penitent children of God but the pure, unadulterated gospel of Christ, together with the love of Christ and of our brethren manifested in all our dealings and intercourse with each other; where there is no love there is no evidence of the grace of God. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; love covers a multitude of sins; it is stronger than death. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself; on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

One editor of a Primitive Baptist paper recently said in defense of the organ, that it is a mistake to claim that singing is a part of the worship of God. What will they say next? If singing is not a part of the worship of God, let us abolish it altogether, for nothing should be engaged in in the house of God except that which is at least a part of the worship of God.

I could say more along this line, but I feel like writing upon the subject of the resurrection, which I will ask you to publish in the SIGNS.

I will say in the outset that the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead was (like many other things) not clearly revealed under the Old Testament dispensation, but it was left for Christ and the apostles to promulgate the doctrine in all its fullness, but there is no doubt but that the doctrine was believed even under the law dispensation, for Martha said at the grave of Lazarus, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day," and there were Sadducees who denied the resurrection. This shows that the doctrine was then taught and believed, and that it was a part of the gospel of salvation. Christ said Moses was shown the resurrection of the dead at the burning bush, so I conclude that the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is as old as the gospel itself; in fact, without the resurrection of the dead there is no gospel, and no salvation. The apostle Paul

devotes the entire fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians to the subject of the resurrection of Christ and of the bodies of believers, and here he says, "But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Now in these declarations of the apostle it is fully shown that the resurrection of Christ assures the resurrection of his people, and if one be true the other is; if one be not true, the other is not; both stand or fall together. There were some in Paul's day that asked, "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" Paul asked the question one time, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" Again, "Of the hope of the resurrection of the dead I am called in question." The Jews allowed (or admitted) that there should be "a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." I have quoted all these Scriptures to show that the resurrection of the dead has been an acknowledged fact at least since the beginning of the gospel dispensation. But there were some even in Paul's day that denied the resurrection, "saying that the resurrection is past already," and overthrew the faith of some. This, together with what Paul and others say, shows that the resurrection is not past, but is still in the future. It is said in Romans that we which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, "groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." "Because the creature itself shall also be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Again, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his [Christ's] glorious body." It does seem to me that a careful reading of the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians will convince any unbiased mind that all that is there said about the resurrection is to take place in the future, and refers to the raising up or resurrection of the dead bodies of the saints. Here the death of a saint is compared to sleep, "fallen asleep in Christ," and so he says, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, * * * then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" If the body is not resurrected, where is there any victory over the grave? We know that the bodies of even the saints lie in their graves and return to mother earth. I would as soon undertake to limit God in his purposes as to limit him in his power to raise the dead; besides I take no comfort in the idea of no resurrection of the body. Of course "it is sown a natural body," but thank God, the same "it" is raised, but "raised a spiritual body," and that is what I am hoping for. "But hope that

is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." I fully believe in a future resurrection, but it will never take place till the last trump shall sound. I do not believe that the resurrection is simultaneous with the death of every person; this is simply a denial of the resurrection, and would rob me of all hope for the future.

I might add in conclusion that a future resurrection has always been the doctrine of the Old Baptists. Elder Gilbert Beebe was one of its ablest advocates during his lifetime.

I hope what I have written has been in the fear of God, and with sacred reverence for his word, and with the view of impressing this comforting yet mysterious truth upon the minds of my fellow-travelers to a better and heavenly country, even those "who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven." Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before his throne, be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, world without end. Amen.

H. J. REDD.

HIGHLAND PARK, DES MOINES, Iowa, April 1, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS AND KINDRED IN CHRIST:—It may be of interest to some of the dear children of God who are scattered abroad to hear from one who feels himself less than the very least of the household of faith, if one at all. I feel that it would be useless to spend time and space in telling any of God's dear children of my weakness and inability to write the dealings of the great God and Savior with me, a poor, helpless sinner; but it must suffice me to say, as did old Jacob to Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are seventy-six years, and evil have the days of the years of my life been. Yet the Lord has never forsaken me, and physically I am well preserved for a man of my years; I read and write without glasses. I could perhaps fill many columns in writing out a long story of my early life, and of the dealings of God with me, but I think it better and of more interest to readers in all cases not to make a narrative too long, so in as few words as possible I will try to tell you what I hope the dear Lord has done for me.

My mother was born in Kentucky, and claimed to be a descendant of the Huguenots, of South Carolina. My father was a Virginian, and claimed his father was with George Washington during the Revolutionary war. They were married in Wilson County, Ky., about 1816, moved to Washington County, Ind., about 1820, and from thence to Carrol County, Ind., in the fall of 1829, where I first saw the light of day, April 8th, 1830. I claim to be the first white child born in Jackson, in that county. At about that time others moved into the settlement from Ohio. The Indians were all around us, and I have as vivid a recollection of seeing them as though it were but yesterday; a large village of them was but twelve miles from our cabin, but the government moved them away in 1836. Several new comers were Old School Baptists, among them were William Hance and wife, Elder John Shanks and wife, Levi Cline and wife, who were my father and mother. They organized a church and called it Paint Creek, and from that day to this, now over seventy years, the members have

met together on Saturday before the first Sunday in each month, and now in a large, fine meeting-house.

At about ten years of age I began to have a desire to live a christian life. By this time a few Methodist neighbors had settled about us, and had organized a class and held their meetings at their cabins. Soon a cabin of round logs was built for a schoolhouse, where both the Baptists and Methodists held their services. Before this public worship and schools were held in the cabins of the families; there were no free schools in that day. My desire to lead a better life was soon gratified, as I soon learned from my Methodist friends that the Old School Baptists had been teaching me falsehoods, and that we could get religion at any time we wanted it, so from time to time I set about it, but as I came to be nearly sixteen years of age I was much impressed for about six months. I had joined the church on six months trial, but they let me off a little before the time was out. One of my young friends had slighted me, as I thought, and so I fell from grace, as they called it, and left them for good, (perhaps their good.) At this juncture the old proverb was fulfilled in me: "The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire;" and many a scene of frolic and fun I was the leader of in the next few years.

My father died when I was about six years of age, and my mother had the care of a large family of children. She was a close and severe disciplinarian, and gave us many talks on good moral character, which I know came from a good heart; but still I thought her religion was very bad, and came from a deceived heart. Time went on, and mother was married to a man who was a Baptist, and at last I concluded to leave the farm and go to the village and make my own living. At the age of twenty-one I was married, and we settled in a village called Camden. Soon the responsibilities of good citizenship began to press upon my mind, and I thought we ought to join the church. We talked it over, and concluded to get religion again. It was not long until I thought I had religion again, and we joined the Cumberland Presbyterians, and were sprinkled. A great revival followed, and many others united, and the members seemed to be wonderfully elated; they thought that they had broken into the Old Baptists, and they put me forward at once as leader of the young men's prayer meeting, which emboldened me to exhortation in public. Things went on smoothly for a year; they said I was able in prayer, and I was foolish enough to believe them. At length we were to have a protracted meeting; Friday night before it was to begin on Saturday, was the time of our prayer meeting; I, of course, being leader, opened the service. I had that afternoon arranged a fine collection of words as a prayer, and memorized the form. I was at work when as lightning falls from heaven I was struck blind and dumb, and a voice that was audible said to me, You miserable hypocrite, how dare you even hope for life? This was the substance of the words that came to me. I, for the first time in my life, saw myself a lost, helpless sinner; and it seemed that there was no hope for me. I could but just sit down on the block, where I was working, weak and feeble. My shopmates came to me, having heard me groaning, two of them being in the shop saw that I was very weak, and started to lead me to the house, but I soon rallied and walked to the house and went to bed. My wife

wanted to send for the doctor, but I knew the doctor could not help me. The big prayer that I had been arranging was never made public, but I would have given all the world, if I had had it, if I could have uttered a prayer; my tongue seemed fastened to the roof of my mouth, I could not pray. I could move about, but was not able to work for three months. I was a mourner, but could not have gone to meeting for all the money in town. I became reduced in flesh, so that I was but a skeleton. At the same time I noticed that my wife was grieving, and attributed it to my condition, which in part was true, but not altogether; for some time she also was in trouble similar to my own. At last the case became so desperate with me that I thought I could live but a few days. One night I was reading in the Scriptures and came to the place where Jesus was talking to Nicodemus about the spiritual birth; I sprang to my feet and went quickly out into the yard, I thought I should not live until I could get out. My wife followed after me in a minute, and called after me, but before she called I was lying flat upon my face on the ground, but I could not pray. I thought of the publican, and cried out, "God be merciful to me a sinner." In a moment my tongue seemed to be loosed, and I wept and cried until my wife called to me again, and then I went to the house in ecstacy of joy, with many tears. I told her that I had found him of whom Moses in the law did write, Jesus. We fell upon each other's necks and wept like children. Strange as it may seem, that night before retiring I was enabled to kneel down by the bed and utter a short prayer. We hardly slept that night. But the strangest story remains to be told: we both concluded that the people which we before had hated we now loved, and the ones that we had loved we now had no liking for. About July 1st, 1852, we both went out in the country to the Old School Baptist Church and offered ourselves, and were received for baptism, and were buried with Christ in the watery grave. You can well judge of the surprise in our old church in town. I had no accusations to make against them, I loved them as good people, but their doctrine I had come to hate as soon as the light came to me, and now no power on earth could have kept me from leaving them.

I desire to tell you of my call to the ministry after a little time. I will now close. May God be with you all till we meet, if it be his will, in the better world.

JOHN CLINE.

CEMENT CITY, Mich., Jan. 16, 1906.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—If one so sinful may claim so dear a kinship. I have thought that I would try to write a little of my experience in the school of Christ, if so be that I have been taught of him. He has told us by one of the apostles who are the infallible witnesses of the living God, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." This is also said, Let him ask in faith, believing that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him. It is in the name of Jesus that we are to ask, not of the preacher, but of God; and this believing is the work of the Spirit of God.

I have it in mind to speak of some things written in the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, not the revelation of "St. John the divine," as men who are under the guidance of the beast may say, who opens his mouth in blas-

phemy through his ministers to blaspheme the name of the living God and his church and his truth. The very first verse of Revelation contradicts the heading that is in my Bible, and John himself would have turned with horror from such a usurpation of the title of the Master.

But to the point upon which I wish to write, it is found in Revelation xvi., under the pouring out of the sixth vial of the wrath of God. Commencing at the thirteenth verse he says, "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." This covers all false religion of every hue and stamp, whether under the name of Roman Catholic, Greek Church, or any semireligious, secret institution of men, with Mohammedanism, and all false churches, to the number of six hundred and sixty and six; which means the full development of the man of sin, the son of perdition, spoken of by Paul in the second chapter of second Thessalonians, and this is now being made manifest by the doctrines of men and devils, prefigured by the three frog-like spirits, and is just as filthy if dealt out from a Primitive Baptist desk as it is from a Salvation Army, Methodist, Mormon or any other desk. We look for something better from the Primitive Baptist stands and papers; but no marvel if these things are heard from Primitive sources, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light, and his ministers are transformed as ministers of righteousness, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. This is that spirit of antichrist which began to work in the apostles' day under the name of christian, introducing false christs.

I do not like the doctrine that we must carry Jesus, for he must carry us; we cannot carry the Spirit, for he must go before us. Satan's ministers must carry their gods, with the false spirits and doctrines of devils, to gather their hosts to battle against the truth. But what do the Scriptures say by way of warning? Verse 15: "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." This, I believe, is to hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering. Who shall see his shame? The subjects of the three unclean spirits. Our garments cannot be kept clean by mingling with the frogs in their filthy services in the cesspool of filthy and blasphemous doctrines. We are given the Scriptures as a thorough furnisher, so that we can watch the practices of the three unclean spirits, whether in the form of a secret order, or a church of Satan under the guise of christianity. Anything that would try to limit the power of the true God or his wisdom is of the devil, who would destroy the true church, which is the pillar and ground of the truth, and would if possible dethrone the God of heaven and earth himself. But the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church, neither by secret machinery, nor by false christianity. Satan is entitled to his own and will get them, and our God will have his own; they are firmly grasped in his right hand, and the wicked are as firmly placed on the left hand of his power. Things are a surprise to us, but not to him, for he has determined them. These evil things are as a sieve to sift the church. The doctrine of God our Savior is no sickly senti-

mentalism, but a living principle; the doctrines of men are nothing but sickly trash. The church of the living God is thoroughly furnished by the Master in doctrine, in reproof, in correction and in instruction in what is right, without any additions by man. So it is written, "If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Jesus, the King of saints, reigns in righteousness and his princes (the apostles) rule in judgment, and the book of Revelation sets forth the works of the man of sin in all his different organized forms of religion, and all these are embraced in the great whore, and the first and second beasts, the one rising up out of the sea, and the other out of the earth, the number of whose name is six hundred and sixty and six. This means that many different sects; and they are still summing up the number, and the beast is still opening his mouth in blasphemy. This book of Revelation reveals to enlightened eyes the mystery of Babylon, and these are some of the Scriptures which make wise unto salvation, as the apostle said to Timothy. Peter said of them, "Even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." But God's people should be satisfied with the provisions of his house, and not wonder after the beast.

This has been written from considering what one of your correspondents, brother Hardy, wrote concerning secret orders, which I believe to be included in the six hundred and sixty and six, the number of the beast. You may publish this if you see proper.

Yours in the love of the truth,

DAVID TITMUS.

[WE wish to add a thought or two here. Are secret orders religious bodies? If so, they are not religious after a christian sense, for they expressly, all of them, reject the name of Christ, and without Christ there is no christianity. And if they are not religious at all, why do they all have a religious ritual in the secret meetings, and on funeral occasions, and other public services? Are they benevolent societies? Why then do they expressly exclude those who most need help, and why demand from poor members as much in the way of dues as of the rich, and why confer as much benefit upon the rich as upon the poor in their need? If they are religious they are antichrist, because they will have nothing to do with him in their religious exercises. To reject Christ surely is to be opposed to Christ, and what is this but to be antichrist? We think brother Titmus and brother Hardy are both right in this matter.—C.]

MANORKILL, N. Y., March 3, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—Through the abounding goodness of the Lord I am spared and have had the pleasure of reading the SIGNS, and have taken solid comfort in it. The editorials and the communications and the experiences in general have filled my soul with delight. They testify of the goodness of the Lord in various ways, but all declare salvation to be of the Lord. The SIGNS has not lost ground at all, but proclaims the same unadulterated word: Christ, the truth and the life. How cheering to know that he sees us when we see him not, and he always hears our cry. Only a few days ago

my soul was full of trouble, and the strain on a weak mind seemed overwhelming, the billows rose mountain high, and no way of escape appeared; the foundation of my health seemed to be destroyed, and, like Elisha's servant, I could see no way of escape; like Israel at the sea, it was before me, and the mountains on either hand, and the enemy behind, yet I could not stand still; but ere I was aware the light appeared, my soul was filled with praise, and I was trying to tell the wonders of redeeming love with words too wonderful for a mortal like me to utter. I was surprised at myself, and felt like asking, Are not these Galileans, speaking the wonderful works of God?

"My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this,
And sit and sing herself away
To everlasting bliss."

At such transports of joy the darkness recedes, and the Sun of righteousness arises with healing in his wings. "Corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids."

"'Twas a heaven below,
The Redeemer to know,
And the angels could do nothing more
Than to fall at his feet,
And the story repeat,
And the Savior of sinners adore."

But we read, "The evening and the morning were the first day." How this opening day falls on our eyes like the opening bud, which after a little unfolds such a beautiful flower that we are overcome with delight, and our souls are ravished at the perfume of love and beauty. Let us bask in its various unfoldings. When it first appears it has a dismal appearance, with no form or comeliness that we should desire it, but still it takes such fast hold upon us, uninteresting as it appears, that we cannot put it off. It may be that we lose sight of it for a time, and then we go about the streets and inquire, "Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?" We wonder and are amazed that we are so wrought upon by this bud of promise, still as yet we cannot tell why it is so, and we try to hide ourselves as we journey along, but still it follows us, and we at last come to inquire of some one about the way, or to ask, Why am I thus? Perhaps we are told, "The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will inquire, inquire ye." As yet we do not comprehend the beauty inclosed in this bud of promise. The night may follow the evening, and the darkness is such that it can be felt, it is the time of Jacob's trouble; but soon again we see the rays of the Sun of righteousness with healing in his wings, the bud has burst forth from the shell, its beauty is wonderful and its perfume fills all around us with its fragrance, our hearts are filled with the love of Jesus, and the night recedes, and the morning appears. We are filled with such delight at finding him whom our soul loves that we want all to enjoy the fragrance with us, and it seems to us that we can tell it to every one, but ere long we find that but few understand what we say, and these few delight us so that we want to live and die with them, for they, too, have found him whom our souls love.

March 8th.—I send love in the Lord. I am in doubt whether it will be for the glory of God, or to my credit, to write what is in my mind, but the thought has come that you will bear with my weakness.

How good it would be if all your subscribers would send on their subscriptions which are due, and pay in advance for the coming year. God has enabled me to do this for the past fifty years, and it grieves me to think that any one could neglect

you so shamefully. I am on the decline, and soon shall bid adieu to you all. I am seventy-four this month. I have carried injuries for sixty years, and at times the burden has been very heavy. I cannot see how this can be for my good, but God knoweth. Forty-two years ago I cast in my lot with this people, and soon the warfare commenced, which I learn is the heritage of them that love God. But at times I have been so weak that I thought a more solemn duty was imposed upon me; it came on this wise: I was in the field planting potatoes, and the words came, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Then again the words came, "Thou shalt not see a fierce people; a people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive; of a stammering tongue, that thou canst not understand." Then again, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers." And, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people." All this so stirred me that I felt the Lord wanted me to stand upon the walls of Zion. Other passages came, too numerous to mention, and I wrote down many, to see if I could learn what they meant concerning me. At times I concluded they did mean that I should be a mouthpiece for God. I also felt impressed to read the Scriptures, and pray in my family, which I endeavored to do. At night I would be so exhausted that I would nearly fall asleep, and I felt that this was an offense against God, and that he held me in derision, so I gave up the evening prayer, but have continued to read a chapter as some word given me would lead to it, and the most of the time it has been a solemn comfort. At times such words as these have come: "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." And, "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye." I have feared that these came as a reproof; it was so this morning as I read, "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost." A few times I thought there was given me a word to speak, but most of the time there has been nothing special, and when I look at the evidence or the qualifications there is nothing at my hand; so of late I have rested assured that it is no more than a trial of my faith. I feel that I have been highly favored of the Lord that I have not made trouble for his people.

I have taken much comfort of late in reading the SIGNS and the Bible. What a treasure to a poor sinner to meditate upon the beauties of God's word, which he has been pleased to show unto his loved ones. While thus meditating my soul has been so overwhelmed with the love of Jesus that I could say,

> "Where he has gone I fain would be;
> This land is not the land for me."

I very much doubt whether this can interest you, but you will know if such travel is common to the brethren generally.

Yours in hope,

D. S. ELLIOTT.

VEGA, N. Y., April 7, 1906.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—This letter leaves us all well; good health is the greatest among temporal blessings bestowed upon us poor mortals. The hope in the mercy of the Son of God is beyond every earthly blessing; but where is the evidence of my hope? It is so small at times I hardly know whether I have a hope or not, yet there is something that holds me up through darkness and doubts. We read in Revelation x. of that mighty angel that came "down from

heaven, clothed with a cloud; and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire." Was not this the child Jesus clothed with the veil of flesh? No one knew this child to be other than the son of Joseph and Mary except those to whom he was revealed; and from his birth in Bethlehem until he was taken up out of the sight of the apostles was he known only as a man by those who had not eyes to see and ears to hear. That cloud hid from the vision of natural eye the very God, as well as very man, the Prince of peace and King of kings. It was in the wisdom of God to so clothe him in a mantle of flesh, or cloud, that no one should behold him as the Son of God with power; that which is mortal cannot behold that which is immortal; the natural eye cannot behold that which is the hidden man of the heart. So I hope that this mighty angel dwells in this poor heart of mine, clothed with a cloud, and will still appear in the cloud until this earthly house be dissolved, then shall I be in the likeness of this mighty angel, no longer clothed with a cloud, but in the glorified state of Jesus, delivered from death by the glory of the Father. The rainbow, is not this the token of the covenant between the Father and Son which is ordered in all things and sure? The rainbow was to be the token of the covenant between the Lord and Noah, and with this mighty angel is the same token found as was seen in the type. The rainbow is not seen except in the cloud, so does Jesus always appear in the cloud, driving darkness away and causing the glory of his presence to appear in our poor hearts, and when darkness, doubts and fears are dispersed, or when the storm is over, then we see the token of the covenant between the Father and Son and feel to praise God with all our heart, mind and strength; then we hear the mighty angel proclaiming time shall be no longer, the end of the law has come to us, and the time of Jewish offerings and sin-offerings, new moons and old moons, is no longer, but Jesus is all and in all.

I will close, hoping that you may come among us this summer.

Your brother, I hope,

JOHN B. SLAUSON.

QUITMAN, Texas, Dec. 25, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Inclosed find two dollars, for which please continue the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to my address. I desire to take the SIGNS as long as I live, or as long as the Lord shall prosper me so that I may be able to pay for it. From all the acquaintance that I have with the paper I believe it sets forth in general such things as I believe to be the truth. The last number was of much comfort to me, coming as it did at a time when I was much cast down because of my sinful and barren condition. This number was indeed laden with sweet messages and glad tidings which seemed to be suited to me, although all unworthy I am. I am glad to note that it contends for salvation by grace, and grace alone, in time as well as in eternity, for what is man but a corrupt being, prone to evil? Were it not for the life of Christ made manifest in his flesh, he would never be mindful of God or of his goodness to men. If my salvation be dependent upon ever so simple a thing, and I comply with that requirement, it places our God under special obligation to me; but such is not and cannot be the case, seeing that he reigns supreme above all his creation, and that to his own glory, according to his purpose which he pur-

posed in himself before the world was, or any man had being. Our God is not as other gods whom other nations serve. When they want their god moved, they must move him, and they have to set him up, if he sits at all. But their gods are made to fall when in the presence of our God's power, for he is a jealous God, and him shall his people serve.

I did not intend to weary you with a long letter, but only wanted to let you know that down here in Texas there is one (and also others) who rejoices in the doctrine of salvation by the Lord, if not deceived.

Yours in love,

S. C. DAVENPORT.

SEBASTOPOL, R. F. D. No. 2, Sonoma Co., Cal., April 21, 1906.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—We have had one of the most terrible earthquakes ever known in the United States. In forty seconds buildings were laid flat, and the dead cannot be numbered yet; destruction is everywhere. This was such a wicked land I think God in his wrath destroyed it. We are thankful the dear Lord has spared us, but we feel that we have been warned to leave this land of destruction. We cannot get a day's work, the banks are burned, and no money for any one. We are a family of eleven, and are trusting in the Lord for help and guidance. Do you think there are brethren that could help us to go where we could get work and be near our church? We do not want to be burdensome to our brethren, but we are in a strait to know what to do. We are here with no money, and the help that will be sent to the burnt towns will not reach the country people that are in the same condition. The poor and rich are all alike; perhaps you see it in the daily papers. We cannot get any papers here; it cannot be described by pen. Will you ask the brethren who are able, if they will help us get away where some of our brethren are, where we can get work? Will some of the brethren and sisters write to us? We have thought of going to Oregon, as it is the nearest, but hope the Lord will direct us in the way he would have us go.

In great tribulation, your brother and sister, I hope, in Christ Jesus our Lord,

MR. AND MRS. S. J. GAINER.

HOPKINS, Mo., March 20, 1906.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I received the hymn books the 9th inst., and am well pleased with them; I also receive the SIGNS OF THE TIMES regularly, and am well pleased with the paper. I was a subscriber and an active agent for about fifty years, but have not taken it since till now. And now to the many correspondents of the SIGNS I can say, I am well pleased with your writings. I am old Elder R. M. Simmons, formerly of Spoon River Association, of Illinois, but since 1875 a member of the Western Corresponding Association of north-western Missouri; I am eighty-six years old; was ordained November, 1861, and have been actively engaged in the ministry ever since. My field of labor has been, and is now, in Missouri, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska and Illinois, and I am still able to go forth in the discharge of my duty. The church here holds two sessions each month. I baptized one member on the third Sunday in December, 1905; by the mercy of God I was able to go down into the water in the name of my Master. I have many friends who will be glad to hear I am still alive and well, and able to fill the place to which I hope the Lord has called me. With love to all the brethren and sisters, I remain affectionately,

R. M. SIMMONS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1906.

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DISCIPLINE.

ALTHOUGH this word is used but once in the Bible, (Job xxxvi. 10,) yet the word from which it is translated in the Hebrew of the Old Testament, *massar*, is also, in very many places, translated "chastisement," and very many times the word "instruction" is used. In the general sense of the English word "discipline" are included these two other words "chastisement" and "instruction." In the New Testament the words "chastisement" and "instruction," or "chastise" and "instruct," are also frequently used, and the meaning of the word discipline is also involved in these words. The word "chastisement" in both the New and the Old Testaments is used with regard to the dealings of the Lord with the children of men in almost all cases, and the word "instruction" is so used in very many cases. Discipline, then, in the real meaning of the word, relates to the dealings of the Lord, and not to what men may do one to another; that is, it is so used when we read of it in the Scriptures; but, like almost all other words, it is in common use with regard to the every day affairs of men. Parents discipline their children, teachers their scholars, commanders in the armies and navies of the world discipline their soldiers and sailors, and rulers those who are ruled; and in its use among men it includes the thought of instruction and of chastisement also. The word also includes the thought of reproof, warning, rebuke, exhortation, and, in short, all that goes to make up the training of children by parents or instructors. So in the Scriptures whenever we read of the rebukes, warnings, reproofs, chastisements and instructions of the Lord, we are reading of that discipline by which the Lord fashions his people and conforms them to his likeness in all holy conversation and godliness. So that it is true that while the word is used but once in the Bible, and not at all in the New Testament, yet every page wherein the commandments of the Lord are set forth is filled with that which belongs to discipline. More than this, from the Scriptures we also learn that all the providential and gracious dealings of the Lord in the lives and hearts of his people as they travel in this lower road, are but parts of that discipline to which he subjects his dear children for their growth in knowledge and grace and in the fear of the Lord. Temporal losses, disappointments, crosses, afflictions, burdens, sicknesses, and also inward temptations, darkness, doubtings, fearings, hopings, with all the sorrow and loneliness of those who must, like David, cry out, "Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" These, and tens of thousands of other things, all go to make up that needful discipline which is so hard to bear, and which only faith can sustain us under. But over and in all these things the strong hand of the Lord is to be found, and sometimes he makes bare his arm, and we believe and know that all is well, and that "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more ex-

ceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

One of the most blessed things belonging to this discipline is the truth that it is of the Lord. It is the Father's hand which holds the rod, and in his hand we know that all is well. One of old said, "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it." The Lord hath taken away as well as it is certain that he hath given. Living faith saith, "What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" How good it is that all this needful discipline of life is in our Father's hand and not in the hand of any man; our earthly fathers verily chastise us after their own pleasure, but he for our good. He knows just what we need, and he chastises not in anger, but rather in highest mercy. His chastisements instruct us, and in the end we are benefited thereby. The wisest and the most loving of earthly friends often make mistakes in their dealings with their fellow-men, but he makes no mistake. No wonder that David said, Let me fall into the hand of the Lord, and not into the hands of men. Let him choose all my trials for me, and let the discipline of life be all his.

But we had in view to say something about what is commonly called "church discipline." While the word is not used in the New Testament with regard to that order which belongs to the church of Christ on earth, and while it is not for ministers or members of the churches to chastise or to instruct in any sense in which the people of God are all taught by him, yet there is much said with regard to the manner in which his children shall conduct themselves toward each other, and much is said about the way in which offenses, or weaknesses, or stumblings among the brethren are to be dealt with. God has placed his people together in companies here for mutual benefit and mutual helping of each other. The word takes account, among other things, of wrong doing, either through ignorance or in wilfulness, and gives full directions as to how brethren are to feel toward each other, and as to what manner of behavior they are to show toward each other at such times as any do go astray, and this we have a desire to now speak of if we may.

Sometimes we have thought that the word discipline has been used among our brethren in a way that sounds harsh and repelling; that is, it has sometimes sounded to us as though the thought in it was something which would seek to compel others, and as though in some sense lordship was implied toward offenders. When any such sound as this is in the use of the word it is not according to the Scriptures. Even the Elders, who are the under-shepherds of the flock, are not to be lords over God's heritage. Paul emphatically said to his brethren that neither he nor any other man had dominion over their faith, but were only helpers of their joy. It is not for the churches or the brethren to seek to chastise, or to claim superiority over the very weakest or smallest of the disciples of the Lord; one fellow-servant must not beat another fellow-servant, or to seek dominion over him; all alike, from the least to the greatest, are but servants of the one Master. In the supreme sense of the word, discipline is in the hand of God only. Yet we do not mean to be understood as objecting to the use of the word discipline when rightly used; perhaps no other word would so well pre-

sent that obligation which is upon the churches of Christ to keep house well, under the direction of their Master; and he has left full directions in his word as to how we shall all behave ourselves in his house, which is the church. What then is the one object of all that he has commanded, with regard to our relations as members of the churches with each other? Briefly it all may be summed up in this one thing, viz: to save each other. It is never the object of that order which we call discipline, to cut off or to destroy one soul for whom Christ died; it all, from beginning to end, is to save, and his directions, when followed, do always have saving power in them. If this is not seen at once, it will be in the end. There is salvation in that which he has commanded his church for the diseased member, and for the whole body as well. So in Matthew xviii. we read from the Savior's own lips that every effort is to be made to gain that brother who has offended, and it is only after it fully appears that there is no spirit in him to hear the church of God that he is to be as an heathen man and publican among us; that is, when it is seen that the member of the body is dead, then, and then only, is he to be cut off; and this is for the salvation of the whole body. So Paul also gave direction that one offender should be delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of Christ. Manifestly this did not mean that this literal body might perish in natural death, but that which was fleshly in him might be crucified, that he himself might in the end be saved from the flesh, and unto the church of God. Then when Paul said, "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear," it is plain that he was seeking the good of the whole body. Such rebukes would fall upon the ears and hearts of others, and there would be a salt in them for others which would preserve them from doing the same things. We all need just such reminders all the time from the word of God.

All these things belong to what is called the discipline of the church, and let us also note well that they are mandatory. They are not directions which we may disregard if we think best, but commandments from the blessed Master, which leave us no discretion as to whether to abide by them or not. If our brother trespass against us, as is dealt with in Matthew xviii., the word is, Go to him alone. Not if you think best, but whether you think best or not, go; it is best to go, though you may not think so. When the church was told to deliver one to Satan that he might learn not to blaspheme, there was no such word as you may do so, but you must do so. When it is said, "Them that sin rebuke before all," it is an equally positive commandment. But the commandment is not arbitrary; that is, it is not without reason; it is not the commandment of a tyrant who seeks the good of no one but himself, but it is the commandment of God our Father in heaven; it is not for revenge, or to cause the offender to suffer, but for healing and restoring, if indeed the member of the body be not hopelessly gangrened and dead. All these directions are the voice of love. God loves his church and therefore he has sought her good in every way. We are sure that all our brethren feel and know that this is true. God is love, and all his commandments are the expressions of love; he is the Father of the family, and they all are named of him in heaven and in earth. It is not only disobedience to him when we neglect these, or any of his ordinances, but it is to the harm of all

his people of his church; it not only shows that the love of God is very dim within us, but it shows that we have but little love to our brother when we neglect the directions of our Father laid down in the word. If he has told us how to deal with an erring brother, then such dealing is for the glory of God and the good of that brother, and our good also. It is good for the whole body that the sickness of one member be healed; it is bad for the whole body if but one member of it be sick. Do we love each other? Do we love God? Then let us do as love directs: try to restore our brother. "He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." That is, he shall put away from that brother manifold transgressions which would follow if he were not thus converted. Suppose that in a family circle a child shows tendencies to wrong courses, what is the result of love toward that child? Is it not to try to save him by instruction, and by chastisement if that be needful? If indeed the parent loves the child as he ought to love his children this will be his effort, even though there be great pain in it to himself. If a brother sees another brother going in ways that can only result in evil, and love reigns in his heart toward his brother, will he not expostulate, and entreat, and warn again and again, to save him from the precipice toward which he is tending? It was the voice of Cain, the murderer, who said, "Am I my brother's keeper?" It is the solemn conviction of love that we are our brother's keeper in the sense of striving to save him from death. How can a church answer her King when he shall say, Have ye tried to save my erring ones? How can any one of us answer when it shall be asked in our consciences, Hast thou striven to convert the sinner from the error of his way? Is there any one whom we have not faithfully striven to convert from that error? Our brother has not sinned against us, he has sinned against God, and against him only; our displeasure is but a small matter, but "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

We know full well how hard it is for one who himself feels imperfect in thought, word and deed, and that he comes far short of that which is commanded him of God, to go to another and seek to point out to him his sin, but because we are lame, shall we therefore let our lame brother slip and fall? True, we all are daily going astray, and daily we must have restraining grace or we shall sin that sin which is unto death; but who is best prepared to seek out others that are erring? Is it the pharisee, who thanks God that he is not as other men are, or is it the poor publican, or is it that man who looking upon the publican feels that he is not fit even to be the companion of such as he? Is it Peter when he said, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee," who is prepared to save the erring and denying ones? or is it Peter who has sinned, and at one look from his Lord has gone out and wept bitterly who is best prepared to seek and to save his brother from error and death? It must not be forgotten either, that all this must be done with a remembrance that the Lord alone can bless the seed that is sown, and produce a harvest to his praise and glory. It is sure that he will and does bless his servants when they are found in the way, and it is true that when any man feels most his own weakness and errors, then, and then only, is he prepared to seek out others who are wandering. "When I am

weak then am I strong," said the apostle. It is sure that no one has come further from abiding by all that has been presented here than has the writer. O that we might all heed this word of the Lord more abundantly! Not self-praise, but the praise of the Lord is in it. Let all be done to his glory, is the prayer of all who love him, we feel well assured.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

JAMES V. 13.

"Is any among you afflicted? let him pray."

The spiritual tribes of the Lord, to whom this epistle was written, have the assurance that in the world they shall have tribulation, and be subject to afflictions, for God's people have always been characterized as a poor and an afflicted people, who trust in the Lord. Yet there are seasons when they are enabled to mount up with wings as eagles, and to rise above their pressing sorrows, when they are permitted to drink of the streams of that river which makes glad the city of our God—when they drink, and, for a season at least, do forget their poverty and remember their misery no more. The tide of their sufferings and of their rejoicings ebbs or flows as they endure the absence of sensible manifestations of the divine presence of their Lord, or are permitted to sit under his shadow with great delight, as his smiles create their purest joys, and when his smiles are withdrawn nothing can supply to them the lack. That this is, and always has been the case with the children of God in all ages past, the Scriptures fully testify; and that the same must be our lot while here below we have no reason to doubt; nor have we any just cause to desire that it should be otherwise, for although no affliction for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous, yet afterwards it works the peaceable fruits of righteousness in them who are exercised thereby. And we are assured by divine revelation that our light afflictions, which are for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not on the things that are seen, but on the things that are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. We are, therefore, gainers ultimately, and even at the present they afford us reliable evidence that God dealeth with us as with children. But still, such is our weakness, we soon would faint under the weight and pressure of our afflictions if we were not sustained by the strong hand of our covenant God. Our impatient nature is prone to seek for sympathy in our afflictions from those around us who are subject to like passions, and it is soothing to our feelings to know that we have kind friends who can feel for our woes, and offer words of consolation and comfort; but still we are not to rely on human, or even on christian sympathy, alone. Our great dependence is, and should be, on Him who is able to bear us up, and to sanctify all our tribulation to our good and his glory; therefore we have the direction embraced in the text, at the head of this article: "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray." This is the peculiar privilege of the saints, of all who mourn in Zion, of any among you; and what a cheering consideration it is that we may come boldly to the throne of grace with our supplications, our prayers, our groanings, our tears, our burdens and complaints, with this warrant or order from the Lord, bidding us to bring them there, and leave them there, for we are

instructed to cast all our cares on him, for he careth for us. As a good Shepherd careth for his flock, and as a father pitieth his own son that serveth him, so the Lord careth for his own elect who cry unto him day and night.

A feeling sense of our extreme poverty should not deter us, for although we have nothing in our hand to bring to our God as an offering, it is his throne of grace that we approach, and the poorer we feel the greater is the necessity of calling on him. If we were not poor, why should we ask for favors? The throne of grace is not accessible to the rich. The rich our God sends empty away, but he filleth the poor with good things. Nor should our darkness and doubtings deter us from approaching the mercy-seat, for our God assures us that they who fear him, though they walk in darkness and have no light, still it is said, "Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." The mercy-seat is open and accessible to the saints, as well when involved in clouds and darkness, as when their skies are bright and clear; for God to them is a Refuge in distress and a very present help in trouble. He is not God afar off, but always at hand. He may be out of our sight, but his saints can never be obscured from his view. His ear is never heavy or dull that he cannot hear their crying. Hence the instruction, "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray."

But what is prayer? It must be something more than a form of words, for when the saints pray they are forbidden to use vain repetitions, as the hypocrites do. Nor are we to indulge the thought that we are to be heard for our much speaking. Prayer does not consist in the position of the body, nor any form of words, though they be ever so sound or orthodox. God is a Spirit, and they who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. Without faith it is impossible to please God, and none but the spiritual, those who are born of the Spirit, possess that faith which is so indispensable to please God, for Paul says it is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; it is a fruit of the Spirit, and it is the faith of the Son of God. Jesus Christ is himself both the Author and Finisher of it. Every one that is born of the Spirit does possess this principle of faith at all times, but it is not at all times sensibly felt by them, it being a purely spiritual principle in them; it is opposed by the flesh, and when the flesh predominates, when we walk after the flesh, that faith in us is obscured by clouds of doubt and unbelief which rise from the flesh, which is always at war with the Spirit. Then we grope along in the dark until we are delivered from the captivity of sin, which is in our members. Still that faith of the Son of God in us cannot die, for it is of God, and overcomes the world.

That faith which is born of God, according to 1 John v. 4, subsists on heavenly food, and will not rest long in us without its food from heaven. The saints cannot, therefore, remain long in darkness, or in captivity to the law of sin which is in our members, before there is a secret breathing desire for deliverance, a sighing after the liberty of the gospel, a groaning, being burdened, a crying out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" This struggling after light and spiritual enjoyment is the action of faith which must finally triumph over the flesh, and overcome the world. It is the prayer of faith that is fervent and effectual.

Christians, therefore, often pray fervently and effectually when there is no outward form or ceremony discoverable,

and perhaps pray most when they feel as though they cannot and do not pray at all. The Spirit of Christ, which is in them, maketh intercession according to the will of God, but it is often with groanings which we cannot clothe with words, for it cannot be uttered; but it is nevertheless prayer, and it is the prayer of faith, and it will assuredly be heard, and in due time answered. We may sometimes be sadly cheated by the deceitfulness of the flesh, and think we are praying fervently for certain things, when our desires are only those of the flesh, and not the groanings or breathings of the Spirit. Hence we ask and we receive not, because we ask amiss. It is a great mercy to us that our fleshly desires are not gratified, that the things which we ask for and which our carnal passions desire, are not granted, to be consumed on our fleshly lusts, which war against the Spirit, for they would only tend to strengthen the flesh, the more vigorously to maintain the warfare against the law of the Spirit of life. But the Spirit of life and immortality, which dwells in all who are born of the Spirit, searches all things, yea, the deep things of God, and knowing the mind of God, maketh intercession for us according to the will of God, and John says, "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."—1 John v. 14, 15. Those who are addressed by the apostle James in our text are all in possession of this Spirit, all being born of it, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, therefore he says, "Is any among you afflicted?" That is, if any one among the saints is afflicted, it is his peculiar and inestimable privilege to pray. None others have the ability to pray with the spirit and with the understanding, for they possess neither, and in their absence all their prayers are but the vain expressions of the prompting of the carnal mind, which cannot please God.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous, and they are not only many, but various, but their afflictions rise not out of the ground, neither do they come by chance, for God hath, for wise and gracious purposes, chosen them in a furnace of affliction, because he knoweth that it is good for them to be afflicted, it seems to humble them, to teach them their dependence on God, and to make them remember the throne of grace. Having nowhere else to look for succor and support, and deeply sensible of their pressing necessities, they are constrained to enter into their closets, and to shut the door; their desire is unto the Lord, they desire seclusion from the world, and, if possible, from themselves, to enter the secret chambers, which are only known to the saints, and there—

> "Into the bosom of their God
> Pour out their long complaints."

"Let him pray." Our Father seeth in secret—he knows our feeble frame. He bows his ear and bids us come even unto his seat, to come boldly, notwithstanding our sense of vileness, of unworthiness; no frowning terror clothes his brow to fright the timid, trembling suppliant from his presence, but as a child coming to a loving parent, so the saints approach and draw nigh unto God by the new and living way, which he hath consecrated for them through the veil; that is, through the flesh of him who was made flesh and dwelt among us. None can come to the Father but by Christ, and none who come by him will ask God

to change the purpose or counsel of his own will for their gratification, but rather will they pray that they may be reconciled in all things to the righteous will of God; and while they pray from the fullness of their hearts that God may forgive their trespasses, as they forgive all who have trespassed against them, they know that unless they have that forgiving spirit in them which from the heart forgives those who trespass against them, neither will their heavenly Father forgive them their trespasses.

At this present time the saints are passing through a great fight of afflictions; we have fallen on exciting times; wars are raging in our land, our sons are called into the tented fields,

"Where blood and carnage
Clothe the ground in crimson,
Sounding with death groans."

Let all the afflicted saints then call mightily on the name of the Lord, as he affords us the spirit of grace and supplication, that he may support us under our present trials, and in his own good time and way restore peace and prosperity to our beloved country, and protect his dear children under the shadow of his wing, until the indignation be overpast.

Ye saints of the most high God, pray without ceasing, and in all things give thanks unto God. And may the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Oct. 1, 1862.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Nancy Strathers, W. Va., $3.00; Phebe J. Faulkner, N. Y., $1.00; Thomas W. Records, Mo., $1.00; Elder D. Bartley, Tenn., $4.00.—Total, $9.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—May 7th, 1906, **Mrs. Phoebe Ruhamah Ellis,** widow of the late John W. Ellis, Scotchtown, N. Y., at the home of her daughter, Mrs. P. B. Hartford, 501 W. 140th St., New York city. Sister Ellis was born Sept. 25th, 1827, and was therefore aged 78 years, 7 months and 6 days at time of decease. She was baptized some twenty-eight years ago, by Elder Benedict, in the fellowship of the Brookfield Church, at Slate Hill, N. Y., and continued a worthy member to the end. Four children survive her, two sons and two daughters, also one sister. She was a doer of the word. The Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelt in her, and that Spirit did quicken her mortal body, for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness that God is glorified in his saints, and that all his will is done in earth even as it is in heaven.

The funeral service was held at her late residence. The text of discourse was from 1 Cor. xv. 26.

J. McCONNELL.

NEW YORK, N. Y., May 15, 1906.

Calvin Howard was born in Chester township, Morrow Co., Ohio, November, 1824, and died at his home in Richwood, June 7th, 1905, aged 80 years, 6 months and 22 days. He was married to Ann Lloyd, Oct. 23rd, 1842, with whom he lived almost fifty years, when the beloved companion passed to the great beyond, twelve years ago. Mr. Howard united with the Chester Baptist Church, in Knox County, when seventeen years of age; in 1841 he moved his membership by letter to the Mt. Pisgah Baptist Church, in Morrow County, with which church he remained until his death. Being much afflicted in his last years, he was prevented from attending the meetings of the church of his choice; he greatly appreciated the visits of all ministers of the gospel, and his worn and much used Bible is a silent testimony of the many, many hours spent in spiritual communion with Christ. He was the father of seven children, five sons and two daughters, who with a host of other relatives and friends mourn his departure.

The funeral was held at the late home Saturday at 1 o'clock. Elders Mathews, T. P. James and A. A. Thomas, of Richwood, officiating.

His daughter, (MRS.) MAGGIE HARD.

RICHWOOD, Ohio, May 13, 1906.

DIED—At his residence, New Kingston, Delaware Co., N. Y., May, 1906, **Richard Miles Faulkner,** in his 78th year. In January, 1844, he had the misfortune to lose a portion of one of his limbs, which caused him to learn the shoemaker's trade, thereby earning a comfortable living for himself and family until stricken with paralysis, in January, 1905, which rendered him nearly helpless. He was married in Janu-

ary, 1850, to Oret Maria Dumund; to them were born three children, one son dying in infancy; two daughters survive him. Though not a professor, he was in possession of a good hope through grace, and we feel that he is at rest.

ALSO,

Oret Maria Faulkner, wife of the above, died October, 1905, aged 78 years. In March, 1900, she, too, was stricken with paralysis; thus husband and wife were almost helpless at one time for over a year, until taken away by death. Two daughters, Martha and Rosenas Faulkner, survive her, and tenderly cared for their parents during their illness. She united with the church at Middletown, Delaware Co., N. Y., many years ago; her trust was in Jesus, anchoring her hope in grace divine, exalting her God. She loved to meet with the church to hear the gospel of Christ, and we have greatly missed her from our meetings since her affliction. She had no fellowship for the fashionable societies of the day, but preferred to walk the two miles in order to meet with us. Hers was the last funeral at which our beloved and lamented pastor, Elder J. D. Hubbell, officiated. Thus one after another of our dear kindred in Christ are taken away, and we are left to mourn, but God who doeth all things well can heal our wounded hearts. PHEBE J. FAULKNER.

I HAVE been requested to write an obituary notice for the SIGNS, of our brother **D. D. Boyd,** and speak of what we hope the Lord has done for him.

He united with the Missionary Baptists, and tried to live up to the letter of the law for fifteen or sixteen years, and knew no other way. He was a faithful soldier, and always tried to live right. At that time he knew nothing of the Old School Baptists. In 1881 the Lord revealed himself to him, and his neighbors said he was becoming crazy. In 1885 some Primitive Baptists came and preached Christ Jesus, and the same year he united with them. He had to go about twenty miles to his meetings. Afterwards his first wife became a member also. She died in 1895, leaving him with several little children. Three or four years later he married a Mrs. Wright; she was identified with the Primitive Baptists when they were married. She is a good and faithful sister in the church, always contending for the faith once delivered to the saints.

Brother Boyd often spoke in public after he united with the church, but never lengthily. In 1890 the Pilgrim's Rest Church was organized in this country, and some ten or twelve have united since that time. Brother Boyd passed away Sept. 27th, 1905. He now lies in the Shady Grove cemetery by the side of his first wife. He leaves his wife, three little children, and brethren and friends to mourn their loss. He was well spoken of by them who are without, as well as those within the church. We do miss him so much, but hope he has gone where there is no more weeping or sorrow. O that it may be our lot to meet him in that world above, where all is love, joy, peace and pleasure. B. F. PARKER.

ROYAL, La., April 27, 1906.

OUR babe, **Alvin Turner Bond,** died Oct. 14th, 1905, was born Dec. 20th, 1904, and was nearly ten months old. He was a bright, sprightly child, and the pet of our family. At the time of his death we were temporarily located in Spencer County, Ky. On the 8th of October we visited our home in Anderson County, and all the pretty flowers we had left were still untouched by frost, but we knew it would be our last visit before they must fade, so his mother gathered all the nicest and made a pretty wreath to place (in the Lawrenceburg cemetery) on the grave of our little Christine, who died nearly four years before. All the way to the cemetery our babe played with these pretty flowers, and chattered over them more than was usual for him to do, until we felt that it was depriving him of much pleasure in leaving them on the little grave for which they were gathered. Wherever we passed any flowers on the remainder of our journey that day his attention was especially attracted by them, and he would reach for them and prattle to the delight of us all. He had been languid for several days from the effects of the whooping cough, and we thought from the unusual cheerfulness he was much better, and we were rejoiced because of it. We were mistaken in this, however, for six days later he was taken from us, the result of the same trouble, and one week after the pleasant journey just described we were traveling the same road, following the corpse of our babe, and when passing the place where the beautiful flowers stood, so attractive to our little one, we saw them blighted and faded by frost, and it seemed that the same frost had visited our home and taken the tenderest and best, and our affections and earthly hopes had felt the killing effects of that frost from the hand of a wise and merciful God. About the same time as on the week previous we were at the grave of our little Christine to inter beside it the body of our other precious babe, who in his infant purity and beauty was fittingly typified by the beautiful wreath we placed there on our last visit.

Brother D. G. Johnson offered prayer, after which the little body was laid to rest, freed from all pain, sorrow and trouble, with which we must all be burdened in this life, to await the resurrection, when all the redeemed family of God shall be united, in which we believe are included those called in infancy from this world of sin into the presence of their blessed Redeemer, to join in the song of grace in that world that shall never end.

As we reflect on the dispensations of Providence toward us, and realize that brother Johnson, who spoke in prayer so comfortingly on the said occasion, was also called home to his last resting-place soon

afterward, we feel that God's hand has rested heavily on us in taking this dear friend and brother from our midst. We bow in humble submission to what has pleased our God to send upon us, and try to say by faith, Thy will be done. C. W. BOND.

DIED—At the home of Mrs. F. L. Cox, Manassas, Va., where she had been on a brief visit, May 6th, 1906, **Mrs. Jane C. Hunton,** aged about 81 years and 6 months. Her husband, brother Thomas E. Hunton, died in 1882. Sister Hunton kept her home in Fauquier County till old age and failing health compelled her to leave it and make her home with her youngest daughter, Margaret, my wife. Under the pressure of disease and old age and severe trials in the last two years of her life, her naturally strong constitution became so undermined that an attack of stomach trouble, to which she had long been subject, soon closed the scene of her earthly pilgrimage after an illness of two or three days. Apparently she suffered but little. I see her now as she lay prepared for the grave, a lovely, beautiful expression upon her countenance, and I felt she was blest above all living. Knowing her as intimately as I have for the past thirty years, and being a member of her family for twenty-two of those years, loving her so dearly both as a mother and a sister in Christ, I feel I must restrain my pen, lest my readers might think I indulge in fulsome praise of a poor fellow-mortal. Mother Hunton was a noble character naturally; grace added its charms to and sanctified that character. I do not think that a more unselfish person lives, or one who more cheerfully sacrificed their own comfort for that of others. It can be truthfully said of her, none knew her but to love her. She was baptized many years ago by Elder Joseph L. Purington, in the fellowship of Broad Run Church. Many of her brethren in different parts of the country can testify to her unstinted hospitality. Her faithfulness to her Lord and Savior as it is always manifest in steadfastness to the truth, faithfulness to the church and its peace and order, was abundantly shown all her life in the church, especially in its closing years of great trial to her, and she proved that her love for her brethren and the house of God was not in word only and lip service, but in deed and in truth. Often in the recent past she expressed a great longing to be at rest, to go to her heavenly home. She sweetly and quietly fell asleep, and we must believe, "asleep in Jesus." We miss her sadly in our home, but grief is selfish, we must rejoice for her. She leaves three daughters: Mrs. Louise Cox, Miss Laura Hunton and sister Margaret C. Badger, and one son, Thomas Hunton, with numerous relatives, friends and brethren in other churches to mourn their loss.

Elder Eubanks ministered sweetly and comfortingly to us at the funeral from the words of Jesus, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., May 15, 1906.

POETRY.

(IN MEMORY OF CALVIN HOWARD.)

As the annual frosts are cropping
Leaves and tendrils from the trees,
So our friends are yearly dropping,
Through old age and dire disease.

Spring and summer, fall and winter,
Each in swift succession roll,
So our friends in death do enter,
Bringing sadness to each soul.

In hope of life eternal given,
Behold a pardoned sinner dies;
A chosen blood-bought heir of heaven
Called to his mansion in the skies.

He left the world and all its toys
For better, brighter worlds on high;
His faith embraced substantial joys,
Soaring beyond the starry skies.

We think we see him now at rest
In the bright mansion love ordained;
His head reclines on Jesus' breast,
No more by sin and sorrow pained.

Why should our eyes with sorrow flow,
Our bosoms heave the painful sigh?
When Jesus calls the saint must go,
'Tis his eternal gain to die.

Fearless he entered death's cold flood,
In peace of conscience closed his eyes;
His only trust was Jesus' blood,
In sure and certain hope to rise.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER W. A. Thompson has changed his address from Blackwell, Okla., to 1019 South Laurance Ave., Wichita, Kansas, where he will be glad to welcome any of his brethren.

Mrs. S. Elsworth having changed her address from Norton, Kansas, to Burlington, Colorado, would be glad to hear from any one getting their mail at the latter place.

MEETINGS.

THE Delaware River Association is appointed to meet with the church at Southampton, May 30th and 31st, and June 1st, 1906. Those coming via Lambertville and New Hope will be met at Ivyland on Tuesday afternoon. Others will be met at Southampton on Tuesday afternoon on train leaving Reading Terminal, Philadelphia, at 4:23 and at 9:43 Wednesday morning. All who desire to come are cordially invited. It is hoped that all the ministers of our correspondence who can do so will be with us. This is

a cordial invitation to each one of them. We shall also welcome any other ministers of our faith and order who may wish to come.

SILAS H. DURAND, Pastor.

WM. HOBENSACK, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Middleburg, N. Y., has appointed her yearly meeting to be held the first Saturday and Sunday in June, (2nd and 3rd) 1906. Ministers, brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

A. COOK, Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, at Middletown, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 6th, 7th and 8th, 1906.

Erie R. R. trains leave Twenty-third St., N. Y., as follows: 7:25, 9:10, 10:25 a. m.; 12:55, 2:55, 3:53, 4:25, 5:22, 6:25 p. m. Get excursion tickets between New York and Middletown. All who can, use 2:55 p. m. train Tuesday before the meeting, arriving at 5:07. All p. m. trains will be met at James St. station. Those coming Wednesday morning will go direct to meeting-house, which is only a short distance from the depot. Afternoon trains from the west will be met at James St. Afternoon trains of O. & W. R. R. will be met at Wickham Ave. depot. Should any one come on morning trains Tuesday or be missed at depot, go to 21 Broad St.

We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of truth and righteousness to meet with us; we specially invite our ministers who preach salvation through the grace of God for time and eternity.

H. C. KER, Pastor.

G. A. EMORY, Clerk.

THE Siloam Association of Oregon and Washington will meet with this church, four miles north-west of North Yakima, in the Nathez Gap, June 15th, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue the two following days. We extend a cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth. Conveyances will be at the station at North Yakima, and all who contemplate coming by train will please write beforehand, stating when they will come. To those wishing to come by private conveyance, will say there are ample means for caring for teams.

SONORA A. HESS.

THE Lord willing, the yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held in the schoolhouse in the township of Brooke, Lambton Co., Ont., five miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1906, and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 74. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1906. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, Feb. 6, 1906.

MRS. MABEL WEEKS—DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD:—I was glad to so soon get a few lines from you, as the theme of our correspondence has ever been the all-important one, the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ. And then, I trust, our interest in the things of Christ has not been concerning the bare theory of these things, but we have desired to know in all its divine preciousness the power of the revelation of Jesus Christ. As the years of our life pass along, we more and more come to the understanding of Paul's language: "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ."—Phil. iii. 7, 8. We are poor, sinful, so needy, we need the Savior in his all-sufficiency, and to us that believe, he is precious.

"In every office he sustains,
In every victory he gains,
In every counsel of his will,
He's precious to his people still."

Those words in Jude that you mentioned in your letter are very gracious, let me pen them: "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." As I look at these words I say, This is spiritual, heavenly employment: building, praying, looking. The saints to whom Jude was writing were compassed with adversities and plagued with false teachers who subverted the gospel of Christ, and in their vile doctrines turned "the grace of our God into lasciviousness." How necessary it was then that those who feared the Lord should hold fast that which they had received and heard of God, and earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. All the false teachers who have in any generation crept in unawares among the beloved of God will eventually find that their damnation slumbereth not, and they shall utterly perish in their own corruption. (2 Peter ii. 3–12.) It is no trifling matter that men untaught of God, "sensual, not having the Spirit," intrude themselves and their damnable errors among the saints

of God. If we are otherwise, if we have been drawn to sit at the feet of the Lord, (Deut. xxxiii. 3,) and have been taught of him, it is all of his sovereign kindness.

"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith." The sacred writer may well designate these the beloved. The evidence that they are such is that God hath delivered to them the truth of the gospel of Christ, and thus they are sanctified unto himself. (John xvii. 17–19.) Their most holy faith is the foundation on which they build. All the doctrines of men or devils will never become a sure support and foundation for poor, perishing sinners; but our most holy faith once delivered unto the saints embraces all the glorious revelation of the everlasting gospel. Here our feet stand, (1 Cor. xv. 1,) and here we may build up ourselves, our hopes and expectations, and find ourselves, through God's mercy, established and unmoved. The storms and winds may beat, trials and false doctrines may assail us; our most holy faith, the eternal, God-given truth, is our rock and everlasting strength, which not all the powers of darkness can ever undermine or overthrow. Happy are we to be found building up ourselves upon this foundation. "Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving." I find, my dear sister, that I look with all affection to our most holy faith, for here there is ground for encouragement for a mourning, sighing, helpless, vile sinner. In this faith our covenant God is known; he who hath loved his people with an everlasting love, who hath chosen his own in Christ Jesus, and hath so freely, most lovingly blessed them in him with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. Here we have revealed the redemption and forgiveness of sins by the shedding of the blood of God's own dear Son, Jesus, our dear One, our Savior, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. In our "most holy faith" all the attributes of the blessed God are comfortingly and gloriously revealed, his justice and grace, his mercy and truth, his loving-kindness and faithfulness, all in divine harmony they dwell in our most holy faith. Here may our desires root themselves. As poor, frail creatures, so sinful, unworthy, may we trust in, lean upon, cast ourselves upon our most holy faith and find there is a building up, that we are encouraged, that we are edified. Truly it is well that we are not moved away from the hope of the gospel, for other foundation can no man lay than is laid, that is, our precious Christ. Others may build up themselves in their vain conceits, in self-righteousness and fleshly, pleasing doctrines, but all such things will prove to be only quicksands, and the end can only be everlasting disaster, confusion and wrath. But our most holy faith, so sacred, so dear, so firm, so sustaining and comforting, abides to bear us up in holy confidence before the Lord our God. Then though troubles be our portion, and temptations assail us, though others depart from the truth and give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, if through God's grace we are found building up ourselves on our most holy faith, we shall find ourselves strong and well fortified to withstand all afflictions, and we shall be found to the praise and honor and glory of God.

"Praying in the Holy Ghost." Did not our Savior say that men ought always to pray and not to faint? (Luke xviii. 1.) One of the consoling thoughts

in the believer's heart is that the Lord heareth prayer. (Psalms lxv. 2.) He hears the cry of the humble and does not despise their prayer. The Holy Ghost is the inspirer of all true prayer, his divine operations move our hearts to look up to the mighty God for succor, and thus in our necessities we pour out our hearts before the Lord, who graciously inclines unto us and hears our cry. The Scriptures abound with encouragements to pray, and none who fear the name of the Lord shall ask in vain. (Isaiah xlv. 19.) God will avenge his own elect that cry unto him day and night. (Luke xviii. 7.) The answer to all our supplications he has already stored up for us, and in the set time to favor us he will bring us relief and shed upon us abundantly his tender mercies. He delighteth in mercy, therefore he says, "Before they call, I will answer: and while they are yet speaking, I will hear."—Isaiah lxv. 24.

"The christian's heart his prayer indites,
He speaks as prompted from within;
The Spirit his petition writes,
And Christ receives and gives it in.

'Tis prayer supports the soul that's weak,
Though thought be broken, language lame;
Pray, if thou canst or canst not speak,
But pray with faith in Jesus' name.

Depend on him, thou canst not fail,
Make all thy wants and wishes known;
Fear not, his merits must prevail,
Ask what thou wilt, it shall be done."

As I muse upon the words, "building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost," I feel my insufficiency to nourish myself in divine things, and I find longings within; my heart going forth that I may in very truth be grounded, nourished and built up upon the precious doctrine of Christ our Redeemer, for I know no other foundation than the faith of God's elect can encourage and build up a poor sinner. "Praying in the Holy Ghost." Yes, while we are building we are praying. I would that the Holy Ghost would teach me more and more my need, and open up to me the preciousness and glories of our most holy faith. O that he would animate my soul with fervent supplications that in all blessedness and comfort I may be strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in my heart by faith; that I, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that I might be filled with all the fullness of God. (Eph. iii. 16–19.) What a prayer for an unworthy, vile sinner to pray! I ponder over it, and though I know I am asking all, my humbled yet yearning heart says, I cannot ask for less, less than this will not suffice me. It is very agreeable to know that you and others are exercised with like precious longings, and as such aspirations do not arise from our depraved natures, but are wrought in us by the Spirit of God, these cries and sighs and yearnings declare us to be those found "praying in the Holy Ghost." So much we need divine help that we are instructed to be found "praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit."—Eph. vi. 18. The next words in these verses we are considering are, "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." "The love of God." Here let us retreat, this is the sanctuary of believers. That love is everlasting, and immutable, and so mighty a hold it has upon us that it will not let us go, and no power in earth or hell can sever us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. viii. 35–39.) Let us, the Holy Ghost en-

abling us, keep ourselves in this sacred sanctuary, in this mighty, unwavering, eternal love of God.

"In heavenly love abiding, no change my heart shall fear,
And safe in such confiding, for nothing changes here;
The storm may roar without me, my heart may low be laid,
But God is round about me, and can I be dismayed?"

O to believe the love of God, for God in his tender mercy speaketh most comfortingly to the poor and needy. He knows that we are weak and sinful, and that we are sometimes discouraged by our temptations, but he who in love and pity redeemed us will surely shelter us from every ill, and he will carry us in his embrace until the pilgrimage is done. Jesus, "having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." Let us therefore keep ourselves in the love of God, that is, that we be found not distrusting, not having mean thoughts of Jehovah's affection for poor sinners, but be found believing and knowing the love that he hath to us. (1 John iv. 16.)

"Keep yourselves in the love of God." This embraces that heavenly teaching of Christ, wherein he says, "He that hath my commandments, [written in his heart, Jer. xxxi. 33,] and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love." "Even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."—John xiv. 21; xv. 9, 10. I know that your heart, and mine also, hath much affection for the commandments of the Lord, and much we crave that enabling grace that we may ever be found walking as his obedient children, not fashioning ourselves according to the former lusts in our ignorance; but as he which hath called us is holy, so would we be holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy. (1 Peter i. 14–16.)

"Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." Mercy, this we constantly need, and our God is rich in mercy. Looking for mercy. This describes us.

"Without thy sweet mercy I could not live here,
Sin soon would reduce me to utter despair;
But through thy free goodness my spirits revive,
And he that first made me still keeps me alive."

"Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ." That mercy that flows through his atoning sacrifice and justifying obedience. Looking for mercy to be shed upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior. (Titus iii. 5, 6.) Looking for mercy, we shall not look in vain, our God will shew us his kindness, he will be merciful to our transgressions, our sins and iniquities he will remember no more. "Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." This is the crowning expectation of the believer in Christ Jesus: that mortality should be swallowed up of life. "Now he that hath wrought us for this selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit." We are now tasting it, for "this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."—John xvii. 3. Our poor earthly life, derived from Adam, is sinful, corruptible, abounding in miseries. O such a life, I would not live alway, I loathe it. (Job vii. 15, 16.) I should indeed be miserable. (1 Cor. xv. 19.) But the hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began, lifts up a poor, sin-plagued sinner to hopeful

blessedness and peace. Eternal life; this is to live in friendship with God and Christ Jesus, the Head of the church. Eternal life; this is freedom from all iniquity, all impurity, to be in spotless beauty, to be holy and without blame before God in love. This is to live in communion with the Lord, to reign in incorruption, immortality, glory and power with Christ Jesus our Lord. O to be like him, to see him as he is. (1 John iii. 2.) Then there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain. This is our destiny, the destiny of all the blood-bought saints of God, and even now how sweet it is to be tasting the earnest of our predestined inheritance to which God our Father hath predestinated us. (Eph. i. 11.) "Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." May the Lord give us eyes to be ever found so looking, and his name we will praise forever.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

"WRITE."

WHAT shall I write? Let me write whatsoever the Lord giveth me. It is as brother Gilbert said of faith: when the Israelites were at the end of their strength, and were at a loss to know what to do, Moses commanded them to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. What else could Moses do than to tell them to wait upon the Lord? The Lord had promised Moses that he would deliver his oppressed Israel out of the bondage in which they were held by the cruel Egyptians, and now when they had apparently come to the end of their road, and were just at the Red Sea, and mountains were on either hand, so that they could not go forward, or to the right hand or to the left, with the hosts of Pharaoh pursuing them to carry them back into their former bondage, how could they expect anything else than to be captured and returned into the bondage from which they were seeking to escape? What great dread they must have been in! But the Lord had promised Moses to set the Israelites free, and he had faith to believe it, therefore he could with confidence tell them to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord; he knew that what God had promised he was able to fulfill. Then when God commanded them to go forward, what else could they do but to arise and go through the Red Sea? As brother Gilbert said, they started onward by faith, not by sight. Had the sea been opened from side to side they could have gone on by sight; but they went forward at the command of God, and the sea opened before them, as they needed that it should do. So if the Lord has commanded me to write in his name he will guide my mind and pen, sentence by sentence, for the comfort of his little ones. But I need to be comforted myself, poor, old, deaf, lame sinner that I am. Paul said, "When I am weak, then am I strong." If there has ever been a time that I have felt to be weak, it is to-day. I am overwhelmed with the troubles of this world, but while cast down, I hope that I am not forsaken. God has promised that he will be with us to the end of the world. That promise means not only the time of the end of the world, but also the time when our end as individuals shall come, for that will be the end of the world for us. It is as when Jesus spoke about the dead hearing the voice of the Son of God, it is not only in the future that they shall hear, but also all the way along. It is a progressive work, and will progress until the last one of God's elect hears his voice and lives. Then, child of

God, while you remain on the boisterous sea of time fear no evil, for he has promised to be with you unto the end of the world, and you shall safely land on the shore of deliverance, and though the waves may roll high and rough they shall not hurt you, for God has promised to be with you alway. While this is the language of Christ to his disciples, to whom he gave the great commission, yet it will fully apply to each heir of promise, and he will be with each one to the end. I sometimes think that my little barque will sink, and then again I think, "How can I sink with such a prop as my eternal God?" How can I sink with his eternal hand underneath me and Jesus standing near to save me from all danger? We are just as certain to be landed upon the sweet shores of rest as though we were already there, for we have a never-failing Pilot guiding the ship, and the devil with all his host shall not be able to overthrow the old ship of Zion, because our God is at the helm. Sometimes we get low down in the slough of despond, and dark clouds enshroud us and there is not a ray of light, yet the Sun of righteousness again breaks through the clouds with refulgent glory, and darkness and storm must give way before his light and warmth. Then the children have a rich feast, and cry out to their fellow-pilgrims, "O taste and see that the Lord is good." The children of God do not wish to feast alone, but want their fellow-pilgrims to come and taste with them. The Lord is gracious and his love is like the rays of the sun, all the people of God share the light and power, and it is not in the least weakened, because it is like its Author, without bound. But the poor, tried pilgrim, like Mephibosheth, is lame on both feet, and his progress must be slow. But thanks be to God they eat at the King's table; they have no robes of their own to hide their shame, so they must be clothed by the King's bounty, and eat at the King's table. They are clothed with a seamless robe, which no man can wear until Jesus puts it on him. But these fast runners who get along so well, they neither want to eat at the King's table nor wear his robe, for they say, "We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." Their own apparel is their own righteousness, wrought out by their own labor in complying with conditions demanded of them, and their desire is that their reproach be taken away before men. They do not want that salvation that is all by grace, they want a salvation upon conditions, which shall be of right theirs when they have complied with the conditions; therefore they want to eat their own bread and be clothed with their own apparel. These are they of whom Paul said, "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." An intelligent lady once told me that Christ's righteousness was only for himself, and that each one of us must have a righteousness of our own; that the righteousness of Christ was only as an example to us. This is the true sentiment of all who do not want to wear the robe that was wrought out upon Calvary. God's people are so poor that they are not able to furnish themselves with clothing, and therefore they are glad of the imputed righteousness of Christ. As my dying wife said when I asked her if she felt that Jesus was her righteousness: "If Jesus is not my righteousness I have none." God's children are a thousand

times willing to have Jesus for all their righteousness, for it is sure that they have none of their own before God. Let "self-righteous souls on works rely, and boast their moral dignity," but when God's people count up all the cost, without free grace they know they are lost. These pilgrims are homeless, having no abiding place here, but they seek a city whose maker and builder is God. This city is the new Jerusalem. Of this city, Jerusalem, with its temple built by expert workmen, who knew each stone and timber and where each belonged, is a type. When this temple under Solomon was built, each stone was taken from the quarry, and every stone was fitted for the temple, so that when they came to erect the building there was to be heard no sound of axe, or hammer, or any iron tool. This city sought by the people of God is a building not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Each stone was quarried out of the quarry of nature. The great Builder goes to the quarry and prepares each stone, and he places each one in the building as it pleases him. Paul said, "Ye are the temple of God;" and God dwells in this temple. When Jesus prayed to his Father he "lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." At another time, after praying, "Father, glorify thy name," the Father answered, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." Then Jesus prayed that all his might be one with the Father and with himself. Then, dear child, you are one with God, and an heir of God, and a joint-heir with our Lord Jesus Christ; what is the Lord's is yours, and all things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. Why talk of being poor when all things are yours? Lift up your drooping heads, ye cast down children of God, for all gold is worthless compared to your wealth. You have an inheritance which is "incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." There is certainty in our salvation, "therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." There is nothing uncertain about this salvation, and everything pertaining to the everlasting happiness of the people of God is sure.

The heading of this article is "Write," and I have written, and I send it to the SIGNS for your consideration, and if there is anything for the people of God in it, it is at your disposal.

Dear brother Chick, your card to me, some time ago, was very encouraging. I am glad that you enjoyed the former letter I wrote you, and Elder Ker said the same thing. To know that such brethren as yourselves and Elder Bartley are benefited by things which are given me to write is an encouragement to me. Let us bless God there will be no deafness or affliction of any kind in our final home. Here we have some foretastes of the living water which waters the city of God to which we are traveling, and I sometimes feel in a hurry to reach that blessed abode. I cannot say that time is swiftly flying with me, like John Bunyan, I am in a prison; but God rules and does his will, and I desire to submit to his will.

May God bless the editors and publishers of the SIGNS, and all his Israel, is my prayer.

J. M. DULEY.

CAPRON, Oklahoma.

RIO, Ill., January, 1906.

LINES TO A FRIEND ON THE DEATH OF A HUSBAND, BROTHER AND FRIEND—TO THEM THAT MOURN:—Some one is in great sorrow. The Lord for a good purpose has led you in deep waters, flowing over you in great waves of affliction, amid groanings that cannot be uttered; in deep sorrow, weeping that the world, even they that know not God, may know the anguish of souls in the prison-house of clay; may see the sufferings of his followers, even as he suffered. "Jesus wept." Why did the Son of God weep, even with the sisters and friends of the dead Lazarus? Ah, why? His beloved followers while in the flesh must needs sorrow. "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." List! the Master says, "Lazarus sleepeth;" and this is heard from his disciples: "Lord, if he sleeps he shall do well." But the veil of the flesh was between them and immortality, and great was their sorrow, even in the presence of their Master, that their brother and friend was dead and in the grasp of dissolution; putrefaction was doing the work of "dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." This, the inevitable, is written in living words upon all flesh: Flesh cannot inherit the kingdom of ultimate glory, until sown in weakness and raised in power. Do we not hear the words of the mourners? "If thou [the Master] hadst been here, my brother had not died." And also, "Thy brother shall rise again," with the reply, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day," but the tomb now holds him in the silent embrace of death; he cannot hear our voices; we can never more in this life see him go forth in his pride in the full vigor of a well ripened manhood.

The one that now sleepeth the long sleep of death once walked with the loved ones now left to mourn; walked with them to the house of the Lord, where the knee bowed at the command of the Spirit, and the tongue confessed unto the Lord, where prayer was wont to be made, and reverence and adoration were tendered unto the Lord of hosts, to whom all power was given when he took up his life and was seen of his brethren, and above five hundred, before his ascension, having conquered death, hell and the grave; and he is Mediator and Advocate with the Father for the sins and iniquities of the flesh, the tabernacle of clay containing the treasure, that the excellency may be of God and not of us. This same Jesus is our Redeemer, who was glad that he was not there with his followers when their brother died, to the intent that his disciples might believe; thus teaching dull mortality that in him, and him alone, there is life in time and in eternity. "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" The first Adam in the garden of Eden believed in God when God called him, after he had fallen by disobedience. Back there is the first attempted hiding in the Lord's garden, when the world was new, ere the appearing of the Ancient of Days was made manifest in the flesh. This first Adam was only of the earth; had he been born of the Spirit he would have been an heir and have dwelt in God's spiritual kingdom. We read that he that is born of God doth not commit

sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and his belief is unto everlasting life. The offspring of the first Adam now is in sin and iniquity, and all his days he must go sorrowing, contending with thorns and thistles. Mortality sees through a glass darkly, so darkly it is hard to believe death is completely swallowed up in victory; hard to see that our brother, husband, kinsman and friend sleepeth in Jesus; hard to see that relatives and friends who have passed over into the land of rest (sleep) must come forth at the last trumpet call, when all the ransomed will come forth of every nation, kindred and tongue. The redeemed were his from the foundation of the world, given him by the Father, and being redeemed from all sin as he, the First-fruits, came forth, so will they come forth, none will be lost.

The redeemed shall come to Zion, the city of our God. Satan cannot touch their lives; they that believe this, whose allotted time in life is as yet but a little season, behold the victory by the eye of faith; they see mortality put on immortality, they see by faith that Christ is the Redeemer, is the resurrection and the life, and believing, they are glad death has lost its sting and the grave its victory over those whom the Master bids come forth. The fetters are broken, the prison door is opened, the prisoners are freed from their grave-clothes, Satan is chained by him who holds worlds in the hollow of his hand. We read in the word, "It is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." This is the language of a noted priest in the time of Christ's sojourn in earth, in the time of Christ's coming to raise the dead, and from that day forth they took counsel together to put him to death, him who should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. (John xi. 47–53.) Friends, mourners, you cannot understand these things, you cannot behold this Master in the resurrection and the life unless he suffered for you, unless he died for you and arose a complete conqueror for you, and if so, and is made manifest to you by the Comforter promised to all the saints, you are not left, as was Rachel, weeping for her children, and would not be comforted because they were not. If the Master is come in the Spirit he will make his power known; where he has begun a good work he will carry it on to the finish, to the intent that you, sorrowing friends, may believe, fully knowing he is all-powerful and doeth all things well; and though you may have prayed that this cup might pass, you can now say, O God, may I be reconciled to thy will, and glory in thy majesty and power, with the sweet promise that, "I go to prepare a place for you. * * * That where I am, there ye may be also." And when your pilgrimage in time is over, may you meet the loved ones gone before. May you realize God's love and mercy as you journey on in time, praise and adore him for the dear Redeemer's sake. Amen.

JOHN L. BLOOMFIELD.

St. Joseph, Mo., March 16, 1906.

To the Primitive or Old School Baptists Scattered Throughout this Broad Land:—I would address you as one who loves the name, and I trust that I do love the name. Why do I love it? I hope that it is as David, who said, "Is there not a cause?" His brethren asked him, as you will remember, why he was not back in the mountains with the few sheep? He replied to them, saying, "Is there not a cause?" Now it seems to me

from the reading of the Bible, which I recognize as the revealed will of God, that those who bear this name are that people who are saved by the Lord. "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord?" And, The Lord "hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Now I will say that I do not know how long before the foundation of the world, but all Old School Baptists do believe this truth, as far as I know. Paul said so, and he was an apostle by the will of God, and knew Jesus Christ, according to the promise of life, which is in Christ. Now shall I not say it also? I will say that there are some claiming the name Primitive Baptist who do not say it, or it seems that way to me. They talk much about the Adamic race. Adam was the last creature that was made of this material world. "God created the heaven and the earth," not the earth and the heaven. Let us receive it as it is written, and let everything come in line as it is written in the record. We also read, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." In Hebrews we read, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." Read also the balance of this chapter. The Lord said, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world," alluding to his disciples. Of some who were present, he said that they were of the world, and he further said that his word had no place in them. They were of their father the devil, and his works they would do. We read of some in whom the Lord works to will and to do of his good pleasure. He said that he would walk in them and dwell in them, and that he would be unto them a God, and they should be to him a people. He said also that "It shall come to pass that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered." Some men do not like these "shalls." But, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Again, he said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." He said that he would give this life to his sheep, which were already his sheep. There were others who were not of this fold, them also would he bring, and they should hear his voice, and there should be one fold and one Shepherd.

Now, dear ones, have you ever heard the tender Shepherd's voice? He said, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." It is said in one place that the sons of God married the daughters of men. Does it not look as though some who bear the name of Baptist are marrying something like this? Some of them do not like to hear very much about predestination or foreordination, but do love to talk about money, and an educated ministry, and are very much alarmed, fearing a failure if we do not exercise ourselves. It would seem that they have failed to notice the promise of God to those who put their trust in him. We are told that "the love of money is the root of all evil," and had we not better be careful in this direction? I do think that there is great damage done to the cause by talking so much about money. One reason is, that all the religious sects around us

are after money, and do not want to hear anything about what is the will of God; but the poor in spirit desire to know something about him whom to know is life eternal. We read in his word that his counsel shall stand, and that he will do all his pleasure. All that the Father hath given to Jesus shall come to him, and all that have left houses, lands and children for his sake, shall have an hundredfold more in this present world, and in the world to come, life everlasting. The ravens have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feedeth them, and one of his children is of more value than many sparrows. There are gracious provisions from him who has all power in heaven and in earth. What has become of our faith? And what sort of faith have we now? I fear that the sons of God whom we have mentioned are learning from the wives which they married of the daughters of men, and this is causing many to halt and many to wander, yes, more than all the preaching of the predestination of God. We learn that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, * * * that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." When we go to the sanctuary and the preacher is dodging on every side, for fear that some one cannot endure sound doctrine, and that if it be preached such as these will not come back, and the congregation will become small, have not many of us seen the result? The sheep get no food, and soon become dilatory about going themselves; it seems as though it is the same thing that caused trouble in days gone by. If the sheep get distant, the little lambs naturally will follow. Peter was commanded to feed the sheep, but was neither commanded to make one nor to shear one.

I have said more than I expected to say when I began, but do as you please with this; I know it is very imperfect and badly composed; my mind has gotten ahead of my pen in writing.

Please send me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for one year, I love to read it; the dear ones talk as did David, Draw nigh, and I will tell you what the Lord hath done for my soul.

Your brother,

J. L. MINTER.

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY.

"THE convulsion of nature that has all but wiped out a city has sent a thrill of horror around the world. Wherever the hand of civilization has touched there are men and women with blanched faces who scarcely had recovered from the horror of Vesuvius in time to learn of the awful tragedy of the city of the Golden Gate. Man is a pigmy. He boasts that he has conquered the elements; he has girdled the earth with electricity; he has learned to talk through space; he has sailed the salted seas with great ships; he has proposed to master the air. In his pride he has believed himself more than man. And in the face of the terrors of earthquake, fire, eruptions, it is meet that he should humble himself before his God and realize that in the face of the natural law, the rich and the poor, the high and the low, the weak and the strong, are equal in their utter helplessness. Man is a pigmy; he is the fly on the window pane, the atom to be rended and torn and crushed as the Power that rules the world for some great purpose, hidden from us all, shall direct. Man is a pigmy. 'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.'"

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I inclose the above clipping from the *Louisville Herald.* I was deeply and solemnly impressed as I read it, yet surprised to find such a profound sentiment in a newspaper. But few will regard or look upon the appalling scenes at San Francisco as being in any way a dispensation of Providence, but all right-minded, candid and honest hearts must say, The Lord hath done it, and should we not

stand in awe and reverence to the God of providence, who is ever righteous in all his acts? What he hath purposed to accomplish we poor, finite worms cannot tell, yet we must believe this awful event is but a stepping-stone to the accomplishment of some great and all-wise purpose. If it is true our days are numbered or appointed, and we cannot exceed them, then the time and way must as certainly be determined and fixed. Many deaths occur seemingly by accident, but the days were numbered and made up to the full. Could the end have come in any other way? Human beings are careless, forgetful, and disastrous results follow, but dare we say our God is careless, negligent or forgetful, making mistakes as men? To whom will ye liken him? Shall we say some part of this great structural work was incomplete—the foundation not strong enough? He who is the great Builder of the universe hath made it complete in all its parts, and will subserve his all-wise purpose. What though Vesuvius be found belching forth streams of molten lava? What though there be internal convulsions in the earth? What though the earth quakes and chasms open and cities are swallowed up? Pause a moment. By whose hand is it done? Man—pigmy, dust, has nothing to do with this. Then if we can trace His hand in these great destructive elements, where shall we set the limits or boundary line and recognize the work of man? In all the intricate working of the universe, "the wheel within a wheel," each little part must as necessarily fulfill its place as the larger. The master wheel is God. The Lord by the prophet could say, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son," but how shall this be when he is born in another country? Our God has divinely arranged all intervening events, so that no cog within the great wheel shall be out of place, and the Son is called out of Egypt. Then,

"Keep silence, all created things,
And wait your Maker's nod;
My soul stands trembling while she sings
The honors of her God.

Life, death and hell, and worlds unknown,
Hang on his firm decree;
He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be.

Chained to his throne a volume lies,
With all the fates of men,
With every angel's form and size,
Drawn by the eternal pen."

"This God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death."—Psalms xlviii. 14. Truly all his works praise him and his saints will ever bless him.

Submitted. P. W. SAWIN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky.

AUGHRIM, Ont., March 19, 1906.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN, I HOPE, IN THE LORD:—While I am about to send my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES I thought I would like to tell you what I hope the Lord has done for my soul.

I was born May 6th, 1834. My father and mother were Old School Baptists, and from my earliest recollection I was taught that in order to be saved I must be born again; that I sinned in Adam, and all the will I had was to sin, and this caused me to have very serious feelings, although I was brought up very moral. I was seventeen years old when I saw myself a lost sinner before God. Then I tried to do better, but the more I tried it seemed the worse I got, until I thought there was no mercy for me; but I tried to give up thinking of these things, and succeeded very well for awhile. There was a family moved into the neighborhood, and they built a house; I was help-

ing them build it when one day a log fell off the house, struck my leg and broke it. No one knew my feelings, but I felt that the God of heaven through his mercy had kept me from being launched into eternity. Then I felt if I ever got over this I would live a better life. I got well again, and able to go about, but I found I was the same sinner as before. I found all my promises were broken, I could not think a good thought, and was now a helpless creature on earth. I was very fond of company, but I thought I would settle down in life, and I asked the Lord to guide me. I bought a bush farm, built a house on it and got married, but I believe there was a hungering after righteousness that all this could not fill. One day I was in the woods alone, and I was so troubled that I put my axe away and started for a place where I would kneel down and pray. Soon the feeling left me and I stopped, and these words came to me, "Remember Lot's wife," look not behind thee; but I went on, and fell on my knees, but could not utter a word, only the publican's prayer, and that did not seem to go any higher than my head. I felt I had sinned away the day of grace and there was no mercy for me, and it would be better for me to die than to live, but as I got up these words came to me, "He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." O if you could know the comfort I received at that time. I wondered if any one else felt as I did, and I wished some minister would come along so that I could tell him my feelings.

One day my brother was working with me in the woods and I told him my feelings. He said, "That is a christian experience;" but I could not believe it, for I thought if that was the case I would be without sin. Then I wished I had not told him, for it seemed I must have deceived him. Shortly after this brother was taken sick with typhoid fever, and passed from this world of sorrow. I felt it was well with him. That same summer I was working in the field alone and felt what a miserable sinner I was; I fell down on my knees to pray to God, but yet I could not say a word; I felt I was a reprobate and there was no mercy for me. Then I thought I would stop thinking about it, but these words came to my mind, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." I knew that was a promise to me, for I did hunger after righteousness, and this kept me from despondency. But I could not keep from sinning, and this gave me trouble, though I tried to keep from everything that was wrong. This went on until the year 1870, when one day I came into the house from my work feeling very sick and miserable, then these words came to my mind, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. * * * But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." I can never describe the joy I felt at that moment, for I felt that all my sins were laid upon Jesus, and I was complete in him, and that I would doubt no more; but before twenty-four hours had passed the darkness returned, and I can describe it only as an eclipse of the sun. I felt miserable, but then I thought of Peter when he thought he would never deny his Lord, and this gave me some comfort. I know that it is not in man to direct his steps, and all my times are in his hand, and all events at his command.

I have tried to tell what I hope the

Lord has done for me. I love the SIGNS, and would not be without it.

I remain, I hope, your brother in the Lord,

MALCOLM McALPINE.

DRAIN, Oregon, March 20, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—Another year has rolled around, which reminds me that it is time to renew my subscription for the dear old SIGNS. In sending remittances for the paper I have often wondered whether it was right for me to say anything more than what is necessary in sending my subscription, but I do love to talk of spiritual things, and I am not ashamed to own my Lord or to defend his cause, although I feel unworthy.

It may not be out of place for me to give a little account of our church. I will leave that to your better judgment. We are a little handful of members, and meet at our home once every month, I hope for the true worship of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Elder Matthews has been with us for some time, and quite often, but he is becoming feeble and aged, and cannot be with us now every time. At our last meeting our dear son, Charles Morningstar, spoke with liberty and comfort to us all, so much so that the church liberated him to exercise his gift. He says that he has fought long and hard against having to stand up to speak in the name of Jesus, and O the tears he has shed, and the terrible load which has been on his mind, no one knows save those who have passed through the same. If ever the Lord spoke peace to my soul it was over this dear boy when he lay dying, as we all thought, from a burn which he received when only three months old. The third day after he was burned I thought that I could live no longer under the awful pressure of my sins, which were pressing me down. I went to my room for the last time, as I thought, to beg the Lord for mercy. I locked the door and fell on my knees, when I heard a voice say, "Daughter, thy sins are all forgiven thee." My tears were dried, my burden was gone, I arose to my feet and sat down and wondered what it all meant. I had been much cast down for five years under this awful load of sin and guilt. Never had I been so happy in all my life before, I wanted to shout praises to our heavenly King, but I thought that I must be quiet on account of my babe. After a time I became composed so that I went to my child, and I noticed that he was better, and he began to mend from that hour. Little did I think then that I would live to hear him declare the counsel of God upon the walls of Zion. Praise be to his holy name, he has wonderfully blessed us. Three of our oldest children, one daughter-in-law and one son-in-law are all members in good standing in our church; they are sound in faith. Our three other children, as I firmly believe, know the joyful sound, and I feel to consign them to the Lord.

At our last meeting we had the pleasure of a visit from dear old brother and sister Turpin. They have lately united with the Baptist Church; one is seventy-five and the other seventy years of age; they are as happy old people as I ever saw. Our custom is to give all our members a chance to speak at our meetings if they feel like it. These two old people related the experience of grace which had been given them, and it did cause our hearts to rejoice. My husband said he had nothing to tell, save his travel from darkness to light, and he had told that so much that it had become as an old coat

or vest, it would seem to the hearers that it was all worn out. Dear old brother Walker said it reminded him of a piece of gold; if it was wrapped up and laid away it became dull, but the more it was rubbed and used the brighter it grew. It stirs up our pure mind and encourages us to hear the dear little ones tell of the sure mercies of our heavenly Father. May we all at all times be ready and able to contend for that faith which was once delivered to the saints. May we be given strength from on high to run with patience the race that is set before us, ever looking to Jesus, "the Author and Finisher of our faith."

I would like to say a few words to the writers of the SIGNS, also to the readers, to tell you my heart goes out to each and every one of you. I feel that we are all one family, being taught in the same school, and Christ is our Teacher. I am very fearful and weak in spirit at times, and have many doubts and fears; at other times my spirit is revived for a little, which makes me hope that my name is written in the Lamb's book of life. Dear loved ones, I ask an interest in your prayers.

With love to all the household of faith, I remain your unworthy sister,

S. MORNINGSTAR.

TROY, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—I will try to tell you a few things that make me glad, and why. I am glad the Lord is my righteousness, my own is as filthy rags; that I am a sinner, for such Jesus came to save; that it is not of him that willeth or runneth, for I cannot do either; that the preparation of the heart and the answer of the tongue in man is of the Lord, for I cannot prepare myself; that the Lord is merciful to our unrighteousness, and will remember our sins and iniquities no more forever; that he will separate them as far from us as the east is from the west; that though our sins be as scarlet or crimson, he will make them white as wool and snow; that the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin; I am glad it does not say some of the least, for mine are big ones; that it is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his grace and mercy that we are saved.

Dear brethren, I began this some time ago, and it seemed so much like myself, poor and imperfect, I laid it aside; but since reading the SIGNS of April 1st, which was so comforting to me, I feel to add a little more, and may perhaps send it on if I do not become disgusted with my effort again. It may be a damaging confession, but I want to make it right now, and that is, I was for many years after I obtained a hope and was received in the Primitive Baptist Church a believer in "conditional time salvation," and tried to defend it in my weak way. Arminianism was so very closely interwoven in my nature that it had to be literally burned out, and the process by which it was done almost drove me to despair at times, but I trust the Lord has delivered me from that snare and delusion and has taught me that salvation from start to finish for time and eternity is alone of him, and without him we can do nothing. I much sympathize with the dear saints that are yet entangled in its meshes, and hope that they may not have to suffer what I have, to be extricated. I hope I am enjoying some of that sweet peace and rest we get in ceasing from our own labors. By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified. Cursed is man that trusts in

man, and makes flesh his arm. Two years ago I was driven out of a conditional church here that had passed non-fellowship resolutions against those believing in predestination. At last, after suffering quite awhile, I came out and united with a little church twenty miles away, that had come out, having had about the same experience I had, and we do not feel that we need any peace propositions, for we have peace, and see eye to eye, and have one speech, no Ashdod. We are denounced, and are called hard names and misrepresented by some of the would-be leaders of the conditionalists, and their animosity and vituperation against us seem to be worse than we get from outsiders, but we can well afford to possess our souls in patience, and let them rail on; if God is for us, who can be against us?

In conclusion, dear kindred in Christ, I want to say that my sorrows and sufferings in this world will soon end, I being sixty-eight years old, and perhaps this is the last I will try to write. I feel to be the weakest of the weak, and the vilest of the vile, and if grace saves a wretch like me the rest of you need not fear. I have a hope sometimes that it will, notwithstanding all my deformity and sins.

As space is precious in the SIGNS, I will close. Love to all the dear saints.

Your brother, I hope, in Christ,

A. J. PHILLIPS.

KALAMAZOO, Mich., Dec. 20, 1905.

EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES: —I herewith send payment for the renewal of my subscription. I have been sick with erysipelas and rheumatism for the past three and one-half months, from which I have suffered greatly. I am improving slowly, and hope to be able to attend again to my school work by the first of January. I do not wish to be without the SIGNS; it always bears sweet, comforting news to the tried and tempest-tossed child. O if I could but write as those who do write for the SIGNS from time to time, how happy I should be, but my words seems as chaff thrown to the wind, of no value at all.

We are ofttimes cast out into darkness, and feel that all have forsaken us, but how our weak, trembling hearts are made to leap for joy when Jesus, our precious Jesus, shows his smiling face, and we are permitted once more to enter that same peace and rest that we did when we were first brought to love Jesus and were made willing to take up our cross and follow him. Surely all that have obeyed his commandments have found that his yoke is easy and his burden is light. True there are trials and tribulations through which we must pass, but it is said the Lord will be with us in six troubles, and in the seventh will not forsake us. What a strong arm to lean upon. O that more could lean upon that strong and everlasting arm.

How sad, dear brethren, it makes us feel to see those whom we feel sure do know the dear Savior's love and power, and whom we would love to take by the hand and journey along with them, go to church meetings and listen to the precious gospel and to the sweet and tender admonitions of God's dear servants, and still do not confess Jesus before men. They may say that they love the Savior, but O how good it would be if they could come and show their faith by their works. It may be they think themselves unworthy to be in the church, but if all such should remain outside of the church what would become of it? Our worthiness is not in self, but in Jesus Christ. Also, they may

think that they will be of no benefit to the church, but I do know that the church has been a blessed comfort to me, and I know that it will be the same to all who find a home there. O for more love, more zeal, and less pride among the inhabitants of Zion. Take the pride from the church and she will be sound in doctrine, pure in practice, and the poor, little, despised children of Zion will delight in her ordinances. The songs that have been sung in days gone by are good enough for me; where they are used with no addition or improvement is my home, and nowhere else; I want nothing new in the church. I love the church that Jesus Christ set up, it is complete, and her laws just and good, my soul desires no other, and I find no sweet-resting place elsewhere. May our God still continue to bless Zion, and all that are his, is the prayer of the writer.

You can publish this if it is the language of Zion. If ever saved, it will be by grace alone.

Your brother,

D. D. McALPINE.

ROMULUS, Okla., Feb. 16, 1906.

ELDERS CHICK AND KER—VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—Not long since I received a letter from a very dear sister in the flesh, and also an Old School Baptist, who lives in Arkansas. She wrote a sketch of her experience of grace, and it was of so much comfort to me, knowing her as I do, to be such a meek, lowly, humble follower of the Lamb, that I felt as though I wanted to send it to you for publication in the dear old SIGNS, if it meets with your approval. I have her consent. She is so isolated from the dear people of God that she has not heard any preaching for three years. Her husband is not a member, and she is far from any church, but thanks be to God, she is still abiding in the faith.

Dear ones scattered over all our land and country, my prayer is that you may be comforted with the heavenly manna which is sweet to all the children of God. We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time, when Christ shall come the second time without sin unto salvation, when he shall make up his jewels, then all the isolated ones will be gathered together. What a glorious meeting that will be, when all they that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth.

Dear ones, no child of God can deny the resurrection; it seems like the sweetest part of the christian hope. If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised, and our faith is vain, and your preaching is vain, and ye are yet in your sins, and are of all men most miserable. Then shall I be satisfied when I awake with his likeness, and this vile body shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body, and I shall see him as he is, and be like him. What a glorious thought to the tempest-tossed child of God, that when we are done with earth and all its trials, and affliction, and pain, and sorrow, and death, we shall be at rest with our blessed Savior.

Dear brethren, please pardon me for writing so much, I did not intend to write more than a few words, but my mind seemed to be carried away upon these blessed truths. Sometimes I feel that I could write a volume. May God bless you both, and give you grace and strength, is the prayer of your little sister,

M. J. RILEY.

BLANSETT, Arkansas.

DEAR SISTER:—I will try to tell you my experience, although I feel it is so

little that it is hardly worth while to tell it, even if I have any to tell. It began with a dream when I was a child. I would then sometimes think about dying, and I felt so mean that I was afraid to die; still it was only at times that I felt that way. As I grew up to womanhood I would study about how vile I was, and it became a great burden to me. I was greatly troubled in mind about my condition for several years, and would try to pray, but could not; I felt that I was too mean to pray. One night I was thinking how full of evil and how little I was, and of what would become of me if I were to die, and I fell asleep and dreamed that I saw an angry looking cloud coming up, and I thought that I was afraid, for I thought that I would soon be blown away, and that I must surely die. But soon the cloud began to scatter, and I heard a still small voice saying, "Fear not, it is I," and I knew it was the Lord, and all fear was driven away. When I awoke my mind was relieved, and I felt that way for some time; but it was not long before doubts and fears came. I then had a great desire to unite with the church, but felt that I was not worthy. Sometimes I would go to meeting, and they would open the door of the church, and I could hardly keep from going forward. Sometimes I would find myself holding to the bench to keep from going, but when Florence united with the church I could remain away no longer.

This is all, dear sister, it is so little I am ashamed for one like you to read it. I have many doubts and fears yet. I feel so unworthy to be in the church that I sometimes think I will have my name taken off the book. I never get to the meetings, and I feel that it is because I am not worthy to go, and that I am a castaway.

"Like one alone I seem to be;
O is there any one like me?"

May God bless you, and be with you in all your trials and afflictions, and guide you in the narrow way.

Your loving sister,

WITTIE DUNCAN.

MAY, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Please grant me the opportunity of saying through the columns of your paper, that while I was at the National Convention of Old School Baptists (so-called), at St. Louis, and participated in the discussion of the various subjects which were discussed there, that I was not, and am not yet, in fellowship or sympathy with the findings of that body, which are unscriptural, and I confess my mistake in assenting to such findings. I also wish to say I believe in and try to preach the holy and high character and attributes of God, in his infinite wisdom, power, riches, love, purpose and grace, and that he rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth with a fixed purpose; causing all righteousness by the mighty working of his Spirit, and suffering all sin and wickedness by the working of the spirit of the adversary.

MORGAN BROWN.

WILMER, Ark., Dec. 27, 1905.

DEAR EDITOR:—In renewing my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES I am reminded that another year has gone by with all its changing scenes and vicissitudes, its deaths and disappointments, its sadness and sorrows, its sunshine and songs, and it has been the case that while at the meeting with the brethren it has seemed that those that have known me longest love me the best, which makes me feel my littleness; in fact I have never

felt worthy of their love, kindness or confidence; indeed and in truth, when I come to rightly examine myself, I have never felt fit to belong to what I believe is the church of God. I have never merited the love of Jesus which I have sometimes felt shined in my benighted soul, and heart and mind, and which at times lifts me up into another world or place which I have never been able to describe. I sometimes wonder at myself when I survey the surrounding world and see the great mass of humanity rushing, surging, pressing on to hear all false religious doctrines of the day. What our Savior said to those so-called workers for Christ in the olden time holds good even to this day: "I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity." I do not believe that this limits God's power, predestination, knowledge or electing love, but he means that in the covenant plan of redemption, which was devised by infinite wisdom, he never knew them, and they have never known him in the pardon of their sins. A remnant indeed they are, few and far between in this part of the world, when compared with the great numbers which surround us, yet it is a feast or treat to meet now and then with this little band of believers, and with them sing songs of praise to the great Redeemer.

Your brother,

C. G. IRWIN.

JASPER, Mo., Dec. 29, 1905.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—As I am sending my annual remittance, I feel impressed to write a few lines that you may know there is one more poor, lonely traveler through this vale of tears who highly appreciates the dear old SIGNS. I have been familiar with the paper ever since I learned to read; being a lover of poetry I used to read it and wonder at its teachings. At the age of twelve years I began to see myself a guilty sinner, and used to search its pages, and read with deep interest everything that seemed to describe my feelings. I was for six years groping in darkness, then, as I humbly hope, the dear Lord spoke peace to my soul.

What I most wanted to tell you, brother Chick, is this: I have derived much comfort from your editorials. Often when my mind has been burdened with some trouble I have received the SIGNS and found an article from you that seemed to just suit my case, and I have long felt it my duty to tell you how I appreciate your writings. May God bless and spare you to speak comfortably to his little ones, and to his name be all the praise.

Your unworthy sister,

C. A. STRATTON.

KENNEWICK, Wash., May 13, 1906.

EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Do any of the readers or correspondents of the SIGNS know the present whereabouts and address of Elder W. W. Polk, formerly residing in San Francisco, on Vallejo St., where he owned a valuable residence property? Since the earthquake I have had no word from him. His residence was in the burned district after the earthquake, and many houses that withstood the earthquake were consumed by the fire, and some were blown up to stop the fire. I think his last address was Berkeley, but I received no answer to my letter when I wrote him before that awful disaster. Please write to Elder J. W. Hess, North Yakima, Wash., R. D. 3, or publish in the SIGNS.

I. N. NEWKIRK.

MARGARETVILLE, N. Y., Feb. 25, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—You will find inclosed two dollars to renew my subscription to the SIGNS. I have been a reader of your dear paper for a long time, and feel that I cannot get along without it. I have been in darkness much of the time, and yet have been greatly benefited by reading the different communications from the Lord's tried and afflicted people, and have at times hoped to be able to write some of the Lord's dealings with me, a poor worm of the dust. This may be the last that I shall write. I have often been asked to write by my dear brethren, and by my pastor, the late Elder J. D. Hubbell, and would gladly have done so, but could not as my health has been poor for years. I am now improving, and the dark clouds are breaking, and it seems like coming out of midnight darkness into the glorious sunshine. I feel like saying, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name."

I am very much alone since the death of Elder Hubbell, and miss his company very much, as he always had some words of comfort and encouragement; but I am sure that of him it is true that he fought a good fight, and finished his work, and has entered into that final rest that remains to the people of God.

I did not think of writing thus when I began, but I have been silent for years, and you will please excuse me. I will close, as I am still weak and my hand unsteady.

From a poor sinner.

(MRS.) R. L. GAVETT.

SENECA FALLS, N. Y., Dec. 11, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I will now send on my remittance to the SIGNS for another year, although I do not know as I will live that long to read it. I can say from my heart that I do like the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have taken it for almost fifty years, and cannot see any difference in the doctrine it contains; it is still "salvation by grace." I love all the brethren and sisters who write for it; they speak my own language. I can say, like Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee."

Dear brother, I like your editorials, they are clear and meek; it seems that you know just how to soothe the sorrowing and help the weak. I look for the SIGNS as the hungry look for food. I do not know that I will ever again be able to write for it. If I live until next May I will be eighty-four years of age.

Now, dear brother, I hope that you will be kept to comfort the people of God, and that the Lord may strengthen you and make you more and more bold for the truth. This is the prayer of the least of all God's children, unworthy to receive the least of all his mercies.

Your sister in this vale of tears,

E. CANDLER.

PLEASE BE SURE,

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1906.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

DOCTRINE AND EXPERIENCE.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—Find inclosed two dollars, for which please advance the date on my subscription to the SIGNS. It is worth more to me than all other papers published; it contains all the preaching we get here, except once a year. I would like to write of some of the way in which I hope I have been led, but I cannot, for I am so weak, and ignorant of spiritual things. My wife and myself fully indorse the doctrine of the SIGNS, so far as we understand it. Can any one believe such doctrine who is not born of God? I do not think any one can. I fully believe it is the doctrine taught in the Scriptures. I wish that you would answer the above question if you feel like doing so; it would be a great satisfaction to me.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

GEO. E. MILLS.

KEENES, Ill., April 27, 1906.

From the reading of the above short letter we are sure that our brother is among the number of those who are born of God; he manifestly believes the truth in the love of it. No one can believe the truth of the Scriptures, and love that truth, unless born of God. As those who proclaim the gospel are to preach the truth in love, so all who believe it are to receive it in love. To all such as are born of God the doctrine of the Bible is more than a theory. The form of doctrine is not a dead form, but one full of life. Mere form never can do any living child good. The living in Zion want that which is spirit and life to live upon, and Jesus' words are spirit and life to them. The blessed Master said that whosoever should eat of this bread should live forever. It is emphatically the bread of life. The provisions of this world support this mortal life, but both this mortal life, and the provisions which support it, shall pass away after a little time; but God has provided for the support of that life which is spiritual, (all spiritual blessings) and neither they nor the life for which they are fitted shall ever cease to exist. So he said, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." The daily bread of this life is sweet to those who live in this life; not only is it needful to be eaten to sustain and to strengthen, but kind Providence has so ordered it that to eat and to drink is a delight to the hungry. It is perhaps a duty to eat and drink the proper amount in order that we may perform that which falls to our lot to do in the work of this world, but yet eating and drinking is more than a duty, it is a delight when we are in a healthy condition. So to receive the doctrine of God our Savior, which is the bread from heaven, is more than duty, it is a delight. The Lord has abundantly blessed the provision of Zion, and has satisfied her poor with bread, and as he brings them to his banqueting-house they eat their meat with gladness. In Solomon's Song it is said that they sit down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit is sweet to their taste. This is the sure witness that one is born of God, that they find the provisions of the gospel sweet to their taste. This, as it seems to us, ought to give comfort and strength to brother Mills.

The question proposed in his letter has

called up a subject in our mind of which we wish to write for a little time, if the Lord will. The two words, "doctrine" and "experience," are in our mind. By doctrine we mean all things that are true in the sight of God, whether we come to know them or not; and by experience we mean that way by which we come to know them, each one for ourself. Clear experience will bring about clear views of the doctrine. Experience is that we may come to know the doctrine; but whether we come to know it or not, the doctrine still abides, and will abide forever. It is true that our God is eternal, self-existent, immutable, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, just, holy, true, merciful, beneficent, and that he in all these attributes was manifest in the flesh, whether any one of all the sons of men ever comes to know all these things or not. All these things are everlasting truths; they were true before the world was made, and they will be true in all the eternity to come. It is true that men by nature are evil, and that the thoughts of the heart are evil altogether, and that men are condemned by the righteous law of God justly to everlasting punishment for their sins; that salvation cannot be by any human work, or merit, or choice; that the only way of salvation is through the finished work of Jesus; that to bring all this about he came in the flesh and lived among men, and died upon the cross to redeem his people from death and hell and sin, and that he arose again for their justification. All these things are true, whether a single soul knows them or not. All these things belong to the doctrine of God our Savior. So also it is true, as taught in the Scriptures, that all must die; that there shall be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust, and that the righteous shall be like Jesus, for they shall see him as he is. All these things remain to be known experimentally by the children of men, but are eternal truths, although not experienced yet by any of us.

Now, on the other hand, experience is that by which we are brought to know the things named above, and the power and sweetness of them. To all those who know not Christ he is as a root out of dry ground, without form or comeliness, and when such men see him, in the only way in which natural men can see him, there is no beauty that they should desire him. But to those who have come experimentally near to him he is the chiefest among ten thousand and the One who is altogether lovely. What has made this difference? This is answered in the beginning of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah: "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" The second question answers the first: they believe the report, to whom the arm of the Lord is revealed, and this revelation is alone by experience. No one knows how sweet bread and water are until hungry and thirsty. No one knows how sweet the sunlight is until that one gropes in darkness. No one knows how good the care of a mother is until he comes to need that care. So no one can know how precious is the power of the dear Redeemer in salvation until that one realizes he is lost. The sick appreciate the good physician; the weak know how good is the strength of the right arm that defends them and supports them. He who is strong in himself needs not the strength of another; he that is whole has no use for a physician; he that is righteous in himself has no use for the righteousness of Christ. To such as these Christ has

no beauty or any excellency whatever. But let that man be convicted of all his weakness, and unworthiness, and sinfulness, and then come to see the beauty and excellency of Christ as his righteousness and redemption, and from that time Christ will be all and in all to him. There has been no change in the dear Savior, but there has been wrought a most wonderful change in the feelings of the man by the revelation of himself to himself. Thus it was with Saul of Tarsus. What a vast difference between Saul and Paul! Saul means "ditch or hell," while Paul means "little." The Christ whom Saul persecuted is the same Christ that Paul preached and loved; but the revelation of the sin that was in Saul wrought in him a knowledge that he had not before of himself, and then showed him his need of a full and perfect Savior, and then to him was revealed that Savior, Jesus of Nazareth, whom he had been persecuting. The secret of it all is declared by Paul himself, when it pleased God "to reveal his Son in me."

Now begins with such as was Saul of Tarsus an experience of the doctrine of God and of Christ. Now all these attributes of Jehovah become solemn realities to him. Now all that Jesus has done and all that he is, becomes of immeasurable importance to him. Now the gospel becomes the gospel indeed. Now he who has come to know the joyful sound is blessed indeed. Such an one has come to believe the doctrine of Christ; he believes because he knows, and he knows by that revelation which God gives the soul, by experience. Such an one, through his own experience, knows that he is totally depraved, that his own merit cannot be accepted with God, that imputed righteousness alone can save him, that he must be kept by the power of God; in short, that salvation is of the Lord. Knowing these things he abhors himself and repents in dust and ashes, while at the same time he magnifies the Lord and makes mention that he is exalted. To this poor, needy soul Christ is all and in all indeed; he believes the doctrine, but he does more than believe it, he loves it.

Our brother asks, Can any one believe such doctrine who is not born of God? We answer confidently, no. One of the strongest evidences that this doctrine, which abases and humbles self and exalts the Lord alone in salvation, is true, is the fact that there are those among mankind who believe it. It is sure that of all the race of men, not one would or could believe such a self-abasing doctrine if left to self. Only the supreme power of God can ever convince any man that he is nothing and that Christ is all. Proud, boastful man will remain proud and boastful if left to himself. Jesus will have no more honor at the hand of any man than was given him by Saul of Tarsus before he was called, so long as that man is left to follow his own vain mind. The power of God alone will ever be able to convince any man that he is condemned and unable to redeem his soul from death. Therefore the fact, as said before, that some men do love this doctrine that abases self and exalts the Lord, is evidence that it is true, for God will not, it is sure, impress falsehood upon the mind of any man. Man cannot of himself believe in his own weakness and unprofitableness, and Satan will not thus abase the thoughts of men concerning themselves. Therefore this work must be of God, and being of God it must be true. His Spirit is the Spirit of truth, and he takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us.

The people of God will not object to

doctrinal preaching, they will not object to experimental preaching, and this for the good reason that they cannot be divided. Some preaching has been called doctrinal which yet did not come to the hearts of the people of God with power and savor. Some preaching has been called experimental which did not instruct the children of God; something was wanting in both, else the results would have been different. Perhaps the doctrine was presented without love on the one hand; perhaps the experience was not a presentation of that which is experienced, but only a narration of the changing feelings of daily life. What has experience taught us? What does the doctrine mean to us? One may argue for total depravity, and while the soul listening accepts the argument, yet somehow it does not reach him to do him any good. The minister who is preaching does not come near to him in it. Perhaps the reason is that the minister is preaching it only as a theory, and not as something which he has tasted in its bitterness, as one tastes the wormwood and the gall, it is theory and not experience that is preached. The theory may be all right in form, but there is no sap in it. On the other hand, what is called experience may be preached, and yet not one soul is instructed in the truth by it. This is not to preach experience in the true sense of the word. The experience of depravity cannot be really preached without clear statements of the doctrine from the word of God being involved in it. So also the experience of salvation cannot be really preached without some clear statements being made regarding the finished work of the atonement. Experience involves election, salvation by grace alone, effectual calling, final perseverance and final glory. All that fails to involve and present these principles of doctrine clearly is not true, heartfelt experience, but simply a misty fog from the emotions and passions and fancies of men.

Christian experience, and the changing feelings and emotions of the heart, are two distinct things. We have all been horrified at the sad news of the destruction at San Francisco of late by the earthquake shocks. Could we meet the hundreds of thousands who experienced the horrors of that dreadful day and hear their testimony, we should find that the experience of all was the same in substance. All had been frightfully awakened that morning; all were driven from home and shelter; all suffered the exposure, the hunger, the danger, the separation of families for a time. In all these things, and many others, all would be agreed. This was the experience, the common experience of them all. But now let each one describe his or her emotions, thoughts, feelings, and what he said or did under the excitement of the time, and we should have not one, but thousands of diverse testimonies. No two in all probability had the same thoughts, feelings or emotions in that awful time. In the experience was unity, but in the feelings produced in each one was infinite diversity. The various thoughts and feelings were not the experience, but were the outcome of that terrible experience. So afterwards came the experience of the bounty of the whole country for relief. This experience in turn produced other feelings, thoughts and emotions; still the experience was one thing, and the various emotions produced by it were another thing. So the experience of depravity and condemnation on the one hand, and of salvation and redemption on the other hand, is one

thing, but the emotions and feelings and thoughts produced by this experience are altogether different things. Experience will produce emotions and feelings, but these are not the experience. Often the soul wonders why such an experience of grace does not produce deeper feelings of gratitude, joy and peace. Why, he says, is my heart so hard, so like adamant under such blessed experience? But while the feelings may change with every passing breath, the experience does not change. All the time remains the knowledge in his soul, "I am a sinner, saved by grace alone." This is what experience has taught that one; it is indelibly written in the heart, and cannot be effaced. C.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. T. Rowe.)

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, to the churches and associations with whom we correspond, greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In our letter for this year we feel to call your attention to some thoughts on the eighteenth chapter of Matthew.

In the closing verses of the preceding chapter we have set forth some of the authority of the kings of the earth, and we think there is no doubt that the disciples of Jesus were looking forward to the time when he would reign a King on earth, and that they had some carnal ambition to satisfy in holding some important position in that supposed kingdom. Therefore the question in the first verse of the eighteenth chapter, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

Second verse. The little child here presented to the disciples was, we think, a natural child, but a helpless little one, and his natural weakness was to remind them of their own spiritual weakness.

Third verse. Jesus says, "Except ye be converted," that is, so changed as to get rid of this carnal ambition to be great, "ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," for its King is humble and tells you that he can do nothing but of the Father; so you must be helpless as little children and know that "without me ye can do nothing." This kingdom of heaven we think is the church militant, over which we have one Lord, and all we as brethren. In this kingdom the smallest one is the greatest, the humblest one is the most exalted, and the one who shows a disposition to be led, is the leader. Such meek, humble, small ones as this are the greatest in the church, (or kingdom) as shown in verse four.

Verse five tells us that "whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me." Not the natural child first presented, but the humble child of God represented by the natural, and it is the child of God that we have presented to us from here on, and his greatness consists in the Spirit of Jesus that dwells in him, and those who love and receive him for Jesus' sake, love and receive Jesus.

Verse six shows us what a terrible thing it is to offend one of these little ones that believe in Jesus, and this offence does not mean the excitement of the carnal passions, but by our own carnal, sinful actions leading them into or tempting them to sin, or to tempt them to believe that being children of God they are immune from the sufferings that belong to the flesh, as Peter did our Lord. (Matthew xvi. 22.) But in the twenty-third verse Jesus said, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me." If we insult our brother as a man, we may appease his wrath and all be well, but who can make amends when we have caused him to offend?

Verse seven: "Woe unto the world because of offences!" Not this carnal world that has not known the Father, nor the Son whom he hath sent, but the world of God's people for whom Jesus is the propitiation (satisfaction) for their sins. (1 John ii. 2.) God's people are called the world, because they are made up of every family of the earth. (Rev. v. 9.) These all feel the woe that their carnal nature by its offences brings upon them. These offences bring the oft repeated cry, "O wretched man that I am!" It is this that brings about the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, and it is the enemy against whom David prays in Psalms cix. "For it must needs be that offences come." Not that offences in any way help or advance the cause of Christ or bring comfort to the child of God, but as two opposite currents of wind produce the whirlwind, so the contrary natures, the flesh and the Spirit in the child of God, necessarily produce offences, crosses, and even sin, and make the children of God cry, Forgive us our sins; and the man who has sinned feels the greater woe.

Eighth verse: "Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off," &c. For the reason that offences bring woe upon the offender, whatever offends you cut it off and cast it from you. This, dear brethren, is in your personal experience. If your carnal nature looking around the glories of the world would take you where you should not go, representing feet, or if it would take to you as a hand that that would neither glorify God nor comfort you, as his child cut them off. It is the same as the apostle says, put off the old man with his affections and lust. "Cast them from thee." Forsake the evil and turn unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon you, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. (Isaiah.) "It is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire." This life means your comfort in the kingdom of God (the church), the joys of salvation as experienced in walking according to the gospel rule. Better to be hopping along in the path that Jesus trod, on one foot, handling only the true gospel of Christ, than having two feet, profession of love to Christ, and at the same time loving the world, and all the time be in the fire of God's wrath and fearfully looking for the day of his fiery indignation.

Ninth verse: "If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee." If you see any other than the hand of God in his works, either in nature or in grace, your eye is offensive, for God will not give his praise to another. Pluck this out, cast it away, and with an eye single to his praise enter into life, the fellowship of Jesus and his people, which is far better than seeing man as an help to God. "Having two eyes to be cast into hell fire," which is experienced in our souls when we are conscious of having robbed God of his glory and praise.

Tenth verse: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones" that walks in the path of Jesus, that handles the pure gospel of the Son of God, and that gives to him all the glory of his works, and in those things sees no one but Jesus. To scorn one of these would be to scorn Jesus, for he dwells in them, and this is why they are such humble little children in his kingdom. And "their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." The Spirit that ministers to them, the grace that keeps them humble and small in their own estimation, does it by showing

them that all things are of God the Father, who rules by his Son in his gospel kingdom (the church). Should we despise them, we should despise (or scorn) the Spirit that moves them in their humble way.

Eleventh verse: "For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost." Not the lost or dead in trespasses and sins are meant here, but those who by living after the flesh have died or are in the wilderness of transgression, as shown in verses 12–14; showing that as the Shepherd is not satisfied with ninety-nine sheep, but must have the hundredth one, and goes himself into the mountains and seeks that which is gone astray, and when found he rejoices more over this one than those that went not astray. It is possible that the earthly shepherd may not find his lost sheep, but the all-seeing eye of Jesus never fails to find the lost sheep, however small he may be, or however dark the mountain into which he has wandered. "It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." Then they will not perish, for God will do his pleasure and bring his sheep home again. It may be with a broken, contrite heart, as the prodigal son, but O the sweet comfort of the poor, wayward son in being received as a son, which was more than he dared ask. All this, brethren, refers to our own experience alone.

Now, coming to the fifteenth verse, the Lord teaches us how to deal with those of our brethren who may trespass against us; and in the first place we feel that we should know that we are injured instead of being insulted and being trespassed against. We should go to our offending brother in that meek and humble spirit that has been with us up to this time in dealing with ourselves, and prompting us to cast away the offending foot, hand and eye. The beam being out of our own eye, we now see clearly how to pull the mote out of our brother's eye, and so not saying one word to any one about our brother's sin, we go to him alone, and if it be that he has the same Spirit of Jesus, he hears us, confesses his sin, and we have gained our brother; but if he be so carnal and selfish as to persist in his sin, then take with thee one or two more of the children that believe in Jesus, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established, for the humble, Christlike brethren will be able to judge both the words and spirit of each of us, and capable of advising us for the better. We feel that the inference is strong, that if he hears them all is well, and here the matter should stop forever. "And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church," and if he hear the church, well, but if not, "let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." He has now been labored with by one, two, and the whole body of Christ, and he will not hear, so you are to look on him as a man of the world, who has no privileges in the church. You have bound him on earth, and the same is bound in heaven (the church). This is justified by his worldly course, and we who have shown our devotion to the cause of Christ outside the church in our efforts to be reconciled to our brother, are loosed; that is, our course has been recognized by the little ones that believe in Jesus, and thus we are loosed in heaven (the church), having the same privileges as before. Those two little ones whom we have called to our aid, and to whom we have submitted our case, have agreed, and the thing has been done for them of our Father which is in heaven (the church), as shown by verse nineteen.

Verse twenty: "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." In the case referred to, the two little ones whom we have called to help us have Christ in them, and we have him in us, and so he is in the midst, directing our own peace and that of the church, which is still to us the kingdom of our blessed Lord.

The remainder of the chapter is devoted to the one thought of sin and forgiveness, and the extent of that forgiveness. Peter asked how oft he should forgive his brother, "till seven times?" thus more than doubling the Jewish custom of forgiving three times, perhaps feeling that this would be very charitable; but our blessed Lord, who is rich in mercy, and all the time forgiving his people's sins, teaches us that as to his, so to our forgiveness there should be no limit: not seven times, but seventy times seven; and then he tells us that the "kingdom of heaven is likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. * * * And one was brought unto him that owed him ten thousand talents." Just think, brethren, what an enormous debt for a small servant to owe with no means to pay, and what anguish of soul he must have felt when his lord "commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made," the debt though more than sixty-seven millions. He does not dispute, but begs for mercy, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all." Brethren, how often we make promises in our poverty that we never keep in our prosperity, but like his ungrateful servant seem to forget what great mercies we have received. His lord was moved with compassion, and forgave him the debt. He was not now required to pay, but set free, and at liberty to enjoy home and loved ones. How glad he must have felt, but how soon he seemed to forget the great mercy shown him, "and went out, and found one of his fellow-servants, which owed him an hundred pence [about thirteen dollars]; and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all; and he would not; but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt." O what base ingratitude! How can one so blessed be so hard-hearted and without feeling for those who are now, as he was but a short time ago, in great trouble? No wonder that his fellow-servants, seeing what was done, should be grieved, and their lord wroth. He truly deserved to be delivered to the tormentors. "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." See, brethren, the great difference in the amount of their debts: the one ten thousand talents, the other an hundred pence, and the difference between the debt we owe our blessed Lord, and that our brother owes us, is no less. If I have done no wrong and my brother has trespassed against me, his debt is small compared to mine. Let me remember the great mercy shown me, the long-suffering of God toward me; also the great debt I owe, and my utter inability to pay, and then I shall see the debt my brother owes me is small indeed. We have one Lord, even Jesus, and to him we go with all our complaints, acknowledging our sin, and with a broken and contrite heart we beg for his mercy. "Ye Gentile sinners, ne'er

forget the wormwood and the gall." Having so many times been forgiven such great sums, in which we have so greatly rejoiced, ought we not bear this forever in mind, and cheerfully forgive the small sums that our brethren owe us, saying it is of small moment, my brother, I freely forgive? May God grant us this blessed principle of forgiving, never-dying brotherly love that gives us at all times to remember and appreciate God's wonderful mercy to us, and then we shall be merciful and forgiving toward those who may at times like ourselves be out of the way.

May God keep us all humble, and at his footstool united in loving fellowship, praising one Lord, Jesus.

WM. GRAFTON, Moderator.

MILTON DANCE, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. E. Gore, May 9th, 1906, at the home of the bride's parents, near Laidig, Fulton Co., Pa., Roy C. Crumwell, of Maddensville, Huntingdon Co., Pa., and Miss Ellen R. Lake.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Zoa Zillotta Crown, daughter of Gilford and Jennie Crown, was born August 10th, 1889, departed this life April 28th, 1906. The frailty of this life has once more been made apparent, and Lottie was called hence at the tender age of 16 years, 8 months and 18 days. This sad event took place after an illness of about seven months. Her sickness from the beginning was of such a serious nature as to cause the family much anxiety. Her time came and the Lord took her home. She is removed from all the ills of this mortal existence, through the gateway of death; she has gone to live with her Savior. She said in her last moments she was ready to go, and as we eagerly listened to the last faint words that fell from her lips, by faith we could almost see her spirit launch into the eternal haven of rest. There was evidence that the Lord was with her. May God's tender mercy and consolation be with her grief-stricken father; her mother preceded her in death. She bore her suffering with great patience and fortitude. She leaves father, three brothers, grandmother and many other friends to mourn their loss.

The funeral service was held at brother Crown's residence. The opening service was conducted by Elder J. C. Hanover; then Elder L. B. Hanover spoke to quite a large concourse of neighbors and friends, using as a text, "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." After which the body was laid away to rest. C. R. HANOVER.

BLACK LICK, Ohio.

Elder R. M. Pate died at Falls City, Texas, Jan. 13th, 1906, lacking only eight days of being 81 years of age, having been born Jan. 25th, 1825, in Jasper Co., Ga. He was married to Miss Nancy Mobley Feb. 22nd, 1848. They both united with the church at Cedar Creek, Coweta Co., Ga., in the year 1850. He was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry about the year 1860. Some time after this he moved to Cass Co., Texas, and from there (perhaps between 1880 and 1885) he moved to south-west Texas, where he spent the remainder of his time, serving churches the most if not all the time in the bounds of the San Marcos Association. Brother Culpepper says he was a faithful member to the last. My personal acquaintance with Elder Pate and his family and history is very limited, and I know only the things that brother Culpepper has written me.

ALSO,

Nancy Pate, wife of Elder R. M. Pate, was born Oct. 26th, 1830, at Edgfield, S. C., and died March 14th, 1906, at Falls City, Texas. Thus she survived her aged husband only about two months. May the Lord comfort all that mourn, with the assurance that though they have ceased from all their labors and sorrows here in this selfish and unfriendly world, they are now at rest.

ALSO,

J. M. Pate, grandson of Elder R. M. Pate and sister Nancy Pate, who was raised by them, died April 15th, 1906. He was born at Atlanta, Cass Co., Texas, August 2nd, 1879. He died of rheumatism of the heart, and before he died said, I see I cannot get well, I shall go to grandpa and grandma. We believe they are all three at rest.

The above is the information sent me by brother Culpepper. I do not know who, if any, of the family are left to mourn, but Elder Pate was the last of the Elders of the San Marcos Association to pass away. Only a few of the members are now left in its bounds. I have for several years regarded them as the true representatives of the Primitive or Old School Baptist doctrine and order in that part of Texas.

H. B. JONES.

OUR dear mother, **Mrs. Euphemia McColl,** widow of the late Duncan T. McColl, died at her home east of Wallacetown, Elgin Co., Ont., on the morning of April 5th, 1906, aged 78 years. She was the eldest

child of the late Duncan and Martha McLean, of Middlesex Co., Ont. Mother united with the Covenanted Baptist Church when quite young, and was baptized by the late Elder Thos. McColl, and continued a faithful member till called away by death. She was sick only a few weeks of dropsy and heart trouble. She leaves to mourn her departure two sons, one daughter, six brothers and two sisters, beside the church, where her seat was never empty when she was able to attend.

Elder W. I. Carnell preached very comfortingly to a large gathering of friends and neighbors, after which her remains were taken to the family plot in Brocks Creek Cemetery.

Her daughter, MARTHA YOUNG.

DE WINTON, Alberta.

DIED—At her home in Charles City, Iowa, April 7th, 1906, **Miss Welthy Johnson,** aged 92 years and 10 months. Miss Johnson had been a subscriber to the SIGNS since its first issue.

K. R. ELLIS.

CHARLES CITY Iowa, May 25, 1906.

MEMORIAL.

IT is our desire as an Association to give some expression of our sorrow in the death of our dear, aged brother, **Dr. John Thorne,** of the Ebenezer Church, Baltimore city, and of our appreciation of him as a long time attendant upon the sessions of this Association. It is perhaps not needful that we should say much of the many good qualities which were his, for almost every member of all our churches knew him well. His kindness of heart, his hospitality to all his brethren, his earnestness of purpose, his unflinching devotion to the cause that he loved, his faithfulness in contending for what he believed to be right, his frank opposition to what he believed to be wrong, his spirit of forgiveness, which could harbor no malice, his readiness at all times to speak of the sacred things that he loved, and especially his unfailing desire and labor for the prosperity of his own church, are things well known to us all, and we need but name them here to the praise of that grace which made him what he was. No one could know him long or be much in his company without loving him as a brother indeed and a faithful follower of Christ. At this our present session, held with the church of his membership, very many of us remember our past associations with him, and at his home, where so many from far and near have partaken in past years of his hospitality, sorrowing that we shall see his face no more. Yet we believe that he is with the Savior whom he loved. We feel that it is useless to multiply words, but desire to place this feeble tribute upon our Minutes. May the blessing of a covenant-keeping God abide upon all dear to him by family ties, and upon the church of his membership, and grant unto us all that we may be found following our dear brother as he followed the Lord.

WM. GRAFTON, Moderator.

MILTON DANCE, Clerk.

APPOINTMENTS.

ELDER John McConnell, of New York city, will, the Lord willing, preach at Goshen, Anderson Co., Ky., June 15th to 17th; Salt River, 18th; Mays Lick, 20th; Little Flock, 22nd to 24th; Sulphur Fork, 26th; Turners, 27th; Pleasureville, 29th; Bethel, Saturday and Sunday, June 30th and July 1st. Brethren can arrange from these dates up to the time for getting to the next appointment.

P. W. SAWIN.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

CONSTITUTION of a Church of Jesus Christ of Primitive Baptists.

The following ordained ministers and deacons met at schoolhouse, one-half mile east and one and one-half miles north of Eddy, Kay Co., Okla., viz:

Elder W. A. Thompson, Sandy Creek Church, Putnam Co., Ill.; Elder Henry Richards, Shiloh, Logan Co., Okla.; Elder Henry C. Waggoner, Shiloh Church, Logan Co., Okla.; Elder Thomas Veach, Shiloh Church, Logan Co., Okla.; deacons J. O. Patrick and J. F. Pieratt, Shiloh Church, Logan Co., Okla.

After prayer, and preaching by Elder J. F. Beeman, of Ebenezer Church, Helena, Woods Co., Okla., a presbytery was organized by choosing Elder W. A. Thompson moderator, and J. F. Pieratt clerk.

The moderator called for letters of those desiring organization, and the following names presented themselves with satisfactory letters of recommendation, viz: brethren W. L. McCann, James N. Rush; sisters Lucy F. Rush, Nancy Henshaw, Mary E. Riley.

Articles of faith read and received as principles upon which the church was constituted.

Prayer by Elder Waggoner, the charge by Elder Thompson and the right hand of fellowship by Elder Richards and then by the presbytery, declaring the church constituted in gospel order.

W. A. THOMPSON, Moderator.

J. F. PIERATT, Clerk.

The church organized for business 1st by choosing Elder W. A. Thompson moderator, pro tem. and J. F. Pieratt clerk, pro tem.

2nd. The name of Bethel chosen for the church.

3rd. Moderator invited all visiting brethren to seats in council.

4th. An invitation was extended for the reception of members. Sister Betty McWilliams, brother R. M. McWilliams, brother J. H. Giller and sister Elizabeth

Giller were by relation of circumstances received into full fellowship of the church.

5th. The minutes of the meeting were read and approved.

6th. Church instructed clerk to send copy of minutes of this meeting for publication.

W. A. THOMPSON, Moderator, pro tem.

J. F. PIERATT, Clerk, pro tem.

MEETINGS.

THE Siloam Association of Oregon and Washington will meet with this church, four miles north-west of North Yakima, in the Nathez Gap, June 15th, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue the two following days. We extend a cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth. Conveyances will be at the station at North Yakima, and all who contemplate coming by train will please write beforehand, stating when they will come. To those wishing to come by private conveyance, will say there are ample means for caring for teams.

SONORA A. HESS.

THE Lord willing, the yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held in the schoolhouse in the township of Brooke, Lambton Co., Ont., five miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1906, and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 74. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1906. NO. 13.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LEXINGTON, N. Y., May 1, 1906.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—For a long time my mind has been wandering back to my past experience, and the way in which I hope the blessed Lord in his abundant mercy has seen fit to lead and teach me, if indeed I have been taught at all. I have to go back to my childhood, for I cannot remember when I did not have a great regard for the Old Baptist people, although I did not hear much of that kind of preaching, as we lived where we were surrounded by the "do and live" system.

I was brought up by pious parents, who tried to bring up their children in the way they should go, trusting that when they became older they would not depart from it; but that teaching has been a great deal of trouble to me, for many times I have feared that only for that teaching I would never have been an Old School Baptist, but O how God-dishonoring such doubts seem to me at times when I have a view of his goodness and mercy. When a child of eight or ten years I had a great many serious thoughts and a great fear of death and judgment, especially when I would hear of the death of some friend. I went on in this way until I was sixteen, then my grandmother, who had lived with us for twenty years, and to whom I was very much attached, having had the care of her, she being blind, was taken sick and died. This made a deep impression on my mind. The funeral was not at the time of burial, as the nearest Old School Baptist preacher was thirty miles away, so it was put off for several months. Then my aunt, who was a Baptist, came with Elder Buel Maben and dear old brother Russell Peck. O how the sight of those good christian people, as I believed them to be, filled my heart with fear and humiliation; feeling myself to be such a vile sinner it seemed that I was not fit to even wait upon them. O how that sense of unworthiness comes back to me now while trying to write. Still I wanted to be near so I could catch every word that was spoken, yet had to struggle to keep my feelings under control lest I should expose myself, and that I would not have done for worlds if I could have helped it. During the preaching I broke down and wept, but tried to com-

fort myself by saying it brought back the loss of my dear grandma all fresh to me, and for a time I even made myself believe that this was the cause of my trouble. So that time passed, and I found no rest night or day; then I began to read my Bible, and that gave me more pain, for every word condemned me, and my sins came looming up before me such a black mass, black as the tents of Kedar, and all I could say was, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Then I would steal away out in the woods with my Testament or hymn book and read and try to pray God to have mercy, but still was in agony of grief, for every word I uttered was sin and sank to the ground, and I would go away in despair, but could find no solace even in tears, which I could hide no longer. This added still more to my sorrow, for I could no more meet my young companions, as they were no more company for me, nor I for them, so I would shun them all I could. I would hurry and do my work and go out in the woods, for that solitary place seemed most suited to my condition. O how well I remember one day; I always had my Testament now, that was my only companion, and I sat down on the trunk of a fallen tree and listened to the wind whispering through the young leaves and branches of the trees, and it seemed like the breath of God, so sacred did the place appear to me, and I such a vile sinner. I then opened my book, and the first thing that met my eyes was the parable, A sower went out to sow seed, and some fell by the wayside, and some on stony ground, and had no depth of earth, and when the sun arose it withered away. Ah, I could read no further, that was my case, there was no hope for me. I was in agony, and still the words would escape my lips, unbidden it seemed, "God be merciful to me a sinner." At another time I was looking in my hymn book and found this hymn:

> "Show pity, Lord, O Lord, forgive,
> Let a repenting rebel live;
> Are not thy mercies large and free?
> May not a sinner trust in thee?"

O, it did seem that my very soul went out in prayer with every word I read, and a sweet peace seemed to steal over me, a sweet, restful feeling. Then I heard my mother calling me and went in. So I went along for a few years; my trouble wore off in a measure, and I would wonder at the change that had come to me at times, but would try to cast it from me and join with my young friends as much as I could, and try to think I would not have any more such troubles, but ah me, I was only preparing the way for more sore trials. About that time Elder B. Maben came again and held meeting, and well I remember the time, it was in August. As our house was small, and the weather being perfect, and having no more convenient place, dear old brother Peck proposed having the meeting in the barn, which was new, and filled with new hay and grain. It was decided to do so, and a large company assembled. To my surprise, after the preaching there was opportunity given for any one who had any remarks to make, to speak, and my dear sister arose, told her experience and was received for baptism. O I can never express my feelings. It seemed all my past troubles came rushing back with renewed force, and it seemed there was a tormenting spirit at hand saying, Now pray again; you prayed to God to send you rest, and he sent it, and you went to dances, and joined your young companions, sinned with your eyes wide open; now how dare you ask for mercy? O it did seem I could see the very gates of heaven were closed forever against

me, and there had been hope for me, but where was there any now? I thought that death and hell were my portion, and did not dare try to pray; I was in mute despair, and tears were denied me. One of my young friends sat beside me, and how I did wish for a way to escape from her, but there was none. They made ready to go to the water for the baptism, but I sat like one dumb; it seemed I could not move, and my friend still sat beside me until all was ready, then she arose, put her arm in mine and said, "Let us go." So I arose somehow and started, but thought I should sink before I reached the place. We walked along by ourselves, neither of us speaking, which seemed so strange to me, for she was very gay and our chief leader. At last we reached the place. They went down into the water. O what a beautiful sight it seemed to me. My sister seemed to be transfigured into an angel of light, and separated from me as heaven is from earth. Then it seemed the fountain of the deep was broken up, and tears came to my relief. My friend still clung to my arm and wept, as I did. When all was done we returned to our home and went to my sister's in the afternoon for meeting, and after it was over dear old brother Peck said to me, Meliss, have you not something to tell us? Pride was slain and my reply was, No, I have nothing to tell, only that I am a lost and ruined sinner. Then came the words of that beautiful hymn, "Rock of ages, cleft for me." I repeated it and asked them to sing it, which they did, but there was no more rest for me; it seemed I must die and sink into everlasting torment. I went on in this way, trying to read and pray, until winter, and no lasting comfort came until one night when all the family had retired, I got the Bible and a prayer went up, I hope, from my poor heart, O that I may find just a little ray of hope, be it ever so small. I opened to Isaiah fifty-third chapter, and my eyes rested on these words, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" I read and then came the long sought rest. I let the book fall and sat as one in a dream, my trouble was gone. My father awoke and said, "Daughter, have you found something?" O yes, I had found him whom my poor soul had long sought, Jesus my Savior, who had borne my sins in his own body on the cruel cross. I saw him as my Savior, the only way for my escape, and I was astonished; I could not realize what had happened to me all that night, and the next day until night; then came the sweetest peace I had ever known. I went to my sister and told her my joys, and we sat up all night to talk and read. I was filled with joy and rejoicing that tongue cannot express, nor can it be written. I soon related my experience, was received, and baptized by Elder B. Maben, and have had many trials since. I went into the darkest trials of my life soon after being baptized; I thought I was deceived and had deceived the church. O such a painful experience. I promised that at the earliest possible time I would go to the church and tell them I was deceived and had deceived them, and would ask them to take my name from among them, but the opportunity was not afforded. I went to care for a sick friend, and her husband was a member of the Andes Church, and the next day was church meeting day; I went, but wished to keep out of sight, for I did feel too unworthy to be among them. In the evening there was preaching by Elder I. Hewitt, and as I could not stay away, I went, feeling I

could not possibly bear my trouble. I took a back seat to be as much out of sight as possible. After the preaching the Elder sang this beautiful hymn:

Come, all you his people of every nation,
Come listen awhile, and to you I will tell
How I was first called to know my salvation
In Jesus, my Lord, who redeemed me from hell.

I saw myself standing a distance from Jesus,
Between him and me lay a mountain of sin;
The devil perceived that I was awakened,
And strove to persuade me that I was too young.

He said I'd get weary before my days ended,
And wish I had never so early begun;
Sometimes he'd persuade me that Jesus was partial,
While he was setting the poor sinner free.

While he was singing it seemed to me that the very heavens were opened and I could see that the devil had driven me to despair all along the way, and I thought I had him marked so he could not torment me any more with such doubts and fears, but alas, here I find him yet, and can see how prone I am to listen to his whisperings, for he comes in so many ways of deceivableness of unrighteousness, and takes advantage of every weakened part.

I was not sixteen when I was first called to think of my soul and the state I was in, and I often am afraid to trust my experience; but if deceived in this, I am without hope and without God in the world, for it is nothing I have learned from man, or sought out myself; but I have found some comfort in reviewing and trying to write, and if any poor soul can find a crumb of comfort in it I will feel more than repaid for making the effort to write, and trust you, dear brethren, will pardon if I have wearied your patience.

Now, dear brethren, I will leave this to your better judgment, to do with as you think best, if it is to consign it to the flames it will be all right with me, for I know it is very imperfect, like myself.

With love to all the household, I remain your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) G. H. FAULKNER.

SHERWOOD, Oregon, March 9, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—BELOVED BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I inclose a letter written me by sister S. H. L. Stuart, which I think surely gives the certain sound of a broken, contrite heart, and we think it will be good reading for those who take the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and doubtless others will be comforted as well as we by reading it. I wish to say to the dear brethren and sisters who contribute their loving letters and experiences to our dear old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that their letters and experiences are a great help and comfort to me. I am now past seventy-five years of age, and according to the course of nature the place that knows me now will soon know me no more forever, and I will be numbered with those that are gone, but I desire to wait patiently until it is the Lord's will to summon me from time and time things to things eternal. I can truly say that the finished work of the Son of God is all my hope and all my salvation, for I am so sinful, so weak and depraved, that I know there is nothing good that I can do. The addition of years in my life has added also to a more full consciousness of my great need of a perfect and complete Savior, and my comfort is that the dear Lord enables me to trust in his amazing grace and mercy, and to have no confidence in the flesh, enabling me to look unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith and of our salvation.

Dear brethren editors, brethren Durand, Coulter and Keene, I would be so glad

if I could correspond with all of you, and many others whose writings are so comforting to us, but I am so ignorant and unlearned, not only in spiritual things, but also in natural things, and feeling my ignorance I cannot get courage to write to the dear brethren, even when I am so well pleased and comforted and encouraged by reading their letters in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Sometimes I would think, Surely I must write to brother Coulter, brother Keene and others, while reading their able articles, but my nothingness and unworthiness would prevent me from doing so. I have dared to write a few letters to Elder Durand and Elder Bartley, and two I think to Elder Chick. This may be the last that I will try to write to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I want all the dear brethren and sisters to know that we love them in the sufferings and fellowship of Jesus Christ. I have been reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES since 1859, and am acquainted with all the old writers, that is, by reading their communications, and I in the same way am acquainted with the present editors and writers, and the great blessing to us all is that the writers for and editors of the SIGNS have had but the one theme: salvation by grace alone from first to last. There has been no change in the doctrine contended for by the editors and writers from the first until the present time, and this oneness of sentiment and doctrine is only maintained and sustained by the Spirit of God that works in his dear servants to will and to do of his good pleasure. They are truly those that continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, determined with the apostles to know nothing among the people of God but Jesus Christ and him crucified, the way of salvation.

May the dear Lord bless the present editors and managers of the dear old family paper, and all the household of faith, is the prayer of a poor old sinner.

J. P. ALLISON.

WARRENTON, Oregon, March 4, 1906.

ELDER J. P. AND MARY ALLISON—MY DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER AND SISTER IN A MOST PRECIOUS HOPE:—I think that in all truth I can say with you in your last good letter to me, that I am also in great need of the same help every moment of my life, and in all that I try to do, feeling and knowing that without Jesus I can do nothing, and now, too, I feel so forsaken, and am nothing but a blank, and O that he would take me as such and fill me to his dear name's honor and glory. Then do I rejoice if I can feel that in my weakness I have tried to maintain the honor of his name and the glory of his cross, for in that name is my hope and my trust, for beside him there is no Savior, and it was for poor, sin-defiled and polluted worms like we that he suffered on Calvary. O hear the blessed Lamb of God crying to the Father, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" He who was a Prince, the crown Prince, the King of kings and Lord of lords, yet for those whom the dear Father gave him left the glorious throne and the riches of his high estate and became poor, that they through his poverty might be rich. O the riches of his love and grace which they receive so abundantly, and the gift of righteousness through their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, so that where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. O that he would help us through his Spirit to mortify the deeds of the body; then should we live more in

harmony with the teachings of Christ and his apostles. My dear brother and sister, I truly find comfort in reading of your doubts and trials. Dear old father and mother in Israel, in whom I have such confidence, (and, I hope, a heartfelt christian love,) I am so cheered and helped along to know that we are journeying on together in the valley, as well as in the higher flights over the way which is hidden from us until we meet with that which is before. So we must trust and go on in the path God hath marked out for us, still trusting, ever trusting in him who holds all things in his hands. O how I long to see you and all the dear brethren and sisters, and hear again the truths of the glorious gospel of our Lord and Master preached to his name's honor and glory. I have long hoped to be permitted to meet with my beloved church, but month after month goes by and I am trying to wait God's time for the rich blessing, and to patiently submit my all to his pleasure. I remain at home, where I can only hear his great ocean giving all glory to him in its ceaseless roll and roar. O how often I am thinking of the rich feasting that awaits those who will be able to attend our coming association, and hope that I may be one so blessed, but now I cannot see how I can get away from home duties. But, my dear ones, how I long to meet with those whom I love so well; I am so lonely and homesick for the Father's household, where I hope that my heart and mind are ever drawn by our mutual love. Our doubts and fears, our sighs and our joys and our aims are one in trying to worship the God of our salvation in spirit and in truth, giving to him all the glory, for to him all glory belongs, and he will not give his glory to another, and to them is this grace given who are made willing through the gift of this same grace to give to our Lord and Savior all glory for the many mercies he has so richly bestowed upon such vile worms as we are made to see and to feel ourselves to be. We would never have known the depths of the sinfulness of our natures but by the Spirit of him who alone reveals himself unto us needy sinners, not as the world looks on him, as a possible Savior, but as a complete Savior in whom we have redemption through the shedding of his own precious blood on Calvary for that express purpose. O that we could love him as we should for all his mercies. My dear ones, I think that your song of sovereign grace is the song of all the redeemed of the Lord, and what are all our sufferings when we think of what he suffered for us? You know that if we suffer with him we shall reign with him. O how dare I think for a moment that I, the poorest, weakest and vilest of all, am one of that ransomed throng? "But can I bear the piercing thought, What if my name should be left out?" when the dear Lord comes to take his children home? Nothing but his grace can prevent, and he alone can be our hiding-place in that most solemn day; but my great unworthiness is ever before my eyes, and it seems so sinful to me; then how vile and black I must appear to the most holy God.

"But since my Savior stands between,
In garments dyed in blood,
'Tis he, instead of me, is seen,
When I approach to God."

O how wonderfully bright and beautiful are all the mysteries of that wonderful love! May its glorious rays beam on you, dear ones, warming and cheering your declining days, driving the dark clouds from your sky, and always be as a lamp to your feet as you finish the journey here.

I will now say farewell for the present; I fear that I have made this letter much too long, but I am so lonely that it is hard for me sometimes to find a stopping-place. May heaven's blessing attend you, is the wish of your unworthy sister in much love,

(MRS.) S. L. H. STUART.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., May 21, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS:—The inclosed letter from brother J. M. Fenton, although addressed to me, is not mine, but by reason of its nature belongs to all the household of faith. I send it to you that it may be spread abroad in the SIGNS, if you see fit. May God bless you in your labors.

Your brother in love and fellowship,

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., May 19, 1906.

DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER H. H. LEFFERTS:—I know a man that was baptized last June by the Old School Baptists at Southampton, Pa., and he felt at that time that he was done with sin and the troubles attending it. All nature proclaimed the glory of God. "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing." He heard Elder Eubanks speak on the "Tried Stone," and heard him say how that at one time he (Elder Eubanks) was at the laying of a cornerstone in a prominent building, and owners of quarries for miles around brought a sample of stone to be tried under a machine built for that purpose. As the machine would be brought to bear upon the stone they would crush under the strain. At last one sample was found that bore the strain and weight, and was accepted. Elder Eubanks typified this to our Savior, how that he had borne all our sins and withstood the crushing weight of them all. Now after hearing this explained as plainly as words could possibly speak them, this man I speak of found out in a short time he was a sinner, and his sins began to roll up like mountains, and he felt now if he could go and be baptized again, but no, there is but one ordinance of baptism; then he thought had the Lord taken him out of the body immediately after being raised from the baptismal waters, he would have felt secure in his salvation. In this great anxiety of mind the words came, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Hope now came in for its part, and he was made to see that Jesus was the Mediator between God and man, there was "none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." For, "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." This seemed to again cut him off, but not entirely, as at no time but he would still hope in God's mercy. He even finds at this present moment what it is that devours the adversaries, and what Paul means when he says, "I die daily." "Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;" and he rejoices to know that Jesus has power over the adversaries, for he rose triumphant and victorious over death, hell and the grave. This man has been brought to see by the eye of faith that Jesus is all and in all; he is not as man, but has all power in heaven and in earth, and executes his will in his people, his chosen, and his glory he will not give to another, and no flesh shall glory in his presence. Natur-

ally when people hear one spoken of, the mind immediately takes in what is attached to that person, his traits of character and general appearance; but here is One that is with God the Father; One that prayed to God before his crucifixion, in John xvii. 20, 21, "Neither pray I for these alone, [his disciples] but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." So that this man reads, Christ prayed for them which shall believe, and he meditates on what belief is, but can get no farther than that it is a gift of God, for it is a matter that cannot be controlled, for we must have evidence before believing. "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness" must shine in our hearts, before we believe God exists. This man was a man of the world in every sense of the word. Some sixteen or seventeen years ago he was fearful he would die and be lost. His wife was a member with Presbyterians, and he went over their methods of salvation, and all met with his approval but the mode of baptism; he wrestled with that for some time, and finally bought a book giving their views, Bible quotations and various arguments that it was not necessary to be buried with Christ in baptism. Had they immersed this man he would have been in fair shape as far as his mind was led then to "work out" his own salvation. He entered upon it with zeal and earnestness, listened to all the sermons, attended Sunday schools and was going to do his part to escape the punishment of the wicked; he cannot recall that there was any love in it at all, only his desire was to go to heaven, and not meet with eternal punishment. This was all right for a few months, and he cannot recall how it was he drifted away from what he had so earnestly started upon. It came about that this man and his wife moved from where they were members, to another part of the city, and his wife took her letter to a branch nearer home. She was asked where her husband was, and she replied that he was not a member anywhere, but if he ever did join anywhere it would be with the Old School Baptists. This husband has often wondered how she came to think that way about him, as he was then ten times more the child of hell than ever. After this man was baptized, the next day, (Sunday) as he went to communion his wife told him it seemed to her he had gone into the fold and she was shut out, and she told him she had prayed heretofore for him; that now she could not pray and that he ought to pray for her. He at once recognized that if he had an experience she had the same, and he felt that the Lord would take care of his own. The latter part of November, 1905, his wife was taken to the hospital to undergo an operation, and could not understand why she was not more fearful of the ordeal; all was peace, and no anxiety as she thought she should have. She read the Bible, but could get little comfort from that; tried to pray, but could not, and as she went to the operating room all she could say was, "God be merciful to me a sinner." She was led to tell the church her experience the second Saturday in February last, and was received, and baptized the last Sunday in February.

I spoke of the motive this man had in joining the Presbyterians some sixteen or seventeen years ago, and I will now try and relate his exercises previous to being received in the Old School Baptist

Church. There was a feeling of discontent, unrest, and his manner of conduct became distasteful; things he had found great pleasure and delight in now became repulsive; he would hate to hear the name of God taken in vain; the world had lost its charms. While he was surrounded with wife, three children, good business, and was respected in a measure by his acquaintances, he felt that if there was no hereafter he would like to end it all. He tried to read ancient history, or most anything that would occupy his mind, but got no comfort, and never once thought of the Bible. His little boy would in childlike faith pray at night, God bless papa and mamma, &c., and he would feel that it was impossible for God to bless one so vile and wretched as he was, but his longings were that he might have the prayer of the child. He was exercised then to be thankful, but who to? God, he felt, could no more be merciful to him, for he had sinned, knowing there was a God, and his exercises were to wonder at the love and mercy of God; that he had been so long-suffering, and and felt that,

"If my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well."

It was the love of God to poor, miserable sinners that drew him, nor was he inclined to hear the gospel preached or read the Bible. But when it pleased Almighty God in his own time he caused him to pass by Southampton meeting-ing-house and hear them singing; he felt he would go in and hear the preaching. While there he heard different ones telling of their exercises and how the Lord had led them, and he was greatly exercised about the life he was leading, and resolved he would forsake his sinful ways and make himself worthy to be one of this flock. While resolving all this in his heart Elder Durand asked him if he had anything to say. As he stood up he saw that there was no good thing in him, never was, and of himself he was powerless to do anything for the salvation of his soul, and if he was ever saved it would be by the mercy of God. I cannot recall now what he said; however the church saw fit to receive him into full fellowship, and before he was aware of it he realized he was among those he had looked on but a moment before and longed to be with. This man has a heart that is deceitful and desperately wicked above all things, and wonders how God can dwell there. There are evils there that he dare not speak about, but he can tell them to Jesus Christ, and his prayer is that where sin abounds in him grace will much more abound, and his hope is based on Christ having died to atone for his sins; upon no other plea or plan can he see his justification before a holy God; not upon any works he ever has done or ever will do, but forever upon the rich, free and reigning grace of Jesus Christ our Lord.

J. M. FENTON.

MT. VERNON, Texas, June 1, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS, EDITORS, CORRESPONDENTS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—It has been a long time since my name has appeared in our good old paper, the SIGNS, but it has been coming to me regularly, and I have enjoyed and appreciated your good letters and editorials. I have been a reader and an occasional correspondent since the year 1877—two years after I was made to hope that God for Christ's sake had forgiven my sins. I had left my native home in the State of Georgia and settled in Texas when I first became acquainted with the dear old SIGNS, and

I soon found that if indeed I had ever learned the doctrine of God our Savior in experience the SIGNS advocated that doctrine. The editors and most of the correspondents who then wrote for the paper have passed from the stage of action, but still we are blessed with the same SIGNS OF THE TIMES as a medium of correspondence through which we can boldly and freely "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints." This I feel that in the main both editors and correspondents have continued to do; but we, too, are being called, one by one, to pass on and give place to others as our fathers have done. Having an abiding hope which is "as an anchor of the soul, both sure an steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered," this does not grieve us. This world is not our home, "here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come." The world here and the flesh are but sources of vexation and disappointment at best; here the child of God is tempted and tried, is persecuted, and enters the kingdom through much tribulation; but in that country whither faith directs, and to which our beloved friends have passed on before and entered, there can be no sorrows, temptations, sicknesses, pains, persecutions, doubts, fears or despondencies. Here we bear the image of the earthy, and suffer and die, there we shall bear the image of the heavenly, shall see the blessed Jesus and be like him, rejoice with him, and live forever in that blessed state of peace and joy known only to the glorified subjects of redeeming grace; then and there we shall have come into full possession of the "inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, [all those] who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." Then why should we want to remain in this unfriendly world or court its favor? Why should we not expect its frowns? since "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Why should we wish our suffering for the truth's sake less? since it is written, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him."

While I am writing thus I am reminded that I am often in a murmuring, complaining frame, and wishing my sufferings less and my road smoother. I seem to feel that if I could only know that my sorrows, the frowns of the world and my persecutions were for Jesus' sake, then I could bear them all patiently. I am sure this is true of many whom I know, but the question, the important question, is: Is it true of me? Our Savior truly said, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." While sometimes I so greatly desire the assurance that will enable me to know that I am not mistaken in the hope of my heart, given me in my boyhood days, more than thirty years ago, yet I almost tremble for one whom I find boasting of his knowledge of his acceptance with God and his ability to please him by living free from sin and continuing in obedience to his commands; I can but regard such an one as a poor, deluded mortal, or a presumptuous hypocrite. The beloved apostle John tells us, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." How good and comforting this testimony. If our confession is truly heartfelt (for a mere formal confession would be but

hypocrisy) we must realize our Adamic nature as vile and sinful, if we realize it as it really is, and if we do realize it, and the knowledge of its vileness is accompanied by a sorrow for it, and a longing desire to be free from it, it is for our comfort written, "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The knowledge of our real condition as vile, sinful and helpless is a revelation, and one that is made to the subject of grace from time to time, for one time it seems is not sufficient. Also the hope of this same subject is based on revelation: Jesus revealed to him and in him as his "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." How wonderful and beautiful when to the believer Jesus is revealed in personal experience in the different phases of his relationship to his dear people: the divinely appointed King, Husband, High Priest, Atoning Sacrifice, Shepherd, Elder Brother and Friend. Reading about it, hearing people talk about it and hearing preachers preach about it, unless we be living subjects and faith abides in our hearts, and it is received in faith, brings no pleasure. If this be the case, however, it always brings joy and peace, whether asleep or awake, in company or alone, in private meditation or conversation, reading or listening to preaching. When all this is seen by faith we can truly sing with the poet:

"His name yields the richest perfume,
And sweeter than music his voice;
His presence disperses my gloom,
And makes all within me rejoice:
I should, were he always thus nigh,
Have nothing to wish or to fear;
No mortal so happy as I,
My summer would last all the year."

As in a loving, peaceful family the voice and conversation of each member, from the head, the reverenced father, and the devoted wife and affectionate mother, to the innocent, prattling child is fraught with peculiar interest, each producing somewhat different yet most pleasing emotions, so is the correspondence in the SIGNS. I do not mean to say a word to the disparagement of a single letter by referring especially to Elder L. H. Hardy's article on secret orders, and brethren Titmus' and Chick's remarks on the same in the issue of the SIGNS for June 1st; also Elders Ker's and Redd's views on instrumental music in the meetings of Old School Baptists. As to the origin and nature of secret organizations none can successfully dispute the position the brethren occupy. That these secret, oath-bound orders are worldly in their origin and nature, yet having a form of religious service, is a sufficient reason for God's children to stand aloof from them; but when we consider that the name of our Savior and Redeemer, the only "name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," is rejected in their forms of service, we have still greater reason to stand aloof from them and less excuse for affiliating with them. They are evidently a component part of the world, referred to by the apostle in his admonition, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." The apostle James tells us that the friendship of the world is enmity with God. "Whosoever therefore [he says] will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God."

If I know my heart I desire to give

heed to the teachings and admonitions of those Scriptures, and our brethren, and the servants of God, and stand aloof from all those things, including organs and such like in the churches, and all other worldly vanities and forms invented by worldly-wise religionists to glorify fleshly lusts, and I would that Primitive Baptists everywhere would live so near the teaching of the Scriptures in doctrine and practice that the line of distinction between church and world might stand out so boldly and vividly that all who desire to may easily discern between them.

I felt especially glad of all those letters I have referred to, including brother Redd's remarks on the subject of the resurrection. May the mercies of Israel's God continue to rest on and abide with managers, editors, correspondents and all lovers of the SIGNS and the truths it advocates everywhere.

Your brother, I hope, in the fellowship of a precious hope,

H. B. JONES.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., June 12, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Our associations are over for this year. They are the Baltimore, Delaware, Delaware River and Warwick. The sessions at each were very good and pleasant, the intercourse of brethren and friends loving and cheerful, and the preaching of the gospel was with power, and came "as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass," because the name of the Lord was published.

At the Delaware River Association nineteen ministers were present, and all were heard from but two, who left before the meeting was over. I believe the association of brethren and lovers of the truth was mutually enjoyed by all, and that many experienced such comfort and refreshing as is expressed in the portions of a letter from my nephew, which I now send you. He lives in Herrick, Pa., our former home, and was here for the first time.

SILAS H. DURAND.

DEAR UNCLE:—I had a delightful visit with the friends in Philadelphia, and considering the liberty I enjoyed in my mind, about the best of the meeting. The visit at sister Durham's was very pleasant. Quite a company gathered during the evening. Elder Mellott came in after his work was over, and Elder Sawin and he talked freely of their early exercises, and of their call to the work of the ministry. Elder and sister Coulter came in quite late, but with "a word in season to him that is weary." How comforting to be in the company of those so devoted to the cause we so dearly love. Now that I am home I am wondering at the great change that has come over my mind since I left here two weeks ago. It seems too good to be true. While sitting here writing I seem to be enjoying that liberty of soul that was given me in my first love of the precious things of the kingdom of our God. I feel my mind dwelling upon the answer of Jesus to the disciples of John who were sent to inquire of him, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" And Jesus said, "Go and shew John again these things that ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." The condition of John in prison seems to represent the condition that I have been in so long. No one but Jesus could tell him the things he so much desired to know; he only could tell him all his questions, as Solomon told the queen

of Sheba. This seems to be our only work, to tell what Jesus has done. "I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord." I feel to walk very softly before the Lord, and to look unto him who is the Author of all our benefits, "the Author and Finisher of our faith." If I look to myself how soon I am in darkness and trouble, but "The Lord is my strength and song, he is become my salvation." This experience of the psalmist came to my mind very sweetly when coming down to one of the little meetings at Waverly, N. Y., where I was teaching many years ago. I remember speaking of it at the little conference meeting at Deacon Harding's. Elder Hubbell had preached, and the conference followed. Neither moth nor rust can corrupt these heavenly treasures; they continue to be as precious as ever.

Affectionately,

HORACE W. DURAND.

ADRIAN, Mich., Dec. 30, 1905.

DEAR ELDER MCPHERSON:—Are not these lovely words: "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God"? This is the church of the living God, built upon the Rock. His little ones are hidden in the cleft of that Rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against them. There is One who is strong to defend, for he has all power in heaven and in earth, and who shall dare to say, "What doest thou?" O what a beautiful sight is the church of God, the city of our solemnities, where the dear children of God meet, and where they speak often one to another and tell of the thorny road which they travel, and of the darkness and gloom that so much of the time hangs over them like a funeral pall. O how I love the place where they meet. To me they are the excellent ones of the earth; their life is hid with Christ in God, and nothing can touch that life. O how secure and safe from harm they are! How lovely they are and how I love them! The world cannot see the beautiful dress which they wear, it is of wrought gold, wrought out upon Calvary's rugged cross, and when Jesus cried, "It is finished," they stood before God pure and spotless. He said, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee;" and lest the shadow of a spot should on my soul be found, he took the robe the Savior wrought and cast it all around. Is not this a lovely wedding dress? It is a free gift to his bride, in whose love he reigns without a rival. But shall I have on that wedding dress? It is the all-absorbing question with me, Will this be my happy lot? It does not at times seem possible. But sometimes I can go back to places and times in my life from which hope will spring up, and for a few moments the dark clouds of unbelief will flee away and all will look bright. I will speak of one bright day in my life which sometimes in memory I live over again. It was a sermon that I heard Elder William L. Beebe preach in the old Fairfield meeting-house, in the State of Michigan, where I once was a member. I believe he was given of the things of Jesus to show them unto us, that we might look and live. It seemed as if the glory of the Lord shone upon the faces of the congregation. O how sorry I was when he said amen, and I had to come back again to earth and grapple once more with earthly things. How my heart went out to that dear servant of God in unfeigned love and fellowship. I believe he is now enjoying that blessed inheritance which God has prepared for them that love him.

I must soon close, but I want to tell

you that I was very much pleased with your good letter and the writing on the Scripture which you did; it was like listening to a good sermon. I was glad that you wrote as you did; I believe you would make no compromise with antichrist, but contend for grace, free grace, from first to last. I believe also that you put your trust in him who has all power in heaven and in earth, and not in the arm of flesh. My fellowship for you is good, and if you ever feel like writing me again I shall be glad to hear from you.

Your sister, I hope,

(MRS.) H. TUTTLE.

HOPEWELL, N. J., March 1, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—BELOVED BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I would like very much to tell you how often I could say amen to what you said upon temptation, but it will be in such a blundering way that I hardly dare make the attempt. When I read brother Kugler's letter I was carried back fifty-five years in memory to the Kingwood Church, when I first looked upon them as the excellent of the earth, with dear Elder Conkling to go in and out before them, and as the servant of Abraham was in the way, so they seemed to me to be in the way, and were given that peace that passeth all understanding. I cannot tell of some great deliverance as some can, but my burden was such for months that all my cry was, "Save a trembling sinner, Lord, whose hope still hovers round thy word." This is still my cry. I was brought to love the Lord's people, and to love the order of his house, but my feelings were very tender, I was so much afraid that the doctrine would hurt some one. In January, 1845, Elder Conklin was with us at Second Hopewell, and he preached to the poor of the flock. I trust the same power that shook the prison walls shook me then. I heard a voice behind me saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Not a doubt has ever crossed my mind about the doctrine. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." No flesh can please God. I am often made to cry, Is this, dear Lord, the way that leads unto the mount of God?

Speaking of temptation, in my earlier experience I was ever anxious to see some particular one come before the church, but I have been made to fully realize that God can perform his own work. My greatest wish the longer I live is to see those who profess to be risen with Christ stand fast and walk worthy of the profession wherewith they have been called, and walk worthy of their calling, and be not carried away with the isms which surround us. I have thought much of the word, as "Christ in you, the hope of glory." If he is ours, then all is ours. May we who profess his name be able in the strength of the Lord to say, I will not go with them. Experience gives us to know that temptation comes in every form. We read that David was a man after God's own heart, and yet he was not perfect. May we who profess his name watch and ask to be set on the watch-tower, that we may hear what he will speak unto us.

I felt thankful for the baptism at Second Hopewell. The Lord, who never slumbers or sleeps, hath not forgotten us as a church. I feel that his judgments are abroad in the earth, and we are as nothing, and the Lord will be exalted. According to the time allotted to man I shall soon go hence to that place from which no traveler ever returns.

In this you will see many mistakes, but if I copy it will be no better. My love to you and to sister Chick.

Yours in hope,

MARY F. HART.

FEBRUARY 19, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I see that my subscription for the SIGNS is now out, and I herewith inclose money for renewal, and also send a few lines which I wrote a few days ago as they came to me, and leave it to the better judgment of the editors whether there is anything in it worth giving place in the SIGNS. "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." That is, nothing which will be for their good will he withhold. I think this is what is meant. Even though we are brought low in sorrow and trouble we are taught that it is for our good. God knows what is best, and we poor, finite creatures know but very little about what is for our good. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Although I have professed to believe these words for the past thirty-five years, yet it seems to me as though I have seldom, if ever, come to a realizing sense of what they mean. All things, both what we would call good and what we would designate as bad. Take, for instance, the life of Christ; could any one as they read it, not knowing the end, think it possible that there could any good come out of all the wickedness done unto one so pure and good as he? Yet when we see the end we remember that through all this suffering and death, and through this only, can any who believe in him have hope. Can any of us expect to escape trial when he suffered so much? They that suffer with him shall also reign with him. Let us take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord, he alone can help us bear it all; he can give the oil of joy for mourning and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. It is enjoined to pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks. O yes, we do learn to thank him for whatever brings us low at his feet, even though it be through severe trials and sufferings; but I am so slow to learn these lessons, it seems to me that I have to learn them over and over, and even then I know them so imperfectly I can only now and then see a ray of sunshine to light my path and give me a little hope in the mercy of God through Christ and what he has done for his people.

Your sister,

(MRS.) NANCY M. OWEN.

LANCASTER, Ohio, March 21, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS AND CORRESPONDENTS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—As it is time to remit I would like to write you a few lines once more, as it may be the last time I am permitted to write. I want to say that I think I do appreciate your letters, as they cause my heart to burn as you talk to me by the way, and I must think you have been with Jesus. I have no hope save in Christ the Redeemer, who I sometimes hope has saved a poor sinner like me; but after great searching I am made to cry aloud, Lord, is it possible I am thine? I who have such a wretched heart, so deceitful and desperately wicked, like a cage of unclean birds, with such a wandering mind that I can have no peace or pleasure. O that it were with me as in the days that are gone, when I felt no evil, and Jesus all the day long was my joy and my song; still I am made to remember my Creator in the days of my youth. If I were eloquent and held the pen of a ready writer, I surely would try to answer some, at least, of Elder Frank McGlade's questions; I do believe I know a greater part of them, taught by the Teacher superior to man. God said no man could see

his face, and he told Moses he would put him in a clift of the rock, and cover him with his hand while he passed by; that he should see his back parts, but his face he should not see. Dear editors, will you please give your views on these Scriptures and oblige a poor, ignorant sinner? I dare not ask the prayers of the saints, for I feel that I am too unworthy of the notice of God's dear people, and that it is hypocrisy for me to claim a name among them, but I dearly love all in the faith.

Yours unworthily,

SARAH B. PEARCE.

RIVERSIDE, Cal., May 3, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am aware of the drawing near of the time for the renewal of my subscription for the blessed old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which is so great a comfort to me as I travel along in these low grounds of sorrow. What a great blessing to believe (but do I believe?) that Jesus the Son of God was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. If that is so, then am I not following him who hath said, "I will not leave you comfortless"? To-day I feel cast down, but not destroyed, and hope he will come again. Brethren, I want to tell you how I have enjoyed the assembly of the saints; in reading over the four numbers from June 1st to July 15th of tho SIGNS of 1900, I felt almost that I had attended an association. There have been a few Old Baptists come to this place lately, and I gave them these papers to read, and told them how happy I had felt while reading them, and one sister said that she, too, had experienced the same comfort in reading them. The question has been asked, Why worship the SIGNS? We do not worship the paper, but the Spirit which dwells in the contributors to its columns. Job said he knew that his Redeemer liveth, and that he would stand upon the earth in the latter day, and I feel to say that he stood with dear old Elder Beebe in the division, and will still stand with his people, although earth and heaven be shaken. Read Hebrews xii. 26–29, and give views through the SIGNS if convenient, and oblige one of the least, and most vile of all, yet who loves to read the explanation of these things.

Your feeble sister, if one at all,

ELIZA SARBER.

CARMACK, Miss., Feb. 25, 1906.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—If you will allow such a poor wretch as I feel to be to thus address you. For some time I have had it in mind to write you, from some cause unknown to me. I am not a subscriber to your paper, but would like to be if my financial condition would permit. A sister who takes it has given me a few copies to read, and I want you to know how much I enjoyed every one of them, and fully indorse the same. I have been trying to preach for four years, have charge of four churches, beside having a large family to provide for, and am not able to do a full day's work. It seems that my road is a hard one to travel, but I must endure it, and the reproaches of the world, but let the world say what it may, my only theme is salvation by grace, both in time and eternity. The longer I live, the more I fall out with the works of the creature. I believe in good works, but they are what faith exercises the creature to do, not a part by the creature and a part by grace, but all of grace. Paul says if it is of grace it is no more works, so I claim works and grace will not mix, any more than oil and water.

I will close for fear I weary you. I hope the good Lord will uphold you and enable you to go on publishing the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Pray for poor, unworthy me.

Your brother in hope,

J. M. PALMERTREE.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., June 5, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I write this to give you the sad intelligence that dear Elder David Bartley is dead. His death occurred on June 1st at 7 o'clock a. m., and came as calmly and peacefully as a restful sleep. He came to my house last April 25th, after having spent the winter in Montgomery, Ala., where he was sick the entire time. We carried him upstairs in a chair to his room, which he was never able to leave. He was blessed with his strong mentality up to his last moments, and delighted to talk of the doctrine of grace, which was his meat and drink. Awhile before his departure he awoke from seemingly a light slumber, with delight beaming upon his face, and said to his wife, sister Sallie M. Bartley, "I had a dream just now that the Lord had sent a divine storm over the whole earth." After this he prayed and asked his wife to pray for the Lord to come quickly. I sat by his bed and saw the end come as a sweet sleep enshrouding its subject for a refreshing rest. Elder Chas. M. Hood was blessed with the ability to talk very appropriately and touchingly on the occasion of the funeral, at 6 o'clock p. m. of the day on which he died, speaking of his able and touching defense of the doctrine which he so much loved, and how much it comforted the hearts of the saints. Thus seemed to be fulfilled what John wrote when he said, "And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

Brother Bartley was conveyed to Carthage Mo., for interment; he was seventy-nine years old the 27th of last April.

Yours in an humble hope through the merits of the same grace that supported brother Bartley,

GEORGE M. HITE.

[IT could not be otherwise than that we should be saddened at the coming of the above letter from brother Hite. Since the coming of the sorrowful letter we have received a full account of our dear brother's last sickness and departure, from his beloved wife. We can only give some faint expression of our sorrow that we shall see his face on earth no more, or read from his pen the strong and clear statements of truth, that truth which was for so many years dear to him. From the above letter we are assured that the end of our dear brother was peace. We know that very many will long miss his clear testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus. We have personally known our dear aged brother for more than thirty years, and while not often meeting in that time we have maintained an almost unbroken correspondence with him, which has been both pleasant and profitable to ourself. It has been our great privilege to receive constant tokens of his kindness to us and of his fellowship for us. When one whom we have loved is taken from us it is hard to express just that which we feel, and thus we feel in writing these words. May God bless his dear companion and all who loved brother Bartley, and the churches and brethren who will miss him so sorely.—C.]

(See obituary notice on page 414.)

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1906.

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EDITORS:
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TRADITION.

THIS word is used several times in the New Testament, and while the word is not used at all in the Old Testament, yet the thing signified by it is frequently spoken of there. It signifies what is handed down orally from parents to children in distinction from written words or facts. Children, for instance, obtain most of the language which they use orally, or traditionally, from their parents, and also inherit most of their ideas and beliefs in the same way. In the Old Testament it was enjoined upon the Israelites to tell to their children the things which had been done for them as a people in the past by the favor of their God. They were to speak of these things in their outgoing and incoming, in their downsitting and their uprising, and so the story was to go on from father to child. In the days of the Savior, and for many generations before, they had a vast mass of traditions concerning the law, which were not written, and by which they made void the word which was written. These evil traditions were more to them than the plain letter of the word of God; the Savior rebuked them for their zeal for these foolish and childish traditions, because the law of God was made void by them. But traditions might be right, and as such contained the truth, either as a matter of history or of the teachings of God with regard to the walk of his people before him. Thus his word was handed down from the creation until the time of Moses, who was inspired of God to write all these things for the surer preservation of them, and that there might not be a departure from the truth by the careless telling of it from one to another. Men's words might be forgotten or changed in large measure as they came down from father to son, and to succeeding generations, and that, too, without any intent to forget or to change them; but the word when written could always be appealed to, it must remain ever the same. Men's memories might prove treacherous, but words written upon parchment were to be seen of all, and children could read just that which their fathers read, and know for themselves what was written. Thus our God has been pleased to give us his written word in the Old and New Testaments, and by that word we are to try all things. If traditions agree with that word they are right traditions, if not, they are untrue and not to be followed.

As the Jews in the old time made much account of their traditions, even to the making void of the law of God itself, so have the Romanists done in these gospel days; counting their traditions of more force and value than the New Testament Scriptures themselves. In this, as in many other things, they have taken the place of the Pharisees, making more account of forms, and ceremonies, and superstitions, than of the blood of Christ as the means of salvation. Old Baptists have always held to the truth that the plain, simple word of God is to be regarded in all things as the rule of

the believer's faith and practice, so that whatever is taught there is to be observed and believed, and what is not clearly taught there is to be rejected, and must not be considered as binding upon the hearts and consciences of men. This has been in all ages, and still is, one distinguishing characteristic of the true church of God. It will be a woeful time indeed for Old Baptists when they shall depart from this plain, simple rule, and allow themselves to be carried away with the plausible reasonings and traditions of men. It is true that at times some churches may mistake the meaning of some Scripture, but it is sure that as a whole the church will be kept by the same Spirit that indited the word. If the church be liable to mistake the meaning of some Scriptures, much more would she be liable to mistake the meaning of tradition, and especially when there is to be seen such a great mass of it as Rome presents for her foundation in her faith and practice. If traditions are needed, as she claims, to interpret the word of God, who shall interpret her traditions in their turn? Her interpretations need interpretation much more than the Scriptures themselves. Through tradition human reason and human policy have come to reign in all her church polity, and out of this a great mass of superstition has grown up around her portals. When the true church of God shall go back from the letter of the word to tradition and human policy, either in her faith or practice, similar results will follow her departure.

But in the New Testament the use of the word is not always evil. The word is used twelve times in the gospels and epistles. In ten of those places it is used in an evil sense, in two places it is used in a good sense; both of these places are in second Thessalonians. Beside this, in 1 Corinthians xi. 2 the word "ordinances" is in the original Greek the same word as is translated "tradition" elsewhere, and there the brethren are told to keep the ordinances (traditions) as Paul had delivered them to the church there. The same exhortation is given in 2 Thess. ii.: "Hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle." It is evident that Paul in these places refers to verbal teachings which he had given them while he was among them; these they were to observe. It is sure that in these verbal teachings there could be nothing contrary to what he wrote, but it seems from a careful reading that he had taught them some things by word of mouth that were not included in his epistles to them. From this we are to learn that a thing is not to be rejected simply because it has come to us by tradition, or by word of mouth from father to son, but all that comes to us in that way must be strictly tested by the word of God written and left on record for our guidance. It is a command to be remembered and observed at all times: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." All that is evil in the churches does not come by tradition, though very much of it does; some evils have their origin in a headstrong and reckless opposition to some matter of faith or practice simply because it is an old practice. What is new, however, may be wrong or contrary to the Bible, and so also what is old may be in harmony with it; nothing is to be rejected simply because it is new or old, but alone because it is contrary to what the Scriptures teach. It is unwise to say that this or that is merely tradition, until it be carefully examined by the written

word, whether it be new or old; much also that is evil comes into the churches from a desire to present something new or startling. While it is true that an old error gathers no dignity because of its age, on the other hand error is none the less ugly because it comes in the bloom and with the nimble feet of youth. We cannot believe that our God has left his church in all past ages in the dark concerning any matter of faith or practice that is vital to godliness.

There are traditional views of portions of the word of God; of these also it is true that some are according to the word and some are not. Because of this it behooves us all to carefully examine each item of our belief and practice by the Scriptures; for this reason let us carefully read the word at all times. Some of Berea were more noble than others because they searched the Scriptures daily to see if the things taught them were true. Even the inspired apostles appealed to the Scriptures often, that is, the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and of the dear Redeemer it was said often that he did or said this or that, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, and he again and again referred those to whom he spoke to the Old Testament Scriptures. That true life and light were in his teaching, and in the teaching of the inspired apostles, is shown, because all that he or they said was in full harmony with the law and the testimony; and we wish to again say that while it is no doubt true that some Scriptures have been misunderstood and misapplied by different churches and different ministers in the past, the same is no doubt true now as well; and also it has been true and remains true that our God has not suffered and does not suffer his church, as a whole, to very greatly misunderstand the word. It is sure that God will preserve his children as a whole from any great error; Hymenæus and Philetus may as individuals embrace grievous heresy, but the church as a whole will never do so. Thus it appears by what is said to the seven churches of Asia in the first chapters of the book of Revelation, that the most of them had given place to errors, either in faith or practice, but no two had yielded to precisely the same error; the error of each appears to have been confined to one church. No one church however could boast over another, for all were imperfect in some one thing or another except two: Smyrna and Philadelphia. But the word of inspiration solemnly exhorted and reproved all that were in error; each one was warned that the particular error embraced by itself would destroy the visibility of the body unless repented of and forsaken; all error tolerated by any church will eat as does a canker, to the destruction of the body.

But our chief object in writing the above was to call attention to the fact that some traditions are in harmony with the word, and therefore tradition itself must not be rejected until it be proved to be contrary to the Scriptures. That is, we mean any custom, or practice, or belief, which has come down to us from our fathers as a tradition, ought not to be lightly cast one side just because it is tradition, but only after careful examination to see if indeed it be contrary to the testimony of the written word. On the other hand, if some one claims to have a revelation of the meaning of the word altogether different from the general view of that portion of the word as held among the churches, that new view ought to be very strictly tested by the word before being promulgated among

the churches. A new tradition is as bad as an old one, if not supported by the plain teaching of the Scriptures, and both alike are good if they be in harmony with the word. It is a right which every brother has in the church, to present for the consideration of the church what seems to him right understanding of any portion of the word, or of any subject in the word, but if when it be presented it does not commend itself to the brethren, then it is not his right to seek to press it upon the church. Let him remember that if it be right he has received it of God and in no other way, and so let him also remember that if others are to know the same things it also must come to them by revelation of God; let him wait, therefore, after he has presented it, until God is pleased to give to his brethren the same light that has been given to him. Paul in Philippians covers all this ground when he says, "Whereto we have attained let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." But "if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you." For ourself we can only say that it has seemed to us that we ought to be very slow to present that which is contrary to the general view of the churches in the past generations and up to the present time. We have felt as though we desired to be very sure from the word, after careful study of it, that any matter of faith or practice held by the church in general all these ages past has been contrary to the word, before condemning it. One ought to be true to his convictions, but let him see that his convictions have a "thus saith the Lord" for them before accepting them or presenting them. Let us be sure that any principle of faith or practice is only tradition, and that it is contrary to the commandments and testimonies of the word of God, before rejecting it or assailing it; let us not forget that some traditions are in harmony with the word. If we do remember this we shall be careful. On the other hand, if we remember that many traditions are contrary to the word we shall be earnest to search them out and reject them.

Brethren, consider what we have here written. May it please God to give us understanding in all things. C.

ACTS X. 34.

"THEN Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons."

The above text is often used to sustain the idea of non-election and free will, but like all other Scripture it belongs to the household of faith, and teaches the doctrine believed and advocated by the Old School Baptists.

After referring briefly to the direct import we hope to establish by this very text the truth that God is a respecter of persons, and that the man respected of God has never had anything to do with the favor shown him, in the sense of meriting it.

Jesus said on one occasion to his disciples, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd. The disciples did not understand these words when they were spoken, but were given to know them afterwards. It is sometimes said that Peter did not know, even on the day of Pentecost, that God would show mercy to the Gentiles. Perhaps he did not, but it will be remembered that in that wonderful sermon he said to his brethren (Jews), "The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." "Unto you, and to

your children," was as far as the promise extended to the Jews; they that were afar off were Gentiles, these God would call. Peter may not have known just then what the Spirit meant to signify by the words, "to all that are afar off," but it pleased the Lord to give him a vision after this by which he was taught God's purpose concerning the Gentiles. Peter went upon the housetop to pray, "and he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, and saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet, knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth; wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven." Peter was a Jew, and had observed the law, hence no unclean beast or fowl had been partaken of by him. While the lamb, the kid and clean birds were in the sheet or vessel, they had become contaminated by the company of the unclean, hence Peter said all were common and unclean. He did not know at the moment what this vision meant, but doubted what it should mean.

Just here we will call attention to the fact that this vessel with all therein was let down from heaven and received up into heaven again. Does God deal with unclean things? Yes, he does not deal with anything else. The things in the vessel show that all men by nature are unclean, the Jew as well as the Gentile: "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." But while by nature unclean, God through his Son hath cleansed them, hence we must not call God's people common or unclean. This vision was for the express purpose, doubtless, to make known to his servant Peter the secret that had been hid from the beginning of the world: that God had a people among the Gentiles. God's ways are equal, hence before this experience of Peter upon the housetop God had appeared to a certain man in Cæsarea, called Cornelius, who was a Gentile, and commanded him to send to Joppa for Peter. His messengers reached Joppa while Peter was wondering what the vision should mean, and told him their mission. God now commands Peter to go with them, doubting nothing. When he came to the house and heard Cornelius tell of God's work he then said, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." He then understood that God has a people among the Gentiles as well as among the Jews, and that all alike are cleansed by the blood of Christ; he then understood the language of Jesus: "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold;" he now understood the true import of his own words on the day of Pentecost: "to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." So far as nationality is concerned God is not a respecter of persons.

We will now take up the opposite view and endeavor to show by our text and its connection that God is a respecter of persons, that he ever has been a respecter of persons, and that the man respected never did merit God's favor. The very fact that all manner of beasts and creeping things and fowls were in the vessel shows clearly that God is a respecter of

persons or he would not have shown that he has a people in every nation, tongue and kindred. If God is not a respecter of persons why did he send Peter to Cornelius that he might hear his everlasting gospel? If God is not a respecter of persons why did he choose a people in Christ before the world began? To manifest his respect unto men he blessed Abel with faith, gave him to know that he (Abel) was righteous. This he did not do for Cain, though by nature there was no difference between them, both were sinners. It was to show him a respecter of persons even with the second born in the earth; strange as it may seem he manifested his choice in the second born or younger throughout the Old Testament Scriptures. When God caused the flood to come upon the earth he showed himself a respecter of persons in that he saved Noah and his family, while death came to all other men. In the ark with Noah and his family were all manner of beasts and fowls of the air, and creeping things, exactly the same as were in the vessel which Peter, in vision, saw let down from heaven, and in the ark they represented the same truth that they did in the vision given to Peter.

God himself has preached his own everlasting gospel from the beginning of the world; he preached it to Adam in the garden of Eden, he preached it in Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David and all the prophets, and in all the ordinances and sacrifices of the law. Election according to his purpose and grace, and conformity to the image of his Son according to his predestination, has ever been his doctrine, and it will stand when all worlds are passed away. God's first sermon to man was salvation by grace through Jesus Christ. His second sermon was election according to his foreknowledge and will, made manifest in the choice of Abel, while Cain was left in his sins. The same is true in the case of Jacob; by nature there was no difference between him and his brother Esau, but according to God's election there was a great difference, therefore God said, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." This he said that his purpose according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, and this he said before the children were born, neither having done good or evil. This doctrine was preached by Paul, who said, By grace are ye saved, not of works, lest any man should boast. God loved Jacob in Christ before the world began, he loved him before he was born of the flesh, he loved him when he took advantage of his brother and obtained his birthright, he loved him when he deceived his old blind father, Isaac, and received the blessing intended for Esau. God did not love him because of his wickedness, but because of his own election or respect of persons according to his purpose and grace given him in Christ before the world began. For this same purpose he called Paul and Timothy with an holy calling, not according to their works. He did not hate Esau because of any evil performed by him, but because he was not included in his electing love and mercy. This is God's right, and no man can say to him, Thou art unjust; we are the clay, he is our Potter. "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" The whole Bible is filled with this doctrine of God's discriminating grace, which shows God to be a respecter of persons. Time would fail us to mention all places where it is declared and made manifest. But before we bring this feeble effort to a

close let us all examine our own experience in this matter. Many of us have been separated from parents, brothers and sisters in the flesh, by this work of grace in our hearts, as we hope. We have also been separated from companions and friends and made to feel alone in the world. Is not this because God is a respecter of persons? In our own life this has been the case, not one of our father's family is an Old Baptist; we are the youngest of the family; if God is not a respecter of persons why should we be where we are and what we are? We feel to say with Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am." This every child of God will say.

May we all, dear brethren, be more and more confirmed in this doctrine of election which makes God a respecter of persons. O for hearts of gratitude for his abounding grace and mercy in calling us out of nature's darkness into his marvelous light. May he give us to show forth his praises, and his name shall have all the glory.

We now leave the subject for your consideration. K.

ELDER W. W. POLK HEARD FROM

In the last number of the Signs (June 15th) there appeared a letter of inquiry from Elder I. N. Newkirk concerning the whereabouts of Elder W. W. Polk since the earthquake at San Francisco; there has been much uneasiness in the minds of his brethren regarding his safety. We are glad to say that very recently we received an interesting letter from brother Polk giving many details of the disaster, and giving his address as Berkeley, Cal. He was not injured at all personally, but suffered some loss. We hope to be able to publish his letter in our next number.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder B. E. Cubbage.)

The Delaware Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Wilmington Church, at Wilmington, Delaware, May 23rd, 24th and 25th, 1906, to the several churches composing this Association sendeth greeting in the Lord.

Dearly Beloved Brethren:—How good it is to have the desire to meet with the brethren at these meetings—bright spots in the wilderness. May it be our privilege to feel and manifest the same clinging in love to the church and to the brethren that Ruth expressed when she said, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me," being united in that same love of the truth and in that like precious faith that was delivered to the saints of old.

In this our annual letter, known as the Circular Letter, we desire to present the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, looking to the travel of Israel, as the Spirit of the Lord, in experience, is manifest to them, as our guide. The apostle Paul in his second letter to Timothy, second chapter, fifteenth verse, exhorts him as follows: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." The rightly dividing the word of truth is the burden of the true minister of the gospel; and to know the truth and abide therein is the whole desire of the Lord's people. Christ declares himself

to be the truth, and his people find no rest, or peace, or abiding-place save in Jesus and his resurrection. Paul did not exhort Timothy to rightly divide the word of truth from the teachings of antichrist (error), but to rightly divide the word of truth in the ministration of that word (Christ) to his people. Truth emanates from the God of heaven and earth, while error, and all that is opposed to truth, springs from the fountain of evil (antichrist); therefore the great work of dividing the two was wrought by Jesus, who hath put all enemies under his feet, led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men, by the one atonement whereby he hath made all things perfect in the complete and perfect fulfillment of the work the Father sent him to do. Hence to those that are Israel, chosen in Christ Jesus and called, there is no walking in error, no mingling of truth and error. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him." And in all the way the Lord leads his people to bring them to Christ do they experience and learn of that truth which is in Christ Jesus, whether it be to lead them by the rivers of still waters, or to try them as gold is tried, or refine them as silver is refined. It is all truth, "Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." The condition of mind and experience which to the poor sinner again and again appear to be the fruits of their sinful nature and error is but the special way in which the Lord leads his people, to manifest the exceeding great and wonderful riches of his grace to his children. If ye be not chastised, then are ye bastards and not sons. He leads his people through the valley of the shadow of death, not that they shall fear evil and turn from it, but that they shall fear no evil. Jonah found the word of truth proceeding from the mouth of God when in the belly of the fish, a trying experience, and the followers of Jesus in trying experiences find in the belly of their human nature the word of truth speaking forth to their good and to the glory of God. Paul declares "that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Therefore in looking into the manifold experiences through which the Lord's people are called to pass, we find them at no place or in no condition that has not been ordained by our heavenly Father in his wisdom to fulfill some wise decree. Error, therefore, is excluded, there is no place found for it in preaching the word of truth, presenting Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith, the sincere milk of the word upon which the new-born babes feed and grow, the bread of life. But we find in that same word of truth the strong meat that belongeth to them that are of full age, who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Brought into the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ in the dark and trying experiences, when the Lord is with his people, yet the sunshine of his presence is removed for a time, that the doubting, stumbling child of God shall know that he leadeth all the way; that he is a Shepherd that slumbereth not, nor sleepeth. Thus Timothy was exhorted to preach Jesus as the sin-bearer, Jesus as the risen Lord and Savior, Jesus our all and in all, rightly dividing the word of truth unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. The Sin-bearer in that he was made "to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." It was our transgressions that carried him to the cross; here we see the shed blood of the Redeemer, for the remission of sin

by the coming of our Lord and Savior in the flesh, which is unto death, the death of our Adamic nature. "I kill, and I make alive, I wound, and I heal, neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand." But in this death to self we are made alive to God. "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living." And whether we live therefore or die we are the Lord's. The risen Lord and Savior, in that he "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification," victorious over death, hell and the grave, robbed the grave of victory, and broke the bars of death; life and immortality are brought to light through the gospel. The angel signifieth to John (Rev. i. 18,) of himself, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore."

May his people abide in love, and be guided into all truth for his name's sake. Amen.

J. G. EUBANKS, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

(Written by Elder F. A. Chick.)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association convened with the church at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 30th and 31st, and June 1st, 1906, to the churches composing the same sendeth brotherly greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is in our mind to address you at this time by way of stirring up your pure minds to a remembrance of the things which you have heard and learned by the grace of God revealed unto you, when you were called out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Lord, and in doing so nothing can be better than to call your attention to the word of the Lord, or some portion of it, revealed in the Scriptures. This has been the custom for many years at these annual meetings of your messengers, as you know, and it is a custom for which we think we have full warrant in the word of God, for it was the custom of the apostles to write letters to the churches, and in this way to present to them things important for them to remember. Some of these letters are given to us in the Bible, and reference is also made to other letters, copies of which we do not have recorded. But it must be remembered that the epistles recorded in the New Testament Scriptures are inspired of God, so that in them there can be no error, while all that we may write at any time must be brought to the test of the inspired word, and if not in harmony with that it is because there is no true light in it.

Among the things which the Scriptures present as being good and profitable, is the general walk which is becoming to those who profess to be the children of the King and followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. The order of subjects in the epistles of Paul, speaking generally, was first to present the strong principles of the doctrine of salvation by grace, then to speak of the trials and victories of believers as they walked along this narrow way, and then to exhort to a becoming walk, in view of what great things had been done for them, and the glorious hope set before them, of grace to sustain while they lived on earth, and of glory in the world to come at the right hand of God. This last thing which we have named must have been judged of exceeding importance by the inspired apostles, since so much is said in all the epistles concerning it. Surely it is most important for the glory of grace and of God, and for the well being of those who serve

him, that their conversation should be in harmony with their high calling in Christ Jesus, and we are sure that you all, brethren, whenever the power and sweetness of this salvation which is in Christ is felt in your souls, do feel stirred up, not only to gratitude for the mercy which has found you, and the blessed hope which has been given you, but also to an earnest desire that you might glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are his. When the hope which is in Christ is revealed, the question no longer is, "What must I do to be saved?" but, "What wilt thou have me to do?" It is not now, What must I do for myself, or for my own benefit? since it now appears to such a soul that Christ has done all that needs to be done for him, but rather the question is, What wilt thou have me to do, as thy servant, bought with a price, and made willing to be thy servant forever? To such a soul at such a time as this, this question is of the greatest importance. To glorify God has become to him the one desire of his heart. Like Job, he now fears God for naught. Let us thank God that there is such a religion in the world as this. Satan questioned the reality of this religion then, and unregenerate men who yet profess that religion which arises out of selfishness, question its reality still. But, brethren, we do trust that we and you know that there is such a thing as a religion in which is liberty and not bondage, and in which the love of God reigns, and not the love of self, and which, whether loss or gain ensue, still believes in and loves God, and desires to serve him. To one in whose heart such a love dwells, the constant question will be, How can I glorify that God who has done so much for me? And if such a soul, upon self-examination, or when the Lord searches him and tries his thoughts, finds that he is wanting in this true spirit of love, and that what he is doing is but a task, rather than a blessed privilege, he is at once put upon great searchings of heart, and is grieved and filled with mourning and shame that he should be so far from what he desires. At such a time he will earnestly pray for more love, saying in spirit, "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart."

It is a blessed work wrought in the heart through the operation of the Spirit which brings one to say before the Lord, "What wilt thou have me to do?" It is a work which the Spirit alone can work there; it is a work which embraces in itself first of all a conviction of guilt and of just condemnation, for thus only can true humility be produced and realized by any one; it is a work which reveals Jesus, and Jesus only, as the Savior, so that to him belongs all the glory of our redemption from death and hell; it is a work which produces gratitude and love to God, and a desire for conformity to his holy will, while on the other hand it produces a hatred of all that is evil, and especially a hatred and an abhorrence of sin as seen in one's own self. It produces a great tenderness of conscience, so that things which before seemed trivial faults, not worth notice, become most grievous indeed, because they indicate, as straws indicate which way the wind blows, the tendency of the evil heart within. It also shows the subject of it that he cannot mark out his own pathway, or guide his own steps in that pathway. How well such an one comes to know, like Jeremiah, that the way of man is not in himself, that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. And now, out of all these revela-

tions of himself to himself, and of the way of life and salvation through Christ, and of the beauty of holiness, there arises a great longing for that way of holiness and that this new life might appear in all his words and deeds, as well as in the very thoughts of his heart. Thus his prayer, like the psalmist, will be, "O Lord search me and know me. Try my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." And now of what vast importance does divine direction in all these matters to such a soul come to be. In substance the voice of his soul will be, O Lord, I know not thy will; I want to serve thee, I want to walk in thy ways, I would obey thee in all things, but I do not know what is thy will. Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? This is the very spirit of that service which the Lord owns and blesses, because it is his own gracious work; it is a work which shall praise the Lord, because it must and will be made manifest in the mortal flesh of all them that believe. The true work of God cannot be hid. As the poet said, it may "lie buried long in dust," but still it shall not deceive the hope that is in it; it will work in the heart and mind like hidden leaven, and the voice of it cannot be stilled. Such an one may strive to still its voice by carnal reasonings and carnal doings, and it may well be that his fellows know nothing of it, but the Lord has planted this seed in the heart and it has life in itself, and that life cannot be destroyed, and it will overcome all obstacles, yea, even the opposition of all the world, the flesh and the devil, and in the end God shall be glorified.

Does this question, "What wilt thou have me to do?" abide with us day by day? Where shall we find the answer? It must be, all of it, in the Bible. The Bible is the one rule of faith and practice to all the church of Christ. When we would know what the Lord requires us to do, it will not do to go to the teachings of men, even of the wisest and soberest of men; there is no infallible guide save the Lord by his Spirit. Ministers and fathers, to whom we go for counsel, after all must themselves be tested by the written word of God. What a solemn thing it is to remember that the Spirit of God judges all that we say or do, and that he has put the spirit of judgment in all his people also, so that they are to judge his messengers. When we come to consider the things of God, and of his house on earth, our opinions, our judgment, our words, have no weight at all unless they be in harmony with the letter of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. We say in harmony with the letter of the word, because the spirit of it must be one with the letter. No thought, no experience, is anything better than mere carnal fancy, unless it agrees with clear Bible testimony. The Scriptures are our rule of faith and practice. In these Scriptures our high calling is again and again spoken of, and abundant exhortation is given to walk worthy of it. We are said to be called unto glory and virtue. Our calling is in the Lord, it is a heavenly calling, it is the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. We are called unto the fellowship of Jesus our Lord; it is a calling unto liberty. We are called in one body and in one hope of our calling; it is a calling unto an heavenly inheritance, and the name of the Lord is called upon by them. These references show how high and exalted is the state to which the redeemed have been called. Thy have, like their great type Israel, been called out of Egypt into

Canaan, out of bondage into liberty. Henceforth they serve not as slaves, but as freeborn children. The bond that holds them to this service is love, and not slavish fear. In this service there is no room for any element of selfish fear, or hope, or love, to enter, but rather the fear of the Lord, the hope of glorifying him, and love, not only to the blessed Savior, but also love of all his ways, so that it becomes the very meat and drink of his people to do his will. What wonderful liberty is this to which we have been called.

How much more ardent is that service which is produced by love than that which has selfish fear or hope for its motive, and how willing and joyful is such service in all the house of God. It is sure that if any of us possess this love of God shed abroad in the heart, we shall desire to know and do the will of God. If on the other hand, no such desire is manifest, there is, there can be, no evidence that the love of God abounds within. If there be faith there will be works. At least it is true that faith cannot be made to appear except by works that are in accordance with it. It is as true today as when the apostle wrote the solemn words, "Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." That is, the apostle would say, you cannot show faith without works; yea, more than this, he intended by these words, we are persuaded, that if there were no works, then also was there no faith.

What solemn questioning this last consideration is fitted to produce in all who really have come to know these things. Graceless carnal professors will find in this nothing to disturb them, nothing to alarm them, for they rest satisfied with their outward formality, or their fleshly morality; but the spiritually minded, the Lord's humble poor, in whom there is a spirit of great jealousy toward God, and against themselves, will often be greatly tried at seeing in themselves so much carelessness of feeling, and in their daily lives so much that is of the flesh and the world. If indeed any of the Lord's children have gotten into that place where these things do not affect them, where they can go on day after day with no heart longings for God and the savor of his word, no longings for greater love, faith and zeal, no desires for seasons of blessed communion with him, at the end they shall find that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. But if any one is troubled, saying, O that it were with me as in days past, when the candle of the Lord shined round about me, and because he feels far away is cast down and cannot be satisfied until the Lord once more restores unto him the joy of his salvation, and washes him and purges him, so that he is once more clean, let not that one be in despair, for the mercy of the Lord has sought him out, and he shall find that the thoughts of the Lord are thoughts of peace and not of evil. And if any are where these things do not affect them, it will appear in their life among their brethren; there will be a forsaking of the assemblies of the people of God; they will not be glad when it is said unto them, "Let us go into the house of the Lord." Conversation upon the things of God and his salvation will be far from their lips. They will not find their joy in hearing of Jesus and his word. The marriage supper of the Lamb will not interest them so much as does the gain or the pleasure of this world. When it appears that any who have walked with the people of God are in such a state as this, there will be sor-

row among the spiritual; and more than this, there will arise great searchings of heart lest such a state may also be theirs, and earnest desires unto God that they may be kept from falling in such a way. How mournful were the words of Paul when he said to his brethren, "Ye did run well; who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the truth?"

Finally, brethren, let us exhort you that you give heed to these things. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." "Consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works: * * * and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." These are the words of inspiration through the pen of the apostle. May it be ours to heed them, for they are good as all the word of the Lord is good.

We leave these considerations with you all. May we all consider them well, and be given grace to abide in them.

S. H. DURAND, Moderator.
ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at the residence of the bride, on Wednesday p. m., Oct. 18th, 1905, John Stapleton Moore and Miss Jane Elizabeth Anderson, both of Princeton, N. J.

By Elder Silas H. Durand, March 14th, 1906, at the home of the bride's father, in Hartsville, Pa., Charles S. Kratz, of Philadelphia, and Miss Etta L. DeCourcey.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, June 6th, 1906, at the home of the bride's parents, near Halcottville, N. Y., Sinclair Snyder, of South Kortright, N. Y., and Miss Ursula J. Hubbell.

By Elder J. G. Eubanks, June 12th, 1906, at the home of the bride's mother, Wilmington, Del., G. Gibson Warrington, of Wilmington, and Miss Harriette R. Reed, granddaughter of the late Elder E. Rittenhouse.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder David Bartley, my dear husband, fell asleep in the full assurance of the living faith, in his 80th year, the morning of June 1st, 1906, at the home of Dr. George M. Hite, in Nashville, Tenn. He had been growing more feeble for several months, but not having his new book completed he continued his work for weeks, more by force of will than strength of body. When that was finished he felt that his life's work was done, and but waited for the time of his departure. On Thursday afternoon after a short sleep he told me he had dreamed that the Lord had sent a divine storm over all this country. I sat by him and fanned him all night Thursday night, and neither of us slept. Up to that time he had suffered but little in all his long sickness, and he was blest with a peaceful mind, fully reconciled to the will of the Lord. But the night was warm and close, and he suffered for breath, but every audible breath was a prayer of faith and hope and love. He tried to comfort me by telling me to often read Hebrews and the eighth chapter of Romans. Once he said, "I'll wait, wait, wait." I said, "All the days of your appointed time?" He said, "No, I'll wait for the will of the Lord to be done," then as his breathing grew harder he begged me to ask the Lord to come quickly and take him home. I reminded him of the sufferings of Jesus, whom he adored, and it comforted him. He raised his hand above and repeated the word, "Life, life, life," many times. I called Drs. Hite and M. M. Harvill, but nothing could stay the icy hand of death. During the few hours before he passed away he was comfortable, and conscious to the last. He commended me to the Lord and to the power of his grace, and assured me that the Lord would raise him up again, that he would come forth clothed in his likeness. Just before he fell asleep he opened his eyes wide and turned them heavenward; they were luminous with ineffable wonder and surprise, then without a struggle he went to sleep as quietly as a babe on its mother's breast. Thus passed away an humble, faithful servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, who had been in the ministry over fifty years. The last sermon he preached was at Montgomery, Ala., the third Sunday in January, taking for his text 2 Samuel xxiii. 5. He often referred to it, and expressed the belief that it was the last time he would be permitted to speak in the name of the Lord.

At 6 o'clock on the evening of the 1st of June we had appropriate services at the house, when our brother Elder C. M. Hood spoke with great comfort and power, after which I started on my lonely journey with him to Carthage, Mo., where on June 4th, after a service of praise and prayer from the home of our son, Gilbert B. Bartley, I laid his dear body in its last resting-place.

I hope the dear brethren whom he loved and served so long will remember me in prayer.

Your sister, SALLIE M. BARTLEY.

BLUE SPRINGS, Mo.

DIED—**Miss Elsie B. Harding,** at her home, No. 355 North St., Middletown, N. Y., April 15th, 1906. She was born near Bloomingburg, N. Y., Dec. 16th, 1845, thus her stay on earth was about 61 years. She was the daughter of Jairus and Elizabeth Harding. She was baptized in the fellowship of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church Feb. 2nd, 1878, by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. She is survived by two sisters: Mrs. Charles Brown, of Middletown, N. Y., and Mrs. Himan Collard, of Winterton, N. Y.

The funeral service was held in her home, conducted by the writer; the interment was in the New Vernon cemetery.

ALSO,

DIED—**Josephine Jenkins Little,** in Middletown, N. Y., April 27th, 1906, aged 67 years. She was the widow of Mr. J. H. Little, and a sister of the late Elder Benton Jenkins. She was baptized by the writer in the fellowship of the Middletown and Wallkill Old School Baptist Church, Sept. 25th, 1898. She continued a worthy member to the last, believing and rejoicing in the doctrine of salvation by grace; she was established in the doctrine of predestination, and gloried in the God of the whole earth. She was much afflicted for months before her death, but endured as seeing him who is invisible.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer, after which her body was buried in Hillside cemetery. May the God of all comfort minister consolation and peace to all that mourn.

ALSO,

DIED—**Mrs. Roxy Leonard,** at the home of her daughter, Mrs. W. W. Hubbell, in Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., May 10th, 1906, aged 76 years. Her maiden name was Shepherd. She first married Geo. W. Davis, who died twenty years ago. After this she married Daniel Leonard, he also preceded her in death. She is survived by four daughters; her only son died one year ago. Sister Leonard had been a faithful and consistent member of the Second Roxbury Old School Baptist Church of Delaware Co., N. Y., nearly forty years; she continued steadfast in the doctrine to the last. She was a good woman, and highly respected by all who knew her.

The writer conducted the funeral service in the meeting-house of her membership; a large congregation was present. Hymn 1253 (Beebe's Collection) was read by request of the family. Her remains were laid to rest in the cemetery adjoining the meeting-house yard.

ALSO,

DIED—**Mrs. Lucinda M. Wheat,** widow of Daniel S. Wheat, at the home of her nephew, J. Decatur Horton, 53 West Main St., Middletown, N. Y., in the 84th year of her age. She was the daughter of Eliphalet and Amy Warner. Her husband died about nine years ago; her only daughter, Mrs. Harriet Clinton, died in 1865. She was the last member of her family. She is survived by several nephews and nieces. The funeral service was held in the home of Mr. Decatur Horton, conducted by the writer.

Sister Wheat followed along after the Old Baptists for many years, but was not baptized until she was past 80 years of age. It was my privilege to baptize her in the fellowship of the Middletown and Wallkill Church, June 28th, 1902. She was kind to every one with whom she came in contact, and leaves a host of friends. She loved the "brotherhood," and made it manifest by her anxiety for their welfare. She will be much missed, both in and out of the church, but the will of the Lord must be done; we desire to be reconciled to him. K.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. J. H. Rockerfellow, N. Y., $1.00; A Wayworn Sinner, Mo., $1.00; A Friend, N. J., $1.00.—Total, $3.00.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 74. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1906. NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PARRY SOUND, Ont., Jan. 31, 1905.

DEAR BRETHREN, AND SISTER STREET: —Beloved, I received your epistle containing a request that I would write you my experience, or give an outline of some of the Lord's dealings with me, both in his mysterious but all-wise providence, as well as in the multitude of his tender mercies manifested toward me, as far as memory serves, or as I humbly hope, God may be pleased to direct my heart and pen. Right here I ask myself the question, What is the motive which prompts me to write? Is it that my fleshly pride may be gratified? To which I answer with more than a half felt sense of fear and trembling, May God forbid. Or is it that the predestinating love, rich, free and abounding grace of our glorious Head and Surety be exalted thereby? To the latter, brethren, when we are favored to sit at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in our right mind, we would give our cheerful, glad and willing assent ten thousand times ten thousand. At such seasons of refreshing one is made to know he has nothing that he has not received; boasting is totally excluded, his mouth is stopped and he gladly eats the crumbs that fall from the Master's table. I feel it to be no small mercy for a child of God to be led to behold him as the God of providence, as well as the God of all grace, comfort and consolation.

As the early part of my natural life was one of hardship and trial, as well as one of sin, shame, open vice and profligacy, being a sailor on board a British man-of-war, I feel inclined to relate a little of my pathway. I hope to exalt the watchful care, long-suffering, patience and forbearance of our kind and gracious God. Lord, be pleased to direct and guide both heart and pen, so that I may sweetly realize that in thy blessed presence is life, and at thy right hand pleasures forevermore.

I purpose here to touch for a few moments upon the watchful care over such an enemy and rebel as I was during my seafaring life, and tell of some of his wonderful deliverances providentially wrought in my behalf while wandering on the dark mountains of sin without hope and without God (manifestly), in nearly every part of the world.

I shall in a few months (if the Lord

wills) enter upon my eightieth year. I was born at Barton in the Clay, Bedfordshire, England, in 1826, (and like all the posterity of Adam was a transgressor from the womb, and went astray, speaking lies, an enemy to God by wicked works) where, as near as memory serves, I remained until I was about five or six years of age. At that time my parents, who were very poor but respectable, removed to London, in hope of bettering themselves, and I can well remember that my father's employer, belonging to "The Established Church," pressed him very much to let me attend their services, which for a short time I did, but have no recollection that any serious impressions were wrought in my mind, my only benefit being the gift of some new clothes, which I badly needed. In this gift, trifling as it may appear to some, I now see the Lord's hand and watchful and preserving care. Shortly after this, the cupboard at times being nearly bare, I was put out to work, my wages being one shilling per week, and one penny for myself, without board, working thirteen hours a day. Being thus early placed at work, I had little opportunity of attending school, and never had more than two or three months schooling. I had now a strong desire to go to sea. I should not mention these apparently trifling incidents did I not firmly and experimentally believe that not only is every blood-bought, Spirit-taught child of God loved with an everlasting love, and chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, but that every step of his pathway, even of the minutest character, through this present evil world is mapped out by infinite wisdom and love, and God will not allow his map to be crossed or blotted by poor, puny, fallen man; also that every such poor soul is sanctified (set apart) by God, preserved in Christ Jesus during the whole of his unregeneracy, and in the set time is called both to a knowledge of himself and the infinite majesty and holiness of God.

When I was about eight years old, having an inclination for a seafaring life, I was bound an apprentice to the brig Aphrodite, of Sunderland, but only remained one month before I ran away, as the treatment I received was hard indeed. My steps were then directed to Portsmouth, the chief navy port in Britain, where for three weeks my hardships and privations were severe. I had not one copper of money to obtain either food or shelter, to beg I was ashamed, to dig I knew not how. Sometimes hunger was so keen that I would pick up a bit of orange peel from the street and eat it; while for shelter I would sometimes creep into the wreck of an old vessel lying on the beach; at other times I would wander around the garrison walls to the soldiers' guard-house, where I often obtained both a meal and a bed. Thus my actual necessities were supplied by that God who feedeth the ravens and supplieth the wants of every living thing. The time for my deliverance from this state of hardship however was nigh at hand, though it came in an altogether different way than I had expected. One evening as I was standing on the dock an officer of the Royal Navy landed from a boat close to where I was standing and beckoned me to him, and asked the following questions; I give them and my replies verbatim, as I remember them vividly: "Boy, what ship do you belong to?" "Don't belong to any ship, sir." "Where do you live?" "Don't live anywhere, sir." "Where do your parents live?" "Got no father and mother, sir." This was altogether an untruth, as at that

very time my father was searching all the naval seaports in England to find the prodigal. "Well," said the officer, "you are a curious fellow, no ship, no home, no parents; will you go aboard a man-of-war?" I readily gave my assent, and he gave me a shilling to get some supper and a night's lodging, and appointed to meet me at 10 o'clock the next morning, which he did, and took me on board "H. M. S. Brittain," fitting out for the east, south and west coasts of Africa to be engaged in the abolition of the slave trade. Now I could give full rein to all the corrupt and vicious inclinations of my own deceitful and desperately wicked heart, inasmuch as there was little or no moral restraint, but immorality of the darkest and blackest character was encouraged and gloried in; truly and with sense of shame I state it, one could drink down iniquity as the ox drinketh down water. But as this kind of narration appears to me to be utterly devoid of interest and profit to heaven-born, Spirit-taught souls, I must summarize the events of quite a number of years; indeed, until I arrived at the age of twenty-two, when I verily believe at times the Lord was pleased to meet with poor, unworthy me on the bosom of the Indian Ocean, and I humbly hope called me by his grace.

I will mention a circumstance which occurred previous to our leaving Portsmouth, wherein the preserving hand of God was manifested toward me in such a way that to the present moment, whenever the circumstance recurs to my mind, it causes a thrill and shudder to pass through my very frame, at the same time producing an ejaculation of praise and thanksgiving to the God of all grace and mercy for what I have always been led to look upon as a special interposition of divine Providence on my behalf. The circumstance was this: we were still lying in harbor, fitting out for our long voyage, and, as was usual on all naval ships, immediately after supper (from 5 to 6 p. m.) the boatswain's pipe sounded all hands to skylark and dance, every one of course being at liberty to choose what kind of amusement he might think fit until 8 p. m. There were about thirty of us small boys on board, eight or ten of whom had begun a game which consisted of one trying to outdo or catch the other in various parts of the rigging aloft; and right here my soul shudders, as it were, while I put on record the fearful position in which I had placed myself. Unnoticed from the deck, thoughtlessly and boy-like, I had dropped away from my companions, and had clambered up to the main royal truck, a small circular wooden cap about ten or twelve inches in diameter, which slips on or over the top of the mast. Now if I could stop here it would have been nothing more than an almost every day occurrence in a seaman's life, but in my utter thoughtlessness I got on the very top of the truck and was standing erect in open space, not a thing to lay hold of, and the ship's deck one hundred and eighty feet below, and in my ignorance of any danger was utterly devoid of fear. Noticing there was a large crowd of people looking at me from the shore, the thought occurred with all its indescribable fear, How am I to get down? I saw my plight, and knew the centre of gravity must be maintained to almost a hair's breadth or I must be dashed to death on the deck below, but through the unsought, unthought of, abounding mercy of our God I was enabled by the gradual raising of one knee to lower myself into such a position that with my hand I was enabled to grasp the edge of the truck. Thus my

worthless life was spared, yet in a gospel sense I was so totally blind that I had no sense whatever that either love or mercy had any hand in my deliverance. The strong man armed kept the palace, his goods were in peace, &c. (Luke xi. 21.) O how can I praise the benign providence of God that he did not end my worthless life at that time? O the long-suffering and forbearance of God toward such a guilty wretch as I.

I must now pass over the events of many years, until I reached the age of twenty-two, such as being at the capture of seventeen slave ships, many of which showed such stubborn resistance that out of one hundred and forty-five men, forming the ship's crew when we left England, only twenty-six were left to be paid off after a voyage of six years and four months. Some fell in action, some were murdered, while the remainder were cut down by disease. I might add that in one engagement two of my shipmates were shot down, one on either side of me as we stood in the ranks; once I received a small cutlass wound on my forehead, but soon recovered, though the scar remains to this day. Now why was my utterly worthless life again preserved? I may say with David, Because thou hadst favor unto me. God in his all-wise providence as a shield was round about me all of this time. I may truly say, not only was I ignorant of God my Maker, his word and ways, but being free from all moral restraint for a long time I drank deeper and deeper into a life of open sin and shame, neither fearing God nor regarding man, so that I was on the way to hell (had grace prevented not) as fast as sin and Satan and time could carry me, and that certainly was very fast. I was led captive by the devil at his will, still I knew it not, neither was I troubled, the waters were sweet, my conscience (being seared) did not accuse me, and I was perfectly satisfied with myself, as every poor, dead sinner, or mere nominal professor, is. O how dead, blind, corrupt, loathsome, depraved and deceitful is the heart of man. At this moment I can truly see it is of the Lord's mercies that I am not consumed.

I now come to the time when I was to be stopped in my blind, my vile career, and was to be made to hear the voice of the Son of God and live, as I humbly hope, trust and believe; when the arrows of the Almighty were to be experienced in my soul. At that time I belonged to and was on board the ship Kent, of London. We had been lying in Calcutta for two months, discharging and taking in cargo, one of which months I had spent in the common jail for threatening (in a half drunken state) to take the captain's life. Previous to this I had received four dozen lashes. At length we sailed on our voyage for London, but the dysentery and fever both being very bad in the forecastle we had only been at sea eleven days before we had buried eleven men. A boon companion of mine was lying in his bunk at the point of death; knowing his friends were in London, I in my rough but well intentioned way (naturally) tried to console him, and offered to take any message he might wish to his widowed mother at home. Now I was to hear the voice of God, as it were, in my dying shipmate's reply, and to behold something of the majesty and holiness of God, and the unfathomable depth of the desperate iniquities of my own deceitful and polluted heart. I vividly remember his words, which were as follows: "Darkey, (my nickname) I would like my mother to have my chest of clothes and

wages due, and my sister what curiosities I bought in Calcutta; and tell mother not to fret about me, for I have made my peace with God." I thought, Why, how can that be? (he was a Romanist nominally.) My mind reverted to such and such midnight revels and debaucheries we had formerly indulged in together, and now you say you are at peace with God; impossible. I stood amazed, but those words, by the holy and blessed Spirit of God, were made effectual in convincing me of the enormity of my sin, of the necessity of a perfect righteousness, and the infallible certainty of judgment. O the burden of guilt and sin that now rested upon my soul. I now knew that I had to do with a just and holy God, and felt certain the lowest hell would be my doom. The unfathomable pollution of my heart was laid bare, every outward sin that I had been the subject of appeared to stand out like mountains before my eyes, the pains of hell gat hold upon me; I did indeed find trouble and sorrow, and what to do I knew not. I could only groan within me, as it were, beneath my burden of sin and guilt, and so vividly is this impressed on my memory that were the vessel afloat now instead of lying on the ocean's bottom, I could go and point out the very spot on which at the time I stood. My shipmate was buried that same afternoon, and the thought occurred in all its fearfulness and dread to nature, What if I should be the next? I had no refuge; God himself was against me for my great and multitudinous sins, while the voice of the law was thundering, as it were, within me, "Pay me that thou owest." I now felt its demands were just, and determined that I would turn over a new leaf and be good by rendering strict obedience thereto; I would utter no more oaths, and would begin to read and educate myself; then I thought the Almighty would be willing to accept me. Here, however, I was beset by a two-fold difficulty: first, I had no book of any kind wherewith to educate myself as I had hoped, and next, although in terrible soul trouble I had determined within myself that if ever I became religious, as the world calls it, I would never let my shipmates know it, lest I should be laughed at and persecuted by them. However, one afternoon (while in this burdened state) I mustered sufficient courage to ask several of my shipmates if they had a book of any kind they could lend me. One of them replied that he had nothing but the neglected history, I could have that if I chose, and at once put his hand down into one corner of his sea chest and handed me a small Bible, the gift of his mother on his first leaving home as a boy to go to sea. I remember my fleshly pride of heart was such that I almost refused to take it, still I felt assured there was something in it needful for me to know, and as soon as I saw the others had all turned in to their hammocks I began to read it. The chapter to which I opened was the third of the gospel by John. I read on until I reached the third and fourth verses. It was all a blank to my natural reason, and I said with Nicodemus, "How can these things be?" Vile unbelief and my own wicked heart suggested that the Bible was simply a myth, a pack of falsehoods, or at the very best was full of contradictions. I threw the book into my hammock, resolved to read it no more; it did not matter, I thought, I was a lost man, and had to be damned anyway, and felt as I have often done since, that I was not only a poor sinner needing mercy, but that I was surely the greatest sinner on

earth. All the sins of my heart, my lips and my life were ever present to my view; what was I to do? My burden increased, I was as helpless as I was guilty in the great matter of salvation. Sometimes I would conclude to throw it all aside and enjoy life as I had previously done, at other times broken-hearted, contrite and groaning within myself I was led to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner;" but as yet it seemed to poor, poor, utterly unworthy me that my prayer was shut out, and that against me was his anger turned. This was the state of exercise my mind was kept in for four and a half months. During the whole of our passage home to London, no light, no comfort, a mighty battle of the warriors going on within; tempest-tossed, afflicted and not comforted. I may use Hezekiah's words in Isaiah xxxviii. as expressive of my feelings at that time: "I reckoned till morning, that as a lion, so will he break all my bones: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me. Like a crane, or a swallow, so did I chatter; I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward: O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me. * * * O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit." I could not, however, return or give up this Bible, though I always waited for an opportunity to read it when I thought no one could see me, and always carried it in the bosom of my blue shirt. If I was sent aloft to do a job of work I would look down on deck in order to make sure that no one was looking up, and if the coast was clear I would take out my Bible, snatch, as it were, a verse or two from its contents, and if any one should happen to be looking aloft I would momentarily put it into the breast of my shirt as though I had stolen something. O the pride of the heart of poor, puny, fallen man.. Thus while heavily burdened in my heart and conscience by sin, my prayer simply an inward groan, hungering for deliverance, I could perceive nothing but the voice of the law, as it were, demanding a perfect fulfillment in every jot and tittle, and pronouncing its weighty curse on every one that offended, even in one point only, and the feeling of my heart was, "Woe is me! for I am undone."

I now come to that ever memorable time when in my soul's experience every bond and fetter was to be broken, my soul was to be brought out of captivity and made to rejoice with "joy unspeakable and full of glory." Having arrived at home in London, I found that during my absence in India the Lord had been doing a great work among relatives and the members of the family, viz: my dear wife, whom I had married just previous to my leaving for Calcutta, and at that time was nothing more than a good moral and chaste young person, had evidently been brought to know the plague of her own heart, and was led to feel after Jesus, if haply she might find him. Also a brother of hers, who when I left was an actor on the stage and had gone to great excesses in open sin, had through grace been brought nigh by the blood of Christ, but had mingled in among the Hagarenes, and there was (as I fully believe now) a great deal of stripping work yet to be done, of which in the set time he gave abundant evidence. The Lord was pleased to accomplish, and afterwards took him home to glory; his end was blessed. Although I had been at home for more than two weeks, as yet not one word had escaped my lips regarding my own wretched and guilty state, though I

believe now that they all recognized a change outwardly; the gaiety formerly manifested was no longer manifest, and I had fully purposed in my own mind to keep all to myself (as I have before stated) if ever I did become religious; but, my brethren, God's thoughts are not our thoughts, &c., the appointed time had come. I left home in the morning to take a stroll around, as my custom was, and at the moment I refer to was walking along one of the crowded streets of London, when lo, on lifting my eyes a little I saw the dear, dear Savior hanging on the cross, with the blood streaming from hands and feet and side, as plainly as I see this paper now before me. In a moment my soul was in ecstacy of joy, my heavy burden was gone, my sins were washed away, my heart was filled with light, love and peace to such an extent that it was with no small amount of effort that I was kept from going out into the middle of the street and telling to all what a dear Savior I had found. I thought, Lord, is it possible that all this multitude of people passing on either side are on their way to hell? and in my mind I felt sure they were, or else they could not be so intent in their pursuit of the things of this life. My soul was now filled with joy and peace in believing that through the power of the Spirit my troubles were all gone, my sorrows would never cause me again to weep; I seemed to be altogether in a new world. I fondly hoped and believed that the happiness and joy I was then in possession of would be perpetuated all my journey through. I felt that the Lord had delivered me and brought me into a large place, his love was shed abroad in my heart; my soul went out in praise and thanksgiving to him who was indeed the chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely One; henceforth there would be no more sorrow, sighing, groaning or affliction; sin with its guilt and weighty curse and powerful workings in my heart was gone, and gone forever. O, my beloved brethren, in how short a time (some three or four days) what a different state of things was made manifest within. A horror of great darkness set in upon my soul, truly a darkness that could be felt to such an extent that not only had I lost every felt sense of the love, joy, peace and unspeakable blessedness that I had been made to rejoice in only a few days previous, but the vile unbelief of my heart brought me into such a state as led me to almost believe there was no God, yet my heart was broken and contrite. I knew not what to do, I felt sure I had lost all my religion, and that against me was his anger turned. At length, after some two or three days of soul exercise, and in answer to my poor groanings, as I have always believed, the Lord was pleased again to bring me up from the horrible pit and out of the miry clay of my own supposed strength and righteousness, and for all his mercies, both spiritual and temporal, I can, I trust, through grace exclaim, "Bless the Lord, O my soul," for if Jesus is not the sum and substance, the beginning and the end, the first and the last in my salvation, I am a lost man.

"But determined to save,
He watched o'er my path,
When, Satan's blind slave,
I sported with death.
And can he have taught me
To trust in his name,
And thus far have brought me
To put me to shame?"

I had intended to give an outline of my call to the work of the ministry, but I find it would take so much writing, which I am hardly able to do now, so

now, dearly beloved, I desire to commend all unto God and the word of his grace, and remain, I hope, your little brother,

WM. KNIFTON.

[THE above article contains the experience of Elder Wm. Knifton, of Canada. He is, as will be seen, a man of nearly fourscore years. It was written to sister Mrs. J. Street, of Brantford, Canada, and with his consent has been forwarded to us for publication. The narrative shows the work of the Lord in a very striking way. In reading it we have felt our heart go out to him, as we trust, in true fellowship, and are persuaded that very many will read it with joy and praise to God for his wonderful works to the children of men.—ED.]

WAVERLY, Pa., April 9, 1906.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find two good letters, one from brother Dickens, the other from sister Ely, in which the glorious doctrine of God's unlimited sovereignty is clearly set forth. There were but few that gladly received the precious truth in the days of Christ and the apostles, and thank God, there are a few to-day, and there will be a few to the end of time. God will never be without his true witnesses, I am sure, neither will the devil be without his; the wicked shall do wickedly, evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived; so it stands, so it will be to the end, and the purpose of Almighty God is perfectly accomplished, whether poor, finite worms of the dust like we are can understand and believe it or not. What we poor sinners believe does not change or affect the truth.

I will now pen a few things that seem to crowd themselves into my mind concerning God. You may call it my catechism. What is God? A Spirit. Where is heaven? Where God is. Where is God? Above. Above in what sense? Above all law, as the sole Creator of all that is created; he, having all power in heaven and in earth, directs and controls all things after the counsel of his own will, and none have a right to question what he does? Do we? I do, to my shame. Where is the dwelling-place of God? In Zion, the church, 2 Corinthians vi. 16: "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." Where is Christ? At the right hand of God. What is your hope? "Christ in you, the hope of glory." In the sense of space, how far apart is God, Christ, heaven and Zion, the church? Or in other words, how far above Zion is God, Christ and heaven? No distance. Do God's people always enjoy the felt presence of God, Christ and heaven in their souls? No. Does this prove that they are not in them? No. Can you tell a heaven-born soul from any other from what you see with your natural eyes or comprehend with your natural mind? No. By what power or spirit do you recognize God's people? By the Spirit of God. Could there not be a wonderful, radical change in a person or body and we not see it? Yes. Does what we naturally see prove to the contrary? No. Before we were born of God did we have any knowledge of spiritual things? No. Was what we believed before traditional? It was. Are we now contending for the same things and calling them the truth? By the spirit of the flesh we will, but by the Spirit of God we will not. Do we know how much tradition there is in us? No. Who can show us? God Almighty. What will we do if he does not show us? We will preach tradition or false doctrine

with all the zeal and power we possess; if he does show us the truth we will preach it with all the zeal and power that he gives us. Does the truth ever disturb or distress God's people? Yes, it does indeed, sometimes it turns them inside out, upside down, and shakes them up so terribly that they feel almost mad; they feel that they do not and will not hear it, but when they are composed sometimes they begin to think over what they have heard, and sweetly and comfortingly accept of it and feast upon it. Why did it disturb and distress at first? Tradition. Tradition can only be torn from us a bit at a time, and the poor soul then feels there is nothing left. I know whereof I affirm; I have been there many times, and God knows where I am now, I do not. Preaching tradition disturbs, confuses and grieves God's people, but seldom makes them angry, and there certainly can be no spiritual food in it. As Jesus dwells in his bride at the right hand of God, or in other words, in the heart of his bride, the intercession of Jesus is there. Where is Jesus when the poor, tempest-tossed soul is crying, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Where is Jesus when the cry is going forth, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me;" Lord, help me; Lord, save me; "God be merciful to me a sinner;" or, Lord, remember me? He is right in the heart of that poor, troubled, sore, broken soul, and the very breathing of that soul is the intercession of Jesus. The very life of Jesus is manifest in the groans, prayers and tears of his people; then take courage, dear, doubting, trembling souls, Jesus is your Savior.

A doubting, trembling, hoping worm,
D. M. VAIL.

MERIT, Texas.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—I know of nothing that would be of interest to you, only I will say that I believe in the sovereignty of God, who is all-wise, all-powerful and all-sufficient, overruling and independent. He never slumbers or sleeps, and he does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and none can stay his hand, or say, What doest thou? Job said, "He is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." He rules; he speaks and it is done; he commands and it stands fast; he is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; he is our King, our Governor, our High Priest, our Redeemer, and the God of the whole earth shall he be called. He was God manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, preached unto the Gentiles, received up into glory, and now he is in heaven, sitting in the person of the Son on the right hand of the Father, there interceding for such poor sinners as you and I, if we are the heirs of promise. He is our Advocate, pleading our cause, declaring that he shed his precious blood for us, and has redeemed us from all sin, and he presents us unto his Father, saying, "Behold, I, and the children whom the Lord hath given me." They are made white and clean, their garments are of wrought gold, and they are all glorious within; these are they who have come up out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, which was shed for them; these are they who give all praise to God for their salvation, singing, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." These are mentioned in Psalms cxxxix.: "When I was made in secret, and cu-

riously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." These are they who constitute the body, the bride, made ready, and to her it shall be granted that she shall be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for this is the righteousness of saints. Of her the Lord has said, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." "There are threescore queens [denominations], and fourscore concubines [auxiliaries], and virgins without number [local churches of these denominations]. My dove, my undefiled is but one: she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her: the daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and concubines, and they praised her." She is a garden inclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. In this holy city is the pure river of water of life clear as crystal, the streams whereof make glad the city of our God. The Lord will help her, and that right early. The Lord said, "Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." No weapon formed against her shall prosper, and every tongue that riseth against her in judgment she shall condemn, for "her righteousness is of me," saith the Lord. A mother may forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion upon the son of her womb, yet the Lord will not forget her; he has engraven her upon the palms of his hands, and given her eternal life, and she shall never perish, and none shall pluck them out of his hand. Jesus said, "My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." She is as a speckled bird, and all other birds (denominations) are against her; but neither death, nor life, nor height, nor depth, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, which love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. The Lord's portion is his people. He found Jacob in a desert land, in a waste howling wilderness, he led him about and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of his eye, and there was no strange god with him. He made his people to ride on the high places of the earth, and gave them to eat the increase of the field; they sucked honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock. The church receives goodness and gladness from her blessed Lord, who is the Rock of ages. The Lord gave his people bread from heaven, and his word to them is as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass. The Lord is her Husband, and she shall not want; he makes her to rest by the still waters of peace. For her there is a way, and an highway, and it shall be called the way of holiness, no unclean thing shall pass over it, but it shall be for the love, the dove, the undefiled of the Lord, to walk there. Her afflictions are many, but the Lord has anointed her with balm, and healed her. The Lord is as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. The trial of her faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, shall be found unto praise, and honor, and glory, at the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Dear brother, this expresses my faith

thus far, and as you wished me to write for the SIGNS, if you think best you can forward it to that paper.

Your unworthy brother,

S. M. DICKENS.

WELLSBORO, Pa., Nov. 26, 1905.

ELDER VAIL—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I thank you for so kindly writing me as you did in reply to the letter I sent you. I do not know as that subject seems much clearer to me, but it has not been on my mind as much, and I know it is all right if we cannot see or understand. But to-night I feel like writing and telling you how glad I am that I am permitted to have a home with the people who believe what to me seems to be such a God-honoring doctrine, as is shown in some of the things which I have just been reading, which they believe: that to know God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent, is eternal life, but that none can find this out until they are quickened by the Holy Ghost and it is revealed to them; and the unchangeable nature of our God, that his purposes and plans are fixed, so that it is impossible for anything to change or turn him, and that he never fails to accomplish for want of ability to execute his will. They believe that God from the beginning chose his people to salvation, that it is all of God. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." That our salvation does not depend on the will or works of men, for "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us." And it is for this chosen people that Christ died, and that none for whom he died can fail of being saved, for does not Christ say that "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day"? And "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Therefore what can be surer than the salvation of his people? He also says, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." So it shows that none can be taken from or added to that fixed number; just those for whom Christ died. God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. That he knew the end of all things from the beginning, which makes it certain that all things should exist in all their order, connection and circumstances. If that is not predestination what is it?

Dear brother, these are precious truths to me, and I do rejoice in them, though at times I question much whether I have any part or lot with this chosen people, but this I know, if I have not, there is none other to whom I can go, or with whom I desire to be.

I feel that I ought not to trouble you with my poor letters very often, for I know you are very busy, but it is a comfort to feel that one can write to some of the Lord's people and they will know and understand your feelings, though poorly expressed, and we do not feel quite so lonely as though we never received any messages from them. This is one of my greatest trials, that I am deprived of the company of the Lord's people.

Your unworthy sister,

FLORENCE ELY.

BERKELEY, Cal., June 3, 1906.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have read the SIGNS of June 1st, and was much pleased and greatly comforted in "Fragments," by Elder Durand, and the editorial on discipline. I also noticed an appeal from brother and sister Gainer, in which they have given through the SIGNS such a statement of the conditions of God's dealings with California and the results of the visitation of God's wrath, that unless corrected will, so far as the circulation of the SIGNS goes, do great injury to the State, and the good people whose all is invested here. I have no doubt but sister Gainer felt as she wrote, but she wrote under great excitement and too early after the earthquake to have sufficient knowledge of the facts in the case. I will give you a few facts as I learned them. About 5:14 a. m. April 18th the earth began to shake, about 5:50 the shaking had ceased. A few badly constructed buildings fell, or partly fell, many chimney-tops fell, but no one was killed in Berkeley, only a few in Oakland, and comparatively few in San Francisco. The fire in San Francisco started immediately after the earthquake. The fire department was promptly at the fire; they found the water-pipes broken, the water soon gave out. In a few hours the United States troops in answer to a call from the mayor were marching down the streets to aid the police in keeping order and fighting the fire; thousands of panic-stricken men, women and children were fleeing through the streets, dragging all manner of household goods, clothing, &c., many of whom had not taken time to change clothes or put their clothes on, and wrapped their persons in such things as they could grab in their flight. The power houses were shaken, telegraph wires were down, street cars all stopped in the streets, the fire increased in its fury, like a demon of destruction spreading out its roaring and flaming wings, flanking the business portion of the city. The best, bravest men of the city met in consultation before evening and began to bring order out of confusion. Committees were appointed and organized for public safety, protection and relief, with their headquarters moving back as the demon of destruction advanced. The city was immediately put under strict guard of police and soldiers, the State guard being called in to aid in this duty; looting was soon checked by the soldiers. Automobiles, and vehicles of all kinds drawn by horses, were pressed into service to take the killed and wounded to places of safety, in improvised hospitals, which for the hour seemed to be at a safe distance from the fire, but soon the wounded had to be quickly removed further back to escape the fire, which soon destroyed their temporary resting-places; many of the dead had to be abandoned to the flames for want of time to rescue the bodies; thus the battle with fire was fought with heroic courage. Dynamite was brought in to raze the buildings in front of the flames, but such was their fury that the debris of the fallen buildings only appeared to be a resting-place for the destroying demon to gain renewed strength, to leap up to the higher buildings to destroy them, and on the destruction went until four square miles right in the center of the city was a desert waste, covered with twisted iron and steel and ashes, with a few blackened walls and chimneys, cracked and broken by the intense heat, left as sentinels guarding the spoils of the conquering demon. Such is but a faint description of the four days of the battle with the fire in San Francisco, in

which fight the brave men and true wrought out their part in one of the saddest chapters in human history; three hundred thousand were made homeless. As the destitute army was driven back and back their numbers increased, and the work of relief also increased to heroic labors, locating and providing shelter, food, clothing and medical attendance for this vast number of destitute, homeless people. The fourth day the fire was checked, not by human efforts and dynamite, for they both had failed and were almost exhausted, but by the shifting of the wind, which turned the fire back upon its own devastation, and what few houses had been left on the northern and eastern borders of its devastated ruins. What proportion of the four hundred dead and missing of San Francisco were victims of the earthquake will never be known; the fire certainly had its share of these victims, and did at least ninety per cent. of the damage to the burned property. While the black angel of death and devastation was writing his lines in falling walls and broken chimneys and burning flames, the white angel of love—charity, was also quickly grasping her pen to fill in with beautiful colors, standing out from the dark background of the great tragedy, the white robe of peace, in the folds of which were food, clothing and shelter falling from her hands upon the people of San Francisco and California as the manna from heaven fell in such abundance in the wilderness to feed a hungry nation of people. This white angel had spread out its wings over all the world, and spoke in clear and distinct accents, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," and every good heart heard its voice, and before the sun of the first day had reached the western horizon the wings of love had encircled the earth, and the response of the hearts touched by love and sympathy was heard in the puffing of steam and the rolling of wheels, and succor was flying from every State in the union to stricken California, and the homeless thousands had plenty and to spare, and still at this writing the solid evidences of human love and brotherhood are still coming. The relief committee has to-day a surplus of seventy thousand barrels of flour above their prospective needs, which they will probably sell tomorrow to have the money to swell the relief fund. No worthy man, woman or child will suffer in California. Since the relief committee has enforced the Bible doctrine of "He that will not work shall not eat," the dependents have been reduced to less than one-fourth of its highest number, but the beggars and lazy people have increased their lamentations; those who can work and want to work can find work for the asking. California is arising from the dust and ashes, and has begun to clothe herself with beautiful adornments of utility, and our God has blessed the State with more than her usual output, and prospects from the fields of culture and mines of wealth; her houses have been burned, increasing her demands for labor of all kinds; her money was not burned, as sister Gainer thought, so California has as much money as she ever had, and soon she ought to have $200,000,000 more coming into her borders to pay up insurance losses, which all means a better harvest for the laboring man. We cannot get enough bricklayers at $7.00 per day, nor hodcarriers at $4.00 per day, nor common laborers at $2.50 per day. Property owners have lost property, but day laborers have only lost a few days time.

California is no more wicked than New York or any other State or country

through which I have traveled and taken observations. The earthquake came from natural causes, the same as do cyclones. Destruction of life and property comes upon those who build their homes and cities upon the lines of earthquakes and storms; God's laws are immutable and must be fulfilled, in accomplishing the destined purposes of the unchangeable Lawgiver. God would not change his purpose to save his Son from death, by violating the law of redemption, in that God would not grant the petition of his only begotten Son in the garden of Gethsemane. God the Father made all the laws that govern the universe in its evolution (varied and incomprehensible as the working out of the different parts may be) before the light was divided from the darkness, and in these immutable laws God wrapped up his predestination, which was and is still commensurate with his wisdom to devise and power to perform.

Now, my dear readers, come with me from the outer courts, where the best christians are by nature the children of wrath even as others, let us enter the inner courts, into which no man can enter except he be born again, and allow me a few words regarding myself. I feel that after preaching to others I myself have become a castaway, sitting here in my room, banished from the bedside of my dying wife by the trained nurse, to await a summons to see her again if she ever awakes in the flesh. I want to say when the earthquake came she was lying as I thought on her death-bed; I ran into her room expecting to see her shocked to death; the earth was shaking, the house was rocking, the dishes were rattling and falling on the floor, the lamp which was burning was dancing on the table, and the coal oil stove was burning and dancing on the floor; I saw her face calm and serene and heard her soft and sweet voice saying, "What are you scared about? God will take care of us as well in an earthquake as he will in the sunshine." I lost all my income from rents in the city, had $13.75 left in the bank, so I had nothing to do but work. I was finishing my residence where I am now writing. I worked on, looking out occasionally at the clouds of smoke during the day and the clouds of fire at night, got my residence so we could live in it comfortably, then went to the city about the 3rd of May, pitched right in, took just what the boss pleased to give, trusting the heavenly Father, who in six troubles has not left me, and in the seventh I believe he will not forsake me. I have found him a little sanctuary in the country to which I have come. I am now in my sixty-ninth year, and still do a man's work. My heart often cries out, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," and yearns for that happy privilege that I have in the past enjoyed.

I will now close by saying that as soon as my burdens are well attended to, not lightened, I will try to help you bear yours by sending you a remittance for the SIGNS. How I wish to see you face to face.

Yours in love and affliction,

W. W. POLK.

ISAIAH XLII. 16.

"And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not."

In my last letter I tried to tell you what I hope the Lord has done for me, but in one short letter could only tell a little part of my trials and troubles leading up to the final deliverance from bondage into the marvelous light, liberty and blessed hope of immortality beyond this vail of tears. It was truly a marvelous thing to me to be led out of a village, and from among well dressed young people, and a fine meeting-house only just across the street from my own residence, and withal a fine minister, and neighbors whom I had loved and had never had a word of trouble with, to go two miles into the country and offer myself to a little band of old, and heretofore despised and doctrine-hated people. This was, and ever will be, a mystery to me which cannot be accounted for outside of the sovereignty of the great and supreme Ruler, the almighty God, for I know that no power among men could have ever induced me to take such a step. To my surprise the very thing that I feared would be most against my being received into the church proved to be most in my favor: they knew my standing in my old church, but did not know that I had been a hypocrite, and when I told them all about it they received me. So I was among them, hated of many of my old church, and my dear wife also with me, whom the Lord had given me as a true helpmeet indeed. I had but little education, only what I had picked up in the little old log schoolhouse, but now another thing began to work with me. In my former letter I said that early in life I had impressions to live a christian life, but I found it impossible to do that. When I was about ten years old, I went with my mother to a Baptist meeting, a man by the name of Arthur preached; he took for his text these words: "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things."—Rom. x. 15. This man Arthur I thought to be the ugliest man I ever saw; yet during his address, for about one minute I saw him the most beautiful man I had ever beheld; and O the beauty of the matter as he presented it to me, I never can express; and though I have never named it before from that day to this so far as I recollect, yet it has never faded from my memory. As John the Baptist leaped in his mother's womb for joy, so also I shall ever believe that God for one moment, though I was but a child, showed me the beauty of the plan of salvation for helpless sinners.

For a few years after I united with the church my mind was easy and I felt to enjoy perfect peace of mind, then I found something annoying me from time to time, and pressing me to more activity in the church; that is, it seemed to me that our meeting was too short, and that something more might have been said. At first it did not seem to me that I was the one to say it, but that some of the older brethren should speak. At last something began to speak to me like this: Well, you have been a public speaker, and why do you not say it? My reply was, And make a fool of myself? I could preach false doctrine, but when it came to preaching Christ as the only way, I knew nothing. About two years had passed, and the western fever was raging, and had carried off some of our brethren to Iowa. I began to think that I might go west and get away from my trouble of speaking in public. I thought I had pretty good judgment, and that I knew an uneducated man never could be a fit

subject for the ministry. Well, the first day of May, 1855, found me with my family on my way westward with a little two horse team and wagon, bound for Iowa. Twenty-three days afterwards we stopped in Guthrie County, there we found a few people, and some of our old brethren, who with others had organized a church the March before, and we put our letters in that church. Time went, on, and I soon found the old trouble knocking at the door. I said, O my soul, how shall I get rid of this trouble, a man who is so slow of speech and dumb as I am is not fit for this work, and why am I annoyed with this impression? The excuses I made could not be enumerated.

Soon after I settled in the west I went into the mercantile business. I remember my greatest plea: A merchant is not fit for the ministry, Lord, have me excused, I cannot do this. At last the war came on, and one day this thought came to me: I know what I will do, I will enlist as a soldier, and if God carries me through I will give up and know that this is of him which is pressing me. But this thought was of short duration; an angel in the appearance of an old, venerable man whom I had often met during my life, came to me and told me that I should not go to the war, for, said he, your first duty is to your own family, and besides I have work for you to do. My condition now seemed to me worse than ever before, I was hedged in on every side, with no way of escape, I feared to disobey, and knew not how to obey; this portrays my condition perfectly. At last the turning point came; the whole matter was settled as to my trying to preach the gospel; it came about as follows: the government was forcing men into its service by draft, one clerk pronounced the name and another clerk wrote it down; then all names were clipped off separately, and all placed in a box, a boy blindfolded put his hand into the box and drew out a name, and whoever had his name on the ticket was chosen to go. Finally John Chine came out; no man of that name lives in Guthrie County, said a bystander. After some wrangling over the matter the Provost Marshall told the clerk that they had made a mistake in spelling my name, and could not hold me under the name and must throw that out. Within a few days all this came to my ears, and now the old man came to me again, smiling as ever, and saying, "I told you some time ago that you were not to go to the war, you will also remember that the Savior said that wars come from the evil heart of men, and let those fight it out that brought it on; come now, you plainly see that the Lord is in the matter. Go now and tell the people what the Lord has done for you." Then he was gone again. Strange as it may seem, a new idea now took hold of my mind, viz: where little is given but little is required. This is Scripture, I thought, and holds good in all cases. From that day forth my mind began to run out in wonderment, and every man, woman or child that I saw or met would cause this inquiry in my mind: I wonder if they know anything about salvation by grace? I wonder if he or she knows anything about Christ? I then began to try to tell the story. It seemed to grow and expand, and to my astonishment the heavy weight which had seemed to bear so heavily on my heart was gone; but not to stay away, for it often would come back again in a few days; but after I would try to talk in public, even though I seemed to make a complete failure, the weight was gone, and at times it seemed as though I could leap over a wall. Thus I went on trying

and stumbling along until the brethren, against my protest, more than twenty-five years ago, pushed me out, and finally, more than twenty years ago, laid hands on me and set me apart to the work of the ministry; but to this day my life seems a failure and a mystery to myself.

Now my story is told, and I look back to the old Paint Creek church-house standing, filled at times with people, and not one is left that was there the day I went down into the water. I turn my eyes westward to old Sharon Church, in Guthrie County, of which I am pastor, and not a soul is left that was there when I placed my letter in the church, nearly fifty-one years ago; all are gone to their long home, and I am left alone. O how sad and lonely I feel, and often I cry, weeping, How long, O Lord, how long must I wait? But as Job said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

I feel to say in conclusion, I know that he will not forget me, and that I shall not always be left, but shall soon see him and be with him and all those who are gone before.

Your brother in hope,

JOHN CLINE.

DES MOINES, Iowa, April, 1906.

MANORKILL, N. Y., May 28, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find a letter I received from Elder John McConnell; it contains such valuable matter and sets forth the sovereignty of God so plainly I take the liberty of sending it to you, hoping you will publish it, and that Elder McConnell will be pleased to let the light shine, that others, too, may be comforted thereby. It is said, "Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence." And, "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another." So let our lips and lives express the holy gospel we profess.

D. S. ELLIOTT.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Nov. 21, 1905.

MR. D. S. ELLIOTT—DEAR BROTHER:—For lack of opportunity I have thus long delayed replying to your welcome letter. I am glad the Circular Letter of the Warwick Association pleased you. Your comments on the subject "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," brought comfort and joy to me. As you remarked in your letter, there are many who assert it is only the good things that work together for good to them that love God, but I do not understand it that way. If God's foreknowledge and predestination did not embrace the entrance of sin into the world, then I fail to understand wherein his sovereignty consists. Just what is meant by "permissive decrees, permission, overruling," &c., as relating to the acts of God, I do not know. To my mind such expressions deny the sovereignty and absolute predestination of God. God's goodness is so great that he could not suffer sin to enter the world except to serve himself in it to some great end; for all his thoughts are the perfection of goodness and wisdom. Whatever men may say, we know that sin is in the world. Its existence must be according to God's sovereignty; its punishment according to his justice; and his ordination of sin to good is according to his wisdom whereby he orders the events of it to his own purposes. In itself sin is a disorder, and therefore God does not suffer it to exist for itself, but he wills it for an end that belongs to the revelation of his glory, and this is his aim in all the acts of his will. He wills it, not as sin, but as

his wisdom can order it to some greater good than was before in the world, and makes it contribute to the praise of the glory of his grace. A shadow is not drawn by the painter for any pleasantness in the shadow, but only as it serves to set forth the beauty which is the object of his art; so the glorious effects which arise from the entrance of sin into the world are not from the creature's sinfulness, but from the depth of God's wisdom. This is seen in God bringing glory to himself out of sin: only "as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ." The abounding of sin is an occasion for the much more abounding of grace. Without sin we had never been miserable, and without our misery God's mercy in sending his Son to save us could not have appeared. Without the entrance of sin into the world, the attributes of God could not have been experimentally known; there could never have been communicated to us the knowledge of those perfections of his nature which exalts him as God over all. His justice had never been known were there nothing to punish; his mercy had never been discovered in having nothing to pardon; and his wisdom had been silent in having nothing to order. As the only wise God he appears in making the wrath of man to praise him. He uses the malice and enmity of the devil to accomplish his own purposes; he defeats the devil by turning his own contrivances against himself. To make things serviceable contrary to their own nature is according to the wonderful power and wisdom of God. It is marvelous in our eyes that the world, (which includes the god of the world,) and death, and things present, let them be as evil as they will, should be ours, that is, for our good, and for his glory: that he makes them serviceable to the honor of Christ and the good of his people. (1 Cor. iii. 22.) He has ordered sin to such an end as man never dreamed of, the devil never imagined, and sin in its own nature could never attain. He willed that sin should be in the world as an occasion to bring forth the mystery of God manifest in the flesh. He never, because of his holiness, wills sin as an end, but as an occasion to draw good out of those things which in their own nature are most contrary to good. The devil inspired man to crucify our Lord, and God ordered it thus to accomplish his own design of redemption. The devil had his own ends in view, but God overcomes his work to serve his righteous will. While they all thought to do their own wills, God ordered them to do his will: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." We all must admit that we are prone to trust in our own strength, and is it not in such seasons that God orders corruptions let loose in us that we may be sensible of our infirmity and come boldly to the throne of grace for help in our need? The great reason why God decreed that sin should be in the world, was to honor himself in the Redeemer; so the continuance of sin, and our falling into temptation, is to honor the infinite value and virtue of the Redeemer's merit which God from the beginning intended to magnify. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." So the credit of imputed righteousness is kept up, and the efficacy of the Redeemer's blood is manifested in cleansing from sin and defilement. Were we perfectly sanctified we

would not need the continual and repeated imputation of the righteousness of Christ for our justification: we would trust in inherent righteousness, and slight imputed. Were there no captivity to the law of sin which is in our members we would soon forget we have a Redeemer, scarce remember we have an Advocate who is the propitiation for our sins; but sin that dwelleth in us discovers to us our impotency to perform that which is good. In this way is the dignity and honor of our Savior's blood kept up. We would soon lose the thankful remembrance of how precious that blood is, if our infirmities did not remind us of its needed application continually.

I must bring this to a close. It comes far short of expressing my convictions concerning the absolute sovereignty of God in all things, but it may serve to show what little sympathy I have with any sentiment that qualifies in the least degree any attribute of our God. The word "absolute" adds no weight or force to any expression of God's purpose, power and dominion, but I like the word, and if any other word could be added to my vocabulary of language to more emphatically assert my love for the doctrine I would adopt it. The mystery of the gospel is worthy of lifelong contemplation and inquiry; we find in it fresh springs of new wonders; it both raises and satisfies our longings, its commands present us with the strongest motives to obedience. The grace of God teaches us to deny ungodliness; not the least allowance of sin is granted, nor the least affection for sin is indulged; it prescribes that none but those that are sanctified shall be glorified; that there must be grace here if we expect glory hereafter; without holiness shall no man see God. I have no inclination to listen to, much less argue with any one who professes to believe in the absolute predestination of all things, who excuse their evil deeds by saying it was predestinated, and therefore they could not help it and should not be held responsible; the Spirit of holiness is the unfailing seal of predestination; it is what causes us to seek to make our calling and election sure; it condemns sin in the flesh; it quickens our mortal body to live unto God, and he who hath this Spirit in him hath seen Jesus and is like him; for when he shall appear we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is; and "as he is, so are we in this world."—1 John iv. 17.

I have in pleasant remembrance my visit with you at the Gilboa meeting, and often long for the privilege of meeting you all again. Remember me in love to all them that name the name of Christ, "who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen."

Your brother in faith and hope,

JOHN McCONNELL.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1906.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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DISOBEDIENCE.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—If it is not asking too much of you, will you write upon the subject of disobedience, and show how it harmonizes with unlimited predestination? We are troubled here with the so-called conditional Baptists; to me they seem free-willers.

Your brother, G. M. SNIDER.
MAUD, Oklahoma.

Perhaps we do not fully understand what is in brother Snider's mind with regard to the above question and request, but in the first place will say that the question of harmonizing the commandments of God and the duty of exhortation one of another by those who love God, with the unlimited predestination of God, has not for many years troubled our mind at all. The one question that seems important is, What do the Scriptures teach regarding both these things? If the Bible teaches that our God has predestinated all things whatsoever comes to pass, we want to receive and believe that; if it teaches that some men are obedient and others disobedient to the commandments of God, we want to believe that also. The same question has been propounded with regard to prayer, and the predestination of God. It has been said, What is the use of praying at all, if all is fixed in the purpose of God? This has not troubled us, it has seemed sufficient to our mind if we find predestination and the obligation and privilege of prayer both taught in the word. If our God has declared both to have place in his arrangements, that is enough, without questioning how both can be true. If men should teach what on the face of it seemed contradictory we should feel that we had right to question either the one thing asserted or the other, but when God, who is too wise to err, declares two things to be true in his word, we know absolutely that they are both true, though they may seem contradictory to our finite mind. Without meaning to say aught that would seem to make light of the solemn things of which we are speaking, we would say that we have always felt, as it is said an aged woman declared when it was asserted in her presence that it was a physical impossibility for the big fish to have swallowed Jonah; she said, If the Lord had said that Jonah swallowed the whale, I would believe it. In like manner, if the Bible teaches that predestination of all things is true, we would believe it, and if at the same time it teaches the truth that men are disobedient to God, or on the other hand, obedient to him, we do fully believe that also, and are not concerned about harmonizing them according to any principles of our finite human reason. Indeed, if the Bible be the product of the wisdom of God, who is infinite in knowledge, and if it does teach things that are supernatural and heavenly, we ought to expect that there would be many things in it that would appear contradictory to our imperfect understanding. We say appear contradictory, for nothing can be really so in the Bible, if indeed it be the revelation of God; and by the use of the little word "if" we do not mean there is

the least shadow of doubt that all the Scriptures were given by inspiration of God, and are absolutely correct in all things, but it is only reasonable to think that when divine wisdom speaks it must be far above and beyond all human wisdom. Little children often fail to understand what their parents do, some things seem contradictory in what their parents say to them, yet it is not really so, as they will come to see and understand as they grow older in years and wisdom. We are but little children in understanding the word and ways of God, and so we must not be surprised when seeming contradictions appear in the Bible; they are however only seeming, and not real. If indeed we could see the full harmony that really is in the word of God, and understand it all, we might well begin to question whether after all it were the word of God, for it is sure that what we can fully understand must be finite like ourselves. The Bible contains the record of divine wisdom, and must be above our finite minds in all things. How needful it is that we come to it as little children, desiring in humility to learn what is the mind of God, and prepared to receive its teachings, even though to us they seem hard to reconcile. It is sure that the Bible does teach unlimited predestination, and it is sure that it does enjoin the obligation of prayer, and the duty of right living; it is sure that it does declare that obedience to the commandments of God is right, and that disobedience is wrong, and it is sure that the Scriptures do teach that there are such things as obedience and disobedience to God. If any one asks of what use is it to pray if all is settled and fixed in the purpose of God, we answer, This is a question that you must ask of the word itself; we are not called upon to respond to it. If any one asks of what use is any commandment of God, or any exhortation from his servants, if all is fixed in his immutable will, we reply again that this question also must be asked of the Author of the Scriptures, and not of us; we are not called upon to try to answer it. We are, and we ought to be, only concerned as to whether the word does teach both these things. If so, then let us rest in this fact, questioning no further as to how both can be true, for God has himself declared the answer in the word. Is it settled in our mind that the Bible is the word of God revealed to us, and that it is all recorded as he would have it? If so, then we shall stand upon safe ground when we gladly receive all its teachings. We should be sorry indeed were the leaven of doubt and criticism of the written word to creep in among the churches of Christ. We should be sorry to think that any one among us as a people, is not willing to sacrifice his own judgment, if that judgment comes face to face in opposition to the lightest word of God, rather than even for a moment to cast the slightest shadow of question upon the perfect truth of the Bible. It is the word of him who cannot lie. "Let God be true, but every man a liar." May the truth of these words have their full weight with us. They who deny the unlimited predestination of God because they think it is inconsistent with the exhortations and commandments of the word, and because they cannot reconcile it with the thought of prayer to him, and those, on the other hand, who reject the thought of prayer to God for that which we desire, and of exhortation, and all the commandments of God, because they conflict with their views of predestination, are both alike wrong; neither the

one nor the other must be given up from our faith, both are alike taught in the word of God.

Of late we have seen and heard arguments against God's predestination based upon the claim that it renders useless and valueless all prayer and all exhortation, and takes away all force from the commandments of God to all obedience, and destroys the weight of all warnings against disobedience. On the other hand, we have seen and heard attempts to put one side, as of little use, all prayer and exhortation, and to banish all the force of the commandments of God, because it is claimed that they are inconsistent with God's predestination. We desire here to lift up our voice in solemn protest against both of these things. Shall we be wiser than God? Are we better acquainted with his arrangements than holy men of God who in former times spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost? The same Paul who declared the purpose of God, and his decree in all things, also warned, exhorted, reproved, rebuked and entreated his brethren as to how they ought to walk, and of himself said that he kept under his body, and brought it into subjection, lest that by any means when he had preached to others he himself should be a castaway; and again and again the same Paul prayed for his brethren, that the richest blessings of grace might be theirs. It is our mind that if Paul taught the unlimited predestination of God, and yet thought it not inconsistent to also teach obedience to God's commandments, and to pray to God for all that we desire, we are safe in so believing and in so preaching.

Some Scriptures bearing upon the question of our brother are in our mind to refer to, and are familiar Scriptures. They have been referred to in this same manner again and again, but are not yet worn threadbare by this constant use, and their force is not abated, and we are persuaded that, like the garments of the Israelites in the forty years journey in the wilderness, they will prove just as good at the end of our journeying as they are now, or as they have ever been. Let no one turn away from the testimony of these Scriptures saying, O we have heard all this before. Well, if you have not profited by it before, it may be that it will profit you now. These Scriptures to which we again call attention have been the rock and refuge of the people of God many times when the darts of the enemy have been so numerous that they have almost darkened the sun; let us flee to them again, as to well tried strongholds. We doubt not there are also many other Scriptures which teach the same things, and we would be glad indeed to have any of them pointed out, and their force presented. These that are in our mind are familiar and commonly referred to, and so have all the more weight when attention is again called to them.

Joseph's brethren sinned (and confessed their sin afterwards) in all their envy of heart against him, and in all that they through envy did to him, yet notwithstanding all this evil-mindedness of theirs, by which they thought only to harm Joseph, God said through Joseph that his purpose was in it to save much people alive. Joseph's brethren fulfilled the decree of God indeed, yet they sinned, and they confessed that they sinned in their cruelty toward their brother, and when Joseph would comfort them as they stood before him with broken hearts by saying that God had a purpose in it all, too, it seems not to have occurred to them to say, Why, then there was really

no guilt upon our part at all, we were only fulfilling the decree of God; how then can we be blamed? This did not fall from their lips, and we are persuaded that it had no place in their hearts, and what is more, neither will such conclusions come to the heart of any humble sinner when he has done wrong or felt wrong. It is impossible that any one led by the Spirit of Christ shall say or even think, This is predestinated, and therefore I am not to blame at all. Had some in this day been standing by Joseph and his brethren when he said to them, The purpose of God was in all that ye did, to save much people alive, they would have said, Then thy brethren have not really sinned. Others to-day would have said, Beware, Joseph, this is dangerous doctrine, you are destroying the very foundations of morality and of godly living, and furnishing your brethren with ground upon which they may justify themselves before you and God. But no such quibblings had any room, so far as we know, in the heart of any one there; let us beware lest such things be in our hearts. Had such questionings been presented before Joseph we can hear that man of faith saying, as did Paul long afterwards, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" When Peter said, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain," and again, when he said, "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together. For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done," he stated both the purpose of God and the guilt of man in the same breath. He did not pause to reason out the harmony of these two statements by any principles of our finite reason. Both these principles of truth were laid down, and these words are not the words of Peter alone, but of the Holy Ghost. Why should we concern ourselves any further than to receive and accept just what is here declared? Our God determined that this should be done, and yet in the wickedness of their hearts and hands they did it. If any man says, I cannot reconcile it, and therefore I cannot believe it, such an one must settle it with the God who inspired this testimony, we will not enter into controversy with him. Paul in the ninth chapter of Romans, refused to enter into strife with any who would oppose the truth of the purpose of God, upon the ground that he would have no room to find fault, seeing that no one had resisted his will. He simply said, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" And this was not the language of impatience or ill feeling upon the part of Paul. These words also were the direct teaching of the Holy Spirit, and are God's words to us, by Paul. Our God raised up Pharaoh for this very purpose, that by the terrible things shown him God might be glorified. It matters not, so far as the argument of the apostle is concerned, whether the words "raised up" mean raised to the throne, or raised up into this mortal life, in either case it was for the purpose of glorifying God by the things which did take place through him.

Now, do not these principles cover all that transpires among men? Is it not true that in all that takes place God has a purpose? Does that purpose destroy the guilt of man in doing all that is evil?

We leave this theme. May God bless his truth to us all. C.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Deacon R. M. Strong.)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Middletown and Wallkill Church, June 6th, 7th and 8th, 1906, to the churches of which this meeting is composed, sends salutation with love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED:—In this, our annual epistle of love and fellowship, we present for consideration the words of the apostle Paul as recorded in the eighth chapter and fourteenth verse of his letter to the church at Rome: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." This chapter (Romans viii.) has always been deemed by the Lord's people a peculiarly precious one. It begins by stating that there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, and concludes with the comforting assurance that there is no separation from the love of God which is in the same Christ Jesus. Between these two solemn truths are inclosed the blessings God has bestowed upon his people, and the unalterable title given them by virtue of their relation to him: "If children, then heirs."

Let us briefly consider some of the leadings of the Spirit, and some of the effects of such leadings. The blessed Spirit leads the sensible sinner to know Jesus, as the center of all Jehovah's acts of grace, for it is in Jesus that Jehovah has loved his people with an everlasting, sovereign and unchangeable love, chosen them to salvation, entirely independent of any good in them or done by them; pardoned all their sins, past, present and to come, sins of heart, lip and life, with all the guilt and aggravation that are connected with them; justified them from all the charges of a broken law, and pronounced them righteous in his sight. In Jesus the Most High meets with them, and makes himself and his secrets known to them, and they pour out their confessions, requests, praises and thanksgivings to him for his unremitted kindness to them. Christ being thus revealed as the center of God's acts of grace towards his covenant people, faith lays hold of him, hope fixes upon him, and love embraces him, and the poor soul is made to exclaim, This is just such a Savior as I need, for in him all my needs are met. The Spirit leads God's children to trust in and pant after Jesus. When the tried saint finds unbelief very powerful, and meets with many discouragements in the way, to be told to exercise faith in God, to put his trust in him and not give way to discouragements, affords no comfort, for the heaven-born and Spirit-taught child knows by sad experience that unless God in sovereign grace bestows the needed faith as a gift, it is as easy to create a world as to trust in Jesus. When however God works in his people to will and to do of his good pleasure, and they are enabled to walk by faith and not by sight, then it is that they experience (in proportion to the measure of grace and faith bestowed) the blessedness of trusting in the Lord for the remission of sins, even though the number of them seem increased, the supplying of needs, though they are multiplied, deliverance out of troubles, though they get into new ones, the assurance that all is right, though everything (in the eye of reason) appears to be wrong. All holy longings and pantings of soul possessed by the believer are of the Spirit's producing and drawing forth. Therefore, when we experience a longing after and panting for Jesus we may rest assured that nature never produced it, but that it is the work of the Spirit, and in his own time the hungry will be fed, the thirsty will be given to drink of that water which will prove

a well springing up into everlasting life, and the weary shall find rest. The Spirit leads the saints to know that in themselves they are as poor and needy, subjects of the same ignorance, weakness and infirmities as they ever were. This knowledge of themselves causes them to often doubt their being children of the living God. When they feel so very sinful, dark, cold, lifeless, barren, shut up and comfortless, they think that if they were truly children of God, they should not feel so; questions something like this they propound to themselves: If I am one of thine, why am I so dark, ignorant, unbelieving, sinful, &c.? If I am not one of thy people, why do I see and feel different to what I once did? Why do I feel any love to thee and thy people? Why do I feel a desire after thee, and cannot rest content without enjoying thee as my God, Savior and portion? Why am I at times thoroughly discouraged, and at other times encouraged? Lord, if I am truly thine, make it manifest to me by thy Spirit. If I am deceived, open my eyes to the deception. O Lord, decide this doubtful case, for I cannot. Now when experiencing this wretchedly uncomfortable frame of mind the believer is unable to decide the matter, but the Spirit can and does, by shining upon his own work already begun in the heart, bringing the promises and declarations of God's word to the mind, revealing Jesus to the soul, and drawing forth faith to receive him. The Father's boundless love being shed abroad in the heart, he is made to see and feel his interest in that love as a vessel of mercy chosen from all eternity in his dear Son, and in him ordained to salvation, and he claims God as his Father in Jesus. Doubts being all removed from his mind he now cries, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." He admires the manifestation of grace to one so unworthy as he knows himself to be, and says, Not unto me, O Lord, not unto me, but unto thy name be all the praise.

Brethren, a word just here. How needful is each and every experience that we pass through while on this pilgrimage journey. We must know much of darkness to appreciate light. We must know much sorrow to appreciate joy. We must experience trouble if we are to be comforted. It is the hungry soul that is fed. It is the thirsty one to whom the cup of cold water is so grateful. It is the sin-sick soul that needs the Physician. It is the weary and heavy laden ones that find rest. We must know something of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, (not in theory, but by personal experience) if we are to realize what a load was laid upon Jesus the sin-bearer for his people. Just in the measure that we realize the enormity of our individual sins (past, present and future) and to that add the sins of all God's people, do we appreciate the awful load Jesus carried in his body to and upon the cross. Then it is that we know something of the fellowship of his sufferings. This fellowship must be known by all of God's dear children, but O what a painful experience is joined to and connected with the knowledge of this fellowship. Our experience would be incomplete without it, and not one of us would part with the measure of it that God has allotted us. The Spirit leads the Lord's people in the path of holiness, to adorn the doctrine of God their Savior, to show forth his praise in well ordered lives and a heavenly conversation. He leads them to desire the welfare of Zion and to pray for the peace of Jerusalem. He leads them to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, to deem their brethren

better than themselves and to cover their faults and shortcomings with the cloak of charity or love. He leads them to desire to walk in all the ordinances of the house of God, and puts in their hearts a song of thanksgiving that they have a name and place with the people that know the joyful sound of the gospel of the Son of God. The Spirit leads the believer to know that all is well between God and him both for time and for eternity. At times he is enabled to say, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," but the ways of a man are ordered of the Lord. He feels it is well in life, notwithstanding all he meets with to try and perplex him. Be he tried in his circumstances with losses and poverty, in his family with afflictions and death, in the world with disappointments, in himself with darkness and misery, his heart heaving up rebellion against God, the Bible a sealed book, still all is well. His mind reverts to past experiences of a similar nature, and he recalls the times when the Lord in mercy turned his captivity, sanctified his troubles to his good and delivered him from them. The language found in the book of Job comforts him: "He shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven [a perfect number] there shall no evil touch thee."—Job v. 19. He feels it is well for eternity, for he who has begun a good work in him will carry it on; he who has brought him into the way will lead him to the end of it. "We are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul," and the righteous shall hold on his way. His perseverance to the end is secured by the love of God, the covenant of grace, everlasting mercy, a finished salvation, the intercession of his Lord, and his unalterable promises.

Brethren, we leave these few thoughts with you, asking the blessing of our covenant-keeping God upon his truth so far as we have given expression to it, and to his holy and reverend name be all the praise through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Ebenezer Church, of Baltimore city, Maryland, sendeth greeting to the churches and associations with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—It is with great pleasure and the kind providence of an all-wise God that we have been permitted to meet again in associated capacity to praise that God to whom we desire to ascribe all honor, power and dominion. We feel that our coming together has been in fellowship, and the servants of our God have come to us laden with the precious truths of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, in whom we hope we have access to the Father, the Creator of all things, and who rules all things after the counsel of his own will. We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that he came into the world to save his elect, chosen children, and that when he said on the cross, "It is finished," that the salvation of his people was complete, the elect of God the Father chosen in him before the foundation of the world. We believe that the Scripture is the word of God, and that the apostles wrote as they were directed by the divine Spirit, and that it is directed to the spiritual family, God's children, and is applicable to them only, and is known to them only as it is revealed to them by the divine Spirit of

truth, that takes of the things of Jesus and shows them to us. Our hearts have been made to rejoice, and we have felt that it is good to be here, and that we have been built up on our most holy faith, which is the gift of God. We feel that it is good to assemble ourselves often together and to speak often to one another in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, exhorting one another to steadfastness, that we be not carried about by every wind of doctrine, but that we be established in the truth as has been set forth here during this association by the servants of our Lord.

Our next session is to be held with the Black Rock Church at the usual time in May, 1907, when we hope to meet your messengers and our friends again.

Brethren, remember us at the throne of grace.

WM. GRAFTON, Moderator.
MILTON DANCE, Clerk.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, held with the Old School Baptist Church in Wilmington, Del., in session May 23rd, 24th and 25th, 1906, to the associations and meetings with whom we correspond sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—In the kind providence of our heavenly Father we are again privileged to meet together and hear the different gifts. How these meetings cheer us and help us on the way. We have had a good and profitable meeting, the ministering brethren have been blessed with the door of utterance being opened to them, and we have received the word as the withered plant receives the gentle rain.

Our next session, the Lord willing, will be held with the church at Cow Marsh, at the usual time, when and where we hope to meet again. We solicit a continuance of your correspondence.

J. G. EUBANKS, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, held with the church at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., May 30th and 31st, and June 1st, 1906, sends greeting to the sister associations and meetings with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Once again the privilege is afforded us of writing to you our annual epistle of love and fellowship in the truth. It is good for those who confess that they are pilgrims and sojourners in a strange land to assemble themselves thus together and to speak often one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, thus narrating the Lord's dealings with them as they travel along the highway of wayfaring men. Such spiritual intercourse stirs up our pure minds to remember the precious things that Jesus has told us, and which we so often let slip. It brings to us again the precious and sure promises of God to his people, which are yea and amen in Christ Jesus. These witnesses of the power of grace as they surround us with their testimony are in themselves an exhortation to us to lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. The letters received here from the churches of this association bespeak the presence of the Spirit of Christ with them and in them during the past year. Surely God is good to us, and we have many causes for thanksgiving. We have been favored at this session of our association with a goodly attendance of our ministering brethren. The preaching has revealed

unto us the diversity of gifts that God has placed in the body for the upbuilding of the lively stones into a spiritual temple for the habitation of his honor and glory, to offer spiritual sacrifices of thanksgiving unto his great name. We have had presented to us in these gifts, doctrine, experience and exhortation. The messages thus delivered do but determine us by the help of the grace of God to continue steadfastly in the doctrine and fellowship of the apostles, in the breaking of bread and in prayer. We cannot of ourselves remain faithful, but if God has purposed to issue us supplies of grace sufficient for our needs, we can then hold out unto the end, and the glory will be forever unto his great name who gave himself a ransom for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

The next session of this association is appointed to be held with the church at Hopewell, N. J., to begin as usual, on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1907, when and where we hope to again meet your messengers and to receive your messages of love and fellowship assuring us of your prosperity and blessedness in the Lord.

S. H. DURAND, Moderator.
ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Middletown and Wallkill Church, to the associations, corresponding meetings and churches with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—We feel to acknowledge in thankfulness the reception of your messengers and Minutes at this meeting, coming to us as they have with messages of unabating love and fellowship. We have great cause to rejoice in the goodness and mercy of God in continuing our churches in peace and prosperity. At no time in the history of this Association has harmony prevailed to greater extent than at present, and unity of Spirit in the bond of peace reigns in our midst.

The next session of this Association is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, in New York city, to begin Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1907, when and where we hope to again receive your messengers and Minutes.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Wm. Grafton, June 19th, 1906, at the residence of the bride's mother, at Towson, Md., John Green Jones and Rozella Lillian Henderson.

By the same, June 25th, 1906, at Center M. E. meeting house, S. Morris Brookhart and Sarah A. Durham, both of Harford Co., Md.

By Elder H. C. Ker, in the absence of Elder John McConnell, June 28th, 1906, at the home of the bride's son, 2643 Broadway, New York city, Robert M. Strong and Mrs. Hanna M. Hobbs, both of Brooklyn, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At her home at Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa., our sister, **Matilda Tollinger.** Her death took place May 9th, 1906. Her age was 70 years, 2 months and 7 days. She was baptized by Elder Thomas Barton, in early life, in fellowship of the church at Rock Springs, where she lived a consistent and useful member until her death, and is much lamented by the church and the bereaved husband and nephews and nieces. She leaves but one branch of her immediate family, a sister in Oregon. She left no family of her own, but is and will be much missed by the church especially, and by the neighborhood generally. She possessed faculties of mind naturally but rarely seen, and in gospel truth and church order was far seeing, a lover of good preaching and a great admirer of the glorious gospel of the Son of God and the suitableness of it to the case of poor, lost and ruined sinners. She had been declining for some years previous to her death, and was fully aware that her time was short on earth, and seemed ready to depart and be with Christ, which she felt was far

better. She passed suddenly away when the time came.

Her funeral was largely attended on May 9th, 1906, at Rock Springs. May the Lord fill up the vacancy in the church, and comfort all who mourn.

WM. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md.

Thomas W. Records died at the home of his mother, Mrs. L. E. Records, Salisbury, Md., April 7th, 1906, at the age of 25 years, 2 months and 21 days He was the son of the late Willard S. Records, who preceded him to the grave twelve years. From his youth he was all that a mother could wish, always obedient and truthful. His disease was lung trouble, of which he was a great sufferer for five years, but he bore his affliction with patience, and would often say, "Mother, don't worry, you know the Lord's will must be done." He was not a professor of religion, but as he often expressed his opinion in the will and purpose of God in all things, I have hope he is at rest. O, it seems so hard to think we shall see his dear face no more, but hope to be given grace to bow in humble submission to God's will. We know he is able to take all with him to that better world where the weary are at rest. He leaves two brothers and one sister to mourn their loss.

MOTHER.

I will add that I have known Thomas from a small boy, and can attest what his mother has said of him. His funeral was held in the Old School Baptist meeting-house in Salisbury, Md., where I tried in weakness to present the truth of the gospel for the comfort of the bereaved. The large congregation in attendance attested the high esteem in which he was held by his friends and neighbors. May the Lord grant unto our dear sister and her children the consolations of the gospel.

A. B. FRANCIS.

Winniferd Maddock departed this life on Friday evening, June 8th, at the home of her father, brother John W. Maddock, in the township of Brooke, Ontario, aged 21 years. It was her birthday. She and her mother were in the basement. A storm was raging, and a stroke of lightning passed through the house, doing no damage to the building, but causing her instant death. Her mother was thrown down and severely injured, but lost consciousness only for a moment. Brother Maddock was present in an instant and took up his wife, who was able to speak, and a brother took up the body of his sister, which proved to be lifeless. Father and mother, four brothers and two sisters, one of them a twin, are left, to whom this is a most startling and terrible affliction. Winnie was remarkable all her life for an unusually meek and quiet spirit; she was admired and dearly loved by all who knew her for her kind and affectionate disposition and her lovely character. Our brother felt almost unable to endure the stroke, but on the next morning the Lord gave him great comfort in the words, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Then he was satisfied, and was made to rejoice in the Lord. The morning after the burial of her body, as his mind was much exercised about her, the Lord gave him to see that the dear child was only lent to him and his wife, and that the Lord had taken her home to dwell with him in eternal blessedness and glory. Then he was at rest concerning her. Her twin sister, Minnie, was for a time prostrated with grief, as was also the dear mother, bereaved of her darling child. But the Lord has been tender and kind to them, and may he be pleased to give needed comfort to all the sorrowing family. The mother remembers that all the afternoon before the stroke these words were continually passing through her mind:

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

Elder H. M. Curry was present at the funeral on Sunday, June 10th, and spoke to the sorrowing family and a large congregation of friends and neighbors, from Romans viii. 28: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

I write this for publication in the SIGNS, by request of our dear brother, at whose house I am at this time.

SILAS H. DURAND.

JUNE 27, 1906.

Mary A. Parks was the daughter of the late Elder Peter Culp, who was an able defender of the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists, and was pastor of Mt. Pisgah Church for about forty years, or until death separated him from those who loved him. He was held in the highest esteem by the Baptists, and to know him was to love him. The subject of this notice was born in Chester District, South Carolina, and brought to Fayette Co., Tenn., when six months old; she was born Dec. 22nd, 1827, and died March 24th, 1906, aged 77 years and 3 months. She was married to Moses Parks in the year 1850, and to this union were born ten children, five boys and five girls; two boys and one girl preceded her to the better land. In the year 1888 it pleased the Lord to take her dear and faithful husband. While she was not a member of the church visible, she was a firm and true and unwavering believer in the doctrine of election and predestination, and that salvation is alone the work of God. She was a lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and was a reader of it about

twenty years, and loved the doctrine it advocates. She never united with the church because of a feeling sense of unworthiness. She was one who tried to keep her burdens within her own heart. Although her body had been frail and feeble for several years, her intellect was bright. She was stricken with pneumonia on Sunday evening, and died the next Saturday morning at 7 o'clock, surrounded by her seven children and other relatives and friends. Jesus was present, and she died as one going to sleep. She left with her children and friends a bright and lasting evidence of her divine acceptance with her adorable King. I would say to the seven children who have lost a kind and loving mother, While your loss is great, I feel it is her gain. I hope the Lord will enable you to bow in humble submission to his will, who is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. Her daughter writes me: "Dear brother, pray the Lord to reconcile us to our trials; we feel that mother is resting, while we are desolate, yet we do not wish her back, but desire to be with her when done with this world and all its troubles."

After funeral services by the writer, she was laid to rest in the Parks burying-ground, in the presence of a large concourse of weeping relatives and friends, to await the summons from on high.

D. G. CHAMBERS.

SOMERVILLE, Tenn., May 31, 1906.

Mrs. Nancy Mason Young was born in Virginia, February, 1826, died March 22nd, 1906. Sister Young was a person of great executive ability, though in a very quiet way. She with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. James Mason, came to Anderson County in 1837, where she spent the remainder of her eventful life. She was married to Mr. Jeff Young in 1849, and to them were born eleven children. Her husband, seven sons and one daughter survive and mourn deeply the loss of that devoted wife and mother. Sister Young united with the Little Flock Church on the fourth Saturday in June, 1871, and was baptized by the late Elder J. F. Johnson. Her life was that of a faithful, devoted member; few indeed exhibit real patience and forbearance as did this dear, aged pilgrim; no murmur or complaint was ever heard from her lips. She was one that desired to faithfully fill her place in her own domain and in her own quiet way. She being in the way, was constantly yet unconsciously talking with her feet. O what an example for us all. She filled her place in the church as a little child; this is the whole record of her life, to the honor and glory of God's grace. She was able to attend to her household duties to within a few days of her death, only being sick five days. All her children living, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, except one, were with her in her last days, and kindly ministered to her, but none could stay the hand of death. I was called to attend her funeral on the 24th, at Little Flock, assisted by Elder Wesley Bond, and spoke briefly from 1 John iii. 2. The very unfavorable condition of the weather prevented many from attending, yet a goodly number followed her remains to their resting-place in the Lawrenceburg cemetery. The casket was borne by six of her beloved sons, in this expressing their tender love for their mother. I feel in my heart to pray the Lord to remember each one of the family, and that they may remember the counsel and example of their dear mother.

P. W. SAWIN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky.

Emily Mosher Eldredge was born in Naples, Ontario Co., N. Y., June 3rd, 1829, was married to Midian Eldredge June 7th, 1849. To this union were born eleven children, five of whom, together with her husband, preceded her to the other world. She was blessed with a good hope in the Redeemer in early life, was baptized by Elder G. Beebe, and united with the Primitive Baptist Church in New York. She came to Manchester, Iowa, in 1854, and lived on the same farm forty-eight years. She placed her letter with the church at Oelwein, and lived an humble, devoted member until called to her home above. Twenty-three years ago this coming winter I had the privilege of staying at her home about three months, and can say a more humble, devoted christian I have seldom seen, each day laying self low and exalting her dear Redeemer who has done so much for her. We have corresponded ever since our acquaintance, and I surely will miss her comforting letters.

Her beloved pastor, Elder J. C. Jones, of Savannah Mo., very ably spoke for the comfort of the bereaved ones, from Luke viii. 52. Her remains were laid to rest in the cemetery near the town to await the resurrection. We as a church deeply feel our loss of one who has always had its welfare at heart. May each member of the bereaved family be kept as their dear mother in true humility and godly fear, is the desire of their friend,

(MRS.) C. H. GARRETT.

WATERLOO, Iowa.

MEETINGS.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will convene, nothing in Providence preventing, with the Olive and Hurley Church, Ulster Co., N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (3rd and 4th,) 1906. The nearest station for those coming from the east is Olive Branch; coming from the west, Shokan, via U. & D. R. R.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk,

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 74. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1906. NO. 15.

POETRY.

MATTHEW XXVI. 40.

"AND he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep."

See Zion's Warrior bathed in blood,
Which agonized from every pore,
Enduring all the wrath of God,
While Zion's sins oppress him sore.
His sacred face is marked with weeping,
And now where are his friends?
Ah, sleeping.

The scribes and elders are awake,
The traitor, Judas, too, is there;
Their darkest councils now they take,
The spotless victim to ensnare.
Jesus his solemn watch is keeping,
But ah, his chosen ones
Are sleeping.

The hosts of darkness cannot sleep,
This is their dark and dreadful hour;
To smite the Shepherd, scare his sheep,
See they exert their hellish power.
Behold, they come like torrents sweeping,
But Peter, James and John
Are sleeping.

The heavenly host are all awake,
And wonderingly the scene survey,
While one his flight from heaven must take,
To strengthen Jesus as he lay.
Angels and friends their watch are keeping,
But Jesus' blood-bought sons
Are sleeping.

Ah, Lord, I have no stones to throw
At those who left thee in thy need;
My wicked heart would often go,
And from thy gentle yoke be freed.
For sloth my senses oft are steeping,
And I am found like Peter,
Sleeping.

Lord, draw my fickle heart to thee,
Nor let me from thee further stray;
From sloth and bondage set me free,
And keep me near thee day by day;
Let me to thy dear feet be creeping,
To keep my sluggish heart
From sleeping.

And when the world with jealous eye
Is watching, hoping I may halt,
O draw my feeble spirit nigh,
And cleanse me from each secret fault.
When at my sins they would be peeping,
Then keep, O keep my mind from
Sleeping.

When Satan like a subtle foe
Would seek to overcome my heart,
And plunge my soul in bitter woe,
O bid the enemy depart;
When like a serpent he is creeping,
O let me not be then found
Sleeping.

The glorious day will soon appear
When every saint with joy shall stand
Around the throne of glory there,
Arrayed in light at God's right hand,
His chosen sheaves when Christ is reaping;
O let me not be then found
Sleeping.

C. SPIRE.

(Selected by S. McDonald, Duart, Ontario.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

REVELATION XXII. 1, 2.

"AND he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

To come to this text it is necessary to refer to the preceding chapter; there we find that one of the seven angels carried John away, in the spirit, to a great high mountain, and showed him that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. This great city is the bride, the Lamb's wife, the church of the living God, having the glory of God, and her light like unto a stone most precious; and this is Jesus, the precious Corner-stone. This city has also a wall, great and high. Thus God has said, "I will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her." Thus, as I understand, this great and high wall presents our God, who protects the church. For she is "A garden inclosed," "a spring shut up," "a fountain sealed." This city had twelve gates; this refers to the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. There were three gates on either of the four sides of the city. This shows us that God has a people in every nation, kindred and tongue, and an entrance or gate prepared for them all to enter. The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. The church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief Corner-stone. John said, "He that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof." This golden reed is, I believe, the gospel of Jesus Christ, by which the church is measured, and will hold out in full measure. The measuring of the wall by the same reed reminds us of the character of God as revealed to all the elect people through the Scriptures of truth. Also the city laid foursquare, the length as large as the breadth; the length and breadth and height are all equal. This is a perfect square, there are no big I's or little you's, all are one in Christ Jesus, and for this Jesus prayed that they might be one, even as he and his Father are one. "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." This is the city or church of God triumphant, when all the elect shall have been gathered together in one body in Jesus Christ the Head. "And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. * * * And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

I have referred to the preceding chapter to come fairly to what is alluded to by the word "it" in the text. I will now try to give such views as I have on the text. All that I know about spiritual matters is but little; I am a poor, ignorant man, so you must throw the mantle of charity over what I write. The river of water of life, clear as crystal, and flowing out of the throne of God and the Lamb, I understand to be the grace of God, compared to a river, owing to the abundance of the water which supplies the hundred and forty and four thousand sealed of the tribes of Israel, beside the great multitude which no man can number, which John also saw. This river

supplies them all, and yet its abundance is not diminished, it remains always full. "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." This water is free to God's beloved ones, it comes out of the throne of God and the Lamb. By the throne, I understand is meant the sovereign power of God, who is able to do all his pleasure, according to his own purpose and choice, independent of any other power. He that sitteth in the throne shall reign in righteousness, according to his covenant of redemption by Christ Jesus, unto the adoption of his children unto himself. This is a free, unmerited favor, bestowed upon the undeserving. He said, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." And, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

This river is clear as crystal, there is not a blemish in it, it is free from all injustice, or want of virtue, or lack of power, and it makes its way to the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory; and this, although some are endeavoring to muddy it with general atonement and special application, and others with a general application, claiming that its availability depends upon whether the sinner strives against the Holy Spirit or not, while others say that the Lord has done all that he can until the sinner reforms his life and grounds his arms of rebellion and comes to God for salvation. Others endeavor to muddy this stream by the doctrine of Universalism, and that the sinner finally gets to heaven by the amount of his own sufferings, and according to the amount of his sins. Others claim that God has invested the power in man to forgive sin upon the payment of money, while others would muddy this stream by the use of an altar, or an anxious seat; but the whole of these combined cannot defile this river, for it progresses with such power that it throws off every evil thing thrown in its way, so that it is impossible to deface it; it will admit no pollution; it admits no practices but such as it teaches in the ordinances. If sprinkling or pouring are resorted to they are discarded by this river. Building fonts to baptize in, so that the minister can stand beside the water without going down into it and coming up out of it, finds no place in this river. It is too pure to mix with anything different from its own righteousness; it is entirely different from all others. We have no doubt at times had our garments stained by something which we could not remove by the use of the clearest water, but this river which proceeds out of the throne of God and the Lamb, clear as crystal, is of quite a different nature; its efficacy is such that all filthy blotches, stains, wrinkles and all such things are removed with certainty, and will never more return, for what the Lord doeth he doeth forever, that he might sanctify the church unto himself, and present it unto himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. This garment of the soul is washed in the blood of the Lamb and made white. The garments of the body we can never begin to make white, but not so with the water of the river of life.

"Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." It is the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanseth from all sin. He that is born of God doth not sin, and he cannot sin, because his seed remaineth in him. Ye are no more under the law, but under grace, and are kept by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be

revealed in the last time. This river possesses the property of healing some diseases which have ever surpassed the skill of earthly physicians; when applied to those who are born blind it causes them to see. So Jesus when he had made clay and anointed the eyes of one blind, told him to go wash in the pool of Siloam, and he went and washed, and came seeing. By nature we are all born blind to the things of the Spirit, because they are spiritually discerned. This is also that river which makes glad the city of our God.

Then "in the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life." There are several points of the doctrine of Christ all included in the doctrine of God our Savior, and in all these is Christ found. The main use of a street is for the passing along of the inhabitants; so in this street we walk by faith, not by sight. Faith embraces Christ, the tree of life, in whom we live, move and have our being. By the faith of the Son of God we live, and by the hand of faith we secure spiritual food from every part of the gospel of Christ. He is in the midst of the city, the church of the living God. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." The whole city by faith draws nourishment from every part of the gospel of Christ; why should they not, when Christ, the tree of life, is formed in them the hope of glory? He said, "I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." He is in the midst of the church of God, and he is the beginning and the end of our salvation.

"And on either side of the river, was there the tree of life." In the first place Christ was on the ceremonial side, in the types and shadows of the old covenant, and on the prophetic side, for all the prophets testified of him, and he was believed on with living faith, that wrought in the lives of those who possessed it. In their hearts was there the Tree of life until John; and also on the gospel side of the river is this Tree, and in the midst of the street of it, or in the hearts of men. The same Spirit of life in Christ which makes us free from the law of sin and death made all the saints free, before the coming of Christ in the flesh. He will ever be in the midst of the church as her life, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, her Shield and hiding-place from every storm. This Tree of life is here in time worshiped and adored, and on eternity's side of the river it shall also be adored and worshiped by all the saints who have gone home to their eternal rest. There they shall drink of the river of the water of life; there will be eternal pleasure and plenty, and "they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." And yet the saints on the time side of the river share the same Tree of life, and drink of the same water, which is in them a well of water springing up into everlasting life. The saints on this time side of the river and the saints on eternity's side are singing together praises to God. This Tree of life is in heaven and also on earth; Jesus is on either side of the river.

And the tree "bare twelve manner of fruits." There were twelve patriarchs and twelve apostles, and twelve times twelve made up the one hundred and forty and four thousand, and twelve oxen bare up

the molten sea with their hinder parts under it, and their faces outward. Oxen represent ministers of the word. The hinder parts, the fleshly nature, is but a burden, for the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. That the oxen pointed outward north, south, east and west, is in accordance with the commission to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. This Tree of life has been with the twelve patriarchs and apostles and the innumerable multitude.

"And yielded her fruit every month." Here we come to a decisive point in that faith by which we are saved. This is a matter in which all the children of God are concerned more or less. "Am I his, or am I not?" I would make the doctrine so plain that even the babes in Christ might see and acknowledge its truth. First, Jesus is the Tree of life who carries the lambs in his bosom; this he did all the days of old. The church was chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and was his by gift, purpose and choice; this was to the end that we might be holy and without blame before him in love. Is this our faith, and have we a love for it? If then our faith works by love and purifies the heart, all is right. Jesus is the elect. "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." Again, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth." This proves that Christ is the elect of God. Need we more texts? Now we pass on to show that the church is the elect of God, chosen of God in Christ before the world was, elect according to the foreknowledge of God through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. This not only shows the election, but that the church shall be brought forth spiritually, and saved from sin, excluding all the works of the sinner in point of merit. It is by sanctification of the Spirit, and the blood of sprinkling, and not by works of righteousness which we might do. Again, it is said, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Again, Paul said, "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." Now do we believe the above Scripture to be true? Do we love to believe it? Is it spiritual food to us? If so, then we are fellow-citizens of the city of God, and are no more strangers and foreigners. Now again, Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." This wonderful argument of the Master establishes the fact that all the corn that is brought forth was virtually in the seed cast into the ground before it died. The corn of wheat I understand to be Christ himself, and that before he died on the cross all the spiritual seed that were or ever shall be brought forth were in him by gift as the lot of his inheritance. There would be no use of a seed to plant if it did not bring forth after its kind, and if the seed bears of its own kind it is a strong argument that what is brought forth was virtually in it before. Christ is compared to an apple tree, and every apple that is produced must be in the tree virtually, else it would never be brought forth; all the fruit is of the same nature from first

to last. It is the tree that puts forth the fruit, and not the fruit of itself; first make the tree good, and the fruit will be good. Jesus Christ in his own time puts forth fruit by his quickening power. This is that divine Spirit that creates a swelling desire for righteousness and holiness, that kills to the love of sin and gives in place thereof a love for all righteousness. The Lord opens the eyes of our understanding to see beauty in holiness, and to see ourselves poor, lost sinners, so that our hearts swell with grief, and we mourn over our lost condition; and "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." This is why at times quickened sinners feel as though their hearts would burst with sorrow, and at times feel so sin-sick and sin-burdened that they can hardly go on. To these Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." By the power of the spiritual life flowing through this Tree our souls are brought into a panting condition, and the soul says, Give me Jesus or I die. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." This panting of soul carries with it the petition, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Lord, canst thou have mercy upon me? Thus the Spirit is making intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered. This continues until they are humbled at the feet of mercy, and are cut off from all dependence upon anything that they can do, and come to feel that God will not be merciful to them, and that they have no friend on earth or in heaven. This is a dark time with the soul, but "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Thus the convicted sinner comes to feel that he is not worthy of God's notice, and that his prospects for life and salvation are dark as midnight. Here God will bring him and prepare him to acknowledge that all must be of grace and that salvation is of the Lord.

Experimentally, then, the tree puts forth its blossoms of faith with all its sweet fragrance, to the unexpected joy of the sorrowful one, and produces praise and thanksgiving to God in him. The putting forth of this fruit puts a new aspect upon everything, the shining sun, the expanded heavens, the beasts of the field, the trees of the forest, all look different, there is a new, sweet, calm serenity beyond the expression of the tongue. This is what is meant in the words, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." There is no mistake in this evidence; if we have experienced the truth of this new feeling and view of things, I believe we have passed from death unto life, and are born of him who has borne unto us spiritual fruit, even faith which lays hold on eternal life. Jesus said also, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Have we, in experience, become little and helpless to ingratiate ourselves into the favor of God? We may have felt that we would always remain in this happy condition, but the scene changes from this blossoming time, it does not remain long, but these heavenly sensations begin to subside measurably, doubts and fears arise, and we begin to fear that it is all vain imagination, that there is no reality in our deliverance from sin; then we make efforts to get back the distressed feeling, and are willing to suffer more; but this we never do. The soul thinks that if it could only get back the former feeling it would not let

it get away again. But now in this drying up of the blossom we see the little fruit begin to appear, and we learn that the just shall live by faith, and not by good feelings; thus there is a growth in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. This tree is to bear fruit all the year, and so there will be always blossoms upon it, and some fruit young, some middle aged, and some perfected and ready to fall into the arms of their heavenly Father and go hence and be with him forever. O brethren, as I look upon this wondrous Tree of life, and think of its bearing its fruit every month, never ceasing as long as time shall exist, bearing fruit for the church, praise, prayer, obedience, love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance, in this world and in the world to come, I feel to join in the praise of the spirits of just men made perfect. All hang or lean upon their Beloved without a discontented note among them; they are all possessed of the one life, and are all taught of God in the school of Christ, and he never teaches to the confusion of the people of God. There is one Lord, one faith and one baptism. This is the reason why those who never saw each other with their natural eyes yet love each other. And they all freely attribute their salvation to free and sovereign grace; they are delighted with the imputed righteousness of Christ. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works.

"The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." The ministers of Christ in particular are the salt of the earth in dispensing the truth which has an effect upon men which nothing else perhaps could. It is in this way perhaps that the nations of the earth are healed from a more degrading state of darkness and insensibility to the great Creator and Preserver of the nations. All this has a certain amount of restraint on the wickedness of men when accompanied by the Spirit; this, I think, all observe. The leaves do not possess in this way any regenerating properties, but they do exercise a beneficial influence. The leaves of the truth contained in the Bible are included, else there is no word of reconciliation committed to the ministers of Jesus Christ.

From your brother,

E. A. NORTON.

HAMPTON, Iowa, May, 1906.

JOHN III. 1–7.

"THERE was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: the same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus said unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

That Nicodemus was not in full agreement with the other Pharisees is conclusively proven by what is said of him in John vii. 50, 51. Moreover, he was not willing to gratify hatred, envy and revenge, at the sacrifice of law and justice, claiming that a man should be proven guilty before being condemned. This is established further by the fact that though he was a ruler of the Jews, he came to Jesus by night. He knew the sentiment in his own heart that prompted him to go to Jesus by night was not understood by others, and hence he went by night. There is something in the early experience of us all like that of Nicode-

mus which leads us to keep from others the powerful working within. The law has entered, and the offense abounds. Being found guilty, we are ashamed. If we do pray we will be found in the closet, hiding ourselves. I know what it is to go off in the night, as did Nicodemus, trying to find Jesus. Sin had taken occasion by the commandment, and wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. I had been walking in darkness, but Jesus has come, therefore have I sin. The man whatever he may have been before, learned, wise, rich, proud or mighty, is now poor, ignorant, naked and blind. How can he understand unless some man guide him? Poor Nicodemus; well do we know your feelings; we have been with you on your way to Jesus; we have believed with you that no man could do the miracles that Jesus did except God be with him; we have with you heard what seemed a strong reproof, requiring of us that which we knew was impossible for us to do. But then how else could we have gone with him into death, baptized into his death? But Jesus did not require this at the hands of Nicodemus, that he must be born again that he might see the kingdom of God, Jesus simply states this as a fact, "Ye must be born again." "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Doubtless Nicodemus thought, as we all are so apt to think, the thing that was required, was required at his hand. How prone we are to look to self, to an arm of flesh, rather than to God. The reply of Jesus to Nicodemus is one of the most astounding declarations found in the Scriptures. None could be more unreasonable and contrary to all the laws of nature or better calculated to produce skepticism in the minds of men. If Jesus had depended upon man for the fulfillment of his word, then he would have answered according to the understanding of men, but instead, his reply is according to the mighty power of God, by which we also believe. So to the Gentile woman who so earnestly sought his help he said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Here was nothing encouraging, nothing satisfying. Do we need any clearer evidence that this book is not of man, nor of the will of man, but of God? Had it been written to deceive, though the language might have been garbed in mystery, in the sequel it would have been comprehensible. Who, by natural ability, can understand "being born again," "seeing the kingdom of God?" Jesus, to show that it is a supreme truth, a truth by no means to be disregarded, prefixed it with these expressive words, "Verily, verily." The importance of it is found in the fact that it is the very beginning of the christian life manifestly. It is essential that we may be blessed to see the kingdom of God. To be consistent with this teaching those who would persuade men to come to Christ, ought first to persuade them to be born again. While this on the face of it is a downright absurdity, it is no more so than trying to persuade men to come to Christ. It is evident that those who are thus engaged are not of the faith of Paul, who said, "Do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." What an awful truth does this bring to our view; for our minds cannot be blind to the fact that in nearly every pulpit, in the streets, in the highways and the byways, men, calling themselves ministers of the gospel, are engaged in vociferously declaring that they are sent of God to persuade men to get religion, and they succeed in getting what

Paul calls "my own righteousness;" but when Paul had that, he lived a Pharisee.

If to be born again is prerequisite to a christian life, it is of vital importance to each one of us to know whether we have been born again, and that we may know we have entered upon the christian pilgrimage. Such is the effect of the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, that one in possession of it is constantly employed in working out his own salvation, seeing whether he be in the faith. Now in the consideration of this very important subject let us remember that birth is not the origin of life, but simply the manifestation of it, and it is that by which we are brought into the light. This is true in nature, and nature is the figure by which we are to be governed in the consideration of this subject. Another thing is evident, viz: that we could no more see after we are born than before unless God had given us the light of day, therefore of ourselves we cannot see, in utter darkness we cannot see any more than though we were without eyes. If this be true in our natural birth, the figure used by the Savior authorizes us to say that it is also true in the spiritual birth. The question then resolves itself into this, Do we see? If so Jesus says, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see." But who were they that did not see? They were those who said they did see. That is, they said they needed no extraneous light, but had sufficient within themselves. Thus they contradicted the law of nature, which God intended should symbolize the law of grace. "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made." When born into this world we see the world, but are not capable of entering into it or of understanding it, for the eyes of our understanding have not yet been enlightened that we may know the things of the world, yet we do see them as clearly as we ever will. So in the new birth, the kingdom of God, the invisible things of God are seen clearly, seen as soon as born, and just as we see this world we see the kingdom of God in its own light. We do not see these things by the wisdom or understanding that is in us. It is written, "In thy light shall we see light." And to him who says, "I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not," it is said, "He will deliver his soul from going down into the pit, and his life shall see the light." This man who says such things of himself, has what Job called the light of life, therefore he must have been born again. He that is born of the Spirit now by the Spirit sees the things of the Spirit. It may be as Zechariah said, "It shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: but it shall be one day, which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light."

Many of us no doubt can go back to the very time when we hungered, and thirsted, and most earnestly desired, and yet could not enter in. O that God would be merciful, was our cry. But how can he be merciful? Now we know that was a day known to the Lord. How wonderfully are we taught. We know that the Scriptures are true, because we have the light of their life shining in our hearts, giving us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; God to us is glorious indeed in the face of Jesus Christ. It is light that makes manifest. This light will never go down. "Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself." "He which hath

begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." I think I know when this work was begun in my heart, and to me it was a day never to be forgotten; if I should say it did not then appear to me as the day of the Lord I should not speak correctly, but it was not then the Lord of the gospel, full of pity and grace that I saw, but the Lord of Sinai; I was brought before justice and judgment, I was made a witness against myself. There was no mistaking this one thing, I was a sinner; I never knew it before as I knew it then; all my life came up before me in condemnation, as a dark, black, threatening cloud; my sins came up before me; the thunders of Sinai were in them; I trembled and feared as never before; the lightning of his wrath sunk deep into my heart; I was a condemned wretch, a hell-deserving sinner. Could such an one say that he was born again? Not then. But yet, if not born again, how could I hear and see and know these things? As said before, it is light that makes manifest, and birth precedes light. It is true beyond question that he who has stood beneath the cloud-capped mountain, and has heard the voice of God saying, "Thou shalt not," "Thou shalt not," and has known that all these forbidden things he has already done, has seen the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God was at Sinai; God was there. He who has received the law, he unto whom the law of Sinai has come, has received the kingdom of God; God is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place. (Psalms lxviii. 17.) Now such an one longs for the power of God, and for his favor and his presence, but to go to him in this mount is impossible. He does not yet know that to this very mount God has led him. Israel could not go to the land flowing with milk and honey, a type of the kingdom of God, by any other route. This is the road that Jesus traveled. He was not made under the law of life, but under the law of death. He came where we had gone to be one with us, that we might be one with him. As a man he was one of conflict, a man of war. Hear him say, "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." Jesus suffered without the gate, and the apostle said, "Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach." Righteousness, peace which is salvation, and joy in the Holy Ghost, the apostle said, make up the kingdom of God; and Jesus said that for Zion's sake he would not rest until he had brought it forth, showing that the kingdom of God was not set up until after he had risen from the dead; it was not while he was in the flesh, but in Spirit, and before we can enter into the kingdom of God, we must suffer without the gate; we must go to him without the camp, bearing his reproach. O my brethren, it is a very different operation by which we see the kingdom from that by which we enter it. All have probably seen many places into which they have not been permitted to enter. There were many who died in the wilderness because of unbelief. "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." If we would enter into rest it must be by the way in which he entered it. "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared." There is no other way, no other experience than that of our dear

Savior, as given above, that leads us and prepares us for entering into the kingdom.

Jesus after telling Nicodemus that a man must be born again to see the kingdom of God, repeated with the same emphasis the words, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." That is, Jesus would say, You must be cleansed as I have shown you in the type, before you can enter into the kingdom of God, though you are born of the Spirit. Before Aaron, our typical high priest, could even so much as put on the holy garments, the Lord said that Moses must wash him with water, and Aaron must put them on before entering the holy of holies, the type of the kingdom of heaven; and those who would draw near to God must have their bodies washed with pure water. (Heb. x. 22.) There is no absolutely pure water in this world, and if there were, all the washing we could do with it would not make our bodies clean before God. But, "verily, verily," we must be clean to enter into the kingdom of God. Not only in the place I have mentioned, but in many places as well, it is said that Moses must wash the body of the high priest, though his body might be never so clean already, yet it must be washed, to signify that purification from sin, with which his soul was polluted. The cleanliness of the body did not make the soul clean. This is what Jesus meant when he said to Peter, "If I washed thee not, thou hast no part with me." In this remark Jesus did not mention the feet. When Peter said, "Not my feet only, but also my hands and my head," Jesus said to him, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." The meaning of this word "whit" is whole, complete, altogether, throughout, entirely, absolutely perfect. Does washing the feet make the man wholly, altogether, throughout, absolutely perfect or holy? No one would claim this. We have the type of that which Jesus meant when he spoke to Peter concerning the washing of his feet. Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet when they go into the tabernacle of the congregation. This is a very different place from the holy of holies, and the signification is entirely different. Moses' law was that they should wash their hands and their feet, because by that law they were not only commanded to walk uprightly but to do right; that is, their hands should be clean from breaking the law. Jesus does not enjoin that upon us, but to walk by faith, and so walk free of all offence, we shall walk worthy of the high vocation wherewith we are called and of our high calling in Christ. Thus we are to walk, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in reveling or mirth, but in soberness and uprightness, redeeming the time.

Though Jesus was conceived of the Holy Ghost, and by the power of the Highest, he was born a man, and all the days of his flesh he was a man, and lived as a man under the law; because of this he was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. When we were born by the same Spirit and power we also were men. Hence Jesus said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Like our Head, for he is head over all things to the church, all the days of our life under the law of sin and death we live by faith as men who must be pure and holy; our life is like his, a life of sorrow, and we are acquainted with grief; it is the life that Jesus lived; it is the washing, the cleansing, the purifying of

our faith, the preparation necessary, the only preparation that qualifies us to enter by faith into the kingdom of God; it is by the new and living way, even the flesh of Jesus; we must suffer with him if we would reign with him. We are dead to the law by the body of Christ that we may with him be raised to newness of life. Thus man's experience is by the Spirit; he is dead unto sin, that he may live unto God. Jesus said only once, "Ye must be born again." It is needed but once, this Spirit never dies. But he teaches the necessity of the water of regeneration as well as of the blood of the atonement. I understand when Jesus said, "Born of water," he meant the spiritual judgments of God, and they are indeed a great deep, and unsearchable; they come from above. These are the waters of which the Psalms speak, "And ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the Lord."—Psalms cxlviii. 4, 5. These waters are separated from the waters below. God divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above. Earthly troubles are common to all men, and all are alike, we cannot tell God's love or hatred by all that we see before us, neither can they be known only by the judgments that come from above. It is the Lord who gives us the water of affliction.

David expressing the sorrows of Jesus and the sorrows of God's dear ones, said, "All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." Sad and sorrowful as are these judgments, no one who has been taught by them, and who has known the blessedness of them, would ask to be spared from them, by them we know the Lord in his dealings with us. None others know the Lord profitably; it is he that goes down to the sea in ships, that does business in deep waters, who sees the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep. I do believe that most of the difference in experience, in writing and preaching, is not because all are not alike born of the Spirit, but because they are not born of the water and the Spirit. I have heard good brethren say that they did not want the judgments of God. None can want them except they have borne them, and been born of them. Paul establishes beyond doubt the idea which I am trying to enforce; he said, "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom." Therefore he could say, "I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation." I heard a very dear Elder say he heard another Elder say he had never had tribulation, and did not know anything about the warfare, and yet he was considered a very good preacher; but by some he was not. A man who has ever entered the kingdom by faith will preach the righteousness of God, the peace of Jesus Christ and the joy of the Holy Ghost: Father, Word and Holy Ghost. All the righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost that we know is in Christ, hence we preach Christ. In a certain sense Christ is the door through which we enter the kingdom, and go in and out and find pasture. Into the gospel of salvation, and into the law of condemnation, and there is pasture in both for the children of God.

Your brother in hope,

E. V. WHITE.

LEESBURG, Va., March 18, 1906.

BURTONSVILLE, Md., May 28, 1906.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Inclosed you will find the good letter written me by sister Pultz. You will remember that when I was at your home a few weeks ago you suggested it be sent to the SIGNS

for publication. I have written to her and have her consent. Elder Corder Mellott and I had the pleasure of meeting and conversing with her about seven years ago; neither of us have met her since, and a few weeks ago I was agreeably surprised to receive this letter from her; I had often wondered as to her whereabouts. I esteem her for the truth's sake. I have a very kind remembrance of her, and her kindness is pleasant to my memory. Our conversation with reference to the sovereignty of our God will always remain to me as one of the Ebenezers of my dark and gloomy pilgrimage. I shall try to visit her and the dear friends in Wheeling if the Lord will. May the fatherly smiles of Jehovah be her consolation, and may she continue to realize the truth as expressed by David, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

Your brother in hope,

JOHN E. GORE.

WHEELING, W. Va., March 26, 1906.

ELDER JOHN E. GORE—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—As I was reading the SIGNS to-day I saw the notice that your address had been changed from Browntown, Va., to Burtonsville, Md. That set me to thinking of the first time I sat under the sound of your voice, and heard the precious truths for which my poor soul had been hungering and thirsting. Dear brother, would it be too presumptuous if I were to think the Lord sent you there at that special time to tell me the things whereby I should be enlightened? He did that much for the man of Ethiopia, and for Cornelius, and others. It seems very much to claim, and I feel that I am so little and unworthy of such wonderful mercies, yet if we are sons and daughters of God what will he not do for his children? I can realize that by my own puny love for my own children. Dear brother, it has only lately come to my mind in what relation we stand to God, he has given me faith to realize something of his wonderful love toward us. I will include myself, for surely I never would have loved and adored him as I do if he had not first loved me and drawn me to him by his divine love. Now I know that this is all clear to your mind, and I will not try to explain it further; I will acknowledge the whole truth, I cannot say anything more on the subject, for my mind is locked up and the key is in wise hands. I feel a thrill of pleasure in the thought that this is God's matter and not mine. O how blessed I feel when I can realize that I am nothing and he is all. I have come to the place in life where I feel I have no future of my own, that it is entirely in his hands.

I have just finished reading those two letters from the pen and heart of Elder John McConnell, they are in December 15th, 1905, SIGNS. I never read anything that expressed my own views more perfectly. O how I glory in such glorious truths! Brother, I have always believed just what he sets forth, but I never had the ability to explain it and make it so plainly understood. I have had several talks with those who do not see as I do the absolute predestination of all things, and it seemed to me that in their view God would not be the Omnipotent that I desire to love and worship. If sin came without his predestinating it, then he did not foreordain and predestinate all things before the foundation of the world, as is declared in his holy word; and if a thing happened that he did not order in all things well, then he failed in his purpose. O I do hope the time will soon come when it will all be made clear,

It is all of God; he can open and none can shut, he can shut and none can open. There are many things that I would like to tell you, but the wonderful goodness of God presents itself to my mind as the chief subject. I can see his goodness in all his dealings with me and mine during the years that have passed since I last saw you; but if I could tell it all it would fill a book, so I will only go as far back as a year ago last spring.

I have never met any of our faith and order in Wheeling, although I must say that I have met many seemingly good people, so good that I have often been led to think they were of God, but as yet they were not interested enough in spiritual things to be much comfort or pleasure to me. I would so long for some one to talk to about what was in my heart that I have at times sat down and cried and begged of our blessed Master to raise up some one for me to company with, and lo, I had my desire granted, and in such an unexpected way. One day, about a year ago, Mr. Pultz came home from his work accompanied by a man whom he introduced to me as Mr. Ford, and added that he (Mr. Ford) had seen my name in the paper. I was wondering in my mind what paper, when brother Ford said, "Yes, we saw your name in the *Advocate*." Then it dawned upon me that he was an Old School Baptist. I was so glad that I was fairly beside myself. We had a talk, and soon decided that we had always known each other, but had never met before. The next time he came (a few days later) he brought his dear, good wife; she walked right into my heart, and I think she is there to stay; it would be impossible for me to describe what she is to me. Something seems to say as if in reply, that she is a part of God's love. You would have to know how badly I needed them, to realize what a sweet blessing they are to me, but O, that was not yet the best of our meeting each other: they told me they were going to Enon Church, at Bysville, Ohio, on the following Saturday, and asked me to go with them, which I did, with great pleasure and gladness. There we met with the little band of Predestinarian Baptists, and heard our dearly beloved Elder Carmichael preach two precious sermons that seemed to flow from a soul full of godly love and tenderness.

Dear brother, this is March 30th. I was trying to tell you about meeting with these dear saints, and now I will try to make the subject a little clearer. Brother and sister Ford, with their very interesting family of children, came from Putnam County, Ohio, one year ago this month, and have located at Shadyside, a little town about eight miles from this city, and we visit each other often. Brother Ford was here this afternoon and brought me a letter from our precious brother and sister Carmichael. It seems wonderful to me that I should be thus honored by this dear saintly minister, whom I told you of hearing preach at Enon Church. This church is about sixty-five miles from here, Elder Carmichael preaches there the first Sunday in each month; the Lord willing I expect to go the first Saturday and Sunday in May. Now, strange to tell, his dear wife and I have become so attached to each other, although we have never met in the flesh, that we can hardly wait until that time comes when we expect to meet. I have often been told about her, and we have exchanged two letters each. My poor heart went out to her with overflowing love, and seemed to meet with a sweet return; she is very precious to me. Brother Ford expects to have four or five

meetings at Bellaire, Ohio, this summer if he can get our ministers to come and preach for us. I was speaking of you to-day, telling him that I was writing you, and he wondered if you would come. We would all love to meet with you and sit under the sound of your voice. I say we, for we are all of one mind about spiritual matters. He has been tendered the use of the City Hall free of charge. Bellaire is situated about half way between Wheeling and Shadyside. We desire to carry out our plans in this matter, but we submit it all to the care and keeping of our heavenly Father, knowing that all things belong to him.

Now I will close by telling you of our temporal welfare. My health is so poor, and my sinful old flesh is so afflicted that it seems a wonder I live from day to day. I have no strength of my own, but the Lord supports me so that I keep up and do our little housework, often with my poor heart overflowing with love to him for all his wonderful love and mercy. I love him for his rod and stripes, and my eyes overflow with tears of thankfulness when I realize that he afflicts me in tender love and mercy. I cannot but see that it is for my spiritual good, I sorely need all, and a thousand times more than he sends upon me. Dear brother, it has pleased our precious Savior to manifest his glorious presence to my view several times in such a manner that if I were to try to tell you about it I expect you would think my imagination had run away with my discretion, but I have received such sweet hope and consolation from those sweet visions that I can never doubt any part of them, only that God would so deign to minister such precious comforts to me, who am, I feel sure, the very least and the most unworthy of all his children.

I spent two months in Hampshire County last spring. I stayed with dear, old brother Barnes nearly three weeks of the time. He is living with James Barnes and wife, in the house where I was staying when you and brother Mellott visited us. I do not expect to go to the country seeking health and happiness any more. I feel to say with the poet,

> "When I am made in love to bear
> Affliction's needful load,
> Light, sweet and kind the strokes appear,
> Through fellowship with God."

Do you ever meet brother Mellott? I hope the dear Lord is ever with him, and will be his life, his all. Write and tell me about yourself. I am thinking you will wonder why I intrude my poor writing upon you, but I have never lost interest in your welfare, and I never will, but use your pleasure about answering this poor letter. If you should ignore it altogether, I will not complain. My family are all in their usual health; my husband's health is rather poor. Accept my christian regard and love in the Spirit.

(MRS.) FLORENCE PULTZ.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

TO THE FIRST HOPEWELL CHURCH—DEAR ONES ALL:—Often I have thought to write to you, and then my own unprofitableness would array itself before me, and I would leave it until another time; but to-day, with a knowledge of myself better than any one can tell me, I will yet try to write. I said, knowing myself better than any one can tell me, for I not only am fully aware of my own imperfections as you all can see them, but I also have a knowledge of secret faults. David prayed to be rid of them, and I expect that all who have had the true light shining in their hearts, and

have seen what was hidden therein, have seen secret faults, but it seems to me I have more of them than others, and at times how much they do grieve me. Also I have a knowledge that my pen could not give comfort or rejoicing without the Spirit accompanying it. I cannot now say that the Spirit is with me, yet withal I have a desire to write, and this whole day has not removed it. I desire to let you know that I have not forgotten you, nor my old home. I look over you in memory, and feel that I do love you and the truth for which you are contending, which never grows old. Though flesh grows feeble, and the step faltering, and the eye dim, it is the same sweet story that it has ever been; in some cases it seems as though the richest feast of his people is in the time of old age. As I think of you all I can but remember that this and that one has been taken away, leaving many empty seats, and perhaps you are saying, And there are none coming in. But this is not in the power of man, the Lord will bring them in at his own time and in his own way.

I do not desire in this to write one thing new, but I do desire to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance. The apostle said, Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together. This is a command, and should we not observe it as we do any other? How discouraging to the pastor for the members to be taken up with this life too much to attend the appointments of the church. Often I have known of members finding fault with some view of the word presented by the pastor, and of their having spoken about it to one or two, or even many, while if in the first place they had had a talk with their pastor with regard to the matter they would have been shown where they were wrong, and it would have been all settled there, and a greater love than ever would have existed between them, and others would not have had their right minds disturbed; these disturbances lead to mistrust and coldness. You know that the Scripture tells us if we have a fault against a brother that we must go to him; this is the right way, any other way is wrong. We are not to feel that we are perfect above others, and that we are right in the thing which we claim, and others wrong. I confess that I do not do these things as I ought, yet it is good to be stirred up with regard to the things we should do, and then do them as near as we can.

I have been shown so much lately of the weakness of my flesh, I find I have no strength. All our strength is in Christ, in him all fullness dwells. Do any of you ever doubt whether this story of Jesus and his love is true, and whether there is a chosen people or not, or whether all that pertains to religion is false, whether there is a spiritual birth, and if so, why is the heart of that one who professes to be born again so desperately wicked? I have been just as doubting as any one can be, and God only, I know, can bring us out from these trials. Peter said, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." We find that this is true when these gloomy doubts are taken away and Christ is once more revealed, and at times so clearly that we think we shall never doubt again, then we share this exceeding joy of which Peter speaks. What a comfort Peter's experience has been to me, for with all his doubts and denials

he was a child of God; in his epistles we see that he knew the truth. What comfort it would be to me if I could say, I know the truth in its purity. But I cannot say that, and sometimes I wonder if I know it at all, then when I hear some one talk, of whom I am satisfied they do not know the truth, I reap a hope that I have known something of it, else I could not discern the difference.

I have written you at great length, yet I want to add a few words about bearing one another's burdens. What a beautiful command this is, yet it is one we often leave undone. Have we not all of us seen times when it was a great help to us for some brother or sister to bear our burden for us? Then let us do unto others as we have had joy in having done unto us. We will know perhaps of some in trouble and in trial, and there is a shrinking of the flesh, feeling we may have to do that which we would not like if we offer our services; but after all there is, I know, great reward in well doing, that is, a clear conscience in the sight of God, and when we do this, our love for the troubled ones is thereby increased. May we ever trust in him, for he is faithful, and his mercy endureth forever.

In love, your sister,

MARY HILL TERRY.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., June, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS, AND BRETHREN:—I promised several of you, while among you in the east recently, that as I could not write individual letters to all, I would let you hear from me through the SIGNS when I should arrive home, but I find it a very difficult task to perform; that is, to write that which would be of general interest to the household of faith, and if what I write is not of general interest our editors could not accept and publish it.

I left my home on May 9th, and attended the quarterly meeting of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, which was held in Dunwich, June twelfth to fourteenth. The meeting there was, I felt, pleasant and profitable to the brethren. My heart's desire was to know nothing among them save Jesus Christ and him crucified, and to preach Christ in childlike simplicity, to the comfort of the dear, tried ones who are in the furnace of affliction. In all my ministry of more than forty years I was never so favored to see the real, true meaning or design of the emblems of the bread and wine in the communion as I did when Elder Eubanks served with the bread. Here indeed was the bruised and broken body of our Lord, not only in the bread, but in the individual members, each one bruised, broken and crushed. What wonderful things are in the revelation of God through the Spirit. I think that many did truly eat the bread and drink the wine, discerning the Lord's body.

From this meeting I went to the Baltimore Association, held in Baltimore city. I also attended the Delaware, Delaware River and Warwick associations, which were held respectively at Wilmington, Del., Southampton, Pa., and Middletown, N. Y. There was a larger attendance of Elders than usual, but yet I was sad to think of the great change, both with the Elders and the brethren, since I first met them at these meetings, twenty-seven years ago. Of the seventeen that I met at Baltimore in 1879, but four remain, yet I rejoice that the Lord is supplying all the needs of his people, and this he is able to do always. I was much gratified in hearing the young gifts, and could see in them the true spirit of the gospel, and a chaste and careful walk.

I was much gratified to find how much our dear departed brother, Elder Dudley Johnson, endeared himself to you all in the east during his visit last year; truly every gift makes room for itself. I am also glad that it was your privilege to know him and love him for the truth's sake, as we here in Kentucky also did. The meetings of the associations were all pleasant to me, although perhaps in times past I have felt a deeper sense of the truth preached, yet I was given food convenient for me, and this, with the assurance of the love and fellowship of the brethren, made the visit a very pleasant one. If there was one unkind act or word, I failed to see or hear it, and I was not looking for anything of the kind. When I get my own individual house cleaned so that I can see out just a little, then I may discover some faults in you.

The two closing days of the Warwick Association were to me the most pleasant. I felt as I heard each one speak, that it was truly wonderful, and how I sunk down into insignificance compared with those who are the true ministers of Jesus. But I felt in my heart to glorify God that he had made them so. It seemed to me that all the preaching I ever did, summed up, would not equal that of those two days. It seemed to me that I ought to have kept silent during the meeting. In company with Elder Brown, I spent the following Sunday in New York city, and felt that it was good to be there. I felt that we were gathered in the name of the Lord, and therefore to the glory of God and the good of Zion.

I left New York at 7:45 p. m. Sunday, and came home by Niagara Falls, arriving here on Tuesday at 3 p. m., and found all as well as when I left home; for this I desire also to be grateful to the Lord.

Now in closing, I will say to each one whom I met, either at their homes or on the way, I have you all in loving remembrance, and am not forgetful of your great kindness to me. May grace, mercy and peace be with you all.

Sincerely, P. W. SAWIN.

MARKS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

(Matthew xxv. 37.)

It is written, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory." Jesus now reigns and rules at the Father's right hand; before him are gathered all nations, and he divides them as a shepherd does the sheep from the goats. This division has been going on through all ages past, and is going on to-day, and it will continue to go on until this salvation shall be made manifest to all the heirs of immortal glory, even every vessel of mercy; for to Jesus is given a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" He is "King of kings, and Lord of lords." "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting."

The righteous and the sheep are one and the same. Jesus came to save the sheep, (see John x.) and he accomplished the work that he came to do; and they are righteous because they stand perfect and complete, clothed in the righteousness of Christ. God's ways are equal. This kingdom stood, prepared for this chosen people, before the foundation of the

world, and every one for whom it was prepared shall enter into this inheritance, from the least of them to the greatest, not one of them shall be left out or come short of it. For Jesus is Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the Almighty; he has all power in heaven and in earth, and is certain to fulfill his every promise by gathering the redeemed out of every nation, people, kindred and tongue, under heaven.

These redeemed characters do not boast of their own good works; they did not know that they had ever ministered unto Jesus until the King informed them, as stated in this parable. The King said that by ministering to the least of these his brethren, they had ministered unto him. Perhaps it may prove to be of some comfort to go back and notice the marks of the righteous who have gone before, the patriarchs and prophets. Abel brought of the firstlings of the flock a lamb, while Cain brought of the fruit of the ground. God had respect to Abel and his offering, but to Cain and his offering he had not respect. For "by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he, being dead, yet speaketh." Abel looked down through the ages, by faith, to the coming of Jesus the just One, who should forever put away sin by the sacrifice of himself without spot unto God; and so sure was Jesus to come and finish the work that the people stood saved in the purpose of God from before the foundation of the world. Thus we see that faith in Jesus is one of the marks of the righteous. For "without faith it is impossible to please him," and "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Again, we read, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." He believed that what God had promised, he was able to perform. So we see that belief is one of the marks of the righteous. The patriarch Jacob when questioned by Pharaoh said, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been." He had been made acquainted with the plague of his own heart, the heart which is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; such as these do not claim to be of any great importance, and confess that they are evil. Moses was the meekest of men; so humility is one of the marks of the righteous. "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect to the recompense of the reward." Affliction is one of the marks of the children of God; for the Lord has said, "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." When David committed the sin of numbering the people, and the Lord sent the prophet to him saying that he could choose one of three things: famine seven years, to flee before the enemy three months, or pestilence three days, he said, "Let us fall now into the hand of the Lord, for his mercies are great and let me not fall into the hand of men." The righteous trust in the mercy of God, "for his mercy endureth forever." The patriarch Job was perfect and upright; he feared the Lord and eschewed evil; the fear of the Lord then is one of the marks of the righteous. "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil," and Job, when everything was swept away, and his sons

and daughters slain, said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Again, he said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." A steadfast trust in the Lord in all our conflicts and trials is a mark of the righteous. The bride in the Song of Solomon said, "I am black but comely." In our fallen nature we are black, but as the people of God we stand perfect and complete in Christ, and are comely. Isaiah said, "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness." This is that corrupt tree that cannot bring forth good fruit; thus it is a mark of the righteous to confess that in their fallen, Adamic nature they are depraved and nothing worth. Daniel continued to pray unto the true and living God thrice a day, though it should send him into the den of lions. The three Hebrew children would not bow down before the golden idol, although to refuse meant to be cast into the fiery furnace; they were steadfast, trusting in the Lord, and did not fear the edict of the king.

The great apostle Paul said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." Then it is a mark of the righteous to confess that we are sinners, sinners saved by grace alone, from first to last.

Now we come to the chief and crowning mark, "love." "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." "He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." "We love him, because he first loved us." If we have no love for the gospel of the grace of God, and no love for the brethren, then we may know that our heart is not right, and we have no part or lot in this great salvation. If we love the brethren we will be found feeding the hungry, giving water to the thirsty, clothing to the naked, and visiting the sick and the afflicted. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Let us, dear brethren, show forth the praise of him who hath called us out of darkness into light, the marvelous light of God; let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, and let us exhort one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all.

In hope,

WM. F. SLOAN.

CLAY VILLAGE, Ky., April, 1906.

RIVERSIDE, Cal., May 3, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The time is drawing near for the renewal of my subscription for the SIGNS. The paper gives me great comfort as I travel along in these low grounds of sorrow. What a great blessing to read and to believe as I do, that Jesus, the Son of God, was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. So then, am I not following him who said, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you"? To-day I feel cast down, but not destroyed, for I hope that he will come again. Brethren, I want to tell you how much I have enjoyed the one testimony of the saints in reading over again the SIGNS from June 1st to July 15th, of the year 1900; I felt as though I had been to an association. There have been a few Old Baptists come to this place, and I have given them the SIGNS to read, and have told them how

happy I have been in reading it, and one sister read it with something of the same loving spirit of rejoicing. The question has been asked, Why worship the SIGNS? My answer is, I do not worship the paper, but the Spirit in which they all write. Job said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand in the latter day upon the earth." I feel to say that he stood with dear old Elder Beebe in the division, and that he will stand with his people although earth and heaven shall be shaken.

Will you, if convenient, give your views through the SIGNS upon Heb. xii. 26–29? and oblige one of the least and vilest of all. I love to read explanations of the things in the Scriptures which come to my mind.

I remain your sister in hope,

ELIZA SARBER.

(See editorial reply on page 470.)

CORDELE, Ga., June 29, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I reached home safely, and in due time, and found all well. I have been very much pressed for time in trying to catch up with my work since I returned home, and as I did not want to write you until I had the time to write something like a satisfactory letter, I have put it off until now. Please pardon this delay.

I am now more than one hundred miles from home, attending a communion meeting down near Savannah, Ga. The meeting has been a pleasant one so far; Elders A. W. Patterson, Bazil Jones and W. A. Lamb are in attendance at this meeting. We are expected to ordain Dr. J. J. Kennedy to the office of deacon to-morrow (Saturday). He is one of the most consecrated men that I ever knew, and I think a deacon indeed.

Our annual communion meeting at our church at Cordele was held last Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Elder A. V. Simms, of Valdosta, Ga., was with us there, and he surely did some able preaching for us. He and I, acting as presbytery, ordained a deacon in our church at Cordele last Saturday, Dr. T. J. McArthur being the candidate. I hope I feel thankful to the Lord for such a gracious gift as he is; I feel that the Lord has given me a faithful and competent yoke-fellow in him, as a minister in temporal things. May the Lord enable us to labor together in love, and put our trust in him to "build the house" and "keep the city."

I have had many pleasant recollections already of my visit up with you all, and hope to yet be able to think of many precious acts of kindness and tender deeds of love you all so graciously bestowed upon me. May the dear Lord show you all a bountiful continuation of his choicest mercies, and afford you renewed evidences of his everlasting love toward you all. I do feel it is a royal privilege to associate in love and fellowship with God's redeemed people, wherever they may be. Truly this is my meat and drink, if I know my heart at all.

Brother Chick, if you will do so, you may let the readers of the SIGNS hear from me by sending them this letter. I know it is a poor apology, and very imperfect indeed, but I kindly beg their forbearance. Pray for me and write to me. Love to all.

Yours in hope,

MORGAN BROWN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1906.

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HEBREWS XII. 26–29.

THE text to which sister Sarber refers begins with these words, "Whose voice then shook the earth; but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." Then Paul declares that this "signifieth the removing of these things that are shaken as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." Then follows an exhortation, wherein the apostle says, "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire."

When Paul says, "Whose voice then shook the earth," it is evident that he refers to what is recorded in the nineteenth chapter of Exodus, in connection with the giving of the law by Moses to Israel. Among other awful things it is said that the whole Mount Sinai quaked greatly. In all that is recorded as having taken place at the giving of the law, there was a presentation of the power and majesty of that God whom they were to fear and obey, and also of the transitory nature of all things earthly which he had made; and also, as we learn from the inspired Paul, this shaking signified the removing of the things that were made, and that Mount Sinai was thus shaken, was an emblem that the legal covenant itself in its forms and ceremonies, and with its conditions, should endure only for a time. No people save Israel were ever under that covenant, and they only until the desire of all nations should come.

Now in the prophecy of Haggai we read a promise of still another shaking, yet in the future, in which the heavens and earth should shake. The Lord said, "Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts." This was spoken of the second temple, which was erected after the return from the captivity in Babylon, and which as a building was far less magnificent than the temple built by Solomon, which had been destroyed, yet its glory should exceed that of the former temple, because the Lord of the covenant should come to it in the days of his flesh; and yet this temple with its worship and all the glory that pertained to it should be shaken. Both the earth and the heavens; that is, the earthly people, and the ordinances and service of that sanctuary, should be all removed. Therefore the apostle Paul said, "And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." In these words Paul teaches that all that pertained to that legal covenant had passed away forever, but the new covenant could not be shaken, and therefore could never be removed. Just before, he had said to the brethren to whom he was writing, that they had not come to the mount that might be touched and

that burned, &c., but that they had come to Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. This city, in the eleventh chapter he had said, was a city that had foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Our God ordained the former covenant, with its sanctuary, and its services, and ordinances, but it was not intended to be the abiding covenant, but only to present in type the things which he had ordained to be permanent, and which could not be removed. Paul in the former portion of this chapter urges upon his brethren a becoming walk; that is, such a walk as becomes those who are free, and not under bondage. He declares that their service is not now the service of fear, but of love, and believers are not come to such terrible things as were seen at Sinai, but to such things as belong to the covenant of a finished salvation, in which is heard the voice of the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel, which cried unto God for vengeance against his brother. This blood calls for blessing, and peace, and salvation, and glory in the end with God, and this is not subject to any conditions; there is no possibility of change in it; it is a kingdom that cannot be moved; every one of its promises and all its glory shall abide forever. If we speak of the kingdom as once being formed in the heart, it is there forever; if we speak of the everlasting mercies of it, they are sure; if we speak of the hope of final glory, it cannot fail; it is, in all that belongs to it, a kingdom that cannot be moved, and the inhabitants of it shall never be removed from it; nothing shall ever shut any of them, from the least of them to the greatest, out from all its privileges, or from the fulfillment of all its promises; the kingdom cannot be moved, and the people cannot be removed.

Now, seeing he says that we do receive this kingdom, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. This blessed service of grace could not be the heritage of any one under the old covenant, there was no promise of grace in that covenant at all; the law demanded all obedience but gave no power to fulfill its requirements, but under the new covenant all is given freely, and all obedience or service flows out freely from the grace given. We have not under this new covenant received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but we have received the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father. We are servants indeed, but we are servants as children are servants. The service of the Spirit of adoption is far different from the spirit and service of those who only hear the thunderings and see the quakings of Sinai. There could be no acceptable service under the spirit of the legal covenant; there could be no godly fear produced by the thunderings of the mount that might be touched and that burned with fire, but now godly fear is put in the heart, and from such fear acceptable service is rendered. He who quakes for fear of failure to obtain that for which he labors, cannot have strength to serve God; his thoughts are not of God, but of himself and his own desires, and prospects, and fears, and questionings; but when the kingdom is once entered which abides, and in which all is abiding, there is rest of mind and peace of conscience, and fear is cast out, and the child is at home with his Father; with a quiet mind and cheerful heart he can then serve God with reverence and godly fear. So Paul admonishes his brethren who are free that it is their privilege to walk as free men before the Lord, and this he would impress upon his brethren as good and acceptable before

the Lord. Believers are not slaves, but children; their service is not that of fear, but love; it is not an old covenant burden, but a new covenant blessing.

The last expression in the text, "For our God is a consuming fire," is not a threat against the children of God, but the promise of a blessing. Not they, but their adversaries, are to be burned. Paul said before in this epistle that the "fearful looking for of judgment" should devour not them, but the adversaries. Our God consumes nothing in his people save that which the Holy Spirit in them points out as evil. First, he consumes all in them that would cling to the old covenant, all that would enslave them in its bondage, all that would exalt themselves and not him, and this they desire shall be done; how gladly do they witness the consuming of all that Paul once called dross, viz: his own righteousness, which was of the law, and this he and they rejoice in, because being unclothed from all their legal, filthy righteousness, they are now clothed upon with the spotless imputed righteousness of Christ.

God is a consuming fire in that in his presence all that is evil in every thought, word and deed stands revealed as that which cannot endure, and must be consumed, and this every believer desires. Then it is not a dreadful thought to the child who loves righteousness (whether we refer to Christ's spotless garment, which covers them and presents them faultless before God, or whether we refer to that obedience which his children desire to always render) that "our God is a consuming fire;" he is such only to that which is contrary to God, and his children in this fire are not consumed, but only purified. How good is the apostle's word "our" in the text, "Our God is a consuming fire." It is in harmony with the language of the spouse, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." It is a word of affectionate proprietorship shall we say? "This God is our God," said one of old, and "he will be our guide even unto death." The feeling expressed in it is that nothing harmful can come from his hand.

We can conceive of a people whose king might possess miraculous power over all his enemies and the enemies of his people, so that when any foe came against them they would be at once destroyed by the terrible power which was his. This indeed would be a terror to every foe, but what a comfort to the people that loved and served him. So our God is a consuming fire, but what a comfort this is to his believing people. Every inward foe shall one day perish; and the closer (shall we say?) they come to him through all the way of trial, and burden, and temptation, in which it is their lot to travel here, the more is all that is contrary to him and to them devoured. Faith sees this to be so, and is glad; and how wondrously blessed is that coming hour when this fire shall have accomplished all its work, and all shall be perfected in them forever, and they shall be satisfied, awaking with his likeness.

We remember once hearing this Scripture referred to, and it was said, Our God, out of Christ is a consuming fire. And we recall that some one replied, "We have no God out of Christ." The thought of the first speaker, of course, was that the God of the universe who gave the law against which all have sinned, would and did visit with everlasting destruction those who sinned, but that in Christ he would not do this for his chosen people. Whatever of truth the brother had in mind when he misquoted this text, it is sure that Paul here was speaking of

God as he is revealed in the gospel, rather than in the law. It is our God, the God who has reconciled us unto himself in Jesus Christ, not imputing our trespasses unto us. It is the God who speaks in mercy and in love from Mount Zion who is the consuming fire. To the believer indeed, there is no God out of Christ. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.

In another place the apostle after calling up the blessed privileges of the saints, says, "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" A careful reading will show that in all the epistles all right doing and living is based, not upon fear of punishment, or hope of future reward, but upon what the Lord has done for his people. If we are to show mercy, it is upon the ground that the dear Lord has been merciful to us; if we are to love him, and if we do love him, it is because he first loved us; he is the Fountain, the pure, sweet Fountain of all grace and blessing. If aught of love, of mercy, of blessing, flows out from our poor hearts, it is only because he has given to us from the overflowing fountain of his grace and goodness. From the text and connection it is clear that the apostle would teach his brethren that their service to be acceptable to God must rest upon the ground of the gospel, and not the law. He does not say, Wherefore seeing that we are receiving such promises of terrible punishment if we transgress, let us serve God; but seeing that "we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God." Let us not forget that grace belongs to the kingdom of grace and not to the legal covenant at all. C.

JOHN XVIII. 36.

"My kingdom is not of this world."

The words of Jesus are spirit and life when applied to the subjects of his kingdom; every one of this kingdom is subject to the King of kings. All power and authority are his, his word is law and verily truth. When he says, "My kingdom is not of this world," we are not to question what he says, but believe his kingdom is not of this world, whether we can understand it or not.

The apostles in their first acquaintance with Jesus, as a man, thought he would set up an earthly kingdom; two of them, James and John, desired to be prominent in such kingdom by sitting the one on the right and the other on the left hand of Jesus. He answered, "Ye know not what ye ask." They had to be taught by many sorrowful lessons, in drinking of the cup that Jesus drank and in being baptized with the baptism that he was baptized with, that his kingdom is not of this world. The apostles had no prominence in the world, we mean religious world, or among men, because of being the servants of God, but were considered "the offscouring of all things," accused of most every evil because they preached Christ and the resurrection; they were prominent, however, in the kingdom of God, where believers in Christ and his power to save are only found. These men did not seek the applause of the world, they did not love the world, nor did they seek to please men. Paul said, "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." A most serious question arises here: Are we who profess to be the servants of Christ seeking to please men? If so, we are not the servants of Christ; he is our King and Master, to him alone are we accountable for our stewardship. Do we sometimes round

the corners in presenting the gospel, or desire to speak "smooth things," lest some one of the world be offended? Do we fail to talk of Christ and his loving-kindness when in the parlor because some are present who do not believe the truth? What is this but denying Christ and pleasing men? The conversation of those of God's kingdom in the early ages of the church was, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever;" they were not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. A command was once given to "Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it." Should not the gospel of the grace of God be so set forth to-day? Should we not be bold in the defense of the truth to speak in such a way that all who hear may know where we stand in this matter of salvation?

There is no place in the army of God for a coward; in ancient times those who were afraid were not numbered with those who fought the battles. The doctrine cannot be preached too plain nor too strong for those who believe it; if unbelievers are offended at the truth it will be no more than they were when Christ preached his own power, the efficacy of his own blood and God's eternal purpose in preparing him a body. Hundreds were offended at this kind of doctrine at one time, twelve only in that great company heard with comfort and said, "Thou hast the words of eternal life." Jesus did not shun to preach the truth just as it is because it would not be received by unbelievers. Why should we attempt to build up this kingdom of God (which he alone builds) with worldly matter? Why, if it is not of this world? John, when in the isle that is called Patmos, saw, in vision, the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven; this is God's kingdom, and the fact that it comes down from God shows conclusively that it is not of this world; it is in the world, but no part of it, it is of God. It is a peaceable and quiet habitation, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace." God's kingdom is spiritual, heavenly and divine, because he reigns in it without a rival, he is one Lord and his name one, therefore there can be no such thing as division in his kingdom. The question might he asked, Does not the strife and war in the church to-day prove clearly that there is division, and that all of his kingdom is not spiritual? No, unless the words of our text, "My kingdom is not of this world," can be proven untrue. If we say there is division in God's kingdom, we say that in part his kingdom is of this world; we also say the Zion of God is not a peaceable and quiet habitation. In our ideas of the kingdom of God we must not deny his word, his word is true, and all things must be tested by it. How can there be division in a kingdom when there is but one power? There is no power in God's kingdom except his own almighty power, therefore no division, no strife. Now the question, What means all the strife in the church of God to-day? "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand." If there is division in God's kingdom or house what will be the result? "It shall not stand." Who would dare say the kingdom or house of God shall not stand? "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." If there is division in it it cannot stand, but the fact that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it proves conclusively that in it there is no division. The fighting of Satan against it does not

make Satan a part of the church; he may be transformed into an angel of light, "so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God," but it is all false, this is only one of his ways of fighting against it; he is still Satan, a liar and a deceiver. Would God work against himself? No. Satan cannot work against himself. "How can Satan cast out Satan?" Why should we imagine that God is divided against himself, or that there is division in his kingdom? God is God, Satan is Satan, truth is truth, error is error. "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?" "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not; and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." Does not James make the distinction clear between these two principles? They are set forth as being opposite in every sense of the word; the one of the earth, the other from above; the one working every evil, the other all good. These principles cannot be blended, therefore are not divided against themselves. When trouble, war, strife and confusion are manifest we have no authority to say the kingdom of God is divided, but the two principles are made manifest, the one of war, strife, error, unrighteousness and every false way; the other of peace, truth, righteousness and every good work. In this we see the word of God still maintained, "My kingdom is not of this world." The precious is often separated from the vile, but the vile has never been a part of the kingdom of God. "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." When the apostles speak of division, a careful reader will observe that the idea of division in the kingdom of God is not set forth, but carnality was ever manifest, and we know that carnality is not a part of that kingdom which is "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Should wolves, in sheep's clothing, get into the visible kingdom of God, they are no part of his house any more than a goat would be a sheep if clothed in a sheepskin. God will cast out all such, because no worldly material can have place in his heavenly kingdom. When we say visible kingdom, we mean church organization, nevertheless "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation." Mortal eye cannot behold it; the Holy Ghost guides and teaches, but by faith we see the house of God eternal in the heavens.

The saints of God do not differ in form and appearance from those of the world, but there is something within them that identifies them with God; "it is Christ in you, the hope of glory." They do not love the world with its follies and delusions, they hate the commandments of men when preached as the gospel of God, they hate all sin, yes, even the appearance of evil, they hate their own life; this shows also that the kingdom of God is not of this world.

The bondwoman and her son were cast out, because her son could not be heir with the son of the freewoman; it was impossible that there could be di-

vision in the inheritance. This casting out of the bondwoman's children is still going on, and will continue; this is one of God's ways to make manifest the heirs of promise. Paul did not claim relationship with the children of the bondwoman, but said, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." The children of God need not be disturbed with regard to his kingdom, he builds the house and keeps the city. In Christ was chosen a definite number before the world began; this number composes the kingdom of God, hence having been chosen in Christ it is not of this world. Neither has it nor can it diminish, "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." This kingdom cannot be divided on earth nor in heaven. May the Lord give us to see by faith its spiritual completeness and perfection.

K.

PLEASE BE SURE,

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Died—Suddenly in New York city, July 4th, 1906, **Katherine Jeanette (McConnell) Higinbotham,** wife of Louis F. Higinbotham, and the only child of Elder John and Ella McConnell; her age was 22 years, 3 months and 15 days. Her death came as a terrible shock to her husband, father and mother, and many friends. She was of a cheerful and happy disposition, adding sunshine to the life of those with whom she came in contact. She never made a profession of religion. We believe the God of the whole earth will do right; he knoweth them that are his.

Funeral services were conducted July 6th, in New York and at Frenchtown, N. J., by the writer, assisted in New York by Elder F. A. Chick, texts: "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." The interment was in the Frenchtown cemetery. May peace through Christ be ministered to the bereaved ones. K.

John Burritt Baker, beloved husband of Edna M., daughter of Elder B. F. and Annie C. Coulter, and the son of brother Samuel F. and sister Mary Baker, of Burdett, N. Y., departed this life on Thursday, June 28th, 1906, aged 34 years. Mr. Baker was a model and loving husband, being deeply devoted to the welfare and happiness of his family. He was highly esteemed and respected by a large circle of relatives and friends. He was an ardent and thorough business man, devoting his entire time in the interest of his employers, so much so that he overtaxed his strength, which necessitated his retiring from business in the early spring. In the latter part of April in the present year, with his wife and two children he went to Colorado in the effort to regain his shattered health, but the climate there was not suitable to his case, and he returned to his father's house in Burdett, N. Y., ten days before he passed away. While Mr. Baker was not connected with the visible church, yet it was clearly made manifest in various ways that he knew and loved the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

Funeral services were held at his father's home on Friday evening, June 29th. Elder Charles Bogardus spoke on that occasion to the comfort and consolation of the people there assembled. On Saturday, June 30th, the remains were conveyed to Philadelphia to the home of his father-in-law, where in the evening Elder J. Corder Mellott spoke feelingly and to the comfort of many who were gathered there to look for the last time upon him whom they loved. On Sunday morning, July 1st, the body was taken to the Welsh Tract Cemetery, near Newark, Delaware, where it was laid to rest after a touching and consoling discourse by Elder J. G. Eubanks, from Heb. ix. 27, 28. B. F. COULTER.

Mrs. W. W. Polk, wife of Elder Polk, died at her home in Berkeley, Cal., July 2nd, 1906, after an illness of eleven months. She was born April 13th, 1833, and was the granddaughter of Elder Benjamin Keith, of Kentucky, who ably defended the Primitive Baptist cause when the Missionaries went off with Fullerites. Her husband and all her children were with her in her last illness. Her home was the home of Primitive Baptists; not one was ever turned away that came to her door for shelter. She was for many years a devoted member of the Primitive Baptist Church, and a constant companion of her grandfather Keith in his ministerial work from her childhood until 1867, when she was married to the writer, and from then she was constantly with him in all his labors in the church until 1881. Since that time she has never been so situated that she could attend the church she so long loved. In 1890 she and her daughter Daisy joined the Missionary Baptist Church in West Port (now a part of Kansas City, Missouri). She soon found she was not at home there, and withdrew from them into solitude, and realized what Ezekiel meant when he said, "Thus saith the Lord God, Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet I will be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come." She lived alone in her reflections and meditations (excepting the companionship of her husband and some special friends, with whom she often talked,) until her earthly house or tabernacle was dissolved and she departed to dwell in that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. It was this higher life she had in mind when she quoted the whole of the twenty-third Psalm, which were her last words.

In loneliness, bereavement and much tribulation I pay this tribute to her I loved.

W. W. POLK.

Edward Raymond Croasdale died at the home of his brother-in-law, Henry T. Lefferts, Nutley, N. J., June 25th, 1906, aged 20 years, 5 months and 18 days. He was born Jan. 7th, 1886, at Glen Mills, Delaware Co., Pa., and was the son of the late Amos S. and Mary S. (Cheeseman) Croasdale. His mother survives him, and was his constant attendant during his illness, which extended over a period of little more than a year, though confining him to his bed only for the last four months of that time. During his illness his tender regard for the welfare of his mother and those caring for him was beautiful to behold. About three weeks before Edward's death, during the presence of the writer at his bedside one evening, he related quite voluntarily, though in much weakness of body, a good christian experience, though to himself it did not appear satisfactory. He said he was not afraid to die, and though not ready to die, he realized sensibly his inability to prepare himself for it. The fear of death was removed from him about four years ago, while living in Ohio. It was at the same time that he was shown the difference between true and false religion, and was made to search diligently the record of God's word. During the last year of his life his thoughtfulness and inquiry concerning the Scriptures was remarkable. During the interview above referred to, he said that if he could choose between being restored to physical health and being made well of his sins, he would choose the latter. We thought this a remarkable thing for a young man to say, just apparently entering into manhood, but he was at the end of the earth and the world had lost its charms. Edward was not an outward professor of religion, but we believe the secret of the Lord was with him. He had a few times attended meeting at the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, in New York city, and was impressed with the preaching of the pastor, Elder John McConnell. It was desired by the family that Elder McConnell should preach the funeral service in Nutley, but owing to his absence in Kentucky the writer was present and spoke from 1 Corinthians xv. 17. Interment was at William Penn Cemetery, Somerton, Philadelphia, Pa., where the services were again conducted by the writer speaking from Romans vi. 23. Edward leaves a mother, two sisters and a brother to mourn their loss. May it be God's will to reconcile them to this dispensation of his providence.

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

JULY 16, 1906.

DIED—May 6th, 1906, **Mrs. Julia Squires,** formerly of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., but for several years previous to her death had lived with her sister at Harpersville, N. Y. She was about 84 years old. Heart trouble was her disease. She had attended Old School Baptist meetings for many years; though not a member, we believe she was an heir of God, and is now satisfied. May the Lord bless all the mourning ones with reconciled hearts.

ALSO,

Leo Kenneth Clark, son of W. E. and Elizabeth Clark, of Justus, Pa., was born November 30th, 1904, died May 29th, 1906, from the effects of teething. May the dear Lord comfort the heart-broken parents with his grace. It was a twin, the other living only four days; both are now at rest.

ALSO,

Miss Abba Vail, of Brown Hollow, Pa., aged 64 years. She never married. She was the daughter of my father's brother, Uncle Harvey Vail. She had lived alone on the homestead most of the time for fifteen years. The house was burned Friday night before the second Sunday in May. She was burned in it; nothing was left but ashes and a few bones. She leaves brothers and sisters and friends to mourn

for her, but she is at rest. She had a good hope in Christ many years, and loved to read the SIGNS very much. She left the New School Baptist Church twenty-five or thirty years ago, but never united with the Old School Baptist Church.

The writer officiated at these three funerals.

ALSO,

Brother **Alex. Wheat,** of Burdett, N. Y., died Sunday, June 9th, aged about 75 years. He was baptized by the writer about twenty-three years ago, and had lived in the sweet fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Burdett all these years. He was loved by all who were so favored as to have his acquaintance.

Elder Charles Bogardus, his pastor, with the writer, attended the funeral June 11th. May the dear Lord comfort the dear children with his grace, is my desire. D. M. VAIL.

POETRY.

(LINES in memory of Mrs. Robert Goff, who died Nov. 21st, 1905, aged 65 years, 9 months and 21 days.)

One by one our loved ones leave us,
One by one God bids them come;
Thus another has departed
For her long eternal home;
But death's angel found her ready
For the joys of heaven's bright home,
Waiting eager for the message
That would summon her to come.

Through long years of sweetest patience,
Waiting on mid joy or pain,
Ripening for the reaper's sickle,
Like a sheaf of golden grain.
Death, O death, thou silent reaper,
Guest unbidden, grim and bold,
Why must thou be so relentless?
Why so cruel, stern and cold?

Dearest mother, how we miss thee
From thy once accustomed place;
How we miss thy loving counsel,
And thy dear, familiar face;
But we bow in meek submission,
Not our will, but His be done,
Yes, we feel thy work is ended,
Jesus thy crown so nobly won.

And we hope again to meet thee,
Mother dear, on yon bright shore;
When our labors here are ended,
May we meet to part no more.
O, it will be joy forever
When around the throne we stand,
At the feet of him who loves us,
There to join the ransomed band.

A. N. GOFF.

MAY 30, 1906.

APPOINTMENTS.

IF the Lord will, I will attend appointments as follows: St. Thomas, Ontario, Monday night, August 13th; London, Tuesday night, 14th; Lobo, Wednesday in the afternoon or evening, as brethren may arrange; Ekfrid, Thursday at 7 p. m.; Detroit, Friday night; Duart, Sunday morning and afternoon, Aug. 19th; Dunwich, Monday at 7 p. m.

SILAS H. DURAND.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

GIVE notice in the SIGNS that my address is Fort Worth, Texas, Box 7, R. 5. Would be pleased to hear from any of my brethren.

ASA HOWARD.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, Maine, commencing on Friday, August 31st, 1906, and continuing three days. We shall gladly welcome all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Those coming will be met at North Berwick on Thursday before the time appointed for our conference.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Old School Baptist Church at South Gardiner, Maine, to begin on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1906, and continue three days. Those coming by rail will be met at South Gardiner on Thursday, Sept. 6th, at 3 p. m., and taken to place of entertainment. All lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus are cordially invited to attend.

J. E. HUBBARD, Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting, the Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Second Church of Roxbury, on Wednesday and Thursday before the third Sunday in September, 1906. Those coming by train will be met at the Roxbury depot on Tuesday afternoon before the meeting, and also on the morning of the meeting. We extend a hearty welcome to all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity.

HENRY BRONSON, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Pa., expects to hold a two days meeting Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 19th and 20th, 1906. Those coming via Ontario & Western R. R. or Delaware & Hudson R. R. will come to Olyphant, Pa., on Tuesday previous, where they will be met and cared for. Any one desiring can address A. B. Russell or Geo. Good-

rich, Olyphant, Pa., R. F. D. Those coming on D., L. & W. R. R. will come to Glenburn, Pa., and take back to my house in Waverly, Pa., or drop me a line and I will meet them on Tuesday. We hope to see a goodly number of brethren and friends from a distance. D. M. VAIL.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will convene, nothing in providence preventing, with the Olive and Hurley Church, Ulster Co., N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (3rd and 4th,) 1906. The nearest station for those coming from the east is Olive Branch; coming from the west, Shokan, via U. & D. R. R.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 74. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1906. NO. 16.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE WITHERED BRANCH.

"If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire."—John xv. 6.

Brother McGlade, the subject contained in the fifteenth chapter of John has for some time been in my mind at intervals and held a place there for a little while, and this Sunday morning I will try, by the help of God as I trust, to pour out to you some of the thoughts I have had along the line of the subject therein contained, for I feel it contains the sentiments we have often talked about.

First we see that Christ is the true Vine, and that his Father is the Husbandman, and the church or the disciples are represented as the branches; thus we have the true Vine, the branches and the Vine-dresser most beautifully set forth. Also we have the positive assurance declared that unless the branches abide in the Vine they cannot bear fruit, for no branch can bear fruit of itself, "no more can ye, except ye abide in me," "for without me ye can do nothing," and every branch in Christ that beareth not fruit he taketh away. I think I see in this the relationship between the Father and Son, and the members of the body of the Son; that the Son is the Head over all things to the church; that the Son acknowledged in his prayer to the Father (John xvii.) that these branches were the Father's, and that the Father had given them to him, and he asks the Father to keep them through the Father's name. I think I can also see a true representation of this Vine and its branches in the sixteenth verse of this fifteenth chapter of John, where he says, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." Also in Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus, first chapter, where he says, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." Here I see the branches of this true Vine are of very ancient standing, they were chosen in the Vine before the world began, which completely sets aside the Arminian theory of a branch springing up of itself and attaching itself to the Vine. This mushroom doctrine of springing up in a night will not do, for the Vine-dresser controls the number of branches. The branches of this Vine, Paul says, are "created in

Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." This beautiful figure setting forth the relationship between Christ and the church, or between the Father, Son and the church, considering the glory the Son had with the Father before the world began, as we see in John xvii., the children of grace or the branches of the Vine being chosen in him before the foundation of the world, are truths that kindle in one a spirit of firmness in the doctrine of God our Savior. But there is another side to all this that causes sorrow, that discourages, and that is the truth set forth in this chapter that every branch in this Vine that beareth not fruit he taketh away. This is the dark side of the subject, this is the fear the branches live in. If a man abide not in the Vine he is cast forth as a branch and is withered, and men gather them and cast them into the fire. The branches of this Vine cannot bear fruit except they abide in the Vine. Do I bear fruit? Do I abide in this Vine? Without the Vine we can do nothing. This I feel is true, but who are the withered branches unless it be those branches that have not abided in him, but have undertaken to walk in their own strength? It is true that in him, the true Vine, the branches live, move and have their being, and they are commanded to walk in the Spirit and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh, for if they live after the flesh they shall die; hence I thus understand that to live after the flesh or after the world, or to love the world, we die or cease to bear fruit, and are cast forth as branches and wither. My mind is drawn into this subject I think because I see myself a withered branch; I see no fruit as I would desire, and we see the brethren, generally, lifeless, the churches in many places seem dead. Why the withered branch? The only cause I see given is, that if a man abide not in me he is cast forth as a branch that is withered, and every branch that beareth not fruit the Father taketh away. Thus it seems the branches of Jesus Christ are taken away, are cast forth as branches and wither, for without him we can do nothing. We see the utter helplessness of the branches to live or walk without him, as it is said, "They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewn them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." The sap of the Vine is what gives life to the branches and causes fruit to grow or love to flow; many things might be termed the proper fruit of the branches. He that hateth his brother is a murderer, and abideth in death, and how easy it is for us to hate a brother. Did you ever see a member of the church of Christ hate a brother who ever did the church any good while he hated that brother? This hatred is of the flesh, and such members are not abiding in the Vine, but are withered and cold, and bring no fruit to perfection. We see members that seldom attend church, and only seem interested in worldly things so far as we can see; they care not to mingle with the branches of the true Vine. What is wrong? Are they abiding in the Vine and sustained by the sap of the Vine? Does the Spirit of Christ flow in them, and is his love shed abroad in their hearts while they mingle not with the branches, or desire to? Let each branch answer for himself; Are you withered? Is there a heart bursting with love in those who can so contentedly refrain from loving and mingling with the branches of the Vine? Let each one ask himself, Am I a withered branch, that the Father hath taken

me away? Let the church that is cold and indifferent search and see if such a church can be called a healthy branch; are they abiding in the Vine? Are they living from the sap of the Vine? Each one knows for himself. But the remedy, the way this can be helped, the way to bring about this change, the way to revive this withered branch, is what concerns us all; and let us remember that first of all without him we can do nothing, he is the life, the light, the strength; in him only can we live. This text and its connection amply sets forth the utter inability of any one of these branches to bear fruit of itself. The Son prayed the Father to keep these branches from evil; he taught his disciples to pray, "Lead us not into temptation." It is said again, "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us; for thou also hast wrought all our works in us." But the withered branch, what of it? How can it be healed, or is it forever lost? This is the absorbing question. All of us fall into temptation and sometimes walk in our own strength, and abide not in the Vine, and we seem to wither and grow cold, and because there is no living sap from the Vine flowing in our hearts to warm us up we seem to be cast forth, but O I trust not forever; this I trust I shall show.

We see in the eightieth Psalm that God brought a vine out of Egypt; he cast the heathen out of Canaan and planted it, and did cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land; the hills of Canaan were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars; she sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river. God did all that was necessary that this natural vine, Israel, which was a type of the branches of the true Vine, should be healthy and bear much fruit; but afterward it is asked, "Why hast thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her? The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it." They pray for the God of hosts to return and look down from heaven and behold and visit this vine, the vineyard which his right hand had planted, the branch that he had planted for himself, to see how it is ruined and burned with fire. Here the house of Israel became a withered branch, it ceased to abide in him, and the Lord took away the hedges and let the heathen trample it under. Again, we see in Isaiah, fifth chapter, "My well beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: and he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes." And he asked, "O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? And now, go to; I will tell you what I will do unto my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up: and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down: I will lay it waste: * * * for the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel." After the Lord had chastened Israel we hear him say, Hosea xiv. 4–7, "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches

shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon." I feel thankful when I read how often the Lord revived Israel, the type of the branches of the true Vine, it gives me hope that he will yet revive us. I remember when Israel remained a withered branch for seventy years during the captivity in Babylon, that the Lord revived her again, and I feel glad to know that long before her captivity it was foretold in Isaiah xxxix. and in Isaiah xlv. her deliverance and Jerusalem's rebuilding, giving us the assurance that one hundred years before the hedges were taken away from that vineyard it was foretold, and one hundred and seventy years before it was revived he foretold it, proving our dark seasons, and the vineyard being trodden down by the enemy, has an appointed time, and the reviving has an appointed time. Ezekiel was carried out into the valley of dry bones; they had lain there a long time and were very dry, they were badly withered; Ezekiel seemed to think none but God knew whether those dry bones could live or not, but he saw them revive and stand up a great army. "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby." After Israel had lain withered a long time, the set time to revive had come; then it is commanded, "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you." "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Zion in her discouragements while laying withered, saith the Lord hath forsaken me, the Lord hath forgotten me; but her Lord saith, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." "I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name." When I see how often Israel transgressed and worshiped idols, and forsook their God, the fountain of living waters, and lay withered for a long time often, and then the Lord would remember his vine and turn away his wrath, and send to gather them from the nations where he had driven them, and bring them back into their own land, and put his Spirit within them and cause them to dwell safely by the still waters, and cause them to rejoice over and over again, thus continually remembering them and renewing them after their land had been given to others, and cause them to revive and abide again in the vine and to take root downward and bear fruit upward, it causes me to hope that though we be a withered branch there is yet a

set time to favor Zion, there is a set time for those withered to abide in the Vine, and O how fruitless it is to try to hurry God's time. I remember that Daniel while in the seventy years captivity seemed to lament and bewail the withered branch, and found out by searching the book of Jeremiah that it was appointed to be seventy years. I do not remember that Daniel ever saw Jerusalem rebuilt, yet he believed in it, and hoped for it, and witnessed of it. You and I perhaps will not live to see the revival of the branches of the true Vine, but from the assurance we have that he will never forsake these branches or leave them, we expect the Lord will not forget to be gracious. You know how the Lord cut off national Israel, and took the kingdom from them and gave it to another people bringing forth fruits of the Vine; but the apostle asks in Romans xi., "Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. * * * God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew." You know God said, "Yet I had planted thee a noble vine;" he brought her from Egypt. And Paul says, "If the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be graffed in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off; and thou standest by faith." Their standing by faith, which is the gift of God, was the reason of their being graffed into the olive tree, therefore he does not allow them to be high minded, but live in fear; "For if God spared not the natural branches [Jews], take heed lest he also spare not thee." I cannot express it plain enough, but a hint to the wise is sufficient. Paul says, "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God." We are to learn here that God is good to those that abide in the Vine, and severe to those that abide not in the Vine; they are cast forth, and men are allowed to gather them and cast them in the furnace of God's wrath. Paul says God was severe on them which fell, "but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them in again." This I rejoice in, and firmly believe he is able to do. "For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be graffed into their own olive tree?" I rejoice that Paul left this blessed truth on record that none of the branches of that noble Vine shall ever finally fall away. Paul would not have them ignorant concerning this mystery, lest they be wise in their own conceits; he said, "Blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." Hence God had a holy, wise purpose in their blindness. Paul assures us that "all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." Meaning when his set time comes to favor Zion. "As concerning the gospel, [Paul says] they are enemies for your sakes:" but he would have us remember that, "as touching

election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. He will not turn away from his promise." "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." Therefore I feel like saying as Paul did, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" He doth not "keep his anger forever." "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. * * * If ye are without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." Hence the necessity of abiding in the Vine and walking in the Spirit, and the double assurance that no branch can bear fruit of itself; all our help must come from him; we need thee, precious Jesus, we need thee every hour. One may ask, How shall we abide in the Vine? We answer, Only by walking in him, and that only by his help, for without him ye can do nothing; this is the only way to abide in the Vine. How quickly a church can wither when strife enters her borders; she is completely cut off when that is the case; no two can walk together except they be agreed. Strife is not in this Vine, it is from a bitter herb. Have we not reason to hope God will revive the withered branches in his own time? They shall not finally fall away; God has power to cut off one, and graft in another. Chastening brings the branches into fruitful condition.

Yours in a blessed hope,

NEWTON PETERS.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., May 16, 1906.

ELDER KER—BELOVED BROTHER IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE:—Since reading your good editorial of May 1st I have felt that I would like to give it my indorsement. It was evidently written in the spirit of love, and with trust in God to direct your mind to handle his word with fear and trembling, and with no confidence in the flesh, but only in "Thus saith the Lord." You did not write the wisdom of the world, but spoke of holy things, declaring the message of truth as it was given through the prophets, and they wrote of that Holy One who was to come in the likeness of sinful flesh to be crucified and to rise again. To this end the church was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. His coming was purposed before the world was, and this must come to pass. But the wisdom of men cannot comprehend the wisdom of God, for they are corrupt from the head to the sole of the feet; there is no soundness at all in all their religious worship, for it is a fleshly worship of their own invention. The ransom price was paid in the shedding of the blood of Christ on Calvary, the offering of the only begotten Son of God, full of grace and truth, and redemption is without money and without price. The psalmist proclaimed, "I am a worm, and no man." He felt to be as dependent as a worm. Such, God will gather out of all countries, and will bring them into their own land, which God hath prepared for them from the foundation of the world. These shall be sprinkled with clean water, and they shall be clean from all the filthiness of the flesh, and from all worshiping of idols. He has said that he will give a new heart, and put a right spirit in his chosen, and that he will dwell in them; he will cause us to walk in his statutes, denying self, and not

desiring to become wise, as did Adam, our natural federal head, in the garden of Eden. From this desire has sprung up all worldly religion with men, carrying on what they call Missionary work, and as they claim, helping God to save souls. For this they are constantly begging for more money to help them along. Poor, greedy dogs, which never have enough. It is Give, give, all the time. O Lord, deliver us from such delusion. It seems some who claim to be of our faith are swallowed up after filthy lucre. As you have said, my dear brother, many have gone off, as did the children of Israel, who sold themselves for naught, or for things which perish. But money cannot redeem them, the gospel alone proclaims the glad tidings of salvation. So the angel said, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." And he saveth from all sin. The government is upon his shoulder, and his name is Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Now having such precious promises, why should we sell our birthright for a mess of pottage? "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." It was so determined before time was. God's people were chosen in his Son, and their life is in him. Salvation is without any worth or merit in man, and upon no conditions of their performance. Christ, the Word, was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we behold his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, as said the inspired apostle. Thus John bore witness of him, as do all the true believing children of God, though we all behold as through a glass darkly. But we trust that "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." What a consolation to sing such a new song; it is the song of Moses, the servant of God, and of the Lamb, and we trust that our God has given us that song: praise to the risen Savior, and being embraced in the covenant of redemption, we are commanded to awake and put on the beautiful garments of salvation. In the prophecy it is written that it was commanded to put off the filthy garments from Joshua. These represent the filthy works of the creature; but election, predestination and true holiness are the works of God, and not man. This salvation is secured by grace divine; the atonement is complete, with no middle ground. Then let us sing unto the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things, which no creature can do. His righteousness has opened the prison doors and set the captives free, and he has renewed his mercy to the house of Israel. Let us be joyful in the Lord, and thankful to him for the goodness and mercy shown us all along our unprofitable lives. I feel so unworthy to be called a child of God, if indeed I am one at all. It does my soul good to read the good letters written by the household of faith, and also the good and able editorials; they seem to grow deeper and better. Let us then hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for he that promised is faithful. Such was the faith of Abraham which God had given him, and when he was called to go out to an inheritance which should afterward be shown him, he obeyed, and went out, not knowing whither he went; he trusted in God to direct his steps. He was an heir of promise, as were all the old patriarchs.

They were all in a strange country, and were fed upon the mountains of Israel and in all the inhabited places of the country. And are not we Old School Baptists scattered in all the land? But God has promised that he will seek out his sheep and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered, and will feed them in good pastures, upon the high places of Israel. They all have the faith of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and they all look for a city which hath foundations, whose Maker and Builder is God, and they all desire a better country, that is, an heavenly. This country God hath prepared for them that love him. With such precious promises we may come before him without wavering, and in full trust. By the prophet our God has said, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price." The Arminians require large sums of money in order that souls may be saved, but this will not satisfy the hungry soul; these desire perfect righteousness, the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus Peter said, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." This is wonderful faith. All such as were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world are cleansed by the blood of Christ.

Dear brother Ker, your editorial is full of the things for which we hope, and of the evidences of things not seen. As I read it I felt that I wanted to see you face to face. It was the desire of my mind to be directed, as a ready writer, in what I might say, for without the direction of the Holy Spirit we are all as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal, and have no light in us. I feel thankful to God for all his great blessings toward me. I have seen both of my dear companions go forward and tell the church of their experience of grace. On both occasions I was overflowing with joy. My present companion united with the church the first Sunday of the present month; her experience was good, claiming nothing but salvation by the grace of God, and she felt that her home was with the Old School Baptists; she will be baptized by our beloved pastor, Elder J. K. Womack. Thank God, we have had several accessions lately of those who love God, and his doctrine, and the order of his church. We are living in peace with one another, and desire the peace of Zion and the prosperity of all the true and faithful followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God. "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" We are told that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Will you pray God to direct our footsteps in the way that is pleasant and acceptable in his sight?

Forgive this lengthy letter. My mind has been drawn to consider these heavenly things. I desire to forget the past, and to press toward the mark for the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus. If you deem this worthy of a place in the SIGNS you are at liberty to publish it. Now may God's blessings rest upon you and strengthen you in the inner man.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

O. B. HICKERSON.

[WE are glad of the above good letter from brother Hickerson, and rejoice with him in that his companion has been brought to know and love the truth in that special sense of confessing Christ before men.—K.]

EPHESIANS II. 13.

"BUT now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

Paul, the great apostle of the Gentiles, addresses the letter in which the above text occurs to the saints at Ephesus, and all the faithful in Christ Jesus. He shows that all had been blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as God had chosen them in him before the foundation of the world. This shows a former inheritance, including eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began. It is by this life they are quickened or made alive from a state of death in trespasses and in sin, and by the one Spirit of God they are baptized into one body, and thus are in Christ Jesus.

The Gentiles were afar off, it appears, in two ways. They all had one natural life and actual existence in the first man, Adam, and by his disobedience in the transgression of the law in the garden they all went with him under the law, and were under its curse. They all were conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity. Isaiah says, "All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way." We all "walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." "There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. * * * Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways. * * * There is no fear of God before their eyes." In this awful condition they were certainly afar off from God and all of his commandments, but nevertheless they had been known and chosen in Christ, and were embraced in the everlasting covenant of God, and the great Redeemer was promised, and "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." And he "hath redeemed us from under the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." He "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests." All of the Lord's people were in the "horrible pit," but are now made nigh by the blood of Christ; the redemption price was paid in full. Another way in which it appears that these, or we Gentiles, were sometimes afar off, was while national Israel had the law, the covenants, the oracles and promises of God many long years, the Gentiles were without these and all church privileges; were bowed down to dumb idols, and were kept shut up under darkness unto the faith which was to be revealed. They were like Mephibosheth in the land of Lodebar, lame on both feet, and had to wait for the command of the king to send his servant to bring him up to his

house, where he could eat bread at the king's table all the days of his life. And the Lord said, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles." Again he says, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Again Isaiah said, "It shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcast in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem." There were many promises made concerning the Gentiles all along while they were sometimes afar off, but they were ignorant of these things, and, like the Israelites in Egypt, they continued to serve their taskmasters. Paul says, "At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: but now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far of, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God."

I leave it to the judgment of the editors and publishers as to whether this is worth space in the SIGNS or not.

P. J. POWELL.

PRATT CITY, Ala., June 13, 1906.

A QUANDARY.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I want to set down a few things that have been passing through my mind lately; they are regarding the testimony of Paul and Silas in responding to the question asked them by the Philippian jailer recorded in the sixteenth chapter of the Acts. He said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" The answer was, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." My thoughts upon this passage of Scripture and its connection have been that this question of the jailer embraces and covers in its import everything needful, and that the answer is also full and definite upon the subject of the inquiry in the mind of the jailer, "What must I do to be saved?" Just this, and nothing more, was included in the answer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." The question then is resolved into a single subject, viz: the salvation of sinners and the means of its attainment. More than this would be superfluous, and add new thoughts, which at the time were not in the mind of the jailer, and so the minds of readers would be confused upon the subject. Less than what was written would leave a vagueness in the mind of

the reader, who desires a complete answer to the point involved in the question. To throw another word into the subject of the question and answer would be adding to the word of the Lord, and any thought or word left out would fail to meet the requirements of the occasion, and the merits of the subject, and the words of the witnesses, Paul and Silas, who were chosen of God to speak of these things in the words which the Holy Ghost chose for them, and thus the narrative would be so blurred and indistinct that the reader would be entirely mystified, and uncertain as to the conclusion to be drawn from the narrative; the testimony as to the plan of salvation would be indefinite, and would not bring any one to a definite conclusion in the development of his thoughts as to salvation, and the means by which it is attained, or the things necessary to it. Again, if the answer does not agree with the true report of the gospel, declaring the counsel of God on the point in question, then the inquiry of the jailer was not answered, only in part, leaving all the rest to the conjectural conclusions of the reader, to be understood according to his own fanciful notions, and to be set forth by preachers as terms and conditions of salvation, and given out by them as the gospel of salvation. Once more, if Paul and Silas on the occasion failed to set forth the counsel of God relating to the inquiry of the jailer, and to the full extent of the question, then they were unfaithful servants and kept back part of the word of the Lord, and the question was not answered in the words employed, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," and no assurance is given to any man who is in like condition with the jailer. But here is the witness of the Spirit by the word of God in writing, and it was sealed by signs and wonders which they did, God by them confirming the word spoken through the signs following, which signs were then present in the earthquake attending their ministry on that occasion. This is all recorded by Luke, in the sixteenth chapter of the Acts, as a matter of sacred history.

Now the conclusion of the whole matter is, if salvation came to the jailer specially and individually according to the testimony of Paul and Silas, then it follows that the same salvation comes to every living and repenting sinner in the same way. If this be not so, then it follows that God's ways are not the same things, and so the processes of salvation are as varied as the views of men and as changeable as the wind. But said Paul in one place, "All that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." This brings us to the historical fact following: And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and set meat before them, and was baptized, both he and all his house, calling on the name of the Lord. These three acts of duty show the spirit of the faith which he had in the name of Christ for the remission of his sins. This was, as Peter declared in the house of Cornelius, a precedent to receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, which was first received at Jerusalem. Thus they were fellow-citizens with all saints by faith in Jesus, as he said. And so Jew and Gentile come into one fellowship, making of twain one new man. Now the visible token of this faith is baptism in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; hence the baptism of the jailer and his household, calling on the name of the Lord, is neither essential to salvation nor for the remission of sins, but is the out-

ward sign of inward grace, showing the faith by works of obedience, as is more plainly stated in the words, good works are the fruits of faith, and follow after regeneration. This is proved in the words of Peter: "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" Peter spake the words of salvation, and to this gave all the prophets witness. Here "all" does not mean a part, but every one included in the list of the prophets, and their testimony is that all who believe on him shall receive the remission of sins. There is no exception to this rule, it was the same at Jerusalem at the beginning, at Cæsarea and at Philippi in the house of the jailer, and the same things are signified in all and in the commission as it is fulfilled in all the world, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved." Now if baptism and believing in him in all the world be essential to the eternal salvation of any one, and if it were essential to the salvation of the jailer and all his house, and Paul and Silas did not tell him so, then they failed to bear full witness when they spoke the word of the Lord to him. Can we presume that they did urge this upon him? Then Luke failed to record their words, which if true, destroys the value of the historical record by the beloved physician who was in fellowship with Paul and Silas. This would erase the whole book of the Acts of the apostles by making Luke an unreliable historian.

Your brother,

I. N. NEWKIRK.

PINSONFORK, Ky., May 24, 1906.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—It has been a long time since I have taken my pen to write anything for the dear old SIGNS, and even now I am at a loss to know whether I ought to write or not. I am in such a dark state of mind to presume to write about spiritual things, and being in this state of mind so much is what has kept me from writing for the SIGNS until now. I enjoy the able and strengthening communications of the brethren and sisters who write for the columns of the standard paper. I could not yield to the impression of mind to write at least one more article for its columns, until thinking over the matter with unusual seriousness I felt that if I did not write now I might never write, for I am now in my seventy-first year, therefore I have concluded to suggest a few thoughts about the calling of God to his ministering servants. I am well aware of the fact that this is a peculiar subject—solemn ground to occupy. I have had a name and place among the Old School or Primitive Baptists for nearly forty-five years, and have been trying to preach nearly thirty-five years of that time, and as a matter of fact, during those long years of experience I have had many thoughts about a heavenly calling to the ministry, and not only about a heavenly calling, but also about the calling of men-made and men-sent preachers, and especially the contrast in the callings, for they are very unlike; one is heavenly, the other is earthly or of the world, therefore they preach of the world, and the world heareth them, but the sheep will not follow them, for they know not the voice of strangers; they do not understand them, because they are not of the world, and these strange voices are of the world, hence they cannot follow them; they cannot walk together, for they are not agreed. The inspired prophet Amos said, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"—Amos iii. 3. This passage is not as it is often quoted;

How can two walk together, except they be agreed? There is no "how" about it, the question is just simply, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" This question can be answered by yes or no, and of course they cannot. The word "walk" denotes one of the actions of life, and is often used in the Scriptures for the conversation and manner of life, and the conversation and manner of life of these two classes of characters are so very different that they are not agreed, neither is there any likelihood that they ever will agree, for the Lord constrained the false prophet Balaam, who was of the world, and was trying hard to please the world; I say the Lord constrained him to say of the people who are not of the world, "The people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations." Therefore these people are not walking together, either in doctrine, faith or practice. I have thought that the trumpet and also the ram's horn is used in the Scripture to represent the calling of God's ministers and servants, while a vial is used to represent the calling of man-chosen, man-qualified and man-sent preachers. I have thought for many years, and do this evening while writing, that there is a profound mystery in the calling of a man of God, even so mysterious and unsearchable that the man himself cannot see through it or understand it. While he feels deeply impressed with the heavenly calling, he cannot see how such a holy and heavenly calling can be for such a weak and imperfect being as he feels to be, no more than he can see through a ram's horn; it is a mystery he cannot solve. The ram's horn never gets any straighter, nor the calling any plainer, or at least this is my experience. If I ever realized the impression of a heavenly call to preach the gospel of Christ, it was nearly forty-five years ago, and I am as far from knowing to-day whether the Lord has called me or not as I was then. Time and again I have had such liberty of mind in my efforts to preach that I could not doubt my calling, for a few minutes, but soon doubts and fears would loom up with such miserable deformity, like a thick cloud, that I could not see through it. It is like blowing the ram's horn, sometimes I might be blessed to blow it with considerable ease, so as to be a comfort to myself and to those for whom it was blown, then in a few minutes I would sit down and ponder over it, and carefully look at the horn, and could not see through it, therefore I began to conclude that it was only imaginary with me, that I had not blown it to the comfort of the hearers, that I was not the right one to blow it, and then and there resolve in my mind never to make another effort to blow the trumpet. O my called brethren, is it thus with you? Have you attained to the state to see through this high and holy calling to your satisfaction? Can any of you walk with me in these things? But on the other hand it is very different; a vial is transparent, you can easily see through it, it is the work of man, and is the most easily broken of all material, but a real horn no man can make. A horn grows out of the head of a living creature, but never grows out of a dead substance, so they are very unlike. God, in his infinite wisdom, because it seemed good in his sight, has chosen, called, qualified some, yea, many ignorant and unlearned men, so far as the wisdom of this world is concerned, has laid out their field of labor, and has sent them to preach the blessed gospel to the glory of his great and good name, which is above all other names.

These wonderful things are past finding out, but the calling of the world's preachers is like the vial, it is easily seen through from beginning to the end, and all along the line. They begin by selecting some promising young man and have him educated at some Theological seminary until he is considered well qualified for the business. Then they give him his diploma, which serves to show his ability for the work for which he is thus prepared, and the board of directors appoints his field of labor, appoints his salary, and obligates him to keep an account of the sermons he preaches each year, how many churches he constitutes (if any), how many converts he has and how many Sunday schools he organizes, &c., and he must visit as many families as he can, and pray for them in their family circles, and report all these things at the end of the year. How easily all this can be seen through, because it is all scientifically arranged by men—men of the world, I mean the religious world. All this class of preachers can see through their calling, they know they are called, and know who called them, and also who sent them, and where they sent them. Can these two dissimilar classes walk together?

My dear brethren and writers for the SIGNS, I am greatly comforted in reading the blessed truths you write. Now remember me, I have a morsel of hope that my only aim has been, and is, to preach the blessed gospel and glorify God's blessed name.

W. J. MAY.

MIFFLIN, Pa., March 15, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—It has been a considerable time since I troubled you with my poor and imperfect letters, and I hope you will pardon me for the liberty which I take in addressing you at this time; I well know that my writing will not be worth your time and patience in reading, but it has been impressed upon my mind for some time to write to you, and I cannot seem to get rid of the impression. In reading a most excellent letter, some time back, in the SIGNS, written by Mary Hill Terry, of Philadelphia, she spoke of Elder Gilbert Beebe and others who have laid their armor by, and have entered into rest. It brought sadness into my mind to think that we shall see these dear old soldiers of the cross here no more. There never was a more able defender of the truth than dear Elder Gilbert Beebe, he stood firm as a rock, and would not compromise with error. The name "Beebe" was a household word in my father's house as far back as I can remember. I loved him; he was humble, and yet bold as a lion in defence of the truth, and if ever one of the Lord's servants suffered persecution, he did.

My mind also runs back to many dear old ministers of the word: Elders Barton, Leachman, Trott, Hartwell, Conklin, Thorn, Dudley, Johnson, and others. All these I have seen, and have set under their preaching. Dear Elder Grafton is, I think, the oldest one now living in the east, and I think the older he gets the better he preaches. I had a pleasant time at his home with him and his pleasant family last summer, and, dear brother Chick, I want to tell you that I enjoyed your company last spring at our association, the night that we stayed at Elder Grafton's; I always enjoyed your company. When I lived in the bounds of the Juniata Association you stayed with me different times over night, and your mind was drawn out on spiritual things. I think that when we Old School Baptists meet together we should spend at least a

little of our time upon spiritual things. When brethren meet together and hear nothing but trifling talk it is mortifying. In the word we read, "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" I must confess that I am slow of speech, and of a stammering tongue, but I love to hear these precious things dwelt upon. It is written, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." What a blessed consolation this is; if we cannot find words to express our feelings, the Lord knows our every thought, and takes them all into account.

Brother Coulter was at the yearly meeting last fall at Harford Church; he is a dear brother in the ministry to me. It has been, dear brother Chick, a long time since we first met, and my love for you, from that day to this, has not abated. I saw my sister in Baltimore since you were at her place last summer, she could not speak highly enough of your visit to her, or of how she enjoyed the sermon. She said the visit, and the sermon, and conversation, were sweet and comforting to her. When you go to Baltimore I hope you can visit her again. She surely has passed through sore affliction, but it has only made the gold to shine the brighter.

I see now you have a partner on the editorial staff, in the person of Elder Ker. You have a good man, and an excellent brother, and an able preacher; I think the church at Middletown has been blessed in having able ministers.

I hardly know whether to send this or not, but I hope you will look over my imperfections. May the blessing of the Lord be with you all, is my humble prayer. The SIGNS seems to me the best paper that is published. Please accept this as a token of love and fellowship.

Your brother in hope,

ISAAC F. VARNES.

HELENA, Okla., June 29, 1906.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have thought much about telling the readers of the SIGNS of God's little remnant found scattered over these vast prairies, but much that I desire to do I do not. It may be that I can have fellowship with the apostle, for he could not do that which he desired to do. Worse than this, he says, That "which I would not, that I do." This does not harmonize with modern ideas of what the religion of Jesus teaches. If we could control every thought so that not a thought could enter our minds only what we wanted to think about, then we might have power to control all our actions. Just this minute I have wandered from the subject which I started to speak about.

In the month of May I visited some scattered brethren in an adjoining county; some of these brethren had been living there twelve years, and not until recently (only for the last few months) have they heard any preaching. As the Lord in days of old kept his people from idolatry, so he kept these dear brethren and sisters from mingling with the idolatrous worship that surrounded them. Do you not think, dear readers, that they were much comforted by the preaching of God's true servants? The way I look at it, there was much rejoicing on both sides, on the side of the speakers and on the side of the hearers; you may call it "a feast of fat things." At this point the brethren and sisters were organized into a church, thus showing their steadfast-

ness and zeal for the Lord of hosts. There were present at this meeting, on the third Sunday and Saturday before in May, five ordained preachers, quite a number to get together in this desert land. On my return I stopped at the city of Enid, and in company with brethren, met at the home of sister Breedon, who has not walked for twelve years, where Elder Veach had an appointment; I also tried to speak in the way of preaching. Our afflicted sister was much comforted by the visit of her brethren. Soon after this, I attended a three days meeting, commencing on Friday before the fourth Sunday in May. This was held with a church in the northern part of Pottawatomie Co., Okla., about 150 miles by rail from my home; there I met Elder J. W. Fairchild and Elder J. B. Adams, the pastor of the church. This church is called by some the "Can't help its." The brethren there desire strong meat, and are zealous for the cause. This church has received about fifteen members in a little over a year, mostly by experience. Two sisters were received at this meeting, and were baptized on Sunday. This church is blessed with a gift, and it is found with brother Langwell, who seems to be established in doctrine. On my way home I stopped in the city of Guthrie, where sister Hutchinson lives; she is a reader of the SIGNS, but much isolated from her brethren. She was much elated because she had recently found a Baptist family who would not mingle with Arminians. At the home of brother Mason I tried to speak to the few gathered there on Monday night. I felt that the Lord owned me as his servant, for what I was enabled to say seemed to be appreciated. It is often very pleasant to the preacher to meet large assemblies of believers, but his service is sometimes more highly valued in the assemblies of the few, and the words of Jesus become most precious, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst."

Now, brethren, I leave this for your disposal. In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

SENECA FALLS, N. Y., May 18, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I received this good letter some days ago, from sister Davis, and have had much comfort from it. She writes me such good letters, they show plainly that she is being led by the loving Savior. I will forward it for publication, and hope that it may help some other poor soul who is cast down.

Your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) U. J. PECK.

ROMULUS, Okla., May, 1906.

DEAR SISTER PECK:—I received your good letter yesterday, and was glad to hear from you. I was just that morning thinking, Surely sister Peck is sick or she would have written me sooner, and, behold, your letter reached my hand in the evening. I said, I cannot wait, I want to see what sister Peck has written, and as I read, your dear, loving words touched the tender chords of my heart, and I felt like shouting aloud. I turned and said, That is the truth, and I know it. My friend who was with me said, She writes a good letter; there were tears in her eyes; so you will plainly see, dear sister, no matter how low down in the valley we get, only a few words in spirit and in truth will touch the tender chords of love in the heart, and will raise us up to the mountain side, where we can discern the blessed smiles of our Savior. O what a blessed experience! By this "we know that we have passed from death unto

life, because we love the brethren." I have been so cast down of late, all feeling sense seemed to be gone, and this has made me conclude that I am wrong; I seemed to be far from God, and this made me weep and cry.

"When I experience call to mind,
My understanding is so blind,
I fear at last that I shall fall,
For if a saint, the least of all."

Your dear letter full of love came, and it has lifted me up. What would I do without some such sweet comforts by the way? This world would be a world of darkness and despair were it not for the crumbs of comfort which our dear Savior sends us. It is all from him, he works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. His favor is not because of any good thing which we have done, but because he loved us. O what a blessed thought! He suffered on the tree to set poor sinners free.

I was sorry to hear of the death of your dear nephew. Was it your sister's son? If so, I well know that it was a shock to her; but blessed are they that mourn. It may be that he saw Jesus by faith, even in his last hour, and received the blessed promise. O what an awful thought to have to cross the chilling waters of death without a hope beyond. Let us be content with food and raiment. Paul said that he had learned in whatever condition he was, therewith to be content, and may our heavenly Father give us a submissive heart, that we may be reconciled to whatever his will may be, and may we press on to the mark of our high calling in Christ Jesus. But at times it is hard to say, "Thy will be done." It is only when our Savior sends to us an humble spirit that we can be humble. O that Jesus may always dwell in our hearts.

It may be wrong in me, but I have hoped when I could bask sweetly in the smiles of my Savior, and see, if not deceived, all this in myself, that it might be his blessed will to call me home. I do hope, my dear sister, to die praising my dear Savior, for to him all the praise is due, he gave his life for the sheep.

I do not want to weary your patience with such a long letter, but I hope to be remembered by you in prayer and by your dear old mother also. How I would love to see all the dear ones.

Dear sister, do not grieve for your loss, for it is God that gives, and it is he that takes away, and blessed be the name of the Lord. May God bless all that mourn, and give them strength and grace sufficient to carry them through this world of tribulation. Jesus can make a dying bed feel soft as downy pillows are.

If you find a word of comfort in this, give to the Lord all the praise. I am little and unworthy, and in my flesh dwells no good thing. Remember me, and may God bless you.

In christian love,

ELLA DAVIS.

GREENVILLE, Ore., Feb. 20, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS:—As the time has come and gone when I should have sent my remittance, I will now forward it, and also say that there are a few Old Baptists scattered around through this section, but for some cause the church in this vicinity seems to be in a rather dormant condition, yet she is blessed with as faithful a pastor as is usual to find in any country; he travels thirty miles in private conveyance to meet with the church eleven months in the year, rain or shine, mud or dust, and he is an able defender of the cause, so we should be thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, yet we are hard to please,

and are prone to complain when everything does not go to suit us. It seems strange that there are so many who apparently have a hope that they have passed from death unto life, that have found Christ precious, and yet do not obey the injunction to go home to their friends and tell them what great things the Lord has done for them.

Pray for us when it goes well with you that the Ruler of all things will enable the church here and everywhere to let their light so shine that others that feel the need of a home may come and ask to go with us.

Wishing the dear old SIGNS, managers, writers and readers, the richest blessings, I close. One of the least,

J. P. AYDELOTT.

1 CORINTHIANS II. 9, 10.

"EYE hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

In reflecting upon this declaration of divine truth by the eminent apostle, my mind was led to contemplate when and what the things are that the Lord has prepared for them that love him.

The religious world preaches and prays before the Lord as though the Lord was a finite creature, as though they would inform him of the need of a plan of salvation best suited to their own vain imaginations, and forgetting their own condition before the Lord, their whole purpose and efforts are to acquaint him with the condition and great need of the salvation of the whole world, thus ignoring the wisdom and knowledge of the all-wise God, who has declared the end (of all things) from the beginning, "saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isaiah xlvi. 10. It occurs to my mind that one of the most precious things which God prepared for them that love him, is Jesus, the Savior of poor, helpless sinners, "who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world."—1 Peter i. 20. "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was."—Prov. viii. 23. This preparation was made in eternity, as every true Baptist Bible reader fully believes; our God is not as the gods of this world, needing instruction and counsel. The prophet inquires, "With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed him the way of understanding?"—Isaiah xl. 14. The apostle Paul makes a similar inquiry: "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor?" —Romans xi. 34. I am persuaded, yea, firmly believe, that our God is able, and will accomplish his purpose in the things which he prepared for them that love him, for all them who look for and love his appearing (the second time) without sin unto salvation; and not only so, but he is able to look from eternity, as it were, into futurity, and declare things "which be not as though they were," so that there is no "creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." With such a God as this, it is with much assurance and full confidence of faith that we can approach him, and in our weakness try to worship and adore the God we love. The knowledge of "the things which God hath prepared for them that love him," comes to us by revelation of the Spirit, or in other words, it is by the revelation of the Son of God, for it is de-

clared by him who spake as never man spake, that "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."—Matt. xi. 27. This revelation is made to none but "to them who are the called according to his purpose," to the children of God, "and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." These are some of the things (eternal truths) which I believe God hath prepared for them that love him, and I hope I may ever be found contending for them, though all the world with all its boasted wisdom should marshall its mighty hosts against me. Pray for me, that my faith fail me not in the end of my earthly pilgrimage, which is fast drawing to a close.

J. H. YEOMAN.

LOVELAND, Colo.

SHERWOOD, Ore., April 29, 1906.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND—VERY DEAR BROTHER:—Through the mercy of God we are numbered among the living, both naturally and spiritually. Naturally we know that we are alive and are blessed with good health, and we hope we are blessed with the proper exercise of our natural mind, for which great earthly blessings we do desire to have grateful hearts to the great Giver of all our blessings, both temporal and spiritual. But as to being spiritually alive, I am not so certain, for much of my time I feel so lifeless, so sinful and so barren and ignorant of spiritual things, that I really conclude I only have a name among the living family of God, while I am surely half dead, if not entirely dead, as to life in Jesus Christ. Yet with this sense of my deadness and lifelessness there is a thirsting and longing for a return of the enjoyment of the fruits of the Spirit, and I love to meet with the dear children of God, though I feel so unworthy of their love and fellowship, and at the same time I would be miserable indeed without the love and fellowship of the brethren and sisters in Christ. But strange as it may appear to you, to me it is a greater cross to try to preach now, at the age of seventy-five years, than when I was younger. As I grow old I seem to realize more keenly my own weakness and my unfitness in every sense to fill the place of so solemn and so high a calling in the church of Jesus Christ as the ministry of the word, either as a teacher or an ensample to the flock, or as pastor, for my insufficiency and unqualifiedness for it all seems so great that words fail to express my sense of feeling. It seems that the Lord has shut me up, or out of his presence, except at intervals, and I feel his presence and life more marked generally when trying to preach; but especially do I feel his presence, and love, and strength, when baptizing his dear followers in this solemn and beautiful ordinance. When I am out of the pulpit it seems that I should never enter that solemn place again, and I am trying to believe that it is not my duty to longer try to preach; for when in the prime of life I knew I was very limited in both natural and spiritual ability, yet then I had a zeal in the cause, and there were twenty-five years passed of my ministerial life that the Lord enabled me to fill all my appointments to preach; but now my zeal is very weak, and my mind is unfruitful, I have no beautiful presentations to my mind of the meaning and beauty of subjects, nor in a text, as I used to have, only occasionally, and mostly after I begin speaking on a text, then I feel strong in the Lord, and the service is sweet in-

deed. But this feeling only lasts about as long as it takes me to get out of the church-house, and my feet come in contact with the earth, then I am again left in darkness, but I am not left without a prayer or a desire in my heart for light and life and liberty in the gospel.

Now, dear brother, I have tried to tell you in my crude and stammering way some of my experience in the ministry, but in looking over what I have written it occurs to me that it is not worth the time that it will consume in reading it, but it has been a long time since I have written to you, and I wish to let you know that you still are in our thoughts daily. I read your writings so much in the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and in your book, "Meditations on Portions of the Word," that I am with you in spirit, and love, and fellowship, in the daytime, and am often with you at night in my dreams, I meet you at meetings and hear you preach; though I do not bother you, dear brother, with my poor letters, I do not forget you, and would love to hear from you and your wife and sister Bessie. May the good Lord bless you all temporally and spiritually, is my prayer.

Your brother in gospel bonds,

J. P. ALLISON.

FRANKLIN, Tenn., April 30, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed please find check for $2.10, for which give me credit on the SIGNS. I am just in receipt of the last number, and like all the others it is filled with good reading, I like it. I am growing old, I have reached the zenith of life, and feel somewhat like old Jacob when he said, All the days of my pilgrimage have been but few and evil, nor do I care to live them over; my memory is treacherous, my eyes are dim and my hearing dull; I have to carry my trumpet to meeting in order to get any benefit; yet I have much to be thankful for indeed, and not the least among the many good things is the hope I have that when this tenement I occupy is dissolved, I shall have an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Though unworthy and unfaithful, I trust that my times are in his hands. "He knoweth the way that I take." God is the refuge of his people, and though the earth be removed and the mountains cast into the sea, nothing is to overtake them but what has been provided for, and in the end will be for their good and his glory; and even in their declining age the promise is that he will never leave nor forsake them. We have his good word of promise that some gladsome day he will come again and gather up his jewels, every one, even the least and most worthless, and take them from this turbulent sea of life to that heavenly and better country where sorrow and sighing have no place, and joy and gladness shall fill their hearts. God bless the SIGNS, with its editors and contributors.

Yours in hope

J. W. HARVEY.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1906.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

SOME questions have been presented to us, concerning which our views are desired. Some of them ought to be of general interest, and so we have decided to reply to them editorially.

Ought candidates to be received into our churches when some of the members are not satisfied, or even when any one member is not satisfied? It has been the universal practice among our churches all over the country, and all over the world, not to do so; there may have been some exceptions, but if so, we do not know of them. If there have been exceptions, it is sure that the great body of our people have regarded such exceptions as out of order. This we think is right, because it is in accordance with what the Scriptures teach regarding fellowship. Where the objection arises out of a failure to obtain evidence satisfactory to the one objecting that the candidate is a subject of the rich and reigning grace of God, the church is bound to consider and abide by the objection, because not to do so would be to trample upon the Spirit of the Lord in that one, and it would result in bringing about strife and contention. Let there be no schisms in the body, is an injunction that would apply in such a case. The organized church, in any place, has the promise that the Lord will be with her, and it is sometimes the case that he is pleased to make his will manifest through the very weakest and feeblest one among them. It may be given to some one to be the eye to discern the right, and so the fact that some one is not satisfied, in the sense that he or she has failed to gain fellowship by the narrative of the candidate, is to be heeded by the church. If the one objecting to the reception of the candidate be truly spiritual there will be great searchings of heart in that one lest some fleshly prejudice may hinder him from hearing as he should the testimony that has been presented, and he will not object without great hesitancy and earnest looking unto God to put away from him all motives, save the sole motive to glorify God by honest and steadfast adherence to his will. If the one objecting be actuated by this humble spirit it will be manifest to the church; if, however, there be some personal ill feeling against the candidate, or some unjust suspicion or prejudice, that also will soon be made manifest to the church, and then the objector would himself be seen to be a transgressor, and be among those who need saving from the error of their way.

If the candidate comes to the church feeling as the humble-hearted children of God do feel, he will not desire to be received over the feeling of non-fellowship which may exist in the heart of any one. He will not wonder that any child of God should not have fellowship for him, but, rather, will wonder that any of them can love him at all. We think that cases where but one or two in a church feel differently from all the rest will be found to be rare, but we have personally known of one or two such cases. In one case the church asked the one objecting to visit the candidate along with the pas-

tor and deacons of the church, for personal conversation, to see if thus the objection could be removed. After doing so the objection was not removed, and so the candidate was not received, and there was no ill feeling in the church because of this; all felt that the law of Zion had been adhered to in the matter.

If any, who may not be present at the meeting of the church at which a candidate has been received for baptism, do not feel satisfied they must not say so afterwards, for the place to speak is in the assemblies of the saints, and if such ones were hindered providentially from being present at such a meeting it is right that they should look upon the matter as from the Lord, and believe that the church was guided by the Spirit of God in her action; beside, those who were absent could not know what it was that enabled the church to obtain satisfaction and fellowship for the candidate; it might well have been that had such ones been present they also would have found themselves in fellowship with the testimony brought. If any have not been present at the meeting because of any luke-warmness or carelessness, then indeed they could have no right to find fault, except with themselves, for their sinful negligence, and before undertaking to sweep others' dooryards they must make their own clean.

If one member simply says, I have failed to obtain fellowship for the candidate by all he has said, and from all I know about him, even though he may not be able to explain why he has failed to obtain this fellowship, still the church must give full weight to his objection; the objection must be removed in some way before the candidate ought to be received. Indeed, if the candidate were willing to be received under such circumstances, this would show either want of due appreciation of what the fellowship of saints means, or else a disregard of those who will be, if he possess the right spirit, to him the excellent of the earth, and whose judgment he will regard as the expression of the mind of Christ which is in them. We know that it was so with ourself, more than forty years ago.

The objection may not be because there has been a failure to obtain personal fellowship with the experience of the candidate, but because of some circumstances in his life, or because he or she is pursuing some course which seems to the objector wrong, and calculated to bring reproach or trouble of some sort into the church. In such a case as this the candidate must not be received until that member and the rest of the church can come to some agreement regarding the matter, if indeed there be a difference of opinion among them; in no case must a candidate be received as long as any one member continues to object. If the church as a whole thinks the objection unreasonable, it is their privilege, yea, their duty, to labor in all kindness and fellowship with the objector, but in no case must the candidate be received until the matter is settled between the church and this one member. The one member objecting may be wrong, but still that member is a member in full standing, and must be respected as such. It seems that this is what good order demands, and we feel sure that the Lord will open the way after a little, if the church is found waiting upon him, and then all will be made right.

If it becomes manifest that one who objects to the reception of a candidate is moved by a spirit of evil, through envy, jealousy, malice or other like causes of a personal nature, then the church must admonish, and warn, and try to save that member from the evil of his way. Let all

remember that there is safety in waiting upon the Lord all the time for guidance. Thus we have presented the matter as it has seemed always to us. No doubt other questions may be in the minds of many upon which we have not touched. Brethren, consider what is here written and compare it with the word of God.

"WHAT is meant by asking all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ?"

The expression, "in his name," "in my name," and "for his name," occurs about one hundred times in the New Testament. Almost everything connected with the salvation of the church of God is said to be "in his name" or "for his name;" that is, it is because of all that Christ is to his people, or all that he has done for them and wrought in them, that they are said to be saved. The name of a person stands for that person himself; the name of God contains in itself the thought of his attributes, power, omniscience, omnipresence, of his justice, holiness, faithfulness, mercy and love, and all else that belongs to Deity is expressed by "his name." So with regard to our Lord Jesus Christ, these three names mean all that he is to us in the sight of God in all that belongs to salvation. Now "asking in his name" is enjoined under the gospel upon all who seek to come to God. This is taught by the Savior's own words, as recorded in the fourteenth and fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of the gospel by John. "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do." "Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it unto you." "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."

These Scriptures are the words of the blessed Lord, and are to be considered with deep solemnity and care. If they teach anything, and in fact if any language can teach anything definitely, they do teach that the disciples of the Master must not seek to come to God except in the name of their Savior. They teach plainly that God will not hear any one who does not come in that name. The prayers of Jews and Unitarians, who deny the divinity of Christ, are not therefore heard at the throne of heaven, and those who offer them are not accepted. No Jew could come unto God in the old covenant times except through the proper offering, and when presented by the high priest; this was the type of better things. So now no spiritual Jew can come to God save by the offering of the Lamb of God, and through the intercession of our great High Priest. None but believers can come to God acceptably, and they cannot come acceptably save in the name of Jesus Christ. Can a believer then join in prayers offered unto God as a Jew or a Unitarian would offer them? To do so would be for him to reject the commandment of his Lord, and become a traitor to his King. In all this we are saying nothing against the honest purpose of either Jew or Unitarian, but it is a most sorrowful thing that they do not know the Lord Jesus, and therefore have no way of access to the Father. Believers do have this way of access to God, and they have been taught that there is no other way. If the high priest himself under the old covenant must not come into the most holy place without blood, and if he should thus come, must be struck dead before God, what shall be said of any who under the gospel undertake to come into the holy place not made with hands, without the blood and intercession of the High Priest of the everlasting covenant? He who reverences Christ, and knows that he receives all gospel blessings in the

name of Christ alone, cannot join in such petitions to God as reject the name of the Lord and fail to receive the chastisements of the Lord; the outer darkness must be his portion. But how blessed it is that we do have such a way of access to the Father. How blessed that there is such a name. How worthless are our names. How inexhaustible is the fullness of his name. Giving doth not impoverish him, nor does withholding enrich him. Blessed be God for such a name, and for such a way of access unto God. How ought all who believe to seek to honor that name in all their ways. But how solemn and awful are the words, "If we deny him, he also will deny us." May the blessed Lord ever keep us from such denial, and especially may this be so when we seek to come to God in prayer or praise.

"Is it ever right for one who is a believer, for the sake of peace in the family circle, to unite with any church that denies the faith and order of the house of God?" The Savior has himself answered this. He said, "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me." Again, he said, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." There is but one thing that ought to be in view when a child of God publicly confesses his Savior in baptism, and that is, not friends, or relatives, or worldly pleasures, or gain, but solely the honor of the Lord and his glory. One ought not to seek to unite with even the church of Christ for any reason save God's glory, and because it is his commandment, and certainly that child of God who for the sake of any earthly friends or relatives unites with any people who deny the faith, has committed a great sin against God. If for no other reason, a child of God cannot be doing right in uniting with most of the various sects of the land, because they reject the baptism which the Lord enjoined. If any one has not true faith in Christ, that one commits sin in making a profession of Christ at all. If one is possessed of true faith in Christ, that one commits sin if he unites with any people who practice sprinkling for baptism, contrary to the commandment of God. Sin is transgression of the law of God; God has commanded his people to be baptized; those among them who reject the Lord's baptism, or his command to be baptized, therefore commit sin against him. It is wrong then for unregenerated persons to make a profession of religion at all, because such profession is a false one, and it is wrong for those who are born again to reject the commandments of the Lord in the manner of their profession. God's believing people do not want to sin against him, but they do sin when they unite with people that are not his church, and when they reject his ordinance of baptism for sprinkling or any other manner that may pass for baptism in the world. C.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906, &c.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

JEREMIAH VI. 16.

ELDER G. BEEBE:—Like the woman of Canaan, I persist in troubling you for your views on a portion of the Scriptures which I see so often alluded to in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, namely, Jeremiah vi. 16: "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein." Your compliance will much oblige

MATILDA E. H. WELCH.

SIKESVILLE, Md., Jan. 6, 1862.

The above request was received in January last, at a season of the year when we are in receipt of more requests of the kind than we can respond to; it was laid aside for the time, and overlooked until the present. In now attempting to offer such views as we have upon the text, we hope that we may be enabled to present to the mind of our inquiring friend, and to others, that which may be, with the blessing of God, to some extent profitable and edifying.

It was the lot of the prophet Jeremiah to bear many messages of reproof from the Lord to the rebellious Israelites from time to time, for they were a stiff-necked and rebellious people. In the chapter from which the text under consideration is taken, the prophet pointed out some of the transgressions of Israel, and announced the judgments of the Lord which were impending, and with these faithful reproofs and solemn admonitions he repeats to them, from the mouth of God, the message contained in our text, saying, "Thus saith the Lord." Truly this was unquestionable authority; and as they professed to be the people of the Lord, in a peculiar sense, and were called by his name, and stood in a covenant relationship to him as their supreme Potentate, to whom they had so often and so solemnly pledged themselves, Whatsoever the Lord commanded us, that will we do, one would suppose they would at once receive the mandate, and with all their ability endeavor to obey. But alas, they rebelled against the Lord, and said they would not do as they were commanded. This particular command which they refused to respect was, "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask," &c. The command to stand in the ways implied that they were out of the ways, or had departed from the ways of the Lord. The ways of the Lord in which they were required to stand, and to walk, were clearly pointed out in the covenant, which embraced them. In that covenant they were required to stand; but they had often departed from it, and had turned frequently aside to by and forbidden paths. In that covenant they must stand in order that they might see, for from no other standpoint could they see clearly the things which they ought to see and fully comprehend. Out of the ways they were in the dark, and consequently they were ignorant, and required to be instructed in the ways of the Lord more perfectly; hence they were commanded to ask for the old paths. From this injunction we infer that they had got off from the old track, and probably into some new paths which had led them astray. This was frequently the case with them, and they were often reproved for their departure from the right way of the Lord, or from the way in which the Lord had commanded them to pursue. But now they are commanded to ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and to walk therein. No new path or way could answer, but one course was lawful for them, and the way which the Lord had marked out, and which had been traveled by the patriarchs, was the

good way; it was good because God had directed it, and good because he approved of it, and good because in it they should find rest for their souls. But they had said by their words, or by their deeds, or by both words and deeds, that they would not walk in the old paths, in the good way, and consequently the way of peace they knew not, while pursuing their own newly invented ways and traveling in the paths of their own choice.

Stiff-necked and rebellious as the carnal Israelites were, their waywardness is recorded as a warning to the christian church of God, under the gospel dispensation, and written for our instruction. In that rebellious people we have a type of the church of God in her gospel organization. The covenant of works in which they were embraced was but the shadow of the covenant of grace and peace, in which the spiritual Israel are held, and the ceremonial law with all its precepts, ordinances and institutions, was a shadow of good things to come, pointing to the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, written and engraved not on tables of stone, but written in their hearts and engraved on their inward parts, and pointing them to the New Testament as containing the infallible rule of their christian obedience.

The inconstancy, disobedience and wanderings of Israel under the Levitical law and priesthood, point to the disobedience and wanderings of the people of God, of whom they were the type, and indicate the shortcomings and inconstancy, which all christians more or less feel and deplore in themselves, and in others who profess to be the children of the new and better covenant. And therefore the spirit of the admonition of the text may be regarded as applicable to the children of God at the present time, especially to those who have departed from the laws and institutions of the gospel, and to those who are born of the Spirit and have not owned their Lord and Master by walking in the ordinances and institutions of his kingdom. To all such may it not be said, "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths," &c.?

First, the heaven-born but disobedient child, who has not entered upon the ways appointed for the humble disciples to walk in; is it not the voice of the Lord which calls him to come out of Babylon, or out of and be separate from the world, and follow the Lamb whithersoever he leads the way? To follow him in the sacred ordinance of baptism? Thus saith the Lord Jesus, "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." Stand ye in the ways, in all the ways which he has instituted by precept, in all the ways that he has marked out by his example. The servant of Abraham said, "I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." But there is but one way to that house for those who have a right to enter there, and that is by the door. He that entereth not in by the door, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. The Lord leads the blind in a way which they know not, and in paths which they have not known; and when he found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness, he led him about and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of his eye. "So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." Christ is himself the way. In him we are chosen, redeemed and saved, and in him we have our standing; and as we have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so we are exhorted to walk in him, as members of him, of his body, his flesh and his bones. We

are in him as we are vitally identified with his church, which is his body, and in him, in this sense of the word, the child of God is commanded to stand, and see, and to ask for the old paths, &c. We are in him as the way when we are within the sacred precincts of his authority, standing in the letter and spirit of his precepts, and here we can see, and inquire, and ask for the good way. We are not at liberty to devise or invent some new way, or attempt to improve upon the old way which God has cast up for the righteous to walk in. The sons of Hagar may ridicule the good old way, and point the finger of scorn at those who stand or walk therein, and sneeringly say, You are behind the times, You do not keep pace with the progress of the world; still we are to ask only for the old paths, wherein we trace the footsteps of the flock of Christ. We are told that there is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. All other ways and paths, except the old divinely authorized ways of Zion, are the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

Not the new convert alone should heed the warning of our text; old disciples who have traveled long are to take heed lest they depart from the ancient pathway of holiness. To them the solemn admonition is addressed, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, the good way. If any have wandered, become bewildered, benighted and doubtful, they can depend on no other guide. The voice of the Lord recalls them to the path which they have departed from, and when they are wandering from the Lord they shall hear a voice behind them saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." That voice will direct to the old and good way, to the way of peace and rest. When bewildered travelers ask of men the way they desire to pursue, they will often tell of new routes, shorter distances, smoother roads and bypaths, &c.; but we are cautioned in the text to be sure and ask for the old paths, which will be distinguished from all others by the waymarks, which are only known by the wayfaring pilgrims who travel there. Travelers in the ways of Zion should be cautious of whom they ask in regard to the way.

We are informed that deceivers are in the world, some crying lo here, and others lo there, but believe them not. One reason why the psalmist so much desired to dwell in the house of the Lord forever, was that he might behold the beauty of the Lord and "inquire in his temple." Reliable instruction will be found there, and only there, for the word of the Lord shall go forth from Zion, and on the word of the Lord alone it is safe for christians to rely. Elsewhere we may be informed what learned doctors think, and what popular commentators say, but in Zion the humble inquirer will hear what the Lord has said, and a "thus saith the Lord" is abundantly sufficient for them. Having made the inquiry, and obtained the important instruction, having found the good old way, marked as it is by the footprints of the Savior, and by his apostles and primitive disciples, the instruction is, "and walk therein." There is no cause to hesitate; none ever stood in this way, or ever saw this way, but those whose privilege it is to walk therein. No fowl knoweth it, the vulture's eye never saw it, the lion's whelp never trod in it, nor shall fools err therein. For we are told it shall be for those, the wayfaring men, &c. If therefore God has revealed this way of holiness to any of us, however poor, weak, sinful or unworthy we may feel ourselves to be, we may rest as-

sured that he has called us by grace to walk therein, and that we shall never find true gospel rest to our souls only as we walk therein. But they that wait upon the Lord shall have their strength renewed, they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and walk and not be faint; they shall find rest to their souls. This is only desirable to those who are tired, weary and faint, but these are the very characters whom Jesus calls, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." This is truly encouraging, for he is a hiding-place from the wind and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

"But they said, We will not walk therein." Ungrateful, rebellious and wicked as it is, young converts and old disciples, when they withhold their obedience to the precepts of the Lord, do say by their disobedience that they will not walk therein; but the Lord has said, If they walk not in my statutes, then will I visit their transgressions with a rod, and their iniquities with many stripes. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh, for if they (who came to Mount Sinai) escaped not who refused him (Moses) who spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven, whose voice once shook the earth; but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven, &c. "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Nov. 1, 1862.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Ida F. Greenlease, daughter of Richard and sister Octavio Furr, and wife of Isaac Greenlease, was born Jan. 4th, 1852, and died May 17th, 1906. Mrs. Greenlease was a regular attendant of the Baptist Church as long as health and circumstances permitted. Her mother, sister Furr, has been an invalid for some time, and her care fell largely on Ida. How beautiful it is to behold the tender and watchful care of a loving daughter; such was dear Ida. Many of the Baptists will remember her with fond affection. She loved our people; she was a true friend, a woman without reproach. How pleasant it is to think and write about such. I had a very satisfactory talk with her a few days before she died. She leaves her invalid mother, a devoted husband and a precious sister, and many, many friends to mourn her, no, our loss, for we do hope it is her gain. Her younger sister now has the care of the mother, and a great care it is, but with equal zeal and devotion she applies herself to the sacred duty.

The writer spoke on the occasion as best he could to quite a large congregation. What of mortal was left of her was put away in the Leesburg cemetery to awake we hope, with the likeness of Jesus, when God shall call her forth. How and when brought forth I think had better be left with the Lord.

ALSO,

Miss Emma Mae Cole, daughter of J. W. and Elizabeth Cole, was born April 2nd, 1882, died July 17th, 1906, of that dreadful disease, typhoid fever, leaving father and mother, brother and sister, to mourn her departure. She was truly the light and life of the family in the beauty and loveliness of her character, the riches of all her companions. It seems hard to part with such. Unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out. The gloom and sorrow that always attends death is much assuaged in her case by the precious testimony she bare in the saving presence of her blessed Redeemer. Her aunt, Mrs. K. B. Cole, wrote that a short time before her sickness the Savior appeared to her in a dream and told her the world was coming to an end, which was true in her case. The family were greatly distressed, but the Savior said, Fear not, I will baptize you all, but you first. She said she never felt so happy in all her life, and was exceedingly sorry to find it all a dream. But does not God sometimes seal instruction in a dream? (Job xxxiii. 16.) See how the Lord verified this to her. In her afterward lucid moments she would point upward and say, I am so happy, perfectly happy. The day before she died she said, I hear the bells tolling, and tried to describe a picture she saw above her. In her dying moment she raised her hand and looking upward said, "How long, how long, how long?" and with a lovely smile upon her face fell asleep in Jesus, to awake with his

likeness. None shall rob her of this blessed awakening, when mortal shall put on immortality, and she shall be like her blessed Savior, seeing him as he is.

The very large concourse of people attending her funeral testified to the high esteem in which she was held. The text was, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." She was buried in Ebenezer burying-ground.

E. V. WHITE.

LEESBURG, Va.

Mrs. Katie Black McLarty, my much beloved sister, departed this life March 27th, 1906, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Penhale, in St. Thomas, Ontario, aged 65 years. She was married to Archibald McLarty in 1863, and to this union were born six sons and one daughter; her husband and two infant sons preceded her to the other world; John Black McLarty, Archibald White McLarty, Mrs. T. J. Penhale, of St. Thomas, Ont., Dr. A. Arthur McLarty, of Manistee, Mich., and Angus D. McLarty, of Detroit, Mich., survive her. She was visiting her daughter, and they were in one of the shops making some purchases when she became ill. A carriage was secured and she was taken home, where she expired almost immediately after being carried into the house, of heart failure. She was taken to her old home, where she went as a bride forty-three years before, and from thence to the St. Thomas cemetery, where her dear remains were laid away to await the resurrection morn.

Elder Carnell preached to a large concourse of sorrowing relatives and friends, from John xiv.; the twenty-third and fifty-third Psalms were sung, they being favorites of the deceased.

She united with the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada about 1887, being baptized by the late Elder Pollard, and continued a worthy member to the last, believing and rejoicing in the doctrine of salvation by grace. In a letter received from her about three years ago, when much troubled owing to the serious illness of her son and the sudden death of her son-in-law, she said: "I have had a hard summer for the flesh, but hope I have been renewed in the inner man and feel, if I am not mistaken, that I know the meaning of 'pray without ceasing', but in the midst of all my troubles I have much to thank my dearest Lord for in his mercy to us." She adds, "Prayer is a cry, may the good Lord put the cry in our hard and stony hearts, and in the hearts of my dear children, if it is his holy will." In another letter, received five days before her decease, she says: "I am so unworthy, instead of getting better I seem worse, but our God changes not; Jesus came not to call the righteous, but sinners, and I am trusting only in his finished work." She was for many years a reader of the dear old SIGNS. Besides her children she leaves her beloved church, one brother and three sisters to mourn their loss, but we mourn not as those without hope. May the God of all grace comfort those who mourn.

(MRS.) J. M. MACFARLANE.

CHICAGO, Ill.

DIED—**Barney Taylor,** at his late residence in Stratford, Conn., March 7th, 1906, aged 62 years. He was married in 1871 to Miss Julia Wallace; seven children were born to them, four of whom survive, one boy and three girls. Brother Taylor was baptized in the fellowship of the Old Valley Church, Virginia, in 1882, by Elder E. V. White. Some years later a letter of dismission to the Ebenezer Baptist Church, of New York city, was granted him, where he continued a valued and beloved member to the end. Brother Barney was held in high esteem by all who knew him; he lived what he believed; as he learned Christ, so walked he in him. May the God of all comfort and grace sustain our dear sister, his widow, in this time of trouble.

The funeral service and interment took place in Stratford, Conn. JOHN McCONNELL.

DIED—At her home, 112 West Chestnut St., Roundout, N. Y., July 25th, my dear sister, **Mrs. Marvin C. Crosby,** aged nearly 51 years. She was the youngest daughter of the late Dr. and sister Hull, of Olive, N. Y. She has left a devoted husband and four lovely children, our dear, aged mother (nearly eighty-six) and myself, beside a host of friends, to mourn our loss, but we mourn not as those without hope, for she many years ago gave evidence of the possession of a good hope through grace in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. She was ever ready to help the poor and afflicted. She was ill two months, of septic poisoning from a bone abscess. We look for strength to bear this great sorrow to him who has promised that "As thy days, so shall thy strength be."

MARY E. SMITH.

APPOINTMENTS.

IF the Lord will, I will attend appointments as follows: St. Thomas, Ontario, Monday night, August 13th; London, Tuesday night, 14th; Lobo, Wednesday in the afternoon or evening, as brethren may arrange; Ekfrid, Thursday at 7 p. m.; Detroit, Friday night; Duart, Sunday morning and afternoon, Aug. 19th; Dunwich, Monday at 4 p. m.

SILAS H. DURAND.

MEETINGS.

NOTHING preventing, the church at Cammal, Pa., will hold their yearly two days meeting the fourth Saturday and Sunday in August, (25th and 26th) 1906. Brother Samuel Maffat lives close to the depot. We hope to see a goodly number of lovers of the truth. Cammal is the railroad station on New York Central Railroad. D. M. VAIL.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, Maine, commencing on Friday, August 31st, 1906, and continuing three days. We shall gladly welcome all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Those coming will be met at North Berwick on Thursday before the time appointed for our conference.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Old School Baptist Church at South Gardiner, Maine, to begin on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1906, and continue three days. Those coming by rail will be met at South Gardiner on Thursday, Sept. 6th, at 3 p. m., and taken to place of entertainment. All lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus are cordially invited to attend.

J. E. HUBBARD, Clerk.

THE Bald Eagle Church, at Mt. Sterling, Montgomery Co., Ky., being unable to hold the association as appointed to be held with her, the Licking Old School Baptist Association will instead be held with Little Flock Church, Anderson Co., Ky., beginning on Friday before the second Saturday in September, (7th) 1906, and continuing three days. Those coming by Southern Railway from either east or west will take local passenger train for Alton Station, Ky., where they will be met Thursday, Sept. 6th, morning and evening, also on Friday morning, Sept. 7th, 1906. Those coming by L. & N. or C. & O. trains will be met at Frankfort, Ky., on Thursday only, Sept. 6th, 1906, morning and evening, both east and west bound trains.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.
J. T. McCOUN, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting at Rock Springs, Pa., is appointed for the second Sunday, and Saturday preceding, in September, commencing on Saturday, Sept. 8th, at 10 o'clock. Those coming by rail will take trains at Philadelphia and Baltimore for Perryville, over the P. B. & W. R. R., to connect with the 4 p. m. train on the Port Deposit and Columbia R. R. for Rolandville, Md., arriving there at 4:30 p. m., where they will be met and cared for on Friday evening. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth who wish to meet with us.

D. M. THOMAS.

PROVIDENCE permitting, the Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Second Church of Roxbury, on Wednesday and Thursday before the third Sunday in September, 1906. Those coming by train will be met at the Roxbury depot on Tuesday afternoon before the meeting, and also on the morning of the meeting. We extend a hearty welcome to all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity.

HENRY BRONSON, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Pa., expects to hold a two days meeting Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 19th and 20th, 1906. Those coming via Ontario & Western R. R. or Delaware & Hudson R. R. will come to Olyphant, Pa., on Tuesday previous, where they will be met and cared for. Any one desiring can address A. B. Russell or Geo. Goodrich, Olyphant, Pa., R. F. D. Those coming on D., L. & W. R. R. will come to Glenburn, Pa., and take back to my house in Waverly, Pa., or drop me a line and I will meet them on Tuesday. We hope to see a goodly number of brethren and friends from a distance. D. M. VAIL.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will convene, nothing in providence preventing, with the Olive and Hurley Church, Ulster Co., N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (3rd and 4th,) 1906. The nearest station for those coming from the east is Olive Branch; coming from the west, Shokan, via U. & D. R. R.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 74. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1906. NO. 17.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE LADDER.

"AND Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set: and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and, behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and, behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it."—Genesis xxviii. 10-13.

Jacob went forth of Beer-sheba a wretched fugitive, he fled from the face of Esau his brother, who purposed to kill him. Yes, as a very outcast, an exile from his father's house, he plods on in his reluctant journey. He makes his escape from the fierce anger of his brother, but how shall he flee from a guilty conscience? The day is past and gone, the evening shades appear, and he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set. He cannot go on in the darkness, he is weary and seeks repose, he lies down, and with the stones of the place for his pillows he falls asleep, and he dreamed. Does he have disquieting dreams? Does he dream that the pit is open to engulf him? Does he have to exclaim with Job, "When I say, My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint; then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions"?—Job vii. 13, 14. Ah no, but he dreamed a gracious dream; the Lord mercifully visited him in his slumberings. (Job xxxiii. 15.) He dreamed, not that the mouth of hell was opened to swallow up the guilty fugitive, but in his vision he beheld the opened gate of heaven, and a glimpse was given him of the covenant welcoming Jehovah. Upon what grounds did the Lord thus graciously deal with sinful Jacob? Was it for his works—his good works, his evil works? It was not because he had done good, or that he had done evil; it was of the absolute sovereign grace of God, it was all the fruit of the eternal purpose of God according to election. (Romans ix. 11.) Though this be ever so abasing to man, it is the truth; though it forever sets at naught the arrogancy of those who vaunt themselves in their imagined abilities, in their supposed self-determined wills, thus deifying the will of the flesh, this is the revelation of the Scripture that it is only of the good pleasure of God's will that mercy and salvation are shown to any of the human family. (Eph. i. 5, 9, 11.) "For

he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."—Romans ix. 15. God had compassion on sinful, unworthy Jacob; he found him in a desert land, in a waste howling wilderness; there he lies asleep, and in his sleep is dreaming. "Behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and, behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it." Then God declared himself to be Jacob's God, even as he had been the God of Abraham and Isaac, and very graciously promised him blessings of both a temporal and spiritual nature. "And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." This dream had a transforming effect upon Jacob, and he "rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of that place Bethel: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first. And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee."

I have traced the narrative, and now desire to present some glimpses of the spiritual import of this vision. It had a typical, spiritual signification, as the language of Jesus in John i. 49–51, very clearly indicates. For when "Nathaniel answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel. Jesus answered, and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these. And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." We are then quite safe in looking upon this ladder in Jacob's dream as being typical of the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, and we shall see as we proceed in our contemplations that in very many aspects Christ may be viewed as that ladder set up on the earth whose top reached to heaven. Our Lord Jesus Christ is God manifest in the flesh; he is the fellow of the Lord of hosts, (Zech. xiii. 7,) and the fellow of mankind. (Psalms xlv. 7.) He is David's Lord and David's son, (Matt. xxii. 45,) the root and the offspring of David. (Rev. xxii. 16.) The testimony in the Scriptures of this divine mystery is very clear and satisfying to the faith of God's elect. Thus we read, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."—John i. 14. This is the most wonderful and glorious act of God; it transcends all his works in creation and providence, for in the incarnation of the Son of God all the glories of Jehovah are revealed in their infinite excellence. The glories of the Lord in creation and his providence are

great and marvelous indeed, but in comparison with this, "The Word was made flesh," they are but the faint dawnings of his glory. This is his glory in all its eternal noontide splendor, and as it concerns the elect of Adam's race it is of infinite consequence, and to their eternal happiness and exaltation. How preciously the fact that God was manifest in the flesh is told in Phil. ii. 6–11: Christ Jesus "being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." "Verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." Who is this "he" that took on him the seed of Abraham? It is none other than the eternal Son of God who is eternally, in his nature, in his essential being, the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power. (Heb. i. 1–3.) This glorious One gave himself a sacrifice for our sins, and when he had by himself purged them away sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. The Son of God in the body fitted for him made the atonement for his people. For their sakes he made himself of no reputation, he was tempted, he suffered, he was hungry and wearied, he was buffeted, smitten and spit upon, they plucked the hair from his face. He was crucified, and experienced all the sufferings of death. Yes, that very manhood that was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary, which verily was of the seed of Abraham, and which was nailed to the cross, and was laid in the tomb and saw no corruption, this very man Christ Jesus was raised again from the dead, and was received up into glory. In the revelation of these momentous facts the faith of God's elect sees Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor. He is exalted far above all might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. That sacred, incorruptible manhood of the Word made flesh is now glorified and made higher than the heavens, and as our bodies are the members of Christ, bought with his blood, (1 Cor. vi. 15–20,) so in the gospel we are warranted to hope for their redemption. (Rom. viii. 23.) Christ shall raise us up at the last day incorruptible, immortal and glorious; for when Christ shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, the dead in Christ shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed. He shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. We shall bear the image of the heavenly, and being conformed to the image of the Son of God we shall dwell with him in immortal blessedness.

Christ in his manhood is with the man asleep on the earth at the foot of the ladder, and in his Godhead he reacheth up to heaven, and is one with God the Father. Thus in his very person how eligible was

the incarnate Son of God to sustain his mediatorial character, which in the gospel is so gloriously and comfortingly revealed. Though the space be infinite between earth and heaven, between a sinful, prostrate man and the high and Holy One that inhabiteth eternity, yet this One, Emmanuel, the man, the Lord from heaven, (1 Cor. xv. 47,) fully and gloriously brings them together. He is the mystical Ladder, and such a Christ became us who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners and made higher than the heavens. The subsistence in the person of the Son of God, of that "holy thing," that incorruptible human nature, is a glorious and soul-satisfying mystery. His deity was Jesus' immortal strength, and gave grace and efficacy to all his mediatorial acts.

Jacob in his dream beheld a ladder set up on the earth, and Christ, our antitypical Ladder, was set up in the counsel of Jehovah from everlasting. (Prov. viii. 23.) He verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, (1 Peter i. 20,) and his goings forth, all the steps concerning himself, and his mediatorship, which constitute our ladder from earth to heaven, were all embraced in the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; for so it is written of him, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."—Micah v. 2. Pause a moment, muse upon this. What love God hath to us in Christ Jesus. (Romans viii. 39,) what grace is given us in him, (2 Tim. i. 9,) that Christ, the Head of the church, should be set up from eternity in the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure. God is love. (1 John iv. 16.) He is gracious. (Exodus xxii. 27.) O that we could shew forth his praises, love and worship him forever. When God created Adam and Eve, and they had fallen by their iniquity, then in the promise given in Eden that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, Christ was set up, the ladder of hope for sinners; yes, in all the promises of the new covenant, in all the prophecies, in all the types and shadows, Christ was set up to faith's vision the Ladder from earth to heaven. On earth at the foot there were sufferings revealed, and at the top, in heaven, immortal glory. The prophets of old searched diligently "what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."—1 Peter i. 11. And "when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."—Gal. iv. 4, 5. Then in the person of Christ the ladder in very fact was manifested and set up on the earth, (and no matter how paradoxical it may appear to carnal reason) he, our Ladder, was on earth, and the top reached to heaven. This divine fact in our faith is declared in the words, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven."—John iii. 13. He was on the earth and in heaven in the selfsame moment, for he is God-man, "The second man is the Lord from heaven."—1 Cor. xv. 47. "The man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts."—Zech. xiii. 7. Emmanuel. (Matt. i. 23.)

In the mediatorial accomplishments of Christ we can very comfortingly contemplate the ladder being set up on the

earth, and shall I say, so built up till the top reached to heaven? In the preaching of the gospel Jesus Christ is evidently set forth, and thus testimonially Christ the Ladder is set up on the earth. Then how very blessed when Christ the Ladder is set up in our hearts by faith! O, we may feel to be down, down, down in the earth, but no matter in what deeps we may be, the foot of the ladder is found to have been set up in the lowest parts of the earth, down, down, down Christ descended to reach, to ransom the lowest of his people. O Jesus, thou didst stoop so low to rescue thy fallen, sinful ones; thou madest thyself of no reputation, thou wast the victim, the sacrifice for our sins, our vilenesses, the curse of the law weighed thee down. O thou didst humble thyself unto death, even the death of the cross; but thou didst rise again, thou didst ascend into heaven itself. Thou art our Ladder, by thee we shall ascend from the depths of the earth.

There is but one Ladder, and this God has set up. Christ only is the way, the new and living way from sin to holiness, from death to life, from earth to glory; he is the one and only Mediator between God and men. (1 Tim. ii. 5.) There are many ladder-builders in the world, but none of their ladders reach very high, and though they set them up and as they are ascending them fancy they are attaining to heaven, the time comes when all these ladders set up are upset.

There was once a race of sinful men who imagined to build a tower whose top should reach to heaven, but how fruitless were their labors, the Lord confounded them. (Gen. xi. 4.) All the humanly devised ladders set up upon the earth come infinitely short of reaching heaven; such presumptuous endeavors are only attempting to climb up some other way than by the Ladder that the Lord has set up. Though man-built and devil-built ladders rear their heads ever so seemingly high, they cannot rise above the curse of the law. These ladders and ladder-builders will be everlastingly confounded by the high and Holy One that inhabiteth eternity.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the only One who is eligible in his very person to fulfill the relations of Mediator between God and man. He is that Daysman or Umpire of whom Job speaks, "betwixt us," that is able to lay his hand upon both God and man. (Job ix. 33.) Christ is one with man in his manhood, the Son of man, and one with the Father in his Godhead, the Son of God, the Word made flesh, Emmanuel. It is very comforting therefore when the Spirit of truth glorifies Christ, showing to us his excellencies. Our meditations of him are ever sweet, (Psalms civ. 34,) for such confidence in his person is begotten in us by the Comforter. In our faith in him we feel all is well between us and God, for our Christ being man, the Lord from heaven, (1 Cor. xv. 47,) the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts. (Zech. xiii. 7,) he is so fitted to be our Mediator. Such a Mediator became us, and his mediatorial accomplishments are so satisfying and glorious that in very truth he is our Ladder, in whom the Lord descends to us and we ascend to God. He is the medium of all intercourse. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."—John i. 18. He "hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all

things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."—Heb. i. 2, 3. Jesus said, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."—Matt. xi. 27.

In the mediatorial work of Christ, behold what a glorious ladder is set up on the earth. The obedience of the Son of God, his sufferings, his blood, his death, resurrection and ascension to glory, reveal the Ladder that joins earth to heaven. When he came into the world to do the will of his Father, and took upon him the seed of Abraham, when he came forth of the womb of the virgin Mary, the Son of God incarnate, he built this ladder till the top reached to heaven. Upward and upward the Mediator of the new covenant went on with his work, and as step upon step he built up the ladder he bare the names of the children of Israel upon his heart. (Exodus xxviii. 29.) Yes, in a divine mystery he carried up in his embrace all his own, his people, his bride. He came down for her, and built this ladder by which she should ascend with him to glory. Up this ladder by faith we ascend, and have a heaven-given boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil. (Heb. x. 19, 20.)

Look at the scene. There at the foot of the ladder lies the sinner, at the top is the compassionate, sin-pardoning, covenant God. Jacob lies prostrate below, God stands in infinite majesty above. At the foot is man in his weakness, at the top is the Lord God omnipotent who reigneth. Does not Jacob very fitly represent the disconsolate, outcast sinner? He speaks of this time as the time of "my distress," (Gen. xxxv. 3–9,) when God appeared unto him and answered him. There in the wilderness he is a fugitive, a wretched exile from the home of his father Isaac. But though he is homeless and houseless, in his dream behold a ladder set up on the earth, the top reaching to heaven, and at the top a gate; heaven is open, the house of God is open, open to him, yes, God the Father is standing there, and down the ladder the Father's voice descends into the heart of Jacob, his dear child, whom he loved, whom he had chosen. (Romans ix. 11–13.) Jacob was one of the number of those whom the Father hath predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, and surely it is all to the praise of the glory of his grace. (Eph. i. 5.) When God quickened us and called us by his grace, how soon we were in the wilderness, distressed and "ready to perish;" (Deut. xxvi. 5,) we felt we were guilty fugitives from divine justice. If to the heavens we looked they were as brass, all closed to the guilty ones. We were shut out, and wandered as in a dreary, waste howling desert, and our hearts became heavy beneath the righteous condemnation of the law, and though we journeyed through all the earth, and witnessed all the devices of men, there was no help for us in their inventions, we found ourselves at the ends of the earth, and at our wits' end, (Psalms cvii. 27,) and our soul's lamentation was that we could discover no way of reconciliation with God. We could see no way for a vile sinner to ascend from the regions of the curse of the law to the purity and blessedness of heaven. No opening heavens around us

shine, all is darkness, all is hopeless, unless this ladder be set up on the earth; and when it pleases the Holy Ghost to reveal Christ the crucified One to the contrite heart, then we see the ladder. His person, Emmanuel, and his covenant mediatorship between us and God satisfies all our cravings. O then with eyes of entreaty we look up the ladder and behold our smiling, gracious God in heaven, and peace and love and sweet gratitude are filling our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. At the foot of the ladder poor, wretched, guilty sinners are found, at the top is the God of eternal love and salvation. At the foot lies Jacob mantled with earth's darkness, and the denser night of guilt is in his bosom, but at the sight of the ladder the day dawns, the shadows of dreadful guilt flee away, for at the top is immortal day, the shining face of the Lord. O Zion, thy God is thy glory, (Isaiah lx. 19,) and glory streams down the ladder into the soul of the loved and chosen and saved sinner that lies at the foot of the ladder. O comforting vision! O beautiful Ladder! O altogether lovely Emmanuel! In the steps of the faith of God's elect the quickened sinner mounts up the precious ladder of Christ's mediatorial, finished work. We ascend in our faith far from earth, darkness, sin and misery, to peace, to light, to blessedness, to God, to behold the beauty of the Lord, our just and gracious sin-pardoning God. Yes, Christ is our Mediator, he is our way, and we are taught, we are continually being taught to mount up with all reliance, with all affection, this ladder. Christ's life, obedience, priesthood, sacrifice and blood, his resurrection and ascension to glory, is our ladder. This is the heavenward way, the ever new and living way, this is the path of life. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

Christ was lifted up, crucified upon the cross between earth and heaven. Without the cross of Christ there would be infinite and eternal separation of us vile sinners from the holy God and the realms of blessedness, but in the cross of Christ we behold the way from sin to holiness, from condemnation to justification, from death to endless life, from pain and sickness and misery to heavenly happiness, from everlasting night to eternal day. O Christ, our Ladder, so pleasant to our sight, in all thine endearing relations thou art so lovely. Thy Godhead, precious Jesus, sheds forth floods of glory over all thine undertakings; all the steps of thy mediation in behalf of thy church are radiant in thy praises and grateful to our trusting souls. Thy glory in very truth is the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Cause thy face to shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

There were chambers in the temple of the Lord, and they went up with winding stairs into the middle chambers, and out of the middle into the third. (1 Kings vi. 8.) The spouse of Christ says, The King hath brought me into his chambers. (Song of Solomon i. 4.) This is she who is found in the secret places of the stairs. (Song ii. 14.) And Paul, a man in Christ, was caught up to the third heaven, into paradise. (2 Cor. xii. 2–4.) Ezekiel says, "As I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God."—Ezek. i. 1. The apostle John on the isle of Patmos beheld a door opened in heaven, and a voice said, "Come up hither."—Rev. iv. 1. In all the varied significations of these Scriptures there is food for sweet

meditations. It is only where Christ the ladder is set up that the heaven is opened. The dying thief found this to be so. Looking to the crucified Redeemer he beheld (in the God-given revelation to his sin-stricken heart) the heaven opened, and Christ, the way, the ladder to glory and happiness, and he believed that the now crucified Jesus was the Lord's Christ, the Mediator, the King of glory, and he cried, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."—Luke xxiii. 42, 43. Look at the ladder in this aspect. In the revelation of the gospel we have God's foreknowledge and election of his people. (1 Peter i. 1.) The predestination of the elect unto eternal life and unto the adoption of children, and the predestination of them to be conformed to the image of his Son. (Acts xiii. 48; Eph. i. 5; Romans viii. 29.) Then flowing from this their redemption, (Eph. i. 7,) their justification, (Romans iii. 24,) their sanctification by the Holy Spirit and regeneration, (2 Thess. ii. 13; Titus iii. 5,) and glorification, (Romans viii. 30; Col. iii. 4,) and so, in immortality and incorruption, they shall ever be with the Lord. (1 Thess. iv. 17.) This indeed is bringing the many sons unto glory. O beautiful, glorious ladder! all of it is revealed and partaken of in and with Christ Jesus our Lord, who is the Husband and Head of his body, the church.

Let us again look at our ladder in Jacob's dream. The angels of God ascended and descended upon it. "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels."—1 Tim. iii. 16. When God brought the First Begotten into the world he saith, "Let all the angels of God worship him,"—Heb. i. 6, and truly they worshiped him; he was their admiration. In the incarnation of the Son of God they beheld, not the exaltation of their nature, for he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took hold of the seed of Abraham. (Heb. ii. 16.) They beheld the exaltation of our manhood in him, and hearkening unto the voice of the Lord they worshiped him, and in divine melody they sang the praises of the most high God: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." In the holy child Jesus, God manifest in the flesh, they beheld the ladder set up on the earth.

> "Through all his travels here below
> They did his steps attend,
> Oft gazed and wondered where at last
> The scene of love would end."

He was seen of angels at his baptism when "the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him; and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."—Luke iii. 22. And in the wilderness of temptation he was seen, there they ministered unto him, (Mark i. 13,) and when he was transfigured in the holy mount, and his face did shine as the sun (Matt. xvii. 2,) they, with the apostles, were eye witnesses of his majesty. (2 Peter i. 5.) When the hour was come for him to tread the wine-press alone he was seen of them in his unspeakable agony in Gethsemane's garden, and one of them appeared from heaven strengthening him. (Luke xxii. 43.) And when in the hands of wicked men he was blindfolded and spit upon, when they crowned him with thorns, when the hair was plucked from his dear face, when they smote him with the palms of their hands, when they led him away as a very malefactor, and crucified him on Mount Calvary, he was seen of angels.

They heard him cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" They saw him bow his head and give up the ghost; they saw the Holy One laid in the tomb; they were witnesses of his resurrection, for the third day, "Behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it," heralding the glad tidings, "He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come see the place where the Lord lay."—Matt. xxviii. 2–6. They saw him burst the bars of death, and triumph over the grave, and when he ascended on high, and was received up into glory, amidst their acclamations, their welcoming triumphal song he entered into heaven, having obtained eternal redemption for us. (Psalm xxiv. 7–9.) And now our Christ is enthroned, crowned with glory and honor. (Heb. ii. 9.) Yes, our very Jesus who was slain to save us from our sins, is now exalted "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."—Eph. i. 21. Angels and authorities and powers being made subject to him, round about his throne they bow their knees, angels and archangels worship him. (1 Peter iii. 22; Phil. ii. 10; Heb. i. 6.) The seraphims veil their faces and to each other cry, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory."—Isaiah vi. 3. And when at his coming the Lord shall descend from heaven, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, his mighty angels will be with him. (2 Thess. i. 7.) All these things concerning Christ and his people the angels desire to look into, (1 Peter i. 12,) for unto them by the church of Christ is made known the manifold wisdom of God. (Eph. iii. 10.) And though the Sadducees of old, or of the present day, say there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit, (Acts xxiii. 8,) let us not mind what they say. What saith the Scriptures? These heavenly intelligencies are such as excel in strength, that do the commandments of God, hearkening to the voice of his word. (Psalms ciii. 20.) One of them said, I am Gabriel, and another is called Michael the archangel, (Jude 9,) and our Savior said, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?"—Matt. xxvi. 53. And now that he is set down on his throne to reign as our Mediator and King, (1 Cor. xv. 25,) thousand thousands minister unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stand before him, (Dan. vii. 10,) are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation? (Heb. i. 14.) All their service to the redeemed of God is upon, and in consequence of the mediatorship of Christ Jesus our Lord. The angels of God ascend and descend upon the ladder. There are very many instances given us in the Scriptures of their ministry, and in how many ways the innumerable company of angels minister to the elect of mankind it is beyond us to determine. Sufficient is this unto us, that the Scriptures teach that these lovely and heavenly intelligencies, Christ's mighty angels, do his pleasure, they are ever hearkening to the voice of his words, and are sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation.

"Thy ministering spirits descend,
To watch while thy saints are asleep;
By day and by night they attend,
The heirs of salvation to keep.
Bright seraphs dispatched from the throne,
Repair to the stations assigned,
And angels elect are sent down
To guard the elect of mankind."

The ladder uniting earth and heaven is significant of the covenant friendship subsisting between God and his people, for in all the intimacy experienced by the called of God, Christ Jesus is the medium, the channel, the living way of that communion. The vital commencement of this intimacy is when the Holy Spirit quickens our souls, and we are awakened to the knowledge of our perishing condition as vile transgressors of the law. Then we are taught by the Holy Spirit to seek God, we are moved by the operations of his divine power in us to a godly sorrow over our sins, and we are moved also to fervent longings, to cries and supplications for mercy and salvation. Now, we would be no more strangers and enemies, but we much desire that all might be peace and friendship between our souls and God. O that he would turn away his anger, and be compassionate to me, a poor sinner. In such intimacy, even to this day, dear reader, I desire to live with my God. There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. (Luke xv. 10.) Look at this scene: There is that publican, he is a sinner, but through grace he is lowly and contrite in heart. Ah, he has been as an outcast in Israel, he has been shunned and hated by his fellows, but that is not his burden now, he fears that he is abhorred by the Lord, a castaway from Israel's God; but he is moved by the Spirit of God, moved by his contrite heart, he is drawn by what he sees of the Lord: loving-kindness to sinners in the types and shadows in the house of God, and so we read he went up into the temple to pray. Another man went up at the same time to pray, a Pharisee. This man had exalted thoughts of himself, and prayed thus with himself: "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican, [Ah, you have one eye upon yourself and the other upon the publican.] I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess." There, you see his ladder, the topmost step is no higher than his exalted self. Ah, burdened, mourning publican, how will you approach to God? The Pharisee's faith was in his own works, he was, he thought, rich and increased with goods, and having need of nothing God sent him empty away. How will it fare with the publican? We shall see. "The publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast." Has he any ladder to reach unto heaven? he appears to be afar off, down, down, down in a low place. Yes, he has. Behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top reacheth to heaven. In his faith he was drawn, and went into the temple to pray. There typically the ladder was set up. The Pharisee's eyes were blinded that he could not see it. God had given to the publican blessed eyes, (Matt. xiii. 16,) eyes to see. (Deut. xxix. 4.) There, in the temple, he saw the priesthood in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people, in the temple there was the shedding of blood, and the sprinkling of the blood toward the mercy-seat. The way into the holiest was opened to faith's view, and his prayer mounted up to this mediatorial work so significantly typical of Christ and his mediatorial work. Yes, his prayer ascended and came in unto that within the veil, into heaven itself. How did he pray? "God be merciful to me a sinner." O, our English word merciful, though so rich, so precious, so full, so suitable, only in part tells us how his prayer came in unto the Lord, into his holy temple. (Jonah ii. 7.) Only in one

other place is this word found in the New Testament, (Heb. ii. 17,) and there it is translated "reconciliation," and here in the publican's prayer it will read: "God be *propitiated* to me a sinner." Propitiated! O this is very mercy! His heart's prayer was, Let all be reconciliation between thee, O God, and me a poor sinner. His faith was of the operation of God, and by faith he saw the mediatorial work that God in his covenant love had set up in his temple. He beheld the priesthood, the sacrifice, the shedding of blood and the sprinkling of blood toward and upon the mercy-seat. Up, up, up his faith ascended, and at the heights of the typical mediatorial work there was the holiest of all within the veil, (heaven itself in his faith) and his sin-stricken, contrite heart burst forth in prayer, God be merciful, God be propitiated to me a sinner. The Lord was at the top of the ladder. O his prayer was set forth before God as incense, (Psalms cxli. 2,) fragrant with the propitiation of Christ's blood. Heaven was open, and at the top of the ladder was God, whose reconciling countenance looked down upon him, and he went down to his house justified.

At the foot of the ladder we pour forth, in our varied afflictions, our sighs and moans and tears, which come before God through Christ our Mediator. Those who are born of God are a "holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."—1 Peter ii. 5. "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name."—Heb. xiii. 15. We have a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, and well it is that we have such an High Priest, for all our prayers and praises, all our worship, need the cleansing of Christ's precious blood, and thus sanctified all is acceptable, and is as fragrant incense before the Majesty in the heavens, and all the mercies of the new covenant ordered in all things and sure are shed upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Yes, all our heart's anguish, our feeble desires, our despairing and our believing cries, all our heart's yearnings for forgiveness and salvation, and for succor in our manifold temptations, ascend in Jesus' name unto our heavenly Father. With eyes of entreaty we look up through Jesus unto him, and by our Savior descends into our hearts the smile, the forgivene[illegible]e strength and blessedness from our almighty and gracious God; and then, ascending by Christ Jesus our gratitude and praises come before our Father God. O Jesus, thou art so needful, so desired, thou art our precious, beautiful Ladder.

> "Thy loveliness hath won my heart,
> Dear Jesus, let us never part;
> I'll sound thy lovely name abroad,
> My altogether lovely Lord."

Jacob again and again remembered and worshiped God at Bethel. (Gen. xxxv. 3–9.) Here he found sweet memories, for here God visited and answered him in his distress, here the ladder was set up, and he found the house of God and the gate of heaven.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

THE GOSPEL.

PAUL says, 1 Thess. i. 5: "Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake." And in 1 Cor. ii. 4, he says, "My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." This was for no other reason than "that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." He declares, in verse two, that he was with them in weakness. He felt his weakness and inability to preach such a Savior to lost sinners, but in this he learned the lesson, "When I am weak, then am I strong." When we feel our weakness then we are made willing for God to take us and use us according to his own will. When we are willing for our God to hold the reins in his own hand, then we are strong, because then there is a power behind us directing our thoughts and words.

While I was back in old Kentucky, my native home, I was with one of my dear brethren, and he had been so comforted under my feeble effort at preaching that he exclaimed, "O you have come to be a big preacher." I knew that it came from his heart, for I read it in his very countenance while I was preaching. While this was comforting to me, I said, "O John, don't say that." Then he repeated it again. I said, "Well, I know that it is not in myself." He said, "James, I know that it is not you." At this very time, while in prayer, before speaking, I felt that I could not get low enough before God, and if I ever felt my need of his help it was then. My feeling was, Poor little one, what am I to speak in such a great name? But, bless the Lord, I had not been speaking a great while before the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and all were partakers with me of the fountain of living waters. It does me good to think and write about it now, here in my far away home. As Paul said, My gospel did not come in word only, but in the power of the Holy Ghost. Bless the Lord for his gift to the sons of men. Each time I tried to preach I did not know but it would be the last time I would ever try to sound the glorious news abroad. This was the case with some that heard me that day. They have not heard me since, and perhaps never will again. God sent me back to those dear brethren, and he knew what he wanted of me there, and he did the dictating, else there would have been no preaching.

There is much letter preaching, concerning which there is no objection to the words, but the spirit is not in it. I have heard men preach smart, systematic sermons, when I knew full well that there was no gospel in it. God's children have no time to sleep when the gospel is coming to them in the power of the Holy Ghost, but if it comes in word only it does not reach the power of that eternal life which God has given unto them in the work of regeneration. One effort after another to present the gospel in the letter only, always has the same result. It is sad to hear preaching and to see all around asleep. Gospel preaching and sluggishness do not go together. I do not feel like continuing to speak when the people are sleeping. Perhaps the cause of their sleeping is the absence of the power of the Holy Ghost. A brother asked once, What would I do if the people should go to sleep? I replied that I would stop speaking and wait on the Lord, trusting that he would be with me another time. I have tried to preach

when I knew that none felt like sleeping; but it is an injury to the cause of God to continue to drag along when one sees that he has no liberty and the brethren are not edified.

The gospel tells of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. While the above is true gospel, yet it does not edify unless it comes from the heart. If one was to tell the people that they were near kin to John D. Rockefeller, and heirs, and convince them that it were true, how many such heirs would sleep while it was being told them? I am sure that I would not sleep if some one should tell me such news if I believed it to be true. But O, what is all the estate of John D. Rockefeller compared to the gospel inheritance? We inherit it by heirship. We are said to be heirs of God, and joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ; that is, we are as much heirs as is our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and what is Christ's is also ours. The gospel tells of a oneness between Christ and his people; it says that Jesus loves his people as the Father loved him, and then adds that the Father loved him before the foundation of the world. Is not this consoling, dear child? Just think that the Father loves us just as he did Jesus, and that he loved him before the world was. There was a poor man who united with the Old School Baptist Church, and the minister asked him if he loved Jesus. He said, "O no! This poor negro cannot love him, but Jesus loves this poor negro." And that love goes back to the Father.

He "that loveth is born of God." Being born of God we are partakers of the divine nature, which is love, and so we love God, and one another. Thus we come to esteem our brethren better than ourselves; we see our own hatefulness and cannot see that of others. I know that if my dear brethren knew me as I know myself they could not have the confidence in me that they have, but, bless the Lord, he has covered our sins so completely that even he himself says that he beholds no sin in us, because of his imputed righteousness. He was made "sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." What a glorious gospel is this!

"Jesus paid it all;
All to him we owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow."

The rich can have what they desire, but the poor cannot afford it. But Jesus said to the disciples of John, whom John sent to him when in prison, Go and tell John again, that the lepers are cleansed, the blind receive their sight, the deaf hear, the lame walk, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. The gospel of God's dear Son is for the poor, it is as free as are all the rest of the gifts of God unto the sons of men. "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not?" "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money, and without price." The poor are needy, and the needy are those who feel themselves ten thousand talents in debt, and without one farthing to pay. The gospel is sweet to such characters as these poor, needy, penniless ones. They thirst but have no money to buy with. But the gospel says, Come and buy, without money and without price. Thus, dear child, it all costs you nothing, yet you were bought with a

price, and the price was the blood of the dear Lord Jesus Christ. We were his and we sold ourselves for naught. Then we were left in a destitute condition indeed. But needy as we were, Christ laid aside his crown and died for us, according to the Scriptures, and he was raised again the third day, according to the Scriptures. But for how many of our sins did he die? He "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity." This means all of our sins in all our life from the cradle to the grave. What did dying for our sins amount to? The wrath of an unflinching justice was appeased. Mercy and truth have here met together and righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Why could this union and peace exist between them? Because justice could ask no more; it was perfectly satisfied. "In due time Christ died for the ungodly." It was not one [illegible]t late; and he was just on time when he arose from the dead for our justification. He became the first-fruits of them that slept.

But I seem to find no stopping-place, I must cease this writing, it is already too lengthy. I am but fifty-nine years of age, but still do not expect to be here much longer. I will soon be sixty years old, and many years ago it was presented to me so that I have believed it, that I should live to the age of sixty. But whether it is the purpose of God that I shall be soon taken away I must wait and see. Hezekiah had fifteen years added to him, but not to the Lord's days. Of one thing I am sure, that I shall live out all the time allotted to me on earth.

Remember a poor sinner at the throne of grace. May God's blessings rest upon Zion in her distressed condition, is the prayer of a poor sinner saved by grace alone, if saved at all,

J. M. DULEY.

KIOWA, Kan., July 8, 1906.

(See editorial remarks in this number.)

MONTGOMERY, Ala., April 13, 1906.

MY BELOVED BROTHER CHICK:—Propped up in an easy chair, I will write you again, if the Lord will. Your last letter was very comforting, and I felt that the Lord is good to me in my afflictions. You do not know how very weak and low I am, but my kind wife is a good nurse and does all in her power for my comfort, and the Lord mercifully makes my bed in all my disease; he gives me much comfort and peace in mind and body while lying so weak and helpless upon my bed. My wakeful hours of nights are sweetened with meditations upon his holy character, wonderful works and goodness, and my soul silently adores him. O how I long and pray for greater nearness and fuller communion with him, to be more like his well beloved Son, who dwells in his holy presence. Deeply do I realize my own sinful weakness, helplessness and unworthiness. O how rich in mercy God is to me! My prayer is for perfect reconciliation to his will, yet I often adopt the prayer of David: "O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more." I am constantly asking and seeking to know his will concerning me, wondering whether he will restore me and leave me yet awhile to his dear people and with my family, and make my last days my best days.

We are very desirous to go to the home of my son, Gilbert Beebe, at Carthage, Mo., and make our home with him and his good wife, Ida, whom we have never met, and it has been more than three years since I saw Gilbert. They are both more than anxious to have us with them, and we hope to go in May, yet, my dear brother, I realize that my work is done, and truly I am waiting—waiting for the Lord to come. The last words of our

precious Redeemer are much in my thoughts: "It is finished," and my mind dwells on the future glory. My last meeting, and sermon, was here, the third Sunday in December, my subject was the everlasting covenant, the text, "The last words of David."—2 Sam. xxiii. 1. The Lord was with us and our hearts were comforted in the covenant ordered in all things and sure. I spoke an hour, though scarcely able to stand on the floor. Then I did not think it was my last discourse, but I am content if the will of the Lord be so.

I am writing these things specially to you, as they may be my last words, and I want to tell you of my late experience, as in my farewell. You know I desire that you write charitably of me after I fall asleep in Jesus, so I want to tell you how it is with me. Like Paul, I have been in perils among false brethren, and have suffered, as you know, but I am so humbly and deeply thankful that now the Lord has enabled me to freely forgive them from my heart. In the midst of all the errors and departures, I bless the Lord that he has kept me by his power through faith, and through grace has enabled me to say with Paul, "I have kept the faith." It cheers me greatly to see the opposition to God's sovereign purpose and grace failing and dying, as it must. "The Lord alone shall be exalted." "God is our refuge and strength."

Now, my pleasant, dear brother and companion in tribulation, with sorrow to me our very helpful and harmonious correspondence of thirty years is closing. I remember it with comfort, how good it has been; to me you have been as Timothy and Titus were to Paul.

One mention let me make: Your "Remarks" in the SIGNS, upon the point that the resurrected body has never been seen by mortal eyes, proves the fact you said, that as long as our dying, mortal bodies can be seen, they have not been resurrected. This is unanswerable, and it rejoiced me. Warm is my fellowship for you and fervent my love; I could fall upon your neck and weep on saying, Farewell, my dear brother. But our loving Lord says to us, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." If his will, I will write you again. Most gladly would I hear from you in my lingering afflictions; your letters comfort us both. What I have written you would fill my wife with sorrow, as she hopes for my recovery, and I would not have her know it now.

Since I began this letter I laid down and rested; now I am weary. Our love to you and all.

The Father comfort all our hearts. In your trials for the truth, the dear Lord says, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" that fadeth not away.

In the faith and love of Christ your brother, D. BARTLEY.

[THE above letter was the last written to us by our dear aged brother Bartley. This was as he thought. Now that he has passed away, it seems to us that all who knew him should know of his faith and hope, and peaceful submission to the will of God in his last days. For ourself we can but say that it was at the time it came, and is now as we have just read it again, inexpressibly touching, and yet most strengthening to us. We do hope for the same faith that is expressed in this letter when the end shall come to ourself; it is the same faith that was with Paul and strengthened him when the time for him to be offered was at hand. Brother Bartley has written much and

preached much in all his long life, but he has never written more comforting, cheering words than these, written when just upon the confines of the better world. We can but be sorrowful when the aged servants pass away, and yet for them we can but rejoice that all at last is well.—C.]

GENESIS IX. 25-27.

"And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and Canaan shall be his servant."

Dear Brethren in Hope of Eternal Life:—If one who feels to be less than the least may venture to thus address you. I have set down this morning with my pen, to endeavor to trace the Lord for a short distance in his wondrous dealings with the children of men. His way is in the sea, and he rides upon the storm, he is in the whirlwind, and in all deep places. The subject at the head of this letter seems to be to me a difficult one. I have offered it to several Bible students, and they all have failed to even try to expound it to me. I have been pondering on it for some time. I feel sometimes as though I had cracked the shell of the nut, but not having skill or the proper instrument, I cannot pick out all the kernel, so I hand it over to brother Ker, that he may dig it all out, that we may all eat and be satisfied.

I will here endeavor to put down a few of my own thoughts upon the above subject, and if I should go astray I hope that you will show me where, for I am but a poor, ignorant mortal, but if I am not deceived I am seeking to know the truth. I will now try to speak of Canaan, and try to find what he represents. It appears to me that he represents the old Adamic nature, which is under the curse with all the Adamic race, and which will there remain until the children of God are made to hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. This being the case Canaan becomes a servant to the servants of God, and he said, "Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant." Here let us take the lineage of Shem and follow it until we come to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob and then to the twelve patriarchs. Then we have that nation which God chose out of all the nations of the earth to make manifest his wonderful works to the children of men. He sent them down into Egypt to remain, as it is said, four hundred years under Pharaoh, then when the fullness of time was come he reached down his arm of mercy and took them by the hand and led them out from that bondage. He raised up Moses to be their leader, and Moses led them through the Red Sea, and then they took up their forty year march through the wilderness; Moses served out his time and God took him. Joshua, who succeeded him, was a true type of the Savior, who was to lead the spiritual children of Israel through the river of judgment, or Jordan; and when they entered Canaan it seems that they did not exterminate the Canaanites, but Joshua levied a tribute of service upon them, as it is written, unto this day; this will also be to the last day that the child of God dwells in the earthly house of this tabernacle; when this earthly house is dissolved they go to that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. The Canaanite is still in the land, so, dear brethren, when the great Antitype came to this Jordan (judgment) its banks overflowed, but he had undertaken and he must perform, bearing the sins of his beloved bride in his own body, therefore she shall never pass through Jordan again. He

completed his mission in the earth, he ascended to his Father with holy joy, exclaiming, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me." Thus he presents them to the Father, holy, harmless and undefiled, there to reign with him through the ages of eternity.

"O the transporting, rapturous scene,
That rises to my sight;
Sweet fields arrayed in living green,
And rivers of delight."

I feel that I must bring this to a close. In a few days I shall be eighty-one years of age, and my poor old frame will soon be called to pass the way of all the earth, and I go, I hope, to that home prepared for the living.

Will brother Ker take up Japheth, and speak of his dwelling in the tents of Shem? Now remember me in your prayers.

Dear brethren, farewell.

D. KENNARD.

[BROTHER Kennard has expressed our own thoughts upon the servitude of Canaan and his relationship to his brethren, as well as we could have done ourself. With regard to "Japheth dwelling in the tents of Shem," we feel that it would be impossible for us to write more to the point than Elder H. H. Lefferts did in the SIGNS of September 15th, 1904, or than did the late Elder David Bartley, in SIGNS of May 1st, 1906. These numbers of the SIGNS we send you, brother Kennard, hoping you may be edified by the above named letters.—K.]

CHARLOTTE, Va.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Inclosed find two dollars, subscription for the dear, old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I would that I could find words, my dear brother, to tell you what the SIGNS is to me in my lonely life, so far from all I love for the truth's sake. I have been reading the last number, (December 1st,) and it seems to me plainly shown that all the writers, north, east, west and south, are taught by the same great Teacher, and all taught the same great truths. First, brother Bartley writes of the power and majesty of our God, who has all power in heaven and in earth, and of the nothingness of man. How fully do I realize the truth and beauty of his words, surrounded as I am by all manner of isms, and by those who say: If man sins, it was so decreed from all eternity, and so he cannot help it, and therefore he is not to blame, which is a perversion of the truth that God predestinates all things. I do not attempt to hold any controversy with any such, I feel that it would be "casting pearls before swine," and so I hold my peace. I know that I cannot open their eyes to realize that "the Lord, he is God," that he, and he alone, can open their eyes and unstop their deaf ears, and give hearts to understand and love this sweet and comforting doctrine, that our God is the God of purpose and grace, that he works all things after the counsel of his own will, and that all things work together for good to them who are the called according to his purpose. Such letters as brother Bartley's help, strengthen and comfort me. Then comes brother Beeman, whose heart is drawn out in love and sympathy for those who are in like situation with myself, far away from all their brethren, and seldom hear preaching except through the dear SIGNS. He tells us we have the Bible, the precious word of God. Yes, that is true, and a precious treasure it is, but, dear brother, did you ever see the time when that precious word was a sealed book to you, when you could see no beauty in its pages, and it seemed like mockery for you to attempt to read its divine words, so mean-

ingless to you? O how dark and dead is our heart when we can see no beauty in that word, so full, so precious to God's dear people. I often feel the words of that sweet hymn my dear mother used to sing:

"Sometimes I read my Bible and 'tis a sealed book,
Sometimes I find a blessing wherever I do look."

Yes, my dear brother, the ups and downs of this daily life none can know unless they are traveling the dark and thorny way. I thank our dear brother for his words of love, sympathy and encouragement. Then as I read on, each and every writer had some word that touched a responsive chord in my own heart, each telling some part of my own daily experience, so that it all seemed one unbroken chain, linked together in love and sweet fellowship all over our country from Canada to Texas. I can but hope that I am taught by the same unerring Spirit, and my heart is drawn out in love for each one. I long to take them by the hand and tell them how their words help and strengthen one who if indeed is a follower of our dear Savior is truly the least of all. Brother May fully expresses my own experience in his sweet letter. He says in days gone by he had the way mapped out that he would grow better and better, and would almost, or quite, know if he were a child of God, but now that hope is utterly blasted, and he is without hope of ever being any better in time, his way hedged up, and he is led into darkness and not into light, as he had hoped, led in a way he knew not, in a land of great drought, a waste howling wilderness, where he must wander around without hope of ever being better or wiser, for he has learned that "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." These words of our brother better describe my own daily experience than any words of mine can. Thus it is with me, my dear brother, I go on from day to day, a monument of God's sustaining mercy and grace, "cast down, but not destroyed." My only hope is in Jesus, that because he lives I shall live also. My cry is, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." Could we cry "restore" if we never knew the joy of salvation?

Dear brother Chick, you do not know how I long to see you and talk with you. I have often thought of writing to you the past summer, for I have been burdened wih much sorrow and distress.

Forgive me for this long and uninteresting letter, and write me a few lines when you have the time.

I am your unworthy sister in hope,

MARY J. COX.

ALVINSTON, Ont., May 13, 1906.

ELDER FRANK MCGLADE—MY DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—While reading your letter in the last SIGNS (May 15th) I was filled with a desire to tell you of the joy and comfort that I received from it, it seemed to fill my very being with delight; and now as I take my pen to write, many questions present themselves to my mind. What is your motive? Is it not presumption in you to make such an attempt? So I can assure you that it is with fear and much trembling that I even try, and unless the Lord undertakes for this poor worm of the dust and directs my pen, I know the effort will be vain. You are an entire stranger to me in the flesh, but I trust not in the Spirit, for I have felt quite at home with you in that communication. I have often felt, while reading a communication of some sister or brother, a strong impression to write and tell them of the satisfaction I received from its perusal, but through a feeling of unwor-

thiness, and for fear it was but a fleshly desire, I have refrained from doing so until now. This is the reason I may surely offer for troubling you with this note. I am deprived of the privilege of meeting with the saints very often, and being a stranger here in a strange land, so far as religion is concerned, there being but one (she a dear old mother in Israel eighty-two years of age) beside myself in the town where I live, I am unable to talk of the things I so dearly love, and this I think has given me such strong impressions to write. I so often think of the truth of these words, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." If our natural feelings were gratified we would surely unfold it; but ah, how weak are poor mortals, utterly helpless to perform one vow for ourself or for our near and dearest kin.

For some time past I have felt dead to spiritual life, and was dwelling in a dry and thirsty land where no water is, nothing but a groan now and again, Lord, help me, Lord, help me, have mercy, Lord. Last week the words came to my mind and seemed to express my case: Filled with "wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores." And now I want to tell you in this sad, gloomy condition, feeling so cast down and burdened, so discouraged, wretched and miserable, I picked up the SIGNS and your letter came as a cup of cold water to this poor, thirsty traveler. "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days." O how kind and full of tender mercy is our heavenly Father, he will not leave his children comfortless. "Bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure." O how sweet to rest in his promises. You told my feelings in that letter better than I can begin to tell them myself. I am continually looking about for something better than I have on, but find I am too poor to furnish anything but filthy rags. I make resolutions daily to do differently, but in the language of Paul feel to say, "How to perform that which is good I find not." What a mystery I am, and surely a complex being. I abhor and hate myself, yes, loathe my life, and still I (nature) want things my own way, and I know at the same time they would surely bring destruction. We have no continuing city here, but seek one to come. Trials must come, but the flesh shrinks from them and rebels against them, but if one has been taught of the Spirit he must surely know that such is the heritage of the saints, and that it is through great tribulation we must enter the kingdom. May the dear Lord grant us patience to bear all for his name's sake.

Now ere I close I feel I must give expression to the comfort and satisfaction I received in the perusal of your former letter, headed "?" published in March 1st number of SIGNS, and also the desire I felt springing up in my heart that you should know it; not that you be exalted over it, but that you may know your effort was not in vain; I have read and reread it time and again, and it did seem to present to my mind such deep thought, which was food for my poor, hungry soul. But we must give God the praise, for he is the Fountain of all blessings, and he does surely feed and bless his little ones through his poor, tried servants.

I am afraid I have written too lengthily, and said but little, but I seemed filled to overflowing, and could not forbear. Please pardon all errors, it is imperfect.

From a poor little one in hope,

(MRS.) W. C. YOUNG.

FREDERICKTOWN, Mo., February, 1906.

EDITORS OF THE DEAR OLD SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—In its columns many thoughts of the saints are expressed, and when I read them my heart goes out to each of the writers, and I want to write to every one, and tell them how much I appreciate their articles. Brother Keene's article in the present number (Feb. 1st) is certainly worth the price of the paper if its value could be counted in dollars and cents. I read every article in my paper; none are ever too long. The Circular Letters are also much appreciated by me. I have no fault to find with any part of it, for it is all conducted so much better than I could do it. Brother P. W. Sawin's writings are much appreciated by me; he has been here twice. I often wonder if he remembers any of us. We are so scattered, and of little importance in a worldly point of view, as we are all poor, but I hope that we are blessed with the true grace of God and the love of Christ Jesus.

I see that brother Ker is now associated with the SIGNS as editor. I love his writings, and think he has been blessed to know the deep mysteries of Christ. I would be glad could I write as do others, but I am only given to see one thought at a time, and if I write or talk about it to some of the brethren or sisters I feel like an empty cask; I wonder sometimes if preachers feel that way after preaching a gospel sermon.

There are only three members here, and we need the prayers and sympathy of all the brethren; we never hear any preaching of our kind, and we seldom go to hear any other, only funerals sometimes to show our respect for our friends and neighbors. We have much preaching all around us, and all begging for money to save souls; some say it is a great science to understand saving souls. I do not think souls are saved by science, but by the blood of Jesus Christ, as is revealed by the Holy Spirit in the heart. When such ones hear the preached word from the mouth of a preacher who has been called and qualified by the Lord, they hear and understand what he says. The Lord said, "I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." "I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts." He declares that "they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and ever man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least to the greatest." It is not like it was in the old temple worship, where they heard Moses' law read every Sabbath day; all this pointed to the coming of Christ, and when he did come very few of them knew him. I fear the same would be the case now if Jesus should come as he did then.

I wrote the above some time ago, and will now send it to you; do as you think best about publishing it in the SIGNS, do not crowd out better matter.

With love to all the household of faith I remain your little sister in Christ,

VIRGINIA HOLLADAY.

CENTERBURG, Ohio, Jan. 9, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS AND LOVED ONES WHO CONTRIBUTE TO OUR DEAR FAMILY PAPER, THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—My poor heart goes out in thankfulness to our heavenly Father for his many great blessings, both spiritual and temporal, that have been bestowed upon me and mine in the past year. I want to tell you all that your words of comfort through the SIGNS have been among my greatest blessings. O blessed hope, the anchor of my soul, it is unspeakable and

full of glory, that we are saved by grace, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. What a rest is this, especially when our eyes see and behold evil men and seducers waxing worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived; I only can say, What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits to poor, unworthy me?

I feel rejoiced to learn that Elder Ker has been blessed with a mind to lighten Elder Chick's burden and care. While I do not think the SIGNS could be better than it is and has been, I cannot help feeling glad to know there is help in the office; my prayer has been and is that the SIGNS may be blest with help; I rejoice to know the paper prospers. I have distributed my SIGNS this last year, gave them to the brethren, sisters and friends that I thought would be interested; what the result will be I cannot tell, I feel if I live and receive them I will continue to distribute them after I read them. It came as a revelation for me to distribute the glad news the SIGNS contains; I have many volumes, nearly all since the year 1850, but time admonishes me that I am failing, and who will care for all these volumes of rich and glorious news after I am gone? But I know the God that I try to trust in is able to distribute to his own glory and the good of his children.

I wish you all a happy and prosperous year, and request you to remember me, a poor sinner, saved by grace, free grace, no merit of my own.

In hope of life eternal, your sister,

SARAH C. BOYD.

GARNER, N. C., March 27, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I want to thank you for the sample copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but do not know how to do so as I would wish. We all read and reread it, and my wife and mother join me in thanking you; we all join in one bond of love with you and the writers and readers of your paper. You do not know how rejoiced I was with it; it was the first copy I ever saw, and the doctrine it contends for is, I hope, just what I believe, if not deceived, but I cannot express it as plainly as all the writers did. There are lords many, and gods many, but unto us there is only one God, one faith and one baptism. Although I am so far away in the south, I love the God that enables you all to speak so comfortably to Jerusalem, and may he through mercy, love and pity continue to bless you. I do not want to weary you with a long, poor letter, but wish I could tell you of my weakness and frailty, and how often I am made to cry out, O my leanness, my leanness, yet I hope I am a sheep, but am so poor and weak I can hardly stand. I wanted to tell you how much the SIGNS helped me.

J. B. SAULS.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1906.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REPLIES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

BRETHREN G. M. Snider, T. M. Greer and Riley Bean, of Maud, Oklahoma, have asked for a reprint of the third article of the London Confession of Faith, as it is called, and also of the principles stated by the SIGNS in its prospectus, and also of the Hopewell Church, in New Jersey. They say that some with them claim that the third article of the London Confession of Faith has never been the faith of Old School Baptists in this country. Probably very many of our readers have never seen the old London Confession to which our brethren refer, and probably none outside of the First Hopewell Church have ever seen its abstract of principles, adopted in the organization of the church, about one hundred and ninety years ago. Perhaps some of our readers have never seen the principles adopted and announced in the original prospectus of the SIGNS, and which are still the very same principles of doctrine contended for in its columns, and it seems to us well for these reasons to comply with the request of our dear brethren whose names are given above. Beside this, it is well to have our minds again and again stirred up to a remembrance of what we do believe to be the truth presented in the word of God. It is also true, and we should always remember it, that the fact that certain things were believed to be taught in the Scriptures by our fathers ought not to be accepted by us simply because our fathers believed them, but, like the Bereans, we do well if we search the Scriptures for ourselves to see whether these things are so. On the other hand, let us beware lest we find a mind in us to reject the things that have been believed by our fathers simply because they were believed by them; true humility will lead us to carefulness in both directions. We are not more spiritual, or wiser, or better instructed than our fathers, who, as well as we, loved and served God; and, on the other hand, let us remember that they were not perfect, and that they also, as well as we, were liable to hold mistaken views of the word of God. But, as we have said in former articles, it is incredible that our God would have left his church in any age in ignorance of any of the great principles of truth taught in the Bible. No doubt, as was the case with five of the seven churches of Asia which were addressed in the beginning of the book of Revelation, some in all ages have been ensnared by error, and some have made shipwreck of their faith; but still it is incredible that the truth has not in the main been revealed in all ages to the church of God, so that they have been made wise unto salvation, as well as we of this last generation.

There is a spirit of intellectual pride in man to-day, as there was among the Greeks, who in their day thought to find out God by searching, which leads men to delight in some new mental discovery, and to especially rejoice if they can claim it as original with them, and in this very thing is a snare, of which Satan takes ready possession and makes ready use, leading some into heresy in that way.

To such minds the very fact that a view is old, renders it the object of suspicion on their part, and such ones are ready to denounce it as being merely tradition, and some new notion, some new interpretation of a text, some view of a principle of doctrine that is new, and which has arisen really out of that tendency in the natural man to exalt the powers of the human mind, are attributed to a revelation from God, rather than to their true source: human reason and human vainglory. Against all this there is need that we should be warned, lest we be led away from the truth of the word by our vain speculations. No doubt Scriptures have been misapplied in all the past ages, but so they may be by ourselves as well, and we have said all this as a warning to be careful in both directions, that we do not reject truth because it is an old belief among the churches, nor because it is a view new to ourselves. The confessions of faith, to which our brethren refer, are not infallible, and those who wrote them and adopted them did not claim that they were. They are simply an abstract of what in the minds of the writers and of those who adopted them was the teaching of the Bible with regard to these matters, and all such confessions of faith, as they are called by common consent, are needful for convenience in stating the faith of those who profess to be followers of Christ. Still all such confessions are but the statement of the understanding of fallible men, and must themselves be tested by the word.

The third article of the London Confession reads as follows: (We will quote, and for brevity's sake leave out the scriptural references in the article.) "God hath decreed in himself, from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever come to pass; yet so, as thereby is God neither the author of sin, nor hath fellowship with any therein; nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor yet is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established, in which appears his wisdom in disposing all things, and power and faithfulness in accomplishing his decree. Although God knoweth whatsoever may or can come to pass upon all supposed conditions, yet he hath not decreed anything because he foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions." The remainder of this article continues to present this decree or predestination of God, more particularly as it relates to election and the final salvation of the elect, and in this connection it states clearly that not only has our God decreed the salvation of a certain fixed number of mankind, but that he has also ordained to pass by and leave to everlasting and deserved destruction all the rest of mankind.

The principles of faith advocated by the SIGNS from the first number ever issued, November 28th, 1832, to the present time embraced the following: The extensive sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfection of the great Jehovah; the revelation which he has given of himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, these three are one, the absolute predestination of all things, eternal and unconditional election.

This covers all that is involved in the question addressed to us by the three brethren named above. In addition to this we quote from the pen of Elder Gilbert Beebe, as published in the first volume of "Editorials," pages thirty and thirty one: "The doctrine of absolute predestination, when rightly understood, does not involve the idea of man's acting in-

voluntarily in sin, nor does it exonerate him from accountability. This may be discovered by noticing the following examples: the crucifixion of Christ, the abduction of Joseph, together with many other circumstances recorded in holy writ." "The brethren of Joseph had no knowledge of the purpose of God when they sold him to go down into Egypt; they meant it for evil, but God ordained it for good. When the Jews persecuted the disciples of the Lord Jesus into strange cities, they knew not that God had ordained this very method of sending his missionaries everywhere, preaching the word. * * * The wrath of man shall praise him, the remainder of that wrath he will restrain. We need only to understand this precious doctrine and we shall most assuredly love it. The christian exults in the thought that death and hell can do no more than what our Father please." Then on page 130, Elder Beebe says, "Satan himself, if he could speak the truth, would tell us that he could not drown a swine without the permission of God." "Men and devils act voluntarily in sin, without the least regard to the purpose or decree of God, of whose purpose or decree they are totally unconscious. * * * Men and devils act from wicked motives, with wicked hands, God means it for good, and overrules even their wicked acts and murderous designs for his glory and the good of all such as are the called according to his purpose."

In the articles of faith adopted by the First Hopewell Church, about one hundred and ninety years ago, the second article is as follows: "Jehovah is self-existent, and the first cause of all subsequent causes; being under no law separate from the counsel of his own will, according to the following scriptural references: Deut. xxxii. 39, 40; Isaiah xlvi. 10."

Thus we have sought to comply with the request of our brethren. It will be seen that in substance all these statements are one, but what is better and of far more consequence, they are all in harmony with the plain testimony of the Scriptures. We do not here desire to argue the subject, as it does not now seem needful. We can but say, however, that this doctrine has been to us all our life as a solid rock; whatever else we have questioned, this one doctrine we have seen no room to question. It is true that when we believed it in our childhood and youth, as a truth established by Bible testimony, there was no sweetness in it, but in after years it came to be full of honey and the honeycomb to us. Once it had been a rock indeed, a hard and flinty rock, but now we are enabled to suck honey out of that rock. In God's predestination we came to see the one hope of our own salvation and of the salvation of all the people of God.

ELDER E. A. Norton, of Iowa, asks about the Song of Solomon i. 8, especially about the kids.

As the subject of kids was especially in the mind of our brother, we will confine what we have to say to that one thought. Some difficulty has been in the minds of very many with regard to the use of the word "kid" in such a connection. This has been because of the division between the sheep and the goats in the parable of that name, spoken by the Savior. Many have not been able to see how those who were placed on the left could be among the number of those fed beside the shepherds' tents, but it must be remembered that under the law, goats and kids were clean beasts, as well as sheep and lambs. In that wonderful type which most completely presents the atonement, and the

bearing away of the sins of Israel, two goats were selected; one was slain to represent the sacrifice of the blessed Lord for sin, and upon the head of the other the hand of the high priest was laid "heavily," (for so the word signifies) and the sins of the people were confessed upon him, and then he was sent by the hand of a fit man away into the wilderness, or, more literally, "a land not inhabited," never to be seen by Israel again. So Jesus died, and, like the scapegoat, he took away the sins of his people forever, so that they shall never come into remembrance against them in the presence of God again. And kids of the goats were continually to be offered as a sin-offering. Beside this, the meat and milk of goats and the meat of kids were to be constantly used as food by all the people of Israel. Thus it will be seen that they were regarded as being clean under the Mosaic law. In the New Testament, in the parable of the prodigal son, the elder brother is represented as complaining that his father had given him no kid during all his years of faithful service, that he might make merry with his friends.

It was the custom, and a necessary one, too, under the old covenant times, when the sheep and goats of the flock were in the fold, to separate them. This was because the goats were stronger and would be likely to crowd the sheep and might injure them, but it did not imply any uncleanness in them under the law; the goats were as legitimately a part of the possession of the people as were the sheep. The kids needed the same tender care for a time as did the lambs, that they might be safely reared and be fat and flourishing.

Now in the text to which brother Norton refers, the spouse who has been inquiring for her beloved is told to go forth by the footsteps of the flock and to feed her kids beside the shepherds' tents. If she desires to find her bridegroom, she will be most likely to do so close by his flock, or by his shepherds' tents; and beside, it would be her privilege as his bride, his chosen and beloved one, to do so. Where else would she have such right to feed her kids as there beside the flock of her husband? It seems to us, from all this, that there need be no difficulty in our minds regarding the use of the word "kids" in the text. The shepherds may refer to the under-shepherds which the great Shepherd has provided for the care and feeding of his flock, and the kids may mean the graces of the Spirit, such as faith, hope, love, patience, meekness, long-suffering, joy, peace and all other graces begotten in the bride by the Spirit, all of which are often strengthened and revived through the ministration of the word by the servants of Christ. How often our faith, and confidence, and love, and hope, faint and grow weak when we go on our way solitary and alone, and how often are they revived when it is our privilege to meet with the shepherds and feed beside the tents where they feed the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers, and how often, while under these ministrations, the dear Savior appears, and our hearts do burn within us as we abide in his presence. If we are mourning an absent Lord and Husband, there is no more likely place to find him than beside the shepherds' tents, where his flock is cared for and find their pasture. The church of God is his abiding-place, and it is the true abiding-place of all who love and would follow him. C.

REMARKS ON BROTHER J. M. DULEY'S LETTER.

We are glad to hear of brother Duley's visit to Kentucky, and of the goodness of the Lord in visiting him and the brethren with an heavenly shower of blessing. How good his glorious presence to revive our drooping spirits and cause us to receive the gospel in power, in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance; at such times it is pleasant both to speak and hear. We have enjoyed brother Duley's letter, and feel sure many will be comforted in reading it. There are a few statements in it, however, which we think well to comment upon for the consideration of brother Duley and the brotherhood. It has been much in our mind the last few months to offer some thoughts upon these very points. We feel sure that brother Duley will not be offended; his love for and interest in the cause of Christ is equal, no doubt, to our own. It is well for us all to understand each other in matters pertaining to salvation.

Brother Duley says, "There is much letter preaching, concerning which there is no objection to the words, but the spirit is not in it." We have often wondered if it can be possible that there is "letter preaching" in the church of God, by the servants of Jesus Christ? Before this question can be answered we must first ascertain what "letter preaching" is. Paul says the apostles were made "able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit;" he also tells us "the law is spiritual." Surely the gospel, which is the power of God, is spiritual; where then do we find "the letter?" We have thought more particularly in the ceremonial law; Christ blotted "out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." The following Scripture, with brief comment, may answer to make clear our position upon this point: "For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members, to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held: that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." "In the flesh" signifies, we think, an unregenerate state, which was the condition of Israel under the covenant of works. (Such was also the condition of the Gentiles who were without law.) Hence "the motions of sins, which were by the law," did work in them to bring forth fruit unto death. But now, being delivered from the law wherein they were held, Paul says, "We should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." Now being dead to the law (ceremonial) by the body of Christ, they were to serve God, not in circumcision, meats, drinks, divers washings, &c., but "in spirit and in truth." "Circumcision [now] is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter."—Rom. ii. 29. The service of the apostles therefore was not to minister in those things (the letter) which had been observed under the covenant of works, which had men appointed specially for such service, but were to minister in spiritual things. Therefore, said Paul, we are made able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit. To preach "the letter" is to preach the doctrine of works, which is the direct opposite of grace. The apostles did not preach "the deeds of the law" (ordinances) as means of salvation, but Christ and him crucified. There were some, however, who did preach "the letter" (deeds of the law), saying, "Except ye be circumcised after

the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." It is said of them they "would pervert the gospel of Christ." When the apostles were in council at Jerusalem they said with regard to such "letter preaching," it would "put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear." This was called preaching Moses. The apostles wrote a letter to the brethren, who had been disturbed by the preaching of those letter preachers, telling them how to walk and from what things to abstain, and also assured them that they (apostles) had given no commandment to those men to preach circumcision, or to command that the law of Moses be kept in order to be saved. They assured the church that the only means of salvation was in the blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God. "In Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them." If indeed the preaching of "the deeds of the law" for justification before God is "the letter," (and we believe it is) can it be said now, or since the resurrection of Jesus, that his servants preach "the letter?" Some of our very ablest ministers have been accused of preaching "the letter" because they are not experimental preachers. Did the writer of Hebrews preach "the letter" when he presented Christ in contrasting the priesthood of Aaron and Melchizedek with the priesthood of Christ? or when he contrasted the blood of goats and calves with the blood of Jesus? Surely he was not preaching or writing the experience of the children of God nor anything that would excite their emotions. Read Paul's sermons as recorded in the Acts of the apostles, and also Stephen's sermon; see if they were preaching "the letter" when they declared the wonderful works of God in salvation, beginning with the promise to Abraham and tracing Christ through the different generations until manifest in the flesh, then to the cross, to the tomb and to the right hand of God. The gospel is "the power of God," not tears, frames or feelings. It is true that men and women are often brought to tears when under the sound of real gospel preaching; this is godly sorrow, and it worketh repentance. It is also true that men and women are more often brought to tears when some sad experience, of an earthly nature, is being related in the pulpit. If we are blessed at all with the spirit of discernment, we have not as yet found the gospel, the power of God unto salvation, in that; it is worldly sorrow, and it worketh death. There is no such thing in the dispensation of grace as the gospel being preached in "the letter;" there is no such gospel. The gospel is always the same (the power of God), but it does not always affect the children alike; the preparation of the heart is as necessary as the answer of the tongue; when we are thus prepared it always comes in power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. If there were more sound, fearless, faithful doctrinal preachers, the church generally would be better established in the doctrine of grace; could readily detect heresy when preached, hence less confusion and disorder. Peter thought it well that the brethren be established in the truth; Paul thought it necessary that they be established in the principles of the doctrine of Christ.

We have no thought or intention of criticising the experimental gift, it fills its place in the purpose of God; neither is it proper to belittle the doctrinal gift, which also fills its place. That God has

given both to the church we have no doubt; the Lord gives each gift of the ministry for the edification of the body of Christ.

Again, brother Duley says, "I have heard men preach smart, systematic sermons, when I knew full well that there was no gospel in it; God's children have no time to sleep when the gospel is coming to them in the power of the Holy Ghost." If system in preaching is an evidence of "no gospel," we will have to do away with Christ's sermon on the mount; the mind of man cannot conceive such system as he manifested. The sermon of Stephen in Acts vii. 2–53, will also have to be cast one side, for no man, save Jesus, was ever more systematic in preaching than he. Some true servants of God have been accused of preparing their sermons, because they deliver them in an orderly or systematic way. We should not be too harsh in our judgment of our brethren; it is as natural for some men to speak orderly as it is for others not to do so. This is due to the mind of the man; some men are orderly at home and at business, a place for everything and everything in its place, while others are the opposite. An orderly mind is a "good gift," therefore it is of the Lord.

With regard to the children of God going to sleep during preaching, if this is an evidence of "no gospel," but "letter," we shall be compelled to examine the preaching of Paul and the prayer of Jesus to see if the power of God, or the Holy Ghost, was present. During the preaching of Paul on one occasion a certain young man went to sleep "and fell down from the third loft." During that agonizing prayer of Christ in the garden, Peter, James and John went to sleep; they could not watch with him one hour. If the preaching of Paul and the prayer of Jesus did not keep the children awake, why should we feel disturbed or doubt the presence of the Holy Ghost when some go to sleep under the sound of our preaching? Jesus said to the disciples who slept, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." The spirit is as willing now as it was then, and we feel confident that the flesh is as weak now as it was then. Should the entire congregation go to sleep it would not evidence that the gospel was not being preached. We imagine that brother Duley has preached as good gospel sermons when no one was in sight or hearing as he has ever done before congregations, and perhaps better if he has attempted to use those sermons before assemblies. We feel sure he was not depressed and so discouraged that he stopped preaching because no one was there to hear him; why should he feel so in the pulpit, if all were asleep, if it be the same gospel he preached when entirely alone? No doubt it has ever been the same.

Brother Duley says, "It is an injury to the cause of God to continue to drag along when one sees that he has no liberty, and the brethren are not edified." We feel very certain that one can judge when he has no liberty to himself in speaking, but we question the judgment, at such times, of the speaker concerning the edification of the hearers. They all appear to him just as he feels, but they do not always feel as they appear to him. It is often easier to stop than to go on, but it is not always best; it is easy to get into the habit of stopping after a fifteen or twenty minute talk, but this is very unsatisfactory to the brethren; often they make special effort to be present, and feel disappointed when the minister stops after a very brief discourse. Gospel ministers frequently preach their most able

sermons when, to them, they are in utter darkness.

We leave these remarks for your consideration. We hold our dear brother Duley in high esteem, and have no intention of wounding him in commenting upon his letter; if mistake is made in so doing, we assure him it is not of the heart. Faithfulness, charity and long-suffering toward one another are essential to the well-being of the brotherhood which we are commanded to love.

K.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder William Lee Staggs was born in Vigo Co., Indiana, Oct. 19th, 1842, and departed this life July 25th, 1906, at the home of brother W. S. Bourland, near Keller, Tarrant Co., Texas, after a lingering illness with stomach and bowel trouble of ten weeks duration. He was the youngest of ten children born to Elijah and Nancy Staggs, four of whom yet survive. His mother was sister to Elder Wilson Thompson. Brother Lee was never married; he emigrated to Parker Co., Texas, in 1880, and was baptized in the fellowship of Zion Hill Church in 1891, by Elder A. D. Bourland, and shortly afterward moved to Indian Territory and soon began speaking in public. He was ordained to the full functions of the gospel ministry in 1895. He remained in the Territory, preaching among the churches in that region until 1900. He was dismissed by letter from Zion Hill Church in 1899, and united with Harmony Church, in Indian Territory. He came back to Texas and joined by letter Denton Creek Church, Tarrant Co., Texas, in 1901, and was called to the pastoral care of the church in 1904. He was an able minister, sound in the faith, and one who did not shun to declare the whole counsel of God. The end was peaceful and quiet. When asked if he realized his condition and felt resigned, he answered that he was resigned and willing to depart, that he had fought a good fight, he had kept the faith, "henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

Elder Robert Keith spoke very appropriately upon the occasion to the comfort of the sorrowing brethren, friends and relatives present, after which all that was mortal of our brother was laid to rest in the Bourland graveyard, there to await the resurrection morn.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

His brother, PRESTON STAGGS.

Joseph Chipchase was born in London, England, April 1st, 1829, died June 18th, 1906, at his home in Cleveland, Ohio, after an illness of four weeks. His death was due to an abscess of the liver. His suffering was intense, but borne with patience and fortitude. He leaves beside his widow, five children by a former marriage, two sons and three daughters, and four children by the last marriage, three daughters and one son. He was a kind husband, a loving father, and will be greatly missed in his home and in the Beulah Old School Baptist Church at Cleveland. He was never absent from our meetings unless providentially hindered. A short time before he died, feeling that the end was near, he called his family to the bedside to bid them farewell; he bade them compose themselves, saying, "I have something to say; weep not for me, but weep for yourselves." Then catching a glimpse of his sorrowing wife, as her face was bathed in tears, he asked, "Why art thou cast down, O daughter of Jerusalem?" He experienced a hope at the age of thirty, and was baptized soon afterward in London, England, continuing until the day of his death firmly established in the doctrine of predestination and election, ever affirming that the robe wherewith he was clothed was the workmanship of the Master's hand.

The writer was called, and tried to speak words of comfort to the sorrowing ones from Matt. xii. 48-50.

WM. S. ALEXANDER.

FELL asleep in Jesus, at his home, "Squirrel Hill," near Readyville, Rutherford Co., Tenn., Wednesday night, July 18th, 1906, **Ephraim A. Speer, M. D.** He was born August 7th, 1838, son of Joshua K. Speer, a great preacher and good man, born in Surrey Co., N. C., April 22nd, 1794, of Old Baptist parents. The Speers' ancestry traces back to Gen. Forbes, 1758, on one side, and in another branch to Simon Hadley, Lord Mayor of London, A. D. 1300. Dr. Speer served as a surgeon in the Confederate army four years. He died of paralysis agitans, a disease from which the faculty is agreed there is no record of recovery. That the readers of the SIGNS may know what manner of spirit Dr. Speer was of I gladly spread before them three of his sayings: "Let the stars fall rather than apply for divorce." "If I could know that my children would tell the truth, always the truth, just the truth, only the truth, I would be satisfied." "A true man is always trying to be honest in act, in word and thought." I offer these three utterances of my "baby brother" as my contribution for the betterment of up to date civilization. I think there is nothing finer, grander, in English literature.

WM. S. SPEER.

WOOSTER, Ark.

MEETINGS.

NOTHING preventing, the church at Cammal, Pa., will hold their yearly two days meeting the fourth Saturday and Sunday in August, (25th and 26th) 1906. Brother Samuel Maffat lives close to the depot. We hope to see a goodly number of lovers of the truth. Cammal is the railroad station on New York Central Railroad. D. M. VAIL.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, Maine, commencing on Friday, August 31st, 1906, and continuing three days. We shall gladly welcome all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Those coming will be met at North Berwick on Thursday before the time appointed for our conference.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

THE Mt. Pleasant Association is appointed to meet with the Sulphur Fork Church, Henry Co., Ky., Friday, August 31st, and September 1st and 2nd, 1906. Those coming by rail via Cincinnati or Louisville, will get tickets to Campbellsburg over the L. & N. R. R. Trains arrive from Louisville 9 a. m. and from Cincinnati about 10:20 a. m., in time for meeting Friday, and will be met. A cordial invitation is extended. P. W. SAWIN.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Old School Baptist Church at South Gardiner, Maine, to begin on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1906, and continue three days. Those coming by rail will be met at South Gardiner on Thursday, Sept. 6th, at 3 p. m., and taken to place of entertainment. All lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus are cordially invited to attend.

J. E. HUBBARD, Clerk.

THE Bald Eagle Church, at Mt. Sterling, Montgomery Co., Ky., being unable to hold the association as appointed to be held with her, the Licking Old School Baptist Association will instead be held with Little Flock Church, Anderson Co., Ky., beginning on Friday before the second Saturday in September, (7th) 1906, and continuing three days. Those coming by Southern Railway from either east or west will take local passenger train for Alton Station, Ky., where they will be met Thursday, Sept. 6th, morning and evening, also on Friday morning, Sept. 7th, 1906. Those coming by L. & N. or C. & O. trains will be met at Frankfort, Ky., on Thursday only, Sept. 6th, 1906, morning and evening, both east and west bound trains.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.

J. T. McCOUN, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting at Rock Springs, Pa., is appointed for the second Sunday, and Saturday preceding, in September, commencing on Saturday, Sept. 8th, at 10 o'clock. Those coming by rail will take trains at Philadelphia and Baltimore for Perryville, over the P. B. & W. R. R., to connect with the 4 p. m. train on the Port Deposit and Columbia R. R. for Rolandville, Md., arriving there at 4:30 p. m., where they will be met and cared for on Friday evening. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth who wish to meet with us.

D. M. THOMAS.

PROVIDENCE permitting, the Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Second Church of Roxbury, on Wednesday and Thursday before the third Sunday in September, 1906. Those coming by train will be met at the Roxbury depot on Tuesday afternoon before the meeting, and also on the morning of the meeting. We extend a hearty welcome to all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity.

HENRY BRONSON, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Pa., expects to hold a two days meeting Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 19th and 20th, 1906. Those coming via Ontario & Western R. R. or Delaware & Hudson R. R. will come to Olyphant, Pa., on Tuesday previous, where they will be met and cared for. Any one desiring can address A. B. Russell or Geo. Goodrich, Olyphant, Pa., R. F. D. Those coming on D., L. & W. R. R. will come to Glenburn, Pa., and take hack to my house in Waverly, Pa., or drop me a line and I will meet them on Tuesday. We hope to see a goodly number of brethren and friends from a distance. D. M. VAIL.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will convene, nothing in providence preventing, with the Olive and Hurley Church, Ulster Co., N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (3rd and 4th,) 1906. The nearest station for those coming from the east is Olive Branch; coming from the west, Shokan, via U. & D. R. R.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

THE Juniata Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the Sidling Hill Church, in Fulton Co., Pa., October 12th, 13th and 14th, 1906. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth, especially to our ministering brethren. Those coming by railroad will come on the B. & O. or Wabash to Hancock on Thursday, where they will be met and cared for. The distance to place of meeting is about twenty miles.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 74. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1906. NO. 18.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE PREACHER TO YOUNG MEN.

"REJOICE, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment. Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity."—Eccl. xi. 9, 10.

In both the book of Proverbs and this book of Ecclesiastes, or the Preacher, Wisdom is talking to her children. In the words of the text those are addressed who are subjects of grace, but who are young in this life. In this language of the Preacher we find some of the acceptable words which he sought to find out, even words of truth. These words of the wise are as goads, causing them to whom they are spoken to move forward in the path of duty, and are "as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are all given from one shepherd." The nails which fasten the teachings of wisdom in the heart, and the goads which urge us forward, are given by our good Shepherd, and are as sure evidences of his tender care, and are as sweet food to the exercised soul, as are his precious promises. These are plain words, fraught with most important meaning. They mean just what they say. They express a serious admonition, but there is no threat in them. The young man is not told to do what is wrong and then threatened with punishment for it. Gospel language is not ironical. The young man of grace is told to rejoice in his youth. This he naturally must do; he has buoyancy and vigor peculiar to this time of life, and he does rejoice in them. It is a pleasure for him to live, and a joy to exert his strength of body and to exercise his mental powers. The Preacher gives him to understand that this is not wrong, not sinful. He does not know the infirmities of age, and the spirit and teaching of the gospel do not require him to try to repress the ardor and stifle the pleasurable emotions that belong to youth.

The young man who is here addressed has had an experience of grace; he has felt his sins forgiven, and now rejoices in a hope of salvation through Jesus; he feels a new controlling power within him, and desires to live free from sin; he realizes that his nature is still sinful, and not to be trusted, but he is given to trust in Jesus, and to look to him alone for help and for salvation; he desires to be

sober and grave, and to walk humbly before God. But he is in the morning of life, and as he joins in the praise and worship of God there is a vivacity in his heart and mind which will manifest itself in his actions, in his voice, in his expressions. This he cannot and need not try to suppress. This mental and physical freshness and pleasure of life will be felt and shown in his daily walk and conversation.

In this sense the young man is told to walk in the ways of his heart, and in the sight of his eyes. The ways of his young heart and the sight of his undimmed eyes are not like those of an old man, and he cannot make it appear as though they were, nor would it be right for him to assume what he does not feel. He does not know the decrepitude of age, and he cannot honestly appear as though he did. That will come to him in its time, if he remains long in this world, and the years will soon enough draw nigh when he shall say, "I have no pleasure in them." But now, in the days of his youth, he does have a natural pleasure in the years as they come to him, and he may know that this pleasure in itself is not wrong, and that he can take the cheerfulness of his heart as properly belonging to him in this early time of his life.

Now comes a serious and most important declaration: "But know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." This solemn truth is to be taken into careful consideration now, while in the midst of youthful activities, and always, during all the years of our life upon the earth, we are to keep in mind that "God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." This is the concluding declaration of this wise Preacher. This Judge is Jesus; he is our Lawgiver, he is our Judge, he is our King, he will save us. His judgment-seat, in regard to the judgment here spoken of, is in the gospel church; he is in the midst of her. It is also in the heart of every child of God. Christ is in every one of them the hope of glory. By them, and by them alone, are his judgments known and felt in this time state. A living soul cannot sin wilfully without feeling the judgments of the righteous Judge against him. Can a living man thrust his hand into the fire without feeling pain? Can one put live coals into his bosom without hurt? No more can one who has divine life come into contact with sin without suffering. The judgment is rendered at once, when the sin is committed. The knowledge of it, the meaning of the stripes, what they are for, may be kept back for a time, but the judgment will be effectual.

We observe that it is not only evil things, but also good things, which are to be brought into judgment. We are apt to read this as though it meant that to be brought into judgment were necessarily to be condemned, but this is not so; the judgment is for or against us, according to the character of our work, whether good or evil, and the character of our work depends upon the motive or spirit which directed it. If we are moved by the vain and selfish spirit of the flesh in what we do, seeking our own glory or the gratification of our carnal desires, then our work is evil in the sight of God, however good it may appear in the sight of men. But if the Spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the dead move or quicken us in doing the work, then it is good, our conscience clear of blame, and the judgment in our favor. (Romans viii. 11–13.)

What a divine favor it is to be enabled

by the Holy Spirit to so walk that we may have a conscience void of offense toward God and toward man. Paul exercised himself to this end. (Acts xiv. 16.) Zechariah and Elizabeth walked in all the ordinances of God's house blameless. It may seem that few attain to this condition, so many of those we esteem more perfect are constantly complaining of their sinfulness and heart wanderings. We are to remember, however, that our sinful nature is a burden and a bondage of corruption to every one who has the life of Jesus in the soul, and that the most spiritual christian, though mercifully kept from sinful conduct, feels the sinfulness of his nature so deeply that he must, like Hezekiah, walk softly before the Lord all his days in the bitterness of his soul.

Now comes the solemn and loving admonition, "Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity." What a solemn reminder is given us in this last sentence of how little of value there is in this mortal life for us. While we are told that it is our privilege to rejoice in our youth, yet we are reminded that youth is soon gone, and that even while it lasts it is only vanity; we cannot build any permanent happiness upon it. All the goodness and glory of man upon the earth are only as the grass, and the flower of grass. How soon the grass withers and the flower fades. Why then should one ever hesitate between a worldly benefit and a gospel duty?

Notice what precedes our text, and how the Preacher brings our minds to this subject: "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun: but if a man live many years, and rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many." Then this solemn conclusion: "All that cometh is vanity." So far, then, as this mortal life is concerned, not only the sweet and pleasant seasons of childhood and youth, but all the years to come, have nothing for us but vanity. We are given the privilege of enjoying the things of this world for the brief period of our stay here, especially in our earlier years, but are carefully enjoined to "use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away." —1 Cor. vii. 31. In youth or old age we are always to "seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness."

How shall the young man remove sorrow from his heart, and put away evil from his flesh? By taking heed to his way according to the Lord's word; (Psalms cxix. 9;) by a most careful attention to all the commandments, teachings, admonitions, exhortations and reproofs of the gospel; by putting off "the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts," and putting on the new man, "which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness;" by keeping under the body and bringing it into subjection; by not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together; by walking in the Spirit, as we live in the Spirit. It is only by grace that any man can do this. We must have grace that we may serve God acceptably. But this grace is sure to be given according as we truly feel our need of it. Jesus is full of grace, and each one of his children will in his necessity find that grace sufficient for him. All this is told in the next verse, where the same young man is still addressed: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." Then follows a most striking

description of the evil days to come to those who stay long in this world, and the pleasureless years that will soon be drawing nigh. Nowhere else can be found so touching and pathetic a description of the infirmities of old age. The peculiar figurative language used in picturing these infirmities makes the description doubly sad and mournful; it emphasizes the declaration that "all that cometh is vanity;" it shows good reason why the young man should not set his heart upon worldly treasures, nor indulge in expectations of greater worldly good, and more enduring pleasures, in the years to come; it shows him that the failing powers of nature will disappoint such expectations, and how, as the sun and light and moon and stars become darkened to his failing sight, and the clouds return after the rain, and the grasshopper becomes a burden, he will be compelled to say of those years, "I have no pleasure in them." But there is one thing that will remain ever fresh, and new, and full of joy to him who has ever once felt its power and blessedness, and that is the word of our God. Though all other things fail, this will never fail, but endures forever.

It is at this time of life that the children of wisdom feel the power of this command with them: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." It is not merely an exhortation, not a suggestion for them to consider, but a word of power; it is the word and work of Jesus in the soul, now made manifest in this time of greatest temptation to seek worldly pleasures and to lay up worldly treasures. The world is new and attractive to the young man exulting in the strength and freshness of youth, and eager to join in all the activities that are all around him. How liable he is to listen to worldly-minded men, and to turn away from the path of strict integrity, in his earnest pursuit of worldly interests. It is now that he feels the restraints of the Spirit of life within his soul; it is now that the voice of Wisdom is heard within him saying, "My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: for they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck. My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not."—Prov. i. 8–10.

God is not only our Creator in the earthy Adam, but also our Creator in Christ. "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus." "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." This spiritual creation is in "righteousness and true holiness," and is "unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." And unto this one, in this morning of life, comes this tender and solemn admonition to remember his spiritual Creator; to remember Jesus and all of his commandments, which he has written in the fleshy tables of the heart. All of the gospel is full of this loving care to the children of God. Jesus speaks to this new heart of grace, and the apostles all are careful to stir up the pure minds of the Lord's people by way of remembrance of the things of Jesus. As you go about your business in this world, so busy and so full of wickedness, remember Jesus in this sweet command, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness." As you meet men of the world in your worldly concerns, do not forget the words of the apostle of Jesus, "Abstain from all appearance of evil." And again, "Walk honestly toward them that are without." And again, "Flee also youthful lusts." Let all the precious words of Jesus abide in you; they are better than all the riches

and honors of this world. Neither the learning and wisdom of the world, nor its honors, nor its gold and silver, are for a moment to be compared with the words of Jesus and his love and favor felt in the soul.

Those who are called by grace are given a tender conscience in the fear of the Lord, which is a blessing of infinite value. It is especially noticeable in the young. By frequent contact with evil, and by thoughtless yielding from time to time, this conscience may become defiled and seared, so that children of God may be left to go into gross wrong without apparent check of conscience. But such a condition cannot last very long; divine life in the soul must soon manifest its abhorrence of all sin; the time must soon come to those who have wandered from the right way when the terror of the Lord will be felt by them. (2 Cor. v. 11.) The Lord knows how to effectually punish his erring children, and at the same time make them feel the tenderness of his love to them. Peter's denial of Jesus with curses was terrible, but it was necessary in order that he might know himself; then only a look from the dear Savior was necessary to make Peter see the greatness of Jesus' love for him, and to make him weep bitterly. The Lord says to his people now, as of old, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."—Amos iii. 2. If under the law of Moses every transgression was punished, how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation? (Heb. ii. 2, 3.) This punishment of the Lord's people, in which for their good he visits their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes, (Psalms lxxxix.) is not by way of atonement, for they are made to know that Jesus effectually put away all their sins by the sacrifice of himself. It is not the law of Moses that we are under, but the law of the Spirit of life in Christ. Paul manifests the tender love and care of the Spirit of Christ for all his wandering children when he says to the Corinthian Church concerning one who had grossly sinned, and whom he had sternly commanded them to put away, "Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow."—2 Cor. ii. 6, 7.

There have been those who held the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God as absolving them from any responsibility for their conduct, and left them free to fulfill the lusts of the flesh with impunity. Such do not give evidence of divine life. The Lord's people will be tempted, as Jesus was, to cast themselves down; but he conquered for them, and in his own time he will give them the banner to be displayed in the face of the enemy, and they will be enabled to answer in his name. "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Those who truly believe in the sovereign power and predestination of God will be found very tender of conscience, and very jealous for the honor of God; they believe that God's eternal purpose includes everything that takes place in this world. If we could believe that one thing could occur which the Lord wished had not occurred, and which he did not intend, how could we trust in him any more? But the Lord so works his will in his people that the more they see of this absolute sovereignty of God, the more they desire to walk carefully before him, in obedience to all of his commands; and also they learn the more every day

that Jesus is their life and righteousness, and that without him they can do nothing.

Those who have a spiritual belief in the truth of predestination do not go about doing a thing because they think the Lord predestinated it; they know nothing of what God has predestinated until it comes to pass; they are given a new principle in their hearts to guide them, and that is the fear of the Lord, which is to hate evil. When they sin they do not charge their sin upon the predestination of God. The Lord moved David against Israel to number them, but David did not plead that as an excuse, but said, "I have sinned, and I have done wickedly."—2 Sam. xxiv. 1–17.

What a good habit it is to be constant in our attendance upon all the meetings of the church, and upon all the ordinances of the dear Savior, even though we know every day that we cannot bring our minds into a worshipful state. What a blessing it is to be given a desire, and a humble, spiritual determination to spend our years in youth and manhood in the holy service of God, even though we feel more and more how unworthy and unfit we are to engage in that pure service. How good it is to grow up, as it were, in the family of God. How great a blessing it is to have the wish in our poor hearts that we might subordinate all worldly things to the things of the Spirit; that we might truly rejoice in our youth, while it lasts, not by indulging in vain amusements or selfish works, but in acts of devotion to the Lord; in speaking of his goodness and talking of his power; in helping the needy, and in doing what we find to do in our earthly lot in the fear and love of God. We may well seek the Lord in this way, and may well hope that he will be found of us, unworthy and unprofitable as we are, and that he will lead us in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

To one who has been favored to feel in some degree in his heart and to manifest in his life the power of the Preacher's words, the days of advancing age will not be regarded as evil. It will still be true that infirmities will be felt, and natural pleasures will fail, but this will not be esteemed as a loss, for the spiritual things of the kingdom of God, which have occupied his mind in youth and manhood, are still his chief joy. Though he may rise up startled at the voice of the bird, and may feel the grasshopper to be a burden, and the keepers of his tabernacle to tremble, and may see the almond tree flourishing, and realize that he is very soon going to his long home, yet he will not feel that he is going away from things of value, for he feels the tokens of God's love in his soul, and that has long been the one thing of real value to him. That love sometimes, even now, makes him return to the days of his youth, so that his flesh is fresher than a child's.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., August 7, 1906.

JANUARY 18, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—My eyesight being very poor this last summer, I failed to read all the numbers of the SIGNS. Not long ago I read your editorial in the August 15th number, in which you say that prayer and exhortation and the commandments are not inconsistent with the predestination of God. You do not know how much I have enjoyed reading it. Since reading it, so much has passed through my mind that I have felt deeply impressed to write, but as it would be in opposition to many

whom I regard as the dear children of God, I have feared that I ought not; but to relieve my mind I will write and send it to you, asking you, as I have before, to carefully examine it to see whether it is truth. I want what is published from my pen to honor and extol our God, to declare his holiness and sovereignty, his omnipotent power and his sovereign right to rule over the work of his own hands, and to abase poor, sinful man in deep humility.

I want to ask some questions. The Bible says that his people were chosen in the furnace of affliction. Was Adam afflicted before he fell? What need had he before he fell for that grace which God gave in Christ before the world began, which was given according to his eternal purpose? For it is said that we were chosen according to his own purpose and grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Must we not believe that when his choice was made, and that in affliction, too, he also predestinated to allow Satan to cause the transgression, in order to carry out his eternal purpose? Must we not believe that he ordained our weakness when he gave us that grace before time was? And must we not believe also that it was not that he merely foresaw that we would be weak, and so provided grace, but that we were chosen according to his purpose and grace? And being chosen in the furnace of affliction shows that all our afflictions were ordained before the foundation of the world. Our God also ordained before the foundation of the world all the exhortations and admonitions. One of them is to "humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God." Poor, vile and sinful as we are, what will humble us more than to contemplate the majesty and holiness of God? He has a holy and sovereign right to do as he pleases with the works of his own hand, and none dare say unto him, "What doest thou?" Paul spoke often of his grace, and of that eternal life which God that cannot lie promised before the world began. He saw the purpose of God as it was being carried out, and yet he also could say, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" O no, no, dear brother, let us lay our hands on our mouths and prostrate ourselves in the dust and own our guilt. We are just as guilty before God as Pharaoh was when God hardened his heart that he should not let Israel go. We dare not say that God was the author of the sin in the case of Pharaoh. Who that has that grace in his heart which God gave him in Christ before the world began, and a precious hope of eternal life which God promised before the world began, would ever think of charging our God with being the author of sin in predestinating and in carrying out such a purpose as that which gave us eternal life and a sweet hope in Christ? Paul said concerning Jacob and Esau, "That the purpose of God according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger." Again, he said, "Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid." Yes, his holiness and his sovereignty forbid that there should be unrighteousness with him. Read the ninth chapter of Romans. Paul knew that some would say, "Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" and in reply silenced them and upheld the right of our God to do as it pleases him. How sweetly he harmonizes these with other Scriptures, such as,

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world." Then let us lay our hands upon our mouth and say, We have uttered things we understood not. Let us ever be willing to suffer with Jesus.

June 2nd.—I will now resume this writing. I remember a text taken by my beloved cousin, Simeon F. Riggs, which seems to be connected with what I have written above, some months ago; it reads as follows: "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." While he spoke beautifully from it, I remembered that it was written that we were chosen in the furnace of affliction, chosen to suffer with Jesus. Blessed Jesus! Blessed purpose of God which has worked out for us a far more exceeding weight of glory! And he predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself. Some whom I esteem as dear saints, and concerning whom therefore I would speak in love and deep humility, say that God foreknew, and therefore prepared a remedy, though he did not intend that this that he foreknew should be done. But we read, "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." Would it not cast a reproach upon the omnipotence of God to say that Satan foiled any of his purposes? I believe that God ordained all his commandments, and created his children unto good works, which he hath before ordained that they should walk in them. On the other hand, neither do I like the expression, "Can't help it." This seems too much like a cloak for our wanderings; yet we cannot command of God our spiritual enjoyments when he sees it to be for our good to hide his face from us. But the life that is spiritual within us enables us to fall into the dust at his feet with confession of our guilt. God forbid that we should ever violate his blessed commandments given unto his children. We must not, and if we be true believers in Christ we will not say, I cannot help my transgressions, for God predestinated them. Such language as this will not harmonize with the law of God given to us in Christ. We have many imperfections; even our thoughts are evil if not prompted by divine grace, but we can keep from open and wilful violations of his commandments. Yes, in our darkest seasons we are not dead spiritually, we do cry for grace and mercy to help us in time of need, and I, for one, need his grace every hour, for I know there is no good in myself. But he has promised to give grace to the humble; let us ask his grace to walk in lowliness and humbleness before him as we ought to walk; let us try to honor his blessed name for all that he has done for us; let us be reconciled, as was Paul, to our trials. Did I not believe that God has a holy and wise purpose in all my trials and afflictions, I should surely sink in despair.

Write on, dear brethren and sisters, of your joys and sorrows, doubts and fears; if you were all without them I would be as one alone.

July 11th.—After reading the July 1st number of the SIGNS and enjoying it much, I have concluded to send you what I wrote a long time ago. Now do with it as your faithful judgment dictates, and if it does not harmonize with the teaching of the Bible throw it away. I want to take the SIGNS as long as I live and am able to pay for it. I hope

all the subscribers pay promptly; I know that it must be a great expense to publish a paper, beside all the arduous labor connected with it. May the Lord stand by you all in your work of love.

From a poor, unworthy worm of the dust,

S. B. THOMPSON.

[WE do not think we need say anything further in reply to the questions proposed by sister Thompson, near the beginning of the above excellent letter, than we have already said in the editorials referred to by her. It is sure that all things were predestinated of God before the world was, and it is equally sure that no child of God, as sister Thompson has well said, will ever think of taking shelter for his transgressions behind God's predestination. Adam was not afflicted before he fell, but our God, before the world was, purposed that his elect people should in this world pass through the furnace of trial. It is in this sense that they are said to be chosen in the furnace of affliction. God's purpose was that it should be so.—C.]

WILLOW HILL, Ill., July 3, 1906.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—VERY DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—If the Lord will, I desire to write you a short letter for the SIGNS, if you deem it worthy of space. I have had a desire for some time in my weakness to let you and the dear correspondents and readers of the SIGNS know how I appreciate the doctrine of God our Savior, as presented in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES by its editors and contributors. I am grateful to say that where the SIGNS is read regularly the brethren are established in the faith of God's elect, which is an evidence that it is supported by the grace of God. In weakness I am traveling much of the time now among the Lord's dear people. This summer I have visited many brethren in northern Illinois. The Lord of the kingdom has wonderfully blessed me in building me up, I hope, on our most holy faith. The kindness and brotherly love the dear brethren and sisters have manifested to me I shall never forget. The brethren whom I have met are earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints. I desire to say that my faith and only hope is still in the Lord, and in viewing the future I only view Christ as my all, for he is all things to his people; he is Head over all things to the church. I feel the need of him every moment of my life, for without him I am nothing, yes, less than nothing, and vanity. How I desire to be kept humble at the feet of Jesus, and esteem my brethren and sisters better than myself, for I am the least one in God's kingdom, if one at all. I know if I am thus kept it must be by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. My experience teaches me that I have no power or ability of myself to direct my course through life, but I look unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith, to keep me in the way, for he is "the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Again, "There is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved." "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." When he bowed his head on the cross, and said, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost, the work his Father gave him to do was completed, and that was

to save his people from their sins. The angel said, "He shall save his people from their sins." A positive declaration. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." He was the surety of his people, therefore he could legally come and suffer and die to redeem them from under the curse of the law, being made a curse for them, for it is written, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." His people had sold themselves for naught, were ten thousand talents in debt, and not one farthing to pay; their sentence was death. Our Savior had power to lay down his life for us, and he had power to take it again. He said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." He satisfied divine justice, fulfilled the demands of the law, made full atonement for our sins. His blood was shed for sin, for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. He was buried in the tomb, and the Jews made sure that they would keep his body there, but blessed assurance, he had power to take his life again. He rose again for our justification, hence in his resurrection the first sheaf of the harvest was secured, which secures the whole harvest. "Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." Well can the poet say,

"Jesus paid it all;
All to him we owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow."

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved: in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." All chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began were chosen to the end that they should be holy and without blame before God the Father in love. They were represented in him when he was made an offering for sin, and at the appointed time of the Father they are quickened into divine life, are given repentance and forgiveness of sins, and by grace walk in newness of life. "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." They have no pleasure in sin and folly, but they desire to go home to their friends and tell them how great things they hope the Lord has done for them; they do not feel to tell what great things they are doing for the Lord, as men of the world claim they are doing, but confess their sins, and by the eye of faith view Christ as their Savior, giving him all the glory and praise for their redemption, for "Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."

Now in conclusion, "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." To deny the resurrection is to deny the resurrection of Christ. For, "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, [as some claim] then

is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." This is the hope of God's dear people, "which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered," and is at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for us, according to the will of God. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

Your brother in hope,

MARION BARTLEY.

HAMPSTEAD, Md., April, 1906.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—It is a long time since I received your cheering words of Jesus and his love, of Jesus and his glory. "Bring forth the royal diadem and crown him Lord of all." I seem to be quietly resting under his banner of love; still there comes a feeling stealing over me, How can you rest when you are so unlike what you ought to be? Then I am carried back to the time when I would be in so much sorrow through being overcome by my daily trials, not knowing whither to go, and I would find that I had been looking to self, instead of to the true source of comfort. The words that have left the deepest impression on me are, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" I feel that these are wonderful words to be given to such a poor, finite creature as I, but O how encouraging and comforting! Although darkness overshadows us for a time, the Sun of righteousness is shining just the same, but we need a little darkness that we may more enjoy the return of light. I feel that I ought to say each day, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." "For his mercy endureth forever." True, my earthly blessings are comparatively few, but what are the blessings of this life when compared with life eternal? to be with Christ, who died for us, that we might be like him and dwell with him forevermore. The foretaste is sweet, but the reality is more than we can conceive, and is a free gift from Love divine. "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!" &c. I had some sweet meditation this winter upon the words, "God is my strength and power: and he maketh my way perfect." I think you know my thoughts better than I can express them, for it seems I never can find words to express my feelings, and then the evil one tells me I have no feelings to express. I was reading this morning about Gideon requiring a sign from the Lord, that he might know he was with him, and just so it is to-day; how often we ask for an assurance that we are his, and that he is with us. As we stray into byways and forbidden paths, we must be scourged, but we desire to feel that his loving-kindness is not withdrawn; we know that he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and this is why the sons of Jacob are not consumed. I enjoy reading the Old Testament, but there is so much that I cannot understand; I believe there is a spiritual meaning in it all, and how much comfort can be given to the weak ones when the beauty of just a few words, such as the "Scarlet Line," is brought to view by those who are endowed with that precious gift. As I was reading your reflections on, "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not," to my surprise I

was the subject that had asked these comforting reflections of both humiliation and exaltation—self abased and Jesus exalted, and I must again say I cannot express the comfort I received. I was writing to the church and I spoke of it; for after having passed through twenty years of joys and sorrows, and when almost on the verge of despair still was upheld by his loving hand, I was now brought back to the time of my first love. Could we both (and all) rejoice together if it were not a reality? God grant that it may strengthen us to rest in that sweet love as of old, though sin does beset us on every side. I thought, too, how much good is done when we forget not to communicate one with another. I often wonder how you can write so much; (but I am so frail in every way I guess is why the task appears so great) you are surely blessed to write to the comfort of so many, and I think it is a help to keep the evil one at bay. Yes, I desired much to see you and family, but it was not God's will. I had the pleasure of being at brother Ensor's in August, when Elder Rowe and wife were there, and the Elder preached twice. Brother Kelley and family have been very kind to me, they took me to the all day meeting at Black Rock last May, and to hear our pastor this fall, and I purpose going with them the first Sunday in May. I do enjoy it so much; if I cannot retain the words, I think I do the substance, and it is so kind in all of them to give me the SIGNS, while I have nothing but love to give in return, but hope they may all receive that blessing which none but God can give. I enjoy it all; sister Bloomfield's letters are beautiful; I do thank Elder True for sharing them with us. I write but little, and therefore receive but few letters. I would have loved to have heard Elder Rowe speak from my favorite hymn: "Amazing grace!"

Perhaps I have written you the same as I did when I wrote you last, but you know it is the same old, old story. This writing reminds me of hymn 518.

Love to all.

GEORGIA D. ENGLAND.

MUIRKIRK, Canada, June 3, 1906.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I have the consent of our dear sister to have the inclosed letter published. Many times I have read it with a feeling that the cool, refreshing waters from the streams of that city that John saw were refreshing my thirsty soul. Kindly insert the letter if you think it best. You need not publish this request, as I feel it would be crowding better matter out. May the God of peace rule in our hearts, and may we be kept in his fear and in his love, for he alone can turn man to destruction, and again he can say, "Return." He speaks and it is done. The words, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you," and Isaiah liv. 8, came with power and much comfort to me lately.

In christian fellowship, I hope to look to the hills from whence our help cometh.

(MRS.) D. T. GILLIS.

APPIN, Ont., May 14, 1905.

MRS. JESSIE GILLIS—DEAR SISTER IN HOPE OF LIFE BEYOND THE GRAVE:—It is with a feeling of fear and much trembling I thus address the dear children of God, I am such a vile, weak worm of the dust; and it is in much weakness and trembling I attempt to answer your very welcome letter of some time ago, with the letter inclosed from sister Bessie Durand. I have so much enjoyed her letters in times past, and I did enjoy both your

letters very much, they seem to tell much of my feelings better than I can myself. I have been feeling so cold and dead in regard to spiritual things that I delayed writing, hoping that I would be enabled to write something of interest to you, but the longer I wait the worse I seem to be. I know that in myself there dwells no good thing, and I am continually made to say, O Lord, without thee I can do nothing.

It is sixteen years ago this May meeting that I was received into the church. Our May meeting was then on the first Sunday, and was changed to the second a year or two afterward. It was on Monday morning as the meeting was closing, when the people all started out of the house I thought I must go, too, but I had not strength enough to leave my seat; I had to stay, though so unworthy, and I could only tell them so very little, and to my surprise they received me, poor and worthless as I was, and I am no better now, more vile and ignorant every day that I live. My daily cry is, "Lord save me." That was the meeting it was arranged for me to stay at home and attend shop, but I could not stay, it seemed as though my heart would break if I could not get there. Saturday afternoon I started, and reached Elder Pollard's about 4:30, but was too late for that meeting, so I stayed all night there; I wanted to hear the company talk, but I did not want them to notice that I was listening. Dear Elder Bundy, who is now dead, was there, also Elder Wyman. My sisters who went to the meeting were very much annoyed at me for not telling them how badly I wanted to go, but I could not, I felt if they wanted to go as badly as I did I could not keep them home. I was not baptized till the time of the June meeting, and O how I was tempted. I had scarcely gotten home when I felt I had been deceived and had deceived the church. I cannot find words to describe the distress of my mind; I could not eat or sleep for days at a time; I wished I would die before the time arrived to be baptized, and when I came up to the June meeting I thought, Now I will and must tell the church that I have been deceived and have deceived them, but I could not do that. O the distress of my soul; all day everything was darkness around me. Then I wished that when Elder Pollard would take me into the water I would be drowned, if I were not a fit subject for baptism. As I stood by the water waiting till he was ready for me I was as helpless as an infant, I would have fallen to the ground if they had not held me up, and everything around to me was as black as midnight; but as he took my hand to lead me into the water, strength was given me, and I was able to walk, but the darkness still remained, and did till the next morning; when I went out of doors then everything was changed, everything was praising the dear Lord for his loving-kindness and tender mercy; this remained several hours. I thought at that time I would not be troubled any more on account of sin, but we had only started to the meeting-house when I was again in great distress. It came to me as if some one had spoken: "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself." Pen cannot describe the bitter anguish of my soul, and at the time of communion I did wish it would choke me if I were not a fit subject.

Well, you are having lovely weather for the May meeting; I hope you and your family are all in health and able to be there, and that you will all be blessed

with a hearing ear and understanding heart. I am not strong enough to attend the meeting this year, but hope to be able to attend the June meeting if all is well. Much of the time I am traveling in darkness, still I cannot give up the little hope that seems almost to be gone. I cannot dread death, (however it will be with me at the last moment) I have no desire for my health to be restored, but a longing desire that my journey here on earth will soon be at an end. I cannot but say, O Lord,

"Should sudden vengeance seize my breath,
I must pronounce thee just in death;
And if my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well."

I am not as well this spring as I was most of the winter. I do not want to complain of my lot here, for I feel that all these afflictions are for my good. Hymn No. 192 is and has been a great comfort to me, and many others, but this one is very sweet to me now. If it is my happy lot to see Jesus as he is, and be like him, I shall be satisfied.

Write to me again if you feel a desire. Much love to you and your family. Give my love to the friends in Muirkirk and Duart, especially Deacon Campbell and his wife, also Deacon Gillis and wife.

Your very little sister, if one at all,

BESSIE BATEMAN.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 17, 1906.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—Having returned from the afternoon meeting at Salem Old School Baptist Church, and feeling a sense of great thankfulness and praise to our God because of the love which he has given me for spiritual things, and for the fellowship which he has given me for all the dear brethren and sisters that rejoice in a complete salvation through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who are taught (each one) by the same Spirit, and together speak forth his praise, I feel like attempting to write to you, and as I do so I wonder, Is it from my natural ambition, or is it for the praise of God? I am aware that our God knows all the thoughts of our hearts, and nothing can be hidden from him; he also knows all the longings to be kept from the evil that so easily besets us in thought, word and deed; he knows all our mourning on account of sin, and all our prayers before we utter them. We may deceive the visible church, but we cannot deceive God; neither are we mindful of him until quickened by his Spirit, for, "Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Thus "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."

I question so often, "Why was I made to hear his voice?" I thought after receiving a hope that I could easily tell it to those around me, it seemed to me so wonderful and so plain. I had not read that "they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." Christ has said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." Nothing but the voice of Jesus can speak peace to the soul, or tell us all things that ever we have done, as he did to the woman of Samaria. Thus we have sorrows as well as joys.

My wife came before the church at the Saturday meeting, before the second Sunday in this month, at Southampton, Pa., and was received for baptism, but as Elder Durand was not very well the baptism was deferred till the second Sunday in April. Thus it is "one of a city, and two of a family." "And the Lord added

to the church daily such as should be saved." We finite creatures need not be exercised as to what is the purpose of God, but rest secure in this, that he doeth all things well, and that they that are his shall be manifest in the day of his power. I have felt ever since I was baptized last June that the Lord had begun a work in her heart, so my rejoicing has extended over all that time. She said, before I was brought to the church, that she had prayed for me, and that now I should pray for her, as she felt she could no longer pray. Also when I was at the communion she saw me in the fold and herself shut out; the world does not see it in this way. My joy is no greater than when I heard sister Lee, at Salem Church, relate her experience, or sister Savidge, at Southampton. This verifies our Savior's words, that there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage, but that all are one in Christ Jesus, and our joy is complete in him. I can say that the Lord has lifted me far above all worldly troubles, and made me to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and his banner over me is love. It is only by the grace of God that I am what I am. He has created in me a love (which is not of this world) for all those who worship God in spirit and in truth. This love, which is the very Spirit of Christ in us the hope of glory, binds and cements our hearts as one, so that we rejoice when we are assembled together and hear the name of Jesus exalted above all others, and sing, making melody in our hearts in praise to his great name for all that he has done for us. "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." May we all be kept in the power of his love, while on our earthly pilgrimage, and may his love produce all good works, and lead us to give all honor and glory to his great name.

Your brother in hope,

J. M. FENTON.

PALESTINE, Texas, April, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST, AS I HOPE:—I have it in mind to write you a letter, as I have never written you before. I hardly know how to begin, but will start in this way: I am not a subscriber to the SIGNS, but have read it from a little boy; my father has been taking the paper many years, and I can get and read it whenever I choose. The doctrine advocated by the writers of the SIGNS is the doctrine taught by Christ and the apostles, if I am any judge of what the Bible teaches, but I am afraid I know nothing as I ought. Eleven years have nearly passed since I went before the church and told the brethren something of the way in which I had been led, and they received me for baptism on Sunday morning. It was a joyful time to me when I went to the water, and looking around saw a crowd about me of my companions, and they seemed to be enjoying themselves, but I could only say, Farewell, vain world, and all my old associates. From that time up to this I have been separated from them, and may God keep me so, for I am sure to go astray if not kept by his power.

My brethren, go on and earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints; tell them that God hath done all things well; tell them that God hath saved his people with an everlasting salvation, and that before the world began he predestinated and purposed to save his people from their sins by the death of his Son. Not only that, but also tell them that all things were made by him

and for him; even Satan cannot go anywhere or do anything contrary to the everlasting purpose of God; he made the wicked for the day of evil; he makes peace and creates evil; he forms the light and creates darkness. Some will say, This will make God the Creator and Former of all things. Well, the Bible says so, too. I love the doctrine that God is before all things, and that by him all things consist, whether things visible or invisible. I love the doctrine that our God works all things after the counsel of his own will. Yes, my dear brethren, there is nothing comes to pass but what our God predestinated it. There is nothing that hath power of itself, "the powers that be are ordained of God." I believe that he hath all power, and that therefore he does his pleasure in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. It seems the time has come when those who believe this doctrine ought to let it be known, for many have departed from the right way. Moreover, brethren, as you see the day approaching, stand firm, trusting that he will make a way of escape for you. There are many who do not receive this, and count it hard doctrine; it is a rock that breaks their teeth. That rock is Christ, the Son of the everlasting Father; he is as one brought up with his Father. Were not his people with him? Yes, they were chosen in Christ before time began. Then at the predestinated time they are born in the world through ordinary generation, just as are others. Christ stood as a lamb before the foundation of the world, slain for them, to redeem them and save them from their sins. To do this he took part of that flesh and blood of which his people are partakers.

I have not written as I thought I would when I began, and perhaps have written more than I should have done; it seems like myself, fit for nothing. I often fear that I am deceived, and that I will deceive others, but my desire is that God will undeceive me if deceived, that I may not pass away a deceiver. If you think this is of any worth, you may give it a place in the SIGNS, but if not, cast it aside, I leave it to your judgment. It is the first time I have ever written with consent for it to be published.

I remain your brother in hope,

T. O. BELL.

CANANDAIGUA, Mich., May 13, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I submit a letter I received so opportunely that it seems to me worthy of a place in the SIGNS. How precious letters are that come, like this, when one feels forsaken yet not destroyed, when he is just discussing the possibility or probability of his having to close this poor life alone. Brother Mouser has always seemed to me an example of meekness, patience, honesty, goodness and godliness, and I have greatly desired that I might also as worthily adorn the doctrine I have professed for forty-three years, and tried to preach for thirty-seven years feebly, yet boldly in all its purity and assurance, based on experience and the testimony of the word of God.

A. B. BREES.

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio, April 6, 1906.

DEAR BROTHER BREES:—It has been so long since I heard from you that I will try to write a little to let you know I have not forgotten you. I feel worried because of the many things that I do not do and the many things that I do. I feel very lonely, and would like to see you much. I would like to write to your comfort, but feel too poor and ignorant

to do so. I feel unworthy of the fellowship of the people of God; it seems to me if they could see and know me just as I am they could not bear with my imperfections; the total depravity of man in my case is full weight or measure, it seems. Paul says, "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." What great and wonderful things we see in the blessed Savior as our hope, our life, our redemption. He is to his people all that they ever have or ever will need, a complete Savior, an all-wise, all-powerful, unchangeable God, the Creator and Ruler of the universe. O how thankful I ought to be for all his benefits. His mercy endureth forever. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." Different from any that can be given by any man, or the world. The apostle says, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; * * * always bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body."

These few lines seem poorly arranged, but it is all I could write you. Write soon.

Your brother, I hope, in the Lord,

D. MOUSER.

ROSWELL, Ga., May 25, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK:—It has been my happy lot to be a reader of the SIGNS ever since 1898. In ordering the book "Feast of Fat Things," from Benton L. Beebe, I expressed my desire to have the SIGNS, which advocates the doctrine that I believe to be the gospel of Jesus Christ, and I have received it regularly ever since, with the exception of a few numbers lost or misplaced in the mail, and being unable to pay for it I wrote you a statement a few days ago, and (unexpectedly to me) you had it published in the SIGNS, and a dear child of God read it and sent me a check to help pay for the paper, which I now send to you, also a small amount beside, which is all I can do at present, on account of sickness. You do not know what a comfort the paper has been to me in my loneliness, it has been a help to me to bear my afflictions, and to rejoice in the salvation of God's children by grace and grace alone. The Scriptures plainly teach that unregenerate man is under the law of sin and death, that he is walking according to the course of this world, and is by nature a child of wrath, until the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes him free from the law of sin and death, or until the Lord shines in his heart to give him the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. Then he is delivered from the law, that being dead wherein he was held, that he should serve in newness of spirit and not in the oldness of the letter. When ye were the servants of sin ye were free from righteousness, that is, ye were not under the law of grace, but now being made free from sin ye became the servants of God. No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost; no man knoweth "the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Here now are two kingdoms and two kings, one for each kingdom. The prince of the power of the air rules in the kingdom of this world, and Jesus Christ rules in his kingdom, and it is impossible to pass from one kingdom to the

other without being translated from the power of the one to the power of the other; this translation is by birth. The fruit of the kingdom of this world is adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, &c., but the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance, of which I only get a glance once in awhile, which is very refreshing to a soul hungering and thirsting after righteousness. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)." "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" In my affliction I find comfort in the persuasion of Paul, for he said he was "persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Will you please forgive me for trespassing on your time? I felt that I wanted to write to you and tell you that I would like to have a letter from you if you can afford to write to one as sinful as I am.

Yours in love,

G. R. JOHNSON.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., July 4, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS:—I herewith send a letter to you for publication from sister Wright, of California. It will hardly be necessary for me to state that I had written her to come this way and we would attend the eastern associations together. After receiving the letter I thought to make the trip alone, but the way looked long and lonely to me, and as I could find no one in Texas who would go even a part of the way, I finally decided to remain here. How much I did wish to be with you (at Middletown especially) you can never know. My heart was with you all through the three days of the association, and I scarcely thought of anything else during the time. It did look as though I might have gone after getting ready, but the Lord willed otherwise, and here I am at Elder Sawin's lovely home in Kentucky.

I had the pleasure of meeting Elder McConnell here last Saturday and Sunday, and heard him preach both days at Bethel Church, very much to my comfort. I have felt ever since that a refreshing shower had fallen and the dew of heaven had been distilled, a calm, peaceful rest has taken possession of me, and I feel revived. I felt while he was preaching that surely the Lord had given him a message for me and led me hither to receive it. The Lord's way is not our way, had I gone east perhaps I would have received no message; all good preaching is not messages. My visit here was most unexpected; I had purposed to visit a sister in Ohio who wrote me a pressing invitation, and seeing the appointments for Elder McConnell I decided to stop off and attend them. My visit with the dear ones so far has been very pleasant. Surely the Lord has blessed me all my days, my lines have fallen in pleasant places.

I will attend meetings at Turners Saturday and Sunday, and then go on to Campbellstown, Ohio, for a few weeks visit. I expect to attend the two associations in this State, in September, on my return south.

Will you please give this space in our

family paper, so the loved ones scattered over the land may know of my whereabouts?

Lovingly your sister,

L. C. RAY.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., April 16, 1906.

DEAR SISTER RAY:—Just a few lines to-night to let you know that I will not be able to accompany you on your eastern trip, but my best wishes will go with you, and I shall think of you all, of the feasts which will be spread before you, and in my heart there will be great regret because I cannot be with you. If you see dear Elder Chick, tell him that I was always a Baptist, but that my short acquaintance with him greatly strengthened my faith; he is a dear, good man. And should you meet Elder Joseph Badger, say to him that you heard from me, and that I send him greeting in the Lord. He baptized me five years ago, and I love him for the truth's sake; indeed, I love all the brethren, and I am glad of it, for it encourages the hope that I have passed from death unto life.

I hope that you may have a safe journey, and that you may be fed bountifully from the King's table. When you return, if you can spare the time, I would be pleased if you would give me an account of you travels; what preachers you met, and tell me if the gospel sound is the same east as you heard in Washington, Oregon and Idaho last year.

Will close, with much love for you, and a great desire to go with you.

BESSIE WRIGHT.

MEARSVILLE, Va., Feb. 12, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—My time to pay for the SIGNS again has arrived, and with pleasure I renew. I have often desired to write a little of the way in which I hope the Lord has led me. My parents were Old School Baptists. My father died when I was about seven years of age. I had serious thoughts about death and the eternal inheritance from my earliest recollection. When a child I was full of life and natural spirits and very wilful and wayward. I thought that I could do better at any time, and that I would do so when I grew older. At twelve years of age my troubles began to increase, but I would go out with my playmates and try to be as joyous as any of them, for I did not want any of them to know my feelings. I traveled on in this way until in my eighteenth year. I was alone one Sunday, and I thought I would go to my room and try to sleep. After I lay down such a fear came over me that I felt if I went to sleep I should never wake again. I tried to pray for mercy. What to do I did not know. All was dark and dreadful around. O how vain were all my attempts to pray.

I was about nineteen years of age when my trouble left me, but I cannot tell the time or place. At times I would feel peaceful and happy, but I was afraid that I was deceived; my prayer was, Lord, if I am deceived, undeceive me. I was at a revival meeting once where they gave an invitation for any who felt their sins forgiven to rise and tell the people; I was almost persuaded to do so, when these words came to me, "Be still, and know that I am God." I did rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, but I did not have any desire to mingle with them.

The first sermon I ever enjoyed was preached by Elder Chick; he spoke of christian experience, and described my feelings better than I could myself. I thought, How strange it is! I had been hearing Old School Baptists all my life,

but I thought he preached different from any one that I ever heard. I tried to read the Bible, and it seemed to teach the doctrine of the Old School Baptists, but still I did not want to be one of them. I wandered around for a long time, but at last was made willing in the day of his power. My desire became so great to be baptized that it was my thought by day and my dream by night. The spirit was willing but the flesh was weak. I was baptized on the third Sunday in September, 1888. I felt then that the Lord was my Shepherd and that I should not want, but I find that when I would do good, evil is present with me. It is said in the Scriptures, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I can truly say that I love the brethren and the things that I once hated. This is the year for the association at our place, and I hope that we may be blessed to have a good meeting. If it be the will of God, may we all meet to worship him who changes not.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

M. A. SOMERS.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., July 5, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, AND ALL THE DEAR PEOPLE OF GOD:—I received the SIGNS two days ago; it is the second since my subscription, and I can truly say that I love it and the good people who write for it. As I read the experience of many of them it seems as though they relate my own case exactly. I feel the most unworthy of all, and this is, I hope, for my good. I have been a member with the dear Primitive Baptists nearly three years. A great many times, and in fact most of the time, I fear that I am mistaken, and that I did wrong in offering myself to the church, but still I am at times much comforted when I think over that time. I believe fully that there is a God, and that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; I believe that he knows all things, and has all power. It is a comfort to believe that the most high God would not suffer my name to remain on the church book of Sardis Church, in Alabama, or upon any other, if it were not right in his sight. I think often that my mind is not on him enough. We all have different stations in life, and we must and will perform the things which he puts upon us. I do thank God that I love the Primitive Baptists; they are primitive indeed, their worship is according to the Scriptures of the New Testament.

Very often I start for the meetings feeling heavy at heart, and afraid that my heart is too stony to be touched, but when I get there and meet the dear brethren and sisters, and take them by the hand, I can feel that there is union, and my heart softens. When preaching is finished it often seems as though all the rough roads through life are cleared, and that I will never feel downcast again, but this will pass away, and how downcast I will again feel. But is not this for the best? Did not Jesus our Lord suffer when he was in this world? Did he not say the world would hate us, because it hated him? Should not this be of comfort to us, who trust that we are the people of the Lord, who is all powerful, and ever to be adored? I say us, for I hope that I am included in the people of his grace. O how I wish and yearn to know more of him, but we can know these mysteries only as it is his will to reveal them to us. In my prayers to God I often feel to ask him to be merciful to me, and that I may grow to know more of his love, and that I may be able to speak of it to his praise. When

I look at the people of God, and read their writings, I feel that they have a better gift than I have, but I do not envy them. Rather, it makes me feel glad to see them so strong in the love of God, but I do wish that I could possess the love that they seem to have. At this writing I have a heaviness of heart, but still there is a thankful feeling, I believe and hope that God has visited even me, and that his Spirit is, as I hope, directing these words.

I feel that I owe an explanation to the dear people of God with regard to the cause of some of my troubles of mind, so that you may understand why I feel so downcast. The great God above saw fit to take my companion from my side the sixteenth of last February. We had lived in unison together seven years, one month and one day. She was twenty-seven years old when she died. We were of nearly the same age, and were both baptized in the same faith on the same day, by Elder H. Barton, in Big Warrior river, in the fellowship of Sardis Church, the fourth Sunday in Oct., 1904, if I remember rightly, so you see we had a double love for each other. I have two children, a boy of six years, and a baby girl of eight months. It is hard for me, but God knows best, he works all things for good to them that love him, and I hope that I do love him. She has, I believe, gone to that ever bright world, where his Spirit giveth light to all who enter therein.

I will close, asking you all to remember your weak and unworthy brother in your prayers before God.

Yours in hope of a brighter world that is without end,

ODIE L. BROOKS.

McCARLEY, Mississippi.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I feel impressed this morning to write a few lines for publication. The Scripture to which I wish to call attention is the language of our Savior, spoken to his apostles: "Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." These words occur three times in the New Testament Scriptures: Matt. x. 22, Mark xiii. 13, Luke xxi. 17. Those who are familiar with the Scriptures know that the apostles and disciples of Christ have been hated and persecuted by the world since the foundation of the first church, and the reason is obvious, for they testified of the world that the works thereof are evil. There is not, there never was, and cannot be, an effect without a cause; the same cause is productive of the same effect in this age of the world. When we view our surroundings, the great Arminians reign over their subjects with their Sunday Schools and Foreign Mission Boards and Tract Societies and various other schemes, all of which are man-made machines and without scriptural authority, we can but testify against them through the press, in the pulpit and wherever occasion demands; and when we behold their thousands of dupes, who are flocking to them by their false teaching and excitement, we become awe-stricken with wonder and amazement, and are made to cry out, Poor, deluded people! They have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof; from such we are commanded to turn away. Now, my dear brethren, I know that we Old Baptists, or "Hardshells," as we are commonly called, are not popular, and we are proud of it, otherwise we would fear that we were conformed to the world; then let us joy in tribulation and rejoice in persecution, knowing that thereunto we are appointed. There are

but few of us, compared to the world, so let us bear each other's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

I will close, trusting in Christ for the upbuilding of Zion.

Yours in Christ, I hope,

D. D. LODEN.

MASON CITY, Neb., April 18, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Thinking that many of your readers with whom I have had some correspondence in the past would like to hear from us here in central Nebraska, I will try to write a brief sketch.

Enon Old School or Primitive Baptist Church was organized near Mason ten years ago, and Elder Isaiah Waggoner was called as pastor. The present assistant pastor is Elder Smith Ketchum, of Chester, Neb., who has served us faithfully since he was called, about six months ago. The meetings have always been held at private houses, as we have no house of worship, on the third Sunday, and the Saturday preceding, each month. During the past year we have had the testimony of Elders C. M. Cooper, of York, John Chapman, of Bee, E. M. Keeney, of Table Rock, and Smith Ketchum, of Chester, Neb., all testifying to the same firm foundation of our hope, salvation by grace. We are at peace, and always hungry for the gospel.

Yours in a precious hope,

J. M. AMSBERRY.

MAYFIELD Ky., Sept. 4, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK:—The Bureau of Statistics at Washington, D. C., has written me to give, or assist in getting up a report of our denomination in the United States. Now if it were requested through our papers that each clerk or moderator of each association would send a minute to me at Mayfield, Ky., R. F. D. No. 5, I could collect from their minutes the statistics and make a report. I will send a copy of this to each one of our papers published in the United States and get them to request each clerk or moderator to send one copy of the latest minutes to me, so the statistics can be compiled. Now if this would suit as the best way, put in a request in some convenient place in your paper, and urge the propriety of a speedy return of the minutes, as it is wanted before the year closes. Congress has made it the duty of the Bureau to collect the statistics of all denominations, and I would like for our people to be correctly reported.

Yours in hope,

J. M. PERKINS.

[WE think well of the above suggestion, and hope our clerks will respond without delay.—ED.]

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER J. B. Slauson has changed his address from Vega, N. Y., to Halcottsville, Delaware Co., N. Y., and wishes those who desire to communicate with him by letter or telephone to address him at the latter place.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1906.

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EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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PROMISE.

THE word occurs about one hundred and twenty times in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. These embrace promises made by man to men, and those made by men to God in a few instances, but chiefly they are promises of God to men. Of these latter there are more than one hundred used in the Scriptures, and embrace promises of temporal and spiritual blessings. We read of the holy promise, of a looking for the promise by men, of the promise of an eternal inheritance, of the promise of the kingdom, of exceeding great and precious promises, of the children of the promise, of the heirs of the promise and of sealing with the Holy Spirit of promise, that these are sure.

Beside the places in which the word "promise" occurs in the Scriptures, there are hundreds of places in which promises are made, but without the use of that word. Future blessings are again and again spoken of and promised, and these places are to be numbered with the promises of God also. These, as we suppose, no one has ever taken the pains to number, and they all are embraced among the exceeding great and precious promises of the Lord.

Under the old covenant many promises were conditional, but these conditional promises always related to the things that belonged to the dealings of God with Israel as his typical people. The promises which were conditional related to temporal blessings only; this one thing ought always to be borne in mind. Under the old covenant made with Israel, whereby they were distinguished from all the nations of the earth beside, there were no promises of eternal life or salvation conditioned upon anything required of them in the way of obedience. Emphatically the blessings were blessings in basket and store, and the curses were also of the same kind. If they were willing and obedient they should eat the good of the land, if they were disobedient they should experience drought, and famine, and pestilence, and the sword. It was not then true, and it never has been true, that the promise of the eternal inheritance has depended upon the obedience of men. Many men have made a sad mistake in supposing that the dealings of God with that ancient people related to salvation from sin, and death, and hell; not one word of that kind occurs among all the blessings and curses announced to that people; but there were promises, even under that covenant, which were unconditional. Such was the promise given to Abraham, that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed; also that his seed should inherit the land of Canaan. Of these promises Paul says that the law, given four hundred years afterward, could not disannul them, so as to make them of no effect. The history of that chosen people shows that they forfeited all right to the conditional promises by constant disobedience, but they could not forfeit the unconditional promises of God. All that depended upon their obedience failed, but all that de-

pended upon the simple word and promise of God did not fail. That people was placed under trial to show how weak and vain is that hope that is based upon the righteousness of men. Man has been a failure all along the line: Adam was a failure, so far as keeping the command of God was concerned; Israel was a failure in the same way, and we all are failures when our own strength is considered. This constant failure was needful to prepare the way and show the necessity of the coming of him in whom there is no failure. There has been no failure in God, who gave the promise of the eternal inheritance through the obedience and merit of the Lord Jesus Christ his Son. Gospel promises, or the promises which are in Christ Jesus, are not conditional; that is, they are not dependent upon the obedience of men for their fulfillment. These promises are not yea and nay, but yea and amen in Christ Jesus, and they are unto the glory of God through his people. The words "yea and amen" mean here that they are not doubtful, that they do not depend upon uncertainties in any way. The words mean that all these promises are altogether certain of fulfillment, and they are thus certain because they are in Christ. All the promises that may be made by men are uncertain, in them all we must remember to say, If the Lord will. His will must and does govern all, and all the promises of God are sure of fulfillment, since he possesses all power, and is of one mind, so that none can turn him. All that God requires in order to the bestowment of all spiritual blessings has been fulfilled in Christ. If the fulfillment of any of his promises depends upon possessing perfect righteousness, then we have that righteousness in our Lord Jesus Christ; he, of God, has been made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. It is true beyond all question that the bestowment of all the promises of God are to the righteous, and to the righteous only; but all that constitutes any man righteous before God is found in Christ Jesus, and he did fulfill all righteousness, therefore the promises in him are sure. Nothing either great or small remains for us to do to inherit any and all heavenly blessings, since Jesus has done all for us, and it is because he has done all that the law of God requires that the promises in him are to us unconditional and sure. No language could express this more forcibly than that of the apostle to which we have already alluded, viz: "All the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God by us."

Our God has promised his children in this life many things, some of them are joyful and some are the things that belong to the furnace of affliction. These are also unconditional in the sense that they do not depend upon human merit or human obedience. Job's friends made the mistake of thinking that his afflictions were given him because somehow he was a great transgressor. They did not know how he had transgressed, but in some way they thought he must have done so, and so they held out to him steadfastly the admonition to improve his way of living as the condition of relief from his sufferings. We know that they were altogether mistaken from the narrative itself, and Job knew that they were mistaken, and said, "Miserable comforters are ye all," "physicians of no value." He also felt that if their contention had been correct, they had not by any exhortation of theirs helped him any, since he was without strength. "How hast thou helped him that is without

power?" he said. His afflictions were not in the least degree because he needed chastisement on account of transgression, this we know from the narrative, but his afflictions were for the trial of the faith that was in him, and to prove that there was such a thing as pure and unselfish service of God in the hearts and lives of his people.

The pathway of obedience in this life may prove to be the pathway of thorns, and persecutions, and oppressions; the most careful souls have sometimes been the most burdened ones. Happiness, as we judge happiness, does not always accompany a life of constant service, the most zealous and earnest souls, those who have labored more abundantly than their companions, often are most tempted, and tried, and sorrowful, because of temptation and doubt and fear. We have found it so in our observation after nearly forty years of association with our brethren in Christ. On the other hand, it has been true in our observation, not always, but at times, that those who have walked afar from God have seemed not to be greatly troubled with anything; they have been at ease in Zion. Paul did not say, If we sow to the flesh, we shall reap sorrow, but "we shall reap corruption," and sorrow is not corruption; rather sorrow is the beginning of holiness. He did not say, If we sow to the Spirit, we shall reap happiness, but rather "life everlasting." We reap the same thing that we sow. The conclusion from all this seems to us to be that not only is the obedience something to praise and thank God for, but also the happiness is his free gift which we do not earn or deserve. The afflictions and sorrows of the way are sometimes his best blessings, for they work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. We have not meant to say that there is no blessing in obedience, but rather that the blessing may not be what we call happy feelings, but deeper and richer experiences of that grace which can only be known by coming into more terrible experience of our own vileness of heart and life. This is the way in which we grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Our hope is based upon the promises of God; hope relates always to the future. What we have in possession we do not and cannot hope for. This is as the apostle teaches us: "Hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" And so the promises always are for the future; that is, we mean when uttered or given they are for the future. What we have received is beyond any promise. Promises are for what we desire and have not yet received. When a promise is fulfilled it ceases to be a promise. Hundreds of promises are given in the Old Testament, which were fulfilled afterwards to Israel, but chiefly we call attention to the multiplied promises of the coming in human flesh of the true Messiah; hundreds of years afterwards they were fulfilled, as we know, God did not fail in all this good word of promise. Again, daily are we receiving the fulfillment of some of the good promises of God, but that which we have received is no longer a promise to us. Some of the promises of the gospel are continuous promises; that is, they are for all our life here below; for instance, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." It was so yesterday, it is so to-day, and the promise continues good, and assures us that it shall be so to-morrow. "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," is another continuous promise. This promise is now, not for the days that are past, but for the coming time. It is a wonder-

ful encouragement to recall all the times when God's promises have been fulfilled to us. His love in times past forbids us to think that he will ever leave us or forsake us; the past is a pledge of the future. The present fulfillment of the promises of God brings to us a glad assurance that the future shall continue to manifest his mercy, but the promises are always for the future when made, and so our hope is not fixed upon things present or past, but upon things to come. Not one good word has failed, therefore we feel assured that none shall fail of all that God has spoken. The daily grace received is our blessed assurance that grace shall continue to be ours to the end. Believers are said to be seeking a city whose maker and builder is God. Paul indeed knew Christ by personal experience, but yet he counted not himself to have attained, but said that he followed after that he might apprehend that for which also he was apprehended of Christ Jesus. Now he said again, We see in part, but then shall we see as we are seen, and know as we are known. All that believers receive while in this life is but a foretaste of what is beyond; this is our joy. The best here is mingled with imperfection, and we long for that imperfection to disappear; the most joyous days are more or less beclouded with shadows, and we long for that day that shall be without a cloud; thank God such a blessed hour is promised. It is this glorious hope that revives our courage by the way, and for this glorious fulfillment believers are looking and longing. Present experiences are helpful, and comforting, and cheering, for they are the evidences to us of the still more wonderful eternity to come. A traveler journeying on, with eagerness looks indeed at the guidepost to see whether he is still in the right way, and whether he is making progression that way, but he does not sit down by the guidepost as though here was all he could desire. As he reads the marks which the Maker of the way has placed along that way, he is reminded of the Father's loving care for his children, his pilgrims Zionward, and he has many precious thoughts of that Father above who so loves and so tenderly cares for his children, but still the chief joy of his heart is the hope of finally reaching his journey's end, and the joy of knowing that at the end there is such a city, the city of God. His heavenly Father has furnished him with a guidebook, and in it has assured him that even should he go astray his Father will seek him out, and not suffer him to perish, and that he will see to it that at last he shall be brought to the desired haven. The way in which he is traveling is the way of happiness, but it is so because it is the way to happiness that shall be perfect and entire.

There are many precious promises which have not yet been received, but which are as sure of being received as though we had already received them, and these are the promises of being kept through faith unto salvation till the end of the strife shall come, of the resurrection at the last day, and of heaven beyond. What it shall be to be there we cannot comprehend until that blessed experience is ours, but some things we are told about it: there shall be no marrying nor giving in marriage there, there shall be no sin or sorrow there, there shall be no death there, and every power will be in full accord with the will of God, so that there shall be no warfare there. Little foretastes are vouchsafed to us in this low ground journey of the royal banquet in eternity, but only a little, yet we feel fully persuaded that the things which are the joy of the believing heart here will be the joy

there. Believers shall not be strangers to heaven, that is, the things they loved here they shall find there; these are righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, and the praises of the dear Redeemer in which they feebly share here shall be in their fullness there. But who can conceive of what it will be to be free from sin, and not to have one thought or wish save that which is in full accord with the righteousness of God? So often our will is not his will here, but there we shall have no will save to possess his perfect will, and the saved shall possess it, and be one with him, and be like him, seeing him as he is.

Well might the apostle speak of all these as exceeding great and precious promises, and for that which has not already been fulfilled we are waiting, and we are confident, because our God is able to fulfill them all, and he has promised that not one shall fail. C.

JOHN XIII. 12.

"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet."

Sister Belle Rupert, of Altoona, Pa., requests our view of the above Scripture.

It will be remembered that years ago this portion of the word was controverted and much bad feeling resulted. Because of this it is with hesitancy that we now give what seems, to us, its spiritual import.

Before entering upon the subject we want to assure our brethren who disagree with us on this question, that we have no intention of opening up the old trouble, and thereby bring about another dispute upon the subject. Those who differ with us regarding this matter, preach and write freely their views of foot-washing, to which we have not the slightest objection. We feel at the same time it is our right to express our view, especially when asked to do so. There must be no bondage in this matter, liberty of thought and expression is the right of us all. Whether or not foot-washing was intended to be observed as a literal ordinance, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." We also desire to assure our brethren who observe it as a literal ordinance, that it has never affected our fellowship for them. Paul said such things should not separate us; in his day there was a difference of opinion regarding the subject of days. "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it."—Rom. xiv. 5, 6. So in this matter they who regard the literal ordinance regard it unto the Lord.

Now to the subject. We have every reason to believe that Jesus did actually wash the feet of the disciples; we have also every reason to believe that in instituting what is called the Lord's supper he took bread and blessed it, also that he took the cup and gave thanks; but there is a decided difference in his language used on these occasions. He said of the bread, "This is my body, which is given for you." Of the cup he said, "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you." The signification of this ordinance was clearly given, and the disciples positively commanded to observe it, according to the order shown them, in remembrance of him. Repeatedly is this ordinance mentioned as having been observed, but nowhere do the apostles speak of a literal ordinance of foot-washing to be observed. The language of the Savior to Peter, when he

washed the feet of the disciples, was, "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." How different from that concerning the bread and the cup. Surely Peter, as well as all the other apostles, knew what a basin was, and what water was, and what a towel was, and what it was to have their feet literally washed, but what it meant for Jesus to wash them they did not know, Jesus said so. If it were to be literally observed they did know, but it could not have meant that, because when Jesus did literally wash their feet he said, "What I do thou knowest not now." What it signified was revealed to them afterwards. There is no command to observe this as an ordinance in the language of Jesus, he said, "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet." There is a vast distinction between the words "this do" and "ought to." There is a difference also between the commandments of Christ, and his example.

In presenting our view of the text we shall be brief as possible. Christ was the anointed of God, he was God manifest in the flesh, in him did and does dwell the fullness of the Godhead bodily: "But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant." "He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death." He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.

The washing of another's feet in ancient times was considered the meanest, lowest or most humiliating service one could render to another. Kings did not wash the feet of kings, much less the feet of their servants, they were too lofty in their minds and stations. Simon, the proud Pharisee, did not wash the feet of Jesus, but Mary, whom Simon despised, did with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.

In the text under consideration we find the King of kings and Lord of lords serving his servants in washing their feet. In this is taught what the disciples did not know then: spiritual humility. If he by whom all things were created, who is before all things, and by whom all things consist, the Head of the body, the church, humbled himself and served his servants in the humiliating service of washing their feet, we "ought" also to serve one another, be at the feet of our brethren. Instead of being high-minded we should fear and condescend to men of low estate; we should watch over each other for good; provoke one another to love and good works, and thus wash each other's feet. This is the only washing we need do for one another, because having been washed by the Savior, in his own blood, we are "clean every whit," and need not save to wash our feet. This presents an humble and godly walk in all things, manifesting the life of Jesus in our mortal flesh.

We have now briefly given what we understand the text to teach and also why we so understand it, and leave the subject, hoping that our sister Rupert may consider what we have said.

K.

CHURCH NOTICES.

At a special meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Christ at Cleveland, Ohio, held on this the 24th day of August, 1906, our beloved brother, W. S. Alexander, was given liberty by a unanimous vote of the church to exercise his gift wherever the Lord in his providence may open a door to him. The church believes that he is called of the Lord to the work of the gospel ministry, and she feels free to recommend him to all sister churches as being sound in the faith.

Published by order of the church.

WM. HARMAN, Moderator.

J. O. Cross, Clerk.

Cleveland, Ohio, August 24, 1906.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. M. J. Jackson departed this life July 28th, 1906; she was born in Tippah Co., Miss., March 12th, 1862, making her age at the time of death 44 years, 4 months and 16 days. While young and reaching womanhood her father, J. D. West, (now deceased) in 1878 moved with his family to Texas, and settled in Tarrant Co., where she was united in marriage to W. J. Jackson April 17th, 1879. To this union were born five children, four sons and one daughter, two dying in infancy. She leaves three children and her husband. Sister Jackson and her husband moved to Eastland Co., Texas, in the fall of 1890, where he joined the Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Church called Little Flock, October 18th, 1893, and was baptized by Elder S. F. Russell. Here they continued for a time, enjoying the blessed privilege and relationship of their new life. From there they removed to Scurry Co., Texas, in 1897, uniting with the Old Baptist Church at Snyder, called Little Hope. The subject of this notice entertained a precious hope in the Lord Jesus Christ her Savior in the forgiveness of her sins some twenty-five years ago, and lived a devoted, faithful, exemplary christian unto the day of her death, with great fortitude sharing her portion of suffering affliction in common with the people of God, esteeming the riches of Christ and his reproaches greater than all the treasures of this poor, perishing world. She was an ardent friend and lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and some years since wrote a few articles for its columns, which doubtless many of the readers and correspondents remember, and in the midst of our late troubles caused by the introduction of new things among the Baptists, sister Jackson was steadfastly and immovably fixed in the old doctrine of Christ and the apostles. The theme of salvation by grace and grace alone, unlimited and unrestricted, was her delight, and she gloried in the absolute predestination of all things, saying it was the truth, and in it was the only salvation for a poor sinner. Her heart was ever open to speak words of cheer and comfort to the needy, and to visit the sick and afflicted. Her house was a stopping-place for sound Baptists. Sister Jackson was a woman of remarkable intellect, brilliant in her ideas and of quick apprehension, and with the eye of faith looked into the mysteries of the word of God as revealed to her by his Spirit, realizing in his precious promises the sure and certain accomplishment of all his purposes, ever desiring to be reconciled to the divine will. She had been in declining health for the past two or three years, finally was attacked with slow fever, which baffled medical skill and terminated her existence on earth, and she calmly fell asleep in Jesus to await the great day of the resurrection. We pray the Lord's mercy upon the bereaved husband and children.

ASA HOWARD.

DALLAS, Texas.

BY request I will attempt to write in memory of two brothers who died in our home.

A. T. Stroad died in Thornton, Calhoun Co., Ark., May 28th, 1906, aged 62 years and 2 months. He was a member of my family eighteen years, and was a tender care for myself and wife, being badly crippled thirty-eight years. He was a brother to my wife, and looked to us more as father and mother than brother and sister. He bore his suffering with little complaint; he had a good experience and a hope in Christ; never joined any church, but was of the Primitive faith, and went several times to join, but conflicts would get in his way and keep him out. The church had fellowship for him. He was married to Miss Abbie Hodnett, Jan. 10th, 1874; she lived only four years and eight months, leaving no children. They now are waiting the resurrection together in the cemetery at Pilgrims Rest Church. We were grieved to give him up from our home; we did all we could, but his case was such that we could not relieve him; we hope and believe that he is now at rest.

ALSO,

S. B. Stroad died May 31st, 1906. He was called from his home in De Queen, Ark., to attend his dying brother, A. T. Stroad, in Thornton. He witnessed the death and funeral of his brother, and was to spend one more day with his sister. He had a talk with her before breakfast, then went to the table and in a cheerful manner talked with a niece and her mother about how submissive we ought to be to the death of such sufferers as his brother was. He was suddenly attacked with paralysis, and called me to help him into the room. He admonished his sister not to trouble about him, saying, "I am all right." Then he spoke of his precious family, he wished for his sons Tim and Breck to be here to go home with him. That day he talked freely until 8 o'clock, then talked no more, and passed away at 10:30 p. m., aged 59 years. His dear wife and three sons came and witnessed his death and took him home for interment. He was a good husband, father and citizen, a firm believer in the Primitive doctrine, and contended earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, but never joined the church. We mourn not as those that have no hope.

A. HOLLOWAY.

THORNTON, Ark., August 31, 1906.

DIED—At her residence in Loudoun Co., Va., Sept. 8th, 1905, **Mrs. V. F. T. Green**, aged 82 years, 3 months and 21 days. Sister Green was the widow of brother James Green, of Loudoun Co., whom she survived about thirty years. She was baptized by Elder Joseph L. Purington in the fellowship of Mt. Zion Church on the fourth Sunday in September, 1873, of which church she remained an esteemed member until her death. For a number of years she

led a lonely life, but she seemed blessed with a cheerful disposition and a spirit of resignation to the divine will. A complication of diseases rendered her last years years of great suffering, which increased as the end slowly drew near. She died in the faith in which she had lived, and her friends and brethren could but rejoice for her that her sufferings were over and she was at rest. Two sisters and two brothers after the flesh survive her, and dear old Mt. Zion numbers one less in her membership. But happy the one who in putting off this mortal putteth on immortality. How much harder it is for the saint to live than to die: "To live is Christ, [to suffer] and to die is gain." May God help us all, who need his help so much, whether we live or whether we die.

J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., Aug. 20, 1906.

DIED—At her home in West Chester, Pa., sister **Jane Jackson,** daughter of the late Barrett and Margaret Jackson, of Fair Hill, Cecil Co., Md. She was born July 11th, 1828, and died August 8th, 1906, aged 78 years. She was baptized by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe in the fellowship of the Welsh Tract Church, New Castle Co., Del., Monday afternoon, October 17th, 1870.

Funeral services at her home on Friday evening, August 10th, conducted by the writer, using as a text John xiv. 2. She was laid away in the Cemetery of the Head of Christiania Church on Saturday, August 11th, 1906. Services were conducted by Elder J. G. Eubanks and the writer. She leaves one brother and sister, with the church, to mourn their loss.

B. F. COULTER.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Pa., expects to hold a two days meeting Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 19th and 20th, 1906. Those coming via Ontario & Western R. R. or Delaware & Hudson R. R. will come to Olyphant, Pa., on Tuesday previous, where they will be met and cared for. Any one desiring can address A. B. Russell or Geo. Goodrich, Olyphant, Pa., R. F. D. Those coming on D., L. & W. R. R. will come to Glenburn, Pa., and take back to my house in Waverly, Pa., or drop me a line and I will meet them on Tuesday. We hope to see a goodly number of brethren and friends from a distance.

D. M. VAIL.

THE yearly meeting of the Cow Marsh Church is appointed to be held on the fourth Saturday and Sunday in September, (22nd and 23rd) 1906. We cordially invite our brethren and friends to meet with us. All the morning trains north and south until 10:06 a. m. will be met at Woodside on Saturday and visitors cared for. Meeting to assemble at 2:30 p. m. Saturday.

W. W. MEREDITH.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will convene, nothing in providence preventing, with the Olive and Hurley Church, Ulster Co., N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (3rd and 4th,) 1906. The nearest station for those coming from the east is Olive Branch; coming from the west, Shokan, via U. & D. R. R.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Lexington, N. Y., of the Lexington Association, has appointed a yearly or two days meeting to be held on Saturday and Sunday, October 6th and 7th, 1906. As it is immediately following the Association, which is to be held with the Olive and Hurley Church the 3rd and 4th, we shall expect all that can to come to our meeting.

FLETCHER MACKEY, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the Sidling Hill Church, in Fulton Co., Pa., October 12th, 13th and 14th, 1906. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth, especially to our ministering brethren. Those coming by railroad will come on the B. & O. or Wabash to Hancock on Thursday, where they will be met and cared for. The distance to place of meeting is about twenty miles.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, Providence permitting, will be held with the New Valley Church, Loudoun Co., Va., commencing on October 17th, 1906, and continuing three days. Those coming from the east or south will leave Washington, D. C., Oct. 16th, taking the 4:15 p. m. train at Sixth St. depot for Leesburg, Va. A train leaves Washington 4:45; any coming on that train will notify me in time or they will not be met. Any coming from the west will be met at Washington Junction Oct. 16th, a train arriving at 1:32. This train leaves Martinsburg, W. Va., 12:41. As the meeting of this train is attended with considerable trouble, being so far off, we respectfully ask that those expecting to be met will write me in time, that I may make proper arrangements to meet them; they will surely be met if they let me know in time. We invite all who love the truth to be with us. We are hoping and praying for the divine presence of our heavenly Father; we feel that he will be with us.

E. V. WHITE.

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IN

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11:00 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

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BI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF THE WELSH TRACT CHURCH.

The bi-centennial of the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., was celebrated Oct. 20th, 1903. After some delay it is now published in pamphlet form, and is now on sale. Price 15 cents. The pamphlet contains photographs of the Welsh Tract meeting-house and Elder J. G. Eubanks, the pastor, the proceedings of the anniversary, letters of greeting from sister churches and a historical sketch written by Dr. B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., and read on the occasion. Some of the brick in the meeting-house was brought from Wales to this country, and hauled on mules' backs a distance of ten miles. The pamphlet is very interesting and full of information.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 74. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1906. NO. 19.

POETRY.

IS THERE A GOD?

"THE fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."

Is there a God? Go ask the sea,
Whose waves with ceaseless flow
Say, God hath given us bounds, and said,
Thus far, no farther, go.

Ask of the storm-cloud o'er thy head,
And list to its reply,
Thou'lt hear the deafening thunder say,
God rules and reigns on high.

Then ask the stately forest trees,
With branches towering grand,
What power sustains their lofty growth,
Save God's all-powerful hand?

Ask of the tiniest leaf or flower
Its origin or worth?
They answer, God hath made us all
To beautify the earth.

Ask of the little birds that sing,
What of their mission here?
They tell thee, God has given us song,
The heart of man to cheer.

The sun, the moon, the twinkling stars,
The planets in their course,
Proclaim the handiwork of God,
Their center and their source.

Then ask thyself of God, O man
With mind and thought endowed,
Does not a voice within thee speak
In accents seeming loud,

Saying, There is an all-wise God,
Who rules this earthly ball,
Who made the heavens, the earth, and man,
The crowning work of all?

ABBY G. CLARK.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DUDLEY, Muskoka, Canada, Sept. 30, 1905.

DEAR SISTER STREET:—Your kind and sympathetic epistle has just arrived, and I desire to thank you for your kind remembrance of me from time to time amidst this wilderness state of things (both external and internal), which is the common lot of all the precious sons and daughters of Zion, who through great tribulation must enter the kingdom of God. Still the eye of faith, though at times very dim, has always the glorious end in view, and the time will shortly arrive when we must lay down this earthly house of our tabernacle, and, as we humbly hope, (through amazing grace) shall enter more fully upon the enjoyments and blessedness of that rest which remaineth to the people of God. I was pleased to learn from you that there has been (as you hope) somewhat of a shaking among the "dry bones" at Brantford, and trust it may be your high privilege to yet see them rise up an exceedingly great army. I, like you, have felt for many years past that it was desirable that a regular morning and evening service should be maintained among the

Old Baptists, still it does not appear to be our heavenly Father's will that it should be so, and to that will I feel assured you all earnestly desire to submit. For my own part I can see no better way than to wait patiently, watch the Lord's hand carefully, and as it may be laid on the minds of the friends, plead the case with him. I am not speaking here in any legal or Arminian sense, but on this wise: although I know my salvation is entirely of the Lord in its origin, in its manifestation on Calvary, in its revelation and blessed operations in my soul, and in its glorious completion by the Spirit of the living God, yet the enjoyment of that salvation depends quite largely upon a godly life and conversation.

I should have been pleased, had it been so ordered, to have gotten to Brantford to have heard brother Chick, whom I have never seen, but can say I truly love for the truth's sake. I look on him as a brother highly honored, gifted and blessed of God, doubtless very poor (in himself), yet making many rich. Indeed, it is so with me when at times I get into the valley of Baca, which alas, alas, I often do; both my vile, fleshly nature and the devil himself seem to vie with each other in placing him before me as an ensample, instead of him, who, when in my right mind, clothed and sitting at Jesus' feet, is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of our complete salvation.

Well, I will try to comply with your earnest request, if God wills it, namely: give you an outline of my call (if ever I was called, which at times I very much doubt) to labor in the vineyard of our blessed Lord. At my advanced age (eighty years) I cannot give dates, as my natural faculties, especially memory, eyesight and hearing, are much impaired, but our God can, if it is his pleasure, bring even all providential matters to my remembrance.

I think I gave you in my last letter an outline of my experience of the Lord's gracious dealings with my soul up to that ever memorable time that the "lawful captive" was to be delivered and brought into the light, liberty and freedom that belongs to the people of God. At that time the joy of deliverance, for a few days, was so great that I verily believed all my sorrows and all my sins were gone forever. At that time I decided to give up a seafaring life, and obtained a situation, and my mind for some two years was greatly exercised as to whether it was not my duty to attempt to speak in the open air. Right here I may say that being entirely ignorant of sects and parties, and taking all to be gold that glittered in the professing world, I had become linked in with the Arminians, who were constantly telling me that I ought to be doing something for God, either in visiting the sick and dying, speaking in the slums of London, in thieves' lodging-houses, work-houses, hospitals, &c. Consequently I was put on the preaching list, and appointed to the Spitalfields and Whitechapel Districts, where, permit me to say, I always met with marked respect from my hearers, even in the lowest dens of vice and misery.

I will now try to get a little nearer the subject I have before mentioned; I will try to describe the beginning of an exercised mind. Oftentimes, for two or three weeks at a stretch, the matter became such a burden that literally there was no rest either night or day. Sometimes I would earnestly beg of the Lord that he would eradicate the thought altogether

from my mind; at other times I would plead I had no gift, and my utter unfitness for the work, my ignorance, blindness and unworthiness. Still the thought continued to harrass my mind, and I would hope against hope that the dear Lord would in his own time open up the way, which at the present was hedged up with hewn stones, and that he would perform the thing that was appointed for me. I ought previously to have said that by this time I had been brought out from among the Methodists, and was sitting fairly regularly under the ministry of Mr. James Wells, a Strict Baptist, of the Surry Tabernacle.

Now for step number two. One morning, while engaged in my daily occupation, and when I was not thinking at all about it, suddenly a voice appeared to speak powerfully within me, saying, Go to the London city Mission-house and offer your willing service. I immediately threw down my tools, and in my rough working attire went to the mission-house, and, to my surprise, after being examined by four "learned divines," was at once accepted, and remained five years, when on account of the committee having learned that I was a poor "Hardshell," and that I had become a member of a Strict or Particular Baptist Church, myself and another brother, also a poor "Hardshell," were given to understand that although they had no fault to find, yet there was no longer room for us there unless we could give up what constitutes, really, the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, namely: election, predestination, the everlasting love of God, with every other truth that is experimentally precious to every regenerated child of God. For five days my brother in Christ and myself were enabled to stand before the Mission Board, and through strength given at the time, successfully refuted many errors entertained by them, and fully established the doctrine of grace as being made known and its preciousness experienced in the heart of truly believing souls. The result was as follows; I give it as nearly as possible in the exact words of the chairman of the Board: "Well, brothers Knifton and Hearson, when I speak for myself I speak for every gentleman on this committee. We are very sorry that you two brethren, whose labors have been honored of God on an average with any other agents of the Mission, and against whom there is not a black mark, should be brought before the committee simply because you do not see exactly eye to eye with your local superintendents. We believe all these things ourselves, but we do not think it wise to preach them." Our reply was simply handing in our resignations, which was thrice done before accepted, and we each received the following note a few days later:

"Very Dear Sir:—The committee had no alternative yesterday but to receive your resignation, which however they did with deep regret, and with most earnest wishes for your spiritual and temporal welfare. It will be postponed by us to any date you may desire to leave.

Yours very truly,

JOHN GARWOOD."

You will now see, sister Street, how all my hopes were shattered, as hitherto I had been led to look upon the work of the Mission as preparatory, in a certain sense, for preaching the word. Now the enemy began to make great havoc upon me, taunting me with what I had done: Why did I not soften down before the committee? Look at what I had brought my wife and family to. I had no earthly means, debts were to be paid, and I might

rest assured that God had forsaken me. These and numerous other fiery darts were hurled by the enemy, and to all outward appearance things certainly looked very discouraging (though I had not as yet actually left the Mission), and I was driven more and more to lay my case, in a time of real soul trouble, before the dear Lord. Now deliverance was at hand; God was working for me, and prayer was answered in a most remarkable way. In a dream, or vision of the night, (call it a dream) I dreamed that it was Sunday morning, and that I was walking along one of the leading streets in north London, called Euston Road, and as I walked along my attention was attracted to a somewhat ancient and peculiar building that stood quite a distance back from the road; I also heard the praises of God being sung therein, and the door was wide open. Curiosity led me to go and look in at the door; I saw the interior was also very peculiar, and although it was a somewhat large place, I could perceive there were but very few worshipers, and there was no one in the pulpit; but while standing leaning against the door-post, two men came to me from the inside, begging that I would try and preach for them, as their minister was away at the seaside for his health. I thought they also pressed me in as soon as I had given a tardy consent, and I had to speak, and was made to promise that I would also speak at evening service, which in my dream I thought I did. Now leave the dream, and behold what I have ever believed was the hand of God in the matter. Very early in the ensuing week I received by mail a letter of which I here give contents:

"Dear Brother:—The Baptized Believers' Church, meeting for divine worship at the Holly Bush Hill Chapel, Hampstead, are desirous of obtaining a supply for the pulpit for a few Sundays. Mr. Frith, one of our deacons, has mentioned your name as a young man able and willing to aid a poor and needy cause; will you kindly respond?"

My reply was that I had never attempted to speak from a pulpit, but would seek wisdom and direction from on high, and if it was the will of the Lord I would try to be there. To my mind, and circumstanced as I was at the time, this was something strange, though I felt it was in some way the work of the Lord, I knew not how; beside I had never known Mr. Frith, or had the slightest knowledge of there being such a church at Hampstead. The following Sunday I set out for Hampstead with truly a heavy heart, no passage of Scripture on my mind, neither could I find one in the whole book of God; all was dark, vain and wild within and without. With the fleshly pride of my heart, and fiery darts of Satan, as well as a felt sense of my utter ignorance and barrenness, I could only groan inwardly for that help of the Spirit that I appeared to need more than ever I had done before; but when I reached the chapel, lo, this was the very building that I had seen in my dream; a measure of light was given, and I was encouraged to speak, feeling at liberty in my soul, and the people appeared to have heard well, requesting me to speak again the next Sunday, and although I refused to take anything for my poor service, yet before I could get away from the building, by one and another the sum of about sixteen dollars was given to me. I cannot tell you how highly elated "Old Man" Knifton became. What a fine preacher he was going to be, very little short of even Paul himself. Yes, this

was the very church I was to be settled over, &c. O friends, what an amount of pride, Phariseeism and hypocrisy there is about even the very best of the children of the living God. Well may we feel shame and confusion of face before the throne of grace from time to time. Truly the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and brings our souls into bondage and captivity to the law of sin, and were it not that now and then we are favored to realize the enjoyment of our hope, namely, that amidst it all, that is, all our sins of heart, of lip, of life, our secret sins which so easily beset us, that none but God and ourselves are cognizant of, that we are washed, sanctified and justified freely from all things, in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God, we should be of all men most miserable. I have no desire to wallow in the filth and mud of my own desperately wicked and deceitful heart, but to exalt the precious Redeemer, amazing grace, everlasting love, predestination and eternal election of all the flock of slaughter from before the foundation of the world.

But here again (through manifold infirmities) I find I have wandered from the subject you wished me to write upon, so I will just mention one more incident and conclude. To make it clear, I may say here that previous to my actually leaving the Mission I had been received as a member of a Strict Baptist Church, under the pastoral care of John Foreman, a man of God, loved and revered by all that feared God for his works' sake. He had been its pastor, I believe, forty years or more. The church was in a healthy and numerous condition, numbering some five hundred or more, exclusive of outside congregation. At the close of the evening service one Sunday he gave out a notice from the pulpit that our young sailor man (friend Knifton) would preach there on the next Wednesday night, stating that fathers generally liked to hear how the little ones could prattle. I was not present at that service, but on the following Tuesday evening, while engaged in giving my final address to my few poor people at the Mission hall, I noticed two of our deacons enter and take a seat among the handful of those present, and at the close of our little meeting one of them said as follows: "Brother Knifton, we are sent to say that you are to preach at Mount Zion, instead of Mr. Foreman, on Wednesday night." What! I, a poor, ignorant worm? "No," I replied, "I am sure I shall not." "Well," said he, "Mr. Foreman is out of town preaching anniversary services, he gave the notice out on Sunday, and everybody is coming to hear you preach, and you be there." O my, O my, whatever shall I do? Here again the fear of man and pride of heart became rampant, as it were, my heart sank like lead in the mighty waters, all was darkness and barrenness within, the will of the flesh was getting the upper hand, without there was nothing but thorns, and briars, and brambles, all indicative of the curse, and Satan himself driving me to a place called "wits' end." I tried to pray, but every word appeared to be thrown back upon me, the book was sealed, no text, and, like Noah's dove, I could find no place for the sole of my foot to rest upon. I at last concluded that I would not go, come what might, but the Lord's thoughts were not my thoughts, neither were his ways my ways, as the sequel will show. Now observe, I resided not more than five minutes walk from the chapel, and service would not commence until seven o'clock, but a full hour before the time I left my house, my mind full of rebel-

lion and confusion, but settled on the one point, I would not go. Where I went I cannot tell, all I know is that I wandered up one street and down another, until as the clock struck seven I found myself at the church door. On entering I saw the place was filled with people to hear "our young sailor friend," and there was I as barren as the heath in the desert, the heavens as brass above my head, and a heart like adamant stone, and I am fully satisfied that no poor wretch has ever ascended the platform for execution with greater fear or dread than I ascended the stairs of that pulpit. No text; truly I may say I was there in weakness and in fear and much trembling, but the Lord was there, too, though I knew it not. At length, the second hymn having been sung, the words of David in the eighty-eighth Psalm, "I am shut up, and I cannot come forth. Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction," came creeping into my mind. The Lord gave me fair liberty in speaking, though what I said I know not, but I remember my concluding words were these: "Friends, you would have me to preach, I have done my poor, poor best, and if you are not ashamed of me and it, I am ashamed of myself." For which saying I received from the deacons, on behalf of the church, a somewhat severe but very loving, faithful and profitable rebuke; I will give it verbatim, if I can, and then conclude. The members of the church being requested to remain behind for a few minutes, dear old Deacon Holmes spoke as follows: "My young brother, this meeting is called for the purpose on the one hand of administering faithful but loving rebuke for your closing remarks. After hearing a discourse as we have to-night, and then to tell the friends that if they are not ashamed of you, you are of yourself, you know not what injury you may have done. For instance, as a church maintaining the doctrine of free grace, we are looked upon by the churches around us as Antinomians, or loose livers, and possibly some may have been here to-night to merely criticise these Hyper Calvinists at John Foreman's, who on returning home will say, Well, we have been to the Calvinists to-night, and what do you think? Why, we actually heard a man say in speaking, mind you, that if we were not ashamed of him he was ashamed of himself. Now we can fully enter into your feelings, my brother, but wherever God in his providence may call you to labor, remember that an apology from the pulpit is entirely out of place." The result was I was licensed by the church to go and speak wherever God might be pleased to make an open door; and now in conclusion, my present feelings are these: a grave doubt, very, very grave, whether I was ever called at all. There has been so much pride of heart, so much of the flesh, at times so much rebellion in my heart, ingratitude to and forgetfulness of God, that all appears to have been a poor, empty, vain and useless matter; but God knoweth, and I am sure that nothing but infinite love, patience and compassion could ever have borne with such a vile wretch as I realize myself to be. What a mercy to have a faithful and unchanging God. I can only say,

"A guilty, weak and helpless worm,
On thy kind arm I fall;
Be thou my strength and righteousness,
My Jesus and my all."

My dear sister, I have not written this for publication, but at your request, and because you assure me that all the friends at Brantford would be interested in its perusal; but if after my departure has taken place, the friends may feel there is

a crumb of consolation or edification for the poor and needy, you or they are at liberty to do as you think best. "My soul cleaveth unto the dust," yet there are times when I can say, "My soul thirsteth for God," and very shortly I must appear before him. O may Jesus then be my shield and buckler, my all and in all. May God bless you all, is my sincere desire. Amen.

WM. KNIFTON.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, June 10, 1906.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I feel like trying to write to you this afternoon and tell you a little of my experience since last I wrote you. Father has not yet returned from his visit to the churches in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, so we have had no service this morning. I myself came home only last Thursday, so I have seen none of the church except Deacon Staples, my mother and two precious sisters. I go away to-morrow, and except for Sundays I do not expect to be at home until near the end of August. I cannot conquer a feeling of sadness at this prospect, for I have never before been away from my home all summer, but I feel that it is the best thing I can do, and this makes it somewhat easier for me. This year has been a strange one to me in many respects; I began my college work in September, weary in body and mind, and the first half year was a very hard one for me. As a Junior I was required to take up the study of Psychology. Our text book was Dr. Bowne's Introduction to Psychological Theory. In spite of weariness I could but be interested in the subject, and I soon found all my theories subjected to severe tests, and my faith in Bible, inspiration, experience, yea, even God himself, many times so weakened that I doubted if there were any left. Cold I felt to be toward the marvelous things of God's kingdom. I could not pray, though night after night I knelt, endeavoring to implore grace of God. At times my soul in agony whispered the old prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner," but even this brought no comfort, no blessing; I felt cast out and alone. Increasing ill health and heart sorrows of an earthly nature finally reduced me to almost despair. Instead of indifference I now felt at times thoroughly rebellious against the whole order of the universe, at times weak and helpless and lost. I could and did say with Carlyle: "Is there no God then; but at best an absentee God, sitting idle ever since the first Sabbath at the outside of his universe and seeing it go? Is the whole world, like myself, sold to unbelief?" In darkness that could be felt I spent most of the time from the last of September till February. I must not let you think this was chiefly from my study of Psychology; indeed, sometimes in my study of this subject I felt dawnings of hope. Then, too, I had four or five precious letters from different ones of the Lord's house, which for a brief time used to comfort me. Here at least I could see a faith and love that even were it mistaken (and that I never really believed for long) was something sweet to read about. It was truly a sorrow to me to have them call me sister Ruth, precious though the name was, for I felt that I must be false and deceitful if they could see in what I did and said and wrote an evidence of anything but a sin-tossed and sorrow-stricken one who too late had found out her true self, a skeptic and unbeliever. I longed so much at times to write to you, for you have seemed, ever since that September meeting in 1901, to

me as a father in Christ, but I could not write you all the wild troubles and sorrows of my tired heart. I did try to read my Bible, I did try to pray, but, as never before (because for so long a time) did the earth seem as iron, the heavens as brass. O Elder Chick, can you have love and fellowship for me when I tell you all this? I had none for myself, I assure you. I was so situated this year that I saw much of the poverty and misery of Boston; I longed to help, yet because I was not well, and was so busy, so tired, I did nothing practically, even to comfort those around me. I felt condemned, but looking ever upon my own paltry self I seemed even to myself to be groveling and whining. Outwardly I do not think I seemed different to those about me, except that I was quieter, and did not look so well and happy as I generally had. The Dean, Professor Warren, was so kind and good to me that I shall never be able to forget it. He half seriously, half laughingly, said that if I did not improve in health he should have to take me from his class in Psychology; he frequently compelled me to take rests. Indeed, every one seemed to try to be as kind to me as they could. All this but increased my sorrow, for I was utterly unworthy of it all; still, sometimes the thought would come to me, If the creatures of this earth are so good, then the Power that created them must be, somehow, just and good. O, can you understand at all how I felt during those terrible six months? It was as though I were in a dark and horrible country, unknown, and terrible shapes were before me. I was tossed hither and thither by angry blasts; no pillar of cloud by day or pillar of fire by night any longer appeared; the light I did receive seemed more like the quick lightning flashes of a tempest than anything else; it was not either as though I had tried to fight in my own strength. If I could only have seen where I had erred it would have given me something to pray for, something to break my numbed heart.

In January I entered the most dreadful trial I ever had. A certain course of action had for a long time been a question of doubt to me; it now became a question of absolute right or wrong. At about this time I received a most precious letter from a dear brother in Christ. I can never tell you how much that letter meant to me. He spoke of experiences similar to mine which he had undergone, he called me his sister, he told of the wisdom, power and love of the God he believed in. I remember well how I felt as I read that God-sent letter; for the first time in months I prayed. Beloved minister of Jesus Christ, you know what that meant to me. The providence of God sent me that letter and applied its healing words to my heart, for I now had come to a garden of sorrow which I may with all reverence call my Gethsemane. A question was before me, prayer to God brought back but one answer: Do this, not that. Days of enforced cheerfulness, even gaiety, were followed by whole nights of prayer and supplication. Finally, by the grace of God I was enabled to sacrifice my all to his will. Earthly joy and happiness became as nothing as I gazed by faith upon my Savior, who was wounded for my transgression, bruised for my iniquity. Weak and worthless as I was, I saw him as my Redeemer, my heavenly Brother, my Friend; his voice called me to himself, and weary, heavy laden, I found in his presence a rest and a peace I had never dreamed could be mine again, yet I was still in the furnace of affliction,

with Christ supporting me. I knew that God was just and good, "too wise to err, too good to be unkind;" I knew that God knew the way I was taking, that when he had tried me I should come forth as gold. How wonderful that in the midst of this fiery trial I was made to feel the sweet presence of Jesus my Savior. Unspeakable love for God filled my aching heart; willing submission to his guidance and care took the place of anxious care. In the words of the same Carlyle: "Sweeter than dayspring to the shipwrecked in Nova Zembla; like the mother's voice to her little child that strays bewildered, weeping, in unknown tumults; like soft streamings of celestial music to my too-exasperated heart, came that evangel." "The self in thee needed to be annihilated." From that time to this there has never been a moment when I have not known my Father was with me. In the dark I have been led, yes, but by him. Weak and exhausted I have felt much of the time, tossed about enough because of my very weakness, but "in his love and in his pity he redeemed me, and carried me" when I could not of myself go on. A week ago (June 2nd and 3rd) the dear brother whose letter had been as God's message to me, and whose subsequent letters had been most wonderfully blessed to me, came to Boston, and we spent several hours talking of the love of God, his wisdom, his power and his grace. As we talked together, strength seemed to flow into my soul, and light to shine in the darkness. Before I had talked with this brother I had known peace, but now the morning dawned, and joy unspeakable and full of glory stole gently over my whole being. He spoke of the twenty-third Psalm, and as he quoted its verses I could follow with him through it. "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." "Thou art with me." A new thought was the one brought out by this man sent from God to me: "Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me." I had never before realized that this meant the rod of the Lord's gracious chastisement, and the thought has been sweet to me as I have meditated upon those things so precious which it was given to me to speak of with one dear to God. "My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor my ways your ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. * * * For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." Like Peter of old, in spite of the fact that I have gone astray and turned to my own way, in spite of the fact that I have denied the Master, have been disobedient and unbelieving, somehow I can but feel that the Shepherd and Bishop of my soul has looked upon me, so that I must cry, Thou, Lord, knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.

Since February I have been tasting a fullness of love and of trust that I had not experienced before since the early days of my love for Christ and his people. I was talking with my dear mother last night on the way God had led me, and I told her that I realized more fully the meaning of these sweet words:

"Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee!
E'en though it be a cross,
That raiseth me!"

I could see, I said, how things had been revealed to me in that long darkness which I never could have seen if I had enjoyed the light during all that time. The thorns, the agony, I would have weakly shrunk from had I known what was in store for me, yet it was the Father's good pleasure to bring me through much tribulation to the desired haven of rest, and trust in him, my Lord and my God.

I spoke in one of my letters to you last year of the gracious reproof given me by a dear one of God. This year, too, I have the same story; God ever moves his children to comfort the sorrowing, bind up the broken-hearted, reprove and correct the erring.

In a letter received from our brother since he returned home I read these precious words: "I was praying last night for you, and really I felt as though my prayer would be answered. O may the ever-present Master give you strength to await his own time, when your mind may once more be made free, and may you trust in him more and more. It may not be seemly for one such as I to pray for one such as yourself, and yet I so much want you to feel right again, to see how just all things divine must be, that I have asked it, knowing that if I ask it may be given." How blessed these words are to my hungry soul! To think that one of God's children should so feel toward me, unworthy and wicked as I feel myself to be.

Elder Chick, I have written on and on, not thinking of the length of my letter. As I read it over now I see its faults; pray pardon them, for I am so imperfect, and it is impossible for me to express either the sorrow that overwhelmed me or the joy that now makes me tremble because of its fullness and its preciousness. O pray for me, dear brother, that I may be led to know what is the full and perfect will of God concerning me. Pray that I be kept in true humility at the foot of the cross. I am weak, so weak, yet I do love God and desire to do only those things that are pleasing to him.

Irene says: "Tell Elder Chick that we would like to see him this fall;" and both mamma and Irene send their love to you and your dear wife. In this I join most heartily. I hope this letter has not been wearisome to you. You have ever been kind, have ever known how to read between the lines the thoughts I could express so imperfectly in my poor words. I feel that God will enable you now to understand what I have written, and if I have erred, if in me you see no evidence of God's reclaiming grace, you will tell me so, I know. May God watch over and bless you, most precious brother, leading you ever in his own way, to do his will, is my heart's prayer.

I am your weak little sister, if one at all, in the hope of Christ Jesus,

RUTH ADA KEENE.

THE EFFECT OF GRACE.

GRACE itself is an holy principle, not an attribute, but an embodiment of God's love to his chosen people. It is a beneficent presence, wielding a power over all the combined powers of darkness. It emanates alone from God. It superabounds in the sensible, conscious sinner above the abounding of sin. It is a saving principle, a life-giving principle. Its source and supply are both limitless. In speaking of its amplitude, the only word we can use is "sufficiency," for it covers every need. It enters the secret place of our mortal life, and circumcises the heart. Its vital forces are invisible, and the cit-

adel which it attacks, it holds forevermore. It is light in a dark place, it is the Spirit of Christ, and the abundance and fullness of his love. The walls which it builds are called "Salvation," and they are invulnerable against every invading foe. Its garden of nuts and of spices is a thing of beauty and a joy forever. Its trysting-places, "assemblies of the saints," are places of gospel rest and gospel feeding. Its pure atmosphere destroys every germ of the foul disease of sin. In the building of its house of lively stones, it employs three chief architects: faith, hope and charity, "And the greatest of these is charity," while the chief Corner-stone of the building is its own substance (Jesus Christ), of which the Lord God says, "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste." In this wondrous building of grace rare and costly tools are used, for he says, "Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet." Grace being spiritual, the house which it builds is altogether spiritual. Its stones are made "lively stones" by its own revivifying power; grace is not supplied because it is merited by him to whom it is given; the carnal mind demands it not, neither does it want it, for it has all that it needs or cares for from an earthly source. This is especially why its effect is so precious to the recipients of it. Grace works its wonders in the children of men "by faith, not by sight." It is the active principle in the great work of salvation. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." Grace is not sown promiscuously over all the field of this world, but the provident Husbandman sows the seed in each individual heart of them whom he has chosen out of the world to present them as a precious gift to his darling Son. It is then an exclusive principle also, it is the secret of the Lord, and the world has never found it. It is a hidden mystery, and it is deposited in the treasury of every circumcised heart. The primary effect of grace on its subject is to bring it out of death into life. Jesus said of his sheep, "I give unto them eternal life;" and the effect of grace is such that by its spiritual strength we die to the desires and lusts of the things of the flesh in the natural life. It creates the necessity for spiritual food, and then supplies the need; it causes us to walk in delighted and delightful obedience to the things which we once abhorred and spurned; it raises the beggar from the dunghill and sets him among princes; it causes him to seek the assemblies of the saints of God, while before he sought the haunts of evil companions in the places of darkness, which lead down to the grave of endless woe. Grace takes hold of and embraces every incident and all of the little things of this life, and moulds them into a beautiful christian experience. The life of faith manifests the salvation of the sinner by the grace of God; it is the holy essence of God's divine love, which embraces his dearly beloved Son, and the children of his choice, so that the effect of grace is revealed only within the inclosure of its perfect work, and that inclosure is the new Jerusalem, the city of our God. A very important effect of grace is to bring its subject into willing and humble obedience to the heavenly vision, and to the divine commandment. A growth out of self (which means a denial of self and of the thing which the flesh seeks after,) invariably means a growth in the things which belong to grace. Grace furnishes all the necessary instruments in our spiritual warfare, noth-

ing is omitted, the whole armor of God is provided, that we may be able to stand in the evil day. Thus, says the spirit of grace as our Jehovah-jireh, "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."—Eph. vi. 18. By the power of grace through faith we are enabled to pray unto the God of our salvation, for he indited our prayers by his Spirit which strengtheneth us. There is no adequate natural illustration to clearly set forth the effect of the work of grace in the heart, that which faintly illustrates it is the surrounding elements which support and sustain the natural child from its infancy on to old age. During all the progressive changes which mark the different epochs in the life of man, the creature himself has no part or parcel in the work, he is altogether passive, and under the influence of a law whose mighty secret working-power was given by the Creator to all animate creation. These surrounding elements, the atmosphere which he breathes, the food and drink which he takes into his body, all contribute to his sustenance through all the changes that take place from prattling infancy to ripe old age of threescore years and ten. Had we the power to check or hinder that unceasing work through time, would we not do so? God's laws are immutable, unchangeable and unsearchable. So in the spiritual life, (more glorious and yet more wonderful than the natural,) the child is born from above, born of God and made manifest by the light of the spirit of faith. The child that is now born enters into a new atmosphere, which it breathes, (the atmosphere of the grace of God,) it hungers and thirsts after righteousness, and grace supplies the need by the gift of God in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. In this atmosphere and on this spiritual food the child grows and grows from childhood to old age, "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." And as in the natural, so in the spiritual, the subject of grace is passive, moulded and fitted for eternity by the great spiritual Potter, whose work is perfect, whose law is wisdom and whose promises are sure.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Aug. 1, 1906.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., July 24, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Inclosed is a letter from sister Mildred Durand, daughter of Elder Silas H. Durand. I feel it worthy a place in the SIGNS, as it breathes the spirit of grace of our Lord and Savior, but I leave it for your consideration.

Your brother, I hope,

J. M. FENTON.

JUNE, 1906.

MY DEAR BROTHER FENTON:—I could not write before, because I felt as if I had nothing to say. For a month I have seemed to have no feeling at all; I did not care to read the Bible or the SIGNS. Once in awhile I would pick them up, because I thought I ought to, but I soon laid them down again without any

interest. I have grieved because I felt that way, but it did no good. My love for the people seemed all gone, which was my last evidence that I knew anything of the truth, so I hated to write and tell you that, and I could not write and not tell you how I felt. Last Sunday when father was preaching, the love and happiness came back, and I thought I had never heard anything more beautiful. When meeting was over I hurried out by myself, because I wanted to keep the feeling, but right away it was gone, and I have felt even worse than ever this week. Even this afternoon when you were talking and I knew it was all so beautiful, yet I could not feel it ; I wondered if my heart was not elsewhere, and whether I would not prefer to be away having a good time. I think I prayed to God that if it was his will he would give me again the love and happiness that I had lost so long ; and I feel that he answered the prayer, for I never can tell you what happiness I have felt. It came all at once, and all goes to prove that I have nothing to do with it, but the Lord hides his face or shows it to us according to his own purpose. I think he leaves us in darkness in order to try our faith; I am afraid mine is not very strong.

You were speaking about your father being afraid of death until shown the presence of Jesus in the baptism of sister Fenton; I have always felt that way so much. At the time I was baptized I forgot all that, but since then it has come back, and I have felt that all fear ought to have left me, and therefore I cannot belong to the true church, because I do still fear it. But this morning when Mr. Mellott said that everything that Christ says is with authority, my mind stopped there, I felt as if I could trust Christ's word, because he speaks with authority, and he said, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." All my love for the church seemed to come back and be even stronger than it was before, and now again I feel as if I could hardly wait until next Sunday. My heart seems full of praise to God, and thankfulness to him for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men. I feel as if I could go on writing forever, I am so happy again. What you said this afternoon comes back to me with new force, and I live again my father's sermon of last Sunday ; everything seems so beautiful I cannot express it. I think about the two or three who met together to-day, and then I think of the twelve who were left alone with Jesus when all the rest had forsaken him, and he said, "Will ye also go away?" What love his must have been to endure it all for his people, even when the last one forsook him. When we do feel this love in our hearts we can understand it in a shadowy kind of way, "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face."

Give my heartfelt love to sister Fenton for me, and write to me as you said.

Lovingly your sister,

MILDRED P. DURAND.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., Aug. 26, 1906.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Just now I picked up the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for September 1st, and read that very precious farewell of dear Elder Bartley's. I had not heard that the Lord had called him home, but was made to feel how sweet was his departure. For some years he and I were correspondents, and he told me much of his troubles, and they so much agreed with some parts of my

own life that I was given very sweet fellowship for him, a fellowship that reaches deep down in sorrows and afflictions, high up in deliverance, and on in the great beyond, where afflictions, persecutions and separations shall be known no more. How blessed is this sweet fellowship that knows no end.

As you said, this last letter is the sweetest; it seems to be sweetened with the glory of the world which lays just over the river whose banks he was nearing. It would appear that the very gates of the new Jerusalem were wide open to him, and that he was smelling the sweet spices as they sent out their pleasant perfume, and in all of this blessedness he was just waiting. I fear, my dear brother, that I am impatient, or, it may be, covetous, for while I read his words I hungered to be there, just there where he was. It is so sweet to be where we can think of those who have evil entreated us and be blessed to pray for them, and to feel in the heart that we have nothing against any. Is not this true forgiveness, true reconciliation? It is also an evidence that our sins are forgiven us. The Sun of righteousness never shone so brightly in a sky beclouded with unforgiven sins, but when the full evidence of forgiveness is in the heart the sky is clear, and we live in the full evidence of the Sun of righteousness shining with healing in his wings; thus everything is healed, the clouds removed, and we look into the blessedness of God for which we have been waiting, and feel the living streams of the oil of the sanctuary as they pour forth to our anointing. We are near the Rock in which we have been anchored, the long chain which has held us so safely through all of our sorrows and cares is now nearly taken in, and the storm-tossed vessel is entering the desired and long-sought haven, we open our mouth with these last words, and say, "I am just waiting." My heart is full of this longing, and I pray God that he will give me grace to patiently wait till my change comes. The Lord bless sister Bartley and all the bereaved. The Lord keep us safe unto the end.

Your brother in a precious hope,

L. H. HARDY.

BLUE SPRINGS, Mo., Aug. 21, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—VERY DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—The September 1st SIGNS has just come, and I feel thankful to you for publishing the last beautiful letter from my dear husband. As I read it over and over, I was reminded of his habit of being exactly correct in everything he stated in writing or speaking. I immediately saw my mistake; in writing I said he preached his last discourse in January. I am so sorry, and can only offer my tired nerves and aching heart as an excuse for my blunder. I love to see his name in the dear old SIGNS. I wish I could bless and praise the name of our God for his tender remembrance and great mercy to his faithful servant, in his last days to give him a peaceful mind and painless body. After he was too weak to speak to me, with his hands folded on his breast, and lying very still, I would say, Is there any pain or suffering? He would smile and shake his head. I believe the angel of the presence of the Lord was there. O how sweet the gospel he preached seems to me, though I am entirely cut off from church privileges. I have it in mind much of the time, if the dear Lord wills, to attend some of the eastern associations next year; my dear sister, with whom I am staying, hopes to accompany me. To be reconciled to his holy will in all things is my desire for Jesus' sake.

There are a few true Baptists, and some readers of the SIGNS who are not members, here, but the church my sister and her nineteen year old daughter belong to is so far, and out of the way. I long to see some of the dear Lord's true servants, and to hear the joyful sound of the gospel of peace. O how I welcome the coming of our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

I think, with you, that my dear husband's last book is the crowning work of his life, but I have sold very few over and above the expense of their transportation from Montgomery, Ala., here. I hope the Lord will spare you to his poor and afflicted people. Remember me in prayer for Jesus' sake.

With love to your wife and children, I am, I trust, your sister in hope,

SALLIE M. BARTLEY.

COVINGTON, Ga., July 1, 1906.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—More than one year has elapsed since my last letter and remittance to the SIGNS. I wish that I, like the widow of whom Christ spake, could cast in one acceptable mite to the treasury for the benefit of the saints, but am unable to do so. I wish to return thanks to the Father of light and love that he graciously endows some of his servants so that they speak to the comfort of Jerusalem and to his own glory. So many are refreshed by the SIGNS who have not the privilege of the preached word; for this I wish to be humbly thankful. May God give to his servants so that they may rightly divide the word of truth, giving each his portion in due season, and may he tenderly grant that even the crumbs may reach his hungry ones everywhere, even to the ends of the earth.

How my heart bleeds for the Master's "other sheep" that "are not of this fold," who wander in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is, and who, like David, thirst "for God, for the living God." O for the preaching that is not all theory, but that is laden with the riches of grace, of truth and Spirit, and the unspeakable love of Jesus Christ. How preeminently full of these precious elements are the articles by Elder Keene. Instead of the sweet peace that comes from God's direct revelation of his immediate presence, I find only an intense longing, a thirsting after God. Twice in life it was given me to feel his direct presence in a wonderful degree, but I faint at the thought that so many years have passed since then, and that I hardly have a taste of the joy unspeakable. But with only memory left me of the blessedness I knew, I still cry, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." Like Peter, I say, "Lord; thou knowest that I love thee." Again, I have seemed to know the constant fellowship of his sufferings. Amid sorrows intense, and beset with temptations, I only feel the more strongly the necessity of pressing "forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus." Crucified to this sinful world, killed to the love of sin, to whom else can we go? With the mountains of sin on either side, and the hosts of Satan pursuing in the rear, what can Christ's disciples do but at his command, by faith, not by sight, pass through the Red Sea that lies before them? Yes, let us press on, for the sea will divide. All through the long march from Egypt to Jordan let us run and not be weary. Some time our Deliverer will come, for even "now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in

the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." God give us daily patience and grace till the coming of our Lord.

This letter is to you, dear brother, it is not worthy of a place in your paper.

Yours in a precious hope,

(MRS.) M. A. D. ROBERTS.

PARIS, Ill., Aug. 26, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—It will soon be three months since my visit with the dear brethren at your associations, and at your home, but I have it in my mind every day, and am constantly thinking of the blessing that was mine to have been permitted to be there.

I received your letter in due time, and was pleased to hear from you, and found much food for thought in your text, "The weeds in our gardens." Alas, mine is all weeds. I sometimes feel that I could shout for joy and tell all around me what a Savior I understand to have come, fully understand the predestined plan, can see it almost, but is it for me? There is no one whose experience compares with mine. Brother Fenton said to me: Now if I had an experience like yours I would be satisfied, and I said the same thing to him of his, but neither of our own experiences were satisfactory to ourselves; but is it not true that we must walk by faith? Your editorial in the SIGNS a few numbers ago was of much comfort to me.

Well, here I am writing more than I started out to do; I wished to ask you to kindly mail me two or three copies of the minutes of your associations. I know your time is very much occupied, but I will be glad and I hope thankful for a letter from you any time. I had a nice letter from Elder Rowe, in reply to a note from me, in which I spoke of missing seeing him at his home in Baltimore.

Our association will be held about fifteen miles west of here, commencing September 12th and continuing three days. We would welcome you among us I assure you. I hope the members of your family are well. Please remember me in love to them, also to any of the many dear brethren and friends who may remember me.

I remain your brother in hope of eternal life, M. C. REEVES.

CUNNINGHAM, Wash., May 18, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I am behind with my little mite I will send on my subscription. The SIGNS advocates my belief, it sets forth the doctrine that is meat and drink to the thirsty soul. Myself and family are in a new country holding a claim, and it has been very hard on us, for my husband and I are old and feeble, and can do but little work, and have one son and a daughter and four grandchildren to look after, and it has been hard on the boy to work and support us and buy everything and feed for his teams; the work that ought to have been done on the ranch had to be done elsewhere for support, but I hope and pray that the hardest of the time is past with us, and a better time is coming. We have been out in the wilds, but it is settled all around us now; have been on our claim four years; we like the country and climate very well. Have found but few of our faith and order here; there are six of us within twenty miles of each other; have preaching once in awhile; brother Gilmore, of Yakima, brother Barnes, of Touchet, and brother Pate, of Dayton, have visited us a few times at Cunningham and preached for us. O I can tell you it was a feast to the hungry soul, it

made us think of the days past and gone in the east. Now, dear brethren, when it goes well with you, remember us.

With best wishes for you and the SIGNS, yours in hope,

(MRS.) FRANKIE ADAMS.

LIBERTY, Mo., June 3, 1906.

DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD, AS I HOPE:—If you deem this worthy of notice, will you please give your views concerning what is done for the "old man," the Adamic man, in the second birth? Some, who say that they have been born of God, claim that the "old man" is worked over and made a new man, but if this be true I am lost, world without end. I hope in an all-wise God, who knows all things from the beginning; with whom is no change, and who needs not the help of men or angels, but who works all things after the counsel of his own will, both in heaven and in earth. If in this I cannot see as you do, I hope you will not condemn me; I have been trying for forty-five years to find where the warfare comes in, if the "old man" is the subject of the new birth. Jesus said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." He also said, "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils."—Luke xi. 21.

I cannot find any place for the warfare except when the strong man is disturbed in his palace. I never had any trouble with this strong man as long as he had full control over his palace, but as soon as the stronger man overcame him there began a warfare which has continued ever since, and which has caused me many sore trials while passing through this valley of the shadow of death. Though dead to the enjoyments of our great High Priest, the "old man" has been brought into subjection to the stronger man. But if the "old man" has been changed, whence comes the warfare? "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." And so we are made to daily cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But God has laid help upon One who is able to deliver. He delivered the three Hebrews out of the furnace, and Daniel from the den of lions, and I believe the same power is his to-day, although he is not pleased to manifest it in the same way. I am still standing alone. I never see one of my first love, yet by the grace of God I hope to die at my post.

Please excuse the liberty which I have taken in thus addressing you; it may be hard to understand.

Your brother,

RICHARD WALLER.

(Editorial reply on page 603.)

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder F. W. Keene.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Conference, assembled with the Old School Baptist Church at North Berwick, York Co., Maine, to the associations with whom we correspond.

ANOTHER year, beloved brethren, has passed since we last greeted you in the Lord, and you with us no doubt can say, the Lord has been mindful of us. We read of him, "He will ever be mindful of his covenant."—Psalms cxi. 5. This is our strong consolation, for in all our pilgrimage we are needing the mercies of the covenant of his grace, and our hope is that in running the race which is set before us, that the God of our salvation will, in his covenant faithfulness, so nourish and encourage us that we shall

hold on our way. In consideration of this we would invite your contemplation to a few words of the apostle Paul pertaining to this subject; they are found in Philippians iii. 12: "I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."

This chapter in which these words are found gives us a summary of the life, experience and expectation of the apostle. He tells us what he was in the flesh, and declares that notwithstanding his attainments he could find no ground to build any confidence upon for eternity before God, and he rehearses to us how effectually he was taught of the Holy Spirit to renounce all reliance in what had formerly been his hope and gain; he found it all a delusive failure, and says, "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." This is glorious and satisfying, and is so in conformity to the life and expectation of all, even to the present day, who are partakers of the heavenly calling, and as we look into these things set forth by the apostle it will be our mercy to examine ourselves whether we be in the faith or not. The apostle tells us, "I am apprehended of Christ Jesus," and then declares that this was to an ultimate and glorious destiny; he speaks of it as "that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus," and then so gracious was the hand of Christ Jesus upon him that he was moved with divine animation, and his testimony is, "I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." Let our first contemplation then be this: "I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." Once he was a stranger, an enemy, a persecutor, a blasphemer of Christ and his people. (1 Tim. i. 13.)

"But thus the eternal counsel ran,
Almighty love, arrest that man."

It pleased God to call him by his grace; he was apprehended on his way to Damascus. (Acts ix. 3.) He is brought a poor, guilty sinner at the feet of the Lord, and found praying for mercy and salvation, and soon he found in the once despised Jesus Christ, his gracious Lord and Redeemer. Straightway he preached that Jesus is the Christ. "I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." This is what distinguishes the saints from the rest of mankind, Christ has taken hold of them. The world is apprehended by this and that, ten thousand things take hold of them, sway them to and fro, and hold them fast. They are the willing or unwilling captives of the powers of this present evil world, and of their own lusts. But to be apprehended of Christ Jesus is a gracious manifestation of God's eternal purpose in Christ Jesus. It is Christ, the Head of the church, ap-

prehending his own; it is Christ with cords of everlasting love taking hold of and espousing us to himself. How sacred and blessed to have the power to say, "I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." Many in the world claiming to be christians know nothing in truth of being apprehended by the Son of God. They have been apprehended, no question of that, but what has taken hold of them? With some it is bare theories of doctrine, doctrines of men, speculative ideas, false, fantastical interpretations of Scripture; yes, with their sleight and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive themselves and others, they become adepts in corrupting, perverting and wresting the Scriptures to make them signify anything that suits their fancy, and they are much taken with their ingenuities, and sport themselves with their own deceivings. But in very truth to be apprehended by the Lord is that his gracious power has quickened us who were dead in trespasses and sins, and has brought us with humble and contrite hearts to mourn over our sins, and to earnestly crave his forgiveness and salvation. O when the once crucified but now risen and glorified Redeemer is discovered to us by the revelation of the Holy Spirit, we are drawn to him, we are very blessedly apprehended, his willing ones, his captives in the chains of love.

"His loveliness hath won my heart,
Dear Savior, let us never part;
I'll sound thy lovely name abroad,
My altogether lovely Lord."

His atoning sacrifice, justifying righteousness and his high priesthood in all its graciousness, so take hold of us, so bless and comfort us, that we are held fast to him in faith and love, knowing that he only hath the words of eternal life, and those words we have need to have spoken in our hearts all the days of our pilgrimage.

"I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." All mankind are not so apprehended, the vast multitudes care nothing for him, they are strangers and foreigners to him, and in that great day he will say to them, "I never knew you." But it is his chosen that in due times are apprehended by his sovereign and omnipotent grace. If then the Lord Jesus Christ apprehends his people by the effectual working of his power in their souls, what is the purpose for which he has thus taken hold of them? The apostle speaks of it as "that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus," and it is designated "the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." The purpose of the Lord in taking hold of his people is to form them for himself to shew forth his praise, and in them he will shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward them through Christ Jesus. Our Redeemer hath saved his people from their sins by his atoning sacrifice, but in the eternal purpose which God the Father purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, he appointed not only the eternal salvation of his chosen, but he hath predestinated them unto the adoption of children to himself, and he ordained them to eternal life and to immortal glory. The Captain of their salvation will therefore apprehend and bring unto that predestined glory all the many chosen sons of God. But in order to be meet to be received up into glory, to dwell forever with the Lord, to be capacitated to partake and to enjoy forever this eternal glory with Christ, the ascended and glorified Head of the church, all the members of his body must and will be "afore prepared unto glory." —Romans ix. 23. The saints are therefore apprehended to bring them into actual meetness to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. Yes,

God's elect creatures shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious manifestation and liberty of the children of God. (Romans viii. 21.) As contemplated in their earthly Adamic estate, as creatures upon the earth, the elect of God are seen to be all unprepared, all incapacitated to inherit that inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, to which God hath predestinated them. (Eph. i. 11.) It may well in very truth be declared, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Now, while on the earth believers are sinners, unholy, corruptible, mortal and vile, and as such unfit to dwell forever in happiness with God, and unable to sustain such eternal blessedness as God hath prepared for those that love him; but as this is that for which they are apprehended of Christ, all things will be done to bring to pass this decreed and ultimate end. "He that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given us the earnest of the Spirit."—2 Cor. v. 5. Christ "loved the church and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Sin, pain and sickness prey upon us now, conflicts, tribulation and grief are our bitter portion, and if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's, at his coming." To this we hope to come, (Acts xxvi. 7,) for when the apostle would present the crowning height of the hope for which, saith he, "I am apprehended of Christ Jesus," it is this: "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." O so much is revealed in the Scriptures concerning the resurrection, and as we are apprehended to the unspeakable glory of the resurrection of the just, it is very becoming that we are found pressing toward this mark for this prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Happy are the moments when in faith and love we are contemplating this ultimate glory of the redeemed. We shall bear the image of the heavenly, we shall be like our ascended and glorified Jesus; and with the psalmist, all who have the faith of God's elect will say, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." Ah, now we are tabernacling in our vile body of humiliation, but has not our Savior said, "I will raise him up at the last day"?—John vi. 40. He "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." "Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Surely as in faith's vision we contemplate this revelation of the Holy Spirit so explicitly written by the apostle, we shall say, This is the desired haven. (Psalms cvii. 30.) In our present estate it is very evident that we are unsuited to dwell in glory with the Lord; for while it is blessedly true that as partakers of the quickening and sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost we love God, love the truth, love the household of faith, believe and rejoice in our Lord Jesus Christ, hunger and thirst after righteousness, and delight in the law of God after the inward man; yes, though we have received the firstfruits of the Spirit, have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father, how marred are all these heavenly emotions of our life, that life which we live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us. There is a law in our members warring against the law of our mind, bringing us into captivity to the law of sin that is in our members. The lusts of the flesh cause us dire conflicts, we are plagued and brought so often into wretchedness by the old man, that is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and we see that our body, in which in all its senses we are continually prone to sin, is frail, subject to vanity. Ah, it is a burdensome load to the believer in Jesus to find himself so frequently immersed in the bondage of the corruptions of his flesh. In all the avenues of the capabilities of our vile bodies we are finding to our humiliation that we are exceeding sinful. We see, and hear, and taste, and feel, and smell, and sin, that hideous monster, employs all these channels of our vile body to bring forth fruit to our shame and grief. Truly the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. The body is corruptible, blots and blemishes and wrinkles soon make their appearance and declare that our vile body is mortal, and to the dust it shall return. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in us, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in us. "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?"—1 Cor. vi. 15. Ponder believingly, affectionately, these words of the inspired apostle, and surely you will say the hope of the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body, the glorious liberty of the children of God, springs from it. Our Redeemer was in the world in the body prepared for him, and was born of the Virgin Mary. He bare our sins in his own body on the tree, but he saw no corruption, his sacred, incorruptible manhood arose from the tomb, and many infallible proofs were given of this; he has gone into heaven, and is set down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. There in heaven reigns our triumphant and glorified Redeemer, and he shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Yes, it is very precious doctrine that our bodies are the members of Christ. Your body and spirit, dear child of God, are his, bought with the price of his precious blood. (1 Cor. vi. 20.) Then, although now, through sin and corruption and consequent mortality, even we that have the firstfruits of the Spirit groan within ourselves, yet we are not waiting in vain for

the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. Our bodies shall die, but we shall rise again. Christ is the firstfruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. And though, saith the apostle Paul, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." O glorious, God-glorifying change! This is the crown of all the mighty and gracious works of God in the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure. As one star differeth from another in glory, so also is the resurrection of the dead; our body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. Now the Son of God will not suffer that any for whom he gave himself a sacrifice should fail of that incorruptible and eternal glory to which they are predestinated, and to which he hath apprehended them; he will assuredly bring them to this glorious height. Hath he not said, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes"?—Hosea xiii. 14; John vi. 37–40. If then this is the ultimate destiny of the saints, does Christ in taking hold of his people have to bring them in unwillingness to this destination? O no, the covenant of grace provides a better way than that. The gracious effect of Christ apprehending his people is that they very cheerfully go after him, they are not thinking of wrenching themselves away from his affectionate, gracious, omnipotent hand, but they are so affected by the effectual working of his power in them that all who are apprehended by him will say, "I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." We love the Lord because he hath first loved us, and we say,

> "Chosen of thee ere time begun,
> We chose thee in return."

Thus we would take hold of him because he hath taken hold of us, and our Beloved so animates our souls that we would take hold of that for which he hath taken hold of us. The apostle likens his endeavor to apprehend that for which he is apprehended of Christ Jesus to a race, and to shew how intently his mind is upon the race, and that he is divinely determined to be the winner, he says, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." He would lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race set before him.

Beloved brethren in Christ Jesus, we are in the race, and with us also there is a reaching forth to win the prize. Though we often find the way to be rugged and toilsome, though the world, the flesh and the devil obstruct, and if possible would put us out of the race, though sometimes our pace in the race, to our sight, seems very slow, and we cannot see that we are making any headway, and though through the oppressions of sin and temptations,

and the vexing cares of life, we may be ready to exclaim, "I am ready to halt," yet there is a reaching forth to attain the prize, to attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Whether therefore we are joyously running strong in faith, or weak in faith with sighs and tears, we are only creeping, we are pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. All our longings after holiness, all our yearnings to be found in the image of Christ, all our sighs over our sinfulness, all our distaste of the vanities of this vain, perishing life, all declare that Christ hath apprehended us, and that we would apprehend that for which he hath apprehended us. We are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. Ah, we sigh, for we know that we are vile, that our sinful, decaying, mortal bodies are alienated from the Holy One of Israel; we groan within ourselves, but we are waiting for the adoption, the redemption of the body, for our bodies are the members of Christ, and the body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. We are his; body and spirit we are wedded to the Lord, and in our faith we are reaching forth in hope that he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in us. Our Lord Jesus Christ will raise us up at the last day in his own likeness: we shall bear the image of the heavenly. The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. Our Husband has apprehended us, our Redeemer has hold of us, and leaning upon our Beloved we shall come up from the wilderness, we shall triumph over sin, death and the grave, and then, incorruptible, immortal and glorified, we shall be like him, we shall see him face to face, and dwell in everlasting bliss.

"I long, dearest Lord, in thy beauties to shine,
No more as an exile in sorrow to pine,
But in thy fair image arise from the tomb,
With glorified millions to praise thee at home."

We have thus, beloved brethren, set forth a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, and in consideration of such a glorious hope that has been given us we could desire that such grace might be given unto us, and to you of like precious faith, that in adoring gratitude we might glorify God in our body and spirit, which are his.

We have appointed our next yearly Conference to be held, the Lord willing, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday before the first Monday in September, 1907, with the church at North Berwick, Maine.

FREDERICK W. KEENE, Mod.
JOSEPH HALL, Clerk.

(Written by Wm. Sloan.)

Licking Association of Old School Baptists, to all of like precious faith with whom we correspond, sends greeting and christian salutation. Grace, mercy and peace from our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—As it has been the custom of this Association for long years past to write a letter commonly called a Circular Letter, and as we have been comforted by these letters in the past, we see no cause to discontinue the custom. At this time we will call your attention to the words of the prophet Isaiah, xl. 1, 2: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

These wonderful words were spoken by the Lord's chosen and inspired prophet at least six hundred years before our Lord and Savior, Jesus, the just One, came to bear the sins of his people, and forever remove their sins far off into the sea of forgetfulness, to be remembered against them no more forever, "and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."—Titus ii. 14.

"Comfort ye, comfort ye." This double asseveration shows the great importance, and is a plain command from the Lord Almighty to speak comfortably to his people. So sure was the Redeemer to come and accomplish the salvation of all his people, both Jews and Gentiles, that his people stood in God's account saved from the foundation of the world, and so the prophet, by the Spirit of Christ that revealed this to him, looked down through the ages and exclaimed in this cheering message for the comfort and assurance of the tried and tempest-tossed followers of Jesus, and well may the watchmen on the walls of Zion proclaim the glad and comforting news, for who is like unto thee, O Israel, people saved by the Lord? As God has provided all needed blessings for his people, he has provided that their comfort shall come through the preaching of the gospel of the grace of God, that Jesus is our all and in all, the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the Almighty, for all we have is in the Lamb, every treasure and every grace is there, and "of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." For, "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." He met every demand of God's holy law, that had been broken or violated by his people, and fulfilled it in all of its jots and tittles. He made the law honorable, and forever paid every debt that was charged against his people. He suffered the just for the unjust, and let the guilty go free. Surely this is amazing grace, and love beyond degree, that my breaches of the law are his, and his obedience mine. His people have not only received pardon for all their sins, but they stand freely justified, "being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."—Romans iii. 24. Therefore they have received of the Lord's hand double for all their sins. This Jerusalem is the new Jerusalem, which John saw coming down out of heaven, prepared and adorned as a bride for her husband, and is the church of the true and living God, which is the pillar and ground of the truth. (1 Tim. iii. 15.)

"Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God!
He, whose word cannot be broken,
Formed thee for his own abode:
On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
Thou mayest smile at all thy foes."

Again,

"There, though besieged on every side,
Yet much beloved and guarded well,
From age to age she has defied
The utmost rage of earth and hell."

Dear brethren and sisters, in view of the fact that our Lord and Master has done so much for us, it is but reasonable that we should spend and be spent in his service, and bear each other's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ, whose law is love. "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. * * * By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."—John xiii. 34, 35.

Dear brethren, suffer a word of exhortation: let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together at our regular meet-

ings; let us do all that is in our power to keep up our regular monthly meetings; also help the poor and needy, and visit the sick and afflicted. "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he has promised to them that love him?"—James ii. 5. For "pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."—James i. 27. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."—Phil. iv. 8.

"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor, and glory for ever and ever. Amen."—1 Tim. i. 17.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.
J. T. McCOUN, Clerk.
T. J. RATLIFF, Assistant Clerk.

(Written by Elder J. B. Slauson.)

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Second Church of Roxbury, September 12th and 13th, 1906, to the several churches of which this Association is composed, sends christian greeting.

ONCE more through the mercy of our God we are privileged to send you this epistle of love and fellowship in the form of a Circular Letter, hoping that it may be the Lord's will to stir up our pure minds, and that he may guide us in all truth for his name's sake. We have met with many losses since our last session; one especially we all deeply mourn is the loss of our much esteemed pastor, Elder J. D. Hubbell, who in the providence of God has been called home. The other members of our churches who have also fallen asleep in Jesus were much beloved, but we desire to be still and know that he is God; he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind.

We desire in this letter to call attention to a portion of the word found in 1 John iii. 14: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death."

There are many things spoken of in the Scriptures which are not made clear to the children of God, "for we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." Jesus revealed himself to his people, and to Peter said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." So by the same power that revealed to Peter that Jesus is the Christ, we know that we have passed from death unto life. Without the Spirit of Christ we can do nothing, neither do we know anything of God or godliness. The Spirit of God reveals all things unto us; it is by the mighty working of this Spirit in us, to will and to do of his good pleasure, that brings us to a knowledge of the truth, and to know that we have passed from death unto life. Now if this Spirit dwells in us we have passed from death unto life, and do love the brethren. The first fruit of the Spirit is love; God is love himself, and dwelling in us by his Spirit we have this witness within our heart that we love the children of God. Here is presented the union of the whole family of God, being bound together in one bundle of love, having passed from death unto life. The whole Adamic family was dead in trespasses and in sins, and while in sin and death we had not

the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, therefore we were enemies to God, and to reconcile us unto himself God sent "his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh," being made under the law of sin and death; therefore he abolished death, bearing our sins in his own body on the cross. He delivered us from condemnation, and presented his bride to God holy and separate from sin. By his resurrection from the dead he is declared to be the Son of God with power. This deliverance from death is made manifest to each subject of grace when they are born of the Spirit. By the Spirit of God dwelling in us we are made to love the place where his honor dwells, to love to meet his children and follow him whithersoever he goeth; our hearts run together as drops of water, all having the same blessed hope, and all worshiping the same Jesus, whose name is above every other name, the One altogether lovely. We are bound together in experience, having passed from death unto life. How sweet has been the experience of some dear one to us, and how we are drawn together in sweet communion when exercised by the Spirit of God to esteem our brother better than ourself, seeing the mark in his forehead. O how sweet and how pleasant for brethren to dwell together in love, that love which is not in word only, but in deed and in truth. May we so love one another that we shall help to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

"He that loveth not his brother abideth in death [darkness]." To make it more positive, and to impress it in the minds of the saints of God, the apostle has told us how we may know that we have passed from death unto life, and in this clause he tells how we are to know when we are dwelling in darkness. We would desire always to be delivered from this darkness, and to dwell in his marvelous light, to have an eye single to the glory of God, and to pray for the welfare of Zion. We know that we are carnal, sold under sin, and the carnal mind is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, and it is darkness itself, and from this evil that dwells in our nature comes all enmity and strife, fulfilling the desires of our mind and lust of our flesh, and from this very source comes hatred. The love of God cannot come from this unhallowed ground; as darkness and light are diverse one from the other, so are love and hatred, and each have their origin. "Darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." As it was in the beginning, so is it with the children of Adam, we are conceived in sin, shapen in iniquity and brought forth in darkness, but when God says in our soul, "Let there be light," there is light. He speaks and it is done; so in a moment the light of the glorious gospel of the Son of God shines in our heart, "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." It is always in the face of Jesus that we behold the glory of the Father, Jesus "being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person," and upholding all things by the word of power, when he had himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, there to intercede for his bride. O may the Spirit of our blessed Savior illumine our poor souls, that all darkness, hatred and malice shall be dispersed, and that the love of God shall be shed abroad in our hearts, dwelling together in love and union for his name's sake, and he shall have all the praise. Amen.

JOHN B. SLAUSON, Moderator.
D. T. KATOR, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1906.

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EDITORS:

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REPLY TO BROTHER WALLER.

OUR brother has suggested one of the most important themes presented in the Bible, because it enters into the daily life of all who believe. There is not a moment in all our lives that the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit does not go on. Sometimes we feel it to be so more than at other times, but still, whether seen or unseen by us, the warfare exists, and often it brings us to our wits' end, and causes so much noise and confusion and strife within that we cannot tell who or what we are; yet there is no better evidence that we have passed from death unto life than the presence and power of this warfare felt within. So long as we are in the flesh, and under its dominion, there can be no warfare, because to cause warfare there must be two opposing forces, and in this state there is but one force within us; but the moment the Spirit of Christ enters, the warfare begins, because that which is good always stirs up the opposition of that which is evil. Therefore the warfare is full evidence that we have come into possession of the Spirit of holiness, as well as the spirit of evil.

In former years much was written concerning the nature and origin of this warfare, and there arose differences of opinion as to these things, and there were many discussions as to the meaning of some Scriptures which bore upon this matter, yet amid all the discussions and difference of opinion one thing remained clear, viz: that all alike felt the warfare, and groaned under it, and longed for final deliverance from it, and when each one wrote of this experience all were agreed as one, and all said in substance just what Paul by inspiration said concerning himself, as recorded in the seventh chapter of Romans. Each one then, as he or she read what Paul said there, could feel perfect union with Paul in it all; it is so now with all who are traveling the thorny road, we are sure. The language of Paul, when looked at by those who felt this warfare, exactly expressed the feeling of each; differences might and did arise when there came a discussion of the subject in theory; but there was no difference when each, like Paul, told his or her experience.

We call attention right here to this one thing, viz: that the terms "Adamic man," "old man" and "new man," all three express different things. The Adamic man simply means man considered in himself, as the descendant of Adam, without regard to either sin or holiness. The old man, which Paul also calls the law in the members, is that sinful nature which Adam did not possess in his state of innocency, but which, ever since the fall, all men possess, and from the dominion of which the elect are redeemed by the coming of the Son of man and his death upon the cross. This was the testimony of Paul when he said concerning believers, "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace." We know of no better way to define the old man than to say that it is that law of sin which rules in all natural

men, and which still dwells, but does not rule, in all spiritual men. The new man, on the other hand, is not the Adamic man, but it is called also the law of the mind, and is that indwelling Spirit of holiness from which arises, in all who possess it, every gracious fruit, such as love, joy, peace, gentleness, faith, hope, meekness, and all the fruits of the Spirit. The Adamic man is not then either the old man or the new man, but in the Adamic man, after he is called by grace, dwells both these warring natures, or principles, or laws, until final victory is given to the new man, and the old man is finally subdued. So when Paul said, "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind," we see three things included in his language. First, "I," that is Paul himself as a man, and then the law in his members, and then the law of his mind. Here is Paul then, and in him two things which he by inspiration calls laws. The word "law" here, and in many other places, has the meaning of power or force, that is, something that controls or directs. The man is the seat of the warfare, the place where it goes on, but the two laws are the things that are at warfare. Jesus made this same distinction in the text referred to by our brother. Paul, or any man who feels this warfare, is "the palace," the strong man is the law in the members, "the law of sin," the old man; while the stronger man is "the Spirit of Christ," the Spirit of holiness, the law in the mind, the new man. In the palace these two dwell, never at peace, but in strife or warfare, which will continue while this world continues to be the home of the palace. So when Paul says to his brethren, Put off the old man, and put on the new man, he does not mean that the believer is to commit suicide, or that he is to destroy this natural life, or put off this visible earthly body, but that in feeling, in word and in deed, he is to deny the evil law of his members, and to walk and live after the will of the Spirit of Christ which is in him. To another church Paul said, "Seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man." Notice men and women, believers in Christ, are addressed by Paul in both instances, and these men and women are told to put off the one and to put on the other. It is evident that he knew, what all believers know more or less, that in all who are called by grace there dwells two warring natures. The two natures are not the man himself, but only dwell in him and carry on their warfare within him.

We have called special attention to this careful use of language by the inspired Paul because our dear brother at the beginning of his letter used both names, "the old man" and the "Adamic man," as though they meant the same thing, and because it seems to us that very many have thought about the matter in the same way, but, as seen, they are distinct. If then, we ask, What is done for the old man in the new birth, or in anything belonging to the work of redemption? we must reply, Nothing is done for him save to overcome and finally destroy him. But if we ask, What is done for the Adamic man in all the work of redemption, both in the atonement and in the new birth? we must reply, He is saved, redeemed unto God, and that the power of the old man is broken in him so that it no longer has dominion over him, and that at the end he shall finally be saved, not only from the power of the old man, but also from his presence. The old man does not put on the new man, neither does the new man put off the old man,

but the Adamic man, redeemed and saved, does put off the one and put on the other. Redemption must be for the one who has sinned, for no one else needs redemption. Christ died for the sinner, and for the sinner only; man, dead in trespasses and in sins, needs to be quickened, and no other has any such need; man, alienated from God by wicked works, needs to be reconciled, and no other has any such need. Christ was made, not a quickened spirit, but a quickening Spirit. The very meaning of the name Spirit forbids the thought that it ever could need quickening, and furthermore, that which needs quickening itself never can quicken another; but the everliving Spirit is a quickening Spirit because it is everliving. That which is spiritual cannot sin, and therefore cannot die; and not being sinful and dead there can be no room for the thought of making it alive from the dead.

In the new birth, therefore, nothing is done for the old man, and nothing is done for the new man. The old man is to be put off, and finally destroyed, while the new man is to be put on, and finally come to reign absolutely in the redeemed man. So Paul said, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then he said in glorious exaltation of feeling and faith, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." This is the redemption of Paul, the sinful man, the chief of sinners, as he said of himself, from the dominion of the old man to the dominion of the new man. What a glorious hope is this: that we shall one day be free from the presence as well as the dominion of sin, and be "swallowed up," (if this expression may be allowed) in righteousness and true holiness. Then "we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." The declaration of the dear Redeemer insures to us the fulfillment of this glorious hope when he says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." The sheep are the elect and redeemed men and women, and to them is given eternal life. But the redeemed are still men and women, and the life is still the life of Christ, and this life not only dwells in them, but works and moves and produces the effects proper to itself in them, and these effects are made manifest in their faith, hope and love, and in all righteous obedience to the will of God.

As brother Waller has well said, the old man has not been made over, or changed, and neither has the Adamic man been made over so as to be spiritual as yet. The old man never shall be changed, but shall be destroyed, as we have said, but the Adamic man shall be changed one day, as we are told in the epistles of Paul more than once. The substance of the change will be that we shall see Jesus and be like him. In this life the stronger man has indeed come in, and has spoiled the goods of the strong man, that is, has taken possession of them, and the old man, or the strong man, is bound, but not cast out. But the hoped for change shall surely come, and our vile body shall be changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Lord. This is the testimony of the inspired apostle, and it shall be as he has testified.

Paul testified that because of the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, he could not do the things that he would This we know is the daily confession of our brother and of all who travel the road Zionward, and it is what we must confess of ourself as a daily experience. The

old man of sin is not made over into a good man of holiness indeed, and the Adamic man is yet not perfected, nor is he wholly under the dominion of righteousness, yet the dominion of sin is broken. Sin in the believer does not indeed reign, but it does continue to abide and to perplex the weary traveler so that at times he hardly dare claim that he is one of the pilgrims who are journeying heavenward. All such ones find a law in their members that they cannot do the good that they would. There are those in the world who claim to have arrived to perfection already, but these cannot know what the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit means. Those who feel this warfare know that they are not yet perfected, and must confess that in them, that is, in their flesh, dwells no good thing. This warfare manifests itself much more within the heart than in the outward life of the believer. The words, deeds and general course of that life which can be seen of men, may be, in a large measure, in full harmony with the commandments of God; one may be found in his seat in the house of God constantly; he may contribute freely and liberally of his substance to the expenses of the church, and to the poor and needy; he may in the conference meetings speak whenever it is needful that he should; he may daily in all his companionships be clear and outspoken in presenting his faith in Jesus; in short, he may so live in all these and other ways that he may be regarded as a pattern for others, and yet know that within there is much failure to be what he ought or what he desires to be. He may preach the gospel, if indeed he be called to that work, and not fail to fulfill all his engagements, and yet in preaching realize that he is not of that spiritual mind that he desires to be, and that he cannot be so. He may give of his goods to feed the poor, and yet not be able to give so cheerfully and unselfishly as he desires or as is right for him to do. When Paul said, "The good that I would, I do not," he did not mean that he could not relieve the distressed, or travel hither and thither preaching the gospel, or that he could not present the living truths of the word in his ministry, but that he could not do these things as he would do them, with an eye single to the glory of God, and where selfishness was mixed with the best deeds or words, he felt that he was not doing the good that he would; that which he did, however good it might appear to the carnal mind of man, which sees only that which is outward, to himself could not appear good, because mixed with a wrong motive, it could not appear good to that God who is of purer eyes than to behold evil. One may be faithful in heeding the word of Paul, not to forsake the assembling of himself with the people of God in public worship, and yet know that he has not in so doing done the good that he would, because it has not been done with the glory of God as the sole object in view. So it is true that if we pray, or hear, or read, sin is mixed with all that we do, and this warfare goes on and is manifest in a thousand ways all along through the life here below, and it will not end until that which is perfect is come. C.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906, &c.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder D. M. Vail, at his residence in Waverly, Pa., August 28th, 1906, Asher W. Emmons, of Idell, N. J., and Miss Ella R. Johnson of Ravenrock, N. J.

MEETINGS.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will convene, nothing in providence preventing, with the Olive and Hurley Church, Ulster Co., N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (3rd and 4th,) 1906. The nearest station for those coming from the east is Olive Branch; coming from the west, Shokan, via U. & D. R. R.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Lexington, N. Y., of the Lexington Association, has appointed a yearly or two days meeting to be held on Saturday and Sunday, October 6th and 7th, 1906. As it is immediately following the Association, which is to be held with the Olive and Hurley Church the 3rd and 4th, we shall expect all that can to come to our meeting.

FLETCHER MACKEY, Church Clerk.

THE First Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, at Vega, N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting to be held, the Lord willing, Wednesday and Thursday, October 10th and 11th, 1906. Trains will be met at Roxbury on Tuesday before the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

V. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the Sidling Hill Church, in Fulton Co., Pa., October 12th, 13th and 14th, 1906. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth, especially to our ministering brethren. Those coming by railroad will come on the B. & O. or Wabash to Hancock on Thursday, where they will be met and cared for. The distance to place of meeting is about twenty miles.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa has appointed her yearly meeting to be held October 13th and 14th, 1906. We extend a cordial invitation to our friends and brethren to meet with us, especially ministering brethren.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, Providence permitting, will be held with the New Valley Church, Loudoun Co., Va., commencing on October 17th, 1906, and continuing three days. Those coming from the east or south will leave Washington, D. C., Oct. 16th, taking the 4:15 p. m. train at Sixth St. depot for Leesburg, Va. A train leaves Washington 4:45; any coming on that train will notify me in time or they will not be met. Any coming from the west will be met at Washington Junction Oct. 16th, a train arriving at 1:32. This train leaves Martinsburg, W. Va., 12:41. As the meeting of this train is attended with considerable trouble, being so far off, we respectfully ask that those expecting to be met will write me in time, that I may make proper arrangements to meet them; they will surely be met if they let me know in time. We invite all who love the truth to be with us, especially ministers who are at peace with their brethren. We are hoping and praying for the divine presence of our heavenly Father; we feel that he will be with us.

E. V. WHITE.

THE Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, of Olive, N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting to be held, the Lord willing, on Wednesday and Thursday, October 17th and 18th, 1906. Trains will be met at Shokan on Tuesday p. m. before the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

A. BOGART, Church Clerk.

THE Welsh Tract Church has appointed her yearly meeting to be held on the third Saturday and Sunday in October, (20th and 21st) 1906, to begin Saturday at 10 o'clock a. m. Those coming from Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore will please come via B. & O. R. R. to Newark, Del., on Saturday morning. Train leaves Philadelphia (Twenty-fourth and Chestnut Sts.) at 7:40 a. m., and Baltimore at 8 a. m. (Mt. Royal.) Those coming via Delaware division will take train leaving Delmar at 7:09 a. m. Saturday, and get tickets to Newark, where all will be met. We cordially invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held this year, 1906, with the church at Messongoes, Accomac Co., Va., to commence on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, and continue three days, (24th, 25th and 26th,) when and where we hope to meet and greet our brethren and sisters once more. A cordial invitation is extended. Those coming from a distance in any direction get tickets for Hallwood, Va., which is on the N. Y., P. & N. R. R., where they will be met. All coming from Delmar or below can come on the train Wednesday morning to Hallwood in time to be taken to the meeting. Do not hesitate to come.

T. M. POULSON, Pastor.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 74. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1906. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

REGENERATION.

I HAVE been thinking some of late of the meaning of the word "regeneration," as used in the Scriptures, and of the way I see and hear it most frequently used among our people.

It is with no desire whatever to elicit controversy that I attempt this evening to write some of these thoughts for the consideration of my brethren; if not deceived in myself I feel a sincere desire that the Lord may enable all who read to judge rightly as to the correctness or incorrectness of these thoughts. It is evident that we may at times be advocating right principles, and yet use passages of Scripture to sustain them that do not properly belong to the subject; about this it seems to me we should all be careful. We ought to be helpful to one another in the brotherly expression of our views, not only as to what the Scriptures mean, but also the right application, or the proper division of them. If our writings and conversations are not to be helpful one to another, then of what profit are they? If adverse criticism of our ideas does not convince us that we are wrong, they ought to strengthen us in our positions. If we see we are in error we ought to be free to confess it and abandon it. If we feel strengthened and confirmed, we may still in a brotherly way contend for our idea, but we should ever remember that our guide book says, "The servant of God should not strive, but be gentle," &c.

The word "regeneration," as perhaps most Bible readers have observed, occurs only twice in the Bible, and both these times in the New Testament: Matt. xix. 28, and Titus iii. 5, and while it appears to be most generally used as synonymous with the "spiritual birth," yet neither of these places seem to bear out that idea. The relation of the word "regeneration" to the "spiritual birth" seems to my mind to be about the same as the relation of the word generation would have to the natural birth. We know that generation is not birth; then why should we conclude that regeneration is re-birth, or being born again? I would not contend that it is improper, or contrary to Scripture principle, to use the word regeneration with reference to the quickening or impartation of spiritual life to the poor sinner who is "dead in sin," (although

the word is not so used in the Scriptures) but it is neither scriptural nor logical to use it as applying to the spiritual birth. In Matthew xix. 28, we have the language of our Lord, thus, "Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." From the days of Abraham to the establishment of the gospel kingdom in the world, Israel had the only God-given system of worship, "unto them were committed the oracles of God." "To whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises." But they were a figurative people, and their forms of service typical; still they were the visible kingdom, nation or people or church of God under that covenant. But that establishment, which had its shadowy forms and ceremonies set up by Moses, according to the pattern shown him in the mount, (Hebrews viii. 5,) also had its time and place, and end appointed. According to covenant purpose, and as the substance of the types and shadows once in the end of the world, (that system and dispensation) hath he (Jesus) appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. Thus by divine appointment one system and dispensation goes out and another is ushered in. Of the first the apostle to the Hebrews says, "Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation." This reformation must have been the establishment of the gospel church, or that system of worship that pertains to the new covenant dispensation. This is the "regeneration," I conclude, in which those (the twelve apostles) who had followed Jesus should sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Thus that which was spoken by the prophet Isaiah was fulfilled: "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment."—Isaiah xxxii. 1. Again, Jesus said to these disciples, Luke xxii. 28–30: "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." "That ye which have followed me," in Matt. xix. 28, and "ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations,"—Luke xxii. 28–30, are beyond dispute the twelve apostles, and it is "in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory," that they should "sit upon twelve thrones, [divine power and authority] judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Which is exactly the substance of what he tells them in Luke xxii. 30. We read in Titus iii. 4–7, "But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Savior; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Here the apostle is teaching the necessity and profitableness of good works, works consistent with the profession of a belief in God,

but is careful to remind Titus that it is "not by works of righteousness which we have done," that the "love of God our Savior toward man appeared," or that we are saved, "but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration," or that same washing or preparation that applied to the new covenant kingdom. The prophet Zechariah bore testimony to the source and place of this washing when he said, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness."—Zech. xiii. 1. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim."—Joel iii. 18. Thus Jesus is that all-cleansing, only and never-failing Fountain "opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem," and it is in that Fountain that the whole "church of the firstborn," which answers to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, is forever cleansed, and thus the "washing of regeneration" saves them.

But there is another point in our text we should not overlook, viz: the "renewing of the Holy Ghost." After the crucifixion of their beloved Lord and Master the disciples were amazed, and were in doubt, and it seems they thought all their hope was destroyed. This was signified when they said, "The chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." After his resurrection Jesus appeared to them and said, "Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus unto them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Peter refers to the comforting reassurance ("renewing of the Holy Ghost") of divine things when he says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."—1 Peter i. 3. Not only the apostles needed, but all the Lord's people need from time to time these renewings of the Holy Ghost, to be begotten again unto a lively hope, and so they do this "fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem." Blessed be the Lord, that Fountain is "for sin and for uncleanness," and is always open, there is no account of its ever having been closed, and it is open for the inhabitants of Jerusalem. To be washed in its pure waters (if I am not mistaken in my deductions) is to be washed with "the washing of regeneration." The inhabitants of Jerusalem are by faith enabled from time to time to repair to this Fountain as their needs may demand, and thus cleanse themselves "from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit."—2 Cor. vii. 1.

"The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
O may I there, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away."

One experience of this "washing" is not sufficient, but there is need to be washed again and again with this same washing. I know that herein is involved a wonderful mystery, and the half has not been told. I cannot put down all the thoughts

that occur as I write, nor refer to all the passages of Scripture as they come to my mind, as it would make this article too lengthy, but I hope I have said enough for those interested to gather my idea. Mr. Webster has defined "regeneration" thus: first, reproduction, forming into a new and better state; second, in theology, new birth by the grace of God; that change by which the will and natural enmity of man to God and law are subdued, and a principle of supreme love of God and his law or holy affections are implanted in the heart. A prominent "theologian" and interpreter of Scripture words and terms of the eighteenth century defines the word thus: "Regeneration is the change and renovation of the soul by the Spirit and grace of God. It is called the new birth, and consists in the infusion of spiritual life into the soul, whereby it is enabled to perform spiritual actions and live unto God." This last writer refers to several passages of Scripture, but to my mind they fail to establish the position that the "soul" as a separate entity, or component part of man, is the subject of the infusion of spiritual life and action. However, his confounding regeneration with the new or spiritual birth, as does Mr. Webster, is perfectly consistent with this traditional theory that has been handed down from time immemorial. Let us endeavor to apply each passage of Scripture where it belongs, and thus rightly divide the word of truth. I believe in the necessity of the quickening by the Spirit and power of God of poor, dead sinners, without which there can be no spiritual action, and also that, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" but what I am doubting is the application of the word "regeneration" as used in the Scriptures to this work.

With love and good will to the SIGNS and the brotherhood entire, I am, I hope, your brother,

H. B. JONES.

MT. VERNON, Texas, August 10, 1906.

DRAIN, Oregon, July 24, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS AND BRETHREN:—I feel impressed to write a few lines for the dear SIGNS, as I wish to have our address changed from Sebastopol, Cal., to Drain, Ore. We have, through the mercy of our heavenly Father, been permitted to again assemble ourselves together in church fellowship with what I believe are God's dear people. A more humble, devoted people to the cause of Christ I never met. The brethren here in Oregon that we have had the privilege of meeting are a plain people, who give God all praise, feeling to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." They are sound in the faith, ascribing to God all power in heaven and on earth. I cannot describe what joy this has been to us, after living ten years in what seemed to us a wilderness, and in all those years never having the privilege of hearing more than one or two gospel sermons. O how starved we were. Often in that time we have felt we could not stay another day, but time moved on and we could not see the way clear to go where we could meet with our dear brethren; but I feel that God in a very mysterious manner opened a way for us to return to our church people. We feel that we have been like the prodigal son, feeding on vanity and show, like the husks the swine did eat, during all those years sojourn in California. We have come back worn and weary, in tattered garments, but by the help of God, if it is his will, I hope we have come back to stay with the people we love. Truly I can say with Ruth,

"Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee:" for "thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Surely this dear people are our brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers in Israel. We had lived those ten years among the people of the world, in a fine climate, in a very pleasant land, which is called "the land of sunshine and flowers," but we felt if we had a home there that we would never be satisfied away from our dear people, where there were no gospel bells. There is no church in California of our faith; our God for some cause known to himself has removed his candlestick out of the land.

Dear brethren, let me relate a little incident which occurred just before the earthquake. My husband was working on a ranch, and found what we then thought was valuable mineral, and as the man who owned it was very anxious to sell the ranch we thought we would buy it and get some of our brethren to come and take shares in it, and we would build a church-house and stay in California. Our daughter Estella went to Santa Rosa to try to raise a payment on the ranch, but the parties she went to see had just paid out all they had to spare a few minutes before she found them. She came home at four o'clock the evening before the earthquake. We talked it over, and I could not give up the idea of getting the ranch, so I said, I will try another friend who is able to invest. I went to bed that night with the full intention of trying to raise the money. How different were my feelings the next morning. I awoke about five o'clock with an extremely heavy feeling; I awoke my husband and daughter and told them something terrible was going to happen. I got up and went to the little cot where one of my twin babies was, and took it in the bed with me. It was sleeping near the chimney, and just after I returned to my bed the awful earthquake came. Now was I warned, or not, of the earthquake? I said to my husband, "An earthquake," and told him the light was burning in the next room. He ran to put it out, and just as he passed through the door a piece of the mantle flew past him, the clock fell, and he caught the lamp as it fell, and so prevented what might have been a fire. The cupboard fell with canned fruit and dishes, and the large chimney fell. There was such a noise and shaking one could not tell what was falling. I held my babies in bed to keep them from harm. The property we were going to buy was in such a condition that we did not want it; it was a large plaster house, and you can imagine what a wreck it was. The large tank fell, and we thought no more of wanting to buy it. The best buildings in our locality were the ones wrecked, and many of our neighbors had to leave their $2,000 or $3,000 houses and live in tents, while the poor shacks of houses that were built near the ground were left so that the people could live in them, but the chimneys all fell except one or two in our vicinity. Every one lost more or less, all fared alike, rich and poor; it was destruction everywhere. I think God sent that earthquake; he knew all about it; he is able to kill, and to make alive, and it did just what he had designed it should do, and he had a purpose in it all, and I feel that we really needed a shaking up. How like worms of the dust we feel to be; like dust in the balance. I tell you it shakes all the pride and vanity out of a God-fearing child. I know God has all power in heaven and earth, and he works all things after the counsel of his own will, and we poor, sinful mortals have no right

to reply against him, or say, "What doest thou?"

Brother Polk speaks of the earthquake coming from natural causes. Who caused the earthquake when our blessed Savior cried on the cross, "It is finished"? and when he arose from the dead, who caused that earthquake? I believe God does, and suffers to be done, all things that are done, and knows all things that are to take place, for he is the great "I AM," and he says he is God, and beside him there is none other. Brother Polk thinks I did an injury to California by speaking of it in the way I did. At the time I wrote that appeal things were just as I pictured them where we lived. True, it was a shock that I shall not soon forget, and it made me want to go where we could assemble with God's dear children, caring nothing for this world and its vanities. The banks were burned in Santa Rosa, and they were burned in the city, but most of the money was saved, and in thirty days they opened the banks in Santa Rosa and gave ten per cent. People were excited and did not know how they could get along, so the farmers would not give work where we were, for they could not draw their money. When I made that appeal we were in distress. On the 21st of April we could still see the city burning, and I have seen people who were there at the time who say it will never be known how many perished in the disaster. I think if San Francisco received so much help, and surplus flour, she ought to have helped the poor country people, who never saw any of the help. Santa Rosa got some help, but nothing like the city. I have not written this to hurt the feelings of any brother, God forbid I should do that; but as I have been corrected in my statement, I feel it is my duty. I do not want to say or do anything to wound my brethren, for I had better have a millstone around my neck and be cast into the midst of the sea, than to offend one of God's little ones. We were in California until the 1st of June; we worked all we could. When we could trade at the grocery we got what we could to live on, but did without many things, but our bread and water were not taken from us. I long for that city not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Dear brethren, it has always been hard for me to say, "Thy will be done." We have had many trials in the past years, and just three years ago the 22nd of last February I was called to pass through the hardest trial of my life, when we laid our oldest son in the cold grave, in Hopland, California. I was not with him in his last hour. He made a bright profession two weeks before his death. God says he will not give us more to endure than we are able to bear, and the blessed Comforter helps me to bear it all, and we must learn subjection to his will; but it nearly broke my heart to have my son die without seeing him and hearing his last words.

Dear brethren, for fear this letter will be tiresome I must speak of our meeting and close for this time. We arrived here the 1st of June, 1906, and after visiting at brother Walker's, brother Morningstar came and took us to his home, and in three days one of my oldest twin boys was taken with what we thought was a cold, but proved to be measles, and in nine days seven more of our children were all sick at once with that disease. Let me say, dear brethren, I found what it is to live among true and tried old soldiers of the cross. They surely are dear, true-hearted christians, and their daughter Sybil has, too, the walk of a

christian. We were greatly grieved that we must bring such care upon any one, and could not see why it had to be, but it was God's will. They comforted us, and said they would not have us leave until well enough to move, not to worry. We were there nearly a month, and I do hope the Lord will doubly bless them for all their kindness. On the 8th instant the brethren and their families (forty-two in all) met at brother Morningstar's to worship the dear Master. We were disappointed that Elder Mathew did not come, but brother Charles Morningstar spoke to the comfort of all. I do not think I ever heard a more heartfelt sermon, giving God all praise. O how I drank in that sermon; how refreshing it was to my thirsty soul, and my husband said he feasted upon it all the week after. Brother Charles is surely a shepherd to us poor of the flock, and his dear father and mother think that God has blessed them in their last days. Their home has been a home for the Baptists many years. I hope dear old brother and sister Allison will be able to visit us soon, at one of our meetings. Dear brethren, we did not come here for climate or for an easy way to live, but to dwell with God's dear people. We spent our all to get here, but we are trusting in our heavenly Father to guide us in all things. In having the measles the twenty-five dollars sent to us came as a blessing, and how thankful and humble it makes us feel, for I have learned the more destitute we are in this world's goods, the closer we cling to our blessed Savior. Truly we feel he is the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Our family has not been well, all at a time, since we came here, but I hope the tide will turn for us before long. I have often thought I would write to the SIGNS, but never felt it would be worth publishing, but after our dear sister Powerie said the obituary of my dear boy comforted her, it encouraged me, as I never thought it would do any one good, but it relieved my mind, as I felt it was all I could ever do for him.

Now, brother Chick, if you see fit to publish this in the SIGNS you are at liberty to do so, as a brother in the east desired me to write to our paper.

I am, I hope, one of the poor of the flock,

(MRS.) S. J. GAINER.

[WE did not understand brother Polk to mean to deny that the hand of God was in the earthquake that wrought such destruction in California, but only that this one earthquake was like all others that take place in the world, in them all it is God's hand that appears, as in all the events of life, whether of joy or sorrow; but still it is true that he works according to the settled laws of his universe, and brings about such events by his control and operation of what we call natural causes. We must remember that in the Scriptures the lightnings are his lightnings, the thunder is his voice; if there be famine, he sends it; if pestilence walks abroad in the earth, it is his hand, and so on of all the events of life; all is ascribed in the Scriptures to the wisdom and power of God. So in this earthquake we are right in saying that it occurred along the line of natural causes, but we remember that all these causes are in the hand of God and but accomplish his purpose. We are sure brother Polk and sister Gainer will both assent to this. —C.]

HOPEWELL, N. J., July 22, 1906.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—Some time ago you asked me to write you my experience, and this is the first I have felt a desire to do so.

This morning your opening remarks carried me back to the morning of my baptism very forcibly, when you spoke of what we think of Jesus, and whether he is altogether lovely to us. This is the question Elder Hartwell asked me when I came to the church: Is he the chiefest among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely to you? And it seemed this morning that I could see myself sitting in the room where we met for baptism, and the brethren all around me, and Elder Hartwell standing with Elder John Badger at his side when he asked me that question. But since that beautiful day I have walked a very crooked way indeed, many, many times doubting if I really ever did have the grace of God in my heart, and knowing that others must doubt it, too. The night Elder Farncombe spoke at your house your remarks were very precious to me. You spoke of the comfort that many realized from the words, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Many times when all else fails that remains with me, and while I fear they cannot love me, yet I love them, and want to meet with them. To-day the meeting was to me a sacred and solemn place, and I felt to say that "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." To turn away from the cares of this world and meet with the brethren for the worship of God is the greatest pleasure I have on earth, and when we are gathered in this way, to me

"We are a garden walled around,
Chosen and made peculiar ground;
A little spot inclosed by grace,
Out of the world's wide wilderness."

But to go back. I cannot tell a clear experience as regards times and dates as many can, and this has often been a great trouble to me. So many can tell the very time of their conviction and of their deliverance, but it is not so with me; I cannot tell when I first knew that I was a sinner under condemnation. It seems to me that from my earliest recollections I had some knowledge of the greatness of God, and my own nothingness. As far as my memory goes back I was never lively like other children, but sober minded, and looked at things seriously. When about six years old I sat by my father during a thunder shower, and I remember thinking of the awful grandeur of God. I was brought up in an Old School Baptist home, and to go to meeting, and never knew anything by way of contrast until I was fourteen; then going away to school, I was thrown among the Methodists. It did not require much time for me to learn that I was among a different people; I felt myself a stranger in a strange land. After some time a protracted meeting was started at the place where the school attended meetings, and then all the power they possessed was used to influence me. For a long time two of us withstood their snares, but finally my friend went with them, and I was left alone, and yet it has often seemed to me not alone either, the One who sticketh closer than a brother must have been with me. How often it has been a cause of rejoicing with me that I was kept. He is a wall of fire around his people. I well remember the first time of my going home, and how eagerly I told of the conflict, and when I asked if I had done right or wrong, they

told me I had done right. That was such a satisfaction to me. But all this left its effects, and I believe it was instrumental in the hand of God to show me the way of salvation by grace. So time passed on for a couple of years, when light seemed to break through the darkness. The first sermon that ever came home to me was preached by Elder Joseph Badger at our association. I never spoke of these feelings to any one, and did not dare allow myself to indulge the hope that it was the experience of a child of God. So I lived on between fear and hope, often despairing, until one day while sitting at the dinner table the words, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," seemed to be spoken to me by some one. I looked at my father, (he being the only other person in the room) but he was not speaking, and appeared not to have heard anything, and then I realized that it must be a precious promise for me. All this time I was growing more and more interested in the meetings, and in the SIGNS, but telling myself that no one knew anything about it. When our next association came around you spoke on Friday, and every word was apparently meant for me; it was like precious ointment to my burdened heart. The next day there was an extra church meeting; when the invitation was given two went forward, brother Daniel Stout and sister Mary Johnson, and related their experience, but it never occurred to me that it would be right for me to go, or that any one had ever thought of it. To my surprise, after meeting Elder Hartwell came and took my hand, and said, "I had hoped you would come to-day, come in the morning." Imagine my surprise, I cannot tell you how I felt, I was dumb, and could not say a word; when my secret had been so carefully guarded, how did he know? We went home, and it was a sleepless night for me. I wanted to go, but could not see my way clear; how could I tell my father and mother? for I had no idea they had ever thought such a thing possible. I thought, What would they think of such a sinner asking a place among the children of God? But the words, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you; and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light," rang in my ears all the time, and I could not tell which way to go. There was nothing to do but stand still and see the salvation of God. Morning came at last, and we had breakfast, and then commenced getting ready to go to the baptism. All the time I felt I could not live with the burden that was on my mind, and yet I could not open my mouth, though all the while realizing that time was passing and it would soon be too late. After I went to my room to dress I heard my mother come into the next room; I could hold my peace no longer; I went to her, put my arms around her neck, burst out crying, and told her what Elder Hartwell had said to me, and then she surprised me quite as much as he did by telling me she had been looking for it a long time. She told my father, and soon every one was doing something to get me ready, while I had not dared tell them of my desire to go, thinking they had no evidence that a change had ever been wrought in my heart; and so it was all day. I shall never forget the love and kindness the brethren manifested toward me. The brethren gathered in the room at brother Voorhees', and they sang the hymn,

"Come, ye that fear the Lord," and then Elder Hartwell asked me to tell them some of my feelings. I had not thought to be able to say anything, but my mind had been burdened so long that when at last I had the opportunity to speak, it was such a privilege and relief that I could not help talking, and was afraid I had said too much. When I stopped talking Elder Hartwell asked me the question that I referred to at the beginning. Then we went to the water, and it has always seemed the happiest day of my life, but now it seems to me that here my experience was only just begun. It used to be my idea that as time passed on I would grow to be more as others looked to me, but I find that is not the way; they grow more lovely while I have to complain daily, "Marks of grace I cannot show." But as I become more sensible of my own weakness and failures, so in proportion he appears more lovely and exalted, and I think I feel the force of the words, "He must increase, but I must decrease." I cannot choose my own way, and I believe the steps I tread and the station I fill are marked out by him; and what am I that he should be mindful of me? We are promised tribulation in this world, and we are also assured that his grace is sufficient for us. O if we could only say at all times, "Thy will be done," believing that he will never leave nor forsake us, but

> "Blind unbelief is sure to err,
> And scan his work in vain."

I have to believe that

> "His great decree, who formed the earth,
> Hath fixed my first and second birth."

I also believe that

> "Though plagues and death around me fly,
> Till he commands I cannot die."

That takes in all the journey in this world, and what can we do, or what are we without him? May I be made submissive to his will, and be enabled to say with the psalmist, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee."

Your unworthy sister,

ANNA J. SUTPHEN.

ROMULUS, Okla., July 5, 1906.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —VERY DEAR BRETHREN IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I once more will endeavor to write a few words to our beloved family paper. Some time since, another of my sisters in the flesh, and also a firm Old School Baptist, believing in salvation by grace alone, and a twin sister to sister Duncan, whose experience I sent you not long ago, wrote me a narration of her experience. I feel that it is too good to keep to myself, and so want to share it with the dear ones of our Father's family. I feel to be little and weak, and often think when reading your good letters that I should like to write to every one of you, but am so ignorant, and am so much of my time able to see only that I am nothing, and less than nothing and vanity, and my poor heart is so wicked, that I dare not make the attempt. But, dear ones, I do so long for a word of comfort, and feel to say as one of old: "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried." If I know my own heart, I do love the dear brethren and sisters; I love to meet with them and join my feeble notes with them in songs of praise to my Redeemer.

> "O glorious hope of perfect love,
> It lifts me up to things above."

He leadeth me by the still waters; he maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he is my Shepherd, I shall not want, and though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil; his rod and his staff they comfort me. I feel sometimes that I can never doubt the Savior's love again; then again, I am in the valley, sinking down in affliction, and then I think, Surely the Lord has forgotten to be gracious. Sometimes his promises are sweet to our souls; then we feel to say,

"I would not live alway, I ask not to stay,
Where storm after storm rises dark o'er the way."

So it is with fear that I go on, a poor, weak worm of the dust, who is sometimes up and sometimes down, blundering along life's rugged road. If it were not for the everlasting arms underneath I would sink down many times; he has raised me up many times when every earthly joy had fled and I felt that I was sinking beneath God's righteous frown. My sins and shortcomings are so many,

"'Tis seldom I can ever see
Myself as I would wish to be."

"So far from God I seem to lie,
Which makes me often weep and cry."

But we hear the dear Savior say, "Of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day," and if I am one of that number I shall see him as he is, and be like him when I awake with his likeness, then shall I be satisfied. Jesus paid it all, and all to him I owe. Now if we sin we have an Advocate with the Father, and where sin did abound, there grace has much more abounded. He said, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

Dear brethren, we are in the midst of Conditionalists. I pray God that he will give us faith and a heart to understand, that we may contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, as our fathers did who have fought the good fight and kept the faith, and have gone on before us. I feel to thank God that our little church here at Romulus is sound in faith, all in love and fellowship, with no discord to mar its peace. In some places divisions have come, but our little band is still trusting in the promises of Jesus, and is looking to him who is the Author and Finisher of our faith. Our beloved pastor, Elder J. M. Snider, still comes to us shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, filled with good things from the Master's table; he preaches to us Jesus, blessed Jesus. May God ever keep him firm and steadfast and humble before him, and give him grace and strength to bear all his trials and persecutions in the Spirit of Christ, for he says, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake." May the Lord make him bold to stand upon Zion's walls and cry aloud, and to say with Paul, "I am not ashamed of the gospel," and when the time shall come may he hear the gracious words, "Well done, good and faithful servant: * * * enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." May this be true not only of him, but also of all the dear ministers of our Lord who are called and sent forth to proclaim the glorious riches of the crucified and risen Savior. Now, in conclusion, I ask you to send my sister a copy of the SIGNS in which her letter may be published, if you publish it. She lives so far away from any church that she hears very little preaching. She is an "Absoluter," as they are called here. We are not ashamed of the name, if it requires that to distinguish us from the world.

Now, brother Chick, I very much wish your views upon the thirteenth verse of

the eighth chapter of first Corinthians. I would like it also very much if brother Ker would write upon the eighth and ninth verses of the sixty-sixth chapter of Isaiah. These Scriptures have been on my mind very much of late. I will be very glad to hear from you both upon these texts.

Now I will close. If any one finds comfort in this, to God give all the praise. "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." May God bless you both, and keep you firm to the last, is my prayer for you, and for all the dear redeemed ones.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) M. J. RILEY.

SUMMERFIELD, Ind. Ter.

MY DEAR SISTER MINERVA:—I feel like trying to write you an account of my little experience as you have requested me to do; although it seems so little, yet it is a great comfort to me. About twelve years ago I first felt that I was a great sinner in the sight of God, and I became so surrounded with darkness that I did not know what was the matter with me. One night I went to bed feeling so cast down in the valley that I thought I was going to die. I tried to pray to the good Lord to have mercy upon me, and while I was lying there I believe the Lord spoke to me, and I heard him say, Fear not, little one, it is I. It seemed as though a bright light shone around me, and I was happy there for a little season; but the gloom seemed to return again. About this time I was taken very ill. One night I was lying upon my bed of affliction, and felt cast down in the valley of gloom, when all at once my mind seemed to be carried from this world to the great beyond, and I saw a beautiful city, all paved with gold, and in the large street there was a great light which shone over the whole city, so that it was brighter than the noonday sun. I asked some one, What is that great light? I was told that it was the Savior. He is the light of the world, and I believe that he has been my light; without him we can do nothing; he is our all in all. I still have doubts and fears, but also I have a little hope. Dear sister, I feel unworthy to even write this to you, but if it will be of any comfort to any one else I will send it to you to do with as you please. When it goes well with you remember me in your prayers.

From your loving sister,

FLORENCE SHELDON.

[IN response to the request from sister Riley to ourself concerning the text in 1 Cor. viii. 13, we will say that as we have written some months since regarding the same subject we will here but give a brief presentation of the matter. The Corinthians were idolaters. Christians would be brought socially into contact with these idolaters, for some would be of their own families and neighbors. With these neighbors and kindred they would be compelled to associate in the daily affairs of life; they were not forbidden to do so, but if at a feast it was said to them, This meat or that has been offered to an idol, they were forbidden to partake of it; not that the idol was anything, or that the meat was in itself defiled by being so offered, but because it would appear, if they should eat of it after being told this, that they were also engaged in worshiping the idol; this they must avoid for the honor of the name of Christ. If in the market they were told that this meat was offered to an idol, they were not to buy, although to them it might be clean, and their conscience might not be defiled by any reverence for the idol; but some weak brother,

who did not see all things clearly, and did not understand how they regarded the idol, seeing them buying and eating this meat, might suppose that they did it in honor of the idol, and so be led to also buy and eat with reverence for the idol, and so his conscience become defiled; that is, he would sin in so doing. Paul in the text says that sooner than cause his weak brother to thus offend he would eat no meat while the world stands; that is, never would he eat it again.

The lesson is, if anything that we may do, though innocent in itself, shall have a tendency to lead a weak brother into doing wrong, then we ought to abstain from that innocent thing for his sake. How tender was Paul toward the weak in understanding; how careful he was lest he should do aught that would lead them into what they would regard as sin. O that all of us might have more of this tender, careful spirit.—C.]

(See editorial remarks in this number.)

LEXINGTON, N. Y., 1906.

ELDER CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—No doubt this letter will surprise you, being from a stranger. The hearers will remember the preacher, while he will remember only a few of those who listen to the message given him to deliver from the pulpit. I have often wanted to write to you, but could not feel capable of writing to a gifted minister of the most high God; not because of the man, but because it is the will of God to give him richly from his storehouse of abounding grace.

I am trying to give all the glory to him, your heavenly Teacher, to him all the glory belongs, and I feel you will understand me. I often read the editorials you write, and have always esteemed you an humble christian brother. Do you ever feel a desire to visit the church at Lexington again? I have been reading of late about the seed sown, some on good ground and some on poor. Are you willing to believe your coming some years ago was of the Lord; if so, are you like Paul, feeling to go again and see how they do? Perhaps you might see it was of the Lord; the people were interested in the word given you to speak; if the Lord's will be so, I should like to hear you again. There is only a little flock now where there was once 200 members, but I am not discouraged, I believe the Lord is at the helm, and all is according to his will. We have (to me) precious meetings; our pastor, Elder Sanford, is faithful to keep his appointments, although his health is quite poor; often he is so weak bodily that he has to lean heavily on the pulpit during the delivery of his discourse. In that I see a beauty; do you wonder how and why? I think although the outer man perish, the inner or spiritual man is renewed day by day. Our natural life is so small, so insignificant, compared to that life that is hid with Christ in God; and though weak in strength he is strong in the Lord, God speaking through poor, feeble man whose breath is in his nostrils, speaking of that life that never perishes, but is eternal.

Dear Elder Chick, do you remember when you preached at our association at Lexington? One of your texts was, "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."—1 Cor. ii. 2. Is not that enough? That is all the food I want preached from the pulpit and talked in our meetings. Preach Jesus; cast out all divisions, all differences in doctrine, as the bondwoman was cast out; preach Jesus, talk Jesus, and let nothing of the flesh have an entrance. When two or three, or

more are gathered in his name, crucify the old man, follow after the things that make for peace; that we surely will do if we follow in the footsteps of the meek and lowly Savior. This is why I became a member of the visible church, and my name is numbered with the Old Baptists, that despised people; it is what caused me to desire baptism, because I desired to follow where the Savior led, and it led me into the water to be buried with Christ in baptism, if so be I am not deceived and have run without being sent. I expressed that once to a dear christian brother (now gone home to glory); he asked me who helped me into the water? I felt to be silenced, for O how calm I was the day I was baptized, such peace nothing could disturb, and I feel there had never been, and can never be another such day. It was a most wonderful day, but the tempter had only left me for a little moment, and soon I began to be tempted; first of all he suggested I stay home from our church meeting; he advanced many arguments that seemed all right to me, and I really concluded I ought to be absent, and began to plan an excuse; but I could not find one readily, so I comforted myself with the thought, Before the time comes I shall surely find a good reason to be absent; but I could find no excuse, and when the church met I was with them. Now, and very many times, I have seen the wisdom of an all-wise God leading me at that time, for I have always attended our church meetings when able to go, and sometimes when I did not feel well enough to go anywhere else. The word of God by his servant is, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is." It was evident some would be neglectful, and it was a good lesson to me that I had early in my experience a trial on the subject, and was convinced it was a wrong thing to do, to stay away when the church met to talk of the goodness of God; and I can truly say it has been a great comfort and support to me when passing through great tribulations, to meet with the dear brethren and sisters, and hear them talk, giving all the praise to him that redeemed us and brought salvation by giving his precious life for all that the Father gave him, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame. (Was it shame to him in his mind? to me it seems not.) He came to do the will of his Father, and finish the work, and I hope I have found his church all complete in him, nothing for poor, weak man to do, all a free gift, for I read and believe salvation is of the Lord; not many mighty, but poor, sick and afflicted sinners are called. The Savior said he would send the Comforter, and I sometimes think spiritual clouds do me much good; I have had some very comforting seasons when passing through clouds. I never get much exalted as I read some do; the valley seems more safe for me, a sweet peace often is found there.

Dear Elder Chick, this was written some time ago, and I have hesitated in sending it, but finally I decided to send it to you, as one of the brethren here has wanted me to write for the SIGNS. After you have read my feeble effort, do as you think best about it, I have never written for publication and have not satisfied myself with what I have now written; I feel the half is not told of God's goodness and mercy.

Your sister in hope of eternal life,

(MRS.) EMMA STOCKING.

IMMORTALITY.

THERE has been a great deal said on this subject which is not clear to my mind; it is a subject which has engaged the attention of men in all ages; men of science have endeavored to reach a final conclusion by comparing notes with ancient writers; among the most learned thinkers who take a scientific view of the subject nothing permanent has been established. In certain literary circles very many exhaustive articles have been written and circulated on Psychology, or the natural philosophy of the soul of man. It is generally assumed that if the soul lives after the death of the body that it is immortal. Many well informed men, as well as Bible readers, fail to understand the meaning of the word immortal. The evidence that science has furnished has not proved that the soul has an interminable existence. Science is forever debarred from penetrating any further than physics. If we turn backward to the pages of history for evidence, it is only a repetition of what modern science has taught. The opinions of men in any age are worth only what is founded on positive evidence. Man may have notions called beliefs, yet no belief can be established without evidence. This is well known in the simplest affairs of life. According to the investigation of science, man to-day is left in the profoundest uncertainty. Tradition cannot furnish proof to relieve the mind of man from this uncertainty. Shall we assume a thing to be true without proof? "The immortality of the soul," is an expression which has been circulated for centuries. If we take the Scriptures as authority on this subject, can this language be proven to be true? Very many places in the Scriptures "the soul" means a person, as in the first mention of the word, Gen. ii. 2: "And man became a living soul." This is referred to by Paul in 1 Cor. xv. 45: "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul." Also is this meaning of soul used in the following places: Num. xxxi. 28: "One soul of five hundred;" Prov. xix. 15: "And an idle soul shall suffer hunger;" Prov. xxvii. 7: "The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet;" Rom. xiii. 1: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers." However, in many other places the word soul is used to denote the life principle within man. Nowhere in the Scriptures is it said that the soul is immortal. It does say that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die."—Ezek. xviii. 20. Jesus says in Matthew x. 28: "But rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." It is apparent from the last quotations that the soul is susceptible to death. Death means the opposite to life, or the end of life. If the soul of man is life itself, there is a possibility of it being put out. How then can we say, in an absolute sense, that the soul of man is immortal? Immortality means life that cannot be destroyed; not only life that has no end, but life that is not subject to any authority; life that is altogether independent. The word immortal, or immortality, is used but a few times in the Scriptures, and only by the apostle Paul; he in speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ to Timothy, 1 Tim. vi. 16, points it out as being peculiar to him: "Who only hath immortality." In another place he calls Jesus "the King eternal, immortal."—1 Tim. i. 17. Where Paul speaks of men aspiring to immortality, it is for them in the future, and to be "put on." This would indicate that man in this life state has not immortality. Immortality is only

reached through death in the resurrection of the just. In this life it is in prospect, and secured by hope in the soul of them "who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." The culmination of that hope is on the other side of death. This harmonizes with Paul's teaching to Titus, i. 2: "In hope of eternal life." And again in Titus iii. 7: "According to the hope of eternal life." It is evident that Paul meant immortality when he used these words to Titus, just the same as he meant in Romans ii. 7: "To them who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life." It is in harmony with Paul's teaching to say that no creature or being can attain unto immortality only those who are brought from the power of death by the blood of Jesus the Redeemer; only the redeemed who shall come out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people shall be enabled to "put on immortality." When it is once put on it can never be put off. Is not this a boundless theme for mortals to consider? O where will the wonders of eternity cease with those who are redeemed and placed on high? Angels have desired to look into these things, but they have not been permitted to attain to the great height of immortality.

Part of this article I have copied from one which I wrote for an independent journal of literature; if it meets the minds of the editors of the SIGNS they can publish it. J. F. BEEMAN.

WILTON, Maine, July 29, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK.—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—Whether I have replied to your last letter or not I do not know, but I feel like talking with you at this time, if you can bear with my weakness and my rambling thoughts. I still remain the same condemned and convicted sinner, according to the holy law of God, and have nothing to plead but his mercy and the righteousness of our gracious Redeemer, whom I would adore and worship and glorify. In the youth of my spiritual life (if that life I indeed possess) his mercies to so vile and polluted a sinner as I was, looked so wonderful that I felt to call upon all that was within me to praise, bless and thank him for his great mercy even to me, so great a sinner. Now in these later days it seems at times that his beloved Spirit is with me to comfort and sustain in trials; or rather, it seems that he bears, or takes away, the trial. Right here, my brother, I am almost confounded as to whether this is but indifference and a cold, stupid state that I am in, or really a calm, quiet and peaceful trust that is given me. I would not deceive the Lord's people in this, or in anything else, but if I am deceived, what am I to do? But what I want to say is, in these later days my one great desire is to honor, and exalt, and glorify our blessed Master as our God and Father, and Creator: Jesus manifested in the flesh and crucified on the cross for his bride, his chosen people.

Does it not seem that one who has felt the Savior's pardoning blood should, above all things, desire to bless, and adore, and glorify his blessed name? As I have said, if not deceived, the Spirit of comfort and consolation has seemed to abide with me and to remove all doubt for a time, then will come the fear that I am resting too easy, that I may be claiming that which is not mine; but his teachings and promises have all been very precious to me, yet in the midst of all,

or at intervals I should say, evil temptations have come. O I would not wish to lisp the wicked thoughts that come unbidden, I can only desire to say, "Get thee hence, Satan."

Most of the time I am alone in my quiet home, and yet am seldom lonely. All nature looks so beautiful, every blade of grass, every leaf and blossom, all the trees of the forest, both large and small, all speak forth the power and wisdom of the God of nature. When I behold the fruit trees, some laden heavily with fruit while others have none, yet all alive and bearing branches and leaves, and some time in the future we expect to see them bear fruit, I think, Is it not thus with the heaven-taught child? Fruit is not always manifest, but still the tree is undergoing a growth preparatory to fruit bearing.

You may not be interested in what I have written, but it is such as I have today; I cannot write as I would. There are times when about my work that some portion of the blessed word is made plain to me, and in my mind I am talking with some dear brother or sister. If these are really the teachings of the Spirit they are far more precious and far more to be desired than all that is fleshly. I remember that Elder Quint used to say that it is essential that one be established in the doctrine of God our Savior.

Elder Keene writes me that Elders Badger and Coulter are expected to attend the yearly meetings in Maine this year, so I expect that you are going another way. It will be a change for you, but I shall surely miss you very much, if indeed I am permitted to go to the meetings in South Gardiner. When several ministers are present I do not have that preference as to who shall speak that I once had; it is not man that can give the hearing ear, and prepare the gospel which he is sent to preach. I have had my days of rejoicing and feasting, and yet when assembled with the saints at times there has been no food for me. But be that as it may now, I hope that the churches may be revived, and that the children may be fed and comforted, and if any have, in any form, embraced error, I hope that all may be converted from that error. May the truth have free course and be glorified, and may good be done in the name of the holy child Jesus, at whose name every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that he is Lord and King of kings.

"His Son, the great Redeemer, came
And sealed his covenant sure;
Holy and reverend is his name,
His ways are just and pure."

Will you please accept these lines as my meditations? I hope soon to hear from you, and that you are all well temporally and spiritually. Your last letter to me was very comforting; you seemed to be in the place where I have so often lived, and when you were raised from that low, doubting state, you were brought to rest and confidingly trust in the promises of God. May you be sustained in all your labors, and while words of comfort are given to you to give to others may your own soul be comforted, is the prayer of a very unworthy sister in hope of eternal life,

MARTHA K. HUBBARD.

LANHAM, W. Va., June, 1906.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK, AND ALL THE DEAR SAINTS:—In Numbers xi. 4, we read, "The mixed multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat?" In the fifth verse we read, "We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely;

the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic." Now I do not know that I have the proper light upon this Scripture, but it seems to me that literal Israel is here also a type of spiritual Israel; and as it was then so is it now, the mixed multitude that is among us has fallen a lusting after the things that gratify the carnal mind only. It seems to me that the preachers that preach Cain, Ishmael and Esau are types of the church in disobedience, while Abel, Isaac and Jacob are types of the church in obedience, still enjoy the cucumbers of Egypt. Such things the saints cannot eat. Such preaching makes no distinction in men, only some are obedient and some disobedient. Such men as these come in among us to spy out our liberties, to trouble us with the earthly plants they have grown. These melons of Egypt can never satisfy the hunger of the spiritual Israel, and such things as these are sickly and offensive to the saints of God when led by the Spirit.

When God chose his priests under the law he chose straight men; they must not be broken-handed, nor broken-nosed. I do feel to thank God to-day that he still has straight men in the ministry, who will not bow down to that God-dishonoring doctrine that salvation is partly of men and partly of God. But when these peddlers of the melons of Egypt come along, the mixed multitude, which is lusting after such earthly things, will fall in with them, and say, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." God's called ministers will not handle the word of God deceitfully, like those broken-handed men. You know that any one with a broken hand cannot handle anything as it ought to be handled. The called minister of Jesus Christ must not have a broken nose, or unclean hands. Why must he not have a broken nose? Because he must be able to discern between the true and the false. False doctrine is offensive, its odor is not pleasant; onions and garlic from Egypt have not a godly odor, and the people of God cannot eat them. We abhor all that is of the earth, religiously, for we do know that God will reject all this, he once rejected it, and what he does stands forever. Some are like the frogs of Egypt, a little animal which neither lies down like a serpent nor stands erect, but goes in a half and half position, partly grace and partly works, and those who want to mix grace and works are like frogs. They are pronounced in the word of God to be unclean, and their teaching is like them.

Now do with this as you think best. I would be glad to write more if I were competent to do so.

Your brother,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

PLEASE BE SURE,

In sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions, to give us the name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive a remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list as a new subscriber, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur.

Also when ordering the address of your paper changed give the old address as well as the new one.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1906.

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EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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1 PETER III. 19.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—Through the kindness of the publishers or contributors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES I have the much appreciated privilege of perusing its columns twice a month. I fully indorse the doctrinal sentiments of both its editors and contributors, and hope they may continue to write as the Spirit may direct their minds, and I do hope the publishers may be amply sustained in their noble work; that is, to send out such an excellent medium of correspondence to God's humble poor. I am poor in every sense, and am so poor as to this world's goods I have not been able to contribute anything to the support of the dear SIGNS, but believe the donor or donors of so valuable a present will be recompensed at the resurrection of the just; but if at any time they should discontinue sending it to me I shall not be offended or complain, for it certainly takes money to publish papers, especially such a periodical as the SIGNS. I am in poor health, but have been enabled of the good Lord to travel and visit the churches more than for several years. I have traveled mostly by public conveyance; the dear brethren paying my railroad fare. I feel that our dear Lord has been with me and blessed me, and that my poor labor has not been altogether in vain; the Lord be praised.

Dear brother, I wish to ask a favor of you: will you please at some time give your views in the SIGNS of the nineteenth verse of the third chapter of first Peter? What I wish to know is: where did he go, and who and where were the spirits in prison that Jesus preached to?

May the dear Lord bless you in your labor of love. May you be spared many years hence to preach and write to the comfort and edification of the dear household of faith.

Yours, I hope, in gospel bonds,

P. H. JAMES.

PRESCOTT, Ark., Aug. 14, 1906.

There has been no question in our mind for a long time as to the meaning of this language; viz: "By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison." See also the next verse. Besides presenting what we understand this verse to teach, we feel also like presenting a few general thoughts upon the connection. The heresy of the Romish Church, based upon a false interpretation of these words, is that after the blessed Lord expired upon the cross, and while his body was in the tomb, his Spirit went to the regions of the dead, which they teach is an intermediate place this side of both heaven and hell where men are given another chance of securing their salvation, and preached to them as he had before preached to the living on earth in the days of his flesh. There are several objections to this understanding of the text, but the chief one to our mind is the language itself which is used in the verse following, which reads as follows: "Which sometimes were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water." If indeed Jesus did in Spirit go to the regions of the dead, and preach to them while his body lay in Joseph's new tomb, this text limits his preaching to those who were drowned in the flood; no others, either before the flood or after the flood, are included in the statement of the text. It is clear that whatever view may be taken of this matter, either the Romish or the view we hope to present, no others are included besides those who were drowned in the flood. In any event the Romish theory of Jesus preaching to the dead in general falls to the ground. Besides this, there is not another portion of either the Old or New Testament Scriptures which can be made

to fit into this heresy of an intermediate state between this life and the life of heaven or hell. The Roman hierarchy have found it to their interest, both financially and because it has added much to the power of the priesthood over the minds of the people, to teach this false doctrine. Large sums of money come into their treasuries as payment for saying masses for the dead, which could not be the case were they to teach, as the Bible does, that at death, and after death, forever, the state of all men is fixed, unchangeably fixed for all eternity. Men will pay large sums of money for dearly loved ones who have departed, in the hope of bettering their condition in the world to come, and this enriches the coffers of the church, and the priesthood has a wonderful lever to use in controlling their duped followers by appealing to their love for their kindred and friends. What father, or mother, or husband, or wife, or child, would not part with all that they had, if necessary, to relieve the state of the dear ones who had gone before, and assist them out of darkness and suffering into light and happiness forever?

But if this be not the meaning of these words, what do they teach? Our brother has asked three questions at the close of the above letter: Where did Jesus go? Who were these spirits in prison? and where were they? The answer is plain. Remember it is said, verse eighteen, that he was quickened by the Spirit, and in verse nineteen it reads, By which Spirit he went. Not in body, as when he walked and talked in the days of his flesh, but in Spirit. In other words, he preached to those which sometimes were disobedient in the days of Noah, just as he preaches now to us, and just as he has preached through the Spirit in all ages of the world to those who were also in prison. The spirits in prison were those who lived in the days of Noah, during the one hundred and twenty years in which the ark was being prepared. Jesus preached in the Spirit or by the Spirit, through Noah, as Noah testified both in word and in deed of the purpose and decree of God that the flood should drown the world because of its wickedness. There were spirits in prison then, and Jesus preached deliverance then by the ministry of Noah, just as afterwards he preached through the prophets and the apostles and by all his servants in all ages since. See Isaiah xlii. 7; xlix. 8; lxi. 1. The preaching was then to those living on the earth, and at the time just before the flood, and the spirits were the spirits of living men, and the prison was just that same prison named in the three places in the prophecy of Isaiah, to which we have just referred; we hope our brother and all others will turn to their Bibles and read them.

But why does the apostle Peter especially name those to whom this preaching came before the flood? If Jesus has by the Spirit been preaching to the spirits in prison in all ages of time, why single out these who lived in the days of Noah? If all will carefully read verse twenty-one the answer will be found: "The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us," &c. Peter had in view the great truth of salvation by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead after he had by his death atoned for the sins of his people. Baptism is a figure of Jesus' burial and resurrection. In all the history of the past there was nothing in all the providences of judgment and mercy which God had shown toward an ungodly world that so completely set forth the same thing as baptism does, save the flood, and the scenes connected

with it. Peter says that the flood was a figure, and so is baptism a like figure; both are figures of the same thing. Because of this Peter by inspiration speaks especially of the time of the flood, and of the preaching of Jesus by the Spirit to the people of that day. In this manner he teaches a great lesson concerning God's dealings with the world then, in judgment and in mercy, and also sets forth the great truths concerning redemption from eternal death which was accomplished by his resurrection, and lastly, shows the force that there is in baptism to set forth the same things. It is for these reasons, as it appears to us, that the Holy Spirit, through Peter, especially refers to those men who lived while the ark was being prepared, and who saw the work of Noah, and heard his preaching during the one hundred and twenty years.

Besides replying to the three questions of brother James, we desire to call attention to some other things named in the text and its connection. First, let us notice that it is said that Noah and his family were saved by water. It is certainly true that he, and all in the ark with him, were saved from the water, or rather from death in the water; but besides this they were saved by water, and it is in being saved by water that we see the like figure in baptism; that is, as Noah and his family were saved by water, so are the children of God saved by baptism now; but both were only a figure of salvation, that salvation which is of God, and which is forever. But does "saved" by water mean as applied to the flood, and as applied to baptism? From what and to what was Noah and his family saved by the waters of the flood? The answer to this seems to us plain: he was saved from the old world of ungodliness, and to the new world, wherein dwelt righteousness on this side of the flood. But let us notice that before the flood came Noah was saved in spirit and in heart from that generation. We read that Noah was righteous before God; that is, God had put in him a spirit which separated him from those around him, so that he was as one alone in the midst of their wickedness. In all this wickedness no doubt, like Lot, he was vexed in spirit day by day. Really and truly he had been saved from that generation before the flood, and did bear testimony against their iniquity during all the one hundred and twenty years in which he was building the ark. In this sense he was already saved; but now he must be saved from the companionship of all those wicked men, and so by the water of the flood he was thus saved. He rode upon the selfsame water that overwhelmed the world of the ungodly, and it was his to see them no more. But let us remember that heartfelt salvation must have been his before, else there would have been no salvation to him by the water of the flood. Had he been saved from the flood, and yet have been as wicked in heart, and as ungodly as were those who perished, then indeed it could not have been said of him that he was saved by water. Grace saved him, through its inward work, before the waters of the flood came, and then the water saved him from the companionship of his wicked associates. So he was saved by water, the old life was now outwardly as well as inwardly left behind, and henceforth he was to walk outwardly as well as inwardly in newness of life.

Peter declares that baptism is the like figure. The same things hold good of salvation by baptism as were true of the salvation by water of Noah and his family; that is, if one be baptized while yet loving evil and united with the world in heart and spirit, that one is not thereby

saved by baptism; but if one is called and saved by grace, and separated in heart and spirit from the old life of the flesh, and from the delight of the world, and has come to abhor sin, either in himself or in others, then that one in his baptism, according to the command of the Lord, is saved, and saved by his baptism; that is, if saved first inwardly, he now is saved outwardly; he is no longer in and of the world in spirit, and by baptism he comes to be outwardly no more of the world. If he be a fit subject for baptism at all he has come to love the things of the Spirit, and those who love God, all of which things those of the world do not love, and he cannot possibly be at home in the world any more. Yet the world claims him, and he cannot testify against it, or make it manifest in any way that he is not one with it, and all the world's temptations are ready to ensnare him. His soul is indeed vexed within him, but how shall his feet escape the snare of the evil one? Now such an one comes to the water of baptism, and in baptism declares to all that he is dead to the world, and dead to self and sin, and that his life is now beyond and above this world, he is now saved outwardly as he has been saved inwardly. Let it be remembered that all this is a figure, and only a figure, the real salvation is, as the apostle testifies in verse twenty-one, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; here, and here alone, is the sinner's justification, for Jesus was put to death for our sins, and raised again for our justification. Here also is the assurance of our sonship, for Jesus is declared to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead; and in his sonship is our sonship involved, and here also is the sure and certain pledge of our final resurrection, so that salvation, in all that belongs to it here and hereafter, is in the resurrection of the blessed Lord from the dead, and of this full salvation baptism is the figure; but to confess Christ in the figure also contains a salvation in it, as Peter here testifies.

Still further, as though to anticipate (and indeed it does anticipate) the heresy of baptismal regeneration, which Romanists and Campbellites alike hold, Peter says negatively, "Not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God." By the filth of the flesh, he does not mean the outward soiling which men who labor receive from the earth in which they toil, but sin, which after all is the only really filthy thing in all the universe. Baptism is not the putting away of sin, indeed, were it to be so, then Christ did not put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and baptism and not Jesus Christ is our savior, and the redeemed ought to sing, not the praise of Jesus, but of the power and efficacy of baptism to all eternity, but it is the answer of a good conscience toward God; that is, through the resurrection of Christ the conscience is assured of its cleansing by the shed blood of the blessed Lord; and now this same conscience desires to confess this salvation which is of God, and the Lord's appointed way for this confession is by baptism. This is the first step toward that outward life which becomes all who have been called by grace to the life of the Spirit within. Baptism, then, is not salvation inwardly, or in the sense of justification before God, but still it is an important thing to the believer. It is important in its place, just as justification is important in its place; but let each have its own place, and in its place let us hold forth each earnestly and confidently, as these things are held forth in

the word of God. Baptism is the first step in all outward obedience. Do what we may, we are not walking in obedience to God, but in transgression, unless we have begun by baptism. When Jesus said, "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness," he meant something. There is no fulfilling of all righteousness for any child of God without thus following the Lord first of all. We cannot take the second step in obedience until we take the first, and the first is the ordinance of baptism. If God has wrought such a work in our hearts as he wrought in the heart of Noah, then we are ready to come over on this side of the water, as did Noah when he was saved by water.

C.

ISAIAH LXVI. 7–9.

"BEFORE she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God."

Sister M. J. Riley, of Romulus, Okla., wishes our view of verses eight and nine above quoted, but as verse seven is in immediate connection it cannot be separated from verses eight and nine. In order to reach the subject we feel it necessary to call attention also to verses one and two of this chapter: "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and trembleth at my word." In this God declares his immensity as filling heaven and earth, as being over all things, controlling all things in heaven and in earth; thus showing that he needs no such house or place of rest as the Jews could build. They had taken much credit to themselves in that vast work, but the Lord said, "All those things hath mine hand made;" that is, it was by his counsel and purpose that they existed. But instead of looking to those things and dwelling in them, he would look to (respect) the man who is poor and of a contrite spirit and trembleth at his word. In these sayings is presented the difference between the legal covenant and the covenant of grace; the difference between the house or dwelling-place of God under the law, as the Jews thought, and his dwelling-place in the gospel. He "dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshiped with men's hands." He dwells in the heart of his people; this is the place of his rest, because there is his kingdom. These two first verses have their special bearing upon the prophecy contained in our text concerning the great prosperity of the church in having the Gentiles added to it after the natural branches (Jews) had been broken off. There was a remnant, however, of the Jews who did believe, and who according to prophecy were saved: "Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved." The gospel church was first established with the Jews, but the number was only one hundred and twenty on the day of Pentecost, before the Lord "added unto them about three thousand souls." This number was far short of that multitude of which the fourth part could not be numbered.

In Isaiah liv. 1–3, we have the following language: "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing,

and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes: for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited." The Jewish church is here set forth as a married woman, who, like Sarah, had long been barren, but is now called upon to enlarge the place of her tent, to lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes, because she should break forth on the right hand and on the left, for her seed should "inherit the Gentiles." This Scripture seems to furnish, as it were, a key to the subject to which our attention has been called: "Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child." The Jewish gospel church was profoundly ignorant of God's purpose and will to manifest the Gentiles as his people, hence before the thought was conceived the work was done. The Gentiles were brought into the saving knowledge of God's grace, given the Holy Ghost and turned from idolatry to serve God; therefore were brought into full fellowship with the Jews. "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together." (See Eph. ii. 11–22.) The Jews rejoiced that God had granted repentance to the Gentiles, hence joy without pain and sorrow. Thus we understand how the church brought forth before she travailed, and how she was delivered of a man child before her pain came. The expression, "delivered of a man child," signifies, we think, the manifestation of the holy child Jesus in Gentile believers. Well might the questions have been asked: "Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things?" No mortal had heard such a thing nor had seen such things. These things had been alone with God from eternity. While the Gentiles were often spoken of by the prophets, Israel did not understand God's purpose concerning them; this secret had been hid from the beginning, "That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel." This work was so vast and so wonderful that it appeared as marvelous as though the earth had brought forth in one day, or so sudden and unexpected that it seemed the work of a day only. How different from the way God dealt with man and made known his purposes in ancient times! First he called Abraham and blessed him, then Isaac, then Jacob, afterwards the twelve patriarchs were manifested. It required four hundred and thirty years to produce the nation of Israel, which was all done according to nature. But the spiritual nation, contrary to nature, was by his power produced, as it were, in one day. "Shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." This last sentence of Scripture is not a contradiction to verse seven, but it qualifies that Zion, the church of God, is presented in this figurative language.

Peter calls the Gentile believers "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation;" chosen in Christ before the world began, a royal priesthood, because of having been washed in the blood of Christ and made kings and priests unto God; an holy nation because of God's imputed righteousness.

"Shall I bring to birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I

cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God." In this verse we are taught that God does not divide his glory with another; he it is who brings to birth, and causes to be brought forth. God in his own great, wonder-working way prepared the Gentiles, by giving them divine life, to receive the gospel and to rejoice in it. No power could have hindered his purpose in that grand manifestation of his power, grace and mercy. It is said in Isaiah lxv. 24, concerning the Gentiles, "And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer." Therefore we must say, It is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us. The Lord's ways are equal, therefore where he begins a work he will perform it until completely and gloriously accomplished. Man often fails in his purposes, but not so with God, he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. The immutability of God is clearly presented in the last sentence of our text; he will not repent, he will not leave his work undone; "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." His promises are as sure as his decrees; he never promised anything that he had not before decreed to bestow upon his children.

We have now briefly given such thoughts as we have upon this wonderful subject, and leave them for the consideration of sister Riley and all who may read them. K.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

NUMBERING THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

Since the last issue of the Signs we have received several letters objecting to the suggestion of Elder J. M. Perkins: that all clerks of associations of our faith and order send him a copy of their latest Minutes, that he might ascertain the total number of Old School Baptists in the United States, for the benefit of the "Bureau of Statistics" at Washington, D. C. The chief reason given for the objection is that the people of God cannot be numbered, and should not be reckoned with the nations of the earth, and therefore we should make no effort to satisfy the demand of Congress. It is true, spiritually, that the people of God cannot be numbered, but as men and women (visible church) they can be numbered as well as any other people on earth. Every separate church keeps a record of its membership; what is this but numbering the people of God? And when we have them numbered, what can be the objection to giving the total to the Bureau of Statistics? If Congress has made it the duty of the Bureau to ascertain how many there are of each denomination in the United States, it has made it our duty also to answer all just and proper questions. If we refuse to do this, we at once become disobedient, not only to the powers that be, but to the law of God: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation."—Romans xiii. 1, 2. We certainly should and must be law-abiding citizens. This is not to satisfy idle curiosity, but the law demands it. It never occurred to us that any objection would be made

to brother Perkins' suggestion. We hope that our brethren who object may reconsider the matter, and that all our clerks may respond to brother Perkins' suggestion without delay. K.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT.

OWING to the extreme illness of Elder E. V. White, and the inability of the New Valley Church, of which he is pastor, to entertain the meeting without his assistance, it has been decided to omit the session of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting this fall. It is with much regret and deep sorrow that this announcement is made.

Done by order of the church, in conference Sunday, September 30th, 1906.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder S. B. Jones.)

To the Elders and messengers of the Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists and the churches they represent, and to all who love our Lord, with whom we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Through the never-failing mercy of our covenant-keeping God, by whom the bounds of our habitation are appointed, we are enabled to meet again in council. Since we last met another year of time has passed with its joys, sorrows, toils and cares, and is numbered with the past, which reminds us of the fact that we are rapidly approaching the end of our pilgrimage journey, and admonishes us that we will soon meet no more here in time. Now, very dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, in compliance with the action of the association at her last session, and in accordance also with previous custom, you will expect a Circular Letter attached to your Minutes, and for your reflection we will call your attention to a portion of the gospel of Christ as recorded by the apostle Paul to the Galatians, fourth chapter, fourth and fifth verses, which read thus: "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law. To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

Now, as to when the fullness of the time was come, let it suffice in this short letter to say that it was at God's own good and appointed time, and that was in time to save his people from their sins from the beginning of time to the end of the same, regardless of age or race: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me," &c.—John vi. 37. We want to speak more particularly of what the Son was sent to do. "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world."—Acts xv. 18. Now our text says it was to "redeem them that were under the law." We understand this to be the law of sin and death, for Paul says, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."—Romans viii. 2, 3. Now to redeem is to buy back or to pay that which stood against the redeemed. We understand that Jesus is the Redeemer, and his church or his people are the redeemed. Now, dear brethren, the subject of the redemption of God's people is a subject of much importance to the saints of God, and has been in all ages of the world, and will be to the close of time. The saints' hope rests entirely in the redemption that Christ

has made for them. Christ could be the Redeemer only upon legal and lawful principles, and the church could be the redeemed only on the same principles; therefore Christ could not have redeemed them if he had no lawful right or title to or in them; but we find that they were his own by gift, John xvii. 2: "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hath given him." Therefore we do understand that God the Father gave them to Christ, that he (Christ) should redeem them (the church or his people) from the curse of the law. Now the fullness of the time came when he (Christ) must lay down his life to satisfy the law that had dominion over his people. Yes, the good Shepherd gave his life as a ransom price for his sheep. O dear brethren, he is not only our Shepherd, but he is our Redeemer and our Savior and our God. "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish. * * * My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." No, they are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." O dear brethren, are we not glad that all the imperfections of man make no change in God? We understand that when Christ laid down his life the law was satisfied that had dominion over his people. So when he bowed his head and gave up the ghost and cried out, "It is finished," the work of redemption was complete. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." And again he prayed to the Father and said, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." The Father gave him power over all flesh, "that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Well might he say when he bowed his head and gave up the ghost, "It is finished," the law is satisfied. He was buried, and rose again for their justification, so now they stand redeemed and justified in the sight of God the Father, and are kept by his power, and at his own good and appointed time he will quicken them into life by sending the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father, and will prepare their hearts by his Spirit, that they may worship him in spirit and in truth, for "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Well might John say, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." Now again Jesus says, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." Then if they are not of the world, the world is not their home; therefore Jesus said, "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." O brethren, think of the high position that he has given them, that they should sit on thrones as judges, and of the greatness of the gift, that he has given them the kingdom or church as their home. Dear brethren, we should not abuse this great gift by living in disobedience to the laws given to govern this kingdom or church, but let each one strive to live in obedience to the laws that the King has given, that it may be

a happy home for the dear children of God while they are here below.

Now may grace, truth and mercy be with all the true Israel of God, is our prayer for Christ's sake. Farewell.

S. B. JONES, Moderator.

J. M. CATE, Clerk.

(Written by the late Elder Wm. Martin.)

The Pocatalico Predestinarian Baptist Association, now in session with the Hopewell Church, Kanawha Co., W. Va., Aug. 29th, 30th and 31st, 1906, sendeth greetings to the churches of which she is composed, and the associations with which she corresponds, by republishing the following, which is a Circular Letter of the first session of this Association, for the year 1835, or seventy-one years ago, when a few of the orthodox Baptists drew out of the Teays Valley Association, which had drifted into Missionism, and formed themselves into what they called the Pocatalico Association.

DEAR BRETHREN:—At the close of our convention you expect a Circular Letter to be attached to our Minutes, in which we inform you we have had a very agreeable meeting. We now proceed to give a sketch of the design of the convention, not that we are tired or dissatisfied with the Baptist sentiment, but would wish earnestly to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. With a sympathetic feeling we look back to the time when the Baptists were one people, all was peace and harmony; yea, when we met at our associations we met like a band of united brethren, the watchmen all blew the same trumpet, and that trumpet gave a certain sound. How often have we heard from the stand of our associations eight or perhaps more sermons preached, and all completely connected, no jars, no difference in the doctrine or the business of the Association; that brotherly love was manifest so that the world was constrained to say, See how these christians love each other; but now when we meet, O lamentable, there appears to be a barrier, a wall of partition, raised up between brethren; even on the stand nothing is more common than for three or four sermons to be preached and no two of them agree. Now, brethren, "can two walk together, except they be agreed?" for if a house be divided against itself, that house falleth.

It is now reported that a few of us are splitting churches and causing divisions. We do most solemnly deny the charge; we would only wish to put a pair of gospel spectacles on the eyes of the Baptists that they may see there are new inventions introduced into the Teays Valley Association. The Baptists once believed that all God's people shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of his children, but now Theological Schools, Societies, and regulations that the New Testament gives no account of, are introduced and received in preference to what the gospel teaches. The spread of the gospel is said to be the ground of contention, but it is not; departing from the gospel rule and substituting other rules in its stead is the ground of contention.

Now, dear brethren, we refer you to the word of God; compare the acts of the general Association with the New Testament and see if it will justify them. Nay, it condemns the course pursued by its advocates. Now, brethren, we exhort you to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, but we hope there are a number of christians among the advocates of the general Association, and we love them; but Paul says,

Mark the brethren that cause divisions, and have no fellowship with them; then, brethren, for the Lord's sake have respect to the glory of God. With pleasing anticipation we look forward to the time when the Baptists will be one people. We do not unchristian our brethren who differ with us in opinion, but invite them to the standard of the truth. Now, dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, in conclusion we exhort you to rally around the standard of King Jesus, and remember that you have enlisted for the whole war, therefore hold not back, if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out. Many trials await you here, but a glorious crown awaits you on the right hand of God, who alone is our great Head and King, the Author and Finisher of our salvation. O come then, brethren, let us banquet together with the Lord, for the banner of love is flying sweetly over us. We hope to see the old soldiers of the cross coming to our next Association with the breastplate and helmet of faith girded on. Dear brethren, do not let your courage fail you, for one shall chase a thousand, and two shall put ten thousand to flight. Finally, brethren, live in peace, and the God of peace shall be with you. Farewell.

J. H. TERRY, Moderator.
Hurricane, W. Va.

G. B. BIRD, Clerk.
Byrnside, W. Va.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906, &c.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—Sept. 27th, 1906, **Mrs. Priscilla Campbell,** of Cammal, Lycoming Co., Pa., aged 72 years, wife of Jehiel Campbell. Lung trouble and heart disease are supposed to have been the cause of her death. She, with her husband, was baptized by Elder S. H. Durand thirty-five or forty years ago. She loved sound doctrine. She leaves a sad, lonely husband, one sister, three brothers and many friends to mourn; their loss is her gain.

The funeral was largely attended the 29th, the writer officiating. May God bless the sorrowing ones for Jesus' sake.

D. M. VAIL.

OUR dear aunt, **Miss Rebecca McAlpine,** departed this life in the 78th year of her age, after months of suffering from cancer in her face. She bore her suffering with patience, and when her niece would say, "I am afraid you will not recover," she would say, "I have not received the call yet;" but one night she said, "I have received the call, I will not get well." I was at her bedside a few days before she died, and I said, "Dear auntie, the Lord will not forsake you." She said, "No, no," and pressed my hand. She was a lover of the truth. Her parents, together with her four sisters, were members of the Covenanted Baptist Church. Her end was peace. Her nephew, Deacon McAlpine, promised her he would attend to all the details of her funeral, which he did. Her funeral was largely attended by nephews and nieces and kind neighbors. Mr. Vance, a Methodist minister, conducted services at the house and grave.

(MRS.) CHRISTINA MURRAY.

Mrs. Martha Jane Lefferts departed this life Jan. 19th, 1906, at the home of her son, G. D. Lefferts, 2736 N. Front St., Philadelphia, Pa. She was born Jan. 4th, 1823. Her father and mother, John and Margaret Krewson, were members of the Southampton Church. She was baptized in the fellowship of this church at Southampton June 13th, 1851, by Elder Sharp, and remained a faithful member till her death. She was a spiritually minded woman, and it was pleasant to hear her talk of spiritual things. After the death of her daughter, during the last years of her life, she lived alone much of her time in the same house in Southampton where she commenced housekeeping. She said she did not feel alone; she realized the dear Savior's presence. She still walked to meeting, about a mile, after she was eighty years old. She was visiting at her son's in Philadelphia when she was taken with her last sickness, and there I saw her for the last time. She said she was ready to go when the Lord's time came, and spoke of some hymns and portions of Scripture. She left three sons and several grandchildren, one sister and two brothers, who

mourn the loss of one dear to them. She was highly esteemed by all her neighbors.

The funeral was at her own home, and the twenty-third Psalm was read on that occasion, upon which I spoke to the relatives and friends.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Sept. 14, 1906.

MEMORIALS.

(ROXBURY ASSOCIATION.)

It has pleased Almighty God to take from among us our dearly beloved pastor, **Elder J. D. Hubbell,** who for over forty years was a faithful minister of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and who for eighteen years served the churches of the Roxbury Association; having the watchcare over the flock as an undershepherd, his whole life was devoted to the welfare and peace of the churches he so faithfully served. The churches of this Association mourn the loss of our faithful servant, but we do not mourn as those that have no hope, for what has been our loss has been his eternal gain. Our dear, departed pastor was always ready to respond to every call of his brethren and to minister unto their necessity, and always had words of comfort; he was also ready to lend a helping hand to the needy. We miss him at home, and we feel that he is missed abroad; we miss him in our meetings, and we also miss his kind and good advice. He continued steadfast in the doctrine of God our Savior, and never shunned to declare the truth as it is in Jesus. He passed through many sore trials during his ministry, but the God of all grace sustained him even to the last. The Lord had bestowed upon him a kind and forgiving spirit, that he was able to love his enemies, and to forgive them that trespassed against him. He seemed reconciled to the will of God, believing that all would be well in the end. While we mourn our loss, yet we bow in humble submission to the will of our God, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. May he give us strength in this our affliction. We, the churches of this Association, sympathize with his widow, our dear sister, and all that mourn the loss of so faithful a servant, and commend them to the God of all grace, who hath said, I will be the widow's Husband, and a Father to the fatherless.

JOHN B. SLAUSON, Moderator.

D. T. KEATOR, Clerk.

(LICKING ASSOCIATION.)

Having been gathered together in an associate capacity with our sister church called Little Flock, the home church of our dear, beloved brother, **Elder Dudley George Johnson,** our sorrow and sadness of heart because of his departure from this life have been increased and intensified because we see his cheerful face and his gentle and humble walk in our midst no more, and regarding this as a favored opportunity, we wish to make these expressions with respect to him. Brother Johnson was a lovely brother, one whose gentleness, meekness, faithfulness and zeal bound him to our hearts in the tenderest bonds of confidence, fellowship and love, and whose gift in the ministry was so fraught with the blessed assurance of its divine sending and gracious adornment, together with its usefulness in the churches, that we can but say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

MEETINGS.

THE Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, of Olive, N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting to be held, the Lord willing, on Wednesday and Thursday, October 17th and 18th, 1906. Trains will be met at Shokan on Tuesday p. m. before the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

A. BOGART, Church Clerk.

THE Welsh Tract Church has appointed her yearly meeting to be held on the third Saturday and Sunday in October, (20th and 21st) 1906, to begin Saturday at 10 o'clock a. m. Those coming from Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore will please come via B. & O. R. R. to Newark, Del., on Saturday morning. Train leaves Philadelphia (Twenty-fourth and Chestnut Sts.) at 7:40 a. m., and Baltimore at 8 a. m. (Mt. Royal.) Those coming via Delaware division will take train leaving Delmar at 7:09 a. m. Saturday, and get tickets to Newark, where all will be met. We cordially invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held this year, 1906, with the church at Messongoes, Accomac Co., Va., to commence on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, and continue three days, (24th, 25th and 26th,) when and where we hope to meet and greet our brethren and sisters once more. A cordial invitation is extended. Those coming from a distance in any direction get tickets for Hallwood, Va., which is on the N. Y., P. & N. R. R., where they will be met. All coming from Delmar or below can come on the train Wednesday morning to Hallwood in time to be taken to the meeting. Do not hesitate to come.

T. M. POULSON, Pastor.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie, N. Y., has appointed her yearly meeting to be held, if the Lord will, on the fourth Sunday, and Saturday previous, in October, (27th and 28th) 1906, at the meeting-house on Schoharie Hill, meeting to begin at

10 o'clock a. m. each day. Brethren of other churches of our faith and order, and all who love the truth, are cordially invited. Trains will be met at Howe's Cave on Friday previous to the meeting.

G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

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To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

BI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

OF THE

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The bi-centennial of the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., was celebrated Oct. 20th, 1903. After some delay it is now published in pamphlet form, and is now on sale. Price 15 cents. The pamphlet contains photographs of the Welsh Tract meeting-house and Elder J. G. Eubanks, the pastor, the proceedings of the anniversary, letters of greeting from sister churches and a historical sketch written by Dr. B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., and read on the occasion. Some of the brick in the meeting-house was brought from Wales to this country, and hauled on mules' backs a distance of ten miles. The pamphlet is very interesting and full of information.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 74. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1906. NO. 21.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FOREST HILL, Md., Sept. 28, 1906.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—I have not been a writer for your paper, although I have been a reader of it the greater part of my life, as was my father before me, but neither of us felt that we had any gift in the direction of writing for publication. Father, who passed away many years ago, was a firm believer in the doctrine contended for by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I think sometimes that I know it, but when I try to tell it I fail.

A short time ago I received a request from a very highly esteemed brother and his wife that I should write for publication a sketch of my experience and call to the ministry. My first thought was, I cannot attempt such a thing; but upon further consideration there came the feeling that I should not treat this request with indifference, and somehow the impression continues to follow me that I must try to comply with it.

Now in trying to present this matter I am at a loss to know where to begin. In early youth I had serious thoughts on the subject of death and eternity, but at the same time I was greatly in love with the world and its pleasures. When upon the dancing floor I have sometimes had sharp soul exercises, so that my knees would tremble under me. I would look around upon my companions, but they seemed to be comfortable and happy, while I was in distress. These impressions would wear off in a measure at times, then I could enter again with zest into my youthful sports. During these years the doctrine held by the Old School Baptists was most obnoxious to me. My ideas of religion were in perfect accord with the popular religion of the day, though I felt that I was not yet ready for religion of any kind, as it would interfere too much with the pleasures of life, which I was still looking forward to; later in life I intended to have this religion, which I thought I could get whenever I chose to set about it. With all my hatred for the doctrine of election there would very often arise in my mind serious questionings in regard to it; I desired with all my soul not to believe it, and yet I feared it might be true. Once when a great struggle of this kind was going on in my mind, I had presented to me an appearance or vision which impressed me great-

ly, and which I will here describe. I was at work in the field alone, a great struggle was going on within. Has God a chosen people? Is election a Bible doctrine? How could I decide the question? All of a sudden there appeared high up in the air a group of people clothed in shining apparel, and inclosed by a wall, the brightness of which I have never been able to describe. I did not seem to look up to see it, yet it appeared to be very high, and was as plainly seen by night as by day. This vision remained with me three days, and was interpreted to me as follows: This is the church of Christ, the elect of God; the bright robes they wear is the righteousness of Jesus Christ; they are inclosed with the walls of salvation; and these words rested upon my mind: "The Lord is good;" and, "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." All my opposition to the doctrine of election was now broken down; I saw clearly that God had an elect people, and that salvation is now complete, and that the offering for sin will never be made again. "In that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." My sorrow was now because I could not feel that I was embraced in the glorious plan of salvation, that I was inclosed within those shining walls with that happy company; but on the evening of the third day, just before the vision vanished, they all seemed to look down upon me for the first time, and the loving look they gave me encouraged me to hope that I should at some time be a sharer of their joys. This was not less than sixty years ago. Ever after that my leading desire seemed to be that I might be with this happy people and know the joy that seemed to be theirs. In the Lord's good time I believe I did enter into the joys of that salvation which I thought they were enjoying, and was able to sit down with them in that blessed hope. Soon after receiving this comforting hope my brother Nathan and myself were baptized by Elder E. Rittenhouse, and received as members of the Harford Church, in Harford Co., Md., where my membership still is.

If ever I have received a call to the ministry my exercises in that direction began right here with this view which was given me, although at the time I knew nothing of what it meant. There seemed to be with me constantly a desire to tell what I had seen, and I was continually at it in my dreams and while at work in the field. At this time it was the custom for our church to meet regularly for prayer-meeting when no pastor was present. In these meetings I was usually called upon to speak, which I sometimes did, with some freedom of mind at times. I continued on in this way from September (the month of my baptism) until May, 1859, at which time the Baltimore Association met with the Harford Church. The committee on preaching had arranged to have Elder Harding follow Elder Joseph L. Purington, but he, (Elder Harding) being in poor health, declined doing so, saying that he was physically unable to preach. They then decided to put me in his place. My feelings at this time might perhaps be imagined (by those who have had a similar experience) better than I can describe them. As I sat waiting for my turn to come, trembling in every limb, it really seemed to me that those who sat near must surely hear the beating of my heart. Elder Purington took for his text, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." It was soon evident to all

that he was under a cloud and could not come forth, and he felt it himself to such an extent that he soon sat down. Just as I saw him failing I found myself growing a little stronger, and when my turn came I was ready to get up and go on. It came to me in this way: Now here is a great preacher, a man of wonderful ability, yet the Lord has shut him up. Does it not show plainly wherein is our strength, his strength as well as mine? I read these words for a text: "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." I seemed to forget my weakness for the time being, and spoke with considerable liberty and comfort to myself. When I had finished, some one in the congregation arose and said, "Loose him, and let him go." The church then voted to ordain me to the work of the gospel ministry, and I was made willing to leave my case in their hands. After the laying on of hands, and prayer by Elder Gilbert Beebe, and charge delivered by the trembling hand of old Elder Trott, I sat down in the pulpit, and suddenly there came upon me such an overpowering sense of my weakness, ignorance and unfitness in every respect for such a solemn and important work, that I was well nigh crushed beneath the awful weight. I knew that I was now liable to be called upon to administer the ordinances of the church, and how dare I attempt such solemn responsibilities? This surely was like unto the Egyptian darkness, of which it was said it might be felt. In the midst of this distress of mind a very beautiful but indescribable appearance seemed to fill the house and to rest upon the people, causing them to look very lovely indeed, and in some peculiar manner appearing to bring them and me very near together. Then it seemed to be presented to me that here was my work among these people, and a still small voice whispered, I will be with you to the end, and the sweetness of this promise still abides with me. My ignorance no longer distressed me, for I had learned that the wisdom I needed was from above. I felt now for the first time that I wanted to preach. I believe this was in 1859, and I continue until the present time, trying to serve this church, together with the Warren and Rock Springs churches, which I began to serve soon after.

I have in this article narrated only some of the more striking things in regard to my experience, both as touching my reason of a hope, and my reason for occupying the position I do in the church. No pastoral gifts were ever bestowed upon me, neither was I ever intended to use the pen. I have done the best I can to answer the request of Elder Durand, and I submit what I have written to the publishers of the SIGNS to do with as they think best.

My eighty-second milestone will soon be reached, but I still continue to go among these people regularly, and to try to preach to them, and they still continue to come out to hear me. I have tried in this article to confine myself to what I hope the Lord has shown me by the way. Of my own exercises I have said but little, although my soul hath them in remembrance. I now feel to submit the matter to your better judgment.

WM. GRAFTON.

TOUCHET, Wash., July 20, 1906.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—I feel a desire in my heart this morning to acknowledge your most comforting letter, which came in due time. Now, my dear brother, I tried very hard to persuade my-

self not to bother you with a letter, or rather my nature tried to hinder me, as I am so weak and destitute of that which is to the glory of God that I feared what I should write would not be a blessing to you, but rather a burden, but if that light that illuminated the minds of the ancients, and that was so wonderfully demonstrated in your epistle, has not to some extent visited my soul, how could my heart beat with warmth at the message of such a salvation? It is through this channel that I am made to say the words, "Dear brother." My soul feels stirred up this morning, and I may weary you, but I hope that the grace of God may direct my pen to the glory of his name and the good of his dear saints.

I have just received a letter from dear Elder Sisk, who has been on the walls of Zion for many years, and has never spoken with any uncertain sound, but still holds fast on his way though sorely afflicted; the whole tenor of his letter was the praise and glory of God, he uttered not one sentence calling in question the justice of God in his affliction.

Dear brother, I feel a desire to notice for a few moments the two covenants, and the difference between them. One, as you stated, is the administration of death, and the other, or the second covenant, of life, and it appears to me that there is lack of a right division of these two covenants in this our day. It seems that some of the brethren cannot see the harmony between God's unlimited predestination and the admonitions of the gospel. In order for us to solve any problem we must first get the principles involved in our minds. Now the principle of the first covenant was fear. When Moses the teacher of the fathers with whom the first covenant was made, heard the voice accompanying the giving of that law, he exceedingly feared and quaked, and the effect was that the whole congregation of Israel begged him to veil himself, for they could not endure the sight, and this he did. It was the administration of death, and when death is manifested men fear.

But now we turn to the second covenant, or new, and of that the principle is love, and we are told that perfect love casteth out fear; thus we see one is the opposite of the other. While Israel followed God under the law to a certain extent, it was through fear of his judgments; but this is not so with spiritual Israel, she follows God and keeps his commandments because she loves him, and she loves him because he first loved her and made his love known to her by revelation. Now to be brief I want to bring the inspired testimony to bear witness with our spirit, or our experience. I say that to-day we serve God because we love to serve him; the very nature of the life of the saint is to honor God and to walk in holiness of life, but he finds himself fettered with sin in the flesh, but God in his divine arrangement has established the words of exhortation to cheer the mind on in this race, and a godly exhortation has no shadow of a threat in it, any more than the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes, neither is there any condemnation in it. This is not conditional time salvation, this salvation or redemption is of these mortal bodies of ours, in which Paul groaned, and Paul is a witness to this. His testimony is that when he was going on in sin there appeared a light unto him. Let us notice, this light appeared from heaven, and in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. The light from heaven was one witness, and the voice that spoke to him was another, and

the gospel preached by the called of God is another witness. So Paul had the fact established in him that Jesus is the Savior. God says, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus in our hearts makes us new creatures; we are no more under the law, but under grace, and if the Son makes us free, we are free indeed. So by this visitation from heaven to Paul he was liberated from his old master, the law, and he could say with humble boldness and fervent love to his new Master, "My Lord," and none can say this truly in the absence of the Holy Spirit. "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Why, Paul, say, Do? Are you afraid of the judgments of your new Master? No, said Paul, he has removed all my sins, and has fully clothed me in his righteousness, and my soul is filled to overflowing with gratitude to him, and I want to honor him, for he is the One whom my soul now loves, and I feel to testify in harmony with inspiration that the love of God constrains me. It is not the constraint of a tyrant, but the wonderful work of God in my affections, which I feel that I have experienced with Paul. I am so tired of this earthly house that I want to be clothed with the house which is from heaven, I want to be clothed with the likeness of the dear Savior.

It seems to me that the commandments and the admonitions of the gospel are in full harmony with God's predestination. Some of the dear brethren seem to think that an exhortation to good works refutes the doctrine of predestination. Paul after he received the heavenly vision conferred not with flesh and blood, but went immediately to the work to which God had called him. Now what was this work? It was that work which God had before ordained that Paul should walk in it. He said, "When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to revealed his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen: immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." One will say, All this pertains to eternal salvation, and we all believe that is of grace, but our enjoyments here, after we know these things, depend upon our conduct. But Paul goes on to give us his experience in this life afterwards. He said, "I labored more abundantly than they all;" that is, more than all the apostles. Does it not seem that Paul ought to have rebuked the other apostles for not laboring as much as he did, saying to them that their enjoyment depended upon their work or labor? But listen, Paul immediately says, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me;" thus Paul ascribes all to grace. So also he said, "By the grace of God I am what I am." And, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given." What was it given for? "That I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." In like manner every child of grace to-day realizes the truth of the language of Jesus, "Without me ye can do nothing." The apostle preached the doctrine of election. He said, "We were chosen in Christ before the world was," and that choice was according to a purpose, that purpose was that we who were chosen should be holy and without blame before him in love. Whatsoever his soul desireth that he doeth, he is unlimited in power. This makes the result of the choice as sure as the choice; this being true, every shadow of a doubt is removed that his purpose shall be consummated. I am not able to separate his purpose from his predestination. Well then, if our God has predestinated

us to be conformed to the image of his Son who shall hinder? "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" And if he "spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Thus we see that the apostle first of all seals to the weary soul, all defiled with sin, that God loved him when dead in sin. O what a wonder of wonders! How can God love me, who all my days have trampled his mercies under my feet? Inspiration comes to such a soul with the assured fact which nature will never comprehend, that God's ways are above our ways as high as the heaven is above the earth; the world by wisdom knows not God. Paul sets forth the principles of election and predestination as being that upon which he could exhort the faithful in Christ Jesus unto good works. In consideration of what God has done for us, we have boldness to take up the cross, or the bed upon which like the impotent man we have been lying so many years, and walk. This is self-denial, which in itself excludes all the works of man, and this is the greatest cross that I find in my experience.

I lay for a long time upon the bed of my infirmities and unworthiness, but when Jesus revealed to me that he was my redemption and my righteousness, my strength and my all, then I could say with Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am," and though he call me to walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for the Lord is with me as my rod and my staff. In this revelation of Jesus we can say in truth, The yoke is easy, and the burden is light. Why is it easy? Because God has chosen us, and our God has predestinated that Jesus should bear all our afflictions and burdens, and he is unlimited in power, and therefore the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands. God the Father prepared Jesus a body, and gave him the Spirit without measure. Then he as the mighthy One could go forth conquering and to conquer, and in consideration of his wonderful and mighty work the gospel comes to us to-day full of exhortation and comfort, which makes the soul leap with joy. But when we find ourselves looking to self, or to the puny arm of man, the gospel comes with a sharp rebuke, which opens our eyes to the wonders of God's mercy in not forsaking and cutting us off in our forgetfulness of him; instead of meting out to us deserved wrath, he remembers mercy, and with loving words he says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." In me shall you have peace.

I want to say before I conclude that I certainly have been made to realize all these wonderful benefits of the grace of God of which I have here tried to write, and when I have been made to rejoice in reading your comforting articles in the SIGNS I am made to hope that God is the author of such excerises as I have had.

I must close. I feel to be just as far from explaining myself to you as I was before I began. May God ever keep his children from every false way, is my prayer.

Your brother,

J. T. BARNES.

LAMOTTE, Mo., June 19, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Will you please allow me a little space in the SIGNS? I have had many sad thoughts over the distreses of the Lord's dear people, and have wept bitter tears of sorrow over the

same, and have often been in silent prayer to God that he would "turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness." I cannot help believing that every true servant of Christ will desire to labor for the peace and union of the brethren, and not division; if he be Christ's servant he will labor to gather together, but if not he will scatter abroad. If Christ is to be betrayed each one will begin to inquire, Is it I? He cannot love Christ and at the same time be willing to afflict or bring trouble upon his body, hence he will heed the apostle's admonition, and seriously examine himself as to whether he is in the faith or not.

I have carefully read and studied the causes of widespread (not local) troubles among God's dear people, and I have found every time that it has come from false doctrine or foreign ideas. Now faithfulness with an eye single to the glory of God, becometh the house of God, hence I desire to be plain but not personal; that certainly is not right; what I wish to present is the principle involved. I hope that I can sacrifice my personal feelings at any time to save a brother; this is I believe right; if all could do this then there would be no trouble; let every one of us remember and practice this and there will be sweet peace. I write to commend the beautiful example of our brother, Morgan Brown, in the SIGNS; he has followed the true road to peace, and this course by the grace of God will alone bring peace. Brother Brown saw the error, and that death to the church was in it, and O how I love him, or any other of the Lord's dear children, who, seeing their wrong, and that it will distress God's dear children, come forward in humility of spirit and make acknowledgment publicly, as brother Brown has done, if the error be public, and if private, then privately. I think I can sacrifice my feelings for those of my brethren, but not precious truth and principle, that would be to divide instead of heal. God's dear children will always stand together in peace and fellowship upon the glorious truths of the Bible. It is not on record where the glorious doctrine of the Bible has ever brought trouble into the true church of God; on the contrary it has always held it lovingly united, but if trouble comes it is because error has crept in doing its evil work; error always brings distress. Paul warns us by telling us just how evil men shall come in bringing heresies. David said, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace. But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off. But the salvation of the righteous [the man of peace] is of the Lord: he is their strength in the time of trouble. And the Lord shall help them, and deliver them; he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him."—Psalms xxxvii. 37–40. Paul said, Romans xvi. 17, 18: "Mark them which cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; [selfish interests] and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple [innocent]." And so brother Brown's course is commendable, and all the brethren will love him; and if I, and all who are in the ministry, would follow the same course, how soon we would have sweet and lasting peace. How can a brother bear that the brethren should divide over him? How quickly he can stop such a thing by saying, I was wrong, brethren, the cause is too great, and I am too little for you

to be in this great trouble over me; brethren, stop this at once. My brethren, this kind of confession will bring peace if anything will. The minister or pastor is not the lord over God's heritage, the church is over him, and he is but the servant, and the church serves the Master, and he the church for Jesus' sake. If the church would exercise her authority, and call a halt when she sees her servant going wrong, either practically or in doctrine, how much distress would be saved. There is no effect without a cause. "Mark them that cause divisions." Surely it is right to call a halt upon the individual, or the body or bodies, that are going wrong; surely this is but faithfulness, and it is safe and right, and if the wrongdoers be thus approached in the right spirit, and they be also in the right spirit, much will have been gained. But much depends upon the manner of approaching the wrongdoer; if we go in the wrong manner it would have been better not to have gone at all.

Another thought I will name here. If a brother has thus been called on to halt and consider his ways, and the brethren begin to line up on opposite sides, this becomes a dangerous enemy to the peace of the church and the good of the cause. But one will say, Shall I stand back and see that brother wronged? No, but by no means act hastily, lest you yourself be using the hatchet to cut the head from the other, especially if indeed he be wrong. Would it not be wiser and better to first study the case closely before acting on one side or the other? First examine yourself closely to see that there be no root of bitterness about you; be assured if we are wrong we had better clear up things at home before starting abroad to clear up the homes of others. If after careful study we find occasion to call upon a brother to halt, then go as a brother to both the wrongdoer and the one wronged, in the spirit of love and in the fear of God, and thus try to settle the matter; and if we succeed we have nothing more to do than to go back home and keep the matter secret in our own bosoms; this will be the end of our mission. Let us all do as did brother Brown, examine ourselves, and if we find that we have been wrong, confess to one another, and we will have peace. I desire nothing but the peace of God's dear children. I know no God but one, and I hope that I love and worship this one God; also in my weakness I try to preach one salvation for time and eternity, one faith, one Lord and one baptism, and this all of the Lord, and for the glory of God and our good, and that these things are all sure to the heirs of promise. Upon these principles I have always thought the Old School Baptists stood. Am I right, my dear brother? My aged father wore his life out trying to defend these principles, and upon these principles alone can we have lasting peace. I try to pray for this day by day, and I go day by day with my head bowed down in sorrow because of the lack of oneness of late among the people of God in some things. If God be not the great I AM, which means eternal, unchangeable and independent, what then is he? If he should in any sense be dependent upon man for the accomplishment of any of his purposes, then is his power limited, then he forever ceases to be God; for if he be limited in one sense, to the extent that his power is limited, his ability to carry his purposes to completion is limited; hence, instead of being all-powerful himself he becomes a mere machine, for he is then dependent, and not independent, and must be subject to disappointments. Can these

things be so? If they are, then am I of all men most miserable; but they cannot be so. The perfection of the blessed Lord is engaged in our salvation, and is that which makes it sure; and sweetest of all is, in this is the blessed Lord glorified, and this I hope I desire most of all.

Your brother,

J. A. LOGUE.

NASHVILLE, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—With your permission, if the Lord will direct my mind, and desiring the spirit of humility, I will again try to write something for the SIGNS. I desire above all things to be made submissive to the will of God in whatever frame of mind I may be; he has all power over all his works, so that we cannot go beyond his decrees. I feel at this time that I am the least of all his little ones, if indeed one at all; I am nothing but a poor worm of the dust, and at times cannot realize fully that I am what I have professed to be; but in reading so many good letters in the SIGNS from the brethren and sisters I am strengthened in the inner man. How good the Lord has been in being so mindful of me, and how good to his flock in giving them such a good hope, and a heart to rejoice in him. Let all the praise be given to the Lord. How consoling to a troubled soul to be so richly blessed out of his unwasted fullness. I feel condemned all along the line of that warfare through which I am passing; I fear that I have made a false confession, and have deceived the flock of God. I know, if I know my heart at all, that my desire is to do all things that are acceptable to God; I would trust in him to direct my steps. I have long since learned through sore trials and afflictions to know that there is nothing that I can do to bring myself into God's favor, yet I am often unmindful of the command given to the children of Israel to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord; in no other way can we attain to the blessed hope of everlasting life. O the precious hope which grace has given us, it is the hope that when days and years are past we shall meet in heaven. What a glorious reception to the blood-washed millions who shall come forth out of great tribulation, and who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. The great High Priest of our profession, who was given to be a ransom for us, will see that not one shall be lost; they shall all come forth at God's appointed time. The blessed Son of God came to do the will of his Father: fulfill every jot and tittle of the holy law, and make it honorable. But, dear brother, the great question with me is, Shall I be numbered with that great throng who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb? I feel to use the language of David, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy Spirit from me."

Dear brother, I do feel at times to hope that the Lord has for Christ's sake forgiven my sins, and I desire to feel thankful for his long-suffering, but I am too unworthy to claim him as my Savior; yet I love to hear his servants proclaim the glorious year of jubilee to ransomed sinners who feel the need of a Savior, and none but sinners do feel this need; such as these have no good works of their own to offer. This is the feeling of the poor, unworthy writer. This is not a place of rest for the sorrowing, wandering stranger. There is a rest to the soul beyond this life, which is the rest that I long to enter; this cannot be seen with natural eye, but

with the spiritual; there will be no sorrow there. O what a blessed thought. We must pass through great trials and tribulations while in this body of clay, but we must wait our appointed time to be called hence to dwell, as we trust, with the redeemed millions who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Our Savior had not where to lay his head when on earth; this world was not his home while he dwelt with sinners in the world to do the will of his Father. In doing his will he suffered, and was smitten and afflicted, and was brought as a lamb to the slaughter. He was a tender plant, and it pleased the Lord to bruise him and to put him to grief, and he is called "the Lord our righteousness;" and to-day like their Master the poor of the flock must suffer persecution in contending for the doctrine of the imputed righteousness of our Savior; there is no other way of salvation than this. This is my faith, and I trust that the dear Lord has given me firmness to stand fast upon the doctrine of election, and predestination of all things. Our God is not accountable to any power, but is absolute in and of himself; I do believe this with all my heart. "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Those who are strong in the faith, who believe the doctrine taught in the word, must suffer persecution for standing fast by the old landmarks; they are trying to follow the footsteps of their Leader, who was crucified; he bled, died and arose again the third day for their justification. Our God has said that he would not leave himself without witnesses, and these witnesses will be reproached by the world. "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion," and theirs shall be everlasting joy and gladness, and this joy no man taketh away from them. Their way is a high way, and it shall be called "the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it." How wonderful are his ways, and past finding out. We have not seen the things which he hath laid up for them that love him. I am so much condemned and cast down and burdened with doubts, often I fear that I am ruined forever, with no hope. O for more of his pardoning love and mercy. I feel at times to rejoice and believe that God will never forsake his dependent little ones; while traveling through this wilderness of sin and sorrow his everlasting arms are underneath them, the eternal God is their refuge, and he will thrust out the enemy and destroy them; they are a people saved by the Lord, and he is their shield and the excellency of their strength; he is above all power, and none can stay his hand; he rules in the army of heaven above and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can hinder.

The SIGNS, it seems to me, is growing better. There are so many good able writers. Elder Durand's letters are good, also Elder Poulson's; he writes with an humble spirit of thankfulness to God for his preservation to old age and for health. He has passed through many of what men call accidents, but with the protection of the loving Father, who has spared him, and protected him, and prepared him to go forth in the strength of Israel's God, and to proclaim that salvation is of the Lord; may it please God to spare him to go in and out before the flock, feeding them in the quiet pastures. I am glad also that Elder Ker is to be your associate, he will be a comfort to you in your burdens, which are great, he is a good writer, and sound in faith. Elder Coulter and Elder Curry also are good writers, and sound men; they all trust in God as their Counselor, as their hope and their all; this is the true doctrine.

We are blessed with a loving pastor, Elder J. K. Womack, who stands firm and warns the members of the church not to make any compromise with the inventions of men. We have been established as a church of Old School Baptists here in Nashville, and in order, for many years. We have been, and still are, recognized by sound Baptists, of the same faith and order; we are poor in ourselves, but are trying to keep the house of God clean. We desire not to permit any adulterated thing to enter in, such as the works of the creature, or conditionalism.

I trust what I have written is in accordance with truth. Publish it if in your judgment it is best, if not, all will be well.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,
O. B. HICKERSON.

RALEIGH, N. C., Aug. 10, 1906.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—For some time I have desired to contribute a few lines for the dear old SIGNS, but from several causes have failed, and now only feel that the desire is all I have; but I know if God is the author of the desire there will be grace given and I will perform. So the question is, Is the desire of him who does not fail?

I tried to speak to-day at my home church, Middle Creek, from the text, "It is finished," and I felt to have some liberty, but the subject is so great, it is a story untold, and while I know I cannot tell it as I desire, yet I enjoy thinking of the finished work of Jesus in the salvation of all that his Father gave him. It is one of the most comforting thoughts a child of grace ever has, to feel that God has laid help on One that is mighty. We (I suppose) are the only people in the world that believe in this finished work of Jesus in the full sense of the term. We believe that God in six days created all things that are made, and rested from all his work, and from then until the end of time there will never be anything else created. We believe that Jesus in three days redeemed or saved the church over which God gave him to be the Head, and from then until the end of time there will never be another soul saved; but while we believe in this, we also believe there is a work yet unfinished, but it is not to be done or finished by man, but by the Holy Spirit, and this work is to reveal to every one of the redeemed of the Lord what Jesus has done for them in his sufferings, death and resurrection.

Some time ago I was made to wonder at the thought that the church was without blame before God in love. I asked the question, How can one so vile as I, so corrupt, ever be so divinely blest? The answer seemed to be, If Jesus has borne all your sins in his own body, are you not without sin? I said, Yes, not only without sin, but also without blame. What a wonderful work indeed, and yet it is finished, Jesus by the one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified. How different from the offerings made under the law; they were only a remembrance of sins, and never could make the comers thereunto perfect, while this one great offering of Jesus in the gospel was an everlasting forgetfulness of sin, and made perfect every one forever that is brought to see it.

"It is finished." Again it is written, "It is done," &c. God begins the work and carries it on unto perfection, and it is begun in Jesus, he being the Alpha, and it is ended by and in him, he being the Omega, and if there is any consola-

tion in Christ, if any bowels of mercies, if any comfort of love, we should think on these things, rejoicing at the thought that Jesus died to redeem, and did redeem us from all iniquity, and therefore we will praise him for having done such great things for us. Anciently when God began to deliver Israel by the hand of Moses, it looks as if the work progressed rather slowly, forty years having elapsed between Moses' first and second visit to them, but God did not fail, nor did he become discouraged by hard-hearted Pharaoh, or anything else; he said, "I have seen the afflictions of my people, which is in Egypt, and have heard their groaning; and am come down to deliver them." Did he do it? Yes, by a high hand and an outstretched arm. Every one, and also the bones of Joseph were carried up. So much for this one type. "It is finished," every enemy slain, to be seen no more forever. Pharaoh was destroyed (a type of our nature). The Red Sea was a type of the blood of Jesus, which cleanses us from all sin. The victory of Jesus over sin and death is unlike that of any man, for they do the greatest in their lifetime, but Jesus did the greatest in his death. Samson also did more in his death than in all his lifetime; he destroyed all his enemies and died with them between the two middle pillars of the house, which shows in a figure that Jesus is the one who did break down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile in his death, and make a full end of sin. "It is finished." But of all the beautiful figures in the Bible I think Joseph comes first in many respects, and I have especially enjoyed some thoughts in connection with Joseph: the famine, and his dealings with his brethren, and just here I will say one of the most beautiful thoughts is, Joseph was sold and carried into Egypt before the famine, and he told his brethren, God sent me before you to preserve life, &c. He also told them, Be not angry with yourselves; ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. Now the world censures us for preaching that God's people were chosen in Christ before the world began, but as long as we have a "thus saith the Lord" we need not fear. The apostle tells us that Jesus was before all things, and in all things he has the preeminence, and by him all things consist. Now this was typified in Joseph, for Pharaoh made him ruler over all Egypt, and when the famine was sore in the land every brother of Joseph had to go to him for bread. This famine represents the reign of sin unto death, and the giving of bread the reign of grace unto life, and when Joseph made himself known unto his brethren there stood no man with him. So in the redemption of the church there stood no man with Jesus; he looked, and there was none to help, the apostles all slept, and could not watch with him one hour, so his own arm brought salvation unto him. Jesus trod the wine-press of the wrath of God alone, and just as Joseph had plenty for every one of his starving brethren and it cost them nothing, so Jesus has plenty of grace to save all that come unto God by him, and as sure as every starving brother had to go unto Joseph, saw his glory in Egypt and was told by him, "And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt," so "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Jesus says, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." We know this is true. But Jesus said again, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will

draw all men unto me," and we know his word is true; he was lifted up and they are drawn and will come; just as long as there is one of the blood-bought saints on earth this power of drawing will continue. They shall come that were ready to perish, and worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem. "It is finished." How full and complete is the reign of sin unto death in Adam; none of his sons and daughters can escape its effect upon them, death is passed upon them all. Upon the other hand, grace is just as full when we think of the reign of grace unto life through Jesus Christ. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." "It is finished." I may pursue this further in the future.

Very truly in love,

W. A. SIMPKINS.

THE WONDERFUL WORKS OF GOD.

"AND God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day."

From these words I am led to think of the time when Jesus, the Son of God, finished the work which the Father gave him to do, and that when he was about to be parted from his disciples he told them to tarry at Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. Then when the day of Pentecost was fully come they were all with one accord in one place. Though the works were finished from the foundation of the world, yet God declared the end from the beginning, and manifested himself by this wonderful display of his power in his church. While all were not Israel which were of Israel, every nation which is under heaven was represented upon that occasion. Here is represented the legal and also the gospel heavens. The identity between Jew and Gentile in the gospel heavens was carried down through Christ. The dividing of the waters is manifested in the church. The first heavens and earth were soon to pass away, and God created new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness. By the gift of the Holy Ghost the apostles were enabled to so preach that each heard in his own tongue, and they, every one, praised and glorified God; but others mocked, as has always been the case since. Let us remember that the children of God are no better by nature than others, but the new man has taken possession of the house and spoiled the goods of the old man, and though he daily puts up his head for a fight, he learns that he cannot successfully war against the Spirit, and that in this warfare he suffers great loss; his goods are spoiled.

"Great God, how infinite thou art!
What worthless worms are we!
Let the whole race of creatures bow
And pay their praise to thee."

The battle is won through Christ; to him be all the honor. Let us join and say, "Holy, holy, holy," "for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." His chosen people are his own peculiar treasure, and no matter what may be their situation in this life they will be made to praise the Lord according to the grace given them; they will all honor his name in some way. One member cannot say to another, "I have no need of thee," each one is of use in his own place. O let me sit at Jesus' feet and hear his words; his fruit is sweet to my taste; his banner over me is love.

"Ere since, by faith, I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die."

But the way is too strait for some, they

cannot bear the idea of tilling the ground in the sweat of their face, or of fighting the briars and thorns and the weeds of every kind. They think some part of the old man must be made good in this life; but if there has ever been anything good found in the flesh of Adam since the fall, I have ever failed to see it; he was of the earth earthy in his creation. What could he have been but a living soul liable to fall? and we witness to the truth of this every day. All was made good for the purpose for which it was made; the real good is in the Spirit; the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. We are "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." To this end we are created in Christ Jesus.

How fast all is moving on to the end of all things. It seems to me that the end of the gospel dispensation is upon us, even at the door, and all that can be done by men or devils against the word of truth, the doctrine of God our Savior, only fulfills the word recorded in the Scriptures. We have need of much patience; beasts there are to fight within and without. There seems to be a falling away in the churches, they go after vain things, love has grown cold, darkness is over the land, light seems to be declining; surely the Lord will come in an hour when we look not for him. O keep me in the hour of temptation, give me eyes to discern iniquity while the enemy encompasses the camp of the saints. This should be the desire of all who trust in his name. It seems to me that God's work in his church below is about completed, she will soon receive her crown, in full triumph over death, hell and the grave, and she will reign with Christ forever. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." May we keep ourselves unspotted from the world, and adhere to the order of God's house strictly. Even so come quickly, Lord Jesus.

Yours to serve, B. D. COLE.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., July 6, 1906.

NILES, Ohio, August 28, 1906.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find a letter written to me by sister Jennie Cross, and as I have her consent I ask that it be published, for it has been to me a sweet morsel indeed, strengthening me as I travel these low lands of sorrow, and bringing me to a sweet remembrance that no matter how dark the night, or how obscure the sun, the blessed Master is ever providing by the wayside these ever-flowing fountains, filled with his everlasting love, springing forth to water his gardens of grace, causing them to blossom forth as the rose and to sing praises to his great and holy name. May the dear Lord bless our sister, and give her many such precious seasons as this, and may it be her privilege to tell it often for the comfort of us poor sinners.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

W. S. ALEXANDER.

CLEVELAND, Ohio, August 14, 1906.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—We have been wishing you would come Saturday and stay over night with us, in case your family is not with you there, if so I know you would wish to stay with them, and come up to our meeting Sunday. If you can come drop us a line and tell us what time we can look for you. We feel that we would enjoy a visit with you very much. What precious meetings we have been having! I feel the dear Lord has blessed us with his presence, and I feel at times my heart overflowing with gratitude to him for his goodness in

sending you to us for our spiritual comfort. I feel sure he will watch over and care for his little flock, and in his own time gather into the fold all the dear ones he has predestined should be identified with his church here in time. We sometimes feel anxious to bring in, or at least help somewhat to bring, those we feel are subjects of grace and more fit to be in the church than ourselves, but I believe there is an appointed time, and we cannot hasten that time, however anxious we may feel. Sometimes I do feel that I can leave all to him and rest sweetly by the side of still waters, for it is the Lord that maketh me to lie down in green pastures, and it is also he that restoreth my soul and leadeth me about for his own name's sake; then can I truly say, "I will fear no evil." Yes, dear brother, the Lord is our refuge and strength, and he will work all things after the counsel of his own will. What is puny man that he should be mindful of him, or the son of man, that he should visit him? The glory of man is as the flower of grass. Just think, the flower of grass; we know how frail that is, thus it is with the imagined glory of man. We read that God is a consuming fire, and therefore when he appears in all of his majesty and power all of the supposed glory of man, and all of the vain imaginings of his heart, are consumed in the twinkling of an eye, and man is laid low in the dust, and made to cry, Unclean, unclean.

O how my mind does run on and on, outstripping my pen; I could write pages, but would it be profitable? These things are not new to you, and you know them all far better than I, but I am led at times to meditate upon them, and it is a relief to speak of them to those of like precious faith.

I was just in my flower garden gathering some flowers for my table, and I selected some pure white lilies, and as I inhaled their sweet fragrance and admired their pure loveliness these words came: "Consider the lilies how they grow." O what a beautiful figure I saw in them of the divine life in the hearts of such poor, vile sinners as we. This rare, pure lily had sprung from the dark, cold earth, it toiled not, it had not spun, it was not discolored or tainted by the earth, and yet it was rooted in the earth, and here it stood with its pure, sweet face turned toward God's beautiful sunshine, receiving the benefits of the sun's warm rays, clothed in all its beauty and fragrance; what could be more beautiful? To me the figure was sublime, and in a moment my heart was singing praises to God for the gift of his dear Son, and for his life in our hearts, for the budding and blossoming forth of that sweet, pure flower, which is "Christ in you the hope of glory," all of grace, all of grace, separate from and untainted by the flesh. O the mystery of godliness, and then this sweet fragrance which sheds its blessing, and comforts all of God's dear little ones as they mingle together, each a comfort to the other as they see the Spirit of Christ manifested in those with whom they mingle.

Thus I have tried to outline a portion of what was presented to my mind, but I feel the half has not been told, and let me ask, Who has ever been able to tell to their own satisfaction the beauties they have seen in the glorious plan of salvation? Tongue fails, and ever will, but the Holy Spirit comes like the sweet fragrance of the lily, filling our hearts with joy unspeakable as he takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us. What we are unable to tell to another

the Holy Spirit can reveal to them in all its wondrous beauty, and thus we are enabled to mingle our voices together in songs of praise, the sweet fragrance filling the temple as this sweet love and fellowship flows from heart to heart, and we are lifted above all cares and trials pertaining to this life.

Pardon my long letter, and if there is one crumb of comfort in it for you give the Lord the praise. May God's everlasting love shield and protect you, and lead you forth in your path of duty, is the prayer of your sister in a precious hope,

(MRS.) JENNIE O. CROSS.

TIMPSON, Texas, July 6, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF THE GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST:—Your good letter of June 14th was of much comfort to me, and I was encouraged by it, yet I felt too unworthy to be remembered thus by one so favored of the Lord. I inclose a letter from brother M. B. Mathis, which was also of much comfort to me, and I appreciate it all the more because it is free from contention or any thought of worldly strife. O that we all had more of that spirit which exalts the Lord and abases man, and that it were more manifest in all our writings, in all our talk, in all our walk and in all the meditations of our hearts. O that we might know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified; then would all strife and contention flee away, and our desire would ever be that the words of our mouth and the meditations of our heart might be acceptable in the sight of the Lord; then would we cry daily, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" This we would cry, not to save us, O no, not that, this we know, for we have tried everything we knew and could do, and found that we could do nothing meritorious, and upon that ground were lost, but the Lord has done for us what we could not do for ourselves; and now the cry is, "What wilt thou have me to do?"

Dear brother, I have just read the Circular Letter of the Delaware River Association, and it was a feast of heavenly food to my hungry soul. How good it would be if we could all heed the admonitions of the Lord as set forth in that letter. I am so far away from God that I am continually bemoaning myself as did Ephraim: "Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God." Again, "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart."

Now, in conclusion, I will quote again from your words which were of so much comfort to me: "But if any one is troubled, saying, O that it were with me as in days past, when the candle of the Lord shined round about me; and, because he feels far away, is cast down, and cannot be satisfied until the Lord once more restores unto him the joy of his salvation, and washes him, and purges him so that he is once more clean, let not that one be in despair, for the mercy of the Lord has sought him out, and he shall find that the thoughts of the Lord are thoughts of peace and not of evil." O for more of that love that worketh no ill to its neighbor. May the Lord bless you and all them that call upon his name in truth.

Your brother in the hope of the gospel of Christ, ROBERT S. PACE.

NARROWS, Fla., July 1, 1906.

MR. AND MRS. PACE—DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER IN CHRIST:—Your comfort-

ing letter is received, and I am too weak this morning to give expression in words to the joy I have received from it. Brother Pace, it matters not how great your darkness seems, in telling of your travel you tell mine also; and you tell not only mine, but that of every child of God who has been brought from nature to grace. If I know anything about the dealings of God with his people, I know that you have been with Jesus, for no man, speaking after the wisdom of men, can tell of the wonderful works of God in the salvation of his people as you have done; to do so the Lord must be with him. Yes indeed, we should meditate upon the things which you have mentioned, and we cannot help meditating when God is working in our hearts to will and to do of his good pleasure. When he begins a work he will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ; and although it may please him to afflict us in the dungeons of darkness, we must remember that all this is to his own glory, and that we are chastened of him because he loves us, not because he hates us, and he has not afflicted us at any time more than we can bear; he so dealt with his own Son, for Christ suffered all these things before us, and that because he loved us. Surely then we shall be blessed if we are chastened because he loves us. "Whom he loveth he chasteneth." When we have suffered enough to fill up his righteous will and pleasure, to show his righteous indignation against all ungodliness, then we shall come forth as gold, then he will put his strength upon us, then light and liberty will be given us indeed. Seeing that these things are so, we cannot help but praise him, and such seasons are a heaven below. All his people shall praise him, "and the eyes of them that see shall not be dim: and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly." In and of ourselves we have no power to enjoy these heavenly mansions; it is only when it is the good pleasure of our covenant-keeping God to bring us to his banqueting-house, where his banner over us is love, that we can sit down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit is sweet to our taste. These are the delicious fruits of the gospel.

Now may God bless you with all wisdom and understanding.

Your brother,

M. B. MATHIS.

BURTONSVILLE, Md., Oct. 17, 1906.

DEAR ELDER KER:—Since the publication of the request of Elder J. M. Perkins, I have written to you, partially stating my objections to the pursual of such a course. I am not alone in stating my objections, as you say in the last SIGNS that you have received several letters objecting to the same. Now, my dear brother, you have given the public the benefit of your own views without publishing the views of any one else. Now I am going to write you a few lines, further stating my objections to such a course, and I ask you to publish them, so that the readers of the SIGNS may have the benefit of the negative as well as the affirmative side of the subject. I still see most conclusively, my brother, that it is only to satisfy the demand of idle curiosity that such a request is made. If you believe that the "higher powers" that are spoken of mean the corrupting influences of Congress, then I beg to differ from you. I recognize not the powers of earth as being the "higher powers," but

the powers that shake the heavens; these are the "higher powers" that every soul should be subject to. I am a law-abiding citizen, always have been, but should Congress (the higher powers) pass a law making it the duty of the Lord's servants to refrain from the preaching of the gospel, or from the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I dare say that you would object, and would not be willing to obey the proceedings of Congress, "the higher powers." If Congress has the power to make it the duty of the church to obey her in one way, then she has the power to make the church succumb in any or every other way. I say that Congress has no legal power to make any such requests of the church. Christ said, "My kingdom is not of this world," and as all power is given to him in heaven and in earth, we should heed his word and recognize his authority as Lord of all. God knows it is not my object to kindle a flame of controversy, my only desire is for truth. I recognize it as being one more step toward the union of Church and State. My dear brother Ker, God's people, literally or spiritually, have never been reckoned among the nations of the earth; in the name of God's kingdom who hath required such at our hands? I am still constrained to repeat that neither Congress nor any other tribunal of this world has any preeminence over the church of God. I cannot see wherein I or any other soul would be resisting the ordinance of God in contending against wickedness in high places. It was for the literal numbering of the nation of Israel that David caused the wrath of God to be poured out upon that nation, so let us take heed lest we fall into the same condemnation. If Congress would only attend to and faithfully perform her duties, with reference to the intrinsic rights of that people whom she claims to serve, she would find but little time, if any, to meddle with the church of God, and if Elder Perkins, brother Ker, myself, with all of the rest, would pray to be subject to the "higher powers," the powers of heaven, in being instant in season and out of season, in contending for the "landmarks" of truth, we would have no time to dabble with or to satisfy the "idle curiosity" of the United States Congress. May the Lord show us our duty, that we may walk in the ordinances of the house of the Lord blameless. Let us do all things decently and in order. If there is room for your views in the SIGNS, why not mine? May the Lord keep us all.

Your poor brother,

J. E. GORE.

[THE reason we did not publish the former letter from brother Gore, mentioned in the above letter, is that he was one of four, of the many readers of the SIGNS, who wrote us opposing the suggestion of brother Perkins. We could not publish all four letters referring to the same thing, so thought it better to acknowledge their receipt and state their import as we did in the last SIGNS. We are perfectly willing that brother Gore shall have his own opinion of this matter, and all others also who differ with us, but controversy through the SIGNS upon this subject would be unwise and unprofitable. We hope our brethren may at least agree with us on this point. In replying briefly to brother Gore we would say, first, that it would not be constitutional for Congress to demand that we preach not the gospel, God has so ordered it. Second, there is no power above the church of God, but there are laws governing those who compose the visible church. Third, Israel was numbered by

David, as brother Gore says; this proves that Israel could be numbered. This was not the only time that nation was numbered, as can be seen by careful reading of the Scriptures. Fourth, brother Perkins and ourself are willing to be subject to "the higher powers," and as to whether we are "instant in season, out of season," those who are best acquainted with the labors of brother Perkins and ourself are better qualified to judge than brother Gore; we have no disposition to "dabble" in the things of the "United States" further than "the higher powers" demand of us. Fifth, we are willing to leave our interpretation of Romans xiii. 1, 2, with all the readers of the SIGNS, requesting them to read carefully the first seven verses of this chapter, and we feel sure they will observe that "the higher powers" do not mean God's power "which shook the heavens and earth," but rather the powers "ordained of God." Read also in connection with this 1 Tim. ii. 1-3. All matter published in the SIGNS is for the judgment of the household of faith, not only the matter itself, but also the spirit in which it is written. —K.]

TOONE, Tenn., April 4, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I have received the sample copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and it is the first copy I ever saw. It contains what is to me good news from a far country. Solomon said, "As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country." I would love to read the paper regularly, for it advocates the doctrine that my soul loves. I hope that the Lord will enable me to subscribe in the near future. I am a vile sinner, and I do not feel worthy of the least of all God's blessings. My sins, vileness and corruption are with me day and night, and I cannot see any good that I have ever done, but am sinful all the time. When my eyes are turned within I can see nothing but darkness, but still there is a little spark of hope in my heart somewhere, which has not yet gone entirely out, and I know if it be of the Lord it never will. Paul has said, "He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." David said, "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." In the first verse of the New Testament it is written, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David." Peter said of this people, "Ye are a chosen generation, * * * a peculiar people." Isaiah said, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." It is not written, They may do so, but they shall, and I am glad of that. I do not know what to do, but hope to be still, as he has said, and know that he is God. Now this generation is the elect of God, whom the Father gave the Son in covenant before the world began; these Jesus redeemed in time by the shedding of his blood; to them he said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Jesus said to his disciples, just before his betrayal into the hands of men to be crucified, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." Again, he said, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

Brethren and sisters, we know that we cannot believe this doctrine of ourselves, it is all of God; for Jesus said, "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes." I believe in the absolute predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass, and that our God is the Governor

among the nations, and that he has his way in all things, and that we are perfectly helpless in his hand. I have no independent power of my own, but must depend upon him for salvation in every respect in all things. Solomon said, "There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." Again, he said, "Man's goings are of the Lord; how can a man then understand his own way?"

My wife and I do not get to hear the preaching of the gospel. There is plenty of conditional preaching, but this does not feed the hungry soul. Brethren and sisters, you that have the blessed privilege of hearing the gospel of the Son of God preached, think of us, we would be happy could we be so blessed as to hear the sweet sound of the gospel; but the will of God be done; we bless his holy name and fear him and tremble before him.

Do with this as you deem best, and all will be well with me. When at the throne of grace think of us poor, tempest-tossed ones, who have a little hope of a better world to come.

S. M. BUTLER.

LONDON, England, Oct. 5, 1906.

MY DEAR FRIEND, AND BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I have just received the SIGNS of October 1st, and glancing over it and seeing many dear and familiar names, it has carried my mind back to the pleasant and profitable time that I spent with you and your brethren during the summer. I somehow failed to see two or three numbers of the SIGNS immediately after my return, and therefore do not know whether there was any allusion made in it to my visit, but I would be greatly obliged to you if you would allow me through its columns to express my gratitude for the great kindness which I received from all my Old School Baptist friends. I felt a sweet union of spirit with those I met, and their memory rises up from time to time in my mind, causing a flowing out of love to them. What a wonderful thing is christian love; is it not blessed to remember that he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him?

Having met Miss Mildred Durand in her father's home, I was greatly interested in reading her experimental letter to brother Fenton. I could sympathize with her in the conflicts she described between the flesh and Spirit, and which so greatly perplexes young believers until thoroughly led into and established in the mystery of the two natures, the flesh remaining the flesh until the last breath, and always distressing and tormenting the poor believer. I read also with interest Elder Durand's article in the preceding number, upon "Rejoice, O young man," &c, and I have also been reading with profit the books which he gave me. I hope brother Fenton is growing in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord and Savior, and finding all things working together for his good. I have also a very pleasant recollection of the time spent in Elder Eubank's company, and particularly of the interesting account he gave me of the Lord's early dealings with his soul. I also received a kind letter from Elder Coulter lately, I hope presently to read his article in the SIGNS. I thank you also for your own letter of August 16th, which gave me great pleasure.

Yours in gospel bonds,

S. J. FARNCOMBE.

[WE are sure that all our readers who met brother Farncombe during his visit in the States will be glad to read this word of greeting from his pen, and we

desire to assure him that very many who met and heard him preach the word of God remember and ask after his welfare since he returned to his home in England. His conversation was spiritual, and by it we were knit in heart to him. Among the blessed results of the gospel when it is proclaimed is that of fellowship one with another in the Lord; this fellowship was felt by all who met and heard our brother while he was among us.—C.]

INDEPENDENCE, Mo., June 10, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Please find inclosed a mite to aid in sending the SIGNS to the poor of the flock. I would like to add my feeble testimony to the goodness and mercy of God to poor sinners, of whom I surely am chief. I have wanted to tell the editors and correspondents how their good editorials and letters have cheered one lone old sinner, and, if I am not deceived, I feel to thank the Lord for raising up such able defenders of the truth as nearly all are that have written for the paper since I have been an interested reader, which has been many years. Their names are familiar, and I have often wished I could take each one by the hand and tell them to write on, for they know not the good they do. Although you are nearly all strangers to me in the flesh, I sometimes have a little hope that I, too, have been given a glimpse of the way marked by the footprints of Jesus and followed by his chosen ones in all ages, but much of the time I am left to grope in darkness, yea, thick darkness, and beg for the unerring hand of the blessed Master to lead me. There are many of your correspondents that I would like to write personal letters to, but the thought comes up, Why should I bother any of God's people with my ramblings? I have not words to express my appreciation of our dear family paper, the SIGNS, and if this is published I hope the editors and readers will cast the mantle of charity over it, but I do not want it to crowd out one line written by others, for they can tell what I would like to say so much better than I can myself. May God long spare you to wield "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon."

I will not say your sister, but rather, a wayworn sinner,

LAVINIA MORGAN.

PENNINGTON, N. J.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—As I have had no chance to talk to you since our last Saturday meeting, I will write a few lines to tell you how much I enjoyed the meeting, and was very sorry to have to leave before it was over. As I went in that day and sat down with the brethren and sisters who are so dear to me, it seemed "as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land;" and as you spoke about the eunuch going on his way rejoicing, after being baptized by Philip, I was very much comforted, for it has been my own experience to go on my way rejoicing since I was baptized. Even when in darkness and sorrow of mind there is a rejoicing within the heart that I did not have when I was not visibly numbered with the children of God. A brother in the church said to me once, There is something that you cannot know until you are baptized. I did not know what he meant then, but I know now, it is that same experience that the eunuch had, and as we have every evidence that he was one chosen of God, have we not great reason to rejoice in the same experience?

Another pleasant meeting for me was

the day you spoke about David numbering the people of Israel and Judah. This is the very doctrine that causes me to rejoice, and also to fear and tremble; surely "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

With much love to you and sister Chick, I remain your unworthy brother, if one at all,

D. M. VOORHEES.

SHELBYVILLE, Ind., R. R. No. 8, Aug. 20, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS:—Once again by the will of kind Providence I am permitted to send the money for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for my aged, blind mother, Mrs. Julia A. Trees. I told you last year of her blind, helpless condition, which is only increased in her many afflictions, but her faith grows brighter each day, until she does seem an angel on earth. If you remember, I asked you to publish my letter asking the members of her church to write to her; you would be surprised how many answered my appeal. O the joy she received from those letters. Again will you make this appeal, telling all who wrote the comfort their letters were, and how they were appreciated? I have read and reread them to her, and they were always good and fresh, bringing tears of joy to those blind eyes each time. I will be ever grateful if you will publish a short note, telling the members she still lives and looks for letters, even though they are not answered. I am an invalid myself, and I have all I can do to take care of her.

(MRS.) WILLIAM McCARTY.

HOSKINS, Oregon.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—As I live far from any church, or any one that believes as I do, I have concluded to take the SIGNS for one year. Having been from home I found one who took your paper, and who gave me one that I might get the address; I believe the doctrine it teaches. Having been a Baptist for thirty-five years, and most of that time far away from the church or any of its members, my lot seems hard sometimes, being most of the time in the dark, and believing myself to be the vilest of the vile; at other times I feel I can say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

Fearing I may weary you, I will close by saying, dear brethren, write on, and give God the glory, and comfort the saints.

From an old sinner, saved by grace, and grace alone.

Yours in hope,

JAMES GROSHONG.

FARMDALE, Ky., Oct. 15, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS:—I did not notice until last night that in the Corresponding Letter of the Licking Association, the place of holding the next session is with the Mt. Gilead Church, Mays Lick, Mason Co., Ky., and it should be, as in the body of the Minutes, with the Bald Eagle Church, Mt. Sterling, Montgomery Co., Ky. Please publish this correction in the SIGNS. I am sorry this was not noticed by me before sending the Minutes; it is my fault, and I hope the messengers and correspondents of the Licking Association will look over this error and pardon me for my neglect.

Your brother in hope,

J. T. McCOUN.

Clerk of Licking Association.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1906.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

BRIEF REPLIES TO QUESTIONS.

Do you think that Jonah was really in the whale's belly, or was it a figure only?

What was it that the Lord took away from the man to whom he gave the one talent?

Your brother in hope,

WM. P. HAWK.

LOCKHART, Texas, Oct. 6, 1906.

In reply to the first question, we can only say that the word expressly declares that there was a prophet named Jonah, that he passed literally through all the experience recorded of him in the book called Jonah, up to the time when it is recorded that the Lord had provided a great fish to swallow him, and that Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. (Jonah i. 17.) All preceding this statement took place literally, if any dependence can be placed upon language at all. If so, then this statement is also a literal, and not a figurative one; but if this last statement in the first chapter is figurative, then all the rest of the book is but a figure, and there was no such man as Jonah at all, and nothing recorded of him is literally true.

No doubt all this narrative was a figure of richer and more glorious things to come, as the Savior himself declared when he said, "As Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." But a figure cannot be a figure of a figure, while literal events can be, and in the Scriptures are often so. It seems to us like denying the testimony of the word to assert that anything declared there as transpiring did not transpire just as literally as it is recorded to have transpired. So this narrative concerning Jonah is both literally true and is also a figure of the death and resurrection of the blessed Lord. So it was literally true that Israel crossed through the Red Sea dry shod, while also this miracle wrought in their behalf was a figure of spiritual blessings and deliverance to come. All the word of God is spiritual, but all is not figurative by any means. Baptism and the Lord's supper are spiritual, but the command to observe them is not figurative at all, but literal. The exhortation not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, is not a figurative, but it is a spiritual exhortation. The commandments of the Lord and the exhortation of the apostles to depart from all iniquity and to follow after righteousness are not figurative, but yet they all are spiritual. We are here calling attention to this distinction because the minds of some have seemed to be confused, mistaking the use of the word "figurative" for the word "spiritual." All figures of speech are not spiritual, and all that is spiritual is not a figure of speech. Jonah, by these natural (literal) providences, and by the miracle wrought with him in keeping him alive in the belly of the great fish, and in finally bringing him to Nineveh, was taught great and wholesome lessons. These lessons are also ours to-day, and the teaching, and the result of it, in Jonah and in us now, is all spiritual.

Perhaps our brother has been hearing the arguments of some who would deny all that is miraculous in the Bible and who would take no account of the wonder-working God of the Bible. These have said that this miracle of the great fish swallowing Jonah was impossible, but all such are cavilers against the God of power and wisdom, they are fighters against God. The humble, reverent soul hears what God speaks, and reverently accepts it, and no question can arise in his mind that God is true. The testimony of the word is, "Let God be true, but every man a liar."

In reply to the second question of brother Hawk, we will say, first, that what was taken away from the servant with the one talent was just what had been committed to his charge by his lord. Let the talent mean what it may, it is sure that the thing bestowed was the thing taken away. Remember that all were alike the servants of the lord who gave to them severally, the five, two and one talents. They were his servants before, and were not any the more his servants afterward. The servant with the one talent remained the servant of his lord afterward as much as before his talent was taken away. Let it be remembered also that whether we think of the five or two talents, or of the one talent, all were alike talents. Notice also that the word "talent" in this parable does not mean "ability," as the terms of the parable itself show. He distributed to his servants the talents according to the several ability of each. The one receiving five talents had ability to care for the five, and so with the two talents, and he to whom was given the one talent had ability to use the one talent. The ability was not taken away from him who had one talent, but the talent which had been given him was taken away. We have long thought that the meaning of the talents might be presented by the expression "fields of labor." Our God assigns to all his servants their places, as each one is able. He lays upon no one more than what he has given him beforehand ability to attend to. The man with one talent had not the ability of the one to whom was given five talents, and so his lord did not overburden him with five talents. He does not require of the feeble what he does of strong men. In his kingdom, and in the labor required in his vineyard, our God is merciful to the weak and the feeble ones. He does not command them to make bricks without straw, and produce the whole tale of bricks, as do the Egyptian task-masters. But if any of his servants shall misuse his talent in any way God will remove it from him and bestow it upon the faithful servant instead. This does not mean more worldly honor or more ease or happiness, but rather greater burdens; while taking away from him who has misused his talent, means not relief from care and burden, but rather, added sorrow and pain of heart. In all the church of God these very things are daily taking place. To the faithful in a few things come still greater care and burden, while from him who is unfaithful is taken away even that which had been committed to his care, with outer darkness added. This is true whether we speak of ministers or of any who have a name and place in the house of God. We desire to repeat that our God does not say that the "ability" of the servant is removed, but rather the thing that has been committed to his care. From such an one the avenues of usefulness are shut up; but to the others fields for usefulness will be continually opening.

PARSONSBURG, Md.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—Please answer a few questions, if you deem me worthy of an answer. I read and enjoy the SIGNS, though I am not a subscriber.

What kind of a serpent was it that talked with Eve and reasoned with her?

When was the negro recognized as a human being, and why should he be so recognized?

Very respectfully,

W. F. RICHARDSON.

We hope to be at all times willing to consider questions that perplex the minds of others, but we cannot solve all mysteries. Indeed we cannot solve any of the mysteries of the word unless the blessed Lord sees fit to open them to our understanding. Of one thing we have long felt assured, viz., that the plain testimony of the Bible is to be at all times accepted as being true. But about almost everything that is said in the Bible questions may be asked that no mortal man knows how to answer. Such questions as these, if any reply is attempted, would only lead our minds out into endless speculations and profitless inquiries; into such inquiries we have not for a long time felt any desire to go; and in noticing here briefly the questions proposed by our friend we do not mean to say more than to call attention to what the word of God itself says. We can know no more than it declares, after years spent in unprofitable philosophizing and reasonings.

In reply to the first question proposed we will say that we are not anywhere told what kind of a serpent it was that talked with Eve and reasoned with her and tempted her, but we are told that it was a serpent; this we must believe, or else discard the word of God altogether. The same Hebrew word that is translated serpent in the narrative of the temptation and fall of our first parents occurs thirty-one times in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and in every place is translated by the same word. In all the other places it means just what we mean by the name serpent, and so it must in the narrative of the temptation of our first parents. It seems to us that this is all that is needful to say here concerning this first question of our friend. God has not in his infinite wisdom, seen fit to tell us more than occurs in the inspired narrative. For ourself, we have long had no doubt that the great enemy of God and man saw fit to take the form of a serpent, and in that form to tempt our first parents, and for this very reason it has seemed to us clear that the devil is called "that old serpent." In various places in the word the subtilty of the serpent is noted, as it was in the narrative in Genesis. These things are told in the word concerning the serpent, and these things we know, all else is speculation and carnal reasoning, which in the things of the word are never to any profit.

With regard to the second question of our friend, we will say that we have never read of a time in the history of the world when the negro was not recognized as a human being, and so far as we know he has been, and should be, so recognized upon the same grounds that the Red, Yellow and Brown races of men are known as human beings. The testimony of the inspired Paul has never been impeached, when he said at Mars' Hill, of the God of heaven and earth, "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." Not only according to this testimony did all men descend from Adam, but still more we know that all men descended from Noah through one of his three sons. Reverent lovers of the

Bible as the word of God that cannot lie, will accept the above testimony, though all the wisdom of the world should unite in scoffing at its teachings. Men may busy their brains in trying to explain how all these differences in the features and color of men have come about, but all this cannot shake the testimony that all nations are of one blood. Still further, if the negro be not a descendant of our first parents, then we have no evidence that any of them are included in the work of redemption through Christ. If not descendants of Adam, then they did not partake of the consequences of the fall, they are not condemned sinners, they are not interested in the atonement, or in the new birth, and none of them have any scriptural hope of the better life at the right hand of God; then all the fellowship extended by our churches in the past or present to them has been but mockery, with no reality in it at all. We have this also to say, that if we ourself do indeed know experimentally the living work of the Spirit in the heart, and if indeed we have any well-grounded hope of everlasting life here and hereafter, if we have ever felt what it is to commune with the dear Lord at the mercy-seat, in short, if there be any reality in any or all our christian experience, then we have known some of the negro race who have seemed to us far our superiors in all that is truly spiritual, for we have seen in them meekness, gentleness, patience, love, hope, faith, with every other heavenly grace, made manifest in their testimony, both of lips and lives before men. We have heard some of them speak of such heartfelt conviction and contrition before God, on the one hand, and of such gratitude and love to Jesus the dear Savior, on the other hand, as has seemed to us to far outstrip our cold affections, so that we have longed for an equal degree of these heavenly graces to dwell in our own heart, and to be made manifest in our own life.

Whatever differences may exist between the races of men that dwell upon the face of the whole earth, and there are great differences, even as there are great differences between men of the same race, in one thing no race has any superiority over any other, viz., in the fact all are alike sinners before God, and when any soul is humbled before God, through the fact that God has shown him what a sinner he is, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin, that soul will not feel himself to be the superior of any one. When that work has gone down into the deep places of the soul and shown all the iniquity hidden there, each one will say, as did Paul, I am the chief of sinners, and all such souls will forever be stopped from boasting in anything over the meanest of their fellow-men. To that soul thus taught there will be indeed no Barbarian or Scythian, no Jew or Gentile, no bond or free, in the blessed fellowship of Christ he will feel to be the least of all; at least this has been the experience of our own heart in these matters.

We leave these reflections for the consideration of our brethren generally.

C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder R. W. Sanford.)

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, Ulster County, N. Y., October 3rd and 4th, 1906, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—According to former custom we send this message or Circular Letter to the several churches of this Association. We desire to stir up your pure minds in remembrance of the things written in the word. Allow us to call your attention to Paul's epistle to the Galatians, that Gentile church. Paul includes himself with all the brethren of grace and peace, from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins and to deliver us from this evil and adulterous world in which there are so many doctrines proclaimed, based upon the will of man and not according to the doctrine Paul taught the Galatians, which he received by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Those who taught any other doctrine were called Judaizing teachers, who endeavored to impose upon the church the ordinances of the law, which if observed would cause painful trouble in gospel churches; such was the case with the church at Galatia. Customs and traditions, in the early age of the church, brought dissensions, divisions and trouble (as then, so now). It is wise for all who seek to know the truth to study carefully the word, and to follow no man further than he follows Christ and the apostles who have shown that the Gentiles were never under the law of Moses, it had no dominion over them before Christ came, nor since. Those who, by faith, were looking for the coming of a new heaven, wherein should dwell righteousness, were under the law until Christ fulfilled every jot and tittle, all its demands; then was the church freed, for it is written, Whomsoever the Son shall make free, shall be free indeed. As was Paul, so is every member of the body of Christ (the church) dead to the law, crucified with Christ; yet they live, but the life they now live in the flesh they live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us. (See Gal. ii. 20.) Paul, like all true servants, was greatly distressed because of the flesh being made manifest by those who had given evidence of living faith by the quickening of Christ to newness of life. Paul taught that according to God's will, in the fullness of time, he sent forth his Son, made of a woman, and made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons and be added to the church, to whom pertaineth the glory and the covenants and the promises. (See Romans ix. 4.) We Gentiles are those of whom Christ spoke when he said to his disciples, Other sheep I have which are not of this fold (Jews); them will I bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd. Peter was taught, in a vision, not to call common or unclean what God had cleansed, and that in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with him. He, by commandment, could administer the ordinance of baptism to Cornelius and his house, and thus were they added to the gospel kingdom. This is the kingdom of which David spoke, decreed and purposed of God in Christ before the mountains were brought forth or ever the world was. His delights were with the sons of men, "which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." Yes, they are in his own time manifested, born in (not into) the kingdom, of an in-

corruptible seed. The earnest expectation of the creature (new man) waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body," the church of which Christ is the head. Although we see not his goings forth manifested in the ingathering of his children, they are all under his all-seeing eye, and he will bring them in his own time. Though the vision tarry, wait for it. Trust in the Lord; "they that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be moved."

R. W. SANFORD, Moderator.
G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, Ulster Co., N. Y., October 3rd and 4th, 1906, to the associations of our faith and order with which we correspond, sends christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN:—How good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garment; and in this manner would we greet you, that peace be within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces. This can only come from Him who bringeth glad tidings, that publisheth peace. How beautiful are the feet of him that bringeth glad tidings. We have been blessed with able ministers of the gospel, whom we trust the Lord hath set upon the walls of Zion to proclaim the everlasting gospel of the Son of God to every creature whose heart is open to receive the truth, and when this truth comes to the believing character it is like the dew upon the tender herb; it toils not, neither does it spin. We are informed that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like the lily of the field; so may we be enabled to look unto him from whence our help cometh and from whom all blessings flow, laud and magnify his great and holy name, for there is no other name given under heaven whereby we must be saved. It gives us courage when we read your Minutes, and other little items in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that this doctrine is proclaimed by pilgrims and sojourners scattered throughout all the world. We desire a continuance of your correspondence. May the God of love and peace be with you, is our prayer.

Our next meeting will be held as usual, on the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, 1907, at Halcottsville, N. Y., on line of U. & D. R. R., when we hope to meet your messengers again.

R. W. SANFORD, Moderator.
G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Second Church of Roxbury, Roxbury, N. Y., Sept. 12th and 13th, 1906, to the associations and meetings with whom we correspond, sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Again we are favored in the goodness and mercy of our God to meet you in an associate capacity as professed followers of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and we believe we have been gathered in his name to hear the precious truth declared by his faithful servants called to the work of the ministry. They have come among us proclaiming the truth as it is in Jesus; we feel thankful for this blessed privilege

bestowed upon us by our heavenly Father, who, according to his promise, will not leave us comfortless. We still desire the correspondence of our sister associations, hoping that it will be the Lord's will to keep us in the bonds of peace, and that brotherly love may abound.

Our next session has been appointed to be held with the Olive and Hurley Church, Wednesday and Thursday before the third Sunday in September, 1907, commencing at ten o'clock a. m. on Wednesday, where we hope to meet your messengers and receive your Minutes again.

JOHN B. SLAUSON, Mod.
D. T. KEATOR, Clerk.

The Licking Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Little Flock Church, to the associations, corresponding meetings and churches with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more we are permitted to meet again in an associate capacity to ascribe all honor and praise to the God of heaven and earth. We believe our coming together has been for some special good, and that the name of the Lord has been glorified. Your ministers have come to us laden with the precious truth of the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Our churches are at peace, for which we are thankful to the Lord, and harmony and peace have prevailed throughout the Association.

Our next Association is appointed to be held with the Mt. Gilead Church, Mays Lick, Mason Co., Ky., to begin on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1907, when and where we hope to again receive your messengers and Minutes. Brethren, remember us when it is well with you.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.
J. T. MCCOUN, Clerk.
T. J. RATLIFF, Assistant Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, Sept. 22nd, 1906, at the residence of Mrs. John Reed, Linvale, N. J., Wilfred L. Hillman, of East Amwell, and Miss Rebecca J. Dumbell, of West Amwell, N. J.

By the same, at the bride's residence, on Wednesday, Oct. 10th, 1906, Jonathan H. Voorhees, of East Amwell, N. J., and Miss Hillena H. Drake, of Hopewell, N. J.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at the home of the bride's father, Benjamin D. Bradner, Warwick, N. Y., Oct. 11th, 1906, Ralph D. Tilt, of Demarest, N. J., and Gertrude Bradner, of Warwick, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Jennie Bruce, wife of Walter W. Bruce, died July 22nd, 1906, aged 25 years and 8 months. She was a loving, kind-hearted woman, a loving wife and an affectionate mother. She leaves a husband, two small children, her father, O. J. Tatum, four sisters and three brothers, together with a host of relatives and friends, to mourn their loss, but we mourn not as those who have no hope, for we believe our loss is her eternal gain. She was always glad when meeting time came, and loved to help care for the brethren; though she was not a member, yet all loved her as a dear sister in Christ.

Elder S. B. Moffit, of Newburgh, officiated at the funeral at her home in Oregon City, Oregon.

JOSEPH BRUCE.

SISTER **Sarah Wheat** died at her home in Horseheads, N. Y., July 8th, 1906, after a short illness, and was laid at rest beside her husband, who departed this life but nine months before. She was born in Orange County, N. Y., Jan. 17th, 1829. Her maiden name was Sarah McNish, and April 26th, 1849, she was married to William Wheat, who was born in Sullivan County, N. Y., April 30th, 1827. They were both consistent and faithful members of the Burdett Old School Baptist Church, and were devoted to the cause. Their hospitable home was always open to their brethren and friends. Their two daughters and four grandchildren loved to be with them, and did all that loving hands could do for them in their declining years, and will miss them very much. The church has lost two dear members, but we feel that our loss is their eternal gain. May God give us grace to be reconciled to the dispensation of his will.

The writer of this notice was called to speak at both funerals, and tried to speak comfort to the stricken family. May the Lord bless and comfort them.

C. BOGARDUS.

BROOKTON, N. Y., Oct. 15, 1906.

DIED—**Miss Sarah Louisa Welling,** Tuesday, Oct. 9th, 1906, at the home of her sisters, in Warwick, N. Y., aged 72 years and 6 months. Miss Welling was born in Warwick in 1834, the daughter of William Welling and Elizabeth Pratt. She spent her entire life in the town of her birth. She had been in declining health for some years, and for the past year and a half had been confined to her bed; she was a great sufferer. She leaves two sisters, who were faithful and kind during all her illness, they are Mrs. A. B. Kolyer and Miss Joanna Welling. The deceased was not a professor of religion, but a firm believer in the doctrine held and advocated by the Old School Baptists; her hope was in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ our Lord.

It was our privilege to visit our dear, departed friend several times during her affliction; the visits were always pleasant, her mind being upon things beyond this life; she always requested us to speak in prayer before leaving her room, and always expressed herself with regard to God's infinite wisdom and mercy.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, pastor of the Warwick Church, conducted the funeral service. May reconciliation and comfort be ministered to the sisters, who have the sympathy of all who know them. K.

SISTER **Sophia J. Bowen** departed this life on Sunday night, August 19th, 1906, at the residence of her niece, after a lingering illness, aged 83 years and 2 months. She had suffered a stroke of partial paralysis many years ago, and was never able to be very active afterwards. She was born in the vicinity of Black Rock, Baltimore Co., Md., and spent the most of her life in that vicinity. She was a daughter of Samuel and Urith Shawl, in former years well known and well loved members of the church at Black Rock. She was baptized in the fellowship of Black Rock Church August 2nd, 1874. We well remember the frequent conversations which it was our privilege to engage in with her for several years before that time. She for a long time was not able to feel assured of her salvation through Christ. One day she said, "Sometimes I feel that the name of the blessed Lord is dear and sweet to me, and that my whole heart goes out to him in love, but I have no evidence that he loves me." We opened the Bible at the first epistle of John, and pointed to the fourth chapter and nineteenth verse. She read it, and then read it again, and then said, "Why, I did not know such words were in the Bible." It was the pleasure of the Lord to bless them to her, and from that time she felt that the hope of the believer was hers. It was but a few months afterward that she became a member of the church. Much of the time, for many years, she has not been able to meet with the church, both because she lived several miles away and because of her increasing infirmities, but in all the years of loneliness that passed with her she never faltered in her faith, and we found her always ready to speak of the things that she loved. We doubt not that she is with the Lord.

In the absence of Elder J. T. Rowe, her pastor, at the time of her decease, we were sent for to attend the funeral service at Black Rock. The text used was Romans viii. 21.

But one sister out of a large family remains, our sister, Cecelia S. Bosley. The sympathy of many friends will be with her. Our deceased sister was the widow of Levi K. Bowen, who was a son of Elder James Bowen, at one time pastor of the church at Southampton, Pa. Her husband passed away in 1871.

ALSO,

Mrs. Caroline M. Johnson passed away from this life on Friday morning, August 10th, 1906, her 79th birthday. For several years she had been very feeble, and last March was severely ill, as we are informed, and from that time failed steadily until the end. Her maiden name was Weedon. She was baptized by the late Elder Wm. J. Purington, some time in 1864, in the fellowship of the church in the city of Alexandria, Va. Of this church she remained a faithful and loving member, loved and honored by all who knew her. It was our privilege to know her for many years when we served the church in Washington city, and often met with the church in Alexandria at their meetings. She was of a bright and cheerful disposition at all times, and it was good to meet her at the places of worship, and at her own home. If we mistake not, it was to her home that the late Elder Joseph L. Purington was taken after he fell unconscious with paralysis at the close of an evening service in Alexandria, many years ago, and at her home he shortly afterward passed away to his reward. Our dear sister loved the truth, and her hope was fixed upon the finished redemption of the Lord Jesus Christ. She loved to speak of these glorious themes whenever occasion was presented. She loved the people of God, and was never better pleased than when she could have them in her home, or when she could mingle with them in the solemn service of the sanctuary. This we can say from our knowledge of her in past years.

She was buried from the home of her son, in Alexandria, and was interred in the family lot in the cemetery there. She leaves one son and one daughter to mourn the loss of a good mother. The daughter writes that as Elder Rowe was absent at the time, the burial service was read by an Episcopalian minister, and the hymn which she had herself selected No. 67 (Beebe's Collection) was also read. C.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie, N. Y., has appointed her yearly meeting to be held, if the Lord will, on the fourth Sunday, and Saturday previous, in October, (27th and 28th) 1906, at the meeting-house on Schoharie Hill, meeting to begin at 10 o'clock a. m. each day. Brethren of other churches of our faith and order, and all who love the truth, are cordially invited. Trains will be met at Howe's Cave on Friday previous to the meeting.

G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 74. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1906. NO. 22.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PSALMS CX. 7.

"He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head."

We can hardly write intelligibly on this portion of this one hundred and tenth Psalm, without noticing that which is embraced in the whole Psalm. The kingdom, the priesthood, the conquest, the judgment and the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ are all embraced in this wonderful Psalm, and indeed we cannot separate any one of these from the others when we contemplate the work which Christ came into the world to do. He was born King, and inasmuch as one cannot be a king unless he has subjects over which to reign, so when by faith we view the birth and the life of our gracious King in his incarnation, we are not surprised to hear John the Baptist say: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," nor to remember the gracious prophetic words of the psalmist found in this Psalm, (the first three verses) which say: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion, rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth." This presents his glorious kingdom, as it is set up in the hearts of his people, and the source of his mighty power and love. Jesus was also made the High Priest of our profession, and so he is heralded in the fourth verse of this one hundred and tenth Psalm on this wise: "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent. Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." As his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, so also his priesthood is forever and ever. He has entered into the holiest of all, and now sitteth at the right hand of the Father, to make intercession for us. Again, he is set forth as the Captain of our salvation, bringing unto us victory over death, hell and the grave. "The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath." And again, he is presented as our righteous Judge, causing equity and justice and truth to shine in Zion. "He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many coun-

tries." Having therefore a faith's view (which is spiritual knowledge) of the object of his coming into the world, can we not reecho his own words while he was here in the flesh: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" No man has ever chosen to suffer of his own natural will. Jesus, in his humanity, did not choose to suffer, (of which his own words do testify while he suffered in the garden, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.") but he came in the fullness of grace, choosing in the spirit of grace, determined to do the will of his Father, and into whatsoever straits the Father's will led him he was willing to pass through them all. Thus we have now come to the words of which I have been requested to write: "He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head." Mr. Donald McKay, of Scotsville, N. S., desires to know whether this drinking was for the joy or the sorrow he met in the world. I will say in the beginning, that it was for both, for both were included in the great work which he came to do.

"He shall drink of the brook in the way." As God formed every stream of water which flows through the earth, from the smallest rivulet to the mighty ocean, of the water which he himself created, so he formed also the living stream (brook) out of which his darling Son must drink in the way. The contents of the brook were decreed of the Father before ever the earth was formed or the mountains brought forth. All along the way he must travel the brook was very bitter; the contents of the brook were blackness, darkness, sorrow, tribulation and death. The first draught of this bitter stream which he partook was when he must needs leave the glory he had with the Father before the world was, and come into a sin-cursed world to find his bride; he took upon himself the flesh of her whom he came to save. "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Now he is in the way, and must drink of the brook in the way. The next draught of which he must partake was the opposition to his coming, his own whom he came to save denied him. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." He must tread the wine-press alone, and "drink of the brook in the way." While there was ineffable joy in the accomplishment and fulfillment of his great mission, yet mixed with every draught from the brook were the vile and poisonous effects of sin. All the days of his incarnation were spent in silent suffering; love, humility and patience marked all the way he took, and by these he drank of the brook in the way.

The original definition of a brook, is water springing up out of, or through marshy ground; that kind of ground where the foul and poisonous slime of the earth is gathered in low places. So the brook from which our dear Savior drank in the way was fetid with the vile odors of sin and iniquity. When he assumed the relationship of our Savior and Elder Brother he went down into the low places of Edom, he partook of our humanity, in consequence of which he was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," he had knowledge of every evil under the sun, he knew all our heart and the deceitfulness thereof, he took all of the sins of all his people and bore them in his own body. What bitter draughts, yet he must drink to the very dregs. Yet in this very agony of soul he rejoiced with exceeding

joy in his great and mighty work, rejoiced in bringing redemption to his beloved, rejoiced in the strength which enabled him to do the will of the Father.

"Therefore shall he lift up the head." In the completion of the great work which he came to do, after death, hell and the grave had been overcome, he not only arose from the grave, taking up the life he had laid down, in all its beauty, and majesty, and fullness of love, but he also brought up with him out from the bowels of the earth his beloved bride, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Therefore doth he lift up the everlasting gates, becoming head over all things to his church, he "is the head of all principality and power," exalted and lifted up in his own power and glory, which his Father gave unto him. As the Captain of our salvation he conquered all worlds, and brought to naught all the powers that be; then could he lay down the sword and lift up the head, and then with all his precious train enter into that rest that remaineth to the people of God, making intercession (at the right hand of the Father) continually for the church in its travel through these low grounds of sorrow.

To take a retrospective view of the bitter draughts of which he partook "of the brook in the way," and of his sufferings in his love for his chosen that "therefore shall he lift up the head," let us call to mind the words of prophecy (Isaiah liii. 7–12:) "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." Thus "he shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head."

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

KIOWA, Kansas, Sept. 19, 1906.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have just read my article on the gospel, with your remarks on the same. I assure you it is with no ill feeling toward you that I want to notice some things you say which do not do my views justice. I love the brotherly manner in which you have written. You criticise my words, "letter preaching." What I meant by letter preaching is for one to merely speak from knowledge, and not from the Spirit; a servant of Christ is indeed in a doleful condition when that is the case with him, as it is from time to time. You think that a called preacher never preaches the letter of the gospel, to say nothing of designing men who have crept in unawares, to satisfy their desires.

You know, dear brother, that the doctrine of the Bible has a spiritual meaning, which must be revealed to the understanding of any one who understands it at all in its spiritual meaning. You also know that a shrewd man can watch you, and other able ministers of the new testament, and can remember your strong points, and can use the same arguments that you use, and yet have no real knowledge of the things that he advances; his knowledge is simply head knowledge. I understand this to be letter preaching, and such preaching I am sure is in the church now. Do you not think so? I also believe that God withholds spiritual liberty from his servants at times now, for their good and his own glory. You also refer to systematic preaching. What I meant by this is ear tickling to please the fancies of men, as though systematic preaching was all divine. You know that the fine preachers of the world all deliver their false system in perfect order, yet that does not prove them to be the servants of Christ. Our God has to-day, I know, great men in the church, such as I could name, who are yet sometimes comforted by those of small talents; but the people of God are all upon an equality; no big ones, and no small ones; all are for the edifying of the body of Christ.

You also criticise what I said about preachers preaching their congregations to sleep, and then refer to Christ and Paul. I also believe that all of the servants of God, at times, will see some one fall asleep while they are preaching, but is there not something very wrong when under one who is preaching almost invariably from one to a half-dozen of his audience are sleeping, and that of members of the church? Do you not think so? I think so indeed. Then you criticise me for telling of the sweet tears shed while the good Lord was pouring his love into the inmost soul of myself and others while I have been trying in my weakness to magnify his grace. You know that God has said he will preserve all the tears of his people in a bottle; and I would be willing to leave it to any hearer, as to whether I was telling some worldly, sentimental anecdote.

My dear brother, I am back here in old Kentucky, among the Baptists of my native land, and I see the same results that I saw when I was here before. I am badly afflicted in body, yet I hope the dear Lord is using me in my afflictions for the good of his humble poor and for his own glory. If I were not afflicted I would not feel, and see his dear presence by the eye of faith. I trust that my feeling arises from that heart of flesh which God has promised that he will give his children. Some of my friends try to persuade me to rest awhile, and cease going among the dear Old Baptists until I get better, but that is not the way I am impressed. I do not feel my afflictions while I am trying to proclaim Jesus as the sinner's all. As I said above, I am perfectly satisfied to leave it to my brethren as to what I preach that reaches the hearts of the children of God. Ask brethren in the ministry who were present at the O. L. River Association what it was I preached that brought tears to the eyes of God's humble poor. I am among the so-called "absoluters" and "can't help its." I am associated with such men as Elder J. M. Perkins. I have not been among those who, like the friends of Job, are miserable comforters; and miserable comforters are such men to me. In your criticism you seem to think that one ought to talk an hour or two because some one came a long way to hear him. It is no trouble for a gifted man to talk for an hour or more,

even if he does have to preach head knowledge. But I had much rather preach twenty-five or thirty minutes to the hearts of the children of God than to a lot of sleepy people for two hours. I do think it an injury, rather than a benefit, to drag along in a dull, lifeless manner, lifeless to the humble poor. What if some have come a long distance to hear the preaching, if it has not sufficient charms to keep them awake, what benefit is it to them? Why preach when the larger part of the church is asleep, and the rest using every effort to keep themselves awake? I feel as though the preacher had better be asleep with the rest, than to be preaching to a sleepy congregation.

We learn by experience, and that is the best way to learn; and you, my dear brother, are young, and will learn much as you grow older in the ministry. One who is sailing on a smooth sea does not know how to sympathize with that poor man whom the billows have well-nigh overwhelmed; but let the same rough waves run over the first one, then he is in touch with the other poor pilgrim. I am not, my brother, saying that you are sailing on a smooth sea, for I do not know how rough your seas are.

I have written enough, and hope that it will not be a check to our brotherly love. I hope that you will throw the mantle of charity over all my imperfections, and, as you have said, if I have said anything wrong, lay it to the head and not the heart.

I am to be at the Bethel and Soldier Creek associations, and am expecting a great feast; but God rules in heaven and in earth, and among men, and in all deep places. Long life to the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and may its editors and correspondents be guided by that Spirit which enables one to preach, is the prayer of a poor old sinner, who lives in hope of a blessed immortality.

September 24.—As I have not sent my letter, I will add a few more thoughts. In your letter you ask if I should stop preaching because all were asleep? How would it have been in those early days when all alone, I was doing my best preaching with no one present? Now, my dear brother, you have been there yourself, and I am satisfied that the tears ran down your cheeks while those sweet thoughts were pouring into your inmost soul, and you in imagination were standing before an interested congregation. Do you suppose that if at that time you had had a congregation of a thousand people while you were preaching those sweet sermons, any of them would have been asleep? I do not. Why? Because it was the very spirit of the gospel, and not head knowledge, or merely the letter of the gospel.

Then, in regard to shedding tears, you say there is no doubt many a tear shed while the pure gospel is being preached. I do not remember your exact words. There are more tears shed under Old Baptist preaching than under any other class of preachers. I mean the tears that God will put in his bottle. They are tears of rejoicing, and not of godly sorrow, as I understand you to say. Godly sorrow produces repentance, deep, heartfelt repentance, and none have ever repented of being brought here. If I understand you, you say that the many tears which flow while the sweets of the gospel are being set forth are the tears of godly sorrow; if so, I think you are much mistaken; I think they are the tears of rejoicing, and not of sorrow. I do not think there is any difference many times among brethren if they understand each other's meaning. I hope I have not written in a re-

sentful spirit. I know you do not think that you are infallible; many views you entertain now you will see in later years you entertained wrongly; I know that has been the case with myself. You are right, I believe, with regard to the main principles of the doctrine of the Bible, but I know you will not claim all your thoughts are right.

I will close. I may not write many more articles for publication; God only knows.

Your brother,

J. M. DULEY.

(See editorial remarks in this number.)

MATTOON, Ill.

ELDER B. F. COULTER—DEAR BROTHER:—Your precious letter was received some days ago. I had previously written a very imperfect and (to me) unsatisfactory letter, but your good letter prompts me to make another attempt, and while I cannot promise any better results than before, yet it will tell you how much I appreciated your thrice read message, so full of the spirit of love and fellowship that my soul was filled with praise to God for putting it in your mind to write, and of making your pen that of a ready writer. I have felt somewhat lonesome to-day, and have thought much of what you say about the time spent by the saints together in sweet and heavenly places, when peace, love and fellowship abound. Yes, their conversation is in heaven, and they delight to dwell in heavenly places in Christ. Their rest here is glorious; these places of rest, when we have sat down under the shadow of the Almighty, and the pleasant fruits of the Spirit were sweet to the taste, leave a lasting impress upon the memory of those who are the blessed partakers of the joy of salvation, and how often do we recur to them in the months and years that follow. Sometimes we wonder why it is not now with us as it was then; then all was joy, peace and happiness undisturbed; we could say, "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." But how different when darkness overshadows our way; when the mantle of night, like a curtain, shuts out the sun, we remember the days of old, when the candle of the Lord shone about us, when glorious things were spoken of the city of God, and the saints rejoiced and beheld how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. The Lord in thus dealing with his children has no doubt designed a lesson for their good; in poverty, destitution and darkness they are very apt to look back and remember the goodness of the Lord that has followed them all the days of their life. This they could not do if they were always in the fruitful fields and the pleasant lands; the present would only be with them. But now they are counted as those that go down into the pit, they are as men that have no strength; then there is a stretching out of hands unto the Lord. "Thy fierce wrath goeth over me; thy terrors have cut me off." "Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?" Israel could not praise the Lord in a strange land, their harps refused to attune and sound the notes of praise where the bleak and desolate plains of Babylon stretched out before them. But the Lord sees their outstretched arms and hears their mournful pleadings; he delivers them out of their captivity and brings them into their own land; darkness is turned into light, and the joy of morning once more is upon them. Right

here is where the wonders of a covenant God are so beautifully displayed; they answer the question, "Shall thy wonders be known in the dark?" We are now risen up, and Christ gives us light. "Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead?" "Shall the dead arise, and praise thee?" O Lord God, thou knowest. His words, are spirit and they are life, and this life is the light of men; it is the true Light, the only Light. Israel saw it when the waters fled before his voice, and they could sing of the glorious triumph at the sea—their deliverance from the cruel oppressor. What a wonder in this scene of triumph, and how often Israel was reminded of it in their journeyings in the wilderness. As we are reminded of our deliverance, and the joy that filled the soul when we were led out of the prison, out of bondage and captivity, our desires go up to the Lord that he "make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil." The Lord is in all that his children, when led by his Spirit, do and say in the assembly of the saints, for there he is in their midst. They cannot live without him, he is their strength and life; their fellowship and love for each other are of the Lord, they have all traversed the same way, and experienced the same incidents along the way. Old soldiers never tire of talking about the incidents of carnal warfare; they understand each other's language and experience, because they were led by the same commander. The soldiers of the cross are led by the Captain of the Lord's hosts; they have all been taught of him; he calls them by name and leads them out; they know but one Lord, one faith and one baptism; they rejoice in one Savior, who is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by him. He is their Shield, their Refuge, their Rock, their Covert from the tempest, Rivers of water in a dry place, King, Lawgiver and Judge. What a wonderful Redeemer to talk about! An inexhaustible subject for reflection and comfort, for every comfort is treasured in Christ, and he is Head over all things to the church. How blessed that his children see eye to eye and speak the same things. As you say, Jesus is a faithful High Priest, of long forbearance and merciful. "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness." They are not come to the mount that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest. The ministration of death was there, the law was thundered forth from this mount, its awful sentence saluted our ears. God's people have learned this, they have learned more; the burning mount no longer has any terror for them, they have come to another, even "Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

Much that I have written was suggested to me while reading your letter, and I have written amid much confusion, but I send these lines to one who knows how to bear with the infirmities of the weak. I wish to be kindly remembered to your family and the friends generally, as you may meet them. I hope to hear from you again when you have the time to devote to such a poor, feeble one as myself.

Your brother in hope, but in much fear and trembling, J. G. SAWIN.

GALATIANS II. 20, 21.

"I AM crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."

These are the words of Paul to the Galatians. These Galatians had departed in a great measure from the gospel Paul had preached to them, they were entangled with works of their own righteousness, or righteousness by the law. Paul tells them in the third chapter and twenty-first verse, "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law;" but righteousness is not by our deeds done in the flesh, for no flesh shall be thus justified in the sight of God. Righteousness is eternal life, the gift of God, given his elect in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. Eternal life is of no beginning of days, nor does it ever end, and how beautifully does the doctrine of election and predestination show us that if we are one of God's chosen, it was in Christ before ever time was, and nothing will ever fail that God has decreed, and there are no such things as accidents or happenings with God, for he knows the end from the beginning.

Now what is it to be crucified with Christ? If I know anything about it, it is in loathing and abhorring my sinful nature, hating my own life; the Lord revealing in me my total depravity and wicked heart, causing the cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." This is where that portion of Scripture applies: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Jesus said to Martha at the grave of Lazarus, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." From this, I take it, the death of his saints is the dying daily Paul speaks of. Our God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. Jesus has abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. The Spirit of Christ in a subject of grace crucifies the flesh, and this is the fellowship with Christ in his crucifixion, when he tasted death for every man. (Heb. ii. 9.)

"Nevertheless I live; [Christ in you the hope of glory] yet not I, [his Adamic nature] but Christ liveth in me." It is Christ in you the hope of glory that causes you to hate your own life; it is the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shining in your heart that reveals you as guilty before God, and you feel to say that,

> "If my soul were sent to hell,
> Thy righteous law approves it well."

It is the light of Jesus shining in your heart that crucifies the flesh and deeds done in the body.

"And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." Every subject of God's grace knows that faith is a gift of God. By faith we know the world was made by God's almighty hand; by faith we believe every word in the Bible is true, and all things are possible with God. Paul distinctly declares it is the faith of the Son of God, showing the source of all grace and blessings. None flow from any other source save from our spiritual Head, Christ Jesus.

Dear household of faith and quickened sinners, do we not all live the life we now live in the flesh by the faith that Christ is of all power in heaven and in earth; that whatsoever Christ prayed to the Father for was granted; that the only true prayer is when the Spirit of

Christ makes intercession for us? We live by faith, we walk by faith, we see by faith, and this faith is not in our control, otherwise the disciples would not have asked the Lord to increase their faith. This is the life the children now live in the flesh, the hungering, thirsting, mourning; it is the same Spirit, no change with God, he is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever. Traveling along with this faith is hope, which is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast.

I might go on and say more, but what appeals to me is that which Paul declares: "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Aug. 17, 1906.

SHERWOOD, Ore., Aug. 25, 1906.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—You will please excuse the liberty I now take in addressing you a short letter; I have thought and desired to write to you often since your name appeared in the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES as one of its editors. I have been much pleased with the earnestness and boldness manifest in your articles for the truth as it is in Jesus. I am a poor, ignorant old sinner, but nevertheless I love sound doctrine, the doctrine taught by our Savior, the apostles and prophets, the doctrine of God our Savior taught in the Bible, the doctrine of election, absolute predestination, the doctrine of salvation by sovereign and reigning grace, without works in any sense by the creature to procure it. The fruit or good works manifest in the child of God by an orderly walk and godly conversation are only evidences of his gracious state, God working in him both to will and to do of his good pleasure. All fruit that is produced to the honor and glory of God is put forth and matured by the life and sap of the Vine. "Without me ye can do nothing," says our Savior. I am pleased with your remarks on brother J. M. Duley's letter; the kind and brotherly spirit in which you criticised is very commendable, and I am sure that brother Duley will not feel hurt, but will feel thankful because of your faithfulness in the meek and humble Spirit of our Lord in showing him his error. The editorial referred to is in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of Sept. 1st, 1906. I think your article was timely, and will do good and not evil. There is a disposition or feeling among some of our ministers that amounts to complaint on account of so much doctrine being preached, and too much stress put upon doctrine. I do not consider that a gospel sermon is ever preached that does not set forth doctrine, practical godliness and experience.

But I am writing at too great a length, and will now say that I have just returned from a three days meeting held with the Sulphur Creek Church, Washington. We had a very enjoyable season; the Lord blessed his ministers with liberty in the gospel; the preaching was all good and harmony prevailed. I met Elder Riffe, pastor of the church, Elder Coleman, Elder Hess, Elder Newkirk, and others who were licentiates. The churchhouse is about forty-five miles from Chehalis, their nearest railroad, easy of access. We were met at Chehalis and conveyed to the place of meeting by the brethren. The road was rough, and wound its course through beautiful timber and openings made by settlers; but I was pleasantly surprised to see so large a congregation of people assembled on Fri-

day for worship, and on Saturday and Sunday there were over two hundred people assembled; had basket dinners, and had four sermons each day; had one addition, and all seemed to be interested and to enjoy the meeting. I have never witnessed so large a congregation before in Oregon or Washington, except at an association, and it is seldom we see so orderly and well behaved young people as we saw at this meeting. There are quite a number of our order of Baptists in that part of Washington; there are some sixty members within the bounds of the Sulphur Creek Church. I cannot find language to express my thanks to the God of all grace for the kindness shown me by all the brethren and friends while among them, also to all the visiting brethren who were present. It was one of the most enjoyable meetings I have ever experienced, and I am past seventy-five years of age, and forty years in the ministry; have read the SIGNS forty-five years. Publish if worthy.

Your little brother in hope,

J. P. ALLISON.

WAVERLY, Pa., August 23, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Inclosed you will find three letters, one from Elder May, one from sister Hallenbeck and one from brother Reed. To me they seem all right, but of course they would be to me what they would or might not to others; I might have some fleshly feelings mixed in, as my name is used. I am full of self, which means the world, the flesh and the devil. Now, in regard to letters that I send you, I do not want you to feel in the least that you are to publish them whether or no; no one will be hurt if you do not, for the writers, as a general thing, do not know I have sent them until they see them published; when I ask them to allow me to send them I will tell you. I hope, but I do not know, that my motive is to do what I can for the SIGNS and its readers.

Yours as ever,

D. M. VAIL.

PINSONFORK, Ky., March 4, 1906.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have just been reading your very precious (to me) article in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for March 1st, and notwithstanding its fewness of words, it comprehends a great deal. It tells my experience, let me be what I may, or rather what I am, for I am a poor "can't help it" in every sense of the word; when I would do good, evil is present with me, and I "can't help it." I also find a law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and I "can't help it;" although it brings me into captivity to the law of sin, I "can't help it;" if I could I would, for we cannot enjoy being taken prisoner by the enemy; if we could help it we would not be prisoners. Notwithstanding all these things we delight in the law of God after the inward man, and "can't help it," for we delight in it. I sometimes sit down (I hope) under his shadow with great delight, and I "can't help it," for it is so delightful; and his fruit is sweet to my taste, and I "can't help it," for I neither made the fruit nor my taste. I sometimes run and do not get weary, and I "can't help it," for he draws me when I run, and I "can't help" his drawing me; I cannot want to help it, for it is with loving-kindness that he draws us; it is then, and only then, that we run. "Draw me, we will run after thee." When our dear Redeemer does not draw us we cannot run, we have to walk, and we "can't help it." In all these things we have to wait upon the

Lord, and we "can't help it," for he can neither be hurried nor hindered; yet out of deep, heartfelt necessities we cry out in the language of the psalmist, "But I am poor and needy; make haste unto me, O God: thou art my help and my deliverer; O Lord, make no tarrying."—Psalms lxx. 5. I am bound to believe that the Lord's people feel poor and needy, and "can't help it," for we cannot enjoy being poor and needy, and on all occasions when we realize our needy condition we try to supply our necessities by seeking water, &c., but our misfortune is, we seek these supplies where there are none, and we "can't help" this either, for we are blind, and must be led to the high and lofty Rock from whence this living water flows, we cannot attain to it.

My dear brother, you have at least one poor, needy and "can't help it" companion in this world of trials and temptations; although I feel too unworthy to write you I "can't help" my feelings. Remember me, and when you find it in your heart to pray, then ask the Lord to have mercy upon me, a poor, helpless creature. W. J. MAY.

West Davenport, N. Y., Aug. 30, 1905.

Elder D. M. Vail—Dear Friend and Pastor:—When I received your good, comforting letter, last February, I was in attendance upon a friend who was very ill, and had very little time to myself, and did not answer it as soon as I would have done under different circumstances. It has not been forgotten, but neglected, and I have felt much of the time unfit to reply. I have read it many times, always with pleasure, but never with more real comfort than yesterday, and I thought: I will make an attempt to reply, but shall never be able to make a fitting one. You say you have often been with me in mind and spirit since my dear sister's death, and I am grateful to be even in the thoughts of those whom I believe to be the children of God. When I am with them listening to the preaching of the word and godly conversation my heart is full and my mind busy, but I seem unable to tell to others what I think and feel, and that often causes me to feel I am not in my right place; and always when the emblems of the Lord's supper first meet my eyes, I feel like putting out my hands and motioning them away, I feel I am not worthy to partake, and I cannot help the feeling. You gave me some comfort at church meeting one day: while speaking you said you had always felt unfit to take part in the communion service, and I thought, If God's chosen ministers feel that way, what wonder that I, the least of all his children, if one at all, should feel the same? and I was helped and comforted. My inability to control my mind is another source of trouble. I have so many vain and foolish thoughts, thoughts pertaining to things of this world, when I would like to think of that other and better world where the redeemed of the Lord, free from the sin and sorrow of this earthly life, are happy and at rest in the presence of their Savior.

You say, May God bless you with himself: you can ask no more. Ah, I sometimes think he never knew me, and yet as I look backward over the years, and recall the many trials, sorrows and bereavements I have passed through until I stand alone so far as family ties are concerned, I feel constrained to say, I have been sustained by a power higher than man's, I trust by the strong hand of our Elder Brother, and feel to say,

"And if our dearest comforts fall
Before his sovereign will,
He never takes away our all,
Himself he gives us still."

I wish to be content, I do not want to murmur, I have much to be thankful for. Remember me in love to all you may meet at Otego, also your family at home. I will send this to Otego, as I never know where you are after the first Sunday. Please write to me again, if you can fellowship such as I.

Yours unworthily,

JENNIE HALLENBECK.

HAMMONDSPORT, N. Y., March 19, 1906.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—Your letters are very interesting reading for me, in them I hope I see the footprints of the flock. Your letter to the SIGNS has brought me many letters from the dear children of our Father in heaven, who are born of the Spirit and manifested here in sinful flesh, which flesh does not inherit the kingdom of heaven; but the kingdom is manifest in it where Satan resides, therefore the war of good and evil commences in earnest. The old man will not give possession of the house until a stronger than he appears. Did not Christ come in the flesh and redeem his people from under the law by the sacrifice of himself, being made a curse for them? He paid the demands of the law, by giving his soul the ransom price for his people, and arose from the dead, manifesting his power over death, hell and the grave. When he appears to his people here in the flesh, does not war commence in earnest? Satan will not give up possession (until overpowered) of the old house in which the saints live in the flesh. When the Lord appears to his people light fills the house and Satan is not found, for he lives in darkness with his angels, but when the Master withholds the light of his countenance how soon the father of lies enters our dwelling again, claiming the right of possession, telling us that we are deceived, and I find that I am inclined to believe him. It is written, "The elder shall serve the younger," and I find it so. The saints have two natures, the first of Adam, who was made flesh and blood, and the second is Christ. Therefore while tabernacling in the flesh we find the old man and the new man with us, and we have much trouble, for they are at war, but Christ shall rule, and nothing can befall us but what is for our good; yea, though the fire burn up the world and all things therein, consuming the dross found with the gold, we shall come off in the war with power over hell and the devil, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

With much love for you and wife, in christian fellowship I remain with you in hope of eternal life in Christ,

WALTER REED.

WARRENTON, Ore., July 4, 1906.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—I am sending you the inclosed letter for publication, with your approval; I feel that I would like to see it in our dear family paper, so others may with me read and enjoy it, especially my cousin. I hope we are more nearly and dearly related through the goodness of God, according to the good pleasure of his will. My precious brother, Elder Wm. J. Hess, this letter tells us that our dear grandparents also were of like precious faith, and O how glad I was to learn this, and how many times did I read over and over the dear brother's letter, hardly believing my eyes or trusting my senses. I was surprised as well as pleased to learn that he had known them, and I hope all who are living of our family who may read this letter can rejoice with us that our loved ones knew and loved the truth, to the praise of the

glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. O my dear ones in this most precious hope, I am so rejoiced, lifted up far above all earthly things, and I hope filled with the praise of his glory and love unto all the saints.

Excuse me, I will write no more now, but I might for hours and not then tell of all the many mercies which a most kind and merciful God continues to pour out upon a poor sinner.

I hope that you will forgive me, my dear brother Simmons, for sending this without your permission.

Your most unworthy sister,
(MRS.) S. L. HECKARD STUART.

HOPKINS, Mo., June 27, 1906.

DEAR SISTER STUART:—I received your kind, and, to me, welcome letter, but have not found time to answer. It reminded me that I perhaps have lived as long a time as the children and grandchildren of the old fathers and mothers who are now corresponding with me. I will be eighty-seven years old November 7th, this year, and am writing this without glasses. Well do I remember brother and sister Heckard, and brother and sister Hess, and all those Elders of whom you made mention in your letter, and I could name many more, but all are gone home. I was licensed to preach in 1860, ordained in 1861, and have been preserved through all the time by the hand of the Lord. I have preached in nine States, have baptized nearly two hundred; the last one was on the third Sunday in December, 1905, a sister weighing 217 pounds, and I baptized her as easily as any I ever baptized. I left Illinois in 1875, and have had the care of this church since October of that year. We have had sixty-four members, but are now about half that number, but we have peace. I served three other churches until my wife lost her health; she died Feb. 1st, 1893. I visit in Illinois, Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Kansas, Iowa and Nebraska. Our church meets twice a month.

Dear sister Stuart, your letter has brought so many things to my mind of past events, and so many dear ones with whom I was so fond of meeting in the worship of our blessed Lord and Master, Jesus the Savior of poor sinners, and I realize daily my dependent condition, and O how often I have had to cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" and often like the poor publican must cry to God to be merciful to me, a sinner. Now I will say, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." What more could we ask? He died for our transgression, and arose for our justification. Dear sister, this is my hope, and this was the hope of your parents and your grandparents, and I hope that you are comforted with the same comfort. I shall be glad of a letter from you at any time. May grace be multiplied unto you, is my desire for Jesus' sake.

Yours in hope,

R. M. SIMMONS.

FAYETTE, Ala., July 21, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—The following letter is from a dear brother and sister who were members of Hopewell Church, which is my home church. I was so delighted with the firm stand they have taken that I decided to send it to you for publication, so do with it as you think best, but if you do not publish please send it back to me.

With love to you and all the household of faith, I close. G. W. BERRY.

LAWN, Texas, July 17, 1906.

G. W. BERRY—VERY DEAR BROTHER:—I will try once more to write to you, although I feel unworthy to write to any of the Lord's dear people; however I will make the attempt, hoping the Lord will give me something to write. I cannot of myself do anything; God has all power, and he does his will in heaven and earth, and none can stay his hand. O dear brother, how I love this doctrine that abases man to less than nothing and vanity, and exalts God as all and in all.

Mr. Griffin and I are still holding our letters, we could not find any church of the predestinarian faith and order, and we could not go with those that would limit God, for how "can two walk together, except they be agreed?" We wandered around like stray sheep, until God in his own time and way directed us to a church of those dear people. This is the way it came about: I was alone and grieving over our isolated condition; I felt like a little child that had been away from home a long time and was crying to return, and these words came to me: Write to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; so I wrote, telling the dear people of our isolated condition, and a brother wrote us, informing us of a church of that faith and order, and told us to come and see for ourselves. We went, and God be praised, we found them to be the very people we were longing to find. Dear brother, tongue cannot express the joy it was to us to meet them; it had been five years since we had been in a church of that faith and order. There will be an association held at that church the second Sunday in August, and we want you to come; you do not know how glad we would be to have you with us; come and look at the country, and see if you do not want to move out here. I hope it is the Lord's will to send you here, we need you; it is about twenty-five miles to that church. If the good Lord would send one of his ministers here I do believe there would soon be a church constituted. If you come, come to Coleman City, and you will be met with conveyance. Those limited Baptists around us try to make us believe they preach just like you all do. Some that come from your part of the world say you all do not preach predestination of all things. We want you, if you cannot come and tell us about it, to write and tell us just what you think about it, and also tell us what you think about this "conditional time salvation." Write us a long letter on those two subjects as the Lord gives you light and liberty, not for argument, but for our good.

From the very least of God's humble poor.

MR. AND MRS. J. H. GRIFFIN.

JAMAICA, N. Y., August 12, 1906.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—When I read your editorial in August 1st number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, subject, "My kingdom is not of this world," I felt that I would be glad to let you know (to some extent at least) the good it did me, and I still have that feeling, but you know I have a very poor

way of expressing myself; this is why I often keep silent. As the impression remains with me to let you and others know, I do not feel it is right but that I should (notwithstanding my weakness) let you all know that by God's matchless grace you have been my helpers in deed and in truth. Not that I desire to flatter my brethren, God forbid that I should attempt such a thing, but I do desire to magnify the grace that I see in them, which causes them to faithfully present the things which are true, which are pure, to the comfort, encouragement and upbuilding of others. Yes, my brother, I am made to rejoice in this.

Elder Chick's editorial in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for August 15th is in place; it is in keeping with good order; it set my mind at ease where formerly I had been much perplexed in some cases that had come up under my observation. There are two letters from Elder McConnell that are most excellent, surely I feel them to be in perfect accord with my own experience and understanding of the teaching of the Scriptures of divine truth. I might make mention of many others, but space will not now admit, but will say, surely the SIGNS is a blessed medium of correspondence. May the Lord continue to bless editors, publishers and correspondents in the future as in the past, I trust is the sincere desire of my heart.

Your rebellious brother, who naturally desires to go in his own strength, but at times I trust there is a desire in his heart to go in the strength of the Lord God, making mention of his righteousness, even of his only.

MARTIN D. FISHER.

CLANTON, Ala,, April 25, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—We are a little behind in sending our remittance to the SIGNS, but we expect it may be the last time, as we are old, and worn out, and poor; we surely do love to read the truth. I was born the same year the SIGNS began to be published; my wife is six years younger. You will find two dollars inclosed, for which send the paper to Rutha Chandler.

I would like to write a few words about the miracle of the loaves and fishes, as I have neither heard any one preach, nor seen any writing, upon that subject. If God has given me understanding I am right, if he has not I am wrong. Does it not represent the preacher and the church which are the chosen of God? Now to illustrate: I walked seven miles to hear two gospel preachers, and the gospel table was filled with plenty of the very best, and none of it was tainted. All had good appetites, and ate all they could, but afterward you could have gathered up twelve baskets of sound fragments, and none of it cost a cent. Now if this is not the spiritual meaning of this, I am wrong. This I am liable to be. I am nothing but sin and corruption in myself, and cannot do what is good, but am prone to wander. I wish I could pray and also write as others can; but it is God that rules, and we must be content, and thank him that he does rule. I think that if there has ever been a time when God has loosed Satan it is now, for it seems as though he has deceived the whole world, and a part of the church and part of the preachers; they are not plain in their preaching, and sacrifice too much for popularity and gain; they should preach a whole God and not a part of one, and that he did foresee and predestinate all things for his own glory and for the good of his people, his church; not churches, but church. He has but one church, and that is the reason he only

provided one Savior, and this is the reason there is but one salvation. There is but one God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Yours truly, we hope,
JOSEPH AND RUTHA CHANDLER.

ROYAL, La., April 18, 1906.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I love to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for in it I see so many good letters written by the dear ones. Noah was in the ark, high above the waves, and his road was on the waves of the flood. This highway is spoken of in many places; even John was carried into a high mount; our Savior went up into a mountain. We have a hope and a love that are far above this life, and I do not think this love stops at the grave, but goes on into eternity. We are in that highway, far above all the dark and stormy clouds. We need not fear, for Paul says, "Your life is hid with Christ in God." In this assurance I sing, "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!" Again I get low down when I see my sinful ways, and my tongue is dumb. When in this highway, as light is given me, I am made to sing of salvation. Jesus said he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, and I find that I am a sinner still. I am never able to see my garments white, my eyes are blind. Are they white? O Lord, if thou makest me clean I shall be clean; if thou makest me white I shall be white. Then these questions come: Do I love or do I not? If I do not, I wish that I could. Do I pray? If I do not, I wish I could. Do I believe he is the Savior? If I do not, I wish that I could. Do I believe that he died for me? If I do not, I wish that I could. Do I believe that he arose on the third day? If I do not, then, O Lord, lead me to believe.

Dear ones, write on, the blessed SIGNS often brings a feast to me. I wish that all Old School Baptists would take it.

Your unworthy brother,
B. F. PARKER.

CLAIRETTE, Texas, Feb. 4, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—It is a pleasure to me to renew my subscription. There is nothing that I read, except the Bible, that gives me more pleasure than the SIGNS; so many of the dear correspondents express themselves as I feel to be, a poor old sinner, if saved at all it is by the grace of God, and by grace alone. The older I grow the more of a sinner I feel to be. I keep looking back over my past life to see if I ever did any good, and nothing but evil appears to my eyes. Then how thankful I feel that the Lord has been so good and kind to me as to spare my poor, unprofitable life, and to bless me with plenty of this world's goods, and all for nothing good that I have done; he is surely a most merciful God, and I ought to be thankful to him. I have a good wife and three daughters grown, and all but one members of the church.

Our church withdrew fellowship from the limited side in 1902. But four of us came out at that time, but now we number twenty-three, and we have the gospel preached to us by our dearly beloved brother, Elder C. L. Nance, of McGregor, Texas, who comes to us regularly. We have one brother who is licensed to preach, and who does well. Two others speak in a public manner. We would be glad if the Lord would open a way and impress one of the SIGNS' editors to come and see us soon. May the good Lord bless the dear old SIGNS, with its dear editors and all the brethren who write for it, that it may stand firm in the doctrine and practice of the Bible.

W. H. CHENEY.

GRAYMONT, Ga., Oct. 16, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—Elder Keene and I have been speaking much of you, and of writing to you, for some time, and this morning we have a little time to do so. We are both as well as usual, and are on a pleasant tour among the various associations and churches of Georgia. Elder Keene reached Savannah by steamer direct from Boston, Friday, September 28th, when and where I met him. Our appointments began in Savannah the following Sunday. We have attended the annual session of three of our associations up to the present time, and contemplate being at two more in Georgia and one in Florida. It will be about December 1st when our tour will end. I am glad that our people heartily receive and fully indorse Elder Keene and his able preaching; I felt sure they would. The Lord has graciously been with us so far in our meetings down here. The meetings seemed to be held in peace and love. Elder Keene sees and hears quite a number of queer things down among our people, but you know that he is real apt in adapting himself to the situation, so he is found readily "falling in line," and keeping step with us at a fair rate; but all these things do not in the least interfere with his spiritual mindedness. He proves to be a veritable storehouse of gospel wisdom, and the readiness with which he draws therefrom is a source of continual delight to those of us who are given to love such things. I hope to be with him on the most of his trip down here in Georgia, and also on in Florida. We contemplate reaching Florida on Thursday before the second Sunday in November, to attend the Mt. Enon Association, to be held with Orange Church, at Orlando Fla., at that time. From there Elder Gilbert has arranged appointments for us up to December 1st, or thereabouts. I feel that it is a rare privilege indeed to have the companionship and "yokefellowship" of a man like Elder Keene. It may be a purely selfish motive, but I find much in the life and manners of a man like him that would be a great blessing to me if I could wisely appropriate them to my needs.

In our conversation we often think and speak of you, and of our pleasant visits at your good home, and of how glad we would be if we could have you with us. I shall yet hope to have the pleasure of your coming to see us, and allowing our people the privilege of profiting by your ministry. Write me at Cordele.

I will close, with love and best wishes for all the dear family.

Yours in hope,

MORGAN BROWN.

CORDELE, Georgia, Oct. 16, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST JESUS:—Well, here I am in God's providence among the churches of Christ in the "south land." It is very agreeable to my spirit to find that "at home" feeling possessing me as I mingle among our dear kindred in Christ Jesus in these parts, and I find even now as I am writing my heart moved in cordial gratitude to our covenant God for that tie that I feel binds me to his people here, and elsewhere also "in bonds of christian love."

"Midst scenes of confusion and creature complaints,
How sweet to my soul is communion with saints.
To find at the banquet of mercy there's room,
And feel in the presence of Jesus at home."

I find that though there may be some things disturbing, vexing and causing grief of heart to God's humble ones, yet there is a blessing even in our communion in our sorrows.

"We share our mortal woes,
Our mutual burdens bear,
And often for each other flows
The sympathizing tear."

It has been my blessedness while I have been among the dear saints in Georgia to find that my heart throbs in unison with theirs; their joys and griefs are mine, and though I am twelve hundred miles from North Berwick, Maine, I am not away from home, for here I find the citizens of Zion, and with them, by God's sovereign grace, I am, I hope, a fellow-citizen, and, I repeat it once more, I am at home in "the household of God" in Georgia. I have already attended three associations, and have visited with our brother, Elder Morgan Brown, a number of churches, and I have met a goodly number of preachers, and with some of them I have become intimate, and feel to love them indeed as the true and faithful servants of our Lord Jesus Christ, for I judge that in their conversation, and in their preaching, they have only in view the glory of God and the edification of the household of faith. I am expecting, the Lord willing, to still visit associations, and a number of the churches in this State, and then to go among our people in Florida, for about one month's time. It would be pleasant to me to have your company in "Dixie's land," and I know that the dear kindred in Christ Jesus would much appreciate your presence and ministry among them. I hope you and all your dear ones are well, and that our God is your strength and comfort in your work of faith and labor of love among the family of God.

I am, I hope, your brother and fellow-servant in the gospel of Christ,

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

GEORGETOWN, Ill., April 23, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars, for which send me the SIGNS for one year. I received twelve copies of the paper about four years ago, and have worn them out, and thought I would send for it for this year. I have been living with the despised Old Baptists since 1861, and am not tired of them yet. I was received by Providence Church the first Sunday in March, 1861, and was baptized by Elder John Shields the first Sunday in April.

Your brother, I hope,

J. M. HANDLEY.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder A. B. Francis.)

The Elders and messengers composing the Salisbury Association, in session with the church at Messongoes, Accomac Co., Va., October 24th, 25th and 26th, 1906, to the several churches whose messengers we are, greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—According to the custom which has been pursued by this Association from its organization to the present time, we deem it our duty to send you this letter, desiring not your hurt, but your welfare, and to promote your spiritual interests. In order to do this we would stir up your pure (spiritual) minds by way of remembrance, putting you in mind of those things which in the past did give you the most blessed consolation, as a sweet, soul-reviving message conveyed to you from your heavenly Father by Him whom he (the Father) anointed to preach good tidings unto the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, the opening of the prison to them that are bound, &c., and as you were brought low, were broken-hearted,

captive, bound and in prison, that message was then peculiarly sweet and cheering and soul-comforting, and the remembrance has ever been a comfort to you. Of that mercy we would remind you, and also remind you that in calling you forth out of that captivity in which you once were, your Father placed you under a lifelong obligation to glorify him in your body and spirit, and that you have no right now to claim that you are your own and can do as you please. The apostle says, "Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." To glorify God in our body it is necessary that we appear in bodily presence before him, in his sanctuary (Judah), in his temple (the church), in the assembly of the saints. "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." To forsake the assembling of ourselves together is accounted sinning "wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth," and will surely result in sorrow to the child of God.

There are certain things set before the children of God for their observance, and neglect of them should be carefully avoided. Jesus commanded his apostles, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, * * * teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Thus we see the apostolic duty was to teach those who received their word and were baptized "to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Among those things he commanded is the ordinance of the Lord's supper, and it is one of the most important; so much so that we do not consider any member of the church has a right, for any trifling cause, to absent himself or herself therefrom at any time that the church may designate for its observance; if one should do so he will suffer a loss that cannot be repaired by any future act on his part, for "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries," which are the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the world, the lust of the eyes, the pride (worldly ambition) of life, &c. These things are indeed adversaries of the child of God, and are ever alert to allure him from the things that are essential to his peace of mind. Wisdom calls to him, standing "in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths; she crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors," and her voice is, "Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold," and all who hearken to the voice of wisdom will find all her ways pleasantness and all her paths paths of peace; but he who, like the deaf adder, hearkens not to the voice of this charming one, will find himself in trouble, led thereto by hearkening to and following the strange woman, whose "house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death." Brethren, suffer a word of exhortation: let us hearken to the voice of wisdom, giving heed to the things we have heard, that we do not let them slip, but ever keep them in remembrance, and be not hearers only, either, but doers also, walking in all the order and ordinances of the Lord's house, and also remembering that when we have done all things that are commanded us we are still unprofitable servants.

When one offers himself to the church for membership he virtually surrenders himself to the guidance and government

of the church, and any carelessness or neglect of the order of the church is rebellion. But the tempter is ever ready to help us with excuses for the neglect; it is either too hot, or too cold, or too rainy, or the roads are bad, or maybe we are looking for company, or have company that it would not be polite to leave, or maybe we are invited to a dinner, or may not feel very well; any or all these excuses are inventions of the adversary, and we may be sure that he is not tempting us in this way for our good, but that he would devour us, and does devour us, too, if we yield to him, destroys our peace and takes away our comfort. We would inquire if this has not been found true in our own experience? Have our excuses been satisfying to us? No, they have not. Then why should any continue to do those things for which they need to make excuses? Let us rather "take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord," paying (in this manner) our vows "in the presence of all his people." Brethren, it is to be deeply regretted that there is not more attention paid to these things. But every indication is that the last days are at hand. An inspired apostle wrote, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." And further, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils," &c. These things, dear brethren, indicate that the "last days," "latter times," are now at hand; surely these things are being fulfilled even now in the church; the word declares these things shall be, but we are not given the power to alter the condition of things. It is distressing to contemplate, but there is a needs be that it should be so. Let us pray God that in this fearfully trying time we may be kept in the strait and narrow way that leadeth unto life.

We have referred to the ordinance of the Lord's supper particularly, but not to exclude other things which are also important, particularly the manifestation of brotherly love, that it should continue, and be without dissimulation, not in word only, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth. Let us also be careful to avoid offences. Jesus said, "Woe unto the world because of offences." But he also said, "It must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" Take heed that ye offend not one of these little ones. Let us consider these things and give heed unto them, and may the God of all grace abound toward you all. Amen.

T. M. POULSON, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

INFORMATION WANTED.

GRIFFITHVILLE, Ark., Oct. 29, 1906.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I am thinking of moving to Indian Territory, and would love to hear from any brother that lives in the Territory, either by letter or through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as I wish to settle near some of my faith, the Primitive Baptists.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,
M. T. PENCE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1906.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

GALATIANS VI. 7, 8.

"BE not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

These words have been very often with us for many years past, and have seemed more and more important the longer we have considered them, and at this time we feel like calling the attention of our brethren to them for a little time. They contain an admonition of the apostle to his brethren at Galatia. But while this is an admonition by Paul, he wrote by inspiration of God, so that unlike all that the servants of God may say or do to-day, we do not need to refer to other Scriptures to see if these things be so. This epistle, and all the New Testament, are the words of God, spoken to us through the apostles. All that they wrote that is recorded in the New Testament was directed by the Holy Spirit, so they could not make any mistake, either in recording facts or in stating the doctrine of God. True, they recorded some things that other men said, which were not inspired of God, but on the contrary were opposed to God and godliness, but even here the Spirit of God was with them, so that we know that evil men did say and do just what the apostles record of them.

This admonition of the apostle is also the revelation of the commandments of God; that is, God commands of his people just what the apostle here exhorts them to do. The two verses quoted at the beginning contain the statement of a general truth, which applies to all the admonitions which precede and which follow them. The whole chapter is full of admonitions as to how believers ought to behave themselves in the house of God and in all their daily life. Concerning all these things the apostle says to his brethren, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked," &c. In all these things it is true that what a man sows that shall he reap. With relation to them all it is true that if we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption, and if we sow to the Spirit, we shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. Take any one of all the admonitions contained in this chapter, in the whole epistle, and indeed all the admonitions of all the New Testament, and these words of the text will apply to them all. Paul here states a general truth, which is sufficiently broad to cover all the admonitions of all the word of God and every commandment of the Lord to his people. This, as well as all other admonitions, is intended to stir up the pure minds of believers to a remembrance of that which is good and wholesome at all times. Such stirring up will always be welcome to that soul who loves God, and who is therefore continually asking of God, What wilt thou have me to do? Once that soul, seeking salvation under the law, said, "What must I do to be saved?" Now he does not and cannot say this, but, having hope of salvation in Christ, he will be found asking how he shall glorify God, not how

he shall save himself. God's dear people are liable to be deceived in a thousand ways. Paul here, and twice in the first epistle to the church at Corinth, urges upon his brethren the danger of being deceived. We are liable to be deceived by the flesh, by the world, by the wiles of the devil. The flesh becomes religious, and would lead us after itself and away from God by putting on the profession of godliness. The world puts on an attractive appearance and professes great charity and benevolence, and so would deceive the soul into folly, and Satan, who failed to deceive the dear Redeemer in the temptation in the wilderness, does often deceive the elect into open sin, or secret sin, as he did our first parents. Paul would bid us beware of all this, and not to be deceived in any of these ways. The admonition, "Be not deceived," covers all the ways in which one may be deceived; be not deceived regarding the doctrine of God; be not deceived regarding the commandments of God; be not deceived as to the spirit which actuates you; and be not deceived as to your walk in the church. This epistle to the Galatians contains much regarding the conflict between legalism and the gospel; some had been bewitched or deceived regarding the way of salvation; it contains much also regarding the orderly life outwardly which is becoming to those who profess the name of Christ. This admonition applies to both these things. If they were deceived into thinking that believers in Christ, after all, must keep the old law else they could not be saved, they would miss the solid comfort of the gospel, and what would be still more to be deplored, they would hold that which would be dishonoring to Jesus their Savior. If they departed in their outward life they would still be dishonoring the name of the Lord, whose Spirit they had professed to have, and beside would cut themselves off from much of the joy of salvation; in either case they would be doing themselves harm. Because of the danger of being deceived, and because of the sorrowful consequences of such deceit, Paul urges upon them carefulness, that they be not deceived.

The next sentence contains a solemn reason why they must be careful in this matter: "God is not mocked." That is, God does not utter his commandments lightly. He will do all his word, and he will not allow that his children shall say one thing and do another. We may make light of men, but we cannot with impunity make light of his word, we cannot flee from his presence, we cannot hide ourselves from his indignation. The word "mocked" literally signifies, to scorn, to deride, to deceive, to insult, to make light of. One may make light of a promise to another man who is weak like himself. We may say that we will obey those in authority in the family, in the city, or in the land, and then pay no attention to our promise, and escape all serious results; but we cannot so treat our God. These Galatians had professed to be saved by Christ, now they were seeking justification by the forms and ceremonies of the law, but Paul reminds them that they could not deceive the Lord, and that he would visit their iniquity upon them. He reminds them also that they had come to profess obedience to his ordinances and commandments, such as communicating to their teachers in the word, and in doing good, as they had opportunity, to all men. (See the connection.) Now they could not make this profession and then depart from it in outward life without reaping the evil that they should sow, God would not be mocked, nay, more,

God "IS not mocked." All that he has said shall find perfect fulfillment in every case. "Be not deceived" with regard to this solemn matter. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Then Paul lays down a general truth, making here a special application of it: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." This is true, as every one knows, in nature, morals, as they are called, in the habits we form in youth, in all the daily life of the believers and in all that belongs to the kingdom of heaven. Now notice that it is not, If a man sows sin he shall reap sorrow, or if he sows righteousness he shall reap gladness, but he reaps the very thing that he sows. If he sows to the flesh, which is corrupt, he shall reap the corruption of the flesh; if he sows through the Spirit to the Spirit he shall reap that which is of the Spirit, life everlasting. Sorrow, on the one hand, is not corruption, and gladness, on the other hand, is not everlasting life. There is a sorrow that is holy, and there is a gladness that is all unholy. Sowing to the flesh may produce gladness, but it is a fleshly gladness that is all corrupt. Sowing to the Spirit may produce gladness, but it is the joy of the Holy Ghost, and often sowing to the flesh produces sorrow, which yet is not godly sorrow. But the apostle does not name here either sorrow or gladness; he simply says that the very thing a man sows, that he shall reap. Naturally, if a man sows wheat, he reaps wheat; if he sows tares, he shall reap tares. He may sow tares unwittingly, but still the result is the same; he may sow all manner of evil seeds without knowing they are evil, and even thinking that they are good, but the crop will be evil all the same.

What is sowing to the flesh? It is following after the flesh. When the Galatians gave heed to the Judaizing teachers and sought to be made perfect through the flesh, of that flesh they could but reap more and more legality, and so go farther away from the grace of God. A little leaven would leaven the whole lump. Departing a little would lead to still greater departures, and after a time Christ would be wholly eliminated from their faith. Beginning with circumcision, soon they would come to think that they must heed the whole law, and that salvation was altogether of the law and not at all of grace. The result was summed up by Paul when he said, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." This would be the corrupt harvest which would result from the observation of circumcision on their part; this would apply to the doctrine of salvation. The pure gospel would give place to the corruption of that fleshly religion from which they had been delivered in their first faith by the Spirit. But coming closer to the connection of the text, we also find the same law applying to the conduct of believers. Sowing to the flesh in this sense means following the flesh in its works, such as adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings and such like. Of all these things the apostle says that they that do them cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Following these things is to turn one's back upon the kingdom of God; and to follow one step leads to following many steps, unless checked by sovereign grace. On the other hand, to sow to the Spirit, is to follow after all that is included in its fruits; they are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, and the

apostle says, "Against such there is no law." All things that we do and say come under one or the other head. We are either sowing to the flesh or to the Spirit all the time. How solemn is this thought. Are we sowing to the Spirit if we are found seeking after worldly pleasures rather than the house of God? Are we sowing to the Spirit when we neglect the assembling of ourselves together? Are we sowing to the Spirit when the gain of this world usurps our chief affection and all our time? Are we sowing to the Spirit when we visit theatres, dancing parties, operas, card parties, or any such places? What is the result in such things? Is it not more and more carelessness with regard to our obligations in the house of God? Are we not weakened in the race by all these things? Can a believer go from the house of mirth to the house of God with a frame of mind that is prepared to hear the word or to bear testimony to its power? Is it possible to begin such a course and not reap more and more corruption? Can one indulge in some little worldly pleasure, and not find it easier to do the same the next day or to depart even farther from the right way? This is sowing to the flesh and reaping corruption.

On the other hand, in following after the things of the Spirit there comes to the soul a growth in knowledge and understanding, a deeper feeling of the solemnity of Zion's courts and of all heavenly blessings, more readiness to join in such conversation as is godly, and deeper heart exercises regarding the word and works of God. Did any one, on the other hand, ever have a season of blessed communion with God at any of the places of amusement of which we have spoken?

Now, in view of all these things, how solemn is the language of the apostle, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked." If one thinks he can prosper in soul while running after that transient joy which the world affords, he is deceived. Be not deceived in this matter, do not think that a believer can engage in all that the world approves and counts innocent, and still have the smiles of the Father. Do not be deceived into thinking that worldly gain, or applause, or favor, can be the goal at which we are aiming, and still that we can live in the presence of God. "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." This is the solemn word of God by the inspired apostle. So also, if we are found sowing to the flesh in envy, hatred, malice, backbiting, slander, or in any evil thought, or word, or deed, we shall only reap what we sow. These things will grow until they corrupt our whole life and heart, our whole thoughts and words, and we shall find ourselves reaping as we have sown. All this is here and now; the corruption will be here and now in all our thoughts, words and deeds. The life everlasting will be also seen and felt here and now, for all the fruits of the Spirit enumerated above are included in the words "eternal life," they belong to that life which is eternal. Of one thing we are sure: that the children of God when led by the Spirit desire the fruit of the Spirit.

C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

CHRIST MADE PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERINGS.

(Hebrews ii. 10.)

In what sense Christ was made perfect through sufferings is one of the most important subjects that ever occupied the mind of man. If we class him in his humanity with Adam we make a fatal mistake. "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." The first natural, the last spiritual; the first was made of the dust of the ground, and before the law, the last was made of a woman and under the law, to redeem them that were under the law; the first man is of the earth earthy, the second man is the Lord from heaven; the first saw corruption, the last saw no corruption. To say Christ was imperfect in any sense would be to contradict every type of him in the Old Testament. To say his nature was faulty would be to say sin was in it, for man is faulty only because of sin. The man Christ Jesus was not the son of Adam, but the Son of God; he was not the seed of man, but "the seed of the woman." He did take on him the seed of Abraham, so far as lineage was concerned, and was the promised seed, but God was his Father, and not Abraham. None of the sons of Abraham could have atoned for sin. "As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." The taking of flesh and blood did not make him imperfect, he was not a faulty creature because of sin, but God manifest in the flesh. He took flesh and blood upon him that he might die or shed his blood for the remission of sins. His blood or life was not contaminated with sin or disease, he was the spotless Lamb of God. We in the flesh are imperfect because we are the sons of Adam; in the Spirit we are perfect because we are the sons of God. Would not the only Begotten of the Father, both in the flesh and Spirit, be perfect from the same cause? Christ is presented throughout the Scriptures as being gloriously perfect; in the types, in prophecy, in his own words and in all that is written of him by the apostles it is so. The idea that he had to be imperfect in his humanity in order to be made perfect, is wrong; he was the Word "made flesh;" he was perfect with the Father before time began, and he was perfect also in the flesh. "Mark the perfect man."—Psalms xxxvii. 37. We shall now quote a few Scriptures to prove the perfection of his humanity as the Son of God. "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." These references are sufficient to establish his perfection as a man both human and divine. The book of Hebrews begins by presenting Christ the Son of God; he is "appointed heir of all things, by whom also he [God] made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, * * * Being made so much better than the angels." All this exalts him far above man, and forbids us to say that his humanity was imperfect. If Adam was perfect, (not spiritual) without sin and faultless, having been made in the image

of God, why not Christ the Son, who is the express image of his person and the brightness of his glory? He "was made a little lower than the angels." This refers always to Christ, and means in the sense of his ignominious death, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

We shall now attempt to answer the important question: In what sense was Christ made perfect through sufferings? It became God "in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." These sons would be afflicted with severe trials, persecutions and temptations, therefore would need one who could succor them. As captain he was perfect, but they needed also in him an high priest who could be touched with the feeling of their infirmities, hence it behooved God to call his only begotten Son to pass through all that his sons, brought unto glory, would be called upon to endure. "In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest." Therefore by actual experience our High Priest knows our infirmities, having been tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. Under the law the high priest who offered blood for the sins of the people, first offered for himself, he having sins. Our High Priest knew no sin, but was made sin for us, and in this sense he is one with us, knowing our temptations and sins, having borne them in his own body. "Such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." He was made perfect (prepared) through his sufferings to be an high priest. These sufferings were trials, persecutions and temptations, and not the sufferings of death. There is no sense in which he as a man, the Son of God, was made perfect through the sufferings of death. His body, the church, was perfected, however, in that one offering. When he said, in Luke xiii. 32, "The third day I shall be perfected," he referred to his resurrection and the resurrection, in him, of his members, by the glory of the Father from under the curse of the law. Had he not been tempted in all points like as we are, he would not know our sufferings by experience. We could not come to him for succor, in his character of High Priest, had he not known and felt our infirmities, yet he was perfect in his humanity. Thus we understand how he was made perfect (prepared, not purified) through sufferings to succor them that are tempted. This was in fulfillment of the prophecy, "In all their affliction he was afflicted." In Hebrews v. 8, we are told, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." There is a vast difference between learning obedience, and being made obedient by the things which he suffered; that kind of obedience is not acceptable in the sight of God. Therefore Christ was not forced or made obedient by the things he suffered; it was his "delight" to do the will of God, it was his meat and his drink to finish the work given him of the Father to do. The obedience of Christ preceded his sufferings, he was obedient even unto death. Obedience to God always, in his sons and daughters, precedes their sufferings, they suffer because of obedience, living, as it were, a living death, or in other words, crucifying the flesh day and night. It is in the crucifixion that we suffer, and the crucifixion is because of obedience; "crucified with Christ." Adam satisfied the lusts

of his flesh, hence no obedience, no sufferings. Christ learned what Adam never knew, viz., obedience, living "by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," or in living in perfect obedience to the righteous law of God. Adam transgressed and died; Christ obeyed and lives to make intercession for us. In his sufferings he learned that the law given to Adam demanded perfect obedience. We learn obedience in the same way, but are not made obedient by the things we suffer; our sufferings are the best evidence we can have that we are obedient. It must be a willing, though painful crucifixion, or it is not acceptable to God.

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." We should not confound the office of high priest with the offering for sin. This text is presenting Christ the Son of God as the Author of salvation, and it shows him to be a perfect offering, not made so through sufferings, but because he was the Son of God. God the Father made him perfect for the work of redemption: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." He could not have done this had he been imperfect in any sense of the word. If Christ was imperfect, as some think, and sufferings could purify or perfect his flesh or humanity, then might we not ask, Could not our sufferings make us perfect also? If this were possible we would need no Savior, but could atone for our own imperfections through our own sufferings. God made the Son "without blemish and without spot," therefore being made perfect he became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; not unto all who say they are obedient, but unto all who, like himself, live the life of crucifixion: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live."

We leave these reflections for the consideration of our readers. K.

REPLY TO BROTHER DULEY.

WE are very glad to give brother Duley space to explain himself. In his explanation, however, we are confirmed that we understood him perfectly in his recent letter headed "The Gospel," and published, with our remarks, in the SIGNS for September 1st, 1906. We still assert that "there is no such thing as letter gospel," hence no such thing as preaching the gospel in the letter. If a man is bright enough to repeat a gospel sermon, the repetition of it does not change the gospel to letter, though the man has no spiritual knowledge of what he repeats. We heard, a little while ago, the hymn "Rock of ages" reproduced by a phonograph; every word was distinct and every note full and perfect. The reproduction of this hymn did not change it into a popular song of the day; it was as much the hymn "Rock of ages" as though an angel had sung it, though the phonograph had no knowledge of what it was doing. We use this illustration to prove that the reproduction of a gospel sermon would not make that gospel sermon "letter preaching." The expression, "the letter," appears in Romans ii. 27; ii. 29; vii. 6; 2 Cor. iii. 6. We hope that brother Duley may carefully examine these Scriptures and their connections, and perhaps he may be convinced that the expression, "preaching the gospel in the letter," is not according to the word of God. In Philippians i. 15–18, we have the following: "Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife, and some also of good will: the one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction

to my bonds; but the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." This also proves that Christ is preached, whether it be of envy, strife, pretence or good will. Can Christ be preached without preaching the gospel? Paul called the above preaching Christ, and rejoiced that he was preached, although some had no spiritual knowledge of Christ who preached him.

We think from brother Duley's first letter that he referred more particularly to the servants of God in speaking of systematic preaching, because he spoke of the children of God sitting and sleeping under it. The children of God, manifestly, seldom hear the ministers of the world preach. With regard to some of the children of God going to sleep in meetings, we still say such has always been the case, and the same will no doubt continue, and it is seldom if ever the minister is to blame for it. We admit that short sermons are better than those of "two hours," unless the man has something to say; yet no servant of God can judge his own preaching.

We acknowledge our youth, which is forty-six years, and our lack of spiritual understanding, but hope that years and experience may not fail to teach us what we should know when we have reached the age of a man: threescore and ten. We have no recollection of ever imagining a congregation before us (as brother Duley says) in our early exercises regarding the ministry; Christ and him crucified for poor, condemned sinners, was all our thought.

We may be "mistaken" with regard to godly sorrow, produced when the Spirit fills the heart and tears are shed; there are not many tears of rejoicing, however, if we have the fellowship of Christ's sufferings; not much rejoicing in this bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus; but rejoicing shall come when the night is past and all tears are wiped away.

We assure brother Duley that our little correspondence shall not affect our fellowship and christian regard for him. K

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Mt. Pleasant Regular Baptist Association, in session with the Sulphur Fork Church, Henry County, Kentucky, August 31st and September 1st and 2nd, 1906, sendeth greeting in the Lord to the churches and associations with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN BELOVED OF THE LORD:—In the providence of God we are favored with the blessed privilege of meeting again, and of greeting each other in the sweetest bonds of fellowship and love in the Lord, and to join in praise to him for such assuring evidences of his good pleasure, and our hearts have been made glad by the coming of the servants of our God, whose coming has been in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, and in the power of his word, assuring us that he has not left himself without witnesses in this part of his dominion, nor has he forgotten his little children who sojourn here. We hope we shall still be favored with your messengers and their messages of love, and shall hope to confirm this by the coming of our messengers unto you.

We have appointed to meet next year at our usual time, Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1907, with the Mt. Pleasant Church, at Pleasureville, Ken-

tucky, when and where we hope to meet with the brethren and friends again. Until then, dear brethren, farewell.

C. F. DUDLEY, Moderator.
G. R. TURNER, Clerk.
E. F. RANSDELL, Clerk.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Messongoes, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have had a peculiarly pleasant meeting at this time, and are glad to be able to say to you that we are in peace; we know of no disorder or trouble in any of our churches. At this meeting the business has been in peace and love, the preaching has been according to the Scriptures of truth, and the trumpet has given no uncertain sound. We have been made glad by the coming of your messengers and ministers, and by your messages of love and fellowship, and we send our messengers with this loving message to you.

Our next meeting is appointed to be held with our sister church at Forest Grove, where we hope to meet your messengers again, and receive your messages.

T. M. POULSON, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence, 21 Broad St., Middletown, N. Y., Oct. 9th, 1906, Romane Titus, of Paterson, N. J., and Miss Flora M. Cortright, of Unionville, N. Y.

By the same, Oct. 23rd, 1906, at the home of the bride's mother, 44 South St., Middletown, N. Y., Clifford E. Brown, of Jersey City, N. J., and Miss Nettie E. Hyatt.

By Elder A. B. Francis, at his residence, near Delmar, Del., Oct. 10th, 1906, Wilmer L. Jones and Sarah L. Benson, both of Sussex County, Delaware.

By the same, Oct. 31st, 1906, at the residence of the bride, at Berlin, Md., Elton Hartwell Timmons and Lillian May Henman, both of Worcester County, Maryland.

POETRY.

A BEAUTIFUL HYMN.

"I AM weary of straying, O fain would I rest
In the far distant land of the pure and the blest,
Where sin can no longer her blandishments spread,
And tears and temptations forever are fled.

I am weary of hoping where hope is untrue,
As fair but as fleeting as morning's bright dew;
I long for that land whose blest promise alone
Is changeless and sure as eternity's throne.

I am weary of sighing o'er sorrows of earth,
O'er joy's glowing visions that fade at their birth,
O'er the pangs of the loved that we cannot assuage,
O'er the blightings of youth and the weakness of age.

I am weary of loving what passes away,
The sweetest, the dearest, alas, may not stay;
I long for that land where these partings are o'er,
And death and the tomb can divide hearts no more.

I am weary, my Savior, of grieving thy love,
O when shall I rest in thy presence above?
I am weary, but O, let me never repine,
While thy word and thy love and thy promise are mine."

[THE above hymn, published at the request of sister E. V. White, was the special favorite of our dear brother, Captain Frank Myers, of Lincoln, Loudoun Co., Va., who was found dead in his bed October 20th. Heart disease is supposed to have been the cause. He was widely and favorably known. We were made sorry by the sad intelligence, and extend our sympathy to the afflicted family and church of his membership. An obituary will appear later.—K.]

CHURCH NOTICES.

WEISER, Idaho, Oct. 13, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It becomes our painful duty to state that we, the Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Jesus Christ called Salem, situated near Weiser, Washington County, Idaho, have withdrawn our fellowship from those of our members that are affiliating with the secret orders of the day, Elder James Turnage being one among those who were excluded from us, is preaching for them, and they are claiming to be the church. We, the church proper, feel it our duty to let the brethren know the condition we are in. We, in council, on Saturday before the second Sunday in October, 1906, agree to have this notice published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that our brethren may not be misled, and we invite brethren of the same faith and order to visit us. We have an article in our Abstract stating we will not fellowship secret orders or inventions of men.

G. B. BARTON, Moderator.
JAMES T. STEPHENS, Church Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Susan Brown, wife of Elisha Brown, departed this life in the year 1905, and was interred in the graveyard at Pann Church, Pike Co., Ala., of which she became a member July 16th, 1885. Sister Brown was a consistent member those twenty years, and was well beloved as a christian and friend by all who knew her. She believed in the Lord first and last, and said if she was saved at all she was a sinner saved by grace alone. She leaves a beloved husband and several dear children to mourn; their loss is her eternal gain. Sister Brown was a constant sufferer for several months before the Lord took her home, but when the summons came she bowed in humbleness to God. Her husband spared no time or means to keep her, but all he and her dear children could do failed to restore her to health. She bore her afflictions with patience. One of her favorite hymns was, "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!" &c. May God bless the husband and children.

M. V. GIBSON.

BANKS, Ala., Oct. 26, 1906.

DIED—**Mrs. Sarah Adelia Hull,** at the home of her son-in-law, Mr. M. C. Crosby, in Kingston, N. Y., Oct. 9th, 1906. Sister Hull was born Sept. 12th, 1820, in Harpersville, Delaware County, N. Y., and was the daughter of Alanson and Lorana Elliott David. She was married to Dr. Abram C. Hull, Oct. 17th, 1843; to them were born three children: Mary E., James Alanson, who died in infancy, and Sarah Frances, who died July 24th, 1906. Those left to mourn the loss of the dear ones are Mrs. Mary E. Smith, now the only child, seven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. In early life sister Hull united with the Old School Baptists, was baptized by Elder David Mead. After her marriage she came to Ulster Co., N. Y., to live, where she united by letter with the Olive & Hurley Church, and remained with them fifty-six years a faithful and devoted follower of the Lord Jesus. Her husband, Dr. Hull, lived and died an Old School Baptist. Their home was for many years headquarters for the brethren, who were ever made welcome. He died Feb. 22nd, 1890; since that time sister Hull made her home in Kingston, N. Y., with her son-in-law. It was our privilege to know dear sister Hull some years, and our hearts were knit in love and sweet fellowship. She was an intelligent woman, well versed in the Scriptures; it was her delight to talk of Jesus and his love, and to hear the gospel preached in its purity; surely she was a mother in Israel. She will be missed by her church and large circle of friends, but no one can miss her as her widowed daughter, our sister, Mary Smith; she is now alone, yet not alone, God is with her and will not forsake her.

It was our solemn duty to conduct the funeral service in the Olive and Hurley meeting-house, October 11th. Many were present to show their respect for the departed, and sympathy for those who mourn their great loss. May the God of comfort and grace be with the family to reconcile each of them to his holy will.

K.

Mr. Levi Corbin was instantly killed on Friday, October 26th, 1906, in the woods near his home, by a falling tree. He was seventy-two years old, and had resided in the town of Roxbury all his life. He was a good citizen, and was much respected by all who knew him. His father and grandfather were also killed in the same manner, by falling trees. Mr. Corbin never made any profession of religion, but was a Baptist in belief. He leaves one son, besides relatives and friends, to mourn their loss. His funeral was held from the meeting-house of the Second Roxbury Church. May God comfort all that mourn.

ALSO,

BROTHER **Nathan Travis** died at his home, near Roxbury, N. Y., October 27th, 1906, in the 87th year of his age. Brother Travis had been a member of the Second Roxbury Church for over sixty years, and was a faithful member and follower of our Lord and Savior. He was able to attend our last meeting, the second Saturday and Sunday. He had been in declining health for two years, yet he was able to get to meeting, which was all the enjoyment he had; he loved to meet his brethren and to talk of the Lord's goodness and mercy toward him, a poor sinner. We shall miss him, but do not mourn as those that have no hope, for what is our loss we believe is his eternal gain. He leaves one son and one daughter, besides the church, to mourn their loss. May the Lord give to all that mourn grace as their day. His funeral was held from the meeting-house of the Second Roxbury Church, where he had been a faithful attendant for so many years.

ALSO,

SISTER **Elmira Winchell** departed this life October 29th, 1906, aged 84 years. She was married to brother Jonathan Winchell in 1868, and united with the Olive and Hurley Church the same year, and was a faithful member to the end of her life in the flesh. She had been in poor health for several months, and was not able to be at our meetings for nearly a year. She was composed in her sickness and waited patiently for the end, which came as a sweet sleep, and she passed away without a struggle. She leaves an aged husband, our brother, and the church, two stepdaughters and one son. Her funeral was held from her late residence, and was largely attended. May the Lord comfort our aged brother and all the family.

JOHN B. SLAUSON.

DIED—At her home, near Falls of Guyand river, West Virginia, April 10th, 1906, **Mrs. Nancy Adkins,** eldest daughter of Charles and Elizabeth Tooley. She was born in eastern Virginia in 1824, and remained there until ten years of age. Her stay on earth was 82 years, lacking 20 days. Mother raised a large family, and taught them to get their living by honest labor, being very industrious and economizing herself. She lived to see all her children grown and married, also to see two daughters die and leave their families. She belonged to the Primitive Baptist Church sixty-one years. She was conscious until the last, and said, "Lord, have mercy on my children;" then said, "Have mercy on me, and take me," then calmly passed away as an infant going to sleep, resting her head on her hand. She often spoke of poor, unworthy me, and would say, "I do not know what will become of you when I am gone." None miss her as I do, but I hope soon to be with her in the heaven of rest.

ALSO,

DIED—At her home near Salt Rock, W. Va., Oct. 5th, 1906, **Millie Ann Boothe.** She was born April 20th, 1834. She leaves an aged husband and several children to mourn, but not as those without hope, for she said, "I have no hope of getting well, but I do have hope that when done suffering here I shall be better off." She was my mother's only sister in this country, and I shall miss her sadly, for I enjoyed being in her company. I was with her the last week of her life. I visited her in July last, and found her failing fast, both in mind and body. While it is very painful to record the death of such near and dear friends and relatives, I do ardently desire that I, too, could be absent from this body of mine and be present with the Lord. O that he would send for me, and call my Spirit home.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

SHERIDAN, W. Va.

MEETINGS.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 74. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1906. NO. 23.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FRAGMENTS.

"WHO then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?"—1 Cor. iii. 5.

The preacher does not cause one to believe. Paul prayed that the saints might know that it is the same mighty power of God which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead that caused them to believe. (Eph. i. 19, 20.) No one can believe a thing without evidence, or what he thinks is evidence. Now faith is the evidence of things not seen, and that is given to every subject of grace. It is the fruit of the Spirit, and "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Now when Paul or any other minister comes preaching the gospel of God's grace, proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ, those who have been born again, who are subjects of grace, believe that truth which they never heard before, because they have faith, which is the evidence, within them. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself."—1 John v. 10. Cornelius believed those things which Peter preached and testified, because he had experienced them, and had in his own soul the substance of those things hoped for, the evidence of those things not seen by mortal eye. As soon as he heard those good tidings of salvation by grace through Jesus Christ he believed them at once; he needed no argument, no proof to the natural understanding; he knew the truth, which he had never heard until Peter told it to him, because he had the witness within.

If the preaching of the gospel caused the belief, then all who heard it would believe; but only those believe to whom the Lord has given the substance of what is preached in their own experience. Now faith is that substance, and therefore it is the evidence upon which belief is founded. As soon as the truth which has been experienced is heard it is believed at once. Some errors are so much like truth in appearance that the hearer will be in a quandary, and will study and argue and consider whether what he hears is truth, but when the true and certain sound is heard he does not stop to question, but feels at once assured in his soul. It is like listening for the sound of one's own bell; he will hear one and another with an, Is that it? but when his

own is sounded he does not inquire, but says at once, That is it. The minister who first brings the truth to our ear is the one by whom we believe, but he had no power to cause our belief; that must be even as God has given to every man. The minister may have the tongue of an angel, but he cannot cause belief in the mind of any but those unto whom God has given in themselves the substance, evidence and power. Unto you it is given to believe on him. (Phil. i. 29.)

I HAVE just read this sentence: "God has promised to bless his people when they obey him." My own experience concerning this subject is that the Lord's blessing causes the obedience, and so I think every child of God feels to thank the Lord that he has obeyed the sweet commands of Jesus. He does not feel that he is entitled to the credit and praise of it, but humbly thanks the Lord that he has been given the spirit of obedience. He does not say, I went in paths of righteousness, but, "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." We must have grace in order to serve God acceptably. It is not grace because of our good works, but good works because of grace; it is not the blessing of the Lord because of our obedience, but obedience because of the Lord's blessing. The disobedient child of God will feel that he is altogether to blame for his evil walk, and that his punishment is well deserved; but when he is restored, and is walking again in obedience, he will not, cannot claim any of the credit for his return to paths of obedience; he will say with Naomi: "I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty." His going away was all of and by himself, but his coming back was all of and by the Lord.

EVERYTHING that is suitable in the life of a child of God, everything that is desirable to the spiritual mind, and that is becoming the gospel of Christ, is made the subject of exhortations by the apostles. Exhortations, admonitions and reproofs do not imply conditions upon which the favor of God is offered; on the contrary, the love and favor of God are the cause of the exhortations. The exhortations of the apostles are inspired by the Spirit, and they touch the spiritual life, and reach and make manifest the desires of the spiritual mind; they stir up the pure minds of the saints by way of remembrance of those things which are first in our spiritual life, and which are contrary to our carnal minds. "Reproofs of instruction are the way of life," says the wise man; they are for our spiritual health and comfort; they feed the spiritual life. "Feed thy people with thy rod." The smitings of the righteous do not bruise and break, but are an excellent oil.

"AND I will turn mine hand upon the little ones."—Zech. xiii. 7. I do not understand this to mean that when the Lord smites the Shepherd and scatters the sheep that he will protect the little ones from the stroke of justice. The phrase, "turn my hand upon," appears to me rather to imply antagonism, punishment, the execution of judgment. The little ones are a part of the flock; they are all to know the just anger of a holy God on account of sin, the little as well as the great. This is the day of judgment; the Shepherd receives the stroke, and in that stroke that fell upon him all the flock, to the least of the little ones, is included. Justice and judgment are thus executed for and upon every one of them. When Jesus died the flock all died in him, in a

legal and mystical sense. The sheep are all scattered, and left helpless and defenceless, and the Lord's hand is turned, in judgment, upon the little ones, when the Shepherd is stricken down. The condition of the Shepherd shows the condition of the whole flock. This condition of condemnation and death must be experienced in measure by every one of the little ones. But lo, to their glad surprise the Shepherd appears again, risen from the dead, having paid the debt of justice, and now with all power in his hands he gathers the sheep that were scattered, and carries the little ones in his bosom. The hand of the Lord is not turned upon them in anger any more, but is laid upon them in love and tenderness, to cover them in the day of judgment, and to uphold them in the time of trouble.

If this sentence, "And I will turn mine hand upon the little ones," had meant in protection from the judgment that fell upon the sheep, then, it appears to me, it would have read, But I will turn mine hand upon the little ones. The word "and," to my mind, includes them all in the judgment which turned the hand of the Lord upon the Shepherd and the sheep.

It has been thought by some that the word "chasten" does not mean to punish; that while the Lord chastens his people, and scourges every one whom he loves, yet he does not punish them. But it appears to me that a careful examination will show that the word "chasten" always implies punishment, though the word "punish" does not always mean to chasten. To chasten means to punish for the purpose of reclaiming, correcting, benefiting, purifying. A father chastens his son with a view to his good when he punishes him for a fault, but when the law punishes a criminal with death it cannot be said that the punishment is chastening. The Lord chastens every son whom he receives. These chastenings, or scourgings, or smitings of the righteous, do not break the head, but are an excellent oil. But those who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, cannot properly be said to be chastened. (2 Thess. i. 8, 9.) The words "chasten" and "punish" are given in the dictionaries as synonymous.

The same infinite power which was in the words, "Let there be light," is in the words of Jesus, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

If it is wrong to give to the officers of the government the number of members enrolled in Primitive Baptist churches, then it must be wrong to keep Minutes of associations and print in them the number of members. If anybody asks the membership of any church I am serving, or with which I am acquainted, I have no objection to telling him, and I see no reason why I should refuse to tell an officer of the government, though my natural pride may be humbled because the churches in our State are so few and small.

If David's sin in numbering Israel and Judah signifies that under the gospel dispensation we must not keep a record of the numbers baptized in the fellowship of gospel churches, I think the apostles would have warned us not to do so; but instead of that we are told how many were added to the church on the day of Pentecost. I feel safe in following that example.

What the force and meaning of David's error in numbering Israel and Judah is, I am not sure that I know. We do know that no man can number the whole of spiritual Israel, that stand before the throne, and it would be presumptuous in any man to even suggest a number. When one asked, "Are there few that be saved?" the answer of Jesus was a loving rebuke for the vain curiosity which prompted the question.

There is a solemn and important lesson in the two records of this wonderful transaction. In 2 Samuel xxiv. 1, we are told that the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them, to say, Go, number Israel and Judah. Even the wicked Joab opposed this, but the king's word prevailed against Joab, and against the captains of the host. In 1 Chronicles xxi. 1, we are told that Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel. Afterward David's heart smote him, and he humbly confessed his wickedness.

With what solemn reverence and awe we read such mysterious things; we see that in all things the Lord's power and purpose will prevail, and that Satan and wicked men can do nothing but what will be controlled by the Lord to the working out of his own eternal purpose of love and mercy. "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 6, 1906.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Aug. 5, 1906.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I feel as though I saw so little of you when I was at Hopewell that I must write you and say a few things. One thing is to speak of the Saturday meeting when I was there. Before going I much desired that I might be able to say a few things to you all that day, but was not enabled to do so. I think this was mostly from fear of this stammering tongue, and of my usually breaking down whenever I make an attempt to speak to the brethren of my past and present experience. It seems to me that I am different from the others, and I often decide within myself that I must imagine a great many things, for I do not hear from the others just as I seem to be. It may be for weeks that I stay on the mountain, or on the side where the dew is refreshing, and then all at once I am low down in the valley, where there is not a ray of light, and where the beasts of the wilderness creep out, and show themselves, and devour, and the sin that so easily besets us is there, too; but if it be imagination, I do feel right now to thank the Lord for his wonderful works to the children of men; that he makes them to know just how deep the darkness is, and how bright the light is, how deceiving their own hearts are, and how little strength they have. O how weak and puny is man, and yet how boastful.

I wanted to speak of the Saturday meeting, how wonderful it was to me, and how great a privilege I felt it was to sit with you, with a hearing ear, and as I feel, also an understanding heart, and with the weights laid aside, and the sin out of mind; and even when that awful shower was showing us the great power of God, all seemed quiet and without fear; to me it was rich. You know the day was the anniversary of my asking a home among you, and as I sat there and looked back over the years (I think about twenty-six) I could but feel that had the church known how little I knew then, and how little my experience was, they would have hesitated in receiving me. I

had only one evidence then, and that was that old things had passed away, and all things became new. Yes indeed, it was new to me, who had been a Saul, breathing such hate to the saints; and now see, there was no way to come unto the Father save by the Son; not now living under the law; but seeing Christ as the end of the law, not seeing in clear understanding then, but since then I have learned, here a little and there a little, line upon line, precept upon precept. Then I only knew I loved the Old School Baptists, and that I had to pass through much shame to acknowledge it before some to whom I had said so much about this dear people. Ah, the preparation of the heart! How much preparation it takes for one like mine! Then I could but think of Elder Purington when he used to stand before us and wield the sword, and I could but recall the blessed privilege of sitting under his preaching for so long, and if I did not heed the many things he said then, now they often come to me as words of guidance, and comfort, and support, with gladness that I knew him so well. I find in conversation with many, that the minister who baptized them, and the one who has opened their eyes, perhaps in some sermon, comes the nearest to them; that is, they have a feeling for them of nearness, and with them I agree, but I could not say our love, in the sense of brotherhood, is greater; that is, spiritual love from Christ through us, and it is of only one class, and that is pure as Christ is pure. As I sat there I could but think of the twenty-six years before, when I thought that as time went on I would grow better, and that my path would shine more and more unto the perfect day. How different it has been, for I seem at times to be hedged in on all sides, and no light is visible. So vividly there now comes to my mind words of dear brother Zephaniah Stout. After I had been a member about a year he wanted to know if I felt that I was growing any better. I was at that time much discouraged with my walk; I told him so, and said that I knew he did not know just how I meant. But the tears coursed down his cheeks, and he said that the day before he came to the meeting to ask them to take his name off the church book, but after sitting with the brethren he could not do it, for he loved them so that he wanted to follow on, and not return from following after them. It gave me much encouragement, for to me he looked so good that I could not see why he should worry about his walk.

But here I am writing on and on, and I fear that I will weary you. For many years in my early experience it seems to me I lived without trials; I cannot say without temptations, for they have always seemed to be on every side. This brings to my mind many things I would like to say, but I will refrain. I used to hear the brethren talk about trials and darkness, and I felt that I did not know what they meant; I had a real desire to know what it was to be in such dark places, and it did please the Father to show me in my experience what it is. When we see for ourselves we then know, and now I feel that I do know what this darkness is. Then I would read of some having such rejoicings, but I was ignorant of them, but the Father has seen fit to raise me at times above everything earthly, and to exalt himself, and himself alone. Now, as I think of these times gone by, and of the many lessons I have had by the way, I give not one word of praise to man for them, but to His most holy name be all the praise.

We had an excellent sermon from our

pastor, Elder Coulter, this morning, and some lovely remarks from brother Mellott; I did truly enjoy them. One thing I never could understand, and that was about the cleansing, in the tenth chapter of Acts, where it says, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." I do not know why I never saw its meaning before. How often my desires are that I may be rooted and grounded and established in doctrine and truth, but I know it is a better spirit to be content with the blessings the heavenly Father gives us. So often I wish we could just step in for the evening; how edifying it would be to us. May the Lord continue to lead you as in times past, with trust and faith in him; may he continue to give you long-suffering, and all the fruits of the Spirit. I am so apt to say long-suffering first, for I always admire that fruit whenever I see it so vividly as I see it in you. To be long-suffering one must possess the other fruits, for this one needs all of the others to manifest it. May God guide and guard you, and fill you with his truth, and may he empty you to the edifying of your hearers. May your brethren all be true to you, for an untrue brother is a sadness in a church. Now I will say, as did Paul in his writing to Philemon, (the seventh verse was brother Coulter's text to-day) "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit."

In love to you,

MARY HILL TERRY.

JUSTUS, Ohio.

BELOVED EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—After wishing you grace, mercy and peace, will say, I inclose at the request of brother B. G. Ford, of Bellaire, Ohio, a letter written to me by sister Pultz, of Wheeling, W. Va. It was not written by her for publication, as you will readily see, but is only a token of love and sweet fellowship for my wife and self in our old age and affliction. Our prayer in our declining days is that God may bless the SIGNS to the comfort of his poor and tried people in the future as he has in the past.

We are your aged and sorrowing brother and sister in hope,

C. J. & MARY A. CARMICHAEL.

WHEELING, W. Va., Jan. 28, 1906.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER CARMICHAEL:—I feel that I must write in answer to your precious letter, which I received in due time. It is useless for me to attempt to describe my emotions on reading your letter, so touching and tender that my tears flowed freely as I read it over and over, and each time I found a fountain of love and consolation in its pages that lifted me above transitory things; I forgot my own trials and tribulations in thinking of yours. Now we know that you could never do all that you are doing and have done in your own strength; surely our blessed Lord and Master is carrying you in his loving arms, according to his gracious promise. Indeed, it has often been so with me, I could not understand in the least how I had performed the work, and still it was all done as I desired. The thought that it was accomplished by his power and might filled my poor heart so full of love and adoration that I could not find a hymn of praise sweet enough to convey my emotions. When I read your gracious words about your feelings toward me, I, like you, felt unworthy of the least of your notice. O, I was so glad and thankful to know that you, dear, honored brother, were able to sit up and write; it does indeed seem as if you were snatched from the very jaws of death. I

feel so thankful, and hope you may be spared to your dear wife and family, and to your churches. I am very sure there would be an aching void if you were removed from them. I have this one thing to look forward to, causing me to be willing to endure life, and that is the thought of meeting in that precious house of God (for so it appears to me) at Enon and sitting under the sound of your voice once more, and now the new interest of perhaps getting to see your dear wife fills my heart with pleasing anticipation. I often think of these words: God is, and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Dear brother, I do not know whether it reads that way or not, but I think I have seen it thus some place. We must believe God "is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." It seems as if something is trying to impress me with the thought of what the word "is" means, as used in that special sense. I try to get the thought that God is ever with us, but my faith is so weak I can only faintly realize the thought; I am sure if I could only fully comprehend it I would be very happy. There are times when I cannot fix my mind on him or spiritual things, and yet it runs so actively on trifling, little worldly affairs. It grieves me much to find myself in such a state, then I realize that this old flesh is sin, and that God alone has the power over sin. It always affords me much joy and comfort to know and realize that all power belongs to God. I think I can truthfully say from my heart that I am perfectly willing to be accounted as nothing, just so all glory and honor and dominion are ascribed to him.

I have been quite poorly for two weeks, some days I feel as if I surely could not live much longer, but through the mercy of our great Physician I have kept up and managed to do the work day by day. Our outlook for this life seems rather gloomy, still it is all for the best for us; I think God knows just what we need to chasten and discipline our vain hearts, and to bring us to his dear feet to sue for help and mercy and forgiveness for our many sins which he shows us. I appreciate your kind prayer in our behalf, and I have much confidence in its efficacy, but O how poor and unworthy I am of your christian regard; but poor and unworthy as I feel myself to be, I do love the dear, precious brethren and sisters, and desire their company above anything else in this earth. My poor husband, who has never understood our doctrine, or why we love each other so, thinks it very strange. It chanced that we were speaking about my going to Bysville; he asked me about the congregation. I replied that there were only eight people there each Saturday and Sunday. He exclaimed, "Why, that shows there is something wrong about it, or they would have larger congregations to hear them preach." I said, "Do you remember how many souls were saved in the ark? Only eight," I replied, "just the same number that we had." He looked at me a moment as if considering, but said nothing, nor has he ever mentioned the matter since. I do hope, and try to pray our heavenly Father, that he with my four sons may yet be brought to love the truth as revealed in our Savior, but that is a work that we poor, weak mortals are not able to perform, but the Lord works, and none can hinder; he stretches out his arm, and none can turn him. I do not write these words because I think you do not know them, but because you do know them and glory in them, as all Baptists do. It seems very presumptuous for me to include myself

in the number, but I will have to admit that through the abounding and undeserved grace of an all-wise God I can fellowship with you when you say that you are the least of all, so unworthy, sinful, weak in faith, absent minded, cannot live as near the cross day by day as you desire; yes, that expresses my condition exactly, and we might as well admit that it expresses the condition of every child of God. As Cowper expresses it in one of his precious hymns:

"God in Israel sows the seeds
Of affliction, pain and toil;
These spring up and choke the weeds,
Which would else o'erspread the soil."

"Trials make the promise sweet,
Trials give new life to prayer,
Trials bring me to his feet,
Lay me low, and keep me there.

Did I meet no trials here,
No chastisements by the way,
Might I not with reason fear
I should be a castaway?

Bastards may escape the rod,
Sunk in earthly, vain delight,
But the true born child of God
Must not, would not, if he might."

I love to read those sweet hymns, and at times find much comfort in them.

I fear you will tire of this long letter, but I have felt so lonely for some one to talk to about such things, and if you are still shut in, from the effects of your sickness, perhaps it will be some company for you. I worried for fear you might have overtaxed your strength in answering my letter, I felt that it was so kind in you to write, and O I do prize your precious letter so much, but, dear brother, I will not ask you to favor this with a reply; I feel that it would be asking too much of you, unless you should desire to write; God alone knows how highly I esteem the kindness of yourself and your dear wife in answering my other letter. I love to see that kind spirit existing among the churches of the same order, they all hold the same place in my heart, I love them all alike, just so I get the true bread which cometh down from heaven, it matters not who preaches it.

Well, I will close, asking you to overlook all mistakes. I do earnestly hope that you are restored to your usual health by the time this reaches you. Please accept my christian regard and best wishes for the health and happiness of yourself and wife and family. I feel too unworthy to ask God's richest blessing to abide on you and yours, but I cannot help the fervent emotions of my heart, which overflows in this same language. Dear brother and sister, please remember me in your prayers.

FLORENCE PULTZ.

BOWDOINHAM, Maine, Nov. 5, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I inclose to you this letter written by sister Attie Curtis, from Randolph, Maine, where she was visiting brother and sister Hubbard, and it was read in our conference meeting at Bowdoinham. Since the Association sister Attie has been among the Whitefield and Gardiner brethren, and she writes me it has been almost a continual meeting everywhere she has been. I always feel to send anything for the SIGNS to you first, knowing that you can judge of its merits best, knowing us all as you do.

We enjoyed brother Coulter's visit among us at the Association. He brought us no new thing, the same old story always new, and he told it with such firm decision and meekness that there was no doubt of his call to "feed my sheep;" "feed my lambs."

With much love to you all, your sister, I hope,

ELLA RAYMOND.

RANDOLPH, Maine, Oct. 29, 1906.

MY DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS OF THE BOWDOINHAM CHURCH:—As the time draws near for you to assemble yourselves together, the desire to be with you is in my heart, and it is a comfort to feel that you are willing to read what I would like to say if I could meet with you. I thought I should be with you again before this time, but my visits among the household of faith have been so full of spiritual enjoyment I have remained in each place longer than I expected. Our minds have been so led that we could talk of the dealings of the Lord with us, and it has been a profitable season to us all. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" I know each one of you will speak the same things, for all of God's children are taught of him, and their peace is great, and it passeth understanding. I am so glad to have the joy of his salvation restored to me, and can look back over the dark and lonely places in which I walked so long and felt like one alone, and feel now the assurance that the Lord was leading me, and what I felt was an evidence against me was only making me to know more fully that "the flesh profiteth nothing." "Salvation is of the Lord." I feel like saying with Isaiah, "Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel." He has put the new song into my mouth, even praise unto God. David says, "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High." I surely understand better than I ever did before how good it is to have my mouth filled with laughter, and my tongue with singing. The Lord has done great things for me in lifting me above my enemies, and has made me know it is his work. I would like to tell you how very precious the name of Jesus is, but as he has been made precious to each one of you, I feel you all know better than I can express it. He is the One altogether lovely, and chiefest among ten thousand. He bore our sins in his own body on the tree, and we are clothed in his righteousness; his grace is sufficient for us. I have been thinking lately of how safe I am, for underneath are the everlasting arms, and I cannot fall. He has sustained me every moment of my journey, and given strength according to my day; he has been my refuge in time of trouble; his goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life. Jesus has been wrought in my soul the hope of glory, and a blessed hope it is, for it maketh not ashamed, because the love of God has been shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. How good it is to be enabled again to declare his works with rejoicing. What a comfort it is to feel I am in my Father's house, and can tell you all my thoughts and feelings, and you will rejoice with me.

"The sure provisions of my God
Attend me all my days;
O may thy house be mine abode,
And all my work be praise.

There would I find a settled rest,
While others go and come,
No more a stranger or a guest,
But like a child at home."

I have never forgotten the sweet feeling of having reached home when I was given a name and place with you, and it is a dear home to me yet, for love and fellowship bind us close together and make us of one heart and mind. Before you close the meeting sing, "Blest

be the tie that binds our hearts in christian love." I hope you will have a good conference, and all you do and say be to the honor and glory of God. May you comfort one another with the same comfort wherewith you are comforted of God. If brother Beal is able to speak to you, I am confident that he will declare the unsearchable riches of Christ, and may God give you a feast of fat things, and make you feel it is good to be there. May Jesus manifest himself unto you as he does not unto the world, and you in his presence find fullness of joy. Brother and sister Hubbard join me in love to you all. I am having a pleasant visit with them, and we had a good meeting here yesterday. May God make us submissive to his will, and enable us to trust in him, is the desire of your loving sister in hope of eternal life,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

EDGEMOOR, Del., Oct. 15, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have been thinking lately about the word "gospel," and it has been on my mind to write about it. At the same time I am aware that it is a subject very often used in preaching and writing, and for this reason, as well as my inability to do the subject justice, I have long hesitated in writing.

Paul calls it the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth, and this thought has seemed clearer to my mind lately. We have the word gospel defined as meaning good news; glad tidings. Suppose the governor of a State, who has the power to pardon a criminal that is under sentence for a crime, should execute a pardon in legal form and then lock it up in his desk, would this pardon be good news to the prisoner while it remained there? Surely a faithful messenger must carry the good news to him, and cause it to be understood, before it can become glad tidings to him. So the gospel in the Scriptures is locked up to all until the Spirit of God opens and reveals the truth. Suppose, again, a governor should execute a pardon for one of the best citizens of a city, would not he and his friends consider it a great joke? Such a moral man has no conscience of guilt of a broken law, and therefore no need of a pardon. What then becomes of all the efforts to offer pardon for sin to those who have no true sense of transgression of the law of God? But to one who has been born of the Spirit, and by the light of this spiritual life has seen the real sinfulness of his carnal nature, surely there are glad tidings to him when the assurance of pardon is revealed to him. A governor can pardon, but here the illustration fails, as far as he is concerned; a criminal, although pardoned, must carry the guilt of his crime as long as he lives. But Christ was not only delivered for our offences, but raised again for our justification, he removes the guilt and also pardons; and when by the revelation of the Spirit the assurance of being freely justified by his grace is given, this will surely bring good news.

Many have for months and years tried to obtain righteousness by the works of the law, only to find that instead of becoming better they were growing worse. Like the Jews, they were going about to establish their own righteousness, and never coming to the knowledge that true righteousness is found only in Christ. But when the children of God learn that they are in Christ, not having their own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith, then comes the good news of being

clothed in Christ's righteousness. Truly the gospel has glorious meaning here.

The word "redeem" is made up of the prefix "re," which means back, and the Latin word *emo*, which means to buy or purchase. In the great work of redemption Christ bought back his elect people, plainly indicating that they were his before he redeemed them. Paul tells us that they were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. The life union is plainly indicated here of Christ and his people; and a true spiritual revelation of this truth, and an assurance of being bought by the blood of Christ, will bring good news—glad tidings.

The word "sanctify" means to set apart, in one sense, for a particular use. It is positively proved in Scripture that God chose a certain number for a special use, for we read in Eph. i. 4, 5, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." It is certainly glorious news to them who can feel that they are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and the household of God. And so we find the Scriptures abound with gospel truth; and it is no wonder that the angel of the Lord said unto the shepherds, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. * * * And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

What will be the final consummation of the gospel when we are through with the experience of this life? In 2 Cor. iv. 17, we read, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Again in Isaiah lxiv. 4, and quoted again in 1 Cor. ii. 9, we read, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

Yours in hope of the gospel,

B. F. HAMILTON.

WAITSBURG, Washington.

DEAR BRETHREN OF THE SIGNS, AND ALL WHO MAY BE INTERESTED:—The article entitled "A Quandary" in August 15th number of the SIGNS was the outcome, humanly speaking, of years of study and comparison with the inspired word or text of the Scriptures, that I might come to a just and true conclusion as to what the teaching of the Spirit is concerning salvation, and the use of gospel ordinances with relation to the evidences thereof, consequently I have had to meet many opponents at every step of the way of advancement. But I must not say too much along this line to occupy your time needlessly.

I will say here that I have before me the August 15th number, which is the second received by sister Smith, of Riffe, Wash., sent her at my request.

My purpose in writing is to continue my remarks along the line of the former letter, and I will proceed without further apology. The Acts, as I have before said, are history, they are not the direct testimony of the Spirit as given by the apostles, but are the exact and reliable record of that testimony of the Spirit by the apostles, and other chosen and ordained writers who were in the Spirit

which came upon the apostles upon the day of Pentecost, and afterwards also, until the prophecy and vision and testimony were sealed up among the apostles as a finality in the revelation to John by the Spirit upon the Lord's day (not Sunday). Now to the subject, and the question, and answer, "What must I do to be saved?" "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." Then follows the promise, "Thou shalt be saved." The spirit of the promise is that it is through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; the inheritance of salvation is through Christ by faith; therefore when the jailor believed he was sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, as was Abraham before he was circumcised, or long afterwards had offered up Isaac by faith, he was justified by faith, and the testimony is on record with precision and certainty. So also it came to the jailor as one given case, and it must be the same in all other cases where the soul of man is involved as regards salvation. It must be the same, and by the same Spirit of the living God, and not of man, in all cases as well as in this case. If it were not so, the Scriptures would be hard to understand and apply, either in faith or practice. If this be true and applicable in the case of the jailor, we have here an established rule of judgment in all the Scriptures given by inspiration of God, else nothing at all is reliable, so "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." All beside this will not measure with this infallible rule of faith and practice, as will be acknowledged by all save defamers of the faith and practice, both ancient and modern. But now to the testimony of Paul and Silas, as to the matter of salvation and the means of its attainment. This is all that we have anything to do with so far as relates to this sixteenth chapter of the Acts. Their answer is, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou [the jailor] shalt be saved, and thy house." This was first to him personally, and then to his house individually. Now Luke says that he was baptized that same hour of the night, calling on the name of the Lord, with all his house. Now if the answer is not full to the question, it devolves upon the disputant to show the deficiency. Are the writings of the Spirit lacking in fullness through Paul and Silas in not saying one word about baptism or other conditions? No, the testimony accords with the word of promise which was made to Abraham and all nations in him, "Sarah shall have a son." And, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." Says the same Paul, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are all the children of promise." This takes in the jailor with his house, as they were the children of faith, and the children of Abraham according to the promise, and having Abraham's faith they were blessed with faithful Abraham. When the jailor believed, he received the promise, and was sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance.

Why did not Paul tell all about baptism being material to salvation, if it were needed? In the minds of the Philippians it was a personal question, with all the means of its attainment. Or why did Luke leave the answer indefinite when he recorded the testimony of the Spirit in the words of Paul? Paul spake by the Holy Ghost, sent down from heaven, in mighty deeds and gifts of the Spirit, shaking the walls of the prison house, and so accompanying the words with signs following. Paul said that he was set for the defence and confirmation of the gospel, then let us take Paul for it.

Your brother, I. N. NEWKIRK.

PRATT CITY, Ala., Aug. 21, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am still situated in Pratt City, and am not engaged in any business, and have not been for about four years, and have been trying to comply with the command to, Give thyself wholly to the ministry, and "Do the work of an evangelist." I have been blessed to go more among the churches of our order, and to be at more good, harmonious meetings this year than any year of my life. I have had to get other Elders to attend in my stead at my home church here in my absence, but I have been on hand sufficiently to baptize two brethren, one in May and one last Sunday. The people that Agar and her children point to, would call such very slow progress, but the two put us on an equality with Rachel. Jacob prayed for Rachel, and we trust that our Savior intercedes for us. Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but God giveth the increase.

I received the SIGNS last night, and have read it this morning, and I feel stirred up some to write a little. I go to our meetings here sometimes feeling so weak and worthless that I do not feel I can render any profitable service; but meeting and talking with the members, and singing some of the old time hymns, often revive me so that I am strengthened before we separate, and I am made to hope that "The Lord is in this place," and that we are the house of God. The Elders that have visited us here from time to time have helped to encourage us along this line. I hope that we are as clear of all isms as any church in the land, and as far as I know all our members love sound doctrine; none of them ever complain when the full sovereignty of God is presented, and they love wholesome exhortation, and so far we are not entangled in any of the divisions that are being perpetrated by any of these councils among our people. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES is still commendable for the very small part it has taken in spreading abroad these serious troubles. When the SIGNS OF THE TIMES was founded the enemy had come in upon the old order of Baptists like a flood. Hagar's family professed to be legal heirs, but their cruel mockings developed the fact that they were nothing but children of the flesh, and were not the children of God, and Sarah (the church) had to cry out, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son." They had their battering-rams ready planted, and were in full harness for the fight, and Elder Beebe and others saw it was time to resent the assault, and founded the SIGNS in defense of the truth, and drove the enemy from the field. Those siege prices: the extensive sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah, the revelations which he has given of himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, (these three are one,) the absolute predestination of all things, eternal and unconditional election, formed a battery they could not charge with any success, and they made a retreat. It is a well known act that Elder Beebe and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES were highly commended for the noble fight they made and the victory they won. If there was a church in the United States claiming to be of the old order that did not have fellowship for Elder Beebe, I do not know of it. Many have been surprised of late years to know that any one claiming to be of the old order have borrowed the weapons of the old enemies to fight against these same principles, and making their charges against this old battery, but we are not surprised at their being repulsed; they are defeated in

places, and have held councils and thrown up their breastworks in the form of a non-fellowship resolution. They have called the old order of Baptists who approve the principles indorsed at the Black Rock Convention by more unbecoming names, and misrepresented them worse, than the people that went out from them in 1832, and such no longer have any right to the name Old School or Primitive Baptists.

Yours in hope of life,

P. J. POWELL.

MARK II. 19, 20.

"AND Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days."

This language of the Savior proves that it is not optional with the children of the bridechamber (the Lord's people) when they are to fast or not fast. The fast under consideration has no reference to abstaining from literal food, but like most, if not all other Scripture, has a spiritual signification, and none but the spiritual can understand its meaning. What does the natural man know about fasting from spiritual food? One must be born again before he can fast, and if he does fast it is a precious evidence that he is born again.

"Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?" The Lord makes the feast by revealing himself; he also makes the fast by hiding himself. When Jesus is with us December is as pleasant as May. "'Tis a heaven below the Redeemer to know." We are satisfied, we want nothing more, he supplies all our need. Although poverty stares us in the face, while Jesus is rich we cannot be poor. Although death and destruction threaten us, Jesus has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me." The children of the bridechamber cannot fast while the bridegroom is with them. "But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days." He whom my soul loveth is taken away. O how I miss him! O what loneliness, what desolation! My staff and my stay, yea, my all, is gone. Still the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, and upon them that hope in his mercy to deliver their souls from death, and to keep them alive in famine. Do we deserve any credit for this fasting? Should we even desire any praise for it? Did we bring it upon ourselves? Shall we disfigure our faces that we may appear unto men to fast? Is it necessary that men (our brethren) should know we are fasting? Our Savior knows it, is not that enough? Will telling men of our fasting cause the fast to end? Will it end until Jesus appears? Jesus said on another occasion, "When ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. * * * But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly." A very important lesson is taught here. Would the Savior have warned us against this gross hypocrisy had there been no danger of his people practicing it? "Be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance." How many of us can say that we are not guilty? I cannot, for one. How much better it is

to be cheerful before men, and pour our sorrows out to him who knows all our sorrows and is acquainted with all our griefs. Men, even our best and dearest friends, could not help us any if we should tell them. I never could see any good in one, who has not been given the hearing ear, to walk up and tell the preacher that he did not get a crumb out of his sermon; it is liable to lead to evil surmising, though his motive may be pure. It is better to wash our face and anoint our hair, that we may not appear unto men to fast.

EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

NEWARK, Del., Nov. 8, 1906.

PALESTINE, Texas, July 15, 1906.

TO THE READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, AND ALL WHO LOVE TRUTH:—This is my first attempt to write for publication, and so I speak unto you as unto wise men; judge ye what I say. I have confidence in you that if what I write is not in keeping with the record, you will reject it as being worth nothing. I am so ignorant that I dislike to send anything for publication. I united with the Predestinarian Baptists eleven years ago, and have enjoyed myself sometimes with them. I have had to pass through many things that I did not think would be the case after I united with the church. I have been where I could just tell them to take my name off the church book, for I was not fit to be there, but when I would get with one of them, and he would talk the same things, then I would say to myself, What will I do? They cannot set me aside upon that, for they all complain the same way. So then I have to grope around in darkness. Sometimes it seems as though a little light will break in, then I am made to feel as though I must press on. When in that frame of mind it is no trouble to write; but if not directed by a power more than is given to the natural man what I write will be of no use to the child of God. O that it were with me as in days past, when all my trust seemed to be in God, who created the heaven and the earth, and all things therein, let them be what they may, good or bad, as we call them. This God is all-wise, and had a purpose in making all things that were made, and all things shall fill the purpose for which he made them. He has all power, and made all things for a purpose of his own. If this be so, then he is entitled to all the honor and glory and power, for he hath done it all, and unto him the praise is due.

My mind is not running as I thought it would. But let us look back to the beginning, if we can find where that was, and there was God, just as complete as he will be in the morn of the resurrection. He chose his people in his Son, so they were his then, and he never gave them to any one but the Son, and the Son was ever brought up with the Father, and his will or purpose was to create the world, and to people it, and that his children should dwell there, and all of them were of Adam, and children of wrath even as others; all fell under the same curse, and were condemned by the same law, which demanded death. Christ stood as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, to redeem his people from the curse of the law. He came at the appointed time, and bore all their sins in his own body on the tree; yet this did not make them sinless, they are still sinners, and will remain so as long as they stay in the world. Jesus died to save his people from their sins.

Well, dear friends, when the load of sin was weighing you down until you could

stand up under it no longer, after a little you found it was gone, and you never have been troubled with that burden in that way since. Surely you were saved from your sins. Your eternal salvation never was insecure. But God sends forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts and awakens us so that we can rest no longer, until experimentally we are saved from our sins. Some or all of you may differ from me, but judge what I have said; if I am not right, cast it away and pray that the Lord will set me right, for I do not want to set forth anything but that which the Bible will sustain. These are trying times upon poor, weak children like myself, if I am a child of God at all. Heresies abound among the people here, two-seedism, opposition to the unlimited predestination of God, denying the resurrection of the body; away with all these things, let us all receive it just as it is laid down in the word, for we cannot make it any better. If we have a desire to follow after the right way, let us look for the old landmarks, and inquire after the old paths; let us receive what is left on record and avoid all else.

If this will not do for publication, cast it away or burn it, for it seems just like myself, good for nothing.

I remain your brother, I hope, waiting for the resurrection,

T. O. BELL.

GLENDALE, Arizona, Oct. 26, 1906.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—For some time I have had it in mind to write a few lines for the good old SIGNS. Though I am not a subscriber, I have read it with much interest for many years, and I can truly say that I have found much comfort and enjoyment while reading the many good letters and experiences which it contains. My dear father, George Gilbert, of Mazon, Ill., sends it to me, and it is all the preaching I have which I can enjoy, and if there are any other persons in this great Territory who love the SIGNS and the doctrine which it advocates, I do not know of them; but if there are any, or if there is an organized church of Primitive Baptists in Arizona, I would be very glad to hear from them. My unworthy name has been in the church book at Hope Church, La Salle Co., Ill., for over twelve years, but it has been my privilege to meet with that dear people but a few times during that period. If I know my own heart, it is one of my greatest trials that I am deprived of meeting with those people that I love so well, and whom I believe to be the salt of the earth, though I feel very unworthy, and to be the least, if one at all, of the Lord's dear children, but I feel to say with Ruth of old, "Entreat me not to leave thee, * * * for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." I desire to say to the dear brethren and sisters of Hope Church that I long to see you all, and again hear the blessed truth of the glorious gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. O how I long to meet with those whom I love so well. My mind and heart are often drawn out in love to you all, and I sometimes almost imagine myself right there with you, almost forgetting that we are two thousand miles apart in body; but I trust, and sometimes hope, that our doubts and fears, our joys and our aims, are one, and though our bodies may be far off removed, we still are joined in heart. I have often thought to write something to you all, but my utter unworthiness, and my inability to write anything that I could feel would be of interest or com-

fort to you, and not knowing where to send it, have kept me from doing so before. I find after waiting so long I am just as incapable of writing anything for your comfort or edification now as I would have been had I written you years ago, as I often promised myself I would do. I hope, if it is the Lord's will, to meet with you all again some day, but he alone knows what is best for us, and I do desire to be submissive to his will at all times; my only hope for salvation is in and through him, for without him I realize that I can do nothing. I feel the need of him every day of my life, for I feel there is no good in myself, and if I know the desire of my heart, it is to look to Jesus alone, who is the author and finisher of our faith, to keep me humble at his blessed feet, and to lead and direct me all through the journey of life.

My health is quite poor at present, having recently undergone a very serious surgical operation in the hospital at Phœnix; but the Lord has been very good to me through all of my sickness, and for some reason known only to himself has been pleased to raise me up again and spare me to my little family, for which I desire to praise his dear name.

I would love to hear from some of the dear ones at my home church, and have written this that you may know my whereabouts, and that I still love you and still desire to continue with you, though the least of all.

I hope the editors of the SIGNS will excuse me for taking so much of their time, but I felt that I wanted to write and find out if I could if there are any Old School Baptists in the Territory, also at the same time to let the little church of my membership hear from me, as I think they are nearly all readers of the SIGNS, but if you are too crowded for time and space to publish this, throw it aside and it will be all right.

I could not help feeling sad when I learned through the SIGNS of the death of dear Elder Bartley. I knew him personally, and loved him for the truth's sake. I have had many good, comforting letters from him and his faithful companion; but I trust his sufferings are now over and he is at rest.

I will close, wishing the SIGNS every success, and may the Lord be with you in the work.

Unworthily your sister,

(MRS.) MIRIAM E. KUNS.

KANSAS, Ill., Sept. 18, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Inclosed please find a letter written to me by brother Wesley N. Spitler; I hope you may feel to publish it, as I have been requested by several of the brethren and sisters to forward it to you for publication. I will in a few days be eighty-three years old, and have been a member of the Baptist Church over sixty-three years, and a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES most of that time, and do not detect any variableness in its doctrine since its first issue. May the Lord still bless its editors and publishers. I know its readers are comforted in reading its contents. Now as I approach the end of this life I desire the prayers of all God's people, that I may still be kept by the dear Lord unto the end. Farewell.

JAMES M. TRUE.

SCHENECTADY, N. Y., Sept. 8, 1906.

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER:—It seems to me, in looking over a letter received from you three months ago, that it was like Paul writing to Timothy; you start by addressing it to "My dear young brother," just as Paul addressed Timo-

thy: "To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord." I have often thought of you, and thought as Timothy must have considered Paul, older in the faith and stronger. I wonder, too, if Timothy did not also wonder at that fellowship, so tinged with an almost fatherly affection, Paul bore him.

You will be pleased to hear I have already attended one of the meetings of the Albany and Troy Church, at Troy. I enjoyed the preaching very much. Elder Vail spoke, and I believe said he knew you. You may also be pleased to hear that I attended the Maine Old School Baptist Conference, at North Berwick, Maine, where Elder Frederick W. Keene lives. There I met Elder Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., (who desired to be especially remembered to you) and Elder Badger, of Virginia; both are able ministers in the gospel of Christ, and said nothing I could discern as being not in accordance with the word of God. The time spent there was very precious to me, and I shall not wholly forget it as long as I live. I fully realize when I hear a true preacher of Christ, that it is for the purpose of supplying to the sheep many things they need as absolutely essential to their spiritual life. As Paul puts it in 2 Timothy iii. 16, 17: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." This applies equally to preaching, for preaching is, by inspiration, the revelation of the meaning of the Scriptures, and I say, I realized more than ever before that all this was not only for comfort, but for reproof, correction and instruction. We know so little and are so weak and erring that we need such things. We may have false ideas of doctrine and need correction; we may be following that course which needs reproof. All that we need, whatever it be, will surely be given unto us. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

I would like to have you convey my kindest regards to sister True, and may God be with you both in this, the sunny side of your life. May he guide you until your life's journey is over, abide in you and be in death your stronghold. Please write if you feel able, for your letters strengthen in me the remembrance of Christ Jesus.

WESLEY N. SPITLER.

GARFIELD, Va., Oct. 25, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have passed the date in sending my subscription for the SIGNS; please excuse the delay. I find myself delinquent in many things, especially those pertaining to my Master's kingdom, although his mercy is unending. We halt and repine, grasping for worldly happiness, and trying to make idols of our earthly treasures. These earthly ties are very dear to us, and we are often persuaded, through our love for them, to wander in forbidden paths; but the Lord is a tender Shepherd, he knows our infirmities, and has made ample provision for them. "For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." This heritage seems to be handed down through ages to the present time. The Lord's little children are just as weak today as Paul found himself to be in ages past. What would we do without Christ's loving care? When dark clouds appear

how earnestly we look for the Sun of righteousness; his gentle healing power enriches our souls, and we gladly sing praises to his holy name; all nature shows forth his handiwork, from the lofty oak to the most minute flower, and receive alike the gentle showers that freshen and beautify their short span of life.

A few days ago I came across a package of old letters from Elder Samuel Trott to my father. I felt a deep sense of humiliation as I read them, but I was crowned with joy to know such a good man had passed through the same experience I had. He often preached at our home, and although a small child at that time I can remember how everything was put in order for his arrival, and a warm welcome accorded him by my father and mother; they were members, and their home was always a home for the Primitive Baptists. These old, sweet memories come back to me, and the dear ones that have fallen asleep come before me, and I almost imagine I can see them around the throne, clothed in fine linen, clean and white. I think the saddest trials the saints have to pass through here are dissensions and strife in the churches. What a great blessing it is to have union and fellowship, to feel that you love your brethren; for, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." —1 John iii. 14. When one branch of a living vine is bruised, it seems to affect the whole vine; but how sweet to mingle with the saints when love abounds, when our hearts are melted with compassion, and we can see that pure Spirit of Christ covering the faults of his redeemed. I have had trials of barrenness while sitting in the assemblies of the saints. The text would be one I had longed to understand, to hear explained, but my heart was dumb, waiting for his tender mercy, when the veil would be lifted and I could sing praises to his holy name; then the words fell like manna to a hungry soul:

"Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

It is sweet to contemplate this glorious theme, to feel that the Lord has a people sanctified through affliction and made perfect in the blood of the Lamb, but O how unworthy I feel, a beggar at the gate, only a very few crumbs could possibly be my portion; yet hope, like a beacon, points to that perfect love which alone belongs to the children of God's grace.

I have written more than I expected, but will submit it to your guardianship. May the Lord in his infinite mercy protect you and the dear old SIGNS, that its pages may gladden the homes and hearts of his children in the future as it has in the past, is the sincere wish of your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) H. B. GREHAN.

RIDDLESBURG, Pa., March 16, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I also would address all the brethren and sisters who feel to have fellowship for a poor old sinner who feels himself, so far as the flesh is concerned, still dead because of sin. My mind has been greatly stirred up for some time concerning the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, and especially by what I have seen in some of the last SIGNS concerning the cutting off of the hand or foot, and plucking out the eye. Of the spirit which prompts me to write I can say but little, yet I do know that this spirit does confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, and that he

is God manifest in the flesh. Flesh is not Spirit, but God is a Spirit, and the spirit which has been prompting me to write tells me that he is the living Word or God, dividing asunder between the flesh and the Spirit, the joints and the marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Thus that which cuts off the hand and foot, and plucks out the eye, to my mind is the word of God, which is sharper than any two-edged sword, and it cuts between the flesh that serves sin and the spirit that serves God.

We ought always in reading the Scripture to consider the character spoken to. Jesus says, "If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." I understand this single eye to mean that the one motive is the glory of God; that is, not to mix the works of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit. If the eye be double, the whole body is full of darkness. This, as it seems to me, is striving to mix works and grace together. These things were spoken to the disciples, and not to some one else.

I feel now to say a few words concerning the offence: "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off." From whence cometh the offence? If that little one is in me, that little one has been offended hundreds of times. But in all cases my old, sinful self was the offender. Do I not know that it would be better to be cast into the depths of the sea? for then I would not have to suffer the cutting off, for I well know that it means a sore conflict through which the pilgrim must travel. We are told, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." We were by nature children of wrath, even as others. This will cover all occasions where flesh and Spirit are used by men who endeavor to mix them together.

I have naturally a dislike for writing, and therefore do not expect to attempt to write another article like this. I have written it for publication, if in your judgment it is best. I believe I have but one object in view: the glory of God and the good of his people. It cannot be that the little ones of whom Jesus spoke shall offend one another, because that would be sin, and he that is born of God sinneth not. Sin is in the flesh, and there is a woe pronounced upon all flesh, because out of it all manner of sin comes, and sin is that which offends the little ones of whom Jesus spoke.

I remain your brother,

WM. MELLOTT.

LOS ANGELES, Cal., Aug. 23, 1906.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—In sending my remittance for the SIGNS I feel like sending also a copy of a letter written to me by my father some time ago. I have read and enjoyed it many times, and feel now that I should like to share it with others, as I think it teaches Bible doctrine, if I know anything about it, and with your permission I would like very much to see it printed in the dear old SIGNS.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) E. SHAFER.

JEFFERSON, N. Y., April 6, 1902.

DEAR DAUGHTER:—I received your letter in due time, and was very glad to hear from you, and to hear you tell so much of what I have experienced; it is a comfort to feel and know that some of my children are interested, and have traveled that highway that is cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in. We read, "Blessed is the people that

know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." He is his people's righteousness, their sanctification and their redemption. He loved them with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness has he drawn them. Now "love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God," "for God is love." We are told, If we love God, it is because he first loved us, and gave himself for us. He has promised, and will fulfill. I have no doubt of this, it does not trouble me at all, but am I his or am I not? is what troubles me. I am at best a poor sinner, and saved by grace if saved at all. God knows what I am, there is nothing hid from his all-searching eye; he knows all things, and I believe he has predestinated all things whatsoever come to pass, and that he knows the end from the beginning. We are told, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." He calls with an effectual and holy calling, "not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." I desire to trust in the Lord, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. My prayer is that he will make us of the circumcision that worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh, and keep us from error and delusion, and from sin and temptation, and every evil work, and lead us by his holy Spirit in paths of righteousness. I hope we may all be ready when the time comes, but "the preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord;" he alone can prepare us for that great and last change.

I will now close. Write as often as you can, I assure you I appreciate your letters very much. Good by for this time.

Your father, D. C. HIX.

LANCASTER, Ohio, Sept. 6, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—It is time for me to remit to the SIGNS again. Since I wrote you last I have gone through sore affliction. The 13th of April I slipped and fell and broke the bones in my left thigh, and am now a poor, old cripple in my seventy-eighth year, and the days of my years have been full of evil; I am a wonder to myself. Why has the great God spared me until now? I have been such a poor, unprofitable servant, if indeed a servant of God at all. If I only could be of profit to the cause of Christ, as I hear some affirm that they have been, healing the sick and overcoming sin, it would be good for me to live, but alas, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." I do not know how to perform that which is good. I search all over my past life, and not one good thing can I see that I have done. It does not seem that I have done as I should have done, were I a child of God. I am ashamed of all my works. All through my months of suffering I thought it would be so sweet to leave this mortal, suffering body, were I but sure that I am one of the redeemed family. But O how dark all looked to me, I felt so forsaken. I now look back to the time when I first received a hope in Christ; I then felt that God had shed abroad his love in my heart in the name of Christ; then Jesus, all the day long, was my light and my song, but now my harp seems to be hung on the willows. I have not met with the church for five long months. I am hobbling about a little on crutches.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

SARAH B. PEARCE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1906.

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EDITORS:
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JOHN XVI. 7, 8.

"NEVERTHELESS I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."

These are important and very precious words of the dear Redeemer. They occur in the midst of a discourse filled with the deepest spiritual truths. The discourse recorded in the three chapters, of which the sixteenth is one, contains the substance of all that Jesus did and taught during his ministry on earth up to that time. He had intimated again and again that he must go away. To this end was he born, and to this end he lived and suffered among men, that he should die. Redemption was his great work; he came to save his people from their sins. To this end he must die and rise again. The fullness of all true spiritual blessings could not be given to any save through the atonement, the finished work of the Redeemer. The substance of all spiritual blessings to be imparted to them was summed up in the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth. In the coming of the gift of the Holy Ghost upon the disciples after Jesus' death and resurrection and ascension, was included all spiritual blessings, such as love, faith, hope, joy, peace, communion with God, christian fellowship, and all the gifts and graces contained in the new covenant, and to be received by all the elect of God in all coming ages. Could it be supposed for a moment that Jesus had not died and risen again, then not one of all these spiritual blessings could have been conferred upon any soul. If we remember this, these words of Jesus will take on a wonderful fullness of meaning.

Jesus begins these words with a note of strong asseveration: "Nevertheless I tell you the truth." It seems clear that thus he would fix the attention of the halting, doubting, fearful-hearted disciples. Just before he had said, "Because I have said these things unto you sorrow hath filled your heart." But they were sorrowful because they did not know what his going away meant to them and to his cause in the world. It meant a finished redemption for them, and that he should ascend on high and receive gifts for them. Thus only could sin be put away and they brought to God. All this he had shown in language but dimly understood by them before, but now he gives another reason why he must go away, and this reason he impressed upon them by this first expression, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth." It is as if he had said, You find it hard to believe it, or to understand it, but still it is true.

"It is expedient for you that I go away." The word "expedient" means, it is wisest and best; it is for your benefit, for your good, that I go away, I will not leave you comfortless. If I go away, I will send you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever, and this Comforter is the Spirit of truth, and he shall take of the things of mine and show them unto you; you shall know me bet-

ter then than you know me now. The things that I am saying unto you shall then be clearly revealed unto you; the things that I have done, the miracles that I have wrought, the association which I have had with you shall all then be brought to your minds in clear light, and the things that have been hidden shall be set in the light of the heavenly day before your eyes. He had said, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." That is, they could not understand them, but the Holy Spirit, when he is come, would make all clear to them. It was best for them that he should go away, that they might have that Teacher who should tell them all things, and show them all things that he had said unto them. This had not been their thought; they hoped for his continual presence with them, just as he had been with them during the three years of his public ministry; they expected him to set up a visible kingdom on earth, and to reign as did some earthly potentate, only with justice and righteousness more than had ever appeared before. How could they think of his going away from them without sorrow indeed? Afterward these words of Jesus would comfort them, but now they were perplexed and heavy-hearted.

There seems to be several reasons why it was expedient for them that the Holy Ghost should come, rather than that he should remain with them in person on the earth. First, it was best for them, and for all his disciples in every age of the world and everywhere in the world, because while here in the flesh but few could come near to him. Outside of Palestine none saw him, and none of all the race of men could see him, or pour out their complaints before him. The sick and the suffering in other lands did not reach him, did not know of him and were not healed by him. It must be so while he remained in the flesh. In the three years of his public ministry he sojourned in the land of the Jews; many there were healed of diseases and sorrows, but none else among the unfortunate of all the earth. Had he remained in the flesh it must always have been so, but now that he has gone away, and the everywhere-present Spirit of truth has come, it matters not where one may be, in the Spirit Jesus is near them all. As he said, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." He with broken heart and contrite spirit who dwells in a palace, and he whose abode is a hovel, he that lives in the heart of the crowded city, or he who dwells in solitude, he that has thousands of earthly friends, or he who has no friend in all the earth, he who lives among those who love and serve God, or he whose dwelling-place is the desert, are all alike near to him, and their crying and groanings are always in his ear, and he sends them all help alike; not one soul must go on any earthly pilgrimage to find him. His altar is everywhere that a broken heart is found, and he knoweth not only the way that one may take, but the way of all; in this sense it was expedient for all his disciples that he should go away. Again, it was expedient for them that he should go away because thus the true fellowship of the Spirit should come to be understood. Paul said, We know "no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." The meaning of the apostle evidently is, We know him no more after the flesh. The disciples by his resurrection were begotten again unto a lively hope. The former

earthly hope must perish, and it did perish when Jesus died, but now another hope arose in their hearts as they came, by faith, to know the power of his resurrection. This is the hope of an endless life, and in this new life is true fellowship found. This is that fellowship which is in the truth, and which is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. Jesus is the man who is God's fellow, and all who believe are fellows to the man who is God's fellow. In this fellowship it is the delight of all who love God to dwell; companions of the Lord, friends of Jesus, brothers in the highest sense of the word. All these happy words are but names of that relationship with God and with his Son Jesus Christ, into which the redeemed are brought by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. No child of God, no matter how long has been his experience of these things, has ever yet fathomed all that this fellowship in the Spirit means; eternity alone will disclose it; and into this fellowship we come because Jesus went away and the Comforter came. It is the fellowship of the Spirit and in the Spirit; it is the fellowship of righteousness and true holiness. By the Spirit the chosen vessels of mercy are brought to know the same things, to love the same things, to desire the same things and to hope for the same things. Men may come to an agreement to do the same things, but this is not fellowship, the basis of true fellowship is oneness of life and feeling; its springs lie deeper than the fruit; its springs are in Christ, who is the life of all his people; and from this hidden life all spiritual fruit springs forth. All this, and more, the coming of the Holy Ghost should reveal; and in this also it was good for the disciples that Jesus should go away and that the Comforter should come.

In the text the Savior said that the work of the Spirit of truth should be to reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. In the verses that immediately follow, reasons are given for each of these three things: "Of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged."

The word "reprove" in the text, is rather "convince" or "convict." Now it is manifest that this convicting of the world does not and cannot mean that the Spirit shall convince the conscience of all men of their sins and convict them of guilt in their own hearts. Jesus was not mistaken in anything he said, and he was not mistaken now. Ever since the dear Redeemer went away and the Comforter came this threefold work has been going on just as Jesus said, yet we know, as a matter of fact, that millions of the race of man have never come to know the plague of their hearts, that the personal work of convincing of sin has not been wrought in their consciences. Was Jesus then mistaken in this testimony? By no means, the very things of which he here testified have been done in all ages since they were spoken; the Spirit does convict or convince the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. The thought is not of what men may come to know or feel of this work, but of the fact that the world does lie in wickedness, and is opposed to righteousness, and does abide under the judgment of the law of God. To illustrate, we will refer to that which goes on every day in our courts of law: men who personally know they are guilty of the crime with which they are charged, are yet tried before the court, and after the due amount of evidence is presented they are convicted; convicted not in their own con-

sciences, but in the eye of justice. Upon the cross, on the one side and on the other of the blessed Lord, two thieves hung; both had been convicted of crime, both knew that they were guilty, but the conviction was according to the law, and before the world in the case of both; both were convicted of guilt before the law, but not in their own consciences; but later one was convicted in his own conscience, and confessed for himself the justice of his condemnation; but his condemnation was just before he confessed it, regardless of whether he himself acknowledged it or not. Now, it is in the sense of conviction under the law that we believe the words of the Savior in the text to be understood. In this sense the whole world is convicted of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. In the first three chapters of Romans, Paul through this very Spirit, the Holy Ghost, testifies to the fallen condition of all mankind, and of their evil practices. In these chapters he shows that the whole world, both of Jews and Gentiles, are enemies to God by wicked works. This had been true all through the past history of the world, but now it was clearly made manifest; the whole life and death of Jesus was full proof of the lost condition of men. Unless this were their condition there could have been no need of his coming in the flesh and dying upon the cross; and now that he has gone away, and the Holy Spirit has come in his name, taking of the things of Jesus and showing them unto the disciples, this truth of the lost state of men is clearly witnessed; and when the special work of the Spirit in the heart is wrought, it reveals to that soul just what Isaiah knew to be true when he saw the Lord sitting upon the throne high and lifted up, viz., "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." In other words, the same work that reveals to any soul his own uncleanness also reveals that all mankind is also unclean. Thus the world is convicted, or reproved of sin, of righteousness and of judgment.

This seems borne out by the words of Jesus which follow: "Of sin, because they believe not on me." This does not mean that unbelief of Jesus is the crowning, damning sin in man, as some have and do claim, but that unbelief in his nature and in his works shows that the heart of man is dead to God, as the apostle testified in Ephesians. If men were not dead in trespasses and in sins, dead to God, and to all that is holy, then they would believe on Jesus. Had mankind been holy when Jesus lived in human flesh, then all men would have come to him, and rejoiced in him, and received his words; but because they were already dead in sin, they denied the just One, choosing at the last a highway robber rather than the blessed Master. His coming in the flesh made manifest the true state of all men as being aliens and strangers to God and to his kingdom. As the Holy Spirit has held forth Jesus and his righteousness in every age since, through the gospel, it continues to reprove the world of sin, because the name of Jesus is not received by men, and his salvation possesses no attraction to men. That the name of the Holy One is not received by natural men is full proof of their sinfulness and enmity to God; and as sin, the sin of all mankind, is made clear through this testimony of the Spirit of Jesus and his salvation, so also is the righteousness of God, as made manifest in Jesus, made clear. It is the righteousness of God, which condemns men, and it is the righteousness of God IN CHRIST that saves

men; and that Jesus went to the Father, and was seen on earth no more, is the full proof of his righteousness before God. Beside this proof of his own personal righteousness, it is full proof that his righteousness avails before God for the justification of elect sinners. He was put to death for our sins, and raised again for our justification, and he, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; there is no more need of his dying. Thus his righteousness as well as the sin of the world is clearly made known.

Following these two considerations, as a logical result, is the convincing of the world of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. In almost all instances where the word judgment is used in the New Testament the thought involved is that of condemnation. It is so here, as appears in the last clause, "Because the prince of this world is judged." Indeed, the judgment of sinners must be that of condemnation, and so this last clause is as though it read, He shall reprove the world of condemnation, because the prince of this world is condemned. The same truth is presented by Paul in Ephesians, where he says, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." This is that spirit that rules and works in the hearts of all natural men, and which is always opposed to God and righteousness; and this is that spirit in all men which is condemned or judged. In the life and death and resurrection of the blessed Lord sin is revealed, and righteousness is revealed, and the condemnation of all men is also revealed.

This is, as it seems to us, the substance of the meaning of the Savior in these solemn words. Were it not that Christ died to redeem sinners, none who have come to feel this judgment could have hope; but in him a full atonement has been made for sin, and a full righteousness has been revealed, and upon him the condemnation has been visited, and his people are saved. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MATTHEW VII. 6.

"GIVE not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you."

This text is found in the closing part of what is familiarly termed, Christ's sermon on the mount, in which he taught them privately, and gave them lessons of instruction, which are of the greatest importance to the saints in all subsequent ages. These instructions should often be examined and re-examined by the children of God, as they are given for their special benefit, and contain admonitions and precepts of the most vital importance. From the rich cluster of golden maxims and rules laid down for the observance of the disciples of the Redeemer in this sermon, we are requested to give our views on the text written at the head of this article, to which we will call the especial attention of the readers.

"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs." The things which were holy under the ceremonial law were the things which were especially consecrated, sanctified or set apart for holy purposes, as were the tabernacle, the ark, the altar and the consecrated things of the inner temple of the Lord in Jerusalem. The tribes themselves, being solemnly set apart from all the families of mankind,

were ceremonially holy, and forbidden to intermingle with the other nations of the earth, and as a consecrated and holy people they were to live on consecrated and holy food; they were forbidden to eat that which was common or unclean. Of all the beasts of the field none but those which divided the hoof and chewed the cud were set apart by the special enactment of the Lord as the consecrated or holy sustenance of the consecrated tribes of the Lord, and these consecrated things must not be polluted by contact with other things which were not set apart; no mixture with anything else was allowed. All this was undoubtedly to signify to us that God's chosen and redeemed people, who are born of God, receive from him spiritual and immortal life, which must be fed and sustained on spiritual and immortal food. This lesson is taught us in all the types and shadows going before. For instance, when God had created man out of the dust of the ground, he provided that the food necessary for man's subsistence should grow out of the same dust of the ground. His nature and composition being of the earth earthy, his subsistence must, to be adapted to the support of his earthy nature, be also earthy; and when man had transgressed the law of God and fallen under the curse, the earth out of which he was to subsist was also cursed for his sake, that it might be still adapted to his nature, as a fallen, sinful, earthy man. So in the figure we are taught that in the spiritual creation in Christ Jesus, they who are born of the Spirit of God must be sustained on spiritual things; as their spiritual life is in God, so is all their spiritual food and sustenance. The productions of the earth cannot feed and sustain the inward man, nor can all the joys of the Spirit, which do feed and sustain the new man, prevent the old man, the earthy nature, from requiring its earthly nourishment. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that flesh is of the earth earthy, and cannot be sustained without that food which is produced from the earth, and he that is born of God, although he might possess all the produce of the earth, would starve if he were not fed on that bread which cometh down from heaven. Except we eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus we have no spiritual life in us, for spiritual life can live on nothing else. Those who are thus born of God are a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people," &c., chosen, consecrated and set apart, "sanctified by God the Father," "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit," &c., cleansed and washed, purged and justified, they shall be called the holy people, and as a holy, consecrated people they are made partakers of the divine nature, and qualified to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, who is the true bread which came down from heaven. Then the things which are holy are appropriated exclusively to a holy people; a people which God has cleansed, and which we are forbidden to call common. This sanctified people are called sheep, lambs and doves, and by many other figurative names, but they are never called dogs or swine. A dog is a very different kind of an animal from a sheep or lamb; he neither divides the hoof, nor does he chew the cud, he is therefore unclean. His disposition is also very unlike that of the sheep or lamb; he is ferocious, quarrelsome, vicious, and, like the wolf, it is his nature to worry, scatter and kill the sheep. His food, or that on which the dog subsists, is not that which would feed the sheep and lambs, nor can

the sheep and lambs subsist on what the dog can feed upon. The dog would starve in the richest pasture field, where the sheep would fatten, and the sheep would starve if fed only on what dogs delight to feed upon. Dogs are dangerous animals, and we are admonished to beware of them. Some of them are said to be dumb dogs that cannot bark; sleepy dogs, lying down, loving slumber, and greedy dogs that can never have enough. In Revelation xxii. 15, they are classified with sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers, idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

The admonition of the Lord in our text then clearly means that his disciples shall not give, or minister the gospel, or its provisions, its promises, its comforts, its ordinances, or any of its commands, to any who are thus designated dogs, or who are in nature, disposition, practice or appetite as unlike the regenerated and spiritual people of God as dogs are unlike and inimical to the sheep and lambs. The gospel is food to the saints, because it is Christ; the preaching of the gospel is preaching Christ, and it is food to the spiritual, and hence the ministers of the gospel are commissioned to feed the sheep and feed the lambs; to feed the flock of God which he hath purchased with his own blood, but charged to give not that which is holy (and the gospel and all its ordinances are holy) to dogs. Dogs have no use for holy things, they can do them no good, for they are not adapted to their nature or suited to their appetites; besides, it is a desecration of holy things to give them to dogs or to swine. It is true, the gospel is to be preached to every creature, to all nations, and in all the world, for a witness to all nations, but only those who have ears to hear can hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. The ministers of Christ have nothing but the gospel to preach, and that they must preach wherever God is pleased to open a door for them to preach, and its effect will be to discriminate between the living and the dead. All who have been pricked in the heart by the life-giving power of the Spirit will gladly receive the word, as did the quickened on the day of Pentecost, while all others will mock and reject the testimony. But what we understand as being intended by this admonition is, that we are forbidden to attempt to christianize unregenerated men, by teaching them the letter of the word, and applying to them the ordinances of the gospel as a means of salvation, by catechisms, Bible classes, Sunday Schools, &c., as though we could so improve their carnal minds as to make them acceptable to God, without being born of the Spirit.

According to our understanding of the subject, every effort to apply the things of the Spirit of God to unregenerated men, is to give that which is holy to dogs. Theological institutions for giving ministerial qualifications to graceless youths for preaching, and to unrenewed children and adults for church membership, and for evangelizing the world by humanly devised plans and schemes, is an attempt to give that which is holy to the dogs, and is clearly a transgression of the authority of our Lord, and an open violation of the words of our text: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine." It is not in the nature of swine to appreciate the value or beauty of pearls any more than it is the nature of dogs to relish the rich pasture on which the sheep feed. The children of God are in possession of jewels of inestimable value, which none but the children of God can appreciate or enjoy. Their spiritual priv-

ileges, their christian love and fellowship, their gifts and graces, their experimental joys and peculiar exercises, their knowledge of divine things, are all pearls of great value to them, but their excellency cannot be known or appreciated by those who know not God. There is a fitness and utility in exhibiting these pearls among those of like precious faith, but those who have never possessed them would rudely trample on them if cast before them, as swine would trample upon the most costly and precious jewels. Christians are greatly edified and comforted by speaking often to each other of all the way in which the Lord has led them; they can talk freely one to another of their joys and sorrows, their conflicts and victories, but should they make these things the theme of their conversation in the streets and market places, or in the synagogues of Satan, they would be treated roughly; infidels, Arminians, will-worshipers, like swine, would trample them under their feet, and turn and rend the child of grace. The psalmist said, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." They who fear the Lord can understand the language, they know too well the value of such precious pearls to despise or trample on them. But those who have only the religion of the world neither divide the hoof nor chew the cud, and, like swine, serve only their swinish appetites, their god is their belly and their glory is their shame. The swine seem to have but one desire, and that is the gratification of their ravenous appetite; cast before them the most costly and splendid gems, or pearls, and as they cannot eat them, they have no other use for them, and they would as soon trample on them as on the most common earth, and they will turn again and rend you, determined to obtain something that they can eat; so when the christian attempts to display the glorious things of the kingdom of Christ to unbelievers, they will sometimes be surprised to find that those with whom they labor cannot appreciate those experimental things of which they speak. Expostulate with them, and demonstrate what you say by the most clear and positive Scripture authority, and they will disregard your testimony and your Scripture, and trample both under their feet, and then assail you again with as much vigor and determined violence as though you had not exhibited to them your pearls.

Sheep, swine and dogs are not suitable companions for each other, they cannot live in good communion together, nor should unnatural amalgamation be attempted, but let the sheep be associated with sheep, and let them "beware of dogs," and avoid the society of swine, and they will be more pleasantly and comfortably situated. The great and good Shepherd has told his flock, Ye "are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." He has chosen them out of the world, and called them to be a separate people. Let us then heed the admonition of our Lord, and give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast our pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend us.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Nov. 1, 1862.

ELDER Whitely W. Meredith fell asleep in Jesus Sunday evening, Nov. 18th, at his home in Felton, Del. It is with much sorrow that we make this announcement. We extend our sympathy to his widow and the churches of his care. An obituary will appear later. K.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, Thursday noon, Nov. 1st, 1906, at Stoutsburg, N. J., Albert B. La Bau and Miss Bessie B. Simmons, both of Montgomery, Somerset Co., N. J.

At the same time and place was celebrated the golden wedding of the bride's parents, Deacon William Simmons and wife, both of whom are long time members of the First Hopewell Church, and who are loved and revered by all who know them.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Nov. 21st, 1906, at the residence of the bride's parents, in Delmar, Del., Edwin H. Elliott and Miss May M. Hearn, both of Delmar.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

James G. Whitt died on Thursday, Nov. 1st, 1906, at 9 o'clock p. m., after an illness of eighteen months. He was a firm believer in the doctrine set forth in the SIGNS, and always enjoyed reading and hearing read the many precious truths in its columns during all his illness. He was born Nov. 11th, 1836, making his age at the time of his death 69 years, 11 months and 21 days.

JAMES E. STEWART.

MOREHEAD, Ky.

Mr. J. W. Hubbell died at his home near Halcottsville, N. Y., Oct. 13th, 1906, aged 67 years. Mr. Hubbell had been in poor health for nearly one year. He was a brother to the late Elder J. D. Hubbell. Only one sister is left of the family; three have been taken since the death of Elder Hubbell. Mr. Hubbell was a kind and indulgent father, a loving husband and a respected citizen. He never made a profession of religion, but was a Baptist in belief, and left evidences of a hope in the Savior. He leaves his companion, who is in poor health, three daughters and two sons, besides a large circle of friends. May the God of all grace comfort the mourners.

The funeral was held from his late residence and was largely attended, conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder Charles Bogardus. Burial in Hubbell's cemetery, Kelly Corners, N. Y.

J. B. SLAUSON.

DIED—At her home in Sussex Co., Del., Sept. 11th, 1906, of typhoid fever, **Mrs. Canolia Messick,** wife of Mr. Peter J. Messick and daughter-in-law of brother J. H. Messick, aged 24 years and 2 months. Mrs. Messick was a noble woman, and worthy of all praise. In her childhood she united with the M. E. Church in her native town, Georgetown, Del., and I believe was sincere and honest, and faithful to her profession. I also believe that she had an experience of the grace of God, and loved to hear his grace extolled. I was well acquainted with her from the time of her marriage, being often entertained at her home, and always kindly received by her, and I am sure it was a pleasure to her to entertain those who visited at the home of her husband's people, where they made their home.

I was called upon to attend her funeral, which was held in the Old Baptist meeting-house at Broad Creek, and spoke to a large congregation of sympathizing relatives and friends, after which her mortal remains were laid to rest in the cemetery of that church to await the resurrection, and we have the hope that when Christ shall appear in his resurrection power and glory she shall appear with him.

She leaves a disconsolate husband and one little boy, mother and others, who greatly feel their loss, but are consoled in the assurance that to her it is eternal gain. We deeply sympathize with them, and commend them to him who is ever ready to soothe the sorrows of all that mourn, with the blessed consolations of his word.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., November, 1906.

DIED—At her residence on Walnut St., Hampton, Iowa, 11:10 p. m., Nov. 3rd, 1906, **Mary Ann Norton,** aged 87 years, 10 months and 15 days. She was born in Jessamine Co., Ky., Dec. 19th, 1818. With her parents she moved to Crawford Co., Ill., in the year 1837; was married to Elder Andrew J. Norton Dec. 19th, 1839; to this union four children were born, two sons and two daughters: Edwin A., Nancy L., now the wife of H. D. Brown, of Hampton, Francis N., of Broken Bow, Neb., and Sybil, wife of A. N. Minor, who departed this life Oct. 27th, 1876. One sister, Mrs. Elizabeth G. Scott, of Windom, Minn., and grandchildren are also left to mourn their loss. Mother united with the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, in Crawford Co., Ill., in 1843, and was baptized by Elder Thomas Young. In 1846 she moved to Beloit, Wis., and in 1853 to La Fayette Co., Wis., in 1869 to Hampton, Franklin Co., Iowa; was in the constitution of the West Fork Church, in 1871, and was a devoted member till her death. Mother had been failing in health for about a year, but her mind was clear to the last. She was a firm believer in the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS. She was a kind mother, friend and neighbor, and will be missed by us all, with the church, but we mourn not as those without hope.

The funeral discourse was preached at her late home Monday afternoon, by brother A. J. Tobberd, of Mason City, Iowa, from Job xiv. 2-4, to a large concourse of relatives and friends. Her body was laid to rest beside her husband in Hillside Cemetery to await the resurrection morn.

E. A. NORTON.

MEETINGS.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

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BI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF THE WELSH TRACT CHURCH.

The bi-centennial of the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., was celebrated Oct. 20th, 1903. After some delay it is now published in pamphlet form, and is now on sale. Price 15 cents. The pamphlet contains photographs of the Welsh Tract meeting-house and Elder J. G. Eubanks, the pastor, the proceedings of the anniversary, letters of greeting from sister churches and a historical sketch written by Dr. B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., and read on the occasion. Some of the brick in the meeting-house was brought from Wales to this country, and hauled on mules' backs a distance of ten miles. The pamphlet is very interesting and full of information.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 74. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1906. NO. 24.

POETRY.

UNSATISFIED.

UNSATISFIED and weary
With earth's turmoil and wrong,
With the craving after riches
By the crowding, rushing throng.

Unsatisfied and longing
For a better, purer life,
Where greed for gold and luxury
And power no more are rife.

Unsatisfied and restless,
With the heart all sick and sore,
Filled with vileness and pollution,
Like a cesspool running o'er.

Unsatisfied and murmuring
At God's overruling hand,
Feeling my poor, weak judgment,
Some better way had planned.

Unsatisfied, unthankful,
For blessings showered on me,
On me, a worthless beggar,
Filthy rags my only plea.

Unsatisfied—the idols
I thought were purest gold,
Are tarnished, rust-corroded,
And bedimmed with earthly mold.

Unsatisfied, but hoping
That some time I shall be free,
And the harrassing "Egyptians"
I never more shall see.

Unsatisfied with all things,
More with self than aught beside,
But hope with Jesus' likeness
To awaken satisfied.

ABBY G. CLARK.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HAMPTON, Iowa, Oct. 7, 1906.

MY DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have copied the following communication, written by Elder John Respess in 1883. I have read your editorial upon the same subject. I have had the paper from which this is copied ever since the above mentioned date, and if in your judgment you deem this worthy, I should be glad to see it published in the SIGNS.

Yours in gospel bonds,

E. A. NORTON.

THE OLD AND THE NEW MAN.

I HAVE never professed to know the deep things of God, or to be able to explain them, and to define precisely the change in the man by the new birth is doubtless far beyond my ability. I know but little more about it than the blind man when he said, "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see." That there is a change in the man by the new birth the Scriptures clearly teach, and in what it consists is our present inquiry. The Scriptures abound in figures and expressions which were never designed to be construed literally, and to so construe them would involve us in in-

extricable confusion. As one example, I give the words of Jesus in John iv., where he said, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Here we know that Jesus did not refer to natural water, or natural thirst, but spiritual water, and wells which the natural can at best but partly represent. He meant to represent spiritual thirst by natural thirst, and by water that grace which is given by him in the gift of eternal life; and by living water he meant to represent the unfailing character of his grace as being unlike natural wells, which go dry in summer, and fail in the time of greatest need. But, like the living water, his grace would not be affected by any changes of time and season, and would be in summer and in winter, wet or dry, the same, and sufficient.

The spiritual people of God are called Zion, and it is said when Zion travailed she brought forth children. We know the church and christians are meant by Zion, and that no church ever brought forth a natural child of flesh, blood and bones, but still that she does conceive by the Lord we do all believe. She sorrows in mind, deplores, as did Hannah, her barrenness and deadness, and cries unto the Lord as a woman of sorrowful spirit, and spiritual joys are born of her. Not to be too tedious, the Savior in John viii. said to the scribes and Pharisees, who boasted to him of Abraham their father, that they were of their father the devil. We know that he did not mean that Abraham was not their fleshly father, or that the devil was their fleshly father, but he meant that in their opposition to the truth taught by him, and believed and loved by Abraham, they manifested a Satanic spirit of hatred to God and his truth, which has ever characterized the devil, and that in this respect they were the devil's children, and not Abraham's.

"Old man" and "new man" are New Testament figurative expressions; also such expressions as these: "Ye are the temple of God," "a spiritual house," "lively stones," the outward and the inner man, &c. The words "old man" are used in the Old Testament, but only in their literal sense, and refer to the years of a man's natural life, as Zechariah said to the angel that he was an old man. The "old man" there, was the real old man of flesh and blood, and not the old man which we in the Scriptures are charged to put off; and neither is the "new man," which we are told to put on, a real man, or a distinct person, but the works prompted by the new creature, and commanded in the word. But while the figurative old and new man are not used in the Old Testament, still the christian's warfare was well known to the old saints; for saints have been comforted and encouraged in all ages by the struggles and triumphs of faith recorded in the sacred pages of them. Could we find a man who had never sinned, but was as good as Adam before he fell, we would find a man with no old man or new man either, but simply a good creature of God. Our blessed Redeemer had our nature, but not its depravity, save by imputation; and while he had two natures in one person, the nature of God, and the nature of man, yet he had no "old man" in his own person to contend with, as we have. It is this depraved nature that is conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity; not so much the man as the nature, because conception and birth are not of themselves sinful, man having been commanded to increase and multiply; and it is not there-

fore sinful to marry wives and beget children, but being sinful our offspring are conceived and brought forth sinful. But when the man is born again (I would not say born over) he, the man, becomes a new creature; but not a new creature in flesh and blood, for so far as flesh and blood are concerned he is the same creature; but as a woman in pangs of travail is delivered by birth, so he is delivered by faith and rejoices in the truth. He is born of the Spirit, for God is a Spirit; he is now new in spirit, new in hope, faith and love, and in the works of faith; he is new in his views of God, truth and himself; old things are passed away, and he is now one spirit with the Lord; he hates what God hates, and loves what God loves, and hates what he once loved, and loves what he once hated. The old man is still however left, but the christian man, the man himself, as a christian, lives by faith. It is the same man who is thus changed who has now in spirit partaken of the divine nature, who now has struggles, and hates his own depravity, who once had no such struggles. It was the same Paul who, after his change, loved unto death the same truth that he before hated unto death. If it was not Paul himself, who was it? It was the same Gadarene who one day was fierce, wild, savage and ungovernable, who sat the next day meekly at the feet of Jesus as a little child. He was the same man in flesh and blood, the same size, the same in features and stature that he was the day before, but he was not the same in spirit, he still had the depravity of his nature to contend with until death should end the struggle. He was a new creature, and what sort of a creature? Why, he was a wonder from the Lord of hosts. He was now a man with two natures, the old man and the new man; he was such a man as no man could be who had never sinned and been born again; he was both a creature and a child; both created and begotten; he was both of God and of man. The warfare is itself an evidence of the new birth, that the new man dwells in the man, that the change has taken place; that the very identical man in whom the conflict is going on is a child of God, and an heir of heaven. He is the one, the lost sinner who is interested in salvation; I know of no other man or creature or being who is interested in salvation.

A man said to me once, If you get to heaven, it will not be John Respess. To which I replied, that if not John Respess, it had as well be Bill Smith, so far as I am concerned. And it had, for it is this person, John Respess, who longs for eternal life; it is this very sinner who longs for holiness, and who hopes to realize it, and to praise God for redeeming grace, and for saving a poor sinner. With all due deference to others, I cannot construe the scriptural expressions with reference to the old and new man, literally, and make of them two distinct men, when in fact they (the new and old man) are more properly two natures or spirits in the one man or person. Whence these various distinctions between the old and new man? If two distinct births of two distinct elements do necessarily produce two distinct beings, then the minds of God's children will be confused, and estrangement and confusion will be caused. But I would say that two distinct births in God's children no more necessarily produce two distinct persons in them than the birth of Christ of the seed of Abraham necessarily produced two distinct beings in him. No one believes that the adorable Redeemer had two persons, but that he, like his children,

had two natures in one person, the nature of God and of man. Therefore we do not understand that God begets in sinners, even his chosen people, any actual children, or that there are actually any fleshly children of the devil, but that the old man is the corrupt nature, and the new man the nature begotten in him of God, so that instead of there being two distinct persons, he is one person with two natures; and though there are two distinct births they are altogether different in character, as much as the natural water and the natural well differ from the spiritual water and well. It would be as sound reasoning to argue that the spiritual well is like in shape and form to the natural well as it is to argue that the spiritual is like the natural birth. The spiritual birth is designed to represent the change in spirit and character, and no actual being is brought forth by it any more than when Zion travailed did she bring forth persons. The meaning of the old and new man is clearly defined by the apostle in his letter to the Ephesians, fourth chapter, and also in his letter to the church at Colosse, third chapter. He writes to the church, "That ye put off, concerning the former conversation, [or conduct] the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God [or like God, or of God] is created in righteousness and true holiness." In this sentence Paul speaks of both the old man and the new man, the one to be put off, and the other to be put on, as if we were putting off one coat and putting on another in its place, and therefore it is not a person to be put off and to be put on, but a life to live. The church there was then composed of Gentiles by nature, and hence he said to them, I "testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles." That is, as Gentiles who had not been made believers, and who walked in the vanity of their mind, whose understanding was darkened, who were alienated from the life of God through ignorance which was within, because of the blindness of their hearts, who being past feeling had given themselves over unto lasciviousness with greediness. This means that they, as christians, were not to live as these others, or as they had formerly lived themselves, but to live now as christians, or children of God, as those of another spirit, and in that way to put off the old man and to put on the new man; and this they were to do because they had been taught better. They had learned Christ, if so that they had heard him and been taught by him as the truth is in Jesus. "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor. * * * Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying." "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." This is putting off the old man and putting on the new man. "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us." "Fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting." To live this way is to put on the new man, and what

a warfare it is, and to accomplish it how necessary that we should, every man, be in his place in the camp with the whole armor of God upon us; because that which the Spirit prompts and the word requires will find more or less opposition in our corrupt natures, the one being contrary to the other, so that we cannot of ourselves do the things that we would. Therefore the idea that the old and new man are two distinct beings is not scriptural. It has also been said by gifted brethren that as all living souls were created in and simultaneously with the first Adam, and, being born of him, necessarily partake of his nature, so were all quickened spirits created in and simultaneously with the last Adam, Christ, and that these quickened spirits, being born of him, as necessarily partake of his nature. If we get the idea that this language conveys, it means that Christ was created as Adam was, and that these quickened spirits, whatever they are, were created in him, and that in the new birth they are born again, and not the man. But the Scriptures say the man must be born again, and not quickened spirits. If Christ be a creature of God, and not God the Son, it would be idolatry to worship him as God. We know it is said that we are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, but this refers altogether to the work of Christ in our hearts, and the elect of God, these redeemed and saved sinners, will have something to praise God for in heaven that no unfallen and unsaved being could possibly have. We are not yet perfected, but wait for the final change. We see as through a glass darkly and know only in part, but when time is past, we shall see him face to face, and know as we are known, and shall attain to the full stature of men. Now we press forward to the future, and shall at last be crowned with fullness of joy, at his right hand. So our new nature is not a distinct being, but it is our God-given nature producing faith, hope and love, and is the evidence that we have eternal life, and shall come off more than conquerors through him that loved us and gave himself for us. Bless his holy name! It is like the leaven in the meal, until the whole is leavened. So shall his people be saved, nothing of them will be lost but their sins and corruption. "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."

What is here written is written in the interest of the truth of God and the peace of his regenerated people, and may the blessing of God rest upon it.

JOHN R. RESPESS.

[AT the request of brother Norton, and because Elder Respess was so widely known, and universally loved where he was known, and also because the above article is so clear in its presentation of the truth, we gladly comply with brother Norton's request, and publish it. Brother Norton refers to our own editorial of recent date with approval, and of this we can but be glad, and, we trust, thankful to God. We have been surprised as we have read the above article at the almost identical agreement of our article with the above letter, and can but feel strengthened and encouraged by this similarity. We do not recall ever reading the above letter before, though we may have done so. Elder Respess attended our eastern associations once, and many still remember him, and the excellent preaching he was given to preach among us.—C.]

HATTON, Kansas, April 15, 1906.

ELDER D. B. NOWELS—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—This beautiful morning I will attempt to write you, as I promised when you were here. I believe this is the second time I have ever tried to write what I hope has been the Lord's dealing with me. When asked to pen it I could not say no, for I am not ashamed of it; though it may be small, very small, it is worth more than all this world to me.

It was in the year 1901, I think, that my trouble first began. In the month of September my father, mother and others first went to Colorado to search for the Old Baptist Church. I thought, How very foolish are such notions of that church and people; my mind was very bitter against father and mother going so far away and leaving us children alone. I at that time was very bitter against the Old Baptists, and something seemed to tell me they would join while at that meeting. When they came home, the first thing that was said was that they had joined and would be baptized the next month, which was October. How I hated that, no tongue can tell. I just made it up in my mind that I would not like the people who came down here to that meeting; still, on my father's and mother's account, I did try not to let them know my feelings toward them. The time came, however, when the preacher and a few of the members came. On Saturday afternoon we went to a schoolhouse about three miles from our place. I did not want to go at all, for I had no desire to hear them, but still I went with them, and I shall never forget that sermon. During the meeting all at once these words came to me: O what a sinner! I could hardly stay in the house, for at that moment I felt that every one knew how I had felt and what I had said concerning them; my heart seemed as if it would break with the heavy load. Coming home one of the sisters turned to me and said, What do you think of us Old Baptists? Do you think we are a pretty bad people? How that cut me I cannot say; I felt that I could not tell her what I had thought, so I answered, I do not know. Time wore on, and my burden did not leave me. I would try to throw it off, and think it was nothing whatever, and I did try very hard to get rid of the burden, but instead of getting rid of it, it grew heavier and heavier. I went on in that state for about a year, when in April of the spring of 1900 you came down here to hold meeting. At that time I said, as well as thought, I will not like that man, and will not have anything to say to or do with him. When the time came for meeting, however, I went, and what a storm was raging in my heart. I went in and sat down in the back seat, for I did not want to be close to you. When you got up and turned around you looked over the congregation and called for the hymn, "Jesus, lover of my soul." They sang that, then you took your text and started to talk. You had said but a few words when you looked straight at me, and O how that look did kill me. Right there it seemed as if I would surely sink out of your sight, for I felt what a great wrong I had done you, and I felt that you could read my heart as I felt it myself. Your sermon seemed to be preached straight to me, and how the tears streamed down my face. When meeting was closed I went right to the door and turned my back toward you, for it seemed to me that you would come to me, which you did. There were two or three other girls standing there with me, you spoke to them and

turned to me and held out your hand, and O, my brother, I will never forget that moment or your look to me; all you said was, This is pleasant weather, is it not? but I felt that you meant a great deal more than that; I felt that you could read my heart straight through, and I could not look at you, my eyes fell, and if I gave any reply I do not remember it. Then you came on home with us and spent the night. I tried to shun you during your stay, for I did not want you to say anything to me, and you did not. On Sunday morning we all went to meeting again, and I do not think I will ever forget that sermon, it seemed to condemn me. After the close of meeting, father, mother and yourself were going to Syracuse to hold meeting that night. I never wanted to go any place as badly as I did to go there. I longed to hear that sermon, and at the same time I felt they condemned me, still I wanted to go with you. I said nothing of it, however, as I knew mamma and I both could not go. So you went, and that afternoon and night it seemed that I could not live. I had done all I knew to drive away that burden, but still it was there, so that night I knelt down by the bedside and tried to pray, but all I could say was, God, be merciful to me. It seemed that it went no higher than my head, so I lay down and tried to sleep, but for a long time I could not close my eyes. At last I dropped off into a troubled sleep. At dawn the next morning I awoke and raised up in bed, and O what a glorious morning that did seem to me, all my burden was gone, and quick as thought these words came to me: "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound! that saved a wretch like me." I could not stay in bed any longer. I went and called the small children, and as they came out into the yard they looked so happy, the little birds were singing so sweetly, and the grass and trees looked so green and lovely, my soul was filled with praises and songs, and as I went into the kitchen to prepare breakfast this hymn came to me word by word: "There is a fountain filled with blood," &c., and as I sang it how sweet it seemed to me. I went on in that state for some time. I had not told any one of that morning.

The time came again when there was to be a three days meeting here, and how I longed for that meeting to come, for I longed to meet those people, they were then so dear to me. You had been on my mind very often since the last time I had met you; I felt that you were near to me for the truth's sake. The meeting came and on the last day you came down and preached for us. After meeting you were sitting close by me and turned to me and said, Why did you not come and be baptized with sister Sisson, little girl? How I felt no tongue can tell. I did not want you to know my feelings, for I felt so condemned over how I had acted toward you. That was the first thing you said to me. I could not say anything but I do not know. I did not then know, brother Nowels, why I did not go forward, for I felt it was my duty to do so, but I felt, too, at the same time, I am young, and perhaps they will not receive me, and it would have been just if they had not. I went back from our meeting here, and on the afternoon of Saturday I could not stay away any longer. When I went forward and tried to tell them a few of my feelings, it seemed that I could not say anything at all, but they took me in, and the next morning I was led into the water and buried by Elder W. C. Perdue. As I came up out of the water these words again came to me:

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound! that saved a wretch like me."

Now, brother Nowels, you have before you the dealings of the Lord with me as nearly as I can write them, and I will say that this hope has never left me, though at times I get very low, and wonder if it is all imagination. When I turn my eyes to that spot where I felt that my sins were pardoned, and that the Savior was indeed my Savior, and that he had died for me, I wonder why it is that I do not live up to that profession. It does seem that I am so vile and sinful that it is a great wonder such a salvation could be my lot; still, my dear brother, it is my chief desire to live a better life, and to be of some comfort to some one. I wander so often, yes, very often, and do things I should not do, yet through all that my blessed Savior has not forsaken me; he is always near, and leads me on, and gives me grace to overcome all, and to look to him who is the author and finisher of our faith.

I enjoyed our meeting here last week, and I was also glad to have Mrs. Nowels with us. She seems very near to me, why I do not know, but I feel that she is dear to me, as well as to others. I wish very much to visit you both in your home, and hope to do so some time during the summer. Tell her I do not forget her, but remember her during all our meetings, and wish she could always be with us. May God bless her is my prayer. I am much ashamed of myself for not writing sooner, but I will not make any excuses, for to tell the truth I have none. Remember me at the throne of grace. Give my regards to all there, and write when you can.

Your sister, in hope, through Christ,

MARTHA HOLDREN.

YORK, Neb., Oct. 30, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—At the request of my mother I shall endeavor to write a few of my travels. If any receive a little comfort, all praise is due to the Giver of all good.

I was born in Wallace Co., Kansas, in 1888. At the early age of eight or nine years this thought came to me one morning, after attending a Missionary Baptist Church and Sunday School: Why did we not go to Sunday School every Sunday? I spoke to mamma about it. She explained what she believed, and strange it may seem, but I never again had any desire to go. I then saw I was a sinner, although not so keenly as some. I enjoyed reading the SIGNS, and love sprang up in my heart for the people of God. Time went on, until the fall of 1899, when we moved to Gaylord, Kansas; here we could attend Primitive Baptist meetings. I enjoyed the preaching, and always felt it was the truth. At times sin weighed me down, for I felt to be the worst of sinners. The 1st of December, 1903, a brother whose name was Davis Burch stayed all night at our house. He told some of his experience during the evening. I felt as nothing on this earth. As I was about to retire a desire sprang up within my heart to join myself to these people, and I felt willing to do so, (which I had never allowed myself to think of before) but I said to myself, I am not fit, and have no hope. Just here a silent voice said, Why doubt? doubt no more, and by the grace of God I have not. I thought, If it is the Lord's will when we move to York, (which we were then thinking of doing) I shall ask a home among these people I love. Shortly after this I was visiting my aunt in Iowa, who was a zealous worker in the so-called Christian Church. She found

out what I believed, and tried to persuade me I was wrong. I came to my grandfather's, and in the evening placed the Bible so I might take it to my room that night to read it; perhaps I was wrong and my aunt right, but every verse and chapter which I read told me she could not be right. I then came to our new home in York. The question now was, Are the Old School Baptist teachings in accordance with the Bible? When I tried to follow the preaching I could not. That duty which later I must perform came so strong upon my mind I could think of nothing else; day after day it increased. It seemed I must follow my Savior, yet so unfit, so unworthy; only those who have passed through the same can understand. For one year and one month I went on in this way. The last month my prayer day and night was that if it were God's will I would be enabled to go home to my friends and tell them what great things the Lord had done for my soul, which I was enabled to do with fear and trembling on Saturday, May 27th, 1905, and I say to every one who feels that burden, to do the same, for only by it will the burden be removed. Sister Ida Stevens, another sister, joined the second Sunday in July, and we were baptized at the same time, the fourth Sunday in July. O how happy are they who their Savior obey; but when we are allowed to wander from the path, darkness comes.

Our yearly meeting has just closed. It was surely enjoyed by all present. Elder J. H. Ring, of Lincoln, Elder J. Chapman, of Germantown, Elder Smith Ketchum, of Chester, besides our pastor, Elder C. M. Cooper, were with us. A brother and sister joined by letter. The only thing about these meetings I regret is they are too short.

I much enjoy reading the SIGNS; so many tell my thoughts, which I cannot express. I would say, Brethren and sisters, write on, tell of God's wonderful works. Sister Ruth Keene's last letter I enjoyed much, as I did her others, she being near my own age, and our experience in going to school somewhat the same; may God direct her to write again, as well as others who have written.

I submit this to the better judgment of the editors; if laid aside all is well with me.

A little one of the flock, if one at all,

BELLE HANSON.

BLUE SPRINGS, Mo., Sept. 9, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS:—It seems to me I never appreciated the SIGNS as I do now. I am thinking and hoping to go to the eastern associations next spring, my sister and I. There is a great famine, not of bread, but of hearing the word of the Lord. I am cut off from church privileges. O, if it were the will of the Lord, how glad I would be to see some humble servant of our Lord, and hear him preach the unsearchable riches of our God.

I am sending you a letter which the writer wished me to send you for publication, if you see fit.

In love, sweet fellowship and sorrow, your sister,

SALLIE M. BARTLEY.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Sept. 2, 1906.

DEAR MRS. SALLIE M. BARTLEY:—Inclosed find post-office money order for fifty cents, as a contribution to help defray the expense of publishing "The Christ-Man in Type." I appreciate your kindness in presenting it, and I appreciate its contents more highly than I can express in words, for I have for many years thought that Jesus had appeared

on earth at various times (since the Tree of Life was in the midst of the garden in Eden) previous to being brought forth by the virgin Mary. Elder Bartley has relieved my mind by explaining that it was in type or figure that it is so; such types as God only did give, therefore the real substance of the types are realized in our triumphant and risen Savior, who now maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. Elder Bartley has thus conclusively shown in this book how it is with us that "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Therefore I regard Elder Bartley, for this with other things from his pen, as a continuous or lasting gift unto the church of God, and since I know that such offering as he made in this and other writings were by faith, he, like Abel, "yet speaketh," therefore unto every lover of truth I would commend this precious book. As for myself, I have searched the Scriptures at various times for thirty-two years past, and read numerous books and periodicals, and enjoyed them very much, feasting on such as both books of editorials by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, (with the SIGNS as my favorite paper) Elder S. H. Durand's "Meditations upon Portions of the Word," "Trials of Job," Mary Parker's book, "Feast of Fat Things," "Mercy Deering," "Man Redeemed from Sin and Death," "The Priesthood of the Son of God," with many other valuable books, all of which comforted and instructed me, but none of them were more excellent to me, if equal to this last book, "The Christ-Man in Type." Perhaps it came to hand just at the time I hungered for such spiritual food. Were I competent I would ask for space in the dear SIGNS to write of my high esteem of this book, but since its sale is pronounced through the SIGNS, that is as evident of its importance to the household of faith as anything I might possibly write. I always feel safe to subscribe for such books as are advertised for sale in the SIGNS. I trust you may realize sales enough not only to pay the actual cost of printing, but enough to let you know our love and kind regard for you, and how we appreciate your kind efforts to circulate the book among lovers of truth, and thus carry out the intent or purpose of your dear, departed husband, one who was among my dearest friends. No one who reads or examines this book will think that Elder Bartley had a pecuniary interest in compiling it, for I think the prices quoted in the SIGNS could not more than pay for printing, binding and mailing. I purpose trying to get others to send for it. My opportunities are not encouraging though, since through physical ailments I cannot get about much. I have a likeness or picture of Elder Bartley in his book "Man Redeemed," and my opinion is that he lived what he preached, and, like Paul, kept the old man in subjection, lest while he preached to others he himself might become a castaway. I know he had many trials in contending for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, but through his steadfast deportment and writings I know that he was "sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." I know, too, not only faith was given unto him, but besides faith there were such other gifts as virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity. I know that these several gifts (all of them) were in him and did abound, and therefore he was not barren or unfruitful in the knowl-

edge of our Lord Jesus Christ, and thus wherefore (for that these gifts of grace abounded in him) he was one of the brethren who give diligence to make their calling and election sure, and thus through the reign of these gifts of God there was an entrance ministered unto him abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This book with his last letter to Elder Chick, as printed in the SIGNS, does testify to this fact concerning Elder Bartley, and I do wish I could impress the importance of such living testimony upon the mind of every child of grace, for by it Elder Bartley yet speaketh, and comforts much those who read it.

If you think what I have written will be of benefit in any way, and Elder Chick approves it, do as you wish about publishing it.

With love from wife and myself,

DAVID L. McNEES.

HERNDON, Va., Nov. 19, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—As my subscription to the SIGNS expires with the next number I will now inclose money order for two dollars to pay for it another year. I do not want to be without the SIGNS, for I can remember the past comforts it has brought me, but I am in great darkness of mind now, so much so that I feel lost to everything that is good and great, and the Sun of righteousness seems to have gone from my sight for many days past. I feel to be a lone wanderer on the earth, and there does not seem to be any one quite so sinful as I feel myself to be.

"Like one alone I seem to be,
O is there any one like me?"

When I read the experience of so many dear, tried souls in the SIGNS, telling of their many doubts and fears, I stop and say in my heart, Dear children, you have almost touched me, but not quite yet, for I am a little lower down in this dungeon of sin, and you cannot quite reach me, but you have told me the rugged way all along until now; but you have not quite reached the place I am in. I am in a very dark place, I cannot describe the darkness, for it can only be felt; my heart seems to be a cage of unclean birds, and I feel to say with the poet:

"Can one who is a christian
Have such a heart as mine?
I fear I never witnessed
The effect of love divine."

I would ask you all this question: Can one grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth in the night time? My fleshly pride would say, No. But to turn to the kingdom of plants in nature, we will readily see that they grow more in the night time than they do in the day, hence they must be made wet with the dews of the night and watered from the dark clouds of heaven. Jesus said, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" Lilies are often found living in valleys or in lowlands, yet we dread to live in low places, we sometimes call it the "slough of despond;" still we find the bright face of the lily in low places, clothed in much beauty, and of great admiration, standing as a great token, that God is there, and so clothes the grass of the field. Shall he not much more clothe you, dear child of God? For "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."

Dear editors, I did not intend to write in this way when I began, I only thought I would say, I now inclose the money for my paper for another year, and to say to you, Go on in your labor of love, sending forth the dear old SIGNS, for it feeds us on the sincere milk of the Word, and this is what all Old Predestinarian Baptists want, which is Christ, the Word of life and salvation; milk tastes better with all the cream in it. I can speak of the joys of the past while in sweet communion with the saints, and in the joys of my first love. O return unto me now, the joy of my first love, I want to go to my Father's house a little child, fall at his feet: Father, I have done thy justice wrong, nor do I deserve thy grace; O return, return, my first love, return.

But I am making this too long, and will close by saying that our dear pastor, Elder E. V. White, is still ill at his home. He has not been with us at Frying Pan Church for many months. His illness has caused gloom to hang over the church, and we all feel to mourn the absence of our dear undershepherd, who has been faithful to us in the many years of the past, coming to us in weakness in himself, but strong in the power of God, determined not to know anything among us save Jesus Christ and him crucified. This has been his theme all the years he has served us, and we feel to love him for the truth's sake. O that the good Lord would restore him to health again; but the Lord's will must be done. We are passing away one by one, and the place that knows us now will soon know us no more forever.

Your poor brother in deep sorrow,

J. F. OLIVER.

HOLLAND, Texas, June 17, 1906.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—VERY DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—By your permission I will address the saints of our God through the medium of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the oldest Old School Baptist periodical in the United States, and the most reliable. Dearly beloved in the Lord, it has been quite awhile since I have written anything for your consideration, but in this you have lost but little, if anything; you have been most wonderfully supplied from wisdom's inexhaustible store of good things by the many contributors to the SIGNS, and this you have shared not alone, for I have all along been gleaning hard by the reapers, and still hope to be allowed to glean in the field of our antitypical Boaz, who by the Father was sent into the world for the accomplishment of a certain object, which was the salvation of sinners. Now let us for a moment inquire as to whether all sinners or only some sinners were embraced in the object. If all were embraced, then all must be saved; but if only some, then some only will be saved, for the angel hath testified, "He shall save his people from their sins." If all are his by the same kind of right, then all must be saved, but if only a part, then only will that part be saved. Paul says, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy [deserving] of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." If this saying is worthy to be accepted in every sense of the word that he came into the world to save sinners, and if all sinners were to be saved, without exception, then all without exception are saved, for he will save his heart's delight, and if all sinners are embraced in the delight of his heart, then certainly all will be saved. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me," says Christ. If all sinners

universally were by the Father given to Christ, then all sinners universally must and will come to him. They that have heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me, says Christ. If all sinners have heard and learned of the Father, all will come; but no man can come to me except the Father draw him. If the Father draws all, all will come, for the same cause produces the same results under the same circumstances everywhere, and if Christ shed his blood for all men, and if his blood cleanseth from all sin, as it is affirmed, then all are cleansed from sin. Yet some are condemned. What are they condemned for? Not for sin, because from all sin they have been cleansed by the blood of Christ, in which cleansing their sins were separated from them as far as the east is from the west, and will be remembered no more forever. If all of this be done for all sinners, why will not all sinners be saved? It is certain that sin will not be the cause preventing, for as a thick cloud all their sins have been blotted out; they have all been washed in the blood of the Lamb, and are all whiter than snow, and though they were the children of wrath, and as black as the tents of Kedar, yet by the blood of Christ they are fairer than the curtains of Solomon, and if the obedient life of Jesus is as much for all sinners as for some, why are not all saved, especially so if it is a fact that the obedience of Christ is that which effects the salvation of any? And if the death of Christ avails anything at all in the salvation of sinners, why does it not avail in the salvation of all? We know that some are saved, and we know that all are not saved; some were chosen to salvation, and for them Jesus lived, bled, died and rose again; he became their surety, became sin for them; died the Just for the unjust, that he might bring them to God; he is their Daysman, Mediator, High Priest and Advocate with the Father, and his thoughts toward them are thoughts of peace, and not evil, to give them an expected end.

Dear editors, do with this as you deem fit. Love to all the saints.

W. M. LITTLE.

WERTSVILLE, N. J., Oct. 26, 1906.

MISS ANNA SUTPHIN—DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD:—It is with a deep feeling of fellowship for you in your experience published in the SIGNS that I make the attempt to write you. I hope that you will forgive me for taking this liberty. When the SIGNS came last week I was filled with joy and gladness as I read your letter, and ever since I have had a desire to write you, and now I am trying to write, and yet my mind seems at a loss as to what to write; but still the beauty of your letter remains with me. When you spoke of comfort in the fact that the love of the brethren remained with you, and that "we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," I could not refrain from crying, for were it not for these words I would have to give up all hope, for it seems, as the hymn says, that I am so vile, so full of sin, I fear that I'm not born again. Now as I look over my past life I cannot remember that I ever desired to really do wrong, but what I desire I cannot attain to, and from what I hate I cannot refrain. But my path was laid out for me, and I have to stand still and see the salvation of God. I am made to feel ashamed at times to think that I am so weak, and that my path is so crooked. I am at a loss at times, and am really a wonder to myself; I am often tempted to do wrong, and then I am

ashamed. Where are the marks of grace in me? Then I have to go back and find all my trust in the grace of God. He said, "My grace is sufficient for thee." As I look back to my baptism, I remember that, to me, it was a lovely day. I had such a desire to go forward, and as I stood and looked at the two sisters as they went down into the water, they seemed to look so humble, and the most beautiful thing to me was to see the Elder following the Lord's command; it was happiness and sorrow together to me. My long desire had come to me, and I felt my unworthiness as I came. At other times I had thought of it, and I could not delay any longer. Before this time something would stand in the way, but in the Lord's time everything was in readiness. It was easy for me to get ready, and I had no fear when I wrote to Elder Chick, yet when his reply came it really seemed too good for me. How glad I was to have my wish granted. When I wrote him I never thought of any one coming but me. I used to be always dreaming of water, but since that time I have had no such thing come to me. In my early experience I would say, When I have repented enough I will come before the church; but I had to be taught better, and I am thankful that I was, for if I had listened to the way of the world's religion I should have had many things to do, and that rest which remaineth to the people of God I should know nothing of. Though I am not prepared to meet all my trials with patience, I know they are all for my good and for the glory of God, and I know that the Lord liveth and reigneth in heaven and in the courts of Zion, and if Zion does not flourish as we think, it is still all right; it only makes us know that all these things are not in the hands of man. There are certainly enough who say, "Lo here," and "Lo there," but I believe that the Lord is able to bring his elect from the four corners of the earth. I can but say all is well as long as the Lord reigns in the heavens.

Yours in hope,

DELIA HOAGLAND.

NORTH WHITEFIELD, Maine, August 7, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I will answer your good and welcome letter of the 3rd inst. I am alone to-day, and the longer I put off writing the harder it is to get it done. You spoke of the fact that as one gets older ambition wanes. Sometimes when I think of how it is with me in that one thing, I tremble lest I should lose it entirely. How I used to love to write long letters, and often, and now it is such a task, as a general thing; it has become so much so that I put off writing as long as possible. I also thought in my earlier experience that as I grew older I should grow more spiritual, or better in every way. I am glad that you wrote about that, as well as for all that you have written. But instead of growing more spiritual I have grown in the opposite direction, as it seems to me. I feel chilled through and through. Yesterday I had an impression come over me to get my Bible and hymn-book and read them, but I could not seem to take any comfort in reading the Bible as I wished, but I did enjoy trying to sing some of the songs of Zion. One was this:

> "If I must sing, I'll sing of grace,
> Which raised me from the fall."

I find myself so changeable I cannot know what the future may hold for me, I can only know it as it comes along. I feel very lonely at times, I miss those who have gone. I often feel as you

mentioned in your letter, that as time goes on there are but few of us left, and that we grow less and less. At times the meetings seem different in some ways; the preaching is the same blessed truth, yet there is something that seems different that I cannot explain, only that it is so. I greatly miss all those who were living when I was taken into the church; there are a few of them still here, but so many have departed. Sometimes I feel willing to live and take things as they come, both naturally and spiritually; then again my feelings change in the opposite direction. I have no just reason to complain, and yet I do complain. I know there never was a more changeable creature than I, and surely none are so unworthy as I am. You spoke of the resurrection as that to which you were looking forward with joy. Sometimes I have had great fear lest that one thing might be taken from me, as some have reasoned otherwise. I have heard it claimed that the resurrection is already past, but I was glad to know that you have faith in the blessed doctrine of the resurrection of these bodies. Of course none of us can know just how it is, but God knows, and that is enough for us, and to believe that it is so. Your letter was a good sermon to me, being both food and drink; I would not have had you write differently. I do not know whether I shall be able to go to our association or not; I should be glad to go, and glad also to have the privilege of seeing and hearing Elders Badger and Coulter. I should miss your presence very much, you have been so constantly with us at these meetings in past years; but these things must be, and I do not wish to be selfish, still I fear that I am. My health has not been the best this summer, although of late I have been quite well. I think it is a blessed thing that we do not know what the future holds for us. I see brother James Hubbard quite often, and through him hear from others. I hope to be able soon to go down to Whitefield.

I feel this to be a very poor answer to your good letter, but it is the best I can do.

With love to you and yours, I am as ever your sinful sister, yet having hope in Christ,

MARTHA E. GLIDDEN.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., Oct. 21, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN, SISTERS AND FRIENDS WHO READ THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I desire by the help of Almighty God to talk to you this day through our family paper. When I wrote you last winter, which appeared in the spring (April probably) I was caring for a fast failing and declining aged mother. I saw her pass away calmly and peacefully, as I trust, to a better rest than any this world can afford. I was her eldest child, and she and I had lived many long years together alone. I am the last one of a large family left at the old home; imagine my sorrow, my dear people who have been called to pass through similar trials. I wearied along, grieving and pining away, longing to be among my dear, spiritual people, whose sympathy is true because God is true, and by this all men may know that we are the children of God, because we love one another. As summer ended I was taken with a slow fever, which lasted some weeks. I had care and attention from physician and friends, and by the help of my blessed Savior I partially recovered, and could go a few miles on the first day of this month to see an only aunt in this country, my mother's sister, and there I

witnessed her death on the 5th inst. So, my dear ones in tribulation, when the dark clouds of trouble hang heavily over us, and we cannot see why we are called to pass through such fiery trials, let us trust in the all-wise Disposer of all things to make it plain; he will in his own time and way.

Brethren editors, if you can spare this short, imperfectly written letter room in your paper soon, I would be glad, as I have some personal friends and correspondents who do not know what has become of me. I think this will explain to them, and they can address me at the above place.

Yours in tribulation,

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

DECATUR, Texas, Sept. 17, 1906.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN, AS I HOPE AND TRUST, IN THE LORD:—I am made to tremble for fear that I am not worthy to call that people whom I do love, as I trust, by that endearing name, but were it not for the fellowship they bear toward me I would almost give up in despair. Sometimes when I am with the brethren it appears to me that they can see what a hypocrite I am while mingling in worship with them before him whom my soul loves. I seem to be of no use in the worship of the Lord of hosts, whom it is my delight to hear others worship. O that I could praise his holy name as others can; if this were so my burden would not, as it seems to me, be so heavy. I feel to be nothing but a poor, stumbling sinner in the way.

Dear brethren, the Lord gave me strength to visit the Trinity River Association, which convened with Liberty Church, Tarrant Co., Texas, on Friday before the second Sunday in September. This was the first preaching I had heard for a year. My health has been so bad that I have been confined at home, in bed with a fearful cough for about four months every winter, but in the summer I am able to be up and around, and can walk about a little. The Lord gave me strength to visit this association, and it was a glorious meeting to me; there were about ten of the Lord's servants there, who were not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for they preached the power of God and the wisdom of God, not turning to the right hand or the left to please men. Our God in his infinite wisdom and purpose decreed all things that ever have or ever will come to pass, and his power is sufficient to bring all his wisdom to pass. Men or devils cannot change that wisdom, for he is God and changes not, for who can command a thing and it come to pass when the Lord has commanded it not? Whatsoever he pleases that he doeth, for he works all things after the counsel of his own will, and he does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand.

When I commenced to write I thought only to let you know that I had not received the SIGNS for September 1st. This is the first number I ever missed, and I have been a subscriber for ten years. The paper is a great comfort to me, for I read many good sermons in it while sitting around in my hours of loneliness; every number comes laden with the truth of the Bible.

Now, dear brethren, may the Lord enable you in the future, as in the past, to stand upon the walls of Zion and wield "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon" in defense of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, is the prayer of a poor sinner,

M. B. F. JONES.

TAYLORSVILLE, Ky., June 2, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I inclose you a letter that I received from G. R. Johnson, of Roswell, Ga. Brother Johnson is a stranger to me in the flesh, but I hope we are brethren in Christ Jesus. I saw brother Johnson's letter in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and wrote to him and received the following reply, and ask the brethren to think of him in his afflictions. I have not his consent to send this to the SIGNS, but assume the responsibility, and leave it with you to publish or not, as you think best.

Your brother, I hope, in Christ,

J. W. SHELBURNE.

ROSWELL, Georgia.

DEAR FRIEND:—I would like to call you brother, but I feel too unworthy because I am so sinful. If you could see me as I see myself, I fear it would be a hard task for you to call me brother; still I hope we are joint-heirs with Christ in that salvation which he wrought out in his death and resurrection for all those given him before the world began, and this salvation is by grace alone. I am so glad it is free; if it had been otherwise I never could have had any hope, for I have no money to buy with, and my works are so sinful they could not be accepted in the sight of a just and holy God.

I want to thank you for your kind and comforting letter, also for your favor of help; words fail me to express the gratitude and love I have for you, for I know it was the Spirit of Christ that put it in your heart to write to me. I will give you a faint idea of my troubles in this world: I have been sick for some time with what is called dropsy; sometimes I am able to go about a little, sometimes I am confined to the bed. Why I am thus afflicted I cannot tell, except, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." My wife is afflicted with prostration of the nervous system, and is able to work but. little. I have three small children who are trying to tend a crop for me. It is distressing to the mind of a father to see his little children in the field at work and he himself not able to help them.

I am not writing as I wish to; I hope you will throw the mantle of charity over this letter, and forgive me, for you know that nothing good can come from a corrupt fountain, and I know that I am corrupt and too worldly minded. I am glad that our life does not consist in what we possess of this world's goods, where moth and rust corrupt, and thieves break through and steal. While we are strangers in the flesh, and probably will never see each other in this world, I hope that our names are written in the Lamb's book of life, and it will be our happy lot to meet where there will be no parting, where the wicked cease to trouble and the weary be at rest.

I will close, as I am so nervous. May God bless you.

Sincerely yours,

G. R. JOHNSON.

LIBERTY, Mo., Oct. 28, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER IN THE LORD, AS I HOPE:—I cannot put off longer speaking to you of the comfort and satisfaction I received in your reply to my request concerning "the strong man and the stronger man," "the old man and the new man." Your reply was received by me at a time when it was much needed, for to me it looked as though the strong man had entered the field, and I was in the midst of the sharpest conflict with each,

and was much cast down, yet thanks be to God, I hope I was not quite forsaken, for when it seemed that the last ray of hope was about to disappear the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for October 1st came, laden with good news. I was minded to turn to your reply, which, as I can hardly help saying, was like when Christ spake to the sea, "Peace; be still." It seemed as if every word you wrote strengthened me and gave me fresh courage to still press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

"While sorrows encompass me round,
And endless distresses I see,
Astonished I cry, Can a mortal be found
Surrounded with troubles like me?

Few moments in praise I enjoy,
And they are succeeded by pain;
If a moment in praising of God I employ,
I have hours again to complain."

Dear people of the living God, we are too apt to wander in by and forbidden paths, and then we complain. O how many precious promises we have to comfort us while on our pilgrimage in this vale of tears. But we hear our Leader saying, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." And, "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world." How many in this day are walking according to the course of this world. We see many, whom once we esteemed as the servants of Christ, who have turned their backs upon us, and who walk no more with us; but, dear people of the living God, stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage; let us not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers.

From a poor old sinner,

RICHARD WALLER.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Oct. 31, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK:—My dear brother in the precious Redeemer, our Lord Jesus Christ, as I verily believe with all my heart and soul, though I am a poor, helpless sinner, mourning and groaning from day to day, being burdened with sin, unworthy of God's protection and the riches of his grace. But let the case be as it may, it grieves me when I go astray, and the inclinations of the flesh have brought me so low at times that I have despaired of natural life. This struggle has been going on for seventy-four years, as it were, between life and death. I am nearly eighty-seven years old, and have been trying to preach the gospel of the Son of God to the best of my ability for sixty-six years. Often have I gone into the pulpit with fear that I was not fit for the place, but was like Ephraim, "a cake not turned,"—Hosea vii. 8, one side burned and the other side raw, none of the cake fit to eat; but when I read in the dear old SIGNS the trials of God's dear people, bearing testimony to the same things, it stirs my spirit within me, and I thank God and take courage.

Dear brother Chick, your last editorial, October 1st, in reply to brother Waller, on the Adam man, the old man and the new man, was so scriptural, plain and instructive, that I thanked the Lord that he had raised up men among his dear people to feed them with knowledge according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God in all humility, patience and brotherly kindness. I have patronized the SIGNS for more than fifty years. I was with the dear old editor, Elder Gilbert Beebe, at one time for ten days, and waited on him like a son.

I thought I would just write you a line; excuse mistakes.

J. S. CORDER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1906.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

TRUE MINISTRY.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR SIR AND BROTHER:—You no doubt will be somewhat surprised to hear from me, but you will probably remember our conversation when you were in Brantford. I hardly know how to state my case to you without writing a long letter, which I have no thought of doing now. I will simply ask you a question: In the event of my asking for church membership, would the Old School Baptists ask me to be re-baptized? I am told that they would. My reason for asking this question is, that I was baptized by a brother whom I now believe to be in glory, and also I fully believe that he was a child of God when he baptized me, in the year 1884. I also believe that I was a subject of grace at that time. Why then should I be asked, as I think, to cast reflection both upon the brother and upon the name of Him in whose name I was baptized, and who has favored me by his grace? I know there are others who would be pleased to have these two questions answered, and if you should feel to answer through the SIGNS I would be pleased. I need help and I believe you are able to give it.

Yours in christian love,

FRED SIMMONS.

BRANTFORD, Ontario, Nov. 14, 1906.

The closing expression in the above letter has come to us as an appeal of a very solemn nature, and at the same time we feel deeply impressed with the knowledge of our own insufficiency to reply as we ought, yet we remember that Paul said of himself and those with him, We are not "sufficient of ourselves to think anything, as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." We have learned many times that we can only present that which seems right to our mind, while the application to the hearts of others must be of the Lord. The servants of God are all without sufficiency in themselves, but the God in whom they trust, and who has sent them forth as his ministers, is all-sufficient in himself, and sufficient for them. While feeling our own weakness we do yet feel encouraged to reply to our friend, by the remembrance that our God will supply all our need through riches of grace in Christ Jesus. We do not wonder that this matter seems a very solemn and important one to our dear friend, and are glad that it is so with him, for it is not good when any one can consider these sacred things lightly. Not only the doctrine of God must be regarded as divine, and therefore all-important, but also the ordinances, which he has appointed and commanded to be observed at the hands of all his children, are matters not to be trifled with. They are so solemn that if indeed any one has been baptized according to the revealed will of God in all respects, that one has no right to again receive baptism at the hands of any one. None of us have any right to reject the Lord's work in the least matter. There is emphatically but one baptism, either of the Holy Ghost or water, that is in connection with the order of the kingdom of God on earth. But all dippings in water do not constitute gospel dipping; all immersions and emersions are not gospel acts; all baptisms are not gospel baptisms. We have used these three words to emphasize the fact that "dipping" is "immersion and emersion," and these three words are what make up the meaning of the word "baptism." It is important then that we know what does constitute such baptism as will be recognized in heaven as gospel baptism. John

came, according to the commandment of God, baptizing. There had been many baptizings before this under all the period of old covenant history; some of the sacrifices were dipped in water; the priests and all who ministered in the sanctuary must wash the whole body often; the form of baptism was familiar to all the Jews. But all these former baptisms, or dippings, did not constitute gospel baptism, or that baptism unto repentance which John administered. This we do not need to more than call attention to. What then does constitute such baptism? This is the question in the mind of all who truly love God and who desire to follow him in all his appointed ways. It must lead to great anxiety of heart when any doubt arises in the mind of a child of God as to whether he has been really baptized according to the gospel rule, and this anxiety does not arise from any thought that the baptism commanded of all who love God, is needful in order to regeneration, or to salvation from sin and death and hell, to righteousness and life and eternal glory. The redeemed soul will be anxious solely because a spirit of obedience is wrought in his heart, and his most earnest inquiry will be day and night before God, "What wilt thou have me to do?" The whole reason which any one who is taught of God will have for seeking to follow the Lord is expressed by the psalmist when he said, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" The Lord has done great things for me; he has shown me great mercy; he has redeemed me from death unto himself, and henceforth I am his, and I belong to him; how therefore shall I show forth these things? The first step in this road is appointed of the Lord, as well as all the steps that follow, and that first step is baptism in water. If this first step in obedience be not taken, then we are not walking in obedience, do what we may. Nothing that the believer does can be walking obediently before God when that believer has not obeyed the first commandment. From these considerations we may see, to some extent at least, how important each and every one who is led by the Spirit will feel this question to be: What constitutes baptism in the sight of God, or what will fill the measure of obedience to his commandment to be baptized? We believe that in the minds of most of our brethren everywhere, three things are needful to constitute valid baptism in the church of God. At least this is our mind, and we think also that in this we have the mind of the Spirit as revealed in the Scriptures of the New Testament. These three things are, first, a right candidate; second, a right administrator, and third, a right manner, or, as it may be called, a right mode. By this last we mean that sprinkling or rantizing, or pouring or cheoizing, will not do, but only dipping or baptizing; in fact there cannot be any modes of dipping or baptizing. Baptizing is dipping, and the other things are not modes of baptizing, they are simply sprinkling or rantizing, or pouring or cheoizing. This we need not argue any further here.

By a right candidate, we mean one who has been born again, of God, and who has come to believe in Jesus, and to hope in him as his personal Savior. If not dipped in water there has been no baptism; if not a believer in Jesus, dipping in water will not be to that one gospel baptism. All this is no doubt clear in the mind of our dear friend, and in the minds of all who are called Old School Baptists.

But the question that troubles our friend, and that, as we know, has troubled

many of the Lord's dear people, and no doubt is still troubling many, is as regards the administrator. Many have said and felt sure that he who administered the ordinance to them was a child of God, and preached the truth as to salvation in Christ alone; why then should not baptism administered by him be valid before God, and in his church on earth? Such souls as these, who are made to desire above all things to reverence God and his ordinances, do well to think well and carefully over this matter. We do not blame, but rather approve, their desire to be fully convinced before rejecting the work of any one whom they regard as a servant of God. But the question is this: Is it enough that one should be a child of God, or is it enough that he should hold the substance of the truth? Are there not some other qualifications needful ere he has a right to administer gospel ordinances? Must not that man be in fellowship with the church of Christ on earth? We are not desirous here of discussing the question as to what is the church on earth, but take it for granted that in this our day the Old School Baptists, as they are called in the north and west, the Primitive Baptists, as the same people are called in the south and the east, Particular Baptists, as they are called in England, are that body of people alone whom God acknowledges as his church to-day. One thing is sure, that if these are the church of God, all others are not; and if others are, they are not. Salvation by the will and choice of God, and the finished work of his Son, is so opposed to salvation by the choice and power and work of man that they who hold both cannot be one people. If one be the people of God, the others are not. This we will not further discuss. Now to return to the question, Must not the administrator of baptism be in fellowship with the church which God has established in the world if his acts can at all bear the seal of heaven? In reply we shall call attention to this one thing, viz., that in all the records of the Acts of the apostles, and in all the epistles, we shall look in vain for any baptism that was not performed by one in full fellowship with the apostles and the church of Christ. In this the early church was but fulfilling the testimony of the dear Savior himself who conferred this duty and right upon his disciples alone. It will be found nowhere in all the New Testament that any work wrought by any who did not walk in fellowship with those who were called the churches of God was accepted, either with God or with the churches. Surely it would seem that this is sufficient for us, and for all who desire to reverence the word of God and to fulfill his will. But, as we have long believed, we have at least one instance recorded of what we call rebaptism, upon the very ground that we have here named, viz., that the administrator was not a competent one. We will not repeat the narrative, but it will be found recorded in Acts xix. We will simply call attention to this fact that the mode of their baptism was right, they themselves were believers; but still the administration was faulty because of the administrator. But one thing has been a source of perplexity to very many of the Lord's children in this connection. Often it has been said and felt that in the ordinance as at first administered to believers there has been the approval of a good conscience, and many souls have felt that in this act they had the approval of God. The thought has been in the minds of such ones, Surely God would not have smiled upon me had I not been walking in the way that pleased him. If

God did indeed own and bless me in the deed, must not that deed have been right, and according to his will? Here many a tender heart has been tried and perplexed. In all sympathy of feeling for all such God-fearing, tender ones we desire to call attention to two or three things here. First, that the revealed word of God is to be our guide, rather than any feelings which we may have had, or which we do have. If the word of God shows us that the three things named above are essential to valid gospel baptism, and in our former baptism any one of them was wanting, then our state of feeling ought not to weigh against that testimony of the word. Our feelings must be brought to the test of the word; God really does approve only what his word commands at our hands. Many have been glad in their first baptism because they thought that in this they were receiving that ordinance which is commanded in the word; this feeling of gladness was precious to them. Any child of God must rejoice when he sincerely believes that he is following the dear Lord's commandments and example, yet in many things children of God have found that they have been mistaken. In that thing which once caused them joy and gladness they can no longer rejoice. One might claim authority to issue naturalization papers to some emigrant who desires to become a citizen in name, as he is already in heart, of this country; in receiving these papers that man would be glad perhaps with great gladness; but soon, when he seeks to exercise the rights and receive the privileges of his citizenship, the proper authority discovers that the papers were issued by one not having authority to issue them, and so he is not after all a citizen. Now he has no more gladness in these papers, because he has discovered they are valueless, yet he cannot forget the former gladness, but this gladness was a mistaken one; it was just as real and powerful in his heart as though the papers given him had possessed the value that he supposed they did. So the gladness of such as have been baptized by one unauthorized to baptize may be real, because the candidate thinks all is right, and goes forward sincerely, yet this gladness does not prove that it is right, that can only be shown by comparing all things with the word of God, and finding whether they are in harmony with that word.

One thought more occurs to our mind: Can the same door open into two different houses? Can the same baptism which is the door into the visible church, admit one into the house of God, and at the same time into houses that are not the house of God? If we believe (and we desire to say here that this is our settled conviction) that the New School Baptists, as they are called in this country, the Disciples, or Campbellites, and all other sects who practice immersion (and we have named these because they practice immersion) are not the church of Christ in the world, how can the baptism that lets one into their fold or house also be the door into the house of God? A Disciple, or a New School Baptist minister, dips one who is truly a believer, but who is mistaken as to the people where he seeks membership, and that one becomes by that act a member of one of these bodies of people; but they are not churches of Christ, and by and by this soul becomes convinced of this fact; now can the same door admit him into the house of God, we again ask?

We have tried to write as clearly as we know how. The matter is important, and ought to be well considered by all. We know from personal conversation with

him that the mind and heart of our friend desires to know and do right. May God lead him and us all into the knowledge of God's will in all things, and give us grace to walk in that will.

C.

CLOSE OF VOLUME SEVENTY-FOUR.

WITH this number of the SIGNS is completed the seventy-fourth volume. Surely it is remarkable that the blessing of God has attended this publication all these years. In defence of the cause of truth and righteousness Elder Gilbert Beebe, as sole editor, began to publish the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in 1832. It then was a very small paper in size, with few writers. God made manifest his approval, however, and its circulation was steadily increased until it had many thousands on its subscription list, every State and Territory in this country being represented, beside England and Canada. Elder Beebe served faithfully in the editorial work forty-nine years. At his death his sons, Elder Wm. L. and Benton L. Beebe, became editors, and later Elder Benton Jenkins was associated with them. Under their faithful management the SIGNS still prospered. When Elder Wm. L. Beebe resigned his position as an editor, Elder F. A. Chick, the present editor, was chosen, and associated with Elder Jenkins and brother B. L. Beebe until the Lord removed them by death. Brother Chick has continued faithful and steadfast in the doctrine of God our Savior, declaring the whole truth regardless of what others have thought, said or done.

Many were the times the following questions were asked by lovers of truth who appreciated the SIGNS: What will become of the SIGNS when Elder Gilbert Beebe is called home? Who can take his place? The same questions were asked concerning those who have followed Elder Beebe in the management of the SIGNS, and who now are resting from their labors. But through the unbounded mercy of God the publication continues, and we are encouraged when the oldest subscribers say they detect no difference in the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS now and that of its first issue. Many have been the enemies of the SIGNS; many have been the assaults, but none have dealt it a deadly blow, nor can they while God upholds it by his almighty power.

We now wish to record the mercies of the present year; many have been the blessings, while the work has been attended with much anxiety. We feel grateful to our brethren for their forbearance; no word of criticism has reached us during the year. We have done our best to have the work appear in workmanlike manner, and to have all matter according to the gospel of God and christian experience. We thank all our writers for their kind and excellent communications, which have helped us and encouraged many tried and afflicted of the flock of God. There has been no time during the year when we were short of matter for publication. Not one article has been rejected because of unsoundness, all have had the "certain sound." We have objected to only two or three at all, and this was because of what might have grown out of their publication: either controversy or bad feeling. In our private correspondence our brethren have been kind and courteous, and we feel safe in saying the feeling between subscribers, writers, publishers and editors has never been more harmonious than now.

We thank our subscribers for their

kind and substantial support, and hope all feel satisfied with our efforts in conducting the SIGNS. We also thank those who have contributed toward sending the SIGNS to the poor of the flock; through their kindness and liberality many hearts have been made glad.

We have been blessed during the year with a steady, though not large, increase in the circulation; we have been able to meet all obligations, and shall hope to begin 1907 with as bright prospects as for many years.

Good by for 1906. K.

SINCE we published the suggestion of Elder J. M. Perkins that all clerks of our associations send him a copy of their latest Minutes that he might ascertain the total number of Old School Baptists in the United States for the benefit of the "Bureau of Statistics" at Washington, D. C., Elder Perkins, through his paper, has said, owing to the fact that so many are opposed to the proposition he will have nothing more to do with it. This ends the matter so far as the SIGNS is concerned. K.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Silas H. Durand, Nov. 15th, 1906, at noon, in Philadelphia, Pa., Wm. H. Stout, of Southampton, Pa., and Mrs. Josephine W. Trego, of Newtown, Pa.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, November 14th, 1906, at the home of the bride's mother, near Pittsville, Wicomico Co., Md., Charles S. Perdue and Miss Anna Beauchamp, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

By the same, Nov. 18th, 1906, near New Church, Va., James C. Corbin and Miss Nellie Middleton, both of Accomac Co., Va.

By Elder D. M. Vail, at his home in Waverly, Pa., Oct. 30th, 1906, David O. Turrell, of Scranton, Pa., and Miss Addie Vail.

By the same, Nov. 17th, 1906, at the home of the bridegroom's parents, Locktown, N. J., Charles R. Myers, of Philadelphia, Pa., and Miss Amelia Dean, of the same place.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mary H. McCullers Chason was born June 23rd, 1851, was married to John Chason August 22nd, 1872; to them were born nine children, two of whom preceded her to the grave. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Olive Grove, in Decatur County, Georgia, Sept. 20th, 1896, and was baptized by Elder P. T. Everett. Sister Chason was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, through the atonement of Jesus Christ, without any conditions. She was a true and faithful member of the church, always present at meetings when she was able, ever ready to do her part in everything for the benefit of the church. Her death is greatly felt by the church. I have often received great comfort when sad and cast down in spirit, in conversing with her about the things of God. She was a true, faithful and devoted wife, a fond and patient mother and a friend to the poor. But she had filled her time on earth, and on the first day of November, 1906, the Lord called her home from her sufferings. In her last days, yea hours, she called her heart-broken husband and children to her and told them not to weep for her, for she would soon be in her happy home, free from all suffering and trouble.

On the second day of November, 1906, her remains were taken to Pisgah Church, and after a short talk by the writer from 1 Cor. xv. 49, were laid to rest in the cemetery, there to await the second coming of Christ, when she will awake in his glorified likeness and reign with him forever, where there is no sorrow, pain or death. We would say to the bereaved and loved ones, Grieve not as those without hope, but look to God for comfort, which he alone can give.

E. S. WARD.

IRON CITY, Ga.

MY mother, **Nancy Brayman,** died August 17th, 1906, at the home of her daughter and son-in-law, Amelia A. and Peter L. Billings. She was born Dec. 5th, 1816, she was nearly 90 years of age. She experienced a hope when about fifteen years old, and united with the Middleburg Church in 1832; she was a professed follower of Christ for more than threescore and ten years. She was always present at the Saturday and Sunday meetings unless sickness or something unusual prevented, until the last few years, being kept away by the infirmities of age. She loved to meet with the brethren and sisters in Christ and converse on the subject of redeeming grace and dying love. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace and grace alone. She was the widow of Benjamin Brayman, who was born Oct. 13th, 1807, and died Jan. 7th, 1890, they having lived together fifty-five years. We, their children, miss our much loved and highly respected parents, but our loss is their gain, for we believe they sleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep.

HELEN J. POTTER.

LEEDS, N. Y.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Attie A. Curtis, Mass., $1.00; A Debtor, Mich., $5.00; Elder J. D. Hubbell's sons, N. Y., $5.00; Mrs. John Pettit, N. Y., $3.00.—Total, $14.00.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

SISTER Lydia C. Ray having changed her address from Bono, Texas, to Egan, Johnson Co., Texas, requests her correspondents to address her at the latter place.

MEETINGS.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 75. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1907. NO. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Submitted herewith for publication in the SIGNS is the experience of sister Hattie E. Willersdorff, written by her at the request of three of our people, whose names she gives. Without further comment on my part, it is yours to use as you deem best.

Yours in love and fellowship,

H. H. LEFFERTS.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Having been requested to write my experience for the SIGNS by sister Bessie Durand, brother Fenton and sister Rachel Bowen, I submit this to you to do with as seems best to you.

When I was but a child, Deacon Brook, an aged man in the Primitive or Old School Baptist Church at Warwick, would frequently climb a long hill to my father's house, on Sunday afternoon, bringing the numbers of the hymns read at the meeting at Warwick in the morning, asking my sister and myself to sing the hymns for him. On one occasion he said to my father: "While I know that the sermon this morning was the sincere milk of the word, yet I need the singing of the hymns." From that time it was my greatest privilege to sing hymns and anthems. The frivolous songs popular to the day were always unattractive, and I did not sing them. As the years rolled on the privilege of singing was taken away, a deep shadow came over me and I could find no comfort. Of Job's comforters I had plenty. Everywhere I turned for comfort the burden grew heavier; I was told to do this and that and I would feel better. There was nothing I could do, seeking bread I received but a stone, until I ceased to speak of my feelings and grew more and more alone. I had many afflictions of the natural life, and for years was out of the house very seldom on account of sickness and infirmities.

There was an appointment made for Elder Horace H. Lefferts to preach at the schoolhouse at Bellvale, about one mile from our house, on Saturday evening, August 25th, 1906. I had looked forward to the privilege of attending this meeting and the meeting at Warwick the next day. From about July 1st until about one week before this ap-

pointment I had been able, on account of a broken bone, to wear but one shoe. The second day before, I had the misfortune to injure the bone again by attempting to walk on the ground, making it impossible for me to attend the meetings. Elder Lefferts was at our house, accompanied by three of the Southampton brethren. There was only a short time from their arrival until the time of appointment at Bellvale. While other members of the family were getting ready to attend the evening meeting I thought I could go out on the porch and talk with the guests. Passing through the rooms on the way out I was vexed with myself that I had through my own carelessness been deprived of the privilege of attending the meetings, and thought, It is of no use for me to look forward to anything, I can have nothing. As we were sitting in conversation there came to me a mighty shock, which seemed to shake the foundations of the earth, and with a wail of agony I started on a journey, leaving the earth and its sorrows. I thought I was dying; I was conscious of leaving the form of the flesh sitting in the chair. I journeyed on a hillside; anxious, questioning voices kept calling me back. I seemed to come back and try to satisfy them, so as to be able to go on. The voices grew more and more distant, but they would not let me go, and I stepped aside and stood waiting. My sister called to me from the house, and I was conscious of the flesh and went into the house, and I scolded because of being called back; I did not want to come back. From this time I was conscious of being in two places; the better part stood waiting on the hillside, the part that was of the flesh seemed frivolous, and I was troubled about it. The next morning I asked for hymns to be sung. After some singing I was asked if I had a favorite hymn. There was a verse that I had sung many years ago, when the shadow was first heavy and dark; I would sing it many times daily as I was about my household duties. My mother said to me one day, "Hattie, you sing that verse, I know, but when I hear you it sounds to me like a prayer." Her sympathy was a comfort to me. I asked for this hymn to be sung, and repeated the words of the verse:

> "Show pity, Lord, O Lord, forgive,
> Let a repenting rebel live:
> Are not thy mercies large and free?
> May not a sinner trust in thee?"

They were only words to me, they had lost all meaning. After the hymn was sung the people left the house, going to Warwick to attend the meeting there. Members of the family remaining at home went their several ways. Being left undisturbed I returned to the better part which stood waiting, and journeyed low down on the hillside of tribulation and despair, conscious that I had journeyed there before, but had not seen how fair it was. There was no sun, no moon, a soft, silvery light shining over all; there was much foliage, no high trees, but there was no shadow, the light was over all; a soft verdure, not like the pastures of earth, but much more fair. I journeyed far along the hillside, looking for the Savior, but found him not. I passed down into the valley of sorrow and tears, and journeyed there a long time, searching everywhere, but found him not. All was fair to see, the foliage, the verdure and the silvery light; there was no shadow. It was not a strange place, for I had journeyed all through this valley, but had not seen that it was a beautiful place. I passed down into the valley of the shadow of death. This was a broad pathway; low down on either

side there was dense foliage; rising from this there were high trees; overhead there was dense foliage, forming an unbroken canopy; out past the foliage on either side there were fair pastures, upon these there was shining the most beautiful golden light. In the pathway of the valley of the shadow of death there was no ray of bright light entering in, all was a restful shadow, all was quiet, perfect peace, and I knew it was good to be there. I journeyed there a long time, seeking the Savior, but found him not. I came up out of the valley of the shadow of death, and standing at the entrance considered, Where shall I seek him? How shall I know him? I noticed that I had nothing in my hands, I had nowhere else to go. Voices of the earthly life came to me, and I came to realize the natural life. My nephew, (who came home on Wednesday) speaking to my sister, said, "Aunt May, you have told me about the meeting at Warwick, but have said nothing about the meeting at Bellvale." Then I heard my sister's voice telling about the meeting at Bellvale. I seemed not to care about it until I heard her say, speaking of the Savior, "Elder Lefferts said he was like a root out of dry ground, which is twisted, crooked and unsightly, because the ground is devoid of moisture. So Jesus, according to the flesh a Jew, sprang from dry ground, the Jewish nation, as they were spiritually dead. He was unattractive to them, because his beauty was of the Spirit, and they, being carnal, could not perceive his beauty, so he was as a root out of dry ground. Christ is to be found indeed only by them that seek him in spirit. There is nothing about him that appeals to the natural man. If when we find him we expect to see a form, a body, a material substance, we shall be disappointed. If we really are seeking him as one hungering and thirsting for righteousness, then in that very spirit of seeking him thus we have already found him." As I heard these words, from the depth of my soul I knew how the root grew, and knew that I had already found him, in having been made to look for him whithersoever I had gone. I had expected to see a material Christ, but instead I realized his spirituality, and that I would find him only in spirit. O, I had found his footsteps, this was the way. Wave upon wave of ecstacy came over me, and I sang a new song of "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever." Out in the valley of sorrow and tears I heard a sweet voice singing this song: These are they who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. All through the valley there arose the voices of the little ones, singing, "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever." I raised my eyes and looked out over the valley of sorrow and tears; it was peopled with white robed forms, and I wondered how I had journeyed all through the valley and did not see them. From the top of the hill there came a mighty voice, and it came from the Rock of truth; it supported the valleys, and the mountains rested upon it. Directly back of the top of the hill there was a high mountain peak; extending from either side there were unending mountains, but none so high as this one. At the sound of the voice saying, "These are they which came out of great tribulation," the whole earth trembled. As the voice ceased there arose upon the tops of the mountains a great burst of song of mighty hosts. Then the white robed

throng, passing over the valley and up the hillside, burst into a song of sweetest melody, wave upon wave of song going upward. On the hillside I heard a sweet voice singing, O how lovely, how lovely is Zion, Zion, city of our God; then sweeping over the valley and upward to the top of the mountains came wave upon wave of the same melody of "Blessing, and glory." I heard another voice singing, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof." Then came wave upon wave of the same sweet song of "Blessing, and glory," ever sweeping upward, never descending, ever growing in strength and volume as it ascended. I heard another voice singing, In his hand are all the corners of the earth, and the strength of the hills is his also; over and over again swept the sweet song of "Blessing, and glory." I heard another voice singing, "The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land;" with the song of "Blessing, and glory," there came the soft sound of peaceful waters. I heard another voice singing, "I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eyelids. Until I find out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob," the song of "Blessing, and glory," ever sweeping upward. I clasped my hands and sang, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness," and I was standing at the entrance of the valley of the shadow of death listening to the song of "Blessing, and glory," ever floating upward. O, one could never grow weary, there was perfect harmony, never any discord and never an amen. I came to a knowledge of the natural life, and my hands were paring fruit. I asked what day it was, and they told me it was Thursday. I was conscious of but a day and a night from the time the people left the house on Sunday morning until Thursday in the afternoon. Following this there came to me perfect peace, the shadow was gone. With a full heart I wrote to Elder Lefferts, fearing to state my desire to come to the church lest I be mistaken, and had no place there. Reading between the lines, Elder Lefferts in his reply, in speaking of the subject, said, "It is your privilege and our pleasure," and the song of "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever," seemed to be present with me, and my desire was to follow in His footsteps and be buried with Christ in baptism. I was received by the Primitive, or Old School Baptist Church at Warwick, N. Y., October 14th, 1906, and baptized the same day by the pastor, Elder H. H. Lefferts. At baptism, as I stepped down into the water it seemed to be merely water, as we know it in every day life; as I walked out into it, it seemed a peaceful flood. When all preparation had been made I found my flesh eager to rest in it. Resting upon it the words, "Dying bed, soft as downy pillows," came to my mind. As it came up over my face it was not to me water in any sense, but a soft caress, like the cool velvet cheek of a little child. Buried beneath its surface the old life of pain, suffering and sorrow seemed of the past, from which I was shut away, made free, a sense of perfect peace. Being raised up and receiving the right hand of fellowship, it seemed a new world, a new life; it seems so still, the soft caress rests much on my mind. On Monday, the following day, the words, The Christ-child, "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the water," came to my mind, and is a comfortable thought. I feel there never can be an-

other day in my life like the day I was baptized; the cares and trials of life that had seemed so burdensome were as nothing, the perfect peace nothing could disturb. O that I could ever be submissive to His divine will, could ever be enabled to say, "Thy will be done." Of myself I am nothing; only through Christ, the hope of glory, is life everlasting.

HATTIE E. WILLERSDORFF.

FAIRFAX, Va.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Please find inclosed two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES one more year. I do not know how I should get on without our paper; some cannot raise the money, but others can, but do not subscribe, yet say they like the paper and believe the truth it advocates, and I cannot understand why the SIGNS is not seen in their homes; but I am not here to judge, and can only say, I do not understand these things. I would write a letter to the saints abroad to send with this, but my mind is so dark I will not attempt it now. In looking in my desk for some paper to pen you this note, I found a letter written to sister Edna Ferguson years ago, and why I wrote it in my book I do not now remember, neither do I recollect why I did not send it, but the thought came to my mind while reading it over: Why not send it to the saints of like precious faith? You can look it over, and if there is a word of comfort in it to the little ones you can use it, but if not it will be all right with the writer. This letter was written a short time after my return from Baltimore, where I had been sent for medical treatment in days of suffering, both of body and mind, but the Lord was with me in that furnace, and the flames did not hurt me; not that I could behold his hand, but the faithfulness in the watchcare over me was so striking I was forced to praise his name though he slay me, and I would talk of his grace even if it was not for me, and as I read this over to-day while the tears ran down my cheeks, I thought how good it was to be afflicted, and the mind called away from the things of time; I could almost wish I could have stayed in that place, for the transfiguration of Jesus was mine to behold, but I did not know that he was to be separated from me yet for a little season. The Lord has not seen fit to tell me why he has kept me here all these years since penning these lines (thirty years), but it has seemed good in his purpose.

The "friend James" referred to, was brother James Kerchevel, a brother of sister Ferguson; he was baptized some time after the date of this letter; both have long since passed away. I have many of their precious letters laid away, and think I will look them over this winter, they are too good to destroy, and I have no doubt would cheer the hearts of some, as they did mine.

Thank you for the subscription blank, it makes it easy for me.

Your brother, I hope,

ELI T. KIDWELL.

MONDAY MORNING, Sept. 18, 1876.

DEAR SISTER FERGUSON:—After reading over what I have written, I see that I have not touched your letter at all, and I have reread yours and find it so full of my own experience that I cannot send you my poor, unprofitable letter and leave the most important part of our correspondence unanswered, or in other words, remain silent on the subject so dear to me in all its bearing, viz., that of fellowship. In the very start in your reply to me you wrote a volume in the

few short words: "I am about to try to reply to your most excellent and acceptable letter," &c. The thought occurred to my mind that sister Ferguson had a feeling of fellowship for me, and as the little word "try" sounded through my mind I felt that it implied a possibility of failure. O, thought I, is it so that sister Ferguson has a fellow-feeling for me? Is it so that she who is old in the faith has so much doubt of ability to answer a few lines written by one of the least of all (if indeed one at all)? and these words came to me as though they were in answer: "For they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them."—Jer. xxxi. 34. I therefore asked no more questions, but my heart said, Dear sister Ferguson, we have fellowship for each other, for it is even so with me. I am now trying to answer your letter, but there seems to be a possibility of failure. In days that are past I know I could have talked with you, but alas, this morning finds me dumb, empty and alone; my Redeemer's face I cannot see; darkness and gloom have settled down over me, and sinful thoughts are prowling about like so many roaring lions, seeking to devour me, but the few words by the mouth of the prophet referred to speak in silent yet solemn accents, "Know me." There seems to be a knowledge of the Lord begotten in all the children of the Most High that each one must have for himself, and while it is indispensably necessary that they all must know him as their salvation, there seems to be another knowledge of him that they must also have, which is the fellowship of his sufferings, and this knowledge brings about a drawing toward each other, excites love in them, and is the link in the chain of love that unites us to Jesus and our brethren, for we must, like our living Head, suffer the loss of all things, and yet in him possess all things, for how sweet to reflect upon his precious words: All things "are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." What a treasure, to have this knowledge, each for ourselves, of the sufferings of Jesus our Savior; to be with him in trials, tribulation, sorrow and in tears, distress and affliction, suffer for food and raiment, thirsty and forsaken; yea, my sister, all these things are ours, we may "rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep." If Peter wept from an awakened conscience, we are enabled to weep with him, and if he tells us he has through the weakness of the flesh denied his gracious Lord, we can sympathize with him, and in love admonish him to go his way and sin no more, seeing his tears bear fruit of godly sorrow for sin; and if we are called to pass where there is a weeping Martha or a broken-hearted Mary, we can feel for them, and tell them of that blessed fellowship we have for them, and of the never-failing power of the Savior's dying love and sympathy, and how he as our Elder Brother will never fail to console and wipe away all tears from the eyes of Martha and bind up the broken heart of Mary, and at last bring forth that one beloved of the Lord from the dark confines of the grave, to live for ever with him in glory. So you see, my dear sister, all we suffer here in body or in mind is a blessing to us, and should even comfort us, but if these distresses came to our view in the light of comfort there would really be no comfort in them at all, and how necessary it is then for us to know all these trials each for ourself. Notice the reading of the words, "from the least of them unto the greatest of them." Now if the poor, little, doubting

one, who feels the least, will look at it in the proper light, he is blessed, first with this glorious knowledge of the Lord, and although least, it shows they are just as much cared for as the greatest; yea, they are greatest, for he that is least among you is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Then are not the little ones, though afflicted and tried on every hand, and often come begging the crumbs from the Master's table, highly favored of the Lord, so they cannot fail to answer each other, although their efforts may be in groans and much weakness, and in their own estimation nothing and worse than nothing? If I were to ask you, dear sister, if you do not think such a feeling of humility, humbleness and self-denial was as it should be, you would answer, Yes. Then when we feel a failing on our part to reply to any of our dear kindred's letters of love, rest assured that our very groans find a loud response in the hearts of the loved ones far away, for when we have no words of our own the Lord is our mouth, and his word never returns void, but accomplishes that whereunto it is sent, whether to a prison-bound John the Baptist, or to a stout-hearted Peter, or a ship-wrecked Paul, or a dear son Timothy, or a poor Dorcas or Lydia, or a Martha or Mary, and thousands of others. I wish my dear friend James could think of these things.

I have seen brother Kearns since the Corresponding Meeting, and he told me he met you, and he seemed well pleased with making your acquaintance, but it seems that I have another field to labor in, namely, a field of bodily separation, and it may be that my race is nearly at an end. I feel that so far I have been an unprofitable servant, and if my whole debt is not already paid I am a poor, miserable castaway.

I have wearied you, and said nothing perhaps that will interest you; please forgive me if you can, you see I do no better as time goes on. Write whenever you can conveniently. My correspondents have all fallen off but eight or ten, and I miss their kind letters, and as this is the fourth very lengthy letter that I have just written, my fingers feel tired holding the pen, so I will stop. May the Lord bless and comfort you. Amen.

Yours to serve,

ELI T. KIDWELL.

OXFORD, N. Y.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR PASTOR:—I am sitting here this morning, thinking of my life all the way along, and how strange much of it has been. One week ago I was with my dear kindred at Hopewell, and now I am up here, and no Old School Baptists nearer than Otego that I know of. I had been with you at Hopewell a year or more, and I wish that there were words to express how in that time my poor, hungry condition was met. They that hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled, I know by my own experience. God has been kind and merciful to me in leading me in green pastures. I have been made to feel that the Lord is my Shepherd, and that I shall not want; he maketh me to lie down in green pastures, and to walk by the still waters; his rod and staff they have comforted me. How safe the little lambs are, and how they feel to rest from all danger, when their Shepherd is near and they can feel his presence. The Lord removed my idols, but still he has given me the oil of joy for mourning, and for the past fourteen months sometimes I have feasted upon the crumbs from the Master's table; yea, not only crumbs, but full meals; I have been blessed with the hearing ear.

Then sometimes I would think, O this is all too good for me, I am so unworthy and undeserving of the love and fellowship which has been bestowed upon a sinner like me. "What manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." Love is the golden chain that binds our hearts in christian fellowship; none save the children of the living God know anything about this love. I sometimes wonder, Do I know anything about it? I surely love the brethren and sisters in Christ, yet I feel so far behind them in the knowledge of the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ I feel like sitting at their feet.

Last summer you spoke of the words, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." It was most beautiful to me; I must say that I think I have been glad always; I hope that I have been. I hope soon to come back to Hopewell, where I can be in my place in the dear old church again, but I feel that I ought to stay for a little time with my brother and niece; I know how sad they feel. My dear brother and sister Chick, I wish I could tell you of the many comforting things you have said to me when I have been in great sorrow, and down in the valley of Achor. It is, we are told, a door of hope. What a good place to be, and yet we do not want to be there; our flesh wants all good things, or at least mine does.

It is said in the Psalms, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits;" but I am so often forgetful of his benefits to me; he has bestowed such great blessings upon me, and yet I forget him. O how ungrateful! I forget that it is the Lord who is leading me on, going before me; I find myself trying to walk in my own strength. But he that clothes the lilies will clothe his people, too. Not long ago I heard a brother speaking about the lilies, how they toil not, neither do they spin, and yet they grow, and that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. What a beautiful comparison. The lilies are so pure and white and perfect. It is said in Solomon's Song, "My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away."

I have been reading the words, "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes." Will you tell me what the foxes are, brother Chick? The Savior said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches."

My mind goes back this morning to my childhood, when I used to play under the beautiful green trees, and weave the green leaves into flowers; then a child of five or six years of age. Even then they seemed beautiful to me, and I felt so solemn, and as though I was too wicked to handle them, for they were so sweet and beautiful. I would look away to the hills, and they also were bright and lovely, and I would think that God made them all. God was to be seen in everything, and the creation of all these things was wonderful to me. Some time after that I remember a meeting at Hopewell, and Elder Hartwell was preaching; I heard him telling of the wonderful Lord; his text was, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you; and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." If ever the scales dropped from my eyes, it was then. My blind eyes were opened, and I saw myself a vile, wretched, condemned sinner before God. I felt that the burden was more than I could bear, it was great, while Jesus said,

"My burden is light," and that his yoke is easy. O, I thought, if I only could be one of his, to come unto him and rest. There is no rest like the gospel rest, when we are enabled to rest in his love after we have wandered around in this wilderness, hungry and thirsty, with no water to drink, and weary and tired and footsore, he is the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, O how restful and cool. For many years I wandered in the wilderness, and what trouble I had, but he led me about and instructed me, and kept me as the apple of his eye. When I was ten years of age I felt a strong desire to come to the church; he said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." I did not keep his commandments, and went on denying the Lord like Peter, and, like Peter, I, too, wept bitterly. I hated to give up the world, but there came a time when I could see no pleasure in the world. Eight years ago, at the church meeting at Hopewell, you preached from the words, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for thee." You told my experience from beginning to end, and you told who my friends were, then, as you know, I came home to my friends and asked a home with them. I think the day I was baptized was the happiest of my life, I felt to say,

"This is the way I long have sought,
And mourned because I found it not."

Since then I have felt no more as a stranger or a guest, but like a child at home. The words are in my mind, "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." Now I am resting in the precious promises: "My grace is sufficient for thee;" and, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." I feel to say with Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee."

But I have written too much, and it is so mixed up that I fear you cannot make anything out of it, still I have written as my mind has been led. I hope to hear from you soon. I miss you all much. Give my love to dear sister Reed, if she is with you now, to sister Chick, and to the church.

With love and fellowship, I am, as ever, your sister,

(MRS.) MARY D. BREWSTER.

SOUTH RIVER, N. J.

ELDER B. F. COULTER—DEAR BROTHER:—I can scarcely realize that six weeks have passed since your letter was received. I thought I would answer immediately, but every day has brought its cares and duties, and time goes so rapidly. I cannot tell you how much your letter was appreciated, but I am afraid you will think otherwise by the delay in answering. The inclosed letter for brother Stults I delivered the same day, also took mine and read it to him; he seemed interested, and when I came to these lines: "With me the question comes, Am I a part of that perfect body of Christ?" he said, "That is it;" he could scarcely talk for crying. His trial has been greater than any one can imagine, but he bears it well, and says it is right. I am pleased to have you express your feeling as you did for this little church at South River, and to know you enjoyed your visit among us. I feel that we also were profited by your presence and cheering words. How much I wish we could have such meetings oftener. You say, "Is it not well that we can rejoice that we are born to die?" I think so. Some time ago I said to a friend, "If I thought there was not an end to this life I would be unhappy." He said, "Well, I would not give much for your happiness." There

is very little in this life to cling to, all things seem so empty and vain, and without the hope that we have been born again there would be but little if any comfort. The question now comes to me, How do I know that I have been born again? "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." If this is an assurance, I feel that I can claim it, for I do love the Old Baptists, and strange to say, I cannot remember the time when I did not. Some of my most pleasant recollections are the times I have spent with them. I am glad I have been received among you and can speak of you as my people, for I have been a wanderer so long, and why I cannot understand. I feel that I have been brought in a very peculiar way. If I knew it was my Savior that had been leading me in this way I would be satisfied, but I have made so many mistakes. I might have done differently, but how I do not know. I regret so much uniting with the New School Baptists. My greatest desire was to be among the people of God, and I thought it made but little difference as to the denomination. I still feel that some of God's dear children are there. I only remained with them two years; I was a member there at the time of the last association here; at that time Elder Durand said to me, "You are in Babylon, come out." Does it not seem strange that he should say that to me at that time, and I a stranger to him? He does not remember saying it, but with me it left an impression.

You have asked me to write you some of my experience, so I will try to comply with your request, but I feel my inability to express myself. It is a subject I love to hear, but one I can talk but little on. I cannot tell you of my first convictions; I had serious thoughts when I was quite young, and a desire to be good, and had a very sensitive nature. When I grew older and went to any amusement I would enjoy myself for a time, but there would come such a depressed feeling that I would wish I had stayed at home; I would think, I will not go again. I did not want to be so different from other young people, and would try to overcome the feeling. I attended the Methodist revival meetings quite often during the winter, and would be much interested, but I did not understand them. At times I have heard them say, "How different you would do if you knew your soul would be required of you before the morning," and "If this was the last opportunity you would have to give your heart to God." I thought it would be no different with me, for I knew I could do nothing, I felt my utter helplessness so much. One night, after hearing that kind of talk, I was speaking to my mother, and how bitterly I cried; I said, if I knew this would be my last night on earth I could do no more. Some years after, when I was so burdened, I spent such a restless night, my sleep was so broken it seemed that I scarcely slept at all; in the early morning these words came to me, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Those words did not bring me comfort, I doubt if I understood them at the time. I said to my mother, "I would rather not have been born than to feel as I do." Soon I arose and went down stairs, I had been there but a short time when my burden was gone, and a sweet peace came to me; I can never forget it. I know it was peace that this world can never give.

Now this is some of my experience, and my hope that I have been born in Christ's kingdom. This was in February,

1880; the following June I was baptized, and united with the New School Baptists. The years that have intervened to the present time have been a mixture of doubts and fears, feeling I had no place either in the world or with the people of God. Have you ever been comparatively void of feeling? I scarcely think you have, and I wonder how any one can feel that way who has experienced such joy. The evening of September 26th, after I was baptized by Elder Durand, at my request he spoke from Ephesians ii. 19. It was an expression of my feeling after wandering so many years.

"There would I find a settled rest,
While others go and come,
No more a stranger or a guest,
But like a child at home."

I have tried to write you the best I can, and also to condense it as much as possible, but while writing on this subject many things came to my mind, and perhaps I have written too much.

My mother wishes to be remembered to you and your wife, also to sister Craven. I hope you will feel like writing me again. Adieu for the present.

Yours in a precious hope,

EMMA R. MARTIN.

NASHVILLE, Tenn.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—BELOVED BROTHER IN THE LORD:—With love for the cause of Christ, and in the fellowship of his sufferings, that his true followers may be blessed with his presence in this world of trials, while contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, I feel thankful to our heavenly Father for the riches of his grace, and for the love of his cause. He has sent his servants among the poor of his flock to deliver the true gospel message to the redeemed sons and daughters of Adam's race, who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. These servants are fitted and prepared to go forth in the strength of Israel's God, proclaiming that salvation is of the Lord, and that his beloved Son is our righteousness, and that in no other way can we be accepted with God.

I feel thankful to God that I was blessed with health and strength, with my dear companion, to go to our association, known as the Cumberland Association, of long standing, which, as our beloved Elder Thomas Taylor tells me, has been holding its annual sessions for about one hundred years. Through many trials and afflictions it has contended for the old landmarks against the enemies of truth which were in our midst, claiming to be instruments in God's hands to convert sinners, and, with other sects, causing great confusion among the true followers of the lowly Lamb of God. Such heresies as "conditional time salvation" also cause Zion to mourn; but thank God he has reserved unto himself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal, and who have no confidence in the flesh. Thank God we were blessed with the privilege, if not deceived, to witness the presence of God in our midst; his predestination, purposes and decrees were proclaimed so plainly that all with an understanding heart were made to rejoice, and to feel that it was good to be there. It did my soul good to hear it explained so plainly; I felt to hope that I had the true witness within to know that it was the truth. I could see many of the old, gray-haired brethren, in advanced age like myself, rejoicing with me with tears of gladness to hear the doctrine of God proclaimed with fear and trembling; God was given all the praise, his faithful servants who visited us brought good news from a far country, which was a feast of fat things.

Your able editorial in reply to brother Waller was good and edifying, and according to Paul's teachings, if I am not deceived. How true it is, with reference to the old and new man, that they are in a continual warfare, and will continue to be so until it pleases God to separate the precious from the vile, then we shall know as we are known; all this shall be through Christ's suffering and resurrection. The church was chosen in him, and in his book were all of the redeemed written. As the psalmist proclaimed, "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." What wonderful wisdom and power, to fashion them when there were none; it is far above the conception of the fleshly or finite mind; it is all too deep without the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Our beloved Elder from the Flint River Association, of Alabama, spoke so beautifully upon the deep mysteries of God that I felt God was in our midst.

My dear brother, God has a people scattered all over the world, and he has given them shepherds, or preachers, to go forward and proclaim his foreknowledge and predestination among them. His purposes and decrees are in all things, and I feel to thank God that it is so, and that we can worship God under our own vine and fig tree, with none to molest us.

Dear brother, this letter is quite lengthy, but my mind was full and I was made to rejoice, and I felt that I wanted to write you. The same God dwells with us in this strange land that I feel to hope does with you; an evidence of such is that we read it in the blessed SIGNS, which is laden with tidings of his wonderful love to the little ones, who are brought by a way that they knew not. What great consolation it is to the believer to read so many good sermons published in the SIGNS, also such good experiences from those who have manifested it, by going home and telling what the good Lord has done for them, and not what they have done for him. Elder Coulter's communication upon the subject of "The Effect of Grace," I much enjoyed reading.

I will now close by asking you, if God will give you light, to give your views through the SIGNS upon Revelation xx. 5–8, as it is so deep I cannot comprehend it. I have heard some express their views, but I cannot see it as they do. I read of but two places, one of everlasting happiness for the redeemed of the Lord, and the other everlasting banishment from the presence of the Lord. It is claimed by some Old School Baptists that Christ will reign on earth a thousand years, and when the thousand years expire Satan will be loosed out of prison, and so on. This is one of the deep things that belong to God I think, but I do not understand it to mean that Christ is to dwell on the earth again. He was here in the flesh at one time, to do the will of the Father which sent him, and he fulfilled the law and shed his blood for his people. We read that he is to come again to gather from the four corners of the earth his redeemed, who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world.

I will leave this for your consideration. I hope God's grace will enable you to give your views, that I may have light on the subject, for I wish to know the truth as it is in Jesus. That the Lord may be with you in all your meditations with regard to the cause of Christ, is my prayer.

Your brother, in hope of eternal life,

O. B. HICKERSON.

OTEGO, N. Y.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I have felt a desire for several days to write to you; why it is I cannot tell, for I do not know what I will say, or why such a great sinner as I feel myself to be should even dare attempt to write to one of God's ministers, but I have you so much in mind, and thinking of the many good things you have said to my comfort in days past, I have a great desire to hear you again. A year ago you were with us here at Otego, I would be so glad if you were coming this year. I could not be spared from home to go away and attend any meetings the past year, for Mrs. Guernsey has been very poorly, and Mrs. Beesley is feeble, she cannot get out of bed or her chair alone.

Our dear pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, was with us last Saturday and Sunday, he comes laden with the good things of the Master's kingdom, and we have good meetings each month, and have no reason to complain. I like to hear the different gifts and ministers, and often wish I could go to meeting every Sunday. Dr. D. M. Leonard and wife were with us last Sunday, and said they were with you the fourth Sunday in October.

I hope you are well, and enjoying the presence of your Savior, which is far above anything in this world. I feel so dull and dead, I often wonder if I do really know anything of spiritual things; then my mind goes back about eleven years, when I hope the Lord did speak peace to my troubled soul, and all was joy for weeks and months; then after a time that season of joy gradually left me, and it seems that I keep sinking down, down all the time, and often wonder who or what I am; but still amid all the gloom I cannot, dare not, say I have no hope; there seems to be something that holds me, a poor, weak, sinful creature, unworthy of the least of his mercies. There is such a gloom around and over me when I go to bed and when I awake. The other morning as I awoke these lines came to me:

"Weary of earth, myself and sin,
Dear Jesus, set me free,
And to thy glory take me in,
For there I long to be."

I am a mystery to myself, and often wonder why I was born, and for what purpose? I am just good for nothing and the greatest sinner on earth, still I do believe God has a purpose in all things, and what he does is ever best, though I cannot understand it; but I do desire to be content with my lot and not murmur, for "the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein: for he hath founded it upon the seas and established it upon the floods." I love to hear the people of God talk on spiritual things, but I cannot write or talk myself; it is not given to me to talk, but I hope I am thankful to be given to understand even a little of the great and glorious plan of salvation by grace; truly what a great blessing to even be given to hope that I have a hope.

"What was there in me to merit esteem,
Or give the Creator delight?
'Twas 'even so, Father,' I ever must sing,
Because it seemed good in thy sight."

I enjoy your writings in the SIGNS very much, and wish you would write more. The last SIGNS has much good reading in it.

I feel sure you will overlook all imperfections in this poor attempt at writing; it is only such as I have give I unto you. I felt I must write a little, and will not expect a reply, for I know your time is fully occupied with the work your Master has called and qualified you for.

From a sinner, saved by grace, if at all,

ROSE B. TAMSETT.

ROYAL, La.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I will try, if the Lord is willing, to write some of my travels. I will first say that in the flesh I cannot agree to predestination, but in the spirit I see no other way. "Salvation is of the Lord." Not by the works of men, for I do plainly see "in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing," for "when I would do good, evil is present with me." So afflictions and troubles follow me all the days of my life; I am made to cry out on my bed of trouble. Dear ones, I know when I hear the word preached in its purity and sweetness; sometimes I have a joyous feast, then again I am in darkness, and made to say, Surely I am deceived in the whole matter, and in wonder ask myself, Are those good people deceived in me? Surely it is only pity they have for me, for they are as wise as serpents and harmless as doves, they show the brightness and graciousness of the Savior, and I cannot; I am not like Eve, she was deceived, but I am more like Adam, he was not deceived. I see myself in filthy rags; how can any one address poor me as brother? Sometimes I think it would be better if I were out of the church, so give me a seat in the back part of the house, or do not let me go to meeting at all. But notwithstanding this feeling, when I go I often have a feast, I see the love of the Savior in the faces of his children, and I am made glad. I know I love them, but I often ask, How can they love me? I am a poor, needy sinner, and "can't help it." Lord, have mercy on me. The fourth Sunday in last month I was at the Lord's supper; before I went I had decided not to go; but for some reason I did, I know not why. Elder J. R. Chandler's daughter went before the church and told what great things the Lord had done for her; she will be baptized the fourth Sunday in this month.

Now I will speak of my past life. My mother died in 1866. I was carried to west Texas; there I learned to ride wild horses and to handle wild cattle, and was brought into a wild way of living; but still I had serious thoughts about the good Lord. I would love to write of this, but I must omit it. I knew not a, b, c, when I was nineteen years old, but I saved my money and went to school ten months, as I had a great desire to read the Testament, the letter, but I knew not Jesus and him crucified until he revealed himself to me as my Savior, then was made to trust in him, and not in the works of men, for I was made to see that in man dwells no good thing. Now you can see my mind is like the restless ocean, never still. I am not worthy any should come under my roof; why should they come to see me? O, so much Adam is in me I am no comfort to any one. I have in me nothing good to offer, no, not a good word, so I will close by asking you, Do any get along as I do? Please overlook all mistakes, and remember me in your prayers.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

B. F. PARKER.

WAVERLY, Pa.

DEAR BRETHREN, ONE AND ALL:—As I am not busy this morning I thought I would write a few lines to you concerning the churches I am serving, in answer to questions from brethren in several localities. They stand about as last year, a few deaths and a few additions, but at peace, as far as I know, among themselves, and as they are entirely separated from the daughters of the mother of harlots, Babylon, they have no trouble with them. There seems to be no inclination

among the brethren to join hands with the religious world in any of their works or their worldly affairs. I am glad they feel the force of the Scriptures more and more: Touch not, taste not, handle not the unclean thing. "Abstain from all appearance of evil." "Hold fast that which is good, [God-honoring.]" I am still preaching with the ability given me the soul-comforting doctrine of absolute and unlimited predestination, salvation alone by the grace of God, first, last and all the way, Jesus Christ and him crucified, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and end, the resurrection and the life, and the brethren receive it with gladness of heart. We have had several ministers with us at our yearly meetings the past year, and they have faithfully preached the doctrine of Christ, and the brethren were comforted and strengthened. God be praised for every spiritual gift to his church.

A brother in the far west asks, Is it in order for one who has refused to commune with the church of his membership for a year or two to take any part in the affairs of said church? I answer, No. A church would be in gross disorder to allow such an one to make or second any motion, or act with the church until they take up their walk again with the church. I have no reference to those that do not commune with the church because of the common feeling among the saints of unworthiness, which is wrong in them to refuse, and they are always backward in taking any part in the business affairs of the church; but others who will not walk with the church, and at the same time are generally foremost in the business of the church, are the ones to be disciplined, and thoroughly, too.

Other brethren ask, When a church is called to order by the moderator, and about to proceed to business, should two or three brethren leave the room without asking the consent of the moderator or church, could the church transact whatever business was brought before it and it be recognized as gospel order? Most certainly, and those that absent themselves purposely cannot be recognized in the order of the gospel, and should be dealt with by the church as transgressors.

There are several other questions that I will answer later, the Lord willing. My right shoulder has troubled me very much the past three or four months, so much so that I can hardly hold my pen to write, but I want you to know that I still love the precious doctrine so clearly presented by the saints through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I love the writers, and readers, too, and I want to say, God bless the editors and publishers in writing the truth and publishing the truth.

Happy new year.

A poor sinner, D. M. VAIL.

TOUCHET, Wash.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE:—I feel that I am intruding on your good nature and patience, but this morning in reading your answer to brother Waller, of Liberty, Mo., I was made to rejoice and praise God for the fulfillment of his prophecy by Moses, in his last song before his brethren, when he declared that his (God's) doctrine should drop as the rain and his speech distil as the dew. As I read your explanation of the problem of the old and new man it seemed to me that God had sent it as the gentle rain, and I certainly felt it distil as the dew on my poor, drooping heart, which was, and had been for some time, cast down and blighted by the cold and chilly winds of doubt,

but as I read, it seemed to awake or open up to my mind a way by which I could see the Captain who leads and commands the army of this new man, and the moment faith caught the sight his gentle voice was heard saying, Fear not, for I have overcome, and because I live ye shall live also. It seemed to me that I was in union with the wise man and could say, He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely. At that moment my mind was called to our dear old comrade, Elder David Bartley; in the closest contest of this great warfare he surely must have rested his weary head, as John did, on the Captain's breast. O what a wonder and what a comfort it is to have even the least evidence that Christ is our all in all; while we realize that we cannot do the things we would, to will is present with us, but how to perform that which is good we find not; to realize that in Christ is the fullness for all our needs for the victory in this warfare; tongue cannot express, the soul can only wait in bright anticipation an explanation of that fullness.

Now, dear brother, I must stop, I only wanted to tell you how I appreciated that editorial. I pray God's grace may continue with you as long as you are in the warfare. I have not written this for publication, nor do I feel to tax you for an answer, although an epistle from my dear brethren is manna to my soul.

Yours in love,

JOHN T. BARNES.

WORTHINGTON, Minn.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I want to write you some of the thoughts and exercises of my mind. I feel unworthy to call you brethren, because of my sinful heart. I am here alone, and I mourn my absence from the dear people of God, and feel as if I were a castaway. I cannot go to hear the Arminians, for I do not want to hear the name of the Lord mocked; it hurts my feelings, and so I stay away from them. The Lord knows that his name is precious to me, and that I mourn because my love is so cold toward him. O if I could love him more; but I know that he knows my thoughts before they are mine.

I do not know how I shall write you, but as my mind is guided, so I shall write; may it be filled with truth and grace; of this you must be the judge. When the dear Jesus shows his loving-kindness toward me, how can I but be joyful in it? It is something that I cannot express in words. I did think I would go to the eastern associations last spring, but the God of love directs my steps, and I cannot go where I please. It is not in man to direct his steps. I feel as did the apostle Paul when he said, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." These things are better felt than told, but the preparation of the heart and the answer of the tongue are sweet to one who has felt these things. I feel to say, Glory to Jesus, for he has taught me, a poor sinner, to know and adore his holy name, but my forgetfulness is great. I am ashamed when I find that I have forgotten him; I mourn in my heart and am amazed at myself; I grieve to see my evil heart so easily turned away by the ties of this world of sin. My thoughts run in this way: You are not called, or you would be with the church; God has sent you here to be alone, because you are not worthy to be near them, and he has cast you off. These and many other things torment me.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

HENRY JAMES.

PLYMOUTH, Illinois.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—As my remittance for the dear old paper is due the 15th of this month, I shall, if the Lord is willing, write a few lines, and send two dollars to you. I wish I could send you some new subscribers, as I think the dear old SIGNS ought to be in every household in the land, but as there are only a few of us scattered around over the country it is hard to get new subscribers for a paper that teaches the doctrine it contends for: the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone. It does my soul good to read the able editorials and the articles of all those who write and believe the same good old doctrine that Paul preached; but there are many these days who preach for doctrine the commandments of men, and who feel high and lifted up because they are doing such grand work, and never mention the work of our Savior; they say they are doing it; they seem to have no use for a God like ours. O, dear children of God, it is with the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, that we have to do. The more the Holy Spirit leads us into contemplation of the God of Israel the more insignificant we shall see ourselves, and the more contemptible will all the righteousness of our flesh be in our sight. By divine teaching our souls refuse the best of all our doings; we are not satisfied with anything we do. We cannot feast upon our own righteousness, for it is not bread; we cannot be clothed with it.

Dear editors and readers, and those especially who asked me to write, I fear I am getting this letter too long, and without any comfort or edification in it, but I want to tell you that I have been troubled with sickness, so that it is a task for me to write, for I am such a poor writer, my hand trembles after I write a line or two until one can scarcely read it. I sometimes feel discouraged, and am almost ready to complain, but when I remember that "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," and whom he loves he chastens, I take courage, and try to hope and believe all my afflictions and trials are in mercy sent. The child of God needs chastisements to keep him humble, but the good Shepherd knoweth his sheep: he calleth them by name, and he leadeth them out; sometimes it is through much tribulation, yet it is all for the best. I love the chastening rod when I can feel that our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Here we have trials and tribulation, but we are only sojourners, this world is not our home, we seek a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. When we get there and are in his likeness, then shall we be satisfied. Through him all the inheritance, all the blessings, graces, mercies, the eternal and unspeakable fullness of the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, flow unto all the heirs of the covenant, and by him all the worship of the children of God comes with acceptance before the throne of the Majesty on high. Our portion is in Christ Jesus our Lord, in him and with him we are blessed with an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us.

I have not written as I thought I would when I sat down, I wanted to tell you of our association, the second Sunday in September, 1906, which convened with Rock Creek Church, in Illinois. The

preachers all came laden with the good news of the gospel, there was no uncertain sound, and all felt it was good to be there, and they were all well taken care of by the members and friends of the church. I thought I never enjoyed an association more.

I love to hear of the good meetings and experiences through the SIGNS, and I wish more would write on those subjects. I would love to see something from sisters Sarah E. Runkle, Jennie Vanmeter, Laura A. Hamilton, brethren Samuel Koontz, John T. Neel, Elder John Scott, our dear pastor, Elder L. E. Frazee, and many others that I might mention.

Now I will close. May the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you, that you may be able to wield "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon" to the comfort and consolation of all the brethren and sisters, is my prayer.

(MRS.) S. G. FRAZEE.

TOUCHET, Wash.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER ALLISON:—I am under obligation to write and tell you how precious a season that meeting was to me. The heavens seemed to be filled with the glory of God, and in the midst of grief I was made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. The past, the present, good and evil, the children of darkness and the children of light, things that are high and mighty, with joys too great to be uttered, made that a day of visitation from on high to my poor soul, and I found it good to suffer for his name's sake. How wonderful was that word picture you gave of the suffering Savior bearing the sins of his people, walking in these low grounds of sin and sorrow, cradled with the beasts, oftentimes hungry and athirst, having not where to lay his head, yet having the power and might of Jehovah with him, making intercession for us, in the shedding of his own blood. The prayer he uttered, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," should ever be the christian's strength and sure rock of defense. Yet we are often left to our own way for a brief moment, time that to us seems all too long, until his Spirit awakens us to a sense of the deadness, and we feel the darkness and cannot see one step of our way; then he sheds one ray of light divine, we look beyond the vanities of this mortal life and are embraced in that charity that hides the multitude of our sins; we rejoice that with God all things are possible, and we are made to see it is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the mystery of godliness: "The Lord knoweth them that are his." If we fulfill the royal law according to Scripture: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," we do well, and happy are we if we pray unto him in a day when he may be found.

"The angel of the Lord emcampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." I had in mind to speak to you of this resting-place, but fearful things in righteousness seem to be the daily lesson, and I will only pause a moment to ask: Do you think, dear brother and sister, that I have broken off the jewels of Egypt? Have I tasted the waters of Marah? Did I pass over the sea dry-shod, and has it been my blessed privilege to camp with that wayfaring company at Meribah? O it would be a priceless boon to know of a truth that I have journeyed through that wilderness, and with that chosen company hated of the world but loved of God. I cannot claim immunity from their sins, if happily I am numbered in their transgressions and redeemed by him who is their re-

demption. How precious to me is the theme of christianity, the outward manifestation of an inward work of grace. "For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say;" and give us to feel another's woe, to hide the fault we see (or seem to see) that we may rejoice as partakers of Christ's sufferings. "Because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth." Also, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."—Rev. iii. 10. I am thinking to-day, dear friends, of all the friendship of the world, a friendship that rests upon such vain things as gold and silver, a friendship that is bought and sold, as fashion or custom may dictate, and their rust is a witness, for it condemns and kills the just. But blessed day when "there shall be no more curse," we shall see him as he is, and the nations which are saved shall walk in the light, having the glory of God. It is my prayer that grace be given that we may keep "the sayings of the prophecy of this book."

As ever, your sister,

(MRS.) M. J. LEE.

ROMULUS, Okla.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—VERY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Again I will attempt to write a few lines for our dear family paper, although I have thought that I would never attempt such a thing again, feeling my utter weakness and inability; but when I read so many good letters from the dear brethren and sisters I feel the impression so strongly that with fear and trembling I will try again. I know if I am guided by the Spirit it may edify some poor, little, weak one like myself, but if it is of the flesh it will profit nothing, for "in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." Dear brother, I am made to realize this many times in my sojourn in this unfriendly world, but it is sweet to rest in the promises of Jesus and be still and know that he is God, and beside him there is none other; he is the first and the last, the beginning and the end, the Rock of our salvation, our all and in all; he rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. I do believe in the doctrine of election and predestination, and that God controls all events whatsoever come to pass; if I did not believe in such a God as this I would faint by the way. Sometimes the burdens of life seem too heavy to bear without the sweet assurance of an all-wise God who works all things after the counsel of his own will. I feel so low down, and so poor and weak and vile, that sometimes I fear after all it is a delusion, and I am left out, and while feeling this way I am often made to cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then again I feel so much comforted by his Spirit that I can say with one of old, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." I feel resigned to his will in all things, and if we could always feel thus how pleasant would be the way.

> "Prisons would palaces prove,
> If Jesus would dwell with me there."

Yes, dear little child of God, we can bear all the trials and afflictions, sorrows and disappointments, the struggles and strife, if we only have Jesus with us to smooth the way, and when we come to die to have his everlasting arms underneath to make it easy.

Dear brother, I did not think of writing so much when I commenced, I only

wanted to tell you how proud I am, and thankful, if not deceived, of the privilege of having the dear old SIGNS, and that the good Lord has given you and brother Ker the wonderful gift to be at the helm. I enjoy your editorials much, and brother Ker's letter was good and comforting; and the dear brethren and sisters who write for our dear paper have surely been taught of God, and they can tell my feelings better than I can, and when I read them I feel the sweet love and fellowship flowing in my soul. Write, on, dear ones, for you send glad tidings of great joy thousands of miles away.

I will bring this to a close. May the choicest blessings of high heaven rest upon you and brother Ker and all the household of faith, is my prayer.

Your unworthy little sister, if one at all,

(MRS.) M. J. RILEY.

ASHLAND, Ill.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, AND HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—The old year of 1906 is nearly gone, never to return, and soon the place that now knows us will know us no more forever.

Well, I do not expect to write much, and so I will get to the subject I intend to write about. I have wondered many times how many of the brethren and sisters who are taking the SIGNS are taking newspapers. I am taking the *Missouri Republic*, and a little paper in our home town, and when my time expires for the *Missouri Republic* I have to send them a dollar or do without the paper, and so does every one who takes a newspaper, so there is no one behind. Now there are some people in Middletown, N. Y., who print a paper called the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and we call them brethren, and no doubt we want to be as honest with them as we are with other people. Now if we do, let us show it by sending in our remittance in advance, then if they need it they will have it, and we can go to bed at night with that off of our minds, and feel a great deal better than to be behind one, two or three years. Do you not think so? That being the oldest paper of its kind, and the best, I think we ought to be ashamed to neglect it in this way. I do not write this to hurt any one. It is an Old School Baptist paper of the old order of Baptists, the very best kind; it publishes the truth, and that is what we all claim we want. Now the first of the year is right here, so all who are able send in your remittance and you will feel better, and the publishers will know you appreciate the paper; otherwise how can they? If you do not want it, drop them a card and tell them so, they will know what to do. If this paper has to go down on account of delinquent subscribers we may never get another one like it. I do hope the Lord may put it in the heart of every one to pay up, and thus sustain it, and may it be the Lord's will to keep the paper going, and give needed grace.

DAVID KOONTZ.

CLAYTON, Mich.

KIND EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—It has been a long time since I have contributed materially to the support of the paper—the only paper that I have almost constantly read for more than forty years. I also acknowledge my debt for many years without paying for it, and have felt all that time like a beggar; yet I felt some hope to be able some day to pay up all arrears, and breathe more freely. Your charity has been so Godlike, without upbraiding me, that I have the more keenly felt the sting of regret at my seeming inability to pay. I have often

queried whether I had a proper excuse for not paying each year's subscription as it accrued; therefore please accept a little conscience-money without credit, leaving the old dates on the credit slip as they are. It may be I will some day be able to pay up in full. I inclose five dollars to the conscience fund. If you publish this as an expression of the gratitude of an insolvent debtor, both to God and man, it may find a kindred feeling in some other poor brother or sister who feels their indebtedness to grace, and the hope of having an interest in the precious blood of Jesus Christ, that cleanses from all sin, pays all their debts, will only make them feel their debt transferred from law to grace. "O to grace how great a debtor." ***

LAMAR, Colorado.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for another year, also a report of the constitution of a church at Hatton, Kansas, and a copy of the minutes of the first meeting of the church, which please publish in the SIGNS. I am thankful to report that the Baptists are in peace and harmony in these parts, and firm in the doctrine of God our Savior, whose gospel is ably declared by Elders D. B. Nowels and W. C. Perdue, of this place, also Elders G. M. Fetter, of Raton, N. M., and J. B. Hardy, of Wellsford, Kansas, who visit us frequently. The church has also been blessed with a visit from Elder D. W. Owens, of Hersman, Ill., and more recently Elder J. B. Hardy, Jr., of Wellsford, Kansas, and Elder W. T. Brown, of Richmond, Mo.; all came telling the same old story. We will gladly welcome all who come among us who are sound Baptists, and who would know nothing among us save Jesus Christ and him crucified.

J. H. HARDY.

(See church constituted on page 30.)

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Sidling Hill Church, Fulton Co., Pa., October 12th, 13th and 14th, 1906, to the several churches and associations with which we correspond, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the mercy and goodness of the God of Zion, he who, watching over Israel, neither slumbers nor sleeps, we are again favored with an opportunity to address to you our annual epistle of love and fellowship, that you may know that though comparatively few in number, according to the estimate of men, and unreckoned among the nations of the earth, we are, we trust, still contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and through the grace of the great Head of the church endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. We have been made, we trust, dear brethren, many times during the past year to rejoice in the exceeding goodness and mercy of God to usward, and yet have also been made to mourn often over the hardness of our hearts, and to deplore our lukewarmness and the apparent absence of Him who is our life, in whose presence there is fullness of joy. When his presence is sensibly with us, and the glorious light of his countenance shines in upon our hearts, sorrow and sighing flee away, the time of the singing of birds is come, and our hearts and tongues cannot refrain from singing praises unto his matchless name for the wondrous mercy he has in divine love and pity bestowed upon poor worms of the dust; naught can then come near us to molest or harm, naught can then disturb us when we feel that the everlasting arms are around us, that the Lord our God has placed our feet upon a rock, even the Rock Christ

Jesus, has put a new song in our mouth, and brought us to sweetly trust and rest in him. It is then morning with our souls, the Sun of righteousness has arisen with healing in his wings, and the powerful radiance of heavenly love touches every fibre of our being with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Glorious indeed is now the condition of the rejoicing child of God whose Lord has again come to him with peace and joy and comfort and healing. "The morning cometh, and also the night: if you will inquire, inquire ye: return, come." Yes, although one night has passed away and the morning cometh, it will not while we are here in the flesh be always day, another night will follow, and another day, and so on and on until the end shall come. The night is as necessary for the child of God as the day; it is needful for him that his Lord shall ever and anon withdraw himself, and in tender mercy and compassion he will deal out to his dear children all those changes of which he knows that they have need. He has promised never to leave nor forsake one of his dear little ones, and whether in the night or in the day their Lord is not unmindful of them; he hears their cries, he remembers all their weakness, and he will safely guard and guide them through all their mortal pilgrimage until he graciously calls them to himself and they sweetly fall asleep to be satisfied when they awake with his likeness.

Dear brethren, we trust that you will receive this, our epistle of love and fellowship, in the spirit in which it is penned, to give all glory and honor to him whom we trust "hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," and to his name be all praise, and honor, and glory, given now, and forever. Amen.

J. N. BARTLETT, Moderator.
J. C. MELLOTT, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Sidling Hill Church, to the associations and churches with which we correspond, sends greeting in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—Correspondence through the Minutes of our association is a pleasant renewal of our love and friendship. As brethren in the church of Christ our hearts warm with greater love when we are permitted to receive your messengers, whose countenances beam forth the love that caused the people of old to exclaim, Behold how these christians love one another; and then a feeling of thankfulness arises from our hearts to our heavenly Father for the preservation of our lives, and health to attend this appointed meeting. We sat together in a heavenly place, and have been refreshed with the preached gospel of the Son of God, delivered with power and in demonstration of the Spirit; letters from the different churches setting forth the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace through the blood and righteousness of Christ, proclaimed and established by the apostles, and contended for in our churches to the present time, have been presented to us through this meeting, to our comfort and edification.

Our next association is appointed to be held with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., to commence on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1907, at 10 o'clock a. m., when we hope to receive your messengers and ministers in the love and fellowship of the gospel.

J. N. BARTLETT, Moderator.
J. C. MELLOTT, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1907.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

As we stand upon the threshold of another year, and also the beginning of another volume of the SIGNS, it would be strange indeed did we not think of the past and of the future. It is often said that we know not what the future has in store for us, and this is true, and yet not altogether true; we indeed know not what the daily incidents of our life may be, but we do know that our life will be, as it has been in the past, in the hand of God, that all shall move as he has determined, that we shall not be at any moment beyond his care, that all his promises shall be fulfilled toward us, that our life shall be full of mixture of joy and sorrow, of loss and gain, of trial and deliverance, and that the same abundant mixture of shade and light, of night and day, shall be ours, as has been the case in the past. These things we know shall be mingled in our cup each day of the journey, and we know that the end shall come just as our Father has appointed for us; so it is true we do know what the future shall be, while yet our heavenly Father has hidden from us the details of each day's life, although all the steps we shall take and all the stations we shall fill are known unto God; yea, more, are appointed of him.

Of the past we only know in part. We do know the events which can be chronicled, such as where we were such and such times, what we were doing, the friends with whom we mingled and conversed, the times when we gladly entered into the house of God, the sermons which were delivered in our hearing, some of the things that were said in them, or in prayer, or in the singing, or in conversation, some of the burnings of heart we felt as we listened or joined in the worship of God, or the conversation concerning spiritual things, and we know the losses and crosses which were ours to bear, the sickness and the sorrow which we were called upon to endure, together with many tokens of God's goodness and mercy to us sinners. But still even these past things we know but in part, for we do not know what all these things involved, or what shall be the outcome of them, either in their effect upon ourselves or upon those around us. We do not know the fullness of God's great designs in the very least event of our lives; we do not know whether this or that is to be the result of our most common words, or of the every day events of our life, which occur so frequently as to pass by us without attracting our notice. It has long been our thought that we do not, after all, really know the past any better than we do the future. Who of us can tell just how the events of the past year shall result for us? Who can tell which of all the things we have done, or said, or enjoyed, or suffered, or which others have done, or said, or enjoyed, or suffered, will redound most to the praise of God, and the good of Zion? It has long been a solemn consolation to us that all events, however they may appear to us, are alike in the hand of God, and that all shall be to the praise of his glory at the end, and we believe with all our heart that the words of the hymn are true,

"Great God, with thee there's nothing great,
With thee there's nothing small."

Things on the earth look to us great or small, because we are down here among them. We have heard it said, and do not doubt it is true, that as men go up in balloons, hills and mountains grow less and less in size and height, and valleys rise, until at a sufficient height all the earth becomes a level plane; and we are sure that with the Most High God all the vain distinctions of earth are as nothing, and that when it is given us poor mortals to rise to some of the heights of Zion these worldly distinctions become as nothing to us also. When it is given us to realize what it is to be risen with Christ and some glimpses of the heavenlies in Christ are afforded us, then all that is below grows very small and mean in comparison; and while in such a state of spiritual communion with God we will not mind high things, and all the distinctions of earth will be as nothing to us. Then the height of Zion will be more to us than all other heights, and the King of glory will so come in and reign that all other princes will be dethroned. At such an hour what more to the soul is place, or power, or wealth, or fame, than obscurity, or poverty, or bondage? These distinctions may be counted for much among men of the world, but he who dwells in the heights of Zion is himself a child of the King, and the untold riches of heaven are all his.

As we think of the past we can but learn some things which are good to know, and of which it is profitable to think and speak. To the children of Israel it was said in the old time, "Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no." How many things they had to remember of all that journey in the great and terrible wilderness. First, they would be compelled to remember such things as would abase themselves, such as their pride, their rebellion, their unbelief, their relapses into idolatry, their murmuring against God and against Moses his servant, and all the folly of which they were guilty, many times over. They would by this be humble and abased in feeling, which is the only safe place for a believer; then they would remember the dealings of God with them in these times of their unbelief and sin; first, in judgment, to rebuke them and to show them his justice and holiness and indignation against sin, and then in his forgiveness of their sins, and the restoration of the tokens of his love and pity for them in saving them and delivering them from dangers and from all their enemies, and then they would be compelled to remember all the rugged road, with its stones in the pathway, with the burning sun by day and the cold darkness of the nights, and how toilsome was the journeying forward day by day. It must have been that they also remembered the resting-places, the palm trees and the oases that now and then were given them. These things they must experience for their good, and these things they should remember for their good still. Even so the pilgrim of Zion must learn to know himself and to know God. The one great blessing of this knowledge in this gospel day is that all such pilgrims come to know God in Christ Jesus our Lord; it is to them the knowledge of that salvation which is of God and of him who gives salvation to the needy. As it is given us to remember the past there is found encouragement for the weary and heavy

laden, because of the assurance that our God is the same. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day and forever; in all the weary past he has not forsaken us, and so we are well assured that however long and weary the future travel of our souls may be he will continue to abide with us and we shall not fall by the way. There was nothing in that people whom God brought up out of Egypt that could merit his esteem or give him delight; it was not for anything that he saw in them which was of themselves that he so chose and favored them. Indeed, Jehovah told them that they were the most stiff-necked and rebellious of all people, but our God chose them that in them his sovereign mercy and grace might be shown as it could not have been shown forth otherwise. In all the journey to the promised land they proved forgetful and ungrateful again and again, still the Lord their God bore with them and manifested all long-suffering toward them, and all this was a pattern to his spiritual people in all ages. It is also true of all his elect, that they deserve no favor from him, but rather reproach and condemnation forever. Thank God it is also true of them that their God is full of all long-suffering toward them, and saves them from all their sins, and saves them forever. Because of all that this God has been to his people under the old covenant, and to all his spiritual people under the new covenant, and because of what he has been to us in all our past lives, we are also encouraged for the future, and continue to hope in his mercy. For ourself we desire to say that we have come to the end of another year, and to the beginning of this new year, as we hope, with a deeper sense of all the faithfulness of God, and with some remembrances of his manifold tokens of loving favor toward us, and we desire that we may be enabled to give praise to him to whom all praise is due. We feel that we have sinned day by day in deed, in thought, in service, rendered outwardly and in motive before God. This has been so all our life since we believed, and it is so still; for this we must be humbled before God daily and hourly. How shall we sufficiently exalt his name for all the providential mercies, and especially for all the spiritual blessings of the past year? Sometimes as we think over all these things the words come unbidden to our heart, "A sinner saved by grace," and sometimes the word "sinner" is emphasized in our mind, and sometimes the word "grace," but whatever word may come uppermost to our mind, "a sinner," or "saved by grace," the other also follows right after, so that the whole sentence rests with us, and upon the truth in it do we find our comfort and joy.

As regards our connection with the SIGNS, we desire to confess that we have never felt more unfitted for the place we hold than we have this past year. It is so easy to make mistakes, and to say and do things that seem hurtful to others, and that hurt the little ones; indeed we are not "sufficient of ourselves to think anything, as of ourselves;" may we dare add to this those other words of the apostle, "but our sufficiency is of God"? We have realized that each and every day we need to be led along, and that we cannot look into the future. Often to-morrow looks dark, but still when it has come there has been light; what is dark to us is light before the Lord. Often we have felt that we could write no more. In this it has been the same as has often been the case in our ministry in the pulpit. Again and again during these past forty or more years we have felt that the end had come, so far as preaching was concerned, yet we

do continue unto this present time, both in the ministry and in writing. We trust that we do feel thankful to God for all these, his mercies. His mercy has been shown us in enabling us to bear, and endure, and to still hold fast the profession of our faith. How great has been the forbearance of the Lord, and how great has been the forbearance of the readers of the SIGNS. As we think of these things we are encouraged for the future; indeed it all seems wonderful to us. We feel also to say that the publishers of the SIGNS, and brother Ker, our associate editor, have been most kind, forbearing and helpful, often speaking encouraging words. How much all who love God need each other. How good it is that the Lord has given us to each other for mutual edification. Heartfelt religion will cause forbearance one to another, because each one will see something of his own weakness, and the Lord will show such ones their own errors. We know that our readers have greatly appreciated the labors of the publishers in making the mechanical work of the SIGNS so free from errors as it has been. No one, save those who have filled such positions, can realize how much care and labor is needed to avoid serious mistakes, and to do creditable mechanical work. Beside this, the editors have had their earnest cooperation, counsel and advice with regard to the matter that has been published. We cannot be too grateful for this, and our readers have reaped the benefit.

For the future we can promise only this: that we shall still strive to make the SIGNS a medium of correspondence between brethren who know and love the Lord. We hope that all that could gender strife among the children of God may be avoided, both in editorial matter and in correspondence. We say strife, not incidental differences of opinion and judgment; these will always be, so long as we are in the flesh, but let there be all forbearance if there be differences of judgment in anything; we know that most of our readers do not want direct controversy in the SIGNS, but we feel sure all are glad to see the views of truth as they may be presented by different brethren. The SIGNS has been made a blessing to many in the past, and we hope that the blessing of the Lord may attend it in like manner for the coming year. We still hold dear the doctrine of God our Savior as it has been loved and preached these many years past.

In conclusion, may the Lord be with and guide us all for the year before us. Paul besought his brethren to pray for him, and said once that their prayers helped him. We know that it is the desire of all who are engaged in the conduct of the SIGNS that we may also be helped in that way, as was Paul, and we also desire the richest blessings of the covenant of grace to rest upon all our readers, and upon all correspondents of the SIGNS. C.

AMOS VIII. 11.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please explain the eleventh verse of the eighth chapter of Amos through the SIGNS. The Scripture reads as follows: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord."

Your brother, ANDREW WOODS.
KEENE, Ky.

In attempting to reply to the above request we realize the importance of the subject and our insufficiency for these things. We have had, in days gone by, some pleasant meditation upon this text, and thought then we knew something of its primary as well as spiritual import. But our ability to reproduce what God

gave us in days past is very limited indeed. Many texts that we have used with liberty of soul, as we hope, now seem dark and mysterious, but the Lord is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever, and is able to supply all our needs through the riches of g ce in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In the preceding chapter of this book called Amos we read that he had prophesied against Israel and was rebuked by Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, and commanded by him to go elsewhere and prophesy, because that was the king's chapel and the king's court. Then Amos told him that he (Amos) was not a prophet, nor the son of a prophet, but was an herdsman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit, but while he followed the flock, the Lord said unto him, "Go, prophesy unto my people Israel." In this he gave his authority for his prophecy against Israel and the certainty of God's judgments upon that people according to his prophecy. Israel wanted and liked "smooth things" told them from the Lord, but hated his prophets and the words of the Lord, when they, as a people, were spoken against; they would not hear, and persecuted the prophets unto death.

God by Amos told of certain days in store for that rebellious and stiff-necked people, days of mourning and bitterness, days of famine to hear the words of the Lord. They who had rebelled and hated the messages should long to hear the words of the Lord, but should not hear them. In verse nine of this same chapter, and in immediate connection with our text, Amos said, "And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day." This was to be fulfilled at a time of joy and prosperity, and it was the beginning of the famine. There is no record in the word or elsewhere that the natural sun ever went down at noon; it did stand still once during a certain battle, that God's army should have the victory, and that his mighty power and glory should be made manifest. If the natural sun is not meant, what could have been the meaning of God's word? is the question. We are told that the path of the just is as a light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Christ is the just, and all records of him, his coming, his sufferings and the glory that should follow, were brighter and brighter from the first mention of him in the garden, by the Lord, as the seed of the woman, to the end of the prophets. Malachi was the clearest of all the prophets regarding Christ; this was because the time drew near for the "perfect day" to be ushered in. Right in the height or brightness of that day of prophecy the Lord took away the prophets; thus the sun or light went down or ceased at noon. A long period of time elapsed without any word from the Lord to that people. It was then that their feasts were turned into mourning and their songs into lamentations; it was then that sackcloth was upon their loins and baldness upon their heads. This was a bitter day to Israel, the famine was then fully upon them, not "of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord." But no word was sent them; they who had had prophets to speak to them the words of the Lord, and through whom they inquired of God, were then left desolate. In that condition they remembered the mercies of God in days gone by, and in that strait were made to repent their rebellion against God; they mourned sore and wandered from sea to sea, from the north even to the east, in search of a

prophet of God or the words of God, but found none. The end of that long silence or famine was broken when John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, in the name of the Lord, saying, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." John called their attention to what the prophets had said, as was then being fulfilled, concerning Christ and his forerunner. So eager were the people, who had endured the long famine, to hear again the words of the Lord, that Jerusalem and Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, went out to hear John and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. Weeping endured for the night, but joy came in the morning.

The above is, we believe, the primary application of the text; the experimental view is better understood, no doubt, by our brother than we are able to state it. We will say, however, if Israel was a type of spiritual Israel, there must be at times and in some way a hatred in us against the words of the Lord. This hatred is made manifest by our rebellion against him, and who is it of his children that has not more or less of that spirit? We, like Israel, enjoy smooth or pleasant things said to us and of us, but we are sinners nevertheless, and the Lord commands his servants to show Israel, his people, their sins. This offends, and we want to hear that man no more, but the man who tells us of our sins, in the name of the Lord, is our friend, and the man who shuns to do this is not faithful to God or to his people. We are often shut out from the presence of our God, our days are days of mourning and darkness, the sun has gone down, we go to and fro seeking the words of the Lord. In the Bible, in the hymn-book, in the meetings of the saints, in prayers and in praises we seek them, but find them not; the whole land is desolate, the famine is indeed sore. Why is all this? The word answers, Your sins have separated between you and your God. Sin is the direct cause of all misery and woe, and who knows it as well as the child of God? He knows without being told that "the way of the transgressor is hard." The man who lives after the flesh dies, the man who hates his brother is a murderer, the man who is covetous is an idolater, the man whose conversation is filthy, grieves the Holy Spirit. Men who lie, get drunk or commit adultery, shall not inherit the kingdom of God. "He that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile. * * * For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." If these things are not true now concerning spiritual Israel we do not just understand why the apostles should have said so. May the Lord give us light and liberty in his word and grace to do his will.

We hope that our aged brother and our readers generally may be able to glean a little here and there from what we have written. We feel that our efforts are very imperfect; our brethren therefore must not expect great things of us; we are willing, however, to do the best we can. K.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

BROTHER W. M. Little has changed his address from Holland, Bell County, Texas, to Groesbeck, Limestone County, Texas, and desires his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mr. Joshua A. D. Holloway, son of the late Elisha Holloway, was born in Wicomico (then Worcester) County, Maryland, April 6th, 1850, and died in the hospital in Quincy, Ill., Oct. 28th, 1906. He was never married, but left an aged mother (since deceased) two brothers, two sisters and a large number of nieces and nephews, by all of whom he was held in very high esteem for his amiable disposition and many admirable traits. He never made a public profession of religion, but was a firm friend of the Old School Baptists, and we hope and believe a lover of truth. His life was spent principally on the old homestead, the place of his birth, until about twelve years ago, when he moved to the State of Missouri, and later to Arkansas, but in August last started to return to his native place, and had reached Quincy, Ill., where he had relatives, and was there compelled to go to a hospital to be treated for what he supposed to be rheumatism, but it proved to be something more serious, the surgeons deeming it necessary to amputate the limb, from the shock of which he soon passed away.

His body was brought to Salisbury, Md., where a funeral service was conducted by the writer on Nov. 1st, a large number of relatives and friends being in attendance; after which the remains were laid to rest in the soil of his native State and County.

ALSO,

Mrs. Sally Holloway (mother of the above) entered into her eternal home Dec. 4th, 1906. She was born August 31st, 1821, in Worcester (now Wicomico) County, Maryland, being 85 years, 3 months and 4 days of age. Her life was spent within a few miles of the place of her birth, never having lived further than ten miles from that spot. She was the widow of the late Elisha Holloway, who preceded her to "the better country" about twenty years. She was the mother of ten children, two of whom died in infancy, and one son, Frank, at twenty-four years of age, two others in middle life, leaving large families; there are only four surviving the mother. There are also thirty-eight grandchildren, forty-one great-grandchildren and five great-great-grandchildren; thus she lived to see her descendants to the fourth generation. Sister Holloway was baptized in the year 1860, in Salisbury, and continued a steadfast and faithful member of that church until called to her eternal home, always being held in high esteem by all who knew her. Truly she was a good woman in all respects, loved by her own family, and also by all her neighbors and acquaintances. It was my privilege to know her well for the past thirty years or longer, and I can testify from personal knowledge of her many excellent qualities. As the time of her departure drew near, she expressed resignation to the will of the Lord, desiring to depart and be with Christ. Her all was above; this world held nothing more for her. Now she sleeps in Jesus, that blessed sleep, whose waking is without sorrow or weeping.

May the Lord minister the blessed consolations of his word to all the bereaved.

A. B. FRANCIS.

Caroline Leach, widow of William Leach, and daughter of Jacob and Rachel Wood, was born near Washington C. H., Fayette Co., Ohio, Sept. 21st, 1818, and died at the home of her daughter, in Hamersville, Brown Co., Ohio., Sept. 11th, 1906, aged 87 years, 11 months and 20 days. She was brought to see her sinful condition when young, and was soon after baptized and united with the Old School Baptist Church at Rockville. She was married to Wm. Leach Jan. 8th, 1846, and came to Brown County. She soon began to look around for some Baptists, and finally put her membership in with the Clover Church. She then rejoiced that she had again found a home among the people she loved, and took great pleasure in attending the meetings. A few years after her husband's death, in 1878, she moved to Washington C. H., again finding a home with the Rockville Church. She was of a quiet disposition, always ready to deny herself for others. As she grew weaker her faith in Christ grew stronger, and she was ready and anxious to go when she felt that her time had come, and passed peacefully away, as one going to sleep. She was one of a family of thirteen children, of which but one survives her. She leaves one sister (a twin), two daughters, six grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Her husband and two sons preceded her to that home beyond. She took the SIGNS OF THE TIMES perhaps forty years; it never got old to her, and was a great pleasure to her. During the summer she seemed to feel that her time was soon to come, and repeated a great many verses, parts of hymns, &c.

M. J. WEST.

DIED—**Matilda Bender,** at her home, 276 Penn St., Brooklyn, N. Y., Dec. 1st, 1906, of pneumonia. She was born in Rexinger, Wurtemburg, Germany, March 3rd, 1835, and came to this country at the age of seventeen. She was married to George Bender in January, 1859; to this union were born thirteen children, of which the following survive her: Susanna Barden, James, George, Matilda Dunne and Martha H. Bender. Her husband, brother George Bender, died some years ago. Sister Bender united with the Middletown and Wallkill Church, at Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., in January, 1860; was baptized by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and continued a steadfast member to the end of her sojourn upon the earth. She loved the place where God's honor dwells, where the gospel is preached in its purity; the fellowship of saints was most precious to her. Her

life was a manifestation of grace, which saves the sinner. Less than two weeks prior to her death she came to Middletown to visit the church, and was very happy and cheerful until Friday night, Nov. 23rd, when she was taken with a chill. She rallied from that, and returned to her home on Monday, Nov. 26th; there she was stricken with pneumonia, and passed away as above stated.

We conducted the funeral service Dec. 3rd, at her late home. She had selected the text for the occasion, it is recorded in 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10. Hymns 704, 746 and 1289 were read. The interment took place in Catskill, N. Y. We all mourn our loss, but hope the Lord may reconcile us, together with her children, to his will. K.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

CONSTITUTION of a Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church, at Hatton, Hamilton County, Kansas.

According to previous arrangement, the brethren hereinafter named, in response to a call from the brethren of this place, met at the residence of brother Henry Q. Holdren for the purpose of constituting them into a church body.

Those present were: Elders W. C. Perdue, D. B. Nowels, brethren L. E. Thompson, J. H. Hardy, sisters Ellen Nowels, Susie Hardy, Malinda Lay, of Bethel Church, Prowers Co., Colo.; Elder G. M. Fetter, sisters E. H. Boggs, Lavina Dawson, of Shiloh Church, Colfax Co., N. M., who organized themselves into council by choosing Elder G. M. Fetter, of Raton, N. M., Moderator, and J. H. Hardy, of Lamar, Colo., Clerk.

After prayer by Elder D. B. Nowels, and singing hymn commencing, "Glorious things of thee are spoken," proceeded to business in the order following:

Those holding letters and presenting same were brethren A. G. Hurst, Henry Q. Holdren, sisters Mattie Holdren, Martha Holdren, Myrtle Holdren and Maggie Grissom, all from Bethel Church, Prowers Co., Colo., and brother Thomas J. Crist, from Little Flock Church, Clay Co., Ind.

On motion and second, all letters presented were received by the council.

Articles of Faith read and approved by the council.

On motion and second, they were declared the church of Jesus Christ in order called Providence.

On motion and second, the hand of church fellowship was extended by the council and by the members one to the other.

Benediction by the Moderator.

G. M. FETTER, Moderator.

J. H. HARDY, Clerk.

The church went into immediate council for business by choosing brother H. Q. Holdren Moderator *pro tem*, and brother A. G. Hurst Clerk *pro tem*.

The Moderator invited visiting brethren of our faith and order to seats in council.

An invitation was extended for the reception of members. Sister Maggie Crist came forward and gave a reason for her hope in Christ, and was received as a candidate for baptism and baptized the following day by Elder D. B. Nowels, of Bethel Church, Colo.

The church proceeded to adopt Rules of Decorum and to the election of permanent officers.

Brother A. G. Hurst was chosen Moderator, and brother Thomas Crist Church Clerk, and Elder D. B. Nowels, of Lamar, Colo., to serve the church as pastor.

The church requested the Clerk to send a copy of these minutes with the minutes of the council meeting for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and *Messenger of Peace*.

Minutes read and approved.

Adjourned in order.

H. Q. HOLDREN, Moderator *pro tem*.

A. G. HURST, Clerk *pro tem*.

HATTON, Kansas, Nov. 10, 1906.

ORDINATIONS.

IN answer to a request from the original Hickory Creek Church, of Jasper County, Illinois, Elder John Neal, from the Middlefork Church, in Franklin Co., Ill., and Elder C. C. Mitchel, from Ninemile Church, Perry Co., Ill., met with said church and joined themselves into a presbytery.

Elder John Neal was chosen Moderator, and Elder C. C. Mitchel Clerk.

Ordained brethren Joseph Bartley and John Laws to the office of deacon. Then the church chose brother John Laws spokesman for the church, and then presented brother Marion Bartley, who was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry by prayer and laying on of hands. Prayer by Elder C. C. Mitchel, and charge given by Elder John Neal.

THOMAS M. BARTLEY, Church Clerk.

HUNT, Ill., Dec. 1, 1906.

AT a meeting of the Schoharie Church Dec. 16th, 1906, opened with singing and prayer. Elder D. M. Vail preached from Matt. viii. 19–27, after which, by vote of the church, brother George A. Miers was ordained deacon, by prayer and laying on of hands and charge by Elder D. M. Vail.

Next appointment for preaching third Sunday in February, 1907.

E. R. KINNEY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Wm. Allen, Okla., $3.00; Sarah Hawk, Ind., $2.00; Thurston Knight, Mo., $1.00; Richard Waller, Mo., $1.00; Lavinia Morgan, Mo., $1.00.—Total, $8.00.

MEETINGS.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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BI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF THE WELSH TRACT CHURCH.

The bi-centennial of the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., was celebrated Oct. 20th, 1903. After some delay it is now published in pamphlet form, and is now on sale. Price 15 cents. The pamphlet contains photographs of the Welsh Tract meeting-house and Elder J. G. Eubanks, the pastor, the proceedings of the anniversary, letters of greeting from sister churches and a historical sketch written by Dr. B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., and read on the occasion. Some of the brick in the meeting-house was brought from Wales to this country, and hauled on mules' backs a distance of ten miles. The pamphlet is very interesting and full of information.

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D. BARTLEY.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 75. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1907. NO. 2.

POETRY.

CHRIST MY STRENGTH.

I know I'm weak and sinful,
My very nature's vile,
But Jesus Christ will guide me,
And lead me as a child.

His special care engages
To be my strength and shield
Against the wiles of Satan,
In all the doubtful field.

My strength is often banished,
And I'm left alone to mourn,
But then I'm made to witness
The strength of God alone.

His strength is only perfect
When all my own is gone,
And I am less than nothing,
Bewildered and forlorn.

My sins will not allow me
To merit one kind word;
They make me know my weakness,
And rob me of all good.

I must rely on Jesus
For all things here below,
And all my hope of heaven
His goodness must bestow.

I stretch my arms to Jesus,
And crave supplying grace
To lead, uphold, support me
Till I have run my race.

J. G. EUBANKS.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NEWARK, New Jersey.

DEAR ELDER GRAFTON—MY BELOVED BROTHER:—Ever since I read your short but interesting letter in the SIGNS of October 15th, 1904, I have had a strong desire to write you, but feeling a great deal of the time the past winter like my dear brother B. F. Coulter, that the hopper was empty, and that it was useless to start the mill-wheels, I have thus far refrained from writing. I read your letter to my sister Jane as she lay upon the lounge quite an invalid, and she remarked, "That is good, it sounds just like Elder Grafton." I want to say to you, my dear brother, that others beside those who were immediately represented in person or by letter on the last anniversary of your birthday, also hold you in kind and loving remembrance, and would have felt it a great pleasure to have been one of the favored ones who made up the pleasant group on that very appropriate and festive occasion. The anniversary of the birthday of one of Zion's gifted and very comforting servants is certainly a very fitting occasion for the modest display of a brother's or a sister's love to

their faithful and loved pastor; a pleasant and an appropriate time for brethren, kindred and interested friends to manifest their unfaltering love and warm feeling. I hope, my dear brother, that this is the inauguration of a pleasant, and, I will say, profitable interview; profitable aside from a pecuniary point of view, that will annually take place at your home, for it is well designed to cheer you and afford you and your dear family circle a notable day of pleasure that is well calculated to leave its impress upon the mind by many pleasant incidents that will render the day memorable, and bring some pleasant thoughts and make some pleasant feelings perhaps in some lonely moment in the future. I trust the pleasure and comfort that was yours to enjoy by the kindness and love of your brethren, kindred and cherished friends on your last anniversary birthday may be yours to enjoy again on the next recurring one. May each one of those who felt it in his or her heart to desire to encourage you, and thus contribute to your happiness, as well as to that of your dear fireside circle, fully realize and feel in their own souls the sweetness of that remarkable as well as comforting declaration of holy writ: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." I would not have you infer for a moment that I intend to convey the idea that these dear brethren and friends in bestowing this kindly and brotherly act upon you, did do it "unto one of the least," no, not by any means; very far from that are my feelings. Called with an holy, heavenly and an eternal calling, you have had very distinguished favors and mercies conferred upon you by your Lord and Savior, in that you have been made peculiarly comforting in your preaching, as well as in a social way, to the dear children of God, while it may be in your experience during your long and useful life to feel at times like David, to ask the Lord if his mercies are clean gone forever, and if he has forgotten to be gracious? But very likely, my dear brother, this has been the very time, in the providence of God, when the hope of some very disconsolate soul has been brightened, and the warm fire of christian love has welled up again in his or her bosom, and they have leaped for joy. The Lord has said he has set watchmen upon Zion's walls, and that they should never hold their peace day or night. Yes, whether basking in the sunlight at noonday, or struggling and groping in the darkness at midnight, his dear servants are called to stand up in defense of his truth, and O how trying it must sometimes be, you, I dare say, very well know, for your experience is not unlike that of your faithful brethren who have finished their course upon earth, and have preceded you to their heavenly home. Perhaps a little allusion to the experience and testimony of two of them, one of whom I know you were well acquainted with, will not prove uninteresting to you. Dear Elder Gilbert Beebe, who was one of the ablest ministers that ever graced an Old School Baptist pulpit, as we are all ready to acknowledge, whose deep, powerful, unanswerable and very edifying editorials of former years so comfortingly enrich the columns of the ever welcome SIGNS at the present time, once said in my hearing: "My experience has been such that I have seen times in my life when called to speak, that had I any reasonable excuse to give to be excused, I would gladly have done it;" and again: "There have been times in my life that seemingly I have been so reduced in my

bundle of evidences that in former years had afforded me a comfortable hope, that I had but one prop to fall back upon to save me from despair, viz., 'We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.'" In a beautiful letter written by him to a young member of the New Vernon Church, more than forty years ago, these significant lines occur: "O, I could tell you, my young sister, of fiery trials and sore temptations which I have been passing through for more than fifty years, and even to-day I feel that I am a poor sinner, more and more sensible that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing; prone to leave the God I love, or the God whom I hope I love above all things. But ah, how often the consolation of knowing that I love him is opposed by my wretched unbelief. I can hardly think it possible that I do not love his dear children; if I do not, why do I so much desire their company and companionship?" And yet the power of his eloquence was such, at times when it pleased the Lord to open wide his gigantic mind and give him full liberty in preaching, that "it was so sweeping and overwhelming that it seemed as though nothing could stand before it," wrote Elder Durand once, whose high privilege it was to hear him under such wonderfully favorable circumstances. Again, that "he was so broad and comprehensive in the discussion of a subject that nothing seemed to be left unsaid, and yet instead of exhausting his subject, he appeared only to have opened a door and shown you that it was inexhaustible."

Now an incident or two in the life and experience of the other brother, Elder Wilson Thompson. Did you ever see him or hear him? If so, I very well know, from what I have been told, that you have not forgotten him. I was quite young, but I remember well his appearance in 1848, when he attended the several eastern associations. He came all the way through from Indiana to Orange County, N. Y., in his own conveyance, accompanied by his wife. After the close of the Delaware River Association, which was held that year with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, N. J., they came to our house, and father accompanied them to the Warwick Association. He was a large man, standing over six feet, and well proportioned. The power, ability and liberty given him in preaching at all these associations were truly wonderful. His sermon on Sunday (last day of association) at Locktown, which was listened to by an immense congregation, was from these words: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" The memory of that sermon will ever remain fresh, I presume, in the mind of sister Lizzie Boggs, who heard him at that time with unusual satisfaction and comfort. In 1810 he moved from Kentucky to Missouri, then a Territory, and on January 11th, 1811, he and his wife commenced housekeeping in his uncle's kitchen, with very few worldly possessions. In a new and strange country, among strangers and surrounded by a very rough element, we can judge a little of the hardships endured, the trials met with and the persecutions (which were many) suffered. On the fourth Saturday and Sunday in August, 1812, he preached for the Bethel Church, and it was a time of a special outpouring of the Spirit upon that favored people. On Saturday sixteen persons came forward and related the dealings of the Lord with them, and on the next day, Sunday, they were baptized after preaching. Elder Thompson

spoke of this occasion as one that ever remained memorable in his mind; he said: "If ever I did preach with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, it was on this memorable day." There was an immense congregation assembled, and deep solemnity prevailed. He said: "I can give but a faint description of the joy of that day." His overflowing soul seemed to be full of the melodious song of redeeming love. He returned home after baptism extremely joyful in his soul, and from that time till bedtime there was a constant flow of praise and adoration springing up from the melodious chambers of his enraptured soul unto God. He laid down to sleep and rest, but could not sleep, he was too happy; but lo, what a change came over that dear brother's mind in the short space of a few hours. From the rich, interesting and soul-reviving pasture that he had been roaming and feasting in, he was suddenly led into as fruitless and barren a desert as could possibly be imagined, into the very labyrinths of black despair. He said: "After lying awhile I finally dropped into a sleep and forgot my pleasing reverie. I awoke in the morning shrouded in a gloom thick and dark, and agitated with as tempestuous storms as can possibly be conceived of. I had lost sight of every promise, and every assurance that I had enjoyed was turned against me." What a sad picture of his mind is here presented. He did not doubt that it was the hand of the Lord in removing him from Kentucky to Missouri, and that it was the power and grace of God that were so wonderfully displayed in the reviving of the church at Bethel and the gathering in of his people there, but he felt that he himself was only a rod in the Father's hand to carry out his own wise purpose, and that he was no child; he thought the Lord had made use of him as he did of Cyrus, Belshazzar, Judas and Pharaoh and many others, as a rod to carry out the purposes of his own eternal mind. Now he felt that the Lord was done with him and was casting him aside, just as the scaffolding to a building is removed when the building is completed. He told his wife and others that he had made the last appointment to preach that he ever expected to make, that he was nothing but a rod in the hands of the Lord, and nothing else could be made out of him. He said: "I had often doubted my call to the ministry, and the vital interest of myself in the Savior, but never before had both been presented and sustained with such an array of argument. The image of the rod was so depicted before me that I could not view myself in any other light. Now the Lord is done with me, and I can see clearly that he is dropping me out of his hand." Poor, disheartened and crushed-to-earth brother. But his love for Jerusalem was not disturbed, for he says: "But I do feel glad that the family (the Bethel Church) is in such a prosperous state." That spiritual life never becomes entirely extinct, does it? But the clouds that had hung over his devoted head, and seemed so threatening in their aspect, were removed as suddenly, and he was permitted to take hold of the promises as firmly as they were so unexpectedly taken from him. How mysterious are the dealings of the Lord with his people! While it was the pleasure of the Lord to bring him through very severe trials and persecutions on account of his religious belief, yet he was also pleased to manifest himself to him in that manner that enabled him to confide in his hope that the Lord was his Shepherd, and that he should not want. Being poor, and located with a

poor people, he received but little help from them, and therefore he had to earn his bread in the sweat of his face; and so he was often found at the midnight hour swinging his axe vigorously in the woods, when all was hushed to silence save the sound of his axe as it echoed through the forest, with his mind so engaged in the contemplation of the Scriptures and the deep things of God revealed in them, and also on the visible glories of the Creator stamped on the bespangled firmament above him, and the earth and its productions around him, that he scarcely had any idea of the time that was passing. I have thought and reflected much upon these two distinguished brethren as I looked upon their early birth into the kingdom, the important place they so well filled in the providence of God, and the fierce conflicts they had with the religious world, and particularly so in the early part of their ministerial career, and the all-sustaining and all-supporting grace and power of God that enabled them to so signally gain the victory over all their foes, single and combined. The Lord took these two brethren at a very tender age in life, one at eleven and the other at thirteen, one from the east and the other from the west, and turned their youthful minds away from the vanities of time and sense to the contemplation of heavenly and divine things. He called them and sent them forth while striplings to declare his truth. Relying upon the unfailing word and promise of their glorious Commander they went forth with humble boldness to fight the battles of the Lord; his everlasting arms were underneath them throughout an eventful, long and useful life, and with "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon" they fought earnestly, incessantly and untiringly in the all-conquering armor of King Immanuel and his blood-stained banner; they fought a good fight, and finished their course with joy, having come off victorious in every conflict. When their earth-walled cottage was being gently taken down, and the last rolling billow of recorded time with each of them had dashed and broken upon the heavenly shores of the eternal world, these conflicts that had raged so fiercely within and without, while here in the house of their pilgrimage, ended, we have no doubt, in everlasting and unclouded rest.

The unusual length of this letter admonishes me that it is high time to bring it to a close. We have had a long, cold winter, literally, and I have felt it to be such within. When I did sing I felt to sing in a suppressed tone:

> "Out of the depths of woe
> To thee, O Lord, I cry;
> Darkness surrounds me, but I know
> That thou art ever nigh."

Or,

> "O for a glance of heavenly day,
> To take this stubborn stone away,
> And thaw, with beams of love divine,
> This heart, this frozen heart of mine."

But the clouds are brushed somewhat away, and the storms have abated, and the vernal air of spring blows softly over me again. I had no idea when I sat down to write you that my thoughts would run as they have, neither did I think of writing you a letter of any such length. If "brevity is the soul of wit," I certainly cannot lay any claim to that excellent quality, as I have well demonstrated to you in the length of this letter. I trust you will cast the mantle of charity over all my imperfections.

I hope that heaven's best and choicest blessings are attending you and yours; that the smiles of your heavenly Father are upon you all.

Your sincere friend and brother, in hope, GEORGE D. CONKLIN.

CHAGRIS, Ind. Ter.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—Again through the tender mercies of God I will send my little mite to the SIGNS. The dear old SIGNS is a welcome visitor to me, it comes laden with the gospel of peace. O how sweet it is to read after the Lord's dear children, as they tell of the dear Savior; it carries me back to my childhood days, and from then up to the present time. The Lord has been my staff all the journey of my life, let me praise the Lord for this.

When I wrote last for our dear paper I gave you a little sketch of my experience; whether it was an experience of grace I cannot tell, but I am still traveling, and hoping for that blessed rest which abides in Jesus forever to all his children. It is said, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" than the blessed name Jesus. So the Lord has led me, and I trust in him for all things. When I found that the Lord was my Savior, and that he had pardoned my sins, I wanted to have a name among the dear saints. I went to the Missionary Baptists, and asked a name there, and they took me in. I was not among them long before I began to wander around, and to think that I was deceived; many doubts began to arise in my heart. What they preached was to me no food then, I felt to be a castaway; I listened to all they said, but they could tell me nothing that did me good. I united with them in Covington Co., Miss., in 1875, and remained with them seven years; they called me a "Hardshell," but I did not know what they believed, for I had never heard one talk; but one Saturday on our regular meeting day there was a visiting preacher who came, and he concluded the meeting with a short discourse, and under it my soul was filled with praise; I could hardly keep from praising the Lord aloud because of his precious words. If he were a "Hardshell" he was the only one that I had ever heard; I remember his text yet, and it is still sweet to me; the text was: "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." I thought as I listened, This is the doctrine of the Savior, and at times ever since I have feasted upon that sermon. O dear friends, for I feel that you are my friends, my cup did run over with praises to the Lord. Soon my husband sold out and moved to Franklin Co., Ark., and I was glad, for I thought, Perhaps I shall find people who believe as I do, for I could not believe the people among whom I had been living; but I did not find any there. We remained there three years, and then moved to Texas, but I did not find the church there. I felt that I was deceived, and a deceiver, and was still in my sins, and that there was no hope for me; but my soul was still longing for the preached word, for I knew that all my works were as filthy rags, and that I could do nothing to justify myself before the Lord: I felt that if I was justified it was by the imputed righteousness of Christ. My soul was sick nigh unto death with longing for the truth.

Now, dear friends, I want to go back to my first experience, and tell you a dream that I had, which was a great comfort to me. I had read my little Testament, and feared, and cried, and tried to pray to the Lord to forgive my sins, they seemed to be legion. All you that have traveled this way will understand me, for I was sick of sin unto death. When I would look at the people or at the beasts

of the field, or the birds of the air, I would feel, O that I were as good as you are. I would have given all the world for the sweet smiles of the Savior. One night I went to bed crying over my lost condition, and in the night dreamed that I saw the Lord in the heavens holding a stone in his hand, and there was writing on it. When I awoke it seemed that my burden was gone, and that the Lord had appeared unto me and I could praise his name.

We came to Texas in 1884. I was glad my husband was moving about, for I wanted to find a people who believed the doctrine of Christ. We moved here in 1887, and put our letters in the Missionary Church, and a member gave us the right hand of fellowship. O how I felt! It seemed as though something said to me, What are you doing this for? I was bowed down with a great burden. Then another dream was given me: I dreamed that I saw the Father and Son in the heavens, and a crown on their head. I wondered in my dream if the Lord Jesus was making intercession for me? This thought was a comfort to me. Then after this I dreamed that I had to serve three years in prison, and in three years from that time I found the true church of Christ. That was in 1890. There were a few others who believed as I did, and we heard of brother A. J. Gilbreath, and invited him to come and preach for us, and he did so. O what a refreshing in my soul, I was full of joy unspeakable. It seemed to me then that I could sing the songs of Zion. "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage. I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel; my reins also instruct me in the night seasons. I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope." The apostle Paul said, "Hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts." This precious hope is Jesus, who strengtheneth us, and whose banner over us is love. After this we organized a little church here, and I asked a home with them, and they gave me my desire. I told them a little of what I have here written. I went forty miles to find a home with them; I did not feel that I was worthy to be there. Brother Gilbreath baptized me in the fellowship of the church called New Hope, and he also introduced the SIGNS, and it has been all the gospel preaching I have had in eight years. After I united with the church such a burden came over me that I thought I must sink in despair. One day I took my Bible and laid down on my bed and tried to read to obtain comfort, for I felt fearful that I had deceived this good people, and thought if I could only have a little evidence given me that I was a child of God I would be happy the remainder of my life. While lying there it seemed as if there was a tent came over me and hid me from the world, and again I was made to rejoice in my Savior; then I could sing: "I will love thee, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom will I trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower." This is a glorious theme to talk about and to meditate upon. I am not gifted in writing, as are many of the dear saints, to whom I would say, Write on, for your words comfort me, as your writing is nearly all the preaching I have. Remember me in your prayers.

Dear editors, may the Lord bless you and all the household of faith with grace to keep you in the way of peace, so that in every trial and trouble you and we all may look to the Lord, who is our help and salvation, our all. O praise the Lord and laud him, all ye saints. Now read this carefully, and publish it, if according to your judgment. In any event all will be right with me. If the Lord shall give me a mind, I will write again for the SIGNS.

From a poor sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all,

NANCY CREEL.

[SUCH letters as the above give us assurance that our labor in publishing the SIGNS is not in vain in the Lord. Our sister says that it contains about all the preaching she receives. We know that others also are situated in a similar way. It is a rich blessing to speak or write one word to the comfort of the poor and scattered of the flock. But the Lord has been good to her, as her letter abundantly testifies. We trust that her consolations may continue to abound through Christ Jesus. It is good to live in the companionship of saints, but it is infinitely better than all else to realize the presence of the blessed Master. Without his presence even the presence of his own dear children can afford no real consolation. All the blessings of the new covenant are blessings, because they are in him. Jesus is all our light and all our salvation.—C.]

RANDOLPH, Maine.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I have been wishing to tell you that the Lord has restored unto me the joy of his salvation, and now I can write easily of the things I love so well. It was such a dark, desolate and dreary place I was in for a long time, and it made me feel that the rest of my journey here would be in darkness, with a ray of light now and then. I tried to be content, and although at times I said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him," it was usually with eyes full of tears. It is good to be lifted above my enemies and have the new song put in my mouth again, and I feel and know well that it is the Lord's work.

I left Lawrence the first of June for Maine, and the meetings at Bowdoinham were full of good things. I was glad to meet the loved ones again and be with them in their assemblies. We have meeting even if Elder Beal is not able to come, and the promise has never failed, for we have felt the presence of the Lord with us. The association at South Gardiner was a season of joy to me. The preaching was a feast of fat things, and we were very glad to have brother Badger and brother Coulter come among us. I hope they will want to come again, and that it will be the Lord's will for them to come. I went to Whitefield from the association, to visit the loved ones, and thought three weeks would be enough time, and now it is eight weeks and the visits not all made yet. I wish I could tell you how much I have enjoyed every visit, and how pleasant and profitable it has been in telling how the Lord has led and upheld me, singing hymns and reading the Bible. It has been a continuation of the association, for we have had meetings right along; our hearts have been revived, and each one has spoken of the same precious gospel we heard at the association. I have thought of you as I visited each one, as you know them so well, and how glad you would be to meet with us. Sunday all would come who could to the place I was visiting, and we

would have meeting, although we had no minister, but the spiritual gift of each one was brought into exercise, and we have been comforted and edified. The love and sweet fellowship in our hearts draw us more closely together in these assemblies, and the memory of these visits will be like incense and sweet perfume. Last Sunday we met here with brother and sister Hubbard, and all felt it was good to be here. Next Sunday, if it is the Lord's will, we meet with brother and sister Weeks, in Gardiner. After I make my visit there I go to South Gardiner for a week or two, and expect then to return to Bowdoinham. As long as my sister remains well I shall not hurry about returning to Lawrence. If you have the time to write, a letter sent to Brunswick, Maine, will reach me safely. I have felt it was a good thing to give thanks unto God, and tell of his loving-kindness and faithfulness. In speaking of his kingdom and power my heart has been made to rejoice. Jesus is precious to those who believe, and no one can say he is Lord except by the Holy Ghost. What great things the Lord has done for us in revealing the truth to our hearts, and making us to know Jesus Christ, whom to know is life eternal. We have been taught that we are not saved by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy. What a sweet and delightful theme salvation by grace is; every note of praise is given to the great I AM. It seems to me I have been led in a way to understand more fully how sweet the song of praise is. I do not know that I can express it so you can tell what I mean, but I was so long destitute of the evidence of spiritual exercise, and seemed to be one alone, and could not even recall one crumb of comfort from a sermon, and saw so much sin and evil in me, which caused deep mourning, and I knew the accusations of my enemies were true. I cannot express how helpless I was, and now to know that the Lord has made me to triumph over my enemies, has filled my heart with praise to him, made me know the place I had been in was for my good, and only his chosen ones were led in that way. Truly I must say, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" "I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people, in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the Lord." His people only can understand what I am trying to tell you, and it has been a great satisfaction and enjoyment while I have been with the people of God at this time to speak of God's salvation; it is the walls and bulwarks of Zion; nothing can hurt or destroy the city of our God. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" The blood of Jesus has cleansed them from all sin, they are clothed with his righteousness, and he is their worthiness, wisdom, strength and refuge; the name of the Lord is a strong tower. How blessed we are in being made to know the joyful sound of the gospel, for we shall walk in the light of his countenance. His eye is ever upon us, and the darkness cannot hide from him. We cannot flee from his presence, cannot get below the everlasting arms, for they are underneath us; what God does is done forever. He does not know even a shadow of turning; knows what things we have need of before we ask him, and teaches us how to pray. When we are made to rest in the promises of God we praise him with our whole heart; no room for anything else but praise.

I have wished many times to write for

the SIGNS, and have attempted it several times and had to lay aside my pen, for no words were given even to form a sentence. I love the truth it contends for, and love those who write, and have often felt when reading a letter that I must write and tell that one how glad I was they wrote as they did; but when I had the time to write, that sweet feeling had left me, and I was in the desert again, shut up, and could not come forth; it humbled me and brought me down low.

I felt I had many things to write you, but I did not think this letter would be so long. If the Lord has enabled me to write anything that you feel will be of comfort to the saints, if only one sentence, you know I would not withhold it. I hope your visit among the people was pleasant and profitable. We all missed you here, and hope another year you will be with us. Did you know Elder Ker came to Woburn, Mass., and they had a two days meeting this month? Brother Hubbard read a letter to us Sunday from brother Ford, which made us rejoice. I know they all enjoyed having Elder Ker there; all of us would have been glad to have been there to listen to the gospel, but we could not.

I know how busy you are, brother Chick, and do not want you to feel you must write to me, but it has been a pleasure to write out of the fullness of my heart, and I know you will rejoice with me. Remember me to all the household of faith you meet. Brother and sister Hubbard send love, and so would all the saints in Maine if they knew I were writing to you. My love and fellowship are all through the letter for you and your family. May God bless and keep us, is the desire of your unworthy sister,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

BRANTFORD, Ontario.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER IN THE HOPE OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST:—I desire to express my thanks for your answer to my letter of November 14th, 1906.

You have fully covered the ground in which my mind has been exercised for some years, and have strengthened my convictions. In the first place, I have believed for years that baptism was the entrance into the church of God upon the earth, even as faith is the door by which all must enter into Christ, before any comforts of his blessed gospel can be experimentally felt; therefore being justified, by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. You will note I have put the comma after the word "justified," for in the ninth verse we are told we are "justified by his [Christ's] blood," and by faith we enter into the peace of it.

In the second place, I have held for years (in fact years before I had any hope in the finished work of Christ) that to be a valid baptism there must be a right candidate, right administrator and a right manner. I also believe that all baptisms are not gospel baptisms. These subjects open up a very wide field for thought.

In the third place, I agree with you in saying, "If indeed any one has been baptized according to the revealed will of God in all respects, that one has no right to again receive baptism at the hand of any one." I do indeed feel this to be a most important matter, as you express it, and have entered upon it, I trust, in the spirit of humility, wanting to know the revealed will of God, and not in any spirit of controversy, and were it not for your personal letter, stating you would be pleased to hear from me, if all should have not been made plain to me, I should

have let the matter drop right here by simply sending a few words of thanks.

If I understand you correctly, you base re-baptism upon Acts xix. as being taught in that Scripture. I have not so read that Scripture to teach any such thing as re-baptism, but in order that you may see I have given this matter much thought, I will give you the incident (if you will pardon me) which led me to go into the subject of Acts xix.: Mr. John Leitch asked me some four or five years ago to give him my thoughts upon that Scripture, and I told him at the time that I had not given the matter thought, but would look the passage up and give him my thoughts, which I did. But whether I may be led to fully give them to you at this time, I know not. You will notice that Paul found disciples (followers, believers) in Ephesus. Followers of whom? Believers in whom? Disciples of Jesus; believers in Jesus; followers of Jesus. Do we not see at Jordan when Jesus was baptized, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost? The Father's voice, calling Jesus his well beloved Son, and the Holy Ghost descending in the form of a dove and lighting upon Jesus? Now did not this take place at John's "baptism of repentance" when our blessed Lord was being baptized? Did not Jesus set his seal upon "John's baptism" being valid baptism? In no place do we read that any of John's disciples were re-baptized, neither do we know of any of those whom John's disciples baptized having been called upon to do so. The question arises, What does this Scripture teach if not re-baptism? which in my humble judgment it does not. The question of Paul: "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" (Please note the first disciples of Jesus did not receive the Holy Ghost with power for months after they were baptized.) They answer, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." This answer shows this, that they had not fully come into a knowledge of the full meaning of "John's baptism." Such a question as Paul puts to these early disciples or believers, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" if put to the weak ones of the flock of God, even in this age, how many would be able to answer, who would give a very clear view, even though they may be true believers in Christ? Paul, to my mind, does not wish to teach, either those to whom he addressed his searching question, or us, that they had not been truly baptized, but wished to open up to their minds the true meaning of "John's baptism;" when they, in answer to his next question, "Unto what then were ye baptized?" he said unto them, "John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus," and in the next verse states a fact about those who heard John's preaching and were baptized, to my mind, does not teach that those to whom he was speaking were re-baptized. I will admit that at first sight that thought may be taken out of it, but it does not so teach me, for had Paul intended them to be re-baptized, the Holy Ghost would have led him to speak some word of condemnation of their first baptism, but on the contrary, he in kindness laid his hand upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost with power, for they began to speak with tongues and prophesied.

Now what was the difference between "John's baptism" and the baptism which Christ's disciples administered? To my mind it was this: John taught of the

"Christ Jesus" to come, while Jesus' disciples taught of the "Christ Jesus" who had come.

Now, my dear brother, if my mind has been led aright (and I verily believe it has) and that this Scripture under consideration does not teach re-baptism, unto what word of truth may I turn for light? I know of no other which gives the slightest hint of any being re-baptized. In my experience I find very few men who agree, or see eye to eye upon every subject, any more than the denominations. When the denomination to which I now belong was founded upon the word of God, and taught the doctrines of that word, which you hold, and the man who led me into the water also taught them, for he was not a young man but an old man, a Scotchman well taught in the doctrine of grace, his name was Elder Gray, and he preached in Clinton, Ontario, at the time, but baptized me in Wingham, Ontario, and was a brother of good report, and, as I believe, was called of God to preach, and because of that belief I am convinced he was a right administrator of the ordinance of believers' baptism, so that in so far as God has led me I am a subject of God's grace, therefore am a right candidate; and as to the right mode, I was dipped in the water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

My case seems hopeless at times, and last night my heart groaned within me: What shall I do? I cannot get any spiritual food where I am, shut out from a people whom I love for the truth's sake, and have a desire to come to the Lord's table with them, yet I know they have no right to ask those whom they think are not fit subjects for it. The Scripture comes to my mind you preached from the first time I ever heard you, and I this morning read a sermon from the same text by J. C. Philpot, now dead, of the Strict Baptists of England: "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appointed unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."—Luke xxii. 28–30.

I again thank you for your interest in my welfare, and for your desire to be of help to a perplexed one. I must now close, hoping that if I am wrong God in his love will show it to me, and that if I am right he will open your eyes to see it. I was much impressed by the loving spirit of your answer, and trust God's richest blessing may rest upon you.

Yours in christian fellowship, though not church fellowship to your mind,

FRED SIMMONS.

ROLAND PARK, BALTIMORE, Md.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—How great is the mercy of God to sinners! It is the sweetest theme of the Bible. How poor sinners (made poor by their afflictions of soul) rejoice in every evidence of the mercy of the God of heaven; they know by sad experiences that they are not worthy of the very least of his natural blessings of which they have partaken every day of their natural lives, and then when they have evidence upon which to hope that the Father foreknew and predestinated them in his Son Jesus Christ unto eternal life before the foundation of the world, they feel that such mercy is too much for them; it is the sight of their own imperfections and the perfections of Christ that makes them feel so unworthy of his tender care, or even notice, but these doubts and fears, caused by a clear view of themselves as they are, are

good evidence of the work of the Spirit of Jesus, for no one can see themselves as they are, except it be shown by the Spirit of truth. Jesus said, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear." What a mercy of God to sinners that they should both see and hear the things of his most glorious kingdom. Well did the apostle say that it is unspeakable and full of glory; no tongue can tell or pen describe the loving-kindness and tender mercy of God to sinners; he foreknew them, he predestinated them, he called them, he justified them, he glorified them, not because of their merit, but because of the great love wherewith he loved them, even when they were dead in sin. Can the carnal mind fathom the depth of such love? No. "It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." To bring sinners justly condemned to death and dead in trespasses and sins, to life and understanding, and make them abhor self because of sin, and love God because of holiness, is wonderful indeed; and then to give them to find and mingle with kindred spirits is also a mercy. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Is it not a wonderful mercy which we should greatly appreciate that he has given us to know and love the church of Jesus Christ, and blessed us with the affection of the brethren, also love in our hearts for them? For by this "we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Loving them, their words and very presence are comforting to us, and we feel now that we have found home and friends, and what mercy is greater than to be at home among loved ones who love us and will do and say what they can to make us feel at home and comfortable? "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." Many places in the Scriptures teach us that the Lord directs his children home, but no place teaches us that he directs them from home; how is it then that some who run well at first, seem full of spiritual life, receive and give comfort, by and by grow cold and turn away or cease to attend the public worship of their God? Have they grown so strong that they do not need the society of the church any more? Or has Jesus become less precious than at first? Or have they lost confidence in some of those they formerly loved? If the first state mentioned be true, they are pharisaical; if the second, they have lived after the flesh and are dead; if the third, they have made a mistake in neglecting the house of God, on account of their lack of confidence in men and women. The apostle says, Do all things as unto God, and not to men. Do we not know enough about ourselves yet to be able to cast the mantle of love and sympathy over the imperfections of others? Our Lord said, "He that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons." The Lord can punish them more severely than we can; let us be sorry for them, and if possible restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering ourselves lest we also be tempted. If I have not done as bad as any one else it has not been because my nature is better, but because of the great mercy of God which I started out to talk about; if one can truly feel this he will not be harsh in his dealings with others. What hast thou that thou didst not receive? O what a mercy is God's preserving care in our every day life; what would we do, dear ones, without it? I

feel that I should not stand one day. Better is it if the will of God be so that we suffer for well doing than for evil doing. Paul suffered even on account of false brethren; we are no better than he; let us have love and sympathy for each other, be loving and faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ, praying for his mercy, that endures forever, upon ourselves and one another, and the God of peace shall be with us.

Your brother in hope,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

LOVELAND, Colorado.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—It is under very trying circumstances that I attempt to write at this time. For some time I have had a desire to write through the SIGNS to the saints scattered abroad; for various reasons I have not done so. If I only knew that I could write to the comfort and edification of the saints, and to the honor and glory of God, I would write oftener than I do. I have very often taken up my pen with a view of writing to the SIGNS for publication, and, on reviewing what I had written, I could see so little in it calculated to comfort any one, or that would be to the honor and praise of God, that I would commit it to the flames, and no mortal on earth ever knew what I had written.

Jesus asked the question, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?" (A farthing is a piece of money of very small value.) The Savior tells his disciples: "One of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father." He said, "The very hairs of your head are all numbered." Also in this tenth chapter of Matthew he tells us that whosoever shall confess him before men, that one he also will confess before his Father in heaven; but whosoever shall deny him before men, him will he also deny before his Father in heaven. I doubt not that very many of God's little children are denying him, who do not realize that it is so; they feel like the little sister who wrote me, the only excuse they give is that they feel too unworthy. She wrote that she felt too unworthy to go home to her friends and tell them what great things the Lord had done for her in giving her to hope in his mercy. I think that I know how to pity such poor and doubting ones. When the command: "Arise, and be baptized" came to me, I cried out in anguish of soul, O my unworthiness! my unworthiness! and for eight years I lived in disobedience to the command of the word. I learned in much sorrow of heart the truth of the declaration of the apostle Paul to his son in the faith, Timothy, "If we deny him, he also will deny us." During those eight years I was denied comfort and peace of mind, which I did after receive when I took my cross and followed him, and now in my old age I seem to be forgetful of the goodness and mercy of God to me; it is an amazing wonder that I am permitted to live. It was the faith which the poor blind man had that made him whole, and on receiving his sight he followed Jesus. O that all the children of God could possess and make manifest this faith, and ever be found at the feet of Jesus. This is my earnest prayer. Let us encourage the weak; there are some of the little ones of the flock who are wandering out of the fold (the church) because of their feeling of unworthiness; do not these need to be encouraged? The church Jesus while here in the flesh ordained or set up is a home or resting-place for his children, separate or apart from the world while they sojourn here in the flesh. The joys and comforts of

the fellowship of the church and of her ordinances they will never know until they are united with the church. It is good to stir up the minds of such ones to walk in the way of duty, and to them duty is also a privilege.

But I am writing at too great length. May the Lord lead us all in the path of righteousness at all times.

I remain yours in hope,

J. H. YEOMAN.

[WE know that it is indeed good to speak words of encouragement to the poor, halting, trembling ones who desire the privileges of membership in the church of God. We know this from personal experience in our early life, and the greatest encouragement that can be presented to all such fearful ones is to preach to them the finished work of Jesus, and the Bible evidences that one has passed from death unto life. It is for this very purpose that the gospel is to be preached at all times; and there is blessed comfort in it when the Holy Spirit shall apply it to the soul of the fainting ones. It is good to be reminded of these things, as our brother has done in the above letter.—C.]

BRANTFORD, Ontario.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—The inclosed letter came to me last night, quite unlooked for; I feel all I can do is to send it to you for the benefit of all who may have felt a spiritual love for the late Elder W. Knifton.

Yours, (MRS.) J. STREET.

DUDLEY, Muskoka.

MY DEAR SISTER, MRS. STREET:—With a sad heart I take my pen in hand to let you know that my dear father, Elder Wm. Knifton, entered into eternal rest on Tuesday, November 27th, having taken to his bed about two weeks or so before that time. He had been much impressed all summer that his time of departure was near, and often expressed a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. His only hope of salvation to the last was in the living and dying of the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom he had unwavering faith, although at times greatly assailed by the great enemy of souls. He gave himself to prayer to a very great extent, and read his Bible constantly, which seemed to be his chart and compass at all times. He loved preaching, but met with much opposition, both from within and without, and often felt like giving up, but "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel," seemed to impress him so that he dared not do so. It seems almost impossible to us that he is gone, but we know that our loss is his eternal gain. He was much drawn to Elder Chick, and highly appreciated his kind letters to him, which seemed to have a stimulating effect on him, and the love in Elder Chick's letters to him was certainly reciprocated, for he would say, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Salvation by grace alone was his theme, and he shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God to the utmost of his knowledge and ability, which you also know. His poor old house was terribly shaken by the invasion of disease, and his sufferings were intense, his complaint having developed into dropsy; the water reached his lungs and brain, which caused his breathing to be just gasping, until the last two days, when the water left his lungs and brain and he breathed easier, and although he appeared to be conscious, was too weak to speak to any one, remaining in that condition until the last, when he smiled, closed his eyes and

was gone, without even a sigh. Previous to the water touching his brain he had truly prayed without ceasing, and I know his prayers were fervent, effectual prayers, inasmuch as they were the effects of the Spirit of God within him. Truly the memory of the just is blessed. We grieve over losing him, but not as those who have no hope, for we have indeed a glorious hope within us that we shall also reach the desired haven into which all the tried, tempted and afflicted family of God shall enter when their appointed time shall come.

Will you kindly let the rest of our Brantford friends know, and give our kind love to them? There is nothing up here but absolute famine, so that we almost faint with hunger and thirst for the courts of the living God. I shall be pleased to get a letter from you or any of the friends at any time. We often used to speak of you all, and wished we were nearer a few who worship God in spirit and in truth. May God in his mercy keep us from all the hypocrisy and form of godliness without the power, of the present day, and keep us looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, steadfast unto the end. Please excuse all imperfections.

Yours in christian love,

(MRS.) J. P. MAY.

[It is with sorrow that we learn of the departure from this life of Elder Wm. Knifton. A good and gracious man has fallen asleep. We desire to express our sympathy with the family in their bereavement, and also something of the feeling of loss that has come upon us as we learn of his death. Many of our readers who read the narrative of his experience of grace and of his call to the ministry during the year past will also be sad at the news of his death; and yet we do not sorrow as those who have no hope. We doubt not that to him to live was Christ, and to die is gain. He longed to depart and to be with Christ, and his desire has now been granted; and this is far better than to abide in the flesh.—C.]

THORNTON, Ark.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have often felt that I would be glad to have a talk with the family of God, as I am much comforted by their talks to me, if I know anything about it. My mother was a widow, and a member at old Lebanon Primitive Baptist Church, Troup Co., Ga. The old brethren and sisters were faithful to visit us, and I enjoyed the talks they had about Jesus. At the age of twelve years I was much troubled at heart about my condition before God, but I did not want any one to know my mind. After suffering for a time with this burning sorrow for my sins, I concluded that I could not live if something was not done. I was afraid to ask any one to pray for me, as that would expose me, and deceive others, as I was in a doubtful mind about my case. I knew no one knew my trouble, for I had said nothing about it. One Sunday morning in May, 1858, I went to seek a place in the woods some distance from home to confess my sins before God, and I laid on my face and prayed the Lord to have mercy upon me in the forgiveness of my sins that were past, and I vowed that if he would forgive me I would never violate his law again. When I arose I felt much better, the tears of sorrow that had flowed from my eyes were wiped away, and my burning heart had been relieved, and I went to the house. Just before reaching the house the thought came, What shall I do to keep mother from knowing anything

about my trouble in the past? I went into a room and laid down for some time, and then arose, thinking that all would be well with me, but instead, to my surprise, trouble had but just begun with me. I would get the Bible and read secretly, and every verse would seem to condemn me, and I had the same bitter thoughts as before. I read that the thought of foolishness is sin, and such thoughts would trouble me daily. I would try to pray every time I could be alone, but felt no better.

I had a brother four years older than I, he understood the Bible as well as most any one I ever heard talk about it, it was a comfort to me to hear him; he saw I was hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and would talk to me often. He preached me many comforting discourses, advising me how to walk through life, telling me that there was nothing for me to do to better my case, although it was right to pray always, for such things were according to the will of God. My faith was strengthened by this. It was a custom with young people in this section to have their fortunes told; I had no faith in any statement of men or women, but went to myself and asked the Lord to show me my life. I did not want it to be as it had been; I wanted to live free from temptation and sin and trouble of every kind; but in a short time it was revealed to me what sort of a life I was to lead. I was to have cares, toils, afflictions, joys and sorrows equal to any others. Doubts would often make me feel that all this was vain imagination, but I am now sixty years of age, and it has been as it was shown me, yet I always wanted stronger evidences of being a child of God, and I asked for my faith to be tried as was Paul's. In the spring of 1883, I was shown that I was to see the church with the water of life taken away from her, and she left in a dying condition, and it so came to pass, and my faith was sorely tried. I feel thankful to be able to say that I was blessed of God to say of those by whom my faith was tried, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." I am glad I can say of a truth that I am satisfied with the blessings of God here, and I believe I shall be after death; he is first in all things, and to his name be all the praise.

Yours, in hope of eternal life,

A. HOLLOWAY.

WAVERLY, Pa.

DEAR EDITORS:—You will find two letters inclosed, one from Mr. A. B. Ostrander, not a member of the church, but a lover of the truth; his mother is a member at Cammal, Pa.; his father is also a lover of God's eternal truth, and as Mr. Ostrander lives at Altoona, Pa., I thought there might be some one living there who took the SIGNS, and seeing his name and address would hunt him up; the other is from Elder C. C. Purvines. I do not now remember seeing his name in the SIGNS, and as he writes like one of our kind of preachers I thought you would be perfectly willing, yes, glad to record his name in the SIGNS, by publishing his letter when you have space. Elder Ker, I wish you would answer the request of Elder Purvines, it is too much for me, I give it up.

Your brother, D. M. VAIL.

1628 TWENTIETH AVE., ALTOONA, Pa.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR FRIEND:—I received your most welcome letter some time ago, and should have written you before this, but have felt entirely too unworthy to do so; to-night I will try and acknowledge its receipt, if nothing more.

I have often wished I could tell my feelings and experience like you can tell them for me; that is, when you tell your own you tell mine. I never felt I was as deep in the pit of sin as I have for the past few days, and how often I have wondered how God can ever have mercy on such a vile sinner as I. Yet I cannot give up all hope, and I do wonder how much longer it will last, and how much a person must suffer in this world on account of sin. I sometimes go to "church," as they call it, but I go empty and come home empty. The minister (Presbyterian) is a lovely man, as far as that goes, but somehow what he says does not seem to apply to my case at all. During the course of the sermon I often sit and think of the good sermons I have heard in the little meeting-house over by the creek at Cammal, Pa., and imagine I can almost hear Elder Vail's voice proclaiming the truth in all its fullness. I expect to visit my parents before long, and will then try and arrange to go when you are going to have meeting; I hope it may be the Lord's will for us both to be there at the same time. I had a letter this week from mother, saying father was feeling quite well, but of course it is only temporary. I am glad to know the members of your family are all well. I will be glad to hear from you any time you find it convenient to write.

I am your unworthy friend,

A. B. OSTRANDER.

GLENARM, Ill.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER:—No doubt you will be surprised to get a letter from me. Although nearly twenty years have passed away, you are still remembered by me, and I will call your attention to our first meeting and last parting, which were at the Sangamon Association, in 1887, if I remember right. You and Elder Bundy failed to come on the early train that was met, but came on a later one, and as I had promised to meet a man on that train, who failed to come, I was sitting in my buggy and saw two strange men get off and make some inquiry about the meeting. Some one who knew me pointed me out, and you both came to where I was; you did not introduce yourselves as preachers, still that was what I set you down for. There were a few words passed in regard to the meeting, which was about three miles south of New Berlin, where you got off. You first proposed for me to take your satchels, as I was in a one horse rig. No, I said, get in, I will risk the buggy, and it was not long until we reached the place of entertainment, brother A. J. Hudson's, one of my old homes, having had the care of that church (Fancy Point) before and since, over thirty years. I remember when we got in sight of the house you said to Elder Bundy, "That begins to look like an Old Baptist Association." Breakfast was all over, but it was not long until yours was prepared, after which we all repaired a short distance to the meeting-ground, where you both proved yourselves to be what I set you down for at first sight. Now, brother Vail, I have no reason to assign for writing to you as I have, only because I have so many times felt a desire to do so, and seeing and reading so many of your letters in the SIGNS, and the afflictions you have met with in the loss of those who were near and dear to you, I not only can sympathize with you in words, but in experience, having suffered the same afflictions in the loss of two daughters who were near and dear to me. Although several years have passed, it comes to my mind as fresh as if it were but yesterday,

and yet I cannot say, Come back. Your letter in the last SIGNS fully expressed my views in regard to the resurrection; although short, it expressed a great deal. It is not always the most preaching or writing that proves to be the most profitable; five words written or spoken with the understanding among the churches are better than ten thousand in an unknown tongue; outside of Jesus and him crucified legal testimony cannot be found, and a well disciplined church in understanding will not receive anything else, every semblance of conditionalism they will let pass to the wastebasket to be consumed with all such like rubbish. Any man (or set of men) who preaches a conditional salvation, in any sense of the word, preaches something that no man can sustain by the Scriptures, only by putting his own constructions upon it, in which he changes the truth of God into a lie, and worships and serves the creature more than the Creator, and from such we are told to turn away. The very idea of a finite creature working on a conditional principle, with an infinite being such as the Scriptures represent the great God of heaven and earth to be, is entirely too feeble even to be worthy of consideration. But since there are some of late risen up among us working right on this line, my plan and advice have been for several years to treat them with all due respect when they come among us, invite them to preach, try the spirits, give them a chance to prove themselves, which they will be sure to do, and if they prove themselves to be taught of God, say amen, but if otherwise, keep your pocketbook in your pocket, and I will assure you they will not bother you very much; there is too much fire in God's word for their combustible matter to stand long. I have heard old shepherds say the best way to protect sheep from dogs and wolves is to hang up a light in the inclosure, and if that be true literally it is also true spiritually; so Christ says, If the eye be single, the whole body shall be full of light. Now as the eye is the light of the body, and in the head, and Jesus being the Head, when he only is preached that body or church will be full of light, and there is no place for conditionalism, which brings discord, to get in, but will be found walking in the light, as He is the light, and enjoying that fellowship which is with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, realizing his blood cleanses them from all sin.

Brother Vail, as you write a great deal for the SIGNS, I will request you to give your views through the SIGNS in regard to the justice in an innocent being suffering for a guilty one. I would like to read something from you on this subject, if you can feel a desire to write upon it.

Yours in hope,

C. C. PURVINES.

HALCOTTSVILLE, N. Y.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I inclose a letter from sister Faulkner for publication, if you think it worthy of a place in the SIGNS. I think she has written in the Spirit of the Master, and it may be of comfort to the readers of the SIGNS. This leaves us all well. I hope to see you before long. Love to you and family.

Your brother, in darkness,

JOHN B. SLAUSON.

LEXINGTON, N. Y.

ELDER J. B. SLAUSON—DEAR BROTHER:—I received your kind letter, and was glad that one so unworthy as I should be remembered. I feel that it is a wonderful blessing to be remembered by those

we love and esteem for the truth's sake, and I do not think I ever felt such a longing in my poor heart for the love and fellowship of my brethren and sisters in all my life as I have in the past year. I have been shut off from them by sickness and suffering for years, and I feel that they know so little of me, and I have always felt my unworthiness so much, that I have hardly dared to approach them when I have had opportunity to meet them, until I fear they think me cold and indifferent. I certainly think there is no one like me; I am dissatisfied with myself, I seem to be such an empty-hearted, indifferent creature, so changeable, and if I have a little glimpse of heavenly things it seems so fleeting, and then my thoughts are carried away with vanity, and I feel just as helpless as the apostle Peter did when he cried, Lord, save, I perish. I often pray to be delivered from the vanities of this world; only today when I sat down to dinner my mind was filled with such thoughts, and then I was made to realize the only way possible to escape, for one of old said, I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.

You spoke of my attending your yearly meeting; I am glad I attended, for I heard preaching there that certainly did me good, and it was the last time I met dear Elder Hubbell; how sad and yet how sweet, for I believe he is at rest, freed from the prison of clay. Dear brother, please turn to hymn No. 1253, in Beebe's collection, and read it. I have thought ever since Elder Hubbell's death that it ought to be copied and published in the SIGNS in memory of him. I enjoyed that meeting very much, and I think I felt just as much at home there and down to Olive as one so unworthy as I feel myself to be can when they meet with those they esteem better than themselves, and I certainly do feel myself to be the least of all, and would feel as thankful as I know how if I could feel certain I am a child of God at all. But this gives comfort: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." If I know my own heart I do love them, and sorrow because my love seems so cold, so faint, to the dear Redeemer and his children, when his love has been so great to me, for he has blessed me in sickness and in health, and when I have been in danger that I could not see he has saved me, and watched over me all through life's stormy journey, and I can see where he has been a ready help in every time of trouble.

I was reading Elder Ker's letter in the May number, and what a blessing I feel him to be to all the household of faith. He seems to be filled with such wisdom and humility; always seems to be down in the valley, but when he is preaching it seems to me he brings up many rich treasures with him for us. How I love to go down in that valley with all the loved ones when I am reading their articles in the SIGNS. I love that valley, it seems preferable to the treacherous calm that has been over me so much all along the way.

Now I must close, hoping to meet you at Middletown in June, if not before; my health has been very poor all winter, but Providence permitting I shall attend. Those meetings last year were the sweetest of my spiritual life, except my deliverance from sin and guilt. Come when you can.

Your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) G. H. FAULKNER.

SILVERTON, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Time, that waits for no man, has rolled onward and brought another subscription due. Please send me the dear SIGNS for another year, it is such a comfort to me I feel I cannot do without it. I want to say something by way of encouragement to all the dear writers, but feel my weakness in trying to write anything that would comfort the least of God's children. I am so cast down and so much in darkness that I fear it will only be a failure, yet I have the desire, and it seems I cannot resist it, so I submit all to the judgment of the dear editors, whose patience I fear has already been tried with my former yearly writings. I want to tell you all that I have, if not mistaken, sweet fellowship for you, and would like to take you by the hand in token of the same. I feel you are all testifying to the truth of the Scriptures, as I see it, which gives poor, unworthy me some hope that I am favored of the Lord, yet when I turn my eyes within, all is so different from what I feel it should be that I often feel I am unworthy to live, and am made to wonder if this wretched state will be mine until life shall end.

We have a little church here, and have preaching every third Sunday, and Saturday before, by Elder W. J. Stephens, our pastor. Elder J. R. Hardy, of Greenville, Texas, has recently located here. I feel to thank the Lord for sending such able ministers. Our little church seems to be passing through a cold and wintry season. Such times come undesired, I know, yet they do come, and who can hinder?

I feel this to be my last attempt at writing; I am so imperfect, my mind so void of all good that others write of, that it would be wise for me in such a state of mind to keep still, but God who gives the will can alone give acceptable words to comfort and build up the lowly minded in this dark world of sin and distress, and I feel this is why I want to write and tell you all how much I love to read your good and instructive letters, and the editorials also. May the Lord keep us all from every harm and danger, giving us perfect understanding in all things, restoring peace in Zion at his own good time and in his own way, is the prayer of your most unworthy sister, if one at all,

E. C. FOGERSON.

WARRENTON, Oregon.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF OUR BELOVED OLD SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—The time has come to renew my subscription, and gladly would I forward to you more than the price if I were able financially. How wonderfully blessed you seem to be in your good work, for your work is ever well done, seldom a mistake on your part, and the paper always on time at our door unless the mails are delayed. O the glad tidings it always brings to comfort and encourage many who seem to be so far from home; but blessed are they who know the joyful sound, then are they no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and the household of God, and how rejoiced are they to hear the good news, the glad tidings of great joy, which is for that peculiar people, that holy nation, that wonderfully blessed nation, whose God is the Lord. To this most blessed people every day is a day of thanksgiving to Almighty God, who inhabiteth eternity, whose mercies endure forever.

Since I started to write, the dear old SIGNS has come, and how I have enjoyed it all, and especially the editorial by the

late Elder Gilbert Beebe. O how very interesting and instructive is every sentence of that good article; although he has gone from his labors here, he yet speaks to comfort and instruct us, keeping his usefulness so fresh and lovingly in our hearts, and how glad we are that God provides others to take up the good work which he so faithfully and lovingly performed until his dear Lord called him to lay his armor by and come home to the glory that awaited him in that beautiful forever. May the grace of God be with you in all your trials, giving you strength to overcome all difficulties, which you surely must encounter very often, and may his rich blessing attend all who may be engaged in the good work which you seem well able to carry on, is the sincere desire of yours affectionately,

S. L. H. STUART.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Selected by Geo. R. Tedford, of the Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church. Written by Elder Ambrose Dudley, of the Licking Association, Kentucky, 1822.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, to the churches and associations with whom we correspond, Greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the providence and tender mercies of God we have been spared and permitted to meet together as an association once more, for which we would be thankful, and although there has been no particular revival of religion among the churches in our immediate connection, yet there have been some additions to some of them of such as we hope will be eternally saved; and we would rejoice that love and unity, both in principle and practice, seem to prevail among us as churches in a good degree, for which we ought to be the more thankful to God when we consider the abounding of error and false doctrine of almost every description in our country and among the people professing our own name, viz., Baptists. Let us remember, dear brethren, that the Lord Jesus said to his disciples, Mark iv. 11, 12: "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables," &c. And again, Matthew xi. 27: "And no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Again, John xvii. 2, 3: "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Again, Luke x. 21: "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Here we may discover that eternal life stands immediately connected with this knowledge of God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the kingdom of God, and also how any poor sinner comes by this knowledge. Then it is, and never until then, that he discovers and understands God to be such a God as he has been pleased to represent himself to be in the Bible, by the prophets, apostles and in the Psalms—a God of divine perfection, without beginning or end, self-existent and self-dependent, omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent, that nothing can be hid from his all-seeing eye. See Psalms cxxxix. 7–17: "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I

flee from thy presence?" That God knows all things in heaven, earth and hell the Scriptures abundantly declare. Acts xv. 18: "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world." It is said of Jesus Christ that he did not need that any should testify to him of man, for he knew what was in man; that by nature we are enemies to God; haters of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ; that the carnal mind is enmity against God. The apostle Paul says in the fifth chapter and twelfth verse of Romans, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." David also observes in Psalms li. 5: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." The Scriptures inform us that in a state of nature men are dead in trespasses and sins. See John v. 25: "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." Also Ephesians ii. 1: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." See also fourth and fifth verses: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." And now, dear brethren, what a wonder of love and mercy that God should ever stoop down to notice such sinners, and how he ever should save such creatures, must have been forever hid from us had it not been his good pleasure to make it known in the Scriptures, and particularly to reveal it to his children by the Holy Spirit; that God should give his Son to live and die for sinners, to make atonement for their sins and redeem them by his blood, is truly a wonder, for it is said by the apostle John (1 John i. 7): "And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." The apostle Paul tells us in the second chapter to Titus, fourteenth verse, speaking of Jesus Christ, "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." The apostle Peter, speaking of Jesus Christ, in his first epistle, second chapter and twenty-fourth verse, says, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." These are the persons Jesus Christ says were given him of the Father: his own words, John vi. 37: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." Again, same chapter, forty-fourth verse: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." These Jesus Christ calls his sheep, and himself the good Shepherd; his own words are, John x. 11: "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." See also fifteenth verse: "And I lay down my life for the sheep." These are his redeemed ones, of whom God by the prophet Isaiah speaks, fifty-first chapter, eleventh verse: "Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion." These are the people Jesus Christ lived and died for, not only of the Jews, but of the Gentiles also. These are they whom he says, "I must bring." See John x. 16: "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd." These are they of whom the apostle Paul speaks, 2 Timothy i. 9: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to

his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." This is the material of which Jesus Christ builds his church, and to effect the same he called his apostles and preachers to life from the dead, converted their souls, brought them to the knowledge of the truth, as he has continued to do, and sent them forth to preach the gospel, with the promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Thus commissioned they went forth, and continue to go forth in the name of the Lord Jesus, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, charging on the people their sins, their guilt and the justice of their condemnation, and proclaiming life and salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ to poor, guilty, perishing, penitent sinners. See Acts xx. 21: "Testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." And when it is the pleasure of God to accompany his word by the operations of the Holy Spirit, then it is that poor sinners are brought to life from the dead, then it is the eyes of their understanding are enlightened, and they are brought to the knowledge of God and themselves, then it is they discern their sin and guilt and the justice of their condemnation, and cry to God for mercy, finding that it is impossible for them to do anything that can in the least recommend them to God. The Holy Ghost having brought the sinner thus far, he will never leave him, but leads him to a knowledge of Jesus Christ, the way, the truth and the life, in whom the poor sinner believes with all his heart, and sooner or later is made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. And now, dear brethren, seeing that salvation, from first to last, in all its parts, is of the Lord, what can we or what shall we render to God for all his mercies? Let us remember the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, he said: "If ye love me keep my commandments," "ye shall abide in my love." Again, "Let your light so shine before men." Again, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." Again, the apostle exhorts "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." And again, "Let brotherly love continue." How careful ought we to be of the feelings and fellowship of one another, and remember that they who touch the children of God touch the apple of his eye, and that Jesus Christ lets us know that whatever is or may be done to one of his children he takes as done to himself, whether it be good or bad; let us then be sober, and watch unto prayer, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and remember it must be done in the spirit and temper of the gospel, otherwise our exertions in support of truth will be in vain, and that the wrath of men worketh not the righteousness of God. And now, dear brethren, let us be patient a little while longer, and try to rest in the faithfulness of God, who hath said he will never leave thee nor forsake thee; and may we all be watching and waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will say to them he places on his right hand, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." And now may Almighty God grant that this be the happy lot of us all, we beg for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Z. M. BEAL, Moderator.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1907.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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GOSPEL BAPTISM.

It will be recalled by our readers that in the last number of the last volume of the Signs we presented some thoughts in reply to a request of our friend Fred Simmons, of Brantford, Ontario, upon the subject of what constitutes valid gospel baptism. In this number we gladly publish a letter from him, and now will endeavor to comply with his wish that we should say something more upon the same subject. It will be seen from reading his letter that his mind is not at rest upon the matter, and that he is not satisfied with his present situation. We are sure that he cannot feel at rest, and desire to express the true sympathy which we feel with him in the perplexity of his mind. We have long felt that all these things were too solemn to be dealt with merely as matters of argument. Paul and other writers in the Bible do indeed argue at times, but still what they present is more than mere argument. The word of God to be of any real benefit to the spiritually minded must always be made living bread to them; the truth must come sealed with the presence and power of the Holy Spirit if it is to do them real good. We do not feel like saying these additional things about this important matter upon the ground of continuing an argument, but we feel sure that the dear friend whose article we publish in this number (and perhaps many others) wants the approval of God, and desires to walk according to the testimony of his word above all things. Many desire this who yet are perplexed as to what is the will of God concerning them, and as to what certain Scriptures do mean. It is one thing, and indeed a most blessed thing, to desire to do God's will, but it is quite another thing to always know what it is that the dear Lord requires. This must be learned from his word, as revealed in the Scriptures. The Scriptures are the only rule of faith and practice for all who are called by grace. This has been one thing that has always distinguished true Baptists in all ages, that they demand a "Thus saith the Lord" for all that they believe and do as professed followers of Christ, and we desire that this may be our purpose always. We are glad to see, from the letter of this dear friend, that this is his mind also, and that he cannot be satisfied with anything short of this. O that all of us might at all times be actuated by this spirit. We trust that it is our prayer to God that what we may here write may not be mere controversy, or written with a controversial spirit, but simply upon the ground of desiring to know the will of God as it is plainly revealed in the Scriptures, or as it is plainly deducible from the Scriptures.

Our friend does not feel satisfied with the allusion in our editorial to the narrative recorded in Acts xix. As we have read what he has written regarding that Scripture we think that we ought to have added in our former article a few more reflections, and will now remedy our failure as best we can. To save space we will not here quote the narrative in Acts xix., but hope all our readers will turn to

and read it. It will be noted that those whom Paul found at Ephesus were not baptized by John the Baptist himself, but unto his baptism. It seems evident that had they been among those baptized at Jordan by John they would have said so directly, but it was "unto John's baptism." We cannot doubt that they had been baptized by some of the disciples of John at some other time and place; this ought to be specially noted. Further, John's baptism was gospel baptism, for we read at the beginning of the gospel by Mark that John's preaching and baptism were "the beginning of the gospel." (Read the first chapter of Mark.) Still further, all baptism up to the time when, after the resurrection of the Redeemer, he gave the great commission to his disciples to go preach in all the world, and to baptize "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," was valid baptism, to be received in his kingdom. We read that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, "(though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples.)" Unquestionably this was all good work and acceptable in the kingdom of God. All this, we repeat, was good and valid up to the time when the great commission was given; before that time, however, baptism was not done "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" now, for the first time, was such a commission given to the followers of Jesus. After this time any baptism not administered upon this authority, and with the use of this form of words, was not gospel baptism. To-day, for instance, should any one be baptized without the use of the formula of words: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," though all else might be in order, still his baptism would not be according to the word of God, and therefore not valid baptism. It was the same immediately after the Savior gave this rule, as well as now that hundreds of years have elapsed.

But why refer to all this? We have done so because it has always seemed plain to us that these disciples spoken of in Acts xix. were not baptized unto John's baptism before this commission of the Savior was given, but afterwards; and, being afterwards, it was not valid baptism. Those who performed this office, although no doubt gracious men, still were not qualified as gospel ministers to perform the ordinance, because they were not aware, perhaps, of the order now established by the Redeemer, or at least did not follow his commandment in performing the ordinance. If they knew of his commission and did not follow it, then they should, if they were disciples indeed, be beaten with many stripes; while, if they did not know of the commission, they should be beaten with few stripes, according to the word of the Lord in Luke xii. 47, 48, and the disciples whom they had baptized would be beaten with but few stripes also, because they had done what they had ignorantly. These disciples of John, therefore, though no doubt gracious men, yet were not now qualified to baptize, because they were ignorant of the commission given by the Savior, and these disciples had not been really baptized in the sense of the gospel, because it was not done in the name of the Father, &c. Had they been baptized before the commission was given it would have been valid, but not afterward.

Now we come to another thought presented by our friend. Upon the same ground, in one respect, of which we have just now been speaking, it was the custom of all our churches in the States, so far as we have any knowledge, to receive

all who came among us from the New School Baptists (if they had been baptized before the division, which culminated at Black Rock, Md., in 1832) upon the baptism which they had already received. We know of one or two instances where some came to us twenty, or even thirty years afterward, who yet had been baptized before the division, and they were received upon that baptism. But if any came to us who were baptized among the New School Baptists after that division, their former baptism was not considered valid, because done by those whom we could not recognize as true churches of Christ. Indeed, could we have believed them to be true churches of Christ, and that what they did was according to the rule of the gospel, we should have been very inconsistent to have declared nonfellowship for them at all. If we could receive one thing done by them in the name of the Lord, then we must receive all. We mean that if they could baptize in righteousness for the true church of Christ, then they could have broken bread for us, and their members could have come to the table and have partaken of the supper with us; that is, there can be no half fellowship recognized by the disciples of the Lord; if men are not for him they are against him.

If it be admitted that the Old School Baptists, in America, and the Strict Baptists, in England, did what was right, and what had the approval of God, in separating themselves from the New School Baptists, in America, and from the General Baptists, in England, then henceforth they could not recognize what was done by those from whom they separated, as having the approval of God. It has seemed clear to us at all times that so long as we can recognize any body of people as being a true church of Jesus Christ, notwithstanding all the failures and weaknesses that may be among them in faith and practice, we have no right to withdraw from them, but must walk with them, though we may, and ought to, be faithful in trying to show them the things in which they are doing wrong or contrary to the order of the gospel; but when a church has so far departed that we can no longer recognize them as a true church of Jesus Christ, but rather antichrist, then withdrawal means that we do not henceforth recognize that what they do as a professed church has the approval of God in any way, and, if disapproved and disallowed of God, we ought not to receive its work. In the first place, any such withdrawal as declares nonfellowship for a church or people that has once been walking in the order of the gospel ought to be well and long considered, and not be the result of hasty conclusions. That this was the case in the withdrawal in America and in England in the thirties we feel sure all Old School or Strict Baptists will admit, and indeed fully believe. We need not do more than to call attention to this here. If then we had the mind of God in these declarations of nonfellowship, that work must be considered final. It was not a light thing, to be as lightly set aside, but a solemn work, which must be abided by. We feel well assured that hundreds of gracious men and women abided with those who departed from the Lord, and continued as members of their churches, yet it is manifest that such as these could not be received at our communion, much as we might have fellowship in Christ for them, any more than any others in those churches could be thus received. So some ministers among them were regarded by almost all of our people as being gracious men, yet these could not be received any

more than others whom we could not so regard, and their work could not be received by us any more than the work of the others just named. A citizen of another country, however much he may love our country, cannot be allowed the rights of a citizen so long as he continues under the other government. It may be hard for him to see why, and he may be very sorrowful for all this, but yet it cannot be otherwise if a nation throws any safeguards around the right of citizenship. Our God has placed the citizenship of Zion upon high grounds, and commands complete separation from all others. Thus Israel was a separate people in all their polity, and the church of Christ on earth is *ecclesia*, or "called out." This our dear friend recognizes.

We are glad to believe with him that the minister by whom he was baptized in Canada was a good and gracious man, and that he preached the gospel of the grace of God. We feel like suggesting this for the consideration of our dear friend, and for all who are in like troubled condition: Suppose that this minister so well loved by our friend was living still, and preaching salvation by grace alone, while still retaining his place as pastor of a church not in fellowship with the Covenanted Baptist Church, in Canada, and, on the other hand, in association and fellowship with those who are not to be recognized as churches of Christ by our people, and our friend should now desire baptism, with the understanding of the truth that he now has, would he feel willing that this minister, pastor of this church not walking in the order of the gospel, should baptize him? Could it be thought in order that any such minister, however much we might love him for the personal experience of grace we see in him, should be asked to administer the ordinances for the church of Christ? If not now, why should the baptism performed by him fifteen or twenty years ago be thought valid baptism? If not now, it could not then be valid. If valid then, it would be so now. Then it would follow that the baptism of all ministers in that body of people could come to be considered valid, because those baptized by them might feel, as does our friend, that they also were God-called and gracious men; and if this were admitted, where would the matter end? The conclusion would sooner or later have to be drawn that we ought not to have separated upon grounds of nonfellowship from them at all; and then the necessary conclusion would be that we ought to seek to come together, admitting our fault in the withdrawal from them in the first place. Let our friend examine his own heart and see if now he would be willing to receive baptism at the hands of his former pastor and friend.

In a private letter our friend asks if all who came out in the division in 1832 were required to be baptized again. We can answer at once, that not one of them was required at that time to be baptized again. It was the mind of the brethren who came out that the Baptist Church as a whole must, up to that time, be admitted to be the church of Christ on earth, and that all her ordinances were valid up to that time. Corruptions were creeping in, until at last the departures were so great that men of God who really loved the order of his house felt that they must come out and be separate, and touch no longer the unclean thing. When the salt was separated nothing but that which was perishable remained, and corruption ruled supreme in the order of their churches. After His people heard, and heeded the call to come out, then the or-

dinances of the people who were thus forsaken could not be valid, according to any scriptural rule, and so all baptisms administered after that among them were not valid. These were the facts, and it is our mind that this course was consistent with Bible order in the churches, and that the opposite course would have been inconsistent.

We have now presented as clearly as we are able the additional thoughts which the letter of our friend has called forth. As said at the beginning, we have not desired to be actuated by the spirit of debate, but that we, and all who may read, might come to consider this subject prayerfully and sincerely, looking to the Lord for light, and for strength to walk in that light.

In conclusion we will say one more thing of the Scripture in Acts xix., viz., that if those baptized had not heard that there was any Holy Ghost, and those who had baptized them did not know of any Holy Ghost, and therefore did not baptize them in the name of the Holy Ghost, as well as in the name of the Father and of the Son, it seems clear that they were not really baptized at all. In that case baptism certainly would be necessary to the fellowship and order of the church. In this case the administrator was not a proper one, and neither were the candidates prepared for gospel baptism. See what we have said before regarding this matter. We are glad that this matter came up in this way; it is important, and cannot be too well understood. May God lead our dear friend, and all who, like him, feel perplexed, into peace and light in the gospel. C.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. T. Rowe, Nov. 11th, 1906, at the residence of Mr. R. P. Ennis, 2105 Orleans St., Baltimore, Md., Thomas W. Johnson and Miss Elizabeth P. Ennis.

By the same, Nov. 27th, 1906, at the residence of Dr. Samuel Moore, in Alexandria, Va., Lawrence Beckley and Miss Harriet L. Grehan.

By the same, Dec. 11th, 1906, at the residence of Mr. Charles Cole, Butler, Baltimore Co., Md., Harry K. Gill and Miss Ella Royston.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Dec. 19th, 1906, at the residence of the bride's father, Denard Q. Adkins, near Salisbury, Md., Ralph Hamblin and Miss Florence L. Adkins, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

By the same, at the residence of the bride's father, W. S. Marvel, in Delmar, Del., Dec. 25th, 1906, Prof. C. Norman Jefferson, of Kent Co., Md., and Miss S. Blanche Marvel, of the former place.

By Elder John McConnell, Thursday noon, Dec. 20th, 1906, at the home of the bride, P. W. Koebig and Miss Elvira E. Tuthill, both of New York city.

By Elder F. A. Chick, Thursday p. m., Dec. 20th, 1906, at the residence of the bride, John F. Fritz and Miss Bertha M. Leming, both of Hopewell, N. J.

By the same, Tuesday p. m., Jan. 1st, 1907, at the residence of the bride, Edward A. Briggs and Miss Ada M. Hunt, both of Hopewell, N. J.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence, 21 Broad St., Middletown, N. Y., Dec. 26th, 1906, Herman Hess, of Shohola, and Miss Agnes Greening, of Shohola Falls, Pike Co., Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **Nannie Henshaw** was born Dec. 12th, 1838, and died at her daughter's, Mrs. J. Bush, Dec. 4th, 1906. She was born near Richmond, Madison Co., Ky., and moved with her parents to Missouri in 1856; married James Henshaw Nov. 11th, 1860, and with her husband moved to Kansas in 1884. Her husband died Oct. 26th, 1886. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church, near Mt. Vernon, Kansas, in 1887; in 1898 she came to Oklahoma to live with her daughter, Mrs. J. Bush. She by letter was in the constitution of Bethel Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, in Kay Co., Okla., May 6th, 1906. She was truly a mother in Israel, faithful and sound in doctrine, and died in the full triumph of faith. We miss her, as she was the first one taken of our little number, but we sorrow not as those who have no hope, for we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and that all who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

Her funeral was attended on Dec. 6th, 1906, by a very large, solemn and attentive concourse of neighbors, friends and brethren, at her daughter's house, where a discourse was delivered by her pastor.

W. A. THOMPSON.

Lois Gilbert, our dear little girl, was called from us the 15th of last April, lacking only 5 days of being 12 years old. Lois had not been able to attend school for some two weeks, yet able to be up most of the time. I left home Friday morning before she died (Sunday) to attend one of my churches some ninety miles away, not having a thought that her sickness was unto death. When I received the news that she had passed away, I could not be reconciled at first, but when I looked upon her sweet face, cold in death, the thought came to me that she was now resting in His love, and the question, Would you call her back to natural life had you the power? The answer in mind was, No, for she would then have to meet the ills of life and again die. She is better off than her parents, four brothers and four sisters, who are left. I often recall her many virtues that I had not specially noticed or considered during her life. She never murmured, but appeared to be satisfied when her mother or I refused to grant what she desired. She would readily give up her playthings to the other children before she would contend with them. I believe the Lord saw a "good part" in her, which her life manifested, and so took her young life from this sin-cursed earth. The Lord gave and hath taken, blessed be his holy name.

M. L. GILBERT.

DADE CITY, Fla.

DIED—Dec. 6th, 1906, **Mrs. Nancy Jane Carpenter,** of Frank, Putnam Co., W. Va., daughter of John and Acenath Bird, in her 70th year, after a short illness of heart disease. She had been a devoted member of the Old School Baptist Church for many years, and was a faithful attendant at the meetings. She leaves to mourn, two sons and three daughters, one brother and one sister (my mother), with many friends. The church feels that it has sustained a great loss, but we hope it is her eternal gain. During her illness she often prayed to go and be at rest, where she would be done with the trials, troubles and sufferings of this world. She seemed to rejoice to know that she was born to die.

May God bless her sorrowing relatives and friends.

G. B. BIRD.

DIED—**Enoch H. Duley,** Dec. 25th, 1906, at the home of his son, W. W. Duley, near Hampton, Ky., in his 90th year. He was born in Livingston Co., Ky., where he lived and died. He had been blind for some years, but bore the affliction with patience. He had been a faithful member of Zion Church since it was organized. He often said he would have greater reason to give glory to God than any one else, because he was such a great sinner. Thanks be to God, he had a great Savior. He was a firm believer in the sovereign power and grace of God. He was a constant subscriber to the SIGNS more than forty years, and enjoyed it very much, especially in his declining years, when cut off from church privileges. He leaves children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren to mourn their loss.

May God sustain them, together with Zion Church, is the prayer of his nephew,

J. M. DULEY.

Mr. John P. Howard was born in Knox Co., Ohio, Nov. 9th, 1826, and died July 10th, 1902, aged 75 years, 8 months and 1 day. The deceased was married to Sarah J. Blaine, August 24th, 1850; to this union were born six children, of whom two survive him. Mr. Howard moved to Paulding County about twenty-five years ago, and resided there until the time of his death. He had been confined to his bed for some time with consumption, and during this period of suffering and waiting displayed cheerfulness, and hope in an eternal home beyond the grave. He leaves his widow, two children and a large circle of friends to mourn their loss.

The remains were interred at the Chapel cemetery July 12th, Mr. Silvat officiating.

SISTER **F. J. (Deannan) Adams** was born in Knox Co., Tenn., Nov. 11th, 1837, moved with her parents to Missouri in 1850, and in 1851 settled in Johnson County, that State. In 1861 she was married to F. M. Adams; to this union eight children were born, five girls and three boys; three girls preceded her. She leaves three boys, two girls, with the father and grandchildren, to mourn their loss. Sister Adams joined Charity Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, in Johnson Co., Mo., about the year 1887. The writer was personally acquainted with her for eighteen years, being her pastor for twelve years, and can truly say, A mother in Israel has fallen. Sister Adams was of a quiet disposition; her noble qualities were better known by her humble walk and kind deeds than by her tongue; she possessed better control of that unruly member than most of God's dear children; in all the conflicts of life which she had I never heard her utter a harmful word of any one in all the eighteen years of our acquaintance. She moved with her husband to this State (Washington) in 1901, then a new country, and located in Adams County, on a homestead, and while spending this lonely life her greatest complaint was being separated from the association of her brethren and church, but God, who is rich in mercy, called her from this vain world of sin and disappointment to that fair clime above, where there is fullness of joy; so let me say to the bereaved, Weep not, but rejoice that God has remembered her in mercy; and we, too, rest in hope of the same great deliverance. Her death came Dec. 17th, 1906.

I, by request of her family, tried to speak of the comfort there is in Jesus for all our sorrows; after which her body was laid away to await the great call for the graves to give up their dead.

ALSO,

Miss Rosa M. Baker, daughter of D. F. and A. M. Baker, was born in Washington Co., Ore., June 20th, 1883, and died at Walla Walla, Wash., Nov. 7th, 1906. I was called to attend the funeral, which was held at her father's residence, and I tried to call the minds of the bereaved ones to the precious promises of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. We do not weep as those who have no hope, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, we believe those that fall asleep he will bring with him when he comes; so comfort one another with these words.

JOHN T. BARNES.

TOUCHET, Wash.

DIED—At the home of his daughter, in Cammal, Pa., **Jeremiah Campbell.** He was born June 12th, 1827. Although not a member of the visible church, he was a firm believer in the Creator of all things. His daughter, with whom he made his home, was kind and attentive to all his wants. Mr. Campbell was the father of thirteen children, ten of whom survive him. The Lord spared his life to the ripe old age of 79 years, 5 months and 16 days.

The remains were laid to rest in the Cammal cemetery by the side of his wife, who passed away several years ago, to await the resurrection.

ALSO,

Sister **Jane Oakes** passed away Saturday morning, Dec. 15th, 1906. She was the wife of James Oakes, who died several years ago. Sister Oakes was born at Cammal in the year 1832, and died near Ansonia at the age of 74 years, 4 months and 15 days. She was the daughter of John and Mary Campbell, who were the father and mother of nine children, three are still living. Sister Oakes was baptized with her husband at Cammal, by Elder S. H. Durand, about thirty years ago, but did not have the privilege of meeting with the brethren as often as she wished on account of living so far away and not being in the best of health, but she was always ready to give a reason of her hope. Her last illness was short; she lived with her two sons, and was taken sick in the night and sat up for a time. One of the sons went for the doctor; she told the other one to help her back to bed, and as he did so she calmly passed away. The remains were laid at rest by the side of her husband in the Ansonia cemetery to await the final resurrection.

J. T. BADGLEY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Elder H. J. Redd, Ala., $1.00; F. A. Park, Ga., $1.00; Mrs. E. B. Jones, Miss., $.50; J. A. Tandy, Texas, $1.00; Mrs. Lewis Cudney, N. Y., $1.00; Isaac Larowe, N. J., $2.00; J. K. Yerkes, D. C., $1.00; Mrs. H. E. Scarsborough, Md., $1.00; B. P. Earle, Ky., $2.00; 1st Independent Baptist Church, Mass., $5.00; Mrs. Elizabeth Beesley, N. Y., $2.00.—Total, $17.50.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 75. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1907. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FRAGMENTS.

WHERE to begin in writing upon the wonderful work and the wonderful experience of salvation, is sometimes a serious question. We cannot begin with the Lord's purposes and work, because we know nothing of that until we experience it. The rescued lamb, if it could talk, would not begin by talking of the wisdom and power of the Shepherd, of his ownership of the lamb and his work in redeeming it, but would begin with its own remembrance of its painful, hungry, helpless condition, and then of its surprised delight in being taken up into the bosom of this wonderful man whom it came afterward to know as its shepherd. We can know nothing of the Sun of righteousness until his healing beams touch us; we see him only in his own light.

In the case of Joseph's brethren, the beginning of their knowledge of him as having been sent before them to save them, was a famine called for by the Lord upon the land where they dwelt. So the beginning of the knowledge of salvation on the part of the Lord's people is an experience of a famine upon all this world; not a famine of bread and worldly riches, but a famine of righteousness. (Psalms cv.) The mountains and hills of human power and wisdom are made waste, and all the herbs dried up, so that we find nothing growing there any more to feed our souls that are hungering for righteousness. Instead of rivers of salvation, which we had formerly thought of as flowing from the exaltations of worldly and fleshly power and goodness, we see only islands; no water at all, but the opposite, and all the pools of human wisdom and merit, at which we had before satisfied our thirst, dried up. (Isaiah xlii. 15, 16.) O what a terrible thing sin is! and this we are going to learn more and more while we live in this mortal state.

MY thoughts are much upon my unworthiness in the sight of a holy God. Unworthiness is too mild and weak a word to express what I feel concerning myself. "Behold, I am vile," said Job, but he was one pronounced perfect by the Lord, therefore we know that this expression, and the one that follows: "I abhor myself," tell only what is experi-

enced by a child of God. When one, however, sees in his own heart and mind what I am seeing in mine, it seems to him very questionable whether such an one can possibly be a child. The feeling of anguish of one in such a condition is unspeakable. He will be thinking that he is one who, like Esau, has sold his birthright; nothing that he can do can restore it to him; or that he is the one who has sinned wilfully, and now there is only a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation; or like one who has trampled under foot the Son of God by thoughts and acts of disobedience.

It is true that Esau could not have had a birthright as Isaac's son to sell if he had not been a son, and that his sonship he could not lose, whatever rights he might sell; and so one cannot sell a birthright to the spiritual blessings, privileges and enjoyments of the church of Jesus Christ unless he has been born of God, for none other can have them to sell, and that relationship of a son cannot be sold. This may and probably does save the disobedient child from despair, but it does not take from him the terror of the Lord, nor restore to him the joy of God's salvation. So in the other cases alluded to by the apostle, we know that the one who is convicted in his soul before the Lord of having sinned wilfully, and of having trampled under foot the Son of God, by disobeying his sweet commands, is a child of God. The natural man is not "under the law to Christ," and cannot sin against that law, nor do despite to the Spirit of grace, for he is not "under grace," but is under the law of Moses, and is dead in sin under that law. It is because one is a child, and under grace, and under law to Christ, that disobedience and wilful sinning cast him so terribly into the depths, which close him about "even to the soul," and cause him such fearful suffering. The man who has not been quickened by the Spirit of God does not know that kind of suffering; there are no bands in his death; his strength is firm, he prospers in his worldly religion, and has more than heart can wish. (Psalms lxxiii.)

But while we are shut away from spiritual enjoyment, and feels that the Lord has made our chain heavy very justly, and has shut out our prayer, there is a kind of relief in reading our state and condition of mind in the inspired Scriptures of truth, and in the hope, which cannot entirely lose its power as an anchor of the soul, that deliverance will come to us some time and in the Lord's own good way. The Lord's love and tender care will never leave his erring, wandering, disobedient child, he watches over him, he looks upon the one who says, "I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; he will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living."—Job xxxiii. 27–30.

I have been thinking of the great goodness of the Lord toward such as I, who have to say:

> "O Lord! how vile am I;
> Unholy and unclean!
> How can I dare to venture nigh,
> With such a load of sin?"

But when I think not only of his wonderful long-suffering and goodness in causing this vile creature to suffer such keen humiliation in order to withdraw him from his purpose, and hide pride from him, keeping back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword, but also of his glorious goodness in giv-

ing him, when the trial is complete, prevailing faith to see and feel his sins all gone, washed away in the cleansing fountain of Jesus' precious blood, how can I but rejoice and say, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord," I have by faith a deliverance from the body of this death? More than forty-two years ago my soul rejoiced in this expression of the psalmist: "O how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men! Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man; thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues."—Psalms xxxi. 19, 20. What a sweet rest is here for the poor soul who has been found by the Shepherd, helpless and undone in the mountain of worldly strength and righteousness, lost in the bewildering mazes of worldly vanity, and has been tenderly brought back upon his shoulders and hidden from the world in the secret place of the Most High, where he shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

It is now the seventh day of December, 1906. Forty-two years ago a council met at my former home in Herrick, Bradford Co., Pa., in accordance with the request of the Middletown and Wallkill Church, in Orange Co., N. Y., to consider the question of ordaining me to the gospel ministry. On account of the inability of my father and mother to travel a distance, the meeting was appointed at our home, about two hundred miles from the church of which I was a member. Of the six ministers who constituted the presbytery only one is now living. Elder Gilbert Beebe was the moderator. The examination and a sermon occupied the first day. The ordination services were on the 8th. The weather was pleasant, and there was a very large congregation both days. What my feelings were at the time, a mingling of hopes, doubts, fears, zealous desires, I would like to tell, but cannot. As I look back how short the time seems, which would have appeared so long to look forward to at that time. How little I thought I should live forty-two years. Though the time seems so short to look back to, yet how few of those who were present then are living now; of those who were the council I do not remember of but two now living. Of my father's family and the families of two brothers living near, there were eleven who were members of the church at Vaughan Hill in 1865; only two of these are still on earth: my sister Bessie and myself. What questionings were mine at the time as to whether the Lord had called me to preach, and what questionings have been mine many times since. I was baptized on the second Sunday in June, 1864, by Elder Beebe, in Middletown, N. Y., and from that time I had but one subject to talk about, and that was salvation by grace. But it was near the last of August that I was told by the Spirit that I must preach. I had listened to a sermon in which there was no gospel, but error from beginning to end. My desire was to get up in that congregation and tell the people that this that they had heard was not the truth; that if they knew what the text meant it would comfort them. I had been a member there, and would have felt no hesitation in speaking, but the Spirit suffered me not; but in an instant it was made known to me that I must preach. My one desire was (and has been ever since) to go and tell to all the ends of the earth that salvation is of the Lord. I wrote

Elder Beebe, and asked him what such feelings meant. He replied that the church had thought I had a call to preach, and was waiting till the Lord should let me know it. Well, sometimes I feel that my work has been of the poorest kind, not worthy to be called preaching, and sometimes it seems to me that it has been a glorious work, and that all the praise belongs to Jesus, the dear Savior, who has at times filled my heart with love to him, and has filled my soul with laughter and my tongue with singing. But O, the dark nights, the terrible afflictions, the awful desolations of soul that have been mine to experience; they cannot be told. During these years I have traveled much, and spoken often, and met many kinds of people, and experienced many wonderful things. There are many of these experiences and incidents that would be of interest, I know, to the brethren, and I have sometimes thought I would try to tell some of them, and recount some of the circumstances of my travels, and tell of the ministers I have intimately known. I know of only one now who has been ordained a longer time than I. How poor appears my work, and myself. Truly I can say I feel to be the least of all saints, if I am one. But how sweet is the fellowship of the saints to me. If I ever write of these things I hope it will surely be by the direction of the Lord, so that I may write nothing that will hurt the cause of truth or any of the Lord's people.

"Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." This is what the angel said to the apostles when he had brought them out of prison. "All the words of this life." What a solemn and sweet expression this is! This is the divine life; this is the life that was in the Word, and which is the light of men; this is the life which Jesus is to his people, and in which they are all one with him. "He that hath the Son, hath life." Our natural life has to do with the things of this world, and the words of this natural life tell of the wisdom and knowledge of this world, and of its interests and activities and pleasures of every kind. All of these shall come to an end with the end of this world; they are all corruptible, defiled, and shall soon fade away. But the words of this divine, holy, spiritual life tell of all that pertains to God and the things of God; they tell of infinite wisdom and knowledge and power, and of love and mercy and grace, and of salvation and all spiritual blessings; they tell of the wonderful love of Jesus, which passeth knowledge, which caused him to die for his people that they might live; they tell of his glorious resurrection and his ascension to the right hand of God; they tell of all the precious things which he hath prepared for them that love him, and of the inheritance which he hath begotten us unto by his resurrection from the dead, which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. To feel these spiritual things, to know their power and blessedness, is better than all this world can give; and how inexpressibly good and pleasant it is to be given this grace to speak all the words of this life, this holy, pure and infinitely exalted life, and what an unspeakable blessing it is to any one in this world to be favored with power to hear and understand these words, to hunger and thirst for them and the things they tell, and to find that they are spirit and life to us, and are living in our hearts and lives.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

"REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE."

(Luke xvii. 32.)

A DEAR sister wrote me to-day, saying the above Scripture had been on her mind much of late, and expressed a desire to hear some one explain it, and strange to say, the same Scripture was resting upon my own mind this morning before I received the letter. However, this is no evidence that the thoughts I may present are the correct interpretation of this Scripture. In writing or speaking I do not set myself up as authority, but simply leave the thoughts for the consideration of the brethren, knowing that "the ear trieth words, as the mouth tasteth meat." We have no authority outside of the book of sacred truth and the witness within. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Since the apostles fell asleep no one man is any better authority than another. But let us examine the words of Jesus, as quoted above, and see if we can come to a conclusion as to what he meant. It is a warning to us, and we should take heed and be profited by it. There are other characters spoken of in the Scriptures that we do well to remember. Achan, for instance, also Ananias and Sapphira; of these I may speak before I close. There are also characters that we have known in our day and time who stand as monuments of warning, whom we do well to remember. The apostle said, "Warn them that are unruly." There is no better way of warning them than to point out the fate of disobedient and unruly children, who stand here and there as monuments of warning.

"Remember Lot's wife." Jesus had just been speaking of the day in which the Son of man is revealed. He said it was like the days of Noah; they did eat, and drink, and married wives, &c., until Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Here let me ask those to whom Jesus has been revealed, Do you not see a resemblance between your experience and that of Noah and his family when they were housed safely in the ark, and all the rest of the world perished? Would it not have been very presumptuous and ungrateful for any one of Noah's family to have tried to take in the ark some favorite heifer, or pet lamb, or drag in some special friend, contrary to their wishes, and thus try to spoil, as it were, the beauty and completeness of the salvation of God? They did not need anything outside of what God gave them. "My God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." "Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all." Here is a wonderful salvation for Lot and his wife and two daughters; is it not reasonable to believe, hope and trust in the God who so miraculously delivered them from the wicked city he was about to destroy? If he would do this for them, would he not also take care of them ever afterwards? Would he burn anything that would be of real use to them? In turning back to save their goods their lives would only be imperiled, as Jesus shows further on in this chapter. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" "Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed. In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and

his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. Remember Lot's wife. Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it." I presume that most readers, like myself, do not take the pains to refer to the Bible and see the connection, so I have quoted the connection above to make it plain what the Savior was talking about. The leading idea is, "Be content with such things as ye have;" do not seek after those things that God has not given you, and does not intend you shall have. Trust in the Lord, he preserves your life; why seek to help him? but rather seek to know and do his will.

"Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it." What is life to a redeemed soul? It is that which is death to a dead sinner. The word "life" here means happiness, or contentment. It is natural for us to seek those things that we think will make us happy and contented, and in seeking those things we become more and more discontented and unhappy, and you may seek and seek, and keep on seeking, and the further away from happiness you get; and so in seeking to save your life you lose it. "Remember Lot's wife." The trouble is that our ideas of what bring life and happiness are all wrong. Perhaps we were happy when we started out, perhaps we were enjoying spiritual meditations; we loved to read the Bible, we loved to meet with the brethren, we loved to converse upon spiritual things; those who have lost their taste for and interest in those things should not say that the Lord has taken them from them, but that they have turned back from them, and in turning back and seeking those things the world seeks we leave the church behind, and we leave the dear Savior behind. "Remember Lot's wife." But what about those who will lose their life and so preserve it? Ah, here is a brave soldier, one who is willing to die at his post; he patiently runs the race that is set before him, he expects no great things, he believes that bread will be given him and his water shall be sure, he expects trials and temptations, he says:

"Are there no foes for me to face?
Must I not stem the flood?
Is this vile world a friend to grace,
To help me on to God?

Sure I must fight if I would reign;
Increase my courage, Lord;
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by thy word."

"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Remember Job. "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." Hezekiah said, "I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul. O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit." Thus Hezekiah acknowledges that it is affliction that preserves his life. Moses by faith chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. This was a very wise choice, for it was a God-given choice; this choice would bring more happiness to Moses than all the treasures of Egypt, had he have chosen them. There is a crown of life for the people of God, which is worn by them here below, sorely tried and afflicted though they are. Where is the interest and treasure and life of the true, obedient children of God? Is it not in the church, which is their home? O how careful each one should be not to trouble the church of God. Remember Achan, he was the one that troubled Israel, and was stoned

to death by all Israel; even his own near kin joined in the stoning. This is figurative of one who troubles the church and must be stoned to death by the whole church, or in other words, excluded from the church. Remember Ananias; when Satan filled his heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, he died at the rebuke of Peter, and great fear came upon all them that heard these things. It seems to me that this should be the case with us all when we witness cases like the above, where brethren live after the flesh and die, that great fear should fall upon us all lest we should fall into the same temptation. Remember Sapphira, who was affiliated with Ananias in his sin; she, too, suffered the same fate. When we tolerate and uphold brethren who sin wilfully we become involved in the same sin, and in this way a whole church may become in disorder, and so go the way of Ananias and Sapphira.

EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

NEWARK, Del.

MACOMB, Ill.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—Once more I ask you to bear with me while I, in much weakness and a feeling sense of unworthiness, try to write something for your perusal. I have a desire to contribute a little to our dear paper, and add my feeble testimony of God's grace to a poor sinner, for if I am saved, or have a sweet hope in his name, it is only through God's grace and mercy to the chief of sinners. I have been a subscriber to the SIGNS for many years, and in all that time I cannot see where it has turned aside from the "good old way," or deviated from the "faith once delivered to the saints;" but it has continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine, turning not to the right or the left. The editorials by yourself and Elder Ker are ever instructive and comforting to God's poor, tempest-tossed children, sojourning in this world of sorrow. You are firm and unwavering in principles and doctrine, yet you write in a kind and brotherly spirit, which strengthens fellowship and increases our love and esteem; may you long be spared to the precious cause of Christ and to the consolation of Israel. The contributors, all, seem to desire God's glory, and testify that salvation is of the Lord; they all seem led by the Spirit of Christ, so are members of one family of the household of faith. My dear brethren and sisters, I have been reading your dear, sweet letters, many of them over and over, and have felt like saying, Write on, for you know not how you cheer and comfort poor, weak ones, like the writer, groveling in the dark valley. Many times I enjoy a feast of fat things when I read the dear SIGNS, and then I want to tell you all about it. When I consider all the great things that God has done for his people, and remember all the way he has led Israel, how he found him in a waste howling wilderness, led him about and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of his eye, and led him to his banqueting-house, where his banner over him is love; yes, when I get only a faint glimpse of these glorious things I feel to say with the psalmist, "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" What are the wonderful works of God? I am too weak, sinful and ignorant to attempt to speak of them, I know so little of his ways, which are past finding out. The mysteries of God knows no man; revealed things alone belong to his children; enough of his greatness is manifest to call forth all praise and honor to his holy name. "The earth is full of the

goodness of the Lord." "The goodness of God endureth continually." His providential care is over all his creatures, his sun shines on the evil and on the good, his rain falls on the just and the unjust; all the blessings that mankind enjoys—life, health, prosperity, friends, freedom, are only a few of the great natural blessings from the hand of our heavenly Father. When we look forth we behold some of his works in nature: the great and glorious sun that lights and rules the day, the moon and stars that shine and beautify the night, are a source of endless mystery and admiration, the great seas whose waves are stilled at his command, the grand and lofty mountains, the fruitful valleys, the mighty rivers, the great trees of the forest, the fish of the sea, the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, even down to the tiny blade of grass, are God's handiwork; without him was not anything made that is made. The planets roll around in their orbits, the seasons come and go, seedtime and harvest, summer and winter, cold and heat, were ordained of God and fulfill some deep design, and work his sovereign will. All God's works are great and wonderful, and as far above the works of man as the heavens are above the earth. Though mankind, who is also one of the wonderful works of God, is endowed with great natural talents, so that he has achieved marvelous things in science, yet with all his boasted power and learning he cannot create an atom, or form the tiniest blade of grass; he cannot give to the rose its color, or to the lily its perfume. God's work in nature extends from the creation of the universe to the worm that crawls upon the ground, and when we contemplate these, which are only a part of his ways, we are lost in wonder and amazement, and are made to exclaim, "Great and marvelous are thy works." "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all." Yet there is a greater work that God hath wrought: it is the great work of salvation of poor sinners, the redemption of his people. Before the foundation of the world God chose in Christ a people to show forth his praise. All men were justly condemned sinners, they had broken God's holy law which said, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." They were dead in trespasses and in sins. God's people whom he had chosen were without hope and without God in the world. His bride was ten thousand talents in debt, and had nothing to pay. The law demanded a sacrifice that was holy, without spot or blemish; the poor sinner is vile, polluted, and all his righteousness is as filthy rags, and he cannot make an offering in righteousness, so without mercy he is lost. But God, who loved his people, these poor, helpless sinners, even when they were dead in trespasses and in sins, sent his own Son, who came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and dwelt among men. He came to redeem his bride, and to pay every demand of the law. Jesus came to do his Father's will, which was to save and keep all that the Father had given him. He called his disciples around him, instructing them as to his kingdom, performing many wonderful works before them to show forth his power and confirm them in the faith. He went about doing good, healing the sick, cleansing the lepers, raising the dead, even the tempest and the sea were subject to his power. Though he had all power, yet he was meek and lowly in heart; his was a life of toil and hardship. When the time came to finish the work he came to do, he was taken by wicked hands and slain; he died the shameful and agonizing death of

the cross, that poor, guilty sinners might live. Why should Jesus die, the just for the unjust? Because, without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins, and Jesus alone was without sin, and he alone could pay the debt. He bore all our sins on the cross, and when he cried out, "It is finished," he completed the great work of redemption. Why such suffering? O why such love for guilty wretches? Was it for me? I am fearful, and have many doubts, yet I feel to say,

"O for such love let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break,
And all harmonious, human tongues,
The Savior's praises speak."

But, my dear kindred, Christ did not remain on the cross. No, glorious thought! Neither did he remain in the tomb, but on the third day, early in the morning, as he had told his sorrowing disciples, he arose from the dead, a victorious conqueror over death and the grave, thus securing the resurrection of all his people, for as the Head arose so must the body, and he declared that he should raise them up at the last day; for in like manner as Christ ascended into heaven he will come again, and those in Christ shall rise first, purified, glorified and immortal, and shall meet the Lord in the air, and shall be forever with him, where there is no more sin, "neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain." The resurrection is the most wonderful and glorious work of God, and if we have a sweet hope of one day realizing this longing desire, should we not live in honor to his name, and praise him for his goodness while here below? He is still working a work of righteousness in the hearts of poor sinners, changing them from the love of sin to the love of holiness, and as God was alone in the work of creation, so is he alone in this great work of salvation. May we live as becometh the gospel. But, dear ones, if you only knew how sinful and low I feel at this time you would wonder that I admonish others. Dear brother Chick, cannot we say these things, yet be far from living the right way ourselves? I know this is the case with me, for I come far short of living as I desire; it seems my praise is feeble, and my path is crooked; O that I could praise him for his goodness and mercy to me.

I must ask pardon for this lengthy letter, for I never intended writing so much, yet I have only touched the most important part of this glorious subject. Praying that our heavenly Father may journey with you all, and sending Christmas and New Year's greeting, I remain lovingly, but unworthily, your sister,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Indiana.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, AND HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH—DEARLY BELOVED KINDRED IN CHRIST:—Another year with its joys and sorrows has passed, and we are still spared monuments of God's amazing mercy; another leaf in our book is turned, and our hearts look up to the all-wise Giver, begging for strength, courage and patience to press on over the weary road of life's toils, sufferings and disappointments. I am bowed with humility when I attempt to write to the faithful saints, who have so often fed me with their writings, but I must thank them and encourage them to weary not in well doing. The prayer of Daniel, made with fastings and sackcloth and ashes, comes to mind: "O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments: we have sinned, and have

committed iniquity, and have done wickedly. * * * O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces. * * * O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken, and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God; for thy city and thy people are called by thy name." Dear old Daniel, a brother born for adversity; how our hearts warm with fellowship when we read his prayer in the ninth chapter of Daniel, where he expresses the very words we long to say, like, God's mercy is very great; My sins are as the sand on the seashore; and, I long to understand thy truth.

I have just been reading Elder D. Bartley's last book, and find him another brother born for adversity. He surely was led through deep waters, but in his last hours was made to lie down in green pastures. He said in regard to writing the book, when he was sick, weak and suffering: "I am in the hands of the Lord, to do with me as seemeth him good." In the wakeful hours of the night he was comforted by his study of those who should testify beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. I read the chapter about Joseph first, as he was always my favorite, and the comfort I had in the reading was worth the price of the whole book. Joseph, when he made himself known to his brethren and they fell down before him, he compares to our experience when we come before our spiritual Joseph, and I felt it to be true; anything that I can prove by my own experience is a great comfort. Sometimes I fear I have not a christian experience, but when I find a similarity in Joseph, Jonah, Job, Isaac, or any of the dear Bible saints, it gives me to hope I belong to the same blessed company whom no man can number. The book of Ruth I have read many times, and wondered over some of the characters. This "Christ-man in Type" makes it beautiful and satisfactory to me; a wonderful lesson of spiritual doctrine and truth. Boaz is a type of Christ, Naomi a type of the church, and Ruth of the Gentiles brought in, and the hand of the Lord directed it all. How "great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty."

A Baptist brother told me he had not much use for the Old Testament Scriptures, but if he should read this explanation by Elder Bartley I think he would feel differently. I have known Elder Bartley ever since 1854; he lived in this city, and belonged to our church a number of years; I have heard him preach many times. He manifested great devotion and tender feeling when entering the pulpit, never indulging in light, vain talk while preaching. He esteemed the cause he served very solemn, and the liberty he had in his last sermon and writings, and his comforting talk to his bereaved wife on his death-bed, prove to us he had been with Jesus and learned of him. I have just had a visit from sister Sallie Bartley, and she told me much of her dear husband's last days, is the reason my thoughts have made me write in this way. I wanted to tell it to my best friends, who write comforting messages for me. When I open the SIGNS and see their familiar names I am cheered and hopeful. Elizabeth Johnson, dear sister in tribulation, when I read your last letter in the SIGNS my heart ached for you in your great loss and loneliness; and M. J. Lee, I was glad to hear from you again in your far away home. Dear one, I love you for the truth's sake, and feel sorry for you with your many trials. I cannot mention the names of all the christian pil-

grims who have fed me from time to time with the finest of the wheat from the Master's storehouse.

But I am taking too much space in our dear paper. Hoping God will bless you in this new year, I am, with abiding love, your unworthy sister in hope,

LINA W. BECK.

REVELATION XIII. 8.

"AND all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

I am aware that what is written in that book of "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John," is clothed with deep mystery, more especially to them who have no spiritual comprehension to understand the prophecies contained in the wonderful book; to them it becomes merely conjectural, wrought out by the cunning of human reason. There can be no true conception of this book except by him who "hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." This is also true of all scriptural knowledge, there is but one source of spiritual understanding, and that comes through the revelation of Jesus Christ imparted to his chosen servants, and what God purposes to reveal to his servants will certainly be accomplished. "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." It is determined in the wisdom of God that every event portrayed in the book of Revelation will be fulfilled with absolute certainty. The chapter of which the verse at the head of this article is a part has been the theme of many and varied theories. All agree that the two beasts represent power, and through the exercise of that power influence an authority over mankind—all kingdoms, and tongues, and nations. So great and powerful is the influence of the first beast, we find him penetrating all lands and all tongues and all people; the great, the mighty and the learned, as well as the small, the weak and the ignorant, have been alike subject to its authority. Must not these things be accomplished? For "all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him." He certainly must come upon the stage of human action and perform his part to fulfill the prophetic scenes assigned him, as detailed by the beloved apostle in the lonely isle of Patmos. Who shall be his worshipers? All whose names are not written in the book of life; no more, no less. It is very conclusive then that there is a book of life, wherein are written the names of people who do not worship the beast. Jesus told his disciples, when they came to him in a seemingly boasting spirit, saying, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name," "Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven;" in that book of life, or the eternal mind of Jehovah. How long have those names been written? "From the foundation of the world." What is the title of this wonderful book? Book of the Lamb slain. Some accept the theory that the Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world. I understand that the phrase, "from the foundation of the world," is connected with the phrase, "are not written," and not the verb "slain." The eighth verse of the seventeenth chapter reads: "And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world." The worshipers of

the beast do not teach that the names of God's children are in that book from the foundation of the world, but are written when the terms of an offered salvation are accepted and complied with. I have listened to ministers of our faith quote that the Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world. Ministers should be very careful not to quote Scripture that will convey an erroneous meaning. That the names of God's children were written in the book of life from the foundation of the world should be a very precious thought to every one who has been called by grace manifestly into the kingdom of God's dear Son. That view is consistent with all the great and fundamental truths of the gospel, it is the very essence of predestination. "For whom he did foreknow, [because written in the book] he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." Then follows another link in the golden chain of God's purposes: "Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called." Their justification, and also their glorification, follow to perfect the saints for that place that Jesus has gone to prepare for them. This precious and consoling truth is not understood by those whose names are not written in that book. Paul believed that their names were thus written: "I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlaborers, whose names are written in the book of life." Again, when he beheld heresies arise among those of his people who erred concerning the truth, and overthrew the faith of some, he was confident in God and exclaimed with hope and trust, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."—2 Tim. ii. 19. Jude also confirmed the belief in the short letter he wrote: "To them that are sanctified [written in the book] by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." "And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." "And called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9. Where will be found in all the world, among the varied religious organizations, one that loves these blessed truths, except the despised Old School Baptists? They can say with the great apostle: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth."—Romans i. 16. Jesus, in describing these written in the book, says, "Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."

In conclusion of the matter, the redeemed family of God was written by name in the book of life, they were written before the foundation of the world, they fell under the power of sin, "and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others," but in the purpose of God they were the children of the promise. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came into the world to lay down his life in order to save them from the power of sin and death, and all that the Father gave to him cometh unto him, and his love for them was so great that he said, "I will in no wise cast out." "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." Their names are written in heaven, in the book of life, they alone are the children of the resurrection, they alone shall

hear, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

I understand the first beast to be papal power in the beginning, a combination of pagan reasoning and christian apostacy, a combination of the spotted leopard, feet of a bear (climbing power), and the mouth of a lion, making a great noise. The second beast had two horns, like a lamb, exercised milder power, came up out of the earth, not so turbulent and stormy as the first, as it rose out of the sea of confusion. One had ten horns, representing great and strong power; the other two horns, (milder power) exercised reason more than force. Both received power from the dragon, or Satan; both strived to maintain secular as well as spiritual power, or combination of church and state, in contradiction of the teachings of Jesus, whom they profess to worship. He declared that his kingdom is not of the world. The two horned beast represents Protestantism, as established in Germany under Luther, and in England under Henry the Eighth. Those two horns, or powers, have grown out of the same head, beastly. How aptly the beasts are described in the tenth verse: "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints."

Brethren editors, I may be wrong in my conclusions, crudely written, but they are as I understand them, and I submit them to your judgment. Success to you while contending for the truth.

Your brother in hope,

T. R. PITTMAN.

HAVANA, Kansas.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have all of yesterday so vividly in my mind this morning that I feel I must tell some one about it, and I know of no one that I would rather write to about it than you. If I had taken my pen an hour or two ago I feel sure it would have been of more interest, for I have lived the day and evening over in memory, and now just give you the copy, or milk of it, while I have devoured the cream. To me it was a day never to be forgotten; one among the beautiful days to a sojourner in this warpath of strife and confusion. It was dull, and finally rained in the morning, but that did not affect the singing and sweet words of comfort of the Scriptures in my heart, and neither did it make me feel that I would not go to meeting, as we do not stop for any ordinary rain. The Lord has shown us such favor that we are made to see his mercy to us in it. Oftentimes we have come home, walking in from our depot, and the rain would slacken until we arrived home, and then in less than two minutes at times, has just poured down. Several times the lightning would flash, and the sound of the thunder would be nearer and nearer, seeming at last to be upon us, and the rain would be stayed until we were home and then fall. So we went to meeting yesterday without getting wet. On our way we overtook a brother and sister, and they looked lovely to me. After we four went into the hall, others began to gather. Elder Coulter was away, and Elder Cubbage was with us. The singing was good, and the text was Romans xi. 5, also the seventh verse, but brother Cubbage did not get to say much about the seventh verse. I felt that I knew it was the truth, and nothing but the truth, but it was too deep for me,

too great for my ability to grasp the fullness of it. I was glad to see the freedom and power the Lord gave brother Cubbage. After meeting it was decided to meet in the evening with our friend, Thomas Cubbage, so I went to dinner with him; brother Charles Bond and family, also sister Duffield and daughter, and sister Horner and brother Cubbage, went there, too, and all the time through the day gossip was left out, and the better things were the theme. In the evening brother H. C. Ker was with us, too. About twenty-five were there, and you know about our usual evening gatherings. The singing was good, each one seeming to join in, in love. Brother Cubbage again took up the morning subject, by request, and spoke to the satisfaction of all, I think. The first one to speak was friend Cubbage, addressing us as friends, and saying that he wished us to feel free in his home, and that as he was not a member he did not feel to say much. Then Elder Cubbage spoke, followed by Elder Ker, on the same subject, and to my mind he finished it completely, giving the full and complete meaning of predestination and election, and of the commands of our heavenly Father; and then, having been touched by friend Cubbage addressing us as friends, and of his unworthiness to be among us, he spoke to him beautifully, and not only to him, but to all who felt as friend Cubbage expressed himself. I do wish I could pen you every word of it, but my desires far, far exceed my memory of it, and I cannot do it, but I can say Elder Ker's remarks to the friends were very touching to all, being entirely the truth. The Salem Church has many of these dear friends, so close to them, and they are in such sympathy with them that the church yearns for them, and when anything touches these friends it touches the church. Dear brother, I find myself really impatient awaiting the Lord's time to bring them in; I try not to be so, but I cannot control the impatient desire I have; yet we have seen his manifest goodness in the last year in bringing in four, two of them being our friends for so long, one having the desire to come to the church for forty years; so we do see where the Lord has begun a good work he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. I often feel that I want to speak words of encouragement to these dear ones; they seem to feel that we do not understand where they stand or how they feel, but we do understand them, and know that they do not understand themselves. They rely entirely on their own judgment, while I feel sure that the judgment of the church is the better, even of their very own case. They see their errors so vividly, and seem to feel that the church is so much better, that they could not live in the church as would become their profession. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak, and they feel that they cannot live and do as they like without the church, and so it would be wrong to enter in and still do wrong. Now I feel to say to such ones, The command is, "Take my yoke upon you; and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." O how strengthening that yoke is, how it keeps us from going in by and forbidden paths; it overcomes many sad and bitter temptations, and, as Elder Ker said last evening, we are already keeping the commands of the Father when we believe. He said there is no God but one, the Ruler and Maker of all things, and when we love the brethren we are following his command, for it has been

given us to see who the brethren are, and we do love them. With my longings in this matter I feel to say, You obey some of the commandments, do obey them all, and "come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." When the evening was spent, and the time had come for us to return each to our homes, I felt the sweetness of the meeting and the profit of it, and desired much to tell them so, but I knew that I would stammer, so I had best not try. These gatherings keep us near each other, and I need every one of them. I need every handshake, every word of love and encouragement, both from the visible members, and those called friends. All yesterday and to-day I have been basking in Elder Grafton's text at Welsh Tract meeting: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."

I must stop, or I will weary you. Come and spend one of these lovely evenings with us; all will welcome you. I have much to say, but must wait longer. Mr. Terry joins me in love to you all.

MARY HILL TERRY.

HUNTINGDON VALLEY, Pa.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—May one so unworthy as I address you as such? May the inclosed letter have a place in the SIGNS? This letter from brother Fenton came to me as a surprise, some time ago. When I received it I was made to cry aloud, and felt that it was the Lord who prompted him to write to me. But why should the Lord think of me? I feel as though others should read it also. I am in a very dark state of mind. It has been almost a year that I have been in the valley, and I feel as though I am almost as low as I can be. I know it is the Lord who has shut me out from his presence, and that in his own time, if it be his will, I shall again see the sunshine.

Our brother has written of how the Savior spoke to the poor and needy. Just while I was reading his letter I felt that I did know some of the things of which he spoke, but in a moment all was gone. If I am one of his, I know that I am the least of all.

Believe me, as ever, your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) E. H. PIERSON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

SISTER ELMA PIERSON—DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—I would direct your thoughts to the words of our Savior, recorded in the fifth chapter of Matthew, where it is said that he went up into a mountain, and his disciples came unto him, and he opened his mouth and taught them. I would first say that as it was Christ who taught his disciples on this occasion, so it is also Christ who teaches those that are his at this day. There will never be any other teacher, for "no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Jesus told his disciples who the blessed ones are; blessed not in earthly possessions, but in spiritual life. He says, verse third, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." I will ask you, Were you ever poor in spirit, or cast down, feeling that it could not be possible that one so vile and sinful could be an heir of salvation? Am I one who will dwell with the Lord forever, after leaving this sinful world?

You will answer, No. For myself, I was satisfied when I felt that the Lord had pardoned my sins, and I was given a good hope in Christ. I felt that sin would never have any more hold upon me, and that I would live the remainder of my days to his praise and in his service, and that I should not commit deeds or allow thoughts that were against my Lord and Savior to ever occupy my time; but alas, how far short I have come. Truly Elder Durand spoke my view when he said that we could not of ourselves work ourselves one hair's breadth toward the kingdom of God. "When I would do good, evil is present with me," and "the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." This was the experience of Paul, and in it we have fellowship for him. Now if we could of ourselves merit any esteem in the sight of our Savior, so that we might come to him, bringing that which we had done, would not this be our own righteousness? But is not the experience of every child of grace: My righteousness is as filthy rags? Jesus is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. What a strong refuge and safe abiding place is this, to have a hope in one who has all power in heaven and in earth. But now the questions come to me: "Do I love the Lord or no?" "Am I his, or am I not?" "If I love, why am I thus?" Now all this describes this one character of which I spoke, which is said by the Savior to be blessed. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." In Isaiah xli. 17, the Lord testifies as follows: "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them." What wonderful, glorious and comforting words to lay hold upon. Mark, the words are addressed to the poor and needy; these are poor in spirit, seeking the water of life, and there is none; these are the characters whom Jesus called blessed. It is not that they will be blessed some time later, but they are now blessed. John said, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." He has appeared unto you when you feel that all your sins are forgiven. You did not behold him with natural eyes, but felt the power of his love, grace and mercy to poor, lost sinners. We never will behold him with these natural eyes, but by faith. God is a Spirit, and Christ dwells within by the Spirit. It is Christ in you the hope of glory that causes you to hunger and thirst after righteousness. We surely would not be poor in spirit had we not the Spirit of Christ within us.

What comforting words are given us in the Bible, and when the Lord is pleased to apply them with power to our souls they are Spirit and life to us. He is the great Comforter, the great Shepherd, and he will never leave nor forsake us. He is able to gather us all to himself when we are through with our travel in this earthly pilgrimage. May the Lord keep and comfort us, is my prayer.

Yours in hope,

J. M. FENTON.

MORGAN Co., Ga.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am now in my eighty-third year, and have been a reader of the SIGNS for about seventy years; my father, Grant Davis, took the paper in 1832, when it was first published; he read it while he lived, and enjoyed it very much. In November, 1834, he died, but my mother continued to take the

SIGNS, and read it to her children. She was a strong believer in the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS at that time, and which it still continues to advocate as Bible truth. My mother died when nearly eighty-eight years of age, leaving as a legacy to her children a large package of old SIGNS for them to read, and I am thankful to say that her children (six in number) were all firm predestinarians, and all except one were Primitive Baptists. She, having married a Missionary Baptist preacher, never united with the Primitive Baptists. I have a number of nieces and nephews who are strong believers in the doctrine of the SIGNS, and delight to read it. They are firm believers in the doctrine of election, predestination, &c., as taught in the Bible. I regret very much to say that out of five children of my own, only one is a Primitive Baptist. Three children and two grandchildren belong to the Missionaries, which outnumber all other denominations in our County. I often feel like saying, O that the Lord would revive his work once more in this part of his vineyard, if consistent with his holy will.

Dear brethren and sisters, if my heart deceives me not, I desire an interest in the prayers of all God's children that my few remaining days may be spent in his service. I know my time is short; God grant that I may be waiting when the final summons comes. I have not been to my church in fifteen years, and never get out of doors at all now. I have been much afflicted for several years, but desire to be resigned to my lot.

If you think this worth publishing you can do so, if not all will be right. In all probability this will be my last. May God bless the editors, writers and publishers of the SIGNS, and enable them to still contend for the truth, is the prayer of your afflicted sister,

LUCY LAURA PERRY.

WINTER-LEA, England.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR FRIENDS AND FELLOW-LABORERS IN THE ONE GREAT VINEYARD, GREETING:—Friend Farncombe has favored me with a sight of your paper, and as I feel a love to all who love and contend for the old truths, I purpose instructing him to mail you every month a copy of *The Christian's Pathway*, which he prints and publishes, and of which I am the editor. If you can see your way clear to send me, direct as above (private address) one copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a month or every other month I shall be glad. It seems desirable, to my mind, that the Strict Baptists of England should become better acquainted with the Old School Baptists of America. I already correspond with some in America, and should be glad to have a line from you. The truths which we believe are worth contending for against the gainsayers of the present age. Here the churches, generally speaking, are in a low state, and there are many "lo heres" and "lo theres." The ancient landmarks are not to be removed.

Wishing you every needful grace, with christian love, yours in the gospel,

FRANCIS J. KIRBY.

[WE appreciate the kind and brotherly letter from brother Kirby, and assure him that we would also be glad if the "Strict Baptists of England" and the "Old School Baptists of America" could become better acquainted. We have read carefully and with satisfaction *The Christian's Pathway*, of which our brother speaks, and are glad to enter his name on our exchange list.—K.]

WELLSBORO, Pa.

LOVED ONES OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD:—I feel a desire to write you a little, if the Lord will guide my pen. I have called you loved ones, and such I feel you to be, the few that I have met and the many whom I have not; but my love has gone out to you as I have read the messages from your pens. How it comforts and strengthens us when one whom we are sure is a child of God tells of the way he has traveled, and what he has met with in the journey; we recognize the road, and know that we have been in the same place, but we had feared we were in the wrong path, but now our hope is strengthened that we are in the path of life. How forgetful and doubting we are; we are continually wanting more evidence that we are of those chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; still, do we not shrink from some of that evidence if it comes in the form of chastisement? "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." But we feel that, "He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." Let us remember that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. May we therefore be followers of God as dear children. "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." "And be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

My love be with you all in Christ Jesus,

FLORENCE ELY.

WADDY, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Please find two dollars inclosed, you will place same to the credit of my wife's subscription. I have been reading the SIGNS over three years, and the longer I read it the better I like it. I am not a member of any church, and do not feel that I am fit to belong to the church of God. When I was first married I began to attend the Old School Baptist Church, (of which my wife is now a member) and thought they preached a peculiar doctrine. I would get into some arguments with my mother-in-law, and thought she talked very strange. I would get angry sometimes, as we could not agree on any point at all. I thought she talked strange talk, and I could not understand her, but since that I have been made to understand the doctrine better, and am always ready to go with my wife to the Old School meetings. I used to think they were the most peculiar people I ever saw. The Scripture tells us that the people of God are a peculiar people, zealous of good works. I believe, according to my understanding as I read the SIGNS, they come nearer the Scriptures than any denomination I know of. I have attended other denominations, but it seems that I think more of the Old School Baptists than any other people. I am past fifty-three years of age, and have never joined any church, on account of my unworthiness. I wish I could talk and write like some who write for the SIGNS, but we cannot all have the same gift. I hope some day to understand the Scriptures better than I do now. The Scriptures tell us: "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew." This passage is a great comfort to me.

Respectfully your unworthy friend, saved by grace if saved at all,

LAUNTA ARMSTRONG.

PRINCETON, Ky.

DEAR EDITORS:—I inclose my remittance for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and wish to express my appreciation of your valuable paper; its grand truths are indeed a feast to my soul. It is all the true preaching I get, there being no Primitive Baptist Church nearer than twenty miles from my home. I have been surrounded by Arminians all my life, my immediate family being the only ones of the Old Baptist faith in the community. I was at one time a member of a Missionary Baptist Church, but by the direction of the Holy Spirit I came out from among them, and am not a member of any church at this writing, yet I feel that I can say, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want," and I know that I do love the people of God, and the dear brethren and sisters who write for the SIGNS tell my feelings better than I can.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

(MRS.) CORA DILLINGHAM.

BLUM, Texas.

ESTEEMED EDITORS:—I have delayed sending my remittance until I could get at least one new subscriber for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I think sister Broyles will be a good friend and patron of the paper. Mrs. Lizzie Raines took the SIGNS several years, but had it stopped, I think, in 1905, but my wife sends one dollar to have the paper sent to her address for six months. Sister Raines, with her family, is moving from Grand Prairie, Texas, to Walter, Okla. We are sure that she will renew at the end of that time. My wife has had quite a hard spell of neuralgia, and has been a great sufferer for about two weeks, but she is much better to-day. She sends kind New Year's greeting to you and the dear ones of your families. We are more than pleased with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; I have been a regular subscriber since 1875, and I do not think I have missed one copy in all those years. When the great famine came on northwest Texas, in 1886 and 1887, the late Elder J. D. Hubbell, of New York, whose memory is precious, had the SIGNS sent to me one year, and a dear brother Reace, also of New York, sent it to me one year. I would be pleased to hear from brother Reace, if he is still living. I certainly appreciated the kind gifts of those brethren. I hope the circulation of the SIGNS will be increased considerably for 1907. I was anxious to secure several new subscribers. We wish to continue taking it as long as we live.

A happy new year to the dear editors and correspondents.

W. L. ROGERS.

JEFFERSON, Oklahoma.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—It is time for us to remit for the SIGNS once more; it is the best reading we can get except the Bible. We have lived in Oklahoma three years, and have not heard one gospel sermon. There are no Old School Baptists in this part of the new State, so we are getting very hungry for some gospel preaching. We are surrounded by people who believe in the do and live system, while we believe the opposite. I believe the Lord has but one church in this world, and that is the Old School or Primitive Baptist. I also believe that this world is just what God decreed it should be, from beginning to end, for he declared the end from the beginning; so God is not disappointed in anything that takes place while time lasts. God created and has all power in heaven and earth, and is too wise to make any mistake. The Lord chose his

people in Christ before the foundation of the world, and all who were in that choice are saved already.

DAVID MEEKS.

MAYS LICK, Ky.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have read with much pleasure and comfort the closing number of the SIGNS for the year 1906. May the new year have a bright and successful beginning for both editors and those who love the sacred truth contained therein, and when it shall come to a close may it be with just such love and harmony as now exists; such love is like to that above.

With a sincere desire that we may all be kept in the constant care of the tender and loving Father, and with best wishes for all,

Your unworthy sister,

BETTIE L. TURNER.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, held with the church at South Gardiner, Kennebec Co., Maine, Sept. 7th, 8th and 9th, 1906, sends greeting to the sister associations and meetings with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—In the kind providence of our heavenly Father we have been permitted to meet again in an associate capacity, to praise that God to whom we desire to ascribe all honor, power and dominion. We feel that our coming together has been in fellowship, and the servants of our God have come to us laden with the precious truths of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, in whom we hope we have access to the Father, the Creator of all things, and who rules all things after the counsel of his own will.

Our next session, the Lord willing, will be held with the church at Bowdoinham, Sagadahoc Co., Maine, to begin as usual, on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1907, when and where we hope to meet again. We solicit a continuance of your correspondence.

Z. M. BEAL, Moderator.

GEO. R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

BROTHER Joseph H. Bozeman has changed his address from Tehuacana, Limestone Co., Texas, to Cooledge, Limestone Co., Texas.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON our list are many whose subscriptions are two or three years in arrears, and we would esteem it a great favor if all such would drop us a line, stating whether or not they are receiving their paper and wish it continued.

We often receive letters censuring us for not discontinuing the paper when the time paid for has expired, but should we adopt this rule we would on the other hand offend many.

Brethren, please let us hear from you.

On the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1907.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ASSOCIATIONS.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have been thinking much, while at home this winter, with regard to associations, and the relation they sustain to the churches, and I wish to ask you a few questions: Is the association an organized body composed of churches? If so, what Bible authority have we for such organizations? Second, has the association power to deal with the churches composing her body if any of them have become unsound in faith, or disorderly in practice? If so, what gospel steps should be taken in such a case? If you will answer the above questions through the SIGNS you will confer a favor upon a poor, old sinner.

SILAS WILLIAMS.

ALBANY, Oregon.

We do not doubt that Elder Williams is as well, if not better qualified to reply to the questions above given than ourself, because, as he says, his mind has been upon the subject while he has been at home this winter; still as this subject has also occupied our own mind very much of late, and also, more or less, the minds of many brethren in all sections of the country, we do not feel like declining to present our thoughts upon it.

First, it will perhaps be well to remember that the name "association" in itself is not sacred. The annual gatherings called very generally "associations" might as well be called by some other name. Indeed, one of our eastern meetings of that kind, many years ago was organized under the name of "The Corresponding Meeting of Virginia." The object, as we have understood, was to avoid all semblance of such an organization as could claim authority over the churches composing the meeting, either in the way of coercion or of restraint. While the rest of our eastern meetings are called associations, it is well understood that they must not claim any authority to legislate for the churches, or to attend to the discipline of the churches composing them. The annual gatherings are simply meetings, to which messengers appointed by the churches may come, bringing and receiving messages to and from the churches, that each may hear of the welfare of the other, and so be mutually edified; and, as the messengers of the churches thus meet, it is thought well and good and edifying to remain together in mutual worship for such number of days as may be thought expedient and profitable. Most of these meetings in the east occupy three days, but we know of two in the State of New York which occupy but two days. Some years ago one association disbanded, owing to the long distance which separated the churches, and since then most of the churches of that association hold yearly meetings. One church in Maine holds an annual meeting, and has never belonged to an association. The churches do not appoint delegates, but messengers, to attend these meetings. Indeed, the churches ought not to appoint delegates, for delegates are appointed to act for those whom they represent. The churches of Christ have no authority from the word of God to delegate their authority to any one or more members to act for them. For ourself, we have always thought that the name "messenger" was the most suitable, and the most descriptive of the place which they occupy in attending the annual

meetings called associations. Their one business is, and ought to be, to bear the messages of the churches, and deliver them to the messengers of the other churches represented; but when together they have no other business relating to the churches to transact. If any matter comes up for discussion among the messengers while together, that which they may say and do cannot, of right, be binding upon their churches at home. It will be only the individual judgment and act of each messenger, and he alone will be responsible for it. If the church to which any member belongs, and of which he is the appointed messenger, has taken any action concerning any matter, or wishes to call the attention of other churches to any matter, she may send word by her messenger, to be delivered to the messengers of other churches, and by them conveyed to their several churches. The messengers cannot lawfully act for their churches any further than this. Each may express his opinion, but it is only his individual opinion; his church at home may, as a body, judge in an altogether different way concerning the matter. If the messengers at such gatherings agree to take some action expressive of their views upon any matter, that does not in the slightest degree bind their churches to their course of action, any more than if two brethren from two churches should casually meet and unite or agree upon some mooted subject. In the last case it would but be the opinion of the two brethren, and in the former case it would also be but the private judgment of all the messengers who might be present at the association. We have said this much to emphasize the difference between messengers and delegates. The churches cannot lawfully delegate anything of their authority to any member or members; they must come together as churches, with the power of the Spirit, to act lawfully in the kingdom of God. All that relates to the order and discipline of the churches must be done by the churches as churches, each acting in the fear of God for itself alone. It is manifest that this does not preclude conference together, either by one church asking for counsel from another church, or from ministers or members when they may meet with the church that feels the need of advice and counsel; but, after all, it is the church that must act as a church. No church ought to seek to relieve herself of this responsibility which God has placed upon her. Indeed, to seek to do so will bring in evils of various kinds, and that church will not, and cannot, realize the approval of her Lord and King. It is good to seek counsel from humble, God-fearing men, wherever they may be, but all who are humble and God-fearing will, among other things, advise each church that she is the one executive appointed of God in his kingdom below.

When messengers are met together at the time and place appointed, good order will be desired in their meetings. To this end it will always be found advisable to choose from among themselves, if possible, some one to act as moderator, and, if they wish to keep a record of the business and religious services of the meeting, some one will be needed to act as clerk. This, of course, is an organization, the sole purpose of which ought to be to avoid confusion among themselves in the meeting that is being held; and when one such meeting has come to an end, that association is also ended. But the churches may, and indeed do, as a rule, desire to again hear from each other, and so the messengers of the churches may be directed to confer together as to

the proper time and place for another meeting. This is generally done and reported to the churches, but even in this messengers cannot bind the churches, but must act under the direction of the churches.

If any one who is present at such meetings shall seek to preach or teach what is contrary to the doctrine of the word, or advocate some practice contrary to the word, the messengers together may refuse to hear him, still they cannot take any action looking to discipline, but must in all cases refer that to their churches at home; each church alone must handle that matter for itself. As to what the churches ought to do, it is not our object to discuss here, we only desire at this time to present what we think is right so far as associations are concerned.

In replying to the first question of brother Williams, we will say that it does not seem to us that the association is an organized body composed of churches, but a body composed of the messengers who may be present from the churches. The association is not composed of all the members of all the churches, because all the members are not present, as a general rule, and if they were, there is nothing in the Bible justifying the whole body of the churches in acting together as one church. Each church must act for herself alone, we again repeat. We indeed may and do speak of associations as being composed of such and so many churches, but this is not strictly correct, when we refer to the annual meetings of the messengers of the churches. The churches may have agreed to send their messengers annually, for the purpose of continuing correspondence together, but still the association is not a continuous organization. In this it differs altogether from the churches of Christ. For instance, we speak of the association held this year, and of the one held last year; this is correct: but we cannot speak of the church held this year, or this month, and the church held last year or last month. The church in any given locality is always in existence so long as God is pleased to allow the candlestick to remain in that place, and the church is as much in existence between the appointed meetings as during those meetings, but the association of the messengers of the churches ends when they separate, and has no organic existence until the messengers of the churches meet again another time.

Our brother asks, in the second place, What Bible authority have we for such organizations? Bearing in mind what we have just said in reply to the first question concerning the difference between churches as organizations and associations, it has been our mind that the practice of the apostles and apostolic churches of writing to the churches and brethren concerning the things of the kingdom of God, and of brethren going from place to place to see after the welfare of the churches, is sufficient justification for such meetings as we have spoken of above. Brethren and churches then desired to hear of each other's welfare, and so sent letters and messengers, one to the other. Sometimes brethren bore with them the bounty of some church or churches to the poor of other churches. Paul desired that his letter to the church at Colosse should be read by the church at Laodicea, and *vice versa.* It need not be argued that the apostolic churches had a deep interest in each other, no one will seek to deny this truth, and so now churches of Christ must have a mutual interest in all other churches of Christ; this will lead to an effort to correspond

with each other in some way. The spirit will remain the same in all ages, but different circumstances will lead to different ways of conducting that correspondence; but this mutual meeting together to hear of each other's welfare has full Bible authority. In this sense there is full Bible authority for associations such as we have described above.

Has the association power to deal with the churches composing her body? Surely what we have said above will answer this question. Associations have no Bible authority to deal with any member or any church. If it be learned, for instance, that any church or minister has departed from the faith and practice enjoined in the word, this is not a matter that the messengers of the churches can deal with at the time when they are together bearing the correspondence of the churches. In such a case it seems plain to us that if any church believes that another church has thus departed, it is the business of that church to make inquiry concerning the matter. The only consistent way in which such a thing can be handled, is for the churches to instruct their messengers not to receive the correspondence of that church, or their messengers, at the time of their meeting in the association. It is going beyond the one object for which the messengers of the churches come together when it is attempted to discipline a church or a member. If a letter from any church shows that she has departed from the faith, all that the messengers have any right to do, as messengers, is to sadly carry the news back to their churches, then the churches ought to act. What their action should be, is another matter. We are here only insisting that the association has no right or power from the Scriptures to act in such matters. Messengers may have, and may express, their personal opinion, but it is only their personal opinion, and nothing more.

Now we leave these thoughts with the household of faith. The matter seems of much importance to us all. It seems to us that general meetings of messengers of churches are scriptural and beneficial, and it is good to constantly hear from our brethren how they do. It is good to confer and to advise together at all suitable times. But still the churches are the only executive in the kingdom of God, and in their church relationship where two or three are gathered together in the name of the Lord, we have his word that he is in the midst. It matters not whether a church has three members or three hundred, the Lord has declared that his presence is with them. To that body, whether three or three hundred, will be given wisdom, even as to them is given authority; but no body of believers gathered together, except as a church, has any right to administer the laws of the kingdom of God. If it could be possible that any church should become unfitted to administer those laws, it still is true that no other body of believers is empowered to do so. A church may ask for counsel in any matter, from brethren who may be present, but still the church must herself in the end act, and not any counsel of other brethren. C.

REQUESTS DELAYED.

We have of late received a number of requests from different sections of the country to write upon different portions of the word. If some are not noticed soon it will not be because we are unmindful of the writers, but for want of space, and often for want of understanding. We will reply to such as we can as soon as possible. C.

REVELATION XX. 12.

WILL Elder Ker please give his views on Revelation xx. 12, together with the rest of the chapter? Verse twelve reads as follows: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." The SIGNS contains all the preaching I get.

In hope of eternal life,

LUCINDA RILEY.

The request of our sister embraces more than we can comply with at one writing, if indeed we could at all. But as she has called attention especially to verse twelve, we will confine our remarks to that portion, with brief reference to the connections.

First we call attention to the fact that much of the language of this chapter is highly figurative. It is important that we remember this in reading, writing or preaching. The preceding chapter predicts the overthrow of all opposition to Christ and his kingdom. The beginning of chapter twenty declares the dominion of God over Satan, called "that old serpent, which is the Devil." He was bound with a chain and cast into the bottomless pit for a thousand years. This denotes the overthrow of antichrist for a period of time until other similar powers arose. The expression, "a thousand years," is figurative, it may have been one hundred, five hundred or more years, but during whatever time it was, the early christians had peace and quietness. In the coming up of other wicked and persecuting kings or powers, Satan was loosed again to deceive the nations, but not the saints; the elect of God are not deceived by Satan or false prophets.

The dominion of God over all creatures and powers is here clearly seen, and also the effects of his authority; on the one hand it is woe, on the other it is blessedness; in the former condemnation is seen, in the latter the resurrection of the elect from death to the standing of priests of God and of Christ, and (they) shall reign with him a thousand years. This period having been enjoyed by early christians, is past, though many are looking forward to the time when it shall come. If the reign of a thousand years is at all applicable in this day, it signifies the entire reign of Christ, and that of his saints in him, over Satan, hell and the grave. Surely this, to us, is the day of Jesus Christ; his kingdom and government are without end; all worlds, angels and devils are subject to him, and cannot go beyond their bounds, which are set.

Among these peculiar and wonderful things given John to behold is a great white throne. Great signifies majesty, white, righteousness. He that sat upon it is the victorious King Jesus in his glory, before whose face nothing imperfect, unclean, unholy, nor types or shadows could stand. "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." The first heaven and the first earth passed away, and before his face there was found no place for them; they were the old covenant with all that pertained to it. That covenant was recognized by the Lord at Mount Sinai when terror reigned and fearfulness seized Israel, but there is no place for that covenant before the throne of grace established through the work of Jesus Christ. Moses and Elias did not appear upon that great white throne; none but him whose dominion is from sea to sea and from one end of heaven to the other.

Immediately following this vision, John saw the dead, small and great, stand before God. It is very evident from this declaration that all were dead. "If one died for all, [nations] then were all dead."

This Scripture establishes the fact that all mankind was in the transgression, and that death passed upon all because of sin. The word "then" is used synomymously with of course, surely, without doubt, and does not signify time, as at that time all died in Christ. That could not be true; we have no record that we in any sense died in Christ; the children were dead already in Adam. Christ died because we were dead, that we might live in him free from condemnation. The idea of substitution is gross error when applied to the work of Christ in behalf of his bride, the church. The substitute experiences that which the man substituted by him never endures; the one is relieved entirely by the other. The work of Christ was not that the chosen of God should not die, but that they might be made alive from the dead. He died that we who were dead might live. Christ, the husband, was responsible for the debt of his bride; in the payment of the debt she was delivered from the condition of sin and death. Death is the end of the law; by death, through transgression, every child of God chosen in Christ was separated from God. Christ the head must also suffer this separation, therefore he was made of a woman and made under the law; in this he came where the children were, and when he said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" he fully realized the separation, because of the sin of his bride. But thanks be to God, he could and did take his life again, and bursting asunder the bars of death came forth to die no more, and because he is the Husband and the life of the bride, the church lives in him, therefore can never again come into condemnation, having passed from death unto life.

John saw every one of Adam's race, dead because of sin, stand before God, or in other words, they appeared in the sight of God in the same condition; none good, no, not one. Every quickened sinner has seen the great white throne, and Christ who sits upon it; they have also seen the old covenant, the first heaven and the first earth, pass away, and all their hope of salvation in it faded as a leaf. In this revelation each sinner sees his or her own condemnation, and that also of each son and daughter of Adam; therefore we are brought into fellowship with John and say, I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God. This Scripture does not refer to the resurrection, except as each one, in his or her experience, is resurrected to behold the glory of God and their own condemnation.

John saw the books opened. This does not mean that books are kept by the Lord against all men, and that all shall be judged according to them at the end of this world. "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out." "He that believeth not is condemned already." "All that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses," or out of the books. The matter is settled now, the elect are forever justified, the non-elect are forever condemned. No man, angel or devil, can lay anything to the charge of God's elect; it is God that justifieth; it is Christ who died, yea, rather is risen again. "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins," therefore those not embraced in the atonement are eternally lost without hope.

The opening of the books signifies understanding given of them; Paul said, that which he thought to be unto life, proved to be unto death; he was judged out of the books according to his works,

and with us was condemned because of transgression. Now finding ourselves cut off without hope of life by the law, we, like John, were given to behold the book of life (God's eternal purpose in Christ), wherein are written the names of all the redeemed, saved because their names were written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, and not because of works of righteousness which were impossible for poor, dead sinners to perform. May we be given to rejoice that our names are written in the book of life.

We have now given the best we have upon this deep and profound subject, and hope our sister and others may carefully read the twentieth chapter of Revelation and weigh our words by it and their own experience. K.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, our heavenly Father has been pleased to gather to his eternal home and reward our dear brother and pastor, **Elder Whiteley W. Meredith,** we, the members of the Cow Marsh Old School Baptist Church, desire to publicly acknowledge the hand of him who doeth all things in love, in taking unto himself our dearly beloved brother, and from our midst a faithful pastor from his field of labor, the church militant, to the church triumphant, where labor and trials and sufferings are displaced by rest and peace and joy in the Lord. As our pastor for nearly four years, his faithful labors and kindly watchcare of the church manifest that the hand of the Lord was with him in the welfare of Zion. We feel our loss deeply, but desire to bow in submission to the will of him who doeth all things well. We extend by the publication of this memorial our deepest sympathy to his bereaved widow and children, pointing them to the God of all comfort: I will not fail thee nor forsake thee. May we all be enabled by the help of God in this dispensation of providence in affliction to say, "Thy will be done."

We authorize our church clerk to enter this memorial on our record, and to send a copy to the bereaved family, and also a copy to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

Done at church meeting, Saturday, Dec. 22nd, 1906.

BENJ. E. CUBBAGE, Moderator.

T. L. COOPER, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, at the home of the bride's brother, in Worcester County, Md., Dec. 12th, 1906, Charles L. Dickerson and Miss Maggie D. Holloway, both of Worcester Co., Md.

By the same, at the home of the bride's father, in Worcester County, Md., Jan. 2nd, 1907, Oscar A. Perdue, of Wicomico County, Md., and Miss Bertha E. Truitt, of Worcester County, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Whiteley W. Meredith, pastor of the Cow Marsh and Bryn Zion Old School Baptist churches, Kent Co., Del., died Sunday evening, Nov. 18th, 1906, at his home in Felton, Del., aged 73 years, 8 months and 18 days. Elder Meredith and his wife had just returned from attending associations in North Carolina, stopping at the Salisbury Association, where he was first taken sick, at the home of brother Bird, in Hallwood, Va. Returning home he filled his regular appointment at Cow Marsh the fourth Sunday in October. His last text was Romans v. 1-3. He was taken sick again Sunday afternoon before reaching home, and lingered about three weeks. Elder Meredith was the son of the late Elder Peter Meredith. He was united in marriage to Miss Emily Broadaway, of Willow Grove, Del.; to this union three children were born. He was baptized, together with his wife, who was formerly a Methodist, by Elder E. Rittenhouse, in 1863, both uniting with the Cow Marsh Church. His wife died in 1870. He removed in 1872 to New York city. In July, 1875, he married Miss Sarah A. Golden, of near Hopewell, N. J., who was baptized by Elder S. H. Durand in 1880, uniting with Ebenezer Church, New York city. Elder Meredith then moved his membership by letter to Ebenezer Church, which first chose him as a deacon, and later, in 1887, gave him license to preach. In 1888 he moved to Delmar Del., but filled an appointment once each month in New York city from the time he was licensed until 1893. Uniting by letter with the Little Creek Church, Sussex Co., Del., in 1893, his license was continued, and his labors thereafter were principally in the Salisbury and Delaware associations. He was ordained by the Little Creek Church in April, 1897, by the following presbytery: Elders E. Rittenhouse, T. M. Poulson and A. B. Francis. Soon after his ordination he moved back to Petersburg, Del., the home of his birth, reuniting by letter with the Cow Marsh Church. The Lord led him in a long and lonely path, strewn with the trials and sorrows of this life, but Jesus was to him the way. He was brought back into our midst during the illness of Elder E. Rittenhouse, and after his death, in 1902, Elder Meredith became pastor of the two above named churches, serving them faithfully to the time

of his death. His labor in our midst was a work of love, pointing to Jesus, the holy Lover, ever ready with a kind and comforting word; and especially was he gifted to speak comfortingly to bereaved ones. He preached salvation by grace in its truth and beauty, boldly defending the doctrine of Christ, but like every true servant of God, in so doing was made to suffer with Jesus, that he might also reign with him. Elder Meredith had a wide circle of friends; wherever he lived or traveled he was loved, both as a man and as a servant of the true and living God. He was conscious near the end, and assured those about him of his comfort and peace of mind, comforting his dear companion, bidding her and his children look to the God of his salvation, manifesting aith and hope in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. On Sunday morning he regained strength, and preached a wonderful sermon to those standing at his bedside; but as evening approached, the life he lived in the flesh came to its close, as one falling asleep, and we believe as the veil of the flesh and the blindness of nature were removed from between him and his Lord and Master, he was given to see as he is seen and to know as he is known. Mortal eyes cannot behold that glorious state and life, but faith and hope enter into that within the veil, and speak in the heart of those left behind of the home of the faithful, where all is peace and rest and joy in the Lord. He leaves a widow and three children: Mrs. Annie Fulton, of Dover, Del., Ambrose B. Meredith, of Jersey City, N. J., and Willard S. Meredith, of Wilmington, Del., all of whom have the deepest sympathy of a wide circle of relatives and friends.

The funeral was held at Cow Marsh meeting-house; services were conducted, at request of deceased, by Elder F. A. Chick, of Hopewell, N. J., assisted by Elder A. B. Francis and the writer. The writer read hymn No. 631 (Beebe's collection). After prayer and reading of the ninetieth Psalm by Elder Francis, Elder Chick preached from Mark iv. 28, 29, to the comfort of the bereaved family and brethren. The remains were interred in Cow Marsh cemetery.

BENJ. E. CUBBAGE.

FELTON, Del.

Louisa Davis Ker, widow of Dr. Samuel J. S. Ker, entered into everlasting rest Jan. 16th, 1907, at the home of her daughter, in Delmar, Del., aged 88 years, 11 months and 8 days. She was the daughter of the late Elder Daniel and Eleanor Bell Davis, of Salisbury, Md. Her father was for thirty-eight years the faithful pastor of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church. In early womanhood she was united in marriage to Dr. Ker, to which union were born eight children, three of whom died in childhood; later two grown sons were taken: Dr. Harlan and Daniel. She is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth H. Slemons, and two sons: L. B. Ker, of Delmar, Del., and H. C. Ker, the writer. She was the last surviving member of the Davis family, and the last, save one, of the Bell family. Her life was an eventful one, having lived to bury nearly all who were related to her, beside many, many friends. She was a very bright, intelligent woman, blessed with much christian fortitude, therefore, by the grace of God, she endured to the end and now has received the crown. For many years she was a member of the Missionary Baptist Church; her hope and faith were in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ, the Savior of sinners. Children were never blessed with a more devoted, kind, faithful and thoughtful mother than she was. Her children and grandchildren were her pride, and when in trouble of any kind they always found in her an unfailing friend to share their burdens. The poor were never turned empty away by her when seeking aid; it was her joy and pleasure to make others comfortable and happy. We thank God for such a mother and for the example of her life. May he enable us to bear the cross and at last receive the crown.

The funeral services were held at 2 p. m., Jan. 18th, conducted by Mr. S. E. Garner and Elder A. B. Francis. Interment was in the family graveyard on the old Bell farm.

ALSO,

DIED—**Obedience Jane (Hoyt) Purdy,** wife of Leander L. Purdy, at her home in Middletown, N. Y., Jan. 2nd, 1907, aged 70 years, 3 months and 20 days. She had suffered greatly for more than a year with Bright's disease, but was patient, believing every pain was according to God's will. She was not disturbed at the thought of death, often saying, "I shall live all my appointed time." Her faith and hope in the Redeemer of sinners were abiding, and when the end approached she calmly passed away to that blessed abode, rest. She had been a member of the Middletown and Wallkill Church forty years; was faithful to every duty, and loved the gospel of the Son of God. She was united in marriage to Mr. Purdy in 1855; to this union were born two children; the daughter, Lena J., survives her, the son, Charles, was drowned in the Wallkill River six years ago. Sister Purdy never entirely rallied from the shock. Mr. and sister Purdy celebrated their golden wedding Feb. 28th, 1905. He is now left lonely and desolate, and will no doubt miss more and more his faithful companion of more than fifty-one years.

The funeral services were held in the Old School Baptist meeting-house at Middletown, conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder A. B. Francis. The interment was in the New Vernon cemetery.

May the Lord comfort the husband and daughter, together with the church.

K.

Hiram Lucas died at his residence near Boone, Iowa, Oct. 4th, 1906, aged 91 years, 5 months and 26 days. There was no special disease, but a general decline of the vital forces. He was born in Powells Valley, Virginia, April 9th, 1815, and moved with his parents to Kentucky the same year. In 1834 he moved to Clay Co., Ind., where he was married to Miss Susan Payne Nov. 12th, 1835. They continued to live there until 1853, when he removed with his family to Boone Co., Iowa, and settled on the old home farm, where they resided for over fifty years, and where they both passed away. On the first Sunday in September, 1878, he was received into the Primitive Baptist Church in Greene Co., Iowa, and was baptized by Elder Wm. L. Jones. He was a faithful reader of the Bible and of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, having been a subscriber to the paper for nearly fifty years. He was well and favorably known as a firm Primitive Baptist, noted for his sincerity and firmness in the doctrine which had been revealed to him. It had been years since he was able to attend church, but Elders of the Baptist Church often held services at his home. Since the death of his wife he seemed to grow still more attached to his faith, and read his religious paper as long as he was able. He was a beautiful singer, religious hymns being his favorites. A few weeks before his death, when I awoke one morning he was singing in a low, sweet voice the old, familiar hymn, No. 488: "Amazing grace!" after which he prayed. Throughout his illness his mind seemed carried toward spiritual things, often praying, and telling his religious experience. He prayed that his pain might be removed, and he grew easy and continued so until he passed into the slumber of death. He was a quiet, kindly old gentleman, a faithful, loving husband and father, whose greatest pleasure was with his wife and family in their home. He had no ill feeling in his heart toward any one, but loved his neighbors. We miss him from his accustomed place; we miss his fatherly counsel and advice, but in our hearts we will ever remember him, and while we bow in sorrow, we mourn not as those who have no hope, for we believe he has passed to that happy home where sorrow never enters. He leaves to mourn their loss three sons and six daughters, a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren and numerous relatives and friends. It was his request that his funeral sermon be preached only by a minister of the Primitive Baptist faith. Every effort was made to carry out his wishes, but without avail, as no Elder could be secured at that time. The funeral services were held at his home Saturday, Oct. 6th, attended by a large concourse of sorrowing friends and neighbors, and his remains laid to rest in the Boone cemetery beside his wife, who, with the oldest son, one daughter and three infant children, preceded him to the better land.

FLORENCE G. LUCAS.

John Markle was born Feb. 22nd, 1830, at Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., and departed this life Dec. 21st, 1906, aged 76 years, 9 months and 29 days. He was married to Catherine Winchell in 1855. In the spring of 1857 they moved from Olive, N. Y., to the vicinity of Yorktown, Ill., where he spent the remainder of his days. To this union were born eight children, five daughters and three sons; four of them died in infancy. His wife departed this life twenty-one years ago. Mr. Markle never united with any church, but had received a hope in Christ as his Savior, and was a friend to the Primitive Baptists. The unworthy writer visited the brethren there last June. Mr. Markle told me that he never had enjoyed meetings and preaching better; he told me then that he felt himself to be a poor sinner saved by the grace of God through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ our Lord. He was as well as usual until Monday before his death, when he was stricken with paralysis; he suffered until just before the end came, when he passed peacefully away.

The funeral service was conducted by Mr. Zerby, a Christian minister, as there was no Baptist minister within reach. Interment was in Fairfield cemetery.

There are left to mourn their loss, two sons: Charles and Edwin, and two daughters: Miss Minnie Markle and Mrs. Leonard Hopkins, all living in the neighborhood, also seven grandchildren and many friends; but we mourn not as those who have no hope. Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them. May the Lord reconcile and comfort the children and friends, is our prayer for Jesus' sake.

MARION BARTLEY.

WILLOW HILL, Ill.

DIED—**Amos Zenor,** at his home in Wayside, Kan., Dec. 28th, 1906, after a lingering illness from a complication of diseases, aged 71 years. He was born in Indiana, Nov. 20th, 1835; was married Sept. 2nd, 1857, to Anna M. Allburn, who survives him. To this union thirteen children were born, four sons and nine daughters; two sons died some years ago, aged seven and eleven years. Forty-seven grandchildren are living. Brother Zenor received a hope in Christ in 1854, but did not unite with the visible church until September, 1886, when he united with the Salem Baptist Church, Harrison Co., Ind. In 1887 he moved to Kansas, and settled south of Dodge City, in Ford County, where he remained three years, and then moved to Wayside, Montgomery County, where he resided until death. In May, 1901, he presented his church letter to the Bethlehem Church, at Havana, Kansas, and was received, where he has since held his membership. Brother Zenor's quiet manner and kindly disposition endeared him to those with whom he associated. His mind was stored with varied information, especially of the Scriptures; the theme

of salvation by grace was very dear to him. His faith in the gracious promises of Jesus was deep and abiding. For many years he was a subscriber to the SIGNS, and heartily indorsed its principles. His experience, written to his old pastor, the late Elder D. Bartley, appeared in the SIGNS for May 15th, 1899, and is filled with tender thoughts, and a good portrayal of his life and character. For several years he was a surveyor in Indiana. He bore his last sickness with resignation, patiently waiting for the change which brought to him that rest hoped for.

On Sunday, Dec. 30th, a large congregation of his friends and neighbors met in the Union meeting-house, near his home, to pay their sad respects to their departed neighbor and friend. As he had desired, I delivered an address, using the comforting words found in Psalms cxvi. 15: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." His near neighbor and friend, Mr. J. Dyer, of the New School Baptists, made some appropriate remarks. His mortal body was then laid away to await the resurrection call.

May the God of peace comfort his aged companion and sorrowing children.

T. R. PITTMAN.

HAVANA, Kansas.

DIED—Dec. 30th, 1906, **Mr. Delos L. Avery,** near Atlanta, Steuben Co., N. Y., aged 64 years. He had been in failing health for a number of months. He seemed to feel hopeful most of the time that he would be better, and continued to make plans for his farm work, although he realized that he was gradually growing weaker. The end came, and he passed quietly and peacefully out of this time state into eternity. What an awful, grand, solemn, incomprehensible word—eternity. Mr. Avery was not a member of the church, but was a firm believer in the doctrine of Christ, hence had no use for any church but the Old School Baptist. I have known him for twenty-eight years, and am fully convinced that he knew the grace of God by experience. He attended meetings with his wife, sister Avery, who is a member of the Old School Baptist Church at Ingleside, N. Y. I shall miss him much; his family, the dear wife and three daughters, will mourn their loss much. There are two brothers, I am not sure there are any sisters; they with other relatives will mourn for him; his neighbors will sadly miss him, for he was kind and accommodating; all speak in the highest terms of him; but he has gone home, blessed home.

The writer spoke to the friends and neighbors at the funeral, which was held in the New School Baptist meeting-house at Naples, N. Y., Jan. 2nd, 1907, after which the house of clay was taken to the graveyard near by and buried in its mother earth. May the dear Lord bless his sad, lonely wife, children and friends with his presence and grace, is my desire.

D. M. VAIL.

DIED—At the residence of her daughter, sister Saunders, Liberty Grove, Cecil Co., Md., **Mrs. Jane Marshall Hanna.** She was the daughter of John and Sarah Caldwell Marshall, and was born Oct. 4th, 1815, and died Dec. 26th, 1906. She was married to Joseph Hanna in 1835, and was the mother of three children. The daughter with whom she lived is the only surviving branch of the family. She leaves seven grandchildren and eleven great-granchildren to mourn their loss. I have known the deceased for at least forty years. Although she made no public profession of faith in the Redeemer, she attended the meetings at Rock Springs Church when able. She possessed some faculties of mind and memory rarely retained by one in advanced years; was remarkably patient, and of a meek and quiet spirit. If she felt the infirmities of age she kept it to herself. In her quiet way she told me many years ago that all was well with her. She seemed to be waiting the time of her full discharge, with resignation to the will of God. She has followed her husband, who died many years ago, and was laid to rest beside his bones at Rock Springs after some appropriate remarks by Elder J. G. Eubanks, who conducted the funeral services, to those who came to witness the last rites of one with whom they had long been familiar. Her favorite hymn commencing, "O thou in whose presence my soul takes delight," was sung. The Lord bless the children and grandchildren who remain. Time and disease will bring us all to our mother earth.

WM. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md.

BROTHER **H. H. Green** died at his home in Walton County, Georgia, May 31st, 1906; was born in August, 1830. He was married to Frances A. Malcom, daughter of the late Elder Geo. W. Malcom, about the year 1850; to this union were born eleven children; six of them, together with his widow, are living to mourn their loss. Brother Green united with the church at Jack's Creek by experience, Sept. 9th, 1868, and was ordained deacon August 8th, 1891. He was a man who purchased to himself a great degree of boldness in the faith, always faithful to his church, and was held in high esteem by his brethren and friends. He was a brave soldier in the war of the sixties, bringing home upon his body scars in his breast and deeds in his record; and so he was in his spiritual warfare against sin. He loved to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and to talk about the doctrine it contends for, and it was while reading one of them that death came and took him suddenly away, when, as we believe, the Father said, Child, come home.

Elder R. L. Cook, his pastor, conducted the funeral services at the family cemetery, in the presence of a large congregation of brethren and friends, who, with the family, were gathered to pay their last respects; he preached to the comfort of the bereaved.

We greatly sympathize with the bereaved family, and pray that He who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind will lead each of them by the good and right way. J. M. ADAMS.

MONROE, Ga.

Joseph Coker was born in the State of Georgia, March 18th, 1831, and died at his home near Athens, in Henderson Co., Texas, aged 75 years, 9 months and 13 days. He was married to Martha Attaway, April 9th, 1855, with whom he lived almost fifty-two years. To them were born twelve children. He received a hope in Christ in early life; he never united with any church, but was a strong believer in the Primitive faith. His home was a welcome home for the Baptists, as much so as if he had been a member. He had been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for thirty years. He leaves a widow and ten children, together with a host of relatives and friends, to mourn his departure.

The funeral was held at Meredith Cemetery, conducted by Elder Tony Pace, who used as a text Revelation xiv. 13, where the remains were laid to rest, freed from all pain, sorrow and trouble, with which we all must be burdened in this life.

His daughter, JENNIE RIDDLE.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 75. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1907. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"MARK THEM WHICH CAUSE DIVISIONS."

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."—Rom. xvi. 17, 18.

I realize the subject is one of great importance, I fear too great for such as myself, yet, dear brethren, in much weakness I attempt to discuss this subject, I hope trusting in him who alone can guide to our profit.

One peculiar thing to observe regarding divisions is, that the different factions among the Baptists use this passage of Scripture to justify themselves in causing divisions. Now as "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace," we must, it seems, know that some one has perverted this Scripture. It cannot mean that God's people are justified in raising bars indiscriminately against each other. This Scripture evidently condemns just such actions. Now if to live as though Christ is divided is condemned by the Scripture, then any Scripture used to justify God's people in living as though Christ is divided, must be perverted. This I feel sure all will admit. In this text we observe two classes are referred to, one is the deceiver, the other the deceived. Now the question is, Shall God's people treat the deceiver and those deceived all alike? Of course the deceiver will say yes, treat them all alike; but what do you say, dear children of God, you who love peace? Notice the text says, "Mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." Paul has not said to avoid those deceived, but to avoid the deceivers. Let us think on these things, think how cruel on our part to treat the one who by good words and fair speeches is deceived, the same as the one who practices this deception in order to deceive. I ask, Is it in harmony with the teaching of Paul to treat the guilty and the innocent alike? Let us think on these things, then let us answer this question, If we treat all alike, are we not ourselves transgressors against Christ? I think, evidently, this must be true. Read Acts xx. 26–31. Paul begins by saying, "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men." Now let us think

about the wilful perverters, whose object is to draw away disciples after them. Can it be said of them they are pure from the blood of all men? Paul said, "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." It was because of the wolves that Paul knew would enter in among them, not sparing the flock, and also of their ownselves men would arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them, that caused this great concern on the part of Paul as to warn for the space of three years with tears. O what a contrast between Paul and those perverters of the truth. Now the question for us to consider is, Shall we treat these wolves and the perverters of the truth, and those who are deceived, the same? Let us think on these things. If we treat the innocent lambs of God, who have fallen a prey to the wolves, perverse teachers, the same as we treat the perverse teachers, I ask, are we not equally guilty? Can we say we are pure from the blood of all men, and at the same time help the cunning wolf kill the sheep? Dear brethren, I fear we have thoughtlessly been the tool to accomplish for the wolf and perverse teacher that which they could not have done otherwise, only by the aid of the unsuspecting. This is accomplished by good words and fair speeches. I believe after giving this subject candid thought, that we who lament the sorrowful condition of Zion to-day, can but admit that all are more or less to blame for the sad condition that now exists; we are not to blame for the wolves and perverse teachers, except in that we help them to carry out their designing plans; for the work of the wolf is to kill and scatter the sheep, the object of perverse teachers is to draw away disciples after them. By this we see the result is the same, either means the destruction of the sheep.

I think it safe to say the wolf's principal plea will be, he is a great stickler for sound doctrine and good order, as he calls it. John said, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God." This trying of the spirits is for the church to do, because there are many false prophets gone out into the world. Here again the same question arises, Shall we treat the false prophets and those deceived by them the same? To do so would most certainly help to carry out the end designed by the false prophets. Now let us make an illustration. The wolf and the perverse teacher are working hand in hand, as far as destruction is concerned; we will suppose they succeed in getting a following by their good words and fair speeches; divisions are brought about, or these perverse teachers may carry churches, or many churches, after them; much depends upon their ability in good words and fair speeches. Suppose there are those who can see this state of affairs has been brought by the cunning wolf and perverse teacher, then suppose those who know these things raise bars and declare nonfellowship for all led away by these perverse teachers. Do we not see at once that this is the very thing desired by the wolf and perverse teachers? By our actions we say, Go, wolf, with all the sheep you can catch, we have no use for sheep which can be caught by your cunning trickery. We also say to the perverse teacher, You have accomplished your ends by good words and fair speeches, we will just declare nonfellowship for those you have deceived, and let you have them; in fact, we will raise bars so high that if any not deceived go among those sheep that have been deceived we

will cut them off from our fellowship. Now could we do anything more disastrous? Is this not the very way these perverse teachers want those whom they have deceived to be treated? It is purely selfish ambition that causes these perverse teachers to do these things. Paul says, They "serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly," (that is, their carnal cravings.) Now these are the people that Paul commanded to mark and avoid.

As before stated, these perverse teachers apply this Scripture to justify themselves in making divisions; this we would expect. O how careful we should be lest we be ensnared by their good words and fair speeches. If this is only of trivial consequence, Paul certainly would not have said, "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." O did Paul see these cruel days when men are lovers of self, rather than lovers of God? Paul had been forewarned of these wolves and perverse teachers, hence his warning with tears because of these things. Let us keep this constantly before us; that is, Paul's great interest in the welfare of the church, also his words, "I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." Let us notice that the reason assigned by Paul for being pure from the blood of all men was because of the fact that he had not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God. Paul's argument is evidently like this: that if he had shunned to declare any portion of the counsel of God, he could not have said, "I am pure from the blood of all men." God spake the same to his prophet Ezekiel. Read the thirty-third chapter. The sixth verse reads thus: "But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand." Paul was blowing the trumpet, he in faithfulness gave warning; this he did in this instance day and night with tears for the space of three years, therefore he could say, "I am pure from the blood of all men." O that we all could say as much. We see perverse teachers dividing the church of Christ; and let me ask you, dear brethren, you who love to see peace, Are we free from the blood of all men if we behold these things, yet we do not faithfully do our part to warn and do as commanded? The faithful ministers are to warn, the faithful hearers are to do as commanded by our Lord and his inspired prophets and apostles. God has seen fit to make all his people accountable to him; there is no place given to the idler and unconcerned.

I believe all Primitive Baptists profess to believe that Christ's body is one body, that the church is the body of Christ, represented as the bride, the Lamb's wife, and that Christ is the head of that one body, and the husband of the bride, which is the church. Now let me ask, If I profess to believe these things, and at the same time I am going over the country trying to get believers to follow me, and get them to raise bars against those who differ from me in regard to some belief I may entertain, and at the same time I know they are God-fearing brethren, who do not believe as I do, I ask, if I am engaged in making or causing divisions, have I the right to expect to be treated as a faithful servant of Christ? Paul says, "They that are such serve not

our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." Now if I had the ability of those who by good words and fair speeches do deceive the hearts of the simple, and my ambition was to have a following, it does seem nothing would be more in line with carnal desires than to have my followers raise bars and declare nonfellowship for all those who are not carnally minded. This is where the sad part comes in, that the carnal leaders deceive the innocent and get them to do the cruel work against those of their own brethren. The leader is harmless in and of himself if he does not get followers, therefore of such Paul said, Mark and avoid them. Now we see that it is not by their words and speeches that we can detect them, for their words are good and their speeches are fair, but it is what they cause: divisions which they cannot cover up. With sorrow I think we must all confess that some are engaged in causing divisions, and meeting with comparatively little opposition in the headway they are making. The great and essential question is, Is any church guiltless that will receive these division-makers into their house? Are they not by so doing bidding them Godspeed, which is forbidden? Read 2 John x. 11. This is a reasonable duty enjoined upon God's people, that they should live in honor to their profession. Therefore if there be any who are so carnally minded as to cause divisions, the duty of the spiritually minded is to restore rather than to sanction the carnally minded, by receiving them with open arms, and at the same time knowing that death and destruction mark their pathway. As before stated, these Scriptures are referred to by all factions to justify themselves in causing divisions and offenses. God's people should keep in mind that it is the one who is causing divisions that Paul is warning against, instead of those who are deceived by good words and fair speeches; it is the guilty party who is condemned. You will observe those division-makers make no distinction or difference as to whether they bar out God-fearing brethren or not; any one who may chance to differ with them is barred out, regardless of his walk. This of itself would seem conclusive evidence that such ones have no love for the kingdom of Christ, therefore serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but are serving a selfish ambition, are carnally minded; they are feeding fleshly desires. Another thing to be observed about those division-makers is, to hear them tell it, that they are greatly persecuted, and the sad part of it is they by good words and fair speeches have so completely deceived many of God's humble poor that they give these perverse teachers words of consolation and sympathy. O how cunning! This is all accomplished by good words and fair speeches. Dear brethren, do you not know, have you not observed, that these division-makers will turn upon their best friends if they chance to cross their views? They have no use for any one they cannot use to advantage to carry out their ends, which are to divide God's people. Many of you know these things to your sorrow, yet these leaders claim to be suffering great persecutions from their supposed enemies, the children of God. The question is, Are they persecuted for righteousness' sake? Do we read of one instance where a righteous man ever labored to divide God's people, and to cause offenses? Jesus said, "Blessed are the peace makers." He also said, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of

heaven." If wars, fightings and divisions are righteous things, then it might be proper for those who by good words and fair speeches do deceive the simple, to claim for so doing they are wonderfully persecuted. Remember Paul said, "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." What could be more perverse than to claim they were persecuted for righteousness' sake, and at the same time are engaged in trying to divide the body of Christ? "Such," Paul says, "serve not our Lord Jesus Christ." Then how careful we should be lest we bid such Godspeed.

JOSEPH FORD.

SHERWOOD, Oregon.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—ESTEEMED AND BELOVED BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I inclose a letter received from Elder I. N. Newkirk, for publication in the SIGNS, if you think it good matter for the readers.

Your brother in hope,

J. P. ALLISON.

WAITSBURG, Wash.

ELDER J. P. ALLISON AND WIFE—DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER IN CHRIST:—Your letter came a few days ago, and I was pleased to hear from you both again, and of your welfare in life. I hope you will continue to write, for I enjoy your writings very much, both privately and through the SIGNS. I am sorry you were displeased with my sending your former letter to Elder Chick, but I left it with him to publish or not. If he publishes it, it will be because he sees something profitable to the readers in it. You will, I know, excuse me for my indiscretion in the matter.

Now I will come to my object in this letter, by way of answering the questions proposed in your last to me. You wish me, brother Allison, to say something upon the subject of the immortality of the soul, and also concerning paradise. Both these Bible subjects are very deep and intricate for any one so ignorant as I am to contemplate. First, I will say that the thought of the immortality of the souls of men in nature finds no support in the Bible; neither does the idea of souls sleeping in the grave; nor does the doctrine of an intermediate state of souls in purgatory find any support in the Bible. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul of the creature man was first taught in heathen philosophy, by Plato, the Greek philosopher, and was adopted by theologians of a later day. That Plato reasoned well was a common saying among men of learning. This sentiment, sown in the hearts of men, sprang up in the world and became popular among men of learning as philosophy. Solomon traced men in his books in the Bible, and to the end of life, and found them to be dust, in common with the beasts of the field, and by all his natural and acquired knowledge of all things under the sun, which he had attained or which he could attain to, by things visible to men, could only at the tomb see man and beast alike moldering into dust. He said in the meditations of his heart and mind, "Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward?" All lie together undistinguished and undistinguishable in the dust of the earth from whence they came, and to which they have returned. This question of Solomon, the wisest of sages, aided by all the knowledge attainable under the sun and in the earth, has disturbed the philosophizing mind of man since the world began. Man has, by his wisdom and knowl-

edge, and by all his scientific research into the future, come no nearer to the truth of God concerning the souls of men after death than did Solomon in this remarkable inquiry just named above: "Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward?" And here, dear brother and sister, I, with Solomon and all other men, including infidels and atheists, own my ignorance on the subject of the immortality of the soul. Being the subject of a direct and divine revelation, it is a profound mystery to all men, because the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, which are revealed alone by the Spirit, because they are spiritually discerned. This saying of Paul settles the whole question of human knowledge and understanding of the immortality of the soul when it leaves the body, as well as all other Bible themes. Jesus, after he arose, said to his disciples, "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." A spirit is invisible, unchangeable, hence not subject to human observation or investigation. So Solomon has exhausted all human inquiry about the soul of man after death, and this was the point that he was making; for in extensive experiments, by the flashlight of human reason and knowledge, and at the last he presents the doctrine of divine revelation from on high, to determine the state of the soul after the death of the body. The body in the grave of mortality has no distinguishable preeminence over the beast. No infidel agnostic could go deeper into this subject than did Solomon. The same conclusion must be reached by all: that man in the state of death, and in the dust of the grave, has no preeminence above beasts that perish, so far as the natural man can by all his wisdom understand. So it remains to be said that if there be a future state and life of the soul, this truth, with the knowledge of it, must necessarily be revealed from heaven. Hence is the necessity of the revelation of Jesus Christ to bring life and immortality to light through the gospel; and of him it is said by that deeply inspired apostle Paul, when speaking of this mystery of mysteries, "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see." This agrees with Solomon. But several chapters beyond the one referred to he says in a positive way, without a question, as in the first place, The spirit of man goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast goeth downward. It is then no longer a matter of inquiry, but an assured fact by the Spirit of divine revelation to faith, and the spiritually enlightened understanding, that the soul of man ascendeth upward when the body dies. There is in this last place no questioning of the ascension of the soul of man after death without denying the Spirit of divine revelation. So we see the doctrine of soul sleeping is overturned altogether by this revelation of the Spirit in the holy Scripture. But the immortality of the soul in the creature man Adam the first, is quite another thing when compared with the second man Christ Jesus, who only hath immortality. Interminable existence alone is not immortality; otherwise the first Adam of the earth earthy, and also a living soul, could not have died in sin the day he transgressed; because immortality is the power of an endless life, and is that by which the dead body of Jesus was quickened, and thus he brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, and the gospel is summed up in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus the Lord of glory, who is also the quickening

spirit. So Paul said in Ephesians, to which you referred in your last letter, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." This was the state of the first Adam in his sin of disobedience, including all the race of man, and Peter said, He hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Now this brings us to the last subject, viz., paradise. This is that paradise of which Jesus spoke to the dying thief on the cross. But I must be brief. I think that the paradise of which the Savior spoke, is the state of believers after death until the resurrection of the dead. The grave was not referred to as paradise, but the state of those who have died believing in Jesus. Peter said we are begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Christ. But not until Christ shall come again will this hope be fully realized. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

A few more words and I shall close. In this last quotation we see that the dead that die in the Lord are blessed, and to this it is added that they "rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." It is said the dead know not anything, and their thoughts and their works cease; until the heavens are no more they shall not wake out of their sleep. Job, I think, speaks here of the dead in general. But Paul tells us that they that sleep in Jesus shall God bring with him. What is generally called death, is but sleep in Christ in the hope of the resurrection. My mind is that the paradise spoken of on the cross is this sleep in Jesus, not of the soul or spirit which goeth upward to God at death, but this mortal body which we inhabit; this is that which sleeps, as embraced in the covenant of redemption. This redemption of the body is that for which we wait and hope, and which is predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son when he shall come again; but the soul goes not to purgatory, but to God who gave it, and it is made alive by that immortality which is in Christ.

Your brother,

I. N. NEWKIRK.

[WE are glad our brother has made the clear Bible distinction that he has between immortality and merely continued existence. Unending existence is one thing, and immortality is another. Angels live forever, but they are not said to possess immortality; and so also the lost finally live on forever, but do not possess immortality. We also are glad he has so clearly shown the falsehood of the theory invented by men of what is called the sleep of the dead until the resurrection.—C.]

MEMPHIS, Tenn.

DEAR EDITORS:—Every phrase in use has its meaning, whether its meaning is legitimate or not. We frequently are confronted with the phrase, "Can't help its." At first this uncouth phrase was used by some of those who oppose predestination of all things and salvation by grace in time as well as eternity. Its first use was as a stigma, by our opponents, but of late there seems to be a disposition with some to accept the appellation, as if it were appropriate to us. I think we should thoroughly understand what the author and promulgator means to signify by such a phrase before appropriating it, or accepting it as defining what our belief is. As far as I have been informed, "can't help it" means that people cannot help doing all or any evil or sinful acts committed by them, and that God's people, after being born again,

born of water and of the Spirit, are yet so depraved (even in their renewed state) that they cannot cease from outward sin, and therefore cannot obey or do anything that is a good work. Now the question of most importance is this: Have any of the unlimited Predestinarians and all Grace Baptists given cause for any to call them the "Can't help its?" My observation causes me to very sorrowfully think that some have thus given cause. While I do not accuse or criticise any of evil motives, still I think that the zeal of some in denouncing conditional time salvation has caused them to err, because in their efforts to prove that conditional time salvation is a damnable heresy they used broken sentences, or a part of a text only, thus destroying its full meaning. To illustrate: if to prove that I cannot, or you cannot, perform conditions, I quote, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would;" and, "When I would do good, evil is present with me," &c.; or suppose a preacher thus quotes only parts of this text, without explaining the fullness of the text in its scriptural connections, has not this preacher erred? Suppose a little child of grace is pricked in the heart, and thus killed to the love of sin, and goes with a pure heart full of gratitude unto God, with the desire to unite with the church, cries within his heart, Men and brethren, what shall I do? and this little child says, I thought I heard Jesus say, "Go home to thy friends," &c., take up thy cross daily, and follow me, and I came here impressed to do these things, but the preacher (in whom I have the utmost confidence that he preaches as the Holy Ghost gives him utterance) tells me in his sermon: "Ye cannot do the things that ye would," and that though I would I cannot, is not that one left desolate and destitute? He says, I would cease from doing wrong, but I cannot do the things that I would, and so I will give it up. And he returns home with the consciousness that he has not obeyed the commandment of God to "arise, and be baptized." O how heavy laden he will be; he says, I would take the yoke of Jesus, but I cannot do the things that I would. Therefore he remains heavy laden and in disobedience, and is told that he "can't help it." Now how much better it is for the watchman upon the walls of Zion to declare unto them all the counsel of God, and so, after proving that conditional time salvation is false, by saying, "Ye cannot do the things that ye would," drop back to the preceding verse (sixteen) and quote: "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." Then to verse eighteen: "But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law." Thus signifying that it was only when we were shut up under the beggarly elements of the law, under the great burden or yoke that our fathers were not able to bear, that we could not do the things that we would; but now comfort the dear, little child by declaring unto him that if we are led by the Spirit, we have by the Spirit been drawn to Christ, and since Christ is risen we have been (in spirit) raised with him. Therefore it is written, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above," &c. Yes, dear, little one, within yourself you cannot do the things that you would, but you are not left alone, for the Spirit leadeth you; and as it was with Paul, so is it also with you, so you can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth you; therefore in reply to your heart's query,

"What shall I do?" we reply, "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." When the preacher has thus done, he has taken heed unto himself and unto the doctrine, and continued in them, and in doing so has saved himself and them that hear him. Still it is to be remembered that when the preacher has thus labored, it is not he, but the grace of God which was with him, therefore the little child that has taken heed, having been exhorted by the preacher, has been saved by grace, which was treasured in Christ before the world was; therefore God saved the little one, and called him, not according to the sinner's works, but according to the purpose and grace of God, which was given us in Christ before the world was. This grace of God pertains unto life and godliness, and was given us by his divine power; thus we are saved in time by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, and thus boasting is excluded. While every true gospel minister, who is sent as a fisher to fish them, will make every effort he can to fish them, at the same time he is only exercised by faith, and led by the Spirit, and will say with Paul: "I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed."—Romans xv. 18. You will notice the purpose of preaching the gospel was to make the Gentiles obedient; now we give our ministers double honor for the sake of the gospel, but still no true preacher will quietly appropriate praise to himself, but will in kindness rebuke any one who may fall at his feet, and will say, "See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God."—Rev. xxii. 9. Thus, dear ones, you are not "can't help its." It is evident that you can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth you, for you have stood, and are yet standing and walking in the old paths, because you can do it; and you are not conditional time salvationists either, because it is by the grace of God you are what you are, and wherein you have walked in obedience it is the Spirit that led you, and where you have been thus led and influenced by exhortations and admonitions it is not of yourself, and not at your own option, but only because the Spirit led you to thus choose to walk; therefore the choice is of God, and not your own, except as a gift of God.

Dear Elders, I have felt impressed to write thus. The SIGNS is sound in this, but it may be well to warn against "can't help it ism."

DAVID L. McNEES.

[WE desire to call the attention of our readers to the above thoughtful letter. Like brother McNees we have never accepted the phrase, "can't help it." As used by conditionalists against all Grace Baptists it is a falsehood. When Paul said, I cannot do the good that I would, and the evil that I would not that I do, he was referring solely to the inward conflicts and daily warfare that went on in his own soul. Paul did not mean that he could not preach the word, or sing the praises of God, or go to those who were destitute in any sense of the word with a cup of cold water to supply their need, or that he could not withhold his hands from stealing, or murder, or his lips from speaking evil falsely of his brother, or against any man, or from any one of a thousand outward deeds or words of evil, but he meant that even in doing

these things he could not realize that entirely unselfish spirit that he desired, and that in spite of himself evil motives would come in, and vile thoughts would intrude, and self was mixed with all he did. This he could not help, this he hated, and this he besought his God to deliver him from, as a body of death hateful, putrid and awful in his sight; this all who truly believe will realize all their life. Those who walk most in the Spirit, and furthest away from the flesh, will realize this more than others who are of a more carnal walk. Our brother is right when he says that the phrase, "Can't help it," is wholly false, as applied to the outward obedience of a believer. Predestination and salvation by grace in time and in eternity do not involve any such conclusions.—C.]

FARMINGTON, Ill.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I am reminded of my duty to send you the pay for the SIGNS for 1907. I wish to write something for its pages, but fear I shall fall far short of writing anything that could be of comfort to the many readers. I have received the SIGNS for January 1st, 1907, and have read it through. I like the paper for many reasons; one is, it is always on time, and often a little ahead of time, and so I think its patrons should be the same with their remittances. When we expect a friendly visit from some dear friend, and they promise to come, how eagerly we look for them, and are much disappointed, and, I must say, rather vexed when they fail to come, still if they give a lawful excuse we can overlook the delay. I have just written to one paper to know why they are nearly three numbers behind time. We should always, if possible, make our word good.

Dear brother Ker, I met you at the Baltimore Association, in Baltimore city, last spring. You may remember that my brother in the flesh had some talk with you the first day upon the steps of the meeting-house. I asked you, after being introduced to you, whether your name is pronounced Ker or Carr, and you said it is pronounced Carr, but was spelt Ker. I allude to this that you may remember me.

Now I feel to speak a little about the meeting, and also about myself. I was much cast down spiritually, if indeed I ever knew anything about spiritual things. I felt so wicked and so cast down that it seemed to me I must die. I had had some mind and thought about going east, but was undecided until one morning it seemed to be presented to me that I must go east. For a month or more my mind was settled that I would go once more and see my dear brethren and friends before I should go hence, and I thought perhaps the good Lord might bless me by the way. I was permitted to make the visit, but seemingly under a great cloud. So after spending about two weeks among friends, and a brother and sister in the flesh, I left them for the association in Baltimore, and attended the three days of the meeting.

Now, my brother, I wish to touch upon the subject you and brother Duley wrote upon in the SIGNS of late. I heard the preaching at the association, and was satisfied that it was the gospel in its purity, yet it came to me in the letter only. I had no fault to find with the preaching, yet it was not for me. Have we not the gospel of Jesus and of the inspired apostles and prophets in the letter written?. Have we not taken that holy book and read it, and it was to us all in the letter? Then again, one verse has contained

more than the whole book has done when it was given to us only in the letter. We may hear gospel preaching, and to one child of God it may come in demonstration of the Spirit, and with power, and to another only in the letter, and it is letter preaching to him. I have during my time (beginning before you were born, my brother,) heard many preachers among the Baptists, and while they were commanded to be instant in season, out of season, there have been times when they were shut up and dark in their minds, still they have filled their places, and preached the truth. Then again there seemed to be more spirit in it. I think this is what brother Duley intended, yet sometimes they are as one of the "Can't help its," of whom the brother speaks. I heard Elder Vail say once, when he was with us years ago, that preaching was like pumping, there are times when it pumps hard, and there are times again when it pumps itself. I think brother Duley was that way; still, has he not often preached in the letter only, while yet it was the gospel? The question is, May not the gospel be preached in the letter? It was written in the letter. Job gave his experience in the letter; he said, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee." The gospel must be a revelation to those who have the hearing ear and know the joyful sound, because the natural ear of even the children of God neither receives nor comprehends the things of the Spirit, only in the letter, unless revealed to them.

I have spoken of the association I attended; I expected to go to one or more of the others also, but I felt so discouraged in mind that it seemed to me I could not go any further. After a little visit at Elder Grafton's, and my sister's, I started for home. I felt I must go, or I could not live. How foolish we poor mortals are. Some years ago I attended the association in Philadelphia. How different it was with me then; I had lost two nights sleep, and got to the association just as it commenced, and felt bright, and seemed to have the hearing ear, and did not get sleepy during the whole meeting; but last spring I was dull, and could hardly keep awake; I tried, but could not help my sleepiness. I now feel low.

Many of the older ones have gone the way of all the earth, and but few who used to write for the SIGNS remain. How much my mind runs after those former days, and to those with whom I used to take sweet counsel. How good the Lord has been to me, and O how rebellious and sinful I have been. I feel wearied of my wayward life, there is nothing good in me. I find more fault with myself than I do with any one else. I have no fellowship for this poor sinner. Often I fear I am without God, and without hope in the world. I go mourning almost all the time on account of my vileness. The Lord has ever been merciful to me, and my continual prayer is for his mercy toward me, a poor, hell-deserving sinner. I know I must very soon pass on to eternity. I feel to acknowledge the justice of God if I am lost and go where hope can never come, yet I feel to ask that in his mercy I may be washed from all my pollution. Our God is a holy and just God, and I am the one who has sinned, so I plead not justice, but mercy, and the Lord has promised to be merciful to our iniquities, and that he will remember the sins of his people no more.

This, perhaps, may be the last I shall write for the SIGNS. I want to say that brother Chick has always been good and

kind to me, and I esteem him highly for the truth's sake, and I feel to kindly remember the publishers of the SIGNS in their labor of love in so ably conducting the mechanical part of the paper. Cast the mantle of charity over this.

I remain your brother in the hope of the gospel,

E. D. VARNES.

[WE remember very distinctly of having met brother Varnes at the Baltimore Association last spring, and also do we remember his visit in Philadelphia a few years ago, and are sorry that he could not enjoy the preaching after coming so far to hear it. He speaks of having heard preaching before we were born; we believe every word he has said concerning those who preached the gospel in that day; darkness of mind and bitterness of soul have ever attended the pathway of those who minister in spiritual things. We very readily admit that fathers in Israel are better acquainted with God and his dealing with men than are the children. Paul lived and died, however, before brother Varnes' day, but his knowledge and experience of grace did not affect the knowledge and experience of brother Varnes. God's children are his children, whether they be a David, Elijah, Paul or those who live now, and Christ has been and is the wisdom of them all. We fully understood brother Duley, and we also understand brother Varnes, regarding preaching the gospel in the letter, and are willing that each of them shall express themselves as they like concerning it, but the expression, "letter preaching," is misleading in this gospel age. We think we know what it is to be shut up and shut out; to be "in the belly of hell" and have to try to speak without unction from God. Perhaps if some of the brethren knew us better they would think so, too. None can realize their unprofitableness more than ourself, yet we must contend for the truth as it appears to us, regardless of the age or station of those who differ with us. We trust that the above letter may not be the last of brother Varnes' writings for the SIGNS, as he has been recognized for many years as a sound, faithful and loving Old School Baptist. May the Rock of his salvation be near him in all his journey, to comfort and strengthen him. As brother Varnes has called attention to the pronunciation of our name, we will say for the benefit of those who may question how it can be pronounced "Carr" when spelled Ker, that it is a Scotch name, and "e" has the sound of "a," hence Ker would be pronounced Carr. We are very glad that brother Varnes feels so kindly toward Elder Chick and the publishers of the SIGNS. They are worthy of his esteem and confidence.—K.]

CHARLOTTE, Va.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—The inclosed letter was written to me by my dear brother, Elder J. N. Badger, and I feel it is too good, too full of gospel truth to lie here idle, but desire my dear brethren and sisters to share its comfort with me. I send it to you for publication in the dear, old SIGNS, if you think it best. There may be some of the Lord's dear children who are doubting, and fearing that they are on the "left hand," seeing no evidence within themselves that they have ever in any way ministered unto one of the little ones, even a "cup of cold water." This letter has truly comforted me. The dear, old SIGNS comes to me regularly, laden with the blessed truths of the gospel. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate it, as it contains

nearly all the preaching I get. When I read the precious letters from so many dear, tried children of God, who seem to travel the same dark and thorny road I do, then receive such as the inclosed, I can but take courage and still hope that I may be one of that blessed number that hear the precious word, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom." The words came to me this morning: "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." O what a precious thought. It is only that precious blood that can cleanse such a vile sinner as I; it is my only hope.

But I only intended to tell you of this letter.

Brother Chick, I often think of you, and of all the loved ones, whom I long to see. Remember me to sister Purington and all in Christ Jesus.

Your very unworthy sister, in hope,

M. J. COX.

MANASSAS, Va.

MY DEAR SISTER MARY:—As I am at home to-day, I will try and give you a few thoughts regarding the separation of the "sheep and the goats," as you requested. In that passage to which you refer the Savior commences, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory," &c. I feel sure he refers to his coming in the Spirit in his kingdom or gospel church, as it was illustrated in the morning of that "day," the "gospel day," "when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." That must apply to the day of Pentecost, when the disciples and a large company of the people were assembled together, and the sound as of a mighty rushing wind filled all the place, and, as it were, cloven tongues, as of fire, sat upon the disciples, and Peter stood up and preached like an angel, as he was; the Son of man was there in his glory, and his holy angels, apostles and ministers were with him. That day has continued until now, and will continue to the end. "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." From that morning the gospel has been preached, Christ and him crucified is the burden of that gospel; it separates, in the word of the gospel, the "sheep," the hearers, from the "goats," those who have no ears to hear the joyful sound. As on the day of Pentecost, so it always is; in hearing Peter preach some were pricked in the heart, and cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" "Others mocking, said, These men are full of new wine," why hear ye them? That is always the effect of the preaching of the gospel; it is a sharp two-edged sword, it is a dividing, a separating power; to those upon the right hand of God, on the side of his favor, of his electing love, his love in their hearts for his word as they hear it say, "Come," in that sorrowing heart is a joyful sound of grace and salvation to a lost and perishing sinner. I say those upon the right hand receive it with joy. On the other hand (the left) the heart, as the word is preached, rejects that word, he says in his heart, "Depart from me;" "We will not have this man to reign over us."

You must remember, dear sister, that the Spirit of God speaks in the heart of his people, in his word of life, which is the gospel. God does not speak to mortal ears as man speaketh, but he is in his word Jesus Christ. Now to the illustration of this truth. You see the doctrine and experience blended in the gospel: "Then shall the King say unto them on the right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared

for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat," &c. You see they are called to what is rightfully their own, an inheritance; that is, the doctrine of the gospel: "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ."

Now, dear sister, see how they are identified, how known. Every one of them begins to say, just as you said in your letter: When have I ever done any of these things you say we have done to you? When have I fed you when hungry, and given you drink and ministered to you in any way? You see these are poor "do nothing" people, that have no merit, have never done a thing worthy of commendation, no good thing. As far as they are concerned the Scripture is true which says, "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." But down in that new heart, where God looks, there is a longing desire to do, and continue to do, everything to show that the law of God does reign. It would be meat and drink to me, says the poor soul, to do the will of God. Dear sister, if we could realize when the law of God is fulfilled, and where his love is seen by him, we would have more courage, it seems to me. It is to the heart God looks, not our natural, sinful heart, but the new heart, the pure heart he has given; that is, the wish that arises to give even a cup of cold water to the dear disciples of Jesus. Our love for them, our real love, is the test, and this is what the King sets forth to those sheep on his right hand. He the same as says, Ye know this kingdom is yours, for your love for my people, my saints, for my sake, and ye love to minister to them in all their necessities, for they are a poor and afflicted people. Ye are one with them, for ye love my word; ye are my sheep, for my word attracts you; my voice is sweet to you, my presence is your heaven, your fullness of joy. Just think how you have at times been drawn to the word, and to him that preached it; how powerfully that word "come" has reverberated through your soul, as almost to lift you from the earth for a time. That word of the gospel has also shown you your leanness, your poverty, your nothingness, until it seems almost to you that God had set you before his face, and filled your heart and mind with the strangest things, things unlawful to utter, that you could not express, not always of joy by any means. The poor, sin-sick soul that has been with Jesus in Gethsemane and drank the cup he drained, and been baptized with the baptism he is baptized with; in a word, that has been with him in prison, in hunger and thirst, in sickness, in persecution, wherever he was while in the flesh, has in a measure been with him; this is the sure token that that soul is with his at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens.

You ask, When is the time? It is now, in the gospel kingdom, into which you were manifestly brought many years ago, when you heard his voice and lived. It is an awful thought, and has often come to me with almost crushing power, that our attitude toward the Lord's people determines our standing with him. "Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee," are terrible words. All gifts, knowledge, understanding, zeal, all power ever bestowed upon man, are nothing if the heart is without love to the brethren; our professions in that case are no more than sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. If our hearts bless his people because they are his people, then are they Naomi to us, and we are Ruth to them. Then, though

we are strangers from the country of Moab, we have a rich inheritance in the land of Boaz, among the chosen people, and from time to time we glean in that goodly land. We are led with the sheep as we are constrained to go forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed our "kids beside the shepherds' tents." Indeed, dear sister, your letter illustrates all this in your own experience. Your yearning love for the company of the saints, for the food upon which they live, for the privileges they enjoy, the gospel they hear preached, is all life to you, is your very life.

May what I have written be of comfort to you in your lonely life. We hope to meet you at the spring meetings.

Your brother in affliction,

J. N. BADGER.

WOODSTOCK, Ontario.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —As I look back over the past year I can say, Truly goodness and mercy have followed me, but O how unthankful and ungrateful I have been, and how unfaithful I have proved in my walk and conversation, and how unmindful of the benefits and favors received; and in looking over the past year to see what I have done, I find nothing but sin and selfishness; not one good act can I bring forward as a token of my appreciation of the mercies which I have received. O what a sad commentary on my state and condition as a sinner before God. Well may I exclaim with the poet, "Just and holy is thy name, I am all unrighteousness." I wonder if there is any one else so full of everything that is evil, so full of doubts and fears and misgivings, and so prone to infidelity, and to doubt everything of a spiritual nature, as I am. I have all my life, with the exception of a few rare intervals, been the subject of this perplexing annoyance, but have kept on, hoping all the time that I would eventually grow out of it, and be made to feel sure that the God we desire to know, to love and to fear, was our God, and that he is most surely a reality, and a sure retreat in times of need. But as old age creeps on I find myself more and more tried, tempted and distressed on this point, with seemingly less strength to stand up against these terrible assaults of the evil one in my own heart. Often I think, a few more such trials, and I must surely give way, and own that I have no God, else surely he would appear to me, and for me, and deliver me from these temptations and fears. I know in many things I am growing worse and worse. Once I felt a relief in trying to pray, and would bow the knee in penitence, and with a feeling that God did hear and answer me, but now it is not so; I bow the knee, but God gives me no prayer, and it is just merely a form, and but little of that. I seem shut out from the presence of him whom I love, whom I once thought heard and blessed me; and then worldliness and the vanities of time take my care and attention, shutting out all thoughts of religion, of God and of goodness, from me. I wander around in a kind of indifference to the things I once loved and enjoyed, and often do I wonder if ever it will be with me as in the days that are past, when I loved to meet with the brethren and talk of the things of God and his kingdom, and longed for the days of meeting, and could say, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." But now, O how different. O, dear Elder Chick, how am I to recover myself from the condition I am in? I try to read the Bible, but alas, I might as well try to read the

Koran, for there is no life, no feeling, no enjoyment, nay, more, no memory of what I read; all is just like an idle tale. It is like what was said about those who reported that Jesus was alive again: they believed them not. Once I read the Bible, and other good books, and they were sweet to my taste, but now all is different. There seems to be no enjoyment in anything; it seems that the days are come, as the wise man says, in which "I have no pleasure in them."

I have here been writing about the state of my mind, for as far as my outward appearance goes I am the same old man, and walk in the same old way; but I have been writing about the workings of my mind, and, if I have a spiritual mind, about the deadness of it, and the barrenness and coldness that I feel in spiritual things. There is no exercise of mind, and apparently no experience of grace, the grace of God that bringeth salvation. I can say that is what I want. I want something that brings salvation. I do not mean salvation in eternity, for that cannot come until we put off mortality, but a time salvation, an experimental salvation, a salvation that I can feel and realize, and, as it were, clasp to my heart, and rejoice in, and take comfort in, and that will make me praise God for his mercies every morning, and at night, and all the day long, teaching me to live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world.

I sometimes think that trouble has brought on this feeling, for to me it is sad to see things turned upside down, as it were. It is enough to make one feel that all religion is vain, and that there is no reality in it. But while we may thus conclude in our hearts, there is another feeling which impels us to go on and wait upon God, just as if things were according to our mind, and we keep on hoping for light to appear on our pathway; and though things look dark aud gloomy, and it appears like the nighttime, yet we continue to walk on, and to trust in the Lord. We may well try to do so, for we have no other refuge, no other place to go, no other name to trust in, and are cut off from all our earthly, fleshly, human nature, unless indeed we give up altogether, and lie down in despair, which I hope we may not be left to do.

We are told that we are to expect losses, and crosses, and trials, and persecutions, in the world, and the apostle was in all kinds of perils, and, among others, by false brethren; but it is said, "Be thou faithful unto death;" and there is a crown of life for all those who are thus faithful. It is easy to be faithful when we have grace and faith given unto us, but when trials of all kinds assail us, and we feel that we have nothing to lean upon, and there is not a single human prop, then indeed our faith is brought to the test, and though we feel that we cannot stand, as the poet says, no, not another day, yet we do continue day by day, learning something every day, and being made to feel more and more that we have no strength or wisdom of our own; and as fast as we set up some of our own wisdom or strength we have it swept away. Thus we are made to realize our need of strength from a higher power, and that the Lord alone is the tower into which the righteous run in times of trial, and are sheltered, and protected, and cared for, and again made to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. May this be our happy lot, is the prayer of one who is tried and cast down, but not destroyed.

Your brother,

ROBERT SCATES.

LESSONS.

THE time of meeting for worship has come; with joy I make preparation for meeting with the church. Some distance is to be traveled before the house of our assembling is reached, and as I ride along my thoughts toward my brethren and sisters are those of love. The words, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," come to my mind, and I feel that I want to tell the brethren that I have known something of how pleasant and good it is in my very own personal experience, since I came to them desiring a place with them. All has indeed been in unity; no brother or sister has desired to know anything save Jesus Christ and him crucified. It is wonderful, this living together in church relationship in the spirit of unity and in the bond of peace. The world is around us, and we are in the world, yet discord is far from us, walled about are we by God's unfailing love. Such are my thoughts, and as, at last, I stand among my brethren and hear their greetings, sweet fellowship and love flow from heart to heart. The service begins, and Jesus is exalted. Every child of God knows what joy that brings, to see him, the altogether lovely One, crowned Lord of all. My heart still burns within me as I listen to the truth, for I realize that unless God reveals his truth unto us it is a sealed truth. I rejoice in the glimpse he has given me of the beauty of brethren dwelling together in unity and kept as the apple of his eye, as a garden inclosed. The last hymn is sung; one, then another rises and tells of their gladness in being once more permitted to hear the gospel preached, but I sit still. What has come to me? Instead of speaking I listen to such thoughts as these: You nearly always speak, so you would do better to keep silent for once; your brethren will think that you are forward, and that you have too good an opinion of your own ability. The benediction is said, and now, naturally, I might expect to feel a gratified sense of having done well, as I have kept myself modestly and quietly in my seat. Do I? No, I am thinking all at once about the words, "Ye are my witnesses;" and then the words, If any man be ashamed of me, of him also will I be ashamed before my Father, come to me with a sort of tender reproach. I realize that pride, not love to God, has been actuating me, and I cry from the depths, Make me willing to be accounted a fool, O Lord, if it be for thy name's sake.

I have long looked forward to a visit from three sisters of my home church, and as the expected time draws near I feel as if I want to speak to them of some of my mind's exercises in regard to spiritual things, and I have so much joy in thinking of their coming, and am so sure that we shall have a heavenly sitting together in Christ Jesus, that the days go by on winged feet. At length they come, and the hours pass rapidly, almost everything of interest to each one becomes a topic of conversation; I think of my longed for hour of conference, and say to myself, Not now, but just before the time for their home going I will speak. Then as we sit together in one place, my hand is almost stretched out for my Bible, and my lips have nearly uttered the words, Shall we not read a chapter, and give thanks to God for the privilege of seeing each other's faces once again? when the thought comes, How do you know that they will care to have you do this? They are your guests, if they feel as you do it would be all right, but are you sure? I hesitate; a sister says some-

thing that changes the turn the conversation had taken, the moment of opportunity is gone, a few moments more and I am alone. Do I feel justified in withholding my speech? A thousand times no. But I have learned to count that day as lost that (where two or three who love his name are gathered) does not record some spiritual conversation, some uttered longing for the presence and guidance of that One whom my soul loveth.

ANGIE J. THOMAS.

[THESE are solemn things of which our dear sister has been speaking. We desire to take them to our own heart, and to commend them to all who may read them. It is, and has at all times been our own feeling that that day is lost where two or three of the children of God are gathered together and nothing is said of the best things of all. We are compelled to mourn many such days in the past. Both in conference and in visits of brethren we have passed through all that our sister here mentions, and at the end we also look back with a sense of sorrow and condemnation. We do feel that the above letter has helped us, and we believe that it will also stir up others in the same way. May the Lord make it a blessing to us all.—C.]

PINSONFORK, Ky.

DEAR EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—As we are entering upon the realities of a new year, I have some desire of heart, I hope, to write one more article for the old, reliable SIGNS, and send it to you as my New Year's greeting and manifestation of my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel, God's redeemed family, although they are poor and afflicted. I realize from a deep, heartfelt sense, if not deceived, that the past year has gone into eternity, with all its consequences, and there is not so much as one of us that can call it back to make amends for our failures, imperfections and mistakes. This is the fifth time, recently, that I have tried to write an article for the dear, old SIGNS, but could not. My weakness and inability to write anything that I thought could in the least comfort any of the Lord's dear children so crushed me down in my feelings that I could not write, but each time I cast what I had written (four or five pages) in the flames, and thought I never would make another effort to write for publication, for it seemed to me that if it were right for me to do so light would be given me. But when the January number of the SIGNS came to hand, and I read it over and over, all the communications seemed to have an unusual sweetness to me, and to longer forbear writing seemed to be a thing of the past, for when I came to the words of Elder Chick, where he said, "Often we have felt that we could write no more, that the end had come," &c., also brother O. B. Hickerson's article, and that from sister S. G. Frazee, of Plymouth, Ill., all, as I have already remarked, were consoling to my feelings, and I hope stirred within me the spirit of love and fellowship, so that at once I sat down to write again, with a feeling that such humble followers of the meek and lowly Jesus can bear with such a worm as I, and will cast the mantle of love and charity over my manifest imperfections, and as the new year is entering my impressions of heart are to offer a few thoughts on the following words of Scripture: "That we should be holy and without blame before him in love."—Eph. i. 4, and as I desire my words to be few and well ordered, if the Lord will so direct my mind, I shall not aim to reach out

into the nooks and corners, or, in other words, I shall not aim to reach out into the connection and general surroundings of this text of Scripture, for it is too wonderful for me, and too deep and unfathomable for my finite mind, but I will try to confine my mind to my individual thoughts on these words, without interfering with the opinion of any one else.

The word "be" means to exist, and the words "be holy" mean to exist or remain holy. Therefore I have and do believe that the apostle Paul had in view, when he wrote these things to the church at Ephesus, the standing of all the election of grace, chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began. Paul said, "He hath chosen us in him [Christ] before the foundation of the world, that we should be [exist] holy and without blame before him [God] in love." The careful reader will observe that we were chosen in him, not into him (Christ) that we should exist holy and without blame or blemish. Therefore "they are without fault before the throne of God." Hence all the chosen and redeemed family of our God had a mystical existence in Christ from everlasting, or ever the earth was, the espoused bride dwelling in the bosom of the eternal Father, and in this standing they were and are complete in Christ. I do not mean that we existed in Christ in our individuality as beings, but our eternal life was there hid with Christ in God; in fact, Christ is himself our life; I mean the spiritual or eternal life; and not only so, but he is called the strength of Israel. I do not marvel that the Lord's redeemed people are poor, helpless and dependent, depending alone on the Lord Jesus Christ, their life and only strength. While the Scriptures fully demonstrate the fact that the church or people of God did exist in Christ, his mystical body and members, the espoused bride from everlasting, we also believe they fully and clearly set forth their standing in Adam. Hence two standings, one in Adam and one in Christ; and in the order of existence their standing (existence or life) in Christ was first, it was from everlasting, or ever the earth was. When there were no fountains abounding with water, or the highest part of the dust of the earth was not yet made, "I was set up from everlasting." In the order of development their standing in Adam was first, was of the earth earthy. But notwithstanding all things connected with their standing in the earthly Adam, I cannot believe from a scriptural standpoint that their standing in Christ, the heavenly Adam, was in the very least affected, tarnished, or underwent any change whatever, but did exist holy, according as God made choice of them in Christ to that end and for that purpose, that they should be (exist) holy and without blame before him in love. The Lord put the word in the mouth of the false prophet Balaam, and made him declare, "He [God] hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: the Lord his God is with, and the shout of a king is among them."—Num. xxiii. 21. So we see from these few quoted Scriptures, together with the entire tenor of the Bible, that God's elect people have been, and are, viewed in Christ from everlasting to everlasting (their dwelling-place in all generations) without sin, blame or blemish, but "holy and without blame before him in love." In this wondrous and mysterious unity we were in Christ from everlasting, "for in him we live, and move, and have our being;" that is, our spiritual life, movement and being, for without him we can do nothing.

My dear brethren, I have in a hurried

and awkward way penned a few of my thoughts on this wonderful passage of Scripture, and O how precious are these blessed and wonderful things of God, which he did for us, whereof we are glad. I desire to praise God for his sustaining grace manifested during the past year, and hope for his grace, mercy and goodness the present year, to follow us and keep us in the way everlasting.

W. J. MAY.

LEESBURG, Va.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—Will you allow me space to acknowledge the receipt of over one hundred letters I have received from those who loved "Dear Elder White?" My eyes are troubling me, or I would answer each privately. I appreciate them, and believe them to be heartfelt and true.

Until February, 1904, Elder White filled his appointments each Saturday and Sunday, distance or weather never being considered. He and I have driven to "The Valley" (eight miles) when weather and roads were both bad, to find no one else there. We would go into the meeting-house, get warm, sing a few hymns and ride home.

During the war between the States he was suddenly convicted of sin. After the war was over and he returned home his trouble was great, and he earnestly sought to know the truth. He has told me that night and day he prayed to God to deliver him. One Saturday afternoon while riding along the road on horseback he came to "The Valley" meeting-house; he went in, Elder Furr was preaching to a few; he had not listened long until he felt it was the truth, and what he long had sought for. The church was nearly extinct, having but one very aged member. His friends (especially the Episcopal minister in Leesburg, who was a warm personal friend,) did all in their power to persuade him, for his children's sake as well as his own, to join a church where his and their associates belonged. Soon afterward he called on old Elder Furr, and told him he wanted to be baptized. It shocked the old gentleman, as he only knew him through the war, in a different character. After some conversation Elder Furr told him to come to the church and relate his experience. Elder White did not know what that meant, as he had never heard one do it. He went, was received and baptized. Shortly afterward he found himself talking to the church about the Scripture, following Elder Furr. It was not long before his gift was discovered, and he was ordained to the ministry. He succeeded Elder Furr as pastor at "The Valley," and remained such until his death. Elder Gilbert Beebe told me of Elder White's ordination, and of the feeling on that occasion, when Elder White read the hymn, "Am I a soldier of the cross?" so soon after the terrible war, changing banners.

He was taken violently ill in February, 1904, on his way home from Mill Creek. No one expected him to recover, but he did, and has preached and baptized and attended the Salisbury Association, as well as the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, at Manassas, since. He preached at Frying Pan the second Sunday in August last, from, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Before preaching he baptized a brother much taller and stronger than himself, and we were all fearful, but he lifted him up as easily as he would a child. In answer to offers of help, he said, "I am not trusting to my own strength." His last service was at

"The Valley," his home church, the third Sunday in August. Since August 25th he had been confined to his room, and was the most patient of sufferers, never one murmuring word. He had been examined by physicians in Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington. His trouble was an abscess, but the location was undecided. We fully expected him to get better and be out again, until on the morning of January 11th he suddenly became unconscious, and breathed his life away like an infant sleeping. That he certainly was beloved in Virginia, every evidence was given after his death. Each meeting-house in town was offered for the funeral service, as his home would not give room for the friends. The Methodist was accepted, being the largest building. Six ministers present were pall-bearers: Elders Durand, Rowe, Gold, Eubanks, Badger and Gore. Thus has passed from earth one who loved God and God's children. Varied were his associates in life, but none received the cordial grasp of the hand that his brethren did; black or white he loved them. God exalted, man abased, was in all his talk. A sermon he preached from "God is love," I never can forget.

All through his illness my prayer had been for submission, and now that our heavenly Father has called him home, to be with and like the Savior he adored, may God in his infinite mercy give me reconciling grace, and enable me to say, "Thy will be done."

Your sister in faith and hope,

MARGARET B. WHITE.

[HUNDREDS will be grieved to learn of the death of our beloved brother Elder E. V. White. He was an old, tried, faithful and able minister of Jesus Christ; a soldier in the fullest sense of the word, yet as gentle as a nurse in the care of children. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to his widow, our dear sister, and to the churches of which he was the pastor. An obituary will appear later.—K.]

JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH.

"BECAUSE thou hast said, These two nations, and these two countries, shall be mine, and we will possess it; whereas the Lord was there."—Ezekiel xxxv. 10.

Ah, the enemy rejoiced at the desolations of Zion, he saw that she was now weak and defenseless. All that passed by the way did pluck her. (Psalms lxxx. 12.) Yes, she looked to be an easy prey to the ravening foe, who thought all he had to do was to invade the land, enter her palaces, (Micah v. 5,) and hold everything in everlasting possession. There was one thing that did not enter into their counsel: "The Lord was there." Ah, poor, sin-stricken, tempted, afflicted, chastened child of God, though all the delightsome land to thee lieth waste, and thou art bereaved of all thy pleasant things, (Lam. i. 7,) though thou art weak, and Satan's messengers sorely buffet thee, (2 Cor. xii. 7,) though thy heart is sighing over thy wretchedness and spiritual destitution, and thy tears are upon thy cheeks, thus saith the Lord, "Yet will I not forget thee."—Isaiah xlix. 15. He will not utterly forsake thee; though he hath spoken against thee and chastened thee sore, he hath not given thee over unto death. (Psalms cxviii. 18.) He earnestly remembers thee still, he will surely have mercy upon thee. (Jer. xxxi. 20.) Ah, but you say, I am so foolish, the Lord knoweth my foolishness, and my sins are not hidden from him. (Psalms lxv. 5.) My forgetfulness, ingratitude and perverse worldliness have procured all this desolation and famine that is upon me. (Jer. ii. 17.) Ah, yes, my chastened soul well knows that not without

cause (Ezek. xiv. 23,) has the Lord suffered all these evils to befall me. O my soul is cast down within me, and the enemy mocketh my soul, "saying, God hath forsaken him: persecute and take him; for there is none to deliver him."—Psalms lxxi. 11. O thou afflicted one, tossed with tempest and not comforted, when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him. (Isaiah lix. 19.) O yes, the stricken, smitten, chastened child of God shall know that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin, and that Emmanuel's obedience is her justifying beauty in the eyes of her Lord, and that in his covenant faithfulness he will redeem his people from all adversities. He will in due time arise and have mercy upon Zion, and thoroughly plead her cause. (Jer. l. 34.) He will, in the set time (Psalms cii. 13,) say to the invading, spoiling, devastating foe, Hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther. The invading powers of darkness shall be turned back; yes, poor, desolate, chastened child, thy God hath not left thee; though as an overflowing scourge, as a mighty flood thy foes, the world, the flesh and the devil, thine unbelief, sore trials and the powers of darkness have made havoc of thy life before God, the Lord will help thee, and that right early, and in his help and salvation thou shalt arise from the dust and put on thy beautiful garments, thou shalt again "be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry."—Jer. xxxi. 4. "And the name of the city from that day shall be, The Lord is there [Jehovah-Shammah]."—Ezek. xlviii. 35.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

REISTERSTOWN, Md.

MR. BARNEY TAYLOR—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your good letter of June 20th has been by me longer than I intended before replying to it, and I hope you will excuse my delay. I have had a busy summer, with many cares and some sickness. In July my little only grandson died in my house, after being sick for about two weeks. All this, coupled with the extreme heat, has hindered me from doing much writing. I enjoyed your letter much, it seemed to me to have the right, good, gospel sound. You know it is said, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day." I remember meeting you (I think it was you) once in Virginia some years ago, and you then told me something about your situation up north. I can in a great measure understand that you have much to contend against where you are in confessing your faith in your Lord and Savior. Salvation by grace is as unpopular now among our modern Pharisees as it used to be when Paul preached it among their prototypes, the Pharisees of his day. New England is now like Jerusalem and Judea of old, the hotbed of self-righteousness, and the doctrine of the cross, which declares that man has no merit before God, must ever be distasteful to the self-righteous spirit of man. We cannot wonder that men fight against this truth, and accuse it of all manner of hateful, horrible consequences. But the fact is, that believers in salvation by grace live better than those who trust in their works, because the grace which God has given them teaches them in their very hearts to deny ungodliness and all worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in the world. They eat

and drink of the body and blood of Jesus, and so the very life of Jesus in them impels to a life like the Lord's life when he lived in the flesh. The right living of the man who trusts in his works to save him is like pumping water up hill, while the right living of the man who trusts in grace is like the natural flow of the water from a living spring down through the fields, making everything green where it flows. The obedience of him who trusts in his works is the obedience of the slave, while the obedience of him who trusts in grace is the loving obedience of a child. The most of New England religion is the religion of slavery, and slaves cannot understand the obedience of sonship. I am glad, my brother, that you believe in grace, and are no longer a servant, but a son; stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Work, my brother, because Christ has redeemed you unto good works, not because you hope to redeem yourself by them. No amount of work can change the heart, but a change of heart does change the work. Now as long as you live you will feel very unprofitable, but this will only make you trust Christ more, and more trust in Christ honors God and helps the soul to live better. May God bless and keep you day by day, and help you to be a faithful witness to the power of grace.

I should be glad of a word from you at any time. I should rejoice to hear that any word written here had done you good.

I remain your brother in the hope of Christ, F. A. CHICK.

[THE above letter was written August 26th, 1892, and was recently sent to the Ebenezer Church, of New York city, by the widow of brother Taylor, and afterward forwarded to the SIGNS with the request that it be published.—ED.]

WEISER, Idaho.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Inclosed find order for two dollars, for which I desire to have the SIGNS continued to me for 1907. I do not feel that I can do without it. The editorials and the correspondence set forth the doctrine that I love. I do not feel worthy of being numbered with the people of God. I sometimes feel to say, These are surely the people of the Lord, and they set forth the doctrine of Christ and the apostles; they all speak the same truth, and proclaim that salvation is of the Lord in time as well as in eternity, giving to him all the praise and glory. We see many who are very zealous, claiming that they are doing good, and saving souls by their good works; but these have been their sayings all the way along ever since the day of Cain, and no doubt will be as long as time remains. The word says that the people shall grow worse and worse, even men of your own selves shall rise up speaking perverse things. I have thought that the church at the present time is passing through this state of things, and many are being drawn away by those who speak perverse things. We see men who once stood reasonably firm in the doctrine and practice of Old School Baptists, who are now among the most bitter enemies with which the church has to contend. They still claim the name of Baptists, but deny the faith and order of the house of the Lord. They are taking in every institution of man, and all the orders of the day. They remind me of the young man of whom the wise man said was without understanding, who was ready to follow after the woman, as an ox to the slaughter, or as a bird to the snare, and her feet lead down to the chambers of death. This has been the occupation of the church of antichrist all

the days of old, and will be until the Lord comes to call all his children home, then there will be no trouble and no death. O blessed hope! Can it be that this poor, old sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all, shall be numbered with that blood-washed throng of the new Jerusalem? "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." So, dear editors and correspondents, write on, for your writings are comforting to many of God's humble poor. I have been made to take courage while reading the many good letters from the children of God. I will close now.

Your brother in hope of the gospel,

G. B. BARTON.

SCHENECTADY, N. Y.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find four dollars, for which you may give me credit on my account. I should have sent it long ago, but have kept putting it off. As long as I have taken the SIGNS this is the first time I have sent my own remittance. I heartily indorse all said in favor of the SIGNS, and see no way of doing without it, and am not looking for a way, for as long as I live I hope to be able to have it.

I often think of my visit in Middletown, and of all the dear ones I met at that time; each face remains with me in fond remembrance, while many of their names are forgotten. There are many things I would like to say, but just now the old man is very much in evidence, and in emphatic terms reminds me that I had better keep still, and not try to deceive good people.

Lovingly your sister in tribulation, but hope through a risen Savior,

ANNA BOUCK.

LOCKPORT, N. Y.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Inclosed I send you money order for two dollars to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, which has come to me regularly for nearly seventy years, and while I am able to read I want it continued, for it is the only preaching I have that is satisfactory to my mind. It still holds forth the same doctrine that was promulgated from the start by Elders Beebe, Trott, Leachman and others, including my beloved uncle, Elder Hezekiah West, all of whom have gone to their heavenly reward.

With the hope of joining them in that heavenly inheritance, yours &c.,

P. WEST.

JACKSONVILLE, Ill.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Inclosed please find two dollars to pay for the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES; I do not feel that I can do without it, as it is the only paper I know of that exactly suits me. I believe in the absolute predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass; that God works all things after the counsel of his own will, and none can hinder. I think brother Koontz's letter a good one, and hope the brethren will all govern themselves accordingly.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

GEORGE H. LEE.

GRATIS, Ohio.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have been taking the SIGNS ever since 1860, and feel as though I cannot do without it, for it is all the preaching I get, and it does me much good. Our church here has gone down, my wife is dead, and I feel all alone. This paper is a comfort to me in my lonely condition, and I feel I must keep on taking it as long as I live. I am now in my seventy-fifth year, was seventy-four the 28th of January.

Your brother,

HENRY HECKMAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1907.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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JOHN XVII. 20.

A DEAR sister in the west asks that we write upon the words, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." She says that a young Primitive Baptist minister asked her about this text, and that they could see no kind of Arminianism in it, as some in these days claim.

There is a very good reason why our sister and the young minister could see no Arminianism in this text, and that is because there is none in it at all. Arminianism means that by human instrumentalities sinners are raised from the dead to the possession of divine life. It is claimed that preaching, praying, singing, exhortation, and a thousand other works of human device, are the means of bringing sinners to know, and love, and serve God, and be saved everlastingly. This Scripture, and some others, have been used as a support to this theory. No doubt this has been done honestly enough by many, for these Scriptures have seemed to them, on the face of them, to teach this theory, which is to the exaltation of man rather than God. The result has been in thousands of cases at the end to put the efforts of man first and foremost, and to ascribe salvation to human effort rather than to the power of God; and a thousand times more is said, and a thousand times more stress is laid upon man's share in this salvation, than upon what the Lord has wrought. In the finality there is no half way ground between giving all the glory of salvation to God, and all of it to man. If we are not saying in heart, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory, we shall soon be saying, Not unto thee, not unto thee, but unto us be all the glory. But all who truly believe know that it is all of grace, from first to last, in this matter of salvation. A song with which we have been familiar many years expresses the travel of that soul that is truly being led by the Spirit of God; the first verse ends, "All of self, and none of thee;" the second verse ends, "Some of self, and some of thee;" the third verse ends, "Less of self, and more of thee," and the last verse ends, "None of self, and all of thee." All the travel of grace is to this end; it is from self to the Lord. First the soul seeks to save itself, but at the end it comes to seek salvation of the Lord. All this our sister (and we doubt not, the young minister also) knows well we are assured, and the text suggested cannot mean anything contrary to this. We feel like saying a few things with regard to what it does signify, if the Lord will. First, it is clearly stated in the word that man, since the transgression of our first parents, is not only depraved, condemned, lost and guilty, but also is dead to God, dead in sins, under the dominion of Satan and sin, and in bondage in every faculty of his being. These are not mere figures of speech, but plain statements of truth, literal truth. They are not hyperbolical expressions, intended to arrest the attention of men, but they are simple expressions of plain but dreadful facts. Man is

as much dead to God, and dead in sin, and as literally so, as are men in their graves from whom the breath of this mortal life is departed. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." This was not spoken in vain, man did die in that very day. It need not be said that men are not dead to this natural life, but they are dead to God, and one day all men will die to this natural world, even as all our fathers before us. This we need not argue, for we doubt not that Old School Baptists all believe it, and, what is more, know it each one for himself. It is also manifestly involved in this thought of death that men cannot even will to live, since where any will whatever exists there must be life preceding the will, and out of which the will comes forth. The dead know not anything, and they that are in their graves naturally cannot even desire to live, and do not know that there is such a thing as life. So in that death of which we have been speaking there is no capability of even desiring life eternal and immortal. The dead, in this sense, do not know they are dead, neither do they know anything of the life of which they are destitute. Unless this be so, there is no force, no settled meaning in language. In this death there is no knowledge of sin or righteousness, no knowledge of separation from God, or of communion with him, no knowledge either of enmity to God or of peace with him; therefore this dead man cannot mourn over sin, nor long for redemption. While abiding in this state of death to God, and in sin, he desires not God, and knows him not; neither does he realize the dominion of sin and Satan, nor can he desire release from this bondage. So complete is this bondage that he does not know that he is in bondage. He looks with pleasure upon the very chains that bind him, counting them ornaments rather than chains. How then shall man be recovered from this state of death? There is a way, and that way is revealed in the word of God; it is summed up in this language of the apostle, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." He "hath quickened us together with Christ." And, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him." Two things are apparent in these quotations from the word. One is that the dead are made alive to God, and the other is that God himself performs this work; and a third thing is to be noticed, viz., that in all these Scriptures there is no mention of any human means used in this quickening; the language is direct in all these Scriptures: "You hath he quickened." Concerning the word "quickened," it has been argued that it does not always mean giving life to the dead, but, sometimes, to revive that which is languishing. That is true, but even when used in this secondary sense, the work is still the Lord's, and it still remains true that the primary signification is to give life where it was not before; and in these Scriptures it is expressly said that it is the dead that are quickened. Whatever secondary meaning, therefore, the word may have, in the Scripture quoted above its meaning is the primary one: of making alive the dead. This, then, is the work of God, without human instrumentalities. Many things are committed to the servants of God in their ministry, but this is not one of them; this our God has reserved in his own hand. It was so in the beginning;

all life, of all sorts and kinds, came forth from the hand of God. Adam could till the ground and cultivate the fruit of it, but he could not give life to that which was dead. No plant in all the world can point to man as he who has caused it to live. Many a plant could testify that man has watered, and pruned, and nourished it, because it was living, that it might bring forth fruit more abundantly, but its life, its power to grow and thrive, is of God. So it is solemnly true that all life is of God and flows out from God to all things. This the apostle taught when he said, It is "in him we live, and move, and have our being." We are here referring to these things, not because we anticipate that any of our readers will dispute them, but to refresh the minds of all who read, and to cause them to remember these things. These things are but figures of the higher life, the life of the Spirit. It might justly be reasoned that if all inferior life is from God, surely that which is the highest life of all must be from him also, and, as it was in the beginning with the things committed to Adam, so is it now in the spiritual world with the things committed to the servants of God. Many things are committed to the children of God, but life is not one of them.

Let us remember that in the word our Lord Jesus Christ is called a quickening spirit. We never read there of quickened spirits. Indeed, that which is essentially life itself could not be thought of as ever needing to be quickened. We never read of any spirit being dead, so as to need to be made alive from the dead. Jesus himself is not a quickened, but a quickening spirit. That to which life must be imparted cannot impart that life to another. Jesus is life itself, and his very words are spirit and life. Men are the receivers of life, and receivers only; never do they, never can they, impart life. One quickened man cannot say, I was made to live by the power of Jesus, the quickening spirit, while another shall say, I was made to live through the work of another quickened man; all alike must say, By the power of God in Christ we live. In this alone can be found true fellowship with the Father, and with the Son, and with one another. The hand does not receive its quickening from the arm, while the arm receives its life from the head, but all alike, arm, hand and head, live and move and have their being in God. But we do not need to continue these thoughts here.

We will return to the text named at the beginning of this article. First, we will say that to believe on him through their word is not to be made alive from the dead. Jesus prayed for his quickened and called disciples, and for quickened and called disciples in all ages, and in all places he also prayed that they all might believe on him, as well as these immediately around him. Every prayer of the blessed Lord was effectual, all of them have been and ever shall be fulfilled. All who are made alive in Christ in every age, when they hear the word of the apostles in the Scriptures, or from the called servants of God in the pulpit, or elsewhere, do come to believe on him as the Savior of sinners, as the one Redeemer, Lord and King. To believe, is one of the functions of this natural life, so also is it of spiritual life. But let it be borne in mind that there is the same difference between spiritual faith and natural belief that there is between the sources from which they severally spring. It is then the living in Christ who shall believe on him through the word of his called servants, and these living souls believe because

God, who gives the word, also seals it to their hearts and consciences, so that it becomes a living word to them.

We now desire to call attention to a few other similar expressions in the word concerning the work and effect of the gospel ministry: "How then shall they call on him in whom they believe not? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" Here is also the same thought of believing through their word. So also the eunuch believed in the word of preaching by Philip. So Lydia, and also the jailer at Philippi, believed through the preaching of Paul. Saul received his sight when Ananias came to him. But Saul was a living man, else he would not have been spoken of as being blind and receiving his sight. So while Lazarus received life from the power of Jesus, it was given only to the disciples to take away the stone, and the graveclothes from him. Paul was sent to open the blind eyes, and to turn many from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. John the Baptist was sent "to give knowledge of salvation," "to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet in the way of peace." All these things are committed to the ministry of the word. So we read that under the preaching of Peter on the day of Pentecost many were pricked in the heart, and cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Is it not manifest that these were living men and women? If not, they might have been pricked in the heart all the day long, and no sign of hurt would have appeared in them. Then Paul is spoken of as opening the blind eyes; this is not to impart life to the dead; in fact we never speak of the dead as being blind. If we say one is blind, by the same words we say that he is a living man. If a man be turned from darkness to light it is manifest, so manifest that it needs not to be said that this man is living. If a man be turned from the power of the enemy to his rightful sovereign, by the same token we know that that man lives, and that he was living before being thus turned. If to any man is given knowledge of salvation, this also is proof of life in that man (we mean spiritual life), and so is the same true of all that is said in the quotations that we have made.

All this we have been saying is not a play upon words; we are not using these words merely as catchwords, God forbid that any of us should handle the word of God in that way. In these Scriptures is defined, and defined carefully and strictly, just that which God has imparted to the ministry, and just that which he has not imparted to his servants. After the Lord has gone before and given spiritual life to him that was dead, then the servant of God, at the bidding of the Master, comes in, and through preaching that living soul is given light, knowledge, understanding, is pricked in the heart, and then is blessed and comforted, and given, not salvation, but the knowledge of it. One feels some day that every word of the preaching he hears is a word of cursing to him, the next day he hears and every word is a word of blessing. This is exactly the language by which one dear child of God expressed her feelings to us years ago, after she had listened to two sermons, one preached two weeks after the other. She meant that the first came with condemnation, showing her all her life as a sinner before God; the other came to her in the revelation of Jesus Christ as the Savior of just such sinners;

and so the voice of cursing was in the one to her, and the voice of blessing in the other. But before the time of hearing the first sermon the Lord had wrought that miracle of grace in her soul by which dead men live.

Thus we have tried to present the work of God in salvation, and in giving life to the dead, and we have tried to present the work of the ministry as it is blessed to the living in Zion. The one is God's work alone, the other is the work of God ministered to us through his servants. In this sense alone are any of us laborers together with God. It is not ours to aid in giving life to the dead, but how blessed to be admitted into the vineyard where the living plants grow and thrive, to plant and water them, but God giveth the increase. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

JEREMIAH L., LI.; REVELATION XVII.

(Reply to sister Leonard.)

We presume it is not expected that we should examine and compare all that is contained in these very lengthy chapters of Jeremiah, with what is contained in the portion of Revelation referred to, but simply and briefly reply to the inquiry in regard to their connection. What was prophesied by Jeremiah was in reference to ancient Babylon literally, and his fearful predictions were fulfilled to the letter in the destruction of that magnificent city, the slaying of her king and his nobles by the Medes and Persians, and the utter overthrow of the imperial government.

The destruction of Mystery, Babylon, recorded in Revelation xvii., is a presentation, in highly figurative language, of the wrath and vengeance of God, which is held in store, and soon to be poured out upon antichrist.

Ancient Babylon, in her rise, progress, wickedness and final overthrow, was unquestionably designed as a type of the organized powers of the man of sin, the son of perdition, that should be arrayed against the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the gospel dispensation. Hence the name Babylon is applied in Revelation to what is elsewhere in the New Testament called "That Wicked," "whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming. Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish."—2 Thess. ii. 8–10. The very name Babylon signifies confusion, and is probably derived from the circumstance of God's confusing the language of those enterprising, industrious, hard-working parties who had united their efforts to build a tower whose top should reach to heaven. In this grand enterprise three prominent objects were intended to be secured: First, to open a common thoroughfare from earth to heaven, without the humiliating necessity of being saved by grace. Second, to defeat the wisdom of God, should he again attempt to deluge the earth; and last, but not least, to erect a lasting monument of the capability, enterprise and zeal of men. But in a way quite unlooked for by them, God confounded their language and defeated their stupendous project. The tower lacked just about as much of reaching to heaven as all the inventions and works of men are doomed to fall short of saving sinners independently of the grace of God. It has always been the pride of antichrist in all her forms and organiza-

tions to boast of her own exploits, of what she has done, means to do, and of her free agency in opening avenues to heaven. Thus the king of Babylon exulted in the palace, of his kingdom: "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?" But, "While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken, The kingdom is departed from thee."—Daniel iv. 30, 31. In the vain and wicked imaginations of his heart he had said, "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds: I will be like the Most High."—Isaiah xiv. 13, 14. But the Lord of hosts has said he would rise up against Babylon, and sweep it with the besom of destruction.

In all these particulars it is easy to trace the spirit, the pride, the vain and lofty imaginations of antichrist in every age. From this ancient and widely renowned city, with its broad and towering walls, its gates of brass and mighty fortifications, in its oppression of Israelitish captives, its invasion of Jerusalem, its desecration of consecrated vessels of the Lord, its widespread dominion and its provinces, all prefigured "that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth."—Rev. xvii. 18. But in the parallels presented by Jeremiah and John, in the chapters before us, the destruction of the typical and the antitypical Babylons, are more particularly described, and show the retributive vengeance of God in their awful doom. And as at the time of the destruction of the former, God called his captives out of the former Babylon, so, in connection with the final destruction of Mystery, Babylon, John heard a voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." From which we infer that there are some of the Lord's captive children now in Babylon, and she is speedily to be destroyed; God now commands them to come out of her.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 15, 1862.

APPOINTMENTS.

NOTHING preventing, I expect to have meeting at the home of sister Jones, 54 Fuller St., Schenectady, N. Y., Friday, February 15th, 2 p. m. and 7:30 p. m.; also at Schoharie Hill meeting-house Saturday, 16th, 2 p. m., and Sunday, 17th, 10:30 a. m.

D. M. VAIL.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder D. M. Vail, Jan. 22nd, 1907, in Trenton, N. J., Jacob C. Vandorn, of Wertsville, N. J., and Mrs. Catherine F. Cronce, of Hopewell, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Hezekiah S. Stipp was born in Ohio, Dec. 23rd, 1821, and died Dec. 19th, 1906, aged 85 years, lacking 4 days. He crossed the plains to Oregon in 1852, and was married to Miss Emma Gholson in 1860. Seven children were born to them, five sons and two daughters. The oldest son died in his nineteenth year, and the youngest daughter died in infancy; there are now four sons and one daughter living to mourn the loss of their loving father, together with the church, of which he was a faithful member. It was his greatest comfort to meet at the house of worship and hear the glorious gospel preached in its purity. Salvation by grace was his theme, through the merits of a crucified and risen Redeemer, Jesus Christ, the Savior of poor, lost and helpless sinners. He often spoke of his imperfections, and of the reason of his hope in Christ. His wife died in 1878. He made his home with us the last four years, his children paying his board and caring for him. He seemed like a father to us, and we miss him as one of the family; but he is gone, and we mourn not as those who have no hope, for we believe our loss is his eternal gain. May the rich blessings of God, in whom he trusted, be with his children, together with Cedar Creek Church, of which he was a worthy member, is the prayer of your unworthy brother in a precious hope,

JOSEPH BRUCE.

OREGON CITY, Oregon.

BROTHER **R. R. Underwood** was born Dec. 14th, 1832, and moved to Alabama in early life and lived in the same county until his death. By his first companion were born to him several children; some of them are still living. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Mount Pleasant, in Montgomery Co., in 1870, and lived and died in fellowship with the same church, and all other orderly Baptists. On June 27th, 1897, he was married to Mrs. P. J. Mesley, who loved and nursed him, spending her time to make him comfortable; she was a faithful and loving companion till his death, which took place Sept. 7th, 1906. His body was interred in the family graveyard on the old homestead. The funeral service was conducted by Elder J. A. Mills, of our faith and order. He leaves his dear companion and children and a host of friends to mourn their loss, but God, who doeth all things right, called him home. My acquaintance with him was for many years. I have tried in much weakness to serve the church of his membership for more than eight years. He was not a man of many words on any subject, but when he spoke it was by way of considering, and in all the troubles which the churches of God have passed through he stood and contended for the old gospel. Let me say to the loving companion who is left all alone, never to see his face or hear his voice again on earth, Still hope to meet him and others who have gone before. May God be the husband to her. Dear children, may God bless you all, and especially his very dear boys, and make you just such men as your father was. May God bless you all for the hour of death, that you all may enter rest. M. V. GIBSON.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, Alabama.

Philip C. Brome was born in New York city, July 22nd, 1818, died on his farm, at South Fallsburg, N. Y., Dec. 16th, 1906. He was a prosperous farmer, being sober, industrious and unquestionably honest. His parents, Elder Philip C. Brome and Mary Meade, came from England. He was married in 1850, to Phebe Jane Benedict, only daughter of Miner C. Benedict and Mary Comstock. They had five children, two of whom, with the widow and one brother, survive: Mrs. Henry J. Dutcher, of South Fallsburgh, and Thomas A. at home. The brother is Thomas M., who resides at Denton, Orange County.

Mr. Brome never made a public profession of religion, but was a firm believer in Jesus Christ, and enjoyed hearing the gospel preached. He was well versed in the Scriptures, and was ever ready to contend for salvation by grace; his hope was for many years in the mercy of God. Old age was the cause of his death; he had become as a child in both body and mind, and continued to fade as a leaf until he quietly passed away as above stated. His family will miss him, so also will the neighborhood; he was very kind and accommodating.

The funeral service was held at his late home Tuesday afternoon, Dec. 18th, and was conducted by the writer; text used, Romans viii. 33, 34.

May the Lord bless the sorrowing ones. K.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER Morgan Brown having changed his address from Cordele, Ga., to Chalybeate Springs, Meriwether Co., Ga., requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place. He would also be glad to correspond with any who may be interested in the many business opportunities and advantages which Chalybeate Springs, with its valuable mineral waters and two new railroads, affords for the home seeker and investor.

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G. W. Wine, Wash., $.25; Mrs. Edward Griffin, N. Y., $3.00.—Total, $3.25.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 75. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1907. NO. 5.

POETRY.

ALL THINGS WORKING FOR GOOD.

"THINGS" are often named in Scripture,
Things of nature, things of grace,
All things made by God our Savior,
All things moving in their place.

Things our mind may try to fathom,
Things our eye cannot discern,
Things too deep for human wisdom,
Things that mortal man can't learn.

If we ever know things deeper
Than eye can see or ear can hear,
They must come by revelation;
So the Scriptures do declare.

As all things do work together,
Not apart, but in their place,
Let us ever trust our Leader,
And rely upon his grace.

J. G. EUBANKS.

FAITH.

MY soul's cast down within,
My leanness I deplore;
I ask, O why art thou cast down?
Why art thou cheered no more?

Hope thou in God the Lord,
And on him daily call,
He can't deny himself or you,
Lest you should faint and fall.

Though darkness veil your skies,
And thunder rend the cloud,
And danger threaten all around,
His bow is speaking loud.

His covenant cannot fail,
So long as he is God;
He said to Noah, Do not fear
My anger or my rod.

The dove brings home the sign,
The waters have assuaged,
The earth will soon be green again,
His love and peace engaged.

He loved his chosen ones,
He gave his only Son,
He can't withhold them now from him,
The glorious work is done.

J. G. EUBANKS.

CORRESPONDENCE.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS OF THE LATE MRS. WILLIAM ORSHALT.

DEAR ELDER DURAND:—I have been reading the SIGNS, which comes to me regularly, for which I am very thankful. I hope you will be paid a thousandfold for sending it, for I love so well to read it, and Loretta enjoys it, too; also the books you gave me. The late Elder Gilbert Beebe's sermons are good, and I look for them, as well as yours and many others. It keeps me reading all that I am able to read. I hope I am thankful for my eyesight, as well as many other blessings that I daily receive from our bountiful Benefactor. I am glad to hear that your wife's health is improving. I

hope you will both live to a good old age to enjoy each other's society, and your children also, that they may be a comfort to you, and you both to them. I am sorry when I hear of sickness in your family, but we read that "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth," so we must be patient; I suppose you are, and I hope I may be. Although it seems hard for the present, yet our Father knows what is best for us all, and he doeth all things well. Although he has taken my last sister, he has spared my children, and they are all kind to me. But the Lord is better to me than all my earthly friends can be, for which I desire to thank and praise his holy name. I thought the experience you had when you were sick was wonderful. Now if we never meet again on earth I hope we may meet in that land where the inhabitants shall no more say, "I am sick." Unworthy as I am, I feel to say, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." I hope you will live to attend my funeral, and though you say but little about me, preach Christ to the people, as I believe you will.

With love to all, from your unworthy sister.

DEAR SISTER BESSIE:—I often feel with the poet,

> "'Tis a point I long to know,
> (Oft it causes anxious thought,)
> Do I love the Lord, or no?
> Am I his, or am I not?"

There is much of the time that I do not feel at home, I am lonely and unsatisfied. I want a meek and quiet spirit, but I fail to have it. I cannot do the things that I would. I often long to be in the assembly of the saints, but that is not my privilege. I suppose there are others deprived of going to the house of prayer as well as I. It may be all right. I believe you sympathize with me, but cannot help me. Pray for me, that I may be more submissive to my lot. I know my time is short, and I hope to be resigned to the Lord's will.

If Silas feels like writing on that Scripture I spoke to you about, I would be glad to see it in the SIGNS. The text is found in Luke: "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." I have been reading in the SIGNS to-day, and the first piece is by your brother. How good and plain he writes. I ate it like one hungry for natural food, for the soul, as well as the body, needs to be fed. How thankful I ought to be that I am able to read, for although I cannot meet with the dear followers of Jesus, I can enjoy their communications in the SIGNS. What a blessing! Praise his holy name. Though I am cast down, yet not destroyed, though afflicted, yet not forsaken. The SIGNS is very comforting; I wish all who love the truth could have it to read.

DEAR BESSIE:—I have been very ill, nigh unto death, with heart trouble, and suffered almost beyond endurance, but I told those around me it was none too much, for there was a great deal of dross to consume, and if there was any gold or silver it must be refined; and I said to them: "Not my will, [or your will,] but thine, be done." The dear Master has seen fit to raise me once more to enjoy a good degree of health, but I know not what for; I hope he will keep me from sinning against him. It is my constant prayer that grace will be given me to overcome every temptation, for "when I would do good, evil is present with me." I go to the Bible, and there find comfort that the world cannot give. When I take up the SIGNS I find some who talk of doubts and darkness such as I have, but they are all so much better than I,

yet I do believe I love those who love God.

Now, dear Silas, I want to say a few words to you. My heart's desire is that the Lord you serve will keep you these many years to preach the gospel, and, as Christ commanded Peter, to feed the sheep and lambs, and whether I am one of the ransomed or not, your preaching has been a comfort to me, yet I often feel so small and unworthy I wonder how the Lord can take any notice of me; but when I read these rich experiences of brethren and sisters I enjoy them, and often wish I could be one with you all; but it is all right, I will be patient and wait the Lord's time, for he knows what is best for me. Dear brother Silas, for I must call you brother, though unworthy to speak that endearing name, but I cannot help it, may the rich blessings of God rest upon you and yours, and keep you safe while you sojourn in this wilderness of sin. I desire an interest in the prayers of you all, that when we have done with the cares of this life we may join in one everlasting song of praise to him who hath redeemed us with his precious blood shed on Calvary for sinners, such as I feel myself to be.

My son David was very ill after his barn was burned, and came near having pneumonia; I worried night and day. One night as I was praying for him these words of Jesus came into my mind: "Thy son liveth." I was relieved at once, and worried no more. They soon came home and said he was better. O how good to trust in such a faithful Friend, who sticketh closer than a brother. He is so kind to me.

Your letter has just come, and I am glad to hear from you again, your letters do me good. It seems if I could be among you, and at your meetings, I should be happy: but I must not complain, for Jesus is everywhere present; he knows all our wants, and will supply all our needs. I can trust in his promises, and he will never forsake those who trust in him.

I have thought of writing ever since I was at Herrick, but somehow it is getting to be hard work for me. I did really enjoy the visit there, and I believe I am thankful that the Lord provided a way for me to go; but I little thought it was the last time I should see Mabel. She seemed as cheerful and happy at that time as any of us; but, as you say, the Lord's ways are not our ways. We know that all he does is just and right, but we cannot see beyond this time state. This thought calls to mind the sermon Silas preached some time since, at Herrickville: We can see what is past, but cannot look into the future; so let us watch and be sober, watch unto the end, that when the Master calls we may be ready to enter in through the gate into the city, to go no more out forever.

We all sympathize with Horace and the children in their great bereavement, but the Lord will remember them, as you said in your most welcome letter, which came just after the dear one was laid away.

When I get lonesome and sad I take up the Bible, and there I find comfort, and often in the SIGNS I find an explanation of what I have been reading, so I am encouraged to go on in this low pilgrimage till the dear Lord shall bid me come home, as I trust, to be forever at rest. There we shall see Jesus, and be like him, and be satisfied, singing that song which the angels can never sing: "Redeeming grace and dying love."

DEAR SISTER BESSIE:—The SIGNS is still coming, and it seems I never enjoyed

it as I do now. There are many institutions, all claiming to be right; a new one has lately come up, calling themselves the "Holiness Movement," and they have started a paper, in which I have read some, but was glad to exchange it for the SIGNS, that is good enough for me, except the Bible; I think they go together, and what shall I say more? I cannot say any good of myself, but I do want to be thankful for the many blessings my heavenly Father is continually giving one so unworthy as I. He keeps for me the sight of my eyes, and has not deprived me of my hearing or my reason, and has bestowed on me so many blessings I cannot enumerate them. Pray for me, you who love the Lord, that I may be kept from evil, and do my duty in all things, and may his rich blessings rest upon you all, that when life's short journey is ended we may meet together in that happy land where sorrows never enter, and where farewells and partings are not known. When I lie upon my bed at night and cannot sleep, then I look up yonder, where ten thousand times ten thousand of the ransomed are shouting, Alleluia, glory and honor be unto him who hath redeemed us out of every nation, tongue and people, and hath made us kings and priests unto God. It is at such times I feel the Savior quite near, and I can rejoice in his presence, and that I shall ere long have a happy entrance into that blissful home which needs not the light of the sun or moon, for the glory of the Lord is the light thereof.

MY DEAR SISTER:—I am upstairs in my room trying to write you a few lines. I have been very poorly for some time past, and feel that I shall not be here long. I do not suffer as I have a great many times before, I am able to walk around some, but mostly I lie down and sleep.

You spoke of brother Silas coming in August; I would be very glad to hear him preach once more, but it will be impossible for me to go out, yet I hope to see him and hear him talk. I have been so glad ever since he came and talked and prayed with my husband. While I am writing I feel that I have an inheritance that all the world could not buy. It seems I am waiting the blessed Savior's call. I long to be freed from sin, and be with the dear Savior in his kingdom of rest, where I can love him with all my heart. How mysterious are the ways of Providence; so many things which are impossible with us are possible with God.

How interesting the history of Elder Knifton's life, and many of the undershepherds and soldiers of Jesus; and the dear sisters of the flock, as I read their letters I find some of my own experience, and feel that I am fed and nourished and strengthened by their words.

Affectionately your sister,

ELIZA ORSHALT.

(See obituary in this number.)

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

DEAR EDITORS:—These few selections from the latest letters of one greatly esteemed, are sent as a fond tribute to her memory, and trusting there may be some expression that will penetrate the gloom of those who are being tried in the furnace of affliction. They are scattered far and wide, and in dark corners of sorrow, bereaved and distressed; some are helpless on beds of pain, and though surrounded by an atmosphere of love and tenderness they are unable to meet in the assembly of the saints, however much they may long to hear the gospel's joyful sound, and to such how good is a mes-

sage of love which causes the heart to vibrate with sweet fellowship. There are many across the sea who love this same truth which is so dear to us, and I feel that all of our kindred in this blessed relation are glad to welcome a fellow-traveler, which we often feel has come to us when we unfold our household magazine, the SIGNS. Our dear sister had a melodious voice, and was very fond of singing, and we children, from our earliest remembrance, loved to hear her sing. The last time I saw her was a little more than a year ago, at our old home in Herrick, where our nephew, Horace Durand, now lives. While spending some time with us there her conversation was mostly on spiritual subjects, and telling of her past life in a most interesting manner, and often singing hymns. When she was ready to leave, she said, "I want to sing you one more hymn before saying good by," and she sat down and sang the hymn all through commencing, "When shall we all meet again?" with her old time melody. As there was a trembling in her voice it was certainly most touching. She is now in the heavenly choir, joining in praise with the white robed throng who came out of great tribulation, saying, "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

With love to the household of faith, and to all who love the name of Jesus, most unworthily your sister in a precious hope,

BESSIE DURAND.

FALSE PROPHECY.

MY mind has been exercised for many years in regard to the prophecy which was made more than half a century ago, that in forty years, according to the ratio then considered, the whole world would be christianized. Why my mind should be occupied with thoughts relating to such extravagant and unscriptural prophecies I cannot tell; one thing, however, is a constant reminder, so that I cannot forget their vain pretensions to the wisdom of God: it is their claim to the truth of the gospel. If we consult the Scriptures about the success of the gospel, in regard to bringing the people of all nations to "worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh," we shall find no proof of their vain philosophy. The Scriptures, to the reverse, prove that God's people shall always be in the minority on this earth. Does this prove that the power of the gospel is ineffectual to accomplish all that it was designed to accomplish? No. When we speak of the gospel it must be understood that we cannot take the accepted view of Arminians. That there is power connected with the gospel is clearly set forth in the writings of the apostles. This power no man can exercise, though he be called and qualified to preach the gospel. The most that is accomplished in preaching by a qualified gospel minister is the witnessing to the consciences of sinners what has been accomplished beforehand; just confirms, strengthens and builds up, as it were, that which has been planted by the "Plant of Renown," in the secret recesses of the heart. The fact is certain that the great Preacher must go before every one called of God to preach the gospel, or there can be no good in any man's preaching. If God had ordered it otherwise,

that is, given power of salvation to his preachers, where would be the limit to the exercise of this vested power? If it were necessary for God to continually appoint executors of his last will and testament, in the persons of his ministers, to make known unto the heirs of salvation that they had an everlasting interest in the blood of the Lamb, then it would be evident that Christ is not the Mediator, for that would dethrone the Lord of lords and King of kings. I agree with brethren that the gospel is one thing and the preaching of the gospel another thing. God's called ministers can preach the gospel, but they cannot reveal its power or seal the heirs of salvation by the wisdom of God. Words spoken by preachers are not the gospel, unless they agree with the wisdom of God planted in the heart of man; giving the gospel and preaching the gospel are quite different. Jesus preached the gospel, thousands heard the voice of his speech, but few rejoiced in the glad tidings. Some were given the gospel, the righteousness of God by revelation; these were the poor who "have the gospel preached to them." Unto these "poor of the flock" of God the apostle preached Christ the power of God and Christ the wisdom of God. The very same words were a stumbling-block to others, foolishness in the same instant, in the same assembly of men. The table of the poor is spread in the midst of her enemies, she may eat and drink, but the rich cannot even see the food and drink; it is spiritually discerned. It may come in great abundance to the elect, yet the rich in self-righteousness are not crowded for room, for earthly space is not considered where spirituality abounds. Thus in a mixed congregation some eat and drink in "my Father's kingdom," while others mock and say, "These men are full of new wine."

I started out to say some things of a different tenor. As God knows all things, and can and does control the devil as he will, I have been wondering about the perversion of the gospel, the gospel that Paul speaks about, "Unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ." "Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife, and some also of good will: the one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds; but the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice."—Phil. i. 15–18. From the above it seems to hint that bad preaching does some good. Christ is preached. Shall I tell my brother to do bad preaching? that is, preach Christ through envy and strife, preach Christ not sincerely? Paul admits that Christ is preached differently, but I am sure he does not approve of bad preaching. Hear him: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."—Gal. i. 8. In the next verse he repeats this assertion; this is emphatic, positive. Those that preach Christ through envy and strife certainly are not approved of God. Paul exhorts Timothy to study to show himself "approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." I have thought that the devil preached or declared, through envy and strife, not sincerely, that there is a Christ, and that God turned his wrath to the praise of his holy name. "Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends

of the world." They who fear the devil and not God do not wait on the Lord, or wait for the Lord, but are impatient, doing their own will, as near as they can, being led by the devil at his will, "the prince of the power of the air." As we gather the statements of the Missionaries themselves of a recent date, it would be alarming if we had put reliance in their exertions and power to convert the world to their gospel. The computations of their writers vary in regard to the number of the christians of all nations. Accepting their figures at the medium estimate, and accepting their estimates of the numbers of christians of all denominations in all the world, making proper deductions for communities and parts of families that are not actual believers, we have about one twentieth, or five per cent., in this twentieth century, of all the human family, believers. Has this been a rapid rate of christianizing the world in the last century? I cannot forbear to quote some from the leading Missionaries now in foreign countries. One writing from China says: "It seems as though a whole legion of devils catch up the seed of the gospel sown in China almost as quickly as it touches the ground." Of the four hundred million in China, sixty-five thousand are all that this writer claims to be christians. A Missionary writer, speaking of India with its two hundred and forty millions of people, says that to-day she has millions of gods. "Brahmanism continues to be the religion of India, even until to-day." Again he says: "The task of christianity to supplant it is gigantic, and rendered doubly difficult by the failure of Buddhism." These statements would seem to indicate that the progress of their christianity was slow, and very difficult indeed. However, the same writer, to encourage, I suppose, in another place makes a glaring statement; here it is: "Before another generation has passed away, if the increase shall be proportionate to the recent past, India will be a christian country." He does not tell us how they shall be able to convert the forty-one millions of Mohammedans living in India. To convert the entire world to christianity would not only embrace the millions of heathen now worshiping millions of gods, but it would include the one hundred and eighty millions of Mohammedans. We see from the present outlook the stupendous undertaking of converting the whole world to nominal christianity. If this be a great work, so great that in the last century it has taken hundreds of millions of dollars and millions of people to push it forward, and it to-day is in its infancy, as it were, how long, O Lord, will it take them to bring every man and woman to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent?

May we be submissive to our God, knowing that he can and will save all his people, whether we work or play, for his arm is strong.

With love to all the saints, I am the same old sinner, saved by grace, which is wielded by the mighty hand of God, if saved at all,

J. F. BEEMAN.

HELENA, Oklahoma.

NEW DECATUR, Ala.

DEAR SISTERS BECK AND BLAIR:—Sallie wrote you yesterday, after reading to me your interesting letters, but I could not find the time. I suppose she told you of the meetings with the little church near Madison, Ala., where we went Saturday with brother Maulsby, the pastor, which were good and comforting, and that he came home Sunday night, but we

not until Monday morning, to find a lot of mail, with yours, which was a treat. We are always glad to hear from you, and of the welfare of you all. How grateful and trustful we should be for the unceasing goodness of God to us. I have never more sensibly and deeply realized this than since he mercifully held me back from a violent death under the cars. How deplorable that would have been! My loved kindred in Christ would have had sorrow upon sorrow, but my persecutors would have triumphed. Ever since then the dear Lord has been more unspeakably precious to me, and his comforts have delighted my soul. I have suffered much, and yet suffer, but he has sanctified my afflictions and given me great peace. As to our future way, I must walk by faith, trusting the Lord to order my steps. Ofttimes I seem as one alone, left to myself to sadly wander in my own way, but where I go the Lord is there, and gives me comforting assurances that he is with me, and my soul blesses his holy name. I realize, dear kindred, that I am a pilgrim and a stranger, and the time of my departure, to be with Christ, is near. This is in my meditations every day and night, and my desolate heart, homeless and weary, longs for that perfect love and perfect home. O to be with and like the holy Son of God. No words can tell you how poor and weak and little I feel now, down here on earth in this delicate body, the least little child in our Father's house. But O, to be a child of God in his house is infinite grace and blessing. I bless God that he gives me, on the behalf of Christ, both to believe on him and to suffer for his sake. His sufferings have made my Elder Brother unspeakably near and precious to me. To have this kindred feeling of sacred nearness and heartfelt fellowship with Christ, the lovely Man, in his sufferings in the flesh, is a richer inheritance than all this world and mortal life. "If we suffer, [with him] we shall also reign with him." If we die, we shall also live with him. O he gives me such a blessed sense of his divine presence ofttimes of late that I want to take him in my arms and bless God, as Simeon did. The cry of my poor, sorrowing heart is, "Nearer, my God, to thee; nearer to thee." With David I feel to say, "When shall I come and appear before God?" If in any special thing I am like Christ, it is in being "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." It is in his obedience that we are made perfect and obey him. So we are joined with him in his obedience of suffering unto death for our sins, and we shall also be joined with him in the power of his resurrection unto holiness and life.

This theme of Christ's oneness with us in our suffering and death, and of our oneness with him in his glory and life, fills my soul, and I could write on and on, but must desist now. How it would cheer my heart to speak with you again, face to face, of our joint heirship with Christ, the Son of God, but this is denied me. Let me say, The will of the Lord be done.

In the love of Christ,

D. BARTLEY.

OLNEY, Ill.

DEAR SISTERS BLAIR AND BECK:—It was a pleasant surprise yesterday to receive your letter, sister Blair, and as to sister Beck, her desire to join you in writing will be accepted until the next

time. As to not knowing where to locate us, please know that letters sent to Lebanon, Ohio, will always find us quickly. I am glad to know of the welfare of you all, and of your steadfastness in the faith of Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh. As Christ was cut off for the sins of his people under the law, so are they that are Christ's cut off with him by the law, and the law is as a dead husband to them, that Christ may be all in all. They have no wedding robe of righteousness, and no white garments of salvation, save Jesus only. It is impossible for them to be conditional salvationists, for Christ is all their salvation, and he is the Father's free gift to them. With him God freely gives us all things. His obedience is theirs in him; his finished and perfect work is theirs, and it is inwrought in them; his atoning death and his risen life of endless holiness are theirs jointly with him. Christ and his brethren are one forever. His cross is theirs, and so is his crown. He suffered with them, and they shall reign with him. They partake of his cup and of his baptism, and sow with him in tears; so shall they also reap with him in everlasting joy, when he shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. Your sorrowful experience, as briefly told in your letter to us, sister Blair, is a little expression of all this truth, and it comforts me in my sorrow. In the omniscient eye of Jehovah and in the eye of the law, which is not dim, it is Jesus that is seen, and not we. O how my sorrow-burdened soul blesses God for this. This is true, dear sisters; "the King's daughter," "the bride, the Lamb's wife," "the queen of heaven," "the church of the first-born," is neither a slave nor a hireling, does not serve her Lord that he may love and bless her, but because he has loved her and given himself for her and blessed her with all spiritual blessings, with his infinite fullness of salvation and grace and glory. She neither spins nor weaves to adorn herself with raiment of needlework, fine linen clean and white, for her Husband has made her more beautiful and comely than the spotless lily out of his heavenly wardrobe; nor does she toil and labor for the bread of heaven and the water of salvation, as do the seven women who say, "We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel," for her King has spread before her his royal table, and says, "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." O how I love this full and free salvation in Jesus, in whom his body is complete. From him, her glorious Head, his church receives all her perfect fullness of life and blessing, grace and glory. All his infinite storehouse of soul-ravishing blessings to her are the abundant rewards of his grace, and flow from the pure fountain of his everlasting love; and in return she honors and glorifies him in the pureness of love. The great love of God, which is far above all price, is fully manifested in his beloved Son, and to us in his Son. It is this love that sanctifies and justifies, blesses, saves and glorifies all his saints in Christ Jesus. How radically different from this is all natural, worldly, legal religion and worship; for here all is done that the worker may obtain salvation and blessing; rewards and punishments are the motive and incentive. It is only the truth in the Son of God that can make any of us free from this bondage.

As Sallie has written the news, I will close, with love to you all. Please write.

Yours in our blessed Lord,

D. BARTLEY.

[THE two letters given above were

written by the late Elder David Bartley to sisters Blair and Beck, and by them forwarded to the SIGNS, with the request that they be published. The first letter was written September 27th, 1904, the second August 2nd, 1905.—ED.]

TOUCHET, Washington.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I have been a reader of the dear, old SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years, and if to-day I were asked why I read it, I would say, Because I love to; and if I were called upon to give my reason for loving to read it, I would say, Because it honors God, my heavenly Father. I have never made known to the editors and readers my appreciation of the God-given blessing of the privilege of reading it. As this is a quiet day with me, I will write you a little. I do enjoy these quiet days, when I am given a mind wholly to meditate upon the rich things of the kingdom, which you and Elder Ker so ably set forth, especially in the number for August 1st. I want to say that I do heartily indorse and feast upon the doctrine set forth by the SIGNS. There is no comfort to me here below only in the God who is the Savior, and who determined or predestinated all things, and who is able to work all his decrees to the praise of his glory and the good of his poor and afflicted people here on earth.

Space will not permit me to free my mind, but I do want you to know that your answer to sister Sarber, August 1st SIGNS, did comfort a poor pilgrim here on the Pacific coast. It does seem to me that such a division as you have given of the two covenants is so plain that all God's little ones must be built up by it. It seems to me that every one who has an experience of grace can rejoice that God has given us a kingdom that cannot be moved. But why do some among our people cling to that old covenant which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear? In the new covenant God has given us all things in Jesus, who is the covenant-head, and in this covenant we find the kingdom of which brother Ker writes; and one must be born again before he can see this kingdom. The ruler wondered how this could be, and the wonder is still among men. We are told how it is: it is said, God gave us power to become sons of God. So then it is by the grace of God that we are born into this kingdom; and, if born of God, we are free; for, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." We are no more under the law, but under the reign of grace. But one will say, We are under the gospel law. It seems to me that we had just as well say to the unregenerate that he is under the law of grace. The gospel is grace, yet there are two distinct terms, just as opposite one to the other as darkness is to light, or death to life, the one called the gospel, and the other the law. The law knows no mercy, while the gospel holds forth mercy that has no bounds. The gospel is God's decreed plan, by which he demonstrates by the Holy Spirit to the heirs of promise the wonderful efficacy of the atoning blood of the new covenant, and it is through this revelation that we are made to rejoice in hope of eternal life; and this life is in the Son. Jesus said, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." So then the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. The old covenant, or law, gives nothing, but under the new covenant it is all the gift of God. It was grace that gave me life and sight and an understanding heart, and grace led me to

love this dear people of God to whom I am writing, and it is grace that keeps me in love with them, and that makes my poor soul to drink of the joys the communications of his people bring to me. I am what I am by an experience given me when only a child or a babe in the things of which I am now trying to write, and I feel to be only a babe to this day, and the least of all; but I mean that when I first came to a knowledge of these things I was brought to face the saying which is so prevalent to-day: that we are blessed for our good works and cursed for our evil works, or our disobedience, and while I was trying to believe this thing, as do all of God's little ones, I suppose, I was trying the spirits, to see whether they were of God or not; and at that time I was made to see that there was no grace in it. My mother in the flesh was a woman that loved and feared the Lord, and I must say (not because she was my mother) that she was brought of the Lord before me to teach me the wonders of mercy. Also another, the widow of Elder Teague, was, with my mother, a perfect example, in all that they did, of God-loving and God-fearing servants of his. Both were sorely afflicted; neither ever enjoyed a day wholly free from pain. They both were compelled to lie upon a bed of affliction, and both often said to me that they could not see why the Lord kept them, as they felt they were of no benefit to any one. I have had to leave the presence of both of them to give vent to my poor heart in thanking him for such manifestations of his rich grace and mercy. Here was I, a poor, rebellious creature, having good health, going to the meetings and mingling with the people of God, which were great blessings, and here were these two, lying upon their beds in their lonely homes, all the rest gone to the meeting, with but one left to wait upon them, and their hearts aching with longing for the association of the saints; this certainly was a chastening that was not pleasant at the time. The question was put to me, Why are you so blessed above your dear mother and this other dear sister? Is it because you have been more obedient than they? No, in no wise, but it is alone by the mercy of God that I am blessed; and it was a mercy of God through them to me. God truly moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. Dear brother Chick, there may be nothing in this little incident to you, but all along this life the Lord has, I believe, led me, to show me his goodness. I will not ask you to write me privately, as your duty is to the SIGNS. May the Lord still give you grace to write to us all, through the SIGNS.

Your brother,

J. T. BARNES.

[SUCH incidents as brother Barnes has mentioned above are not little things, or to be regarded as trifles. The dear Lord works by what means he will to impress his truth upon the hearts of his children, and with him there is nothing great and nothing small. Many things that seemed little to ourself in past years, have come now to seem full of the purpose and grace of God. We have been interested in the above narrative and are glad that our brother has spoken of it.—C.]

TOONE, Tenn.

DEAR EDITORS, AND CHILDREN OF GOD, WHEREVER YOU MAY BE:—I feel so lonely this morning that I want to write, but do not know what to write; but the spirit of my mind says write about the words, "He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations."—Rev. ii.

26. To what character is this spoken? It is Jesus Christ the Son of God, he is the only one who ever overcame, and kept the works of God unto the end. Jesus said to his Father, "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."—John xvii. 2. Again, Jesus said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."—Matt. xxviii. 18. Can there be any power anywhere else? In the light of the above Scriptures I must say, No. Can the people of God do as they please? No. Why not? Because Jesus has said, "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price."—1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. The people of God cannot help being his. He said, "Ye shall be my people, and I will be your God." His people do keep his commandments spiritually. "This is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another."—1 John iii. 23. Whose work is it that we believe on him? It is the work of God. How do we know it? Jesus said it, as quoted above, and, again, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him."—John vi. 29. Again, it is said that these people are kept by the power of God. It is all of God. Some say they do not like this phrase, "Can't help it," but I love it, and I cannot help loving it. I have been brought to the end of my own strength, and I know that I am helpless before God and must depend upon him for life, movement and being. I have no confidence in myself, neither can I depend upon myself for anything, but must look to God for all things. I do not believe I can order my own steps or my ways, because I do not know one hour what kind of a condition I shall be in the next hour; but my hope is in God, who raiseth the dead. Jeremiah the prophet said, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."—Jer. x. 23. I must agree with the prophet from my heart.

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES is coming to us now, and my wife and myself read it and reread it, and weep for joy just to hear our dear kindred in Christ talk of the dealings of the Lord with them. We are strangers to you in the flesh, but we thank the blessed Redeemer that the same power that taught you has also taught us, and blessed be his holy name.

Dear brethren editors, do as you think best with this, and all will be right with us.

S. M. AND JOANNA BUTLER.

[OUR brother says that he must agree with the prophet Jeremiah when he said, "I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." What a blessed experience to come into fellowship with saints of the old covenant times as well as with saints in the new covenant times. So Jesus said, "Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." These Old Testament saints are the great cloud of witnesses of which Paul, in Hebrews, speaks, and which he declares surrounds the present time believers. By like trying, and yet blessed experience, the people of God to-day come to see and rejoice in the same things as did the prophets of the olden time; so our brother said well that for his part he must agree with the prophet. We know that this experience of ours is of God, simply because it is in agreement with inspired testimony in the Bible. It is by this test that we must try all experience, and all thoughts, and

all understanding. What everlasting comfort and consolation do these Bible testimonies minister to those whom the Lord has brought to know the same things.—C.]

GALATIANS III. 29.

"If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

The sense in which the people of God are Abraham's seed is a mystery that I fear I do not understand. I feel impressed to write a few thoughts upon the subject, and trust if any who read have more light upon the subject they will write for my instruction, and also for others who may feel interested. Abraham was called out of Ur of the Chaldees, and must have been a Chaldean by birth. In his calling of God he was separated from all the nations of the earth, as all who are called by grace are to this day. Jesus says, "My kingdom is not of this world," and to his disciples he says, "Ye are not of the world." The Lord made promises to Abraham of a national seed, and all that was promised of God concerning this seed was fulfilled to the jot and tittle. Their increase, their bondage, their deliverance and heritage, were all foretold, and to this day they are manifest among all nations, fulfilling what is written in the law and the prophets concerning them, and their future in this world. The Lord also promised Abraham that he should be heir of the world: "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." He was to be the father of many nations, and the father of the faithful. The seed in which all the families of the earth were to be blessed was none but Christ. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." When the Son of God, who was always one with the Father, was also to be made manifest as the Son of man, "Verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but took on him the seed of Abraham." He was conceived and brought forth by the virgin Mary, who was of the tribe of Judah, the son of Jacob, one of the distinguished descendants of Abraham. The promises of God to Abraham were perpetuated to Isaac and on to Jacob, and Jacob was inspired to comprehend the perpetuation and fulfillment of this promise of God in the tribe of his son Judah, and when he was pronouncing his last blessings upon his sons in the land of Egypt he said, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law," and he brought forth the seed of Abraham. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." All the fullness of the Godhead bodily dwelt in him. He was God manifest in the flesh, or seed, of Abraham, and all that are born of God are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. This promise of God to Abraham that he should be heir of the world was not to Abraham or his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. "For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith

of Abraham, who is the father of us all." "Know ye therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." The children of Abraham are also called the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. [And he is the seed of Abraham.] There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

P. J. POWELL.

PRATT CITY, Ala.

CEMENT CITY, Mich.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have received the SIGNS for January 15th, and have read your reply to our friend Mr. Simmons, with regard to the order of the church which God commanded to be established by the apostles of the Lamb, and by his authority, and I think it timely and to the point. God's house is a house of order, and none of us have any right to our own private judgment as a rule for the government of the church. In the word the lines are all drawn and the stakes all set by the great Master of assemblies, and the church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone.

I feel like giving a little of my experience along that line. If ever I received a hope that my sins are forgiven, it was some years ago. I immediately wished to follow my Savior in the ordinance of baptism, in obedience to his command when he said, "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." I was received and baptized by the New School Baptists, but soon found that in other things they were teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, and then I had great trouble. I was given, as I hope, to see that they as an organization were but a part of spiritual Babylon, the great, and the command, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues," rang in my ears. After going through great trouble I was brought to see the true church in her doctrine and order, and found her bearing the name "Old School Baptist," or "Predestinarian Baptist," which is, I think, a better and stronger term.

It is true we cannot point to any human being, professor or nonprofessor, and say, This person is not predestinated unto eternal life; but, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." And, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." The moment I saw the church I loved her in all her God-given order, and felt that I would not have her change or swerve one iota from her doctrine and order to suit my views, or those of any other created being, after the traditions of men and not after Christ, as declared by his princes, the apostles. Our God has a people, no doubt, in all the organizations of antichrist, or Babylon, for he says, "Come out of her, my people." Thus it is certain that some of his people are in Babylon.

I write this as an indorsement of the views which you have presented. The SIGNS is filled with able matter, much better than my poor writing, still I think that the order of the church of Christ is a very important matter. I think this church should have nothing to do with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. This the church will do when refusing to receive their baptism, for the Lord said, "He that

gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad." The Mormons, and several sects, immerse, and it appears to me that we might as well receive their baptism as that of the New School Baptists. I think, if I know anything as I ought to know, that the Spirit of God leads his people to love what God loves and approves, and to hate what God hates, and he hates every false way.

Dear brother, do as you think best with this letter. I hope it will not do any harm; but I am not the judge of what will do good or harm. The truth is what stands.

Yours in the fellowship of the truth,

DAVID TITMUS.

MILAM, Texas.

ELDERS F. A. CHICK AND H. C. KER—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST JESUS:—The SIGNS OF THE TIMES is a great comfort to me; it is six weeks older than I am. My father subscribed for it from the first, and I read it when a small girl, and loved it. During the war I longed to have it to read, for I was in eastern Texas, far from my loved ones. I am now sitting here enjoying my seventy-fourth birthday. My last birthnight I was on my bed, and to-night I am sitting up with a sick grandson to give him medicine. His father and mother died four years ago, within eight days of each other, and left two girls and two boys; it was a sad blow. Just four years before, my oldest son was killed here at home in a sawmill, and six weeks afterward my dear husband fell backward into the fire, and was badly burned, and died six days later. I wonder how I got through it. God was truly with me to strengthen me. I wept and mourned day in and day out, and at times it seemed a comfort to weep, but my trust, hope and confidence were in God, he has blessed me all the days of my poor, unprofitable life. I have made many departures; nothing good have I done in all these long days and years. This grieves me, and causes me to beg of God continually for mercy; I have been a beggar all my life. It makes me think of a peevish, little child teasing its mother for something, until she herself gets vexed. At times I cry, "Is there any one like me?" I am so prone to do that which I would not. I am a wonder to myself, not fit to live or fit to die. We are blessed with some able preachers here, and they fear not to declare the counsel of God. Our members are few and scattered. We have five churches in our association, which is but two years old. This (Sabine County) is a backwoods country. We would be delighted to have some of our ministering brethren from the older country visit us in the near future; they can get here by public conveyance. Our people are all poor financially, and often feel poor in spirit.

Dear brethren, what I have written is poorly done, and does not seem fit to send to you, but it is the best I can do, and I think you will excuse a poor writer.

I wrote Elder Bartley more than a year ago, asking him to give his views on the eleventh chapter of Revelation. Who is the woman? Is not she a figure of the church? Tell us about the whole chapter, especially the fourteenth verse. My membership is twelve miles away; sometimes I go on horseback, sometimes in a wagon and sometimes in a buggy. I hope in an all-wise Savior.

I will bid you good-by.

MARY E. KING.

ARENA, N. Y.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—When I write to

renew my subscription to our family paper I usually write a few lines to its editors and contributors, and should you think they contain aught of interest to any of the household they are at your disposal. Now that we are entering another year I desire to wish you each and all a happy and prosperous new year; I wish also to assure you that your editorials and communications are both edifying and comforting to me.

More than forty years ago, when I was about twenty years of age, I hope and trust my Savior arrested me with these words: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." Although I was attending a dancing party when the words came into my mind, and I had no recollection of ever having heard them before, yet I was impressed that they were the language of the Son of God, and that he was the one I must follow. After being taught many useful lessons, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, I was constrained to take up my cross and follow my Savior in the ordinance of baptism; that most beautiful and solemn rite was administered to me by Elder Isaac Hewitt. I can truly say this blessed hope has been a stay and staff all these years, and now that I have passed the meridian of life, and the dear companion of my youth and riper years has been called away to that great beyond, I am still clinging to this hope, which is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. I feel it is the greatest solace in my declining years; among the many unmerited blessings our heavenly Father hath bestowed upon me this far exceeds them all.

Elder Chick, I want to tell you I greatly enjoyed our visit at sister Hubbell's last fall after our association. I had heard you deliver a few sermons, but never had the privilege of conversing with you before. I consider it a great treat to listen to those who have such good understanding of the sublime and mysterious truth of the gospel. I hope and pray that both yourself and Elder Ker may long be spared to edit the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that you may have strength and grace according to your day.

Your sister in hope,

JULANA H. DICKSON.

GREENWOOD, Colo.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I cannot do without my paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It comes to me richly laden with edifying gospel truth, and is good, comfortable reading for the long, cold, winter nights, so I will now send my renewal for another year. By request of our dear Elder I will write a little sketch of our meeting. Elder Perdue came up from Lamar and preached for us at Greenwood, Colorado. He preached in our meeting-house the first Sunday, and Saturday before, in December. Saturday he spoke from Romans ii. 8, and on Sunday from Philippians iii. 11. We had good meetings. It was all of free grace and love, and was good, nourishing food. Our congregations were small, but the Lord has said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Elder Perdue preached what I believe to be gospel truth in its purity; it was indeed a feast, and was both comforting and consoling to me. I felt that I could exclaim with David, "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." And again, I must "praise the Lord; for his mercy endureth forever." It is through much tribulation that we enter the kingdom; but he has promised that when we pass through the waters they shall not overflow us. I

am much of my time in deep waters of sorrow, and oftentimes I feel as though the presence and mercy of God have vanished from me forever. I do desire an interest in the prayers of the Lord's people, that I may not bring reproach or disgrace upon the cause of our blessed Redeemer. My prayer is, almost continually, Keep my walk by thy Spirit, O Lord, and guide me to the end.

Dear brethren, I must close my imperfect letter lest I weary you. May the God of all grace bless, comfort and uphold the dear saints everywhere, is the petition of a little one, if a sister at all. With love to all the dear ones everywhere,

M. J. DUNCAN.

ROBERSONVILLE, N. C.

ELDER H. C. KER—MUCH ESTEEMED BROTHER:—I inclose check for three dollars, which you will please place to my credit for our much esteemed paper, the SIGNS. I trust that you will excuse the delay, though I do not feel that I deserve it, from the fact that I could have remitted before now, as I have not been lacking in said amount; but that old man "neglect," how careless he is, putting off until to-morrow that which ought to be done to-day, and thereby injuring himself. Perhaps that would not be so bad after all, if others were not made to suffer by it. I frequently have to write bitter lines against myself, my brother, because of my leanness. While here we groan, being burdened, because of that old man of sin; none but the Lord can deliver us from his iron chains, we cannot break them, or at least I cannot, and it seems to me of late that I am pretty well bound down in chains of darkness, so it is but now and then that I get a little glimmer of the light, and even then I feel ashamed of myself, because the light makes manifest, and it shows all my blackness and deformity. Then I am ready to draw back, and feel surely that I am nothing, yes, less than nothing, and vanity. So if my salvation depends on my doing things (such as I can do when permitted) on time, I am lost, for besides being neglectful I am forgetful, or absent minded and careless, also indifferent, slothful and frequently backward, and if there were no grace, what would become of such an one? I am glad Paul said Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, for the sinner is the one that needs help, because he is undone. I sometimes feel glad that I know I am a sinner; may not such hope in the mercy of God? Just now I remember Paul's expression: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" Escape what? The chastening of the Lord for the sin of omission. "For if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." If I had not owed anything for the SIGNS I could not have neglected the payment; so it is with the case in hand, the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord; if one is not a subject of salvation he cannot neglect salvation; if a man has no farm we would not say such an one is neglecting his farm; so it is, only more so, to neglect or lose sight of what the Lord has done for us. Surely it is something to be glad of that Jesus did not neglect his Father's business, but came in the world on time and did all his work on time; he never was behind or late in doing anything. "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into this world." And again, "But for this cause came I unto this hour." That was the very hour he must suffer, not another; so if the very hour for Jesus to suffer was fixed, his

sufferings evidently were, and his sufferings being arranged, surely salvation was, from the fact that salvation followed the sufferings of Jesus; for if he had not died he could not have been delivered from death. So he, being our resurrection, when he arose we were brought up with him, for "thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." Praise ye the Lord.

Your brother, I hope, but a stumbler,

G. D. ROBERSON.

CENTERBURG, Ohio.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the coming year. I would like to say a word of encouragement to all the dear ones who write for the paper, but I feel I am too unworthy to claim any lot or relation to the dear ones who comfort me so much by the blessed words they are enabled to write. My heart goes out in thanks and praise to our heavenly Father for his great mercy to unworthy me, in blessing me with a hope that I have an interest with the dear family of God, and when I read their comforting words it appears to me how easy it is for them to tell just what I hope I feel, and much better than I can myself. I know I receive comfort in what I once knew nothing about, and the things I once loved I now hate. I do not get to hear much gospel preaching in the winter, and go twenty miles in the summer, but trust I hear the truth, and have an understanding of the same, for which I have great reason to be thankful. Write on, all you afflicted and poor people. While I have no special affliction, I feel to be one with the afflicted, not knowing how soon affliction may come; my own poor self makes me more trouble and anxiety than anything else. There is one thing I do not have to worry me, and that is, I have always paid for the SIGNS in advance.

I will be sixty-six in March, and have read the SIGNS from my earliest recollection; my father, mother and myself have always paid in advance. I will tell brother Koontz I for one take no paper except the dear, old SIGNS; that and my Bible are enough. But who will take it when I am no more? I have it as a precious treasure; all in my house know, from the least to the greatest, that it is mother's or grandmother's paper. But the news of the world is of more interest until Christ manifests himself to us as the One altogether lovely.

With christian greeting and wishes for a prosperous new year, I am your poor, weak sister in the precious hope of a better world than this,

(MRS.) SARAH C. BOYD.

WESTON, Michigan.

ELDER CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Another year has passed and gone, and another new year has taken its place, and I feel to bless the Lord that it is as well with us as it is. The Lord has been good to us in his long-suffering and tender mercy, and with David I can truly say, Bless the Lord, bless his holy name for his goodness and mercy to the children of men. Our Lord is the God of Israel, he remembers his children in their low estate when cast down, he will not forsake them; though they pass through the valley of the shadow of death they shall fear no evil, for they know that their God is the Lord, who is mighty to save. I dare say, dear brother Chick, that in the year just passed you have seen many dark and trying seasons in your labors of love to the brethren, but Abraham's God has remembered you, together with all the household of faith;

yea, our faith is established in the doctrine for which the good, old SIGNS has contended since its first issue; therefore, dear brother, may you be enabled through the strength of God to continue the publication of the eternal principles that shall stand when everything of an earthly nature shall be destroyed. I wish to say to all those dear ones who have written so many precious letters through the SIGNS, Do not lay your pen aside, but continue those epistles. You say you do not always feel in the spirit to write; well, such an one is just the one that will write to the comfort and edification of the weak and poor of the flock. If you do not feel like writing, just write and tell the dear ones how you do feel; tell them of your ups and downs, your doubts and fears, your troubles and misgivings along the way; tell them of your remembrance of the pardon of all your sins; yes, tell them how he took you to his banqueting-house, and his banner of love was over you; there you partook of the sweet and blessed things of his table; these are they that eat his flesh and drink his blood, and have fellowship in his suffering, were chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. The God of Isaac is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto him by the Son; these are they that have made their robes white in the blood of the Lamb. May grace and the love of God be with all that love the appearing of our Lord Jesus.

Yours in love,

THOMAS J. WYMAN.

SADIEVILLE, Ky.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—I am made to ask, Am I worthy to call the dear saints by that endearing name, knowing nothing good dwells in this flesh of mine, where all is sin and vileness? I inclose my remittance for our dear paper, the SIGNS, which comes with every page full of good reading to comfort the dear people of God. O how I love to read after those dear saints, some telling how the good Lord has led them along the way, some relating a sweet dream. My heart went out in love to old brother Knifton, who has since passed away. The Lord visited him in a dream to guide and comfort him on the way. He realized it was not in man to guide his footsteps, and his sweet dream was a comfort to him all along his useful life. I had a dream more than twenty-five years ago: I dreamed I was in a little log house with my little children; something made a tremendous noise at the door; I put everything against the door, took my children and got on the bed; the thought came, If I would open the door whatever it was it would have mercy. I took my children down, opened the door; a tall, straight figure walked in and said, Touch me not, for I am holy. I seized my children, for I was afraid they would touch him. I said, It is Jesus, he is worth all the grass that grows; he is worth the wind that blows; he is worth the water that flows; Lord, give me Jesus. I instantly awoke, with a feeling of gladness and joy. It almost seemed real, and this precious dream is a comfort to me. In 1904 I visited my brother in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. When we left his home we came by way of Burlington; the road runs almost parallel from there to St. Louis with the Mississippi River. With tear-dimmed eyes I would look out on the water, and think of my sweet dream.

The precious SIGNS is all the preaching I get. Brother Dudley Johnson visited us occasionally while he lived, and we all

loved him. Brother Durand is ever mindful of us, he is faithful to come once and sometimes twice a year; he is a good preacher. Our church at Elk Lick only numbers six; we should meet oftener than we do, and not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, if we love one another as we ought to. O it makes my heart ache when I look back and see the many things I have left undone that I ought to have done.

I am intruding on your precious time to read this, so I will stop. Since our rural route was established our post-office is Sadieville, Ky.

Unworthily yours, I hope, with christian love,

SARAH E. BURGESS.

FINKSBURG, Md.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I scarcely know how to begin a letter to you, or how to address you, feeling, as I do, my great sense of unworthiness, and uncleanness, and general unfitness to be among the people of God. I have been thinking of writing you for a long time, and waiting for I know not what, so now I have concluded to write, trusting in the Lord to guide me. I will not weary you with a long letter, but briefly state my desire to have a place among God's humble people, and to be the least of all among them. Just here let me state the love I have for the dear, old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, with the dear editors, and the many contributors to its blessed pages. They have all entwined themselves around my heart, as fragrant vines around a vile weed or stunted shrub of the least importance. The blessed thoughts they express fill my soul with joy unspeakable; I can scarcely express the joy and comfort they afford me. I should be at a great loss without it, and I must here thank you all for your great love and kindness in supplying it to me while I have been in arrears. I desire to explain why: I have met with severe reverses the past few years, but the dear Lord has still sustained me, and I think I will be able to remit all my back subscription after this coming season. The Lord has blessed my labors of late, and has given me new hope. If you will continue the paper a few months longer I think I can pay you all. I feel that I cannot part with the dear SIGNS, it is a part of my very life. I would dearly love to see you all as we once used to see you among us, and do hope to see you again before very long. Remember me kindly to sister Chick and your family. I do not expect you to answer this letter, knowing that your time is more profitably employed. I am satisfied with all, knowing it is of the Lord.

Your unworthy brother in Christ Jesus,

THOMAS B. JONES.

LEESBURG, Va.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—In the death of Elder E. V. White and Captain Frank M. Myers the church and community have sustained a great loss. Elder, or Colonel White, as he was known, was a leader in the late war of the States. He entered the service when quite young, and was in many hard fought battles, as the numerous scars on his body would indicate. Two of these almost proved fatal; in fact, it is not certain that his death or long suffering was not caused from a ball which had never been located.

Captain or Major Myers joined Colonel White with Company A, in 1861, and they were close friends and comrades, and fought many battles side by side, which endeared them to each other, and

especially was this so after the Captain joined New Valley Church, their lives seemingly to be linked together as one. Colonel White died ignorant of the death of Captain Myers, his family fearing the effect it might have on him in his weak condition.

In the death of these two the writer has lost two warm, close friends and brothers. I have known the Colonel for forty-six years, and very intimately for twenty years, both in business and church relations. The Captain and myself were raised up together from early youth, and we were warm friends until his death. The Captain was the first of the church to follow the death of my wife, which occurred June 15th, 1905, and brother White, so soon to follow him, makes the writer feel that he, too, must soon be called to give up all that is earthly, to try the realities of an unknown world.

May the God of grace comfort and protect all who mourn with the churches, is the prayer of your unworthy brother in hope, S. B. PAXSON.

(See obituaries in this number.)

FORDYCE, Ark.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am glad to say to you the doctrine the SIGNS advocates is the doctrine we love here. We are not very numerous, but all are sound, genuine Old School Baptists. We have plenty of the Arminian type of people here, too, who make great pretensions that they are working for God, and saving souls for him, but they are strangers to us, and we will not follow them. We hope we love the doctrine that exalts God's name, declaring him to rule the heavens above and the earth beneath, and working all things according to the counsel of his own will, and that he needeth not the addition or the help of any, but speaks, and it is done; commands, and it stands fast, and that his people follow him because of his loving-kindness drawing them, which gives to them the strong consolation that he is their sufficiency, and at the same time that they are not sufficient of themselves to do anything that would be acceptable in his sight. His people have his Spirit to lead and guide them, and it leads them here in time, and is the guiding Star which directs them in the way of all truth.

Yours in hope,

V. R. HARRIS.

COZAD, Neb.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Please allow me to say through the SIGNS, to any of your readers who may think of coming west, that we have here one of the best localities, I think. Have rich soil, free from stones and easy to cultivate, good roads, abundance of water and healthy country in which to live. Land yet reasonable in price, and I think better opportunities are afforded to those of limited means than in the east. I am no land agent, and have no land for sale, but would like to see Old Baptists locate in this country, and if they will only come and see, they will be convinced.

Yours in love and hope,

W. S. CRAIG.

NEW SUBSCRIBERS.

ALL new subscriptions received from this time will be entered on our list and credited from the date received, but should any desire their subscriptions to commence with the first of the year, if they will notify us to that effect we will send them back numbers, and credit them until the end of the year, thus giving them the full volume.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1907.

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REPLIES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Will you give your views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES regarding the woman Jezebel, as recorded in Revelation ii. 20? Who is this Jezebel, and what does she represent?

Your brother,

M. W. GRAY.

ROANOKE, Va.

Brethren have differed in their understanding of what this woman represents, whether there was literally a woman in this church of that name, and guilty of these practices, and of leading others also into these evil things, or whether the name is purely symbolical, representing a class of teachers among them who thus perverted the word of God, and led astray many of the Lord's children. No man can speak certainly concerning this matter, still it is our opinion that the Spirit had reference to a class of false teachers who claimed to be true prophets of the Lord. It seems to us the reference is to Jezebel, the wife of Ahab, and the design is to show that these false teachers were leading astray by their atrocious doctrines some among this church who were weak, just as their prototype Jezebel of old led astray the weak Ahab into gross idolatry and all manner of vice in the worship of idols. Two things are recorded of Jezebel, the wife of King Ahab: she led Ahab into gross idolatry, and made him the enemy of his own people and of the true God, and she slew the true prophets of the Lord. This woman was both vile and cruel, and she so wrought upon Ahab that it is said, "There was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up." In his reign false religion flourished greatly, for it is recorded that there were many hundreds of false prophets: prophets of Baal and of the grove. Great zeal for religion may dwell in places and in hearts that are full of abominable practices and cruelty; the minds of men have often been so perverted by such idolatrous worship that they have thought that their evil practices were pleasing to their god. Thus we have a description of Jezebel, the wife of King Ahab, and, as said before, it is our mind that the Holy Spirit in the second chapter of Revelation means that in the church at Thyatira there was found a similar class of teachers, the appropriate name of which was well represented by this woman. Whether this be so, or whether there was literally a woman of this name in that church, does not especially matter, as it seems to us, the facts stated are the same in the one case as they are in the other. This church was, first of all, commended for many things, but the Lord declared that he had a few things against her. We will briefly glance at what follows: they suffered, not encouraged, or aided, or abetted, but suffered this woman to teach among them, and to seduce the Lord's servants. It is in the sight of God a fearful thing to even suffer, or bear with such gross evils. The hearts of the church, as a whole, may have been grieved and sorrowful, but this was not enough, they ought not to have allowed this evil thing to go on. Truth

must not even tolerate error, it must fight against it, and cast it out. This woman (or these teachers, as a class, as the case may be) called herself a prophetess; God did not call her so, but she took this title to herself, and under it led captive the unwary; (evil under a cloak of righteousness or of sanctity is much more dangerous than open evil,) she taught and seduced God's own servants to commit fornication, and to eat things offered to idols. It is a fact that in that day there were those who taught among some of the churches that the body had no part in the salvation of God, and therefore it did not matter how gross the life of men outwardly might be, it was all in the body, and did not affect the spirit, and the work in the spirit did not concern the body; therefore, all manner of sensual desires might be gratified to the full, and no harm would result to the spirit. It was into these two things that Jezebel of old led Ahab. In the address to the church at Pergamos it is said that they had among them those who, like Balaam, taught the people to commit fornication, and to eat things offered to idols, and we know that Balaam sought to thus pervert Israel to do these things literally. It seems almost incredible that among the churches of Christ such gross vices could have found place, or any one to listen to such teachings, but the proof is too plain that it was so; and the eating of sacrifices offered to idols means the offering of worship to idols. All this involves the thought also of spiritual fornication, out of which these gross literal practices grew, and we do not need to say here, that in the Bible Israel of old, and the church now, are charged with fornication when they have forsaken the commandments of God, and go in ways contrary to his law. Unfaithfulness to God is called fornication, just as unfaithfulness in the marriage relation is called by that name. Unfaithfulness to God was at the root of this woman's teachings in this church at Thyatira, and the Lord declares in verse twenty-one that he gave her space to repent of her fornication, and she repented not; that is, he did not at once pour out the vials of his wrath upon her, and the result was that she continued on in her course. And she should be cast into a bed; that is, following out the thought of spiritual fornication, the place of her adulteries should be the place of her judgments. Jezebel of old was slain in the very city where she had caused Ahab and all Israel to err, so here this modern Jezebel should be killed in the place of her spiritual fornications and idolatries, and they who had followed with her into these abominable things should also suffer great tribulation, except they should repent of their deeds. These represented in verse twenty-two were not her real children; that is, they were not unrenewed persons, but were really the children of God, perverted and led astray. These the Lord would never suffer to perish, yet they should suffer tribulation unless indeed they gave up their evil practices. These practices were just as evil in the Lord's people as in any others, but there was this difference: they were deceived, and did not sin wilfully.

The children of this spiritual Jezebel should not only suffer great tribulation, but should be killed with death. These last three words are a Hebrew expression, signifying the certainty and grievousness of this punishment. It signifies here, as it appears to us, that they should soon appear in their true colors before the church. It should be seen clearly that they did not at all know the Lord, but were like the prophets of Baal in the

time of Jezebel of old. They were slain at the command of Elijah, and so should these false, idolatrous teachers be slain, while those who had only been deceived and led astray while yet having the fear of God really in their hearts, should be chastised or suffer tribulation. God's judgments fall upon his deceived and disobedient people, but in mercy, while all who know not the Lord, and whose hearts are filled with wickedness, shall perish forever. There is still a vast difference between the teachers of false religion and those who may be deceived by them.

In the conclusion it is said that the churches should know (that is, in this way,) that it is the Lord who searcheth the reins and the heart, and who will give to every man according to his works; to the one chastisement, and to the other death forever. To the church, and to as many as have not this evil doctrine, the Lord said, I will put upon you none other burden than to hold fast that which you already have, till I come. That is, to continue to avoid and to abstain from sharing in these evil teachings and practices. This necessarily means that they denounce and condemn such as this woman, and all their teachings and practices.

My father, Ira Phelps, would be glad if you would give your opinion as to whether he that spoke to Moses in the burning bush as the great I AM was the same one who said, I am able to lay down my life and I am able to take it again. Was it the Savior at the burning bush?

His daughter,

S. REARDON.

It is unquestionably the same God who was manifest in the flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ who appeared to Moses in Horeb, in the bush that burned and was not consumed. God was pleased to manifest himself many times and in many ways during all the old covenant times, and it is not needful that we should here refer to any of them specially. God was manifest in the garden to Adam after he had sinned, to Abraham, to the prophets again and again, in vision, under the form of a man at different times, and under the form of an angel at other times. These all were the manifestations of the same God, the God of Israel, and he did not reveal himself to any other people in the same way during all that dispensation. It must not be forgotten that God was manifest in the flesh, in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, as he did not manifest himself before; it was the same God and Savior all the time. But "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" but once, and that in the last or gospel days. He was born of a woman but once, he lived as a man among men but once, and he was crucified and rose again from the dead but once. At no previous time had he been manifest as he was now manifest. The Word was made flesh but once. There was no need that the Word should be made flesh more than once, "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." It must not be forgotten that there is a vast difference between those appearances of our God visibly to men under various forms in the old covenant times and that manifestation of him in the flesh as the child of the virgin. It is then the same God, but a very different manifestation of him. Still further, while Christ is formed in all his believing people the hope of glory, it is still true that God is not now manifest in his people as he was manifest in Christ after his birth of the virgin. Believers are indeed the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, but they are not God

"manifest in the flesh," as was Jesus. In Christ, God was with us, and is with us, that we should at the end be with him. Is it saying too much to say that the Word was made flesh that we might be one with him in Spirit? He is called Immanuel; that is, God with us, that we might be with him. He suffered with us and for us that we might be glorified with him. This he did but once, even as he was manifest in the flesh but once.

WILL you kindly tell me what is the meaning of verse twenty-nine in the third chapter of Mark? I have often wondered what is the sin against the Holy Ghost. Do you think it possible that a soul who has felt to be truly born of God can turn aside in a moment of strong temptation, and be finally lost?

Yours truly,

W. A. DOLSEN.

DAVENPORT, Iowa.

Replying to the last question, we will say, Most certainly not; if this were to be so, then the finished work of Christ was not finished, and the lie is given to his own last words. If this be so, he did not save his people from their sins, but only tried to do so. If this be so, then the work of the Holy Spirit is in vain. Then also is there no truth in all the types, and no truth or certainty in any of the "yea and amen" promises of the word. Then not only would the work of Christ be in vain, but also the work of the Holy Spirit; to say this, would be blasphemy against the Holy Ghost indeed.

As regards what is the sin against the Holy Ghost, as used in the New Testament, it seems to us that the connection shows clearly what the Savior meant. In the immediate connection of the text we read that the scribes who came from Jerusalem said that Jesus cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils. This, Jesus said, in verses twenty-three to twenty-six, was an unreasonable assertion, and not only so, but was also a blasphemous one. These scribes said this in their malice and anger against him. They were bound in total darkness by their own proud self-righteousness, and by their craft, out of which came their gain, and while they could not deny either the fact of his miraculous works or the beneficence of them, they made clear the enmity of their hearts against all godliness, by charging that this glorious revelation of the power of the Holy Spirit was the result of Satanic power with Jesus. Thus they not only spake against him, but also against the power and presence of God with him. It was not him that they hated, but his Father. This charge that his mighty works were wrought through the prince of devils, was robbing the Holy Ghost. The Spirit of truth was not in them. They claimed to be learners and seekers and teachers of truth itself, and to fill places as the servants of God. Their rejection of the work of the Holy Ghost in Christ was therefore all the more grievous sin in them, and manifested clearly that they were deceitful teachers and evil workers. This was unquestionably the sin against the Holy Ghost in their case; in fact Jesus himself said so in the connection. There is no need, it seems to us, to question further as to what this sin is. As to whether this sin can be committed now, and if so, as to what it would be, we do not feel now to discuss. But one thing we will say, viz., if any one is troubled lest he should have committed this sin, it is a certain evidence that he has not committed it. He who is troubled about the matter cannot be the enemy of God, and these scribes were enemies of all godliness. It seems on the other hand also sure that they who have committed this sin will not be troubled at all about the matter. All such trouble shows a tender conscience, a conscience made tender by the Spirit of God. C.

PSALMS XLIII. 5.

"WHY art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God."

Perhaps no Scripture is more often in the minds of God's children than the above, and perhaps none is more applicable to them in their daily experience, though all is not darkness, all is not trial, all is not temptation. We often hear the expression: I have had many ups and downs, but more downs than ups. Little do we think what we say; how can it be possible for us to have more downs than ups? When we are down we must be raised before we can be down again, hence no child of God has had more nights than days. The evening and the morning were the first day; evening and morning have been to the present day the same, no more nights than days; so it is in grace. But we, like David, are forgetful of our anointing, of our victory over the enemy death, of our songs in Jerusalem and of our praises in the courts of our God. It is seldom, however, we forget the prison-house, the heavy chain, doubting castle, temptation in the wilderness and our journeys through the valley of the shadow of death. We all are prone to look upon the dark side of life, to fear where no fear is, to tremble with God's everlasting arms underneath us. Who can tell "why" we, who have been delivered from cruel taskmasters, fed and watered in the wilderness, brought across Jordan (judgment) into Canaan (church), where our enemies have been made our servants, should doubt God's dealings with us? Shall we say it is because we look upon the dark side? Perhaps in a measure this is true, yet there are evidences of our acceptance in the Beloved, in our trials and afflictions of soul, which we should not forget. How could we know the comfort of the rod and staff were we not led in the valley of the shadow of death? How can we know God's power to deliver from the fire except we find ourselves in it? How could our faith be found unto praise and honor of God were it not tried? Could we know anything of the power of the resurrection of Jesus if we did not first experience death? All these dark or night seasons are blessed evidences of our inheritance with the saints of light, and all are to the end that we might have fellowship with him who was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."

David asked the question of his "soul," as though he made a distinction between the man and that which was within him, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me?" But it is not our purpose to dwell at any length upon this point; will say, however, the word "soul" is sometimes used for the whole man: eight souls or persons in the ark; at other times it is used with regard to that which experiences salvation: "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."—1 Peter i. 9. Jesus makes a distinction between soul and body: "Fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."—Matt. x. 28. In our text we believe David meant the spirit or inner life. Darkness and anguish are always felt from within; so also is the light from within; God hath shined in the heart. We know David was troubled, and that the darkness was great, and we should not forget the importance of the question: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" After having asked the question he seems to encourage his soul by saying, "Hope in God." Why should there be fear? why should there be doubt after the many blessings and deliverances he

had received from the merciful hand of God? Fear comes because of the revelation of what we are by nature; doubt comes that our hope may be renewed. There can be no such thing as hope in the absence of doubt; there can be no such thing as faith except in the absence of sight; there can be no knowledge of God except we know man; there can be no knowledge of the righteousness of Christ except as we behold our own depravity. We seek those things which are above, only as we groan because of sin; in the hatred of sin is the seeking of righteousness. It is in being lost that God's power to save is made manifest; it is when in "the belly of hell" that we seek heaven. Did not God hide his face we could not be troubled; if there were no night the evil beasts (propensities of our nature) would not leave their dens; if there were no day we could have no rest from them. To show David's faith when in darkness we will call attention to another expression in the text: "For I shall yet praise him." Though cast down he was not destroyed, and it would be David himself who should praise God. This he did when he said, "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy." Here the mortal body of David was quickened. "Quicken me, O Lord, for thy name's sake: for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble." A live man thus speaks. Paul spoke of this experience in his letter to the church at Rome. The mortal body is the body of a living man; mortal means man, or that which is subject to death; immortal means the opposite: that which is not subject to death. Therefore the body of a dead man is not mortal, because it is dead, inanimate, as much so as the earth upon which we walk. Hence, when Paul said, "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you," he meant the experience of being delivered from just such a condition as David was in when he uttered the words of our text. "The days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, [children of the bridechamber] and then shall they fast in those days," said Jesus. We therefore are not always manifestly in the glorious presence of our blessed Lord, and we fast because of his absence, we are cast down, and our soul is disquieted within us; but still we hope in God, and when he who is our life appears we appear also with him in glory.

> "In darkest shades, if he appear,
> My dawning is begun;
> He is my soul's sweet morning star,
> And he my rising sun."

What a blessed thing hope is to us! "Who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast." The idea of full assurance here of heaven is not the experience of the children of God. "Hope that is seen, is not hope;" how can a man hope for that which he is in possession of? How can there be anything but hope for that which we see not? Therefore "we are saved by hope."

"Hope in God; for I shall yet praise him." Praise is ever rendered when he restores unto us the joy of his salvation. There is a difference between salvation and the joy of it. How helpless and dependent upon God we are; he brought salvation through Christ to poor sinners, which salvation is eternal, hence it is ours in time as well as in eternity. It

cannot be lost, mortgaged or sold. We can and do lose sight of its joy, and all our efforts fail to restore its blessed effects, but the Lord in his time and way makes manifest its peace and joy; then do we say, "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad;" then is our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing. Surely the Lord has turned again our captivity as the streams of the south, and in this experience of soul we are made to know the Lord is the health of our countenance, and our God. K.

WE have received a letter from a brother at Komoka, Ontario, dated February 14th, who wishes a reply. We much desire to write him, but as he omitted to sign his name we do not know who our correspondent is. Will the brother send us his name? C.

IT is with sincere sorrow we announce the death of Elder W. W. Polk, of San Francisco, Cal., which occurred in that city Nov. 30th, 1906. As we have received no obituary notice, and learned of his death in an indirect way, we can give no further particulars at present. K.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER G. M. Snider has changed his address from Maud, Oklahoma, to Asher, Oklahoma, and requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Edwin Newton, Ohio, $2.00; T. G. Harris, Neb., $3.00; John Hobson, N. Y., $3.00.—Total, $8.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Benj. E. Cubbage, at his home in Felton, Del., Jan. 28th, 1907, Harry Hayward Jones, of Philadelphia, Pa., and Miss Ada Warren Meredith, daughter of William W. Meredith, of Viola, Del.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder E. V. White, our beloved pastor, died at four o'clock Friday morning, Jan. 11th, 1907, at his home in Leesburg, Va., in the 75th year of his age. He had been a great sufferer at times for nearly three years past, never murmuring or complaining. He died as he had lived, an upright, christian man. The writer had had many short but sweet talks with him during his last illness, and I never met a more spiritual minded man. He loved to talk of Jesus, the Savior of sinners; a firm believer in absolute predestination of all things, abasing man and all his works. His labor was a work of love, pointing to Jesus as the only way by which sinners are saved, and especially was he gifted to speak comfortingly to poor, bereaved ones. Elder White had a large and wide circle of friends; wherever he lived or traveled he was loved as a man and as a servant of God. As a man in time of danger, firm, courageous and brave; as a gospel minister, meek and lowly, abounding in love and charity. Elder White was baptized April 15th, 1866, by Elder Joseph Furr, ordained the third Sunday in August, 1877, and at the death of Elder Joseph Furr was made pastor of New Valley, Mill Creek and Frying Pan, Va., churches, and served all these years, faithful through heat and cold, sunshine and rain, to meet his appointments.

The funeral services were held in the Methodist meeting-house of this place on Monday the 14th, attended by a large concourse of sorrowing relatives, friends, neighbors and comrades in arms, it being estimated that from one thousand to twelve hundred persons were in the house. Elder Joshua Rowe, of Maryland, read the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians. Prayer by Elder P. D. Gold, of North Carolina, after which Elder S. H. Durand, of Pennsylvania, preached the discourse from 1 Corinthians xv. 56-58; followed by very feeling and appropriate remarks by Elders J. G. Eubanks and J. N. Badger. His remains were then laid away in Union Cemetery, at this place, to await the resurrection call.

We extend our sympathy to the sorrowing widow, children and grandchildren, together with the churches. May the God of peace comfort and abide with them.

ALSO,

Captain Frank M. Myers died Oct. 20th, 1906, at his home near Lincoln, Loudoun Co., Va., in the 67th year of his age. Brother Frank had been complaining for three or four days, but not seriously enough to call in a physician. He retired Friday night about eleven o'clock, the family thinking him somewhat improved. His daughter on going to his room the next morning found him cold and rigid in death, which was a great shock to the family and the community in general. Brother Frank was born and raised in this county, and was a most excellent man.

He joined the New School Baptist Church when quite a boy; in later years it was revealed to him that salvation was by grace only, and he became much exercised. A year or more before he came before the church at New Valley he borrowed the writer's hymn-book, and along through it to-day can be found hymns marked, two of which were great favorites: "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!" and "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord." Brother Frank was baptized by Elder E. V. White in the fellowship of New Valley Church Sept. 15th, 1889, and remained a consistent and useful member until his death.

In the absence of a minister of our faith and order the family called Mr. Chas. Herndon, of the New School Baptist Church, to officiate, after which the remains were conveyed to Catoctin family burying-ground and laid beside those of his wife, who preceded him fourteen years, to await the resurrection.

Three sons and two daughters, with the church, are left to mourn their loss. We would commend them to the care and keeping of the all-wise and merciful God, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. S. B. PAXSON.

LEESBURG, Va.

Mrs. Eliza Orshalt departed this life at the home of her daughter, Mrs. David Vanness, in Standing Stone, Pa., Jan. 11th, aged a little more than eighty-seven years. She was born in Broome Co., N. Y., Dec. 15th, 1820. She had ten children, of whom five survived her. She left twenty-two grandchildren and twenty-three great-grandchildren. At the age of thirteen she came to my father's house, when I was an infant, where she remained seven years. She has always been to us as a sister. She was first exercised on spiritual things when she was about ten years old. She began to try to pray, and the more she prayed the more she felt her need of praying; she saw herself so very wicked. She would think of things she had said or done that were not quite right, and she had not thought that anybody could be as wicked as she found herself to be. The people with whom she lived saw that there was something on her mind, and though not members of a church, asked her if she did not want to go to meeting. She answered promptly that she did. She kept her eyes on the preacher, and while he was speaking all at once she felt so light she hadly knew what to do. From that time she wanted to be singing hymns all the time, and they said she must not sing so much or people would think she was crazy. She was naturally an unusually amiable and truthful woman, whom all admired and loved. She united once with a Free-will Baptist Church, but soon found herself not at home with them. Her mind was with the Old School Baptist Church, but she had no opportunity to unite with them, nor could she often hear them preach, or be with them, except when she visited at our home and when I spoke in her neighborhood. She had the privilege of reading the SIGNS for a number of years, and appreciated that privilege highly. Her mind was continually exercised, and I will send for publication in the SIGNS a few extracts from letters she wrote to sister Bessie and me, which I think will be interesting to many. The last few years of her life were spent with her daughter, Mrs. Loretta Vanness, where her husband, also a subject of grace, passed away. Her desire was that I should preach at her funeral, and requested me two or three years ago to preach from John xi. 25, 26, and have sung, "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand," and "I would not live alway." I could not be present at her funeral, but hope to preach in that place, if the Lord will, some time next spring or summer.

Her daughter, an experienced woman, writes: "When mother was taken sick she did not seem to think she would get well; she said she would leave it all with the Lord, it would be all right. At the last she could not talk much; she would say, 'I want to go home.' Sometimes she would beckon with her hand and say, 'Jesus, take me home.' Yes, I do think mother was taught in spiritual things. Her meditations were upon them, and I feel that she has fallen asleep and awakened in the likeness of Christ, and is no more lonesome or homesick. It was a great comfort to me to have father and mother with me the last of their stay upon earth."

I feel that in her death I have lost one who was to me as a dear sister, both in a natural and spiritual sense. SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

Mary Pierce Richards Kennard was born Nov. 14th, 1822, near Concord, Louis Co., Ky. She united with the Old School Baptist Church in 1844. She was married to David Kennard Sept. 24th, 1847. They moved from Kentucky to Illinois during the fall of 1848, and lived there until the fall of 1855, thence to Missouri, living there until the spring of 1875; they then came to California, where they lived at the time of her death, which occurred Jan. 6th, 1907. To this union were born five children, four daughters and one son. She leaves to mourn their loss a devoted husband and two daughters: Mrs. Martha Selby, who made her home with her parents, and who was seriously ill at the time of her mother's death; the other daughter is Mrs. J. A. Sutton. She also leaves thirteen grandchildren, and ten great-grandchildren, besides a brother and sister in the southern part of this State.

Her funeral sermon was preached at her home in Delevan, Cal., by Mr. Russell, of the Baptist Church of Maxwell, the text being Revelation xiv. 13: "And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

Her mother, Mrs. Susan Hampton Richards, who died in Missouri Sept. 14th, 1883, at the age of 85 years, was a member of the family of the noted Hamptons of Virginia, and a relative of the well known Wade Hampton. Her father served as one of General Washington's staff officers, and was also one of Washington's pall-bearers. She was a woman of great strength of character, a kindly, hospitable lady. Age had not dimmed her mental faculties; her mind was clear until the last. Only two hours before her death she gave orders for the personal comfort of the attending physician and neighbors. She was familiarly known as "Grandma," each one feeling a personal interest in her, and it is partly due to this mutual interest that the friendliness and good fellowship prevails in our neighborhood. We all miss her, but we know our loss is her gain. May she rest in peace. A FRIEND.

DELEVAN, California.

Sarah Catherine Seybold Newton was born Dec. 23rd, 1833, and departed this life Jan. 21st, 1907. She was first married to Wm. G. Mathis March 10th, 1853; to this union were born three children, two of whom died in infancy; the surviving daughter, Mrs. Ida J. Gifford, now resides in Edina, Mo. Mr. Mathis died March 17th, 1860. After eight years of widowhood and lonely struggle in those pioneer days she was married to George M. Newton. This union was blessed with two children: Mrs. Ada N. Armstrong, who resides near Tonica, Ill., and Milo M. Newton, who died at the age of seventeen months. Mr. Newton died March 26th, 1879. Sister Newton united with the Old School Baptist Church near Tonica, Ill., Sept. 16th, 1866, and was ever faithful to her profession, devoted to the doctrine and ordinances of the church; she always attended when not prevented by sickness. She was a sufferer for many years, suffering very much the last two years, yet she bore her sufferings with that patience which was characteristic of her, as many of her neighbors can testify. Some time ago she said to a friend that her constant prayer was that she might be kept from impatience and bear her sufferings according to the will of God. A short time before her death she seemed to feel very forcibly the beauty of the hymn commencing, "Jesus, lover of my soul," which by the request of her daughter was read at her funeral, which was conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder Downey, on January 24th. The church feels deeply her loss in the death of sister Newton, but feels to bow to the will of God, and while they will miss her in her accustomed place here, they hope to meet where parting is no more. We can only say, Sleep on, dear sister, in your sweet repose until God shall call you forth to meet us again in mansions prepared above.

S. H. HUMPHREY.

GALESBURG, Ill.

J. M. Duley, of Oklahoma, died Jan. 19th, 1907, after an illness of fifteen days. He was born in Livingston Co., Ky., March 20th, 1847, professed a hope in Christ at the age of twenty-one, and soon after joined the Primitive Baptists. He was married to Harriet Mizell at the age of twenty-six; to that union were born five children, three boys and two girls; all are dead but one boy. Brother Duley and his wife lived together for thirteen years. After his wife died he married again, but his last wife only lived a few years; she died April 21st, 1891. In October of the same year he and his only son moved to Kansas, and lived there until 1894; when they moved to Oklahoma, near Capron. After his son's marriage he lived with him until his death. I have been acquainted with brother Duley for forty years. He was a warm-hearted, christian man, and lived according to his profession. He was liberated to preach a good many years ago, but was never ordained. He was sound in the faith of God's elect. He bore his affliction without murmuring, and was willing and wanted to go. He leaves one son and a host of relatives and friends to mourn their loss, but has left evidence behind that he is better off.

J. B. HARDY.

Benjamin Sylvester died at his home near Goldsboro, Md., Jan. 12th, 1907, in the 76th year of his age. Mr. Sylvester made his home with his brother Samuel, who died three years ago. The manner of his life was such as to command the respect and esteem of all who knew him. He was one of the world's truly good men. He made no open profession of religion, but for many years had been a sympathizer with the Old School Baptists, and a frequent attendant of the meetings at Cow Marsh Church. His heart was with the Baptists, he loved the doctrine they preach. Just before his death he requested of his niece, Miss Rosa Sylvester, that there should be Baptist service at his funeral. The writer was therefore sent for to conduct the service, and used as a text John i. 13: "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." For we believed him to be one of God's elect vessels of mercy, but for some wise purpose known only to Him on high he was never brought into the visible church. Interment Jan. 16th, 1907, at Cow Marsh cemetery.

BENJ. E. CUBBAGE.

FELTON, Del.

Mrs. Mary Fisk departed this life Wednesday morning, Feb. 13th, 1907, after an illness of about two weeks, aged 79 years and 1 day. She had been in poor health for several years, yet she seemed better than usual during the winter. She contracted a cold that developed into pneumonia, and her death was quite sudden. Her maiden name was Swartout, she

being a niece of the late Elder Swartout. She was married to Herman Fisk, who died several years ago. Mrs. Fisk never made a profession of religion, but was a firm believer in the doctrine held and advocated by the Old School Baptists. It was our privilege to visit her last October, after the two days meeting held with the Olive and Hurley Church. She had enjoyed the meeting, and spoke of how good the preaching had been to her. This was the last meeting she was able to attend.

Her funeral was held from the home of John Hasbrook, where she had made her home for several years. Hymns Nos. 1245 and 1247 were read by request of the deceased. Text used, 2 Cor. iv. 7-10.

J. B. SLAUSON.

DIED—Feb. 3rd, 1907, **Carl L. Antone,** infant son of Eugene and Lizzie Antone, of Justus, Pa., aged 4 months and 4 days. His disease was pneumonia. The funeral services were held at the Old School Baptist meeting-house at Justus, Pa., Feb. 6th, the writer officiating. May God's Spirit reconcile the mourning ones to their sore affliction.

D. M. VAIL.

DEPARTED this life Feb. 16th, 1907, brother **Benjamin White,** brother of Elder E. V. White, in his 82nd year. They like "Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided."

MARGARET B. WHITE.

LEESBURG, Va.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 75. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1907. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ROMANS XII. 21.

"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

The exhortations which are recorded in the New Testament Scriptures are not given to the world at large that they may be used by the fleshly mind according to the will of the flesh to procure a record of good works, but, like all the written testimony of the word in the Bible, they are intended exclusively for the followers of Jesus, for those who are born again of the Spirit of God, called to be saints, inhabitants of the kingdom of God's dear Son. They do not tell us of things that we ought to do through carnal reasoning or fear of punishment, but they do remind us of the work of grace going on in our hearts, calling for the obedience which the love of God inspires. First, we are reminded of the strength and force of evil desires and fleshly lusts. We remember how that once we rolled sin as a sweet morsel under our tongue, and were satisfied in evil doing, but now the exhortation comes from within, from whence our evil passions once arose, and the words of which I am writing are a true testimony of the voice within our heart. Before, we felt in our heart that "Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant;" but alas, we have discovered that our evil mind and sinful tendency are to be dreaded more than deadly poison, for by them our vile passions are stimulated to a high degree, and we are led about by the powers of darkness into all manner of sin and temptation, carried about with every wind of doctrine, causing us to die to every spiritual desire. Now, the exhortation is, "Be not overcome of evil," and we must always remember that the exhortations are never addressed to the natural senses, but are invariably addressed to the heart. If you say to the man who is reveling in sin to his natural advantage and pleasure, Refrain from so doing, will it not irritate and inflame his evil passions, and cause him to become more manifestly a child of the devil than before? Who knows the depths of the darkness of a heart that is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked? It is as a man carried away on the proud waves of the mighty ocean to certain death. The subject of gospel address who is overcome of evil must die; he must be purged with fire, and every vestige of dross be consumed. The ex-

hortation itself is an evidence that every child of God is liable to, and capable of, being overcome of evil. Therefore are we in jeopardy every hour, the enemy is round about us and is alert and active; the weakest point in our fortress is known of him, and attacked by him. Of ourselves we are unable to stand against our foe; surely then it would be useless to exhort us to do that which is an impossibility, and we know that no Scripture is given in vain; then we must appeal to a higher power than that of our own flesh. We have learned the virulence of the leprous disease in our flesh, that it is a deadly and incurable disease. How is it to be eradicated? We have the answer and the remedy in our text, "But overcome evil with good." The poor, tried and tempest-tossed soul cries, I am beset upon every side, I know not what to do, how can I overcome? There is no good in me, therefore I have no weapons to withstand the enemy. My leanness, my leanness, is my cry; the conflict is raging, unbelief is arrayed against belief; light breaks in, the illuminating power of the word of God shows me that I have been fighting with carnal weapons; there has been no captain to lead me into the fray, deeper and deeper have I been sinking in the mire; but now the same light that has shown me my error and my dismal failure, that all my efforts were futile, because they were evil, has also shown me wonderful things in righteousness; not only has it shown me the good, but it has shown me how to overcome evil with good. First, it has shown me the Captain of my salvation, that he is undertaking for me, and that with him "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds: casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; and having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled." The heart has now awakened out of sleep, and is alert and active, the words of exhortation are now received with gladness, for they are the breathings of the Spirit of Christ; the corrupt heart has been made good and fruitful, and only good can emanate from that which God has made good. Through Christ we can do all things, for he strengtheneth us. Evil never has been overcome with evil, but the power of good is greater than the power of evil, for where sin abounds, in the circumcised heart, grace doth much more abound. To overcome evil with good, is to know good and also to know evil. If we know that every thought and act and deed emanating from the carnal mind is vanity, if we know that our heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, if we know that in our flesh dwelleth no good thing, then we know evil. On the other hand, if we desire with all our heart to be a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, if we love our brethren with a pure heart fervently, if we walk by faith and not by sight, and know that of ourselves we can do nothing, then do we know good. These are the first requisites in overcoming evil with good, while all that follow are like unto them. Love is the fulfilling of the law, by the sweetness and power of which we always overcome, for the outgrowth of the exercise of God's love is to cause us to esteem others better than ourselves. The name of Jesus is our fortress, our tower, our bulwarks and our communion with and access to our heavenly Father. Let us ever pray for grace sufficient to overcome in the day of trial, and in the hour of temptation.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 23, 1907.

HELENA, Oklahoma, Feb. 4, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I inclose a copy of a private letter from a dear friend of the truth, which I hope you may be able to publish in the SIGNS, if you think it worthy of a place there. I have the consent of the writer; he is now living in this town. We hope the Lord will soon give him strength to come to the church, where we think he ought to be, as he is earnest in defending the doctrine of salvation by grace, and the doctrine of God's election and predestination.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

HELENA, Oklahoma, January, 1907.

DEAR FRIEND:—I will try to tell you, as best I can, what great things I hope the Lord has done for me. It will soon be a year since I first had any evidence that I was lost and undone. It came about in this way, as near as I can remember: I was working nights at the pump-house in Wichita, Kansas, by myself. The foreman, a Methodist, asked me to let Eva, my daughter, go with them to meeting. Well, when they came back he wanted to know why I did not go to meeting and get good and save my children. He said, "If you will just make a start, God will do the rest." I said, "What could I do to be your son?" "O," he said, "you must not look at it that way; that takes all of our free moral agency away." From that night on, for two weeks, I hated to see that old man come in. I began to read the Bible to see if I could do anything, but lo, the more I read the worse I got; I could find no comfort in it, for it seemed to be written to a certain people, and I saw by reading it that I was not one of them, and it was useless for me to read it. Now here was this old, gray-haired man telling me that all I had to do was to make a start and that God would do the rest. How to start was the point that I was worrying over; my sins were all in front of me, I could not forget them, neither could I remove them; if I went to bed they were with me, when I went to work they were with me; what to do I knew not; to pray was out of the question, for I remembered reading that the prayers of the wicked availeth nothing; then, who should I pray to? The Bible, as I saw it, referred to God; I wished that I had not read it, for instead of giving comfort it condemned me. I desired to leave that old pump-house, feeling that if I were away where I would not have to see that old man, this trouble would leave me, or I would forget it, not being with him. But here were the children; should I leave and not get work soon they might have to go hungry, which they had never done to my knowledge; to leave seemed out of the question. Remembering that my money was due the first of March, I decided to work until I got it, then I was going to leave; but lo, my burden seemed to get heavier each night as I went to work. One night, about the middle of February last, when I went to work I thought surely I would not live through the night; I went around doing my work seemingly not knowing it. I would have given everything I had, it seemed, if I could get away from there. I remember walking around in front of the three old boilers that I was firing, feeling that if they would blow up and take me out of this misery I would be glad of it. They did not blow up, and there I was before a just and holy God, condemned. I had even been trying to act as Juda did over some of God's people—I condemned them; yes, I was better than they were, they would do things

that I would not; no child of God would do such things as some of them did. Some time during the night I went around to fire up, and it seemed that every step I took would be the last one. When in front of the boilers again I thought there was no hope left for me, that I was doomed to go down into everlasting punishment, I had committed the unpardonable sin. As far as I could see I had used all the means possible, but had failed in all things. What a miserable place for a poor sinner! O how he would like for some friend to help him; but lo, there is none to help, he must stand still and see the salvation of his Savior, who comes to his rescue in a moment unexpected, when all hope is gone, and blots out those sins, or removes the burden of them. How well I remember when God through his mercy removed my burden. I was standing before those same old boilers, and had given up all hope of finding relief, feeling that God was just in casting me out, when to my surprise God removed that burden in a moment unexpected; for when I felt that I was cast out, God caught me and set me down in another place. What had happened to me? Here I was in front of those old boilers, but that burden was gone. What was the matter with me? A great change had taken place in this poor, helpless sinner, somebody had done him a great favor, yes, the greatest favor he ever had. Who had done this? I had sunk down, it seemed, almost to the bottom of the pit, but some one had caught me just before I reached the bottom, and brought me up. I began to look around to see if any one had come in while I was in this trouble. I noticed that everything seemed to look bright; I could hardly realize I was still in that old pump-house, where a few minutes before I was in so much trouble, and now I was so happy I hardly knew what to do. I thought I must find out who did this for me. O the joy I found in this change, it was much greater than the grief which had preceded it. I forgot my grief entirely, and found myself going around singing praises to God. It seemed that I could not sing and praise him enough; my joy was unspeakable, I was so happy I hardly knew what I was doing. Some time during this happiness, I cannot tell just when, it seemed that Jesus was with me, and feeling that he was with me, I desired that he would not leave me. I never thought of having any more trouble, but felt now that Jesus is with me I need not fear. I thought to write to a friend whom I felt was a christian, and tell her what joy I had found in Jesus. I sat down and headed my letter, but I could not write, for what I wanted to tell I could not think of. I got up and went to work; no sooner had I got to work when that which I wanted to write came back to me. I stopped work, sat down and headed another letter, with the same result as before. I went back to work, wondering what was the matter, still having the desire to tell her, yet could not. It seemed that she was dearer to me than ever before; why could I not tell her? It appeared to me that she was a sister. While studying over this I sat down as before, and headed my letter, but instead of writing "friend," I wrote "sister," and went on with what I wanted to say.

I remember at the first of my experience I thought my troubles were all ended, but lo, it has been almost a year since this change came to me, and I am still persecuted, and for what? For the same cause: believing the truth and talking the same. See 2 Cor. v. 13, 17: "For

whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God." "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." See John xiv. 20: "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." See Eph. i. 5: "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." See 2 Tim. i. 9: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Also Romans viii. 14: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." I believe these are all that ever will be saved: the ones that are led by the Spirit of God. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."

Yours in hope,

D. S. ONSLEY.

MANASSAS, Va., Feb., 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I feel impressed to write a slight token of remembrance of dear brother White, who has been especially near and dear to me ever since I came to Virginia, in 1876, thirty-one years ago. A number of years ago I heard a dear brother in the ministry say he thought it hardly worth while to love anybody in this world, for the inevitable separation causes such suffering and sorrow as to more than compensate for all the comfort and happiness there is in the love. I give the substance of this brother's remark. I could not then agree with him, and now, after several years, and the loss of many who were dearer to me than my own life, I cannot agree with him. I am glad to the depths of my soul that I loved brother White, and that I still love him. Our first acquaintance seemed to develop a mutual love and fellowship, which succeeding years have increased and strengthened. It was at Mt. Zion, on the fourth Sunday in February, 1876, on the last visit I made to Virginia before moving here the following May, that brother White was in the meeting with me, and I can but feel that the Lord, by the mighty power of his grace, was with us. That same gracious God gave brother White to me in filling his soul with the comfort and power of the truth given me to preach that day. It was a day I can never forget. On the evening of that day and at night he gave me a history of much of his life. In his early life his delight was in war and fighting; he was brave unto recklessness, with no fear of God in his heart. At the same time he loved honor and uprightness among men, and hated everything low, or sordid, or mean. When he came to speak of heavenly things, as they were made known to him in his experience, and the subsequent trials and conflicts, he came so very near to me that I felt, This is a man telling me all things that ever I did. Hours passed rapidly in that, to me, ever to be remembered conversation. He opened his mind to me concerning his impressions regarding the work of the ministry, telling me I was the first one to hear them from his lips. I can but feel that a sweet spirit of unity knit our hearts together in a live and growing love, confidence and fellowship, which nothing has been able to disturb or mar. If I put myself forward in thus writing of brother White, it is because I have a motive, which the kind and loving reader will discover. I am writing as I feel to write of that precious servant of Jesus, and of my relation to him. "Bles-

sed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee," are wonderful words. Of course it is a great satisfaction and comfort to know that brother White loved me, and that love and fellowship grew between us as the years passed by; but that is not the ground of the evidence of my hope that the love of God is in it all, but that I loved him, and the cause and nature of that love gives me to-day, as I think of the loss we all have sustained, a joy which is unspeakable, a solemn joy, not of this earth, I am sure. As a man he was loved and esteemed by all who knew him, and deservedly so, but what won my soul was the workmanship of God, "the perfect man," "the hidden man of the heart," the image of Jesus as revealed by the Spirit of God dwelling in him. I loved him as I love his Savior, with the same love, or same kind of love. This may sound to some like a strange remark, but to me it is a glorious truth. If I love him only because he loved me, I would in no way differ from the publicans and sinners. It is a precious thought that brother White loved me, but that thought is often mingled with a fear that he was deceived in me, and that I am altogether unworthy of his love and all those who are like him; but I know I loved him, and in that knowledge there is a joy to my soul, and in that love there is a sweetness and comfort above and beyond the thought that he loved me. The evidence upon which my hope of eternal life is founded is this love for brother White, and many others of like precious faith, both dead and alive, which I find dwelling in my heart at times, at least. In his conversation and in his preaching brother White seldom opened his mouth without telling my own thoughts and feelings better than I could do it myself. In the deadening trials of the past weary months, trials in which no element of bitterness seems lacking, his unfailing love, confidence and fellowship have been a stay and support for which I desire to render continual praise and thanksgiving to God. "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer," but he "that loveth is born of God."

The churches of the Corresponding Meeting of Virginia have met with a heavy loss in the death of Elder White, a loss which just at this time seems peculiarly hard to bear, for it seems to the few of us who are left that we need him more than ever before. These are our thoughts, but God's thoughts are not our thoughts. My feelings have been, during the weary months of brother White's illness, We cannot spare him; and the cry has gone up to God to have mercy upon us, and retain him among us yet a while longer. Now we wish to say, Thy will, O God, be done.

As this letter is largely personal, I will conclude by saying for myself, I have lost a near and most precious travailing companion, a companion in tribulation indeed, a brother born for adversity. I desire to praise God that it has been given me, altogether unworthy as I am, to love and possess the fellowship of many of the gifted and precious servants of God, and that I still feel that yearning love for them, whether they have long since departed this life or are still numbered with the living; they have been many times the angels of God's presence to me. May the comfort of his love dwell sweetly in the heart of our widowed sister White, and in the hearts of all that mourn.

Dear brethren, these desultory sentiments are at your disposal; they are simply the thoughts and feelings of one

who dearly loved and appreciated that servant of Jesus, Elder E. V. White.

Affectionately yours,

J. N. BADGER.

MARGARETVILLE, N. Y., Jan. 16, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER CHICK:—I have had an impression to write you ever since our association. I am glad you enjoyed it, and hope you will be able to come again. We greatly miss our former pastor, Elder Hubbell; it seems as though I miss him more and more as the days go by. His words have greatly comforted me in my afflictions, especially before I was strong enough to attend meeting. I was seldom well enough to go for the first few years after I united with the church, and thought I should be so glad were I only able to attend our home meetings; but after I was better, so that I could attend nearly every time when the weather permitted, then I wanted to be strong enough to attend our association; and now that I have been able to go a few times I am not yet satisfied, but still murmur and repine with blessings in my hand. There is nothing here that will satisfy, neither gold, nor houses, nor lands; but having food and raiment I ought to be content, while so many are suffering for want of food and fuel; but our heavenly Father says that not one of his little ones shall perish; even the hairs of their head are all numbered. Is it not wonderful, the height and depth of his love? I cannot comprehend it, it is far above my thoughts. We are but as grasshoppers in his sight, and I often wonder why my unprofitable life is spared, while such a useful life as Elder Hubbell's should be taken away; but we must be still and know that he is God; we each have to fill our own place in this life; our God works, and none can hinder, he controls the universe. The one sovereign, sole Creator is eternal, ever gracious, ever wise, and all our times are in his hand, and all events at his command; he is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. He has remembered me in much mercy, he has brought me up out of an horrible pit, and placed my feet upon a rock, and he has given me a desire to ascribe all praise, honor and glory to his most holy name, for unto him is all praise due. He is the God I adore, the One altogether lovely, and the chiefest among ten thousand; bless his most holy name. "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow." "O for a closer walk with God." I have a desire to extol his name, to live nearer him, and worship him in the spirit of holiness, to magnify his name, for he is our Rock, our Salvation.

I have always had a great desire to hear you speak, brother Chick, since I began to read your writings in the SIGNS, sixteen years ago, but I did not know that I should ever be able to do so. Your editorials are very comforting to me, especially your New Year's greeting for this year. I cannot get to meeting in the winter, unless it is a warm day, but our next meeting is appointed to be held at my boarding place, so I am looking forward with the anticipation of having another pleasant season. I have not had one since October, when I heard Elder Bogardus at the yearly meeting at Vega; also at the usual meeting on Sunday after. I greatly enjoyed his conversation at sister O'Conner's the evening of the two days meeting. It was also interesting to hear Elder Vail tell the exercises of his mind, at our association time. We are glad to meet our brethren and sisters from all parts of the country at our association. Such seasons are sweet, but the parting is sorrowful. I think

these meetings are beneficial to our poor souls, and very comforting and encouraging by the way. I am so prone to wander; instead of setting my mind upon things above, it is running after the world and its vanities. Vain are all things here below, false but yet how fair. Twenty-three years have passed since I first felt peace and joy in believing, and I do not get any better. For the first seven years I could not understand the Old School Baptist doctrine, and thought there was no one like me. I had love for them, but as I could not believe just as they did I thought there was no home for me; still I thought they must be right, as they did not preach from notes like other denominations, who sometimes reminded me of a schoolboy acting his declamation. I know how to feel for those who have love for the truth and yet cannot understand the doctrine of God's electing love. After a long, dark season, when the joy of my salvation was restored unto me, this doctrine which is so precious to me now, was revealed, and I was soaring upon the mountain top, my cup with blessings overflowed. These seasons are few and far between, but I have much to be grateful for. Our Savior said that he clothed the lilies of the field, and will he not much more clothe those "of little faith?" Will he forgive all my imperfections, and bring me off conqueror at last? He has washed the robes of all his little ones, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. He has dearly bought, and redeemed his people from their sins. O that I were worthy of his love, and could walk more as becometh one who professes to follow in the footsteps of the Savior, and be more conformed to his image; more humble, childlike and trustful. His promises are yea and amen to those who love his name; he so loved poor sinners that he gave his only begotten Son to redeem them from woe. He has remembered me in much mercy, and enabled me to hope that my sins are pardoned through his blood. Why should he think upon me, a poor worm of the dust, less than the least of all, and ruined in the fall? Surely the Lord is good, and his mercy endureth for ever. My desire was granted that I might be received into the church, I who am yet so unworthy of this great blessing, and there I wish to remain as long as they can bear with me, for it is a great comfort to meet with them, although I never can tell my experience as I should like to, but I love to hear what the others can tell of their joys and sorrows. Theirs is the God I adore, and him I wish to serve. I hope you may visit us again soon, we would all be glad to have you.

Your unworthy sister,

PHEBE J. FAULKNER.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., Feb. 19, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—For ten days I have been in the house with a case of "la grippe." This is the second attack I have had this winter, and it appears to be very hard for me to get rid of.

While sitting here I have thought of my brethren all over the country, and have read much of their writings in the SIGNS, and have been comforted. It is indeed a very great privilege that we have to write to each other in the name of the Lord, and to read the things that the Lord has done for each of us. John was commanded to write the things that the Lord revealed to him for the rebuke, warning, comfort and edification of the churches. These things have come down to us, as well as the writings of the other saints who wrote in the New Testament, and as we read them we find sweet com-

panionship with them, and through them with our Lord Jesus Christ. This is what the apostle said: What we have seen with our eyes, and heard with our ears, and our hands have handled of the Word of life, declare we unto you, that you may have fellowship with us; "and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." Truly this is a glorious link of fellowship, and it is the only way that fellowship comes. The experience in our hearts begets fellowship in the hearts of those of kindred spirits, faith is added to faith, so that little is added to little in the whole household; we receive it precept upon precept, and example upon example, as the Lord gives it. Break one of these links and the whole house would be broken. How good it is that it is given to us in joint-heirship. If we are children we are also heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. Joint-heirship can be given only in will; the law will divide whatever is left in its jurisdiction. Then a will is necessary to prevent division. In this wonderful work of God he has given everything in will, to and by the Son; he is the divine Executor; when he came he came to do the will of the Father; this was his delight. "I delight to do thy will, O my God," is his word. It was not his privilege to change that will, but to do it, and it must be done just as it fell into his hands from the court of the Father. To do otherwise the Executor would become a transgressor, and be subject to the wrath of the law. He was by no means accountable for the arrangement of the will; if it was wrong it manifested a fault in the Father; the Executor was responsible only to fully, in the letter and the spirit, carry out the items of that will. This required his death, and he died just as it had been written of him. In his dying he delivers others, and gives to them the things which the Father had provided for them and had recorded in the will. The Executor could not give these precious things to any others, for that would be a misapplication of the estate, giving the children's bread to dogs; this he declares it is not meet to do. From this I conclude that every one in the household gets his part in the estate; it belongs to him because of the favors of the Father. The blind receive their sight, the deaf hear, the lame walk, the mourner is comforted, the lepers are cleansed, the poor receive the gospel, &c. Why are these things so? Because they are given to them in the will of the Father, which has been faithfully executed by the Son, and now the Holy Spirit, blessed Guardian, is faithfully ministering to us the good things so given and insured to us. He shall take of the things of mine (the things of the Father) and show them unto you. He "shall bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Blessed Comforter, faithful Companion, ever nigh to minister comfort in distress, life from the dead. He will come and save us, he will accompany us through the dark valley, and bring us to Calvary, and pour out on our heads the dew of Hermon, and our souls shall rejoice as our eyes are enlivened to see the streams of living mercy flow down in the blood from the cross where Jesus died. There as the blood goes down, leaving the body hanging on the tree, we and our sins are separated, as the east is separated from the west; no more forever can these sins rise up against us, for our Father has not visited the cross with the resurrection. When the body rose from the tomb, the blood and the sin were washed away in that gory stream, and the people of God

and their sins eternally separated. This the Holy Spirit reveals to us. Thus salvation is of the Lord, and we by him; how blessed these thoughts. This was given us in the will. Men or angels can never handle it; no, none but the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Is not our salvation secure? and are we not secure in it? In consideration of such wonderful provisions, what manner of men ought we to be? How godly our conversation, how humble our walk. Ought we not to be more circumspect and faithful than if we were to obtain salvation by our works? All that we are and all that we have are his, and all should be given in sacred obedience to his holy word, that we should praise him in our body and spirit, which are his.

I have thought much of the bereaved ones left by our dear, faithful brother White, and I pray the Lord to comfort them. He is more than all the world to us, and can never be taken away. To die is but to live for ever in the Lord.

It did me good to read sister Lina W. Beck's article; it brought back to my mind many precious words of comfort that have been spoken from Crawfordsville in the years that are past.

I consider the SIGNS a glorious gift of God to the church. Our chains of correspondence are like the rivers of God that flow from the Fountain in which we are so much refreshed and encouraged. The Lord enable our editors and correspondents to write in the spirit of the love of his truth, that we may all grow up together before the Lord.

Yours in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

DAYTON, Wash., Dec. 30, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Through the tender mercies and long-suffering of our God I am spared to see the close of another year, and I desire to write you and give expression to some thoughts that have been in my mind for the last few weeks. Not long since, I was in a very low state of mind, in darkness and gloom, the Bible was a sealed book to me. This oppressed me, and I sought relief, so I took my Bible, and it opened at the first of Zechariah. I read until I came to the seventh and eighth verses of the eighth chapter, reading to this place without understanding. These verses read as follows: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country, and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness." As I read this the dark cloud dispersed, and the light of the knowledge of the glory of God seemed to flow in my mind with such beauty that I was enabled to rejoice in his holy word. I fully realize I can only give an outline of the fullness of the gospel embraced in the above text; I can only mention the different lines of thought that occurred to my mind. First, in the expression, "I will save my people," is embodied the doctrine of election and predestination; "I will," is a declaration of a determination, it declares what our God determined to do. "My people," embraces those who were embodied in the covenant of redemption, and are all alike his own. Then it stands that this declaration is as sure as God himself is sure, and his word true. His word has gone forth, "I will save my people," and to call in question the word of God, and to say that any of

his people, for any cause, in any part of the world, will go to hell at last, is to deny God's word and say it is not true. It is impossible for God to lie, so the salvation of his people is sure, as sure as his holy word is true. As to how this work is accomplished, opens to the mind a wide door of thought, embracing the great plan of salvation by and through our Lord and Savior. Of him it is said, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." This language is positive, certain and unconditional, there can therefore be no failure in this salvation, unless first there is a failure in God's holy word. Then if all men are his in this covenant, Universalism is true, and cannot be condemned without condemning God's holy word. But is this idea true? We read that some will stand at the door and knock, and will say, Lord, we have done many mighty works in thy name; and in thy name have cast out devils. What is the answer of the Lord to them? Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you. It is said, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." And Jesus said, I know my sheep. Here is described a people of whom the Lord said, "I never knew you," and then it is declared that he knoweth them that are his. Is not this full evidence that there are those who are not his? He knoweth them that are his, and this other people he never knew. To trace out this people, and all the Lord's dealing with them, would require too much space and time, so about all I can do is to call to mind this line of thought. Now trace the seed of Abraham throughout, as the Lord's people. To him the many precious promises were given, and it does not matter whether one is a Jew or a Greek, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." By nature the Lord's people are not different from others, but are sinners, and were under condemnation and death, even as others; in this sense there is no difference. Paul said that we were dead in sins, and that among the wicked we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the lusts of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath even as others. By this it is evident that he did not choose one because he was better than another, or more worthy than another; neither was it because of any act of any man that he was chosen. It is declared that his people are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people. Paul also tells us in whom, and why they were chosen. They were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. Here we find the line of distinction between his people and others; it is not that his people are naturally better in any respect than others, for all alike have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." In this work is made manifest the subjects of God's rich mercy and of his great love. It is not that we are in any respect deserving, but it is all because he loved us and hath made manifest his great mercy to us, and thus we are taught to know that it is "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."

"I will save my people." This is the Lord's work, and not man's work. "I will bring them." This is also the Lord's work, and by the manifestation of his

love to us we are taught to love him, and are thus brought by the sweet cords of love to the church.

My brother, I feel it would require more of your time than I am entitled to, to attempt to write in full upon this subject. I have merely drawn the outline of this vast subject as it has occurred to me. I received much comfort in meditation upon this, and thus had a desire to tell others something of it, with the beauty and comfort that is in it. May the Lord bless and comfort his dear people with a knowledge of his name. Yours in the fellowship of the gospel and bonds of christian love,

B. S. PATE.

MATTHEW XI. 6.

"AND blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."

What a comforting message this must have been to John, who was shut up in prison and overcome with tormenting doubt and unbelief. Jesus knew how John would feel when he was reassured that he was the Lamb of God that should take away the sin of the world. John would say, Yes, this is he that should come, but my name is not written in his book, or I would not have asked the question, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" This would be harrassing him now. How varied are the trials and temptations of the people of God. Jesus knew what John's next trial would be, therefore after enumerating the evidences that He was the one that should come, no doubt to the satisfaction of John, he would not leave John comfortless, but adds these precious, heart-cheering words which have been a comfort to poor, tempted mortals ever since: "And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me." Indeed, all the sayings of Jesus are like the above, their aim and end is to comfort. How often we have heard Jesus preached, and there was nothing attractive or edifying in it to us, but we had the satisfaction of knowing we were not offended in him. All those who are not blessed in Jesus are offended in him; he that is not with Jesus is against him; he that soweth not with him scattereth abroad. There are thousands who claim to be sowing with Jesus, who are scattering abroad their own doctrine instead of the doctrine of Jesus. Evidently there are many who think they are with Jesus who are against him. Paul thought he was doing God service when he was persecuting the saints. How may we know that we are not offended in Jesus? This is a very important question. Here opens up a broad field for investigation. "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." The experience of the saints is not a theory; "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself;" therefore his testimony of Jesus is not conjecture, but is that which he has seen with his eyes, and which his hands have handled, and which he has tasted. When Jesus declared that no man could come unto him except it were given him of his Father, many of his disciples (false ones evidently) walked no more with him. They were offended in Jesus. Why? Because his doctrine was not consistent with their carnal reason. The carnal mind, through Satan's lie, thinks itself to be something, and something it is, look at it: "The carnal mind is enmity against God." When Jesus turned to the twelve, and said, "Will ye also go away?" Peter said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the liv-

ing God." Thus we see the difference between true disciples and false ones. False disciples misconstrue the sayings of Jesus, and even misquote them to suit their carnal reason, while to the true disciples they drop as the rain, and "distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." They hunger and thirst for his words. At times they find his words, as recorded in the New Testament, bubbling up in their heart, and they find his commandments are not grievous. Are we offended because Jesus said, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last"? Is not this just what we want? Is not such a Savior just the kind we need? Are we not utterly helpless? Are we offended because he said, "Without me ye can do nothing"? "Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me." The blessing extends through time and eternity; precious hope, let us cherish it.

EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

NEWARK, Del.

OLIVE, N. Y.

ELDER KER—DEAR BROTHER IN A LIKE PRECIOUS FAITH:—As it is time for me to send in my subscription to the SIGNS for another year, I am impressed to write a few words, but why I know not, for I do not feel that I can say anything that will be of comfort to any one, and I know that I have not the pen of a ready writer on sacred subjects. I have been brought to meditate much of late on the fleetingness of life, as one after another in the church and neighborhood has been passing to that bourne from which none return, and others by reason of failing health and the infirmities of age are on the threshold of eternity, and I feel that there is nothing of this time state but just that which passeth away, and the thought has of late made me very sad; and as I look back through the mists of time I can only say with one of old, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been." I feel to prostrate myself in the dust, and cry, Unclean! unclean! How dark the future looks when not sustained by the presence of God; but sometimes I am made to realize that he sustains and supports those who are his, although it seems to me at times as if one who is so vile and sinful as I realize myself to be is sacrilegious to dare think or hope that I belong to that innumerable company which has been made white by being washed in the blood of the Lamb; and yet when I have the presence of my Savior, how beautiful to meditate on the One altogether lovely and the chiefest among ten thousand! I feel to say then, "Praise him above, ye heavenly host." "Give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever." O what a theme! Christ the mighty One to leave the Father and come down to suffer the ignominious death of the cross, to ransom his beloved bride from death, hell and the grave. Yes, she had indeed sold herself for naught, and now what a redemption price was paid. How little can we realize the sufferings and death that our dear Lord passed through to redeem her. Chant his praise, ye children of men, for the wonderful ransom price he paid for his bride. I sometimes feel that eternity will hardly be long enough to praise him for his wonderful works to the children of men. Think, my brethren, of people working to save souls, when His own right arm has gotten him the victory. Where were we when he laid the foundations of the earth? Yet this Jesus, who is one with the Father, comes into our

hearts, and we feel his presence, feel that he has done all, and makes us to know and realize that we are sold under sin, but he has paid the redemption price, and we are made to sit down in his banqueting-house, and his banner over us is love. Well may we say with the poet, "It was love that spread the feast, and sweetly forced us in." It was not of ourselves, we ever must say. I feel to give thanks and glory and honor to him for a finished salvation. When people say that this doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things makes God the author of sin, I feel that my own deceitful heart only is the author of my sins; self is the author of them all, and if not restrained by the power of God are there any depths of sin that we do not get to? I think every truly exercised child of God will feel to thank him that they have been restrained from outbreaking sins, and if they are allowed to depart into sin and iniquity they will see that their own depraved nature which led them into it is the author of sin.

My dearly beloved brethren in the Lord, I often think that if I were a child of God I would not have such a dread of the "king of terrors," but would feel more like a child nearing home; would feel to say, I am one day nearer home than I have been before; but sometimes I am comforted by his presence, and then I do not fear, then I can truly say, What a glorious thing it is to feel that the everlasting arms are supporting and upholding; but I go so much of my time in darkness that may be felt, it is so intense, or else I do not have any spiritual exercises, but live on and on without having or feeling his presence, but like one who feels as if cumbering the ground. When I first united with the church I thought I should feel more and more the presence of my Savior, and enjoy religion more, but I find that my way has been hedged up and my thoughts evil, but I feel thankful when he talks with me by the way, as he did with the disciples on their sorrowful journey to Emmaus; though, like them, I knew him not until he vanished from my sight.

I wrote this letter over a month ago, but have felt undecided about sending it, and still feel so, but it would be wronging the SIGNS to delay my remittance longer, so with much fear and trembling I send it, knowing that you will not print it if it contains anything unworthy of a place in our dear family paper. I trust it to your judgment.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) M. B. KEOGAN.

NORTH YAKIMA, Wash., Feb. 9, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Having been edified and comforted many times by reading communications in the SIGNS, I have a desire to contribute my mite also, if peradventure the Master will guide my pen in such a way as to be profitable to my brethren, for "Let all things be done unto edifying." I have thought, with much self-searching, of the words of commendation, spoken by the Master, of the woman who anointed his body for the burial with precious ointment, spoken of in the fourteenth chapter of Mark in this way: "She hath done what she could." My desire is that the spirit of those words may sink deep in the hearts and minds of the household of faith, to the end that their work of faith and labor of love may be more earnest, more zealous and more faithful. What was it she did? She poured very precious ointment, that might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, on the head of Jesus. No doubt, like us, she would liked to have

done more, but lacked opportunity, besides not knowing what else she could do, and though it seemed little, the pharisaical spirit of selfishness, so prevalent in the human heart to-day, had said she had done too much: whence this waste? But blessed be God, our Jesus said for her comfort and ours, "She hath done what she could." She did what she did through faith and love, which is beyond the ken of the carnal mind, and yet is the foundation principle of all true service to God. I have no idea she thought of the cost of the ointment, though it may have represented much hard work. How many of us, think you, would not have stopped to count the cost of this service or that service, as, I cannot go to meeting to-day, for my work needs all my attention; or, I cannot give this needy brother or preacher anything, for my family needs it; or, I do not have time to visit and cheer that sick one, for fear I lose by it? How long, O beloved children of my heavenly Father, will it be before we learn that the gospel of the Son of God is a gospel of loving service one to another? Jesus our Lord has passed into the heavens, and his bodily presence is no more with us, so we cannot, if we would, pour our precious ointment (our loving service) on his beloved head; but he has told us the church "is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." Then on the members of his body is the place to pour out your precious ointment. This ointment is not measured by quantity, no more than the "Well done, good and faithful servant," was measured by quantity, but by opportunity and diligence in its improvement. We may not all have five talents, or even two talents or opportunities for doing good, being poor in this world's goods, or isolated, or feeble in body, but when the opportunity of doing a kindness arrives, break your alabaster box and pour your precious ointment, fearing nothing, knowing that "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." So then, beloved, whenever this gospel (power of God unto salvation) is preached, this accompaniment (faithful, loving service) must be preached for a memorial of her; and I do not want my brethren to get their minds so fixed on the purposes and predestination of God, or time salvation, as to forget it; and if they do not want to keep in mind a memorial of a nameless woman, let them think of her antitype and we have a name: "And this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord Our Righteousness."

Dear brother Chick, I have written this for the household of faith, and especially did I have in mind a dear cousin, and beloved sister in Christ.

I was well pleased with your article on "Associations," in February 1st SIGNS. May the dear Master enable you to long continue to set forth the truth, as I feel he has hitherto, in an able and humble manner.

Do with this letter as it seems good to you, and all will be right with me.

Yours to serve in the fellowship of the gospel,

W. J. HESS.

LIBERTY, Ind., Feb. 12, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—I inclose a short letter from sister Rose Sherwood for publication in the SIGNS, if it meets your approval. I have been handing her and her aged and afflicted mother copies of the SIGNS, with which they are much pleased and comforted. Sister Sherwood desires to express her own feelings, and their appreciation of the SIGNS. Her

letter comforts our hearts, and we trust that it may comfort others.

I often think that I will write something for the SIGNS, but do not get it done.

Your brother in hope,

W. N. THARP.

BROOKVILLE, Ind., Feb. 1, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER THARP:—I am a wonder to myself; but recently I felt I never would take up my pen to write anything of a spiritual nature, or address any of God's dear people again. I realize so much my imperfections, and feel more like consigning my feeble efforts to the flames, than sending them to any one, so if there be any comfort or consolation in them to you, to his name be all the glory. "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord;" and again, "No flesh should glory in his presence." For some time I have been in the valley of humiliation, ready to give up in despair, with not one ray of light, not one promise can I apply to myself, nothing but sin and darkness seem to reign, and as the psalmist would say, "By terrible things in righteousness" we are made to realize in our own souls our nothingness and unworthiness, that he may be all in all to us. We know nothing spiritually only as we are taught of God, and I sometimes think we learn more in the valley, and when he seemingly forsakes us, than on the mountain top. It seems to me I see more clearly than ever before that God has a purpose in all things, even in our cruel and hateful sins, which we hate and deplore, for they humble us and keep us from becoming exalted and puffed up, as we would if we could live as we desire.

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES is full of comfort to us, with the sweet experiences and deep doctrinal truths, and often have the dear writers given us a cup of cold water in his name.

You spoke in your letter of being so discouraged, but also beautifully wrote of Elijah when he thought he was forsaken and left alone, and how the Lord showed him differently. Dear brother, it seems characteristic of all God's true servants that they are often grieved and cast down and ready to give up in despair. So it was with Elisha, Elijah, Jeremiah and the apostles, and so it is down to this day.

But I forbear, lest I weary you, and add "words without knowledge." If you cast this aside it will be all right.

Your unworthy sister,

ROSE SHERWOOD.

EAST DIXFIELD, Maine, Dec. 30, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your good and comforting letter of the 15th arrived in due time, and was thankfully received, notwithstanding my delay in replying. It is not that I am unmindful of your kindness, and the goodness of God in that he oftttimes gives the good word of consolation to the lonely, and a cup of cold water to the thirsty one. I feel that I have here no continuing city, and desire that I may be found pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. We read, "When the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem." It is often in my mind, that on so many occasions he gave testimony that he knew all things, and needed not to be told, and ofttimes has it been to me an unspeakable joy that it is so. He knoweth our feeble frame, he knoweth that we are dust. In all our afflictions he was afflicted, and he knoweth how to deliver.

"Praise to God, immortal praise,
For the love that crowns our days;
Bounteous source of every joy,
Let thy praise our songs employ."

How can a frail mortal approach to God, claiming merit for his own good works? We are commanded to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. It is indeed ofttimes with fear and trembling that we take the holy name of God upon our lips, looking alone to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, and only in the robe of his righteousness can we find acceptance. "Though cast down, not destroyed; persecuted, but not forsaken." "O to be nothing, only to lie at his feet," says the poet.

Jan. 2nd, 1907.—You will see by this date that some days have elapsed since I began this letter. The best excuse I can offer is a wretched, barren mind, and yet the greatest joy of my life is the hope that I am embraced in the everlasting covenant, that Jesus Christ should come into the world to save sinners, of whom, as says Paul, I am chief. Believing, we rejoice, and wait until the storm ends. "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." The rain comes from the clouds, and the dew in the nighttime, while the sun is not shining, and I have the hope that the time of the singing of birds and the springing up of the green grass may come even to me. I want to be found waiting, and to ascribe greatness to our God. "He is the Rock, his work is perfect."

My health is as good as usual; I am stronger than during the summer, and we are having a good winter as yet, some quite cold days, but not blustering, and light storms.

I saw Mr. Fuller on Monday; he is well, and wishes to be remembered to you, and says if you feel to, he desires you to pray for him.

The thought came into my mind that the whole body of Christ is compact together, if one member suffers the others are thereby impaired, and I have a wish that I may be presented at the throne of grace, for Christ's dear sake, who died to redeem us to God. Mr. Fuller brought me the "Feast of Fat Things" to read, and promised me the reading of dear Elder Bartley's last work. I think I fully understand the "riddle" in the little book; also the others are all fruitful writings. I feel under obligation to you for your kindly remembrance of me, and desire that you may find in the companionship of the dear brethren and sisters comfort and strength, and that love and peace may abound. Please give my regards to sister Chick and the children, and accept the same yourself.

From a sister in hope,

ELIZA WHEELWRIGHT.

NORTH YAKIMA, Washington.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Will you announce through the SIGNS the death of Elder W. W. Polk, of San Francisco, which occurred on the evening of Thanksgiving day? We have just learned the particulars in a letter from his daughter, from which I copy: "My father went for a short visit to Los Angeles and vicinity, and was to meet me the day before Thanksgiving at my brother's house, in San Meto. Coming up from Los Angeles he caught cold on the train, which developed into pneumonia and attacked his heart, and he died the next evening at about nine o'clock. His last words were, 'Christ, come take me.' He enjoyed his visit to Los Angeles very much, and

spoke a great deal about it to me that last day. I do not have to tell you what a good and lovely character my father had, and what a shock his death was to me and to my brothers. He is buried in the Oakland cemetery, next to my dear mother, who died last June, and without whom my father was very lonely and inconsolable." While at Riverside, California, our brother wrote to brother J. L. Chamberlain of this place, to whom he was warmly attached, of the dear brethren and sisters he had met there, and of the enjoyable meetings they had, saying from there he expected to go to Los Angeles, and if he liked the Baptists there as well as those at Riverside he would remain in southern California until spring. This, we heard later, he expected to do after visiting his children; but his summons came first. As he will be remembered by many in the bounds of the Siloam Association, of Oregon, I would like to add an extract from the last letter he wrote my husband in September: "I somehow think of you in Siloam Association as true brethren and sisters. Surely you are children of my heavenly Father, struggling in tribulation, fighting the world, the flesh and the devil. My hardest fights are with the flesh; 'when I would do good, evil is present with me.' I remember when you paid me that very short visit, you asked me how I was spiritually. It made me feel unworthy to hold my head up. I was not sure, neither am I now sure, that I have any knowledge of spiritual things. I think I love the brethren, and then I think if I loved them I would leave all and live among them, so they could watch over me and reprove me, rebuke me, admonish me and keep me in the path of christian duty. I am getting old and cannot work like I did when you saw me, and am of no account any more, if I ever was. Surely I am but a dead dog, not fit to sit at the King's table, so I get all I deserve. But I have my daughter left, and she loves me; yet I am hungry, not for bread, but for the word of God. With love to all, I am your unworthy brother."

May the dear Lord comfort and sustain the lonely children twice bereaved.

SONORA A. HESS.

[WE desire to express our regret at the news of the death of Elder Polk. It had been our privilege to have a somewhat regular correspondence with him for several years, and we always found his letters interesting, kindly and spiritual. We never met him personally, and feel sorry that it was not our privilege to do so. The occasional letters from him which were published in the SIGNS we know were received and enjoyed by many of our readers. We believe him to have been a true servant of God, and doubt not that he is at rest from all care and sorrow, with the blessed Redeemer whom he loved and served.—C.]

LOCKPORT, N. Y., Feb. 19, 1907.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—The SIGNS has come all right, and I am as well pleased as a young goslin is when restored to the flock. To be alone while surrounded by a multitude is a desolate feeling that can only be relieved by being restored to usual conditions. The SIGNS has been a source of comfort to me for seventy years without an intermission, except when absent from home, and when, on a few occasions, I have had the exquisite pleasure of being among a people who could sympathize with me in the glorious doctrine of God's sovereignty in the salvation of his people, and in the disposition of the affairs of men and devils to

the honor of his great name. It seems to have been my lot to live aloof from the society of those with whom I could affiliate in doctrine and in practice, and to be deprived of their encouraging fellowship and needed advice, as those have who have access to each other's companionship. The Bible, however, and next the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, have been my comfort and assurance in all my seasons of doubt and uncertainty. That I am alone, among the enemies of what I believe to be God's truth, is not an exceptional case, for frequent cases of the kind are brought to my notice in the SIGNS, and there I find many stating the same exercises of mind that I have passed through; all this, and more, too, have tended to confirm me in the belief that God rules in the army of heaven and among the children of men; so when I have a fit of doubt and despondency I call to mind the certainty that "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Then why should I falter or be discouraged? I have every reason to bless God for the comforts I enjoy, for they flow from his hand in bountiful abundance, and his blessings are new every morning. How fully and how constantly did the psalmist praise God for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men. So let us enjoy our dependence upon God for every blessing, and follow the example of those who magnify his great name.

I am admonished that this may be the last time I shall have opportunity to express my love and attachment to the chosen people of God through the SIGNS, for without God's preserving care over me I shall soon go hence, to be here no more forever, for at ninety I have little promise of an extension of life.

In submission to the will of God, and with christian love to his children, I bid them all adieu for the present.

P. WEST.

ASHLAND, Ill., Dec. 31, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST:—Almost a year has passed since last I wrote you, trying to tell how much comfort and pleasure the dear, old SIGNS is to me; as each year goes by it seems to grow dearer. Often my mind will be on some part of the Scripture, and to me it will be darkness, and while longing for God's dear presence to show me the beauties that are in the word, God in his mercy has put in some dear brother's heart to write on that very Scripture, and when my dear, old SIGNS comes and I open its pages, there I find God has blessed me with just what I longed to know; words fail to express the sweet comfort it gives me. Do you wonder when I tell you that as time goes on the SIGNS grows dearer? Doubts and fears are often with me; when I would do good, evil is present with me; the things that I would do I find I do not. I feel so unworthy at times it seems there are none like me, yet when I read the SIGNS do I not find those very words written by our dear, gifted brethren? O dear brethren, how near and dear you are to me; my heart goes out to each and every one in christian love. I know the editors have many cares, but God in his mercy has given them patience and love, and blessed them with the gift to teach and explain his word that distils as the dew, and like the rain upon the tender plants, so are their words to the poor of his flock. Write on, dear brethren and sisters, often. You feel that what you write cannot comfort God's children; but though we are in our far distant homes

we are cheered and comforted, and after reading your precious words it seems that we had been to meeting and felt to say, It was good to be there. O for all these blessings can we not say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him"?

Your little sister, who feels to be the least of all,

ELLA M. PARROTT.

LAURELVILLE, Ohio, Dec. 27, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—To-day while renewing my subscription to our family paper I resolved to send you a few lines of appreciation. While many of the flock much more useful, and I am confident, much nearer to God, have been called from the field of action to their heavenly home, I am permitted to remain in these low grounds of sorrow to battle with the common enemy of all the flock, and if not altogether dead I feel that he has well-nigh killed me. A few months ago, a dear sister in conversation with me about the SIGNS, said, "I miss the name of one correspondent who occasionally wrote in past years." I said, "Perhaps he is dead." She said, "No, he is not dead." I replied, "There are more ways than one of being dead." In past years I enjoyed spirituality much more, but it seems that pride of life and the deceitfulness of riches (worldly matters) have entered in and choked the word, that in me it has become unprofitable. I often think of a remark dear, old Elder Tusing made years before his death: "Some christians are like a wasp—bigger when first hatched." I have thought much lately that this fitted me exactly. While I was never large, I grow smaller every day; I am nothing, yea, less than nothing. I appreciate (in my cold, indifferent way) the many excellent letters and editorials in the SIGNS, and while I seem to have lost my ability to taste, I know that the spiritual food spread on the table is pure.

If any of the dear kindred feel like writing to the least subscriber, I shall appreciate it highly. Pray for your brother,

GEORGE W. HARTSOUGH.

DELPHI FALLS, N. Y., Dec. 30, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS, AND ALL TRUE OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS:—I feel encouraged to again write you, for the Lord in his mercy has enabled me to send a postal order for two dollars for the much beloved SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I feel when I receive it that I will have a good, rich feast of sound doctrine, without the will of the creature mixed with it. I think all the will-workers should join the company called The Willing Workers, and not be hanging on to the Old Baptists. I am thankful to the God of all our blessings that we are not troubled with such foolish things in the dear, old SIGNS. It has had years of trials and conflicts, but the Lord has delivered it out of them all thus far. If I had to pay twice as much for it I would try and take it just the same; it is above money value to me. When Elder D. M. Vail was here last November, I told him it was the SIGNS first and him afterwards; he answered, Be sure and take the SIGNS, and not bother about me; but the Lord has use for both the SIGNS and Elder Vail; all praise to His holy name. Elder Vail is very dear to me, he is prompt to admonish and rebuke, and to uphold the feeble hands, as the case may be, as also are you, dear editors of the SIGNS, and you have my sincere love and fellowship in the same. If you see anything in this letter that is wrong you will do me a great favor to admonish me. May the God of all our blessings be with you and

the dear ones who write for and take the SIGNS, and may his Holy Spirit rule and reign over us, that we may be enabled to live to his honor and glory day by day, and to the good and comfort of one another, is my earnest prayer.

With love and fellowship in the sufferings and joys of the afflicted and poor people, I am, as ever, a poor sinner,

J. E. TAPNER.

BLACKLICK, Ohio, Feb. 19, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—Thus far God's power has prolonged my days, but why my poor life is spared I know not. O that the good Lord would open my understanding to know the Scriptures, and give me a mind to remember, and grace that I might serve him the few days he has allotted me here in this world of sin, for without him I can do nothing. There is nothing here that I can see as an inducement for me to remain longer.

"Weary of wandering round and round
This vale of sin and gloom,
I long to leave the unhallowed ground,
And dwell with Christ at home."

If I only knew what the will of the Lord is, and what he would have me to do, that I might serve him with reverence and godly fear my few remaining days. When I think of the many dangers, trials and afflictions I have been brought through, and yet how good the dear Lord has been to me, I feel that surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life. What shall I render to the blessed Savior for all the blessings bestowed upon me ever since I had being, a poor, unworthy worm of the dust? O that I could praise his name that it is as well with me as it is. While I am afflicted and nervous, my health is better than for some time, and I can ride in the cars or carriage without pain.

With best wishes and love to all the brethren, yours as ever,

L. B. HANOVER.

FRANK, W. Va.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—With regret I must request you to stop my paper, as I am unable to pay for the same now. I would be glad to continue my subscription for two reasons, viz.: first, I love to read and preserve for my children each number of every volume of the dear, old SIGNS; second, because I would like to contribute my little mite each year to the financial welfare of the SIGNS; however, I can have the privilege of reading my father's paper, he lives only a few hundred yards from me.

In closing, I wish the paper great success in the future, and may God's richest blessings rest upon the editors, publishers and contributors to its columns; may they continue in the future as in the past to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

The little church here, while but few in number, is in peace, believing in the absolute predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass, and eternal and unconditional salvation of the elect of God for time and eternity.

Yours in gospel bonds,

G. B. BIRD.

EGAN, Texas, Feb. 23, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I wish to inquire through your paper if there are any Baptists in Texas or in any State west of Texas who expect to attend the Jamestown Exposition and the eastern associations. I wish to go east, provided I can get company, and want to take advantage of the Exposition rates. Would be glad to hear from any one who contemplates going to the associations.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) LYDIA C. RAY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1907.

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EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Will you please give your view through the SIGNS upon the words recorded in Colossians i. 23, 24? Was it every new creature who was quickened by the Holy Spirit, and born again under the old covenant, or legal dispensation, or heaven, to whom Paul has reference? Jesus said, To the lost sheep of Israel am I sent, and the other sheep among the Gentiles must I bring also. I am glad that Jesus is the builder of his church, and that the work of bringing every vessel of mercy is not left in the hands of puny, sinful man.

Yours, I trust, in a good hope through grace,
WM. F. SLOAN.

CLAY VILLAGE, Ky., Nov. 7, 1906.

The one thing to which brother Sloan calls special attention in the text named is the preaching of the gospel to every creature under heaven. First, we will say that some other Scriptures seem to teach the same things that are taught in this text. We will quote them: "But I say, Have they not heard? Yea, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."—Rom. x. 18. "Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth."—Col. i. 6. In these Scriptures is declared the fulfillment of the words of the Savior when he said to the disciples, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." It seems to us that the text proposed by brother Sloan relates purely to that which had been fulfilled since the gospel dispensation was ushered in; and also the language, "which is under heaven," is only another form of saying, "in all the world." As the commission given by the Savior to the disciples to preach the gospel to every creature simply meant that now it should be preached to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews, so these texts quoted from Romans and from Colossians simply declare that the gospel had been thus preached to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews.

The words "every creature" must find a limit, as all such words must, somewhere. They manifestly could not mean literally every creature, if every creature could be understood as taking in all the creatures, beasts, birds, fish and reptiles that the Lord has made to occupy the earth. This interpretation would be absurd upon the face of it. No one ever sought to give the words "every creature" that wideness of meaning; and neither do they, nor could they, mean that every human being under heaven had then heard the word of the gospel. As a simple fact, the people in vast sections of the earth had not then heard the gospel, and neither have they in all these past nineteen hundred years. "Every creature" does not then mean this last thing.

The gospel had been preached among many Gentiles of all nations known to the world governed by Rome then, as well as to many Jews. We have not been able to understand either of the Scriptures which we have quoted, including the one named by our brother, in any other sense than this, viz., that they declare that Gentiles had heard the gospel, and many among them had believed, as well as among the Jews. The church at Colosse itself was made up mainly of Gen-

tile believers; this of itself gave peculiar force to these words of the apostle. Paul was especially the minister of the Gentiles, declaring the putting away of all legal forms and ceremonies, and of the middle wall of partition that had under the law divided Jews from Gentiles; both had become one in Christ Jesus. The covenant of the law spoke to Israel literally only, but the word of the gospel speaks to the true Israel; that is, to all who have the faith of Abraham, Gentiles as well as Jews. Millions of mankind to-day have never even heard the name of Jesus, or of the gospel, and this and other Scriptures must not be understood in any sense which would contradict these facts. Still further, it is very seldom indeed that "every creature" "all men" "the whole world" ever mean more than the fact that the Gentiles are to share in these things as well as the Jews.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—If it would not be asking too great a favor, would you please give your view through the SIGNS upon the following texts: Genesis vi. 6, and Matthew xxiii. 37? and greatly oblige a reader, MRS. CAMPBELL.

POPLAR HILL, Ontario.

The first text to which our attention is called by our friend reads as follows: "And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart." In addition to this Scripture it is said some twenty times in the Old Testament, that it repented the Lord, or that the Lord repented. Sometimes it is said that he repented of the evil which he had caused to come upon the people, and sometimes it is said that he repented of the good which he had bestowed upon them. Then again, some half dozen times it is expressly said by him and of him, that he will not and does not repent, as do the children of men. Besides, it is said, "He is in one mind;" "I am the Lord, I change not;" he is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." There has often been perplexity in the minds of humble, God-fearing men and women as to what these seemingly contradictory Scriptures can signify. How can the unchangeable God be said to repent of anything that he has done? The children of God, who reverence his word and who fully believe that the Bible is the revealed word of God, who cannot lie, cannot admit for a moment that there can be any real contradiction in the revealed word; this one thing is settled in their minds. In 1 Samuel xv. 11, we read the Lord said, "It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king." Then in verse twenty-nine we read, "And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent." The inspired writer evidently saw no contradiction in these two sayings. But still the question remains, What and where is the harmony in these two seemingly opposite expressions? While the matter has long seemed clear in our mind, yet even were it not so, we should not believe for a moment that there was any real contradiction in these two expressions, but only that we ourself did not have sufficient understanding to see the real harmony in them; it would be our ignorance, and not any difference in the word of God. Still the question remains, In what sense is it said so often that it repented the Lord, or that the Lord repented? In the text named by our friend it seems clear to us that it is not meant that God changed, for he cannot change, but by language suited to our nature and experience he is described as about to alter his visible procedure toward mankind, from being merciful and long-suffering to showing himself a God of judgment. As the

impious race had filled up the measure of their iniquities, he was about to introduce a terrible display of his justice. Thus there was no real change in the mind and will of God, but only in the visible dealing of God with mankind then; and the same rule will apply to all the places in which repentance is spoken of with reference to the dealings of God with men.

In this second text spoken of by our friend we have recorded the language of the dear Savior as he mourned over Jerusalem, just before they had filled up the measure of their wickedness in his betrayal and crucifixion. Jesus came into the world born of a Jewish mother, and he was thus by nationality a Jew. He had the same feelings in all the relations of life as did any man; he loved his own people as other men love their own nation. In addition to this, they were the chosen people of God typically, under the former covenant. All this we need not say more about, for all readers of the Bible know it to be true. In the anguish of his mind, regarding the holy city, as he stood gazing upon it, he breaks out in the language of the text, saying, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."

It has seemed clear to our mind for a long time that when the Master said, "How often would I have gathered thy children together," he referred to all the dealings of God with that people in all the ages past, when with warning, and reproof, and rebuke, and entreaty by the mouths and pens of prophets, and wise men, and scribes, he sought the good of Israel; but in all these past generations they had proved to be a stubborn and rebellious people. All this is also set forth in the parable of the king's son. The lord of the vineyard had sent servants to receive that which was his due, and these they had abused and sent away. Lastly he said, "They will reverence my son," and so he sent his son, and him they took and slew. The lord said, I will destroy these wicked servants. This parable sets forth the same truth that is declared in the text referred to by our friend. The blessed Savior refers not to the effectual call of the gospel unto grace and salvation, but to the national dealings of God with them under the old covenant, and now in his own public ministry among them. To all these warnings and rebukes and providential judgments they had given no heed, but the measure of their iniquity was now filled, and the blessings of that covenant were about to be taken from them; their house should be left desolate; and very soon this was literally fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem under the Roman general, Titus, when the people were scattered and the holy place was defiled, and the temple and city was razed to the ground, never to be rebuilt again. The text named has not the slightest reference to any gospel ministry or preaching, but solely to the dealings of God with that people nationally under the former covenant.

The thought in the comparision of gathering chickens under the wings of the hen is that of protection, shelter, tenderness, safety and all the blessedness connected with these things. So as the hen cares for her chickens the Lord said that he would have cared for Jerusalem and Israel, but they had no heart to obey, love or serve him, and thought not of all his

care or his mercies. They had preferred, all their history along, their own ways to his ways. Chickens give heed to the mother, and love the shelter of her wings, but that people had given no attention to him, and cared not for all his loving-kindness toward them, and now upon that generation should come all the righteous blood that had been shed by them in all the past generations. Indeed and in truth that national house should be left desolate.

BROTHER J. W. Shelbourne, of Taylorsville, Ky., some time since, asked the question, whether Israel under the old covenant was a type of the people of God now under the gospel covenant. In connection our brother said that two New School Baptist ministers, with whom he was talking some time ago, said it was not so taught at the college where they graduated. Our brother said it appeared to him that they were depending upon what men had taught them, rather than upon the teaching of the Holy Spirit. In this, undoubtedly our brother is right, and we are sorry to say that this same is true of the vast multitude of theological students. Indeed, from what we have been able to gather concerning the matter, our conclusion is that theological seminaries turn out more skeptics and infidels, by far, than they do men versed in the Scriptures. A man can hardly go through the course of study, and reading, and lectures, prescribed in these schools, without becoming skeptical, and losing the most of that reverence for the Bible that might have been in him when he entered these schools. Almost every sort of human learning and human thought is taught there, but emphatically, reverence for the Bible is not taught there. The last thing that is likely to be heard of in all these schools is the plain, simple doctrine of the word. The fact that these two preachers could say that it was never taught them in the schools where they were educated for the ministry that Israel of old was a type of the true spiritual Israel, is full proof that in the seminary which they had attended, at least, the Bible was not taught, nor its teachings enforced. It is a simple fact that much of the Bible is without meaning unless the relation of Israel as a typical people is remembered and understood, and the truth is that the types of the Old Testament declare the doctrine of election, of special atonement, of effectual calling, and of what we call final perseverance, too plainly to suit modern self-esteem and pride. These things are too soul-humbling to ever suit any save the humble sinners who have come to know their poverty and their need of a finished salvation in Christ. What jars upon the vain self-esteem of men they are not forward to teach. Theological seminaries are hotbeds of human vanity and pride, God is put out of sight, and creature power and works are exalted. The great things we must do for the Lord, and not the great things that the Lord must do for us, are the very basis and reason for all such schools.

Surely we do not need to urge any further the fact that Israel was a type of the true spiritual Israel who is saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. This truth we have never heard denied by any one, and these two preachers of whom our brother speaks did not deny it, but only professed entire ignorance in the matter, saying that it had not been taught them at the school from which they went forth to preach. He that is taught of the Lord will preach what the Lord has taught him, while he that is taught of man will preach what man has taught him. It could not be expected to be otherwise. C.

2 JOHN 10.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I would like to have your views on 2 John 10, which reads as follows: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." Now in regard to the house, what kind of a house do you understand this to mean? Please reply to this through the SIGNS, if not asking amiss.

From an unworthy brother, if one at all,
EDWIN NEWTON.

ASHVILLE, Ohio, Feb. 5, 1907.

We would be glad to reply satisfactorily to brother Newton, and shall do the best we can in that direction. Most of us, however, have ideas of our own concerning this or that Scripture, which we are not willing to lay down because some one differs with us. We admire a man who has a mind of his own, and stamina enough to stand by his convictions until thoroughly convinced he is wrong, then the principle of a man cannot be more fully demonstrated than for him to acknowledge his error. Many good and faithful brethren differ upon this text, and while we shall endeavor to give our view, it will not be to force it upon others, but for the consideration of brother Newton and others who may so desire.

"If there come any unto you." The pronoun "you" is the first point to consider. The apostle addresses the "elect lady and her children," whom we understand to have been the Jewish gospel church at Jerusalem; "her children" were those who composed that body or church. The "elect sister" was the church at Ephesus, where John is supposed to have been when this epistle was written. Every church of Jesus Christ is an elect lady in this sense, as each church is an independent organization to transact business and attend to the ordinances of the house of God. But in the sense of unity with Christ all independent bodies or churches are one, composing the bride, the Lamb's wife.

After the address the apostle assures her and her children of his love for them in the truth, and not his love only, but the love of all who have "known the truth." It was for the truth's sake that that love then existed, and as this is true of all churches of our faith and order, may we not hope that we are close kin to the elect lady and her elect sister? John presents love in verse three as the foundation of the doctrine and of the church; whatever the special points or principles may be, all are embodied in the word "love." Verse five speaks of the commandment which was given from the beginning (of the gospel), that we love one another. In verse six this love and the commandment are described thus: "And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it," love. Verse seven tells why we should be careful to walk in love and thus keep the commandment: "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist," because he denies the doctrine of love in the words of Jesus, found in John iii. 16: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Love is here presented as the foundation of salvation, but if Jesus "is" not come in the flesh, God has not as yet manifested his love to men, because it must be in the unspeakable gift of his Son that his love is made known. But Christ "is" come in the flesh, this is the record: "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

John was very particular to describe the doctrine of antichrist as well as the true

doctrine, to the end that the elect lady and her children be not deceived by false teachers, seducing spirits that know not God nor the power and blessedness of love. To deny Christ in any sense of the word is to set at naught the promise of God to Adam, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and to do away with the hope of salvation. John spoke with full assurance, out of a full heart, in his first epistle, chapter five, verse twenty, when he said, "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true: and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." This is "the doctrine of Christ" mentioned in our text; anything short of this is antichrist:

In verse eight carefulness on the part of the elect lady and her children is exhorted, and also the blessedness of obedience in the truth is presented; he calls it "a full reward," not in heaven, but in the church; steadfastness in the doctrine of Christ means quietness and assurance forever.

Verse nine tells us the consequence of transgression in departing from the truth; in such case we have not God, that is, we have not his approval; but if we abide in the doctrine of Christ we have both the Father and the Son.

Verse ten, the text, presents the likelihood of false teachers visiting the elect lady and her children. They may appear as, and claim to be servants of God; they may make fair speeches and ask that they may read the Bible and pray for the elect lady and her children; they may sing hymns and give thanks, but if they bring not the doctrine of Christ, receive them "not into your house." When Jesus sent his disciples out to preach he commanded them that when they entered a house and there found the Son of peace, they should bless that house and abide there; if the Son of peace were not there they should not bless nor abide in that house. In this instance we understand dwelling-houses to be meant. Wisdom at that time was given the disciples to judge where and what the Spirit of Christ was. In our text the lady and her children are presented as having the wisdom to judge whether or not the Spirit of Christ was in those who came unto them.

Church-houses in that day were not numerous, but a church was in many dwelling-houses, the saints often dwelling together. In Acts v. 42, we find the temple at Jerusalem spoken of as a place where Christ was preached; also it is there stated that "in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." We understand by the latter, dwelling-houses where saints resided.

In Col. iv. 15, we have the following: "Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house." In Philemon, verse two, we read: "To our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house." These references are sufficient to establish the fact that the word "house" in our text does not necessarily mean a church-house; there is no virtue in wood, stone and mortar. The house of God means men and women redeemed from death and brought into the saving knowledge of God's grace, therefore where two or three or more are gathered together in his name, there is a house of worship, a house of prayer. That church, wherever it may be, shall not receive any who preach not Christ Jesus the Lord. If it be in our dwelling-house we must beware of wolves that come unto us in sheep's clothing; we must not entertain them in

the name of the Lord—must not listen to them speak contrary to the doctrine which we have received. If we have a church-house we must not allow them to preach in it antichrist. But more particularly the house into which we are not to receive them, is into our number as one of us; if we in this or in any other way encourage them we bid them God speed, and are therefore partakers of their evil deeds. In this day, when false teachers are abroad in the land, it becomes us all to be careful of the admonition of the apostle, lest we should be ensnared and fall from our own steadfastness in the truth. We must not allow our pity and sympathy for those who have sorrowful stories to relate, to overcome our better judgment, but let us ever beware of those who cause divisions, and avoid them. God's mercies come to poor sinners because of his love to them, not because of their works. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." We cannot avoid it; therefore whoever suggests that we can by conforming to certain ideas and notions, is a false teacher and an antichrist. Christ suffered in the flesh for us, and we are to arm ourselves with the same mind: to suffer for him.

"Why should I complain of want or distress,
Temptation or pain? He told me no less;
The heirs of salvation, I know from his word,
Through much tribulation must follow their Lord."

We now leave the subject, hoping our effort may not be entirely in vain. K.

BEGINNING with number one, present volume, we have omitted dates of articles. This was done for convenience, as the length of communications, whether long or short, often determines when they shall be published, rather than dates. Space must be filled, and whatever manuscript fits the space is used. As the omission of dates is not entirely satisfactory to some of our writers, and as we wish to avoid dissatisfaction, dates again appear with this number. If articles are somewhat delayed, or do not appear strictly according to date, all our writers will understand from this notice why.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

BROTHER **Benjamin White** died at the residence of his son, Harvey J. White, near Poolesville, Md., Feb. 16th, 1907, of pneumonia, in the 82nd year of his age. He was sick about two weeks, and suffered much, but when the time of his departure came I am informed that he passed away as one going into a gentle sleep. He was a brother of Elder E. V. White, who preceded him to the grave one month and five days. "Brother Benny," as he was generally called by the church, was baptized in the fellowship of the New Valley Church, Loudoun Co., Va., Sept. 20th, 1880, and soon after, he was made deacon of the church, which office he filled not only in letter, but in deed, until the time of his death. The writer was baptized in the fellowship of the same church two months later, and though he was much my senior, he was a very dear brother and companion until his death. He was in all walks of life an example of pure christianity, which is to be so much desired by the followers of Christ. Although he would complain of not being able to live the life he wished to live, God had wrought a work in him that was manifest to all subjects of grace that met and talked with him, that he had been with Jesus. He was a firm believer in the work of grace in the heart, to make manifest the work which God alone can do. He leaves five children, two daughters and three sons: Mrs. Mary Claggett, of Brunswick, Md., who is a member of the same church, Mrs. Louise Ball, of Brunswick, Md., H. J. White, of Poolesville, Md., Benjamin White and Dr. Elijah White, of Baltimore, Md.; these, with the members of his own church and brethren of other churches, and many friends, are left to mourn, not his, but their loss, for with him it is gain.

The funeral took place from the home of his son, where he died, on Tuesday, Feb. 19th, 1907, Elder J. T. Rowe, of Baltimore, Md., officiating. He preached about the resurrection of the body from the dead, after which the body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Beallesville, Md., to await the resurrection, followed by a large number of relatives and friends.

May the God of all grace comfort and strengthen the bereaved, is the prayer of the unworthy writer,

T. S. TITUS.

LEESBURG, Va., March 5, 1907.

John Benstead, of Strathroy, Ontario, Canada, died at his home on Thursday, Feb. 7th, 1907, aged 68 years. He was born near Eley, Cambridgeshire, England, in 1839. In the year 1859 he was married to Mary Drakard, who survives him. Twelve children were born to them, six sons and six daughters; eleven of these are still living, one son dying in infancy in England. In 1884 he and his family came to Canada and settled near Kerwood, Middlesex Co., Ontario. About three years after this he moved further west, settling in the tenth concession of Brooke, Lambton Co., residing there for about eighteen years. From there he moved to the township of Metcalfe, near Strathroy, where he died. On Monday, Jan. 28th, he had a chill and was confined to his bed, and on Wednesday morning the doctor was called in, and found he was suffering from Bright's disease and pneumonia; he gradually grew weaker, until at last he passed away, after about ten days illness. He was conscious and cheerful to the end, and had a smile for every one. The eleven children were all at his bedside when he died. As he passed away he tried to tell us all about it, and the last words he was heard to say were, "The angels." The children who survive him are: Thomas, of Strathroy; Lydia, of Metcalfe; Sarah, of Enniskillen; John and Mary, of London; Ruth of Delaware; Hephzibah and Reuben, of Brooke; William, Mima and Charles Edward, at home. Our dear father was a firm believer in the sovereign power of God, and that salvation is of the Lord, and not according to the works of man; no other doctrine could satisfy him. Up to the last his faith in God was unwavering, and when he was suffering he longed to go home. His death was a glorious one, one that will ever be remembered by his lonely widow and children. We do not sorrow as those that have no hope, but rather rejoice in the hope of the resurrection of the dead. We rejoice to know that our dear father and husband is liberated from that body of flesh and sin, and we have a hope that he is now singing the song of the redeemed, and has met the loved ones that have gone before. Father was baptized at Lobo, in October, 1904, by Elder Carnell.

Elder Carnell preached at the house from John xiv. 1–3, with much comfort to all that heard him. His remains were laid away in the Strathroy cemetery, near his home. Six grandsons acted as pall-bearers. May God comfort us at this time.

THE FAMILY.

Mrs. Olive A. Clark, daughter of the late Francis and Maria Chadbourne, of North Berwick, Maine, departed this life at her home in the village of North Berwick, Sept. 5th 1906, aged 74 years, 1 month and 25 days. Her death was from Bright's disease and heart failure. She was the wife of Eli Clark, and he writes us that they had lived together nearly fifty-one years, and she never gave him one unkind word in all those years. She leaves three children, one son and two daughters, to mourn the loss of a faithful, loving mother. The dear husband writes us as follows: "She was baptized by Elder Wm. Quint more than fifty years ago, and honored her profession by a well ordered life and godly conversation. The day before she died she had a heavenly vision as her daughter Myra and her husband stood by her side. She exclaimed, 'O how lovely, how lovely.' She said, 'This is heaven.' The next morning she passed away so easily that those sitting by her side did not notice when she went."

Beside the husband and children there remain one brother and one sister, seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Elder Keene conducted the services, and she was laid to rest in Mt. Pleasant Cemetery. The bereaved husband writes also: "I do not know of any words that would express my feeling better than the sparrow on some lonely building's top, where it sits and grieves alone. My dear companion is gone, and I am left alone; all that I had to live for is gone; I pass most of my time in the room where my wife and I have spent many pleasant hours together, and I cannot be content anywhere else. I am a lonely traveler here, and many times I have longed to be laid beside my dear one. In all her suffering I never heard her complain, or seem out of patience. I heard her say once, 'I wish that I could die,' but this was in a time of great suffering. She is gone, and I would not call her back. I have loving and devoted children, who would do for me all they can, but only God can heal the wound and bind up the broken heart; upon him I feel to cast my burden and be still, trusting in the promise that in his own good time he will drive away sorrow, and cause joy and gladness to shine forth where now all is gloom."

We can add a full indorsement to the above words by the bereaved companion. We knew her for many years. Once we spent several weeks boarding in this family, and have been glad to visit them ever since. Our sister was as devoted to the cause she loved as any one we ever knew, and when possible, she loved to visit the courts of the Lord's house, and was glad when it was said to her, "Let us go into the house of the Lord." We have lost a dear and tried friend. The family does not need to be assured of our sympathy with them. May God bless them all for his name's sake.

C.

DIED—In our house, near Forest Hill, Md., **Isaac Varnes,** in the 76th year of his age. The deceased was my brother-in-law, my wife's brother. Tuscarora, Pa., was his birthplace, and his remains were taken from here Feb. 23rd, 1907, and carried to his native place, old Tuscarora. I have known brother Varnes for at least fifty years, and it was my privilege to administer the ordinance of baptism to him

in the waters of Licking Creek, near his home, and in fellowship with the Tuscarora Church. He was twice married, and bereaved of both wives some years previous to his death. Being left companionless, he sold his home in Fulton County, Pa., with the intention of spending the remaining days of life with his people. His family consisted of two sons and two daughters. He was advised to discontinue trying to keep house longer. Brother Varnes was of rather a sorrowful spirit, generally gloomy-minded and sad, but sound in the faith of God's elect, a lover of good men and sound preaching, and remained a faithful member with the Old School Baptists until his days ended on earth, leaving the church and family, one brother and two sisters, out of a large family, to mourn, but not without hope, for the righteous hath hope in his death.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ rest upon those who remain.

WM. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md.

Mary Lillian Adams was the daughter of Geo. W. and Emma Davis, born May 15th, 1874, and married to J. O. Adams April 17th, 1890. To them were born seven children; her husband and six children still survive. She and her husband united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Harris Springs, Oct. 16th, 1897, where she remained a consistent member until death, which occurred Nov. 20th, 1906. She was buried the following day in the Adams' burying-ground.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder J. T. Jordan, assisted by Elder R. L. Cook, using hymn 1249 (Beebe's collection), and Romans v. 20, 21, as a text.

Gentleness, meekness and charity were in her life so blended that it compelled admiration and love from all who could appreciate those noble qualities. To deserve and to have, as she did, the confidence and love of others, are higher tributes than any characters of our painting. We knew her worth while she lived, but much more since her death, as we are made to realize that "Blessings brighten as they take their flight." D. J. ADAMS.

MANSFIELD, Ga., Feb. 26, 1907.

Mrs. Sarahette Jenkins, wife of Wm. Jenkins, of Trout Creek, Delaware Co., N. Y., died Feb. 25th, 1907. She was the daughter of Henry and Catherine Southard; was born in Schoharie Co., N. Y., April 23rd, 1833, married to Wm. Jenkins, in 1851, baptized by Elder Balas Bundy with three others June 7th, 1874, uniting with the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church at Otego, N. Y. Sister Jenkins was a faithful, loving sister, esteemed highly by all her brethren and sisters, sound in the faith of the gospe of the grace of God, an unassuming, peace-loving humble child of God. I have known her for twenty-five years or more, and have had many precious visits with her and her family. On spiritual matters, and for aught I know, we were perfectly agreed upon every point of doctrine. These things sister Jenkins loved to talk about, but she is at rest with her Savior, eternally happy. She leaves of her immediate family, her husband, one daughter, one sister, four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Her husband is a lover of the truth; the daughter, sister McLaughlin, is a member at Otego, her granddaughter, sister Mima Clark, also; the son-in-law and other granddaughter are lovers of spiritual conversation and gospel preaching. May God bless the sad, lonely husband and all of the mourning ones with his grace. A loving wife, mother and neighbor will be greatly missed.

The funeral was held in the New School Baptist meeting-house at Trout Creek, February 28th, the writer officiating. She was laid in the cemetery near the village. D. M. VAIL.

Truman England departed this life Wednesday, Jan. 30th, 1907. According to the best recollection of his parents, they having no record of his age, he was 38 years old the 24th day of October, 1906. He leaves a wife, one child, a daughter, together with a father and mother, two brothers and one sister, with a host of friends and neighbors, to mourn their loss, nevertheless our loss is his eternal gain. The writer, having been a near neighbor to the deceased, had occasion to talk with him often with comfort. While he was not a member of the Old Baptist Church, he seemed to be a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and though he had no learning, could not even read or write, was diligently inquiring after the truth as it is taught by Christ. His kindness to me will never be forgotten. I loved him dearly as a friend and neighbor; I loved to have him come to my house, he always came with a smile. He was a kind, thoughtful and helpful neighbor and friend, and fair and just in all his dealings. May the Lord comfort the bereaved in this time of great sorrow, which words cannot express.

Elder P. C. Harris sang a hymn and prayed at the house of the deceased.

NOAH W. HYMES.

KIRT, W. Va., Feb. 24, 1907.

Craig P. Thompson, youngest son of Elder W. A. and sister Nancy Thompson, of Wichita, Kansas, (who are members of Sandy Creek Church of Primitive Baptists, in Putnam Co., Ill.,) was born in Putnam Co., Ill., August 25th, 1871, and died Feb. 11th, 1907, aged 35 years, 5 months and 17 days. Craig was never married. He had pneumonia and enlargement of the heart, and although he was in the prime of life, three weeks of intense suffering and scorching

fever wasted his flesh and strength, and death claimed its victim. Surely in the midst of life we are in death. His was a short but useful and helpful life; his cheerful and genial disposition made for him many friends, who will miss him sadly, but most of all he will be missed in the home of his aged father and mother, brothers and sisters, who mourn their loss. We would say to them, Cast all your burden on the Lord, he careth for you, and may you be enabled to say, The Lord's will be done; and, The Lord gave and the Lord taketh, and blessed be the name of the Lord. He has taken away the sting of death, and robbed the grave of its victory. In his every day walk he manifested that he had been with Jesus; he was never known to use bad language or go in bad company; was always ready to go with his sisters to meeting and to lend a helping hand in any way for good. Though he never made an open profession, he had a blessed hope in Christ; so, dear ones, weep not as those without hope, for our loss is his eternal gain. An aged father and mother, three brothers and four sisters are left, as follows: G. B. Thompson, of Blackwell, Oklahoma, C. C. Thompson, of Cherryvale, Kansas, W. W. Thompson, of Tonica, Illinois, Mrs. Harriet M. Hartenhounerten, of Bloomington, Illinois, and Miss V. W. Thompson, of Wichita, Kansas, who were present at the funeral, and J. J. Thompson and Mrs. Elders, of Illinois, who were not present.

The funeral was conducted by Elder Thomas Veach, of Crescent, Oklahoma, after which the remains were laid to rest in the Wichita cemetery.

Ellen J. Tarr was born at North Yarmouth, Maine, Jan. 30th, 1830; was married to John W. Plummer, in 1851, who died in 1860. In 1866 she was married to Elisha Tarr, who died in 1894. I think it was at North Berwick, Maine, that she met Elders Fred. W. Keene and F. A. Chick, before removing with her daughter's family to Dakota, and later to this place, where she passed away Feb. 20th, 1907. She leaves two daughters, seven grandchildren, one great-grandchild and many friends, to mourn. While her sympathy and belief were with the Primitive Baptists, she never united with the church, but always seemed to enjoy the meetings when able to attend. Her beloved daughter, Mrs. A. M. Pratt, of North Yakima, Wash., where she ended her days, and her dear grandchildren, were very kind to her, doing all they could for her comfort.

The writer officiated at her funeral, trying to speak words of comfort and encouragement to the bereaved family and the many friends and neighbors assembled, from the text: "The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." W. J. HESS.

NORTH YAKIMA, Wash., Feb. 27, 1907.

CHURCH NOTICES.

THE Welch Tract and Wilmington churches having arranged to hold yearly meetings alternately hereafter, the Wilmington Church will postpone her meeting which heretofore has been held on the second Sunday in April, and Saturday preceding, until the third Sunday in October, and Saturday preceding.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER H. E. Purris has changed his address from Bloomville, to Attica, Ohio.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 75. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1907. NO. 7.

POETRY.

O THUS LET ME DIE.

When all things of earth fade away from my sight,
O Lord, in this eventide let there be light;
Let heaven's bright glory be seen by faith's eye,
Let me look on thy beauty, O thus let me die.

O to pillow my head on Jesus' dear breast,
In his arms fall asleep, by him laid to rest;
My soul then ascending with Jesus on high,
How blessed! how happy! O thus let me die.

O speak in that moment and tell me all's well,
I'm taking thee home in glory to dwell;
On thy bosom thus leaning I'll breathe my last sigh;
Smile, dear Jesus, on me, O thus let me die.

In that sacred hour let me muse upon heaven,
Let me know in that moment my sins are forgiven;
Once far off by sin, by thy blood I'm brought nigh,
In this precious faith in sweet peace let me die.

Sin, sin is death's sting, but through grace I can sing
That from sin, death and hell the Savior shall bring
His ransomed, with him they shall dwell in the sky;
In this hope of the gospel O thus let me die.

Yes, when death shall dissolve this frail house of clay,
And from time and from earth I speed me away,
With heaven's sweet melody waft me on high,
While salvation I'm singing, O thus let me die.

When death shall approach shall I tremble and fear?
If Jesus draw nigh I shall be of good cheer;
His presence shall make all death's shadows to fly;
In the light of his face O thus let me die.

Thus in my last moments on Jesus relying,
O blessed repose! the sweet bliss of dying!
O death, where's thy sting? I'll triumphantly cry,
Christ giveth the victory! O thus let me die.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

North Berwick, Maine.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Mt. Vernon, Texas, February, 1907.

Dear Brethren Editors Signs of the Times:—Having read and reread the article by brother McNees, and Elder Chick's remarks following, in the Signs for February 15th, I desire to add a few thoughts along the same line. I think so far as those who invented the phrase, "can't help it," as applied to Predestinarian, Grace Baptists are concerned, like all other mocking Ishmaelites, were wiser than they knew, in giving names to those who contend for the truth. In every sense that those who are charged with being "Cant help its," so are those who make the charge. I have never heard, or read after, one of our brethren who said that God's children could not obey him, when he gave them the spirit of obedience, when he works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. I have never been so unfortunate as to be associated with any brother, or brethren, who denied that God's children, through Christ, could do all things required of them. But I, and those with whom I have been associated, together with all Grace Baptists, as far as I know, have

and do deny that the Scriptures teach that God's children are given power in the spiritual birth to obey all the commandments, and do all the things that are required of them, and upon their obedience, which is left optional with them, is hinged their spiritual blessings in this life. This latter is what I understand is called "conditional time salvation," and the opposition to this theory no doubt is what gave rise to the stigmatizing term, "can't help it ism." While I do not accept it in the full sense and extent (as no doubt was) intended by those who brought it into use, yet I am willing to accept it just so far as it is true, and no farther. So far as I am concerned, the brother who pleads justification for the gratification of his fleshly lusts because he in belief is what is called "Can't help it," is about as hard to find as that noted character who plead justification before the church for getting drunk because it was so predestinated and he could not help it, and the church had to excuse him because she believed in the doctrine of predestination. As humiliating as it may be to us, we are all in many things "Can't help its." We were born into the world on a certain day of the month, in a certain year, and are the offspring of a sinful head, and so are all sinners, and who of us can help that? As a result of sin we are all just as sure to die at some future time, and who of us can help that? Jeremiah the prophet said, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." The psalmist said, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and he delighteth in his way." The Lord is the keeper of his people; they "are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." These are unalterable facts, and who of us can help it? The inability of man to comply with the demands of the law in no wise affects the justice of the law, nor does such inability to any extent render null and void his obligations. The law is spiritual, holy and just in its demands, but we are "carnal, sold under sin." Paul did not say, I was, but, "I am carnal," &c. In our fleshly relationship we are all as Paul was. Jesus taught his disciples that without him they could do nothing. Paul recognized this truth, and when he says, "I labored more abundantly than they all," he quickly adds, "yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." When he writes to the Philippian brethren, admonishing them to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," he follows it with, "for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." So the doing that God requires of his people, and the will to do, are strictly of him, and not of creatures. Until he works in us "to will and to do of his good pleasure," what can we do that would be acceptable in his sight? If he works in us "both to will and to do of his good pleasure," can we consistently suppose that there will not be a doing? A gentleman once said to me (he was contending for creature ability): "You know I could go over in the city this evening and drink and carouse if I wanted to." I replied, "There is one way you can convince me that you can: go right now and do that, and I will agree that your argument is correct." I was ready to admit that he could have done that if he had wanted to, but I knew him well enough to know that he could not want to. There are four things essential in the constitution of ability, with a creature: he must have physical and mental capacity, will-power and opportunity.

To illustrate: let a man be hungry, and let a table be spread before him with such eatables as he likes, and no prohibition known to him to forbid his eating, if he is physically and mentally capacitated, his condition and the surrounding circumstances immediately form the will, the opportunity is present, and he is sure to eat. If he did not, it would be because of the intervention of some circumstance or condition impairing his physical or mental capacity, or will. Surely man is a creature of circumstances. Conditions and circumstances govern his course in this life; an all-pervading, all-wise Providence rules over these.

Many things occur to my mind here that I would like to write, but for fear of being too lengthy I will mention only a few. Note the different temperaments of men; how seldom, if ever, we see two men just alike in disposition; a single occurrence in a crowd of one hundred men would hardly effect any two just alike; hence the difference in the doings or actions of men. I doubt not, if we could find two men just alike in their physical and mental make-up, and just alike in temperament, born into the world and reared up under exactly the same conditions, surrounded with identically the same circumstances at all times, and have just the same opportunities all their lives, but they would do just alike, and come out in the end just the same. The implantation of a higher order of life (spiritual), and that alone, can change the course of man from that dictated by natural conditions or environments. From this life or spirit which he now has as the gift of God through Jesus Christ, (Rom. vi. 23,) and is his life, (1 Cor. ii. 12,) just as his natural life is his as the gift of God through Adam, arises new and holy aspirations and desires; hence the daily conflicts in the bosom of every quickened sinner. The "old man" is by no means dead, but is evidently alive in his sphere, though continually in process of crucifixion, according to the admonition is continually being put off with his deeds. This being true with the christian he can say with Paul, "So then, with the mind [mind of Christ, see 1 Cor. ii. 16,] I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."—Romans vii. 25. The law, nature or inclination of the flesh is to sin. In our flesh we lust after and love the forbidden, and hate that which restrains or hinders, but in the spirit, or mind which we have of God, received by us in the spiritual or new birth, we love that which is holy and hate the evil; love the law of the Lord and hate sin in its every form. Were it not for the indwelling and restraining influence of this spirit, life or "new man," the flesh would do anything that it ever did; would indulge in its own sinful lusts as freely as circumstances would allow, for it loves these things. To my mind the Scriptures do not teach that we are killed to the love of sin, but in that new and holy relationship to God as his children we were never in love with sin. I do not wish to be misunderstood in any particular, so will add in this connection I understand that the sons and daughters of the earthy Adam are the subjects both of the first and the second birth, and are by virtue of the first birth children of the earthy Adam, and by virtue of the second, new, or spiritual birth, the manifest children of God, and are by the power of that eternal life, or Christ in them, according to God's predestination to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. (Rom. viii. 29.) Because of God's established order of things the quickened sinner can no longer live in sin, though at

times he may and does yield to the inclinations of his flesh and indulge in forbidden things, or uses creature blessings in an unlawful way, yet the result is death, and not life: "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace," says an apostle. "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received a knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Now this "certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation," certainly is a sore chastisement, and "no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Is not this the Lord's ordained way of correcting and disciplining his children, and weaning them from following after the lusts of the flesh, and does he not thus continually keep them by his power? The apostle Peter tells us that we are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." Then if we are "kept by the power of God through faith," we are not kept by our own power or ability through works, which we can do or let alone at our option.

Now I wish to examine the question of commands, admonitions, exhortations, &c., to God's children, then conclude. I maintain that there is not a written command to God's children in the Scriptures but must be also felt in the heart of the subject of address before it is an understood duty. In other words, it is known and received by faith, which faith is God's implantation in the heart; Jesus is its author and finisher. Jesus says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Surely this character is the quickened, conscious sinner, and how many of these long "labor and are heavy laden" before they have the most distant idea that they are the subjects addressed in the language of our Lord. "Some long repent, and late believe." The cry of many poor, burdened, heavy laden souls for a long time was, O that I could come, surely rest is not for such as I; but there is a time for all such, when something within says, Come. A still small voice is heard, "Come hither, soul, I am the way." O the sweet rest and peace Jesus gives; how could one stay away under such circumstances? Is it not now as impossible for him to stay away as it was before to come? With the rest Jesus gives, the love of God in his heart and the praises of God in his mouth, methinks it would be easier for the very stones to cry aloud than it would be for him to resist the command. There is power in the word of the King, and when he says, "Come," it is not merely an invitation, but a command, an irresistible command. When he says, "Come," there is sure to be a coming, a willing coming, and "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." The words, "Take my yoke upon you; and learn of me," are not merely an invitation, but must be heard and received within by the same faith. If we could take the yoke otherwise, it would only be sin, for it is written, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." It may be a long or short time before he in whose faith this command is received takes the yoke, but sooner or later he must take the yoke and learn of Jesus, else it could not be

true that "He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." He writes his laws in their hearts, puts them in their minds, and says, "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people," and when it comes to their unrighteousness, and their iniquities, provision is made for them also. He graciously says, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more;" so I conclude it is so with all the commands of the Lord to his people, they are sure and effective, and by his children never successfully resisted, nor rendered null and void. As the blessed Son of God in rendering full, perfect and complete obedience to the divine will, in suffering, dying and taking up his life which he had laid down, destroyed the works of the devil and forever delivered his people, so the work of the Holy Spirit in quickening, calling and teaching his children is just as perfect; "God is not mocked;" the work of the Spirit must be effective and irresistible. As every member of our body is set in its proper place, and each moves in its own ordained sphere, so in the body of Christ, God hath set the members in the body as it hath pleased him, and "unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." These verses from Ephesians iv. show that the members set in the body, whose duty it is to minister unto, edify, instruct, &c., are gifts from him who ascended up on high, and led captivity captive. What is the purpose of these gifts? Within the scope of these gifts comes, preaching the word, reproof and rebuke, exhortations, warnings, admonitions, &c.; these are all spiritual gifts in the church, and the members, God's children, are the subjects for whom these gifts are provided; they, and they alone, are the subjects of gospel address. "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." The preacher may preach, if he has the gift and the spirit, but he cannot give the hearing ear. The exhorter may exhort with feeling, but cannot give that condition of heart necessary to its profitable reception. The Lord must do the work at both ends of the line, so to speak. In every case it seems to me that it is as the apostle said, "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." A God-given ministry appeals in its operations, not to natural reasoning powers, but to a God-given faith, and there is a revelation from faith to faith. Exhortation, then, does not appeal to nor depend upon creature ability for its effectiveness. Paul's exhortation to the Ephesian brethren was preceded by the statement that he himself was the prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ. I "beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness," &c. When he exhorted the Philippians, he did not tell them, Now

you are able to do these things, and you can, and upon the doing depends your spiritual blessing in this life, but he said, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputings." This I take as an encouragement to them who already have a desire in their heart and mind to do these things, viz., to "work out," or by doing what the Lord has enjoined, make manifest the work which God hath wrought within. Truly did the prophet say, "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou hast wrought all our works in us." I might be asked: Do you believe then that God's children can be disobedient? Yes, but not to the extent that they can render noneffective the commands of God. God cannot be thwarted nor disappointed. Chastisements, too, are sure to follow disobedience, but even in this they are blessed with the evidence of sonship. See Hebrews xii. God's chastisements are "for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness." "Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought!" "The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." Therefore according to his word, who has the power to accomplish, and who is immutable, all things work together for their good.

Dear brethren, I almost feel to apologize for this lengthy letter, or throw it aside, but I will send it; do as you think best with it, and all will be right with me.

Your brother in bonds, I hope,

H. B. JONES.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 25, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send for publication in the SIGNS the last letter I received from our dear brother, Elder E. V. White. I feel that in his death the churches and brethren of our correspondence have sustained a great loss. We know that the Lord's time, and therefore the right time, had come for him to cease his warfare and go home, yet we can but mourn that he is no longer to be with us. He was a dearly loved and highly esteemed one of a company of ministering brethren who are very closely drawn together and united in the bonds of spiritual love and fellowship. The fathers in the ministry throughout all this region of country have fallen asleep. We remember with love and reverence such men of God as Elders Beebe, Trott, Barton, Hartwell, Hassell, Conklin, and many others of the tried and faithful and true servants of God, whom we knew in our youth as able ministers of the New Testament, who preached sound doctrine powerfully and sweetly, and taught true gospel order, being themselves examples to the flock in maintaining good works, and who, as reliable watchmen upon the walls of Zion, sounded the alarm at the approach of the enemy in all God's holy mountain, and they are to us, in our remembrance of them, as pillars in the temple of our God, going no more out. Now we, their children in a gospel sense, who were favored with their good teaching, have in our company the young, the middle-aged and some who are getting old. I want to say that we have great reason to be thankful to the God of all grace for the great measure of mutual love and confidence and brotherly kindness which exists among us. We certainly do love each other dearly, and value each other highly, and labor to-

gether in the gospel field most cordially, (which is a wonder, seeing that we all are worried and afflicted and apparently hampered with the evil and selfish propensities of a depraved nature,) and each of us is a sincere mourner when one of our number is taken away from our earthly society, though we are assured that the change is an unspeakably glorious one for him.

There is no one among us more dearly loved and honored than was our dear brother Elder White. He possessed some very rare qualities as a man, and they were strikingly manifest in the exercise of his spiritual gifts as a preacher and pastor. They were not manifest to himself, but to others. He certainly did rate himself very low as to his ability to preach, and thought that anybody who could preach at all could do it better than he; yet when God's word was felt as a fire in his bones, and the love of God filled his soul with a holy ardor, and his tongue was set at liberty, he had to acknowledge that it was a glorious joy to declare the unsearchable riches of Christ and proclaim salvation by rich and reigning grace. As a soldier on the field of battle naturally it was said of him, and he acknowledged, that he had no fear. As a soldier of the cross he certainly had no fear that would hinder him from telling anywhere and before any one what he believed to be the truth. The only fear he had then was the fear of the Lord, which made him feel when opposing error like Job's horse going on to meet the armed men, but which made him tender and gentle and apparently timid before the smallest and weakest one whom he esteemed as taught of God. He surely had a heart made tender in the fear of the Lord, that fear which "is to hate evil." This made him faithful and kind, and still kind when faithfulness required him to speak reprovingly. What he saw that was wrong in your words or acts he would tell you, if necessary, faithfully and gently, but you might be sure he would tell no one else unless gospel order required him to do so (which it seldom does). He firmly declined all solicitations to take any public office, no matter how profitable it might be, that would tend to interfere with his work in the ministry. I was with him once when one of the most prominent public men in the country said to him: "Colonel White, you can have anything you will ask for." That was nearly thirty years ago. For years he was urged by his neighbors and by men in Congress and in other public positions to be a candidate for Congress. There would have been no opposition. He told me his feeling on the subject; he felt that if he was in Congress he would owe his time and energy to the United States; but he could not give it that way, for as a preacher he was to give himself wholly to the work of the gospel. "But," he said, "I cannot explain this to them, for they do not understand it." He thought much of his friends and neighbors, and they certainly held him in most affectionate esteem. A few years ago one of the leading men in his county said to me: "It is not too much to say that Colonel White is the most popular man in Loudoun County," and one reason was, he was so absolutely truthful, and to any one who asked his opinion or advice he would tell plainly just what he thought. In many cases he became, on this account, a peacemaker. Differences among men would often be left to him to settle.

I would love to write many things he said to me in the early years of his ministry, when I was often with him. It

was such a comfort to me then, and is now in remembrance, to see him so simple and childlike, so honest and true and faithful in the things of God and of men, and so self-forgetful where the things of the kingdom of God were concerned. I cannot forget the sound of his voice when I first heard him in prayer. Naturally he had a voice that was very powerful when raised in excited argument, or in command (as they tell me) on the field of battle; but now it was so low and timid and reverent, so full of solemn tenderness and awe, that one would not have thought him the same man. I thought of a little child pleading.

I would love to go on and tell some more, but will not now. He was a very dear brother to us all.

Your brother in love and fellowship,

SILAS H. DURAND.

LEESBURG, Va., July 26, 1906.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—MY VERY DEAR BROTHER:—It must be a power supernatural that can say, Dear brother, to one who is not a brother in the flesh. If we can say this truly, say it feeling it in our heart, is it not because the spirit of life dwells in us, and because we have seen that life in our brother? How else could we say it in truth, feeling it? There is but one spiritual, as there is but one natural life. Only by the natural are we, or can we be, brothers in the flesh; so it is only by the heavenly or divine Spirit that we can be brothers in the Spirit. Having this Spirit in us we are spiritually divine; cannot sin, for sin was never chargeable to the Spirit, but to the flesh. Being not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, sin has no dominion over us; being not in the domain of sin, but in the kingdom of God, we have nothing to do with sin. Sin cannot reach us, sin only has power in its own domain, it cannot enter the heavenly, the divine. God in Christ has translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son. Subjects of his divine grace, and under the dominion of the Spirit of life, sin cannot reach us. How can we ever be separated?

As I have thought, so have I written, and if not in harmony with divine truth you will be faithful and tell me so. When I took my pen in hand it was simply to tell you that though I had long delayed answering your letter, it was not because I did not highly appreciate it, for indeed I did. I was anxious to hear from your association, and your letter was good news. Though I have not written you, many, many times you have been in my mind, and always, thank God, without alloy. I do not know how it is with you, but I cannot say this of all, and tell the truth. Is this of the flesh or of the Spirit? Is it not sometimes hard to tell which it is? Jesus himself did not know how to divide between the evil and the good until he ate butter and honey. (Isa. vii. 15.) I believe, therefore, brother Durand, it is only when we are permitted to eat the same that we are capable to tell the evil and good, or separate the two.

Elder Eubanks preached at Broad Run, Md., last Saturday and Sunday, and is to preach at Hughsville next Saturday and Sunday. I have been attending all my appointments except Mill Creek, W. Va. Hope to go there in August. Baptized a young lady at Frying Pan last meeting. I still suffer, and at times very much, from my abscess. Margaret joins me in love to you all. Wish you could visit Frying Pan the second Sunday any time.

Your brother in hope,

E. V. WHITE.

HALCOTTVILLE, N. Y.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I have in mind to write a few thoughts upon the transfiguration, and submit them to you to do with as you think best. It is by revelation that the Lord makes known to his poor and afflicted people the mysteries hid from the wise and prudent. All things are in the hand of our all-wise God. He has all power in heaven and in earth, controls all things after the counsel of his own will, and none can say, What doest thou? It was in the infinite wisdom of God that the apostles should be eye-witnesses to his majesty; not by the eye of faith, but to see him with their natural eyes. Acts i. 3: "To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." I do not question the power of God that he was able to give the apostles faith to believe all things concerning his death and resurrection, and that he was the Son of God. "And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them. And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them."—Mark ix. 2, 3. We find by consulting the inspired word that both Mark and Matthew say after six days, and Luke records about eight days after these sayings. In the first verse, recorded by Mark, Jesus speaks on this wise: "And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." Whether Mark especially refers to the sayings in the first verse of this ninth chapter or the sayings in the preceding chapter found in the thirty-first verse, and also the following verses, makes no material difference in regard to the subject under consideration. First, I should like to present a few thoughts upon these sayings of Jesus to his disciples. The transfiguration took place after Jesus had fed the multitude from the seven loaves and a few small fishes, and had opened the eyes of the blind man, and it is not unreasonable to believe that there was inquiry in the minds of the multitude after witnessing these wonderful works, What manner of man is this? Jesus, when alone with his disciples, asked them, Whom say men that I am? They answered, "Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some Elias; and others Jeremias or one of the prophets." These were the ideas of men. But Jesus then asked the disciples, "Whom say ye that I am?" Peter replied, "Thou art the Christ," and he charged them that they should tell no man. Jesus made himself of no reputation, but in his humble life was that meek and lowly One who is the friend that sticketh closer than a brother. The sayings that follow are the things concerning himself, teaching his disciples of the things that should take place: that he must be slain, and raised again the third day. Could the disciples grasp the full meaning of his words at this time? Were they able to lay hold upon his words by faith? Certainly not; the Comforter had not come, even the Spirit of truth, that should bring all things to their remembrance that he had spoken unto them. Therefore they doubted, and did not comprehend his sayings. But he continued, and talked to them, saying, Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake

and the gospel, the same shall save it. These words were words of encouragement to the apostles; there were severe trials awaiting them, bonds, imprisonment and persecutions in divers manners. He that would save his life from those trials should lose it. The life here is to realize the sweet presence of that blessed Spirit of Jesus which satisfies the longings of our soul as he communes with the tried and faithful child. How true are his words: If they hate me they will hate you, and if they persecute me they will persecute you. What would it profit the disciples to shrink from their duty in following their Lord and Master through these trials and afflictions? Should they turn from following him and from preaching the gospel to the service of the law they should lose the sweetness and joy of his presence. It is a mystery to me how children of our heavenly Father that have felt the presence of the blessed Savior, who hath done great things for them, and once enjoyed the fellowship of the saints of God, can become so cold and indifferent to the cause that they are never found in the meetings, having lost all interest in the welfare of the church. Are they spiritually alive? Is the place which was once so precious to them when they said with the poet, "Here my best friends, my kindred dwell, here God my Savior reigns," dead to them? Have they sought to save their lives from the trials and burdens of the church? Should they not feel it a duty as well as a privilege to help bear the burdens of other brethren? Could we not sacrifice a little of the pleasure of this world to that cause which should be our greatest joy? O that we might love him more and serve him better. I have heard brethren say they would like to attend the meetings, but they cannot get time, they have so many cares. I am afraid those brethren are cumbered about much serving, as Martha was. The prayer of my heart to God is that such may be again quickened into the service and duty that belongs to the true child of God. Our Savior said, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."—Luke ix. 62. He that would save his life shall lose it. Paul, when he had set his face toward Jerusalem, said he was not only ready to suffer bonds, but ready to die for the cause in which he had been a faithful servant. Let us here call to mind the words of the apostle to the Hebrews: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." How many of the servants of God have made great sacrifices for Jesus and the gospel. But, dear ones, what are these sacrifices to be compared with what Jesus has done for you? "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." O that we may be willing to lay down our lives for this glorious cause of Christ.

I am dwelling too long on these sayings, and must now come to the scene on the mountain. The sayings had gone abroad that he was Elias or one of the prophets. Peter had been taught by the great Teacher that he was the Christ; James and John had said nothing on the subject. Now it had been revealed to Peter, not by flesh and blood, but by his

Father in heaven. We find that after Jesus had said the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and be killed, and the third day rise again, Peter began to rebuke him. Peter did not have faith to fully lay hold on his words, although he had said he was the Christ. After the scene on the mountain Peter was first to speak, and say, "Master, it is good for us to be here." The transfiguration was to prove to them that he was not either Moses or Elias, but was the Christ, the Son of God, and that the sayings of the people were not true. His raiment became so bright and white that no fuller on earth could make it whiter. He appeared so pure and white that no earthly power could have wrought this change. Why did Moses and Elias appear on this scene? Why not some of the other prophets? The first thought in my mind is that they were looking for the fulfillment of the prophecy that Elias must first come, and some had said that Jesus was Elias, therefore Elias appeared. It is true that Elias had already come in the person of John, and they knew him not. As to Moses, it appears to me there was no greater prophet among men than Moses; and the disciples now saw and were sure that Jesus was not either, and they believed, and the cloud overshadowed them, and they heard the voice saying out of the cloud, "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him." They not only saw the characters of Moses and Elias, but heard the voice verifying the words of Jesus that he was the Son of God; all this, with many other scenes, were to prepare the apostles in a manner to preach the gospel, and to declare the things that their eyes had seen and their hands had handled of the Word of life, and these words are a living testimony to this day, and we lay hold on these sayings by faith, which is the gift of God.

Your brother in tribulation,

J. B. SLAUSON.

"THE AMEN."

(Revelation iii. 14.)

I THOUGHT upon this name, and the person and achievements of him to whom it belongs, and my heart responded and said, Thou art, O Christ, in truth the Amen. My soul went forth to him in all affection, and I said within me, Thou art altogether lovely; and as the more and more I mused upon Jesus the Amen, in the vision of my faith, he was glorified; my soul was delighted, for I beheld him crowned with glory and honor. Such moments as these, given me, as I believe, by the Holy Spirit, are sacred indeed, they far transcend all earthly blessedness. O, how is it that I, a sinner, an unworthy one, should be granted even one glimpse of the Son of God? It is all of Jehovah's covenant, eternal love, of his electing, matchless grace. If now a glimpse of Jesus, as through a glass darkly, excites in the soul such blessedness, what must it be,

"Forever to behold him shine,
Forevermore to call him mine,
And see him still before me!
Forever on his face to gaze,
And meet his full assembled rays,
While all the Father he displays
To all the saints in glory"?

In myself I see I am a very failure, I am a sinner, and come short of the glory of God. (Rom. iii. 23.) My aims, endeavors, yes, my utmost attainments, I see to be very vanity. Ah, I cannot do what I want done, and that must be done, I cannot be as I would and as I must be, I cannot attain to what I would attain, and to which I must attain; all is imperfect, all is unsatisfactory; in myself I am but a poor, sinful failure before God.

"These things saith the Amen." Surely our Lord Jesus Christ is the Amen unto his people. Christ, the head of the church, is so needful to them. His members in their Adamic condition are all imperfect, defiled, corruptible, mortal. Ah, they are in a sunken, sin-degraded, helpless plight; and only that Christ the Lord, the Word made flesh, undertook, and still in his mediatorial reign undertakes for them, they must have remained under the curse of God in his holy law. They could never have escaped the wrath to come, (1 Thess. i. 10,) for by nature they are the children of wrath even as others. But the Son of God undertook the redemption, and the everlasting glorification of his elect. He did not fail, he will not fail; the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand, (Isaiah liii. 10,) he will bring all things to a glorious consummation, for he is the Amen. The Scripture saith, "All the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."—2 Cor. i. 20. These are what are described as "better promises."—Heb. viii. 6. They are promises of infinitely more blessed realities than the old covenant could yield us; they are better also in this respect, that they are sure to all the seed. (Rom. iv. 16.) The heirs of promise shall surely in due time be put in possession of all the new covenant blessings, and the eternal inheritance to which they are predestinated in Christ. (Eph. i. 11.) What security have we of all this? The Son of God, Jesus Christ, is the Amen: and we are sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance.

All the promises of God in him are yea, they are all affirmed in him; in him (O, not apart from him) they are all declared. God hath promised us eternal life, this life is in his Son. (1 John ii. 25.) The mercy promised, forgiveness, salvation, the eternal inheritance and crown of glory, are all affirmed unto us in Christ, and all are in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us, the favored, chosen heirs of promise. Christ is the Amen, the Verifier, the Establisher, bringing to a God-glorifying consummation all the exceeding great and precious promises given unto us in the covenant ordered in all things and sure. We were sinners, vile transgressors, under the curse of the law; Jesus came to redeem us. To all the obedience required in the law, to all the dreadful but righteous penalty pronounced upon us, Christ our Surety, the Surety of the New Testament, said, Amen; so let it be, it shall be verified, I will establish it. "Lo, I come, (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God."—Heb. x. 7. He shall magnify and make it honorable; not belittle, or complain of the holy severity of its demands; O no, he, our Surety, Redeemer, came to fulfill the law, he is the Amen, the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

Am I a believer? View him in his precious, sacred life, contemplate his agonies in Gethsemane, and his sufferings on the cross of Calvary, in all of which he declared himself the verifier of the law, the verifier of the promises of God. His achievements in his life of obedience, and atoning sufferings and death, were all the ratifying of the everlasting covenant of grace; he is the Amen. When that bitter cup came to him in the garden then he said, Amen, so let it be. "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done."—Matt. xxvi. 42. On Calvary's mount he cried, "It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost."

Has not our Redeemer said, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it"?—Matt. xvi. 18. His hands laid the foundation of this house, and his hands shall finish it. The headstone thereof shall be brought forth with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace, unto it. (Zech. iv. 7–9.) Our Savior has gone into heaven itself now to appear in the presence of God for us. (Heb. ix. 24.) He was received up into glory. (1 Tim. iii. 16.) There now he reigns our Priest and King, and he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. He will bring forth his people from their graves. At the last day, (John vi. 40,) he himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ "shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"—1 Cor. xv. 52–55. Is this language of doubtful signification? Will this unequivocally take place? Yes, he who is the truth saith, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes."—Hosea xiii. 14.

Are we believers in Christ Jesus the Amen? Then may we, the Holy Spirit enabling us, contemplate, and believe him to be in very truth the Amen. How cheering! what a good hope we have in him, a lively, animating hope, lifting us up in grateful adorations, with ardent longings to glorify God in our body and spirit which are his. Though now the way is rugged, and temptations and conflicts with the world, the flesh and the devil are our trying portion, we are weak, we are imperfect, we come short; but we shall overcome at last. (Gen. xlix. 19.) We shall be more than conquerors through him that loved us. Christ our Amen will bring all to a glorious conclusion. This is everlasting consolation. Believing in him, his precious doctrine ends our soul's disquietudes, silences Satan's accusations, hushes every discordant note, and we have blessed peace, for Christ is the Amen.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

TOUCHET, Wash., Dec. 10, 1906.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I am sending Elder J. P. Allison's letter for publication in the SIGNS, and trust you will see fit to publish it, as it seems to me especially comforting in these trying times, when there is so much strife concerning many points of doctrine. It has been a comfort to me to see the church abiding steadfastly in faith and in love, rather than in dissension.

Yours in haste,

(MRS.) M. J. LEE.

SHERWOOD, Ore., Nov. 28, 1906.

MY DEAR SISTER IN HOPE OF THE BETTER RESURRECTION:—Your good and precious letter of the 18th instant came to us by due course of mail, and I assure you, dear sister, that it received a hearty welcome, and has been read by us with much interest and comfort. About my first thought after reading it was, Who

am I, a poor, ignorant, old sinner, that I should be blessed with the privilege of having the love and fellowship of God's dear children, and also to have the privilege of reading such encouraging and comforting letters as you write me? While I feel very unworthy of such kind expressions as you use toward us, they are highly appreciated by us, and are like water to a thirsty soul, and are esteemed by us above rubies. I should have written in reply to your letter at once, but feeling my inability and weakness and ignorance in spiritual things so keenly, prevented me from making the attempt. You will remember that I did not promise an answer to your letter, but my promise was that I would write you something in reply. You say that it would be a precious boon to know of a truth that you had journeyed through that wilderness. Now, sister, none but those who have been quickened by the Spirit of God know anything about the barren wilderness of their depraved, deceitful and wicked hearts. In Psalms cvii. 4–6, it is written: "They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses." This doubtless is the wilderness that you refer to, and your referring to it proves beyond a doubt in my mind that you are familiar with all the solitary wanderings in this wilderness. The psalmist, in this language, does not mean that the children of Israel only wandered in this wilderness, but he is here setting forth God's dealings with his children in a spiritual sense. So the spiritual wanderers are here represented, and the first thing said about them is that they wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way. What is the condition of a wanderer, such as is described in this text? First, he is houseless, and second, has lost his way. What made him houseless? Did he not have a comfortable home and a place where he could find shelter and satisfy his hunger? He surely did. That place was the world, which was then his home, and the things of the world were his food; but when the Spirit of God enters with divine power our conscience and heart it drives us out of this house and banishes us from this shelter, and, like Noah's dove, we cannot find rest for the sole of our feet among the carcasses that are floating among the waters of the deluge. We are no longer able to find shelter in our own wisdom and righteousness, the pleasures of the world have lost for us their interest, the inward teachings of the Spirit have driven us out from them all by laying the weight of eternal things upon our minds; thus we become wanderers. I think the wilderness is a type of what this world is to God's children. But the wanderer has also lost his way. We know that when we were in the world we had no difficulty, the way was so broad that we could not mistake the path; but when the work of divine grace begins in the sinner's heart he loses his way. This you, dear sister, know. We cannot find our way into the world, the Lord has driven us out of it, as he drove Lot out of Sodom; we cannot find our way to heaven, because we lack those bright evidences which alone enable us to see our path. This then is our experience: we have lost our way, having turned our back upon the world, while yet unable to realize those enjoyments in our hearts that would make heaven our home; we have so lost our way that we can neither go backward nor forward, nor turn to the right or left hand. We

have no plain landmarks to show us the path in which our hearts long to go. We need not stray from the text to find where the wanderer is, for it is said, "They wandered in the wilderness." As before stated, the wilderness is a type or figure of what this life is to the Lord's people; there is nothing that grows in it to satisfy their spiritual hunger, but in it we find sin and Satan continually biting and stinging us. In it we find no rest, but we read that they wandered in a solitary way. It is a path in which we each have to walk alone, a road where no company cheers us. This, my sister, is a peculiar mark of the children of God. You no doubt thought, and still think, that yours is a solitary way, and that no one is traveling your way; your perplexities are such as you think no other living soul is exercised with. The fiery darts cast into your mind by the wicked one are such as no child of God ever experienced, the darkness in which you travel, the infidelity and unbelief of your heart, are such as none ever knew but yourself. This indeed makes it a solitary way, but it only proves that you, my sister, are being led by the Spirit of God in this wilderness where the Lord alone can deliver. We must be cut off from resting upon an arm of flesh.

We read that they found no city to dwell in. A city implies something which is stable, with walls, streets and dwellings, and where the world enjoys the friendship bought with gold, as you so beautifully set forth in your letter. But the Lord's people while journeying through the wilderness find no real rest in these cities; there is nothing stable, nothing satisfactory. Do you not find this in your experience: that there is an aching void in your heart that nothing but the love and presence of the Lord can fill? You are restless at home, restless in company, restless abroad; there is a vacancy the world cannot fill. But we also read that they were hungry and thirsty, and their souls fainted in them. Hungering after what, after the world, and the things of time and sense? No, but hungering after the things that are spiritual. This hunger is so great that it causes pain, and it seems that death will surely be the result if this hunger and thirst for righteousness, which we now see that we do not possess, be not satisfied; but we must be brought to the fainting point. You know what that is. "Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble." Not before or after it, but in it. Nothing but trouble will make us cry. "Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses." There can be no deliverance without something to be delivered from. You know by experience what a great train of troubles you were in, so also you know what deliverance is, and how sweet that deliverance is.

"And he led them forth by the right way." It was a solitary way, where there was nothing but ups and downs, and to us it seemed there was no way at all, but it was the right way to a habitation to dwell in, and here we found rest. This is the habitation of God, and the righteous run into it and are safe. "He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love. Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples; for I am sick of love."

I must stop. Remember us at the throne of grace.

J. P. ALLISON.

JOB IX. 2.

"How should man be just with God?"

This question has occupied the minds of men in all ages, and various methods are put forth to obtain that end. We read in the daily papers that a plan is on foot to evangelize the world in the coming generation, and the wisdom of the world believes such a thing possible, but "the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." Christ suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. (1 Peter iii. 18.) The just is Christ; the unjust is the church. "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, * * * there is none that doeth good, no, not one."—Psalms xiv. 2, 3. One came to Christ and said, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God." Christ, the just, suffered death upon the cross for the sins of the unjust (his church). This atonement was for all the elect, chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and embraced all his people and all their sins to the end of time.

The eighth chapter of Proverbs speaks of wisdom, which is Christ. The twenty-third verse reads, "I [Christ] was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." He is the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.

We will take up the church; there is vital unity between Christ and the church. He is the Head, the church is the body. (Eph. i. 23.) He is the Husband and the church is the bride. As God created Adam, and then formed Eve of a part of Adam, so Christ was from the beginning, and the church came forth from Christ, "for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children."—Isaiah lxvi. 8. After God had created Adam and put him in the garden, he gave him of every tree to eat "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Also in Ezekiel xviii. 4, the word of God says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." We find the woman brought to Adam, and Adam said, She is "now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; * * * and they shall be one flesh." Eve was tempted, and partook of the fruit and gave to her husband, and he did eat, and their eyes were opened. They were now transgressors of the law of God, but God gave them a promise, saying to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Eve was the mother of all living. As the law had gone forth in the disobedience of our first parents, so death passed upon all that should come forth from them, for "who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" Eve was a type of the church and Adam a type of our Lord and Savior; Adam followed Eve in the transgression, so did Christ follow his church into this world of sin. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."—Hebrews ii. 14. Christ was the seed of the woman (but was of the Holy Ghost) for the suffering of death, and being flesh and blood the law was over him the same as over his church, which is his body. "God so

loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" and in Revelation xiii. 8, it speaks of Christ as "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," establishing our belief that God knew the end from the beginning. Here is where election and predestination shine forth to the great joy of believers, as all sacrifices in the types before the coming of our Lord and Savior were required to be perfect, without spot or blemish. So our Savior came in the likeness of sinful flesh, that he might be obedient unto death to satisfy the demands of the law, and redeem his church from under the curse. In his death the law was satisfied; death has now no dominion over him or his body, the church. Christ came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill; and Christ is the end of the law to every one that believeth; we are not under law, but under grace. Christ suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. It is through Christ that a man is just with God, for he is our "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." "I am the door of the sheep." It is only by and through Christ that we inherit eternal life, and they that are born again have the earnest of the Spirit. Christ, talking to the two on the way to Emmaus, after his resurrection from the dead, said, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" "We love him, because he first loved us." Bless his holy name.

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan. 17, 1907.

DELIGHT, Md., Feb. 19, 1907.

MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I feel ashamed of myself that I have not written you before to let you know how much I enjoyed your comforting letter; but this is the first letter I have written this year.

I cannot tell you how happy I feel, and thankful also, that I have at last found a home with God's dear children. I was baptized, with my husband, the fourth Sunday in August last. I hope it will always be comforting to me to remember that day. I wish I could feel more humble and thankful than I do. I knew it was a great and solemn step to take when I went before the church and asked them to take me with them, and then to follow the Savior in the beautiful and sacred ordinance of baptism; but I have done this, and it seems wonderful that I have really done so. I would rather share their joys and sorrows than enjoy all the pleasures this world can afford; if I am not deceived in myself, I do love the Baptist people, they seem to draw like cords around my heart. I feel very unworthy and undeserving of a home with the church, but in spite of all my unworthiness and sinfulness I wanted a place there very much, and I feel thankful that the heavenly Father has led me to them.

I am looking forward to the association in the spring at Black Rock. I hope to meet you there, and I would be glad to have you come to see us at any time you come to Reisterstown. My husband will be glad to see you also. I would like very much to have a talk with you concerning the things of the Spirit. I read your letter to Alfred, and he thought it was good, and full of good things. Please remember us both in your prayers.

From your unworthy sister, if one at all, MERAB H. PARKER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1907.

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PERPLEXING QUESTIONS.

PERPLEXING questions have always from time to time arisen among the churches of God in the world; such questions do still arise, and, we have no doubt, will always arise. At the time they often seem distressing, and the hearts of those who truly love God, and who desire the welfare of his cause and people, are made to tremble and be sad. Experience of past perplexities, and of deliverances from them, which God has always in the right time shown his people, do not always seem to give us assurance that it will be so now in the present trial. Israel came often into difficult places, and as often in their journeying were brought safely through, yet their hearts continued to fail with fear when some new obstacle appeared in the way. This was always so, except at times when their God gave them some special confidence, by which they overcame the fear and weakness which was natural to them. So it is true now that as often as some trial or dark cloud looms up in our sky we begin to question and fear again, and so go haltingly and stumblingly along until the cloud is dispersed, or until seen clearly that it has broken and sent down blessings upon our heads; then indeed we can sing the joyful strains of those who have come off conquerors. It is indeed at times true that the blessed Lord gives to his children, when face to face with some dark and trying experience, such victory of faith that even before the enemy has disappeared they go forth like the army of King Jehoshaphat, with the singers and players upon instruments in the forefront of the battle, because they shall not need to fight in the conflict at all; and as they go forward, with the foe in full sight, they praise and bless the Lord as though the victory had already been won. Indeed, when God is pleased to give such overcoming faith as this the enemy is conquered, because "this is the victory which overcomes the world, even our faith." How good it is to see some humble child of God when face to face with the sorest earthly trial, which comes against him like a threefold host, as the Moabites and Ammonites, and the inhabitants of Mt. Seir, then came against Jehoshaphat, still calm, cheerful and confident, employing himself with no preparation to contend against the foe, but steadfastly believing in God that he will save him, and going on his way with the praises of God in his heart and on his lips. What a testimony such an experience as this is to the power of sovereign grace in the heart. Such a soul knows the battle is the Lord's, and that he does not need to fight his own battles, and so all his soul is, and must be, engaged in praise, rather than in strife.

The things to which we have referred thus far relate especially to personal trials and soul-conflicts. The trials may be caused by untoward circumstances, such as sickness and poverty, the wrong doing of one we love, the assaults of personal enemies, or a hundred other things of like nature, or they may arise from temptations of the enemy, who strives to al-

ways weaken our faith in God and to destroy our hope in him, or they may arise from receiving clear views of our own inward depravity, from which the awful doubt comes that the work of the Lord has never been wrought in us at any time, and that we must still be in the lost and dark condition in which the fall plunged us with all mankind. But let these things arise in whatever way may be the case, they cause sore questionings which we cannot answer, and they bring us to a low ebb in feeling indeed. At such times we find we cannot rise above them, or become conquerors over them, by any might of ours. We may strive to remember the past evidences, but there is no power in them; we may read the Scriptures which once have ministered comfort to us, but the sweet savor of them is departed from our hearts, and we may endeavor to present our sad case in prayer before God, but prayer seems but a chattering noise. All things that we can do fail, and we come to learn at last that not only shall there be no need for us to fight in this conflict, but that we could not fight if there were need. Such hours of trial and conflict are blessed in their results if we are thereby brought to the place where we learn that the battle and the victory are the Lord's.

We had in mind when we began this writing to speak of questions which do not relate, except indirectly, to the inward experiences named above. It was in our mind to speak of questions that are constantly arising in the churches, as regards their order and discipline. There are times when even the most humble and God-fearing among the people of God do not see all things alike. Difference of judgment will arise as to what is wise and most in harmony with the gospel, and for the good of the cause, and for the glory of God. Such questions arose in the days of the apostles, and were the source of anxiety in the minds of the apostles and the churches then. There were differences of judgment, there were roots of bitterness springing up, troubling the hearts of all who were spiritual, and there were at times such differences as led to strife and contention; and it has been so ever since, and will be until that which is perfect is come. We recall that Paul and Barnabas differed about Mark, as to whether he should accompany them upon a visit to the churches of Syria and Cilicia, where they had before preached the gospel. The occasion was that Mark had failed to accompany them in a former visit, and Paul thought him blameworthy and unfit to take with them now. There was no question of fellowship involved between Paul and Mark, but it was the judgment of Paul that it was not wise to take Mark with them; perhaps because he was the son of the sister of Barnabas, Barnabas was more disposed to overlook his weakness, and to insist upon taking him with them. No small contention arose between Paul and Barnabas concerning this, and the result was, not declaration of nonfellowship, but that they went different ways (Barnabas taking Mark with him) and preached the same gospel. It has seemed to us that in this one narrative very many perplexing questions might find their solution. Difference in judgment ought not to lead to divisions. Our differences of opinion concerning men are no reason for division. It may be indeed true that to avoid unprofitable friction and contention each one may go his own way, or to his own field of labor in such cases, but still there is no reason that one should say of another, He is not the servant of Christ, and I cannot hold him in fellowship. In

such cases, if the judgment of good brethren is irreconcilably different, let it be so, and let each go his own way, as did Paul and Barnabas. Afterwards Paul speaks most kindly of Mark; even in the midst of the dissension Paul does not intimate any question as to the reality of the faith that was in Mark, but he did not think him fitted for the serious work that was before them amidst dangers and trials and persecutions; he seems to have questioned his steadfastness. It is, no doubt, the case often that there is no question in the mind of brethren in general as to the real call of some one to the work of the ministry, and no question as to the reality of the faith which he professes, but still there may be weaknesses in that one, or lack of some needed qualification, which in the judgment of his brethren unfit him to labor in certain directions. Our God, who loves all his children alike, has not fitted all alike, but designs one for one place and another for another place. So with the churches of God, they may have no doubt as to the work of sovereign grace in the heart of a brother, or concerning the reality of his call to the ministry, and yet not think it wise to put him in a certain place. In such cases let the brethren do as did Paul and Mark, each go in his own direction, as the providence of God shall mark out the way.

The above relates to differences between ministers themselves, as to what is wise and best to do; but sometimes differences arise in the churches concerning different ministers which are hard to reconcile, and which bring up perplexing questions; such differences occurred in the churches founded by the apostles. The divisions in the church at Corinth are often referred to by Old School Baptists, and are familiar to all. We need not repeat all Paul said to that church concerning this matter, but a few things we desire to call attention to: first, they were carnal in these divisions; it was all of the flesh; the name and honor of Christ was lost sight of, and one thought only of Paul, another only of Cephas, and another only of Apollos, and it would appear that even those who said, I am of Christ, did not say this in a right spirit. It would seem from the narrative that they said this with a party spirit, as did all the others, thus bringing Christ down to the level of party strife and debate. Be this as it may, it is evident that all that division was of the flesh. Indeed, James tells us that wars and fightings among the brethren come of the flesh; and yet there is no doubt in our own mind that each party there really thought they were actuated by a praiseworthy spirit, and that they were seeking the honor of Jesus and the good of his cause. How easy it is to be deceived, and mistake what really is of the flesh for devotion to the cause of God. To magnify any man, even Paul the great apostle, is wrong, and it was evidently most abhorrent to Paul himself. He sought only the praise of Christ, and nothing could hurt him more than for any to seek to make his name prominent rather than Christ. How forcible are the words, "Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" And, "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed?" Like John the Baptist, they were but the voice of one crying in the wilderness of this world; they were only the friends of the bridegroom. The greatest joy possible to them in their ministry was that Christ, and Christ only, should be magnified. Paul said to the churches in Galatia, "My little children, of whom I travail in

birth again until Christ be formed in you" the hope of glory.

In the second place, let us notice that all the rebukes and all the warnings of Paul were to the end that these divisions should be healed. Let Paul and Cephas and Apollos be counted as of no value beside the name of Christ and the union and welfare of his church. We do not read that the church did finally divide over these men. It appears from the second epistle to them that Paul's words were blessed of God to them in such a way that they put away from them this, with other evil things; it wrought a great clearing of themselves, and a great zeal for the better way. When God gave them, through his inspired apostle, to see their folly and base departure from Christ for the sake of men, they were humbled, and sorrowful with a godly sorrow that needs not to be repented of. One had no room to think himself less culpable than another. If one could say, I did not make an idol of Cephas or Apollos, he had to confess before God and to his brethren that he had done so in his mind and heart, with Paul. Even those who had said, I am of Christ, were convinced that they were in no wise better than their brethren, and that even in confessing Christ the spirit of strife was more or less actuating them. No doubt there was enough true religion among them, even at the worst, to lead them to serious questioning as to how all this trouble could be healed. As it is at this day, so was it no doubt then, they realized that they were all in a wrong road, but the question was, How shall we return to the right way? Paul, by inspiration, showed to them the right way, and this was to cease to think of men, or to magnify them, and to remember that they all belonged to Christ by redemption, and through the new birth. Nothing could serve to bring them to a right mind again so well as to remember who it was that had been crucified for them, and in whose name they had been baptized. Nothing is such a healer in time of dissension as to remember all the way in which God has led us, and to look to the hole of the pit from which we have been digged. In humility there is no room for strife over men, but Jesus alone is exalted, and in the lifting up of Jesus all who know him will be drawn to him, and in being drawn to him will also be drawn to each other in union with him, and so we have a lesson in Paul's argument with this church. It was: "Is Christ divided?" Did Paul die for you? What was the testimony that you bore in your baptism? Christ, and Christ alone, was in all this. This they knew, and it was the mind of the apostle to remind them again of their first love. At that time they could not have said, I am of Paul, or I am of Cephas, or I am of Apollos. It is good to be little children always, and it is good to remember the time of our spiritual childhood often. We have never been nearer right at any time than when we first believed. How good it is when we can have in our desires only the glory of God and the peace of the church of God. How good when we can know no man after the flesh, and how exceeding good it is when we can with our whole heart pity and love a brother, even when we must oppose him to his face. Thus did Paul when he withstood Peter to his face, and censured him for his course. Do we love our brother well enough to censure him to his face when he has erred? Censure without love kills, and to love the erring without reproof is equally deadly.

We leave these thoughts with the churches; think upon them, consider them, and search the Scriptures concerning them. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

HEBREWS XII. 22–24.

"BUT ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

The inspired apostle Paul, who is presumed to have written this epistle, after having discussed very fully the nature and import of the Levitical priesthood, and all its typical bearings, in prefiguring the great High Priest of our profession, and his royal priesthood, having not only compared, but also contrasted the former with the latter, most faithfully admonishes the saints to consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, and to render strict obedience to him, and see that we refuse not him that speaketh. "For," says he, "if they escape not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven; whose voice then shook the earth; but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." He exhorts them to lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset them, and run the race set before them, looking not now to Moses, who, as a servant, was faithful, but unto Christ, the Son of God, who is over his own house, and to lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and to make straight paths for their feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright." These solemn admonitions are enforced by the consideration of their high and holy calling and the superior dignity of Christ as a Son above that of Moses as a servant. If under Moses, in his inferior capacity, every transgression received a just recompense of reward, and if "he that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God," or refused him that speaketh from heaven? All who transgressed or failed to obey the law administered by Moses were subjected to the pains and penalties of that law, and died without mercy, for there was no mercy in that law. Moses could not judge them by the law of Christ, which is written in the hearts of the children of God under the gospel, but by that law which was written on tables of stone; that law could show no mercy, hence they died without mercy; but in the law written in the heart, God is merciful to the transgressions of his people, and will remember them no more. Still the punishment of which the saints are thought worthy, who transgress the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, is much sorer than that under Moses, inasmuch as Moses could only inflict temporal judgments, and under the law of Christ spiritual judgments, such as leanness, barrenness, and fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall destroy, not the saints, but the adversaries. He visits their iniquities with the rod, and their sins with many stripes, nevertheless his loving-kindness he will not take utterly away.

As an incentive to greater diligence and more profound attention, to deeper reverence and more implicit obedience to the law of Jesus, the apostle says, "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard, entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more," "but," says he, "ye are come unto mount Zion." How striking is the contrast! Mount Sinai, in Arabia, typified by the bondmaid, answering to that Jerusalem which gendereth to bondage, and which is in bondage with her children. Where the voice of God was heard in thunder tones, proclaiming the precepts of the covenant of works, the ministration of death, the display of the awful terror of the Lord, demonstrating the impossibility of approaching unto God by the deeds of the law.

"Not to the terrors of the Lord,
The tempest, fire and smoke;
Not to the thunder of that word
Which God on Sinai spoke."

In that mountain no refuge could be found for either man or beast, but all who approached were stoned, or thrust through with a dart. But Christ, our High Priest, has redeemed us from the terror of that law.

"And we are come to Sion's hill,
The city of our God,
Where milder words declare his will,
And spread his love abroad."

Mount Zion, or Sion, as it is rendered in the New Testament, was literally the city of David, the seat and centre of the government of the commonwealth of Israel, fortified with invincible walls and mighty towers, abounding with every possible comfort and security for its inhabitants, and located upon the mountains of Zion, which were refreshed with the dews of Hermon, where the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forevermore. This city is frequently used, both in the Old and New Testaments, to represent the church of God in her gospel organization, strength and beauty. "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early." "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God." The gospel church is Mount Sion, and she is the city of the living God. Ezekiel and John saw this holy city of our God in their vision. John says, And he shewed me "the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." This holy city is the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife. To the church of the living God, thus presented as Mount Sion, and as the city of the living God, every regenerated follower of Christ, under the gospel has come. This Mount Sion, this city of the living God, is the heavenly Jerusalem. Not that Jerusalem which gendereth to bondage, which was destroyed, but the heavenly Jerusalem, which is above, is free, and which is the mother of all who, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise, and children of the free woman. The city to which the saints are now come is the city of the living God. He is so called, not only because he is alive, and lives of himself, being self-existent and independent, but because he is the source and fountain of all spirituality and vitality to all his saints. It is his city because he is the founder of it, and her name is, "The Lord is there." He is the maker and builder of it, it is not made with hands. It is his because he has formed it, for he says, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise."

And again, he says, "And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken." The saints have come also to an innumerable company of angels. The term "angels," in this place, we think means the saints in their spiritual existence. Their flesh and blood cannot come into this spiritual communion, for it cannot inherit the kingdom; no man is here known after the flesh; the flesh profiteth nothing; they have no confidence in it, for it lusts against the angel, or spirit, and all its works are in direct opposition to the fruits of the Spirit. Christ says of his little ones (and all his children are little ones), that their angels do always behold the face of my Father, which is in heaven. Their fleshly powers cannot behold the face of God, but their angel, or spirit, that which is born of the Spirit, does behold the face of God, for he that hath seen Jesus hath seen the Father also, not by natural sight, but by that spiritual discernment which is peculiar to the new man. The number of these angels is definite, but no man can number them, hence to us who come to Sion the company of them is innumerable, for it includes the whole family in heaven and in earth. They constitute one general assembly, embracing all that were chosen of God in Christ before the foundation of the world, all who are and were predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, all for whom Jesus died, for whom he arose, and for whom he ever liveth to intercede. This general assembly is the church of the firstborn, which is written or enrolled in heaven. Christ, in his mediatorial headship of his church, in all things must have the pre-eminence. He is the first begotten from the dead, and he is called the firstborn of every creature, and that he should be the firstborn among many brethren. This Mount Sion, this city of the living God, this heavenly Jerusalem, this innumerable company of angels, this general assembly, then, is no more nor less than the church of Jesus Christ, his body and his members, his flesh and his bones, and one with him, even as he is one with the Father. They have come also to God, the judge of all.

We have already noticed in the foregoing remarks that God is in the midst of Zion, that she cannot be moved. He has chosen her for his dwelling-place, and in her will he dwell forever, for he has desired it. The God of Zion is the judge of all; his judgment has decided and fixed the destiny of all beings, of all events and of all worlds. Judgment and justice are the habitation of his throne, and from his decision no appeal can be made. But there is a special sense in which all the subjects of his spiritual kingdom who have come to Zion have come to him as their judge. When called and quickened with spiritual life, each subject of his saving power finds himself arrested and arraigned before his judgment-bar, and his sins are set in order before him. The book of the divine law is brought before his court, and all the transgressions of its precepts are plainly pointed out, and all other judgments as to our case are effectually set aside. We are made conscious that whatever has been our own judgment in regard to our standing, our guilt or innocence, our merits or demerits, our ability or inability, or whatever judgments may have been decided for or against us by our fellow-men, are found to be null and void. We come to God as the judge of all; the case is between the individual

and God the judge. Before our arrest we had judged of our own case favorably, for we knew not the deep depravity of our own hearts, and we even have thought justice was on our side, but now that we stand before the eternal Judge, we find that we are guilty and ruined, helpless and despairing. Now we change our judgment, and decide that justice is truly against us, and that we cannot be saved without infringement of the justice of God. But neither our first or second judgment can stand, for God is judge himself, and when he by his Spirit has made known his decision in our case, we know that it cannot be reversed. He shows us truly how guilty we are, and how justly we deserve his wrath, but he also shows us that he can be just, and the justifier of the ungodly. Christ is to us revealed as our Savior, our Wisdom, our Righteousness, our Sanctification and Redemption, and we can rely with joy and confidence on this decision, for it, being the decision of God the judge of all, is irrevocable. We come to God, the judge of all, in regard to all things that concern us for time and for eternity. As our judge he establishes our goings, the paths in which we are to tread, leading us in a way that we knew not, and in paths which we had not known. As our judge we learn (slowly perhaps) to commit to him the keeping of our souls, to decide for us what is best, and to withhold from us what he sees would not be for our good or his glory. Our feelings and our judgment we lay aside, and search the volume which contains a record of his decision, with a desire that we may walk in all his judgments and obey all his precepts. If we transgress his law (as we are conscious we do daily) we still have to do with him as our judge, for the Lord will judge his people. If our enemies set upon us to destroy us, we are not to avenge ourselves, for God is the judge of all; vengeance belongs to him, he will repay. If we meet with offenses, or are grieved with the course of our brethren, or have wounded them, we are not competent to judge the case, but he is the judge still. We are to watch closely the judgments which he has recorded in every case, and conform to them. When Israel had no king or judge, we are told that every man did that which was good in his own eyes. But such is not our right now, as citizens of Sion. May all of us who have entered the gates of the holy city, and eaten of the tree of life, ever come boldly, freely, unreservedly to him as the Judge of all, and submit all our concerns to him.

"And to the spirits of just men made perfect." By just men, we understand those who are freely justified through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, for no other men are just in the sight of God, the judge of all. Their spirits we understand to be what we have treated on as their angels; their spiritual life and immortality; that which is born of the Spirit; and in this there is a unity. There is one body and one spirit, even as they are all called in one hope of their calling. But while here in the flesh, even the spirit of the child of God is not perfected. It has not attained to the consummation of its perfection, or the fullness of its glory. Not yet so happy, so free from oppression, conflict and trials as it shall hereafter be. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he [who is our life] shall appear, we shall be like him," and that will be perfection truly. Here we see but in part, we know but in part, but when that which is but in part shall be done away, we shall see as we are seen, and know even

as we are known. The spirits of the saints who have finished their course on earth are now perfected. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the spirits of the prophets and apostles, are perfected, but they have not left Sion, for the Mount Sion to which we are come abideth forever. This kingdom shall break in pieces all other kingdoms, and it shall stand forever; it is an everlasting kingdom, and a dominion that hath no end, and all who are brought from the east and from the west, the north and the south, shall sit down in the kingdom with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. The mortality of our earthly bodies cannot interrupt the communion of the spirits of the just.

"The saints on earth, and all the dead,
But one communion make;
All join in Christ, their living Head,
And of his grace partake."

"And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant." We have not come to Moses, the servant, but to Jesus, the Son, to Jesus the Savior, the mediator of the new covenant, the mediator between God and men. The new covenant is contrasted with the old covenant, which was a ministration of death, but the new is a covenant of life and peace. "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old."—Heb. viii. 7–13. As Aaron and his sons in their priestly office ministered as mediators at the altars, under the old covenant, with the blood of calves and other victims, which were offered continually in mediation for Israel, so Jesus, the High Priest of our profession, is the Mediator of the New Testament, or covenant. In the new covenant the spiritual Hebrew, or Israelite, draws near unto God by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. It is therefore through Jesus Christ as our Mediator that we enter into the holiest of all, that we come unto God by him, and from the least to the greatest all know God, which knowledge is eternal life. "Now," says the apostle, "of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man."—Heb. viii. 1, 2. The apostle in thus summing up, compares and contrasts the two covenants, and the mediators of them, respectively, and shows in verse six that Jesus has obtained a more excellent ministry than that of Aaron, under the first testament, and that "by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." The old covenant was established

on conditional terms; life and temporal blessings were promised if they obeyed its provisions, but death and temporal judgments if they transgressed; but the new covenant is a better covenant, and established upon better promises, unconditional promises, promises which are confirmed by two immutable things, by the oath of him who can swear by no greater, by the immutability of his counsel. "And for this cause he [Jesus] is the mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."—Heb. ix. 15. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Not yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entered into the holy place every year with the blood of others. * * * But now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation."

"And to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." The blood of sprinkling to which the new covenant saints are come, is the blood of Jesus Christ, which was shed for the remission of their sins, and the sprinkling of that blood signifies its application to those for whom it was shed. As Peter applies it, to the "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Answering to the application of the blood of the passover lamb, in the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, which blood was applied to the door-posts of the dwellings of those who were to eat the passover, and were saved from the angel of wrath, and redeemed from the house of bondage. "Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these."—Heb. ix. 18–23. The purification of the children of the new covenant is effected by the sprinkling of his blood, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot unto God, and who has obtained eternal redemption for them. His blood speaketh better things than did the blood of Abel. The voice of Abel's blood called from the ground for retribution upon Cain, but the voice of Jesus' blood speaks peace, deliverance, salvation. "Having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." —Col. i. 20. The language of Jesus' blood sprinkled upon his redeemed people is that of peace, it bids the messenger of divine wrath pass over those on whom it is sprinkled; no wrath can enter there, no condemnation, no guilt can there be

found, for his blood cleanseth them from all guilt. It speaks in soothing accents to the despairing sinner, and bids him lift up his head and rejoice in Christ his Savior; it speaks deliverance to the captives, of opening the prison to them that are bound. His blood proclaims a complete and full salvation to all for whom it was shed, and of an inheritance of immortal glory beyond the grave.

We have briefly noticed the most prominent points embraced in the text; on each there is room for much enlargement, but the very manifest design of the apostle was, by all these considerations, to urge and admonish the saints to see that they refuse not him that speaketh. Higher, nobler, loftier considerations than any presented in the law of a carnal commandment, or enforced by the merciless rod of Moses, appeal to the hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, by the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, to lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset them, and to run with patience the race which is set before them, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 15, 1862.

APPOINTMENTS.

IF the Lord will, I will attend appointments in Kentucky and Ohio as follows: Mount Sterling, Tuesday, April 16th, at 2 p. m.; Winchester, Tuesday night; Little Flock, Wednesday, 17th, at 2 p. m.; Farmdale, Wednesday night; Bethel, Thursday, 18th, at 11 o'clock; Shelbyville, Thursday night; Lexington, 123 Walton Ave., Friday night; Mays Lick, Saturday and Sunday, 20th and 21st; Georgetown, Monday night, April 22nd; Sadieville, Tuesday morning, 23rd; Mill Creek, Ohio, Wednesday morning, 24th; Mt. Pleasant, Ohio, Thursday morning, 25th.

SILAS H. DURAND.

NOTHING preventing, I will be at Schoharie Hill Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., April 20th and 21st, third Sunday; Schenectady, N. Y., 54 Fuller St., 23rd; Saratoga, N. Y., 24th and 25th; Troy, N. Y., 28th, fourth Sunday. D. M. VAIL.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Jane Gillies, my mother-in-law, passed away at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Duncan C. Graham, near Dutton, Ontario, on the morning of February 11th, in the 85th year of her age. She was confined to her bed about two weeks with a general breaking up due to old age. She had for many years suffered much from stomach trouble, unable much of the time to retain food long after eating, but through it all was patient, and often would say she had no reason to complain. She was married young, and with her husband, who predeceased her twenty-six years, endured many of the privations consequent to pioneer life. To her were born twelve children, seven of whom preceded her to the grave. She experienced a hope in the mercy of God when she was about twenty years of age, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, by the late Elder Dugald Campbell, about sixty-four years ago, and continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and fellowship of the brethren, always feeling herself to be the least among them. She was possessed of a good memory, and could recall even in her latter years many interesting incidents connected with the church, as well as her own experience in the eventful days of her early life. She devoted much time to reading her Bible and other good books, and would often speak of God's goodness to her, not because of any merit she saw in herself, but because of his mercy to one so vile and sinful as she felt to be. Shortly before she was taken down with her last illness she was much cast down in mind, feeling desolate and forsaken of her God, but ere long was made to rejoice and cry out like one of old, "My Lord and my God." On previous occasions she has spoken to the writer of her doubts and fears, and would seem to take in the words of the Savior to Thomas: "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." The latter part of the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians, beginning at the fifty-second verse, was much on her mind before she was taken sick, from which she concluded that she, or some one near of kin to her, was to be called away soon, and as she was in the act of informing those about her of that fact she went into a convulsion, from which she recovered for a few hours, when she had a second attack, which left her unconscious for about twenty-four hours, when she recovered again, and so remained until the end came several days after. She would occasionally repeat portions of Scripture, and sometimes would say, "He promised he would never leave me nor forsake me." Once when she was so weak she could scarcely utter a word audibly she held up both hands and lisped the words, "Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." She was for many

years quite deaf, and as a consequence unable to hear preaching, which was a source of sorrow to her, as she loved to mingle with her kindred in Christ, and when she was able, regardless of her hearing, would attend at the communion service. The welfare of the church was always a source of concern to her, manifesting thereby that she was indeed a mother in Israel. She was the last remaining (with perhaps one exception) of those who were baptized by the late Elder Dugald Campbell. She saw many sorrowful days, having been compelled to part with so many of those who were near and dear to her by the ties of nature. Her remaining children, one son and four daughters, were constantly about her in her last illness, and did all that loving hands could do in ministering temporal comforts; but Jesus alone can make a dying bed feel soft as downy pillows, and such we feel that he did for her, so that we mourn not as those who have no hope, being confident that she has entered into that rest which is eternal. The sixty-sixth paraphrase was one of her favorite hymns, a portion of which was sung at her funeral.

The funeral service was conducted by Elder P. W. Sawin, of Shelbyville, Ky., who spoke comfortingly to the mourning ones, as well as to the brethren and friends who were present on the occasion, after which the remains were conveyed to the cemetery and laid beside those of her departed husband.

J. T. KERR.

IONA STATION, Ontario.

Miss Bessie Bateman departed this life Dec. 11th, 1906, in the 46th year of her age, in a blessed and glorious hope of immortality and eternal life beyond the grave. Hers was a life of suffering and sorrow, but the wonderful patience and resignation with which she was endowed by her heavenly Father was such as is seldom witnessed. For years she suffered without a murmur that I ever heard, always pleasant and cheerful. She was born March 26th, 1861, received into the church in May, 1889, and baptized in June following. She had but little to say when she came before the church, but the whole church had a warm fellowship for her, and she had a warm and hearty welcome into their communion. She was of a rather quiet, retiring disposition, but warm-hearted and a good talker to those she was intimate with. She was greatly afflicted for many years with different diseases, but the final disease was consumption. She suffered much with a very distressing cough for years, but would always say, "I am well, only for this cough." I visited her last October the last time, and it was a good visit to me. She was enabled to tell how she longed for the end; she had no fear of death, and though she wished to be patient and resigned, yet she desired rest, for she was so weary, so tired of sin and self, and she longed to be with Jesus. She was bright and cheerful, and though only able to speak in a whisper, it seemed good to hear her talk of the end in such a bright, cheerful manner. I think I shall never forget my visit, for it almost seemed like talking to one who was done with this world and all its affairs. She lived over two months longer, just, as one might say, in sight of that land which is fairer and more lovely than any mortal can describe. She was tenderly nursed and cared for at her sister's, Mrs. P. Corneill's, who never seemed to tire in her devoted care for her. The last two weeks of her life she had no rest day or night with her terrible cough, and she longed and pleaded for the end. Her sister said to her, "You are suffering." She replied, "I have not one pain too many," and she repeated the words, "The flame shall not hurt thee, I only design," &c., and said, "He is only consuming the dross." She would say, "I cannot go till the call comes." The last night she seemed to rest easily a little while, then she looked up and said, "Am I gone?" Some one said, "You are nearly gone." Then she bade all good-by, but said, "I miss one"—her nephew Willie. They called him, she bade him good-by when he came, then closed her eyes, rested a little, but became restless again and said, "Do I have to come back again?" She requested to be raised in bed, which was done, when she said, "Glory, glory, Jesus is speaking to me, keep still. I want you all. Good-by. 'Other refuge have I none, hangs my helpless soul on thee.'" Then she said, "Phil., Mary," evidently wanting to say something, but the end had come, and she closed her eyes on all things here below and was at rest, glorious rest that she had so longed for.

Elder Sawin preached to a large concourse of people at the Baptist meeting-house, from John xiv. 1–3, and she was laid away to rest.

R. SCATES.

Ezekiel D. Clemments was born in 1817, and died January 1st, 1907. Our brother experienced a hope in Christ Jesus, and was baptized April 16th, 1840, by Elder Philander Hartwell, in the fellowship of the church at North Berwick, Maine. He was a man held in high esteem in all the neighborhood in which he spent his life, and he was well beloved by the church of God. He walked humbly with his God, and before his brethren, ever expressing himself in lowly and self-abasing speech, yet confessing that he was held up by God's reigning grace, and that he could not cast away the beginning of his confidence, which the Lord, for Jesus' sake, gave him—a comfortable hope that his sins were forgiven. Many times I have heard him relate his soul's first experience of the saving loving-kindness of the Lord, and nearly always it was with tears in his eyes that he told the divine story. The last few years of his life he was unable, through infirmities, to attend the assemblies of the saints; when I visited him he lamented his inability, and longed that he then might have the privilege which had been his in former days. During his

last days our brother and his wife, sister Clemments, were unable to carry on their farm interests, but they were kindly cared for at the home of their daughter, Mrs. Stevens. I drove to see him in his last short illness, and was glad to be there to converse once more with him before his departure. I talked to him of the blood and righteousness of the Lamb of God, and of the covenant faithfulness of the Lord, and several times he expressed himself that Jesus was all his hope of salvation, and of eternal glory, and when I sang to him some precious hymns, and among them, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in his excellent word," he mentioned how good and sweet it was to him. I stayed a few hours with him, but before the dawn of another day he had departed this life, to be with Christ, which is far better. At his funeral I preached from the words, "The nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it."—Rev. xxi. 24.

ALSO,

Louammi Quint departed this life Feb. 15th, 1907, aged 80 years and 10 months. Our sister united with the church, and was baptized by Elder William Quint in the year 1850. She ever manifested a warm attachment to the doctrine of God our Savior. During the fourteen years of my intimacy with her in the kingdom of Christ I ever found her one with whom it was a blessing to hold conversation upon the things of Christ. She at times was much tried concerning her personal participation in the benefits of the atoning death of the Lamb of God; yes, many doubts and fears exercised her soul. She had her allotted trials in life, and to others it appeared, at times, that she had a rather large share of tribulation; but it was no more and no heavier than was our heavenly Father's good pleasure to lay upon her, and like all the dear household of God, it was her comfort to find his grace was her sufficiency. "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be." During her illness she was a great sufferer, and it was painful indeed at times to witness her distress, but amidst it all the Lord was near, very graciously supporting her in her affliction. Thus in this eventide of her sojourn in the world it was light. Again and again she would speak of herself as a poor, vile sinner, and that the only ground of her hope of acceptance before the throne of God must flow from the riches of his grace. She sighed and longed for release from the earthly house of this tabernacle. Her hope in the Rock of our salvation was bright, and at times blessedly triumphant. Many times during my frequent visits at her bedside I felt it a sacred pleasure to talk and to sing to her of the loving-kindness of the Lord, and of this she again and again expressed her grateful appreciation, and it was very blessed to hear her tell her heart's gratitude to the God of all grace, and of her comfort and hope of life everlasting in Christ Jesus our Lord. At her funeral I spoke from the words, "To die is gain."—Phil. i. 21.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

DIED—March 7th, 1907, sister **Catherine Bundy,** wife of brother Jerome Bundy, of Bainbridge, N. Y. Her maiden name was Jones. She was born in Gilbertsville, N. Y., March 29th, 1831, married to Jerome Bundy Oct. 20th, 1856, died of pneumonia, followed by what is called by physicians heart failure. She was sick ten or twelve days. She, with her husband, was baptized twenty-eight or twenty-nine years ago, by Elder Balas Bundy, uniting with the regular Old School Baptist Church, of Otego, N. Y., remaining in the love and fellowship of the same until her heavenly Father called her to her eternal home. Many, many times within the last year or two she has said, I would love to see the beyond. She longed to see her home beyond, her heavenly home. Her desire is fulfilled perfectly, nothing lacking to be made up in the future, for with the dead there is no future in eternity; this she fully indorsed. She was as firm as a rock in her belief of the doctrine of Christ, election, predestination, salvation by grace, and grace alone, and the resurrection of the church in Jesus Christ from the dead to eternal glory and happiness, and was the most hopeful and confident of any one that I ever knew in the Old School Baptist Church. She felt the need of the grace of God continually, and I am sure that she knew the grace of God in truth. She loved to talk of the mighty power, goodness, mercy and love of God. Many times in the past twenty-eight or twenty-nine years I have been privileged to visit at the home of brother and sister Bundy, and always felt greatly benefited in my visits. She would often say, God spoke to me at such a time, and I cannot, I dare not, question or deny it. She is gone, gone forever from us in the flesh, but in spirit still united, for the body of Christ never has been and never can be separated. She leaves her husband, our dear brother, to mourn the loss of one who had been a helpmeet to him for many years, united by natural and spiritual ties as husband and wife and as children of God. May God bless our dear, lonely, disconsolate brother, who now feels that there is nothing to live for in this world. May God bless him with his own presence to strengthen and comfort him the remainder of his journey. She also leaves four children, one boy and three girls, all very affectionate and kind to mother, as she was to them a kind, loving mother, two sisters, one brother and fourteen grandchildren, who will all miss her much, for they all loved her. May God bless them all with reconciliation to his righteous will for Jesus' sake.

The writer officiated at the funeral March 9th, which was at the home. There was a large attendance. The body of clay was buried in the cemetery near the village.

D. M. VAIL.

OUR dear, precious sister, **Mrs. Mary Shields,** daughter of Elder I. N. Vanmeter, died at her home in Macomb, Ill., Feb. 22nd, 1907. She was a firm, faithful Baptist, and a dear, loving sister.

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 75. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1907. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

RATLIFF, Ky., Feb. 10, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Inclosed you will find a letter written to me by Elder W. J. May, of Pinsonfork, Ky., which I would like to see published in the SIGNS. I consider it worth appearing before the brethren, as I believe it sets forth the sacred truth of God our Savior.

Yours to serve,

J. E. THORNBURY.

REVELATION XX. 12.

"AND I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."

ELDER J. E. THORNBURY—MY DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS SAVIOR'S LOVE:—Your soul-cheering and welcome letter relieved my mind greatly, for I was so anxious to hear from you again that I have been quite restless at times, but your consoling letter has both strengthened and encouraged me now; therefore I will answer your request as best I can, although you have asked a hard thing of me; that is, for my views on the above portion of holy writ, I mean, by saying you have asked a hard thing of me, that I cannot conscientiously deny you, and my view of the text is so faint and dim that it is a great cross to me to let my weak views go before the brethren, and yet I do not feel justified in withholding them when called on for such as I have, for this is all that I can do, and certainly nothing more can be reasonably required of me. I am sure in my mind that I cannot at the most do more than to minister a cup of cold water, comparatively.

Dear brother, in the first place there are two things we should emphasize: first, that the book of Revelation is a summary of the entire Bible, both Old and New Testaments, and briefly mentions the struggles, conflicts and trials of the church or people of God with the powers of the world and Satan, in all ages of the world, and under all circumstances which they were and are called to encounter or predestinated to undergo. Second, that after the second chapter every chapter begins with the copulative conjunction "and," which demonstrates the fact that the entire book of Revelation is one unbroken chain of living testimony of things past, present and to come. In chapters one, nineteen, and at this point, chapter twenty,

he was definitely pointing to the closing out of the old dispensation and the bringing in of the new. In order to make the matter as clear as I can, I will say something in relation to the great white throne and him that sat on it, in the preceding verse, for at this judgment-seat the dead, both great and small, were marshalled to hear the sentence against them according to their works, and their works were evil according to the result that followed. I am of the opinion that the same incident is narrated in Matthew xxv. 31, and to the end of the chapter, inclusive. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne [great white throne] of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep [their name in the book of life] on his right hand, but the goats on the left," &c. The sentence was, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." The following to the end of the chapter shows that all on his left hand were goats, and their works had been evil, and they were judged accordingly. Throne in some instances in the Scriptures denotes sovereign power, and in this text it is strictly qualified: "a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away." This had reference to the former or Jewish heaven and earth in the law dispensation, which was then being rolled together as a scroll, &c. No place found in the gospel heaven for the old legal covenant with its conditions, ceremonies and carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation, (Heb. ix. 10,) or until the change from the old to the new—from the old covenant of works to the new covenant of grace. Hence there is no place found in the new for wrath and curses, for, "There shall be no more curse." And again: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens [legal heavens] shall pass away with a great noise, [weeping and gnashing of teeth] and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up. Seeing that all these things [old covenant things] shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness; looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens, [legal heavens] being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens [gospel heavens] and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." No place found in the gospel heavens for legalism, nothing but the spotless righteousness of Him that sitteth on the throne, the great white throne, "for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." A new heaven and a new earth, a new and living way which he consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne," the great white throne, whereon sitteth the Son of man, the Ancient of days, "whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: [that sat on the throne] the judgment was set, and the books were

opened."—Dan. vii. 9, 10. Doubtless the prophet Daniel was by the inspiration of God portraying the period and event that the apostle has reference to here in the twentieth chapter under consideration, although it was over six hundred years before Christ made his advent into the world, for Daniel beheld the thrones cast down and the Ancient of days (the eternal Son of God) sitting upon this great white throne, with the numerous thousands standing at the judgment-seat. John says, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." We have in this text the idea clearly set forth of two distinct classes or characters, the one is dead and the other is living, and a separate record of each class. The names of all the living are enrolled in the book of life, but the dead in the books, for their names were not found in the book of life, hence were cast into the lake of fire (verse fifteen). I have thought that the books referred to here were the books of the law and former ages and dispensations. Furthermore, I have not thought that this has reference to the end of this material world, or to the corporeal dead, yet I may be mistaken on this point; however, I cannot speak of it in that way, for I have not yet seen it in that light; neither do I believe the "lake" in this connection means punishment after death, although it may. The sea, death and hell all had to deliver up the dead which were in them, for, "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet; and the hail [doctrine of God] shall sweep away the refuge of lies, [false doctrine] and the waters shall overflow the hiding place. And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it."—Isaiah xxviii. 16–18. Again, "Who among us [not of us] shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"—Isaiah xxxiii. 14. So, my dear brother, I am led to the conclusion that those characters denominated "goats" in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, who were driven away into everlasting punishment, and the rich man who died and was buried, and in hell lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and seeing Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom, &c., and the text under consideration, and many other instances, too numerous to mention now, all mean the one and the selfsame thing, the death of the Jewish nation and the dissolving of the Jewish elements, and shutting the door forever against all legal righteousness, and from that time until the present those carnal seed of Abraham (enraged Jews) have been barred out, weeping and gnashing of teeth while beholding Lazarus (gospel subjects) in Abraham's bosom, or gospel rest. I do not think the word "everlasting" is equivalent to eternal, only when God or Christ is the subject in question, therefore the phrases, "everlasting burnings," "everlasting punishment" and the "lake," in this connection, are only used to represent the last state of the Jews, being so much worse than their former state; this is their second death—death to all gospel privileges or new covenant blessings; bound hand and foot and cast out into outer

darkness. It seems clear to my mind that a careful reading of this twentieth chapter will show us that these things have reference to the time state of these people, both dead and living, for the apostle speaks of the thousand years being finished (verse five) and expiring, (verse seven) and we must know that eternity or eternal things do not expire; and following right on to the end of the book proves conclusively that the new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, were still in their true state, for chapter twenty-one says, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea." This is the holy and heavenly Jerusalem. "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but [only] they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."—Verse 27. Forasmuch then as those who "were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works," and their names not being written in the book of life, they could in no wise enter into this holy city, new Jerusalem, which John saw coming down from God, through all the past ages to the glorious gospel day. There is nothing said in this text about those whose names were in the book of life being judged, but only the dead, small and great, whose record was that of the dead; they were not written among the living in Jerusalem, God's chosen and redeemed people, of whom Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation [or judgment]; but is past from death unto life."—John v. 24. I do not think "small and great" here mean infants and adults, but small and great as regards their rank, station or birth, yet I may be deceived.

I know I am occupying controverted ground, and I have written with fear and trembling, and desire the prayers and forbearance of you, dear Elder Thornbury, and all to whom this may come. You may send this to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES if you choose to do so.

Your unworthy, but, I hope, humble servant, for the truth's sake,

W. J. MAY.

PINSONFORK, Ky., Jan. 10, 1907.

FRAGMENTS.

YOU are afraid you have not the right experience of a child of God because you do not have doubts enough, and have never felt the terrible condemnation that others have. Well, the apostle says that God will supply all your needs, (Phil. iv. 19,) and if you need any more doubts, undoubtedly they will be supplied in the Lord's own time and way. If you had no doubts I hardly think you would have asked me to tell you whether I think you are a child of God or not. There are a great many kinds of affliction through which the Lord's people are tried; a great variety of tribulations through which they enter into the kingdom of heaven. The Lord appoints them all, and they all work effectually for the good of his redeemed and for his own glory. You have had some sense of condemnation, for when you were made to see yourself a sinner before God you had a feeling of great sorrow that you should have lived a life of sin before him who is so good and holy. But you think this was not as terrible a feeling as some have. It is almost an impossible thing to compare oneself with another in this respect, and estimate the difference in the power and

strength of the heart's emotions. At the same time that you were shown your true condition before God you were given a feeling of trust in him who doeth all things well, and these words have been precious to you: "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us."—1 John v. 14. You have never been so dark but that you could trust and wait, assured that he would show himself to you again. You are afraid that sounds like boasting, but it is far from boasting. The most joyful times in your life have been when the flesh was utterly crushed by trials and bereavements. Well, instead of being worried by this you have great reason to be thankful that the dear Lord has given you that confiding trust in him, and that sense of his nearness to you in your great afflictions as a very present help in trouble. You could not have had that sacred experience of trust in him if he had not given it to you. He answers the prayers that his Spirit puts in our hearts, but not according to our expectations. "By terrible things in righteousness" he answers us, but he is himself the confidence of those who experience these terrible things; "the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea."—Psalms lxv. 5.

It was a comfort to you to write to me of your strange feeling of trust in the Lord under all your trials and bereavements, and of the doubts that you have because you have not doubts enough, and it was a comfort to me to read what you wrote. You and all the children of God have just the experience the Lord gives you, and that is always the best. It is natural for us to be looking to some others, and comparing our experience and our own gifts with theirs, and we are so apt to think that if we had such an experience as they have we would not doubt. But each one's experience is his own, and he does not really want that of any one else. Our experience is as our life; it is through that that we are taught of Jesus, and come into the knowledge of spiritual things, and through our own troubles we grow in grace. It is in our own tribulation, not in that of some one else, that we rejoice; it is our own tribulation, not that of another, that worketh patience in our own souls, and that brings us to that precious hope which maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. (Romans v. 3–5.)

"THEREFORE being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." I saw lately in a letter by a brother a statement that he placed the comma in the above sentence after the word "justified," because he did not think we are justified by faith. I read the same thing in an article by an English writer. I have wondered at this when the apostle has just been arguing upon this very point, and has said: "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."—Romans iii. 28.

I THINK it is safe, as a general thing, to take the plain reading of the Scriptures in order to come at their meaning. In regard to the certain disciples whom Paul found at Ephesus, it has been thought by some that they had been baptized in gospel order, but did not know it until Paul told them, and that they were not baptized at this time. But we know that a knowledge of Jesus and of the Holy Ghost was necessary in order to a true gospel baptism, and this they did

not have when they were baptized unto John's baptism; and we know that it is stated here in plain, simple language that they were baptized at this time in the name of the Lord Jesus. It reads that way plainly, and to make it read any other way violence must be done to the language. The plain reading of the language is enough; but we can further consider that they must have known the name of Jesus and have been taught by the Holy Ghost at the time of their baptism, in order that it should be gospel baptism. The teaching of Paul afterward concerning the necessity of one being a believer on the name of Christ in order to be baptized would be enough. So we read that "when they heard this," that Paul taught them "they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

FEW heard the dying thief say, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." To the most of those who looked on he was merely a criminal who was receiving just punishment; he was merely a thief. But there was only this difference between him and the rest of the crowd: he had acted out the evil propensities of his heart, while the others had not, or if they had acted them out they felt no condemnation for it, and did not know, as he did, that they merited the punishment of death. But the dying thief is not to be regarded as an extreme case of criminality among those who are saved, as though he occupied a lower, more vile and more degraded place among sinners than the most of those who receive salvation. We know that one stood afar off looking on that terrible scene who must have said to himself, I am viler than he, for I denied my Lord with cursing and swearing, and thus helped to crucify him. And there are times when every redeemed soul, looking into the dark depths of his own heart, is obliged to say of himself what the apostle Peter must have said: I am worse than that thief; I am the chief of sinners. Instead of making the dying thief and Manasseh represent the extremely wicked among sinners, to encourage us to hope for the salvation of those who have given us no evidence while they lived, we rather take them as representing the best, if there be any best, among the redeemed of our God.

"God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants," said Judah, as he and his brethren stood the last time before Joseph. How much there is down in the depths of the heart of the best among men that they look upon with hatred and detestation when the Lord finds it out and forces it upon their view. It does not need that they shall have put it into deeds, or even into words, in order to feel this terrible oppression and hatred of it in the sight of God. They cannot feel free from the sense of guilt because the wickedness, or any part of it, was kept hidden in the heart, but they see God's great mercy manifested in regard to any of that evil that they were restrained from acting out. The covetousness that was kept hidden in the heart, as well as that which was shown in the crimes of the dying thief, the hatred that we have felt, and indulged, in our hearts, as well as that which came red before the world in the murders of Manasseh; they all alike were laid upon the dear Lamb of God, and caused his terrible suffering, crucifixion and death. We are all alike guilty before God, and there is but one way of salvation for all. It is through grace and mercy alone that any are saved. It is the same grace and mercy for each one, the same grace abounding to all. O what

wonderful words, grace and mercy and love through our Lord Jesus Christ.

"ENDEAVORING to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."—Eph. iv. 3. The word "bond" is sometimes incorrectly written in the plural. It is not bonds, but bond. Peace is the one bond in which the Lord's people are held together in this time state, as against all the contrary powers of the flesh that would rend them asunder, as love is, in an absolute and eternal sense, the bond of perfectness. (Col. iii. 14.) To Zion it is said, "I will also make thy officers peace."—Isaiah lx. 17. Peace alone can rule effectually in the church, and no other officers can restore peace among believers. "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding," is amply sufficient to "keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."—Phil. iv. 7. I have known dividing troubles, and very bitter feelings, to disappear at once by the remembrance, or rather the renewal of the blessed experience, of the peace of God, which came to us when the dear Savior appeared as having died for us, and I have never known a good and reliable overcoming of fleshly wounds and troubles and divisions in any other way. "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts."—Col. iii. 15. This is the effectual ruling of a perfect officer.

All the saints are born of one and the same Spirit, and therefore have "one heart and one soul," and should be of the same mind, and the same judgment. They are all baptized by one Spirit into one body, and it is their highest comfort to walk in this one Spirit, and to constantly endeavor to keep this unity of the Spirit, to each turn away from the selfish temptings of the flesh, to deny selfish desires, and seek to know and to follow only the leadings of the Spirit; and when this sweet and holy peace is felt in the heart of each, and manifested as a bond in which all the members are sweetly drawn and held together as one, then it is evident that they all have the one Spirit of Christ, and are keeping the unity of it in that sacred bond, notwithstanding all the natural differences of circumstances and disposition among them, and they then realize what the sweet singer of Israel said: "Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 15, 1907.

BRANTFORD, Canada, Feb. 27, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER IN HOPE OF A RISEN CHRIST:—What I may now have to say in reply to your answer to my letter, published in the January 15th number, is not in any spirit of strife, but in the spirit of love, with a pure desire of knowing the will of God, which to me at this time is a very solemn question.

In your reply you mention my having sent a private letter, but you did not mention anything about my saying that after having written my views upon Acts xix. 1–7, volume one of the Editorials of Elder Gilbert Beebe came into my hands, and that there I found an editorial upon Acts xix. 1–7, by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, in answer to a question of brother Parks, on page 682, fourth and following lines, which I will now quote, but not in full; but before doing so let me say that I am under the firm conviction that the views to which I gave expression upon these verses were not of man, neither by man. Question number three: "Were the twelve disciples mentioned in Acts xix. 1–7, rebaptized?" Reply by Elder

Gilbert Beebe: "We answer, No. The twelve disciples whom Paul met at Ephesus had been baptized probably by Apollos, with or unto John's baptism, and Paul expounded to them the manner of John's baptism: that he (John) baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him that was to come, namely, on Christ; and when the people heard this preaching of John they were baptized (by John of course) in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Would it be asking too much for you to republish Elder Beebe's reply to the above question in full?

I would also like to call your attention to one or two other portions of your reply: You state, "If it be admitted that the Old School Baptists, in America, and the Strict Baptists, in England, did what was right, and what had the approval of God, in separating themselves from the New School Baptists, in America, and the General Baptists, in England, then henceforth they could not recognize what was done by those from whom they separated, as having the approval of God."

Do the Strict Baptists, of England, lay down such a hard and fast rule? I think not; they never have done so. If what I am given to understand is correct, the late editor of the *Gospel Standard*, J. C. Philpot, took very strong grounds against asking all who came from the General Baptists to be rebaptized, and they do now receive into their fellowship those who come, without asking them to be rebaptized, if they have reason to believe they were subjects of grace at the time of their baptism.

Let us now suppose a case. If one in full fellowship with the Strict Baptists should come to the door of the Old School Baptist Church, but had received baptism at the hands of the General Baptists, would you refuse to receive such an one into your fellowship?

There seems to be one other point which you seem to have overlooked. I again quote from your reply to my letter: "To-day, for instance, should any one be baptized without the use of the formula of words, 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,' though all else might be in order, still his baptism would not be according to the word of God, and therefore not a valid baptism." To my mind your statement proves one of two things: either that they were not rebaptized, (of which we read in Acts xix.) or that they went through a form, but they have not yet received a valid baptism, for they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

In closing let me say I feel that I must have a "thus saith the Lord" before I could take the views which you hold, even at the risk of having to go the remainder of my days without church fellowship. The Lord knows I want to do the right. I am but a poor sinner, but one, I trust, saved by grace.

In justice to myself, and to your readers, I request that my letter be published in full, and if you can, I again ask that Elder Beebe's editorial upon Acts xix. 1–7, be republished; for I feel many of your readers would be glad to read it. Let me say that I admire the spirit of your letters; although I cannot indorse all you say, your words have great weight.

Yours in christian fellowship,

FRED SIMMONS.

[WE thought not to say any more upon the subject concerning which we have recently written twice lengthily in reply to former letters from our friend, whose

letter we published above, at least for the present, but as our friend feels that in justice to him we ought to publish the above letter, we will do so, and here make a few remarks in addition. We think it will be best with this to close this matter for the present, because when differences are dwelt upon too long the discussion is apt to degenerate into controversy, and the desire to simply ascertain the truth is swallowed up in a strife for the mastery, and this cannot be profitable.

With regard to the text in Acts, named by us both, we know there are differences of judgment. To our mind the conjunction "and" would have been placed in the text before the expression "When they heard this," &c., had the inspired writer intended to say that this baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus took place when they were baptized by John the Baptist. Because this word "and" is omitted, it seems clear to us that these men did now receive baptism at the hands of Paul. But let our judgment concerning this text be what it may, it cannot affect the truth, first, that all immersions are not gospel baptism. This our friend also believes. Second, strictly speaking there is no such thing as rebaptism, in the sense of gospel baptism. If one has received gospel baptism once, the second immersion would not be gospel baptism. There can be but one gospel baptism, even as there can be but one Lord and one faith to us as the disciples of the Lord. Third, whatever this text may mean, it cannot disturb the truth that three things are needful to all baptisms under the gospel; these three things are a right subject, a right mode and a right administrator. If it be asked, How do we know that the subject of the ordinance must be a believer possessing living faith? the answer is that there is no record of any others receiving baptism, in the New Testament. All that is said of this ordinance involves the thought of believers receiving it. "If thou believest," was the requirement. If any did receive immersion who were not believers, they were not baptized in the sense of the obedience required in the gospel. If it be asked in the second place, How do we know that immersion alone is baptism? the answer must be the same, viz., that there is no record of any other form being regarded as baptism; nothing is said of sprinkling or pouring. In the third place, if it be asked, How do we know that none save a called minister of the gospel is authorized to baptize? the answer is the same, viz., that there is no record of baptism being administered by any save such a minister.

As regards the practice of the Strict Baptists, in England, we have never been informed, but have taken it for granted that to withdraw fellowship from any one, or from any people, in all cases would be understood to involve having no dealings with them as churches or in a religious sense afterward. To declare nonfellowship for any one must mean that, or else we cannot know what it does mean. If we, as Old School Baptists, could have recognized New School Baptist churches as gospel churches, we had no right to declare nonfellowship for them, it was our duty to have abided together with them, and we did wrong in separating from them. If our declaration of nonfellowship was justified at all, then it means that we had no fellowship in Christ for them, and that we did not believe that their fellowship was with the Father and with the Son. We most certainly believe this of them now, else we would walk in fellowship with them.

Nonfellowship means that their members cannot commune with the church of Christ, and that their ministers must not administer the ordinances of the church, either in preaching, prayer, baptism or the supper. All these things are expressions of gospel fellowship, and if that fellowship does not exist these acts are expressive of falsehood. From the moment when the church of Christ declared nonfellowship for those with whom she had been affiliated before, because they had now so grievously departed from the truth, she could not receive their religious rites, as being done under the command of the Master, without stultifying herself, and giving her solemn act of withdrawal the seal of condemnation. If the baptism of those from whom the church has withdrawn fellowship would be valid when done years ago, then it would be valid now, and if valid now, then it would be equally right to receive the supper at their hands, and to give them all the rights and privileges of the church.

We do sympathize deeply with our friend, and feel to be one with him in the experience of the grace of God. We do not doubt that he was immersed with sincerity in his own heart, and it is not ours to question that the minister who immersed him was a good man and a lover of grace, but he was not walking with the true church of Christ, and so it was not his to perform the ordinances of that church. We have said much more than we expected to say when we began what we have here written, and now think it will be wise to leave the subject with the brethren. God alone, by his Holy Spirit, can lead any of us to know and walk in the truth. It is best to remember the word of the apostle, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." We hope that we and our dear friend may be given to obey this word. We will now close the subject by republishing the editorial by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, as requested by our friend.—C.]

"Were the twelve disciples mentioned in Acts xix. 1–7, rebaptized?" We answer, No. The twelve disciples whom Paul met at Ephesus had been baptized probably by Apollos, with or unto John's baptism; and Paul expounded to them the manner of John's baptism: that he (John) baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him that was to come, namely, on Christ; and when the people heard this preaching of John they were baptized (by John of course) in the name of the Lord Jesus. This accounted for these disciples' ignorance of the name of the Holy Ghost, as that sacred name had not been mentioned in the administration of the ordinance by John. Had they been baptized by any of the apostles after the commission to preach the gospel to every creature, &c., baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, they certainly would have heard whether there was a Holy Ghost; but, as they knew only John's baptism, they needed that the apostle should give them the instruction contained in the passage under consideration.

Some have mistaken the words, "When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus," to indicate that when these twelve disciples had heard what Paul said about John's baptism, they were rebaptized by Paul: but this cannot be, for at least two good reasons. 1st. Paul's definition of John's preaching and baptism would have been vague and incomplete if separated from

that clause which was especially designed to show wherein John's baptism differed from the manner of administration by the apostles, after the ascension of Christ. And 2nd. If Paul had rebaptized them he would not have administered the ordinance in the name of the Lord Jesus, as this would have been but a repetition of John's baptism. As in the baptism by John the name of the Holy Ghost was not mentioned, so neither in the ordinance as administered by the apostles after the day of Pentecost, was the name, Lord Jesus, mentioned.

Again, to have rebaptized these because Apollos had baptized them after the manner of John, would have been to invalidate the baptism not only of these twelve, but of all who lived in that day who had been baptized in the same manner; and what would be still more dreadful, it would have been virtually charging our Lord with setting an imperfect example when, being himself baptized of John in Jordan, he said, "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness."

WAVERLY, Pa., March 8, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As I am home for a couple of days, and not feeling well, thought I would answer a few more questions as best I can, and leave them with you to publish or not, as you think best.

First: What advantage has a church that belongs to an association over one that does not? Answer: Not any, from a spiritual standpoint. There are many sound, healthy, gospel churches that never have belonged to any association. Many churches that were once connected with associations are separated from them, and are still walking in gospel order. I would much rather stand with a little church in gospel order than twenty or more large churches in an association in disorder. Leading spirits, working in their own selfish interest, have caused a great deal of trouble, confusion and disorder in many associations that I know of. I also know of associations that I believe are orderly and helpful to the churches. I stand mostly neutral on the subject of associations.

Second question: Is it proper or right for one minister to serve as pastor several churches? Answer: If it is in the heart and mind of several churches to call one minister to serve each or all of them, it is self-evident that it is right for that one to serve them; the mind of the Lord must decide who shall and who shall not serve. No minister can force his services on any church, and any effort to do so will prove disastrous to the one thus minded or led; it is the flesh that prompts such efforts. The gift of a man will make room for him, and if the gift of a man does not make room for him in the heart of the church, opening meeting-house doors surely will not; God works harmoniously. When God calls a man to preach, he will preach, and some one will be called to hear him. If a man wants to preach and cannot find a place, the evidence is he is not called to preach. The evidence that a man is called to preach is that he does preach, and God's people are comforted, edified, instructed, built up, strengthened and fed.

Third question: What is your mind about a church having a pastor and calling an assistant pastor? Answer: There can be no such thing as an assistant pastor. A pastor of a church may have some infirmities, and the duties devolving upon him may be more than he feels able to perform; if there should be another minister that could assist or take part of

the work, I can see nothing wrong in it; he can assist the pastor, but cannot be pastor, in any sense, while the church has her called pastor. A church may have a pastor who can meet with them but one Sunday in a month; this will not hinder the church from having supplies the remaining Sundays, if she can procure them, but they are supplies, not assistant pastors.

Fourth question: Is there any middle ground between "can't help it" and can help it? I can see no room for a middle ground in this any more than I can between grace and works. The apostle tells us if it is of grace, then it is no more of works; and if it is of works, then it is no more of grace; it is not both, neither is it a mixture; it is by grace alone. This is the ground I take, and it is Bible ground, if I am not deceived. If the doctrine of "can't help it" is true, the doctrine of can help it is false; if the idea of can help it is true, the idea of "can't help it" is false. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, he also made every living thing, and every living thing has a nature, and a disposition to act out that nature, and they cannot act out any nature except that which God gave them; this is also true of the vegetable kingdom. What power can make a change? "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil." A corrupt fountain cannot send forth pure water, neither can a bad tree bring forth good fruit; make the fountain sweet, and it cannot send forth bitter water; make the tree good, and it cannot bear bad fruit. By the power of the spirit of the flesh Job's wife said, "Curse God, and die." By the power of faith Job said, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Can help it will not work in these cases. In the covenant that God made with Abraham he told him that his seed should sojourn in a strange land so many years, and be in bondage. Finally the time came when they were to be delivered, brought out, taken to the Red Sea; they stood still, the sea divided by command, they went through, then they sang a song; next the forty years journey in the wilderness, with its very peculiar trials and deliverances, and their final entrance into the land of Canaan, a land of plenty. Where, in all the various changes and circumstances in connection with the history of that typical people, Israel, can the term, can help it, be applied? I answer, Nowhere; but in every step they trod, in every condition they were placed, every trial they encountered, every deliverance they experienced from first to last of that wonderful journey, "can't help it" is proclaimed in unmistakable language. This being true literally of the typical people of God, we will certainly find a corresponding testimony with and in the antitype spiritually. Jeremiah declares, "I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Paul says, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Again, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Again, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established. The testimony of God's people by Moses and the prophets, and Jesus and his disciples, and down to this present time, is pregnant with the

truth embraced in the words, I "can't help it." Sometimes I feel a spirit of love to God and his people, joy and gladness fill my poor heart, I cannot help it, I do not want to help it; sometimes I feel cast down, mean, ugly and all out of sorts, and I "can't help it;" I certainly would if I could. "The good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." I do not mean that I am transgressing the law of the land by stealing, cheating, murdering and such like crimes; no, no, but it is a positive fact that I do things I ought not to do, and say things I ought not to say, and I cannot help but confess it.

I hope I have written plain enough, so that my brethren may understand me, and I hope I may not offend or hurt my dear kindred in Christ in my style of writing. I enjoy the SIGNS very much, and wish that I could write to edify the readers as others do, but alas, it is not my gift, if I have any.

I sign myself, a brother in sympathy with all the "can't help its."

D. M. VAIL.

RALEIGH, N. C., Feb. 27, 1907.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—For some cause the subject of Jephthah and his daughter has been in my mind for some days, and I would like to write a few lines for your much esteemed paper upon the subject, but I fear I shall not be able to write to profit.

It seems from the Scriptures that Jephthah was hated by the rest of the children of Gilead because he was the son of a strange woman, and they thrust him out of their house, but by and by they got into trouble; the Ammonites encamped in Gilead and made war against the Israelites, and it was a question as to who was able to fight against them, and by some kind of wisdom they centred on Jephthah as their captain, and it was agreed between him and them that if he would be their captain he should be their head, and they called on God to witness the agreement, and so they made him their head; and as after consultation with the king of Ammon he failed to make a peaceable settlement, Jephthah decided to fight against them, but before entering the battlefield he made a vow unto the Lord after this manner: that if the Lord would without fail deliver the children of Ammon into his hands, he would offer for a burnt offering that which first met him on his return home. And he smote them from Aroer, even to Minnith, and to the plain of the vineyards with a great slaughter. Thus the children of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel. Now this was called by men Jephthah's rash vow, but I think it is one of God's ways to speak to the fathers by the prophets. As Paul said, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days [gospel days] spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." All those things were types, of which Jesus is the end. I will first call attention to their hatred for him who must become their head and leader: "He is despised and rejected of men."—Isaiah liii. 3. Again, John i. 11: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." But now they are in trouble, and they appeal unto him and respect him. So with the children of God, when they are shown their true condition they appeal unto the One they have previously hated.

Now a few words about the "vow." I wish to notice the strength of the language, If "without fail" they were de-

livered into his hand, then he would surely offer that which came forth from the doors of his house. I think this is a figure of the covenant that Jesus entered into with his Father before the greatest of all battles was fought and the greatest of all victories won; this covenant was ordered in all things and sure, and fully kept by Him who made it. We do not know that Jephthah had in view what he would offer, but we do know that Jesus knew what he would offer: it was Jephthah's only daughter who met him, for besides her he had neither son nor daughter; and as she met him with timbrels and dances he said to her, "Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me; for I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back." Jephthah had wonderful respect unto his word, and the reply was, "My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth; forasmuch as the Lord hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon."

Jesus said in the garden, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." The child, the only one of her father, must die. "Without shedding of blood there is no remission" of sin. All the offerings had failed, sacrifices and burnt offerings for sin afforded no pleasure to God, so in the volume of the book it is written of Jesus, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." So we clearly see Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, was brought to view in the offering of the damsel. She said to her father, "Let me alone two months, that I may go up and down upon the mountains, and bewail my virginity, I and my fellows." For some years Jesus was in the flesh, "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," with his fellows (his disciples), talking to them and telling them his mission in the world, what he came down from heaven for, that he must go as it was written of him, he must be lifted up, must be betrayed into the hands of sinners. I can imagine this girl's feelings, telling her fellows, I can only be with you two months, then I must return unto my father and be offered, according to his vow. How sorrowful she must have felt, but if she murmured it is not on record, and it is said, "She knew no man." Jesus was holy, harmless, higher than the heavens, separate from sinners. It was a custom in Israel to meet four days in a year to lament the daughter of Jephthah, the Gileadite, and it is now a custom in spiritual Israel to meet and talk of the sufferings, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Lovingly submitted.

W. A. SIMPKINS.

SHERWOOD, Ore., Feb. 3, 1907.

ELDER H. C. KER—ESTEEMED BROTHER:—I inclose a letter written to me by our beloved brother, Elder Wm. H. Gilmore, which I think would be good reading for the patrons of our beloved old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have hesitated in sending it on account of the reference made in it to myself, but in thinking the matter over, I have concluded to send it, knowing that I am now old, and feeble-minded, and no doubt need all the encouragement I can get.

J. P. ALLISON.

NORTH YAKIMA, Wash., Jan. 6, 1907.

ELDER J. P. ALLISON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—After a long silence, for

which I might offer many excuses, perhaps after all the main reason for not replying to your highly esteemed letter being negligence, I will write you a few lines; but, my old father in Israel, it is hard for me, just a boy in knowledge and a child in understanding, to address one who has grown old in the service of the Master, and who is also able in the doctrine of God our Savior. But while I can see such superiority and wisdom in my old brethren, I am able to glean comfort and encouragement by the way, because I find that they feast on the same precious truths that I do; they rejoice in the same gospel that is precious to me. Here my mind runs back to the last time we were together, with the church at Touchet. This was to me a Pentecostal feast; it did seem that the house was filled with the Holy Ghost; and our hearts rejoiced when we could see the Spirit resting upon each of the Lord's servants, inditing words for them whereby they could comfort the waiting children of God. How precious it is when the Lord talks directly to us through his called servants; do not our hearts burn within us? These bright and cheering seasons by the way are for the time being beautiful camping places for the true Israelites, but, as of old, these camping places cannot abide, and we are required to resume our journey; and this will not be hard if the beautiful bright cloud of God's glory moves gently on before, for it lights our path to the next camping place; but perchance at this camp Aaron may be induced to make us a molten image, and the smoke of our incense offered to this idol will so obscure our vision that we cannot see the bright cloud of God's glory ahead; but the Lord is still ahead, and when we have passed through sufficient scourging to bring us to pray for mercy we find that the gracious Lord answers ere we are through asking; then again we take up our journey, moving a little more carefully, remembering the waters of Meribah are bitter, and the bite of the serpents is deadly. All of these trials of the children of God are without meaning to the world, but the prophet Zechariah has pointed out this very people, saying, "I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God." Shall we ask where these people are to-day? I would answer unhesitatingly: The people of like experience, who are going forth by the footprints of the flock, the people who are walking by faith and not by sight; in short, the people who contend that salvation is of the Lord, first, last and all the time, by grace through faith, and that not of themselves. The prophet evidently has under consideration the same class of people that the apostle John spoke of, saying, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." We take it for granted that Jesus was the same Lord that the prophet had under consideration, or in other words, it was the Spirit of Christ speaking through the prophet; so then, men believe and trust in the Lord because of something done for them, and the first thing absolutely necessary to enable them to act spiritually is life; yes, eternal life, rendering the subject capable of receiving a higher order of knowledge than it is possible for man to attain to in a state of death by sin. Through this life men grow in grace and the knowledge

of the truth. The essential elements of growth are found alone in the great spiritual Fountain, and the development is only through the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But I must refrain from writing more on this line, remembering your more perfect knowledge of the word of inspiration. If what I have written is in harmony with gospel truth, receive it in honor of the Lord Jesus, knowing as you do that without him we can do nothing.

I received a letter a few days ago from our esteemed brother, Elder I. N. Newkirk, and he requested me to forward the same to you, which I will do. This leaves my family reasonably well, except my wife, who is suffering with neuralgia. The brethren and sisters are well as far as I know. I hope this will find you and mother Allison enjoying the blessings of health, and that your spiritual enjoyments may be continual. Write when convenient. My wife joins me in christian love and fellowship.

W. H. GILMORE.

ROLAND PARK, BALTIMORE, Md., Feb. 1, 1907.

ELDER H. C. KER—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I have a subscription to send to you, which should have gone several days ago, but I felt that I wanted to write you something of a religious nature, and have been waiting to feel that I had something to say, but I am as blank this morning as ever, but feel that I must send the subscription.

There is a subject that has been in my mind for some time; it is this: I see it mentioned often in our papers that there are differences that give trouble to our people in different sections of the country. I do not know that I can fully appreciate the conditions that surround many of our people, never having been mixed up with those things or those people who make trouble in our churches, but I often wonder if those differences are not more seeming than real. As long as there is individuality there will be differences of opinion about questions that may arise, and I have thought perhaps there has been, and is, a tendency to withdraw from brethren who do not see things just as we do, or say things just as we would say them, too soon. Let us see if they have a good hope through grace and are orderly in their lives; if so, let us bear with them, and labor in love for peace and unity in fellowship. It is evident from Paul's letter to the Galatians that they were in disorder, and were trusting in the flesh to some extent, at least. He says, "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain?" But Paul did not forsake them, he said Jesus crucified; had evidently been set forth before them, and he loved them for Jesus' sake. If I am not much mistaken, I love every man and woman in whom I find the evidence of a knowledge of their own sins and a loving desire for the righteousness of Jesus our Lord. Let us labor, my brethren, everywhere, for the union and sweet fellowship of all such sinners, for they are the sons of God now; and it is written, "Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the Lord." Instead of looking for differences, let us look for those things and ways in which we are alike. When Primitive Baptists do as John said: "Speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen," they never have trouble; these things instead of separating always join them together in the bonds of sweet fellowship. When Baptists quarrel it is apt to be about some question that

neither of them understand. Brethren, talk of the wonders of Jesus, and of what you hope he has taught you of himself and his glorious and precious kingdom, and you shall "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" This oneness is too sweet for us to neglect for any length of time and to quarrel with each other. May God grant us the mind that was in his Son, that bears with faults and failings, and manifests loving forbearance and fellowship.

Your brother, I hope,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Feb. 10, 1907.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I am sitting alone this evening, thinking of the things we heard this morning. Ever since leaving the meeting I have felt constrained to write you. What I am going to write about I do not know, but I am certain of feeling more comfortable after telling you that my words this morning, when speaking to you, did not correspond with what was uppermost in my mind; but to tell you then meant to break down. All the time of the meeting the tears would gather in my eyes; when in prayer you asked that it might be given us to pray that you would be given strength to speak, at that very moment it was in my mind, and I was hoping the Lord would draw very near to you, that you might feel his presence round about you. As it is written, "Before they call I will answer." It is certain, if you felt weak and barren, his strength was made perfect in your weakness. Early this morning it seemed the storm would prevent my going to meeting, but I am very glad to have been there. The sermon was a feast of fat things to me, and although you compared your own state of mind to the dry bones, yet I hope you were comforted, too, in speaking, while the Lord blessed you and enabled you to present the truth to the comfort of at least one poor and helpless soul. Whenever you speak of being cast down, or cold and lifeless spiritually, I always wonder what you must think of me, who am always saying and doing the things I should not. It seems to me my counterpart is found in Peter; very often I have to compare myself to him, in that I am so impulsive, and always doing the thing that I have to be sorry for and mourn over afterward. But one great trouble that is with me often is, that I do not feel as sensible of my sinful state as I ought, and do not mourn because it is so as much as I ought. Often I wonder why it is that I can be happy while I know my sins are as mountains. Sometimes it is a question whether it is best that I have the disposition to look on the bright side of things, and then sometimes I remember who gave it to me, and also remember some of the things I have been called on to pass through, and am made to say that he knows what is best for me; that he doeth all things well. But when you allude to your walk as being imperfect, it makes me feel very humble. If you feel to mourn because you are not what you think you ought to be, how must I appear in your sight? I must appear as a very dry bone indeed. At times it seems if it were not for the desire I have to meet in the assemblies of the saints, and the love I have for the brethren, I would have no hope at all. If I know my own heart, I can truly say that to meet with the brethren for worship is my chief delight. This morning when you spoke of those who absent themselves from the meetings, I thought how I would like to tell them my experience in this matter, and to urge

them to always be in the meetings while it is possible, for no one knows how soon this privilege may be taken from them. I am obliged to confess that I did not always feel the importance of being in my place at the meetings as I do now, and I have seen the time when little things were sometimes allowed to keep me away. Well, the time came when I had to stay away, and in the eight years that I went only by making a great effort to get there, I learned a great many things I had never known before. I found it a very different thing to stay away occasionally because it suited me, than to stay away because I had to. So my advice to all lovers of the truth is to go while they can, for the day may come when they will find themselves wanting to go and cannot. Then you spoke of our being faithful, and that even if others turned away we should be found in our places. It carried me back a few years to a Sunday morning when you talked about the disciple asking Jesus what he would have another to do, and he answered, "What is that to thee? Follow thou me." That has always remained with me, and helped me out of many difficulties.

This letter is much longer than I intended; I hope I have not tired you, I just wanted to ask you to pardon (if you can) what you see amiss in me.

I am very glad to have you home again, and I hope you will soon recover your usual health.

Your sister in love and fellowship,

ANNA J. SUTPHEN.

CONWAY, Ark., Feb. 15, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have thought time and again that I would like to write a few lines to let you know how very much I appreciate the good, old family paper. It comes to me regularly, and always brings good news from the children of God, which fills my hungry soul, for I am poor and needy. I need the grace of God to help me in my afflictions, and to subdue the sins that dwell in this flesh of mine. I can say, with old Job, "I am vile," no soundness in me from the sole of my feet to the crown of my head. When I was young I would look at my dear, old father and mother, and other old soldiers of the cross, and they appeared so good to me that I wished I was as good as they were. I thought when I got older I would be, but alas, my brethren and sisters, the older I get the more vividly I see my sins; so I feel sometimes that I am no better.

The reason of some for not liking the Old Baptists is, they say they sing the same old song, and all write the same way. If he put a new song in our mouth, it was not songs. He said a song, (not songs) so if we write or talk about the one thing needful, we will have to write and talk about the same Jesus. It may sound old and like fogyism to some people, but the name of Jesus always sounds sweet and fresh in a believer's ear. Dear, old Paul said he was determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified. We should be thankful when we are ridiculed, and not let these things move us. Our blessed Redeemer says, "My sheep hear my voice, * * * and they follow me." But "a stranger will they not follow;" so if we only know that sweet voice it is enough, for it is but one. There are many voices gone out in the world, even among the Old Baptists, but Paul warned us of these things. Dear ministering brethren, stand firm, and cry aloud, and spare not. Perhaps I am too bold in admonishing the brethren, such a

worm of the dust as I am, but, as John said, I do not write this because you do not know it, but because you do know it; you know that many of our great men (as we thought) have gone after the great "beast."

If I have written anything wrong, I ask forgiveness; lay it aside, and I will not write more, for I love the old SIGNS too well to dishonor it; it is about all the preaching I have. Our church is far away, and I am getting old, hence it is not so I can go often. When my dear husband was living we seldom missed a meeting until he became afflicted. Dear brethren and sisters, pray for me, a poor sinner, saved by that same Jesus if saved at all. O what a blessed thought, to have such a Foundation, that is sure and steadfast.

I must close, for I feel too unworthy to write about such things. Of myself I am nothing; only through Christ is hope of my salvation.

Your unworthy sister,

LOUISE GLENN.

BENNINGS, D. C., Feb. 26, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have often felt a desire to write a few lines to the SIGNS, but I feel so unworthy that I have put it off. I receive the SIGNS regularly, containing the glorious truth of the gospel that I firmly believe. We hear in Washington the gospel preached every third Sunday in the month by our dear brother, Elder J. T. Rowe. I think I am blessed with more than I deserve when I read in the SIGNS of dear brethren and sisters so far away from such privileges. I do love to read your good editorials and the letters from brethren and sisters; they are a great comfort to this poor, mourning soul, for they write the doctrine that I believe. I cannot help but believe that God has a people, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. I certainly am glad it is not by works that we are saved, for I know that it is nothing I have done or ever can do; if I am saved it is by grace, and grace alone. I feel to say with Paul, "that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." "For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." I often think how thankful we poor, helpless worms of the dust should be that he can have mercy on us. I believe that the Old School Baptists are the only denomination that preaches the doctrine the Bible teaches. We read in John xvii. 4, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." None can believe this doctrine but those that are born again. Christ said on one occasion, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14. So it is impossible for one dead in trespasses and sin to be taught the things of the kingdom of God. You cannot teach a dead man anything. We read in the eighth chapter of Romans that there is nothing that can separate us from the love of God. What a glorious thought, what a great comfort to a helpless sinner, for there are none but the children of God that know they are lost and helpless sinners, dependent on the mercy of a just and holy God.

My love to you and brother Chick. May God give you both as editors health and wisdom to still write the glorious truth as contained in the Bible. Please cast the mantle of charity over these imperfect lines.

Your unworthy brother, if one,

THOMAS ALDEN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1907.

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EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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INQUIRIES ANSWERED.

WHERE is the justice of an innocent being suffering for a guilty one? In the SIGNS for Jan. 15th appears the above question in a letter from Elder C. C. Purvines to Elder D. M. Vail. Brother Vail did not reply, and asked that brother Ker should do so. Brother Ker informs us that he does not feel like answering the question. While we cannot claim any understanding of the matter more than these brethren possess, still it is in our mind to suggest a few thoughts which we have long had concerning it, and hope that what we may say will not deter either of the above named brethren from also writing if they should at any time feel to do so.

In the first place, this is not a question to be reasoned out according to the ideas which prevail among mere creatures. All we can know about this or any other spiritual thing is, and must be, solely what is found revealed in the holy Scriptures concerning it. The question propounded by our brother is as though it were asked, Where is the justice of the just suffering for the unjust? Where is the justice in this statement: He who knew no sin was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him? Where is the justice in one being put to death for the sins of others? These and other expressions are the testimony of the Scriptures with regard to the atonement, and they must be accepted as being according to the righteous will of God. Indeed, the dear Savior himself said, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?" Again, he said, "Thus it behoved Christ to suffer." It was then, according to the righteous will of God, that the holy and just One should be put to death that sinners might be saved everlastingly. These are all scriptural statements, and are to be received and believed without any questioning whatever. It is all-important that these things be received by us; but it is not important that we understand how all this can be just. It is enough if we find it is declared that the Just did give himself for the unjust. Indeed, if there is to be an atonement for the sins of any one who is guilty, that atonement must be made by the sacrifice of one who is himself innocent; the guilty must die for his own sins if he dies at all, and therefore cannot die for the sins of others; this all the types declare. All sacrifices for sin, for trespass and for transgression in every form, under the types of the Mosaic covenant must be absolutely without flaw or blemish. Blemishes were symbols of sinfulness. That all sacrifices must be free from blemishes, declared to all who could understand, that the great Antitype also must be free from all sin in nature and in life. There could be no such thing as a sinful redeemer, and so Christ is again and again declared to be holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners; and only as he was thus free from sin could he be accepted as a sacrifice for our sins. If, then, there is to be a sacrifice for our sins at all, that sacrifice must be innocent; if our sins are to be

laid upon him he must have none of his own. We do not need to use argument in this matter, since the word of God declares that the innocent, or the just, did suffer for the unjust, that He might bring them to God.

It is not needful, again we say, that we see how this can be just, it is only needful that we read the word of God to see if it be so. God's ways and thoughts are far above our ways and thoughts; what is confusion to us is all plain to him. The Judge of all the earth cannot do aught but what is right, and we must not undertake to judge his ways by our foolishness and ignorance.

We have heard men who, unlike our dear brethren named above, did not believe that Christ was the Savior at all, in the sense of making atonement for the sins of his people, urge that for Christ to die for us would be unjust. It cannot be right, they have said, that the holy should die for the unholy. Therefore as they judged that it could not be just they denied the plain testimony of the word concerning it. But to argue thus is to deny the most common facts of providence. God is the God of providence as well as the God of grace and salvation. A child transgresses his father's commandments and harm comes to him. Great as his suffering may be as the result of this transgression, his father suffers still more. A drunkard brings more suffering upon his innocent family than he does upon himself. These are but instances of the arrangements of God in providence. The same God has also arranged the way of redemption, and in redemption, as in providence, the innocent one suffered for the guilty. The justice of God is not ours to question or to measure. Let us receive as little children the plain testimony of the word of God.

NEW HOPE Ark., Jan. 3, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I wrote some time ago asking you to give your views upon Josh. iv. 7-9. I would be glad to have you write upon this Scripture.

Your sister,

MARGARET STEVENS.

We do not now recall the former letter of which our sister speaks. We would not willingly disregard the request of any one who desires to know the meaning of the Scriptures.

The chapter to which our attention is called narrates that Joshua commanded, first, that twelve men, who had been selected before, should take twelve stones from the center of the river Jordan, where the feet of the priests who bare the ark of the covenant stood with the ark until all Israel had passed over, and erect a memorial of them in the place where they lodged their first night in the land of Canaan. Then they were commanded that when their children should ask what these stones meant, they should be told about the wonders of the Lord, wrought in behalf of their fathers at Jordan. Then we are told that Joshua took twelve stones and erected them in Jordan where the feet of the priests stood, as a memorial of the sovereign power of God.

We desire to briefly call attention to a few things here: Jordan is not a type of death, neither is Canaan a type of heaven. The name Jordan means "river of judgment," and not river of death. Canaan cannot be a type of heaven, unless we are willing to believe that heaven is a place of strife and warfare against the foes of God and righteousness. Canaan is an excellent type of the believer's warfare during all his earthly pilgrimage, wherein he wrestles against spiritual wickedness in high places; but still, Canaan is not Egypt, neither is it the wilderness. There is warfare there, but there is not bond-

age or wandering. Believers are freed, through living faith in Christ, from the bondage of corruption, and from the restless wandering under the law, seeking for rest and finding none, when they enter into rest, by ceasing from their own works, and being brought to believe in Christ as he who has fulfilled the law for them, and so has given them rest forever. But still after this, and all their life long on earth, the Canaanite will be found in the land, and foes of various kinds must be met and fought against constantly, as was the case with Israel in Canaan. But how blessed is this land, even though there be unceasing warfare there, when compared with Egypt and its hopeless bondage, and with the weary wilderness great and terrible. But Israel was prone to be forgetful then of all the mercies of God and of his almighty power; so the people of God are still prone to forget God's great mercy to them. To help Israel remember the deliverance wrought out for them at Jordan these two heaps of stones were commanded to be erected for a memorial. This always has been, and still continues to be, a world-wide custom; great events and great men are honored in that way in all the earth. Here were mightier deeds done than men ever have done, and so Joshua caused that monuments should be erected, one in Jordan and one in Gilgal. The one in Jordan could not be seen by the eye of men, yet it was there, erected by the hands of Joshua himself. Our spiritual Joshua has erected an everlasting monument to his great work of staying the waters of God's judgment until all his spiritual people have passed over. This monument, hidden save to the faith of his people, is always before him, and is the token that divine judgment has been fully met in behalf of his people. He sees the stones in this Jordan, as he saw before in Egypt the sprinkled blood, and passed over every house where he saw it. These waters of divine judgment can never prevail against his people. The ark of the covenant is their security as they pass over, but no other people shall ever travel this pathway. Jordan's waters of judgment shall overflow all others, even as the waters of the Red Sea overwhelmed Pharaoh and his army, though furnishing a firm pathway for the Israel of God. God's people have a memorial also, which they are given to see, and this is in their first resting-place in the new land, the land of promise. Surely we need not say that to every true Israelite this would always be a sacred place, and how gladly and thankfully would they look upon the heap of stones which was their memorial to these wonderful events. There is not to-day a child of God who does not love to go back to the place of his first rest and remember all that the Lord wrought for him there. There are Ebenezers all along the way, but there is no other like this first possession of the land.

SOME time since, sister Mary Brewster, of Hopewell, N. J., expressed a desire to know what are the little foxes that spoil the vines, referred to in Solomon's Song ii. 15.

The figure in this immediate connection is that of a garden. The husband and the bride find their delight in walking through this garden and beholding the pleasant fruits, and breathing the pleasant odors. The garden is the church of God, wherein the true Bridegroom of the soul dwells, and which is the delightful abode of all who love him, and whom he loves. But this garden is represented as needing care; the wild boar of the

wood may waste it, the little foxes may spoil it; these constant enemies seek to enter at every unguarded place. If the church as a body be referred to, the hedge, or wall, of true spiritual discipline must be kept intact everywhere, else these evils find a ready entrance, and waste the garden, or spoil the vines which bear the tender grapes. If each individual believer be referred to as the garden, then the foxes and the wild boar are the secret sins, and the sins that come in more boldly and openly to ravage and devour. Their work is fearful, whether it be the church as a whole, or the individual believer that is considered. It is not any more true that one child of God, if he lives after the flesh shall die, than it is true that any church living after the flesh shall also die. The vines are the children of grace planted in this garden, the grapes are the fruits of the Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, faith, hope, humility, long-suffering and all other fruits of the Spirit. But these fruits may be devoured by foxes, and the little foxes are specially dangerous; they can creep in at small places, places in the hedge which, without great care, may escape our notice. While full grown foxes would at once excite our fear, the little foxes are so playful, and so apparently harmless, that we may grow careless of them, and so they come in more readily, and speedily devour the tender grapes. The word "spoil," here, and in other places in the Bible, signifies to rob, or to take away. So here the vines are represented as being robbed of the tender grapes, and the warning is, "Take us the foxes, the little foxes." Is this the voice of the Bridegroom or of the bride? Some have thought one and some the other. It is our mind that both the voice of the Bridegroom and of the bride are here heard. It is the Bridegroom speaking, and he also speaks in the bride. It is his beauty that clothes her, and it is his voice that makes her voice sweet, and there is full union in every desire, in hatred against all sin, and in love of holiness. Both, then, say, "Take us the foxes." What are these foxes? They are all that can be called sin. But little sins may grow, as do the little foxes. If the little foxes are taken or cut off, they do not become great foxes. So if little weeds are pulled up they do not become great, and more difficult to eradicate. The thought is to watch for the apparently innocent things; these things will increase to more ungodliness. The beginnings of evil may seem harmless, but evil will grow to greater evils; then, take the little foxes; look out for the little things. If our zeal be great for the welfare of the vineyard, we shall be found watching, we shall not be asking, How near can I come to the precipice and not go over? but, How far can I keep away from it? What horror would be in the soul if murder were suggested to it; but there may be anger and hatred dwelling there, and we are not alarmed, yet the word of God says, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." He that covets is guilty of theft, is the divine word. Envy, jealousy, anger, impatience, and a host of other things, are within us all by nature. The beginning of exercise in them is like the creeping in of the little foxes, and soon these things spoil the vines of all the graces and comforts of the Spirit. If we refer to the outward life and behavior, we may speak of tale-bearing, tattling, faultfinding, foolish talking and jesting, slander, and a thousand other things in our speech, that are as the little foxes, and will soon grow to overwhelming numbers and fearful size unless taken. In going to places of

worldly amusement, in frequenting the companionship of ungodly men, and in selfish grasping after the goods of the world, we shall find the little foxes that may grow to still greater ungodliness of life.

If the bride be supposed to speak in this text, then it is a prayer to the Bridegroom to defend her garden from these enemies. If the Bridegroom be speaking here, then it is a declaration that the Bridegroom does care for the garden, and has given commandment to protect his vineyard and his bride. C.

MATTHEW XXII. 21.

"RENDER therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

The above Scripture was suggested to our mind through several private letters, of late, to us from brethren in Georgia and Texas, asking, "How do the Old School Baptist churches of your section of country stand on the use of organs or other instrumental music in our worship?" "Previously appointed protracted meetings of many days at one place?" "Exhorting alien sinners to repent and believe the gospel?" "The receiving of members of other professions on their alien baptism?" "Permissive decrees or limited predestination," and "conditional time salvation?"

We feel stirred in our spirit, we hope, to write a few things in reply to the above questions, and our desire is to present, in so doing, the doctrine held by the Old School Baptists of 1832 and ever since by those who are genuine Old School Baptists.

First of all we wish to express our sorrow that such a condition exists in any church or association, claiming to be Old Baptists, as has caused the questions above quoted. We have known of this sad state of affairs for a long time, and our denomination in the north and east has been pained to know of such confusion and error. The SIGNS has been comparatively quiet on these matters for several years, hoping that all of the children of God who had departed from "the good old way our fathers trod" would be given to see their error, and return. But matters grow worse, and it seems evident the Lord intends that there shall be a sifting, and the army reduced as in Gideon's day.

As the SIGNS was fully acquainted with the situation before and after the division in 1832, good and faithful brethren are calling upon it now, asking to know what the doctrine was, and is, held by true Old School Baptists. We therefore feel called upon to say to all Primitive, Predestinarian Baptists everywhere, that the SIGNS has not nor will not deviate one iota from its prospectus published in 1832. It stood with and was indorsed by all sound Baptists in the United States, and such is the case to-day. The Lord has sustained it thus far, and we have faith to believe he will continue to do so while he has use for it. If compromise with error is necessary to hold it up, it must fall.

With regard to instrumental music in our worship, will say that a musical instrument of any kind is not indorsed by our churches. With regard to such protracted meetings as are above mentioned, where pathetic songs are sung and alien sinners exhorted to repent and believe the gospel, will say, no such thing has been known among Old Baptists in any section of our country since the division in 1832, nor would such be tolerated one moment by them now. All such ideas and practices are Fuller's doctrine plain and simple, therefore those who advocate such things are Fullerites. It was this same doctrine that brought about the separation in 1832.

Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." If this be true, man by nature is dead in sin, and no word except the "Word of life" can have effect upon him. This does away forever with the instrumentality of men or angels in the work of quickening dead sinners. Again, Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." Every one therefore is sure to come. Why should people calling themselves Old School Baptists get in a hurry about this matter? It must be that the Scripture is being fulfilled: "Lo, here is Christ." If you come now, they say, you can find him, but if you wait another day you may never find him. Jesus said, Go not after them; it must be because Christ is not where they say he is. Sarah, Abraham's wife, tried to hurry God's purpose and promise; the fruit of her labor was a mocking Ishmael who could not be heir with the son of the freewoman. Such is the result now among men; mocking Ishmaelites are produced, but not one heir of promise.

With regard to members being received upon alien baptism, will say, no man or woman, under any circumstances whatever, would be received into the membership of any church in our bounds, except he or she had been baptized by an Old School Baptist minister who was in good standing when he administered the ordinance. Any who do receive members on alien baptism have surely departed from the principles of Old School Baptists. If alien baptism can be received by any claiming to be Old School Baptists, why not have New School Baptist ministers administer the ordinance of the Lord's supper also? And if this, why not indorse their preaching and go with them and be one in name as well as in fellowship?

As to "permissive decrees or limited predestination," will say, the SIGNS and all churches in our section denounce the idea in any form whatever of limited predestination. Nothing short of unlimited predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass, would be received in any church among us. There is no middle ground to be taken in predestination; if God declared the end from the beginning, he certainly must have declared everything between the two extremes: beginning and end. Adam was not given to understand how any purpose of God could come through his disobedience, but had he not sinned salvation could not have come. God had decreed or predestinated salvation before the world was, therefore sin and death must exist. The devil was made, deceived Eve, and sin was brought into the world. The devil was condemned for his work and predestinated unto destruction by the Seed of the woman. If sin was in the plan, to make man a subject for salvation, was it not predestinated? David could not understand or even imagine how any purpose of God could be brought about through his sin in putting Uriah at the head of the battle to be killed that he might have his wife. God had predestinated that David should be the father of a son whose name should be Solomon, and that he should reign king in Israel and build an house unto the Lord. Did he not also predestinate who the mother of that son should be? She was Uriah's wife. David was held accountable, and punished for his sin, notwithstanding God's predestination in the matter. Such was the case with those who crucified Christ; Peter told them that it was ac-

cording to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, yet with wicked hands it was done. He then told them to repent of their sin. Some who claim to be Old Baptists assert that the devil was not made. If he was not made, he must have an eternal, independent existence; this would make him, in his kingdom, equal with God. This cannot be, as the Scriptures from beginning to end show that the devil is subject to God in his every movement. We are told in the Scriptures that all things were made by the Word. Again, we read, All things were created by him, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, things visible or invisible. Hence, if the devil is a thing, God made him; if he is a power, God made him; if visible or invisible, God made him; whether found in form or without form, God made him. "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent."

With regard to "permissive decrees or limited predestination," will say further, such doctrine is as far from being the doctrine of genuine Old School Baptists as the east is from the west. God is a sovereign, ruling in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, controlling all things animate and inanimate; not a sparrow can fall to the ground without him, yea, the very hairs of our head are numbered by him. He "hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." He "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." If anything has ever occurred contrary to his will, the above Scripture is false, and God is not a sovereign; but if a sovereign, and nothing has or can occur contrary to his will, then all things which do occur must be according to his will. "O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" Some people are dreadfully afraid of making God the author of sin; none of us could do that if we would. In tracing sin to its origin we find man its author; he transgressed God's law; "sin is the transgression of the law." "Where no law is, there is no transgression." The former quotation of Scripture shows how man (Adam) was the author of sin; the latter quotation shows the impossibility of making God its author, because he is above all law. But no Predestinarian Baptist will deny that sin was a link in the mighty chain to bring about God's purpose in the salvation of his elect. If the crucifixion of Christ (which was according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God) was a sin, was it not a predestinated sin? If so, is God its author? If so, would not he upon the same principle: to bring about his purpose, be the author of all sin? But on the other hand, if he is not the author of that one great sin, yet predestinated it, could not he predestinate all sin and yet not be its author? We have plainly stated in this article that one point of the doctrine of genuine Old School Baptists is "the absolute predestination of all things" whatsoever come to pass, yet they do not believe that God is the author of sin.

With regard to "conditional time salvation," will say, the very term presents legality and denies grace. Paul tells us that God "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." If one spiritual blessing in Christ to the child of God depends upon the works of that child, then the blessing is according to the works of that child. But Paul

says, All spiritual blessings are according to God's choice of us in Christ before the foundation of the world. Is he right, or do they come according to our works? We do not deny that the "law to Christ" demands obedience, but it is spiritual obedience, hence one of the blessings in Christ. Paul, addressing obedient children at Philippi, called it, God working in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Our spiritual blessings in time are no more conditional than our blessing of eternal life which we have in Christ Jesus our Lord; all are of grace to the honor of God.

We have now replied to the questions of our brethren the best we can; have used plain, positive terms, that we may be fully understood by all who may read what we have written. The Scripture at the head of this article shows clearly that there is no mixture of grace and works. "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" God will not divide his glory with another. K.

LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

OUR supply of the large type cloth Hymn Books is exhausted, and we have only a few copies of the large leather binding (blue marbled edge), which we will mail as long as they last at $1.50 each. We will not be able to fill large orders for these books, but can supply any number desired of the small type Hymn Book.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

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OBITUARY NOTICES.

IT is with much sorrow I record the death of our dear sister, **Martha Varnes,** who died Feb. 7th, 1907, aged 66 years, 7 months and 4 days. She was the widow of brother M. H. Varnes, who died five years ago. After the death of her husband she and her youngest daughter, Rebecca, kept house together for about two years, when it pleased the Lord to remove her daughter by death. This was a heavy stroke on our dear sister, as she had no one to live with her, and was not able to keep house alone, so she was obliged to break up housekeeping and live with her children, and she was very discontented after her home was broken up. Two years ago she was stricken with paralysis, from which she never entirely recovered, although she got so she could go around some and attend her meetings, and was very fond of being always in her place there and helping with the singing. She was baptized twenty-five or thirty years ago, by Elder David Bartley, and received in the Old School Baptist Church called Tuscarora, of which she was a worthy member until her death. One year ago last December sister Varnes came to my house to meet with the church, (as we mostly hold the meetings here in cold weather) and was very feeble, hardly able to travel. I insisted that she stay with me until she felt better, or as long as she felt like staying, and she was with me nine months. I certainly did admire the meek and quiet spirit she always showed in her walk and conversation. She was very fond of reading her Bible and the SIGNS, but would often tell me she could not get the good or right understanding of what she read, and would often draw her chair by me if I took the SIGNS or Bible, wishing me to read aloud, which I did as often as I could; many times have I seen by her countenance that she enjoyed it much. I would have loved to had her stay longer with me, but owing to her feeble condition and my own age and infirmities I could not give her the attention she needed, so her daughter took her to her home last September, where she was well cared for. Her daughter brought her back to our meeting in October, but she was so feeble she told us before leaving she never expected to get to meeting again, and requested we would bring the ministers to see her when they came, but we never got to do so. I visited her in November, which was the last time I saw her. Her daughter still wrote to let us know how her mother was, and she would always write a little as best she could and send along, asking us all to come and see her, thus showing her love for her brethren. Two weeks before her death she had another stroke, which rendered her very helpless, and she sank rapidly. Her daughter told me she passed peacefully away, like one going to sleep. She leaves to mourn their loss, six children, a number of grandchildren, brother and sister, together

with the little church here, who feel their loss deeply, for her seat was never vacant at meeting time when she was able to be there. Truly our loss is great, yet we feel to bow in humble submission, knowing the Lord doeth right, and while her death has been a great loss to us, we hope to die was her eternal gain.

Elder J. C. Mellott officiated at her funeral, using as a text these words: "It is finished," after which she was laid by the side of her late husband and daughter.

May the Lord sanctify this dispensation to the good of her children.

CATHARINE LONGACRE.

PORT ROYAL, Pa.

DIED—At her home, the house of Mr. Wm. Humphrey, (her son-in-law) near Bluemont, Loudoun Co., Va., March 19th, 1907, **Mrs. Emily L. Moore,** beloved wife of brother F. M. Moore, aged 72 years and 5 months. Rising in the morning apparently in her usual health, and talking cheerfully with members of the family, she gave no sign of any illness. Some time after the breakfast bell rang, she not appearing, some one went to her room and found her sitting upon her bed, a little inclined to one side, and cold in death. Naturally the shock was terrible to the family, especially to her husband, our dear brother Moore, who himself is just rallying from a severe attack of "la grippe," and who is enfeebled by eighty-three years of the storms and buffetings of this mortal life. Sister Moore was baptized in the fellowship of Ebenezer Church, Loudoun County, in the early seventies, by Elder Joseph Purington, during his ministry in the churches of the Corresponding Meeting of Virginia. She was a dutiful woman, lovely in character, and that loveliness was sanctified by the love and grace of God. For many years she was a sufferer from an affection of the nerves, evidently caused by severe stomach trouble. Her afflictions seemed to render her more tender towards those whom she loved and who loved her, both in her own family and in the church. Grace beautifies the sweetest characters and clothes them with humility and self-abnegation. It is enough to say that sister Moore was a humble christian, a consistent follower of the lowly Jesus. I find in writing an obituary of such ones a tendency to let my heart speak, and I sometimes wonder if the reader may not think I am given to extol those I love more than I ought. I do not mean that my words shall be taken in that way; my mind is upon the exceeding loveliness of the finished, the complete work of almighty grace and love in those in whom Christ manifestly dwells and reigns. For more than thirty-one years I have known intimately sister Moore and her dear family, and I write of her and them as, I believe, "the joy of the whole earth." We know there is a very small remnant of such, the apostle says so, and our heart and experience corroborate the saying.

Sister Moore leaves, besides her husband, two daughters and their husbands: Mrs. Wm. Humphrey and Mrs. Milholland, one sister, I believe, several grandchildren and nephews and nieces, together with all her brethren who knew her, especially those of Ebenezer Church, to mourn their loss. May God comfort our aged brother and his dear household as only he can comfort. J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., March 27, 1907.

DIED—March 2nd, 1907, **Polly Robinson Banks,** at the home of her daughter, Mrs. George H. Faulkner, in Hunter, Greene Co., N. Y., aged 91 years. She was the widow of brother Joseph Banks, who died six years ago, aged 92 years. Sister Banks was born in Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., and resided there until eighteen years of age, when she was married to Joseph Banks, of Hardenburg, Ulster County, where she and her husband united with the Redkill Old School Baptist Church, were baptized by the late Elder James Mead. Both of them lived and died in the fellowship of the people of God. They raised nine children, eight of whom survive, six sons and two daughters. A daughter, who was an Old Baptist, died five years ago. One of the surviving daughters, sister Faulkner, and one of the sons, are also members of the Old Baptist Church. The other children all believe and love the truth.

Sister Banks was a member of the Lexington Church at the time of her death, and a lovely character, adorned with the righteousness and grace of Christ our Lord; firm in the doctrine of predestination, election and the unity of Christ and the church. She had been blind for several years, but never complained of her affliction. Her daughter was ever kind and faithful, making life as pleasant and comfortable for her mother as she could. She would often read to her the Bible, SIGNS and hymn-book; their communion was pleasant and profitable. Mother and grandmother will be much missed in the home, but it is a comfort to believe she is at rest.

Owing to the inability of Elder Sanford, her pastor, to be present, and the illness of Elder Clarke, also of the Lexington Association, we were called upon to conduct the funeral service, which was held in the meeting-house in the town of Lexington, N. Y. We did the best we could in magnifying the grace of God that saves and keeps poor sinners. The interment was in the Lexington cemetery. May peace be ministered to the children and the church.

Written by request. K.

ENTERED into eternal rest, March 27th, 1907, sister **Ada White Long,** wife of brother Isaac S. Long and daughter of the late Elder E. V. White.

MARGARET B. WHITE.

BROTHER **Lyman D. Chamberlain** died at his home in Vaughn Hill, Pa., Feb. 20th, 1907, aged 83 years and 10 months. His death was caused by a general breaking down due to advanced age. He was born at Homets Ferry, Pa., April 20th, 1823, and was one of a family of thirteen children. In early manhood he was married to Mary U. Coburn, who died July 26th, 1866, leaving two daughters, who still survive their father, viz., Mrs. P. V. Fisher, of Standing Stone, Pa., and Mrs. B. B. Cooley, of South Hill, Pa. Later he was married to Mrs. Arminda Cooley, who with their three daughters, Misses Mary, of South Orange, N. J., Eva and Bertha, and one son, Asa, living at home, and the two daughters mentioned above, three sisters and three brothers, and a host of friends, are left to mourn. A kind and loving husband, parent and brother, has been called to his rest beyond this vale of tears. "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep." We feel that our loss is his eternal gain. Brother Chamberlain was a member and the clerk of the Vaughn Hill Old School Baptist Church many years. His house was always open and ready as a home for his brethren, and he and sister Chamberlain and their children made Old School Baptists always welcome. The writer has been going to Vaughn Hill more than twenty years to speak to the little flock, and always made his home while there at brother Chamberlain's or at brother Overton's, who lived near by and who was laid at rest a few years ago. Deceased was an honest, conscientious, upright man, doing what he could for the upbuilding and prosperity of the community and his fellow-men; a firm and zealous member of the church, always in his place at meeting time, and by his daily walk and conversation showing the work of grace, which none but God can bestow. One by one our loved ones are laid at rest. We feel to say, Thy will, O God, be done.

Services were held at the home of the deceased, Saturday, Feb. 23rd, the writer officiating. Interment was in Wyalusing cemetery. May the Lord comfort and sustain the sad and lonely widow and grief-stricken family. C. BOGARDUS.

BROOKTON, N. Y.

DIED—Near Roseburg, Oregon, June 10th, 1906, **Philander Thomas Lemmon.** He was born June 15th, 1843, near St. Joseph, Mo. His parents, John and Jane Crocker Lemmon, came to Oregon in 1845, and settled near Salem, where he grew to manhood, and was among the first graduates from the East Salem high school. He inherited valuable property, but attacks of paralysis and scurvy contracted while prospecting for gold in the Cascade Mountains left him frail and quite unsettled in purpose. Uncle was third in my grandfather's family, and my mother being the eldest, he looked to her as his natural guardian. He was in Canada at the time of my husband's death, but hastened to me, and was a contented and useful member of my family during the years of my dear babe's illness, oftentimes talking to that dear one of the worthlessness of all earthly gifts and attainments, and of death as but a sweet release. After Beatrice's death I was in great strait of circumstances, and he would not remain after the attack of illness that rendered his right arm useless. He gave us a kind parting, saying he would visit his older brother, wander to the bounds of his habitation, but with streaming eyes he said, "I have a home where sin and sorrow never come, and there in the bosom of his love I shall some time rest." He has entered into that rest.

ALSO,

Mrs. Martha J. Edgeman Walden died suddenly of heart failure at 9 o'clock Wednesday evening, Feb. 6th, 1907. She was born near Shelbyville, Ky., June, 1828, and came to Indiana while young, with her uncle, Elder D. Easely, and family, where she was married to P. S. Walden in the year 1846, and with her husband and his parents came to Oregon in 1852. Their first home was near Salem; they then moved near Halsey, Linn County, and in 1870 to Umatilla County. Uncle and aunt were blessed with bright evidences of the power and mercy of God in the forgiveness of their sins, and many times were moved to speak of the blessed hope which they each possessed, but a great sense of unworthiness, and the wonderful childlike sincerity and candor of dear old uncle seemed to keep him out of the church, and after his death aunt's whole conversation to me was of her earnest prayer to be laid beside her dear old companion. The last moment came as a wonderful change. She sat up and asked for some warm draught, then arising from the bed seated herself upon a chair, took the cup and soon sank away without a struggle. The golden bowl is broken, the silver cord is loosed, and she rests beside the dear ones in the Weston cemetery. Two sons, Thomas and Benjamin Walden, Mrs. Ira Phipps, Mrs. Larken Phipps, of Weston, and Mrs. Iven Oharra, survive.

(MRS.) M. J. LEE.

SISTER **Sarah Mellott** died at her nephew's, Henry Deshong, near Sidling Hill, on Sunday, March 24th, aged 85 years, lacking a few days. Deceased was the widow of Obed Mellott, who died about nineteen years ago. She had been a consistent member of the Old School Baptist Church for about sixty years.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer, who used as a text the latter part of the first chapter of first Peter, after which the body was laid to rest in the Sidling Hill Baptist graveyard to sleep till God shall bid it rise.

She leaves two sons and two daughters, with the church and a host of friends, to mourn her departure.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

NEEDMORE, Pa., March 27, 1907.

Margaret M. Wilson, aged 36 years, daughter of the late Elder Joseph L. Staton, departed this life at her home in Wilmington, Delaware, March 4th, 1907. She was the beloved wife of William R. Wilson, formerly of near Welsh Tract, Delaware. Mrs. Wilson was not a member of the visible church, but was a lover of the truth and a regular attendant at the meetings of the church in Wilmington. She leaves a husband and two children: Pearl, aged about thirteen years, and Ernest, aged ten years; also one brother and three sisters. Sister Martha Staton, widow of Elder Joseph Staton, was stepmother to Mrs. Wilson.

Elder J. G. Eubanks conducted services at the home of her husband on Friday morning, March 8th, 1907, speaking from 1 Corinthians xv. 26; followed with brief remarks by the writer, after which the remains were conveyed to the old Welsh Tract cemetery, Newark, Del., and laid in their final earthly resting-place.

May the blessings of our dear heavenly Father attend the desolate husband and children and all who remain.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March 22, 1907.

SISTER **Nancy Miller,** of Spencerville, Allen Co., Ohio, departed this life March 9th, 1906. She was born Feb. 14th, 1821, in Springfield, Clark Co., Ohio; was married to Andrew Hamond March 18th, 1840. To this union were born six children, as follows: William B., of Piqua, Ohio, George W., of Toledo, Ohio, Margaret Chipman, of Lima, Ohio, Cornelia Cook, of Lattie, Ohio, Edwinia Thompson, of Glenwood, Texas, and Edward Hamond, who died in youth; his father, Andrew Hamond, died the same night, in the year 1850. She was married to John R. Miller Oct. 20th, 1853. To this union were born four children, as follows: Clinton, of Spencerville, Allen County, Ohio, Wilson A., of Royerton, Ind., Alice Wein, of Spencerville, Ohio, and C. Gilbert, of Columbus Grove, Putnam Co., Ohio. Though sister Miller was aged and infirm, her mind seemed to be clear in the things of the kingdom.

The writer, by her request, tried to speak to a large and attentive audience, from John xiv. 27.

B. F. HUTCHINSON.

FINDLAY, Ohio.

Fannie Avery, my dear sister, died at the home of her daughter Feb. 20th, 1907, in the 62nd year of her age. The cause of her death was rheumatism, from which she was a helpless invalid for seven years, and her sufferings were great, but she bore all with great patience. A few minutes before she died she said she was going home to her blessed Savior. She was a member of Macedonia Church, Clay Co., Ala.

A. J. PHILLIPS.

TROY, Texas.

DEATH has again visited our midst, and taken from us our esteemed young friend, **William Morris Martin,** son of Squire J. and Roxa L. Martin. He was born Oct. 27th, 1878, and died Feb. 11th, 1907, aged 28 years, 3 months and 13 days. He was a young man of bright promise, and the pride and comfort of his dear parents. He was the grandson and namesake of the late Elder William Martin, the dear old soldier of the cross who stood so firm at the time of the departure from the faith of the old order of Baptists. William Morris Martin lost his life while running as brakeman on the K. & M. R. R. at Rumor, Putnam Co., W. Va. He was married to Miss Leona Pierce, of Middletown, Ind., Dec. 7th, 1905. He leaves a father, mother, two brothers, two sisters, wife and one child to mourn their loss. We know he is in the hands of One who works all things after the counsel of his own will. May the Lord abundantly bless the bereaved family, is my prayer.

JAMES W. McCLANAHAN.

LANHAM, W. Va.

DIED—**Mrs. Sallie M. Smith,** at the home of her daughter, Sallie A. Smith, in Walsh, Ky. She was 80 years old Feb. 8th, 1907, and died March 7th, from the effects of a second stroke of paralysis. I had been her only help and support for the last fifteen years. Mother was a firm believer in the doctrine held and advocated by the Old School Baptists. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was a great pleasure to her; I am thankful she had the privilege of reading it. I shall greatly miss mother, but am sure she is at rest. May the Lord guide and comfort me in my lonely life.

SALLIE A. SMITH.

DIED—At her home near Allen, Md., Feb. 26th, my dear sister, **Mrs. E. E. Griffith,** wife of John Griffith, aged 67 years. In sentiment she was an Old School Baptist, but never made a public profession of religion. We who knew her well and had talked with her on the subject, feel sure she was a child of God. Her illness was short, and she could not talk much because of slight paralysis of throat and tongue. She leaves a husband, six children, one brother and two sisters, all believing it is well with her, and yet mourn that we shall see her dear face no more on earth. May God give us grace to bow to his will.

ANNIE ROBERTSON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Wm. P. Tolley, Tennessee, $2.00.

APPOINTMENTS.

If the Lord will, I will attend appointments in Kentucky and Ohio as follows: Mount Sterling, Tuesday, April 16th, at 2 p. m.; Winchester, Tuesday night; Little Flock, Wednesday, 17th, at 2 p. m.; Farmdale, Wednesday night; Bethel, Thursday, 18th, at 11 o'clock; Shelbyville, Thursday night; Lexington, 123 Walton Ave., Friday night; Mays Lick, Saturday and Sunday, 20th and 21st; Georgetown, Monday night, April 22nd; Sadieville, Tuesday morning, 23rd; Mill Creek, Ohio, Wednesday morning, 24th; Mt. Pleasant, Ohio, Thursday morning, 25th.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Nothing preventing, I will be at Schoharie Hill Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., April 20th and 21st, third Sunday; Schenectady, N. Y., 54 Fuller St., 23rd; Saratoga, N. Y., 24th and 25th; Troy, N. Y., 28th, fourth Sunday. D. M. VAIL.

MEETINGS.

The Baltimore Association is appointed to be held with the Black Rock Church, Baltimore County, Md., beginning Wednesday before the third Sunday in May, (15th) 1907, and continuing three days.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Cow Marsh Church, Kent Co., Del., commencing on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, 1907, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continuing three days, May 22nd, 23rd and 24th.

All friends will be met at Viola station, Delaware division of P., B. & W. R. R., Tuesday p. m. before the meeting. Two trains from the north and one from the south will be met. From the north, train No. 39, arriving at Viola station 5:08 p. m.; train No. 45, Viola station, 5:29 p. m. From the south, train No. 46, arriving at Viola station 5:12 p. m. Those of D., M. & V. branch from Berlin and Snow Hill arrive at Harrington at 2:55 p. m., wait there for second train north, which will be train No. 46, as above, and stops at Viola at 5:12 p. m.

A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth, and especially to ministering brethren of our faith and order, to meet with us.

BENJ. E. CUBBAGE, Moderator.

Thos. L. Cooper, Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Hopewell Church, Mercer Co., N. J., beginning Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (May 29th) 1907, and continuing three days.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Ebenezer Church, at New York city, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 5th, 6th and 7th, 1907.

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11:00 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition, which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at the following rates, viz: a single copy for 10 cents; 12 copies for $1.00; 25 copies for $2.00; 50 copies for $3.00; 100 copies for $5.00. Address,

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 75. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1907. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MANASSAS, Va.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—In looking over some papers in my desk I came across manuscript which I had written some time ago, probably three years or more, and laid aside, dissatisfied with it, as is generally the case with anything I write. I will transcribe it now, and perhaps send it to you to publish if you think it of profit or comfort to any of the readers of the SIGNS, providing it is not allowed to crowd out better matter.

There is resting upon my mind a subject of so great import, and so full of christian experience, and withal of christian mystery, (if I may use the expression) that I fear to pen even a line for publication. I hardly know how to put in words what I would like to say.

I presume there has always been a very small "remnant" of the Lord's true witnesses among his people whom he has favored to go with him into the "lowest hell" and see "his wonders in the deep." Our fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, were of the number, so was David, who says he was at his wit's end, and was made to feel that he should one day fall "by the hand of Saul." These men were peculiarly favored, for in the knowledge they obtained there is something besides a mere theory in the head, of the sufferings of the Son of God, and salvation through those sufferings, and the death and resurrection following. So Jonah was constrained to cry "out of the belly of hell," and was heard. There he remembered his vow that "salvation is of the Lord;" and so to a favored few, a "remnant," it has been given to "do business in the great waters," mounting up to the heavens upon the billows of God's wrath, and going down into the abyss, discovering the bottomless pit of their own vile nature. Naturally one shrinks from suffering, no man desires it, our nature rebels against it. Taking advantage of this fact, and of our carnal idea that a real, faithful christian is a happy man, living in ease and comfort so long as he lives rightly and is obedient, the enemy of the peace of God's people so torments them with the knowledge of their sufferings, trials and temptations, that he often constrains them to think that their hope is vain, that they have no right to hope in the mercy of God. Says the wily tempter, You have no good rea-

son for the hope you so foolishly indulge; your walk is in darkness, you have no faith, a sure sign you know not God; your mind and appetite are in and of the world; God's people are not so, their peace flows like a river, while you are tossed to and fro, emptied from vessel to vessel, and can only cry out of the depths of distress and despair, "Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" "Will he be favorable no more?" In these straits the tormented soul does not realize he is giving voice to the very words and lamentations of the man of God; while seeming so far off from the darling Son of God, he is really breathing his very spirit, and praying his very prayer. Here is the very mystery and the glory which was in my mind when I took my pen to write: the mystery of suffering. It is as old as the world, and yet as hidden as any of the secret things of God; volumes have been written upon it, men in all ages have sought to investigate and to explain it, still it remains as inscrutable as ever. The wonders of it, the profit of it to the favored remnant, whom the Lord admits into his sanctuary, as he did his servant David, can only be seen and felt as God reveals his gracious name, and makes his chosen few to bless him that he has found them worthy to suffer for his sake. Here and there one is given to see a little of God's wonders in the deep. Mark you, my dear, tried brethren, this deep is the inscrutable deep of your sufferings, where and when you get a glimpse, and only a glimpse, of the sufferings of Jesus your Savior; then you are brought into the nearest fellowship with him that you can be in the flesh, I believe; to "know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings," is what Paul earnestly desired, and what he experienced. Thank God, it is only by the power of his resurrection that we can know the fellowship of his sufferings.

But I wish to write of the strange, the incomprehensible mystery of "joy unspeakable and full of glory," assured to and experienced by those who are called into the awful sanctuary of the suffering Son of God. Well do I know I cannot explain it, or even give any adequate idea of it to any save perhaps a few who can, out of a troubled soul, follow me in what I write, whose spirit may be in loving sympathy with my own. Jesus said in his prayer to the Father for his disciples, "I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." He said this as the final scenes of that awful conflict with the powers of darkness loomed near before him, and hell itself was moved for him to meet him at his coming. To be with Christ is the crowning desire of every child of God; this desire is granted, but Jesus bore the cross before he received the crown. Says Paul, "I am crucified with Christ." Remember, dear brethren, "with Christ." We read that of old three Hebrew children were bound hand and foot and cast into a burning, fiery furnace, sustained by a miracle, for faith is a miracle; they could not deny their God. Our God is able to deliver us, they say to the king, but whether he delivers or not we will not bow to any other god. No way of escape from their awful fate is seen by them; he who is with them is not yet seen by them. Helpless, they are cast into the flames; soon it is manifest they are not alone; there is One with them in the midst of the fire, not on the outskirts, outside, to hinder them from

going into the fire, to save them from their awful suffering, but he is seen walking with them amidst the devouring flames. They are not prostrate, but walking; the fire hurts them not, but their bands are burned off and they are the Lord's free men. Christ is with them, they are with Christ, and though the furnace seethes and the fire burns they feel it not, a joy unspeakable and full of glory fills heart and soul. Saved in the furnace of affliction, not from it, is the miracle of grace. To my mind it is impossible to know fellowship with Christ, or with his people, save through suffering. To be baptized with the baptism he was baptized with, and to drink of the cup he drank, is the great privilege of his real followers. But here is presented to our faith, as we are with him where he is, suffering, crucifixion and death, on the one hand; on the other, victory, glory and everlasting life. To my mind our conceptions are often very far from the truth—the truth taught in our own experience. What does Paul mean when he writes, "I am crucified with Christ"? Does he mean simply that he suffered much in his first experience, in being brought to a knowledge of the truth years ago, but that now that suffering, that crucifixion, is past, and he is a victor through Christ? That now he lives at ease in heart and conscience, in faith and love and every grace? Were these the apostle's meaning and experience, how many of the saints could be in fellowship with him? Aye, more, how could he be "with Christ" so long as he remained in the flesh? But he does not say, I was crucified with Christ; he speaks of a present experience, which is continual, a knowledge which is constant. He who has this knowledge, this experience, needs not to go back to past time, past days, or months, or years. He speaks out of a living truth in his own soul, as much a part of his life as the bread he eats is a part of his body, or the pain he feels is a part of his natural life. Paul speaks of a living man, not of a dead creed, when he says, "We preach Christ crucified;" he speaks of a living truth, which is in the heart of every one who has an ear to hear; an experience which they already have in their own souls; hence he is a witness of things they already know, and his word a testimony to the truth already revealed in them. From this fundamental truth it is clearly seen that the apostle's preaching is out of a continual, a daily experience of both himself and them who hear him. The crucifixion is a daily dying, a cutting off of the flesh, its lusts, its desires and appetites. "O wretched man that I am!" is the expression of groanings constantly proceeding from the heart oppressed by consciousness of sin. At times it is true triumphant faith enables us to say, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." According to this same apostle the mystery of godliness is great. "God was manifest in the flesh," is something revealed alone to faith. It always and necessarily means suffering and death in this mortal flesh. We who believe are always delivered unto death, that the life also of Christ might be manifest in our mortal flesh. No man can see my face and live, said God to Moses. When a man lives to himself he is dead to God; when he is alive to God he is dead to himself. Strange truth in that soul who knows it. Going down into the pit he sees God's wonders in the deep; and how does he see them? By having a startling view of the exceeding breadth of God's commandments, and of the aw-

ful depravity of his own heart and life; the depths which Jonah discovered, from which he cried unto God, as out of the "belly [the midst] of hell," and where God heard him. A strange thing in this experience is that while seeming to be sinking into hell, and almost in despair, there is a mighty love, or hope, or faith, or all three, underneath you, and you cannot feel entirely lost, for there is a confidence in the soul in an almighty power that touches the very foundations of the earth and makes you say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." This confidence, or trust, does not come from any conscious strength you possess to trust in the Lord, but from a living love in the heart, a peculiar power, which you cannot account for or resist. O this dying to all hope in anything and everything "which is seen," and a trust solely in what is "not seen;" no wonder that doubts, fears and forebodings assail the minds of God's dear people; to hope we live, when we feel assured we are dead; to cry to God for help, when we are mocked with the thought that we do not know from whence help can come; dying, and yet not knowing we are dying; crucified, and yet not knowing we are crucified; so near the suffering Savior, and thinking we are so far from him; hopeless nearly, and yet the very goal of our hope so near us; great mystery, and yet so plain. Peter and all the rest had their own ideas, but Jesus called them fools, and slow of heart to believe. All their expectations, all their hopes cut off and blasted, so there is nothing left to them but a crucified Christ. So it is a cutting off of every hope from an amended life, a good disposition, an earnest seeking for truth, a godly life, a zealous obedience, all we are or hope to be, all we have done or hope to do, have proved "a refuge of lies," and we are crucified to it all, cut off from it all, dying to it all. No wonder that every attribute of our flesh rebels against this truth, yet there is no hope for a sinner in any other view. This crucifixion with Christ is the only way into his kingdom; he is the door, no man cometh unto the Father but by him; he is the way. "Christ, and him crucified," is the gospel Paul preached; the glad tidings of great joy; no other way leads to the kingdom of God but by the fellowship of his sufferings. The thought of the world is that a follower of Christ is a happy man, and happy because he is good and deserves to be happy and prosperous; God rewards him for his goodness. The man the world follows must be without fault; there can be no commendation for one who sins or has any weakness, or has anything to be forgiven; so we judge ourselves, and so we are naturally inclined to judge our fellows. If this were the truth, where does the justification of the ungodly come in, and more appalling than all, and more hopeless for all who are not perfect before God, where is there any hope for the ungodly, the sinner? It is sin that crucifies, it is the sinner who is crucified. I fear we often get these thoughts strangely jumbled in our minds. In theory we say all are alike sinners before God; in practice I fear we are left to say, "I am holier than thou;" I would not do the things you do. God is good, he is merciful, he will not allow one of his feeble poor to boast over another. A strange test he has put in his church to try those who are his is, he who esteems himself least is accounted greatest; self-esteem, self-righteousness, confidence and conceit are among the baleful things crucified or cut off in the one who is of comfort and help in the church. How terrible is the struggle

where the proud heart is made willing and glad to be nothing, to esteem the cross of Christ of greater riches than any other thing the mind can conceive in this world. "Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, save in the cross of Christ my Lord," is the language of one bearing that cross. Such precious souls are the pure gold composing the vessels of the sanctuary. Now can we imagine the fire through which these are passing? Do we realize the crucifixion, the daily dying, the nearness to the suffering Jesus, the fellowship of the sufferings of the "man of God?" I think not often. As a child is born into this world with pain and a cry of anguish, so a child of God is manifest by a cry out of a broken heart, a broken and a contrite spirit. I think I am right in saying there are a few who are especially favored in being very near the suffering Savior. It was Peter, James and John who were with him in the holy mount, and saw his glory there; it was the same three he took with him into Gethsemane. No doubt this is for a wise purpose. The foundations of Zion are deep; in our weakness and ignorance we cannot perceive them; only as our dear Lord takes us for a moment into the inner sanctuary and gives us a glimpse, all we can bear, of the mysteries of salvation, then for a moment we may exclaim, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."

Affectionately,

J. N. BADGER.

HAMPSTEAD, Md.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I send you these good letters (as I think) for the SIGNS. There was a mistake made by some one in my letter, and this is what brought the sweet meditations on "Amazing grace!" to me. What we call mistakes, often prove to be blessings to some of God's poor, afflicted ones, and it seems as if I desire to acknowledge the hand of God in these small things. I would liked to have replied, but it seemed as if I could not; since then I have received the sweet meditations of a dear old father in Israel on my favorite hymn. Thus I receive blessings from my Father's hand, but always desire more.

I read in the SIGNS that your dearest earthly tie has been severed, but I know in your sorrow you feel that the Lord has been gracious to spare her so many years to you. May God's blessing rest upon you and yours.

G. D. ENGLAND.

AMAZING GRACE.

"AMAZING grace! how sweet the sound!" All do not know the joyful sound, though this hymn is formally sung by all the daughters of mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots. The sound of grace has no charm to the one who is trusting in his own efforts to procure for himself the blessings of God in this time world or in the world to come. The sound of grace and conditions will not harmonize, any more than the spiritual songs of Zion and the tinkling of cymbals, yet the natural man cannot discern the discord.

"That saved a wretch like me," are words without meaning to those who feel to be able to do anything to merit God's favor. Only those who have been taught of the Lord to know the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and have viewed the Lord as the Creator and disposer of all things, can say with Job, "Behold, I am vile: what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth."—Job xl. 4. And it is when Jesus finds them in this

waste howling wilderness, as Jacob was found (Deut. xxxii. 10), that they sing, "I once was lost, but now am found." And again, with the man who was blind from his birth, whom Jesus healed, they add: "Was blind, but now I see." (John ix. 25.) This man did not say afterwards that he saw things different from the way he first saw them; no, he did not do that, as some are now doing, saying that they see things different from the Old Predestinarian Baptists, but this he said, "Whereas I was blind, now I see."

"'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear," while men and devils are combined in trying to teach the people that which grace alone can teach. Men are everywhere engaging in Sunday Schools and in running protracted meetings for the purpose of teaching their deluded followers to know the Lord, which knowledge can come only by the revelation of Jesus Christ. "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord."—Jer. xxxi. 34. (See 1 John ii. 27.) There must be a preparation of the heart to receive this knowledge, for "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14. Again, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."—John iii. 3. False teachers are all over the world proclaiming that every man must make his own preparation if he would meet God in peace, but what saith the Lord our God? "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord."—Prov. xvi. 1. If it were not so it could not be truthfully said that "Salvation is of the Lord."—Jonah ii. 9. So, with Paul, we cannot cease "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet [prepared us] to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."—Col. i. 12.

"And grace my fears relieved." "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."—Eph. ii. 8.

"How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed." So has it ever been with all the redeemed of the Lord. "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."—Isa. xxxv. 10. The burden of sin will know them no more forever, so far as the law of sin and death is concerned, for they are redeemed from the curse of the law, but they find sin yet in their members, and are often made to cry in the words of Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"—Romans vii. 24. And, like David, they cry unto the Lord, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation."—Psa. li. 12.

"Through many dangers, toils and snares, I have already come." As it is written, "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake."—Luke xxi. 17. "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."—John xv. 19. But when the Lord delivers us from our enemies for a season, and we again rejoice in him as our Savior, we sing: "'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home." "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the

day of Jesus Christ."—Phil. i. 6. The Lord does not begin this work in us and then leave us to carry it on within ourselves, but he also continues to perform it, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."—Phil. ii. 13. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."—Psalms xxiii. 6.

"The Lord has promised good to me." What more can be promised to vile man than eternal life? "which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." —Titus i. 2.

"His word my hope secures." For this hope is not a vain desire of the carnal mind, but "is Christ in you, the hope of glory."—Col. i. 27. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is."—Jer. xvii. 7. Our faith is not based upon carnal evidences, but is a fruit of the Spirit.

October 2nd.—Dear sister, the hymn "Amazing grace!" had been dwelling sweetly in my mind for several months, and I decided to write some of the meditation of my heart as I would sing this hymn; so I wrote the foregoing in July, and being interrupted I never thought much more about resuming my task, and it was laid aside; but when I read your good letter in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for September 15th, what you said about that good old hymn made me want to send you what I had written, just as I wrote it, though unfinished, and if you find any comfort in it, give God the praise; if not, cast it aside and forgive me for this intrusion.

Your brother, in hope of the grace that saves poor sinners,

ROBT. S. PACE.

TIMPSON, Texas, July, 1906.

UPPERCO, Md., Feb. 14, 1907.

MISS GEORGIE D. ENGLAND—DEAR SISTER IN HOPE:—Here I am seated to write you another of my poor letters, and the question comes to mind, Why do it, as what I write is of so little worth? Well, the foremost reason is, I have received several good, spiritual letters from you, and fear that if I neglect to write you in return I shall be deprived of the pleasure your precious letters afford me; this is selfishness, is it not? Be it what it may, I have the desire, and hoping it is a right one, I am making the attempt. Knowing as you do my great age and feebleness of body and mind, you may wonder how my days in this inclement winter are being passed. I can only tell you it is better with me than I deserve or have any right to expect. The infirmities of age are upon me, which none can fully realize or understand until they get there themselves. I have a staff, or cane, as we generally term it, upon which I lean my weary body, but I sometimes feel I have a better and stronger Staff upon which I lean, and trust for my support and safety for time and eternity. I suppose, dear sister, you spend many hours in reading your Bible, hymn-book and other good reading, and sometimes in reading the same thing over again you see something new, or some thought is made precious to your mind, and you wonder that you never saw it before; that I think has been the way with me, if I am not mistaken, in my reading over and over again in the Bible, hymn-book or other religious reading: something old, yet ever new. Among many other good and precious things that I believe the good Lord has enabled his servants to write for the comfort and consolation of his tried, tempted and defenceless children, is found in hymn 1052 (Beebe's collection):

"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly."

No doubt the writer could remember the loving embraces of a fond mother; with what confidence and trust he or she would fly to the arms of mother when danger or perils seemed imminent. Cannot we, too, dear sister, remember the safety we felt in the arms of mother, leaning upon her bosom? and true it is there is no earthly love like that of a mother for her offspring; but a mother's love is human, and even she may be forgetful of her child, but in our heavenly Parent, if we are truly his children we have one who has loved us with an everlasting love, and will keep us to the end. Then,

"Let me to thy bosom fly,
While the raging billows roll,
While the tempest still is nigh.
Hide me, O my Savior, hide,
Till the storm of life is past."

David prayed, "Keep me as the apple of the eye; hide me under the shadow of thy wings." Again he was given confidence to say, "In the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me: he shall set me up upon a rock." O what a safe, what a secure hiding-place is Jesus, the Rock of our salvation, and cannot we say with the poet,

"Safe into the haven guide,
O receive my soul at last.

Other refuge have I none—
Hangs my helpless soul on thee"?

It was declared of Israel of old, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." David again takes up the song, and says, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed," &c. Then cannot we with confidence plead,

"Leave, ah leave me not alone;
Still support and comfort me"?

All earthly supports are weak, and all human comforts fail to satisfy the weary, hungry soul, so we are led to fly to Christ for refuge, and can say confidingly,

"All my trust on thee is stayed;
All my help from thee I bring;
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of thy wing."

Saith the psalmist, "My soul trusteth in thee; yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast."

"Thou, O Christ, art all I want;
More than all in thee I find."

"Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever." God alone can

"Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,
Heal the sick, and lead the blind."

Blind leaders may attempt to lead the blind, but both will fall into the ditch; but God openeth the eyes of the blind, leadeth them in a way they have not known; he maketh darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things he doeth unto them, and will not forsake them.

"Just and holy is thy name,
I am all unrighteousness;
Vile and full of sin I am,
Thou art full of truth and grace."

If we feel to be full of sin and vileness, and all unrighteousness, unable to think a good thought or do a meritorious act, where is our hope? where is our plea but in the imputed righteousness of him whose name is holy, and who is full of truth and grace, the Lord our righteousness? Yes,

"Plenteous grace with thee is found,
Grace to pardon all my sin;
Let the healing streams abound,
Make and keep me pure within."

Lord,

"Spring thou up within my heart,
Rise to all eternity."

Dear sister, before I began to write I thought I had some very comforting thoughts in reading that good, old hymn, and so attempted to put them on paper, but I find I am not able to express them as I would desire, so will desist, feeling certain you will see more in reading the hymn itself than in anything I can write upon it.

We are all able to be about the house, and have felt somewhat lonely since the severe weather set in; hope the weather will soon moderate. Give our love and best wishes to all the family, reserving a good measure for yourself.

Hoping we may meet again when circumstances permit, your old, weak brother, JOHN P. KELLEY.

THE FEAR OF THE LORD.

"UNTO you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings," is his word of promise, which cannot be broken; therefore the people that know the joyful sound of salvation from their sins by his grace, shall walk in the light of his countenance, be exalted in his righteousness, and rejoice in his name all the day—an everlasting day. My heart moves me to speak to you, dear brethren, of this fear, and how it is peculiar to the children of the light, whom the Father hath delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of his dear Son, in whom they have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. No others truly fear the name of the Lord, for all others are presuming, arrogant and haughty; they are proud, defiant and self-sufficient; they are self-willed, bold and confident in the wisdom of this world, insomuch that they fear not to reply against God, if his sovereignty transcends the narrow limits that they prescribe for him. This is the most shocking presumption and self-will to the meek and contrite in spirit, who fear and tremble at the word of the Lord, whose heart bows low in awe before him, saying, "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth." It is enough to them that, "Thus saith the Lord," and they fear to call in question his holiness, his authority and right. With his meek and lowly Son they say, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." A sacred reverence pervades the spirit of all who fear the name of the Lord, and the sentiment of their heart is, "Holy and reverend is his name." The thought of charging sin and wickedness to their infinitely holy God is the most shocking sin and folly, from which they shrink with abhorrence, and would fear that he might righteously smite them for such daring wickedness. For they who fear the Lord have been taught by him, so they know that he is the holy One, the Almighty, and that they are as dust and ashes, and nothing before him, and that it becomes them to bow in deep humility and be still and know that he is God. The question, "Is there unrighteousness with God?" they reply with, "God forbid." "The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." This quality of being "clean" shows that the fear of the Lord is spotless and holy, above the clear shining of the sun after rain, and it sanctifies the Lord God in the heart of every one in whom his fear dwells. In that one who is meek and lowly in heart, as was the perfect Brother, there will be no place, therefore, for haughty arrogance, no room for conceited wisdom and self-righteousness, and so no replying against God; for all such evil thoughts and sinful acts have their source in the hotbed

of the corrupted flesh, the carnal mind of the sinful creatures, of whom the word says, "There is no fear of God before his eyes."

"Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake," when he beheld the majesty of God; and so do all his servants. "So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun." "Thou, even thou, art to be feared; and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?" "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom: and to depart from evil is understanding," said Job. And David said, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." A few of the words of wisdom spoken by Solomon are: "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate." "In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence; and his children shall have a place of refuge. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death." Isaiah says, "Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread." Of his people the Lord himself says, "And they shall be my people, and I will be their God; and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." Therefore, the Lord is the author of this holy fear in the hearts of his people, and so it is the loving fear of his children, but not the slavish fear of punishment, which hath torment and is unto bondage. Even in the darkest hour of the long legal night, when gross darkness covered the people of the old covenant as a thick veil, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." It is even so now. "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Indeed, it is this loving and reverential fear of the Lord in the hearts of his saved people that prepares and inspires them to serve him, for this fear of the Lord arises from his love, which is shed abroad in the hearts of his children by the Holy Spirit, and it casteth out the slavish fear that hath torment. All true and acceptable service unto God is the fruit of this holy fear of the Lord, which he puts in the hearts of his people, and it moves them to seek his face because they love him, and therefore delight to serve him, while it humbles them before him in self-abasement, even with adoring reverence, and they would tremble at the thought of replying against God, or of charging him with unrighteousness, because he has said, "I will do all my pleasure." None who really fear the Lord will dare speak against his infinite holiness and sovereign power; but those who do not fear him are not afraid to impiously do this. They thus betray a rebellious heart, and a self-willed spirit of enmity and irreconciliation to the holy One. All religious service in the world which has for its motive the hope of reward and the fear of punishment from God, is not the fear of the Lord, nor the fruit of the spirit of love, but it is a selfish and slavish fear, and hath torment; and this fear is taught by the precept of men. Its very essence and soul is, that God can be acted upon and influenced,

moved and turned, by the works and services of man, either in turning to us and bestowing blessings as rewards for our services, or in turning against us and inflicting punishments if we do not serve him. This principle of selfish and servile fear charges, not only that the immutable God changes, either for us or against us, according as we serve him or not, but that he is also brought down under obligation to those who serve him. It also fosters a legal principle of pride, self-praise and boasting in one's works, and its inevitable tendency is to trust in man, make flesh our arm or strength, while it leads the heart to distrust the sufficiency of God's grace, the freeness of his blessings, and to depart from the Lord. Only one principle excludes boasting from divine service, and this is not of works, but of faith.

"And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone around about them: and they were sore afraid." It is so in every case, when the power and glory of the Lord is revealed to the children of men, as it was with those shepherds. "And he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" The fear of the Lord thus made the humbled Saul tremblingly and meekly obedient in the day of the Lord's power. No other principle than this reverential fear will effectually subdue the pride of vain man and bring him down in willing submission at the cross of Christ, and make him thus obedient in word and deed. Thus the early gospel churches, "Walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied." "And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling," said Paul to his brethren in Christ. To his beloved and obedient brethren he again wrote, saying, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." In no other way can we work out, manifest and make known our salvation, dear brethren, only as Paul says, "with fear and trembling;" and in this way only for the reason he gives: "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Our own salvation, then, has its source in God, and it is his gift to us as our inheritance in Christ, who "shall save his people from their sins," and when we work it out, walk in it and show it forth, it is always "with fear and trembling;" for the fear of the Lord is put in our hearts, and both the will and the power so to do are given us of God's good pleasure. For this cause it is impossible for us to avoid the "fear and trembling." Our experience of salvation, and the turning away from our sins with self-loathing, and with the mouth making confession unto salvation, teaches us the solemn truth that it is with fear and trembling. We know, too, that we can no more give ourselves this fear and trembling, of our good pleasure, than we can dispel our weakness and fear and much trembling when God worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. We may profoundly adore his holy name that it is so, and say, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." The good work of redemption is not only wrought for the redeemed of the Lord, who shall return and come with singing unto Zion, but now in time God hath begun the good work of salvation in them, and he will perform it until the day of the full revelation of Christ. Yea, they "are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." And the God of salvation said to his and our beloved Christ, "Thy people shall be willing in

the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness." Thus made willing, and strengthened with might by the power of his Spirit in the inner man, they do meekly confess that, "Salvation is of the Lord," and say with Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am." He who cried out on the cross, "It is finished," calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out from the law and the world, sin and death, and gives them eternal life. They are all taught of God, and therefore they come to Jesus, for they know that there is salvation in no other. All this work of salvation is the way of holiness, and in all the way grace reigns through righteousness by our Lord Jesus Christ, raising the saved in the Lord above the curse of the law, the works of the flesh and the dominion of sin, so that sin by the law becomes to us exceeding sinful, and we are made to die indeed unto sin, but to live unto God through our Lord Jesus. Now, all this experience of salvation unto holiness is attended with strong crying and tears, fear and trembling before the Lord God, who is most holy, even as was the life of the man Christ Jesus in the flesh, and from this there is no escape for the least lamb that the good Shepherd gathers with his arm. He says, "They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them." But, it is also said, He "shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." "Fear not, little flock."

Fearing and trembling, yet trusting and hoping, I am, I hope, your brother in the sufferings of Christ,

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Indiana.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April 4, 1907.

MY DEAR KINDRED OF LIKE PRECIOUS FAITH:—Whenever I attempt to address you, the thought occurs to me, What a great company it is to whom I am speaking; then I shrink and hesitate with a trembling heart. It is many years since I first sent a message to you through the SIGNS, yet I never seem to grow strong or wise. Instead of increasing in knowledge as my years increase, I always realize my lack and insufficiency in those things which I esteem of greatest value. Yet, as I pause, and my thoughts go over this "great company," I find it made up of small companies, a few scattered here and there, each one feeling to be the least in the Father's family, the smallest in the great household. With this view I feel at home with you. A sacred tie binds us, and I realize a sweet soul-companionship in talking of the things most dear. At such times even ignorance does not hinder, for Paul says, "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called," and the words of Jesus are, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." In my early experience these two passages were very precious to me, for I realized so fully my lack of wisdom, and I was filled with wonder and glad surprise at what had been revealed to me, even me. The Lord had taken my feet from the miry clay and placed them upon a rock, filling my heart with praises to his holy name. Lady Huntington, in relating her experience, said that the letter "m" saved her from despair. In her first exercises of mind, the thought came to her that the Scriptures read, Not any mighty, not any noble, are called, and this filled her with dismay, as

she felt herself left out. But after anxious searching she was filled with rejoicing to find that the passage read, "Not many mighty, not many noble, are called." She was of the nobility of England, yet her subsequent holy life proved her to be a true and humble follower of Him who was meek and lowly in heart.

While I write I am thinking of the varied circumstances of those who will read these lines: some are suffering on beds of languishing, some mourning in broken homes for dear ones gone, longing for the touch of a vanished hand, and listening for a voice that is still; some far away from their kindred in Christ, and looking for a message of love from home, some word from those who are traveling in the same pathway; and there are others of our dear kindred who dwell in beautiful homes, which are abundantly supplied with everything for comfort, and yet not happy unless they share with dear ones less favored. How lovely is the Spirit of Christ thus manifested, and how great the joy in giving to the needy, far more blessed than to receive. Then there are those in deep soul-trouble that no words can express, which is far more afflictive than all other suffering. Such feel with Jeremiah, "He hath inclosed my ways with hewn stone: he hath made my paths crooked." He hath filled me with bitterness, and I forgot prosperity, "and I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the Lord." Then comes the cry, O that it were with me as in months past, when the candle of the Lord shined round about me, and by his light I walked through darkness. "My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. This I recall to mind, therefore have I hope. It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." These words of the prophet of ancient days must be a comfort to those who are walking in darkness, and sadly dwelling in this nighttime of the soul. I think they must have been left on record for this purpose. But whatever the trial of any one whose God is the Lord, he is able to bring relief. He can heal the broken heart, cure the deepest wound, soothing the pain, and with his soft hand wipe away the tears of bitter sorrow; he can make the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. If it be not his will to remove the trial, he will give grace to bear it. While together in this holy fellowship how fully we do enter into each other's joys and sorrows.

"When each can feel his brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part;
When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart.

When love in one delightful stream
Through every bosom flows;
And union sweet, and dear esteem,
In every action glows."

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us," that he should give his beloved Son to suffer that we might rejoice, to become a servant that we might become princes, and to die that we might live.

But I must remember that my object this morning was to acknowledge my birthday greetings, which came to me last Saturday. As the number is such that I cannot send a personal letter to each, as I would wish, there being some special thought in every one that I do not like to leave without response, it has been suggested to me that I express my appreciation of such kindness in a way that all will know how greatly I prize their sweet expressions of fellowship and tokens of love. This shower of loving-kindness was a very pleasant surprise to

me. Though I feel unworthy to be thus remembered, it is comforting and encouraging, and to every one who has contributed to this pleasure I hope there will return a taste of the wine of that kingdom which is not of this world; that each soul will be illuminated with rays from the Sun of righteousness, and each heart be filled with that joy which is "unspeakable and full of glory." What riches to have a hope in Jesus, well called the Pearl of great price; it is better than crowns of gold or the choicest gems of earth.

In this blessed hope I am, I trust, your sister, affectionately,

BESSIE DURAND.

ROMULUS, Oklahoma, Feb., 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—It is as an act of duty that I again take my pen to write you. I desire to let you know I have not forgotten you, but I feel too imperfect to undertake such a thing as writing to you. I am cast down, and feel empty of all spiritual blessing at this moment; I feel as though I had grasped the shadow and missed the substance. I realize that without our blessed Jesus I can do nothing; but the apostle testified that through him we can do all things. He is the author of our faith; he is the stronghold in the time of trouble; he is the fountain of life, the spring of the water of life; he is the horn of our salvation, the rock of our defense, the bread of life, our robe of righteousness, the tree of life, our all and in all, the first and the last; he knows all things and he made all things, and without him there was not anything made that was made.

I feel sometimes of late that the Lord withholds his presence from me, and I am made to cry, O wretched one that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? "When I turn my eyes within, all is dark and vain and wild." How can I deem myself a child? Again, at times he brings me to the mountain top. I read in the SIGNS his dealings with the dear ones, and they tell my feelings better than I can myself; I am made to rejoice with them, though miles away.

Brother Ker, I enjoyed your views upon Revelation xx. 12, and the rest of the chapter. I am glad the dear sister asked your views upon that chapter, as I have thought a great deal upon it, and received more light from your views than I ever had before; I hope the sister will feel satisfied. I also enjoy brother Chick's editorials, and will say to all dear ones, Write on. May you still be furnished with the Spirit of truth to lead the little, weak ones, like myself, in the way of the truth as it is in Jesus.

Brother Chick, will you please give your views upon Revelation iii. 1? which reads as follows: "And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God." I hope this is not asking too much of you, but I do long to know the truth. May the richest blessings of God rest upon you and all the household of faith.

Feb. 21st.—Dear brethren, I have some Scripture impressed upon my mind this morning, and feel to write a few words more, as I was so cast down when I wrote the other day. I feel cast down still, but not destroyed. I was talking yesterday to a friend, who is a Methodist in belief, and she asked me if I believed that a part of mankind was born to be lost, and a part to be saved? I replied, Certainly, for, according to holy writ, all will not be saved. Well, said she, did not Christ die for all? I replied, He died for all his own,

and that was as many as the Father had given him; and he said that all the Father gave him should come to him, and of all that came to him he said he would lose nothing, but would raise it up again at the last day. So I looked for some Scriptures, and I came to Romans ix. 33, which reads: "As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." I asked her what she thought that meant. She said that she did not know. Well, I think it means the Lord Christ. When Jesus is preached to a believer, or one that has the witness in himself, it is life and bread to him; but the ungodly are turned away; they cannot understand this, as said the Lord. If I am not deceived in the matter, the doctrine of God our Savior is food to the hungry soul. To the one class it is a stumbling-stone and to the other it is the power of God unto salvation. Some Old Baptists are good spellers but bad pronouncers. We believe that all that Christ died for will be saved, and if he died for the world it will be saved; but the work is finished. Christ finished the work he came to do, and there are no conditions in it.

"Jesus paid it all,
All to him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow."

He was put to death for our sins and raised again for our justification, and now "who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." How can one preach except he be sent? as it is written, How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." When the little children hear the word they are made willing in the day of his power.

I hope you will not think me presumptuous, for I have felt impressed to write; if there be anything not according to the blessed word of God, reject it; if according to his word, do with it as you think best. May the Lord guide our minds in the way of truth, and if anything in this shall be of comfort to any, give to God all the praise. In myself there dwells no good thing; but my desire is to know the truth as it is in Jesus. This will let you know that I am still in the land of the living, and that I have not forgotten you.

In christian love to you and yours,

ELLA DAVIS.

[WE will try to respond to the request of sister Davis regarding Revelation iii. 1, if the matter shall be opened to our mind, ere long. If some other brother feels to write upon that subject, we shall be glad, however.—C.]

TOUCHET, Wash., Jan. 29, 1907.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD:—Can you for one short moment leave father, mother, brother and sister, wife and children, and shout with me, in that this vile body shall be changed and made like unto our Savior's glorious body? Although we do not know what that body will be, yet it sufficeth us to be sure that we shall be like him, or our bodies be likened unto his glorious body. O let the eternal anthems ring, Glory to God in the highest It hath not entered into the heart of man the glory that awaiteth the saints; no, flesh and blood cannot enter into the secret of God's glory. "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?" O vain man, that boasteth of his ability to save himself! What is man? Are we not as

clay in the hand of the potter? What! shall a man say to him who formed him, Why madest thou me thus? Alas, I cannot enter into the veil, nor step into the courts our High Priest hath entered, to enjoy the glory he had with the Father ere the world was formed; nay, I must wait all my appointed time, till my change come. Now, dear household, pray that I faint not, but be able to pray the Father to save me from evil. Dear saints, it is such a privilege to read and enjoy the word of truth once delivered to the saints. We read that such things are hid from the wise and revealed unto babes. The beloved apostle to the Gentiles exhorts the saints to beware of all error, all evil. All surely signifies all, not two evils, no, but all evil, even as the Son prayed the Father. He did not ask that they be taken out of the world, but that they be saved from the evil. O how comforting to read and see the beauty, the harmony of the Spirit of truth; yea, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." How shall we be filled? If we garble the husk we will not be filled with the kernel, the nourishment. O that we may be kept from grasping other than the true manna, the bread of heaven; neither let us strive to lay up store, for it will perish with the rising sun; he who tries to lay by a store of food will find it even decaying in his teeth. Our Savior said, Take no thought what ye shall say, for it shall be given you in the same hour. Did they by faith believe, or did they prepare a theory to modify or make their condemnation easier? May we think they strove "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"? "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstabled, wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory, both now and forever. Amen." Now, remembering our Lord hath said, "Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire."

(MRS.) S. J. CUMMIN.

WORTHINGTON, Minn., Oct. 23, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If you will allow me to so call you. I do not feel worthy to do so, for you seem to me to be blessed of the Lord with knowledge and understanding of the truth of our dear Savior, and I am such a poor sinner that I feel unworthy because of my sins. I try to watch my thoughts, and to see if I cannot control them, but alas, I feel they condemn me every hour of my life, for instead of looking unto Jesus they are taken up in this world's affairs so that I cannot control them. I mourn and cry as I walk, because of the sin which dwells in me. I can say, as did one of old, "I

know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." My desire is to serve the Lord, but I fear I do not, and that my enemy is right when he says, You are a castaway and not fit to be where there is a church; God has set you here alone because you do not belong to the blessed; you are forever cast out and doomed to destruction. These thought sare with me day by day, and hour by hour, and when I look into my own heart and see what it is, I know that my own works condem me, and then I think that what my enemies tell me may be true. But Jesus died to save sinners, of whom, like Paul, I must say, I am chief. If my dear Lord and Master does not hold me up, I cannot stand. I know he has all power in heaven and in earth, and that if I am saved it is all of his grace in Christ Jesus, my Lord and Savior. I know that of myself I can do nothing. Jesus did it all upon the cross of Calvary, and when he said, "It is finished," it was all done, and if I am one for whom he died, then I shall be numbered among the blest. I have a hope in him to comfort me in this world. I must trust in him, and I hope that he will give me grace according to my day. When I look back over my pathway in this world it seems to me I can say, Praise be to his holy name, for his mercies have followed me all the days of my life. Then my poor heart rejoices in the deliverances out of all my many serious troubles. It seems to me that Jesus has been with me in all trials. I have seemed to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord; he has with unseen hand directed me; he is present in all things. Sometimes upon my bed at night my thoughts are of the cross of Calvary, and it seems as if I can see the dear Savior's pierced side, and then my mind is drawn to him as the babe in the manger. These are my thoughts by night; I cannot tell you my feelings, but I can say it is sweet to have our heart's devotion fixed on Jesus. Dear brethren, I have often thought how Enoch walked and talked with God; his heart was with God, and God was his guide in all his paths, he gloried in the Lord. I know that if it be the Lord's will, he can take care of me even here alone. It has pleased God to call my wife home, which leaves me alone. She was willing to go, and, I can say, in full faith in the dear Redeemer of her soul.

I remain yours, trusting in the cross for deliverance,

HENRY JAMES.

"CAST THYSELF DOWN."

THESE words are the language of the devil, about whom Old Baptist preachers have little to say. The popular notion that it is a preacher's business to fight the devil being a false one, and the persuasion of better things to preach, and having no fear of a conquered enemy, the minds of God's servants run more to the glories of eternal salvation; yet at the same time the saints are fully aware of the enemy's power and their own weakness, and know well that without help they never could stand against the wiles of the devil; but in or through the strength of Christ they can do all things. Some may not like so much reference to him, but to me he occupies a large place, not only in the Bible, but in our experience, and even in things which made that experience possible. I never was sent to fight him, God sent his Son to do that, yet I have heard his howls through the dreary nights of despair, out in the desert, sick and helpless and ready to die, and about all that was to fill the cup of life was for him to get me; but I have also

felt the power of Him who has power over the devil, keeping him from me; Christ has done this time and again. I know he can do it, and will do it, he is able to keep the devil from me, and me from the devil.

But I wanted to talk of another feature of the text first, one that lies close to us all: the temptation. Much has been said about the thing called "temptation," but I am afraid none of us know much about it. Some say God does not tempt, &c.; others say he does, &c. The former quote James i. 13, 14, the latter Genesis xxii. 1. Without taking up this side of the subject just now, I wish to say that here is a temptation that God surely had a hand in from its conception until its completion. The words, "led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil," mean he was led of, or by, the Spirit of God; that Spirit that ratified the baptism; as nothing in his life was unnecessary, so this temptation was necessary. When the time of baptism came, the Lord had a John to baptize him, and when the time of temptation came he had a devil to tempt him. This is not the first temptation either, there was one before; in the garden of Eden we see a similar scene, but with different results. It is the same identical devil, but a different man; the same temptation in degree, but the one successful, the other a failure. The difference was not in the tempter, but in the tempted; the first man fell, the second man stood; the first man was of the earth, the second man was the Lord from heaven; the first man was natural, the second man was spiritual. If the first man had been made like the second he would have stood, and if the second man had been made like the first he would have fallen. It was impossible for Christ to fall, because God was in him he could not fall. God was not nonplussed by the result following the fall of the first man, but had everything arranged a long time beforehand, just as he knew all that would take place. The one was that the other might be, as every one that was in the first man fell in him, so every one that is in the second man stood in him. The first man was made liable to fall, and not able to stand; the second man was made able to stand, not liable to fall; the two men were made after the liking of him who made them. Of the second man God said, "The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." "He will magnify the law, and make it honorable." His work with its legitimate result was all marked out and laid before him, the end from the beginning. He was tempted in all points like as we are; that which occurs in the dry tree had its place in the green, because of which he is able to succor the tempted. Jesus Christ stood, and they cannot fall.

Every child of God is familiar with the words of the text from a two-fold source: without and within. If you state to the world that you are a Baptist, they will invariably class you with the Missionary or New School Baptists; knowing this, I never allow an opportunity to pass without letting them know the kind of a Baptist I am, which is easily done by saying I believe in election, predestination, foreordination, effectual calling and final perseverance of the saints, absolutely and unqualifiedly. I am an object of interest at once, and almost universally they say, If I believed such doctrine I would take my fill of sin. I tell them they talk just like the devil, then I quote the text at the beginning of this article, which they do not know is in the Bible. They see the point and subside. The believer hears these words from within: Cast

yourself down, you cannot be lost; if you are a child of God you cannot be lost, and a thousand other insinuations and suggestions from the devil, until distraction reigns supreme in your breast. But not one of them ever did it for the love of it, because in the heart of every one of the saints God has by the Holy Ghost created an utter abhorrence of sin in all its forms, and has created there the holy desire not to tempt the Lord God.

Brethren and sisters, you who are low down, you who seldom hear the truth preached as you desire to hear it, you who are old and feeble, whose race on earth is nearly run, who have tasted the joys of this world and have only a handful of withered flowers, you who are waiting for your time, come with me for a walk this morning; we are in the holy city, Jerusalem; the streets are thronged with a struggling mass of human beings, intermingled with beasts of burden, all intent on making the most of the time profitable to themselves financially, apparently as utterly heedless of God as though there were no such being. The sun has risen in a clear and cloudless sky, casting its shadows and shedding its rays, every ray declaring there is a God. Look yonder, there is some one on the temple, it must be workmen repairing it. Let us stop and see what is the matter; get back here against the wall, so we will be out of the way, and as we look we see outlined against the clear, blue sky two forms, just two; we are too far away to hear, but from the gesticulations of the one who seems to be doing most of the talking the case is urgent. These two are not friends, but inveterate enemies, the one is for the fall of the other; leaning far out, looking in his face, he says, "Cast thyself down." We see him disappear, and the Son of God stands alone. Soon we see myriads of angels hovering around and ministering unto him; a feeling of sweet peace and security comes stealing into our hearts as we wend our way back, our hearts too full to notice the rabble around us, their hearts too full to care to know the Lord. As we pause at a crossing, away down the street in the distance a strange, unusual sound falls upon our ears, and, as we listen and strain our eyes, a mixed multitude comes into view; at its head, riding on a beast, sits the same Man we saw yonder on the temple, surrounded by a band of children. A few hundred of the curious follow, laughing, jesting, but all intent to see what will happen. As they near us we hear the children shouting, Hosanna! Hosanna! "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." A strange feeling comes into our hearts, and ere we are aware we are moving along with them, singing and making melody in our hearts unto the Lord.

"All hail the power of Jesus' name,
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all."

FRANK McGLADE.

HEBRON, Ohio.

LIZELLA, Ga., March 3, 1907.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I have felt a desire to write to you since I subscribed for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, about three years ago. I would not weary you with an attempt at telling you of the way in which I feel to hope the dear Master has led me through the years of my sorrowful life, of the many dark valleys through which I have passed, the many blessings and mercies which he has so graciously and freely given to one not worthy of the least of his mercies, but I do most earnestly desire to tell you just a little of the way.

In this part of Georgia there are many Baptists, but few of them take the SIGNS or seem to love the doctrine as contended for and so lovingly and faithfully demonstrated by the editors and writers in their letters. It seems to me that I have always felt the doctrine of God's eternal and unlimited power over all things to be truth. This was so even before I understood much about such things, but as I grew older I often heard Old Baptist ministers preach what I felt to be truth on this subject; but my mind was not much disturbed over that until after I hope Jesus revealed himself to me as my Savior. At that time most of the Old Baptist preachers in this section had died, and I seemed to feel there was something different. I did not find the comfort in preaching that I once did. I seemed impressed to search the Scriptures, and continually my mind was impressed with the thought that something was wrong. I had heard Baptists discuss predestination, and it seemed that their ideas were different from the way I felt, and I became very much troubled about it. For years I read the Bible, and felt I could not harmonize their ideas with what I felt it taught me. About this time there began to be much said in the churches about two salvations; I felt that it was wrong. When I discussed these subjects with Baptists they accused me of being what they called an absoluter. I became so confused and worried that I truly thought once I would become insane. I tried not to think of it; I tried not to desire to read the Bible, thinking perhaps that would relieve me; I felt that surely I must be wrong. Nearly all Baptists felt differently about it; but I knew that I remembered hearing some preach years ago who, as I believed, preached the truth as I felt it to be. I could never tell you how troubled I was; my people thought I was losing my mind, and they avoided all subjects in the Scripture; but my whole desire was to talk of these things.

One day I had about decided that surely I was wrong, as there were no others that felt as I did; I wanted to join the church, and I felt that possibly that was why God did not permit me to join—I was wrong. I tried to pray him one night that if I were wrong he would take all error from my heart, and show me the right way. Next morning a lady living about two miles from me, who had been most earnest in trying to show me that my position was wrong, sent me two copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I had never heard of it before. She did not take it, they were some old copies that she had. She had marked two articles on predestination, and said there were some who believed as I did. Shall I tell you that I felt almost as great a burden taken from me as when I felt to realize Jesus as the One who bore my sins? I simply devoured them, every word; I felt almost like shouting aloud. Now I knew there was a people who felt as I did; now I knew I was not alone. O how my poor, hungry heart rejoiced I can never tell you. I subscribed for the SIGNS, and have been taking it since, and have since joined the church. Elder Henry Jones, of Texas, was here, and preached what seemed to me truth, and I joined them. There are a few Baptists here who seem to love what to me is sweeter than life, what to me is life, upon which my hope is placed, my faith and my all. He is God, and beside him there is none other. Ah, I am glad he is God; I rejoice that he rules. I desire to be ever led by still waters, and made to lie down in green pastures, by so merciful

and loving a Savior, Shepherd and King.

May God bless you, and enable you to continue the publication of the truth. I feel that as God wills it will triumph over all error, just as Jesus conquered all things. Pray for me.

In love, ELLA BARFIELD.

BEAVER, Okla., April 3, 1907.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I write to inform you of the death of my beloved father, J. M. Duley, of Capron, Okla. He was taken sick with "la grippe," but a complication of diseases resulted in his death. He suffered untold agony during his sickness till death ended his suffering. He prayed for the end to come. Good physicians and loving hands ministered to him, but alas, what is puny man when pitted against the God that dear father preached? Father was born March 20th, 1847, and died January 19th, 1907, making his stay on earth 59 years, 9 months and 29 days. He professed a hope in Jesus in his twenty-first year, and joined the Old School Baptists, but was drawn off from them by outside influences into the Missionary Baptist Church, where he remained several years; but he often said he did not feel at home among them. After staying away as long as he could he came back, and was received with open arms. I have seen him stand and preach when his blessed face was bathed in tears of joy as he proclaimed the joyful tidings. A more devout man I never saw; not because he was my father do I say this. Often when at his work he would be preaching as if to an attentive audience, or else supplicating the throne. He was a man of affliction; partially deaf from childhood, he was deprived of the blessings of life in the fullest sense. He lost two wives and four children; there were five of us, I am the only one that survives him. There were no children by his last wife. Through all his adversities his hope never left him; the cord that bound him to Jesus grew brighter and stronger towards the end. He showed by his heavenly talk that he was nearing the brink. He had an omen in middle age that he would live to be sixty years old, and he always said that he would not die until he was sixty, but when he was taken down he said he would never get well. As he lay on his dying bed he preached and talked of heaven, and just a week before his demise we were around his bed; we thought he was dying; it seemed as though he could not live through the night. I was on my knees at his bedside, when he asked to have his hand placed on my head, as he wanted to pronounce a blessing on me, and I never heard such a prayer fall from the lips of man. He was able in prayer, but petitioning the throne in my behalf it seemed doubly forcible. Our loss is his eternal gain. O that I may some day enjoy that blessed hope that was father's, which is as an anchor, both sure and steadfast; but it looks gloomy for me, as I am in my twenty-ninth year, and am still a wicked sinner. I cannot be converted until I am first convicted of sin, but I believe that if I am a chosen vessel I will be made to realize it, for I am an Old Baptist in belief. God is all-powerful and full of mercy.

Well, friends, and father's brethren, when I sat down I did not think of writing as much as I have, I intended just to tell you of father's death, and also have you please forward the SIGNS to Beaver, Beaver Co., Okla., as I have moved from Kiowa, Kansas. This is my first attempt to write; please excuse all imperfections, as the writer is imperfect. Father told me to write his obituary, but I feel wholly

incompetent, as it seems like treading on sacred ground, therefore do with this as you like.

I remain yours, unworthily,

A. C. DULEY.

[A NOTICE of brother Duley's death appeared in the SIGNS for March 1st, written by Elder Hardy, but we are glad to publish the above from brother Duley's son.—K.]

PARIS, Ill., March 17, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I have been trying to find time to answer your good letter of last December, but when I have the time to devote to writing, it is then that I find myself a blank. I have been hoping all winter that matters would shape themselves so that my wife and I could arrange to attend the associations, or at least the ones at Hopewell and New York, but on account of some building we contemplate doing this spring, I fear now that we cannot go. In addition to ourselves, Elder M. B. Moffit, our pastor, and sister Moffit, talked some of accompanying us. They have never been to that part of the country, and I am sure you would enjoy having them with you, although Elder Moffit says he would probably get lost among so many able preachers.

Well, how are you and the family and brethren? My little visit was such an oasis in life's desert that I find my mind carried back every day to the great privilege that was mine to have been with you to enjoy your meetings and our personal talks. I fully appreciate your personal interest in me, and wish that I were worthy of the same. I enjoyed the little drive we took to New Vernon to visit the last resting-place of Elder Gilbert Beebe, and others whose names are dear to me, although I had never met them personally. I had always felt that when I could see the grave of dear, old Elder Beebe I would then have faith, as did Thomas, for I think Elder Beebe was among the ablest writers on spiritual things that I ever read after. Just now the question comes up, What do I know about such things? and I confess that I know nothing, except that I love the brethren, and feel when I am with them that my cup is full, and I am like Jacob of old when he had found his long lost son; and again, sometimes I think I love sin, or I would not continue to commit sin. I know the Bible says we must, or will, hate sin, and that is what bothers me. I know a great many who are praying for and worrying over some other person's sins, but my own sins are the ones that trouble me.

I get the SIGNS regularly, and usually sit up at night until I have read it through, and although I take two or three other Baptist papers, I think the SIGNS is just right, or as nearly so as finite man can make it. I know how your time is taken up, and shall not ask you to reply, although of course a line from you would find a warm spot in my heart. I wish you and sister Chick could come and visit us; we would receive you with open doors and arms. Please remember me to sister Purington, and any others, besides your own family.

With love I remain, I hope, your brother,

M. C. REEVES.

SUNRISE, Wyo., March 25, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am somewhat tardy in my remittance for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so I will now write a few lines and send enough money to pay one year ahead. I have no excuse for not remitting sooner, except negligence. Inclosed

you will find four dollars, which you can place to my credit for the dear, old SIGNS. It comes regularly to my address, laden with good tidings of great joy. I often, after reading the last number, find myself counting the days until I shall receive another number. I read so many good letters in the SIGNS from those situated, like myself, in a desert land, with no church privileges nor any of like precious faith to even speak to. My heart goes out to them in fellowship, and sometimes I can hardly keep from writing to them. There is not a Baptist in the State of Wyoming that I know of. I have not seen a Baptist in the States of Colorado or Wyoming during my stay here, which will be seven years next June. During that time I have made two trips east as far as Indiana; there I had the pleasure of hearing the gospel preached, and of meeting many Baptists. I returned from a trip in Indiana the 19th of January; I was away from home thirty days.

I have just received a letter from T. W. Mitchell, of Coalmont, Ind., stating that one church in his charge, at Buenavista, Ind., had gone to pieces. Time salvation, and duty of churches to ministers, seems to be the trouble. They need a good, sound paper and ministry in that country, and I would like to see the SIGNS OF THE TIMES circulated there.

Now I will try and close this letter, as your time can be better occupied than reading letters from me. Hoping the richest blessings of the Lord may be yours and all connected with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, your brother, I hope, in Christ,

J. A. MITCHELL.

CAMDEN POINT, Mo., Jan. 7, 1907.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I feel that I ought to ask your forgiveness for not renewing my subscription sooner; I thought I would, but circumstances were such that I could not until now. Inclosed you will find two dollars, for which you will continue sending me the paper. My dear, old father loved the SIGNS next to his Bible; I suppose he took the first number that was printed. He was an Old School Baptist preacher, and used to write for the SIGNS sometimes; perhaps you remember him, his name was Philip J. Burruss. Elder Durand remembers him, I know, for he was at our house once when I was a child, in Platte County, Mo. To tell you I love to read your paper does not express it; I watch for its coming as I would a visit from a friend. I read the letters, and what the writers say about their hope and fears, their trials, temptations and doubts. Some have told just how I have felt, only my case is just a little worse. Can I be a child of God and have such wicked thoughts? I try hard to banish them, but they come thicker and faster, and I am made to cry out, like Paul, O wretched mortal that I am! I have had a hope, I trust, for thirty-nine years, and know if I am saved, it is not because of anything I have ever done, or ever can do; if saved, it is by grace, and grace alone.

I am not a member of the Old School Baptist Church, but I love you all. May God bless you, is my prayer.

RENA BELL.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER Horace H. Lefferts has changed his address from Philadelphia, Pa., to Warwick, Orange County, N. Y., and requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1907.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

GENERAL COUNCILS.

SOME questions have been suggested of late, which have seemed of importance, and to which we feel like replying, among them is this:

Are what are called general councils likely to be productive of much benefit among the people of God?

We would not like to reply to this question with a full assent or a full denial. We know that in the Scriptures one such council is spoken of among the apostles of the Lord, and their conclusion regarding the matter then under consideration must be regarded as the voice and mind of the Lord, by whose Spirit they were directed. The narrative to which we refer is recorded in Acts xv. There have also been general gatherings of the ministers and members of churches in the past which were, as we believe, of benefit to all. The assemblage of the messengers of more than one hundred churches, who wrote and adopted what we call the old "London Confession of Faith," was, we do not doubt, also of the Lord, and productive of good down to this day; but it does not follow that all such gatherings have been of benefit or to the glory of God. Indeed, we are well assured that some such gatherings have been to the troubling of Israel, and to the dishonor of the name of the blessed Redeemer. The hierarchy of the Romish church have held such councils at different times in the ages past, and in every instance the result has been that either some unchristian dogma or some unchristian practice has been fastened upon that church. General councils of the churches of Christ are not an infallible panacea for the ills with which they are from time to time afflicted. Still, we do not say, and we do not think, that such councils are never of benefit. All depends upon the object for which they are called, and the spirit in which they are held, and upon whether they are called by a few self-constituted leaders, or by the voice of the church in general. It is all-important that the Spirit of God should be the leader, both in the churches in general by whom the council is called, and in the hearts of those who by appointment of the churches may meet together for conference upon the questions under discussion. Still further, it seems clear to us that such councils ought not to be the product of the individual call of any man, or of any number of men, acting as individuals, but of the churches; and no man or number of men ought to attend and take part in such councils unless appointed by the churches of which they are members. When churches feel that matters of sufficiently great import are in question, and they are moved with a desire that God may be glorified and that the good of the churches may be secured first of all, it may seem good to them that there should be a general conference concerning the questions involved, and so a move may be made by messengers to meet for the consideration of these questions. This is not wrong, as it seems to us.

It is right for any ministers, or any members of churches, to confer at any

and all proper times over any matter that may come up concerning which there is not clear understanding or perfect agreement among all. At our homes by our firesides, in the ordinary conference meetings of the church, or at any other times and places, it is right and good for brethren to confer concerning all that pertains to the doctrine and order of the churches. It is right to confer upon the things in which there is full agreement, to the end that our faith may be confirmed and strengthened. It is right also to confer concerning anything in which there may be differences, in order to ascertain, first, whether there be any real difference of view, and second, if there be such difference, to see which may be wrong, or whether both may not be wrong. The feeling in all such conferences ought to be to desire to know the truth, and to yield to it when it is seen. These differences, if they exist, may be concerning some action to be taken in the church, or concerning the meaning of some Scripture, or concerning some point of doctrine or of order in the house of God. It is right to confer together in love to God and the truth, and in love to each other. The object must not be, if any good is to result, to conquer a brother by superior powers of argument, and so be able to boast of a victory over him, but simply to get into each other's hearts and see what the Lord has shown to each one, praying that what is of the flesh may be discerned and discarded. We remember times when argument has arisen between ourself and some other, in which we have felt that our opponent had been silenced in his opposition to the truth, and we had obtained a victory, only soon to find that the devil had obtained a still greater victory over ourself, by puffing us up with pride and vanity and vainglory. We are not speaking of differences with brethren here, but the same might be the case if argument with brethren should arise. The same principles that ought to govern us when we meet to confer privately should also govern in any public meeting for conference. The chief object ought to be to glorify God, and to be of service to his people; next, it ought to be our object to ascertain what the Lord's will is, as revealed in the Bible, and then when we are assured that anything is scriptural, to stand by it to the end. No child of God has any right to yield one iota of the truth for the sake of the appearance of peace; it should always be remembered that the wisdom which is from above is first of all pure, and then peaceable, and easy to be entreated. If the truth of God is precious to us, and we are given to clearly discern it, then there will also be a striving for the things that make for peace, and for mutual edification or upbuilding; but this will never be gained by yielding the truth. Contention for the truth is enjoined upon all who believe. Contention means continual testimony to the truth; it does not mean strife or debate, and no believer has any right to subscribe his name in assent to any form of words which does not express what he really does believe. It is not every difference of opinion or of understanding that ought to lead to separation, or withdrawal of fellowship one from the other. If this were so, no two men on earth would ever walk together at all. We are persuaded that no two men can be found in all the churches anywhere who understand all things alike. In this very thing there is room for constant forbearance in love. Differences will arise concerning some course in church discipline, or in the ordinary business affairs of the churches, or in the application of some Scripture,

while yet there is perfect agreement in all the great principles of the doctrine and order of the church. In all these things let there be, if desired, full and candid expression of judgment by each, while at the same time there should be no thought of bars of fellowship. Still, no one has a right to say, "I agree with you," when he does not agree. It is right to bear and forbear, but it is not right to profess to believe what we do not believe. All this refers to matters which will come up daily, as they always have in the past. Concerning the great principles that are connected with the doctrine of grace, unless there be agreement fellowship cannot exist. No fellowship can exist between him who confesses that he is saved by grace alone, and him who claims that he is to be saved if he holds out faithful to the end. No fellowship can exist between him who says that the gospel is a proclamation of completed salvation, and him who says that it is but an offer of salvation if men will accept and comply with the conditions prescribed. There can be no fellowship here, because one places the matter of salvation upon God, and the other upon the choice of man, and these two things are as opposite and unreconcilable as darkness and light.

Councils should not be called to effect compromises. Truth must not be compromised; not one corner of the truth must be rounded off. Among men of the world it is thought a scandalous thing to compromise principle. Even though men may regard the principles of another as unsound and fraught with evil, still they respect him who holds these views if he stands by his colors, but they despise him if he compromises his principles for any cause whatever. He may yield anything else, but he must not yield principle if he would have the respect of his fellowmen. How much less has a citizen of heaven a right to compromise his faith. If the Lord has revealed anything to him, and bidden him testify to that thing, that is the thing to which he must bear witness always; he must not yield one jot or tittle of it. The Lord's message to him must be delivered exactly as he has received it; it is not in his discretion to change it in the slightest degree. We are sure that here we are but calling attention to that which every child of God fully believes. The servants of God have been taught of God to hold his word in reverence above all things else. Our God has no compromise to make with men, no change to make in any message that he gives them. The ambassadors of the court of heaven must deliver the message given them; but it will not be forgotten by any true, spiritual man that in delivering that message he is also dependent upon the same God who gave the message, that he may rightly interpret it, and rightly apply it, and our God has promised the Spirit to be with all his servants for their aid. What a wonderful blessing is it when the children of God walk in him, and speak the things born in them, and living in them, through communion daily with their blessed Lord.

We have not been able to see any good growing out of recent councils held in this country. No doubt our God does bring good out of what seems evil to us, as he did out of the selling of Joseph into Egypt by his brethren in the olden time; but this is a different thing from commending the act of selling Joseph. We have not felt at liberty to attend any of these councils, or to take part in them. One reason has been this, that they have not been the call of the churches in general in the country; another reason has been that, so far as we have been in-

formed, those who did attend them were not appointed so to do by their churches, but were volunteers. We were indeed invited to attend one of these councils (the one at Fulton, Kentucky,) by a minister. The terms of the invitation were, that they desired all the leading, most able and most pious men of our denomination in the country to be with them at the council. Not being a leading man, or very able, or very pious, we had to write that the terms of the invitation excluded us; we could not consent to pose in the light of great piety, or ability, or of leadership. We recollect wondering whether any minister, or member, in the whole land would be willing to admit that he was among the leaders, or the most able, or the most pious. Perhaps those who did attend that council were not invited upon the same terms contained in the invitation which we received. Suppose at such a council the question of predestination should come up. My faith, says one, is fixed that all things were predestinated of God before the world was. Another says, I cannot believe that any wicked thing was predestinated. Both are sincere and earnest in the thing that they profess. After a discussion, lasting some length of time, a third brother draws up in writing what he believes will show a middle ground, to which both these brethren can come, and in which they can walk in agreement. He who believes in the predestination of all things still believes in it as strongly as ever, and he who denies this doctrine still fails to receive it, and believe it. If they put their names to this middle ground paper, both have yielded what they regard as truth; both subscribe to what, to them, is a lie; both say, "We accept," what they do not really accept. Is this right? Surely we do not need to answer this. Here is an outward agreement, when the hearts of the two are as far apart as ever. So far as they are concerned, the third brother has brought them both into guilt before God. The result of this council has been that these two men commit sin by saying, "We believe," what neither of them really does believe. The facts are the same, whether three are in the council or three hundred. No one has a right to say, "I accept and believe," what he does not really believe. We have seen statements drawn up by councils which we could not have signed, had we been present, without stating falsehood. The result of all such things must be evil. We do not say here that these brethren ought to have fallen out with each other; on the contrary, in many instances they had the right, and it was their duty to bear with each other; but let neither one compromise his faith. Let those who regard the day to the Lord still so regard it until shown a better way, and let those who do not regard the day, because they think it not commanded under the gospel, still abide in this faith, but let each bear in all love and kindness with the other in this difference. Do not yield the truth, but be forbearing. C.

LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

OUR supply of the large type cloth Hymn Books is exhausted, and we have only a few copies of the large leather binding (blue marbled edge), which we will mail as long as they last at $1.50 each. We will not be able to fill large orders for these books, but can supply any number desired of the small type Hymn Book.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. N. E. Askew, Ark., $1.00; G. W. Horner, Ore., $3.00; Morris Faulkner, N. Y., $1.00.—Total, $5.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Elva Frazier Redgrave died at her home in Middletown, Del., March 18th, 1907, at the age of 38 years and 9 days. She was confined to her bed nine weeks before her death, but suffered for four years more or less from the dreaded disease, consumption, which took her away. Her suffering was very great towards the last, but she told her mother at her bedside, "I do not suffer as our Savior suffered," manifesting a fortitude and resignation which is born of a hope in the blood of Jesus. She was patient and enduring to the end, and spoke to her husband of that blessed sleep which she was entering, and said, "A sleep from which none ever wake to weep." She was the youngest daughter of brother James Frazier (deceased) and Rebecca Frazier, formerly of the vicinity of Cow Marsh Church. She was married Jan. 21st, 1902, to Roe Sylvester Redgrave. She never made a public profession of religion, yet her very decided preference for the Old School Baptists was manifested by attending our meetings, together with her husband, whenever opportunity permitted. She loved the doctrine held by the Baptists, and asked that none but Old School Baptist preachers officiate at the funeral. She left no children, but a devoted husband, mother, brothers and sisters and many friends, who mourn their loss. May they be given to know and feel that their loss is her eternal gain.

The funeral was largely attended. Hymn No. 1289 (Beebe's collection) was sung. The writer spoke in prayer, after which Elder J. G. Eubanks preached from Luke xxiv. 46, greatly to the comfort of the bereaved friends; followed by the writer with personal remarks. Interment in Forest Cemetery, Middletown, Del.

ALSO,

DIED—At his home near Smyrna, Del., **Mr. Benjamin Hazel Ross,** aged 37 years and 3 months. Mr. Ross was born near Blackiston, Del., one of a family of two brothers and five sisters, which, together with his father, Chas. G. Ross, survives him. He was married Feb. 26th, 1892, to Miss Mary C. Burrows, daughter of Mr. Frank Burrows (deceased) and sister Annie Burrows, formerly of near Kenton, Del. Mr. Ross was a prosperous farmer in his community, having many friends and relatives. He made no profession of religion, yet spoke to his wife of his condition as a poor sinner, before he was taken, in a manner to comfort and encourage her. He leaves a widow and five children. May the Lord lead them in paths of righteousness for his name's sake, and comfort and sustain them by the way.

The funeral was largely attended, at which the writer spoke, using as a text John xi. 25: "I am the resurrection, and the life," &c. Interment in Odd Fellows' Cemetery, Smyrna, Del.

BENJ. E. CUBBAGE.

Mr. Benjamin Hostrander was born at Cammal, Pa., and died March 23rd, 1907. He lived there and near there his lifetime of 72 years and 4 months. He had a slight stroke of paralysis four years ago, and two others since then. He leaves a widow, who constantly attended him during his sickness, also nine children, two brothers and one sister, with many friends, to mourn their loss, which we believe is his gain, as he was a believer in the doctrine of sovereign grace, though not a professor of religion. He would often speak of the blessed truth with tears in his eyes. He is at rest, and may God bless the sad, lonely widow and children, and all who mourn, with his presence and grace to support them in their affliction.

The writer attended the funeral the 25th, which was held in the Old School Baptist meeting-house at Cammal, Pa.; he was buried in Cammal burying-ground.

ALSO,

The funeral of **Morris E. Callahan,** of Slate Run, who died in the Williamsport hospital on Sunday, was held from the Baptist Church at Slate Run this morning at 10 o'clock. The services were in charge of Elder Marvin Vail, of Waverly, Pa. Interment was at Slate Run. Mr. Callahan was taken sick while here on a visit to his daughter, Mrs. May Yarrison, of 137 Pine St., where he arrived three weeks ago to-day. Next day he was stricken with paralysis, and was taken to the hospital last Tuesday. Mr. Callahan was an old and much respected resident of the Pine Creek region; he was born near Jersey Mills, Nov. 15th, 1833, and always lived in that locality, but last winter he made his home with Harry Callahan, a son, at Corning, N. Y. His wife died in 1885, and he leaves the following children: Harry and Lewis, of Corning, Mrs. Yarrison, of Williamsport, and Mrs. Rhoda Derry, of Elmira, N. Y. During his life he was a lumberman, merchant and contractor.

The above was taken from the *Williamsport News.* I will say that I have been somewhat acquainted with Mr. Callahan for twenty-eight years, and have heard him contend earnestly for the doctrine of grace many times. His wife was a member of the Cammal Church. He has gone home. His wife preceded him, as will be seen, twenty-two years. May the Lord give grace to the mourning ones as he sees they need.

D. M. VAIL.

WAVERLY, Pa.

John William King, son of Allen and Ann E. King, was born Nov. 23rd, 1869, and departed this life May 12th, 1906, aged 36 years, 5 months and 19 days. John William was born in Carroll, Co., Miss., and came with us, his parents, to Texas in 1877, at the age of eight years. He grew to manhood here in Denton County, Texas, and attended the public schools of the county, and finished his education in

the North Texas Normal College, after which he taught school several years. As a boy he was always truthful, obedient and affectionate; as a man he was honorable, dignified and useful, never kept bad company nor contracted any bad habits, yet he was of a lively disposition, and made friends among good people wherever he went. He was married in 1898 to Miss Lizzie U. Haynes. To them was born one baby boy, who was two years and four months old at the time of his father's death. John William joined the Missionary Baptist Church about the year 1896. We never remonstrated with him about it, feeling that he should be as free in such matters as we had been ourselves. Notwithstanding he did not join the church to which we belong, still it affords us great consolation to know that the fruits of the Holy Spirit were manifest in him. He bore his suffering with christian fortitude. Indigestion was his disease, and though he had the attention of two good physicians, and continual nursing of those who loved him so well, the Lord called for him, and he had to go, and now we feel to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." It is very hard to give up one we loved so well, yet we know that the Lord of the whole earth will do right, so we try to be reconciled to this our great bereavement. I was watching by the bedside of my dear boy on the evening before he died, and thought I saw his lips moving. I leaned over to catch a word, if possible, but the only word I caught at that time was "mercy." His features looked at one time as if he were going to cry, then they changed to a smile, and he spoke aloud, and said, "The victory is won, the victory is won," then he fell asleep. Our poor, bleeding hearts are comforted with the thought that he is at rest, and basking in the smiles of his loving Lord. He leaves a sorrowing and heartbroken widow, one tender offspring, a father, mother, one brother and a host of friends, to mourn his departure.

ANN E. KING.

ARGYLE, Texas.

Mrs. Rachel Elizabeth Gice Baker departed this life as the old year 1906 departed and the new one came in. She was born in Troup County, Ga., Dec. 7th, 1820, making her age 86 years and 23 days. She united with the Primitive Baptists in 1843, and was baptized by Elder Banks. In 1844 she was married to Wm. Calver Baker. I was personally acquainted with five sons and two daughters, but do not know whether there were more or not. Samuel, Morrel, Thomas, John and Charles were the sons; Carrie and Donie the daughters. Samuel, Thomas and Carrie united many years ago with the Primitive Baptists, and the others were friends. Brother Wm. Baker died some seven years ago. They moved from Georgia to Drew County, Ark., in 1865. Sister Baker fell about fifteen years ago and dislocated her right hip, and several years ago she received a second fall. She never was able to walk without crutches from the first fall, and was a continual sufferer until her death. Though in her old age she had much suffering, she still retained her mind and was rational until the end came. She was with sister Carrie Moore, her oldest daughter, at the time of her death, and had made that her home most of the time since brother Baker's death. Just how long she had been sick, I do not know, but not very long. She had taken a long sleep, and when she awoke asked for sister Carrie. Beulah Baker, her granddaughter, told her that her Aunt Carrie was asleep, as she had lost so much sleep and needed rest. Sister Baker told her she knew she was tired and needed rest, but that she was dying, and she knew Carrie would rather be wakened. For two hours she talked freely, and told of her happy frame of mind, and that she saw her way clearly. She then told Carrie to kiss her good-by, and then folded her hands across her breast and breathed her last. It was my privilege to become acquainted with brother and sister Baker in 1882. Many times the brethren would gather at their house and have a heavenly time in sweet communion with them. They united with old Ephesus Church, where she ever remained a true mother in Israel. Brother Baker has been dead several years. Brother Thomas is a faithful brother, and a member of Antioch Church. May the Lord remember the dear, old sister's children and grandchildren, and if it is his holy will, save them in Christ our Lord.

JAS. H. BLYTHE.

SISTER **Lucinda McLeroy** died at her home in Clarke County, Ga., July 14th, 1906, aged 76 years and 1 month. Her maiden name was Eidson; she was married to Elder F. M. McLeroy Sept. 9th, 1849, who preceded her to the grave six years. She united with the church, by experience, at Mt. Zion, about the year 1858. She had been confined to her room and bed for some eighteen weeks, during which time she fell with vertigo, dislocating her hip, causing much suffering, yet she endured it with christian fortitude, saying that her Lord had suffered even death upon the cross. She was a faithful member of her church, as well as a wife to a minister of the gospel who had for forty years given his life for the brethren and the cause of Christ. The writer of this was baptized by him about thirty-four years ago. He was moderator of the Oconee Association for many years. To this union of brother and sister McLeroy were born nine children, six girls and three boys, seven of whom survive her, and were called to her bedside to receive her last and farewell kiss, telling them that she wanted to go home, where sin and sorrow would be no more. We feel that our loss is her gain. Her anxious cares and responsibility in raising such a large family in high esteem, in the absence of her husband, who had the care of four churches, was

trying. Five of the children are members of the church with us.

The remains of sister McLeroy were interred at the family cemetery near the old home. Her pastor, Elder D. S. Gower, together with Elder W. W. West, conducted the funeral service, to the comfort of the bereaved, and in the presence of many relatives and friends. We would say to this beloved family of children and grandchildren, to try and imitate her in this life, and when it is over may you, too, fall asleep in Jesus. J. M. ADAMS.

MONROE, Ga.

SISTER **Rebecca McConaughey** died at her home near Newark, Del., Feb. 16th, 1907, in her 83rd year. She was baptized by Elder Thomas Barton in the fellowship of the Welch Tract Church. She was one of a family of nine, and lived to see them all laid away in the silent tomb. She had been the caretaker of the family from early life, being of strong nerve and will. The family for two generations back have been firm in the Baptist faith. Sister Rebecca possessed faculties of mind but rarely seen; she was a lover of church order and the preaching of the glorious gospel of the Son of God. Her mind dwelt much on the Scriptures, particularly on the creation and final redemption of the church. The Welch Tract Church will miss her. Her house was a Baptist home for many years, and the friends were always made welcome. Her housekeeper, Miss Laura Gregg, was very faithful to her in her declining years.

Elder Eubanks spoke very comfortingly to the friends assembled, and read her favorite hymn, 1296 (Beebe's collection); after which she was laid to rest by the side of her kindred, in the old cemetery at Welch Tract. M. S. CAMPBELL.

IRON HILL, Md.

DIED—In Jacksonville, Fla., March 10th, 1907, **Mrs. Marietta Clark,** wife of brother Joseph C. Clark, of Freeport, Maine. The circumstances of her death were sad, as she was on a pleasure trip to the south with her eldest daughter and a cousin. She had been ill with measles, but was recovering, when pneumonia developed. She was not considered dangerously ill until it was too late for brother Clark to reach there and find her alive. Her daughter lovingly cared for her, and had everything done that could be. Although she did not have a name with the people of God, we believe the truth had been revealed to her. She could not walk with those who boasted of their own works. She was a faithful wife and mother. Her husband, one son and two daughters mourn deeply their loss.

Funeral services were held at her home in Freeport, March 17th. Elder Z. M. Beal spoke from John xiv. 1-3. May God comfort the hearts of the sorrowing family. ATTIE A. CURTIS.

APPOINTMENTS.

IF the Lord will, I will attend appointments in Kentucky and Ohio as follows: Mount Sterling, Tuesday, April 16th, at 2 p. m.; Winchester, Tuesday night; Little Flock, Wednesday, 17th, at 2 p. m.; Farmdale, Wednesday night; Bethel, Thursday, 18th, at 11 o'clock; Shelbyville, Thursday night; Lexington, 123 Walton Ave., Friday night; Mays Lick, Saturday and Sunday, 20th and 21st; Georgetown, Monday night, April 22nd; Sadieville, Tuesday morning, 23rd; Mill Creek, Ohio, Wednesday morning, 24th; Mt. Pleasant, Ohio, Thursday morning, 25th.

SILAS H. DURAND.

NOTHING preventing, I will be at Schoharie Hill Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., April 20th and 21st, third Sunday; Schenectady, N. Y., 54 Fuller St., 23rd; Saratoga, N. Y., 24th and 25th; Troy, N. Y., 28th, fourth Sunday. D. M. VAIL.

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Association is appointed to be held with the Black Rock Church, Baltimore County, Md., beginning Wednesday before the third Sunday in May, (15th) 1907, and continuing three days.

All those who desire to attend the association coming by way of Baltimore city, will leave there from Union station at 3:30 p. m. Tuesday, buying tickets for Cockeysville, where they will be met by the friends and cared for. Those coming by way of Harrisburg will take train for the same station, leaving Harrisburg at 11:55 a. m., and arriving at Cockeysville at about 2:30 p. m. They will be met there at a little past 4 p. m., upon arrival of train from Baltimore. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love salvation by grace, to be with us at this session of the Association.

FRANK G. SCOTT, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Cow Marsh Church, Kent Co., Del., commencing on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, 1907, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continuing three days, May 22nd, 23rd and 24th.

All friends will be met at Viola station, Delaware division of P., B. & W. R. R., Tuesday p. m. before the meeting. Two trains from the north and one from the south will be met. From the north, train No. 39, arriving at Viola station 5:08 p. m.; train No. 45, Viola station, 5:29 p. m. From the south, train No. 46, arriving at Viola station 5:12 p. m. Those of D., M. & V. branch from Berlin and Snow Hill arrive at Harrington at 2:55 p. m., wait there for second train north, which will be train No. 46, as above, and stops at Viola at 5:12 p. m.

A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the

truth, and especially to ministering brethren of our faith and order, to meet with us.

BENJ. E. CUBBAGE, Moderator.

THOS. L. COOPER, Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Hopewell Church, Mercer Co., N. J., beginning Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (May 29th) 1907, and continuing three days.

All trains leaving either New York or Philadelphia on Tuesday afternoon before the meeting will be met at Hopewell, and the friends who may come will be cared for. All who come on Wednesday morning will come at once to the place of meeting, about ten minutes walk from Hopewell depot. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

ELIJAH LEIGH, Church Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Ebenezer Church, at New York city, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 5th, 6th and 7th, 1907.

The meeting place is at 171 Eighth Ave. Beginning Tuesday afternoon a committee will be at the above address to provide accommodation for all the friends. Those coming via P. R. R., B. & O., Erie, Central of N. J., Lehigh Valley or D., L. & W. railroads will find advantage in using the Twenty-third St. ferry, as it is nearest the meeting place. All who love the brethren are cordially invited to meet with us.

JOHN McCONNELL.

THE Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon will hold its next session with Sulphur Creek Church, the Lord willing, near Vern, Lewis County, Washington, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 14th, 15th and 16th, 1907, commencing at 10 o'clock a. m. Those going by railroad will go to Tacoma, Wash., there change to the Tacoma & Eastern, which leaves Tacoma at 8 o'clock a. m., arrives at Tilton at 1 o'clock p. m. Those going should be at Tilton Thursday evening before the meeting, where they will be met and conveyed to the places of entertainment.

N. J. SHANK, Clerk.

THE yearly two days meeting will be held, if the Lord will, with the Frying Pan Church, of Virginia, on Saturday and Sunday, May 11th and 12th, 1907. We give a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth. All ministering brethren of our faith and order who can come we give a special invitation to meet with us. Trains leaving Washington, D. C., 4:45 p. m. on Friday and 8:10 a. m. Saturday will be met at Herndon, Va.

W. A. THOMPSON.

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11:00 A. M. 2:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 75. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1907. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"I REMEMBER THEE."

"Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown."—Jeremiah ii. 2.

Unless you have a heart to know the Lord, the things declared in this chapter will be altogether unintelligible; you can have no apprehension of their spiritual significance. But if we are those who fear the Lord there will be found in this chapter very sacred things, which, when unfolded to us by the Holy Spirit, will move our hearts to throb with manifold emotions. I said in my heart a few moments ago, Here are love's chidings and chastenings, pleadings and grievings. Then came the question, Is the Lord in very truth such as he is declared to be in the Scriptures? and my heart said, In very truth he is. Then the question comes, How can I so confidently pen this? and this is my answer, I hope in very truth I know the Lord. O, it is wonderful that any poor sinner should have the right to say this, and I feel it is only by a miracle of grace that I dare say, I know the Lord, or rather, am known of God. (Gal. iv. 9.)

"Loved of my God, for him again
With love intense I burn;
Chosen of thee ere time began,
I choose thee in return."

"Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee." This is marvelous condescension, that Jehovah should have regard to sinful creatures, and that he should reveal himself in such near and dear relations. "Who hath God so nigh unto them?"—Deut. iv. 7. "For that thy name is near, thy wondrous works declare."—Psalms lxxv. 1. This may well excite the wonder and adoration of those who are made partakers of such distinguishing favor.

"Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee." As I look into these words of God this gleams forth to my view: it is love's entreaty; it is the Lord declaring to his sinful, straying, ungrateful people that he loves them still, that he has never forgotten them, and cherishes remembrances of their love to him. Thus he speaks: "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." This is the constancy of the love of God. But in contrast to this, look at these words:

"Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? yet my people have forgotten me days without number."—Jer. ii. 32. While the elect of God are dead in trespasses and sins Christ is unknown, undesired, we see in him no beauty that we should desire him. At that time (saith the apostle) "ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."—Eph. ii. 12. As I just penned this quotation a sort of a shudder passed over me as I looked upon the dark and awful picture of man's unregenerate estate. Ah, the whole world lieth in wickedness, pursuing its course in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, with no concern over their lost condition under the curse of the law, and with no regard for the true and living God. "Without Christ," "having no hope, and without God in the world." Such were we, "by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." When God called us by his grace he awakened us and made us alive to our bondage to sin. Like Israel in Egypt, our life was unto us as in an iron furnace (Deut. iv. 20,); yes, we were in the furnace of affliction in very truth. We were alive to the knowledge that we were vile transgressors, and the frown and condemnation of the law weighed down our hearts. Like Israel in Egypt, we toiled in the field, but our hard labors were all insufficient to accomplish our daily tasks; we could not yield to the law what it in righteousness demanded. Every day we came short, and we were beaten with stripes, the yoke of the law was more than we wretched transgressors could bear. (Acts xv. 10.) Then we fell down and cried in our affliction for mercy unto the Lord. The Lord did not despise nor abhor the affliction of his afflicted ones in Egypt, neither did he hide his face from them, but when they cried unto him he heard, and came in power and all graciousness, and brought them out of the house of bondage. He bare them on eagles' wings, and brought them unto himself. (Exodus xix. 14.) So the God of our mercy comes to sinners whose souls he hath quickened into divine life and called by his grace. Jesus comes to us, he is revealed by the Holy Ghost in us. (Gal. i. 16.) He shews himself the crucified One, our Sacrifice, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Poor, guilty sinners, we mused upon his sufferings, his wounds, his blood, we believed the story of our Pascal Lamb; his love, his sacrifice told to our sin-wounded, mourning hearts good tidings, healing tidings, we believed the gospel, we believed in Jesus; we girded our loins, put our shoes on our feet, and with our staff in our hand we feasted on the Lamb of God, Christ our passover sacrificed for us. (Ex. xii. 11; 1 Cor. v. 7.) The tribes of Israel went forth of Egypt into the wilderness; they followed the Lord, who in the cloudy, fiery pillar went before them. He led them through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and pits, through a land of drought, and the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt. (Jer. ii. 6.)

The time of the soul's espousal to Christ is a sacred and memorable time. Have we forgotten? Christ has not, he will recall it to our minds, he will awaken the memories of this season of our first love. "Go, and cry in the ears of Jeru-

salem, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals." Jesus found us poor and wretched, in our rags and filth, so sin-defiled. We were sinners feelingly "ready to perish."—Deut. xxvi. 5. There was none to help, no comforter to relieve our souls, no eye pitied us to do anything for our salvation. We must have perished in our sins under the curse of the law, but Jesus came, he looked upon us, and we looked unto him. (Isa. xlv. 22.) His speech was full of compassion, his gospel was good news indeed, we saw in his wounds and blood that love moved him to die for our sins. We were drawn to him confessing our iniquities and pleading his forgiveness. His obedience even unto death became the refuge to which in faith we fled for deliverance from the law's condemnation. With sweet tokens of pardon and salvation Christ espoused us to himself, and in our soul's love to him our heart's sweet song was:

"Love moved him to die, on this I rely;
My Savior hath loved me, I cannot tell why;
But this I can tell, he hath loved me so well
As to lay down his life to redeem me from hell."

Yes, we believed in the Son of God, we loved him. In those days our heart was ever kindly toward the Savior, so desired was he; in his gospel we caught glimpses of him, and so longed for was the Savior. Some sweet word of his gospel was sent, brought by the Holy Ghost to us, and our sin-distressed heart said, Can such a kind word be for me? We were thrilled with longings, with hope it might be so. We sought the Savior, we sent a secret petition to him, asking, Are such gracious words of thine in the gospel for me? These were the days of our espousals, love-letter days. He wrote to us, and in return our heart moved us to send some poor, broken sentences to him. Our letters were such a mixture of sighs and longings, trust and distrust; we told him we were uncomely, and so unworthy of his regard, and after we had sent a letter to him we were ashamed of it; we said to ourselves, It is so badly penned, it is just like myself, a poor, worthless sinner, he will see it is from an ignorant creature, and after a glance or two he will cast it from him into the fire; I fear I shall never have another line penned by him to me. His letters were so well written, so noble, gracious, full of tenderness, we could hardly believe they were written to us, so poor, sinful and ignorant we knew ourselves to be. Well, what do you think Christ has done? I will tell you; he did not throw these letters away, but he has kept them all, every scrap of them, locked up in his heart. "Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals." As I have intimated, this means he has treasured up all her love-letters to himself, and now he brings them forth from the casket of his heart and reads them in her ears. "Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem." Can you, O backsliding daughter of Zion, disown these letters? Did not she indite them? Are they not Zion's own heart penmanship? Were they not addressed to him only? Was there at the time of writing them any other in her thoughts? Can she deny her own signature? Take a glimpse of these letters written by the saints of God in the days of their spiritual youth; there are photographs of them in the holy Scriptures. Some of them are blithesome and gay, happiness in Christ the Lord sparkles in every word; some are tear-stained, telling the sighs and moanings of her sin-anguished heart, beseeching him to come and in his pity redeem her from her miseries. All these letters have a sweet-

smelling fragrance. Was it not her own hands, dropping with sweet-smelling myrrh, that perfumed them? (Song of Solomon v. 5.) O the wayward, backsliding believer cannot deny these things, and when our Lord comes saying in our ears, "I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals," how we are stirred; we then remember, too, and we are ashamed and blush, and sigh beneath these memories of our early attachment to our Lord Jesus Christ. Then it was that "Jesus all the day long was our joy and our song;" then the heart flowed forth in its freshness, simplicity and fervor; then, O believer, thine heart was kind, thy thoughts were yearning and tender toward the Lamb of God, thine eyes were often turned to him with tearful entreaty, and his smile was then thy heaven. In the day of our espousals to Christ we were hopeful and happy in him; sin was atoned for, we were pardoned and we had peace with God through him. Such loveliness and desirableness had been revealed to us in him, the suffering, sin-atoning sacrifice, that we were drawn to him. (John xii. 32.)

"His loveliness hath won my heart;
Dear Jesus, let us never part;
I'll sound thy lovely name abroad,
My altogether lovely Lord."

Yes, in the love of our espousals we crowned him as our Husband, Shepherd, Savior, King; Christ was our all. It was a time of reciprocal love and gladness, it was the day of the gladness of Christ's heart. (Song of Solomon iii. 11.) He rejoiced over us with singing. (Zeph. iii. 17.) His speech, his gospel was a gladsome song, and our happy, sin-pardoned heart in all kindliness and love did sing, He is the chiefest among ten thousand, he is altogether lovely; worthy is the Lamb that was slain. No stranger intermeddleth with the joy (Prov. xiv. 10,) of Christ and the church in these espousal days. Of Jacob it is written, "The Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him."—Deut. xxxii. 12. All gods were utterly renounced and famished out of the land. (Zeph. ii. 16.) They had cheated and mocked us, in our distresses they gave us no sustenance, afforded us no help, they were lying vanities, (Jonah ii. 8,) and we cast them to the moles, and to the bats. (Isa. ii. 20.) We now knew it had been very folly to say to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods. (Hosea xiv. 3.) Now we could sing:

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness."

To Jesus we looked, he altogether satisfied us, and all things and all others were now counted but dung, that we might win Christ. (Phil. iii. 8.) He had attracted, won us, and we would win him who had won us. For there was no other one to save a poor sinner, (Acts iv. 12,) and no other was there that we worshiped, trusted, loved; we were leaning on him alone. Are you able to enter into this sacred mystery? Christ and the believer, these two, espoused, no third one.

"I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown." Thus it was with typical Israel; forth from Egypt they came, the Lord going before them in the cloudy, fiery pillar; after him they went into the wilderness, a land not sown. Here God nourished them with bread from heaven. (Ex. xvi. 35.) He opened the rock, the waters gushed out to give drink to his people, his chosen. Israel was holiness unto the Lord, a peculiar treasure unto me, saith the Lord, above all people. In the first happy season of the believer's espousals to Jesus,

when he is saying, My Savior is mine and I am his, he thought, Through a delightsome land I shall go with Jesus, my Redeemer, until he shall bring me into his palace on high. Israel having passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, (Heb. xi. 29,) sang most joyously, The Lord hath triumphed gloriously. (Ex. xv. 1.) From the Red Sea "they went out into the wilderness of Shur: and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water. And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah."—Ex. xv. 22, 23. Then, and many times afterwards, "the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way."—Num. xxi. 4. Nevertheless a divine power drew them on; here and there they were led about in the wilderness; though unworthy and rebellious they found grace in the wilderness, (Jer. xxxi. 2,) God kept them to himself as the apple of his eye, (Deut. xxxii. 10,) and at length he brought them in rest into that land which is the glory of all lands. (Deut. xi. 12; Ezek. xx. 6.) In our first days of blissful intimacy with our Redeemer we dwelt and walked where the flowers cast forth their fragrance, and the birds were sweetly singing. (Song of Solomon ii. 12.) These were sacred moments, for we were drinking the forgiveness of all our sins of Christ, our Fountain of living waters. (Jer. ii. 13.)

> "Tongue cannot express
> The sweet comfort and peace
> Of a soul in its earliest love."

One such, some time ago, said, "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." A believer, in the kindness of his youth feels altogether willing to go anywhere with Jesus, and sometimes in his soul's simplicity he sings:

> "Through floods and flames, if Jesus lead,
> I'll follow where he goes."

Ah, little does he understand what his loving heart is singing. Let me repeat once more that when Christ our Savior and King betrothed us unto himself (Hosea ii. 19,) he did not immediately take us to his palace, into heaven itself. No, the Holy Spirit shewed us some pictures of it, and the "better country;" (Heb. xi. 16; Isa. xxxiii. 17,) we had foretastes of the heavenly felicity given us, and we were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, and in this comforting earnest of our inheritance, (Eph. i. 14,) by faith we journeyed on in hope of eternal glory with our dear Savior. It was a terrible wilderness we came into shortly after our espousal to Christ; (2 Cor. xi. 2,) it was a waste and howling place, and there were scorpions and fiery flying serpents. Ah, how often do we find that we are in this wilderness even to this day. While we have the felt companionship of our beloved Savior, while we are walking in the highway with him, (for in the wilderness "an highway shall be there."—Isa. xxxv. 8.) while we are following hard after him, (Psalms lxiii. 8,) all is well. He is our Guide and Protector, but O, when we step aside from the highway, scorpions and fiery flying serpents abound, and fears and miseries, hunger and thirst, plague our life. We thought in our youthful days our life henceforth as a ransomed, pardoned sinner was to be to live and journey in a land of corn and wine, a land of brooks and gentle rivers, flowing with the loving-kindnesses of the Lord; but only for some little moments have we found our way to be such. We

have had to come into the knowledge of the dreary, howling desert of the human heart. Our vile, sinful heart we have found to bring forth only briars and thorns; truly it is a land "not sown" with any good thing, (Rom. vii. 18,) consequently we can harvest nothing therefrom for our sustenance and spiritual comfort. Look back, O believer, to those early days of the kindness of thy youth, and the love of thine espousals to the Lamb that was slain for thy sins; was not thy heart all kindness toward him? It was. But this coming into the wilderness astounded us, we did not know then that there could be such a horrible wilderness in us. We trembled, we blushed, we mourned, but to the Savior we were clinging; we confessed it all to him and implored his compassion and salvation. Those fiery flying serpents, our sinful thoughts, are dreadful; a child of God cannot tell when or where they will attack him, and so he is often harrassed and bitten and soul-sick indeed because of the plague of his own heart. (1 Kings viii. 38.) "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," breeds these scorpions and serpents, (Gen. viii. 21; Matt. xv. 19,) and surely we need to be ever watchful, and to have our healing balm near by.

"Precious is my dear Physician,
Oft I prove his power to heal;
Curing every sad condition
When he does his love reveal.
Precious Jesus,
Much I need thy healing power."

The world, its trials and temptations are as a devouring waste to famish and shrivel up the ardor and blessedness of the love of our espousals; but through the rugged wilderness, through tribulation, the church of Christ must travel, and when our Lord is near, when on him we are leaning, we can hold on our way and tread temptations under our feet. Thus saith the Lord, "I did know thee in the wilderness."—Hosea xiii. 5. Yes, dear Lord, thou hast owned us, pitied and succored us in all our dreadful straits. O thou hast been pitiful indeed, so rich in mercy, ever revealing thyself in all gracious intimacy to us vile, unworthy sinners. Though rough and thorny was the way, the kind words of Christ's gospel revived our courage, creating for us here and there a grateful oasis. Out of the heart-wearying cares and conflicts of our pilgrimage we entered these pleasant places of living green. The doctrine of Christ came to us in power, in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance. How transforming is the word that Christ speaketh to us! Then in the wilderness waters break forth, and streams in the desert; in fellowship with Christ we drank of the brook in the way, and our face was lifted up unto God, (Psalms cx. 7,) and thus our scenes of desolation are made to become unto us as the garden of Eden. (Ezek. xxxvi. 35.) What though we are perplexed by Satan, and our old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, weighs down our life in the dust, and with weak hands, feeble knees and fearful heart we are ready to halt, (Psalms xxxviii. 17,) soon all is changed when we are moved by the Holy Spirit to look unto Jesus. In his atoning sacrifice we see sin's destruction, our old man crucified with him, Satan defeated, death and the grave swallowed up in victory. Yes, Christ is with the church in the wilderness, (Acts vii. 38,) and through the world and all tribulation with eyes of faith and love she followeth him to the realms of immortal love.

Read again with me our text: "Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine

espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown." Have we not recollections of it all? "Thou wentest after me in the wilderness," but saith the Lord, "Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? a land of darkness?"—Jer. ii. 31. No, dear Lord, thou hast not. "O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me."—Micah vi. 3. Is there a voice in all the host of Israel to testify against God? Not the first syllable is uttered, but all heads must be bowed with confusion of face before him. O there is not an instance in all our pilgrimage wherein Christ has been wearisome, a wilderness unto his people. Then why, O backslider, hast thou changed, become so degenerate, so cold, so indifferent to the things of Jesus Christ? Why art thou so far removed from the fervor of thy first love? Why are thy privileges in the church of God so neglected? Come, dear brethren, let us not put away these searching questions, it is profitable to examine ourselves whether we are in the faith. Is Jesus Christ less precious, less needful than in the days of the kindness of our youth and the love of our espousals? Is he not still the only Fountain of living waters? What are all things else, all others, but broken cisterns that can hold no water? Are you crucifying the flesh with the affections and the lusts? (Gal. v. 24.) Are you seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness? Are you seeking your carnal ease, so greedy for money, so swallowed up with the things of time? Are you so looking upon the things that are seen, which are temporal, that your eyes are become bleared that you scarcely see the things which are unseen, which are eternal? (2 Cor. iv. 18.) Can it be that temporal things have become more weighty with us than things which are eternal, the far more exceeding and the eternal weight of glory? If so, then our scales are in a wretched plight, we are miserably deceived, and are in a dreadful condition. Perhaps, notwithstanding our profession of the name of Christ, we are none of his. (Rom. viii. 9.)

"Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee." What, remember a sinner like me?

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

ALVINSTON, Ont., March 20, 1907.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—Inclosed find postal order for two dollars, my subscription for the SIGNS, and I can say of a truth it has been a source of much comfort and satisfaction to me for many years, and I feel that I cannot do without it, as it contains most of the preaching I have, and comes laden with good things that the world is unable to supply. The doctrine it advocates I receive in the love of it, and often when I have been brought low because of mine iniquity it has encouraged and helped me by the way. Many times I have been cast down and distressed, and feeling as one alone, then in reading some of the communications in the dear, old SIGNS I have felt we "are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints." Is this then not joy unspeakable? and does it not give a poor, wayworn traveler consolation to know that God has not left himself without witnesses, and that "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God"? Like David, I have been envious at the prosperity of the wicked; but when brought to a realizing sense of the truth of these words: God has "chosen the poor of this world rich in faith," yes, and "the Lord is nigh

unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit," then I esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.

I herewith inclose a letter written to my dear mother twenty-seven years ago by Deacon Bateman, who departed this life many years ago. I never had the privilege of reading it until about three weeks ago, and we thought it would be of interest to the readers of the SIGNS, so will leave it to your judgment whether to publish it. I also send a letter written by my mother to you, in which she has related some of her experience, which she wishes me to forward to you; she has written in much weakness. She is sadly afflicted in body, having suffered from several strokes, which have rendered her very weak and almost helpless. It is with much difficulty that she writes at all; but I will inclose her letter and you may kindly correct errors if published.

Your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) WM. C. YOUNG.

MOUNT BRYDGES, Ont., Feb. 3, 1880.

MRS. SARAH CARTER—MY HIGHLY ESTEEMED FRIEND AND, I MAY SAY, SISTER AND COMPANION IN TRIBULATION:—We have just arrived home from Duart, and your very interesting and welcome letter is before me; we both have read it with great satisfaction and deep emotion, being in sympathy with you, having felt and still feeling the truth of the words that, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," and that the grace of God alone through Jesus Christ is able to save us from the wrath to come. This you have felt and still feel, therefore we are companions in tribulation, and, I trust, also in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. You say that you have often, since the conversation referred to, wondered what kind of a person I thought you were. Now I will tell you that I thought you were one of God's lawful captives, and that you would be delivered in God's own time, and I am satisfied that you have seen the arm of the Lord made bare in your salvation, and that it is your privilege to walk in the footsteps of your dear Redeemer at the first opportunity, and show to all who can behold that you are not ashamed to own your Lord though you are ashamed of yourself; in this also we are companions. I believe, too, you can say in sincerity that you are a companion of all those that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, and in this, too, we are companions. I am satisfied from what I have seen and heard from you that you still remember the wormwood and the gall, and your soul is humbled within you, and that you recall them to mind, and therefore you have hope. I believe likewise that you have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and that his love is better than wine, and in this we are also companions and joint-heirs with Christ of that never-fading inheritance that is treasured up in Christ for all them that love him. I am sure the deep grief you feel for your sins is an evidence that God has taught you terrible things in righteousness, and though you feel that you cannot blot out your former sins from your remembrance, that is no evidence against you, but is an evidence in your favor, and proves that God has made a new covenant with you. Hear what he says in the new covenant: "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a

people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." Here is the reason given by God himself, who cannot lie: "For [or because] I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." What a blessed promise to the poor soul that is stripped of all his own righteousness. This poor soul has nothing left but unrighteousness, and he or she fears and trembles because clothed in filthy garments, even nothing but unrighteousness, but the promise in the new covenant just fits the case: "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more," for "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee. Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel." Now, dear, trembling soul, though you cannot blot out your sins from your remembrance, the God of your salvation has promised to blot them all out and remember them no more against you, and this he did when Jesus bled on Calvary for his bride. For "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." And Jesus cried, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost. He not only died for the sins of his people, but to crown all he rose again for their justification, and entered into his glory, to appear in the presence of God for us. Jesus rendered obedience when he laid down his life for his chosen, and by his obedience they are made righteous, even as he is righteous, for he covers them with the robe of his righteousness, and then there is no spot in them, and he says, "The King's daughter is all glorious within," her raiment is of needlework, and wrought gold her clothing. O how lovely she is when decked with the righteousness of Jesus, and when he appears to her faith, which is his gift to her, he is the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely One; and he says to her who is his bride, "Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair." This is the way she appears when beheld in Jesus, but in her Adamic nature she is all defiled, as you have found by painful experience, and that is an evidence that you are one with him when you suffer with him, and the apostle says, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." Again, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

Dear child, you ask me to tell you if you said anything wrong; if I should say you did, I fear I should be guilty of condemning the breathings of the Holy Spirit, who is teaching you to profit. As I read your exercises, I could not help weeping and rejoicing for such a blessed testimony of a work of grace in you, and I can bear testimony with you of the superabounding grace of God to me, the vilest of the vile. Elder Pollard will preach in Ekfrid next Friday evening, and may the Lord give you strength to tell the church your mind then, for I am sure it will be a relief to you and a rejoicing for the church, for there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine just persons that need no re-

pentance. The gospel heaven is meant, not the heaven of glory above, but here in the church. Grant me the privilege of showing your letter to Elder Pollard. I must say to you, Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; why standest thou without?

Yours as ever,

JOHN C. BATEMAN.

MELBOURNE, Ontario, March 25, 1907.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—May one so unworthy call you brother in Christ? I feel very unworthy to claim such a relationship with any of the Lord's dear children. I feel impressed to write a little of what sometimes I hope has been my experience in traveling from nature to grace, if indeed such it be. If you cannot see in it the marks of one who has been taught of God, I hope you will tell me so. It is with much fear that I make the attempt, for I do not want to deceive any of the Lord's dear children. I have before this been deceived myself, and found it out to my sorrow, and it has caused me a great deal of trouble, far more than I can express.

I was baptized when quite young, by a man that did not love the truth. Neither did I love it, but hated it, and did not want to hear it. I did not then know my right hand from my left in spiritual things. In course of time I was laid upon a bed of sickness, and I was brought so low that I could not speak louder than a whisper; while I lay in this weak state I seemed to hear a voice which said to me, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." I feel now that was the time when the Sun of righteousness shone in my heart, and I was turned around, and the things I once hated I then loved, and what I once loved I then hated. I lost all confidence in myself, and my strength was gone. I then wanted to go to the church of Christ, but I was too unworthy, and I was afraid that the church could not fellowship me. I had told some of my feelings to Deacon Bateman, a dear man of God, and he gave me encouragement, but I was afraid that he might be mistaken. Just at this time as I was out in the yard one evening after dark, and walking down the path, it seemed that I heard a voice which said, Whosoever is ashamed of me, of him will I be ashamed; and then I was made willing to go to the church. I was baptized by the late Elder Pollard, and I have had rest ever since, although often beset with doubts and fears that mine is not the part of God's elect.

I leave this with you; if you think it worth putting in the dear old SIGNS, do so, if not, cast it into the fire, and all will be right with me.

(MRS.) A. CARTER.

WHITT, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS, AND BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Having been absent from home for quite a while on a tour to southwest Texas, and across the Rio Grande River into the Republic of Mexico, makes me anxious this morning to break the long silence by trying to write a short article for the dear, old, reliable family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which through the mercy and providence of a just and holy God has weathered and stood the ordeal of merciless persecution for seventy-four years, and yet is prospered through the Spirit to contend earnestly for the ancient order and practice of the church. In unbroken succession its editorials and communications exhibit efficiently and authoritatively the unlimited sovereignty of Almighty God; unfurling the banner of truth be-

fore them that fear him to whom all creatures and all things are naked and open; his predestination of all things, and the absolute certainty and fulfillment of all his purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world.

Very often my mind reverts to the time and place of the Old School Baptist meeting at the memorable convention at Black Rock, Md., in 1832, when among the valiants of Israel on that eventful occasion the late Elder Gilbert Beebe was chosen to conduct the publication of a religious periodical entitled the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, sending forth its prospectus of the same to all the Old School Baptists in the United States of America, to confront and battle with all the isms of the day, at such a critical moment, when Judson, Rice and others, with all their cohorts, were propagating their new enterprise of Fullerism and human policy, and therefore our devoted brother and fellow-servant in the gospel of the Son of God, for the great cause of truth and the welfare of the church, was made able to stand forth in the strength and power of Israel's God and wield "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," against all innovations and pernicious doctrines of men, and like the stripling David, smote the uncircumcised Philistine, and thus vindicated the cause of Israel, and prevailed. The eternal God being his refuge, he did not fear men, nor the frowns of the world, but with Christ in the vessel he could smile in the storm, preferring to suffer affliction with the people of God than to have all the treasures of Egypt or the popularity of the world. So down through all the years of his great life he stood immovably fixed in the doctrine of unconditional salvation by grace, ascribing all power and glory to the Lord God of heaven and earth; by which he was made an able minister of the New Testament, to withstand all the fiery darts of Satan, promulgating the glorious truth of Bible doctrine to the joy, comfort and peace of the dear children of God. My remembrance of him, his earnest devotion and the faithful performance of his arduous labors under great responsibilities, will never be forgotten by me as long as memory lives. When I was first made acquainted with the SIGNS, forty years ago, I was at once peculiarly drawn to the editorials on the various subjects of Bible truth, so elaborately discussed, and the great liberty of spirit by which he wrote, and the brilliant light of his interpretations of the revealed word of God. It seemed to me then, and does yet, that he could take a portion of Scripture and bring forth sublime things, touching the types and shadows of the Old Testament Scriptures, pointing to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel, so appropriate and full of gospel promises to the joy of the saints scattered abroad, and all who hunger and thirst after righteousness and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come shall be filled. (Heb. vi. 5.) Although Elder Beebe has long since ceased from his labors here below, his works do follow him, and will live on in the history of the Old School or Predestinarian Baptists to future years.

Brethren, bear with me, my mind has thus run and moved my pen to write some of my solemn reflections on the character and ministerial career of one of the Lord's gifted servants, whom God raised up in the church and blessed with wisdom and understanding, to preach Jesus to a poor and afflicted people, the

only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

Passing from here, we next come to our dear brother, Benton L. Beebe, who was associated with his father in the publication of the SIGNS. But he also is gone, and we keenly miss him; his sound counsel and firmness in the faith of God's elect. However, we are assured of the fact that God has never left himself without witnesses. Now I wish to say that I am highly pleased with the present editorial work of Elders Chick and Ker, praying the Lord's blessings upon them, that in the midst of sore conflicts they may be enabled to speak and write "as of the ability which God giveth," "to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." They also are precious to me, and their work in the Lord highly commendable. I have just read and reread carefully Elder Chick's "Answers to Questions" in his editorial on page 217 of the SIGNS for April 1st, 1907, and now in all candor I am glad to be able to say to him that my association, the Trinity River, and three other associations of our correspondence, fully accept and indorse his views on the resurrection as a sound and able exposition of that subject. His annotation of the vile body, the natural, fleshly, mortal body that dies, goes to the grave and is raised in the consummation of all things, is our hope, and what the old-fashioned Bible Baptists I am identified with in Texas believe and contend for. I truly can appreciate the subject in the scriptural light, so wonderfully set forth and expounded by Elder Chick in that editorial.

Now I must forbear, lest I trespass upon the precious time of our dear editors. I trust our adorable Savior gave me the above reminiscences, as well as some things to write about of the present, therefore I send you and all who love our Lord Jesus Christ, my best greetings. I hope you may be able to publish this early, for the benefit of many dear brethren who have been inquiring after me and soliciting me to resume writing for the SIGNS. May the grace of our God, the King of kings and Lord of lords, forever sustain and bless you with all wisdom, and prosper the SIGNS, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

In tribulation, affectionately,

ASA HOWARD.

"A LITTLE LEAVEN."

LEAVEN is of a transforming nature, and works by an affinity to that within which its operations are performed. Leaven will not work effectually upon a substance which is foreign and without any affinity to the leaven, such as sand, spice, pepper, &c. If the leaven is good, and the substance to be affected by it is so related to it that a fusion may take place, then the leaven will perform its work effectually, and change the elemental nature of the substance to the nature of the leaven throughout the whole measure, until all is leavened, or changed, without the destruction or annihilation of any of the parts or particles. But the sand, spice or pepper, will not be changed, nor assimilated to the leaven, because of no affinity to the leaven, though coming in contact with it. The kingdom of heaven, therefore, is like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened; that is, finished, completed, perfected, when the fermentation would cease to be active. Jesus, in this parable, taught the disciples the effect and the effectuality of the work of God by his Spirit in the hearts of men, when his word

entering gives them light and life through our Lord Jesus Christ. "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ," is the doctrine taught in the parable. Behold, I will sift you with a sieve, but not one grain of wheat shall be lost or fall to the ground, is the word of the Lord by the prophet. The harmony of the word of the Lord by the prophet and the word of the Lord by Jesus Christ is established by the use of this parable of the leaven and the meal, or the flour of wheat. The wheat, crushed and broken and ground into meal is yet unleavened, but it is in a common mass, and all of the same nature and material substance with the grains of wheat which were planted in the ground and died, but were quickened, and therefore brought forth much fruit. This grain of wheat, or corn, characterizes the Lord Jesus who was crucified and rose again from the dead, crowned with immortality, and entered through the veil, (that is to say, his flesh,) into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us; and in this state of blessedness is the hope of eternal life for all his people redeemed by his blood from all iniquity, and is the life of the church, which church is signified by the three measures of meal, till all is leavened or perfected.

There is another leaven of unrighteousness, which is hypocrisy, deceit and malice, which is the effective opposite of all perfection, and is the revelation of the man of sin, whose coming is after the working of Satan, the great enemy of God and all righteousness, who also shall be destroyed at the coming of Christ and by the word of his power. Paul said, "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way;" and then, said Paul, the man of sin shall be revealed. That is to say, he shall be made known in his true colors when he can no longer deceive by his magic power of imitation of the works of God, like Jannes and Jambres, who withstood Moses until their folly and fraudulent imitation through their enchantments were exposed in the sight of Israel and Egypt.

A few suggestions might not be amiss along the line of the foregoing. It is seen that leaven is an active agent implanted to change the natural substance of the things of nature into other forms and conditions than what they possessed before this change is effected by the introduction of the leaven, which works effectually in the mass or measure of meal, and this will express alike the action of both the good and the bad leaven, and also shows that the change effected is not in the leaven, but in that into which it is placed. Therefore, if the leaven be good the result is good, and if evil the result is evil, and upon the whole mass. We also see that when the leaven has had its full effect it ceases to be active, and the work is done, and that is perfected which is good, and that which is evil is completed also. In the last place the cup of iniquity is full.

Now as to the figurative use of the bad leaven, we have the saying of Paul in his application of the figure, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." All is leavened. In the application of the whole subject in an ungodly sense, we find the principles of sin and iniquity personified in the man of sin when he is revealed sitting in the temple of God and showing himself that he is God as a personification of all that is called God. Now we read that at this height of the mystery of iniquity in his purpose, pride, and glory, this man of sin is to be destroyed at the com-

ing of the Son of man in his glory, to take vengeance upon all that know not God and deny the gospel. This period brings our subject down to the end of time, and the coming of the man Christ Jesus, at the resurrection of the dead, when the glorious change of this vile body shall take place, and it shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body, and this will be the perfect end of the work of God through the effectual work of the Spirit of Christ, and of God the Father by the Holy Ghost, in bringing his ransomed people home to himself in the heavenly world. But on the other hand, he will destroy the wicked (as it is said in the prophets) with the breath of his nostrils, and he shall slay them. It is in harmony with this prophecy that Paul said of the man of sin sitting in the seat of God, showing himself that he is God, that he should destroy him with the Spirit of his mouth, and with the brightness of his coming.

This brings us to the end of all things. But the times and seasons knoweth no man but the Father only, as we are distinctly told by the Lord himself, and also that the times and seasons he hath in his own power. No man, therefore, knows the time or the manner of time when that last great event of the world shall come to pass and be fulfilled; but it will be when all the Scriptures of the prophets are fulfilled, and not sooner. From this view we are commanded to watch and be sober; and said he, Let no man deceive you by any means; for there shall be false christs and false prophets, and they shall deceive many. But I will be allowed to express my opinion with regard to the times and current events in the world, that the last signs of the Lord's coming are rapidly being fulfilled in the development of the man of sin in our day; and that the Lord is at hand, not with sword and cannon, but with the Spirit of his mouth.

Your brother,

I. N. NEWIRK.

JULIAETTA, Idaho, Feb. 12, 1907.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 5, 1906.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have felt impressed to send this letter to you to publish, and at last I am doing it. I agree with him in regard to who it is that cannot sin, and that does sin—cannot sin against the law of Moses, not being under it, and yet does sin, as being under law to Christ. I leave it with you.

Your brother,

SILAS H. DURAND.

SHERWOOD, Ore., Sept. 16, 1906.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND—VERY DEAR BROTHER:—I am continually thinking of you this beautiful Monday morning, away out here on the Pacific coast, and as I owe you a letter I will try to write. I have been at work in my hennery this morning, and while resting will write a few lines to my beloved brother Durand, whom I hope I love in the truth as it is in Jesus. I have lately received a letter from sister Lydia Ray, and she writes me that she attended two of your appointments in the east, and spoke very highly of the two sermons she heard you preach, but especially of the one from the words, "It is I," &c. I almost envy her in her great privilege and pleasure. How I do wish I could have been with her and the dear ones at those two meetings, to have enjoyed those two sermons; I can almost taste their sweetness clear across the continent. Sister Ray is a live Baptist, and is bright and consistent in doctrine and experience, and is very spiritually

minded, which makes her extra good company. I still read the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and enjoy the good, old, sound doctrine of salvation by grace, which is so ably and beautifully set forth in its pages. Elder White has a very able article in the SIGNS of August 1st, I think, and if I understand him where he says, "When we were born of the same Spirit and power, we also were men; hence Jesus said, 'Except a man be born again,'" &c., I am in accord with his view here. I have held that view of this subject of the new birth for years, but as the brethren generally dissent from that view I have not contended for my view of it; being weak and barren in knowledge, and so limited in comprehension in spiritual things, I would not, until lately, show my opinion. Where it is said in the word, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he [not it] is born of God," is the same man that Elder White sets forth in his article. I understand, in short, that the reason this man cannot sin is because he is born of God, and none are thus born except those for whom Christ died, and they cannot commit sin any more in the eye of that law from which they have been made free by the blood of Jesus; and as they cannot commit sin any more in the eye of that law, they shall never more come into condemnation under the curse of that law, neither in time nor eternity, because Christ hath obtained eternal redemption for us. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." To be born of God I understand is to be born from the dead, to pass from death unto life. "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." "You hath he quickened, who were dead." This same man is said to be translated out of the kingdom of darkness, or delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. This man who is translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son is now under law to Christ, and he cannot commit sin any more in the eye of that law from which he is forever made free; but now being under law to Christ he does sin, so we see there is a qualified sense in which this same man that cannot sin, does sin. If not, why are both of these things ascribed to him? I have just given an outline of how I view this subject, but do not know that I am correct. Tell me plainly if I am wrong; you have not written, I believe, on this subject.

Well, my brother, I have been to some very enjoyable meetings lately; I have visited Sulphur Creek Church, in the State of Washington; they held a three days meeting, and there was a large attendance Saturday and Sunday. On Friday there were over forty persons present. The brethren thought that there were two hundred people present on Saturday and Sunday. Elders Hess and Newkirk and two licentiates were present, besides Elders Riffe and Coleman, who are members of Sulphur Creek Church. The preaching was all good; the brethren in the ministry seemed to be blessed with liberty in preaching what I believe to be the truth, and there was much interest manifested among the people. There was one addition to the church. This church is located near the Cowlitz River. I have also visited regularly the Cedar Creek Church, at Oregon City. There have been two additions to that church this summer. I have also tried to preach here in this neighborhood at the church-house of the Congregationalists; so you

can have some idea of what I am doing. Sister Ray wrote me about seeing you baptize an old brother, and spoke of the two old grey heads going into the water, with reverence, in the solemn ordinance of baptism.

Dear brother, I must stop writing, as I have already taxed your patience with this lengthy letter. Give our love to your sister Bessie and your dear wife.

Your brother in hope,

J. P. ALLISON.

WARRENTON, Ore., March 24, 1907.

ELDER H. C. KER—BELOVED BROTHER IN CHRIST:—As often as I have read your editorials I have had a desire to tell you what comfort and enjoyment I have found in reading them, but my great unworthiness and inability to write kept me silent. I am very poor in spirit, and I feel to-day that I could not find words to tell you as I should what a blessing the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES is to me in my loneliness. This paper and my Bible are what I read, and in these I find comfort, and all the reading I truly enjoy, feeling that there is no profit in reading anything which we have no fellowship for. That which has not been made manifest unto us by the Spirit of revelation as truth, finds no place in us, yet is very highly esteemed by the religious world; it is an abomination in the Father's sight, and so also unto his children, and they are told to "Touch not; taste not; handle not." Only in that which the Father gives unto them do they find sweetness. O what consolation we have in the knowledge that it is God who is our all, and we can come unto him as children to a kind, indulgent parent; we receive not a stone when we ask for bread; O no, for it is unto his hungry poor that the gospel is preached, and they only can enjoy its sweetness, while the Spirit applies its precious truth unto their waiting souls. O blessed, favored people; in him will they trust. "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)." My dear brother, that text is one of my favorites, and will you in loving-kindness some time write upon it? Of few words, but of wonderful scope, and is the bright star which glows upon our hope, crowning all the doctrine and precepts, and nothing is ever lacking to those who love Jesus Christ their Lord in sincerity; for grace, the sovereign gift of our gracious Lord, is in all those who know experimentally the sweetness of the joy and peace there is in the comforting restfulness of salvation by grace. O how I love all truth, and hate sin and all false doctrine of the world. I will not go where this is preached or talked, as I am better at home than to bid them Godspeed by my presence. I have not the blessed privilege of attending regularly my church meetings, for I live more than one hundred and twenty miles from Oregon City, where our church holds her meetings. You, my dear brother, can think how homesick and lonely a poor wanderer must be. I feel here as a stranger in a strange land, for I live in a truly Arminian community, and knowing that I am only a poor Old School Baptist, they look upon me as a curiosity perhaps, or some one who is hardly worthy of their pity or society. I feel to glory in persecution for our dear Jesus' sake, and would not exchange my precious hope for all their pomp and popularity.

I am so glad you are associated with dear brother Chick in the editorial work of our beloved old paper, and often do I

in my weakness ask our God to richly bless you both in your good work, making you strong in his strength and wise in his wisdom, enabling you to continue for many years the work which he has fitted you for, blessing the same to the comfort of his little children everywhere, as well as to the many lonely ones here on the far away Pacific strand, for our dear Jesus' sake, is the prayer of your very little sister,

(MRS.) S. L. H. STUART.

(Editorial reply on page 313.)

WHITLOCK, Tenn., March 16, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS, AND ALL THE FAITHFUL IN CHRIST:—It is time for me to renew my subscription for our dear paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I feel impressed to tell you it is a great comfort to me to have it to read. The many good writers can tell of the Lord's dealings with them, and tell some of my feelings much better than I can tell them myself. I feel to be so little, so imperfect, but I do love the truth, and the saints of God everywhere, and through the SIGNS I can hear them from all parts of the world giving God all power and all glory. If I could feel that I am as good as they are I would not get so tired of myself, yet I know our righteousness is not in ourselves, but in Jesus. It seems that I am the least of all God's little ones, if one at all, and I am made to sigh, and moan and cry, "My leanness, my nothingness," then for a moment I am carried back to the time when I was all undone, and could see myself a sinner. I was all wrong, and felt that I did not have a friend on earth or in heaven; I did not feel fit to be in company with any one, and wanted to be alone; all I could do was to cry, Lord, have mercy on me. I went on in this way for three years, or about that period, I cannot say just how long, but the time came that I thought I must die, yet something must be done; I could not sleep, and when the time came to eat I felt that I had just eaten, and would wonder what was the matter with me. I lay down to sleep one night, and thought I was sitting by a little stream of clear water. When I awoke I was singing, I have found a land that doth abound with food as sweet as manna. I felt some better, but the burden was with me yet. My health being very bad I did not go to meeting. One evening I lay down to rest, and was meditating on my condition, and it did not seem that I was asleep, but I could see a multitude of little people marching in at the door. I thought that was the heavenly host. I went on in this way until at last one night it seemed that my strength was all gone, I could not live that way, and I cried to God, What must I do? In a moment all was light, and I heard a still small voice say, Be baptized in my name, I will bear you on my wings to heaven. I could rejoice, and could not praise God enough; I felt that all was well with me, I never would want; everything looked new, I thought my troubles all over. I wanted to be baptized, but was afraid I was deceived. In November I went to hear dear brother Harvill preach, and it seemed that he knew my feelings, and all he said was to me. When he had finished preaching he sang, "Amazing grace," and before I knew it I was there talking to him, trying to tell what the good Lord had done for me; but that is something I cannot tell, words cannot express it. I was received, and baptized by brother Harvill on the 5th day of November, 1883, and then I felt there was no more trouble for me, but alas, I am yet troubled on account of my imperfec-

tions; can see there is nothing good in the flesh; if I am saved, it is by the imputed righteousness of Christ.

I love to read the SIGNS, and feel glad it has never changed. I do not feel this is worth sending to any one, and hope you will correct all mistakes.

Your little sister in hope,

PALESTINE WORK.

HERNDON, Va., March 21, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—Brother M. F. Snider, of Daysville, Va., requested me to write a letter for publication in the SIGNS, but I said, No, I cannot write on spiritual things, for darkness cannot comprehend light. I am all darkness, and have been for a long, long time, and since the death of our dear pastor, Elder E. V. White, it seems that the darkness is more dense. I can hardly realize now that he is gone forever from among us, for when he was alive, and here with us, I would often go to him while in a dark frame of mind, and he would most always have a word of comfort for me; but now he is gone, and I feel sad and lonely, for we have no under-shepherd, and I am so dead to spiritual things that I cannot say, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." No, all that I can see is a mountain of sin before me, and no faith to remove it from my sight. If I had a little faith, even so much as a grain of mustard seed, and just one glimpse of Jesus, I could say to the mountain, Be removed, and it would disappear, but O, I am of little faith. I am glad indeed that brother Badger wrote that loving letter for the SIGNS about the life and walk of dear brother White. I did wonder in my mind if brother Badger could love me just a little if he could know me as well as he knew brother White; I am afraid he could not. I am almost sure I love brother Badger, but not sure at all times that it is that perfect love which casteth out fear. I am in such a condition of mind that I often have doubts as to my ever having the love of God shed abroad in the heart. All that I can take any comfort in is remembering the past, when I could smile at Satan's rage, and face a frowning world. O I felt so tender-hearted then, I could talk freely with my brethren, and sing songs of praise to God in the night. But alas, my harp is hung upon the willow, and how shall I sing the Lord's song in a strange land? I have not been to meeting this whole winter, and I sometimes think it would be best for the church to erase my name from the book, and cast me off as nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity. I can verify what brother Badger says in regard to brother White's conversation and preaching, especially where he says, "In his conversation and in all his preaching brother White seldom opened his mouth without telling my own thoughts better than I could do it myself." Like the woman, I often felt to say, "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did." Brother White preached my every day experience plainer to me than any one I ever heard. I do not say this now because he is dead, but I often told him so while living. He is gone now, and let us not grieve for him, but I weep and grieve for myself, and O that I could say in spirit, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

"Why do we mourn departing friends,
Or shake at death's alarms?
'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends
To call them to his arms."

Do with this as you think best.

Your brother, I hope,

J. F. OLIVER.

MONTICELLO, Ark., Jan. 15, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I am writing to renew my subscription, I feel like trying to tell you some of my exercises. There is an old man living with me, he has lived with me sixty-three years, and has been, and is, hard to get along with. He is very religious sometimes in his way, but I have been made to hate his religion. He tells me many times that I had better let the SIGNS alone and spend my money for something that would profit me. Sometimes he (the old man) endeavors to rule me, and would if I did not get the help that I have from the stronger man to bind the old man. Then I become willing to send for that good old family paper; for when I am in my right mind I know of a truth that I have got the worth of my money in reading the letter of some one brother or sister in the SIGNS. I find there many letters that fill my soul, and my eyes, too, when the old man is not present, and I am clothed and in my right mind. Brethren and sisters, I do not feel half as good as David, nor half as good as John the Baptist, nor half as good as Peter, and I read that they had to live with this same old man, and that he has always hated the truth. I hope that I will always be allowed to take the SIGNS, and I hope for knowledge, and grace, and strength, to overcome the old man. It seems to me that the SIGNS gets better and better each number.

Much esteemed editors, brethren and sisters, I hope that the stronger Man will guide you all. It is my prayer that you may be given all grace and knowledge to keep our old family paper pure, and to keep the old man out of it.

It has been a year since I have written, and this is so much like the writer that it does not seem worth your time to read it. It has been on my mind to write you for some time, but I am such a poor writer that I am ashamed to send it. Please cast over this letter the mantle of charity. Dear brethren, my hope is in the Lord, if indeed I have a good hope; it is by grace alone that I am saved. Pray for me, dear brethren.

Your brother,

A. TULLAS.

MEARSVILLE, Va., Jan. 16, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—As my subscription has expired, I will inclose money order for two dollars to pay for it another year. My heart went out in sympathy to Elder McConnell in the loss of his daughter, who died July 4th, 1906. It was the same day I received the sad news that they thought the "Maggie Philips" was lost. My oldest son, (W. J. Somers, Jr.,) was mate on her. She sailed from Baltimore the first day of June, 1906, for the West Indies, and never reached there. It seems so sad to think I never can see him again or know what happened to him. Yet I desire to know my Master's will, and be able to say, Not my will, O Lord, but thine be done. May God in his mercy give me grace sufficient for all of my sorrow.

Yours in tribulation,

M. A. SOMERS.

NOTICE.

EAST COBBLESKILL, N. Y., April 30, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please give notice in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that Elder John Clark, of Halcottville, N. Y., is serving the Schoharie Hill Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., every fourth Sunday, and Saturday previous, as he has been doing for years in the past.

M. B. BORST, Church Clerk *pro tem.*

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1907.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 THESSALONIANS IV. 10-12.

"BUT we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more; and that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; that ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing."

Our mind has been led to this and some other similar portions of the word of late by some expressions that we have seen in print regarding the business affairs of this life, and regarding the proper course for believers to pursue in these things. It is easy upon this, and indeed upon all subjects, to be one-sided; that is, to consider one side without careful regard to other things, and so to present extreme and unscriptural theories instead of what is really the mind of God. Perhaps in nothing is there more danger of this than in regard to the business of this world in connection with what the word constantly affirms regarding the unsubstantial and fleeting nature of these things. Upon the one hand we see now (and it has been so in all ages past) men of the world making the riches of this world their god, and engaging in a mad race for wealth, as though nothing else was worth a moment's regard. Then, on the other hand, we see now (and it always has been so,) some men going to an extreme on the other hand, denying that any man should seek to accumulate the riches of this world at all, and going so far in some cases as to retire from all worldly business, shutting themselves up in cloisters, or retiring to dens and caves, to spend their useless lives in what they are pleased to call a religious life, subsisting meanwhile upon the charity of men who labor, and who are imposed upon by these religious mendicants.

It is manifest that neither one of these extremes is right, nor in harmony with the word and will of God. Nothing is more certain than that God has put every man here in the world to work, and to eat his bread in the sweat of his face. Work is not a curse, but the greatest of earthly blessings; there can be no happiness nor enjoyment of life without labor. Each one ought to labor according to the degree of health and strength given him, and in the field assigned him in providence. Idleness is a curse to any person, and breeds all manner of vices and ill humors in body and mind. Idleness, slothfulness and sluggishness are condemned in the word of God constantly, while diligence, energy and promptness in all the business of life are constantly commended. In the commandments given at Sinai to Israel it was as much a command that men should labor six days as that they should abstain from labor the seventh day. Indeed, the rest provided and commanded upon the seventh day would have been a misnomer altogether unless weariness had come with labor of the six days; no man can rest unless he be tired.

In the text which we have quoted at the beginning of this article the brethren in Christ were enjoined by Paul to be attentive to their own business, and to labor with their own hands, and the reasons given were, that they might be enabled

thereby to walk honestly toward them that were without, and that they might have lack of nothing, and so not be chargeable to other men. It is a common saying among a certain class of men, that the world owes them a living. The world owes no man a living unless he works and pays the world for it; and believers, led by the Spirit of holiness, will feel that they owe all to God, and that neither in providence nor grace are they entitled to anything. We cannot render a return for the grace of God; it would cease to be grace if we could and did. It is the rule of this life that if a man will not work, neither shall he eat. The bread of idleness is stale, but the bread of labor is sweet. Believers are not exempt from this common rule of labor, if they would have the things of this life. This is true, notwithstanding the fact that to some affliction is given after such a sort that they cannot labor with their own hands; for these God has provided in his word that they that are able to labor shall care for them and see to it that they lack nothing of all that which is conferred upon other men. One of the exhortations of the apostles is that their brethren should labor, that they may have to give to them that have need. In the text to labor is enjoined, that they may pay all honest debts, and not be chargeable to others, as said just before.

The word "work," in the text, is very broad; it means not only manual labor, or labor with the hands in the field or in the shop, but also what we call in a more general sense, business. It would appear, however, that these brethren at Thessalonica were mostly men who labored with their hands. Paul tells them that they had abounded in love, one toward another, and toward all in Macedonia. This love, under the circumstances of persecution that then existed, would have frequent opportunities for displaying itself in deeds of kindness toward the oppressed and the needy, and this love they had shown toward all their brethren. Now Paul said that in this he would have them to increase more and more; and to do this he exhorted them to be quiet, first of all, and to be diligent in labor. As the people of God, called out from the world, he would have them to remember that they were one family, and that they ought to stand by one another, and not to leave their brethren to the charity of the heathen, which toward them would be cold at best. Perhaps there was need of this exhortation to labor diligently addressed to this church, because we learn that there was restlessness among them, growing out of the fact that some had thought that the day of the Lord was at hand, and therefore there could be no longer any need of much care for the things of this life which would, as some thought, soon perish. But Paul elsewhere in these two epistles to them warns them against this error. That day no man could know, therefore they were to labor as though many years yet remained before the end should come. It is so now; let us be looking for the end as though it were close at hand, but still let us be found doing what our hands find to do, as though that day were far off; it is all for the glory of God. Great diligence in business is not inconsistent with great fervency of spirit, according to Romans xii. 11; rather, if there be true fervency of spirit there will be diligence in all that is committed to our hands. But, as said just before, the word "work" ought to take in all manner of employment, whether of brain or of our hands. The schoolmaster, the merchant, the physician, the lawyer, the astronomer, the statesman,

all are laborers; the man who gives employment to hundreds of men who labor with their hands is daily performing hard labor; labor that taxes his strength of mind, body and nerves. Brain work is needed as much as the work of the hands, and brain work is more taxing than manual labor ever can be; but whether it be the one kind of labor or the other, the exhortation of the apostle applies alike to all. Let each one remember that, first of all, he is to remember the suffering and needy, to give to them as their needs require and as he is himself able, and to pay his honest debts, and to endeavor not to be a burden upon others; this is what the last expression in the text means. If one lacks nothing, he is not a burden upon others. How good it is when we see men, whether earning daily wages at the bench, or forge, or in the field, or managing large interests with which they may be entrusted, whether earning daily wages or receiving interest upon invested property, mindful of the needy, honest in all their dealings with all men, and providing for themselves, that they become not a burden to others. This is to the glory of God indeed. It is not wrong to earn money, it is not wrong to accumulate money; unless money, to some extent, be accumulated, no business could go on. Unless some capital had been accumulated, this editorial could not go forth to the brotherhood, from the lack of a press to print it, and a building to house that press in. Unless some money had been accumulated and concentrated in the hands of a few men, this paper could not reach the subscriber who in the extreme west or south receives it in due time, for then there would have been no steamships or railroads to convey it to him. Nowhere in the word of God is there any condemnation of wealth. There is condemnation of pride, vanity and oppression by men of wealth. Solemn charges are given as to how rich men shall conduct themselves. Paul said to Timothy, "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." This is perfectly consistent with what Paul said earlier in this same chapter: "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things." Riches are not wrong then, but they do bring temptation. On the other hand, poverty also brings temptations equally as contrary to God. Riches are not wrong, but the love of them is, and brings a snare to any man. The abuse of riches is a great curse to him who has them, and to others also, but to use riches well, with lowliness of mind, not trusting in them, remembering that it is God who gives them, doing good with them, distributing them, and communicating to the poor, is to lay up heavenly riches, which will be a good foundation against the time to come. This is the testimony of the inspired

Paul. God will indeed provide, but this does not mean that we shall presumptuously be idle and careless and wasteful. God will provide, but it will be in his own way. God would bear up the dear Savior in his hands, nevertheless he must not cast himself down from the pinnacle of the temple to prove this. God will provide for our families if, through what men call misfortune, we are not able to do so at the time of our departure from this life, but this does not mean that men ought to be indifferent to the welfare of the wife and children that God has given them, and presumptuously fail to labor to provide for them against the time to come. No honorable man can contemplate with quietness the prospect of leaving his family a burden to others. No man who loves wife and children as he ought can think of leaving them to the uncertain future with no provision for their comfort, without grief. If after men have done the best they could, and God has not so prospered them as to enable them to lay by in store for the future, then they may safely commit their dear ones to the bountiful care of the loving God and Father, but let us not be guilty of presumptuously neglecting all due exertion, that we may leave them something to help them along in their need.

As to the manner of saving, and of investing what is saved, this must be left to the judgment of each one for himself. It is not our province to advise in this direction, but it is our duty to point out what the word sustains regarding the accumulation of property, and it is the duty of us all to neither set our heart upon riches, nor to be careless regarding the affairs of this world. How strait and narrow is the way; how easy to err upon the right hand or upon the left. We not only need to search the Scriptures to see what is right, according to the commandment of God, but we also need the inward illumination of the Holy Spirit, and its constant guidance that we may understand, and that we may walk in harmony with the word.

The summing up of the whole matter seems to be this: Let not the rich oppress the poor, but rather help them. Let not the poor grudge against the rich, but rather remember that God gives and God withholds according to his own will, and that his will is always best. Let the man who labors with his hands for his daily bread rejoice that God has given him strength to labor, and has not given him the awful responsibility of using riches well, according to the will of God. Let the rich man rejoice that God has given him the opportunity in his riches to glorify him, and to do good to the needy. But he that feels these things as he ought can never say, I am better than the humblest man, or that God has given me these riches because I am better than others. Gain is not godliness; and, for that matter neither is poverty godliness; but godliness will use poverty well, and godliness will also use riches well. Some children of God have been rich, and many of them have been poor.

It is better to be poor in this world and rich in faith, than rich in this world and poor in faith; but if God is pleased to make some man rich in faith and also rich in this world, this is to the glory of his name, and to the good of his people.

C.

2 KINGS XIII. 21.

"AND it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band of men; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet."

DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE:—I would like to trace the Lord in his wondrous dealings with the children of men. To him all things were known from the ancients of eternity; all things were present; he knew all our dark hours, all our rejoicings, and our every sigh; he felt them. To him there is nothing new; there are many things new, however, to the child of grace.

The text at the head of this letter has been on my mind some time, and every time I read it it is as if some one says, Write brother Ker, and ask his views. Will you be so kind as to give them through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES? It is on my mind most of the time. I sometimes think that all of us have been let down into that sepulchre; yes, lost was our condition, deserving nothing but destruction. Was there not power in Elisha's bones?

Well, I will close. If you will give your views on this Scripture it will be a great comfort to me, a poor sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all.

Yours in hope,

D. A. WILLBANKS.

NICKEL, La.

The subject suggested by our brother Willbanks is one of mystery, as are all the works of God. Often we would have been glad had some one else been asked such hard questions; we have, however, in the past done the best we could in complying with all requests. Sometimes we have heard from the inquirer, thanking us for writing, and expressing their satisfaction or dissatisfaction, but more often no word is received concerning the matter. In such cases it is hard to determine whether our views are appreciated, indorsed, or even read.

The question no doubt in the mind of our brother is, How could the bones of the prophet Elisha cause a dead man to live? The Moabites had invaded the land which belonged to Israel; it was not their right to take possession of that land nor to bury their dead in it. They did not believe in God, nor credit his prophets with unction from the Lord, but God had a people, and prophets to speak to that people; and while Israel mourned the death of Elisha and the Moabites rejoiced, God would let the enemies know that there was still a God of power and glory in Israel. There was no virtue or life-giving power in the bones of Elisha; God wrought the wonderful miracle to prove that Israel's God was the God of power, and by it he established the fact that Elisha was his prophet and that he had honored him. Elisha wrought miracles during his life, and was blessed and wonderfully favored of God. It was he who brought back to life the widow's son; it was he who cleansed Naaman the Syrian of leprosy; he also caused the leprosy of Naaman to cleave unto Gehazi, his own servant, who lied to him and took a reward from Naaman for the cleansing in the name of Elisha, who had refused gold and silver for the miracle. Naaman was commanded of Elisha to wash in Jordan seven times and he should be clean. This vexed Naaman, who thought the waters of Damascus better than all the waters of Israel; nevertheless he dipped seven times and was clean, his flesh being like that of a little child. There were no healing properties in the waters of Jordan, had there been, all lepers would have sought that river, washed and have been clean, but God wrought that mighty work by the prophet that the king of Syria, with all his host, should know there was a God in Israel. Thus we see the power and purpose of God still manifest in causing the dead man to live who was cast into the sepulchre of Elisha, but in his bones there was no power at all. But this wonder in the eyes of the enemies did not hinder them from oppressing Israel. In the New Testament we have several instances which

remind us of this in ancient times. There was a poor woman afflicted twelve years, and had spent all her living on physicians and only grew worse, but when she heard of Jesus she said, "If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole." There was no virtue or healing power in his garment; if so, many who thronged him would have been healed. The faith of the woman in Jesus healed her, not the hem of the garment which she touched, for "Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes?"

In the vision of dry bones seen by Ezekiel he said, "I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied there was a noise, and, behold, a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone." The children of God were there represented; they are also called bones in Psalms xxii., and we have a figure of this in the bones of Joseph who died in Egypt. He gave commandment concerning his bones: that when Israel left Egypt they should take with them his bones and bury them in the land of Canaan. That commandment was obeyed, not one bone was left in the land of Egypt (darkness, bondage), all were taken out, carried forty years in the wilderness and at last found a resting-place in the promised land, or the land of his fathers. Paul says of the church, "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." In the coming of the poor, afflicted woman to Jesus we have the fulfillment of what Ezekiel saw and heard: "bone came to his bone," or in other words, a child of God coming to Jesus by faith. Again, we are told that Jesus spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and anointed the eyes of the man who was born blind, and told him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam; he did so, and received sight. There was no virtue or healing power in the clay nor in the water of the pool, but in that way the power of Jesus was made manifest. All who sought the Master or touched him by faith were healed; in that way God honored his Son, giving the poor, the halt, the lame and the blind to know that he was with him.

We have learned to be careful in presenting the doings and sayings of the Old Testament as types and shadows; mistakes are often made in so doing. We are safe, however, in applying the types spoken of by the apostles.

May the Lord give our dear brother needful light and comfort concerning this subject, which seems so impressed upon his mind. K.

EPHESIANS II. 4, 5.

"BUT God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)."

Sister Stuart asks our view of the above wonderful text. Will say first, that it is in every detail boundless, hence we can but touch upon it at best.

The love of God is beyond the conception or comprehension of mortal man, the spiritual mind in man cannot grasp it. The apostle John could say only, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." How he who is holy, harmless and undefiled could love those dead in sins is a mystery too deep to be fathomed, nevertheless it is a precious truth which sinners know by experience; and as it cannot be fathomed, each recipient of it finds that it is equally impossible to appreciate it as they would desire. The love of God knows no degree, no change, no end; he loved his people in Christ, and as he loved his only

begotten Son, so he loves each member of his body. The same glory that Christ had with the Father before the world was shall be the glory of all the seed, for they are joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

Often we read in the Scriptures of the wrath and anger of God. To the natural mind this implies change in the feelings of God toward his children, but such is not so; he said, "I am the Lord, I change not." In the experience of the redeemed it seems at times that God is angry and turns from them, and they feel desolate and forsaken. There is no change with God at such times; his love has not abated, but the condemnation of the law is visited upon us because of sin; the law is the strength of sin, and it makes sin appear exceeding sinful. Sin is ever condemned in the flesh of the Lord's children, and the law does that work. If God loved his people when they were dead in sins, surely he loves them with the same love after they are quickened, even though they often transgress his holy commandments in thought, word and deed. Were there no transgression we could not know the riches of his mercy. Notwithstanding the sins of David he said, "His mercy endureth for ever." If the love of God could know such a thing as an end, would not the end have come when we all transgressed in Adam and died because of sin? If such a thing could be possible, how could any sinner have hope of immortality? Because of his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, he hath quickened us together with Christ; wonderful, merciful work, quickened together with Christ, made alive from the dead. Therefore we have passed from death unto life, "and shall not come into condemnation." Let us think soberly upon this quotation, the words of Jesus; how perfect, how glorious the finished work of our great High Priest; "by grace ye are saved." No mortal can understand these words except he who has been "quickened;" in the quickening is the revelation of our depravity by nature, nothing good in the flesh, therefore we say with Paul, "By grace ye are saved." Yes, saved eternally by grace, and saved daily in our conflicts with the world, the flesh and the devil, by grace. It is only in experience that any can learn the riches of God's mercy. He is rich in mercy, which means a fullness of mercy for the needs of poor, erring, sinful creatures saved by grace. Not only are we quickened together, but we are raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ. Notice that this language does not refer to the future, we are now raised up together, raised above the law, above death, above the grave. As an evidence of the children having "risen with Christ," they find themselves seeking the things which are above. The redeemed are already in possession of the victory, through Christ, over death and the grave. We now sit down in heavenly places in Christ; we now are come to the spirits of just men made perfect; we now sit down in the kingdom of God with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; our conversation is now in heaven, from whence we look for the Lord Jesus. These wonders of his love are that we shall know the exceeding riches of his mercy. But in this life we can have only the earnest or beginning of the glory of God, the fullness comes when mortality is swallowed up of life.

K.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, April 15th, 1907, at the home of the bride's father, 1536 Butler St., Philadelphia, Pa., George H. Robinson and Cora M. Springer, both of Philadelphia, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Durand Grafton, son of Nathan Grafton, died Jan. 19th, 1907, at his home near Forest Hill, Md., aged 42 years. His death was very sudden and unexpected, and fell as a heavy blow upon his family, as well as upon his aged parents. He leaves his wife and six children, his father and mother, one brother and one sister, together with numerous other relatives and friends, to mourn their loss, but we are not without hope that our loss is his eternal gain. Though not a member of the church, yet during the past few years he had been a very frequent attendant upon our meetings, and his every action, and the very expression of his face during the preaching, all seemed to show a most intense interest, and we fully believe that his mind was exercised upon the subject, though he never expressed himself to any one.

His funeral was very largely attended, showing the great esteem in which he was held in the neighborhood. May the Lord comfort the bereaved ones, for he alone is able to do it.

ALSO,

DIED—February 1st, only eighteen days after, **Jacob Grafton,** another son of Nathan Grafton, at the Baltimore city hospital, where he had been taken for treatment. My brother Nathan and his wife feel most keenly the loss of their two sons. May the Lord comfort them, as well as the bereaved wife and children of the deceased. I had the privilege of baptizing Jacob some years ago in the fellowship of the Harford Church. He was clear and decided in his views on the subject of salvation through Christ alone, and also possessed some gifts to tell of that surprising grace that saves poor sinners, as he felt himself to be. His experience was in many respects a very striking one. Through deep waters and fiery trials he seemed called to pass. He had been a great sufferer for the past ten years, much of the time suffering the most excruciating pain. Surely for him to die is gain, and how could we wish him back to such a life of suffering? The end came peacefully at last, and he was laid to rest in the old burying-ground at Harford, where so many of his ancestors lie buried. Jacob leaves a wife and five children to mourn their loss. May the Lord comfort them, as well as all that mourn. WM. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md., April 21, 1907.

Mr. R. M. J. Blackwell died at the residence of his daughter, near Stoutsburg, N. J., on the evening of Monday, Feb. 4th, 1907, aged 70 years and 4 months. For a long time he had not been a strong man, and for two or three years he had been gradually failing from a complication of diseases, which gradually wore him out. Mr. Blackwell was born and lived all his life in this community. His wife died several years ago, since which time he had made his home with his daughter, Mrs. Eva Moore, occasionally visiting his sons, who also live in this vicinity. As a citizen and neighbor he was highly respected by all, for his life had been honorable among his fellowmen. He had all his life been an attendant upon the services of the Old School Baptist Church in Hopewell. He loved the doctrine of grace, and was clear in his understanding of Bible truth. Since we have lived here we have had some good and pleasant conversations with him upon the things of vital godliness. He confessed to the possession of a hope through grace again and again, but still he felt that his evidences were not sufficiently clear to entitle him to ask a place in the visible church. This feeling was with him to the end. While this feeling brings sorrow, and deprives those who possess it of much of the comfort of church association and church privileges, yet it is an evidence that the plague of the heart is felt, and of great jealousy for the honor of the name of the blessed Savior and his cause. How much better this is than boastful self-confidence. Yet it is commanded of God, and it is well always, to walk in the footsteps of the flock, and to outwardly in baptism, like the dear Savior, fulfill all righteousness. We do not doubt that final rest is his. His daughter cared for him in the last months of feebleness with all a daughter's care, and she and her husband did all that could be done to relieve his sufferings. He leaves two sons, one daughter, a brother and sister. They have sorrow, but do not sorrow as those who have no hope. We all, as a church, shall miss his presence in our meetings, where he delighted to be.

The funeral service was held at his late residence on Friday, February 8th. Many neighbors and friends were present, saddened that they should see his face no more. It was our lot to conduct the service, using as a text upon the occasion the twenty-third Psalm. The interment was by the side of his departed companion in the cemetery at Pennington, N. J.

ALSO,

BROTHER **Asa H. Shepherd** died suddenly from heart disease, at his residence at Hopewell, N. J., on Friday afternoon, Feb. 1st, 1907, aged 70 years and 3 months.

ALSO,

SISTER **Rachel A. Shepherd** died at her residence in Hopewell, N. J., on Wednesday, Feb. 13th, 1907, after a lingering illness of several years. Thus have passed

away from earth, within two weeks of each other, a husband and wife who had lived together more than forty years. All the circumstances make this double bereavement peculiarly sad to the family and the community. Both had been long time members of the Second Hopewell Old School Baptist Church at Harbourton, N. J.; both had been faithful members, and sound and clear in the doctrine of grace; both loved to converse concerning those things which are above; both had spent most of their lives in this community, and were well and widely known. Brother Shepherd had been about and as well as usual, apparently, up to the moment of his death. That day he had been out in the village attending to several affairs, and had called at several places, remaining a little time. He came home toward evening and sat down by the bedside of his wife, as he said, to rest awhile. In a moment he fell over and was dead. We were in Canada attending the Duart quarterly meeting at the time. A telegram was sent to us, and on Monday as soon as the meeting closed we started to return. We reached Hopewell in time to attend the funeral services in the afternoon of Tuesday at his residence. The deep snow at that time hindered the interment from taking place until the next afternoon; then a few friends went in the cold and snow to the cemetery at Harbourton for the burial. Sister Shepherd was at that time too ill to hear the services, but she was able to be seen the day of the interment, and to ask that prayer should be made before leaving the house. From that time she continued to fail, until twelve days later she was also called to her long home. We doubt not that the end with both is peace. They leave four children to mourn the loss of dear parents. The loss to the church is great indeed. The text used at brother Shepherd's funeral service was 2 Corinthians v. 5; the text at the funeral of sister Shepherd was John xi. 25, 26. C.

John Litchfield was born in Cambridgeshire, England, Dec. 11th, 1821, the son of Richard and Sarah Kendrick Litchfield, and died at his home in Toluca, Ill., Feb. 9th, 1907, aged 85 years, 1 month and 28 days. He leaves to mourn for him his aged widow, ten children, twenty-seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild, also one sister, Mrs. Emma Conners, of Evansville, Ind., besides many neighbors and friends. The family left London about Nov. 1st, 1836, finally landing at New Orleans, after spending over three months on the water. Passing up the river they finally settled in Vanderburg Co., Ind., early in the year 1837. Amid scenes of frontier life Mr. Litchfield grew to manhood. In 1848 he was united in marriage to Miss Ann Palmer. In 1849 he came to Illinois, locating in McDonough County, near where Macomb now stands. Two years later he came to Marshall County, settling near where Toluca now is. Here he entered a tract of land and made it his home until death ended his labors. He was one of the representative men of Marshall County, widely and favorably known, and during his long residence here had gained the confidence and respect of all with whom he came in contact, either in business or social life. After the death of his first wife, which occurred in 1851, he was married to her sister, Miss Emilie Palmer, in 1853. A long and useful life is closed to us here, but we feel not to sorrow as those who have no hope, for while brother Litchfield (as we who knew him felt that we could fellowship him in church relationship) never united with the Old School Baptists, yet he had no use for any other doctrine. He was a constant reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and fully believed the doctrine it sets forth. He was always ready to help in any way to take care of the brethren, and his hospitality can be certified to by many, not only of the private members, but the ministry was always looked after by him.

The writer was called by wire, and tried to preach the doctrine he loved to one of the largest congregations that ever assembled in the neighborhood on account of a funeral, and was assisted by Elder Downey and Mr. Telford. To sister Litchfield and the family I can only say, He is not dead, but sleepeth. His remains were laid away to await the resurrection morn.

S. H. HUMPHREY.

DIED—March 22nd, 1907, **Mary Elizabeth Hunt,** at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Emil Behre, 2437 N. Thirty-second St., Philadelphia, Pa., aged 67 years. Sister Hunt was baptized about forty years ago, by Elder Hartwell, in the fellowship of the First Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J., where she remained a faithful and consistent member until nearly two years ago, when she brought her letter to the Salem Church, Philadelphia. She was a dear mother in Israel, and passed away happy in the faith and assurance of the resurrection. She leaves two daughters, their husbands and four grandchildren, with the two churches, to mourn their loss. Appropriate services were held both in Philadelphia and Hopewell, when she was laid away in the cemetery at Hopewell.

May the God of all grace and comfort sustain each one of us, making our departure as peaceful and radiant as was hers. B. F. COULTER.

Mrs. Amira Vallandingham, my dear sister, departed this life Feb. 17th, in the 87th year of her age. Our sister was a faithful member of the Primitive Baptist Church most all of her long life, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. She leaves one brother and two sisters to mourn their loss, with many friends, yet she left the sweet assurance that all was well. She said, "I am ready; the happy season soon will come when all saints shall meet in heaven." E. THEOBALD.

SADIEVILLE, Ky., April 16, 1907.

In the death of **Elder Levi Garish Bavis**, on Saturday, April 6th, there passed to the great beyond a man of sterling character and worth, and one whose life and work have left an indelible impress on those with whom he associated. Affable of manner, frank and direct in address, persuasive and strong in argument, with an earnest and true heart, Elder Bavis had all the gifts that fitted him for his work in the Old School Predestinarian Baptist denomination. He had been pastor of the Caesarcreek Baptist Church for the past twelve years, and for eight years was a resident of the community. No better neighbor or truer friend than he. Born in New Jersey on a farm where Atlantic City now stands, in September, 1828, he emigrated west to Cincinnati at the age of nine years. He was the fifth child of a family of six children, four boys and two girls. One brother survives him, who lives at Hartford City, Kansas. He was married to Hannah Main in 1854, to which union three children were born, two boys and one girl, who survive him. His wife died in 1897. In December, 1901, he was married to Mrs. M. E. Martin, who survives him. He was ordained a minister in the Old School Predestinarian Baptist faith some forty years ago, and gave his life to the cause. He departed this life April 6th, 1907, at 9 p. m., at the age of 78 years, 7 months and 1 day. Elder Bavis was a man of more than usual ability, and for the last forty years his life was spent among his brethren. He always filled his appointments, and as a minister of the gospel the power of the Spirit was plainly manifested.

The above is a clipping from a Jamestown, Ohio, paper, which tells of the esteem in which Elder Levi Bavis was held among his neighbors. He was well known among the older members of the churches throughout Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky, and by many of the brethren in the east. He was a powerful speaker and a beautiful singer, having a very deep, rich voice. He was very dear to me and to the brethren with whom he was associated.

M. C. REEVES.

Paris, Ill., April 21, 1907.

Sister **Martha Warfield** departed this life on the fourth day of April, 1907, in the 66th year of her age. She was the widow of Richard Dorsey Warfield, and daughter of W. H. and Mary Moore Gunnell, and great-granddaughter of Elder Jeremiah Moore. She was baptized seven or eight years ago by Elder E. V. White, and received in the Old School Baptist Church of Frying Pan, in Fairfax County, Va., of which she was a faithful and devoted member until her death. Sister Warfield was never blessed with a strong constitution, and of late years had been an invalid, but as often as she could she attended her meetings, though living ten miles from the meeting-house. It was a great trial to her that she could not meet oftener with the brethren and sisters. Her last illness was congestion of the brain, from which she suffered intensely for eighteen days, when her dear Savior called her home. She was unconscious the greater part of the time, but in her rational moments she talked very sweetly of Jesus and his great love, and gave her loved ones a blessed assurance that all was well with her. She was perfectly resigned to God's will, and repeated many passages of Scripture and verses of hymns. Just before she died she said she was in the ship and almost across the river. She bore her suffering without a murmur, and fell asleep in the arms of Jesus peaceful and calm. She leaves one brother, one sister and many nieces and nephews, together with the church, to mourn their loss, yet we feel to bow in humble submission to the Lord's will, knowing he doeth all things right. May he comfort us in our affliction.

MARY B. GUNNELL.

Hunter, Va.

Elder H. C. Hick departed this life April 19th, 1907, in the full assurance of faith, aged 53 years, 3 months and 5 days. He suffered three months prior to his death with a complication of diseases. He is now at rest, and his works do follow him.

The funeral service was conducted by brother Barker, who spoke very comfortingly to the family and friends. The widow and ten children, six boys and four girls, are left to mourn their loss. Four sisters and one brother also survive him. The remains were interred in Olive Hill Cemetery. Fully four hundred persons were present.

His widow, R. E. HICK.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

A Friend, Pennsylvania, $4.00.

MEETINGS.

The yearly two days meeting will be held, if the Lord will, with the Frying Pan Church, of Virginia, on Saturday and Sunday, May 11th and 12th, 1907. We give a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth. All ministering brethren of our faith and order who can come we give a special invitation to meet with us. Trains leaving Washington, D. C., 4:45 p. m. on Friday and 8:10 a. m. Saturday will be met at Herndon, Va.

W. A. THOMPSON.

The Baltimore Association is appointed to be held with the Black Rock Church, Baltimore County, Md., beginning Wednesday before the third Sunday in May, (15th) 1907, and continuing three days.

All those who desire to attend the association coming by way of Baltimore city, will leave there from Union station at 3:30 p. m. Tuesday, buying tickets for Cockeysville, where they will be met by the friends and cared for. Those coming by way of Harrisburg will take train for the same station, leaving Harrisburg at 11:55 a. m., and arriving at Cockeysville at about 2:30 p. m. They will be met there at a little past 4 p. m., upon arrival of train from Baltimore. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love salvation by grace, to be with us at this session of the Association.

FRANK G. SCOTT, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Cow Marsh Church, Kent Co., Del., commencing on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, 1907, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continuing three days, May 22nd, 23rd and 24th.

All friends will be met at Viola station, Delaware division of P., B. & W. R. R., Tuesday p. m. before the meeting. Two trains from the north and one from the south will be met. From the north, train No. 39, arriving at Viola station 5:08 p. m.; train No. 45, Viola station, 5:29 p. m. From the south, train No. 46, arriving at Viola station 5:12 p. m. Those of D., M. & V. branch from Berlin and Snow Hill arrive at Harrington at 2:55 p. m., wait there for second train north, which will be train No. 46, as above, and stops at Viola at 5:12 p. m.

A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth, and especially to ministering brethren of our faith and order, to meet with us.

BENJ. E. CUBBAGE, Moderator.
THOS. L. COOPER, Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Hopewell Church, Mercer Co., N. J., beginning Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (May 29th) 1907, and continuing three days.

All trains leaving either New York or Philadelphia on Tuesday afternoon before the meeting will be met at Hopewell, and the friends who may come will be cared for. All who come on Wednesday morning will come at once to the place of meeting, about ten minutes walk from Hopewell depot. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

ELIJAH LEIGH, Church Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Ebenezer Church, at New York city, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 5th, 6th and 7th, 1907.

The meeting place is at 171 Eighth Ave. Beginning Tuesday afternoon a committee will be at the above address to provide accommodation for all the friends. Those coming via P. R. R., B. & O., Erie, Central of N. J., Lehigh Valley or D., L. & W. railroads will find advantage in using the Twenty-third St. ferry, as it is nearest the meeting place. All who love the brethren are cordially invited to meet with us.

JOHN McCONNELL.

THE Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon will hold its next session with Sulphur Creek Church, the Lord willing, near Vern, Lewis County, Washington, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 14th, 15th and 16th, 1907, commencing at 10 o'clock a. m. Those going by railroad will go to Tacoma, Wash., there change to the Tacoma & Eastern, which leaves Tacoma at 8 o'clock a. m., arrives at Tilton at 1 o'clock p. m. Those going should be at Tilton Thursday evening before the meeting, where they will be met and conveyed to the places of entertainment.

N. J. SHANK, Clerk.

THERE will be meeting at 54 Fuller St., Schenectady, N. Y., each Sunday in the month at 2 p. m., excepting the fourth Sunday, when it will be held at 8 p. m. All who love Old School Baptist doctrine are cordially invited to come.

SARAH JONES.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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OF THE

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The bi-centennial of the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., was celebrated Oct. 20th, 1903. After some delay it is now published in pamphlet form, and is now on sale. Price 15 cents. The pamphlet contains photographs of the Welsh Tract meeting-house and Elder J. G. Eubanks, the pastor, the proceedings of the anniversary, letters of greeting from sister churches and a historical sketch written by Dr. B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., and read on the occasion. Some of the brick in the meeting-house was brought from Wales to this country, and hauled on mules' backs a distance of ten miles. The pamphlet is very interesting and full of information.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 75. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1907. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MARK X. 18.

"AND Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good, but one, that is, God."

Thus the Lord of grace and glory by one breath of his mouth sweeps away forever every vestige of creature goodness from the realm of his holiness and his perfection. But through what depths of sorrow, trouble and self-loathing must we pass to learn the wonderful truth set forth by the Master in this text. Although the great religious world will utterly ignore it in its teaching, and we may think but little about it, the declaration is an eternal truth: "There is none good, but one, that is, God." This language of the Master is a reply to an interrogation by one who wanted to know what good thing he should do to inherit eternal life. Let us notice first the question of our blessed Lord. How pertinent it is. It is as if he said, What do you see in me? What think ye of me? Yes, what think ye of Christ? Do you regard him as some great, moral teacher that shall give you lessons whereby you shall obtain merit and be exalted above your fellows? Do you think his purpose is to give you a chance to obtain this wonderful gift and thus get glory to yourself? Such seems to be the very highest conception of Jesus by the great religious world of to-day. The thought is expressed by the query of Jesus to his disciples: "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." O may we know this, and may our answer ever be the same in all the vicissitudes of our mortal pilgrimage. Yes, may it be written in the fleshly tablets of the heart; aye, "with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever." Thus taught it by the revelation of Jesus Christ we can say, The Lord is my rock, my fortress, my high tower; yes, the Lord is become my salvation, for he hath saved us and called us with an holy calling. He doth yet save us, and will save us with an everlasting salvation. May this wonderful revelation be ours, may we rest here, for Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The great question

is, What do we see in Christ? "Why callest thou me good?" What we think of Christ, and what we see in him, is the criterion of our standing in him.

"What think ye of Christ? is the test
To try both your state and your scheme;
You cannot be right in the rest,
Unless you think rightly of him."

"There is none good, but one, that is, God." What a solemn and awful truth, yet how little regarded, and through what solemn, sorrowful, troublous scenes we must pass to really know it, and we can only know it as we know every other gospel truth, by heartfelt experience. Only by a proper knowledge of it do we come to Jesus. It is written in the prophets, "They shall all be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh to me." Blessed teacher, and blessed results. This knowledge is not a theory, not an abstract truth to be learned in the schools of science, philosophy and human thought, for who by searching can find out God? But if we have the Spirit of Christ we may know it as we are led by the Spirit, "for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." By this teaching and searching the apostle Paul said, "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." By it he cried, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" By it also he was enabled to exultingly say, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." But "there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" As we follow up the narrative we will learn, as we have already learned by experience, that "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy;" that no act of the creature can move him, for he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy. But there is a way that seems right unto a man, and he will pursue that way until lost, when Jesus comes to seek and to save, and He always finds, though in a waste howling wilderness and a desert land. Not only so, but he leads us about and instructs us and keeps us, too; yes, "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." What exceeding great and precious promises are found in Christ, which are in him yea and amen to the glory of God.

"There is none good, but one, that is, God." As we know this we will draw nigh to God, yes, and he will draw nigh to us. As we feel and realize this in the soul we will deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Jesus. As we hunger and thirst after righteousness we are filled, and all by the blessing of God. As we grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth there will be a going out of self into the stature of a man in Christ, for we all, as in a glass beholding the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. In the world we shall have tribulation, because we are not of the world. But O the blessed gospel of the Son of God, and that faith which enables us to glory in tribulation, and even prefer to suffer affliction with the people of God; this teaching which is found only in the school of Christ will often lead us to say with David, "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God." Yes, I had fainted unless I had believed, to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Truly when we are weak then we are strong,

for he giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength, and the wonderful perfection of his strength is manifested in our weakness. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." But as we proceed with the narrative it expands, showing the glorious plan of God's salvation.

About all that I really know of these precious things is how it was and is with me. I was indifferent and careless about these heavenly things until I had reached the meridian of life, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, much more concerned about the honors of this world than the honor and glory of God. At about the age of thirty-five years I began to be seriously concerned about my standing before God. Of course I had thought about it before, but only in a casual way, thinking I would attend to that when my other desires were gratified. About this time I anxiously set about it with, as I thought, some prospect of success; I fled to the law for refuge. Like the young man I inquired, "What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" I made an earnest effort to reform my life and to keep the commandments as written. As I traveled on, the way seemed to become more difficult; doing the best I could, I found that I had foolish and vain thoughts at times, and realized that the thought of foolishness is sin. I felt that while man looked on the outward appearance God looked on the heart. I began to feel that by the deeds of the law I could not be justified. As I felt to need justification, I struggled on with many anxious forebodings, thinking to find some way of escape. But I met One who seemed to say, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Surely this was the way I had been trying to enter; what a sad failure! But I stumbled on, the way getting more dark and gloomy, every step more difficult; then I seemed to meet a Man, the faithful and true witness; his testimony was: Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. I did not for one moment doubt the evidence, and the conclusion forced itself on my mind that I was altogether unholy. O the blackness, the blindness and weakness, but, blessed be his holy name, he has said: "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known." My strength was all gone, but in due time, when we were without strength, Christ died for the ungodly, and as the blessed testimony came home to me it seemed to suit my case, and I trust I found Christ as the end of the law for righteousness, and surely I was a believer. I seemed to see how that God for Christ's sake could pardon such a poor sinner as I. O the joy of that moment; I clasped him in my arms, the antidote for all my infirmities, I seemed to be in his blessed presence, where is fullness of joy, and at his right hand, where are pleasures forevermore.

But where have I come now? Paul says, and I seem to realize it, "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest," &c. Ah no, "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all,

and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and Jesus the mediator of the new covenant," &c. What a blessed thing that we have been enabled to come to Jesus, the mediator of this covenant, and it a covenant of mercy. While justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne, mercy and truth go before his face. But how did we get there? Listen to the sweet voice of the Master: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."

But about my holiness, how is it? "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." We were seeking salvation, it came to us, brought by the blessed Jesus. We were without strength, but in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength; and now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; power on earth to forgive sin, power over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as the Father gave him. So "of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

May this blessed truth sink deep in our every heart, that we may rise up as a people praising God, accepted in the Beloved, complete in him, having neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing.

C. C. MELTON.

NEBO, Illinois.

NASHVILLE, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—With your permission I wish to say that I indorse your good editorial of March 15th. One name which the Arminian world has urged against the Old School Baptists is Antinomians. This does not manifest the right spirit; it is the spirit of antichrist. But we should not be surprised at any name by which we may be called, the Waldenses were called heretics by antichrist centuries ago. They contended for the same faith for which Old School Baptists contend now, and the Lord blessed them, though they were severely persecuted. But the Lord did not leave himself without witnesses even at that early date. The Lord had chosen one, Peter Waldo, to feed the flock, and he stood firm, declaring the counsel of God. Though he was hunted by enemies, the Lord opened a way for his escape. This was centuries ago; now the Old School Baptists are standing firm and contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and they are given hard names, such as Antinomians, Fatalists and others. Such names do not move the poor, dependent little ones, who know that all good works are those revealed of God, that his children should walk in them, and they are to deny self in all things, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. Such is our faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. The poor and afflicted were stoned, and slain, and wandered about destitute, and afflicted, and tormented, of whom the world was not worthy. But the Lord has provided better things for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. This perfection is given to the redeemed of the Lord. They are not in bondage under the works of the law, but were sealed by the precious Savior through the shedding of his blood, and are under grace, which has saved us from the law of works. Therefore God accepts no man's person

upon conditions to be performed by us. Paul once tried it and failed. He was taught in a different school, not by the inventions of men. He had been taught in the school of Gamaliel to be obedient to the fleshly law, but he went to the high school, when he was taught by revelation of God's Holy Spirit, then he sang a new song, and quite a different one: "Salvation is of the Lord;" and without his divine will we cannot do anything pleasing to him. Paul was a chosen vessel to go forth and declare the decrees of God from the beginning. The prophets declared the coming of Christ, the Son of God, and that he was to be crucified. This was also decreed before time was. Isaiah was inspired to say of the Lord, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations." The prophets and apostles were all given the spirit of wisdom and understanding to set forth God's decrees and predestination of all things whatsoever should come to pass.

Dear brother, it is the blind that cannot see, and therefore they call Old School Baptists hard names. It was so of John the Baptist. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence." Some have trodden underfoot the Son of God, and have counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith they were sanctified, an unholy thing, and have done despite to the Spirit of grace. But Paul said, "For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord." He will judge his people. Christ was himself called a wine-bibber and a friend of sinners. The Pharisees condemned him for eating with publicans and sinners; but Jesus knew their wicked hearts and their self-righteousness. He said, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." He said that he did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the Lord pondereth the hearts." Justice and judgment are more acceptable to God than sacrifice. Jesus was poor, and had not where to lay his head, but with the Spirit of God dwelling in him he performed many wonderful works which the natural mind could not comprehend. He sent shepherds to feed the flock of his pasture, for which he gave his life a ransom. He sent them forth as sheep in the midst of wolves, and they were instructed to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. Paul himself had been a wonderful Arminian, professing to do the will of God and helping to save men; but when it pleased God to give him spiritual understanding, he no longer claimed that he was obedient to the law of God, and he found that he had no will of himself to do the will of the Father. This will must be given him of the Father. I trust that we have also been thus taught of God. He gives the spirit of humility and of denying self in all things. If left to self we are most miserable. We learn that if saved at all it is by the pardoning grace of God. For this I feel that I am still groaning in the body of the flesh, desiring to be clothed upon with the imputed righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. I desire to find my name written in the book of life. I do sometimes feel to hope that God has for Christ's sake forgiven my sins; if so, I have the righteousness of the Son of God. The world does not like the ways of God; but this fulfills the Scriptures, and we may hope that we are those spoken of by these hard names, God's

poor, afflicted children, who depend upon him who knows their need better than themselves. We poor beggars have nothing to offer that would please him. John rejoiced greatly when the brethren testified of the truth and walked in the truth. John also said that he wrote unto the church, but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence, did not receive him. He said, "If I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words." He did not receive the brethren, but cast them out of the church. Diotrephes was like those who call the true Old School Baptists Antinomians. Of such ones John said, "Beloved, follow not that which is evil." But John spake well of Demetrius, and said that he had a good report of the brethren. This is so much like our beloved brethren who are standing firm in defense of God's truth. To this the dear old SIGNS has been devoted from the beginning of its circulation among sound Old School Baptists. Go on, my faithful brethren. I feel to thank God that we have true, faithful servants of God, who are standing firm at the helm of the SIGNS, with sword and shield, and they will not be found wanting in proclaiming the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things. This is the truth as I trust the good Lord has given me to understand it. The fleshly man cannot please God, as his work is spiritual, while that of man is fleshly. Jesus came to do the will of the Father, and he said, "Not my will, but thine be done." He did not, in this, claim any part, but as a man felt that he was insufficient of himself. The poor, wandering pilgrims must tread the same road their Redeemer trod to reach the portals of peace and happiness. We may be called strange names by others, but thank God he has placed men upon the watchtower to proclaim his doctrine, the revealed will of God. Such ones come boldly to the throne of grace and defend God's truth, which feeds the flock and makes them to rejoice. Dear brother, at the sound of the trumpet, which will declare that time shall be no more, the Arminian world will still stand claiming to be morally upright in their good works, and the performance of conditions upon their part, and in calling the children of God by hard names. It will be then as it is now. Jude exhorts to stand fast, as there are certain men who want the preeminence over God's heritage, and they were "ordained to this condemnation;" "denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." By the prophet Zephaniah the Lord said, "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." If then we are called by hard and strange names for the sake of Jesus, let us rejoice. We should rejoice, if the Spirit of God dwells in us richly, to suffer for proclaiming and defending God's truth. It was done in olden times, and it is yet the same.

Our beloved brother, Elder Coulter, has spoken so lovingly with regard to the church, which has never been left without witnesses, and never will be. I feel encouraged, my dear brother, by your firm declarations upon the decrees of God embracing all things. Our God is the God of purpose; he purposed to afflict his beloved Son; he must bear our iniquities, and he shall see his seed, and shall prolong his days, and shall be satisfied. God was with him in all his afflictions; so is he with all the poor who are traveling from nature to grace. He protects them through all their afflictions, and delivers them from all their pains, miseries and troubles. When he commands they stand still and see the salvation of God. When

self is denied, then the Comforter comes to the troubled soul with pardon and love, that soul which he had chosen in him before the foundation of the world. And through his suffering his poor and afflicted people shall be presented to the Father, and, as we hope, can say that we have washed our robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. We are clothed, as we trust, in the righteousness of Christ. His people are a peculiar people, zealous of good works; they are given these good works through the suffering of God's only begotten Son, and they are made zealous of good works. In his grace we shall be presented to the Father without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. These people have no merit on their part, but trust alone in the Lord, who is the author and finisher of our faith and of our good works. This is my only hope of eternal life. I love to read the truth which is revealed in the word, and I do believe as far as it has pleased God to give me the conception of the word. The word condemns me, which causes me to pause and consider as to whether I have deceived the little flock; but there are some of the teachings of the word that I hope I have passed through. Without his free grace I know I am lost. These are some of the trials through which I am passing.

Dear brother, it seems to me that the SIGNS is improving; it still contends strongly for God's grace without conditions. I was glad to read Elder Coulter's good letter, and many others. I know this is too lengthy, but I wanted to say a word regarding your good editorial. May God be with you and all the household of faith, is my prayer. I have tried to divest my mind of all save an eye single to the glory of God, that I should not offend any of the little ones.

Your brother in hope of immortal life,
O. B. HICKERSON.

MELBOURNE, Ont., Jan. 15, 1907.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—There have some months passed since given consent to forward this good letter for your disposal. I could not hear when this dear sister and husband talked before the church, but could see them fed with the heavenly manna. The words came, Jesus reigns; he reigns victorious over heaven and earth; most glorious Jesus reigns. We did feel his reign that day, for it was joy and peace and love and light in the place of darkness, as the dear one says, and she was given that love which many waters cannot quench, neither can the floods drown, and if a man would give all the substance of his house for that love, it would be utterly condemned.

"Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above,
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

My thirsty soul was made to glow with that love while reading sister Ruth Keene's letter, and Elder Bartley's last. The words, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life," came to me, and it did me good when I saw that dear saint had written them to you. I am continually in need of crying for mercy to him whose mercy alone endureth forever, and who alone is able to guide and direct our steps aright; for without that heavenly Guide we can do nothing. One morning while desiring to know if I really was his, or one with him, this hymn came so sweetly:

"One in the tomb, one when he rose,
One when he triumphed o'er his foes,
One when in heaven he took his seat,
While seraphs sang all hell's defeat."

The words came to me some time ago, and I wondered what would follow: "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." No, the prince of this world hath nothing in Him who has all power in heaven and in earth; "Who

maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire;" who hath commanded them to go into all the world and preach his everlasting gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned. Again he says, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves."

But I must close. May you, my dear brother, with all the tried and persecuted servants of the Master, be kept faithful and strong in him and in the power of his might, that no man take thy crown, is my prayer, I trust, for Jesus' sake.

Your sister, I hope,

CASSIE STEVENSON.

IVAN, Ont., Oct. 24, 1905.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—I hardly know how to start to write you, there is so much to tell, and I feel that I can tell so little; but I hope that God has pardoned my sins, which are many. When I was a girl about fifteen years old I was very sick, and all thought I was going to die, and my friends were standing by my bedside. One of my sisters asked my father to pray for me, and I have never forgotten what he said: "She is in God's hands, if it is his will he will bless her." I did not think much about it then, for I did not know that I had a soul that must be saved or lost; but as I grew stronger these words would come back to me, and then I forgot all about them until father died, when they came back very forcibly, and I felt as if no one would care for me now. I did not know that a higher power than man was guiding me through it all. After I was married my sister died, and O, I thought, if it were I where would I go? and that was such a trial. About that time I heard Elder Eubanks preach in Lobo, and thought it such a good sermon. Then he was to be in Duart, and I felt I must go; so we went, but O how disappointed I was; I thought, Surely that is not the way he preached before. I did not hear anything he said, and was discouraged to think I went all the way over there to hear him. I thought, We will go where he goes at night, and surely he will say something that I will like. We did so, but not a word of anything spiritual was said, and, my dear friend, I cannot tell how I felt. It came bedtime, and I was put with Mrs. Cross, from Cleveland, and Flora Sinclair. I thought, Surely they will say something good, but not a word; they thought we had better sleep. They slept, but O what a state I was in, when the words came to me with power, Behold, I am God, and beside me there is none other; and, Behold, I will teach thee, saith the Lord. I forgot all about them, I was shown that I was putting my trust in man. We came home, and I could not read the Bible nor any other book; I wanted to be taught by the Lord. I was afraid then I would learn from some one else. When my dear mother would find an experience in the *Gospel Standard* she would give it to me, but I could not read it, I was afraid that I might take some of those things which were not mine. I never said a word to any one. I thought if there was anything good in me I would not have these awful feelings. I prayed God to teach and guide me, for I felt to be so sinful and helpless. Once we were at an oyster supper, and O the dreadful state of mind I was in. My face was smiling, but my heart nearly breaking; I was glad when we could go home. That night I had an awful dream: my hands were tied down to my sides, and my feet fast, and there was a terrible fire before me; O, it was an awful fire. A large man stood at my

left side, and as I looked at him he wanted me to give up the little hope I had, and curse God, and he would set me free, but O, I could not do that, and I felt as if he were going to throw me into the fire, when the words came with so much power they awoke me: "Trust in the Lord." My dear friend, I did not know what had happened to me, for as I lay there my trouble was gone and I was resting; O such a sweet rest. But, I thought, that was only a dream, none of God's children were ever set at liberty in a dream. This summer I heard a sermon about how God showed Jacob in a dream, and at once it came, Did God reveal to me that my sins were forgiven? I was praying, and thinking about myself; did God love me as he loved his children? and the words came, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." I awoke my husband and told him all; we slept no more that night. I felt as if I would like to tell the church, and you do not know how I wanted to tell you all here, that night, but something kept saying, You have nothing to tell. After the meeting I felt I must write to the Elder and tell him some of the things I felt, and he sent me such a nice letter it did me good. But O, I had a sore trial Friday night before I was baptized. I am subject to the croup, and thought I was going to have it, and that I could not go to the church, but if there was anything good in me I would be able to go. My cold was getting worse, and I felt there was no good in me, that I had deceived myself and had deceived others. My husband tried to comfort me all he could, but his loving and cheering words did me no good. I think if ever a poor mortal prayed, I did: If I am not deceived, let me go to the church, and the words came, "Though he slay me yet will I trust in him," and by Saturday night my cold was nearly gone. On Sunday morning I was much better. My first thought was, "Resting in his finished work." I was made happy, and forgot the trials. I feel as if I told very little when I went to the church, but I was too happy to think of my dark days. My baptism was beautiful to me; I felt as if there was a light all around my pastor, and he was in the midst, and I was afraid he would not take me into the water. In imagination I stretched out my hands to him to take me. My dear friend, my trouble all came back to me again; my cold came back on Monday. I thought no one ever got a cold from being baptized, but I did. I hope no one will ever have to go through what I did. I would think, If I do not get the croup I will have a little hope, and it came very near, but I did not have it, to show me how near He could let it come and yet keep it back. I was in that state until Tuesday morning, when it seemed as if some one said to me, I will be a wall of fire round about you, and I caused your cold to come back lest you forget. I was made very happy Sunday. I forgot that I only asked him to let me be able to go to the church. It was a sore trial, but for my good; I have to be kept at his feet, pleading for his guidance in all things. There are many things I could tell you about: how I was shown what I am and how little I could do for myself. One night a fearful feeling came over me; I never was given to swearing or using bad language at any time, but this night I do not think there ever was a bad word said but what came up before me; I never heard of such words before. I was not saying them, but there was nothing else on my mind; it was terrible, I lay there nearly all night. When I

had done all I could to drive them away I prayed God to let me sleep, to get rid of these awful thoughts. He heard my cry and I slept. I feel that God has in many ways shown me that I can do nothing for myself; I used to think I could. O his amazing grace, that saved a wretch like me!

Now, my friend, I feel as if I had told only a little of what I went through. I hope you will overlook all mistakes of one who needs help all the days of my life.

(MRS.) NEIL GRAHAM.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., April 29, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—The apostle in writing to the Hebrews sets forth many useful exhortations relative to our perseverance in the things belonging to the kingdom of Christ, and showing how necessary these reminders are to us, that we might be kept wide awake to the sweetness and the preciousness of the privileges and blessings which belong to us, who walk orderly and uprightly in Christ Jesus. Among the many important things which he said to the Hebrew brethren was this: "But to do good, and to communicate, forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."—Hebrews xiii. 16. To grasp, to define and to set forth just what was in the mind of the apostle at the time he recorded these words, is the earnest desire of my heart. If the earnest desire of the heart is begotten of faith and love, which drives out all desire for self-praise or glorification, but all is centred in the uplifting of Christ and the welfare of the brethren, then it seems to me that we have the foundation for the fulfilling of the first clause of the text, "But to do good." It is so often in the mind of the doubting and fearing child of the heavenly King to say, There is no good in me, neither do I any good thing; and to them I wish to call to mind the familiar expression of the apostle: "For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." I place emphasis on the words in parenthesis, that we might understand a very important truth, namely, that the salvation by grace through faith which he had received from the Lord did not in any sense change the evil propensities of his flesh. We are often deceived by our carnal minds to believe that we can and must do something through our own carnal reasoning that is good and pleasing to the Lord. So the apostle makes confession that the corrupt fountain of the flesh has not been cleansed; the flesh goes on serving the law of sin after the Spirit of Christ takes up its abode in the heart, just the same as it did before. The apostle clearly defined the two opposing principles constantly present in the followers of Jesus, when he said, "So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." Having then this principle of evil alive within us, which is the "mystery of iniquity," we can see how necessary and how profitable are the exhortations of the Scriptures to us in our every day life here in the flesh. We cannot be reminded too often of the provisions of that law which the Lord hath put in our inward parts and written in our hearts. It is said by one of our poets that the pictures in our mind are laid in fading colors, and if not often refreshed, fade and vanish away. There is a desire in the heart of every child of God to do good, and to walk worthy the high vocation wherewith he is called. That principle of good (the mystery of godliness) exercises him to fight a good fight and keep the faith. Therefore "to do good"

comes from above, and not from the corruptions of the flesh. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure [heavenly desires] of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure [vain and worldly aspirations], bringeth forth evil things." These are the two opposing principles in every subject of grace, which cause the constant conflict with which they are tossed to and fro, but in the end brought off more than conquerors through Him that loved us and gave himself for us.

"And to communicate, forget not." This is a very important injunction. "To communicate" does not simply mean to write a letter to the SIGNS two or three times a year; neither does it simply mean to reply to the letters of our brethren after receiving them; it means that and more. We can go back to the days of prophecy and read: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." The Lord's people cannot come together too often to communicate and commune with one another of the things so dear to every circumcised heart. The law and the prophets communicated to the waiting and wandering thousands in Israel the things pertaining to Christ's kingdom, which must be set up in the earth. The hosts of Israel were also called upon to "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee." That we may not only receive the communication that it may be impressed upon our minds and hearts, but that we may also communicate to succeeding generations the same things, and also that we may not forget how the Lord did lead his people out from under the burdens of the bondage of Egypt, into the wilderness, wherein he led them about and instructed them, and kept them as the apple of his eye, afterwards bringing them into a land flowing with milk and honey, which he had promised them. How prone we are to forget the precious things of the gospel of Christ. We listen to preaching, and receive it as glad tidings, assenting to its truth, with the hope that we are embraced in its teachings, and we go to our homes, or out into the busy world, and the cares thereof choke out the good seed sown, and we forget it all, and after awhile we wonder why we have to cry, "My leanness, my leanness." We forget that we forgot. So our hearts must confess that, "All our days are passed away in thy wrath; [and] we spend our years as a tale that is told."

"For with such sacrifices God is well pleased." When Jesus was baptized of John in Jordan, "the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." When we do good, and communicate, and forget not, it is the Spirit of Christ that worketh in us, causing us to walk uprightly in the fear of the Lord. To do this is to be crucified to the flesh, in which we obey the injunction to "present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." To be true followers of our Lord Jesus Christ, we must of necessity renounce "the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's con-

science in the sight of God." Unconsciously the work of sacrifice goes on in our hearts; our carnal reason suggests that "stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant." But to love God, and our neighbor as ourself, "is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." The offering of the things that come up out of the earth, the work of our own hands and the deductions of the natural mind as sacrifices unto the Lord, are an abomination unto him, but a broken and a contrite heart is acceptable unto him. If our prayers ascend to the throne of grace for light and help and guidance in our daily walk, then surely is our affection set on things above, and not on things of the earth. May we ever be guided by the Holy Spirit, that we may glorify God in our body, and in our spirit, which are God's.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March 2, 1907.

DEAR ELDER H. C. KER:—I inclose two letters which if in your judgment are worthy of place in the SIGNS are at your disposal.

With love to you, your brother, I hope,

J. M. FENTON.

HUNTINGDON VALLEY, Pa., December, 1906.

MR. J. M. FENTON—DEAR BROTHER:—It was on my mind all last week to try and answer your letter, but I feel that I have nothing to tell you that will be worth reading. This morning, while I was busy with my work, it seemed as though some one spoke to me and told me to try and answer it.

My dear mother, being an Old Baptist, I always went with her to meeting. I loved to go to meeting, and when the ministers came I loved to hear them talk. I remember once when Elder Chick came and spent the day how I enjoyed it. When he bade me good-by he said he guessed I was glad he was going, but I was sorry to have him go. I made many promises that as I grew older I would be better. I was a small child when our dear sister Keziah Hogeland was baptized, but I shall never forget it. I love all the dear brethren and sisters, but there is a double love for her. As they came down to the water she looked so pure to me, and while they stood there a beautiful light seemed to shine all around her, and to me she looked just like an angel. I wanted to speak to her, but mother said I was only a child. That light still remained with me when my brother was baptized; they sang the hymn, "Despise me not, my carnal friends, lest you despise my Lord," and I felt I was one of those friends. I then made many promises, but I only broke them; instead of doing better as I thought I would, I did worse than ever. I was visiting at Elder Purington's one afternoon; they had company, and sang, "It is I, be not afraid," and a feeling came over me that I can never describe; my sins rose like mountains before me, I could not sing. Elder asked me what the trouble was. I did not want to tell; it seemed I could not see anything but what great sins I had committed; but in all my trouble that light I spoke of was before me. Time went on, I cannot tell just how long; one evening I went to meeting, it was at the Elder's house, and his text was John xiv. 1–3. He dwelt on the third verse. After meeting I told him I never heard anything like that sermon. That was in March, and the following June I was baptized; that was the happiest day I ever saw. There were eight of us baptized that day, and when the Elder led me into the water he said,

What will the gainsaying world think of this one in her youth being brought out to follow in her Savior's footsteps under no carnal excitement? Some time after, I spoke to my dear mother of how happy I was; she told me she hoped I always would feel that way, but she knew I would not. That was thirty years ago last June. O what a crooked path I have made. I thought as I grew older I would be like those dear ones that have gone home: they were so good; to think I should have a thought that I ever would be like them. I have had very many dark times since then, and it has been almost a year since I have had any light. I feel I am almost as low as I can be; not one good thought do I have; Satan has got hold of me; I try so hard to lead a different life, but when I would do good, evil is present with me; I say and do many things that I ought not to do, but before I know what I am doing I am in the same path; I try to ask the Savior to make me lead a different life. I know that I have suffered nothing compared with what my dear Savior did when he was nailed to the cross. I feel to say that it is his will that I shall be in the valley, and if it is his will, in his own time I shall again see the sunshine. I love all the dear ones, but I feel I have deceived them; I feel they would do right if they turned me aside; I see myself too vile to be numbered with them. While I was reading your letter I felt as though I did know something about what you spoke of, but in a moment all was gone; everything was dark before me; I felt that if I could only get one crumb how happy I should be; but I am in the hands of a wise God, and whatever his will I must be satisfied.

I have written much more than I intended. When you read this commit it to the flames, for I do not feel there is one word of comfort in it for any one.

Hoping you will remember me in your prayers, and that you may be kept as an ornament to your profession, I am your unworthy sister,

E. M. PIERSON.

WRIGHTSTOWN, Pa., Feb. 1, 1907.

MY DEAR BROTHER J. M. FENTON:—I feel this morning that I have to talk a little to you by the way. My mind has been traveling, or led by the Spirit, if not deceived, in the same line or way you write. As lively stones the saints bear Jesus' image. How lovely they appear all in white raiment, clean and not a spot, predestinated to be conformed to his image; no work of their own to plead, but all give glory to Him who washed them in his own blood; loved with everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness he draws them, not to make them his, but because they are his, and placed in the church as it pleased him. He rules all things, both in heaven and in earth; but when I cast my eyes in the earth all is dark and vain and wild; can I call any evidence to mind? Yet this changes no purpose of Jehovah, for he is of one mind. The foundation of God standeth sure, he knoweth them that are his, and I cannot believe he has brought me thus far to put me to shame. It seems such a short time since I saw him as the light and only life of his people, the first begotten from the dead, the Resurrection. In him is every treasure of boundless stores of grace. It is all of love from first to last that I have hope that he will keep me from falling in with what leads to destruction. Trials of every shape and name attend the followers of the Lamb; the way is so narrow at times there seems no way at all; faith is weak, I cannot

look back; all is dark, fearing his mercy is clean gone forever, and that surely he has forgotten to be gracious; but it is said of his: "They may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." O no, my dear brother, he will not forget his own. I feel he knows all our trials, our every groan; I feel within an evidence that the Spirit maketh supplications with groanings that cannot be uttered. What great assurances are given in the Scriptures of truth to his chosen ones; yes, chosen in the furnace of affliction; there we learn of his power to save; no other way can we fellowship his sufferings, no other way can we attain unto the resurrection of the dead, having no strength in or of ourselves to draw one breath, or breathe a sigh that would reach him; all without him is but a chattering noise. What a good-for-nothing I am, a sinner at best.

I am, I hope, your sister, though unworthy,

HENRIETTA KREWSON.

PORT ROYAL, Pa., March 11, 1907.

ELDER J. C. MELLOTT AND WIFE—VERY DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER:—Your last letter received, and I was glad to hear from you again. I have not answered your former letter because of sickness. I was taken with "la grippe" on the 26th day of January, and have not been able to write since, and it has been but a few days since I dared try to read any, as my nerves and heart have been so weak. When brother Mellott was here to attend the funeral of dear sister Varnes I thought that I was getting better, and that I might soon be well again, but alas, I had not yet learned how frail I am, nor the weakness of the flesh. When I heard of dear sister Varnes' death I thought, Well, the dear soul is at rest in heaven now, her home.

"Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep,
From which none ever wake to weep."

I could have no doubt that she had gone to her happy home. But O, the thought came, Had it been me, a vile sinner, hardly daring to claim a hope in the mercy of God, all seeming to be dark, vain and wild, and my heart filled with unbelief and sin; I thought, How can I deem myself a child? I think I told dear brother Mellott something of the dark state of my mind the evening he was here, and he talked very comfortingly with me. I knew all that he said was comforting to those to whom it belonged, but felt that I was not one to whom these sweet promises did belong; I felt that I was unworthy of the company of the Lord's people, and if they could see me as I see myself they would have no fellowship for me. In this dark state of mind I have been traveling for months. When in company with the brethren I would feel cheerful and enjoy their society and the preaching, and yet afterwards I would feel badly, and wish I had not done as I had, and tried to deceive the Lord's people by my hypocritical ways. My mind seemed entirely taken up by the cares of the world. I would take my Bible sometimes and read, but it seemed I could find but little comfort, and would get sleepy and lay it down. I felt to mourn over my condition, and to write bitter things against myself. Often has this come up in my mind: "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion;" I felt that I was one of the characters there spoken of. I was so cold and dead to all spiritual things that I often wondered if any one ever felt as I did. In this dark state of mind I con-

tinued until it pleased God to bring me down very low. Soon after the funeral of sister Varnes I was taken much worse, and I, as well as the rest, thought that time had come to an end for me. I had many questionings in my mind; I could not read now, and had no one around me whom I cared to ask to read, for their reading was of anything else but the Scriptures, and I never wanted to hear the Scriptures read in a light way, as though one was reading a newspaper. I felt that my case was truly deplorable; like one alone I seemed to be. One morning as the doctor was standing by me as though in a study, I said, "You think my heart very weak?" "Well," said he, "it is, but not quite as weak as it was the other time," referring to an illness which I had years ago. Said he, "We pulled you through that time, and maybe we can again." My reply was, "If I have longer time to live I will get well, but if not, I am ready to go; you are doing and have done all you can, I know." He had no sooner left the room than it came to me, You have assumed to have great confidence to speak thus; upon what is your confidence based? You have been a sinner all these seventy years, and never have done anything good, and cannot think a good thought, much less perform anything good, and now you stand upon the brink of the grave and tell the doctor that you are ready to go. O how I felt no tongue can tell; all was dark as midnight before me; I felt hedged in on every side, and could see no avenue of mercy for me; I felt that I had come to the end of all things here, like the children of Israel when commanded to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. I hope that then the Lord appeared to me as a precious Savior, and turned the darkness into light. I could then look back over the years gone by, to the days of my childhood and youth, and was given a view of all the way in which the Lord had led me through dangers seen and unseen, and how, as I humbly hope, he was pleased to show me my lost condition as a sinner in his sight, and then also gave me a hope in his mercy and his protecting care, which has been over me all my life. All this was plain to my faith's view, and now I could say, It is the Lord who did all this, and his merciful hand has been over me always; he has led me about, and instructed me, and kept me as the apple of his eye, and when there was no eye to pity and no arm to save, his arm was made bare in my behalf. I could now say, The Lord is good, his mercy endureth forever; he hath taken my feet out of the lowest pit, he hath placed them upon a rock; he hath put a new song in my mouth.

O dear ones, I felt when I started to write that I must tell you of the happy change that had come to me, and of the comfort which was given me to enjoy, but words fail me to express what my comfort was. Everything seemed plain, I needed no one to read, for my mind was filled with so many sweet promises; I felt that the good Lord was with me, and I could say with David, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." The Psalms appeared so beautiful, and seemed to flow into my mind with much sweetness; I felt to say with David, "Bless the Lord, O my soul." I did not feel to be upon the mountain top, but that the place I was in was down low, as it is expressed in the twenty-third Psalm: "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." "'Tis a heaven

below my Redeemer to know." I felt that though I was shut off from every one with whom I could converse, yet I would love to tell to some one this change. Then I thought of your letter, and for many days it was in my mind, either writing or conversing with some dear one; and if you could but read all that I wrote while lying here in sweet meditations, which were with me often when the family thought that I was sleeping, you would know my comfort better.

I was sad when dear brother I. F. Varnes died and was buried, to think that I should see his face no more; O how we shall miss him, and sister Varnes, too; but the Lord called them to their reward above.

Now I hardly know why I have written so much to you, I fear you will get tired reading; I have written at intervals as I could; I am very nervous, and cannot express myself. I can but wonder why my unprofitable life is spared, while so many have been called away, but the Lord knows what is in the future for me.

"Though plagues and death around me fly,
Till he commands I cannot die."

I hope to hear from you soon. I will close. Please pardon a poor, unprofitable sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all.

KATE LONGACRE.

BLUE SPRINGS, Mo., March 25, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—The inclosed letter, which has been a comfort to me, I send that others of the dear family may have the benefit of its sweet messages. I have been in correspondence with sister Adela Jones for several years, and each letter I get from her I feel like sharing with the readers of the SIGNS. Not only one letter, but all bear the impress of the divine Teacher, and I feel grateful for this manifestation of the gracious Father's love to me, that he has made known to me this dear sister in the Spirit whom I have never seen in the flesh. "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

With love to the household of faith, I am your unworthy sister,

NELIA M. STARTZMAN.

NEW YORK, N. Y.

MY DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—Your letter was welcome, because it came from one in whom is the love of Christ. O that wonderful, wonderful love! Does it not seem strange how we can so dearly and truly love one whom we have never seen and perhaps never shall see? But this I think is because the Spirit of Christ in me (if indeed it dwells within so vile a piece of clay) at once recognizes its kindred spirit, "Christ in you the hope of glory." If he did not dwell in me I would have no eyes to see him in you; if he did not dwell in you I could see nothing to love (spiritually) in you. Truly this is not a natural affection; if we should never meet our love would be the same, for "God is love," and they in whom he dwells must love those who are born of God. I see many precious letters in the SIGNS, and feel as if I must write and tell how I appreciate them, and how they help to strengthen me. Yours is the only Old Baptist letter I get now, as a trouble with my hands and arms prevents my writing to many of God's dear children as I should enjoy doing. Blest indeed are the people of the living God. I desire to be thankful, if as I hope he has given me a little taste of heavenly joy. Dear sister, did you ever feel as though you were tired of the hurry and bustle of this life, and longed to run to

the peace and quiet of the dear Master's presence? When the earth is cold and bare, when the storms and winds are beating on every side and the whole world seems in an uproar, I feel that I want to run to a place of comfort and peace. Did you ever think of the likeness between a little chicken and the child of God? It runs about until tired of all the goodness the world can give, until it is weary and frightened at the blowing wind and rising storm, and knows it longs for something, but cannot tell exactly what, until reminded by the cluck, cluck of its mother, who seems to say, Come unto me, and I will give you rest. How quickly it runs to her outspread wings, spread over the whole brood like a banner of love. There is room for all, and the closer they snuggle together the warmer they become, and let the day be ever so cold, the warmth from her body will comfort and strengthen them, and they rest near her downy breast beneath the shadow of her wing in perfect quiet and peace, and she often is heard speaking (in her own bird language) comfortingly and soothingly, as though she might be saying, "Fear not, little flock," "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Draw nigh to me, and I will draw nigh to thee. I frequently feel tired of life's struggle and the surrounding confusion, and long for a place to run where for a time I can lose sight of earth and earthly cares. At one of our church meetings here in New York one dear, old sister remarked that she was hoping, but really could not tell what she was hoping for. One referred to this, and said, It is really so, we can have a hope that we are hoping, &c., but none of us if asked could tell what we are hoping for. This is all true, I know, in a way, for eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, the things which are prepared for God's people; but still if I were asked what I am hoping for, there are a few things I could mention, such as deliverance from this body of sin, deliverance from this awful and continued conflict to keep this earthly body in subjection. I hope to be pure and holy, as He is pure and holy, and hope to rise in his likeness, to see him as he is without the veil between, and be able to spend all eternity in his worship, untrammeled by the intervention of anything which could hinder, and I sometimes think if called to my future home I could say, as dear mother said when in answer to her question, "Well, does the doctor think this is the beginning of the end?" I replied, "Yes, mother, he thinks it is." "O," said she, "can it be possible the glorious day has come at last?" A glorious day indeed it is when we can close our eyes on earth, to open them in the realms of purity and peace.

You ask, dear sister, if I would object to your sending my letters for publication. I may be wrong, but I feel that anything which has in it the Spirit of Christ, anything which is godly or Christlike, anything which will add to his praise or be a comfort to his dear people, must be sent to us from heaven only; it cannot be of the earth earthy, but is purely spiritual. If there is ever anything in my poor letters which is spiritual, it surely is not mine to keep, but came from above, and therefore belongs to His dear people, and I shall feel highly favored if the King sends a message by this unworthy messenger. I would not dare withhold anything which is given me that could in the least comfort one of his dear little ones, any more than an humble servant of a king would dare refuse to deliver an important message or valuable gift sent by him to one of his wor-

thy subjects; neither would I wish to deliver a message of my own construction, as though it had been sent by me from the King of glory. You are perfectly welcome, should you see a grain of comfort in anything I may ever write, to divide it with the rest of the flock, but be careful, very careful, not to offer them chaff by mistake. I write on and on, hoping to be able to express my feelings, but find at last I have utterly failed. Do you sometimes feel as though there was a fullness of heart and soul, a something unknown to the world, a something which it would be utterly useless to try to express by lips or pen, but a something sweet and sacred which flows out only toward your heavenly Father and his little ones? I think it must be "the secret of the Lord," for it can never be told, but I am sure it is felt by all who fear him. The world tells of its secret societies, and wonders that we (the Lord's people) do not approve of them. How can we when we have our own? and O how different, how much more binding are our vows; how much greater our enjoyment. Our password is "love;" we cannot tell the meaning of the word, for it must be felt to be known, and no one who does not feel it can enter His courts, where his banner is spread, and it must be a love sent directly from the throne of grace down into our heart, and so fill it as to crowd out every other love, for this is a holy love, and "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him," and none can ever divulge this holy secret, and can never make known to the world the wonderful beauties of his courts, nor the experiences through which we are called to pass. This love of God is a wonderful love; no poor, weak mortal is ever too small or degraded to receive it, yet kings cannot buy it with oceans of gold; it makes of the high and mighty little, weak, trembling children, and raises the helpless, dependent infant to the level of a king; it makes the weak strong; and helps him to banish armies of enemies, and the very armies of heaven must bow before its awful power; it is powerful and strong, yet gentle and innocent as a beautiful dove.

I have been longing for a letter from some of my kindred in Christ, and yours did me much good. Remember me in christian love to dear brother and sister Knight, to Mr. and Mrs. Record and your own dear family.

Affectionately,

ADELA JONES.

WINCHESTER, Tenn., March 25, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN CHICK AND KER:—I inclose post-office order for four dollars, two of which please place to my credit on my subscription to the SIGNS, and apply the other two to reducing any indebtedness that may be outstanding against you, or to the indigent fund, as you may elect. I regret that I have let my time run over even one number, having just received the April 1st issue; I did not intend it should be thus. I have been trying the last few weeks to think of making this remittance at some time when I felt able to pen a few lines to accompany it, rather than just sending a cold, formal order for a specific purpose, but my mind has shown its feebleness even more than my body. There have been times within the period named when I could have written, if then my memory could have recalled my purpose to write. O we poor mortals, how feeble at our best we are! But when we are below this standard the depths of our weakness can scarcely be sounded; but withal, no physical weakness can equal the depth of my spiritual

weakness. Sick and feeble as I am, and have been physically the past three years, I am more depressed by my spiritual condition than by my bodily infirmity. The only consolation or comfort that I have is that I trust I am content to abide my time, and to know that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and that he never makes a mistake. Why I change my custom of subscribing to the SIGNS for more than a year is owing altogether to my feeble condition; I cannot hope to survive the year, and to be permitted to read and enjoy its contents, as I have done these many years during which I have been a subscriber to it. Yes, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been more steadfast and unswerving in its purpose and principles, and in its devotion to the truth which it has proclaimed from its beginning, than any magazine or periodical of which I have had any knowledge. I have not found any fault with it, and esteem myself to have been fortunate to have had the opportunity of reading it as long as I have. We are such poor, weak and wavering creatures that the strongest and most steadfast need some visible, tangible thing to aid them in their pursuit of the truth. I verily believe that the SIGNS has done much for me along this line, weak and wicked as I am. And now at the very last, if I could utter a word of encouragement to editors and correspondents to persevere in the good work, I would gladly do it. I now feel confident that this is my last communication for the SIGNS, and with this letter goes my most affectionate desire for its prosperity and an affectionate adieu.

Your brother in hope,

WM. P. TOLLEY.

[WE trust that it may please Almighty God to spare our brother to his brethren yet many years to come. Letters like the above are encouraging and helpful to us, for often we feel well nigh discouraged and forsaken. May God bless our dear brother with all temporal blessings of which he may stand in need, and with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.—ED.]

KENILWORTH, N. J., Jan. 15, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—In renewing my subscription for the coming year I feel to add a line of testimony, for the SIGNS is most precious to me; I could not get along with life's rugged way without such precious letters to help sustain me. It was through the perusal of this dear paper that my eyes were opened. I think all who profess the name of Old Baptists ought to take it, as much is missed in their lives who do without it. The paper also has quite a good record by way of delivery, as it has been coming in our name all these seventy-four years, and none have gone astray through the mail. October 1st, 1906, was lost by a person leaving it on the cars; I obtained that number of my sister. It came in the name of my dear father, Wm. H. Johnson, sixty-eight years.

Dear editors, may God's richest blessing be yours this coming year; may you be upheld and strengthened and comforted with that same comfort wherewith you have been enabled to comfort others.

I am, unworthily, your sister,

MARY A. HAINES.

NOTICE.

BROTHER P. M. Sherwood, of Newark, Del., desires us to say that his supply of the pamphlet of the "Bi-centennial Celebration of the Welsh Tract Church" is exhausted, and requests that any who may have them on sale will return them to him. All who have ordered the pamphlet and failed to receive it will please write him and he will refund the money.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1907.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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THE CHURCH IN SARDIS.

(Revelation iii. 1-6.)

IN a recent number of the SIGNS sister Ella Davis, of Romulus, Oklahoma, requested that we should write something upon the address to the church at Sardis as it was named among the seven churches of Asia, in the third chapter of the book called Revelation, and at this time we feel like trying to comply with this request.

Perhaps it ought to be emphasized more than it often is that in each case the address to each church is to the angel of the church. We surely do not need to argue that by the angel of the church is intended the pastor, or whosoever might preside among them. The name "angel" literally signifies, "a messenger," and the pastors of the churches would be at all times messengers to them of the word of God. Now the Lord willed to reveal some things needful to these seven churches of Asia, and so the things to be revealed were announced to the angels (or pastors) of the several churches. In all this our God was but recognizing the gift that he had given to these pastors, and through them, to the churches. The churches would hear his word, not directly spoken to them, but as churches now hear the word of God, from his servants. God has been pleased to communicate his will concerning the order and practice and faith of the churches through the ministry of the word. He has thus conferred great honor upon his own work in them, and by this causes them to feel a sense of deep responsibility when they speak to the people what he has bidden.

It ought also to be noticed that no two churches among the seven were alike situated. Each one had its own peculiar weaknesses and errors, and each one needed some word of special reproof different from what was needed by all the rest. It has been so in every age; churches in different places have also differed in the things wherein they had departed from the right way of the Lord. One could not boast over another, for wherein one might not be guilty as was another, that was balanced by the fact that that one had erred in some other way to equally as great an extent. In all ages since, it is probable that there never have been any two churches which have been in precisely the same condition at any one time. The word that would suit one would not suit the case of another. But God, who sees all things, spoke to each as each one had need, and in all these things written to all these churches good and profitable matter has been left on record for the churches of Christ in all ages since. We need the same Spirit that indited the admonitions and warnings written to these churches now to open them to us and to apply them to our profit.

"These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God." As seven is the number that denotes perfection in anything, this expression signifies, as it appears to us: He that hath the perfection of the Spirit, or the perfect fullness of the Spirit. Thus it is God, in whom all fullness dwells, who now is speaking to the

seven churches. The number seven here also signifies the perfect church; that is, the whole church then and in all ages since. In our God is all fullness, and in the church there dwells a fullness also. The church is declared to be the fullness of him that filleth all in all. Not only has God the fullness and perfection of the Spirit, but he also has the seven stars. Stars signify glory and brilliancy: so that in him is all the glory as well as the fullness of the Spirit. How great the contrast between this Spirit of glory and the deadness and formality of that church which then was being reproved. This fullness of the Spirit (the glory of God) was made manifest in Christ, and is to be made manifest in all the churches, as the graces of the Spirit are produced in them and made manifest in their lives. But this church came short of this, in a very large measure, as we learn from what is said to her. Whatever of beauty and glory did appear in the church was because her God and Savior had poured out the Holy Spirit upon her, and it dwelt within her. It would appear that, very largely, this church as well as the others had received this grace in vain. Paul found it needful to warn his brethren, I "beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain."

"I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." How solemn are the words "I know." How often it is said in the word that the Lord knows. He knows what is in the heart, and judges not by outward appearance. This church had a name to live, and was numbered among those who served God in truth, and in the sight of men perhaps was regarded as being a living church. Perhaps all the forms of religious service were maintained among them, and great zeal may have appeared in attending upon these forms. Perhaps they themselves thought that they were models of righteous obedience, and prided themselves upon the forms of worship among them. But God saw that while thus they had a name to live, they were in reality dead. How awful to be mistaken in this matter. No doubt there are churches at this day of whom this is also true. This word "dead" does not here mean that none among them, or even many among them, had never been called by grace to know and love the Lord, or that they were not really children of God. This church had been alive, but now was dead. They had lived after the flesh and the penalty had fallen upon them, of which the inspired apostle said, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." Their love and zeal had grown cold, and they had ceased to be spiritually minded; they had become satisfied with the form, the mere profession of religion, and did not mourn that there was little or no lifting up of the heart to God in confession of sin, and the imploring of forgiveness; the joy of salvation was not with them, and they did not mourn because of this. David sinned most grievously, and for a time went on in his sin, as it appears, without sorrow, but at last the Lord came to him by his word through the prophet, and then he deplored his sin, and prayed, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." David was not then dead, but living. This church was not sorrowful like David over her departures, and this want of sorrow was proof that she was dead, in the sense named. Sin produces death. It produces not only eternal death to the unredeemed, but daily death in all believers who err from the way. In this sense this church was dead, and what was worse, it still was ignorant of its

death and had a name to live. How solemn is this word to us all, whether we seek to judge ourselves individually or as churches. The admonition that follows is full proof that this church was not dead, in the sense of still being dead in sin: "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God." This is the heart-searching word of the Spirit. How many times have saints been made to feel ashamed and grieved at some word of commendation from others as to their course of living and their spirituality of mind, when in the presence of God they had come to know that in heart, and lip, and life, they had come far short of all that was pleasing in his sight. Ashamed of themselves, and naked before God, how could they bear to be spoken of, or spoken to, with words of praise? The works of the church in Sardis might have been perfect in their own view, and even before their fellow-men, but before God they were not perfect; but lest what did remain of the fruits of the Spirit should also perish among them the solemn commandment is spoken to them: "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die." If a breach is made in the wall anywhere the whole wall is thereby weakened. No believer, no church, can indulge in one sin without weakening themselves in their warfare against all other sins. No error can find place in the church, or in the heart, without giving room for other errors to come in still more readily and easily. If the breach has been made, and is discovered at once, the need will appear to strengthen that portion of the wall which remains. Perhaps the breach cannot be repaired at once, but let all strive that it be not increased, and then that the whole wall be restored as soon as possible. If, indeed, repentance was given this church when the angel of the church communicated this message unto them, then the same effects would appear in them that were seen in the church at Corinth after Paul had written to them in such language of rebuke. (See 2 Cor. vii. 11.) This would be strengthening the things that remained and were ready to die. A shepherd finds his flock sickly, and some of them dead; at once it will be his task to save the sick, if possible, and to prevent others from becoming sick. This church through their pastor is commanded to pursue the same course that a shepherd would do.

Then (verse three) they are bidden to remember the past; how they had received and heard the word of God, and to hold fast to this, and to repent. Thus Paul exhorted the churches in Galatia and the regions round about. It is good to remember the former love and zeal, that by contrast the present departures may appear, and that the hearts of the people of God may be turned into grief for the past, and come to more earnestly desire a return to the old ways, the ways of the Lord, holding fast to what God has shown them, and repenting of their own ways of evil. But if the state of the church be such that watchfulness has utterly ceased, if they have fallen into such gross carelessness concerning these vital things as to be indifferent to the coming in of error and evil practices, then indeed judgment from the Lord will fall upon them suddenly and unexpectedly. The Lord is sure to come in judgment. This is in full agreement with the teachings of the Master more than once in the gospels. The solemn lesson is taught us here that sin has in itself the seeds of decay; it is an evil leaven that shortly will

penetrate the whole body and corrupt it and cause it to die; while to walk in accordance with righteousness has a preserving power: "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify [or deny] the deeds of the body, ye shall live." To this church at Sardis the Lord expresses all this by saying that he will come as a thief, at an unexpected hour. This coming would be in judgment, to manifest his righteous anger against all sin.

While all this was true, as regarded the church as a whole, it is declared (verse four) that even in Sardis there were a few names which had not defiled their garments; that is, they had not gone into all the evil manner of living against which this church is warned, and of which it is accused. These garments do not here mean the imputed righteousness of Christ, for this garment cannot be defiled, but they signify the right behavior: behavior which is suitable to the house of God; they mean adherence to the order and ordinances of the house of the Lord. Some, even in this church, had not departed into evil practices as others had done. Walking in the order of the house of God would be keeping their garments clean and white; turning away from this order would be defiling these garments. These who had not defiled their garments should walk with the Lord, and be clothed in white, because they were worthy. Thus the Lord commends his faithful servants. To these it should be said, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: * * * enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." It does not need that we should here say that there is no worthiness in any man, as regards the ground of that man's justification before God, but we ourselves speak of some members as being worthy of honor and regard. So it was said of the Roman centurian in the gospel who desired that his servant should be healed of the Lord: He is worthy for whom thou shouldest do this thing, for he loveth our nation, and hath built us a synagogue. Some thirty times this word "worthy" is used in the Bible in this sense. How blessed was that witness of the Lord to these few who had not defiled their garments. When the blessed Lord declares that one is worthy we know that it is real. Those whom men count worthy often are not worthy, while many whom men count unworthy are worthy in the sight of God. Who among the Lord's dear people would not count themselves blessed indeed to receive this welcome plaudit from heaven itself? and what great cause for grief is it that many are not walking worthily before God. To thus walk before God means a warfare, and so it is said (verse five): "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment." From the whole connection we learn that some do not overcome, but are overcome, and carried away by the snares that have been spread for their feet. These shall the Lord visit with judgment, their names shall be blotted out of the book of life, and he will not confess their names before the Father and before the angels. Thus also the dear Savior said that whosoever should deny him, them would he also deny before his Father and before the angels of God. Thank God, they are not to be blotted out of the book of redemption and salvation, but they shall cease to be recognized as the people of God on earth; they, bearing no fruit, or bearing evil fruit, shall be cast forth as branches, and shall become withered, and be trodden underfoot of men. But these who overcome shall be clothed with white raiment, which is the token of approval,

and which is clothing suitable for the courts of the Lord, being the righteousness of saints. Their names shall not be blotted out of the book of life, and their names he will confess before the Father and before his angels, and they shall be known as the children of God, and Jesus as their elder Brother. How blessed are they to whom ears to hear are given. This means attention and glad hearing, and a readiness to follow what the Spirit saith to the churches. Those in whom God has formed this hearing ear will hear. By this they shall be known, and by this is discovered the difference between him that serves God and him that serves him not.

In conclusion we will just add that this last expression (verse six) fixes the truth that all who were addressed had been given the ears (shall we say?) of the Spirit, and to these were these words of warning, of admonition and of promise given. Blessed are they who now hear and give heed to the word of the Lord. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

JEREMIAH XLVIII. 10.

"CURSED be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully, and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood."

Jeremiah was the messenger of the Lord, sent with many fearful predictions of wrath upon the carnal and idolatrous Israelites, and also upon the nations round about them. In the connection of our text he delivers a message from the Lord against Moab, because Moab had trusted in his works, treasures, &c. As the Moabites were always adversaries to Israel, so those of subsequent ages who, like Moab, trust in their own works, treasures, means and instruments, are the adversaries of the spiritual tribes of our Lord, who contend that salvation is of the Lord alone.

These curses denounced, in our text, against those who do the work of the Lord deceitfully, and him that keepeth back his sword from blood, seem to have a special reference to the execution of the judgments of the Lord against Moab. We have an illustration in the account recorded of Balak, king of Moab, when he sent for Balaam to come and curse Israel for him, hoping that thereby he and his forces might be able to drive the Israelites out of the land. Balaam loved the wages of unrighteousness, and being allured by the princely gifts which Balak proposed to bestow, and the great honors to which he was to exalt him, although solemnly pledged to utter only the words of the Lord, did nevertheless consult deceitfully with Balak to ensnare the Israelites, by laying a stumbling-block to cause them to sin. He did the work of the Lord deceitfully, for while acting as a prophet of the Lord, and charged by the angel of the Lord, (see Numbers xxv., xxvi., &c.,) he consulted with Balak to lay a stumbling-block to cause Israel to sin. Balaam's love for the wages of unrighteousness undoubtedly induced him to do the work of the Lord deceitfully.

Jeremiah may have uttered the words of our text in justification of his own faithfulness in declaring the word of the Lord, and in showing the fearful responsibility resting on him, and on all who are called to proclaim the judgments of the Lord to Zion, or what God hath spoken of impending wrath which shall consume the adversaries of his cause and people.

We have a striking illustration of doing the work of the Lord deceitfully in the case of Saul, when he was sent to destroy Amalek. He was commanded to utterly destroy old and young, men and beasts.

He had no discretionary power, for it was the work of the Lord; but instead of strictly obeying the word, he ventured to substitute his own judgment, and spared Agag, the king, and the best of the sheep and oxen, and then reported to Samuel that he had obeyed the commandment of the Lord. But Samuel replied, "What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" Saul had a very pious and plausible excuse; he said, "Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag, the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal." But Samuel did not regard even this pious disposition of Saul and the people to make wholesale sacrifices to the Lord as a valid excuse, for he said, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry."

We have many examples recorded of doing the work of the Lord deceitfully, which are written for our admonition, and to which we shall do well if we take heed, such as making clean the outside of the dish, the whitening of sepulchres, the straining at gnats, the drawing nigh unto the Lord with our lips, the tything of mint and the making void of the law of God by our traditions, and the teaching for doctrines the commandments of men; but to all such deceitful workers how terrible are the words, "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully."

What multitudes are at this very day professing to be the ministers of God, interpreters of the will of God to men, who, instead of preaching peace on earth and good will to men, are appealing to the most violent passions of their fellow-men, and with all their ability fanning the flame of discord, war and carnage. Rivers of human blood have marked the history of these deceitful workers from the days of Cain to the present hour. This very class has caused more bloodshed on the earth by their deceit and hypocrisy than has ever been shed from all other causes since the world began, yet they pretend to be doing the work of the Lord. At one time we find this deceitful clan engaged in getting up their union prayer meetings simultaneously throughout the land, all loving, melted in sympathy for the poor Hottentots, or the barefooted Indians of some foreign desert, and promising to usher in a glorious millennium in a very short time. Anon we hear them praying for war to the knife, and the knife to the hilt. They are a praying people, and have been famous for their long prayers in public places for ages past. But to detect the deceitful manner of their prayers, let their prayers be compared with the instructions given to the disciples by their Lord and Master: "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men." "Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread: and forgive

us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," &c. To this instruction our Lord has added: "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."—Matthew vi. 5, 9–15. Again: "And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us."—Luke xi. 4. "But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you."—Luke vi. 27, 28. There are very many lessons of prayer of this kind taught by the Savior to his disciples, but in no instance has he instructed them to pray for fire to destroy their enemies, or for God to help us to take vengeance on our supposed or real foes; nor are we at liberty to ask God to forgive our sins, only as he has made us willing to forgive all who have trespassed against us. Let those who profess to be doing the work of the Lord, in praying or in preaching, or in any other way, be tried by the words of him who is the supreme Judge of quick and dead, and from whose decisions there is no appeal, and mark what multitudes are under the curse, as they are manifestly doing the work of the Lord deceitfully.

"And cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood." In the war which God instituted between Moab and Israel we have figuratively presented the conflict which is now raging between antichrist and the spiritual Israelites. In the type the warfare was carnal, but in the christian warfare no carnal weapons are allowed to be used. Moab, as we have shown, as well as all the other tribes and nations which were hostile to Israel, were figurative of the various organized powers of earth and hell, against which the great Captain of our salvation leads forth the soldiers of the cross. Those who were in the type were, like Saul and David, to use carnal weapons, and forbidden to keep back their swords from blood, where God commanded them to shed blood, were, as we understand the types, to teach us that in our spiritual conflicts we are to make no compromise with error, no treaty with the man of sin, to give neither aid nor comfort to those who are hostile to the spirit or government of the King of Zion. It certainly cannot be construed to mean that as men in the flesh we are to indulge in hatred, wrath or vengeance against them, or to in the least injure them in their persons, property or reputation, for that would conflict with the lesson taught in the preceding part of our text. For we war not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, and against the rulers of the darkness of this world. Christ has said, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight," &c. But as his kingdom is spiritual, so our weapons are not carnal, but spiritual, and mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. But still, as in the type, the war was to be uncompromising and earnest, so also in the antitype the soldiers of Jesus are to fight valiantly and constantly until they are honorably discharged from the conflict; then, like the valiant Paul, they may say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith," &c. In applying the language of our text: "Cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood," we understand those who professing to be the soldiers of Jesus, who from cowardice, or from any wicked affinity with the enemy, shall hesitate to contend earnestly for the faith, the truth, the order, the ordinances

or the discipline of the gospel, shall thereby forfeit the fellowship of the saints. As they that were cursed in Israel were separated and put away from the congregation of the Lord, so those who will sympathize with the enemy, or countenance their errors, are guilty of keeping back their sword from blood, in the spiritual application of the text. Saul was not the only Israelite who kept back his sword from blood, in sparing Agag, and the sheep and oxen, which the Lord commanded him to destroy with his sword. Nor are we permitted to believe the cases are few or far between in christian profession wherein faithless soldiers are intermingled with those who "are called, and chosen, and faithful." Saul was a carnal man, his sword was a carnal weapon, an instrument for inflicting injury and death. The true soldier of Jesus is spiritual, and his sword is the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; it is not an instrument of cruelty, in a literal point of view, but it is nevertheless "quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." What then required the carnal Israelite to utterly destroy their adversaries with the edge of the sword, must signify that the spiritual Israelite is to demolish every stronghold of the enemies of the truth by the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. With this spiritual weapon no personal injury can be inflicted upon our fellow-men, while we smite offensively and defensively all who dare oppose the truth of God, and utterly cut off from our communion and fellowship all who fail to pronounce the gospel Shibboleth.

Perhaps in all ages of the christian dispensation there have been some connected with the church who have kept back their sword from blood, in the sense of our text, by indulging in a false sympathy for error itself, or for those who hold and plead for error, and they not only keep back their sword, if they ever had the sword of the Spirit, but also do all in their power to deter the more valiant soldiers of the cross from dashing Babylon's little ones against the stones. But they are accursed; that is, they are denounced in their cowardly and treasonable course by the declarations of the word of truth. The word of the Lord is: "Put yourselves in array against Babylon round about: all ye that bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows; for she hath sinned against the Lord."—Jer. l. 14.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., October 15, 1862.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MY aunt, **Mrs. Sarah H. Bishop,** died at the home of her son, James R. Bishop, near Showell, Worcester Co., Md., Monday noon, April 15th, 1907. She was the daughter of Elder Lemuel A. Hall, who died in 1855, and was the widow of Capt. James Bishop, who preceded her to the grave thirty-nine years. She was in her 89th year. She lived with her son, Dr. L. A. H. Bishop, in Dover, Del. She left Dover Friday, March 29th, to visit relatives in Worcester Co., Md., and stopped in Salisbury, Md., at the home of a cousin, Mrs. R. D. Grier. She attended preaching by Elder Durand Saturday afternoon, and intended to go Sunday morning, but being feeble, and the weather unfavorable, she did not go. Monday morning, April 1st, she had a slight attack of paralysis on the right side, but came home with me to St. Martin, where she remained until Wednesday afternoon, when her son James took her over to his home. Her son, Dr. Bishop, came the day she was taken sick, and visited her several times, giving her medical attention. She was kindly and tenderly cared for by her daughter-in-law, Mrs. James R. Bishop, but lived only two weeks. She was buried by the side of her husband and three children on the old home farm near Fenwicks Island, Sussex Co., Del. Owing to inconvenience of getting a minister of her faith, a Methodist preacher read a chapter in the Bible and made some remarks on the occasion. She leaves two

sons, Dr. L. A. H. Bishop, of Dover, Del., and James R. Bishop, of Showell, Md., one half-brother, Philip W. Hall, living near Salisbury, Md., four grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and several nephews and nieces, to mourn their loss. She wrote to me March 15th that she intended coming down Easter week, stopping at Salisbury to attend preaching there. In her letter she said: "I am aware of the imperfections of my wicked, deceitful heart. 'The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.' 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.'" When asked of her hope in death she said, "All is well." She was baptized by Elder F. A. Chick more than twenty-five years ago, at Snow Hill, Md., and remained a member there until death, attending preaching when she could. She had often expressed a desire to die at the home of her daughter-in-law, which desire was granted her, and I think all was directed by the divine Hand.

(MRS.) L. A. GILLISS.

ST. MARTIN, Md., April 26, 1907.

[FOR many years sister Bishop was well known to ourself, and to very many of the brethren in Maryland and Delaware. It was our privilege to baptize her at Snow Hill, Md. So far as known, she was the first person to follow her Lord in baptism in all the history of Snow Hill. Afterwards it was our privilege to meet her quite often when on the eastern shore of Maryland, and for many years she would occasionally write to us of the exercises of her mind religiously, and her letters were always interesting, because of such a spiritual and gracious nature. We, as well as many others, will miss her greatly. We desire to extend our sympathy to the children, and to the niece who wrote the above obituary, and to all the friends, and to the church of which she was a member. Another true believer has been called home.—C.]

Mrs. John Bowman died March 24th, of pneumonia, at her home with her daughter, Mrs. M. B. Keogan, at Olive, N. Y., aged 80 years. She was born in Roxbury, N. Y., and was married to John Bowman at the age of twenty-one years. She experienced a hope in Christ when quite young, and united with the Old Baptist Church of Olive and Hurley in the year 1862, being baptized by Elder Jacob Winchell, who was pastor of the church. She was strong in her belief of the doctrine of election, predestination, salvation by grace and grace alone; a good neighbor, an exemplary mother, and always improving her time by work or in reading her Bible, hymn-book or SIGNS OF THE TIMES. During the winter she had been much favored by feeling the presence of her Savior much of the time. She was confined to her bed but one week. When the doctor was called she said: "I am ready to go, only waiting for the summons; I used to dread the suffering of death, but I do not dread even that now." She died on Sunday evening. About two hours before the end we succeeded in moving her into a more comfortable position, after which she never spoke again, but her face took on the most beautiful expression, her years seeming to fall away from her, much of the expression remaining until she was laid away from mortal sight, one lady remarking that hers was the most beautiful dead face she had ever looked on. Her husband preceded her to the grave twenty-three years, of whom we have the blessed consolation that he also was an heir of grace. The writer has often seen him with uplifted, tear-stained face, saying, "Praise to His name." There were seven children, five of whom survive her: Dr. J. M. Bowman, of Wallkill, N. Y., Mrs. E. C. Moore, of Lexington, N. Y., Mrs. Oscar Davis, of Kingston, N. Y., Mrs. Wm. DeGraff, of Olive, N. Y., and the writer. Two of the daughters are members of the Old School Baptist Church, and I have reason to hope that the other children know the joyful sound. There are eleven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. As I lived at home with my parents until the death of my father, after which mother came with me to my present home, I miss her O so much; though as David said, she cannot return to me, but I shall go to her. I would not wish her back to this world of sorrow, but the ties of nature are not easily severed, and after over fifty years of her presence and counsel it is hard to become accustomed to her absence, although I know our loss is her eternal gain.

At her funeral our pastor, Elder John Clark, spoke from the words: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."—Rev. xiv. 13.

MARY B. KEOGAN.

Mrs. Martha Rebecca Scott, who was the daughter of the late Joseph and Martha Bosley, was born Feb. 9th, 1855, and died Dec. 15th, 1906, making her stay on earth 51 years, 10 months and 5 days. She was married to Frank G. Scott April 27th, 1876. Eight children were born to them, four sons and four daughters, seven of whom survive her, they having lost one son in July, 1899. Mrs. Scott was brought up a Methodist, and joined that denomination some years before her marriage, but her husband says she was always willing to entertain his brethren, the Primitive Baptists, and to this I can bear testimony, as I have often been a guest at her hospitable home. She was not a woman of many words, but faithful to her kind husband and children, and kind to all those around her. In the last years, and especially the last months of her life, which were full of suffering, her husband, our dear brother, in whose judgment in those matters I have the utmost confidence, feels sure she experienced the work of grace in her heart. She would often ask him to read the Bible to her, and wanted to talk of those things that the world knows

not of, and she manifested unusual interest in the church and people of whom her loving husband is one, and before the end peace and resignation to the will of God came to her heart, and she longed to go home and be at rest. So, dear brother, in the midst of your great sorrow and bereavement you have also much to be thankful for; you had a good wife for nearly thirty-one years, and now that she is gone you have the sweet hope that she rests in the bosom of Him who loves poor, helpless sinners with an everlasting love, and in his own time and way takes his loved ones to himself, where all but joy is done away, which is far better for your loved one. May the love of God the Father and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you to sustain and comfort you through all the time that you shall remain. May he guide and protect your children, and incline them to follow their mother's good example, and give them the same good hope through grace, is the prayer of your friend and brother, as I hope,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

Mrs. Nancy Maria Newton died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. J. W. (Lucy) Smith, 38 Knapp Ave., Middletown, N. Y., April 20th, 1907, aged 65 years, 11 months and 9 days. She was married Feb. 14th, 1860, to brother John Newton, who with one son and daughter survives her. She was baptized by Elder S. H. Durand many years ago in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Church, New York city, in which membership she continued to the end. Sister Newton was well known among the Baptists in the Warwick Association of churches as one taught of the Lord, sound and established in the doctrine of God's grace and sovereignty, and of unusual discernment in the kingdom of God's dear Son. For many years she was an almost helpless invalid, but her life was blessed to the church and to all who were favored with her acquaintance. Physical and temporal affliction tried her faith as by fire, but the angel of the Lord's presence saved her, making her able to bear it. She fought a good fight, she kept the faith, she overcome the world, and in the trial of her faith she received the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. She believed on him that justifieth the ungodly, and her faith was counted for righteousness.

The funeral service was held in the meeting-house of the Middletown and Wallkill Church, in Middletown, April 22nd, conducted by Elders J. McConnell and H. C. Ker. The remains were interred in the Phillipsburgh cemetery. There is comfort in believing that those who are truly convinced of sin, manifest by their fervent prayers and tears, under the burden of a plaguing heart, that their redemption is at hand, nigh, even at the door; that now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ.

J. McCONNELL.

W. J. Hale was born in Pulaski County, Ky., April 9th, 1826, died March 1st, 1907. At the age of seventeen years he with his parents moved to the State of Missouri. Not long after going there he was married to Miss Jane Teague. About the year 1851 they both united with the Old School Baptists, and were baptized by Elder Ousely. In 1852 with a number of emigrants he crossed the plains and settled on Puget Sound, in Washington Territory. In 1867 he and his family moved to eastern Oregon. In 1877 he and wife with a few brethren and sisters had a church constituted in his own house. His wife died in 1888. To them were born seven children, two of whom died in infancy; five sons are still living upon the Pacific coast. After the death of his wife he traveled for many months, visiting the Old School Baptists of Canada and the east and south. In 1892, in Butler, Ga., he married sister Fannie Hopkins. In 1893 he and his wife moved to south Florida, settling near Dade City. Soon afterward they put their letters in my home Church, Bethel, where he lived a faithful, honored and beloved member until his death. Truly a righteous man has fallen in Israel. I do not look upon death as I once did. To sleep in Jesus is not to die. When the young die they are only called from the evil to come; when the old, who have borne the burden of a checkered pilgrimage, are called hence, their departure is a grand and glorious release from this bondage of sin to mansions of eternal rest. As I muse over his glorious transition, joy mingles largely with sorrow in my humble tribute to his memory. May the widow, children and church be strengthened by the Lord, and enabled to emulate his faithfulness, and may it be with each as with him: "To live is Christ, and to die is gain."

M. L. GILBERT.

EUSTIS, Fla.

Rachel Tooley, wife of George W. Tooley, died Feb. 22nd, 1905, from the effects of a fall. Aunt Rachel was born in Fleming County, Ky., August 4th, 1833; her maiden name was Rock. Dear uncle and aunt lived and died far from most of their relatives, but I trust they are "Asleep in Jesus."

ALSO,

George W. Tooley died Sept. 12th, 1905, at his home in Wellington, Kansas. Uncle was born in east Virginia July 4th, 1831. I had not seen him for twenty years. He was a mild, sympathetic man, and I have been informed that after the death of his wife he grieved himself to death, being alone and so desolate he could not be comforted. He left three children, and I trust they will imitate his example.

ALSO,

Charlie Adkins, infant son of Charles M. and Mary G. Adkins, died April 26th, 1907, from the effects of whooping cough. Little babe Charlie was born Feb. 28th, 1907, lacking 2 days of being 2 months old.

The dear little babe was a wonderful pet in all the family, but none can stay the hand of death. I trust the sorrowing parents and brothers and sisters of the departed infant will be resigned, and think it was a bright flower plucked from their bosoms by their heavenly Master for a wise purpose.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., May 10, 1907.

Mrs. Mary Albro departed this life March 22nd, 1907, at her home in New Albany, Pa., aged 93 years and 8 months. She united with the Old School Baptists when nineteen years of age, and continued steadfast in the faith to the end of her pilgrimage journey. She was indeed a faithful christian, and took much comfort in reading the SIGNS.

Her daughter, (MRS.) RUTH HATCH.

MEETINGS.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Hopewell Church, Mercer Co., N. J , beginning Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, (May 29th) 1907, and continuing three days.

All trains leaving either New York or Philadelphia on Tuesday afternoon before the meeting will be met at Hopewell, and the friends who may come will be cared for. All who come on Wednesday morning will come at once to the place of meeting, about ten minutes walk from Hopewell depot. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

ELIJAH LEIGH, Church Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Ebenezer Church, at New York city, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 5th, 6th and 7th, 1907.

The meeting place is at 171 Eighth Ave. Beginning Tuesday afternoon a committee will be at the above address to provide accommodation for all the friends. Those coming via P. R. R., B. & O., Erie, Central of N. J., Lehigh Valley or D., L. & W. railroads will find advantage in using the Twenty-third St. ferry, as it is nearest the meeting place. All who love the brethren are cordially invited to meet with us.

JOHN McCONNELL.

THE Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon will hold its next session with Sulphur Creek Church, the Lord willing, near Vern, Lewis County, Washington, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 14th, 15th and 16th, 1907, commencing at 10 o'clock a. m. Those going by railroad will go to Tacoma, Wash., there change to the Tacoma & Eastern, which leaves Tacoma at 8 o'clock a. m., arrives at Tilton at 1 o'clock p. m. Those going should be at Tilton Thursday evening before the meeting, where they will be met and conveyed to the places of entertainment.

N. J. SHANK, Clerk.

THE Lord willing, the yearly meeting of the Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held in the schoolhouse in the township of Brooke, Lambton Co., Ontario, five miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1907, and continuing two days. Our pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, has promised to meet with us. Brethren of our faith are cordially invited to meet with us.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

THE Andes and Middletown Old School Baptist churches, the Lord willing, will hold a two days meeting at Arena, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, June 26th and 27th, 1907. Those coming from the east or west will take the Ulster & Delaware train Wednesday morning, change at Arkville and take Delaware & Eastern to Arena. Meeting will commence at 11 o'clock a. m. Wednesday. We hope to meet our brethren there, and also extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Place of meeting is but a few minutes walk from Arena depot.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THERE will be meeting at 54 Fuller St., Schenectady, N. Y., each Sunday in the month at 2 p. m., excepting the fourth Sunday, when it will be held at 8 p. m. All who love Old School Baptist doctrine are cordially invited to come.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 75. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1907. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FRAGMENTS.

"WHICH all are to perish with the using."—Col. ii. 22. This is a very peculiar expression, and refers only to the ordinances of divine service under the first covenant, in the worldly sanctuary. The first, or legal tabernacle, with all these carnal ordinances imposed on the children of Israel, were only figures for the time then present. Hebrews ix.: They were "patterns of things in the [gospel] heavens." Now a pattern is to indicate the form and character of the reality. This also is true of a figure, a shadow or a type. When the body, or substance, or reality, appears and has thus been proved and established by the pattern or shadow, this is of no more value. When the garment is made the pattern according to which it was made is thrown aside as of no more use; it has perished with the using. When the body has come the shadow flees away.

Those who believe in salvation by the works of the law, those who preach Moses, or the things which Moses commanded to the children of Israel, are dealing with patterns and figures and shadows, which have all been used, and have perished with the using. These legal ordinances were only shadows of things to come, but the body is Christ. These ordinances or patterns are dead now, and all the works based upon them are "dead works;" no gospel life in them, and never was. Therefore the apostle says to the churches concerning them: "Touch not; taste not; handle not."

This expression, "which all are to perish with the using," refers only to patterns of spiritual things, which must be used before they can perish. Many patterns of earthly things are destroyed without ever having been used. Not so with these; no legal pattern of a gospel thing was ever thrown away or destroyed unused; it cannot perish before being used, nor exist as a living thing any longer after the gospel reality has appeared.

How often shall I forgive my brother? The first time my brother sinned against me I felt tender toward him, and sorry for him, and when I told him his wrong he at once confessed it, and I freely forgave him. I was glad I felt tender towards him, and I realized a feeling of

thankfulness for my state of mind. I have since thought that some self-exaltation and boasting were mixed with my thankfulness.

His next transgression against me was more aggravating, and I was vexed with my brother and spoke sharply, and was answered in a like spirit. However, he finally acknowledged his sin, and I forgave him. On the occasion of his third trespass I had to ask one or two brethren to meet with us, and talk with him before he could or would see and confess his wrong. Since then he has sinned against me several times, but after more or less of hardness, resistance and denial, he has said, "I repent," and I have forgiven him. It appears strange that so good a brother should transgress so often. I have now forgiven him seven times, and that certainly appears to me to be enough. I think I will ask the Master if anything more is required of me.

Well, what a fool I am! I asked the blessed Master, "How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?" Who would have thought that his answer would be as it was? How his loving glance searched my poor, vain heart as he answered: "I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven."

How blindly and selfishly I have been limiting the boundless love of God. How could I be so forgetful as to think of setting bounds to his rich mercy and grace? For if there is true love in my heart it is not my love, but the love of God shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto me; and if I have ever felt the true spirit of forgiveness toward my brother it is the same spirit of mercy which caused the dear Savior to say to me, "Thy sins are forgiven thee."

Now if I had asked the dear Lord, How oft shall I sin against my brother and he forgive me, what answer would I expect? What answer would I want? And suppose I had asked: How often can I expect forgiveness of the Lord? O, to think of my multiplied transgressions against a holy God! Sins repeated and repeated; what a heedless, blind, wicked and foolish transgressor I have been against him, in heart and lip and life. Have I any right to ask or expect his forgiveness? And how often would his forgiving mercy be needed? Until seven times? What would that be compared with the number of my transgressions? "They are more than the hairs of mine head; therefore my heart faileth me," said the best of men. Seventy times seven would not cover the number. O how glad I have been in many a dark hour of self-loathing and repentance to read this unspeakably sweet sentence: "His mercy endureth forever." This covers the case and supplies all the needs. How long will mercy endure toward such a sinful creature as I? Not seventy times seven merely, but for ever. So there is no limit to the number of times that I shall forgive my brother. In the most extreme case it is not likely that four hundred and ninety times will be required. But how much oftener than that, in the case of the most obedient child of God, will the boundless stores of God's mercy be called upon for his forgiveness. O how good it is for us that God "is rich in mercy." The whole heavenly choir join in this song of praise: "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens."

O may we never say of any one we be-

lieve to be a christian, I cannot forgive him. May we be enabled by the rich grace and mercy of God always to pray after this manner: "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

"FIGHT the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life." The apostle does not say, Lay hold of eternal life, as though eternal life were to be obtained by laying hold of it. It is a wonder that men of good, natural judgment should not consider that life cannot be obtained by any exertion on the part of one who is destitute of it. Life itself must precede any action; one must possess it before he can even desire it; and yet how many intelligent people speak and act as though eternal life were something whose possession depends upon some action of our own. Life can only be given to any one by the quickening power of God, and that life is only manifested by a birth, and in both of these works the creature is entirely passive. Timothy is addressed by the apostle as one who is a manifest child of God, and already in possession of eternal life. He is directed and exhorted by the apostle with regard to his work as a man of God, and is told whom and what things to avoid, and what things to follow. This involves a warfare between the flesh and the Spirit. On the one hand are various lusts, temptations, errors, which are attractive to the flesh, but which, when followed after by a living soul, bring him into sorrows and drown him in destruction and perdition. (1 Tim. vi. 9.) On the other hand are righteousness, godliness, faith, love, meekness and the like; these are the fruit of the Spirit, and can only be seen and known by faith, which is also the fruit of the Spirit. Faith constantly and persistently presents to us these spiritual things, and claims our careful attention for them; and the carnal mind, with all the desires of the flesh and the wisdom of the world, as constantly and persistently oppose them. Here are the parties to this warfare: faith, eternal life and all spiritual things on one side, and all the pleasures, interests and wisdom of the world on the other.

"Fight the good fight of faith," says the apostle. What weapons shall I use in this fight? asks the man of God. "Lay hold on eternal life," answers the apostle. You have no need to lay hold on carnal weapons, "for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal," but they are spiritual, and are "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." You have no need to lay hold on any of the things pertaining to this world, its riches, wisdom or pleasures, to help you in this warfare; the things that belong to eternal life are enough; lay hold on them and you will need no other weapon, no other power. This faith by which the battle is named, "the fight of faith," and by which it is fought, and all the spiritual things belonging to it, and the eternal life which alone is laid hold of in fighting, and the holy zeal and spiritual courage and determination which are felt in the fight—all these are out of the sight of the wisdom of this world, hidden from it; neither can the world see the victory in which at times by faith we rejoice. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." But the fight of faith is none the less a good fight, and the victory is none the less sweet and glorious because the world cannot see it. The victory was not with

those who stoned Stephen to death, but it was with him when he kneeled down and said, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," and then "fell asleep."

"THE Sun of righteousness." What a wonderful phrase! What a clear and wonderful figure to show whence and how righteousness comes into this world of ours. It does not come to any one of Adam's race through any work of his, nor by reason of any personal merit of his own. It does not rise up from the earth, but comes down from heaven, as the light comes down from the sun. The sunshine reflected from the bosom of the earth might seem to have its origin there; so good works wrought by a man seem, to the natural mind, to have originated in his soul, and to be justly ascribed to him; but to the spiritual mind this is known to be erroneous; the spirit and power by which these good works were wrought came from above. So a servant of God was inspired to say of all the righteous works he did, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." This is Jesus, he is the Sun of righteousness; he has arisen in the gospel heavens, and his righteousness is upon all who fear his name; it heals all their sicknesses, and clothes them gloriously forever. They are clothed with the Sun, they are clothed upon with Jesus, and thus, in their experience, even here at times mortality is swallowed up of life.

WHEN the sky has been clear and the sun shining for a long time the ground becomes hard, so that a grain of wheat dropped upon it would not take root, but would lie like a pebble, as though it had no life, until picked up by one of the fowls of the air. So the heart that has had a long season of rest from trouble is likely to get hard and cold, so that "the word of the truth of the gospel" will not sink into it and take root, but will lie upon the surface of the mind, with no effect upon the life and conversation, bringing forth no fruit.

To recover the soul from this sad and apparently lifeless condition affliction and tribulation are required. It is through great tribulation that all of the saints must enter into the kingdom of heaven. While in this mortal state, with two natures, the one contrary to the other, the best of the saints cannot endure undisturbed prosperity long at a time. So Hezekiah says of the deepest afflictions, "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit." The living soul must be sorely tried from time to time, or he will begin to be exalted and to trust in himself.

The north wind of sorrow and affliction is awakened and caused to blow upon this garden of the Lord, chilling and freezing its powers, and preventing any flow of pleasant thought and feeling. Sometimes we can see in our thoughts and actions some good reason for this feeling of special self-loathing, and this sense of God's anger against sin, and sometimes we can see no especial reason for this, except that we know always that we deserve at any time nothing but rebuke from our God. Then, when the north wind has accomplished the purpose of God, the sweet south wind of the gospel comes and blows softly upon us, thawing and warming our cold hearts, and the gentle rain of the doctrine of our Savior drops upon us and sinks down into the heart to soften it, while the sunshine of God's felt love finishes the prep-

aration of this sacred soil, making it fine and soft, and ready for the reception of that most precious seed, the word of gospel truth. Then gently and sweetly this precious truth sinks down into the tender soil of this humble and contrite heart, sending its roots downward through all its broken depths, and bearing fruit upward to the honor and glory of God.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April 3, 1907.

HELENA, Okla., April 23, 1907.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—The inclosed letter is a copy of one I received over twelve years ago. My wife found it among my papers a few days ago and called my attention to it. The sentiment seemed so good I thought it might be of interest and profit to the readers of the SIGNS. The letter of mine published in the SIGNS, which the writer mentions, was about the first one published in the SIGNS exposing the doctrine of two salvations—one of grace, the other of works, which was then being promulgated among the Old School Baptists of the west and south. The rereading of brother Miller's letter was sweet to my taste—sweeter than the honey in the honeycomb; in fact, in his experience he sets forth the true doctrine as well as experience; they agree in one, go hand in hand, have the same origin, are linked together so firmly and lovingly that the skill of man cannot counterfeit it. Surely the honey in the honeycomb may be faintly compared with the doctrine and experience, one cannot exist without the other; that is, the honey without the comb to hold it, so experience cannot exist without the doctrine.

J. F. BEEMAN.

ESCO, Tenn., Sept. 14, 1894.

ELDER J. F. BEEMAN—VERY DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—It is with pleasure that I now let you know there is one poor, bleating lamb in the hill country of east Tennessee that believes with all his heart that salvation is of the Lord, as you have written, and that was published in the SIGNS, present volume, No. 36. We have had just such brethren in our church as you speak of. They used to tell me to go around and give my hand to members of the congregation while they were singing. I would tell them that I did not feel like it. They said if I would get to shaking hands then I would feel like doing it. I told them I thought it would be acting the hypocrite. I got into trouble over it. It was one of the leading members who gave me this advice, and I thought if this was my duty that I would do this much, so I got very religious (in the flesh); I thought that I was perfectly willing to do anything that the Lord required. I was at meeting one night; while there I thought (and do yet) that the Lord told me to go to a certain man and tell him to join the church; but I stood there rather astonished. They were singing a hymn, and I thought that when they got to the end of each verse I would go and do what I was commanded, but I stood with fear and trembling until the hymn was ended. I cannot describe this; it appeared plain to me that there were two of me, one just above the other, and to my upper mind it was as plain as it could be that it was my duty to go, but I could not get the consent of my other mind. I was shown that the carnal mind is enmity against God; it cannot please him; all the worship and good that we claim to do with it are but hypocrisy and Arminianism; we are all Arminians by nature, and the carnal mind of the saints cannot be anything else. I very often hear our preachers pray to the Lord "to draw in the

wanderings of our minds." If they were drawn in they would only be enmity against God. Of course they mean for God to give us a sufficient amount of the mind of Christ to overcome or swallow up the carnal mind. Every thought, act or emotion of man that is not prompted by the Spirit of the Lord is Arminian, and cannot be anything else. When I professed a hope I was ten years in doubts and fears, so much so that my life was a misery to me the most of the time. I did everything in my power to brighten my evidence. I do think that I had the least evidence of any one living. I tried every conceivable way to get the Lord to bless me, for I thought by my good deeds and my prayers I could earn his blessing. I have often heard my mother talk about how ashamed she was after the Lord had made her praise him at meeting. I had and do have as much confidence in her as in any one, but I thought that was the most foolish talk I had ever heard. I have lived to witness with her that if we could bring one spiritual blessing, then why be ashamed of it? I could not as much as join the church until the Lord made me do it. They that can do so without the help of God had better go somewhere else. I stayed out of the church two years for two reasons: first on the account of some members I did not much like (however that got all right); second, my hope was so little, and I was honest about it and did not want to join unless I was fit; so I decided with all the honesty that there is in a natural man that it would be sinful for me to join the church, and that I would not unless I had a brighter evidence. I became satisfied about it, and thought I could do as well out of the church as in it. I went on in this way for about two years, and the impression about joining the church had about left me. One night they called for joiners; two or three went forward and it seemed as if the air around me drew me to them. As I said before, I had a determined resolution not to join until I had more evidence. You see that I believe when the Lord wants one he brings him. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." We have a people here claiming to be the Old Primitive Baptists, who believe the same as those you refer to in your letter in the SIGNS. They hold protracted meetings, send their members around to talk to their friends to get them to come to the mourner's bench, and when they convert them, persuade them to join the church. Their preachers teach this to be a duty; they say that they have enough of the Spirit all the time to do all the commandments; they say they can do good for evil, and love their enemies at any time. We read of a people that have made lies their refuge; if these people are not those mentioned by the prophet, they are just like them. They say that we can keep all the commandments; I say that man has never lived who can love his enemies without the Spirit of Christ. I cannot love my Savior as I want to do, much less my enemies. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." If this just meant quicken into life, it seems that the angel would have said, Save his people from hell. It is said, We know not how to pray as we ought. That being so, what is it we can do? We cannot sing in spirit unless he places us there. If we can do any good thing in the flesh, we cannot say in truth, "We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Just so far as I can prepare myself for worshiping God,

that far I will have confidence in myself. An associate editor of a professed Baptist paper came up here preaching just such stuff as this, "free agency after quickening;" he came among Baptists that are in disorder; the leader of that faction was excluded from the church that I belong to. I think that it would be better for the church of Christ if all the different "ites" were out of it, and they are many. The Lord has separated the most of them from us in this country, and it appears that it is still going on. It seems something like it was in the days of Elijah: "Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life." But the Lord let him know in his deep distress that he had reserved seven thousand unto himself, and had it been his will and purpose he had the power to have reserved a million. His arm is not shortened to-day. I feel satisfied that it took the Lord to place me where I am, and if he wants more he still has the power. O that the Lord would only reconcile us to his will; but we are chosen in the furnace of affliction, and they "that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." This is an irrevocable decree, and we need not look for anything else while we are traveling along the pathway of truth. These Ashdod Baptists claim that they can live up to their duty, and make their paths easy and smooth, but it is not so with me. I would to God that I could live more humble and obedient; not but what my morals and daily walk are as good as most men, and that is a good thing in its place, and I attribute all that to the Lord; but O this body of sin, this inbred corruption that makes me groan within myself, and makes me feel and know that all my righteousness is as filthy rags, that I am as a cage of unclean birds, and "that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." When we are enabled to get a sip out of that wellspring of salvation, and view ourselves by the eye of faith in our heavenly Head, then it is that we feel he is to us the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, and that he is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. We can feel that he is everything that we stand in need of in time and eternity. Believing this, then away with that false doctrine of salvation by works, for it is not known in my experience, nor in the Bible. If there is anything I do know, it is that this system is false, because I tried it for ten years after I professed a hope, and if every Baptist in the world were to tell me that it was so, I could not believe it; I feel that I followed it into Jonah's hell, and I was made to cry that "salvation is of the Lord." That was what Jonah cried; he never said that it was part of him, and every child of grace that has traveled this road says the same. Jonah knew naturally that it was of the Lord, for there was nothing that he could do to make the whale bring him to the shore; so it is with us who have been led through deep waters, we know that we cannot so much as call on him until he enables us to do so, and when he does deliver us, then we know spiritually that it is from the Lord. At such times we can do all the commandments; we can seek and find; we knock and it is opened unto us; then it is that we can love our enemies; it is Christ in us the hope of glory. Christ says, "Without me ye can do nothing."

Dear brother, I am making this letter too long, and so scattering I know it will not be interesting unless the good Lord makes it so. These Riggmonite Baptists

(this is what we call them here) give the lie to their own experience, if they are christians (and I have my doubts about many of them from the fruit they bear); they also give the lie to a great many of the Baptist hymns written on the experience of the saints, and the very ones that do my soul good, such as: "I would, but cannot sing." I think the Baptists are in a very sad condition in some sections; some of them are in correspondence with the Missionaries, so you see through these Ashdods we are in correspondence indirectly with the Missionaries. I think we would be much better off to be less in number and be separated from them.

We had three join our church last meeting; one of them had obtained a hope about ten years ago; thus the Lord makes them willing in the day of his power. Our association was held two weeks ago; the Lord was with our preachers and gave them utterance. He also blessed many of his dear, little ones with his Holy Spirit.

I will close, for I feel that I have imposed on you through ignorance, but my intention, I think, is good.

Your brother in hope,

E. M. MILLER.

SHERWOOD, Ore., Jan. 25, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—I send the inclosed experience for publication in the SIGNS.

Your brother, as ever,

J. P. ALLISON.

LA GRANDE, Ore., Jan. 20, 1907.

ELDER J. P. ALLISON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have thought many times of my promise to write you a letter, but have just as often not complied with it. I will confess I have been so barren and cold (spiritually) for the past few weeks I could not write. Last night I was very much surprised when Elder Attebery, of Winona, Wash., came home with my husband from town to stay over night with us. His wife is at the Hot Lake Sanatorium for treatment. I had quite a pleasant talk with him on the subject of religion.

You asked me to write you a letter for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; I do not think it will be worthy the space, yet I will let you be the judge.

When I was a child fourteen years old I was at a Missionary meeting, and was far back in the corner of the house. The preacher called for those to come and give him their hand who wanted to be prayed for. I can never tell what I had been thinking about before this, but I got up, and just as I knelt down I saw a beautiful white robe; it came to me just as any one in a long, white gown, and it trailed by me on the floor and was gone. It was a spotless robe, pure and white. I then saw myself one mass of blackness, the blackest object I ever saw before or since. I was weeping; I knew the friends were around me and talking to me, but I could not express the awful agony I was in. I tried to pray and ask God for mercy, but it all seemed so terrible. I wept all the way home, and the next day I still wept, I could not hide my tears. I went to that meeting and several others of the same kind, and would go to the mourner's bench and try to pray, but I got no relief. I saw others profess religion (as they called it) and be baptized, but there was no comfort for me, and I finally ceased going up among them; I did not want to go. My parents and grandparents were Old Baptists, but I had never heard one preach. Father and mother were not members at this time, but believed that doctrine. Finally some

Old Baptists came to that part of Missouri from Indiana (the Elders Stark), a church was organized, father and mother joined and were baptized. I stood on the bank of the stream and witnessed their baptism with a heavy heart. I thought, O, if I were only fit to do likewise how happy I would be. I always believed that to be the way Christ was baptized. The Baptists had regular meetings, and I went as regularly as I could, and loved to hear them preach. I could witness with them until they came to where they rejoiced in the Savior's love, and felt they were pardoned of all their sins. I was in total darkness, and could not get relief. Many times I would give it all up, and say, There is nothing in it, I have tried and tried, and begged and begged for mercy, and cannot find any relief. But there was grandfather's life, his happy countenance when talking on religion, and his earnest zeal when defending the doctrine (he was quite a fireside preacher), a light would beam on his face, and then I would think, He is a true christian, and not a hypocrite, and then for a time I would try to hope that I might some time find forgiveness. Time went on for seven years before I found relief; sometimes I could throw it off and go on with my work (I had become a school-teacher) smoothly, to all outward appearance, but my heart was burdened all the time. Many times when I would try to pray it seemed that my words did not rise higher than my head; it seemed that my case was an outside one. One night I had gone to my room, but could not sleep; my tears had wet my pillow, and distress and gloom had driven sleep away; it must have been midnight when all my sins rose before me like a rugged mountain; it seemed to me I could feel them pass away and everything become clear, and above my bed the Savior and the angels were hovering, and I was one of them; I was laughing for joy, and just before that I had been weeping. I was so happy I called to mother and father, and O such a meeting and glad rejoicing there in the darkness. I got up and walked across the room; it seemed to me I was so light I could fly. I went to bed and to sleep, and O such a sweet sleep it was. The next morning the same calm, sweet feeling was mine; I felt to tell all whom I met of the glory, mercy and blessedness of Jesus, and how happy I was. There were no tears, no troubles, I could read the Bible and hymns and see much beauty in them. My hymn-book went in my lunch-basket as regularly as my lunch when I went to school; my days were filled with joy and no cloud came over my mind. I wanted to be baptized, and wished a "Philip" would come and baptize me, like he did the eunuch, but not so. The church meeting came in a few weeks (the church met at father's house; Elder B. F. Querry was the pastor), and on Saturday, when the time came, and the hymn was nearly through, I could keep my seat no longer, and I tried to tell them what I hoped the Lord had done for me. I was received, and the next morning was baptized by Elder Querry. It was a bright, sunny day, and I can never describe my feelings; all things praised God for his goodness and mercy, and when we went to the house every one looked beautiful to me; no tears filled my eyes, no troubles filled my heart, I was full of the blessed Savior's love. "O how happy are they who their Savior obey," &c. These lines and many others filled my soul to overflowing; I could listen to the preaching and rejoice in the Savior's love for many days and weeks, with not a trouble. The first tears

I shed after this wonderful change were at a meeting when the brethren and sisters were taking the sacrament; I cried for joy. That is long ago (twenty-eight years last September).

My dear brother, my life has been a mixture of joys and sorrows since that bright season; many times I have prayed that it might come again, but my happy moments are of short duration; I am often in the valley, and my harp on the willow, yet sometimes the Lord lets me see his lovely face and feel his presence.

Yours in gospel bonds,

(MRS.) M. C. COUCH.

HELENA, Okla., March 18, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I heard brother C. G. Miller read the letter I had written to a friend; brother Beeman sent it to you for publication. Brother Miller has loaned me his SIGNS OF THE TIMES to read for the last six months or more. I felt confident you would not publish any letter that you felt was not in harmony with the truth as it is in Christ. I noticed there was a letter wrong in spelling my name; it should be Owsley, instead of Onsley. Will you please correct it through the SIGNS, so that should any brother desire to write to me I would be able to get it? I find much comfort in reading the SIGNS, or letters from any of the dear children of God, especially when they are spiritual, but if it is a call to do some great work among other denominations, then I find no comfort in it. I find more comfort in five minutes talk with a brother on points of Scripture that we can agree upon than in all the preaching I heard in the forty-three years prior to my first receiving a hope in Christ, for up to that time I did not know the love of the Savior, if I do now. Sometimes I feel that I am mistaken, for, if not deceived, the most sacred command in the New Testament is to love one another; in other words, all the law and the prophets hang on love. I have been greatly worried over the thoughts of excluding brethren. It hardly seems reasonable to think that I would want to raise a hand to do this act, and hope it may never come up before me, for I fear this act cannot be done through love, and if not through love, then I fear it is all wrong, for vengeance belongs to the Father. When I think of the woman that was brought before Christ, that should Christ come forth and put the question as in that case with the woman, that there would be none left but the woman and Christ. Could it be possible that one brother could get up before Christ and say, I am without sin? It does seem to me that if we feel we are without sin we are back where we were when we did not know the love of God. How often did we say then about some Old Baptist, as well as others, I do not profess to be a christian, but I would not do a trick like that fellow did. I often wonder, if Christ did not condemn the woman, are we better than Christ? What did Christ say? He that is without sin, let him cast the first stone. How many could cast a stone when this question was put to them? and what did he do? Waited, and it seems Christ did not say anything until he found them all gone, for he knew they were all guilty. Yet we will cast a brother off, knowing at the same time in our own hearts that we are all sinners.

How great is the comfort that comes with the SIGNS sometimes. I borrow brother Miller's SIGNS, and when I begin to read it seems there is no interest in it, and I lay it down, and it may be on taking it up again I find great joy in reading, and desire to keep it to read some

time in the future. I will send you two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that I may keep each number, for it stands for the truth as I see it, which is a comfort to know that God has a remnant that has not bowed to the image of Baal.

I sometimes wonder if we do not get too hasty? In Jeremiah li. 17, God says, "Every man is brutish by his knowledge," and I often think we act a little brutish toward one another; brute-like we do not want to give up. Elijah of old thought he was the only one left, yet God told him he had reserved seven thousand. Should we not suffer many things? Are we better than our Savior? Did they not accuse him of all manner of things, and even put him to death? Yet he was without sin, so is every child through him that is born of God; neither doth he commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him.

Please excuse this long letter, and do as you think best with it; never allow it to appear in the dear, old SIGNS if you think it not the truth. This will be at your disposal, feeling that the Lord is with you, and has led you with the spirit of love, which I feel is the only true evidence we have that God is with us. We love the truth as it is in Christ our Lord. May he ever give you of this spirit, for I feel that it is the only true spirit, that we are to be tested with the spirit of love, for every child of God must be of this one spirit. There are many others, but God is love; may he always bring forth love in the SIGNS in the future as has been manifested in the past, is my prayer for you, brethren, if I am worthy to say brethren.

Yours in the bonds of love for the truth's sake,

D. S. OWSLEY.

LUKE XXII. 19.

"AND he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it and gave unto them, saying, This is my body, which is given for you."

It was the same night in which Jesus was betrayed that he spoke these words.

"O what a sad and doleful night
Preceded that day's morn,
When darkness seized the Lord of light,
And sin by Christ was borne."

Who can picture the scene as it really was? Who can tell the story as it should be told to bring it vividly before our minds? O for the pen of a ready writer to present it as I saw it last night in my wakeful hours. As I saw him in the garden of Gethsemane praying alone, the tears flowed freely from my eyes. How could I ever murmur or complain at my light affliction while beholding such a scene as this? He said to his disciples, "Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder." How could they sleep while their dear Lord and Master was in such agony? But it shows how indifferent and hard-hearted we poor mortals are. Those disciples were not unlike us in that they slept; but there was a purpose in this sleeping: the suffering Savior must pray alone, the scene was too sacred for mortal eyes to look upon. He must tread the wine-press alone. He went the third time and prayed, saying, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," and an angel appeared unto him and strengthened him. But no, the cup could not pass from him, he must drink it to the dregs. The scene grows darker, a multitude of his enemies are at hand, Judas has betrayed him, the hour had fully arrived; not only was the day appointed by the Father, but the very hour in which he should be delivered into the hands of his enemies. Jesus is bound and led away into the council hall; "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter,

and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." Had he been a criminal the scene would not appear so terrible, but here it is the criminal torturing the innocent. Still the scene grows darker and more terrible, he is falsely accused and smitten on the face, because he gave a sensible answer, and the terrible trial goes on, he is blindfolded and whipped by his foes, who would say, Now show your wisdom in telling who smote thee; but the dear Redeemer did not satisfy their curiosity, this was not his mission. He is taken before Pilate to be condemned to death. Pilate, though wicked and hard-hearted, could see no fault in him, and no reason why he should be put to death, and therefore pleads for him, not wishing to condemn an innocent person to death. Is there no mercy for the holy child Jesus? No, the scene even grows worse instead of better, the cup is not yet drained. Pilate scourges Jesus, thinking this might serve to appease the wrath of the Jews; but no, this would not do, they cry, "Crucify him, crucify him." Pilate, remembering it was their custom to have him release unto them a prisoner at the time of the feast of the passover, desired to release Jesus, but the rabble preferred that a wicked robber should be released instead of Jesus. Jesus is delivered up to be crucified. Where are his disciples? Is there no one to give a look of pity or sympathy?

Elder E. V. White once said in a sermon (and I wished everybody could have heard that sermon): "It is a coward that would dare claim any of the glory for his salvation, when all the soldiers of Jesus turned their backs upon him." He fought the battle alone, and of the people there was none to help.

Jesus is led away to Calvary, bearing his cross; his dear body is beginning to weaken under the dreadful strain and severe scourging of this sad night, he breaks down under the weight of the rugged cross, another is made to carry it, and on he is led. The worst is to come yet, he is nailed to the cross, there to remain until he dies. Jesus is dying; behold the great sacrifice for sin. "This is my body, which is given for you." Nature hides her face from this awful scene, there is darkness over all the land from the sixth hour until the ninth; the people are terror-stricken and smite upon their breasts. About the ninth hour Jesus cries with a loud voice, "It is finished," and yields up the ghost. Jesus is dead! The earth quakes, the veil of the temple is rent in twain from top to bottom, the legal covenant is ended and rolled up as a scroll, and as a vesture it is laid away; the great Antitype, the one great Sacrifice for sin, hangs upon the cross dead. This is the body which is given for you. Let us think of these things.

EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

NEWARK, Del., March 23, 1907.

MELBOURNE, Ont., April 19, 1907.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I was reading your letter on the words, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God," and I felt edified and instructed, and my mind rested on the words, "Quicken me, O Lord, for thy name's sake: for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble." A live man thus speaks. Paul spoke of this experience in his letter to the church at Rome. The mortal body is the body of a living man; mortal means man, or that which is subject to death; immortal means the opposite: that which

is not subject to death. Therefore the body of a dead man is not mortal, because it is dead, inanimate, as much so as the earth upon which we walk. Hence Paul said, "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Dear brother Ker, this explanation was particularly comforting to me, as well as all the letter. How often we do feel cast down; it is the same now as in the days of the prophet Elijah, when he got so discouraged and cried, "I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." And the Lord answered him and said, "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him." "And a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice," and Elijah heard the voice, God has reserved witnesses for himself. The grandeur of the forest speaks of him, the rolling waves, the starry sky and the bright flowers, decked with thine own hand, and some of them so sweetly fragrant, declare thy glory, but I cannot express my feelings.

"O how can words with equal warmth
The gratitude declare
That glows within my ravished heart?
But thou canst read it there."

I feel thankful for the privilege of getting the SIGNS, and do wish the dear sisters in Canada would write oftener. We read, "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another." I fully indorse and know the "I can't help it" doctrine we read about to be the truth. "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Esau could truly say, "I can't help it," and when Esau cried with a loud voice, "Bless me, even me also, O my father," though the father very much desired to bless Esau he had not the power, for he had given the blessing to Jacob. I trust that all the dear brethren and sisters are possessed of an honest principle, and will not object to liberty in thought, liberty in discussion and investigation on any subject of interest, and not assail a man because he may differ in opinion from us. I am often told that the Old Baptists are few in number. But in the Bible the Lord's people are always few in number compared to other people; they are spoken of as a remnant, and we read that the great nations of the earth are as the small dust of the balance in the sight of God. It is humiliating to our natural minds to believe that the great British Empire, with its standing army and millions of inhabitants and millions of money, is as the small dust of the balance in God's sight, but this is true, and the same with other great nations, as the American nation or the Russian nation, thus showing us that as high as the heavens are above the earth, so are God's ways and God's thoughts different from man's. Poor, puny man, who thinks he can chain the lightning; but when the Lord sends the earthquake on a great city, who can stay his hand? Men must then submit to the issues of divine decree, and know that God is beyond all law, and rules and reigns supreme in the heavens and on the earth. God is the God of love, not of wrath, and he knows what is best for the children of men.

Pardon me for writing such a long letter. With a swift glance of the mind my

thoughts go out in love to all of this precious faith who are scattered from one end of the world to the other. I have not enjoyed good health for some time, but feel reconciled to whatever Providence has in store for me. The Lord has been good to me all the days of my life, and unworthy and undeserving as I am, I feel to praise him who doeth all things well.

Sincerely,

(MRS.) GILBERT McLEAN.

[WE have permission from our sister to publish the above good letter.—K.]

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 25, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—As I have a letter from sister Laura Cubbage that I enjoyed very much, I feel to send it to you, and will leave it to your judgment as to its publication. It seems to me a long time since I have been with or even seen you all at Hopewell. I am hoping it will be in accordance with the Lord's will for us to be with you the fourth Saturday and Sunday of next month.

How sudden was brother Asa Shepherd's death, and how soon afterwards sister Rachel was called hence, yet it is the Lord who doeth what is best, and may we all submissively bow to his most holy will, knowing

"It is the Lord enthroned in light,
Whose claims are all divine;
Who has an undisputed right
To govern me and mine."

I can but feel this morning that I have been made to know the true light of the glory, power, mercy, truth and love of the gracious and mighty Father, who has children on this earthly footstool who sometimes are groveling in darkness, and again rejoicing in the light divine. It has pleased him, the most wise God, to reveal his love and his benefits to this worm of the dust. How little and insignificant I feel of my own puny self, but how strong I feel in his mighty strength which he has given me. For a little time I can stop all my work and take up the Bible or hymn-book and read and sing, when I can see the glory of his great work therein inscribed. Only a few minutes ago I left my work and went to find just what the whole hymn was commencing, "If I must sing, I'll sing of grace," and I just had to sing it through, and how beautiful it was to me. I have read some of the Psalms this morning. Again, last evening we had a little experience that seemed to show us the watchcare of the mighty One to these two feeble ones. We were to meet at sister Craven's, and started to go, but you will remember how it snowed; so we decided to come home. At that time we did not think we could possibly make the train that we would like to, and expected to wait nearly an hour, but we were in time for the train. We expected to walk home, as the hacks are so busy at such times that they do not care to come so far; so we started from the depot and met our carriage; one of the men was bringing a passenger to the train, so we rode right to our door. What do you call that, chance, happen so, or the benefit of the Lord to us? Well, it just came to us in such a sweet way that we could but rejoice in his great love. I got the Bible very soon and read the one hundred and third Psalm, and it did show me the care of the Father to the children, and I know it was not a natural rejoicing merely for the convenience, but a full acknowledgment of his benefits to us, and we could but bless the Lord from our souls. This morning I was made to think of Jacob telling his sons what should befall them in the last days, and my mind was upon Joseph being a fruitful bough. I tried and tried

to see why it had come to me as it had; so I took up the Bible and read the forty-ninth chapter of Genesis, and it was full of mystery to me, I could not understand it. I do not know yet what was the reason I must meditate upon that fruitful bough. How much I would like to have some one tell me about it, I seem so ignorant. When I want to know about any of these hidden truths, I only seem to read them and feel there is so much there if I was only permitted to understand. But I am willing to wait the Lord's time for him to make these things known to me.

Brother Coulter spoke yesterday from Psalms cxvi. 6: "The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me." I felt that I knew the truth of the Psalm, also of the brother's remarks, but I was not then permitted to enter into the enjoyment of it as I like to when listening to preaching, still there was a sweetness to me in it that the world knows not of. This morning I fairly burst out in the rapturous delight of the words, "In the midst of the congregation will I praise thee," and how lovely, and what a great privilege it was to me to feel that I knew who make up the congregation of the Lord. These are not they that worship the images and idols made by their own hands, nor they who glory in their own strength, with their hearts far from God. Often I wonder how so many that have professed to know of these better things, and have convinced us that they did, and who seemed to be living faithful to their profession, can become engaged in some worldly doings, mingling with some worldly religionists, neglecting their own profession and brethren and going astray, yea, so far astray that it does not seem as though some of them can be brought back, yet I know through Christ all things can be done. How sad not to be in the confidence of the brethren. May it be the Father's will to put us and keep us in their confidence.

I only intended to write a few lines and here I have taken up much of your time. With much love to yourself and family,

MARY HILL TERRY.

WILLOW GROVE, Del., Jan. 30, 1907.

DEAR SISTER TERRY:—After reading your very interesting letter in the SIGNS of February 1st, I felt as if I had mingled with you at that lovely meeting, though I was only there in thought. Those gatherings are precious to me, and I feel just as you have expressed it, I do indeed need every handshake and every word from our dear kindred in Christ all the way along. Here in the country we cannot get together as you do in Philadelphia, and it often gives me pain to know it must be so, for I feel that these fireside meetings are indeed some of the most profitable, and my home and heart are open at all times for just such glorious meetings. If I love anything in this world it is to mingle with the dear children and sing songs of praise to the God I love, as I hope. You wrote of the "friends." I feel the very touch that you expressed, and we have just such friends here at Cow Marsh. I can tell you that you are not the only impatient one, for I find myself often saying in mind, when listening to these friends talk, Why are you yet outside the gate? even forgetting that it is not yet the Lord's time. I often feel like speaking words of encouragement to them, but I feel myself so unfit, and that if I should try I would fail, for in me dwells no good thing, and I am made to be still;

but if I could talk and write as you can I would not be so timid. Dear sister, let us try to be patient, and stop to think that in the Lord's own good time he will bring them into the fold; but this does not keep our hearts from going out after them, for we see that their walk and conversation is such as becomes children of God, and indeed I often feel that they are more capable of giving words of comfort than poor, unworthy me. Not until it pleases the dear Lord to bring them face to face with him can they come out and acknowledge that they are not ashamed to own the Lord nor to defend his cause. While in this state the flesh is indeed weak, and not until they are made strong in the Lord can they come; but our hearts go out after them just the same, and this is one of the mysteries. While we cannot meet and have those fireside communions, I am glad you brethren and sisters can, for to me they are a great privilege when I can meet with you at Salem. I often stop and think of you all, and recall your faces in my mind, and then I am made to stop and think of our losses here: two deacons and our pastor in less than two years, and how our hearts mourn to see the vacant places, yet we would not wish them back if we could have it so, for the Lord has taken them from this world of sin and sorrow, and the memory of them left for us is good; their examples are good for us all to follow. Elder Meredith spent his last appointment with us, which was the fourth Sunday in October. We were very much alarmed about him then. I said Sunday evening to my husband, I believe that this is his last trip to Cow Marsh, and so it was, until he was carried there to be buried. His conversation was so changed, he had no trouble about anything. His wife asked what would she do? He said, "I do not fear death at all, for the sting of death is gone. Why, it is only passing over," and he was made to wait the Lord's time to take him home. When he would talk, this was his theme. He was so all the time of his sickness, and the nearer the end came the more he rejoiced; and on Sunday night before he died he was so happy that he actually laughed. We miss him very much. Just stop and think, suppose Elder Coulter should be called away, O what a sad time you would have! This is just what we feel. Is it any wonder we are sad and feel our loss so much? Yet we know it is the hand of God, and it is right, else it would not be so. We are left alone in a bad time; the association meets with us in May, and we have no pastor. But sometimes I feel that we are blessed beyond our just deserts after all. Elder Cubbage has been raised up among us; he is near us, and we all think much of him; he has been preaching to me ever since he was baptized.

For fear I will weary you I will close, wishing you many such meetings as you so beautifully described in the SIGNS, and I hope you will write often, many of us love to read such communications as are printed in the SIGNS, signed by "Mary Hill Terry" and others. It would afford my companion and myself great pleasure to meet with you each Sunday evening if we could, for this is our pleasure in this life. Remember us in love to the dear kindred and friends, and write us often, for such letters do poor, hungry souls like us good.

Your unworthy sister,

LAURA A. CUBBAGE.

AVONDALE, Ala., March 30, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—It may be thought by some that my continued silence, and from some of my writings in other papers, that I have changed, or lost interest in the general principles set forth in the SIGNS, and I feel that I want to tell you that I still hold in reverence the doctrine I have firmly believed for a number of years, viz.: that God has a grand and glorious purpose in every event that takes place in time, and that he absolutely rules and controls all things, and that "all things [whether good or bad] work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

My mind was stirred up to a renewed contemplation of the subject of predestination from reading Elder H. B. Jones' article in the SIGNS for April 1st, 1907. In my meditation on the subject my mind went back about twenty years, when one Sunday night I was thought to be dying (and I thought so, too,) with heart trouble. I had an appointment to preach ten miles in the country that day, but as I was unable to attend, Elder R. F. Popasan filled my appointment, accompanied by brother Baines Griffin, and both were at my house in Northport, Ala. Both brethren spent the night, and next morning at my request brother Popasan knelt beside my bed and offered a fervent prayer in my behalf, and left for home. Both these brethren have long since gone to their eternal home, together with Elders T. J., W. S. and G. W. Norris, A. J. Coleman, R. F. Ellis, W. M. Wimberly, and all the old preachers I was then associated with, all are gone but my poor, unworthy and unprofitable self. For some purpose (God alone knows why) I am here yet, but still suffering with heart trouble daily. Brother Griffin was a great and sweet singer, and in my silent meditations I can still hear his soul-animating voice singing the songs of Zion. I was thinking about all this the other night, and I said, "I certainly believe that Almighty God has a purpose in everything that takes place in this world; and more than that, he brings all his purposes to pass in some way. If I had died twenty years ago there are three of my children now living that would never have been born, and if any or all of these three children are the elect of God and embraced in the covenant of redemption 'ordered in all things, and sure,' how could they have been saved if never born?" It does seem to me that every link in the long chain of events is absolutely necessary in the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose in the salvation of his chosen people, and so I said, "If to believe this doctrine constitutes me a heretic, then I am a heretic." I believe there are many of God's dear people whose minds have never been led to properly contemplate this glorious doctrine, and they have been prejudiced against it through the influence and teaching of those who "rail against the truth," and never lose an opportunity to hold up the doctrine of God's predestination of all things as a hideous monster, God-dishonoring, and heresy of the deepest dye. I said publicly, not long since, that I believe there are thousands of God's children who are right at heart who have no proper conception of the teaching of his word. I believe this is true, and for this and other reasons I am not in favor of making a belief or disbelief in this doctrine a test of fellowship. None of us can help believing as we do, and I cannot afford to disfellowship a brother for believing what he cannot

help believing, or because he does not believe in predestination just as I see it; it is the Lord who teaches his people to know and love this truth. If there still be those who refuse to live with and fellowship us because we believe these things, let them go their own way. "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." I greatly desire to believe right, but above all things else I desire to live right and die right. I hope I still love the doctrine of God our Savior, and also those who earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

In gospel fellowship,

H. J. REDD.

MORENCI, Mich., Feb. 1, 1907.

BELOVED EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I am just recovering from a severe attack of "la grippe," and as I sat in my chair for the first the SIGNS was brought in and placed on a stand by my side, and it was like seeing the face of a dear friend. I opened to Elder Durand's letter, and shortly tears were streaming down my face. Surely here is one like me, I said aloud, the heavy chain, O there is another poor sinner in all this world who has felt the galling links of this heavy chain, and yet the Lord has again spared me. His mercy has been round about me all my days, therefore will I sing his praise.

I have not heard the gospel preached in over four years, and may never again, as my health is very poor, so I have been impelled to write a few lines to the dear ones of the fold of God. He will love his own and care for them even down to old age. My mind has been of late continually dwelling on the precious love and mercy of our dear Redeemer, who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; yes, those dear eyes were suffused with tears, for "Jesus wept." Behold, O my soul, the Son of God in agony for my cruel sins, and I the worst of all sinners. But glory to God in the highest, he lives to intercede for poor sinners. O this wonderful love, that the spotless Lamb of God should lay down his precious life to redeem sinners and bring them to rejoice in his name. Praise the Lord, O my soul, for with his loving-kindness has he drawn me, and I will run after him.

The SIGNS is full of good doctrine. How I miss dear Elder Bartley; but we know he has entered into rest. I have some precious letters written by him. Many faithful soldiers are falling in battle; they have fought a good fight. Soon we shall go the way of all the earth. Well do I remember the sermon Elder Durand preached in our church-house in Fairfield; he was young then, but is still spared to wield the sword of the Lord. May Zion prosper, and all God's dear children be valiant soldiers.

Hoping to again hear from Attie Curtis, and all who love the truth, I will close lest I weary you.

Unworthily,

(MRS.) SARAH WYMAN.

MANORKILL, N. Y., March 28, 1907.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I am much pleased with the SIGNS and its contents generally, and I have reread the experiences with much pleasure. I would also add my feeble testimony if the Lord will fill this earthen vessel with the rich treasure of his grace. I at times feel to ascribe greatness to our God because of his boundless mercy and loving-kindness to the chief of sinners. When I contemplate his wonderful works I feel to say with the psalmist, "What is man, that

thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" At such times we run and are not weary, we walk and are not faint. "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage." "My cup runneth over." Then we sing, rejoice and believe in the Lord, who makes our cause his own, and this hope built upon his word cannot be overthrown. But ere we are aware he seems to be gone, and we mourn his absence. Jesus said to his disciples, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." Then we can say with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." And we are led to say, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." He is good when he gives, inexpressibly good, and not less so when he denies. Crosses from his sovereign hand are blessings in disguise. Paul learned how to be full and how to be hungry, how both to abound and to suffer need; he was much favored of God, and we hope that we also are of that number whose God is the Lord. "He that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God." Having this hope we follow on to know the Lord, and to know him is life eternal. It is said, "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days." Thus we are bidden to wait for the vision if it tarry; it will surely come; it will not tarry. Thus his promises are not yea and nay, but yea and amen, and not one of them has ever failed. Thus we are strengthened to pursue the narrow way. It is a highway, and the redeemed of the Lord walk therein. Our journey is a thorny maze, but we march upward still. We pass on, wondering what the end shall be, but when we get a glimpse of him and hear him say, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me," we then mount up on wings as eagles, and run and are not weary. Like Paul we seem then almost to be caught up to the third heaven, and exclaim, My Lord and my God! When we can feel him thus nigh we rejoice in the Lord, and our mouth is filled with laughter and our tongue with singing. In old time is was said, "The Lord hath done great things for them. The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." Then we can say, The Lord is my strength and my song; the Lord is my life and my light; his praise shall dwell on my tongue. We are glad in the way the Lord has led us, and in the power of his might we are strong. At such times our love is increased, and we can say with the psalmist, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul."

This is something of the way in which I have been led of late; I fain would do better if I could; the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. I am seventy-five years of age to-day. I have been much comforted in reading the word and "The Christ-man in type." Hymn number 1302 (Beebe's collection) expresses my mind. May the Lord bless you.

Your brother,

D. S. ELLIOTT.

CENTERBURG, Ohio, Feb. 1, 1907.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —BELOVED KINDRED IN CHRIST:—If one so unworthy may be allowed to thus address you. I have received February 1st

number of the SIGNS and have just read Elder Durand's words of comfort, also brother T. R. Pittman's letter on Revelation xiii. 8. For one I feel to say, Amen, and praise the dear Lord that such a blessed medium of correspondence is upheld by our heavenly Father for the comfort of poor, tried and tempted ones. Elder Durand was baptized in the month of June, 1864, my poor, unworthy self in August of the same year. Though I have never heard his natural voice, I feel that many have been his words of comfort through our family paper, the SIGNS, and I can say with him, Many changing scenes have I passed through. My thoughts are much upon my unworthiness in the sight of the pure and holy God our Father, and I ask myself, Am I a child, or not? If I could travel along with worldly institutions I would be alarmed indeed; but while I feel so averse to the amusements and entertainments of this world, and especially the religious (or so-called) institutions, I feel that I am blessed to see a small portion of the workings of the "beast," and the prophecies being fulfilled, we read about their smoke. If I am not deceived, this smoke has drawn many tears from my eyes when I have had to behold the many things that are coming upon us. Yes, many tears and many heartaches have I endured because of this; but I know the Scriptures must be fulfilled, and it is in God's hand to do all his pleasure with his own; and when I fully realize there is not even a shadow of turning with him, I try to be reconciled to his divine will, fully believing that he is able to do his work without the help of poor, weak man. He is my strength and righteousness, if I have any; I know he will perform the good work until the day of Jesus Christ.

As I had to write you on business my mind was led to say these few things; I wanted to tell you I have much use for the Old Testament Scriptures. If I could write there is much I think of I would like to speak about, but owing to my inability and weakness I will not trouble you with my imperfections.

Your unworthy sister, in hope,

SARAH C. BOYD.

LEXINGTON, N. Y., Jan. 29, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find five dollars; two dollars for a renewal of my subscription to the dear SIGNS, the rest to the contribution fund. I do not feel as if I could do without the SIGNS, as it is a great comfort to me, and I do not understand how any Old School Baptist can do without it. I am sure it is not the price, for they can afford to take other papers; but if I only can have one paper to read, give me the dear SIGNS. I call it dear, for it is dear to me. I have never been given any gift for writing or speaking about spiritual things, but sometimes I feel as if I had been given an ear to hear, which is a great blessing to me.

Yours in christian love,

(MRS.) EDWARD GRIFFIN.

NOTICE.

THE OLD PATHS DEFENDED

Is the title of a pamphlet now being published, containing letters and extracts from many of our oldest and most able ministers and Primitive Baptist editors in the United States on the innovations of the day. Also historical sketches, &c., showing how our people have ever regarded the inventions and practices of the worldly religionists. Price, 25 cents per copy; $2.00 per dozen. Send to

JOHN M. NORMAN.

MOULTRIE, Colquitt, Co., Ga.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1907.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PSALMS XII. 1; ISAIAH LVIII. 1.

SISTER Mary A. Haines, of Kenilworth, N. J., has called our attention to two expressions, one found in Psalms xii. 1, and the other in Isaiah lviii. 1. The first reads, "Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth," and the other, "Cry aloud, spare not." Our sister does not say in her letter why these two Scriptures are at the same time in her mind.

In reply we will say, first, that there is no contradiction between the first, which is a prayer of the writer of the Psalm, and the second, which is a command from God to his servants. Both relate to a state of alienation from God, which to the psalmist caused grief and distress and fear, and to God gave offense and displeasure. It is good when that which is offensive to God is also offensive to ourselves; in this appears our union and fellowship with God. There are blessings pronounced in the word upon those to whom the reproach of Zion is a burden, and the reproach of Zion, or that which causes her to be a reproach, is always her transgression.

In this twelfth Psalm the writer deplores the vanity of the people, their deceitfulness, the pride which was apparent in their mouths, their disregard for the commandments of the Lord, speaking loftily against his authority, their oppression of the poor and the needy and the increase of the numbers of wicked men because the vilest of men are exalted. All this evil appeared in Israel, the chosen people of God. All such vile things might be expected among the nations that knew not God, but how vile, passing all conception, must they be who, having God's laws and his prophets and teachers among them, and claiming to be the Lord's own heritage, could yet indulge in all the ungodly practices named in the Psalm and quoted above.

The writer of the Psalm sees all these things with grief, he deplores them with all his heart, he abhors them and laments his association with such ungodly men, and in his distress he is driven to prayer. We may not doubt that he had warned and reproved and rebuked faithfully those who were guilty of all these things, but, so far as he could see, to no avail. After all his faithful warning and rebuking of them they still went on in their ungodliness. In his trouble and indignation against all these things he is driven to turn to God as the only source of help; God alone could give true repentance, both of heart and life, to the people. He implied in his prayer a confession of his own inability to turn the people from this their folly by any exhortation or effort of any kind of his own; he had planted and watered, but must learn that God only could give the increase.

We learn from this Psalm, and from the words to which our sister has called special attention, that in times of declension the Spirit of God alone can revive the work of God. We also learn that all who are truly spiritual will mourn at the departures of those who have named the name of the Lord, and we learn that

through bitter experience we come at last to see that in God alone is our help, and so the cry is heard, "Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth." How sorrowful to see those who did run well departing or dallying by the way. How sad to find such as these apparently deaf to all entreaties and exhortations by the faithful servants of God. How such things discourage the heart of a faithful pastor, and often cause him to feel that his ministry is in vain. Such a faithful servant at such times will be put upon great searchings of heart to see whether he has been faithful to set the right example as well as to preach. What great fears that servant will have lest as Paul also feared after having preached the gospel to others he himself should be a castaway. How that faithful servant will be compelled to come again and again to God, laying the case before him and asking for personal grace to be faithful in his testimony, and then to walk in the way, as well as to point it out. How often he will fear that his preaching has not been faithful, and then that his life has not measured up to that which he enjoins. It was not without reason that Paul said to Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine." Thyself first, and then the doctrine. It is sure that a man cannot be a good minister of Jesus Christ unless first of all he himself be a good man. The grace of God lives in men before it lives in their preaching. All this view of self, and of the coldness and ungodliness of Israel, led the psalmist to the prayer of the text. Whatever might be the result with the people, it was a good place for the psalmist himself to be in.

The people of God are just as much exposed to being led away by the deceitfulness of sin to-day as they were then. Not only did literal Israel thus depart, but spiritual Israel also has often thus gone astray. We need not go to the ranks of false religionists to find all these evil things, we shall find them in the true Israel. All these things did indeed exist in all the heathen religions of that day, but it was to Israel only that the psalmist was looking with such earnest crying to God for them. Among Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Romanists, all these things of evil are found, and indeed they belong to them; but this does not concern the godly man so much, it is when these things appear among Old School Baptists that the truly spiritual will be troubled. Has godliness ceased in any degree among us? Do the faithful fail among us? Are any among ourselves speaking vanity, and using flattering words, and acting with a double heart? Is there flattery or falsehood (for all flattery is falsehood) and pride in the speech of any of us? Are any of us saying by our practice that we have the right to dictate to others, and that none have any right to call in question whatever we may say or do? Are any of us causing the poor to be oppressed and the needy to sigh? These are the things which marked the ungodliness of that time, and against which the psalmist warned the people, and because of which he entreated the help of God. It is a solemn question, Have we, any of us, life enough in our hearts to even deplore these evils when they are found, and to cry to God for help that they no longer may prevail? The gracious answer of God in the Psalm is, "For the oppression of the poor [or because of the oppression of the poor], for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him." This word "puffeth" means

literally to blow with the mouth, as one who would blow away some trifling thing, and the thought is that God will protect those who are, in the sight of these ungodly men, of so little weight that a blow of the mouth would drive them away. God cares for these who are of no account to the ungodly, and from this gracious answer of the Lord the psalmist draws consolation, and faith springs into lively exercise, and his confession is, "The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever." How earnest and pitiful the cry! How instant the gracious answer! How confident the faith springing forth to receive the answer!

Now there is no contradiction between the prayer of the Psalm and the commandment in the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah. It is not probable that the same time is referred to in both places, but the connection shows that much the same condition of things existed when both the psalmist and the prophet wrote. In both cases iniquity abounded in the land. In the one case the psalmist turned to God in prayer (so we need not doubt that prayer also was in the heart of the prophet to God); in the one case the prayer is made prominent; in the other case the word of the Lord, and the commandment of the Lord to proclaim it, is made the more prominent. But we may be sure that he who prays to God will also warn and rebuke and reprove. On the other hand, he who warns and reproves according to God's command, will also be found often in prayer. Prayer and preaching go hand in hand; if there be no praying there can be no spiritual preaching. He who seeks to deliver God's word must and will find that he needs God's strength to deliver it in, and he who is benefited by the word of God is that man who so feels the need of it and realizes the blessedness of it that he will have a heart to pray for it. One of God's ways of answering the prayer for help against the inroads of all ungodliness will be to stir up the hearts of his servants to cry mightily against it. So the prophet was bidden to cry aloud and to spare not; it was his duty to shew the people of God their sins and transgressions. Is the heart of any servant of God exercised, as was that of the psalmist, to cry for help against the prevailing carelessness and ungodliness among the people of the Lord, then also the heart of that one will feel the power of the word which says, "Cry aloud, and spare not," declare to the people their sins. Exhortation and warning to the ungodly are the breath of which prayer to God is the life. Prayer against sin which does not lead to warning against that same sin is but a lifeless form indeed, and warning against sin which has not come out of a heart that cries to God for help against it is as the Dead Sea fruit, which is said to be fair in the eyes, but in the lips only dust and ashes. God has thus joined these two things together in his word, and these two texts to which sister Haines has called attention clearly set forth these solemn and gracious truths. C.

LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

Our supply of the large type cloth Hymn Books is exhausted, and we have only a few copies of the large leather binding (blue marbled edge), which we will mail as long as they last at $1.50 each. We will not be able to fill large orders for these books, but can supply any number desired of the small type Hymn Book.

THE SPIRITUAL AND FIGURATIVE MEANINGS OF THE WORD.

BECAUSE sometimes we have heard these two words confounded, and have seen the thoughts of some confused regarding them, we feel like briefly calling attention to the difference between them.

The word of God in the Bible is not all figurative language, but it is all spiritual, and that portion which is figurative is no more spiritual than that which is not spoken in a figure of speech. When it was said, "Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone," the language is figurative, because the person and work of the man Christ Jesus is compared to a stone, and the thought is that as a stone is solid, abiding, and not subject to decay, so Christ is the sure refuge and salvation of his people. This language is both figurative and spiritual. But when just below it is said, "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake," that is not figurative, but it is just as spiritual as the other words quoted above. We refer to these texts as instances in point; the whole Bible presents spiritual things, but those spiritual things are sometimes presented in figurative language and sometimes in plain terms. When Paul said, "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death," he was using figurative language, but when the word was spoken, "Arise, and be baptized," it was no figure of speech, but just plain, direct language; yet these last words were spiritual as well as the former. When we have through figurative language come to see the plain meaning of the Holy Spirit in the words, we have come to see what the spiritual meaning is. It is easy to run into a false spiritualization of the word, which is contrary to the mind of God in giving the word. For instance, "Husbands, love your wives," and, Wives, be obedient to your own husbands, are exhortations to believing husbands and wives in the relation which they occupy to each other. It would be an entire perversion of the meaning of the Holy Ghost to interpret these exhortations to mean that Christ must love the church, his bride, and the church must obey Christ, her Husband. Both these things are most graciously true, but they are entirely foreign to the texts named. The texts are spiritual as they are, and it would be a false spiritualization to thus pervert them from the true mind of the Spirit. They are spiritual exhortations of the apostle, but they are not in any sense figurative.

In our desire to gather the spiritual meaning of the word of God, and to present that, we must not ignore the literal meaning. We must not forget, for instance, that the Red Sea was literally divided; that the great fish did swallow Jonah and then cast him out on dry land again; that the three Hebrew children were literally in the furnace and came out unhurt; that this literal world was created by the word of God; that Jesus was literally born of the virgin Mary; that he lived as a man among men; that he did the literal miracles that are recorded of him; that he died literally, and rose again from the dead literally, and ascended at last in the presence and sight of many disciples until a cloud received him out of their sight. All these things were literal facts, and are recorded as such, and they all exhibited the sovereignty of God over natural things as well as over the realms above, so that they declare the glory of the wisdom and power of God in and of themselves. These, all of them, were the work of God, who is a Spirit, and it is just because they were done literally that they can

and do present to our view the higher spiritual things of the kingdom of God. The last and crowning miracle of the blessed Savior before he was betrayed into the hands of sinners was the raising of Lazarus from the dead. We love to see in this the evidence and the emblem of the resurrection of the sinner dead in sin to divine life. But it must be remembered that had not Lazarus been raised from the dead literally, this one evidence that our Savior is the resurrection and the life would have been wanting, and there would have been one less proof that he is able at the last day to raise the dead from their graves.

It has been well said that where there is no substance there can be no shadow, but it is equally true that there is a shadow, and in the shadow we can see the form and reality of the substance. Let us indeed look to the substance chiefly, but let us not ignore the shadow. It is most blessedly true that healing from sin is that which is chief of the works of the Lord, yet when Jesus healed the sick, literally, it was also full evidence of his divine power, and it was also a special blessing to those who were healed in body. Let us wonder at the glorious emblems and figures of the spiritual work of God, and contemplate them earnestly and long, because they testify of that which shall abide forever. C.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906, &c.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by E. A. Johnson.)

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Black Rock Church, May 15th, 16th and 17th, 1907, to the several churches of which this Association is composed, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the providence and tender mercies of God we have been spared and permitted to meet together as an association once more, for which we would be thankful, and if it is the Lord's will, try and write what is commonly called a Circular Letter, hoping that the Lord's hand will direct and guide us in all truth, for his name's sake, for we know and feel what weak worms of the dust we are; cannot do anything good, much less write comfortingly to his people.

We desire to call attention to Matthew viii. 11: "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." Who are these people that shall come from the east and west? Jesus says "many shall come." Are they not that great multitude which no man could number that John saw, that came out of great tribulation and had washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, Christ Jesus, who brings us to the banqueting-house, whose banner over us is love? and is it not love that brings us to this banqueting-house today; love for the brethren, love to hear the gospel proclaimed, love to hear Christ and him crucified preached as the only Savior of poor sinners? Is it not a blessed privilege to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the rest of God's people, in the kingdom of heaven, and to know the Lord, whom to know is

life eternal? Jesus says, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." Have we that life? Is it not our desire to have that life above all things? In 1 John iii. 14, we find these words: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." That is a comforting assurance to us, for if we are not deceived in our poor hearts we do love the brethren, and love to meet with them upon occasions like this; it is like sitting down in the kingdom of heaven, where all is peace and love, and do not our hearts burn within us as they talk to us about things pertaining to the kingdom? These are bright seasons for us, like oases in the midst of the desert, bright spots along our pathway. We hope these meetings may continue to be held in their time and place, and that we may all have our spiritual strength renewed, and be able to say, It was good to be there.

WILLIAM GRAFTON, Moderator.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, in session with our sister church at Black Rock, Baltimore County, Md., sendeth love in the Lord to the churches and associations with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Shall we address you with unfeigned love? We greatly desire to do so, but how can we realize that we do? The evidence can only come from the burning in our hearts when we see the faces of your messengers and the love that beams in their faces and shines from their burnings, whence your messengers and messages of love, and our fellowship is strengthened, and we greatly desire your love and fellowship, all brought about by the grace of God.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Harford Church, when and where we hope to meet your messengers again.

WILLIAM GRAFTON, Moderator.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, May 15th, 1907, at the home of the bride's parents, at Wagram, Va., E. Reuben Fooks, of Wicomico County, Md., and Miss Mattie J. Satchel, of Accomac County, Va.

By Elder H. C. Ker, in Fishkill-on-the-Hudson, May 16th, 1907, Bertram S. Decker, of Fishkill, N. Y., and Miss Arabella S. Hawkins, of Highview, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MY father, **Ira Phelps,** died April 6th, 1907, being 96 years and 8 days old. He had been a subscriber to your paper almost from its first publication, and he felt he could not do without it. Because of failing eyesight he had been unable to read it for the past few years, but I would read it to him. He has often written for the paper, and his experience has been published in it. He was a firm believer in the Primitive Baptist views, and felt it was the only true church on earth. He was the last remaining of his family, and the youngest; there were two brothers and one sister who lived to be over eighty years of age; one sister died in infancy. He was born in Gray, Bradford Co., Pa, in the year 1811. He was the father of six children, three dying in infancy; one daughter, my half-sister, died in her twenty-sixth year, and only a half-sister in Ohio and myself are left. He was a great sufferer for many years, but his remarkable energy and perseverance were a surprise to all. He would walk to his church, seven miles distant, and stay over night with the brethren and come back next day, when over eighty. He clung to life strongly, and dreaded to meet the final change, often praying Jesus, if it could be right, that he might live awhile longer, but would add, if not consistent with his will, that the Lord's will be done. He said he knew he was a sinner, and had been all his life; that he was not fit to live or die, and how could such as he stand before Purity? often saying that it had been hope and fear all through. He hated to leave me alone, as we had no kindred within a thousand miles, and I, being an old, crippled woman nearly sixty, having to get around with crutches, did not know how I would get along. But at the last he was willing, and desired to go. He had his reason until almost the last, but could not talk. He had previously made all possible arrangements for

his burial, and desired Elder David Johns to preach his funeral sermon.

LAVERA REARDON.

STARKE, Fla., May 20, 1907.

[THE following is a clipping from one of his home newspapers.—ED.]

Ira Phelps, one of the oldest residents of Bradford County, died Saturday afternoon, April 6th, 1907, at his home east of Starke, of arterio-sclerosis, or hardening of the arteries. He had been confined to his bed one week, although he had been quite feeble for several years. For an extended period he had been affected with dropsy. Had Mr. Phelps lived a little more than three years longer he would have been one hundred years of age. He was born March 29th, 1811. Coming to the vicinity of Starke about twenty years ago, he strove hard to make a living, and even during the last four or five years succeeded in doing this, although he was greatly handicapped on account of his wretched physical condition. Hardly more than able to move about, Mr. Phelps maintained a truck patch about his home, and this to a great extent provided a living for him and his daughter, Mrs. Reardon, with whom he lived. Ira Phelps was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, near Starke. He was a christian, was honest and industrious, and was well liked by all persons with whom he was acquainted. Mr. Phelps was reserved and conservative. On coming to Starke, twenty years ago, he took up his residence with his daughter, Mrs. L. Reardon. He lived a consecrated, christian life, and did unto others as he would have them do unto him. The strong characteristics of his life were sobriety, honesty, industry and patience. He was to be found daily at his employment until about four years ago, since which time he was confined to his room to a great extent. It was not until a few days previous to his death, however, that he found it necessary to take to his bed.

The remains were interred in Crosby cemetery.

Mrs. Mary Matilda Cole, widow of brother F. M. Cole, a former member of Mt. Zion Church, in Loudoun County, died at her home in Loudoun Co., Va., April 9th, 1907, aged about 65 years. Mrs. Cole was a daughter of Mr. Wm. Dodd, of Loudoun County, Va. She was married to brother Cole in February, 1866. She became the mother of five children, four daughters and one son, and while the most of these were yet in tender years she was left a widow, a number of years ago. She was a devoted and exemplary wife, and was also a competent and faithful mother to her children. It can truthfully be said of them all that they are ornaments to the society in which they move, and an honor to their mother, to whom they were peculiarly devoted. Mrs. Cole never made a public profession of the faith which was in her, and which was her stay and support during the weeks of her great suffering, and in the triumph of which she died. She had been a lover of the truth for many years, always attending Old School Baptist meetings when able to do so, and no others. A lack of all confidence in herself and a sense of unworthiness kept her back, like multitudes of others, from the ordinances of the church, which we have great reason to believe she loved. She was evidently baptized with the Holy Ghost, and her last days were in sweet and precious communion with her God, as the end seemed clearly to show. Besides her children she leaves one brother and two sisters with their families and many relatives and friends to mourn their loss in her departure. May God comfort the mourners.

ALSO,

Mrs. Julia A. Lewis died at her residence, "Rosemont," near Manassas, Va., April 22nd, 1907, aged about 79 years. In the death of sister Lewis the little company, the membership and congregation of Bethlehem Church, near this place, have sustained a severe loss. For two or three years past sister Lewis has been deprived of the privilege of meeting with the church by reason of the dread disease, consumption, of which she had been the victim for many years, but we knew her heart was with us, and her interest in the welfare of the church remained unabated. She was one of those gentle souls whose unselfish devotion to duty, whether to her brethren, to her family or to the community in which she lived, or to any who came under the sweet influence of her gentle ministrations, renders the term by which we love to designate them, "mothers in Israel," peculiarly appropriate. I believe sister Lewis was baptized by Elder Samuel Trott, probably nearly a half century ago. I have not access to dates. My acquaintance with her and her dear family dates back to 1877, and I can testify to the truth of my words. She has been a dear mother to me, a friend and helper indeed. I must pay this personal tribute to her memory. She said to me as I stood by her bed two days before she died, "I want to go." She could not speak above a whisper. Her death seemed a fitting close to her life; without a struggle, quietly and peacefully she fell asleep, "asleep in Jesus," we must believe. The death of her husband, brother Lewis, several years ago, was a heavy stroke to her, for she was a devoted wife. She bore her sorrow in meek submission to the divine will, as also her bodily sufferings of the last weary years of her life she endured without complaint or murmuring. She leaves four sons and two daughters, all worthy children of a worthy mother, together with one brother, I believe, her brethren in Christ, many relatives and friends, and the entire community, who witness to her real christian character and life among them, to grieve because of her departure.

J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., May 27, 1907.

George W. Guernsey, of East Cobbleskill, Schoharie Co., N. Y., entered into rest March 1st, 1907, aged about 68 years. Mr. Guernsey was a member of the Old School Baptist Church at Schoharie Hill. His parents were John and Eve Hoose Guernsey, the father being also a member of the same church. There was a large family of them, a sturdy race, industrious, strong characters, and intellectually bright and vigorous. The mother was an aunt of Dr. James H. Hoose, who a quarter of a century ago was one of the educational leaders in the Empire State. Mr. Guernsey was reared on his father's farm, near East Cobbleskill, attended the district school, and afterwards the seminaries at Charlotteville and Warnerville, in his native county. He afterwards taught in the public schools of that locality. After the Civil war broke out he enlisted with the 134th Regiment of New York Volunteers, took part in the battle of Gettysburg, and was severely wounded while in action in the wheat field during the second day of the fight. After he had recovered from his wound he joined the army in the west, and was captured by the Confederates and lodged in Andersonville prison. After his return home he married Iantha Cole, daughter of Elder Loren P. Cole, of Conesville, N. Y., and established himself on a farm near East Cobbleskill, where he continued to reside until the time of his death. Through industry, intelligence and good management, he achieved success in his chosen occupation, a vocation which he regarded as one of the noblest. Six children were born to them, five of whom are living. Mr. Guernsey took a great interest in educational affairs, and was especially interested in the education of his children. Mr. Guernsey was baptized by Elder Balas Bundy some thirty years ago, and became a member of the church at Schoharie Hill. He performed an active part in the affairs of the Old School Baptist Church, tenaciously adhering to all the tenets of its faith. He was rarely absent from church service, and was regular in his attendance at the yearly meetings and the associations, greeting and entertaining the brethren with a hearty good will and hospitality. He was clerk of his own church for some twenty years, and at the time of his death was, and had been for a considerable time, clerk of the Lexington Association. He was a big-hearted, kindly man, who seldom refused a favor either to his family or a friend. He was a steadfast friend, enduring as adamant. Loren C., the eldest of his children, died in the spring of 1902, while engaged in educational work in the Philippine Islands. Of the remaining members of his family, Iantha, his wife, a woman of high character and intelligence, Dr. Rosco Guernsey, of Columbia University, Mrs. Elma Aker, of Howes Cave, N. Y., Valetta, of Stamford, N. Y., Grover C. and Cecil, of East Cobbleskill, survive and mourn the loss of him who, after life's fitful fever, sleeps so well.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder R. W. Sanford, Elder Clark, his pastor, being unable to be present on account of sickness. Interment in the Cobbleskill Rural cemetery.

WILLETT A. BAKER.

Fred Burch was born in Stokes County, N. C., Oct. 15th, 1817. At the age of ten years he moved with his parents, Charles and Elizabeth Burch, to the State of Indiana, where he resided until his death. He died of old age at the home of his son, Charles F. A. Burch, in Monroe County, Ind., July 27th, 1906, aged 88 years, 9 months and 12 days, in the full triumph of faith in Christ, believing in the absolute sovereignty and foreknowledge of God, and the predestination of all things, giving praise to the King of kings and Lord of lords. Dec. 28th, 1837, he was married to Margaret Carmichael, to which union eleven children were born; two of these died in infancy. On March 13th, 1870, he was again married, to Elizabeth Carmichael. He had thirty grandchildren, forty-four great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild. He was a member of the Old School Baptist Church forty-five years, always having full confidence in the promises of God, and was highly respected and beloved by all. A father in Israel has fallen; his labors are ended, his life's work is done; he is not, for God has taken him. He leaves five children in Missouri, besides many grandchildren. The children requested me to preach to his memory, which I did on the second Sunday in October, 1906, at the Mt. Pleasant meeting-house, in Nodaway County, Mo. Text used, 2 Corinthians i. 2. A very large and attentive congregation was present. I have also been called upon to preach one daughter's funeral and three of the grandchildren's.

ALSO,

Rowland Lewis Hutchinson, son of Lemuel and Mary Francis Hutchinson, died Dec. 27th, 1906, at the home of his father, in the city of Hopkins, Nodaway Co., Mo., aged 23 years and 22 days. He was born Dec. 5th, 1883, and died in the full triumph of living faith. Although not a member of the church militant, we have every reason to believe he was a member of the church of which the Savior of sinners said, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," as he left us every evidence that he had been with Jesus, and that his heirship is incorruptible, undefiled and unfading. Never was he heard to murmur or complain. The disease which caused his death was consumption. He took great interest in the Old School Baptist meetings, and desired baptism in their fellowship, but affliction and surrounding circumstances prevented. His father and mother were members of the Three Forks of Nodaway Church, his mother having gone several years, and his grandparents on both sides having gone before and having lived and died in the faith of God's elect. He leaves his father,

three younger brothers, grandmother and Aunt Laura and many other dear relatives to mourn his absence, but we mourn in hope that we shall all be gathered when the last trump for us shall sound to call us home to God.

His funeral sermon was delivered on the second Sunday in April, 1907, by the writer, pastor of the church, to a large congregation. Text used, last two verses of the fourth chapter of 2 Corinthians and first verse of fifth chapter.

R. M. SIMMONS.

HOPKINS, Mo.

G. T. Blevins was born in Dade County, Ga., Nov. 25th, 1857, died Sept. 1st, 1906. He moved with his father to Tarrant County, Texas, about 1875; was married to Miss Mary Bird, July 4th, 1880. To this union were born ten children, nine of whom are living. Deceased was baptized by Elder A. D. Bourland in the fellowship of Denton Creek Church of Old School Baptists on the first Sunday in June, 1893, and was ordained deacon of same church on Saturday before the first Sunday in May, 1903. Our dear brother was a stanch believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and that God is a sovereign and works all things after the counsel of his own will, and that whatsoever God does is right, because it is God that doeth it. In all his afflictions, which at times were excruciating in the extreme, being eighteen months subjected to the surgeon's knife in the treatment for cancer, and amid all the dark hours our brother was sustained by grace, and enabled to sing hymns of praise to the worthy name of his Redeemer, but O how he did long toward the close of his pilgrimage to depart and be with his Lord, although saying he desired to be submissive to the will of his Master, and that his afflictions, though severe, were for a purpose, and that God is too good to be unkind. Surely in the calling of this brother home our little church has suffered a great loss. He was deep in doctrine, sound in the faith, charitable, ever ready to lend a helping hand to God's humble poor. In our little church meetings his seat is vacant, his voice is hushed in death, and we cannot hear him lead in singing praise to his heavenly Master; but we mourn not as those having no hope, for we believe our loss is his gain, and that the dear Lord has called him home to his reward, that inheritance that fadeth not away. He often admonished his wife, who was baptized at the same time with him, to stand firm in the doctrine of God our Savior; to teach their children honesty and uprightness, to love one another and to obey her. May Israel's God guide us into all truth, and give us grace sufficient for our day and time, and may he make a way of escape in our every temptation, is the prayer of your unworthy brother,

W. S. BOURLAND.

VERNON, Texas, May 9, 1907.

Mrs. Mary E. Davenport departed this life Wednesday, March 20th, 1907, at the home of her niece, Miss Addie M. Derby, near Howells, Orange Co., N. Y., aged 76 years. She had been in failing health for some time, and was very ill for three weeks before the end came. She was born in the town of Wallkill and spent her life in the vicinity of where she died. Her parents were Daniel and Julia Carpenter Derby. She was of a family of seven children, two brothers and one sister of whom survive: De Witt D., of Howells, Isaac, of Orange, N. J., and Kate, wife of Henry Knox, of Kansas. One son, Theodore, of Chadron, Neb., also survives her. The late John Derby, of Howells, Dr. W. C. Derby, of Ellenville, and Addie C., wife of Theodore W. Decker, of Pine Bush, have passed away within a few years. Sister Davenport united with the Middletown and Wallkill Old School Baptist Church many years ago, and remained a faithful member to the end of her life here. She loved the cause of Christ, the companionship of saints and the doctrine of grace. Her niece, at whose home she died, was faithful and kind to her for many years, depriving herself of much pleasure that she might be with her aunt to minister to her wants, and in so doing she ministered unto Jesus.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer, and was largely attended.

May grace, peace and comfort attend the pathway of all who mourn.

K.

Charles Burton Fraser was born at Otisville, N. Y., Dec. 3rd, 1888. His father, Schuyler Fraser, died while this son was a baby, and his mother, Nellie Easton Fraser, the dearly loved daughter of James and Elizabeth Corwin Easton, died ten years ago, leaving her two sons to the care of their grandparents. It is in loving memory of a rare and beautiful personality that these lines are written, in a full knowledge of the splendid inheritance of character and mental ability from an honored ancestry, which Charlie Fraser possessed. The spinal trouble which made his life a constant battle for health developed very early, and he soon became an object of added interest to his relatives and friends because of his brave spirit and cheerful disposition. As a small boy his tastes were all for manly sports. In his many illnesses nothing pleased him better or seemed to help him more than for his friends to read him stirring stories of warfare or adventure, and Cooper's Indian stories were a never-ending source of delight. As he grew older he became an apt student, doing wonderfully well for the odds he fought against, and some of the pleasant recollections of the writer's life are of the days when Charlie was feeling well and was busy with his school work. Always bright, and making the best of everything, he put to shame the complaints of those possessing health and strength. He was a manly, truthful, honest boy, and these

qualities grew in him with years. He had been for a long time attending to business matters for his grandfather, and had been taking a business course at Middletown. Not feeling very well, he went to his cousin's home at Dingmann's for rest and change, but was taken ill there on the 16th of May, and died on the morning of the 21st. Of his immediate family only one brother, James Easton Fraser, survives him. The sympathy of all who knew him goes out to his brother and his grandparents. He was peculiarly their care and comfort. Always busy, bright, cheerful, and intent on keeping up with the interests of the day, he was particularly helpful to his grandfather, who is troubled with cataract. He will be terribly missed in his home, but the memory of his bravery and reliance on a higher power is an inspiration to those who were so fortunate as to know him intimately.

The funeral services were held at his late home on Friday afternoon, May 24th, and Elder Ker, of Middletown, preached most helpfully. The public school was closed as a mark of respect and affection. Interment was at Howells, in the family plot.

A FRIEND.

Mrs. Mary Shields, our dear sister, died at her home in Macomb, Ill., Feb. 22nd, 1907, her age being 60 years, 1 month and 14 days. She was the daughter of Elder I. N. and Lucinda Vanmeter, and was born in Grayson County, Ky., Jan. 8th, 1847. In her tenth year she came with her parents to Illinois, where she has lived nearly all her life. She was married to Martin Shields Nov. 26th, 1868, and was the mother of seven children, six of whom, with her husband, survive. She united with the Old School Baptist Church called New Hope, in Warren County, Ill., in 1889, since which time she has been a firm, faithful and earnest member, beloved by the church and all who knew her. She had been in delicate health for many years, troubled with weak heart and lungs, but was up and around the house until about a week before her death, when she was taken with severe pleurisy, which with her other ailments soon finished her course, and on the night of February 22nd she quietly and peacefully fell asleep. She suffered very much for several days, and spoke but little, but near the end she told our aged mother and her children not to grieve for her, for she was ready to go. A sweet smile seemed to rest on her face in death, calling forth the remark, "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep." She was of a meek, quiet, humble disposition, always bemoaning her unworthiness, and often saying she had no hope except in what Christ had done for sinners. Salvation by grace alone was a precious doctrine to her. She greatly enjoyed the little meetings held from time to time at her house when she was unable to leave home. Beside her immediate family she leaves an aged mother, four brothers and three sisters, the church and many friends to mourn her departure, but we grieve not as those who have no hope, for we confidently believe that she "is not dead, but sleepeth," and in the glorious resurrection morn her body shall come forth, not in weakness and suffering, but clothed in immortality and in the likeness of Christ, and she shall be satisfied. O may our faith embrace this precious truth, and may we be enabled by divine grace to so live that when we are called away we can say, I am ready.

On Sunday evening, Feb. 25th, she was laid beside our dear father and sister Susie in Oakwood cemetery, at Macomb.

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

MACOMB, Ill.

Mary J. Swart died May 24th, 1907, at the ripe old age of 85 years, at the residence of her son, Samuel A. Swart, 226 S. Second Ave., Mt. Vernon, N. Y. My mother was a stanch friend and a regular reader of your most excellent paper. She died in the faith. She was in the best of health until about a week before her death, when she was taken ill with bronchial pneumonia, but fortunately did not suffer during her sickness, and went to sleep peacefully.

Funeral services at Margaretville, N. Y., Sunday, May 26th.

S. A. SWART.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Thos. W. Records, Mo., $1.00; Nancy Stathers, W. Va., $3.00; Mrs. D. Baker, Md., $.50; M. J. Campbell, Md., $1.00; S. F. Gandy, N. J., $1.00.—Total, $6.50.

MEETINGS.

THE Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon will hold its next session with Sulphur Creek Church, the Lord willing, near Vern, Lewis County, Washington, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 14th, 15th and 16th, 1907, commencing at 10 o'clock a. m. Those going by railroad will go to Tacoma, Wash., there change to the Tacoma & Eastern, which leaves Tacoma at 8 o'clock a. m., arrives at Tilton at 1 o'clock p. m. Those going should be at Tilton Thursday evening before the meeting, where they will be met and conveyed to the places of entertainment.

N. J. SHANK, Clerk.

THE Lord willing, the yearly meeting of the Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held in the schoolhouse in the township of Brooke, Lambton Co., Ontario, five miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1907, and continuing two days. Our pastor, Elder D. M.

Vail, has promised to meet with us. Brethren of our faith are cordially invited to meet with us.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

THE Andes and Middletown Old School Baptist churches, the Lord willing, will hold a two days meeting at Arena, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, June 26th and 27th, 1907. Those coming from the east or west will take the Ulster & Delaware train Wednesday morning, change at Arkville and take Delaware & Eastern to Arena. Meeting will commence at 11 o'clock a. m. Wednesday. We hope to meet our brethren there, and also extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Place of meeting is but a few minutes walk from Arena depot.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, in her seventy-sixth annual session, at the residence of brother Doty Varnes, five miles southeast of Farmington, Fulton Co., Ill., on Friday, August 30th, 1907, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue the two following days. Those coming from north of Farmington must come Thursday evening, where they will be met; those coming from south of Farmington will change to the Iowa Central for Cramer on Thursday afternoon, where they will be met. Those from south of Galesburg will come to Abingdon on the C., B. & Q., change to the Iowa Central at 4:36 p. m. Those from Galesburg and the north will take the Interurban at 3:30 p. m. for Abingdon, where they will meet those from the south all bound for Cramer.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 75. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1907. NO. 13.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., April 28, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have had some meditations upon the first Psalm. If it be the burden of the word of the Lord upon me causing me to think upon these things, all is well, but it is with fear and trembling that I attempt to write anything for publication. David was inspired to say at the beginning of the Psalm: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." In thinking of the old patriarchs and prophets we are prone to set them up above the saints of God of today, but when we are led by the Spirit to see Christ as the head and the church as the body, then we see the whole church, from the first child of God that lived upon earth to the last one that will be gathered home, standing upon the same common level, and each filling his or her place as members of the body of Christ and as members of the Lamb's wife. Thus David was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, as you and I are to-day, and as is every other member of the body; at times he was lifted up on the mountain top, and at other times he was down in the valley and in the belly of hell. It was therefore that he was able to write what would comfort the saints of God in all ages of the world.

What a comfort it is when he says, "Blessed is the man;" not that man will be blessed in some future time, or that he will be blessed because he does the things named below in the Psalm, but he is blessed in the doing of them. Dear kindred in Christ, have you not experienced this blessing when it has been your high privilege to resist the temptations that have been set before you by those who would lead you astray? There are many counselors standing on every side ready to throw out the net and entangle the feet of the upright in heart. In this great city of New York we have everything, from the worst gambling den to the little, petty things that the world calls sin, ready to draw in every one who will run after them. Some are kept from these things through shame, and some through the fear of hell, but the children of God, to whom he has been pleased to reveal his grace, are kept from these things by his almighty power and grace.

But the matter does not stop here. We have no reason to think that David was speaking of these things at all; but there are thousands of people who profess to be followers of the meek and lowly Savior who, like some of the Pharisees, will devise every means to persecute the church of Christ and offer every inducement to draw them away. These are said by the Savior himself to be the ungodly, the scornful and sinners. For he said to them, Depart from me into everlasting fire. True, we are all sinners, but we are told that he has washed us in his own blood and made us white; he said, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as wool." We are sinners in our own sight, but righteous in his sight; for when Jesus was nailed to the cross and cried, "It is finished," all the work was accomplished, and not one thing was left for the sinner to do to merit his salvation; the debt was paid, and the bride, the church, was safe in the love .of her Husband. There was no more need of burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin, for he said, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me." This proved that all the blood that was ever shed on Jewish altars could not atone for sin, but was only typical of that great sacrifice which should be offered, which was the Lord from heaven, who was clothed in flesh. There is still another thing which comes even closer to us, and that is this flesh of ours. There is a constant warfare between the flesh and the Spirit. Temptations and evil thoughts beset us day by day, and we groan and mourn, being burdened with them, so that we cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But when we are lifted up above all these things of the world, of which I spoke, and the plague of our own hearts, we rejoice and say with David, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly." We see and know by experience that in our carnal nature we have scorned the things that pertain to godliness, and being lifted up above these things for a moment we learn how blessed we are, and are made to thank God, not as did the Pharisee, that we are better than other men, but that by his electing love and grace we have been shown better things, and that he has kept us from the evils and temptations that beset us on every side. Is not this a blessing beyond the power of poor, mortal man to express or conceive? People say and think that if a man does not drink, gamble, steal, kill and so on, or in other words, if he is what is called a moral man, he is not such a sinner as are those who do all or a part of the things named. True, in the sight of the law of the land he is not, and I admire the moral man and have great respect for him as a law-abiding citizen, but still in the sight of God we have account of but two ways: the right and the wrong way. The man who blasphemes the name of God, and the man who cries, Lo here and lo there is Christ, and who if possible would deceive the very elect, are alike sinners in the sight of God. This man, zealous for his religion, is just as vile a sinner as the most dissipated creature that ever lived on earth. These are hard sayings to the so-called followers of Christ, but to the true followers of the Lamb they are known to be true statements. This man's "delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night," says the psalmist. Do you not again and again ask yourselves the question, Is my delight in the law of the Lord? Why, one says, There

is much of my time that my mind is set on the things of this world, greedy for gain, thinking how to accumulate more of this world's goods. Is this not my delight? Yes, this is true with many of us. But let us examine ourselves and see if this is really our delight. After all, is it not our desire to walk in the light of his countenance, and as becometh saints of the living God? Is there any joy that excels this joy when it pleases the Lord to lift us up above the beggarly elements of this world, and we can say with David, "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock," and put a new song in my mouth, even praise to his name? Is not our delight in the name of the Lord, and do we not meditate in his law day and night? I do not think there is a day or night that passes in which the Lord's people do not have some meditations upon his law. Whether we are basking in the sunshine of his presence, or shut up in midnight darkness, we are thinking of his wonderful works and of his mysterious ways, and these meditations at times are sweet morsels under our tongue, while at other times they are as the gall of bitterness. But still we are blessed in all these things, for if asked, Would you give up the little hope that is within you? you would say, It matters not how bitter the gall I am drinking, and we, like the disciples, cannot go away, for we have nowhere else to go. These are like trees planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth their fruit in their season, and whose leaf shall not wither. If we plant a tree in dry earth where there is no water, it will die, but if we plant it by a river, where it can draw water which feeds and nourishes the life of the tree, it will bring forth fruit in its season and the leaves will flourish. Thus the man of God is planted by the river of life, which ever flows from the throne of God and the Lamb, and it is by this river that he lives, grows, flourishes and bears fruit to the glory of God in his season. If there is life in one there will also be some fruit. There has never been a tree of the Lord's planting that did not bear fruit, every one in his own order. The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff that the wind driveth away, therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. This is true of the characters of which I have been speaking. Men of the world are like chaff driven before the wind. We see this day by day, and, coming home to our own experience, like Solomon, we learn that all is vanity and vexation of spirit. All the air castles that we have built and the idols that we have set up fall and are carried away as the chaff before the wind, and the ungodly cannot stand in the congregation of the righteous. The followers of antichrist cannot stand in the congregation of the followers of Christ. Oil and water will not mix, so righteousness will not mix with unrighteousness. It matters not how dark the night, when the sun rises it disperses the darkness and it is day; so when the Sun of righteousness arises and shines upon us it matters not how dark and dreary the night has been, it is day in our souls. It is always day when he is shining upon us, but when he withdraws himself it is midnight to our souls. The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish. Yes, he knows every step that we take, and he leads us every moment. It is said of Jacob, The Lord found him in a waste howling wilderness, and led him about and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of his eye. Here

he finds every one of his people, and were it not for his presence and his pleasure to lead them out, there they would remain; but he leads them about and instructs them, he guides them every step, and at last brings them to his banqueting-house, and his banner over them is love. Is not this a most beautiful banner? O to think of the banner of God's love floating over poor, hell-deserving sinners such as we all are, is not this a blessing indeed?

But the ungodly shall perish, for John said on one occasion that his fan was in his hand, and that he would gather the wheat into the garner, but the chaff he would burn with fire unquenchable. What love to his people! O that I could praise him without ceasing for all these wonderful blessings.

Your brother,

JOHN L. HASTINGS.

HUNTER, N. Y., Jan. 3, 1907.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—May one so utterly unworthy be allowed to thus address you? Since my last attempt at writing I have been made to examine myself to see what was my motive in making the attempt. Although I felt my unworthiness and inability for years, and deferred from year to year to do so, yet since writing I have felt that perhaps I have deceived my brethren and sisters by so doing, for I feel that if they could know me, and see me as I see myself, they would have no fellowship for me; but if I know my own heart at all, I surely do have love and fellowship for them, and desire their fellowship, which I prize more than all other things on earth, and when reading their good letters I sometimes feel as though I could not be so far separated from them, for there seems such a dear nearness to them. Now while writing the words of this beautiful hymn drop into my mind:

"From whence doth this union arise,
That hatred is conquered by love?
It fastens our souls in such ties
As distance and time can't remove."

This is union of souls. What a blessed thing it is that the Savior said in his prayer, "That they may be one, even as we are one." If we feel the assurance that this nearness is in him, how can we help but rejoice and be glad? I cannot tell when I have had a season of such darkness and trials as I have had for the past three or four months; I have wondered why I have so many hard trials to endure, and so little grace to bear them. I awoke Christmas morning, and the light broke in, and I was made to see how prone I am to forget the mercies of God, and then I could weep and beg for grace to bear whatever trial I may meet by the way, and to realize that it is all sent for my good, and to trust that it is all for the glory of God; but these seasons are so short that I sometimes feel afraid they must be imaginary. Sometimes when I read, and rejoice so much in what I am reading, as soon as I close the book it is all gone, and I feel an aching void which the world cannot fill. Then at other times I feel so lonely and discontented that I will try to read, and there seems no beauty or life in what I am reading, and I cry out, O, is there any one like me? I know of a certainty that only for the strong hand of sovereign grace I should give up all. I often fear that I never have had anything real to give up, and certainly I never have had anything to give up, for I cannot give it up if I would; it holds me fast.

"He takes my soul ere I'm aware,
And shows me where his glories are."

And,

"My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this,
And sit and sing herself away
To everlasting bliss."

Never in all my life have I seen the emptiness of the world and of worldly things as I have this winter, and never have I felt so strong a desire to depart from it all and be at rest. I have felt sometimes as though the time was near at hand when I should

"Quit this house of clay,
And fly to unknown lands."

And now at this moment the words of the beautiful hymn come to my mind:

"Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty,
Hold me with thy powerful hand."

It is my desire to be held in that powerful hand, and to be led about and instructed, even as was Jacob. Greatly do I need this instruction, for I am so blind, and also so weak and lame that I cannot take one step in safety only as he leads me. I cannot see that I have ever taken one step forward, but rather backward. Instead of being any better, I see myself more and more miserable. When I hear others complain in the same way it gives me hope that through the mercy of the blessed Lord, who knows that I am only dust and nothing more, and who came to this earth manifest in the likeness of sinful flesh to suffer and bleed and die that we through his death might have life everlasting, I can but be still and say, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." Grant that I may be found worthy to stand among that happy number who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. O happy people, blessed in the assurance that Jesus Christ has wrought this salvation, and that they are not left to work it out for themselves. We are so poor and worthless, and our works come so far short of giving him the honor and glory due to his name for the matchless gift of his love, that we feel to owe all to him. What are our works for salvation in our own sight? And how can we expect or look for blessings from the holy God upon our works, which are of the earth earthy and all sinful? We have an example in the offerings of Cain and Abel. Abel offered by faith of the firstlings of the flock, and his offering was acceptable. Cain's offering was the fruit of his labor. So would an offering of our own works be, except we bring that which is wrought within us by the Spirit of Christ, and it is said that he works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. Even when trying to write, it seems at times a sin for me to make the attempt, and there are times when I feel that I am not fit even to call upon his name for mercy, though this winter I have found sweet relief when approaching the mercy-seat in prayer, and have felt that I was not sent empty away, and have received the blessing that I have sought for and desired so much. I have at times been made to say, Though it tarry long, yet will I patiently wait for it. Patience I sorely need, and also charity. O how empty I feel of all these blessed gifts. If my brethren could look into my heart I fear they could not cast the mantle of charity over my imperfections unless they have a greater gift of that blessed charitable spirit than I feel that I possess. I can say with the poet:

"Emptied of earth I fain would be,
Of sin, of self, of all but thee;
Reserved for Christ, that bled and died,
Surrendered to the Crucified."

Dear brethren, do with this letter as you please; I have thought to send it to you for some time, but have hesitated until now. I wish to be remembered by

you who hope for mercy in the same God whom you serve, and remember me at the throne of grace. Although I am not where I can join hands and voices with you, yet I sometimes feel a holy solemnity stealing over me, as though I were joining in giving of thanks with all the dear ones to his great name.

From a sister, saved by grace, if saved at all,

(MRS.) MARY FAULKNER.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., April 24, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Another year has passed, and I find that my subscription for the SIGNS is due, so inclosed you will find two dollars for its continuance. Like many others, I am separated from the brethren whom I love in the Lord, and the SIGNS contains all that I hear or ever see about the goodness of God to poor, helpless sinners. It tells of the God who loved us when we were dead in trespasses and in sin, and who gave his Son to die that we might live; it tells of a people saved by grace, who, being justified by faith, have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; it also tells of the trials and troubles and the doubts and fears of those who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world; it tells of a poor, lowly, despised little band, whose only hope is in the crucified and risen Redeemer, and who are patiently awaiting the day when they shall see him and be like him; and it tells of the patience and perseverance of those called to be saints all through this life, and of their triumphant deaths. All the above are one and the same people, and I love to read concerning them; sometimes my heart is filled to well-nigh bursting, and sometimes my eyes so filled with tears that I cannot see, but they are tears of joy and sweetness; not sweet because they came forth from such a sinful being as myself, but because our Father in heaven sanctified them for my good and his glory. I often find great relief in tears when they are occasioned by a heart overflowing with love and gratitude to God for a finished salvation, and I am not ashamed of them. I cannot praise him enough that I had nothing to do in it, for my will would conflict with his and my feet would refuse to follow in his footsteps. There is no life in me except that which is hidden with Christ in God. There is no goodness nor love abounding until I remember that he first loved me, and then the cry goes up, Make me better, dear Lord, and make me more thankful for all thy mercies. I wish many times that I could see all who write for our family paper, that I might take them by the hand and tell them how they have cheered my lonely pilgrimage, and how it has been a school to me in unfolding and explaining so many beautiful things, so beautiful that I feel constrained to say, A people taught of the Lord; no earthly influence could have thus directed their minds. I read the writings of our beloved editors, and I see such a spirit of love, of fairness and of meekness displayed that my heart goes out to them in love and admiration, and I think how favored they are to have been chosen to give us the tidings of such great things. I know, too, that it is not always that you are enabled to speak or write as you wish to do; I know that you have seasons of doubt and darkness, that you feel your leanness on many occasions, but it may be that it is a heathful condition after all; a helpful one I assure you, for your emptiness will be our fullness, your despondency our time for rejoicing. If there were no others tried as I am, if there was no other barrenness of soul, I

would have no encouragement to continue this warfare, but when I know of others whose robes seem so much whiter, whose lives seem so much more consecrated to His service, experiencing the same things that I do, I feel to understand and to appreciate as I never did before the saying at the same time, "Great is the mystery of godliness." I wish I could tell to all the brethren how I love them as such, and that I could write them what at times I feel it in my heart to say by way of encouragement, but when about to attempt it, it comes to me, Who are you, that you should essay to address those who are so superior in mental and spiritual attainments, especially concerning Him whose garment you are not worthy to touch? so I go to examining myself, and in so doing get away from God and his goodness, and see only my sins, my pollution and my insignificance. Where there is one who can write to the comfort and edification of the household, there are hundreds who cannot, so you who have the talent should continue to let it shine, that we may be built up and God glorified. It may be that they do not always tell of the good you are accomplishing, but way down in our heart of hearts we know it, also something of your great responsibility, and our prayers go up that you may be fed from his bounty, clothed with the robe of his righteousness, sustained by his grace, and spared in his mercy a long while yet to break to us the bread of life; in other words, to let fall from your lips and pens the words which are meat and drink to us.

My dear mother always wanted me to meet brother Durand, and I have desired to know him also. I could go clear down the line, but it would be tedious. It is this love which constrains me to believe that I have passed from death unto life, and causes hope to spring anew.

I read of Elder White's death with regret; I knew him, and like brother Badger, I loved him. The last sermon I heard preached was by him at sister Waddy's, in Georgetown, D. C., about six years ago. I wanted to have some conversation with him, but felt too unworthy to approach him. A good man has been called home, and though we sorrow, there must have been a very abundant entrance into that city whose builder and maker is God, and where sorrow and parting never come. Sister White has my sympathy, but I have never written her; I believe there is consolation only at the Fountain, and that he who has been her help will not desert her. Again, I felt that I could not point the way to one who had been brother White's companion for so many years—the companion of such a God-fearing, God-loving man.

But it may be that I am not writing profitably, so will close. We have had a cold, wet, dreary winter, but as in our spiritual life, the springtime never fails to come, and now there is gladness in all nature. My husband and I are alone; a few months back he was seriously sick, but was spared to me, for which I am very thankful; he remembers you kindly. I am thirty-five years older than when you knew me, but in and of myself not one whit better. If I have grown in grace, if I do more sincerely desire the things of his kingdom, if I have striven for that which makes for peace and harmony, if I love the Lord and his people, to him I must ascribe all praise and dominion and power, and he must make answer for me.

With much love for yourself and family, not forgetting brother Ker, I remain

your sister in hope, by and through the merits of One who is infinitely better and higher than I.

(MRS.) J. L. WRIGHT.

PINSONFORK, Ky., April 4, 1907.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I have just received and read a precious letter written by Elder J. E. Thornbury, of Ratcliff, Ky., which I hope you will publish in the dear old SIGNS for the comfort and encouragement of the Lord's humble poor. It is so consoling to me, a poor weakling, that I think it will comfort and rejoice the hearts of many others. O how consoling those blessed words of tenderness and love of our dear Redeemer, who spake as never man spake.

Yours in hope,

W. J. MAY.

RATCLIFF, Ky., March 31, 1907.

ELDER W. J. MAY—VERY DEAR AND PRECIOUS BROTHER IN LOVE AND GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP:—Your very comforting letter of the 26th inst. at hand, and read with much pleasure. No, you do not weary me with your writing. Your letters, though short, are always comforting and instructive, and appreciated by me. If you should only say, I still remember you, it would encourage me, yet I feel unworthy of such an endearing name as you call me: that of brother in the Lord. You speak of me as ably defending the doctrine of grace. O my dear brother, how can you say I am able in the ministry? If you only knew how weak I feel myself to be, and how unprofitable to the poor and afflicted children of God, you surely could not call me an able minister. I feel that any one who can preach at all is qualified to speak words of comfort to the edifying of God's poor and afflicted children more than I, yet there are times when I feel the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, and when a door of utterance is opened, it is sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. O how weak and helpless I am without his strong arm to support and strengthen me in time of trial and grief; his tender love and grace have kept me through all the afflictions and sorrows I have been called to pass, and his words verified that he would uphold and strengthen in time of need; why should we be so distrustful as we are, halting and shrinking at every step, if we realize these things in our experience? Yes, I know the Lord rules, not only in heaven, but among the inhabitants of earth, and does his will in his own time and way. O that I may be kept and guided by his power and grace in the right way, and led by his Spirit to so walk that I may not be a reproach to the cause I so dearly love, for it is there my best friends, my kindred, dwell, and there God my Savior reigns. Ah, my brother, entwined about the tendrils of the heart are precious memories of moments spent with Christ the Lord. Short indeed, perhaps a glimpse, no more, yet never to be forgotten, through the open door (Christ) in the temple of our God, revealing hitherto hidden mysteries, wondrous in beauty, transcendent in loveliness; a joyful sound reaches our ears; hark, what do we hear? The song of Moses and the Lamb, taught in Zion to the inhabitants thereof, sung in Canaan with joy and much rejoicing, but silent upon the lips of the captives in Babylon. Christ looks upon his beautiful bride as the rose of Sharon, the lily of the valley, the chaste virgin, the King's daughter all glorious within, saying unto her, Thou art all fair, my love, thou art all fair, there is no spot in thee; while we,

ah, broken-hearted ones, crushed and ground to powder between the upper and nether millstones of the justice of God, black as the tents of Kedar, as the poor publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, saying, God, be merciful to me, a sinner, which is known by every one who is called of God and knows the plague of his own heart; but O the sweet assurance that enters with the light of God's grace, and the joyful sound, saying to the sad and doubting heart, "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." O glorious assurance that even I, the chief of sinners, am not left out. Again, we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, speaking words of surprising wisdom, and afterward saying to his mother, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" What business was this, my brother? To do the will of his Father, to make a way through the avenues of a broken law, through sin and confusion into the frozen heart of all the election of grace, and bring them to the Father in love and sweet fellowship. Ah, wondrous condescension, willing obedience! We behold, as the eye of faith wanders here and there over this temple of spiritual treasures, that although the bounteous hand of our heavenly Provider is constantly giving out his treasures to all who have need, yet the supply is never diminished nor the garner less full. We should bear in mind that in each scene recorded in the New Testament Jesus is the central figure; this, my brother, is true in the mind and heart in the dealings of God with us; his works are the works of love, for God is love; he is the object of all our hope and of every fond desire; to all who look for his appearing he is precious; he also is precious to those who believe; they have no cause to fear the enemy while here in this mortal state of existence during their pilgrimage journey, for Christ hath destroyed their enemies, and he says to them, "Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name: and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth [not a part of it] shall he be called." Again we turn our eyes to the view of heavenly things, and this time behold the way by which our heavenly Lover ascends unto his Father; by faith we view him bleeding upon the cruel Roman cross for all the sins of all his people. Ah, for my sins his life-blood flowed, with the cry of anguish upon his lips to his Father, saying, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and with his expiring breath saying, "It is finished." What precious words to dying, helpless mortals; a knowledge of the finished work of Jesus kindles hope in the weary traveler's breast. To the weary, anxious ones he sweetly says, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn." Very precious indeed are the memories of sweet communion with Jesus along the way. We realize his helpful hand and his sure mercies and his living promises in sickness, in pain and in all our afflictions; our memory assures us that he will never leave nor forsake us. My dear brother, it would require volumes to record the memories of a lifetime in the

pilgrim's journey from darkness into the full light of gospel day, while no mortal tongue could ever tell the power and sweetness of Jesus' love.

When I began this I only had it in mind to express to you my high appreciation of your letter, but I have written thus; after reading it you may send it to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if in your judgment it contains anything to comfort the poor and afflicted of God.

Yours to serve in gospel bonds,

J. E. THORNBURY.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., April 21, 1907.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR SIR:—I had the pleasure of reading a communication by you in the SIGNS to-day while at my father's (Martin D. Fisher) which was much help to me. I fully believe every word of it, and the way it helped me was to know there are others that see things as I do, or I see things like others do whom I believe see them the right way. I have thought that I must be alone in my belief, but I find that maybe I am not altogether. The way you explain things in your article of April 15th issue of the SIGNS is the only way I want to believe on that subject, for if salvation is not of the Lord, and I am not entirely in the hands of One who foreknew and foreordained my existence, present and future, I am left out; and if I thought God had not full control of the devil, as well as every other thing, my hope would be gone entirely, for if he did not, I would be in danger even to the end. I do not think there is any danger of a chosen one being snatched away from Him, for he said, "Of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." That is just as true as true can be, and full of sweetness, too, and that being true, he has power over all things. This is my only comfort, to believe and to know that power exists over the devil as well as me. While I had for some time past believed as you wrote, it came to me as milk to the babe, as a loaf to the hungry, and it was dropped for me to pick up, although when you wrote it you were ignorant that it would benefit me.

The first ray of light I ever saw (if not deceived) was at the association at Snow Hill, Md., about four years ago, during Elder Eubank's discourse. I forget his subject, in fact his sermon, only when he said that when a child cried that was evidence of life. I believed before this that where life was, death was not, but I never realized before that it was only the living who have need, that felt their need and asked for help. I never was aware before that one had to be alive to see their need; when I heard this I needed no more. I remembered no more of his talk; I was full. I thanked God that he had directed me to that place, and that he had put those words in Elder Eubank's mouth for me; I did not think to receive that when I went. I do not remember that I had any particular object in view in going, but the time had come for me to be relieved of that burden, and that was the place and time, and Elder Eubanks was the one it had to come through; not from, but through. Years before I had realized my helplessness in regard to salvation, but believed I could bring things around my way in this life, and in that respect I decided to make the most of this life, but I had troubles of my own that I wanted to be rid of, and I asked for an undisturbed, peaceable, pleasant, jolly natural life, nothing more; I dared not ask for anything else, for I saw no way for anything else, and to be undisturbed in this life was enough to ask for,

and more than I deserved, but I craved that, and thought to have it, and was stubborn enough to make up my mind I was going to have it any way, I would bring it about myself. Well, I was wonderfully deceived, for I suffered heavy financial losses, years of sickness in my family, and it took seven years of this for this poor, stubborn mortal to find out he had no more power than the worm to better his condition either one way or the other; and the pleasure and natural peace of mind never came; but a peace did come, that if I could I would not sell for the combined natural pleasures of every man, woman and child that ever lived or ever will live. I am not happy all the time by any means, but there has been a gleam that has never left me entirely since at Snow Hill, but it would leave me if there was any conditional part about it, and if God has not complete power and perfect control over everything, he is not what I think he is, for his word is law, and his law and commands are obeyed and his promises fulfilled to the last, and there is where my pleasure is, in knowing that there is One who rules and controls all things, and that the devil has no power only that which is given him. God made him for a purpose, the same as he made everything for some purpose, he made or does nothing in vain. My seven years of adversity were not in vain, it took that for me to realize my utter helplessness in one thing as well as another.

I have written more than I intended, I never have attempted such as this before, and I find that my letter is very much out of joint, imperfect and altogether unsatisfactory to my mind, but I felt that I wished you to know how I appreciate your letter, but from what I can see in this I have failed to explain fully how I do appreciate it. I beg of you to pardon my intrusion in writing to you, as I am not a member of the church, but if it is God's will that I shall be I will join when the time comes. I feel too small and insignificant to be classed with the people of God, but if he ever has use for me there he will place me there; if not, I will remain where I am. If you have any leisure time I would be glad to hear from you; if not, all right, and throw this away and forget it.

Again begging your pardon for the liberty taken, I remain yours truly,

F. SELBY FISHER.

LEICESTER, England, Feb. 24, 1907.

DEAR FRIEND AND FELLOW-PILGRIM:—I received your very kind letter the other day, and as I have nothing to claim my time I will attempt a reply; as you say in yours, I will venture, whatever comes of it. I am sure I sympathize with you on account of your poor sight and trembling hand. I, too, know somewhat of affliction, weakness and distress, but I am sure the Lord can sanctify them to the soul's profit, until one may, by the grace of God, even hug the cross and take it up joyfully and bear it gladly after the dear Captain of our salvation. When by faith we are shown that our sufferings are indeed fellowship with the Lord in his sufferings, all is then well, and we wish nothing altered, for we are then assured that we, even such sinners as we, shall be graciously favored to have fellowship with him in his joys at the marriage supper of the Lamb, when he maketh up his jewels.

I have just lately read the book of Job again. In the past it has been much sealed up to me, but I believe I have in some little measure (yet more than many do, too,) lived lately through a similar

experience; I do believe really that Job and even such an one as I have had very much in common, and that now I can enter a good deal into the life of poor, tried, yet favored and blessed Job, and I feel really signally privileged to be led even through much affliction, losses, crosses, opposition, false accusations and misunderstandings, with all their grievous pain and anguish, into fellowship with dear Job and the other suffering yet triumphing saints of old, and also those of a later day, and the few such still left scattered up and down on the earth in these last days.

It has been a very severe and trying winter here for all, especially weakly folks like me. I have been far from well since the beginning of December. I thank God I have been graciously enabled to pray for my enemies lately, whereas formerly I have prayed, not once nor twice, for God's vengeance and sudden destruction to come upon them. What a mercy God does not answer all our prayers! What a blessed change he can work in our feelings toward those who have really wronged us. How he can graciously enable us to forgive, to pray for those who despitefully use us, and make us willing to suffer for our enemies, even as the Lord himself suffered for his enemies.

There is, apparently, little likelihood of my coming your way at present. I sometimes think that if only I had the necessary money I would come for the good of my health for a few months; go about among the God-fearing friends, see if the Lord opened my mouth and made me acceptable to any of the real tried family, and see if he opened a way for me to settle and be useful there. But while every door here seems to be fast shut up, barred and bolted, as it were, I have had no definite instructions yet to come your way, and no method yet provided to pay passage and expenses. Sometimes I think that some day I shall be brought, but have no idea when nor how. Sometimes I wish I were coming by the next boat, then again I am afraid, and almost fear I should be sent to you. I am daily, nightly, sometimes almost hourly, listening at the doorposts of the house of the Lord to hear what he will instruct me and give me power to do; waiting at the footstool of mercy to know the mind and will of God towards me in providence and grace; standing upon the watchtower, looking for the appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, unfolding to me by the blessed Spirit of God where I am to go, what I am to do, what I am to say, and how to go, and do, and say, &c. If ever I did come your way it would be "to trust in the living God," as you say. God forbid I should trust in and to any one else, whether profane, professor, or even possessor. I hope I have learned in some measure how vain it is to put confidence in man (natural man), or in princes (spiritual man), and much more to put any confidence whatever in my poor, sinful, frail self. No doubt a man taught of God would be very desirable for you and the friends in your city, but God is not really dependent on such means. You yourself claim to have been led into hidden truth and further light without such a pastor, and I am very much inclined myself to think that some, even godly men, cling to some things which they did not get by the Spirit from the Word itself. It is a solemn thing to stand up as a teacher or preacher, and however godly and grace-taught a man may be, and even very acceptable to many of the living family, yet if God has not

really sent him forth to the work, his godliness and grace will not do of itself, and he may really do much (for a while undiscovered) mischief. May I never be such an one.

I hope you will be able to read this. An afternoon's talk would be worth a day's writing. I wonder if we shall ever have it. JESSE BREE.

[THE above letter was written to a friend, and sent for publication..—ED.]

ANDERSON, Tenn., May 20, 1907.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—I hope that my move to this place was of the Lord, and that in due time it will be evident to you that I not only appreciate the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but that I am more than willing to help you bear the burden you must necessarily bear up under to send it among the brethren, but with me it is a serious question whether I am willing to "spend and be spent" for you; at times it seems an established fact that "to will is present with me," and with it that equally true statement is recognized and acknowledged (in the same connection), "how to perform that which is good I find not," so these truths become at times like unto honey which one sucks out of a flinty rock. I say, Surely there is nothing in this for me, and Satan says, Surely there is not; there is nothing for such as you but a vain hope in this life, and in the life to come just what you and all such as you deserve: perdition, and by this I am humbled and ready to say, Yea, I know I am a hell-deserving sinner; God himself could not be just and the justifier of such a wretch, fit only for the abyss, fit only for banishment forever and forever from the peaceable and lovely presence of that holy and just One, and when I have sank exceeding low, just ready to give up, his grace has raised my soul unto a comfortable hope, Jesus is brought to view, my accusers all gone. The promise is sweet, yea, his word is sweet to my taste: "I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine," and while I spend my days without hope, that is, without the hope of ever getting over the weakness of the flesh, or escaping fleshly infirmities while I abide here, I am made to abound in hope in spite of the buffetings of Satan. In spite of all the power of the enemy I am enabled to say, "The things that my soul refused to touch are my sorrowful meat," and in singleness of heart do I eat them, and say, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come," and all the intermediate changes and trials by the way are but "our light affliction, which is but for a moment," and "worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," and while I feel that I must shortly lay aside this tabernacle, I rejoice in the hope that "this mortal must put on immortality," or rather that mortality must be swallowed up of life, so I am made to say (when I think of it and am made conscious of surviving depravity), Not that I would be unclothed; then is the cry to let the cup pass; then complete reconciliation in spirit would say, "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done," and in spite of a slavish fear I would be clothed upon, while the flesh is weak, ready to draw back.

Brethren, these are some of my exercises this morning; I count not that I have apprehended, and leave this for your use, if it is not entirely useless. I have never been able to place any estimate upon what I say and write; when I feel puffed up, what I say humiliates the friends; when I am cast down, what I say, if I am enabled to speak at all, seems

to comfort them; so again I say, I cannot tell, and am willing, I trust, to leave my letters where I would leave the firstlings of my flock, yea, my all, at the feet of my brethren, and be willing to serve them in spirit for Christ's sake, and yet the cry of my soul seems to be, if it be so, Why am I thus?

Forgive my continuance, I only meant to ask that my address be changed from Soddy, Tenn., to my present address, yet you see what a letter I have written you in this; my best efforts are like unto me. But I must desist.

I am, I hope, your brother in the faith of God's elect,

T. D. WALKER.

ELGIN, Oregon, April 10, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I send you the inclosed letter by the request of sister Dodson, to be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES if it meets with your approval.

I wish to say that I am in hearty accord with the doctrine as contended for by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and think it is in perfect harmony with the word of God: salvation by grace.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

PRAGUE, Okla., Jan. 1, 1907.

MRS. CATHERINE DODSON—DEAR SISTER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I received your kind letter to-day, and am glad to know you are well, and glad that my letter was food for you. If there is anything that I have written that was of any comfort to you, give God all the praise and glory, for "he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

Brother Davis, of Arkansas, was with us the fourth Saturday and Sunday in December, and preached the gospel in its fullness; he preached salvation by grace from first to last; yes, Jesus the way, the truth and the life. He was sent of God to us. I think we shall never forget how sweet his preaching was, and how we all enjoyed ourselves, and O how eager all the brethren and sisters were to catch the crumbs as they fell from their heavenly Master's table. I said crumbs, but they seemed to me like loaves of bread, for we were all

"Hungry, and faint, and poor,
Behold us, Lord, again
Assembled at thy mercy's door,
Thy bounty to obtain."

You spoke of being lonely, and also of going to the Old Ladies' Home. I do not know what would really be best for you; consult the dear brethren and sisters, it might be they would instruct you better than I can. Dear sister, I know you have been made to pass through many sorrows and afflictions; your road has been rough, but though the thorns and the briers pierce your feet, do not get discouraged, but press toward the mark for the prize and calling in Christ Jesus, which is life evermore. I hope that some day you may gather flowers from the thorns that now pierce your feet, for

"There is a blissful home on high,
From sin and sorrow free,
Beyond the gaze of mortal eye,
In love's unbounding sea."

Some day we shall lay our burdens down at the foot of the cross, and there receive a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, our righteous Judge, shall give us at that day, and not unto us only, but to all that love his appearing. We shall see Jesus, and the best thing is, we shall be like him, and shall be satisfied when we awake with his likeness.

Give my love to all the saints in Oregon. Although we have never seen each

other's face, I hope we have been taught and led by the same Spirit.

Dear sister, another year is gone and is numbered with the past, and we, too, will soon pass away, and those that now know us will know us no more in this life forever, but the sweetest thought is, though our friends shall know us here no more on earth, we shall know as we are known on the other shore, where our great Head and Mediator, Christ Jesus, is; we shall be known of him, yes, we shall hear him say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." If it is God's will, may we all be found walking while here in the strait and narrow path that leads to life everlasting. I am so glad that salvation is a free gift, if it were otherwise I would have no hope at all, for all my works are so corrupt they could not be acceptable in the sight of the just and holy God.

I have not written as I thought. I hope you will throw the mantle of charity over this letter, for it is like the writer, imperfect. You said you wanted me to answer your letter on New Year's day, and this is New Year's night, so I wish you a happy new year. I hope, if it is God's will, that we may follow closer in the footsteps of our blessed Redeemer this new year than we have in the past, ever looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith.

I will close, hoping this letter will reach you in good time. Good-by.

MAGGIE TURNER.

RICHMOND, Maine, Feb. 16, 1906.

MRS. MARTHA K. HUBBARD—DEAR SISTER:—I have thought of you many times since I last saw you, and have hoped to hear from you, so you may be sure that I was glad to receive your letter of a few days ago. I hope you have all been well this winter. We have all been so blessed, and I have desired to be thankful for such a great blessing.

I saw a notice of the death of Mrs. Sarah Moody; how little I thought that I should never see her again when I last saw her. I could only say, We are gathering home. When my time or yours is to be, when we, too, shall be called, is not known unto us, but God has numbered our days as well as directed our steps; he knows, and he can make a dying bed feel soft as downy pillows are. I know that if I have a right to enter within the gates into the city that eternity will not be too long to praise the holy One who secured the redemption of fallen sinners.

Dear sister, how wonderful it all is; this bond of fellowship between the children of God, this oneness of feeling, this fellowship of suffering with Jesus. How good to feel that we do indeed know something of the loathing of sin that Jesus felt. Though he was without sin, yet he bare our sins in his own body on the tree; that is, the penalty of our sins was laid upon him, that we might be presented before God holy and blameless. We cannot always realize that because we see our own depravity so clearly that it does not seem possible that before God we are blameless for the sake of the death of his dear Son. If we are of the called our transgressions are declared to be blotted out as a thick cloud, and our iniquities are remembered no more, and I do believe the record God has given us; his covenant is sure. How then can I help rejoicing in such precious promises? How can I help feeling that though all the world be against me, yet it shall be well with my soul? Yes, dear child of God, wherever we are when we see Jesus

lifted up for the healing of our souls it is well with us.

As I look back over the years I think of the time I first remember seeing you. It was at an association in the old meeting-house at Bowdoin. You looked good and pure then, as you have ever since. I knew then the truth, I believed the doctrine I heard, but at that time I did not think I could ever be one of them. I thought there was something about the elect of God better than the rest of mankind, or else they would not be chosen to be partakers of his glory. I felt afraid, very much so, that I did not possess any qualifications that would ever enable me to be among the elect. I have since become convinced that I never had a good thought or act to recommend me to God's favor, or never shall, but that my calling from nature's darkness into the marvelous light of God was by the free, unmerited grace of God, and, furthermore, if I am walking before him uprightly and as becometh one unto whom Jesus has been revealed, it is not by any goodness or strength of my own, but because he has directed my steps, not only last year or last month, but every day and every hour. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

Whenever you go among the saints I would be glad to be with you. Remember me to all.

Now good night, with love.

ANGIE J. THOMAS.

DRAIN, Ore., March 14, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—The time is at hand for us to renew our subscription. I would like always to be prompt in everything I do, but I have nothing of which to boast in that way. I fall so far short of perfection, and often cry out in anguish of soul, "O is there any one like me?" O is there any one so prone to evil as I? I have to use the language of the writers of the SIGNS, viz., "A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all." I love to read such language from them. There are no people on earth who do believe entirely in a whole and complete Savior except the dear Old Baptists. I do love the company of the dear saints; they are the people for whom our meek and lowly Savior died, and with whom he loved to be while on earth. O what love he felt for his chosen race.

Our brethren here are scattered so far apart that we do not get to meet nearly as often as I would like, but I have found during nearly sixty years in this my pilgrimage that there is nothing perfect, and we never will be satisfied until we awake with his likeness, if indeed we are of those for whom Christ died.

I am passing through a terribly dark season spiritually, but still I have a feeling of assurance that all is right, and in this I find rest. We ought to be willing to suffer a little when our dear Savior passed through such great darkness, and yet he could not sin, while we deserve more chastisement than we get.

I do hope that the dear ones will continue to write for the SIGNS as they have in the past, for the reading of their communications is a feast to our burdened souls. Many of the old writers are passing away to their reward, but the Lord will raise up others to fill their places; he will never be without witnesses as long as the earth stands. May our heavenly Father watch over us all through the journey of this life to his glory and honor, is my prayer.

Your sister in hope,

S. MORNINGSTAR.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1907.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

2 SAMUEL IX.

WILL you give your views through the SIGNS upon 2 Samuel ix? The Spirit seems to say to me that there is comfort in it for the children of God.

I am a poor sinner.

S. M. BUTLER.

TOONE, Tenn., Dec. 21, 1906.

This request has been by us for some time, as the date of the letter will show. We have not delayed writing because of any indifference toward the request of our brother, nor because of any want of interest in the subject. We have many similar requests for views upon the Scriptures remaining unanswered, and desire to respond to all when we can, but sometimes subjects are upon our mind of which we feel to write beside those embraced in such requests, and so delay cannot be helped at times, and we do hope the writers of those that remain unanswered will not think for a moment that we feel indifferent to them or their requests.

This chapter, which narrates the kindness of David to Mephibosheth, a son of Jonathan, has been often delightful to the people of God. It is full of that which must be pleasing to all gentle-minded men, if regarded simply as a narrative of good-will and kindness to one of a family who had done David much hurt in times past. The evil done to David by Saul, the grandfather of Mephibosheth, was great; but on the other hand, this man was a son of Jonathan, who had been dearer than a brother to David. The power of love to Jonathan in the heart of David outweighed his anger at the thought of the injuries done to him by Saul, and so Mephibosheth became the recipient of unmeasured kindness at his hands. In David, the man after God's own heart, we discern a heart to forgive and to bear with patience the evil humors and contrary lives of men. This was apparent in all his dealings with Saul, in his mourning at the death of his enemy and in his present kindness to the grandson of his enemy. In all this we see a pattern of him who should come, our antitypical David, from whom all his unbelieving, doubting, erring and disobedient people receive all long-suffering and kindness, and who deals with them in all patience and forbearance, and bestows upon them, without regard to their own worthiness or merit, unnumbered and eternal blessings. As David dealt with Mephibosheth, so our spiritual David deals with all his children. We belong to a family who by nature are enemies to Jesus and his salvation, and yet he deals with us as though we were his dearest friends.

Before speaking further of this chapter, so full of excellent things, we desire to call attention to some things that are narrated of Mephibosheth in the sixteenth and nineteenth chapters. It is recorded in the sixteenth chapter that as David was fleeing from the danger that then beset him, Ziba, the servant of Mephibosheth, came to him and reported of his master that he was hoping and planning for a restoration of the kingdom to the house of Saul, of which he

was the only remaining member. This had no foundation in truth, and in the nineteenth chapter this is plainly shown. Thus Mephibosheth was slandered and suffered reproach without cause at the hand of his own servant, but his whole demeanor made clearly manifest that he felt himself unworthy of the great kindness of David, and recognized that the king had an absolute right to take away all that he had bestowed upon him if it were his pleasure to do so. He felt that he had no claim upon David for any blessing, and that all given him were acts of clemency and mercy toward him. He had no claim upon the score of his family for favor, but rather for the displeasure of the king, and he could make no claim upon the ground of personal merit, for he could be of no service to the king, being lame on both feet. He needed both mercy and grace, and upon him had David bestowed these favors.

There are some things clearly set forth in this rich chapter of which we desire to briefly speak. First, the unworthiness of Mephibosheth and the loving-kindness of David. On the one hand here is one of the family of an enemy; he belongs to a race inimical to David; in addition, he was personally unable to be of any service to the king; always he must receive all and render nothing in return; he could neither run, walk, labor or fight for the king; he must ever be receiving free bounty; blessings conditioned upon his own faithful service would have done him no good, seeing that he could never render that service; his condition was such that all human merit and human labor could avail him nothing; each day as he sat at the king's table and received the service of the household of Saul, which had been assigned him for his benefit, he would be under continually increasing obligations to David; obligations which could never grow smaller, but on the contrary larger to the end, and always would the evidences of the loving-kindness of David continue to grow in his sight. In all this is a true picture of the relation between our spiritual David and ourselves. No doubt Mephibosheth revolved all these things in his heart often; no doubt he was grateful, and often filled with wonder at the bounty of David to one of such a family as his; no doubt he often thought that it could not be for his own sake, but for the sake of the love which David bare to his father Jonathan, that these things were done to him; but this would all humble him and cause him to feel more grateful still. The fact that he was grateful did not seem in his sight worthy of notice. What could more beautifully express the feelings of a forgiven sinner receiving of the unmeasured bounty of his Father and King, than the words of this humble man recorded in the nineteenth chapter? He said, "But my lord the king is as an angel of God: do, therefore, what is good in thine eyes. For all of my father's house were but dead men before my lord the king: yet didst thou set thy servant among them that did eat at thine own table. What right, therefore, have I yet to cry any more unto the king?" This is the attitude of mind that every humble minded soul occupies daily before God. How entirely contrary to this is that spirit which would say, The blessings of God to me are conditioned upon my service to him.

In the second place, this man was dwelling far away, hiding himself from the very notice of the king. At the most, all he hoped for was to remain unnoticed. If noticed at all, he had good reason to fear that it would be for his own destruc-

tion. But he was not hidden when David wanted him. The Lord at his own appointed time, the set time to favor Zion in every chosen vessel of mercy, will seek them out. They dwell in Lodebar, as did Mephibosheth, which means no pasture; that is, they dwell in a desolate place. What words can describe this desolateness? To him it was a desolate place, not only as regarded all herbage, all green and pleasant things in nature, but a desolate place in the sense of having no friends, and what was still worse, in the sense of having no knowledge of any favor from his king. His life was dreary indeed, and there seemed no prospect but to dwell here and die at the last. Surely we need not say that this sets forth the condition of soul in every poor sinner when the Lord finds him.

In the third place, he was not seeking David, but the king sought him out; he was not making inquiry for the king, but the king made inquiry after him. Sinners do not seek the Lord first, but the Lord seeks them; they do not find the Lord, but the Lord finds them; they do not choose the Lord first, but the Lord chooses them. It was so with this man. Here was a soul in need, but there was no thought in his heart that he could ever be aught but a castaway from the privileges of every Jew. His only thought was to remain hidden, and when brought into the presence of the king he could only ask, "What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?" I am fit, he would say, only to be spurned from thy presence. How could he dare to come into the presence of the king? What reason had he to expect aught but vengeance at his hands? Thus the convicted sinner feels; thus he strives to hide himself away and abides in places of desolation, but the blessed Lord seeks him out and brings him home. The sinner dares not even seek God's presence in prayer, lest God should at once visit him with everlasting destruction. How many have not dared to say with their lips even the words, "God be merciful to me a sinner." It was so once with ourself. Yet while the lips dare not speak, the heart prays all the time, and this is the burden of the prayer: Lord, save, I perish; Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. No doubt the thoughts of this lone and lame man often went out to the favored number who were privileged to be the favorites of the king, but he could not anticipate that one of these privileges should ever be his. O how desirable these things must be, but they are for others, not for such a hated wretch as I. But O how wonderful, while he thought upon these things the heart of the king thought of him, and sought him out in mercy, and here was his salvation; not that he thought of the king, but that the king thought of him.

In the fourth place, he anticipated vengeance, but he found favor instead. How contrary God's ways from the ways of men! Men who come expecting favor find vengeance, but men who come anticipating anger find love; anticipating the awful words, "Depart from me," they hear the joyful words, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." The Lord approves those who do not approve themselves, the Lord disapproves those who approve of themselves. The hidden ones and the fearful-hearted the Lord seeks out, but he passes by those who bring that which they think will secure his favor. The Pharisee in the parable came boldly before God and went down unjustified as he came; the publican dared not look up to heaven, and could only plead for mercy, and him the Lord sent down to

his house justified. It is the sinner who is redeemed, it is the rebel who is reconciled to God, and it is thus that all such souls come to join the song that will be everlasting: Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory.

In the fifth place, Mephibosheth bestowed nothing upon David, but received all from David. It was the royal bounty, and not reward of merit that he needed, and that he found. How constantly we need to be reminded of this, that we can give nothing for all the mercies we receive save to acknowledge them as the mercy of God. There never has been a true prayer, a true song of praise, a true confession in the heart of any child of God, which is not to be found summed up in the words, a sinner saved by grace, and in the prayer, Lord, have mercy upon me, a sinner. Mephibosheth could not render service personally; he had no retinue of servants and soldiers to offer to the service of David; he had no riches wherewith he might increase the riches of the state. What could such a dead dog amount to before the king? It was thus that the favor of the king toward him was magnified; it is thus that the grace of our God is always magnified. We owe, and shall to all eternity owe, to God an ever increasing debt of gratitude and love. David was blessed in the giving and Mephibosheth was blessed in the receiving. God is blessed forevermore in bestowing of his unwasting fullness, and saints are blessed forevermore in receiving from his infinite bounty.

In the sixth place, all that had been Saul's was bestowed upon Mephibosheth, not as a matter of right, but as a matter of bounty. If the temporal and outward privileges of the temple of God are intended here, they are all the bounty, free and unmerited, of the king. Saul and his household by transgression against God had lost all these outward privileges. Mephibosheth could not claim them as a right; he had no thought of thus claiming them, however desirable they might have appeared to him to be; but all these things are restored to this poor man. Here could be no boasting. If Saul might have boasted that they were his by right of conquest and favor done to the people, Mephibosheth could not thus boast. What could such a dead dog do? How wonderful it all must have seemed to him! These things were his, not by birthright, for he belonged to a family accursed before God and man; they were not his by right of great services rendered to the state, for he was a dependant, altogether so upon the bounty of others; here at least all was free grace and favor. His experience was such as convinced him of this and made it manifest to all. Thus believers must ever sing, Grace, free grace. All the privileges of the sanctuary, all the temporal mercies of the way, are bestowed upon such lame, helpless men in this gospel day, and as the lame and the poor they are prepared to receive them and crown the Lord alone with glory.

In the seventh place, beside all these other favors he was given to eat at the king's table as one of the king's sons. Here, as it seems to us, we are brought to that inward communion with the Master, that communion of heart and soul which is secret, and into which none can enter save the redeemed and their God. This was more than was taken away from the house of Saul. All that was taken away was restored to this poor man, but additional bounty was his also. Is there not a shadowing forth of the truth here that is involved in the declaration of the apostle, "The first man Adam was

made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit"? The first is of the earth, the second is the Lord from heaven. To all the redeemed more is given than they forfeited in the transgression. What royal bounty is this indeed! Eternal life was not given to Adam in his creation, and so eternal life was not laid down as the result of the transgression, but to all the redeemed it is said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, * * * and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." All the spiritual blessings of the new and everlasting covenant are involved in eternal life. Having this life all these dwell in the King's house forever, and do eat continually at the King's table, and they ever remain lame on both their feet; that is, in brief, they never become able to render to God any return for all his loving-kindness; they are always poor cripples, magnifying the favor of God to them; they are always sinners saved by sovereign grace alone.

We have but sketched the chapter, but we trust that we have at least not misapplied the rich things that are in it. C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On our list are many whose subscriptions are two or three years in arrears, and we would esteem it a great favor if all such would drop us a line, stating whether or not they are receiving their paper and wish it continued.

We often receive letters censuring us for not discontinuing the paper when the time paid for has expired, but should we adopt this rule we would on the other hand offend many.

Brethren, please let us hear from you.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder B. F. Coulter.)

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Cow Marsh Church, Kent County, Delaware, May 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1907, to the several churches composing this Association sendeth greeting in the Lord.

Dearly Beloved Brethren:—It is again our privilege to address you in this our annual letter. For many years the custom of sending a letter to the churches has been kept up, and the principal reason is very apparent: each church in the association is a little family set apart, in a different locality from the others, and each family is desirous to know of the welfare and prosperity of the sister churches. All the members of the association cannot be present at its annual meeting, therefore it is our duty and privilege to send you the Minutes, which embrace all of our deliberations, including this fraternal greeting. We are thankful to be able to report to you that we are in peace and harmony within our borders, that no schisms (emanating from carnal ambitions of would-be leaders) have crept in among us to mar our worship and mutual comfort and consolation in the Lord. Possessing then these blessings and mercies we greet you with thankful hearts, and express to you our thankfulness in the words of the apostle in his second letter to the Thessalonians, first chapter, third verse: "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other abounded." These words are alike applicable to all saints, and to all churches walking in gospel order. Whatever of grace abounded in the heart of the apostle, it

was sufficient always to cause thankfulness to God for the brethren, who are of like precious faith. The same grace also abounding in the hearts of the brethren causes the same thankfulness to God for one another and for the churches. If, as we hope, we are all one in Christ Jesus, it is not a strange thing that we are interested always in the welfare of one another; our aims and aspirations and hopes are one. The love of God aboundeth in each one individually, and in all as one body, and when we observe the peace, good will, harmony and oneness of mind existing within our boundaries, we are bound to thank God always for you. If there is strife and contention among us we become aware that we are alive, that a dead thing cannot manifest the motions of life, therefore we are bound to thank God always that we have an High Priest which can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, who was in all points tempted as we are, and in whose name we may come boldly to the throne of grace and ask help in time of need, that we may with strength of grace contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; One who can bring sunshine out of darkness, and perfection of beauty out of strife and contention. In whatever condition we may be, whether as churches or individuals, we are bound to thank God always that it is as well with us as it is; whether we are sad or joyful we are bound to confess that God has been of tender forbearance to us, and merciful even to our unrighteousness. Our faith is made known by our works, and our work is to make manifest the Spirit of Christ in us. Jesus said, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." The manifestation of our faith is a constant cause for thankfulness that we live and abide in the love of our God, who hath called us by his grace.

"As it is meet." We give thanks unto God for ourselves and for our brethren also, in that he "hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." It is meet that we should "in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." When God in the beginning made a helpmeet for the man, he made in her all that the man required, for all things else had been created to his hand, therefore it was meet for him to love her and devote his life to her. So also it is meet that as we have been redeemed from death by the blood of Christ, so it is meet that we should in all thankfulness devote our life and our willing service to the brethren and to the cause of our gracious Redeemer. If we do this, and purge ourselves from all that pertains to idol worship, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, we shall be vessels unto honor, "sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

"Because that your faith groweth exceedingly." This is a sufficient reason that we should in all humility spend and be spent, because as we witness the exceeding growth of faith, making manifest a healthy condition in the churches, it leads our minds into the garden of all fruitfulness in grace, and we go "down into the garden of nuts, to see the fruits of the valley, and to see whether the vine flourished, and the pomegranates budded." In this we behold the beauty of the Lord, and we rejoice and are thankful for you, brethren, that your active zeal and growth in grace, and even your chastisements and your tribulations, yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness. Our growth in faith is commensurate with our growth

in grace, which means a deeper knowledge of all things pertaining to holiness and righteousness, and also a clearer knowledge of the total depravity of our own flesh. Therefore our growth in grace and faith causes us to mourn more and more in consequence of our sinful nature.

"And the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth." In the superabounding of grace, where sin abounds there is to be found always that charity which suffereth long and is kind. Thankfulness for such proofs and evidences of God's love which causeth charity to abound in and among us should constantly fill our hearts. Charity is the strength and power of effect of which the love of God in the hearts of his people is the moving cause. It is also the manifestation of that love. We are well assured that wheresoever charity aboundeth the love of God is in sweet exercise, through which the fire of God's wrath consumes all things which blacken and destroy, purifying, refining and cleansing the house of prayer, the temple of God which is within you. So that the abounding of your charity is not a strange thing, yet it is wondered at by the world, but it is the shining forth of the mystery of godliness, making melody in the hearts of its possessors, which is a fertile field for bringing forth fruit for all thankfulness. When charity aboundeth in the church of Christ it is always toward each other, showing that although our cup often runneth over, yet nothing is wasted, for all redounds to the glory of God, to the lifting of Jesus on high, and to the cementing together of the members of the body of Christ through all the gifts in the church, "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

B. E. CUBBAGE, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

(Written by Elder Silas H. Durand.)

The Elders and messengers composing the Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with our sister church at Hopewell, N. J., May 29th, 30th and 31st, 1907, to the churches whose messengers we are send christian salutation.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We have been careful in the above address to recognize our association as a meeting appointed and arranged for by the churches, and not as a body continuing in existence during the intervals between sessions. The messengers are not called delegates, for the churches cannot delegate any authority to their messengers to be exercised over themselves. The meetings of these messengers are for the purpose of hearing from the churches concerning their condition, renewing expressions of love and fellowship for each other, receiving messengers from other associations, conferring with each other upon the important things of the kingdom of God, uniting in the worship of God and attending to the preaching of the gospel. We think it important to regard the association as existing only during the days appointed for the present session, and as having no existence as a body after the session has closed. We count this the more important because associations have sometimes assumed authority over the churches, and have exercised functions which do not belong to them. It is most likely on this account that some brethren have objected to associations. While we would not for a moment yield to the

thought that associations have any controlling power over the churches, whose messengers compose them, yet we must esteem them as of much benefit to the churches. If they were contrary to the New Testament then we would say, Dispense with them at once; but this we do not think. We call your attention to a brief consideration of this subject.

It is often asserted with much stress that the churches are independent. We do not think that is a good word to use with regard to churches of Christ. So far as religious bodies of any kind are concerned, it is true that the churches may be called independent, for they are not under any such dominion. But we do not consider a church independent any more than we do a member of our natural body. We are said to be members of Christ's body, "of his flesh, and of his bones;" also, "we are members one of another."—Eph. iv. 25; v. 30. This does not refer simply to one church, but to the whole body. The apostle says, "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, being many, are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread."—1 Cor. x. 16, 17. The apostle was writing this not alone to the church of God at Corinth, but to "all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ."

The church is spoken of in the singular by the Savior: "Upon this rock I will build my church;" "Tell it to the church." Also in the early part of the Acts of the apostles: "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved;" "Fear came upon all the church." Not until some time had passed, and many churches in different places had been established, do we find the word in the plural: "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied."—Acts ix. 31. It will be observed that when the churches are spoken of thus in the plural they are referred to as together, and as equally interested in the messages given to them, or sent by them, or in the work done for them: "Confirming the churches."—Acts xv. 41. "And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in numbers daily."—Acts xvi. 5. "The churches of Christ salute you." "To the churches of Galatia." "What the Spirit saith unto the churches."

There is no intimation throughout the New Testament of any one church being independent of another. When the singular is used it is to designate the whole church, as, "And gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body;" or to designate the church in any one place, as, "The church at Philippi." The apostle gave command to the Elders at Ephesus concerning the whole church throughout the world and through all time: "To feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." At Galatia there were several churches, and there probably were also at Ephesus, yet they were regarded as one by the apostle.

We emphasize this fact that, while the churches are independent of any body of people, or of any government or authority or power in the world, religious or otherwise, they are not independent of each other, but are mutually and lovingly dependent; they are necessary to each other. When they are walking in gospel order they illustrate the truth of the psalmist's sweet declaration: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

They have one life, even Jesus, and are moved by his one Spirit, and they find unspeakable comfort in their mutual fellowship and communion.

Brethren, we have often enjoyed this good and pleasant communion at our associational meetings, and hope it may be the same with those who shall follow us in the years to come. Here we realize the benefit of associations, not as having dominion over each other's faith, but as helpers of each other's joy. We can think of circumstances in which it is of great advantage and benefit to meet together with sister churches, in whose wisdom and love and spiritual understanding we have all confidence, and confer with them.

Suppose a church presents herself to us by messengers, declaring herself to be of our faith and order, and asking for our fellowship, we must necessarily inquire into her character and standing. Suppose she replies: Our church is independent, we do not acknowledge your right to inquire into our affairs; we ask you to take our word, and acknowledge us a church in good standing without any further investigation. The writer of this Circular was so answered on one occasion many years ago, when as a messenger he made such inquiry. The churches of the Delaware River Association, or any other gospel churches, would undoubtedly meet the request of such a church with this answer: If you are of our faith and order you have nothing among you, no act or doctrine, which you want to keep back from the knowledge of sister churches. Would we be usurping authority in thus replying? Would it not be according to the gospel?

Suppose a distant church divides, and both come claiming to be right. Is it not our right, and also our duty, whether as an individual church or as a number of churches in fellowship, to investigate the claims of each? If there is true fellowship between any church and the churches of the Delaware River Association, it must have a gospel foundation. If there is any work or doctrine which that church wishes to cover up, asserting their right, as an independent church, to do so, there must be something wrong. We do not think we are authorized to tell a church what to do, but we do think it our duty to judge of what they have done.

Thoughtlessness in the beginning of a work has often entailed upon churches great inconsistencies and trouble. Two associations that do not fellowship each other, correspond with each other by only one remove from directness. Some troubles between churches are started and continued on grounds entirely personal.

We present these things for your consideration. O that we might be favored in such cases to see the blessed effect of that wisdom which is from above, which "is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."—James iii. 17.

Because we see some serious fault in a church or an association, it does not necessarily follow that such are not still to be held in fellowship as gospel churches. Among the seven churches of Asia only two were found free from fault and blame, but they were all still regarded as churches, though some of them were near being rejected. What care is needed in regard to churches that we think to be wrong in some point, what forbearance, what brotherly kindness, what charity.

In case of a question as to the order of a church, or a part of a divided

church, who is to judge and decide? The church or the portion that has separated? It is generally counted desirable that all church work should be done by unanimity, but if that is impossible a majority must rule, according to worldly custom; and what other rule can we see? But in the division of 1832, and in later divisions, the majority was often on the side of those who departed from the scriptural doctrine and order. It is not always clear as to who is to judge, only that we know the right judgment must come from Jesus in our midst.

Sometimes two parts of a divided church both claim to have the same doctrine and order as before the division, and no difference can be recognized between them except what is purely personal. It has sometimes occurred that a self-confident, angry, arrogant spirit on the one side, and a gentle, forbearing spirit on the other has made the decision easy; but this does not always give assurance as to which is right, our natures are so deceitful; there is apt to be some wrong on each side. In cases of such perplexity it is good to have the mind of sister churches in whom we have confidence. We are likely to find there the mind of Christ, which is what we need and seek to find. If any come to us claiming our fellowship as a church of God, it will be manifest to us, if their claim is true, that Jesus Christ is in the midst of them.

"In the multitude of counsellors there is safety." The churches of Christ are one; they have one spirit and one interest, and to us it appears good and mutually helpful that they keep in as close an acquaintance with each other as is convenient by having associations and union meetings. The many ways in which the value and importance of such a mutual acquaintance and such meetings will be made manifest we have partially indicated by our suggestions in this letter. May the dear Savior by his Holy Spirit lead us into all truth, and enable us, and all our sister churches, to walk in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

F. A. CHICK, Moderator.
ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

(Written by Elder H. C. Ker.)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Ebenezer Church, of New York city, June 5th, 6th and 7th, 1907, to the churches composing this meeting sends salutation with love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The time is at hand when you will expect something in the way of a Circular Letter. This custom is of importance, as it gives the associations of our correspondence to know what we believe and practice regarding the kingdom of our God. Usually some point of doctrine is treated upon in a Circular Letter, or the order of the house set forth. We think it also well to write of the things which seem of special importance at the time. We deem it unwise and unprofitable to write Circular Letters upon controverted subjects or Scriptures, as the letter when adopted goes forth as the view of the association, when perhaps four-fifths of the membership of that association is not present, and often but few of those absent agree with the writer. It is not justice to the absent members nor to those who take the opposite side of the question. There are subjects enough to write upon when a Circular Letter is expected without using points of difference between brethren. It is of course the privilege of the writer to differ with a brother, but we do not think it right that his view should go on record

as indorsed by his association when indeed but few stand with him.

These are perilous times, the love of many has waxed cold, false teachers are abroad in the land, wars and rumors of wars are heard. These things are not signs of the coming of the Son of man to gather together all nations to battle against Jerusalem of old, but signs of his righteous judgment soon to be visited upon new Jerusalem for departing from the living God. We ask, Who are they that shall stand firm, as polished shafts, in the doctrine and order of God's house? Shall the soldiers of Christ allow flattery to turn them aside from the path of faithfulness to the Captain of our salvation? Shall we love the applause of men more than the cause of Christ? The devil is cunning, and ever attacking the weak points in the Lord's children and servants; his schemes are delusive, and ere we are aware we are entrapped. May we be watchful and ever ready to stand up for the doctrine of God in every point and principle. It is easy for a man who is willing to compromise with false teaching for the sake of peace to say to a servant of God, Your moderation is known, and the meek and humble spirit in which you speak and write is loved and appreciated. Except kept by the power of God the vanity of the flesh will lay hold of that man as a friend, when indeed he is an enemy to the cause of Christ. It is an easy matter for the same spirit to say of another servant of God, who is plain and decided in his expressions, whether in preaching or writing, He is proud and conceited, and is making an effort for leadership, and his writings and preaching have a tendency to divide the children of God. Men may talk of humility, but it is a hard matter to hide the pride which stands out so prominently in most of those who thus talk. Voluntary humility is an abomination in the sight of God and his church; the man who thinks he can use this deception and the church not detect it is laboring under a delusion. The soldiers of Christ are accountable to him, therefore the commendation of the devil or the rebuke of his angels amounts to little; to their own Master they stand or fall. If plain, decided writing or preaching of the gospel divides the churches, they ought to be divided; the man who cannot stand to have God exalted and the creature abased, or in other words, who cannot stand the doctrine in its purity, is in the wrong place if he be a member of an Old School Baptist Church. The preaching of Jesus always separated between two classes; if there were liars in the company he called them such, if hypocrites he called them by that name, if children of the devil he said so, but this spirit is condemned to-day by some who call themselves Old School Baptists. They say we need love, long-suffering and gentleness; if these principles had have been continued by the Lord's people there would have been no Old School Baptists in existence to-day, the new ideas and notions suggested by Andrew Fuller would have been the only doctrine known among Baptists. Love, long-suffering and gentleness are commendable, but when we see destruction coming upon the church or cause of Christ through false doctrine and practices, we should follow the example of Jesus and preach his everlasting truth, even if five thousand turn away from us at one time and only twelve are left who recognize such sayings to be the words of eternal life.

It may seem somewhat out of place to thus write when no trouble or discord exists in our association, but these things

are working their way toward us, therefore we should be stirred up to be on our watch, and before the wolf enters the flock to give the alarm. It is easier to keep out such leaven than to get it out after it gets in the church.

"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."

HORACE H. LEFFERTS, Mod.
R. M. STRONG, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at the residence of the bride's parents, on Thursday evening, May 9th, 1907, Frederic G. Fritty, of Trenton, N. J., and Miss Florence Kise, of Hopewell, N. J.

By the same, at his residence, on Saturday, May, 25th, 1907, Franklin E. Norton and Miss Cora M. Seals, both of East Amwell, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Emily R. Bailey, wife of Martin D. Bailey, of Schoharie, Schoharie Co., N. Y., died June 1st, 1907, aged 52 years and 1 month. Her maiden name was Emily Ryder. She died of cancer of the throat. She had been sick but little previous to this attack, which lasted several months. She suffered greatly at times, but was patient and uncomplaining. Her whole life was spent in serving others and trying to make them happy, never thinking of herself; she was absolutely unselfish, and every one that knew her can testify to the truth of what I have written. She was a kind, loving wife and mother, and a friend to every one she knew; she will be greatly missed by her sorrowing husband, children and friends. Her husband, two daughters and one son, with other relatives, are left to mourn their loss. She is at rest with her dear Savior, free from disease, pain and sorrow; yes, she is in the perfect likeness of her Savior and Redeemer, not waiting. She never made a profession of religion, but loved the doctrine of salvation by grace. A few weeks before she died I called to see her, by her request, and while there she told me she had desired to be a christian as far back as she could remember, but never had felt satisfied with herself—never felt that she was as good as some people claimed to be, therefore the only hope she had was in another, even Christ. She said that when she was taken sick she was troubled terribly about dying and being put into the grave. The grave was a terrible place to her, but she said it had all been taken away, and now, she said, there is no death, no grave, I cannot think of it, it is gone, and there is rest and peace in its place. Truly the saints can find rest only in Christ, not in the grave, neither does the faith of God's dear children lay hold or embrace sleeping dust, but Jesus Christ alone.

I was sent for, but could not be present at the funeral. She was buried near Schoharie village.

May the dear Lord comfort, reconcile and sustain the mourning ones by his grace, is my prayer for Jesus' sake. D. M. VAIL.

WAVERLY, Pa.

SISTER **Rebecca Miller** died at the home of her son, Isaac Miller, near Dublin Mills, Fulton Co., Pa., April 29th, 1907, aged 81 years, 4 months and 24 days. Sister Miller was baptized by the writer, together with her daughter and granddaughter, some years ago in the fellowship of the Springfield Old School Baptist Church, where she remained a faithful member until death. Sister Miller was sick only a few hours. She was a woman of a very quiet disposition, good to the sick, an ornament to her profession, firm and unwavering in the doctrine of salvation by grace. I often visited her at her son's home, where she was well cared for. Her husband died about nineteen years ago. She leaves to mourn their loss, three sons, two daughters and quite a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren, with the church, but their loss is gain to her.

The discourse was delivered by the writer, at the house, on the first day of May, to quite a large gathering of friends, after which the body was taken to Wyngardner cemetery and laid to rest until God shall bid it rise.

ALSO,

Richard Maddan, of Dublin Mills, died May 3rd, 1907, aged 56 years, 4 months and 8 days. Mr. Maddan was taken sick last fall with stomach trouble, and was taken to Philadelphia, where he had an operation, but it did not prove successful, so he was brought home, and continued to grow weaker till the end came. Mr. Maddan had been a Baptist believer for a number of years, but was never baptized. I did not get to Springfield during the winter, in which time he became very desirous to be baptized. I visited him the first of April, and he told me that if he was ever able to go to the water he wanted me to baptize him, but that time never came. I was

with him quite a number of times after the first of April. I preached in his house on Thursday night, and he enjoyed it very much; when I left him on Friday morning to return to my home he gave me a loving handshake, and in the afternoon the spirit took its flight and left the body to return to dust. Mr. Maddan was a man of very few words, but of good, sound judgment. He leaves a widow, one son, four daughters, two brothers, four sisters and a host of friends to mourn his departure. His wife and one daughter are members of the church. May God comfort all that mourn.

The writer tried to preach Jesus to a large gathering of friends and neighbors at the house, after which the body was taken, as directed in his will, to the Old Baptist meeting-house at Springfield, and after services was laid to rest.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

NEEDMORE, Pa., June 14, 1907.

Frederick S. Brown, son of sister Sophia Brown, died May 31st, 1907, aged 43 years. His decease was due to consumption. Of seven children there survive now but two sons and one daughter to comfort the declining years of our sister. May the God of all grace strengthen her for the tribulation of this world.

The funeral service was held at the home of his mother, in Brooklyn, N. Y., June 1st. The text used, 1 Cor. xv. 51–58, was dwelt upon as the testimony of living witnesses to victory over death and the grave through our Lord Jesus Christ.

ALSO,

Julia Taylor, widow of Barney Taylor, died at Stratford, Conn., June 1, 1907, aged 51 years. Three daughters and one son survive her. She was born in Loudoun County, Va., and while residing there was married to brother Taylor. She was baptized by the writer some five years ago, in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Church of New York city, in which membership she continued faithful to the end. Her sudden death was attributed to heart disease.

The funeral was largely attended by her many friends from her late home; interment at Stratford. Her favorite hymns were used: 1296, 488, 494, (Beebe's collection) and John xi. 23–27, was the subject of discourse.

JOHN McCONNELL.

NEW YORK, N. Y.

MY dear sister, **Bertha Lee Pilchard,** departed this life at her home near Beaver Dam, Md., May 9th, 1907, after a brief illness, aged 22 years. She was the daughter of Jacob and Rebecca Byrd, and was married to Bates Pilchard Feb. 22nd, 1905, living together only two years, two months and seventeen days. Never were two happier than they. Father had just divided the farm and built them a new house only a little over a year ago, and they had just gotten fixed and ready for living, as it seemed. She left father, mother, three sisters, a devoted husband and a dear little baby about three hours old. Bertha was a good and dutiful daughter, an affectionate sister and a devoted and loving wife. She never made a profession of religion, but we have reason to believe that she has gone to rest. Toward the last she said she was dying; mother said, "Darling, put your trust in the Lord." She said, "Ma, I have done it." The last words we heard her say were, "Who is crying? somebody is crying, do not cry." She then fell peacefully asleep. We feel that it is heartrending, and we cannot do without our Bertha, but the Lord knows best; O it is so hard to part with her. May we all be reconciled to His will who doeth all things right, and may we be given strength to bear this sad affliction.

Funeral services were held at her home on Saturday morning, May 11th, conducted by the husband's pastor, Mr. Clements, of the New School Baptist Church, after which her remains were interred in the cemetery at Good Will, Md.

Her sister, GEORGIA A. BYRD.

A FEW words in addition. I was away from home and could not be reached for the funeral. I have hope that with Bertha it is well. It is a sad bereavement to the family, but the Lord has done it and he can heal. The families have our deepest sympathy. T. M. POULSON.

SISTER **Sarah Elizabeth Elliott** departed this life to enter into her eternal inheritance March 17th, 1907. She died on the farm where she was born (near the old Rewastico meeting-house) nearly 64 years ago. Sister "Betsey," as she was generally known, was baptized by the writer in the fellowship of the Rewastico Church about twelve years ago, and was a devoted and faithful member to the time of her decease. She leaves one son, two grandchildren, three brothers and two sisters to mourn their loss, but their sorrowing is not without hope. They have good reason to hope that their loss is her eternal gain. I attended her funeral at Rewastico meeting-house on March 19th, after which she was laid away in the cemetery at Mardela Springs to await that voice that shall call all out of their graves, in the sweet hope that hers is to be a resurrection into everlasting life and joy. May all that mourn be comforted by this assurance.

ALSO,

Mrs. Mina Dobler, wife of brother George Dobler, died at her residence near Woolford, Dorchester Co., Md., April 16th, 1907, aged 78 years and 3 months. Sister Dobler had been a very faithful and stanch member of the Fishing Creek Church for about

twenty-five years, having been baptized by Elder Joseph L. Staton about September, 1881. She was a native of Norway, in northern Europe, but had been in this country from quite early in life. She was firm and unyielding in the truth, all her walk and conversation affirmed that she had been with Jesus and learned of him. She was very fond of the society of the Baptists, but on account of her brokenness of speech it was difficult to converse with her. Her trust was in the blood of the crucified, risen and exalted Savior, and not in anything she could do.

Her funeral took place April 18th, at the Old School Baptist meeting-house near Woolford, where she had so long delighted to meet in the assemblies of the saints. The writer tried to comfort the lonely husband and the friends who gathered to pay the last tribute of respect to one whom they loved and honored for her many good qualities.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del.

Isaac L. De La Mater died at his home in Olive, N. Y., of pneumonia, Feb. 10th, 1907, aged 73 years, 10 months and 10 days. Brother De La Mater died suddenly; he had not been confined to his bed, and although suffering from a very severe cold and having no appetite, he continued to attend to his duties until the morning of his death, when he sank down upon a couch, became speechless, although conscious, and died without a struggle, but with a look of joy on his face. He was a man of strong nerve and will, which undoubtedly accounted for his not giving up and going to bed when illness came upon him. He leaves an invalid wife, who has been in almost daily expectation of death for the past year, and two daughters, Mrs. Thomas Lennox, of Watertown, N. Y., and Mrs. Hattie Caldwell, formerly of Kingston, N. Y., who came home to care for her mother during her illness, and the church, to mourn their loss. He united with the church of Olive and Hurley about fifteen years ago, being baptized by Elder John Clark, and was a firm believer in the doctrine advocated by Old School Baptists, especially so in the absolute predestination of all things whatsoever cometh to pass.

The funeral was held at his late home; burial in the home plot. Owing to the illness at the time of Elder Clark, our pastor, Elder Sanford, of the Lexington Association, was called to preach on the occasion.

(MRS.) MARY B. KEOGAN.

OLIVE, N. Y.

George Blakley Myers was born March 18th, 1832, died May 21st, 1907, aged 75 years, 2 months and 3 days. He was married to Mary A. Mason, March 29th, 1858, and to this union were born nine children, three sons and six daughters; five have passed on to the great beyond; two sons and two daughters died in infancy; one, Mrs. M. Enterman, passed away March 20th, 1902. He leaves a widow, one son, three daughters, one brother, one sister, twenty grandchildren and one great-grandchild to mourn their loss. He united with the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church about thirty-five years ago, being baptized by Elder Gershom Peters, now deceased. He was patient in his last illness, having suffered with "la grippe" for a period of three years, and often expressed a desire to be relieved from his bodily suffering by the hand of death, but stated that there was an appointed time for him to die, and that he must wait until the Lord should end his sufferings. We feel that "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Brother Myers departed this life with a strong hope in his Redeemer and faith in the doctrine of salvation by grace.

The writer, by his request, tried to speak to a large and attentive audience, from 2 Timothy iv. 2: "Preach the word."

B. F. HUTCHINSON.

FINDLAY, Ohio.

Raymond C. Smith, infant son of Allison T. W. and Annie S. Smith, and grandson of Allison T. Smith, died March 5th, 1902. Little babe Raymond was born Sept. 20th, 1901, making him 5 months and 15 days old at the time of his death. His parents miss him very much.

ALSO,

Lloyd W. Smith, infant son of Allison T. W. and Annie J. Smith, and grandson of Allison T. Smith, died March 21st, 1907; his disease was consumption. Little Lloyd was born Nov. 5th, 1906, making him at his death 4 months and 16 days old. Our home is very lonely, but we should all be reconciled to the Lord's will, and think it was a bright flower plucked from our home by our heavenly Father for a wise purpose. Interment was at Forest Grove cemetery.

(MRS.) EARICK A. SMITH.

PARSONSBURG, Md.

APPOINTMENTS.

IF the Lord will, I expect to be with the church at Burdett, N. Y., on Tuesday, July 16th, morning and afternoon; at Grover, Pa., Wednesday night, July 17th; at Cammal Thursday night and Friday.

SILAS H. DURAND.

I EXPECT to be at Schoharie the second Sunday in July. I come to Otego first Sunday, go to Brookdale Monday, Schenectady Tuesday, Saratoga Wednesday, Albany Friday, and then to Schoharie Saturday, nothing preventing.

D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Eliza A. Hutchens, Oregon, $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Andes and Middletown Old School Baptist churches, the Lord willing, will hold a two days meeting at Arena, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, June 26th and 27th, 1907. Those coming from the east or west will take the Ulster & Delaware train Wednesday morning, change at Arkville and take Delaware & Eastern to Arena. Meeting will commence at 11 o'clock a. m. Wednesday. We hope to meet our brethren there, and also extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Place of meeting is but a few minutes walk from Arena depot. J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, in her seventy-sixth annual session, at the residence of brother Doty Varnes, five miles southeast of Farmington, Fulton Co., Ill., on Friday, August 30th, 1907, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue the two following days. Those coming from north of Farmington must come Thursday evening, where they will be met; those coming from south of Farmington will change to the Iowa Central for Cramer on Thursday afternoon, where they will be met. Those from south of Galesburg will come to Abingdon on the C., B. & Q., change to the Iowa Central at 4:36 p. m. Those from Galesburg and the north will take the Interurban at 3:30 p. m. for Abingdon, where they will meet those from the south all bound for Cramer.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 75. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1907. NO. 14.

POETRY.

HEBRON, Ohio, May 19, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I take pleasure in sending you a copy of that great hymn of Kent's, the perusal of which will feed the hungry sheep out in the desert of this sin-cursed world.

Your brother, FRANK McGLADE.

"Jehovah in council resolved to fulfill
The scheme from eternity laid in his will;
A scheme too profound for seraphs to pry,
And all for the lifting of Jesus on high.

'Twas not from the creature salvation took place,
The whole was of God, to the praise of his grace,
And all to his glory shall attend by and by,
To accomplish the lifting of Jesus on high.

His wisdom contrived the adorable plan,
Grace, mercy and peace, and good will toward man;
The great Three-in-one did the same ratify,
And all for the lifting of Jesus on high.

Here all the perfections of Deity shine:
Love, wisdom and power, and goodness divine;
His justice and grace were honored thereby;
'Twas all for the lifting of Jesus on high.

When first the great project to angels was known,
They hailed him in songs as the Lamb on the throne;
The concave of heaven resounds with their cry;
God-man, Mediator, they lift him on high.

Creation proclaims the great work of thy hand,
All beings and things in the order they stand;
Productions by chance we are led to deny—
'Twas made for the lifting of Jesus on high.

All things for his sake did Jehovah prepare,
For of him and to him and through him they are;
All systems and worlds that revolve in the sky,
Were made for the lifting of Jesus on high.

Set up as the head of his mystical frame,
He honored the records of fate with his name,
And nothing was wanting which God could supply
To aid the uplifting of Jesus on high.

When man was created what wisdom we see,
The whole he possessed was the image of thee;
But O, in his fall we are led to espy
'Twas all for the lifting of Jesus on high.

When Adam to eat of the fruit was inclined,
It answered the end which Jehovah designed;
No purpose of wisdom was altered thereby,
'Twas all for the lifting of Jesus on high.

Here Satan was nonplussed in what he had done,
The fall wrought the channel where mercy should run
In streams of salvation which never run dry,
And all for the lifting of Jesus on high.

From hence it appears he made nothing in vain,
For Adam thus formed was a link in the chain;
In him 'twas decreed that his members should die,
And all for the lifting of Jesus on high.

The man that betrayed him prediction foretold
The pieces of silver for which he was sold;
To prove his salvation the world we defy,
He fell for the lifting of Jesus on high.

The law that was given on Sinai of old,
Was still the great mercy and love to unfold,
Which did in the womb of eternity lie,
And all for the lifting of Jesus on high.

In fullness of time he came under the law,
Its jots and its tittles he answered we know,
And stretching his arms, did on Calvary die,
To accomplish his lifting to glory on high.

He slept in the tomb till the morning arose
That signed his release and confounded his foes,
Then bursting its bars he ascended the sky,
To reign in his glory eternal on high."

CORRESPONDENCE.

SADIEVILLE, Ky., May 4, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—The inclosed letter was sent me by a precious sister, a stranger in the flesh, from Wheeling, West Virginia, in reply to my little piece in the blessed SIGNS. I have read and reread it with cheering comfort, and if it meets with your approval I would like to see it in the SIGNS. I prize it as a great treasure.

Yours in hope of the truth,
SARAH E. BURGESS.

WHEELING, W. Va., April 15, 1907.

MRS. SARAH E. BURGESS—DEAR SISTER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I have been reading in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, (No. 5, March 1st,) and among many precious and comforting letters I found yours. Please excuse me for my presumption in trying to reply to your good letter. They all seem good to me, and I feel as if I would like to reply to each one personally, but again, the thought comes to my mind, Who or what am I that I should take such liberty among the children of God? I begin a survey of my former life, and present, while the tears of humble contrition begin to course down my cheeks, but, dear sister, there is a hope given me that I am loved of that tall, straight form that you saw in your dream. O, if I know anything about my heart at all, I think I do love Him with all my heart and being. You know if he had not loved us we would never have loved him; our carnal natures would have chosen sin and destruction without his love and mercy. But I am sure he has comforted you with all this precious truth, and I will not stop to speak of it now.

It was your dream that so appealed to my sympathies; I read it over and over, and as you said such things comforted you I felt that I would like to tell you about my dream. But first I will tell you a little of my experience of grace, as I hope.

I hardly know how to try to condense such a subject. I think I had serious impressions when I was seven or eight years old. I was much distressed when I was told that this earth would pass away, or be burned; I grieved in secret, but never thought of telling any one. From that time on I thought much about God, I feared him very much, and in my childish way I made many resolutions to be good, so that I should not go to the bad place; but as I grew older and went to school and mingled with other young folks my solemn feelings gradually left me, and I was gay and happy. Yet the warning voice never left me; it usually spoke to me when I was in high spirits, saying in solemn tones which would make me shudder and feel sick at heart, "You must die." Strange to say, I did not take it to mean that I was about to die a natural death. It always seemed a warning that I should turn my mind to spiritual things. Still I soon discovered that I made great failures when I tried to do good. Matters went along thus until the year 1884, when I was brought to have godly sorrow for my sins. Now, dear unknown sister, you may think it strange when I tell you that I was at a Methodist meeting when this took place. There is no Old School Baptist Church in this city, and a friend asked me to go to this revival meeting. I went feeling very indifferent to it all except the hymns, which were mostly the sweet, old-fashioned ones, which made me think of home. After the service I said to my

friend, Well, if I am never converted until that preacher converts me, such will never be. I felt sure about it, and I looked at the preacher and felt defiant toward him, but I went back with her the next night, and we went nearer to where the preacher stood. He read the parable of the prodigal son, and the words struck home to my heart with terrible force. I sat vainly trying to hide the tears that had broken all bounds. Strange to say, I felt to be one of the fold, but felt that I had wandered far from God, and was no longer worthy to be called his child. I went home that night vowing that I would never go back to that church, but I could not stay away, and the next night he told or read how Paul and Silas were taken before the council and beaten, and they went on their way rejoicing that they were thought worthy to suffer shame for his name's sake. Well, I was completely broken and dissolved in the greatest grief I had ever known. The thought came to me that if I did not confess my Savior before men, neither would he confess me before his Father in heaven. The preacher came and asked me if I would go forward, and I arose and went. They gathered about me and sang and prayed, but it seemed to me that no power on earth could reach my case. All I could do was to cry in my heart to God to be merciful to me, a sinner, and while I wept and repeated this one plea, with my poor, swollen face hidden in my hands, I saw with the eyes of my spirit our blessed Savior sitting surrounded by his disciples, and as I looked he turned his face partly toward me and smiled. Then I lifted my poor, tear-stained face and joined in a hymn they were singing. The greater part of my burden was gone, but the thought that our blessed Lord only gave me a side glance marred my joy; as often as I considered that I felt troubled. I did not join their church, as my parents were Old School Baptists, but I went regularly to the meetings as long as that preacher was in charge; after he went away I never went back there, but I went to other churches here, seeking food, but came away more hungry than I went. Finally I began to find that the Old School Baptist meetings were the only place to find the food I craved, and O how I did hunger. In the year 1892 my dear father died, and the day that his funeral sermon was preached my faith was fully settled and founded in their doctrine of salvation by grace. My dear mother, a precious old sister and I were baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church by our pastor, Elder B. W. Powers. I had many trials and temptations, and many falls, which only showed me that of myself I could do nothing. I learned by very bitter experience that I was, and am yet, nothing, less than nothing, that God is all in all. It would take much space and time to tell you all my travels, and how I have been led about and instructed, but you have been through it all, having been taught by the same divine Spirit.

Now I will come to my dream, which I had November 17th, 1905. During all these years I had longed to see our Savior's face turned full upon me; I seldom ever laid down at night without trying to pray for this that I so longed for. On that night I dreamed of being in our little log-house in the country, where we had lived several years before coming to this place; I saw, as it were, a crowd of people in and about the house, and among them was our Savior. I saw him as a man in the flesh, and although he was more quiet, more reserved, not gazing here and there like other people, but

looking straight before him, he was larger than any one else, or seemed to tower above all in dignity and majesty. If I had the power to describe perfection of manner and action I could tell you something of what he was like; he was to others what the sun is to a tallow candle. O that wonderful presence in that little log-house, and O how I loved him and adored him. The next thing I knew I was kneeling before him and washing his precious feet. I thought of the scar the spike had made, and lifted one foot (his right foot) and set it on the edge of the wooden pail and looked for it. I saw it, white in the center and purple edged. I asked him if I might wash them again, and he nodded such a gracious assent that I knew nothing more for awhile. When I came to myself I had become separated from him. I went to a little, old log schoolhouse (where I had gone to school when I was a little girl); it seemed there was to be preaching there, and I thought our Savior would be there. I went in and asked some that had gathered if he had come; they muttered something about not seeing him, and I wondered how they could seem so indifferent about it. I could not rest until I found him, so the next I knew in the vision I was back in our little log-house inquiring of my mother if she had seen him. There was a large gathering of people, some sitting around the table eating, but my Beloved was not among them. I was in a terrible state of unrest, and was standing in the room, when all at once I raised my eyes to look for him, and there he was, standing out on the front porch. He looked through the window pane, his precious face turned full upon me. I looked into the heaven of his eyes, O such loving eyes, they were melting with love and tenderness, and they drew me right to his dear breast. I awoke with my heart palpitating and my nerves trembling and thrilling; I was in such a state of rapture that I could hardly keep from crying out. O my Savior, I repeated over and over, while the tears flowed, tears of love and longing for that Holy One. I was terribly excited, and I finally begged this precious God-man to quiet me and send sleep to calm my overwrought nerves. My request was granted, and I fell into a peaceful sleep while hugging this sweet vision to my heart. I wish I could describe to you how I felt when I awoke in the morning. I was almost a stranger to my old self, everything seemed new and bright. My poor, old body is much afflicted, but I went around like a buoyant young woman until my failing strength reminded me that I was in the same old house of clay. The words that came to you when you saw Him, seem precious to me, because his presence called them forth. I never heard words like them before in my life.

Now, dear sister, (for so you seem to me) I will try to close, although I feel like writing on and on. I cannot doubt that you will accept my poor letter in the spirit that it is given. If you had not related your dream I could not have had the confidence to approach you in this manner. There are many, even of our church, who seem suspicious of such things; they are inclined to think that we are a little beside ourselves.

I was going to tell you that when I arose from my bed that morning, after seeing this vision, I wondered greatly if I ought to tell it. Something suggested that I try to write of it, so I got paper and pencil and sat down, begging the Lord to show me his will. All at once I was writing of it in verse; it flowed into my mind almost as fast as I could write

so I took that for permission to tell it to those whom I thought would rejoice with me, but alas, I have several times met with utter silence when I started to relate it, and they seemed to want to change the subject. That made me feel sorry to think that I had ventured to tell them.

Well, I will close by asking you to pardon me for this long letter, and, dear sister, I make this request in an humble spirit: if after reading this you feel that I have been foolish in writing to you, please tell me so openly, and I will try to submit to your decision with meekness and love.

(MRS.) FLORENCE PULTZ.

WELLINGTON, Colo., May 12, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS AND KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I hope it is with the spirit of christian love and fellowship that I again attempt to address you, and to send on my remittance for the SIGNS another year. I am sorry to say that I am behind with my dues, yet I feel thankful to the Giver of all that it is not for the lack of means wherewith to pay that it is deferred until this late date. You will find inclosed draft for the amount due you. I cannot tell why it is that I feel so reluctant and have such a feeling of hesitancy in attempting to address the children of God and the readers of the SIGNS, except it is that I can see in myself, so much more plainly than I can in others, things that are not as I would have them to be had I the power to have them otherwise; and yet I do know that I have reason to be thankful that I am not my own keeper, but have hope that I am of those who trust in the living God, believing that the will of God is done in all things, and that he works all things after the counsel of his own will. If at any time God fails to do his will then he ceases to be God, and we must of necessity say with the fool, "There is no God." Although my pen may have lain idle, and my tongue silent in a measure, and the way in which it has been mine to go may have been the slow and silent way, and I may have been a very dull scholar in learning wisdom's ways, yet this have I learned: "that the way of man is not in himself;" and this also: what a strange thing is human life. Yet how much more wonderful and mysterious is the sustaining and upholding grace of God toward those upon whom he has set his heart to comfort, when called to endure some fight of affliction. How much more wonderfully strange do these things appear to us when we are brought under the many trying circumstances connected with them in this present life. It had become apparent to all about us that my husband, who has already passed the allotted time for man upon the earth, was going down rapidly, and to all appearance the time to remain for him was short. He was taken suddenly and seriously ill, and I cannot boastingly say that I did of my own power and will, when the time came for the trial of my faith and I was put to the test, turn to Him who has ever proven himself to be a present help in time of trouble. No, there was no praise due me that the strong, protecting arm of God was thrown so gently about me, bearing me upward and onward beyond the transitory things of time, until it seemed at times I stood in the peaceful presence of Him who doeth all things well. How strange it all seems to me that I was given strength, both mentally and physically, to endure what I did. The first week, before his condition became so serious and alarming, I cared for him almost wholly, he being

then a very sick man. It was but natural that I should have a desire to faithfully do my duty as far as I was able, and it was also his wish that I do so; my care of him was almost constant night and day, he being delirious most of the time and greatly pressed for breath. Not that I lacked plenty of offered assistance to relieve me, but not until a trained nurse from Fort Collins came to relieve me was I willing to turn my charge over to another. The doctor gave his instructions to her, with the remark, "I do not think he will live through the night." Through it all I was undisturbed in my peace of mind; do you wonder I say, How wonderful is the sustaining grace of God? As I look back over it all today, in wonder I ask, Will I ever be able to endure the same again should it be laid upon me? The answer comes to me, There is nothing impossible with God. Although contrary to the expectation of any of us, in a few days he began to improve, and is around again, though a confirmed invalid. I am not sure that it is proper for me to mention this at this time in my letter, yet I do know that it is a great thing to be able to feel that God does indeed have compassion on one of the least deserving of those whose hope has been strengthened and faith confirmed in the belief that the grace of God is a divine reality, and that he has the same power to-day to calm the troubled waters as he had when he withdrew himself from the multitude, and with his disciples entered a ship, and a great tempest arose, so that the disciples became fearful, and they besought him to save them; and when he had rebuked the wind and the waves, and they obeyed him, and all had become calm, they wondered what manner of man this is that even the elements obey him. They marveled at this display of divine power in one less than God himself, although they had listened to his sermon on the mount and had witnessed the display of his power in healing all manner of diseases; but to believe that he had power to command the wind and waves so they obeyed him was too great a miracle for their faith to believe. They needed instruction, and Jesus had chosen this method of instructing his disciples more perfectly, and to make it manifest to their understanding that he was indeed the Son of God with power.

Perhaps I have already extended this as far as will be profitable for all concerned, but I had this one circumstance, and still another on my mind, which I will leave entirely to your judgment to publish or not. The SIGNS is so well supplied with matter that it is both pleasing and profitable, and it appears rather like encroaching on the liberality and good gifts manifested by others who can occupy space and fill its pages much more to profit than I can, yet there is a duty incumbent on all, and none can say, "I have no need of thee." Each is to make use of the gift given, be it small or great; let each one be true to their own convictions. Yet the thought is uppermost in my mind that we are not always sure our convictions are from the right source, when we remember that there are evil spirits abroad in the world that are deceivers, and are lying in wait, seeking whom they may deceive by their cunning and artful devices. But however that may be, it is sure that none are able to give only as they themselves have received to profit; then it can be said, Of such as I have, I give freely. My writings generally have a tone of weakness about them that is greatly to be deplored, and is certainly very discouraging to me;

and do or say what I may in the house of God, it is to little profit, for I am but an unprofitable servant. But when shall I be stronger? Shall it be the next year, or the next day? or shall it be when this mortal shall have put on immortality, when death, weakness and all the attending vanities of mortality are swallowed up in victory? May it please God to give strength equal to our day, that we may with patience wait for our Lord from heaven. How often in my experience in this life do I recall to mind when I, in the springtime of life, before the wintry blasts had swept their cold and merciless waves over my innocent young life, and I stood at the threshold of my father's door and watched the fleeting clouds mingled with bright streaks of sunshine as they threw their reflections upon the broad, smooth face of the Shawangunk Mountains that lay spread out before me, and as my mind reverts to these events I see my own life of sunshine and shadows reflected there. As I recall with freshened memory the many and varied dangers, seen and unseen, that I have been called to pass through in the intervening time that has passed since then, I can only wonder and admire and bless the merciful God who has watched for my welfare all those years, and who has kept my feet from going in the way of Cain, for I realize that of myself I am unstable as water.

I had it in my mind, as I have mentioned, to speak of another circumstance, in which I feel that I have been much profited by way of instruction in the order of God's house, which perhaps I never would have learned had this not occurred; but I have already extended this further than I intended, and I may some time in the future refer to the other, and will now close with love to all who may read what I have written, hoping that the mercy of God may continue to follow us and all his Israel in the future as in the past, and his name have all the glory.

Your sister in hope,

ABBIE CODDINGTON.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April 6, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I would like to have this letter of brother George H. Beard's published in the SIGNS. I have known him from his childhood, and he and his people are among my dearest friends, and this letter is of peculiar interest to me. I am persuaded that it will also be read with comfort by brethren who do not know him personally.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

BROOKTON, N. Y., Feb. 24, 1907.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR ELDER: —I came near saying, Dear Uncle Silas, as we were used to saying in childhood days. I received your good letter a few days ago, and was pleased to hear from you. Glad you have recovered from "la grippe," which is a very debilitating malady, and that your wife's health is improving. There seems to be a great deal of sickness and many deaths among our acquaintances and friends, and we feel sad to know that we will see them no more, and yet I believe in a life beyond the grave, which is life everlasting, so if those who have passed from this life are chosen vessels of God's mercy, surely they are in a place of hallowed peace, and we can but say, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow." His will concerning them on earth is accomplished. I have in mind specially the dear soldiers of the cross that have been called home in the past few years with whom I was personally acquainted: Elders Purington,

Beebe, Bundy, White, Hubbell, Campbell, Rittenhouse, Meredith and Jenkins. We are loath to part with them, and yet we feel that our loss is their eternal gain.

You ask for my exercises of mind and my experience. I do not know that my experience is that of a child of God, but I do know that if I am a child of God, and am led by his Spirit, I am an heir of salvation and a joint-heir with Jesus Christ our Lord. As you know, I always used to go to meeting with my parents until I left home to go to New York, and when in the city I attended Old Baptist meetings quite regularly, but I cannot say that I knew anything about the religion of Jesus Christ until I was about nineteen years old, when I felt a strong desire to know the truth. I had attended meetings in several of the so-called churches of the city, such as Talmage's, Dr. Hall's Dr. Paxton's and Dr. McArthur's, but could see nothing in what they talked but man the savior of man, or salvation by the works of the flesh. I had read considerable of the Scriptures, and saw nothing but Christ the Savior of sinners, and I felt that I was a sinner, but I could not feel that I knew anything about salvation. I went along in this way for some time, feeling that I was lost, and that there was no help for me, when I believe one day as I was reading, "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries," I felt that the adversary (outbreaking sin) was destroyed in me, and that I hated sin and the ungodly lusts of this world, and that all praise is due to our most high God for his mercy toward me. I felt that he had put a new song in my mouth, and established my goings; but alas, many doubts arose in my mind whether or not it was my imagination. I did not see how God could save one so vile and full of sin. It has been about seventeen years since I first began to be troubled about my salvation, and it has been a mixture of hope and despair ever since. I was received, and baptized in the fellowship of the Caroline Old School Baptist Church in December, 1894. At the time I was received, and after baptism, I felt lifted out of myself, as though I was in the air, looking down upon the world. I have had seasons of feeling the presence of the Lord, when I could see a great light while awake at night (yet with my eyes closed), and could hear the words, Fear not, thy sins are forgiven. Just before such times I have been in great trouble on account of my lost and helpless condition, feeling that there was no refuge, and praying from my heart that the Lord would have mercy on my soul; then how comforting comes the light, filling all the world with beauty and my heart with joy unspeakable. The world is full of so-called evangelists, &c., teaching the people of a god who is striving with their souls, but cannot save them unless they change their hearts and open the door so he can walk in. I am thankful that the God I love to talk, think and hear about is the only true and living God, and that he has all power in heaven and in earth, and he will do all his pleasure.

My health has been very poor for two years, so that I have not been able to do any but the lightest work, and at times could do no work. My trouble is a weak heart, caused by the effects of "la grippe," and the doctors say I will outgrow it if I rest or keep quiet enough; but I have not been bedridden, which is a comfort, for

Bertha and her parents have plenty to do without caring for me. Bertha is real well this winter, but Elder and Mrs. Bogardus are neither of them well any of the time, and as I have not been able to work out of doors much, father has had a good deal more than he has really been able to do. Time brings many changes; we cannot tell what the morrow will bring forth, but the Lord knows all things, and doeth all things well. Many things seem strange to us, but not so with him.

"His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower."

Father returned home last night from preaching at the funeral of brother Chamberlain. One by one the Reaper gathers in his ripened sheaves, and he puts them where time can no more whiten the hair or blanch the cheek, but where there is eternal rest.

I hope this will not tire or trouble you. Bertha joins in love to you all.

Your brother, I hope, in Christ,

GEO. H. BEARD.

HOPEWELL, N. J., April, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR PASTOR AND BROTHER:—I am thinking of the evening of our last visit at your home, and that the conversation was nearly all upon spiritual things, and how glad my heart was, and I cannot help thinking of the words, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst." I love to hear the name of Jesus extolled above all else. Things of this world are of small account compared with heavenly things. It is too often the case where God's dear children are gathered together that the name of Jesus is seldom spoken, and yet we know they all love his name. Often I ask myself, Why is this so? And I bow my head in sorrow and think, Well, I talk too much, and will keep still in the future. Then these words come into my mind: "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another," and thus their pure minds are stirred up by way of remembrance. It does seem that my dead, dormant mind needs stirring up often, and I love to be thus reminded. Many are the times that I am ready to halt, poor, doubting one that I am, I am ready to give up the race, but a word or a handshake from a brother or sister strengthens me, and I feel that perhaps after all I am in the way.

As you were speaking a few Sundays ago from the words, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith," I thought, Do I lay aside every weight, and do I run with patience the race set before me? O I fear not. If it were not for the guideposts, of which you spoke, along the way, I should often turn back and think I am not on the right road, or have lost my way. But as I go on and on, and here and there meet a child of God and talk a little with them, it gives me new strength, and as they are the Lord's little ones I am made to know that this is indeed the way. The dear Savior said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." And I hope that I know the truth; I think I do, and love it, too. I feel thankful to all-wise God that he has made me to love the truth, and to follow on and to frequent his courts, although I feel to be far behind the rest. I am a very dull scholar in the school of Christ, still I feel

to say, with Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge." In the valley of Achor I have learned that God is merciful to a poor sinner such as I. It is there that I am made to cry out, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. Hymn 1032 is most beautiful. My prayer is that God will ever keep me desiring these things. I am most happy when I feel poor and lowly and like sitting at the feet of my Redeemer, as did Mary. Mary had chosen that good part that should not be taken from her. But often I have heard you say it was needful to have Marthas as well as Marys. I think that I am a Martha sometimes, troubled about many things. May the Lord guide my steps.

It has pleased the Lord to bring me back to my dear old home church again, where we can meet together in peace and with thanksgiving to Him who gives us all our blessings, and who is altogether lovely. As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is he among the sons; and as the lily among the thorns, so is he among the daughters. What beautiful comparisons in Solomon's Song! It is said, I will make the desert to blossom as the rose. I think that I have experienced this, and so has every child of God, still it seems to me that so much of my time I am shut up and cannot come forth; I am in prison, and long to break the bars asunder. Paul said, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." I heard Elder Vail preach from these words some years ago up in the quiet little meeting-house at Otego, N. Y. I cannot recall the words he spoke, but the sweetness is still with me. "Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." It is to me most important and solemn, Do I walk as becometh a child of God? if indeed I am one of his. I desire to do so, and wish never to find fault with my brethren, so endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Why do I not see the beam in my own eye before the mote in my brother's eye? There is so much that is of the flesh about me. It is so hard to know whether all is of the flesh or not. When I go back in memory to my early experience, when a child in its first love, I can but feel that it was not the flesh. Our flesh does not love the things of God, nor desire them, nor love the brethren. We see many evils in the flesh, but when the Spirit of God is with us how different, and how heavenly and precious things appear to us, and we wonder why we had not seen them in this way before. No matter what condition or color the children of God are, I love them, and they are made to dwell together in love. It is as a dear sister said to me a short time ago: "Our hearts are said to be knit together in love, and it bothers us sometimes to find the stitches, but yet they are surely there." I think sometimes that I am different from any one else. I wish that I could hear the name of Jesus exalted all the time. I feel sorry when little things come in to take up the time. These are weights, are they not? It is said, "Let us lay aside every weight." I am by nature of a lively turn of mind, and like everything that is beautiful in the world. My lively turn of mind often grieves me very much. I think this is one of my besetting sins. Then again I have ex-

perienced some of the trials of which Job spoke, and feel that I am a companion of dragons and owls. But for some months past the most of the time I have felt to say with the psalmist, "I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most high." "Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth."

Pray for me, dear brother, that my faith fail not, and that I may always come before God's little ones with lowliness and meekness and forbearance, striving to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, that God may be praised.

Your unworthy sister,

MARY BREWSTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., May 18, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I feel impressed to write for publication upon these words: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."—Heb. x. 31, and I hope that it is with no thought or endeavor to gain anything, but rather to give. I hope, too, that I may give expression to the meditations of my heart in such a way that they will be acceptable in the sight of God and to the comfort of those who may read.

It would seem from the language immediately preceding the above text: "Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord," that Paul means to convey the idea that every transgression shall be visited with stripes, and that there is no escaping the rod. Every subject of God's mercy who has through tribulation entered the kingdom, has learned that the natural heart is evil continually, and that we have that evil constantly to contend against and to mourn in ourselves. When the quickening power of the Spirit is first felt in applying the atoning blood of Jesus, experimentally, soon we begin to feel the truth of the words: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Nor is the love of God shed abroad in the heart or the peace of God felt in the soul until we have, through bitter experience, been taught the dreadful reality that I am a sinner, and "that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." By the Spirit's irresistible work our minds were led to a knowledge of our own depravity, our hearts were opened to their deepest recesses, our sins in all their magnitude stared upon us, hell became a reality, for we felt its pangs in our very soul; so, burdened with guilt, becoming more and more heavy laden, we at last sank under the burden, despaired and died—died to come forth in newness of life and with a new song in our mouths, "even praise unto our God." We came forth new creatures, old things had passed away, behold, all things became new. We now have a spiritual mind, which seeks and discerns spiritual things and enters into an enjoyment of them. We had a natural mind, and were, until quickened by the Spirit, dead in trespasses and sins, walked according to the course of this world, had our conversation in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of our carnal mind, and were by nature the children of wrath even as others. But through the effectual work of the Spirit our minds were led to a knowledge of the truth, glorious visions met our view, beautiful wonders filled our minds with unspeakable delight, the glory of God shone round about us, and we were absent from the body and present with the Lord.

My object in writing as I have already written, is to lead the mind of the reader

into a better understanding of what I have uppermost in my mind to write. It is this: We cannot serve God and mammon; we cannot enjoy the love of God and the love of the world at the same time. "Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord."—2 Cor. v. 6. When we sow to the flesh, we of the flesh reap corruption, but when we sow to the Spirit, we of the Spirit reap life everlasting. The natural man and the spiritual man are opposites; that is, what one likes the other dislikes; what comforts and nourishes one crucifies the other. When we live after the Spirit, the flesh with the lusts thereof are crucified, but when we live after the flesh we die, die to all the spiritual privileges and enjoyments which are ours through Jesus Christ our Lord. After that we have received the knowledge of the truth, if we sin wilfully we cannot then turn, take it back again and thus escape the consequences of our sin. "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"—Heb. x. 28, 29.

Into what intense darkness and distress of soul has many a subject of grace been plunged on account of sin or disobedience, and learned by bitter experience, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." We learn obedience by the things we suffer. The stripes must and do fall upon the transgressor or disobedient. There is no escaping the rod, "but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."—Heb. x. 27. It will be fearful indeed, for no chastening of the Lord is joyous, but grievous, but rest assured, dear subject of God's love, that it is for your good, and will yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness when we are exercised thereby. His loving-kindness he will not utterly take from us, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. His covenant he will not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of his lips. "Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever."—Psalms lxxxix. 33–35. His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."—John x. 28, 29.

"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Paul therefore writes to the Corinthian brethren: "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men;" those whom in another place he addresses thus: "Now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light." That they walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise; that they have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them; that they forget not the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is, but that they consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works.

Paul in this epistle to the Hebrews expressed the language of my soul for the Israel of our God in better language than I can: "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting

covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

J. CORDER MELLOTT.

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

"I AM the way." As the Son he was the Father's way. He came down from heaven, he ascended back to heaven. He was in the world, the world knew him not. He came to his own, his own knew him not. He had power to give life, and no power could destroy what he gave. He was in the Father, and the Father was in him. He alone could glorify his Father, for he came from him. It was of him and to him and by him all things came. Prophets prophesied of him because moved by him. He was God, and it was not robbery to be called God, nor to be worshiped as God, nor to be held in the Scriptures as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. The way was to God, and not to the world. He had power over all flesh, to give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him. His power was his Father's power. In his mediatorial work he worked the works of his Father. In his humanity he was the servant of his Father, and as one of his brethren. He could not lie, for truth was the girdle of his loins, and righteousness sustained him in that he came out from God. One of old declared, "Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all the powders of the merchant?" What he brought with him is the assurance of his origin. All frankincense and myrrh. He came as the Head of all his members. He is their way, he is the light of God in the wilderness, where Jacob was found. There he leads and instructs and keeps as the apple of his eye. His eye is their faith or sight; they cannot walk without him; they cannot feed and lie down but by him, for where he is they shall be also, kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. If the last of this way is sure (kept by the power of God), is not all that comes to pass sure also? He is the way in which the righteous run and are not weary, walk and not faint. God made known his ways to Moses and his acts to the children of Israel by delivering them from their enemies by his high and outstretched hand. Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, esteeming reproach, forsaking Egypt, keeping the passover and the sprinkling of blood, passing with all Israel (not one left behind) through the sea on dry land, and beholding the assaying to do so of the Egyptians ending in death. This way of God saved all Israel and destroyed all enemies. This way preserved the harlot Rahab when she received the spies with peace. Sinner, where were you and what were you when you hailed with delight the Lord's messenger of deliverance? To this day you are a pilgrim and a stranger in the world, but by the grace and mercy of God in a covenant ordered you rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. The fleshly way will be like Esau, flattering to man but despised of God. Not even the patriarch could change the blessing. The old servant said, I being in the way, the Lord led me, &c. The Lord led him where he sent him. Believer, the Lord leads and the Lord sends; he takes us into sorrow that faith may look to the way for deliverance, the good old way the saints have always traveled. The highway has been cast up and the stones

gathered out of the way. Jesus, when he delivers from sin, leaves not a doubt of his power, but makes a believer out of a Mary, or Manasseh, or even more vile me. When the soul is in that way doubts, fears, unbelief and all manner of evil appear as the will of God for a purpose, a wise purpose, a legal purpose. Christ was led by the Spirit (not by the flesh) into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil; he saw all the devil had to show, he saw all the cunning, lying devices his people should endure; he was put upon the temple, he was put upon the mountain; he saw all the glory of this world. Believer, has not the tempter shown you at times all these same things, and for a time made you believe them? But grace reigned through righteousness, and you had a view of that in which Christ conquered. We are not deluded to think that we can do any more to-day than we did yesterday in our sins. It is no more I, but grace can do all the will of God.

"Try the spirits." In the wilderness there are spirits. In Egypt when the rod appeared as a serpent, Moses was commanded to take it by the tail, and it became the same rod of divine protection. Christ was made sin for us, and Moses saw it. Christ withstood temptation, and the devil saw it, but from behind. "Get thee behind me, Satan." The rod showed Moses that faith alone could discern God's way. The destroying angel must stop his rage at Israel's tent, for Israel is camped in this way, as a pilgrim, to move when the cloud lifts.

G. M. FETTER.

PRATT CITY, Alabama.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The apostle Paul charged Timothy to "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."—2 Tim. ii. 15. The only way that I see for any minister to show himself approved unto God in his ministerial office is to preach that which the Lord bids him preach, declaring all the counsel of God without fear, and to feed the church of God with the sincere milk of the word, without trying to skim off the cream: election and predestination; also to walk as ensamples unto the flock, taking the oversight of the flock, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind, and such faithful workmen need not to be ashamed. That which Paul wrote to Timothy is applicable to all that are called of God to preach the gospel, but according to reports we see sometimes that some have not obeyed, and have been using skimmed milk, until some of the children are as tender eyed as Leah and her sons were, and they are taking to the "effort system." When Noah and his family entered into the ark, and Jehovah shut them in, and the waters of the flood began to rise, there was a grand display of the effort system made on the outside, but none were saved. Also there was a gigantic effort made in the plains of Shimar, but it was a failure. The children of the new covenant better try to wait upon the Lord and obey his commands, "rightly dividing the word of truth." To take a casual glance, it does not look as if the word of truth should be divided, but a closer look shows that it is actually necessary. Paul makes or shows a division in writing to Timothy; he says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," &c. There are thousands of professors in the world that substitute what is written for reproof and correction for doctrine, and never preach doctrine; and

while they claim such a broad and liberal system of salvation, it is nothing but a broad system of condemnation. There is a grand distinction and division to be made between the law and grace, but thousands show forth the works of the law written on stones, and preach the law for grace, or its works to obtain grace. "The law is not of faith," but grace is the source of faith. "The law worketh wrath," but grace brings peace to all that receive it. "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified;" but grace justifies through the redemption of Christ. "By the law is the knowledge of sin;" by grace is the knowledge of righteousness. The law imposed a system of bondage, foreshadowed by Hagar and her son; grace brought freedom, foreshadowed by Sarah and her son. The law was a system of burdensome works, but grace brought rest and tranquillity to all that were oppressed with a knowledge of these burdens. The law was without mercy, but grace is all merciful. The law curses all disobedient subjects, but grace is full of blessings, and leads its subjects to obedience. The law was added because of the transgression of the first Adam, but grace is given because of the obedience of the second Adam. "The law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

The foregoing is only an inferior synopsis of the subjects touched upon, but if these topics were given justice it would fill a whole SIGNS or more. I leave it to the better judgment of the editors what to do with this. The SIGNS comes to hand regularly. I have been so afflicted since early in February some of the time I could read only a little at a time. I find it so well filled this new year that I wanted to write some in commendation, but brother Allison has excelled anything I could say, and I will just add my amen to his article.

Yours in weakness and fear,

P. J. POWELL.

RALEIGH, N. C., April 25, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—As the time has come for me to renew my subscription, I herewith inclose check for the amount. I enjoy reading your paper, and I wish I could contribute something to its columns, and I am sure if I know myself I desire to indorse the doctrine contended for, and I especially enjoy your candid expression, because you are cautious in your writing, according others the right to think for themselves, as you do for yourselves, and advising forbearance as well as faithfulness. I especially enjoyed Elder Ker's reply to the questions asked, in April 15th number. Brother Ker, your answers were just what they should have been in every sense of the word. Brother Chick, your letter in May 1st number, relating to councils, is to the point; it is rich matter indeed, and will meet the approbation of every Baptist that is established in these matters. The great Head of the church said, The Holy Ghost shall guide you into all truth. He is the leader still, and David said, "He leadeth me beside the still waters." I have thought much of late on this short twenty-third Psalm, and it has been sweet to me, especially the verse which reads, "He leadeth me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake." I verily believe there is a race

set before each child of grace, and he must run it, and Paul admonishes us to run it with patience. Every path is one of righteousness, whether it be a path of sorrow, of sickness, of poverty, of distress or of death, and we are led therein for his name's sake. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." How have we received him? Just as the prophet Isaiah did: as the child born, a Son given, the one upon whose shoulder is the government of the church of God; his name is Wonderful, the mighty God, everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Such is our God, and when we are given a glimpse of these wonderful truths we can say with David, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me." This path in the valley and shadow of death is still a path of righteousness, Jesus has been there before us, and we are simply following after. Jesus said, "They follow me," and I am glad of this thought: that his children are never called to pass through any trial that He has not first endured. There is nothing that we can call to mind that Jesus did not endure while in the flesh. He is head over all things to the church, which is his body, and every stroke, whether of suffering or death or any trial we could have, just acquaints us with our Lord, and conforms us to his image more and more; but all our suffering, could it last a thousand years, could not atone for our sins, but it brings us into sweet fellowship with Him who did atone for them, and made an end of them, and at the same time brought in everlasting righteousness to his people.

Brother Chick, I would be glad for you to visit our association, the Little River, this fall, in September; it convenes at Clayton, just fourteen miles south of Raleigh. I saw in the *Gospel Messenger* your promise to go to the Kehukee Association, so I am hoping you will also be at ours, and not only you, but we would be glad to have any of the dear brethren visit us, for I am sure they would meet with a welcome among our churches down here.

Very truly,

W. A. SIMPKINS.

ROMULUS, Oklahoma, March 1, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN:—My mind has been called to bygone days, in which I was very sick and thought for a time to be near death, but for a purpose unknown to me I was spared, and have passed through many dark places since. I was sick two months, and it seemed at the time that I was to die. I was perfectly willing to go, and prayed to the Lord for the moment to come for my departure. Some said to me, You should want to live and to be with your family of little children. I could only tell them that they were in the hand of God, and he could take care of them without me just as if I were with them, and better than I could care for them. I was reconciled to his perfect will, and was anxious to depart and be with Christ. For months, dear brethren, whatever came up, it made no difference how excitable it was, it did not excite me in the least, and nothing fretted me or made me angry, and nothing wearied me; there was not a doubt in my mind, and my prayer was, continually, to be taken home; I did not want to live in this world. My mind was continually carried above and rested upon heaven and heavenly things, and then I could not believe that I ever should doubt again. I thought I was going to leave this world of sin and sorrow. All this time I was able to help do the cooking, and was up a

good part of the time. I would tell my husband it was all right; I will leave this world soon; I do not have any desire to live here; my home is not here, and I long to go home and meet my dear ones who have gone before. This went on for some months. One night I lay sleeping, and I saw in my dream the Son of God come in the flesh, as of a man, and it seemed to me: Now this is the Savior, and his sheep know his voice and will follow him. I thought in my dream there was a strange man at our home, and this man did not know the Lord Jesus, and he came up to this strange man and said to him, I have come to judge men. I thought that the Savior said to me, Where is thy family? I told him that they were in another room, and I would have them come to him. I thought Jesus said, No, I will go to them. He went to them, and came back to me and said, Your family is saved. Then I awoke, and this dream gave me sweet rest concerning my little family. I lingered along, and my talk was all of heavenly things, there was not a thing in this world that was of any enticement to me. Time went on and I fell into great doubt and fear, and was made to cry out, O wretched one that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? There have been but very few times since then that I have found myself submissive to the Lord's will as I was at that time. Why am I thus tossed to and fro? How my hopes are crossed whatever I do, or wherever I go. O Lord, this is not because thou changest, but because I stray. Lord, guide me by thy Spirit, and keep me in the way. My mind has been cast down for the last few days, and my thoughts have been called back to the days that are past, and their memory is dear to me. O if I could but have an humble spirit, and be reconciled to the Lord's will as I once was. Without Jesus we can do nothing, and with him we can do all things. By his Spirit we are humbled; by his Spirit we are willing and reconciled, and by his Spirit we are carried up above all earthly things, and bask in the sweet smiles of his face. I fear I shall fall at last, for I am the least of all, if indeed I am his at all.

Dear brethren, I did not write this for publication, but to relieve my mind, but do with it as you see fit. May the Lord bless all the household of faith.

From a little, weak sister, if one at all,

ELLA DAVIS.

WOODSTON, Ont., June 2, 1907.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I feel a desire to write you a few lines, and will try to do so; not that I have anything special on my mind, or think I can write anything that will benefit you in any way, but I cannot read with any comfort, I cannot meditate on anything but worldly affairs, and am much cast down in mind spiritually over my cold, indifferent, ignorant state of mind religiously, and I thought possibly if I sat down to write, my mind might become a little more reconciled to my condition, or it might ease my mind in telling some of the troubles I experience and the many dark and trying places I get into, and which seem so different from the experience of God's people; and many of these things it seems to me are a shame to one professing to know the power of the gospel as long as I have. Over forty years I have hoped that I knew the experience of God's people, and for thirty-two years have made a public profession of the name of Jesus, and now at the end of all these years I feel so dead to spiritual things that I wonder if it is possible

there has ever been any real experience of grace in my heart; and, worse still, I am in doubt if there is such a thing as real, vital, revealed religion. I believe there is a God, for it seems to reason that there must be a ruling power that guides the universe with unerring certainty and wisdom, but what good does that do me unless I can feel his power in my own soul and have some evidence in my own heart that he is leading me, and that I am interested in the salvation of Jesus Christ? But what evidence have I that such is my condition? I cannot read the Bible with any comfort or edification, and as soon as I read I forget. There seems no light or life or interest in it, much as I desire that it might be so, and the Lord knows that I do desire that I might be instructed and edified and benefited thereby, but such is not the case; and then my daily life, that is, my thoughts, words and actions, are all of the world and about the world, when I would have them centered on better things, but I find I cannot control or direct my thoughts or actions, for after the world and the things of the world they will run, and not after Jesus and the things of the kingdom of God, and so I find I am tossed on a sea of uncertainty, perplexity and doubt, and often wonder where the scene will finally end. Will I at last be made manifest as a deceiver and deceived? This brings me to another condition of mind that is unpleasant and unenviable, and that is the fear of death, which often makes me tremble as I think of the hereafter, or if there is any hereafter, or will I go down to death with no light, no evidence that I am saved from the power of death and made to triumph in that solemn moment when earth and all its vanities are disappearing from my view, and when no power but God's can strengthen and uphold me and make me cry, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" O that I could feel, if but in a small degree, the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus on an evil conscience and cleansing my heart from sin and its power; but alas, I do not know if there be such a thing, but my longing after something of that kind sometimes makes me hope that there is a principle of good in my being somewhere, or why should I long and cry for something I know nothing about? A person that is hungry longs for food, and a thirsty person for water, and they know what they want and that there is plenty somewhere, and it is the evidence of life and vitality to so desire, and O is it possible that the longing desires in my heart for salvation, for spiritual food, for the presence of the Master, are evidences of spiritual life within, and of a principle that can only be satisfied with spiritual food and with the visits of him whom I once thought I loved and adored? These are solemn thoughts with me at the present time, and O for some one or something to satisfy the cravings of that hunger and thirst that I do not believe can be satisfied with earthly things. I have one evidence that I am different from the world, and that is, I cannot worship with them, I cannot bow down to their gods, and feel, I think, somewhat like the three Hebrew children when they said to the king, "Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." O I know I cannot worship with the professing world; I may have no God and no religion, but I know the religion of the world is false and vain, and only an image set up which, if there be a God, he will certainly destroy; but I am not as much concerned about the re-

ligion of the world as I once was. It is my own religion that I am concerned about, and whether my experience is true or only a delusion; I know that like Ruth I can say, "Though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens," not like a follower of Jesus, not like what I ought to be and what I desire; I follow after the vanities of the world rather than the things of the Spirit, but sometimes I hope I desire to be better and more like the Master, and at other times I am afraid I do not care, and so I am a stranger here below, unfit to live or die.

We had a visit a week ago from sister Lollie Campbell, who was at sister McPhail's with us the night you were there, and I enjoyed her visit. Like myself, she feels cold and indifferent to spiritual things, but we had some pleasant conversation on the experience of our sinful hearts, and it did me good and made me feel we were one in spirit.

Now I have written you a curious letter, but my mind feels a little relieved, and I hope I have not tired your patience. I enjoyed your preaching at the May meeting more than is common for me, and was glad you came, and hope you may visit us again.

I will now close, with kind love to you and yours, from your unworthy brother,

R. SCATES.

BLUE SPRINGS, Mo., May 21, 1907.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR FRIEND:—As my subscription to the SIGNS was due the 15th of this month, and having been a constant reader of it for over twenty years, I feel a desire to continue reading it as long as I live, as the doctrine it advocates suits me better than any Baptist periodical I have ever read. I am familiar with the doctrine set forth in the first and second volumes of the Editorials published by dear Elder G. Beebe, and having read many of his late editorials in the SIGNS, and comparing all the doctrinal views, I have seen nothing conflicting with the prospectus published in 1832, though three-fourths of a century has elapsed, and the faithful ones who so earnestly contended for salvation by grace have gone to their reward. I hope to feel thankful that the Lord has chosen Elder Chick and yourself to earnestly contend for the same truths which have always been dear to those who were not born after the will of the flesh, but of God. Your editorial in No. 8 (April 15th,) on "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's," was edifying, as it shows conclusively to my mind the difference between salvation by grace and of works. O how glad I would be if all who claim to be Primitive Baptists were established in salvation by grace, and not rely so much on the works of the creature. Your and Elder Chick's editorials are worth much more to me than the cost of the SIGNS, to say nothing of the able and comforting communications from all the contributors, which I value very highly; but knowing both of you as I hope I do, you will take none of the glory to yourselves, for the Scripture says, "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" I feel sure you feel you have nothing to boast of, but it only humbles you, and makes you realize from whom your help must come. I hope you both may be spared long to edit the SIGNS to the comfort of the poor in spirit.

I wish I could send you many more names, but I fear some are weak in the doctrine.

Your friend,

THOMAS W. RECORDS.

SACRED MUSINGS.

AH, yes, I am sinful and mortal, grey hairs are here and there, the wrinkles and blemishes all declare the decay of this corruptible tabernacle. I love my body, this house of clay; this is very evident, for I nourish and cherish it, (Eph. v. 29,) but it waxeth old, I feel its frailty, its aches and pains, its days of languor and sickness all admonish me that some day the earthly house of this tabernacle will be dissolved. O thou precious Jesus, the heavenly one, (1 Cor. xv. 49,) my thoughts are turned to thee. Once thou wast here in the world in the likeness of sinful flesh, thou wast slain, and laid in the tomb, but thou hast triumphed over death and the grave, thou hast risen from the dead, thou hast ascended on high, thou now art glorified, crowned with glory and honor. (Heb. ii. 9.) Hast thou not bought thy people with a price? This hope thou hast wrought in me, that my body and spirit are thine. (1 Cor. vi. 20.) O Savior, thou art precious, my soul clingeth to thee, and from thy loved doctrine this I know, our "bodies are the members of Christ." How instructive, how comforting is that word: The body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. O Jesus, lovely One, mighty Redeemer, thou knowest the bodies of all thy chosen ones are weak, mortal, corruptible, vile, but thy doctrine speaketh to my heart, they shall sleep in Jesus, (be laid to sleep by Jesus.) Blessed sleep!

O, in that moment let me gaze upon thy charms,
And clasp thee dying, in my fainting arms;
Then gently, leaning on thy breast,
Sink in soft slumber into sacred rest.
Death's ghastly form shall have a pleasing air,
And all things smile, while heaven and thou art there;
My soul with thee in paradise shall be,
My body laid to sleep by thee.

Laid to sleep by thee? O sweet, consoling thought, my flesh shall rest in hope. "Laid to sleep by Jesus." Thine own voice shall us awake, yes, we shall awake with thy likeness, (Psalms xvii. 15,) immortal, incorruptible, glorified, fashioned like unto the glorious body of our ascended Redeemer. (Phil. iii. 21.) We shall bear the image of the heavenly. On earth I see all comeliness decay, here pain and sickness, woes and death are ours. O sin doth so mar and taint our mortal life, here we have blight and shadow, bitterness and strife, but there, in heaven above, where reigns our dear Redeemer, the shades of evening ever are unknown. There, there is no waning of our day, there shall no night be there. Immortal Day, infinite light is there, the Lamb is the light thereof.

O then, when in my dying hour
All nature sinks and fades away,
Support my soul with thy redeeming power;
Thy smile shall be my everlasting day.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

NOTICE.

THE OLD PATHS DEFENDED

Is the title of a pamphlet published, now on sale, containing letters and extracts from many of our oldest and most able ministers and Primitive Baptist editors in the United States on the innovations of the day. Also historical sketches, &c., showing how our people have ever regarded the inventions and practices of the worldly religionists. Price, 25 cents per copy; $2.00 per dozen. Send to

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PSALMS CI. 4, 5.

"A FROWARD heart shall depart from me; I will not know a wicked person. Whoso privily slandereth his neighbor, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer."

Some time ago brother John R. Cubberly, of Robbinsville, N. J., made the request that we write upon the above Scripture, and it is in our mind to try to comply with his request now.

David says at the beginning of the Psalm that his object in it is to sing of mercy and of judgment, and this he will do unto the Lord. It is of the mercy and judgment of the Lord toward himself and toward his people that he will sing. Out of this feeling sense of the mercies and judgments of the Lord has sprung up in his heart the purpose to walk wisely in the perfect way. Then in what follows he declares his purpose to cleave to them that are righteous, and to turn his face away from them that do evil. He will have nothing to do with the proud who exalt themselves against God and above their fellow-men, but will have as his friends and servants those who are faithful and who walk in the perfect way. This is the substance of the whole Psalm.

First, this was true of David as a man after God's own heart, as it is also true of all who have been taught of God and have learned of him. If there be any truth in the testimony of the word of God, then it is true that if the Spirit of truth and righteousness dwells in any heart, in that heart will be found the fruits of that Spirit. The indwelling Spirit is the Spirit of righteousness, which seeks to depart from all iniquity and to cleave to all that is of God and that is pleasing to him, and it will produce in the man where it dwells a following after all that is pleasing to God. Not only does this indwelling Spirit cry, Abba, Father, but also those in whom it is found cry, Abba, Father, and they who possess it are sons of God. The Spirit of him that raised up Jesus, the Son of God, dwells in them, and as Christ was obedient to his Father, so they who have this Spirit will also love the paths of obedience, and it will be their constant cry, "What wilt thou have me to do?" Sin becomes exceeding sinful in the view of all who love God, and righteousness takes on exceeding loveliness to them; in their blessed Lord they behold all loveliness; to them he is the chiefest among ten thousand and the One altogether lovely. Righteousness is with their blessed Lord, and they long to be clothed in the same lovely robe; therefore David expresses the desires and purposes of his own heart personally in this Psalm. This was true of David as a servant of God, although it was also true of him that more than once he sinned grievously to his own hurt and shame, and to the displeasure of God; yet although he so grievously departed from the right way of the Lord at times, it was still true that his heart was fixed, or prepared, to sing and give praise to God by him of whom it is said that "the preparations of the heart in man and the answer of the

tongue, is from the Lord." David felt the great mystery of the warfare within and the warfare without; in him, as in all the people of God, sin dwelt and plagued him, yet it did not reign in him. Sin in him, as in all the redeemed, had once reigned unto death, but now grace reigned through righteousness unto eternal life. But sin was not yet cast out, its motions were still felt in his members. In this he was our brother and companion. This it is that makes the Psalms of David such a continual treasure-house to the warring children of God. They know that God did own and bless David as his own dear child, and as they read of the manifold conflicts and victories, the temptations and overcomings, the errings and restorings experienced by this dear child of God, their hope can but be encouraged again and again, and they feel strengthened to still run with patience the race set before them. One said in our hearing once, The christian is not a man who does not sin, but he is a man who when he sins is sorry for it. David sinned, and sinned grievously, more than once, but still he was loved of God, and he loved God, and sorrow of a godly sort was felt by him when he had sinned. So likewise Peter sinned and was grieved, but this did not destroy his faith, and so he could afterwards say face to face with his blessed Lord, "Thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." Had Peter said this to the other disciples perhaps they would have reminded him of his grievous denial, but the Lord only said, Feed my lambs; feed my sheep. Because the Lord knew his heart Peter was emboldened to say in spite of his grievous sin in denying him, "Thou knowest that I love thee." So David loved the Lord and served him, even though he fell once and again into such great transgression. David had not forgotten his sins when he wrote this Psalm; his transgressions in the past, and the imperfectness of his heart and life now, did not prevent this good confession flowing from his heart: "I will sing of mercy and of judgment: unto thee, O Lord, will I sing." He realized and confessed that all this hatred of sinners and of sin had proceeded from the dealings of the God of mercy and judgment with his soul. All the love of righteousness, and of those who were righteous also, had been begotten in his heart by the Holy Spirit of God. In all this confession that follows he is only singing of the mercy and judgment of God. All these good fruits of which he makes mention he knew to be the fruit of the indwelling Spirit of holiness. How wonderful it is that one can feel vile as the vilest, and yet realize the blessedness of salvation, that salvation which then and now produces indwelling holiness. Paul knew he would do good and that he would not do evil, even when he did evil and failed to do good. The disciples would have been wakeful and have watched with the dear Redeemer, even when they failed to do so, therefore the blessed, tender Master said to them, "The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak." We are persuaded that every child of God whose mind is turned to the Psalm under consideration, and who reads it word by word, will feel in his or her heart to respond to every word of it as an expression of that which his own soul would depart from and cleave unto. Are any who may read this filled with self-loathing and oppressed with manifold fears lest they be not the children of God? Does it seem to any that they love iniquity more than holiness? Do any feel as though what is said of the wicked in the word of God suits them more than what is said of

the righteous? Let such an one read this Psalm, and see whether it be not true of them that they desire to be, as was David, cleaving unto righteousness and the men who work righteousness, rather than to wickedness and those who delight in it. Is there not fellowship with David in the heart of all such ones? One may say, I do not attain to this, but I desire to attain to it. The soul knows the inward desire. Others see the outward conformity of life to that desire. No child of God ever yet was satisfied with his attainments. At most, much of the time it is only desire, but this inward desire affects the life, and believing hearts will recognize a kindred spirit amid all the halting and stumbling into which such ones may fall. Men of grace knew that David was a child of grace even when he had most grievously sinned, and the godly sorrow felt in his soul afterwards but knit them more closely to him. There is more joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance.

But leaving the personal application of this language to David, we desire to speak of this as it applied to him as king in Israel. The things of which he speaks in this Psalm he purposed should characterize his reign as king among them. In the text he says that a perverse heart should depart from him; that is, one who opposed God and godliness and denied the commandments of God. As he desired to abide in the word and law of God, so he would not have before him any who regarded not God. The word "froward" signifies one who is perverse. We speak of a perverse child, a perverse scholar, a perverse man, meaning one who opposes himself to all that is thought best and right by those with whom he is associated. Perverse and wicked men David would not harbor among his servants, they should depart from him and he would not know them; that is, he would not favor them or regard them with pleasure. As a king dealing with his subjects, he would cut off him that slandered his neighbor, and he would not suffer him that had a high look and a proud heart. Before he could purpose thus to do as a king he must have had that preparation of heart, by which as a man he would be brought to love righteousness and hate iniquity, and this preparation is better by far than any anointing out of either a vial or a horn. God had vouchsafed this preparation to him while yet he was but a shepherd lad among his father's flock. Here was an anointing of the Spirit, exalting him to a higher throne than that of Israel, that throne which all the redeemed share with the great King, and in which they reign over self, and are lifted up above all their enemies round about them. Kings need this anointing as much as the lowliest, and this anointing the lowliest one in Christ has received, and kings and subjects, rich men and beggars, here find the one fellowship which is with the Father and the Son, and which is by the Spirit. Here there is neither male nor female, rich nor poor, bond nor free, Jew nor Gentile; the one title of each and all is that they are children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. But here also we see set forth a Greater than David: he who is David's Lord and King is here also set forth, and to this Greater than David come all that are lowly and faithful. From Him departs the perverse and the proud heart and high look. How these two verses in this Psalm chime in with the words of the lowly and yet exalted Redeemer when he rejoiced in spirit and

said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Babes cannot be perverse, or wicked, or slander others, or go with high looks and a proud heart; the wise and prudent who are boastful of their wisdom and prudence are guilty of all these things. Our blessed Master seeks the lowly ones as his companions; the proud he knoweth afar off; this is the testimony of the word. When the Spirit of God performs the work of bringing any heart to trust in him, there is wrought in that soul the spirit of submission instead of perverseness, of humility instead of high looks and a proud heart, and the desire to think and speak good of others rather than to magnify their faults and spread them abroad. These have been given to drink in of the Spirit of the meek and lowly One, and so become companions of him who was preeminently meek and lowly in heart, and here is rest indeed. The proud never can rest, only the meek and lowly can ever know what true rest is. How blessed are these companions and servants of the Lord.

It ought to be remembered that of the Master every word of this Psalm was altogether true, he fulfilled it all. The man Christ Jesus thus lived personally, and now he reigns thus in all the perfection of his righteousness. No other man ever so lived in the perfect way; we all go halting and stumbling along; blessed are we indeed if our faces are Zionward. With all the slipping and stumbling backward, still it is true that we are not of those who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. The blessed Lord has marked out the perfect way, and his feet have trodden it without faltering, but he knows our weak frame and that we are but dust, and as a father he pities us and forgives and holds us on our way. Perhaps not one of us can read this Psalm, and especially the two verses to which brother Cubberly has called attention, without ourselves pleading guilty to all. Why then are we not cut off forever? Because, although we are guilty of frowardness, of wickedness, of high looks and a proud heart and of slandering our neighbor privily, yet all our iniquities, even these also, have been laid upon the great Sacrifice offered upon Calvary, and confessed upon our great Scapegoat and carried into the land of forgetfulness, so that the dear Lord has said, I will remember thy sins and thy iniquities no more forever. Here is our all-sufficient hope; we have no other, and we need no other. And lastly, is it not true that when there comes up in our view all these sins of our own heart and life, and we do realize that, first of all, we ourselves must plead guilty before God, there is a sensible departure of the joy of salvation, and we come again to know that the eyes of the Lord are upon the faithful who walk in the perfect way, and that he does not suffer the high and proud ones in his presence? Our sins are the things that come in between us and God. We learn this by sad experience, and are troubled. The pride of the pharisee and of the carnal worldling is foreign to the Lord, and if such a spirit be found in any of the people of God they also shall experience the hidings of his face. But, blessed truth, he deals not with his erring children as he does with the world. The world he has ordained for destruction, but with his own children he deals in judgment, for correction, and to restore them to himself. Every believing soul, because of his er-

rors and faults, knows what it is to experience the hidings of his face, and every believing soul also knows what it is to praise the grace that forgives and restores to the ways of obedience and to the joy of salvation.

What bitter evils are these named in the whole Psalm, and what a glorious work is that which can prepare any heart to say what David has said in the Psalm, and what exaltation in righteousness is manifested in Him who perfectly fulfilled all this, and who brought righteousness and salvation to his erring people, through his meritorious life and death and resurrection. C.

EXPERIENCE.

"I AM a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

The above lines were no doubt written when fear and sorrow of heart seemed to overwhelm their author, and, like the hymns of Watts, Newton, Kent, Cowper and others, have been comforting to the children of God in many generations, and will doubtless continue to help them. Many wonderful and gracious sermons are contained in our songs of praise, and often much comfort and encouragement are given through them. Think of hymn 751 (Beebe's collection):

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!
What more can he say, than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?" &c.

Some years ago Elder D. M. Vail visited associations in Kentucky; Elder P. G. Lester was also present, and said when he arose to preach: "As no Scripture is resting on my mind I will read and comment upon hymn 751." Elder Vail told us afterward that he said within himself: Now he is attempting something new, and I do not think much of it, as there are texts enough in the Bible without preaching from hymns; but, he continued, before he had been talking ten minutes I found he had the whole Bible in the hymn, and my soul rejoiced in the doctrine it contained. How wonderful indeed is the 751st number; in it are found the sovereignty of God, his immutability, his grace, mercy, the everlasting promises and also the experience of the pilgrims of Zion.

At this time we feel impressed to write a few things regarding the verse quoted at the head of this article; not that Scripture is scarce or less important than heretofore, but to call attention to this peculiar yet common experience. The composer uses the personal pronoun "I," and does not lose sight of it in all the hymn. It is wonderful to observe how personal a matter the life of each conscious sinner is. Job said, "I am vile." Isaiah, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips." Hezekiah, "I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul." Peter, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Thus each one says, "I am a stranger here below;" yes, no one like me; no companion, no mate. "I am like a pelican of the wilderness; I am like an owl of the desert. I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the housetop." Yes, perfectly "alone;" am restless, seeking something, but what is it? Who can tell? We wander in the wilderness in this solitary way. Do we seek a city? Do we seek companionship? Would rest satisfy our longing? What is it that we really desire? Each one stops to think; silence reigns; not one can answer; but now with one voice all say, "I am a stranger here below, and what I am 'tis hard to know." But do we never find what we seek? No. Do we never find

real companionship? No, never. Always alone, each has greater cause to doubt and fear than any one else. When we hear the children talk we sometimes say, Yes, I have been there, but you have not been in such dreadful, horrible places as have been my lot; you have not been almost, if not quite, a confirmed infidel; you have not almost, if not quite, hated some of the brethren instead of loving them; you have not been in that indifferent state: "don't care;" you have not felt the feeling of fight when you were compelled to try to pray or sing; you have not felt to love the wages of unrighteousness more than the grace of God. Therefore my case is different from all others of the family, if indeed there be a family. How true, "Every heart knoweth its own bitterness," and often when in the company of saints we feel as much alone as if we were on some trackless desert. Jesus felt this, but said, "Yet I am not alone." It is seldom one of us can say, The Father is with me. No, no, but instead it seems the powers of hell are loosed and are bent on our destruction.

One has said, "I am both a devil and a saint." Feeling this we with the poet say, "What I am 'tis hard to know." "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Our nature would have us do all that is ungodly, but we find ourselves restrained. What am I? is the constant inquiry. I cannot do the good I would, neither am I suffered to commit the sins my nature dictates. "What I am 'tis hard to know." When shall we know? When mortality is swallowed up of life, then with the image of Him who is holy, harmless and undefiled we shall be satisfied. We think we hear a babe in Christ saying, What, not till then? We answer, No, not till then. We live here by hope, we are saved by hope, and cannot get beyond it while clothed with mortality. Then I fear I shall become discouraged and faint by the way, said the babe. The gray-haired pilgrim bent with years and infirmities answers, Many will be the doubts, fears, trials and discouragements by the way, but he who begun the good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Unconsciously to himself the weary traveler bears fruit in old age; he is praising God for mercies past and manifesting faith in him for all days to come.

How sure the word: "Thy saints shall bless thee." The babe blesses the Lord in thanksgiving for mercy, grace and peace in turning his heart from sin to God; his soul is filled with love, wonder and adoration, but yet not satisfied. The aged one blesses God for keeping him in the days of temptation, shielding him from danger and delusion in all the long journey of life.

Some one asks, Why are you troubled, are you not just as God made you? We answer, No. In the sense of the term no man is just as God made him; God did not make man a sinner, and all are sinners. Another asks, Was not man made of the dust of the ground and therefore his nature earthly? We answer, Yes, God created man and formed him of the dust of the ground, but the earth is not the same now that it was when Adam was made. Let us remember that the ground was not cursed until sin entered the world; never did it yield thorns and thistles until after man's transgression. We therefore are not justified in saying we receive our corrupt nature from the earth because Adam was made of it. Our vile, polluted nature is because of Adam's transgression; hence man by na-

ture is just what Adam made him: a sinner. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." Spiritually, man is what the grace of God made him: "By the grace of God I am what I am:" a believer or christian and a disciple. God made the wicked for the day of evil; he is the creator and maker of all things and beings, but he did not make the wicked wicked, but he did make some of the wicked righteous. Sin has its place, and righteousness has its place, therefore we must not confound them. Who can fathom the depth of the bottomless pit—sin? Who can describe the height and glory of righteousness in which each child of grace hopes through the Lamb of God? Hence, having both natures, human and divine, is it any marvel that we say, "What I am 'tis hard to know"?

"I fear that I'm not born again." Why should a sinner hope he is born again? How can he do anything but hope? Jesus said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." These words make the new or spiritual birth a matter of the greatest importance. We long to know if we are born again; we go to God in prayer concerning it, but the fear remains. We sing at times with the spirit and with the understanding also, but the fear remains. We hear the gospel preached with power and in demonstration of the Spirit, yet the fear remains, and we are compelled with the poet to say, "Without free grace, I know I'm lost." Yes, there must be grace, and that grace perfectly free, or no salvation for me. That Fountain filled with blood is God's free gift to poor sinners; it is opened to all who doubt, fear and tremble because of sin. In this Fountain they are washed and made whiter than snow; by it all their diseases are healed and their deformities covered. Through this Fountain was "a nation born at once," and taught of him whom to know is life eternal.

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." K.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the First Hopewell Church, May 29th, 30th and 31st, 1907, to the associations, corresponding meetings and churches with whom we correspond sends greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—God in his wisdom and grace has brought us together, an assembly of the saints, to sing to his praise and extol the honor of his name in the glorious redemption of the church, through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, whose called ministers have come to us in the fullness of the gospel, declaring that salvation is of the Lord, and that all the heirs of promise are destined to eternal glory. We have received your messengers with Minutes containing evidences of love and fellowship for the blessed followers of Jesus, and that you are continuing in the faith once delivered to the saints. Our churches report that since our last meeting some aged brethren have been laid in the silent tomb; we mourn their departure, but hope in their immortal rest with God and the Lamb. The additions reported by the churches testify to the power of God ruling among his people, bringing believing subjects of his grace from darkness to the marvelous light of the truth, with songs of praise and everlasting joy upon their heads.

Our next meeting is appointed to be

held with the Kingwood Church, Hunterdon County, N. J., to commence on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1908, at 10 o'clock a. m., when we hope to receive your Minutes and messengers in the love and fellowship of the truth.

F. A. CHICK, Moderator.
ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

The churches composing the Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, held in New York, June 5th, 6th and 7th, 1907, to the churches and associations with whom we correspond sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We have once again been favored with the presence of your messengers at our annual meeting, and we desire to express thankfulness to our God for his goodness and mercy which have followed us, and preserved us in peace and the bonds of fellowship.

The next session of this association is appointed to be held in June, 1908, with the church at Warwick, N. Y., beginning on Wednesday following the first Sunday and continuing three days.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
R. M. STRONG, Clerk.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Cow Marsh Church, Kent County, Delaware, sendeth greetings to the churches and associations with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—It is with much joy that we have been gathered together in the name of Jesus, and enabled to sit together in heavenly places in Christ in the capacity of an association. We feel that the Lord has filled our hearts with love and fellowship to his saints, and has enabled us to go on our way rejoicing in him as the God of our salvation. Your ministering servants and messengers have come to us in the fullness of the gospel of Christ, and in power, declaring unto us the unsearchable riches of Christ, which is the confirmation of our hope, and builds us up on the most holy faith, which belongs only to God's elect people. We ask for a continuation of your correspondence and messengers in love of the truth.

The next session of our association is appointed to be held with the Salem Church, in Philadelphia, in May, 1908.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER E. A. Norton has changed his address from Hampton, Iowa, to 2105 East Sixteenth Ave., Denver, Colorado, where his correspondents will address him until further notice.

MEMORIALS.

(DELAWARE ASSOCIATION.)

WE desire to place upon our Minutes an expression of our deep regard for our dear brother, **Elder Whiteley W. Meredith,** and of our sorrow at his decease. Our dear brother was widely known and dearly loved for the truth's sake. During his life in the church he attended the sessions of the Delaware Association, as well as others, very closely. Elder Meredith was a kind and loving friend and upright man, a good citizen, a sincere lover of the truth, an able minister of the new testament and a faithful and loving pastor. In comforting them that mourned, and in helping those who were in tribulation, he was specially gifted of the Lord. We sorrow because we shall see him no more in our midst, but we have the full assurance that he resteth in that peace which abideth. To his bereaved family, and to the churches of his pastoral care, we desire to extend an expression of our sympathy in their bereavement. May the Lord sustain them. Also that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES publish the above memorial.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

ORDINATIONS.

CLEVELAND, Ohio, June 22, 1907.

AT a meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church at Cleveland, Ohio, for the purpose of ordaining brother W. S. Alexander to the full work of the gospel ministry, the following churches and brethren were invited to seats with us in council:

The Wilmington and Welsh Tract churches of Delaware, and Salem Church of Philadelphia—Elders J. G. Eubanks, C. J. Carmichael and F. McGlade, brethren B. G. Ford, of Byesville, Ohio, and Z. Gillies, of Detroit, Mich.

Moved that brother Gillies act as clerk.

Moved that Elder Eubanks be moderator.

Moved that brother Cross be appointed mouthpiece for the church, to answer all questions regarding the ordination.

Brother Alexander related his call to the ministry, after which the council proceeded with the ordination by the laying on of hands by Elder J. G. Eubanks and Elder C. J. Carmichael.

Prayer by Elder Carmichael.

Charge by Elder Eubanks.

Brother Cyrus Cross was appointed deacon by the laying on of hands and prayer.

Moved and seconded that the minutes be adopted as read.

Elder C. J. Carmichael preached the ordination sermon, using as a subject the last half of the eighth chapter of the Acts.

Closed with singing and prayer.

J. G. EUBANKS, Moderator.

Z. GILLIES, Clerk, *pro tem.*

Through a misunderstanding of the appointed time for the ordination, Elder F. McGlade arrived too late to take part in the same, but he came laden with a rich message, which he delivered the following day, speaking from Isaiah xliii. 1–7.

J. O. CROSS.

LINCOLN COUNTY, W. Va.

THIS is to certify that Gilbert B. Bird, a minister and member of the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church called Providence, of the County and State aforesaid, being before proved and recommended by said church, and being sound in the Primitive Baptist faith, which is the faith of God's elect, was set apart with prayer on the 25th day of May, 1907, by the imposition of hands of Elders J. W. McClanahan and J. H. Terry, ministers of the gospel, and brethren A. L. Thornton and Joseph Lake, deacons, who were called for a presbytery for that purpose; whereby the said Gilbert B. Bird is ordained a minister of the gospel, and is entitled to administer all the ordinances of the church.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.
Signed { J. H. TERRY.
A. L. THORNTON.
J. D. LAKE.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder P. W. Sawin, at the residence of the bride's mother, near Campbellstown, Ohio, Monday evening, June 3rd, 1907, at 6 o'clock, William Larkin Gaar, of Huntington, Ind., and Miss Atie Paddack.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

William H. Price died April 17th, 1907. He was born Feb. 16th, 1844, in Anderson County, Ky., where he resided all his life. On Feb. 14th, 1867, he was married to Miss Alzora J. Hanks, of the same county. To this union were born one son and two daughters, all of whom survive him and have families. Mr. Price was not a member of any religious order, but a regular attendant at the meetings of the Old School Baptists at Salt River, where his widow is a member. He always disliked pretended religion, and believed in the change of heart as essential. He was blessed by the experience of this change some time before his death. After that he was entirely reconciled, and rejoiced much in the hope of a better life. He was glad to have his friends call to see him, but did not want to be burdensome to them more than possible. As he saw the time of his death approaching he told his son to care for his mother, and that he was wholly reconciled to God's purpose, and was depending on him for salvation. He died as if falling asleep in Jesus.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved wife and children at the funeral services, held at Salt River meeting-house, after which the remains were interred in the burying-ground at that place, to await the blessed resurrection, in which we believe he has a part.

C. W. BOND.

SISTER **Polly Smith**, wife of brother William Smith, of Burlington, Ky., departed this life April 6th, 1907, aged 85 years. Sister Smith had been a member of the Mt. Pleasant Church, in Boone County, Ky., for about fifty-four years. During all this period she was faithful and punctual in attendance until hindered by failing health the last year or two of her life. She was established in the doctrine of grace, and was satisfied with the goodness of the Lord's house. She leaves her aged husband, with whom she had lived for nearly sixty-five years, and one child, to mourn for her, together with the church and a host of friends and many relatives.

Her funeral was largely attended by the best people of the whole community, who felt that a truly good woman was gone. Her warfare is ended here below, and all her sorrowing is over; all tears are wiped from her eyes, and she has gone to the reward of grace. May God comfort her bereaved husband, our aged brother in the Lord.

H. M. CURRY.

Our dear sister, **Mrs. D. T. Keator,** was called from among us Jan. 19th, 1907. She was about 60 years of age. She was received in the First Church of Roxbury Oct. 31st, 1891, was baptized by the late Elder J. D. Hubbell. Sister Keator's maiden name was Slauson. She was born in the town of Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y. After her marriage to our brother Keator they settled in what was then known as Batavia Kill, but it is now called Vega. There were born to them three sons; one was drowned in Kelly's pond, at Halcottsville, and in her deep grief caused by the sad death she was led to believe in the blessed Savior, and found that his grace was sufficient for her in time of trouble. She lived a devoted member to the church and the cause which she felt was most dear to her. For several years her health would not permit her to attend meeting, yet her heart and mind were with her kindred in Christ. I often visited our dear sister in her last sickness, and always found her composed, and submissive to the will of God, and longing for the end to come that she should be freed from suffering.

Her remains were laid to rest in the cemetery near the Baptist meeting-house in Vega. She leaves two sons and a devoted husband, beside the church, to mourn their loss, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. May God bless and comfort us, and console our dear brother in his bereavement.

ALSO,

Mrs. Hulda Hubbell departed this life June 8th, 1907, in the 68th year of her age, after a lingering illness of several months. She was the widow of D. W. Hubbell, who died last October. Mr. and Mrs. Hubbell were each stricken with paralysis, and lived some time in an almost helpless condition. It was my privilege to visit her in her last hours, and while she could talk but little, and that with a great deal of effort, her face spoke to us in words of reconciliation to the will of her heavenly Father. All who knew Mrs. Hubbell held her in high esteem. She was not a professor of religion, but was a believer in the doctrine held and preached by the Old School Baptists. She leaves three daughters and two sons, besides three sisters and one brother, to mourn their loss.

Her funeral was held from her late residence, and was largely attended. Burial was in the Hubbell cemetery. The writer tried to comfort the family and friends with such as the Lord gave. May God bless all that mourn their loss.

J. B. SLAUSON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Cornelia Green, N. Y., $.50; Laura R. Elgin, Va., $1.00.—Total, $1.50.

APPOINTMENTS.

If the Lord will, I expect to be with the church at Burdett, N. Y., on Tuesday, July 16th, morning and afternoon; at Grover, Pa., Wednesday night, July 17th; at Cammal Thursday night and Friday.

SILAS H. DURAND.

MEETINGS.

The Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, in her seventy-sixth annual session, at the residence of brother Doty Varnes, five miles southeast of Farmington, Fulton Co., Ill., on Friday, August 30th, 1907, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue the two following days. Those coming from north of Farmington must come Thursday evening, where they will be met; those coming from south of Farmington will change to the Iowa Central for Cramer on Thursday afternoon, where they will be met. Those from south of Galesburg will come to Abingdon on the C., B. & Q., change to the Iowa Central at 4:36 p. m. Those from Galesburg and the north will take the Interurban at 3:30 p. m. for Abingdon, where they will meet those from the south all bound for Cramer.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Old School Baptist Church at Bowdoinham, Maine, to begin on Friday before the second Monday in September, (6th) 1907, and continue three days. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus. Place of meeting is but a few minutes walk from Bowdoinham depot.

GEO. R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

THERE will be meeting at 54 Fuller St., Schenectady, N. Y., each Sunday in the month at 2 p. m., excepting the fourth Sunday, when it will be held at 8 p. m. All who love Old School Baptist doctrine are cordially invited to come.

SARAH JONES.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 75. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1907. NO. 15.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WHY?

To the two apostles who were on the way to Emmaus Jesus said, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" And the same night, in his interview with his apostles, he said, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day."—Luke xxiv. 46. But why ought he to have suffered? It is enough to set at rest every question to know that it is according to the eternal counsel and purpose of God, and that "thus it is written." This is set forth well and clearly in an editorial of brother Chick's in the SIGNS of April 15th. This is a sufficient reason why the Just should suffer for the unjust. In his person and character as a man he was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. Earthly wisdom cannot see why such a man can be justly devoted to death for any one, and especially for sinful and unjust men; but neither can the wisdom of the natural man understand or receive any of the things of God; they are only discerned by the Spirit of God. (1 Cor. ii.) But the Lord has been pleased to show to the faith of his people how the claims of eternal justice are regarded and satisfied by the coming of Christ in the likeness of sinful flesh, and in his suffering and death. To this end Christ is presented in three relationships to his people: Shepherd, Husband, Head, in each of which there are claims and responsibilities which figuratively represent the claims of his people upon him, as established and laid upon him by the eternal justice of God, according to his eternal purpose, which he purposed in himself before the world began.

To this mystery of God's will the dear Savior refers when he asks, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?" The contemplation of each of these relationships will show us why it behoved Christ to suffer. The name, Christ, which he uses here, intimates the reason. It signifies "anointed," and presents him in connection with his people. It applies more particularly to the relationship of Head and body. As the body is one, and hath many members, and these members are one body, so also is Christ. Christ is "Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." The apostle

Peter also used this name, Christ, when he said he hath once suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. He is just not only in his essential character as the mighty God, the everlasting Father and the Prince of peace, but also as well in his humiliation as the servant, with all the sins of his people upon him, making himself of no reputation in the sight of the holy law of God, and becoming obedient even unto death. Justice required all this, and in this it was the suffering of the just for the unjust.

Take the first of these relationships, the Shepherd and the sheep. This takes us back into the eternity before the world began. "All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."—Isa. liii. 6. When did the people of God go astray? When Adam fell. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." Upon what principle of justice could the iniquity of these sheep be laid upon Christ? Only because they were his before they went astray in Adam. A flock of sheep have trespassed and are held for the damage. One looks at them and asks, How much is the damage? The reply is, One hundred dollars. I will pay it and take the sheep. Were they yours before they went astray? No. Then the law will not allow you to take them, not if you offered a thousand times the damage. Another says, I will pay the damage and take them. Were they yours before they went astray? Yes, they were mine. Then not only you can, but you must. The law holds you responsible for them. Therefore, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?" They were his before the foundation of the world, and under this figure he presents himself as responsible for their trespass. There can be no right of redemption in any one except the one who owned the person or thing to be redeemed before it needed redemption. Upon the principle of eternal election alone can there be one sinner of Adam's fallen race redeemed. One who denies the doctrine of election denies the only ground of hope for a poor sinner. If they were not chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, then they can never be holy and without blame before him in love. (Eph. i. 4.)

When Jesus appeared under the law he appeared as the Shepherd of his sheep. He said, "I lay down my life for the sheep." The sword of justice awoke against the Shepherd, and when he was smitten the stroke of justice satisfied the just judgments of God against every one of the sheep, even to the last of the little ones. (Zech. xiii. 7.) And Jesus says that he will seek them all out, and gather them from all the places whither they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.

The relation of husband and wife is another figure used to show why Christ ought to have suffered these things. Adam was made in the image or likeness of Christ; he is the figure or image of Him that was to come. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam in the day when they were created. When the Lord had taken a rib from Adam's side, and had made that rib a woman, and had brought her unto the man, Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." When the tempter came to Eve she was deceived, and transgressed. The man was not deceived, but for the love he had for her he followed her and was with her

in the transgression. He must go to her and be with her, for they were one. Then the Lord said, "The man is become as one of us, to know good and evil."

Now the image or figure is fully manifested, and Adam is shown to be the figure of Christ. The church is regarded here and elsewhere in the Scriptures as the bride of Christ, in a mystical and legal sense, before the world began. She fell in Adam; Christ followed her and was made of a woman, made under the law, that he might take her debt upon him and pay it by his death. Adam could not bring his wife back from under the law, but Christ, the heavenly Husband, could. He had power to lay down his life, and power to take it again. This was the washing of regeneration, when he went down into the ocean of death to wash away her sins. She being buried with him by baptism into death, and then coming up from that washing, he is "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." And when it is declared concerning Christ, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," it is also true of all his people who inherit in him the resurrection of the dead, that they are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. (Luke xx. 35, 36.)

The apostle says, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."—Eph. v. 25–27. Thus the relation of Husband and wife shows why Christ ought to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory. He entered into his glory when he ascended up on high, and when his people are brought one by one to see and feel the truth of salvation by grace, they behold his glory. (John xvii. 24.)

This unity of Christ and the church is more perfectly illustrated in one particular, by the figure of Head and body. The apostle says to the Ephesian church that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, gave Christ "to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."—Eph. i. 22, 23. And to the Colossians he says, "And he is the head of the body, the church."

This wonderful figure seems intended to show how, according to the principles of eternal justice, the iniquities of his people could be and were laid upon him. It is necessary, in order to show this particular kind of responsibility of Christ for the sins of the church which brought them under condemnation and death, to consider that he must have been regarded in this relationship to them as Head and body before the world began. Therefore the Spirit of Christ in the psalmist says, "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there were none of them."—Psalms cxxxix. 15, 16.

This shows that he and his body must be one in death. Therefore the apostle says: "We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead."—2 Cor. v. 14. That is, if he died for them in such a way as to atone for their sins, he must have died in such a relationship to them in a legal and mystical sense, that when

he died the law regarded them as having died in him. So the apostle says again, "If we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him."—Rom. vi. 8. And again, "We are buried with him by baptism into death." Then it follows that we are raised up together with him. In many ways the apostles dwell upon this figure of the Head and body, as showing how the death of Christ satisfies the law for all of his people, who were chosen "in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love," and as showing how they are quickened together with him and raised up together. Because of this oneness of Head and body, this eternal, vital unity, he is to all his people the resurrection and the life. They all inherit in him the resurrection of the dead, and "are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." The apostle says, "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." This wonderfully close relationship, or oneness, shows why Christ ought to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory; why it behoved him to suffer thus, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name.

When the fullness of this glorious and precious truth is experienced by us, then we are one with him, as he is one with the Father. He is our life, and when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then we shall appear with him in glory.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April 12, 1907,

NASHVILLE, Tenn., April 15, 1907.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE:—This life we believe was prepared for them that love God, who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. I read in the SIGNS of April 15th your good editorial, replying to letters from brethren in Georgia and Texas, asking for information with regard to usage and practice among the Old School Baptists in your section. I feel glad at your reply, and believe the Lord gave you spiritual wisdom and understanding to reply in the way in which you did. You have the inspired written word of God to bear you out in the stand you have taken against the workings of antichrist and the Arminian world. You indorse the same doctrine which I trust the Lord has given me to comprehend and understand. This teaching Paul said he did not receive of men, neither was he taught it but by revelation of Jesus Christ; in no other way can a sinner be saved. I am sorry to know that there are some claiming to be Old School Baptists who have gone off into another gospel, which is not another, but a perversion of the gospel of Christ. Paul said, Let such be accursed. We are blessed in hearing the truth and in reading the SIGNS, what more should we want? We want God's ways, and not man's. With such love and fellowship abounding there will be no lo heres and lo theres, but all will be of one mind, speaking the same things as they are taught of God and not man. As you remarked, brother Ker, there will be a great sifting, and as in the days of Gideon, a great reduction. It was so in the separation in 1832; then the Arminian doctrine had crept in to destroy the faithful followers of God, but they trusted in Him to fight their battles for them, and, like Moses, they stood fast. If the Lord be with us we may claim that which was said to Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to Jehoshaphat, "Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid

nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's." He sets captains of war over the people of the gate of the city, and he speaks comfortably unto them, saying, "Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there be more with us than with him: with him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God, to help us, and to fight our battles." This great multitude spoken of is the power of antichrist. This same spirit was shown in 1832, and was then denominated "Fullerism;" and it drew many to follow after the beast. I feel to thank God that the unyielding editors are standing firm upon the old landmarks for which our beloved Elder Gilbert Beebe contended in the separation in 1832, and ever after in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and in his ministry. There were few then that followed with him, but now there are thousands. The sword of the Lord and of Gideon went with him and fought his battles, and our God will still fight for the faithful who are hungering for the true manna which comes down from heaven. There is so much Arminianism taught in the world that if possible it would deceive the very elect; but their arms are too short, with all their inventions, to deceive the redeemed of the Lord.

Instrumental music is another invention of antichrist to draw large crowds. Protracted meetings are another invention to help save the whole world, as they claim, saying that Christ died for them all, and they may be saved if they will accept him. They have no faith in the great work of redemption, that it is God that works in man both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Their doctrine is to save souls by missionaries and Sunday Schools, as nurseries of the church, to gain a large membership. This was one of the causes of the separation in 1832; Andrew Fuller was the father of it, but the time had come for a separation from the works of antichrist and all Arminianism. The children of God are forbidden to make marriages with them, or to unite with them, for thus their sons will be turned away from the Lord to serve other gods. The true and faithful servant will break down their images and destroy their works, for they are the inventions of man, and not of God. But the blessed Lord has a people holy unto himself; the Lord their God hath chosen them to be a special people unto himself alone, above all other people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon them or choose them because they were more in number than any people, for they were the fewest of all people. Our fathers went down into Egypt, with threescore and ten people, and now God hath made them as the stars of the heaven for multitudes. Man had no part or lot in this increase, it was not upon conditions, nor the instrumentality of men, all was decided before the dust of the earth was laid. Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." He makes them willing in the day of his power; they will be sure to come at his appointed time. There are some who bear the name of Old School Baptists who are apparently trying to push forward God's appointed time to add to their number largely, but Paul said, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." None can find him until it pleases God to reveal himself unto them. God does not accept any man's person;

salvation is not of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

I am glad you have come out so plain and clear, God directing your mind, with regard to receiving members of other churches which are not of our faith and order. Old School Baptists, from the separation, have had no fellowship with New School Baptists, nor with Missionism, nor permissive decrees, nor limited predestination, nor instruments, nor means. Our God is above all powers, and he made all things for himself, yea, the wicked for the day of evil; he decreed whatsoever comes to pass, and predestinated all things. Such faith is indorsed by all sound Grace Baptists, and no others should be permitted to unite with the church, for how "can two walk together, except they be agreed?" It is charged upon the church, not to be "unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God." Paul also admonishes us to come out from among them and to be separate, and not touch the unclean thing. This he declares is the word of God, and He saith, "I will receive you."

Dear brother, this is the true doctrine our fathers in Israel taught, and which was published in the prospectus of the SIGNS, and which is still taught by our beloved editors in the present day, and by the able contributors to the SIGNS. This is a blessing from God, and a glorious privilege. I rejoice and feel to hope that God has given us a right conception and understanding of his dealings with us poor, dependent worms of the dust, and without his mercy and saving grace we are forever lost. Thank God for his infinite grace.

Dear brother Ker, your editorial was so good and true that it did me good to read it, and I felt to rejoice in it. I am sure the Lord gave you a mind to write as you did. I trust that all sound Baptists fed richly upon it. The Lord is in the battle and he will make us victors in the end. He has promised to fight the battle for all them that love and serve him. Go on, dear brother, in the strength of Israel's God, nothing shall be able to molest you nor make you afraid. We have a High Priest who is the Captain of our salvation, and he has promised that he will never forsake us. Let us thank him for his blessings upon us while tabernacling in this low ground of sorrow. We are "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it," and the Spirit helpeth our infirmities. Man's works of righteousness are dead in the sight of God. The obedience of man, for which so much is claimed in the way of reward, is not that which brings the reward, but it is all of grace, according to the revealed will of God. We are told that the reward is with God, who "will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom. * * * Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth."

"Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him?" "Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance. * * * Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity." "Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers." Man has no merit of his own to offer; all power is given of God, and it is God that worketh in them to will and to do of his own good pleasure; God worketh and none can hinder. "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." We are not our own, but are bought with a price, and our reward is upon no conditions which we can perform.

I am now in my seventy-fifth year, and I feel thankful to God that I am still spared to renew my subscription again. I felt that I wanted to say something in the way of encouragement with reference to your reply to the brethren in other States. Your editorial I am persuaded will be indorsed by all true Baptists. May God bless your labors, which I believe the Lord has called you to perform. He has promised to be with us to the end. What I have written I trust is in accordance with the teaching of the word of God, and I hope that his wisdom has directed what I have written. I will leave the subject with you.

Yours in the hope of eternal life,

O. B. HICKERSON.

PLEASANT HILL, Md., April 30, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—When I last wrote you I told you I would endeavor to write you soon again, so feel that I must keep my promise.

The last few days my mind has been running over the past, back to 1875 and 1876. If I have an experience of grace, the year 1875 marks the beginning of it. If my recollection serves me right it was the fall of that year I first realized the awful burden, and how I felt when it was removed, and how I went on wondering many times just what it was that made me feel that way, and how I felt the day my dear mother passed away, falling asleep in Jesus. Dear Uncle Eli Scott was here; he had been talking with mother, and he came to me and said, "Frank, your mother said Jesus is sweet to her." The thought came to me, If I am only able to say that, for I felt in order to say so we must know Him in the pardon of our sins, and I remember what a comfort it was to me when Uncle Eli told me what mother had said. I had always thought she was very good, but I had never heard her say anything about her hope; in fact I do not know that I had thought very much about it up to that time. I remember you being at the funeral, and how beautifully you talked about mother. Time passed, and the 27th of April, 1876, came, which marks the date of my wedding. The day following I brought to this home, of which my dear father was the head at that time, my young bride, who proved to be a kind and loving wife and a devoted mother, and never seemed happier than when at home with her family around her. I thought many times how thankful I ought to be that the good Lord had blessed me with such a companion, ever ready to wait on me, either in sickness or

in health; but he saw fit in his wise providence to remove her from me, and I humbly trust I feel to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

From the fall of 1875 to June, 1876, I recall very little of my experience, only as I remember nothing seemed to trouble me very much until one day in June, if not mistaken, as I recalled the words of Paul, "sin revived, and I died," they seemed to suit my case, for it was then that I fell prostrate before Him who rules in the army of heaven and upon the earth, and asked him to have mercy on me, for it seemed to me that he had now shown me what a sinner I was; but Jesus came at the right time, as he always does, and calmed the troubled waters. The years passed, and many times I was casting around as to where to cast in my lot, until the fall of 1894, when I became very much exercised about uniting with some denomination. What seemed to impress me, or the coincidence, I will not state at this time, as it would take considerable space and time. The Lord, as I humbly trust and believe, made the way plain, and there was but one place for me to go, for I felt that my prayer had been answered, and as with an audible voice I heard the words, This is the way, walk ye in it; go and be baptized. Just how long that was before I asked a place among those whom I believe to be the people of God I do not remember, but it seemed that the time had not yet arrived; while I had thought about it many times, there were some questionings in my mind, and not until the first Sunday in April, 1905, while you were telling us after you had finished preaching, about your call to Hopewell, and how you felt about it, and among other things that you said was, "I feel that my work here is done," when the thought came to me to say, No, it is not, I want you to baptize me; then all obstacles seemed to be removed, and I felt impressed to tell you the travel of my mind. No doubt you will recall that I met you as you came down the aisle, and after talking with you it was arranged for me to come before the church Saturday before the third Sunday in April, which I did, and was gladly received. O how unworthy I felt, and how my heart went out to those dear people, and it was arranged for me to be baptized Sunday morning, as you will remember. Now this brings me to a day that I shall ever remember while my memory lasts. What a glorious day! I felt that the day was made for me, and I for the day, and yet how sorrowful; I must bid farewell to my loved ones and follow my dear Savior into the watery grave. My dear wife said to me that morning that she felt as though there was a gulf between us, and two of the children were sick and could not be present, and they seemed so anxious, and said how much they would like to witness the ordinance. Sometimes I felt that I ought to have postponed it for a time, and yet there was something that bade me go on, and how glad I was afterward that I did. As I see it now the day and time had arrived, and I must obey the command. I recall how affectionately my wife met me when I came up out of the water, and how that evening, after I came back from taking Uncle Eli to the station, she talked to me, and how different she seemed to feel from what she did in the morning; it seemed that the gulf had been removed and we were standing together. My wife, as you know, was brought up in the Methodist denomination, and united with the same several years before we were mar-

ried. While her walk was consistent and commendable, she was not one to talk much about her profession. For several years after we lost our son it was seldom that she went from home, and as I recall, since that time, and the last few years of her life, it was very seldom she attended her own meetings. Since I united with the Old Baptists she seemed kindly towards them, and seemed ever ready and willing to wait on them whenever they visited us. I remember the last association at Black Rock, how she seemed to enjoy it, and having the friends with us, and some of the folks remarked to me what an interest she manifested. I often questioned in my mind why it was that she did not go to church, as they term it, for there was always a way, even if I did not go myself. I would say to her, in a jesting way, that they would turn her out, and she would always make some excuse. Whether she had ever thought about uniting with our people I do not know, and I have regretted and sometimes felt to censure myself for not having said something to her about it, for I now recall noticing what I believed to be the work of grace in her heart, and then I would think, Maybe I am mistaken; but you know it is much easier to talk to others than our own. When she was first taken sick she seemed to suffer a great deal, both in body and mind; she desired to get well, and seemed hopeful that she would, and, as I believe I told you, she did seem to improve for a time, and then she began to fail, and the emaciation gradually went on until the end. For several months before she passed away she seemed to want me with her all the time to talk and read to her, and O, my dear brother, I never felt my insufficiency greater, but wished that I could do or say something that would comfort her. She spent much of her time in prayer and reading the Bible whenever she was able, and when she did not feel like reading she would ask some of us to read to her. There was manifested that hungering and thirsting which only the soul that has been quickened by the divine Spirit knows anything about; a desire to know more about Jesus, whom to know is life eternal. She said to me one day that she regretted she had not lived closer to her Savior, and another time, when I was talking to her about her faith and trust in the Lord, that she had never had the assurance which she had heard others tell about, but she hoped the good Lord would take her just as she was. I was glad to hear her talk that way, and felt that it was the work of grace that enabled her to do so, and as the end drew nearer there was that childlike faith and trust which was beautiful to behold, and O how thankful I felt I ought to be for such evidence. While my heart was sad, and I felt sometimes that I would break down under the strain, the Lord sustained me, and though in the midst of sorrow I felt to rejoice. The love that passeth understanding drew us closer together, and I felt that while we were one by the ties of nature, we were one in Christ: my wife in nature, my sister in Christ. She seemed to be perfectly reconciled and willing to depart whenever it was the will of the Lord to take her. Two of the hymns they sang the day of her funeral came into my mind while talking with her some time during the last few months of her life, and the third just as she was passing away.

As the association is drawing near, and we hope to have you with us at that time, and to have an opportunity to talk with you, which I feel I can do better than I

can write, will close, and not take more of your valuable time at present. I have written more than I intended when I began, and not just as I thought I would, but I feel that you will bear with me and pardon what I have said amiss.

Yours in hope,

F. G. SCOTT.

MOLINO, Mo., May 4, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS, WRITERS AND INTERESTED READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have been reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES about eight months, beginning a short time after I united with the Old School Baptists, and I have desired to let my love for the writers of the consoling communications be known. I see no way to fully express the comfort I have been blessed with since I have been a reader of the Bible and SIGNS. I might do well to just say that the paper tells my experience more accurately than I can tell it myself. I read the good things, and am filled with the feast of consolation, and regret that I am not also a vessel through which the glad tidings pass to the hungry souls. I sometimes wonder why such a wretch as I am made to enjoy such things; I, who had been miserable while depending on self for ability to buy, and enjoyed the so-called pleasures of the world, and was turned away from such things, and all love of worldly pleasure was taken from me. I rambled in search of pleasure, even where the world had gathered together its best articles and called it "The World's Fair," but found no pleasure there. I was made to be exceedingly lonesome; I had traveled a crooked route from Boston, Mass., to Kansas City, Kansas, but found all things dark and gloomy; this world appeared to me as a wilderness, and I was in it, and I wondered why. After I was made to realize that this world is not my home I had a hope that I would find a home when this life is ended, and I was relieved, but not entirely. I began to think about joining the church, but the Old Baptists were scarcely in my mind. I would say to myself, I do not suppose I will ever join a church unless I can find a denomination that I can believe all of its doctrine. I had a chance to attend a protracted meeting, and I went, feeling a desire to join the church, but I did not find there what I wanted; there was no food for me. Their doctrine was, The Lord wants all to be saved, and if you will do your part he will do his. I thought, What is my part, and how shall I do it? I did not believe such doctrine, and I thank God that I do not believe it now. I desire to ever know that God is almighty, and does not need assistance to fulfill his designs, therefore I can say; If it is true that God wants all to be saved, he can save all. Certainly my mind was in confusion. The third Saturday in September I went to hear another Old Baptist sermon, with no special inclination to join that church, but the singing sounded good, better than ever before, and the sermon seemed to be directed to me, and seemed to be concerning me, and before the sermon was concluded I was made to feel at home. O how sudden, how joyful it was! Those great clouds had passed, and I was surrounded with light. What came with that light? Love for that congregation and all others of its kind. The light and love came at once. The door of the church was opened by singing my question: "Am I a soldier of the cross?" Trembling with fear that I would not be received, I went forward, and was received. How precious was that hour to me; to feel that I had been led away from worldliness to such a place

of joy; relief had come, my mind was at rest, and has not been seriously disturbed since. The Lord has been merciful to me, I feel in my heart to say, It was by the grace of God that I lost sight of the pleasures of the world, and that I was led to Berea Church to recognize the ring of the gospel, and made to rejoice when I heard it. Now can I agree with a man who preaches that God wants all to be saved and if I will do my part he will do His? No, no, I do not believe such false doctrine. Of course I know God will do his part, but I desire to praise him for doing it all. Yes, Jesus paid it all. I did not turn away from worldly pleasures by my own strength, but I rejoice in believing that God turned me away from them and led me home. He has opened a way for me to live near the church, where I can enjoy better pleasure than this world can afford. Certainly, brethren and sisters, the Lord our God has showered his blessings upon me. I believe it is by the grace of God and his good pleasure that I rejoice to hear the gospel, and if consistent with his will I hope I shall retain my sense of seeing and hearing, that I may hear the gospel and read the Bible and SIGNS, which paper I receive regularly. Frequently while reading the SIGNS I feel that I want to take wings and fly, to shake hands with all of God's children. To read the writings of Elders Durand, Chick, Ker and Francis is nearly as good as hearing them preach. I remember their voices, and hope to hear them again. I ardently wish that a number of the Old Baptist ministers of the east would attend our association this year at Stoutsville, Mo.

May God bless you all, is the prayer of your brother in hope of salvation through Jesus alone.

IRA S. FISHER.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., March 1, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have just finished reading the SIGNS for this date, and truly it is a great comfort to me. Is the paper somewhat extra, or am I in better condition to eat its contents? I enjoyed each article as they came, but when I read your editorial on Jezebel I rejoiced the more. Your opinion that her name is used to represent certain false teachings which were in that particular church has been my opinion for quite a while. Surely no more wicked, God-hating woman ever was married to a king of Israel; committing whoredom with all of the abominable gods of the tribes of the Canaanites whom God had ordained to destroy or lay waste in the land. Are not all the false religions now extant in the world, and offering compromises with the church from the same source? The Sidonians could very easily afford to make compromises and marriages with Israel; no commandment had been given to them against this, but the God of Israel had spoken in blessings to Israel and in cursings to the Sidonians, their worship and their gods. Then for an Israelite to worship with the Sidonians, or to allow a Sidonian to worship with Israel, was a curse to Israel. Israel, having been called of God and separated from those gods and their worships and mysteries, could not afford to make any compromises or join in any of those things from which they had been separated by God's holy calling. This is much more true of the Israel of the gospel or of the church of Jesus Christ. The Old School Baptists cannot afford to make any compromises with any of the religions of this present day. God has called them by his grace and separated them from the world and bid them come out and be separate. Should they not do so? It is God's word.

The mysterious religions of the secret orders, from the least of them to the greatest of them, of which Paul said, "It is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret," should no more he held in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church than any other form of false religion which is held and promulgated in this world. To allow these things in the church is to allow the teaching of that woman, Jezebel, which is so strongly condemned by the Lord of heaven. If any of our brethren are engaged in these things they should turn away from them, and we should love them the better and commend them the more. The more prominent one is in the church, and the more influence he has, the more harm he can do, and the more certain should the church be in her dealings with him. It seemed to be a charge against the pastor of the church: "Thou sufferest that woman Jezebel," &c. The church of God should he first in the mind of every pastor, and he should not let any brother or sister rise higher in his esteem than the good of the church. If one of our brethren should attach himself to the New School Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians or any other open religious profession, or if he should go in and take the bread and wine with any of them and thus indorse their religion, unless that brother should turn and satisfy us that the Lord had shown him his error, and given him repentance, we would withdraw fellowship from him. Why should we tolerate these other things, which are just as bad and altogether in darkness? Men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.

Another thing has crept in among us that had its origin in the gambling den, and then crept out through false religion and popularized itself in the world, and, in some places, has found its way into the houses and company of the Primitive Baptists, that is, card parties; not religious of course, but carried on by these same false religionists who have set every other "no harm" trap to decoy and lead astray Old Baptists and their children. We sometimes hear Primitive Baptists say, O, there is no harm in those innocent amusements. I have always believed that every "no harm" trap is the devil's workshop, and in my own experience have found it so. These are among the teachings of Jezebel, and should be faithfully condemned by every pastor and every church, and should not be tolerated in the Israel of our God.

As I continued to read, the SIGNS was so interesting to me that I read all before I stopped. The Lord bless you, Elder Ker and all the contributors, to continue to honor his holy name, to lift up your voices like trumpets and cry aloud, spare not, showing the house of Israel their transgressions and sins. May he bless the publishers to be faithful and strong in the Lord, and to send out comfort to the little ones in the remote places of the earth.

Your brother in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

LIBERTY, Mo., 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I thought I would write you a few lines to tell you what I hope have been the dealings of the Lord with me, a poor sinner who am saved by grace if saved at all.

In the year 1885, while working for a man, driving oxen, I became uneasy about the condition of my soul in the sight of a holy and just God, and I did not know what to do. One day while on my way to the woods it seemed that there

was a prayer going on within me: "God be merciful to me a sinner." This continued with me, and I felt to be the worst sinner that lived. I had been very wild in my single life, and now I could see it all; I was before a just God, and was miserable. I continued in this way for a long time. I did not know anything about the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists, and had never heard the truth told about that people. I had always a desire that if ever I got religion it might be the true religion. I went to the Missionary Baptists to hear them preach, and they told me to give my heart to God and that was all I had to do. I tried to pray, but it seemed to make my case the worse. I tried to stop praying, and could not, and it seemed to me I was getting worse all the time. I began to read the Bible, and I came to where it is said, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Then I read where Christ said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." By this time I could see some light, but did not know what to do. One day a Missionary minister came to my house and was talking to my wife; I got the Bible and read these Scriptures. He told me that was the word of God, and he said no man can come of himself. I listened intently, for I was in trouble. Then he went away. On Sunday I went to hear him preach; he said, "People say you cannot come to Christ, but I say you can if you will." Now, brethren, right here I lost sight of that doctrine, and never have had any use for it since.

One Saturday, I will never forget, I went out and fell down on the ground, and I spoke and said, Lord, have mercy on me, a hell-deserving sinner; Lord, if it be thy will, be pleased to melt my stony heart. I got to a place where I could not even shed a tear, but something touched me in the heart, I could not rise nor move my body, my burden left me and I left that place crying. My wife talked with me, but that did not do any good. She had just before united with the Missionary Baptists, but did not remain with them any length of time as she was a firm believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine. I doubted whether the Lord had done anything in the matter of salvation for me; still I had a love for the people of God, yet I was afraid it was not true love; still I could not get back where I was before. These old time hymns began to come into my mind: "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound;" "The day is past and gone." Sometimes these songs would be singing in me, and it would seem that there would be a great multitude of people, and I would be walking among them; then I would fall into the depths again, and would think perhaps all was but my imagination. I continued on in this way for four years, but, thank God, he opened up the way in his own good time, and gave me to know light from darkness. He led me about and instructed me, and took my feet out of the horrible pit and placed them upon a rock, and led me about in paths which I had not known and in ways that I had not seen. He put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto the Lord, who brought me out of darkness into his marvelous light. I am not ashamed of the gospel that ascribes all praise to God.

I went to the church and told them this short story and they received me, and I was baptized the second Sunday in May, 1898. Then the preaching of the gospel began to oppress my mind very heavily. In 1899 my wife was taken away by death, and I was left in great distress; but the

Lord was ever mindful of me, and has taken care of me and carried me through. The impression to preach stayed with me in all my troubles and trials, until the 18th of last October. I was forty-nine years of age that day. The impression concerning preaching was so heavy upon me that I was made to talk to the church, and they gladly received what I had to say; since then my mind has been greatly relieved. I believe in the doctrine of election and predestination, and that God chose his people in Christ before the foundation of the world. I love the people who believe and preach that doctrine.

I must close this letter as it is already too long; my mind has led me out, and I could not seem to stop. This is from one who is saved by the grace of God. I take the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and read in it many precious letters from the dear ones.

From your brother,

CHARLES BIRD.

OCEAN CITY, Md., June, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I submit the inclosed letter from brother Pittman for your disposal. In a separate letter I have his consent to send it to the SIGNS. We have no authority for saying Jesus broke down under the cross, but I thought we had until brother Pittman called my attention to it. Perhaps others are of the same opinion I was, and they will be glad to have their attention called to it.

My health is much improved.

Yours in hope,

EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

HAVANA, Kansas, June 10, 1907.

EDWARD F. ROUNDS—DEAR BROTHER:—I have just read your interesting communication in the SIGNS of the 15th inst. upon the wonderful ordeal the blessed Savior passed through in his arrest, trial and crucifixion. It is a sublimely pathetic theme for the meditation of the recipients of that glorious redemption secured for them through that suffering, death and resurrection. How submissively he bore the sins of his Father's children in his own body!

Pardon me for requesting an explanation of a portion of your letter. You write: "Jesus is led away to Calvary bearing his cross; his dear body is beginning to weaken under the dreadful strain and severe scourging of this sad night, he breaks down under the weight of the rugged cross, another is made to carry it." I have no wish to be an iconoclast to destroy or shatter what appears to be so universally understood. Poets have dwelt upon it, ministers have pictured the scene with the most sublime pathos, but from the description given by the four gospels is there any evidence that the cross was laid upon Jesus at any time, or that he touched it until he was cruelly nailed to it by the infuriated Roman soldiery? Matthew describes that scene of carrying the cross, xxvii. 32: "And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his [Christ's] cross." Mark xv. 20, 21: "And led him out to crucify him. And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross." Luke xxiii. 25, 26: "But he delivered Jesus to their will. And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus." (i. e., following after in the order of the march to the place of execution.) The testimony of these three

writers is substantially the same, and nowhere is there any evidence that Jesus bore the cross. John's version is presented in a different way, omitting Simon and using the personal pronoun instead. Seemingly he did not know his name. John xix. 16, 17: "And they took Jesus and led him away. And he [Simon] bearing his [Christ's] cross went forth into a place called the place of a scull," &c. From the above Scriptures it seems that the soldiers led Jesus from the judgment hall into the common hall, called Prætorum, where they heaped upon him their cruel indignities and mockery, and prepared him for the crucifixion; and as they led him from the hall they laid the cross upon Simon, and he bore it to the designated place.

About two years ago my attention was brought to this subject, and I investigated it closely and came to the conclusion that the common opinion that the cross was placed upon Jesus and that he broke down under it is merely traditional and without scriptural authority.

I submit the above thoughts for your consideration and in the interest of scriptural truth.

Yours in the fellowship of the gospel,

T. R. PITTMAN.

CROYDON, England, April 17, 1907.

DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I have read and reread with the greatest interest and satisfaction your article headed "Perplexing Questions," in the SIGNS of April 1st. It contains most important advice to the churches, couched in a loving spirit. I trust that the Lord's people who read it will take to heart and obey the closing words. It is true, as you remark, that there are times when even the most humble and God-fearing among the people of God do not always see alike. It seems inseparable from the mysterious nature of heavenly truths (which so far transcend all finite comprehension) that in this time state even those taught by the Spirit, though agreeing upon fundamentals, would not all view everything from the same standpoint. I quite understand that your remarks are mainly with reference to divisions among the Lord's people over ministers, or certain courses of action, under various circumstances, but I wish to enlarge the scope of your remarks to all causes of contention among the true Israel of God, believing that they are applicable to everything of a dividing nature. Most true are your remarks, "Nothing is such a healer in time of dissension as to remember all the way in which God has led us, and to look to the hole of the pit from which we have been digged." As we remember that from first to last we are debtors to divine grace, and that if we know anything aright it is all by divine teaching, it induces in us a measure of that compassionate spirit for the weakness of others, that the dear Redeemer had without measure, who could have compassion upon the ignorant and upon men who were out of the way. I was also much pleased with a letter from Elder J. T. Rowe in the SIGNS of April 15th. Let me quote two sentences which seem to be written in letters of gold: "As long as there is individuality there will be differences of opinion about questions that may arise, and I have thought perhaps there has been a tendency to withdraw from brethren who do not see things just as we do, or say things just as we would say them, too soon. Let us see if they have a good hope through grace and are orderly in their lives, and if so, let us bear with them and labor in love for peace and unity, in fellowship." Again he

says, "If I am not much mistaken, I love every man and woman in whom I find evidence of a knowledge of their own sins and a loving desire for the righteousness of Jesus our Lord. Instead of looking for differences let us look for those things and ways in which we are agreed."

When we consider, on the one hand, the many exhortations of Christ and the apostles to mutual love among the children of God, and, on the other hand, the dreadful delusions and false doctrine with which the devil is flooding the religious world so as to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect, it behooves all who truly love the precious doctrine of grace to close up their ranks, drop, so far as they can conscientiously, their minor differences, and with a united front contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. May we ever remember John's words: "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."

Believe me, my dear brother, yours in gospel bonds,

C. J. FARNCOMBE.

[THESE are good and gracious words from our brother across the water, and such as it is good to give heed to.—C.]

TOONE, Tenn., March 1, 1907.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—My love for you is far beyond all love for fleshly kin and the pleasures and idols of this world. I feel thankful to the good Lord for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for through it we can communicate with and comfort each other, which is a great blessing to me. The SIGNS advocates the truth. The Old School Baptists are the true church of Jesus Christ.

After John baptized our Savior, Jesus calling him John, said, "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth unto it." The "every man" spoken of here are believers. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." Jesus said, "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." Jesus said, "He that is of God heareth God's words." He told his disciples when he sent them out to preach, to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. Serpents trust in their heads for protection; they fight with their heads and bite. Children of Jesus, trust in your Head, which is Jesus Christ, the great Head of the church, he will protect you. Jesus said when he comes again to gather up his elect there shall be two women grinding together at the mill, one shall be taken and the other left. One woman is the old mother of Babylon, the church of antichrist; the other is the bride, the Lamb's wife; the mill is the Bible; the bride, the Lamb's wife, says it teaches salvation is all of grace; the old mother of the harlot children says it teaches that salvation is partly the work of the sinner, and so they are grinding together here in this world at the mill; so when Jesus comes without sin unto salvation he will take his bride (wife), and the old mother of Babylon shall be left. Brethren, it does look so plain when Jesus opens our understanding, it is so beautiful it cannot be described; but I can see that the Old School Baptists are the true church of Jesus here on earth.

I did not think about writing what I have when I began to write this, but the will of God be done. My mind is getting so crowded with the beauties in the

holy Scriptures I want to proclaim them upon the housetop; so, brethren and sisters, old and young, you who believe the doctrine that the Old School Baptists advocate, do not be uneasy, a few more days on earth and we will be carried away by the power of God to that celestial city; then our doubts and suffering will be over; thank Jesus and God the Father forevermore.

Brethren, write for the SIGNS, it is of much comfort to my poor soul. Brethren editors, do what you please with this.

In hope of eternal life through the shed blood of Jesus,

S. M. BUTLER.

VERNON, Texas, Feb. 3, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE BONDS OF HOPE:—Since our subscription has expired, we desire to renew for our old family paper. Inclosed find four dollars for the same. We implore the goodness and mercy of Almighty God upon the editors and publishers of this dear, old paper, which is a medium by which God's children can converse with each other, and can relate their experiences and tell how merciful the Lord has been to their unrighteousness; how he has been pleased to strengthen their little hope by the reading of the travels of the Lord's dear people in this unfriendly world of sin and wickedness; how the Lord in the darkest hours of doubt and unbelief was pleased to reveal his loving face and speak peace to the troubled soul. O what consolation it is to God's humble poor when they have been captives of Satan in a strange land, and been lured by his cunning, deceptive enticements, to meet with one of the Lord's little ones who speaks the language of his kinfolks and can say the words plainly. That language has no uncertain sound, it is pure and gentle and holy, like its Author —perfection in itself. Our Savior tells us that, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Their lives are hid with Christ in God; they are preserved in Jesus Christ and called; called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ before the world began.

Your brother, I hope, in bonds of fellowship,

W. S. BOURLAND.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., May 11, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—By your permission I desire to write a few lines to the scattered pilgrims and strangers in this wilderness world of woe who read your paper.

Dear brethren, sisters and friends, I often have a desire to respond to your precious messages of love and truth which you send forth through our dear household paper, the SIGNS, which comes to me regularly, and I prize its visits very much. I am so situated in this life that I never hear any Old School Baptist preaching except through our papers. I would like to say to the traveling brethren: If any of you ever do come this way, call and hunt for the bleating lambs of your Master's fold. I often fear and tremble lest I am not one of them, then when the precious truth of the Bible finds lodgment in my heart I am encouraged, and hope on that the fallow ground of this old nature has been broken up. I

think brother Duley's son, of Beaver, Okla., is one that deserves great credit and encouragement. I for one can sympathize with the bereaved, as it is just one year and one month to-day since I looked upon the face of my dear mother for the last time in this life. Friend A. C. Duley, if many other children would honor their parents as you have done there would not be so many sorrows in this sad world. I am glad your father's words and prayers sank deep down in your heart; they will spring upward. I am so glad to hear any one say all power belongs to God, who works and none can hinder. It is he by his Holy Spirit that quickens the dead into life, and where he begins the good work he will perform it to the end. Brethren, let us try to live to the honor of God in all we say and do, and praise him for our parents which he gave us, and say his will be done when he takes them.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

THORNTON, Ark., March 10, 1907.

EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS—DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—As we have so dull a season it makes me hunger and thirst for the faithful communion of the saints, but it seems to be the time for those teachers that have itching ears to make followers of them, leading silly women captive, making fair speeches. There is no comfort to me in the sayings of men about spiritual things if their walk is not stronger evidence. If I see a man walking in the decrees and ordinances of the church, it comforts me and makes me believe him a child of God, and desire his fellowship and communion. How important is the command: Take the saying of no man for your counsel. I know I do not keep the commands of God, and feel guilty before him, yet have an earnest desire to worship the true and living God, but I have to stand still and wait the rising of the Morning Star in the east with its brightness to remove the darkness so I can see how to walk the strait and narrow way that leads to life.

I was made to fear and tremble a few years back when there was a sad departure among the churches; they acted without the ordinances of the church and had serious trouble; some of the brethren said they knew nothing of church discipline, and saw no use of it, all they wanted was to love one another and watch over each other for good. It has proved in that case to be love of men that led them and that cast out the fear of God, just as the fear and love of the Lord casteth out the fear of man. If we observe the ordinances and walk in them we will be watching over each other for Christ's sake, not for the sake of evil men and women, as there are none good. The churches here are in many divisions, and have not had any faithful assembling for three or four years, but I trust the power of God may be manifest, that we may see a willing people again, and have their fellowship and communion.

I will here speak of the comfort I found in the first letter of the February 15th number of the SIGNS, by Joseph Ford. I find that we have been taught alike, as I can indorse the whole of his letter; but it is very crucifying to the flesh. I would like to meet brother Ford face to face and hear him talk.

There are a few of us living in our town, and would like the brethren far and near to visit us when convenient.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

A. HOLLOWAY.

CORVALLIS, Ore., April, 17, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—The time has passed for the renewal of my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I hope you will pardon my delay. I have just returned from a trip in the east; I spent the winter in Iowa with my daughter and other relatives and friends. I had a very pleasant visit, and also three different times had the pleasure of attending meetings held with the Little Flock Church, Marion County, Iowa. Elder Rose and brother Geo. Jones preach for them regularly. Elders Reeves and Jordan were with them at the December meeting, and as far as I am able to judge they all speak the same language: salvation by grace and grace alone. It is there as it is here in the far west, the Baptists are few in number, but the Lord has promised where two or three meet in his name he will be in their midst. One thing that makes the Little Flock Church seem doubly dear to me is that my membership was once with them. I united with that church in 1860, and was baptized by Elder Tannehill. I left Iowa in 1870, coming with my family to Benton County, Oregon, where I now live. What a change has taken place in that time; but few of the dear, old saints that met there then are there now; most of them have gone to their reward, and how we miss them.

The SIGNS comes to me regularly, and how I appreciate reading its editorials, as well as the letters from the dear children of God scattered over the land.

Dear brother Chick, I read with much pleasure and comfort your editorial on associations, in February 1st number of the SIGNS. I have been a reader of the paper for many years; I think my husband subscribed for it in the early sixties, but I cannot recall the year. I am now in my seventy-third year, and being twenty-five miles from any church of our faith and order I seldom hear any Baptist preaching except through the SIGNS.

This is at your disposal, do with it as you think best, and all will be right with me; I only thought of writing to renew my subscription.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

(MRS.) JAMES WATKINS.

WILMINGTON, N. C.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS AND ALL WHOM I MET ON MY RECENT VISIT TO THE NORTHEASTERN ASSOCIATIONS:—My tour among you and association with you was pleasant indeed, and with fond remembrances my mind runs back to the sweet meetings we enjoyed together. I can sincerely say I thank God upon every remembrance of you who cared for me so tenderly and encouraged me in deed as well as in word. Though perfect strangers in the flesh, you made me feel that I was with the children of God, and that we were of one Spirit and one mind, having been brought into this unity by being born of that incorruptible Seed that liveth and abideth forever. I would be glad to mention the names of all who entertained me, but space forbids; I want each one, however, to receive this as personal, and if you have the mind, a line from you would be appreciated. May the dear Lord keep you in the future, as in the past, from the isms and schisms of the day, and continue to bless you with able ministers of the new testament to go in and out before you and to feed the flock of God which he hath purchased with his own precious blood. How encouraging it was to listen to them from day to day as they proclaimed the eternal, unlimited, unchangeable power, love and mercy of God in the salvation

of his people, and that everything is so fixed that the wrath of man praises him and devils tremble before him. How confidently I rest in the thought that death and hell can do no more than our Father pleases, and though I make my bed in hell he is there; his hand shall uphold us, and his right hand shall guide us.

On my return home I found my family well, for which I hope I am thankful.

I am your brother, I hope, in the fellowship of the gospel of Jesus Christ,

E. E. LUNDY.

POTTER, Ark., May 30, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I write to renew my subscription for the paper; I would have remitted sooner, but kept putting it off. I felt that I wanted to write a few lines to let you and the writers of the SIGNS know how I enjoy reading the good letters and editorials; but now the thought comes to me, What right have I to intrude? What right have I to the children's bread? Yet I do hope I get a few crumbs which fall from the Master's table. I have just read the article of Frederick W. Keene in the SIGNS of May 15th, and if I am not deceived I did enjoy it. O what a blessing to be remembered by the Lord, which causes us in turn to remember him, for we love the Lord because he first loved us. I was very much interested in the correspondence between Elder Chick and Fred Simmons, because I was nearly in the same condition as Mr. Simmons, but I trust I have been made to see differently from what I did before I read those articles.

If it is not asking too much, will Elder Chick give his views on Joseph's cup? What is meant by it being put into the mouth of Benjamin's sack, and why was Benjamin's mess five times as much as the others? Joseph seemed to love Benjamin better than the others; why was this?

I do love to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; beside the editorials there are many good letters.

LAURA A. WILSON.

[IF the Lord will give us understanding we will try to comply ere long with the above request.—C.]

PUEBLO, Colo., June 18, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am somewhat behind with my subscription, and have no excuse to offer except negligence; I hope it will not happen again. I was just thinking how we would feel if the dear, old SIGNS would fail to reach us for two or three months, how soon we would write to know what was the matter that we did not get our paper on time. Now, brethren, let us be just as punctual to send our subscription, so the publishers will know there is nothing wrong with us. I send my subscription in this, together with my love and best wishes for the editors and the dear, old SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

From a poor, old sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all,

AMBROSE FLOURNOY.

NOTICE.

LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

OUR supply of the large type cloth Hymn Books is exhausted, and we have only a few copies of the large leather binding (blue marbled edge), which we will mail as long as they last at $1.50 each. We will not be able to fill large orders for these books, but can supply any number desired of the small type Hymn Book.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1907.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

NATURAL LIFE AND SPIRITUAL LIFE.

SOME reflections have been in our mind of late concerning two or three matters of which we have heard much said in years past, and of these it may be profitable to say a few words. One question is this: What life did Adam forfeit when he trangressed the law of God in the garden? It appears to us that the apostle has settled this matter by saying, "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." And again, That which is first is natural, afterward that which is spiritual. "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven." It seems clear from this testimony that the first Adam did not possess spiritual life, but only natural. In his created state he was not a partaker of the divine nature. It seems then incontrovertible that he had no other life to forfeit than natural life, and this life was all that could be demanded of him because of his transgression. This penalty has been exacted of all the human race save those two who were translated by faith that they did not see death. This life all must lay down, and that because of sin; and so we read, "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." This sentence was passed upon all men, the elect and the nonelect alike. The children of God "were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." These "others" are those who are not included in the covenant of grace. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Paul says there is no difference among men, either Jew or Gentile, so far as this sin and condemnation are concerned; therefore, infants and aged men of all conditions and classes of life die. We need no other proof that sin is everywhere than the fact that death is everywhere. When men die it is because they are dead, first of all, in sin. The expression, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," in the original Hebrew is more forcibly expressed, as will be seen in the margin of most large Bibles, "Dying thou shalt die," and this seems to us to involve the awful truth of that death in sin and death to God which brings about this other death which must come to all men some day. It does not seem correct to say that Christ, as our life, was involved in the transgression. This eternal life which is spiritual and holy, and which is said by the apostle to be "Christ in you, the hope of glory," Adam did not possess in his creation, and consequently this life was not demanded of him, and he could not forfeit it. Whatever life belonged to Adam, our first parent, is that life of which all his descendents partake. Had Adam possessed spiritual life as a creature all men would also have been possessed of it as creatures. Adam did possess natural life, and all his descendents are also in possession of it. In this life all men, elect and nonelect, share, as said before. Some men and women dead in sin, even as others, were,

before the world was, chosen in Christ unto salvation. This was because it so seemed good in the sight of God; there is no other reason than this to be given. For these men and women Christ died upon the cross of Calvary. In order to thus die, the Just for the unjust, he took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, and was found in fashion as a man. He was that Word made flesh, and dwelt among men. Thus only could he bear the sins of his people and die for them that they might live.

Jesus laid down his life; he had power to lay it down, and power to take it again; no other man ever had this power. The Lord did not lay down his divine life, and the divine nature was not crucified upon the tree of the cross, but, as the man, our fellow, he died, laying down that very life for us which the law demanded of us in our first parents in the garden. Thus he paid all the debt which his people owed, and forever delivered them from bondage and from the fear of death. Now the way is blessedly opened for him to ascend on high and receive gifts for men, even the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them. These gifts are all embraced in the one gift of eternal life. No man ever possesses this life until he receives it through the indwelling of the Spirit. What Adam did not possess by creation, the chosen of God now come into the possession of through the finished work of the dear Redeemer. "The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." The chosen vessels of mercy were given in the covenant of promise to Christ, and Christ was given to them in the same covenant, and as the promise given to Abraham could not be disannulled by the law of Moses, so this everlasting covenant given us in Christ could not be disannulled by the law given to Adam. Christ came to die for his own elect ones. All men had sinned and fallen in Adam, but Christ came to redeem the chosen, the elect, from death and sin. The same penalty rested upon all men, but Jesus bore the penalty for his own; the nonelect are left abiding in death forever. Here we behold, as said the apostle, "the goodness and servity of God." This is presented by the apostle in Romans ix: "What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."

It has been sometimes incorrectly said that the life of the church was demanded, and that as Christ is declared to be that life, therefore the law demanded of the church that she should lay down this life; but this could not be correct, because Christ and his people can never be separated. If then, that life which is Christ Jesus himself, was demanded of the people of God, or the church, then they and that life must be separated, or, in other words, they must lay down that life and be without it. But we have before shown that eternal life was not forfeited in the transgression, because Adam did not by creation possess that life. Christ was not by creation the life of our first father; he was not the life of man in man's creation in any sense of the word. That man in whom Christ dwells, and of whom he is the life, can never be called upon by any transgression to yield it up; it is eternal life and not temporal. Life itself does not die, but we who lose our life are said to die when that life is separated from us. Christ laid down no

other life than that which was demanded of men on account of the transgression; and by his death the chosen vessels of mercy were redeemed from death and made the recipients of that eternal life which was not theirs until it was given them in the new and everlasting covenant of grace.

The word "quicken," or "quickened," is a common word in the Bible, both in the Old and New Testament Scriptures, and as it is an important word it has seemed to us most important that we understand its meaning. This is also true of all Bible words. The Holy Spirit has chosen right words to express his mind, and holy men who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost were not allowed to make any mistake in the use of words. We indeed may mistake their meaning by carelessly reading them, or by giving to them as we read them the meaning which has become attached to them by common use among us, which however may not be the meaning they originally had. This is true of this word "quicken." It possesses a definite meaning in the Bible; in our common use of it in our every day life it has come to have a lesser meaning, very far short of its signification in the word. We are not finding fault with this, but only desiring to call attention to the strict and definite use of it in the Scriptures. The original Hebrew word translated "quicken," in the Old Testament, and the original Greek word translated by the same word in the New Testament, possesses a primary and a secondary meaning. In both Testaments the word means "to give life" or "to maintain life that has been given." In the Old Testament the psalmist often speaks of having been quickened, and prays for quickening at the hand of the Lord. In these last named places he evidently uses the word in the sense of preserving alive his interest in spiritual things. In the New Testament the word "quicken," or "quickened," or "quickening," is used eleven times. In almost all these places the word signifies giving life, or causing to live. In all these places that which is quickened is presented as having been dead. In one or two places the secondary meaning of "keeping alive" that which has been made to live may also be included in the word, but even in these instances the meaning of giving life to the dead is included primarily. So we read, "As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will;" "it is the spirit that quickeneth;" "who quickeneth the dead;" "shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you;" "that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die;" "the last Adam was made a quickening spirit;" "who quickeneth all things;" "quickened by the Spirit;" "hath quickened us together with Christ;" you "hath he quickened together with him." It will be seen at once that in nearly all these Scriptures the word must signify to give life to the dead, or the power of giving this life; and even when it may be understood in the secondary meaning the first meaning is necessarily involved.

In most places which we have quoted it will be seen that the word applies to the work of the new birth, or the making alive of those who were dead in sin and to God. In three instances, however, reference is made to the making alive of the dead who were dead literally. This is true of the language in John v. 21: "As the Father raiseth up the dead." Also 1 Cor. xv. 36, where the apostle declares that seed sown by men must die to be

raised from the dead again in the new and glorious form of the plant or tree. Also in 1 Peter iii. 18, the Lord himself is spoken of as being made alive from the dead in his resurrection. Thus it will be seen that the word applies to what we call the new birth, and also to the raising up of the dead from their graves. In both cases it retains its full meaning of "causing to live." In Romans viii. 11, the apostle says that if the Spirit of Christ dwells in us it shall also quicken our mortal bodies, or rather that God shall quicken them by his Spirit which dwells in us. Paul had just said, "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." The body has been dead all the time of our life, and even after the indwelling of Christ it is indeed still dead. This is as true of the aged saint as of the child in grace. All the warfare of all the years of this mortal life continues to prove that the body is still dead, and this will continue to be true to the end. The believer of fifty years experience must still unite with the babe in Christ and say, My body is dead because of sin. One can say, My body has been controlled, kept in subjection and made to walk in the way of uprightness in some measure through grace, sin has not had dominion over it, but it is still a dead body because of sin. The Spirit has compelled my feet to go to the house of God, and my hands to minister to the disciples of the Lord, and my tongue to sing the praises of God, but still my body is dead. This takes in all that may be included in the word body; but the apostle says it shall be quickened by the Spirit which dwells in it, for he has just said, "The Spirit is life." It is not merely living, but it is life itself. This is the glorious hope based upon the promise of God given to all believers.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

PSALMS CX. 4.

"THE Lord hath sworn, and will not repent. Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

The inspired writer to the Hebrews calls attention to the important fact that all the priests of the Levitical order were made priests without an oath; but the priesthood of the Son of God being of an infinitely higher order, the superior dignity and everlasting perpetuity of his office is expressed in the awful solemnity of his induction: "But this with an oath by him that said unto him, * * * Thou art a priest for ever," &c., and the apostle adds, "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament." Regarding then the oath of God in establishing the permanent and everlasting priesthood of the Lord Jesus, as designed to mark the wide disparity between him and Aaron, his suretyship from that of the sons of Levi, and the superiority of the testament or covenant, of which he is the surety, above that which was made with the patriarchs, the subject is peculiarly interesting to all the saints who are vitally interested in that suretyship. The psalmist, inspired with the spirit of prophecy, says, "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent." We can conceive of nothing in all the record of divine revelation so solemn, so sacred, or so full of consolation to the heirs of immortality, as the oath of God. God, who cannot lie, who is immutable, of one mind, and cannot be turned; God, whose word without an oath cannot be doubted without involving the most impious infidelity and blasphemy, has seen cause to swear, on this subject, in confirmation of his word. We can conceive of no reason why he should swear in confirmation of his truth,

except that which is given us in Hebrews vi. 18, namely, Being willing to show to the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, &c. "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." How condescending and how gracious to pledge his holiness for the consolation of his children, and how truly consoling it is to know that the new testament or covenant is better than the Sinai covenant, which could make nothing perfect, which could not give life, which could not make the comers thereunto perfect, could not purge their conscience from dead works, nor qualify them to serve the true God. A better covenant, established on better promises, and secured by a better, an infallible Surety. The former testament or covenant was in the flesh of Israel, and all its promises were conditional, and all the conditions were based on their obedience to its requisitions. The Levitical priesthood, with its teeming altars, its rivers of blood, its numerous victims and oft repeated ceremonies, could secure no permanent or spiritual blessing to the priest or to the people. Neither Aaron nor any of his sons could continue long in the office, by reason of death; and even during the brief period of their official service they had first to offer sacrifices for their own sins, and then for the sins of the people, showing that they were themselves sinners needing to be purged, redeemed and saved by better blood than ever had streamed from their smoking altars. But the great High Priest of our profession is holy, harmless, separate from sinners and higher than the heavens, having no personal sin to expiate, no blemish to unfit him for his sacred position.

"Not Aaron nor Melchisedec
Could claim such high descent as he;
His nature and his names bespeak
His unexampled pedigree.

Descended from the eternal God,
He bears the name of his own Son,
And dressed in human flesh and blood,
He puts his priestly garments on."

It pleased the Father that in him all fullness should dwell. All the fullness of the Godhead dwells in him bodily. The whole fullness of the church is in him, for the church is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. He is full of grace and truth; he is full of righteousness and of all the eternal perfections of Deity; full of life and immortality, possessing the power of an endless life; full of ability to save unto the uttermost all that come unto the Father by him, seeing that he ever liveth to make intercession for them; strong to redeem and mighty to save, having power over all flesh, that he might give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him; possessing all the power of earth and heaven. How admirably qualified to be the Surety of the new covenant! We have observed that the old covenant of works was conditional, and depended on the obedience of those to whom it was given, but there was no reliable surety, all were bankrupt, and all accursed, for as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh living can be justified in the sight of God; but the new or better covenant, with its better promises, relies not on the fidelity and personal obedience of the people for its fulfillment, but upon the Surety, upon the High Priest of our profession. Hence in the revelation of this covenant not a condition is found. It is ordered in all things and sure, and it is all our hope and all our salvation. Its emphatic lan-

guage is the promises of God, all of which are confirmed by his oath, saying, "I will," and "Thou shalt."

"The Lord hath sworn." This would seem to be enough; what more can we desire in confirmation of the pledge? But to the assurance: we are told he will not repent. It is not the word, the promise, the oath of a fickle or mutable being who is of one mind to-day and may be of another mind to-morrow; no change of time or circumstances can alter the purpose and counsel of his will; he is of one mind, and none can turn him. He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever; he changes not, therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed. The immutability of God is a heart-cheering consideration to the saints, especially in its application to the priesthood of our divine Redeemer. God has not only sworn, "Thou art a priest," but the words of his sacred oath are, "Thou art a priest for ever." Never to be changed, dismissed or superseded in the holy office. The sons of Levi were not suffered to continue, by reason of death, but Christ, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. They were made priests by the law of a carnal commandment, but Christ is made a priest by the power of an endless life. Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. Thus the power of eternal life, of immortality, is secured in the priesthood of the Son of God, and his priesthood cannot be changed, because he hath an unchangeable priesthood. Furthermore, the oath of the Lord determines irrevocably the order as well as the perpetuity of this priesthood. The Lord has sworn and will not repent, that it is and shall forever be after the order of Melchisedec, and consequently not after the order of Aaron.

Let us consider this order as applicable to the priesthood of Christ.

First. The priesthood of Christ is a royal priesthood. Under the Levitical economy the priesthood was distinct from the reigning power, there was nothing regal or royal in it, but "Behold the man whose name is The Branch: and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."—Zech. vi. 12, 13. Our Priest is seated on the throne of power, and shall sit and rule upon his throne, and he shall build the temple of the Lord. This is after the order of Melchisedec. "For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God." These titles for our benefit are thus explained: "First being by interpretation, King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace."—Heb. vii. 1, 2. As the King of righteousness, his government is founded in righteousness, and every perfection of eternal Deity is displayed in all the orders of his throne. While as King of righteousness he demands a perfect conformity to all his laws and institutions, and that all the subjects of his kingdom shall be holy as God is holy, as King of peace, in his priesthood he is able to make them so. By one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified; for all his subjects were sanctified, or set apart, by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called. He has himself made peace by the blood of his cross, having reconciled his people unto God. As King of right-

eousness, he met the stern demands of the law and justice of God, bore all the penalty due to their transgression, put away their sin by the sacrifice of himself, washed them from all pollution in his own blood, and having freely justified them through the redemption that is in him as their Priest, he calls and quickens them by giving them eternal life, imparts to them his own spirit, writes his law in their hearts and sits upon his throne and rules them by the word of his power. Thus the counsel of peace is between them both, that is, between the Ruler and the Priest, the King of righteousness and the King of peace. His name is Wonderful, Counsellor, The Everlasting Father, The Mighty God, The Prince of Peace. Truly the government is upon his shoulder, and "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever."—Isaiah ix. 6, 7. Well did the apostle say, "For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, [of the order of Aaron] to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore."—Heb. vii. 26–28. "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man."—Heb. viii. 1, 2. After having thus briefly summed up the amount of the testimony of the order of the priesthood of the Messiah, and its superiority over the typical priesthood, having shown its royalty, its power, its righteousness, its majesty and efficiency, he exhorts the saints from all these considerations to appreciate their exalted privileges; "and having a high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) and let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." And as we would honor Christ in his priestly office, let us be careful that we discard all other priests and offerings to commend us to God, knowing as we do that there is salvation in no other, that there is no other name under heaven given whereby we must be saved.

To this dear Surety's hand
Will I commit my cause;
He answers and fulfills
His Father's broken laws;
Behold my soul at freedom set!
My Surety paid the dreadful debt.

Jesus, my great High Priest,
Offered his blood and died;
My guilty conscience seeks
No sacrifice beside;
His powerful blood did once atone,
And now it pleads before the throne.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., April 15, 1862.

POETRY.

SOLOMON'S SONG II. 15.

"TAKE us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes."

"Dear friend, if these no warmth impart,
(These weak effusions of my heart,)
Pray cast them all away,
And I will not intrude again,
If I no evidence obtain
That you like what I say.

The little foxes spoil our vines,
They cavil and dispute our lines,
And mar the tender grapes.
As with our loving Lord we walk,
How grieving 'tis to hear them talk,
And boast of their escapes.

They think what judgment they possess,
What knowledge and what cunningness,
To try and to condemn.
They laugh and jeer and mock and scorn
The weakness of a soul newborn,
And boast 'tis not like them.

The lispings of an infant's prayer,
The work of leaving all one's care
In Christ's almighty hand;
The sweet submission to his will,
The heavenly grace of standing still
At sea or on the land,
Are tender grapes.

The breathings of a filial fear,
The drawings felt when Christ is near,
And how the bowels move!—
The yearnings over him we love,
The longings, too, to soar above,
And all his kindness prove,
Are tender grapes.

The holy worship at his feet,
The way the Spirit makes us meet,
And joins us all in one.
The comely praise that's offered there,
The beauteous robe we sinners wear,
Who no good works have done,
Are tender grapes.

The love that flows from heart to heart,
The union death itself can't part,
Nor Satan with his hosts;
The patience in the toilsome roads,
The bearing of each other's loads;
Why honor no one boasts!
Are tender grapes.

The daily dying to ourselves,
The way we're saved from rocks and shelves,
Yet sail with daily fear;
The secret counsel we receive,
The little things o'er which we grieve,
And shed the silent tear,
Are tender grapes.

The loathings on account of sin,
The leper's cry, 'Unclean, unclean!'
And Satan's mighty power;
The strong desires to be preserved,
The groanings when from truth we're swerved,
In some unguarded hour,
Are tender grapes.

The light that shines on that dear book,
The precious glass in which we look
To see if all is right;
The gropings, too, we often know,
The doubts and fears we undergo
In the cold, dark, winter night,
Are tender grapes.

The joy that's felt when morning comes,
The true resigning of our homes,
To serve the Lord alone;
The zeal that does our hearts inflame,
The jealousy for his dear name,
Now he and we are one,
Are tender grapes.

The untold glories which we view,
The precious treasures, old and new,
Which sovereign grace bestows;
The way we're washed, and how we're dressed,
The way we're healed, and how we're blessed,
No hypocrite ever knows—nor loves
Those tender grapes."

(Selected by Mrs. Sarah McDonald.)

THOUGHTS.

THE time draws nearer every day
When I shall pass from earth away,
And, far above this gloomy place,
Behold my precious Savior's face.

I shall behold him as he is,
In the blest land of perfect bliss,
No more to doubt, no more to fear,
Be done with all these sorrows here.

O yes, by faith methinks I see
A home in heaven prepared for me,
Where I shall join the blood-washed throng,
And sing with them redemption's song.

All praise to him who gives such hope;
It lifts my drooping spirit up,
Makes me to fly on eagles' wings
Above all sublunary things.

(MRS.) JAMES WYMAN.

WESTON, Mich.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Elmira Horton, widow of Deacon Hiram Horton, of Howells, N. Y., died at the home of her niece, at Port Jervis, N. Y., July 20th, 1907.

ALSO,

Mrs. Celinda J. Jenkins, widow of Elder Benton Jenkins, died suddenly at her home in Middletown, N. Y., July 21st, 1907.

More extended obituaries will appear later.—ED.

Mr. Warner Bouck, of Saratoga, N. Y., who was the proprietor of a large boarding house called the Spencer House, died July 5th, 1907. He was thrown by a vicious horse in Albany, N. Y., and then the animal stamped him with her fore feet, crushing his skull; he only lived a few hours, and never spoke. He leaves a widow, who was Helen Kinney, daughter of brother Peter Kinney, of Schoharie, N. Y., a young son three years old, and many relatives and friends, to mourn for one suddenly snatched out of the world in the full vigor of life. He was about 30 years old, with apparently very bright prospects before him. I had some acquaintance with him, having been at his home in Saratoga a number of times, and have held meetings at the boarding house, and can say that I was very favorably impressed with him, and have been informed that his wife and some of his friends have good evidence that he was a heaven-born soul, and I can say with them I had strong impressions in that direction. But why should he be taken, and especially in that way? God only knows. God bless the poor, sad, lonely widow with sustaining grace, guide and guard the little son and comfort all the mourning friends, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

He was buried in the Schoharie burying-ground, eternally at rest.

ALSO,

Miss Mary Morse, who was living with her sister, brother Peter Leonard's widow, near Bainbridge, N. Y., died July 10th, 1907, aged 91 years and 6 months. About three years ago she fell and broke her hip, and never walked afterward, I am told, and seemed to fail from that time until released by death from all her sufferings. She had never made a profession of religion, but was a firm believer in the doctrine of Christ, and gave evidence for many years that she was born of God. "Aunt Mary," as she was commonly called, never married. She leaves two sisters and other relatives to mourn, but not without hope, for many of them not only had hope for her, but have a good hope for themselves. She is perfectly at rest in Jesus. May the dear Lord reconcile and comfort all of the mourning ones.

The writer of this notice spoke at the funeral, which was held at her sister's, Mrs. Leonard's, after which the remains were taken to Otego and buried.

D. M. VAIL.

DIED—Brother **Henry Denton** and sister **Laura Denton.** The circumstances connected with their departure are sad indeed. There were two brothers, Henry and Rufus, and a sister, Laura, all living together on a farm near Cairo, Greene Co., N. Y.; neither of the three had ever married. On the evening of March 22nd, 1907, they retired as usual; later in the night Rufus awoke to find the house on fire. He awoke his brother Henry and then went to waken his sister, who occupied an upper room, but on opening the door he saw the room was ablaze, and, thinking he might rescue her from the window, he hastily got a ladder, but by that time the fire had made such progress he could only look in, and saw his sister lying on the farther side of the room beside her bed, but he was driven back by the angry flames. No one knows how or why, but for some reason Henry went back into the house and was so badly burned that he died soon after daylight. Rufus survives, but suffers greatly from burns and shock; also one sister, Mrs. Distin, of Big Hollow, N. Y., is left to mourn the sad fate of a kind brother and sister.

Henry Denton was born May 12th, 1833; Laura Denton was born Sept. 5th, 1836. They both united with the Old School Baptist Church of Middleburgh, N. Y., more than thirty years ago, (I have not the exact date,) and were faithful, consistent members until death, always filling their places when circumstances would permit. I will copy a little from their town paper:

"They were rather eccentric people, but their neighbors speak of them as being honest, temperate, law-abiding and God-fearing people. A more devoted brother and sister you could not find. They were loyal to their church and to their God."

We cannot question the Lord's right or purpose, but desire to bow in humble submission to his will in all things, knowing he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. We as a little church feel to mourn as one after another is called from our midst, but we feel that our loss is their eternal gain.

Their charred bodies were taken to Cornwallsville, N. Y., for burial, and a suitable funeral sermon was preached by their pastor, Elder John Clark, Sunday afternoon, June 2nd, from 1 Cor. xv. 22, 23, in the meeting-house of the Middleburgh Church.

(MRS.) ADDIE COOK.

RENSSELAERVILLE, N. Y.

OUR beloved brother, **William Gore,** was born near Ramsey, England, March 4th, 1818, died at Evansville, Ind., Oct. 12th, 1906, aged 88 years, 7 months and 8 days. He came to America in 1837, and the following year was married to Miss Mary Ann Gilbe. To them were born fourteen children, five of whom survive him. He united with the Regular Baptist Church at Lynnville, Ind., in 1860, after which he was ordained to the office of deacon, which office he

filled to the time of his death. After the death of his wife he was again married, to Mrs. Ann P. Felstead, of Evansville, in 1882, and moved to this city in 1883, where he ended his long and useful career. He never changed his membership from his home church, to which he was taken for burial, but during his residence here acted in the capacity of deacon for our church, which office he adorned by a godly life, which won the love and esteem of all who knew him, especially the members of our church. We feel that in him we have lost a wise counselor, a faithful friend, who was indeed a father in Israel, but we sorrow not as those who have no hope, for we feel assured that our loss is his eternal gain. He leaves a widow, five children and a host of friends to mourn their loss, but especially his widow, to whom the blow is most severe. The writer had been personally acquainted with him during his residence in this city, being a member of the church which he attended, and can say for him that he was always at his post, never failed to fill his seat when possible to be there. He served the emblems at our May meeting, and was taken from this city to his last resting-place on the morning of our October meeting. He never failed to be with us at the communion season till he was called to the communion above. There was no blemish on his character, either as a christian or as a citizen. He never uttered a word of dissension in the church, but peace was his ensign or life's motto.

MATTIE KERE.

EVANSVILLE, Ind., July 15, 1907.

Brooks Ellegood Phillips, son of John T. and Nola A. Phillips, of Broad Creek, Del., passed out of time into eternity June 1st, 1907, at the age of 11 years, 6 months and 6 days. The poor little fellow was afflicted with spinal trouble from his birth, and was never able to walk, and the constant care that his parents gave him with untiring devotion endeared him to them, and bound him in such strong affection that his death is a sore and sad affliction to them. His last illness lasted about fifteen weeks, and was very severe, and in his sufferings he longed for death to take him out of his pain. We feel to hope that he is far better off than he could ever be in this world. I would commend the sorrowing parents to Him who is able to heal all the sorrows and afflictions of this world of suffering, and encourage them to hope in a glorious resurrection from the dead. May the blessed consolations of the gospel be ministered unto them by the great Comforter.

A. B. FRANCIS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Sarah E. Burgess, Kentucky, $2.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, in her seventy-sixth annual session, at the residence of brother Doty Varnes, five miles southeast of Farmington, Fulton Co., Ill., on Friday, August 30th, 1907, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue the two following days. Those coming from north of Farmington must come Thursday evening, where they will be met; those coming from south of Farmington will change to the Iowa Central for Cramer on Thursday afternoon, where they will be met. Those from south of Galesburg will come to Abingdon on the C., B. & Q., change to the Iowa Central at 4:36 p. m. Those from Galesburg and the north will take the Interurban at 3:30 p. m. for Abingdon, where they will meet those from the south all bound for Cramer.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Maine Conference will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at North Berwick, York County, Maine. The meeting begins on Friday, August 30th, 1907, and continues three days. We invite all who love our Lord Jesus Christ to attend our gathering.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

THE Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, Providence permitting, will hold a two days meeting the first Wednesday and Thursday in September (4th and 5th), 1907. We extend an invitation to all lovers of the truth, especially ministers.

HENRY BRONSON, Church Clerk.

THE Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Predestinarian or Primitive Baptists will convene with the Mount Pleasant Church, at Pleasureville, Ky., on Friday, Sept. 6th, 1907, and continue three days. Pleasureville is on Louisville & Lexington division of L. & N. R. R., with daily trains each way. Also from Cincinnati via La Grange or via Cincinnati south to Georgetown and Frankfort. We expect Elders Lester, Eubanks and John G. Badger with us at that time. Come, brethren, meet with us.

C. F. DUDLEY, Church Clerk.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Old School Baptist Church at Bowdoinham, Maine, to begin on Friday before the second Monday in September, (6th) 1907, and continue three days. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus. Place of meeting is but a few minutes walk from Bowdoinham depot.

GEO. R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 75. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1907. NO. 16.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., July 3, 1907.

DEAR ELDER H. C. KER:—I have been pleased with your writings, but am delighted with the Warwick Circular Letter written by you and published in the July 1st, 1907, SIGNS, and must tell you so. Your warning words to the dear brethren and churches regarding "these perilous times," then your words: "It is easier to keep out such leaven than to get it out after it gets in the church," are certainly most appropriate. Those churches that are so very fortunate as to have escaped the defiling tongues of seducing spirits and doctrines of devils (notice doctrines of devils are plural, they are numerous and of quite a variety, but God's doctrine is one,) have indeed been miraculously preserved or reserved of God. These false teachers come with "fables." (See 1 Tim. i. 4; 2 Tim. iv. 4; Titus i. 14; 2 Peter i. 16.) In each case we are warned to give no heed to these fables. Peter calls them "cunningly. devised fables." These false teachers are indeed exceedingly cunning, they are wolves in sheep's clothing, they come with soft speech, (Prov. xxv. 15,) they pretend great piety, and are so benevolent that their sympathy knows no bounds, they cannot say to a man, Thou art a heretic, they must organize systems that will appeal to carnal minds to cause them to be considerate of spiritual things, simply "cunningly devised fables." You have explained it better than I can. I wish, dear brother, your churches that have not been molested could only know what great love, peace and fellowship existed with the Baptists in our southern and western States twenty-six years ago, when with but very few exceptions they advocated predestination of all things, and that salvation (with everything which pertains to life and godliness) is given by His divine power, was preached just as the SIGNS has ever set them forth. We do not worship the SIGNS, but we remember at that time, twenty-six years ago, the SIGNS was in nearly every Primitive Baptist house, and was indorsed as sound. Well do I recall the time when the SIGNS came out in mourning, testifying that our beloved brother Gilbert Beebe was dead; strong, able-bodied men and women wept as if their hearts would break. How well I remember that as soon as Elder W. W. Sammons could choke down

or control the emotions of his heart he said: Brethren, our beloved brother Gilbert Beebe is at rest; we loved him much, we shall miss him, but his gain is to be with the God he loved and served so valiantly; he is dead, yet his works in the Lord follow him, and thus he yet speaketh. This declaration was echoed from within the hearts of all the brethren and sisters, they loved him for the truth's sake, and while we could hear his voice no more, nor read from his able pen anything more than his past writings, still "the word of the Lord is not bound." We trusted in God to raise up other witnesses to the truth who would continue the SIGNS, and this wish has been gratified, and under God to-day we have in the dear SIGNS one of the best, if not the best, periodicals ever known.

Yes, may God impress those churches that have not been torn asunder by false teachers, to heed your very timely warning and "keep out the leaven of the pharisees," for since conditional time salvation entered the churches in the south and west, peace has been disturbed and divisions wrought; men who once greeted one another with that good old Hardshell Baptist handshake have met in public places and quarreled like two fierce bulldogs. I say two fierce bulldogs because one was a conditional time salvationist, the other one (that quarreled in public) went off into antinomianism, or, I might say, into an extreme that would justify our opponents in calling us "lifeless machines." I am glad there remains some of our sort, who have too high a regard for the Baptist cause to quarrel in public about their differences on this subject. I am truly glad the SIGNS is firm in contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and is valiant in its fight against spiritual wickedness in high places without the use of carnal weapons. We have had many whole churches depart and give heed to this seducing spirit, conditional time salvation, and have of themselves kindled a fire, and compassed themselves about with sparks, and walked in the light of their own fire and in the sparks that they have kindled. (Isa. l. 11.) They have certainly already lain down in sorrow, for since they prefer their own way to that of waiting upon the Lord for his perfectly established way in Christ, their houses are left unto them desolate; they have no regular pastor, for their "candlestick" is removed; there are among them a few who seem to be sincere, but they are like sheep that are scattered by wolves and have no shepherd; O it is sad indeed. Let those churches that have not been thus molested take heed to the warning which you have given in your Circular Letter, i. e., to keep out the leaven. When you ask one of these cunning disciples of conditional time salvation, Why do you go preach? they reply, Because God commands me to go. Then ask, Well, could you have remained at home instead of going? They reply, O yes, but I did not want to play the "Jonah," so I put on the whole armor of God, and thus I equipped myself and went to battle. They are quite gifted with "great swelling words of vanity," and are liable to deceive by their cunningly devised fables, for it is only a fable to say, I go because of the command, then turn at once and say, I could have not gone; for if the command of God caused him to go, it is evident that such a command is irresistible, and his going was inevitable. But see that big "I:" "I" did not want to play the "Jonah." Again, "I" put on the whole armor of God, and "I" went. Now, whether it is playing the Jonah or

not, we all know that when any command of the Lord comes there is rebellion in our nature or flesh, thus sin revives and we die; yes, die to our own strength, because the law or commandment kills, but at God's own time we are delivered from the body of this death through Christ, and thus in Jesus Christ are passive, and are led by his Spirit, so that when the Lord first says, Go, our rebellious nature says, I will not, but when his quickening Spirit leads us we afterwards repent and do his will. It is Jesus who gives us repentance so that we do the will of our Father, and the big "I" is not in it. I was asked, How is it then that God's regenerated people ever disobey? I replied that disobedience is sin, and that sin came by man, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, so our sinful, rebellious acts are by the "old man," but sin is condemned in the flesh, and all obedience is the work of grace, and therefore it is not I, but the grace of God which was with me; therefore it is thus while "the outward man perisheth, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." Our obedience is simply a growth in grace, and whether we can understand the why, or how a child of God does sin or rebel against God, we do know and understand that we have no righteousness of our own, and that all obedience is the work of grace, and of living faith, and is our work only as the gift of God unto us. Even the apostle Paul, after all his labors, said, "For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient by word and deed." —Rom. xv. 18. That is enough, is it not?

This is trespassing on your time and patience,; forgive me, and may the God who has all power in heaven and in earth keep you. DAVID L. McNEES.

SHERWOOD, Oregon, Nov. 16, 1906.

DEAR BROTHER NEWKIRK:—It has been a long time since I received your letter; I have thought of you often, but felt that I had nothing to say that would be of interest to you. You are aware that I have not the pen of a ready writer. I wish that I could write a good, sensible letter, from a spiritual point of view, but this I cannot do, for I am too poor in spirit and too sinful; I am consequently very barren as to spiritual things. Since receiving your letter I have visited the church at Elgin, Oregon, and the church at Touchet, Washington, and had very enjoyable meetings. There was no other visiting minister at Elgin, and I had to speak four times in the two days, but was favored with good liberty. Here I will tell you that our friend Long requested me to tender you his best wishes, and to say that he would be very glad to see you again. At Touchet there were six ministers present: brother Huyett, Elders Gilmore, Storms, Wagoner, Barnes and myself (it is not meet that I be called a minister). Brother Huyett preached excellently, and all the preaching that I heard was good.

As my train was late I had to wait at Walla Walla all day, and so I missed the meeting on Friday at Touchet; but while waiting there, in conversation with a man I said, "I cannot go on to Portland, as I have promised to stop off at Touchet to attend an Old School Baptist meeting." After he left another stranger came to me and said: "I beg pardon, but I understood you to say that you expect to stop at Touchet to attend an Old Baptist meeting." "That is what I said," I replied. "Well," he said, "I am glad to learn that there is an Old School Baptist Church that close to me." He said, "I have lived near Walla Walla for some

time, and have never learned that there were any Baptists near me." He added, "I want to attend that meeting, and I am waiting for a cousin who is coming to pay me a visit, and he is an Old School Baptist preacher. Now when he comes you just go home with me, and I will drive you both down to the meeting tomorrow." I told him that I would have to go on the train, as the brethren would be looking for me. His cousin proved to be Elder Wagoner, whom I had met at Oregon City. But to cut my story short I will say they both came to the meeting, and on Sunday my strange man united with the church by relating a good experience of grace; and afterward one of brother John Cummins' sons also united with the church, and both were baptized by Elder Barnes. Now had my train been on time I would not have gone to Walla Walla at all, and of course would not have seen this stranger, who, a child of God, was looking for a home among his people, and had not the other man drawn out of me in our conversation the words "Old School Baptist," I might not have found out anything about this brother. Is this any evidence that I am a laborer in the vineyard, and that I am called of God to travel and try to preach the gospel, or did all this just happen? It seems to me too much for me to claim that the Lord sent me to this, his sheep. Had it been you or some of our other Elders I would say, Surely this is the Lord's work, and it is marvelous in my eyes. But be this as it may, I cannot claim any honor in the whole matter, all the praise belongs to the God of grace.

Now I will write a little upon a different subject, though not by way of an attempt to expound the subject, but rather by way of inquiry. I have had a name among the Regular Old Predestinarian Baptists since 1847, and in all that time in all that I have heard preached or have seen written by able men upon what is termed the soul of man, I have never heard or read anything that I could understand or that my experience taught me was in accord with the word of God. Now what is meant by such lines as these:

> "With melting heart and weeping eyes,
> My guilty soul for mercy cries"?

Who is guilty? Is it not the sinner? Did not Jesus come into this world to save sinners from sin and death? It could not be an immortal being that was guilty. Now one writer said, "Although our souls are spirits by nature, they have now no delight in spiritual or divine things; their affections are inverted and misapplied by sin." This writer further says, "The soul whose element should be God alone, spends its strength in the pursuit of earthly and sensual enjoyments." He also says, "The soul is an immortal and vital substance," and also "it is regenerated." Now I understand by the Scriptures that the first man was of the earth, and consequently was earthy. That which was first was natural, and afterward that which was spiritual, and God breathed into the nostrils of this natural man and he became a living soul, or living man. Now Adam was just such a being as we are, for we are only Adam multiplied; still Adam in creation was free from sin before the transgression. Now if he possessed an immortal soul beside the living soul which he became after God breathed into him the breath of life, where in the Scriptures does it say so? Another writer says that the regenerated soul looks with a spiritual eye, which God has implanted in it, first up to God and then down into itself. If this writer means that the man which is born again, the man or soul that

sinned in Adam, the man that is translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the light and liberty of the Son of God, if he means the man whom Paul meant when he said, "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," if he means the man who was chosen in Christ that he should be holy and without blame before him in love, then I have to acknowledge that I do not understand his language. We were chosen that we should be holy, not that we were holy or immortal before being chosen in the covenant of promise ordered in all things and sure. This same man that was ordained to be saved, and who was, as Paul testifies, quickened from the dead, was a sinner of Adam's race. It does not say your immortal soul, but you, sinners, the children of promise. These Jesus came into the world to save. If this writer means that people whom Jesus called his sheep, and who follow him in his paths, even in the ordinance of baptism, and of whom he said, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live," if, I say, this writer means these characters whom I have been describing when he uses the words "the quickened soul," then it accords with the words of truth and my experience; but if something that some are pleased to call the immortal soul is meant, then I must acknowledge that I do not understand his teaching; yet I may be wrong in my conclusions. Still I can point to plain texts of Scripture to establish my view of the subject as I have here stated it. But, one may say, how then are the wicked to be punished forever? This is a matter that entirely belongs to our God, who created them. Did he not create them for the day of his power? And do we have to invent a system by which the great Jehovah can punish the wicked everlastingly that will be consistent with human reason? That sovereign God who inhabiteth eternity, who asked not to be, who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast, needs not the help of poor, puny man to make it possible for him to punish the wicked; and he needs no help to enable him to save his people, and to be consistent with himself without giving to all what men call a chance to be saved. We read that the thoughts of the heart are evil, and only evil, and that continually, and that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." And it is said, "Who can know it?" Who indeed? None but he who tries the reins and is the Searcher of all hearts, and opens the hearts to see and feel their entire dependence upon him, with their depravity or vile and condemned condition. We read that our God will take away the hard and stony heart and give a heart of flesh; or, in other words, a feeling, sensitive heart, a heart to know God, whom to know is eternal life. This is the same sinner who was dead in sin, who could and did walk after the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved.)"

Dear brother, I will be compelled to send this unfinished, but I have said enough to give you an idea of my line of thought upon this subject. Let me hear from you.

I remain your brother in the hope of life, J. P. ALLISON.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., April, 1907.

TO THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—Once more I feel a desire to write you a few lines to express some thoughts that have been in my mind regarding this Scripture: "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." These words are found in Matthew xxvi. 41. As we read them do we find the very truth of these words? Hear Peter before this, answering the Savior: "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." How strong he must have felt when he uttered these words. How little did he know the weakness of his own flesh. Jesus knew that it was well for Peter to learn his weakness, and so tells him, "This night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice." Then Peter must have felt that the Savior doubted his love, for again he says, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." With what real assurance he must have spoken. I am glad that Peter was so boastful of his strength, because it has often comforted me; I have been boastful, and how very weak and small I have felt to be after being acquainted with my weakness. This has not always been in words spoken by my lips, but in the thoughts within, which no man can know. But the Father knoweth the secret thoughts and intents of the heart, he knows that in such thoughts there has been some judging of a brother or a sister concerning some word or deed, and also the feeling of boasting that I would not do that thing, and then before the night has passed away I have been made to weep bitterly because of my own boast, which had fallen as did that of Peter. We may see one tempted in meat, drink or clothing; the temptation is the same, no matter in what it may come, if the tempted one is weak in these things. We will say the temptation is in strong drink, and we may feel that we could not be tempted as that one is, but let us look at ourselves in some weakness of our own, and we shall see that we are just as weak as they are. We are told not to think of wherewith we shall be clothed on the morrow, and yet we do think of not only the morrow, but of days and months to come.

Let us go on a little way in the chapter. Now Jesus comes with his disciples to the garden of the Lord's agony; then he said to them, "Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder," and he took with him Peter, James and John. And Jesus began to be very sorrowful and very heavy, and he said unto them, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me." As we read this we feel that we, too, would have been sorrowful, and so would have watched even unto death. Let us regard him in his agony. He fell on his face and prayed, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." Now where are they that would not deny him? He found them asleep, and he said unto Peter, "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" I wonder whether Peter felt that he had boasted vainly. The Lord said, "Watch, and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Do we not find every day of our lives that these words to Peter are true of ourselves? We do want to do better, to be more thoughtful, more earnest, more devoted, but the flesh is weak. If we think of what it means to be a real follower of Jesus we shall surely look at ourselves as very weak and sickly. The Scripture says, "Be ye therefore followers of God,

as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient; but rather giving of thanks." Further on it says, "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is, and be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."

I feel after writing this that it leaves me so entirely out that I do not know how to go on, but I feel that I do know in the depths of my heart the truth of these words, and that I want to do them, and that I have very sincerely desired to do them. For instance, I have desired to leave off jesting, but the flesh is weak and so prone to wander. I have often made a sort of vow that when the brethren come to visit us the time shall be spent in spiritual conversation. The brethren come and go, and I find that my flesh was so weak that I have made only an attempt or two to bring about a better talk, and they at last have gone and I have failed, and then I have grieved because I was so weak as to allow the time to be thus wasted. Also it seemed to me that the minds of the brethren were likewise dead, or perhaps I should say, had no interest. But where life is not, there is death. When we think of Christ giving himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, how weak in contrast we see ourselves, even when we strive against any affliction or anything that would cause us sorrow. We feel that it is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting, and have experienced it to be so, yet in our weakness we would rather go to the house of feasting. Many times I have thought, Now I will go and visit an afflicted one, a widow or some fatherless child, and I feel this is what I will do surely, but my worldly cares come up first, and when they are completed it is too late to go. Is this pure religion and undefiled?

Dear ones of the household of faith, this is something I must have written some months ago, for I do not remember when I wrote it. I feel it is not mine, and so I send it to you; if there be any edification in it for any of you give to God all the glory, for to him all the glory belongs. The letter was not finished I see, but I do not feel like continuing now.

My mind at present seems especially drawn to the framing of the word "Shibboleth," and how some failed in pronouncing it. Is it not true that in this our day we see much framing to pronounce, and much failure? There is a great difference between framing to pronounce and pronouncing. I heard one last evening saying that it was an easy thing to speak of subjects if one had them in his mind and knew the meaning of language. It seemed as though the speaker felt that there was nothing to do but just give a clear account of it, but I could not in my mind agree, for I knew that there are times when a matter may be clear in our minds and yet we cannot utter it. To pronounce this word "Shibboleth" we must know the root of the word, something of the foundation of it, or else it

will only be framing to pronounce; but when the life is from the root, and the foundation is the Rock of Ages, then the pronouncing is without framing, and such as these pass through Jordan. But while it is precious to me, I cannot tell it to you as I would. My mind is full of things that seem sweet to me, but this letter is already lengthy, so I will close. Dear editors, do with it as you deem best; I fully trust to your judgment.

With deep love to all,

MARY HILL TERRY.

HALCOTTSVILLE, N. Y., July 16, 1907.

TO THE READERS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Having just finished reading the SIGNS of July 15th, I feel an impulse to write. I enjoyed every article, and was glad to hear from Elder G. M. Fetter again, his letter was very sweet.

Having been requested to write some of my experience since I have been sick, I will now try to do so. From childhood I had an ambition to accumulate a reasonable portion of this world's goods, but had no inclination to be dishonest in order to do so. I never seemed to get along as well as many of my fellows, and often brooded because this was the case. Living on a farm, and desiring to make a success, and finding it hard to get help, I worked very hard early and late. In May and June, 1906, I found I was failing in health, and losing flesh. Thinking this due to overwork I tried to take more rest, but still worked on until about the first of August, when I was taken with frequent hemorrhages. I realized at once the seriousness of my condition. Having a wife and two little children, and limited in means, considering my disposition, together with my circumstances, one would suppose I would be very despondent, but strange to say I was not. To be sure all my hope of worldly gain and success was now blasted; I had long since realized that all spiritual bread must come down from heaven, and that as a free gift, but felt that worldly gain and success depended upon my own efforts. But now I am as dependent upon God for the latter as the former, and what has been so wonderful to me, I was given to implicitly trust in God that he would provide. I began the modern treatment for tuberculosis when I was first taken sick, and while I have gained thirty-five pounds in weight I am still unable to do any work. Last winter I was in bed, and very sick, and the prospect of my recovery looked very dark. I could hear my little ones playing, and my heart would become sad and my eyes fill with tears that I must leave them. One night in November I had a severe attack of hemorrhages that lasted intermittently all day and until midnight, when I thought the end was at hand, and all was dark and vain and wild; but the end was not yet, hence I was not ready to depart. God does not give dying grace to live by, but living grace to live by and dying grace to die by: "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." Thus far have I experienced this; thus far hath the Lord helped me. I have been given to believe that the Lord will provide for us while we live, and when we come to die there is a better world for us. During my sickness the word "heaven" has been at times inexpressibly precious. Jesus and heaven are the dearest words in our language to me. How beautifully the apostle expresses it, and sums the whole thing up when he says, "But my God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." What more do we want? What more do we need? When he appears

"The opening heavens around me shine
With beams of sacred bliss;
While Jesus shows his heart is mine,
And whispers I am his."

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" I believe the "all things" here mean all things: all things are yours, but you do not have them in your own name, and it is well you do not, but you have them in the name of Jesus, and they are kept for you, and dealt out to you as you need them. This is the way I have come to look at things since I have been sick. It is often said by the world, "The Lord helps them that help themselves," but I say, The Lord helps them who cannot help themselves. Men may say this is a foolish, idle notion. Well, any way it is a blessed good thing to rest in this belief. The Lord gives us this faith. As we go through life I am reminded of Abraham's experience when he went up to the mount to offer up his son Isaac. Although it looked as if Isaac would have to die a lad, yet there was hope in the breast of old Abraham that Isaac would still be spared, that God would fulfill his promise that his seed should be as the stars of heaven for multitude, and as the sand upon the seashore, innumerable. If Isaac must die, God is able to raise him from the dead, thought Abraham. O for such faith, precious faith, it is the gift of God, and happy are they who have it, and blessed. Abraham's faith was tried and found precious; he would not have known its preciousness had it not been tried. God knew it, but Abraham did not; he must know it, too. God teaches us to appreciate what he gives us. My faith has been tried, and I have found it precious; yes, it is as dear to me as my life. It is contrary to reason that I should feel as hopeful and trustful as I have under such trying circumstances; it is because I have been kept by the power of God through faith. I would to God I could live as becometh those who possess this faith. Brother Ker spoke in a late editorial of not being able to see that we love certain brethren, but almost hate them, if not quite. I know what this is, and God knows I do not want to have that feeling toward my brethren, and have bowed my knees in prayer to him to remove that feeling from my heart. I have never been able to reconcile my walk with my faith and profession. I feel that nothing more appropriate could be inscribed on my gravestone (if I am able to have one) than these words: "A sinner saved by grace," for I know I am a poor, helpless sinner every day of my life, but the mercies of God are new every morning; I still hope in God in spite of my cruel sins. I desire to sin not, but if I sin I have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

A sinner saved by grace,

EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

HOLLAND, Texas, July 13, 1906.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The Bible in various places and in divers forms of speech teaches us that the great almighty God created all things, and if so, all are by his creation, and if his, has he not an undeniable right to do as he pleases with his own? Who among all of his creatures has the right to murmur or complain at whatever disposition he makes of them, or to say, Jehovah, what doest thou? Now I would ask, Is it not reasonable to conclude that he meant something by all this great work? He surely did have an object in such a great, grand and stupendous work as that of the creation of the universe. Let us not for a

single moment entertain a thought but that his every act is pregnant with the greatest degree of significance. He signifies something grand and glorious, and that something must be attained in spite of every intervening opposition. His work is perfect, and certain of accomplishment. He will work, and who shall hinder? Men of intelligence in their every action act upon the principle of reason, and surely He from whom all intelligence flows acts upon the principle of the very best and highest of reason, and in the arrangement of things, in order to the accomplishment of the design entertained in the divine mind, everything was so skillfully and wisely arranged in the relation that each and every part was given to so sustain its fellow part that absolute and perfect harmony of action was the unfailing result, and hence the absolute certainty of a full and glorious accomplishment of his most glorious, sublime and wonderful design, namely, his glory. "My glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." No, no, for all thy works shall praise thee. The glory of God is the glorious end to which all things are predestinated. All things were created by him and for him for the accomplishment of his glory, and surely there would have been no certainty upon any other than upon the principle of predestination. Does the absolute certainty of the full and complete accomplishment of the main design of the Almighty in the creation of the universe lessen the value or importance of the design? Is the certainty of this event grating to the ears of any? Shall any because of this strive with his Maker? The potsherds may strive with the potsherds, but woe to him that striveth with his Maker. Has not the Creator the right to create for whatever purpose he pleases? Every creature of God is good, or certain to answer the end for which it was created, for all was created for him. I am frequently admonished not to say that God has predestinated all things, for the reason that it is not in just the same and so many words taught in the Bible. Still my admonishers say they believe that God predestinated all things that pertain to the salvation of his people. I ask them for a like Scripture to the one they demand of me, and they, too, fail to produce it. They also say that the position that God predestinated all things teaches that he predestinated sin, for, say they, sin is a thing. But I deny that sin is a thing; nothing but that which was created are things; sin is not a creature, hence not a thing. Sin is the effect of the creature, or thing, but is not, in my judgment, a thing. Sin is the transgression of the law. It is both wrong and sinful to transgress the law of our Maker, neither of which I think can be properly called a thing. Sin cannot with any more propriety be called a thing than it could be called a creature. I would like to see something from brother Chick upon this point, or any other who may feel inclined to write upon it, for it is not impossible but that I have made a mistake in this, and if I have I would be glad to know it, for I want to know nothing but the truth.

Love to the dear, old SIGNS OF THE TIMES and all who approve it.

W. M. LITTLE.

WHEELING, W. Va., June 24, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I herewith inclose a letter which I received from Miss Margaret Champe, of Mount Pleasant, Ohio. She is a precious sister, zealous in and for

the truth as it is in our Lord and Savior. Her letter seems good to me, and I would like others of our brethren who have met her to enjoy it with me; however I leave it to your judgment as to giving it space in the SIGNS. Of all the many Baptist publications it seems to stand out as the main one to depend upon; I like it best of all.

Your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) FLORENCE PULTZ.

MOUNT PLEASANT, Ohio, June 6, 1907.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—If one so very unworthy as I feel myself to be may use such a dear appellation; I, who am so poor and needy, daring to claim relationship with the King and his subjects, but no other people on earth are as dear to me as the subjects of King Jesus.

Your good letter was received May 30th; I did enjoy it very much, and always have enjoyed every letter I have received from you. The sweet union of spirits that I was favored with at your house, when I was blessed to meet the dear brethren and sisters, made me think of the words of the poet: "If such the sweetness of the streams, what must the fountain be?" Can it be possible that we shall be united with angels and draw our bliss from that great and ever-flowing Fountain? Dear sister, when I think what it cost the blessed Lord to bestow such gifts on his poor, disobedient children I exclaim, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake. Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God? But our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased." It hath pleased him that you and I should meet, and I do hope that it is, and ever will be, for our good and for the glory of our blessed Master, who is too wise to make mistakes. If I know anything about myself, it is the greatest desire of my heart to love my God supremely, and the apostle John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." This is the reason he gives, and it is also mine, but it often seems very presumptuous in me to even think that I love them as I ought, but I know that I have been drawn to them, and I hope it is the sweet cords of divine love that have and still do draw me to his dear children. You speak of our hearts being one: it cannot be otherwise if, as we hope, our life is hid with Christ in God.

I do not believe you are selfish at all when you speak of being lonely in that company; such has been my experience for years, I have often thought of our Savior's words in connection with this. If we do as the world does, or love the things of the world more than the things of our King, how much better are we than the world? I have gone to such meetings during the last sixteen years and I could hardly wait until the services were over, being so anxious to get away somewhere so that I could read something unmixed with man's works. I want to hear something that gives all the praise to my Master.

Dear sister, I think of you often, and say, What hath God wrought, and what is it that he cannot do? I have thought much about what it means to be in fellowship, and of the same mind in the things of Christ, and in these I have been especially drawn to you and our beloved in the same.

I saw in the last SIGNS OF THE TIMES a comforting quotation from that verse in the Psalms: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." I never

saw anything written on my little secret order before. I hope you will read it. The sister gives the password: it is, Love. Is it not beautiful to think of? Love is the golden chain that binds the children of the King together. In other secret orders the name of Jesus or Christ cannot be mentioned, but in this order

"His name yields the richest perfume,
And sweeter than music his voice;
His presence disperses my gloom,
And makes all within me rejoice."

Please let me hear all about the meeting last Sunday. Were both of the Elders there? I hope you had a revival, or, in other words, a feast. It was impossible for me to go. I expect to go to Byesville some time this year if the Lord will.

I know that I have not answered your letter, but I have written just what has been given me at this time, please cast the mantle of charity over it.

I close with love to you and any of the flock you may meet. Write when convenient.

Lovingly, M. A. CHAMPE.

ROSWELL, Ga., June 2, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER FOR THE TRUTH'S SAKE:—I desire to write to you once more, although I feel too unworthy to address one whom I esteem so highly, and tell you how much I appreciate your good editorials; they have been a great comfort to me in my affliction. I wish to thank you again for the continuation of the SIGNS to my address, it brings to me the glad tidings of great joy concerning Jesus, who is able to save to the uttermost all who come to God by him; by his loving-kindness he draws them. He said, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Again he said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." What a harmonious plan of salvation! What a great blessing it is to rest in the finished work of Jesus! I must not make this letter too long, and I hope you will forgive me for trespassing on your time. I have been a great sufferer for some time, and for several months it looked as though I could not live, but thanks be to him who doeth all things well, I am yet spared to be with my family, which is very dear to me. I desire an interest in your prayers for me and mine.

I would like to address through the SIGNS the household of faith and the readers who have been so kind to me in ministering to me in my affliction, and also for their comforting letters, if you deem the following worthy a place in the SIGNS; if not, all will be right.

Dear brethren and sisters, while here below we have no abiding place, no city of refuge into which we can flee by any natural power of ours from the awful consequences of sin, but we do hope and trust and believe that we, by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit, have been brought into the knowledge of the awful depravity of our hearts, which are desperately wicked, and that by grace we have been enabled to behold him of whom the apostle speaks, saying, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." It is by faith that we have been enabled to behold him "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Again it is said, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ

Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" Do not these Scriptures show plainly that the people of God have nothing to fear? Our God has all power in heaven and in earth, and he doeth the works. Therefore Jesus could say, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." Jesus died for our sins and rose again for our justification. Brethren, as said Paul, "In all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us." Well might Paul again say, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

With these comforting assurances I bid you farewell, for I know that my time on earth is but short. I desire that you will all remember me at the throne of grace.

Yours in love,

G. R. JOHNSON.

LAURELVILLE, Ohio, June 23, 1907.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—I have had it in mind for some time to write a few lines to you, not that I am able to say anything of profit to you, but I wish to add my testimony, which is weak, to the many excellent ones contained in the SIGNS. I am as poor in spirit, unworthy and sinful, naturally, as I have ever been; my mind is like the fool's eye, continually wandering to the ends of the earth. As the good old hymn reads, "Sin is mixed with all I do." But thanks be to God, our sufficiency is not in us, but in Christ, in whom all fullness dwells. Paul says, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." While in this tabernacle we groan, being burdened. What a comfort that we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and that in him all fullness dwells, and that he is able to present us before the Father's throne without spot, wrinkle or any such thing, and that we shall be thus if we are one with him. My trouble is that I am so cold, careless and unfruitful. Do I think on his name, sinful thoughts come into my mind; do I try to pray to the Father of mercies, worldly cares come into my mind; do I listen to the proclamation of the gospel, indifference takes possession of me. Again, like Paul, "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not;" so that "it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Even while I write cometh the thought, What you are saying is insincere, and but from the lips, and proceeds not from the right Fountain, but is an utterance of the flesh, and is said merely for effect, so that I hardly know whether I have the mind of Christ or not. It seems that I desire such a mind, and would that God would give it to me. Like Peter I would say, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." I look around at the dear brethren, and they look so beautiful and pure to me that I feel I am the

black sheep of the flock, if indeed one at all. I seem to be halting between two opinions. No doubt you have heard the Arminians use this expression, applying it to the sinner who has serious thoughts about God, but who is not fully persuaded in his mind that he is ready to renounce the world; but I halt, that is, I limp, sometimes I hobble to the opinion that I am with Christ, and again I limp over to the other side; I cannot walk straight. May I hope that the angel has wrestled with me?

Well, dear brethren, this is no doubt wearying you, and I will close. I beg an interest in the petitions of all God's humble followers, although the least worthy of such notice.

I vaguely hope, a little child in Christ,
GEO. W. HARTSOUGH.

ISAIAH LXV. 22.

"As the days of a tree are the days of my people."

The Scriptures mention the tree and trees to represent the things of the kingdom: the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, tree of life, &c. We must not lose sight of the fact that the tree of life, or Christ, embraces our natural as well as our spiritual life. "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." In my writing now I am looking out the window at a tree, and I will represent it to be the church; it is rooted and grounded in the love of God. "For God so loved the world [the church] that he gave his only begotten Son," &c. While I have not seen the roots of this tree I am looking at, I know they are in the ground, otherwise it would not stand; so likewise the church of God is held firm by the roots: predestination, election, salvation by grace, eternal decrees, purposes, wills and shalls, love, mercy, peace, joy, long-suffering, meekness, gentleness, kindness, &c., and would say the one great root to my mind is predestination, and that is well under the body. If you ever cut down a tree you can get at the roots that run out near the ground, but the one directly under is the foundation; so is God's eternal purpose or predestination of all things, whether we can reason it or not. God is sovereign, and never created anything he does not control, and has it to serve his purpose.

The body of this tree I would liken to the way, the truth and the life, as it is the avenue from which the limbs, branches, leaves, blossoms and fruit partake of what the roots send forth, being fed by the love of God. Christ is the Mediator between God and man, represented by the ladder from earth to heaven that Jacob saw; also the anchor-chain from your soul to that within the veil; also the High Priest, of whom Aaron was the type. As Aaron was mediator between Israel and God, so is Christ making intercession between spiritual Israel and God in this gospel day, and it is through Christ that any part of this tree shows forth its life.

The limbs I would liken to the patriarchs, prophets and apostles; they all were fed from this body, and therefore are one in declaring what they received from the roots. Some of the limbs are crooked and have ugly knots on them, but are of the tree; I would liken them to some that did not have an easy time in their lives, as Peter and David. I find it somehow or other hard to tell where to separate this tree, as it all seems to be one. I will come to the leaves; they look alike, but when I come to examine them I find no two exactly alike; neither can I find any two subjects of grace alike. I was brought into the church under one sermon, and shortly afterward

brother Chas. Savidge was received, who had been living on hope for fifty years. To my mind we both got our growth from the roots, through the body of the tree. You will say, How old is the leaf? Why, as old as the tree, for the life of the tree produced the leaf, as your life is hid with Christ in God. The blossoms I would liken to the gospel sending forth its sweet perfume, and can you deny that the fragrance comes forth from the roots? All comes from the Giver of every good and perfect gift. After the blossoms pass away we look for a fresh supply; so the gospel, ever the same truth, but ever new. Now I find the whole of this tree is sealed by something peculiar to itself, in that it all seems to look alike and is different from the one next to it. So "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., June 13, 1907.

BENNINGS, D. C., April 5, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I take my pen to write a few lines upon the wonderful subject of salvation by grace, and upon the wonderful love of God in sending his only begotten Son to suffer and die upon the cross to redeem such poor, unworthy sinners as we are. It is wonderful indeed. The natural mind cannot understand it. See Acts xxviii. 22, where it is recorded that Paul appeared before Cæsar to testify concerning this sect which is everywhere spoken against, and this sect is everywhere spoken against unto this day. Human nature is the same as it was then, and God is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. It is said by the inspired Paul, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Now "if God be for us, who can be against us?" If all mankind is to be saved, or can be saved, as some would have it, why is there an election? The Lord said, I came not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. We believe that he did finish that work, and that all the elect are complete in him. He has said that for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, he gave his Son to die for us. I wonder if one so vile as I feel myself to be can be of that number. We know that in nature the brighter a light shines at night the darker the surroundings seem; so also it is with the Sun of righteousness, the brighter He shines in our hearts the darker our vile nature appears. Now the Bible tells us that God had a people chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, or, in other words, a people given to him. This proves that the whole plan of salvation was all completed then. Is it not wonderful indeed? He said, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." When we think of the wonderful works of God we can say, "Let rocks and hills their lasting silence break." All that he did in the creation of the world was complete; it and everything that was therein contained was made out of nothing. How small this makes us poor worms of the dust feel. But none save those who are born of God can know or realize it.

I receive the SIGNS regularly, and certainly do enjoy the editorials and the letters of the brethren and sisters; they all write the doctrine I love so well. I

hope you may be given health, strength and wisdom to declare the wonderful works of God and the truth contained in the Bible.

Yours with christian love,

THOMAS ALDEN.

CEMENT CITY, Mich., June 28, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have read the Warwick Circular Letter in the SIGNS written by you, and you give no uncertain sound. If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare for the battle? Out here there are Primitive Baptist preachers who say that the doctrine of God's unlimited power and predestination are only a matter of opinion; be a good christian, be humble and say nothing about it, lest you cause a division, quoting the admonition of the apostle: "Mark them which cause divisions;" stopping there and not finishing the sentence: "contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." But some seem to love "old wives, fables," more than the everlasting gospel of the ever blessed Son of God, which includes all the doctrine of God our Savior. There is one here in Michigan who is not afraid to speak the truth in love, with no compromising spirit, and whom they call a thresher, and do not like him. It takes, I tell them, a lot of threshing to separate the wheat from the chaff, especially when the wheat is soft and damp by false doctrine. As you say, there seems to be more voluntary humility and worshiping of angels (ministers) in the church at the present time than ever before, and the saints are being bewitched by false teachers; truly the fear of man worketh a snare. I believe with you that where the truth of God causes a division there ought to be one. Go on, brother, you will draw the fire of Satan's masked batteries, which will show us where they are. A prominent preacher of the Primitive Baptists said to me, It will not do to preach the doctrine of election and predestination too strong, it will make God look ugly to people. I told him that the true God would always look ugly to the carnal mind, and God's doctrine in its fullness was not to be shunned to please that. The gospel of the grace of God, which is in and through our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of life and glory, includes all the doctrine of God our Savior, giving glory to God and not to man. Another minister, when told that God could not be the author of sin, since sin is the transgression of the law, He being under no law, but exalted high above all principalities and powers and every name that is named, &c., answered that He is under law. To be asserted by puny man that God, by whom the earth with all its inhabitants is computed as less than nothing, is under law, is blasphemy. There are gods and lords many, and some of them have gotten among the Old School Baptists in some places, and our God will not have them there, for when he is ready he will have faithful ministers to draw the line between Christ and antichrist where it belongs, which will most certainly cause divisions where antichrist is. We are not to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of man, (which is voluntary humility) but under the mighty hand of God in Jesus Christ our Lord, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light, and all things were created by him and for him, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities; this includes Satan. So, dear brother, fear not, for all power is His; there is no power but of God.

I must close lest I weary you. This is

not to flatter, but to gratify a prompting from some source.

Yours in truth,

DAVID TITMUS.

East Cobbleskill, N. Y.

Mrs. J. D. Shafer—My Dear Sister:—I was glad to get so good a letter from you, and do not feel worthy of such. I should have answered it before, but there are times when I cannot write letters, for I feel so poor and sinful I can hardly raise my eyes upward, yet I know God is good to poor me. Dear sister, I do feel my depravity, every one is so much better than I, and yet my stay is upon God. I can see his handiwork in everything; there is nothing new or old with our Maker. There is nothing for us to worry about, spiritual or natural, for we have just so much to pass through, and where our troubles come in is because we are short-sighted beings; things are obscure, but when the dear Father of light reveals one of his dear promises to us what a change, how differently our troubles appear. The very hairs of our head are numbered; fear ye not, therefore, he has promised, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee;" and when we are called to pass through the waters he says, "I will be with thee," "for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior." Ah, dear sister, are not his promises precious? What beauty in our Savior dwells; I feel to adore his most holy name for all his goodness and mercy shown to me all the days of my life through dangers seen and unseen. When I think what a God he is, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." All our times are in his hand. How often I feel to say:

"Up to the fields where angels lie,
And living waters gently roll,
Fain would my thoughts leap out and fly,
But sin hangs heavy on my soul."

Dear sister, when I have been sick and suffering these lines have been a comfort to me. Is not this world poor from shore to shore? Yet I am perfectly willing to stay here if it is God's will. Not my will, but thine, be done, dear, gracious God. I know what it is to suffer pain in my poor, old body, and yet in my sufferings I have enjoyed the sweetest seasons of my soul. I would not have one thing different, all is right. I feel reconciled to God's will, having been brought to learn many precious lessons through my sufferings. I feel to say amen. O how often I think of days past and gone forever; how I did enjoy being with you, and I have that same love down in my heart for you yet; it is love that can never die; it is like two drops of water which cannot be separated. I am thankful for the sure foundation for the children of God. Dear sister, have you ever thought how sure the foundation of God stands? Just meditate for one moment, what beauty, what security. "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord." What a wonderful God is ours, he declared the end from the beginning; I, the Lord God, do all things. Our poor, puny arms are too short to reach out and grasp one of his dear promises; neither do I want to, I am perfectly satisfied to leave it all with him; he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind; bless his most holy name. Since I have been writing it seems as though a cloud has rolled away, and I feel the presence of God near me; I have not felt this way in a very long time.

Do forgive me for writing such a lengthy letter; I hope it will not weary your patience; pardon all mistakes. My

father's and mother's health is poor; they do not go to meeting very often.

Dear sister, I would like much to spend a few days this summer with you, but it will be impossible. Give my love to all. Good-by. Write when you can.

Your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) SPENCER NETHAWAY.

CAVE CITY, Ky., May 4, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN:—How sweet is the gospel to the heart of the believer. How does the pure word of truth illumine our darkened mind. There is nothing but God that can delight our hearts and ease us of the heavy load of sin. There are none but the true ministers of our Lord and Savior to blow the gospel trumpet and speak comfortably to Jerusalem; that is their mission. The heavenly Master asked the apostle Peter if he loved him, and was answered in the affirmative. He said, "Feed my lambs," and tells him twice more, "Feed my sheep." Ofttimes the Lord is pleased to feed his children through the medium of preaching, and while in the goodness and tender mercy of our heavenly Father we enjoy the spiritual food, so essential to our enjoyment in this life, at the hands of our ministering brethren that labor with us in word and doctrine, let us not think it hard to help supply their temporal wants; there is no duty more plainly taught in the New Testament Scriptures. Our minister's wives are often left lonely for weeks, but how consoling it should be to them to know that their dear husbands go to break the bread of life to the hungry. I think the dear sisters should feel honored of the Lord, and encourage their dear husbands to go on and fill their appointments, dispensing joy and gladness wherever they may go, testifying to the gospel of the grace of God to the comfort and consolation of God's dear children. I believe that the most orderly walking christians, even our ministers, have trials to undergo, difficulties and dangers to meet, but when they do come there are many precious promises recorded in the holy Scriptures for their comfort; their dear Redeemer God has pledged his word that his grace shall be sufficient for them, and as their day is, so shall their strength be. It is a great consolation to know that the Lord will never forsake his children, and to know that their times are in his hand; that though the waves of trouble come around them his word is, Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther, and all things must and do obey him, and when he says, "Peace, be still," the gloom and doubts are dispelled, and they are in possession of joy and peace the world knows nothing of.

A lover of Zion, I hope,

LAURA M. BAIRD.

LAKELAND, Fla., May 9, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—Another year has passed with its joys and sorrows and I am still spared, and enjoy very good health for one of my age. I enjoy reading the SIGNS very much, it has been worth more to me than it cost. Dear brother Bartley had it sent to me the first year that I read it. He was a faithful servant of God; the Lord must have sent him here for my good, as well as that of many others. He was sound in doctrine, and very faithful to deliver the message of God regardless of all opposition, and in a very lamblike manner. Conditionalists are sorry he came here, they say that he was the cause of my preaching unlimited predestination and salvation by grace. I am sure that he helped me, in confirming me in what I already believed. O

how I rejoiced in spirit to hear it preached just as I believed it. I understand the object of preaching is to build up, strengthen, confirm and feed, that the children may grow thereby.

I suppose you do not have much spare time, and so I may weary you in reading this badly written and badly composed letter, but I have no other way of expressing myself to you. I heartily indorse brother Ker's editorial in the April 15th number, and also yours in the May number. I hope the good Lord will keep you both, and enable you to still contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. I do not see how I can do without the SIGNS, yet I do not see how I can continue to pay for it; my time is out and I am due for one number, but the prospect for making a crop this year is very poor, and I live by farming. If I cannot make a crop I will have to use all the money I can obtain to make a living.

Remember me at the throne of grace.

I remain your unworthy brother,

J. W. FUTCH.

TOUCHET, Wash., May 10, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for fifty-seven years, and have been a subscriber to it for fifty-four years. My name a portion of that time has been enrolled in its list of agents. In my early connection with the Baptists, and for many years following, the subject of predestination as then advocated by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe was very seldom questioned among the Baptist ministers in Iowa, where I then lived, and the unity of Christ and his church was much dwelt on in those days by our ministry, much to the comfort of the brethren and sisters, showing our sure hope anchored within the veil with our great and blessed Redeemer. A great number of the old soldiers who wrote for the SIGNS then have been called home to their reward, but I am rejoiced to see that our dear Lord has raised up others to fill their places, and contend for the same blessed truth they then contended for, salvation by grace, the only salvation either in time or eternity that saves a poor, helpless sinner who has no ability to save himself. I can see no variation in the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS now and when I first began to read it. So far our brethren on this western coast have not been bothered with the issues that are causing trouble in the middle west and some of the southern States, and are nearly a unit in faith and practice. Our churches are yet small in number of membership, and distantly located from each other, but are very well established in the doctrine, faith and practice as taught in the Scriptures and advocated in the SIGNS, and love and fellowship generally prevail among us.

Please excuse me for writing so much to take up your time.

Yours in hope,

R. CUMMINS.

NOTICE.

LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

OUR supply of the large type cloth Hymn Books is exhausted, and we have only a few copies of the large leather binding (blue marbled edge), which we will mail as long as they last at $1.50 each. We will not be able to fill large orders for these books, but can supply any number desired of the small type Hymn Book.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1907.

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EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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LUKE XVI. 9.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—As I have never, to my knowledge, asked you for your views upon any Scripture through the SIGNS, I will venture it this time. It is concerning the parable of the unjust steward. What I want to know about is the expression: "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." I am not given to see into the matter. A brief reply will satisfy me.

Your brother, T. M. POULSON.

MASSEY, Va., March 18, 1907.

The above request of our dear brother Poulson, as will be seen, was made some time since. Our delay in replying has not been because of any indifference to our brother or to his request, for there is no one whose requests we would more gladly comply with than his. Many things have caused us to delay until this time; among other reasons for the delay has been a hesitancy upon our part in trying to write upon this parable at all. This has arisen partly from the fact that much has been written upon it in the past through the SIGNS, and because there have been some differences of opinion among the brethren regarding its meaning. Perhaps, however, this is no good reason why we should not also present the thoughts which seem to us suggested by the parable, and in doing so we can but present the matter as it appears to us, and, as all may rest well assured, with no intent to criticize or assail the views of any other brother.

It seems important that first of all the meaning of the word "mammon" should be understood. The word occurs three times in this parable. It is to be found in but one other place in the Bible, and that is in Matthew vi. 24. In this place the word clearly means nothing but the riches of this world. Jesus in the connection presents to the disciples the service of God on the one hand, and the service of the riches and gain of this world on the other hand. They are told that no man can serve two masters; they cannot seek that which belongs to this world and that which God requires at their hands at one and the same time; they cannot love God and the gain of this world at the same time. They had been chosen to serve God, and are in the connection told that that God whom they were to serve would provide for them all needful temporal things; therefore they need not be anxious regarding this matter. If their minds were filled with anxiety concerning their temporal interests their service in His kingdom would be hindered and marred; they could not have their minds and hearts occupied with two things so opposite to each other at once; they could not serve God and mammon. They were to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these temporal things should be added unto them. That God who cared for the fowls of the air, clothing, feeding and giving them shelter, would much more provide for them; they were of more value than many sparrows. Nothing is surer than that any servant of God whose chief object is to look after the gain of this world cannot be useful in the kingdom of God. Those who will be

rich fall into temptations and snares, and in the end pierce themselves through with many sorrows. This seems to us to be without question the design of the dear Savior in the sixth chapter of Matthew; mammon there means the riches of this world. We have not been able to see any good reason for giving this word "mammon" any other meaning in the parable of the unjust steward.

It does not seem needful to take up every expression in the parable and consider them, indeed, to do so would be impossible in the limits of an editorial; we desire however to call attention to a few things in as brief a way as possible. First, this was spoken to his disciples, and was intended as a lesson to them alone. "And he said also unto his disciples." Surely we do not need to say that that which was good for the disciples to consider then must be good also for the disciples of Jesus now, and at all times. Others heard the parable, as we are told in verse fourteen, but the parable was not spoken to them, nor directly of them, though they perceived that it would fit them, but the Savior was teaching his own followers alone, and the lessons that he taught would be to their profit alone; and whatever in the parable was for their benefit must be for our benefit also.

In the second place, attention ought to be called to the fact that the Savior does not say that the master of the unjust steward commended him for what he did, but only for his wisdom. He is presented in the parable as pursuing a course that was full of worldly wisdom. The steward had been accused of wasting his master's goods; we are not told in what way he wasted them, and this was not necessary so far as the teaching of the parable was concerned; his master calls upon him to give an account of his stewardship, that is, to render a statement of the affairs of his master which had been in his charge, also telling him plainly that he should be no longer steward. The steward had been dealing unjustly all the time, and now he plans a crowning act of injustice. He has been unjust in some measure and now becomes unjust in much. He that will do a little wrong will under provocation do a greater wrong, and he that is faithful in little will be faithful in much. The spirit of injustice and the spirit of faithfulness are opposite, and each will lead to fruits which are also opposite to each other. It has been well said that stealing does not make a thief, but only reveals a thief. A man is not a thief because he steals, but he steals because he is a thief. This steward was unjust, and therefore he did unjust things, and when he was found out, to save himself from want he did still more and greater unjust things. In the plans he made he manifested great worldly wisdom, and so the master is represented as commending him because he had manifested such wisdom; but his unjust practices were more forcibly emphasized, and these were still condemned. Jesus adds to the words of the master of the steward commending him, "For the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." There ought to be special notice taken of the expression "in their generation." It seems to mean that they belong to one order of things, while the children of light, or of God, belong to another generation, to another order of things altogether. One class is of the world and is worldly in all desires, aspirations, aims and hopes; the other class belongs to the kingdom of God, and it possesses other desires, aspirations, aims

and hopes. These last are set apart from the world to live in the kingdom of heaven. While the first will seek the things of this life with such wisdom as belongs to this world, the other has a spirit to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness. Men by their wisdom gain much in this world. The people of God are told how they shall conduct themselves in the kingdom of heaven, but how foolish and disobedient many of them are. The men of this world have a single eye to the gain of this world, but how divided are the affections of the people of God. Must we not plead guilty to all this? The children of this world set before them honor, fame, riches, wisdom, the applause of men, and a thousand other things that belong to this world. The children of light are told to seek not the things that are below, and not to lay up treasure where moth and rust doth corrupt and thieves break through and steal, but rather treasure in heaven. The children of this world manifest the wisdom of the steward in a thousand ways in following after worldly gain. But how often do the children of light walk and do foolishly, thus warring against their own souls and bringing shame and sorrow upon themselves in the kingdom of God here below. "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." Notice this also, that it is with regard to the handling of the temporal things committed to us that this is particularly said to be true. If ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who shall commit to your trust the true riches? The expression of the Savior to his disciples, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations," has always seemed to us to be just what Paul afterward said to Timothy: "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."—1 Tim. vi. 17–19. This would be making to themselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness. It is to the disciples all along that the Master is speaking, he, as it seems to us, would tell them not to be unjust as was this steward, but to be wise as he was. A similar expression of the Master is: "Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." The wisdom of the serpent is commended, but not his maliciousness and venom; so the wisdom of the steward, and not his injustice, is commended. To do as the unjust steward did would be to do themselves harm. This course would not be making to themselves friends of the riches of this life, but rather making enemies of them. To do as this steward did would be an injury to them, and not a blessing, but to use the riches of this world as Paul has enjoined above would be to their great good. To give to the needy, to be humble, remembering their own unworthiness, and that these things had not been given them because they were better in any wise than the meanest beggar at their gate, and to be willing to distribute would be using the goods of this world wisely indeed. While the unjust steward by his wisdom planned to be received into the homes of those whom he had benefited, still this would be but for a time, because all earthly things must soon have an end; but on the other

hand, the true disciples of the Lord using what had been committed to them as Paul enjoined would have treasures that would not perish, and a home that would be enduring. All this would commend itself to the spiritual mind, because such ones have come in some measure to see the vanity of all that is earthly, and that all the fashion of the world is passing away. The Holy Spirit has engraved upon their hearts the solemn words, "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth," and they have come to feel the force of the words of the psalmist, "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them." The humble follower of the meek and lowly Lamb will feel great anxiety if this world's goods are committed to him, lest he misuse them, and there will be a prayer in his heart that he may use them to the glory of God and to the comfort of his own soul. There is nothing, and there can be nothing more important than to have these things set before us. Whatever tends to the glory of God and to the good of his people is all-important to be considered, and these things that pertain to the fruit of grace and faith in the hearts and lives of disciples cannot be too earnestly considered, and all who are spiritual will receive such teachings as remind them of the commandments of God with an eager heart and with prayer that they may be found following in this way. But the Pharisees, of whom it is said that they were covetous, when they heard these things, derided him. The Greek word here translated "covetous" literally signifies "a lover of silver." This fits in with the word mammon as used by our Savior. The meaning of their derision was that they perceived that this teaching would also condemn them in their evil practices of robbing widows' houses, and in all their oppressions for gain. But it was easier to deride or sneer than to refute his teaching, and the Master replied, "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; [that is, have a form of godliness which appears fair and good to men upon the surface,] but God knoweth your hearts." He knows that ye are like whited sepulchres, fair without but within full of corruption. "For that which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God." That is, all your fair show of religion, which is but a cloak of your covetousness, is abomination before God. All the religion which they knew was made up of forms and ceremonies and tithing. Into this form of godliness had come the same spirit of covetousness, which manifested itself in loving this world's gain. All was done for self, and in it all they had no desire to glorify God or to benefit their fellow man. All such religion is worse than vain, it is an abomination to God, it comes to be an abomination also to all who love God. How heart-searching is the truth of God; how it brings to light the hidden evils of our dark nature. By all such searching of the heart we come to see more and more that our salvation must be of the Lord through sovereign grace and mercy.

C.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906, &c.

HOLINESS PEOPLE.

DEAR BROTHER:—We have a band of "Holiness People" here that rely mostly on Paul's letter to the Hebrews (vi. 4–7; xii. 14–17,) to prove their doctrine. They claim all baptism is Holy Ghost baptism. If not too much trouble please explain this.

R. R. HURST.

CLARENDON, Ark.

The above request, as will be seen, comes from a brother who lives in the midst of "Holiness People." What good neighbors and citizens they must make. We believe they claim holiness to the extent that it is impossible for them to sin. How strange that the Lord did not so bless the patriarchs, prophets and apostles; not one man, who knew the grace of God, from Abel to the end of the apostles' day, nor since, could say, I am wholly without sin. But all have confessed that they were and are sinners, though saved by grace. The mighty apostle Paul said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." He did not speak in the past tense, as to say he was the chief of sinners when Saul of Tarsus, but "I am" now the chief of sinners.

We are told in the Scriptures that, "There be gods many and lords many," and delusions are just as numerous, but this holiness idea is the chief of them all; it denies every statement of salvation, because salvation refers only to sinners, no other character ever needed it. Jesus said, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." The righteous (holy) are not called at all by him; they need no repentance, therefore have no need of Christ. He died for sinners, saves sinners, calls sinners and keeps sinners through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. John wrote the things which he and the other apostles had heard, seen and handled of the Word of life, that the brethren in Christ might have fellowship with them and with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. In this same letter he said, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." If there was no possibility of the brethren sinning, we fail to understand just why John should thus write, and if the children of God are without sin in the flesh we fail to understand why John said, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." We have every confidence that John was right, and that then or now the man who says he has no sin is a liar, not only against his own conscience, but against God and his holy word. If we have no sin how can we confess our sins to God? and how can he prove his faithfulness in forgiving our sins? Paul said of a certain class, "It is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret." It is indeed a shame, and if some of the deeds of those who claim to be without sin were brought to light it would be a hard matter to convince men that they are absolutely holy. Not one believes it who has the grace of God in the heart.

The Scripture in Hebrews cited by our brother as the foundation of the doctrine of the "Holiness People" has no bearing whatever upon such doctrine, therefore does not belong to them. Hebrews vi. 4–7, reads as follows: "For it is impossible for those who were enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they cru-

cify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God." The apostle had in the preceding verses of the same chapter called their attention to the principles of the doctrine of Christ, which he had no doubt carefully and faithfully presented to them before, and in which they should have been established, but he reproved them in the former chapter for lack of knowledge, saying, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat." Now, after once more having called their attention to the principles of the doctrine of Christ, he said, "Let us go on unto perfection." The going on unto perfection did not signify that they could attain unto holiness or perfection in the flesh, but that there were gracious and glorious things in the Scriptures concerning Christ and the salvation of sinners that they should not be ignorant of. The priesthood of Melchisedec and Aaron must be brought to their knowledge and compared with the royal priesthood of Christ; these and other types must be presented as shadows only; Christ must be preached as the Antitype or body of all shadows. Therefore the apostle means a perfect knowledge of Jesus in the fullness of his character by the word "perfection," as he said to the church at Ephesus: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." He is Shepherd, Husband, Head, Lawgiver, Savior, Redeemer, Resurrection, Mediator, Counselor, High Priest, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, Mighty God. To speak of him and show his relation to his people in all these wonderful names is indeed perfection which the "Holiness People" have not yet arrived at.

In verses four, five and six the apostle shows clearly the character and efficacy of salvation through the blood of Christ. It is impossible to renew any again unto repentance "if they shall fall away;" it is equally impossible for any to fall away, for "we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."—Heb. x. 39. Yes, the work of Jesus is so perfect that neither life nor death shall separate us from the love of God. If one sinner for whom Christ died could fall away and be lost, every declaration of salvation would be denied and all men be left without hope. But to the praise of the glory of his grace he hath by one offering perfected forever all them that are sanctified or set apart. As man stands in Christ, our living Head, he is holy and without blame before God, but as he stands in Adam the body is dead because of sin, therefore the law of sin in his members is still active, bringing him often into captivity. If Paul realized this and confessed that sin dwelt in him, how shall any man now claim to be without sin?

Hebrews xii. 14–17, reads thus: "Follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the

blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." Verse fourteen is an exhortation to godliness in life and deportment. Men may believe and be established in the doctrine of God, and yet in their lives, by bad conduct and unclean conversation, deny Christ who bought them. Men who are not willing to suffer shame and reproach for the name and cause of Jesus Christ are not apt to live peaceably with all men. To follow after holiness is to deal justly, love mercy and walk humbly. The apostle does not say, If we do not follow after holiness we shall not see the Lord, but without holiness or righteousness no man shall see him. If his name is called "The Lord our Righteousness," he surely must be our holiness also. Therefore without his righteousness or holiness no man shall see him. Verse fifteen continues the exhortation by saying we should be diligent lest any fail of the grace of God; this would be receiving the grace of God in vain, of which Paul speaks in his second letter to the church at Corinth, chapter six, verse one. To fail of the grace of God, or to receive this grace in vain, is, that grace makes no change in the life of the man who has received it; if it does not make the liar truthful, the drunkard sober and the thief honest, it is of no benefit to such men in their lives, nor does it glorify God in such men. The apostle's meaning is that all who have received the grace of God should "mortify the deeds of the body," put off the old man (former life), which is corrupt, and put on the new man (newness of life), which is created in righteousness and true holiness. In following this course no root of bitterness will spring up, nor will any be defiled. Verses sixteen and seventeen clearly show the possibility of the children of God sinning and being visited with the displeasure of God because of their transgression. These two last verses completely remove the foundation from under the "Holiness People." "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."—Eccl. vii. 20.

With regard to "all baptism being Holy Ghost baptism," will say, if it be true how shall we understand why God sent John the Baptist to baptize with water, or why Christ was baptized in Jordan, or why the apostles baptized in the days of the flesh of Jesus, or why Christ commanded the apostles to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost? The eunuch said to Philip, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? and Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." The chariot was commanded to stand still, and they went down both into the water and Philip baptized him. Why people should wrest the Scriptures to suit their convenience and bring about their own destruction is difficult to understand, but such has ever been the case and will doubtless continue, since "God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned." Holy Ghost baptism is that which sanctifies the sinner, makes him a believer and causes him to follow Christ. Cornelius and his house had received this baptism before Peter commanded them to be baptized with "water." The apostles were commanded to baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, but not with the Holy Ghost. Water baptism is the answer of a good conscience toward God in putting on Christ before men, professing faith in him as the crucified and risen Savior. It shows the death,

burial and resurrection of Jesus. A man who is not dead to sin is not a fit subject for water baptism, and should he be buried and raised in the likeness of the resurrection of Christ he could not "walk in newness of life" because he is not, in Christ, a new creature.

We now leave the subject for the consideration of our brother, hoping he may in a measure at least be satisfied with our explanation. K.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

James Steel, son of John and Elizabeth Steel, was born Jan. 19th, 1831, died June 15th, 1907, at the age of 76 years, 4 months and 26 days. In early years he was married to Miss Sarah Judy; to this union were born four children, three sons and one daughter. The all-wise God saw fit to take the wife and mother, we hope, to himself, thus severing the tie that binds every happy family together. On Sept. 24th, 1869, he was again married, this time to Miss Mary Dum, who preceded him to the spirit world Feb. 26th, 1906. To this union were born eleven children, seven sons and four daughters. Three sons went west several years ago, and it is not known whether they are alive to this day or not. There remain here to mourn, eleven children, eleven grandchildren, two brothers, two sisters and many distant relatives and a host of dear friends. I think I may safely say that he had not an enemy in the world, and was always ready to help those in sickness or distress. Brother Steel professed a hope in the all-powerful arm of Christ to save to the utmost all those who come to God by him, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Laurel Baptist Church by the late Elder G. N. Tusing, Oct. 25th, 1896, and remained a steadfast member of the church militant until called to join the church triumphant. He loved the assembly of the saints and very rarely failed to be present at our church meetings. He dearly loved the doctrine of salvation by grace and creature depravity, and said repeatedly that he had hope in nothing but free grace for time and eternity.

The funeral took place from the Laurel Baptist Church on Monday, June 17th, at 10:30 a. m., when our beloved pastor, Elder T. C. Williams, preached to a large assembly of sorrowing friends and neighbors, after which all that was mortal of our dear brother was laid to rest in the Mt. Olive Cemetery, near South Perry. His sufferings are past and his sorrows ended.

GEORGE W. HARTSOUGH.

Sarah Annie Powrie was born Oct. 10th, 1903, died June 11th, 1907, making her dear little span number 3 years, 8 months and 1 day. Her disease was cerebro meningitis. We never knew but what she was in perfect health, but after first complaining the disease developed too fast for any earthly aid to reach, and He who had loaned her only for a season called her to himself in glory. Truly we can say the year 1907 has had much real grief in store for us, yet it is but a little more than half gone; none but God can say how much more we shall see before its close. On January 17th our dear little bud Clyta Mary Powrie was born, and her dear little spirit at once returned to its Giver, and on Jan. 19th her precious form was laid tenderly away beside her darling little brother Charlie, who was called home in 1902. We felt that our cup was then full, but He who knoweth all things better than we knew there was more. On June 7th, 1907, our dear, rosy-cheeked little Annie complained of earache, and in four short days was taken from us. We feel that we would fain throw out our empty arms and beg Jesus to bid us come, yet we know this is not the faith of a true christian; we should rather pray for strength to bear our sorrow with obedient grace, and as we cast our eyes forward to the setting sun of life's journey ask God to give us strength to say, "Thy will be done." Our last sad loss falls heavily upon her dear grandparents, A. and S. Morningstar, as she was a great blessing to them. Thus again are we taught that we know not when the Son of man shall appear. When little Annie was first taken ill she told us, "My is not going to die." Dear ones, we fully realize that little Annie is not dead, but alive in Christ. We ask the prayers of the household of faith in this our third sore trial in so short a time. She leaves papa and mamma, one sister, Pearl, and three brothers, Emmett, Omar and Larch, in her own home to mourn for her dear presence. They are all older, our babies are all with the Lord and we feel very lonely.

Her papa and mamma,

J. B. AND OLIVE POWRIE.

DRAIN, Ore., July 25, 1907.

DIED—Feb. 12, 1907, at her home near Bloomfield, Loudoun Co., Va., **Miss Pleasant Ann Richards,** daughter of Barton and Mariah Richards, aged 70 years. She was not a member of the church, but one of its warmest friends, always filling her seat at Ebenezer until prevented by affliction. She had a stroke of paralysis in June before her death, and was not able to go around after that. Her last sickness was stomach trouble. The last two days and nights her sufferings were terrible, and her only cry was, "Heavenly Father, take me home." We do feel and believe that he has taken her home, and that she rests from all her labors and sufferings. She leaves two lone sisters to mourn their loss, but we

feel that our loss is her gain; yet how sad to see our loved ones laid away beneath the sod, never more to see their faces or hear their voices. We would remember "the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

ALSO,

My dear and only brother, **Samuel Barton Richards,** died of "la grippe" at his home in Merrifield, Fairfax Co., Va., Feb. 28th, 1907, aged 64 years. He was a soldier in the late war, and served in Stuart's Cavalry three years. Brother Robey said the day he was buried, He was a good soldier, a good citizen, a good husband and father, and, he believed, a good soldier of the cross. He was not a member of the visible church, but loved the truth. He said he was willing to die if it were the Lord's will; he felt that the everlasting arms were beneath him. He leaves a lonely widow and four children, three sons and one daughter, all married. We sorrow not as those who have no hope.

MATTIE M. RICHARDS.

BLOOMFIELD, Va.

Rebecca Huddle Rhinehart was born in Fairfield Co., Ohio, April 21st, 1824, died July 9th, 1907, aged 83 years, 2 months and 18 days. She moved with her parents from Fairfield County to Seneca County, Ohio, when she was quite young. She was the oldest of a family of eighteen children. She was married to Noah Rhinehart March 2nd, 1845. To this union were born five children, two of whom preceded her to the spirit land. There are left to mourn her demise three children, sixteen grandchildren, five brothers, four sisters and a host of distant relatives and friends. Her husband was called to his rest several years ago. Since her husband's death she has resided most of the time with her son on their old home farm, in Shelby County, Ohio, two miles from Sidney, but a part of her widowhood was spent with her two daughters, Amanda Fisher and family and Lydia Patterson and family. She united with the Old School Baptists sixty-two years ago, and lived a consistent and dutiful member of that church until called to the church triumphant. Her home was a gathering place for the brethren, and meetings were often held in her house, where she ministered to their wants as hostess with christian love. She was not backward in duty in the church, and was sound in the doctrine of God our Savior, and always an humble, meek follower of her Lord. The hope she received in her Lord and Master in her younger life was her stay and staff through all the afflictions and sorrows which she passed during the sixty-two years of her membership among the people of God. Though age brought afflictions, and billows of sorrow rolled over her at times, her faith failed not, and she was enabled, at least at times, by the love of her Master to say, Thy will be done. Her soul was securely anchored in the hope given when it pleased God to give her an evidence of the pardon of her sins.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer.

N. PETERS.

DIED—**Alpheus D. Loud,** March 30th, 1907, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Charles Greenleaf, 138 Hopkins Ave., Jersey City, N. J. He was born Jan. 7th, 1827. In early manhood he was married to Hannah M. Hoyt, daughter of Archibald and Elizabeth Hoyt. To this union four children were born, all of whom survive him; they are Alice E., wife of John McDonald, of Pittsburg, Pa., James E., of Washingtonville, N. Y., Elizabeth E., wife of Charles Greenleaf, and Arthur D., of Jersey City, N. J.

Brother Loud was active for a man of his age, and was around as usual until the evening of March 25th, when he was taken with a chill, and on the 30th, the day of his death, he suffered a stroke of paralysis. He united with the New Vernon Church many years ago, was baptized by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and continued a faithful, steadfast member to the end. He loved sound doctrine and good men. He exalted the grace of God in his salvation, and often said, "That God hath saved me 'tis a wonder, wonder, wonder." He lost his wife a few years ago, and after that seemed very lonely and sad, but said he was willing to wait all the appointed days until his change came. This he did, and died as he had lived: in the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The funeral service, which was conducted by the writer, was held at the home of Mrs. Crist, his sister-in-law, at Howells, N. Y. The interment took place in the Howells cemetery, beside the companion of his youth. We would desire that the comforting assurance of grace and mercy be given the family.

Written by request. K.

DIED—Jan. 24th, 1907, at the family residence in Camp Point, Ill., **Mrs. Lucinda Harris,** aged 73 years, 8 months and 23 days. Lucinda Jenkins, the daughter of Deacon John and sister Sally Jenkins, was born in the State of Tennessee May 1st, 1833. She received a hope in Christ in 1849, shortly after which she came with her parents to Illinois. She was married to Solomon Harris April 14th, 1864. Three children were born to this union, all of whom died in infancy. Her life was one of self-sacrifice and humility, although she could never see her way clear to go to the church, on account of her imperfections. The weather and roads were very bad at the time of her death, and after prayer at the grave by Elder Rice Harris, her husband's brother, the remains were laid away in the Ebenezer cemetery, ten miles north of Camp Point, and near the old home where she had spent the most of her life. Funeral services were

held in her memory at Ebenezer, a church-house belonging to the Methodist people, conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder Rice Harris, the fifth Sunday in June, 1907. The congregation was very large, and listened with profound attention and apparent interest.

Our dear brother Harris is left in his old age (now in his eighty-first year) without an earthly companion, but he has abiding faith in God, whose grace we feel sure will be sufficient for him, and while he is separated from her with whom he traveled life's checkered road for almost forty-three years, he is only waiting for the Master's call. May his last days on earth be cheered by the presence of the Lord, and his precious hope in Jesus grow brighter as his earthly sun is sinking in the golden west.

D. W. OWENS.

HERSMAN, Ill.

DIED—Sister **Lucy F. Bird,** at 4:30 o'clock a. m. July 17th, 1907, at the residence of her daughter, aged 57 years, 10 months and 18 days. Thus another member of our church has been called home. Sister Bird united with the Providence Old School Baptist Church in 1879, and was a faithful and dutiful member until her death. She had been a cripple for nearly three years, and had to go about on crutches, from the effects of being thrown from a wagon. The doctors said her death was caused by a complication of diseases, which had resulted in consumption. The evening before she passed away she called her children to her bedside and with the greatest composure gave each of them their part of her personal property, and gave explicit directions how she wanted to be buried. She had been confined to her bed for only a week, and was a great sufferer, and often prayed for the time to come that she might cease from suffering and be at rest. She leaves a husband, seven children and many grandchildren to mourn their loss of a dear one, but while we mourn and sorrow here we hope she is at rest, and could not wish her back. She leaves a son, who is licensed to preach, who seemed to be a great comfort to her.

Elder W. I. Wade conducted the funeral services on July 18th, 1907, at the grave, where amidst a sorrowing crowd she was laid to rest by loving hands. May the love of Jesus fill the hearts of the bereaved.

G. B. BIRD.

W. G. Moon died at his home in Fairfax Co., Va., May 23rd, 1907, in the 79th year of his age. Mr. Moon was a firm believer in the doctrine held and preached by the Old School Baptists, but was never baptized, his fear of deceiving the church seemed to be always before him, and when approached on the subject he would always say, I am too unworthy to be among them. In his last sickness he was very humble, and his prayers to God for mercy and forgiveness were very pathetic, assuring us that his hope of eternal rest was sure and steadfast. He had been a subscriber to the SIGNS for many years, and enjoyed reading it. He leaves a widow and two sons.

His funeral was held at his late residence, in Fairfax County, Va., and was largely attended by relatives and friends and the Confederate Veterans, of whom he was an honorable member. May the Lord comfort his aged and infirm widow, our sister in the hope of eternal life.

HANNIE B. GREHAN.

FAIRFAX COUNTY, Va., July 23, 1907.

DIED—**Mrs. John Thomas,** of Copenhagen, Ontario, *nee* Mary Hamilton, daughter of Thomas Hamilton, formerly of Ekfrid, Ontario. It is with deep sadness I send you the notice of my dear sister's death, which occurred July 19th, 1907. She had been sick for more than three years with bronchial trouble, and suffered from a cough, but was able to be around until a few days before her death, when she was taken with a smothering feeling and great difficulty of breathing. She said her time was short. The doctor was called in and gave her some medicine, which gave her relief, but she passed peacefully away in the 55th year of her age. She was a member of the Old School Baptist Church for a number of years, was baptized by Elder Wm. L. Beebe. She was reconciled to the Lord's will, and seemed to have no fear of death. We all realize she is better off, but there is a sadness in parting with our dear ones.

(MRS.) THOMAS LEATHERDALE.

DRESDEN, Ontario.

DIED—June 27th, 1907, **Mrs. Maria Garrison,** at Central Bridge, N. Y., aged 72 years, 9 months and 10 days. Sister Garrison was born in Binghamton, N. Y., married to Mr. A. Garrison Dec. 5th, 1869, who survives her. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Baptist Church of New York city, in June, 1871, by Elder Wm. Benedict. She continued a faithful member to the end, adorning the doctrine of God our Savior in a walk worthy of the vocation wherewith she was called, with all lowliness and meekness. "A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth."

Interment was in the Schoharie Lutheran Cemetery.

JOHN McCONNELL.

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MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting of the Bryn Zion Old School Baptist Church, Kent County, Delaware, is appointed to be held August 17th and 18th, 1907. The meeting will open Saturday at 2 o'clock p. m., and continue all day Sunday. A cordial invitation is given to brethren and friends to meet with us. All trains on Del. Div. R. R. will be met at Clayton Saturday, the morning before the meeting.

BENJ. E. CUBBAGE.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, in her seventy-sixth annual session, at the residence of brother Doty Varnes, five miles southeast of Farmington, Fulton Co., Ill., on Friday, August 30th, 1907, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue the two following days. Those coming from north of Farmington must come Thursday evening, where they will be met; those coming from south of Farmington will change to the Iowa Central for Cramer on Thursday afternoon, where they will be met. Those from south of Galesburg will come to Abingdon on the C., B. & Q., change to the Iowa Central at 4:36 p. m. Those from Galesburg and the north will take the Interurban at 3:30 p. m. for Abingdon, where they will meet those from the south all bound for Cramer.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Maine Conference will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at North Berwick, York County, Maine. The meeting begins on Friday, August 30th, 1907, and continues three days. We invite all who love our Lord Jesus Christ to attend our gathering.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

THE Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, Providence permitting, will hold a two days meeting the first Wednesday and Thursday in September (4th and 5th), 1907. We extend an invitation to all lovers of the truth, especially ministers.

HENRY BRONSON, Church Clerk.

THE Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Predestinarian or Primitive Baptists will convene with the Mount Pleasant Church, at Pleasureville, Ky., on Friday, Sept. 6th, 1907, and continue three days. Pleasureville is on Louisville & Lexington division of L. & N. R. R., with daily trains each way. Also from Cincinnati via La Grange or via Cincinnati south to Georgetown and Frankfort. We expect Elders Lester, Eubanks and John G. Sawin with us at that time. Come, brethren, meet with us.

C. F. DUDLEY, Church Clerk.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Old School Baptist Church at Bowdoinham, Maine, to begin on Friday before the second Monday in September, (6th) 1907, and continue three days. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus. Place of meeting is but a few minutes walk from Bowdoinham depot.

GEO. R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Harford Church, Harford County, Md., to commence at 10 o'clock a. m. on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1907, and continue two days. A cordial invitation is extended to lovers of the truth. Those coming by way of Baltimore will take train that leaves North Ave. station at 3:45 p. m. on Friday before, for Long Green or Forest Hill. Those coming from the north take train that leaves York, Pa., at 1:55 o'clock for same stations.

NATHAN GRAFTON.

THE Roxbury Association is appointed to be held with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., commencing on Wednesday, Sept. 18th, 1907, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continuing two days. Trains will be met at Shokan, on the Ulster & Delaware R. R., Tuesday p. m. A cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth is extended, especially to ministers of our faith and order, to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE annual meeting of the Cumberland Association with the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church of University St., South Nashville, Tenn., will convene, if the Lord will, Saturday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1907, and continue three days. All lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus are cordially invited, especially those in the ministry.

O. B. HICKERSON.

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SARAH JONES.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

THE REFINING POT.

"AND it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off, and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God."—Zech. xiii. 8, 9.

"He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver."—Mal. iii. 3.

God's dealings with national, typical Israel are of very much interest to the church of Christ. Therein is discovered to us the attributes of the Lord, and in this nation we have a portraiture of the manifold vicissitudes that pertain to the children of Zion even to the present day. This people were exceptionally favored above all the nations of the earth. To them were committed the oracles of God; blessings peculiar and abundant were their heritage. At times they worshiped God in grateful praises for his sovereign graciousness unto them, but ah, how soon they forgot his works, they corrupted their ways, debased themselves in their forgetfulness and wandered treacherously from the Lord. They knew what it was to flourish beneath the smiles of the Lord, and to fade and die beneath his rebukes. How often the Lord wrought for his name's sake, (Ezek. xx. 9,) shewing them mercy and delivering them from their adversities. In reading the history of Israel we see that severe indeed were the fiery ordeals they were subjected to. Look at this: "Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross: all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are even the dross of silver. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore, I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in mine anger, and in my fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the Lord have poured out my fury upon you."—Ezek. xxii. 18-22. Ah, though the furnace was so severe there were ever some silver, some that

were precious in the eyes of the Lord, a remnant according to the election of grace. So in Zech. xiii. 8, 9, "Two parts therein [saith the Lord] shall be cut off, and die; but the third part shall be left therein." This third part are his very people, and they confess the Lord to be their God. By fiery trials the Lord separated them from their idolatries, uncleanness and witchcraft. He purified them by the spirit of judgment and of burning from all the foreign mixtures that had become mixed with the pure worship that God had ordained among his people when he redeemed them from the house of bondage. Moab was the Lord's washpot, (Psalms lx. 8,) and Babylon was also the refining pot for Israel. Seventy years they were in that fiery furnace to purify them from idolatry. Though the fires of exile and captivity were painful, their songs were hushed, and in sighing and weeping they spent this long night of affliction, yet all worked together for good. There they bemoaned themselves, and sighed and wept, but the morning came, and they came forth with singing (Isaiah xxxv. 10,) and laughter; yes, the bright shining silver sang, "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." Are "the third part" his people? Are they silver and gold? Then he will refine them as silver is refined, and try them as gold is tried. In graciousness and faithfulness, for his own glory and their good, the Lord will bring the third part through the fire.

It is not my intention to recite the narrative in particular, in which is told the fulfillment of this prophetic word in typical Israel, but, the Holy Spirit enabling me, I will present some glimpses of the subject as have ever been and are now experienced by those who are in truth the people of God. "I [Jehovah of hosts] will bring the third part through the fire." "He [Christ, the Word made flesh, the messenger of the covenant,] shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver." By these declarations of the Scriptures the Refiner is no other than God. This being so it is our comfort, as believers in God, to be assured that he is not trifling or experimenting with his people; he is not using them as playthings when he turns his hand upon them (Isaiah i. 25,) and puts them in the refining pot. The little that we know of God persuades us to believe that he is holy and wise, gracious and almighty. All his ways are judgment, just and right is he. When his saints come forth of this and that, and all the fiery furnaces that the Refiner puts them into, will they not be to his praise and honor and glory? In very truth they will; my soul is exultant in the thought. It is so sustaining and uplifting to have right thoughts of God. The Refiner is the Lord of hosts, the silver is his own elect, his redeemed and regenerated people, whom he hath eternally loved and hath predestinated unto eternal glory. The silver is owned by the Refiner. Who then shall question his sovereign right to do with his own as seemeth good in his sight? The sorest chastenings of our heavenly Father are for our profit. (Heb. xii. 10.) Our Refiner knows that there is much dross mingled with the silver in his people; we think we know it, too, but he better knows it than we, and what is more, he knows just exactly what fire and what degrees of fiery trials will separate this and that alloy from the silver, bring it to the surface, and that only his own hand that put us in the crucible and melted us can purge away the dross. Have you not prayed, dear child of God, that you

might more brightly shine in the beauties of the Savior? Yes, you say,

"I asked the Lord that I might grow
In faith, and love, and every grace;
Might more of his salvation know,
And seek more earnestly his face.

'Twas he who taught me thus to pray,
And he, I trust, has answered prayer;
But it has been in such a way
As almost drove me to despair."

O, there is much chaff to be burned up, and tin and dross to be purged away all the days that we are in the earthly house of this tabernacle. Well, child of God, how many times have you been in the refining pot? What fires have you been brought through? and in what furnace of affliction are you now being melted? To tell all your answer would be a long account. The Lord has many fires, and fire after fire to bring his chosen through; some of his dear children are seldom out of the melting pot. The furnace of affliction in which the Lord has his chosen may be, in his providence, some outward earthly trial. It may be the blasting of our temporal prosperity; we are called upon perhaps to see nothing but shattered hopes and blighted expectations. Perhaps by God's dispensation we find our bodily health declining, and wearing and painful sickness is our lot. Then how sore to meet with bereavements, when strong ties are rent and torn. But there are living troubles which are as a living fire; some such afflictions are never breathed to any other, but are as a continuing furnace to the soul. Then, when it pleaseth the Lord, he can so kindle a fire to melt us that the common cares of life are a daily furnace to us. Or our Refiner's fire may be the fiery darts of the wicked, the buffetings of the messenger of Satan, the devil's cruel insinuations and accusations. What a harrassed life some of God's dear children have; all their surroundings are such that we wonder they endure such fiery trials. O they are not utterly consumed, the Lord, the Refiner, loves them, and his invisible and gracious hand sustains them. A child of God cannot always say with Job, "I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came."—Job iii. 26. Our circumstances may have been very different when trouble came. Trouble came; unsent? Never. Let us not believe such atheistical stuff. Trouble came, the fire burns, the child of God is in the crucible, and soon he is melted because of trouble. The affliction of the silver is not to destroy the silver, but to refine it. The bush that Moses saw burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed; and Moses said, "I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt."—Exodus iii. 3. And I am sure if we have eyes to see the elect of God in the refining pot, if we have a heart to enter somewhat into the intimacy between the Refiner and the silver, if we can view the scene taking place in the crucible, we shall say, This is a great sight, such a sight which if once seen can never be altogether obliterated from memory's vision.

To a right apprehension of what is to be witnessed as we contemplate the children of God in the fire it will be borne in mind that all is not silver in the pot, there is dross there also. The child of God has two natures, one pure silver, the other all alloy, veritable dross, though some of it may very much resemble silver. The silver is the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, and the dross is the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. (Eph. iv. 22–24.) Having this well understood I would that we to-

gether might look into the crucible and see the tribulation of the silver therein, and let us know that while we are obtaining some glimpses therein that there is One who sees far more and deeper than we, One who sees all; the Lord, the Refiner, sitteth near by, his heart and his eyes are there perpetually. (1 Kings ix. 3.) He has dominion over the fire, and in wisdom regulates its intensity; nothing is taking place in the refining pot without him. By the heat of the fiery trial the child of God begins to be moved, as silver he is troubled; the varied alloys of our carnal nature also are agitated in affliction's furnace. That one and the selfsame person should be agitated by such contradictory emotions is a mystery. In the refining pot the child of God becomes melted; yes, the new man is molten, and is moved like melted, boiling silver in the refining pot, and the dross also is put in motion by the fiery ordeal. What strugglings, what warfare is experienced by the tried soul. As the silver and the alloy are boiling, at certain stages they are so mixed, there is such confusion of the substances, that the child of God cannot himself determine what is silver and what is dross; what is of the Spirit and what is of the flesh. O this he learns, that he is frail and sinful. So mixed sometimes are the silver and dross that the poor soul in the furnace cannot determine whether he is a child of God or a child of the devil. "When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path."—Psalms cxlii. 3. So our Refiner ever distinguishes, ever knows the sighs and yearnings of the silver. "The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the Lord trieth the hearts."—Prov. xvii. 3. While the child of God is in the crucible he is being tested indeed, for consider what darkness he is in much of the time. The providences of the Lord are often as an impenetrable cloud, and blind unbelief, that foul, God-dishonoring dross, comes to the surface, and our tried souls are entombed in its dismalness. Ah, yes, there boils up out of the depths of our sinful hearts murmuring and rebellions, and we pray, but all our prayers are not silver prayers, there are dross prayers, peevish cries; we pray, Take us out of the fire, but we are still kept in, the fire still burns, our Refiner blows upon it and it becomes the hotter. Yes, in affliction's furnace the believer will find thoughts bubbling up, imaginations of the carnal mind, and in passing through these fiery trials the Lord purposes to separate the dross thoughts from the silver thoughts. Many have been and are our thoughts of God, of his providences and of things that we imagine to be the truth; we cherish them as silver, but they are base alloy. Ah, what misconceptions we are liable to; we sometimes think that God is altogether such an one as ourselves. Silver thoughts are ever according to the testimony of the holy Scriptures, and those that are not sustained by the word of God, no matter how pretentious, no matter how we have gained them, no matter how they appear to shine, no matter how much we hug them to our bosom, they are nothing but very dross and scum, and in the refining pot we shall find it to be so to our soul's discomfiture. God's fires are where the wood, hay and stubble, where heresies are consumed. The false, the counterfeit, that religiousness that originates in our flesh, the erroneous ideas which we thought were right, and were friendly to Christ, are now in the furnace discovered to us to be opposed to that true and vital knowledge of God, (2 Cor. x. 5,) and all such by sore tribula-

tions are separated from the faith which is of the operation of God. Yes, the refining pot is the place for the destruction of inherent Arminianism. Self-righteousness is only wood, hay, stubble, and affliction's fire will burn it up. As the dross comes to the surface we look into the refining pot, and nothing but this offensive scum is seen. We say, Is this a child of God? Look at Jonah in the refining pot in Nineveh and its vicinity; he is exceedingly displeased, and very angry, and even in the face of God he spits forth this: "I do well to be angry, even unto death." As we stand by and look upon this, depicted in the fourth chapter, do we not blush and feel ashamed that such behavior should be in any creature? Surely this is dross. Is there any silver in Jonah? Yes, look beneath this shameful scum, look at him in the belly of the whale, in the second chapter, and there the precious grace of God, the silver, is seen. The Lord of hosts sits as a refiner and purifier of silver, and as the dross comes to the surface it is his work, because of his great interest in the silver, to remove all the base scum away. Let us not overlook this one thing as we consider the elect of God in the furnace of affliction, that amidst all the severity of their trials they are given to prove the unfailing mercifulness of the Lord their God. Our Refiner loves his own, he ever has compassion for his silver. He, the Captain of our salvation, was made perfect through suffering when he was put to grief for the atonement of our transgressions. He saw the travail of his own soul and was satisfied; yes, for the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. So he sitteth as a Refiner and witnesseth the travail of soul of his tried people, his beloved silver ones, in the refining pot. He sees the end, that they shall come forth to his praise, they shall very gloriously reflect his own image.

"I feel at my heart all thy sighs and thy groans,
For thou art most near me, my flesh and my bones;
In all thy distresses thy Head feels the pain,
Yet all are most needful, not one is in vain.

Then trust me and fear not, thy life is secure;
My wisdom is perfect, supreme is my power;
In love I correct thee, thy soul to refine,
To make thee at length in my likeness to shine."

The Refiner takes away from time to time the upboiling dross; he has no pleasure in this scum, for it mars the divine excellence of his silver. Yes, tried one, thy Refiner will take away the dross from the silver, and thou shalt come forth from the fires a vessel well pleasing in his eyes. (Prov. xxv. 4.) Though in your trials you find so much that is not pure and gracious and Christlike, though your melted soul is feelingly buried in this all upboiling scum, and your heart aches to find there is so much of it, thy loving Refiner will purely purge away thy dross and take away all thy tin. (Isaiah i. 25.) By divine teaching errors are swept away, for God's word, his truth, is like fire. The gracious teachings of the Spirit of truth (John xvi. 13,) separates us from our mistaken ideas of doctrine, and we are made quite willing in our fiery temptations to have all heresies carted away to the dunghill. The people of God are glorified in the truth, but errors dim the lustre of the faith of God's elect. O the grievous scum of the depravity of our flesh, what shall cleanse this away? Only the hand of the once crucified One can purge it from thy aching conscience. Yes, the dear Refiner who sitteth near by will put forth his hand, and the voice of his pierced hand removing the scum will say to the heart of his silver underneath,

This is my blood shed for the remission of sins. O blessed removal of the dross by the precious blood of the Lamb! At such a moment as this the silver, though still in affliction, can look up with smiles unto the face of the Refiner, saying, I have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. Scum, vain imaginations, delusions, heresies, murmurings, unbelief, atheisms, all such are not evidences of the grace of God; they are not to be exhibited, looked upon or mentioned as evidences presenting us as the children of God; such is in all mankind. Such things are vile, they are not precious, and to be as God's mouth we must in our testimony take forth the precious from the vile. (Jer. xv. 19.) Sin in its every aspect is to be loathed, to be refused, to be condemned; we are not to smack our lips over it as though it were enjoyable, good to eat. O Lord, "thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity."—Hab. i. 13. And shall we feast our eyes on sin? Surely if we are of God, born again, born of God, if we are silver, our heart-aching prayer will be, Take away all iniquity, and we shall be ashamed, and mourn, and loathe ourselves for all our iniquities. Can such an one whose conversation is not chaste be found mingling among the saints; who tells, with a grin on his face, an obscene anecdote? Shall I by word or look, or in any other way, be a partaker? God forbid. O God, have mercy upon me. How dare such a person profess the name of Christ? How dare they invade the society of believers in the Lamb of God? Child of God, let that one whose life is such be unto you as a leper; keep no company with such. O pray to God to keep thee from this walking pestilence. O flee, in thy heart, to the pavilion of thy God, in the secret of his tabernacle thou shalt find a refuge, and there pour out thy sighs in the hour of temptation. Thy merciful, succoring God "shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler."—Psalms xci. 4. It is so gratifying, moving our souls in thanksgiving to God, that his grace was so sufficient for the apostle Paul that he could write, "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe."—1 Thess. ii. 10.

Many are the conflicting thoughts and the prayers of the elect of God while being brought through the fire, for in the Refiner's fire, of whatsoever nature it may be, we are melted and sink down in the crucible, and wonder why it is that we have fallen into such temptations. In gloom because of the uprising dross, and agitated by our trials, we know in truth that no chastening is joyous, but grievous, and it is not easy for us to understand that any God-glorifying fruits can come out of such distracting, heart-burdensome, burning dispensations. Look into the refining pot and see the children of God therein; you say, I do, and I see some of them have hard thoughts of men, of things and of God; they murmur, and some in rather loud tones express their peevishness. This surely is dross and scum. Yes, but if you have good hearing incline your ear over the refining pot, and from underneath all this scum you shall hear the sighs and prayers of the melted silver. "How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?"—Psalms xiii. 1. "Why standest thou afar off, O Lord? why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?"—Psalms x. 1. The very time when he is so much needed we fear

he has withdrawn, and has taken away his mercies from us, and amazed and disconsolate we ask, "Will the Lord cast off forever? and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" —Psalms lxxvii. 7–9. Do not these complaints very clearly declare that the Lord is the One so needful, so desired? Look at Job when he was in the furnace, you may see the dross. Ah yes, he spake "words without knowledge." In the day of his grief and desperate sorrow his speech was as the speech of one that was desperate. (Job vi. 26.) The dross came to the surface, but let the dross be taken away from the silver and how affectionately we look at the molten silver, at Job in his afflictions. His bereaved soul cries out, "O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!" "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." And then so nourished was his faith and hope in God that he says, "He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." What a comprehensive view he had of God's providence, and how gracious was his soul's acquiescence to the afflicting dispensations of God when he exclaimed, "What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?"—Job ii. 10. All afflictions and chastenings endured by the chosen of God are for their good, and the fruit of it all is God-glorifying; so even while in the fire the silver is found to glorify the Lord God. For however inconceivable to the carnal mind, the child of God spiritually thrives in affliction. Melted in the fires we are separated from fleshly dependencies.

"Trials make the promise sweet,
Trials give new life to prayer,
Trials bring me to his feet,
Lay me low and keep me there."

"O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit."—Isaiah xxxviii. 16. "They shall call on my name, and I will hear them." That is, the melted silver shall call upon the Refiner, I, the Lord, will hear them. He is so near the refining pot.

"He knows how deep their groanings are,
And what their secret sighs declare,
And for their comfort has expressed
That all such mourning souls are blest."

In trouble they visit their God and pour out a prayer while his chastening is upon them. The word prayer here means "a secret speech, a whisper." Yes, the cry of the tried heart is only for the ear of the Lord. So very gracious is our God that when the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I, saith the Lord, will hear them, I the God of Jacob will not forsake them. Prayers, silver prayers, from that heart prepared by the Lord are the forerunners of his decreed mercies. Such prayers are not tin prayers; silver prayers are not asking amiss, but asking according to the will of the Lord our Refiner.

"They shall call on my name, and I will hear them." In our affliction we are moved by the Holy Spirit to seek the Lord. No other one can afford us help. Ah, it may be before we were brought into trials we were careless, wayward ones; but now in our tribulations where shall we go? to whom shall we look? "When he slew them, then they sought him; and they returned and inquired early after God: and they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer." Listen to the silver praying, "Take away all iniquity."—Hosea xiv. 2. Take away this hateful dross that darkens my life, mars my

peace and shuts out from view the face of my Redeemer. In the chastening fires we are brought into implicit reliance in the atoning blood of Christ, more and more endeared to us becomes the hope of the gospel, and we look with all desire to the merits of our Savior, and when the Comforter applies the blood of Jesus to our sin-aching hearts, then the scum is gone, and the silver face looks up to the face that looks down, and that look of the Lord, the Refiner, says, Thou art mine, my delight, my Hephzibah, and the happy silver says, The Lord is my God. Many are the sighs and cries of the tried saints for resignation to the divine will, and that they might as dear children bear the indignation of the Lord, endure reproaches for the name of Christ, and that they might be kept ever worshiping the everlasting God. The furnace of affliction most surely brings the children of God into more intimate communion with the Lord; here their faith is purified, errors are purged, and they are brought into the necessity of a deeper and more extended knowledge of the characters that Christ sustains to his own. If passing through the fire is to burn up the dross, then let the Lord do with me as seemeth good in his sight. Unlike material silver from which all alloy has been purely purged away, and is then pure silver, the child of God becomes while in the world again and again mixed with dross. "How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed!"—Lam. iv. 1. Ah, it becomes tarnished, corroded with earth's defilements. The dross accumulates, it grows up from our depraved nature and mingles itself with the silver. Ah, some of the dear family of God are only out of the furnace for little moments. These little seasons are quietness and joy, and radiant in gratefulness, they reflect the smiling face of God. Then if needs be the Lord puts them in the refining pot again. Surely his purposes are wise and gracious. Though the silver be tried in a furnace of earth and purified seven times, (Psalms xii. 6,) will the silver in the end find fault? will there be a murmuring thought over any or all the seven fires? O there will be perfect acquiescence, there will not be a lisp of complaint, but this shall be the heart's sweet song: My Jesus hath done all things well. The Refiner in all graciousness clears away the dross, and looking into the furnace he sees the melted silver, sees in his tried ones his own image, and he says, It is my people, and the silver's heart responds, The Lord is my God. Would you see a child of God brought through the fire? then look at this picture. There stands Simon Peter in the palace of the high priest warming himself at the fire. Ah, Peter, the Lord has put you into the refining pot, and underneath Satan kindles a fire, for he has desired to have thee that he may sift thee as wheat; he has insinuated that you are nothing but chaff, and you have thought you are the finest of wheat, all wheat and no chaff, for you have said, Although all should be offended, yet will not I. The fire is kindled, and Peter in the crucible will soon begin to be dissolved by the vehement heat of temptation, and we shall see what silver and what dross he is composed of. The Refiner is near by. "A damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee." This was a hot fire, and Peter is melting hot within, the silver and the dross are all in commotion, and up to the surface comes the dross, and Peter "denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest." Another who saw him "said unto

them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man." What, do you think that an oath for confirmation will end the strife, silence your accusers and cause them to believe your lies? Ah, sinful Peter, this is very dross. The fire still burns, and Peter is boiling with emotions; yes, the silver is in motion and the dross is in motion. About the space of one hour another accuser came, and his accusations and questionings were as a vehement flame under the refining pot. This accuser confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him, for he is a Galileean, (the accuser was one of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman, whose ear Peter cut off,) and he saith, "Did not I see thee in the garden with him?" O Peter, where is thy vehement courage now? will you cut him down with your sword? Ah, the once brave Peter is now a very coward. "Then began he to curse and swear, saying, I know not the man." What, lying, swearing, cursing? Whom was he cursing, himself, his accusers? Was it that he was cursing Jesus? O execrable scum! This is the very scum of scum. Can there be any silver in the refining pot? Yes, for our Savior told him before he was put in the furnace, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." While he was lying, while he was swearing to confirm his lying denials, yes; even while he was cursing, Peter knew, the silver knew, Jesus; the silver ached, the silver sighed, the silver was ashamed. The silver, deep down in the crucible, hidden from all human view, blushed and dared not lift up its face to the Lord. (Ezra ix. 6.) Three horrible boilings up of vileness; once, twice, thrice, enough: "Thou shalt deny me thrice." Not four times. "And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice." Look into the furnace, and there to our view is Peter, and we say he is all dross, all depravity, he exhibits the very scum of the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. This is all that is outward of Peter in the crucible, and we say, O Peter, thou art so unlovely. "The Lord turned and looked upon Peter." It is the moment, the set time for the Refiner to skim away the odious scum. Christ looked, O that look! He looked upon Peter, he looked and looked and looked all the dross, all Peter's dense, corrupt scum away, and Peter is transformed. Jesus looked upon him with eyes of injured love; that look said, I have prayed for thee. He looked in such compassionate forgiveness. O that look was the look of the suffering Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, and thus Jesus the Refiner took away the dross from the silver. The Refiner looked upon the silver, and Peter (not scum and dross Peter, but silver Peter,) looked upon the Refiner. Who can tell the story of what transpired in the soul of Peter when his eyes met the eyes of the suffering, compassionate Jesus? The lying, swearing, cursing Peter is transformed. The Lord with his eyes, which are as a flame of fire, so looked into the crucible that all the dross was cleansed away, and Peter went out and wept bitterly. O thou art silver Peter. Thy bitter weeping is sweet to us. O Peter, thou art lovely, thou art all fair, there is no spot in thee, nothing but silver now is seen. The broken-

hearted, melted silver is all aglow with the likeness of the Lord, the Refiner, who himself is a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Jesus turned and looked upon Peter, and he went out and wept bitterly.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

KENILWORTH, N. J., May 23, 1907.

DEAR PASTOR, AND LOVED ONES OF THE CHURCH AT HOPEWELL:—I had a strong desire to be at this meeting, but the association is close at hand, and I could not leave home for so long a time. I know it will be a precious meeting, and all the week it has been on my mind to tell you that it is now just thirty-six years since my first visit to the church. It all seems very vivid to me now. It was the most precious meeting and association of all my life. But let me first thank sister Anna Sutphin for stirring up the pure mind by way of remembrance. After reading her good letter in the SIGNS for October 15th last I had a lovely time in my mind for two months, living over that early love in the church. As I lay upon my bed I thought of him whom my soul loveth, and I had songs in the night.

I always was serious when a very young girl, and never joined in anything in the churches except the choirs. I sang in several places and was very regular in attendance because of my fondness for music. At the time of my coming to Hopewell I only knew five Old School Baptists beside my parents and sister. Those were my mother's sister, a dear aunt, who taught us rich lessons by her humble walk in life, sister Jane VanBuskirk and her daughter, and two maiden sisters, Amanda and Phœbe Durand, hence the Amanda in my name; I have always been proud of it because she was such a dear Old Baptist. My parents often visited these sisters, and I was one of the children who were ready to go. They were plain, and I remember their godly conversation, and that they took the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. They lived two miles from our home. My sister Rhoda is the only one who remains of that number. I was living with a dear cousin at Rosselle, and singing in the best choir at that time. I went home one Sunday and mother asked me if I were coming home to keep house while she went to the association. I said, "Why, mother, I am going, too." I noticed that she did not oppose me. I had very often read the SIGNS, and there I found that which opened my eyes. When I read experience I found that which came close to me. My desire became great to see and know just what Old School Baptists were like. When the time came for the meeting my mother and sister went to the church Saturday and the supper was on Sunday. We went to Princeton; sister Vanwinkle and her daughter were with us. Brother Charles Merrill met the train and took us to his home on Friday, and on Saturday took us to meeting. After I seated myself in that dear meetinghouse my first thought was, This seems like home; and this before a word was spoken, for I had not seen Elder Hartwell. He came soon, and how I gazed at him, the first Old School Baptist minister I ever saw. I listened attentively to all he said, and the meeting closed. Brother Simpson Vandyke's wife greeted me first, and it was such a greeting to me, a stranger, that I never could forget it. I noticed they all seemed to think very much of one another. Sunday was a beautiful communion season, and when Elder Hartwell took the bread and

blessed and brake it, I thought, That must be the right way; I had always seen it cut before. On Wednesday the association began, and such preaching I never listened to; all was in harmony, all had the certain sound. Thursday was one of the most precious days of my life; I sat in the gallery, beside the pulpit, and there was where the Lord touched me. Looking down, I saw Elder Hartwell in the midst, and all the ministers sitting around him; Christ and his disciples were presented to my view, and it seemed that the glory of the Lord filled the house and the odor of the ointment fell on all around. Then I thought, What a grand place this is, and tears unbidden coursed down my face. At the close Elder Hartwell took me by the hand and asked me if I could get over all the hard sayings. This puzzled me; I could not understand what he meant, when it was all so beautiful to me. I felt it very much when my sister was addressed as sister. Friday the meeting was just as grand; how could I bear the parting? Thursday at the conclusion of the meeting I made this resolution, I will go home and then come down to the July meeting and if I like these Baptists as well then as I do now I would like to be one of their number; but all my resolutions came to naught. The hymn was given out, "From whence doth this union arise," and I thought, What a beautiful hymn to close such a meeting as this has been. I started to sing, but broke down on the second line and sat down and wept. All my strength was gone and I was as helpless as a little child; I could not stand without a prop. When dear father saw me weeping he asked me if I wanted to stay down. I said yes to his question, but why I do not know, only that I loved the people, and did not want to leave them. I had no thought of being baptized. We went to the home of brother James Hill, out on the farm. I was troubled that night, but when sleep overtook me I had the sweetest dream. I thought I stood with Christ in the river and beheld the gathered throng. The next morning sister Jane Hill asked me if it were my intention to go before the church. Then I told her of this beautiful dream, the most beautiful I ever had, and that I felt it would be right to offer myself; and it was a great relief after I told her this. Every one was kind, all doing something for me. We went to the home of brother Asa Titus for dinner. He came to me and said, "They tell me you are going to the fountainhead. Well, that is the right way to go; forty years I was in the wilderness." Again I was puzzled, I did not know what this dear old man meant by the forty years in the wilderness. We went to the meeting; I had no liberty to tell of the grandeur of the meeting to me; but all showed much feeling. Brother Zephaniah Stout arose and said it must be something more than a worldly nature when one so young in years comes to the church, for there is nothing at all to attract; and his words were a comfort to me. I thought how kind it was of him, and that I would try to prove his words were true of me. But, dear brethren, how far short I have fallen. I well remember all the beautiful talk at the house of brother Voorhees, of which our sister spoke in her letter, it made me feel to doubt and wonder why I should sit there a candidate for baptism. When I went into the water and was baptized I beheld a full realization of my dream. Then after having the right hand of fellowship given to me, Elder John Badger took his text, "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious," and what a pre-

cious sermon it was. All the rest of the day I sang hymn after hymn, so unspeakably happy was I. On Monday as I stepped into my home it sounded sweet to me when my dear father came and greeted me as sister Johnson. He could not remain over Sunday, and I knew he felt it much to have to leave and go home.

But now came a severe trial: could I return to my cousin's home and then sing in the choir where I had had so much enjoyment? No, I could not sing the old songs, for He had put a new song in my mouth, even praise to our God. Soon after this I left my cousin's beautiful home, a home of grandeur, and came to live in the home of brother and sister Britton Hill. Those were happy days, and we visited about among the brethren. We all loved Elder Hartwell, and after parting with him I felt that we could not love another pastor so well; but in due time Elder Purington came, and I felt it to be not only a pleasure but a privilege to sit under the sound of his voice. I was awakened to see many things. He was kind, and taught us many lessons. When he was taken from us I felt again to say, Who can take his place? Now we have dear Elder Chick, who has filled the vacant place in our hearts and lives.

I remember daily my own imperfections and short comings, and mourn over them. For a number of years my life was very bright, but when trial and sorrow came it made me feel as though I never knew the Lord. I want to do what is right, but it seems that the wrong is always first; I cannot do the things I would, and the things I would not, those I do. I do not feel at all worthy of the love that has been bestowed upon me by the brethren, yet I can sing, "Do not I love thee, O my Lord?" Many of our loved ones have been called home, but there are many left who will remember the time of my coming to the church. A short narrative of my experience was written some years ago. I do not know what I wrote, nor to whom it was sent, but it was by request of sister Harriet Shepherd. I have trembled a great many times about it; what did I know then about experience? It must have been written then more with an eye to please sister Shepherd than with an eye single to the glory of God. We learn from day to day, here a little and there a little, line upon line and precept upon precept. In all my years of trained nursing, sitting by the side of sick and dying people, I have had sweet meditations with the church; I could see you all there in your places, especially those who attend the meetings regularly. Do you wonder that the Hopewell meeting-house is the choicest place on earth to me? A few times during these past years the way has been so dark I have felt like asking that my name be taken from the church book. Once in Elder Purington's time I was getting ready to go for that purpose, but I could not get over this one text, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." The Lord speaks to me in my very lonely life, giving peace that the world cannot give nor take away.

My dear pastor, I now leave this to your better judgment. It is, I know, altogether too lengthy. How I shall miss the dear ones at the association, especially brother and sister Asa Shepherd. I spent the whole time with them three years ago.

I am your most unworthy sister,

MARY AMANDA HAINES.

PSALMS CIV. 32.

"He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth: he toucheth the hills, and they smoke."

This one hundred and fourth Psalm in beautiful language sets forth the wondrous power, providences and eternal glory of God, while the thirty-second verse, quoted above, presents to our minds the manifestation of that great power, both in the creation and in the work which God has wrought in the hearts of his children. The same Spirit that moved upon the face of the waters in the beginning of time, bringing harmony of light, and knowledge, and wisdom, and understanding out of chaos, hath wrought mightily in out hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The finest and broadest mind in nature cannot attain unto the least conception of God's mighty power; he speaks and it is done. The result is harmony of action pleasant to behold, a constant wonder.

"He looketh on the earth." In the intercourse of natural men one with another a look sometimes speaks volumes; as man looketh upon man it betokens, as in a mirror, the secret thoughts of the heart; it shows love, pity, sympathy, anger and even murder. Many times words do not have to accompany a look in order to define its meaning. These are small things in comparison with a look from an outraged and sin-bearing Jesus, or a look from the Majesty of the heavens; its effect is such that the subject of it "trembleth" with fear, remorse, shame and humiliation. Whatever may be the character of the look (when God looks) whether of love, pity or anger, it causeth fear and trembling. After the crowing of the cock Jesus looked upon Peter, and he went out and wept bitterly. Who can tell the anguish and sorrow of poor Peter except they who have experienced the same? Can we not each one of us remember times that we denied our Lord? And when we realized that Jesus was looking upon us with pity and sorrow were we not crushed and heartbroken that we had done despite to the spirit of grace, outraged the profession we have made and manifested the evil that continues to dwell in our flesh? When certain men brought to Jesus a woman whom they accused of a certain sin and demanded that she be punished, Jesus looked upon them and said, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." They all left her, conscience-stricken by the power of his look and his presence, while on the other hand the woman was humiliated, and rejoiced in his mercy and love. "The Lord shall rejoice in his works," and his works embrace the subduing the whole earth by the word of his power to the glory of his grace. All that is contained in the earth is embraced in the one word "Jacob." As a representative character all the nations of sin are set forth in him, he was a supplanter and a deceiver, and when the psalmist was inspired to say, "He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth," the Lord directs our minds to Jacob. The prophet Isaiah says, "Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty; and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof." While the devastation of the possessions of Israel literally, because of their idolatry and disobedience, is primarily implied in this declaration, yet also the experience of the Lord's people is pointed to, wherein the devastation of the possessions shall take place, and his goods spoiled by the stronger Man, who cometh and bindeth the strong man. Here is cause for trembling,

"The Lord looketh on the earth, [you and me] and it trembleth." As Jesus drove out from the temple all that defiled it, so when the Lord looketh on this deceitful heart of ours, as holiness looketh on blackness and deceitfulness to purify it, we fear and tremble, we are made empty of the activity of the elements of the earth within us, our best prospects are turned upside down, and the inhabitants thereof (wrath, envy, hatred, malice, deceit, &c.,) are scattered by the light and power of the truth of God. All this is the Lord's work, and "it is marvellous in our eyes." He teareth down his people whom he hath chosen, and buildeth them up a holy temple unto himself, thus he saith, "The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." Thus he looketh and the earth trembleth.

"He toucheth the hills, and they smoke." The same power of God is displayed in his touch as in his look. "The Lord God of hosts is he that toucheth the land." The result of his touch is a separation of the precious from the vile. The Lord descended upon Mount Sinai in fire, his presence touched the mountain and it sent forth smoke. When the presence of the Lord toucheth the land it becometh holy ground, all pollution or sin is swept away as smoke. Smoke is a vile and poisonous refuse emanating from combustible earthly material which has been consumed by fire; it ascends into the air, and coming in contact with the ozone in the air of heaven, becomes pure and sweet and clean. Thus "saith the Lord, Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

"He toucheth the hills, and they smoke." Man in his best estate in nature exalteth himself in his pride and arrogancy, becoming in his own estimation as hills, which stand above the plain face of nature and of the valleys. He looketh out upon all nature as being subject to his mighty will and power, and he esteemeth no man as better than himself. He goeth about seeking and striving for the things which make for his ease, comfort and pleasure. He also boasteth of a righteousness which issues entirely from himself, but when the Lord toucheth him he is brought low, the hill sinks into insignificance, the poisonous vapor of smoke chokes out and tarnishes his former splendor, adversity cometh upon him, his riches are carried away in the whirlwind, and with one of old he crieth, "But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people." He now knows that he is a sinner. The Lord is baptizing him with fire, and the poison of smoke ariseth from the burning. The Lord's touch is the touch of love; he must needs suffer, but the end is everlasting rest and peace and joy in the Lord. Out of the blackness of the cloud of smoke man cometh, stripped of his own filthy, self-righteous rags, and clothed in the habiliments of the righteousness of the saints of God. Again he cries, "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes." And again, "The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever: the Lord shall rejoice in his works." The question comes to us from the Lord by the prophet, "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" And from the same source the questions are sweetly

answered: "He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil." If we suffer with Christ our Redeemer we shall also reign with him in glory. Amidst the fire and smoke of the baptism of the saints the heart is broken and bleeding because of sin and its dreadful results; but we have this sweet promise: "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

OXFORD, N. Y.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR PASTOR:—I feel like sending this good letter to you to read and do with as you think best. It is my letter now that it has left brother Fenton's hands, and yet not mine, for I feel that it belongs to the SIGNS, so that all lovers of the truth may read it.

In love and fellowship, I remain your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) MARY BREWSTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 18, 1906.

DEAR SISTER BREWSTER:—Your letter of November 4th is at hand, and was refreshing to read, as you wrote of your love to the saints and of your appreciation of the privileges with which you are blessed in mingling with them. Truly there is no true joy save in mingling with the assemblies, and in the fellowship of the saints. We are often seemingly alone, and yet not alone, for Jesus is never absent. We may not always realize it, but nevertheless this love for these things is "Christ in you, the hope of glory." This is Christ manifest in our flesh. Being manifest in the flesh means more than his being born of a woman, it also means that he dwells now in his people. There is not a song of joy or a cry of "God be merciful to me a sinner," but what is caused by the Spirit of the Lord dwelling in us. We know that we are sinners only as the light makes manifest the darkness of our great sinfulness and depravity. Once our Savior told the disciples that he would tell them more, but they were not then able to bear it. I take it that they were not then able to have more of his glory revealed to them, and also were not able to be shown how exceeding sinful they were before God. But the Savior said, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." You say there are none like the people of God. Well, they are all led by the same Spirit, are all taught by the same Spirit, and all experience the same love of God shed abroad in their hearts; in fact all are one in Christ Jesus; all bear the same fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, meekness, gentleness, kindness, &c. When we are controlled by the adversary we bear the opposite fruits, such as envy, hatred, malice, backbiting, &c. The Lord suffered Satan to sift Peter, and no doubt he will suffer every child of grace to know the temptations and sufferings which are on account of sin. It is said, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him."

Now, my dear sister, I have a realizing sense of the reality of my hope, and that I shall one day know for myself. I know that time moves swiftly on, the day that is past is, in one sense, as far from us as if it were hundreds of years ago; in other words, it is just as possible for us to pass

through the hours of a thousand years ago and live over one of those days as it is to live again the hours of yesterday. We, creatures of time, can talk over what have been the important events of our lives so far, but we do not know the future. When we consider that we were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and that the moment of our natural birth in this world and the moment of our going out of it were all known to God, it seems wonderful. I take comfort in the sovereignty and wisdom of God, and that there is no limit to his wisdom. If this be so, there is nothing that will ever transpire with me but what is known of God before it comes to pass. If I am one of his chosen, every sin to the utmost was known to him, and was atoned for by the blessed Jesus. To say that I could commit one sin that would break my kinship with Christ would be to say that his wisdom was not sufficient to take in and know that sin. I cannot question his wisdom or his power to save to the uttermost those who are his chosen or elect; they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Our life is hid with Christ in God. But one will say, Give me some evidence that I am an heir of salvation. Let us refer to the characters to whom He spoke while on earth. When the Lord revealed himself to Peter that disciple said, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Had he known this before? O no. Again he said, Except a man hate his life he cannot be my disciple. Is there one of his who is satisfied before God with the life he now lives in the flesh? Each one says, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." "The good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." He says, "Pray without ceasing." It is not needful to be saying a form of prayer all the time, for the true prayer is from the heart, and with groans which cannot be uttered. Again, he said, Confess your sins. Tell me, are not your sins always before you, standing like a mountain between you and God? We sometimes think, Surely one so vile as I cannot be a subject of God's love and mercy. This same mountain of sin is removed when Jesus appears as our righteousness, wisdom, sanctification and redemption. He goes before us always, and has prepared the place, and has come again, and will in time take all for whom he died to be where he is, that they may behold his glory. This is the promise of the Lord.

You ask, Who is the waster and destroyer spoken of in the word? You will recall that the word says, "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins," &c. You will recall how David, the type of our spiritual David, slew the lion and the bear, and restored the lamb to the fold; not one lamb less, but two adversaries slain; so Jesus is the waster to destroy the adversaries of his people. The strong Man is bound when the stronger man comes and binds him. This is Christ binding the strong man of sin and evil within. So Jesus loosed the woman bound those eighteen years by Satan. Isaiah, by the Spirit of Christ in him, did testify to the coming of the Lord and Savior. Peter said, "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." So it is

the same Jesus that speaks in his people to-day that spoke by the prophets and apostles. He said, Abraham saw my day and was glad.

I had a good visit with Elder Ker when he was here last week. I feel my sinfulness before God; pray for me.

Your brother,

J. M. FENTON.

ROMANS V. 3–5.

"NOT only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed."

I have felt for some few days that all the hope I have is centered in the above Scripture, and that only because of my tribulation I have evidence that I am what I hope I am: a child of the living God. I used to think before I had a hope that because of my troubles I was not one of the Lord's people, that his people never saw any trouble, that it was a season of rejoicing with them, and that it was only those who have trouble that were left out, therefore I could not glory or rejoice in my trouble. But I think I see things differently now; that it is only the Lord's people who have trouble, and each and all of them do have trouble. When I first saw this Scripture I could not see how any one could glory in tribulations, because naturally tribulation is trouble and doubt, worry and suffering, and how could it be that one could glory in these things? But it seems at present my hope is centered in my troubles, and because of these troubles I hope I have a hope. From reading I have found the Lord's people have been a people of trouble all along, and in doubt a great portion if not all the time; for they think, I would not see trouble if I knew these things; but what we see we do not hope for, and if these things were made sure to me I would have no tribulation, patience, experience or hope. But it is not this way, so I have these things, and one goes with the other and all are one. I have no doubt that if I be dead with Christ I also live with him. I know these things, for as sure as I am dead with him so sure I live with him; but I have only a hope that I am crucified with him, and by tribulation I have this hope. It seems small at times, but when it is the smallest it is most sweet and dear to me; all the hope I have is that when God's only begotten Son died on the cross he died for me, and that in his resurrection I was resurrected, born in new life, life without sin, pure, perfect, spotless and blameless in the sight of the Father. If I am not now clean I can never be, for this cleansing was done in his death, and the life was in his resurrection. Our Savior suffered and was troubled while in the flesh, and therefore we cannot expect anything else. It seems I am troubled for the sins I do now, and continue to do, not those I have done, and I grieve because of my weakness.

I went to meeting yesterday feeling fairly well, but when I saw those whom I love, and hope love me, I felt that I was entirely beneath their notice, and it would be better should they not condescend to notice me at all; but yet notwithstanding all this I desire their love and fellowship. When I tried to talk with them their words sounded sweet and full of meaning, while mine echoed back to my ears as hollow and nothing, and better unsaid. My talking is a continual annoyance to me anyhow, but it seems impossible for me to refrain from it, especially when with those who are His, and when at my work or by myself I think of their sorrows and tribulations, and my eyes scale the mountain's peak.

I am made to glory in my tribulations because it works patience; I am patient because I cannot be any other way; I cannot hurry things nor hinder them. My troubles make me patient. I am waiting to be free from this downcast feeling. This patience is part of our experience. I used to think when people spoke of their experience it was up until they received this hope and ended then, but I now think and know that mine is not ended, that my experience goes on as I live, therefore I can tell my experience only in part, I can only tell of things I have passed through, and if I am his I will continue to have experience; these experiences give me hope. I had an experience before I had a hope, but did not know it, for if I have a christian experience Christ was working in me when my troubles began, and things were being made plain to me, but I did not know what for. The first thing made plain to me was my lost and helpless condition, and this is still clear and plain to my mind as far as I am concerned, and if not saved by God's grace I am not saved at all. I am not ashamed of a hope in this Power, because it is pure, perfect and strengthening. Why should we be ashamed to hope in the Power that is superior to all others? Are we not proud of the strength of our national government, proud of the strength of it, and not ashamed to stand under her flag? We are proud of it because of its superiority; how much more should we be proud, and not ashamed, of a hope in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, because we know beside him there is none other. His strength is all we have; his love and strength are what we depend on; we know of his strength and hope in his love. But we glory in tribulations, because tribulation worketh patience, and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed.

If you will pardon this intrusion I may never do so again. I enjoyed the association; the preaching was a calm sea to me.

If one at all, the least of all your brethren, F. SELBY FISHER.

JAMAICA, N. Y.

[THE above letter was written to Elder B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., and by him forwarded to us for publication.—ED.]

ROMULUS, Oklahoma, April 12, 1907.

ELDERS CHICK AND KER—BELOVED BRETHREN:—I have a desire to talk to you a little this morning upon the subject of the sheep. You may think me presumptuous in writing to you so much, but I want to ask you a question. Is the one that lives nearest to us, in distance counted by miles, our neighbor every time? I think not. For my neighbors naturally are Methodists and Campbellites, and for this reason, when I feel a desire to talk of Jesus and his work, I cannot call these my friends, but when I find in me a mind to talk of Jesus I am compelled to write to those of like precious faith. This gospel is from faith to faith. So you see, dear brethren, I just go a few steps to be with those to whom I can enjoy speaking of the Savior.

But I will write now touching what I would like to speak of, if the Lord will guide my pen. It is that Jesus stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and also that he has told us that his people are counted as his sheep. There are two classes of people spoken of in the word: the sheep and the goats. We cannot make a sheep out of a goat, neither can we make a goat out of a sheep. He said that he will place the

goats on the left hand and the sheep on the right hand. It looks very plain to me that the sheep have been chosen as sheep always, and the goats have been goats, and will be always the same. Goats are wild by nature, desiring wild food, and the sheep are very careful as to what they eat. The little lamb desires the milk, and it would be impossible to raise it upon that which older sheep would thrive upon. The lambs of Jesus must be fed with the sincere milk of the word; they cannot thrive on such food as older ones of the flock enjoy. As they get older they become stronger and enjoy the stronger food, and the stronger their food must be; but goats will eat almost any kind of food, even to refuse matter.

You will remember when the command was given it was to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; it was not commanded to go to the goats, but to the sheep, and Jesus said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." He does not say, Other goats I have, but, other sheep. Again, he said, My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me, and a stranger they will not follow. He did not say the goats will follow him. Some of the goats may for a time follow with the sheep, but this does not made them sheep. They cannot get on enough of the sheep's wool to make them sheep; they have always been goats and always will be while the world stands. Jesus said, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." But it is the dead sheep and not the dead goats. My understanding is that they were the chosen sheep before they heard this voice, but, at that time, they did not of course realize it. Even afterwards, we do not at all times feel as though we are among the little ones. It is not in man to make a sheep, and neither is it in man to bring salvation, but it is by grace that we are what we are; it is in Him and through Him that we live, move and have our being, and let us praise him, for to him all praise is due.

I enjoyed Elder D. M. Vail's answer to this question very much, and would say, as he did, "I can't help it." I would be glad to hear more from brother Vail through the SIGNS.

Brother Chick, your ideas of the little foxes were very plain and clear to my mind, and I did enjoy reading them very much. I feel strengthened by reading after stronger brethren, who are strong in the Lord; it strengthens, builds up and feeds the little, weak worms of the dust, such as I feel myself to be. My prayer is that his grace may still uphold you up in the future, as it has in the past. I feel assured that it will be so, for His ears are ever open to the cry of His loved ones.

Brother Ker, I much enjoyed your editorial regarding Old School Baptists having organs in their houses of worship, and concerning protracted meetings and all such things as these. I think such things are an abomination to the Lord; the song must come from him, and his people are made to sing the song when they have the Spirit of Christ in them; he gives them the new song which none can sing save those who have received it. This song is a puzzle to the world, and will be as long as the world endures; but the redeemed all sing the same song, which is both old and new. The Old School Baptist Church is a mystery to the world, and always will be; it is not

of the world, and therefore the world knoweth it not, and it is not recognized among the denominations of the world, and I feel to thank God for it.

Now, dear brethren, I hope you will read this carefully, and if there is anything wrong in it forgive me. I will leave it to your better judgment whether to publish or not. I had no one here to talk with this morning and so felt that I wanted to write to you. If it were the will of God, I would be glad to see you and hear you both preach. If you think this imperfect letter is worthy of publication you may use it, as my father and some other friends who live far away may want to hear from me in this way. If there be anything in it to comfort the least one that may read it, give to the Lord all the praise. I know that in my flesh dwells no good thing. Do not let this letter occupy the place of better matter. May the Lord be with you all, is my prayer.

With christian love to the household of faith, ELLA DAVIS.

EGAN, Texas, July 15, 1907.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—I have a desire to write to all whom I met at the four associations I recently attended in the east, as several expressed a desire to hear from me through the SIGNS. I have been too lonesome, too barren, too desolate to write anything that would be of the least interest to any one whom it was my pleasure to meet. I do not think I have ever in life been so homesick for the company of my Father's children as I have been since my return home. I live over and over again the time spent at each place of meeting, and try to imagine myself in the midst of the brethren listening to the glorious truth as set forth by the different ministers and faithful ones in Christ. I feel that the Lord greatly blessed me in permitting me to visit the four associations and meet so many of the loved ones, quite a number of whom I met when there four years ago and a number I had never seen before. It is a visit long to be remembered. I was greatly blessed with a hearing ear, more so than is common with me, for which I hope I am thankful. I do wish I could express just how well I did enjoy the entire trip, but language fails and space forbids, yet I must mention the pleasant evening spent with dear sister Craven and a number of the church in Philadelphia; I was enabled to pick up several crumbs that fell from the Master's table, and they are sweet to my taste yet. I received much comfort from the description given by Elder Coulter of the poor, little sheep following way behind the flock, bleating as it follows on, feeling too poor and insignificant to be in company with the rest, yet cannot bear the idea of being left behind. I feel to-night that I am that poor, little sheep, almost out of sight of the flock that is pressing on toward the goal. In my mind I hear the good Shepherd just ahead calling, and I hear the answering cry of the sturdy old sheep and the faint bleat of the little lambs as they follow afar off. One blessed thought comes to me: He will carry the lambs in his bosom. "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." He has promised never to leave nor forsake you. Though the winds of adversity may howl around you and the storms of persecution burst upon you, be still, he has promised to be a hiding-place from the winds and a refuge from the storms. He has loved you with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness he has drawn you,

"For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." Praise the Lord, O my soul, and bless his holy name.

I wish to say, that while I enjoyed each association very much, I think the Delaware River, held at Hopewell, N. J., was in some respects the pleasantest one of the four I attended. Not that the kindness of the brethren was greater, or that the preaching was better, but somehow it seemed exceedingly good to me; perhaps it was because I was in a better mood to enjoy it than the others. We do not always enjoy a feast spread before us if we have a poor appetite, and do not relish the food like, perhaps, some one seated near us.

I wish to say to one and all whom I met, that I shall ever remember with pleasure the happy hours spent with you. I wish I could express what my heart feels, but the feeling is too deep for utterance; I do feel that your God is my God, and that where you live I want to live also. May God bless you in all things, is the sincere prayer of my heart.

Unworthily, LYDIA C. RAY.

KANSAS, Ill., Aug. 5, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have felt for some time a desire to write once more to the readers of the SIGNS, but owing to the great failure of my physical powers I could not do so, and I now can write but little.

I have enjoyed reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years, and now at the near approach of my eighty-fourth year it is my comfort and satisfaction next to the Bible. Sixty-four years ago last March I was baptized in the fellowship of Little Bethel Church, in Coles County, Ill., where my membership now is. I have only one regret for my action then, and that is my life has been so unprofitable among the brethren. As Paul expressed it, "In my flesh there dwelleth no good thing," yet I still hold to the good hope that after death I shall be like unto the glorious body of Jesus Christ. This hope is more to me than ten thousand worlds like this.

"My latest sun is sinking fast,
My journey almost done,
My hardest trials now are past,
My dawning is begun."

With the poet may I say,

"O come, angel band,
Come, and around me stand;
Come bear me away on your snowy wings
To my immortal home"?

I am thankful the Lord has kept the editors of the SIGNS in the path our dear Savior trod, and that it has never varied in its doctrine.

I write this as my dying testimony. Farewell. May God be with you through life. JAMES M. TRUE.

RATON, New Mexico, May 22, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—I suppose you are to-day at Cow Marsh. Last week I was, in mind, with you all at Black Rock, and have had you all in mind to-day. Next week you all hope to be at Hopewell; may you have the presence of our Lord with you at all the meetings. I have had the privilege granted me to be at associations at all the places they are appointed this year, except New York city, and I feel that I should be very thankful for the many blessings of which I am the daily recipient. Please remember me in christian love to the brethren and sisters who may assemble with you.

I remember the first time the Delaware River Association met at Hopewell, I judge it was in 1835, but am not sure of the date; I had all of the old Minutes for

many years, after my mother's death I took care of them, but they got mislaid when the war broke out, as we were in Washington and subject to some confusion in our household arrangements. I know that Elder Beebe and Elder Trott were there.

Elder Fetter joins me in christian love to all the friends. I dare not say I wish I might be there with you, for in the providence of an all-wise and all-merciful God I cannot be there, and I desire to say, Not my will, but thine, O Lord, be done.

With many kind wishes, I am, I hope, your sister,

ELIZABETH H. BOGGS.

NANY, Va., Jan. 1, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—The dear, old SIGNS is to me a great comfort in my lonely, declining years. The dear ones who contribute to its columns tell of my daily trials and afflictions, and my hope, which seems at times so feeble, is strengthened, and I am encouraged to dare hope that I, a poor, vile worm of the dust, am a fellow-citizen with the household of God. O what an honor for such a sinner to claim! Truly only in the blood of Jesus can we have hope. The editorials are excellent and full of comfort and instruction to all who love the truth.

Dear, loved ones, it has pleased the blessed Redeemer to cause me to fast most of my time. My times of feasting are few, yet my faith, though ever so faint, abides with me. Dear friends, pray for me, that my faith may grow stronger as the end draws near. I desire to thank and praise our dear Lord for all his great mercies to me and mine. I try to pray the Lord to prosper and bless you, both spiritually and temporally, and that you may long be spared and blessed in your labor of love for the household of faith and in defence of the truth.

Lovingly your sister, I hope,

MARY A. MURPHY.

ATWATER, Ill., April 30, 1907.

ELDER H. C. KER—ESTEEMED BROTHER:—Through the kindness of a dear sister who loaned me her paper I have just read the article published in the SIGNS for April 15th, giving your views on predestination and other subjects in reply to letters written you from Georgia and Texas, and wish to say your views agree with what I have believed ever since I received a hope through grace, more than twenty years ago. When I read the SIGNS I often find I am not alone, and am made to rejoice in the comforting things it contains, and my Bible proves them to be true. I cannot give up, but must press on toward the mark of the high calling in Christ, and I hope God will enable me to run with patience the race set before me. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES is the only paper I have ever found that advocates true Bible doctrine of salvation by grace unmixed with men's works, and the predestination of God as I believe it, so I feel that I must have it for myself, and herewith inclose two dollars, for which please send the paper to me.

Your unworthy sister,

L. J. HUDDLESTON.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1907.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JOSEPH'S CUP.

IF not asking too much, will Elder Chick give his views upon Joseph's cup? What is meant by its being put into the mouth of Benjamin's sack, and why was Benjamin's mess five times as much as the others? Joseph seemed to love Benjamin better than the others; why was this?

LAURA A. WILSON.

POTTER, Ark., May 30, 1907.

According to the promise made in the SIGNS for August 1st we will try to comply with this request. At best, however, we can only give such thoughts as occur to us as being in harmony with the word of God. No direct explanation is given of this subject in the Scriptures in its application spiritually to the people of God under the gospel; but we believe that this, as well as all other Old Testament Scriptures, was written for our learning, because the apostle has so said. Some of the types recorded in the Old Testament are fully explained by the inspired writers in the New Testament, but not all. These first we know are as explained in the Scriptures, but the many, of which nothing is directly said by the New Testament writers, we have come to feel very careful in handling. At best we can but give our judgment concerning any of them, and feel like speaking very carefully. Of one thing we have come to feel very sure, viz., that types and shadows all ceased when the blessed Savior died, for he was the true answer to them all. When the substance came there was no more need of shadows and types. There are emblems to be observed by the church now, such as baptism and the supper, but these are not to be regarded as types, because they relate to a Savior already come, and living now in and with his people. Also in the New Testament there are parables setting forth the various matters relating to that kingdom which has already come. Narratives are also given in the New Testament which set forth how God under the gospel deals with the children of men who are called by his grace, but these are not to be called types or shadows. These dealings of God are then spiritual realities, and show just what God's dealings with men will continue to be to the end of time. The kingdom of heaven was not on earth until Jesus came, therefore what was set forth concerning the kingdom of heaven could have no application to anything that was under the old covenant; but the things set forth in the Old Testament did point forward to the coming kingdom of heaven.

In all ages of the gospel church, so far as we have been able to read, Joseph has been regarded as a lively type of the blessed Lord in his incarnation. Many writers have delighted to trace out points of resemblance between Joseph and Him who is greater than Joseph, but we cannot here speak of all these things. We also believe that it is right to speak of Joseph as a type of the blessed Savior. This is true in a general way, we do not doubt, of all that he did and suffered.

Concerning the questions propounded by sister Wilson, it seems manifest that what is recorded of Joseph in that im-

mediate connection would, as it related to the literal events of time, be only natural for him to do. Joseph's cup was that out of which he drank, and it was silver, and no doubt very costly and beautiful. It may represent to us the cup of salvation, which is in the hand of the blessed Lord and which he bestows upon his people. Out of it he bestows upon them that wine and milk which makes their heart glad, and which nourishes them in all heavenly graces. It is said that by it Joseph "divined" or, literally, "made trial." Such things were common among all the ancient heathen nations, and especially were such cups used in Egypt. It is not likely that Joseph, who worshiped the living God with prayer and praise, would be guilty of such heathenish practices. The steward said this concerning the cup, and not Joseph. The steward saw that he prized it highly, and no doubt concluded that it must be that Joseph did so because he found mysterious power in it. Joseph indeed did use it to divine what was in the hearts of his brethren toward each other, and especially toward Benjamin; by it he made trial of their state of mind, to see whether it remained the same as when they had sold him into bondage. By the cup of salvation our spiritual Joseph makes trial of his people; by it he discerns their very thoughts, not for his own information, but for theirs, that they may know how evil they are in thought, word and deed. This cup is that word which discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart, and divides asunder the soul and spirit, the joints and marrow. As the hearts of the brethren of Joseph were probed and revealed in their trial by the cup, so in the work of salvation all the children of God are made to know themselves, and stand revealed to themselves as guilty sinners before God and in the sight of their own consciences. As the cup was costly and beautiful, so salvation through Christ is most costly, and the robe of this salvation is most beautiful. It is beautiful without, and they who are clothed in it have no spot upon them; and, more than this, are all beautiful within. The King's daughter is all beautiful within. The cup belonged to no one save Joseph; it was his own peculiar treasure. Likewise salvation is all of the blessed Lord.

What is meant by its being put in Benjamin's sack? Regarding the narrative simply as a narrative, as said before, there is no doubt in our mind that the reason which actuated Joseph was that the real feeling of his brethren toward their half-brother might be made to appear clearly. They had sacrificed all natural affection in their eagerness to get rid of this dreamer, their brother Joseph, and he would now test them to see whether there had been any change in their hardness of heart. The money was also placed in the sacks of them all, as had been the case before. Had the cup alone been put into the mouth of Benjamin's sack, and no money found in the sacks of them all, there might have been room for them to censure their brother as alone guilty; but now this could not be, seeing that all found that which did not belong to them in their sacks. This would be true, if we regard the natural event alone. We have no reason to think that Joseph had any knowledge of the fact that God, who was overruling all this series of events, intended to set these things forth as types of the true heavenly things to be revealed under the gospel dispensation. It was not in his mind that all this was a type of the dealings of the Lord with his people; but we know

that what Joseph did not then know is the truth. That the cup was found in Benjamin's sack would be a type of that experience of soul which led Paul to count himself the chief of sinners, even as Benjamin would appear to be the chief sinner among them all, and yet the thoughts of Joseph were those of peculiar tenderness and love toward Benjamin. Thus Paul was made to count himself the chief of sinners, that the love and mercy and favor of God might be all the more gloriously made manifest in him. That the cup was found in the sack of Benjamin was to the brethren of Joseph an evidence of peculiar disfavor, so that they would fear the worst, but in reality it was the evidence of the especial love and tenderness of Joseph toward his brother. God's thoughts and ways are not our thoughts and ways. Men judge, when one wounds another, that it is a mark of enmity, but whom Jesus wounds is the subject of his own peculiar love above all others. Thus, that the cup was found, by Joseph's order, in the sack of Benjamin, was a mark of that love that was stronger than death. Every soul toward whom the Lord will make known his grace and mercy finds the evidence of his own guilt and of the disfavor of the Lord brought home to himself personally. At that hour he cannot believe in the favor of the King, but rather that he must suffer for his sins. No doubt Benjamin expected nothing but wrath from Joseph, but how soon all this is changed and he stands forth as the object of Joseph's especial regard and favor.

Why was the mess of Benjamin five times as much as the others? First, Benjamin was Joseph's own brother, while the others were but half-brothers. Then the others had been concerned in his banishment from his father's home and in his captivity as a slave in Egypt. Benjamin had had no part in all this series of crimes against him. It was but natural for these reasons that he should be dearer to Joseph than the rest. We would not be understood as saying that Benjamin was a type of the disciple John, for he was not, if we consider John as an individual, but still of John, as was of Benjamin, it is said that he was that "disciple whom Jesus loved." It was not meant that Jesus did not love all the rest of the disciples, but it was true that toward John was made manifest peculiar love and regard from the Master. Joseph manifested love to all his brethren, but there was a dearer regard to Benjamin in his heart; he yearned over them, but longed that Benjamin should be in his arms the most. He forgave all his brethren all their sins against him, but, in the sense of which we are speaking, Benjamin had not sinned against him at all. There was special favor toward Benjamin, as there is special favor to the obedient now. The sins of the others had separated between them and Joseph. Their sorrows and repentance and confession brought them near to him and blotted out the past transgression from his mind. Upon them all he bestowed favor, but to Benjamin five times more than to the rest was given. They were all brethren, sons of the same father, but they did not all treat him alike. The children of God are all sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, and brethren to the Lord Jesus Christ, still the disobedient are beaten with many stripes, their sins come in between them and the joy of salvation. It was so with David when he prayed, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit." David's sin had come in between him and the joy of the Lord, and he beheld the

hidings of the face of the Lord, yet when repentance was given David this joy was restored unto him, and once more he could walk in the light of God's countenance. Something of this seems to us to be involved in this type. Joseph loved Benjamin more than the others; this sets forth, does it not, that which the blessed Master said in the parable of the vine and the branches: "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love"? The disobedient are the children of God indeed as well as the others; but transgression results in the hidings of the Father's face. It was so in this lively type, as it appears to us. There is no difference in the love of God at any time, but the difference is in our own selves. The clouds that hide the face of the sun are from this earth of ours; the sins that hide the face of the Father are from our own hearts and lives; and how often the earth itself gets in between us and the sun and we walk in midnight darkness. The sin of Joseph's brethren had come in between them and their brother; it was in their minds, and was as a barrier between them. It was true that their sins were more of a barrier against their coming to him than they were against the outflowings of his love to them; long after his heart had burned with love to them as though they had never sinned, their hearts would recall all their bitter hatred, and there would be mourning on account of it. Our God forgives us all our sins, but we can never forgive ourselves; if we could do so, then there would be small evidence that He had forgiven us. Those whom the Lord loves, cannot love themselves; those whom the Lord does not love are full of self-love. Joseph's brethren remembered in their distress and perplexity how their brother had pleaded with them in vain to spare him, and they felt that they had no right to ask for mercy, even at the hands of him whom they thought was a stranger; from this stranger they could expect no consideration. Had they known it was their brother before whom they stood they must have trembled still more, and this because it was against him that they had sinned. O what a mercy it was that their sin had been against a brother! They could not have thought it, but it was so after all. When he had revealed himself to them, they still greatly feared and were troubled, but the words of Joseph were gracious and merciful. They indeed intended evil, but the Lord intended good, and by their wickedness much people were saved alive. Their guilt was the same, but there were large purposes of mercy in it all. This did not make their sin any the less, nor did it decrease their repentance and sorrow; but Joseph could, out of this his faith, find room for forgiveness. If our brother sins against us how much it will help us to forgive if faith assures us that to us, and to all who love God, their transgression shall work out good. A view of the largeness of the mercy of God, and of the greatness of his wisdom, and of the unchangeableness of his purposes, will put down within us all hardness against puny man, and we shall feel, as did Joseph, that God meant it all for good. If a warfare between us and our fellow results to our great advantage even natural men will find it in their hearts to be forbearing and forgiving after the manner of men; and since we know that all things work together for good to them who love God, ought it not to be easy to forgive even very bitter wrongs against us? C.

POETRY.

WHEELING, W. Va., June 24, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I inclose some verses written by a precious sister, Miss Semma E. Corder, and would like to see them in print, as they seem very comforting to me, but I desire to let you be the judge. As I was copying them I found them adjusting themselves to the tune, "There was a little family who lived in Bethany." They seemed to gather sweetness as I tried to sing them to that air. Sister Semma's address is Philippi, W. Va.

A poor, trembling one in hope of immortal life,
(MRS.) FLORENCE PULTZ.

DREAMING OF MANSIONS ABOVE.

(A Song.)

I'm dreaming of those mansions
Far, far above the sky,
Where shadows never gather
In that bright world on high;
There Jesus lights the city—
'Tis one eternal day,
And angels of sweet music
On golden harps do play.

Chorus:

I'm dreaming, yes, I'm dreaming,
Of mansions far away,
Those mansions where the weary
Find one long sabbath day.

I'm dreaming of those mansions
Beyond this world of gloom,
Where flowers of true wisdom
In grand perfection bloom.
There King Emmanuel reigneth
In perfect love and peace,
And joy in that fair kingdom
Shall never, never cease.

Chorus:

I'm dreaming of those mansions
Beyond this dark abode,
That peaceful habitation,
The paradise of God.
There the redeemed of Jesus
Shall walk with him in white,
And drink of that pure fountain—
The river of delight.

Chorus:

I'm dreaming of those mansions,
The heaven of the blest,
Where none shall e'er grow weary,
But find one sabbath rest,
And in the Savior's presence
Forevermore proclaim
In one unceasing anthem
The power of his name.

Chorus:

I'm dreaming of those mansions
Where sorrow is unknown;
Where all is praise and gladness
Around that sovereign throne.
There to the King immortal
All honor shall be given
Forever and forever
In that sweet home in heaven.

Chorus:

A SONG OF PRAISE.

"THOU dear Redeemer, dying Lamb,
Thou great Jehovah, great I AM,
We love to hear of thee, dear Lord,
And listen to thy sacred word.

No music's like thy charming name—
It puts us in ecstatic frame;
Not half so sweet can aught else be;
O let us ever hear of thee.

O let us ever hear thy voice,
And in our hearts we will rejoice;
In mercy let us hear thee speak,
And thy dear face we then shall seek.

And in our Priest we will rejoice,
When we shall hear his glorious voice.
Thou great Melchisedec, to thee
Let all our adoration be.

Our Jesus shall be still our theme—
'Tis he that wrought salvation's scheme;
While in this sinful world we stay,
We'll praise our Jesus every day.

We'll sing our Jesus' lovely name,
By whom our great salvation came,
And when all other things decay,
Thy glorious name shall be our stay.

When we appear in yonder cloud,
And trumpet sounds both long and loud,
We'll join with all thy favored throng,
And sing the everlasting song.

There we shall sing both loud and sweet,
When we shall our Redeemer meet;
We'll join with all the blood-bought throng,
And Jesus Christ shall be our song."

(Selected by Elder H. J. Redd.)

APPOINTMENTS.

PROVIDENCE permitting, I shall be with the Woburn Church, in Woburn, Mass., the fourth Sunday in September, instead of the first week in October, as was understood at our last meeting. K.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elmira Horton, widow of Deacon Hiram Horton, died July 20th, 1907, at the home of her niece, Mrs. F. W. Cole, in Port Jervis, N. Y., aged 82 years. She had been very feeble for a long time, but the end came suddenly. She was the daughter of Eliab and Clarinda Hawkins. One brother, one granddaughter and other more distant relatives survive her. Sister Horton united with the Middletown and Wallkill Church many years ago. When younger in life she with her husband attended the different associations of this State, and the meetings of her church when opportunity afforded, but in later years her enfeebled health prevented her from meeting often with the church. It was our privilege to visit her in her home several times, and always found her glad to see us and hear of the welfare of the church. She is now, we believe, at home in the church triumphant.

The funeral service was held in the New Vernon meetinghouse July 23rd, conducted by the writer. Hymn 1217 (Beebe's collection), was read. Text, John xiv. 18, 19. Interment was in the New Vernon Cemetery by the side of her husband, who preceded her in death eight years.

May the Lord be with those who are left, to strengthen and comfort them.

ALSO,

Celinda J. Jenkins, widow of Elder Benton Jenkins and daughter of John Calvin and Maria Corwin Harding, departed this life July 21st, 1907, at her home, 37 Academy Ave., Middletown, N. Y., aged 76 years. She was married to Elder Jenkins in 1868. No children were born to them. He died Jan. 8th, 1897, after which sister Jenkins continued the home, which she loved, though very lonely. July 20th in the afternoon she was taken ill with heart trouble, and other complications developed which, after intense suffering, ended her earthly existence the next night. When the clock struck for 5:30 Sunday afternoon she asked the nurse if it struck for 11:30, and was answered no, but that it would soon be night. Then she said, "O, it is so long to wait until half past eleven," at which hour she entered the haven of rest. She was baptized by Elder Gilbert Beebe in the fellowship of the New Vernon Church, August 1st, 1852, and continued steadfast in the faith to the end; she was well established in doctrine and the order of the house of God. She had traveled much in company with her husband, and therefore had a broad acquaintance among Old Baptists and their friends, and was highly esteemed by all who knew her. We shall miss her in every way, but fully believe our loss is her gain. The change from natural to spiritual, from mortality to immortality, is known only by those who have it. It doth not yet appear what we shall be, therefore it cannot be described, but we feel safe in saying the change is glorious. She is survived by one brother and two sisters: Ira L. Harding, Mrs. Fannie M. Boyd, widow of Horace T. Boyd, and Jemima, wife of George Ketcham, all of Middletown, N. Y. Two nieces and two nephews, beside many distant relatives, also survive.

The funeral services were conducted at her late home on Wednesday afternoon, July 24th, conducted by the writer, assisted by Elders John McConnell and Horace H. Lefferts. Hymn 977, which had been much with her for several weeks before her death, was read. The text was Isaiah lv. 8. The interment took place in the New Vernon Cemetery by the side of her kind and devoted husband.

May none of us murmur at God's will concerning us.

K.

DEATH has again visited our family, and on the 29th day of January, 1907, took from us our beloved daughter, **Ida V. D. Mann.** For five years she had been very poorly, but was only confined to her bed about five weeks. She was very patient through her illness, never complained, but was always grateful. Much of her time was spent in reading her Bible. Many chapters she had marked. Often when I would go into the room she had her hands clasped in prayer, then talked of the beautiful verses of Scripture she had read. She often said she had no fear of death, but wanted to go. All that worried her was leaving her mother. She would say, "Do not grieve, you will soon come." We had looked for her death, knowing that it was liable to occur any moment, yet when it came how unprepared we were; what a shock it was to us. We feel our great loss of a faithful, loving daughter; her loving care and tender thoughtfulness were ever for those around her. Elder Durand often called and had good talks with Ida and made comforting prayers. I was glad she seemed to feel and talk with so much liberty. She said, "I want to go to sleep," and passed away quickly and peacefully. Through the goodness of God I was enabled to wait upon her until the end.

MATILDA MANN.

THE above notice was written by sister Mann. She and her husband are left bereaved and desolate indeed by the death of this, their last child. Their son, Alfred M. Mann, was taken from them in January, 1900. Both I believe to have had an experience of grace, but neither of them were members of the visible church. Not long before her death Ida told me of one experience when her mind was so greatly troubled by a sense of sin that she was crying to the Lord for mercy, and her prayer seemed to be a questioning of the Lord whether indeed her sins could be forgiven, when the words came as though spoken to her, Thy sins are all forgiven thee. At another time, but a short time before, she said she awoke from

sleep with the words in her mind, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow," and she had a very solemn feeling of great joy and comfort. During the last few weeks of her life she seemed to want to hear conversation upon spiritual things. Once when I was talking she said, "Tell Uncle George to come in, he will be glad to hear this." She was very thoughtful of others.

The funeral was Feb. 4th, when I read some portions selected by her, among them 1 Cor. xv. 40, and "Consider the lilies, how they grow," and tried to preach the gospel. May the Comforter continue to appear for the comfort of them that mourn.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., August, 1907.

John Stephens, youngest child of Andrew and Ann Stephens, was born Nov. 1st, 1831, departed this life July 12th, 1907, aged 75 years, 8 months and 11 days. He was united in marriage to Anna Shoemaker Oct. 5th, 1854, and to this union were born ten children; two of them and his dear companion preceded him to the better world. He was the youngest of eleven children, and the last of his father's family, six of them having passed away in the last ten years. He was an indulgent father and a good neighbor. He united with the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church at Cæsars Creek in June, 1868, and was appointed deacon in March, 1870, which place he filled to the entire satisfaction of the church until his death. He was a man of deep mind, but of few words, and believed as the Bible teaches: salvation by grace. He often spoke of his unworthiness, and would remark as one of old, When I awake with thy likeness then shall I be satisfied. He had been a constant sufferer for the past six months, part of the time he could not lie down, and for two months had been confined to his bed; his suffering was intense, yet he never murmured or complained, but bore it all with christian fortitude. All was done that kind hands and loving hearts could do, but the Lord rules and reigns. He leaves eight children, six grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and a host of relatives and friends to mourn their loss, but we mourn not as those without hope, for we believe our dear, departed one has entered into the joy which the Lord prepared for his people, which is unspeakable and full of glory and fadeth not away.

The funeral services were conducted Sunday afternoon at the family residence by Elder George Weaver, of Galion, Ohio, in the presence of a large concourse of relatives and friends, after which the body was laid to rest beside his wife in the cemetery at Jamestown, Ohio.

Written by request by his nieces.

(MRS.) NANCY JOHNSON.
(MRS.) ROSA BALES.

MEETINGS.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, in her seventy-sixth annual session, at the residence of brother Doty Varnes, five miles southeast of Farmington, Fulton Co., Ill., on Friday, August 30th, 1907, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue the two following days. Those coming from north of Farmington must come Thursday evening, where they will be met; those coming from south of Farmington will change to the Iowa Central for Cramer on Thursday afternoon, where they will be met. Those from south of Galesburg will come to Abingdon on the C., B. & Q., change to the Iowa Central at 4:36 p. m. Those from Galesburg and the north will take the Interurban at 3:30 p. m. for Abingdon, where they will meet those from the south all bound for Cramer.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Maine Conference will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at North Berwick, York County, Maine. The meeting begins on Friday, August 30th, 1907, and continues three days. We invite all who love our Lord Jesus Christ to attend our gathering.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

THE Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, Providence permitting, will hold a two days meeting the first Wednesday and Thursday in September (4th and 5th), 1907. We extend an invitation to all lovers of the truth, especially ministers.

HENRY BRONSON, Church Clerk.

THE Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Predestinarian or Primitive Baptists will convene with the Mount Pleasant Church, at Pleasureville, Ky., on Friday, Sept. 6th, 1907, and continue three days. Pleasureville is on Louisville & Lexington division of L. & N. R. R., with daily trains each way. Also from Cincinnati via La Grange or via Cincinnati south to Georgetown and Frankfort. We expect Elders Lester, Eubanks and John G. Sawin with us at that time. Come, brethren, meet with us.

C. F. DUDLEY, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting to be held on Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 4th and 5th, 1907. Those coming via Ontario & Western R. R. or Delaware & Hudson R. R. will come to Olyphant, Pa., on Tuesday. Those coming on D., L. & W. R. R. will be met at Clarks Summit, Pa., Tuesday afternoon. We respectfully ask that those expecting to be met will write to G. W. Goodrich, Olyphant, Pa., R. F. D., so that arrangements may be made to meet them.

G. W. GOODRICH, Clerk,

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Old School Baptist Church at Bowdoinham, Maine, to begin on Friday before the second Monday in September, (6th) 1907, and continue three days. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus. Place of meeting is but a few minutes walk from Bowdoinham depot.

GEO. R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Harford Church, Harford County, Md., to commence at 10 o'clock a. m. on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1907, and continue two days. A cordial invitation is extended to lovers of the truth. Those coming by way of Baltimore will take train that leaves North Ave. station at 3:45 p. m. on Friday before, for Long Green or Forest Hill. Those coming from the north take train that leaves York, Pa., at 1:55 o'clock for same stations.

NATHAN GRAFTON.

THE Licking Association of Primitive Baptists will convene with the Bald Eagle Church, at Mt. Sterling, Montgomery Co., Ky., on the C. & O. R. R., about thirty-two miles east of Lexington, with daily trains each day, on Friday, Sept. 13th, 1907, and continue three days. We extend a hearty welcome to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. We will meet all trains Thursday evening and Friday morning.

T. J. RATLIFF.

THE Roxbury Association is appointed to be held with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., commencing on Wednesday, Sept. 18th, 1907, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continuing two days. Trains will be met at Shokan, on the Ulster & Delaware R. R., Tuesday p. m. A cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth is extended, especially to ministers of our faith and order, to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Cammal, Pa., expects to hold a two days meeting Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 18th and 19th, 1907. We cordially invite brethren and friends generally to meet with us. Nothing preventing, we expect to have two or three ministers with us.

D. M. VAIL, Pastor.

THE yearly meeting of the Cow Marsh Old School Baptist Church, Kent County, Del., will be held on Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 21st and 22nd, 1907, beginning at 2 o'clock p. m. Saturday. All trains stopping at Viola station will be met Saturday morning, and friends will be conveyed to the meeting. A cordial invitation is given to all who love our faith and order.

THOMAS L. COOPER, Church Clerk.

THE annual meeting of the Cumberland Association with the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church of University St., South Nashville, Tenn., will convene, if the Lord will, Saturday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1907, and continue three days. All lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus are cordially invited, especially those in the ministry.

O. B. HICKERSON.

THE First Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, at Vega, N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting to be held, the Lord willing, Wednesday and Thursday, October 2nd and 3rd, 1907. Trains will be met at Roxbury on Tuesday before the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

V. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Association of Old School Baptists will convene, if Providence permits, with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon County, Pa., on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1907, and continue three days. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth, and hope to be remembered by our ministering brethren. Those coming by railroad will come on the Pennsylvania R. R. to Mount Union on Thursday, and there take the East Broadtop road to Three Springs. The trains leave Mount Union at 9 a. m. and 4 p. m. Both trains will be met.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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11:00 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

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THERE will be meeting at 54 Fuller St., Schenectady, N. Y., each Sunday in the month at 2 p. m., excepting the fourth Sunday, when it will be held at 8 p. m. All who love Old School Baptist doctrine are cordially invited to come.

SARAH JONES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 75. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1907. NO. 18.

POETRY.

AN ADDRESS TO DEITY.

INCLUDING THE LORD'S PRAYER IN PARENTHESIS.

We love thee, (Our Father) O help us to sing
Of thy mercy and love (which art) ever the same;
The angels most holy (in heaven) all bring
Songs of praise, while they shout (hallowed be) his great name.
Help thy saints here below (thy name) to adore;
In goodness and grace let (thy kingdom) draw near.
We know thou wilt (come, thy) love we implore,
While glad songs (will be) chanted with reverence and fear.
Thou dost speak and 'tis (done in) love and in grace;
Thy redeemed here on (earth as) they travel life's way,
See all things but darkly; (it is) there face to face
They shall see thee (in heaven) forever to stay.
That perfect rest (give us) we trust while we live,
Our hope through (this day) thou wilt strengthen anew.
From thy fostering hand (our daily) food give;
Of that heavenly (bread, and) keep our hearts true.
Wilt thou bless and (forgive us) thy children to-day?
For our sins and (our trespasses) how numerous, how great!
In life's thorny path (as we) walk day by day,
Give us grace to (forgive them) our foes, and not hate;
Help thy children (that trespass) to turn from their ways,
Those sins are (against us,) repentance must come.
We ask thee to (lead us) and thy name shall have praise;
If we walk (not in) truth we shall never reach home.
We are prone (to temptation) and yield unawares;
Pass us not (but deliver) and strengthen each one,
And tenderly keep (us from) sins and from snares;
Lift our hearts above (evil, for) we trust in thy Son.
Our life here is short (thine is) endless through years;
On this earth is (the kingdom) prepared from above;
Give us grace to adore (and the) heart's doubts and fears
Will be soothed by thy (power and) thy great tender love.
Unto thee be (the glory), O let us all then
See our King in his beauty, (forever, amen.)

(MRS.) LUCY A. CRAWFORD.

LOGAN, Ohio, April 15, 1907.

THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE.

TALK not to me of wealth and store,
Of glittering gems or golden ore;
A pearl I've found of richer price,
Like that which glows in paradise.

It is what Paul once prized so high,
It is what Jesus died to buy,
It is God's love within the heart,
Which doth substantial joys impart.

Long have I sought, but sought in vain,
Some pure enjoyment to obtain;
I ranged the fields of pleasure o'er,
But never found such peace before.

To me the sting of death is gone,
The grave's divested of its gloom;
I view it as some kind retreat,
Where I shall rest in dreamless sleep.

(Selected by Mrs. Lucinda B. Brewster.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., March 7, 1907.

DEAR PAPA:—Perhaps I cannot write as I feel, but for the past week I have had a great many of the feelings that you wrote me about. So many things that I do I question, and wonder if these are what God would have me do. Oftentimes thoughts will arise that I try to check, for they are so light and trivial, and perhaps for a few minutes my mind will be on higher things, but it will not be long before I will go back to those other thoughts. These are the hardest things I have to fight. How often I long to return to the feelings which I had for several weeks, when I felt that God was with me all the time. Now I cannot help but trust and feel that I have been given these present feelings for a purpose. Maybe if I had continued to feel the way I did for a longer time I would not have been able to sympathize with or understand the trials that come to others, and I would have gotten conceited. It seemed so easy to try to do what was right, for my heart was light. There have been times in the past week when I felt there were some things I could not bear much longer, but then I felt that if I could only put my whole trust in God and know that he does everything for a purpose, how much better I would be able to battle with these things. One night I felt like crying, but when I thought of how good God had been to me, and how many blessings he has given to me, the tears would not come, and I realized that he was not giving me more than my share of suffering, and that so far what troubles have come to me are few to what I deserve. I can still pray, and this is a comfort, but each day something new will come up which makes me see more clearly than ever before how many our wants are, and then the same prayer will arise time and time again, and I wonder that God does not grow impatient with me for asking so many times. Then I think of the words: God answers prayers, and his patience never tires. These words will help me at such times. Then again I find comfort in these words: God will not mock the hope he giveth; no love he prompts shall vainly pleadeth, and I can wait more patiently for the time to come when he shall see fit to have me love him as I should.

I do enjoy reading the Psalms, and have found my greatest hope in them, for I like to know that it is intended for the flesh to battle against the Spirit. I have also read the other chapters you mentioned, but could not understand just what they mean; I think what you have written will make them clear to me. My hope seems to me to be so little to what others have, but I do feel glad that even this little hope has been given to me, and that I can trust God as I never did before. My life seems to be a failure, and I make many mistakes, but I do want to do better and live more in the way that would honor God. When going to worldly amusements I have questioned and wondered if that were what God would have me do. I have seemed to feel at times that the simple pleasures which do not take our thoughts away from Him are all right, but that those which do are harmful. I cannot feel that it is intended for us to lead selfish lives and not enter at all into the pleasures of others, yet I do feel that we cannot make too strong a dividing line between those that are right for us to enter into and those that are not, and that we should not be afraid to keep away from those that are wrong because we know that others will

sneer at us if we do not enter into them.

Each time I write I am afraid that I am playing the hypocrite, for I do want to write only as I feel, and yet I am afraid of saying things that will give a wrong impression.

From BONNIE.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., March 13, 1907.

DEAR PAPA:—It seemed strange to me when in your letter you referred so often to the first epistle of John. For several nights I have read and reread it, and found much comfort in doing so. It has been easy to pray after reading this, for so many prayers would arise in my heart and a new hope be given to me.

You asked me to write as to how I feel regarding a public confession. I cannot say that my mind has been led that way very much. Sometimes I think and wonder if the time will ever come when I will be led to do this; then the thought comes to me: If God desires this he will put the desire in my heart and I will be made to feel that I cannot keep away; then again I wonder what I could say that would make the people of God willing to take me in with them. My mind is so worldly at times, and I would be afraid all the time that I could not live up to the life one should live after making such a confession, and by not doing so be a still worse hypocrite in the sight of God. It frightens me when I think of how much God has done for me and how little I give in return; I do not feel that I serve him as I should. At times when I feel that I am losing hold on the things that have been given to me, I try to find something to read which will make my thoughts return to him. My thoughts for some time have seemed to be a continuous longing for something which I do not yet feel, and yet that longing brings happiness. The fourteenth and fifteenth verses of the fifth chapter of first John express what I now feel and have felt. Jessie and I had a talk last Friday about joining the church. She seemed to think that it is all right for any one to become a member, for she felt that it might make some lead better lives. I told her I could not see it that way, for I felt that only the Spirit of God in us could do this, and that without this we would fail in our attempts to do better; even with this we see how little we do that is right. I feel that it is a sin to join the church just to say you are a church member, and yet I feel that many who do this think they are doing right, and are sincere in their belief, for they have never been made to feel otherwise, and if ever they should be made to feel themselves sinners they would see then what dreadful hypocrites they had been. I think that Jessie feels as I do about prayer. We can understand each other, however, and it does us both good to talk.

I read the one hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm, and in connection with the last two verses come into my mind the last four lines of the hymn "Lead kindly light:"

"Lead, Savior, lead me home with childlike faith,
Home to my God,
To rest forever after earthly strife
In the calm light of everlasting life."

I do not think the meaning intended is the same, but they appeal to me in the same way. I think all of this hymn is beautiful. It is such a restful spirit to trust in God. I can truly say, The rest which does us good and enables us to do our work well is the rest of the heart, the sabbath of the soul.

I do not mind others reading my letters, only I cannot express myself as I would like to. For a time I felt as if I

wanted to tell every one, but lately my feelings have been so varied that sometimes I wonder if I have any right to mention these things at all.

Love to all. From

BONNIE.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., March 20, 1907.

DEAR PAPA:—I received both your letter and the SIGNS yesterday, and will try to write a little to you to-day. My mind at times seems almost a blank, but this is not as I would have it if it were in my power to change it. It is hard for me to find words to express what I feel. I used to wonder what people meant when they said that others could tell how they felt better than they could themselves, but I can understand now, for when I read letters written by others I wish that I could express my feelings as well as they have expressed them for me.

At first it seemed easy to be good, for my heart felt light, and God seemed near me all the time. As the weeks go on I find it harder and harder to keep from sinning, for everything I do is sinful, and there is a continual fight going on within me. I feel that I grow worse all the time, and at times I wonder if I really know anything at all of the things I have been writing about; yet there is still a little hope left, for I find much pleasure in reading of things concerning God, and I grow more anxious each day to know more about these things, but I feel that I know less.

I did not know that Aunt Angie is a member, but I enjoyed her article in the SIGNS. Sometimes I have longed for some one to talk to, and one time when Jessie came we did not have a chance to say much, and I felt more disappointed than I can tell. Aunt Angie expressed just what I felt. Where in the Bible are the words, "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is the tree of life"? One night I felt sick at heart, and I prayed that I might not feel that way. When I opened the Bible I saw those words, and felt like another person. Since then I have been unable to find them, but thought I would like to read in what connection they are written.

March 21st.—To-day is the first day of spring, and what a beautiful day it has been. I awoke very early and watched the sun rise. It seemed wonderful to me, and I thought, How can we doubt that there is a God, with so many things to show his goodness to us? Emerson said, "All I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen."

At night when I go to bed I like to throw off all care, and feel that I can trust God for everything. Sometimes I wonder if it is right for me to cast all my burdens on God, but the thought comes to me, What good will it do for me to worry? for God has planned my days for me, all the trials and all the pleasures, and everything he does is for a purpose. All of my thinking and planning cannot change it; and perhaps the very next day I find myself planning to do something, and then sometimes this thought immediately follows: If God wills it so. The fear of God is not like our worldly fear, but it seems to be a fear brought about by a spirit of love in our hearts. I feel that it would be awful to be without it. Our ways are not God's ways, and I see the truth of these words more and more every day.

I enjoyed Mr. Barnes' letter, and your little reply to it, for God surely brings about a knowledge of his truth in many different ways, and O how much the little

things count. I enjoy reading the SIGNS, and find a great deal of comfort in many of the things I read, but it seems strange for me to have felt so many of the things that others write about, when I have been so worldly and unworthy. I cannot be thankful enough that God has given me a little understanding of these things.

It is good of you to write to me, for I find your letters very helpful, and I enjoy reading the different chapters that you suggest. My letters are rambling, but I can only write the things I feel most while I am writing.

Love to all. From

BONNIE.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., March 25, 1907.

DEAR PAPA:—There have been some things on my mind to-day that I thought I would write to-night. Many times I have wondered if it were right for me to pray so often for the same thing, when we know that God has planned our lives for us. This morning it came to me that perhaps God put these desires so strong in our hearts to make us realize more fully his greatness and goodness toward us through the answering of them. It seems to me I have never felt so happy and thankful as when God has granted me some wish, and since reading the verse I mentioned in my last letter I cannot be unhappy when the granting of a prayer is deferred. Those words have cheered me very much. I like to read about prayer in the Bible. This morning I was reading chapter twelve in first Corinthians, and when I read the different ways the Spirit of God is manifested in man I felt that if any belonged to me it is faith. Through faith I seem to be brought closer and closer to God. It was a comfort for me to learn that wisdom and knowledge are not given to all, for I feel that I know so little, but I do want to trust God for everything, and to feel that whatever he does is for the best. I am continually looking for something that expresses my feelings, and liked this poem:

"Let no threatening ill appal thee,
Trust in God whate'er befall thee,
Serve him with thy latest breath,
Be thou faithful unto death.

Men may praise thee, men may jeer thee;
Ever keep in sight to cheer thee
What the heavenly Master said:
Be thou faithful unto death.

Let no loss or suffering rue thee,
God at last will triumph in thee,
Crown thee with the victor's wreath;
Be thou faithful unto death."

I write you these little poems as they come to me, for they do me much good. As time goes on I find I look more and more to the Bible for comfort, yet I love to read what others have written in regard to these things. Always before it was the tune of a hymn that I liked, not the words, but now I find myself thinking of the words and not the tune, and cannot help but wonder how it could ever have been otherwise. I always respected those people whom I knew were interested in better things, but I gave little heed to these things in regard to myself. At times I think, Can it really be possible that God has granted me such a rich blessing? But when I think of the past, I feel sure it must be a higher Spirit than man's that has wrought such a change. Many times I heard these things from man, but they made no impression, but as you said in your letter, we cannot learn these things from the teachings of men. Whittier says:

"More than your schoolmen teach, within
Myself, alas, I know;
Too dark you cannot paint the sin,
Too small the merit show."

"The Lord is God, he needeth not
The poor device of men."

The truth of these words is so evident to me now.

Love to all. BONNIE.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., June 21, 1907.

DEAR PAPA:—To-night I feel as if I could write to you again. For some time past it has seemed to me that everything I did and said was a failure, and I was depressed, but this evening while I was dressing to go to the Alumni I felt a desire to read the Bible. After I had read the fifth chapter of Matthew I could pray; the load was lifted, and a wonderfully calm and peaceful feeling came over me. Before I went over to the association I knew that I had no desire in my heart to hear the preaching, but I did want to see the people. The day the meeting ended, however, I could not bear the thought of leaving, for I wanted to stay right on with those whom I love so much. It seemed so strange to me that I could listen to preaching for four hours without growing the least bit weary. While driving home I felt a nearness to God, and everything looked beautiful to me. It was only the next day that I was cast into darkness again, and I can truly say that the few days following were the darkest I have ever known in my life. I could find no comfort in anything. One night as I was getting ready for bed a few restful thoughts came to me, but these only lasted a few minutes, and by the time I got in bed I was as troubled as ever, and it was impossible for me to sleep. I do not remember these feelings leaving suddenly, but for some weeks I have been indifferent to these things, and could neither read the Bible nor pray. To-night all is different, and I feel once more that I can trust God for everything, and see that when left to myself there is no good in me, and that he alone can keep me from evil.

It is almost one o'clock, so I must go to bed. We had a very pleasant meeting, but it was also a sad one.

Love to all. From

BONNIE.

[THE above letters were written by Miss Bonnie Chick to her father, Elder F. A. Chick, and while they were all written within a few weeks they show clearly a growth in knowledge and experience. We are glad to say that she has recently united with the First Hopewell Church, of which her father is pastor. May it be to her a place of "settled rest."—K.]

LAW.

"BUT we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully; knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust."—1 Tim. i. 8-11.

We are sometimes charged with being Antinomians, or such as hold that God's people are saved contrary to, or against, law; but I wish briefly to notice that Christ fulfilled the law in every jot and tittle, and that therefore there is "now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."—Rom. viii. 1, 2. It follows that if One died for all, then were all dead. It is impossible for the law to be brought against one dead; it is only against those that have not died. The love of Christ constrains us to judge, according to 1 Cor. v. 14, that the effect of law ceases when the end of the law has come. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteous-

ness to every one that believeth."—Rom. x. 4. The law has thereby been fulfilled in behalf of all that are dead, and we who believe in the death of Christ for our sins, and in the resurrection of Christ for our justification, are thereby, by faith in him, enabled to put on Christ according to the measure of faith which is given to every man. (See Rom. xii. 3.) The dead in sin have not faith, therefore they must be raised up unto a new life before we can expect it of them. The dead know not anything, and so the experience of God's people, all of them, must show them that "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's, at his coming."—1 Cor. xv. 22, 23. Now this harmony in the work of Christ belongs not to all those who die in Adam, but only to those who are made alive in Christ. This word "all" is broad enough to comprehend all the elect or chosen family of God, chosen in Christ before the world began, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named. (See Eph. iii. 15.) This whole family, therefore, alone possess the promise of eternal life through Christ, for all things are theirs. (1 Cor. iii. 21.)

The Old Testament may be said to belong to all mankind in a sense, and all modern theology is but a piece of the old world and its laws, either amended, abridged or substituted, but the New Testament belongs exclusively to the new generation, or the begotten ones who have passed through all the relationships of the old and experienced only death, but who by mysterious grace are now brought not to Mt. Sinai but to Mt. Zion, in the purified atmosphere of which new vitality is felt, and a new source of enjoyment is presented to their taste. The old law, which was divided into ten general commandments or titles, needed definitions and penalties and manners of administration. But these have all lost their application to believers, for they are no longer under the law, but under grace. The law has been satisfied by the one offering, and they are by this offering perfected forever. This offering was Christ, who died for them. They are not therefore subject to a renewal of the old law, or any other code of laws which could place them again in jeopardy; for if the first law was not kept by any one of Adam's race there can be no faith in the ability of this poor, corrupt race to keep any other law. Laws are still apparently needed, but not for those who walk after the Spirit.

Legislators seem to vie in their efforts to obtain popular applause for their grand efforts to stamp out sin, such as the divorce evil, drunkenness, theft, arson, murder and adultery, yet all leave some flaw, some defect or some executive difficulty in the administration of their most feasible laws. The same difficulties follow still which always have marked the legal profession from the creation unto Christ. He only is accepted who feels a perfect liberation from law into the perfect liberty of the Son of God. This does not at all mean modern socialism. The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus is that in which there is no condemnation, and no fear (for fear hath torment), no penalty (for penalties would destroy the virtue of liberty), no need of any formal commandment (for the one pervading emotion which leads all into sacred harmony and peace is love). He who loves is born of God, for God is love. The things that seem tasks to those under the law, are liberty, rest and enjoyment when directed by love. Those who work for

wages labor hard toward the shadows of evening, but they who enjoy the vital strength of divine energy in the soul feel refreshed as evening approaches (only the sense of so little done saddens them) for they enjoy the labor of love. Nor do the suggestions of brotherly correction seem harsh, but pleasant, when the scriptural feeling of love prompts both the reprover and the reproved. These brotherly corrections are needed, for we still have the same old remnant of legality in the fleshly nature, although dead and filthy, and we still await the full adoption, of which the spirit of adoption is only a foretaste, which will be received at the last remove into the unmixed state beyond. Each one under the benign influence of love will seek the welfare of every other one of like kindred ties, and not his own selfish gain. O what memories cluster around the dear ones gone before with whom I once felt such sacred union: Elders Delano, Brown, Trumbo and Morris, toward whom I never had a harsh thought, and with whom there never was any expression of dissent either in doctrine or order; these profitable gifts are all gone, and I am lonely, lingering on for a few more idle days. I can only contemplate the past with joy at the privilege (not the law) of being kept thus in harmony. Alas that sorrow should also be my lot; and yet I could not feel the fellowship of suffering with Christ and the privilege of weeping with those who weep if these things were not mine by experience. And then to sometimes witness the return of those who through the flesh have erred, is a joy. O how I would love to once more present the preeminence of these old ministers whom I esteemed so highly for the truth's sake; and also the joys of the younger who in love, without ostentation, so ably defend the order of the church with the ability that God has given them is a pleasure to me.

Most unworthily, your little brother, if one at all, A. B. BREES.

CLAYTON, Mich., June, 1907.

HAMPSTEAD, Md., June, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER IN CHRIST:—A hope of that blessed life beyond and my seemingly useless life here sometimes cause the desire that the appointed time of my departure was at hand. I do not know how I may feel when the time does approach, but I do know that all I can do is to trust in the loving Savior. "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage?" O what a blessed thought (believing that we are a portion of that remnant). "He retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities: and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea."

You will remember, my brother, when you were speaking at Black Rock you said, Just think upon the words of the text: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." I did not dwell much upon them at the time, but have since, and have found comfort in them and also a desire for a grateful heart; but if you felt that you had not words to express what you saw in them you will not expect it of me. I will quote a little from one of Elder Osbourn's letters, written before my natural birth: "How admirably well is salvation's scheme adapted to the woes, wants, miseries and low condition of the sons of Zion, and how very thankful ought those

to be whom the Lord hath raised to a comfortable hope of an interest in the everlasting gospel of the Son of God. Also how ought they in a cheerful mood to speak of the glory of his kingdom and talk of his power. What a surprising degree of compassion there must be in the bosom of our God to pity sinners as he pities them, and to make such ample provision as he hath made for all poor, returning prodigals."

This, my dear brother, is your theme and mine, and, I may say, the theme of all God's people; but we are so weak in the flesh, and come so far short of what we desire. The story is old but ever new. Brother Kelley loaned me the book; no doubt you have read it. He was writing upon the Triune God, but that subject is too deep for me to be able to come to a definite point. I love to dwell upon his love, his mercy and his compassion for all the weak ones such as myself. Yes, sin is mixed with all I do, and it never grows less. We are told that we are unprofitable servants, and such we feel to be, and for such do I have fellowship, and feel there is a tie that binds us, far stronger than any natural tie. While lying on my bed with a sad heart, and begging to be kept nearer to my God on the morrow, the words came to me, There must be a thorn in the flesh, but my grace is sufficient for you. Then I was made to rejoice again, believing that I have an Advocate with the Father. Truly "His mercy endureth for ever." What a comfort there is in believing that there will come a time when the thorn will be removed. The evil one would cheat us if possible, but the very heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth forth his handiwork. Just think of this vast mother earth, and of the numberless things that it supports, and it is said that there are no two things just alike. This is wonderful, but the objects of his pity are at times so crushed by the weight of sin and guilt that they cannot even see the beauty of this present life, or the glory of God revealed in it.

When I read the editorial upon 2 Samuel ix. I thought, What a precious gift, not only to see, but to be able to explain the word of God, that the weak ones may behold the beauty of his word and find solace and comfort in their lonely homes. It seems that this number is especially good, yet perhaps this is in the hearing ear.

I have finished reading the book of Daniel, and am made to wonder why I cannot trust God as he did. How small are the trials of the people of God to-day when compared with those of ancient times. You, with myself, gloried in the Lord at my coming to the church when I did, but O how trifling were the difficulties then when compared with those of ancient times. The memory of that time strengthens me many times in my doubtful moments, and it is another blessing that this is left on record, that we may be built up on our most holy faith, that our God is all-powerful, declaring the end from the beginning, and all things are in his hand, from the least to the greatest, so that not even a sparrow can fall to the ground without him. One said, "When I fall I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me." "The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him." These are very great assurances to the Lord's people; how strong are his shalls and wills. How little and weak it makes us feel when we can get a glimpse of him in his exaltation and glory; then we are ready to sing, "Crown him Lord of all."

We speak of accidents; but there are no accidents with the Lord. O how prone I am to wander and forget that my times are all in his hand. If God has been glorified in one act that I have ever done I have not been able to discover it.

You said in your last letter that the grace of God had been much more magnified in me than in yourself, because I have not had the companionship of those of like precious faith. Did I understand you aright? I can hardly understand what you can mean.

It is now the fourth of July; twenty-one years ago I spent the day at your pleasant home, and I then had no thought but that you would be my pastor as long as we both lived. I felt sad when you left us, but I am more than glad that your place has been filled by one whom I highly esteem in the Lord.

I was reading some of your old letters, and in one you spoke of Nellie's baptism. I did not realize that she had been a member almost as long as myself. It did me much good to see you both at the association at Black Rock. In all these years how vastly different have our lives been, but I believe that our experience, in one point at least, has been the same, viz., trusting in our dear Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and in feeling that the everlasting arms are around and underneath us, and when we seem ready to sink still will sustain us. I was also much pleased with all the strangers that I met, but they did not seem to me as strangers. The love that I have for God's people is a great comfort. I do not think that I am deceived in this. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

I spent the day Tuesday at brother Kelley's; his family wished to be remembered to all. I also spent the first Sunday in June with them, expecting to go to the meeting, but I was again doomed to disappointment, owing to the rain. These visits seem like oases in my desert life. Brother Kelley said he had desired often to hear a spiritual interpretation of Mephibosheth. He, too, enjoyed that editorial, as we do when we feel that God has spoken to us through his servants. The SIGNS is certainly a great comfort to the scattered ones of the flock.

I hope that Bonnie may soon realize the full and sweet fellowship of the people of God. When I met sister Chick, a year ago, I thought I would write at once, but have procrastinated until now.

It is time for me to close. I hope that you are all well. May God's blessing rest upon you all. I would be glad to hear from any of you.

I remain your sister in hope,

GEORGIA D. ENGLAND.

ORLANDO, Ark., July 21, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—While lying on my sick bed today, and being all alone, I feel a great desire to tell a little of what I hope the Lord has done for me. Should the true spirit be given me I shall in my feeble way try to write as best I can the truth as I hope it has been shown me. I have often felt a desire to write to you, but as often put it off, realizing my nothingness, feeling myself to be the vilest of sinners. The most of the time I am held in great darkness and despair, but if I know myself I trust in none but God, the only wise Creator; by him were all things predestinated and created according as he purposed it, and beside him there is no power. It is to his poor and afflicted people that he manifests his power, his

supreme love, that he is the God of all things, and beside him there is no other. Poor, mortal man is imperfect in all his ways, sin is mixed with all he does; he is nothing and less than nothing, and vanity. Man has no power only as it pleases God to work in him his will and purpose to do. In ourselves we find nothing good, it is only when the Spirit of God is with us that we desire to do right; all that is of the true Spirit is pure and good. Of all sinners on earth I feel myself to be the worst, and if saved it is by grace, and not because of any good work which I have done or ever will do. I firmly believe in absolute predestination; that God chose his people in Christ before the world was, and that his love is everlasting, for he is the unchangeable God. In the beginning all things were with him as though they had already been. None of his work is conditional, but man's work is conditional.

I believe God has seen fit to show me what a poor, weak, sinful creature I am; I am not worthy of the least of his blessings. Much of the time is spent by me in cold darkness, worrying over the things of this world. Sometimes I am so cast down I long to be hid from the sight of all mortal beings; I try to pray, but find no relief. My cry is, Lord, be merciful to me, a poor sinner. I am then unable to express my feelings. Sometimes I long to hear the word of God preached, but I do not feel worthy to occupy a seat in their midst. I feel that every one sees me as I see myself: corrupt and unworthy, full of hypocrisy. My great desire is that I might have a home with them, but I do not feel fit or in any way worthy to be numbered among them. Why should one so unworthy, so imperfect, attempt such boldness? Could God's people be deceived by such as I? However, I do believe that God works all things according to his will, and when it pleases him for another confession of his goodness and mercy to be made his purpose is done.

It was while I was in the far west among cold unbelievers of beautiful California that I felt a hope in Christ. I am unable to express the sweet joy of this experience; God's purposes were plain to me, I knew that if hell were my doom all that I could do would be nothing, and if saved it was by grace alone. It is only God's people who can worship him in spirit and in truth; the world knows nothing of this spiritual worship. While in California I spent my saddest and most lonely moments. The people with whom I associated knew nothing of the truth; should you attempt to talk spiritually to them they would ridicule you and say that you were not modern. If their religion is modern, surely I have no desire to be one of their up-to-date members. They made every effort to trap me, but I told them they were not true worshipers of God, and that I could not participate in such foolishness, for it seemed so to me. The preacher told me I could not be saved unless I did something to help myself and to show God that I was willing to be saved and accept him, and that it was necessary I should join the church. I replied, Salvation is not of works. They could have executed me, they could have done anything with me except force me to accept their religion as the truth. For some time I acted as reporter for their church; they forced the work upon me, then it was necessary that I should attend their meetings, as I was expected to do justice to a big display of all they did. This was a sad grief to me, and at my earliest convenience I discarded the work. In some ways my stay

there was enjoyable, but my poor heart ached and longed to be back among God's people.

I returned to my home in Louisiana on the first day of June, four years ago, finding my poor mother in bad health. I remained home all summer, and on the fourth day of October it pleased God to take her from us. She lived a true Primitive Baptist ever since I can remember, and died strong in the faith. My father still lives, and is a member of the same church. Three years ago I was married to Elder J. H. Blythe, who is indeed a noble and good husband.

I do not feel that what I have written is worth anything, and ask that you do with it as is your wish. Pray for me, and accept love and best wishes from one who is most unworthy.

(MRS.) MARTHA E. BLYTHE.

PRATT CITY, Alabama.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The SIGNS is filled with so much better matter than I can offer that I have many times had to put away the impression to write. Only once in awhile I can gain courage to venture to express my thoughts in my imperfect way; I get stirred up often by reading the good things written in the SIGNS, and it seems that I cannot hold my peace. At this time I feel inclined to give my approval and commendation of what Elders Chick and Durand have written upon the subject of associations; both have written plain, even and smooth, and have shown much of the good to be derived from such meetings, and I believe they have lined out the truth upon the subject in a way that is not offensive, and in a way that will be profitable to all who desire and love peace, and have felt the unction from on high in these good meetings, and have spoken and written of what they enjoyed, many days and weeks after, and desire the perpetuation of such assemblies of the saints, where the words of our Lord are fulfilled again and again: "Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." This is the same kingdom of heaven that John the Baptist declared to be at hand, and I have seen brethren and sisters coming to these meetings from different directions with expressions of joy and gladness on their faces, and the Elders at these meetings often seem to have new light and liberty, and some as good preaching as I ever heard has been done at associations, and I have been reminded of the words of Isaiah: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth." It seems to me that the churches would often feel solitary and lonely if deprived of the privilege of corresponding and associating with each other. There may have been some errors committed in the deliberations of these meetings, but more errors have occurred in church deliberations, and sometimes these church errors have been carried up to the association, and much confusion has resulted by it, and the association had to bear the blame, and many have opposed associations for such errors, and want to do away with such meetings, and they could just as well condemn the church also, for church errors are first to occur.

The greatest troubles I have known in associations and churches have been caused mostly by men who aspired to be the moderator the few hours that the messengers of the churches are engaged

in reading letters from their churches, receiving and appointing correspondence, and attending to other little matters necessary for the mutual benefit of all concerned. No doubt but some have thought that it was an office of high honor to be moderator of these little business transactions, not considering how limited such honors are. The deliberations of our association closed about eleven o'clock on Saturday before the third Sunday in September, and the moderator is no more than any other Elder for a whole year, and I do not believe he feels that he is. He has been in the ministry for about fifty-five years.

There is a complaint in some sections about "organized associations;" but if there is any way to hold an association without some form of organization I do not know how it can be done. If we should adopt the plan of choosing the pastor of the church the association is held with as moderator, and the church clerk as the association clerk, it is an organized body with a system to perform deliberations just the same, and errors could creep in just as easily, and the moderator and association could suffer the same reproach. I believe that the Lord has ordained it that his people should correspond and associate with each other in the way best adapted to their surroundings. The present mode or system of associations could not be so convenient while there was so much religious proscription and persecution; but when more liberty was allowed to the true church their associations were formed in a more convenient and systematic way, and they began to publish minutes of their deliberations and articles of faith, and finally began to publish religious papers in defense of their faith, and through these two mediums we hear from nearly all the Baptists of the United States, and messages of good news cross the ocean in exchange. The Paulicians and Waldenses did not enjoy the liberties and facilities that we do; they no doubt would have made use of such liberties in a profitable way. That noted, grand and most famous association that took place at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, where devout men (Jews) of every nation took part, for an example, comes up in my mind.

But I must close, I have written more than I intended.

Yours in hope of immortality,

P. J. POWELL.

WAITSBURG, Wash.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—Is man a predestinarian? This question impresses my mind after reading this morning an article in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES written by Elder F. W. Keene, upon Jacob's ladder, so-called. The full inquiry in my mind is this, Is man a predestinarian or an idiot? I take for a standard of judgment the word of the Lord Jesus Christ: "Which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?" From this reference to the builders' trade, I will present a few thoughts concerning what the necessary qualifications of a builder must be, in order to a successful finishing of his building, according to the design, specifications and material. First, the builder must have a mind and be possessed of all the things necessary; he must have power, wisdom and mechanical skill, with sufficient knowledge beforehand to choose, purpose and plan the construction and use of the building when finished. This requires in the builder all

the attributes of mind and creature intelligence necessary to build wisely, safely and substantially, to insure the perpetuity of the building sufficient for its intended use when finished, with every intermediate step between the purpose and the completion of the building; and in so far as his knowledge is perfect, and his possession secure, he is able to declare the end from the beginning. This will be commensurate with his wisdom, power and the continuity of his thoughts, and being in the same mind continuously. In the measure, concerning the building, the man can declare the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do my pleasure.

Now, brother Durand, I would ask any man of common sense and ordinary capacity of reason, If all this wisdom and power, with other qualifications and possessions, belong to man in building an earthly habitation for himself and his family on earth, is it amiss to ascribe these things to the Maker and Builder of the universe and the Author of all being in nature, while the heavens declare His glory and the firmament showeth forth his handiwork? If not wise to deny God's work, wisdom and ways in nature, it is no less unwise to deny the same attributes of the eternal power and Godhead of the universe in his works of grace in the redemption which is in Christ Jesus to the highest glory of God. Therefore, if it be idiotic in the one case to deny these things in the works of God in nature, it is equally idiotic to deny the power and wisdom of the same God in the grace of his Son in building for himself a habitation through the Spirit according to his foreknowledge and the purpose which was in himself according to his own will and counsel before the world began. If man performs any intelligent action according to knowledge and predestination in his limited sphere, is God the less wise and just because he predestinated before the beginning the beginning and the ending of all things movable and immovable? Surely those who deny his predestination, rebel against him, and set up idols in their own imaginations, and worship these idols which are but fancies or phantoms. But I must close.

Your brother,

I. N. NEWKIRK.

BENNINGS, D. C., June 1, 1907.

ELDER KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I feel inclined to write a few lines to our family paper, but feel too unworthy to write anything of a spiritual nature; but by the help of God I will try and write a few lines, for I know without him I can do nothing.

I was baptized the third Sunday in July, 1903, by our dear brother, Elder J. T. Rowe, and I look back to that time as the happiest of my life. I thought my trouble was over, but alas, how different from what I expected, for I find a warfare going on in me; like Paul, when I would do good, evil is uppermost with me. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I thank our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ our church here in Washington, D. C., is in peace and harmony. We have our dear brother, Elder J. T. Rowe, every third Sunday in the month, preaching the truth as it is in Jesus. I feel sure I can speak for all the members of our church, that we hold our pastor in the highest esteem for the truth's sake. May God bless him and his family, is my humble prayer. If I could write as comfortingly as others do I would be glad to write often, for I certainly do enjoy the

good letters from different brethren and sisters, all speaking the same language; and also the good editors. May God bless you both with wisdom to still continue to write the blessed truth contained in the Bible. I feel so poor and unworthy at times that I wonder if I am born again, but when I read where Christ says, He that hungers and thirsts after righteousness shall be filled, I feel somewhat comforted; and again where it says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," for I do love the Old Baptists. The Bible says God has a people in every kindred, tongue and nation. I believe the Old Baptists are the only despised people on the earth. Christ said, The world will hate you, for it hated me; my kingdom is not of this world. He was as a root out of dry ground to the natural man. "If any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders" to seduce, and, if it were possible, would deceive the elect. I believe we have them now, but I thank God that it is not possible to deceive the elect; God is able to keep them from harm. He says, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." What comforting words to such poor, helpless worms of the dust as we are, that the just and holy God will care for such poor creatures, who are nothing, and less than nothing and vanity. Why do we call each other brother or sister? for we are strangers in the flesh, but if we are the children of God then we are one family in spirit. When I read letters from different ones whom I never saw I feel drawn in love to them, for I feel that they have been taught of the Lord, as I hope I have been. When I meet strangers in the flesh and they talk of spiritual things, I feel as though I have always known them.

If you see anything in this you can publish it; if not, throw it in the waste-basket.

Your brother,

THOMAS ALDEN.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., August 8, 1907.

ELDER CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—It seems to me there is something that causes this poor and needy sinner to address you. I am away out in an unknown road, in a place of trials and afflictions, and bowed down with sorrow, yet the thought comes to me, O could it only please the good Lord to take me away to the place that he hath prepared for them that love him, that my burden should be removed; then should this poor one no more look to the time when father and mother, brothers and sisters, despised the doctrine of salvation alone by the grace of God, and forbade the doctrine to be talked by this poor, unworthy one in the presence of the children. Not only by my dear and loved ones at home has this doctrine been despised, but by all who do not believe in the only begotten Son of God, who claim salvation depends upon what the poor sinner, who is dead and has no strength, does. This is their plea: that Jesus died to save all men, for Peter said he would not that any should perish, but that all would turn to repentance. They claim that Jesus is standing with outstretched arms wanting to save all of the Adamic family. But listen to Jesus: No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and he that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. Again said one of my Arminian friends to-night in a discussion, No man

can enter into eternal life without his works. My reply was, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." The Bible says one way and the Arminian doctrine another; which is true? "Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar." "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God." How then can we believe salvation to be of works when the Scriptures say by grace? O could I only say with the poet:

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound)
That saved a wretch like me."

But instead I often say:

"When sorrows encompass me round,
And endless distresses I see,
Astonished I cry, Can a mortal be found
Surrounded with troubles like me?"

But the apostle said, "Glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us."

Pray for me, dear brethren, that I may bear all burdens that come upon me while here I stay.

A most unworthy sinner,

A. R. BURKS.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, July 25, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I have been reading in the SIGNS your reply to the request of brother John R. Cubberly, that you write upon Psalms ci. 4, 5, and it strikes home to my ownself; it seems as though I was reading my own heart. The thought came to my mind, Why were such great writers as David, and others whose words are recorded in the Bible, suffered to commit such great or grave sins? Look at David and Peter, and at Paul before he was made to be a follower of the Lord; was it not all for a purpose? It would seem that they all had enough to answer for without such grievous faults, and yet it was, as it appears to me, necessary to keep them humble, and in their writings afterward their sins were always before them. Paul could never forget the way in which he had persecuted the church of God; he felt that could he live forever he could not forget that sin, and he could not redeem himself from all his transgressions, his sin was always before him. Did it not make him a more humble christian? I may be wrong, but in my heart I think so. With us all, when we see that we have sinned, and that daily, what can we do? Does not this very thing humble us? Then where can we go? We have but one place, and that is to humbly confess our sin before God, and to beg of him to forgive us. Does it hurt us to come to him in this way? I think not; it is the way of the outward man to stand alone. We want to be independent, and to run things ourselves; but can a poor sinner feel this way when he feels that he has sinned past all forgiveness, and that he has come to the end, and can go no further, and that he is not fit even to ask God to forgive him? How can the just God forgive such a worthless worm as I? O brother Chick, I think that it does us good to be made to feel this way sometimes. Does not one glimpse of Christ's pardoning love seem most precious after such an experience as this? Is it not more than we deserve? But do we not love this way? It makes me feel like a little child; then all my troubles are forgotten for the present time, and I feel to rejoice in God's pre-

cious love. Then the thought comes, Am I included in that number of his loved ones? The hope of my life is that I am. That I must hold fast to, for it is all I have. Yet "what I am 'tis hard to know." When I look within what do I see? Nothing but corruption. Can God love one like that? He knows that I do hope it is so.

Brother Chick, I hope the Lord will be with you and brother Ker in all your labors.

From an unworthy brother, if one at all,
ANSON QUINT.

ELGIN, Ore., July 18, 1907.

ELDER CHICK:—I have desired to write to you, and also have in mind others of the dear saints whose kind remembrance of me remains as a memorial before the throne of God, and I am inclined to trust this communication with the dear, old SIGNS, which is ever true to its motto: "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." How vividly I recall my first attempt to obey a teacher who said, "Try to read from papers," as a practice in reading. I went to my brother's room, and finding a copy of the SIGNS on his table read column after column. The wonder and amazement that filled my mind belongs alone to that period of child life, but my heart was delighted, and I went to my suffering, invalid sister and said, This paper tells us all about our Savior and the great God who made all things that are made, and who knows all things and is everywhere. The last statement I had learned by experience the previous year, when as a child, six years of age, I had been made to realize the presence and power of God everywhere, and had said with tears of joy, "Thou God seest me."

This morning a comforting assurance came in these words: My word shall not return unto me void, and I am enabled to say, "The Lord is my strength." To share in this blessing came a kind letter from sister Ruth Keene, full of comfort and fellowship, resplendent with praise to our dear Redeemer, precious and instructive, from her far away place of abode; best of all it was suited to one alone and forsaken and in the midst of dark waters. The children of God are ever to be a sorrowing people, yet ever rejoicing. This is true of the world also, but from the world's sorrowing and the world's rejoicing the child of God must be forever separated by that Spirit that tries by its searching power all spirits, whether they be of God or of the world.

I have been reading the story of that dear sister of old, who in true humility and simplicity of heart, urged by the honest integrity of living faith, walked alone the country road leading from Bethany to Jerusalem to meet her Lord and Savior on his return, that she might ask him to restore her dead brother to life, saying, I know that whatsoever thou wilt, that shall come to pass. Her honest confession and the glorious beauty of truth and simplicity enthroned in her heart by the grace of God will ever present the most vivid view of faith as recorded in the wonderful works of our Savior while here on earth. It is recorded that she said, "I know that he [Lazarus] shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus saith unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life." Blessed words, spoken to a lone, weeping woman, yet the pleasure of God in his wonderful works of creation and redemption was therein expressed. This is the christian's only hope, the soul's sweet home, the everlasting portal to all the bliss for which we by the Spirit of God

are made to sigh, and of which we have a foretaste by grace divine and see as through a glass darkly. All the above named, and the nameless joys of heaven, were embraced in that one statement. This trial of faith, and the evidence of her faithfulness, are recorded for the comfort and encouragement of the soul that is exercised in many ways by the changeableness of time and humanity, and the variableness of human minds. All that ever has been or ever shall be of the dealings of the Lord with the children of men is made secure in the few brief words, "He shall rise again." It is the promise of our dear Savior that when all manner of sin and evil are everywhere present he will come again without sin unto salvation; blest will be that heart in which is found true and living faith.

(MRS.) M. J. LEE.

ATLANTA, Ga., May, 1907.

ELDER H. C. KER—MUCH BELOVED BROTHER:—If so be that I may claim such relationship. I am pleased with your writings as associate editor with Elder F. A. Chick, whose gift and able writings have been much enjoyed by all true Primitive Baptists, if I may be permitted to testify with the outcast of the humble and the poor in spirit, who look unto our God for all blessings we receive in time or hope for in eternity. Brother Ker, there has been, and now is, a question of time salvation among some of our family down here. It may be just a difference in understanding, and if I could I would love to give a word for explanation. I look at the question this way: we all hold that there is but one Savior, who is rich in mercy and who has all power both in heaven and earth; then if he has all power we subjects of his mercy must in ourselves be poor. Then I will compare this question to a rich man who is going on a long journey to return. It is not reasonable to suppose for a moment that that man would want to carry more than enough of his wealth with him to defray all expenses, with the hope that he would enjoy the balance of his fortune when he returned home; so we just have enough heavenly blessings or riches on earth to last us while traveling through this time world, nothing over, with the sweet assurance and hope that the fullness awaits us. We get these blessings as the good Lord sees we need them, without an earthly effort. The Lord is our Fountain of all that is good, and as he has all power we cannot force or coax one blessing over the allowance here on earth; the balance is securely reserved in heaven for us. Just let us trust him and try to let every day be our sabbath day, and say, Glory to the Lord all the time. We will all soon be called home to receive the balance of our inheritance; at best we cannot stay long, we are all travelers, and I feel that my journey is near an end. I only can thank the good Lord for his goodness and mercy and long forbearance to me. I feel under many renewed obligations every day I live; the older I get the more sensibly I feel it. I am now in my sixty-first year, and just as dependent, and, if possible, more so than ever before.

Brother Ker, I feel I cannot write as I wish, but I do desire the peace of our family.

The subscription is past due for our family paper; I have been waiting on a new subscriber to get to send in with my remittance. I would say to all the family: Prove, or try to prove, to the editors that we love and appreciate the best and most able paper known to the Baptists: the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have not

failed in years to send in a new subscriber every time I renewed my subscription; let us all do so who feel such an interest as we express. I am proud of such expressions, but better pleased with the proof of sending in a new subscriber. And be sure to pay your own subscription promptly, and look after those in arrears as much as possible.

Elder J. T. Jordan, the moderator of the Yellow River Association, spent the night with me last night. He came home with us from meeting Saturday, and we all went to meeting to-day, Sunday. Elder Jordan was well pleased with your answer of questions in May 15th number, present volume; I had to give it to him. Will you please send me another? The heading was, Render unto Cæsar the things that belong to Cæsar, &c.

Brother Ker, you may publish this if there is anything in it good for the paper or any of the family.

Your brother,

H. H. BENTLEY.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., June 17, 1906.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—If my roaming mind will permit, I will endeavor to write a few lines to the SIGNS. I have been reading the SIGNS, and can truly say I am well pleased with it, and when we say we are well pleased it should have a deeper meaning than any other word we can use, because God said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." We know from reading the Scriptures that God knew there was not a better expression to use than "well pleased." If there had been an expression with a deeper meaning I believe he would have used it instead of "well pleased," because Jesus, his only begotten Son, was and is the apple of his eye; he loves him and his church above all things. Dear brethren and sisters, if I am worthy to call you so, for surely I feel my unworthiness, I would be glad if I could write my experience, but it seems when I try to write or tell it I cannot express it. I have only been a member of the Primitive Baptists a little over two years. For the first two years the time seemed short, but the last four months have seemed a long time to this poor sinner, having lost my wife the 16th of last February. We were much devoted to each other. I know I love the dear people of the Primitive faith better than any other. We all know that primitive means old, and the oldest worship and teachings of God are what God's people love. These new ways and styles can never satisfy me, and when I go and hear them I come away feeling heavier at heart than before I went, because I have failed to receive manna for my soul. I live close to a theological school, and have been to their meetings and heard them read a passage of Scripture, and when they would speak upon it they would not use the name of Jesus throughout their lecture. I know and realize that our Savior does all things at his appointed time, and according to his holy will and pleasure.

I have written far more than I expected when I started, and I feel relieved after the attempt. May it be God's will to be with me and my two children (one seven years old and the other seven months) and with his people throughout the world, is my humble but earnest prayer. Dear people of God, I beg of you to remember your unworthy servant in your prayers to God.

Farewell for the present.

ODIE L. BROOKS.

WYNNEWOOD, I. T., August 6, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have been reading your most precious paper only a few months, but I like to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I do not belong to the church, but hope to some day. I do not feel that I could come to Christ except the Father draw me. I have felt at times that I would never be a christian, and again I have felt that there is hope. I can do nothing of myself, but if it is God's will he will save me. I believe that the Lord has an appointed time for all things, and he will call his own in his own time. Christ says, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." That shows that man has no power whatever to help the Lord save souls, as I have heard men preach, and that is about all the kind of preaching I hear in the Territory, such as have a god that needs help. I believe that these are the blind that Jesus spoke of, saying, "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." There is but one God and Savior Jesus Christ, and there is no other. I hope that God will be my helper in coming to the church, if it so be that it is the Lord's will for me, a poor sinner, to join. I hope to be one of God's children some day, though I may not be. My dear friends, pray for me, for I feel that I need God's help. My father belongs to the Old School Baptist Church, and grandmother belonged to the same church; she has gone to her eternal home. My mother was a Missionary Baptist; I was four months old when she died. My father is still living.

You can use your own judgment about publishing this letter. I will close for this time.

Your friend,

JOHN E. HENSON.

HAMMONDSPORT, N. Y., Oct. 29, 1906.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—For many years while passing through the wilderness of sin, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES was my constant companion, bringing me news of our Father's family in tribulation, which comforted me in my way, for they, too, have trials and afflictions in their journey as they follow the footsteps of the flock, leading them to the smitten Rock, from which flows the water of life, of which they drink and are satisfied. They do not drink from the artificial pools prepared of men, among the bogs of earth, but are led by the good Shepherd, who gave his life for the sheep, to the Fountain proceeding from the throne of God, where they drink and are satisfied. This holy water cleanses and purifies them.

Your brother, I trust, in hope of eternal life in Christ,

WALTER REED.

PETTIGREW, Arkansas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will send my dropsy remedy free to all poor sufferers in the bounds of your circulation if you will insert a line in the SIGNS to inform them of the fact.

Respectfully,

C. W. ANDERSON.

NOTICE.

LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

OUR supply of the large type cloth Hymn Books is exhausted, and we have only a few copies of the large leather binding (blue marbled edge), which we will mail as long as they last at $1.50 each. We will not be able to fill large orders for these books, but can supply any number desired of the small type Hymn Book.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1907.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

ALL who are connected with the Old School Baptists in this country know that we, as a people, stand opposed to what are called Sunday Schools, and probably almost all who live in the United States also know that this is the case. It is also no doubt true that a vast majority of those who know this do not know the reasons why we take the ground that we do in opposition to such schools. No doubt very many think that we have no good reasons to urge, and that our opposition is a mere matter of prejudice without reason. Most people think them a good thing because they are a nursery out of which the membership of the churches must largely be recruited; others think them good because they instruct children in the Bible, and because they are supposed by them to exercise a good moral influence, and because they keep children out of mischief, in which they might otherwise indulge during the tedious hours of Sunday. Here and there are those among the children of God who say, Why should we oppose Sunday Schools? surely it must be all right to gather our children together one day in the week and read to them the Bible, and instruct them in what it contains. Surely, they say, it can do no harm, and by it our children will be guarded against the things that are contrary to sound doctrine, and therefore not be so easily snared by error. Some are grieved that their children manifest no love for the cause, and hope by such means to awaken in them an interest in our meetings and in our faith. We have heard now and then these things said nearly all our life. We can sympathize with our brethren who are exercised in mind and heart concerning these things, and can understand how they can be and are anxious to take some step to retain their children at home and not allow them to become prejudiced against their own parents' faith and against the people whom they love in the Lord, and we can understand how easy it is for them, seeing others retaining their children at home by means of their Sunday Schools and other attractions provided expressly for young and godless people, to also fly to these very things in order to retain their own children at home. It seems to us that it is well, for the above reasons, to consider this matter again, and perhaps somewhat at length. Those who believe that Sunday Schools are a good thing in the sight of God, have a right to ask of us the reason of our objection to them; we, on the other hand, who believe them wrong, and therefore do not adopt them, have a right to present our reasons for our course. If those who sustain such schools are sincere in their course it is also true that we are sincere on the other hand. We oppose them, first, because we find no warrant in the New Testament for them. It is our faith that the New Testament furnishes all that the church ought to practice in her order or in her worship. We believe that to hold otherwise would be to say that our blessed

Master did not see all that his church would need in all the ages of the future, and, therefore, did not provide, as a wise steward, all that would be needed. No one, so far as we have known, has ever claimed that such things as Sunday Schools expressly for the instruction of children in the Bible are provided for, either by direction or by example in the New Testament. Here also we will add, although outside of the one thing of which we are writing, that there never was a Theological Seminary, or a Missionary Society, or a plan for Christian Endeavor Societies, or any other auxiliaries to the church presented by the apostles to any of the churches, if we may believe the history recorded in the New Testament. It is true that inferences have been drawn from one or two texts by which it is sought to justify such schools. The text in Ephesians vi. 4, is used to this end: "But bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Without pausing to speak of what this Scripture may mean, we will here say that it condemns such schools instead of supporting them. Parents, and not teachers of schools, are addressed, and, so far as the text relates to the subject at all, it would forbid parents from turning their children over to Sunday School teachers for instruction. So, likewise, when Jesus took little children in his arms and blessed them, there is no shadow of proof that he authorized modern Sunday Schools any more than that by so doing he authorized infant baptism or church membership. Nothing can be more important or more clear than this: that all ordinances or practices in the church of Christ must have a direct, plain command or example laid down in the New Testament. To say the least, God-fearing men and women will be a long time hesitating before they will want to place their foot where they cannot plainly see the Savior's footsteps marked in the Bible. This one fact then, that there is no shadow of example or authority for Sunday Schools in the New Testament, is full and sufficient reason for rejecting them with all who hold God's word in reverence. But it may be well to consider some of the reasons which seem good to many, and which even a few of our own dear brethren in some instances have regarded as furnishing justification for them, and in considering these reasons urged in their support, we desire first of all to say that the name "Sunday School" in itself may mean what is right or it may mean what is wrong. If Sunday School simply means a school on Sunday, as a night school simply means a school at night, there is no wrong in it, unless holding a school on Sunday should be a violation of the law of the land; it is not the name but the object of Sunday Schools to which our brethren object. As we have read that the first school on Sunday was started by Robert Raikes, in England, in order that poor children, who were by the necessities of their parents compelled to labor all the week, might have opportunity for such simple instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic as could be given them in that limited time, we should be most heartily in favor of them, and if time and opportunity offered, and necessity demanded, we would count it a privilege to take part in such a school ourself. We do not know whether Robert Raikes had it in view to mingle religion in his teaching or not, but we have always understood that his object was simply to instruct the children of the poor in the same branches of learning that were taught in the week time schools. However, Tyerman in his life

of John Wesley claims that the Methodists were three years ahead of Robert Raikes in starting such schools, and their object was chiefly religious teaching. We certainly feel willing to give to the Methodists all the credit due them for originating modern Sunday Schools; if they claim all the credit we shall not dispute the matter with them. Methodists are entirely consistent with their faith in general when they support Sunday Schools for religious teachings; their whole system of salvation is based upon faith in creature effort, and they claim that men are not really dead in sins, dead to God, but only need to be advised, instructed, exhorted and urged to turn from a course of evil to God in order to accomplish their salvation. Their preaching in the pulpit, especially at revival seasons, and their teaching in the Sunday Schools are all of a piece: it is that children can be led into the kingdom of heaven by Sunday School teaching, and older people by preaching. It is no wonder that Methodists hold such schools, or that they originated them; but for the very reasons urged by Methodists for their support, we who believe in salvation by sovereign grace, and in the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit in the new birth, must always refuse them admission into our churches. Neither men nor children can be instructed into the kingdom of heaven. We say INTO the kingdom; those who by the new birth are in the kingdom can be instructed; he who is not in the kingdom cannot be instructed, he must be born again. Being born again he is a subject for teaching. Methodists by their use of the Sunday School deny the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of men.

It has been said by some with whom we have met in years past, We do not believe that either in the pulpit or in the Sunday School any man or child can be made an heir of glory; we do not approve of either preaching or Sunday Schools for any such reason as that, we simply think them a good thing in order to keep our children at home and away from places of folly or of false religion. Those who have spoken thus are, as we believe, gracious men and women, and they have thus thought and spoken with no thought of introducing any Arminian teaching or faith, but rather have said these things because they do not wish their children to become connected with such false teachings. Now to such dear brethren as these we desire to speak earnestly and kindly. If the establishment of a Sunday School in connection with our churches were needful to these ends, why did not the inspired apostles provide for them by giving directions for them in the New Testament? Why did not the blessed Master command them to be organized? Why was the church left for so many centuries without them? Why did not the Spirit of God lead the mind of our fathers, who were spiritual men, to see the need of them? Why was it left to a people that deny the most solemn truths of our holy faith to originate them? Why must they be the product of workmongers, and not originate among lovers of the truth of salvation by grace alone? Shall we fight carnality with carnality? Shall we use Satan's weapons to fight Satan? Shall we use the armor of the giant to fight the giant? Shall we not continue to use the shepherd's sling and smooth stones from the brook? Because the enemy of truth uses all untruthful means to ensnare the unwary, shall we therefore forsake the Lord and use methods which he has not commanded? Where has the blessed Lord commanded

us to organize Sunday Schools? The reasons urged seem on the face of them very plausible. They are plausible to frail human judgment and reason, but are they in harmony with the Scripture? If Sunday Schools are such good things why should they have originated from the source they have? We have no idea that the early christians allowed their children to attend upon the false and idolatrous worship of the heathen around them in the early or apostolic days, and we do think, and have always thought, that believing parents to-day have no right to allow their children, who are under their charge, so long as they are under their charge, to attend upon the equally false and idolatrous worship of the present day. Sunday Schools are for these reasons no more needed to-day than at the first; nothing was provided for the people of God then save the one church of Jesus Christ, with her ordinances and meetings for worship, nothing more is needed now. This must be true, since the church is God's work and the Sunday School is not his work. If children are to be governed, let it be in the order which God has established, and not according to what may seem good and plausible to our short sight.

We would also urge upon such brethren as we have just been referring to, another consideration: Every wrong thing grows rapidly; "bypath meadow" gets rapidly further and further away from the true way. It has been so with Sunday Schools, even where they have been conducted most carefully and with most careful watchfulness. In the various denominations of the day which depend so much upon the Sunday School, as well as other societies of various kinds organized for the furtherance of their cause, it is true that more and more their papers, their pulpits and their work as churches are filled with these societies rather than with the church itself; more dependence is placed upon these auxiliaries than upon the church organizations; church organizations droop and die out of sight and out of mind while these societies come more and more into prominence. At the first, even in false churches, the Sunday School occupied a very humble place, but to-day it dwarfs the church and stands out with greater prominence than the church. This is true of those denominations which are unscriptural in their faith and order. The same thing is true where those who do love the faith and order of the gospel have established them: more and more comes to be said about the Sunday School, more and more importance is attached to it as the years go on, more and more dependence comes to be placed upon it for the inculcation of truth and for the upbuilding of the cause and for increase in membership in the church. This is so, and always must be so; human nature is always pleased with its own work, and will magnify its own doings, and how often the spiritual mind becomes clouded, and the children of God fail to discern clearly, and become enraptured with the fair colors that appear in all that is false, and before they are aware of the danger their feet are ensnared, and they find themselves depending upon the work of their own hands more than upon the work of God. We know that our God has established his church and that we honor him when we honor it, but can we say as much for the Sunday School? It may be innocent when it is small, at least in appearance, but it will grow, and some day it will destroy the hand that has petted it. The church which God has founded shall not fail or fall; it shall be kept humble and

lowly in dependence upon the dear Savior, but the Sunday School, however innocent in its inception it may appear, will grow self-confident and boastful because the Lord has not established it, and we are persuaded that it will be found almost impossible to keep legalism, will-worship and Arminianism out of it no matter what care may be exercised regarding the conduct of it. We think that in our day and time we have seen these very things, and therefore we solemnly speak of them.

Still further, after a little time it is found that even the ordinary course of teaching in the Sunday School becomes a tedious thing to the children. One argument for such schools has been that children become weary of the regular service, such as preaching, praying and singing, and the Sunday School brings matters down to the comprehension of their little minds, and so their interest will be maintained; but is it so? Let the multiplicity of festivals, children's days, rewards, premiums and special inducements presented to the children to hold them to the Sunday School answer. Emulation, which is forbidden in the word of God, is appealed to in the children to induce them to study the lessons, or commit Scripture to memory. Thus the whole spirit of the Sunday School becomes unscriptural and unchristian in the very endeavor to keep the school in existence. Purely worldly influences are brought into the Sunday Schools, which claim to have as their object the turning away of the minds of the children from the world to the things that are of God. It is as contrary to the mind of the Spirit, as revealed in the gospel, to offer a Sunday School child a bag of candy or a book as a premium for excelling others as it would be to offer a prize in the shape of money to that member of any church who should prove most faithful in his attendance at the services during the year; the one thing is a denial of Christ in his word as much as the other. Children can no more be induced to attend Sunday Schools without these enticements than they can be induced to attend upon the regular services of the church. We are not here urging these things upon the consideration of those who know not the grace of God and who have but little regard for the word of God, but upon those who are spiritual and do love the truth, and desire to be found walking in the way of the Lord. To our brethren we desire to say once more, that out of Sunday Schools have always grown up, and we believe they always will, the evils of which we have here been speaking; they do the children harm and not good, and they certainly are of great injury to the church, in that they turn their minds and hearts away from the strict word of God.

In conclusion we quote from the address issued by the meeting at Black Rock, Md., in 1832, so much as relates to Sunday Schools, and with this we now leave the subject. May God lead us all into a clear vision of the right way and deliver us from all error.

"Sunday Schools come next under consideration. These assume the same high stand as do Tract Societies. They claim the honor of converting their tens of thousands; of leading the tender minds of children to the knowledge of Jesus; of being as properly the instituted means of bringing children to the knowledge of salvation, as is the preaching of the gospel that of bringing adults to the same knowledge, &c. Such arrogant pretensions we feel bound to oppose. First, because these as well as the pretensions

of the Tract Societies are grounded upon the notion that conversion or regeneration is produced by impressions made upon the natural mind by means of religious sentiments instilled into it; and if the Holy Ghost is allowed to be at all concerned in the thing, it is in a way which implies his being somehow blended with the instruction, or necessarily attendant upon it; all of which we know to be wrong.

Secondly, because such schools were never established by the apostles nor commanded by Christ. There were children in the days of the apostles. The apostles possessed as great a desire for the salvation of souls, as much love to the cause of Christ, and knew as well what God would own for bringing persons to the knowledge of salvation, as any do at this day. We therefore must believe that if these schools were of God, we should find some account of them in the New Testament.

Thirdly. We have exemplified in the case of the Pharisees, the evil consequences of instructing children in the letter of the Scripture, under the notion that this instruction constitutes a saving acquaintance with the word of God. We see in that instance it only made hypocrites of the Jews; and as the Scriptures declare that Christ's words are spirit and life, and that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, we cannot believe it will have any better effect on the children in our day.

The Scriptures enjoin upon parents to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; but this, instead of countenancing, forbids the idea of parents intrusting the religious education of their children to giddy, unregenerated, young persons, who know no better than to build them up in the belief that they are learning the religion of Christ, and to confirm them in their natural notions of their own goodness.

But whilst we thus stand opposed to the plan and use of these Sunday Schools, and to the S. S. Union, in every point, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we consider Sunday Schools for the purpose of teaching poor children to read, whereby they may be enabled to read the Scriptures for themselves, in neighborhoods where there is occasion for them, and when properly conducted, without that ostentation so commonly connected with them, to be useful and benevolent institutions, worthy of the patronage of all the friends of civil liberty." C.

JOHN I. 12.

I WOULD be glad to have your views through the SIGNS on the twelfth verse of the first chapter of John. Please give at your convenience, and oblige a friend. G. H. WALES.

BOONEVILLE, Miss.

The Scripture reads as follows: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."

It is encouraging in this fast and non-religious age of the world, to know there are a few here and there inquiring after truth. We are always glad to comply with such requests when, as we hope, we have some understanding of the Scripture suggested.

The verse above quoted is in the midst of a cluster of profound and important sayings which all have their bearing upon each other. John had, as well as the other writers of the gospels, an independent style of writing, yet by the same Spirit. Each one wrote as carefully as though no other had or would write of those wonderful things. Therefore it is necessary to give special attention to what each one says, and by the light of

the Spirit search the meaning of every sentence of each writer, and not expect to learn what one means by what another says. We do not by this mean to suggest that to compare Scripture is not needful or helpful.

Not one of the evangelists, as the writers of the first four books of the New Testament are often called, has given us such a definite account of the majesty and sovereignty of Jesus Christ as John has done. He begins his testimony by saying, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." He is so careful and definite that no man can distinguish between the Word and God. "All things were made by him." In this, glory is given to the Word in the creation of all things, as he and God are presented as one. This is also the testimony of Jesus himself: "I and my Father are one." John continues by saying, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." We must therefore understand that life is in the Word only, and that without that life no man can have light and liberty. "The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." Darkness cannot comprehend the light: "Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord." Men must be made alive before they can comprehend the Light. "He [the Light] was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not;" neither does it know him now. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." The Jews were "his own" by creation; by choice in setting them apart from all other nations; to them he manifested his power and glory at the Red Sea, Mt. Sinai and Jordan. The Word in his incarnation was a Jew, therefore by nationality they were his own as "the natural branches." He was their brother, being the seed of Abraham; but notwithstanding all this they, as a nation, did not receive him, but rejected him with scorn and disdain. As a nation they were darkness, or blind to the Word made flesh. The law of Moses could not give life, hence grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

In the days of Elijah, the Israelites, as a nation, were blind to the work of God's Spirit in men; they killed the prophets whom God sent to them, and digged down his altars. The old prophet felt alone in the earth as a true believer in God and as a discerner of the Lord's dealings with men in the Spirit, but the Lord told him that there were seven thousand (a remnant) reserved who had not bowed the knee to Baal. Paul in presenting the subject of election among the Jews said, "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. * * * What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." This remnant or election of grace were those who believed on his name and received the Word. The testimony of John the Baptist as recorded in this first chapter of John is, "That all men through him might believe." No people ever had such demonstrations of the existence of God, of his power, glory and sovereignty, as the Israelites, but none of those things caused them to believe in the Word as the anointed of God. If natural men by demonstrations of God's power in nature can of their own volition believe on and receive Christ, why did not all the Jews receive him? The term "all men" refers to different

tongues, kindreds and peoples, of which none save the Jews had known the true God until after Jesus came and removed the middle wall of partition. If all men through him believe, it is evident that it is not through themselves or their powers, yet learned men contend that it is, and that any man can believe and receive Christ at any moment he chooses to do so.

When Christ was born in Bethlehem, the city of David, the angel of the Lord was sent to a part of the remnant; they were shepherds watching over their flock by night. They received Him; Simeon and Anna received him; wise men of the east received him. All these received him and believed in him, when he was but an infant, as the Christ, the Savior of sinners. When he began to be about thirty years of age, John the Baptist received him as "the Lamb of God." The disciples received him as "that Christ, the Son of the living God." Mary, Martha and Lazarus, the man of the tombs, the lepers, the blind, the sick and afflicted, all received him as the promised Messiah. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The reception of Jesus by those above mentioned, and by all who did receive him, was the evidence of their sonship, which could only be by birth: "born of God." Life precedes action, and birth makes manifest.

The words, "gave them power to become the sons of God," do not mean what the "Millennial-dawn" people think they do: that during the thousand year reign of Christ on the earth we who receive him now shall then become the sons of God. The words, "which were born," completely refute their idea of this text, as the term, "which were born," most positively asserts that which had already taken place, and if the child is not a son of his father when born, when will he become a son? If it be true in nature that immediately he is a son and an heir, why is it not true spiritually? The spiritual birth manifests the children of God, and if children, then heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. John said in one of his letters, "Now are we the sons of God;" not going to become sons some time in the future. Men are not the sons of God because they are born of blood, royal stock, nor because they are the children of Abraham, nor is it because of a birth according to the will of man, which is carnal and contrary to God, but because they are born of God. Nothing else constitutes a child of God; and because of this birth men now receive Christ Jesus the Lord and rejoice in his blessed gospel of free grace.

We realize that our effort is feeble, but it is the best we can do, and we leave it for the consideration of our friend.

K.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

At her home at Stewartsville, Bedford Co., Va., July 26th, 1907, in the 73rd year of her age, the spirit of sister **Susan Julia Basham** passed forever to dwell with Him who is glorious in holiness. For weeks she had realized that her pilgrimage was near its end, and, like David of old, her cry was, My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I appear before God. On Saturday afternoon, the 27th, an immense throng gathered at her late home to pay the last tribute of respect to one they loved. Her pastor, Elder A. B. Philpot, conducted the funeral services, speaking consolingly from Revelation xx. 6. Of her it could be truly said, She trusted in the mercy of the Lord, and her heart rejoiced in his salvation. She was the daughter of Peter M. and Susan Wright, of Bedford County. She was united in marriage to W. W. Basham, of Franklin County, in November, 1851, who, although he never united with any visible church, believed in salvation by grace. He died in February, 1901. The Lord was strength

to her in her distress, "a present help in time of trouble." In writing of this time, she stated that in the latter part of 1900 the sentence, I will show thee what great things thou shalt suffer for my name's sake, was brought to her mind, and continued with her so much as to cause great anxiety, fearing she would not prove faithful in the unknown trial, but the words, "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart," were comfortingly applied. She thought she realized something of the meaning of the last two sentences. Thanks be to God, the ever merciful Savior visited her with the favor he shows his people, and ere long she felt with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." About forty-nine years ago, after great travail, her soul was brought into marvelous light by the Deliverer. Rejoicing that her burden was lifted, she offered herself to the Primitive Baptist Church, at Bethel, in Franklin County, and was received, and baptized by Elder Martin, who long since passed away. From that time until her death she had a name with them, and was ever ready to speak to the praise of the glory of his name. She was one who through great bodily suffering entered into rest. For fifty-two years the hand of disease was upon her, and through most of that time she was confined to her bed. The first three years of this period was spiritual darkness, but after that she was given the oil of joy for mourning and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Her soul was strengthened by words of holy writ, and drawn into close communion with the One who bore our griefs and carried our sorrows. No pen can tell what seasons of refreshing were hers when possible to have the Elders come to her home and publish peace and good tidings and administer the memorials of bread and wine; nor can words describe how she loved the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. There is no meetinghouse for our faith within ten miles, and no Elder near. She felt this deprivation greatly, and in a larger degree after the trial of not being able to get one of our ministers to conduct the funeral services of her husband. But thanks be to the Giver of all good gifts, her heart was much strengthened of late by the Lord opening up the way for her to leave means after her decease, viz., two acres of land and $1800 in cash, for the building of an Old School Baptist meetinghouse near her late residence. She entrusted the building of this house to her very dear nephew, Mr. Ellis Wright. She was one of a family of nine children, and her crossing leaves only one (the writer) on this side, and I have nearly reached fourscore years.

(MRS.) H. A. MCMANAWAY.

SANDY FORD, Va., Aug. 17, 1907.

THE hand of death has again visited our little flock and torn from our midst our precious sister, **Ann P. Core,** widow of the late Wm. Core. She was born at Chatteris, England, May 27th, 1833, died at Evansville, Ind., July 30th, 1907, aged 74 years, 2 months and 3 days. She was married to Matthew Felstead, April 29th, 1853, emigrated from England Oct. 11th, 1854, and arrived at Evansville Dec. 26th, 1854. She was again married, to Wm. Core, at Evansville, Feb. 21st, 1882. She joined the Regular Baptist Church at Evansville, August 23rd, 1863, where she retained an unbroken membership for more than forty years. She was devoted to the church and its welfare, and her house was a home for the Baptist people, especially the ministry. It seemed to be her chief joy to entertain the preachers, and I believe she cared for more Baptist ministers than any one I ever knew. Her kindness did not stop here, but extended far and near, and many shared her hospitality. As a christian she lived an exemplary life, always adorning her profession by an upright walk and a godly conversation. She leaves one sister, a number of other relatives and a host of friends to mourn their loss. Although she had passed the allotted time of life, her death came unexpectedly, and the event was quite a shock to all her friends. Her place in her home is vacant, her seat in the church, where we had so long been accustomed to seeing her form, is vacant, but she has passed through the dark valley and reached the goal of her hope, and forever outstripped the fears that becloud this mortal life, and while we miss her presence, we would not recall her if we could, but will look forward to the time when we, too, shall be freed from the cares, temptations, doubts and fears that so beset the pilgrim's pathway.

MATTIE KERR.

Miss Carrie Logan departed this life July 29th, 1907, at her home on Main St., Lebanon, Ohio, after a long and painful illness. In life Miss Logan was an active, energetic woman of more than ordinary business tact and proficiency, and for several years was one of the principal business spirits of the town. In her long and tedious illness she was patient, cheerful and resigned, and bore her intense sufferings with a calmness and fortitude which was indeed miraculous. She talked at all times of her approaching departure with a calm and undisturbed composure, and arranged all things for her funeral in the most exact order and minutest detail. She desired that the eighth chapter of Romans be read as an expression of her experience, hope and faith, and that the twenty-eighth verse, which has so long been a fountain of consolation to the Lord's experienced people, be especially dwelt upon. The different city papers gave beautiful encomiums on her life and character, but referred only to outward things, knowing nothing of her inward faith and hope and charity, of which the outer life was but the shadow. Miss Logan was an esteemed member of the Old School Baptist Church known as the West Lebanon Church.

The funeral took place at the home on Thursday,

August 1st, where a large and sympathetic audience assembled, after which the mortal body was deposited in the public vault, where it lay until Saturday evening, August 3rd, when it was committed to the grave in the presence of the family and a few friends.

H. M. CURRY.

MEETINGS.

THE Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, Providence permitting, will hold a two days meeting the first Wednesday and Thursday in September (4th and 5th), 1907. We extend an invitation to all lovers of the truth, especially ministers.

HENRY BRONSON, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting to be held on Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 4th and 5th, 1907. Those coming via Ontario & Western R. R. or Delaware & Hudson R. R. will come to Olyphant, Pa., on Tuesday. Those coming on D., L. & W. R. R. will be met at Clarks Summit, Pa., Tuesday afternoon. We respectfully ask that those expecting to be met will write to G. W. Goodrich, Olyphant, Pa., R. F. D., so that arrangements may be made to meet them.

G. W. GOODRICH, Clerk.

THE Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Predestinarian or Primitive Baptists will convene with the Mount Pleasant Church, at Pleasureville, Ky., on Friday, Sept. 6th, 1907, and continue three days. Pleasureville is on Louisville & Lexington division of L. & N. R. R., with daily trains each way. Also from Cincinnati via La Grange or via Cincinnati south to Georgetown and Frankfort. We expect Elders Lester, Eubanks and John G. Sawin with us at that time. Come, brethren, meet with us.

C. F. DUDLEY, Church Clerk.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Old School Baptist Church at Bowdoinham, Maine, to begin on Friday before the second Monday in September, (6th) 1907, and continue three days. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus. Place of meeting is but a few minutes walk from Bowdoinham depot.

GEO. R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Harford Church, Harford County, Md., to commence at 10 o'clock a. m. on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1907, and continue two days. A cordial invitation is extended to lovers of the truth. Those coming by way of Baltimore will take train that leaves North Ave. station at 3:45 p. m. on Friday before, for Long Green or Forest Hill. Those coming from the north take train that leaves York, Pa., at 1:55 o'clock for same stations.

NATHAN GRAFTON.

THE Licking Association of Primitive Baptists will convene with the Bald Eagle Church, at Mt. Sterling, Montgomery Co., Ky., on the C. & O. R. R., about thirty-two miles east of Lexington, with daily trains each day, on Friday, Sept. 13th, 1907, and continue three days. We extend a hearty welcome to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. We will meet all trains Thursday evening and Friday morning.

T. J. RATLIFF.

THE Roxbury Association is appointed to be held with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., commencing on Wednesday, Sept. 18th, 1907, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continuing two days. Trains will be met at Shokan, on the Ulster & Delaware R. R., Tuesday p. m. A cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth is extended, especially to ministers of our faith and order, to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Cammal, Pa., expects to hold a two days meeting Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 18th and 19th, 1907. We cordially invite brethren and friends generally to meet with us. Nothing preventing, we expect to have two or three ministers with us.

D. M. VAIL, Pastor.

THE yearly meeting of the Cow Marsh Old School Baptist Church, Kent County, Del., will be held on Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 21st and 22nd, 1907, beginning at 2 o'clock p. m. Saturday. All trains stopping at Viola station will be met Saturday morning, and friends will be conveyed to the meeting. A cordial invitation is given to all who love our faith and order.

THOMAS L. COOPER, Church Clerk.

THE annual meeting of the Cumberland Association with the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church of University St., South Nashville, Tenn., will convene, if the Lord will, Saturday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1907, and continue three days. All lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus are cordially invited, especially those in the ministry.

O. B. HICKERSON.

THE First Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, at Vega, N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting to be held, the Lord willing, Wednesday and Thursday, October 2nd and 3rd, 1907. Trains will be met at Roxbury on Tuesday before the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

V. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School or Primitive Baptist Association will be held with the Second Roxbury Church, at Halcottville, N. Y., on line of U. & D. R. R., at the usual time, on first Wednesday and Thursday (2nd and 3rd) in October, 1907. A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth.

JAMES AVERY, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Association of Old School Baptists will convene, if Providence permits, with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon County, Pa., on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1907, and continue three days. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth, and hope to be remembered by our ministering brethren. Those coming by railroad will come on the Pennsylvania R. R. to Mount Union on Thursday, and there take the East Broadtop road to Three Springs. The trains leave Mount Union at 9 a. m. and 4 p. m. Both trains will be met.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the New Valley Church, at New Valley, Loudoun Co., Va., commencing on Wednesday, October 16th, 1907, and continuing three days. Trains from the west will be met at Washington Junction, Md., 1:30 p. m. Tuesday, 15th. Those coming by the Southern Railroad from Washington will be met at Leesburg, Va., 3:30 and 6:10 p m. Tuesday, 15th. A cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth is extended, especially ministers of our faith and order, to meet with us.

S. B. PAXSON.

THE Mt. Enon Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Elim Church, near Ft. Meade, Polk Co., Fla., beginning Friday before the second Sunday in November, 1907, and continuing three days. A cordial invitation is extended to all Old School Baptists, and especially to ministering brethren who love and contend for salvation by grace, to be with us.

M. L. GILBERT, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 75. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1907. NO. 19.

CORRESPONDENCE.

IF THEY SHALL FALL AWAY.

"FOR it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."—Hebrews vi. 4-6.

The leading thought of Paul's argument here is expressed by his words, for it is impossible "to renew them again unto repentance." The other portions of his argument are subsidiary to this leading thought. The renewal of these characters would, on such an hypothesis, "crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." This would be as impossible: "crucify the Son of God afresh," as it is "to renew them again unto repentance." Many persons in reading this Scripture think that because the apostle uses the word "if," that it makes his argument conditional, and signifies that he meant it might be either way with those persons. The word "if" does not always mean a condition actually existing, but frequently it is used for the sake of illustrating by the hypothesis of a supposition. Paul uses it many times in this way. In Romans, chapter eleven, the apostle, speaking about the way God saves his people, declares emphatically that they are saved by the election of grace, "And if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace; otherwise work is no more work." He says it is by grace, then adds, If it be of works. Can it be either way? Why does he use the word "if" as though it were contingent, conditional or doubtful? His argument is to show the wrong way, or that which is no way, as well as the way of holiness. Many other places he brings in suppositions by using the word "if." In the Scripture at the head of this letter where he says: "If they shall fall away," does not prove that they shall fall away. I am surprised to find an Elder among the Primitive Baptists who takes the position that those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, are not the children of God, but that they are the nonelect. He says that if these are the children of God spoken

of here by the apostle, then the Arminians are right in claiming that God's people can fall from grace. I have never found it prudent to dodge any point of Scripture teaching to thwart the argument of an Arminian.

Let us consider briefly the five very important things which Paul has used to delineate the special and effectual calling of his chosen people.

"Those who were once enlightened." Does this mean the enlightenment of the world? Has the wisdom of men entered into the minds of these persons to give them light which they did not possess previous to that enlightenment? If this denotes the reception of worldly wisdom, it then must be acquired by study or labor of some kind, or infused by their fellow-creatures. Paul, in speaking of this enlightening, says: "I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." This enlightenment comes from the great Fountain of light, for he is the "true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Expounders of Scripture may take the above word "world" to mean this natural or physical world, but inspiration has made a distinction: "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 12–14. The true Light is the fountain of wisdom only to them who are born in the spiritual world. This birth manifests them so that they see the true Light of spiritual day; the Daystar arises to them in all of his beauty. The Lord himself will enlighten his people, and at the proper time, the appointed time, he will command, "Let there be light," and light shineth in darkness, but the darkness comprehendeth it not. How wonderful is the power of our God. David says, "The Lord my God will enlighten my darkness." There is a power displayed by Almighty God in the physical world which can be seen by mortal man, and though he tremble and fear at God's power over the elements of nature he soon forgets what he has seemed to learn. David was acquainted with the power of God's might in this respect when he said, "His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled."—Psalms xcvii.

"And have tasted of the heavenly gift." This second time the apostle speaks on the same line, connects it with the word "and," showing that it is similar to the preceding phrase. It seems plain that he is alluding to the same mighty work of the Lord, but uses different words to make it more impressive. They have tasted of something, what is it? The heavenly gift. Can a dead sinner taste of so high a gift and still remain dead? The heavenly gift is a gift that comes from heaven. Jesus says that he came down from heaven, and it was not to do his own will, but the will of his Father which sent him. Jesus is that heavenly gift. If a man taste of that gift he shall never die. A taste of that gift gives life, quite different from the natural taste. Jesus says, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life." A taste of the heavenly gift is

sufficient for all time and eternity; it is so sweet and precious that the heavenly flavor never leaves the tongue, but springeth up in the soul as a fountain of living waters. They henceforth eat and drink in "my Father's kingdom," and the all-important food is the flesh of Jesus Christ's body, and the drink is the blood of Christ; one place it is called the blood of God. They taste, eat and drink wherever Christ is exalted a Prince and a Savior to give repentance and remission of sins unto poor sinners. It may be when conversing on the subject of God's mercy, or when they hear the glad tidings by the proclamation of the gospel, or in meditating upon his holiness and love for poor worms of the dust.

"And were made partakers of the Holy Ghost." I cannot for an instant think that such strong language has allusion to sinners dead, who remain dead in trespasses and in sins. Those who were made partakers of the Holy Ghost must be those whose names are written in heaven, those whose names are written in the palm of God's hand. The same names appear in the Lamb's book of life, written there before the world began. These persons are well secured by Jehovah long before they are needed to show forth his praises. When the time of manifestation comes God makes them partakers of the Holy Ghost. This is evidence of their primitive standing in the Ancient of Days. This third phrase of the apostle is in line with the two preceding, and cannot mean that any except but God's favored people are made partakers of the Holy Ghost. Jesus told his disciples to fear God and not to fear man, and that when arrested by men to take no thought what they should say, "For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say." The Holy Ghost is God. There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost; these three are one. It is inconsistent with all Scripture teaching to say that natural men have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost and still remain natural, dead.

The fourth phrase follows in the same line of argument; it refers to the elect, the objects of God's love, and for whom the Son left heaven to accomplish their redemption. "And have tasted the good word of God." If this was put in opposition to the second thought of the apostle in this connection, it would do no violence to the sentiment involved in the text. To taste of the heavenly gift is the same as to taste of the good word of God; certainly he that tastes of the heavenly gift must taste of the good word of God. Jesus is the Word of God, and no doubt will stand as the good Word of God. The written word or the testimony of the word might be meant here, but I would rather think the apostle meant Him who is recorded on high, though the printing does not signify that he is meant. God's people are born again by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. The word of the Lord endureth forever, and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you. In the last two references I have always believed that the Word mentioned was nothing short of Jesus Christ.

"And the powers of the world to come." Those who taste the good word of God also taste the powers of the world to come. They who have been with Jesus on the holy mount have tasted the powers of the world to come. How could one be dead and taste the powers of a world not yet come to him? It is for the living in Jerusalem to taste of this unseen

power; it is only through the channel of faith that they see the country which is far off, yet nigh, made so by revelation. Their eyes have not yet seen it, their ears have not yet heard the heavenly songs, neither has it entered the carnal heart what God has prepared for the world to come, but revelation has brought it nigh, the revelation of Jesus Christ, "to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." This is when the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings to the poor and helpless of the flock who are ready to famish. Then there is rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Can these who have experienced such wonders fall away? Did God ever love the characters spoken of in the text? He most certainly did love them, or he never would have wrought so powerfully in them. Our God is no try god, one that tries experiments on the family of men to find out what man will do for him. Where he begins a good work he "will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." "He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law." They are kept by the power of God unto salvation every step of the way. How shall they fall away? If they shall fall away it is impossible to renew them again. God loved his people with a great love; even when they were dead in sins he loved them with an everlasting love. Who shall separate them from that great love, that everlasting love? Let the same holy writer that wrote our text answer: "Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." This is great and strong evidence. Dear children, rest in the Lord, for in the Lord is everlasting strength.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

HELENA, Okla., Aug. 19, 1907.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Aug. 9, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have obtained brother Coulter's consent to do as seems best with any of his letters written to me, and I have selected four which I desire to have published in the SIGNS. I think they will be of value for comfort and instruction to the brethren, as they have been to me. Often the letters that would be most interesting to read are so personal that the receiver cannot well publish them. Brother Coulter's letters to me, as well as his personal intercourse, have been of much value to me, kind and encouraging and full of comfort. From my very extended correspondence during the past forty-four years with ministering and other brethren throughout the land, I have many packages of letters which are so good that I cannot consent to have them destroyed. The writers of many of them have long ago gone home, but I hope their words of instruction and comfort may yet be read by many lovers of the truth.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March 2, 1895.

MY DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—Your letter came to hand several days ago. We were glad to hear that you arrived safely, and found brother and sister Chambliss well. But poor Florida, her pretty gown of green and yellow has

been torn from her by the cruel blasts of winter, yet no doubt pity with her soft heart will come along with her warm south winds, bind up her wounds and so make her gay and fruitful again. The work of the Lord is to kill and make alive. He also makes manifest his wondrous power in nature as a type of his own work of grace in the hearts of his children. I wonder if brother Chambliss has not already read his own heart's experience in comparison as he observed the play of the elements, first in bringing into beauty and fruition his fertile grove, and then when security seemed doubly secure in the near realization of a rich harvest, the swift hand of destruction comes in a night, laying waste the rich promises of yesterday which abounded in life, while to-day the blasted hopes are covered in death's dark shroud. The circumstances that combine to check our natural zeal seem to be reminders to the Lord's children that here "we have no continuing city," that the things of this life of earthly aspirations all do perish with the using, like the flower that withereth; to-day we see it in its beauty, its loveliness and its rich perfume, and tomorrow it is a thing of the past. We turn from this, and by the mirror which reflects our own heart to faith's view we see in the heart of our brethren the flower (or word) of eternal life, springing up from the seedtime and maintaining a steady growth until the harvest, "first the blade, then the ear; after that, the full corn in the ear," and as we compare we realize the word of the Lord (alone) endureth forever. With what anxiety we look for the evidences in ourselves that we so clearly read in our brethren, and how we tremble with fear and dread when in our searching we find them not, but instead we find a vile and deceitful heart, a heart desperately wicked and as prone to evil as are the sparks to fly upward; indeed, we find our whole being bent upon turning the back upon the fair city of Jerusalem and seeking the polluted streets of Jericho. But with me ofttimes, dear brother, a ray of hope springs up into life when I realize that there is a something within me that has produced a change of feeling; I find that I do not roll the fleshly lusts of my evil nature "as a sweet morsel under my tongue," and while I recognize that with my flesh I serve the law of sin, yet that new something within me causes me to hate evil, to abhor the things I once did revel in, and as the little ray of hope becomes a ray of light also, by it I obtain a glimpse of the foundation upon which my hope is builded, my faith discovers Jesus as its author and finisher, and if, as I fondly hope, a growth in grace is going on, I see more and more in that growth the fullness of Jesus' love, that he is all and in all, the Alpha and the Omega indeed. I seem to discover also that the very fact of a hatred of evil being present is the fear of God, and this is the beginning of wisdom. My desire is that I may hear my Savior's voice in all my every day life, and feel the gentle pressure of his gracious hand to restrain and guide me through all the fitful fever of this life.

I visited sister Himes on Friday afternoon and found her up and dressed, walking about the hospital. She has been very nervous during the last few days, owing probably to the noise and confusion of the other patients in the ward. She now expects that she will leave the hospital on Monday (March 4th), and will likely visit with the brethren here for a week or so before she goes home. She is anxious to meet some of our

preachers, and we expect to have quite a number of meetings this month; Elders Chick, Grafton, Bogardus, Rittenhouse, Vail and Badger we expect to be with us. We have not heard from Southampton since you went away. We miss the occasional visits with which you sometimes favored us. Do you think the visits of the Lord's people to each other can be properly called angels' visits? They mostly take a message with them when they go, and I think in the true sense angels are messengers.

We hope you will all return in April much benefited by your southern sojourn. We all unite in sending love to yourself and family. I have just heard a very interesting and womanly little letter read, written by Miss Edith Durand, to her aunt, Annie Jenkins.

Affectionately your brother,

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—The love of God which passeth all understanding was so clearly manifest in you during your last short visit at our house that I have thought much of it, not only pleasantly, but with renewed assurance that the Spirit of God dwells richly in his people, and that our religion is not a dream of things that are vain, but a sweet and precious reality, the substance of which is, as declared by John, "Which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life." It was not alone the conversation (yet it was rich and abundant in the faith of God) that impressed me, but a certain undefinable something which I am glad I cannot describe or explain, for I am sure it is embraced in, and the very life of, the mystery of godliness; a something, of which I can only say that it is a manifestation of the exercise of the Spirit of God in the heart of one of his servants, which mellows and sanctifies all things within its sweet and subtle influence, causing a solemnity of feeling and a sacred nearness in the fulfillment of the words in Deuteronomy: "But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it." A something that casts out fear, making doubts to flee into the wilderness, and our sins into the land of forgetfulness, to be remembered no more against us forever, causing us to rejoice in spirit that Jesus is our very life, in whom we live and move and have our being. A something that makes melody in our hearts, for we behold Jesus, our King, exalted above the heavens, high and lifted up, glorious in beauty, "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood." We see him, too, as the High Priest of our profession, having purged our sins by the sacrifice of himself, "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." A something, the result of which faith spreads before our enchanted vision the complete work of the salvation of God, the way and plan of salvation made plain and simple in the perfect wisdom of God, for "by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many." A something which causes the love of God to flow from heart to heart, and which brings about a cementing of fellowship which can never be broken. Friendship may (for a time at least) be marred by misconstructions of understanding, but fellowship never, when our instructions are sealed by the Spirit of God.

Almost all the winter I have been shut

out from the joys of God's salvation, filled with darkness of mind and barrenness of soul; the rays of light have been as angels' visits, few and far between. I have longed for some little sense of feeling, that I might feel the power of an endless life, or some little sense of taste, that I might taste the sweetness of the Savior's love. I have cried in the desert for water, and there was none; I have tried in vain to think, but my thoughts wandered, like the fool's eye, to the ends of the earth; I mused, and in my musings I did hope the fire should kindle in my breast, but within all was dark and cold and vain and wild, even every tiny spark had flown as before the north wind. Since your visit I have taken courage, and feel once more to be reconciled to the will of God concerning me, for now I firmly believe that every heartache, every acute sorrow for sin, every sore trial, has been necessary for me, just the things I needed, and I also firmly believe that since the morning of the creation up to the present moment God has never done one thing in vain. I often complain because things around me do not go as I would have them, and I have to be lashed with many stripes to be made to see that I am finite, my vision curtailed, and I look through glasses that are warped and altogether imperfect, while God is infinite, and the mechanism of his perfect arrangement adjusts itself to every detail, both in wisdom and harmony. I set up a standard of right according to my own weak and faulty judgment, and condemn every one who does not come up to my standard; I put myself in the same catalogue with the fool who said in his heart, "There is no God." Is it any wonder that I am made to go down into the pit to learn wisdom? But just now I rejoice that my God is a merciful God, and of long and tender forbearance; he has not rewarded me according to my iniquities, but according to his tender mercy and loving-kindness. I would be glad to say (to every brother who has come in contact with my perverse and crooked nature) with the apostle, "Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me." You know what it is, brother Durand, to feel that sacred nearness of the presence of the gracious Redeemer, when you would tread softly in an atmosphere of God's precious love, where all things in the earth and above the earth have become subdued in the sweet yet awful solemnity of the life and light of everlasting bliss; then rejoice with me, for if I am not deceived I have had just a little taste of the unrivalled viands of his banqueting-house.

We have engaged the room for fourth Sunday evening, and announced your coming on that evening (this month). We all send love.

Affectionately your brother,

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Sept. 7, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—In your far off temporary home I have no doubt you are willing to read a letter even from me. The distance between us is readily measurable, and I suppose all material things with which we have to do in this material world are capable in some way of being measured, either by time or distance, but when we are privileged to draw the curtain which separates between things material and things spiritual we find (sometimes at least) that we must lay aside our measuring-rod and stand in awe and with wonder as we meditate upon the unsearchable depths of the riches which are in Christ Jesus

our Lord. The psalmist was no doubt looking by faith into the wondrous depths of God's mercy and love when he said, "For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." Only by faith can we understand the things which our natural mind cannot grasp, which mind cannot reach beyond the things of time and sense. Who can lay the measurement to the boundaries of heaven? or who can follow Him whose footsteps are in the mighty deep? Neither can the extent of his mercy be outlined. Should we start to-day and travel for a million years we could not cover the distance between the east and the west, nor would we be any nearer the end than at the beginning; then how great and how precious is the promise of the putting away of our transgressions. With our finite minds our thoughts are time thoughts; as the well worn pages of a book we turn backward and refresh our memory with the incidents of a life in time, and as we turn page after page we remember how sweetly, how gently and how wisely the guiding hand of our gracious Lord has directed us, and on a very occasional page we will find it recorded that as was Paul so were we, whether in the body we could not tell, or whether out of the body we could not tell, "God knoweth;" "caught up to the third heaven," eternal, unmeasurable, hearing "unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter," and as we consider the oft turned pages as a whole we notice that all unconscious to ourself we have been measuring "the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein," and we find to our amazement that this is the way we have made those measurements, through an experience of grace, in trials many, in afflictions severe, in weary nights, in groanings, in tossings to and fro, yet all the while extending our measuring-rod in the hope that perchance we might find a similar measurement in ourselves fitting in the temple, or about the very foot of the altar, peradventure we might discover in measuring a retired nook where our bodies have fallen prostrate, and where we have offered supplications and sacrifices of thanksgiving to Him that sat upon the throne; also we measured "them that worship therein" to find if possible if our own stature corresponded with the stature of those lovely ones. O, says my heart, my fellowship and my love and all my desires are with that company. But again I scan the pages, and alas how marred and misshapen does my course appear; I find I have been making myself of the number that commend themselves, that I have been measuring myself by myself, and attempting to stretch myself beyond my proper measure, that I might appear something in the eyes of my brethren when I am nothing. How zigzag is that path, O so crooked, and I look up as Peter did, and perceive Jesus looking upon me, O so sad and pitiful; then do I weep with very shame and contrition, but the lesson is to me in value above rubies, and whatever fruit is yielded is to the glory of God, to the power of his grace, and to the lifting on high of my gracious Redeemer. Again the turning of a page reveals to me that I have thought of my Creator as such an one as myself, as one that might go on a journey, or perchance be asleep, or perhaps weary with being so constantly forgotten; but the next page recalls to my memory a voice which came to me in that selfsame hour, as a sound of many waters, saying, "Hast

thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding." I look again, and behold I find my puny mind has been trying to find out the way of the Lord, of which it is said "the vulture's eye hath not seen," and to search out his judgments; again the voice comes, this time in thunder tones, "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." As I continue my search I reach the time limit, yet time goes on, the leaves bear record so far, then blank leaves follow, I do not know how many, but I am in the present, and now my measuring-rod must do more work; surely my stature is greatly increased, how much have I grown in all these years? But what means this? Surely my measuring-rod is at fault. It shows me not increased, but shrunken, dwindled down, until I am reminded that my Lord said, "Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance." Why, when I began the record of my pilgrimage journey I verily thought I would grow big and wax fat and astonish my brethren with the greatness of my knowledge and achievements, but now the shrinking tells me and this dwindled speck of nothing assures me that my early aspirations were only fleshly ambitions. I do rejoice now, however, that I do not regret the failure of my cherished plans, but with the apostle "I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." And now as I live in the present I realize that pages in my book are still unceasingly being recorded, to-day becomes yesterday ere I am aware, and to-morrow becomes to-day. I would peer into the future and scan the pages yet untold, but the curtain rises not, only as the future becomes the present and the present the past. But I still cling to my measuring-rod, and the lessons I have learned in the past seem to have passed from me as water from a sieve, for I find I have profited not by them. I go on trying to measure the unmeasurable, I would know the secrets of eternity, my line reaches out to embrace the breadth and depth of God's boundless love, I seek to ascertain the farthest recesses of the mercies of God; I even attempt to open and pass beyond the portals of the darkness, that I may find how far the powers thereof are permitted to go. But of my follies you have heard enough. Should all things be taken from me that are unprofitable and foolish and vain, there would be nothing left, and the place that knows me now would know me no more forever.

When I sat down to write I had a little hope that I might be given something that would interest you, but alas for human hopes, "For to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." I find I am not able to measure my capabilities, and just at this moment I think I have discovered the reason, and it is because my researches are being made in the wrong place, I am searching in my own flesh for good things and depending upon my own strength to perform good acts. Were I to enter the temple which I hope is set up in my heart, close the door and pray in secret to the Father, I feel to know that the Father which seeth in secret would reward me openly. But I feel to be like Jonah, who was rebellious and stiffnecked, and there was a needs be that he must not only be cast into the belly of hell, but also that he should faint, and so become bereft of every ves-

tige of strength in himself ere he could proclaim salvation to be of the Lord. In Jesus we have all things and know all things, but in the flesh how puny and insufficient we are.

I hope you will come home greatly improved in your physical condition. Please remember me in christian love to brother and sister McColl. I had the pleasure of meeting sister Ella this summer at Middletown. We all join in love to you. I have no special local news that would interest you.

Affectionately your brother,

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., May 3, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—I cannot help thinking all the time (sister Durand's declaration to the contrary notwithstanding) since my short visit to you yesterday how profitless my visit was to you, and how much profit it was to me, therefore if I tell you I am glad I went you can see it is a selfish pleasure, because I derived all the benefit. However I want to tell you, if I can, how the visit affected me. When I saw you lying upon the bed in an apparently helpless condition I did not look upon you as temporarily bereft of the profit and usefulness to the sheep and lambs of the flock of your Master, which have been so vividly manifest through all the time of your precious and profitable ministry, but a continuance of it; not a cutting off for the time being of the work which the Lord has ordained concerning you and the people whom you so faithfully serve, but a ploughing deeper and deeper into the fallow ground of your already rich and varied experience, that his ends may all be accomplished in the pathway which he has marked out for you. I could see in it all how good the Lord is to his people, and how infinitely higher are his ways than our ways. He says, "I wound, and I heal;" and in the wounding he leads his servants way down into the depths of the mystery of his precious gospel; he shows unto them their own creature helplessness, causing them to lean on him for support, and to cry out of a contrite heart, "Lord, help me," by which they enter into a fellowship and nearness with our gracious Redeemer which in its wondrous fullness is as the knowledge of the Lord, filleth the earth "as the waters cover the sea," and in the knowledge of their helplessness they are brought to see how Jesus does carry them in his bosom, and how they breathe not their own depraved life, but the atmosphere they breathe is the life and light and strength of Jesus. How wonderful was the revelation when it first came to me that Jesus was my very life. "And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." In connection with yesterday's visit come these words: "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so." You have a clear conception of how a physician feels (or ought to feel) when he enters a sick room, his senses keenly alive to every symptom manifest in the case, but when I entered your chamber yesterday, brother Durand, I had a peculiar feeling, and one I hope I never will forget. It was a feeling of joyful solemnity, for I seemed to feel the presence of the great and supremely wise Physician, whose beneficent and healing presence and virtue had never been absent from the room. My anxiety was at once removed, and I felt to know that in his own good time you would be preaching to us again. My heart said, although

my lips did not utter it, The Lord is here, and all is well. Perhaps it may be a little comfort to you to know that your present illness has been blessed to the comfort of one poor, hungry soul, that he has been fed to great fullness with the feeling that there are yet twelve basketfuls remaining, not an ounce of which will be wasted. The feeding time has been to-day, rather than yesterday, so that I have been at your bedside nearly all of to-day. May the dear Lord bless you and give you yet many days to go in and out among the assemblies of the saints, and may his blessing rest upon each member of your household.

With much love from us all, affectionately your brother,

B. F. COULTER.

WILMINGTON, Del., Sept. 3, 1907.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I inclose a letter from sister Laura M. Baird, of Pleasant Hill, Ky., which I received yesterday, and which seems rich in grace to me, and I think it would be helpful to others. I feel some timidity however in sending it on account of the first part of the letter. I have read many of her letters to my mother, and enjoyed them, and felt impressed to write to her. She is old and an invalid.

I hope I am one of the family.

F. SELBY FISHER.

PLEASANT HILL, Ky., Aug. 25, 1907.

MR. F. SELBY FISHER—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I received your kind favor of the 20th inst. and read it with heartfelt pleasure, and, as I humbly hope, with a feeling of sweet fellowship. I feel that my thanks are first due to our heavenly Father for your sending me from your heart and pen such a precious message. He alone must have put it in your heart to pen an aged pilgrim (as I sometimes hope) such words of comfort and joy. You must be highly gifted of the Lord to so ably set forth the doctrine of salvation alone by the grace of God. It is the doctrine I love, if I know my own heart, though I once thought I could be saved by my own works and walk of life. Yes, I was a pharisee of the pharisees, never realizing that in and of myself I was not equal to one good thought. When quite young I joined the Missionary Baptists, mistaking excitement for religion, as that denomination uses that expression. I lived with those people about three years, and during that time I was married; my father-in-law was an Old School Baptist minister. I had no love for the doctrine they preached; I thought if it were true they would not be so few in number. Often when the brethren would visit father and discuss the doctrine of predestination I would leave the house to weep, and felt that I would give worlds, if I had them at my disposal, if my husband believed just as I did; but it was just as impossible for me to get him to believe in the Missionary doctrine as for me to believe in the Old School Baptist doctrine. He was a believer but not a member. I went with him to each monthly meeting, and ere many months, through the blessing of God, I was made to realize my true condition, and what anguish of mind to think I had been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. I felt I had committed the unpardonable sin, and that my ignorance of true grace did not excuse the great sin I had committed. It was not long until I left off entirely attending my church meetings, and I could not rest in mind until I wrote a letter to the church requesting them to erase my name from

the church record, that I had been deceived, that the Searcher of all hearts knew I had been deceived, and I did not care if the whole world knew it. The church sent a committee to talk to me; they said I had done nothing to be excluded for, because I was sincere in that of joining their church. They told me I ought to be a shouting christian, but O, dear brother, I felt it was the blind leading the blind, and both would surely fall into the ditch. Finally they granted my request, but ever afterwards those that once gave me the warm clasp of the hand passed me by with a cold nod of the head. This was in the year 1857. I was distressed for many months, pleading for the forgiveness of my sins. Often when trying to plead for mercy I could not utter one word, my prayers seemed to be nothing but mockery in the sight of the just and holy God. Thus I lived, having eyes and seeing not, ears and hearing not, and a heart and understanding not, and I could not remember when the great burden was removed, but this only added to my grief, and I could exclaim as one of old, "O that I were as in months past," still I longed for the meetings. I went Saturday and Sunday; like yourself I had great love for the brethren and sisters, but I felt unworthy of their notice, and longed to be seated in some obscure corner where I would be unnoticed. Thus the years passed. The dear ministering brethren often visited us, and it always gave my heart a thrill of delight to entertain them at our home, but I felt unworthy of the privilege of doing so. On one occasion Elder A. L. Woodson visited us; a cousin of mine had attended preaching with my children, and I suppose Elder Woodson's sermon displeased her and she took him to task for some expression he had made in his sermon. His reply was, "The child never cries until it is born," making the application spiritually. I was all attention; O, I thought, is it possible that I have been groping in darkness all these years, never realizing that I had been changed from nature to grace, wondering at the great love I had for the dear Old Baptists, wondering that they showed such love and sweet fellowship for poor, unworthy me? For years they had been calling me sister; often I felt humiliated, and thought, O if they only knew how vile and sinful I feel to be they could have no love for me. Well, Elder Woodson's reply made such an impression on my mind I felt that I must have a talk with him, but no opportunity occurred during his life. Soon after his death Elder Durand visited our little place of meeting and while there baptized a niece of my husband's, held services several times, but as our home was three miles away he could not visit us at home. At his next visit, which perhaps might have been one year later, I thought before he came that I would talk to the dear brethren and tell them of my hopes and fears, and request baptism if they truly thought I was a subject of grace. I was so impressed I even thought of taking a change of raiment, but O, my dear young brother, when the time came dear Allie and I went, but the sermon was no comfort to my poor heart; I do not think I ever felt more miserable and cast down; I felt that if the dear brethren knew my feelings and could just see into the depths of my sinful heart they would never deem me a child of grace. I had wanted to tell the brethren that my experience of pardon, if I truly had any, was not bright like many I had read of: never having heard any voice or experienced a bright light; it seems all that is

vouchsafed to me is a calm trust, a feeling of Lord, save, I perish, and O what joy it affords; it is more to me than all the world beside. O that I may be enabled by divine grace never to bring reproach on the cause of the blessed Redeemer. I often felt that I wanted to write to Elder Durand after his return home, but the thought would come: Who and what are you that you should be writing to the Lord's undershepherds? I think it was three years later when Elder Sawin visited us on Friday before the meeting; it was on the 21st of May, 1897, brother J. A. Nuckols came with him. When I first learned that he was coming I did not feel thrilled with that joy that I usually had on learning that our ministers were coming, until dear Allie and myself met him at the yard gate, then my poor heart was filled with an indescribable love. We all came into the house together, and the morning was spent in sacred conversation. In the afternoon Elder Sawin commenced singing some sweet songs of Zion, and the words were so applicable to my feelings I could not keep back my tears. When through he asked me some questions in such a sincere manner I could but answer him, and told him in substance what I have already written you, only more. He urged me to go home to my friends and tell them what great things the dear Lord had done for me. I asked him as I had once been deceived if he did not think possibly I might be again. He said he did not. When he seemed so positive that it was truly the grace of God I had experienced my doubts and fears seemed to leave me. I went with the dear brethren to Oak Grove the next morning (as did two of my daughters) and when the invitation was given I could not stay away, so went forward and told the little I had to tell, and was gladly received by the dear brethren and sisters. The invitation was repeated and my eldest daughter, Allie Davis, was joyfully received, as was a daughter of brother Nuckols. We all were baptized by Elder Sawin the following August, on Saturday the 14th, 1897. Thus, dear brother, I have given you a partial relation of my travels; I hope it is an experience of grace, and that I have passed from death unto life. I do believe that God will work all things for the good of his people and for his own glory, so amid all my doubts and fears it seems I sometimes get a crumb from the Master's table, though this is seldom with me. I often wonder if there is any one like me, but the apostle says, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." But we are not without sin, for the apostle Paul says, "I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." I am made to wonder how any child of God can claim any worth or merit of their own when our righteousness is as filthy rags in His sight, since we do hope and trust that the Lord, "who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins," and enemies to him by wicked works, has given us to see and feel the condition we were in, drawing us to himself by the sweet cords of his everlasting love. O that he would enable us to follow him as dear children, and "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us."

Dear brother, when you can say, "Our Father," remember your unworthy sister and her children. May God ever bless you with the sweet guiding influence of his Spirit; may you have that peace of mind, that heartfelt joy, that is only known by the followers of Immanuel. Write as often as you feel inclined, it joys my heart to receive letters from my spiritual kindred. Accept my love for your family and dear parents. My children and myself are in usual health, and we would rejoice to see and be with you all; letters are next best.

Unworthily, yours in hope,

LAURA M. BAIRD.

BALTIMORE, Md., Aug. 22, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —I inclose a letter from one of the deacons of Shiloh Church, of Washington, D. C., to the other deacon, which brother Alden and I feel is worthy a place in the SIGNS. We have not asked brother Walker's consent to send it, but we feel that he would not say us nay, but leave the matter to our judgment, any way we take the risk.

Dear brother, the twenty-first verse of the second chapter of Galatians has been much in my mind of late, and I have tried to speak upon it twice with some pleasure to myself and I hope and believe to others also. Paul is there talking to the Lord's children, who were for the time bewitched by those who would rob them of their liberty in Christ Jesus. I do not remember that I ever heard even an Arminian say in so many words that salvation is not by grace, but after making this confession they will say that while salvation is by grace certain things have to be done in order to receive that grace; thus they frustrate the grace by which they claim to be saved, for "to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." Paul says, "By grace are ye saved," and he never at any time said that which contradicts that statement, either to sinner or saint, and so he does not "frustrate the grace of God," but his teaching at all times and under all circumstances is in full accord with this plain, simple statement: Salvation is by grace. In the next chapter he says, "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" As a people we claim to believe (and I think we do) that salvation is by grace, and yet our foolish nature often suggests that we obtain, or could obtain, something by our doings. The fact is that every blessing of the Lord comes in such a way that we can but say it is the free gift of God. "If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." This to my mind means that if the blessings of God come to us because of our works then Christ profits us nothing, or died in vain. Then, brethren, let us not frustrate the grace of God by claiming that by our work as children of God we merit blessings. True, we receive blessings in obedience that we do not and cannot otherwise receive, but "it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Then we must not frustrate the grace of God, for "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Salvation is of God for time and for eternity.

Your brother, I hope,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Aug. 14, 1907.

MR. THOMAS ALDEN—DEAR DEACON: —I have just read your good letter in

the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and enjoyed it very much. I wish you would write often, as such letters are a comfort and are encouraging to the little ones who read the SIGNS, often hoping to see some sign there that will give some encouragement to still hope on, and when they read of a like experience to their own, related by those they know to be the Lord's people, they are given renewed hope, and perhaps strength.

The SIGNS comes to us regularly, and often as a reminder, as it often finds us in a very low state; yes, often in a careless state, full of worldly cares, giving, as it seems, our entire time and thought to things of this poor world. I mean the things man has made poor in this world, for God made the world and pronounced it good, and we find it such. The SIGNS comes and is often a beautiful break in our thoughtless career, as regards those things spoken of in its pages. One thing has been a mystery to me for many years, and that is, at the time the SIGNS comes, which is nearly always breakfast time, when I am on the point of leaving for my day's work, my mind far from such things contained in it, I cannot remember the time when I cast it aside, but generally scan it over, and O how often I have caught sight of some words spoken by some writer that have arrested my attention, if even for a few moments, and which have caused a thrill of pleasure and comfort to pass through me, and I have found myself melted, comforted, thankful, rejoicing and everything else that goes to make up the feeling that one experiences when that spark is fanned by a breath of heaven, sent by the Spirit through the dear people who write in these letters such life-giving words. This experience, though short at times, has such a solid substance that it needs no introductory remarks, but comes as a beam of sunshine, which appears the brightest in the morning after the night of darkness. This darkness seems to be the fruit of our own coldness and indifference. What ungrateful creatures we are; these shortcomings often cause us to think we have quite mistook the way, yet the Lord is pleased to show us, we believe at times, that he is the way, the truth and the life; then we can rejoice in the precious words. We read and hear of his goodness to his people, and at times realize although we have wandered we are brought nigh by the precious blood of Jesus. What a precious name; no name is half so sweet to us; at such times it is the sweetest name on mortal's tongue. May we be blessed at last when done with these changing scenes of time to be with those who will sing to all eternity the song of the Redeemer. Sometimes here we have a foretaste; if such the sweetness of the stream, what must the fountain be? We sometimes feel when reading the letters spoken of above, we must write to the brethren and tell them how much we enjoyed their letters, yet feel we would only tarnish it by our handling.

Next Sunday is our meeting day; we hope Elder Rowe, our dear pastor, will be well, and that the Lord will be with him as in times past, giving him a word of comfort and edification for the brethren. Give my love to Elder Rowe and the brethren. I am not feeling well, and intend spending a few days with my family, who are away from the city. I have seen brother Yerkes, who has very kindly offered to attend to advertizing and money matters. I am glad we have him with us, taking an active part in the church. If you can, pray that he may be inclined to bring his letter and become a member of our church in name. We are

also very glad you are one of the deacons of our church, as I feel you fill the office acceptably, which is more than I can say of the other deacon; in fact it has been on my mind for some time to ask in church meeting that my resignation be accepted as such, but have put it off from time to time. If sister Walker knew I were writing you she would say, Give my love to Mrs. Alden, which I do now for her.

With christian love to you and yours, and hoping you are all well, the dear grandson included, I am yours in gospel bonds,

JOHN T. WALKER.

CHARLOTTE, Va.

DEAR BRETHREN CHICK AND KER:—Ever since my return from our meetings at Hopewell and New York I have desired to write to you, but a feeling sense of my utter unworthiness, and inability to write as I wish, have deterred me from making the attempt. But when I read your editorial in the SIGNS of July 15th from the words, "I am a stranger here below," &c., I felt a strong desire to write and tell you something of the comfort your words gave me, and of the way I hope and trust the Lord has led me these many years. It has been nearly fifty years since I hope the Lord found me in a waste howling wilderness and gave me a hope in his mercy.

The meeting at Hopewell was one of peculiar sweetness to me; it was the sweet fulfillment of a long cherished desire to meet with those dear brethren, and now that the Lord in his great goodness has seen fit to grant me that blessed privilege, I feel that I want to acknowledge his love and goodness to me all these years of wanderings in the wilderness. I well remember the time when I felt that I was a condemned sinner in the sight of the just and holy God, and could see no way in which he could be just and have mercy on such a vile sinner as I. But still all my cry was for mercy. I attended a protracted meeting and was asked to go forward for prayers. I told them their prayers could do me no good, for my case was an exceptional one; there was no one like me, for I stood alone before an angry and offended God, a justly condemned sinner. But when Jesus was revealed to me as my Savior I could then see how God could be just and save such a sinner as I, for Jesus died that I might live, and had washed all my sins away in his own most precious blood, and I was made pure and white as the new fallen snow, and could not believe that I should ever grieve or suffer again. Then my heart went out in love for the dear people of God, whom I had known from early childhood, for my father's house was always a home for Old Baptists, and I had a desire to see them and tell them what wonderful things the Lord had done for me. I loved them with my whole heart, and longed to be one with them. Accordingly when father attended his appointment at Bowdoinham, Me., where he was pastor, I went with him and told the brethren how I felt, was received, and baptized the following day by my dear father, Elder J. A. Badger. It was cold and snowy, in March, but I knew it not, nor felt the cold; my heart was warm with love, and I felt rejoiced that I could be numbered with those few that were not numbered with those about me. I shall never forget how those dear saints looked to me as we met in an old schoolhouse, and as they sang the sweet hymn, "From whence doth this union arise?" For a few days I felt calm and peaceful; I felt that on the

wings of love I was carried above all sin, temptation and pain. But O, can I ever tell the terrible fall I had? I thought I could sin no more, but in a moment my mind was filled with all manner of evil thoughts; I trembled so I thought I should fall; I fell into doubt and almost despair; I thought I was wholly deceived in all I had felt and hoped, and had deceived the dear people of God, whom I loved so much. From that day to this I have been doubting and fearing. Sometimes my hope is so little I think I will give it up. But in all my wanderings I have never lost all hope, sometimes almost in despair, but never wholly forsaken. My love for His church and truth had to be tested. Many said when I was baptized, Of course you would go with the Old Baptists, as your father was one. That did not trouble me then, but in after years, when filled with doubts and fears, I wished I had mingled with other denominations more, and known more about them. How did I know the Old School Baptists were the only true church of God? These and other questions arose in my mind. Serious troubles arose, and I then felt I would test the truth and try for myself if I could find a home among New School Baptists. I mingled with them; then came the inquiry, What is truth? I read Andrew Fuller and others and studied. The more I read and thought the darker and more confused was my mind, until I was almost in despair; I felt enveloped in Egyptian darkness that could be felt. I attended an association and thought I might get some help from the ministers that would relieve my mind; but what a disappointment, I heard nothing but begging for money. I felt entirely cut loose from them, and saw fully that the religion of Jesus Christ was not among them; all was money, men and means. I felt then I was entirely alone, forsaken of God, a castaway and reprobate, without God or hope. My mind went back to the people I once loved, but I was miles away from them, and felt I was justly doomed to live alone, but far preferred to do so rather than with the people I had tried to love. But the desire of my heart was to know the truth. The Scriptures were a sealed book I could not understand, so much was dark and mysterious. Tongue or pen can never describe my sufferings for so long; it seemed to me I was cast into outer darkness, where there was weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth, and if I could have given up all hope I then would have done so. But God, who is rich in mercy to the most undeserving, appeared for my deliverance. While thinking of these things, suddenly these words flashed into my mind: Here am I and the children thou hast given me, and with it a flood of light. All doubt, all darkness had vanished, and I beheld Jesus and the church of God in him. I can never describe the change or the beauty of the way of life and salvation, the church in Christ, saved in him from the foundation. I cannot tell it, but if you read brother Durand's article in the SIGNS of August 1st you can there read better than I can tell what I then saw and have since. All doubts as to what is truth were removed, and also as to the only people on earth that knew the truth and were contending for the faith that was once delivered to the saints. My heart at once went back to the people I had left, and O how I longed to be with them again, but many obstacles were in the way; I was in Virginia, and the church I left in Warwick, N. Y., many miles away, and many other things were in the way; but

the dear Lord brought me to be willing to give up all on earth for a name and home with his dear people. I then wrote to the church in Warwick and asked if they could receive the prodigal back home again. Our dear lamented brother, Wm. L. Beebe, was then pastor, and brother George Conklin clerk, who wrote me telling me I was received back into the church. I can never describe my feelings on receiving that letter. I felt that I had been shipwrecked and tossed upon the angry waves until nearly lost, when kind and loving arms had taken me up and placed me in a loving home on the softest bed, and I was surrounded with every comfort and most loving friends. O I felt I could never doubt God's everlasting love to me any more. Can you wonder that when I met brother Conklin at Hopewell at the meeting that my heart went out in love to him? for how vividly it brought to my mind that letter and the feelings connected with it. My dear brethren, I have passed through many trying scenes since that time, but never has one doubt crossed my mind as to what is truth or who are the people contending for it. My only trouble is, Am I one of them? By this shall ye know that ye have passed from death unto life, because ye love the brethren, is often my only hope, my only comfort, and often I fear that is not sincere christian love. I feel that I am one alone, that there is no one like me, and yet when I read the sweet communications in the SIGNS I can but take courage, for if not deceived I know the way they take, and we are journeying through the same rough and thorny way, and have the same hope and fears, and have learned the same lesson, or are learning it every day, that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing, that our only hope is in the crucified and risen Savior, who hath saved and called us by his rich grace, and will bring every one of his chosen home to eternal glory. My daily comfort is that

"The steps that I take, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will."

Yes, but I so often ask:

"When thou, my righteous Judge, shalt come
To fetch thy ransomed people home,
Shall I among them stand?
Shall such a worthless worm as I,
Who sometimes am afraid to die,
Be found at thy right hand?"

Dear brethren, forgive the length of this letter and do with it as you think best.

Your sister in hope,

MARY J. COX.

VERNON, Texas, Aug. 30, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Our mother, Mrs. A. D. Bourland, Sr., has moved back to the old home in Tarrant County, Texas, and would have you change the address of the SIGNS from Vernon, Texas, the present address, to Keller, Texas, at which place my father received that paper since about 1871, and was a continual subscriber until his death, in 1904, since which time mother has continued the subscription. She says she feels lonesome and disconsolate, and can get more comfort and consolation from reading the experiences, the trials and difficulties of God's people in the SIGNS than from any other source, and she feels that as long as she lives and the paper continues as of old she will only be too glad to continue reading it. Our heart's desire or prayer to God is that he will bless the correspondents and the editors with a holy zeal for truth, and that they may stand unshaken in the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone.

With love and fellowship for all who preach or love the truth, I am, I hope, your brother in much unworthiness,

W. S. BOURLAND.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1907.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REPLIES TO INQUIRIES.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I would like your views upon Genesis xxii. 12, especially the expression, "For now I know that thou fearest God." Are we to understand by the words, "For now I know," that God did not know the faith of Abraham, or what Abraham would do, until he had tried him? I would be glad to read your views through the SIGNS. This question was asked not long since, and the claim was made, from the above named text, that God did not know.

Yours in love and fellowship, B. S. PATE.

DAYTON, Wash., Jan. 16, 1907.

As will be seen, the above request has been by us for some months past, and we desire to say to brother Pate that this delay has not arisen from want of thought or care on our part. We hope that when replies to such requests are delayed, or when they are not responded to at all, none of our brethren and friends will think that such delay arises out of any indifference toward them, for we would most gladly reply to all such requests at once could we do so. Often we feel humbled when brethren write us asking questions concerning the Scriptures, for we know well how unfitted we are to reply as we ought. We hope that brother Pate will accept this as an apology for our long delay in responding to his letter given above.

Surely no one who feels any reverence for God, or toward his word in the Bible, could ever for a moment admit that this Scripture, or any other, could imply that our God does not from the beginning know all things that shall ever come to pass. Men who know not God, and in whose soul is found no filial fear and love, may draw such conclusions from isolated texts, but all those in whose hearts is the knowledge of God will know that any such conclusion must be wrong. This expression, like some others in the word, such as, "It repented the Lord that he had made man," and, "The Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people," with other similar expressions, and those Scriptures which speak of the Lord proving his people to know them, and all similar expressions, simply present a truth in a way to accommodate it to our human understanding. God does not really repent, for he expressly declares that he does not. God does not need to prove men to see what is in their hearts, for he knows already, but these expressions simply present the work of God as it is made manifest to the children of men. The darkness and the light are both alike to him, yet to us they are not, and it seems to us that every day there is change in his arrangements, when in reality they are always the same. So when he proves the people it is not that he needs to know us in this way, but that we need to know ourselves, and by the manifold tests of trial and temptation he shows us the truth concerning ourselves, which he has known from the beginning.

What a blessed assurance these words of the Lord must have been to Abraham. Under this most solemn trial of his faith and fear of God there can be no doubt that Abraham, like all who are the children of faith in every age, felt great

temptations, and realized the weakness of his trust in God as he went on his way to do as the Lord had bidden him. Perhaps, like ourselves under our trials, he felt much doubt arising in his own mind as to whether he did really possess any faith at all. He had the same human affections, the same human passions we have, and in his heart there was great grief at the prospect of sacrificing his son at the command of God. This he would realize, and under a sense of this knowledge he would also realize a shrinking from the will of God, which he would recognize as being sinful, because it arose from sinful flesh and out of contending unbelief. In all this he had the common experience of all the faithful; all of them often have occasion to say, "Help thou mine unbelief." But now the voice of the blessed Lord comes to him with the assurance that he did after all possess living faith: the Lord said, "Now I know that thou fearest God." Abraham might greatly doubt this, and other men might question the truth of it, and Satan might suggest that he did not really know what the fear of the Lord was, and his soul would tremble greatly under these doubts and accusations, but now all this was at one life-giving word silenced, and the conflict within him for the moment ended in victory; here with him was the victory of his faith made manifest. Faith had been victorious all the time; had it not been so he would not have steadfastly gone on toward the mount with Isaac and the preparations for completing the sacrifice. Faith often overcomes the world when we ourselves are conscious of nothing but great fear and weakness, and do not see that we have faith at all. Now with Abraham the conflict was ended and the victory appeared, and to him now God gives this blessed assurance: Thou dost indeed fear God; and when God thus speaks to any soul there is, there can be, no question remaining to trouble that heart any more. Like Peter, afterwards Abraham knew that the blessed Lord knew all things, even the hidden things of darkness in his own heart, and so the word of the Lord to him could not be questioned. All this was for the benefit of Abraham and for the consolation of all who possess the faith of Abraham. The language, once more we repeat, does not imply that our God needs to be informed of anything, but only that Abraham needed this assurance, and these words were spoken that he might know what the Lord already knew concerning him.

SOME questions have been propounded recently by a dear brother concerning some points of order in the church, of which we will here say a few things.

First, it appears to us that in the Bible only general principles are laid down by which churches are to be governed in maintaining the order of the church. There will always be found arising in the daily life of the churches particular difficulties and questions, and no two will be precisely alike. These general rules laid down in the New Testament will be found to cover all that is needed, but yet there will be found need at all times for the direction of the Holy Spirit in applying these rules to special cases as they arise in the travel of the churches. The eighteenth chapter of Matthew covers all offences of one brother against another, and yet no two offences will be alike, and there will be need in each special case for asking divine guidance, even when we seek to follow the directions given in that chapter. Love to God and love to the cause of truth will be the best key to un-

lock the hard questions which so often arise, and without that love, simply following the letter of the rule will advantage the cause nothing; the form of godliness is of no avail without the Spirit. This is true in the discipline of the church as well as in what we speak of as her worship.

The special question asked was this: "What course shall be pursued regarding those who cannot present a letter of dismission, with whom yet we have fellowship, and who were baptized in gospel order?" The question is rather broad, for such a condition might arise out of several causes. We would speak carefully in what we say regarding the question propounded. One might be in this condition if their former church has become extinct; a letter of dismission could not then be presented. We think the general course has been in such cases (and this course we think is a right one) to hear the experience of that brother if he desires to become a member of another church, and if that is satisfactory, and it is clear that he was legally baptized and received into a gospel church at the first, to then receive him upon this narration, without requiring anything further of him save an orderly life. We can see nothing else to be done in such a case. This answer supposes of course that the church which has become extinct was a church in gospel order at the time when this brother was baptized, and each church must decide for herself in the fear of God in receiving such persons to her membership.

Second, What course shall be pursued if the church has fallen into disorder, so that some member has withdrawn, believing that he ought no longer to abide with the church? This would mean either that the church has so far departed from the order of the gospel that she ought not any longer to be regarded as a church of Christ, or that the brother departing was in such disorder in his departure from the church that he could no longer be regarded as a true follower of Christ. So long as a church can be regarded as a real church, though in disorder in some things, each member ought to stand by that church. Churches cannot be in more gross disorder, either in doctrine or in practice, than was the church at Corinth, or the churches addressed in the beginning of the book called Revelation, and yet they were called churches by the Holy Spirit, and no intimation was given that the orderly members among them ought to forsake them. It seems clear that as long as a church can be considered a church of Christ at all, although her departures may be sore to bear, she must be borne with by all, and her members who are grieved ought to warn and exhort to a return to the right way, but still abide with the church. If they do not they are themselves cut off by their own act, and no other church can receive them without saying, by so doing, that the church from which the brother departs has ceased to have any right to be regarded as a true church.

Third, What is right if the church abides still in the true doctrine of the Bible, but has become contentious, so that there is constant strife? This certainly would make the home of any loving, peaceable brother very unpleasant, but still that brother ought to abide with his home, taking care to take no part in the strife, but to live quietly and peaceably himself, and by so doing he may make the others ashamed, and bring them to consider their ways and to repent of them. The best and most effectual way

to silence strife of tongues is not to drown it by still louder noise, but to render soft words for loud ones, and kindly manners for those which are harsh. There is a disposition in man, at times, to think that the only way to have peace is to fight for it, and to kill off all the rest who differ. This will truly bring a cessation of the strife at last, but it will be the peace of the graveyard, where all are dead. True peace is not anything like this, and true peace comes by each one for himself being peaceable. Let that sorrowful brother himself set the peaceable example. In this case also, to receive this brother, if he withdraws from the church or is excluded from it, is to disfellowship the church.

Fourth, What is right if one has been unjustly accused and condemned and harshly dealt with? Such things may be, even in a church of Christ. But one thing seems sure: if any church has been led thus by the flesh, and has done injustice to any one, in time the Lord will show them the wrong, and that church will seek to undo its unjust deed, with sorrow and humble confession of the wrong that they have done. This will be as true of a church as of any member. Let such an one leave the whole matter with God, committing his cause to him that judgeth righteously. Even in this case, no other church can receive him without saying, by so doing, that the church from which he has been set aside is no longer a church of Christ, and that she has sinned beyond repentance. There might be cases where a neighboring church, believing that the act of the other church had been unjust and wrong, would be doing right to call the attention of the former church to this they believed to be wrong, but we think that the cases where this would be advisable are few and far between. It is presumable that each church knows better than any other church all the circumstances involved, and that she has done what, under all the circumstances, has to her seemed wisest and best. If, however, any other church feels that there has been grievous wrong, such as demands attention from herself, she should act with exceeding carefulness, and after long and prayerful deliberation, and even then, it seems to us, all that it would be right to do would be to simply call the attention of the church to what seems wrong in her act, and then she must still be left to consider the matter herself. The faultfinding church would have no right to make any demand upon the other church, but only to say that this act seemed to them too hasty, or in some way wrong. After all, each church must attend to her own affairs for herself, and, as we said, cases where it would be wise for another church to intermeddle are few and far between. We have no doubt that it is true that many times when strife has arisen Satan has deceived even the children of God into thinking that the form of order is more than the spirit. There is no such thing as crying, Order, order, so loudly and so long that all the spirit of love and true gospel order is utterly killed, and sometimes order, order, is demanded when it only means that sort of order which any worldly society would maintain, with no love and life in it at all. Technicalities of law are not what gospel order means; the spirit is more than the outward form; very many things which we have come in time of strife to think are needful in order to be in order are an abomination to God. Suppose that King Saul had fulfilled his word and destroyed the life of Jonathan because he paused in the pursuit of the enemy to eat some honey con-

trary to the king's command, of which command he was ignorant, would he not have fulfilled the letter of his order at the destruction of the spirit of it? The people were more wise than the king when they said that this must not be done. Greater good would grow out of breaking his word than by keeping it. Saul's design was to stop the people from pausing in their pursuit of the enemy to gather up the spoils of victory, and when Jonathan had become faint in the pursuit, eating the honey enabled him to really fulfill the king's command better than he could have done had he not eaten the honey and been strengthened by it. The whole object of order is to save, not to cut off or destroy. Still the spirit, living and acting, will always make itself manifest by some form. In no other way can the spirit be made manifest than by taking some form. So love and the spirit of peace and the desire to glorify God must appear in some words and acts, and they must be such as are in accord with the word and commandments of God, but how much wisdom we need to conduct ourselves wisely in the perfect way. In some of the above named cases it may seem that one is suffering grievous wrong, and it is hard to bear wrong, yet here the patience of the saints may be made manifest, and when the Lord has tried one of his humble ones sufficiently he will bring them forth as gold. If this confidence be in us we may wait patiently for the victory, which the Lord will surely give at the last. We would tread softly in all these things, and we know it is far easier to point out what may seem the right way than it is to walk in it. C.

We are getting short of copy. If any of the brethren feel impressed to write for the Signs we would be glad to have them do so.

EXTREMES.

Of late, more than for several years past, the word "extremes" has appeared in the writings of many of our brethren in different parts of the country, and in the sense in which it is used, almost invariably carries with it the suggestion of overreaching. Some say we should, in our presentation of truth, avoid extremes, but give us no just reason for doing so. We have had some meditation upon this subject, and have carefully examined the word "extreme," and our conclusion is that grave and disastrous mistakes occur in trying to make the doctrine of God our Savior appear smooth, plausible and attractive to all classes, both in and out of the church. Not since 1832 has the church of Jesus Christ had as many "feeble," "lame," "sick" or unestablished ones to trouble her as at the present time. Is it because "extremes" have almost ceased to be preached? Think seriously upon this question, brethren.

Some young men, within the last few years, have united with the Old Baptist Church in different parts of the country. They were zealous; manifested what was thought a gift to preach; were ordained; labored far and near; were never considered "extremists;" pleased many; after awhile indulged in exhortation to the young to follow Christ and consecrate their lives to the Master's cause; later were found holding protracted meetings, singing pathetic songs and gathering in many young, giddy people. These men became high-minded, thought Old Baptists were slow and should be stirred up to be more progressive, and advised that they have a supreme council to adjust all matters of difference in churches which could not be settled at home; they also said that the commission to preach the gospel to all nations was given to the

church, therefore the church should send the gospel to alien sinners. These men continued for awhile, but are now with the New School Baptists, some of them having been rebaptized and reordained, thereby absolutely renouncing the Old Baptists as the church of Jesus Christ.

Just here, brethren, let us all engage in a little sober thought. Why is all this? We answer, Because "extremes" were avoided. These men, and many others who have gone to their own place, as Judas did, were never established in the doctrine of free, unmerited grace, effectual calling and justification by faith; had they been, "the gates of hell" could not have prevailed against them. In the face of these undisputed facts, will the ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ continue to oppose and avoid "extremes"? The word "extreme" simply means: "utmost point; edge, or border; outermost; greatest; highest." Therefore it does not signify beyond bounds or without authority. Consequently to "go to extremes" in preaching the gospel does not mean to get beyond the truth of God; and since it has no such meaning why should any mortal saved according to the foreknowledge, predestination and grace of God object to "extremes?"

We shall now try the word "extreme" in connection with some points of the doctrine of God. Peter uses the expression, "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." We shall therefore take up the doctrine of foreknowledge first. Do we, as a people, believe it? All answer, Yes. To what extent do we believe it? as regards the salvation of the church only? or do we believe that it embraces all things in eternity and time, even the thoughts of men? David said, "Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; thou understandeth my thought afar of." This is very minute; it is an extreme. Do we believe it? If so, why not preach it? Do we believe in predestination of all things? O yes, is the answer. What term of language then is too strong to use in setting it forth? Some one replies, The term absolute predestination of all things is too strong. This is another extreme. If God did predestinate all things, surely it is absolute predestination, and absolutely sure to come to pass as predestinated; but if he did not predestinate all things, whatever is not predestinated happens by chance only, and God is not in it at all, either in purpose or decree. The wisdom of all the world could not make it appear otherwise. Paul said, He "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." This is another extreme. If any one thing is not included in this declaration, Paul was mistaken. Why credit, therefore, anything he said? since he might be mistaken in all that he said. Again, in Romans viii. 28, we read, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." Some say this text refers only to the sorrows and temptations in the lives of God's children, that their faith may be tried; others say it refers to the things of salvation only. The epistle to the church at Rome is one letter, and in it the apostle clearly and definitely sets forth sin through the disobedience of Adam; the reign of sin unto death; that those brethren had been the servants of sin, and he thanked God that it was so; the weakness of the law through the flesh, and the utter inability of man to lift himself above the law of sin and death. All these things and many others are embraced in the text: "All things work together for good." Together does not mean apart or separate; as one link of a

chain supports and strengthens another, and many make the chain, so Paul said, "All things work together for good;" the disobedience of Adam and the reign of sin, as well as the obedience of Christ that grace might reign through righteousness. If we believe Paul's testimony, is it wrong to use terms of speech which set forth the "utmost points" of the predestination and sovereignty of God? If the Bible teaches special atonement, which unquestionably it does, is there any language too extreme which declares that truth? If "by grace ye are saved" be true, can it be declared by the servants of God in terms too positive? If not, why not employ plain, positive language to set forth the doctrine in the extreme, that no one mistake our meaning? How would it do to say Paul went to an extreme when he said, By grace ye are saved? No term could be more so, and it carries with it power and positiveness which men or angels cannot refute. In reaching this point the apostle presents the doctrine of foreknowledge, election, predestination, redemption, resurrection of Christ and adoption to show his authority for the extreme language: "By grace ye are saved," in which short sentence is cut off every idea of avenue to salvation by creature works. The same authority abides for each servant of God and for the faith of the election of grace. Salvation and all that brought it about, and all that pertains to it, is according to God's eternal purpose; no language therefore can be employed which is too positive, in declaring the counsel of God. The children need to be instructed in every point of doctrine; the fathers and mothers in Israel need to be reminded if established, and if not established they need to be instructed also. One of the qualifications of an Elder or Bishop is, "apt to teach." To impart knowledge it is necessary to be clear in expression, using such words as can easily be comprehended, and as few of them as possible to convey the thought in the mind of the instructor. We have no thought of suggesting by anything we have herein said, that the ministers of Christ should be railers or abusive of other denominations, but to the contrary, to be gentle, kind and considerate. But if foreknowledge be our subject, use such terms as set it forth in the extreme or fullest sense. If predestination be the subject, use such language as will most positively declare that nothing takes place by chance, but that "all things" are in God's purpose and fulfill some design known to him. If the sovereignty of God be the subject, use terms of speech to so positively declare it that the hearers may understand that not a hair of our head can fall except God so directs it. If salvation by grace be that which we are dwelling upon, do not hesitate to so declare it, breaking down every imagined stronghold of salvation by works, showing the weakness of the law through the flesh and the power of grace through Jesus Christ.

Jesus nor the apostles ever avoided "extremes," we therefore have tried to show the authority of the ministers of the new testament for going to extremes or serving the children of God in the fullness of the gospel of Christ. All desire, we are sure, to be charitable and to live peaceably with all men, but none should be willing to sacrifice one iota of truth in order to do so. If any servant of God has ambition to be reckoned with the nations of the earth or to be popular in the world, he must "round the corners," "speak smooth things," or in other words, compromise with error. If not willing to do this he may as well for-

ever give up the thought of being popular with the world. One of the infallible evidences of the sonship of God's children is, that they are hated by the world, because God hath chosen them out of it. The world loves its own, therefore the man who seeks this love needs to carefully examine his heart. Jesus commands his followers to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. Do we do it? Not if we seek the friendship of the world at the expense of God's eternal truth. Let no man be afraid of "extremes," since in them God is glorified and his people edified and established. K.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder Frederick W. Keene.)

The Maine Conference, assembled with the church at North Berwick, Maine, to the churches composing the associations with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more we send you our yearly greeting, wishing you all new covenant mercies and all prosperity in the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. This for you, and for us also, is so desirable, for we are frail and imperfect, and without continual sustenance from our Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the church, we very easily become the prey of manifold evils. But the mercy of the Lord is in the heavens, and his faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. (Psalms xxxvi. 5.) In this we may find rest amidst all adversities, and confiding in him believe we shall be more than conquerors through him that hath loved us. In some parts there are contentions and troubles among the churches; men are arising who do not consent to the wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine that is according to godliness; they are men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, spending their lives in perverse disputings. (1 Tim. vi. 3–5.)

In the profession of christianity throughout the world there is a very great tendency to accept as sufficient an assent to certain items of belief, a profession of devotion to God and of discipleship to Jesus Christ in the entire absence of that gracious and efficacious work of the Holy Ghost known in the hearts of all who are the called of Jesus Christ. Even in the assemblies that we speak of as being the churches of Christ there is a very grave tendency to substitute the bare assent of people to certain principles of the doctrine of Christ for that work of the Spirit of God in the soul which is all essential to the scriptural profession of the name of Christ, and which must be ours that we may know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.

"Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Sometimes persons are spoken of as those who love the Old School Baptist doctrine, and that they ought to join the church, and yet such ones profess no experience, and have no experience of repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

The love of the truth is a sacred thing indeed; it is an experience wrought in us by the Spirit of truth, and declares us to be of those who are born of God. (1 John iv. 7.) To be a believer in Jesus is not that meaningless thing that many vainly imagine. Do I believe in Jesus as my Savior? Then I have seen and felt myself to be a poor, perishing sinner. Do I confess him to be the Lord our Righteousness? Then I have been taught the insufficiency of my own works, and

know with shame before the Lord that all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. Do I profess to have redemption through the blood of Christ, and that his precious blood cleanses from all sin? Then before God I have felt to be a guilty bondman under the curse of the law, and have seen myself all sin-defiled, and in due time I have been drawn to Jesus, and to his precious blood, and out of a yearning heart I have prayed, "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin."—Psalms li. 2.

"Black, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Savior, or I die."

Am I declaring that salvation is of grace? What appreciation can I have of this only as the gracious God has humbled me beneath the knowledge of my utter unworthiness and nothingness? Christ sustains manifold characters to his people, but we can only know him in these relations as we are taught our need of him. It is this experience of our need of Christ that prepares us to find in very truth that he is precious. (1 Peter ii. 7.) It is the vital, painful consciousness of our malady that brings us to an appreciation of God's remedy in Christ Jesus. The whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. Christ is our healer, to him we came sin-sick, faint and weary; wounded and bruised we cried, "Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise."—Jer. xvii. 14.

"Precious is my dear Physician,
Oft I prove his power to heal;
Curing every sad condition
When he does his love reveal.
Precious Jesus, much I need thy healing power."

An essential part of the testimony of the apostle Paul in his ministry that he received of the Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the grace of God, was that he was found testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. (Acts xx. 21.) These two essential points will not be found lacking in the preaching of the grace of God in our own times. "Repentance toward God." This opens up to view that man has sinned. Yes, our first father hath sinned, and all mankind are transgressors from the womb. (Isaiah viii. 8.) From our birth we grow up without God, estranged from God, (Psalms lviii. 3; Eph. ii. 12,) and if left to ourselves we should remain estranged forever from the Holy One. How is it then that any of the human family are found penitent before the throne of God? Whence springs this repentance? The penitent sinner is God's workmanship. "Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," are both the fruit of the gracious operation of God, the Holy Ghost, in the hearts of the elect; and this divine work, producing such God-glorifying results, is all to fulfill God's own eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. Our God is revealed in the Scriptures as having loved and chosen his people in Christ Jesus before the world began; it is therefore meet, as unfolded in the covenant ordered in all things and sure, that his loved and chosen ones whom he hath predestined to eternal glory should be brought to this glorious destiny in all friendship, in all at-one-ment with himself; for how shall his own elect dwell forever in his presence unless all is agreeableness and blessedness between himself and them? O glorious destiny! We shall be holy and without blame before him in love. (Eph. i. 4.) When Christ ascended on high, there to appear in the presence of God for us, the testimony of the gospel is that he received gifts for men, for

the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. (Psalms lxviii. 18.) Our ascended Jesus is the Prince and Savior of Israel, and in his love and pity, in a most princely manner, he gives repentance and remission of sins unto his people. (Acts v. 31.) When the church of God in the days of the apostles were made witnesses that the Gentiles were recipients of this princely favor they glorified God, saying, "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."—Acts xi. 18. The Spirit of truth convinces of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment; thus we are brought to self-loathing on account of our vileness, we become burdened with the enormity of our transgressions, and our aching heart cries out, "Mine iniquities are gone over mine head; as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me." —Psalms xxxviii. 4. O it is of the mercy of God that we are subdued and penitent at his feet, and our soul mourns unto the Lord because of our sins. This is godly sorrow, working repentance unto salvation. (2 Cor. vii. 10.) Repentance toward God is a divine reality. What, is it drawing nigh to God with our lips and saying, God, be merciful to me, a sinner, and yet still walking in the gratifications of the lusts of the flesh? No indeed; they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. Genuine repentance toward God is that blessing of Jesus, our ascended Prince and Savior, turning us from our iniquities. (Acts iii. 26.) Thus the redeemed of the Lord, who are called by grace, are described as "them that turn from transgression in Jacob."—Isaiah lix. 20. We know, dear brethren, that repentance unto life is a divine transforming power turning us in our spirit away from the vileness of our flesh, and causing us with an humble and contrite heart to seek the face of God. The Lord speaking by the mouth of Jeremiah says, "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth."—Jer. xxxi. 18, 19. While we are under the conviction of our sins there also rest upon our spirit apprehensions of Jehovah's just wrath, but we do not turn away from the holy God against whom we have sinned, for the gift of repentance wrought in us by the Spirit exercises us toward the Lord. With humbled spirit, with a sin-grieved and contrite heart, we are turned to the Lord entreating his mercy. Yes, repentance toward God signifies not only sorrow for and turning from sin, but it declares how we are moved by its gracious operations with kindliness toward God; the enmity is now conquered and we are moved with fervent longings for reconciliation, yes, for friendship with God. We see the one dreadful, hateful barrier between our souls and God, our sins, we are turned from them, now we are ashamed of all that we have done, (Romans vi. 21; Ezek. xliii. 11,) and mourn in our desolation unto the Lord. (Jer. xii. 11.) Truly the repentant sinner is a miracle of the grace of God, and there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. But though our eyes are a fountain of tears, and we should weep day and night over our sins, and though with all entreaty we are turned to the Lord imploring his compassion, can our moans and

tears put away our guilt and satisfy the law, which is holy, just and good? Ah, the quickened sinner realizes he is under the curse of the law, and in his penitent heart he confesses:

"Not the labors of my hands
Can fulfill thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears for ever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and thou alone."

Paul's testimony was not only of repentance toward God, but also of faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. This glorious One, the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person, who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but took upon himself the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." Christ lived and suffered, bled and died, he was buried and rose again from the dead, and has gone into heaven, there to appear in the presence of God for us. The revelation of this to the penitent sinner is very graciously efficacious, for as by faith of the operation of God he looks unto Jesus he finds all that his sin-bruised, mourning soul yearns for; yes, in Jesus he tastes forgiveness, reconciliation and loving friendship with God. The glad tidings of the gospel make known that we are justified freely by God's grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood. (Romans iii. 24, 25.) The Spirit of truth shews the things of Christ to the repenting one, and his gracious operations enable him to look with all desire, with all affectionate reliance, unto the blood and obedience of Jesus.

"O thou that hearest the prayer of faith,
Wilt thou not save a soul from death,
That casts itself on thee?
I have no refuge of my own,
But fly to what my Lord hath done,
And suffered once for me.

Slain in the guilty sinner's stead,
His spotless righteousness I plead,
And his availing blood.
Thy righteousness my robe shall be,
Thy merit shall atone for me,
And bring me near to God.

Then snatch me from eternal death,
The spirit of adoption breathe,
His consolation send;
By him some word of life impart,
And sweetly whisper to my heart,
Thy Maker is thy Friend."

All now is satisfactory, for thus we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. O what kindness God hath declared unto us in his only begotten Son, and as we are constantly partakers of this kindness and love of God it is very clearly manifest that it all flows from the exceeding riches of his grace. May the God of all grace grant us abundance of grace, that we may most cheerfully render to the Rock of our salvation everlasting praise.

Dear brethren, we have received your messengers and correspondence, and hope for the continuance of your fellowship and love in the gospel of Christ. We have appointed our next annual Conference to be held with the church at North Berwick, York County, Maine, to commence on Friday, September 4th, 1908.

FREDERICK W. KEENE, Mod.
JOSEPH F. HALL, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Hannie B. Grehan, Va., $1.00; Mrs. J. H. Rockafellow, N. Y., $1.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Horace H. Lefferts, Sept. 5th, 1907, at the Old School Baptist parsonage, Elbert L. Hulse and Miss Alice A. Benedict, both of Warwick, N. Y.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at the home of the bride's parents, Kelley Corners, N. Y., Sept. 11th, 1907, 10:30 a. m., Burr Hubbell and Miss Emma L. Peet, both of Kelley Corners, N. Y.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at his residence, Hopewell, N. J., on Monday p. m. July 29th, 1907, Matthew Foster Johnston, of New York city, and Miss Lucy Ealinor Chick, of Hopewell.

By the same, at the residence of the bride's parents, in Hopewell, on Tuesday p. m., Sept. 3rd, 1907, Walter B. Atchley, of Trenton, and Miss Anna Mary Yard, of Hopewell.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder G. B. Williams was born in middle Tennessee Feb. 27th, 1849, and died Nov. 28th, 1902, making his stay on earth 53 years, 9 months and 1 day. The dear brother had a lingering disease of the lungs, and suffered a great deal the three last months of his life. His parents moved while he was an infant to the State of Arkansas, and there it was that he grew to manhood. On June 1st, 1876, he was married to Miss Mary E. Corley. To this union were born six sons and three daughters, seven of whom, with his widow, are left to mourn their loss. He remained in Arkansas till the fall of 1884, when he moved with his family to Hill County, Texas, in which State he remained until his death. In the spring of 1886 he united with the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church called Pleasant Valley, in Limestone County, Texas, being baptized by Elder M. M. Gibson. The church liberated him to exercise his gift when and where God in his providence might cast his lot, and so favorable was the impression he made with the brethren that on the 6th day of December, 1890, by a presbytery of four ordained ministers he was regularly ordained and set apart to the full functions of the gospel ministry. At the same meeting the Pleasant Valley Church called him to the pastoral care of the church, and he served them to the best of his ability and to the comfort and satisfaction of the church until he became so weak from disease he could not serve longer. It was a great pleasure to him to visit the churches, and among the brethren, and for them to visit him at his home, which place was and is yet by his dear companion (who is also a worthy member of Pleasant Valley Church) and family a home for the Old Baptists. He was a loving husband, a kind and indulgent father and highly esteemed as a citizen. When he realized the end was near he told his wife three or four days before his death not to grieve for him, and to raise the children right. Thus ended a useful life. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder A. P. Cardwell, much to the comfort of those present.

Written by request of the family.

JOHN RICHARDSON.

SISTER **H. Annie Meredith** was born Oct. 13th, 1866, and died August 7th, 1907. Sister Annie had suffered for some months from tuberculosis, but was confined to her bed only a few days before her death. She was the youngest daughter of the late brother Peter and sister Sarah Meredith, of Petersburg, Del. Elder E. Rittenhouse baptized her. She was received into the fellowship of the Bryn Zion Church, Kenton, Del., afterward removing her membership to the Cow Marsh Church, near her late home. Her walk as a christian and her walk in life was without reproach. She was loved by those in the church and those without, for she was consistent in all things. We feel that we have lost one that all who knew her loved, therefore desire to extend to her family and friends the sympathy prompted by such a high regard.

The funeral was held August 11th, 1907, at the Cow Marsh meetinghouse. The text used by the writer was 1 Cor. xv. 49: "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." Interment in Cow Marsh Cemetery. God reigns in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, we believe, to his glory and to the spiritual gain of all his people.

BENJ. E. CUBBAGE.

MEETINGS.

THE Primitive Baptist Church at Black Rock, Baltimore Co., Md., has appointed a two days meeting to be held on the fifth Sunday, and Saturday preceding, in September, 1907, it being the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Black Rock Convention in 1832. We purpose to have the address issued by that meeting read, with perhaps some remarks. Meeting to begin Saturday, 10:30 a. m. We have the promise of Elders Wm. Grafton and F. A. Chick to attend the meeting, each having been pastor of the church in years past. Those who expect to attend the meeting will come to Baltimore in time to take Northern Central Railroad train at 3:30 p. m. for Cockeysville on Friday before. Also write either to Frank G. Scott, Cockeysville, Md., R. F. D., or to John E. Ensor, Glenco, Md., R. F. D., so that they may know how much conveyance to provide.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE First Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, at Vega, N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting to

be held, the Lord willing, Wednesday and Thursday, October 2nd and 3rd, 1907. Trains will be met at Roxbury on Tuesday before the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

V. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School or Primitive Baptist Association will be held with the Second Roxbury Church, at Halcottsville, N. Y., on line of U. & D. R. R., at the usual time, on first Wednesday and Thursday (2nd and 3rd) in October, 1907. A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth.

JAMES AVERY, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Association of Old School Baptists will convene, if Providence permits, with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon County, Pa., on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1907, and continue three days. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth, and hope to be remembered by our ministering brethren. Those coming by railroad will come on the Pennsylvania R. R. to Mount Union on Thursday, and there take the East Broadtop road to Three Springs. The trains leave Mount Union at 9 a. m. and 4 p. m. Both trains will be met.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa has appointed to hold its yearly meeting, if the Lord will, October 12th and 13th, 1907. We hope to see a goodly number of our brethren and friends gathered there to praise God, especially ministering brethren. Those coming on the U. & D. R. R. will be met on Friday, Oct. 11th. Should any come and not be met take stage to Miss Jennie Leonard's.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the New Valley Church, at New Valley, Loudoun Co., Va., commencing on Wednesday, October 16th, 1907, and continuing three days. Trains from the west will be met at Washington Junction, Md., 1:30 p. m. Tuesday, 15th. Those coming by the Southern Railroad from Washington will be met at Leesburg, Va., 3:30 and 6:10 p. m. Tuesday, 15th. A cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth is extended, especially ministers of our faith and order, to meet with us.

S. B. PAXSON.

THE yearly meeting of the Old School Baptist Church of Wilmington, Del., is appointed for the third Saturday and Sunday in October, (19th and 20th) 1907, beginning at 2 o'clock p. m. Saturday. A cordial invitation is given to all of our faith and order.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie, Schoharie Hill, will hold their yearly meeting the fourth Sunday, and Saturday previous, in October, 1907. Ministering brethren, and brethren and sisters of our faith are cordially invited to meet with us. Trains will be met at Howe's Cave Friday before the meeting, which is to commence at 10:30 a. m. Saturday.

M. B. BORST, Clerk *pro tem.*

THE Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie, N. Y., Providence permitting, will hold a two days meeting the first Tuesday and Wednesday in November, (5th and 6th) 1907. All lovers of the truth are welcome. All those coming by rail will be met at Howe's Cave and Schoharie. Please send me card stating expected time of arrival. We hope that ministers of our faith and all others who can will meet with us.

GEORGE A. MIERS.

BOX 361, SCHOHARIE, N. Y.

THE Mt. Enon Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Elim Church, near Ft. Meade, Polk Co., Fla., beginning Friday before the second Sunday in November, 1907, and continuing three days. A cordial invitation is extended to all Old School Baptists, and especially to ministering brethren who love and contend for salvation by grace, to be with us.

M. L. GILBERT, Clerk.

THE next session of the old Mt. Enon Association of south Florida will be held with Mt. Enon Church, four miles east of Plant City, as stated in the Minutes of last year, embracing Friday, Saturday and second Sunday in November, 1907. A cordial invitation is extended to all Old School or Primitive Baptists believing in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone. Come to Plant City, and you will be conveyed to Mt. Enon Church.

J. W. FUTCH, Moderator.

F. M. CARLTON, Clerk.

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11:00 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 75. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1907. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MAHASKA, Wash., June 18, 1907.

MRS. M. O. LOGSDON—DEAR SISTER:—In reply to your request I will say the sin against the Holy Ghost, as spoken of by the Lord and recorded in Mark, was that of which Jesus himself had been often accused by the scribes and doctors of the law, and in their view it consisted in making himself equal with God by saying that he was the Son of God, as he had done many times in the course of his life. He had wrought many miracles also in proof of his heavenly power. Denying the power of God, by which he cast out devils, the Jews accused him of casting out devils by Beelzebub. Now Jesus, reaffirming his divinity and power, made this positive declaration, basing it upon the truth of his word, that he was indeed the Son of God, and in replying to his accusers he said, "Verily I say unto you, [that is, in his own name and right as the one Mediator] All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme." This is the affirmative side of the question, which if true must stand forever, but, on the contrary, if not true, it follows that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins nor forgiveness. Hence the the second proposition in opposition to the first, which rested upon the assertion that he was the Son of God. "But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness." Here he places the judgment of the law against all men who blaspheme God, who is a Spirit. Hence if Jesus, while claiming the divine relationship of the Son of God, had really cast out devils by Beelzebub, as they had charged against him, his confession of being the Son of God would have been false, and he himself exposed to everlasting condemnation as a blasphemer.

The truth or falsity of the entire gospel lies between the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth verses of this chapter of Mark. Therefore I say unto you that all sin and blasphemy, wherewith men shall blaspheme, shall be forgiven them, but whosoever blasphemes against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven. The argument, on the one side or the other, is explained thus. The law of faith and the law of works are brought into close review at this most critical point. For says the word, If righteousness be by the law it is no more of promise; and if they

which are of the law be heirs, then faith is made void and the promise is of no effect.

The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is a sin against God, who is a Spirit. Blasphemy against the Son of man is a sin against the spirit of His grace, and all the Jews, scribes and Pharisees were guilty of blasphemy against the Son of man, and were exceedingly mad against him, as was Saul of Tarsus. It was not this saying of Jesus on this occasion that constituted the sin against the Holy Ghost, as held by John Wesley and others to this day, viz., the charge that Jesus was casting out devils by Beelzebub; but He took occasion from this saying of theirs to expound the law of Moses to his enemies, the Pharisees, who were in Moses' seat, and to show that they were guilty of that sin who claimed divine honor with himself.

Now let us read what Paul said about all sin and transgression against the law, by which, Paul says, is the knowledge of sin. If there are other sins beside those which are against the law of God, I should like some one to tell me what they are, and against what law they are. But hear the apostle: "All that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." What were these things, or these sins? They include the very blasphemies which we have under consideration, and also murders, adulteries, witchcraft, &c. None of these could be put away by the sacrifice of birds and beasts, and the ashes of an heifer, but according to the law these must be stoned until they died. But now the apostle says, "All that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Hence the words of Jesus under consideration, that all manner of sins and blasphemies shall be forgiven through the blood of Jesus Christ which cleanseth from all sin. Now find the remaining sin for which the blood of Jesus is no atonement and you will find a law which was not given by Moses. Is there such a sin? Yes. See the tenth chapter of Hebrews: "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin." And "he that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses," as we have already seen. How much more shall the man that hath done despite to the spirit of grace, and hath counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, be counted worthy of suffering the penalties of that law, which is the law of life in Christ Jesus. Many have confounded this with the law of Moses and the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost treated of above, but there is no resemblance. Here is the difference between the law of works and the law of faith, between the two covenants, the covenant of works and the covenant of grace. The new covenant provides for the forgiveness of all sin, while the old covenant demands perfect righteousness or obedience. We must look from the one to the other. The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, the gospel the means of salvation, to all believers, from death. "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." The law demands all, while the gospel gives all. But to sin wilfully against the spirit of grace in Christ Jesus is to receive the penalty which is written in that covenant, which penalty is the rod provided for all them that go astray. I want to say once more before this leaves my hand, that if there be a sin for which Jesus' blood is no atonement, that particular sin is not catalogued in the writ-

ing of Moses, nor in the prophets, nor by John the Baptist, nor by the Lord Jesus Christ. A proper analysis of these words in Mark would be in the English: All sin and blasphemies wherewith men shall blaspheme shall be forgiven, as John the Baptist said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." So also John the apostle writes, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." And Paul declares, "All that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." This explains the reason of salvation, and takes all power from the devil's hands to slay the children of God, if that were possible, as has been claimed before now by commentators and others to build their creed and subdue their followers with, lest they should fall from grace, as they say.

I wish to explain in one respect my remarks more fully. I take the position that blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, as judged by the law of Moses, was in the presumption of man in claiming to himself the attribute of divine power, thus making himself equal with God, and this was the charge made by the Jews against Christ. I think the form of this accusation clearly defines what is meant by the word blasphemy in the mouth of the scribe and the Pharisee, which subjected the offender to death, according to the law, which death was by stoning. This being presented, I wish to make a final application of this subject of blasphemy to the man of sin, as recorded by Paul in one of his epistles to the Thessalonians. In writing of the mystery of iniquity he says, "The coming of this man of sin is after the working of Satan," and that he (the man of sin) exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped. Now this man of sin, I think, is the culmination of all sins and blasphemies in one embodiment, in one man. All manner of sins and disobedience in the world are found in him, from the sin of Adam to the end, when Christ shall come and destroy this man of sin with the spirit of His mouth, and consume him with the brightness of his coming. And so Jesus said, "He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, [neither in this world nor in the world to come] but is in danger of eternal damnation." Again I say that it was not the mere saying of the Jews, as held by John Wesley and others, which constituted their blasphemy, for they were here speaking against the Son of man; that is, the Lord Jesus, in charging him with blasphemy in (as they charged) casting out devils by Beelzebub. This sin was in them the sin of ignorance or unbelief, even as Paul was thus guilty in persecuting the name of Jesus. This was on a parity with the sin of the Jews in charging Jesus with blasphemy. It was not that Jesus was accusing them, but they were accusing him of blasphemy in saying that he was the Son of God, and they took up stones to stone Him, as the law of Moses commanded. Now to draw the parallel between Jesus, who was the Son of God, (and therefore not guilty of sin,) and the man of sin, who is not of God, but of the world. We see the difference, in the end of all things, between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan, or the world. The mystery of iniquity has worked, and will work, till the man of sin shall be revealed, and the mystery of godliness in the Son of man shall also be revealed at his second coming in glory. The man of sin in the seat of God shall be destroyed, thus showing that Jesus is Lord. Now, when the culmination and form of all things evil in

the man of sin shall be revealed, then the Lord Jesus shall come forth from his kingdom of righteousness and destroy the man of sin with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power, and, according to his everlasting decree and absolute predestination of all things, the evil incorporated in the man of sin shall be revealed in His time, in the day of the Lord, at his coming.

Your brother;

I. N. NEWKIRK.

[THE above letter has been forwarded to us for publication by the sister to whom it was written.—ED.]

A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE STRICT AND PARTICULAR BAPTISTS OF ENGLAND.

IN my opinion, one of the greatest benefits arising from my visit to Canada and the United States last year, is the personal knowledge I was thereby enabled to acquire of the "free grace" churches in those countries, and through the medium of the *Friendly Companion* to impart this knowledge to the Strict Baptists of England. Hitherto the greatest ignorance had existed on this side of the Atlantic of the state of vital religion in America, and it was generally supposed that the preachers and lovers of the truth there were exceedingly few, and that what churches there were, were very weak; but now, to our great surprise and pleasure, we in England learn that there are a very considerable number of persons holding what is known as Calvinistic doctrine, gathered into numerous churches under the pastoral care of ministers well qualified to feed spiritually the flock of Jesus. I desire, by the kind permission of the editors of the SIGNS, to perform a similar service for the free grace Baptists of America, by describing the present condition of the Strict Baptist churches of England, tracing their history during the last hundred years, and narrating important events connected with the denomination which have occurred during that period.

Perhaps it would be as well to explain, at the outset, the meaning of the title "Strict and Particular Baptists." The word "strict" applies to the rule with respect to the Lord's table, and indicates that the churches comprising this denomination will not admit to communion any but baptized believers, and so is opposed to what are called "open communion" churches, which in this country are usually Arminian in doctrine. The word "particular" indicates that they believe in particular or special redemption, as opposed to the doctrine that Christ died for every man. Hence the full official title of the denomination is "Strict and Particular Baptists."

We will now transport ourselves in thought to the beginning of the nineteenth century, and take a brief survey of the condition of the churches in England holding the doctrine of grace. At this time the last of a remarkable chain of eminent and godly ministers in the Church of England, John Newton, the author of many precious and gospel hymns well known in both hemispheres, was nearing his eternal rest; Toplady, Hervey, Berridge and Romaine had been called home, but the deep impression which the Lord had made by their preaching, and particularly by their writings, still remained. They had been powerful champions of the doctrine of free and sovereign grace, and God had greatly blessed their labors. Whitefield had been dead about thirty years, but there were many still living who had reason to

bless the Lord that they had been brought under his powerful ministry. But it is to be feared that a dead, untried faith in the doctrine of grace widely prevailed, and so the Lord at this time was purging the visible professing church by the ministry and writings of William Huntington, whose earnest contention for a living experience of the truth was bringing down upon his head the hatred and contempt of the dead professors of the day, but whose ministry was largely blessed to the comfort and establishment of the tried and tempted children of Zion. This remarkable man was at this time at the height of his usefulness; and as, although he was not a Baptist, his ministry exercised a powerful influence upon that body, I think that a short account of him here will not be unacceptable to my readers.

William Huntington, S. S., (these letters meaning "sinner saved") was born at Cranbrook, in Kent, in the year 1745. He was nominally the child of a poor laboring man named Hunt, but was really the offspring of his mother's adultery with the farmer in whose employment his reputed father was. This fact is mentioned here, as illustrating how the Lord takes no account of honorable parentage, or otherwise, in those in whom he designs to display the riches of his grace, or to use in the accomplishment of his purposes. He was a wild, wayward youth, and in his early manhood left his native parish to avoid contributing to the support of an illegitimate child, wandering about the country in search of work, and enduring many hardships. It was at this time that he changed his name from Hunt to Huntington, in order to conceal his identity. Obtaining some settled employment he married, and soon after this event the Lord began the work of grace in his soul. His exercises under the law were very deep and severe. For many months he endured great distress of soul, wandering from one place of worship to another in search of relief, but finding none. He was at this time a devout adherent of the Church of England, but could find none among her ministers in his neighborhood who in any way understood his case. At length, as he was sinking in despair, one morning, when engaged in working in his master's garden, the Lord brought him into gospel liberty by a glorious manifestation of Christ to his soul, of which he gives a graphic account in his "Kingdom of Heaven Taken by Prayer," which is a history of his spiritual experience after this blessed deliverance. For some years he waded through many heavy temptations and trying providences, often being brought into sore straits to find food and clothing for himself and family, and experiencing many answers to prayer which he describes in detail in his "Bank of Faith." But this was the Lord's school, in which he was being fitted for the work of the ministry and acquiring the tongue of the learned to enable him to speak a word in season to him that is weary. After a time the Lord opened his mouth to speak in his name, and for some years he labored extensively in the towns and villages of Surrey and Sussex, occasionally visiting London. After a time he was invited to settle in the metropolis, and doing so, very soon gathered a numerous and devoted congregation around him, amounting to about two thousand souls. Twice his chapels were destroyed by fire, but they were quickly replaced by still handsomer buildings, which the willing contributions of his friends enabled him to build. The great gift of Huntington was his singular ability to

describe the Spirit's work in the souls of God's children, and the emotions, desires, hopes and fears of a regenerated soul. He contended earnestly for a living experience of grace in contradistinction to a mere head knowledge of the letter of the truth, and also against the then prevalent opinion that though not justified by it the law is the believer's rule of life. Huntington held that the gospel precepts are the believer's rule, and that all acceptable obedience springs from a spirit of love, working through grace, derived from Jesus Christ. His published works amount to not less than twenty volumes. This eminent servant of God died in the year 1813. The influence of Huntington's teachings on the church of Christ was still further extended by the preaching of several ministers in various parts of the country, who were either his children in the faith, or associated with him in some form or other. Of these the principal were John Vinal, who labored extensively in the county of Sussex, Isaac Beeman, of Cranbrook, Kent, Henry Fowler, of Birmingham, and later of London, Thomas Oxenham, of Welwyn, Herts, Hardy and Chamberlin, of Leicester, and Samuel Turner, of Sunderland. The labors of these men were greatly blessed among a body called Huntingtonians, which exists to this day, though diminishing in numbers, as very few ministers are being raised up among them to supply the places of those removed by death. In consequence of this their pulpits are now being supplied often by Strict Baptist ministers, with the result that their congregations are gradually being absorbed by that denomination. In addition to a remnant of the Church of England, and the congregations connected with William Huntington at the commencement of the nineteenth century in England, there are likewise a few independent churches scattered over the country who are still faithful to the religious creed of their spiritual forefathers, and whose works are still highly esteemed by the church of Christ. These differed from the Strict Baptists only with regard to infant sprinkling, grounding it upon their contention that it took the place of circumcision under the old covenant, and that it was the initiatory rite to the outward privileges of the church.

We see, therefore, that at the particular time of which we are treating there were no less than four distinct bodies in England holding the doctrine of grace: a remnant among the Church of England, the Independents, the Huntingtonians and the Strict Baptists. The two former exercised a certain amount of influence upon the latter, owing to the fact that many of the hymns used in their public worship were composed by churchmen such as Cowper, Newton, Berridge and Toplady, or by Independents, such as Isaac Watts. To this state of things, so different from what exists in America, I should be disposed to attribute the fact that though the Strict Baptists will not commune with unbaptized persons, yet we are tolerant, and will go to hear those whom we regard as being servants of Christ, even though they do not observe believer's baptism.

To my knowledge there is no authentic history of the Strict Baptists at the period of which I am writing, but from all that I can gather I should judge that they were then a weak and scattered body. John Gill, their most distinguished ornament, whose commentaries on the holy Scriptures, and whose doctrinal works are still highly prized by many, had been dead about thirty years. Some of them had undoubtedly been influenced by the

writings of Andrew Fuller, 1754–1815, who taught a modified form of "Calvinism," and contended for "Duty Faith." But the Lord was, at this time, beginning to revive his work in this portion of the church by sending forth some eminent ministers, who were largely used of the Lord in raising the Strict Baptist churches to their present position, and establishing on a scriptural basis their articles of faith and practice. The first and perhaps the principal of these was William Gadsby, of Manchester.

C. J. FARNCOMBE.

LONDON, England.

EAGLE, Ontario, Aug. 24, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR BROTHER:—Your letter received, and it was good news from a far country, and we feasted upon it for several days. Our dear Jesus' name is to be praised, and when his children feel his power upon them what a wonder of wonders. It is Jesus that preaches; it is Jesus that we love to hear preached, and I do hope he will allow me to praise him.

As I rode home from sister Cassie's, O the sweet, calm spirit that came upon me. The words were flowing in my heart, "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us." And, "My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." This is the peace of God that passeth all understanding. We must wait for the ways of the Lord. When I was under conviction, and felt that I was delivered, I thought that my troubles were at an end. Then I had to be tried about uniting with the people of God, for I was very rebellious, and when I was delivered and made to sit down among them I thought that my troubles were at an end. Dear brother, if the Lord wills, I will try to tell you about these ends. From early childhood my sins were a great burden; I used to lie awake and weep, and many times I have fallen upon my knees in my grandfather Leitch's fields and tried to pray and beg for mercy, because I was such a great sinner and I needed a great Savior. I felt I was lost forever. I knew nothing about the plan of salvation. I went to hear preaching, but knew nothing of the goodness of deliverance. I knew nothing but my guilty conscience before the just and holy God. The first promise I received was on my way home from the shop, in 1889. The words were, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." I did not know that these words were in the Bible until my dear mother told me where to find them. My burden was still with me, and I had no hope of being born again. In 1890 my dear grandfather Leitch died, and I was in great sorrow, for he was a dear christian man, and I awoke out of sleep with the words,

> "You now must hear my voice no more,
> My Father calls me home;
> But soon from heaven the Holy Ghost,
> Your comforter, shall come."

I rejoiced for a short time, but my burden was still there and I had no hope.

January 1st, 1891, we came back to our farm, where we still live, and all summer I seemed to be such a great sinner, and longed for deliverance from bondage. In the month of October I begged on my knees for a hope. October 16th, 1901, I was hurt accidentally, and when I fell the words came to me, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." They were five hours dressing my wounds, and when they put me to bed the words came, I will be with thee in six troubles, and in the seventh I will not forsake thee. I

did not know those words were in the Bible, but I knew the power of them, and I found them afterwards. The next day, and for weeks, I suffered great pain. Dear Elder Pollard visited me, and he was very kind, and prayed with me, and spoke comfortingly, and he told my mother that he felt my deliverance was near at hand. On the thirty-first day of October, 1891, at eleven o'clock, the words came, I will be with you in six troubles; and, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose;" and, I will be merciful to your unrighteousness, and your sins and your iniquities will I remember no more forever. These just seemed to pass through my mind, and I was in great pain. Then I began to sing the forty-second paraphrase, and I sang to the fourth verse, when the room seemed to change, and above my head was a gray cloud, and my dear Jesus descended out of that cloud and hovered over my bed, and spoke these words in my inmost soul:

"Hence shall I come, when ages close,
To take you home with me;
There we shall meet to part no more,
And still together be."

I was so happy, and wanted to go home with him, and I had no more pain in my limb, all was joy and peace. I said to my dear mother, I want to go home. But he went above, and I was in this world for awhile longer. Now if this is a christian experience, this is my hope and my anchor; this is the day of days to me. I am sitting near the same spot while I am writing to you. Elder Pollard came again to see me, and I told him all. "And now Lord what wait I for? my hope is in thee." "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come," came about one-half hour after I received my hope. Our dear brother, the late Duncan McKillop, brother of sister McWilliams, came to see me, and I told him the good news, and his heart was touched, and he related his lovely experience of grace. All I can remember is that he was upon his knees, and he heard a voice saying, Arise, thy sins are all forgiven thee, and he looked around to see who spoke, and he was alone and his burden was gone. Then the enemy attacked me, tempting me to disbelieve the reality of my hope, and I rolled upon my bed in great distress. Was I deceived, and had I deceived others? The words came with power, "If our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." And again I was made to rejoice in my dear Savior. In May, 1893, Elder Vail and dear brother Malcolm McAlpine came here to our home, and I kept out of their way. I did not want to talk for fear they would want me to join the church, for this I could never do until God should command me. When my work was done I came in where they were, and brother Malcolm would have me tell Elder Vail of my experience. Then they said, You must join the church. I had no impressions from on high, and Elder Vail said, Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. But I felt that I must have the promise from above. I went to the meeting on Saturday, and mother sat on the outside, as though she was going to keep me in. Brother McAlpine said, She cannot stand that. But I never heard a word for myself. I said to mother, Let me out, and she did so, and while I was outside the words came, "The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak." I begged if it was right for me to go, to give Elder Vail utterance to tell me so. I came on Sunday and heard Elder Vail well, but

still said, I am not going among those good people; I am not going. On Sunday evening he took for his text, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of ourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For ye are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that ye should walk in them." This followed me all night and next day, and when he preached I heard him, but still I was determined not to remain at the church meeting. I sat back near the door, and while they were singing the last hymn I was compelled to stay in, and when I rose to my feet the words came,

"Through floods and flames, if Jesus leads,
I'll follow where He goes."

I was received, and dear sister Robbine also could not go out. She had no power to carry her out, and she was received; and dear sister Martha Young, Deacon McCall's daughter, also could not go out, and was received.

Now I was in great darkness after this, when the words came, Unto you in David's town is born this day, of David's line, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord, and this shall be the sign. I felt better until the day of my baptism, then I was in great trouble of mind, everything seemed so dark, and when I came to the water I was in darkness still. I was baptized first, and when they were singing, "I'm not ashamed to own my Lord, or to defend his cause," my heart leaped for joy, I felt as free as a bird, and that I could soar away and be at rest. I remained in that frame of mind for a few days, but troubles came again, and I was tried about the resurrection for five years. I tried not to be exercised about it, but such thoughts would come and come again. I did not know that others were also in trouble in a similar way. I continued in great distress until one day I was directed to read 2 Thess. iv. 13, to the end. I stopped working and got my Bible and read, and, dear brother, if ever the Spirit of God was upon me it was then in power, and I was satisfied. And now what wait I for? To be delivered from all this trouble. All that is in my lot I must go through with, but if Jesus is mine and I am his all is well.

Mother sends her love to you and thanks God for your letter.

Your sister in hope,

ANNIE MURRAY.

LITHONIA, Ga., Aug. 26, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—To-day I feel like writing a few lines to the readers of the SIGNS. For nearly twenty years I was a constant reader of that paper, but about five years ago, when I became so blind that I could not see to read, I discontinued it; since that time I have not been able to read print or writing. Before that time I had at times the privilege of reading five Baptist periodicals, and wrote occasionally in my weak and imperfect manner, but these privileges have been denied me for some cause, I know not why; but, as yet, I have not murmured at his dealings with me, and I desire to bless the hand that smites me. I know that our God is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, and he will place no more upon me than he will give me strength to bear. He has promised to be with us in six troubles, and not to forsake us in the seventh. Like little lambs we shall in his bosom be borne. What a precious and loving Savior and friend he is to his dear, suffering children, and how kind and indulgent he is to them. How I wish I could more closely follow in his footsteps, who trod

the wine-press alone; but I seem to be far from the path of duty and obedience, and I have been beaten with many stripes; my life is full of sorrow, sadness and afflictions. O the loneliness and dreariness of my life! My mother and I live alone; she will soon be eighty-one, and I am almost sixty-three years of age. Mother is deaf and I nearly blind. I am writing this letter partly by guess. To me all these things seem very sad. We have a host of friends, and yet no one especially to look to, although our friends are kind to us. I am the only child of my mother. I hope we have a friend in Jesus, for he alone can all our sorrows heal; O that we could manifestly rest more securely in his blessed name and carry all our sorrows to him.

Dear brethren, several days ago I commenced this letter to you, but was not able to complete it, and now I really do not know what I wrote then, as I am so blind that I cannot read it over. If the Lord will direct me I will try to add a few more lines.

About twenty years ago a lady who was identified with the Missionary Baptists made the remark to me that the Primitive Baptist doctrine was a dangerous doctrine. But since the true church was revealed to me the doctrine has seemed a sweet resting-place. I believe that the Primitive Baptist Church is the dove of which the Lord has spoken. He said in speaking of the church, Thou art my dove, my love, my undefiled. The Scriptures plainly teach us that there is but one church, and this is that church which Christ set up on earth while he was here, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Comparatively we are few in number, which is Bible proof that we are the true church of Christ. The Bible tells us that there is a remnant according to the election of grace. Agreeable to the teaching of the holy word the subjects of grace were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Not one can be added to that number, nor can any be taken away. We have no more power to make a child of God than a leopard has to change his spots. Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Poor sinners cannot work themselves into God's favor by any power of their own. Paul said, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." This excludes all boasting within ourselves. The dead sinner can do nothing. When they are arrested by the Spirit of God they try to save themselves, but their works fail to atone and they find themselves helpless. The Lord found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness, and that is where he finds all dead sinners. When he had found Jacob he led him about and instructed him. When Adam transgressed the law he fell under the curse, and all his posterity fell in him. All of them are ten thousand talents in debt, and they have not one farthing to pay. But Christ canceled the debt and set them free; he suffered the ignominious death of the cross that they might live; he died for all the subjects of his grace. These are the elect according to the foreknowledge of God, and every one for whom he died will be eternally saved; not one of them can be lost. Not one drop of his precious blood was shed in vain, and if we are children of God we are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. He is our loving and merciful God.

There is much being said about sending the gospel to the heathen. A man cannot carry the gospel; it is the gospel

that carries him. The Lord of heaven created the whole earth and the universe, and all the inhabitants thereof, and all things are in his hand, he has all power in heaven and on earth, and he has the same power in heathen lands that he has here. His children are already saved in Christ, and will be made manifest in time. It is all of free and sovereign grace, and it is not by works of righteousness that we have done; our righteousnesses are all as filthy rags.

Brethren, I submit these scattering remarks to your judgment. I trust that the God of love and comfort will bless and sustain you in your labors of love, and enable you to continue the publication of the SIGNS; this is the desire of one who loves you for the truth's sake.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

ARMINDA L. DULIN.

KELLER, Texas, Sept. 18, 1907.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the goodness and tender mercies of an all-wise God, the Trinity River Old Predestinarian Baptist Association has just closed its forty-ninth annual session, held with Denton Creek Church, at Keller, Texas, September, 1907. The letters from the different churches reported all in peace, with some ingathering, and the spirit of peace and brotherly love was significantly manifested, and the association conducted her business harmoniously. Each day we had a large attendance, the ministering brethren coming in the fullness of the blessings of the gospel of our adorable Savior, proclaiming the good news from a far country: the rich treasures of sovereign grace, speaking to us of the glory and majesty of God, and the power of the world to come, united as one in the same mind, and the same judgment, striving together for the faith of the Son of God, was obvious to the dear saints. The introductory sermon was delivered by the writer from 1 Kings x. 6, my mind being particularly drawn to the relationship of Christ and his elect people; the discussion of that momentous subject, the positive certainty of the word of truth, its divine authority and the analogy of Christ and the church. On Sunday our large church building was packed to its utmost capacity; we were entertained by our beloved brother, Elder J. A. Campbell, of Chillicothe, Texas. The audience gave Elder Campbell good attention, and good order prevailed while this man of God was promulgating the gospel in its purity and simplicity. His discourse was fraught with wisdom and consolation to the poor and afflicted ones, whose affections are set on things above. We rejoiced in the fact that our great High Priest eternally lives to make intercession for his people, according to the will of God, exclaiming, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto God, be all the glory. Elder Campbell is one of our most gifted ministers, whose speech and preaching is not with enticing words, which man's wisdom teacheth, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, and by the force of inspired testimony sustained and secured the right of inheritance through Jesus, the passover, sacrificed for the lawful captives or heirs of promise. The power of his argument swept before it every false way, with all the delusions and fanaticisms of the world, clearly distinguishing God's chosen or redeemed family to be a peculiar treasure, separated from the world, and shall not be reckoned among the nations. His ability was without a man-fearing or a man-pleasing spirit, yet, as a servant, gentle toward all men, sincere and firm

in his convictions, desiring in meekness to instruct those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure might give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. The coming of such a servant is a royal feast to our hungry souls, and therefore we thank God and praise him from whom all blessings flow, for his great mercy, and the precious gifts bestowed upon his humble servants who labor in the word with untiring zeal and faithfulness in the work whereunto they are called of God, as was Aaron, willing to spend and be spent for the sake of Jesus and the cause, esteeming the reproach of Christ in his humiliation greater riches than all the treasures of this poor, perishing world, and whose only incentive is the word of life, testifying of the doctrine of salvation by grace, the immutability and unchanging love of God as an absolute sovereign over all worlds, and his unlimited predestination of all things. This I do believe unquestioningly with all my heart, and feel authorized by holy writ to so declare. Solomon said, "A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men." Moreover this heavenly gift will surely prompt the recipient to all acceptable gospel obedience to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he is called, and not to confer with flesh and blood. There is a sacred responsibility upon the preacher in the discharge of duty enjoined upon him under the commandment of God, and any neglect thereof will cause the rod of chastisement to be applied, and it is not left with him to consult his own interest at home, to bury his father, to prove his oxen, or to marry him a wife, with reference to whether or not he will go and preach the preaching the Lord bids him. Again, if the gospel rested upon such a flimsy, sensual conclusion it would never be preached, because the brother could never get his business rounded up sufficiently at home, consequently he could never be a volunteer. O then, how grateful I feel to-day that we have a wise and gracious God to serve and worship, who is the Father of light, of mercy, of truth and of all perfection, who has provided all things necessary for the welfare, comfort and perpetuity of his kingdom in the world, speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast, whose word is as fire shut up in the bones. I shall ever believe when God calls a man to preach his everlasting gospel he will make him just as willing as he did a Jonah of olden time, or a Saul of Tarsus, teaching him that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts he should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world, and not in any way to the satisfying of the flesh, or of worldly aspirations.

Dear brethren, excuse me, I only meant when I began to write to give a little sketch of our good associational meeting, but my mind has run out far beyond the Trinity River Association and her correspondents who love the dear old SIGNS and the doctrine therein contained, and many of them are warm supporters and subscribers of the paper, and I pray for its continuance under the direction of the Spirit of God, also, that it may prosper, and go as a welcome visitor to every Old Baptist family in the land. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ abide with you all.

In hope of a glorious resurrection,

ASA HOWARD.

MONTICELLO, Ark., Aug. 4, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS, BRETHREN AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—With fear and trembling I will endeavor to write some of the Lord's dealings with this poor old sinner.

I was raised among the Missionary Baptists, and that was all I knew until I was about forty-two years of age. I was a member with them nineteen years, and was made to know, as I trust, by the great Light that shined in my heart, that I knew nothing of the saving power and doctrine of our Lord. I trust in the year 1885 the Lord showed me the way and the truth and the life, and that the way in which I had been going was the doctrine of men and devils, and that there was no soundness in it. The place seems so plain to me to-day, as I look back, when all things became new to me and old things passed away. I was called on to offer prayer by the old pastor, and I remember very well asking the Lord to send the Holy Ghost into our hearts, and to show us the way he would have us to go, and, dear children of God, I believe that was one time that I really prayed and the Lord heard this old sinner at the throne of grace. I went home hating the way that I had lived all my life. I told my wife that the Missionary doctrine was as worthless as the dust I walked on, and that I was no more a Missionary, and I could not be a Methodist or a Presbyterian, and I said, as for the Old "Hardshell" Baptists, I never did expect to be one of them, and, turning from her, I said with tears falling from my eyes, I am not fit to belong to any of them. But O, dear children of God, I saw how sinful I was right then. I always had thought I was as good, or a little better, than most people, but then I saw that I was a condemned sinner in the sight of God, and I began to ask the Lord for mercy, that he would be merciful to me, a sinner. I said, Lord, show me the way. That was the first time I knew I was lost. I was left in that waste howling wilderness about eight years, and my cry was, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and show me thy way. I would fall down between my plow handles and cry, Lord, save me and show me the way. Dear children of God, I went on through the wilderness, and I hope there was a wrestling all night with the angel of the Lord, and he helped me and made me know that if ever I was saved it must be by grace. During that time I was made to hate my own life and the doctrine of men and devils, and I do believe that I hate it to-day; and in the Lord's time I hope that he showed me the way and the truth. The first time I ever heard it in my life, it seemed to me that the preacher told me all things that ever I did, and told it all to me; but I was not satisfied at that time; I accused a brother of telling the preacher what I believed. I said that I was going back again, and not let them know that I was going. But the dear Lord, as I hope, filled the dear brother with a message to show me the true way, the way I declared at first I was not going, and I said in my heart, If the preacher preaches this kind of doctrine all the time I would love to live with that people if they would let me.

Dear kindred in Christ, I would like to show some of the wonderful works of our God, but I fear that I will intrude on our dear editors of the good old family paper, and will be as short as I can. After going to hear these old preachers I believe the Lord sent one of his little ones to my home, and he preached to me and to my family half the night, and I do believe the Lord gave me an ear to hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. There I do believe this poor old sinner did give up all the hope he had in the arm of flesh. The next time I went to the church, which was about twenty-five miles away, I carried extra clothing, presented myself before the brethren,

they received me, and I was baptized. Brethren, I never have felt worthy to be with the children of God, but I trust I have been made to know that if I am ever saved I am already saved by grace, and grace alone. I hope that I am killed to the love of sin, and yet I sin daily. I have been made to believe in election and predestination of all things.

Now this is just a sketch of my travel, if I have ever traveled in the way of the Lord. I leave this to your judgment, and trust that you will cover this poor effort with the mantle of charity. May the Lord bless you both, and give you the spirit of wisdom to guide you, is my prayer.

I am your brother in Christ, I hope,

A. TULLAS.

GARFIELD, Va., Aug. 29, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—In solemn reverie the conviction comes, How mysterious is the great plan of salvation, that in this wide and thickly populated world only a remnant is saved. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." The above quotation from Paul's epistle to the Ephesians seems to dwell on my mind; I have read it at intervals for years, but it seemed particularly impressive to me to-day, I could see such rich beauty and steadfast promises to the poor and humble, depending on God's mercy and love, and again I am made to wonder if I have a right to claim an interest in his workmanship. The way for the christian seems to be laid out; we must believe it if the teachings of the Bible are true, and we have no right to doubt that all things are predestinated for some purpose or end, and though we see as through a glass darkly, the revelations of God's Holy Spirit seem to imbue our minds with his wonderful grace and mercy for poor, sinful mankind, dead in trespasses and sins, yet we crave the love of God. With joy unspeakable and full of glory this sweet old hymn comes to me with conviction:

> "Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
> Prone to leave the God I love;
> Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it,
> Seal it for thy courts above."

So many cling to an arm of flesh and try to pervert the power of God; they boast of their success in promoting christianity, and are very punctual in attending their meetings. I have friends among them that are dear to me, I enjoy their company and would grieve deeply if death took them away; but this is a natural love, perishable; any personal offence that would cause a rupture would engender hate. I cannot realize this feeling existing for the little, imperfect children that our precious Savior has chosen; they may offend us, but we forgive them. This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. (John xv. 12.) When this love exists it must be precious evidence that the Lord has honored poor, weak mortals with his holy love, and this spiritual life and love is without sin. O how thankful and humble we should be; but this old worldly body, our ever present companion, how many indiscretions it leads us into. Peter was strong in his own might, but the Lord humbled him, and every christian will find himself walking repentantly in Peter's shoes; there is nothing exalted in them but the Spirit of God, despised by the world and its minions. The name of Old School or Primitive Baptist is sufficient to make us an ob-

ject of ridicule, but we are deaf to their scorn, believing them to be the blind leaders of the blind, and the Lord wills it thus. "For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."—Gal. iii. 10.

I truly enjoyed brother Frederick W. Keene's letter in the SIGNS of September 1st; his description of the refining pot is beautifully portrayed and explained; it comes home to our hearts with no uncertain sound. When we conscientiously examine ourselves we are constrained to believe we really need to be melted in this pot, but I am afraid we will never get rid of the dross while traveling in this vale of sin and sorrow. I trust the Lord will grant our brother grace sufficient to continue writing such able letters to the SIGNS and the household of faith.

Our little church at Washington, D. C., seems to be in harmony. Our dear pastor, Elder J. T. Rowe, meets with us every third Sunday, laden with rich, spiritual food. Often I find myself like poor old brother Job, longing to appear before God, and I cannot, but sometimes, through God's mercy, my cup is full. We are truly blest in having such a good, humble man to go before us and feed the sheep of our little fold, but I am afraid we are often amiss in our duty of attendance, and I truly wish that all who share the manna of God's grace would come oftener and fill the vacant seats.

I have read this letter over and it seems very unprofitable to me, but the dear editors of the SIGNS can cast it into the waste-basket if it takes the room of better material, and all will be well.

With love and fellowship for the household of faith, I hope to remain your unworthy sister,

HANNIE B. GREHAN.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., July 22, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I send you a letter written by our beloved and afflicted pastor, to the little flock which he so humbly serves in meekness of spirit, always trusting in God to direct his mind. He has declared the counsel of God, having no confidence in the flesh, nor has he any compromise to make. He has not been able to visit us since April last, and was much afflicted at that time, but his mind has been directed to heavenly things by the Giver of every good and perfect gift. He did not realize his suffering while preaching the gospel of the kingdom of Christ. We feel to hope that it may be the Lord's will to restore him again to us to feed the little flock over which the Holy Ghost has made him overseer. After the reading of his good epistle of love to the church, by our clerk, a motion was made and adopted that the same should be sent to the SIGNS for publication, and I was instructed to have the letter forwarded to you. Our beloved pastor's afflictions are great, but he bears them with patience, believing that it is far better to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. We have known our beloved pastor for many years, and he is a strong believer in the decrees of God in all things, and he teaches and preaches it. I trust that the household of faith may be greatly benefited by the reading of his letter.

Your brother, I trust,

O. B. HICKERSON.

EAGLEVILLE, Tenn., June, 1907.

To the members of the church at University St., Nashville, Tenn.

BELOVED BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—Grace, mercy and peace be unto you from Jesus Christ our Lord and from God the Father, who gave his Son for us.

In my sore trials and many afflictions I have not forgotten you, but I make request to God that in his great mercy he will bring me to see your faces once more, and to hear your voices singing the praises of his name, and in prayer through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. In my affliction he has given me his Spirit, and grace to enable me to look to him and to set my affections on things above, and not on things on the earth. I rejoice to hear that you have your regular meetings once a month, and that our well beloved brother, Elder Anderson, preaches to you the gospel of peace, love and grace. Do not forsake the assembling of yourselves together, beloved brethren, as the manner of some is, but keep up your worship; it is good for you, and, as we hope, for the glory and praise of our Lord Jesus Christ. I hope that I will, before many months, through the mercy of our Lord and Master, be permitted to mingle my voice with yours in prayer and praise, and in preaching the gospel which the poor have preached unto them. None other than the poor receive it and rejoice in it. The rich the Lord hath sent empty away, but the poor he hath filled with good things. Brethren, there is a complete victory in the work of Jesus, and this victory is given to us, and not won by us. The Holy Spirit takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us, and we rejoice and praise his holy name for the complete victory which he has gained for us and also wrought out in us. Therefore the apostle said, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Brethren, "set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." We have a foretaste of this in time, and we shall fully realize it in eternity.

Accept this short letter, my brethren, as a small token of my love and affection for you as the children of God. I have written it while propped up in bed. I hope, if it be the will of our covenant-keeping God, to see you face to face, that we may be strengthened by the mutual faith of you and me. Finally, brethren, for this time, farewell. "Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

Your brother and pastor in hope of the resurrection, J. K. WOMACK.

MANORKILL, N. Y., Aug. 25, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I take my pen again with much hesitancy to write to you, fearing that it will be taxing you too much for the little I can write you, but for some cause my mind has been much taken up with you to-day. Your labor of love in writing and in preaching cheers me at times, so that I am drawn to you and feel free to use my pen to converse a little with you, yet I feel my inability to write to edification. This morning I was a little surprised in receiving the words, "I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me."—Prov. viii. 17. To my mind these words are like apples of gold in pictures of silver; they are words fitly spoken. How much has our God treasured up for his afflicted people; but at

times it is hard for me to claim to be one of that number whose God is the Lord, yet again I feel to say as did Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee." While I was pondering upon the words, "those that seek me early shall find me," the thought came, Yes, this seems just as the do and live system teaches. But I feel to say as did Paul regarding this system, "Evil communications corrupt good manners," and, "Wisdom is justified of her children." I for one am glad that it is Wisdom that is speaking in these words. Wisdom is speaking to her children, and they know the joyful sound; they shall walk in the light of the countenance of the Lord, and in his righteousness shall they rejoice all the day. It does my soul good to thus meditate upon his love. He speaks to those that know the joyful sound, and, like the blessed Savior, I feel to say that I thank the Father in heaven that he has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." We read that he created all things for himself, and glorious things are spoken of Zion, the city of our God. The oneness between him and his people is precious. "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." To know the cause of his loving them that love him gives room for the deceiver to come in, who would take the children's meat and give it unto dogs, that is, to the natural man, putting new cloth on the old garment, so the rent is made worse. For a time the unclean spirit appears to be gone out of the man, but soon he returns with other spirits still more wicked than himself. John tells us why or how Wisdom loves this people: "We love him, because he first loved us." He speaks to them that know, and not to the world, and the Spirit breathes upon the word and brings the truth to light.

This has been written in haste. Please pardon error and believe me yours in fellowship, D. S. ELLIOTT.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. W. McClanahan.)

To the churches composing the Pocatalico Association, and the associations with whom we correspond.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—In continuance of a custom practiced by this association from the time she was constituted to the present, a Circular Letter has been prepared for the consideration of the brethren constituting this body, and if accepted, published with our Minutes as an expression of the faith of the members comprising this association. The writer of a letter of this character should ever keep in mind that it differs from a personal communication in that if it be adopted it becomes an expression of the faith of the association, and therefore he should be very careful and not weave in anything of a personal character, or embrace the opportunity to defend any personal views he may have that he knows are not generally acceptable to the brethren of the association; likewise, the association sitting in council on the letter should be no respecter of persons, and not for fear of hurting the feelings of the brother who wrote the letter permit anything to pass that they feel is not in keeping with the faith and practice of the association, but should deal faithfully, so that if the letter is received to be published with the Minutes each member of the association would feel willing, if needs be, to sign it as their own personal letter. That the association may not be

embarrassed with any confusing questions, let us select a plain declaration of Scripture to write upon, about which there can be no doubt as to even its literal meaning. This we will find in the gospel as recorded by John, third chapter, sixth verse: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." These words were spoken to Nicodemus by our Lord in answer to his inquiry how a man could be born again. He wanted Jesus to explain to his natural understanding how such a thing could be a physical possibility; but Jesus did not gratify Nicodemus' carnal curiosity by resorting to vain reasoning to convince his natural mind, but declared to him that all that is born of the flesh (natural wisdom included) belongs to the flesh, and avails nothing in understanding the things of the Spirit. There is no mistake in the import of this language, it could not read plainer, it divides everything in nature and grace into two distinct classes, and only two, for there is no blending of them, or middle ground. This unalterable truth runs as a middle wall of partition through the whole inspired word from Genesis to Revelation, and through the experience of every saint; in fact, every thought, word or act in all the universe is on one or the other side of this wall; there is no merging of the two natures, each must remain as they are born as long as time lasts, and each can only exist in its own element. It is as utterly impossible to change that which is born natural into spiritual as it is to change that which is born spiritual into natural; they are as opposite as the east is from the west, and all efforts to change the natural into the spiritual can only result in confusion. This striving to transform the flesh into the Spirit is what creates the christian warfare, "for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Every one that has been taught by the Holy Spirit knows how fruitless have ever been their efforts to change their old carnal nature, and yet having this knowledge they still continue looking to the flesh to see if they cannot find some evidence that it is growing more spiritual, and invariably they have to turn away sadly disappointed and discouraged; but the trouble is they are looking on the wrong side of the line, among the things born of the flesh, to find spiritual comfort. To just the extent we think we are successful in our search for something good in our flesh, to just that degree we are qualified for the companionship of the Pharisee, and disqualified to say with Paul, "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." Is there a child of God that has not often been sorely tried in their endeavors to discern whether certain acts, or thoughts, or intents of their hearts were of the flesh or of the Spirit? They have learned by sad experience how closely the flesh can counterfeit the Spirit, and many times when they have thought that they were actuated by the Spirit, and their motives were the best, have they been afterwards shown that it was all of the flesh, and prompted by a selfish desire for admiration or prominence among the brethren. Perhaps they have attended the assembly of the saints, and attempted to speak to their comfort and edification, and felt that they had some liberty, and thought surely this was of the Spirit, but afterwards have been shown by the light of the Spirit that they were more rejoiced over the successful way they were able to express themselves than they were

concerned about the honor and glory of God. Thus being so often deceived in their best efforts they are led to inquire, How are we to know when we are truly obedient and influenced by the Spirit? There is no safer way to determine this question than to appeal to the inspired word, and there we find the distinction between flesh and Spirit clearly defined, for the Scriptures declare that the flesh works, but the Spirit bears fruit. Paul tells us in Galatians what are the works of the flesh, and also what is the fruit (not fruits) of the Spirit. Now whatever is produced as a result of our work belongs to the flesh, but that which is of the Spirit is manifested as the fruit which comes forth and matures without any effort on its own part, but wholly as the result of life within itself, and of this fruit of the Spirit the first of the beautiful cluster mentioned by Paul is love, which is the life of the fruit; next joy, then peace, &c. It should be marked that joy and peace are as much the fruit of the Spirit as is love, and no more obtainable by the voluntary efforts of the saints than love; and who that has an experience of grace will say that we can of our own volition command the love of God to be shed abroad in our hearts, or who when it is the pleasure of God to so unspeakably bless them as to pour out his Holy Spirit upon them can prevent this heavenly fruit, (joy, peace,) from coming forth? God has his set time to favor his children, and he will prepare each and every one of them in his providence, either by sore afflictions, or whatever way he sees fit, to bear this divine fruit, and all the efforts of the flesh to force the yielding of this fruit outside of God's appointed seasons can but result in the production of a counterfeit void of all spiritual life. How beautifully the figure of the vine and the branches portrays Christ and the members of his body; the life is transmitted through the vine from the root, which is the reservoir of the life; so our spiritual life is hid with Christ in God, and through Christ, in his mediatorial character as the vine, this life is conveyed to the branches, and from the branches the fruit is put forth as the effect of this life; no effort is exercised by the material substance of the branch. But, says one, the branch is not conscious like man, therefore the figure is not complete. In answer to this we will first say, if any are not satisfied with the figure they must settle the matter with the Author of it. As to the consciousness of man or his carnal mind, if tested by the line drawn in the text, it will be found that they belong among the things born of the flesh; in fact, the neutral condition of the materials of the branch, while in no wise spiritual, is in a far more favorable condition than man with his boasted reasoning faculties, for all are born of the flesh, both his mental and physical power; and the fact that man is possessed of a natural intellect, instead of giving him preeminence, (because the carnal mind of man is itself enmity to God, and it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be,) it sets itself up in judgment over the things of the Spirit, and rejects all that it cannot conform to its logic. This conflict between natural reason and spiritual revelation will never cease while we remain in the flesh, for one is born of the flesh and the other is born of the Spirit, and it is only by the direct power of the Spirit that we are ever kept from being carried away by the vain reasoning of the natural mind. May God give us divine wisdom to draw the line between the things of the flesh and the things of the Spirit.

J. H. TERRY, Moderator.
G. B. BIRD, Clerk.

(Written by Elder C. W. Bond.)

The Licking Old School Baptist Association, in session with Bald Eagle Church, in Mt. Sterling, Montgomery Co., Ky., Sept. 13th, 14th and 15th, 1907, to the churches composing this association sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—It is our custom to address you in a Circular Letter at our regular meetings, setting forth some of the vital points of our belief and faith, that we may be encouraged and strengthened in the fellowship of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. We know that our experience has already taught us that every good and perfect gift is from above, and that in our flesh there dwelleth no good thing, but the most precious gift we have received is to know Christ as the Son of God and the Savior of sinners. How is this known to-day? We would answer that it is just as it was in the days of the apostles: by the revelation of God. It was by this that the Savior was known when in the flesh, and by this alone may he be known in the Spirit. We understand this to be the rock upon which Jesus said, "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." This rock has never been changed, nor has its uses been modified. Let us not be moved by the inventions of men, nor by the so-called advancement of religious work, to believe that God's eternal purposes and gospel order have to be made different in this day to meet the changed condition in society and developments along the many new lines of thought. Man may be wise, but our God is Wisdom, and his works and ways are made perfect from the beginning, and need no changes. When Jesus said to the primitive saints that he could not be known except by revelation of the Father, he spoke the truth for all ages. This is the only way that one can know him, and this shuts out all human agencies and means, and leaves the work of building the church in the same hands that it was at first, viz., to him who said, "Mine own arm brought salvation unto me," and also, "My glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." God is building his church today, and the work is not hurried or hindered by human instrumentality; but by the power of that still small voice that reassured the discouraged prophet, he is working his sovereign will and purposes among all nations; although we may not see and understand it all, yet our faith in him bids us be still and know that he is God. Brethren, do not be discouraged and think God is slack concerning his promises, for nothing can resist his power, and wisdom directs all his works, and it will be so wrought that all his redeemed shall give him all praise and glory for their salvation. Let every believer in this perfect salvation so live as to honor the God who has called them out of darkness into his marvelous light, and continue to trust him for strength to overcome the many trials by the way, and to have no confidence in an arm of flesh.

May the God of all grace keep you, and preserve you unto his heavenly kingdom, is our sincere prayer in Jesus' name.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.
J. T. MCCOUN, Clerk.
T. J. RATLIFF, Assistant Clerk.

(Written by Elder J. B. Slauson.)

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, Sept. 18th and 19th, 1907, to the several churches of which this Association is composed, sends christian greeting.

ONCE more through the goodness and

mercy of God we are assembled together in an associated capacity, when you will expect our annual letter, and we feel to thank the Giver of all good for the many blessings bestowed upon us in the year past. Our desires are to praise him for all we have received in the past, and hope for mercy still. Some of our dear kindred in Christ have been called home from among us, and we have been made to mourn because of our loss, still we do not mourn as those that have no hope; we trust that our loss has been their gain. Our faith is in God, who is able to build the house and keep the city. Our churches are in peace, walking humbly before the Lord with reverence and godly fear. We are still contending for gospel faith once delivered to the saints, and no error has crept in among us to disturb us. Our only hope for salvation is in Jesus our blessed Redeemer, who has saved us by his grace; he loved us and gave himself for us. As it is written, he "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." We are settled and grounded in the truth of the finished and complete work of redemption through the blood of our dear Redeemer.

We will call your attention to the words found in 1 Cor. xv. 19: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Among all the writings of the apostles there is none sweeter to us than the positive declaration of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Let us look upon him as a man born of a woman, or the Son of man as he was manifested in the flesh. The life here spoken of we believe to be his life, as he was a man of sorrow and grief. Truly we cannot hope in any of his mighty works of raising the dead, opening the eyes of the blind, causing the lame to walk and the deaf to hear, casting out unclean spirits and healing all manner of sicknesses; these were marvelous, and even those that did not believe on him said, We have never seen it on this wise before, that one who was born blind should receive sight. These are mighty works and emblems of mightier works which we have seen and hope we have experienced. Should one be so unfortunate as to be born blind, and by the instrumentality of one should be made able to see, or one deaf to hear, one lame made to walk or one sick should be healed, these would be great and good blessings, but would be only in this life. Should we look to Jesus for the healing of our infirmities, and know that these were all the blessings we should receive, all would end when life's journey is done, we would still be miserable. But looking into the manifold experiences of the children of God, we have the witness within of this truth that our preaching is not vain, nor is hope vain, for the many sweet communions with our risen Lord have taught us that the declarations of the apostles are very truth, and these are living evidences of the work of the Spirit in our hearts. What can be compared with that mighty work of opening the eyes of our understanding that we "may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power. Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the world to come; and hath put

all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church." This far exceeds every earthly blessing that could be bestowed upon man. Therefore we have living faith and living hope in a loving Savior, who lives to intercede for us, who knows the infirmities of his people and the weakness of our flesh; therefore it is Christ in us the hope of glory, and this could not be if we had only hope in this life; all must end here, no hope of glory unless Christ is glorified, for the body cannot precede the head. We are bone of his bone, and are members of his body in particular; so if Christ be risen then are his members risen from under condemnation, for there is no more condemnation to them that are in Jesus Christ, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, and this is made manifest in every subject of his grace as he calls them with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world was, and this hope being Christ in us "as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." What great and exceeding promises are left on record for the poor and afflicted children who are pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ. "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us," and be faithful to him that called us by his grace; though afflictions may come, and clouds of darkness arise in our minds, let us be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of God, knowing this, that when he who is our life shall appear we shall be like him. This is the substance of our hope, that we shall appear in the likeness of our risen Lord to praise him forever and ever. Amen.

J. B. SLAUSON, Moderator.
D. T. KEATOR, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, Sept. 18th and 19th, 1907, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends christian greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—Another year has passed away, and we have met according to previous appointment in the capacity of an association, to behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all," and through you all; the one great Mediator, who has redeemed us and brought us near unto him that we might know him as one able to save. Your messages of love, through your Minutes, are thankfully received by us. Your messengers have come to us laden with rich treasures of the gospel of Christ, for which we feel to praise God, the giver of every blessing, and we desire a continuance of your correspondence.

Our next session has been appointed to be held with the First Church of Roxbury, on Wednesday and Thursday following the third Sunday in September, 1908, commencing at 10.30 a. m. on Wednesday, where we hope to meet your messengers and receive your Minutes again.

J. B. SLAUSON, Moderator.
D. T. KEATOR, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1907.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

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Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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PREDESTINATION.

WE have been asked of late why we believe in the doctrine of the predestination of all things, and the request has been made that we sum up the reasons for this, our faith, and present them through the SIGNS. Much has been said during the past few years regarding this doctrine, and if our own views are not well known, we are sure it is not because we have been silent in the matter, and so our reply will be somewhat brief, as we do not think it needful that we go over the whole ground at this time again.

First, it seems to us that the following Scriptures teach this doctrine, together with many similar portions of the word, which are too numerous to name in one brief article. "And also of the son of the bond-woman will I make a nation."—Gen. xxi. 13. "For this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power."—Exodus ix. 16. "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, * * * he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel."—Deut. xxxii. 8. "Hast thou not heard long ago how I have done it, and of ancient times that I have formed it? Now have I brought it to pass."—2 Kings xix. 25. "He performeth the thing that is appointed for me."—Job xxiii. 14. "Before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee; and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."—Jer. i. 5. "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put into his own power."—Acts i. 7. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God."—Acts ii. 23. "Those things, which God had before shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, * * * he hath so fulfilled."—Acts iii. 18. "For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."—Acts iv. 28. "As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed."—Acts xiii. 48. "And hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."—Acts xvii. 26. "Predestinated us unto the adoption of children."—Eph. i. 5. "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Eph. iii. 11. "For this same purpose have I raised thee up."—Rom. ix. 17. "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world."—1 Peter i. 20. "Who were before of old ordained to this condemnation."—Jude 4. These Scriptures, and all Scriptures which speak of his foreordination and of his eternal purpose, plainly teach the predestination of all things.

The foreknowledge of God, which embraces all future things and events, proves his predestination of them, else foreknowledge is not foreknowledge, but merely supposition, with no certainty in it. In the nature of things the one is just as certain, and no more so, than the other. If to believe in the predestination of all things involves difficulties to our finite mind, so does foreknowledge involve the same difficulties. If we deny the predestination of anything it also

involves the denial of the foreknowledge of these things.

The immutability of God proves unlimited predestination. Immutability in Jehovah means that there can be no change in his will, his decree, his knowledge. Since these things are so, there can manifestly no one thing ever take place aside from that which he has known and purposed from the beginning; if so, there would be change, or mutability in his purpose and in his knowledge. But these things are immutable, because God is immutable. We do not pause here to argue these things, but simply state them as reasons why we must believe in predestination. The essential blessedness of Jehovah proves this doctrine. If anything can surprise him, or take place contrary to him, then perfect blessedness cannot be predicated of him. That things do transpire unexpectedly and contrary to our will makes unhappiness. In such a state we cannot be perfectly blessed; but our God is blessed forever more, and therefore all must move on in perfect harmony with his everlasting purpose, and this is the predestination of all things and events.

Personal election proves it. God hath chosen certain persons to everlasting salvation. Millions of events from the beginning of the world have had to do with the coming into the world, at the time appointed of God, of these persons, and with their continuing to live until the time appointed of God to call them by grace, has rolled around. Uncertainty in any one of these millions of events would have made it to some extent uncertain whether these persons would have been born into the world at all. If their birth (first and second birth) was fixed with Jehovah, then all the millions of events leading up to this must also have been fixed of God. This seems so plain as not to need argument; it has only to be stated to be believed; it seems well-nigh what mathematicians call an axiom, a self-evident truth.

Every prophecy proves this doctrine, and unnumbered prophecies are found in the Bible. Holy men, moved by the Holy Ghost, declared that multitudes of things or events should be in the future. These things were, all of them, either good or bad, either sinful or holy; and many prophecies embrace both good and evil. They embrace declarations concerning good and bad men, Israel and the heathen, temporal and spiritual things and events, things in the animate and the inanimate creation, and concerning individuals and nations, and these prophecies are all headed with the words "will" or "shall," and these two words always mean the future, and also mean positive certainty when spoken by Jehovah. Man, it is true, says, "I will," and fails. Man says, "you shall," and it is often not done. But we must not attach the thought of failure when God says, "I will," or "you shall," or "He shall." The late Elder Wm. J. Purington once told us that there were more than sixteen thousand wills and shalls in the Bible. There are about fourteen hundred of them in the prophecy of Isaiah, so he said. Take them all out of the word of inspiration and what would we have left? They are the cement of the language of the Bible; without them it would all crumble to pieces. How did Isaiah, for instance, know the things which should come to pass? If we ask him he will say, Jehovah has so declared to me. If we ask still further, How does Jehovah know the future? there can be but one reply, He has predestinated the future; it is His purpose.

Still further, there could be no consolation in affliction without this doctrine. Here Job stayed himself in his sore trials. Let us hear him: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Again, "He performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him." Here was his strength and comfort. Once the truth contained in these words lifted the writer of this out of sore distress and murmuring because of the death of a darling little child.

"Wait, O my soul, thy Maker's will;
Tumultuous passions, all be still!
Nor let a murmuring thought arise;
His ways are just, his counsels wise."

Let all read the whole hymn; it is No. 17 in Beebe's collection. The comfort was in this one thought, It is God's decree, and his purposes are right. There never has been a saint in affliction who has been glad to think that these afflictions came by chance, or from the wicked one. Many years ago it was our privilege to know well a dear sister who could for a long time see nothing that could help any one in the doctrine of the predestination of all things. At last affliction came to her of the deepest kind. Soon after the trial came, in conversation with us, she referred to this trial, and to the blasting of all her hope of happiness and freedom from care in this life, and then said, It must be that it was to be. What she could not believe before was now her comfort as she was brought into the sweetness of the doctrine by her affliction.

We always from childhood believed this doctrine; it seemed to us like a solid rock. Yet in those early years we found no consolation in it; it was a rock, but it was a hard and flinty rock. After a time, through sore experience, we came to suck honey out of that rock. It was still a solid rock, but it was full of sweetness to us. The power and sweetness of this doctrine, as well as of all other doctrine, is learned only in the school of affliction, in which we learn our weakness and folly, and our need of strong foundations to rest upon, and it is a blessed comfort to know that when we are weak and variable and unstable there is strength, and no variableness, in God. It is good to know that we can never flee from his presence; it is good to know that not one thing of all that happens to us is outside of the predetermined will of God. Whatever of objection to this precious doctrine may arise in our minds, nothing can arise which would not also come up against the foreknowledge of God, and his immutability, and his election of his people to life and glory. This doctrine may not be charged with leading to carelessness or licentiousness of feeling and life, any more than election or the foreknowledge and immutability of God may be properly charged with these things. Natural minds may and do turn every doctrine of God our Savior into lasciviousness. This is true of all other principles of the doctrine, as well as with regard to the predestination of all things, but this does not prove that the doctrine is evil or false, it only shows that men are evil.

It is said that there are deep mysteries in this doctrine. This is most blessedly true, but so there are the deepest mysteries in all the doctrine of God our Savior, in election as well as in predestination. If we never declare a doctrine until all its mysteries are made plain, we shall none of us ever preach a sermon again. It is said that this doctrine must be handled with care. This is also true,

but the same is true of all the doctrine of God. God forbid that we should any of us handle this doctrine, or any portion of the truth of God, with careless or irreverent hands. These all are solemn, sacred things, and there should be a solemn and sacred feeling when we speak or write about them, or even meditate concerning them. The mysteries of the doctrine of God are not such as repel the spiritual mind, but rather such as compel the soul to adore and wonder and wait, expecting to see still greater delights in them as it shall please God to unfold them to us, and it is always the unfolding of the same doctrine, never in any wise implying error in what has been unfolded, but only added confirmation and the more completely showing forth of its glory. We trust that with the passing years of experience many things concerning the doctrine of God have been more and more clearly shown to us, but never to the denial of that doctrine, but only more and more revelation of that truth which is in full harmony with the doctrine which was at the first made dear to us. Especially has this been so with this one principle of the doctrine, viz., the predestination of God. C.

JOHN I. 41, 42.

BROTHER CHICK:—Please give your views upon the forty-first and forty-second verses of the first chapter of John's gospel, especially the words, "He brought him to Jesus."

(MRS.) A. H. RICE.

MACON, Ga., Feb. 21, 1907.

Our response to this request has been long delayed, as will be seen by the date of the above letter. We hope that our sister will believe that we have not been unmindful of her, however. Turning to the narrative it will be seen that it was Andrew who was here said to have brought his brother, Simon Peter, to the Lord. It will be remembered also that both of these brothers were among those who were waiting for the consolation of Israel. Jesus had now revealed himself to Andrew as the Messiah for whom they were looking, and by proof which convinced his heart and mind, Andrew believed that this was indeed the promised Messiah. Read the narrative preceding these verses for the statement of these facts. It is evident that Andrew knew that his brother, Peter, was also of the same mind as himself, looking for the Messiah. Now being convinced himself that Jesus was that Messiah, he hastens to find Peter and tell him the good news, and now as he had come into the presence of the Master, and had been convinced, he brings Peter to his presence also, no doubt feeling sure that he was the expected One. Both of these men were seekers after the Christ that was to come, and no man can be such a seeker as they were unless the grace of God has gone before, doing its work in their hearts. What a difference there is in men of grace compared with those who know not that grace. Why did not all men believe on Jesus when they saw him and heard his words, and saw his miracles? Why did not the very presence of Jesus affect all men alike? Because all men were not alike. Why were not all men alike? Because grace had not wrought in all men as it had in those who did believe. Not to all the wise men of the east was it given to see the star or to know its meaning. Not to all shepherds in the world was the vision given by night as they kept their flocks, but only to some shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem. Not to both the thieves on the cross was it given to know the Christ of God, and to confess their sin, and their need of forgiveness, but only to

the one. Had a like work been wrought in all, then all would have confessed him alike. It is God that hath made men to differ as to these heavenly things in all ages. It is so now. Two men go to the house of God together, both alike careless, one comes away as he went, the other comes away to weep, never again to be as he was before. This is the work of God. So then the Spirit of God had wrought in Andrew and Peter, and both were waiting and hoping for the coming of the promised "Help of Israel." Probably the work wrought in their hearts was deeper than either could understand in their thoughts. Their thoughts were of a Messiah who should literally redeem Israel from outward bondage to Rome. But the work wrought in their hearts called for a redemption which was far beyond any freedom from the yoke of men. This wrought upon Andrew even beyond any clear perception of his own mind, and it was not until long afterward that these two men came to see what the coming of Christ in the flesh really meant to them. Now in the same sense that Andrew had come to Christ, in the company of John the Baptist, and had heard His words, did he bring his brother to Him; that is, he told Peter of him whom he had found, and Peter gladly and eagerly followed him to where Jesus literally was. Here was a short sermon by Andrew to his brother, and this preaching found a lodgment in his brother's willing heart, for the heart was prepared of God for the message. The application seems to us to be like this: How many living souls seeking after God and godliness and salvation from sin, death and hell, have found in the preaching of Christ just that message which they have needed, and have in their faith come to him for all that they have needed and desired. So the Lord opened the heart of Lydia that she attended to the preaching of Christ; so the eunuch was prepared to hear the preaching of Philip, and to receive it, and so to learn of Christ and to follow him; so thousands in all ages since have come to see Jesus as their Savior when they have found salvation in no other, and had come to feel that there could be no salvation for them. There is not one hint here of bringing ungodly sinners to know their sins and to Christ for salvation, but it does set forth the blessed news of salvation, that it has come, and that it is in Jesus Christ alone, and that those who are perishing hear it, and recognize that this is just what they need, and by the preaching they come to believe, as Paul has testified in Romans x. 14: "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" It recalls one portion of our own experience: in a time of deepest darkness, when we felt that there could be no salvation for us, one who had learned something of our state of mind said, Do not trust in yourself; if you do you will trust in a broken reed that will only pierce your hand; trust in Christ, in him alone is salvation. We could not then trust in Christ, but the words opened to us the way of truth, that in Jesus alone was salvation, and not in our own good works or religious performances. Was not this bringing Jesus to our mind, even as Andrew presented him to Peter? This did not save Peter, seeing that he already was seeking salvation that is to be found in Jesus alone. The work was begun in his heart, and, being begun, he was prepared to hear the preaching, and to find a blessing in it.

C.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, Sept. 25th, 1907, Robert E. Bailey, of Wicomico County, Md., and Miss Mamie S. Townsend, of Worcester County, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

My brother-in-law, **Edward F. Rounds,** departed this life Sept. 9th, 1907, at the home of brother D. M. Leonard, Broome Center, N. Y. He had been ill with tuberculosis for over a year, but at the beginning of this last summer he went to the Catskill Mountains, and there became so much improved, as we thought, that we were scarcely prepared for the end when it came. Brother Rounds was born Feb. 3rd, 1874, in Worcester County, Md. His parents were George and Mary Rounds, and his great uncle was Elder James Rounds. Edward was the thirteenth child of his parents, and is survived by his mother, seven brothers and six sisters. It pleased God to call him by his grace and to enable him to give the reason of his hope unto the church, so that in 1893, by Elder William Grafton, he was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Welsh Tract, Delaware. Some time later he removed to Philadelphia. Residing in the city for some time, he removed his membership to the Salem Church, who chose him one of their deacons. He married my sister, Naomi J. Lefferts, Sept. 2nd, 1902, and to them were born two sons: Paul L. and Edward Stuart. His widow and children survive him to mourn their loss. In the spring of 1904 he with his family removed to Welsh Tract, and at the time of his death he was a deacon in that church. Brother Rounds was endowed with a spiritual gift to speak and to write to the comfort of the Lord's people. His last days were spent among the brethren of the Roxbury and Lexington associations, in New York State. There is no doubt but that these days were among the happiest of his life. He frequently spoke in public while among these brethren, and so marked was the liberty afforded him of the Lord that the brethren without hesitancy called it "preaching." We do not think he was conscious of his approaching end, for only a few days before he passed away, in a letter to his wife and also in a letter to Elder Durand, he quoted: "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord. The Lord hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death." These words had been much in his mind, and he construed them to mean he should not die, but continue to live and speak here upon earth. No doubt exists but that these words were given him by the Holy Ghost, but he erred in the interpretation. Rarely do we find a young person so spiritually minded as he, and so well versed in the Scriptures. His Bible and he were close and intimate friends.

The funeral was held at Welsh Tract, Delaware, and interment in the burial grounds adjacent. In the absence of the pastor, Elder Eubanks, the services were comfortingly conducted by Elders Durand and Coulter. Elder Coulter spoke from: "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved," &c. Elder Durand's remarks were in general, but very substantial.

May God bless our brethren D. M. Leonard, E. R. Kinney, Elder J. B. Slauson and others of the Roxbury and Lexington associations who so sweetened the last days of our brother. Also, may the divine Spirit of reconciliation comfort and graciously sustain all that mourn.

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

Warwick, N. Y.

Died—At her home in Sussex County, Del., Jan. 29th, 1907, **Mrs. Lavenia Hearn,** relict of Deacon Joseph Hearn (who died about twenty years before his wife), at the advanced age of 87 years and 4 months. She had been quite feeble in body for several years, but retained her mental faculties to a remarkable degree to the last. Sister Hearn was baptized in the fellowship of the Little Creek Church, in Sussex County, Del., about sixty years ago, by Elder Warner Staton, and continued a true, faithful and devoted member of that church to the time of her death. She was truly a pattern, and well might all the younger members follow her example; her seat was always filled, unless some serious difficulty interfered. She was the mother of seven children, four of whom survived her, also eighteen grandchildren and twenty-two great-grandchildren, a large circle of other relatives, and the church, by whom she was very highly esteemed; but we sorrow not as those without hope.

Her funeral was largely attended at Smith's Mills on the 31st, when the writer tried to comfort the bereaved, after which the body was laid in the cemetery near by to await the sound of the trump of God, which shall call the dead to awake and arise to be forever with the Lord.

ALSO,

Brother **William N. Hearn,** son of the above, passed away from earth on the 13th of August, 1907, aged 63 years, 8 months and 10 days. He was baptized at Little Creek by Elder E. Rittenhouse over thirty years ago, and continued an esteemed and beloved member of that church until his decease. He was twice married, first to Miss Lavenia Hearn, Dec. 24th, 1867, who died in 1897, leaving four children. After her death he was married to Miss Augusta Hastings, April 6th, 1898, by whom he had no children and who survives him. He was a great sufferer at various times of his life from rheumatism, the last attack lasting for over six years, by which he was entirely incapacitated from all manual labor, suffering greatly, but always bearing his affliction with remarkable

cheerfulness and patience. He was of a very kind and affectionate disposition, and his death is greatly lamented by his widow and children, by whom he was dearly beloved. The church also feels the loss of one whose interest was always in the welfare of the saints; one who was ever ready to minister to his brethren, gladly sacrificing his worldly interests to serve them. May the bereaved wife and children realize the fulfillment of the promise and find God to be the Father of the fatherless and the God of the widow in his holy habitation.

A funeral service was held at Smith's Mills on the 15th, conducted by the writer, after which he was buried beside his deceased wife till God shall call him thence by his power and change the vile body and fashion it like unto the glorious body of his exalted Redeemer. A. B. FRANCIS.

SISTER **Jane Hole** was born July 18th, 1826, near Nashville. Tenn., and died Sept. 9th, 1907, at Celina, Ohio, aged 81 years, 1 month and 21 days. In 1842 she was married to James Boyland, near Crawfordsville, Ind. To this union were born two children. In later years she moved to Celina, Ohio, where she was united in marriage to Jonathan Hole. To this union were born eleven children. She united with the Old School Baptists in the year 1871, and lived a consistent member until her death. Sister Hole was a zealous member, who did not allow trifles to keep her from her meetings; she walked for miles to meet the brethren, if necessary; the weather was seldom severe enough to keep her at home at regular meeting time. The last male member of the church at Celina, Ohio, was Elder Henry Hole, who was called to his reward several years ago; since then sister Hole has been looked upon by the remaining members of the church as their leader, as she was the oldest in age and oldest in membership, and so full of zeal and love for the cause. This caused the remaining sisters to doubly feel their loss.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer.

ALSO,

Lena Trout Armstrong was born in Franklin township, Licking County, Ohio, March 25th, 1820, died Sept. 18th, 1907, aged 87 years, 5 months and 28 days. She was united in marriage to J. V. Armstrong March 8th, 1840. To this union were born seven children. Her husband and five children preceded her in death. She united with the Old School Baptists a number of years ago, and lived a consistent, zealous member to the time of her demise. Her husband, while not a member of the church, was a devout adherent to the doctrine of God our Savior, and both were faithful attendants at the meetings of the Salamonia Church, situated in Jay County, Ind. Sister Armstrong was very much interested in the church, and gave evidence of being under the influence of the Spirit of grace, which comforted her in her latter years when she became too feeble to attend the meetings and when brethren were careless in visiting her. God's grace was present, and his love manifest to cheer and comfort her in her last days.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer.

ALSO,

John Bailey, son of Matthew and Elizabeth Bailey, was born in Perry County, Ohio, July 12th, 1823, died Sept. 24th, 1907, aged 84 years, 2 months and 12 days. He came to Jay County, Ind., in the year 1854; he was united in marriage to Eliza Smith in the year 1862. To this union were born thirteen children, his companion and two children having preceded him in death. Uncle John, as he was known, for many years believed in the doctrine of God our Savior and rejoiced in its truth, and rested his hope in the gracious promises contained in the gospel of the Son of God; although feeling unworthy of a name among them, yet he loved their company, and was quite a regular attendant at their meetings, seeming to have a zeal of God that is according to knowledge. He took quite an interest in the old Salamonia Church, situated near Boundary, Jay Co., Ind., and was present at most of her meetings, where he heard the doctrine he loved and feasted with the brethren. He felt his time on earth was short, and this summer asked me to preach his funeral, which I tried to do.

N. PETERS.

Mrs. Mary Lewis, wife of John Lewis, was born Feb. 15th, 1852, and died at her home near Mobray, March 16th, 1906. Her maiden name was Vandergriff, and her early life is almost entirely unknown to the writer. She united with the Methodist society when about eighteen years of age, but was never satisfied with the teaching and practice of that people. She seemed to have no ill feeling toward any of her former associates, but could not understand the Scriptures to favor much that is carried on under the guise of religion, and I am not sure that she ever partook of the supper; I am sure she manifested to the unworthy writer that she believed the truth, and that Jesus was more to her than a mere word or name, and the order of his house more than an empty form. She had been taught her dependence upon God, and we believe she delighted in him who graciously put his trust in her heart. She was a confirmed believer in the order of worship set forth in the New Testament Scriptures and confirmed by the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, her adorable Redeemer, and ours, I hope. She was married, I think, in 1881. The Lord deprived her of the pleasures of motherhood, but gave her the everlasting consolation of Jesus to bear her up in spite of the cares and afflictions of this life. The cause of death seems to have been consumption. She was deeply afflicted, but God turned her afflictions to her good, and out of them all he graciously delivered her. Precious in

the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints; precious because he kills them to the love of sin, separates them from self and all below, then receives them to himself. In eternal glory she rests from her labors. We committed her body to the ground in the hope of the resurrection, feeling that in spirit she had entered into that inheritance of which we cannot speak now. The glory she is made fit to enjoy is beyond description.

May the Lord uphold both the reader and writer, establish, strengthen and settle us, and afterwards bring us to glory. Amen.

ALSO,

Dr. Jesse M. Brown was born June 17th, 1846, near what is now known as the Watson place; died at his home March 5th, 1907. He had been in a feeble state of health for some time before his departure. He studied medicine under Dr. Gowan, attended school two or three years at Athens, Tenn. He also served in the Federal army and received an honorable discharge after undergoing the privations and trials common to army life. The writer cannot recall the dates, but he was sick with fever during the latter part or soon after the war ended between the States. The attention given him during this illness endeared to him a family in the State of Kentucky. They could not have treated a son or a brother any kinder, and he always spoke of them with the deepest gratitude. He returned to his native State some time afterward, and after attending school at Athens, as stated above, he was united in marriage to Sarah A. Yother, July 17th, 1873, near Union Fork. This union was blessed with both sons and daughters, a great comfort to the bereaved widow. One daughter preceded the deceased to the beyond. During his life he was subjected to many changes. He was a man with settled convictions, and labored under some misapprehensions about the design of gospel ordinances and other truths. He was evidently set at rest, and in spite of his restlessness and for a little time a want of reconciliation manifesting itself, we hope God abounded toward him in all goodness and loved him even when he was dead in sins, and quickened him together with Christ, gave him the comforts of hope and afterwards received him to himself.

The writer tried to speak at the cemetery for the comfort and instruction of the bereaved relatives and friends and all who delight in the name of Jesus. We committed his body to the ground, awaiting the resurrection of the just.

May the Lord bless those who may read these poorly written lines, and if we meet no more here, when we pass over life's tempestuous sea may we meet with the glorified in heaven and be with the Lord forever. Amen.

T. D. WALKER.

ANDERSON, Tenn., Sept. 14, 1907.

Harold V. Ketchum was born near Elmwood, Peoria Co., Ill., Dec. 15th, 1886, and died at the home of his brother, Prof. Milo S. Ketchum, in Boulder, Colo., August 29th, 1907, aged 20 years, 8 months and 14 days. He had not enjoyed good health for a number of years. When his fatal illness came upon him he was owner and editor of a weekly paper, *The Chester Herald.* His mother took him to Colorado the first of May, with the vain hope that the climate and altitude would bring him back to health, his father joining them on June 1st. During the three following months he had the constant care of loved ones both day and night, as well as the best of medical attendance, but no permanent relief came, and he grew weaker day by day until his young life went out. He was blessed with a brilliant intellect and a mind richly stored with the best gems of thought. He was fully aware of his condition from the first, and talked calmly and thoughtfully of his coming death with a feeling of resignation that to his friends was wonderful in one so young. One of his greatest reasons for wanting to get well was that he might join the Primitive Baptist Church and enjoy their fellowship. For a number of weeks during the last part of his illness every morning his voice was heard in prayer, thanking God for the blessings of life and commending all to his mercy. He calmly and thoughtfully made all of the arrangements for his funeral, requesting that Elder J. H. Ring, of Lincoln, conduct the services, selected his pallbearers, gave directions as to his dress, even to the most minute detail, thoughtfully disposed of his belongings to the family, and dictated letters closing up his business affairs a short time before his death. In the evening he said: "The end has come, I will be with God before midnight." When he bade us a final farewell I said: "How does it look to you now, Harold?" "All right, father, everything is bright." His last request to me was that I write his obituary to be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

The remains were brought to our home, Chester, Neb., where the services were held on Monday, Sept. 2nd, conducted by Elder Ring, after which we took the body to the cemetery and lowered the casket to its final resting-place, and the hymn, "God be with you till we meet again," was softly and sweetly sung.

He leaves father, mother, four brothers and numerous other relatives and multitudes of friends to mourn his departure.

I am his sorrowing father,

S. KETCHUM.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

A Friend, New York, $2.00.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE following appointments are for Elder B. F. Coulter:

London, Thursday, Oct. 31st; St. Thomas, Friday, Nov. 1st; Dunwich, Sunday, Nov. 3rd; Duart, Monday, Nov. 4th; Ekfrid, Tuesday, Nov. 5th; Lobo, Wednesday, Nov. 6th.

DUNCAN McALPINE, Clerk.

IONA, Ontario.

MEETINGS.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the New Valley Church, at New Valley, Loudoun Co., Va., commencing on Wednesday, October 16th, 1907, and continuing three days. Trains from the west will be met at Washington Junction, Md., 1:30 p. m. Tuesday, 15th. Those coming by the Southern Railroad from Washington will be met at Leesburg, Va., 3:30 and 6:10 p. m. Tuesday, 15th. A cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth is extended, especially ministers of our faith and order, to meet with us.

S. B. PAXSON.

THE yearly meeting of the Old School Baptist Church of Wilmington, Del., is appointed for the third Saturday and Sunday in October, (19th and 20th) 1907, beginning at 2 o'clock p. m. Saturday. A cordial invitation is given to all of our faith and order.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Association is to convene, the Lord willing, with the Forest Grove Church, eight miles east of Salisbury, Md., Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in October, (23rd) 1907, and continue three days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. Come Tuesday before the meeting. From the north, take train on P., B. & W., leaving Broad St., Philadelphia, at 7:45 a. m., Wilmington 8:36; take tickets for Salisbury, change cars at B., C. & A. crossing, near Salisbury, for Parsonsburg.

Those from the south, take train leaving Cape Charles at 10:30 a. m., stop at Salisbury, where they will be cared for. From Baltimore, take B., C. & A. from Pier 4, Light St. Wharf, at 4:10 p. m., take tickets direct to Parsonsburg.

A. B. FRANCIS, Pastor.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie Schoharie Hill, will hold their yearly meeting the fourth Sunday, and Saturday previous, in October, 1907. Ministering brethren, and brethren and sisters of our faith are cordially invited to meet with us. Trains will be met at Howe's Cave Friday before the meeting, which is to commence at 10:30 a. m. Saturday.

M. B. BORST, Clerk *pro tem.*

THE Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church will hold their yearly meeting, nothing in Providence preventing, the first Saturday and Sunday in November, (2nd and 3rd) 1907. Trains will be met at Olive Branch and Shokan, U. & D. R. R.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie, N. Y., Providence permitting, will hold a two days meeting the first Tuesday and Wednesday in November, (5th and 6th) 1907. All lovers of the truth are welcome. All those coming by rail will be met at Howe's Cave and Schoharie. Please send me card stating expected time of arrival. We hope that ministers of our faith and all others who can will meet with us.

GEORGE A. MIERS.

BOX 361, SCHOHARIE, N. Y.

THE Mt. Enon Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Elim Church, near Ft. Meade, Polk Co., Fla., beginning Friday before the second Sunday in November, 1907, and continuing three days. A cordial invitation is extended to all Old School Baptists, and especially to ministering brethren who love and contend for salvation by grace, to be with us.

M. L. GILBERT, Clerk.

THE next session of the old Mt. Enon Association of south Florida will be held with Mt. Enon Church, four miles east of Plant City, as stated in the Minutes of last year, embracing Friday, Saturday and second Sunday in November, 1907. A cordial invitation is extended to all Old School or Primitive Baptists believing in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone. Come to Plant City, and you will be conveyed to Mt. Enon Church.

J. W. FUTCH, Moderator.

F. M. CARLTON, Clerk.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 75. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1907. NO. 21.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., June 24, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—With your permission I will try to write of that portion of the revealed will of God recorded in the fifth chapter of John, and of what I trust, if not deceived, is the teaching of Christ there. Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and there was a pool by the sheep market called the pool of Bethesda. It had five porches, wherein lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt and withered ones, waiting for the moving of the water. To my mind these represent penitent sinners who have been quickened into life and who are waiting and looking for the presence of the Savior to deliver them from death and hell. They felt that they were not able to deliver themselves, and were made willing to be made whole. The Savior said to the impotent man, "Wilt thou be made whole?" All such ones will be overcome with the glory of God shining in their hearts as he gives them to partake of the water of life freely.

By the self-righteous Jew, Jesus was called in question. But this poor, impotent man, or sinner, was made whole, and the love of God was revealed in him. He was commanded to take up his bed and walk, and by the light of the countenance of Jesus Christ and the power of his imputed righteousness he obeyed; the man of himself could do nothing. "I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool; but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me." In this experience the Lord was leading him into all truth and righteousness. He was made whole, and told to take up his bed and walk. He was to go and rejoice, and proclaim abroad what a precious Savior he had found. Jesus was censured by the Jews because he had done this on the Sabbath day. This man had told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him whole. But it was given of the Father to Jesus to reply, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." What a holy, righteous answer. Christ as a man felt that he had neither power nor will to do only as was given him of the Father, and thus every one who is born of the Spirit feels. What a gracious gift and blessing that the Son of God came in the likeness of sinful flesh to do the will of his Father, and he was verily God and verily man; he ful-

filled every jot and tittle of the law, and he was made sin for the bride, the Lamb's wife. The Father loved the Son, and would show forth still greater works. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." They shall all hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. The will shall be given them to hear. It is not, If you will, as the Arminian world teaches, urging upon men to exercise faith, which would be but man's faith, and denying the power of God. Christ taught that there was a power above him while he was in the flesh: "For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." The psalmist proclaims, "In thy light shall we see light." "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." It is Christ and his righteousness all the while that is given to a poor, guilty sinner; he is to them the surety of a better covenant, and of better promises. Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many. He came to do the Father's will, and proclaimed, "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God." The covenant of works was done away, and he established the second covenant upon a more sure and lasting foundation. This foundation shall never fade away, it is perfected forever; it is for them that are sanctified, and whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. God puts his law in their hearts and writes it in their minds, and the Father, who hath life in himself, hath also given to the Son to have life in himself. As the Son, he looked to the Father to give him all obedience and to direct his steps. Christ as a man seeks not his own will, but the will of the Father. Christ said, "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true." He had a greater witness than himself while in the flesh, and did not offer to justify his own work; this would be of the flesh. He also said that he did not receive testimony of man; and to the Jews he said, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." Paul, who was taught of God and not of man, went into Jewish synagogues and reminded them to search the Scriptures daily whether these things were so, and it is written that many believed. Paul did not receive honor of man, because Christ had appeared to him in the name of the Father. Christ said, "How can ye believe, which receive honor of one another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?" Christ paid all the debt, and cried out, "It is finished." He fulfilled the law of God and made it honorable. He said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Christ is the bread of life, and he said, "Labor not for the meat which perisheth." This is dead works, and they have no life in them. Labor for "that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed." "Moses gave you not that bread from heaven." All fleshly worship cannot be accepted. The Father giveth the true bread which cometh down from heaven. Jesus came not to do his own will, but the will of the Father, and of all that the Father gave him he shall lose nothing, but shall raise it up again at the last day. "It is the spirit

that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." These words of the Master offended many, and they so went back, and walked no more with him. Then he said unto the twelve, "Will ye also go away?" And Simon Peter answered, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." There is salvation in no other. "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." This was spoken by Peter and John, who were unlearned and ignorant men, and therefore this was not the wisdom of man, but it showed that they had been with Jesus. That many went back and walked no more with him, reminds me of the time of the separation in 1832. The mass of the Baptists walked no more with the people of God, because they were trying to establish their fleshly works in saving sinners, but a few in number stood firm upon the apostolic faith, and defended the cause of Christ and his doctrine, and these could not be moved, and we are still contending for the same Christ and his righteousness as was done at the Black Rock convention. Those that went out from us then have not walked with us any more. The true doctrine has been at all times too hard for them. It is not the works of the flesh, but the work of the Spirit, which is meekness and humbleness before God, that is acceptable in his sight. These are my thoughts and feelings toward the household of faith. If I am what I have hoped, I feel thankful to my heavenly Father for the spirit to acknowledge him as being my Savior and my righteousness.

My beloved brother, this subject has been upon my mind for some time. Many are claiming the work of the law for deliverance. But woe to the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep. Christ will gather his remnant out of all countries, and they shall dwell safely, and his named shall be called "The Lord our Righteousness." If we have not his imputed righteousness we are none of his. This is our only hope of eternal life. May God bless you, my brother, in all your labors, and in standing firm and contending for Christ and his righteousness. This is my prayer.

Your brother, I trust, in the hope of eternal life,

O. B. HICKERSON.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind.

DEAR ELDER KEENE:—I have been reading again "The Refining Pot," in Sept. 1st SIGNS, and it is very comforting to me, and could I put on paper what is in my mind some other poor, doubting child might be comforted. To-day I have been to meet with the saints in the old church-house where I have been going many years; there I met a sister who had come one hundred miles for this meeting, saying, "I could not stay away any longer; I have longed for the assembly of the saints, starved and famished to hear the gospel and see all your faces once more. Have been moved away nine years, and have heard only one good gospel sermon in that time. How you are all blessed to meet together every month, sing the old hymns, clasp each other's hands and feel the sweet fellowship that flows from heart to heart. I did not want our pastor to stop preaching to-day, but talk on until I could be full once more. I have tried to throw away my little hope that has been my anchor for twenty-four years, yet still I feel that Jesus is my hope." Yes, I said,

"Our Jesus is the christian's hope,
Wrought in us by God's power;
It holds the weak believer up
In the distressing hour."

But I had in mind to say something about this "melting-pot" that I was put into when a very small child, when my eyes were opened to see myself a sinner of the blackest dye, everything I did was wrong. Surely if I tried my best I could live one sinless day. But alas! sin was in my very being, I could not live one minute without evil thoughts. Thus for several years I groped along, trying to do and live better, but never succeeding. Surely I do know what it is to be the "ends of the earth," no language that I could command would express my depravity. I was eighteen years old when I first felt "Jesus' blood can cleanse the foulest stain, and will avail for me." The dark clouds that had been hovering over me for so long were rolled away, and I wondered and rejoiced over a merciful, loving, forgiving Savior. It seemed to me that bright day that nothing would ever trouble me again.

"He saw me ruined in the fall,
Yet loved me notwithstanding all;
He saved me from my lost estate,
His loving-kindness O how great!"

Nothing else seemed of importance; Jesus was the theme of my song. But now how is it with me? O, so afraid I am a hypocrite, so full of doubts and fears; afraid to write for fear that I will be misunderstood, yet loving the household of faith, and anxious for the prosperity of Zion. I am glad that was left on record about Simon Peter. I have warm fellowship for this poor brother in adversity. Have I not repeatedly denied my Lord? Once a woman moved into my home, and I thought best not to tell her about my being an Old Baptist, for she might despise me or we might quarrel. Soon she went to visit her friends, and they asked her where she lived. When she told them, they said, Why, that woman is a "Hardshell" Baptist. She came home and told me what they had said, and added, "Surely you are not? You will give everybody a chance to be saved?" I trembled, and quoted, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God," &c. She said, "That is not in my Bible," so she took her Bible and I had mine and we contended a long time. She said, "Poor woman, I am sorry you are so ignorant, and always stay so low down in the valley; come up on the mountain-top with me, where the sun shines." She soon moved away from such a hard case, and I often wonder if her life is still continuous sunshine. Was she ever in the Refiner's pot? Poor Jonah, another tried one, I love; and Job is a great comfort to me. Once I had been sick a long time and was much disheartened, thinking I must not read my Bible, for it is for good people, the redeemed of the Lord. After some days I opened to Job, and how he expressed my feelings by saying, "O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness." And again, "Doth not he see my ways, and count all my steps?" God knows I am anxious to walk uprightly; he knows I want to love him. Now I am mourning over the death of a friend, from my childhood even down to old age; she was my neighbor, and came to me in my many trials in sickness and bereavement. Now she has gone to rest, and how she will be missed. How can I do without her? She was the wife of Gen. Lewis Wallace, that I wrote about two years ago. She was a loving, generous woman. "She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy." In her tongue was the law of kindness, and she

opened her mouth with wisdom. In one of her writings I find her words: "A sense of my own littleness overpowers me; my poor life with its weak ambitions, poor purposes, grievous mistakes and failures, O the emptiness of earthly glory beneath the light of the heavenly. I have to look up to the blue heavens above and trust God who made them." Although we were not members of the same church, we could talk of the things of the kingdom together, and often could see eye to eye. She called on me a few days before her last sickness and said, "My setting sun is sinking fast, my candle is very short, my race is nearly over." Her last words were: "I am so happy." You say some of God's dear children are seldom out of the melting-pot. It is a comfort to have you tell me my troubles never come unsent. The Lord, the refiner, sits near by and hears all our sighs and groans. Can he take notice of a poor worm like me, always begging for mercy?

> "Supplies of every grace I want,
> And each day want supply."

Elder Keene, please forgive my much talking; this is not all I wanted to say. Thank you for all your heartsome writings for the SIGNS; never weary in well doing.

Brother Luckett requests me to tell the friends of his great loss by death of his dear companion, who has walked with him along life's rough pathway for fifty-four years. August 30th we laid the precious body away in our lovely cemetery after a soothing discourse from our pastor, from the words found in 2 Cor. v. 1: "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Elder Robert W. Thompson, of Greenfield, was present, and introduced the service by reading the comforting chapter (John xiv.): "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." O how secure the saints are; taken from this earthly house to that eternal abiding place in Jesus, a mansion of sweet rest. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. This dear sister with her husband came to live in Crawfordsville about twenty-five years ago, and joined our church by letter. They lived near our house of worship, and entertained many of the saints. She was like Phebe of Cenchrea Church, she was a servant and succorer of many. This last year they became too feeble to keep house, and moved over near me, to their son's, so I have had comfort walking to the house of God, and taking sweet counsel together by the way with this pleasant sister now gone to her heavenly mansion. I will miss her greatly, but the good Lord knows our every want, and he will provide. I hope he will give us faith to trust him, and O that I may "read my title clear to mansions in the skies." The dear sister's faith was strong, she said she was willing to trust the blessed Savior, for she knew he would do all things well. She was very quiet and peaceful in her short sickness, and faded away like a lily, and now is blooming in the paradise of God.

I am your most unworthy sister in hope,

LINA W. BECK.

HUNTER, N. Y., Oct. 2, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—It seems to be my chief joy to read the communications of those whom God inspires to write so comfortingly to his little ones, now that my dear mother has been called home. O how sadly I miss her loving, comforting presence. Sometimes I feel to cry like a tired child for mother, although I know she is at rest from all earthly things, with her blessed Lord. I feel impressed to write you, my dearest friends, of the sweet assurance she was enabled to leave to comfort us. For two or three months she seemed to be down in the valley, and that troubled me, for she had always been so strong and trusting, loved every footprint of the Savior, trusted him in sickness or health, never wanted any other physician, saying he could heal body and soul. Then seeing her so cast down I would wonder, What will be the feelings of such as I when the trying hour comes to me? I could see she was passing away from me, and as I sat by her bedside in the lonely hours of the quiet night, it seemed my thoughts were one constant prayer that God would be with her, and she might give us evidence that he was very near her. One night she wanted my sister and myself to pray with her, and I was confounded for some time, and hardly knew what to say for an excuse, as I had never spoken one word in prayer only as I entered into my closet where none but God could hear, and at that moment I felt destitute of even one word, yet I felt it was a request that must be granted. My dear sister seemed to be in the same state of mind. I said, "Mother, I will read to you," hoping we might feel differently; and while reading, these words came into my mind, "Open your mouth wide and I will fill it." So we tried in our feeble way to implore God's blessing, and my sister spoke beautifully in prayer. After she finished, I said, "Now, mother, try to sleep," and repeated the words, I will give unto my beloved sleep; her reply was, "If I knew I was his beloved I could sleep." It troubled me to see her so fearful, but she soon fell asleep, and slept until morning. When she awoke, she raised her eyes toward heaven, and a radiant light illumined her countenance, and her face was like something not of earth. I said, "O mother, what do you see?" She said, "Beautiful, beautiful!" and that was all she could say; but two or three times after that she raised her poor, blind eyes toward heaven, and it seemed that the very light of heaven was on her face; once she laughed aloud. I said to her, "Mother, this soothes all the trials, by the way;" she tried to speak, but could not. I cannot describe my feelings while standing in the presence of death, of God and his angels, and to feel that He was taking one of his ransomed home; one who believed the same truth I profess to believe: salvation by grace, and grace alone. My niece being present, said, "O I did not have time to put my shoes from off my feet," for it seemed we were standing on holy ground. O how God can sanctify to us our deepest distress. When I realize how blessed it is to die like that, I feel to say, Come quickly, Lord Jesus, and take me home. Then at times I ask myself, Will it be my happy lot to go like that, I who am so full of imperfections? It seems there is no other like me. Can there be perfection in the Son of God for such as I feel myself to be? Yet I do hope in his mercy, and have no other hope, and my prayer is that he will keep me by his grace from

all that is contrary to his will, let me suffer whatever cross, distress or disappointment it may bring to me, for the poet says, The deeper our sorrows the louder we will sing. How comforting are the promises; I am surely comforted by them, whether they belong to me or not. I am also comforted by the good letters in the SIGNS; the last number was especially good. Sister Mary A. Haines' and sister Ella Davis' letters were precious to me, and many others; how near and dear the writers all seemed, and I cannot express my feelings better than being bound together in one bundle of love; I often wonder why any root of bitterness should spring up among us. Surely, dear ones, we should each strive, so far as in us lies, to overcome every such feeling. I have been thinking of late of the dear Savior's words when he was here on this sin-cursed earth, when the woman was accused, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone." I wonder if this was spoken to the conscience of each one of us, as it was to the crowd then, who could cast the stone; I am sure it would not be me, for when I realize that all my secret thoughts are known to God, it makes me fear and tremble; we can cover our faults in a measure from man, but nothing is hid from His all-seeing eye; can I hope to stand before him blameless? What love he bears his people. If I am one of them, O amazing grace that saves a wretch like me. I was lost, but now am found, was blind but now I see; and what do I see? I see that it takes the power of the triune God to save lost sinners, of whom I feel myself to be chief. What a wonder of wonders. I feel it needs the same scourge of small cords to cleanse my heart that it did the Father's house, that was made a den of thieves. I think all Scripture is given the children of God for instruction, and I cannot say of any one who has given evidence that they have been born of God, that I have no use for them, even if I think I know they have turned aside from the right path, for I am afraid there is a mote in my own eye; but I feel it would be so good if we could say in very truth that we love the brethren, all, not a part. We cannot love and hate at the same time; for a fountain cannot send forth both salt and fresh water. If we love our brethren we must love them all, for Christ's body cannot be divided, or a bone broken; it is, and must be, a perfect body. What wonderful lessons we have to learn, one after the other. We must be brought to the knowledge of truth by paths we have not known, and we cannot walk in them alone, for others have walked there before, and others are still following on, and the great Leader has gone before. The good Shepherd goes before the sheep, and they hear his voice and follow him, and there shall be one Shepherd and one fold; there can be no dividing.

Now, dear ones, I have written very differently from what I intended, and this letter seems so simple that I do not know whether to send it or not, but will leave it to the judgment of the editors. May God in his wisdom and mercy remember Zion and help her right early.

From a pilgrim and stranger,

MARY M. FAULKNER.

BRANTFORD, Ont., Dec. 27, 1906.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER:—I hope you will not think me wearisome, for my heart seems drawn to you, and I cannot help writing. Since Monday last I have been unable to attend to the active duties of life, so

have had much time to think and read and meditate upon the Lord's goodness to me, his child, begotten by his blessed Spirit of promise, through faith in his only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. During these days of leisure I have about read the SIGNS through, and thought maybe it would not be out of place for me to add a few words of encouragement, and of my impressions upon the reading of the SIGNS, being a new subscriber. In the first place, I would say I am no stranger to the doctrine of grace taught by the SIGNS, having been a constant reader of the *Gospel Standard*, published by the Strict Baptists of England for over twenty years, and have known it from my earliest recollections, my departed father having taken it almost from its first publication, and used to read it to us, a large family of eleven children, and to my poor mother, who was unable to read it for herself; but it was not until the year 1884 that I was led into the truth of God experimentally, although I was led to see myself a great sinner somewhere about the year 1874; but these convictions somewhat left me, and I was left to go deeply into sin until about the year 1880, when it was my privilege to return to my home, and to again come under the sound of the true gospel, which again brought deep conviction into my soul, and never left for any length of time. In 1882 I left my home in Tunbridge Wells, Kent, England, to come to Canada, hoping to shake off these feelings, but while on the Atlantic the convictions were but deepened, until I made a vow that if He would but bring me safely to land I would serve Him all the days of my life; but how vain these promises were I shall not stop to relate, but simply say I tried (like many before, and as many will no doubt till the end of time) to reform my life, and I believe I did so in a measure outwardly, but was not fully brought to see my helplessness until, as I said before, 1884, when a great fear came upon me, which could not be shaken off until God in love showed me that he for Christ's sake had forgiven my sins.

But I have wandered from my purpose. To return to my subject: I was much impressed with the truth taught, and with the experience of our brethren and sisters related in the SIGNS, believing them to be the truth I loved and the same as the *Gospel Standard* people write and teach; this gives me comfort of mind and soul. I think if one thing more than another impressed itself upon me, it was the fact that so many of your correspondents were sisters; this seemed strange, for in the *Gospel Standard* very few, if any, of our sisters in the old land write for publication; in fact, I do not remember of any of their experiences being published until after their departure from this life.

One other thing that seemed to force itself upon me was the newness of the matter published, and in most cases, the clearness of thought, and these, not only by its editors, but by many of its able writers, which leads me to think what a deep hold the SIGNS has upon its readers.

I have much enjoyed the editorials by yourself and brother Ker, and I feel that I already know many of your writers, and love them for the truth they teach, some of whom it has been my privilege to hear preach: Elders Durand, Vail, Eubanks and others. The latter brother mentioned preached in my home, in August last, to the joy and comfort of God's saints in this city; his text was 1 Cor. xiii. 13: "And now abideth faith,

hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." How he did enter into my soul's feelings I cannot express, but I had a good hearing time, and was thankful and took courage. I think I can say the past year has been the sweetest of my christian experience. In August (as I before said) we had Elder Eubanks with us, and in October you brought us words of cheer, and I was enabled to spend a day or two with you at the Poplar Hill meetings. I do indeed wish to add a word of praise to God, and with the psalmist say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits," and can say, Hitherto the Lord hath helped me, and "brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

My heart seems to be warming within me, but I must now close, for I only intended to say a few words when I began, but it now seems hard to stop. I would like at some time to give you more of my experience, if you think it would be for the glory of God. In closing let me say I have been reading the ten articles as given by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and in the main can indorse them, fully believing them to be founded on the word of God.

If after reading this you think any part would be of interest to any of your readers you may do as you think best for the glory of God. I have thought maybe some would care to know more of me, for I received a letter from a Mr. W. R. Storms, Touchet, Wash., who seemed much interested in my welfare.

Yours for the truth as it is in Jesus,

FRED. SIMMONS.

BOWDOINHAM, Maine, Sept. 9, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I feel I must write you about the meetings in Maine, for I am confident you will be pleased to hear, and will rejoice with us. We were all very much disappointed because you could not meet with us, and when I reached North Berwick and found you could not even come there, I did feel the disappointment very keenly; but, dear brother, you will understand me fully and know just what I mean when I say that after Elder Coulter began to speak to us I forgot my disappointment. The Lord wonderfully blessed him in giving him liberty to speak and declare the finished work of our Lord Jesus Christ in the salvation of his people. He also blessed us with the hearing ear and understanding heart, and in reference to myself, I can say the truth was applied to my own heart with much power and sweetness, so that through both meetings there was melody in my heart to the Lord. Sister Raymond, brother and sister Wilson and myself attended the meeting at North Berwick, and we enjoyed it so much that even before we arrived home we were talking of going next year, if the Lord wills. Elder Keene did not seem to feel that brother Coulter needed any help from him, so he spoke to us nine times, and truly the sermon Sunday evening was as rich and full as any of them, and no repetition in presenting the unsearchable riches of Christ. How wonderful are the works of our Lord. I do feel to say, "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable." It is good to have the love and fellowship in exercise in my heart, and be made to declare his works with rejoicing. The asso-

ciation was with my home church here in Bowdoinham, and it was indeed a joyful anniversary, for He gave unto me the joy of his salvation, such as I felt thirty-five years ago when I was given a name and place with this people, and was buried with him in baptism and sweetly felt, "In thy presence is fulness of joy." Sister Bonnie came into our hearts, and we were glad to hear her tell of the great things the Lord had done for her. I do not know of any greater blessing one can have than being led from nature's darkness into His marvelous light, in having Christ wrought in their soul the hope of glory. I felt to rejoice for you when I heard that Bonnie had been brought to a home in the church. I have seen her and sister Nellie but very little during the association, and did not have much time to spend in conversation; as they leave for home to-morrow I shall not see them again, but I hope they will come to Maine again before long.

I cannot seem to realize our association is over for this year, but Elders Keene and Coulter did declare the truth with great boldness, and we all rejoiced to hear it. The brethren from Gardiner and Whitefield assembled with us, and truly all was peace and harmony, and we are of one heart and mind. It is very comforting to have the love and fellowship of our brethren manifested for us, and how sweet it is when our own heart is exercised so we can manifest it for them; how careful it makes us not to hurt or wound them.

I must tell you about our meeting last evening. Many went home after the meeting in the afternoon and only a few were left, so it was decided to have a conference meeting. It was a beautiful ending of our association, and all felt like testifying to the truth they had heard, and declaring what the Lord had done for them and how his goodness and mercy had followed them all the days of their life. Almost every one related some portion of their experience, and gave all power, honor and glory unto the God of their salvation. Such meetings do draw us more closely together, and we are blessed in speaking one to another. It is a very precious theme, salvation by grace. Jesus is the one mighty to save, and has redeemed his people. I am never weary of hearing him exalted above every name that is named, and I desire every time I speak or write that it shall be in such a way as to exalt that precious name, and declare the wisdom, power, knowledge and goodness of God.

I am writing you a long letter, but hope the witness within your heart will enable you to feel sure that you have tasted of the same precious things of the kingdom of our God, and love and fellowship will be felt in your heart. I know you would have been glad to be present at our meetings, and hope another year it will be the Lord's will for you to come. I read a good, comforting letter from sister Mary Terry to Elder Coulter, and I hope to write to her soon.

Remember me to your family, and all those who love the truth as it is in Jesus. May our God bless and sustain you every moment of your life. May he make us realize that the everlasting arms are underneath, is the desire of your loving sister in hope of eternal life,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

AVONDALE, Ala., Oct. 3, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I want to tell you some of my present feelings and surroundings for the relief of my own mind, if nothing else. In some sense I feel to be the most miserable, helpless, hopeless

creature in all the world. I am now living where I never expected to live, and where I had no desire to live, neither did I intend coming here when I broke up and left east Alabama, three years ago; but circumstances over which I had no control forced me here. I do not know whether the Lord sent me or not; one thing I do know, and that is, that my object in changing locations was to improve my condition financially, and to better the condition of my children socially and educationally. I have to some extent accomplished this object, but O how I have suffered for the association and sympathy of my brethren and church privileges, and the assemblies of the saints. There are perhaps seventy-five or one hundred Old Baptists in and around Birmingham; they are from various places, but they seldom visit each other, and but few of them attend preaching when there is any. I am in poor health, not able to get out from home and attend associations and other meetings, so I am living an isolated, restless life. I can only be contented when at hard work, which I try to do regardless of my physical ailments. When I stop work I have nothing to do but to sit down and grieve and lament over my isolated condition and physical ailments, and I get into doubts and fears, and feel that I am cast into outer darkness, with not a ray of light to lighten my pathway, and sometimes I lapse almost into infidelity and skepticism, and sink down into deep waters where there is no standing, and I almost sink in hopeless despair. At such times I lose almost every evidence I ever had that I am a child of God. This is the condition in which the SIGNS for October 1st found me, but as I read its pages and the recital of the trials and conflicts of other poor pilgrims, love, fellowship and union seemed to rise up in my soul and pervade my being, which only increased my desire for their companionship and godly conversation. I could but feel that this was an expression of God's love to poor me, and a sweet evidence that I had passed from death unto life, and I was made to realize the great contrast between fleshly, or natural love, and spiritual love, and this is my excuse for writing to you at this time. I have often thought of Lot going to Sodom, and Naomi going to Moab to better their financial condition, and what they must have suffered during their sojourn in a strange land, isolated from their brethren and being vexed with the "filthy conversation of the wicked" from day to day. But it is evident that the Lord was with them even in a strange and barren land, for he preserved them, and finally delivered Lot, and brought Naomi safely back to her own people. Peter says: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished;" and when Naomi returned to her people she said, "I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty." So it is, we "go out" seeking to better our worldly interest; we experience darkness and leanness of soul; troubles and trials are our lot, and we are made to hunger and thirst for the courts of the Lord, and often we hang our harps upon the willows and sit down and weep by the rivers of Babylon. "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" But still the Lord preserves us, and ofttimes he sends us a message of comfort through some of his tried servants, and in his own time and way he delivers us out of all our trials. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth

him out of them all." My only hope in my present condition is that "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

If this is published I trust it may find a responsive chord in the hearts of those situated as I am, and who are often walking in the "valley of the shadow of death."

Brother Chick, this is entirely at your disposal, to publish or not; I have written mostly to relieve my own mind, but for aught I know some poor, tempest-tossed soul may be in need of what I have here written. I feel that I need the sympathy and prayers of the Lord's poor and afflicted people.

Your brother in tribulation,

H. J. REDD.

AVON, S. D., Aug. 15, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR FRIEND:—As I am going to change my address I write you. I am going to live with one of my sons, so you will change my paper to Armour, Douglas Co., South Dakota. I do not want to miss a copy, as it is the only preaching I have that I care for. I love to read the many good letters from the editors and writers. There is one in the July 15th number, written by a Mr. Scates, Woodston, Ont., that tells most of my feelings better than I can. I felt when I read it that he must be my brother in feeling, but I do not feel that I am fit to join the church. There is no Old Baptist Church in this country. If I know what I do believe, it is salvation by grace and grace alone, but I fear it is not for such as I. I love the SIGNS and intend to take it as long as I can pay for it.

I have a letter written by my dear father about a year before he died, I will send it to you; will you please publish if it will not keep out better matter? It has been a comfort to me, and perhaps others would like to read it, but do as you think best and all will be right with me.

Sincerely yours,

REBECCA T. STOUT.

HARRIS, Mo., Aug. 13, 1899.

DEAR DAUGHTER:—You stated in your letter that you would like to have my old hymn-book. If you had it, it would do you no good, it is so defaced and worn, and I do not know where to direct you to obtain one now. I have long since ceased to sing, as I am slowly declining. I would not give my understanding of the Scriptures for all the hymn-books in the world; therefore I exhort you to read the Scriptures, for they are reliable, and-hymn books are the product of human wisdom. It is written, "Every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness."—Heb. v. 13. "Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision." Israel, after the Spirit, is the true circumcision that worshipeth God in the spirit, rejoiceth in Christ Jesus and hath no confidence in the flesh. Now the children of the flesh are not the children of God. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Dear daughter, there are very many who seek to conform the flesh to the Spirit, and thereby make flesh the children of God; this is impossible, and this idea gave rise to modern missionism. All the effort that is made on the part of man will not make a child of God, nor convert the flesh into one; flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven. "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." The Israel of God after the Spirit He knew before the

foundation of the world. "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Dear daughter, the word "us" alludes to the called of God; this is explained where it is said, "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?" Remember that the apostle says, "The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we [apostles] preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." Dear daughter, God never called an Edomite unto the fellowship of his Son; what he once hated he always hated. If I were with you I think I could make all these things seem consistent. Remember this is a material world, anybody using it otherwise is unwise in the word of righteousness. May you learn wisdom by the gift of God. In reading the New Testament remember that the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, and that better hope was Jesus Christ, and him crucified for the sins of Israel; thus it is said, You are dead unto sin and alive unto God, or justified through our Lord Jesus Christ; this you will find in the sixth chapter of Romans.

This leaves me in rather poor health.

ISAIAH GUYMON.

SHERWOOD, Oregon, Sept. 25, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER:—"Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever; for wisdom and might are his: and he changeth the time and the seasons; he removeth kings, and setteth up kings; he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding." My dear brother and fellow-laborer in the Master's kingdom, is not the above true concerning the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which is, and ever has been from its first issue, devoted strictly to the truth which is in Jesus? I look back over the fifty years that I have been a reader of the SIGNS, and note the dear and faithful editors whom God has taken away from their arduous labors here in their Master's kingdom to their eternal rest, and that when God in his wisdom saw fit to call one of his kings (for we are all kings and priests unto God; that is, if we are the called of God,) from his kingdom here below to that upper and better kingdom to receive the crown of glory, he has raised up others to fill their places; and, dear brother, God has never made any mistakes in choosing servants to be managers and editors of the SIGNS, for they all continue to speak the same language, and contend for the same truth that the dear founder of the SIGNS voiced all of his most useful life; and to-day, bless the Lord, we are blessed with editors who contend for the same truth, and they are both able in word and doctrine.

We are also blessed with able writers, such as Elders S. H. Durand, Coulter, Keene, H. B. Jones, and many other dear brethren and sisters. My heart is made glad always when I read the blessed truth of the gospel, which comes to us regularly twice each month; how eager we are to see who has written this time. We are quite certain that we will hear some good tidings from Elder Chick and Elder Ker, but cannot know who the other writers will be; but I want to say, dear brethren and sisters, that it is always a feast to two poor old sinners to read the precious testimonies of Jesus' love and care for his dear ones, which are so beautifully explained in your articles, and give God all the glory. May God bless you, my dear kindred in Christ, and enable you to still continue to write for the SIGNS. Just think for a moment how many hearts you make glad by writing one article. Thousands read it, and each one is comforted. I feel to be the least, yes, less than the least, among God's children, yet when you tell of your vileness and your depravity and nothingness and unworthiness it helps me along, as I can say in truth, Yes, I know just how you feel, for I can witness to the same things.

But I must stop writing upon this theme and tell you of a precious meeting my wife and I enjoyed at Cedar Creek Church, in Oregon City, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 21st and 22nd. We met Elders Bartley (a nephew of the late Elder D. Bartley,) Mathews and Moffit, and we heard some glorious preaching. Elder Bartley has been with us, or in the bounds of this association, for some months, and we have had the pleasure of hearing him preach several times. He is a precious brother, and his preaching is profitable and able. He was wonderfully blessed with liberty in the gospel at the meeting at Oregon City; truly his conversation was in heaven; we all enjoyed and realized the blessing of meeting together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. The preaching was indeed good, and we all felt that it was good to be there where Jesus held his court.

Your brother in a precious hope,

J. P. ALLISON.

DOVER, N. J., Aug. 21, 1907.

MRS. MARY BREWSTER—DEAR SISTER:—I have been thinking much about you lately, and have thought that I must write you, but have felt that really I had nothing to say. How can anything good be expected from such a poor worm of the dust as I? Our God in his providence has seen fit to keep me here for some wise purpose of his own, while so many younger and more useful have been called away from time to eternity. These things seem to occupy my mind most of the time. O how I long for some congenial spirit to talk with and hear from; there is no one here, so far as I can hear, that knows or believes the truth. At times I have thought of advertising in the weekly paper to inquire whether there is an Old School Baptist in or around Dover, but I have felt that it might look like a hypocritical show to the world; but I know there is with me a yearning, tender feeling for those whom I believe to be the Lord's true followers that I feel for no others, and in my loneliness, and often discouragements, this is a little comfort, for why do I love them? As natural men and women there is nothing about them more agreeable than others, but as was said of the two disciples as they journeyed toward Emmaus, our hearts often burn within us when in their company.

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in christian love!
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

I believe the poet expresses this truly. Yes, these are little beams of heavenly bliss. The Lord deals mercifully with his poor, fainting, weary pilgrims, who are seeking a city which hath foundations, and whose maker and builder is God. How all things in this vain world sink into insignificance when Jesus shows his heart is ours and whispers we are his. It is indeed a heaven below the Redeemer to know, and O how thankful I want to be if indeed I have ever enjoyed these things, but I am so faithless and unbelieving; as soon as I am left to myself my eyes are turned within, and I can see no reason to hope, and Satan taunts me with regard to my early experience, and says to me, You know that you never suffered the terrors of hell, of which the Lord's people tell, so that you could not eat nor sleep. These things have been a great trial all these years. I have often wanted Paul's experience, but then perhaps I should have been proud and self-confident; the Lord knows what is best. My experience of grace, if I have any, is different from many. I cannot tell when I did not fear the Lord, and his people always looked different to me from others, and I never doubted that they were the Lord's people. As far back as I can remember I seemed to realize that I was a sinner in the sight of God, and in my childish way I would make resolves to be and do better. For many years the most of the time there was an uneasy, restless feeling in my heart that I could not be satisfied with the follies of youth as others seemed to be; I lived a mourning life, but did not think that this was the Lord's work, yet I sincerely hoped that some time he would give me that repentance that would crush me to the earth. I had heard experience, and had been brought up to attend Old School Baptist meetings, and I thought that these feelings were the effect of what I had heard. I thought all others must be the same, but as time passed on I seemed to feel my sad state more deeply, and realized that I could do nothing to save myself. One day while at work, and oblivious to all around me, with a cry in my heart that I might but touch the hem of His garment, I seemed to view him on the cross, and he smilingly told me that my sins were all forgiven. I went out into the open air and everything looked differently to me, and all things were praising God. For a few days I felt a love and peace in my heart; then Satan came and told me that it was all a delusion, that I had no powerful convictions such as the Lord's people have, that I had built my house on the sand; and so my life has been one of conflicts and trials; yet from time to time I do believe that I have felt His love shed abroad in my heart, and my mouth has been filled with songs of thanksgiving. This has been often the case in the silent watches of the night; but I am mostly down in the valley of the shadow of death, doubting and fearing. Hymn 991 is often on my mind. I stayed away from the church many years; I knew where the church was, but feared that I was not fit to be one of that number, until the time came that I could no longer stay away, and then it was a blessed privilege to confess my Lord.

Your sister in hope,

LUCINDA BREWSTER.

TOUCHET, Wash., Sept., 1907.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—Once more this side of eternity I will, if the Lord wills, pen you a few lines for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to let my brethren and sisters learn of my existence still upon the earth. Yes, this tabernacle is still breathing, and if my heart continues to vibrate to-morrow will bring me to breathe the air of my seventy-ninth birthday. Then I enter my eightieth year. Surely I can say, as did Jacob when he spoke to Pharaoh, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been." I am "lame on both feet," yet I sometimes hope that my daily food comes from off the King's table, still many times it seems that I almost perish with hunger. Hungry and lame, I lie at the rich man's gate awaiting a crumb, so bruised, mangled and decrepit that I dare not look upward toward the new Jerusalem, the city of the blessed; yet may I be given the strength that Job had when he said, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." I dare not say with the apostle, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness," yet my hope is sometimes in exercise, and then I rejoice that the end is nigh when this vile body shall fall to rise no more until it shall be resurrected in the likeness of the blessed Lord, who has gone before to prepare a home for his bride, when he shall come in his glory to take her home with himself, to sing that song which none but the redeemed can learn. There will be no night there, nor sorrow, nor mourning for the departed ones, and no grievous wolves to mar our peace; it cannot be told, nay, it cannot be conceived, the joy that awaits the saints. So let us strive to lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us with all prayer and supplications strive to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Satan is as a roaring lion, going about seeking whom he may devour. If he tempted our Lord, saying, Fall down and worship me, will he not also tempt his children? For what did our Lord pray in their behalf? "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil."

The foregoing may serve to show what a shattered wreck I am; it will show my brethren and sisters just how feeble of mind I am. But O pray for me, that my faith fail not in my last hours of life. I do feel as if Satan were sorely besetting me, to convince me that all has been delusion, and that my hope was and is based upon a deception, and that it is Satan himself transformed into an angel of light, instead of the blessed Jesus, who is my hope. This has been my state of mind for some time. Now tell me if there is any one like me. O that it were as in days past. Yet not my will, but the will of God be done. Amen.

(MRS.) S. J. CUMMINS.

[How touching are these words from this aged mother in Israel. We gladly publish them, because we are sure that none but the children of the Father ever encounter such difficulties by the way. The testimony of this aged woman will encourage younger believers who are sorely tried. This we know, that such words of the older are a great help to the younger, and so His children still bring forth fruit in old age.—ED.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1907.

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EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

BRIEF REPLIES TO REQUESTS.

"IN Adam we are all dead, sunk in corruption and condemnation. Dead men do not open their own tombs. Christ was their life. He became so by his passion, which was an eternal sacrifice, and everlastingly effectual to heal. To him must they come. His sacrifice satisfies divine justice forever in behalf of all who rely upon it with firm and unshaken faith. Are men then to live in sin? No. Although the gospel annihilates human merit, it does not annihilate evangelical virtue. God bestows his salvation freely, and we give our obedience freely. On the one side there is life by grace, and on the other works by love. How comes love to spring up in the heart of a guilty and condemned man? It comes in this wise: The gospel turns a man's eye upon the Savior. He sees him enduring his passion, bearing the bitter tree, to bestow upon him a free forgiveness and life everlasting. That look enkindles love. That love penetrates his whole being, quickening, purifying and elevating all his powers, filling his understanding with light, the will with obedience, the conscience with peace, the heart with joy, and making the life to abound in holy deeds, fruitful alike to God and man. The gospel is not only a doctrine, but a life. Both dispensations have one substance, and that is salvation by grace, the only difference being that one covenant taught by type and symbol, and the other by plain statements. Christ alone is our true High Priest."—*Zwingle.*

We are glad that our attention has been called to this clear and sublime language (setting forth the gospel as it does), as it has been revealed and believed in throughout every age by men taught of God through the Spirit. We think that some at this day who contend so earnestly that our salvation here in this time state is conditional upon our own obedience, might read this with profit. Here it is clearly stated that sovereign grace is before all things spiritual, including obedience and all spiritual blessings. We are obedient because we are blessed, not blessed because of any merit in our obedience. All is of God at the last. Of him and through him and to him are all things. How true the expression above: "God bestows his salvation freely, and we give our obedience freely." The showers water the new earth freely, and the springs of that new earth freely send forth their waters, which flow freely back to the ocean from which they first came. We do love this free flow of grace from God, and obedience from the saved sinner. This is what, as we are persuaded, Paul means when he speaks of the liberty of the gospel, the liberty which is in Christ. Believers are the Lord's free men indeed; not free to serve him or not serve him, as each may please, but free to serve him, because first the desire to serve him is created in them, and then their love and gratitude flow out to God in thought, word and deed. All that grieves these

believing hearts is that the flesh, the world and Satan so often hinder and mar their free service. This hindrance is bondage, while the obedience to God is liberty. The root of the matter must dwell in any man who can truly say such things as are contained in the above extract. The word "conditional" is all out of place in the gospel covenant, the covenant of grace. It will fit in without any jar to the covenant of works. Let it stay there.

WILLS POINT, Texas, Sept. 16, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Will you allow such a sinner as I am to thus address you? Will you please give your views upon Jacob serving seven years for Rachel and yet getting Leah instead of Rachel, and then working seven more years for her? I have had a name among the Primitive Baptists since 1865, and am still a poor sinner, living down in the dark much of the time. Pray for me.

Yours, (MRS.) M. A. GREEN.

We do not know just what was in the mind of our sister with regard to the Bible narrative to which she calls attention above. The narrative is in itself most interesting, as a picture of the customs and thoughts of that time and of that people. Jacob had fled from his home with the blessing of his father, and with an admonition that he should not take a wife, save of his own kindred. He comes in his journey to Padan-aram, and as he rested by a well toward evening, Rachel came to water her father's flocks. Jacob assisted her, and then made himself known to her, and is welcomed by his mother's brother, Laban. With him he abides and enters into his employment. Jacob loved Rachel and wished her to be his wife. To this end he served seven years, as Laban demanded. This was and still is a custom in the east. Fathers demand for the hand of their daughters a reward. Sometimes this is paid in money or in jewelry. Jacob had neither, and so the seven years service is exacted of him, and it is said that the seven years seemed to him but as a few days for the love he bore her. But now we see in Laban what is also apparent elsewhere: a manifestation of the dishonest disposition of the man. When the time of the marriage came he gave Leah, the elder sister, to Jacob, instead of Rachel. This was easy to accomplish, because of the eastern custom, the bride being clothed in a long veil and her face not seen by her husband until the marriage festivities were over. When Jacob complains, Laban replies that it was not the custom of the country that the younger daughter should be married first. This was no doubt true, but nevertheless Laban was dishonest in that he did not so state at the beginning of the seven years. Jacob was cheated. Did not his own sin, in deceiving his father seven years before, occur bitterly to his mind, now that he himself had been deceived? We are not told; but we know that the sin of Joseph's brethren came up in their minds when they were in trouble before their unknown brother, and so we can well believe that Jacob remembered his own sin now that he had been treated in a similar way. Isaac was sorely grieved by his conduct and deceit, and now great grief had come to Jacob, and his heart was sorrowful, disappointed and disturbed within him. But Laban made a proposal: that he would give Rachel to Jacob also after a proper time has passed, and that he should serve seven more years for her. So after one week had passed Rachel also became his wife. This was according to the evil custom that had arisen in the east; but it brought many evils in its train, and no doubt much marred the peace and happiness of Jacob. There was jealousy be-

tween Leah and Rachel, each striving for the chief place in the affections of Jacob, and for the greater honor among men. God had in the beginning ordained that every man should have his own wife, and every woman her own husband, but men had, almost from the first, corrupted their ways, and even Israel, and men who were the chosen of God, were captivated by this evil thing. Nevertheless trouble and sorrow grew out of it. The Lord had ordained that this sin should bring its own punishment to men.

Jacob sinned in this. One lesson that is to be learned from this narrative is that all men are weak and erring, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and all do sin as long as they remain in the flesh. There is encouragement in this to believers, not indeed to sin, but when compelled to remember and confess their sins to hope that there is still forgiveness, and that they are indeed the children of God notwithstanding their sin. We have long been glad, not that holy men of old sinned, but seeing that they sinned, the record is left for our help and hope. They were the people of God, although they erred; and so we may hope that we are his, even though we have gone astray.

It also may be that Jacob was a type of our blessed Lord in this narrative, and that Leah and Rachel shadow forth the Jewish and Gentile portions of the church of God. But we feel to only suggest this, because it is not so said anywhere in the word. Some of the types are interpreted by the word of inspiration in the New Testament, and in regard to these we may speak boldly and without question. For a long time we have felt to speak with diffidence regarding types that are not explained in the word of God and applied there. So in conclusion we just suggest this one application of the subject, and leave it to the sister and to all who may read what we have written.

"THE wages of sin is death. The gift of God is eternal life."

It is in accordance with the general tenor of the word of God that the apostle uses the two words "wages" and "gift." It is not the wages of sin and the wages of God, but the wages of the one and the gift of the other. We earn the death, but we do not earn the life that is eternal. Death, in whatever way we regard it, is our desert, but eternal life, in every sense, is a gift, we do not earn it. This is not only in accord with the teachings of the word of God in the law and in the gospel, but it is in full accord with the daily travel of the believer. In a letter written to us many years ago one said, "Why is it that when I feel to be far off from God, and down in darkness, and as though he does not regard me, I always feel that if I had not done so I should not feel so; but when I am in the light, and the presence of God seems near, and my comfort increases, I never feel that it is because I have done so that I feel so?" We thought then that this was an experience in full accord with the teaching of the Scripture at the head of this article, and when we replied to the letter we said so.

The life that is eternal makes itself manifest in the believer here and now in part, and so far as it does make itself manifest it is always a gift. Our obedience, our good frames of mind, our abundant service, if these things be ours, could never deserve life even in the present experience of its power and gladness, but are themselves the gift of God, which lead on to other gifts. All these gifts make up our experience of eternal life

day by day. Nothing is more clearly stated in the word of God than that life eternal is now possessed by all who believe. "I give unto them eternal life," said the blessed Savior of his sheep. It is not, I have given or I will give, but, "I give." It is as though the Master said, I give the knowledge of God, of sin, of righteousness; I give all holy desires and emotions; I give all seasons of blessed communion with my Father above; I give the obedient spirit, and then strength to follow on in this way.

These things then are not wages bestowed for good done on our part; they all come to us through the finished work of the Lord our Savior; they are gifts for his sake, and not wages. We never deserve them, but we do deserve the death by reason of our sins. That the Lord should hide his face from us is just and right, but it is pure mercy and grace when he gives us to behold Him in his courts.

THE works of the flesh. The fruit of the Spirit. (Gal. v. 19, 23.)

What a vast difference between the words "work" and "fruit." The flesh is represented as working, and all its works are evil, while the works named in the connection above are such as would be thought of as belonging especially to what is called the wicked world of the irreligious, yet out of all fleshly religion spring up also the same evil deeds. Worldly religion produces emulation, jealousy, strife and all other evil works, just as surely as does any other carnal self-seeking. These things all proceed out of self-esteem and vainglory. The thought, I am better than my fellows and deserve more, is the real cause of all these works named and condemned by the law of God. Out of this principle has proceeded all war, and strife, and envy, and evil speaking, with every other sinful thing. Because of this men seek for high places in the societies of men, religious or otherwise. Because of this many men give largely to this or that charitable society. They expect notice from men and favor from God by so doing. This all produces work, hard work, in which the flesh can find no rest, but like the troubled sea is always casting up mire and dirt. It is all work, ceaseless work, with no time for resting. There is strife and struggle in it all, and if one who has been taught of God becomes entangled by the flesh, to him there is labor. He has gone back to his own works, from which, when he believed, he had ceased. It is given to the soul that knows God to know also what all this weary work means. While he was yet in the flesh it was work in which there was nothing but evil, and now that he has believed, the flesh would bind upon him still more burdens. The flesh dictates nothing but work, until he becomes utterly wearied and is thus made ready to hear of that rest which is revealed in the gospel—that rest which is found in Jesus Christ.

But there is no weariness in bearing the fruit of the Spirit. Who ever became tired of loving God or his neighbor? Who ever felt that he ought to have a rest-day from this bearing of such precious fruit? This fruit is not produced by strong girdings up of the will or the mind and determined efforts of the body, but by the Spirit, causing all these pleasant fruits to grow like clusters of grapes upon the pruned and nourished vine. If the fruits of the Spirit were simply works, then weariness would follow. But what child of God ever grew weary of bearing the fruit of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

meekness, temperance? If there be any weariness it is rather because of his longing to bear more of this fruit.

The works are our own, but the fruit is not our own in the sense that we originate it. It is the fruit of the Spirit, and glorifies the Spirit. If this fruit appears in any soul, that soul cannot glorify himself because of it, but must glorify the Source of it all. These things are to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the Beloved. Still these fruits are in us, and are made manifest through us. It is the Spirit that dwells within us that bears the fruits. It is not us without the Spirit, nor the Spirit without us. The Spirit bears the fruit, but it bears it by its indwelling in the believer. Faith, for instance, is one of these fruits, but still it is called "our faith;" and it is "our hope" and "our love." But all these blessed things are ours only because they are the fruit of the Spirit. As the Spirit is given, so all its fruits are given. How blessed are we in this, that such blessed gifts are ours, and so ours that it is our privilege to call them ours. What is given us of the Father is much more blessedly ours than anything which could come to us as wages, even could we earn the wages, and the sum of it all is that God is glorified in all things, and not man. C.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906; 07 means 1907; 08 means 1908, &c.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE SLAUGHTER OF THE TWO WITNESSES.

THE minds of many of our brethren have been led, of late, to discuss the subject of the Lord's two witnesses, and the prophecy concerning them, contained in the eleventh chapter of Revelation, compared with Zechariah iv. 2–14. The attention of our readers was called to this subject about thirty years ago, by brother Trott, who, at that time, expressed his convictions that the two witnesses were the gospel ministry; not that their number was literally reduced to only two, but from the legal provision in the ceremonial law, making two the smallest number admissible to establish any testimony; thus showing that the ministers of the gospel during the forty and two months, or one thousand, threescore days of their prophesying in sackcloth, should be reduced to the very smallest number requisite for maintaining the truth, in the face of great popular opposition, and under the most discouraging circumstances, as indicated by their clothing. In those early papers brother Trott arrived at the conclusion that the forty and two months most probably commenced at or about the year 606, and adding to that period twelve hundred and sixty days, taking these days of prophetic time to mean as many years, according to our common computation, would extend to about the year 1866, when these two witnesses should finish their testimony, and when the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and kill them, and their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the

people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be buried in graves, &c.

To us it seems quite remarkable that that distinguished servant of God had at the very moment when the struggle was going on in the church of God, which resulted in a separation between the New School, or Mission Baptists, and the Old School, or strictly apostolic Baptists, in which the former took position with the whole sisterhood of the harlot daughters of Mystery, Babylon the Great, in support of all the novel and worldly religious inventions of the day, and in discarding the Bible as the only infallible standard of truth and righteousness, and the latter withdrawing her fellowship from those who then went out from us and took her bold position on apostolic ground, repudiating all religious creeds and maxims, doctrines and ordinances, institutions and combinations, for which she could find no warrant in the New Testament; to us, we say, it is not a little remarkable that our enlightened brother Trott was at so early a day enabled to sound the alarm in Zion, and so clearly point out what he understood to be predicted for the half century which was then to ensue. The development of the Protestant beast which had risen out of the earth, commanding the making of an image of the papal monster which had risen out of the sea—the rapid advance of the image to its completion, and its investment of power to speak and command all men to worship the beast, to proscribe, persecute and ultimately put to death all who should not worship the image of the beast. We have watched for the last thirty years the progress of this man of sin, this son of perdition, and now witness, at the very time indicated, the fearful reality of what was foreshadowed in the faithful admonitions of our beloved brother; but the end is not yet.

As the time draws near many of our most discerning brethren, and among them brethren Stipp, Owen, Rittenhouse and others, are drawn out upon the same subject, and although at the first view there seems much discrepancy in their expositions of the two witnesses, there is a remarkable unison in their understanding of the time signified for the slaughter of the witnesses and of the powers by whom the slaughter shall be accomplished. In closely comparing the views expressed by our brethren, there does not seem to us to be so much want of harmony as we at first supposed. The present views of brother Trott, expressed in a late letter, are that the Scriptures, and the church through the ministry, are the two witnesses; the one as the olive tree, supplying the golden oil, through Christ, as the golden bowl, conveyed by the golden pipes, the gifts of the Spirit, to supply the lamps, which burning with holy fire make the light which is reflected by the candlestick (the church) send forth its radiance. (We do not give brother Trott's words, as his letter is not at hand, but according to our recollection.) One brother thinks the Holy Ghost and our Lord Jesus Christ are the two witnesses intended, and others again are equally confident that the two covenants, the old and new testaments, are meant. There is not so much difference in these explanations as some may apprehend, after all. Suppose we take the views of brother Stipp, that Christ and the Holy Ghost are the two witnesses. The Holy Ghost is the spirit and life of all the Scriptures, and if the Scriptures could be separated from that spirit, the mere body of the

Scriptures, deprived of all its real vitality, would be to us only a dead body, a mere form of words, without power or life. The church is the body of Christ; he is her life and immortality. To strip the church, as a witness, of her identity with Christ as her spiritual vitality, she would be as dead, in regard to spiritual things, as our natural body would be if all the natural life were taken from it. A living body is a body having life in it; take that away and it is only a dead body. This is certainly true in regard to the Scriptures, and also the church. But can the life of the Scriptures or that of the church be thus separated? In one sense they cannot, in another we think they can. In the street of the city new Jerusalem, where the pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, flows from the throne of God and the Lamb, neither of these bodies can die, for there shall be no death there. But in the street of the great city, which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified, there is death. Solomon says, "Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death."—Proverbs vii. 27. Remember these two witnesses are not to lie dead in Zion, but in Sodom and Egypt, and how? While the rulers of the darkness of this world altogether ignore the testimony of the Bible, and set up their own wisdom, works and wills as a higher law, they still pretend to venerate the book, and will not suffer it to be put in the grave. They are busily engaged in multiplying copies of it, and are flooding the land with Bibles. But mark, it is the Bible as a dead body, not as a book of inspired testimony, not as God's witness, that they venerate it; they rejoice over it as a dead body, while they oppose with all their might its testimony. Having now succeeded in gaining a controlling influence over the popular mind, they rejoice and send gifts one to another, because this witness which has in former times tormented them is dead, as a witness in support of truth and righteousness, and against fanaticism and will-worship. In regard to the doctrine of salvation by grace, the Bible is no longer regarded as a witness, either in Sodom or Egypt. As a witness it is dead, but the body is prostrate in the street; nor is its testimony admitted in regard to any of the ordinances or institutions that characterized the church of God in the apostolic age. The divine government of God, as testified in the Scriptures in regard to the relations of servants and masters, parents and children, citizens and magistrates, is superseded in the public streets by what is familiarly called a higher law. Those who profess to be the divinely authorized exponents of the sacred volume, instead of proclaiming "Peace on earth," are making the most violent appeals to the maddest passions of men to drench the earth with human gore, and their pulpits are made to ring with the loudest blasphemies that ever fell on human ears. Death is the separation of the vital spirit from the body which had been animated by it. Allowing then that the Spirit of God, or the Holy Ghost, is the spirit of inspiration, and that God spake to the patriarchs by the prophets, and holy men who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, the rejection of the testimony of the Bible, in its spirit, as the testimony of God, while the book itself is retained in its letter, is to separate the life from the body, and in its absence from that spirit it is dead.

But we see also the church of God slain as a witness. It is true the church of Christ can never be deprived of her vitality in Christ, for her life is hid with

Christ in God; but in her testimony, as a witness, through her ministry she is disregarded. A few weeks since, a committee visited the president of the United States, purporting to be the representatives of the clergy of all denominations of christians; as such they were received by the chief magistrate of our nation. Their business was to persuade him to annul the relationship which God had instituted between two classes of the human family. But was there in the committee, or in the convention which they represented, a single member of the church of the living God? Not one; yet they presented themselves and were accepted as the representatives of every christian denomination. True, the church of God shall and does dwell alone, and is not reckoned with the nations, but the officially recognized body of the church is a body without a particle of spiritual life—a dead body. But this loathsome carcass cannot be one of the witnesses intended, for it has not been prophesying forty and two months in sackcloth; it has not been slain, nor have we any hope that the spirit of life from God will ever animate it with vitality. The true church of God, the mystical body of our Lord Jesus Christ, has been prophesying in the time and manner signified, and her testimony as one of God's witnesses has been, like the leaves of the tree of life, for the healing of the nations. To her peaceful doctrine, her Christlike example and the effect of her testimony to the world, may be attributed all the ameliorating influences tending to the great cause of "on earth peace, good will toward men," which have relieved the nations of the earth from heathen darkness and the most abject wretchedness. As a witness for God and truth, the church has encountered the most determined and bitter opposition of all other sects and denominations of religionists, from her organization at Pentecost to the present time. But as a witness for God and truth, her voice is no longer heard nor admitted, either in Sodom or Egypt. The place where our Lord was crucified is the place assigned in prophecy for her to be slain. The gross and unnatural wickedness of Sodom, the darkness and bondage of Egypt, were figurative of the influences brought to bear in effecting the crucifixion of our Lord. The scribes, Pharisees and priesthood, and the perverted civil authorities of Judea and Rome, were blended in the accomplishment of the tragedy of Calvary, and the same or similar influences must be developed in silencing the witnesses of the Lord. Our modern scribes, Pharisees, priests and clergy are now the rulers of the darkness of this world, and having gained a commanding ascendancy over Sodom and Egypt, have they not effectually slain the church of God as a witness, so far as Sodom and Egypt are concerned? Yet the church is not exterminated nor put in a grave; she is still visible to her enemies as a prostrate antagonist, while over her, and over the dead body of the Scriptures, they who dwell on the earth (not on the sea of glass) rejoice, make merry and send gifts one to another.

Our object in this article is not to offer any new light on the subject of the two witnesses, as we do not feel competent to do so, but rather to show that the views of our brethren, which have been published in our columns for thirty years past, are not as discordant as some have apprehended. If in reality the witnesses are now slain, according to the prophecy, the triumph of antichrist will be short. The three days and an half of the virtual suspension of their testimony will soon

be numbered, and at their fulfillment a more glorious state will be ushered in than the church has experienced for twelve hundred and sixty-three years and six months at least, if not more brilliant than has been witnessed since her organization. But whether our views on this important subject, and those of our brethren, are correct or not; it is beyond all reasonable doubt that we are approaching a momentous period in the history of the church, in which the Savior's admonition should be solemnly regarded: Take heed that no man deceive you. As he commanded his disciples to watch the signs which preceded the destruction of Jerusalem, so are the saints of the present time admonished to watch the signs which indicate the destruction of Babylon. The sovereign order from his awful throne is now being heralded in thunder tones: "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."—Rev. xviii. 4. "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."—Rev. xvi. 15.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Nov. 15, 1862.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON our list are many whose subscriptions are two or three years in arrears, and we would esteem it a great favor if all such would drop us a line, stating whether or not they are receiving their paper and wish it continued.

We often receive letters censuring us for not discontinuing the paper when the time paid for has expired, but should we adopt this rule we would on the other hand offend many.

Brethren, please let us hear from you.

On the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder Isaac Capps.)

To the Elders and messengers of the Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists and the churches they represent, and to all who are contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, with whom we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—Another year with its sorrows and its joys has passed since we have met in an associate capacity, and we are again permitted to meet together as the spared monuments of God's amazing mercy, while many of our fellow-mortals have been called to try the realities of another world. According to the order of the last association and a long established custom, you will look for something called a Circular Letter, and as that lot fell on me, as a starting point I will call your attention to Matthew xxii. 37, 38. Jesus says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment." We understand this love to be equal to God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, as these three are one, but each one filling the place allotted him in that council that was between them. God the Father as the head over all things; the only begotten Son as ever doing the will of the Father; the Holy Spirit always accomplishing whatsoever the Father and Son sends him to do. Now it pleased these to create a world, and all things therein, and man being the last of that creation he was given superiority and dominion over all the others, and God caused man to dwell in a fruitful and beautiful garden and gave him a law as to what he should do, and what he should not do;

and as the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil both grew in that garden, and man had access to both of them, yet man chose to violate the command of his Creator and partake of the forbidden fruit and bring sin and condemnation and everlasting contempt upon himself and his posterity after him, rather than partake of the tree of life and live forever. Neither can man plead ignorance, for Paul informs us in 1 Tim. ii. 14, that "Adam was not deceived;" therefore he did this knowingly with his eyes open, knowing what would follow. Notwithstanding this awful sin and rebellion of man we are informed in the gospel by John iii. 16, that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" therefore the promise of everlasting life is to believers and to believers only; and believers are those that are born of God, (1 John v. 1,) and if born of God then heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. (Rom. viii. 17.) I understand that these are the same ones that Christ was praying for in the seventeenth chapter of John, and said that the Father hath "Given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." Further on Christ says, "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them." In this gift of the Father to the Son we see a joint ownership; what belongs to one belongs to the other; and the Son says that the Father "Hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. * * * For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world;" therefore this love of God for his chosen people is older than the world. Then could Paul truly say to his Thessalonian brethren, "Beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."—2 Thess. ii. 13. Peter says these are "A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." Beloved brethren and sisters, as we take a view of the testimony before us, and see the fallen, ruined and pitiful condition of man as he is driven from his inheritance on account of his sin and rebellion against God's command, then behold the love of God towards these sinners, we are lost in wonder and amazement. It is too mighty for me, I cannot fathom it; I cannot comprehend it; it is so much higher and loftier than anything that belongs to this earth that I have nothing to compare it to; the love of God to fallen man stands alone; there is none like it. Then surely, brethren, we can see why this is the first and great command, that we should love God with all the powers that are within us; and we are informed that he that loves God loves his brother also; for love is of God. Christ and the apostles have taught all the time that we should love one another. Now, brethren, if a brother should trespass against us and do us wrong, let us deal with him as God has dealt with us, dealing with him in love, being ready to forgive as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us; let us try and help to bear each other's burdens and thus fulfill the law of Christ; let us meet often and speak comfortable words one to another about our Master and his kingdom; let us strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; ever "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher

of our faith." Let each one have an eye single to the peace and welfare of Zion, knowing that the time is short when our Lord and Master will come the second time without sin unto salvation. Then let us be found dwelling together in peace and brotherly love; let us be found, like the wise virgins, with oil in our vessels with our lamps, so when the bridegroom cometh we may rise up, trim our lamps, and be ready to go in to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you in all your deliberations, is our prayer for Christ's sake. Amen.

S. B. JONES, Moderator.

H. C. CATE, Clerk.

(Written by Elder John Clark.)

The Lexington Primitive Baptist Association, convened with the Second Church of Roxbury, October 2nd and 3rd, 1907, to the several churches and messengers with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—In this, our letter, we desire to stir up your pure minds by the Scriptures. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."—1 John iv. 1. This is an express command to the children of God. Christ said, "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many."—Matt. xxiv. 4, 5. "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."—Matt. xxiv. 24 "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."—2 Timothy iv. 3, 4. "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."—Acts xx. 30. "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love." "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."

In conclusion let us say with the apostle, "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another."

R. W. SANFORD, Moderator.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

JAMES AVERY, Assistant Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Licking Old School Baptist Association, in session with Bald Eagle Church, at Mt. Sterling, Montgomery Co., Ky., to the several associations with whom she corresponds sends greeting in the Lord.

IN the providence and goodness of God we are again brought together as an association, which we are glad to state has again been characterized by perfect harmony and brotherly love. The preaching has been sweet to our souls, coming as it has with power and much assurance; the theme being salvation by grace, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God, so we feel that the Spirit of the Lord has been manifestly present, making our hearts rejoice together in this most holy faith and love. We desire to have your correspondence continue.

Our next session is appointed to meet with our sister church, Mt. Gilead, at Mays Lick, Mason Co., Ky., beginning on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1908, where we hope to meet your messengers.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.
J. T. MCCOUN, Clerk.
T. J. RATLIFF, Assistant Clerk.

The Mt. Pleasant Association of Regular Baptists, in session with the Mt. Pleasant Church, Henry County, Kentucky, Sept. 6th, 7th and 8th, 1907, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN BELOVED IN THE LORD:—In the providence of God we are favored with the blessed privilege of meeting again, and of greeting each other in sweetest bonds and fellowship in the Lord, and to join in praise to him for such assuring evidences of his good pleasure. Our hearts have been made glad by the coming of his servants among us laden with their messages of heavenly food from the Master's table, declaring none other things than that the Spirit did signify: love, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, giving all power, majesty, honor and glory to him to whom all majesty belongs, speaking to us in no uncertain tones of what the Master has in his love and in his mercy done for his children. Being thus favored and blessed should we not as good soldiers press onward toward the mark of the prize of our high calling in Christ, looking unto Christ Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith?

We have appointed to meet next year at our usual time, Friday before the first Saturday in September, 1908, with Beech Creek Church, Shelby County, Kentucky, where we hope to again meet with and greet the brethren and friends. Until then, brethren, fare ye well.

C. F. DUDLEY, Moderator.
G. R. TURNER, Clerk.
L. K. SMITH, Assistant Clerk.

The Lexington Primitive Baptist Association, in session with our sister church at Halcottsville, Delaware Co., N. Y., sendeth love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We do feel to thank God for this one more demonstration of his loving-kindness in permitting us to greet our beloved brethren and give them the hand of fellowship. Dear brethren, we do feel, if not deceived, the same love which occupied the heart of David and Jonathan; it is said of them, Their hearts ran together as two drops of water that could not be separated. Surely we have heard the truth proclaimed in its purity since we have been together. Dear brethren, we desire a continuance of your love and fellowship.

Our next session is appointed to be held with our sister church at Gilboa, Schoharie Co., N. Y., where we hope to meet your messengers again.

R. W. SANFORD, Moderator.
JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.
JAMES AVERY, Assistant Clerk.

POETRY.

BAPTISM.

JESUS, Master, kind Redeemer,
Friend of sinners, strong to save,
Thou wast once in Jordan's river
Plunged beneath the flowing wave.
Thy example,
Lord of life, we now pursue.

Rising from the yielding water,
O thou mighty God of love,
From the opening heaven descended
On thy head the peaceful Dove;
While the Father
Owned, well pleased, his equal Son.

Come, all you that love the Savior,
Come and own his gracious name;
You who trust in Jesus' merits,
Follow him into the stream.
Be baptized
In obedience to your Lord.

King of saints and Lord of angels,
While we view thy matchless grace,
Suffering, bleeding, groaning, dying,
For our lost and ruined race,
Can we ever
Be ashamed to follow thee?

O what love to guilty rebels
Has the great Redeemer shown;
He, to purchase life for sinners,
Freely did resign his own.
Hallelujah!
Glory to the Lamb once slain.

Christ, the Captain of salvation,
Dying, conquered hell and sin;
Rising from the grave victorious,
He ascended heaven again,
Where he ever
Lives to intercede for us.

Help us, Lord, on earth to praise thee,
Fill our hearts with joy and love,
Till in nobler, sweeter anthems,
We begin thy praise above,
Where hosannahs
Loud shall sound from every tongue,

[ELDER John Boggs was pastor of the church at Hopewell, N. J., for nearly forty years, from 1807 to 1847, and while there composed the above excellent hymn. His name and memory are still dear to many hearts in this vicinity. He was a faithful pastor and an able minister of the new testament, clear and sound in doctrine and in the order of the church. The above hymn was forwarded to us by Dr. John B. Garrison, and we gladly give it a place in the SIGNS. —C.]

APPOINTMENTS.

THE following appointments are for Elder B. F. Coulter:

London, Thursday, Oct. 31st; St. Thomas, Friday, Nov. 1st; Dunwich, Sunday, Nov. 3rd; Duart, Monday, Nov. 4th; Ekfrid, Tuesday, Nov. 5th; Lobo, Wednesday, Nov. 6th.

DUNCAN McALPINE, Clerk.

IONA, Ontario.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elijah White Miller was born August 27th, 1887, and died July 4th, 1907. He was employed in a drug store in Washington, where he was taken sick with typhoid fever, and returned to the home of his parents, brother and sister A. S. and M. S. Miller, Kearneysville, W. Va. After an illness of six weeks he passed away from earth to that home on high where sorrow shall never enter. From the first of his illness he said he did not think he would recover. He had two doctors, who said he was dangerously ill, but that he would get well. On Wednesday morning of the last week of his sickness he said to his mother, "I will not get well." She said, "Why, Lige, yes you will; both doctors say you will; they say you are better now." He said, "Yes, but they do not know." She said, "What makes you think you will not get well?" He replied, "I saw the Savior last night, and he was beautiful. I wanted to go with him." On Saturday morning he was lying with his eyes closed when he said, "There is Colonel White, I see him plainly, the real, genuine Colonel White. He is preaching; he says, 'Do not weep, Jesus is here.' Look, there is Jesus' temple, and he has given me a place in it. Do you not see it?" His mother replied, "No, dear, I cannot see anything." "Well," he said, "sit down, I see it." On Sunday evening she said, "Lige, will you take your medicine for me?" He replied, "Yes, I will take it, but what is the use? I am not going to stay here, I am going to see Jesus." Two years before this sickness he told his mother one morning that he had a beautiful dream the night before. He dreamed that he had typhoid fever, and that he had died and gone to heaven, and saw Jesus. He said, "I saw him sitting there just as plainly, and he was beautiful."

Dear brethren, while at the Corresponding Meeting of Virginia a few days ago I met brother and sister Miller, of the Mill Creek Church. She told me of their son's sickness and death, which so deeply interested me that I asked her to put down in writing what she told me. She has done so, but only in part. I send it to you for the SIGNS. It is another wonderful manifestation of the glorious grace of our God and Savior Jesus Christ. He was not a member of the church, but a lover of the truth.

SILAS H. DURAND,

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Oct. 21, 1907.

OUR aged sister in Christ, **Mrs. Mary Ann Croasdale,** died August 12th, 1907. She was born Jan. 9th, 1815, the daughter of Thomas and Rachel Margerum, and was one of ten children, but her seven brothers and two sisters passed away before her. She was married to Joseph Croasdale April 11th, 1840; baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Southampton, Pa., by Elder Jas. B. Bowen, April 16th, 1837. Because of being very deaf she did not attend the meetings of the church for a long time previous to her death, and for many years, on account of failing sight, she could not see to read, but she would quote Scriptures and repeat hymns word for word which she had memorized years ago. The reality and vitality of the revealed religion of Jesus Christ is often evidenced in these old pilgrims of the cross, for while they may seem to forget the things of the world, unable to retain them in memory, yet when they are led to talk on spiritual things the dim eye takes on a new lustre, the faded cheek glows with new freshness, and the faltering tongue speaks an unhesitating language, showing they have not forgotten One who loved them better than his own life and died for them when as yet they were not. Surely the world had long lost its charms for our dear sister Croasdale, and she has gone forth to realize the fruition of that blessed hope which was her comfort and solace here below for many years.

The funeral was held from the home of her daughter, Mrs. John Samms, Byberry, Philadelphia, Pa., and interment in William Penn Cemetery, Philadelphia, Pa. Out of a family of seven children she leaves two daughters and one son. On account of the absence of a minister of our faith and order, and because of indifference in the family to their mother's religion, the services were conducted by Nathaniel Richardson, a member of the Society of Friends.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

Dorothy Trumbo Hess was born Dec. 13th, 1817, died May 10th, 1906. She was married to Elder Levi Hess July 26th, 1836, who preceded her to the better world some years. They were both true and faithful Old School Baptists. After the death of her husband she made her home with her children until her death. She dearly loved the doctrine taught and advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the pure doctrine of predestination and election, the sovereign power and grace of an all-wise and just God. On account of my long and pleasant acquaintance with her and her family, they requested me to write her obituary. I can say, Surely a mother in Israel has gone to her reward. She leaves a large family of children, who nearly all believe as their mother did. It is good to remember such good and faithful followers of Jesus and firmly believe they are at rest in heaven. May we all meet her there, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

W. A. THOMPSON.

WICHITA, Kansas.

Robert Walcutt Peters, son of Gershom and Ann Walcutt Peters, was born Feb. 7th, 1846, in Franklin County, Ohio, and departed this life Oct. 3rd, 1907, aged 61 years, 7 months and 26 days. He enlisted for service in Company E, First Regiment Ohio Volunteer Cavalry, in the spring of 1864, and served until the close of the war. He returned to Walnut township, Pickaway Co., Ohio, and settled on the farm where he spent the remainder of his life. He was first married Oct. 28th, 1868, to Emma Swope, who died March 17th, 1872. They were the parents of two children, Anna and Alice. He was again married April 3rd, 1873, to Martha C. Glasscock. To this union were born six children, John, deceased at the age of eighteen months, Alvin, Mary, who died when three years old, Robert G., Lulu May and Mirtie A. He united with the Primitive Baptist church at Darbyville, July, 1874; he was ordained to the ministry July 16th, 1887, at the church of Darbyville, in which he served faithfully until declining health compelled him to retire. During his ministry he served four churches, who will feel their loss of a kind undershepherd. He served two years as Moderator of the Scioto Association. He leaves a widow, six children and six grandchildren, who feel the loss of a devoted husband, a loving father and a kind grandfather. He will also be missed as a kind neighbor and a true friend by those who knew him, and feel the fruits of his life will be crowned by the following words: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

The funeral services were conducted by Elder Walter Yeoman, assisted by Elders J. W. Hoppes, Geo. Waddle and J. C. Hanover, at Emanuel Church, Saturday afternoon, Oct. 5th, 1907, at 1 o'clock. Burial in Reber Hill Cemetery, near by.

J. C. HANOVER.

DIED—At his home in Prince William County, Va., July 15th, 1906, **Mr. Benjamin F. Manuel,** aged about 81 years. Mr. Manuel was one of many whom we believe are in heart believers in Christ, who worship him in spirit and love his truth and his people, but for some reason never become identified with the visible church by public profession of their faith. His walk among men was as the walk of a christian, honest and upright in all his dealings with them, and he was highly esteemed by all who knew him. Death came upon him suddenly, yet it seemed to have no terrors for him; his trust was in the mercy and grace of God, in which poor, helpless sinners are brought to confide. He loved to attend Old School Baptist meetings with his wife, sister Emma Manuel, who is a loved member of the Bethlehem Church,

near this place. Sister Manuel deeply feels her loss of a loving husband, but she also feels that her loss is his great gain. Besides his widow, Mr. Manuel leaves brothers and near kindred to realize their loss. How can we grieve for the death of the righteous man whom we believe the Lord has taken to himself in paradise? J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., Oct. 10, 1907.

MY brother, **E. C. Canfield**, died August 12th, 1906, at the home of his son, Elkins, W. Va. They buried him beside his wife. Elder John Bartlett, his pastor, preached a very comforting sermon. He had been a member of the Valley Church for forty-seven years, and a deacon for a number of years. A good man is gone. He was firmly established in the truth.

His sister, (MRS.) MARY FERGUSON.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER E. A. Norton has changed his address from Denver, Colo., to Hampton, Iowa, and requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

MEETINGS.

THE Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church will hold their yearly meeting, nothing in Providence preventing, the first Saturday and Sunday in November, (2nd and 3rd) 1907. Trains will be met at Olive Branch and Shokan, U. & D. R. R.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie, N. Y., Providence permitting, will hold a two days meeting the first Tuesday and Wednesday in November, (5th and 6th) 1907. All lovers of the truth are welcome. All those coming by rail will be met at Howe's Cave and Schoharie. Please send me card stating expected time of arrival. We hope that ministers of our faith and all others who can will meet with us.

GEORGE A. MIERS.

BOX 361, SCHOHARIE, N. Y.

THE Mt. Enon Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Elim Church, near Ft. Meade, Polk Co., Fla., beginning Friday before the second Sunday in November, 1907, and continuing three days. A cordial invitation is extended to all Old School Baptists, and especially to ministering brethren who love and contend for salvation by grace, to be with us.

M. L. GILBERT, Clerk.

THE next session of the old Mt. Enon Association of south Florida will be held with Mt. Enon Church, four miles east of Plant City, as stated in the Minutes of last year, embracing Friday, Saturday and second Sunday in November, 1907. A cordial invitation is extended to all Old School or Primitive Baptists believing in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone. Come to Plant City, and you will be conveyed to Mt. Enon Church.

J. W. FUTCH, Moderator.

F. M. CARLTON, Clerk.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

THERE will be meeting at 54 Fuller St., Schenectady, N. Y., each Sunday in the month at 2 p. m., excepting the fourth Sunday, when it will be held at 8 p. m. All who love Old School Baptist doctrine are cordially invited to come.

SARAH JONES.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at the Hall. corner of 19th St. and 8th Ave., fifth floor, Elevator entrance on either 19th St. or 8th Ave.

11:00 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 75. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1907. NO. 22.

CORRESPONDENCE.

VASHTI AND ESTHER.

"For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

I wish to present some thoughts on the above text. It is true, perhaps, that most Baptists who are familiar with the reading of the Old Testament, have read the book of Esther, and especially this fourteenth verse of the fourth chapter, and I shall only speak of a few things herein contained.

First, it is to be remembered that the ten tribes were removed from Samaria in the year 713 B. C., by the king of Assyria, and placed among the Assyrian kingdoms and scattered through most of the then known provinces, and later the two tribes were carried captive into Babylon, and in the time of Esther were well scattered among the provinces. It is true that quite a number of the two tribes came out of Babylon by the decree of Cyrus, to rebuild Jerusalem, as we see by reading the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah, and also is the truth verified by reading Nehemiah and Ezra; but there still remained the greater part of the twelve tribes scattered among the provinces of the then known world, as we see by wicked Haman so informing the king, and also informing him of their being diverse in their worship from other people, especially in their not bowing to men. These were a typical people, and this history cannot profit the children of grace now, except as it relates in a typical way to the antitypical people of which the Jews were a type, and the thing in which it is now profitable to God's children is their being remembered in their adversity through all their wandering life; they are called a people that were ever removing, living in an unsettled state. Idolatry was often the cause of their removing from a settled to an unsettled state, which unsettled state I think in some way is fulfilled in the antitypical people. It was often the case, and I might say most of the time from Abraham's day until the new covenant people were manifest, that the first covenant people were made to suffer for their idolatry. Many times they were driven from their promised land, and their inheritance lost for a time, but for the two tribes the inheritance was kept longer than it was

for the ten tribes. We know not what figure or type Vashti's refusing to obey the king's command, in refusing to appear before the king that her beauty might be displayed, was, unless she typified the first covenant people, who were always disobedient and were removed because of their disobedience. We see that their disobedience opened the way for the manifestation of the Jews, of whom Esther was one, her uncle, Mordecai, bringing her up in a creditable way; her accomplishments were agreeable to the time, and fitted for the events of her day. It is true that Esther's kindred had not been shown to the king at the time of her being chosen queen of the provinces of the then known world, and hence her being chosen as the wife of the king was not done by those who had a hand in the matter with any view to the welfare of God's typical people; but when the maidens were gathered in from the provinces that the king might have a goodly number from which to choose, there was prayer made constantly to God by Esther's uncle, Mordecai, we would infer, by Mordecai's behavior before the court of the king and before the women's court, where the maidens were kept in preparation for their appearance. The point we get here is, Mordecai's people were a scattered people, but yet a distinct people, and the rebellion of Vashti at this time, and the events that followed swiftly, show it was one of God's times and ways to reveal his people and shew himself their deliverer, and to bring his protection over them to the Jews for their comfort, and also to bring this knowledge of his being Israel's God before the world; and this he did in removing the first queen that he might establish the second. It might seem that here we have a type or figure of the two covenants, but the time was ripe for God's glorious power to be manifested to his people, and also that his typical people should be manifested to the world; for it seems that no sooner had Esther been established queen than it was manifest that there was hatred arising against her people through her uncle not bowing to wicked Haman. This peculiar feature of Mordecai not bowing seems typical of the new covenant people not bowing to man. This is one of the prominent characteristics of God's children; they will not bow in reverence to any man or king, save Christ. It is now, as then, often a cause for offence, and God's children suffer for it, but still they will not confess any except the true and living God.

Haman's wrath against Mordecai and his evil design in planning the destruction of his people, seems typical of the enemy of all righteousness planning the overthrow and destruction of God's dear children; but the overthrow of Haman's plans seems to be done in a way that is fitting to the way deliverance comes to God's people under all their afflictions. Mordecai and his people hear the decree that they are to be destroyed, and know no way of escape, hence their mourning and fasting and covering themselves with sackcloth and ashes, and Mordecai entreating his niece, Esther, the queen, to entreat the king for help. This seems fitting or typical of God's dear children who are made aware of the awful decree hanging over them, that the Judge of all the earth has discovered them, and their enemies are to rise up and obey the decree of the king and smite them. We think this decree against God's typical people and the sorrow it brought upon them, and their prayer to God for deliverance, is fitting to the experience of all of God's people when they have been

discovered by Him who has all power over them, and they feel they must perish. I say, the mourning and fasting and praying for help, and the crying with a loud, bitter cry of Mordecai in the streets because they are to perish, is emblematic of the bitter cry of God's people when sin has gotten the power over them and the enemy of all righteousness has planned their destruction. The great deliverance that followed this pitiful cry for help seems typical of the deliverance that comes to God's people when helpless at the feet of Jesus they lie pleading for mercy, when all hope seems gone, when the power of darkness seems to have the mastery over them, and they feel judgment has passed against them, and the posts are publishing it to all nations, and the expected hour is appointed for them to die, as it was with the Jews, and they cover, as it were, themselves with sackcloth and ashes; all they can do is to fast and pray; but a typical savior appears, Mordecai arises, he hears the fatal decree against his people, as Christ heard it against his people. Mordecai refuses to honor Haman; Christ refused to honor the scribes and Jewish rulers; wrath ensued against Mordecai, as it did against Christ from the rulers. The servants showed Haman Mordecai's people; this discovery led Haman to plan their destruction. So it was when Christ's people were discovered, their destruction was planned. Mordecai was hated most; even so Christ was hated most, and his life was taken first, as was to be the case with Mordecai. A gallows fifty cubits high was erected, and his life was demanded; but just before all this machinery of death was set in motion and the awful carnage of God's typical people is launched forth, something unseen or unthought of by man begins to move. The king is restless and tossed upon his bed, he cannot sleep, God's hand is moving; the king in his wakefulness has the records read, and it was there found that Mordecai had saved the king's life previous to all this, by informing on a couple of traitors of the king who had planned the king's death, and it came into the king's mind that Mordecai ought to be honored. So while Haman's friends and himself were planning Mordecai's destruction, the king was planning his honor. Haman was building a gallows, but the king was ready to make Mordecai great. Thus we see the divine hand moving silently to save his typical people. Haman appears before the king fresh from his erecting the gallows for Mordecai's death, flushed with the evil purpose of destruction in his heart, and the king held out to him the golden sceptre and Haman stands before the king; the king cries out, What shall be done for the man the king shall delight to honor? Haman reflects, and feels the king would honor him more than others, and hence named all the honors the one should receive whom the king delighted to honor, which were to put upon him the king's apparel, and set him on the king's horse, and lead the horse through the streets of the city, and say, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor. When Haman named these honors he supposed he would wear the king's apparel, and ride on the king's horse, and have one of the king's most distinguished nobles to proclaim before him, saying, This is the man whom the king delighteth to honor; but alas, what must have been his chagrin and dismay when the king told him to take the king's apparel and put it on Mordecai, and place him on the king's horse, and bring him on horseback through the streets of the city,

and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor. Thus we see how swift does the pride of man fall when the hand of God has turned all his glory into defeat. Haman had planned Mordecai's death, his wife had helped him plan it, but God had planned the complete overthrow of Haman and the lifting of Mordecai to the second place in the kingdom, which would seem typical of the lifting of Jesus on high and thwarting all that Satan had planned.

I have not followed the line that was in my mind when I sat down to write, but have been led differently. Haman, the archenemy of God's typical people, was overthrown in all his plans against God and his people, or rather against Mordecai and his people, as it was with Satan, the archenemy of righteousness, when he had planned the crucifixion of Christ, thinking that he might put an end to all the kingdom of Christ; but O what a complete victory over Satan and all his host do we see when Christ rises from the tomb, abolishing death, getting the victory over death, hell and the grave, so that Satan was overthrown in all he had done, and Jesus was given all power in heaven and earth, to reign until he shall have put all things under his feet. Mordecai was lifted up over Haman and all his kindred, and his (Haman's) power was completely broken, and God's people were honored when the queen, Esther, shewed to the king her people. So it was when the queen, the new Jerusalem, revealed her people; her spiritual Mordecai cried in the streets with a bitter cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Mordecai said to Esther, Fear not to stand for thy people, for he seemed to feel that after all perhaps she had been brought to the throne for just such an emergency as they were in, and hence he prays her to entreat the king on her behalf and in behalf of the Jews. I think we see in Esther a type of the new Jerusalem, the bride, the Lamb's wife, and a type of Christ in Mordecai; and the wonderful interest Mordecai took in behalf of the Jews, is also typical of the great interest Christ took in his people. I do not see where the Jews took any leading part in the salvation of the Jews at that time, as Mordecai did; neither do we see that any member of the household of faith took such an interest in the salvation of God's people as did Christ. So we see typical sufferings and typical salvation in Mordecai's time. But this is in the past and might be forgotten did it not give some encouragement now to the people of God. First, be it remembered that this display of God's power in behalf of his typical people was about the year 521 B. C. Just at the time the Babylonian captivity of the two tribes ceased, and Cyrus had issued a decree that Jerusalem should be rebuilt, and the two tribes, or a portion of them, had gone back to Canaan and built Jerusalem; but a great portion of the two tribes remained in the province of Babylon, where they had gained possessions during the seventy years captivity, and the ten tribes had long been scattered in the kingdom of the Medes, and at the time of Esther and Mordecai, Haman said to the king, There is a people scattered throughout all the provinces of thy kingdom, and their laws are diverse from all people, and neither do they keep the king's laws; therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them.

Brethren, the last point I wish to call your attention to is that God's typical people were in Esther's time a scattered people, suffering God's wrath for their

disobedience, yet he remembered them still and wrought for their deliverance; he suffered kings to do them no harm, saying, "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." We do not hear of the ten tribes ever coming back to their possessions, yet God remembered them still. Hence in this, our day, we feel that it is a dark time; churches are going down, brethren are being called home, and none to fill the ranks; divisions have arisen, and Israel is fighting against Judah, and it seems a great many are scattered among the provinces (or Arminians), but yet their laws are diverse from Arminians, and they do not bow to earthly kings, and I trust in their scattered state God will remember them even if he has cast them out of Canaan, and that he will not suffer kings to harm them. O brethren, this remembering his people in their adversity in times past has given me much assurance that he is watching over both Judah and Israel, even though they are fighting each other and are guilty of idolatry. Yet I see God remembered them still; though he brought them few in number, yet he told Judah that after they had lost their children in the Babylonian captivity, the others he would give them in the place of those they lost would say, The place is "too strait for us," give room; meaning Zion's children would again be so numerous that the land of Canaan would be too small to hold them; "For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants. * * * Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? and who hath brought me these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been?" Zion said at that time in her scattered and desolate condition, that the Lord had forsaken her, and her Lord had forgotten her; but her Lord saith, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me. Thy children shall make haste; * * * Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these shall gather themselves together, and come to thee."

I have read and reread the great assurances God gave to his typical people, even before he chastened them, that he would revive them again; therefore I am often made to hope that even now in this twentieth century God does still remember his people, and that we have a sweet and abiding promise that even in our dark and adverse times God will again revive us; that God will yet take the stick of Judah and the stick of Ephraim, and they may become one in his hand. I am made to hope this may yet be true of God's people when I read how in Esther's and Mordecai's time he overthrew their enemies and made kings tremble before them. Isaiah in the forty-ninth chapter has given this assurance to Israel; why should not spiritual Israel hope for the same? Isaiah told the Jews to rejoice, thou barren, that barest not, break forth into singing and cry aloud, thou that travailest not, for the desolate hath many more children than her that hath an husband. Hence let us rejoice, having the true Husband, even if her children are not at present so numerous. God never forgot Israel of old, may he ever remember us now.

NEWTON PETERS.

"PRAY WITHOUT CEASING."

(1 Thessalonians v. 17.)

THIS portion of Paul's writing, as well as most all of it, and most all of what has been written for the children born of the Spirit, would and does seem to the natural mind as an utter impossibility, and to the child of nature it is fully if not more so than it seems. Our Savior's own words are that "men ought always to pray and not to faint." To always pray, and pray without ceasing are about parallel as far as I can discern. In the first place, I do not believe that our Lord and Savior imposed impossibilities on the church; his commandments were unlike those given by Moses, which were to my mind as being impossible to fulfill in the strictest sense. We can obey the laws of our land in an outward way; that is, we may never kill any one, but yet have murder in our heart, therefore in the sight of God we are murderers, but in the sight of man we are not, because our sin has never been made manifest; but I say that it is and was impossible for man to live according to the law given by Moses, but the commandments our Savior gave to his people can be and are obeyed, because it is possible, ourselves having undergone a change, being brought out of darkness into his marvelous light we walk in newness of life, being new creatures; old things having passed away and all things are become new. Then it is possible to obey the commands of our Savior, for he and his people are one. Not that one should be on his or her knees continually speaking words, but it is groanings of the Spirit that cannot be uttered, a continual desire to be perfect as He is perfect, and to be led in the way, and to have power to overcome evil, a continual begging for mercy. To my mind one who has, or hopes he has, any knowledge of the way, the light and the truth, does pray, knowing it is not in man to know these things, but to hope, for we cannot hope or do not hope for that of which we are already in possession, and we do not ask for what we know we have. When we are down in the pit of trouble and sorrow we are then begging—a continual prayer; when we are lifted up we for the few moments of that time are trying to praise Him who has seen fit to favor us with his glorious presence, but we find that we are unable to find words suitable to the occasion; that is, we are unable to utter or even give thought to words that would in any way seem proper and of enough weight and force to express our praise to Him who comes to us in all his beauty. These seasons are very short and far between to me, seemingly, but I hope I do not complain, for I am not worthy of any pleasure or joy of myself, but have a hope that the inner man is perfect, and that I was remembered in the forming and making up of the host of Israel. Therefore, having this hope should I not pray always, giving thanks and praise to him who redeemed this vile and sinful man born of the accursed family, born in sin but with a hope born within me that I am born of the Spirit? If so, then to me are given these words to "pray without ceasing," to pray always and to not faint, for these things are given only to those who are born of the Spirit, and not to the world at large. The apostle Paul was writing this to the Thessalonians, and not to every man, woman and child living, but to the church; the same way that the Savior gave commandments, not to the world, but to his people. That is, in other words, the head directing the movement and ways of the body. He is the Head of the body, the church. As our natural head

rules our natural body, so our spiritual Head rules the spiritual body. Does the head of one family ever give orders to another family? No, but each family receives orders from its own head. This spiritual body having only one Head, and the Head having only one body composed of many members, all that he spoke was and is to that body. The same with all the apostles; their speakings and writings are for that body; not only so, but every word of truth that is spoken today, or ever will be spoken, is said to that same body and not to the world, for when all and every one, the whole world at large, are exhorted and admonished as to what to do, it is not the truth. God speaks these promises to his own, and the truth which is in him is spoken today, and will be as long as his people continue here; and it is spoken to his very own, for he knows his own, and they are they who "pray without ceasing;" these only have seen their nakedness and the need of clothing; those who are clothed with self-righteousness have no need of clothing, for they are satisfied. The poor pray to be clothed, for we who have been stripped of all our earthly possessions in the way of clothing cannot see the clothes with which we hope we are clothed; therefore there is a continual begging to be clothed in raiment of spotless white, and we can never be satisfied until we awake with his likeness, no man knowing his end; but the God of Isaac and Jacob does know the end of all men, and in his own time makes his children satisfied, and looses their lisping tongues to praise him in a way that we cannot here, and until that appointed time we do and will "pray without ceasing." In the Psalms David speaks: "For great is thy mercy toward me; and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell." There are times it seems we are more fully aware of his mercy toward us than at other times; then it is a song of thanksgiving, a prayer of praise; and then again David says, "Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul." In these times when we feel like this it is a supplication for salvation, not only eternal salvation, but a salvation while here in the flesh, and to my mind, if I know anything about these things, we are in one thing or in the other; that is, either in a sinking condition or in an exalted condition; at any rate never satisfied, always wanting something, a continual pouring out. It is strange to the natural mind, for we find people who do not like to talk of these things, yet to ask them about it, or to hear them express themselves, they are perfectly satisfied, and having nothing to worry about they are always light hearted, never cast down, while for myself, most of the time I am cast down and feel in a strange land, with my harp hung on the willow, and am unable to sing Zion's songs; then I am wretched and dissatisfied, and cry unto him whom I hope is my God to bring me home. So it seems to me since reading this Scripture that it is true, and that as the church was told to "pray without ceasing," they do it. "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."—2 Cor. v. 4. This Scripture seems to say we do these things. May the Answerer of all prayer comfort those who pray.

F. SELBY FISHER.

WILMINGTON, Delaware.

HUGHSVILLE, Va., May 7, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have been impressed to write of the death of my loving friend, Mrs. Mary M. Cole, beloved wife of brother Frank Cole, who died some years ago. She was taken sick in February with what they thought "la grippe," but, as she was somewhat better, on Saturday, March 9th, her youngest daughter, Mrs. Henry Rodgers, gave her a nice birthday dinner. She rallied and went, but on Sunday she was taken much worse. On Monday her son would have the doctor again, and when he came he told them it was what was called dilated stomach. Four doctors were called, but they could do no good, and all that her loving family and friends could do could not stay the hand of death; she suffered much. At first she hoped to get well, but said to her children, How can I get well when I cannot eat anything? I never saw one more calm and patient—never murmured once. The doctor said she must not see company, but she said, Do not keep them away, and wanted to see all who came, said that it would not hurt her. She faded day by day, her precious body growing weaker, but her spiritual mind growing brighter. It was one of the loveliest death-beds I ever witnessed; sad to know my friend had to pass away, but glad Jesus was with her; it seemed his very presence was there the four weeks she was sick. The heart-broken daughters and their faithful husbands came, almost forsook their homes to wait on her and be with her; never did I see more love toward a mother than was shown to that mother. O it was good to see them; they would sit by her day and night; sometimes they felt, How can I give my mother up? They would lift her as gently as if she were a little babe. I would often think, O if the world could look in and behold such love and tenderness. Her dear son would sit by her day and night; never did I see a son so devoted to a mother. She would take her poor, feeble hands and clasp them around his neck and lay her head to his, sometimes smoothe his face and say, Poor Jim; she knew he would be left alone, and it would be so hard for him to be alone. She said her girls had good, kind husbands to be with them. Greater kindness I never saw shown to the friends and loved ones that came, everything was done for their comfort. On Friday evening before the fifth Sunday in March she was growing so much weaker I said to her daughter, Have any of you anything to say to your mother? She said, I have wanted to talk, but feel I cannot; she would break down so she could not. She asked me to please go and talk to her mother. I went to her, I said, Mrs. Cole, do you know Sunday is preaching day at Hughsville? She had been looking forward to the fifth Sunday, Elder Lefferts was to preach for us. She turned her head on her pillow, her sweet face lighted up with a beautiful look as she said, Yes, you all go, and I hope you may have a good meeting; it is not the Lord's will for me to be there. I said, Are you reconciled to God's will? She said, Yes, perfectly reconciled. I said, Have you anything to say to me? She said, I feel I am growing weaker and weaker, I feel I have done my duty. I said, You have such loving, devoted children to care for you. She said, Yes, I could never repay them for their kindness. Then I said, If it is not for you to get well it is all right. She said, Yes, all right. I said, It is not death to die, only sweet sleep. She said, Yes, a sweet sleep for me. I said, And a sweet rest for you. She said, Yes. The next night I

was in another room; a lady came in and said, Mrs. Cole says she wants to go home and wants to talk; she asked me to go and talk with her. I went in, and had to bend low to hear her. I said again, Mrs. Cole, do you know to-morrow is our meeting day at Hughsville? She looked up with the same bright face and said, You are going, are you not? I said, Must I go or stay with you? She said, Do as you think best. Then she said, I would love to have gone to the church, but it seems it was not for me to go. She had told me before many times she could hardly keep her seat, wanting to go before the church. I said, But you love the church and love the brethren. She said, Yes. Then I told her the Bible says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." She was not ashamed to own her Lord. She was as humble as a little child, and in that lonely midnight hour she did confess she loved the church, and loved the brethren, and said she loved to have them in her home; and that was an evidence she was a child of God. She was good and lovely to us, but claimed no goodness in herself, that was why she did not go to the church, she felt too unworthy. I said, Your life has been full of trials and sorrow in this world. She said, Yes. But, I said, it takes such to wean us from this world. She said, Yes, then she went into sweet sleep, as if a heavy load was lifted from her mind. I went to the church, and came back and told her about the meeting; she looked bright and happy. She suffered on until the 9th of April, and at two o'clock in the afternoon passed away as if going to sleep. As her breath was almost gone, and her loving children crying, her eyes were closed, and she closed her mouth with a beautiful smile, there was the sweetest expression passed over her face; I had to say, O children, look at her, how beautiful she looks. I feel her spirit must have gone to God; she must have seen him when that beautiful look came over her face; she was lovely in death. So my friend passed away from earth. She was sixty-five years and one month, lacking two days, of age. She had been left a widow with five children to care for, but she did her duty. God was with her and helped her raise her family, and a more loving family I never saw. Her children are: Mrs. Will Keeler, of Middleburg, Va., Mrs. Will Cole, of Round Hill, Mrs. Fielder Norman, of Purcellville, Va., Mrs. Henry Rodgers, of Hughsville, Va., and James Cole, of Hughsville, Va.

I have written this because I loved her so much, and I shall always miss her. The children cherish their dear, dying mother's words, and that death-bed scene impressed me so I felt I had a spiritual blessing, and have lived in it; I felt God was there. Her sister, sister Emma Craig, with loving care waited on her; she felt, How can I give my darling sister up? I will miss her so and loved her so. She and the children bowed in sweet submission to the will of God; they all felt that God was doing his work, and that we could not stay the hand of death. May that dear son, with his loving bride, whom he has taken since his mother's death, and that sweet family, one and all, meet around the great white throne; there they will be like Jesus, and see him as he is, never to be parted any more.

Elder J. N. Badger preached a comforting sermon, and his prayer was precious. The text was 2 Corinthians v. 1. Now she has gone from all sorrow of earth; her dear children will always miss her, and many loved ones and the church will miss her.

"O happy soul, who safely past
Thy weary warfare here;
Arrived at Jesus' feet at last,
And ended all thy care.

No more shall sickness break thy rest,
Or pain create thee smart;
No more shall doubts disturb thy breast,
Or sin afflict thine heart."

I could write on and on, as the power of God was so beautifully manifested to me and to the children; I write this for them and the loved ones and the church she loved. I felt I would like to send this letter to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as she loved it so much. May God bless you in your work, for the SIGNS contains good food for hungry souls.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,
FANNIE BALDWIN.

HAMMONDSPORT, N. Y., Oct. 7, 1907.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—Though a stranger to you in the flesh, I hope that I am not in the Spirit. I inclose a letter from Elder W. J. May, of Pinsonfork, Ky., which I received some time ago, and have his permission to forward it to you for publication in the SIGNS, with your approval. Should you not print it, please send it back to me.

A seeker after truth, I hope,
WALTER REED.

PINSONFORK, Ky., Feb. 20, 1907.

WALTER REED—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE:—I have just been reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for February 15th, and your letter to Elder D. M. Vail, and also your doctrinal poetry, have expressed my feelings to such a degree that I am writing you, or trying to write, and I am sure that trying will be all, unless the Lord blesses me. I am a poor weakling, a short-sighted mortal walking in darkness, with no light, and am often found trying to kindle a fire of my own combustible matter to warm up my poor cold and frozen self, but as an inevitable result I have lain down in sorrow. My dear brother, I feel too weak and sinful to write you, but feel in this heart of mine that I want to let you know I much enjoyed the doctrinal sentiment of your poems, and most especially the one headed "Destiny," and I have no other way of communicating to you some of my thoughts but by the pen, for I am away here in the extreme eastern part of Kentucky, and cannot hope to see you personally and talk with you face to face of the good things of the kingdom of our God, which blessed kingdom "is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."—Romans xiv. 17. This I should so much love to do, but have no evidence at this time that God has so ordered it. I am persuaded (convinced) that all things, both natural and spiritual, for time and eternity, are in perfect harmony with the sentiment of your poetry, especially the seventh and eighth lines, which read as follows:

"And from eternity designed
The place each one should fill."

This infinite and all-wise God not only knows the end of all things, but has absolutely declared them, "saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do [perform] all my pleasure." Forasmuch then as the destiny of all worlds, beings, things and events are inevitably fixed and settled by and in the infinite wisdom and immutable counsel of eternal Deity, so also is every link in the chain of events as unalterably fixed as is the end. If your poetry does not convey this sublime and glorious scriptural truth, I do not understand it. I hope my love goes out to you for the God-honoring and soul-cheer-

ing truth you have so well set forth in few words. My cup was filled to running over while reading your letter to dear brother Vail, whom I never have seen, but whom I love in the truth, and O how I do crave to meet him. The all-wise and omnipotent God has declared of himself and said, "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."—Mal. iii. 6. It seems to me that the idea is clearly conveyed in this declaration of holy writ, that if the Lord could (but impossible) change but one moment, the sons of Jacob would be consumed. However, he cannot change even for one moment, neither can so much as one of the sons of Jacob be consumed. It was and is needful that the Lord keep his children both night and day, which makes up all time, and water them every moment. This he does and has always thus kept his people, and we cannot think that the infinite and all-wise God ever did or ever could do anything unnecessary or unneeded. Therefore it is of the utmost importance that the Lord keeps his people night and day and waters them every moment lest any hurt them.

I must close lest I weary you. No doubt this will come to you unexpectedly, and perhaps be no comfort to you. I am threescore and ten years, and have had a name and place among the Old Baptists a little over forty-four years, and have been trying to preach a little over thirty-four years of that time, in much weakness, fear and trembling, but just as God designed, as my text in your poetry reads. If you write to Elder Vail or see him, remember me to him. I hope to write an article for the SIGNS soon, if the Lord will. Love to you and yours.

Yours unworthily,

W. J. MAY.

HOPEWELL, N. J., July 29, 1907.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—Sitting here today, busy with my sewing and thinking of you (with a prayer in my heart that you will be strengthened for this day), I feel it would give me comfort to write you a few words.

The meetings to me, both Saturday and Sunday, were unusually sweet and solemn, and I believe they were to many others; it seemed to me that joy flowed from heart to heart, and that we truly sat together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

It has often been a question with me whether I should ever have come to the church at all, and if at all, whether it would not have been better to have waited awhile longer. When my dear mother was taken away from me I had such a clear and overwhelming view of my nothingness and helplessness that it has often made me wonder if I really ever had any experience before that time. But yesterday, when in the sermon you referred to the tears of gladness you saw in the eyes of many at the waterside, it took me back to one thing that transpired the morning of my baptism, though I knew nothing of it until some time after. Then an aged sister came to the church, and Elder Hartwell asked her from what time she dated her experience? She said, From seeing a young person baptized five years ago. I thought nothing strange of that, but it was very different when she came to me after the meeting closed and said, "You are the person I saw baptized." I never had felt so humble in my life, and that dear sister, long since dead, was always very precious to me. But why was it my baptism? There were two others, why was it not one of them, or all of us? It was from no fleshly partiality, for up to that time

we were not acquainted. I have never forgotten her words, but yesterday when you spoke of the tears of gladness, and my mind went back to the dear sister, I had a different view of it from any before. It seemed to me if it had not been right for me to go then, the Lord would not have made use of me to show her the plan of salvation. It was through the baptism of a poor, unworthy sinner that she was brought to see herself a sinner saved by grace. How true it is that his ways are past finding out. "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." It is all beyond my comprehension, but this view of it made me hope that after all it was the time appointed of the Lord; and whether it seems right to me or not, if it was his will I have no right to say, "What doest thou?" Sometimes it is made plain to me that "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform," and that it is becoming for me to keep silent and wait my Maker's nod.

Again I want to say that the meetings had a sweet savor, they were like precious ointment; and while the Lord spoke through you to us, I hope you also drank and were filled of the same water of life. While I love the brethren, and had rather go to the meetings than any other place on earth, I fear the words of yesterday's text will never be applicable to me. The flesh is weak, and I get so far astray,

> "'Tis seldom I can ever see
> Myself as I would wish to be;
> What I desire I can't attain;
> From what I hate I can't refrain."

I felt very humble yesterday when you said we had borne kindly with your failings for a number of years. I cannot see it that way; I feel you have borne with my faults and failures generously, and have been true and faithful to us, both as a church and individually, and I have always been thankful the great Shepherd of the sheep sent you to minister to us, and wish I could show you by a well ordered life and godly conversation how much I appreciate your kindness, your forbearance and your faithfulness.

July 30th.—After writing this yesterday it looked so much like myself, so imperfect, I decided not to send it, but today I cannot help writing. I am glad that you came to live among us. While I know you have had many trials and many crosses to bear in that time, yet I trust you have had some sweet seasons, too, and hope there have been times when your outward losses were made up by inward graces; and while I also know that my walk gives you but little if any cause to rejoice, as did the walk of the children of whom John wrote, (3 John 4,) you may be glad to know that it is a grief to me that, "When I would do good, evil is present with me," and I have to cry out with Paul, O wretched one that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I am glad he knows my frame, and remembers I am but dust. I hope you may long be strengthened to stand upon the walls of Zion, and "cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned," to the comfort and encouragement of weary and heavy laden sinners.

If this is out of order, please do not fail to tell me. I think I felt a little as sister Bonnie said Saturday, when she spoke of wanting to write.

Your sister in hope,

ANNA J. SUTPHEN.

GLENBROOK, Va., Sept. 6, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —I have often had a desire to write you, if only a few lines, to let you know what a comfort the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is to me. When I read the letters written by different brethren and sisters from all over the country, it seems that I am reading my own heart, for they tell my feelings better than I can tell them myself; and the editorials by yourself and Elder Ker are certainly good and strengthening to the weak, trembling ones. When I read your editorial on Sunday Schools, in the SIGNS for September 15th, I felt that I must write and tell you how I enjoyed reading it, and I fully agree with all that you said on the subject. There is so much creature work in the world to-day, men claiming to lead souls to Christ. Poor, weak, puny man, what can he do to change the heart? Nothing. How foolish then to talk of winning or leading souls to Jesus, and leading the tender minds of children to the knowledge of Christ. We who believe in salvation by grace, and grace alone, know that it is as impossible for them to change the heart as it is to turn the earth upside down. When we feel that awful stirring up in our hearts our sins roll up before us as mountains and we are made to see ourselves as we are: sinners before God, then do we cry in our misery and distress, Dear Lord, have mercy on me, a poor sinner; and when our prayer is answered, dear brother, what peace; yes, "the peace that passeth understanding" is ours, and how quickly our heart is turned from the pleasures of this world to higher things in Christ Jesus, and we can truthfully say, The things that I once hated now I love, and the things I once loved now I hate.

I was baptized December 16th, 1906, by our dear brother, Elder H. H. Lefferts. I have only been with the Old Baptists a few months, but I think they have been the happiest of my life, and I thank God for giving me a home among his people that the world cannot buy. If there are any people in this world I do love it is the Old Baptists, and Paul says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," and therein lies my strongest hope, for I am sure, if I know anything, that I love the brethren with a love that the world knows not. O what wonderful love the Father has bestowed upon us.

"How high a privilege 'tis to know
Our sins are all forgiven;
To bear about this pledge below,
This special grant of heaven.

To look on this when sunk in fears,
While each repeated sight,
Like some reviving cordial, cheers,
And makes tempations light.

O! what is honor, wealth, or mirth,
To this well grounded peace?
How poor are all the goods of earth,
To such a gift as this.

This is a treasure rich indeed,
Which none but Christ can give;
Of this the best of men have need,
This I, the worst, receive."

Through the death of our dear brother, Elder E. V. White, our church at this place (Frying Pan) is left without a pastor, but the Lord will take care of his own and raise up another to take his place. We have with us every fourth Sunday, for the present, Elder J. G. Eubanks, for which we are very thankful, and thank God our little church is in perfect love and fellowship, peaceful and quiet.

Brother Chick, I did not write this for publication, but only to relieve a troubled mind. I would that I could speak a comforting word to some of God's little ones, but I cannot; I seem to need so much myself and can give nothing in return.

May the Lord bless and strengthen you, dear brethren, and continue the publication of the dear old SIGNS, which is such a comfort to many. Remember me as the least of God's little ones, if one at all.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) LENA HUNTT.

[WHILE our sister did not write this for publication we feel sure she will not be offended because we publish it. Such words as the writer's are good for all the family of God to read.—ED.]

SHERWOOD, Oregon, Oct. 10, 1907.

ELDER H. C. KER—VERY DEAR BROTHER:—I inclose a letter written by our esteemed sister, M. J. Lee, which you will please publish if you think it worthy a place in our dear old medium of correspondence, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Your brother in a precious hope,

J. P. ALLISON.

ELGIN, Oregon, August 29, 1907.

ELDER AND MRS. J. P. ALLISON—DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER IN CHRIST:—There comes to me often the memory of my promise to write to you when possible to do so, and, dear, aged friends and fellow-travelers to a better home, I am resting an hour at the home of dear old sister Dodson, who is now recovering from a recent illness, and while the blessing of a painless rest is hers I feel the urgent duty upon me to write to you, and would that God's mercy would so work upon my heart that I could open my heart to you, to tell some of the dealings of the Lord with my poor soul, and of some great seasons of loneliness and weeping that have been and to-day are mine; yes, mine to the end of this mortal existence, mine till the hour when "loyal hearts and true stand ever in the light; all rapture through and through in God's most holy sight." O that I may once more be enabled to rejoice with joy unspeakable that I have been counted worthy to suffer. Dear friends, this morning I desire to know the very cause that impels me to write to you, for I desire not to garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, neither do I desire to neglect the weightier matters of law, judgment, mercy and faith, yet he who is the God of the living hath enabled me to walk in mine integrity. "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world." "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved," and my daily prayer is for grace sufficient for each trial that awaits me. How easy it is for outward godliness to appear in the lives of those who believe in a god that rules in most everything. With some the above quotation is meant to include everything except the financial side of life, others exempt the affections, others wish to be left to their own taste in social matters; but, dear brother and sister, I have not so learned Christ. How precious is the view of that dear Husband of our souls, yea, the Bishop of souls, who wins the best and purest affections, holding them even to the end. The bride, the church adorned in spotless array, waits patiently all the appointed days of his coming, and neither seeks nor admires any other.

Dear friends, I am in great haste, and write as thoughts come scatteringly to mind. I do not wish to annoy your precious golden days with any of my earthly cares. You have both been as father and mother to me ever since the time you visited my dear parents and instructed me in so many points regarding the attitude of a poor child of grace when coming in contact with the surrounding world, for my conscience was, I know, tender and true, and I wept at the thought

of mingling in worldly doings; but your advice did not lead to false pretense, it gave truth and christian courage as the only safe rule, and I fear the cunning falsehood that glides into weakness of action. Can you write to me some time?

I remain yours truly,

M. J. LEE.

KALAMAZOO, Michigan.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find two dollars, for which you will continue to send the SIGNS to my address for another year; we do not feel that we can well do without it, as it advocates that which we believe to be the truth as it is in Jesus. It brings us glad tidings in our old age, for in its pages we find no divisions to mar the peace and enjoyment of the children of God; for this, my dear brethren, I hope that we are thankful to our God, and thankful to him for guiding the dear editors in publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to the comfort and edification of his dear people; and O, dear ones, may the King of kings lead you to know the truth as it is in Jesus as he may see that you have need; and O Lord, guide these soldiers of the cross with might and power in the future as thou hast in the years gone by. What joy there is in doing our Master's will; and think of that little stream where such sweetness came into our poor hearts the day we were buried with Jesus to live with him forevermore in newness of life in the kingdom of our Lord and Savior. It makes us poor, it makes us humble, it makes us rejoice, and it makes us happy to think that we rejoice, and we cry out, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." Ah, dear ones, wonder of wonders that we ever were made to love that Name above every name; and what shall the substance be when in full glory we see it? Many of God's dear ones have gone to their reward. Those who bore the toil and burden and heat of the day put on the whole armor of God and fought in the ranks; but where have I been all these years while others are carrying on the glorious warfare? I feel myself out of sight of the flag many times, a poor wanderer. Yes, you that have named the name of Christ, if you are mourning for some loved one who will walk with you no more on earth, I would say, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." If you really believe that Christ lived and died and rose again, then it is easy to believe him when he says, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Let those of us who have named the name of Jesus take comfort in this Scripture: "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench." All things shall be brought unto victory by the King of kings.

After reading this, if in your judgment it is suitable to publish in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, do so; if not, put it aside. Remember us poor old creatures in your prayers. If ever saved, saved by grace alone.

MR. AND MRS. D. D. McALPINE.

TROY, Texas, Oct. 20, 1907.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I feel a desire from some cause to try to address you, vile and unworthy though I feel to be. The way I am traveling is dark and thorny, and I often wonder if I am not one of the characters of whom the Lord said, "I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh." It seems that I am an alien from God, and am crying for bread as I journey through

this desert. During the Civil War sometimes when I was on picket duty at night in northern Virginia, shivering with cold, I would watch with great anxiety for the first dawn of daylight; so it is now, I am watching for the Sun of Righteousness to arise with healing in his wings. O that the joy of his salvation might be restored once more. I am utterly unable to produce light when it is dark, though with other conditionalists I once thought I could; but with all my efforts in that direction I only sank deeper and deeper in the mire of sin. I had fall after fall, until Jonah-like I was brought to confess that salvation is of the Lord from start to finish, for time and eternity; so you see how I was cut off from depending upon my ability to be keeper of my conditional time salvation. "Without me ye can do nothing." Sometimes it takes very bitter experiences to teach us this lesson. I expect some of our brethren who are now following this strange god will tell a different story if they live long in this world of sin, sorrow and suffering, if it is the will of the dear Lord to show them that with the flesh they can only serve the law of sin. I rejoice in the hope that the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death, and that I am no longer under law, but under grace.

This is a dark, rainy day; it is our meeting day, but we cannot go as it is eighteen miles from here and the roads through this black, waxy land are almost impassable. Our little band is composed of about twenty-eight members, and peace and fellowship abound since separating from the conditionalists about three years ago.

Submitting this to your better judgment, I will close by asking all the dear saints to remember at the throne of grace, when they have access thereto, a poor old sinner.

A. J. PHILLIPS.

RATON, New Mexico, August 21, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—With the approval of the editors of the SIGNS I would like to reply to the correspondents who have during the past year written for the paper. As I have received and read their articles I have felt that I must write to each one and tell them what pleasure I have received in reading them. I could not write to every one, and so I am impressed to try and say to each of them that I have been most wonderfully comforted and delighted in reading their articles, they expressed my own feelings; in reading every letter I could say, That is just as I feel. No one said, I can do good and help the Lord convert the world; I hear people talk that way, but they are not the writers of the SIGNS. I feel sure I "love the brethren," but the question comes to me, Is it a spiritual love, or is it simply earthly love? Then comes the question, Why are we so unlike the mass of people? We all believe so differently from them, and all of us have the same trials of mind, feel our unworthiness, and feel that we have many blessings showered upon us. It certainly does give us much satisfaction to find so many scattered ones telling of the same things we experience. I feel daily that I am the recipient of more blessings than any one else. I have passed my seventy-eighth birthday, am the last surviving member of a family of fourteen children; I am the thirteenth child. As I look over my past life I am able to see the hand of the Lord directing all my steps. Not as I planned from time to time have I gone, but as my God has directed and led me, and I can see now how much better has been the way I have been led than the way I planned. I feel to say:

"Sovereign Ruler of the skies,
Ever gracious, ever wise,
All my times are in thy hand,
All events at thy command.

His decree, who formed the earth,
Fixed my first and second birth;
Parents, native place and time,
All appointed were by him.

O thou Gracious, Wise and Just,
In thy hands my life I trust.
Have I somewhat dearer still?
I resign it to thy will.

May I always own thy hand—
Still to thee surrendered stand;
Know that thou art God alone,
I and mine are all thy own.

Thee at all times will I bless;
Having thee, I all possess;
How can I bereaved be,
Since I cannot part with thee?"

Dear brethren and sisters, write on. I owe letters to many of the readers of the SIGNS; quite a number of them were in days gone by pupils of mine in Hopewell, N. J. To each and all I would extend warm christian remembrance.

May the Lord bless you, is the prayer of your unworthy sister in hope,

ELIZABETH H. BOGGS.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Elk River Association of Primitive Baptists, held at Cherryvale, Kansas, with the Big Hill Church, to our corresponding associations sendeth christian greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have received your messengers and correspondence, and are thankful to the God of mercy and grace that your fellowship and love are continued. We have for thirty-five years continued these missives of friendship and fellowship, but it seems now they must be discontinued, as our churches have become so weakened from various causes as to make it advisable to discontinue our associations until in the providence of God we can resume them.

May the God of peace grant you plenteous grace. Farewell.

NATHAN REEDER, Moderator.
T. R. PITTMAN, Clerk.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder F. M. Sutton.)

The Elk River Association of Regular Primitive Baptists, now in session with Big Hill Church, Montgomery County, Kansas, to the churches composing her body, to her correspondents and to all of like precious faith, sendeth christian salutation.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST:—Another year with its cares and burdens, as well as its joys and pleasures, has passed away, and we have again met to enjoy a short season of fellowship and love in the worship of the God of our salvation, and as is our custom, we print this Circular Letter with our Minutes as an expression of some of the doctrine held by the churches of our body, as well as an expression of some of the principles upon which our church relation and fellowship are based.

The great apostle to the Gentiles (of which nation we are) in his letter to the church at Ephesus and the faithful in Christ Jesus, said, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." —Eph. i. 4, 5. The word "us," as used in this quotation, includes the apostle Paul, the church at Ephesus and the faithful in Christ Jesus, and all of whom bear the same relation to God through Jesus Christ that we bear to him, if it indeed be that we are of the church of Christ. If we carefully examine the relation that Paul and those addressed had to God the Father through Jesus Christ, and the manner of the establishment of that relationship, we may be able to ascertain the relation we hold to him as

churches identical with the church at Ephesus, as well as the way in which that relation is established with us.

The apostle says they were predestinated unto the adoption of children, and in that expression we learn the relation of these Ephesians to God, it being that of children, as having been adopted to himself by Jesus Christ, and children only by adoption, and not by lineal descent, as some would have us believe, for, according to Biblical history, these Ephesians were of the lineal descendants or seed of Adam, and fell in him, and were of the worst sort, being Gentiles (as are we), and were by nature the children of wrath, (Eph. ii. 31,) and as such were not God's children. In this and other countries persons may, under the law of adoption, make other people's children their children by adoption, who thus become heirs to their estate equally with their own children, and this, too, may be done, and usually is, without the consent of the child adopted. Now these adopted children do not become children by descent or by their own will, but by the good will of those who adopt them. These natural children are adopted under the laws of the State; the children of God were adopted under the law of God. Children of this life are adopted in time; the children of God were, in his foreknowledge and predetermination, adopted in the ancients of eternity (see first quotation in this letter), having been chosen in him before the foundation of the world and predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself. Natural children adopted in this life take their places in the families into which they are adopted, in a natural way, but the adopted children of God (and there are none other than adopted children of Adam's race) are not so inducted or placed into the family of God, although there are those who try very hard to make it so appear.

As we have already seen, the adoption of God's children was predestinated before time began, but their manifestation as children is in time, in this life; but their life in Christ is not natural, but spiritual. "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual."—1 Cor. xv. 46. "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son."—Romans viii. 29. This conformity to the image or likeness of Christ is effected in regeneration, and not in a natural way. "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." And further, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him."—Romans viii. 15–17. This heirship with Christ comes by our adoption through him into the family of God. Our inheritance is the same as that of Jesus Christ, which is an incorruptible inheritance, unto which we are kept by the power of God. (1 Peter i. 4, 5.) To this inheritance we are called. "Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."—Romans viii. 30. As there were no conditions in the adoption of the child of God as to anything he could do touching his adoption, inasmuch as his adoption was effected by the predestination of God prior to his manifestation here in the flesh, in this life, so also there are no conditions as to anything he may do as to his entrance

into the inheritance; as we have already seen that whom he (God) predestinated to be conformed to the image or likeness of Christ, him he called, justified and glorified, there being no conditions whatever expressed or implied as to his conformity to Christ, his calling, justification or glorification. Nor is it strange that this is so, when we consider that our relation with Christ is spiritual and not natural; that we are born into the world as natural beings; that before an entrance into that inheritance or the kingdom of Christ can be effected we must become spiritual; that in order to become spiritual we must be changed, and in order to be changed we must be born again unto a new and spiritual life, "not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God," which is Christ; that we must be born of the Spirit, his Spirit bearing witness with our spirit, as already quoted. The operation of the Spirit of God in the heart you have all felt, and by it you have been able to believe in the Lord's Christ, to recognize the children of God, and in it you have found the basis of the love of God and the love and fellowship of the church, and by it you are able to "know the joyful sound" when the gospel is preached in your hearing; and this spiritual relation to Christ, which we have been made to feel within ourselves, has begotten within us a hope that we are among those that were predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, and are embraced among the children of promise.

And now may "the faith once delivered unto the saints," and even to us of the old Primitive Church, and in part here set forth, be contended for earnestly by all the churches, and may grace, truth, mercy and peace be multiplied and abound everywhere among the children of God. Amen.

NATHAN REEDER, Moderator.
T. R. PITTMAN, Clerk.

(Written by Elder John E. Gore.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting of Old School Baptists, in session with the New Valley Church, October, 1907, to the churches composing the same sendeth greeting in the Lord.

WE believe, we hope, in the perfection and holiness of our Lord Jesus Christ, as God perfect and holy in all of his attributes, executing his eternal decrees, doing his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; as Christ, (who is God manifest in the flesh) the anointed of the Lord, the complete and everlasting Savior of poor sinners; as the Holy Ghost, the Comforter and wise Preserver and Leader of his people, taking the things of Jesus and revealing them unto the church. These three bear record in heaven, these three are one, the only wise God and Savior Jesus Christ. Our God is not limited as a sovereign in his decrees, he is not slack concerning his promise, nor can he be thwarted in one degree in the accomplishment of his wise and gracious purposes. He is not confined to limited space upon earth (his footstool) or in heaven (his throne). By his word he cursed the earth, and by virtue of his death and resurrection he began to set up his kingdom in the earth; that which then was in his purpose true, has and will be to a jot and tittle both literally and spiritually accomplished by the working of him with whom we have to do. He fills eternity and every atom of space, both in heaven and in earth, without being absent at any time, point, position or place. He is everywhere, "beholding the evil and the good;" no time or place excepted; if we ascend into heaven he is there, if we make our bed in hell he is there; living with Jesus, suffering with Jesus, being with him where he is and beholding his glory, can only lead

the hungry soul into a sacred nearness with Jesus. It is only when we are enabled to see ourselves, or what we are by nature (altogether corrupt), that we are enabled to see Jesus as being what he is (holiness and perfection). Isaiah, when he saw his weakness and the corruption of his own heart (as well as that of the people with whom he dwelt) at that time, by faith, saw the Lord high and lifted up, and His train (the church) filled the temple. He saw the glory of God, the perfect work of Jesus, the vital unity of Christ and his church; she was with Jesus in that high sphere of refulgent glory: immortality and holiness. No poor sinner has ever seen Jesus, the head, without seeing his body, the church, for there never was a time (nor will there ever be) when the head and body were disconnected. It was in the midst of extreme suffering when the heavens were opened to Stephen; it was then that he saw Jesus at the right hand of God, (where the church is, Acts vii. 55.) Stephen looked up to see Jesus and his body; Isaiah looked up when he saw, by faith, the vision of the Lord and the church in the temple; Jacob looked up when he saw the angels of God ascending and descending; it was in the night, in the midst of suffering, as it were. John, in his agony of soul, in the isle of Patmos, looked up to behold "The holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Jesus and his church are above all things earthly: "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." She is holy because God is holy, she lives because God lives, she is lifted up because Jesus is lifted up. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." "Unto him shall the gathering of the people be." "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." The canopy of the literal heaven does not have to be opened and rolled aside for a poor sinner to see Jesus at the right hand of God, as if God and the kingdom of heaven were a great way off. This was not true of Stephen, it is not true of any one else. Stephen looked up, so does every other poor soul in his affliction. It is by faith, not by sight, that we see Him; he is above all, the earth is his footstool; he fills immensity. We are, by nature, of the earth, we are at his feet; if we see him we have to look up to behold his glory. The head is above the body; He is from above, we (sinners) are from beneath, of the earth earthy. The poor sinner cannot look to the earth for that for which his heart panteth. The earth is cursed, it is unclean. When we look to the earth we see nothing but vanity and pride, we find nothing but death in the pot. That kingdom, that high and holy place where Jesus and his people dwell, is absolutely pure and undefiled; flesh and blood cannot enter there, has never and will never enter there. The kingdom of our Lord and his Christ is an everlasting kingdom, free from the corrupting influences of human nature. That kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, ordered in all things and sure. The subjects of that eternal house compose the generation of Jesus Christ; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ; a chosen generation, a royal family; they are the children of God, loved by him, redeemed by him, borne and carried by him all the days of old. God has been their dwelling-place in all generations. They have eternal life, the very life of Christ, and that life is hid with Christ in God. As the life and very existence of the natural branch is in the vine when as yet they have no visible ex-

istence, so the very life and actual existence of the spiritual branch (the church) were in the spiritual vine (Christ) when as yet there were none of them, manifestly. Eve, as she stood the type of the church in her natural relationship to Adam, was bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh and life of his life; her very being was actually hid in Adam when as yet she was undeveloped as the bride of Adam. Adam stood as the type of Christ, and as the natural existence of Adam's posterity was in Adam when he was made in the image of God, just so the spiritual existence of the generation of Jesus Christ (the church) was in Christ, their spiritual head, from everlasting to everlasting. Time has and will continue to develop God's eternal purpose in the natural creation, as well as that of the spiritual creation. "By one man's disobedience [Adam] many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one [Christ] shall many be made righteous." "Except a corn of wheat [Adam, the type] fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: [that is, Adam's posterity would have remained undeveloped] but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Even so without the death and resurrection of our blessed Savior, the antitype, there would not have been any development of the church from nature's darkness to light and immortality. By virtue of his death his saints of old were enabled, by faith, to look down through the dim vista of time to the cross, and by faith in the blood of Christ we are enabled to look back to the cross; the first believing that all things would be accomplished by the death of Christ, the second believing that his work was accomplished when he bowed his head and gave up the ghost. Now in time the Holy Ghost shall take these things and show them unto you. "As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be;" in the development of the church, the body of Christ, the pillar and ground of the truth. Here to live, by faith, swallowed up in the hope of the victory that Christ wrought, rooted and grounded in the precious hope that when we awake with the likeness of Christ we shall be satisfied.

Our next annual meeting is appointed to be held with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1908, where we hope to greet your messengers and receive your messages of love again.

J. N. BADGER, Moderator.
G. G. GALLEHER, Clerk.

NOTICE.

THE brethren and friends of Brantford, Ontario, would be pleased to have any of our ministers, who visit Canada, call and preach for them. Any who can do so will communicate with Fred Simmons, at Brantford, Ontario.

INFORMATION WANTED.

IF there are any Old School Baptists in the vicinity of Upland, San Bernardino County, California, will they please communicate with G. A. Dundas, at the above address?

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

W. M. Little has changed his address from Groesbeck, Texas, to Donie, Texas.

ELDER Lee Hanks has changed his address from Pelham, Ga., to Macon, Ga.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1907.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

EZEKIEL XXXVII.

MRS. Mary J. Carnue, of Colfax, Kan., has requested our views on the thirty-seventh chapter of Ezekiel. There is too much in the chapter to allow us to do more than briefly sketch a few thoughts upon it. It is our recollection that we have at some time in the past written concerning the former part of the chapter, but however we will suggest a few thoughts.

At the time of this prophecy both Judah and Israel were suffering captivity as a reward for their transgressions; beside this, the life of each was at a low ebb, and devotion to God and his service had well-nigh died out from among them. The forms of religion, according to the demands of that worldly sanctuary, had well-nigh ceased to be observed, and the weightier matters of the law, such as judgment and justice, were held in but little regard, and vice and crime were prevalent in the land. Those who were spiritual among them, who really feared God, were distressed; some of them, like Ezekiel, had warned and reproved and exhorted the people to repentance, but to little avail; to those who loved God and his cause all things looked discouraging. Could real religion with its fruits ever be revived in the land and among Israel again? This was, in brief, the state of things in Israel and the state of mind among those who were really spiritual at that time. Ezekiel as a prophet of God had fulfilled the work assigned him of God, and yet to him there appeared to be no righteous fruit of his labor in them; they were still cold and indifferent to the word of the Lord by his lips, and to all human appearance they were past help; indeed, vain was the help of man. Warnings and reproofs and beseechings were alike unavailing to move them to forsake their ways and turn to the ways of righteousness. No doubt the prophet, like many other servants of God, was tempted to say in his heart, It is of no use to continue to prophesy; these are but dry bones, with no flesh upon them, and separated each from his fellow; surely they cannot live again, why continue my labor among them? But now the Lord has a message to impart to his servant, and the vision of the dry bones follows. These dry bones represented the whole house of Israel, as we are told. As the prophet beholds this sad vision, the word of the Lord stirs up the question in his soul, Can these dry bones live? All the questioning and doubting and fearing of the prophet would be stirred up by this solemn question. What think you: can these bones live? they are dead and they are dry, and very dry. The prophet could not say, They will live; and he could not say, They will not live; but his faith brought him to say just the right thing: "Thou knowest." This seems to us to be just that attitude of mind that waits upon God, believing that all things are possible with him, though to our human sight they are impossible. There is faith begotten in the heart of believers that with God all things are

possible. Then came the word of the Lord to Ezekiel, bidding him prophesy to these dry bones; and the prophecy is made up of promises from God. The prophet was told to say to these dry bones that the word of the Lord was, "Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord." This was God's message by the lips of Ezekiel, and it was a message just suited to them; these dead, dry bones could make no move toward any of these wonderful works. "I the Lord do all these things." As Ezekiel declared the word of the Lord it was done as the Lord had said. The prophet did not do this, but the Lord, and there was no exhortation on the part of the prophet in this vision, as though there would be power in them to turn from their dry, dead state and live; it was simply a gospel message, and the Lord fulfilled his promises. No conditions were proposed to these dry bones, and no effort was demanded at their wills. Indeed, they were so dead and dry that they could not even hear the message from the lips of the prophet until life had been given them. Then the Lord declared to the prophet what this vision meant: "These bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts." Now the Lord declares to this mourning people that he will open their graves and bring them forth, and bring them to the land of Israel, and put his Spirit in them, and place them in their own land, and they shall know that it is the Lord who hath done all this. This is the substance of verses eleven to fourteen. This is the Lord's word, and it is his work, and they shall know that it is his work. The blessed Lord works always in his people so that they come to know that it is the work of God, and thus he cuts them off from all self-praise. They come to know that their sins have cut them off, but that their good works have nothing to do with their restoration. In no other way could they come to say, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory." This is all very manifest in this narrative. Ezekiel is not told, and neither does he intimate, that his prophesying was the cause of this wonderful work seen in the vision, and so his preaching among the people was not the cause of their repentance and the following restoration of them to their own land. He first, last and all the time is told, This is what I, the Lord, will do, and this he is bidden to say to the people; nothing more and nothing less. Here was pure gospel, the gospel of unassisted grace, which is sovereign, rich and free; no other gospel is worthy of God or available for man.

It seems important here to make one thing prominent: Israel is not said to be dead, in the sense that all men are by nature dead in trespasses and sins; they are not said to be dead, in the sense that the Gentile nations were dead; they were the Lord's chosen national people, and this the Gentile nations never were. Israel was here represented as being dead in the same sense in which Paul declares that believers die by transgression. They were saved from this death, and raised up from it, in the sense that the Lord's people always are when the Lord causes them to repent of their backslidings and to return to the ways of the Lord. It is important to remember that Israel is always the type of living and believing souls under the gospel dispensation, never

the type of those dead in trespasses and sins. This valley of dry bones did not represent unregenerate men, but regenerate men who have backslid. It it recognized in all the word of God, and every living soul knows for himself, that there is such a thing as becoming very dry and dead, in the sense of being cut off from the joy of salvation. This is that state which this chapter sets forth in the vision and in the type. Now why is it so important to notice and emphasize this truth here? Because it sets forth the other precious truth that it is the work of God alone to revive his work from time to time, as well as to begin it in the heart, and in this constant reviving there are no conditions to be complied with upon the part of the dry bones, any more than there were conditions to be complied with ere men were brought to repentance and salvation in the first place. Our daily salvation is not one whit more conditional than was the work at first. Having been begun by the Spirit the work goes on by the Spirit to the end, when the final glory is received. This must be so if we are to believe all that this chapter teaches, and the children of God exercised by living faith do believe it.

Churches here and there, or portions of churches, or persons who believe, are seen to be in a dead, dry state. Like the prophet, every gospel minister must grieve at this, and, like Ezekiel, his place is to prophesy God's work and God's promises to these dry bones. If the pastor who is grieved at the declension of some who have run well asks, What shall I do? the answer is given here: Declare what the Lord says he will do to the dry bones of his people. If things have come to such a pass that he is ready to become altogether discouraged and to cease from his ministry among the people, in this chapter is encouragement stored up for him; his unbelief and questionings will here find rebuke. Here also will he find rebuke should he begin to imagine that he can have some hand in reviving things. Every gospel minister must learn the lesson that it is his sole business as the servant of God to go on declaring that the Lord will cause these dry bones to live and to stand upon their feet. The Lord will heal the backslidings of all his people, and when the people of God are revived that minister can but bow his head before God and render praise to his mighty and gracious arm. Yet it is the burden that is laid upon the servants of God that they must prophesy. If one shall say to them, If, as you say, all this is the work of God, why preach at all? the answer is found in their souls, and it is, The Lord has bidden me to preach, and his word is like fire in the bones shut up, and I long to speak that my soul may be refreshed. Preaching is needful for him who preaches and for him who hears, because it sets forth the Lord's work and brings forth praise from believing hearts to him; and in the reviving, and afterwards, it will always appear that it is not conditioned upon either the preaching or upon steps to be taken by those who need reviving. God works, and both preacher and hearer are prepared to praise him alone. This truth is altogether apparent in this wonderful vision, and in the application of it to the house of Israel, and here, as always, the word of God in the Bible agrees with the word of God in the experience of men, and its burden is, "Salvation is of the Lord."

In the rest of this wonderful chapter is set forth how dissensions are to be healed among the people of God. Judah and Israel were divided into two kingdoms, and, more than this, were divided in

sympathy and feeling; there was alienation and strife among them. To one who has no knowledge of the deceitfulness of sin and of the human heart it would seem incredible that there could be such alienation among brothers of one family, and especially among the children of God, and still more, when both were confronted with baleful enemies and it would seem that wisdom demand that they should present a united front against their foes. If our God gains the victory over Israel's foes it is in such a way as takes all room for boasting from them. He graciously preserves his people and wonderfully overcomes all their foes, even when they are engaged in strife. What wonders of power and what wonders of grace are in him to save his people, backsliding and stiff-necked as they are; and if they were not the most stiff-necked and rebellious of all people it would seem that such wonders of mercy and forbearance would have long since broken their hearts and made them ashamed of their strife among themselves; it would seem indeed as though the hardest heart would be melted and would drop the weapons of warfare as against a brother. Now Israel and Judah were thus divided, but they shall be united, therefore the prophet is directed to take two sticks and write upon them the names of both Judah and Israel. What a blessed consolation that the Lord writes both names of the warring people. We would declare anathemas against our opposing brother, but the Lord writes even his name in the covenant. There is one name and one stick for each, and the prophet was told to join these two sticks together. Then the message was this: If one should ask, What means this? he was to say, Thus saith the Lord, I will make these two sticks one and they shall be one in my hand. They shall be one, under one covenant and under one king, and my tabernacle shall be with them, and I will be their God and they shall be my people. We have not quoted the chapter here, because it is too long, but have been giving the substance.

Now let us mark that here also the healing is all of the Lord's power and grace; it is "I the Lord" all the time. Israel and Judah could not get together, but the Lord could place them together and make them one people again. It is as vain when divisions occur now as then for any of us to be running up and down seeking some way of making peace; our cry of Peace, peace, will never make peace; we cannot convert our brother's spirit, neither can we convert our own. No doubt among Israel and Judah many had often sorrowed, and many had urged that there should be a coming together again, and perhaps many had made suggestions to compromise, or of processes in which it might be hoped that healing of the breach should come; but compromise would not make oneness. Our ways cannot heal divided hearts, and it was so then, if indeed such things were tried. Ezekiel himself could have no power here; this he, as well as all others, must learn; all healing must come from God. The word of the Lord is that he will heal; and whenever strife ceases and love and union do abound, it is to the glory of the God of grace. This is the lesson of the latter part of this chapter. Would it not be well for us all to take this to heart? If the work is the Lord's, and his time to heal strife has come, he will put the spirit of peace in all our hearts, and give the spirit of prayer, that we may be one indeed; if the fruit of peace is to be sown in peace of those who make peace, that sowing must first be in our own hearts.

If the spirit of peace is not in us, we shall not sow the fruit of peace, and this is as applicable now as it has ever been. If it be asked of us, Can these warring factions be at peace? it is still true that the Lord alone knows. Here also it is our place to still keep right on prophesying and preaching the gospel of peace; that peace which but one Man has ever made with God: the man Christ Jesus. C.

PRAYER.

BROTHER R. Case, of London, Ontario, asks that we write upon the above subject. He also asks some questions regarding family worship and spiritual conversation. We would be glad to grant the request of our brother, and shall do the best we can in that direction, though prayer is a subject we have long feared we know little about. We verily believe, however, there is such a thing as prayer, and also answer to prayer, but seldom is it answered as we expect or hope. Prayer does not, if we know anything about it, consist of words, and seldom, if ever, do words fully express the desire of the heart. Sometimes actions show forth prayer, sometimes groans, sometimes tears, sometimes a bowed head. Abel showed the prayer of his soul in the offering of the lamb, feeling his need of the shedding of blood for the remission of sins. No word was spoken by him, called prayer, that we have record of. Many of the old testament saints are recorded as having prayed, and their prayers were heard. Christ and the apostles prayed and commanded the church to pray, but their words must be made spirit to us before we can obey them. Men no doubt often imagine they are praying, and would tell us, should we ask them why they pray, The Bible tells us to. If our needs do not cause us to pray, we surely never can. Prayer is a petition, and with no need or desire there can be no petition. James tells us that we "Ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." John tells us if "He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." These Scriptures are both clear. From James we learn that real prayer is not asking for something we can consume upon our lusts. And as we receive not these things according to our request, we learn from John that such petitions are not of God, hence are of the flesh, and are not prayer at all. Every petition given of God is heard and answered, but in such a way as to almost drive us to despair at times. Often the tried child of God asks for patience; this is answered, but it comes through tribulation: "tribulation worketh patience." We ask for experience of grace, that we may know the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ; this comes through patience: "Ye have heard of the patience [endurance] of Job." Did we not have like experience, how could we have fellowship for the man who said, "The hand of God hath touched me;" and, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him"? We often ask for hope; this is answered, but it comes through that experience of cutting off all our efforts and righteousness in the flesh. When this is done we are made to hope in God for life and peace through his Son. Jesus tells his people that, "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him." He deals with his children now as he did with Solomon, when He said unto him, "Ask what I shall give thee;" that is, what I have in store for thee. Solomon, just entering upon his kingly reign, felt greatly the need of wisdom; therefore he said, "Give me

now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people." God-given petitions are not for riches, wealth, honor, long life, nor for the life of our enemies, but for that which instructs, comforts and leads us in the ways of God, that his grace and power may be magnified.

Sometimes the Lord's people are troubled with regard to formality in their attempts to pray, and say, It is all form when I try to pray. No one can be more troubled regarding this very thing than we ourself have been these many years. But as we write these lines we remember the words of Jesus: "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." We are wondering if there can be any such thing as formality in spiritual worship. Forms and ceremonies have passed away, and all things are become new. The Syrophenician woman worshiped Jesus, saying, "Lord, help me." The worship was in spirit, believing in Christ as the Son of God with power; the petition was because of the worship, and not the worship itself. The children of God partake of the emblems of the broken body and shed blood of the blessed Redeemer, not that they may have communion, but because they have it already one with another, being "one bread." In communion there is worship of God and his Son Jesus Christ; partaking of the emblems is only an open confession of the Lamb of God, and done in remembrance of him. Worship must be in spirit, not in form or words. There is a difference between cause and effect, so is there a difference between worship and that which worship prompts. The poor woman who said, "If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole," did touch his garment because of worship, not in order to worship him. The spirit of prayer is given the redeemed, and the groaning within is evidence that intercession is going on. Without this spirit all is indeed formality and amounts to nothing, but with it there is no such thing as formality. The Pharisees prayed in word only, standing on the street corners and in other public places, not because of worship to God, but "to be seen of men." Jesus said it should not so be with his disciples, hence commanded them to enter into their closet and shut the door, then pray to the Father in secret. The closet is used in contrast from the street corners, and signifies a secret place; not that we must go into a literal closet, but that we must do nothing to be seen of men. The closet is that place where no mortal is except the one who prays. It is that solitary place in the experience of the Lord's people, feeling that no one has ever traveled this way, therefore it must be wrong. It may be that the one is at home with his or her family around them; it may be in the company of saints; it may be when listening to the preached word; but wherever it is, it is the closet, and in that secret place prayer goes up; yet no one hears a word, no one knows the longing of that heart, no one understands the expression of that face or why the silent tear steals across the cheek. Perhaps some poor, desolate one will say, If this is prayer, and such is the way the children of God are led to pray, I hope I know something about it. By these experiences we are taught that we are the children of God and that we keep his commandment: enter into thy closet and pray unto the Father in secret.

With regard to family worship, and whether it is right and why it is not practiced as much as in former years, will say first, that it cannot be wrong if done to the glory of God. But some say it

should be done for example to our children. If this be the incentive it is nothing short of mockery. If one's conscience is in it, and therefore feels impressed to read a chapter in the Bible and try to give expression in word to what the spirit feels, it would be wrong for that one not to do so. On the other hand, if one's conscience is not so burdened, but hopes he prays without ceasing, and that God knows his heart and the thankfulness thereof, to him, what would be a privilege to the other, would be burdensome or formality. As this is a matter of conscience, the one cannot judge the other. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."—Romans xiv. 5. Just why family worship is not more universally held, as in years past, we do not understand. Some say it is because the church has grown stronger in the faith, while others feel it has grown weaker in this respect. Whatever the case may be, as we have no direct command or example in the New Testament for it, each one must act according to his own conscience, and the other must not condemn his brother. We have sometimes thought of custom in connection with this matter. Every locality has its customs, and we have observed that now in some places family worship is held, while in others it is, perhaps, seldom thought of. It is almost a universal custom to open our meetings with prayer and close with a benediction, but we have no command or special example for this. The apostles prayed when moved to do so, whether before or after preaching, or whether there was preaching at all. This we think should be the privilege of the minister now. We feel, however, that almost invariably a feeling pervades the heart to ask God's blessing upon and presence in the meeting.

As to spiritual conversation when in company with the saints, and the good derived from it, we desire to give some expression in answer to our brother's inquiry. We may not understand what spiritual conversation is, but if we do, it is conversation prompted by the Spirit upon the things of God and his kingdom. Therefore all talk is not spiritual, even though heavenly things be mentioned. In this we speak from experience. Many have been the times when we felt that such conversation would be expected, and we have tried our utmost to enter into spiritual things, but while our words were of Jesus and his mercy to poor sinners, it was all in word only; no power, no assurance, no Holy Ghost. At such times we have had no evidence that any one was edified, but had every reason to believe that no one was benefited at all. At other times there has been no effort, no thought as to whether spiritual conversation was expected or needful; our very soul seemed filled with blessing and comfort, then involuntarily we spoke of the wonderful works of God, and others seemed to realize the presence and power of the Holy Ghost. There must have been great difference between the conversation of the two disciples as they journeyed on their way to Emmaus, before and after Jesus appeared. Before his appearing there was no understanding of the Scriptures nor burning of the heart, though their conversation was of Jesus. It may be that some one has been disappointed in not having heard spiritual coversation when in company with those from whom such might be expected, but if such has been the case, it is evident that it was not the Lord's time to comfort that one. We doubt that an effort made, by a minister or any one else, to comfort, encourage, rebuke, reprove,

instruct or exhort a certain one ever reached that one at all. The duty of the minister of Jesus Christ is to preach the preaching He bids him. God himself applies the word. This is one thing that all ministers will learn sooner or later. God will also order the conversation of his people to the comfort of the weak and tried ones when it pleases him. All our efforts therefore without his Spirit are vain and empty. May he give us all to wait upon him for all things.

We now leave these suggestions for the consideration of brother Case, hoping he may accept them as our desire, at least, to comply with his request. K.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Sept. 11th, 1907, Ray R. German and Ida E. Beach, both of Delmar, Delaware.

By the same, Oct. 9th, 1907, Clarence E. Clouser and Amy E. Kenney, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

By the same, at his residence, Delmar, Del., Oct. 21st, 1907, Philip C. Elliott, of Broad Creek, and Susie L. Francis, daughter of the officiating minister.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, Oct. 16th, 1907, Winfield Jones and Lily Wilson, both of Worcester County, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

By request I send for publication in the Signs a notice of the death of sister **Arminda Chamberlain,** widow of Lyman D. Chamberlain. She passed from time to her eternal home in glory on Friday morning, Oct. 18th, 1907, at 8 o'clock. She was ill for several months, and finally became almost paralyzed. Sister Chamberlain was born in Monroe County, Pa., Oct. 28th, 1835. She moved with her parents to Meshoppen, where she was united in marriage to David L. Cooley, January, 1852. There were four children by this marriage. She was left a widow Feb. 2nd, 1856. She was again united in marriage Jan. 2nd, 1867, to Lyman D. Chamberlain. By this marriage there were six children, four of whom survive her. She experienced a hope and was baptized by the writer of this notice in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Vaughan Hill, Bradford Co., Pa., April 28th, 1872, where brother Chamberlain was already a member. She was clearly and deeply experienced in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and loved the meetings of the saints and the preaching of the gospel. Both she and her husband were faithful and devoted members till their departure from this world. Their home was a pleasant home for visiting brethren, and all their children helped to make it so, and to show a most cordial welcome to all who came under their hospitable roof. Many a pleasant and profitable social meeting we have had in that home. My last visit to that church while brother Chamberlain was living was in August, 1906. He desired to walk once more to the meeting-house, a few rods, without help, which he did with two crutches, very slowly, and he expressed much comfort in the meeting. It was his last attendance. Last August I was there again, but sister Chamberlain was unable to walk at that time; she was still able to talk well, though slowly. Her daughter, Miss Alma Cooley, of Illinois, writes: "She never gained in strength after you saw her, but failed gradually, getting more and more helpless until two weeks before she died. She never completely rallied, but grew weaker and weaker until the end came. Her suffering was great, but her mind remained good and she was able to talk until about two days before she died, and then she would answer any question we would ask her. I came home a week before she passed away, and she was able to visit with me and enjoyed my being here. Eva received a letter from Bessie and I read it to her, and she expressed great pleasure in being able to hear from you all, and to know that you were all so comfortable."

She was kind and faithful in all the relations of life, and her children feel deeply their loss; also the whole community, who held her in dear esteem. She is survived by two sisters. May all the mourning relatives and friends know the true comfort of our God.

The pastor, Elder Bogardus, was not able to attend the funeral on Sunday, at 2 p. m., and Mr. M. L. Cook officiated.

SILAS H. DURAND.

It is with much sorrow I record the death of my dear mother, **Mrs. Edith M. Braswell.** She was born in Washington County, Ga., August 6th, 1843, and departed this life Sept. 30th, 1907, making her stay on earth 64 years, 1 month and 24 days. She was the daughter of John F. and Lucinda Brantley; her father died Oct. 15th, 1872, and her mother May 14th, 1885. Mother was married to Jesse B. Braswell, June 17th, 1860. To this union were born eleven children, eight sons and three daughters; two of her sons died in infancy, and one daughter died Sept. 10th, 1905. Eight children survive, six sons and two daughters, all grown and married except two. Father died August 10th, 1905. Mother leaves, besides her children, several grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, three brothers, one sister and a host of other relatives and many dear friends, together with the church, to mourn her departure. She died suddenly;

she arose very early in the morning and was soon seized with a severe pain in her head and neck, and in a few moments was unconscious and died in about an hour. Dr. E. S. Peacock, of Harrison, Ga., was summoned to her bedside as quickly as possible, but she passed away ere he arrived. He said he thought she had hemorrhage of the brain. Mother joined the Methodists soon after she and father were married, and lived with them about fourteen years, but was never satisfied with their teaching and practice. She seemed to have no ill feeling toward any of her former associates (religiously), but could not understand from the teaching of the Scriptures that they (Methodists) were right. I am sure she manifested to the unworthy writer that she believed the truth, and that Jesus was more to her than a mere word or name, and the order of his house more than an empty form. She had been taught her dependence upon God, and we believe she delighted in him who graciously put his trust in her heart. She united with the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church at Mt. Gilead about the year 1874, and was baptized in the fellowship of that church by Elder H. Templer, and lived an orderly and consistent member until the day of her death. Mother was a stanch believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and that God is a Sovereign, and works all things after the counsel of his own will, and that whatsoever God does is right, because it is God that doeth it. In all her affliction and trouble which she was called to pass through she was sustained by grace, for she told me several times this year if it were not for the sweet hope she had in Jesus she did not believe she could stand it; but O how she did long toward the close of her pilgrimage to depart and be with her Lord, although saying she desired to be submissive to her Master, and that her troubles, though severe, were for a purpose, that God is too good to be unkind. Mother was sound in the faith of God's elect, charitable, ever ready to lend a helping hand to God's humble poor. She was always present at her church meetings unless providentially hindered. She attended her meeting on Saturday and Sunday before she died, Monday, although the weather was very inclement Saturday. But her seat is vacant, her voice is forever hushed in death, and we cannot hear her sing the sweet songs of Zion any more, but we mourn not as those having no hope, for we believe our loss is her eternal gain, and that the dear Lord has called her home to her reward, and that she is now basking in the sunshine of God's presence with all the loved ones gone before, and will sing praises to God in unceasing ages to come. I have thought many times that I could never give up my dear mother, but now I have been called on to do that which I thought I could not do. She is gone, and I would not call her back, for I know that her troubles are all ended. The wound that God has inflicted he only can heal and bind up the broken heart. Upon him I feel to cast my burden and be still, trusting in the promise that in his own good time he will drive away sorrow and cause joy and gladness to shine forth where now all is gloom.

The funeral was largely attended. Hymn No. 382 (Lloyd's collection) was sung. Elder H. Templer, her beloved pastor, preached a comforting discourse upon the subject of the resurrection, after which her remains were laid to rest by the side of her husband in the Mt. Gilead Church cemetery, there to await the blessed resurrection morning.

Her loving son,

JOHN W. BRASWELL.

TENNILLE, Ga., Oct. 25, 1907.

Elizabeth A. K. Bogart was born Feb. 10th, 1832, in Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., and passed away from earth at her home near Prophetstown, Ill., Oct. 10th, 1907, at 2:30 a. m., aged 75 years and 8 months. She was the daughter of Stephen and Delilah Keator, and the granddaughter of Elder Van Velsen. She was united in marriage to Hiram Bogart, June 4th, 1851, at Olive, N. Y. As the years passed along six children came to bless their union: the eldest, Henry W., who resides in Rock Falls, Ill., Sarah Ellen, who died at the age of twenty-two years, Eva Delilah, who died at the age of five years, Ida E., residing at home, Lottie C., residing in Chicago, and Ervie May, living on the old farm. The first three children were born in the State of New York, the family coming west to Illinois in 1858, and two years later, in 1860, moved to the present homestead, which our dear one often said she would never leave until they carried her away.

The funeral services were held at the home Saturday, Oct. 12th, at 11 o'clock, Elder Butler of Galesburg, Ill., and of the Old School Baptist faith, delivering the sermon and speaking words of comfort to the bereaved ones, from 1 Cor. xv. 19. The hymns, "How firm a foundation" and "Asleep in Jesus," were sung.

Father and mother Bogart joined the Primitive Baptist Church July 4th, 1863, and were baptized by Elder Chenowith in the fellowship of Spoon River Church, in Illinois. Always a christian in word and deed, her life exemplified the Savior's teachings. Her ways were of exceeding gentleness and peace, her steadfast faith in God's wisdom always sustaining her in all her trials. The last months of her life here were passed in patient resignation, as she felt herself slipping away from the dear ones she yearned over, but felt that she alone could not comfort. The first week in October she took a heavy cold, from which she grew better, but stepped out to care for her flowers a few moments the following Thursday and suffered a relapse, which terminated in pneumonia. She was in bed only three days before the dear form was locked in death's embrace. When asked by sis-

ter Ida, "Is there anything you would like?" she replied, "Let me rest." She passed beyond, her head pillowed on sister's lap, her hand in hers, her last words being, "Don't cry." Nothing good enough can here be said of the purity, goodness and sweetness of the character of her whom we so deeply mourn. She was beloved by all who knew her, but frail as the flowers she loved so well, we could not keep her, and we believe that her soul is resting in the paradise of God's saints to await the resurrection morning, when we shall be clothed in his likeness. Lord, strengthen us to await the happy day. Besides her loving, devoted husband and four children she leaves six grandchildren: Sadie, Belle, Vena and Ada, children of Henry, Bessie, only child of Ella, Eugent, son of Lottie, two great-grandchildren (children of Sadie and Belle), one sister and two brothers, to deeply grieve their loss. She had a large circle of kindred, friends and neighbors, who will all hold her in loving remembrance.

Written by her sorrowing daughter, at the request of father. LOTTIE ROBINSON.

Susan M. Fitzwater Hymes was born March 23rd, 1844; was married to Gilbert S. Hymes, Jan. 4th, 1866, near Meadowville, W. Va., where she lived a peaceful life until God called her home on Sunday, July 14th, 1907, at about 1:30 a. m. About three years previous to her death it was discovered that that fatal disease, cancer, had taken hold of her, and for more than two years she was a constant sufferer. Although a desperate effort was made to restore her, nothing could be done, she gradually grew weaker till the end came. Her suffering which at times seemed almost unbearable, was borne with the greatest of patience, without murmur or complaint, ever putting her trust in Him who doeth all things well, but she often expressed a desire to be at rest; and as she lay in her casket the calm, peaceful expression on her face betokened that her prayers were answered, that the desired rest had come.

Funeral services were held at the home on July 15th, conducted by Elder J. B. Cross, in the presence of a large congregation, after which her remains were laid at rest in the family burying-ground near the place of her birth.

Although she never united with the church, she received a hope in Christ more than twenty years ago. She was a firm believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine, and loved to read her Bible and the SIGNS. She loved to visit the sick, and was ever ready to help those in need. She was the mother of three children, one, her only son, having preceded her to the spirit world twenty-one years. Two daughters, her husband and one sister are left to mourn their loss, whose loss we realize is her eternal gain.

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SARAH JONES.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 75. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1907. NO. 23.

POETRY.

THE MORNING "ABIDE WITH ME."

"Abide with us."—Luke xxiv. 29.

ABIDE with me, the day has just begun,
And all is brightness in the rising sun;
Refreshed with sleep, I come once more to thee;
Through every hour, O Lord, abide with me.

Direct and plan my every step to-day,
O'er every power of mine do thou hold sway;
The future hours are all unknown to me,
But this I know: thou wilt abide with me.

'Twas on thine arm, dear Savior, that I slept,
All through the unconscious hours I have been kept,
And now when I awake I'm still with thee,
And this my prayer: O Lord, abide with me.

If I arise to join the busy throng,
And work with brain or hand the whole day long,
Perchance with people far away from thee,
I will look up and cry, Abide with me.

Or is it unto loneliness I wake,
As far as loved ones can communion make?
Then would I lean more heavily on thee,
And as I lean, would trust "Thou art with me."

Or do I wake to find the happy hours
Crowded with blessings and with earth's sweet flowers?
Earth's fairest hopes and joys may from me flee,
Unchanging Savior, O abide with me.

Or do I wake to sorrow sore and pain,
Perchance to wish I had not waked again?
E'en in my direst need I'll look to thee;
Lord, in my low estate abide with me.

If I should wake to Satan's subtle arts,
Lord, give me faith to quench his fiery darts.
Satan is strong, but I look up to thee;
O Stronger than the strong, abide with me.

When hours and days and months and years are past,
And I within the heavenly gates at last,
Through all eternity I'll dwell with thee,
Since thou in time, Lord, dost abide with me.

—*Selected.*

CORRESPONDENCE.

MUIRKIRK, Ont., April 28, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN THE GOSPEL:—Since reading the SIGNS of May 1st I feel desirous of telling you how I was refreshed in reading your letter; also Elder J. N. Badger told my feelings in regard to doing business in great waters, better than I could; also dear sister Bessie Durand's letter was filled with the spirit of love and good will to men. In her description of those in deep soul-trouble I felt to travel with her, and how comfortingly she adds that whatever the trial of any whose God is the Lord, he is able to bring relief in his own time, and his promise is, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be." Elder Bartley, though dead, yet speaketh to the praise of God who had done so much for him

and was pleased to give him the hidden riches of secret places.

We read in holy writ, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." It is truly fearful to the old man and his deceitful lusts to be put into the furnace, which is heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be, to purify the gold. Then we cry, Lord, save, I perish. I can never forget the power I felt when the words came to me, "Your life is hid with Christ in God." I in them and they in me. What a wonderfully mysterious union. Truly we are made to say, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom," &c. "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me," David said. It is only as He takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us that we can understand the heights and depths and know the love of God. How mysterious it is when we are given a faint glimpse of ourselves in that union which was before time. The church he purchased with his own blood from everlasting woe, and will present her to the Father without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Truly great is the mystery of godliness, and "as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways." When I last heard you proclaim the everlasting gospel, the words were with me: How glorious Zion's courts appear; and, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." A short time after that, as I dozed to sleep I saw in a dream a very high mountain; I was on a path going up the side; before me were many footprints, to my left a valley, and I saw a man go down into the valley, but he never stumbled. (Thy foot he'll not let slide.) Across the valley was a bridge of logs and gravel between; some brethren asked me to cross on the bridge, but I replied, No, I cannot go on a structure made by man; I preferred to stand still and see the salvation of God. If the dear Lord showed me aught in my dream I desire to say, Forbid, Lord, that I should glory, save in the cross by which I am crucified unto the world and the world unto me. How prone we are to set up idols in our minds. It is the Lord's work to wean us from them and make us see this is not our rest, it is polluted. How good it is when we can say, The Lord is good to me; "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

Oct. 26.—I have this unfinished letter, and could I get peace of mind I would gladly cast it into the flames, and with dear old Jeremiah say, I will no more speak in the name of the Lord; but there seems to be with me that still small voice, or fire at times, that I must finish it and send it to you, even if the heart is to know much bitterness for so doing. There are times when my heart is filled with gratitude and praise for the shadow I am permitted to rest under in this weary land. This past summer, after much disquiet of mind and assaults of the enemy, I dreamed I was to cross over a great abyss, and was brought over as on wings and borne to a large place or building. As I gazed up I saw the Savior's face surrounded by a light, looking at me, and again I saw him on the cross and heard a still small voice. I tried to listen, but could not hear better, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit." It was a sweet Ebenezer to me, and I could then say, "The Lord is good."

Dear brother, I inclose a letter written by the late Elder Knifton, also two by his daughter, sister May, feeling they contain rich crumbs from the Master's table; you are at liberty to publish them if you wish. I do not feel there is any-

thing worth publishing in this, but felt a desire to write you, hoping it is of the Lord, and that he will make all work for the lifting of Jesus on high and the good of his afflicted and poor people.

In tribulation and hope,

(MRS.) D. T. GILLIS.

PARRY SOUND, Ont., April 12, 1900.

MY DEAR BROTHER BATTEY:—I have been about to write you a few lines for some time past, but have been hindered hitherto by circumstances over which I have had but little control. Nearly ever since you were here my dear wife has been getting weaker and weaker, and she is again confined to her bed. It causes considerable alarm, still I know that affliction does not spring from the dust, nor trouble out of the ground, but that all is laid on in everlasting love and infinite and unerring wisdom to them that truly fear God. I desire to walk in his faith, hope, love and fear, and when favored with a little of the bright shining of his countenance, and privileged to sit at his feet clothed and in my right mind, I not only can pray that the affliction may be sanctified to our mutual good, but in some way or other seem to realize that to God's dear children every affliction is simply a blessing in disguise. One thing I know, they remind us this is not our rest, it is polluted, show us our utter helplessness, wean us more and more from the world and lead us to cry from a contrite heart, "O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me." For thou hast, as I humbly hope, in love to my soul cast all my sins behind thy back. These I feel assured are some of the blessed fruits and effects of divine grace in a poor sinner's heart and conscience, and though flesh not only dislikes the way, but murmurs, repines and rebels against it, yet faith approves it well, and desires to say with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Every "heart knoweth its own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with its joys;" still I do desire to be content, and may you, my dear brother and sister, continue to drink from the upper and nether springs. O for a little more water from the well of Bethlehem; it is so cooling, refreshing and invigorating; there is none like it. But a few more days, or months, or years, and we shall bid adieu to all sorrows.

We were purposing to go to Muskoka as soon as navigation opens, as the doctor thinks nothing but a complete change for the entire summer can benefit her; but as she appears lying on the bed before me, just at the present moment I am reminded of the admonition of James, and must say, "If the Lord will." My wife sends her warmest love to Mrs. B. and often speaks of her, and hopes some day to see her again.

I think I must now come to a close, sincerely wishing you a prosperous season, and thanking our heavenly Father for that sweet union and fellowship we have enjoyed with each other for many years in the wilderness, and I promise when it is well with this poor sinner to remember Joseph.

W. KNIFTON.

Mrs. Knifton died a few days after the above was penned.

DUDLEY, Canada, Feb. 3, 1907.

MRS. D. T. GILLIS—MY DEAR SISTER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—Your very kind and exceedingly welcome although quite unexpected letter came to me about ten days ago, perfumed with the odors of the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the valley, and was read and reread with a feeling of delight better known than ex-

pressed. To think that the Giver of all good should impress you to send me (who am less than the least, if one at all of all saints) such a soul-cheering draught. It is indeed sweet to be remembered by those we love in Christ Jesus, who have no confidence in the flesh and desire to walk in the footsteps of their Savior through evil as well as through good report. We find continually the path to heaven to be a very rough and thorny one, and very much spoken against, but we know that the servant must not expect to be above his Lord, and so at times are made to glory in tribulation in some little degree, knowing within ourselves that we have in heaven a more enduring substance, which we treasure beyond all human conception. To us who believe, He is indeed precious. Bless his dear name, he does not half save us and leave us to do the rest, as so many seem to think. We have not so learned Christ. Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering from the fold of God, or I know I should never have sought him, but would have continued in the downward road to destruction, to at last hear the dreadful sentence, "Depart from me, ye cursed."

This is the first Sunday in February, the time of your meeting in Duart, I believe. All day yesterday and to-day I have been with you in spirit, although absent in body. It is a great blessing to be under the sound of the truth, but we do not fully know its value until we lose it. My dear old father is missed very much, but we know that our loss is his eternal gain. So many things remind me of him. Truly "all flesh is grass." "The grass withereth, and the flower thereof fadeth." "Man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" In eternity.

It is nineteen years last summer since he (father) baptized my sister and me in Lake Muskoka. He seemed to be happy beyond expression, as did also my dear mother, who died nearly seven years ago, trusting in Jesus. Her last words were, My anchor is cast within the veil; I am a poor sinner, and nothing at all, but Jesus Christ is my all in all. Are your parents still living? I enjoyed their company very much when at your house. Your letter reminds me of the fact of one generation passing away after another and going to their long home, in telling of the death of Mr. Gillis (grandpa). It was nice to know my dear father was used instrumentally to the comfort of Mrs. Gillis in the time of her bereavement. I think he was greatly gifted through grace in that particular way, as I have often been comforted while under his preaching when in trouble. So that though he was doubtful at times concerning his call to the ministry, it is quite evident to my mind he was called of God to preach, because I know of so many being comforted thereby. It is sad to think we shall never hear his voice again, but God's ways are not our ways, and there we must leave it. Resignation is a hard lesson to learn, at least it is to me. We would be pleased to have you visit us when you are able, or any of like precious faith. We are glad to hear from sister Annie. Please give our love to all the family, we do not forget their kindness. Please write whenever you can.

With love, from your sister, I hope,

SUSIE P. MAY.

DUDLEY, Canada, June 30, 1907.

MRS. D. T. GILLIS—MY DEAR SISTER IN THE SAVIOR OF SINNERS:—Once more I make the attempt to write a few lines to you, at the same time feeling my inability of myself to do anything to the honor and praise of Him who has called

me (I hope) out of nature's darkness into his glorious, marvelous and blessed light, and allows me now and then to rest beneath his shade while traveling the desert.

Your kind letter was welcome in the extreme, although it may appear otherwise to you, judging from the time it has taken me to answer. The only reason I can give is ill health and a feeling of ignorance in divine things; but Christ is our wisdom, our righteousness, our sanctification and our redemption, our all in all, and we realize more and more the truth of his words, "Without me ye can do nothing." We are so apt to forget that God is carrying out his great purposes just the same in the day of adversity as in the day of prosperity. Paul may indeed plant precious seed, and Apollos may water, but God giveth the increase. I wish we could attend, as you do, where the truth is proclaimed in its purity, in the spirit of love, that we might meet with a few who love the joyful sound and have no use for instruments of uncertain sound. The children of God are not promised a great deal in this world besides trouble, but they have their joys which the world knows nothing about; and although we are deprived of the ordinances of God's house, the God of those ordinances remains the same, he neither slumbers nor sleeps. "The Lord knoweth them that are his." "He knoweth our frame," and will never suffer one of his to perish, even though he hides his face and all to us is darkness, so that we see not our signs, and all we have gone through is suggested by the tempter to be a delusion or fancy of the brain, driving us to a place called "wit's end," (a place most of us are familiar with) yet out of the depths we cry unto the Lord, O Lord, have mercy upon me and deliver my soul, for thou art the strength of all that trust in thee. With Jonah, we know that salvation is of the Lord. We are only too glad to look toward his holy temple, we know it is the only temple we can worship in acceptably to God, for he is the way, the truth and the life, and in him we live, move and have our being. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble," and such I have proved him to be many times. At one time these things were unimportant to me, but how different when brought to know my state and condition before God. Now the companionship and communications of the children of God are more to me than I can express. The many letters and editorials I read in the SIGNS are a continual feast to me, and I feel to love all the writers, without partiality, for they all sing the same song of Moses and the Lamb alone, ascribing all glory to the God of peace, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Whatever there was in my previous letter worth publishing in the dear old SIGNS, I do not know, for I came near throwing it into the fire, feeling within myself it came so far short of the glory of God; but do as you like with it, for, as you remind me, we are not our own, we are bought with a price, to which I say, Amen; and although my heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, there is a desire within to glorify God in my body and spirit, which are his.

It seems to me I miss father more and more, but I am continually reminded that one generation after another passeth away, and it will, at longest, soon be my turn. God grant I may be ready, through grace, for the solemn call, prepared to meet my God. Who is your minister now? and how often do you meet for have service? Do you know of any of the despised few who are likely to be up this

way this summer? We only know of one living up here besides our own family, and she is a dear, experimental soul, bedridden the last eight years, but full of love and gratitude to the God of her salvation, and looking forward with childlike joy to the time of her departure. She reads and enjoys my SIGNS very much; only for being able to go and visit her we should be apt to conclude with the prophet that we are left alone. She asked me once what I thought her unprofitable life was spared for, which did not take me long to answer, I can assure you.

Kindly overlook all imperfections, and remember me to all the friends, and write whenever you can, the sooner the better.

Lovingly your sister, I hope,

SUSIE P. MAY.

ROMANS VI. 23.

"THE wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

The wages of sin would imply the recompense, or that which is given in return for sin, and is death. Sin is the transgression of the law. The law was given by Moses to the children of Israel upon tables of stone. This was under the old covenant, as we speak of it, or the first covenant. The first law given recorded in the Bible is where God commanded Adam, "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it." That command or law was transgressed, and death, the wages of that sin, passed upon all men. The law given by Moses upon tables of stone and in various commands of the Lord were, we might say, statutes or rules governing the people; they were promised the good of the land if they obeyed, and their disobedience was provided for by various sacrifices, which all pointed to the one great Sacrifice: Jesus Christ on Calvary. There is nowhere a promise of eternal life for perfect obedience to the law, because eternal life is the gift of God. "Now we know, that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."—Romans iii. 19, 20. The psalmist says, "Thy commandment is exceeding broad." We will take a simple illustration right in our own land and the law governing it. The law declares certain statutes and the penalties for transgressions. Now if we do not transgress the law, and render perfect obedience, we are in no way compensated by the authorities for not transgressing. Neither has God in his holy law arranged to bestow his gift of eternal life for obedience to the law; the law gives the knowledge of sin, and sin is the transgression of the law.

"The wages of sin is death." What is death? Webster defines it in one instance as separation or alienation of the soul from God, being under the dominion of sin, and I understand this to apply to Adam in his transgression, for God said to Adam, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." In that day he was driven from the garden of Eden, and cherubim placed with flaming sword (the law) to keep the way of the tree of life (Christ). I also understand that by the transgression of the command of God that death (natural) passed upon all; "for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." But when Paul speaks of the wages of sin being death, I believe he means to infer that sin works death.

"The gift of God is eternal life, through

Jesus Christ our Lord." A gift is something given by one who is in no wise obligated or bound in justice to bestow upon the one receiving it; the moment the recipient of the gift gives one penny in return for the gift, it ceases to be a gift. We as mortals give gifts one to another, and the motive for such acts is generally founded upon love. We read that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." These are the words of Jesus, recorded in John iii. 16. So then the gift of God is his Son Jesus Christ, and Christ is eternal life, for he says, "I am the resurrection and the life." "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." In him is no darkness, "And there shall be no night there: and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever."—Rev. xxii. 5. God sent his Son a sacrifice for sin, because he was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. Christ was the only one born of a woman that was without sin and acceptable unto God—a perfect sacrifice, and one that answered the demands of divine justice and could fulfill the law in every jot and tittle. God gave him power to lay down his life, and power to take it again; no other person under the law was given this power; he rose triumphant over death, hell and the grave and brought his body, the church, with him, and now sitteth on the right hand of God, an High Priest unto God, making intercession for his people. Not one of them shall be lost, for none is able to pluck them out of his Father's hand. He is the way and the truth and the life, and no man cometh unto the Father but by Jesus Christ. "The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." What a consolation is our hope in this everlasting salvation! J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 8, 1907.

DIANA, Texas.

I WANDER alone in the darkness,
No kind, leading hand can I see,
Forgetting to mourn for my vileness;
O, Lord, art thou still loving me?

If living, I surely must slumber,
I scarce can remember to pray;
Revive me, O Lord, by thy power,
And change all my darkness to day.

I long for the joy in thy blessings
I've felt in the days that are past;
O, could I have then been mistaken,
And trusting vain hope for thy rest?

I cannot forget the sweet moments
I've spent trusting thee in thy grace,
I'm fainting, O Lord, for some token,
One more blessed glimpse of thy face.

O, grant me one crumb from thy table,
For no other substance have I;
I hunger, O Lord, for thy dainties,
Without them I surely must die.

O, listen, for now as I'm crying,
Some hope springeth up in my breast,
If hungry, I surely will feed thee,
Look, weary one, find in me rest.

Dear brethren editors and readers of the SIGNS, the lines above are the expression of the trials of my soul. Sometimes thoughts come to me in rhyme, I do not know why. I will not say that I have been impressed to write for the SIGNS, as that seems too much to claim; but I have desired at times to send one more greeting to the loved saints, and ask to be remembered in my low estate. Dear ones, I am writing in bed, having been very sick for two days. Truly contrary to my early hopes of growing in godliness, I grow less and less, and often can scarcely have courage to address the brethren as brother or sister; I feel so useless and weak that I cannot hope my presence or writing could be greatly missed. But I sometimes feel like begging to be carried

along, and to beg for the prayers of the spiritual. I desire the fellowship of the saints, for I cannot call any other people mine. You surely could not miss me much, but this world is but a wilderness to me when deprived of your company. I have not been well this summer, and have not heard much preaching. This hot climate does not seem to agree with me, and my kind husband expects to move to Ohio (my former home) soon. I hope to be able to take the trip by the end of this month, October. If he can stand the cold, we will probably remain there, if not, we will try to find a place better suited to both.

I would be very sorry to give up the SIGNS, for I like the editorials so well, and I might mention almost every one of the writers. Elder Keene and Robert Scates (and others) seem to come down with me into the valley and say, Take courage, little sister, I, too, feel so weak, little and vile, that I can fellowship even you. I cannot claim an equality with them, but feel that perhaps they could sympathize with me a little. I usually find a crumb of comfort in every page of the SIGNS. I love its writers and often feel like writing to them, but I feel so unfit the greater part of the time. I fear that I am saying too much now; I only dare to expect a small corner to ask for your prayers and remembrance of me; as of old I can have no avenue of hope, save in the Lord our righteousness.

The association met with the church here on last Friday, Saturday and Sunday. We had some company both Friday and Saturday; Elder H. B. Jones, familiar to the readers of the SIGNS, staid with us both nights, for which I was very thankful. I enjoyed the company of the other brethren also. I met several brethren at the church who said they had known me a long time, though we had never met before; their words and acts of love and confidence were of great comfort and encouragement to me, making me more hopeful that the Lord had been mindful of me; their faces looked lovely, reflecting the Spirit of Christ. I attended only on Saturday; my husband took a comfortable armchair for me to sit in, but it tired me so much I was not able to go on Sunday. I hope to regain my health when we get back to Ohio.

Nov. 3rd.—My dear brethren, I had been thinking of destroying all the above letter, but since I have read the SIGNS of November 1st, I do so want to tell of the comfort it gave me, and to express my love for all the writers, and I would do no better perhaps if I attempted another letter.

Of late the Lord has been blessing my dear husband, and me also, in a measure, with sweet meditation and converse upon heavenly things. But O how I have been tried during the past year, being buffeted on every side: cold-hearted, forsaken, sick in body and mind. I do not know whether I doubted, or Satan suggested, that there was nothing real in all my experience, that there was no home above, no God, no rest in Christ, all a delusion. O what misery; sick of the world, the flesh, and longing for that I saw not; a stranger in a desert land without food or water. O how I hated myself, and how hungry I became for those heavenly crumbs so sweet to my taste. I feel unworthy to tell of God's goodness in remembering me in my loathsome condition, but these words came to me, "Were there not ten [lepers] cleansed? but where are the nine?" The poorer and meaner the sinner the more praise is due to His great name for restoring the soul, and granting the coveted crumbs. We

feel to know there is rest in him, when he bids us enter into it. Yes, dear Elder Chick, the liberty of the gospel is a sweet, holy privilege. While I feel that I have earned all chastisements, if this liberty, if all those blessed fruits of the Spirit be mine, I would lay my face in the dust and confess that it is of him, and because, "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake," and I would ascribe all righteousness, wisdom, power, dominion and glory unto him who doth deliver, and who hath wrought all our righteousness according to his will and everlasting love. I am glad that he is all in all, and Head over all things to the church. In him is perfect fullness, which admits no additional works or conditional merit. When he is revealed naught else can be desired. He is our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, at all times.

I have written more than I intended.

Your unworthy sister, but, I hope, worthy in Christ,

JOIE E. WOODS.

TILBURY, Ontario, Sept. 3, 1907.

MR. AND MRS. NEIL GRAHAM—DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—How pleasant it is to think of such dear kinship; how wonderful to claim such a high relationship to One who is pure and holy and without sin; yet if we are his dear children, born from above, there is in us the spirit of holiness, which desires holiness and longs to put off this body, which is impure and imperfect and all that is vile and polluted. Can we not say, like one of old, O how "I hate vain thoughts: but thy law do I love"?

Dear brother and sister, it is now nearly thirty-nine years since, I hope, there was a new song put in my mouth. O what I passed through for months before this, and especially the last week of that time. I thought my natural reason would fail me; I feared there was no hope of mercy for one so vile. With one of old I could say, Has the Lord forgotten to be gracious? Has he in anger shut up his tender mercy from me? Then, in a moment, he came skipping over the mountains of my sins and revealed himself in mercy, saying to my soul, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Also, Though the hills should depart, and the mountains should be removed, yet my loving-kindness shall not depart from thee. O what surpassing mercy! A new song was put in my mouth. This is a song that is ever new; this is the reason of my hope, if this fails all hope for me is gone. It is all I have to go to in my hours of distress; I have no other refuge to which I can flee. This is his own word of promise to a hell-deserving creature. How many times in all these years has he come with delivering mercy to my poor soul. Were mine the pen of a ready writer volumes might be written, for his mercies are new every morning. We need daily supplies to strengthen us, for the warfare is still going on. How long will this warfare last? While there is a company of two armies there will be fighting, but the great Captain of salvation shall conquer the last enemy, which is death. Then will the redeemed soul fly to everlasting rest in the arms of eternal Love. Will it not be heaven to be freed from all that is sinful, all that is vile, and be clothed with the righteousness of God's dear Son? Is it any wonder that we long to put off this house of clay, in which we groan, being burdened with the weight of our sins, which we are made daily to feel? I do not grow stronger as I grow in years; I

do not feel better able to withstand the fiery darts of the wicked one. I am often tried in my mind with the emptiness of my vile nature, which is ever ready to cast up mire and dirt to destroy my peace of mind.

I enjoy reading the SIGNS, and have just read this morning a letter from Georgia D. England, and it seemed that every word was precious indeed. While I enjoy reading the SIGNS much, it is very hard for me to read, for my eyes are weak. It is also very hard for me to write, but I long to hear from my dear kindred in Christ, though unable to answer their precious letters as I wish.

I did wish so much that I could have been in Dunwich on Sunday to hear Elder Lefferts, but I did not feel strong enough to go. My health has not been very good this past summer. It is written that tribulation worketh patience, but I do not feel it does in my case. One morning, before I went to Detroit expecting to undergo an operation, the following words dropped sweetly into my mind, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." O that we could bear more patiently our light afflictions, and that we might run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus for all that we need.

It is now just four weeks until the October meeting, and I hope to be able to go. How I long for such a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. I believe it is a foretaste of the joy which awaits the children of God beyond. I was pleased to hear of Mrs. Carmichael's coming home to the church. I hear that Elder Ker is expected at the October meeting. I hope the presence of the Lord may be there as the great Moderator, that he will own and bless us, and gather into the fold such as shall be saved. I hope, dear brother and sister, that this will find you well.

Yours in love and fellowship,

SARAH A. McCOLL.

NEWMAN, Ill., Nov. 4, 1907.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—I promised our brethren in Oregon and Washington after our return home I would write you concerning our visit with them, and if you deem worthy, please publish in the SIGNS.

I arrived with my thirteen year old daughter, Ruth, in east Washington the last of March, and returned to our home at Willow Hill, Ill., the first of October, making just six months that we traveled and visited with the Baptist brethren in Oregon and Washington. We visited the brethren in north Oregon until August 15th, then daughter and I accompanied twenty other brethren and sisters to attend a three days meeting, which was held the third Sunday, and Friday and Saturday before, in August, at Waldport, Oregon, which is located about one hundred and thirty miles west of Albany, and on the beach of the great Pacific Ocean. Elders W. S. Mathews, Silas Williams and Vincent Turnage were in attendance. Brother and sister Elijah Goen and old brother Walker's son and family live at Waldport. There never had been an Old Baptist meeting held there before. The meeting was largely attended and love reigned supreme with us all; I never saw brethren feel more free and happy than at this meeting; surely it was good to be there, for the Lord was in the midst. Brother and sister Goen requested that all the brethren meet with them again next year. Brother Goen said that he felt I would be with them again

then. The Lord knows, for I am many hundred miles from there now. I am grateful to God for the privilege of meeting dear brethren and sisters, and the happy seasons of refreshing from the presence of the dear Lord while with them. We visited all our Baptist brethren in those two States, except a few scattered ones. We desire to send to all whom we met, our most tender regards, and christian love for their hospitality extended to my daughter and me; I feel to be unworthy of such kindness. Dear brethren, I can only commend you to the Lord, who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before Himself in love, who has redeemed you by the sacrifice of his Son, who bore our sins in his own body on the tree. His shed blood atoned for our sins, satisfied the demands of law, therefore God's people are no more under law, but under grace, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God," which is Jesus Christ our Lord. Salvation is not by our own works or righteousness, but by the atoning blood of Christ, and all who have received the Spirit of adoption are enabled to cry, Abba, Father; such are enabled to look away from self and view Christ as their Savior. What a blessed favor from the Lord to be blessed to understand the plan of salvation as it is in the covenant of redemption. All the works and institutions of men, in order to save people from wrath to come, never added one more to that number of God's chosen people. Hence the promise of God is "sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Again, Jesus said that all power both in heaven and in earth was given unto him, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him. Christ is head over all things to the church, which is his body; he is their ruler and law-giver, and deals out their blessings, and corrects them for their good, according to the will of God. Without chastisement God's dear people forget that they were purged from their sins and become hateful in their own selfish way; but when the chastening hand of the Lord is laid upon us, then we remember that we are poor and dependent upon the Lord. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." He only chastens them because they are his, and it is done in love. Sometimes I hope that I know something about the Lord's dealings with his people. As unworthy as I feel to be, my mind is impressed to visit the people of God, and with all the ability that God is pleased to give me present the beauty of salvation according to the gospel of the Son of God. Since my return home I have arranged my temporal affairs for another year, and if the Lord will, will travel and visit in his kingdom wherever he opens the way. Brethren desiring to write me will please address me at Willow Hill, Ill.

Your unworthy brother,

MARION BARTLEY.

SHERWOOD, Ore., Oct. 29, 1907.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Through the rich mercies of our God I am again enabled to send in my subscription for our family paper. I feel that I could not cheerfully get along without the SIGNS, for it has been especially blessed to my comfort in the past, when I was so far away from my beloved church and people. I feel confident that the blessing will not be withheld in the future, which is ever with the great and

holy God, as also are we, and we know that whatever is his will to do, that he doeth.

Dear brother Chick, I did so much enjoy your editorial in the last issue (Oct. 15th), and if I know anything, I do surely indorse every word, and hope I can say that because he is God, having all the attributes of God, do we poor, finite creatures find sweet comfort and consolation in our many trials and afflictions. Trusting in him, knowing that he changes not, we can rely on the precious promises, which are for the comfort of his poor, little ones, who would faint by the way without him; and the precious faith, this God-given faith, works by love, and is the only kind that can stand the test, for it is of God, and, like all of God's gifts to his children, it is perfect, for the Giver is ever the same immutable God.

Dear brother Ker, I wish also to tell you how pleased I was with your good editorial, by my request, on my favorite text, Eph. xi. 4, 5. O how I have enjoyed the reading many times over, always finding much comfort. I should have told you this ere now, but I had many sore trials and many hard things to bear before the dear Lord in his mercy took me from Warrenton and brought me here to my dear friends, where I have the privilege of attending my church meetings, and every day have the society of beloved Baptist people. O how wonderfully has he blessed all things to my good and to his glory; how wonderfully blessed are all the little ones of his love and care, according to the multitude of his loving-kindnesses. "For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Savior. In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them." O where is there a god like unto Israel's God? There is none, for he is the living God, the mighty One of Jacob. His angel presence delivered Daniel from the lions' power, and in the burning fiery furnace that presence had the form of the Son of God when the three Hebrew children were delivered from the great heat with not even the smell of fire upon them. O how very wonderfully beautiful all of the workings of the Almighty God appear to us, for he is the living God, and steadfast forever. Through time he is a safe retreat and shelter in all weariness, and our Rock of defence, and is an ever-present protection in all time of need. O how we need his loving care and guidance every hour of our lives, and without him we are nothing, and surely can do nothing but ask for help, as we must always cry to our Lord for his mercy on us, if we are walking in that narrow way, and to lead us where we can always behold the blood-stained footprints of the blessed Master, which we should ever wish to follow.

But I will hasten my rambling letter to a close. Dear Elder Chick, I wish that you could come to visit us here. Elder Allison was speaking to me last night of his great desire to see you. The dear old veteran of the cross is now growing feeble, and may be called hence ere long, and it would be a great comfort to him to be with you, if but for a short season. Elder Marion Bartley visited us this last summer, remaining with the Baptists from May until September, and all enjoyed his presence among us, and were also comforted and edified with the many good sermons he preached. We would gladly have kept him here with us if it had been the Lord's will to have him remain, and we hope he may return to us some time and again bring his daughter Ruth; all seemed to love her.

My beloved ones in the truth, I hope you can excuse this imperfect letter, which I know is too lengthy already. May the grace of God be with you and all the true Israel of God through all time, for Jesus's sake, is the sincere desire of your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) S. L. H. STUART.

WALKER, Ore., Oct. 24, 1907.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—By request of Castfork Church I forward you a letter written to the church, to publish in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES if you think proper. Brother Miller is eighty-six years old, and lives over one hundred miles from the church. I have taken the SIGNS since 1869, I think, and it is like news from an old friend; the longer I take it the more I want to see of it. I am now past eighty years of age, and expect to take the paper as long as I can see to read it. May God bless the editors, publishers and correspondents, and guide them in all truth, so that it may continue to enlighten and gladden the hearts of the readers and lead them in the way, so that each one may be mutually benefited, is the desire of your little brother in a precious hope,

J. F. WALKER.

JULIAN, Cal., Aug. 7, 1907.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS OF THE CASTFORK REGULAR PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH:—It has pleased the Lord through his mercy and grace to permit me to write to you once more in weakness, and I ask your pardon for not writing earlier. It is a hardship for me to write, as I tremble so; it is not because I do not want to write; my heart and my prayers are with you always. If there is anything on earth I love it is the brethren. We are commanded to love God, and our brother as ourself. Why? Because God first loved us. The question is asked, How shall we know that we have passed from death unto life? "Because we love the brethren," is the answer; my theme is love. O God, I pray thee, give me strength, grace and charity, that I may love thee more and serve thee better. I received a long, kind letter from Elder S. B. Moffit, also the Minutes of the associations up to this year, a few days ago, and I would like to have the Minutes of this year, for it gives me great pleasure to hear how the churches are getting along, and to know they are in peace and fellowship one with another. I feel all alone, as there is not a church of our faith and order in California that I know of. I see by the Minutes the passing away of our beloved sisters, Mrs. Mathews and Mrs. Tucker. Peace be to them that sleep in Christ, for great is their reward. We must all give an account of our stewardship here below; may we be enabled to keep our lamps trimmed and burning, so that when the Bridegroom cometh we may enter in to the wedding feast. This may sound like foolishness to some, but God chooseth the foolish to confound the wise.

Now suffer me to say a few words in exhortation to the dry land Baptists who feel weary and heavy laden: Do not stay away from the church; Christ said, Come unto me, and I will give you rest, for my burden is light and my yoke is easy. All you who feel as though you are as a little child, humble at the feet of Christ, as dependent on Christ for salvation as the little child is on its parents for its natural support, may strength be given you to take up your cross and follow Christ down into the water and be baptized for the remission of sins. Join the church, and be in full fellowship, and eat the

broken bread of Christ's body, and drink of the cup, his blood, for, "This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." It was the blood of Christ that atoned for the sins of his people. If the truth makes you free you are free indeed. Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." God has said that he will be a God unto them and they shall be a people unto him. Now, as the wills and shalls of Jehovah cannot fail, God's church is a good place for his children, but a poor place for hypocrites. God says all who are not for us are against us. O how I long to be with the brethren of the Castfork Church and the friends of the neighborhood, but God's will be done, not mine. My heart and my prayers are with you always.

Your little and aged brother,

S. S. MILLER.

RICHMOND, Maine, Sept. 22, 1907.

MISS BONNIE CHICK—MY DEAR CHILD:—I was glad to receive your good, kind letter, telling us of your safe arrival home. We did all miss you; that is the hard part of visiting friends; but how it leads us to think of that country where parting will be unknown. I am glad indeed that the good Lord led you to speak of his dealings with you, and of the experiences through which you had passed; we all were made to fellowship and love you the more. It has always seemed to me that we love those in the church most in whom the image of Jesus is most plainly reflected. I am also glad that you realize you are weak and frail, and need just the Savior that you have, who saves to the uttermost all that come unto him, and we have no cause for fear, since there is nothing able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I have gone back in my mind since your coming, to my own early experience, to that time when every leaf and blade of grass seemed to be praising God. The world is his, and all that is therein; all creatures were made by him and for his own purpose and glory. How plainly all that was revealed to me, and how great was his condescension in saving a worthless one as I felt myself to be. That highway that was cast up for the people of God was revealed to me; I desired nothing but to be found walking therein, and I felt such a rest, and calm, and peace, after the years of heavy burden-bearing, and my days were full of singing, and my heart made melody unto the Lord; I desired fervently to grow in grace and in the knowledge of his word; I felt that life was sweet since I had been shown that the Savior died for me; I imagined that growing in grace would be keeping such sweetness and joy always mine. At least, as I look back it seems to me that I never had so fervently prayed for grace. O, if I had known then that the path must lead away from the green pastures and still waters into the wilderness and into the sea; but I did not. Afterwards I was made to feel that all his billows had gone over my head; my days were sad and my nights weariness, and I remember that the Savior's petition of questioning grief was often in my lips: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Yet I do thank him more and more every day that he has counted me worthy to suffer for his sake. Is it not wonderful to feel that we have fellowship with the sufferings of the holy One, the Son of God, the Savior of sinners, the One altogether lovely? At this time, if there is any prayer in my heart, it is that he will still lead me about and instruct me.

Now give to all my love, and write me as often as you can.

Lovingly your aunt,

ANGIE J. THOMAS.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., Nov. 3, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I should have written to you long ago and sent in my little mite to pay for my paper, which comes to me promptly, all aglow with good news to my hungry soul. Many are my tears of joy and thanksgiving while I read the precious letters and epistles of love from one to another in this dear old medium of correspondence. What a very great blessing from our God that we can talk to our kindred in Christ, tell each other our thoughts and experiences, our trials and tribulations, while traveling here in this wilderness of woe. While we do this we are comforted by each other, because we have love and sympathy for each other; we feel that we understand all about the hard struggles of the rough way from earth to heaven the world does not know or understand, but tries to gainsay and taunt us.

Dear readers, I often think I would like to say something to cheer some one of you, and many times I make the attempt, but feel so poor in spirit and so insignificant in myself that I give it up, then duty presses me again and I am reminded to be about my Father's business. While my life is one of sadness and desolation, I am not left comfortless; God in his goodness and mercy puts it into the heart of some of his ministers to visit just such poor, isolated ones as I, once in awhile, to cheer the weak believer and to reprove the proud. Look on page 625, number 20, present volume of SIGNS, find a Circular Letter written by Elder J. W. McClanahan; to my understanding this Circular is glorious preaching. I rejoiced when I read it, and you will rejoice with me when I tell you that this very dear and able servant of the most high God preached four sermons in this neighborhood two weeks ago. He lives many miles from here, but he has not forgotten the command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Brother McClanahan, I do feel well assured that the Spirit of the Lord directed you here that you might fill your mission. After bidding you and brother W. B. Melton farewell Sunday night, and entering my lonely habitation, I sat down and wept, feeling O so sad that this precious season was so soon over; I felt sure that heaven had bowed and come down once more to me, as you so ably made it appear in your discourse that night from the words, "And the iron did swim."—2 Kings vi. 6.

My dear kindred in Christ, as death is mowing down its victims daily around me this may be my last epistle of love to you, but I want to be ready, watching and waiting for the messenger that separates soul and body, and sets my poor, fettered spirit free. May we all try to live just as if each day was our last; "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath;" let our God be honored in all we say and do, pray for each other, and the God of peace save us.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

TOONE, Tenn., Sept. 17, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have desired for some time to write on the safety of the children to whom God gave his Son Jesus. These are all the people that God has promised eternal life; these children are anxious to know what it takes to constitute eternal life in them. Now, children of God, listen to the blessed words of Jesus our

Savior: "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."—Matt. xi. 27. Now you see there is no man or agency of man or earthly instrumentality in it; it is a secret revealed to the children of Jesus by his Spirit. Paul said, or God by Paul's mouth, that "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."—1 Cor. xii. 3. Jesus said, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."—John xvii. 3. God said by the mouth of the prophet, "But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord."—Jer. ix. 24. Every one who believes in his heart that God is absolute, that he rules all things and works all things together for good to them that love the Lord, hath the witness in himself (1 John v. 10,) and is born again. These are the children of God. Jesus said, Behold, I and the children which thou hast given me. Now these are the children to whom John had reference when he said, "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."—1 John ii. 27. Children, you say, I am so sinful and so full of evil, what shall I do? Jesus prayed for you to his Father when he was here that the Lord would deliver you from evil, (John xvii. 15,) and the Father always hears his Son. Now Jesus said by Paul's mouth, "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father."—Gal. i. 4. Children, you need not think it strange about your affliction and tribulation, for that is fulfilling his word; he said, In the world you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world. I can see troublesome times for the children of God in the near future, but have no space to write of it now, so I shall stop right here, for fear I weary you with my writing. I see no Old School Baptists to talk with at all, and wife and I get very lonely.

Brethren editors, if you think this will not cause the children of Jesus trouble you can publish it when you have space.

A poor, wearied sinner,

S. M. BUTLER.

ORLANDO, Fla., Sept. 25, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I see my time for six months has expired; I will send you one dollar for six months again, and when my time is out you may stop sending my paper, not because I am tired reading it, but I do not think I will need it longer. If I live to see next February I will be eighty-one years of age, and my days will soon be ended. I have quite a number of old copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that my dear father and mother, Stout and Fanny L. Atteberry, used to read, and they are new to me yet.

There is one thing upon my mind, and that is to speak about the commandments of God. He wrote the ten commandments on two tables of stone all together, and why is not one commandment as good as another? He says, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Another Scripture

says, "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail." How can we say we believe in the sanctity of the first day of the week and call it the Sabbath, when we cannot find a thus saith the Lord for it? The women that followed the dear Savior to his burial prepared spices and ointments and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment. After Christ had risen from the dead he made himself known to his disciples, and said to them, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," but he did not tell them to keep the first day of the week for the Sabbath. "The works of his hands are verity and judgment: all his commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and righteousness." Read Isaiah lviii. 13, 14. I do not think we have any right to add to or take from the commandments of God; he says, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." I believe the seventh day was the original Sabbath of the Lord, and I cannot help it. I believe brother Vail was right when he said, "I can't help it." I have had a name among the Old Baptists ever since I was twenty-three years old, but O what a crooked path I have made. Sin and sorrow have been all along my pathway, but I have a hope in Christ that is worth more than all this world to me. O Lord, "Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth."

Dear readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I fear I am wearying you. Now if you think I have not done right in speaking of the Sabbath in the way I have, just throw this away and it will be all right, but I would like some brethren to explain what they think about the Sabbath.

SARAH J. BRANSON.

BURLESON, Texas, Oct. 23, 1907.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I herewith send a letter I received from brother Leonard, written, as you will see, in 1904. I feel like sharing it with the loved ones scattered abroad. I have not asked his consent, but believe he would not object. I have derived much comfort from the reading of it, and hope others may also enjoy it.

I was rejoiced to learn through the SIGNS that dear Bonnie had come to the church; what a joy to you and all the church. I think I can almost realize how you felt. It is indeed a time of rejoicing when our loved ones in the flesh come declaring what great things the Lord has done for them, and yet as the children of God they are no more to us than a stranger in the flesh, for we are bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, joint-heirs with Christ, all members of his body, and not only children of the King, but kings and priests. O what a glorious inheritance! Why should we murmur at the few petty trials we have here? It is because we are yet in the flesh, and, like Paul, we cry out and say, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

I was very sorry to learn of the death of sister Jenkins, also brother Edward Rounds. I was not much surprised to learn of his death, but was of sister Jenkins', it was so unexpected; I know she will be greatly missed.

Now I must stop; excuse me for writing such a long letter. Give my love to all your family and to the dear saints I met at Hopewell, especially sister Puring-

ton. May Israel's God be with you and bless you, is my humble prayer.

Yours in hope,

LYDIA C. RAY.

BROOME CENTRE, N. Y., Jan. 2, 1904.

LYDIA C. RAY—DEAR SISTER:—Blessed is our hope of immortality, which hope we have anchored in our Forerunner (Christ Jesus), who hath entered within the veil, there to intercede for his elect, his chosen, chosen in him before the foundation of the world. These loved ones are spoken of by him as possessing eternal life: "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." This life you see, sister Ray, makes the children in age equal to their Brother, their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; both are eternal, therefore everlasting. What a blessed hope this is! The natural mind is unable to comprehend the least of it, and when it comes home to us as our surety that all our sins were laid on him, and that he has paid the debt, and that we are clothed with the robe of righteousness pure and white, O how our poor souls leap for joy; yet at the same time fear and trembling may arise in our minds: Is this for me? Can it be such glorious things are laid up by the hand of Him who rules all things, for poor me? Yes, sister Ray, every one of his loved ones are as pure and holy and as secure as God himself, because their life is his life and his life is their life; they (the children) are all one in Christ Jesus, the union is one, the life is one; as he lives they shall also live, there is nothing built on so firm a foundation; our God is the God that changes not, therefore his dear children are not consumed, they are safe and secure in him. O blessed hope, in him we are unable to change or destroy it.

Well, dear sister, you call my attention to the meetings of Elder Eubanks. I had the great pleasure of hearing him five times, and having his company two days, and of a truth it has been a great pleasure to us all. He has been blessed most wonderfully each time I have heard him, it has been so easy for him to bring out the travel of the children and make it plain; though one were a fool I think he might understand. His preaching has been very comforting to us, and I hope to be thankful for the great blessing; truly God is good to us, and has always remembered us in times of need; his watchcare has been over all his creation from the beginning, and O how thankful I am that he is the Almighty, the Ruler and Disposer of the universe, of all events, great and small. He cannot do injustice or wrong to any, all is for our good and his glory; let all his creation praise him for his goodness.

I have penned you a few lines as they have entered my mind, they are, like myself, very, very imperfect. I would that I were able to give you and all a word of comfort, but all must come from Him, he only can speak peace to the troubled heart; we are unable to bring a clean thing from that which is unclean. May it be his will to teach us his truth and cause us to walk therein as becometh his dear children, and may we be enabled to ascribe unto him all honor, praise, power and glory forever.

We are usually well, and hope to be thankful for all blessings.

Yours in christian fellowship,

D. M. LEONARD.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, I shall be with the Woburn Church, Mass., third Sunday in December, instead of fourth, as usual. We shall be glad to see any of the brethren and friends who can meet with us.

H. C. KER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1907.

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REPENTANCE.

"AND that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."—Luke xxiv. 47. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."—Acts v. 31. "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent."—Acts xvii. 30.

While much is said all through the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments concerning repentance, the substance of it all is summed up in these three Scriptures quoted above. Repentance is always coupled in the gospel with the remission or putting away of sin. In the heartfelt experience of the grace of God it always is presented as preceding the forgiveness of sins. There seems to be but little or no difference between the words "remission" and "forgiveness" as they are used in the Scriptures. Perhaps the word "forgiveness" comes closer home to the heart of him who needs forgiveness. It may also be that sometimes the word "remission" refers more especially to the putting away of sin before God, while forgiveness may refer more especially to the assurance of forgiveness through the remission of sins, by the atonement of Christ, when that assurance is given to the soul that is feelingly convinced of his need of remission and forgiveness. The remission of sins is presented in the word as the work of Christ upon the cross of Calvary. The sealing of this remission to the heart and conscience of a poor sinner is the work of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, whose work it is to take of the things of Jesus and show them unto his people.

In the last of the texts quoted above it is declared that repentance is commanded of God. In the first text quoted it is declared that this repentance must be preached among all nations, and in the second Scripture this repentance which God commands, and which must be preached among all nations, is said to be given of God through Jesus Christ, who to that very end is exalted, not only as a Prince, but as a Savior. The Jews expected a prince, but felt no need of a Savior; but the spiritual Jew, who is one inwardly and not outwardly, needs a Savior, and consequently both these names of the Holy One are dear to him. As the Savior he is the medium through whom all spiritual blessings flow to us, while as a Prince he is himself the giver. All his gifts are royal bounties, bestowed by a royal Prince; and among these royal gifts is the favor of repentance.

More generally in the Scriptures the word "repentance" refers to that change of conduct which is produced in those to whom is given sorrow for their sins; it signifies a turning away from. The word may mean a turning away from one course of conduct to another, from one party to another party; it may mean turning from good to evil, or from evil to good, or from one evil to another evil; in either case there is a turning away. Still it is true that in the Scriptures it is most generally used to signify a turning away from evil to that which is good.

Sometimes in the Scriptures it is used in a sense that includes the idea of that sorrow which leads to the change of conduct; that is, the whole change wrought within and without, when a man is turned from his former ways, is sometimes included in this word in the Scriptures. Yet after all, as said before, the word more especially signifies the outward change of conduct which is wrought by the sorrow within, and this sorrow is the work of the Holy Spirit of God. Sometimes men are sorry for their former course, and yet cannot repent; that is, undo the past, or turn away from it. So it is said that Esau found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears. Esau was exceedingly sorry for the selling of his birthright, but he could not undo what he had done, though he strove to find a way to do so with tears. Many a man, like Esau, has done that in his haste for which he would have given much could he undo his act, or could he avoid the result of it, and yet has found no place of repentance, or turning away. This is true of the experience of every sinner convicted of his sins before God. It is the common experience of such convicted sinners that they have striven to find a place to turn away from their sins and escape them and the consequences of them, but all in vain. So the poet sings truly, "In vain we seek for peace with God, by methods of our own." We cannot undo our sins, or find any way to escape the penalty. Our iniquities prevail against us; that is, they demand justice and judgment; our crimes, like the sin of Cain, cry to God from the ground for vengeance; go where we may we cannot escape that cry; the sin always lies at our door. But thanks be unto God, Jesus has been exalted to give that which we cannot find; he has made a way for our salvation from sin, and it is he who gives us that repentance which we seek, and through him the sin is put away and the vengeance due it is turned away from us; with his stripes we are healed. When Job's friends said, in substance, to him, that if he were good he should find favor and blessing from God, he said, "I know it is so of a truth: but how should man be just with God?" How can a man turn away from his sins so that he may become just? A man may hate his sins, but that does not justify him. He may long to henceforth live holily and blamelessly before God, but that only means that he confesses his sins and that they condemn him; in this very feeling is a confession that he has sinned; here is no place found of repentance; he cannot be at peace with God by any or all these methods; he finds no place of repentance, though he seeks it with tears. How sweet the blessed gospel news will come to such an one: That which thou couldest not do Jesus has done, and from his gift that which thou seekest is thine; both repentance and forgiveness of sins are thine.

We have spoken of that sorrow which worketh repentance, perhaps it would not be doing violence to the word to speak of this sorrow as that inward, heartfelt repentance which leads to the outward repentance. One must be turned away from his love and delight in sin before he ever will desire to escape it outwardly. The nature of a swine must be changed, else when outwardly washed he will return again to his wallowing in the mire. So if through any cause man outwardly turns away from his evil course for a time, unless that cause be the grace of God working repentance in his heart, he will turn again to his sins, and perhaps with more zest than before. Right here

is the difference between the work of man and the work of God: man washes the outside, but such washing never cleanses the heart; God washes the heart, or the conscience, and this always produces a cleansing of the hands; man strives to work from without inward and fails, God works from within outward and his work is perfect and shall finally be perfected in every one in whom he has begun his work.

But we do not forget that the word speaks of two kinds of sorrow. Paul calls the one "godly sorrow" and the other "the sorrow of the world." Of the last he says, "It worketh death." Of the former he says, It "worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of." Thus the sorrow of King Saul and of Judas worked death, but the sorrow of David and of Peter wrought repentance unto salvation; and Paul wrote to the brethren at Corinth that they had sorrowed after a godly sort, and the evidence upon the ground of which he could feel sure of this was that their sorrow had wrought out in them a putting away of their transgressions and a vehement desire for the better way. The sorrow of the world is accompanied with no hatred of sin, but simply with the dread of the results of sin. Saul, the king, did not hate his sin, but was grieved at losing his kingdom; Judas did not hate his sin, else he would have sought for cleansing and forgiveness; but godly sorrow involves the thought that one has come to hate his sin and to desire cleansing from it, and out of this desire comes prayer, and the answer of prayer, which is salvation; the sorrow has wrought repentance and the repentance has wrought salvation. This is the order which the apostle has declared to be the work of God.

Now according to the first text quoted, this repentance, as well as the remission of sins, is to be preached. What does this preaching of repentance mean? Does it mean that ministers in their preaching are to directly exhort ungodly men to repentance? Rather, does it not mean that repentance is to be preached just as is faith, and remission of sins, and the atonement through which remission is given, and the work of the Holy Spirit in the new birth, and the final preservation of the saints to glory? Is it made the duty of one man to say to another, Have faith in God, exercise faith in God or in the Lord Jesus Christ, be born again, preserve yourselves unto glory, or repent or be sorry for your sins with godly sorrow and repentance? Is it not rather true that all these things are to be preached unto seeking sinners as that which the dear Lord Jesus has already wrought out for them and secured to them in the covenant of grace? If preaching repentance means that it is ours to exhort men to repentance as something that they are to do for themselves, it would seem to follow that remission is also to be preached in the same way; that is, as something which men are to strive to secure to themselves. Does not the reading of the text shut us up to this, that if remission of sins is the gift of God, so also is repentance? Is not the first text named in full harmony with the second, which declares that Jesus gives both repentance and remission? Moreover, the third text quoted does not in any wise contradict the two former. God commands repentance or turning away from sin; the commandments of the Lord are, all of them, true and righteous; his law is holy, just and good. But it is true of all men, as Paul said of himself, we are "carnal, sold under sin;" the fact is that it is not in man to keep one of the

least of all the commandments of God. It is the word of God that "thou shalt not covet;" "thou shalt not commit adultery." Since the fall of Adam has any man ever truly kept one of these commandments? But one man has kept them, the man Christ Jesus, and he has kept them for his people. If repentance means turning away from sin, then Jesus fully turned away from sin, loathing it with utter loathing. What we did not do, what we could not do, Jesus has done for us. Ministers then are to preach that all the commandments of God are fulfilled in Jesus Christ, and fulfilled for his people. All this perfect righteousness is imputed to poor sinners. But beside all this, the Holy Spirit has been given to write these things in our hearts. Thus the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, as said the apostle Paul. God commands us to love him with all our powers. This we have never done; left to ourselves this we never can even desire to do; but the Holy Spirit writes this law in the heart, and thus it is fulfilled in us. So repentance, which is commanded of God, is among the gifts which Jesus was exalted to give, and which he received for men, even for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. This heavenly grace is formed in the heart in the form of godly sorrow for sin, and then appears in the outward obedience of such an one to the commandments of God. Thus the commandment of God unto repentance is obeyed in the sinner and by him; in no other way, if the gospel be true, could this obedience be wrought in him.

It seems clear that there is a vast difference between declaring what our God commands and what Jesus is doing and has done in the matter of repentance, and exhorting ungodly men to sorrow for sin and to turn away from sin. It is true that he who preaches the gospel must also preach the law, but each in its place must be presented, and not one in the place of the other. God commands love and he commands repentance, but the poor, convicted sinner finds that he can do neither. Thus he by the law becomes dead to the law; the law itself cuts him off from itself. Now this condemned and helpless sinner finds salvation and strength revealed in the gospel through our Lord Jesus Christ, and when the word of the gospel is applied by the Holy Spirit it brings assurance of salvation to him, because Jesus has paid all the debt he owes, and because the same Savior has been exalted to bestow upon him righteousness, repentance and all that he needs. It is not the place of the minister of the gospel to exhort men to keep the law for salvation, neither is it the place of the minister to exhort men to be sorrowful for sin and to repent; but it is the precious work of the minister to declare what the blessed Lord has done and is doing and will do unto the end. A full law must be preached and known before a full gospel can be preached and known. A full law cuts men off forever; a full gospel shows the perfect way of salvation, and that is also forever.

We recall that when but a child it used to be said by Old School Baptists around us, that Methodists were more consistent with themselves than were New School Baptists; Methodists said that men could repent and believe, and so they exhorted men to do so; New School Baptists said that men could not of themselves repent and believe, and yet they exhorted all men to do so. It used to be said that New School Baptists tied people hand and foot, and then told them to run. We

think that this saying of our fathers expressed the truth. If men can of themselves repent, then it is right to exhort them to this work; if they cannot of themselves repent, then all that remains is to preach that to the children of God Jesus gives repentance; and this will be good tidings indeed to that soul that is bound and cannot repent. When this godly sorrow and repentance shall be felt in the sinner's heart he will know from whom the blessing has come and be prepared himself to exalt the blessed Savior and Prince, and to make mention of his holy name; to him there will never be any other name in heaven or on earth.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

PSALMS II. 12.

"Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

Many, in commenting on this text, either from ignorance or design, grossly pervert its plain and obvious application, and represent it as being addressed generally to unregenerate sinners, warning them to make their peace with God by embracing his Son, espousing his cause, or by becoming his disciples. A careful examination of the context will clearly show that nothing could be more foreign to the plain import, not only of the text, but also of the whole Psalm. The text is addressed to the kings and judges of the earth, especially to those of the Gentile nations, at and subsequently to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ into the world.

With a prophetic view of the advent of the Son of God, the inspired writer demands, Why did the heathen, or Gentiles, rage, and the people, or Jews, imagine a vain thing? This was literally the case, and this Psalm is repeatedly referred to in the New Testament, to show that its predictive bearing looked forward to the incarnation of Christ and the opposition of Jews and Gentiles to him and the kingdom which he came to set up and to preside over. "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." This was literally fulfilled in its primary allusion to Christ and the primitive days of his kingdom, and is still being fulfilled in relation to the rage and opposition of both Jews and Gentiles to his cause and kingdom on the earth. So forcibly did this prophecy apply to the early persecutions of the primitive saints, that the apostles, and the whole company of the saints, "lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is; who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together. For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."—Acts iv. 24–28. But to show how utterly futile and unsuccessful should be the opposition and rage of men and devils, in their attempt to thwart the purpose of God and prevent the establishment of the Redeemer's kingdom, the psalmist adds, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in de-

rision. Then shall he speak to them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure." And when they shall have exhausted all their power and wrath, when they shall have crucified the Lord's anointed One, when they shall have done all that God would suffer them to do in opposing, "Yet [saith he] have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." Their united opposition, their wrath, their counsel, their imaginations and their rage, could not prevent the exaltation of the Son of God to his mediatorial throne, nor could they dispossess him of any of that power with which he is invested, to reign over the kings, rulers and potentates of this world. For all powers are put under his feet, and he is inaugurated and mounts the holy hill of Zion, to be the Head over all things to his church, with power over all flesh, that he may give eternal life to as many as the Father has given unto him. With all the power of heaven and earth, he reigns King of kings and Lord of lords. What folly, then, what madness for men, even for kings and rulers of the earth, to oppose his government or restrict his dominion, which is from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth. Now seated high upon his imperial throne of power and majesty, the Son of God proclaims the great decree: "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." By this decree the Son of God inherits all his Father's power over the kings and kingdoms of men. His rod of iron signifies sovereign power to rule and dash the kingdoms of this world to pieces.

In view of the reigning power of Christ with all the angels of heaven at his command, possessing all the omnipotence of the Father, who shall be able to resist his matchless sway, and his supreme control of all things and of all events?

> "What mortal dare
> With the eternal God compare?"

"Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth: serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little." Among the ancients, to kiss a superior was a token of recognition of superiority and loyal submission, as when Samuel anointed Saul to be king over Israel, he kissed him, saying, "Is it not because the Lord hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?"—1 Samuel x. 1. And in speaking of those whom the Lord had reserved from serving Baal, the Lord said, "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him."—1 Kings xix. 18. And this figure is used to signify the reconciliation of hostile parties: "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."—Psalms lxxxv. 10. It was also a token of pacification, as when Jacob met his brother, Esau: "And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell upon his neck, and kissed him."—Gen. xxxiii. 4. These examples will suffice to show in what sense the kings, judges and rulers of the earth are admonished to kiss the Son, by acknowledging his supremacy, as the Lord's Anointed, as Samuel acknowledged the anointing of Saul; by loyal submission, by reconciliation to his government; by enacting no laws in opposition to him, or calculated to oppress his people; by

refraining from all attempts to annul any of his ordinances or institutions, or to improve upon any of his precepts; by refraining from all attempts to be wise above what is written by inspiration, and by an humble acknowledgment of their dependence on his power and providence; by carefully observing the words of David, "The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God."—2 Samuel xxiii. 3.

"Lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way," &c. Fear to provoke his wrath. Remember that, with all your regal grandeur, ye are but dust and ashes before him. He has full control of you and all your principalities. Revere and dread his iron rod, with which he will break to pieces the nations that forget him, or that forget their responsibility to him. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings. When indications of his displeasure are manifested, heed them well; think not presumptuously to brave his almighty power; you cannot escape his rod, for, "The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his King, and exalt the horn of his Anointed."—1 Samuel ii. 10. When the proud monarch of Egypt hardened his neck in rebellion against God, it was that he should be destroyed. When the king of Babylon essayed to be like the Most High, it was that he should be brought down to hell. (Isaiah xiv. 12–14.) Not only the kings and rulers, but the nations of the earth, have felt the weight of his iron rod. Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum and Jerusalem, which had been exalted to heaven, were thrust down to hell. Sodom and Gomorrah, Nineveh and Babylon, all present fearful examples unto those that after should live ungodly. (2 Peter ii. 6.)

"And ye perish from the way." As Christ taught his disciples in regard to discipline: "Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him," &c. Thus signifying that the time for pacification was limited. So the admonition to kings and rulers of the earth implies the certainty that when by presumption or maladministration they have provoked the wrath of heaven and involved themselves and their kingdoms in vengeful clouds of wrath, they shall find it impossible to avert the retribution due to their rebellion against the Lord's Anointed. "Be wise now, [not at some future period] therefore, O ye kings."

"When his wrath is kindled but a little." In the providential dealings of God with the children of men, he is long-suffering; if it were not so, all nations would sink beneath his wrath. But although he suffers long, and sends his rain upon the just and upon the unjust, until the cup of their iniquities is filled up, they shall not escape.

> "Those heaps of wrath by slow degrees
> Are forced into a flame;
> But kindled, O how fierce they blaze,
> And rend all nature's frame!"

The time of earthly governments is brief and transient; the thrones of human governments contain the elements of their destruction, and when unjust rulers of the earth shall be driven away in their wickedness, they will surely then have perished from the way. No rocks nor mountains then can screen them from the presence of Him that sitteth upon the throne, nor hide them from the wrath of the Lamb.

In our remarks upon this text we have refrained from making an application of it to our own beloved country; not however because we are not embraced in the

solemn admonition in the text to kings and rulers, for, according to our understanding of the subject, all the rulers of the earth are fully included. Indeed, all who rule, or have authority over their fellow-beings, are admonished in our subject to be wise, whether they be kings, governors, judges, parents, husbands, masters or overseers, to the extent of the legitimate power or authority with which they are invested. All are amenable to God, and are required to rule in the fear of God. "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth;" and be wise now, therefore, O ye people, and may the God of heaven make all his saints wise unto salvation, for they that are wise shall be wise for themselves, and they that scorn, alone shall bear it.

The conclusion of our text is consoling to the people of the living God: "Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." That is, in the Son; the Son unto whom power and dominion are given; exalted as God's King. Whereas, it is written the kings of the earth set themselves. But God hath set his King upon his holy hill of Zion, and unto his Son he saith, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." None but the blessed of the Lord do really trust in him, and it is because God has blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus that they are enabled to put all their trust in him. How blessed it is to trust in him, and not be afraid. Though the earth be removed, though mountains be cast into the midst of the sea, though the earth tremble at the swellings thereof, still, "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever." O may this blessing be our own.

In conclusion, may not those blessed ones who are of the household of God, and built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, hail the eternal Prince who sits enthroned on Zion, and with holy reverence kiss the Son, bow down at his feet and say,

> "Reign forever, wondrous Prince,
> Born to redeem and strong to save."

And by our humble reliance on him in all our tribulations manifest that we do trust in him, and in him alone. Above all things, let us who trust in the Lord endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and see that we fall not out by the way. The kingdom to which we, as the people of God, belong, shall never be destroyed, for our King is the mighty God and the Prince of peace; it therefore becomes us, as his subjects, as much as in us lies, to live in peace with all men, and especially with those who are of the household of faith; and it is the privilege and duty of those who know the Lord to call earnestly, devoutly and humbly on his name.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Feb. 1, 1863.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder T. M. Poulson.)

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Forest Grove, Wicomico Co., Md., Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1907, to continue three days, to the several churches composing her body, sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—The nature of our greeting, according to the usual custom, will be a presentation of some thoughts bearing upon some portion of the written word, therefore we will refer you to Paul's letter to Titus, second chapter, eleventh and twelfth verses, which read as follows: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all

men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." We feel assured from the tone of this letter that it was to refresh the mind of Titus with reference to the doctrine and order of the gospel, for salvation by grace is undoubtedly the doctrine of the Bible, and this is why Paul calls it the gospel of the grace of God, and it is this grace or divine mercy that brings salvation to poor, lost and wretched sinners; it is not offered, but it is brought to them when they have found that the bed is shorter than they can stretch themselves on and the covering is narrower than they can wrap themselves in. Then is the time for the grace of God to do its marvelous work, this grace being stored in Christ before the world was, ready to bring salvation, for said John, "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." Not grace for works, as the world will have it, but always works for grace, not upon conditions at all to be performed by the poor, helpless sinner. If Jesus had required the very least particle of work to be performed by the poor man that lay at the pool of Bethesda he or his dust would have been there now, and if the Samaritan had demanded one step to be taken by the poor fellow who was half dead, he or his dust would have been there yet. But divine mercy brings salvation only when or after every other refuge has failed; so the honor all belongs to the grace or mercy, and thanksgiving springs forth as the result. So a sinner saved in this way, experimentally, excludes all boasting save in the crucified and risen Jesus, for through this he secured that blessed fountain from whence this grace so freely flows, and will until the last elect vessel is brought in. This is then substantially the doctrine of salvation by grace, and of the Bible, and the apostle reminds Titus that it hath appeared unto all men. In order to arrive at the proper understanding of his meaning and application of this seemingly broad term we must examine closely the language leading up to this assertion. He first calls attention to the old men, and how he should talk to them that they should live soberly, gravely, temperately, sound in the faith, in charity, in patience; the aged women likewise; then unto the younger men, and then how the younger women should be taught by the example of the aged, that they should be sound in speech that could not be condemned; also on down to the servant. So this gives the reason for the seemingly broad term in the text, for this grace hath appeared unto all of these different ages and stages of life: father, son, daughter and servant, and he also declares that the same grace that brings salvation has and is still teaching us. Paul includes himself with Titus and all those mentioned, as he is truly a witness unto the declarations he has herein made, for he could not do so in truth without. What is the great lesson that this grace teaches? First, denying ungodliness and worldly lust. We believe that when a poor sinner comes tremblingly before the church he or she then and there declares against and denounces all ungodliness from any point of view; ungodliness in the name or under the guise of religion, or in violation of every moral code; that they should not lust after evil things as they once did, and as the world does, for while they are in the world they are no more of it. This being included in their profession and taught them by the grace of God is the reason why they should live soberly, not only from the effects of alcohol, but from

madness of every kind, to be moderate in all things pertaining to godliness. There is not a single example or injunction in the Bible but that which the grace of God teaches its subjects, so there is perfect harmony. We are to show as much as possible that our righteousness is not of this world, so to keep unspotted from the world. To live godly we have thought means a great deal, for it calls for persecution, for we are told in the Scriptures, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." So let our lips as well as our lives confess the holy gospel we profess. Beloved, should we not ever be glad and thankful to the great Author for such amazing grace, and for its abiding and constant teaching? We do not have to appeal to tables of stone, nor even search the Scriptures, nor listen to the mouth of man, for this is the new covenant order. If we should be on the high seas, there we are taught to live soberly; if we are surrounded by infidels, there this teacher is saying, Live soberly and godly. We do not believe there is a subject of this grace in all of this land but what has and is still being taught blessed and God-honoring lessons, and when their attention is called to them they know they are true; this is why they are profited by having their minds stirred up by way of remembrance; all external lessons may be forgotten, we may not only forget the lesson imparted by earthly parents, but even forget their faces, but the grace of God is an internal teacher. We would not have much patience with, nor much hope for, one professing godliness to hear him or her say, Well, I forget that the Bible said that I should not get drunk, or that I should not steal, or lie, or use such language as unbecometh godliness, or that I should not participate in the worship of the beast or his image. We believe the grace of God causes its subjects to love godliness in every shape and way, and creates a desire to flee from the opposite.

May all of God's dear people properly and seriously think on these things to their profit and to the glory of amazing grace. Amen.

A. B. FRANCIS, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Forest Grove, Md., to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have had a very interesting and, we think, profitable meeting at this time; the theme preached has been Christ the crucified and risen Redeemer. The preaching has been so clearly and forcibly presented it seems that any one might have been profited thereby. We can gladly say to you that we are in peace; all the churches are free from disorder or trouble of any kind. Your messengers and ministers have given us good cheer with their messages of love and fellowship. The weather is fine and we are pleased to note that there are a goodly number of brethren with us. The business has been conducted in a peaceful and loving manner.

Our next meeting is appointed to be held with the church at Nassaongo, in October, 1908, where we shall hope to again meet your messengers and receive your messages of love.

A. B. FRANCIS, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

MEMORIALS.

(VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING.)

WE desire to give some expression upon our Minutes of our sorrow in the loss we, as an association, have sustained in the death of **Elder E. V. White** during the past year. In this sorrow we well know all our brethren who knew him share with us, with whom he was for many years so intimately associated, but none could know as we know the value of our dear brother. As a man among men, as a citizen, neighbor and friend, but more especially as a loving, earnest and faithful follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, and as a preacher of righteousness and a faithful pastor of churches, he fully commended himself to the confidence and love of all. This was to the praise of the glory of the grace of God, which was revealed in him, and of which it was his delight to testify. The churches of our association that were under his care feel desolate indeed; they sorrow that they shall see his face no more on earth, yet we have full assurance that it is well with him forever. It is our prayer that we all may be so sustained by grace divine that we shall follow the Lord as he followed Him. Especially it is our prayer that God may sustain and comfort the bereaved companion and family, and minister grace to the churches of his care, and enable us all to say, It is the Lord, let him do as seemeth him good. A good man and a good minister of Jesus Christ has fallen asleep.

ALSO,

In memory of our dearly beloved brother, **Benjamin White,** brother in the flesh to Elder E. V. White, and deacon of New Valley Church for twenty-six years; who was lovely in character and manifested the love of Jesus in his walk and conversation.

ALSO,

Our dear brother, **F. M. Myers,** to whom the foregoing will apply with equal force, and being naturally of a retiring disposition, he was indeed one of the little ones in his own estimation, but will be greatly missed by the little band at New Valley.

May the Lord give us grace and enable us to say, Thy will, O God, be done.

THE Old School or Primitive Baptist Church called Darbyville, situated at Mattville, Ohio, when at our last regular meeting adopted the following resolutions in memory of **Elder R. W. Peters,** member and pastor of said church:

Whereas, God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to take from our midst by death our brother and pastor, Elder R. W. Peters,

Resolved, that while we shall greatly miss his precious gifts in the gospel ministry, by and through which many brethren have received comfort, edification and encouragement by the way,

Resolved, that we bow in humble submission to him that doeth all things well, and that we extend our sympathy to his dear family and many friends.

Resolved, that these resolutions be spread upon the minutes of this meeting as a portion of our church record, and a copy be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication, also our county paper, *Union Herald.*

ELDER M. SILVEUS, Moderator.

MRS. FRANCES FULLER, Church Clerk.

NOVEMBER 9, 1907.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder John McConnell, Nov. 6th, 1907, at his residence in New York city, Dr. Richard Kuehne, of Hoboken, N. J., and Miss L. Ethel Meredith, of Viola, Delaware.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At the family home, four miles east of Hersman, Ill., May 13th, 1907, **Bradley Hurst,** aged 72 years, 6 months and 21 days. He was married to Mrs. Matilda Worthington Perry, April 27th, 1860. Together with his wife, he united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Mt. Gilead, May 5th, 1878, and was baptized by the late Elder James Harper. Brother Hurst was a very quiet man, but an uncompromising believer in Jesus and the doctrine of salvation through him, and his few words on that subject were fraught with the deepest meaning, while to sit in the house of God among those he loved for Jesus' sake, and listen to the story of the cross and the praises of the name of the Lord, was his chief delight. He was a constant reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and its editors and many of its able correspondents were very dear to him. The dear bereaved and almost helpless widow and four children are left, besides a larger number of relatives than any other man in his county.

The funeral was from the family homestead, May 15th, where a very large congregation of relatives, brethren and friends assembled in the face of a gathering rain and wind storm, and through its raging listened with tearful patience to a discourse by the pastor, the prayer for grace and the singing of the dear old hymns he had loved, after which the remains were laid away in the Perry family cemetery.

May the dear, afflicted sister be supported by the everlasting arms, and the children be enabled to look to the Lord, their father's God.

D. W. OWENS.

SISTER **Hannah Tuttle** died at her home near Adrian, Mich., the last of August, 1907. She was born Sept. 3rd, 1835; was married to Andrew J. Rogers, and lived three or four years in New London, Huron Co., Ohio. After the death of her husband she came

with her daughter and made her home with her father, brother Geo. Livesay, in Madison. She lived a widow until 1881, when she married Deacon Tuttle, of the Old School Baptist Church, Fairfield, July 3rd. She joined the church about 1865, and was baptized by that dear soldier of the cross, Elder Joseph A. Johnson, who often preached at our place, and who baptized about twenty during the time. She was partially paralyzed several years ago, but the immediate cause of her death was supposed to be cancer of the stomach. She bore her suffering patiently, always trying to smile through her tears. Nothing grieved her like the breaking up of our little church, and often she would exclaim, Can it be that I shall never hear another gospel sermon? and prayed to be reconciled to the will of God, and her prayer was answered. She quietly fell asleep in Jesus after making preparation for her funeral, disposing of her property and bidding farewell to all, asking them to pray the Lord to take her home. Sister Kate Livesay, who was with her to the last, said she was ready, and peacefully passed into that rest which awaiteth all of God's chosen ones. You all knew her by her writing, and loved her for her sweet poems, which I hope may be printed in book form. She leaves her daughter and a granddaughter, two grandsons and her faithful companion to mourn their loss, also a large circle of relatives and friends, who sympathize with them in this great sorrow.

(MRS.) JAMES WYMAN.

WESTON, Mich.

SISTER **Margaret Barton** died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Catharine McQueen, in Marion Co., Oregon, Nov. 10th, 1907. She was born in Indiana in 1839, and moved from that State to Iowa when she was four years old; came to Oregon in 1853, in company with Elder John Wand and Mary A. Short, and settled in Linn County; was united in marriage to Deacon William Clymer, in 1853, who died May 30th, 1903; they lived together in peace and love for many years. To them were born eight children, all of whom preceded them to the grave except Mrs. McQueen, who is left to mourn the loss of a dear mother. She left four grandchildren, three great-grandchildren and a large circle of friends, who sorrow not as those who have no hope, believing that their loss is her eternal gain. Sister Barton was united in marriage Oct. 5th, 1905, to Hiram Barton, who is a resident of California. She was on a visit here to her daughter and old friends when she was taken severely ill with what the doctors called cancer of the stomach. Her suffering was great, but she bore it with patience, never complaining, having a humble trust in her Savior. She was a firm believer in the grand old doctrine of predestination and election, and the effectual calling of God's people from darkness to light, as held by the Primitive Baptists. She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for many years, and no doubt passed through the valley of the shadow of death leaning on the strong arm of her Beloved.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort to a circle of relatives and friends, using as a text 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52, after which we laid her remains by the side of her former husband, Deacon William Clymer, in the Lebanon Cemetery, to await the resurrection.

SILAS WILLIAMS.

ALBANY, Oregon, Nov. 14, 1907.

MY dear father, **J. S. McCauley,** died May 5th, 1907. His health had been failing for a long time, but for over two months before his death he failed more rapidly, and when the last moments came it was a gradual sinking, and he died peacefully, happily saying he was going home to Jesus. His life, as many know, was for many years a life of christian duty, and at last it seemed he could hear, Enough, thou good and faithful servant. Those who have lost a dear husband and father know from experience how sad and heart-rending the loss is, and those who have not experienced it can never know till it comes. It is a loss that can never be filled, but we must remember our loss is his gain, and God is wise and merciful, and will not heap on us more than we can bear. Before dying he told me he was at peace in his soul with every human being; he remembered nothing against any one, all was forgiven, as God had forgiven him, and he is now where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal. He was interred in the Primitive Church cemetery, the funeral services being conducted by Elder S. J. Wilkinson, who chose the beautiful passage: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years," and made an impressive and touching talk. The grave was covered with beautiful flowers, but no more beautiful and pure than the soul of the body they then covered. Dear friends, we thank you all for the last loving tributes paid our dear one. The last request he made of me was to write his obituary. I feel my inability to do so; however I send these few lines.

LOUISE McCAULEY.

EDEN, Miss.

SISTER **Cassendria Purse** died at her late residence in Kenton, Del., at the age of 83 years. She was baptized by Elder E. Rittenhouse, and received in the fellowship of the Bryn Zion Church, near Kenton, Del. Her walk as a christian was such as to inspire the full confidence and fellowship of the brethren and the respect of friends. She was never married, and in the latter years of her life lived alone in her home. Often when there was no way for her to ride

to the meetings she walked, a distance of about one mile. In the summer of 1906 she was paralyzed; later she was further stricken, and was confined to her bed many weeks awaiting the change.

The brethren and friends gathered at her late home, and the writer tried to speak of the hope the Lord's people have in Christ Jesus, the risen Lord, to the comfort of all that mourn. Interment in Bryn Zion cemetery, near Kenton, Del.

BENJ. E. CUBBAGE.

FELTON, Delaware.

DIED—Little **David N. Rogers,** Oct. 10th, 1907, being 18 months old, lacking 5 days, son of R. W. and L. E. Rogers, Healing Springs, Washington Co., Ala. Grieve not for him, parents dear, your loss is his gain. We do not understand why it is better so—why this little bud was so early plucked, but the ways of the all-wise Providence are not ours, therefore we must bow in humble submission to his will, knowing he never errs. We must think of David's death as only gone before, where there is no death, pain or sorrow.

His uncle, A. J. DOGGETT.

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PERSONALS.

CORRESPONDENTS will please address me at 134 Winship St., Macon, Ga., as I have some trouble in getting my mail; have lost a great deal of mail by not having street and number on it.

LEE HANKS.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

MERKEL, Texas, Oct. 21, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have been almost a constant reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the last ten years, and from time to time have had a mind to write through its columns to the dear ones of the Father's kingdom, especially after reading some dear brother's or sister's letter which would make a special application to my poor heart; but such impressions have worn away from time to time, until the present date finds me for the first time trying to pen a few lines to the saints scattered abroad. I have observed that letters written by our aged fathers and mothers in Israel are to myself, as a rule, most comforting and instructive. O that you, my dear, aged parents, would write oftener than you do. Do not think because you are nearing the end of your earthly pilgrimage that your letters are unprofitable to the readers of the SIGNS. Your lifetime experiences are of great value to us younger ones, who are behind you in the pilgrimage journey; they help us to see things beforehand that otherwise we would not know for years to come. You younger readers, most of you, I know have realized that letters from them are very profitable, having deeper experiences in things pertaining to the kingdom of God and his righteousness; although this rich, experimental knowledge of the deep things of God is often found in the younger ones who are taught of the Lord. It was about the time of my first acquaintance with the SIGNS that Elder John McConnell's letters afforded me much comfort. I remember in one he said something about the tenor of them being such as was calculated to remind his readers much of their sins, and to call them from the heights of their joy in Christ down with him into the low grounds of sorrow, much to his dislike, yet he could not well help it. They made him only the dearer to me, for the Savior was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. O how my fellowship ran out to him. Such language manifested to me the glorious truth that he is a companion in tribulation. Show me one who mourns because the heart is found deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and I will show you one whose heart is purified by faith. It is a source of triumphant joy to the tried soul to

learn that the more exceeding sinful sin appears, the farther from a wilful, sinful life one is removed; it is then that every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, is laid aside. When sin is made death to one, as it was to Paul, O how that one will flee from every sin and every evil way. It makes one prefer to suffer for right doing rather than wrong doing. The faster you run in the race laid out before you, the deeper your footprints are left in the earth of sin. Do you, dear souls, feel distressed and discontented on account of sin? Is sin made death unto you; thorns in your flesh? O yes; well, these are deep footprints you are making in this low ground of sin as you run with patience the race. Now you are not running so uncertainly but that you may receive that glorious, incorruptible crown, and that crown is the Lord God in the person of Jesus Christ, for the Lord shall be a diadem of beauty and a crown of glory unto the residue of his people in that day, says one of old. But you say, How shall I know this blessed truth is applied to me? Well, you love the brethren, do you not? Yes. You prefer Jerusalem above your chief earthly joy, do you not? Yes. Again, your heart burns within you at times when God is pleased to open to you the Scriptures in the gospel by preaching or otherwise, does it not? Yes. Well then, your experience with that righteous Man of God that undertook for you and accomplished your salvation from everlasting woe and ruin, has given you this seal of his Holy Spirit of promise, to wit, that he (God) was in Christ reconciling you to himself by the death of his Son, and so you have found all earthly treasures lost, and you, with Paul, willingly count them but dross for the excellency of Christ; and so all things you counted gain are but the things you count as loss, or nothing worth, and rather seem to hinder your course and deter you from the blessedness of Christ. Yet all the things obtained as gain in Christ are contrary to the fleshly nature in you, and as a consequence you say all earthly things are against you, but in these very things is found your life in Christ. Let us see. One of the best things our kind Father of mercies has given us, and the one that lies at the bottom of them all as a foundation upon which the whole structure of christian experience is built, is a broken heart, a contrite spirit. This is contrary to the flesh; anything else would the natural man suggest. Yes, no doubt all things else would one choose; but the love of God can find lodgment in no other than a broken heart, nor is it manifest but by a contrite spirit in those of meek and lowly mind. The fruits of the Spirit which bloom and bear fruit manifestly in the children of God are the products of their broken hearts, for in no other can those celestial flowers bloom. Christ dwells in you richly in all knowledge and in all wisdom, to the praise of his glorious grace. God has broken your hard, unfeeling heart of stone in bringing you out from under the bondage of sin and death, and for this reason it must be so that now sin is condemned in the flesh, your mortal bodies, that Christ may reign in them in righteousness. You would not have had it so, but the way that seemed right unto you is but the way of death. God has taught you that your choice would have been to remain in death; you knew nothing else, even as the captive Israelites knew nothing of freedom, but only servitude of the most rigorous kind; they could choose nothing else, as they knew nothing better, for they were total strangers to freedom;

but now you who were afar off (in nature) are made nigh by the blood of Christ. All those exercises of soul are evidences of joint-heirship with Christ, and that we are children of God by faith in him, being born again. It is a blessed relationship, far above what we are able to comprehend while we only see and know in part. O what a blessed relationship! Let us rejoice in God our Father, for we can truly say, He hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad. Do you feel to have an interest in this relationship to Christ as your elder Brother? Your experience teaches you this great truth: that you are born of God, and for this reason have become heirs of an incorruptible inheritance, reserved in heaven for you. Here is more evidence in your favor which the Holy Spirit has sealed to you. "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."—Romans viii. 10. Yes, experimental deadness on account of sin condemned in the flesh. Who told you so, Paul? My experience, would be his answer, and your experience is your answer. You, dear child, because you feel that your body is dead because of indwelling sin, though condemned in the body, must of necessity be more spiritually alive in order to feel this deadness of your body; but you only feel this death because of sin in the same degree that you feel that the Spirit (of God) is life, or, in other words, your life because of righteousness, which righteousness is the righteousness of Christ. The Spirit is life. How did you learn that? Did you learn it in the letter? No, but by the Spirit renewing you day by day in raising you to a more sensible and a more appreciable realization of God's righteousness wrought out for you. The Spirit is then your life in the sense of a lively, quickening and renewing experience of it day by day in your heart. This text presupposes that you are already quickened by the Spirit, being born of God, so this text is only expressive of the truth that your bodies are dead in an experimental sense on account of sin, though condemned in the flesh; but on the other hand, it teaches that the same Adamic man experiences that the Spirit is life. The less we, as the quickened sons and daughters of Adam's race, feel the life of the Spirit, the less we feel experimentally that the body is dead because of sin, and so less and less degrees of this experimental, spiritual life of the Spirit in righteousness finally reduces us to the low state of carnal-mindedness, which is death, for to be carnally minded is death; yes, dead to all the lovely renewing and enlivening influences of the Spirit. Then in this carnal servitude of sin one ceases in great measure to feel this deadness because of sin, because of unbelief and the dominating evils of the heart for the time being, for the Spirit seems not to be working in us against the motions of sin. In this condition the flesh gets puffed up and seeks self-justification, as the Pharisee who thanked God that he was not as others, or as the poor publican who stood in his presence. Could that self-righteous Pharisee experience the deadness of his body because of sin? No, the most carnally-minded dwell mostly in carnal security and ease. Therefore the word "if" in the text is placed there to show that when you, by faith, most joyfully experience that the Spirit is your life because of righteousness, it is then you keenly feel the deadness of your bodies because of sin. Dear, tried ones, faint not at tribulation so keenly felt, Christ is made your righteousness. What a cloud of witnesses at-

testing your sonship and heirship by virtue of the new birth, and yet the half has not been told; and so because ye are sons he dealeth with you as sons in every way, for your good and his glory.

I have here cited many of the evidences of your new creation in Christ Jesus unto good works, and hope you may be encouraged by them. I have also brought many Scriptures to bear testimony to the truth of your experience of the Lord's work of grace in your hearts, and what the revelation of your experiences teach you so do the Scriptures, but whatever is untrue the Scriptures in like manner testify the falsity of the same, and so these are faithful sayings, because He who spake as never man spoke, spake them by his own mouth and through his inspired prophets and apostles, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Now you, dear ministering servants of the Most High, God has given you a mouth and wisdom that none of your adversaries can gainsay nor resist; speak every word the Holy Ghost puts in your mouths to speak, although they may be hard sayings; but God has never left himself without witnesses, so there will be a few who will hear and receive it in good, honest hearts, and will bring forth fruit to God's glory, for he has said that it shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish that which he pleases, and shall prosper in the thing whereunto he sends it. Fear not the giant Goliaths who are defying the army of the living God, for he has equipped you with the whole armor for his spiritual warfare, that you may fight the good fight of faith and war a good war. Neither fear them who rise up among us speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them; God has made your faces harder than a flint against their faces, and as a defenced city and a brazen wall.

"And let it never once be told
That truth by us was ever sold."

We feel that our God will maintain his cause and prevail over all opposition of the enemy in and by the gospel and the proclamation of it by you, and may you at the end be enabled to say with Paul, I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith. Now for such heavenly favors let us praise the Giver of every good and perfect gift, who has done exceedingly above what we are able to ask or are in the least worthy to receive. For thou art worthy to be praised, for unto thee doth it appertain, forasmuch as in all the nations of the earth and in all their kingdoms there is none found like unto thee, having immortality, which no man can approach unto while possessing mortality; but we are looking for and hastening to the time when mortality shall be swallowed up of life, we shall then enter thy royal Presence, where we will sing unceasing songs of immortal praises unto thee. Glorious thought, dear friends, how rapturous to our hearts is the theme. Praise ye him, ye chosen seed, ye whose names are written in lines of blood in the book of the everlasting covenant for Christ's sake. If it be his will, may God continue to bless the household of faith, with the battle-scarred and victorious SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

I close this letter with heartfelt love and fellowship for you all, but it is poorly expressed; I am glad, however, you all know it better than it can be expressed. I commend you all to God's grace.

Your brother in Christ, the least of all,

J. I. FOSTER.

FRAGMENTS.

It is not by the natural voice or by a musical instrument, nor to the natural ear, that melody is made unto the Lord in this gospel day, but in the heart. It is not necessarily true worship when we are making or listening to natural strains of music, but it is when we are feeling the sentiment and power of gospel truth in the heart.

> "Sweet is the work, my God, my King,
> To praise thy name, give thanks and sing;
> To show thy love by morning light,
> And talk of all thy truth at night."

"Speaking to yourselves," says the apostle, "in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."—Eph. v. 19. Under the former dispensations the forms of worship were strictly natural, and the natural man and the child of God could unite in that worship. There was nothing in it to distinguish them from each other. But in the gospel dispensation, "They that worship him [the Lord] must worship him in spirit and in truth." This cannot be done by merely playing upon a musical instrument, or by listening to natural strains of music. The apostle speaks to the true spiritual experience when he says: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."—Col. iii. 16. True spiritual worship was never by outward forms alone, and spiritual praise was never by merely playing upon the harp. The faith of the Son of God was always necessary, and that alone distinguished between the merely formal and the true spiritual worshiper. The true worship must always be in the spirit; the melody must be in the soul. "Things without life, giving sound," cannot tell the truth of God's salvation, nor distinguish truth from error, nor can even the sweet sounds of the most melodious voice. Two may sit side by side and listen to the same sounds of harp or voice and be equally charmed by the melody, though only one of them knows or cares for the things of God, and the one who does not know the truth may be the most delighted with the music. It is undoubtedly to enforce this truth upon the minds of the saints that the apostle uses this striking form of expression, exhorting them to speak with each other in psalms and spiritual songs, that they should not place an undue estimate upon the natural sounds of music, but should remember that the true melody is not made with hands or voice, but is made and finished in the heart.

Not only the trumpet which Moses was commanded to make, to be used on certain specified occasions, (Numbers x. 1–10,) but all the instruments of music mentioned anywhere in the Scriptures, have a spiritual significance. We have that spiritual significance of these musical instruments in this gospel day, but not the instruments themselves, for they cannot make spiritual melody; that melody must be in the heart. The great trumpet is blown in this gospel day, as Isaiah declared it should be, and they come who were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and they do now "worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem." But no natural eye sees that trumpet, and no natural ear hears its joy-inspiring sound, nor have those blessed gospel realities which God hath prepared for them that love him ever entered into the natural heart. The natural man does not receive them, for they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual melody and beauty are only heard and seen and felt

in the new heart. I may be deprived of my natural hearing and sight, unable to sing or to hear singing, but I am not thereby deprived of the power and privilege of worship, for in this gospel day the melody unto the Lord is made in the heart. True gospel music is not for the purpose of stirring the heart, but because the heart is stirred up. It is not a cause, but an effect; it is the effect of an experience of Christ in the soul; it is he that sings in us. "In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." If instruments of music are to be used in the worship of God in this gospel dispensation we shall find it clearly so directed in the Acts and epistles of the apostles.

"WE all do fade as a leaf."—Isaiah lxiv. 6. If the leaves of a tree have a vital attachment to the tree they will surely fade. If they are artificial leaves they will remain as good and beautiful as ever when all that were real are gone. If there is divine life in a man he will fade as a leaf. There must be divine life in the soul before one can begin to see and feel the vanity and sinfulness of this natural life, and so begin to fade. Then he will try to keep the old strength and paint the leaf over to keep the natural beauty and freshness, but in vain. In the end his iniquities, like the wind, will carry him away, and he will lie as helpless and undone as a withered leaf in the dust. The natural man does not realize any such fading as a leaf; his strength is firm; (Psalms lxxiii.,) he remains satisfied with this natural life and the things that belong to it; he feels that his own works of righteousness are sufficient to keep him in the favor of God; his iniquities do not make him feel that he is cast off, and they do not carry him away from his confidence in himself, nor separate him from his love for the riches and pleasures of this world.

THERE is an earthly house of this gospel tabernacle, and there is a spiritual house, a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. In our earthly house we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. (2 Cor. v. 1.) The earthly house is made with hands, and consists in the work of our hands in attending to the order and ordinances of the visible church. These are "the things that are seen;" but the deep spiritual signification and power of these visible works are "the things that are not seen." Moses refers to the work of the Lord's people under the law when he says in his prayer, (Psalms xc. 17,) "And establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it." By this he expressed the desire of the quickened soul that the true spiritual meaning and power of those legal works might be fulfilled in their experience, as was done in the gospel. So now it is the desire of the Lord's people that they may realize in their souls the true spiritual significance and power of gospel ordinances which are attended to in the church of God openly in the sight of men, such as preaching and hearing the word of the truth of the gospel, attending to the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper. To feel the spiritual meaning and blessed power of these outward works is to "be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven."

THE infinite necessity and value of grace and mercy must be known by every one in the family of God, and they can only be known by experience. We try, and it is a noble ambition, to build our-

selves up in our own esteem upon our virtues, and upon our exemption from meannesses and vice. But every living soul sees some certain thing in his past life which is constantly in his way, constantly interfering with his self-love or self-respect; some act not strictly honest, some evil word or base thought; and as the apostle said, I am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God, so we have to say, or feel in the privacy of our own hearts: I am not worthy to be called a christian, because of such and such a thing which I did, or said, or thought. Sometimes the forgiven sins sink out of our sight for awhile, for when once forgiven they no more rise to condemn us (though they continue to remind us of how vile and base our nature is), and we begin to grow in self-esteem and to be glad and proud of our goodness, when something which we had counted a valuable asset in our store of good qualities, for which we had given ourselves many satisfactory and comfortable nods of approval, all at once puts on another appearance, which startles us out of our self-complacency; a new light seems to be shining upon the supposed virtue, and we see it as something to be hated and scorned, and for which we can but hate ourselves, yea, our own life also; and so there is nothing in us that is worthy of our admiration, when the true light is shining upon us, nothing to build us up in self. In us, that is, in our flesh, we are never, when in our right, spiritual mind, going to find any good thing. The best qualities of our vile nature, the best things we can see in our corrupt hearts, when set in the light of God's countenance will appear what they truly are, altogether vile. Our secret sins (secret from our own eyes) will some time be set in that most searching light, so that we shall abhor what we admired before. No, we must find, we shall find, that we can be nothing but poor, vile sinners, dependent entirely upon the great grace and rich mercy of God for acceptance with him. We must come down to this, to be poor sinners, in order to come up through mercy and grace to the favor of God. That is all the goodness we can ever hope to have before the Lord or in our own sight. And when the Lord by his abounding mercy and grace makes us walk honestly before him and in the sight of men, our thanks are all due to him. Thanks to the Lord, there is a goodness for us. The Lord has prepared of his goodness for the poor. That goodness he has laid up for them that fear him and that trust in him before the sons of men. (Psalms xxxi. 19.)

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 26, 1907.

LAMAR, Colo., Nov. 14, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—As the year has once again rolled by I now remit you my contribution to your valuable paper, which I much enjoy. I also by request send you a communication from our dear old brother Dawson, written to brother L. E. Thompson, of Las Animas, Colo. Publish if you think best. It was my lot to bury the dear old brother in baptism. That my footsteps were guided to his home, far away from any Baptist Church or community, by the unseen Hand, I doubt not. On reaching his place I was astonished to find all his loving children and grandchildren had gathered there before me. Why this was I could not understand, nor did they. We held meetings a few evenings, and then our dear brother came forward and related the hope God had put in his breast more

than forty years ago. He was received for baptism, and on Sunday afternoon, August 18th, 1907, in the crystal waters of the beautiful mountain stream known as Bear River, he was buried with Christ, and raised with him to walk in newness of life. Tears of joy coursed down many cheeks as wife and children clasped the dear old brother in their arms. I shall never forget that scene. It was then clearly made manifest to me why God had directed my unwilling feet thither, and now, since the message was delivered and the work done, I could return from thence.

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform."

May the God of all grace and comfort lead and keep us all throughout this changing world of woe, is my prayer.

D. B. NOWELS.

HAYDEN, Colo., Oct. 11, 1907.

L. E. THOMPSON—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I have had two letters from you and have not answered either, so answer both jointly. In the first letter you say I ought to be identified with the church. I differ with you, as I could be of no service to the church unless I were where I could visit with the members. As it is, I could not fill my seat at meeting, I could not take the sacrament, I could not vote on any business of the church. In this respect I am like the eunuch, and Elder Nowels, like Philip, has been caught away by the Lord, and I go on my way rejoicing. If the eunuch ever joined a church we have no record of it, and I do not know that Elder Nowels and I will ever meet again, but hope we shall. It is not recorded that Philip and the eunuch met afterwards, and it does not matter, our God is everywhere, and we cannot miss his all-seeing eye, or fail to walk in the way he foreordained we should. I have read where others regretted being baptized, fearing they had deceived the brethren and had done wrong, but it is not so with me, I would not take a step backward for this world. I feel it is all right, and that God ordered it. The above is not because I feel better or more free from sin; the flesh is the same to-day as it ever was. "Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it."

I want you and Elder Nowels (not that I think either of you do not believe the doctrine set forth there) to read Elder Ker's article on "Extremes," in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for October 1st. I indorse every word of it. I have felt ever since reading it that he is one of the plants the Father hath planted, and not one the Savior speaks of that shall be rooted up because it was not of the Father's planting. I love what he says, it is what I believe from my heart; we should tell the truth, and if we do it cannot be gainsayed. I would like to see Elder Ker and shake his hand, but do not expect to meet many more of the Old Baptists on this earth. On the 10th day of November I shall be seventy-nine years old.

Now, brother Thompson, after you and Elder Nowels have read this to the church you may send it to the SIGNS for publication. I wrote a few letters to the SIGNS before I was baptized, and they were published; one in brother Benton Beebe's lifetime and one at the beginning of the editorial duty of Elder Chick, and for that reason I thought this might interest some who have known of me by reading.

I will close by saying, If I am saved it is of grace; my walk has been crooked. As old Jacob said, my days have been few and full of evil. May the Lord bless his people everywhere, is the prayer of

your brother in the station that God has pleased to put me.

I want sister Nowels to read this, she seemed to me to be an humble christian.

J. B. DAWSON.

HAYDEN, Colo., Nov. 5, 1907.

ELDER CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I have been reading your article in the SIGNS of October 15th, 1907, and my mind seems impressed to tell you how much I enjoyed reading your views on predestination. I believe every word you wrote, and it all seems so plain that I think all could understand; but then how can the blind see or the deaf hear? Paul may plant and Apollos water, but God gives the increase, and he must give the spirit of understanding or the dry bones will remain dry in the valley. Man cannot reach past that flaming sword and partake of the Tree of life and live forever, for Christ is the way, and none can come unto him except the Father draw them. I believe God rules all things according to his own will; that all things were fixed and purposed in his mind before the foundations of the earth were laid, and it is a great comfort to me when I read such views as you have set forth in that article. If there was any uncertainty with God, what consolation would we poor mortals find in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ? How could we plead the merits of a crucified Savior, or why should there be a Savior at all? If God was uncertain, we might live here always, or we might happen to fly off to some other planet. No, thanks be to his holy name, his purposes are fixed, and not one jot or tittle will go astray or be lost; we are born at a certain time and serve his purpose on earth, and when he is done with us here he takes us away, and the place that knows us now shall know us no more forever. When afflictions come why do we fly to God for refuge? Why, because we see immutability in him, while we see nothing to lean upon in humanity; our arm is weakness itself.

I was called last spring to give up a dear son; God gave him to us for thirty-two years, then called him away. I felt, like Naomi, that the Almighty had dealt very bitterly with me, and it seemed I could not be reconciled, but he made me willing in the day of his power, and I could say, "Thy will be done." I could not help but mourn, but then my poor judgment I felt was not capable of guiding my steps, for I was but as the grass of the field, and less than nothing, and I felt to cry, "Guide me, O thou great Jehovah."

I must now tell you of a joyful meeting we had in August. Elder D. B. Nowels and wife, of Lamar, Colorado, and brother L. E. Thompson, came to visit us. Brother Nowels preached for us. The second week they were here Mr. Dawson expressed a desire to be baptized, and the second Sunday Elder Nowels led him down into the water and buried him in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. My poor heart was made to rejoice, for I had longed for years to see him made able to obey the commandment. We have no church here; we are the only Baptists we know of near, and it seems very lonely to be so isolated, but I know God has a purpose that can be fulfilled in no other way, and I want to stand still and know he is God, and beside him there is none other; he never makes a wound that his love cannot heal; too wise to err, too good to be unkind.

Brother Chick, I do not know why I have written to take up your precious time, which might be so much better em-

ployed, but it seemed I must tell you how much comfort your article was to me, and I could only do so by the pen. I am a poor, stammering, weak worm when I come to write, so throw this aside, but pray for me that my faith fail not, for I have a rebellious heart which deceives me often. May the Lord sustain his people everywhere.

Your unworthy sister in affliction,

LAVINIA J. DAWSON.

[WE feel sure that all our readers will find that which will edify and please them in the above letters. We are glad that this dear old brother has found that answer of a good conscience of which the word speaks, in the ordinance of baptism. The Savior said, "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." It was right that Elder Nowels should baptize him, although far removed from any church, even as Philip baptized the eunuch, and we think it would be right, if this dear brother should in the providence of God ever live within the bounds of some gospel church, for him to present a letter from Elder Nowels to that church and seek membership in it, and it would be right for that church to receive him to membership upon the letter of commendation from Elder Nowels. If one is situated, in the providence of God, near a church of Christ, it is right and for the good of the church and of the brother or sister and for the glory of God that that one should become a member of that church. If one loves the house of God it will be true that he will be glad when it is said unto him, Let us go into the house of God.—ED.]

HELENA, Okla., Oct. 22, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I remember saying to one of you in a letter that I believed Christ had forgiven all the sins I had committed or ever would commit. I fear I went a little too far, yet I hope it may be true. My mind has been impressed upon the whole armor of God. I sometimes fear I have not any part of it. Ephesians vi. 10, 11: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth." It appears that Paul in describing this armor places truth as the first part of it. This agrees with Christ's own words when he said, "Without me ye can do nothing." Christ is truth, and if we speak not the truth we cannot put on the whole armor. If we have not the first part I fear the rest will not fit; even if we try to put it on we must have truth first. "And having on the breastplate of righteousness." This will not fit without truth. "And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." These all fit right along together, but they will never fit without the first one. "Above all, taking the shield of faith, [this it appears is the most important part of the armor, according to the impression Paul makes] wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." Yes, if ye have faith ye shall stand. Faith is the gift of God. Paul says, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God;" and take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. This is a grand and glorious armor, and we are told to put it on, and I feel the whole armor is a gift of God. Have we put it on? This I feel I have desired to do, but sometimes fear I have not started with the first part of it, although I once felt no doubt of this first part, for I felt

sure Christ was with me; but now I only have a hope. The evidence was once bright, and I never thought of doubting it, but now I can only see as through a glass darkly; once in a while it seems the sight is a little clearer.

Dear brethren, I leave this to your judgment as to whether you publish it or not. I feel, as I have said before, that you will not publish anything that is not in harmony with the teachings of Christ and his apostles, and I think we ought all to feel glad, if we should write a letter that you felt was not in harmony with the true Spirit, that you would not publish it. I only intended to say a few words, as I had a letter from a brother I wished to send to you for publication, if you feel it worthy. I have not asked his permission, but am sure it will be all right with him.

Your brother, I hope, for the truth,

D. S. OWSLEY.

MEDICINE LODGE, Kan., Sept. 25, 1907.

MR. STONEWALL OWSLEY—MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I received your very good and comforting letter this evening, and I was a little surprised to get it. I had been looking for a letter from you, but when it came I was not looking for it. So it is, when we least expect a blessing it comes.

As the subject of the Sabbath is on my mind I will try and write along that line.

"And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." —Gen. ii. 2, 3. "For we which have believed do enter into rest; as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world."—Heb. iv. 3. Man was not made for the Sabbath, but the Sabbath for the man. The children of Israel were commanded not to work on the Sabbath day, to do no work of any kind; so when by the revelation of Jesus Christ we were made to hope in him, and know there is salvation in no other, it was then and there that we ceased from our works and rested in what God had done for us; then our Sabbath began: rest in the finished salvation. God's people do not have to wait six days for rest after they see Jesus as their Savior, it is one continual Sabbath to them; and so Christ has commanded us not to work on the Sabbath day, for he has done all the work: perfected forever them that are sanctified. Now, brother, if we do any work we disown Christ and deny what he has done for us. "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?"—Gal. iv. 9. The Mosaic Sabbath was pointing to this time when Christ would come and save his people that they might rest in God; and none but those who are born again, not by the will of man, but of God, can rest in this Sabbath. "Not by the works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us."

Your brother in hope,

C. G. MILLER.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., Nov. 23, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I am at home to-day and have thought of you many times, and also of the readers of the SIGNS. I love our dear papers, or the doctrine they contain, and all those who love that doctrine.

I have thought some on the blasphemy or sin against the Holy Ghost, and have heard some of our brethren and sisters say that one of their greatest fears is that they have committed that unpardonable sin. There has been a question in my mind as to whether a christian ever has or ever can commit that sin. God is represented to us in the Bible as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, but is he not the one God? God is a Spirit, but there was a time when the Godhead dwelt fully in man or in the flesh. In that condition he was God-man or God manifest in the flesh. A question in my mind is, Why was he thus? Why was this necessary? Was it not for the making of the offering for sin, which God in his eternal wisdom had devised in the economy of salvation? That is what appears to me to be true. He said, Unto this hour was I born, and therefore he came for the suffering of death, that he might purge from sin all who had been chosen in him. We cannot conclude that all of the sins of the whole Adamic race were laid on him, but only those for whom he stood as the divine Head and Representative. It appears to me that the division was made at the very time that he became our Surety, that being before man had an actual existence, or had ever committed any sins or blasphemies. It appears to me that the sins and blasphemies which have been committed by those whose sins he bore were against him as the Son of man, or as God manifest in the flesh, and he fully assures the disciples that all manner of sins and blasphemies against the Son of man shall be forgiven unto men. This "all manner" of sins and blasphemies include sins and blasphemies of every cast and character to which men are subject, but to be forgiven they must be against the Son of man and not against God as a Spirit, or the Holy Ghost. There is another class of men in the world whom we generally call the nonelect or those who are not in this covenant relation to Jesus Christ as the head and representative of the church. That class of men are sinners of the same race naturally as the elect or church of God, but they have no Daysman, no Mediator; therefore their sins are against God as a Spirit or against the Holy Ghost. We are taught that without the shedding of blood there is no remission. Our Lord Jesus spilled his blood, remitted the sins of his people, made an end of sin and brought in everlasting righteousness. Therefore when the holy eye of divine justice looks upon them, they are seen only in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and he says, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." Thus they are accepted in and through him and their iniquity does not appear. This brings in the truth of the blessed new covenant, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." To the other class the Lord says, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity;" I know you not. Thus their sins rise up and they are cast out and cast off far from God and from mercy. Why? Because of their works of iniquity. They have no Daysman to stand up for them and say, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me." Their sins are not remitted, for no Holy One has died for them, and their sins are against the holy God, the Holy Ghost. A spirit has no blood to spill, and therefore cannot make atonement nor remit the sins of those who have blasphemed against him, therefore they shall not be forgiven, neither in this world nor in the world to come. The Lord's little ones never commit this sin, for all their sins are against

Jesus, their divine head. Here is mercy known. Had not the Lord fully satisfied justice he could not have shown mercy. But since by him justice is fully satisfied he sees of the travail of his soul and he is satisfied. He could not be satisfied with divine justice frowning on his bride, therefore,

> "He paid whate'er his people owed,
> And canceled all their debt."

Now, therefore the church appears as a "wonder in heaven;" she is clothed in the perfect and bright shining of the Sun of righteousness, who has risen in her experience with healing in his wings, and on these she soars far above the law, and has the moon under her feet, and on her head is the blessed gospel of the apostles bringing forth the royal diadem, crowning Jesus Lord of all. Thus her poverty appears, for she has on not one thing of her own making, nor does she have so much as an inch of soil on which she may rest the sole of her foot; her Lord has provided for her, her garments, her crown and her Foundation. Contrast her with that other class: the apostle saw them as a woman sitting on a scarlet colored beast, clothed in purple, with a crown on her head and a name of her own written on her forehead, "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth." She declares, "I sit a queen, and am no widow." To-day the whole religious world is running after this great whore, and partaking of her fornications, showing that their names are not written in the book of life. Every work of theirs is a point-blank denial of the efficacy of the blood of Christ. They set up Sunday Schools as a means to put young souls in the way of life, and temperance organizations to save souls from going down into an everlasting hell. These are the two lamblike horns of the second beast which John saw coming up out of the earth. They plead for their mission system as a necessity to save many souls that would without this sink down into hell. This is the image that this second beast should make to the first beast, and all these uniting on the same ground: that God wants them to do these things to save men's souls. This proves that they know nothing of the precious blood of our dear Lord Jesus. He is not their Daysman; they have no atonement. Their sins and their blasphemies are against the Holy Ghost, and there is no forgiveness for them in this world nor the world to come. How timely the word of the Lord, "Come out of her, my people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Some of our people are there, as some Israelites were in Babylon. The church is the place that is filled with gospel promises, and therefore it is the Canaan that we love and where our Lord abides. The saints shall hear the cry, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen," but not until after the days of severe persecution which are just before us. Let us continue to fight the good fight of faith, even though it brings persecutions to this poor, mortal body, and makes us seal our faith with our blood, as our brethren have done who have gone before. The Lord strengthen us for his service.

Yours in a good hope,

L. H. HARDY.

KOMOKA, Ont., Sept. 7, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—It seems like imposing upon you for me to bother you with my poor letter, but I have had a desire to write to you for some time, and after reading your daughter's letters in the SIGNS I could not put it off longer. I was glad and thank-

ful as I read the letters which were the expressions and experience of a child of grace. May God bless and keep her. I received much encouragement from the letter written by sister Mary Amanda Haines, in the SIGNS of Sept. 1st; surely the Lord had put it into her heart to write as she did. I have been resting, trusting in the God of love, most of the time since you were in Canada. I hope I am thankful for such rich blessings. I am so undeserving of any kindness that I am made to wonder why I am given roses to pluck instead of thorns, I am so prone to evil. I must have been about to glory in my flesh, or in man, when I was made to cry, God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. I do not remember what I was doing, but I was filled with those words; they have continued with me for several weeks, and I trust it was a prayer actuated by the Holy Spirit. At another time I was desiring, if it be the will of God, that my walk and conduct in the church might be becoming, that the brethren might always think well of me. Then the thought was presented to my mind: Are you ready to become a fool in the sight of men, if it would redound to the honor and glory of God? I was brought low and said, I am ready to become a fool. You may think this strange, but I have only written as I have been led, and I hope it is my privilege to say, Thus far the Lord has led me. I have wanted to write you for some time, but hesitated. Does it not say somewhere in the Bible, I have chosen the foolish things and the weak things to confound the wise? I often think that the foolish and weak things, yes, and the base things, would apply to me.

Elder Lefferts preached in Lobo glad tidings of good things. It seems wonderful that one so young should be able to preach the gospel. I know there is nothing too hard for the Lord; out of the mouths of babes and sucklings is perfected praise.

I would rather you would not publish this, but it is yours to use if you wish. Pardon all I have written amiss, and may the God of all grace be with you and yours, to guide and keep you.

From the weakest of the flock, if one at all,

LOLLIE MAY CAMPBELL.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK—I send you the inclosed letter. It was misplaced for some time. Brother Money is a very dear young brother. I had hoped that you would get to our association.

Yours in Christ,

P. W. SAWIN.

"ASLEEP IN JESUS."

How sweet it is to think about being asleep in Jesus. There is something in this for us to think about before we get to that blessed state. I am sometimes afraid that I will never reach that final blessed abode. This I do greatly desire, but if I do not, the righteous law of God approves it well. That which brings about this blessed state is the work of God as believed by all Old School Baptists. It does seem to me that to believe as some do, that it is by our works, we could never find or attain to this rest. We sometimes labor until we are so wearied that we cannot sleep. Sleep must come to us, we cannot go to it. "He giveth his beloved sleep." Exercise is beneficial naturally, and yet we often fail to accomplish the end desired. So is it spiritually. It is good and right to work out that which God works in us, and

the Lord will accomplish all his purposes; there is no failure with him. There are things for us to do if we are the children of God, and the doing of them makes manifest that we are the children of God. I often come short. "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." But where little is given little is required.

The word "faith" is a wonderful one, if I know anything about its meaning. Faith is the gift of God. Faith in God is satisfying and restful. If we believe in the works of the creature there can be no resting in faith and hope. He that enters into rest ceases from his own works. I have fallen asleep at night, and have awakened the next morning and thought how sweet it would be to fall asleep in Jesus like a babe in its mother's arms. To sleep in Jesus is "far better." We believe in Jesus through faith, and that is the gift of God. Though young in years, I long to live and walk by faith, and not by sight. I desire to fill my place in the church, doing what the Lord commands, and when my race is ended I want to fall asleep in Jesus, and awake in the blessed resurrection, when mortality shall be swallowed up of life. In this I am hoping.

Yours, P. D. MONEY.

FINCHVILLE, Ky.

BALTIMORE, Md., Nov. 24, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—Through the goodness and mercy of our heavenly Father my unprofitable life is spared until the present time, for what purpose is only known to him who works all things after the counsel of his own will.

I will now send you money order for the SIGNS; I am sorry I could not send it when it was due, but sickness prevented me. I thank you very much for sending me the SIGNS regularly, for I love to read the good letters, they are a comfort to me in my lonely hours. I seldom get to meeting, on account of poor health. I much desire to meet with the Lord's people, yet I ought not to murmur or complain, for the Lord knows what is best for me. I often think I have no right among the dear ones, for I am so sinful that I think if they could see me as I see myself they would have no fellowship for me. O that I could see in myself what I so much admire in others, then I would not feel as I do. I feel that there is no one on earth like me, filled with doubts and fears.

I was taken sick the 24th day of last December, and was confined to my bed three months, and under the doctor's care six months, and I suffered much in body. Dear brother, I felt it was all right that I was afflicted, but my constant grief was that I could not cease from sin; my sins seemed to rise up before me like mountains, and I felt all those long months that I must sink in despair. I once thought I had a little hope, but that seemed to be gone, and if I were to die what would become of me? I felt that I would be forever banished from His peaceful presence. O the wearisome days and nights that were appointed unto me; words fail to tell you my feelings; I was in deep waters where there was no standing, and I had no power to bring myself out of this sad state; surely Satan desired to have me to sift me as wheat. Our dear Savior prayed for Peter that his faith fail not, but would he pray for such a sinner as I feel myself to be? Peter's experience was good, but I had sinned against him a thousand times more, and was there any mercy for me? None but those who have traveled this

road can understand what I have passed through. Do you not think that mine is an outside case? If I could believe that I was in the "refining pot," and that the dross was being consumed, then I would be satisfied. Now, dear brother, you who have a good hope through grace and have the true marks of a child of God, will you tell me what you think of my case? Have I any right to think I am one of His little ones? There is one thing I am sure of: if I am saved it is by the grace of God, and not by anything that I have done.

I would be pleased to have a letter from you, but I feel it is asking too much, as I know your time is very much taken up with other things; I do not feel to be worthy of your notice. I felt like writing, I do not know whether I have done wrong or not. I hope you will excuse this poor letter, and if you have a word of comfort for one that is weary and heavy laden it will be gladly received. May the Lord bless you in your labors of love to his people, and may you enjoy much of his presence. When it is well with you remember me.

With love, I am your unworthy sister,
(MRS.) LEE GRAFTON.

FRANK, W. Va., Nov. 9, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find ten dollars to pay for the subscriptions I sent you a few days ago; I hope to be able to send more before long. I think every true Baptist should try to increase the circulation of the SIGNS, as it is a sound and safe paper, and the best of its kind published in the United States. I think brethren should be careful not to encourage the reading or assist in the circulation of an unsound paper. Some claiming to be Old School Baptist papers are very unsound, and are filled with that man-made doctrine: conditional time salvation. True brethren should use their influence against such papers.

I have the pastoral care of one church, and of the membership there are only four who do not read the SIGNS, therefore it is not necessary to say that this church is established in the doctrine of God our Savior.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
G. B. BIRD.

SHELBYVILLE, Ind.

DEAR EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I want to thank you for printing my request for persons of Baptist faith to write to my aged, blind and bedridden mother. She received letters from the north, south, east and west, and is never so happy as when some one is reading them to her. I would ask through your paper that they who have written, and as many more, write to her at her new address: Julia A. Trees, 48 Van Ave., Shelbyville, Ind. I have moved her home with me.

Wishing you all well, I am yours,
(MRS.) W. L. McCARTY.

MADISON, Ga., Nov. 18, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find post-office money order to pay for the SIGNS for the year 1908. I am now in my eighty-fifth year, and have been a reader of the SIGNS from youth to the present time. It still contends for the truth as taught in the Bible, and I do enjoy reading the many good letters from the dear brethren and sisters, as well as the editorials. Although a stranger in the flesh to nearly all, I must say that I cannot help loving them; they certainly feel near and dear to me, and I hope to be able to read the dear old SIGNS as long as I live in this world of sin

and sorrow, and I desire the prayers of all God's children that we may meet in that blessed world where sickness, sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more. I have been confined to my house for several years, and feel that my time is short. As this may be my last I will say, Farewell. I had the pleasure of a visit from Elder Babcock, brother James Adams and others, as they returned from the Ocmulgee Association. They both preached for us, and I certainly enjoyed it very much. I would be glad to meet Elder Eubanks while visiting his old churches in the south.

Excuse writing and all mistakes, as I had my right hand badly mashed by dropping a heavy window on it.

Your unworthy sister,

LUCY LAURA PERRY.

CHURCH NOTICES.

LAMAR, Colorado.

TO THE CHURCH CALLED BETHEL, IN PROWERS COUNTY, COLORADO:—During the month of August, 1907, the brethren whose names appear below met at the home of brother and sister J. B. Dawson, near Hayden, Routt Co., Colo, and also at a nearby public schoolhouse, and held a number of meetings conducted by Elder D. B. Nowels. At the close of one of the meetings brother John B. Dawson came forward and requested baptism at the hands of Elder Nowels, if the brethren present were satisfied. After relating some of the Lord's dealings with him for a period of more than forty years, and giving a reason for his hope in Christ, brother Nowels asked for an expression from the brethren as to the fitness of brother Dawson as a candidate for baptism, which was gladly assented to by all present: Elder D. B. Nowels, sister Ellen Nowels and brother L. E. Thompson, all of Bethel Church, and sister Lavinia Dawson and brother A. G. Dawson, both of Shiloh Church, which was organized about fifteen years ago at the former home of brother and sister Dawson, on the Vermajio, in Colfax Co., N. M. According to arrangement the ordinance of baptism was administered by Elder D. B. Nowels, Sunday, August 18th, in the beautiful clear water of Bear River, which runs by the brother's home. This dear old father in Israel would certainly be a precious gift to any church organization; to know him is to love him; he has no confidence in the flesh, and no praise for it, and has no compromise to make with wrong doing, especially hypocrisy and Arminianism or any other ism; his whole trust is in the strong arm of the almighty God. As this dear brother is very aged, and lives a long distance from any church of our faith, it is deemed proper to ask this church which holds Elder Nowels' membership to consider making some permanent record of this baptism.

In much weakness this report is submitted by your unworthy brother,

L. E. THOMPSON,
Moderator of Bethel Church.

The above report was read to the church at her regular meeting in September, and was unanimously adopted, and the clerk requested to send a copy to brother Dawson, also that a copy be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication, also that the same be spread upon the records of Bethel Church.

JOHN H. HARDY,
Clerk of Bethel Church.

INFORMATION WANTED.

IF there is an Old School Baptist Church in or near St. Louis, Mo., will any brother or sister knowing of such please communicate with Mrs. M. H. Chancellor, 6335 Spencer Place, St. Louis, Missouri?

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1907.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR SIR:—While not a stranger in the flesh to you, I feel that I am a stranger to you after all, owing to our different positions in life. However I am going to ask a favor of you. At your earliest convenience you can reply through the SIGNS or by personal letter. What I want you to reply to is the portion of Scripture recorded in Col. i. 23, 24. In these two passages it seems that the apostle Paul fulfilled what our modern churches of to-day claim they are now fulfilling, by preaching the gospel to all nations, as commanded, or charge given to the disciples after the crucifixion of our Savior at Jerusalem, when he commanded all his disciples, as I understand, to go into the world and preach his gospel to all nations. In Matthew xxiv. 14, it says: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come." My impression is that each of these Scriptures has a bearing upon the other; at any rate, it seems that our modern churches are claiming to fulfill this clause. I would like you to give your views upon both portions of the word which I refer to, and state whether such applies to the present time, or has it been already fulfilled? These things have been upon my mind for some time past, and I have not had a clear understanding of them. In replying to this you can keep my name secret and use the word "subscriber," as I take the SIGNS regularly.

Yours truly, SUBSCRIBER.

BALTIMORE, Md., Nov. 13, 1907.

In reply to "Subscriber" we will say that there is no doubt in our mind that the Scriptures to which he has referred, and also that recorded in Romans x. 18, which is quoted from Psalms xix. 4, simply declare that the gospel, instead of being sent to the Jews alone, goes out to the Gentile nations as well. In harmony with the language recorded in this Psalm it is declared all through the Scriptures of the Old Testament that the Sun of righteousness shall arise, not only upon God's elect people among the Jews, but also upon his elect among all those who are called Gentiles. Did we not remember the darkness of the natural mind, even in reading the letter of the Scriptures, it would seem incredible that those to whom were committed under the old covenant the oracles of God, should not have understood that when the Messiah came he should be the Savior of Gentile as well as Jew. Again and again was this set forth in their own Scriptures, yet we know that they did not understand. Jesus, by many clear statements in the days of his flesh, set forth the same truth. Twice he answered the cry of Gentiles who came to him in trouble; these were the Roman centurian and the Syrophenician woman, and in the text referred to by "Subscriber" (Matthew xxiv. 14,) the blessed Master expressly declared that the good news of the kingdom of our Lord should be preached in all the world for a witness. Still the carnal Jews did not believe, and even the disciples themselves were in darkness, very greatly at least, until the day of Pentecost came; and we find that Peter, even afterwards, needed a special vision to prepare him to go and preach to a Gentile congregation and administer the ordinance of baptism to them. Paul in Colossians and in Romans, as referred to above, simply states that the Savior's words had been fulfilled, even in that day; the gospel had already been preached among the Gentile nations, and very widely at that. It seems plain to our mind that by this he did not

mean that every individual of all the race of Adam had heard the preaching of the gospel; in point of fact, that has never been the case in any age of the world's history. To-day far more than half of mankind have never seen a Bible, or heard the glad news of the gospel. In Paul's own day very many Jews had never seen Christ while he was in the flesh, nor heard the word of preaching. This has always been true, in large measure, of both Jew and Gentile. These Scriptures cannot mean anything contrary to these facts; but they do mean that while the oracles of the old covenant were limited to literal Israel, the oracles of the new covenant belong to all the spiritual Israel, both among those who are Jews literally and those who are Gentiles literally. In all this there is not one word in support of modern Missionism. We recall that it was a word often in the mouth of the late Elder William Quint, for forty years pastor of the church at North Berwick, Maine, that the only society organized by our Lord was the church of God, and that all other organizations were man-made. This is true. Our blessed Lord saw no need for Missionary Societies, Theological Schools and Sunday Schools, and therefore he gave no command for them, and enunciated no rules by which they were to be governed. Jesus called and sent his disciples out to preach the gospel, bidding them go in full trust in God to sustain them. In the early ages of the history of the church we shall look in vain to find any society pledged to sustain and support temporally the servants of God who went forth upon this mission, yet they were supported. Once when they had returned to the Savior and he asked them, "Lacked ye anything?" they said, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." The Lord had wrought this great work through them, and so also he had supplied them in all things else. They went forth in simple confidence in God; let the Lord's called servants go now in the same way and the blessed Lord will not fail them. Who hath required modern Missionary work of any one?

It is the place of all who are called of God to watch the hand of God, both in their own inward leadings of mind, and in his providence. The blessed Lord will lead his servants in the right way, that way which shall glorify himself and result in good to all his people. He will open before them individually the door into which he designs that they shall enter, and will provide for them when they have entered. There will be in the soul of his servants a Macedonian cry, Come over and help us; and when this cry is felt in the soul dark ways shall be made light before them, and all the servants of God will find that their Lord, and not any of their fellow-servants, is their Master. The Lord and not their fellow-servants must bid them go, and go about his work, and they will feel that they must be about their Master's business. Missionary Societies turn all this work and way of God upside down. The Lord has not required any such thing at their hands. Every true servant of God, when led by the Spirit, will feel to hold himself in readiness, with his loins girt about and his lights burning, to go where and to do what his Master shall bid him do. He will be found listening for the voice of his Master alone; he will be found watching for the coming of his Lord, and he will be anxious to wait for the Lord and to run only when the message is given him and he is sent of God. Still further, he will come to know that his ministry is not to save men from eternal death, nor to

convert men in the sense of giving them a saving and an experimental knowledge of the truth, but that it is for a witness to the work of God in salvation, and a witness to those in whom that work has been wrought, whereby they may understand the work that has been wrought in their souls, that it is of God. Thus the high priest Eli was a witness to the child Samuel, testifying to the meaning of the call of God to him as he lay in the temple. Samuel did not know that the voice was the voice of God until Eli had told him to say, Here am I, Lord. How many do not know the meaning of their own travel until the servant of God declares to them what these experiences mean; and so wherever the gospel shall be preached it is a witness; a witness to men of the things of God and of his finished work in salvation. Again we say that in all this there is not the shadow of support given to modern Missionism.

We trust that what we have here said may be of satisfaction to our friend, who desires to be known as "Subscriber."

ONE whom, by the handwriting, we suppose to be a brother, and whose name is signed "Reader," has proposed some questions regarding the order of the church, and asks a reply through the SIGNS. There are times when we hesitate about replying to such requests, because at best our understanding is but weak, and we fear to darken counsel with words without knowledge. Another reason is, that many times we have cause to believe that such requests are intended to apply to circumstances in the vicinity of the writer, and anything we might say would seem to be an attempt to judge and decide between two parties who were in controversy. This it is not our province to do; no one at a distance is qualified to be a judge in any dispute or trouble that may arise, as there might be a thousand circumstances bearing upon the difficulty, of which any one at a distance must be ignorant. We therefore desire to always be understood as attempting to reply to such requests as they read upon the face of them, and without knowledge of any trouble that may exist in the section from which the request may come. Of one thing we are sure, viz., that without the spirit of love and peace no trouble will ever be healed to the glory of God. It is far better to bear a grievous personal wrong silently than to involve a whole church in it, to their sorrow and hurt. In any event, if our one object be not to heal the brother who has erred our course cannot command the blessing of God, and we are transgressors as well as he. By his wrong he is not hurting us half so much as he is hurting himself. As we do not want our brother to be burned we shall strive to pull him out of the fire. We shall not say, He is wrong, let him suffer the consequences of his wrong.

"Reader" asks first, Can any church hold as their pastor a minister who has been excluded from the church in which he had his membership? It does not seem to us that this question needs a reply if looked upon just as stated by "Reader," still there are many things which might influence the judgment of brethren in such a matter. The church might have themselves departed, as many years ago the New School Baptists did, and their pastor might have been excluded from them because he persisted in protesting against their departure. The church may have done wrong in some other way also, and this would have to be considered by any other church if called upon to decide with regard to this minister becoming their pastor; but if the church

is abiding in the faith and maintaining the order of the house of God, her acts of discipline must be regarded as done according to the gospel. A church of Christ may err, we know, as individual members may err, but this does not unchurch them so long as they hold the faith, and walk looking to the Lord and his word for guidance. If a minister has been unjustly excluded from the church, let him wait upon the Lord; the Lord will bring all things to light, and if the church has done wrong, it will appear sooner or later to all who love God. If the church be herself waiting upon the Lord, she will in time come to see her wrong and confess it and turn from it. A second evil will not heal the first evil. We have always believed that if one is excluded from a church of Christ, even though it be unjustly, he must bear his burden, with more pity for the church than for himself, and the Lord will bring his righteousness to light in his own time.

Second, "Reader" asks, Has any member of another church, or any other church, or any association, a right to interfere with the proceedings of a church? To this we should unhesitatingly answer, No. But it is not interference if a brother thinks a church has done wrong, or is about to do wrong, and believing this, he seeks to show that wrong to the church; when he has done this he has done his duty, and may now leave the matter between that church and their God. This would not be interfering with the church, and the church, if she be in the right spirit, will welcome the counsel of any faithful brother and respect and love him for it, even though she may at the end decide that her course is right. Surely we do not need to say anything about the unwisdom of associations undertaking to control the travel and discipline of any church. This is not the province of associations, and they put themselves in great danger when they undertake to do so.

"Reader" asks, in the third place, if any member, or church, or association, would not be out of order who should hold such excluded minister in their fellowship? We do not know that we can say more in answer to this than we have said in our reply to the first question. The third question seems to us to be covered in our reply to the first.

Again "Reader" asks, Is it orderly or right for a minister from one association to go into another association and denounce the proceedings of its churches and hold in his fellowship members who have been excluded from such churches? and if not right, how should such an association treat such a minister? We should think it very unwise for any one, be he minister or member, to pursue such a course in any case. As to the treatment which should be accorded such a minister, it seems to us that the New Testament is clear. Not the association, but the brethren of his church, should labor with him in love to show him the error of his course. If he has shown an unlovely spirit, this would not justify the brethren of his home church in manifesting a similar spirit toward him. It is easy to do wrong when we think that we are doing right, and it is easy to attribute a bad spirit to another when he does what we do not approve. In most of the troubles to which our attention has been called we have found an equally earnest desire to do right on both sides, but the trouble seemed to be that neither one could think that the other side was as anxious to do what is pleasing to God as they were themselves. If one is a child of God at all, that one will desire to

know and do the will of God, but yet he may mistake the right way; therefore it is said, "If any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." Again, "If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." Beside, this minister may not have said or done the thing with which he is charged; or if he has said some things, he may not have intended them as they appeared to others. He may have said the churches in his mind had done wrong, without meaning to rail upon them. All these things, and perhaps a thousand others, must be considered in all such cases; above all, it ought to be the mind of all concerned in any such trouble to look to the Lord with humble confession before him, each one of his own transgressions of word and deed, and, most of all, his transgressions of spirit before God. In most cases, by the time we have made our own confession we shall have little time to devote to confessing others' offenses; and it is a sorrowful thing when we mistake our own wounded pride for sorrow before the Lord. O that the Holy Spirit might search us, and know us, and see if there be any wicked way in us, and lead us in the way everlasting.

We feel persuaded that all our brethren will feel to assent to what we have here feebly said, as being according to the word and truth of God. We trust that our desire is to simply present that which is in harmony with that word.

C.

CLOSE OF VOLUME SEVENTY-FIVE.

WITH this number of the SIGNS the seventy-fifth volume closes. This seems a remarkable record for a religious paper, and especially so when the opposition and persecution the SIGNS has endured are taken into consideration. We are encouraged to believe that the Lord began the work and has therefore sustained it to the present time, and that he will continue to preserve it to his glory and to the comfort of his poor and tried children.

The present year has been one (of the many) of anxiety and perplexity, as well as arduous labor. None but those personally associated with the publication of such a paper as the SIGNS can fully appreciate the position of those who are and who desire to do their duty in every sense of the word before God; to avoid giving offence to the household of faith and do all things for the lifting of Jesus on high. We trust that we are all willing to thus serve, realizing that many of the flock who have not the privilege of meeting in the sanctuary of God, to worship him there and hear the proclamation of the gospel of peace, are helped through the SIGNS. If this were not the case we feel that it is a "good work," and affords comfort and encouragement to many as a medium of correspondence. Often some tempest-tossed one is more comforted and encouraged by the relation of an experience than through the exposition of some Scripture. It is not only a "good work" in that it reaches the homes and hearts of our readers, but it is good also for its editors and publishers, as our minds are often diverted through our work from many other channels which do not glorify God nor benefit man. Surely our minds are carnal too often, notwithstanding our constant labor in

these better things, and well do we know it means "death;" but often have our minds been stirred up by reading and preparing the matter for the SIGNS, to dwell upon those things which are worth more than mountains of gold or rivers of silver; many times also has instruction been sealed to us in this way.

Our brethren and friends have been kind and forbearing during the present year, as well as in former years. We thank you all most sincerely for your support in every way, and hope the Lord may continue to put it into your hearts to write for the SIGNS and also to aid in its circulation.

Brother Chick and ourself have done our best to keep the paper free from controversy and error; we have given cheerfully such views as we have on Scriptures and subjects when requested or otherwise, and are glad to say we have received much encouragement from our brethren and friends, for which we feel grateful. The managers and publishers have done everything in their power to keep within bounds financially, and to keep every account in perfect order, and to have the paper go out on time. The compositors have been faithful and careful in their work, and have often been commended for their correctness.

We are glad to state that the financial condition of the SIGNS is encouraging; all obligations have been met; the circulation has slightly increased during the year, and with the help of the Lord we shall all hope to begin the new year with renewed courage. K.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

"Cash," Pa., $2.00; John T. Walker, D. C., $4.00; Edwin Newton, Ohio, $1.00.—Total, $7.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Howard E. Hogeland, son of Elias and Elizabeth Hogeland and grandson of Deacon Edmund Vanartsdalen, was born Jan. 13th, 1853, and departed this life Jan. 4th, 1907. He was married to Rachel Woodington in 1874; to them were born one son and four daughters. The widow and four daughters survive him, the son, Elias, having died in the west in July, 1899. Howard was a plain, quiet man, and held the respect of all who knew him. His parents were both members of the Old School Baptist Church. His wife for a time was a member with the New School Baptists, but when the Lord revealed to her that salvation is by grace she made mention of uniting with the Old School. He told her that she must not feel to unite with them because they were his people. I had fellowship for Howard; at the time of my being received as a candidate for baptism he went personally to see that the water was sufficient, and he got down into the water and made the place secure. This may seem a small matter, but after his funeral I was told of this, and I felt his faith in the ordinance was the same faith I had been given of the Lord, and I felt the fellowship for him that is alone from God. While not a visible member, I feel that he had the love of God in his heart. His home ever was and is a place for Old Baptists to be provided for and entertained. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."

Sister Hogeland writes the following as to how her mind was led and comforted in her trial:

"While sitting by my husband's death-bed the vision of the sheet let down from heaven came to me very plainly, and the words, 'What God hath cleansed, that call thou not common.' Some time before, this same vision made the resurrection plain: All in Him before the foundation of the world. While sitting there both came to me, and I felt that he was one for whom Christ died. The last day he lived it almost seemed he spoke to me, Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves. Even in my great sorrow I could not help but rejoice. At the last, when my strength seemed to fail, the words, We are kept by the power of His love, gave me strength to pass through the last sad rite. I still feel the everlasting arms are underneath me, bearing me up."

Elder Durand preached the funeral sermon to a large assembly of friends and relatives—words to comfort the living. J. M. FENTON.

Ada White Long departed this life March 27th, 1907, was born June 30th, 1871. She was the youngest daughter of Elder E. V. White, of Leesburg, Va., and lived near there until she was married, Dec. 15th, 1892, and since that time lived one mile from Frying Pan Church, in Fairfax County, Va. In June, 1895, she was baptized by her father, and from that time

until her death was a true, loving and devoted christian. Her death was from the effects of nervous prostration, after having been sick for several weeks. She left me with five sweet, affectionate children, three boys and two girls, ranging from thirteen and a half to three and a half years of age. I have realized in its fullest sense what home is without a mother and a true, loving and devoted wife. God has seen fit to take her to himself, to be forever blessed and freed from all the cares, troubles and sorrows of this life. How much I miss her God only knows, and I pray her kind and loving words to me may abide with me forever. Even though it is possible for a mother to forget her child, I am sure she never forgot one of hers, but loved them beyond measure, and made every sacrifice possible for their pleasure and welfare. O, she was so near to me, and was one of the wives who in the strictest sense lived up to the solemn vows of matrimony, forsaking all for her husband. While I have lost the dearest and noblest friend to me on earth, and my bosom companion, she was one with me in the Lord, faith and baptism. None knew her but to love her. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Hers were meekness, love, kindness, charity and forgiveness, even as Christ forgave. In all her duties and cares of life she was faithful, and when her breath failed her to give utterance to words she sang with her expiring breath, "Jesus, lover of my soul," "Nearer, my God, to thee," "Show pity, Lord," and "Home, sweet home." I feel that in spirit she was caught up, as it were, being supremely happy in the thought of resting with Jesus. She is gone, but not forgotten. Now I have my five children to care for, and I pray the Lord they may grow up as she would have had them grow, and that I may present my body a living sacrifice to God hereafter, which is my reasonable service.

Her loving and sorrowing husband,

J. T. LONG.

Ezra Guernsey died at East Cobbleskill, N. Y., Nov. 7th, 1907, aged 74 years, 2 months and 4 days. His whole life was spent in the neighborhood where he died. His occupation was farming. A visit at his late home, where his only living son now resides, gave evidence of success. He was the father of three sons and one daughter, wife of Spencer Nethaway, living at East Cobbleskill, N. Y. His wife died four years ago last August. He and his wife were received by and united with the Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie about forty years ago, and remained steadfast in the doctrine of grace to the end. Truly a substantial citizen, a good neighbor and a loving father is released from the cares and conflicts of this life, and is at rest.

His remains were buried in the family cemetery at the homestead. The writer tried to speak comfortingly to the sorrowing family from the words, "It is I; be not afraid." May God give the son and daughter the spirit of reconciliation to his wise and holy will.

R. W. SANFORD.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE following appointments were made by Elder H. H. Lefferts at the solicitation of the brethren of the different churches. He will fill them according to dates, if the Lord will:

Wilmington, Del., Dec. 26th, evening; Leesburg, Va., Dec. 27th, evening; Hughesville, Va., Dec. 28th, afternoon, and morning of 29th; Frying Pan, Va., Dec. 30th, morning; Broad Run, Md., Dec. 31st, afternoon; Kearneysville, W. Va., Jan. 1st, afternoon; Southampton, Pa., Jan. 2nd, evening.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

HOSEA II. 14, 15.

"THEREFORE, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope; and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt."

God never forgets his people, but it cannot be said that they never forget him. They are full of waywardness and rebellion, which call forth his fatherly chastisements to reprove and correct them. It seems incredible that the people especially blessed with the presence of the Lord, and who had witnessed again and again his omnipotent power and omniscient oversight working in their behalf, could ever forget him or grow cold and indifferent toward him; not only so, but that they should give themselves over repeatedly to the foolish vanities and idolatries which they had before learned could bring them naught but shame and sorrow, seems far more incredible; but of all this was national Israel guilty at the time of the prophecy quoted above. This nation so singularly chosen of God from among all nations of the earth, whereby it pleased him to show forth his honor and glory, was seen lusting after heathenish idols, forsaking the law of her Maker and all his holy ordinances as prescribed by Moses, to seek the satisfaction of her natural inclinations in bowing the knee unto the gods of the Gentile nations about her. She had forgotten God's wonderful deliverance of her from Egyptian darkness and bondage, of his parting the Red Sea waters that she should pass through dry-shod, and had entirely lost sight of his guidance of her through the forty-year wilderness journey in the cloud by day and fire by night. In the time of great thirst he caused the rock to be smitten, that it should pour forth a stream for her sake; but it was forgotten, together with that time of great hunger when he sent manna from heaven for food. The service of the holy temple, the intercession of the high priest and the offering for sin were all forgotten. God brought her safely through Jordan's swelling flood into the promised land (Canaan) flowing with milk and honey, gave her the victory over her enemies and established her in that country which he gave her for her own. What more evidences could she require of his faithfulness? And

how did she requite Him? Her answers were rebellion, pride, depravity and idolatry. At the time of the prophet Hosea, Israel was steeped in national corruption and was standing on the verge of the Babylonian captivity, and in all this was an ensample unto the Israel of the gospel age, not very far distant. These events of national Jewish history typify spiritual truths imparted unto the gospel church at the present time. There is a proneness to wander felt by the child of God that often gives him great concern, and this very concern, so long as it is present, is in itself a safeguard against yielding to temptation, but when one comes to that state wherein his wanderings do not cause anxiety, he is treading very near Babylon's captivating lure. When in the christian experience one passes from law to gospel, nature to grace, first realizes a hope in the virtues of Jesus' blood and sings for the first time the new song of praise unto God, then in the ardor of his first love is lost entirely to view the weakness of the flesh which will later endeavor to ensnare him into yielding to its temptations. Were the new birth a change wrought in the old man of our Adamic nature, no such danger could exist, nor would one ever wander after the false gods of the flesh. The new birth is the coming into manifestation of a new creature, created in righteousness and true holiness, but it is not a renovation of the old creature of sin and depravity. This makes the subject of grace a dual being experiencing the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit. There are times in the experience of gospel churches, and of individuals, when there seems to be little or no response to spiritual things, and a coldness as of frost seems to nip in the bud every good and beautiful tendency to higher and better things; accompanying this condition there is also no manifestation of anxiety or grief concerning the matter, but instead an inclination to worldliness is manifested in a careless walk or conversation unbecoming the profession of a disciple of Christ, and a disposition to use the principles of Bible doctrine as a cloak to cover one's actions or utterances. This condition of a church or an individual answers to the condition of national Israel in the type at the time of Hosea's prophecy. The remedy for this condition is not in our hands, but in God's hand, and he will distribute to us of reproof and correction that we shall be ashamed before him for all our ways, and confessing our sins, be brought unto repentance and forgiveness. The child of God that hugs some fleshly idol to his heart is sowing to the flesh, and will of the flesh reap corruption. Do any of us ever strive to lay up for ourselves treasures on the earth? Scarcely any are guiltless on this score, but labor and sorrow are all we get for our pains. This state of affairs cannot long exist with the Lord's people, for he is a jealous God and will not give his glory to another, nor his praise to graven images. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," is a command that must be fulfilled, and as surely as God has determined it, so shall they most certainly be brought to serve him to the exclusion of all things else.

"I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness." To allure is to attract and entice. In being thus drawn into a snare one is not conscious of his danger, nor that he is being tempted. Our slight indulgences of fleshly impulses unconsciously lead to more and more ungodliness, until we are enmeshed in a web from which we are unable to extri-

cate ourselves. The wilderness referred to in the text is the utter worldliness of Babylon, and represents the wilderness of total depravity. It is waste howling. "Waste" because it is entirely destitute of any spiritual qualities wherewith to satisfy the desires of the new creature, and "howling" because it is full of the wild beasts of our nature, prowling around seeking what they may devour. When dominated by the flesh a child of God is drawn away by the lusts thereof and enticed. He is led into the wilderness, but when, within him, the motions of eternal life manifest themselves, total depravity becomes a mightily oppressive burden; then one knows the panting of the soul after God and what it is to be as a pelican in the wilderness, or as a sparrow alone upon the housetop; this is the depth of woe and the pit of miry clay. One deeply questions whether the Lord has forgotten to be gracious, and if his mercy is clean gone forever. I trust I do no violence to the text when I say that our fleshly lusts are those principles which allure us toward Babylon, although the pronoun "I" in the text refers to God. Our heavenly Father not only takes cognizance of our fleshly wanderings, but ordains them, not as an end in themselves, but as evil out of which good shall come. We, his people, are not at liberty to do evil that good may come, but God has a perfect right to appoint such a path for us if he so chooses, and that without in the least impeaching any of his divine attributes. Whatsoever he does is right, because he does it. By causing his wayward children to realize the bitterness of the fruits of their idolatries, they are brought into that attitude of soul towards him of which he says: I "will speak comfortably unto her." Words able to comfort must be spoken by one fully acquainted with the needs of the case. Herein does the repentant child touch the Daysman, the Mediator, Christ Jesus, who was tempted in all points like as his people are, yet without sin, and is able to succor them when tempted, for he is touched with the feeling of their infirmities. He is the speaker of the comfortable words. Thus amidst the shattering of one's idolatries there arises a blessed communion with Christ as he comes near to comfort her who had wandered from her true Husband after false lovers.

"I will give her her vineyards from thence." The fruitfulness of the church arises from her realization of the vanities of the flesh and of the value of Christ to her. When mindful of her inherent weakness and infirmity, and aware that without him she can do nothing, she is not in danger of being taken captive by unbelief, but treads softly and humbly, leaning upon the staff of his precious promises. It is in her high-mindedness and self-confidence that temptation lurks, and until the Husbandman prunes these dead twigs the fruit of the vine will not come to perfection. It is in being made to realize the utter spiritual destitution of the wilderness of the carnal mind and heart that the soul is prepared for the growth of those vineyards whose grapes are the fruits of the Spirit enumerated by the apostle Paul in his letter to the Galatian Church. (Gal. v. 22, 23.)

"And the valley of Achor for a door of hope." This is the valley wherein Achan, he that troubled the peace of Israel with his relics of Jericho's corruption, was stoned to death with all his house. It is the valley of purging or of purification, and is the place wherein we are made to fellowship the sufferings of Jesus, who purged away all our dross and tin and

purified us of unrighteousness. The golden wedge of self-confidence is often buried in our tents, but when the light of Jesus' truth discovers its hiding-place, a sense of guilt fills us with anguish, and we are found crying, "Lord, save us: we perish." This is the fiery trial wherein is wrought the refinement of faith's gold and the destruction of unbelief's wood and stubble. This deep distress which serves to tear our idols from us and turns our faces toward the temple again, is the door of hope, or that by which hope enters anew and afresh into our souls. When we were drifting idly and calmly upon the smooth surface of fleshly security, we lost sight of our hope or any necessity for such an anchor. But in the midst of the storm its "anchor pull" is felt, for the severity of the tempest tests its security. If our hope were centered in some earthly thing, it could not endure the tempest's rage, but the christian's hope, though lost sight of in times of fleshly ease, is anchored in heaven above, in God's love and power and infinite mercy. The higher we are tossed on the billows of trouble, the nearer we approach unto our anchor (hope), which is never so precious as when earth and its idols perish.

"And she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt." She shall sing "there;" in that very place where has been witnessed her humiliation and distress she is made to sing; not in some other place, but there, where she has experienced so much hunger and thirst of spirit, shall she rejoice unspeakably. The very wilderness wherein her entanglement caused shame and sorrow shall be glad for her with the rising of the Sun of righteousness. The desert wherein her strength utterly failed shall blossom as the rose with the presence of Him, the Bridegroom of her soul. God does not need to remove us from amid desolate conditions in order to make us happy in him. A prison is just as good to dwell in as a palace if Jesus dwells with us there. God does not wait until our bodies die to impart unto us the doctrine of the resurrection and its experimental comforts and benefits, but while yet in this time state we come forth from death in Adam unto life in Christ, and, like Paul, die daily, but nevertheless live by the life of Christ, which dwells in us. Though the experience of the wilderness causes repentance in sackcloth and ashes, yet it is where Jesus speaks comfortable words to his tried ones, and when he has revived their hope from the valley of trouble they find again that song in their heart which was theirs in the days of their spiritual youth, when in their first love and first enjoyment of a hope in the virtues of Jesus' blood. This song of praise, yea, even God's praise, testifies to the victory which God through Christ has given the church over all enemies of righteousness.

Unto all those that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, I affectionately tender the above message, I trust, in the fear of God.

Yours in gospel bonds,

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

WARWICK, N. Y., Dec. 11, 1907.

NORTH JAY, Maine, Oct. 27, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—For several weeks I have desired to write to you and express my feelings of both joy and sorrow, and now in the midst of talking all around me, I will pen you a few thoughts as they come in my mind.

Although more than a year has passed

since the loss of my home, my temporal abiding-place, yet now I miss my quiet home as much as one year ago. I felt at first that the loss of it was for some wise purpose.

Last April it was my rich privilege to attend the two days meeting in Woburn, Mass., where I heard the first gospel sermon with the hearing ear, and in that church-book has my unprofitable name been recorded for fifty-four years. I was again permitted to listen, as I trust, with the hearing ear and the understanding heart to the same precious gospel preached by Elder Ker. It appeared to me as Elder Ker was talking about those sacred truths that he was carried above the things of time, that he was for a time out of the body and carried down deep into the depths of the gospel of Christ our Savior. How wonderful it seemed that a vile sinner like me should be comforted and fed with such heavenly food.

After the two days meeting in Woburn, as you know, in company with Elder Ker I went to New York, and then took the train to Hopewell and was soon at your home, where I was met by you all with the most cordial welcome. The meetings in Hopewell were continual feasts, both before and during the Delaware River Association. It seems to me that I never can forget the last night I stayed at your home, when the house was nearly filled with company and I slept in the upper hall. A portion of Scripture came to my mind and was opened up clearly and beautifully to my understanding, with sweet meditations that were so precious that I thought when morning came I would have much to tell you; but instead, I could only remember the joy and comfort, while the Scripture was all gone from me, and I have never since been able to recall the words. The same night-feast also occurred while I was at brother Lefferts', in Warwick, N. Y.

The Warwick Association, in New York, was also another precious season. At its close, through the kind invitation of Elder Lefferts and family, I went to his home in Warwick, where I was again received with the same cordial welcome. While there several social meetings were appointed, as well as that on Sunday, beside other meetings which were pleasant and which it was my privilege to attend. It was also my privilege to visit at several homes of the brethren, at which places the time was mostly spent in talking of the precious things of the Master's kingdom. Then I went to the home of Elder Ker, in Middletown, where the same warm greeting and cordial welcome was given me. He and his wife took me over the beautiful city of Middletown, and also to call and see several who were strangers in the flesh, but in conversation I soon found they were of that family who worship the true and living God, and whose God is the Lord, of which body Christ is the head. I was made to feel what a depth there is in these sweet truths. I was more than pleased to meet with all who are concerned in conducting the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Perhaps I do not appreciate the reading of it more than before, through having seen those with whom I had never met, but I have learned that there is more labor and care in preparing each number for publication than I had before realized. After staying three days in Middletown, in company with Elder Ker I left for Boston, and arrived at brother L. B. Ford's the evening before the meeting in Woburn, the fourth Sunday in June. I felt that my feast must now be over, but to my happy surprise I was again granted crumbs of rich food from the Master's

table. Then came a change as I left those with whom I had felt such sweet communion and fellowship to again associate with those interested only in the things of this world.

Nov. 6th.—Many dark clouds have hovered over my pathway since I saw you. Why are all these dark ways in providence? We do not know; and sometimes I feel the word: "Be still, and know that I am God." Last evening I came to Mrs. Wheelwright's and passed the night, and we had pleasant, and, I trust, profitable conversation together. I can see in her a steady growth in grace since the loss of my home, before which I often saw her. I would like to write you many things of her, but there is so much for me to write, and I want to talk with her more. I told her you would be more than glad of a long letter from her, and that when you had opportunity you would gladly reply. She seems to greatly feel her unworthiness.

You will see in what I have sent you, where my thoughts have been, and since last Sunday, when I penciled them, I have not had opportunity to finish what was in my mind. It seems that I have not been forgotten by you, as a good letter has come to me from you.

Nov. 17th.—In my recent letter to you I said that I would try later to go on, but have forgotten just where I left off writing. Though I mingled with relatives who were all kind and who gave me a warm and cordial welcome, yet I felt alone, in a sense; I desired to see and mingle with those in whose company my soul so much delighted. Memory carries me to my own quiet home, where I could read, and write as I was impressed to many with whom I had passed such pleasant and profitable hours; but now this home is gone, and I am drifting about, yet in this I believe there is a wise purpose, and all these trials are for my good, and my soul's desire at times is to be submissive to all the dealings of Providence with me. These trials are what I need, and perhaps the loss of my home was to try my faith, as well as to afford me the privilege of attending the meetings and being given the hearing ear, and the sweet meditation of which I have spoken. "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Now and then a glimpse of the God of grace, and the glorious plan of salvation of his anointed, have comforted and cheered my restless spirit.

I felt greatly disappointed that you were not able to be at the association. Elder Coulter's preaching was very comforting and instructive, and the little social talks encouraging and profitable. Elder Keene's preaching was also good and upbuilding. Now I have given you a little account of the way I have traveled since I saw you. One thing more I wish to mention, and that is my meeting with your two daughters, Nellie and Bonnie. I had not seen sister Nellie since her bereavement in the loss of her husband; I felt that she was an example of faith and trust. She told me that she felt the Lord would never call her to pass through anything that he would not give her strength to bear, as he had so wonderfully sustained her in the past. Sister Bonnie seemed to be speaking praises to her heavenly Father for his wonderful mercies to her.

I have been reading your editorial for Nov. 15th, and hope it may prove profitable and instructive to many. Remember me with love to your entire family.

Your unworthy sister, in the hope of a better and an endless life,

MARTHA K. HUBBARD.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., June, 1907.

DEAR MRS. BAKER:—You never can know how much I appreciated your letter; I read it over and over again, and enjoyed it just as much each time. Since coming home from Black Rock my mind and heart have both been full of God's goodness to me. Before I left home there was a week or ten days that my mind was a blank in regard to spiritual things. I left home with a desire to see the people, but without much thought of the preaching. Wednesday I listened, but did not hear anything that just suited me, but Thursday afternoon when one spoke of the condemnation because of sin, I saw what a dreadful sinner I was, and wanted to cry to God for mercy. That night I had ten good talks with different ones, and O how good it seemed to be able to tell my feelings to those who had passed through the same trials, and to hear them tell of what they had passed through. Friday it seemed impossible that I could listen to preaching for four hours without growing weary, but all things are possible with God. There were both feelings of gladness and sadness at the close. My heart went out in love to these people, and I could not bear the thought of leaving them to come back to those whom I think care more for worldly things than for spiritual things, but God in his goodness brought me close to him during the drive home. Since then my mind has been burdened, and I am full of doubts and fears. For a short space of time my heart will be light, but soon I will be cast down. This proves something which when, I trust, I first had a hope seemed impossible to me. There were several weeks that I experienced the most peaceful feeling, and my mind was at rest, I wanted to sing and pray continually, and cared only to read of these things, and thought how grand it was that God had given me such a beautiful hope to be with me the rest of my life; but God works in a mysterious way, he has brought me down to the depths of despair, and perhaps then sent a passage of Scripture to comfort me and put a new song in my mouth, which makes me rejoice more and more that there is a Savior in whom I can trust. I can only express myself feebly in regard to what I feel, but my mind is on these things and I cannot write of anything else. I hope some time soon that I will see you in Baltimore, and that when the weather becomes settled you will spend some time with me.

With love to all,

BONNIE CHICK.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., July 15, 1907.

MY DEAR MR. FENTON:—How can I ever thank God enough for the sweet and comforting messages he sends me through his people? My heart overflows when I think of his goodness to one so unworthy as I. I grow more and more sinful every day; sometimes all is darkness, and if left to myself I would surely sink in the depths of despair, for I cannot do the good that I would. Evil is present all the while, but God in his own good time will remove the cloud, and I feel it is sweet to suffer affliction. I think I can truthfully say that after each of the dark times I have experienced I have been drawn nearer to God, and my heart has been filled with praise and song. I wonder now how I was ever happy when I did not feel the need of the blessed Savior. His ways are surely marvelous, and he can indeed lead us in ways which we know not. I long to grow in his grace daily, but at times I am cold to spiritual things; I look at others, and

their faces reflect the love that is in their hearts, and my heart goes out to them, but O how unworthy I am to even be with them. The last day of the association I dreaded leaving those whom I loved so much to come back to the people whom I could not talk to and tell of this love. I would attempt to talk to some of my friends, but in a short time I would stop, for I knew they did not understand me. God alone can open their hearts to this precious truth and awaken the love for his children. It is truly a wonderful love and past all understanding.

Last Tuesday afternoon I went to the home of a Mrs. Parker, who became a member of the Baltimore Church last fall; papa had written that he wished I knew her. Her home is about four miles from here, so I decided to go and not wait for an introduction. In a few minutes I felt that I had always known her. I always felt at home with the Old Baptists, but now I am drawn right to them with a feeling that I never had before. I used to wonder why they loved to be with each other so much, but now I know, for all are one in spirit; it is surely a tie that binds. Whenever I write of these things I wonder and feel afraid that I am deceiving others, for all I do is mixed with deceit and vanity. I have to give the same excuse to all, and that is, that I cannot help it, for I cannot write of other things. This little extract expresses my feelings:

> "More than your schoolmen teach, within
> Myself, alas, I know,
> Too dark ye cannot paint the sin,
> Too small the merit show."

I did not intend to write so much when I began, but wanted you to know what a comfort your letter was to me, for my mind has been greatly distressed because of the sin that is in me.

Remember me to your daughter; I wish so much that I could have had a talk with her. Many thanks for your kind and cheering words.

Sincerely your friend,

BONNIE A. CHICK.

GENESIS I. 3.

"AND God said, Let there be light: and there was light."

I will first say that this is a subject too high, sublime and wonderful for me to attempt to expound, but I am impressed to write a few thoughts in connection with it. I trust that he who is able to guide our minds, will guide my pen, and I will leave what I shall write for the brethren to judge.

In the first place, I believe every word that is written in the Scriptures was written by inspiration of God, and that holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. In the first verse we are told: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." What is intended by the expression, "In the beginning"? With our God there was no beginning; for if we believe the Scriptures he is eternal. But there was a beginning with this earth, and this creation which God created and of which he said that it was good, was the beginning that is spoken of. We should carefully notice the first thing that was created. It was the heaven, the abode of his people, and then the earth, which is his footstool. Then all things were created upon the earth before man was made, to support and sustain his natural life. As all things were created before man was made, he could not say that he created anything; to God he must give all the glory. If this be so naturally, much more must it be so spiritually. Then God prepared the garden and all the trees that were in it, of which Adam

might partake, save the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; but by this man's transgression were many made sinners. The Lord purposed that Jesus should come in the flesh, and prepared him a body to this end, yet without sin, that by one Man's obedience many might be made righteous. We are told that the earth in the beginning was without form and void. Now, to my mind, the Scriptures do not only set forth these things as one would write history, but they are also types of better things. To the carnal mind they are not anything more than a history of that which is natural, and that is as far as the natural mind can see. It is as impossible for the natural mind to see above this as it is for water to rise above its own level; but to the spiritual mind, when it pleases God to reveal the glory and beauty which shines forth out of these things, they bring forth praise to God for his goodness and mercy in preparing such things for them that love him. We can see that this earth which was created, and upon which we live, with all creeping things, with all its storms and tempests and all things else that it contains, is a type of the heavenly world; but how void was this body of ours of all spiritual things when it was born into this world.

It is said, "Darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." These Scriptures are beautiful when it pleases God to give us to look into their depths and see the spiritual beauty which is in them. As the natural earth was void and dark, so we by nature are void of the knowledge of God until he moves upon the face of the great deep. Darkness covers from our view all spiritual things. We have no thought of the things that are hidden, as it were, beneath the sod until in the warm springtime they burst forth, green and tender.

Now I come to the first verse which I quoted: "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." How mysterious is the work of God. He created the heaven first, showing that the heaven is above the earth, and that the darkness was before the light. The earthly man is before the spiritual man, and all is darkness to the soul until God says, "Let there be light," or until he moves upon the face of the waters, and we are born into that new kingdom. We knew no more about that light until he said, "Let there be light," than we knew about the natural light of this world before we were born into it; and when we are delivered we know not what the light is. But the newborn babe soon learns to know the light from the darkness, and while it does not know what either is, it soon learns to cry for the light; just so it is with every one who is born of the Spirit, like Saul of Tarsus, when the Lord says, "Let there be light," they fall to the ground. Not that they all fall to the ground literally, but they are brought down and made to cry with Saul, "What wilt thou have me to do?"

Now further on in this chapter it is said that God divided the light from the darkness. In spiritual experience we are made to realize this dividing, for at the first, as said before, the child does not know one from the other; yet it knows that it likes the light and will cry for it. Until it pleases God to divide the light from the darkness we are constantly crying for the light, yet not knowing what we are crying for, but we know that there is something we desire and long for, and when it pleases God to divide the one from the other, then the evening and the morning are the first day with our souls.

This is the first day in our experience; we have not known what all this meant before. We may have seen the light for some time, but to us it was dim, and as though in the distance, but now it is divided, and we are basking in the sunlight of his presence. He does not take away the darkness entirely, he only divides it from the light. Had he taken away the darkness altogether, we should never have any more dark seasons. This would not be good for us, the night must come. But we do now know the night from the day, the darkness from the light. Our God has divided them, and how we long for the light when the dark seasons come, and how we rejoice when we hear the singing of the birds again and catch a glimpse of the light in the east shining forth from the Sun of righteousness. We rejoice to see the dark cloud pass over, and to behold the bow in the cloud shining in its radiant beauty as a token of the covenant of God with man. O what glory is in these things; it is high; I cannot attain to it. How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out. It is written: "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowlege of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. iv. 6. What wondrous grace he has bestowed upon his people, saying, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." It is not glorify man, but give God all the glory. O may he divide the light from the darkness in us, that we may praise him for his goodness, and to him be all the praise, honor and glory. Amen.

Your brother,

JOHN L. HASTINGS.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., Nov. 6, 1907.

THE EMPTY VINE.

"ISRAEL is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself."—Hosea x. 1.

This solemn, momentous prophecy of Hosea was announced and put forth to the Jewish nation, or chosen Israelites, according to Bible chronology, about the year 760 B. C., for reproof and sundry judgment because of their idolatry and disobedience to the mandates of the eternal God, also as indicated in similar places of the Scriptures. The forlorn condition and adverse state of the churches here in Texas, as well as elsewhere, our barrenness and declension, brought the above subject seriously to bear upon my mind, and therefore, by the mercy and grace of God, I will endeavor briefly to write a few things relative to this sacred portion of holy writ.

In touch with its importance of warnings, and the absolute necessity of correction, returning to the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, the church in her typical order is frequently alluded to under the appellation of a vine, showing the culture, growth and fruitage of the vine, which, in the literal rendering, means "a plant producing grapes; the slender, trailing stem of other plants." How beautiful to see the lily, or vine, growing in rich soil under the vitalizing influence of the sun and the cool, refreshing showers of the rain, bringing forth fruit in its season. But when the carnal Israelites, or national Israel, became elated through the lusts of the flesh and allured by the vanities of the world to follow strange gods, being enticed by their cunning craftiness to join field to field, then they become as represented by our text, "an empty vine," bringing "fruit unto himself," and become "the degenerate plant of a strange vine." "For though thou wash thee with nitre,

and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God."—Jer. ii. 21, 22. All through the ages of the old testament dispensation we notice numerous instances where this vine withered, became sickly by reason of the poisonous nature of sin and rebellion, producing confusion and discord in their midst; a decay, distemper, and, for a time, a cessation of growth, until God's divine justice was satisfied and his holy law vindicated, delivering Israel from the iron grasp of her enemies and again planting them in their own land to be a goodly heritage unto the Lord their God; (Jer. iii. 19; Psalms xvi. 6,) corrected in measure, chosen in the furnace of affliction, led through the angry floods of persecution, tortured in the vehement flames of temptation, buffeted by the cold waves of a frowning world, yet in all the visitations of God's judgments upon his people, the objects of his love, he remembered them in mercy, even in the midst of deserved wrath, succored them and fed them in the wilderness with "angels' food," led them about, instructed them and kept them as the apple of his eye, and there was no strange god with him. (Deut. xxxii. 10, 12.) "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end! How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up? For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges." The rock of antichrist "is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps," so antagonistic to Christ, the Rock of our salvation. The old vine or covenant of works must languish and vanish away. Christ is our Redeemer, our Passover, the High Priest in the blood of the new covenant ordered in all things and sure, the Intercessor and Mediator of a better covenant, established on better promises. The poor, weeping children of Zion have just one Father and one Lord, Jesus Christ, who atoned for their sins through the perfect sacrifice of himself, the perfect coetaneous Son of God, the gracious Preserver of Israel, the cloud and pillar of fire that directed them in all their wanderings across the river Jordan into the land of promise. The ceremonial law was given from Mount Sinai, with its typical offerings and divers washings, to be perpetuated to the coming of Christ. When left to ourselves we are an empty vine that can only bring fruit to the idol. "Their heart is divided: now shall they be found faulty: he shall break down their altars, he shall spoil their images."

Affectionately,

ASA HOWARD.

KELLER, Texas.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Oct. 26, 1907.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I wish to say how much the brethren and friends of Shiloh Church, Washington, D. C., enjoyed your visit among us on October 14th last, when you preached to us. Many expressed their feelings, after the service, to have been of comfort and edification, and of pleasure at meeting you as the one who for many years came among them, thus renewing the feeling of love they had toward you. I suppose you are now returning from the Salisbury Association, and I hope you had as good a meeting as we had together at the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, at New Valley Church last week. Those meetings were especially good; it seemed that the Lord smiled upon each service. Each minister was given liberty in speaking, and

the precious words spoken were gladly received by waiting ears; the expressions of many attending were such as gave the impression of spiritual feasting; the dear Lord gave both speaker and hearer words of comfort, and each night we went home feeling thankful, for it had been a feast of fat things; still a feeling of sadness prevailed at times, on account of those dearly loved who had been called away since the last meeting, yet that sadness had a bright side, as we all felt, as we saw and heard of the love felt and expressed for those departed ones while in the flesh, and how dear their memory was to those left behind to mourn. Another pleasant feature of the meeting which had an especial sweetness, we thought, was the beautiful expressions of love, esteem and fellowship shown towards Elder J. N. Badger in every corresponding church letter to the meeting. It must have been very comforting to the Elders present (and especially so to Elder Badger) to hear and feel that their services to the churches are appreciated, and that their labors of love are not in vain, but have united pastor and members in bonds of love far above earthly feelings. "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." We trust we are thankful for the privilege of being able to enter with the brethren into their joys and sorrows; the sorrows which some of them have passed through are already bearing the peaceable fruits. It is indeed comforting to realize that we love the brethren, and that it is appointed when brethren meet together in the Lord's name to attend to the business of his house and to worship at his throne, and though before we may have been strangers in the flesh, there is soon manifested that relationship that the world knows not of.

One other feature of these meetings with the New Valley Church was the perfect arrangement made for all visiting brethren and friends; everything seemed to have been anticipated, and I could but admire the perfect harmony that prevailed; the deacons of the church (brethren Paxson and Titus) endeared themselves to us by their untiring efforts in making all comfortable; we shall all long remember the kindness and fellowship shown us. Our hearts were moved at the sight of the children of our brethren and friends at the meeting, and at their homes, how earnestly they entered into the wishes of their parents in providing for and entertaining their guests; these contributed in no small degree to the comfort of those attending the meeting. It was my privilege to spend two nights at brother S. B. Paxson's home, and an added pleasure it was to find one of our late brother Cannon's daughters (Nettie) presiding over his house, having married brother Paxson's son. I also spent one night at the home of brother Sid Titus, and there found in the absence of their sainted mother (our late sister Titus) his daughters devoting all their time to the comfort of their visitors. Can anything be sweeter in nature than to see such filial affection for parents? May God bless them all in this life and in the life to come, if it be his good pleasure. May the Lord bless the church there, and soon give them another pastor to go in and out among them, who shall serve them as did their late pastor, Elder E. V. White. I desire to be thankful for our churches, our pastors, our brethren and friends. What an unspeakable blessing to be able to say "ours," though often I feel it presumption on my part, yet there are times, I trust, I can say, "Abba, Father," for none other would show us such continued mercy and forgiveness.

I must now close, trusting you and your dear family are well. I wish to be remembered to them in christian love.

Yours in hope of a better life,

JOHN T. WALKER.

ALEXANDRIA, Va., Dec. 4, 1907.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—If we read the Bible as a history, and study its admonitions, it is profitable. It warns us to do unto others as we would wish to be done by; this is morality. Then we reach the limit of our earthly power, and to hope for a better and purer life. We must leave this vile body, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14. Then we are helpless children, tossed by the temptations of a carnal, sinful world, dead in trespasses and sins, so prone to err that sometimes we cry out in anguish of soul for mercy and strength, and wonder if the Lord has entirely forsaken us, or if we have an inheritance not made by the law as given by Moses, but grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ. Then the sweet, assuring memory comes back to us of our first love and our baptism; surely they were not of the law. How lovely everything spiritual seemed to us then, and we felt assured of the Savior's pardoning love. If this joy was permitted to last we would be unfitted to cope with the carnal world. Our Savior was a man of sorrows, and if we in any way try, or are led, to follow him, we must glory in tribulation; it is the christian's heritage, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."—Rom. viii. 28. There are times when our trials are almost more than we can bear, but the Lord suffers it to be so, and we rest on his everlasting arm; this life's trouble is only for a short while, if we have a hope in Christ our compensation is incomparable. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us."—Romans viii. 35, 37. Though our lives are passed with those who fear not God, our best and truest impulses are of "the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."—John xiv. 17. May our humble petitions always follow this glorious Leader, the humble christian's unfailing Friend.

We have a dear, aged sister who is seldom absent from our meetings; she is afflicted with deafness, but seems to enjoy meeting with us, and always seems cheerful and ready to talk about those glorious things pertaining to our Father's kingdom. The Lord gives her consolation in a way that I know not of—rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation and continuing instant in prayer. It is the sweetest privilege we experience in life to meet with our brethren and hear them tell about their hope through Christ; these dear ones, who come so close to us in our experience of grace, whom we love with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Our cognizance of this love is not premature; it is our birthright, given before the world was made, with those "which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."—John i. 13. Knowing our weakness in the flesh, can we be over zealous in our supplications for divine mercy? "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that

heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."—John v. 24. Can we doubt this support? O no, it comes from the Rock.

"Rock of Ages, shelter me,
Let me hide myself in thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and power."

Sometimes we get gloomy and impatient when we look over our small congregations and count less than are visible members of the church, and in our fleshly weakness we wonder if the Lord will sustain this little band; then we compare them to our neighbors' larger congregations and their beautiful houses of worship, and we note they are zealous of good works; then we are made to feel and know the Lord's purpose in choosing the meek and lowly to confound the wise and great; they boast of their wealth and power, we are just poor sinners, saved by God's grace. Would any of these lowly little children exchange their inheritance for our neighbors' self-confident faith? I think not. Only to know that we are heirs to that inheritance spoken of in Daniel's vision and the final redemption. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John iii. 15. I trust we can rest on this support as we journey through this vale of tears. I feel to be one of the least, if one at all, in our Father's love.

We dearly appreciate the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and congratulate our dear editors on their constant adherence to the faith; also our dear brethren and sisters, who write such comforting letters; we feel that we love them, and hope we will hear often one from another.

Unworthily, your sister,

HANNIE B. GREHAN.

PINSONFORK, Ky., Oct. 2, 1907.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have just received and read the SIGNS for October 1st, and am so well pleased with your article on "Extremes" that I cannot forbear writing you. It is the truth, and the truth as it is in Jesus. No doubt a large percentage of the sick, faint and feeble of the flock of God is due to those points, called by some "extremes," being cried out against, and being in a great measure left off. So many apologizing for God, so many rounding the corners, prophesying smooth things, even the deceit of their own heart. I have been astonished for a few years past to listen to the many and strong appeals from some of the brethren through their papers for peace propositions, crying, "Peace, peace: when there is no peace," saith our God, and for us all to leave off certain points and phrases in order, as they seem to think, to reconcile or unite that which God has set at variance, or in other words, make that straight which God has made crooked. Dear brother Ker, I cannot remember that I ever saw an article in all my life that seemed just as timely and appropriate as your article in this number of the SIGNS. Those points that have been left off or evaded by such characters as you have so minutely and truthfully described, are just what have brought the Old School or Primitive Baptists in the condition they are to-day; yet this must needs be, it is among the "all things," and must work for their good. There never was, no, and never shall be, anything preached but truth and error, and

the further apart we can keep them, and the clearer we can discriminate between them, the better it is for the Lord's humble poor. If the writers and preachers would all come to the front and stand shoulder to shoulder for the "extremes," as you have said; when we come to speak of predestination or any other point, to express it in plain, unmistakable terms to mean predestination in everything; not to say we believe in predestination, and then explain it away so as to mean nothing, or to starch and iron it nicely and round the corners so that even the enemies will accept it. It is the truth, and should be preached and contended for in the very extreme, or in its fullness, so far as God gives ability. I would not be understood by what I have said of your article being the most timely and appropriate that I remember ever seeing—I say, I would not be understood by this to undervalue the other good articles, for I have not seen in the dear old SIGNS anything, as I now remember, but what was able, sound and consistent, but I mean this is just right, came at the right time, and is such a boon to my present feelings, for I have wearied for a few years with such hue and cry among Baptists about these peace propositions, leaving off certain words and phrases, &c., and some have gone so far as to say we should just use Bible words. Your article has made the matter clear as the sun at noonday. Where is there any good reason why we should not all strictly and prayerfully take heed to it? I pray God that we may.

Dear brother, I fear I am intruding on both your time and patience, therefore will soon close. I have been four weeks hardly able to sit up, but I think my health is improving nicely now. This is badly written, and I have not expressed my feelings as I would like to have done, but it has built up my downcast feelings so much to learn that at least I have one companion on these points. I have been trying to preach nearly thirty-seven years, and I never try to preach but what I preach the principles of predestination, &c., as best I can. I do not try, neither do I wish to try, to cover it up with apologizing words to darken the question, but to make straight paths for our feet.

Yours very unworthily,

W. J. MAY.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 22, 1907.

DEAR ELDER KER:—The inclosed letter was dictated to me, to be read at our regular monthly Thursday meeting, November 7th, 1907. You may use it if you wish.

Your brother, I hope,

J. M. FENTON.

NOVEMBER 6, 1907.

TO MY BELOVED IN THE FAITH:—"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." This portion of Scripture has been blessed to my soul in my affliction. I am now in my eightieth year, and from a child have believed in the Old School Baptist doctrine, but did not come into a realization of the love and fellowship of the saints until after I was brought into the church. With what assurance the apostle Paul could speak the words, "We know that all things work together for good," for he suffered bonds and imprisonment for the love of the church, and yet he considered himself the least of all the apostles. In another place he says, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to

come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Jacob when in the wilderness saw the ladder that extended from earth to heaven, and the angels ascending and descending. What reverence and awe he must have felt when he awoke to find that the Lord was with him in the wilderness; that was a perfect Bethel to his soul. It comforts the saints now when traveling through this wilderness when they are permitted to sit at the table of his grace; being brought into his banqueting-house, his banner over them is love. Of late years I feel to realize the goodness and mercy of God to me. From a child I always looked upon christians with great respect, and never wanted to hear them spoken against. I remember Elder Beebe in a sermon told of the queen of Sheba going to visit Solomon, and spoke of the attendance of his ministers and his cupbearers, and the ascent by which he went up unto the house of the Lord, and she said, "Behold, the half was not told me." Peter denied the Savior, and what comfort it must have been to him when the Lord told the women who went to the grave to anoint him, to go "tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him." It must have been a comfort to Peter that he made mention of his name. Peter knew that He knows all things when he asked him three times, Peter, lovest thou me? and said, Feed my lambs and feed my sheep. The trials and afflictions of the old saints have been a comfort to me. I often think of the wisdom of God made manifest in the disciples and holy men of old while they were in the flesh imperfect; had they been perfect where would we have consolation? We do not use their shortcomings as an excuse for our wrong doings, but as a comfort in our weakness. The "all things" embraces all our afflictions, our losses and trials; even the thief on the cross must have been given faith to know his Lord and Redeemer. When the saints of God enter the portals of eternal glory they will have no need of faith, for they shall see Jesus as he is, and all will be swallowed up in love. John "saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband," prepared with the robe of righteousness, salvation and redemption.

Yours in hope of eternal glory,

SARAH A. ALLEN.

HERNDON, Va., Nov. 14, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find check for two dollars in payment of my subscription to the SIGNS another year. I would hardly know how to get along in this unfriendly world without the coming of the dear old SIGNS to my home. It seems to me that it gets better and better, while I seem to get worse and worse, yet I seem to cling to the doctrine of free grace, that grace which bringeth salvation to poor, lost sinners. I sometimes feel like writing for publication, and feel if I could write like many of the writers of your paper I would often be found writing to the saints of God; but O my leanness. Dear brethren, I can say this, that I cannot write a letter unless I can see Jesus and have an eye single to the glory of God; except I can see him by faith when I write, it will be nothing but "a mess of trash." I have no light of my own; I am in nature's darkness without him to direct and guide me by the way. I pass through many dark seasons of sadness and affliction as

I journey by the way, still when looking back over my past life, and remembering the hand of the Lord through it all, I am sometimes made to say, in the language of David, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord." I am not sure that I know just what "the cup" denotes, but it seems to me that it is suffering, for Jesus said, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." It was at the time of great suffering when our Savior uttered those words, but he was made willing to take the cup for the sake of his bride, the Lamb's wife, the church, chosen in him before the foundation of the world. It seems to me, too, that David was personating Christ in the expression, "I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord." I may be wrong in this, but set me right if I am. Dear editors, I did not expect to get into such deep water as this when I commenced to write; you could, no doubt, help me out by telling what the cup denotes, recorded in Psalms cxvi. 12, 13. I know that the Bible says we must suffer with Jesus that we might also reign with him. But the cup that Jesus spoke of meant to be crucified, going into death. Paul meant suffering when he said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." O to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." It is when viewing him by faith that we can enter in and be willing to suffer with him in partaking of that bitter cup which brings us to death and makes us say, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt;" but he comes down to our weakness, and it is for our good that he cried out, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me;" and again, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Thus we see that the cup Jesus took brought salvation to all the elect of God, and in that sense we can call it "the cup of salvation." In David's suffering it refers to Christ's suffering; Jesus was made willing to take the cup, and David also was made willing to "take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord." It seems to me that David meant by taking the cup that he was made willing to enter into great suffering again for the Lord's sake, for he said, The Lord is good, and his mercy endureth forever.

But I must close, I did not intend to write in this way when I began. I am ignorant and unlearned in spiritual things, and trust you will measure me just as I am, for I am very small. Please cast the mantle of charity over all that I have said out of place.

Your brother, I hope,

J. F. OLIVER.

ATLANTA, Ga., Sept. 6, 1907.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I feel somewhat encouraged to write a few lines for the SIGNS, if in your judgment, and after close consideration, you feel it is right for it to find some humble place in our family paper. I will head this article with a broken sentence, as you will see. I feel like saying, Holy, holy art thou, from everlasting to everlasting; yesterday, and to-day, and forever, thou art without the shadow of a turn, and thou hast been pleased to speak this mighty world into existence, together with man; and we, the church, ourselves constitute a very small portion of that creation which thou wast pleased to put

under the law, which law we (the whole Adamic family) have failed to keep, consequently we have become transgressors of that law. We remember reading in the holy word that sin is the transgression of the law. Then we, having transgressed the law, must be sinners in a depraved state, totally depraved. So much is this so that man actually exhibits his animal nature to the lowest degree, even as animals do; we, as well as they, make known our wants by a common or universal growl. This, the lowest animal and the highest forms of men who are enlightened and educated, together with kings upon their thrones and presidents, have in common; all the tribes of the earth practice this. How few people have ever considered their makeup and have discovered how deep is their depravity. This all belongs to our feeble and fallen nature, and belongs to this life.

As we know, the whole Adamic family possesses the five senses in common: seeing, feeling, hearing, tasting and smelling; these all belong to natural men. We have also five other stations in our nature mentioned by the apostle; they are these: first, the feet, which are swift to shed blood; then the heart is said to be deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; then the throat is an open sepulchre, where dead bodies are buried and left open, foul and filthy; then the tongue, which is an unruly member and is set on fire of hell, and sets on fire the course of nature; then the head, where the carnal mind rests, which is enmity against God, not being subject to his law, neither indeed can be, and neither can it know spiritual things, because they are spiritually discerned. But there is a people who will set all these Scriptures in the background, and cry to the dead sinner in their revival meetings: Just come up to the altar and give your hearts to God and be saved to-night. Men from the Theological seminaries all will do this; but we Primitive Baptists are too dependent upon the power which raised up Jesus from the dead, the power that rent the rocks and opened the graves of the saints and they came forth after his resurrection; that bade the sun forbear to shine, and that shook the earth with an earthquake, to believe and practice such things as this. The guards at the grave were helpless and the stone was rolled away and the Savior came forth triumphant. This is that power to which we poor Baptists submit, knowing our deep depravity, and, on the other hand, that power which causes the lightning to shine from the east unto the west. When you see a flash of lightning you never see anything cast a shadow; it shines just as brightly on one side of the house or tree as upon the other, there is no difference; and when the Lord shines in the heart and makes himself known to an heir of promise he shines in the heart and makes known the heinousness of sin in that evil nature, and reveals all. There is no shadow to hide in, but we are open and exposed in every part to the eye of Him with whom we have to do; we have no covering from the Lord. We are brought into this place penitent, and do not need a Sunday School to teach us to pray. We pray from a deep sense of depravity; and such an one need not to be entreated to turn back or quit praying. Such an one would pray just as effectually if he had no tongue at all; and his cry will be, "God be merciful to me a sinner." This is not of the natural voice, but it is of the Spirit of God. We worship him, not with our hands, nor with anything that we can see, for he is a

Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Brother Ker, I must close this rambling letter. I feel ashamed of it, it is so weak. I cannot write as I wish or as others do.

Your brother,

H. H. BENTLEY.

CHAGRIS, Ind. Ter.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—The time for renewal of subscription to our dear family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, is at hand, and I cannot do without it, for it is all the preaching I get. I sometimes wonder if the good Lord has forgotten me, but when my paper comes then I say, No, for he has sent me some more sweet messages of his love. I am not worthy of such, so with tears running down my cheeks and my soul filled with joy I trace the lines, with my heart all aglow. Dear brethren and sisters, none but those isolated from the people of God can know how precious it is to read after the dear saints; by this "we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I feel from my heart that I love the Old Baptists above all people. I know if I love them with a pure love I am one of them; the Lord is my Judge, and I leave it all with him. He is my only help, for of him and to him are all things, and without him I can do nothing. Yes, according to the Lord's will, mercy and love I shall wait on the Lord all my appointed time till my change come. Through the many years of toil, hardship, trouble, sorrow, affliction and mourning I can say the Lord has been with me, and I can say, Wait, O my soul, upon the Lord. Sometimes I am so cast down that I begin to look and wonder, and say, Where is my hope? I cannot place it on anything good I have done, and sometimes my path is so dark I fall by the way and mourn like the dove. O where is my Love, that I might find him? Sometimes when I have stayed in this dark pit for days and weeks the light begins to shine and I rejoice, and the first thing I know I am praising the Lord for the great and mighty work he hath done for me. "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." Dear saints, tell me, is it thus with you? O that I may run and not look back, for surely my soul is then full of the love of God and my tongue is loosed and I can say, The Lord be magnified. Surely the Lord is good to me, for he has had mercy upon me. "Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness; to the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent." "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together." My dear friends, it seems to me when I read after you that we all do magnify him who is the Author of our redemption. O that I were a Mary, or a Hannah, or a Ruth. When I read about them it seems that I am nothing at their feet, and I feel to say with the woman at the well, O "give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." "Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered." "Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. Thy righteousness is like the great mountain; thy judgments are a great deep: O Lord, thou preservest man and beast. How

excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings." "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light. * * * Let not the foot of pride come against me, and let not the hand of the wicked remove me." "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

I would thank some brother or sister to give their views on Revelation xvii. 17, if it is not requesting too much.

Now, my friends, this letter I commit unto your care, it is with your judgment to publish or not; as for me, I had rather read after you than myself. I will make one request of you: if it is not in accordance with the divine teaching of our Savior and the travel of those born of the Spirit, please throw it aside; I would rather be silent than deceive any one, for I find in me, that is, in my flesh, no good thing; but by the grace of God I am what I am. May the Lord's mercies be over all the household of faith. O that it is his will to count unworthy me one of that number. Remember me at the throne of grace.

Farewell in the Lord.

NANCY CREEL.

COOLEDGE, Texas, Oct. 7, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I feel as though I would like to talk a little while this morning with the dear family of God that I so dearly love, and let them know how much I appreciate their writings in the SIGNS. If I could write in as edifying a manner to them as they do to me through the columns of the SIGNS it would be a great source of pleasure and satisfaction, but I feel to be so little, weak and insignificant that it is in much fear and trembling that I make the attempt. "I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing;" for when I would do good evil is present with me, and sin is mixed with all I do. I have been much cast down and in great darkness of late, there being no brother or sister near me to whom I can speak of my dark seasons of trials, troubles and afflictions. As I sit and wait and count the days for the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES to arrive, I look for some sweet message from some far away brother or sister, and am never disappointed; never fail to get at least a little morsel of the sweetest of things. Sometimes my cup is filled to overflowing, as was the case last week when the SIGNS arrived and I began reading it. It was so full of the very richest of dainties that my cup ran over. I had been in darkness for some time, but while reading I came to Laura M. Baird's article, from Pleasant Hill, Kentucky, and that of sister Mary Cox, of Charlotte, Va., and I could but rejoice and take courage, and say, Glory be to the eternal God; glory in the highest, for such messages of love. For the eternal God, the Creator, Ruler and Disposer of all things, according to, or after the counsel of his will and purpose, is the Author and Giver of all.

Sometimes I fall in company with a stranger in the flesh, and he announces to me that he is a Primitive Baptist, and I feel glad; but often after I ask him a few questions I am made very sad to hear him denounce the eternal predestination of all things, times and events, and begin to talk about a conditional salvation in time, which we poor dust-worms of the earth

can work out or leave alone. Or that one may begin to talk about an eternal devil and his eternal children; then I almost wish I had not met him. Still this also is one of the events in the eternal purpose of God. The greatest trouble with me is my shortsightedness in seeing these things and in being reconciled to them. But when it pleases the all-wise God to reconcile us to his will, then his justice and righteousness in all things will be seen by us.

Well, I must close this poorly written letter by saying, Write on, dear brethren and sisters, for you know not the satisfaction you may give to some poor, feeble, hobbling lamb of the fold. Now may the sovereign grace of our God guide, guard and direct you, and us all, through the remainder of our sojourn in this world of sin and sorrow.

Your little brother, the least of all, if indeed I am a brother at all, and if saved it is by grace, both in time and eternity.

JOSEPH H. BOZEMAN.

ALBANY, Oregon, Nov. 14, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Inclosed I send two dollars for the renewal of my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which comes to us regularly, laden with the glorious doctrine of grace, the doctrine I love with all my heart, which is a great source of comfort to me, a poor old sinner, now in my seventh-fourth year, and while looking over my past life I realize that I have been a vile sinner in God's sight. This is why I love the doctrine of grace: because I know there is nothing but God's saving mercy and grace that can save me; this is a truth which is revealed to all of God's people who are brought to the knowledge of the truth. O how ignorant we are in regard to spiritual things until we are quickened by God's Spirit; this we believe is accomplished independent of means or instrumentality of poor, weak and depraved man. There is a false doctrine taught in the world, that there is a little spiritual life God has given to all men, and that they have power to exercise that life in the use of means in order to bring themselves into favor with God. That doctrine suits the carnal mind, but is not taught in the Bible. Paul says, "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and in sins." Here is a dead sinner made alive by the power of God, and is now a fit subject of gospel address, and the first thought that enters his mind is, "God be merciful to me a sinner." When Paul received the great light and revelation from heaven he said, "Who art thou, Lord?" The answer was, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest." No doubt he trembled from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, and prayed earnestly to God for salvation in the pardon of his sins. This is the experience of all quickened sinners; God begins the good work in their hearts, and he says he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. He disarms him of all power to reject Christ, and the thought in his mind is, Can God be just and save so vile a sinner as I? Here the glorious light of salvation springs into his soul, he then praises God with his whole heart, and realizes the truth of that glorious declaration of our Savior, that "when a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils."

Brother Chick, when I commenced this letter I thought I would only write a few

lines in regard to renewing my subscription, but I have let my pen run until I have written the above.

Our little church called Bethel, constituted, I think, in the year 1848, still continues to meet. I have been pastor for twenty-seven years, and in all that time peace and love have continued with us. At our last meeting I had the privilege of baptizing a precious brother, who is a son of our brother, Elder Horner; to God be all the praise.

SILAS WILLIAMS.

LAURELVILLE, Ohio, Dec. 2, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—As the time for which I have paid for the SIGNS has about expired, I take this opportunity of renewing, and also have the great pleasure of sending a new subscriber, one who knows and appreciates the blessed truth as promulgated by the editors and contributors of the SIGNS. If we are capable of judging, our family paper is surely each issue full of wholesome food for the lambs of the fold. We are so glad that the editors and contributors know no new thing, but, like Paul, are determined to know nothing but Christ and him crucified as the way, the truth and the life. Many changes have taken place, and much advancement is recorded in the world of nature, but no advancement can be made in the religion of Christ, because it is perfect; nothing can be added and nothing taken from it; it is Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. We appreciate the fact that there is no vain jangling in the SIGNS, no wresting of the Scriptures, but that all contend earnestly for the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. The God of the SIGNS is all-powerful, omniscient, omnipresent, was his own counselor when he laid the foundations of the earth, &c. (Job xxxviii.) I am so glad that we have a God that changeth not, "declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand," &c. Dear editors, we pray that it may be according to his will that you may be constrained to keep every vestige of Arminianism out of the SIGNS, and hold forth the unadulterated truth as advocated by the apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone.

This letter is worthless, and I hope will not be permitted to crowd out good matter.

Very unworthily yours,

GEO. W. HARTSOUGH.

WARRENTON, Va., Oct. 19, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am somewhat behind with my subscription to the SIGNS, but better late than never. I hope it will not happen again, for I would feel miserable if I should miss it one month; I would soon write to know what was the matter that our paper did not come. Now, brethren, one and all, let us be punctual to send our subscription, so the publishers will know there is nothing wrong with us. I dearly love the doctrine the SIGNS sets forth, but I had rather do without it than to read it at their expense. May God put it in the heart of each and every one to pay up their dues. God bless the editors and all who love God in sincerity and in truth. Write on, dear brethren.

Please find check inclosed for two dollars for the SIGNS.

With love and best wishes to all lovers of the truth,

(MRS.) WM. UTTERBACK.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1908.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

A NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS TO OUR READERS.

As we stand upon the threshold of another year it may be expected that we say something with special reference to the passing away of the old year and the entrance of the new. We trust that we desire at all times to speak of the glory of God and of the greatness of his power. This, or kindred themes, ought to be in our minds and hearts at all times, in the middle of the year as well as at the end or the beginning of it. The minds of all who hope in the mercy of God through grace will often call up the past with its conflicts and victories, its weakness and strength, its sorrows and joys, its transgressions and its seasons when forgiveness has been sealed to the heart. There are special seasons, however, when this will be especially the case. With ourself this has often been the case at this season of the year, and thus once more does our mind recall the travel and trials, and all the thronging events with which the days of this past year have been filled. Looking over so many of them, as they come up to our mind, we can but remember and speak of the favor and goodness of a covenant-keeping God to all his people. We ought to bear testimony to the unfailing mercy of God to ourself and to all who are connected with the conduct of the SIGNS, to our readers, to all the churches of the saints, and to each and every individual believer everywhere. For ourself we can but acknowledge that we have found occasion often during the year that is past to confess sin and iniquity before God, together with many failures and mistakes, and we trust that at times we have had some evidence that God has been merciful to our unrighteousness, and we do have hope that we have had at times the assurance that our sins and iniquities he will remember no more, according to his word of promise to all his people. That which belongs to our outward life, both at home and abroad, in the ordinary life that we all live as citizens, as neighbors and friends, in the relation which we occupy to the church and in the ministry of the word, our life is for the people of God to judge. We have desired, and do desire, to live openly before our brethren, and we know well that there must be much to disapprove in their sight; but they have been pitiful and forbearing, and we hope that it is with some feeling of humiliation and gratitude to God that we realize this. While men and women, our companions and kindred in Christ, can and do know what is outward in our words and deeds, there is One only who can know our motives. Open and naked to the eye of him with whom we have to do has been our every thought, however secret it may have been, and hidden even to ourselves. This is true of all men; God alone is the judge of the heart. No man knows enough about himself to be his own judge; no man knows enough about his fellow to be his judge. This seems to us a most glorious and comforting truth, that men are not

our judges, but that God is. Paul felt that man's judgment was but a small matter, but that it was a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. So Job repelled the judgment of his friends, and denied their accusations, yet when he came before God he said, "I am vile." His friends looked only at that which was outward, the words and deeds that men could hear and see, and Job could with truth deny that his words and deeds had been such as they accused him of, but before the Lord he was vile by nature, and confessed that when he saw the Lord he must abhor himself and repent in sackcloth and ashes; and before God, as we look back over the past, we must be humbled, because we can find no place or time along our whole travel in which we could claim that we had an eye single to the glory of God. What a mixture of motives come up at every step of the way; motives that one does not and cannot see in himself until the light of the Spirit takes the word, which is quick and powerful, and divides soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and searches the heart and shows to us its secret faults. At such hours all boasting is indeed excluded, and even some word of praise which may be spoken of us cuts to the quick, because we know that it is undeserved, and we fear that we have behaved ourselves hypocritically in the sight of him who speaks that word. We say in our hearts, and perhaps with our lips, O if you only knew me you could not say such things; and instead of being exalted we are ashamed. But it is good when we can remember that with our God even our failures in motive or in deeds and words are all known, and that he can and does make even these things which we most deplore work together for good to us. We have felt glad at times that our grief over our transgressions and our failures shall all be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of the blessed Lord. This does not for a moment lead one who is spiritual to excuse his transgressions, but rather to abhor himself all the more, and praise that matchless grace and wisdom which work such glorious ends out of such vile transgressions. Thus Peter's vain boasting and self-glorying led to his fall, and his fall led to repentance, through the discovery thus made to himself of himself, and then to sorrow and shame and confession, and then to larger understanding of his need of grace and forgiveness, and of the "must needs be" that Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day. All such discoveries of self lead to greater discoveries of Christ, the all-sufficient Savior; thus there is mercy, even when left to ourselves for a time. Paul expresses it when he says, "We are not of them who draw back unto perdition." What a mercy that the backsliding of his Israel cannot be unto perdition. Herein is the grace of God much magnified, that his people are not left to perish, however far they wander from the right way.

Out of these reflections, as they rest in our mind as we are writing, comes up a deeply felt sense of our need of grace, daily grace, and then comes the word of precious promise, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." Another thing seems very clear, from all that we have been saying, viz., that there can be no comfort, no salvation, no hope, no increase of faith, in looking to ourself, but rather sorrow, despair and sinking down in waves of unbelief, and doubt arises whenever we look at self. Every ray of light, hope, peace, faith, joy and assurance of salvation come as we are for a time favored to see how strong is the arm that

upholds and guards us, how searching is that eye that keeps watch over the little flock. Salvation is of the Lord; in this is all that comforts the soul at such times as it is given to see its own uncleanness and weakness.

We have felt, especially of late, that we need reviving. Our mind has been much upon those portions of the Scripture that speak of this need and of the promises that our God will revive his people. If nothing else could convince us that in us is no might, this need of reviving again, and the evidence that we cannot revive our own self, would convince us beyond doubt. What one among us can revive his own faith, hope, trust, patience, meekness, long-suffering, the spirit of prayer, of desire to read and meditate upon the word, our abhorrence of evil, our consciousness that there is nothing in this world worth striving for; in short, every spiritual exercise within our heart? How precious is the doctrine of grace, but how exceeding precious is the grace of the doctrine felt in the soul. A mere reasonable belief in the doctrine revealed in the Bible will not do, we need to live upon the doctrine that distils as the dew; we want the secret refreshing of soul that Paul and Silas felt in the inner prison, when amid their sufferings they sang praises to God; this alone will soften the heart to prayer and praise and love to God and to our brother.

Turning from these solemn reflections we desire to say a few things regarding the connection which we have had with the SIGNS for a number of years. Brother Ker in the closing number for last year has given an outline of the condition of things relating to the prosperity and the conduct of the SIGNS. Our hearts have all been anxious that truth, and only truth, should be published in its columns; as he has said, we have tried to be careful that no hurtful matter, such as church difficulties, &c., should be found therein. No doubt we have made mistakes, mistakes that the brethren have seen; if so, they have been very forbearing, and have considered that we are all in the flesh, and therefore liable to err; for this we ought, and we believe we do, feel thankful to God, who has given our brethren such tenderness and patience toward us, and for the future can only say that it is still our desire to pursue the same thing, to seek peace, but not at the expense of truth; we do not wish to forget that wisdom which is from above is first pure; above all we all shall need divine help in every step of the way.

For ourself we desire to here acknowledge the great help we have found in the counsel and advice of brother Ker all along the way. If there has been any difference of judgment about anything connected with the SIGNS, each has spoken his mind freely, and have always agreed as to what should be done. We have felt this to be a wonderful blessing. The publishers of the SIGNS have been thoughtful and faithful in all that has fallen to their lot. But brother Ker has said in the closing number for last year all that needs to be said in that direction, and we will desist.

Paul said in one of his epistles, Now, brethren, suffer a word of exhortation. It is sure that exhortation has a great place in the New Testament. All exhortations recorded there are with regard to the things that become sound doctrine, good order and right personal behavior. These things are important, because by such things is the grace of faith made known. Faith works by love. Faith then is an active grace, and in that love which is shed abroad in the heart does it make

itself known; he to whom this faith is given will ask, "What wilt thou have me to do?" It is not, What wilt thou have me to do to be saved, but, What is it that will be to the praise and glory of God, and the good of his people? All such exhortations that stir up the pure minds by way of remembrance are sweet and savory to the people of God when they are in the spirit. Perhaps an illustration will help us to see what these things mean. We recall that when but a child there was a desire in our heart to do what our father wished us to do. That was an abiding desire, and we would look to him for direction again and again. Now when his word came to do this or do that, it met a response in our heart, and we were glad to know what he would have us do, and glad to do that thing as best we could. Thus it seems to us the heavenly Father has placed in the mind of all his children the spirit that finds it meat and drink to do the will of God; this will be the abiding desire. Now to meet this desire the blessed Lord, through the pen and word of his apostles, who were inspired to make known his will, has revealed what his will is as regards the order of his house and the personal walk of his disciples. How gladly will the dear children of God welcome such messages from the word of God, because their hearts are like a thirsty garden that greatly desires such watering of the word; and to present these admonitions and exhortations is to preach Christ, as much as it is when the atonement is proclaimed. Christ in us the hope of glory produces all good fruits, as well as hope, faith and assurance of salvation.

"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you." C.

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

(Luke xvi. 19-31.)

It has been suggested by several brethren that we write upon the above named parable. Many in days gone by have written upon this subject, yet there is room, we hope, for a few suggestions from us.

The Savior spoke in parables, that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says, "I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world. * * * that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand." Many, however, who claim to be the servants of God apply them literally, and teach many false lessons from them. Sometimes they are applied experimentally, but we feel that much of the hidden treasure in them is missed in so doing. If the parables are to be applied literally, how can there be any obscurity in them? If applied experimentally, where is the instruction? For many years we have felt that some deep truth is hid in each one, and that we are not warranted in applying every detail in order to reach their import; our desire should be to know the truth contained in them; this can be done by the Spirit's teaching only, as natural men do not understand the things of God better to-day than when Jesus spoke to them in parables. His disciples then were given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, and none but such now understand.

The rich man in the parable before us was the Jew, and represented national Israel in all their riches and splendor. Paul asks, "What advantage hath the Jew?" then answers the question by saying, "Much in every way:" to them were given the promises, the law and the oracles; these things constituted the riches

of the Jew. God recognized them as his people, he watched over them, guided them, fed them, sheltered them, and they were the only nation on earth, before the coming of Christ, that had a God-given form of worship.

Lazarus (poor man) was the Gentile, and represented all Gentile nations in their dire poverty and distress, being without the promises, the law and the oracles, or in other words, without "hope and without God in the world;" the lack of those blessings made them poor. The Gentiles were idolators, but occasionally one would be found with the Jews, and was called "a stranger." They observed a difference between their gods and the God of Israel, in that He guided, protected and fought their battles for them, while the gods of the Gentiles could neither hear nor help them. The king of Babylon recognized this when Daniel had interpreted his dream and said, "Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets." Yet none of the Gentiles had the knowledge of God, but there seems to have been a hope in the Gentile that he might be blessed through the Jews. This is seen in the desire of Lazarus to be fed with the crumbs (lesser blessings) which fell from the rich man's table. Again, the Syro-phenician woman, who had no right to claim anything from that nation, asked help of Jesus. He first told her it was not meet to take the children's bread and give it to dogs. She answered, Truth, Lord, but the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table. She, a Gentile, manifested her hope of help through the King of the Jews. Jesus said to the woman of Samaria, "Salvation is of the Jews."

We are told in the parable that the poor man died, (but was not buried) and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. This is not heaven, and should not be represented as such; neither was the death literal, but experimental: death to all hope of heavenly blessedness coming through nations or idols. The angels were the apostles, ministering spirits, sent to minister to the heirs of salvation; they carried the poor Gentile into Abraham's bosom in preaching salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord. The preaching was, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, [children] and heirs according to the promise." This relationship between Abraham and the Gentiles did not come through Abraham, but through Christ, the promised Seed; "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." Abraham is the "father of the faithful," and with him, Isaac and Jacob, the Gentiles sit down in the kingdom of God.

The rich man also died and was buried. This death was not literal, nor was his body deposited in the earth, neither did he descend into a lake of literal fire. He died to the favor of God in that the kingdom was taken from him (Jews) "and given to a nation [Gentiles] bringing forth the fruits thereof." The natural branches were broken off that we Gentiles, contrary to nature, might be grafted in and be partakers of the fatness of the tame olive Tree. In the work of Christ the law was fulfilled, justice satisfied and all types and shadows done away; the Jews therefore who had answered the purpose as a figure of spiritual Israel were cut off and cast out into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth, scattered among all nations, and to this day have no country of their own. This condition of the Jews is represented by the word

"hell," a terrible state indeed for those to be in who had been so blessed and prospered. It was in the fullest sense of the word "torments." This part of the parable is often used to frighten people into getting religion, (as it is called) being presented or set forth as a literal fire wherein sinners are to burn eternally. The word "hell" in the Scriptures is not as carefully examined as it should be; in many places it means no such thing as a place of literal fire. For instance, when Jesus said by the mouth of the prophet David, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell," he meant no such thing as a lake of fire and brimstone, but that God would not leave him in the grave or state of death. Again David said, "The pains of hell gat hold upon me;" immediately he explains by saying, "I found trouble and sorrow." When Johah said, "Out of the belly of hell cried I," he referred to the condition he was in: "For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me." How well acquainted are all of the Lord's children with this condition called hell by Jonah.

We have thought of the Scripture in John v. 28, 29: "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation," as referring to this condition of the Jews as a nation, and to the blessedness of the elect, both Jews and Gentiles. The words "grave" and "graves" are used in a figurative sense, and very seldom are we permitted to give them their literal meaning when speaking of them from a scriptural standpoint; almost invariably they signify condition rather than location, as is taught by the "vision of dry bones." The Lord commanded Ezekiel to say unto the bones, "Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel." Not one bone was buried in the earth, but all of them appeared on the surface of the earth. This Scripture in Ezekiel is intended to show the condition of Israel at that time. It seems that John v. 28, 29, is explained in Matthew xxv. 31–46. In that parable is seen a resurrection or coming forth of two classes, and judgment is passed according to John v. 28, 29. To those on the right hand it was said, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." They had "done good" in that they had ministered unto the brethren of the King (Christ). To those on the left hand it was said, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," (Jesus told the Jews on one occasion that they were of their father the devil) condemnation, torment, cut off, cast out. These had "done evil" in not ministering to the brethren of Christ. Remember that the rich man (Jew) did not minister to the poor man. There is a sense in which this separation takes place every time the gospel is preached, for the gospel always separates between the righteous and the wicked, saying to one, Come in, thou blessed of the Lord, while to the other it says, Depart, ye workers of iniquity.

In this condition of torment (house left unto them desolate) the rich man or Jew sees "Abraham afar off," and Lazarus in his bosom. He addresses Abraham as father, and Abraham calls him son. This very thing establishes the fact that the "rich man" was a Jew, and that the "poor man" was a Gentile, as the son of Abra-

ham claimed no relationship to him. It is worthy of note that the rich man did not call upon God for mercy, but upon his father Abraham, asking that he would send Lazarus that he might comfort him. Abraham called his attention to the good things (blessings) he had enjoyed in his lifetime (while God was with them as a nation); his attention was also called to the former condition of the poor man, and said, "But now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence." The great gulf did not come by chance, but was "fixed" between the Jew and the Gentile and remains unto this day; it is unbelief, in the Jew, of the sonship of Christ the Son of God. A Jew and a Gentile may live in the same house and labor side by side day after day, yet this gulf is fixed, and in faith they are as far apart as the east is from the west; it is as impossible for the believing Gentile to come to the Jew religiously as it is for the unbelieving Jew to come to the Gentile, hence no passing from one to the other.

When the rich man asked Abraham to send Lazarus to his father's house to warn his brethren that they come not into that place of torment, Abraham replied, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." None but the Jews had Moses and the prophets, and they believed them not. Jesus said to them, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" But the rich man continued by saying, "Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent." Abraham replied, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." How true these words are; Jesus, the crucified Lord, did rise from the dead, and his gospel was preached in all the world for a witness, but the Jews rejected the testimony, persecuted the apostles and put them to death, but the Gentiles believed on Jesus and rejoiced in the salvation of God, hence "are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God," while the Jews still refuse to hear the name Christ Jesus, manifesting that their terrible condition: "hell," remains to the present day.

We have now given such as we have upon this subject, and have tried to be clear and as brief as possible that our view be fully understood, and leave it for the consideration of our readers.

K.

ORDINATIONS.

In response to a request of the Mt. Pleasant Regular Baptist Church, Pleasureville, Ky., Elder W. T. Ritter and brother B. Ritter, of Elk Hill Church, Shelby County, Ky., Elder H. M. Curry, of Lebanon Church, Ohio, brother L. K. Smith, of Sulphur Fork Church, Henry County, Ky., Deacon Jeff Vories and brother W. H. Chilton, of Cane Run Church, at Turner's Station, Ky., met with said church and organized themselves into a presbytery for the purpose of ordaining brother Isaac W. Kelly to the full work of the gospel ministry.

Presbytery chose Elder Curry Moderator and Elder Ritter Clerk.

After hearing the candidate relate his christian experience and impressions to speak in the name of Jesus, proceeded as follows:

1. Imposition of hands of the presbytery.
2. Prayer by Moderator.
3. Charge delivered by Moderator.
4. Right hand of fellowship by presbytery and all members present, in the midst of much good feeling.

C. F. DUDLEY, Church Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at his residence in Hatcottsville, N. Y., Nov. 27th, 1907, Emory Robinson and Miss Edith E. Ploutz.

By the same, at the same place and date, George H. Lawrence and Miss Nettie M. Ford.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Druzella E. Snell was born in Callaway County, Mo., Nov. 16th, 1834. Her maiden name was Craig. She was united in marriage with Caswell Snell in 1856, and moved to Nebraska in 1869. They joined the Old School Baptists in the seventies, at Dawson, Nebr. They came to Texas in January, 1896, and located at Webster, Harris County, where brother Snell died Jan. 3rd, 1900. Our dear sister continued in the gulf coast country, except a short time, when she lived in Blum, Texas. A sister, Mrs. M. C. Whitcomb, and a niece and nephew live at Webster. Our sister attended the association at Blum in 1901, and joined the church by letter and was highly esteemed by all the brethren and sisters of her acquaintance. Poor health compelled her to live on the coast, but she, being of a very independent disposition, would not accept a home with any one until June, 1907, when she commenced keeping house for her sister. She had a stroke of paralysis on July 25th, 1907, from which she never recovered, gradually failing, losing her mind about the first of October, and was removed to the home of her nephew, B. A. Whitcomb, who is a graduate nurse; but in spite of all efforts, continued to grow weaker until Nov. 6th, 1907, when she died in fellowship of the Old School Baptists and in the true faith. Her remains were buried in Evergreen Cemetery, Houston, Texas, by the side of her husband. Our dear sister never complained, except that she was unable to work and be a help instead of a care. She had no children, but leaves one sister and four brothers; one sister died in Missouri just nine days after her death. It grieves us to give up our dear, faithful sister in a precious hope.

W. L. ROGERS.

BLUM, Texas, Nov. 27, 1907.

Mrs. Martha Gunnell Warfield died April 4th, 1907, at her home in Fairfax County, Va., in her 66th year. Mrs. Warfield joined the M. E. Church South when quite young, and continued with that denomination until about ten years ago, when she joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Frying Pan; she was baptized by Elder E. V. White, and was a faithful member until her death. She joined the church with her sister, Mrs. Williams. "Aunt Bettie," as she was affectionately called, was one of the best women the writer has ever known, and the even tenor of way won her younger sister, so that they walked together in their christian career. Mrs. Warfield was a good, conscientious woman, who tried to deal justly with every one, thus trying to obey the teaching of her Lord in her daily walk and conversation. The last years of her life were spent with her nephew and niece, Mr. and Mrs. Carberry Gunnell, who did everything for her comfort that children could have possibly done for a mother. The writer visited Mrs. Warfield a few days before her death, and saw the tender affection with which she was nursed by Mr. and Mrs. Gunnell, and indeed many of her nephews and nieces were present, watching with tender care over the careworn sufferer, who was passing so rapidly from the gaze of those who loved her.

On Saturday, April 6th, 1907, she was buried from Andrew Chapel after services by Mr. Oliver, by the side of her husband, R. D. Warfield, who preceded her to the tomb twenty-seven years and one month. Mrs. Warfield leaves one brother and one sister, Mr. Arthur Gunnell and Mrs. James Jackson, and many nephews and nieces and grandnephews and nieces to mourn their loss of a dear one.

Her funeral was attended by a large assembly of sympathizing friends and neighbors.

A FRIEND.

Alexander Harlan died at the home of his son-in-law, brother C. H. Nixon, in Lebanon, Ohio, on Saturday, August 8th, 1907. Brother Harlan was born in Wilmington, Ohio, and was brought up in the Quaker religion, but was brought to the knowledge of the truth, by grace, and joined the Old Baptist order about eighteen years ago. He was well established in the doctrine of the truth, and walked humbly and uncompromisingly therein. He was regular in his attendance at his meeting, and always enjoyed the preaching of the word and the society and fellowship of the saints. The end approached peacefully and quietly, and he welcomed its coming with many expressions of joy and glad anticipations, such as, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus," which were his last words on earth. Brother Harlan leaves a widow, two daughters, five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. The bereaved widow, sister Ann Harlan, is a faithful member of the church and an ardent lover of the truth of God. The Lord sustained her by his love and power under this sore bereavement. One of the daughters, sister Nixon, is also a member of the church and a lover of free grace preaching.

The funeral services were held at the house, and the writer tried to speak from the words, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

H. M. CURRY.

SISTER **Mildred J. Taylor** was born Oct. 21st, 1830, united with the old order of Baptists in the year 1867, was married to William H. Taylor in the year 1868, departed this life July 11th, 1907, making her

stay upon earth 76 years, 8 months and 20 days. Sister Taylor was always glad to have the brethren and sisters visit her, and her husband, while he is not a member of the church, is a lover of the doctrine of salvation by grace, and was always ready to wait on her, as her health was never good. Sister Taylor was well liked by all who knew her. As there were no children born to them her husband is left alone to mourn his loss.

The writer was called to attend the funeral, and used for a text, "Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season."—Job v. 26. The congregation was large, and sadness seemed to fill each heart present. Services were held at the house, after which her body was laid in the Vondan cemetery to await the resurrection morn. J. W. McCLANAHAN.

SISTER **Octavia Furr** was born Nov. 5th, 1827, died July 9th, 1907, aged 79 years, 8 months and 4 days. Sister Furr was baptized in the fellowship of the New Valley Church June 22nd, 1876, by Elder Joseph Furr. Sister Furr made her home with her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. I. Greenlease, whose home was a home for the Baptists. Her daughter, Mrs. Greenlease, died in June, 1906, but sister Furr still made her home with Mr. Greenlease until her death. She leaves one lonely daughter, who was faithful to her in caring for her in her last days, as she was confined to her bed for at least three months prior to her death. Another faithful one has been taken from our little band. May the Lord comfort the bereaved ones.

The funeral was conducted by Elder J. N. Badger, after which her remains were laid to rest in the cemetery at Leesburg. T. S. TITUS.

LEESBURG, Va., Dec. 11, 1907.

R. L. Ezell, of West Harpeth, Tenn., died in the triumph of faith May 31st, 1907. His life was a beautiful example of the christian religion, and he left many to mourn their loss, but we know our loss is his eternal gain, and try to be reconciled to the will of our Father.

His widow, A. D. EZELL.

FRANKLIN, Tenn., Dec. 16, 1907.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Norman Brown, N. Y., $1.00; Richard Waller, Mo., $1.00; J. A. Tandy, Okla., $1.00; Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $5.00; Jas. H. Wilson, Maine, $1.00; Martha Beardsley, Ill., $1.00; Elder T. R. Pittman, Kansas, $1.00.—Total, $11.00.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE following appointments were made by Elder H. H. Lefferts at the solicitation of the brethren of the different churches. He will fill them according to dates, if the Lord will:

Wilmington, Del., Dec. 26th, evening; Leesburg, Va., Dec. 27th, evening; Hughesville, Va., Dec. 28th, afternoon, and morning of 29th; Frying Pan, Va., Dec. 30th, morning; Broad Run, Md., Dec. 31st, afternoon; Kearneysville, W. Va., Jan. 1st, afternoon; Southampton, Pa., Jan. 2nd, evening.

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Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

THERE will be meeting at 54 Fuller St., Schenectady, N. Y., each Sunday in the month at 2 p. m., excepting the fourth Sunday, when it will be held at 8 p. m. All who love Old School Baptist doctrine are cordially invited to come.

SARAH JONES.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 76. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1908. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THEY SHALL NOT HURT NOR DESTROY.

(Isaiah xi. 6-9; lxv. 29.)

THE natural disposition of the four wild beasts and the two serpents presented in this wonderful figure, is to hurt and destroy the four domestic animals and the little child spoken of in connection with them. In nature the contrast between the animals here placed in pairs is very striking, the one of each pair being ferocious and destructive, while the other is mild, peaceful and defenceless. But here each of the wild beasts is placed in an attitude and position contrary to that which it would naturally assume, and in which its ferocious disposition does not appear. This natural disposition, however, does not appear as changed or eradicated, but as brought into subjection and held under powerful control. So the lion is eating straw like the ox, the wolf is dwelling with the lamb, the leopard lies down with the kid, the cow and the bear are feeding and the sucking child is safely and fearlessly playing with the most deadly of serpents.

It is not in nature that this miracle is seen, not in any earthly place, but in God's holy mountain, the church of our Lord Jesus Christ. Here are seen two contrary and antagonistic principles, the flesh and the Spirit, brought together in one person, in the experience of grace, and held under the control of that Spirit of Christ which is represented by the little child.

The coming and kingdom of Jesus Christ is presented by the prophet Isaiah in each of the places referred to above, and this figure is employed by the Spirit to show the effect of gospel power in the church of the living God. I do not regard this figure as showing something that is hereafter to be seen upon this earth among the nations of men, but as something that belongs to the work of grace, and is seen and felt in the gospel church and in the experience of every child of God.

These wild beasts do not represent natural men tamed, but natural principles, passions and propensities belonging to the flesh of a child of God. In our natural birth the life of Adam is manifested in us, with all the qualities and powers created in him, which are now depraved and vile. In our spiritual birth there is manifested in the same person the life of

Jesus, with all its holy and sinless principles and perfections. This new birth, manifesting a new life from above, does not change the sinful nature of the Adamic life, but brings it into subjection. Now are seen and felt in the one person of the christian the two lives, two principles, flesh and Spirit, the result of two births, "and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."—Gal. v. 17. This spiritual birth causes a great change to be experienced in the heart and life of a poor sinner, but not a change of the Adamic nature, as he soon discovers to his sorrow. A birth does not change the nature of anything, but greatly changes the circumstances.

If these animals, coupled together in this peculiar figure, are intended to represent the opposing principles of the human and the divine nature in the christian, how well and appropriately is the contrast arranged. The lion and the ox, the bear and the cow, the leopard and the kid, the wolf and the lamb, the asp and the sucking child. Here we may see the graces of the Spirit, as faith, affection, meekness, love, peace and the like, and over against each one is represented that natural power, passion or propensity which is most directly opposed to that spiritual grace, and most likely to hurt and destroy it. So the lion may well represent the natural intellect, the carnal mind. It is lordly, proud, self-confident, domineering, and has controlling power in natural things, but it "is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Opposed to that towering intellect is faith, which is the only power that can see and receive and understand spiritual things. They stand contrasted with each other, as the lion and the ox. The ox is patient, steady, reliable. Without faith it is impossible to please God, for faith sees the things of God, and by faith we walk, and not by sight.

Now the ox has no power over the lion, but the Spirit, the little child, has controlling power, and in God's holy mountain, in the church of God, the mind is brought under control by the Spirit, and is made to employ its powers, as a servant, in the work that will be to the benefit of the Lord's people. So, as the lion eats straw like the ox, the natural powers of the mind, when controlled by the Spirit, are employed in things that are for our good. Its learning and knowledge are used in reading, in writing, as holy men of old did, moved by the Holy Ghost, in attending to the things that pertain to external forms of worship. In these things the controlling power is manifested through faith. The ox does not do things like the lion, but the lion eats straw like the ox. But the lion is a lion still, and when in any degree released from the controlling power of the Spirit in that holy mountain it will tear and devour. The mind that was employed in reading the Bible, speaking of experimental things, singing hymns to God's praise, will, if controlled by the flesh, be engaged in profane and unwholesome literature, and in worldly and even vile enterprises. Thus living after the flesh we die, in the sense meant by the apostle; but neither faith nor any other grace of the Spirit shall be finally hurt or destroyed. Even Peter's faith did not fail, though he appeared to be at the borders of death and destruction. He yielded much to his strong, determined mind, but the little child had still the controlling power. Sometimes the intellectual power seems to prevail, and we are proud to see so fine and powerful

a creature as the lion engaged in the things of the kingdom of Christ, and feel that the brighter mind and the superior learning do have more influence and success in religious work. Then we are suddenly brought to see that we seem to be coming down from the beautiful eminence of God's holy mountain, and are being drifted to a fancied exaltation of our own, and the lion is not seen beside the unmoved, patient ox, but is "seeking whom he may devour."

How good it is of the Lord that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."—2 Cor. x. 4, 5. We cannot trust our own minds, we need the constant presence of the little child to lead us. Our own minds would lead us soon away from the things of faith, and then we cease to walk in the path of holiness, for we walk in that path only by faith, not by sight. How constantly we feel our need to call upon the Lord to lead us "in the paths of righteousness."

Sometimes we seem unable to distinguish between natural and spiritual affection, though there is as much difference as between the cow and the bear. When feeding together we might be well satisfied with them; but one is altogether a selfish principle. True spiritual affection, brotherly kindness and motherly care may be represented by the cow. They are unselfish. These affections are to be set upon things above.

I do not understand the leopard, the wolf, the asp and other animals to represent some specially vile and terrible passion or evil propensity that may spring up in our hearts suddenly, as fierce intruders which do not really belong there, and which we ought to, and can, drive out and destroy, but I regard them as representing all the principles and characteristics of the flesh, in which, Paul says, dwelleth no good thing. "The heart is deceitful above all things;" it is as a cage of unclean birds; it is a waste howling wilderness; nothing good dwells there, but howling beasts of prey and deadly serpents. To the wise of this world such statements appear the height of foolishness, but the exercised people of God know that the representation is none too strong. All the really good things that are in any man are from the Spirit; they are the fruit of the Spirit, as "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." When we consider the terrible list of the works of the flesh given by the apostle, we wonder how one spiritual grace can remain unhurt and not destroyed, and how hope can be left alive. But here is where we see the manifestation of spiritual power, "the power of God unto salvation." Power can only be manifested by an opposing force. We could see no power in the wind if we did not see the grass wave and the tree fall before it, or feel its force against ourselves. The power of God caused peace on earth. The power of Jesus was seen in the falling of the wind and the waves before his word. How can there be peace in the heart of a sinner when such opposing principles are there as are represented by these different animals mentioned by the prophet? Only by the power of the Spirit bringing the natural powers under control. And, still more wonderful, when the lion or the leopard or the asp appear to us to have broken away from under control, and to have done their destructive work, so that

we feel that love and peace and spiritual joy are dead in our hearts forever, to find ourselves again melted down in thankfulness and love before the Lord, and to find that all those things which the kid and the lamb and the weaned child mean to us are still there in our poor hearts. This is because the decree has gone forth that they shall not hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain.

We shall die if we live after the flesh; if we sow to the flesh we shall of the flesh reap corruption; if we do despite to the Spirit of grace we shall have sore punishment, (Heb. x. 29,) but the fruit of the Spirit, though its manifestation cease for the time, shall not be hurt nor destroyed.

We feel sometimes the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit so fierce that we wonder we still live; but to-day we have to acknowledge that the same hope is ours which was given so long ago, and although we still see evil and vileness in us, that is, in our flesh, yet we have to acknowledge that we are favored at times to enjoy sweet peace and confidence in our souls. Why is this? Because these graces of the Spirit cannot be hurt nor destroyed; they are altogether spiritual, but it is through the flesh they must be manifested.

The little child leads not only the ox and the lamb, but the wild beasts also, when we are in God's holy mountain; that is, the whole man is led. Not only is the spiritual mind led to desire to dwell in the Lord's house, but the natural mind is made to yield to that desire, and the feet are turned toward the place of meeting. It is as men, as having the two contrary natures, flesh and Spirit, that we are led, and desire to be led, by the Spirit of God. Sin is terrible to a child of God, and he can but groan under "the bondage of corruption;" but it is a comfort to be assured that the spiritual graces once planted within us shall never be hurt nor destroyed, but shall remain till our change comes, when we "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."—Romans viii. 21.

"For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." This cannot mean the literal earth, nor the nations of people upon it. The language and the figure will not allow of such a thought. Like all gospel truth this is known only in experience. The knowledge of the Lord is life, eternal life. (John xvii. 3.) It is said to fill the earth as the waters cover the sea. This is the new earth which the Lord has created, the people of Jerusalem. (Isaiah lxv. 18.) They are new creatures in Christ, but are partakers of flesh and blood, and so are still troubled by a sinful nature. No man can teach them the things of God. It is written in the prophets, "They shall be all taught of God." Just as knowledge concerning natural things comes from the head to every member of the body, so the knowledge of the things of God comes from Jesus, the Head, to every member of his body. The knowledge in each case is life. This knowledge of God, which is eternal life, fills the earth as the waters cover the sea. All the dark depths of the sea and its fearful gulfs are covered and hidden from our sight by the water; so when the Lord is pleased to give us to feel the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, the power and blessedness of that eternal life-knowledge so fills these earthen vessels, this new earth, that we lose sight for the time of the great depths and gulfs of evil and sin in our depraved nature, and to see Jesus only as our life and our righteousness, our song and our salvation.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 4, 1907.

A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE STRICT AND PARTICULAR BAPTISTS OF ENGLAND.

(*Continued from page 615, Vol. 75.*)

WILLIAM GADSBY was born at Attleborough, Warwickshire, England, in 1773, of very poor parents. In his youthful days swearing, lying, frothy conversation and mischief were his besetting sins. He was convicted of his state as a sinner when about seventeen years of age, and after lying under the terrors of the law for some time, was favored with a gracious deliverance into the liberty of the gospel. At this time he was among the Independents, but becoming convinced of believers' baptism as an ordinance of the Lord's appointment, he was baptized and joined a church at Coventry in 1793. He was by trade a ribbon weaver. His friends being impressed with the conviction that the Lord had called him to the work of the ministry, he first spoke in public at Bedworth on Whit-Sunday, 1798. He describes his early work as a minister as follows: "I preached to a number of poor people in a barn, and truly we had many precious visits from the Lord, which made the old barn a consecrated place to our souls, notwithstanding the thatch was off in many places in the roof so that we could see the sky through the numerous holes, so that when it rained the people had to remove from one part to another during the preaching to prevent getting wet through, and what was worse, the people were too poor to get it repaired." The poor people and their minister however struggled to build a new chapel, and in the providence of God his first introduction to the Baptists in Manchester arose from his going there to collect money toward it. He preached at the Baptist Chapel at Back Lane, which was very low at that time, and without a minister, but his testimony was so acceptable to the people that they gave him a call to settle over them, which he accepted, and removed with his family to Manchester in 1805. The Lord so blessed the word that the congregation rapidly increased and the chapel was rebuilt to accommodate twelve hundred people. This year, 1907, the old building has been pulled down, and a new chapel erected on the site, the old one having stood nearly one hundred years.

Mr. Gadsby was accustomed to visit London several Sundays every year, and likewise preached occasionally in many other parts of England. He preached the great truth of the gospel with the ability that God gave, and not man. The power of the Lord rested upon him, and He blessed the good word of His grace spoken by him to the souls of His people. The doctrine he preached dropped into their hearts under the anointing power of the Holy Spirit as the rain upon the thirsty ground, and his speech distilled as the dew. There was that power attending his word that knit the hearts of the people to the preacher for the truth's sake. By his tongue and pen he was a powerful champion of the gospel and the ordinance of believers' baptism, and undoubtedly his preaching and writing contributed greatly to the consolidation and growth of the Strict Baptist denomination in England. His works, "The Perfect Law of Liberty," and "An Everlasting Task for Arminians," have been several times printed and widely circulated in America. The last letter he wrote was to his son John, instructing him to give some of his works to a minister of America, for distribution there. He died in January, 1844, his last words being, "Free grace, free grace, free grace," thus to his dying breath bearing his testimony to salvation by free grace.

Closely associated with William Gadsby was John Warburton, of Trowbridge Wilts. He was inferior to the latter in pulpit gifts and mental power, but his preaching was characterized by an unction and savor which made it exceedingly acceptable to the people of the Lord. Warburton was born near Manchester, in 1776, of poor parents, and was brought up to the staple trade of the district, that of cloth weaving. Hearing that a new church, with a fine organ, was to be opened in a town a few miles from the place where he resided, he resolved to go, though at that time he was associated with evil companions and given to all manner of wickedness. The minister's text was, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." "These words," to use Warburton's own language, "entered my soul like a dagger that cut me through and through." He left the place a broken-hearted sinner, and for many months endured great distress of mind. He wandered about to different places of worship seeking comfort, but in vain, until at length, when sinking in despair, he was directed to the chapel of Mr. W. Roby, an Independent minister of Manchester. The preacher's text was, "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." Warburton says, "As Mr. Roby read his text, O the wonder and the glory that shone into my soul. How wonderfully was my soul led to see that the dear Savior had fulfilled that holy law which I had broken in ten thousand instances, that all my cursed sins had been laid upon him. His redeeming love flowed with such peace, and love, and joy, and liberty, into my soul that I hardly knew what and where I was." Warburton lived in this happy state of soul for nearly twelve months, being favored during this time with some very special and powerful manifestations of the Lord's love; but gradually the Lord's sensible presence was withdrawn, and he fell into great darkness of soul and experienced much of the workings of the corruption and unbelief of his heart. This new and unexpected experience drove him almost to his wit's end, and his distress was aggravated by sharp temporal trials, through which at the time he was likewise passing. He had a young family, and trade was very bad, and provisions dear, flour being five pence or six pence per pound, and other things in proportion; but this was the Lord's school to him, training him for his future work among the tried and tempted people of God. In this gloomy path he learned invaluable lessons of the depravity and unbelief of his fallen nature, on the one hand, and on the other, of the goodness and faithfulness of a prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God. Like Mr. Gadsby, Warburton's first religious association was among the Independents, but he became convinced of baptism as being the Lord's command to his believing people. For some years he tried all in his power to satisfy his mind without attending to it, for he felt a great reluctance to leave the Independent Church, the members of which had been very kind friends to him in his temporal trials; but at last he was enabled to break through these ties, and was baptized by Mr. Gadsby, who after the ordinance was administered placed his hand upon Warburton's shoulder and begged the Lord to raise him up as a servant in his hand for his own glory and the good of the cause of truth. His prayer was eventually answered. After preaching two or three years among the

churches of South Lancasshire and Yorkshire, he settled over a people at Rochdale, who at that time met in a room. As the Lord blessed his labors and the congregation increased they began to build a chapel which they called Hope Chapel, as it was begun in hope, carried on in hope, and a hope, too, which will never make ashamed.

However, with the great expense of building the chapel, and the poverty of the people, and the badness of the times, Warburton and his large family could not be supported by the people, and he left, being succeeded in the pastorate by John Kershaw, who was over the people until his death, in 1870, a period of between fifty and sixty years. Warburton removed to Tunbridge, in Wiltshire, about the year 1815, and gathering a large congregation around him built Zion Chapel, and labored there until his death, in 1857. During the summer months Mr. Warburton was accustomed to visit London and many other parts of the country, and his savory experimental preaching was greatly blessed, and contributed considerably to the growth of the Strict Baptist denomination.

Reference has been made above to John Kershaw as the successor to Mr. Warburton at Hope Chapel, Rochdale. During the greater part of his life he was very closely associated with Gadsby and Warburton, though he outlived both. He was born in the neighborhood of Rochdale, in 1792. His father was a godly man, a shoemaker by trade. His fallen nature early manifested itself in a hatred of the house of God and in following greedily after all manner of evil, but when about fifteen years of age the Lord was pleased to stop him in his mad career of sin and folly. He says, "I was walking alone in the footpath in the field next to the chapel when the Lord arrested me. There came such a power and solemnity over my mind as overwhelmed me; I stood still, trembling, and burst into a flood of tears; I felt that the powerful hand of God had laid fast hold upon my poor soul. Death, the day of judgment and the realities of a vast and awful eternity oppressed my thoughts and harrassed my feelings in a manner I can never describe." After many exercises his soul was set at liberty by the application of these words, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Describing this experience he says, "I read these precious words, and their blessed contents were brought into my soul with power and glory. I saw and felt that I was in Christ Jesus saved with an everlasting salvation. The burden of sin was removed and my conscience cleansed by an application of the precious blood of Christ. I read the chapter through with a joy I cannot describe." Though brought up among the Independents, he had been a Baptist in principle from the first time he saw the ordinance administered, and having the love of Christ shed abroad in his heart he felt it to be his duty and privilege to follow his Lord and Master in that solemn rite. He was baptized by Mr. Gadsby, becoming a member of Rochdale Church, over which Mr. Warburton shortly after became pastor. For some time after his marriage he passed through severe temporal trials. He was a cloth weaver, and at that time, the period of the great war between England and France, trade was very bad and provisions exceedingly dear. His friends discovering in his prayers and conversation that the Lord had a work for him to do in his vineyard, he was publicly called by the

church to the work of the ministry, and eventually became pastor of Hope Chapel, in succession to Mr. Warburton, as previously stated. He commenced his labors as minister at Rochdale in March, 1817, and his pastorate continued until his death in 1870. Like his intimate friends, Gadsby and Warburton, Mr. Kershaw was accustomed to pay annual visits to London and many other parts of England. His itinerate labors in South Lancasshire and Yorkshire were exceedingly abundant. The predominant trait in his character was a spirit of christian love and a great tenderness of walk before the Lord and His people. His preaching and labors likewise tended greatly to strengthen the Strict Baptist denomination.

There were at the time these servants of God flourished, that is, during the first half of the nineteenth century, many persons holding the principles of the doctrine of grace, but not Baptists. Some of these were followers of William Huntington, others were Independents still holding the truths that were prized by their godly ancestors, from which the great body of the Independents had sadly departed. Some were churchmen who had been driven out of the Established Church, because, after the death of Romine, Newton and other ministers like them, they could find no spiritual food within its pales. These flocked to hear Gadsby, Warburton and Kershaw when they came to London, and the result was that many turned to Baptist principles, as these eminent men contended earnestly for baptism by immersion. At the same time, they did not do this in a rancorous, bitter spirit, and preserved personal friendly relations with Henry Fowler, John Vinal and other Huntingtonian ministers, with whom they were in full agreement in all points save baptism.

Mention should here be made of James Wells, for many years the pastor of Surry Tabernacle, a large chapel in the south of London, capable of seating about two thousand persons, and which was usually filled with eager and attentive listeners. Mr. Wells was born in Hampshire in the year 1803, his parents being in an humble rank of life. After his call by grace he came to London and commenced preaching, and soon gathered around him a large body of followers. He was a strong and able advocate of the doctrine of grace, but more than once came into collision with Mr. Philpot, the editor of the *Gospel Standard*, more particularly over what was called the Rahab controversy. Still he was generally recognized as a servant of God, and no doubt he was used greatly by the Lord in the growth and development of the Strict Baptists in England.

In the year 1835 there was started by John Gadsby, son of William Gadsby, at Manchester, the *Gospel Standard*, and a little later there appeared the *Earthen Vessel*, founded by a minister named Charles Waker Banks. To a great extent the principles and contents of these two periodicals were the same, the only difference, perhaps, being that the *Earthen Vessel* received a lighter and shallower experience than would satisfy the editors of the *Gospel Standard*. A still further divergence took place in the year 1860, when a great controversy arose over what was called the "Sonship Question." Some ministers of the *Earthen Vessel* connection preached that Christ was not the Son of God by eternal generation, but that he became the Son of God by office; that is, that his title of Son only relates to his incarnation, and that he is not the eternal Son of God by nature. On the whole, the *Earthen Vessel* rather leaned to this

view, and probably most of the ministers of that connection now hold this same view; at least I was informed that this is the case by one of their ministers not very long ago. Mr. Philpot dealt with this view in some masterly articles in the *Gospel Standard*, and the affair caused a still wider cleavage between *Gospel Standard* and *Earthen Vessel* churches.

Having now introduced the Baptists to my readers I will leave the subject.

C. J. FARNCOMBE.

LONDON, England.

THEY LIMITED GOD.

"YEA, they turned back, and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel."—Psalms lxxviii. 41.

The holy writer used these words after rehearsing the manifold blessings bestowed upon the children of Israel. They were still God's people, as the opening verse of this Psalm testifies: "Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth." Notwithstanding the many blessings with which He blessed them, and the wonderful works which God did before their eyes, yet, "For all this they sinned still." But the Lord was "full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not." Some were destroyed, it is true, but as a people they were preserved —saved from destruction. This turning back and tempting God could be done only by God's people. It was a grievous sin. Is it not a grievous sin to-day? None but God's people can turn back and thus tempt the Lord. Wise men of the world have always limited God in all things, rejecting his testimony and setting aside his decrees of justice. It is the Lord's people that I want to speak about. There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, but there is evident condemnation for all those redeemed and quickened sinners who now walk after the flesh. Is it not walking after the flesh to deny the only Lord God, who hath bought them? Have not some to-day turned back from following Jesus? How have they turned back? By claiming that they merit esteem at the hand of the Lord in helping God to build up his cause in the land, holding that the Lord's hand is a little short to do everything, therefore it is necessary for man to aid him in melting the hearts of the people by the words of man's wisdom. This is to make simple (or simplify) the gospel to the understanding of men. The testimony of God, I have often thought, and it seems to be sustained by the Scriptures, that when believers cannot trust God in his providence, in regard to their worldly prosperity, that they then tempt him. When they appeal to men for future aid, for fear that providence will be against them, this is tempting God; then their whole trust is not in him. God says that he is a jealous God; he also says, My name is Jealousy. If believers fail to render all their trust in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, then they have turned back and tempted God. Many things common to all the saints might be specified in detail that draw us from the path of holiness in this life. I shall not speak of many, but I am now just thinking of a conversation which I had with the late Elder Samuel Danks, in 1869, at his residence, in Cincinnati, Ohio. Somehow our conversation turned in the direction of insurance; he said an insurance agent waited on him one day and asked him if he had his house insured? "Yes," replied brother Danks. "In what company have you got it insured?" was asked. "In heaven," was brother Danks' reply.

He said to me that he felt to fully trust in the Lord, even to the loss or the preservation of his house and property. I mention this to show the strong faith which brother Danks had in the "Father of the Lord Jesus Christ." This awakened, as it were, in my mind thoughts about rendering unto God that which belongs to him. I have ever felt, since I have been made to believe on his precious name, that I cannot yield too much dominion unto the Lord over my thoughts and actions, yet I am just as prone to sin along this line as the poorest of the flock; it is only by the spirit of prayer and supplication that my mind is brought back to view my infirmity. I feel to realize that I am walking after the flesh when I am looking to man for help in any temporal trouble; however, this seems to be the condition of my mind oftener than otherwise. The apostle exhorted the primitive saints: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." Have we received him as a Sovereign, unlimited in power and mercy? If so, let us go on unto perfection, and not turn back, but have our eye single unto the glory of God, for if our eye be single we shall be full of light, and if we are full of light the command of God's prophet claims our attention, viz.: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Most surely if we have received the Lord as a complete Sovereign, and we are found limiting him in any way whatever, then we are turned back from serving him in spirit and in truth. If this is our lamentable condition, that is, we are turned back, tempting Jehovah, limiting the Holy One of Israel, who is to blame, the creature or the Creator? Surely God "knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust;" must the dust enlightened from on high be justified in turning from the Light and tempting the Holy One? No flesh shall glory in his presence nor be justified in his sight, neither shall the God of Jeshurun be responsible for the errors or transgressions of his enlightened people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God and be cut back to the main stem of vitality by the Spirit which searches all things, yea, the deep things of God. Limiting God is idolatry, the greatest sin found among the children of men. Idolatry must have been found among the primitive saints of the gospel day, for Paul exhorted the Corinthian brethren to "flee from idolatry," and John's warning: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." There were some who were vainly puffed up by their fleshly mind, not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God; these were idolatrous people who did not hold the Head in proper estimation. They limited the Holy One, exalting the flesh above the Spirit's teaching, preferring to eat their own bread and wear their own clothing, but desired His name to cover their sin. This is a great limit of the power of his grace and mercy. O what a slur against Omnipotence! Can one who believes in Jesus be ashamed of the great scope of his power? Why not give him jurisdiction over all things? Why not deliver all things up to his care and custody? It is written that whomsoever believeth upon this Corner-stone shall not be ashamed; again, they shall not be confounded; and again, they shall not make haste. Here is set forth the faith of God's elect; let them then contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints in all its fullness and

beauty in the face of opposition, for His great name's sake.

I submit these thoughts to the readers of the SIGNS, if they are approved by the editors.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

HELENA, Oklahoma.

FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE.

(Psalm cv.)

THIS Psalm is a narration of the wonderful history and providence of God with and over the people called Jacob and Israel, and who were the children of one man, called out alone and separated from his father's house. The purpose of God in this seems to have been to raise up and develop a seed of righteous men in the flesh upon earth, to see whether men instructed, warned and enlightened to the highest degree of moral instruction could obey the Lord of their own will and choice. This thought is expressed in the forty-fifth verse of the above named Psalm: "That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws." The tenth verse informs us that the covenant was confirmed unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant. The eighth verse tells us that He remembered his covenant forever, the word which he commanded for a thousand generations. This forever was the whole time of the Jews in covenant relation with God by the law of circumcision, which was not of Moses, but of their father Abraham, and of Isaac and Jacob his descendants, and which reached the period of its termination at the coming of Christ, and at his manifestation at the baptism of John in the river Jordan, with the descent of the Holy Spirit upon his head, John being the last of the thousand generations under the law, and the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ in his ministry. Yea, during all this time the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, with the children called Israel after them, remembered his covenant which had been given to Israel for an everlasting covenant throughout their generations, when circumcision and ceremonies lost all signification forever, as a system of obedience with honor and praise to God, and hence, from this consideration, the preaching of John was, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." It is said that this same John had his garment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins, and his meat was locusts and wild honey. By these signs he showed his own repentance, in turning away from the old Hebrew covenant of legal service under the reign of circumcision, imposed upon the seed of Abraham until the time of reformation. (See the epistle to the Hebrews.)

Now we have reached a very critical point in the investigation of this Psalm, which was written with the pen of a ready writer: David, the man after the heart of God, and in covenant also, as another sign of the day of the Lord, was the writer. For it is said, "If Jesus [Joshua] had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day." In this sentence, which declares the sure mercies of David, God spoke of and limited a certain day, (not days, but one day, known to the Lord) saying in David the son of Jesse, Judah, Isaac and Abraham, To-day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts as in the wilderness. In this Psalm David had followed the children of Israel in covenant with God from Egypt to Canaan and then down to the coming of Christ. God himself was the author and husbandman of the scheme of culture and building of the

house of Israel to see whether they would be obedient or not, as before declared by Him at the beginning from the top of Mount Sinai. I say, David in this Psalm had followed Israel from the beginning to the end of the generation in the covenant of promise to Abraham, and the last verse declares the purpose of God in it all, which was that they might observe his statutes and keep his laws. Then the psalmist adds, "Praise ye the Lord;" and we behold the end thereof in disaster, humiliation and shame, in the destruction of that whole nation, city, temple and all the rites thereof, which were plowed as a field. "If then I be a father, where is mine honor? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord." For ye have rebelled against me; yea, this whole nation, wherefore I will give your city to the flames and your people to the spoiler. I will break the staff of Ephraim and the staff of Judah, and Israel shall be spoiled of both their kings. It is now, and has been from the days of John the Baptist, that no flesh living can be justified by the law; nor by the law can Israel bring forth the fruits of righteousness to the praise of the Lord God of Jacob and the Redeemer of Israel. Yea, rather, the law worketh wrath. Where no law is there is no transgression. But death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the manner (or similitude) of Adam's transgression. This does not mean little children only; but by Adam's transgression all men became sinners; and "the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." And here at this point Paul predicates the gospel of salvation from sin and death in the person and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is written that Abraham saw his day and was glad; and his day was not the Jewish Sabbath, or our Sunday. "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." This presents the difference between the old and the new covenants. "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed."

This is the summing up of the whole gospel. But the theme is endless, and I must conclude. But the praise of the Lord shall never cease in the heaven of glory.

I. N. NEWKIRK.

WOODSTOCK, Ontario, Dec. 15, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I feel like writing you a little to-day; I am lonely and sad; my days are spent in vanity and darkness, almost without comfort, so I do not feel that I can write on spiritual things, and yet I feel I have nothing else to offer you. Like the poet, I feel, Hardly can they be worse who have never heard his name. It seems no one can get much lower than I am in the spiritual scale; but in reading the last SIGNS O how glad I did feel to read Mrs. Lee Grafton's letter; I felt I could clasp her hand and say, O how precious your words are to me, for I am groping along with you in the deep, dark valley of doubts and fears. I often think this is the valley of the shadow of death, for it seems to me as if the shadow of death is over me all the time, and O that I could say, "I will fear no evil," but alas, I am full of fears. Had sister Grafton put her street address I would have written her. Then Elder Hardy's letter was very good and comforting. O to think of all my sins being laid on Jesus, the great Sin-bearer, the great Mediator, the Daysman; I felt, O what great need I have of the Daysman, one to intercede for poor, vile me. It did me good to read his article, and I

thought old brother Dawson's letter good, as it was a dying testimony to the truth of God. I do not want to say for an instant that any of the letters were not good, but it is only the ones that seemed to touch my poor, sore, tried heart that I speak of; perhaps the others may have been for some other characters whose condition of mind was different from mine, for I often think there are but few of God' people (if I indeed am one, or if there is a God and he has a people,) like me, for many dark, infidel thoughts come to my mind, yes, and stay there, too, though I would drive them away if I could, but they are my daily companions, and I can say with the psalmist that they say unto me daily, "Where is thy God?" Sometimes I feel as if I could reason out by logic that there must be a God, then again reason seems to be taken away and I am left utterly alone, not one to stand by me. I think it is said of the Savior, that in his humiliation his judgment was taken away, and I wonder, Is that like poor me? for so often my judgment seems all gone, and O how sad it does seem to be left without any judgment; that is, cannot see things right, everything is upside down, and I am unable to see or feel how they can be set right; yet amidst all the darkness and doubt where do I look for help and salvation? Not to myself, for I know I am a poor, feeble worm of the dust; not to my fellow-man, for I know he is just as unable as myself to help, and how can I look to the Lord? for I have sinned against him and he must be weary of me, of my forgetfulness of him and of my many backslidings and my waywardness; but there is nowhere else to go, all the world and all worldly help is shut against me, and in the words of the psalmist, Our eyes are unto thee, O Lord. Yes, I cry unto him in the night season and am not silent, and though I so often feel there is no use in looking to Him who is of purer eyes than to behold evil, yet I must look, I must seek his face, I must cry out in my heart, O God, look upon mine affliction and my sorrow, and release my soul from prison and death, and though often my cries seem in vain, yet I continue to cry and supplicate for mercy and for a restoration of former joys, when I could say and feel that where sin abounded grace did much more abound. I have thought much of late, Why do I not give up crying and praying, when it looks to be of no use? then I think of the poor widow that the Savior speaks of, who went to the unjust judge to avenge her, but he would not for awhile, but the poor widow's cries were so importunate, so prolonged, that he gave way; but O how much stronger and how much more importunate are God's people who cry unto Him for a restoration of the joy of his salvation; how much enters into their cries. If I do not love him, why do I cry for him and long for him? I think I love his name, and once I could say with delight, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds," but now the name seems empty, and yet I hope I love it. I hope I love his people and his doctrine, and love to ascribe all honor and glory to his name, and that his name is above every name, but I want to feel the power of that name that is above every name in my heart, feel that he is mine and I am his, and to bask in the smiles of his face, to feel his love in my heart chasing away the darkness, ignorance and guilt. I would that my heart were softened instead of so stony and hard, and that I could be more kind and forgiving, and that I could take up the Bible and read it with enlightened eyes and see its beauties, but instead I

must go along my weary road, and if like him I profess to follow, I must be sorrowful and acquainted with grief. I think I realize that his was not worldly sorrow, but sorrow as he contemplated all the trials and temptations he must go through; tempted that there was no God, and that God had forsaken him, and then the load he had to bear: the sins of his people. O dreadful load; no wonder he was sorrowful even unto death, and so his children must also sorrow even unto death.

Yours in sorrow and affliction,

R. SCATES.

DOVER, N. J., Oct. 16, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR PASTOR:—My mind has been with you and the church at Hopewell all day. Some weeks before I came away I seemed to be in so cold and dark a state of mind I thought that surely I did not know one thing of those precious spiritual things which I had professed to know. It seemed to me that all my kindred must see it, too, and that I had been deceiving them; but last night in my wakeful hours the cloud was lifted and I truly enjoyed those hours of wakefulness; it seemed but a moment until daylight. These words seemed to awaken me as though they had been spoken by some one: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." They came with a sweetness that I cannot describe to any one. Surely I can say I love the brethren, and I do not remember the time when they did not look like saints, and my heart went out in love to them, and it is still so when I read their dear words or hear them speaking the things I love. I have of late been made to see again the difference between the things of the world and the things of the Spirit. I seem to have to be isolated at times to see how little I care for the world and all its joys; then I look within and see how merciful the dear Lord has been to a poor sinner like me; he has established my goings, put a new song in my mouth, and I desire to keep singing this song always, as dear sister Bonnie and others now do. If I could but know that I am established in the truth, rooted and grounded in it, how glad I would be. I am visiting my mother-in-law, sister Brewster, and again we are talking of our hope and fears, and how good it is to get out of the world again for a short time. The Lord has been gracious to me all these past years in leading my faltering footsteps among his people, where I can hear his glorious word proclaimed and speak of his goodness and mercy.

I shall be glad to get back with you all again. I expect to go to New York to the meeting before I return.

Sister Bonnie's letters have been of much comfort to me since I came away, as has also the SIGNS. It is now Sunday morning, and just the hour for worship at home; I have had a strong desire to be with you all there and to hear the glorious things you are telling. I have been thinking of this beautiful hymn:

> "Glorious things of thee are spoken,
> Zion, city of our God;
> He, whose word cannot be broken,
> Formed thee for his own abode."

O how blessed, I thought, are those who know the joyful sound, and it is glorious to hear them tell of this salvation.

> "On the Rock of ages founded,
> What can shake thy sure repose?"

What is more solid and lasting than a rock? As I sit beside the beautiful Hudson River, on the top of the famous Palisades, three hundred feet high and all solid rock, beautiful to the natural eye,

my thoughts go back to the time when and by whom all these things were made, and I appreciate the beauty of them when I can see His handiwork. How wonderful are all these things! The sun, moon and stars are made and kept by him. Just so day and night come and go in order, as our God designed they should. He makes no mistakes, yet I find much fault with the path which he has marked for me to tread. I believe firmly in the predestination of all things, and there have been many times in my life when I have been made to stand still and see the salvation of God. All must be best since ruled by him. "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." I hope this is not boasting; I have felt it to be more of a meek, submissive spirit. I would like always to have that feeling; but with such blessings in my hands I must not murmur or repine. Mother and I have been talking to-day about the good seed sown, and while men slept an enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and that they must grow together until the harvest time, which is the end of the world. I feel as though the dear old sister, past eighty years of age, has been instructing me in excellent things. I am a poor sinner, a mere worm of the dust, but I do desire to be found walking as becometh a child of grace, as I hope and trust I am. "By grace are ye saved." It is "not of works, lest any man should boast." I feel to say with the dear Savior, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." Can you pray for me, my dear brother? I need the prayers of the saints. I need their encouraging words and hearty handshakes to help me on in my wilderness journey.

With love and fellowship, I am, I hope, your sister,

MARY BREWSTER.

LANHAM, W. Va., Oct. 1, 1907.

BROTHER KER:—I heartily indorse your writings, as they are God-honoring; your editorial in the last number was surely good. I would be glad to see those who claim to be Primitive Baptists prove it by preaching such God-honoring doctrine as yourself, Elder Chick and old brother Beebe did, with many others I could mention. Jesus came to seek and to save poor, lost sinners who could not save themselves; he is their salvation, both in time and eternity; he saves to the uttermost all that come to God by Him; he is the author and finisher of our salvation. We have learned in the school of Christ that the flesh profits nothing; the letter kills, but the spirit giveth life. When led by the Spirit, we walk in the light; when left to ourselves we grope in darkness; then I am like an owl of the desert, I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the housetop. "Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down;" "when I would do good, evil is present," so I find "in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." I have generally told the people that we Old Primitive Baptists are the only people on earth who preach salvation a free salvation. What could be more free than a gift? But I know of some who claim we must buy a little for time, and it is to be bought with the works of the flesh, yet the flesh profiteth nothing. If God's people are to be a willing people in the day of his power, can they be willing sooner by the works of the flesh? Will I miss any blessing that was treasured up in Jesus for me? I think not. When we receive Jesus we receive all, for he is all to us who are led by the Spirit and have no confidence in the flesh; yea, happy is that people whose God is the

Lord. "The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down. The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season." God has made provision for the owl to get his meat in the desert. "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me." "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." In this chapter David is relating his experience, or the dealings of the Lord with him; he desired to be led in the way, a definite, particular way (not ways). Surely David's experience is ours: Try me, and see if there be any wicked way in me, such as conditional time salvation. Jude speaks of a common salvation which is common to all the saints; they all understand that it is of the Lord from start to finish. O dear child of God, let me say to you, Watch those who are sowing the field with mingled seed, and are trying to get a garment made of two materials, wool and linen; the linen your eternal, the wool your conditional time salvation; one by grace and the other by works.

This may be my last, as I feel that my life is near the end.

Yours in tribulation,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

ELGIN, Oregon, Oct. 27, 1907.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS:—I have been reading some old copies of our dear paper, and each communication seems like a precious balm to my weary heart, and a comfort to the soul that is alone on life's billowy sea. While earnestly entreating for that sure support I was impressed to read Matthew xxviii, and at verse 10, and from there on, a strength and gracious sweetness of hope revived, and the precious promises were assured to me in the glorious fullness of love to the driving out of all earthly fears; and, no longer encumbered by worldly cares, I see the mighty power and gracious mercy of Him whose heart is with us, even in the valley of Baca, and whose cross is upon those who are counted worthy to walk in his footsteps and rest in his love.

"Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?" are the words that impressed me to write at this time. I know that somehow and somewhere there are mercies and blessings that could extend to me even while life endures, yet, for purposes of his own glory, are these apparent blessings withheld, and the last ray of hope is removed, and only the divine power is left as a testimony that in the great and terrible day of the Lord no earthly power or favor shall exist. I do not see that any com-

fort could come from a trust that retains any part of our knowledge or power as separate from the glory and goodness of God. To me he is all in all; through him I come to the fountain of love, to the perfect love that casteth out fear; and in that happy state I dwell upon the mountain and see the weary travelers upon the plain below, burdened with the love of self and the cumbered weight of self-aggrandizement. O that I may be permitted to thus abide continually upon this mount, and near that burning bush, and in plain view of that radiant light which outshines the brightness of the noonday sun where no cloud nor dust can intervene. This is the beauty of vision, the crowning glory of cherubim and seraphim, the wonder of the poor creatures that would hide themselves from its presence, or stand in wonder and questioning. Is this the city of the living God? I sometimes fear that it is too good to be true that I am a partaker (and not an onlooker) of the great and wonderful dealings of the Lord with the children of men.

Dear friends, I shall weary you; I must do that which my hands find to do, and if my work is blessed I wish to be one who ministers to the needy, for I would not again be numbered with those who say, Be ye fed; be ye clothed. In these things I have seen the depths; but the Lord's will be done. It took every earthly treasure and the chief objects of my affection, yet there is mercy for those who are caused to interest themselves in these matters. I need your prayers, and trust that I am only reckoned with those who are not ashamed to weep, even as Jesus wept.

(MRS.) M. J. LEE.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., Sept. 20, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER MCCLANAHAN:—I am pleased to have so good a letter from you. I cannot delay answering it in my poor way, but, as you say, please throw the mantle of charity over what I may say amiss.

This day marks my sixty-third year of this mortal pilgrimage, and I feel to say, Few and evil have been my years. Forty years ago last May, if I mistake not, I was baptized by dear brother Byrnside; he is gone to his rest. Dear, strange brother, I do hope God has raised you up, called and qualified you to fill his place, for he was one who could preach and rightly divide the word of truth. Brother Jehu Byrnside in lifetime was a favorite preacher with me. I have always been led to believe if I ever had an awakening from nature's dark night that God sent a message by him to my poor soul. Weary and fatigued with a long, hard day's travel on foot, he called to stay all night at my father's house; before retiring he read the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, gave out and sung:

"Did Christ o'er sinners weep?
And shall our cheeks be dry?
Let floods of penitential grief
Burst forth from every eye."

He then prayed, and it all seemed to be for me. I have often in my darkest seasons wondered why the precious services of that memorable night had such awful effect on me. Why, brother, I do believe the Spirit of God came with mighty power, for the word was quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, dividing asunder both joints and marrow. O to think he was led "as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." The whole chapter has always been very dear and precious to me, for through it I was made to feel that my

sins, my cruel sins, had helped to cause the sufferings and death of the innocent Savior. I often think of his agonizing prayer for his dear disciples, and not for them only, but for all who should believe on him through their word. My brother, was it ever a question with you whether that prayer extended to and embraced you? It has been so with the poor, unworthy writer many times. It saved poor Peter, and I am led to believe it will save all who trust in God for salvation.

When I began this letter I intended to tell you how thankful I am to God for the impression he has given you to visit this part of the country and preach the preaching he bids you. I do hope there will be a way opened for many to hear the gospel preached in its purity.

It seems I could write this whole tablet to-night, but would it be interesting to any one?

E. JOHNSON.

BOOTHWYN, Pa., December, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Sometimes in the wakeful hours of the night portions of Scripture have been presented to my mind with such comfort and assurance that I have wished for the pen of a ready writer, so that I might express in suitable words just what I have seen and understood. Such seasons are very sweet and refreshing, as well as edifying. On one such occasion I seemed to get a clear view of what would constitute a perfectly organized church; in other words, a visible church walking in perfect order. We learn from Scripture that the church, the body of Christ, is a perfect church, for we read: "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." While we can rejoice in the truth that Christ has perfected forever them that are sanctified, we have learned in this life that "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." This being true, we do not expect perfection in organized churches in this life. Of the seven churches of Asia, Christ had somewhat against five of them, so it would not be surprising if churches of the present day were sometimes walking in disorder; but how heartily we might all wish that we might walk as near as possible in perfect order. While thinking of these things in those favored hours of the night some pertinent questions seemed suggested to my mind: Do we each esteem others better than ourself? Do we desire to have the preeminence? Are some members accounted of little value? Are others considered great members? In all things whatsoever we would that men should do to us, do we even so to them? Are churches always in a true spiritual condition when doing business? Do we always submit cheerfully to majority rule? In a word, are we all walking according to the following: "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves"? Paul exhorted the brethren at Ephesus: "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Well might we hope and pray that we be in the condi-

tion of the churches of Judea, Galilee and Samaria, when they were walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost and were multiplied.

Yours unworthily,

B. F. HAMILTON.

MELBOURNE, Ontario, Aug. 23, 1907.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I felt that I wanted to have a little talk with you when you were in Canada. I cannot hear very well since my affliction, but I understood all you said when you were in Ekfrid, and it was such a comfort to hear that sweet gospel ring once more; I felt that I could say:

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

The sight of your face seemed to cheer my poor, hungry, thirsty soul. I am very hungry for some spiritual food; surely my harp is hung on the willow; but there is a blessing promised them that hunger after righteousness. I can say in truth that my soul pants for the living God; may the dear Lord give us patience to wait on him. O what a blessed comfort when we can feel the sweet assurance that he has pardoned all our sins and will remember them no more forever. But O those gloomy doubts and fears arise and mingle with our sighs; how they make me tremble many times, and I stop and think, Can it be possible that such a just Judge will have mercy on one so vile as I?

I had a few lines from sister McPhail, of Dunwich, and she told me how much she enjoyed your preaching and your short visit with her. She is a dear sister in the Lord; she loves sound doctrine: Christ exalted and man abased, and that is what I like. I have had the reading of your letter to my brother Robert after your visit to Canada, and I rejoice with you in the coming of your daughter to the church, and also in the pleasant time you had with the church in Lobo, and with all the rest over here. Surely it is a cause of rejoicing to all the church to see that the Lord has not forsaken us; for when the Lord's time comes to favor Zion nothing can hinder; the work goes on just as our God sees fit, and in his own time. I do feel that there are many around the fold waiting for the crumbs that fall from the Master's table.

I do not feel that I can write anything that will be profitable or comforting to any of the Lord's dear children, and so had better close.

With christian love to you all, from a poor, weak sister in hope of life eternal,

(MRS.) A. CARTER.

PROPHETSTOWN, Ill., Nov. 1, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—I see I am somewhat behind in renewing my subscription to our dear old paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I think I have been a regular paid up subscriber for more than fifty years. I became interested in reading it when a boy about twelve years of age, and I am now just past my seventy-sixth year. My father and mother were firm Old School Baptists, and took the paper from its first volume; that is the way I became an early reader. I remember well how I used to steal away and hunt up the old volumes to see if they were in accord with the Bible, as I then believed, and still believe, that revelation is of God, setting forth the great love of God and the plan of salvation to the chosen race, chosen in Christ before the world began. Dear friends, I want to say I cannot see any difference in the present volume from the first. I verily rejoiced to read it at that time, and still

do. I remember well sitting up many nights rejoicing to hear Elder Beebe talk of the love of God through his Son Jesus Christ. Elder Beebe often used to stop with father and mother over night in his travels from his place to Delaware County to attend meetings; that was when I was young; I have become old and deaf, and cannot hear conversation or preaching, but, dear brethren, write on, for I do rejoice to read your writings.

I am, I hope, your brother in Christ,

HIRAM BOGART.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Springfield Church, to the associations and churches with which we correspond, sends greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The time is here when you expect our annual epistle called the Circular Letter. We therefore call your attention to the words of the leper, recorded in Matthew viii. 2: "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." The fame of Jesus' preaching, teaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing all manner of diseases had already gone forth throughout all Syria. This poor leprous man had heard the fame thereof and was given faith to call upon Him, knowing that Jesus alone could heal him. This is prayer indeed: "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." It ascribes to Jesus the honor and power which truly belongs to him only. In it there is not the least doubt expressed but that Jesus is able to do what is asked. Such prayer is always acceptable, and is worshiping in spirit and in truth. In answer to this prayer, though short and pathetic, Jesus put forth his hand of sovereign power, love and mercy, saying, "I will; be thou clean." There is virtue in Jesus; a touch of his hand or a command from his lips will cleanse the foulest stain that sin ever produced in mortal man. We know that faith is the gift of God, and that without faith it is impossible to please him, therefore our faith is in him, and not in self or in man in any sense. Jesus, of whom we have been writing, is both Lord and Christ, therefore let all the angels of God worship him. Amen.

A. MELLOTT, Moderator.

J. C. MELLOTT, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Springfield Church, to the associations and churches with which we correspond, sends greeting in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Our God in his wisdom and mercy has brought us together once more to sing his praise and extol the honor of his great name for the redemption of the church through the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose ministers have come to us in the fullness of the gospel, declaring that salvation is of the Lord and that the heirs of promise are destined to eternal glory. We have received your messengers and ministers with love and fellowship as the followers of Jesus, and believe that you are contending for the faith once delivered to the saints.

Our next meeting is appointed to be held with the Fairview Church, Fulton County, Pa., on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1908, at 11 o'clock a. m., where we hope to receive your Minutes and messengers in love and fellowship of the gospel of Christ.

A. MELLOTT, Moderator.

J. C. MELLOTT, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1908.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ROMANS XI. 14-36.

DEAR BROTHER:—I would like to have your views upon the eleventh chapter of Romans, beginning with the fourteenth verse, and especially the twenty-fourth verse.

Yours in hope,

J. E. BUCKNER.

PINE HILL, Texas, Sept., 1907.

We are glad, whenever we can, to respond to such requests; but sometimes we do so with especial hesitancy, because there have been differing views among brethren, all of whom we esteem and whose views we regard with respect. Concerning some things in this chapter there have been differences of opinion, and while we have felt decided about some things in it, we do not feel like writing as though we desire to antagonize any other brother. Manifestly also, we cannot in one number comment upon all the chapter, or upon all that is embraced from the fourteenth to the twenty-fourth verses, still we feel to present some thoughts upon what we have understood to be the general intent of the apostle in this chapter.

At the close of the tenth chapter the apostle quotes from the Old Testament, language which presents Israel as a disobedient and gainsaying people. This and other declarations in the Old Testament declare the gathering in of the Gentiles under the gospel dispensation, and the fact that Israel, or the Jews, would not acknowledge the Messiah when he should come. Although they were the chosen people of God, typically and nationally, under that covenant, yet this did not prove that they were spiritual or that they were, as a whole, embraced in the covenant of grace, through which alone was salvation. Now some one would say to Paul, Do you mean by these quotations, and by your conclusions from them, that God has cast away the Jews, his people whom he foreknew, utterly? No, says Paul, God hath not cast away his people and received the Gentiles alone. The chosen people of God under the gospel are among the Jews as well as among the Gentiles. Receiving the Gentiles does not signify the casting away of the Jews. In the first two or three verses of the eleventh chapter Paul shows what he intends to set forth. That God had not cast away his people whom he foreknew he shows first by saying that he was also a Jew and one of the strictest among them. I have been called by grace, and called to be an apostle of Christ; therefore God hath not cast away the people to which I belong by nature. Still further on he shows more fully what he signifies by referring to the fact that Elijah had once thought that he alone was the servant of God in Israel, but that the Lord had shown him there were as many as seven thousand beside himself who had not forsaken the true God. And so now, he says, there is also a remnant according to the election of grace. It appears to us that the general thought of the apostle is just this: that as all men, Jews and Gentiles, are fallen in Adam, and lost in that fall, and that all are under condemnation alike, so has God chosen

from the Jews as well as the Gentiles a people to his praise. National Israel was not under the old covenant saved from their sins by the observance of it. The great mass of them were unrenewed persons, and perished, as did the heathen Gentiles, in their sins. There was nothing required by the rituals of their service that an infidel could not perform as well as a believer, and again and again it was proved that the true fear of the Lord was not in their hearts. As were the Gentiles so were the Jews by nature, and all their rituals did not confer grace upon them, or cause that they should fear God; but there were a few among them who did know the power of grace in their hearts, and who did truly love and serve God. In like manner now there is a remnant according to the same election of grace. Considered with regard to the matter of final salvation, there never had been more than a remnant of them who really loved and served God, and there still was a remnant of them of the same heart and mind, even as was also the case among the Gentiles. There were Gentiles elected to life and glory, and so there were Jews elected to the same life and glory. Paul was himself a proof of this among the Jews, and the many Gentile believers were proofs of this among the Gentiles. Paul opens the subject in this way, and then shows what he means by the election of grace; and this is that it is not of works, or because of works, that men are elected to life. If it had been so, then this election would have belonged to the Jews only, and Gentiles would have had no part in it. He takes occasion also in verse six to show that salvation by grace excludes all work, even as salvation by their works would exclude all grace. No matter whether a man had worked, as had the Jews, or had not worked, as was the case with the Gentiles, salvation came to both by grace alone. The law could not give life, it could only show forth and emphasize the sinfulness of men, and then condemn that sinfulness. The law given to Israel was not intended as a method of salvation, but only to reveal sin and show the absolute need of salvation by grace alone, if indeed any soul was to be saved at all; this is plain from verse six. Paul then quotes from the Old Testament again, and shows how utter was the failure of the Jews in abiding by the law which God had given them. The purpose of God in the giving of the law to them was that they might learn, and other men through them might learn, how impossible it was that salvation should come to any soul by his own goodness. God knew when he gave them the law that they should stumble at it. He knew that not one of them would ever succeed in keeping it. He knew the frame of men, how frail they were. He therefore gave his law to prove them and to show how impossible it is that any man should be saved by obeying the law. Therefore Israel had not obtained what he sought after, because no man could attain to it by his own seeking or by his own obedience; but the election had obtained it and the rest were blinded. The seven thousand in the days of Elijah had obtained it, and even so now there was a remnant who had obtained it, and they were the election of grace.

Thus in them was fulfilled all that is contained in verses eight to ten. But was it the purpose of God that they should fall, as though this were the end that he had in view? Does God purpose that men fail simply that they should fail and be condemned? No, says Paul again, another end was in view with Jehovah. Our God, according to his eternal pur-

pose, which had been kept hid from ages and from generations, had in view the coming in of the gospel, when salvation should come to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews. The Jews had stumbled and God had so purposed it, according to the testimony of Paul, verses nine and ten, and they had fallen from that position which they had occupied as the chosen nation to whom alone belonged the oracles of God and the privileges of the outward sanctuary; but he does not mean that one elect vessel of mercy had forfeited his right in the kingdom of heaven. It was simply as a national, typical people that they had fallen, and to this place they never shall again be restored. But now a new covenant is established upon the finished and perfect work of Christ, and in this covenant Gentiles share. The gospel could not dawn until the night of that dispensation had passed away. Now is the gospel day, and now Gentiles share in the brightness of its rising. In that rising the remnant among the Jews also have a share; God has not cast them away, in just the same sense that he has not cast away the Gentiles in this new covenant.

Now Paul sets forth the truth that salvation has, through this fall of theirs, come to the Gentiles. The gospel goes out to them, and believers are multiplied among them. Gentiles were the subjects of election before the new covenant came in, Jews are also the subjects of election after this new covenant has come in. The apostle speaks all along here of the covenants, and the position of Jews and Gentiles under both. Now from this he draws a word of warning and caution, addressed to the Gentile believers. They have no preeminence over the Jews; they are not embraced in this covenant of grace because they are better than the Jews or because the Jews are worse than they; rather, let Gentile believers be humble, remembering that all is of sovereign mercy and grace to them as well as to the Jews. The Jews did not believe in the promised Messiah when he came, and so were cut off. God knew that this would be so; they had before rejected the prophets, and they would likewise reject the Son. Yet a remnant did not reject the Son, even as a remnant did not reject the prophets. All this is discussed from verse eleven to verse twenty-five. Whatever difficulties may be involved in some of the special language in this part of the chapter, it appears to us that the above is the general argument of the apostle. He therefore urges upon his brethren among the Gentiles not to be puffed up in their own conceit, as though they were now so favored because they were superior to the Jews. The whole matter was in the purpose and wisdom of God for his own glory, and to make manifest his goodness, sovereignty and wisdom. No mortal man could find any room for self-praise in all this wonderful plan. The Gentile, left to himself, would never seek after God, but yet had found God, or rather, was found of God, while the Jew, who did seek after God through the works of his own hands, did not find God in that way; but Paul, and a remnant with him, even among the Jews, had found God by the revelation of his grace, even as had the Gentile believers, and the Gentiles must not be high-minded, but fear. We understand the above to be in general the meaning of the apostle in the chapter, considered as a whole.

Some have thought that Paul taught here that there should one day be a coming of the Jews again to their own land of Palestine, and that again they should be established there as a nation with

power and great glory, but we have not been able to believe this to be the teaching of this or of any other Scripture. Much of the prophecies relied upon to prove this had reference solely to the return of the Jews from the captivity in Babylon under Ezra and Nehemiah. This is true of many of those Scriptures considered literally, but we do not forget that that return was a type in itself of another and more glorious return that should be accomplished under the gospel, when the captives of Zion should return and come to Zion with gladness and joy; and so such Scriptures as relate to the return of Israel from the seventy years captivity are not strained out of their proper place when the glorious gospel is seen in them. While we have not been able to see that this eleventh chapter of Romans teaches such a return as this, we have long thought that it does teach that ere the end of this gospel day shall come there will be an awakening among the Jews, and a turning of the hearts of many among them to the Lord Jesus Christ, as has been the case for nineteen hundred years among the Gentiles.

We have thought that verses twelve, fifteen, twenty-three, twenty-four, twenty-five and twenty-six, might be understood as favoring this view. We mean this as an expression of opinion upon our part. We know that prophecy is not to be fully understood, save in its fulfillment. What the prophecies concerning the first coming of the Lord meant, no one understood until he came. Even the prophets themselves searched diligently what and what manner of time was signified by the promises of his coming. Jesus said of things in the future, Of that day and hour knoweth no man, not even the Son, but the Father only. For this reason we have felt to be very careful in interpreting prophecies which are yet to be fulfilled. When they are fulfilled it will be seen that this fulfillment is what is meant in the prophecy, and so we desire to say no more than we have with regard to the prophetic declarations embraced in this chapter.

It has seemed that the crowning verse in all this chapter is when Paul said, "And so all Israel shall be saved." There can be no question that he uses the word Israel here in the sense of Israel which is so by living faith, both Jew and Gentile. These all are the true children of Abraham, and all of them shall be saved. The Jew shall be cut off from his self-righteousness on the one hand, and the Gentile who had no righteousness of his own shall not therefore be cast off, hence grace is magnified in both Jew and Gentile, and both come together, the middle wall of partition between them being broken down forever, and all boasting on every hand is excluded, save as all together come to boast in the Lord.

Now it is no wonder that Paul should be moved by the Spirit to close this wonderful chapter by saying, "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. [Mercy upon the Gentile, and mercy needed just as much by the Jew that is saved.] O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

INVITATIONS OF THE GOSPEL.

We have received a communication from the north, over the signature, "A Friend of Truth," desiring our views in regard to what are called the invitations of the gospel; whether they are addressed indiscriminately to sinners or exclusively to the quickened children of God. We learn from the letter that some of our esteemed brethren are differing seriously on the subject. Such passages as Matthew xi. 28–30: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," &c. "Many are called, but few are chosen." The marriage of the king's son: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Also the first and eighth of Proverbs. Some brethren take the position that these are invitations to sinners indiscriminately, and others contend that these are invitations addressed only to the children of God.

In giving our views we beg leave to differ, very respectfully, however, from both parties. We deny that there are any invitations, either in the law or gospel, to saints or sinners. We think that a little reflection on the subject will satisfy all honest inquirers after truth that it would be altogether incompatable with the eternal perfections of Jehovah to issue invitations to any of his creatures.

First. We will remark that none of the communications from God to men are anywhere in the Bible called invitations, and it is therefore speculative and idle to argue theologically a position or question which has no scriptural foundation, and therefore, like the endless genealogies and questions about the law, which the apostle warns us against, is only calculated to gender strife, but cannot edify or comfort the family of God.

Second. An invitation is a complimentary request or message from a party having, and claiming to have, no authority to enforce the request, or message, which concedes to the party invited the undisputed right to respectfully decline the invitation, leaving it entirely optional with the party invited to accept or decline without transcending his right.

Third. All who have been brought to a saving knowledge of God will admit that He speaks the word, and it stands fast; he commands and it is done. "Where the word of a king is, there is power," and God is the King eternal, and the word that proceeds from him shall not return unto him void of the work whereunto he hath sent it. Even the carnal Jews perceived that our Redeemer spake as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Should the writer of these remarks receive a card of invitation from the president of these States, or from the governor of New York, the fact of its being an invitation guarantees the right to accept or to decline without involving a wrong or a crime in doing either. But should either the president or governor, as chief magistrate of the nation or the State, send an authoritative message to any citizen, summoning him to be or appear at any place, that message would be clothed with all the authority and power of the magistrate from whom it issues; but it could not be regarded as an invitation, because it does not concede to the party to whom it is addressed any right to decline or disobey its authority.

Will any of our brethren contend that when the God of heaven peremptorily says to the seed of Israel, "Seek ye my face," that they have a right to disobey

or regard it only as a mere invitation? If he says to them, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else," does this imply that the people thus addressed have the same right to decline it as an invitation as to obey it as a sovereign mandate from the throne of God? Since God has commanded men to look to him for salvation, have they a right to look anywhere else for that salvation? If there be any authority implied in the address it destroys the nature of an invitation. Indeed, we cannot, without detraction from a proper sense of the eternal power and majesty of Jehovah, entertain the preposterous idea that he deals in invitations to any of his creatures in heaven, earth or hell. All his words are big with power and high in authority; he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and submits nothing to the volition of any of his creatures' wills. But in regard to the passages referred to, they bear the impress of his divine authority; they can none of them be disregarded or disobeyed. The passage referred to, Isaiah xlv. 22, is a sovereign command to the seed of Jacob scattered to the ends of the earth, to look to him for salvation, because he is God, and beside him there is no Savior. All who looked anywhere else, or to any other being, or to themselves, for salvation, were not only guilty of disobedience, but also of idolatry.

The passage, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden," &c., is sufficiently clear and explicit. It is addressed to all who labor and are heavy laden, and to no others; and whenever and wherever these words are applied by the eternal Spirit to any poor, laboring, heavy laden sinner, that sinner will as surely come to Jesus as it is sure that the dead will rise when the voice of God calls them forth. The dead neither labor nor are they heavy laden, they slumber unconsciously in their graves; and all men are dead in sin, and as destitute of spiritual vitality until they are quickened by the Spirit, as the body of Lazarus was of natural life before Jesus raised him from the grave. But as soon as a sinner is quickened by the Holy Ghost he becomes a laborer, and is burdened with a heavy weight of guilt, and such are called to Jesus and find rest to their souls in bearing his yoke, which is easy, and his burden, which is light. To take the yoke of Jesus is to come under his law, to be baptized in his name and be yoked together in communion and fellowship with his disciples in all the privileges of the church of God. But are the unregenerated called to be baptized and identify themselves with the church of God? Philip did not so understand it when he said to the eunuch, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest."—Acts viii. 37. None but believers are called or commanded to be baptized and come under the yoke of Jesus, for they must first be delivered from the yoke of Moses, the yoke of bondage.

In Matthew xx. 16, in the conclusion of the parable of the householder and his hired laborers for his vineyard, Jesus used these words: "So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen." There was murmuring among some of the disciples; the sons of Zebedee desired distinguished places in the kingdom, and some said, "We have forsaken all," &c. What shall we receive? The parable was to rebuke this selfish principle, and to show not only the right of our Lord to choose from the whole company of his called children whom he pleased, to labor in his vineyard,

but also to reward them equally. Those who had labored the most or longest were amply rewarded, but Jesus chose to make those who had labored least, equal with those who had borne the heat and toil of the day.

Again, in Matthew xxii. 14, the same words are used at the end of the parable of the marriage of the king's son. The application was made to the Jewish nation, which had been called as the carnal or fleshly descendants of Abraham, and under the covenant of works. God, by the prophets, had informed them of the approaching marriage. In the type they were bidden to the marriage, but in the election of grace they were not the chosen people of God. As the apostle Paul explains: "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."—Rom. ix. 6–8. Although the whole nation of Israel was called in the type, or shadow of good things which were to come, how very few of them were found to be included in the covenant of grace. "Esaias, also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved." —Romans ix. 27. "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election [or the few chosen] hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—Romans xi. 7.

We have not time or space to enlarge on these parables, but it is sufficient for us to demonstrate that there are none called by grace but the chosen people of God, whose salvation is fully secured in our Lord Jesus Christ. "For whom he [God] did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."—Romans viii. 29, 30. In this calling none but the predestinated are called, and all who are called are justified and ultimately glorified. They are saved and called with a holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own (God's own) purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. (2 Tim. i. 9.) To prove, therefore, that they are the called according to God's purpose, is to prove that they love God; that all things work together for their good; that they are predestinated to bear the image of the Son of God; that they are justified and glorified in Christ. The passages, therefore, which speak of many being called and but few chosen, do not, nay, they cannot possibly relate to this holy calling in which Christ, the good Shepherd, calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. For in this calling the dead shall hear his voice, and they that hear shall live. (John v. 25.) The promise of God is unto "all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."—Acts ii. 39.

The declaration of Christ to the self-righteous Jews that he had not come to call or save righteous people, but to call sinners to repentance, does not admit of the construction that he had come to call all the sinners of Adam's race to repentance, for millions of them had already left these mortal shores. The Pharisees upbraided him for associating with publicans and sinners, and he told them that this was his business into the world, to

save sinners. The whole did not need a physician, nor did the righteous need one to save and purge them from sin.

The first chapter of Proverbs is also referred to as favoring the doctrine of invitations, &c. But an examination of the Proverbs of Solomon will show that Solomon personifies Wisdom; and Wisdom, we are told, is justified of her children. In a spiritual sense Christ is the Wisdom of God to his children. He is of God made unto them wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. But wisdom, abstractly considered, is the opposite of folly and madness. As rational beings, we disobey the maxims or proverbs of wisdom when we transgress her dictates; and wisdom will laugh at us in our calamities, into which we foolishly plunge ourselves, and mock us when our fear cometh. The voice of wisdom is loud in her reproofs when we rush heedlessly into trouble. But the wisdom of God is only known to those who are made wise unto salvation, through faith, which is in Christ Jesus.

Brethren should be careful to avoid any interpretation of the Scriptures which will clash with other plain declarations of the inspired word. We may fail to comprehend or understand some portions of the divine testimony, but our ignorance will not justify us in forcing interpretations which must necessarily conflict with the teachings of the word and the Spirit of the Lord. If our views are right, both the word and the Spirit will harmonize with our views, but if we entertain opinions or views which the Scriptures do not so justify, they must be discarded as wrong and pernicious.

Now, in conclusion, we will reiterate to our legally inclined brethren of the north the appeal which the great apostle to the Gentiles made to the bewitched Galatians: "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?"—Gal. iii. 2, 3. Review your own experiences, see if in your own salvation you only accepted an invitation and availed yourself of it to secure your acceptance with God, or were you awakened to a sensibility of your guilty, lost and helpless condition by the irresistible and almighty power of God? Was it left optional with you to decide whether you would live or die, when by the arrows of the Almighty you were arrested and arraigned before the bar of eternal Justice? Why did you there cry, Lord, save, I perish? Why did you not say, Lord, I will accept thy invitation?

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 1, 1863.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

JOSEPH H. BOZEMAN has changed his address from Cooledge, Limestone Co., Texas, to Tehuacana, Limestone County, Texas, and desires his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

ELDER G. M. Snider having changed his address from Asher, Oklahoma, to Maud, Oklahoma, requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. E. Gore, Dec. 16th, 1907, Carl Shaffer and Etta Jones, both of Barbour County, W. Va.

By the same, at the residence of the bride's parents, Earl Jacobs and Miss Semma Poe, both of Taylor County, W. Va.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, Dec. 17th, 1907, near New Church, Va., Daniel M. Ball and Hattie E. Taylor.

By the same, Dec. 25th, 1907, near Wango, Md., Lee Francis Hollaway and Miss Lucy May Leonard, of Wicomico County, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Harriet Sayer Halsey, widow of John B. Halsey, died at her home in Westtown, Orange Co., N. Y., Friday night, Nov. 29th, 1907, after an illness of nearly six months duration of heart trouble, aged 78 years. She was the daughter of William Sayer and Sally Murray. Three sisters and one brother survive her: Mrs. Antoinette Shaw, of Newton, N. J., Miss Sarah Sayer, Mrs. Emma Halstead and Daniel Sayer, of Unionville, N. Y. She is also survived by two children: Sarah, wife of Albert Cook, of Princeton, N. J., and William Halsey, of Jersey City, N. J. A younger daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Allen, died a few years ago. There are three grandchildren: William and Harry Cook, and Hattie Allen, who is married to Henry Muhlenbrink, of Port Jervis, N. Y.

Sister Halsey united with the Middletown and Wallkill Church in 1866, being baptized by Elder Gilbert Beebe. She was faithful during all those years; her delight was in the law of God, and her conversation of him and his grace. She loved the doctrine in its purity, never compromising with error, but was decided in her convictions and never hesitated to stand for the right in all things, yet she was mild and gentle in disposition. She was perfectly resigned to God's will concerning her and patiently awaited the summons, peacefully falling asleep.

Her funeral was largely attended; she having spent nearly all her life in the community where she died, had many friends, who esteemed her highly for her sterling worth. The writer did the best he could in speaking to the praise of God in the salvation of sinners, desiring that some word might be blessed to the comfort of the sorrowing family; 2 Corinthians v. 1, 4, was used as a text, and hymns 1247 and 1290 were read, they having been favorites of hers. The interment took place in the family plot in Westtown cemetery.

We shall all miss our dear sister very much, but believe it right because the Lord did it. She has now received the crown of righteousness which awaits all who love His appearing. May that peace which passeth understanding be ministered to the dear family. K.

My mother-in-law, **Margaret Ann Stout,** was born in Plainville, Somerset Co., N. J., Feb. 1, 1832, died Oct. 31st, 1907, aged 75 years and 9 months. She was married to Jacob Stout Nov. 7th, 1850. To this union were born nine children, six daughters and three sons, all of whom survive her. Her husband bought a farm in Mercer County, N. J., where they lived in comfortable circumstances until his death, which occurred June 11th, 1888. She kept house for eleven years after his death, until her health failed, after that she lived among her children, who did all that loving hands could in ministering to her comfort. It pleased the Lord to call her by his grace and enable her to give a reason of her hope in Christ to the church, and July 24th, 1881, she was received in full fellowship by the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, N. J., and was baptized by Elder Wm. J. Purington. While she was able to attend, her place was seldom vacant in the church. She was a subscriber to the Signs, and loved to read it, but for the last three years her eyesight failed so that she could not read, but loved to hear it read. Four of her daughters are members of the same church, and the other children, though they have not openly made a confession of their faith, are lovers of the truth. She had suffered for several years with chronic indigestion and kindred diseases, so that she was not able to go from home, but for the last three months of her life there seemed to be a general breaking down and wasting away. She died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Lucy Collings, at Hopewell, Oct. 31st. Her daughter, Mrs. Lena Hough, was also with her. She passed away as gently as one going to sleep.

The funeral was held in the Old School Baptist meeting-house at Hopewell, on Sunday, Nov. 3rd; her pastor, Elder F. A. Chick, spoke comforting words to the friends, using as a text Ephesians i. 14. She was buried in the cemetery adjoining the meeting-house, her six grandsons gently consigning the casket containing all that was mortal of the loved one to the grave, there to await the resurrection.

M. J. STOUT.

Mt. Rose, N. J., Nov. 26, 1907.

[We desire to add to the above that all that has been said with relation to the faithfulness of our aged sister in her church and family relations conveys no more than should be said of her. In our acquaintance of eleven years we always found her ready to converse upon the things that she loved. As long as she was able to attend, her place at the meetings of the church was seldom vacant, and then always for some good cause. Not many weeks before the end of this life came it was our privilege to have a long and earnest conversation with her, and we shall never forget her expressions of love, joy and peace as she spoke of the things that pertain to salvation. We cannot doubt that for her to die was gain. The family grieves, but they rejoice in the blessed hope that it is well with her.—C.]

John C. Hayes, of North Berwick, Maine, departed this mortal life to be with Christ, which is far better, on Sunday, Dec. 1st, his birthday, aged 75 years. "A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth."—Eccl. vii. 1. This, we feel an assurance in our hearts, was very true of our dear brother. He was a man highly esteemed by all who became acquainted with him; he was a good neighbor, a man that will be missed by

all around him. He was one that ever wished the welfare and happiness of all. In the things of the kingdom of Christ he was unshaken in his attachment to the doctrine of God our Savior, and he was given deep meditations upon the word of God above many of the household of faith. He had well-nigh memorized "Young's Night Thoughts," a book which he had been acquainted with from his childhood. How often while in private conversations have I listened with sacred pleasure while he would quote some blessed and sublime utterances from those "Thoughts." I cherish the remembrance of all this. Our brother's deportment, concerning his own relations to the eternal realities of Christ's gospel, was ever lowly; he was clear and firm in his apprehensions of what the Scriptures teach, but he was ever confessing himself to be the frailest, the most undeserving of all the family of God. To him the bare theory of things did not suffice, his heart craved to taste in vital experience the precious things of Christ. One ever-present question seemed to be with our brother: Am I a participant in the glorious realities of the gospel? Brother Hayes had been in failing health for some time, and during the last year or two he frequently spoke of the time of his departure being nigh, and he hoped through God's electing love and Christ's atonement for sin that all would be well. He was baptized by Elder William Quint many years ago, and was ever held in esteem by the church of which he became a worthy member.

At his funeral the writer made some remarks from the words, "Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."—Eccl. xii. 6, 7.

He leaves to mourn their loss, his widow, two sons and two daughters, and as a church we shall miss our brother.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

Mrs. Martha H. Earle Laffoon, one of the oldest lady residents of Hopkins County, Ky., passed away at the residence of her daughter, Mrs. J. W. Rash, in Madisonville, Ky., at 10 o'clock Thursday morning, August 1st, 1907, after an illness covering a period of several months. She had been in poor health for some years, and her death was mainly due to the infirmities attending extreme age.

Martha H. Earle was born in Hopkins County, Ky., Jan. 12th, 1833. She was married to J. B. Laffoon about fifty years ago; to them were born three children, as follows: Mrs. J. W. Rash, of Madisonville, Mrs. J. P. Nuckoll, of Hopkinsville, and Hon. Ruby Laffoon, of Madisonville. J. B. Laffoon, the husband, has been dead about twelve years. Mrs. Laffoon was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, and held membership in the Flat Creek Church at the time of her death, where she had been a member for twenty-five years. She was the last surviving daughter of a family of eight children, four boys and four girls. Two brothers survive: Dr. Benj. P. Earle, of Charleston, and T. B. Earle, of Morganfield, Ky. Mrs. Laffoon's father was an Old School Baptist minister. There is a large connection on both sides of the family in Hopkins County among the Earles, Laffoons and Halls. Mrs. Laffoon was a woman of broad charity, and noted for her many acts of kindness and sympathy for the distressed and afflicted. It was her pleasure and pastime during the active years of her life to visit the sick and bring sunshine into the lives of those less fortunate than herself. She died as she had lived, at peace with all the world, in the evening of life, when the shadows begin to fall. She had passed on life's highway the years that marked the highest point of sweet old age, and, like the full-blown rose, she fell a ripened blossom from the tree of life. In this solemn hour this good and brave woman seemed not to suffer, but, as one being weary for a moment, patiently awaiting the approach of evening, she passed into that dreamless sleep we call death. As friends, children and loved ones stood around the dear old mother waiting for the decay of life, slowly, in its way of ways, it brought a wreath of smiles upon the wrinkled brow that told the dawning of a grander day in another world.

The funeral services were held at the residence of Mr. J. W. Rash, Friday, August 2nd. J. C. Hopewell and P. D. Tucker conducted the services. Interment followed at Odd Fellows cemetery.

Her brother,

BENJ. P. EARLE.

TRIBUTE OF RESPECT.

(JUNIATA ASSOCIATION.)

Whereas, our blessed Father has, since our last session, been pleased to call from their labors by the hand of death our beloved brethren, **Elder E. V. White,** a faithful pastor in our Association, and **Elder W. W. Meredith,** an often welcomed visitor, we as an Association desire to give some token or expression of our regard for them, and of our sorrow for their death. Our dear brother, Elder E. V. White, was especially very dear unto us as a brother, as a minister and as a faithful pastor. He has been with us in times of trouble, and we have been cheered by his counsel and steadfast defence of the truth. We mourn deeply our loss of both these ministers, but rejoice to believe that for them to die is gain. We extend our sympathy to the churches which they served and to their bereaved families.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Philadelphia, Pa., $2.00; Lavinia Morgan, Mo., $1.00; Isaac Larowe, N. J., $2.00; Mrs. H. E. Scarborough, Md., $1.00; J. D. Lake, W. Va., $1.00; Dr. B. P. Earle, Ky., $2.00; T. A. Ardies, Ontario, $1.00.—Total, $10.00.

MEETINGS.

THERE are a few Old School Baptists in Riverside, Cal., and they have meeting the first and third Sundays in each month, at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

W. D. BALL.

THE Mississippi River Association will be held next fall, with Mt. Enon Church, at Coles Academy, one and one-half miles northeast of Middleton, Tenn., on the Southern Railroad.

R. R. CRAWFORD.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

THERE will be meeting at 54 Fuller St., Schenectady, N. Y., each Sunday in the month at 2 p. m., excepting the fourth Sunday, when it will be held at 8 p. m. All who love Old School Baptist doctrine are cordially invited to come.

SARAH JONES.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 76. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1908. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GLEANINGS BY THE WAY.

In the Signs of the Times for November 15th, 1872, my experience was published, and now at the ripe age of seventy-five I write a few gleanings of the time ere I really knew that sect everywhere spoken against since the days of the apostles. It was in a Methodist meeting-house, after attending a meeting every night for three weeks, for no purpose but to laugh and have fun, in company with my two cousins, that a feeling came over me that checked my career in that respect, though for the next three weeks I tried to be as gay as ever. No one knew of my feelings, for, like Mary of old, I kept all these things to myself and pondered them in my heart. The following winter I was visiting my sister, in Georgetown, D. C., and often attended, with my two cousins, their weekly prayer meeting. The moment the feeling spoken of above came over me all my worldly pleasures were taken away. Once when in company with my cousins, the minister read the hymn,

"Stay, thou insulted Spirit, stay,
Though I have done thee great despite;
Cast not a sinner quite away,
Nor take thine everlasting flight."

These words pierced me like so many darts. The next morning, ere I had returned to my sister's, the minister called and told my sister that the Spirit was at work in my heart, for he had seen it in my face. I was at that time eighteen years of age.

During my visit, my cousins and I were invited to a small wedding party, with the understanding that there was to be no dancing, but the lady of the house being a Romanist, consented to having a dance, and, after earnest entreaty by a gentleman, I got on the floor and went through one set almost senseless, and then sat down the balance of the time. The next morning, long before sunrise, I awoke perfectly wretched, and felt that I had committed a great sin. When all had assembled in the dining-room for breakfast, my youngest cousin seemed very angry, and remarked, They danced and spoiled all my pleasure. But it was not that way with me; I felt, Thou art the one, and sin lay at my door.

The following summer my sister was visiting us, then a member of the Presbyterian Church, and for one week I felt that my heart was in constant prayer, and while attending with her a prepara-

tory service on Saturday, I felt to be such a sinner that my presence would disturb the peace of christians, and I desired the floor to open and let me through; but in a moment the great burden rolled off me and all was peace and joy, and it seemed that the people could push me about like a feather. The next day, Sunday, I told my oldest sister that I was going to be immersed. About three weeks after, I went before the church and answered such questions as were asked me and was received and immersed by Dr. Isaac Cole, in Rock Creek, near my home, Rockville, Md. The next spring I was visiting my sister in Georgetown when the sad news came of the death of my oldest sister. This was my first worldly sorrow. She had a great presentment of her death, and desired that I should be a mother to her three small children, ranging from two to six years of age. I loved the children, but my heart was not to be their mother. My intended husband, a man of discretion, saw that I was troubled, and said to me, If you regret your promise, I will release you right now. This brought the matter to a point, and my trouble ceased, and willingly was I made to give up and accept the charge at the age of twenty-one years. After this change in my life and occupation my trouble began again; I loved my church, but found no comfort in the so-called preaching, and found more comfort in reading my Bible at home, though I desired to hear the Scriptures expounded whenever I attended, but would return void of all comfort. Once in a Methodist meeting these words came to me, How is this, I did not at one time trouble myself about such things? The answer was in my mind, Why, it is a special thing. I sung in two choirs, besides my own, and once when a Mr. Brooks, of Baltimore, was speaking in the Methodist house upon Ephraim, he remarked, "Everybody is like Ephraim." The words came to me, No, everybody is not like Ephraim. After the service several members remarked, Was not that a grand sermon? But it was not to me. Once in the Presbyterian house every one looked happy, edified and comforted but myself. Then I concluded that I was such a sinner that I could not be comforted, and I tried to rest in that conclusion. My mind was drawn to the Bible, and I read much, so I kept my Bible near me, to read as often as I found leisure, and especially when nursing my babe. I was so troubled that I groaned in my sleep; it awoke my husband, and he called to me, "What is the matter?" I answered, "I am such a sinner." I was hardly conscious of what I said, when he answered, "We are all sinners." But ah, I was the chief of sinners, and I could not be comforted. At last I got a crumb from one verse of a hymn the minister read: "Behold the Lamb of God."

> "Behold him, as the race you run,
> Your never dying Friend;
> He will complete the work begun,
> And grace in glory end."

By some means I got to reading the SIGNS, and here were the same doubts that pierced my very heart, and the more I read it the more I desired to read it, for it contained preaching to edification and comfort. O how my poor, benighted heart did rejoice that I was not alone in this wilderness of woe. About this time I had a dream: I seemed to have to go through a piece of wood, but it had no path, and while thinking what way to take, I was caught up by some unknown power and carried through the wood to a great black cloud. The cloud was in front and the wood behind. I was like the children of Israel, I could go neither forward nor backward; then

by the same unknown power I was carried through the cloud, and over a clear stream of water to a place on dry ground. For three days I went, as it were, with a veil over my eyes, when upon a dark, cloudy day in March I was reading in Isaiah: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people," when the veil fell from my face and the room seemed to become light, as if a very bright light had been brought into it. I raised my eyes and noticed the countenance of my husband. What is strange to me, for the past few years the expression of his face has been before me often; it was a look of one who was surprised. I am comforted when reflecting on the good evidence which he left of a great burden, and of praying, and that afterwards the burden was gone, and he felt a great peace on his deathbed of eight days sickness; all this taking place in his mind while I sat in his room, ignorant of his feelings, gives me great hope for him.

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people." I now saw the preaching of the gospel as good news to comfort and edify the believer, and not to make believers out of unbelievers. None but the thirsty desire water, and the hungry food, and the weary rest. I awoke one night with the words in my mind,

> "I would to everlasting days
> Make all his glories known."

Here he appeared to me a great God, ruling in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and that none had any right to say, "What doest thou?" Then another trouble came: Could I give up the church that I thought I loved? I said in my mind, I cannot. The words of the sweet singer in Israel passed through my mind, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." I was no longer tried about leaving a sect for whom I had no fellowship; the eyes of my understanding began to be enlightened from reading my Bible, for it was a different book to me, and I was given light to know the truth as it is in Jesus, the beloved Son of God. In time I had an opportunity to go with an aged aunt, who was a member, to an afternoon meeting and tell them I could not fellowship their doctrine, when the husband of the aged aunt said, "You do not fellowship us, nor we you." This made the young people laugh, but I was calm, and made no reply until an old member laughed, and said that I had a new vision. Then it came into my mind that he had remarked in my presence that it was a damnable doctrine, and would send more souls to hell than any other doctrine. Also one had said that I wanted to return to the world, and another that it was the work of the devil. At this I was given to say, I have had hard things said to me, and of me, but you are not my judge. Also, when I joined you the Bible upon election and predestination was a sealed book to me, but now is as clear as the noonday sun. The preacher, Mr. Thomas Jones, replied, "So it is to me." I answered, "You do not preach it;" when he turned red, and said, "Yes I do." Then I sat down and the words came to me, If God be glorified I am satisfied; and not for one moment have I regretted that I was separated from that people. More and more as the great day approaches, this people make a fair show of worldly religion by will-worship.

I am now the oldest member in the Shiloh Church, in Washington, D. C. When our church book was fixed up, before my sister's death, who had to answer the call of my name, on account of my deafness preventing my hearing it, the

words came to me, How very favored I am to have a name on that book. Yes, as sister Grehan writes, we have our dear pastor, Elder J. T. Rowe, who is with us regularly every third Sunday morning and afternoon to comfort and edify the favored few in this city. Although well advanced in years, and without my natural hearing, I have been favored to attend nearly all the third Sunday meetings for the past eighteen months. I can read the hymns and texts, and often sing the hymns in my mind as I sit so silent among them. Their faces and the grasp of their hands are tokens of that love from which all true obedience flows.

"Oft in the assemblies of the saints
Have I beheld his smiling face,
And oft have seen his glory shine
With power and majesty divine."

Dear brethren editors, I send you these few gleanings by the way to use as you think best. I hope that you may be spared many years to comfort the weary pilgrims, as in the past.

I am your sister in hope of the better life,

RUTH ADAMSON.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Oct. 30, 1907.

[IT has been a long time since our dear, aged sister has written anything for the SIGNS. We are glad to see her name again, and to know that her faith does not falter in the blessed God of salvation. No doubt there are many other such gleanings in her past life. These we are sure will bring her very near to brethren who have never known her, and still nearer to those who do know her. May the blessing of God rest upon her until the summons shall come to her to enter into the joy of her Lord.—C.]

HAVANA, Kans., Dec. 13, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—The SIGNS of the 15th inst. was received to-day, and I was much interested in reading your reply to "Subscriber."

I have given the subject of the commission of Christ to his disciples some thought. In the religious world there are many and varied opinions in relation to that most important subject, yet with all the theories about it there flows from it but one glorious truth. This is true of all scriptural subjects; they do not conform to man's reason unless it is the work of the Spirit of God. Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." No plurality about that declaration, but an entire unity. The commission as given to the disciples after his resurrection, and just before his ascension to his Father, presents but one truth. He said to them, Matthew xxviii. 18–20: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: [no inventions of men, even of the disciples, were to be tolerated] and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," i. e., Jewish world. This instruction was given alone to his chosen disciples; he was giving to them their life-work in his service. Mark is more explicit in giving his account of the same subject, xvi. 15: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," and then tells them what will follow their preaching: "These signs shall follow them that believe." Who can claim that the commission was given to any other but the disciples? It gives no support to modern missionary claims. The writer closes the chapter in his own

language, as he was a witness of its truth: "And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen." This declaration seems too plain for any variance of opinion; it describes past action, or what had been done by the disciples as they were commanded by their blessed Master. Matthew xxiv. 14, is an exposition of the same truth: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come." There are two distinctive thoughts in this text; the first is the declaration, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world." When did that preaching commence? Jesus answers it himself plainly, Acts i. 8: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth:" the Gentile world. He chose his disciples for this work because they were the witnesses of his suffering. Matthias was chosen, or ordained, because he was a witness of the resurrection with the rest. Jesus had this same purpose in view when he answered Peter when he had asked, "What shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." He here confers upon them their authority to be his witnesses of the purpose of which he came into the world, and what he accomplished by his coming.

The second thought is the purpose of the preaching in all the world. The answer is found in the phrase, "for a witness unto all nations." Paul was also a chosen apostle and witness; he makes this humble confession of his apostolic authority, 1 Cor. xv. 8, 9: "And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God." The work was done, the gospel had been preached in all the world as Christ had intended it; all nations had the work of the witnesses completed, or rather, a perfect witness was given; the work assigned them was finished. Those old chosen witnesses were called home, most of them as martyrs to the truth they loved so well.

"And then shall the end come." What end did the Savior have in view? Scriptural evidence seems to prove conclusively that the end meant the abrogation of legal worship and government under the old covenant. When the Roman army under Titus swept through the streets of Jerusalem carrying fire, death and utter destruction in its course, the magnificent temple was utterly destroyed, not one stone left upon another. History records that a Roman ploughed over the site of the temple. Then the end came to the worship as instituted by the law given by Moses. "Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."—Heb. viii. 13. The gospel had been "preached in all the world;" the chosen witnesses had completed their work and left it as a witness to all nations. This witness is called "The New Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." The four gospels give the life-work of Jesus, the precious truths he gave to the world, the record of his arrest, trial, crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and ascension to his Father, where he triumphantly reigns as the Mediator of the new testa-

ment, made perfect by his suffering. The Acts of the apostles exemplifies the organization of the visible church by the authorized witnesses of Jesus, showing forth their trials and difficulties, their hopes and their joys; in stripes and in prison, in love and trust, in evil report and good report; the wonderful and miraculous conversion of the persecutor Saul changed to Paul, a chosen vessel unto God to bear his name before the Gentiles, and kings and the children of Israel, in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prison more frequent, and above all his sorrows he was in perils among false brethren. Wonderful book, opening and unfolding the doctrine of the new covenant of grace. Then comes the deep and far-reaching letters of the chosen apostle of the Gentiles, understood by so few in the years that have come and gone since they were penned. Peter realized the deep wisdom of Paul's epistles, declaring, "In which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." Then follows the shorter letters of the writers named in their order, all contending for the same faith, all moved by the same Spirit, all filled with the same hope, all living witnesses of Jesus. The precious volume closes with the mysterious book: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John." Precious Book of books, the hope, the joy, the instruction, the doctrine of the church of the living God; dark and mysterious book to them who have not been taught of the Lord, but to them who have been called "the power of God, and the wisdom of God." "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." Isaiah, in sublime prophetic language, beheld the perfection of the kingdom of God through Jesus Christ the Lord: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

Your brother,

T. R. PITTMAN.

BRANTFORD, Canada, Nov. 13, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —Since the Lobo meetings, held October 5th, 6th and 7th, it has been upon my mind to give you an account of our visit and of the meetings, but felt to leave it to others better able and with riper experience and judgment; but at the suggestion of our friend Mr. Leitch, and that of Elder Coulter (who by the way was with us on Wednesday evening, Nov. 6th,) I make the attempt. The meetings were of such intense interest to me that I will try, the best I may be led, to give an account of them, and a few lines of my own experience while there.

Elder Ker was in Brantford on October 3rd, and preached from Luke xiv. 33–35: "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. Salt is good: but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor for the dunghill; but men cast it out." He was well received, and his message much appreciated by the friends here. I heard many expressions of good will toward him, one of which I will quote, made by a deacon in the Regular Baptist Church of Canada (New

School): "It is not often I am so affected and moved by the preaching of the gospel, but that indeed was the gospel, and I could but shed tears of joy." We all felt his coming and his message were of God, who knows how and when to feed his little flock, and just the right food to nourish their waiting souls. I did indeed seem to hear the Father's voice, saying, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

I was enabled to go to the Lobo meeting on Friday morning, in company with Elder Ker and Mr. Leitch, and much enjoyed the conversation on the train, and we felt our hearts warmed within as we talked by the way of the wonderful works of God in nature and in grace. We were taken to the home of Deacon McGugan, where we spent the evening (with about twenty others) in song and praise, after which Elder Ker gave the company a short address. We cannot speak too highly of the hospitality of the friends in Lobo. On Saturday morning Elder Ker preached from Isaiah lviii. 11: "And the Lord shall guide thee," &c., which made a great impression upon his hearers, so much so that at the close a motion was read extending a call to him to become their pastor, and that the matter be left open until Monday. Every sermon I heard preached, either by Elder Ker or Elder Vail, was well worthy of mention, but I shall have to speak more fully of two, which seemed expressly for me. On Sunday morning Elder Ker preached from Luke xxii. 35-38; many precious thoughts were brought out, but his view upon the two swords was most helpful. Elder Vail spoke in the afternoon, and I shall not soon forget that meeting, one of the most precious times I ever had; I felt such a nearness to the speaker and his hearers, and realized in my inmost soul that these indeed are my people, and it was only by restraining myself that I was able to keep my seat. I think his text was Rev. xiv. 13: "I heard a voice from heaven," &c. I left the meeting feeling that sooner or later I should have to cast my lot among that people, if they would receive me into their fellowship. I had their fellowship, but not church fellowship, and felt cut off.

It had been arranged for me to leave for home by the first train Monday morning, and I was somewhat cast down at not being able to remain until the end of the meetings, but "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." What I am about to relate may seem a small matter in the eyes of worldlings. When friend Leitch and I were ready to go, our handbags were nowhere to be found. We felt much concerned about it, not that we thought of dishonesty on the part of any one, but feared that in the search I might lose the train in the morning, which I did, but I had no hand in the misplacing of them, and was enabled to leave the matter in the hand of Him who hath the disposing of all things, even our missing grips, and felt, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I spent the evening with Elder Vail and Mr. Leitch at a friend's, intending to be out early the next morning to meeting, and if possible get my grip and catch the train; but soon found that God meant otherwise, for on our way such a sight, I shall never forget it; all thoughts of my handbag were gone for the moment: the friends were gathering beside a small stream to baptize a brother who had been received the afternoon before by the

church. The sight was more to me at that time than even my employment, should I lose it by missing the train. I have during the past twenty-three years seen dozens go down into the water to be immersed, but never felt such a nearness to the Savior or his people, and I felt like asking the church to allow me to become one with them, as indeed I felt myself to be one with them in the Spirit. We found our property, but too late for the train, and I was enabled to throw off the thoughts regarding myself, and felt, in a measure at least, to be in the Spirit. Elder Ker was to preach, and my soul went out to God to give me a parting blessing, and my prayer was not in vain. He took for his text Isaiah lv. 6: "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." I have heard many sermons during the past thirty years, and read many by the best preachers of the "old land," but never did I experience such a oneness of spirit with them. I think I can truthfully say, "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." I then knew why God had brought me back. He did fill my soul with great delight; I felt like saying with one of old, "My cup runneth over." I lost sight of the speaker and drank in the message, and even now the effect seems to stay with me whenever my mind is led to Lobo. I might quote what friend Leitch said to me yesterday: "I cannot get down to business since those meetings, they follow me."

After the meeting the church extended a loving call to Elder Ker to become their pastor; no one could be better received than our esteemed friend, Elder Ker, and none would more gladly welcome him to Canada than the few friends in Brantford, who love him for the truth's sake.

You may use this if you think any would be interested, but I am doubtful myself if God would use anything this poor worm of the dust might write, to the comfort of his people.

Yours in gospel bonds,

FRED. SIMMONS.

[How good are such gatherings of the Lord's people. We feel glad that the Spirit of God was with those who spoke forth the word of God at the meetings at Lobo, and especially that he was with our dear friend Mr. Simmons, opening his heart, as was the heart of Lydia, so that she attended to the things that were spoken. We feel well assured that there was joy in the hearts of both speakers and hearers, and much gladness in the heart of the dear brother who was baptized and of the church in his behalf. We are sure that all who may read this narrative will feel to praise God for his mercies to his people recorded in the above letter.—C.]

MACOMB, Ill., Dec. 30, 1907.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the kind and tender mercies of our heavenly Father I am again permitted to send my remittance for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and through his grace abounding to the chief of sinners I still believe and rejoice in the doctrine set forth in its columns. I have a desire once more to write a few lines to the household of faith, to the faithful in Christ Jesus, to those I love for the truth's sake. I do not know why I should have a desire to write to you, for I feel so sensibly my unfitness and inability to write anything of interest or comfort; I feel to be the least of all, scarcely daring

to claim a hope in Christ. But your dear letters in the SIGNS give me courage and hope; I read them with tears of rejoicing. It seems that the SIGNS grows better and better, if that were possible, and surely never contained better reading than of late. The editors and correspondents seem desirous to ascribe all honor and glory to God for their salvation, disclaiming all goodness or merit in themselves. It is true that those taught of the Lord and made to see the vileness of their nature, that in their flesh dwells no good thing, and brought to the end of their own strength, and when sinking in despair, have been delivered from the bondage of sin, the Lord speaking peace to them, giving joy and gladness, their whole heart breaks forth in praise to him, and they exclaim with one of old, "Salvation is of the Lord." Jonah knew his deliverance was alone of the Lord, he was utterly helpless; so is every poor sinner, and when he has tried all his works in vain, he realizes his help must come from the Lord, and he ever wishes to adore and exalt His holy name. God's children, though in weakness, fear and trembling, yet with holy confidence, write of these precious things in the SIGNS, telling my feelings so much better than I can, that it is comforting and soul-cheering to me. Grace makes us humble, keeps us low and shows us our helplessness and dependence, and leaves no room for boasting. Sometimes I feel I must give up, I am such a sinner, I am almost in despair, thinking no one else is like me, and that no one who ever professed a hope in Christ could get so low. It was thus with me when I received the SIGNS for December 15th, and when I read sister Grafton's letter my heart went out in love to her at once, for truly she spoke my own feelings. Dear sister, I, too, have been on a bed of suffering and have been down in the depths. I never felt my sinfulness and unworthiness so deeply; search as I would I could find no evidence or true marks of a child of God; I was almost without hope, and was compelled to cry day and night for mercy. O, I felt, if I only knew I am being tried, or that I am suffering for Christ's sake, I would be satisfied. The clouds have lifted a little, and I feel that all my suffering and trials were for my good, though I could not then understand how it could be so. I know I merit all his chastening, and pray for the spirit of resignation. O that I could walk more humbly, trustingly and uncomplainingly in the footsteps of my dear Redeemer. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and in all our afflictions he was afflicted. His children should think it not strange when fiery trials beset them, for this is their heritage in this sinful world; "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world."

I was much interested in the letters of Elder Nowels and brother and sister Dawson; surely the Lord directed the footsteps of this minister to their far away home and gave the dear brother courage and strength to follow Jesus in the ordinance of baptism. My father used to visit at the home of this sister and preach there before she moved out west. Her letters are always good and comforting. I love the letters from the aged ones. Quite a number have written lately who have passed their fourscore years; these letters full of hope, love and faith are of great comfort to us who have not been so long in the way; we have a tender love for them, and wish to learn from them many lessons of patience and trust. I never visit my dear mother but

that part of the time is spent in spiritual conversation. She is now past her eighty-seventh birthday, and still reads and loves the SIGNS and other good publications, and says as she grows older she seems more established and confirmed in the faith. What an example and comfort are these aged pilgrims to poor, weak ones like myself. How almost sublime seems such a life; it seems like the dying out of a beautiful summer day. May God's richest blessings rest upon all his aged saints, and especially his faithful servants who are bearing the trials, hardships and afflictions of the ministry. How we feast on the good things of the kingdom while they proclaim the pure doctrine of the gospel. Salvation by grace and God's sovereignty will ever feed his sheep and lambs and build up his church. How consoling to God's children to know that this gospel is not after man, nor received of man, neither are God's ministers taught it, but it is by the revelation of Jesus Christ, and Paul repeats that if an angel from heaven preach any other gospel, let him be accursed. God's ministers go forth in his name, depending on him for light and ability to preach the word. How different from the modern religionists of the present day, with their grand church edifices, cushioned pews, select choirs, musical instruments, innumerable societies and salaried ministry, which require much work and money to keep them moving. Truly theirs is "another gospel," yet not another, for there is but one gospel. God's poor people do not want to sit under the sound of such things, for they are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ. They love to convene, however few in number, sing the dear old songs of Zion, hold sweet converse, telling how the Lord has led them, feeling that all their righteousness is of the Lord, and whatever good they do is not of themselves, but God worketh in them to will and to do of his good pleasure. May God's people be kept from idols, be separate from all religious inventions of men, and be ever satisfied with the good old way, saying, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory."

Brother Chick, I have since my childhood believed and loved the doctrine of predestination, and your article on that subject was comforting to me. How it strengthens us to believe and trust in God, who knows all things from the beginning, and all things are fixed and determined beforehand, with whom there is no shadow of turning. When we consider his greatness and our nothingness it becomes us poor, finite mortals to be still and know that he is God, and that he works all things after the counsel of his own will, and not after the will of man. Dear brethren and sisters, may we all receive comfort from this great and precious truth, and may God bless and keep you all for his name's sake.

Dear editors, I have written too much I know; I feel it is not worthy a place in our paper, but use as you think best.

With New Year's greetings to all, I hope I am your sister, though least of all,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

CUMMINSVILLE, Nebr., Nov. 30, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD:—I feel lonely this morning and will try to write you a few lines; but they will be like myself, unworthy, yet I want the brethren and sisters to know about our association, held with Deer Creek Church, at Battle Creek, Nebraska, the last two days in August and the first day of September. The

Lord surely blessed us, for at the meeting on Saturday six came forward and asked for a home with us, telling what great things the Lord had done for them. On Sunday we went to Battle Creek, where they were baptized and raised to walk in newness of life. It was surely a day of rejoicing, and one long to be remembered by all present. Nine or ten ministers were there, and we enjoyed all the meetings. I will name the ministers that I can remember: Elders T. J. Scranton, W. L. Brown, Ring, Keene, J. S. Ham, W. E. Ham, W. E. Craig, Dickson, McFarland and Pollard; if there were more I do not remember them now, for they were, many of them, strangers to me. Elder I. Wagoner was not there, and we greatly missed him.

As I sat in the grove where we all assembled, I thought, We will probably never all meet again in this life; but what a joyful meeting it will be never to part any more, nor to know sickness, sorrow, pain and death, for these can never enter there. I wonder many times why we desire to fight for this life so hard when sickness comes to us. In this life there is so much trouble and sorrow and such like things; but this seems natural, and we most all do strive for this life; all the real enjoyment I see in this life is to be with the brethren and sisters in Christ. I am fifty miles from the church, but Elder J. S. Ham lives near us and has a meeting once in awhile. I like to hear him preach, and I like to hear all the sound Old School Baptist preachers, for they all say the same thing: salvation by grace, and not by works, and this suits me, for I feel that if I had to save myself I should soon be where hope is a stranger and mercy never can come. My dear brethren, God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love that he bore us, even when we were dead in sin, has called us with an holy calling, and is a whole and complete Savior, able to save to the uttermost. I fear, and wonder many times whether I am one of that blessed number, the blood-washed throng, who belong to King Immanuel. But our God sees what is best for us. I do many things that I ought not to do, and if I could hinder it I would never think an ungodly thought or never wish another wish contrary to his will, but it seems I am so wicked that I cannot do what I desire, much less can I save myself. I tried to save myself for seven years, but got worse and worse all the time, and at last was afraid to try to pray lest the Lord should destroy me there, I felt so vile in his sight.

Now, brethren and sisters, I am in poor health, and have not been able to get around for some weeks. I may never see any of you in this life, but I have a hope that enters into that within the veil: Jesus died for sinners, not for the righteous, and that includes me; for a sinner I feel myself to be, and nothing else. Brethren, let us all love one another, and not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; let us not think that we are better than any one else, and let us all strive for the things that make for peace, and not stir up strife, for this is not letting brotherly love continue. Too many want to be the bell sheep among the flock; let us not do this; it does not look well, and it is not well, and it causes the feelings of many to be hurt, and this ought not to be. As a general thing the brethren love to hear all God's true ministers, for they feed the flock. Some are given to tell us one thing that we want to hear, and some another thing; they are not all gifted alike, and so we love to hear them all. Our God saw fit to arrange these things just

as they are, therefore let us keep peace if possible. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" I think it our duty to be friendly one with another. It is hurtful to see any coldness among brethren, and it always makes me feel badly. I humbly desire that you all pray for me, and our little church, that she may always be kept in peace and in harmony with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Elder Keene is our present pastor.

I remain your unworthy sister,

ANNA HARPER.

[THE advice of our sister near the close of her letter is certainly good and excellent. When the Spirit of Christ shows to us the truth we shall see that there is no place in the kingdom of heaven for jealousy. We all do err from time to time, and if ever we are found walking aright it is to the praise of grace alone which keeps us in that way, and all boasting before God or over a brother is excluded. Our Lord watches over us all; O that we might commit our cause to him, desiring chiefly that he would keep us from an evil disposition, and from harming ourselves by wrong doing. He that possesses a wrong spirit, or he that does wrong, is more to be pitied than he against whom the wrong may have been done.—C.]

TOUCHET, Wash., Jan. 3, 1908.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—I have a desire to let you know how my heart was made glad while I read your article on the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. It was clear, and in harmony with all the teaching of Jesus, who came to fulfill the prophets or law, and not to destroy it. It is declared that "He came unto his own, [Jews] and his own received him not." He told them he came not to do his own will, but the will of his Father, and to finish the work he gave him to do. That work was to bring to light things that had been hid from the foundation of the world, and among the main things were life and immortality, which are brought to light through the gospel. Jesus came under the law; he told his own (the Jews) of the condition they were in under the law, and showed the difference between the law covenant and the new or grace covenant. In his teaching he spoke mostly in parables, and to my mind most every parable teaches what was to take place or come to pass at the end of the law covenant; he offered himself once in the end of the world, or end of the law dispensation. In the parable of the wheat and tares, I understand both to be Jews, but the good seed were the children of the kingdom, or those looking forward in faith for the fulfillment of the promise of God; the tares were those who only looked for and expected the blessing through the law, or through Abraham as their father in the flesh; such fruit John the Baptist would not receive as suitable to entitle them to the solemn rite of baptism. The parable of the two sons is also along this line, the younger representing the wayward Jew, who had spent all and had forfeited all right to his father's house and felt too unworthy to claim any relationship whatever. His poverty became so distressing he would have filled himself with the husks as he fed the swine, yet no man would or could give him what his soul desired; nothing but grace or mercy could reach his case; the law could not, for he had spent all his substance, as did the poor woman; he had no money with which to buy, no righteousness to plead. So in the day of God's power his children are made willing to go to their Father's house, humbly confessing their

sins, for grace and mercy are found nowhere else; grace was given us in Christ before the world was. The elder son was yet at home (under law) at work in the field. At work? Yes; Jesus said in your quotation from John, The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall come forth; those who have done good, unto the resurrection of life. The prodigal had been resurrected to a knowledge of the abundance of grace in his father's house; the elder drew near or was resurrected to a knowledge of the return of his brother and of the feast given him, and he was wroth and would not come in. Why? Because he had always remained at home and could thank his father (God) that he was not as other men, and especially as this poor publican (prodigal son). Ye will not come to me, said Jesus, that ye might have life. So both were awakened, or resurrected, one to joys everlasting and the other to wrath and confusion. "I am the true vine," said Jesus, "and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he will purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit." Now, brother Ker, I understand this Scripture to teach the same grand truth as is taught in the parables before mentioned, and also that of the ten virgins. It shows the pruning or separating the wheat from the chaff. Under the law the bad and good all grew together until the harvest, or resurrection to life and condemnation, that being the day our dear Lord arose a conqueror over death and the grave, came in his glory, and in this gospel day the blessings are not confined to the Jews as a nation, but all nations hear His voice and come forth, and Jesus separates them, saying to Lazarus and the prodigal son, to the fruitful branch, to the wise virgins, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; and to the rich man, elder brother, unfruitful branch and foolish virgins, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;" condemnation, weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Brother Ker, I did not intend to write as I have, I simply wanted to tell you how I enjoyed your views on the parable; so pardon me and cast this in the waste-basket, and remember me, a poor sinner, at the throne of grace. I enjoy the contents of the SIGNS and hope God may bless you and all of its correspondents.

Yours in christian love,

JOHN T. BARNES.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., Nov. 6, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I inclose a letter which I received from brother F. Selby Fisher; I take the liberty of sending it for publication in the SIGNS, if you deem it worthy of a place in its columns. For many years the SIGNS has been a medium of correspondence and of comfort to the pilgrims of Zion scattered abroad throughout this sin-cursed earth.

Your unworthy brother, in hope of eternal life,

JOHN H. HASTINGS.

WILMINGTON, Del., Oct. 14, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your two letters were received to-day, and I was ready for them, as I most always am for everything of like nature. I will say that I rejoice to know you experienced a season of light, for it is a great relief, if only for a short time. Much of my time since I left New York has been dark and dreary. I have been in an inactive, stu-

pid, careless sort of way, and when I felt concerned could not get any satisfaction from anything. Reading did not fill me as it has done in times past; I could not talk, for I knew not what to say, and could not write, for I knew not how; I was deaf, dumb and blind. I was ignorant of the fact that anything I was writing to you could be of any profit to you, for it seemed to me that it was the most worthless letter I ever wrote. But the God of heaven and earth knows how to comfort his people, and he will surely do so, though we may be cast down, cast out into darkness in a strange land. But when we are in this strange land how can we sing the songs of Zion? Did you ever think of how our Lord and Savior suffered while on earth in the flesh? You know that he knew what he would suffer when he should be crucified; yea, he knew full well all the suffering through which he must pass, but just before he died what wretchedness must have been his when he cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Can we expect to be more highly favored than he? He was perfect, and knew all things; he knew that he was in the Father, and the Father in him, and that he and the Father are one; yet knowing this and all other things he felt forsaken and alone. But the Father was with him and did not forsake him, but raised him up again on the third day; and in that resurrection all his people were raised, and raised perfect, pure, spotless, holy and blameless in the sight of God, and our transgressions will he remember against us no more forever. What a glorious truth to be revealed to such poor, worthless worms of the dust, and especially to such a weak, wicked, sinful wretch as I. I am given a hope that I am included, and that when the book of remembrance was written before Him my name was written there, and if so, I know that none can erase it; it is indelible. I am given a great blessing in having a hope; to be without hope in this world with its troubles, and without God, is terrible. I think sometimes, Why do I see the trouble that I do? I know all things are predestinated of God, and that none can change our God, for who has been his counsellor? Knowing these things, I think at times that I should not be troubled; yet this very trouble was also predestinated, just as is our rejoicing; and so the evening and the morning were the first day. The evening is just as necessary as is the morning. I feel frequently that I am forsaken, and that all I have felt is an illusion and there is nothing of my hope at all. I am made to wonder then, Why am I allowed the pleasures I receive; why am I allowed to glean in the field, and why are those handfuls dropped for me?

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Who are they? They are those who hunger and thirst, and not those who are always full. There is great comfort in this one Scripture to me. "Blessed are they." They are already blessed in that they do hunger and thirst. I feel to hope that I prefer these things above my chief joy. You and every one are hungry and thirsty when you are in the dark places, and but one certain thing can feed you or any one else, and unless the word spoken is given of God it is no help to a poor sinner. It is God alone who can quicken the dead and awaken those who sleep. One may preach till his hair shall grow white, and unless the quickening power of God is with it, it can be of no profit to the redeemed. There must be life and light in

it, and there are none who can give this power to the word spoken or written save God, who is the giver of all light; to him is all praise due for all things. I feel it is strange that I am able to help you or any one else, but I am glad, and rejoice that I suffered what I did. I am glad I suffered and was willing to suffer all that trial and tribulation and darkness I did suffer, if through it one ray of light came to one of God's dear children. My suffering is nothing if I can but know there is comfort in it to others. I know that neither you nor any one else is glad that I suffer, but that in my trials I am made a comfort to you; you are then benefited by my troubles, and I am, in return, benefited by the trouble of some one else. How strange it all is. The Lord's people are a peculiar people; there are none like them; they are a chosen people; the Lord chose every one of them, and there is no guesswork in it. "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."

I will stop now. I did not expect to try to feed you, for I cannot do it. May the Lord of lords and King of kings be with you, to keep you, guide you and direct your steps, and may you be reconciled to the way that is marked out for you, is the prayer of the least of all who have a hope in the redeeming Savior's love. F. SELBY FISHER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Dec. 12, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—There are a great many questions in my mind, some more prominent than others, and some more persistent than others; some I try to turn away from, while others I long to have answered. The most important, or probably the most persistent, is, Have I the mind of Christ? But when that question becomes active and burdensome there are so many others which follow in rapid succession that I become lost, and swallowed up in doubts and fears and trembling. The mind of Christ is as clear as the light of day; there are no spots upon its beautiful, bright surface; it measures the "temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein." It opens to the view of its happy possessor the whole paradise of God; it shows the finished work of perfect obedience to the will of God the Father. If these things be so, and I have the mind of Christ, why do I walk in darkness, doubt and fear? Whence cometh the dark and lowering cloud of opposition, which bedims the testimony of the great cloud of witnesses sent out by the mind of Christ? Why do I listen to the evil seductions of my flesh, and forget that God is above all and in us all? In my earnest inquiry after the truth I often lose sight of the fact that although I may have the mind of Christ, yet sin continues to abound in my mortal flesh; but when the spark of hope lights into a blaze, I find that where sin abounds grace doth much more abound, to the glory of God and to the dissipation of the darkness and doubt and fear. It appears to me just now that the light of the mind of Christ reveals to me all the evils of a totally depraved and deceitful heart; it shows me what I am by nature, and also what is my hope and attitude toward God. The mystery of iniquity stands out in direct contrast and enmity to the mystery and truth of godliness; it shows us how we are wrapped in both mysteries, the one having the mind of Christ, and the other partaking of the evils of the flesh. To have the mind of Christ leads us into communion with Christ, and also with the Father through Christ. It leads us also to the house of our Master's brethren, where

the love of God is made manifest in the exercise of the spirit of love in the hearts of the brethren. The simple desire to be in the company of our brethren is one of the small things which we are apt to overlook as a testimony of our acceptance in the Beloved. Do we ever get beyond our first simple desire for righteousness and holiness, for brotherly intercourse, for communion with saints, for listening to the preaching of the word, for stealing away alone to the evening sacrifice of supplication and prayer? These are the things dictated by the mind of Christ. When the children of Israel brought of their own possessions the material for the building of the temple, only those offerings were accepted which were brought with a willing mind, of which the apostle also speaks on this wise: "For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." This is the mind of Christ. Still the question comes up, Have I that wondrous mind? Can I claim such a high attainment? Is it my very own? Do I live by the faith of the Son of God? Methinks I can see it afar off, and I long for it. Sometimes I think I can understand it, but all is vain unless I possess it and own it. Is it mine, is it mine? This is my cry day and night. Can it be possible that I preach the gospel to others and am myself a castaway? My precious brother, do you have the same questions and heart searchings? I think you do.

Your brother in search of truth,

B. F. COULTER.

UPPERCO, Md., Dec. 31, 1907.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF LIFE ETERNAL:—Once more in my fast declining days I feel like making the attempt to write you a few lines to remind you that we hold you in loving remembrance, although we have not the pleasure of meeting you face to face as in former years. There is nothing in this world that would give me greater pleasure (if only I were endowed with greater ability than I have ever possessed) than having intercourse by writing, conversation or otherwise with those I esteem so highly as citizens of the better land; but when I meet with them, or attempt to write in their absence, I feel to be but a blank, and of no use. Dear brother, it has been so long since we met together I do not just call to mind how long it has been, but the time seems long. If I were younger in years I would still hope to meet you again, but being in the eighty-third year of my mortal pilgrimage it seems vain for me to look forward to pleasurable events to take place in this life. I am glad we have the pleasure of reading occasionally from your pen in the editorial department of the SIGNS; for myself, individually, it is more enjoyable than the preaching of the word, as I can no longer hear preaching with the natural ear; but I love to meet with the brethren when health and other circumstances permit. Being so near the end of this mortal life, one might think my mind would be entirely occupied with thoughts and meditations on a future state, but I am yet in the flesh and care in a measure (perhaps more than I ought) for the things of this life. Instead of taking no thought of what we shall eat or drink or wherewithal we shall be clothed, I still find myself careful about many things, but would, if I could, call in the wanderings of the carnal mind, and have my thoughts more and more fixed and centered on things eternal; yet, notwithstanding all my worldliness and carnality, I sometimes can entertain a little

hope of a blessed existence of unalloyed happiness in the home beyond the skies.

Brother Rowe and family, and some of the friends about Black Rock, visit us occasionally, but some of them, like myself, are old and feeble, and our meeting on earth will soon be over, and but few taking the places of those who pass away; but the Lord will build his own house, and he knows where to find the material. Our dear sister, Georgia D. England, with whom we meet socially more frequently than some of the members farther away, often speaks of you in loving terms, and would be glad to meet you again, and so I might say of all the little band.

We enjoy the SIGNS very much, and think it is about as near perfect as uninspired men can make it, and are glad the outlook for its continuance is encouraging.

Yours as ever,

JOHN P. KELLEY.

ASHLAND, Ill., Dec. 30, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—Another year has passed, and we have been blessed with the sweet comfort of reading our dear paper. Words fail to express the deep feeling of love and gratitude that fills my soul as I read each number. O, dear brethren and sisters, it takes me back to my youth when my life was spent away from home and those who were near and dear, and as I had no one I could speak to of the things that are not of this world I thought, I will take some of my dear old mother's SIGNS, it will be a comfort in my lonely hours. God knows how it did comfort me when I was buffeted on every side. My paper I loved to read was called "Sins of the Times" by some who knew the editor; they called me ignorant to like to read that kind of a paper, and said it made God the author of sin. With a feeling of humility I never can describe I went to my lonely room, but the God who was with those dear ones who were cast in the fiery furnace was the same God who could give sweet peace of mind to a lonely little girl who felt so unworthy; and yet the desire most suited to my cast down spirit was to read the dear old SIGNS; and as years have passed away and I am growing old, will you wonder when I try in my weak way to tell you how much I love to read the same dear old paper? And now, dear editors, sisters and brethren, how grateful I feel to our heavenly Father for the gift he has given you to comfort his little ones. Precious brethren, I know you have cares, but God, who is rich in mercy, has given you a spirit of love and patience. May it be God's will to bless each and every one with his love.

Your little sister, the least of all,

ELLA M. PARROTT.

KELLY CORNERS, N. Y., Jan. 8, 1905.

MR. LORENZO ECKERT AND WIFE—DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER IN CHRIST:—Not having seen you for some time, and not knowing when I shall see you, I drop you this note that you may know you are not forgotten; and while sorrow and trouble fill up the measure of days, and wearisome nights are appointed to you, it is still good to be stayed upon the Lord. But though we may sigh for home, and dread the unknown morrow, yet it is not natural to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Our nature clings to earth though all our prospects are blasted, yet it is a sweet and lasting consolation to be able to trust the true and living God, whose Son overcame all our enemies, even the last we will have to contend with here in time,

and when released it will be "come up hither." I have no doubt, my dear, afflicted sister, that in spirit you are looking and longing for that sweet deliverance, though you may have much darkness of mind. My prayer for both of you is that the Lord may give you resignation to his holy will to await all your appointed days of sorrow.

Remember me to Asa and family, in which my wife joins in love and kind regards.

Your brother in hope,

J. D. HUBBELL.

[THE above letter was forwarded to us for publication by brother Eckert.—ED.]

COVINGTON, Ga., Dec. 16, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I desire to make mention through your much esteemed paper of the great treat our people had in the visit during most of November of Elder J. G. Eubanks. He came not in his own strength, but in the strength of the Most High, as was clearly shown during the three weeks he visited and preached among us. During this time he preached almost every day and night the unsearchable riches of Christ, glad tidings of great joy, much to the delight and comfort of his many friends, acquaintances and old neighbors. I feel that his visit among us was good indeed, was strengthening and upbuilding to all lovers of the truth who were so fortunate as to hear him. We will ever remember this visit with much pleasure, and hope Elder Eubanks may live many years to proclaim this same doctrine you have been holding to, which is the same the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has always fearlessly contended for, and that he may be with us much more in the future than for many years in the past,

Your brother, L. D. ADAMS.

LAUREL, Md., Dec. 30, 1907.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I am now at home (in Maryland) spending the holidays. While I am here I will send you notices for publication in the SIGNS. This leaves me well and getting along well in West Virginia. I am trying to serve three churches in West Virginia, and at the same time I am clerking in a large clothing store. I cannot say that I am altogether satisfied with my situation, but still trust that I may be. I hope that this may find you and your dear family well and enjoying the numerous blessings of God. May the blessings of the coming new year bring many happy greetings to you all. Elder Ker, allow me to say that your articles, comments on verses of hymn in the SIGNS of July 15th, and Oct. 1st on "Extremes," were most excellent. How true. May the grace of God keep us all. Love to you all.

Your poor brother in hope,

JOHN E. GORE.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON our list are many whose subscriptions are two or three years in arrears, and we would esteem it a great favor if all such would drop us a line, stating whether or not they are receiving their paper and wish it continued.

We often receive letters censuring us for not discontinuing the paper when the time paid for has expired, but should we adopt this rule we would on the other hand offend many.

Brethren, please let us hear from you.

On the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder Z. M. Beal.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, in Bowdoinham, Maine, September 6th, 7th and 8th, 1907, to the churches composing the same sends christian salutation.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—By the all-controlling hand of that unsearchable God who controls the cycling years, the time appointed for our associational meeting has arrived, and as is our custom, we, with the ability that God has given us, send you this our annual letter. It is with a feeling of gratitude and thankfulness to our God, the giver of every good and perfect gift, that we would acknowledge his great mercy that has been shown us through another year, and we feel that the goodness and mercy of God have followed us all the days of our lives. We would thank God, brethren, on your behalf, that you have been kept by the power of God through faith from the snares and errors and false doctrines that are so numerous and popular among the religious classes of the world, and that you continue steadfast in the doctrine of the apostles of Jesus, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth, which is after godliness. As it was in the days of the apostles, so it is at this present time, their cry is still heard, Lo, here is Christ, or Lo, he is there; but Jesus says, "Believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Has it not been manifest in our experience oftentimes? When we seem to be in thick darkness and we go mourning, we have sought him on our beds; we arise and go about the city, in the streets and in the broad ways; we seek him, but we find him not; we mourn, we feel poor in spirit, we feel meek, we hunger, we thirst, our souls are sorrowful, but it is a godly sorrow which worketh repentance unto salvation. Dear brethren, the foregoing is characteristic of the people that Christ gave himself for, that he might redeem them from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people; he was delivered for our offences and was raised again for our justification. We, brethren, "are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard, entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more. * * * But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." The name of Jesus is precious to all who believe, and as it is written, Whom have we in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth we desire beside thee, and of his fullness we receive all things which are needful for us. My dear brethren, what can we do or whither can we go without him? The children of God are poor, but he has eternal riches; if they are needy, he has an everlasting supply of all things necessary for them. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The ever-

lasting Father, The Prince of Peace. [The prophet gives five appellations, but only one name.] Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever," and we rejoice that this prophecy is unalterable. Have we not sat together in heavenly places in this wonderful Being? He is our Counsellor, and our mighty God and everlasting Father; is not our peace in him? Surely he "of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Has not our heart burned within us while he talked with us by the way and opened to us the Scriptures? For "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God," and what shall we say more?

In conclusion we think that we cannot do better than to quote from the epistle of Paul "to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints." "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another; not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality," &c., to the end of the chapter. (Romans xii.)

May the God of all grace bless you according to his mercy in the fullness of Christ. Amen.

Z. M. BEAL, Moderator.
GEO. R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 6th, 7th and 8th, 1907, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is with gratitude to our heavenly Father, who has preserved us through the vicissitudes of another year, that we send you this our epistle to perpetuate the correspondence existing between us. Dear brethren, we are in peace, having but one Lord, one faith and one baptism. We are surrounded with enemies on every side, some saying, Lo, here is Christ, and some saying, Lo, there is Christ, but we are commanded not to go after them, nor to be partakers of their sin, for these are deceivers who would deceive the very elect if it were possible; but we rejoice that "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his," and that of all the Father hath given him he will lose nothing, but will raise it up at the last day.

We are greatly comforted in having the presence of your messengers with us, and we desire that God will continue to bless our correspondence to our mutual comfort and to the strengthening of our love in the truth.

Our next association, the Lord willing, will be held with our sister church at Whitefield, Kennebec County, Maine, on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1908.

Z. M. BEAL, Moderator.
GEO. R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1908.

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PSALMS LV. 12-14.

BROTHER M. W. Gray, of Roanoke, Va., requests that we write something regarding Psalms lv. 12-14, which reads as follows: "For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him; but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and my acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company."

This Psalm in general presents the mind of David, either with reference to the persecutions of Saul, and his distresses under them, or his sore trouble when Absalom had won the hearts of the people against him and he was compelled for a time to flee for his life. In either case his enemies were many and his distress was great. Against these open enemies he complains before God, praying to him not to hide himself from him; and that he would attend to his supplications. The oppression of his open enemies was, however, to be expected, and so he was prepared, in a sense, to meet and contend against it. All this he could bear, being forewarned and forearmed against it. But besides open enemies there had arisen against him one with whom he had held sweet counsel and whom he regarded as his friend indeed, but this friend had proved treacherous and had shown that he was not a true friend by also turning against him in the day of his adversity. All else he could bear, but how could he endure this disappointment in his friend? David, as a man and as a king, was like all other men by nature; all men crave friends and friendship; all men are helped in trouble by the thought that at least there is one in whom they can trust not to turn against them. One can contend against an open enemy with strength and courage, but how the heart becomes weak and courage fails when a friend turns against us, and especially is this true if that friendship has been close. David says this friend was his equal, his guide, one upon whom he depended for advice and counsel, and his acquaintance; that is, one who knew his very thoughts and purposes, one to whom he had unbosomed himself freely in the confidence of his friendship. More than this, they had taken sweet counsel together concerning the things of God and his salvation, felt and experienced in his soul, and had also joined together in the worship of His house. The ties of human relationship, whether as neighbors helping one another in neighborly fashion, as members of the same family thrown into daily contact in all words and deeds of love, sympathy and helpfulness, do not fasten hearts together as does this one of spiritual brotherhood and fellowship; these are for a time, and are necessarily mingled with more or less of human selfishness in us all, but this is eternal in its duration and has in it the power of an endless life. The love of God felt in the heart is stronger than all human love. If a

neighbor shall become our enemy, it is hard; if a member of our family becomes our foe it is still harder to bear; but all this cannot produce the suffering of heart and soul that is caused when one with whom we have communed in the things of the Spirit and in the public worship of God, proves himself an enemy to us, to the truth and to God. David's sorrow was not because of the breaking of simply human ties (that would in itself be but a small matter), but because he had placed his affection upon that friend as a lover of God and of his sanctuary, and he had been deceived. This man had become an open enemy of God, as well as of himself. When David denounces his enemies we must not forget that he speaks as the king of Israel, and that his enemies are the enemies of the kingdom which God had established and over which he had set David as king. The enemies of God were his enemies and the friends of God were his friends, nearer and dearer than any other friends could be. Right here is explained some expressions of David against his foes that have seemed to some to be unlike that meek and forgiving spirit that was inculcated and lived out by the blessed Master. If we but remember that David speaks by inspiration of God, the things which were in God's mind against the foes of God, and not of any personal revenge, the difficulty named above will disappear; and, moreover, we must remember that the blessed Master himself, loving, gentle, forbearing and patient as he showed himself to be, yet denounced bitter woes against the scribes and Pharisees, and against Judas, and against the cities of the sea.

In the view of many this text points to our blessed Savior himself, and expresses the grief that filled his heart when one of his disciples betrayed him. Others have thought that this language refers especially to the denial of him by Simon Peter, thinking that Judas was an open enemy, known to be such by the Master all the time, but that Peter was one who was among the nearest to him in the mount of transfiguration, and afterward in the garden of temptation and sorrow. We do not undertake to decide whether either of these two views is correct, but we are sure that the language will apply to every one who has professed godliness and then has proved false to this profession. There is no greater sorrow than to see one who has apparently run well, turn away from the truth and become an opposer and bitter foe to the cause of God.

BROTHER Gray also asks that we say something concerning the law of leprosy, as recorded in the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of Leviticus.

Space forbids that we say anything in detail concerning this law, even were we able to do so, but we will so far comply with this request as to call attention to a few things concerning it.

First, the disease was in itself what men would now call a blood disease; it might be working secretly for a long time before there would appear any symptoms of it in the flesh, or in the sight of men. The sufferer himself would not know that this hideous disease was lurking in his system, but at last it would appear upon the surface. The sufferer would himself be the first to detect an appearance upon the skin, and how terrible would be the hour of its first discovery to such a soul. This is like sin. All men have this foul leprosy in them, but no man knows it until it is brought to light. Conviction takes hold upon such an one in the secret

of his own conscience, while before men his life may be all fair. Leprosy is a fitting type of all this.

Second, leprosy was never known to be healed by any human skill. Instances are narrated in the Old Testament where leprosy was healed, but it was by divine power working miraculously in men. There was no virtue in the waters of Jordan that could heal Naaman the Syrian, else all lepers could have been healed if they bathed there, but God would thus humble the pride of Naaman and manifest his sovereign power over all diseases, even this the most virulent of all. Still it remains true that so far as any human skill was concerned this disease was a hopeless one. In all this, leprosy is also a type of sin. No human power, goodness, service, obedience, religiousness, weepings, groanings, penances, rituals, repentance or believing, has ever healed the sins of one man. Preaching, singing, praying, ordinances, even those given to the church in the word of God, anxious-benches, risings for prayer, teachings, whether in the Sunday School or from the pulpit, never have and never will communicate life to dead men, nor wash away sin from the conscience. Only the power and grace of God manifest in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ for sin, and to condemn it in the flesh, and applied by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the heart and to the conscience, ever can give that troubled conscience ease, or cleanse it from dead works, to serve the living God.

Third, in the two chapters named by our brother we have a record of the manner in which one afflicted with leprosy could be so cleansed ceremonially that he should not be cut off from the privileges of that earthly and typical sanctuary. In this is set forth a type of all living gospel experience. That leprous man under the old covenant was not cured of his leprosy; he remained a leper still, but he was restored to his privileges as a Jew in the sanctuary which God had ordained for them. In these same two chapters there is also provisions made for those who were suspected of leprosy but afterwards proved to be free from it; that is, whatever the trouble was, it was not leprosy, and after attending to the prescribed forms of cleansing, this man was to mingle with other men as before. But when a case of real leprosy occurred, the law was that first he should show himself to the priest, and if the priest was not satisfied as to its nature, the sufferer was to be put one side from the camp seven days. Then again the priest was to look upon him, and if he were not fully covered with the disease he was to be put one side from the camp another seven days, then again the priest was to look upon him, and if he was now covered by the leprosy altogether, provision was made for his cleansing, and then he was to be pronounced clean, and not until then. We cannot here call attention to all the forms prescribed by the law of Moses in these two chapters, but this one more thing we desire to present: no cleansing of blood, or of water, was prescribed for this man until he was wholly covered with leprosy, then blood was to be put upon him, and he was to be washed in water, and then was he clean ceremonially, and only ceremonially, let it be remembered.

We know of nothing that sets forth the course of all christian experience in all the types more clearly than does this that we have just called attention to. The work of the Lord is begun in the soul, and the first fruit of it is, in that soul, a conviction of indwelling sin, by reason of its outward effects being shown to the

conscience. Evils begin to appear to that man in his thoughts, words and deeds. Whence do these evil things arise? Now the man begins to suspect that he is a sinner indeed, but this is not enough, he is not all vile, he cannot yet believe that he is the chief of sinners, still he cannot longer associate with the world of the ungodly, and he is not yet prepared to enter into the companionship of the church of God on earth; his experience has set him one side. Again, the Priest looks upon him, and that look searches all his soul, mind and heart, and the leprosy has spread; but still he is not convinced that the whole head is sick and the whole heart faint, that from the head to the sole of the feet are wounds and bruises and putrefying sores, and so he is company neither for the world nor for the people of God for yet another seven days; but again he is brought before the Searcher of hearts, who, thank God, is also our priest unto God, and now he is all covered with this foul leprosy. This is now leprosy indeed, and there is not a spot in him that in not leprous. He is at his worst state, a guilty, condemned wretch indeed. The work has gone onward in the heart until he can only cry for mercy, and we read that this was the cry of the lepers in the gospel when it was theirs to meet the blessed Master. Now here is the time of cleansing; now is the time, in the type, when the priest applied the blood and the water and this man was restored to his privileges in the sanctuary of God and given all the blessings accruing to all Israel under that former covenant, and now is the time when the soul, having come to an end of all perfection and seeing that the commandment is so broad that he cannot begin to measure up to it, is given by faith to see what virtue there is in the blood of Christ, and in the application to the soul of the precious word of God to cleanse him from his sins and to purge his conscience from dead works to serve God. Like the leper, this subject of grace still feels himself plagued with the foul disease of sin so that he complains that he cannot do the good he would; but yet that soul has found peace with God, and entrance into the sanctuary of God, and fellowship with the people of God. A sinner saved by grace; a sinner still, but yet redeemed by blood; a sinner still, but yet privileged to enter into all the privileges of a child in the house of God. It is not until a man is become all vile, altogether covered by this vile leprosy, that this wondrous grace is revealed to him; if it were revealed before, it would not appear such wondrous grace to him. Sin has become exceeding sinful that grace might appear exceeding gracious; the leprosy has covered him that the robe of righteousness might be seen to be ample to also cover him; he has become the chief of sinners that grace might be seen to be sufficient for the chiefest sinner, and now this man is a companion of lepers saved just like himself. Before this he had not thought himself as vile as others, now none are farther away from cleanness than is he. Before this he would boast in himself over others who were more vile than he, now he has become as vile as the vilest. No one need tell him this, for the great Searcher of hearts has shown Himself to him. As he now hears the confession of other poor lepers he is prepared to join in their lament and to draw near to them in their distress. Even after the cleansing blood has been applied to his conscience he is still a companion of all who mourn their leprosy, but also he has now become a companion of the cleansed lepers. As once he had joined in the

mourning, and the cry of, Unclean, unclean, with all such sinful mourners, so now he is prepared to join in praise to the power that has saved. He, and all such ones, are justified freely by grace; and grace, free grace, is to be evermore their song. How dear to each other must all those who were lepers in the olden time have been; they were united by a common sorrow. But how much dearer must they whom Jesus healed have been each to the other as they joined in praising his holy name; they were united by the memory of a common sorrow and of a common blessing also. At all events, we do know that such convicted and redeemed sinners now love each other through this common experience of sorrow and joy. In these experiences all true fellowship has its birth, outside of these experiences there is no such thing as real fellowship. C.

JOHN XIV. 2, 3.

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

At the request of Mrs. W. S. Johnson, of Kingston, N. Y., we shall offer a few thoughts upon the above Scripture, which are the words of our High Priest to his disciples in one of the most trying periods of their lives. In this discourse the Savior had told them he was going away and they, then, could not follow. After having been with him three years and a half during his ministry in preaching the gospel of the kingdom, raising the dead and healing the sick, their love for him and their hope in him of the restoration of all things pertaining to national Israel were deeply seated, and his words regarding his departure from them fell upon them with mighty force, and sorrow filled their heart. He, fully understanding their grief, said, "Let not your heart be troubled." It is understood by some that the word "troubled" does not mean sorrow or sadness, and not long ago we heard a very learned gentleman define the word "troubled" by saying, It has no reference to sorrow or sadness, if so, Jesus was asking an impossibility of the disciples; but it means, he said, Do not be troubled about my going away, it is all right, it is for the best, therefore do not be concerned about it. Job said, "Great men are not always wise," hence are liable to mistakes as are others. In this same sermon, recorded in the sixteenth chapter of John, Jesus said, "Because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart." And after he had gone and they supposed forever, he appeared to two of them and asked, "What manner of communications are these, that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?" We readily see the three words, troubled, sorrow and sad, used with reference to the same experience; therefore our conclusion is that the disciples were indeed "troubled" when Jesus told them he was going to leave them. He spoke encouragingly, however, by saying, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."

It seems necessary first to establish what the "Father's house" is. If we say heaven, the question immediately follows, Was there ever a time when the realms of immortal glory were imperfect? All God-fearing people answer, No. Then the Savior did not mean that he was going to heaven to add to its glory and perfection in building mansions when he said, "I go to prepare a place for you." Moses made a tabernacle in the wilder-

ness, in which God was worshiped in offerings and the burning of incense. Solomon built a temple and dedicated it unto the Lord. Jesus recognized this house when in the flesh, under the law, but said to the money changers, "Ye have made it a den of thieves." The tabernacle and the temple both passed away, because they were of earthly material; hence we cannot look to either of them as "my Father's house." David being a prophet, and by faith seeing a house not made with hands, said, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." A house made without hands bears no mark of earthly architecture, and when this house is seen it is always recognized as the work of God. The writer of Hebrews, in contrasting between Moses and his house and Christ and his house, gives us as good a description of it as mortal man has ever had, when he said, "Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we." This brings us to look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down, neither shall her stakes be removed nor her cords broken. Jesus said, "My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer;" not a house to pray in, but "a house of prayer," which house is the church of God, the pillar and ground of the truth; composed of lively stones, men and women, built of God upon the rock, revelation, and shall never be overthrown, but abideth forever.

At the time Jesus uttered the words of our text the church or house of the Father was not in actual existence, but with God all things are present and in his purpose "were finished from the foundation of the world," yet the Savior said, Upon this rock I will build my church, not yet done, but I will build it. He, seeing the house complete, said, "In my Father's house are many mansions," or places to be occupied.

Having now tried to establish the fact that "my Father's house" is the church of God, we shall turn our attention to the "mansions." What mistaken ideas many hold regarding this point, thinking that in heaven every one shall have a mansion, decorated according to their works for the Lord here, and the more the works the grander the mansion, and the fewer the works the more modest the mansion. If, as we have endeavored to show, "my Father's house" is the church of God, the mansions will be found there. They are particularly the offices or places to be occupied therein, and each one occupies the mansion or office according to his gift. Gifts were given to men; to some were given apostles, to some prophets, to some evangelists, to some pastors and teachers, then the gift of deacons and also that of healing. These are the most prominent places in the church, but the eye, ear, hand and foot fill their respective places. "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy, according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness." The Lord hath placed each member (gift) in the body (church)

as it hath pleased him, therefore each one occupies his own mansion or place in the house of God. "Were it not so, I would have told you."

"I go to prepare a place for you." He was then about to go to that place prophesied by Isaiah: "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken." Yes, in a little while we find him in the garden, sorrowful even unto death, treading the wine-press alone, sweating, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground; his three disciples asleep, dead to his agony. He prays to his Father, "If it be possible, let this cup pass." But it was not possible, he must prepare a place for his people, and it must be done in the appointed way. We now see him before the kings and rulers who had taken counsel against him, the Lord's Anointed; he is spit upon and mocked, a scarlet robe is put on him and on his holy head a crown of thorns is placed. Now before Pilate he stands, where many murderers and thieves had stood to be sentenced; but how strange this sentence, never one similar before nor since: "Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him." Now he is being led as a lamb to the slaughter, but he opens not his mouth. His holy hands and feet are pierced with rugged nails, he is lifted from the earth, dying for the sins of his people. He is dead; the earth quakes, the rocks rend, the graves of many of the saints which slept are opened. He is taken down from the cross and buried, a great stone is rolled to the door of the sepulchre and sealed, and the watch is set. The third day, very early in the morning, he comes forth from the dead a conqueror; death has lost its sting, the grave its victory. The "place" is "prepared:" the church brought up from condemnation and death. The Conqueror cries, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me." He has now returned, (I will come again) giving his disciples a lively or living hope of immortality by his resurrection from the dead. He receives them unto himself into the spiritual kingdom or house of the Father. The King reigns in righteousness and princes (apostles) rule in judgment, sitting upon thrones, judging the twelve tribes (all the elect) of Israel. He is now in the house of his Father, or in his own house, where all nations are, through his work of redemption. He is the door, the way, the truth, the life and the resurrection; no man cometh unto God except by him.

The clause, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself," is interpreted by some as referring to the end of this material world, but a careful investigation of the chapter will perhaps convince them that it means no such thing. For instance, Jesus said, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." This he did after his resurrection. "Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord." Again he said, "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." This is very different from taking men out of the world that they make their abode with the Father and the Son. Christ our blessed Lord comes now in the person of the Holy Ghost to comfort all his saints, and to guide them into all truth. His first coming was "in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin." His

second coming is in "the image of the invisible God," without sin unto salvation, and to all who look for him he will appear. Paul says, The righteous Judge shall give a crown of righteousness to all who love his "appearing," which is his coming again in the Spirit in the experience of each one of his children. No mortal who has experienced the forgiveness of sins will deny that Jesus has appeared to him, and it is always as the end of the law for righteousness, hence without sin unto salvation.

What an easy thing it is to forget that the church or house of God is the body of Christ, and that where the body is the Head is also, and where he is there are his children. Where is he? The Bible answers thus: "I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."

It has been a pleasure to grant the request of our esteemed friend, Mrs. Johnson, and we hope that she as well as others may be able to glean a little here and there from the things we have tried to present in the fear of the Lord and in good will toward men. K.

APPOINTMENTS.

NOTHING preventing, Elder D. M. Vail will fill the following appointments:

Middletown Church, February 2nd, meeting to be held at the residence of brother Morris Faulkner, 11 o'clock a. m.

February 4th, Halcottsville, N. Y., 11 o'clock a. m.

February 5th, First Roxbury Church, Vega, N. Y., 11 o'clock a. m.

February 6th, Second Roxbury Church, Roxbury, N. Y., 11 o'clock a. m.

J. B. SLAUSON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Philemon Stout, Ill., $1.00; Mrs. John Pettit, N. Y., $3.00; J. R. Yerkes, D. C., $1.00; Mrs. H. J. O'Bannon, Va., $1.00; Henry Heckman, Ohio, $2.00.; Mrs. Esther A. Pipe, N. Y., $1.00.—Total, $9.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

George G. Galleher, of Hickory Grove, Prince William Co., Va., died at the Sibley Hospital, in Washington, D. C., Jan. 4th, 1908, aged 59 years and about 2 months. Three weeks before his death brother Galleher was taken violently ill with appendicitis; an operation was thought to be imperative, and he was taken immediately to the hospital and the operation successfully performed. At first but little, if any, hope was entertained of his recovery, but in a few days his condition sensibly improved. Up to the day he died he had so far recovered as to be thought out of danger, and was encouraged to hope he would be able to go home in a few days; but it appears an abscess had been forming in the stomach, unsuspected by any one, which broke and bled profusely. An operation was decided upon as absolutely necessary. A growth was found in the "pit" of the stomach which apparently had been developing for months. He passed away without regaining consciousness after the operation. His body, followed by his heart-broken wife and the young lady he had reared from childhood, was taken on Monday, Jan. 6th, to their now desolate home near Hickory Grove. On Tuesday, in the most violent storm of wind, rain and sleet known in this section in many years, we followed the dear remains to Mt. Zion, six miles away, and laid them beside his former wife, sister Mittie Galleher. In spite of the inclement weather a large number of people attended the funeral, testifying by their sadness and tears the love and esteem in which he was held.

Brother Galleher was baptized in the fellowship of Mt. Zion Church by Elder Joseph L. Purington, during his service of several of the churches in the Corresponding Meeting of Virginia. After death had removed the former officers of the church, brother Galleher was chosen clerk, and then deacon. For several years he had been the only active male member besides myself until a few months ago. He filled his offices faithfully; there was no lack in his service of his brethren, to whom he was very precious. He also served as clerk at the sessions of the Corresponding Meeting for many years. He was a prosperous farmer and business man, and was liberal in contributing of his substance to the temporal needs of the church and of the poor and needy. He was uncompromising in his views of gospel truth, also he was characterized by the lowly spirit of his Master, and his walk was above reproach. He adorned his profession by a well ordered life and a godly conversation. His house had long been a hospitable home for his brethren whenever they came. His death seems not only a loss to us, but a calamity; we feel that he was so much needed that he could not be spared, and there is no one to take his place. The hand of God seems heavy upon us; one year ago our precious

brother, Elder White, was taken from us. Afflictions even worse than death have visited some of our churches in the near past, still we would remember the Lord casts down before he exalts, that he kills before he makes alive, wounds before he heals; his ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts. In the death of brother Galleher this entire community has sustained a great loss; probably no man among us would be more greatly missed. He had served this assembly district three terms in the State legislature at Richmond very acceptably, and had taken an active interest in public affairs for many years, serving the people in many capacities. It is hard to know we shall see his face no more. This sorrow is for ourselves who are left in this vale of tears. He is at rest, has finished his course, kept the faith, and we are assured he has received the crown which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give to all those who love his appearing. Brother Galleher leaves a widow, to whom he had been married a little more than two years, the young woman, Bessie Wood, alluded to above, one brother and a number of nephews and nieces, together with his kindred in Christ and a multitude of neighbors and friends, to mourn the sad loss.

My excuse for the length of this obituary is the extended acquaintance of its subject among the Old Baptists and the universal esteem in which he was held.

ALSO,

Mrs. Jane Ashton Davis died at her residence in Fairfax Co., Va., of pneumonia, about Dec. 1st, 1907, aged 66 years, 5 months and 4 days. She was the eldest daughter of George and Jane E. Dodd. I transcribe the following, written by one of her family: "She was baptized in 1868, by Elder R. C. Leachman, in the fellowship of Mt. Zion Church, of which she was a devoted member at the time of her death, but circumstances kept her from attending as she wished. She was a firm believer in predestination. She passed away without a murmur or a groan. We feel lonely and desolate without her, but feel that she is at rest with the Savior, in whom she implicitly trusted. She was married to Mr. James E. Davis, Feb. 5th, 1870; to them were born five daughters and one son, all of whom survive her, together with the aged husband, to mourn for a faithful and loving mother and wife; she leaves also two sisters. Not being able to have a minister of her faith present at the time of her burial, Elder J. T. Rowe, of Baltimore, Md., spoke to the comfort of the bereaved on the third Sunday in December, in Washington, D. C."

I can fully indorse what the writer has said concerning sister Davis.

J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., Jan. 11, 1908.

Christina B. Wessner Mouser was born in Berne, Germany, Feb. 27th, 1844, died Jan. 2nd, 1908, aged 63 years, 10 months and 5 days. Her mother died when she was a child, and at the age of fifteen years she came to New York. A short time afterward she came to Wyandotte County, Ohio, and on Nov. 30th, 1862, she was married to Decatur Mouser. In the fall of 1872 she came with her family to Allen County, Ohio, where she resided until her death. This union was blessed with four children—one son and three daughters: Frank Mouser, Mrs. J. A. Woolford, Mrs. Marcus Marks and Mrs. C. W. Cremean, who, with the husband, are left to mourn the loss of a devoted wife and mother. She also leaves a half-sister, a half-brother, seven grandchildren and a host of friends to mourn their loss. She was a conscientious woman, who tried to deal justly with every one, thus trying to obey the teachings of her Lord in her daily walk and conversation. As long as she was able to get around she was ever looking after the welfare of her family, and her greatest pleasure was when we were all at home together, and as we tenderly watched her we could hardly realize she was rapidly passing from the gaze of those who so dearly loved her. Everything was done that loving hands could do to ease her suffering, but to no avail, and on Jan. 2nd she passed peacefully to rest.

The funeral services were held at the house Saturday, Jan. 4th, conducted by Elder A. B. Brees, who delivered a comforting sermon from 2 Corinthians iv. 7. The hymns beginning, "O land of rest, for thee I sigh," "Keep silent, all created things," and "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep," were sweetly sung, after which her remains were gently laid to rest in the Spencerville cemetery.

I have copied the foregoing for the *Spencerville Journal News*, by Mrs. C. W. Cremean, daughter of the deceased, and though I would like to add a few words of commendation of the life and labor of the departed, yet I will only say that I shall miss her kindness and faithful attendance at our little meetings. She always was a zealous friend of the Old Baptists, and a close observer of the order and doctrine contended for in the SIGNS. She never made a public profession, but showed herself to be worthy of our confidence and love as a humble and confiding lover of Christ and his people. Truly a friend and sister has left us.

ALSO,

MY father, **Solomon Moore Brees,** died at his residence near Canandaigua, Mich., August 21st, 1907, aged 90 years, 9 months and 25 days. He was born near Horseheads, N. Y., Oct. 26th, 1816, moved to Michigan about 1832, I think, and on Feb. 10th, 1841, married Kezia L. Carpenter, who preceded him to the grave (in 1902) at the age of 85 years, 9 months and 12 days. I am their only child. My father was ambitious to a fault, and through hard labor and ex-

posure grew decrepit as he grew old. I had the humble privilege of caring for him the last three and a half years of his life, and feel the only regret is that I could not more tenderly provide for him. He was regarded as honest in dealing, frugal in habits and strong in prejudice, yet often gave freely in cases of need or pleasure. I have no personal knowledge of his making a profession of faith in Christ.

A. B. BREES.

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio, Jan. 6, 1908.

MY dear sister, **Amy Hart Addis,** was born Nov. 14th, 1837, in Southampton, and died June 24th, 1907. She was the daughter of Elias and Harriet Yerkes, and lived in the neighborhood of her birthplace nearly all her life. She was baptized by Elder William Quint, in June, 1866, in the fellowship of the Southampton Baptist Church, where she remained a worthy member until her departure from this mortal state. She was especially loved by all who knew her in the community, as well as in the church, for her quiet, gentle manners and her orderly walk and conversation. I read a letter since her death, written to her by Elder Quint in 1867, in which he spoke of a talk he had with her. He spoke of her as most honest before God and men, and that she did not want one word of encouragement that did not belong to her. The day he baptized her he said he never expected to feel happier than he then did while here below. She was married to J. Clarkson Addis in 1875. Their home was near the meeting-house, so they were always in their place unless sickness prevented. Mr. Addis was fond of preaching, and was always ready to mingle with the brethren and to entertain them.

Dear brethren, the above was written by sister Rebecca J. Yerkes, at whose house in Philadelphia sister Addis passed away. She has asked me to write an obituary notice and send for publication in the SIGNS. I cannot do better than to send what she has written. But I wish to add an expression of the dear love and high esteem in which she was held by myself and family, as well as by all of the church. I knew her for more than forty years, and was her pastor for about twenty-four years, and I am glad to say that she was one of those whose presence at meeting, whose careful regard for the order of the church, and whose thoughtful kindness make them most helpful to the pastor. She was truly a devoted christian. We often had evening conference meetings at her house. As a church we greatly miss her. One brother survives her, also three sisters, two of whom are members of the church. They all feel the loss deeply, and especially sister Rebecca, who was seriously injured by a fall nine months ago, and who is still very lame. Sister Addis was helping care for her. May the Lord comfort all of the mourning friends.

Funeral exercises were held at the house Wednesday night, and Elder B. F. Coulter spoke. Funeral at Southampton meeting-house Thursday morning, when I spoke from John xi. 25, 26.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 24, 1907.

Mr. Cornelius Elmendorf died at his home in Kingston, N. Y., Jan. 2nd, 1908. He was born March 11th, 1825, hence was in his 83rd year. Feb. 14th, 1850, he was married to Charlotte Bogart, who died May 14th, 1903. Three children: Mrs. Emma C. Johnson, Mrs. Elizabeth Bishop and Alvah Elmendorf, together with six grandchildren, all of Kingston, are left to mourn their great loss. Mr. Elmendorf had been in failing health several years, having suffered a stroke of paralysis, which greatly impaired his strength, but he continued to be around until a day or two before his death. He had been a very active man, and was never better satisfied than when helping to make others comfortable and happy. He was known as an honest, upright man in all his dealings, and was highly respected by all who knew him. He was not a member of the Old School Baptist Church, but a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace; he had a rich christian experience, but his poor opinion of himself kept him out of the church. He was a friend to the cause, and ever attended the meetings when he could, even after he was very feeble. His home was a pleasant resting-place for the brethren who passed through Kingston on their way to the different meetings of the Roxbury Association. It was our privilege to visit him frequently, and always found a hearty welcome. He had been a subscriber to the SIGNS many years, and often expressed his satisfaction in the matter therein. We conducted his funeral service in his late home Jan. 4th, and tried, with such ability as the Lord gave, to speak comfortingly to the family and many friends who gathered to pay the last tribute of respect to their esteemed friend. The interment took place in the Kingston cemetery.

May the children be enabled to bow to the will of Him who doeth all things well. K.

Ruth Ann Sliter Van Denberg, who departed this life Nov. 23rd, 1907, after a brief illness, was born March 27th, 1832. She was the daughter of John Sliter and Polly Harder; was married to William W. Van Denberg April 15th, 1848. To this union were born two daughters, Amanda and Elizabeth. Mrs. Van Denberg was a believer for many years, although she never united with the church. The message of salvation came to her under the preaching of the late Elder B. Bundy, who for a time preached to a little band of believers in Troy, N. Y., who still love to hear the word of God declared. For many years Mrs. Van Denberg had been blessed with a hope in the

crucified and risen Savior; it had also been her blessed privilege to be favored with health to attend the meetings, and many times she spoke of the comfort she received while listening to the sound of the gospel of Christ. She lived a devoted life to the cause of Christ, and was loved and respected by all who knew her.

Her funeral was held from the residence of her daughter, near West Sand Lake, where she had made her home for several years, and was largely attended by friends and relatives. By her request the writer tried to speak from Isaiah xi. 1–9, and with such ability as God gave me tried to comfort the sad ones. Hymn No. 1247 was read by request of the friends.

May the God of all grace comfort all that mourn.

J. B. SLAUSON.

OUR aged sister, **Mrs. Elizabeth Stain Beesley,** died Dec. 26th, 1907, at 8:45 o'clock a. m., after a short illness dating from Sunday, Dec. 22nd, from the effects of hypostatic pneumonia. She lay in a stupor from Sunday evening until Tuesday noon, then regained consciousness and remained so until death came very gently on Thursday morning. Sister Beesley came to Otego April 28th, 1897, and made her home with Elder B. and sister Bundy until March 28th, 1903, when she came to our house to live, and never went out again until we bore her remains to the cemetery Dec. 28th, 1907. The funeral services were held in the rooms she had occupied so long, and our pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, spoke from the twenty-third Psalm and read hymns 1290 and 1249.

Sister Beesley was born March 17th, 1818, in the city of Coventry, England, and was the eldest child of Joseph and Ann Walpole Stain. Her father died in 1826. Her only sister, Mary, (who long afterward was sister Gedney, of Ebenezer Church, New York city,) came to New York with their mother and stepfather in 1830, and lived near Verona for a time, then at Utica and vicinity, until they moved to New York, where our sister was married to George N. Beesley, April 16th, 1838. They resided at New York and Utica as long as Mr. Beesley lived. Sister Beesley was baptized when sixteen years of age, at Verona, June 6th, 1834, and was one of the nine members who were constituted the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church of Utica, where her membership remained until the consolidation of the Utica and Otego churches. Sister Beesley made all arrangements for her death and burial, and everything was done as she requested. She looked beautiful as she lay in her casket; a smile came over her face as she passed away, and she looked peaceful and really at rest. Perhaps some one will write more of a history of our sister's long life. This is a brief notice to her friends and acquaintances that she has gone home.

SUSIE C. F. GUERNSEY.

OTEGO, N. Y., Jan. 8, 1908.

Susan M. Gudgel Bass was born July 14th, 1830, in Anderson County, Ky., was married to Thomas A. Bass Oct. 5th, 1865, died at her home near Waddy Sept. 18th, 1907, in the full assurance of a blessed hope in Christ, in her 77th year. Sister Bass was received in the fellowship of the Beech Creek Church, and baptized by the writer on the third Sunday in September, 1900, where she remained a faithful and devoted member until death. How much she will be missed in our little gatherings at old Beech Creek. She was always of a pleasant countenance and had a cheering word. She was left a widow some twenty years ago, and was a widow indeed. For the past nine years Mr. and Mrs. E. G. Martin (the latter a niece) occupied her home, with whom she lived and by whom she was tenderly cared for. She had been somewhat afflicted with a rheumatic trouble, but was only confined to her bed for a short time, having fallen and injured her limb. She seemed to be getting along nicely, but died suddenly from heart failure. Aunt Sue was dear to the family and is greatly missed by them, but we all feel assured she has entered into the joy of her Lord. She was the last one of a family of ten children.

Her funeral was largely attended at the Missionary Baptist meeting-house called Pigeon Fork, conducted by the writer, after which all that was mortal was laid beside the deceased husband.

May the Lord comfort and bless the dear family and lead them in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

P. W. SAWIN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 76. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1908. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, Jan. 7, 1908.

WILLIAM C. HASTINGS—MY DEAR BROTHER IN THE PRECIOUS HOPE OF LIFE ETERNAL IN CHRIST JESUS:—It comes into my thoughts that I have not written in return for your last gracious letter to me. However that may be, I feel I want now to pen you a few lines. As I am sitting here with my pen in my hand the question comes into my mind, Where shall I begin? I thought of this being the first month of our year 1908, and then Exodus xii. 2, came entering in with some dawning of the signification of the words. Let me pen you a few of my thoughts.

"This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you." This month of the celebration of the passover, and of the exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt called Nisan or Abib, was the seventh month of their civil year, and corresponded with our April. In this month Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us. What, for me? God had promised to Abraham to bring forth his seed out of the land of their afflictions and bondage, (Gen. xv. 13–16,) and when the time of the promise drew nigh (Acts vii. 17,) they were afflicted indeed, sore straits attended their sojourn in the land, they were crushed down under oppressions and cruel servitude. The last year they were in Egypt was the bitterest that they had ever known. As that year was ushered in Moses had returned to Egypt from the land of Midian, and the miseries of Israel were increased, more work was laid upon them, and the whips of Pharaoh's taskmasters were heavy upon them. Six months of this year there was no abatement of their grievous bondage. The seventh month is at hand, and in the midst of this month all is changed. What a transformation! The bondmen are free, their sighs and groans are hushed and songs of triumphant praise they are singing. You know the story, dear brother, the Lord made bare his holy arm, his mighty hand and outstretched arm gave deliverance to his people, his chosen. This seventh month became, in things pertaining to God, the beginning of months, the first month of the year unto them. Old things were passed away, and all things had become new. It was a new year, and this month of Abib the

beginning of the year unto them. "Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto the Lord thy God: for in the month of Abib the Lord thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt."—Deut. xvi. 1; Exodus xii. 42. The literal narrative of all this is interesting, but to be given glimpses of the spiritual meaning of these things is better, and then by divine leadings to enter experimentally into these typical mysteries, and for our hearts by faith to be saying, "Even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us," this indeed is blessedness. O such exceeding riches of grace is made known in bringing salvation to us poor sinners. Again and again within me I am saying, O that I could love thee, my Lord, my Redeemer. O for fervent gratitude that my heart might be a living fountain pouring forth its praises for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men. We were once in bondage far worse than Egyptian: we were the slaves of sin, (Romans vi. 16–20,) but we knew it not. The fleshpots of Egypt, the leeks, the onions, the garlic and Egyptian bread gave us fleshly gratifications. (Num. xi. 5.) Ah, we were in a shameful plight, the pleasures of sin sufficed us. (Heb. xi. 25.) But God's decreed time arrived in which it pleased him to call us by his grace, then indeed we were made sensible of our desperate and enslaved condition to sin. We could no longer, with any delight, walk according to the course of this world, a mighty, gracious power turned us in heart from our transgressions. (Isaiah lix. 20; Acts iii. 26.) In times past we had our conversation in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath even as others. "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." This, dear brother, is what has wrought in us this gracious change. Our eyes were opened and we saw where we were, the captives of sin, exposed to the curse of the law, fit subjects for the everlasting displeasure of the Holy One; what way of escape was there for us from the damnation of hell? The Lord gave us a heart to feel, and we had a heartfelt knowledge that we were wretched bondmen in Egypt. Then Moses came, the law entered and our offences abounded, and our servitude was more and more bitter. Pharaoh's hand was severe and cruel upon the Israelites, but how sorrowful is the lot of the quickened sinner when the yoke of his sins is heavy upon his neck, when Satan and all the powers of darkness assail the guilty one, yes, when the voice of condemnation smites the sin-burdened soul. Israel sighed and cried because of their bondage, (Exodus ii. 23,) and so do quickened sinners mourn unto God over their sins. (Ezek. vii. 16.) Truly that good work wrought in us by the Holy Spirit is very gracious and transforming, for we are not left by God to perish in our sins, we are drawn to the mercy-seat, we are moved by the operations of the Holy Spirit to pour forth our sighs and cries unto God. "The Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows."—Exodus iii. 7. This is a consoling thought, God knows our sorrows. "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh," and took unto himself all our griefs and carried our sorrows. It was not robbery that our Lord, our Christ, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. O no, it was not robbery, for he was the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of

his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. (Heb. i. 3.) O consoling, glorious mystery. Being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself for our sakes and became in very truth, even unto unfathomable depths, the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. (Isaiah liii. 3; Luke xxii. 44.)

"I know their sorrows." He knew our first sorrows, when we were ready to perish in Egypt with hard bondage, (Deut. xxvi. 5,) and he has known all our sorrows since then, and have we not found the Lord to be merciful and pitiful, sustaining and comforting and bringing us salvation? The last year that Israel was in Egypt was dark and bitter indeed, their cup of miseries was full. Six months of that year cruel bondage was theirs, and though God's judgments were heavy upon the Egyptians no salvation for Israel was yet in sight. But this is the year of God's redeemed, the acceptable year has come. (Isaiah lxi. 2; lxiii. 4.) The set time is come, the month, the very day, according to the promise of the Lord to Abraham, is nigh, and God's own mighty hand and outstretched arm shall bring them out of the house of bondage. (Gen. xv. 13; Acts vii. 6; Exodus xii. 40, 42, 51.) The seventh month was ushered in, and in the fourteenth day of the month at even the passover lamb was slain, and the selfsame day they marched out of Egypt. Jehovah had broken the bands of their yoke and made them to go upright. (Lev. xxvi. 13.) Ransomed, free, upright, they went forth by their armies, and against any of the children of Israel not a dog moved his tongue. (Exodus xi. 7.) How well it was that this month of Abib should be the beginning of months, the first month of the year unto the host of the redeemed ones.

The gospel of Christ is very blessedly declared in the sacrifice of the passover. On the tenth day of the month each family was to take a lamb without blemish, and in the evening of the fourteenth day it was to be slain. "And they shall take the blood, and strike it on the two side posts, and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it." "It is the Lord's passover." "And," saith the Lord, "the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt." That passover blood was the difference the Lord put between the Egyptians and Israel, (Exodus xi. 7,) and it is Jesus' precious blood that redeems us from our guilt and shame; by him we are ransomed from the curse of the law, from death and the power of the grave unto God. (Gal. iii. 13; Hosea xiii. 14; Rev. v. 9.) The Israelites came forth of their houses under the blood. The blood was sprinkled on the lintel over their heads, and on the two side posts of the door. What harm could befall them thus sheltered by the blood of the lamb? O, my dear brother, that sacred mystery in our faith that Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, what a comfort it is. How many times I have sung the words:

> "What mighty sum paid all my debt,
> When I a bondman stood,
> And has my soul at freedom set?
> 'Tis Jesus' precious blood."

Others may imagine to find hope for themselves in their own doings, but we are taught of God that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of

sins. (Heb. ix. 22.) Surely I shall never forget that time when first I saw Jesus, the Lamb of God, sacrificed for me.

"When first I knew my Lord, my God,
'Twas in his deep humility;
His garments rolled in his own blood,
With eyes of love he looked on me.

Lo, then my fainting heart revived,
When I beheld my Savior smile;
'Twas then in Jesus I believed,
And felt the glory of his toil.

I nothing had when my dear Lamb
Did show me all my sins forgiven;
I nothing had but sin and shame,
When first I saw my name in heaven."

There, those lines repeat to you the story; all things became new; this was in the month of April, 1871, and truly it was the beginning of months unto me. Yes, it was such a hopeful, blessed beginning for a poor, vile sinner like me. It began with God, who is rich in mercy unto all that call upon him, it began with the riches of his grace, it began with Christ, our Passover, sacrificed for us. Deliverance was mine through the blood of the Lamb, and, set free from sin and shame, the bonds of the curse of Satan and hell were broken, and I stood before the Lord a pardoned, ransomed, loved one, and thus the arm of the Lord made me to go upright out of the land of Egypt. (Lev. xxvi. 13.) Of what value is that life, that hope in things pertaining to God, that has not the sacrifice of the Lamb, without blemish and without spot in the beginning of it? Christ, the Lamb of God, is also the Apostle and High Priest of our profession. (Heb. iii. 1.) If he is not the beginning of a man's profession it will end most miserably.

The Israelites in Egypt were bondmen, but when the Lord brought them forth they were no more Pharaoh's slaves, but the Lord's free people; freed by his saving power, by the blood of the passover lamb; no more bondmen, but the adopted nation of God. Henceforth Jehovah was known as the God of Israel. Thus saith the Lord, "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt."—Hosea xi. 1. Yes, dear brother, from the moment that by faith I tasted the efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ for my sins I began in my heart to say, Abba, Father. Surely it was the gracious God himself who gave a vile sinner like me power to do so. (John i. 12; Jer. iii. 19.) God sendeth forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. "Wherefore," saith the apostle, "thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."—Gal. iv. 7.

"This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you." So much took place with Israel in this month; they arose from under their heart-wearying bondage, no more grinding tasks, nor the Egyptians' scourge laid upon them. The Lord released them, and they were made to go upright, their groanings were over, their tears were all wiped away, while very blessedly between them and their God there was the reconciling passover lamb. They feasted upon the lamb slain for them. "Thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste; it is the Lord's passover." Truly this was a time most memorable in Israel, and in this month Jesus our Lord was crucified.

"Glory to Jesus, the sinner's great friend,
He ransomed his people and saves to the end;
Once we were bondmen, far worse than Egyptian,
Till the arm of the Lord with might led us forth.

And Jehovah still keeps us from sin, death and Satan,
And our foes will destroy with the breath of his mouth;
Sing loud hosannas, ye ransomed, with me;
Jehovah hath triumphed, his people are free."

How the years have fled since we met

face to face. I have ever thought of you affectionately since that time, for sweet was our fellowship in the doctrine of Christ. May the Lord be gracious to you and to your dear wife and all your family.

I am your brother affectionately in Christ Jesus,

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

WAVERLY, Pa., Jan. 16, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Inclosed you will find a letter written by Elder John McConnell to me. I have shown and read it to nearly, or quite, one hundred Old School Baptists, five of our ministering brethren among them, and all have urged that I send it for publication, and I know that you will fully indorse the sentiment as truth plainly set forth. You see he says that he is not fearful of my judgment, and as I have the judgment of one hundred good brethren, he surely cannot object to its publication.

I enjoyed your article in the SIGNS of January 1st, 1908, very much, as I have many others, but this seemed especially good to me. I must say that the SIGNS is a grand old friend to poor, weary pilgrims. How many, many poor, naked, hungry, downcast, heartbroken, lonely, sad, heavy laden sinners have been comforted by this messenger of peace; it was the first and only religious paper that I remember seeing in my father's house, and I feel to thank God for that. How many Old School Baptist homes are flooded with all manner of trashy, flashy literature, and not a sign of a book or a paper in which God's eternal truth is set forth. It makes me feel sad and often in mind ask the reason why. Brethren, keep on writing, keep on preaching; pen preaching is just as necessary as any other; many poor souls have no other preaching from their kindred; so, brethren, think of these poor, isolated ones, you that are gifted to write. If I had the gift to write like you I would be heard from often, but I have not, I could never get my thoughts on paper as I would like, so have never written much for publication, and am strongly impressed that I am done, as my right arm is almost a failure now from rheumatism.

Brethren, farewell.

D. M. VAIL.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Dec. 4, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER MARVIN VAIL:—Your letter of the 29th ult. received, and we are glad to know you are recovering health and strength. A large congregation was out to meet you last fourth Sunday, and many expressed sorrow upon learning of your illness. Agreeable to your suggestion, the Lord willing, I shall exchange with you next fourth Sunday (December), you to come here and I to afflict the church at Cammal. You may rest assured of a warm welcome, and I am thankful and glad of the refreshment your coming will be to this tired and longsuffering people, but I am sorry for the folks at Cammal.

There is much in your last two letters I would like to reply to, but time and space forbid. I want, however, to assure you of my fellowship in one particular, for I think I know your feelings. You are not alone, as some say, in your conclusion that immortality is brought to light through the gospel; that "now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ." The time, manner and place of that coming I have heard you declare many times with so much comfort to me as almost to persuade me that I am a christian; that perhaps I am one of those

for whom Jesus offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears in the days of his flesh. Some way there is comfort in believing that groaning, being burdened, is the fellowship of his sufferings; that in this experience is the fervent, effectual prayer of the only righteous man, Jesus: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." Yes, I believe in the spirit the saints do say, "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true: and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ." I heard you once say that no man ever preached the gospel who did not preach the resurrection of the dead, and I believe it. Salvation is the resurrection of the dead, and I have never felt any burden on me to proclaim anything to the saints but "now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ." The hope of salvation now is so wonderful that my mind is engaged (when I have any mind) exclusively in trying to discover what ground I have for a hope in Christ. I am not wise; the tongue of the learned (to explain the nature of a future existence) has not been given me, and because of such silence I am sometimes called in question of the hope and resurrection of the dead. What doth not yet appear is beyond my understanding. Some brethren talk as if it is well settled in their mind what they will be, but none have yet been able to communicate to me the comfort of their views. With all my searching of the Scripture I find marked reserve in its language as to any particulars of the future existence of those who are saved. The way of that salvation only is declared, and to know and attain to that everlasting way is all my hope and desire. The fear of my life in serving this people is of being carried away with false doctrine; of trying to comfort them with fanciful notions; things seen; things their body, soul and spirit naturally crave. I would rather their faith be confirmed in an experience of fearing always; trying the spirits whether they be of God; examining and proving themselves. I would rather be told, You make me think, than be assured of having preached a wonderful sermon by a hearer who could not remember a word that showed him what manner of man he was. After all, is there other than the word of faith preached in the gospel? Is it not a living principle in the hearts and lips of the saints, making present things past and to come? And does not its exercise in them separate between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not? I think so. In the one case his service of God will be the fruit of his faith; he will live and move in a new atmosphere; he will see heaven new and earth new, a wall of salvation around him, and the river of the water of life, and the tree of life, ever his drink and food. In the other case, his works and labor will be the offspring of fear, or of the desire of self-glorification. He will count eternal life as a fair exchange for his good conduct, and even the forgiveness of his sins as purchased by his own acts of propitiation. The

presenting of his body a living sacrifice unto God as his reasonable service, is far from his mind; he still clings to the old earth and old heavens, deluded with the persuasion that he is rich and in need of nothing, when he is really poor and naked and blind and miserable.

I was once told by a Methodist preacher that the Old School Baptists dishonored God when they preached the insufficiency of man to walk uprightly; that it excused man from all responsibility and tended to ungodliness. How ignorant he was. Ungodliness finds no encouragement in the gospel, for it publishes the goodness of God in destroying our enmity to him; it frees us from the curse, but brings us under captivity to Christ, and is made known to all nations for the obedience of faith; and the will of God in the gospel is our sanctification, that we might serve him in holiness and righteousness. The only service acceptable to God is the obedience of faith. There is no true obedience before faith, for without faith it is impossible to please God. A good work cannot proceed from a defiled mind and conscience, (Titus i. 15,) and without faith we are to every good work reprobate. By faith ye are "dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that ye should bring forth fruit unto God."—Romans vii. 4. All fruit before marriage is bastard. There must be justification and peace with God before our services can be acceptable, for good works are the issue of a pure heart, and the heart cannot be pure before faith. All obedience has its root in faith, and is not done in our own strength, but in him whom God has set forth as our Head and Root. Faith and obedience are inseparable, and yet they are distinct. Faith is the cause, obedience the effect; cause and effect are not the same. By faith we confess Christ as our Lord; by obedience we walk according to his commandments. By faith we are the children of God; (Gal. iii. 26,) by obedience we are manifestly the disciples of Christ. (John xv. 8.) Faith purifies the heart, and the issue of such can but be pure religion and undefiled; it identifies us with Christ, and a living branch cannot be without fruit. (John xv. 5.)

Faith is a wonderful word; how little we comprehend its import. The trial of our faith is found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. We are justified by faith; it is counted for righteousness to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly. It is of vital interest for me to know that the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God. Is it in sensible weakness of the flesh that I am a partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God? Is this seeing Jesus crowned with glory and honor? Is it by His knowledge that Jesus justifies us? Is it the fellowship of his sufferings when we realize "the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak"? I hope so, for if the issues of death do not belong unto the Lord, the God of our salvation, then I am without hope in this world and for eternity.

I have written you a long letter, with no excuse for doing so except that I felt like talking to you. You know me better than most folks do, so I am not fearful of your judgment.

Unworthily but affectionately your brother in hope of life eternal,

JOHN McCONNELL.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Oct. 22, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—Your editorials of the present month upon "Extremes" and "Predestination" were read by me with much interest; they are established in the word of God, if I rightly understand its teachings. There is no power above our God. Solomon proclaimed that "the Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." The wicked are said to be reserved unto the day of judgment; they shall be brought to the day of wrath, said Job. Those who walk after the flesh presumptuously are self-willed, and as natural brute beasts speak things that they do not understand, and shall utterly perish in their own corruption. Such receive the reward of their own ungodliness; they feast with eyes full of adultery, and cannot cease from sin; they have forsaken the right way, and have gone astray, following the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness, but was rebuked for his iniquity. These are wells without water, carried about with a tempest, to whom the mists of darkness are reserved forever; for when they speak with great swelling words of vanity through the lusts of the flesh, through much covetousness, they ensnare those who were clean escaped from those who live in error. When they promise them liberty, they are themselves the servants of corruption. If being once enlightened through the knowledge of God they are again estranged, the end is worse than the beginning. Peter declared that the word came not in olden times by the will of man, but that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. But these are false teachers, and many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. Those who contend for the old landmarks are called extremists. The great trouble I believe with many calling themselves Old School Baptists is that they are not willing to declare the whole truth, as the faithful servants of God, who are commanded to feed the flock of God, and they are forbidden to shun to declare the whole counsel of God. If they fail to do the bidding of their blessed Master they are not worthy of their calling. God will keep his chosen unto himself, and will be their God and they shall know the Lord. They are a holy people unto the Lord, our God chose them to be a special people unto himself above all others upon the face of the earth. Then go on, faithful servants, contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." They are to hold fast the true doctrine, and the crown is the glory of God. We are commanded to stand firm upon this rock which cannot be turned or changed by mortal man. Foreknowledge and predestination are truths as firm as the throne of God itself; all his decrees and purposes were present in his mind before the dust of the earth was laid, and when the servants of God fail to declare these truths they are following Balaam, and are charging His faithful servants with being extremists; they object to the doctrine of God, and desire to please men, and limit the mighty God. So did the children of Israel; they turned back and limited the Holy One of Israel; they did not remember the goodness of God, and

when they were chastised they sought refuge under the doctrine of predestination. Our God is too wise to err, or to be brought into question by man, or to be limited. Let not the servants of God turn back to the beggarly elements of the world and condemn that which they once received and rejoiced in; let them not deny the predestination and power of God and his foreknowledge of all things, and let them not charge them that believe the doctrine with being extremists; his power is all and in all to us, and he sets bounds, and controls in all things, and at all times and places. There was full evidence of this immutable truth when the Son of man walked among men; all things were subject to his power, and to this he was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; but foolish men, with sinful presumption, seek to limit God, and would rob him of his omnipotence, and deny to him unlimited dominion and control. Hear what our God saith both of himself and of all mankind: "It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers." He brought the princes to nothing, the judges of the earth to vanity. "Hast thou not heard that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding." "Man at his best state is altogether vanity." "O ye transgressors. Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me." Why should we limit the almighty God, and deny his wisdom and knowledge, since he has declared "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure"? He has spoken it, and will also do it. O hearken, all ye stouthearted that are far from righteousness, do not condemn God's predestination, for he is called the Ancient of days, and his is an eternal existence. Daniel saw in the night visions one like the Son of man, "and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him." The Lord has set his King upon his holy hill of Zion. He said, "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away nor be destroyed. It was given to Daniel to know the interpretation of the things which he saw. The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom and possess it forever. The greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given unto the people or the saints of the Most High, and this kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. This was revealed to Daniel, and this appears to me to be the predestination of all things, and foreknowledge of his decrees and purposes.

There is no power that can set aside the decrees of God, as they were declared before time was. What would come to pass in the fulfillment of the Scriptures if any power could set aside his will? Let those who do not see this, hold their peace and ask the Lord to enlighten them. It is all of God and not of man. He has called his servants to proclaim the doctrine of election and predestination, and they will have great searchings of heart, and nothing but God's wisdom and infinite love can open the eyes of our understanding. Then there is hope, not chance, for it is all worked out, not upon conditions, but all of God. "By him

were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." He is without beginning or end of existence. "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms:" and he shall thrust out all your enemies, and destroy them before you; thus he is without end, without change, everlasting, immortal, perpetual, ceaseless, unchangeable, and so is his eternal truth; nothing transpires without him; he rules in all things; he has limited the bounds of all created things. All this may be called extreme, but I am sure that it cannot be successfully controverted; it is firmly established in the word. You have both ably defended the teachings of the word of inspiration as it was stored up in the mind of Jehovah from ancient times and revealed to his chosen servants; but this the world will not accept, and cannot, because it comes from above, from a Power greater than man. Daniel did not claim any honor or wisdom in interpreting the vision of the king; it was of the Lord only; the dream was certain and the interpretation thereof was sure. This should come to pass because it was the purpose and decree of God. This very Daniel was thrown into a den of lions because he would not worship the king's god, but the Lord protected him, as he does now all those who stand firm in the defense of the doctrine of the absolute decrees of God.

We had two faithful servants of God with us at the association; both were strangers in the flesh, but, we believe, not in the Spirit. One was from Paris, Mo., his name was F. Sutton, and one was from Nebo, Ill., his name was C. C. Melton, and both indorsed the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We love them both for the truth's sake. Their deportment was mild and pleasant, and they were strong in the faith of God's absolute decrees in all things.

I hope that this will be read with prayerful hearts, and that you all will remember the writer.

Your brother, in hope of eternal life,
O. B. HICKERSON.

FARMINGTON, Ill., Nov. 3, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I often think of you and your faithful labors in the Lord's vineyard. Your time is occupied laboring in spirit and in the truth of God. I often feel like writing you a private letter; then I think you have so many letters to read, and many perhaps like mine, poorly written, and many perplexing questions asked you; but I ask your pardon for troubling you this one more time. The last time I was permitted to meet with you was one year ago last spring, at the association held in Baltimore. I heard you preach at my sister's, Mrs. Grafton's. I was in a peculiar state of mind at that time, but do not suppose that you knew it; I seemed as one dead to any spiritual life, if indeed I had ever known anything about spiritual life. I had expected to attend several other associations, but felt that I must go home or I could not live, and I could not help my feelings.

I am still here as a pensioner of time, feeling to die daily. I do not know whether there is any one like me. I often awaken in the dead hours of the night with such a great weight upon me, feeling so sinful and wretched I have to cry unto the Lord for mercy, for I am in trouble and my eyes are consumed with

grief. My life is spent in grief and my years with sighing; I feel to call upon the Lord to remember mercy to me, a wretch undone without it. A few weeks ago in the silent watches of the night I awoke, feeling that I was dying, death had gotten hold upon me, my breath and heart seemed to be stopped, I grew cold and told my wife that I was dying. In the midst of this feeling I did say by faith, "Come, welcome death, I will gladly go with thee."

My dear brother, the Scriptures seem to be a dead letter; I have gotten so that I do not often read them. I opened the Book this forenoon, hoping my eyes would behold something out of which I might get comfort. I commenced reading the eighteenth Psalm, and it seemed to suit my case, and seemed comforting where he says, "The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me." I read on until I came to the twentieth verse, then I could not feel that I could justify myself. He said he was wicked, but I was all unrighteous. I thought of you, that I would like you to read all the chapter and comment upon it all in the SIGNS. David here claimed righteousness, for he had kept the way of the Lord. He said he was upright before the Lord, and he says also that he was recompensed according to his righteousness, according to the cleanness of his hands. Right here I seemed to sink down in the mire, for I am all unholy and go bowed down all the days and nights when awake.

I have received the SIGNS for November 1st, and feel to love the dear writers. My mind dwelt very feelingly on the letter written by Elder Redd. He seems to be low down in the valley of doubts and fears. I love him dearly. I met him years ago at Atlanta, Ga., and considered him an able servant of Jesus Christ, and would be glad to have him with us. But very soon I shall pass away. This world is a wilderness of woe; this world is not our home. In days past I have taken much comfort in traveling and in being with the dear ones I love so much. I always feel unworthy of their love, and feel that I have imposed on dear brethren in trying to impress them that I love them, when I very much doubt if I am a child of God.

Dear brother Chick, please pardon this poor letter; I did not write it for publication, but you can do with it as you please, and all will be right with me. May we meet in that blessed clime where we shall ever be with the Lord and where there is no sorrow or sin.

Yours in love,

E. D. VARNES.

P. S.—I spoke of my trip to the association last spring one year ago, and that I did not enjoy myself; I want to add that I found no fault with the preaching, and I know it was all good, but I was not permitted to feed and receive it in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. You know what I mean, I hope, my dear brother. My brother Isaac, who was with me, has gone to rest since then, and I am the only one left of the brothers. The Lord has dealt with me with much longsuffering. O, am I a vessel of wrath, only fitted for destruction? Or am I a vessel of mercy? The Lord alone knows. You may think that I am a child of God, for you do not know my sinful heart.

E. D. V.

[THE Psalm to which brother Varnes has called our attention is a very lengthy one, so that it would not be possible to comment upon it all in one article, even were we competent to do so; but right here in connection with his sorrowful let-

ter we feel to say just a few words, which we hope the dear Lord may make a blessing to him and to others who are similarly tried. First, we doubt not that David here, as well as in all his Psalms, wrote right out of a sorrowful and yet blessed experience of his own. He also wrote by inspiration of God, and the special aim of this Psalm is to set forth the sorrows and victorious triumph of the righteous Lord, our Savior Jesus Christ. Of him pre-eminently is it true that the sorrows of death got hold upon him, and the sorrows of hell compassed him about, and the snares of death prevented him. On the other hand, it is of the blessed Redeemer also that it was true he was righteous altogether. Now in view of this there is consolation for just such troubled, sinful souls as brother Varnes feels himself to be. Why did the Savior suffer such sorrows? It was because he would redeem us from death. Why was it said that he was righteous in this Psalm? It was because his righteousness is ours by imputation. Brother Varnes, instead of this Psalm being the medium of sad news to you, it is the medium of the most blessed news in all the world, the gospel news that Jesus has suffered all, and that he is risen in righteousness, and that in this is the salvation of just such troubled souls as is described in your letter. We cannot see ourselves in the Psalm save as the Psalm describes our Redeemer, and save as we are one with him in his finished work. May our dear brother, and all who are like him distressed, be enabled to read this Psalm seeing our victorious Lord set forth in it. It is all true of him, and it is true of us only as we stand in him.—C.]

SAMSON, Ala., Dec., 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—I have just finished reading the SIGNS, and it is as good news from a far country. I feel much comforted when I read its columns to see that there is faith in the earth. I have never written a letter for publication in any paper, much less have I tried to write upon such precious subjects as would be comforting to the saints. In Matthew xii. we read: "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." We learn from the first verse of Matthew that this is the book of the generation of Jesus Christ, therefore it is written to those who know the grace of God, and not to the world, who know not the law nor grace. It is written to that character to whom God has seen fit to reveal the way of righteousness, and into whose heart a new song has been put, even praise unto God.

We are taught by the divine word that Christ shall reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet, and that the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. Thus he died for our sins and rose again for our justification, yet we all own that we are still sinners though saved by grace. Paul spoke of himself as being at that present time the chief of sinners. Our God is so pure that he cannot look upon sin, and so Christ died for the sins of his people, paid all their debt and set them free, so far as committing any sin that would shut them out from heaven and eternal glory. He writes his law in their hearts and puts it in their minds; thus when the child of God goes contrary to the teaching of the Holy Ghost he commits sin. Christ has died once for them, and they do not, and cannot, claim

anything but that they are led by an evil spirit when they sin.

Jesus said, "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come." But he said that if he went away he would send the Comforter, which should guide you into all truth. Again, we read that God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to condemn sin in the flesh. As long as we live in this body of clay we are mixed with the world, more or less, all the time doing, saying or thinking things that are wrong. Now, in so doing we commit sin, and we suffer in the flesh for it, in which flesh sin is condemned. All who have ever known the way of righteousness know that after doing things that are not in accordance with the teaching of the Spirit they are made to mourn and think that if they were ever born of the Spirit they would not have such troubles and sin to contend with, and often they fear that they are mistaken in the whole matter, which is often the case with me. I look back at such times and cannot see why God in his wisdom spared such a poor, frail man as I am, one so vile and full of sin. I can see no one that bears the name of Christ who seems to go as often astray as I do; they all seem to be far superior to me in their daily walk in life; yet there is one thing I do know, and it gives me comfort at times, and that is, the things I once loved I now hate. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." But when I begin to sum up the matter to see if there is any good in me, I can see myself but a sinner of the deepest dye; if there has ever been any change in me it has been in and through the mercy of God. I can say of a truth, as did Paul, "that, when I would do good, evil is present with me." I at times fear that I deceived the brethren when they received me and I was led down into the liquid grave, and that I have brought on the brethren, the redeemed of the Lord, a burden, and that they would be much better off if they had rejected me. It has always seemed to me if I had told them more at that time, when I tried to tell what great things the Lord had done for me, whereof I was glad, that I never would have been known as a Baptist; yet I can only be satisfied as I read or hear some one tell of the mercy of God and of his goodness.

I see I have left the subject in considering the imperfections of myself; yet all things work together for good to them that love God. If I could only know that I have been taught of the Lord I would not hesitate to write, believing that some one would be comforted by my words; but if not taught of God, the people of God will not be comforted, but placed in confusion. I desire, as much as in me is, to let everything alone that is not in accordance with the will of our Master. If I could put my whole trust in him I know that I should never lack for anything. I know I do not put my trust in him as I should, because I often find myself planning about my financial support, as though I could do something within myself. Putting our trust in him is safe; and we never lose anything in giving to the poor, or in paying for spiritual literature.

Brother Chick, I did not know the address of your paper, the SIGNS, until in August last I saw several of them, and I wrote you to send me one copy and I would subscribe for it. In a few days I was writing for it, when my wife said, "It looks as though we are not able to pay for the paper." I said, "It is a Baptist paper, and we will never lose anything." So I sent you the subscription in the full

belief that I would not lose anything, but that our God works all things right; I felt that I was not impoverished at all for the paper, but that God would supply my needs. I sent one dollar for it, and one month later I found two dollars. Thus it is in everything, the Lord provides, not as man does, but double. The Lord measures to his people double measure, filled up, pressed down, running over, and this is still another evidence that we are the children of God.

Dear brethren editors, it seems to me that this is not worth anything to any one, but do with it as you like.

Your brother,

J. E. FRAZIER.

MANORKILL, N. Y., Oct. 20, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel inclined to pen a few lines, for you to read, if it be the will of God. While contemplating on the subject, and feeling that it might be wisdom to be silent, the words came, Ye that fear the Lord, keep not silent. And, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow," seemed to loom up with some comfort.

For some time I have felt to speak a word to Miss Bonnie Chick that was, but now sister, if it be right for one so unworthy to speak of himself as a child of God. The language of the psalmist comes concerning Zion: "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early." Again, "Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man." Sister Bonnie spoke with much freedom and simplicity of her exercises, and very expressively of the Lord's dealings with her, and in doing so told so much of my travel that I felt I wanted to speak a word of good cheer to her. I bless the Lord, too, in leading my daughter to follow her Savior in his appointed way. He said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." I am led to exclaim, as did another upon a similar occasion, How great a mercy to a poor sinner; all over glorious is my Lord; he is most beloved, and to be adored.

I also read a Circular Letter, written by Elder J. W. McClanahan, which was most timely. I would say with the poet, "Go on, go on; my soul says go, and I'll come after you." I have been favored of God to attend our association and two yearly meetings. It seems cheering to hear of the God of all grace by his servants who draw water out of the wells of salvation. The Lord gives water in the wilderness and springs in the desert, to give drink to his people who are his chosen. I feel to say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases."

"It was compassion, like a God,
That when the Savior knew,
To ransom us required his blood,
His pity ne'er withdrew."

I also think of the words,

"O that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still;
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will."

Then the thought comes, "The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." Thus we cannot excuse ourselves in this judgment, which is meted out to us, as we follow strange gods, or at least some of us.

Brethren, I wish you well. Because of

divisions it seems that we all ought, in an especial manner, strive for peace and to edify one another, and whatever is done ought to be done to the honor and glory of God. Let us all turn to our first love, and "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth." If we could do this, then peace would reign in every bosom, and joy would be a constant guest. I have seen sorrow in the churches, and the loved ones scattered, and some inquiring souls not knowing what to do; O may God lead them beside still waters, and his banner over them be love. I have been privileged of late to enjoy all that my heart could wish; mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. O that all his people would seek peace and pursue it.

Nov. 21st.—I wrote a few lines some time ago and concluded not to send them; but will add a few lines to inform you that this frail bark has been down in the valley, sinking down in woe. Last Tuesday, for about four hours, the tempest, or as the psalmist has it, "the pains of hell gat hold upon me." I cannot understand why these changes come. First lifted up to heaven, so we feel that we can say, "Come, welcome death, I'll gladly go with thee," and then sinking so low that we cannot even touch the hem of His garment; then again we see him coming unto us meek and lowly, and we run to meet him, and like Martha and Mary, say, Lord, hadst thou been here, our brother had not died. We, too, would not have died to all our spiritual enjoyment. But yet now we rejoice that the Lord has once more come and entered into his temple. Now the darkness has passed and the sunlight appears by the life-giving word, "It is I;" so we are led to feel "It is I" all the time. He is our soul's sweet morning Star, and his banner over us is love; we are lifted to the third heaven when Jesus is formed in us the hope of glory.

I read an article in the SIGNS, written by Fannie Baldwin, and as I read it peace flowed like a river. Further on I read the editorials for November 15th, and they met my mind so well I felt like Paul when his brethren met him: "He thanked God, and took courage." The most of the time I feel to rejoice in Christ as my Savior, and that all things work together for good to them who love God and who are the called according to his purpose. The Lord gives, and he takes away, and blessed be his holy name.

Yours in hope of life eternal,

D. S. ELLIOTT.

CENTERBURG, Ohio, Dec. 16, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—The time is here that I should renew my subscription again. My unprofitable life is still spared for a purpose known better to my heavenly Father than to me. I have been quite feeble this fall and winter—have felt that my race was about run in this world of sin and temptation. My doctors advised a change of climate, as our winters here seem to be very much against me. My daughter, being much out of health, my husband and son-in-law decided to go to Ocala, Florida, and made all arrangements to go. While I believe my days are numbered and I cannot add any to them, I felt that I would enjoy the sunny south, and especially to meet with some of the dear ones I love in the Lord. This had been my mind for some time, but it was a great struggle in my mind to leave a good home and all the necessary comforts of this life and go to parts unknown; I felt that it was taking a leap in

the dark; I told my son (a lodge man) I thought it was something like joining a lodge, and I am no believer in lodges, especially for believers in the Lord. We continued to make ready for the trip, and through the kindness of Elder and sister Durand we were helped to a good correspondence with friends in Florida, which I feel to appreciate very much, and have just received a letter to-day from a brother Baptist, in answer to my letter telling him we had given up going. We were all ready to pack up and start; this gentleman had gone to the trouble of finding us a cottage and rooms, and I imagined myself down there enjoying the new life with the people of the south. While I had never been fully convinced with an answer from my heavenly Father that I might go, which I was pleading for all the time in my feeble way, the answer came in the negative, for the present time, not knowing what the future will bring for us. It has brought some pleasant correspondence and much confidence in our southern friends who gave us their kind assistance in providing us a house and rooms that we might feel at home when we arrived. I feel this kindness has found a warm reception in my heart never to be forgotten.

I am no doubt writing more local news than will be profitable or of use, but I want to speak of dear old sister Sarah J. Branson's letter, of Orlando, Fla., in the SIGNS. I had hoped to meet with this church at Orlando had I gone south. I want to say to the dear sister, I have had a great deal of controversy over the Sabbath, but I never could, from a child, believe in the sanctity of the first day of the week, and would ask my mother questions about it. It would take too much space in our precious paper for me to try to explain all of my experience regarding the Sabbath, so I will just say in short, I cannot understand how any to whom Christ has revealed himself in the pardon of their sins, can possibly put any trust in any day or works of any kind. If Christ shall make us free we shall be free indeed; blessed rest.

"My spirit looks to God alone;
My rock and refuge is his throne;
In all my fears, in all my straits,
My soul on his salvation waits."

I want to say to my dear and beloved kindred in a precious hope who write for our dear family paper, the SIGNS, some of whom I have met in the flesh, others in spirit, Write on, you can all express what I feel better than I can. I am able to read, and trust I understand your blessed words of truth and righteousness, and as I am mostly confined at home in the winter, I appreciate your letters in much sympathy and love of the blessed truth you all proclaim. I have continued to distribute my SIGNS where I have found those who loved to read them, and I learn I have gained the approbation of some who desired to patronize your paper. I have been blessed with some soul-refreshing seasons this last summer, and have been able to still meet with a few of the Lord's dear people, having to go twenty and forty miles. Our yearly meeting was a glorious one; Elder Peters, of Indiana, and Elder Hutchinson, of Findlay, Ohio, were with us. Following that we were blessed with a visit from Elder Jackson, of Iowa, which was a feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined. He visited the churches at Delaware and Galion. Our young brother Weaver, of Galion, Ohio, has the care of both these churches, with the assistance of young brother Jackson, of Bucyrus, Ohio, so we are blessed with those we have much

confidence in as our leaders. While I have lived to see many of our fathers called home to rest from their labors, and their works follow them, I feel to say with one of old, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places."

I ask an interest in your prayers, that I may be kept in the right and true way of peace and righteousness.

With love and christian fellowship, hoping our Father may continue to bless us in the future as in the past, I am your poor, weak unworthy sister, in hope of eternal life,

(MRS.) S. C. BOYD.

NEWARK, Del., April 8, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER:—I will try to fulfill my promise of writing to you.

The words of Peter are in my mind now, when he said, "I go a fishing." Jesus had gone away, as he had said he would, and the disciples were left lonely and destitute. How true it is that without Jesus we can do nothing. They were then like sheep without a shepherd; they had no leader, and were scattered, not knowing what to do, so Peter said, "I go a fishing." What could he do but return to his old occupation? Being without a leader or guide he could but return to his own work, and follow the dictates of his own mind. Were Peter and the other disciples alone in this experience? Are there not times when it is with us as though Jesus was lying in the tomb, or asleep in the hold of the ship? Then we grope in darkness because our Leader is gone away, and we go a fishing.

Elder Joseph Staton once said to a sister who had been to a meeting and had an enjoyable time, and now was returning to her work, "You can go fishing now." How sad it is after being with Jesus and feeling his presence to have to return to fishing. So much of my time is spent in this lonely, unprofitable kind of fishing. They fished in the nighttime, but Peter was not alone in this fishing, the other disciples went with him. They fished all night and caught nothing. What a long and tedious night it must have been. I imagine, however, it was of some comfort to Peter to have the other disciples with him. I wonder what they talked about during the night. Perhaps they wept as they talked. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." In the morning Jesus stood on the shore, but they knew not that it was Jesus. How often, when the morning comes and Jesus talks with us, we are not fully confident that it is the Lord, but are ready to attribute this gladness to some other source. "Then Jesus said unto them, Children, have ye any meat?" How tenderly he addressed them, calling them children. "They answered him, No. And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes." This was what they had been toiling and waiting for all the night, and no doubt they had become more and more discouraged. How true that it is the darkest hour just before the dawn, and when ready to give up, then help cometh. The Lord helps those who cannot help themselves. It is the poor who have the gospel preached unto them. Those who have nothing, and are at their "wit's end," and have no money to buy, are told to buy without

money and without price; these are the subjects of God's help; his strength is made perfect in their weakness.

"Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said unto Peter, It is the Lord." After they had followed the direction of Jesus, and had caught so many fishes, it dawned upon them it was the Lord who was directing them. One said, "It is the Lord," and the rest believed it. How often, after having a good meeting, we have heard some one say, "I felt that the Lord was in the midst to-day," and when we see their faith we are ready to believe it also. So it turned out to be a successful fishing trip, after all. Have we not all been on such fishing trips, and have they not turned out just as this one did? Going to meeting, reading the Bible, visiting the brethren, all, all is a failure unless led by the Spirit of Jesus. No man is able to keep alive his own soul. We need to be taught this lesson, not only once, but again and again. This is why we have to fish so many long nights and catch nothing. We must be taught our own weakness, that the strength of the Lord may be perfected; we must be brought to nothing, that Jesus may be everything to us; we must decrease, that he may increase. What a blessing to be able to say, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." For me to live is to learn more and more of his salvation.

It is said that John D. Rockefeller's income is fifteen million dollars a year, which is about forty-seven thousand a day, and it has been said that his board only costs him about eighteen cents a day. How little we need, after all, of this world's goods. Let us consider our blessings and learn to be thankful.

Your brother in this precious hope,

EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

[THE above excellent letter from our brother, the late Edward Rounds, was forwarded to us for publication, and we think will be read with interest by our readers; it was one of the last from his pen.—ED.]

PRINCETON, Ky., Nov., 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS, AND ALL THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—I am not worthy to address you, but I have a desire to do so. My father-in-law, now deceased, was a reader of the SIGNS for many years, and we have some old copies now in our possession, of which I am proud. I am a "doubting Thomas," and have been for twelve years, for if I have an experience of grace at all, it is an experience full of trials, troubles, doubts and fears. Trials, because I want to tell everybody of God's love, power and wisdom, and I cannot do so because I am slow of speech and dull of comprehension; troubles, because God's children are encompassed by the enemy, and the camps of the saints are almost bare, only a few scattered here and there, and the love of many has waxed cold; doubts, because if God ever has called me into the light and knowledge of his truth I am too blind to see it or understand it; fear, because I know that God is able to destroy both soul and body in hell, and will that be my fate, or is my name written in the Lamb's book of life? Well, at times I hope it is, and that the Lord will remember me. Then again the hope that I have becomes but a mere spark, and I am again in the belly of hell. How long, O Lord, how long? I look back twelve

years in the past, when I viewed a sight that to me was the most grand and glorious in all the world; I was high up upon the mountain, with the wicked and sinful world far, far below me; I thought for a few days that I would never sin again, and that I would live here perfect and holy unto final glory. Was I deceived, or was I dreaming, or was it a delusion of an overworked brain? The Lord alone knows. Since then I fear and tremble in his presence, for I know that in my flesh there is no good thing. My body is but a temple of clay, fashioned by the Potter a vessel of honor or a vessel of dishonor; which it is, the Lord alone knows. I know that God is just and righteous in all he doeth, and "though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." I know that the work of man shall be destroyed, but His work shall stand forever. In this temple of clay there is something at work, is it the work of God? I hope it is. Does he work in me both to will and to do? He does, and then I work it out with fear and trembling, fearing lest I should be found claiming the honor. God has declared the end from the beginning, and every link in the chain between the beginning and the end, and all shall stand fast; nothing can be added to it nor taken from it, and all has worked, and does now work, and shall continue to work together for good to them who love God. Whose work is it to do this? It is God's work. Does he make the wrath of man to work together for good? He does. He makes peace and creates evil. God sent his Son to save his people from their sins, and to conform them to the image of his Son, and this he did because he loved them, and so gave himself for them, that where he dwells they may be also. What did they do to be saved? They stood still and saw the salvation of God. When a true called minister of God preaches this doctrine somebody believes it. Why? Because they have passed from death unto life; they have the witness in themselves and they all are taught of God. Man does not repent of himself, God leads him to repentance; he does not go to the mourners' bench to get religion, for true religion gets him; this is why he mourns. The child of God stays at the mourners' bench all the rest of his life; that is, he stays at the feet of Christ. Can a child of God, who is saved by grace, look up to God and demand reward, or a blessing for obedience? No, because at the best he has only done his duty, and so does not feel to merit any blessing, because he has only obeyed his Father's command, which is his duty as a child, and the Father is under no obligation to reward his child for his obedience. Then let us wait the appointed time, till our change come, and then we shall receive that inheritance which is reserved in heaven for us, then we will see him as he is, and be satisfied. Then, brethren, let us meet often one with another, and speak of Him, for a book of remembrance is written before the Lord for such. Shall I be one of the jewels which the Lord will make up? Shall I sit at the Lord's table? The Lord alone knoweth.

Your brother,

C. K. HAINES.

HERNDON, Va., Jan. 15, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I thought many times during last year that I would like to tell you and brother Chick how I enjoyed your editorials and many other letters of the dear kindred in Christ. How I have been made to rejoice through those letters, which tell my experience much better than I can tell it myself, and I

thought to-day, as the time of my subscription to the SIGNS has expired, I would send to you the amount for another year and try to write a little and tell you all how I have been edified from time to time. Your editorial on Prayer, some time back, and another on Predestination, April 15th, I think were very good, as were also the "Refining Pot," by brother Keene, in Sept. 1st number, Psalms cxiv. 32, by brother B. F. Coulter, same number, Fragments, by brother Durand, Dec. 15th, and New Year's Address, by brother Chick, Jan. 1st inst. I cannot express myself to the extent that I was edified in the above letters printed in the dear old SIGNS. I sometimes get so low down I think it is all a delusion, that I am mistaken in it all, yet there is still a little hope after all; then again for a short season I am made to rejoice without measure, then I feel to praise the Lord for his goodness to me, a poor, wicked worm of the dust. What am I, that God is mindful of me? I rejoice at times to feel that the Lord has given me a heart to love his people. I do not think we are ever able to fully appreciate the rich blessings the Lord bestows upon us, yet I believe we desire with fervent hearts to ascribe all praise and all glory to his holy name; but there is much in my flesh to draw me away from that sacred nearness that I so much long for. Among all the ransomed of the Lord, if I am one, I am the least worthy of his love and mercy. I seem to be less thankful than any one else for the great hope which he has given us, and while I know that in me there dwells no good thing, I hope there is within me that principle, God's love, which at times, at least, lifts me above the things of this world. I want to be an humble follower of Him who was meek and lowly of heart, who was reviled, and reviled not again; and we know, dear brother, to be a follower of Jesus is to go where he went, to suffer in measure as he suffered for us, to know what it is to be poor, naked, wretched and miserable, to suffer persecution for his name's sake. All such are those whom he calls blessed; they hunger and thirst and mourn; he commands and they gladly obey. We are made willing to go through dark places that we may come again into the light of his countenance. "Draw me, and we will run after thee," said the bride in the song. Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him;" and what a sweet and precious drawing it is: drawn by the cords of his precious love. His voice is "a still small voice," which speaks to our faith, and is as the sound of many waters, and whenever it comes to us it is with power in the Holy Ghost. The flesh, being enmity to God, is never drawn by God's love, but is made subject to the higher power. The power of Satan is found within certain limits, he can only present the temptation, and if in our weakness we cannot resist it, then we fall, if not kept, a prey to our lusts. So I find how necessary it is for me to pray earnestly that I may be kept from the powers of darkness, for it is only by his sufficient grace that we can obtain strength to conquer our enemies. The apostle tells us that we are crucified with Christ, nevertheless we live, but the life we now live we live by the faith of the Son of God. How marvelous this is, yet how glorious; he that is born into Christ's kingdom cannot live the old life, but faith exercises him in the love of the Father, and so Jesus commands his disciples to let their light shine, saying, "A city that is set upon a hill cannot be hid." The saints of God who compose the holy

city, the new Jerusalem, are upon the mountain of God's eternal love, and there is no night there, for the light of the Sun of righteousness, which shines in this lovely city day and night, is far beyond the brightness of the noonday sun in our natural heavens.

But, my brother, you know more of these things than I do, so I will close, hoping to see you again. If the Lord will, I would be glad to meet with you this fall at our association, which is to be held with the Frying Pan Church. O how I do miss our dear brother and pastor, Elder E. V. White. It was just one year ago yesterday (14th) that he was buried, and it seems to me I miss him more and more as time goes by; he was one of God's excellent of the earth, a bold defender of God's predestination and grace, which is my hope and salvation. May God's mercy and grace ever abide with you and brother Chick in your duties toward the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as it has in the past, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

As ever, your brother in hope of life eternal,

W. A. THOMPSON.

ELGIN, Oregon, Nov. 29, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—The inclosed letter from brother Silas Williams I desire to share with such as are like minded; to me it has been a source of great comfort. The news of my son's serious illness, and my inability to be with him, is very trying indeed, and such thanksgiving as I have is in remembrance of the few who are in sympathy with me in these great trials.

Trusting to be guided by that Light which shined in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not, I remain yours truly,

(MRS.) M. J. LEE.

ALBANY, Oregon, Nov. 22, 1907.

MRS. M. J. LEE—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—Yours of July 27th was duly received and read with much interest, and feeling a deep sense of my unworthiness, and inability to write anything that would be of comfort to one of God's children, I have failed to answer it until now; but when I read your beautiful letter in the SIGNS to Elder J. P. Allison and wife it was so comforting to my poor heart that I felt impressed to write you a few lines, though I often feel unworthy to associate with the dear people of God. But Paul says, "By the grace of God I am what I am," and I trust that His grace which was bestowed on me was not in vain. O, my dear sister, how precious is that word grace to a poor old sinner like me. I am now in my seventy-fourth year, and when I view my past life I realize that I have been a great sinner; but I know that Christ is a great Savior, and this encourages me to press onward toward the mark for the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus. In my early life I labored under the conditional system of religion, preaching for the Missionary Baptists until, I trust, the Lord revealed to me the truth. You know, my dear sister, that we know nothing in regard to spiritual things except by revelation; and when the Lord revealed to me the truth, as I trust, in all its grandeur and beauty, my poor heart was filled with joy inexpressible and full of glory, and from that day until now I have never doubted in the least that the doctrine as held by the Primitive Baptists is true. I was at that time preaching for the Missionary Baptists, and had been for many years, and

was called a revivalist among them, but when the great light came, the first thing the Lord did was to show me that the doctrine I was preaching was false, which was the conditional doctrine, and you may be sure that I have had no love for it since that time. This was in the year 1880. I was then drawn to the Primitive Baptists with a power I could not resist. I then commenced preaching the doctrine of grace with all the power God gave me. This I found to be easy work when I had the Spirit; but to show me my weakness God has often withdrawn his presence from me while trying to preach his gospel. In this I realize that where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. It is no wonder that the false teachers have to labor hard to prepare their sermons, as they have to do this without the help of the Lord, and I feel sorry for them; for none but God can give light. The reason why there is so much false doctrine taught in the world is that men do not understand the Scriptures. When our Savior met his disciples by the way, after he had risen from the dead, the first thing he did was to open their "understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead." No doubt at that time our Savior gave them a clear view of the plan of redemption, as it rests solely on the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord from the dead. One of the prophets said, Who by searching can find out God? The poor, helpless sinner does not find God. The prophet said, The Lord found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness; he lead him about and instructed him. This accords with the experience of all of God's people, and it is written for them, and no one can understand it but those to whom it is written. How true is that declaration that he has hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes. So we see it is all a revelation from first to last. The Old School Baptists are the only people who preach this doctrine. Surely they are the peculiar people spoken of in the Bible.

Now, my dear sister, I will leave this subject and talk to you about our little church. I suppose you know when Bethel Church was organized, I think it was in the year 1848, and perhaps you knew many of the dear old brethren and sisters who were in the origination who have long since gone to their eternal rest. There are now sixteen members in love and fellowship. The unworthy writer has been pastor of this church for twenty-seven years, and in all that time peace and love have reigned with us; to God be all the praise. At our last meeting I had the privilege of baptizing a precious brother, a son of Elder A. Thomas. I will also state that our beloved sister, Margaret Barton Clymer, with whom you were no doubt well acquainted, departed this life Nov. 10th, 1907. The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the sorrowing friends, using as a text 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52, after which we laid her remains by the side of her husband, Deacon William Clymer, to awake in the resurrection.

As I have written perhaps more than will interest you I will close for this time. Give my love and regards to Elder Mayfield and all the brethren and sisters.

I am, as I trust, yours in hope of eternal life,

SILAS WILLIAMS.

PARIS, Ill., Dec. 29, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—I find it time to remit for the dear old SIGNS, and also to acknowledge the receipt of a letter from you some time ago, containing words of cheer. I still count my visit with you and the dear brethren in the east one of the greatest privileges of my life; perhaps it came about as "all things" do, in God's own way and time, leaving a memory dear that I shall never forget. You perhaps remember in some of the little talks we had that I told you, and perhaps some of the other brethren, that I had no "stake" set that I could go back to in my experience, as did Paul, and nearly every other brother or sister with whom I have ever talked. This discourages me at times, but I have often felt a very small hope that I would not exchange for a world, then again I think it is because of the SIGNS. Probably I love the SIGNS on account of always having it in our family; my grandfather, Elder George Reeves, of Ohio, took it from its first publication. After his death, in 1854, my father was a subscriber and lover of the paper until his death, three years ago. I have been taking it several years, but have always had the privilege of reading it; so, as I say, I often fear that my religion is a "head religion." But I love the SIGNS and the writers with a love that I cannot express. This is how my visit came about. I had read after such able writers as Elders Gilbert and William L. Beebe, Durand, Rittenhouse, the Puringtons, Quint, Badger and younger writers, as Elders Keene, Rowe, McConnell, Ker, Coulter and many others, including yourself, until I felt that I knew them. When the way was opened for me to go, and I was on my way, the question came, Now what are you doing? You are putting yourself up as an Old Baptist, and going among strangers; they will have no use for you. I had written to Elder Durand that I purposed going, and he wrote me to come, and come right to his house. When I got to the station at Southampton I saw I was not among strangers; Elder P. W. Sawin and Elder Slauson, with a brother Reeves, were there. The next morning when I went to the meeting-house dear old Elder Durand and Elders Badger, Keene, Rowe, Eubanks, Hassell, McConnell, Vail, Francis, yourself and many others whom I had heard of and loved were there, and my cup was full; I was a stranger and they took me in. Perhaps this does not interest you, but my mind ran in this way, and I wanted to tell you how I love and appreciate the SIGNS, and how the editorials, both yours and Elder Ker's, have been enjoyed, together with letters from all; they are like letters from our absent ones. I have been particularly pleased to hear from several brethren in the west, in the Siloam Association, where I was permitted to visit about ten years ago; they are a lovely people. I went to them in a similar manner as I went to your associations, but I was not a member then. They have perhaps forgotten me, but I have a precious recollection of sitting under the preaching of dear Elders Wm. S. Mathews, Silas Williams, W. J. Hess, I. N. Newkirk and many others. So you see the SIGNS is a good medium, even if I have not the spiritual understanding and hearing ear.

Please remember me in love to your own family and others who remember me. A letter from you at your convenience will be highly appreciated. Please excuse this ramble.

Yours in a precious hope,

M. C. REEVES.

OREGON CITY, Oregon, Dec. 25, 1907.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN EDITORS:—It has been a long time since I have written anything for the columns of our precious medium of correspondence, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which I have had the pleasure of reading for forty-seven years, and I rejoice to know that it still contends for the same faith that was once delivered unto the saints: salvation by grace, through the merits of the crucified and risen Savior, our Redeemer, Lord of heaven and of earth. As it is written, All power in heaven and in earth is given into my hands; and now, dear brethren, when that precious Savior comes again the second time without sin unto salvation to make up his jewels, in that great and notable day of the resurrection, when the redeemed of the Lord, who have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father, shall be changed from mortal to immortal, then shall they be truly adopted into that spiritual family, for they shall be raised by the same Spirit that now dwells in the children of God, and be fashioned like his glorious body, then there will be no veil between, but they shall see him as he is and be like him. Here, dear brethren, is where and when all those who have received the Spirit of adoption will be adopted into the glorious family of God; they shall meet around the throne to dwell with Jesus and behold his glory that he had with the Father before the world was; then will be the glorious consummation of the will of our blessed Savior when he said, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."—John xvii. 24.

Dear brethren, I have not written what I thought to write when I commenced; I wanted to speak regarding the prosperity of our little church called Cedar Creek, in Clackamus County, Oregon, here in Oregon City. We do feel to take courage and press on toward the mark of our high calling in Christ Jesus our Lord. We have been favorably blessed of the Lord in putting it in the hearts of his dear ministers to visit us from far and near during this year. Elder Marion Bartley, of Illinois, came with Elder G. E. Mayfield, of Elgin, Oregon, last May, and Elder Bartley remained out here on the coast about five months, visiting all the churches, I believe, in Oregon and Washington, to the comfort of all. At our last meeting our beloved brethren, Elders J. H. Gilmore, of North Yakima, G. E. Mayfield, A. Horner, J. P. Allison and S. B. Moffit (our assistant pastor) were all here and preached the glorious doctrine of God our Savior in its purity. The last five meetings we have had additions to the church, two by letter, one by relation of experience, a dear old sister ninety-three years old (Susanna Porter), related her experience as clearly as we ever heard any one, and three by experience and baptism. Last meeting a brother from Astoria, Oregon, over one hundred miles from here, was received by experience and was baptized; though it was raining hard, yet he desired to go to the stream and be buried in baptism, and his wish was granted. All who were able went to the stream, about one mile distant, through the rain and witnessed the sacred ordinance, after which we all returned to my house and remained all night, or at least several of the brethren and sisters, and Monday morning our dear brother Heckerd, who had just united with us, wanted to read and have sung the good old hymn, "Love is the sweetest bud that blooms." He read it and commented on it as he read, and when it was sung dear Elder Gilmore by request spoke in prayer. It was a solemn parting.

Now I will close, trusting that we all may be kept humble at the feet of Jesus and each other.

Your brother in hope,

JOSEPH BRUCE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1908.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE PRODIGAL SON AND THE ELDER BROTHER.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I will thank you very kindly if you will give your views through the SIGNS of the prodigal son and the elder brother. Do you think that the younger brother was manifestly saved before he left home?

Your brother,

W. H. SIMPKINS.

RALEIGH, N. C., Dec. 7, 1907.

There have been differences of opinion among equally good and spiritually-minded brethren regarding some things in this parable. For many years we have believed that it was right and good for all these different thoughts to be presented, not in the way of controversy, but each one giving his own understanding, without striving to oppose what another may have said and thought. It seems to be right for each brother to present what has commended itself to his own heart, but at the same time it is not his right to insist that all others shall view the matter as he does. Paul said, "Whereto we have already attained, let us walk according to the same rule, let us mind the same thing." But "if in any thing ye be otherwise [diverse] minded, God shall reveal even this unto you." Let each brother, after presenting that which commends itself to him as a revelation of God, wait until the same revelation is made to others. If his understanding be of God, at the proper season, God will also show the same to others, and so now we feel to respond to our brother's request gladly, and in doing so we desire to present what has long seemed to us true of the parable, without in any way attacking the view of another.

First, we will say that the title found at the head of the chapter in which this parable occurs, the parable of the prodigal son, was placed there by uninspired men. The Savior did not call it by that name, and, taking the whole connection into consideration, we have long thought that the more appropriate name for the parable would have been, The parable of the elder brother.

Second, in the fifteenth chapter of Luke, where this and two other parables are recorded, viz., the parable of the lost sheep, and the lost piece of money, just one supreme thought is presented; and these parables, all three of them, present in substance the same things. These parables differ in intensity and force, but all of them are intended to set forth the same lesson, and the key to all three parables is found in the first two verses of the chapter. Let us read them carefully: "Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." Now, in the parable of the prodigal son, the elder brother sets forth the Pharisees and scribes who murmured, and the younger brother sets forth the publicans and sinners, with whom he did eat, and who drew near to hear him.

Third, to these murmuring Pharisees and scribes Jesus first speaks in the parable of the lost sheep. They said, We

are the saved, we have not at any time wandered. If Jesus be indeed the Messiah, why does he not recognize us and our goodness and faithful obedience? Why does he so speak that publicans draw near to hear him? Why does he receive them and give them tokens of fellowship? If he were the Messiah indeed, surely he would associate himself with us, and would speak the things that would be pleasing to us, who know the law, rather than the things which these outcasts would delight in. Now in this parable of the lost sheep Jesus reasons with them in an unanswerable manner: Granting that you are what you say, and that these are all that you say of them; granting that you are in the fold, and that these are very far astray, what would be the most natural course for me, the great Shepherd, to pursue? What would you yourself do if one of the hundred sheep that might belong to you should go astray and be in danger? You yourself would leave the ninety and nine in the fold and seek after the one that had gone astray. Shall not I do the same? Why find fault with me for doing for men what you would do for a sheep? Jesus elsewhere used much the same figure when he was faulted for breaking the Sabbath in doing his work of healing. They also would take an ox or a sheep from the ditch on that day; is not a man of more value than a sheep?

Now in the next parable, that of the lost piece of money, the same thought is presented, only with greater condemnation against them, since the contrast between men and a piece of money is even greater than between men and sheep. A woman having ten pieces of money loses one; from that time she pays no attention to the nine that remain safely in her purse, but lights a candle, even though it be day, that she may see into every hole and cranny in the house; and more than that, sweeps the house, and diligently seeks after it until she finds it; and in both these parables neighbors and friends are called upon to rejoice that the lost is found. If you yourself would so care for the lost piece of money, and would so rejoice at its recovery, why fault me for seeking the lost, the publicans and sinners? You yourselves confess that they are lost, and therefore do not acknowledge that you need salvation, why then find fault that I seek the lost that they may be saved? It is not recorded that they made any answer. There was no answer that they could make.

The same rebuke is administered to them in the next parable, that of the elder brother and the prodigal son; but in this parable there is more elaboration of the rejoicing at the end, and the force of the truth is set forth far more intensely here than in the other parables, because here we have the closest ties of life presented, while in the other parables only money and sheep are presented. The younger brother is the publican and sinner who drew near to hear him, and the elder brother is the Pharisee and scribe who murmured at this, as recorded in the first two verses. But all three of these parables are living parables; that is, they present what is true in every age and among all men. The same class of men to-day draw near to hear the Savior; the same class of men to-day find fault with such a Savior as this who has no words for the righteous keepers of the law, but who speaks only that which the sinner can hear and rejoice in. This is one glory of all that Jesus said while on earth, viz., that it describes men in all ages and places, and under all conditions, so that

His words are as true now as when they were spoken. There are publicans and sinners to-day, as then; there are Pharisees and scribes to-day, as then. The latter are rebuked in these parables now, as well as at that time. If it be not so, these parables are not living truths to us, but only ancient history. Publicans and sinners, then, found in His words just that which suited their condition. The same class of men find the same things in his words to-day. Pharisees, then, were not drawn to his teachings, and were wise enough to see that what he said was suited to the sinful and the lost, and so they found no place for him nor his teachings in their hearts. The same class of men have no use now for the soul-humbling doctrine of the cross, any more than then. The reproach of true religion is that it suits sinners, the lost, the straying ones, the prodigals. What anger burns in the hearts of self-righteous men now, as then, when it is set forth that Jesus does not have any good words for them, but only for the sinful.

In the parable of the lost sheep, the fact that the lost one, and those that were still in the fold, were all alike sheep, is not to be understood as though Jesus would say, You are all my true sheep. It is just a figure to set forth the one truth that would be a rebuke to the Pharisees, setting forth as it did their unreasonableness as they murmured. So also the parable of the lost piece of money does not mean that they were all stamped with the seal of heaven, as all these coins were stamped with the seal of the land, but just this one truth—anxiety to find the lost, and rejoicing when it was found. In the parable of the elder and younger brothers there is no thought that Pharisees and scribes were true sons, or, for that matter, that publicans and sinners were sons, but the whole matter sets forth what would be true in nature, even among those Pharisees themselves, and, therefore, that they were altogether actuated by enmity to Him, and to all that salvation really means, in their murmuring against Him for so speaking as to draw publicans to him and in receiving them. All through the life of the dear Redeemer there was that which repelled one class of men and that which drew to him another class. In the gospel which presents him still before men the same thing is true: the gospel of grace draws one class and repels another class. To one it is the savor of life unto life and to the other it is the savor of death unto death; that is, the gospel of Jesus Christ makes manifest what is in the hearts of men. If life be in the heart the gospel is life to that one, if death be in the heart there is no life in the gospel to that one; the gospel simply makes manifest that he is dead to it.

The Savior said, "Likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." "Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." "It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found." Those who dwell in the presence of God, and in whom his good Spirit dwells, will rejoice at seeing another trophy of sovereign grace, while self-righteous hearts will not rejoice, but rather murmur, that Jesus saves not the righteous, but sinners; and all these who do rejoice were once themselves also lost and found; they were once dead, but are now alive. Knowing what this salvation means to themselves, they are prepared to rejoice

with exceeding great joy when the lost are brought home again.

No doubt there are minor lessons taught also in this parable of the two sons. Minor, we mean, not because the truth is any less important, but because they are not the one special thing designed to be taught in the parable. For instance, it is most true that these publicans and sinners, when they are brought to themselves and see things in the right way, find only husks in the land where they are, and even these they are not allowed to eat, no man gives even these unto them, it is a place of hunger; but still, it is most blessedly true that it is the place of life to them. They have come to themselves, the swine are no longer their companions, and the food of swine cannot satisfy them. The world with all its vain pleasures, ambitions, riches, friends, and with all its religion as well, is nothing to them now. If they flee to these things for satisfaction they cannot fulfill their desire. Once they did, but in them they have squandered all, and are now empty-handed and hungry. It is also true that these feel they have sinned against heaven and in the sight of God in their whole lives, yet with this knowledge, and because of this conviction in their souls, they say, "I will arise and go to my father." Necessity drives them. While one crumb could be found remaining to them of their former pleasures, or former religion, they do not say, "I will go to my father;" no one ever comes to God unless his hands are altogether empty. It is also true that all such ones feel unworthy. We cannot ask the least favor upon any other ground than that of mercy. It is too much to ask that we shall be as a servant born in the house; only "make me as one of thy hired servants." This is the work of the Spirit of God, preparing them to come as publicans and sinners come. They would not come at all if there were any longer that which could do them good in the former things. They would once have been as self-righteous as the Pharisees if they could, and so it is by no merit of theirs that they come as publicans and sinners. It is also true when they thus come trembling, fearing and hardly daring to come at all, that the Father sees them while yet they are a great way off, and in the soul's sweet experience it is true that at an unexpected hour the Father meets them. They were expecting frowns, and, at the most, could but suppose that the very least of favors would be bestowed upon them, and that at the price of infinite mercy. But O how large and free is that mercy, far, far beyond their highest thought! The Father meets them and embraces them and overwhelms them with a view of his love and his tender pity and forgiveness. How small their highest anticipations, but how vast the blessings bestowed upon them. Every token of favor and love is shown them. There is joy in the presence of the angels of God. There is a mixture of shame, sorrow, humility, heart-breaking and confession on the one hand, in their own heart, and yet of joy and wonder and adoration of the love that could receive and so bless such a sinner. Could a Pharisee receive such tokens of love and favor he would regard them with pride and self-elation, as only being a proper tribute to his faithfulness and goodness. So we are told in the parable, the elder brother, seeing all this feasting, was angry. He could conceive of no reason for such rejoicing only on the ground of great service or faithful obedience, and his thought was that such a feast must be to the praise and glory of the one in whose behalf it was made, therefore he

speaks of the reproach and shame brought upon the name of the family by the prodigal. Why should he, this sot, this associate of harlots, be thus feasted and rejoiced over, when I have never received any such token, though I have been obedient always? His was the thought of all natural religionists: blessings granted for meritorious service rendered. Had such a feast been made for him he would have been exalted and filled with insufferable pride. To such an one the gospel brings no message; the gospel of grace is an unmeaning sound to him. But see the self-abhorrence which fills the prodigal. He knows that this feasting and joy are not to his honor, but to the praise of free grace. He knows that the robe, the ring and the embraces of his father are not things to boast of, but to humble him in the dust and cause him to walk softly all his days. Men of a worldly religion to-day think and speak of heaven as a reward for well doing. They think and speak of crowns that shall be to their own praise, and that shall testify to their faithfulness and the abundance of their works, but the humble prodigal still remembers that these hopes are his, not because of his goodness, but because of the wonderful grace and mercy of the Lord, and that he shall be crowned and clothed with righteousness is to the praise of mercy, and so, as he feels and in weakness testifies here, he shall to all eternity testify that the Lamb alone is worthy. "By the grace of God I am what I am;" I have what I have by the grace of God, and so, in that better world, and here, ere they reach that abode, saints delight to say, "Not unto us, but unto thy name."

We repeat that all these things are true, and it is good to draw these lessons from the various things said in this parable, but, after all, the one special thought is to set forth just what is presented in the first two verses of the chapter. We trust that our dear brother, at whose request we have written these thoughts, may find in them that which will be of satisfaction to him. C.

CHURCH NEWS.

WAVERLY, Pa., Jan. 15, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, AND ALL WHO READ AND LOVE THE PRECIOUS TRUTH CONTAINED IN THE SAME:—I am now trying to do what I have felt to be a privilege each year for several years past; that is, to make a short statement concerning the little churches I am still in great weakness trying to serve. The number of churches is eight, one less than last reported. Elder John Slauson is serving the Albany and Troy Church, which I served from its organization until he was called. There have been but few changes in the churches the past year; a few deaths, a few baptized, a few moving to other parts and a few coming to take their places and fill their vacancies, which would leave them numerically about the same. We mourn the loss of a number of old and reliable soldiers of the cross who are now resting eternally with Jesus, which is great gain to them. We cannot boast, if we would, of large congregations, but we do have good, faithful brethren, who are always found at their post, ready to do their duty in every way possible, which is of great strength and comfort to the pastor of a church, as well as to the church itself. A little church of ten or fifteen members, who are faithful in their attention to all the services of the church, each found in their place, is of more real benefit to a pastor than a church of one hundred and fifty members and not more than one-half or two-thirds of them ever present at a service. If there is anything that would make a preacher feel he is not

wanted I am positive that would. We have had a few two days meetings, as you have seen noticed in the SIGNS, and they were excellent; the preaching was first class, and hearing the same. Elders S. H. Durand, Joshua Rowe, John Slauson, Bogardus, Ker and McConnell have all visited us the past year, either at our two days or regular meetings, and they did us much good I assure you. The good, old hard corn gospel is what we need up here, and we have ministers who are not afraid to preach it. Ministers, bring the corn, the grinders are here to crack it. Soft corn will do for that other animal that parts the hoof, but does not chew the cud nor produce any wool. I will now say to the ministering brethren, Come and preach for us when you can; and to the brethren, sisters and friends, Come and make us good long visits, we love your company and messages of love.

Your unworthy brother, I hope, in Christ, D. M. VAIL.

POETRY.

IN this vain world I fain would see
The way to endless day;
I wish to run the christian's race,
And never go astray.

Some say our works bring us to God,
We must the law obey,
But O, my works are lame and poor,
I cannot come that way.

My Jesus did the law fulfill,
His works are all my plea;
For Jesus (and his righteousness)
Is all the way I see.

From every other hope I come,
All other names decline;
Let others take what they may choose,
Let Christ alone be mine.

No man to God can ever come,
Though thousands still may try;
For Jesus is the only way
That leads to God on high.

(Selected by Elder E. A. Norton.)

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Sallie A. Martin, my beloved wife, died at our home Jan. 2nd, 1908, in her 80th year. She was Miss Sallie A. Thomas, born and raised in this county, (Fauquier, Va.,) and had she lived until the 28th of this month we would have lived together fifty years. She was a loving and devoted wife in every sense of the word, a favorite with all who knew her. We had no children. She had been in delicate health for many years, but was taken last March with a severe attack of rheumatism, which changed from one disease to another, and was a most intense sufferer all the time for nearly nine months, when it was the good Lord's will to take her from all earthly trials and suffering. She was baptized in the fellowship of Ebenezer Church, Loudoun County, by our beloved pastor, Elder J. N. Badger, of which she remained a consistent member. She was beloved by all.

She was laid away Jan. 4th, in the cemetery at Ebenezer, and brother Badger preached a short but comforting sermon. The weather was cold and disagreeable. I am lonely and sad now, but the good Lord alone can give comfort, and may he give me the heart to say in truth, Thy will be done. It cannot be very long before I will be laid by her side, as I am now in my seventy-seventh year.

WM. A. MARTIN.

DELAPLANE, Va., Jan. 19, 1908.

Emily R. Yawger died at her home, 2114 S. Fifty-seventh St., Philadelphia, Pa., Nov. 16th, 1907, aged 71 years. Mrs. Yawger was a sister-in-law to the late Elder E. Rittenhouse, and a sister of brother Cyrus Risler, of Kingwood, N. J. She had lived in Philadelphia for the last fourteen years, and had been a regular attendant at all the appointed meetings of the church, although she was not a member. She was well established in the doctrine of Christ, and manifested a love for the church that can come only by the grace of God in a broken and contrite spirit. She leaves two sons, a son-in-law and a daughter, with relatives and many friends in the church, to mourn their loss. She was laid away in the cemetery at Rosemont, N. J. May each one of us be enabled by grace to pass out from time in living faith as did she.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

Jephthah Watkins was born June 10th, 1828, in Anderson Co., S. C., and died in Columbia, S. C., Sept. 8th, 1907, making his stay on earth 79 years and 3 months, lacking two days. He was a member of Mill Creek Primitive Baptist Church, of South Carolina. I had been personally and intimately acquainted with this dear and noble brother for some ten or twelve years, having served that church occasionally

for some years. Brother Watkins was possessed with noble traits of character, and was a firm believer in the good old Bible doctrine of salvation by grace, the doctrine of election and predestination. He had been a constant reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES ever since he had been a member, and was greatly devoted to it and the doctrine it advocates. He leaves eight children, three sons and five daughters, to mourn his sad departure, but not as those without hope. Two of his daughters are devoted members: sister Lizzie Hollis and sister Charity E. Watkins; they are precious sisters in the Lord. It is by their request, and that of other members of Mill Creek Church, that I am writing this imperfect sketch of their dear father. He left a wife and several children by her first husband, who was a brother Brazzell; she also is a member. Brother Watkins' first wife was a member with him, and a noble, good woman. Brother Watkins was a well informed man in the Bible, was a good citizen, a kind and good neighbor, a loving husband and kind father.

J. E. ADAMS.

ANGIER, N. C.

Mrs. Catherine V. D. Taylor was born in Mercer County, Ky., Sept. 15th, 1820, and departed this life at Oskaloosa, Iowa, Jan. 20th, 1908, aged 87 years, 4 months and 5 days. In 1821 her parents moved to Park County, Ind., and in 1839 she was married to Philip D. Taylor. In 1854 they moved to Mahaska County, Iowa, where most of her life was spent on a farm near Agricola. To this union there were born twelve children, five boys and seven girls; one son and two daughters have passed over the river of death. In November, 1868, she became a member of the Pleasant Grove Church of Primitive Baptists, situated in Mahaska County, Iowa, and continued such during the remainder of her life. She was confined to her bed but a few days during her last sickness, and on the morning of Jan. 20th, 1908, she peacefully fell asleep in Jesus.

Her remains were taken to Barnes City, and at 3 p. m., Jan. 21st, a funeral sermon was preached by the writer, using as a text 1 Cor. xv. 21, after which her remains were laid to rest to await the morning of the resurrection.

WM. J. REEVES.

Reuben D. Robinson died suddenly Monday, Dec. 23rd, 1907, at his home near Reynoldsville, N. Y. He had been failing in health for some time, but was suddenly stricken with apoplexy. He was the youngest son of Sabin and Charlotte Sprague Robinson, who came from Putman County in 1833. The deceased was born in Hector, May 27th, 1843, where he lived until his death. He leaves to mourn their loss one brother, Oliver Robinson, and two sisters, Mrs. Mary Egbert and Miss Lovina Robinson. Mr. Robinson was a man of noble character, and had been a constant reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for over forty years. Although never making any public profession of religion, he was a strong believer in the grand old doctrine of predestination and election. The relatives have the sympathy of a large circle of friends.

Elder Chas. Bogardus, of Brookton, N. Y., preached a very comforting sermon to the many friends and relatives.

OLIVER ROBINSON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

"A friend in Kentucky," $.50; Mrs. T. G. Harris, Neb., $3.00; Mrs. Edward Griffin, N. Y., $1.25.—Total, $4.75.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 76. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1908. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DELAWARE, Ohio, Jan. 12, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—I send you a letter I received Christmas day from Elder Peters, which I think very good. Will you please publish it in the SIGNS? I enjoyed it very much, and feel there are others who would enjoy it, too. It will be all right with Elder Peters. I have enjoyed reading the SIGNS many times, but have not had it since April; find inclosed two dollars, for which send me the SIGNS again.

Yours in hope,

L. E. STEPHENS.

DEUTERONOMY XXXI. 20.

"FOR when I shall have brought them into the land which I sware unto their fathers, that floweth with milk and honey; and they shall have eaten and filled themselves, and waxen fat; then will they turn unto other gods, and serve them, and provoke me, and break my covenant."

Brother Stephens, some things along the line of Scripture recorded in Deuteronomy xxxi., from the sixteenth verse to the end of the chapter, have been on my mind considerably of late, and one of the things especially along this line is God's foreknowledge, for the last half of this chapter is made up of Israel's future disobedience. Here God does not pretend to guess at, but to positively foretell Israel's future disobedience, and I have thought of how forcibly God impressed upon Israel the certainty of their future departures. God did not stop at telling Moses of Israel's certain future disobedience, but told Moses to write of this future disobedience, and teach the children of Israel, to put it into their mouths that this song may be a witness for Him against the children of Israel. Brother Stephens, it does seem as though Israel, after having such warning of their future disobedience, having it taught to them and put in their mouths and in their ears, that Israel could not say they were ignorant of their future calamities. "The Lord said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers; and this people will rise up and go a whoring after the gods of the strangers of the land, whither they go to be among them, and will forsake me, and break my covenant which I have made with them. Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them; so that they will say in that day,

Are not these evils come upon us, because our God is not among us?" "And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are befallen them, that this song shall testify against them, as a witness; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed: for I know their imagination which they go about, even now, before I have brought them into the land which I sware." Moses therefore wrote the song the same day and taught it to the children of Israel. Did ever a people have such plain, unmistakable warning as did the children of Israel of their future conduct? even foretelling the words that Israel would say when the future evils would befall them which was to be. "Are not all these evils come upon us, because our God is not among us?" Brother Stephens, if God were to foretell your future disobedience as he did Israel's, and teach it to you, and put it in your mouth and ears, and write it into a song, and have the Elders to keep teaching you that song, that this might be a witness against you, would you think for a moment that his foreknowledge was uncertain, or your future disobedience uncertain, or would you think for a moment that God could foreknow or foretell an uncertainty, and when you would fill up your measure of disobedience, as foretold, would you say you could have done differently from what God foreknew, or would you think you were a free agent and could keep God's covenant that he foretold you would break? If these Scriptures prove too much for those who find so much difference between God's foreknowledge and his decrees, are not all the future predictions foretold of men against them too much for those who admit God's foreknowledge but deny his decrees? The matter resolves itself thus: if a decree be added to God's foreknowledge, will that make the thing he foreknows any more certain or fixed? We must admit God only can foreknow and foretell things that are certain future events, and if a decree cannot make a future event more certain than God's foreknowledge of the event, then those who see so much difference cannot show as much difference as they would claim. Moses told the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord God across Jordan, to "take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee. For I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the Lord; and how much more after my death? Gather me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their ears, and call heaven and earth to record against them." Did ever a people have such plain warning of their future disobedience as did Israel? and are we to think Israel could have kept the commands that God knew they would not keep? or can God foreknow that men would do a certain future event that was not certain? I will cite a few things for our consideration. God said to Moses, Exodus vii. 2–4: "Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land. And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt. But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, * * * by great judgments." Exodus ix. 12: "And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them." Exodus x. 1: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh: for I have hardened his heart, and

the heart of his servants." Exodus xiv. 4: "And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them." Verse 8: "And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued after the children of Israel." Brother Stephens, God had foretold four hundred years ere this came upon Pharaoh that the nation to whom they should be in bondage will I judge, and they shall come out with great substance. (See Genesis xv.) This future event God foretold as a thing he knew, and not what he guessed at; he told it to Abraham before Isaac was born, therefore it behooves all of God's children to believe in God's sovereignty, for those who believe there is such a great difference between God's foreknowledge and his decrees are at a greater disadvantage in reconciling the certain future events of things rewardable and punishable of men's vices and virtues, their good and evil deeds, as arising from some other source than God's decrees, than if they were to own God's decrees over all. God knew Pharaoh's future wickedness. Pharaoh's will and choice were changed several times by God hardening his heart and then causing him to repent, showing that for men to fulfill the lot foretold of them in the future their minds, wills and choice are governed by those things God sends upon them, as in Pharaoh's case. Let men read the fifteenth chapter of Genesis and then compare it with God's dealings with Pharaoh; and let them read the thirty-first chapter of Deuteronomy, of the future disobedience of Israel, and then read the rest of the Old Testament, and see if God foretold any uncertainty, for Israel's whole life, from Moses until Christ, amply proves Moses told the truth, and that God in foretelling their future disobedience foretold fixed future events. Hence when men deny the predestination of these things, and yet are compelled to acknowledge their certainty, what is gained by it, and what besides God's power and wisdom fixes these future events that they cannot fail? It does not make these future transgressions of Israel any less certain if we take away God's decree from his positive knowledge, for God cannot foreknow uncertainties. We will come closer to the point, for it is certain that God, for wise and holy purposes and gracious ends, ordered the event of Joseph being sold into Egypt by his brethren (Genesis xlv. 5): "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you, to preserve life." "God sent me before you, to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God." Psalms cv. 17: "He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant." It is certain that God, for wise and gracious ends, hardened the heart and made the spirit of Sihon, king of Heshbon, obstinate, that he would not let the children pass by, as we see in Deuteronomy ii. 30; also we see it was of the Lord to harden the hearts of the kings of Canaan, that they should come against Israel in battle that he might destroy them, as we see in Joshua xi. 20, and we might cite many instances recorded all through the Bible where God foretold the obedience and disobedience of eminent persons, such as Josiah's righteous reign, foretold in 1 Kings xiii., and fulfilled three hundred and fifty years afterward. In 2 Kings xxii., xxiii., we are sure that those who feel God's foreknowledge of future events differs much from his decreeing them have these things before them to

reconcile, the same as those who believe in the absolute decrees of God, and they find it hard struggling to reconcile God's foreknowledge of these things according to their notion of God, and at the same time keep out of predestination of such events. When we read how God hardened Pharaoh's heart so many times, and how he purposed the selling of Joseph into Egypt, and how he hardened the spirit of Sihon, king of Heshbon, and Og, king of Bashon, and how he hardened the hearts of the kings of Canaan that they came against Israel in battle, to the end that he might cast them out, and as we read in Jeremiah lii. 3, how that through the anger of the Lord it came to pass that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon, and the Lord took Nebuchadrezzar his servant, and all the families of the north, and brought them against the land of Judah and all the nations round about, as we read in Jeremiah xxv., and also Christ "being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."—Acts ii. 23. "And truly the Son of man goeth as it was determined."—Luke xxii. 22. "For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together. For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."—Acts iv. 27, 28. "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But these things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." I say, brother Stephens, when we see these things so forcibly set before us, how can we shut our eyes to them, as though God never did anything of the kind? Why is it not better to own that God, for wise, holy, righteous purposes, and most gracious ends, did these things? as most all of these cited truths were done to pave the way for the blessing of his people, either under the first or the second covenant. Joseph being sold into Egypt was wickedness in Joseph's brethren, but God had a holy, righteous purpose in it, that Joseph might nourish his brethren through the famine; and God hardening the heart of Pharaoh was that His name might be declared throughout all the earth, and that it might be told for generations to come what great things God wrought in Egypt; thus the evil that Pharaoh did was with wicked intent. God had a holy, righteous purpose, and a most blessed, gracious end in view in beginning to pour out his blessings on his people and to force nations to respect his chosen people. God hardening the spirit of Sihon, king of Heshbon, and making his heart obstinate, was for a glorious purpose, for God had promised Abraham four hundred years prior to this act that his seed should possess this land; and God hardening the rest of the kings of Canaan that they came against Israel in battle, was to the end that he might cast them out. This also was a fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham, four hundred years prior, that his seed should inherit this land, though God had waited long for those Amorite nations to fill up their cup of iniquity and become ripe for destruction; this also God had long purposed and promised and showed long forbearance until his appointed time came. Thus God had only a righteous purpose in thus arranging an inheritance for his typical people, and shall we poor, finite creatures, with such weak understanding, charge God with being the author of sin because we are too weak to

comprehend his holy purposes and gracious ends? Shall carnal reason take the holy Father to judgment before their carnal court and find fault with his decrees because they are not according to our natural reason? What are we but dust, and is not the wisdom of this world foolishness with God? Hence shall foolish, worldly wisdom pass judgment upon God? The crucifixion of Christ, if we look upon the act and the evil intentions of those who had a hand in it, certainly was the most heinous crime ever committed; but when we look at God's side of it, and the purpose and end he had in it, we certainly must say it was the greatest blessing ever accomplished, and that God thus ordering it and fitting men for it was the most gracious act and the most holy purpose of all of God's acts. Hence for us to preach experience, to the exclusion of doctrine, and listen to those who plead for to be fed upon milk, as they are not able to endure strong meat, I often think of Paul's remark about it. "Every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word." Those who do not believe in the predestination of all things have these cited Scriptures in their Bibles, and if God has done all these things and is not the author of sin, but of holiness, can he not have a holy, righteous purpose in all things? For we all have the Scriptures to reconcile, and their way of reconciling them is no better than ours. God is a sovereign over all things, and has ordered all things according to his own eternal purpose, as we see in Isaiah xliv. 7: "And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them."

Brother Stephens, my letter is long, yet I feel like continuing; the wisdom and purposes of our God are unbounded, his sovereignty great, his power unlimited, his grace so sweet, his love so healing, his Spirit so directing and discerning, that one finds no place to stop.

NEWTON PETERS.

PORTLAND, Indiana.

WARWICK, N. Y., Nov. 15, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—In the SIGNS for November 15th I notice a letter to Elder Chick from sister Lena Huntt, of Virginia. I have to-day just received another, as I think, good letter from her, and you may use it if you so desire. I will notify her that I have forwarded it to you so she will be prepared for its appearance in print. It was my solemn privilege to administer the ordinance of baptism to her, and since coming among us she has manifested a zeal for the truth quite refreshing to witness. Those who read this letter from her will notice a mind exercised in the Scriptures. Such an exercise is very comforting and reassuring to the faith of God's people.

Leaving this matter in your hands, I am yours for the truth's sake,

H. H. LEFFERTS.

GLENBROOK, Va., Nov. 12, 1907.

ELDER H. H. LEFFERTS—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I think spiritually I have been with you all day, and I feel that I must try to write you a few lines, yet am so little and unworthy that I do not feel like taking my pen to write any of my brethren; but O how I do thank God for the love of such brethren; I know they are the dearest people in the world, and I think it would almost kill me should they withdraw their love and fellowship from me. I know I love them and our dear Jesus with all my heart and with all my soul, and now the following words come

to me: "Not as the world giveth, give I unto you." My mind has been led to read John xiv., and in the twenty-seventh verse I find these words: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." I have had many passages of Scripture revealed to me in this way since our association. It has troubled me greatly that I can remember things I read but a short while. I take the Bible or the SIGNS and read something that is very comforting to me, and I say to myself, Now I will remember this, I will read it again and be sure to remember it, but that resolve is as weak as the one who makes it, I cannot remember, and I often feel the words of a hymn I used to sing, which runs thus:

"Though I have labored again and again,
All my self-cleansing is utterly vain;
Jesus, thou blessed Redeemer from woe,
Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow."

Yes, all my self-cleansing is utterly vain, and everything I try to do of myself is utterly vain, for "When I would do good, evil is present with me." "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." Of the many good sermons I heard at our association I remember the text of but one, and that was the one you spoke from on Thursday night: "I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her," &c. I remember that and a part of what you said in connection with it; then in a few days came these words: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory." I could not find those words until Elder Eubanks told me where they were. Then came these words: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." Again, "My grace is sufficient for thee." As these Scriptures come to me one by one I cannot rest until I get the Bible and find them, and these are the things that stay with me, I do not forget them.

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform."

"Great is the mystery of godliness;" yes, and how wonderful when we are enabled through faith to see the wonderful works of God. I am thankful and happy today, dear brother, that God saw fit to embrace me in his covenant of grace, if indeed he has, but I often doubt it very much. Sometimes I feel that I am deceiving myself and my brethren, then again, when my heart seems to be full to overflowing with the love of God, how can I help the hope that fills my heart that I am one of his children saved by grace? I know I love the people who I feel sure are the children of God, and desire and pray for their love and fellowship in return, and if I am not one with them, my dear brother, tell me why I love them so well and long to be in their company. I have been thinking to-day of the second Sunday in September, 1906, when I was in such great trouble of soul I could hardly eat or sleep; I was in the bottomless pit, a lost and ruined sinner, guilty before God; I was sick both in body and soul. It was preaching day at the Methodist house and also at Frying Pan; my husband asked me if I were going to Frying Pan? I said, No, I do not feel like going; but after brother and sister Wortman had gone to meeting I wanted to go to the Methodist meeting, but my husband said, No, you were not able to go to Frying Pan and you are not able to go out there. O how foolish that seems to me now. Would I stay home to-day and let them go to Frying Pan Church and I want to go elsewhere?

I can answer, No, with all my heart. Did I not fight hard against going to the Old Baptist Church? They asked me to go just one time. I told them in October I would go just once to please them. I said there was nothing there for me, but I went. They were expecting Elder Lester to preach, but when we got there some one said he was sick and could not come, and they would not have any preaching. How my heart sank within me, I did not like to own even to myself how disappointed I was; I know I felt the disappointment as much as any who were there, and how beautiful those people appeared to me; they had never seemed half so beautiful before, and I felt that I loved them already. While they were assembled in the meeting-house talking one with another Elder Gore walked in, and how surprised they were to see him. When he got in the pulpit he spoke of what a mystery it was to him that he was there, for the day before he was not thinking of such a thing as coming to Frying Pan that day, and he said, "I am here, but I do not know what for," but before he was through preaching I felt that I knew what he was there for. I feel that he was sent to deliver to me a message, and I was brought there to receive it; he told my feelings better than I could have done, and showed me my home among God's people. I shed the last bitter tears that day, my dear brother, that I shed for many months; a sweet calm seemed to come over me after that, or a sweet peace. O how wonderful, how glorious, how divinely beautiful is this peace from above. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." Blessed indeed is the one who receives this peace, which the world cannot give nor take away. I think, dear brother, the Old Baptists should be the happiest people in the world. Of course we are always troubled because of our sins, for we feel to be the most sinful and despised, and are hated of all the world, but this I think should encourage us and make us happy. There is comfort in the hatred and persecution of the world, for our dear Savior says, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." I, for one, am glad that I am numbered with the hated and despised of the world. It is a wonderful thing for me to look back and see the way that I was brought a subject of God's grace, as I hope, and given a home with his dear children, and what a pleasant home it is, and how I love them. Jesus says, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." If the Old Baptists do not love one another I do not know where you can find any that do.

"By faith in Christ I walk with God,
With heaven, my journey's end, in view;
Supported by his staff and rod,
My road is safe and pleasant, too.

I pity all that worldlings talk
Of pleasure that will quickly end;
Be this my choice, O Lord, to walk
With thee, my guide, my guard, my friend."

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, * * * and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."

I am glad I was able to attend the association, I enjoyed the preaching and was glad to meet so many of the brethren and sisters I had never seen before, and glad indeed to see you and hear you again; but, dear brother, I think I was in the refining pot when I went to the meeting, and stayed there until the last day. I think I was feeling almost as miserable at that time as I ever did in my life, spiritually, for my mind was not on worldly things, and I was like poor old Peter when Jesus looked on him, there was bitter weeping over and over again; and every time I am made to weep my cry is, Dear Father, help me; from the bottom of my heart do those words go up in silent prayer to God. O what a blessed Savior; he is merciful even to our unrighteousness. I have had great rejoicing since our association, with many passages of Scripture imprinted in my heart, but not for any goodness of mine. Ah no, but "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."

What a long letter I have written, and not as I intended writing at all, but it is as my mind ran. May God bless and keep you, is the prayer of your little sister saved by grace,

(MRS.) LENA HUNTT.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan., 1908.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—Now, as I thus address you, as a flash my mind has a view of many dear ones, and a great delight fills me that once more I am permitted to come before you. It is a precious privilege, of which I do not feel myself worthy, or, if so, I am blinded to it. For the past two weeks my desire has been to once more take up my pen and write. This morning I made plans and had thoughts regarding my day's work, so that I could lay it aside, and, leaving much undone, I embrace this opportunity as a command to write.

I said that my mind had been filled with a desire to write for two weeks, but it has been for a longer time than that. About two weeks ago a little child said to me, "You have not had a letter in the SIGNS for a long time." The child seemed to miss them. At once the desire to write grew, and my mind commenced to travel, seeking for something to write of interest to the little child, and also to the older and the stronger, and to the aged leaning on their Staff, with their locks whitened and their hearts tender with the desire to live to the honor and glory of God, and perhaps looking back over the way in which they have been led, with regret that they have not lived better lives, and lamenting their weakness, sinfulness and short-comings, remembering how they began the way in faith and trust, that as they traveled on, their light would shine more and more unto the perfect day. But O how disappointed they have been. It does seem strange that from the pen can flow words which can go into the heart of each and be received with joy, yet in the wisdom of God it is so. If not pricked in the heart by the Word, only the letter of the word can please any one. May it be the will of God to make manifest his Spirit in every line that I may write.

I am sitting here feeling melted, and with tears streaming down my cheeks, so that I can hardly see to write. I am filled with love, thankfulness and rejoicing that God reigns, and that all is of him from first to last. Yes, of him, that ever constant One, who is with us whether in poverty of spirit or in joy unspeakable and full of glory. The words of David often live in our hearts, and often they are almost our sole comfort. Read very

carefully his words in the Psalms, and see how often he was poverty-stricken and down in the depths, calling upon God for help. Let us hear him: "O save me for thy mercies' sake. * * * I am weary with my groaning; all the night I make my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears. Mine eye is consumed because of grief." Then soon after all this anguish of soul we hear him: "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger." Then again, in sorrow and gloom hear him: "How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily?" Again, he says, "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am in trouble; mine eye is consumed with grief, yea, my soul and my belly. For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing." So do we read of his continual beseechings to his heavenly Father for mercy. In one place he expresses himself thus, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest me not; and in the night season, and am not silent." Yet right in the midst of his grief does he give praise; he says, "But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel." Now any Bible reader knows enough about the language to know that his sorrows and joys were as are those of the weary sojourners in this weary land to-day, and they know that David alternately felt these sorrows and joys as they are felt to-day. I remember one time speaking of my leanness and loneliness and deserted feelings to one whom, at times, I had believed knew something of the Lord's ways, but that one felt and said that my liver was out of order, else I would not feel so blue. Another expression from one whom I felt knew just a little about the dealings of the Lord with his children was, There is no use in it; be happy and cheerful, for it is not pleasant to be with one who is gloomy. Now this is true in nature, but in the kingdom of grace how sweet is this poverty of soul to another. We see the Lord reigning there by his Spirit, and that it is night there, but that the night will pass and joy will come in the morning, for so it is promised, and, beside, we come to know that it is so by experience. What a field this covers, and as we look at it it bears continual fruit in our sight, and it is fruit that never loses its taste nor its beauty. But how does all this look to one who knows not the experience of a true child of God, a follower of Christ? They hate these words. I once knew for myself what they now feel. At that time it seemed to me that Old School Baptists were all the time urging their belief wherever they could, and if they could say nothing else they would talk about experience, and election, and predestination; and if they saw a soul sinking in sin, what did they do but just helplessly look on and never do a thing for that one, but feel that the Lord would in his own good time bring that one to see his wrong, and such revilings would reign in me and I was puffed up with my good works. One would never have thought it possible for me to come down small enough to hear that "still small voice" convincing me of that which no soul on earth could have argued me into believing, and this morning I am

filled to overflowing with these words of the Lord to his little ones, who dare not lift their eyes to him and say, I can do one good thing, or, I can be happy by laying aside all my inward feelings and looking on the bright side. But rather they say, The Lord doeth what seemeth him good, whether it be giving joy or sorrow. I often feel that sorrows and joys are unevenly divided, but look to Christ with all his life of sorrow and joy, was his life divided? Rather is it not true that his life was one continual travail of sorrow? Only once is it said that he rejoiced, and that in Spirit, thanking the Father that he had hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and had revealed them unto babes.

Two or three years ago, Elder Coulter spoke to us about agreeing with the adversary quickly while in the way with him. I was not at that time given light upon it, and for a long time talked and thought about it. A few weeks ago while reading I came to those words again, in Matthew v. 25, and then came a desire that I might see the exact meaning of them. I talked of them, and said, I will write to Elder Ker about them and ask an editorial from him; but it pleased God, I trust, to show me something of their meaning before asking him. Still I would be much pleased if he would write upon this subject.

I have had several experiences lately, of which at the time I could not see the good, but since then the good in them has been shown me very plainly. I have seen the reason for agreeing with the adversary, and who the judge is, who the officer is, and what the prison is. But how hidden are these things from our understanding until revealed to us of the Father, then we can claim them as our own. Right here comes to my mind a text used by Elder Ker some time back, when he was with us: "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law."

Now I must stop; I have not written at all as I thought I would, but God knows best. I leave it with you to judge whether these lines be of self or from His guiding counsel. I fear self often, for it appears to loom up large and full, but this morning it has been hidden from my view; still perhaps it has come in secretly and you dear ones may see it. O how far short I come of what I desire to attain. I would love to stay close at the feet of Him who is meek and lowly and who is all in all. How great is this mighty One; there is no room for anything else while he fills the soul with his delight and praise. Praise ye the Lord, all who love him, praise the Lord.

Your sister,

MARY HILL TERRY.

HALCOTTSVILLE, N. Y., Jan. 3, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I will try to write a few thoughts for your consideration, and if you think they are worthy of a place in the SIGNS you are at liberty to use them. I know that I am far from being perfect, and feel that I have no gift to write. I am unlearned and unskilled in the word, and now that I attempt to write, I fear that it will be very imperfect. My thoughts are upon the creation of man, as recorded in Genesis ii. 7, 8: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed." The man whom God

had formed was upright and perfect, as regards his creation, being the workmanship of God, yet he was formed of the dust of the ground, and from the standpoint of his formation would cling to the earth, for earth will cling to earth. He was neither spiritual nor holy. In the process of time God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he took from his side a rib, and from the rib he made a woman. The woman must have received her life in Adam, so that she was not only bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, but the very life of Adam was the life of the woman. Thus we are able to see the strong tie that bound the man and woman together. Therefore their name was called Adam in the day when they were created. Adam, as he stood in the garden, was without transgression, yet under God's holy law, but not until he transgressed this law was he a transgressor. To all the trees of the garden he had free access except the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden, which bore pleasant fruit and pleasing to the eye, and, being very desirable to make one wise, he, being of the earth, would naturally desire the fruit from this tree. But to the fruit that grew upon the tree of life he had no desire; as it was not pleasant to his eye he could not desire it, any more than a man dead in sin can desire Christ. The serpent appeared to Eve to fulfill the purpose of God. Was it not God's purpose that Adam should fall? If not, why did he fall? Adam, being left to himself, did just what any poor mortal would do if left to himself without the restraining grace of God. He was created, not able to stand, but very certain to fall, and the love which he had for the woman being stronger than death, he took of the fruit and did eat, therefore he became a transgressor, for he had disobeyed the word of God or transgressed his law. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Now as Adam is the head and progenitor of his race, we, being in him, are partakers of his transgression. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." We see the fulfillment of God's word to Adam that in the day that he ate of the forbidden fruit he should die, and that death was not natural, neither was it spiritual, but death in sin, therefore he came under the law of sin and death, and in that death was separated from God, and driven from the garden, to go forth to till the ground, with the sentence of death in him; of this death the whole posterity of Adam partook, for we were in him, and are only the multiplication of Adam. If the man Adam by his transgression became a sinner, or under the law of sin and death, we, being in him, must be partakers of the same, for every seed brings forth after its own kind, whose life is in itself. Therefore, "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." According to the word it was man that became the sinner by transgression, and it must be man, or the sinner, that is redeemed. God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. Webster defines the word "soul" thus: "The spiritual, rational and immortal part of man; the seat of real life or vitality; a human being or person." The word of inspiration says that man became a living soul. The man that was formed of dust became a living soul, and it is the man who was separated from God, or became a sinner, and it is the man, or sinner, that is redeemed. Is not the church of Christ

composed of sinners of Adam's race, who are partakers of his transgression, but who were chosen in Christ before the world began and ordained unto salvation by Jesus, who came to redeem his people? Now, does he redeem that which transgressed? Most certainly he does. Then man was the transgressor, and man is the object of redemption. If it were possible that any of Adam's race were not transgressors they would have no need of redemption, but "there is none that doeth good, no, not one." "There is none righteous, no, not one." "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." Had Paul been righteous he would have had no need of a Savior; but the sinner who feels his need of a Savior is the one who finds his sins washed away in the blood of Jesus. Who then is the sinner? Paul says, I am the chief of sinners. Was it not the man Paul who was the sinner? And was it not the man Paul who was saved by Jesus, who came to save sinners? He (Jesus) came to seek and to save that which was lost. The child Jesus, who was born of the virgin Mary, received from her that body which was made a sacrifice for sin, and that which was born of her was named Jesus, which signifies Savior, and was in the likeness of sinful flesh; and in that body he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and to the Jews and Pharisees was the son of Joseph and Mary, whose father and mother they knew. Also he was known as the carpenter's son, yet he was verily God and verily man. What think you of Christ? Whose son is he? What think you of Jesus? Whose son is he? Christ is the head of the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. Jesus was the man of sorrows, and that which was born of Mary. As it is written, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." And again, "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." He was not declared to be the Son of God with power until after he was raised from the dead; he must conquer death by his resurrection, and now having conquered death, hell and the grave, he is victorious. "He that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death." The body of Jesus was nailed to the cross, and was taken down and wrapped in a clean linen cloth and laid in Joseph's new tomb, and this same body was raised in the morning of the third day; not a natural body, nor in the likeness of sinful flesh, but a spiritual body. "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." The body of Jesus was mortal, in the sense that it was subject to death. He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit; also, he bare the sins of his people in his own body on the cross. Then that which was mortal became immortal in the morning of the third day, when the body of Jesus was raised spiritual, and he became the first fruits of them that slept. Did not Jesus sleep in the grave over the Jewish Sabbath? If not, how could he become the first fruits of them that slept? There was not a spiritual emotion while he (Jesus) lay in the tomb; then we conclude that it was the man Jesus who was crucified and buried, and raised the morning of the third day, according to the Scriptures. Was it not the man Enoch who was translated that he should not

see death? And is it not the man, the transgressor, or sinner, who is saved, and shall be raised in the likeness of our risen Lord?

I submit these rambling thoughts to your better judgment.

J. B. SLAUSON.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 30, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—Sister Guernsey has written you of the calm and peaceful departure of our beloved sister Beesley, and she has sent me some papers which were found among her belongings, with a suggestion that we, who were acquainted with her years ago, should write a little account of her. But in looking over what she has written out of her own heart, it seems better than anything I might write of her. She once spent six weeks with us in our home in Bradford County, and it was very interesting to hear her tell of the goodness of the Lord and how he had cared for her from her earliest remembrance. She told of some striking and most touching experiences she had passed through, and of the delivering hand of God when no earthly help could avail. But I will not attempt to relate any of these exercises, fearing I might not remember quite correctly. Of one thing I feel quite sure, that she could say with David, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." I have selected the following, together with the last letter I received from her, trusting some sorrowing one of our scattered family who reads the SIGNS may find comfort in the words of this dear sister and mother in Israel, who has entered into the fullness of all she longed for here.

Unworthily your sister,

BESSIE DURAND.

OTEGO, N. Y., April 1, 1899.

THOUGH deprived of meeting with the saints to-day, I am not deprived of the company of my blessed Jesus. He can take my soul ere I am aware and show me where his beauties are, and I realize that he is altogether lovely. I have reason to sing of his wonderful ways to the children of men, but how little I realize the glory that awaits me. I must wait a little longer on the shores of time, until I hear the blessed voice saying, Come home, weary one, to dwell with me forever. My enraptured soul will then sing sweeter and louder, and Christ shall be my song. Unto Him who hath loved me and pardoned all my sins be glory and honor forever.

SAD MEMORIES.

April 6.—Time rolls on and brings the second year of my heavy sorrows when called to part with my last earthly dear one. I beheld my child draw her last breath, and, amazing thought, that I could say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." In much mercy thou didst calm the troubled seas that were rolling over my head; thou didst speak peace to my soul, and all was calm. O for the same voice to calm my troubled soul at this time. I know Thou art the same today and forever. Sweet thought, how many times thou hast appeared for me. I will here raise my Ebenezer stone to the honor of thy blessed name; as I look back on the way thou hast led me through this thorny maze I know what thou doest is best. O Lord, enable me to leave all my sorrows at thy dear feet, praying thou

wilt hear my cry. I shall yet praise thee for all my trials, not one pang too much. Though dark be my way, since he is my Guide it is mine to obey, it is his to provide. Hasten the time when I shall join the happy throng around the throne in praises to our glorious Redeemer forever and ever.

SWEET THOUGHTS.

January 15, 1902.

As I stand and behold the sun shining from the east, how it lights up the earth that was all darkness and gloom. So in my experience the light of God's truth for years was lighting up my poor soul; I was shown the beauty of the church, the safety and glory that awaited her, her oneness with Him, yet could not see Christ as my Savior for years. Though I could see him, by faith, hanging on the cross, with eyes of pity looking upon me, still I was unable to embrace him as my own God and Savior; but when the Sun, the glorious Sun of righteousness, broke forth with healing in his wings, my soul was overwhelmed with light, and I heard the sweet words, Daughter, thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee. Then how glorious did my Beloved appear to my enraptured soul, and I realized a little of heaven. But when he delivers me from this corruptible body I shall then behold him without a veil between; then my spirit will find sweet employ in that eternal world of joy.

OTEGO, N. Y., June 4, 1903.

MY DEAR SISTER:—I was very much pleased to receive your letter of May 25th, and thank you for the invitation and kind remembrance. As I am not able to go out at all, my mind has been with you to-day, and I have been able to look to the throne of grace, beseeching a blessing to rest upon you all in your meetings there. I can say that the Zion of our God is very dear to me.

"I love her gates, I love the road;
The church, adorned with grace,
Stands like a palace built for God
To show his milder face."

If such the sweetness of the streams, what must the fountain be? where we shall realize the wonders of redeeming love and bask in the eternal Presence forever. Dear sister, I am looking forward to that glorious time when free from earth, myself and sin. Glorious thought, that our dear Savior has gone up with a shout of victory. May he, while he still sees fit for us to remain on the shores of time, give us grace to endure all he shall lay upon us. I look back with pleasure to the sweet communion we have held together, and recount the happy times we have sat and talked of Jesus and his wonderful ways toward us; but those days are gone forever, yet I trust we shall sit together with him in the realms of eternal glory, to sing of his goodness and chant the blissful story of redeeming love.

It would have been a great pleasure if I had been permitted to meet with you all at this time, both at the association and at the ordination of our young brother. I hope that the presence of the Master has been realized in your midst, and that it may be a lasting blessing. I have to thank and admire the good hand of God that has led me all my journey through to the present time, and that he should in his goodness bring me to rest with my dear sister and church people, and that I have the sweet privilege of enjoying their company, having every comfort I could ask for. I felt when my dear Emily was removed, and I stood by her as the light faded from her dear face, the Lord hath taken away my last prop; but, as in the former trial, I have experi-

enced what the Lord has promised: that he will never leave nor forsake us, and I am still enabled to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." When I look back and see the goodness of the Lord it is more than a match for my heart, which wonders to feel its hardness depart.

Dear sister, please write to me again. We are looking forward to Elder Vail's coming on Saturday, as he will tell us about the meeting and the friends he met there. My love to Elder Durand, his wife and daughters, and accept much for yourself.

From your aged sister,

ELIZABETH BEESLEY.

EAST SHOKAN, N. Y., Nov. 4, 1907.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I met Elder Ker at the Olive Association, and had a talk with him, and shortly afterward I received the SIGNS. I suppose he was the instigator of its being sent to me. I thank you all for it. I love the SIGNS, and derive much pleasure from reading it. I will inclose one dollar, and if it is not too much trouble send me a few numbers. If I sell my place, which I expect to do soon, I will contribute to the SIGNS. Should I be taken away my daughter will act in my stead; my heart is willing but my means are restricted.

Dear Elder, how much I have wanted to see you and hear you preach; but I can read the editorials, and you and Elder Ker do fill dear old Elder Beebe's place well. I was looking at his picture, and it looked very dear to me. He came to see us several times, and desired me to write my experience, and I wrote a part of it. The next time I saw him he told me to write again, but I did not, because others could write better than I could. At times I feel cast down in spirit, and as if the Lord had forsaken me. I live among a people who pretend to be helping the Lord, and who are trying to put down predestination. One said to me, The Old School Baptist people will surely go to hell if they believe in predestination. I experienced a thrill of terror at first, but the next moment I felt to rejoice to think that the merciful God had led us to see the right way; and his truth will stand until all the ransomed church of God be saved, to sin no more. The Lord will sustain the children of his love. I cannot tell you how much I love the people of God, but the Lord knows. "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel." I was very thankful to hear Elder Ker preach. He is a dear, good soldier of the cross.

Dear Elder, I cannot tell you what I want to. I told Elder Ker some of my travels through life. I wanted to write some of my experiences and ask you your opinion of them, for they are wonderful to me when I think of them. My courage is so low since my dear husband was taken away, and so much vanity is going on around me that I feel like one alone. Methodists, Reformed and New School Baptists are all around me, doing wonders to help the Lord, so that their eyes stand out with fatness. I sometimes tell them to give all the glory to God, for to him all the glory belongs. My mind is very much in darkness; I cry out to the dear Lord; I have no love for the world, for all is vanity; I hunger and thirst after righteousness, and to meet with the dear brethren and Elders and hear them preach the true gospel.

Now, if it will not try your patience too much, I will write a few sketches of what has been revealed to me, as I trust, and some things that seem to puzzle me. I have passed through great troubles. In

the beginning of my trouble I was busy at my work when a cloud came before me, and a voice told me of trouble ahead; and it so came to pass. Five different times a voice has spoken to me, telling me of trouble and sorrow which I must endure. At one time, before I arose in the morning a voice said to me, Thou shalt be cared for, and at the same time an arm seemed to be waving before me. At one time we were going to move, and I was busy working, when I was startled by a voice saying, Have you not trouble enough? I said, Yes. Then the voice said, Do not move to Newburgh. At another time I was much troubled, and was about my work, when it seemed that I was caught up and placed in a beautiful, heavenly place; it seemed so much like heaven that I cannot describe it. I said, Now I am satisfied, dear Lord, and no matter how much trouble I may see I shall not be discouraged nor find fault. But alas for the weakness of the flesh, I have murmured as much as ever since then, and more, for my troubles have seemed greater than I could bear, and now it appears so dark to me. It seems at times as if the dear Lord has cast me off. Now, dear brother Chick, if you can and will give me a little light upon these things I shall be thankful to you, and I feel as if it would be a great comfort to me through the remainder of my stay in these low grounds of sorrow.

In the beginning of this letter I forgot to tell you that my husband and I were baptized and united with the Old School Baptist Church about forty years ago, and I have remained in the faith that was once delivered to the saints until now.

I will now bid you farewell, begging an interest in your prayers.

HANNAH HURLBERT.

[We would be glad to speak some words of consolation to our dear, aged sister if we could, but all our words are in vain unless the dear Lord shall graciously apply the word spoken. This our sister knows well, we do not doubt. The Lord deals with his people in different ways; to some he gives more wonderful revelations than to others, but in all these varieties of operation it is his Spirit, giving to each as his special need requires, and all is to the glory of his own matchless name. How blessed are such seasons of communion as our sister refers to in the above letter; that the dear Lord should speak to poor sinners, such as we are, is wonderful indeed, and it is a sure token of his favor to us. What he says is always for our good, but the most blessed thought of all is that he speaks to us at all. The things of which our sister speaks are, no doubt, tokens of the favor of God to one of his dear children.—C.]

TRIBBEY, Okla., Oct. 24, 1907.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—I feel a desire this evening to write you a few lines, if the Lord will guide and direct my mind, and give me strength and words by which I may write, but if left alone in the flesh there will be nothing in it to comfort any one. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

I desire to write of the resurrection. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." According to this language there is a part of mankind who have part in this resurrection, and there are those who do not have part in it. This seems plain to my mind. If I am not deceived, the church of Christ has part in the first resurrection, and these are those whose names are written in the

Lamb's book of life. Christ, in his death upon the cross, was crucified for their sins, was buried, and rose the third day for their justification. They were with him in his resurrection, and when he rose he conquered death, hell and the grave for them. This looks plain to my mind. If I should be wrong in this I shall be thankful if the brethren will correct me.

There are those here who tell me they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, but that Christ was crucified for just the people who were on earth when he was here, and that those who were not on earth then, had no part in that death on the cross, or with him, and that they cannot be born again until Christ shall come again. But, brethren, my hope is founded upon a crucified and risen Jesus, and if I were not chosen in him before the foundation of the world I shall be lost, world without end. If his suffering on the cross was not for me, I know of no other name on earth or among men whereby I must be saved. The Lord said, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life." I can say with Paul, "When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." My sentence was already passed, but the command had not come to me, but when it did come, sin revived, and I died. I believe He comes to all his chosen people, and makes them willing in the day of his power.

Think of those who tell us that the Lord has done all he intends to do, and that now it is with the people to do evil and be lost or to do good and be saved. Dear brethren, I live in the finished work of Jesus in salvation; for he finished all that the Father gave him to do. "It is finished." Jesus made an end of the law, and he did what the law could not do, for without the shedding of his blood there could be no remission of sins. The blood of no one save the dear Redeemer would answer the purpose; his body was prepared.

Dear brethren, I hope soon to be able to send in my remittance. Please change my address to Tribbey, Oklahoma, for I have been bothered of late in getting the SIGNS. Brother Chick, if not asking too much of you, please give your views upon Malachi iv. 3. May the God of all grace comfort you both in your labors, that it may be to the edification and comfort of the little and despised flock, and may it be said of you when you have finished the work the Lord has called you to do, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, * * * enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." "They may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

From a sister in Christ, I hope, saved by grace if saved at all,

ELLA DAVIS.

[WE will endeavor to reply to the request of our sister at some future time, if the Lord will.—C.]

PLYMOUTH, Ill., December, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—As it is time to send in my remittance I thought I would write a few lines; if they contain comfort or consolation to any of the dear brethren and sisters you may publish them. Another year has rolled around since I have written anything for the readers of the SIGNS, and has been filled with its appointed measure of hope, fear, joy, sorrow, trials, troubles, conflicts, victories, toil and rest, and we have all had our allotted share. Many during the year have been called to try the reality of the things which they have believed and in which they have hoped, and so it will be as long as

time lasts. I have been sorely afflicted this last summer with a complication of diseases, and since last August with sore eyes. I was almost blind for three months, and was very much cast down at times, and felt that my departure was close at hand; but when the time for our association came around I felt I must go, blind and afflicted as I was. I asked the doctor if I could go, and he gave his consent and I went, and it was one of the best meetings I ever attended; I forgot all about my sad condition for a time. O what a feast, we sat under the droppings of the sanctuary, and the fruit was sweet to my taste; I felt that we all gathered crumbs from the Master's table, as every one seemed to enjoy it as well as myself. There were not as many ministers as we usually have, but all came laden with the good news of the gospel of Christ. Elder L. E. Frazee preached the introductory, and it was an able sermon; he is our home preacher, and has been for many years, and how glad we are that we have such an able defender of God's word going in and out before us the first Sunday, and Saturday before, in each month, preaching Christ Jesus to the edification of the church, the strengthening of the feeble and comforting the poor, doubting lambs of the fold; but we are sorry to tell the dear readers of this paper that he is in declining health, and we may have to do without him for awhile, but hope for his speedy recovery, that he may have the precious privilege of preaching for us in the future as he has in the past. I feel that we cannot do without him to stay and strengthen our borders; but I must be still and know that the Lord rules. Man deviseth the way, but God directs his steps; He works everything after the counsel of his own will; all the glory belongs to and is ascribed to Him whose thunder shakes creation and whose sceptre sways the whole. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."

I received a good, comforting letter from D. S. Koontz and wife a few days ago; they are my own dear cousins in the flesh and very dear kindred in Christ, as they hold forth the words of sound doctrine. Brother Koontz believes in the God that declared "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." He is the only one that can do his pleasure, and I can walk with brother Koontz in all he believes; we are agreed. It does me much good to know that he stands upon the solid rock whose builder and maker is God; he is the God of the whole earth, the bright and morning Star.

Dear brother Chick, I have just received the SIGNS for Dec. 15th, and it is filled with good letters from the dear brethren and sisters. I feel that I am crowding out better matter by anything I may write; they tell my feelings and views far better than I can, and nearly every one touches a tender spot in my heart before I get through reading. I am comforted in all their dear letters, and ask you and all the dear readers to remember me at the throne of grace, for it seems to me I am ten thousand talents in debt and not a farthing to pay with. I hope, dear editors, that the Lord will uphold you in editing the dear old SIGNS to the comfort and consolation of its dear readers, enabling you to stand boldly upon the walls of Zion and proclaim the truth as you ever have done, no matter what men may say. You may be tried

as by fire, but the flames will not hurt you, His "fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner." Yes, dear brethren, he will be with you in six troubles, and in the seventh he will not forsake you. Study to shew yourselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. You may be cast into prison, but the same God rules as in days of old, who opens and none can shut, and shuts and none can open.

Brother Chick, if it is not asking too much of you, I would like your views on Matthew xix. 28.

I remain your little, weak sister, if one at all,

(MRS.) S. G. FRAZEE.

(See editorial reply on page 150.)

PALESTINE, Texas, Oct. 1, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The words "can't help it" are often referred to by us. Now I may be an extremist, if so I "can't help it." Predestination has been before me for a long time; I have tried to preach it, I have written some upon it. What I have spoken and written upon it is agreeable with the views of all strong predestinarians, so far as I know, yet there is still something about it that I want to tell, but I fear, because I am unlearned. If I could tell it I would be condemned as making God the author of sin. At the same time, many good brethren have preached it, not perhaps in so many words, but in substance. They have preached that God is the first great cause of all second causes. All that Adam and all his line must suffer is for what he did. It is said that the cause or reason for his disobedience was the love he had for the woman; if so, then behind this cause lies another cause, a cause for this cause, and is not this first cause God? Right here is the grandest display of God's power set forth in the Scriptures. Can any of us see how it would have been had not Adam sinned? Our God purposed from all eternity to create this earth, or world, he also purposed to people it, also that some people should have some understanding of him, and that there should be a devil, an evil spirit, that should set himself up against God. How did all this come in? The Lord brought it in because it seemed good in his sight to do so. Then our God is able to control it all. Are these things so? If they are, then let us say that the Lord purposed it all, and yet that he is just. Further on we see more of it, in that men are brought to see and feel themselves guilty sinners, and condemnation rests upon them and they feel that they are justly condemned. Brethren, this whole matter began back in the garden of Eden with Adam. It began right where God purposed it should begin, else He had nothing to do with it. But our God had all to do with it, and I am glad that this is so. This was his way of showing himself to people, to show forth his power. It is man's notion that God could not have purposed the sin of Adam and remain just. If Adam's cause for sinning was the great love he bore for Eve, how came he with such great love? Adam was completed when God pronounced him a living soul. Then he had all his love for the woman when she was brought to him; then his love for her was made manifest. Our God loved his bride, the Lamb's wife, before she was made manifest. Being made manifest was not what made her the bride, she was this with God before. Jesus was the husband and head of the bride before he was born of the virgin Mary.

Now, brethren, I do not know what you will do with this, and it does not matter. I have only written my sentiments, and would like the brethren to read them. You can send it out in the SIGNS if you think best. I am yet combatting, and I hope for brighter evidences. May God save us from things that tend to our hurt, and keep us from all evil. U. J. BELL.

WALLACETOWN, Ont., August 5, 1907.

DEAR ELDER DURAND:—The following is a short sketch of the experience of my sister, Mrs. D. A. Cameron, who died at her home in Wallacetown, February, 1905. She was never a member of the visible church, but we all believe that she was, nevertheless, a subject of God's wondrous grace. It was while you were preaching one Sunday, many years ago, in the old Aldborough Church, that she first became troubled on account of sin, and terror seized hold upon her. All that night she wept, but no word of comfort came to her relief. In the morning she resolved to go and tell her mother all about it, and to ask her what it meant, but even when kindly questioned by her mother as to what was the matter, knowing that something was troubling my sister, her lips were closed. So the time went on until one night, after long, sleepless hours of fear and grief, the words came to her: "I sought the Lord, and he heard me." Immediately peace, hope and joy filled her soul, and for a short time she could rest. But soon fears and doubts began to assail her, and she was afraid her hope was too small. One night while this trouble was upon her she turned her eyes on the wall of her room and saw there a terrible dark object which she could not describe. Then she looked to the ceiling and beheld a circle, and in the circle was the face of a man enveloped in a soft, beautiful light. Then the words seemed spoken in her heart, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Again she looked toward the wall, but the terrible object was gone. Once more she was filled with rejoicing and songs of praise to her God. One Monday morning, a few years before her death, she heard Elder Vail preach, and afterwards she said to me, "You must have told Elder Vail all about me." I replied that I had not done so. Then she said, "Some one must have told him, because he told me all the way I came." "No," I said, "no one has, but the Lord sent him with that message for you." "O, can it be possible?" she exclaimed with tears of great joy. It was her one great desire to unite with us and be baptized, but on account of delicate health it was not her privilege to do so. She fell asleep, we hope, in Jesus, there to await the resurrection morn, to awake in his likeness and be satisfied.

If you think this worthy of a place in the SIGNS you may publish it, for there are many here who would like to see it.

Your sister in hope,

MRS. McWILLIAMS.

LOCKPORT, N. Y., Jan. 24, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find post-office order for one dollar, to be credited on my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which has been continuous for about seventy years, if I am not mistaken. I had the reading of it from about the commencement while at home in my father's house. It has been my counsel and my comfort and a source of much enjoyment; it has given me acquaintance with many of the Lord's people with whom I have taken sweet coun-

sel and have been wonderfully encouraged by the way. The sentiment claimed, exhibited and defended by the SIGNS for three-quarters of a century, with unswerving fidelity to the teaching of the Scriptures, proves it to be accepted of God, blessed by his Spirit and sustained by his power. Those who like to contemplate the lessons taught in the Scriptures of the supremacy of God over all created things, of his justice and his mercy toward the creatures of his care, derive much satisfaction and comfort from the testimonies of their fellow-men recorded in the SIGNS, and if this is any evidence that the work of grace has been wrought in the hearts of those readers, it affords me a comforting hope that I may be one among them, though far from them in person. I very much enjoy reading their communications in the SIGNS, also the editorials, and hope to be able to read them a little while longer. My eyes are failing, and it is with difficulty that I see to read print, but I feel thankful to God that I can still write to my friends with less difficulty. Having entered my ninety-second year I cannot hope for a much longer lease of time, and this may be my last communication with the patrons of the SIGNS, to whom I say farewell for the present.

P. WEST.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., Dec. 24, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—The SIGNS yet comes laden with the good things of the kingdom of our God, and is to us as good news from a far country. As time goes by the things of this world change, and as they change they grow worse. The old priesthood under the law grew worse until it grew out of existence. There was of necessity a change of the priest. We have a priesthood, a religion, that knows no change and no compromise. Why? Because there is no change of Priest; our High Priest abideth forever, and he is a Priest continually. He is forever making intercession for the sins of his people, and therefore he is able to save them to the uttermost. Our God laid help on One that is mighty, and it was and is his delight to do the will of his Father. His intercession is according to that will, and therefore it cannot be denied. I am glad to see that the SIGNS continues to contend for this glorious truth. With all the changes of the world it knows none. The world, with its changes and changeable institutions, must pass away, but this unchangeable word of God, with those who believe it and rejoice in it, must continue forever. The Lord bless you and give you strength to bear up under the trials through which you are called to pass.

As ever, your brother in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON our list are many whose subscriptions are two or three years in arrears, and we would esteem it a great favor if all such would drop us a line, stating whether or not they are receiving their paper and wish it continued.

We often receive letters censuring us for not discontinuing the paper when the time paid for has expired, but should we adopt this rule we would on the other hand offend many.

Brethren, please let us hear from you.

On the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1908.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REPLY TO SISTER FRAZEE.

"AND Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."—Matt. xix. 28.

Almost precisely the same thought is found in Luke xxii. 28–30: "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

It has long been our understanding that the word "regeneration" in the first text and the word "kingdom" in the second text mean the same thing. The word "regeneration" implies necessarily a former generation, and no violence is done to the word "regeneration" in the text when we say that the meaning is that there is to be a new generation. Now in this new generation the Son of man sits in the throne of his glory, and they which had followed the Lord (apostles) shall also sit upon thrones of judgment, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. It has seemed clear to our mind that this Scripture plainly declares that those who had followed the Master, in the coming kingdom, or in this new generation about to be set up in the world, should in that kingdom also be known as the appointed judges sitting upon thrones of judgment. The text does not read, and neither does it mean to say, Those who have followed me in the regeneration, as though the regeneration were already past; but there is in the original Greek, from which this verse is translated, as well as in our English versions of the New Testament, a comma between the words "have followed me," and the words "in the regeneration." The comma shows beyond all doubt that the word regeneration in the text relates not to something already done, but to something yet to come. The regeneration of which the text speaks relates to a state into which they had not yet entered, but into which they shall enter; the regeneration was not past, but in the future. In this coming kingdom, or new generation, Jesus says that his disciples shall share with him; he shall sit on a throne and they shall also sit on thrones. But his throne is one of kingly sovereignty, while theirs are but thrones of judgment. His is the throne of his glory, their throne is that of service rendered to his children; and over them, as well as over all the rest, Jesus is to reign with power and great glory. In this new kingdom Jesus is King indeed. In this kingdom Jesus is exalted a Prince and a Savior to give repentance unto Israel and the forgiveness of sins. In this kingdom Jesus has appointed all things needful for his own glory and for their good. He has declared in this kingdom what he will have his church to do, and in the word of God we have the decisions of the inspired judges as to what his will is, and as to what is good for his servants and for the glory of God. Here is the throne of his glory. Before this new kingdom

had come, Jesus walked among men humiliated and distressed, bearing the burden of the curse of the broken law and all the sorrows of his people, himself a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He bore about a body of humiliation all the days of his mortal life, but in this new kingdom he occupies no longer the place of humiliation and shame, but the throne of his glory, raised above all the reproaches of men, where he shines forth the exalted Redeemer, Savior and King. The old generation, to which belonged only a carnal, fleshly service, has passed away, and in its place has come the new generation of those in whose hearts the love of God is shed abroad; and now in this new generation it is true that "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." What a glorious promise is this embraced in the two texts at the head of this article. Thrones of judgment were to be theirs who had followed him. They had followed him in his temptations, as the second verse says, and these temptations mean all his daily trials, his sorrows, the reproaches of men, the unbelief of their hardened hearts, because of which they reviled him and pointed the finger at him, the temptations of the wicked one, who would have allured him away from the pathway of obedience, with all the hungerings and fastings and homelessness and friendlessness of his life. They had followed him, not only as he journeyed up and down Judea, from city to city and from mountain to desert, from busy days to watchful nights, but they had followed him in spirit, feeling something of his sadness and loneliness, as regards this world, and something of his oneness with the Father, seeing now and then glimpses of his true glory, veiled as it was most of the time by his flesh. They had followed him in trial and in victory, seeing, but dimly it is true, what all these things could mean, and now to them he said, Ye shall sit on thrones and shall eat and drink at my table in my kingdom; you are greatly abased here, but in my kingdom you shall be exalted and shall share my glory; you are faint and hungry here, but in my coming kingdom ye shall be filled; now you eat and are hungry again, but in my kingdom ye shall eat bread and shall never hunger again; now ye are counted as the offscouring of all things, but in my kingdom ye shall sit on thrones of judgment; there in my exaltation, ye shall be exalted also. And this kingdom of heaven was at hand. Thus John the Baptist declared, and thus the twelve were told to preach when the blessed Lord sent them forth; thus also the seventy were bidden to declare when afterwards the Master sent them forth, two and two into every city, where he himself would afterward come. He himself was the very embodiment of this new kingdom of which prophets prophesied, and for the coming of which all true Israelites had hoped. This kingdom was not to be of this world. It was not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. It was not in word, but in power. It was within men. It was not of this world, and therefore his servants must not seek to maintain it by the sword. It was a kingdom of peace, and its King was to be the Prince of Peace. It was a kingdom of righteousness, and in it righteousness should reign; in it was to be true freedom, and not bondage; its service was to be the service of children, and not of slaves. This kingdom is now set up in all hearts where Jesus by the Spirit

dwells. Jesus reigns now in millions of hearts, and shall continue to reign while the world shall endure, and in this kingdom all the subjects are also kings, with the dominion of kings over the world and self and all things below. They are also priests unto God and the Lamb, and by him offer sacrifices of praise continually. Was there ever such a kingdom as this?

We trust we have said enough to show clearly that we understand that this word "regeneration" is simply another word for the new kingdom of our blessed Savior; and what precious things the dear Savior promised to his disciples in this new kingdom. Those who dwell there are also "a new generation;" they are born there. The generations of men are born into this world, and live in this world, and do not by that birth rise above this world. They cannot rise above it, for the testimony is, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven." But a new birth is provided for those who are chosen of God, and by this new birth, which is of God and which is by the Spirit, they become new creatures, even as the kingdom is a new kingdom. Being born, men come into and live in this world. Being born again, of the Word and Spirit of God, they enter the kingdom of God, and live and grow there, and rejoice in its glories and in its delights. The words "regeneration," "generation" and all the words in the New Testament that signify what we call the new birth are all from the same original root in the Greek. God's people are call "a generation," as all the people who have ever lived in the world are called the generations of men. They are called generations because they have all been "born" into the world. The people of God are a new generation, or a regeneration, because they have been born again, and this new state into which some of the sons and daughters of men have come is called in the text the "regeneration," or "the new kingdom."

We will add a few remarks concerning the connection of this Scripture in Matthew. There is a certain spirit, different from the spirit of the world and different from the spirit of all legal or worldly religion, which characterizes the kingdom of God and belongs to those who dwell there, and this spirit is made plain in the connection. We read, just before, of the young man who had gone away sorrowful, because he had great possessions. The Master had bidden him sell what he had and distribute to the poor and to follow him, and then had said that to him should be given treasure in heaven. This he was not prepared to do, and therefore went away sorrowful. Now Peter, having heard and seen all this, said to the Master, Lord, "we have forsaken all, and followed thee: what shall we have therefore?" It was true that they had left all their worldly business and possessions; one had left his place at the receipt of custom, some had left their fisher nets and others had left whatever avocation was theirs. Now Peter, seeing the contrast between their course and that of this young man, and hearing what the Lord had said to the young man, asks, What shall we have for what we have done? This was a natural question, proceeding out of a natural conception of the religion of Christ; had Peter been led purely by the Spirit of the Master he could not have asked such a question. The service of Christ is not for reward; Christ had said of himself, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." True, there was a joy set before him, and so there is also before all who likewise, in their measure, serve God; but the joy is

in the service, and the service itself is not grievous, but pleasant; and if the Spirit of Christ rules in us we shall also say, It is my meat and my drink to do the will of God. But Peter, asking, What shall we have therefore? makes manifest a spirit entirely contrary to the Spirit of Christ. Let us not condemn Peter, as though our own hearts were free from a like spirit. This legal spirit dwells in us all, and that spirit mixes itself with all that we do. Well is it for us, when we are shown in the light of the Lord of what spirit we are; and the believer, when he is aware that this legal spirit is in any degree actuating him, is ashamed and humbled, and at once counts all his service but vain show. How much all the service that we render needs the washing of the blood of Christ, that it may be acceptable before God and pleasant to ourselves. How good it is that among all the other sacrifices provided for sin and uncleanness in the type there was also a sacrifice provided for the iniquity of their holy things. Even their religious service needed cleansing, and the best offerings that we have ever presented before God have needed washing. Thanks be unto God, he has provided in Christ such a washing, to cleanse that which is evil in our holy things. Were it not so, how could we ever find acceptance in our offerings of praise, prayer, thanksgiving, alms-giving, or in anything else before God?

The spirit Peter manifested here was contrary to the "regeneration" or kingdom of Christ, and the Lord rebuked this spirit in him. True he says, Ye shall sit upon thrones in my kingdom, and "shall receive an hundredfold, and inherit everlasting life. But [after all] many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first." Now what does this mean if not this, viz., that if Peter, or any other disciple, be actuated in his service by any selfish thought of gain, either in the things of this life or of the life to come, because of that spirit, though his service be counted long and great in the sight of men, yet he shall be counted last in the kingdom of heaven? In the eyes of men he may be counted first, but in the sight of God he is last, and also in the kingdom itself he shall be counted last. But though the actual service of one be but little and brief in the sight of men, and most of all in his own sight, yet if he has been actuated by the spirit of love, and has not thought to ask, What shall I have for my service? that one in the sight of God is first and not last; and in the confidence and affection of all who love God he will be first, while the one who seeks self-advantage, though his service be arduous, and he may have borne the burden and heat of the day, shall be counted least, or last, in the kingdom. The things counted great in a purely legal service are counted least in this new kingdom of God. The spirit of this new kingdom is to exalt grace, and not our service. This the above words of Peter gave occasion for the Master to set forth in the words, "But many that are first shall be last; and the last first." These words also are the key to the parable of the laborers in the vineyard that follows in the next chapter. This is plain, because at the end of that parable the same words are again used by the Savior. Thus the parable illustrates these words. The secrets of Peter's heart were laid bare in these words, and in this parable; and so indeed the secrets of all hearts are here declared and legality in our service condemned. C.

ADOPTION.

In Romans viii. 15–17, this subject will be found, and as our mind has been occupied with it more or less for the last few days, we shall offer a few suggestions for the consideration of our readers. The gospel is never preached but what this important doctrine is presented in an indirect way, but seldom is it dwelt upon directly. No subject can be of more importance, nor is any point of doctrine more comforting and assuring than that of adoption.

The apostle presents two spirits in the text before us, and calls special attention to the work of each one. He first assured the brethren that they had "not received the spirit of bondage again to fear." Fear hath torment, therefore produces bondage. Before the coming of Christ all men possessed that spirit and feared death in consequence. Even now all who have not received the Spirit of adoption fear death because of the spirit of bondage.

God made promise in the beginning of the world that the seed of the woman (Christ) should bruise the serpent's head, and, having fulfilled His promise, the apostle said, "The Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil;" and, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." This first quotation shows the perfect work of Christ in the destruction of the works of the devil. The second quotation shows that Christ was made one with "the children" in his incarnation, and that through his death he destroyed him that had the power of death (the devil), and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Death is now abolished, and life and immortality are brought to light through the gospel. This glorious and wonderful truth is given the redeemed in the revelation of Jesus saying as he did to those in bondage when he was in the flesh, "I am the resurrection, and the life: * * * whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." I am the life, he, therefore, who has His life shall never die. If any poor soul sees that death has lost its sting, and the grave its victory, and the fear of death therefore has vanished as the dew before the morning sun, it is because he or she has received the Spirit of adoption.

The adoption law of our country and its work can only in part be compared with the work of the Spirit of adoption. Through that law the son of one man becomes legally the son of another, and if a son, then an heir of the adopter and a joint-heir with his own children. This is the extent of the figure, if we may so call it. The law of adoption cannot change or make void the relationship existing between the actual father and his son. Though adopted by another, and legally his son and heir, he is still bone and flesh of his own father.

Some excellent brethren confess that they do not understand the work of the Spirit of adoption, and ask, How can the children of God, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, be adopted children? Whether any of us understand it or not it is an absolute Bible truth, and should not be denied nor considered lightly. We should remember that in God's plan, purpose and decree they were children, but not actual children by generation and birth. The

natural birth precedes the spiritual; that which is first is natural, afterwards that which is spiritual; hence Jesus said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." By natural generation and birth men are the sons of Adam, but by regeneration and the work of the Spirit of adoption they become the children of God, "bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh." The only reason any mortal can give for men and women becoming the children of God, is that God "predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." When this scriptural reason is analyzed it seems clear enough to convince the most biased mind that the man predestinated unto the adoption of a child is as passive in the matter as the child born in nature.

The very fact that by nature men are the children of Adam, possessing his life, his nature and his sin, makes it necessary that they be adopted into the family of God; and the work of the Spirit of adoption is so perfect and glorious that the sons and daughters of Adam become the actual children of God, being partakers of his life and divine nature, and are no longer in the flesh, but in the Spirit, (Romans viii. 9,) hence are heirs of God through Christ.

We understand the work of the Spirit of adoption to be close kin to the spiritual birth, as it is called, and will call your attention to John i. 12, to establish our opinion: "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Power was given men to become the sons of God; it was through their birth of the Word of God, that incorruptible Seed which lives and abides forever, that they became the sons of God. In our text we are told that through the Spirit of adoption we cry, Abba, Father; the cry always follows the birth, and those who were the children of Adam are now the children of God through Christ, the Spirit of adoption, and if children, then heirs of God their Father and joint-heirs with Christ, the only begotten Son. This seems too wonderful, too good for poor, halting sinners, yet it is God's word.

We shall not attempt to enumerate the wonders and glory of the inheritance of Christ, but whatever he is heir to, the children, by adoption, share in the same measure.

Immediately the suffering of Christ is mentioned, as though it were necessary for the children to suffer with him that they be glorified together. This suffering with him does not mean that the children sweat as it were great drops of blood as he did, nor that they wear a crown of thorns, nor be nailed to the cross, but that they shall suffer for sin with him. He bare our sins in his own body, therefore knows the guilt and iniquity of all his people; he was pressed down as a cart under many sheaves. Is it a wonder that he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief? Each one must suffer in his own measure with Christ. If it is in any way through suffering that we are glorified together with Christ, we should not think of the word "glorified" as referring altogether to the future state of the redeemed of the Lord. The word has a broader meaning than that; it means "honored; dignified; exalted to glory." One of the ten lepers returned and "glorified God;" that is, he honored him. By reading Romans viii. 29, 30, it will be seen that the apostle

speaks in the past tense in presenting the work of God in the salvation of sinners. If we believe and are agreed that He has already "called," already "justified," why not accept the same tense used in the next clause: "them he also glorified"? If the children of God are so honored as to be acknowledged or owned by him, having been exalted in Christ above the law, sin and death, and are in possession of his life and divine nature, are they not already glorified together with Christ? And because of this gracious work they shall all at last enter the haven of rest where hope and faith are done away in fruition, but charity, the love of God, shall abide forever. Now because ye are the sons of God, through the Spirit of adoption, He sends forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts crying, Abba, Father. This Spirit comes when sent of God, and always cries the same thing: Abba, Father. It guides the children into all truth, keeps them in the day of temptation, supports them in the time of affliction and receives them at last unto glory. K.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Miss Martha Bell Fancher, our beloved friend and neighbor, departed this life January 27th, 1908. She was born November 3rd, 1823, in New Canaan, Conn., but at the age of fourteen came to Warwick, N. Y., where she resided at the time of her death, never having lived elsewhere than the old Captain Benedict homestead. Though she never became a member of the Old School Baptist Church, yet she was for many years a believer in the perfectly finished work of Jesus Christ, and ardently contended for the doctrine of free and sovereign grace, to the end of her days. Notwithstanding she never confessed her Lord in being baptized, she was not ashamed to own him and his work, and it was her pleasure to talk of heavenly things whenever occasion offered. Arminianism was disgusting to her, and conditionalism, in all its creature-hinging contingencies, revolting. The name of Jesus was dear to her soul, and the peace and prosperity of the church her constant desire. During the last years of her life she was quite deaf, so that she could not hear preaching, but she never made her affliction an excuse for absence from the meetings. Sunday after Sunday she sat in her accustomed place in the meetings, though never hearing a word. She said it did her good to see the faces of those who were being fed with the preached word. During these last years she thought much of baptism, but never was enabled to see her way clear to that ordinance. The Scripture: "If ye love me, keep my commandments," was never made spirit to her, else she would have obeyed. This good old friend was loved and respected by all the countryside, in whose midst she had spent seventy years, seeing families come and go, and being familiarly known to all as "Aunt Martha." She will be greatly missed by us all, but especially will she be missed from her accustomed place in our meetings.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer; text, Ecclesiastes xii. 1-7; interment in Warwick cemetery.

May the Holy Spirit comfort the mourning ones.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

WARWICK, N. Y., Feb. 6, 1908.

IT is with feelings of deepest sorrow that we insert the following obituary notice of the late **Mrs. Gilbert McLean,** whose death occurred at St. Joseph's Hospital, London, on Monday, Dec. 2nd, after an illness of about five weeks.

The funeral was held on Wednesday afternoon from the family residence to the Old School Baptist Church, where the services were conducted by Elder Tharp, interment being made in the Baptist cemetery.

For some days before her death she realized that the time was near at hand when Christ would call her to his fold, and her words of christian peace during this time are now greatly comforting to the bereaved ones. Owing to the serious nature of her illness, for some hours she was deprived of voice, but just before sinking into her last sleep she was granted the power of utterance for a beautiful prayer, part of which we are privileged to quote: "O God, who was, and is, and evermore shall be, with whom there is no shadow of turning; it is better to die and be with Jesus than to live. He that hath part in the first resurrection, over him death hath no power; he will never die, but will be with Jesus."

The text taken on this sad occasion by Elder Tharp was from 1 Cor. xv. 21, and his words were in direct accordance with the belief cherished by the sister. To-day our hearts are sad, for we mourn the loss of a loving mother and a highly estimable friend, who will be missed in the community, and most greatly by the family, who has lost the light and joy of their home.

Deceased, whose maiden name was Mary L. McTaggart, was born in the township of Ekfrid, Jan. 10th, 1856, and was in her 52nd year. Her parents

were Highland Scotch, and were among the early pioneers of western Ontario, and were firm believers in the Old School Baptist doctrine, with which church deceased with her eldest daughter, Mrs. (Dr.) Woods, united in membership in 1901. Previous to her marriage she taught the public school at Riverside for three consecutive years. She was married to Gilbert McLean Oct. 12th, 1876, and since that time resided continuously in Ekfrid. She leaves to mourn their loss a husband and four daughters: Mrs. (Dr.) J. T. Woods, of Chelsea, Mich., Mrs. Archie Stevenson, of Melbourne, and Ethel May and Laura, at home. The funeral attendance was one of the largest ever congregated in this vicinity, sympathizing friends being present from Brantford, Toronto, Windsor and London.

[THE above was clipped from a local paper and forwarded to us from Canada; it speaks none too highly of our much esteemed sister McLean. It was our privilege to meet her last May at the quarterly meeting of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, held at Dunwich, and again in October at Lobo. We were much in her company during the two meetings, and were peculiarly impressed with her anxiety to know more of the way of life and salvation; her mind was filled with questions which fully demonstrated that she was very familiar with the Scriptures. She will be sadly missed by the church, but more so by her family. It was our privilege to meet Mr. McLean and one of the daughters, to whom, together with the other members of the family and the church, we extend our heartfelt sympathy, desiring that grace be ministered to them by Him who binds up the broken-hearted.—K.]

Henry C. Steers, our dear brother, died Jan. 21st, 1908, aged about 76 years. He was baptized May 5th, 1872, in the fellowship of the Bethlehem Church, Prince William Co., Va., by the late Elder Joseph L. Purington, and was chosen our deacon and served in that capacity until a short time before his death he became so broken down in health that he could serve no longer. He was afflicted with scrofula, and at last went to a cousin's to be cared for. His family has nearly passed away. He came from New York to Virginia when quite young. He lost his wife several years ago, and, never having had children, he tried to live alone for some time, but his health got so bad he at length moved to the town of Manassas, and at last went to the cousin's referred to, but lived only a few months.

His remains were laid beside those of his wife in the cemetery at that place. Elder Badger spoke in prayer at the grave. The weather being so inclement but few were out, but services were announced for the first Sunday in February.

I should like to tell of some things connected with my long acquaintance with brother Steers, but I forbear. Suffice it to say he was a man of few words, but conscientious for the truth and strong in the faith once delivered unto the saints, and we believe he is at rest.

ALSO,

Our sister, **Mrs. Brenton,** departed this life Dec. 30th, 1907, aged 73 years. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Bethlehem Church Oct. 6th, 1895, by Elder Badger, and remained a consistent member until death called her from us; but while this is sad to us who are left to sorrow here, we hope we are numbered with those who have hope in God who saves to the uttermost all who come unto him by Jesus Christ our Lord. Our sister was another one of those who talked little, but she told of her love for the truth by coming among us whenever she could, and testified in her life that this vain world was not her home. She lived a widow several years in Manassas, where she died. I know but very little of her family, but by past experience I know we cannot forget a mother's love, therefore we hope that the Lord will enable us to say, "Thy will be done." We, as a church, feel sad because of the death of our members, for our little band is indeed small, and were it not for the encouraging words, "Fear not, little flock," we would despair; but the Lord is good, and his love in times past forbids us to think he will leave us at last in trouble to sink.

May the Lord sanctify these afflictions to our good and his glory. ELI T. KIDWELL.

George H. Beard departed this life on Thursday, Jan. 16th, 1908, in his 37th year, at Brookton, Tompkins Co., N. Y. Brother Beard was baptized in the fellowship of the Caroline Church, Tompkins, Co., N. Y., on the fourth Sunday in December, 1893, by his father-in-law, Elder Charles Bogardus. He remained a faithful and consistent member of that church until the time of his death, and was their church clerk for several years. On October 19th, 1892, he was married to Miss Bertha Bogardus (only daughter of Elder Charles and Frances Bogardus). During the last few years of his life he was afflicted with disease of the heart, but five days before his death he contracted pneumonia, which caused his death. He remained conscious until the last. He was a lovely christian character, highly esteemed by all who knew him. In a letter written by a lawyer in Ithaca were these words: "He leaves to you and his daughter the legacy of a life well spent, a blameless life and a brave death; we are all better for having known him." He was the son of brother James and sister Watie Beard, of New York city. One brother and one sister live in New York city, and one brother in Panama. He leaves his wife and one child, with many relatives and friends, to mourn their sad loss.

His funeral was largely attended by his many

friends. By his request the writer spoke words to the living, after which his body was laid away in a quiet cemetery, surrounded by mountains (God's handiwork). So one by one God gathers his jewels into his casket, where in eternal glory they continually praise and glorify his name.

B. F. COULTER.

Mrs. Abigail Carpenter died at her residence, and the home of her daughters, in New York city, of pneumonia, on Jan. 9th, 1908, aged 76 years, 5 months and 27 days. She was the widow of Benjamin Carpenter and the mother of five children, three of whom (daughters) survive her. Sister Carpenter was baptized in the fellowship of Ebenezer Church, New York city, by the late Elder Wm. L. Beebe, July 13th, 1891, continuing to the end a faithful and worthy member, adorning the doctrine of God our Savior in all things. Sister Carpenter was an invalid for the last eight years of her life, and confined to the house much of that time. The loving care and devoted attention of her two daughters with whom she resided soothed and lightened her sufferings of many years. May the God of all grace and comfort sustain them in this bereavement and comfort them in remembrance of her life and love. As a church we mourn and deplore our loss, yet we are confident that for her to depart and be with Christ is far better.

The funeral service was conducted at her late residence Jan. 12th, by the writer, (text, 2 Cor. v. 1-7,) and concluded by Elder H. C. Ker at Middletown, N. Y., where interment was made.

JOHN McCONNELL.

My father, **John C. Fenton,** died Dec. 28th, 1907. He was born Jan. 29th, 1842, making very nearly 66 years of this mortal life on the earth. He was brought to know the truth as it is in Jesus about thirty-nine years ago, and was baptized, with my mother, by Elder Wm. J. Purington. Father was one who knew the Scriptures, and the Bible was much read by him; he was humble, and felt himself the least of the saints, and often questioned that he was one at all. He was stricken with paralysis on April 9th, 1906. While never regaining his former physical strength, the inner man was renewed day by day. I had many pleasant conversations with him about the things of the kingdom. In his last illness he declared his faith in the promises of God, and was given to speak words of comfort to those gathered at his bedside. Hymn 1248 (Beebe's collection) was a favorite of his.

Elders B. F. Coulter and Corder Mellott conducted services at his late residence, 1216 N. Fifty-seventh St., Philadelphia, Pa., and Elder Silas H. Durand spoke words of comfort in the Southampton meeting-house. I believe he has awakened in His likeness and is satisfied.

J. M. FENTON.

George Alexander was born Dec. 26th, 1826, died May 19th, 1907, in Wilmington, Delaware. He was buried May 22nd, at London Tract, Chester County, Pa. He married Susan A. Barton, Sept. 24th, 1846; to them were born thirteen children, seven of whom preceded him to the grave. In 1862 he moved to Welsh Tract, and in 1866 united, by baptism, with the Welsh Tract Church, where he remained until 1876, when he, with his family, moved to Wilmington, and soon afterward joined the church there by letter, where he remained until his death. He was buried from the home of his granddaughter, Mrs. Battis, 1603 W. Seventh St., Wilmington. He is survived by his wife, six children, nine grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, six brothers, two sisters and a large number of relatives and friends. Our dear pastor preached a very comforting sermon, both at the evening and morning service.

The above notice of the death of our much esteemed brother was sent me by our aged sister, wife and companion of brother Alexander. He was widely known among the Baptists of the east as a faithful member, always in his place. He greatly loved the church, and always engaged in singing the songs of Zion. His character was above reproach. We do greatly miss him, but our loss is his gain. We extend our deepest sympathy to our sister in her lonely hours. May God sustain her in her last days, is our prayer in the name of Christ our Savior.

J. G. EUBANKS.

Sister **Anna Cobbs Whittle,** wife of Joseph Whittle, died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. E. J. Clark, in Hamden, N. Y., Sept. 13th, 1907, in the 75th year of her age, after a lingering illness. Sister Whittle was born in Kings County, Ireland, April 15th, 1833; she was the daughter of Joseph Cobb, and was married to Joseph Whittle May 24th, 1858. In June of the same year they sailed for America, and located at Olive, N. Y.; here were born to them four children, three sons and one daughter, of whom two are still living: George, of West Hurley, N. Y., and Mamie, of Hamden, N. Y. Sister Whittle was received in the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church June 27th, and was baptized by Elder J. A. Badger June 28th, 1868. She lived a faithful member to the cause, and was well established in the doctrine of salvation by grace. Brother and sister Whittle spent nearly all their days at Olive, N. Y., having settled there soon after coming to this country, and lived there until the spring of 1907, when on account of her failing health they were obliged to leave the old homestead, and moved to Hamden, N. Y., where she died, as above stated. She leaves her husband, one son and one daughter, beside the church and many friends, to mourn their loss. May the God of grace comfort them in their sad bereavement.

The funeral was held from the home of Mrs. Clark,

burial was in the Hamden cemetery. We believe she has entered into the fullness of that glory where the weary are at rest.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Jesse B. Adams died Nov. 29th, 1907, aged 71 years. He had been in poor health for more than four years, but was able to be up and around the house most of the time until about three weeks before he died. We went to an association in September, but he was only able to attend one day, but had preaching every night, and he seemed to enjoy it very much. We live near the Baptist meeting-house at Hot Springs. He went to our monthly meeting the fourth Sunday in October, told us it was the last, as he was conscious the end was near. He knew everything until his last breath, and said, "I have but one regret, that is leaving you in this world of trouble all alone, you and baby," as we have a little granddaughter two years old to raise; her parents are both dead. O how I miss him. He was my second husband, was married to him fourteen years. He united with the Primitive Baptists soon after we were married, and was a strong believer in salvation by grace. His favorite hymn was, "Amazing grace!" It was sung at his funeral.

May God give me grace to comfort me in my lonely home, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

His wife, MARY F. ADAMS.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 76. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1908. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MALACHI IV. 2.

"BUT unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall."

This is the language of the prophet Malachi to Israel, and is one of the many precious promises given to the poor and afflicted children of God. This Scripture, as well as much of other prophetic language, is at times of great comfort to me, and my mind of late has been dwelling upon them, and I will now pen a few of my thoughts regarding the above text, and submit them to the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

When we are given to understand a portion of Scripture it abounds with sweetness to spiritual Israel, as it did to the characters of faith at the time it was written. It is evident to my mind that many Israelites did not understand the sweetness of the promise given in the text, and likewise there are many to-day who cannot understand the promises, because these things are hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes (new creatures). In fact, the natural man receiveth not the things of the kingdom of God, because they are foolishness unto him, and he cannot know them, because they are discerned only by the spiritual mind. Christ said to his apostles, Unto you "it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them [the multitude] it is not given." Our text pointed to the coming of Christ, when he should set up his kingdom here on earth, which to my mind is the same time that John speaks of in the book of Revelation xxi. 1-3: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven [Jewish church] and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."

But now let us briefly notice the text: "But unto you that fear my name." Speaking to a particular people, a people chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. (Eph. i. 4.) Peter says, "Ye are a

chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." They are a people who fear the name of the Lord, and God said, "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."—Jer. xxxii. 40. O how wonderfully favored are the few into whose hearts he puts his fear. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." Unto you "shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." God has had a spiritual people on earth in every age of the world, in whose hearts he writes his law, and who are taught of the Lord, and who, by the eye of faith, look to Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith, viewing him as the only Savior. There were people at the time the prophet Malachi wrote the words of our text who had hope in the blood of the Lamb promised to them, and looked for his coming, as did those wise men of the east, and who could no doubt by faith see what all the sabbath days and seasons were foreshadowing, even the time spoken of by Malachi, even the beginning of a new day, the gospel day. And while this day began with the coming of Christ, to the church collectively, yet this great sabbath of the Lord begins with the sons and daughters of Zion experimentally when Christ is manifested to them as their Savior. It is now with them a new day and a new life, old things have passed away and all things have become new. That same "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." But we were at one time afar off, lost, without hope and without God in the world, and were by nature the children of wrath even as others. We were led captive by the devil, and confined in prison; we were condemned by the law and under its curse; we have viewed the glory of God in the face of his Son, and have felt to be exceeding sinful, and that we are nothing, yea, less than nothing and vanity, and felt to be sinking beneath God's righteous frown. We now love the things of the kingdom of God and hate the world, and the things in it that we once loved; now we hate our own sinful self and loathe our hard and sinful heart; we desire to be relieved of our burden; our taskmaster, the strong man armed, has become more oppressive; we desire to be released from this awful confinement; we pray and mourn and cry, we groan beneath our heavy burden. But fear not, ye who tremble at the word of God, O be not dismayed, for the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him. Fear not, for all things are working together for your good. The Lord said, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, [sin or darkness] and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters [the devil]; for I know their sorrows." Fear not, he has come down to deliver you. But unto you that fear his name (just such characters as you, just such hateful sinners as you feel yourselves to be) shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings, and he will heal all your maladies; he alone can cure the sin-sick soul, he is the great Physician, he is the Balm of Gilead, he will bind up your broken heart, he will bind the monster in chains and set the captive free, he will clothe you with the robe of righteousness, even the righteousness of the Son of God, and present you

to the Father holy and without blame before him in love; he has procured your pardon and now it is sealed, you have the sweet assurance that your iniquity is pardoned and your sins shall be remembered against you no more, you are washed whiter than snow and are now led forth in newness of life, "and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall;" you have been redeemed from under the curse of the law, and are now liberated and made free; the Son hath made you free, and you shall be free indeed; you are no more under law, but under grace, and "there is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." I think I hear you saying, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." "He brought me to the banqueting house [church] and his banner over me was love." The Sun of righteousness is leading you; he has put you forth, dear lambs of God, and he goes before you in affliction in being a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, in death in the tomb and in the resurrection, and he has made straight paths for your feet, and has commanded you to follow him. He does not lead his people now as he did in times past, when he took them by the hand and led them through the Red Sea, he draws you by the cords of his love shed abroad in your hearts. O how comforting and soul-cheering are the words of the Bridegroom to his lovely bride, saying, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is passed, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; and the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." The reign of law is over and gone, your hard and stony heart is taken away, the winter is passed and God has given you a heart of flesh, a heart of love, and now is the time of rejoicing. "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." "The voice of the turtle [the gospel of the Son of God] is heard in our land," the poor have the gospel preached unto them, and this gospel suits all those who feel themselves to be poor and needy, for it is glad tidings of a free and perfect salvation for time and eternity; there is no deficiency in it, but it is eternal and everlasting, and is like its Author in perfection. The Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

My dear brethren in the Lord, while many of you are strangers to me in the flesh, I feel a nearness to all those who are traveling along the same rugged road with me, and I like to talk with them of the many experiences along the way, of the many battles and hard conflicts with the enemy, and the many deadly blows dealt us which seemed to threaten our destruction, but the victory has been ours. This part of the subject is most soul-cheering, for it gives all glory to God. The great Captain of our salvation fights all our battles and gains every victory. "Salvation is of the Lord,"

O how gracious it is to be blessed with quietness of spirit, that we can be still and know that he is God; how calm is the breast thus leaning on the everlasting Arm. Lord, keep us in humble submission to thy great will.

Yours, in hope of eternal life,

G. B. BIRD.

FRANK, W. Va., Feb. 1, 1908.

FAITH PRECIOUS.

"IF ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed."—Matt. xvii. 20.

Small indeed is this measure of faith; though small it is genuine, pure. This holy principle is all-important for the accomplishment of anything in the spiritual kingdom, for without faith it is impossible to please God. This teaching of Jesus shows the inestimable value of faith: "as a grain of mustard seed." This is wonderful, so small yet powerful in the conscience of the saints in light. It also points out to the children of God the great importance of being clothed with the "faith of God's elect." There is great difference between a "big" notion in the mind, and the "least" amount of faith. There is no intermediate point between having no faith and having the smallest faith possible. If faith the size of a grain of mustard seed will remove mountains, how great is that faith. Nothing in nature can illustrate the preciousness of faith, since a seed, the smallest of all seeds, has almost unlimited power, being centered in the King of kings. Even the trial of this faith is much more precious than gold, though it be tried with fire. This precious jewel of the kingdom outshines any earthly treasure, though it may be as small as a grain of mustard seed. It is certainly the riches of the saints, for they are rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom. This comparison of faith with the mustard seed grain is of the utmost force, showing the great power granted unto the saints in the kingdom of Jesus; there is nothing like unto it. They live by faith, they walk by faith, their faith shall overcome the world. Is not this a most precious treasure? They are not justified by works, but they are justified by faith. This is my understanding of Paul's teaching in Romans in the third, fourth and fifth chapters. "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." The apostle says, "We conclude." Is not this sufficient authority to establish the truth of justification by faith? In speaking of the way of salvation in the next chapter (iv.) he confirms his conclusion of the previous one by saying, "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." After much argument upon this subject the apostle opens the fifth chapter with a positive declaration: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." If then we are justified by faith, is it not most precious to us in our mortal pilgrimage? Faith is the evidence of things not seen—evidence to our understanding, comprehension. Faith is the result of the work of Jesus; it conveys to the hearts of his people the power of his love, mercy and grace. Whereas Jesus died under the law and redeemed all his people from under the law, and they stand justified through his righteousness, it is necessary to acquaint them with the great work done for them, hence he gives them faith; he is the author and finisher of it; the evidence of things not seen by mortal eye. This evidence to them is justifi-

cation; they are justified by this evidence to believe on his name. Without evidence they could not believe. They cannot produce this evidence from anything that they naturally possess, neither can they know anything of spiritual things by natural things; revelation alone must break through the veil of flesh to give the evidence of things not seen. How futile then are all the efforts of man to become justified in believing on Jesus, seeing that the work of believing is the work of God. If to believe that Jesus is the Savior of sinners is the work of God in the heart, how then can man be justified in believing, only through the faith given him of God? In olden time men wanted to do the work of the great Jehovah, as they do to this day; they made inquiry of Jesus what they should do to work the works of God. Jesus showed them by his answer, though they could not understand, that the natural man is forever barred from doing God's work. If man could possibly do God's work, then there would be room for boasting. Where then is boasting? It is excluded by the law of faith. "Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." They still thought that they could do God's work by asking for a "sign," not knowing that they never could believe through signs tangible to the flesh independent of the grace of God. To-day we have the same notions among the children of the flesh, viz., all men can believe that Jesus is the Christ if they will to believe so. Hence all legalists hold to the notion that they are justified by works, thinking that they have the power to believe, and this is called something for them to do. If all men should agree in all points of doctrine concerning what the Scriptures teach until they get to this place, where the fan of discrimination purges the floor and divides the wheat from the chaff, their one offence here in rejecting the clear testimony of Scripture, as well as the power of God's revelation in making men believe through the evidence given unto them, is enough to blow them into the regions of despair.

Much might be said about "our common faith" and then the subject would still be inexhaustible. Faith is connected with all the display of gospel light. It is often contrasted with the law, and it speaketh better things than the law, inasmuch as it lays hold of the things of Jesus. Abraham was not devoid of it, though he lived before the coming of Jesus. His faith was the same as the faith of God's elect; he was justified by faith, says inspiration, and not by works. This belief of his in God was justifiable, because it was through faith and not through "signs," or things tangible to the natural senses.

With these hints I shall leave the subject for the present.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

HELENA, Okla., Dec. 25, 1907.

EASTON, Mass., Jan. 12, 1908.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—Before me lies a letter just begun, dated Christmas and addressed to you. My heart dictated the beginning, and I had many things to write you about, but found myself too tired to go on. I have not been feeling as well as usual for some weeks, and Christmas found me pretty thoroughly tired out. I graduated from college in June, as you know, and have been teaching school since September. I went to Halifax as principal of schools, my own school being grammar and first year high, and the responsibility of a hundred

scholars, together with the fact that the school itself, through frequent changes of teachers, is a hard one to control and teach, with a body tired from the beginning, combined to make it a practical impossibility for me to write, much as I have often wanted to, and longed to be able to, spiritually. I am now teaching, as you see, in Easton, a town not very far from Halifax, and three miles nearer Boston. I have a most delightful school; my two weeks here have simply flown, and I feel much better in health than I have for months. God is good, and I am very little deserving or even appreciative of his blessings.

"Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them." I woke up early this morning, and finding myself unable to sleep again I arose. To-day, too, is the first day of the week, and it is early in the morning; not yet is the day bright, for the sky is gray with that twilight which precedes dawn. "The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre." My mind goes back again and again to that "first day of the week" so long ago. I seem to see the sorrow-stricken disciples gathered together with the Marys, worn out with grief and disappointment, for was not Christ he whom they had trusted would redeem Israel? I seem to see Mary, the forgiven woman, she who loved much, rising very early that morning and going with her spices to the sepulchre where her Lord lay; and now she comes, and seeing the stone rolled away from the sepulchre she cries, "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him," and they look in vain for his dead body. He has risen—the phrase is a wonderful one. He who had power to raise the dead while yet he walked about on earth, has now shown his power to take that life which he laid down. He is risen, and yet they find it hard to believe that it is indeed he. When Mary had recognized the Lord, and had reported thus to the disciples, their minds were unreceptive, and the story appeared an idle tale, and they believed it not. No, nor can we now believe until in personal experience we see the risen Lord. We, too, believe not; we, too, must think that, while delightful, this vision of Christ is but a delusion and imagination, a mere apparition. Are there not indeed those among us who say that this sight of Christ was but a vision, that they imagined, dreamed, saw, as it were, in a vision, the Lord disclosing his hands and his side, breaking bread, preparing that meal of fish and bread? Then, if this be true, small wonder if in the world people regard faith in Christ as a beautiful delusion. If this appearance of Christ was but an apparition, why did he say to Thomas, "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed"? For to every one is granted a vision of Christ, every one, I mean, who is given faith to see in him their Savior. The glorified Jesus is my one hope, for had he not himself borne my griefs and carried my sorrows, had he not himself known the force and the terror of temptation, he could not now succor me.

I have been reading this morning the fifty-second and fifty-third chapters of Isaiah. "For he shall grow up before him as a tender [weak] plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see

him, there is no beauty that we should desire him." His countenance was more marred than any man's. Ah, is this the Redeemer? Yes, and those marks were made in our behalf; for us it was that the Prince of Peace suffered. Never will that truth be aught but exceeding wonderful; more wonderful than ever before does it seem to me this early morning of a bleak, January day. Without is storm and rain, (for it is now light) but in my heart burns the fire of God's wonderful love, that love which passeth knowledge, and can but be felt and lived, not expressed or explained.

When I read your daughter "Bonnie's" letters, last September, I sat down and wrote to you, but the letter was so entirely inadequate and worthless that I burned it, and did not try to write again until December. Her letters in a recent number of the SIGNS brought back something of the feeling I had at that time (September), and I have felt like writing to her, but fail to find opportunity and mood to suit. Her letters brought to my remembrance so clearly my own experience of God's love when first he was revealed to me as my Father through the adoption consummated by Jesus' atonement. Sweet indeed are those first early days of love, pleasant to remember, a joyful time of hope and expectancy and tender zealousness for His cause; yet would I not go back, for as I have suffered, so has been the vista into the realms of his love made clearer; as I have learned, so must I now, more than then, understand how much I need my blessed Lord. I thought I knew then that I must depend upon him, I know now that I can do nothing without him. I had yet to begin to learn the alphabet of God's grace, now I have begun, and I see before me enough to fill eternity. "Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you." What does that mean? It means to me that even in the question of a study in school I must have his help; in the discipline he must help me. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." This is the peace that the world can neither give nor take away, and it, too, passeth knowledge; like a river it rises and swells and flows on, majestic, silent, deep, strong, resistless. It is from a long period of defeat and struggle, struggle and defeat, that I can now rest in the Lord and rejoice in his strength. My mind has been long barren and indifferent; the cares of this world, the selfishness of self, the unbelief and skepticism of a froward heart, all have wearied me and taken away my comfort. From the darkness of Egypt, from its bondage, I have indeed escaped, but the Canaanite is still in the land. Only when I am strong in the Lord's strength can I sing praise to him; such a time is now mine, and I am filled with the greatness of his love and mercy to me, the least of his children.

"O then, nor is my boasting vain,
O then I boast a Savior slain;
And O, may this my glory be,
That Christ is not ashamed of me."

With love to your dear family, I am your sister in Christ,

RUTH A. KEENE.

HOPKINS, Mo., Dec. 31, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—I send two letters which I have received from dear sisters, which I think would deeply interest many of the saints, the blessed children of God. I have not asked their consent, and leave it to your judgment.

Grace be to you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. R. M. SIMMONS.

WARRENTON, Oregon, June 3, 1906.

ELDER R. M. SIMMONS—DEAR BROTHER

IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I was very glad to find your familiar name in our dear old SIGNS, and how my mind was stirred up, bringing before me the happy days of my childhood, when my parents lived in Fulton County, Ill., where I was seemingly made well acquainted with you by hearing them with joy often speak lovingly of you, also of your gift as a young licensed preacher in the early fifties. How well I can now call to mind the association of the year 1851, which was the last one my parents attended before moving to Iowa. How very eager we little children were to hear all their conversation when they had returned. Even now I almost seem to hear their dear voices speaking of the love and sweet fellowship so dear among the poor and afflicted people who still trust in the Lord. My dear mother had always the habit of asking her children to find the texts of Scripture used, whenever she had returned from her church meetings, and although we were only children this was a very dear task to us all, which we could attend to with great satisfaction to her, and also to ourselves; and now after this dear assembly of the loved Old Baptists of the Spoon River Association we, too, had a feast in finding the texts of all the ministers in attendance, some of whose names I remember well, as Elders John Record, Charles Vandevere, John Roberts, James Tatum and brother R. M. Simmons, and we were wondering why you were only a "brother," when such a good man and preacher; we felt that you, too, should be dignified with the title of "Elder," and of course there were others, whom my mind almost grasps, then all flee from me. All of whom I have made mention, but yourself, have been called home ere this, I have no doubt, as also have my beloved parents, Jacob and Mercy Heckard. O, my beloved brother in Christ, how very precious to us is the love of the saints of God, and how comforting; how often we would almost give up all hope when we are searching in our sinful heart for something encouraging, and find it all blank, but for the rich glow of that love which many waters cannot quench nor floods ever drown, and O how sweet to us to be able to obey our blessed Lord's commandment that we love one another, and if we love each other we must love Him who has given us to know and love his people. O that he would give us grace to live as we should, finding sweet encouragement to bear with patience all things for his dear name's sake. I hope that you may long be able, as one of the heralds of the cross of Christ, to proclaim the truth of his glorious gospel to his honor and to the comfort of his dear children.

I truly hope you may not think me presuming in writing to you, as I feel that I was one of your long time ago friends, and one whom I kindly remembered as a loved brother of my parents in the bonds of christian fellowship. How I would like to meet with you; what a pleasure it would be to look into your face, grasp your hand and hear your voice in the worship of our God. I hope you can read and understand me in this very rambling letter.

May God ever bless you, is the prayer of your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) S. L. H. STUART.

DRAIN, Oregon, December, 1906.

R. M. SIMMONS—DEAR BROTHER:—Perhaps you will be surprised to receive a few lines from me, but after seeing a short article written by you in the SIGNS of November 15th, I felt inclined to write you. I do not know that you remember

me, but you baptized me in the fellowship of the old Mt. Zion Church, in Illinois, October, 1875. I have always felt a near feeling for you, and thought I would write and tell you I still remember you, and am glad the blessed Savior has preserved your strength so long to stand on the walls of Zion to declare the unsearchable riches of his grace. What a wonderful God we worship; not a weak God who needs help from the puny arm of flesh, nor money to save souls, but one who has all power both in heaven and earth.

Since you baptized me I have had many trials and troubles, but the Lord has kept me from sinking under the turbulent waves; I believe he has been at the helm of my frail bark. He has wonderfully blessed me and my family. We have six children living, three boys and three girls. Here is where I have cause to praise the Lord: our three daughters are all brought into the fold (the church), and I have no doubt that they are taught in the school of Christ; our youngest daughter was baptized this last September, by Elder Mathews; our oldest son has been numbered with our faith and order over eight years, and for the last year has been exercising what we all believe to be a gift for the ministry. He talks so feelingly and with such ability that our church liberated him to preach the gospel. I firmly believe our other two sons have deep mourning on account of sin, and I have faith in the blessed Lord that they in due time will be brought into the fold. I feel when I complain at my poor, sinful heart, that of all the families of the earth we are blessed, and I ought to rejoice day and night; but that old Adamic nature I cannot get rid of, and will not as long as life lasts. I often long to be set free from this prison of clay, but then the thought comes, Am I one of that redeemed family? Is my name written in the Lamb's book of life? I have many fears and doubts; I sometimes fear that I am not one of that chosen generation for whom Christ died.

Well, dear father in Israel, I did not intend to write so much when I began, but just to let you know that I still remember you and would like to see your face once more; but if we never meet again in this life I hope we shall meet where parting will be no more, in that upper and better kingdom. I will just add that we have some able ministers of the gospel in Oregon, and have some glorious meetings. If not deceived, I believe the Lord is with us on these occasions, the same Lord that I believe you are praising there. My husband joins me in christian regard and fellowship. May your last days on earth be your best, is my prayer.

Your little sister,

(MRS.) S. MORNINGSTAR.

NORTH YAKIMA, Wash., Jan. 20, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Having to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, for which I inclose money order, I feel like writing a word of appreciation of the excellence of the communications; and especially have I enjoyed the writings of yourself and brother Chick, together with those of beloved Elders Durand and Keene. I need not mention the names of all the dear ones whose writings have brought cheer and comfort to my soul. Brethren, write on, and may the dear Master give you the pen of a ready writer, and cause your hearts to ring true on the doctrine of grace to the glory of the King of kings. Dear brother Ker, your article on the "Rich man and Lazarus" I believe to be in harmony with the testimony, and

explains several points which have troubled me not a little.

My mind is to write a few thoughts on two of the most important laws with which humanity has to do; they are both mentioned in Romans viii. 2: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." I shall speak first of the law which Paul saw in his members, warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity. This law has force, just like the law of gravity, and its tendency is downward, or, shall I say, deathward? The manifestation of it in humanity is the carnal mind, which is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, and it is that which causes us so much trouble on our pilgrimage journey, being the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet us. But blessed be God, though he will not remove it from us he has promised sufficient grace to save to the uttermost. Then

"Come weal or woe, come joy or grief,
The Lord our God has promise given
That all these things shall end at last,
And we ourselves go home to heaven.

Mortality no more shall grieve,
With songs the heavenly mansion rings,
And thou, tired hearts, mayest well rejoice,
Thy Savior is the King of kings."

But to return. This law became operative when Adam partook of the forbidden fruit. By one man's disobedience "sin entered into the world, [humanity] and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," and it will cease when the last enemy, death, is destroyed. Now the works of the flesh by this law are "adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like."—Gal. v. 19-21. It seems to me, dear ones, that we should see to it that our christian walk has none of these enumerated things in it.

Conditional time salvation seems to me to be but a species of idolatry; the setting up of one's obedience or good works instead of the grace of God and the power of him who said, "Without me ye can do nothing." I will put my law into their hearts and write it in their minds. This is the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," and is in the soul as a light shining in a dark place, but the darkness (soul) comprehends it not, at first, but exclaims, O, I am a sinner and must mend my ways. Thus the light, or life of Jesus, works as leaven in the soul and spirit of the man until they are leavened. We call it liberty, or the new birth; it is liberty, for it is from the Son of God. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." This is what Paul meant when he said, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." He did not mean his body was free, otherwise why would he say, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" He must have meant that his soul and spirit, inner man, were free from the law of sin and death, and this agrees with the testimony of John: Whosoever is born of God cannot sin. So, dear brethren, we are not taking steps backward, although our little hope seems not to grow, and so much of the way seems dark and full of anguish, yet in that light shining in our hearts our God has made with us an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, and we are partakers of the sure mercies of David, being under the glorious reign of his Son. Not only under the reign of Jesus, but partakers of his divine nature and Spirit; thus there is unity so far as

soul and spirit are concerned. This is the resurrection begun and progressed so far; soul and spirit are two of the three measures of meal, and they have been leavened, and the whole lump (man) or three measures must be, for the law of the Spirit of life does not stop half way, it works by the power of an endless life, and nothing short of a conformation to the image of Jesus will do. "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." So in due time, after that we have suffered awhile, being buffeted by the carnal mind and fleshly lusts and worldly ambitions, these bodies of ours, bearing "the image of the earthy," in obedience to the law of sin must go down to the grave, "for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Human reason and logic say they will stay there forever; death has the victory and will hold it. But the body must be raised spiritual, for if so be the dead rise not, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, your hope is also vain, ye are yet in your sins and we are found false witnesses of God. O the misery and darkness of the picture if we stop here; but O the glow and brightness of hope from the words, "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." "In my flesh shall I see God." "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth," not in weakness, but in power; not natural, but spiritual; not corruptible, but incorruptible; not mortal, but immortal; and the three measures of meal are then leavened, and the working of the "law of the Spirit of life" complete. Our victory in Christ won; the adoption, redemption of our body, is consummated, the resurrection finished; death loses its sting, the grave its victory; we shall know even as we are known, and shall be like Jesus, and see him as he is.

W. J. HESS.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

DEAR EDITORS:—We send this letter from brother and sister Coulter because it is good in itself, and not because of any expressions of personal regard to ourselves, though these expressions are dear to us.

FRANKLIN AND MARY TERRY.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan. 11, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER TERRY:—Annie has suggested that I write to you and express our thankfulness and appreciation of your many acts of kindness to us, and the constant manifestation of your love and fellowship for us. We can say truly, It is of the Lord. His goodness and mercy extendeth even to us, and we feel to be the least in the Father's family, therefore the least deserving. But daily we learn the sweet lesson that he does not bestow his benefits because we deserve them, but in tender love and gracious mercy he sends his ministering angels (and you are both numbered among them) to cause us to rejoice in his love and to wonder at his wondrous grace. The pure, uncontaminated love that was displayed here last Sunday evening melted my hard heart to tenderness, and as love flowed from heart to heart, I could joyfully say: "The Lord is good," and he is right here among us. I sometimes think we can view the tender watchcare of the Lord and his loving-kindness more clearly when we look

back over all the way the Lord God has led us, and remember all the days of old; how he has kept us, restrained us and filled our hearts with heavenly desires; shown us his matchless beauty, healed our aching, bleeding hearts, set us among kings and priests, giving us as a "balm in Gilead" his precious Son, in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, displaying in him all the rich treasures of his grace. When we were in darkness he made darkness light before us; being filled with the leprosy of sin, he touched us and we were clean every whit.

As you see, my mind is now dwelling on the display of his wondrous grace. Moses desired to see his face, (and his face is his glory) but He said, "Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me, and live. And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: and I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts; but my face shall not be seen." Moses represented the law, and under the law the gospel was hid, and that which we beheld was a reflected glory. The "rock" is Christ Jesus; the "clift," his protecting grace; the covering of the hand, his decrees of sovereignty and love; the "back parts," his work of grace, which his presence in passing has wrought in us, and which is shown unto us in experience. These are parts of his ways, but his judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out. The display of God's grace cometh out of Zion, and is seen in the assemblies of the saints, in acts of charity and love, in the manifest breathings of a broken and contrite spirit. When under the law we look upon the face of God we die (as God said); that is, die to sin, for we were living in sin and dead to all holiness and righteousness, but now Christ is risen from the dead, and this is the glory of his face which we behold, "The only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." We are raised with him from the dead to newness of life, to behold his glory and his beauteous face in all the things of the gospel, which were hidden under the law, but now revealed by his Spirit, in which we behold his beauty and glory for evermore. Now we look back in remembrance and behold the display of his "back parts," not unlike the night display of the natural heavens, the glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, each star differing from every other star in glory, showing the beauteous face of the firmament of God; so the spiritual heavens show the reflected light of the Sun of righteousness upon the broken law of God (the moon), and the myriads of twinkling stars of God's right hand placing, each showing forth and brightly displaying the wondrous handiwork of God in the hearts of the creatures of earth. Heart searchings of the creature display their attitude to their God and the gracious Redeemer, for in the searching they bring out the hidden things of the wisdom of God. By the same wisdom the prophet Obadiah asks, "How are the things of Esau searched out! how are his hidden things sought up!" Inspiration answers, "But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions." Here is the secret revealed, we have come to Mt. Zion, where there is light and where all secret or hidden things are revealed.

Now, dear brother and sister, we want

you to be assured that we have you in our hearts, to live with you and to die with you; you are in our sweet fellowship, and you have our love. May the rich blessings of God's grace continue to rain upon you, is our prayer for Jesus' sake.

Affectionately your brother and sister,
B. F. AND ANNIE C. COULTER.

BALTIMORE, Md., Feb. 4, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I sat down to read some this morning, and as I read the first and second verses of the sixth chapter of Galatians it came into my mind to write some thoughts concerning them and send them to you. They will be at your disposal, do with them as you think best.

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." This Scripture is what we commonly call an exhortation, and I will not object to the term, still I do believe that what the apostle here enjoins is already in the hearts of those who are spiritual by virtue of the Spirit of Jesus, which makes them spiritual. No saying of an apostle or minister of the gospel can ever make a man spiritual, and unless he is spiritual he will not be subject to this exhortation.

First, we notice that the apostle was addressing the brethren, and they are those who are born of incorruptible Seed by the Word of God; to them it is said, "If a man be overtaken in a fault." This certainly does not mean the man who seeks and runs after the things of the flesh, or, in other words, sows to the flesh, or wars after the flesh; such men deserve to bear their own burden and suffer their own punishment, but "if a man be overtaken in a fault." This, to my mind, means a brother who, though desiring and seeking to walk circumspectly, is yet surrounded by such circumstances that ere he is aware he has done or said that which is unbecoming his profession, and so has hurt the feelings of his brethren; but he has hurt none more seriously than his own feelings when he sees the wrong step. When this is clearly the case, in the mind of the church, I think that all who are spiritual are ready and willing to bear the burden, and to restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, which is the Spirit of Christ in them, by which they are able to consider and to know their own weakness and liability to stray from the ways of righteousness and peace. The Lord's people are yet in the flesh, and all flesh is weak and profiteth nothing, and we have nothing that is spiritual only as the Lord graciously gives it, therefore we have no right to boast over another, but we have great reason to sympathize one with another, and, as much as is possible with us, to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ, as we are taught in the second verse. This exhortation is in our hearts if we are spiritual. Every spiritual member is willing to bear the burden of the weak brother. The apostle compares the body spiritual to the body physical. We see how that in a healthy condition of all the members of the physical body they willingly bear a part of the burdens of the whole body, and that if one member is afflicted or overburdened, all the others, as they can, do for its relief; if they do not, they themselves are in an unhealthy condition. It is so with the body spiritual, when there are burdens to be borne all the healthy members go to the help of the burdened ones. This is true, not only in bearing

with the weakness which is common to human nature, but in any work or expense to which the church, as a body, is subject. The member of the body who is not willing to submit the matter to the judgment of the body of which Jesus is the head, and then bear his share of the burden, is not in a healthy condition, is not spiritual. As it is a law of nature that all the members of the physical body willingly bear each other's burden, and help each other when in a healthy condition, so the members of the spiritual body, when the Spirit of Jesus, who is their life, circulates in every member, willingly help each other, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Your brother,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

MEDICINE LODGE, Kansas, Oct. 11, 1907.

"SIN is the transgression of the law." By one man's transgression sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. How did sin come? By transgression of the law of God. "God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Man had no helpmeet, and so God caused a deep sleep to fall upon man, and he took a rib out of the side of Adam and made a woman, and called her name Eve. Then God placed them in the garden in Eden, and said to them of all the trees of the garden they might eat, but the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which was in the garden, they should not eat of it, neither should they touch it, lest they die. But the serpent said to the woman, "Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Thus we see that God made a commandment, and God's commandments I understand to be law; therefore man was under law, and man transgressed God's holy law. Adam was not righteous, but was in a state of innocence before the transgression. The woman was deceived, but Adam was not deceived. Adam was a figure of him that was to come (Christ), and the woman was a figure of the church. She said, "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." Eve transgressed the law of God, and she became a condemned sinner before the just and holy God; she fell from that state of innocence which she was in before the transgression. We could not go to God, but Christ came to us and gave his life for us. Now we see that the first child born into this world was a sinner, because his parents were condemned sinners. "For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." The offerings of the two first children that were born into the world represent the two systems of salvation: the first works, the last grace. Cain offered the works of his own hands, the very best he had, but Abel offered that with which he had nothing to do, that is, with regard to bringing it about; he offered as a sacrifice the firstling of the flock; and we read that God had respect to Abel and his offering, but unto Cain and his offering he had not respect; for salvation is by grace, and grace alone. But the Lord would not allow Cain to be slain, and thus workmongers have existed ever since, and they worship the works of the creature, the works of men's hands. "If by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more of grace: otherwise work is no more work."

I have been employed in Medicine Lodge

all summer, away from my family, and have not had the privilege of reading the SIGNS regularly. We think the SIGNS the best Old School Baptist paper published. I may have a prejudice for it, but it suits me the best. My prayer is that God will bless you and sustain you in its publication in the future as in the past.

I send this to you to read, and if you find it not suitable for the columns of the SIGNS, cast it into the flames and forgive one who loves to read the SIGNS.

Your very little brother in hope,

C. G. MILLER.

JOSEPH IS ALIVE.

THAT which caused Jacob to rejoice was the assurance that Joseph was alive. He was afraid to believe their report lest he be disappointed, but when he saw the things of Joseph he believed and said, "It is enough: Joseph my son is yet alive." Joseph was to Jacob as God is to the sinner. Saints in all ages have trusted in the living God; all other gods were dead things, made of sticks or stones, the work of men's hands; like the calf of gold at Sinai, it was made by man's hands, the children of Israel danced around it and said it was the thing that brought them out, when it was not, but the living God did it. Joseph was as if dead to Jacob, the same as Isaac to Abraham. Jacob had been desiring to hear the news his sons brought, and then was loth to believe it, but when assured of the fact what a change came to the rest of his life. "Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die." It made all the difference in the world to him if he were living.

Baal was a god of the Philistines, much worshiped by the children of Israel, many of them, but not all, some were reserved; they would have done it, too, but this living God kept them from it. "As the Lord God of Israel liveth," was Elijah's watchword. "As the Lord God of Israel liveth," said the widow. Job said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." The king cried at the mouth of the lions' den, "O Daniel, servant of the living God." The heathen could see the difference in the gods made with hands; they (gods) had eyes, but could not see, while the eyes of the living God run to and fro throughout the whole earth. They had ears, but heard not, while the ears of the God of whom Joseph was a lively figure were never shut, but ever open to the cries of the saints. The living God moves, and makes all things move; he works all things after the counsel of his own will, and all things work together for good to them that love God; not because we love him, but because he is able to do so; able and does bring good out of evil; things that the wicked intended for evil God meant for good. Joseph's brethren intended to put him out of the way and cause all his plans to miscarry, but everything they did only worked in harmony with God's will and purpose, as you see before you to-day. Jesus said, "Because I live, ye shall live also," (eternal life) and never perish. When I read these words as I do to-day I just feel like shouting because it all seems so clear, and is so strong, and is the only way under heaven whereby we must be saved. Joseph only revealed himself unto his own family; Jesus reveals himself unto the church, the whole church, every one, ninety-nine are not enough, all the lambs shall hear and come, because God, the living God, worketh in them both to will and do of his good pleasure.

FRANK McGLADE.

HEBRON, Ohio.

HOSKINS, Ore., Nov. 24, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—(If indeed one so sinful and unworthy as I, dare to call you by so endearing a name as brother.) This evening I have been contemplating what poor, blind, short-sighted mortals men are. We cannot claim one moment of time. Now, my dear brother, I may be intruding upon you, being a stranger in the flesh, yet I hope that we are not so in the Spirit. Something within says, Why are you writing to him? and again something says, Write, and this has the stronger influence in my mind. I want to tell you how much I appreciate the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; I do not know how I could do without it. I take several other papers, but when they come all are laid aside for the SIGNS until it is read. These papers contain all the preaching I have.

Dear brother, bear with me a little, I live many miles from any church, or any who believe as I do, so I get very low down in the valley, where I am most of the time. I have been so low in mind all day, and so weak that I tremble and can hardly write. My cry is continually for mercy. My hope at times is so small I think that I will throw it all away, still my cry is for mercy. But when all seems to be gone, and I think that surely I will sink, again he shows his smiling face, and once more all is changed; then all is joy, and I cry for grace to praise him, and with the psalmist say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." O that I could praise him, O that I could adore his matchless name forever and for evermore. But the time is very short before I am in the dark again. Dear brother, please tell me, are any of these the marks that distinguish a child of God?

I have not written as I thought I would, but perhaps it may give you some idea of how I feel from day to day. Lest I weary you with my troubles I will close. May the Lord bless the editors of the SIGNS to still contend for the truth, is my earnest desire.

Yours in hope,

JAMES GROSHONG.

[WE feel sure that no such questionings concerning salvation ever arise in the heart of the natural man. Men of the world do not feel sufficient interest in the things of God to lead them to question as to their own personal interest in them; but all those who have had a revelation of the value of this heavenly sonship see such beauty and glory in it that their hearts burn with desire for an interest in it, and yet they are so unworthy and so sinful, and this estate is so holy, that they can but fear and question and tremble lest after all they have no right in this inheritance. But all such ones have been blest, and are blest and shall be blest. They have been blest to see this heavenly light, they are blest to now desire to dwell in it, and they shall be blest forever and ever with perfect conformity to this heavenly inheritance, so that they shall be satisfied when they awake with His likeness.—C.]

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 7, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I reread this letter, written over a year ago, and felt it new, and send it forth to be at your disposal.

Your brother, J. M. FENTON.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 31, 1907.

J. M. FENTON—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LOVE OF THE TRUTH AS IT IS IN JESUS:—I had hoped to pay you a visit at this time, but circumstances prevented, so I

suppose I must be content to wait until some other time. I have felt glad to have the opportunity to be at Elder Durand's for the winter, and to attend the meetings, but such a strange creature am I that I have sometimes almost regretted it, and wished I were away off somewhere by myself. I certainly have not yet "learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content," yet I think I do love the society of God's dear children; I like to hear them talk of the things of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is not of this world, and cannot be understood or found out by the wise of this world; yet, O wonder of wonders, I, even I, dare to hope that I am in the secret. It is written, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him," and surely I have been made to fear him, not with slavish fear, but, I trust, godly fear. I think I know the meaning of the words: For every idle word we shall give account at the day of judgment. It seems to me I have to be constantly brought before the judgment-seat, not so much for the outspoken words, but the thoughts and imaginations of the heart, which are evil, and that continually, and such a turmoil as there seems to be going on in my mind. Surely I know what it is to have the flesh striving against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; could I possibly know anything of this were I not possessor of the two natures or lives? O what a mystery we are to ourselves, and yet how wonderfully blessed if indeed we have been made to differ from the ungodly world. I feel our days should be spent in glorifying the great name of Him who has made us to differ, but with shame I have to confess that it is not so with me; I often feel sick of myself and sin, and yet I suppose these very feelings are the tribulations through which we have to pass. As brother Horace Lefferts said when speaking in this way, we must decrease while He increases; we see him holy, and ourselves altogether unholy. I think I can truthfully say I have felt the dear Savior to be the altogether lovely One, the chiefest among ten thousand; since I can remember, the name of Jesus has been sweet to me; long before I dared to hope that I was numbered with his children I loved the name of Jesus, and longed to know more of him, and wondered if he would ever condescend to have mercy on me. Even as a little child, after repeating a formal prayer, I would add the leper's cry, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." I did not doubt his power, but O would he will to remember me?

"And can he have taught me to trust in his name,
And thus far have brought me to put me to shame?"

I can only hope on from day to day, knowing that if the good work is begun he will perform it.

With love to sister Fenton and the children, I am, I hope, your sister, though unworthy, BERTHA WELLS.

TAMPICO, Illinois.

DEAR KINDRED:—I have thought for some time of writing, I do not know what for, but I have had a desire to write. When sorrow comes upon me my first thought is of the Baptists, my beloved people, for I know I will find sympathizing hearts there, which the world knows not of. What the Lord does is right; it is right because he doeth it.

It has not been quite a year since dear father left us; the days are sad and lonely without his dear face, and I know I can never see him more on earth, but I hope to meet him again where parting is no more. To-night I received news that my dear brother is gone, and O how sad

is my poor heart. I have not heard any particulars about his death, yet I sit here waiting for the morning to come that I may find out. He was the youngest of our family. He went north in April, and I have not seen him since, which makes it harder to bear. Pray for us, that we may bow in submission to His dear will, that we may kiss the rod that smites us, that we may hope in his mercy and feel his dear presence to help us in time of need.

I will close. If any of God's little ones feel like sending us a word of comfort it will help us bear our sorrows.

From an afflicted sister in hope,

ANNIE HOPKINS.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, now in session with the Fountain Church, to the churches composing her body.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the abounding mercy of a covenant-keeping God we are permitted to meet once more in this world of sorrow. We will call your attention to the seventy-six years of the steadfastness of your faith. Of that time the unworthy writer has been a member for forty-seven years. In all that time we have had no new doctrine to invade our ranks. Salvation alone by grace, and that the Lord's portion is his people, and they alone know the joyful sound, and to them the gospel is preached in power. The alien sinner is not a subject of gospel address to repent, for he is dead in sin, the gospel to him is, as the apostle has said, a stumbling-block and foolishness, and as the prophet has said, Though you bray a fool in a mortar with a pestle among wheat, yet his foolishness will not depart from him. So it is with preaching the gospel to alien sinners to repent. The gospel is the power of God to the believer, to the one that has been quickened, who was dead in trespasses and sins. Jesus did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. They now are no longer dead sinners, but quickened; now they hate sin, sin has become exceedingly sinful. Right here there begins a warfare. Christ is in them the hope of glory, the law is spiritual, but they are carnal, sold under sin, they cannot do the things they would, so when they would do good, evil is present. Their old nature is not changed; the new man would like to have it changed, so they would not have to cry, O wretched man that I am! When in nature's night he did not behold the inbred corruption, that his heart was as a cage of unclean birds; he then was in love with himself, he was able to get religion when he got ready; so teach all the false prophets that you must make yourself better, then God will love you; but when God commanded the light to shine in the poor sinner's heart, he then suffered great loss, his selfishness was gone to the moles and bats, and now light is shining in his heart, he is no worse than he was, but the commandment came, sin revived and he died to any hope; he seems now to be going down to perdition, he is the sinner. God is just in his condemnation, but in the Lord's time, as Joseph was made manifest to his brethren, so Jesus appears as the chiefest among ten thousand, and as David said, has taken me up out of a horrible pit and put a new song in my mouth, even praises to his holy name. Jesus paid it all, all to him I owe. This is what this poor sinner has felt, and if this is not the faith of this association I hope this letter will be discarded.

Dear brethren, live in peace, and may the God of peace be with you.

E. D. VARNES.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1908.

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EDITORS:

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

We give below some brief replies to correspondents who have written, asking our views upon some portions of the word, and also to some questions that have been proposed by the writers. We do not feel like withholding such thoughts as we have upon these scriptural subjects, and hope and think that in the views which we present we have the mind of Christ. Did we not think so we would not attempt to reply at all.

Brother Joel Laytham, of Mays Lick, Ky., asks concerning John viii. 43: "Why do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my word." This, as it appears to us, simply means that they could not understand his preaching because they did not know the truth, or did not have it in their hearts. Unregenerate men to-day do not understand the preaching of the word, because they have never known it in their soul's experience. There is a difference between the word "speech" in the first clause of the text and the "word" as used in the second clause of the text. The "word" in the second clause is the living truth itself, which must dwell in the heart first, in order that the things spoken by the Master or by his disciples can be understood. The whole conversation recorded in this chapter between the Master and the Jews clearly shows how little they understood of all that he had been saying to them. In the text Jesus strikes at the root of the whole trouble, by saying that they did not understand what he was saying, because his word had no place in them. He spoke of times which they had never seen, tasted or handled. (1 John i. 1–3.) In like manner, men read the word of God to-day and do not understand it, because the things of which this word testifies have had no place in their hearts. Likewise the preaching of the truth, or the testimony of those who are spiritual, in telling that experience by which they have come to know the truth, strikes no responsive chord in the hearts of Pharisees, or natural men, whether religious or not, because they have not known, and do not know these things for themselves. This always has been so, and it will always be so. When men tell of the dealings of the Lord with their souls before worldly men, they will always seem to them as though they were half insane or morbid, or in some way wrong in their minds.

Brother S. M. Butler, of Toone, Tenn., calls attention to 2 Chron. xvi. 12, and also to James v. 14, 15.

In the first named text it is said that King Asa was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great, yet in his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians. In the second text, James speaks of calling for the elders of the church, if any be sick, &c.

If our brother will read the whole chapter to which he has referred in Chronicles, he will see that this text was in keeping with the whole course of King Asa; he sought not to the Lord in all his reign, but to advisers among men, and

followed his own base inclinations at all times, and in the text referred to, when the time of sickness came to him, and he drew near the end, he still continued godless in his course, and sought the help of men rather than God, even in the last extremity. The text but emphasizes his whole life. He did not live like a man of God, and he did not die as a man of God. In his life he despised the warnings and admonitions of those who were godly, and was given over to hardness of heart and a reprobate mind indeed, and in his death it was the same. There was nothing wrong, in itself, in King Asa appealing to skilled men as physicians for remedies to be used for his recovery, but this he did not do in humble dependence upon God to bless the remedies used to his good. In the time of King Hezekiah, when he was sick unto death, and in response to his prayer the Lord gave him recovery, and lengthened his days fifteen years, in announcing this to him by the prophet Isaiah this sentence is added, "For Isaiah had said, Let them take a lump of figs, and lay it for a plaster upon the boil, and he shall recover." This was a proper remedy to be used, according to the understanding of Isaiah, yet this was not done through lack of humble trust in God, but rather in humble reliance upon God and upon his promise of recovery to the king. It is not faith in God, but foul presumption, when men say, I will look alone to God to heal me, while at the same time they reject that remedy which God has given wisdom to some men to discover and apply. Rather, we show our trust in God, without presumption, when we make use of the remedy while yet looking to God, who alone can bless the remedy so that it will accomplish its proper work. King Asa thought not of God in the whole matter, and here was his sin. Blessings may come to us in a thousand ways, and by any hand that they may, but, after all, they are from the Lord, and to him alone is it right to look, and to him alone must thanksgiving be returned.

We do not think that the text referred to in James sets forth aught that is in anywise different from the narrative given in Chronicles. All that James declares does not set aside the use of remedies which may be proper, even as Isaiah commanded the remedy to be used with King Hezekiah. If one be a child of God, and be possessed of that humble feeling of dependence upon God which characterizes all who are truly spiritual, and sickness or any other trouble comes to him, he will find his heart and mind looking above for help, and all such will feel as though it will be good for the elders of the church to visit and pray with them; and if to these elders and to the sick one faith be given, such visits and prayers will do good, and there will spring up assurances of the forgiveness of sin, and that the Lord can heal. Notice that James says, "And the Lord shall raise him up." The elders of the church had no power given to them to heal or to forgive sins; the one was the work of God as well as the other, according to the testimony of James in this text; but when the Lord gives the prayer of faith, and the faith to pray, the answer will surely follow.

It is fully evident that in the first days of the church the Lord gave privileges and powers to his apostles and ministers that have never been afforded them since; for instance, it is recorded in the Acts that some were raised up from the dead at the word of disciples of the Lord. One instance is recorded in Acts, ninth chapter, being the resurrection from the dead

of Tabitha at the prayer of Peter, and the other is recorded in Acts, twentieth chapter, being the narrative of the young man who was raised from the dead at the prayer of Paul. Such a work has never been wrought at the intercession of men since. If it be asked, Why does not the same power exist in the ministry or in the church to-day? it is not needful to answer; it is sufficient to know that had the blessed Lord seen fit to give such faith to his servants in all the nineteen hundred years past, then similar works would have followed. That such miracles are not wrought, is full evidence that such faith has not been given, and such faith has not been given because it has not seemed good in the sight of the Lord. This faith was not given in that early age because the servants of God were in any wise better than they have been since. Human merit does not determine the success or the power of the word now, and neither did it then; all has been as it has simply because it has so seemed good in his sight.

But let it not be forgotten that these literal miracles wrought in the first years of the church's history may be regarded as emblems of richer works and still greater miracles which have been wrought in the souls of men in every age and place where the blessed gospel has been preached. If the bodies of men have not been miraculously healed as they then were, there has in all ages been ministered healing of spirit through the word preached. Many have, all these centuries along, been turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, and have received knowledge of salvation and understanding in the things of the kingdom through the ministry of men. Peace, comfort and hope have been ministered, and love made to increase and abound, and faith has been increased, and many have been turned from the ways of ungodliness to the truth of God, through the ministry of the word. All these are greater miracles and richer blessings to the soul than any healing of the body can be. These things are done to the living, who live by the power of God, according to the testimony of the apostle: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Our God quickens, or makes alive, the dead in sin, and then the ministry of the word can be and is applied to their instruction and edification. The first is the work of God without human means of any sort, the last is the ministration of the same God through his appointed means of preaching, or through some other ordinance appointed in his church.

SISTER M. B. Cunningham, of Bondville, Ky., asks if there is a Scripture that reads as follows: The Lord is angry with his people every day. We do not know of such a text in the word of God, and we certainly should not know what to understand by it if there were such an one. Some hundreds of times the anger of the Lord is spoken of in the Old Testament and in the New. He is angry with the wicked nations of the earth for their wickedness, and he is sometimes said to be angry with his chosen people, and with individuals, because of their departures and their unbelief and rebellion; but in Christ, and because of what he has done for his people, our God is said to love his people always. Sin is always displeasing to God, but he has provided redemption for his people because he loves them; and it is said by inspiration that he has loved his people with an ever-

lasting love, and therefore he has drawn them. This means that he has brought them out of death into life, out of darkness into light, and has washed away their sins forever, and has secured to them the glory of final salvation, not through their merit, but through the merit of Christ alone. While it is said that he is angry with them at times, it is as a father is angry with his child, and not as an enemy is angry. He sometimes turns away his face from his people for their good and to bring them to repentance and obedience again; all that he does for them or to them is in love. We must not think of the anger of the Lord as that evil thing called anger among men; he deals with his children as Joseph dealt with his brethren whom he loved; that is, he turns away his face from them and it seems to them that he regards them not, while his heart is toward them still. God is angry always against all sin, whether in chosen ones or in the men of the world. He hates it, and punishes it, and counts it as an unclean thing and an abomination to him. These things are testified to again and again in all the Scriptures.

BROTHER M. B. Weedon, of Fort Scott, Kansas, writes that he notices we make frequent use of the word "soul" in our editorials, and asks what we mean by the word, and what the soul of man is, according to our understanding. He also says that brother Durand makes frequent use of the word, and would like to see something from his pen upon the subject.

We feel to say but little regarding this matter, and do not wish to be understood as desiring to anticipate brother Durand, if he shall feel to also reply. We shall say, first, that we use the word frequently, because it is used in the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, nearly or quite five hundred times. Though used so frequently in the Scriptures, we are not told what the soul of man is. Sometimes the word means the whole person of man, as, for instance, when it is said, Wherein eight souls were saved by water, meaning eight persons. Many times the word is used in just that sense all through the Scriptures. Again, it is used often to distinguish what is called the soul from the body, as, for instance, when the blessed Master said, Fear not him that can kill the body, and after that hath no more that he can do, but rather fear him who after he hath killed the body hath power to cast into hell, or, as it reads in another place, hath power to destroy both soul and body in hell. Whatever the soul may be defined as being, it evidently was the case that the Savior intended to use the word as pointing to something distinct from the body. Again, Paul made a similar distinction when he besought God as he told his brethren that God would preserve their whole body, soul and spirit blameless. If we believe in the inspiration of the testimony of Paul we know that our God has taught us in the last text that there is a threefold division in man. Paul would not have prayed that the Spirit of God should be preserved blameless, as it seems to us. It is not needful, as it appears to us, that we seek to ask as to what each of these two words, soul and spirit, may signify. It is sufficient that we accept what the inspired apostle has told us, and what the blessed Master also has testified, as referred to above. From these Scriptures we know that man has a body, and a soul, and a spirit. It seems to us but speculation to seek to define each, and put, as it were, our finger upon each. Man, brute and vegetation, all possess

what we call life, but who has ever been able to define it? The Bible speaks again and again of life of various kinds, but the Scriptures do not define what it is. Suppose we hold in our hand a lump of pure gold, and say to some one, This is gold; what more is to be said about it by way of defining what it is? We can tell some things about gold, and about life, and about the spirit of man, and the soul of man, but no one can grasp them so as to analyze them. So the Bible says things about the soul and the spirit of man, and these things we know are true, and we must accept them as the truth of God; but still when we undertake to use any other words to tell what the soul is, we are lost in speculation. Such speculation may be interesting to the natural mind of men, and may attract even the fancy of believers, but still it remains only speculation and human reasoning, and is far more likely to be wrong than right. This must be so, because we are only following the will-o-the-wisp of our own fancies, which can never find a resting-place, and when the blessed Sun of righteousness is pleased to arise upon us, all such reasonings disappear from our view, and we wonder that we could, even for a moment, follow them. C.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, I shall be with the Woburn Church, Woburn, Mass., fourth Sunday, and Monday following, in March. Service at 10:45 a. m. and 2 p. m. each day.

We shall be glad to have any of our brethren and friends meet with us.

H. C. KER.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ISAIAH XL. 20.

"He that is so impoverished, that he hath no oblation, chooseth a tree that will not rot; he seeketh unto him a cunning workman to prepare a graven image, that shall not be moved."

The propensity of mankind to run into idolatry has not been confined to any period, nation or tribe since the introduction of sin into the world. The depravity of our fallen nature inclines our sinful hearts to pursue whatever is hostile to the principles of holiness and in opposition to God. Man, even in his alienation from God and holiness, is naturally a religious being, irrepressibly inclined to venerate or worship something. The carnal mind being enmity to God, it is not in subjection to his law, neither indeed can it be. Being ignorant of the true God and eternal life, they can have no fear of God before their eyes, and the wild imaginations of their deceitful hearts lead them to claim the right to worship and adore the gods of their own imagination. This principle of idolatry began to be developed in the religion of Cain, the first born son of Adam. Destitute of that faith by which his brother offered unto God a more perfect and acceptable offering, he, without regard to divine authority, presumed to offer that which he had obtained from the earth by the labor of his own hands, directed by the judgment of his own depraved mind. As he had neither heart nor desire to unite in the devotions or offerings of faith with his brother Abel, to the true God, as dictated by his Spirit, his offering was dictated by an opposite spirit, to the idol of his vain and wicked imagination, and was therefore a palpable act of idolatry. Such also is the nature of all manner of will-worship in every age; as Christ said to the woman of

Samaria, "Ye worship ye know not what," &c. And to the idolatrous Jews he said, "In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines, the commandments of men." Jude says of all false religionists, "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain." Not only in his way in his partiality for a strange god and an earthly offering of what the true God had not authorized, but also in his persecuting and murderous opposition to the truth as exemplified in his brother and in the offering which he made.

The carnal Israelites, notwithstanding all the temporal deliverances and wonders which the true God had wrought for them, were frequently detected in acts of flagrant idolatry. So strongly was that spirit of will-worship developed in them that not even the dreadful majesty of God displayed at Mount Sinai, with that fiery mount still in their view, could deter them from appropriating their Egyptian spoils to make for them a golden calf, to which they ascribed the glory of their deliverance from the house of bondage. Priest and people were alike involved in the abomination.

In this chapter the prophet proclaims a message of comfort to God's people—a proclamation of pardon, deliverance and salvation from the mouth of the Lord, and calls the cities of Judah to behold their God. Behold him as contrasted with all flesh, which is grass. His glory which fills all heaven with ecstatic rapture, contrasted with the glory or goodliness of man, which fades and withers like the flowers of the field. Behold him also as contrasted with the gods of human production, and of these there is a motley diversity. The rich lavish gold out of the bag: "The workman melteth a graven image, and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver chains." But they are not all of them able to provide for themselves gods of gold, or even silver, and the poor must content themselves with less expensive materials. "He that is so impoverished, that he hath no oblation:" no gold, no silver, nor even brass, or iron, seeks for the most imperishable wood. He "chooseth a tree that will not rot." The poor as well as the rich betray a fixed design to go permanently into their idolatry. If they designed their idols only for a season, they would manifest less anxiety for imperishable materials. On these gods they stake their hope for prosperity in this life, and their expectation for immortality in the world to come; they have no other hope for time or eternity. The poor man, if he cannot vie with his aristocratic neighbor in a costly god, still desires to have one that will last long, for he entertains no fear that he will ever require any other. But poor, deluded wretch, where will he find a tree that will not rot? Even the gold, the silver, the costly stones, monopolized by the wealthy, must perish, decay, and final dissolution is indelibly stamped on all earthly things. Still the search for a tree that will not rot is no more vain or delusive than the hope of salvation from any other than the true and living God. But the poor, deluded idolator makes a selection, chooseth a tree, and as this prophet elsewhere describes his folly, he scores and hews the timber, and with a part of it he kindles a fire, cooks his food and warms himself, and exultingly says, "Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire;" and with the residue he maketh himself a god, prostrates himself before it, and worships the works of his own hands. He has not the wisdom or sagacity to reason with himself on the absurdity of his course, or to consider that a part of his god he has burned, but

vainly relies on the residue of the same tree to be his god.

But all idolatrous worshipers show a decided preference for a splendid kind of religion. Their idol must be dressed up, and decorated, according to the means commanded by the worshipers. "He seeketh unto him a cunning workman to prepare a graven image, that shall not be moved." He desires to make his religion as permanent as possible, and the artist is employed to engrave the block of wood with such devices as may indicate the imaginary attributes which the idolator thinks a god should possess, and to make the figure so imposing in appearance as to fascinate the beholder with reverence for it, that it may never be superseded or removed from the position assigned by its maker.

How strikingly illustrative is this description of idol-making of the modern forms of idolatry. Those who know not the true God, in setting up their idols will choose the kind of religion which suits best their own fancy, whether it be Pagan, Mahometan, Papal or Protestant, that kind which they imagine will last the longest, or will not rot, and having chosen their tree they look out next to find an artful, cunning theologian, or priest, or clergyman, who has acquired the honors of the academy or college, and studied the art of theological engraving in some worldly school of divinity, to hew and square, trim and engrave his block so as to make it look as nearly as possible like what the idolator thinks religion should be, and to set up such an imaginary god in and over his religion as he fancies a god ought to be. The more cunning and artful the hireling employed may be, the more flattering, in the eyes of the idolator, is the prospect that his god will not be moved; that it will resist the force of truth, withstand the searching glare of light and defy the omnipotence of divine revelation to remove it.

Not only have the polished graduates of theological schools been employed to make false and fashionable religion permanent, and their idol popular, but they often invoke the aid of kings and potentates of the earth, and rely upon the arm of human power to establish their god where they choose to place him. The fiery oven of the king of Babylon was but a type of the cruel persecution resorted to by all manner of false religionists and deluded will-worshipers to establish their gods and their idolatry.

One thing is very clear in the history of idolatry in all ages of the world: no system of false religion has ever set up a god that was able to rule or govern its worshipers; all idol gods must act only as they are acted upon. The Arminian's god is supposed to work only by means and instrumentalities; he can absolutely save no one without their consent and co-operation. The modern missionary god can only go to heathen lands as he is carried there by his agents; he has no funds except they be supplied by the liberality of men; no men competent to execute his desires unless they be qualified and furnished by his devotees. He is said to desire to do much, but is overruled, restricted, kept back and retarded by the apathy and covetousness of capitalists on whom he depends. These fashionable gods cannot foreknow, predestinate or do their pleasure (if they have any) either in the armies of heaven or among the inhabitants of earth. But what a contrast! "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say

unto the cities of Judah, Behold, your God!" How vast the contrast, how amazing the difference! "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd [not be led by his flock], he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom." He does not depend on them to carry him, nor leave them to perish in their wanderings, nor to hold on to him, or fall from grace and perish. Yea, he "shall gently lead those that are with young." He will not be led by them, nor by any other beings or influences. It is the God of Zion, "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance." Well may the prophet, by the word of the Lord, demand, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him?" We know who directs the gods of human production, and who are their counsellors; we know who mark out the work, make the calculations, pass their resolutions, and then bid their gods follow up with blessings what they have projected; who tell their gods when to come, where to go, what to do and how to do it. But, "With whom took he [Zion's God] counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding? Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity. To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?" "Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundation of the earth? It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in; that bringeth the princes to nothing: he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity." "To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names, by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth." The decree has gone forth from the throne of God, saying, "They shall go to confusion together that are makers of idols. But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end."

Then, brethren, lift up the voice with strength, and say to the cities of Judah, Behold thy God.

"This awful God is ours,
Our Father and our love;
He shall send down his heavenly power,
And carry us above."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 15, 1863.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906; 07 means 1907; 08 means 1908, &c.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Caleb Ford, of North Berwick, Maine, fell asleep in Jesus Jan. 13th, 1908, aged 87 years, 5 months and 20 days. Our brother in his last sickness was for many months confined to his bed, where he was lovingly cared for by those of his own who were home with him. He endured his weariness and pains with much graciousness, and this helped to lighten the burden in caring for him and ministering to his comfort night and day.

Our brother's first exercises concerning his condition as a lost sinner before the Lord were in the year 1843. At that time the Millerites were making quite a stir preaching their doctrines of the immediate coming of the Son of God from heaven, of the end of the world. Our brother began to search the Scriptures to learn whether what he heard them preach was the truth, and he became convinced they were mistaken in their ideas upon these subjects, and he concluded that neither they, nor himself, nor any other one on the earth, knew the time "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day." It was interesting to listen to him telling his soul's exercises over this subject. He used to argue with these Millerite Millenarians, but his sorest disquietude was over himself, for the knowledge of himself as a sinner increased, and he felt himself exposed to the damnation of hell. At this time he was much assaulted by the powers of darkness; there were voices uttering in his soul blasphemous things against God, and urging him to destroy himself. After some weeks of such distress, so desperate became the state of his mind that he took a rope and went down to his pasture to hang himself upon a certain tree. When about half way to the place, suddenly a power within him moved him to say aloud, "Get thee behind me, Satan;" the dreadful snare was broken, the devil fled from him, and he fell to the earth crying to the Lord to have pity upon him. His trouble continued for months after this; he went to hear preaching, but no relief could he find; he mourned and wept over his sins, but the way of salvation he could not see. One day while pacing to and fro before the kitchen hearth, feeling what a hopeless, vile sinner beneath the just condemnation of the law he was, his burdened heart poured forth this prayer unto God: O Lord, if it can be consistent with thy holiness and glory, have mercy upon me. The time of love was come, and the Lord said to him, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee," and he was made to rejoice in God his Savior. Tears would always fill our dear aged brother's eyes as he would tell his story of God's sovereign grace. He became exercised about uniting with the church, but many years passed before he did so. He was baptized in the year 1860, by Elder William Quint. He was a worthy member of the church and loved the cause of our Redeemer, and he was constant in his attendance with all the assemblies of the church. Even when through his infirmities and sicknesses he was unable to meet with the household of faith, he was ever solicitous for the prosperity of Zion; this was a comforting manifestation of God's grace in him. I found it blessed and edifying to visit our brother during the months of his last illness, for the theme of our conversation was Jesus, his preciousness to us vile sinners. Well, the Lord has taken him from us; his five sons and four daughters and grandchildren also will sometimes sigh because he is removed from their sight, but their memories of him are pleasant.

At his funeral the words were used as a text, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

ALSO,

Mrs. Myra J. Hall departed, to be with Christ, Jan. 21st, 1908, aged 60 years, 8 months and 21 days. She was married to brother Joseph F. Hall Sept. 3rd, 1870. Our sister was one beloved indeed by the church of God for the grace of God that was in her. She was beautiful in our eyes in that incorruptible adornment of the hidden man of the heart, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. The Lord put his own truth in her heart, and established her therein; she was not tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine, but was unwavering in her attachment to the doctrine of Christ. Her soul's experience in the things of Christ cannot be better expressed than in the words of the hymn that she used to speak of as "my hymn:" 1022 (Beebe's collection).

In the year 1892, her husband being much exercised with regard to being baptized and uniting with the people of God, opened his mind to her, and began telling her his experience. He told her he had to go back many years to tell the beginning of his experience, to a time when Elder Joseph L. Purington preached at North Berwick from the words, "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee."—Psalms cxxx. 1–4. While he was in the midst of his story she went and brought her Bible, and showed him those very words which she had marked, and then related to him how the Lord at that selfsame time, while sitting

by his side listening to the same preaching, had caused her to know that she was in the depths, a poor, perishing sinner, and how her troubled soul was constrained to cry unto the Lord. Twenty-one years had passed since that time, and during all those years not one word had either of them spoken to indicate to the other how God had most graciously been dealing with them. This was a blessed day to them, and from that time they were companions indeed, living as heirs together of the grace of life, (1 Peter iii. 7,) fellow-pilgrims, of much comfort to each other in the kingdom of God's dear Son. On Sunday morning, August 7th, 1892, on their way to the place of meeting our sister repeated with much feeling the words of hymn 563 (Beebe's collection). Husband and wife both related their experience of grace to the church that day, and were welcomed into their fellowship. At the close of the services they were baptized by the unworthy writer of these lines.

Some two weeks before her death she was taken with "la grippe," which terminated in pneumonia. During this sickness the gracious faithfulness of God was very manifest in her. In the midst of her illness, just before pneumonia set in, I visited brother and sister Hall, and we three spent the whole afternoon conversing upon the glorious works of God's reigning grace. This was to me one of the most heavenly seasons that I have ever known. Forgetful of all things else, the Lord's presence and loving-kindness were our consolation and delight. That night our dear sister was taken suddenly very sick. During her sufferings in these last days her soul was divinely supported. She knew, as she expressed it, that all those around her were making a great fight for her life, but all was in vain, she had come to the brink, she was entering the river, soon to pass through to the other side. She passed the river telling the triumphs of her King. She often repeated verses of hymns that were dear to her, such as No. 68. Yes, during this week of distress for the frail tabernacle the inward man was renewed day by day. One of her sisters, who had been endeavoring to make her as comfortable as possible, said to her, "Now, Myra, you can rest a little," and with all graciousness she replied, "There will be no rest for me till I get home with my kindred above." Her husband, stooping over her, said, "I wish I could take your sickness and bear it for you." She threw her arms around his neck, saying, "O no, it is mine to bear," and began repeating the verses of our family hymn, No. 751. On the afternoon before her departure I was at her bedside; it was evident she was nearing the end of this mortal journey, but she was still able to speak. I inquired if Jesus was then precious to her; she exclaimed with much animation, "O yes, indeed, he has been near and comforting to me in my sickness." I spoke to her of the glory awaiting the soul of the believer in death, that to depart and to be with Christ was very blessed, and she responded, "O yes." I sang to her verses of several hymns that she loved, and after I had sung them she would say, "That is good, so good," and would repeat lines of these verses. Repeating the words to her, "Jesus can make a dying bed feel soft as downy pillows are," with a sweet smile lighting up her face she said, "Yes, O yes." Soon after this her articulation was such we could not understand her speech. During those last hours I sat with her husband at her side.

At her funeral I tried to speak from Rev. vii. 13–17. To our dear brother, her husband, this is a sore bereavement, yet the Lord does, and in future days doubtless will sweeten the cup which day by day he has to drink. He has lost his wife, affectionate companion, just at the time when, saith he, "I needed her the most."

ALSO,

Samuel F. Staples, of North Berwick, Maine, died Feb. 1st, 1908. He was sick a few days before his departure, but neither himself nor those around him thought he was so near the end of his pilgrimage. But with thee, O God, our days are determined, the number of our months are with thee, thou hast appointed our bounds that we cannot pass; and when in faith we are reposing in our gracious God we shall not want to be continuing on the earth, in this sinful, mortal life, one step, one moment beyond his unalterable decree. "Our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him." "Whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." The "afterward" is faith's anticipation, to be with our ascended Jesus in paradise. "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory."

Our brother united with the church of Christ, and was baptized by Elder William Quint, Nov. 6th, 1864. He was one who walked circumspectly in the world, humbly, unpretentiously in his religious life, and showed by his constant attendance with the church at her times of public worship that his heart was in sincerity in the blessed hope of the gospel of the grace of God. He took much pleasure in singing the sacred songs of Zion, and the Sunday before his death when at meeting he sang as usual; now we hope his ascended and glorified spirit sings with all the glorified spirits of the ransomed above in unfaltering, immortal strains the praises of the Lord. We shall miss our brother, and others recently taken from us. What shall we say when the Lord thus removes from our midst our dear kindred in Christ Jesus? It will be our comfort to have the heart to say, The will of the Lord be done.

At his funeral the writer preached from the words, "For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding."—1 Chron. xxix. 15. In the grave, beside the remains of his wife, who

died in 1896, his body was laid, there to await the resurrection morn, when the Lord Jesus himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall be raised incorruptible, spiritual, immortal, in glory, fashioned like unto Jesus our Savior's glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. To this hope of the resurrection of the just we hope to come. (Acts xxvi. 7.)

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

Mrs. Lucy C. Farmer was born June 20th, 1824, and departed this life Jan. 30th, 1908, at the advanced age of nearly 84 years. She was the daughter of Thompson and Maria Thomas; her mother's maiden name was Haley. She was married to Benedict Farmer, (deceased) of Farmdale, Ky., Oct. 20th, 1843. Of the children born unto them three survive: Mrs. J. T. McCoun, of Farmdale, Ky., B. T. Farmer, of Cincinnati, Ohio, and W. S. Farmer, of Frankfort, Ky. She professed a hope in Christ early in life, and was received into the fellowship of the church at Little Flock, Anderson County, Ky., on the fourth Saturday in January, 1848. As a woman, sister Farmer endeavored to maintain that standard of womanhood the tendencies of which are only elevating, according to which her very life was a constant indication to the younger women of the way in which they should go. She exemplified her ideals of the true character of life more by example than by precept. Her every day life was so embellished by a well ordered train of good manners and an easy bearing of gentleness and grace as to make one feel that it would be good to be of such lineage and to share such gracious adornments. The strength of her life was most forceful in its marked simplicity. She was not given to many words, but of much work, and though her words were few, yet they were decisive. She was clear and firm in her convictions and decided in her preferences, and like her good husband was admired for being just what she was, in thought, word and deed. As a wife she was true to the divine law of that relation. Her husband embodied, in her estimation, the full and true qualities of man, husband and father, and her chief aim and desire seemed to be that these should meet in her the true embodiment of woman, wife and mother, and therefore it might be truly said of them that they walked together in this relation blameless. She was a helpmeet indeed, and a keeper at home. Her hospitalities were bountiful and gracious, and for the household of faith hers was a home indeed, and great is the company of them who have partaken of the bounties of her extended hand. As a mother she was all to her children that the word means; she so lived to them and for them as to impart to them the best of her life, enriching them with her character as an everlasting inheritance, a sweet smelling savor, an abiding benediction. Sister Farmer was faithful in the exercises of her privileges in the house of God. For sixty years she went in and out before the Lord, and was truly a mother in Israel. During her widowhood she was favored to abide by the old hearthstone, and to have thrown around her the faithful watchcare of her son-in-law and daughter, brother and sister McCoun, and their daughter Lucy, Mrs. Morris. In her last moments she awoke as from a deep sleep, and while looking steadily as at something beyond she passed gently into that blessed sleep in Jesus.

Services were held at the home by Elder P. W. Sawin reading the twenty-third Psalm, and prayer, followed by the writer with remarks upon the blessedness of the dead which die in the Lord, after which she was laid by the side of her dear husband at Frankfort. But the blessed reality is in the paradise of God.

P. G. LESTER.

Mrs. Ollie May Crutcher was born in Panola County, Miss., May 1st, 1873, died July 3rd, 1907, making her stay here on earth 34 years, 2 months and 2 days. With her father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Pevy, she moved to Shelby County, Tenn., at the age of about five years. She professed a hope and joined the Missionary Baptist Church at the age of fourteen, of which she lived a consistent member some few years, after which she joined the Methodist Church, and remained there until she was called from earth. She was the third daughter of her mother and father; both of her sisters preceded her to the grave some ten or twelve years, and, I think, two brothers when they were young. (Her mother soon followed her; on Feb. 7th, 1908, she fell asleep in Jesus, as we hope. She was a great sufferer for many years before she died. She was about 70 years of age; was a devoted member of the Primitive Baptist Church for many years.) My wife was first married to T. D. Harrison; he only lived a short time, which was about 1892. On Dec. 18th, 1898, she and I were married; to us were born two girls and three boys. The first boy and girl have passed away, the boy at eleven months of age, named James Hargan, our daughter, Julia Rowena, aged six years, also our baby, last, aged six weeks, three weeks after its mother. She was a kind, loving and true-hearted wife, a devoted mother and dutiful child to her father and mother. She leaves one son, one daughter, her father, one brother and myself, beside many friends and relatives, to mourn for her. In her last illness she was a great sufferer, but complained very little; she bore it with much patience and christian fortitude. On the eve of the third day of July I could see a great change in her, but did not think that her time was so short. She sat up on the bed and ate her supper, and seemed cheerful and bright; she appeared much better, and said she would get up in the morning, put on her

clothes and stay up; but O how different it was; she got up in the night and walked to the door which was between our room and her mother's, then came back to bed and said to me, "If my knees would get strong I would be all right." She laid down, and if she ever moved or spoke again I do not know it. About midnight our baby awoke me, crying; I called my wife, but she did not answer; I took hold of her hand, which was folded across her chest, and O such a shock! she was dead. All who may read this will have a faint idea what my poor heart has suffered since that midnight hour. I do hope that God will reconcile me to his holy will, and make me feel that it was all done for his glory. Pray for me.

JAS. R. CRUTCHER.

BRUNSWICK, Tenn., Feb. 24, 1908.

Elizabeth Duffield Black departed this life at her home in Langhorne, Pa., Feb. 14th, 1908, after an illness of several weeks. She was born March 7th, 1876, the daughter of Thomas Hart Duffield and Rebecca Sarah Duffield. She was married May 26th, 1898, to Clarence Randall Black. She was one of the kindest and most lovely of women, and her death is peculiarly sad, making desolate the home and heart of her husband, and of her mother, who lived with them and is a teacher in the town. A brother survives her, living in Brooklyn, N. Y. She was dearly loved by her many relatives and friends. Her sweet disposition endeared her to all who knew her. She experienced a hope in the Lord while at school at West Chester, Pa., and dearly loved the doctrine and order and people of the church at Southampton, of which her mother is a member, but she never made a public profession. I knew her from a child, and held her in most affectionate esteem, and I deeply sympathize with the bereaved husband in his affliction and with our dear sister in her repeated sorrows, and desire that comfort may be given to them and to all who mourn.

A large number came together at the funeral on Monday p. m., Feb. 17th. The services were conducted by the Methodist preacher, and by request I spoke in prayer, and spoke from the following words of Jesus: "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."—John xi. 26.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

Ira Holford was born in Pike County, Ill., Sept. 2nd, 1834, died Feb. 19th, 1908. He was married to Mary A. Applegate in 1856, and to them were born eight children, three sons and five daughters, all of whom are now living except one daughter, who died in 1899. Mr. Holford's father died when he was about four years of age, but he was fortunate in having a mother possessed of great force of character, who in those early days successfully raised a family of children to manhood and womanhood. She died a few years since, at a ripe old age.

The opportunities for an education were at that time very limited, especially for the children of a poor widow; but being possessed of natural ability of a high order, inherited no doubt in great part, they all received a fair common school education. Mr. Holford was a great reader, and being possessed with a retentive memory was well posted on the current topics of the day. He read the Bible much, and while he never united with any church, he always expressed a strong belief in the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists. I feel we have evidence that he believed Jesus is the Christ, and hence is passed from death unto life. The immediate cause of his death was that dread disease, erysipelas.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the sorrowing ones from 2 Cor. iv. 5, at the family residence, after which the remains were laid to rest beside his wife, in the Hollis cemetery, on the bluff overlooking the beautiful valley of Spring Creek, there to await the resurrection.

C. C. MELTON.

NEBO, Ill.

Mrs. Harriet Elston Wisner, widow of Gabriel Wisner, died at her home in Unionville, Orange Co., N. Y., Jan. 28th, 1908, aged 83 years. She had been in failing health for some time, but continued to live alone, by preference, until last fall, when she went to the home of her only child, Mary, wife of Dr. F. W. Dennis, to be cared for, which was done with tenderness and devotion. She is survived by three sisters, several nephews and nieces, beside the daughter, one granddaughter and the son-in-law.

Sister Wisner was a woman of strong mind and character; loving and kind; faithful and devoted to the church. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Middletown & Wallkill Church many years ago. The writer conducted the funeral service Feb. 1st, and notwithstanding the disagreeable weather many gathered to pay the last sad tribute of respect to their friend and neighbor. The interment took place in the Unionville cemetery. May comfort be ministered to the troubled ones. K.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. T. V. Richardson, Md., $3.00.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER I. N. Newkirk having changed his address from Waitsburg, Wash., to Dayton, Wash., wishes his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

THERE are a few Old School Baptists in Riverside, Cal., and they have meeting the first and third Sundays in each month, at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

W. D. BALL.

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The Minutes of the seventy-fifth anniversary meeting of the Black Rock Convention, of 1832, held Sept. 28th and 29th, 1907, are now published and ready for sale. They are published in pamphlet form, and contain forty pages. They contain the minutes of the anniversary meeting, together with a history of the church since her organization in 1828, and of her connection with what our brethren all over the land know of as the Black Rock Convention of 1832, also the address adopted at that convention is contained in the pamphlet, together with the names of all who were then present and affixed their names to that document. There is also a portrait of the present pastor of the church, Elder J. T. Rowe, and of the meeting-house itself, which still stands as it was at that time, with no change in its outward appearance. The pamphlet can be obtained by addressing Elder J. T. Rowe, 704 Linwood Ave., Station L., Baltimore Md. The price is fifteen cents per copy.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 76. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1908. NO. 7.

POETRY.

FAITH.

VEILED is the future before me,
Life's checkered pathway I climb,
God in his goodness revealing
Only one step at a time.
Will the to-morrow be clouded?
Will it bring sunshine to me?
Let me lean harder, dear Savior,
Let me lean harder on thee.

Earth's dearest ties must be broken,
Time's sweetest roses decay,
Words of farewell must be spoken,
Evening will follow the day.
Still, waves of joy roll around me,
Swelling from love's boundless sea,
While I lean harder, dear Savior,
While I lean harder on thee.

Some time I'll come to a valley
Where a grim shadow is thrown;
No human friend can go with me—
Leave me, O Lord, not alone.
Till that bright, beautiful morning,
When all the darkness shall flee,
Let me lean harder, dear Savior,
Let me lean harder on thee.

(Selected by Mrs. W. S. Johnson, Kingston, N. Y.)

THEN why my soul so sad? (though bad
Thou hast a friend that's good;)
He bought thee dear, abandon fear,
He bought thee with his blood.

So rich a cost can ne'er be lost,
Though faith be tried by fire;
Keep Christ in view, let God be true,
And every man a liar.

(Selected by a friend.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

SPIRITUAL CHASTITY.

DEAR EDITORS:—Being desolate, lonely and without other company to-day than my wife, in sight of six steeples of the bond-woman, and having repeated invitations to go with them to worship, I feel to leave here in print (if you will publish it in the SIGNS) my humble reflections on the most sacred rule of christian conduct that I can find in sacred record, either in print or experience. I wish just here to say that every child of God must experience what is in the Bible before he can read it understandingly. The grace of chastity must first be written on the quickened tablets of the heart, before the child can see beauty in the word. I dare not attempt to jot down all my early lessons, beginning with the first love of God and the first bliss of hope in Christ; they would occupy all time and all my space; I must only say that God so wrought upon me as to reveal all my vileness, but let me feel his sacred care of me until I was brought to see the beauty in all his holiness, the perfection in all his work and harmony in all his purposes. I could not see my own ways

just nor my own life lovely; my only consolation was trust in him. I sought social entertainment in and with the world, but it was so much like myself that it became disgusting to me, but I thought perhaps as I had lost enjoyment in the vanities publicly practiced in debates and other social circles, that my presence, example and corrections might make some improvement in their conduct, but alas, the more I went the less I enjoyed them. Even after I united with the church, being baptized by Elder John Fisher, Oct. 3rd, 1863, (who had been baptized in New York in the Old School Baptist Church, after having been baptized by the New School Baptists under the delusion of faith in their order,) I joined a secret order for a little while, but all my heart-wanderings gave me a taste of the world's bitterness, until I was led to wonder how any child of God could find relish in the vanities of time or the attractions of the plausible subtilties of societies that promise so much and do so little. Surely Jesus must be very gracious toward me, or I had been cut off as a withered branch for all my rebellion against his holy law of chastity. Paul says in 2 Cor. xi. 1–3: "Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me. For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtility, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." Not only do the daughters of the scarlet woman with the filthiness of their fornication invite with their mysteries, filthiness, miracles, deckings of gold, precious stones and pearls, but even some of the "fathers," saith God, "are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain. Neither said they, Where is the Lord that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, that led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and of pits; through a land of drought, and of the shadow of death; through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt."—Jer. ii. 5, 6. How strange that after all such experiences we should wish or seek for other aids, or in the least desire to follow after other gods, use their means or invent any of our own, when we must all just dwell and walk and have our being in that God who thus brought the fathers out of bondage and us also out of death into life, in perfect harmony with his eternal purpose, which he purposed in himself before the world began. Have we not been taught of God? What new thing do we need? Have we been betrothed to Christ? What new love should we desire? I am led to cry, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?"—Psalms xlii. 1–3. Let every man stand aside when he steps between my Lord and me as a spokesman to plead for me, as though I needed his intercession to aid my approach to God. I love the fervent, effectual prayer of the righteous man, but only as it is in accord with Christ's own intercession, for thus the will of God is translated into words to my consolation. I love the gathering of the children of God when "gathered," not in "voluntary humility" for a few moments and then to spend the remainder of the meeting in jest, levity and worldly conversation;

nay, if this be all there is in worship leave me alone with my God, for he is an ever present help in time of trouble. I would rather dwell in the corner of the housetop than in a broad house with a "brawling woman." My experience in secret societies, social life, vain delights and misplaced confidence in men have a tendency to wean me from the world. Though I cannot boast of self-righteousness, the blessed Lord has shielded me from drunkenness, adultery, fornication, theft and murder as no other power or influence could have done. O, when I think of the many dark phases of life they all magnify his mercies, and yet I often feel to be the worst sinner on earth. Come unto me, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what great things he has done for my soul. I have so often tried to tell what God has done for me, not what I have done for him, that I almost fear I have been casting my pearls before swine. So few have been led to feast on such hard sayings; pearls are not nutritious, therefore cannot please the swine, they only desire what they can consume upon their lusts, and therefore I cannot go where nothing else is given but to feast the palate or satisfy some sensual lust; no, not even to those innocent, so-called, grange, life insurance and secret orders. Like Cornelius, I desire no longer commerce with the noblest band on earth. The "Itálian Band" was no doubt the noblest band or order in his day, but the angel of God ignored it, told him to send to Joppa, not to Italy's seat of learning, nor to Rome's great seat of government, and call for Peter in the house of Simon the tanner, both of them laborers in lowly life. O how consoling to feel that God does not consult with men, but uses them in mysterious ways. I often think of Israel in Ezekiel's vision, O the bones, the dry bones, they all shall live; no man can make them live nor hinder them. Ezekiel could only prophesy over them; God only could bring them together, every bone to his fellow. No matter then how lonely, dry, uncouth and lifeless here I lie, God has still the blessed marrow of life for me, even me; my faith whispers to my joy, and therefore I feel to rest sweetly in his promise, nor need any other god, nor desire any other husband. As Christ taught his people how to walk in the world without putting away their wives to marry another, save for the cause of fornication, so I feel that I am dead to all former associations of life, and should not live any longer therein; no matter how lovely all the past may have been to me, I cannot, dare not go with them any more; nor can I invite them to come in with me from any church, society, band or order whatever.

There is one point just here that I wish to make, viz., that fornication does not allow of any legal marriage of the guilty one, and any such ceremony is null and void, so whoever comes to the church under any license whatever, still holding to the illicit offspring of fornication with any other order of people, is not eligible to the communion or membership of the church of Christ. This is plainly indicated by Paul in 1 Cor. v. 9–13, showing clearly that if we are not to keep company with fornicators of this world, or fornicators who do not belong to the church, then we must go out of the world, because the world is so full of such characters that one can hardly escape or avoid them; but if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator we are not to company with such man as a brother, or in church worship, or communion, to eat the Lord's supper. This also typifies the

chastity of the church of Christ, in which she cannot company with idolators, the whole fraternity of means salvationists of any name or order; for means to be used by men to secure what Christ has already secured for his elect, is idolatry, or taking away the faith from Christ's work and placing it in some other means, no matter what means we use; therefore no means have any license for our recognition in the holy communion of the saints. Jesus said we must forsake all for him, and promised no compromise with the world, but to live in righteousness greater than that of the scribes and Pharisees. When Cornelius was baptized we are not told that he was particular about the administrator, nor that he was baptized by Peter; all that was necessary was that he be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus; but it is certain that none but authorized servants of the church ever baptized; therefore we have no authority to follow the wish of a candidate for any choice of their own, unless by authority of the church or the arrangement of the pastor. When we give heed to the choice of candidates it too often gives occasion for offence or evil surmising. I have no recollection of ever being chosen by a candidate, but once, and I then appealed to the pastor, not that I felt to neglect duty, but felt to respect his office and age. I dare not claim to be a pattern to build by, but that is my feeling in regard to apostolic rule and example. Cornelius also showed that God had cleansed him, according to the revelation sent to Peter from heaven before he sent for Peter, therefore there was no preparatory work to be performed on him, only to inquire as to his own personal evidences of faith in Christ. And Peter commanded him to be baptized; he needed no persuasion, exhortation nor threatenings. What a blessed and joyous work was that; what a suitable example for the church in all ages. There was but one church consulted. Peter was evidently willing to hear counsel, for he asked, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?"

I cannot feel to close without noticing one very important fact: the church of God is but one, and not many, as modern Evangelical Unionists claim, with but one rule, one standard and one interest; be that church few or many members, it is but one body, therefore the various organizations who claim to be so free and loving, are characters to be avoided. Christ's bride is but one, "the choice one of her that bare her." Let the queens and concubines practice their polygamous evils, the church of Jesus Christ should live chastely and practice virtue.

A. B. BREES.

HAVANA, Kansas, Jan. 7, 1908.

ELDER H. C. KER—ESTEEMED BROTHER:—I am very thankful that, as I believe, the Spirit that leadeth into all truth gave you utterance to write upon the very much misunderstood and misapplied Scripture, the parable, "The Rich Man and Lazarus," as published in the SIGNS of January 1st, 1908. I have heretofore meditated upon that subject, and my conclusions were so at variance with seemingly all classes of professors that I felt alone. You may realize my joy when I perused your opinion thereon. That the parable was directed to the Jews as a nation, represented by their rulers, who at times denied that Jesus was the Christ, I have no doubt. In the last verse he makes that very distinct: "If they [the Jews] hear not Moses and the prophets,

[which testified of him] neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." How their subsequent history demonstrates the fulfillment of his words! I have found in my observation, to quote a sentence in your article, "many, however, who claim to be servants of God apply them literally, and teach many false lessons from them." We find this true among our own people. These errors seem to have come down the centuries, and are accepted as truths merely because they were traditional, formulated through carnal reason void of spirituality. Error is so gilded by the deception of apparent truth that many are deceived thereby. This parable has for ages been used to depict the terrors of a literal, everlasting place of torment after this life is ended. In presenting your views of the parable you overthrow the strongest claims and apparent scriptural proof of a literal hell. I have an opinion about that which may not be acceptable to many. I have not made it a subject, however, to dwell upon in my ministry, feeling that I might not be understood, and provoke controversy upon a subject that does not come under the minister's obligation to "preach the word." It is his duty to feed the lambs and sheep, the last sweet command of the dear Savior, or as Paul so solemnly enjoined, "Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." How prone we are to forget these instructions and preach that which will be in harmony with the world. The great apostle of the Gentiles well realized this when he told his brethren Elders, "Therefore watch, and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." O where do we find such solicitude now? I have before me the Articles of Faith of one of our own associations; one of them reads: "We believe in the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust, but every one in his own order; they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation. And that God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ. We believe the joys of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked will be everlasting." It seems the language quoted is misleading, ambiguous and somewhat unscriptural. The clause, "but every one in his own order," is an incorrect quotation from 1 Cor. xv. 23, and has no such meaning as given above. "But every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's, at his coming." Not one thought about them "that have done evil," but only Christ and them that he held by purchase with his own blood. Does not the resurrection alone embrace the redeemed children of God, those precious ones "sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called"? Christ makes it plain in his declaration, Luke xx. 35: "But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage." Jesus said unto Martha, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Only a resurrection here for them who believe in him. Jesus again says: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Again, "They shall never perish." All who are not given repentance and the forgiveness of sins shall perish. Perish how? "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," was the command given.

They did eat thereof; judgment was passed upon Adam and all his posterity. "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Paul defines it thus: "The wages of sin is death," which fully and satisfactorily to God paid the penalty of sin or disobedience. Paul says again upon this subject: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." If the sentence of death alone was passed upon man in the fall, when was an additional punishment added, and for what sin? Was man appointed to any other destiny than that he should perish in death? Where is the record? Again we read, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this [appointment] the judgment"—death. Paul's defense of the resurrection in 1 Corinthians xv. contends for no other resurrection but the children of God, and closes the chapter with that sublime apostrophe which has been comforting and consoling to the unnumbered saints who have fallen asleep, and are cheering words to the living: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Over what power was the victory? Can there be any other answer than death and the grave? The weary pilgrim journeying to that heavenly city with the hope of the resurrection as an anchor to his soul, fears not the sting of death nor the victory of the grave; he believes that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

Brother Ker, I have written the above thoughts as they occurred to me; you may not agree with me, but I feel that we are not far apart. If we differ, I feel that you possess that lovely and greatest gift, called charity, and will cast it around my imperfections. What I have written I feel to be the truth. These views came very forcibly to me about five years ago. I read of the sentence of death that was passed upon man for his disobedience, and the question came to me, What did he do to entail upon himself an additional, never-ending, conscious penalty of hell? I have pondered upon it much, and have found no answer. The term "hell" has been used by all legal religionists as a menace to scare men into embracing their offered terms of pardon for sin. If it is true, as they affirm, that man is thus punished because he will not accept Christ upon their proffered terms, then their contention must be correct; but we believe and affirm that such contention belongs to those who "being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." We believe that Christ came to give eternal life to all that his Father gave him in the covenant of redemption.

I do not ask you to publish my views above written, but submit them to your mature judgment.

Your brother in hope of the resurrection,

T. R. PITTMAN.

[WE are glad of Elder Pittman's indorsement of our view of the parable of "The Rich Man and Lazarus." We are also glad that it called out such a good letter from him on some points which have occupied the minds of many of the Lord's people. Often those who have such thoughts and questions, like brother Pittman, are very slow to mention them lest they be misunderstood and misrepresented. Brother Pittman writes in that

spirit which is commended by all lovers of truth, and while he feels that what he has written is the truth, he does not mean to force any idea upon those who differ from him. His letter is worthy of the careful and prayerful consideration of the brethren. It matters not what a man believes, nor how long he has believed it, if the Scriptures do not support his view it cannot be said to be according to the word of God. The SIGNS is for the purpose of hearing from our brethren regarding their exercises, revelations and experiences. It is not a one man paper; who would set up his views as a standard to which all men must come? We desire to avoid all unpleasant controversy, but free thought and expression, when presented in the spirit in which brother Pittman has written, should be the privilege of all.—K.]

LANCASTER, Ohio, Aug. 8, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—But have I right to call you by that name? I am so ignorant as to the education that man can give, I hope you will be charitable to my mistakes and blunders in writing. My mind has been traveling for quite a while. I thought I must write you, and have commenced letters, but could not get my thoughts on paper as I wished. I read in the SIGNS grandly composed letters. I know I am a great failure, but surely I do love to read these letters, and love the dear writers whom I never saw, yourself among them; you all seem like old acquaintances. I have received many sweet morsels from the editorials.

Now what is in my mind to write about is this: Does the gospel teach that John's disciples, or the disciples of Christ, or His apostles, had true knowledge of Christ, or of the Holy Ghost, until after he had risen from the dead, or until he was glorified? We read that John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost, and his mother Elizabeth, and Zacharias his father, were also filled with the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost was upon Mary, and it was shown to good old Simeon that he should not see death until he had seen the Lord's Christ. Then we read how he spoke. Did he not seem to have the knowledge of Christ's mission, that he was the Light to lighten the Gentiles? But the disciples did not seem to understand this; they were looking for a kingdom to be restored unto Israel, for we read that once they wanted to take him by force and make him king. I understand that they were believers in the promises, and were looking for the promised Messiah, not knowing, however, what his kingdom really was. They thought him to be a literal king, who would restore the kingdom to that nation. John said, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance," but he said that One mightier than he was to baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with fire; and the word tells us that when Jesus was fulfilling the prophecies the disciples did not understand; their eyes were holden. Even Mary, his mother, and Joseph did not understand him after all they had heard and seen of him. He said to them, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them," but his mother kept all these things in her heart and pondered them all. But Peter said, Thou art the Son of God, and he believed that Jesus was the promised Christ. He believed the promises, and that the Messiah had come. We may believe something that we have not clear knowledge of, or that we have not seen or felt understandingly. Peter had not clear knowledge of

Christ, else he would have known that he must suffer and die; but he said unto the Master, "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee." If Peter had had any idea of the nature of the kingdom of God he would not have said this. We read, "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." It is explained that he spoke this of the Spirit, which they that believed on him should receive. But this was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified. Jesus said again, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come." Again, he said, "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." This was to take place after he was ascended. Again, Jesus said, "For he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." So the two disciples that after his crucifixion journeyed to Emmaus said unto him, "We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." He replied to them, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!" Then he expounded to them the Scriptures concerning himself, and when he had made himself known to them and was vanished, "they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" In the twentieth chapter of John it is said that "he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Before this, when he had sent them forth, bidding them to heal the sick, and giving them power over unclean spirits, upon their return they said, "Even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." He answered, Rejoice not in this, but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven. The disciples after his crucifixion were told to tarry at Jerusalem until they received the promise of the fathers. He said, "John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence."

No doubt you will wonder why I write all this, as you know it already, but this theme is on my mind, and I cannot seem to rest. I will add a few more thoughts of what I hope the dear Lord has shown me, though ignorant and unlearned in the wisdom of men. They asked him if he would at this time restore the kingdom unto Israel; he answered, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons;" but he said that after they had received the Holy Ghost they should have power to be his witnesses. So it is evident that they did not yet know the truth as it is in Christ, and had not been taught by the Holy Ghost, as we are informed. The Holy Ghost had not fallen upon them as yet, and so the knowledge of the truth concerning him was not yet given. From all this, it does seem to me that neither John's disciples nor the disciples of Jesus knew anything of the Holy Ghost, and yet had been taught to believe on Christ Jesus, that he was the Son of God. I cannot remember that I ever doubted that he was the Son of God, and that he died to save sinners. But what knowledge of the Holy Spirit did I have until the love of God was shed abroad in my heart in the name of Jesus Christ, and he was manifested to me as my dear Savior? I was then made to know the wonderful work of God. It is still wonderful to me to meditate upon. The apostles were not prepared to declare this wonderful work until they had received the Holy Ghost, upon the day of Pentecost, then they could tell what the proph-

ets had declared, and that God had spoken through them. But did they know while they saw him fulfilling the prophecies? Were not their eyes holden? I have not been quite able to see with dear brother Durand, if I understand him upon this. I understood him to say that believers could not have been baptized in a gospel sense unless they had been taught by the Holy Ghost. It looks very much to me that none had been taught by the Holy Ghost, nor had spiritual knowledge of Christ while he was on earth with them. May God lead and instruct his own in all truth.

I hope I have written this in love of the truth as it is in Christ, and by no means for any controversy. The gospel seems plain to me on that point. With humble love, I hope, to the household of faith which is in Christ our Redeemer, I am your unworthy sister,

SARAH B. PEARCE.

[WE have not understood brother Durand to differ from the general thoughts expressed in the above good letter. It is plainly said in one place that the Holy Ghost had not yet come; and Jesus said that if he did not go away the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, would not come. We have not understood brother Durand to in anywise present views which would be in contradiction of these expressions of the Scripture. As to what the coming of the Holy Spirit meant, is another question, which we will not attempt here to remark upon. We do not know whether brother Durand will feel to write further upon this subject, but would be glad if he should do so. We desire to commend the kind and interesting letter from sister Pearce to the attention of our readers.—C.]

REVELATION III. 20.

"BEHOLD, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

The above was addressed to the Laodicean Church, one of the seven churches of Asia. "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John."—Rev. i. 1. "John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.' —Rev. i. 4, 5. "I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. * * * His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace. * * *

He had in his right hand seven stars; and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword." "I am he that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." He says the seven golden candlesticks are the seven churches in Asia, and the seven stars held in the right hand of him that was in the midst of the candlesticks were the seven angels of the seven churches. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." He said some special things in reference to each one of the seven. Our text stands connected with the last named, the Laodicean Church; he says, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." The condition of those brethren was very distasteful and nauseating. "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knoweth not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." This is a very dangerous condition for churches to get into, and possibly we might be living in such a time as was the Laodicean Church, so completely carried away with self-righteousness and self-sufficiency, or with the allurements of the world (gold and silver), where rust can corrupt and thieves break through and steal. The text quoted, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock," is thought by the masses, religiously, to have a general application to the Adamic race, and that the atonement was general, and sufficient for all if they will accept it, but certain to none. I heard this text spoken from nearly fifty ago, by a believer in a general atonement. He had Christ knocking at the sinner's heart for admittance, but the stout, hard-hearted sinner refused to open. He said the sinner was in a good warm room with a bright fire burning, but the dear Lord was on the outside. It was snowing, as was represented by the minister; Jesus knocking, desiring admittance; though his locks were covered with snow and frost, he must turn away. But such an application of the text is wrong; this message was addressed to the angel of the Laodicean Church, and applies only to God's people, regenerated and born again. As proof I refer you to Song of Solomon v. 2: "I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night." Isaiah i. 18: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Luke xii. 37: "Blessed are those servants, whom the lord, when he cometh, shall find watching: verily I [Jesus] say unto you [the bride], that he [Christ] shall gird himself, and make them [his disciples] to sit down to meat, and [Jesus] will come forth and serve them." Here you will discover the supping together. John xiv. 23: "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with them." It seems clear to my mind, from the foregoing Scripture references, that it is Jesus the husband who is knocking, as he says, "Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled." Such language could not apply to the alien sinner, but does sweetly apply to God's little children. When they realize their lost, helpless and perishing condition, then it is they are en-

abled to hold sweet communion and fellowship with God, in talking with him, in praying to him, in coming to him with all their cares and trials, for he cares for them. He says, "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved."

As I was taken with "la grippe" a few days ago and could not fill my regular appointments near Greentop, Mo., first Saturday and Sunday in February, being able to be up a part of the time, I have written a few thoughts on the above named text, first for the consideration of the brethren editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and with their approval to be published for the consideration of its many contributors and correspondents. I have been a reader of the SIGNS for nearly half a century; I am past the seventy-fourth mile-post of my natural life; not quite as old as the SIGNS. I heard Elder Gilbert Beebe preach a few times. I have met quite a number of the old correspondents who have been called to their reward; some are yet living, whose faces I would like to see and voices I would like to hear again. I have had a membership with the Primitive Baptists for more than fifty-three years, and more than thirty-five years in the ministry.

May God's blessing rest upon you all, editors and correspondents.

ISAAC SAWIN.

WILMINGTON, Del., Feb. 17, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I herewith send you a letter from my only brother in the flesh, and I trust I am his brother in the Spirit. I have read this letter to several whom I look upon as judges of spiritual things, and it met with their approval. I think the letter particularly interested me, and I hope I know of what he is talking. Much of my time is spent way down in gloom. I feel to know what he means by this world appearing gloomy; to me it seems to be a muddy scene and full of pollution. When it is well with you remember a poor, miserable sinner, who trembles to sign himself

Your brother,

F. SELBY FISHER.

MOLINO, Mo., Feb. 8, 1908.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—Though I am very sleepy, and it is past bedtime, I have prepared to write, but I fear that I will not be successful in my attempt to express my thoughts, my feelings. A proper group of words might not even make you understand, but I am under a burden, in a sense of the word, that I feel like writing about, though I may not do any good in the act. Now, bearing on the matter, I ask, What kind of light is it that is mixed with darkness? A wave has come over me which is bright with darkness, it is joyful with sadness, a complicated feeling. It has been with me about thirty-six hours. I will try to express my feelings by illustration. Suppose you had been enjoying the company of friends in a nice location, pretty land and plenty, but there is a place far away which is much nicer; you have never been there, but you have sufficient evidence that it is a much better place and you want to go there. You are prepared to go, and your time for departure is nearly at hand, and you are grieved to bid your friends adieu, and you shudder to think of the trip, but the hope of reaching that better land causes the land in which you are, to look dead, dreary and barren of anything to cause you to want to remain. You might wonder why your friends continue in their pleasures, which are nothing compared with the pleasure you anticipate by reaching your journey's

end. Do you not see the complication? It is sad to leave the friends, it is sad and lonely to see the only land you ever saw appear so gloomy, but it is joyful to hope to reach that better land; on this occasion joy and sorrow exist in me with each other.

I am well, and getting along with my work all right; the weather has been good, and I know of no natural thing to disturb my peace, but a wave or shadow is over me; light and darkness with each other seem to fill me. While at my work, while sitting by my fireside, while trying to go to sleep, this feeling is with me. With fear I feel content; I see nothing of the world except a gloomy picture; a picture of worldly ways rises before me as a dim mass of colors, representing confusion, with no resting-place. It will soon be full of days, it does not stand forever, neither can I remain upon it, and with the hope to safely arrive at that better land, and on account of the gloom that now surrounds me, I rejoice that I have a hope that when my departing hour is, I can rejoice to bid farewell. I see the rush for wealth, and I catch myself counting all that I would do if I had much money. I catch myself thinking I would be more content—so foolish. Do I not know that a lover of silver is not satisfied with silver? What is all the rush for? What good is there in the act of storing away a surplus and seeing the neighbor in need? O you rich men who boast of your wealth, vain you are, you and your wealth must separate. How can they go on in their gaiety and not see the gloom? I presume they do not know better. I feel that I want to sing, I feel that I want to fall to the ground and praise God, from whom all blessings flow, and in my mind I almost continuously see tokens of everlasting love; I see angels in wonderful surroundings, and they are filled with love; I see brother Ker and brother Chick, and it seems that I see a great multitude of saints, and they appear so good; I am glad there is a better world than this; I am glad I have a hope of going there. I could not get there of myself, I could not pay my way, but I hope my way is already paid when Jesus paid the price for the rest. Suppose you were a long way from home, and you had nothing, and you could not walk the right way home; you tried, but you are so forgetful you go wrong, you find yourself stumbling about and just as far from home as when you started; you give up, it is all you can do, and that is nothing; but a messenger gives you a message which declares that your father has paid your way, and says, "Come," would not that be a sweet message, and on your way as you swiftly go would you not be thanking him and longing to see him and your hope be bright? I have not told it all, and I cannot, I am as full as when I commenced writing, yet I suppose I have expressed my feeling as well as I can, but I fear you do not understand how I feel even now. Pride, and the rush for money, and to make a display of worldly possessions, are abominable to me, it is vanity.

Write to me as soon as you can.

Yours in hope,

IRA S. FISHER.

NICKLE, Louisiana.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel as though I would like to talk a little of the goodness of God. Oftentimes I think of how I felt at my first sight of Old School Baptists. I was raised by Missionary Baptists, united with them, and stayed with them fifteen years. I had many arguments with them, and was called many

hard names by them. After so long a time the Lord sent some of his dear servants this way to preach; they were accompanied by some other brethren. I decided to go and hear them, as I had never so much as seen one of that faith, and I had thought my case an outside one, and thought it would make no difference anyway; so the next morning my wife and I went to the place of meeting. When we got there, I knew them by the fact that they were strangers. Right there took place what has always seemed a mystery to me: I went with my wife to the door, those bood-washed brethren were standing a little way off, and I looked at them and my eyes ran over and I felt as though I would have to cry aloud. I turned away for a little while, and then went up and spoke to them. After getting acquainted we began to talk of what we believed. It was a feast to me to meet with people with whom I could talk, and hear them tell just how I felt, yet I felt as though I was deceiving them; but I was drawn to them by an irresistible power. Some men say that they can help doing things; if I could have kept from crying, I would have done so. It has been a settled fact in my mind ever since that day that the Predestinarian Baptists are the church of Christ. That which I beheld in the faces of these brethren has ever been glorious to me. I had never seen any of them before, and I had never seen the image of Christ in men before; but his image was in all of them. I felt as though I wanted to say to all that stood by, Come and see the church of Christ, which he has sent here in his appointed time; he said that he would not leave himself without witnesses, now come look on them; but the thought came, They will say you are crazy, therefore I held my peace.

Preaching commenced, and some of it I liked very much; but they had a great deal to say about the Missionaries, and in a way that I thought was out of place, and I think so yet. I love to hear a man preach Christ, still I think it should be done in the spirit of love. Well, in about four or five months the Lord sent Elder I. R. Chandler here, and I went to hear him. When he prayed it seemed as though it was all for me, and when he stood up and said that he wanted to talk to little people, that just suited my case. Before he got through I thought I should get up and tell him I knew he had preached the truth; but I did not. He told all that ever had occurred with me, and well did I know that he did not know of me, for I never had breathed it to any one, and from that day until now I have believed that God called him to preach Christ to poor sinners. No man could tell what he did that day unless God was with him; he made things so plain that it seemed to me as though any one could see.

There is one thing I forgot to mention before, and it keeps coming up, so I will here name it. Before Elder Chandler came, I was at work in a rice patch that I had sown broadcast and the wind had blown it down, and it had fallen in every conceivable way, with here and there a stalk standing. These looked as though there had never been a wind, standing as a few in a hill. While looking at them, it was as if some one had said, Those standing represent the children of grace which God preserved; they are no better than that which is blown down, but it is because of grace treasured up in Christ before the world began, and grace makes all the difference that there is in man. It came to me, As the sickle is in thy hand, so shall my word be in thy mouth the

balance of thy days. If I had had a world to make, I should have been just as well prepared as I was for that work. While Elder Chandler was preaching, it was as if something said to me, Behold, a man whom I have sent to comfort those who are represented by the standing stalks of rice; he shall cry unto Israel that her warfare is accomplished. About this time he began to tell why it was that he tried to preach the gospel. I have oft-times thought of my feelings at that time. I was not yet identified with the Grace Baptists, and I have never felt I was worthy of a home with them.

Now, brethren, do as you think best with this; it is like the writer, very imperfect. May God, who declared the end from the settlements of eternity, be with you and uphold you, is my prayer.

D. A. WILBANKS.

NORTH WHITEFIELD, Me., Jan. 12, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—As I am thinking of you and yours this evening I will try to write you a little. I have often thought to write you since I received your last letter, but I am so barren in mind that I feel I ought not to bother you with reading anything that I can write; all with me is so mixed with self. In your last to me you go back, reviewing the past. It has brought to my memory many things which are pleasant to remember in my past experience, and also many things which are sorrowful, such as parting with loved ones. To be sure, we form many new acquaintances and find new friends every year of our lives, but none are like those in the past, most of whom have passed away; some are still living, but they are so far away that we seldom see them.

Your letter contains my own thoughts and feelings, but I could not express them as you have done. You say it was at Whitefield that you first heard the blessed gospel. If I mistake not, the association was held in the hall then. We always called it the Bell Schoolhouse. I can remember that when I was a child I used to go there to meeting; that was before the meeting-house was built. I can also remember how I used to crawl into my uncle's entry, and sit on the floor and listen to Elders Hartwell, Purington, Campbell, Quint, Badger and Deacon Moody and my uncle, brother Turner, as they talked together on spiritual subjects. There were more ministers at the Maine Association in those days than attend now, as you know. I used to love to hear them talk. Somehow the meetings do not seem to me now just as they did then; they all appeared and looked so solemn that I could but feel solemn also. I can see the aged sister King just as she looked then. I used to wish I could be like her; but I never was, and never shall be. I wish that I could live near to some of God's little ones. I have no relatives in the flesh who are Old School Baptists, except sister Badger, and I have not seen her for a long time.

I fear you will not get much enjoyment out of this letter, for I am dull, as is usual with me, but I can say that I feel to rejoice in that salvation which is of the Lord; it is the only way for a sinner like me. This is the beginning of a new year, do I feel as thankful as I ought for all the blessings vouchsafed to me in the past? Truly God has been good and merciful to me all my life, but how thoughtless I have been. Surely his mercies endure forever; he is not like man, for whom once he loves he loves to the end. Why cannot I live more to his honor and glory? It seems to me that I deny him many times in a day. I

read in my Bible before I go to sleep almost every night, but still it seems like a sealed book to me, yet now and then there is a glimpse of light upon some passage of Scripture, which gives me a little comfort, but it soon goes from my mind. I sometimes feel very tired of myself, of my thoughts and of the world in general; I feel restless and uneasy at times, and life seems almost a burden; then again it is different, and I think but little, if anything, about the matter, and my work and the world will fill my mind.

I dreamed one night of talking to a number of people about the resurrection. I stood in the midst of them, and after talking awhile the thought came forcibly to me, There are none among them that can understand what I am saying, and so I stopped. Not one of them had ever known the truth, and but one did I recognize.

But now I must close. My love to you and yours. Ever your sinful sister, in hope of life everlasting,

(MRS.) MARTHA E. GLIDDEN.

FLEMINGTON, N. J., Dec. 18, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR PASTOR:—As you requested me to write when down in the depths (and being usually there I find no other time to write), I will now make the attempt. I was feeling in rather a better spirit when I left Hopewell, on account of those words you spoke to me the day I left. Perhaps you have forgotten them, yet I have not, and I glean a little comfort from them occasionally. You spoke of the leper who said, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," and the Lord said, "Thy faith hath made thee whole." You asked me if I had the leper's faith? Then I saw that I had. I had read that passage many times, but my eyes were holden and I could not see until the Lord opened them. I felt rather discouraged not to hear a word of the preaching, and felt that I was going away without a crumb, but when you came into brother and sister Yard's and repeated those words, all was changed, and I felt that I was repaid many times over for coming. I felt no especial joy, but a solid comfort to know that I had the hope which is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. No doubt you will wonder why I am down there again. I wonder, too, yet I am there. Now this thing has presented itself to me, that I am purely a natural being, void of any spiritual life, and my faith can be the faith of devils as well, for we read that the devils also believed and trembled. I have always heard there are no two experiences exactly alike. I never heard one quite like mine, and this causes me to fear that mine is not a christian experience. I know I have no pleasure in the things of this life any more, but age would have a tendency to tone me down and draw me away, would it not? Surely a child of God would feel the heart go out in love to God, if born of God, whilst mine is like a stone. There are times when I feel that I cannot live with myself much longer, because I am so unlovely. I should be ashamed to tell you or any one the hateful things that come into my heart, and how I am tempted to dislike my best friends, and then is it strange to doubt my heirship? I know I am just where the Lord has placed me, and cannot help myself in the least. Should he ever bid me rejoice I will do so, and not before, you know that. If I must go hence without praising him, I cannot help it, but until he loosens my tongue I must be silent. I know that if I am his all the dross must be consumed, however painful it seems. He chose his

people in the furnace of affliction, and if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him.

Now, dear brother, I have written all that has been given me to write, whether it is spiritual or only natural you must be the judge.

Sincerely yours,

MARY E. FISHER.

[IN how many ways the Lord's people are tried. We say the Lord's people, for none others ever know these anxieties and temptations. Our dear sister did not know them at one time. The warfare must go on in the heart of all who are called by grace, and it is never felt in any other heart. The flesh could not strive or lust against the Spirit if the Spirit were not in the heart. One cannot fight an enemy which does not exist or which is miles absent from him, but when the Spirit comes and dwells in our hearts then the warfare can and does begin. All this conflict and weakness under it but brings us to rest still more upon God. The warfare is appointed to bring us away from self altogether, and unto the blessed Lord for victory, and for all things else. Every child of God will have fellowship in what our sister has written above.—C.]

FT. ROBINSON, Nebraska.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I was thinking it might be such a thing as the readers of the SIGNS would like to know of the welfare of some of the Baptists of this part of the country.

Last fall, in October, we heard through Elder Craig, of Dawson County, that the Missouri Association would be held with the Deer Creek Church, in Madison Co., Nebr., and as we had not heard any Baptist preaching for twenty-three years we concluded to go. It is three hundred and fifty miles from here. To show how strange it is that Baptists seem to know each other when they meet: when we got off the train at Battle Creek a stranger asked me if I were looking for some Old Baptists. I said, I am. He said, I thought you looked like them. He said, I am looking for them myself. Wife, daughter, our new found brother and I all went to brother Mark Sesler's; there we found quite a number. Brother Sesler had transportation prepared to take us all to the grounds where the association was held, it being three miles from the station. There we met several old acquaintances and a large concourse of brethren and sisters. There were thirteen ministers present, nine of the home and four from a distance. We had good preaching, for the Lord seemed to pour out an abundance of his Spirit of love on the whole congregation. It seemed so good; all the ministers were taught in the same school and by the same Teacher. There were six united with the church, five were baptized and I joined by relation of experience. Our oldest daughter joined. Every one seemed to be in full harmony. On Sunday, dinner was spread on the grounds; from there we proceeded to the beautiful stream called Battle Creek, near the town of Battle Creek, where the candidates went down into the water and were buried in baptism, and came up praising God. O what a glorious sight! Praise the Lord! That night we took the parting hand and came home, not to forget, but to remember the feast of good things we fed on.

Your brother,

T. G. HARRIS.

UPLAND, Cal., Dec. 19, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—Your card came to hand, and I also received the SIGNS a few days later, and hope that I do feel thankful. A brother in Riverside, Cal., saw my name in the SIGNS and wrote to me, giving me his address, and asking me to attend meeting the following Sunday. I went, and found a little company of the Lord's poor and afflicted people assembled to hear the truth preached. Mr. Dunnaway is the minister; he is from Tennessee. There are ten members there, but no organized church. There are also a number of followers in Riverside city. My wife and I went over again last Sunday, December 15th, and had a good meeting, and a pleasant visit with the friends. Riverside is thirty miles distance by rail. I have also been pleased to find some Old Baptists much nearer home. There are five members in Ontario City, two and one-half miles from this place. I recently found them, through the brethren in Riverside.

Well, dear brother, truly the Lord has been good to us poor, unworthy creatures. The dear brethren and sisters in Canada gave us so many expressions of love and fellowship when we parted from them that we felt humbled in the dust. It was in our hearts to live and die with the dear people in far off Canada, but the Lord had willed it otherwise. What precious seasons we have had, dear brother, when you were in our midst in the Covenanted Baptist Church, in Canada. I love that name. I love to think of the covenant ordered in all things and sure, which is all my hope and all my desire, though he make it not to grow. (2 Sam. xxiii. 5.) My wife joins me in love to you and Elder Ker, and all the household of faith. I am late in remitting. I thought to have two new names to send, but have failed as yet to get them. Inclosed you will find money order for my renewal. May you be favored with a felt sense of the Lord's presence.

Your brother in hope,

G. A. DUNDAS.

[WE feel glad indeed that our brother in his far away home has found so many of like precious faith. We feel sure that he and his companion will find that the people of God, though differing in manners and customs, are in experience and faith one and the same in Canada and California.—C.]

DELEVAN, Cal., Dec. 18, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN:—May one who feels to be the least of all, claim such dear relationship with those whom I do believe I love above all people in this world for the truth's sake? I find that my subscription for the SIGNS is now due, and I wish to renew for another year, so find inclosed two dollars, which please put to my credit for 1908. The SIGNS contains all the preaching I have in this far away western country. I have been living here since 1875, and have not heard what I believe to be a gospel sermon in all that time, and I would feel lonely and desolate indeed were it not for our dear old medium of correspondence. If we are not permitted to meet and converse face to face, that our joy may be full, we do converse through the SIGNS. O for sustaining grace, that we may dwell together in love, unity and fellowship in this world of sorrow, and that we may eventually be gathered in one in Christ and be forever blessed.

Now, dear ones, I must bring my letter to a close; there is nothing in it worthy of your attention, it is like myself, poor and feeble. Dear brother Chick, I wish

to make a request before I close: Will you please take up the subject found in Matthew xi., beginning with the twenty-fourth verse, and tell us something about that man out of whom went the evil spirit, and to whom it returned again? and oblige your brother, if indeed I am one at all. This may be the last time I shall ever try to write, as I cannot use a pen, but must write with a pencil. When I read so many communications from writers in the SIGNS, and they speak of so many seasons of joy at the associations, I almost begrudge their happiness, but do feel to thank God for his care over them in holding them together in union and communion. "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" I ask an interest in your prayers.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

D. KENNARD.

[AT some time in the near future we will try to comply with the request of brother Kennard.—C.]

RALEIGH, N. C., Feb. 3, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—For the first time in many days I am at home with my family, and feel I would like to send you a line or two of encouragement, for if there is anything dear to me it is the truth for which you so earnestly contend in your paper. Your writings, as far as I have been able to discern, are in full accord with the word and christian experience (if indeed I have one), and that is why I say I want to encourage you, and I wish I could cause you to know how much I admire your earnest and yet lovely way of contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints; your labor is not in vain in the Lord. How blessed to be associated with such gifts I cannot express, but I do know I think of it as a God-given privilege to read from the pens of such gifts. Your labor is in harmony with the word. "Freely ye have received, freely give." In the kingdom of our God everything is free, because it is the gift of Jesus; you do not even have to bring a dove, or a pigeon, or anything of the kind. How blessed it is when wisdom prepares her table, and the maidens are sent forth to minister in the house not made with hands, to those who are hungry and thirsty; how freely they partake of the bread and wine which are prepared by wisdom. Though this table be spread in the presence of our enemies, yet when we eat, our cup runs over, for when love is shed abroad we are not ashamed for the tears to flow, though all the world were looking on.

Dear brethren, please pray for me that my faith fail not. I trust the Lord will be with you and that you will still go forth as lambs among wolves, as wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

Very affectionately,

W. A. SIMPKINS.

INDEPENDENCE, Mo., Dec. 16, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—If it is not asking too much, I would like to have a little space in our family paper to tell the dear brethren and sisters that their letters are of much comfort to one weary old pilgrim who is left to finish life's journey alone. I expect to take the paper as long as I can see to read and can get the money to pay for it, for many times when I am cast down and have much darkness of soul, and am filled with doubts, and fear I have missed the way altogether, then it is that a letter written by some one who has been down in the valley causes a little hope to spring up, as they seem to point to Jesus, "saying, This is the way, walk ye in it." By this

spark of light I try again to hobble on for awhile, searching for the old landmarks that have been a guide to the afflicted and poor people of God in all ages, feeling sure that the Lord knoweth them that are his, and the blessed promise is that he will never leave nor forsake us. I have read every number of the dear old SIGNS for the year 1907, and each number seemed to be the best. The all-wise Master gave the editors and correspondents of his fullness, that you all were able to send a feast to many of the hungry ones scattered over the land. The feast was so bountiful that a few crumbs fell each time for even me. Were you not directed of the Lord to let fall a few handfuls, that the little Ruths who glean in a strange land might not perish? Each writer in the last number of the paper seemed to bid the readers an affectionate good-by, with a promise in their hearts, if the dear Lord wills, to write again.

Dear editors, if you never publish this poor letter I will not be disappointed.

An old sinner,

LAVINIA MORGAN.

HARDING, W. Va., Dec. 9, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription is due for your excellent paper, I will send you two dollars for another year, for I cannot think of doing without it, as I am old and cannot get to meeting often. It is a great comfort to me in my old age to hear from the dear brethren and sisters in the Lord. How I love to read the letters from my dear kindred; it is like good news from a far country, as many express my mind better than I can tell it. I like to hear of love and peace in the churches of our faith and order. How good it is for brethren to dwell together in love and fellowship. I would like to know that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is in every Old School Baptist home, for I think it publishes the truth of the ever-blessed Savior; if it does not, I do not know what truth is. In reading the SIGNS is food to my hungry soul, and I hope the blessed Lord will give you strength to fulfill your arduous duties as editors. May you be spared long to give us our family paper.

You can publish this if you wish.

EMELINE FINDLEY.

ORIENT, Ohio, Jan. 1, 1908.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—As the year begins I wish to cast in my mite of approval of our family paper, which is food and drink in a desert land. I can but notice sister Nancy Creel's letter, and rejoice with her; though isolated from the people of God, we see her leaning on the arm of our Beloved, trustfully assured, rejoicing, strong in the Lord, as salt of the earth, as a lamp not hid under a bushel, and as her cup runneth over we hear her adoration and praises to our God. As I have had the blessing of church privileges I can say, What a great blessing to meet those face to face who love the Lord indeed, and mingle our voices in songs and praises to our God. "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion." "Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following."

As my subscription is due, and I wish to renew, I inclose a money order for the same.

FRANCES FULLER.

ARENA, N. Y., Jan. 12, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—While writing to renew my subscription, I would like to say a few encouraging words to those who

labor so arduously to prepare the religious magazine we receive semi-monthly. The paper is good, the type clear and the reading matter excellent. I, for one, feel very thankful to our heavenly Father that he gives our editors and publishers the ability to make such a very interesting and instructive paper, and I feel confident that it is highly prized by all who read it. The articles contributed by our brethren and sisters are oftentimes very comforting, and give evidence of deep understanding in the "mystery of godliness." I hope you may all continue in well doing and enjoy a happy and prosperous new year.

Your sister in a blessed hope,

J. H. DICKSON.

VERY IMPORTANT NOTICE.

"THE Department has not attempted heretofore to deal by regulation with the practice on the part of some publishers of mailing for an indefinite period papers to persons whose subscriptions have long expired, and no rules upon that subject were promulgated. However, such rules have now been made, and are as follows:

A reasonable time will be allowed publishers to secure renewals of subscriptions, but unless subscriptions are expressly renewed after the term for which they are paid, within the following periods: dailies, within three months; tri-weeklies, within six months; semi-weeklies, within nine months; weeklies, within one year; semi-monthlies, within three months; monthlies, within four months; bi-monthlies, within six months; quarterlies, within six months, they shall not be counted in the legitimate list of subscribers, and copies mailed on account thereof shall not be accepted for mailing at the second-class postage rate of one cent a pound, but may be mailed at the transient second-class postage rate of one cent for each four ounces or fraction thereof, prepaid by stamps affixed."

The above is quoted from the new postal law, effective January 1st, 1908. This law prescribes that on all subscriptions three months in arrears, extra postage must be paid, and as the SIGNS OF THE TIMES must comply with this law, we earnestly request all subscribers who are in arrears to send on at once the amounts in full due us, and that all subscribers keep their subscriptions paid up, if only for three months at a time. To send the SIGNS to delinquent subscribers means that six times the usual postage be paid. This would necessitate a financial burden which the SIGNS is illy able to bear. We trust that this new law may have a tendency to prove the loyalty of our subscribers to the SIGNS, and that they may come to the front at once, and in remitting their back dues relieve us of additional burden and anxiety.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1908.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

A FEW months since we wrote somewhat lengthily with regard to this subject, as some will remember. It is not our wish or intention to say much more here with regard to it, but some of those whom we believe to be spiritually taught have advanced the following argument in favor of them, and to this argument we feel to call attention. They urge that there have been blessings conveyed to the souls of some of the Lord's humble poor through the teaching of the Sunday School, and that therefore it is evident that the Lord smiles upon this institution, and owns and blesses it. We can appreciate the feeling of regard which one who has received blessing from God to his soul will have toward the very channel itself through which the blessing has seemed to come, and to the place where it was given. We do not desire to wound the feelings of any such tender ones, but it yet appears to us that this argument is an unsafe one to use in support of any institution or any service in which men may engage. The fact that some humble soul is blest of the Lord does not always indicate that the Lord approves of the place or the circumstances under which, or in which, the blessing is bestowed; and, beside, not our feelings, but the simple word of God is to be the test of whether anything is pleasing to God. The one Bible rule is, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." For any practice in the church of Christ, or for any institutions of a religious nature, there ought to be a plain "Thus saith the Lord." This has been the claim of the true church in all ages. It is not enough that something is not expressly condemned in the Bible; there must be plain example or plain precept for it ere it ought to be taken up or allowed in the church. This has been the boast of the church in all ages; this is the only safe course. "See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed thee in the mount," was the commandment to Moses with regard to the tabernacle worship. How much more important that the heavenly things themselves should be thus carefully guarded. The Lord, in the New Testament, has commanded preaching, praying, singing, baptism, the supper, that churches should be organized for his service, that there should be pastors, evangelists and teachers, that the people of God should not forsake the assembling of themselves together for worship of his name, that the various gifts which he has bestowed upon the various members of his church should be exercised and that believers in his name should confess him before men. All these things are commanded, and for them we have examples in the New Testament; but where in the New Testament do we ever read of either an example or command for the establishment of special services for children, or for young people, or for men, or for women? It is incredible that there should not have been

apostolic precept or example for these things had they been needful for the cause of God and truth, or for the glory of God. There is just as much, and no more, authority in the New Testament for Missionary Societies, Theological Schools, protracted meetings, the aim of which is claimed to be to save souls that might otherwise finally perish, as there is for the special institution called the Sunday School. We do not desire to speak hastily or with any sarcasm about these things, they are too important and too solemn for that; our desire is to call attention to the fact that for all the church of Christ is to practice or believe, there is full authority, plain and clear, in the New Testament. We do not ignore the Old Testament at all; the same doctrine is taught in the Old Testament as in the New, but the rituals given to Israel are not the ordinances given to the church under the gospel. Those rituals were types, and as such are now all fulfilled and are taken away, that the substance may have room. For instance, baptism does not take the place of circumcision, and the supper is not in place of the passover supper. The former were types of spiritual things finished by the dear Savior, and not at all authority for the baptism of believers and for the Lord's supper. All this is true of every type, and the Old Testament commandments to literal Israel to observe all those ceremonies are in no sense binding upon the church now; all the practice of the church now must be found in the New Testament.

Returning to the first thought here presented, that some of the Lord's children have been blessed under the teaching of the Sunday School, we desire to say again that the fact that this has been true does not therefore prove that God has commanded the Sunday School, or that he is pleased with it. We know of some instances where the souls of the poor of the Lord have been blessed in Arminian Sunday Schools, but this does not prove that God is pleased with the teaching of Arminianism. We have known of some who were the true spiritual followers of the blessed Lamb who found blessing and peace ministered to their souls at the anxious-bench in protracted revival efforts, but this does not prove that our God is pleased with such practices. We know of one man who was intent upon persecuting the church, and was going on a mission to that end, and who found a blessing while in that business, that abided with him to the end of his life, but this would not prove that to persecute the church was a good thing. Our God has mercy upon his chosen, and when the appointed time shall come, whether they are at the anxious-bench, or listening to falsehood itself, or engaged in persecution, the power of his Spirit shall reach them and they shall live. We have ourself found in books, the general tenor of which we must condemn, and which we could not recommend to any one to read, now and then sentences which have come with power to comfort and to bless, and which we remember as indeed and in truth a word from the Lord, but this would not prove that the blessing of God rested upon that book. In short, our feelings or our experiences are not the test or standard, but the standard is simply the teaching of the Bible. If our feelings or experiences are not in accord with the plain letter of the word, the word is true and they are false. If from the experience of some blessing in any service, or in any place, we are convinced that that service or that place has the blessing of God upon it, while yet we find no approval of that service or of

that practice in the word, then indeed the blessing may be real, but we ought to conclude that the place or the service is not approved of the Lord, and forsake it.

In conversation with regard to the persecutions to which the people of God have been subject in past ages, some time since, the question was asked, if there had not been times when they had also been guilty of persecuting others. This question has suggested some thoughts that may be of interest to others as well as ourself.

First, what does the word "persecution" mean? It is used perhaps fifty or sixty times in the Bible, and there simply means to pursue after. In a few places a syllable is added which intensifies the word into pursuing hotly after. The thought is that of pursuit of one regarded as an enemy to destroy him, and in the Bible it is always the righteous who are being pursued, or persecuted. The pursuer breathes out threatenings and slaughter against the pursued. In reply to the question above mentioned, it is true that the church of God has never persecuted others, and never has had the spirit of threatening and slaughter within it against others. The Spirit of the Master is given it, and that Spirit is of forgiveness and pity and good-will and kindness. Jesus when reviled reviled not again, and at the last expiring breath prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Stephen, the first martyr, prayed, "Lay not this sin to their charge;" and believers are enjoined to pray for their enemies, and to do good to them who do them harm and despitefully use them. The fact that they know the truth can be shown only by revelation of God, forbids them to seek to drive others into a professed belief, and confession of it, by any threats or any force brought to bear upon them. They remember they were themselves blind until it pleased God to reveal his Son in them, and they know all others must be blind until it shall please God to favor them in the same way. Paul had been a bitter persecutor of the church, and of all who confessed Christ, but after he also knew the Lord indeed, we never read of any attempt to persecute his former companions. Indeed, he could not have done so without proving that all he had come to know was but head and not heart knowledge. But vital godliness had been begotten in his soul, and he knew that this knowledge must always be by revelation of God.

But after all, the people of God are still living in the flesh, and are subject to like passions with other men. If left to themselves they also will manifest the same spirit against those who oppose them that is manifest in their persecutors. This is clear from the instance recorded in the gospels, when the disciples said concerning a people that had rejected the Savior, "Wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them?" And he said, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." It is not then because the people of God are perfect, or are better than their persecutors by nature, that they themselves do not persecute others; grace, and grace only, keeps them from so doing; left to themselves to act out the dictates of the flesh, there would appear in them all hatred and wrath, as well as in the adversaries of God. From the days of Cain and Abel it has been the wicked who have hated and killed the righteous, and the righteous have not resisted their enemies. The word of God again and again declares this to have been the conduct of

the people of God when oppressed for the truth's sake.

In addition to all this, it is also true that our God has so arranged the order of his church that it can never be guilty of legally oppressing those of another religion. Even were it the desire of his people to hail men and women for their faith, and cast them into prison, or to seek to destroy their lives, they could never do so, because they never can obtain authority. The Romish power was and is concentrated in one head, who is supreme and who is regarded as infallible by the devotees of that religion. This man of sin, controlling this mother of harlots with centralized power, has always been a persecuting man; and Rome could persecute, because moving as one body with one head she could gain control of governments and dictate laws, and when she thought it advisable could and did put men and women to death in many horrible ways for their faith. Heretics were given over to the civil power, but this only meant that they were given over to suffer what Romanists had themselves enacted into penalties for being what she called heretics. It was Rome laying off her hypocritical religious robes, and appearing as she really was, a brutish, merciless persecutor, under the cloak of giving men over to the civil powers. This will appear when we remember that the laws against heretics were enacted by Romanists themselves, and when we also remember that such laws were never once rebuked by any pope of Rome. But that which we desired to enforce was the thought that she could persecute legally because of her centralized power. The same is true of every body of people organized in the same way, and upon this very ground it is impossible for the church of Christ to ever persecute others. Each congregation stands by itself, subject only to the King of Zion. Even the associations of the churches have no power to rule over the churches, but, instead, are only meetings of messengers of the churches conveying the messages of the churches to the other churches. It is impossible for Baptist churches to gain the control of any government as a body, for the reason above named. Our God has so ordered in his word what his church shall be and what shall be her order, as to forever prevent her from becoming a persecuting body. In this the wisdom, love and care of God for his own people, and for his own glory, appear. We have often admired and wondered at that wisdom which has been abundantly displayed in this one direction of guarding his church from becoming the persecutor of others. There is a union between the churches of the Lord, but it is not an organic union, it is the union of faith, wrought in the heart of each one that knows the Lord by the Spirit of God, so that they are one in fellowship and sympathy; but still each church must stand by itself or fall by itself. Each church must attend to the order which our God has established for itself, and no man can ever become the head of any church, and still less can any man become the head over many or all the churches.

In conclusion we again repeat that the church of Christ has never been a persecuting body; first, because the Spirit of the meek, lowly and forgiving Master is with it, and second, because the church order which God has established forever forbids it. C.

FIRST RESURRECTION.

DEAR BROTHER:—I want to ask you a question: When is the first resurrection? (Revelation xx. 6.)

Yours truly, P. E. DAHLSTEDT.

ELCAMPO, Texas.

This question which our brother asks is among the many which have perplexed the minds of able men, and it seems presumption in us to attempt an answer, yet we feel it right to do the best we can. Were it not for the fact that our readers know how weak and unskilled we are in the mysteries of the kingdom of God, and are charitable in not holding our mistakes against us, we could not attempt to write at all. We know that our efforts are feeble at best, and come far short of presenting the fullness of any subject whatever, yet the Lord has put us in the harness and we want to serve the brethren with such ability as he gives. We desire that our positive way of presenting our views, whether in speaking or writing, be not interpreted as inferring that we are right and every one else wrong. We mean no such thing, but we do want to be understood, that all may know where we stand on whatever subject we attempt to use. As to whether our views are right or wrong, is a matter for the brethren to decide.

Jesus said to Martha, "I am the resurrection." The world never knew a resurrection until Jesus came. Sin was not put away until he died. The children were not justified until he rose from the dead; they had not a spiritual advocate until he ascended to the right hand of God. "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last," said Jesus; he therefore must be the first resurrection. "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." The widow's son was restored to life by Elijah the prophet; Lazarus was made alive from the dead; the widow's son was also restored to his mother alive by the Savior, but in our view of the resurrection none of the above were resurrected, except in the sense of being made alive naturally to die again. The resurrection of Jesus and that of his children, in him, was different, he was raised by the glory of the Father to die no more, being raised above the law and its curse, God saying, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." Begotten from the dead "a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." If the children were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, they must have been in him when he came into the world, hence were in him when he died and in him when he rose, and one with him when in heaven he took his seat, having triumphed over all his foes. On those who have part in that first resurrection (Christ) who fulfilled the demands of the law, paid their debt, delivering them from death, the second death hath no power, but they shall reign with God and his Christ forever. The first death was separation between God and man because of man's transgression; the second death is separation between dust and spirit. "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." That which we all look for and hope for in the future, called the resurrection, is Christ, because it is his image we shall have; "we shall be like him." Whatever the different views may be regarding the resurrection, all centre in the one hope: "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." This hope is according to the predestination, mercy and grace of God, and the glorious change from the image of the earthy (Adam) to the image of the heavenly (Christ) takes place when this

corruptible puts on incorruption, and this mortal puts on immortality, but when and how that takes place no man can answer; "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him." The image is therefore sure to all who have part in the first Resurrection, and all other blessings are equally sure. "All things are your's; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are your's; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." K.

LUKE VIII. 32, 33.

BROTHER KER:—Will you please give your views through the SIGNS upon Luke viii. 32, 33? which reads as follows: "And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them: and he suffered them. Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked." Why did those devils want to enter into the swine, and what did those hogs represent?

I intend to take the SIGNS as long as I live and am able to pay for it, for I do love the doctrine contained therein.

Your sister, MARY A. LAKE.
HURRICANE, W. Va.

We confess that we have never felt satisfied that we understand the Scripture, and its connection, suggested by our sister, yet have had some meditation concerning it, and shall endeavor to answer her questions as best we can, and also present a few other thoughts in connection.

The reason why the devils wanted to enter into the swine is answered in verse 31: "And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep." That to them meant destruction, therefore they did not want to go into the deep. Jesus suffered them to enter into the swine. Those very devils had had power to drive the poor fellow, who said his name was Legion, into the wilderness and torment him there, but they had not power over the swine to prevent them from going down that steep place into the lake (deep); had they, they surely would have exercised it. Jesus did not grant their request that they should not go into the deep, though they no doubt thought so when he suffered them to enter into the swine.

Jesus, speaking by way of a parable, tells us what the "hogs" or swine mean, in that expression, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine." Pearls unquestionably signify the precious things of the gospel, while "swine" mean ungodly men. We do not think the Savior meant to call men hogs as one rough man would speak of another, but in a figure he showed the impossibility of unregenerate men to appreciate and enjoy the gospel, and also showed the vanity and fruitlessness of the attempts of his servants to make them hear and understand. Many of the dear children of God in their early life in the things of the kingdom, have thought the way so clear and unmistakable that they could show it to their friends, and tried to do so, but in the attempt were taught that it is vain to cast pearls before swine. We think a servant of God can so far depart from the truth of the gospel that he can feed swine, but he cannot eat the same food (husks) with them, as much as he might wish to do so. The fact is, swine cannot feed upon the gospel, nor can a child of God feed upon error.

We shall now call attention to the power of Jesus over the devils and the swine. He commanded the devils to come out of that poor man whom he went over the lake to heal; no other man in all that country felt the influence of the

Spirit of God and recognized Jesus as "the Son of God." The devils obeyed Jesus, as also did the winds and the water on his way over the lake. The swine ran down that steep place into the deep at his command, as we have shown that it was not at the influence of the devils, and perished in the sea together with the devils. (Matt. viii. 32.) This represents the destruction of the nonelect (swine), and that of devils also. But the deliverance from the devils showed the salvation of God to the poor man who felt as many of us often do: "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God?" Election and grace are clearly presented in this narrative; that man possessed with devils was not, from a religious standpoint, the best man in that country, perhaps none were worse, yet Jesus went over the lake expressly to heal him.

It is evident that all the swine (unregenerate men) of that country were not drowned in the sea, for when they heard what had been done by Jesus to the man of the tombs, they went out and besought Him to depart from them. Such doctrine and power they could not endure. Many such swine are in existence to-day who cannot endure the doctrine of God and the power of Jesus to save. They say, "It is a dangerous doctrine, and will send thousands of souls to hell." We suppose they remember the destruction of that great herd of swine, but swine are lost because they are swine; goats are lost because they are goats, and devils are destroyed because they are devils; but that man who knew and felt the power and salvation of Jesus was not a swine, nor did he go down into the deep, but was sent to publish what great things the Lord had done for him.

"This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" K.

AARON'S ROD THAT BUDDED.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I would like to have your views on Hebrews ix. 4. Aaron's rod that budded is the main part I want to know.

A poor sinner, S. M. STEVENS.

LONE STAR, Ark., March 1, 1908.

In this letter to the Hebrews the apostle is contrasting between the tabernacle in the wilderness, together with the service therein, and the spiritual tabernacle of God and its service. He shows the difference between the offerings of the old covenant and the offering of Christ, the great Sacrifice. He also presents the priesthood of Aaron as imperfect, and declares the priesthood of Christ as not after that order, but after that of an endless life. The apostle, knowing the dangerous attachment of the Hebrews to the legal ceremonies, was very careful in every particular to show their typical reference to Christ. In so doing he described that "worldly sanctuary," and the office and privileges of the high priest, that he entered into the "holiest of all" to make atonement for the sins of the people, but that atonement only endured one year, then there was a remembrance of sins again and another atonement was necessary. But in presenting Christ the High Priest of the new covenant, he said, "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

In describing "the ark of the covenant," the apostle told the Hebrews what was in it. That ark was the peculiar treasure and shield of that people; it went before them, being borne by the Levites, and meant safety to Israel. In it was the golden pot, wherein was manna

perfectly preserved from one generation to another, notwithstanding the fact that the people could not keep it from one day to another. Aaron's rod that budded was also there perfectly preserved with its blossoms and almond fruit. The tables of the covenant were also therein perfectly kept. We have thought of the ark itself as a figure of Christ, who as the Captain of our salvation goes before, and in following him there is safety. In Him also is kept perfectly preserved from one generation to another that manna (gospel food) which the children cannot keep from one day to another. The law which the children would constantly break is perfectly kept in him, and Aaron's rod that budded (life and power to bring forth) is also in him.

The special purpose of the twelve rods, each one representing the head of each tribe of Israel, was to decide in the minds of the different tribes God's choice for the priesthood. Some had been seeking it and murmuring against Moses and Aaron concerning it; the Lord visited them with death, nevertheless murmuring and rebellion continued, "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and take of every one of them a rod, according to the house of their fathers, of all their princes according to the house of their fathers, twelve rods: write thou every man's name upon his rod. And thou shalt write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi: for one rod shall be for the head of the house of their fathers. And thou shalt lay them up in the tabernacle of the congregation, before the testimony, where I will meet with you. And it shall come to pass, that the man's rod, whom I shall choose, shall blossom: and I will make to cease from me the murmurings of the children of Israel, whereby they murmur against you. And Moses spake unto the children of Israel; and every one of their princes gave him a rod apiece, for each prince one, according to their father's houses, even twelve rods: and the rod of Aaron was among their rods. And Moses laid up the rods before the Lord in the tabernacle of witness. And it came to pass, that on the morrow, Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds. And Moses brought out all the rods from before the Lord unto all the children of Israel: and they looked, and took every man his rod. And the Lord said unto Moses, Bring Aaron's rod again before the testimony, to be kept for a token against the rebels; and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from me, that they die not."—Numbers xvii. 1–10. This decided the matter, and never again in the history of Israel is there any mention of murmuring or rebellion concerning the Levitical priesthood.

Aaron's rod was the same as the others, all from the same tree, no doubt, but in Aaron's rod God manifested his power, glory and choice, it being the only one that manifested life after being cut off.

Do not we see Christ set forth in that rod? "It behoved him to be made like unto his brethren." He, therefore, was one with them; the prophets, his brethren, were killed (cut off) one by one; many came before him professing that they were of God, thus claiming the honor of that Priest who should come. Of them Jesus said, "All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers." Some came after him claiming great things, of whom he said, "False christs and false prophets shall arise, and shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the

elect." Not one of all the tribes of the earth after death, being cut off, ever manifested by life and fruit that he was the Christ, except Christ, the "Branch," who was cut off in the midst of his days and buried with the dead, but, behold, he lives, buds, blossoms and brings forth fully matured fruit, thus demonstrating and forever settling the question that he is the Priest of God and ever liveth to make intercession for the saints according to the will of the Father. In him is life, and the life is the light of men.

Christ as an Israelite, or after the flesh, was not of the tribe of Levi, but of the tribe of Juda, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. But it was said, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Shiloh is none other than Christ, and before him all nations are gathered, and unto him both Jews and Gentiles come acknowledging his might and dominion, and confess him as their High Priest, Prince, Law-giver, Mediator and Redeemer. Thus every knee bows, and every tongue confesses that Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. K.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906; 07 means 1907; 08 means 1908, &c.

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Eliphlet Ketchum, Ill., $1.00; Mrs. M. M. Rounsavell, N. Y., $1.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon James P. Small, our beloved brother, departed this life at his home in Harrison County, Texas, Jan. 25th, 1908, aged 76 years, lacking 2 months and 12 days. Deceased was born in Pike County, Ala., and moved to Henderson County, Texas, in 1872, then to Harrison County, Texas, in 1873, where he lived until removed by death. He was married to Miss Roxanna Hines August 15th, 1855. To this union a number of children were born, eight of whom survive the aged father. Brother Small several years ago joined the church called Gum Springs, an Old School Baptist Church, in Harrison County, Texas. It was just about the time, or just prior to his uniting with the church, that I became acquainted with him, I cannot remember the exact year. He was ordained deacon in that church not many years after he became a member. I served the little church of his membership for a few years or until the time I moved away from that section of country, about ten years ago. I became during that time intimately acquainted with brother Small and his family, and I never knew a more humble, earnest and devoted Baptist than he, always ready and willing to perform his duty as he was enabled to understand it. His walk and conversation were so characterized by that meek and lowly Spirit of the Master that he was much beloved by the brethren and sisters who knew him, and such were his good qualities as a neighbor and citizen that he had many friends and few, if any, enemies. He was a kind and devoted husband and an indulgent father, and while he will be sadly missed by friends, neighbors, brethren and sisters, by far the saddest hearts will be those of wife and children, who no doubt feel that their loss is irreparable. To the bereaved companion I would say, Comfort your heart with the thought that he has gone from a world of sorrow and suffering to one of rest, peace and joy eternal. It cannot be long, even at the longest, before you, too, will be called to enter rest. To the children I would say, You will do well to seek to emulate his good example as a man, a citizen and neighbor, and may it be your happy lot to embrace the precious hope and faith that was his, by reason of which he passed away so quietly, calmly and peacefully into eternal and undisturbed rest.

H. B. JONES.

MT. VERNON, Texas, March 4, 1908.

MY sister, **Averilla Gwartney,** was born Sept. 10th, 1821, in Harrison County, Ind., and died Jan. 12th, 1908, aged 86 years, 4 months and 2 days. Her last sickness was "la grippe." She united with the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church called Mt. Gilead, in Perry County, Ind., I think, in 1860. If I remember correctly, her last husband died in 1869. She leaves three children by her first husband: Emma J.

Scott, William M. B. Shuck and Elizabeth Catherine Taylor, and four sons (one daughter died in infancy). One sister and two brothers are also left to mourn their loss, but we mourn not as those who have no hope, for we believe our loss is her eternal gain. She was the oldest of eleven children, seven brothers and four sisters, who have all passed away except my youngest sister, my youngest brother and myself.

JOSEPH BRUCE.

OREGON CITY, Oregon, Feb. 25, 1908.

WOODBURN, Oregon.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—My uncle has written my dear mother's obituary and sent it to me to read; I will add a few lines and send with it. Mother sold her farm in Perry County, Ind., the spring of 1876. She and her five boys moved to Lancaster County, Nebr. June 15th, 1889, the Salem Church was constituted. Her letter, with others, was received, and Elder J. H. Ring served as pastor. She moved to Custer County, Nebr., in the fall of 1885, with my oldest brother, Wm. B. Shuck. She made her home with brother Will, and some of the time with me. She came to Oregon the fall of 1905, making me a visit until Sept. 4th, 1906, then went back to her home in Nebraska, spending her last days at her old home. O how sad it is to think she is gone never to return. She cannot come to us, but I hope we can go to her. She was a kind and loving mother and sister, a good neighbor, making many friends wherever she lived. We will all miss her kind letters, her quiet footsteps, her kind words, helpful hands and smiling face, but she has only gone before.

Her remains were laid in the Arnold cemetery.

CATE TAYLOR.

Mrs. Elizabeth H. Slemons, widow of Dr. Albert B. Slemons, entered into everlasting rest at her home in Delmar, Md., March 6th, 1908, aged 71 years, 6 months and 8 days. She was the daughter of the late Dr. Samuel J. S. and Louisa Davis Ker, and the only sister of Llewellyn B. Ker, of Delmar, Md., and H. Claude Ker, of Middletown, N. Y. Her husband, Dr. Slemons, died in June, 1891; a son, Albert, aged 28, died in October, 1891; another son, John, aged 40, died in March, 1903; one daughter, Louisa, died in 1869, aged two and one-half years. Sister is survived by three children: Samuel Ker, Marion Harlan and Mary Lou Slemons, all of Delmar, together with the two brothers above mentioned. She had for many years been a member of the Missionary Baptist Church, and her life was one of devotion and self-sacrifice, doing all things with an eye single to the glory of God. She was deeply experienced, and her hope and faith in God unwavering. She was a woman of great fortitude, meeting every obstacle in her pathway fearlessly, and at last met death, "the last enemy," without the slightest fear. Several years ago, when ill, and she thought perhaps the end was near, she said, "No fear, but a sense of perfect rest and peace." During her last illness she was heard quoting from Paul: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." These words were to her the words of faith, and of blessed assurance of unalloyed rest with Jesus. She was among the best of mothers, the kindest of sisters and truest of friends.

We all feel this sad dispensation very keenly, but recognize the Lord's hand in it, and because it is He, we desire to bow in humble submission, kissing the rod that smites us. His promise is, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea. God is our refuge and strength.

The funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Mr. S. E. Garner, assisted by the writer. The text was, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." The interment took place in the family plot in Delmar Cemetery. Thus another treasure is taken from us, making the world less attractive, but making our hope of heaven more precious. May we bless God for that place of hallowed peace where all is hushed to rest. K.

Mrs. Sarah Austin, widow of Patric T. Austin, died at Byron, N. Y. She was born August 12th, 1812, died Feb. 7th, 1908. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of the Old School Baptists. She leaves three sons and two daughters to mourn. She was a noble mother and a true wife. We deplore our loss, yet are confident that for her to depart and be with Christ is far better. Truly God has gathered one more of his jewels to their eternal glory, where she can continue to praise and glorify His holy name. She was buried at Byron, N. Y.

May the Lord sanctify these afflictions to our good and his glory. JAMES D. AUSTIN.

HARRISTON, Miss.

MEETINGS.

THERE will be a three days meeting held with the Sidling Hill Church of Primitive Baptists, situated in Fulton County, Pa., the first three days of May, 1908. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth, and especially to our ministering brethren. Come on Thursday to Hancock, Maryland, on the B. & O. or Western Maryland railroad, where you will be met and cared for.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Mississippi River Association will be held next fall, with Mt. Enon Church, at Coles Academy, one and one-half miles northeast of Middleton, Tenn., on the Southern Railroad.

R. R. CRAWFORD.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

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To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

THERE are a few Old School Baptists in Riverside, Cal., and they have meeting the first and third Sundays in each month, at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

W. D. BALL.

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By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition, which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at the following rates, viz: a single copy for 10 cents; 12 copies for $1.00; 25 copies for $2.00; 50 copies for $3.00; 100 copies for $5.00. Address,

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The Minutes of the seventy-fifth anniversary meeting of the Black Rock Convention, of 1832, held Sept. 28th and 29th, 1907, are now published and ready for sale. They are published in pamphlet form, and contain forty pages. They contain the minutes of the anniversary meeting, together with a history of the church since her organization in 1828, and of her connection with what our brethren all over the land know of as the Black Rock Convention of 1832, also the address adopted at that convention is contained in the pamphlet, together with the names o all who were then present and affixed their names to that document. There is also a portrait of the present pastor of the church, Elder J. T. Rowe, and of the meeting-house itself, which still stands as it was at that time, with no change in its outward appearance. The pamphlet can be obtained by addressing Elder J. T. Rowe, 704 Linwood Ave., Station L., Baltimore Md. The price is fifteen cents per copy.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK, compiled by Elders Silas H. Durand and P. G. Lester, $6.00 per dozen, sent at expense of purchaser; 70 cents for single book, sent by mail postpaid. Send all orders to Elder Silas H. Durand, Southampton, Pa., stating which kind of note is desired—round or shape.

THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 76. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1908. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HAMPTON, Iowa, Feb. 25, 1908.

MY DEAR BROTHER KER:—I send you this article written by Elder J. W. Thomas over sixty years ago. It was published by Elder Lowe in his paper called the *Regular Baptist*, at Weston, Missouri. Elder Thomas baptized my grandfather and grandmother, on my mother's side, in the year 1830, in Kentucky. He has one son, living at St. Joseph, Mo., Elder R. M. Thomas, now a very old man. I met him at an association one year ago last September; he is a very able minister. I would like you to publish this in the SIGNS if you deem it proper; it shows how sound the Old School Baptists were at that time. E. A. NORTON.

WAVELAND, Ind., Nov. 13, 1847.

BROTHER S. J. LOWE:—As I occasionally have some minutes of leisure, I will submit to your disposal the following, which I consider Bible truth, they being my thoughts on the doctrine of election, as therein clearly taught.

First, I remark the union of saints is of vital importance when founded on truth. We should therefore hold fast the form of sound words in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus, and bear in mind at the same time: "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." The clearly revealed truth of God is for the comfort, edification and instruction of his children in righteousness, but vain and unlawful speculations with regard to the divine testimony are calculated to mystify and cause a hurt to the daughter of Zion. How important then it is for us to consider well the peculiar and appropriate admonition of the apostle who hath said "Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." Again, "I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God;" for in this we are confident the Scriptures contain everything necessary for us to know, believe and do in our services to God. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." It is very clear to me that it is the same Spirit which records

scriptural truths on the fleshly tables of our hearts, that moved the apostles and prophets to write; hence to assert what is not sustained by divine authority, is to set the truth aside. But notwithstanding the many losses here and there, we have the blessed assurance given that truth shall triumph over error. Christ gained the victory over antichrist; mists and fogs that darken the religious atmosphere are driven away, and the true light shines with splendor, convincing gainsaying with transportation to the dear children of God; until then how well adapted to their happiness it would be for them to employ every laudable means in their power to propagate those truths calculated to confirm pilgrims to Zion in right understanding of the Scriptures, and remove from them everything calculated to intercept their enjoyment of the truth in its simplicity; earnestly to contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints.

Secondly, we remark the Scriptures in their simplicity of truth read thus: "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." —Prov. xvi. 4. In this he "hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." "Adam was not deceived; but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression."—1 Tim. ii. 14. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God." —Heb. xi. 3. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. For by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are on earth, for in six days God made heaven and earth, the seas and all that are in them. (Exodus xx. 11.) "Thus the heavens and earth were finished, and all the host of them."—Gen. ii. 1. Compared with the following: "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."—Gen. ii. 7. "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bound of their habitation."—Acts xvii. 25, 26. These quotations prove, first, that all the posterity of the first man, Adam, indiscriminately concentrated their natural existence in him, being seminally created in him, in a mass, or at one and the same time, both elect and nonelect, when God created him of the earth and he became a living soul. The principle is universal in its application, that every seed will produce its kind—that nothing proceeds from it but what was created in it. If Cain was not created in Adam, how did he descend from him? Where did he receive the law but in Adam? If the law did not bind him to its obedience, how could his murder of Abel be considered a sin? In the absence of sin, how could he be justly the subject of punishment? In what sense was he Abel's brother, if he did not descend from the same progenitor upon the same principles? Can he that descends from a corrupt source and he that descends from a very good origin be considered brothers? No, I understand Cain to have received and transgressed the law upon the principles with Abel. As Levi paid tithes, thus Levi was in the loins of his great-grandfather, Abraham, when Melchisedec met him. Just so Cain and Abel were in the loins of their father when and before the devil, Satan or serpent, met Eve. The truth of this matter will fully appear when we simply take the revealed truth of God, as manifest in the Scriptures,

Look at Genesis i. 26–28, and you will find the principle of germination set forth in man on the day that they were created, by which they were to multiply according to the laws of natural generation. In Genesis iii. 16, the same thing is brought to view under two other terms, the only difference being that of the multiplying of the woman's sorrows in which she was to bring forth; (Gen. vi.) and my position is established by keeping in view the chain of the truth, viz., that Cain (the nonelect) is just as old by creation as Abel or the elect—full brothers, being created at the same time. "To the law and to the testimony." "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord God said, I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them."—Gen. vi. 5–7. This, in view of the fact that all the hosts of creation were finished within six days, and the entrance of sin into the world by one man thereafter, together with the enunciation to Noah and his sons, also to Abraham, "Be ye fruitful, and multiply; and bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein," "that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heavens," just as he said to Eve, "I will," &c., brings us irresistibly to the conclusion that the entire posterity of the first Adam is intrinsically his natural seed, which Peter calls corruptible seed.

Thirdly, that God as a sovereign, having created man upright, gave him a law as a test of obedience, by which he was under solemn obligation to yield his perfect obedience to its precepts, and that a penalty added to a breach thereof being death, was reasonable, and that man transgressed the law. By man I mean the whole posterity of Adam, elect and nonelect, and became justly exposed to the wrath of God, in reference to which transgression and its effects the apostle has appropriately said he is earthly, sensual and devilish, in the state of nature destitute of ability to render that obedience to which he is called, culpable for every failure and irrespective of the mediation of Jesus Christ; it would have been just had Jehovah poured his vials of wrath upon his disobedient head. All of which I have been speaking, this is the sum in the first Adam; there is no discrimination of elect and nonelect, but his natural posterity, without distinction, is considered in a condemned state by virtue of the offence of the first Adam, who acted for them and thereby made his unborn race sinners. The elect are set forth in the Scriptures in two points of light; first, as they are in with others in relation to themselves and their earthly existence as descending from the progenitor upon the same principles; secondly, as they stand in the sight of God as his elect, in Christ their spiritual head, in whom they are chosen and by whom they are represented. In the first of these they are considered as being condemned to death, and every charge may be as justly preferred against them as against any other sinner; but in the last they are spoken of as being justified, absolved from every charge and adjudged to life, for in Christ, the second Adam, all the elect seed, they in him and he in them, are accounted for the seed; who have their spiritual existence in him (Christ)

are justified by virtue of his (Christ's) righteousness or obedience, who acted for his unborn seed, who eventually will all be born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, and saved by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, and independent of human means or effort. These two Adams are spoken of as the only two men who represent mankind, and Paul runs these parallels in order to show both the condemnation of the world, elect and nonelect, and the justification of the elect. (See Romans vi.) The whole human family condemned to death, the sentence having gone forth: "Thou shalt surely die," Paul asks for the difference, and then answers the question himself, thus: "What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin." How came it that they (all the natural family of the first Adam) are under sin? Listen, and Paul will tell you: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation. This offence armed death with power to reign over the posterity of Adam, according to Romans v. 17: "By one man's offence death reigned by one;" so that we see by plain Scripture language that the offence of Adam's sin commenced its reign, and reigns unto death. Agreeable to Romans v. 21, our position is evidently established that all men stand in the same relation to Adam, without distinction of elect and nonelect, and are considered by the apostle to be by nature the children of wrath, as servants of sin and under the law differing nothing, (Eph. ii. 3; Gal. iv. 1,) standing condemned as criminals under the just sentence of the just law of the holy God, who will in no wise acquit the guilty, for we cannot conceive how or upon what principle God could execute justice in judgment unless they transgress the law, which they could not have done if not created in Adam and in him received the law, "for where no law is, there is no transgression." In this state of guilt they are altogether indisposed toward God, unreconciled to his law, opposed to his gospel, hate the light, love darkness and choose the ways of death; under the influence of Satanic infatuation rendered inflexible to every power but that, which is irresistible. And now, as if more fully to illustrate the doctrine of election, the apostle has introduced the history of Jacob and Esau, thus: Having not "done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."—Romans ix. 11–13. A clear example given to show that God, as a sovereign, exercises his right in choosing from among his creatures those who shall inherit eternal glory, without giving account for the divine procedure, and Arminians of every grade will be condemning the Lord if election is true, alleging that God is partial and unjust, and that election is based on God's sovereignty, and not some good work of him that is elected. The apostle shows that before either of these children were born, or had done good or evil, their mother was told that the elder should serve the younger, as it is written, Mal. i. 2, 3: "I have loved you [Israel the church], saith the Lord: yet ye say, Wherein [or for what] hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob,

and I hated Esau." This recorded truth goes to show that Jacob and Esau were, under all considerations, upon equal footing and in the same condition and situation, where one was loved and the other hated, or one chosen and the other passed by, for neither of them were yet born; and had they been born, their parentage could have been no reason why one was chosen and the other not, because both were the same; nor had the one performed any good actions, nor the other any bad actions; so Jacob was not loved for his good works nor Esau hated for his bad ones. This confirms the truth of the doctrine that the objects of predestination, whether to life or passed by, are alike, whether considered in a corrupt mass as fallen, or in the pure mass of creatureship antecedent to sins having entered into the world; yea, without any consideration of it, which is clearly proven by the above quotation. The whole matter must therefore be resolved into the absolute sovereignty of God, it being his sovereign will and secret counsel; the whys and wherefores we are unable to give, unless, as the Lord Jesus on another occasion answers: "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." Moreover, I understand that the apostle threw this down as a challenge to the vain ingenuity of all the enemies of God's sovereign grace, as being forever irreconcilable with their plan of election by blood and works, but by grace alone. And now let them yield their plan, condemn the Lord or confess the truth. Again, the matter is plain and stands thus: Abel was Cain's brother, Ishmael had the same father as Isaac, Esau and Jacob, and God in the decree of election, God in his sovereignty, elected Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and left out thereof Cain, Ishmael and Esau. If it was anything good in the former which induced God's choice of them, then it would be of works, and the idea of salvation by grace would be destroyed. The elect were chosen before Adam sinned or was visibly the inhabitant of the earth. In view of that choice God by the prophet hath said, "I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him."—Isaiah xliii. 6, 7. Although chosen in Christ, their spiritual head, before the foundation of the world, in whom they never sinned, yet in their earthly head they were suffered to fall into transgression. This is what caused the incarnation of the Word. "The Word was with God, and the Word was God," and the Word was made flesh, God manifest in the flesh; God was in Christ, who is the head over all things to the church, which is his body, and in whom dwelleth the fullness of the Godhead bodily; all of which goes to show the relationship which exists between Christ and his people, which gave him the right of redemption. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." (not Adam)—Heb. ii. 14–16. Isaac (not Ishmael) was the promised child; that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, (Cain, Ishmael and Esau were of that number) but the

children of the promise are accounted for the seed. (Romans ix. 8.) Of the latter is Christ (the elder brother). "He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, with all whom shall reign with him in glory. "And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." —Gal. iii. 29.

JOHN WALKER THOMAS.

A SPOT ON EARTH.

I SHOULD like to speak of experience to-day. If I have had an experience that relates to the heaven-born son, spoken of by the Lord Jesus, then I must turn my mind back to think upon what occurred many years ago. When I call up my memory (it only takes an instant) of the times and seasons of my early trials about my awful state in nature, the "spots" on God's earth always come to my mind. The places of my earthly abode when I felt the just condemnation from on high are not so vividly impressed on my memory as is the place where the first great flood of light shone within me (and I sometimes have thought around me). Every time I think of that wonderful day to me, that wonderful hour, that wonderful moment when that great Light came to my soul, or my being, the earthly scene comes before me. The "spot" in the road is before me now as it was more than forty-seven years ago. It was a mile from my home, my face towards the east, at a bend in the road as it skirted the brow of a hill, a rail fence to my right and a small branch of water to my left. Why must this scene come before my mind's eye? Why is this earthly picture so indelibly written upon my memory? I have been ashamed to speak of these things to my brethren. As far as I know I have mentioned it but once, and that a week ago, to some brethren here. It has seemed to me to be savoring so much of the things of the earth, and at the same time unimportant. I had been in distress for more than a year, a little less perhaps than two years, but the Lord was teaching me all that time and I knew it not. When it pleased God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, to shine in me, I was traveling with my father and in conversation with him about the way sinners are saved. I was a believer before this, but did not know it. At this time the Scriptures were opened to my understanding so forcibly and so beautifully that the road, the fields, the sky, the clouds and the trees clapped their hands for joy; thenceforth a new life seemed opened to me. I cannot think of this time without the earthly scene coming before my mind; the picture of that place seems to be engraven upon my mind in such a way that years of care, anxiety and toil cannot eradicate the earthly scene. Why should it be so strongly written upon my mind? Was this a resting-place in my pilgrimage or a starting-point? It seems that in one sense it was a starting-place, and in another a resting-place, a glorious rest in Christ Jesus. It, to me, was more welcome, no doubt, than an oasis in the desert is to the weary traveler, a place of rest and refreshment. There are three more places and three different times, all embraced within the space of three days, which I desire to speak of. The first of these was only a few days after the one just mentioned. It was at the time that I came before the church—a small band of old brethren and sisters despised by the world. It has always been a question in my mind ever since my carnal mind

considered these things, Why did I appear before the most insignificant body called a church in my surroundings? Strange action this, as judged by the natural mind. God's providence was such that I must appear before that august body at the very time and place I did; the measure of Jehovah's predestination could not be full without it. Every time I think of that time when I stood up and tried to tell the brethren of my sinfulness, but could not for weeping, the house, the old brethren and sisters, and the place the house was located, are all pictured in my mind before me as they were then. This picture is seen by my mind's eye whenever I think of that eventful day. The evening of this same day I followed my father to the field where he went to feed the hogs. While he was at his work my mind was most powerfully exercised about the sermon I had heard that day. It seemed to me that all mysteries were being revealed to me, and O the beauties of God's kingdom that shone within me that Saturday hour I cannot tell. Just then my father came up, I took him by the hand, passed under his arm, and said something about being born again; it did appear to me just then that that was the time of my heavenly birth. I was talking to father all the time while walking from the field, because I was so filled with the beauty of God's holiness, the power of his grace to save and his willingness to call helpless sinners to himself. Now while speaking of that time and these things the picture of that field and surroundings has been before my mind's eye of remembrance. It was in the "six acre field;" a lane passed along the west side, a draw near the north end of the lane and a walnut tree on a knoll north of the draw. This special place is unimportant to the reader, but if I have a good hope through grace it is important to me. The next day as we gathered at the water for baptism, is the other significant place, for that event is some experience by the grace of God in my pilgrimage on God's earth. How surprisingly I was strengthened to walk down into the water that day! I felt strong in the Lord and in the glory of his might, as my father on the bank of the stream sang:

> "I'm not ashamed to own my Lord,
> Or to defend his cause,
> Maintain the honor of his word,
> The glory of his cross."

Just then I was so strong in the faith (even physically I felt strong) that I felt I was not ashamed of Him, but on the other hand was proud of his lowly yet high name. Yet when I call to mind this event, and try to concentrate my thoughts upon the state of my mind then, of the holy scene and fortitude that I then enjoyed, the earthly surroundings crowd upon my mind, and I think of the special little river, the special place in the river, and the different people of my memory assembled there. In speaking as I have about these places I feel that it is a weakness, and perhaps not appreciated by many readers of the SIGNS, but these things have been on my mind so many years that I have ventured to speak of them. From the experience of many brethren and sisters I am led to believe that they cannot speak of a sudden flood of light rushing in upon their soul; their experience seems to be a gradual growing into the knowledge and light of the gospel. Their morning may be like a morning when clouds obscure the sun, even to midday; to them the Sun of righteousness may arise so gradually that they cannot tell when the first rays of light entered into the deep recesses of their hearts. These cannot tell the time,

that is, the day, or perhaps the year, when Jesus became most precious to them. There are others of God's tried and taught people who can point out the time and place where the Sun of righteousness arose to them spontaneously, without any intervening cloud, and broke the bands of Satan, and set them free from the curse of the law. These love to point back to the time of deliverance; they are compassed about with songs of deliverance. Was that poet, now unknown to modern writers, wrong in his experience when he sang,

"There is a spot to me more dear
Than native vale or mountain;
A spot from which affection's tear
Springs grateful from its fountain.
'Tis not where kindred souls are bound,
Though this resembles heaven,
But where I first my Savior found,
And felt my sins forgiven"?

There may be a slight tendency to Arminianism in this stanza or the balance of the poem, but part of his experience stands out grandly to my mind, as—

"Hard was my lot to reach the shore—
Long tossed upon the ocean;
Above me was the thunder's roar,
Beneath, the waves commotion.
Darkly the pall of night was thrown
Around me—faint with terror!
In that dark hour how did I groan
And weep for years of error!"

In the following verse it might seem that he thought his cries were available:

"Sinking and panting as for breath,
I knew not help was near me;
I cried, O save me, Lord, from death,
Immortal Jesus, hear me!
As quick as thought I felt him mine,
My Savior stood before me;
I saw his brightness round me shine,
And shouted, Glory, glory!"

It seems in his last verse that he has sanctified the "spot" where he first found his Savior, or, as stated below, where love divine first found him:

"O sacred place, O hallowed spot,
Where love divine first found me!
Wherever falls my distant lot,
My heart shall linger round thee."

Now, brethren, I leave this to your judgment whether it is fit to publish or not.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

HELENA, Okla., Jan. 19, 1908.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, Feb. 4, 1908.

MISS LOUISE E. CANEGALY—DEAR FRIEND:—A stranger, but as you are friendly to my daughter Ruth, you are certainly my friend. I was a little surprised but not at all displeased to have you pen me a few lines. It is pleasant to think of the agreeableness between yourself and our daughter. You say, "It seems so good to have somebody I can talk with about heavenly things." Talk about heavenly things? Why, that is the last thing the vast host of professors of religion talk about. They can talk about their church, their preacher, themselves and their achievements, and what they intend to accomplish for the Lord, but "heavenly things" are not their theme, because they lack the experience and knowledge of "heavenly things." Dear friend, one must be born again to understand heavenly things. (John iii. 12.) The "heavenly kingdom" (2 Tim. iv. 18,) no one can see or enter unless born of God. It is through the riches of God's grace that any poor sinner is a partaker of "the heavenly calling," (Heb. iii. 1,) and then begins that true and vital experience of "heavenly things." God gave unto his people discoveries of heavenly things long, long ago, in types and shadows, (Heb. viii. 5,) and then the true regenerate people of God worshiped him in spirit and in truth through these divinely appointed patterns of things in the heavens. (Heb. ix. 23.) Take a glimpse with me of heavenly things under the

old testament times, and though in types and shadows much of it is pictured to our view, yet see what gracious gospel realities are to be seen. First, there is the Israelite, a sinner; he is troubled over his iniquities, and he comes unto God. What a mercy for a poor, guilty sinner to be drawn to the Lord. (Jer. xxxi. 3.) He comes before the Lord. How? In his self-righteousness? with the works of his own hands? with good resolutions and fair promises that he will henceforth be better, live a religious life, say his prayers, read the Scriptures, join a church and work for the Lord, &c.? No; one that was a true Israelite comes unto God in God's revealed way. God taught and moved Abel, and he, a poor sinner, by faith offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. (Heb. xi. 4.) The true worshiper seeks access unto God by sacrifice. (Psalms l. 5.) He came with a lamb without blemish and without spot. Dear friend, be not deceived, no matter what any one may say, there is only one way, one hope by which a sinner can draw nigh unto God. (Heb. vii. 19.) It is very blessed to have peace with God, and to stand in justification of life (Rom. v. 18,) before him; but it is only through Jesus that we have access by faith into this grace. (Rom. v. 2.) Saith Christ our Savior, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me."—John xiv. 6. The worshiper came with a lamb for a burnt offering, and wended his way with sighs and grief, with an humble and contrite heart to the place appointed by the Lord. (Exodus xxv. 8–22.) There he found the priesthood, and an high priest, too, who could "have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way."—Heb. v. 2. The sinful one then laid his hands on the head of his sacrifice and confessed over it his sins unto God. What next? O that wondrous mystery! The lamb was slain, its blood was shed, for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. (Heb. ix. 22.) It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul. (Lev. xvii. 11; Rom. v. 11.) The body of the lamb that was slain was burnt upon the altar, a burnt sacrifice, a propitiation. (Rom. iii. 25.) Thus reconciliation was made through the blood, (2 Chron. xxix. 24,) and sweet peace and pardon were shed abroad in the heart. What heavenly balm for the sin-stricken heart! These are heavenly things, things pertaining to God. What can be better for a sin-troubled heart than the healing, blissful hope that Jesus is our merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God? (Heb. ii. 17.) Am I related to, have I that heartfelt intimacy with Jesus? Have I been so taught that my sin-stricken, yearning heart cries out,

> "Nothing in my hand I bring,
> Simply to thy cross I cling;
> Naked, come to thee for dress;
> Helpless, look to thee for grace;
> Black, I to the fountain fly;
> Wash me, Savior, or I die"?

Tens of thousands sing these words and the language is utterly meaningless coming from their lips. They are such of whom Jesus speaks: "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips: but their heart is far from me."—Matt. xv. 8. But the heart of the quickened sinner is not far from God; O no. God has put within that one a heart to know him. (Jer. xxiv. 7; xxxii. 39.) A heart capable of knowing God, yearning to know God, to know him in all heavenly intimacy. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."—John xvii. 3. They shall be all taught of God. (John vi. 45.) "They shall all know me, from

the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord."—Jer. xxxi. 34. Am I included in the number of such favored ones? O, is there any heart intimacy between me and God through the Mediator Jesus Christ? If in very truth this is so, then in part our spiritual, heavenly knowledge will be in this: "All shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."—Heb. viii. 11, 12. Sweet, sweet is forgiveness of sins flowing to the sin-burdened one through Jesus' precious blood. (Psalms xxxviii. 4; Eph. i. 7.) This is to know the Lord. (Jer. ix. 24.) What are we in ourselves? All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. (Isa. lxiv. 6.) The best obedience of our hands is defiled, and dares not appear in God's sight. O what shall a guilty sinner do, hell-deserving, "ready to perish"? (Isa. xxvii. 13.) Can he alleviate his woes? Can he satisfy the claims of eternal justice? Can he atone for his vile transgressions of God's holy law? What can he do to reconcile himself unto the high and Holy One who inhabiteth eternity, who is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look upon iniquity? (Hab. i. 13.) We are without strength (Rom. v. 6,) to accomplish our justification from the curse of the law. (Gal. iii. 10–12.) We can give the Lord no help, for we learn by divine teaching the truth, and it is very humbling, that we have no might. (Isa. xl. 29–31.) There was none to help our Lord Jesus Christ, and he needed none from poor, helpless sinners. (Isa. lxiii. 5.) He trod the winepress alone, his own arm brought salvation, and this is his voice from Calvary: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else."—Isa. xlv. 22. Have you, have I, been drawn to the crucified One? (John xii. 32.) Very blessed is that sinner who has eyes of faith and love to look unto Jesus.

"Looking to Jesus we look not in vain;
Christ's our salvation, the Lamb that was slain.
In love and pity for us he hath died,
Our sins he atoned, the law satisfied."

Perhaps I have presented to you a glimpse of heavenly things; things that pertain not to this world, they are invisible to mortal sight, but are related to that kingdom that is not of this world. (John xviii. 36.) O there are manifold other glimpses of heavenly things testified of in the gospel of Christ, and that are seen and tasted by faith in that vital experience known in the souls of those whom God hath translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son. (Col. i. 13.) While in the earth believers are subject to tribulation and temptations; they know, every one of them, the plague of their own heart, (1 Kings viii. 31,) and need constant mercy and loving-kindness from the Lord in their pilgrimage. But they are looking for a better country, that is, an heavenly one. (Heb. xi. 16.) Are we such pilgrims walking in the footsteps of the ransomed flock? Then the steps of our faith (Rom. iv. 12,) will be in the blood and righteousness of Christ. He, our High Priest, Sacrifice, Redeemer and Forerunner, has entered within the veil with his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption for us, and now appears in our behalf before the Majesty in the heavens. (Heb. vi. 20.) What a glorious revelation is this! What a sacred hope to cherish in the heart of a poor, sinful worm like me!

"Love moved him to die, on this I rely;
My Savior hath loved me, I cannot tell why;
But this I can tell, he hath loved me so well
As to lay down his life to redeem me from hell."

Perhaps you never received such a let-

ter as this before. It will do you no harm. May the Lord make it a blessing to you. Give my kind love to Ruth, and with kindly feelings to yourself, I am your well wisher and servant in the gospel of Christ,

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

FAIRFAX, Va., March 6, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I do not feel that I can write for publication, but I do feel I would like much to talk a little now and then to those who can and do, but this I am deprived of the most of the time. I do not want to write if I cannot comfort the brethren, and I have always felt I needed that part myself, for my pathway thus far through life has not been very smooth, and my understanding of spiritual things is very limited. I cannot write to the point, if so be that I see it at all. Yet while I have been reading the dear Bible, sometimes I have thought I could behold the most beautiful and sublime things. I sit here in my little room and preach to my wife the unsearchable riches of Christ as those pictures of silver shine forth to my view. I forget for the moment what manner of man I am. Such was the case a few weeks ago. While I read the account of Joseph and his brethren, I felt I was really there with them, was one of them, and indeed all of them, and I was carried back to my much earlier life, when my sin had found me out, and in much distress and trembling, and by reason of the famine in the land of my nativity, I was told there was only one course for me, and that was to go down in darkness and death, where Joseph, my elder Brother, had been, by me, sold into bondage, to be bound like him and die with him there. What a crushing blow that was to me, but I must go, all my own strength and boasted ability swept away, the heavens were as brass, and the cool, refreshing rain of peace was cut off and my tongue failed for thirst; the Lord did not seem to hear my cry, and I felt there was no hope for me, die I must, and was it not just, since I knew I was a sinner? and not only so, but I was born such. Is it not strange that any should undertake to remodel their own deformity especially a deformed heart like mine, full of envy and jealousy? There I saw it all. Why should I have my eyes open on such a sight? I think I must have had a part and lot with Adam in the garden, and in him received the curse, and was driven out of the pleasure of the Lord (for that is what the name "Eden" means). I was conceived in sin and born a sinner. Now this sinner is in great distress, his bread is cut off, there is no water here at home (in the flesh), and death is at hand, the ground is cursed, and he knows that nothing but thorns and thistles are on every hand; and he knows something more, he knows he must die, for, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them," and now down in this dark place the cry will come up out of the heart, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" All my good resolutions are put in the sack and count for nothing, and even my own flesh is held as hostage. Whither can I fly? The letter killeth; I cannot do the things I would; I know I am vile; I would do good, but evil is present. One has told me all things that ever I did. I never did anything good, and it does not make me feel joyful. O for peace and rest from all distress. I hunger and thirst after righteousness, for by past experience I know I have none. With all things that ever

I did meeting me at every turn I am distressed; but the time was in God's purpose when we were called into the presence of Joseph (Jesus) and all others sent away, and he made himself known to us, dear brethren, and the question, "Is your father yet alive?" comes home, for we know then there is a God of purpose, a Father that is good and gracious, who has watched over us in all these years, and has cared for us and provided a ransom, even before the world began; for his holy purpose is the foundation of all his mighty works, and Jesus is described as the lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Was not that sweet peace which fell upon us as our spiritual Joseph told us he is our brother, one with us? Just here I should like to talk, if I had the ability, but you can think this point over and we can enjoy it together, though many miles intervene between us, geographically, but the oneness of God is not affected by distance; not only a union, as two joined together, but unity as one, and cannot be separated. I love the doctrine; Christ and his bride are one, as the Father and the Son are one; as Jesus said, addressing the Father in prayer, "That they [that believe] may be one, even as we are one." Blessed thought, one with the Father; what can one want more? But, dear brethren, we are not yet taken out of the world, and we have need to learn a little each day what Jesus means in that prayer to his Father and our Father, when he asks that they which the Father hath given him shall be with him (Jesus) where he is; the word being in the present tense, "where I am," therefore suffer with him, or, in other words, not even be separated in death itself; and as the holy Comforter, the Spirit of truth, brings this to our understanding in our experience, we are able to glory in our infirmities, and we are enabled to see that the sacrifice of our body is a reasonable service, and we fall on Joseph's neck, and those who are without may indeed hear our cry of contrition, but they cannot see our humility. But Jesus is our brother indeed, and while our sins cause our sorrow, seeing we meant it for evil, yet while still holding us in his tender embrace he tells us that God meant it for good. Now does not this prove the flesh cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God, and that such judgment cannot be the true interpretation of God's holy character? It is indeed foolishness to all such, and the cause is found in the fact that God is a Spirit, and that those who know him in that character look for him and approach him in a spiritual manner, and therefore the letter kills, but the Spirit is life; and as this life dawns upon us we see and know that which we never knew before: good and evil, and we lose confidence in the flesh and rejoice in the Spirit. We know the earth brings forth thorns and thistles, and in prayer and supplication we are brought to the throne of grace, and there we meet our spiritual Joseph and find in him that sympathy we so much crave. Why, dear brethren, while seated here writing these imperfect lines methinks I hear an old hymn being sung that I have not heard for many years:

> "Jesus can make a dying bed
> Feel soft as downy pillows are;
> While on his breast I lean my head,
> And breathe my life out sweetly there."

O how I love these cheerful moments, and I often become foolish, and, like some of old, I want to set up a tabernacle and live here, not heeding the prayer of Jesus that it is better to be with him where he was, and glory in my infirmities. I must go with him through the valley as well as to the

mountain-top; and as he bare our sins in his own body, we must have infirmities of the flesh to keep us in the knowledge of our dependence upon him. We are loth at all times to give up some theory of our own, and often cling to it until it drags us down, but in our extremity we must come to Jesus for relief, and he proves a brother indeed, and while faithful in telling us all things that ever we did, he still consoles us, saying, "I am Joseph your brother," and, Is my Father yet alive in your daily experience? Does his righteousness outshine yours? Does your righteousness become as filthy rags as your eyes are turned within? Has he revealed himself to you as he has not to the world? If this be true, then to know God is eternal life. Then, says Jesus, I am here to succor you, to sustain and comfort you, and you shall not be separated; yours shall be the bread of eternal life, and you shall drink of the river of life, for you are my flesh and my bones, I in you and you in me; ye are mine and I am thine.

"What more can he say than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge hath fled?"

Dear brethren, I have written much, and for aught I know have said nothing worth your perusal, but I did so much wish to talk with you a little, and feel certain I have failed in manner and intent, but I do hope you may be able to read between the lines and see the work of the Lord in it. Inasmuch as I hope there was no intent other than to talk in an encouraging way, with the truth of God in view, and as I have not heard any preaching since October (have been much indoors since then), I get hungry and want to hear from my kindred. I get to talking sometimes, and do not know where to stop, but you must try to think as kindly of me as you can. The dear Old Baptists have always been lenient with me, and I should not wonder if their kindness has spoiled me as if I were a babe; sometimes I think they mistake me for Benjamin, but as the first shall be last, and the last first, it may turn out that as a Gentile sinner I may be found mingling with the saints. Like a child whose garments are polluted while playing in the sand, the mother needs to look after and care for it, so I need the faithfulness of my brethren in love and gracious sympathy to help me over all my faults. Let me beg your forgiveness for this intrusion on your time and patience, and may the Lord continue his blessings to you, is my desire for the truth's sake.

Your brother, I hope,

ELI T. KIDWELL.

LANHAM, W. Va., Dec. 1, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—As to-day is the first day of December, and it being our regular meeting day of the Hopewell Church of Predestinarian Baptists, who meet on the first Sunday, and Saturday before, in each month, this time being set by our fathers in the year of 1833, and, as we humbly hope, we are a little handful of the fallen sons and daughters of Adam's posterity, who have been led by the unerring Spirit of Almighty God to love the truth and to walk in the way our fathers trod, having no desire to fall in with the institutions of men, but to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. I have just returned from our meeting, and while reading the last number of the SIGNS my eyes feel on the writing of sister E. Johnson. I am glad I went to that part of West Virginia and preached to the comfort of one of God's humble children, for the prophet Isaiah has said, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith

your God." I can say that I enjoy being in such company as sister Johnson's, for I feel that she is a mother in Israel, and if the Lord spares my life until spring I hope to see you all again.

The modern Pharisees claim we have no right to go back into the old Scriptures for a text, as the old Scriptures were done away by the coming of Christ to make the way possible and passable for the universe of mankind; but I must say to the modern Pharisee, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." God's people are set forth under the appellation of sheep, and when sheep go to battle against the enemy they go back in order to gather power, that when they come they may come with power. For this reason God's ministers go back to the old Scriptures and come with the prophecy of Isaiah xliv. 21–25: "Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee. Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel. Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone: that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself; that frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish." O no, the modern Pharisees do not want to go back into the old Scriptures, for they know that prophecy is predestination, and as perverters of the truth they want to mislead or befog the minds of their hearers, and if it were possible they would deceive the very elect. But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel; for the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. "The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." Bless his holy name, he hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, knowing that man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ. Even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law, for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. Dear kindred in Christ, we are freed from the law of sin and death by the shedding of the blood of the Son of God on the cross for us, and his blood cleanses us from all sin; so it is a special atonement for a special people, the spiritual Israel, of which natural Israel was a type. The redeemed of the Lord are of every kindred, tongue and people upon earth, for they shall all know him, from the least of them to the greatest, and the promise is that he will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities he will remember no more. "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee,

O people saved by the Lord." He speaks, and it is done; commands, and it stands fast. He is not wooing and trying to save poor, lost sinners, as the modern Pharisees continually tell their congregations in their synagogues on the Sabbath day (law Sunday), Isaiah x. 15: "Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood." Now, dear kindred in Christ, we do not beg our axe to let us take it to cut wood, or whatever we want to use it for, for we are sovereign over the axe; neither does the carpenter beg the saw to let him take it and saw this plank; no, no wooing and begging, for he is sovereign over the saw; neither does the staff lift itself up to meet us on half way ground. What would you think if you were to hear one begging his axe or saw to let him use it to fell a tree or saw a plank? Surely you would think that such an one was fit for the asylum. The Pharisee preacher will tell poor, dead sinners to make the start, and then Jesus will meet them half way; that he is willing and wants to save them, but they will not let him; they will say that their salvation is conditional—if the dead sinner will do his part, then God will do his. I must say that I am sorry to know the spirit of conditional salvation has gotten into the Old School Baptist churches in some parts of the country, and, to befog the minds of the Baptists, they have coupled conditional time to the salvation of all, and they that will not accept of this conditional time salvation they say are absoluters. Well, predestination is absolute or it is not predestination at all, and I am glad to know that we, the Pocatalico Association, are not bothered with any of the ministry as sowers of mingled seed, for the gospel field is not to be sown with mingled seed, neither is a garment made of wool and linen to come upon thee. I feel sure that God has as many as three hundred who can lap as a dog lappeth water, as when the dog is lapping his eyes are looking in every direction, and I believe that God has his watchmen on the walls of Zion, and they are watching for the welfare of Zion.

Do with this as you think best.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 3, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have prevailed upon brother McConnell to allow me to send the following portion of a letter to you for publication in the SIGNS. I feel that many who read it will understand what good reason I have for wishing it published.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Sept. 1, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—It is kind in you to write encouragingly respecting my forthcoming visit among the Canadian brethren; I hope your expectation will be fulfilled, but I have my doubts. In all the ten years of my trying to speak of what great things the Lord has done for them that fear him, I have not attained to any assurance of ever being called of the Lord to speak in his name. I am not averse to talking about the blessedness of them that die in the Lord; indeed, I love to speak of how Jesus appears to me as glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe, but a sense of insufficiency to rightly divide the word of truth to the edification of the saints always oppresses me. I do not think I de-

sire an eloquence of speech that will soothe and excite the mind with ecstatic frames and feelings; nor do I think I want a reputation for being systematic and convincing in my delivery, but I do desire ability to present the truth in such a way as to make men think, consider their way and ponder their path. I covet the gift of them that make me think, consider, and examine myself whether I be in the faith. The things and life which the saints live are the text of the only message I want to deliver: that they have passed from death unto life; that they who dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." And so it seems to me that we behold the glory of the only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, in the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; we see Jesus crowned with glory and honor in the sufferings of death. That through weakness of the flesh we are crucified with Christ, that the power of Christ rests upon us in confessing to insufficiency in self, that the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God, is the cross of Christ, the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth, the gospel, through which immortality is brought to light, is the only way and name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved, is wonderful to me. I love this doctrine in the hope that perhaps it has been given me not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. Surely his name is "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Eternal life is in him, and though he be merciful, good and wise, were it not for his eternity what ground of comfort could we have in any of his attributes? What could support us if such things pertained to a God that was other than of one mind? What hope of a resurrection to newness of life could we have, or the continuance of it, if that God who promised it were capable of change? He would not be almighty if his continuance were not eternal. But as his days shall have no end, so his covenant will be, for it is founded on his eternity. He hath sworn by his life that the covenant shall be everlasting. The promise of eternal life is as old as God himself in regard to the purpose of the promise made to Christ for us: "Eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." What a wonderful mystery it is! It cannot be comprehended by a creature of time; but God shows his covenant to his elect, and they speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto their glory. His eternal power is terror to them that hate him, but comfort to them that love him, "for God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." He "hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began: but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." Therefore the gospel, which is the new covenant published, is called the everlasting gospel (Rev. xiv. 6), and can no more be altered

and perish than God can deny himself. "This God is our God for ever and ever."

I must bring this letter to a close, for it is late in the night. I have been at it for more than four hours, but much of the time has been occupied in reading, and thinking of Scripture read, and my travel of mind has been pleasant. I wish such times were more frequent with me, but when I feel the need of such exercise most I am burdened with a sense of bondage and destitution.

Remember me in love to your wife and family, and believe me, in the fellowship of the gospel, your unworthy brother,

JOHN McCONNELL.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., Dec. 2, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I see that my subscription expires this month, so will remit two dollars, as the SIGNS is like one of our family, having always seen it in my father's home, and when I did not take it father sent it to me. I love to read the letters from the dear brethren and sisters, as they tell my mind much better than I can, although strangers (some of them) in the flesh. While sitting alone this morning my mind goes back some years, when living in the city, how we went to meetings, and what a desire I had to be good and do good as they said they did, and were so sure of going to heaven. I never felt that I was good, and the longer I live the more I see my faults. I never liked the name Old School Baptist, somehow I had a horror of it, and would never say my father and mother were Old Baptists, but I always liked that people. Time went on and my mind was troubled, but I fought against it. Then we moved near the Old Baptist meeting-house here on Schoharie Hill, where my folks had always attended. I went often with a dear sister and brother, one time to a two days meeting. Elder Bogardus spoke in the afternoon, and it seemed he looked and spoke directly to me. It did seem my heart would break, and I would choke; the tears rolled down my face in spite of me. I thought, If I ever get out of here I never will be so foolish as to come again. Their faces appeared very bright as we all left; I tried to throw it off, for I had always declared I never would be an Old School Baptist—anything but that. I often called my husband an Old School Baptist because he would not go with me to other meetings; but still I kept going to the Old Baptist meeting. The Lord saw fit to take a little daughter one year old, and O the trouble and sorrow I passed through. I did not want to bend to His will, but during the long, lonely nights watching another baby three years old, expecting death again, I was made to feel and say, The Lord's will be done, not mine. I felt, What he does is right. He took the one and spared the other. What sore trials we are brought through to teach us what poor, helpless creatures we are. I thought I would live a better life and do much better. One very cold morning in January a brother on his way to meeting stopped in to get warm. I talked a little while we were fixing to go with him, and he said, "I think you must be interested in Old Baptist meetings to go such a morning as this." We sat and talked some time, and he asked me if I had ever felt like talking to the church. No, I said; I did not want him to see I had any love for them. He went on, and I was made to take my Bible in my hand, and then all I could say or think was, Lord, lead me the way I should go. My heart was full, and when we reached the

meeting-house I felt as if I would choke, and when meeting was over they asked me if I did not have some remarks to make. I could not swallow, and what I said I do not know, but I felt somewhat relieved. They took me in, but O the sorrow and trouble since then; instead of growing better I see more and more of my sinful self.

We have had some good meetings this summer. Brother Rounds made us a visit, and O what comforting words he spoke; but since then he has passed away. We held meeting at our home, and quite a company came to hear him. One dear brother said he had not attended a meeting in forty years that had done him so much good; it seemed a hush came over the room while he spoke, and there were but few dry eyes when he was through; many spoke of how much good it had done them; they felt they would like to keep it forever in mind. I heard him again at sister Kinney's, at Schoharie; his text was, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; lean not unto thine own understanding." How many times his words, face and form come before me when I feel dark and lonely, and how sad we felt when told he had gone, but felt that our loss is his eternal gain. What sore trials we are called to pass through, but I feel it is good for us, it weans us from the things of this world. I hope the Lord will speak words of comfort to his family, that they may not mourn as those without hope. When I read of the sorrows of others I feel that I sometimes mourn with blessings in my hand, for it is very pleasant for husband and wife to believe the same doctrine. My husband has always believed and loved the Old School Baptist doctrine. He has said he could never tell when the light was first made manifest. He feels in his every day life that what comes to us is all right, but I often feel I would like it some other way, and forget it is God at the helm. Many times I have declared I never would be an Old School Baptist, but how quickly we can be made to see the truth. How I like to have meetings and entertain the church in our home.

Jan. 8, 1908.—You will see by the first date of my letter I commenced this some time ago, but I felt it was not fit to send to the editors. Often I feel I would like to say how much we think of them, and hope the Lord will help them, be with them and comfort them in their trials of another year.

Elder Vail stopped over January 6th with us, on his way to Schenectady, and what good sermons we did hear. How glad we are to have him visit us.

I have written far more than I had any idea of, and I feel like laying it aside, but I want the SIGNS, so will send it along with the order, and hope you will overlook all mistakes.

Wishing you all a prosperous new year, I remain your unworthy sister, if one at all, (MRS.) GEO. A. MIERS.

BOWDOIN, Maine, Feb. 27, 1908.

JAMES E. HUBBARD—DEAR BROTHER:—You may be somewhat surprised to receive a letter from me, but I have no doubt you will be glad to hear from this poor old sinner. It is not because I have forgotten you that I have not written you; no, brother Hubbard, you have been in my mind, together with all the loved ones with whom I have had sweet and precious communion in times that are past, and if I am not deceived I have them all in my heart. This must be the heart in which God has written his law, which is spoken of in Jeremiah xxxi. 33. Love is the fulfilling of this law.

I suppose you would like to know how it is with us temporally. My wife and I have been at home alone thus far this winter. We have gotten along very well. I have been fairly well up to the middle of this month, when I had what the doctor called "la grippe;" I was in bed three days and in the house seven. I have not gotten entirely over it yet, but am so that I can do my work, but do not have much to do. My wife is not very well, but has been able to do her work thus far this winter. When I was taken sick our daughter Rachel and husband, of Bath, were visiting us, and they stayed until I was able to do my work. We cannot expect to be as well as we were in our younger days. I am now in my seventy-third year, and my wife is in her seventy-fourth year. The Lord has been very good to me all these years, and I think I feel much as Jacob expressed himself to Pharaoh: "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been." "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" Can I do as the psalmist said: "I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people"? The cup of salvation, spoken of by David, I think prefigures the same cup that Jesus took (see Matt. xxvi. 27,) and said, "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Also in 1 Cor. x. 16: "The cup of blessing, which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?" Therefore we conclude that the blood is the life, and it was the life that was given for the salvation of his church, and that this is what was embodied in the expression of the psalmist, "I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord." Simeon testified of him; while he was a child, he took him up in his arms, blessed God and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people."

Brother Hubbard, am I right in my elucidation of the text, or am I wrong? If I am right, then the cup of salvation must be the blood of Jesus, which was his life. The name of Jesus is the only name that ever was given or ever will be given in whom is salvation. How sweet the name of Jesus is when by the Spirit it is given to the hungry and thirsty, the poor in spirit, and to all who have no might. There are many theories in the world in this time in relation to salvation, and as to how man can be saved. It is, Lo here is Christ, and, Lo there, but all who have been born again, not of corruptible, but of incorruptible seed, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, are not tossed to and fro, and turned about with every wind of doctrine, but they speak the truth in love, and they grow up into him in all things, who is the Head, which is Christ. Whom have we in heaven but him? and is there any on earth that we desire beside him? He is our life, and the life we now live in the flesh we live by the faith of him. There is nothing needful for the heirs of God but what is in the fullness of him that filleth all in all. When he ascended up on high he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry and the edifying of the body of Christ, which is his church, and we are members of his body. In Psalms cix. is recorded a wonderful ministry. What a wonderful travail the church of Christ must pass through until

they all come in the unity of the faith, and in the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. My dear brother, there are things without number (seemingly) that I do not know, but one thing I do know, and that is, I am an undeserving sinner, and many times I mourn and weep, and my heart seems full almost to bursting, and whatever I do or resolve to do brings me no relief, all is vanity; but I hope the Lord hath searched me and known me; yes, he knoweth my downsittings and my uprisings; he understandeth my thoughts afar off. "For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether."

I have written a long letter, but I do not know that there is anything in it that a child of God can fellowship, but it is all I have, and I can say as Peter said to the man who asked alms of him: "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee." What I have written I hope is in the name of Jesus.

With love to you and sister Hubbard, and all the church of the firstborn, I am, I hope, your brother in the faith of Jesus,

Z. M. BEAL.

DUART, Ontario, Nov. 2, 1907.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I have had much thought of late of trying to write to you, I might as well say for my own comfort, for what is in my miserable life that would be a comfort to others, unless there be something that testifies of Christ? and of that I am a poor judge, though I ofttimes enjoy seeing the mark in my brethren. I enjoyed the Lobo meeting, and also the little meeting in London, although I only got away from there when I became tossed by the conflicts of life, which lasted for five weeks without one ray of comfort. In a desert land, in a waste howling wilderness, at the end of that time the Lord remembered me in mercy, he restored again to me the joy of his salvation; but as I look back now I can but feel it was to prepare me for greater conflicts. The day I was raised above the law that seemed to torment me, in showing me my own weaknesses, I was called to the bedside of a young man, and I thought, Surely the preparation is for this; but no, instead of this, right in our own family, or rather my husband's former home, I was called to the bedside of the young woman I introduced to you as my niece the night you spoke in London. She came home ill of pneumonia. I stayed by her for twelve days, until she passed away. She was too sick from the first to converse; she would say a few words at a time; she spoke of you, and I said, "You remember the little meeting in London?" She said, "Yes;" I said, "He spoke very nice," and she said, "Yes." She was a good friend to the church, although I know nothing of the travel of her mind. We did not want to give her up, but we must be submissive, as the Lord makes no mistakes.

Now I will speak a little about the preparation. Well, at that time I had an object in view, and it seemed as if I was commanded to examine myself to see if there was any wicked way in what I was about to do, and I thought if it turned out wrong I would repent in dust and ashes. At that time I felt repentance in my heart, and I think I was faithful and right; then came the words, The Lord commanded Moses to smite the rock, and the water came forth. Before this as I heard and read these words it was just Moses and the rock, but now the word was made flesh and Moses became the

law, the rock became Christ and the water the water of salvation; but nearer still it came, for this word dwelt among men. Then I could see, Ye are bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. The law shows us our weakness, and at the command of the Lord smites our hardened hearts and then true repentance ebbs forth. This was very sweet to me, I felt that the Lord was merciful, and I believe I rejoiced in spirit.

I will now tell you more of myself in plainer words. I sometimes feel that I am the vilest, most unruly character in the church. This is all in my own heart; O the conflict that goes on there. There was a time I thought I could keep this old nature in subjection, but it has so completely defeated me that I am made to cry, Unclean; I am of unclean lips. I often feel to be a hypocrite when I speak to the brethren of the things concerning Christ. Now, Elder Ker, I believe I am giving you my true character; should I keep these things hid? We are commanded to confess our faults. Truly these things are so great a weight upon me that I cannot do the things I would, yet I sometimes take courage, though I am such a vile sinner that with the mind I serve the law of God. I will ask you nothing about your coming to Canada to live, as I trust the Lord will decide and answer the question that is in my mind concerning you. As much as it would please me I would not wish to be selfish, so feel to leave it in better hands. I will now say good-by for the present, hoping to see you some time. Answer if you find time, but do not burden yourself, it will be all right.

Hoping you and your family are well, I am your unworthy sister in hope of immortality,

(MRS.) P. ALLISON.

[WE appreciate the above kind letter, and feel to deeply sympathize with our sister in her trials and conflicts. She has, no doubt, as in days past, felt the presence of the Lord to keep and comfort her. His blessed promises are sure to his children, and to all such as know, by that peculiar experience, the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, he reveals himself; in the very conflict is the revelation.—K.]

JOHN XIV. 18.

"I WILL not leave you comfortless: I will come to you."

These words were spoken by Jesus a short time before he was crucified. He promised to send the Comforter unto the disciples, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive. If we receive the assurance from a friend that he will come to us in the time of trouble and comfort us, we feel very thankful to him for the promise of consolation; but our friend may be hindered from coming, or we may be absent from home when he does come, and we fail to receive the comfort and consolation he had for us, and we think he has quite deserted and forsaken us, and we straightway begin to cherish hard feelings toward him and to say he has proven false, when we thought him to be true; but when we meet again everything is explained, and we find we have wronged our friend in accusing him of unfaithfulness when he has always been found ready and willing to help us in every time of need. If we can feel to accuse an earthly friend of deserting us, how much more will we be ready to say the Lord has forsaken us; our God will be gracious no more; but "the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear" his people who trust in him. "It

is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy;" for it is written, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." The Lord has said, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn." Let him that walketh in darkness and hath no light trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon his God. "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Sometimes when we are tried we seem to be deserted by all our earthly friends, and to add to our trouble we find the Lord has forsaken us, too; and when we meet our supposed friends, hoping to get some word of comfort or consolation, we find them anxious to get away from us, and we are left alone in the desert with nothing to cheer us, and we are ready to say, Hath the Lord forsaken me quite? Will my God be gracious no more? But we are just as safe when we are in the fiery furnace as we are when on the mountain-top, for at the time appointed the Lord will return unto us, and all our friends will return at the same time, for we find the words true in our case: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Blessed is that people whose God is the Lord; "they shall run, and not be weary, and they shall walk, and not faint."

"Wait on the Lord, with courage wait;
My soul, disdain to fear;
The righteous Judge is at the gate,
And thy redemption near."

"The way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Jesus said, "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." We are to forget the steps already trod, and onward urge our way. Look not back, was the command given to Lot's wife, which command she disobeyed and was turned into a pillar of salt. There is a way the eagle's eye hath not seen, and the lion's whelp hath not trod, and the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein. This God is our God forever, he will be our guide even unto death.

May we ever be prepared to walk in the way the Lord has appointed, that it may be well with us.

H. BEAKES.

HOWELLS, N. Y., March 3, 1908.

LONG GREEN, Md., March, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS, and the many dear ones with whom I have been associated for the past thirty-seven years: —I have loved you all many more years than thirty-seven, with a sacred love, and though not speaking it, while yet feeling this wonderful love, how dear and lovely these loved ones appear to me, even though I cannot call them brother or sister.

I desire a little space in the SIGNS to reply to some questions, and will be as brief as possible.

It is generally known that my whole nervous system was broken down some five years ago, from over office work, and I have been a charge ever since upon my devoted wife, whom the Lord has sustained with strength and a willing mind to give me all needed attention. I will say to all inquiring friends that I am still living, and that is all I know. I will also say that I was eighty years of age on the third of this month. That I should be spared so long is a wonderful thought, and beyond my comprehension. My judgment is as clear as it ever was, but

my flesh is too weak to keep up with my brain. I have been confined most all winter, and the end was often seemingly near. Welcome rest, if Jesus leads.

Next I wish to speak of congratulations on my birthday, which were about one hundred, and such rich messages of love that I have been humbled beyond all expression; I am not worthy; but I want to express my sincere thanks to every one who felt in his or her heart to thus address this insignificant creature. It was a perfect surprise. Surely, brethren and dear ones, you have overestimated my gift. I have been looking for it for more than thirty years and have never found it. While lying in my bed very ill, my friends looking for my death and my mind nearly a blank, those precious letters were brought to me and some of them read, and brother Frank G. Scott walked in and commenced to talk. What a wonderful change came over me; all was life now. How I loved those people, and my tongue began to speak. While very weak, I could no more restrain my feelings than I could die; and I did not want to restrain them either. The letters have all been meat and drink to me. Some from the ministers were eloquent indeed; all were lovely. But probably I have said enough of this.

Many requests to write for the SIGNS sound strange in my ears. I am empty, and that must be my answer. Brethren, why do you not write? I am one of those foolish ones who want to do much that they have no power to do, and one of the things I most desire to do, and that I always fail in, and cannot know, is whether I have even desired to pray. When I hear my brethren pray, sometimes I do not want to miss one word, and wish that I could pray that way. Then again, at other times I do not hear it and am empty to it all. Then I wonder if I say words in the way of request if that can be prayer. I feel the need of some strong hand to direct, and I believe that God is able to direct me; but will he do so? That is the important question. Some one may say, You must have faith. That is the very thing I most desire, but it seems beyond my reach. The question of prayer has come up in my mind times without number, and I almost always ask myself, Have you ever prayed? In an instant the answer will come, No. Then immediately the words: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Then, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Can this be prayer? If so, then I have prayed thousands of times since 1870; and I think, brother Chick, you have not forgotten that you were praying at the same time. What never-to-be-forgotten days! I must confess that all these many years the Lord has been dealing with me; yes, for these eighty years he has been leading me. I speak of myself in this way not for self-praise, but for the glory of God and the humbling of the flesh.

I must stop, as my pen cannot keep pace with my mind. I must mention those dear messages of love again. I feel as though I would like to say farewell. If you can publish this, do so, that the dear ones may pray for me.

Your little brother,

MILTON DANCE.

[THE time mentioned by brother Dance when we were praying at the same time, neither knowing the state of mind of the other, is a very precious memory in our mind. Had we known about his eightieth birthday we also would have written him.—C.]

PARIS, MO., DEC. 5, 1907.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I first became a subscriber to the SIGNS about the year 1858, and have been a constant reader nearly all the time since, and I have never lost a single copy through the mail. I consider the SIGNS the most substantial paper published among the Baptists in the United States that I have seen; it has pursued the most straightforward course. I do not claim perfection for it, or for any human being; perfection is found in our God only, and he is the source of all good. I have enjoyed reading the SIGNS very much, and hope to see it continue in the future as in the past.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. F. SUTTON.

VERY IMPORTANT NOTICE.

"THE Department has not attempted heretofore to deal by regulation with the practice on the part of some publishers of mailing for an indefinite period papers to persons whose subscriptions have long expired, and no rules upon that subject were promulgated. However, such rules have now been made, and are as follows:

A reasonable time will be allowed publishers to secure renewals of subscriptions, but unless subscriptions are expressly renewed after the term for which they are paid, within the following periods: dailies, within three months; tri-weeklies, within six months; semi-weeklies, within nine months; weeklies, within one year; semi-monthlies, within three months; monthlies, within four months; bi-monthlies, within six months; quarterlies, within six months, they shall not be counted in the legitimate list of subscribers, and copies mailed on account thereof shall not be accepted for mailing at the second-class postage rate of one cent a pound, but may be mailed at the transient second-class postage rate of one cent for each four ounces or fraction thereof, prepaid by stamps affixed."

The above is quoted from the new postal law, effective January 1st, 1908. This law prescribes that on all subscriptions three months in arrears, extra postage must be paid, and as the SIGNS OF THE TIMES must comply with this law, we earnestly request all subscribers who are in arrears to send on at once the amounts in full due us, and that all subscribers keep their subscriptions paid up, if only for three months at a time. To send the SIGNS to delinquent subscribers means that six times the usual postage be paid. This would necessitate a financial burden which the SIGNS is illy able to bear. We trust that this new law may have a tendency to prove the loyalty of our subscribers to the SIGNS, and that they may come to the front at once, and in remitting their back dues relieve us of additional burden and anxiety.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1908.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

HUMAN MEANS.

DOES our God make use of human means in the work of quickening sinners, dead in sin, into divine life?

Old School Baptists, so far as we know, are very generally of one mind with regard to this question. It is the view of almost all who bear our name, that the work of quickening the dead into life is alone the prerogative of God, and that he performs this work in every instance by the direct operation of his Holy Spirit. It is not therefore because there is in general any opposition to this view of the matter that we feel to call attention to it, but it may be well to once more examine the reasons why we believe as we do. It is good, and according to the teaching of the inspired word, that we be ready always to give a reason to every one that asks us of the faith that is in us. While we here desire to give our reason for our faith in this matter, we would not misrepresent the views of any other one.

The religious world in general believes that our God makes use of very many human means, and very many natural causes or events, in carrying on this work of salvation. Preaching, praying, singing, protracted effort meetings, Sunday Schools, the picturing out of deathbed scenes, the terrors of hell and the blessedness of heaven, anxious benches, together with a thousand other things, are used to this end. More than this, they profess that this work is so placed in the hands of men that if thousands perish it is, largely at least, because christians have not done their duty toward them. This same religious world does not teach nor believe that men are really dead in trespasses and in sins, but that they are simply asleep, or in a trance, or dormant, and that anything that may serve to awaken them is sufficient. To this religious world conversion and the quickening of the dead are one and the same thing; therefore they urge men to turn from their sins and live, to repent, to believe and be saved, as though all this work were not a miracle at all, but simply to be brought about by the ordinary exercise of one's own powers of heart and will. In their view, to turn from sin to God requires no other work in the heart than it does for one to turn from labor to pleasure, or from serving one man to serving another. All this ignores and denies that men are dead to God, dead in sin, and that they need to receive another life than is already theirs: divine life, eternal life, which the Savior alone can give. This system implies that the love of God is in every man's heart, together with the love of evil; that men are simply hung in a balance, and that whichever way they may incline themselves, that is the way in which the balance shall be turned. To those who hold this theory, a christian is in nowise different from a sinner, only in this, that now he is seeking to do good, and then he was seeking to do evil. As a man dissipated and reprobate may be induced to turn from his dissipation to sobriety by an appeal to his reason and his affections, so

in the work of salvation, to appeal to reason and sympathy, in their view, is sufficient to turn men from sin to God. Surely we need not stop to argue how contrary all this is to the testimony of the Bible, or how foreign it is to all real experience of vital godliness in the soul. It is not to these that we desire to speak in this article; but there are some whom we have known, who stand opposed to the thought that man has any power at all in the work of his own salvation, or in the work of another's salvation, who declare that all this work is the Lord's work, and that to him belongs all the glory and praise; that, in short, salvation is of the Lord from first to last, who yet think that in this work of salvation our God does make use of men and means. They deny that any power exists in men of themselves, or in any exercises of worship, to quicken the dead sinner, but think that by these means God works and saves men and women from sin and death. To these who ascribe salvation to the Lord, and do so out of a deep, heartfelt experience of his power, we here desire to present what seems to us to be the teachings of the Scripture in this matter. The fact that every Arminian holds to what may be called the "means doctrine" does not of course settle that it is untrue or not in accord with the Scriptures, but it does create a presumption against it. This very fact requires this view to be regarded with suspicion by all lovers of grace until, or unless, it can be shown that the word of God plainly teaches it. The fact, on the other hand, that good, spiritual men have believed this theory, and that good and spiritual men do yet, some of them, believe this theory, of course ought to cause us to carefully examine their reasons for believing it, but still from both we ought to turn away to see what the word of God teaches, and this alone ought to be our standard. It is a fact that we do see growing up out of this "means theory" almost all the evils of which we have before spoken, such as revival meetings, appeals to the unconverted to be converted and live, together with Sunday Schools, Theological seminaries, Missionary societies, with Salvation Army methods and Christian Endeavor societies, for all of which there is not the shadow of authority in the word of God. This creates a strong presumption in the very beginning that the theory is itself wrong, unscriptural and God-dishonoring. All these uncommanded societies declare that, in the view of those who organized them, our God was not sufficiently wise to perfect all that was needful for his church to practice in all ages that should come, and if the daughters are so evil, it looks as though the mother of them must also be contrary to God. The real origin of all these societies and efforts is the thought that the salvation of men depends upon other men and their efforts. But after all it is simply a question of what the teachings of the Bible are with regard to this matter. In connection with this we desire to call attention to a few thoughts. First, the beginning of the work of salvation, as relates to our personal experience of it, is presented in the New Testament as a quickening, as a birth from above, and as a creation. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." "Hath quickened us together with Christ." "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him." See also John

iii. concerning the new birth, with reference to which we will here only say that the expression, "being born again," more literally reads, "born from above," or "born of God;" as is said in another Scripture, "being born of the Spirit," "born by the Word of God." And concerning the figure of creation we read, "Created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." And they that are in Christ are said to be new creatures. There are many more Scriptures which indirectly set forth the same truth that is presented in these that have been here quoted, but these will suffice for the present. We have quoted these to set forth this one fact, viz., that there is not here the slightest intimation that either in giving life, in the new birth or in this new creation, any means whatever, save the living Word of God, is made use of. In all these figures of speech, setting forth the blessed work of salvation in the soul, there is no intimation of any power or presence save the power and presence of the God of salvation. If the work be regarded as a creation, what room is there for the introduction of any human means? In the figure of a birth it is expressly declared by the Redeemer to be from above, and of the Spirit, and by the living Word of God, with no intimation that any other means are used by the Author of this birth, and in the Scriptures which present this work as a quickening from the dead, we see no single sentence introduced implying than it is any other than a direct work of the Spirit of God in the heart.

But it may be asked, Do not those brethren who seem to think otherwise have some Scriptures to which they refer, and which they think support their view in this matter? Yes, there are some Scriptures to which they refer and which they understand do justify them in believing that God does make use of preaching and other spiritual exercises in quickening the dead in sin, some of which we will here allude to: "And thou, child, shalt be called the Prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord, to prepare his ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto his people, by the remission of their sins, * * * to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." This was said of John the Baptist. To Paul it was said that he was sent of God "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins." And concerning the preaching of Peter upon the day of Pentecost it is said that its effect was that many were pricked in the heart and cried out, "What shall we do?" Other Scriptures are referred to, but these will, we think, cover the whole ground. It is thought that these Scriptures prove that our God uses preaching and teaching to quicken the dead or to bring men to salvation. But let us carefully examine these quotations; do they, either one of them, present the work of quickening the dead? Is it, for instance, the work of quickening to give knowledge of salvation, or to give light to them that sit in darkness, or to guide their feet in the way of peace? Do the dead sit in darkness? Can those who have not been saved receive the knowledge of salvation? Can the feet of the dead be guided in the way of peace? Are not all these already living men only needing instruction and

consolation? Then are the blind dead? If we say a man is blind, do we not also really say that he is living? If men are turned from darkness to light, are they not living men? If they are turned from the power of Satan unto God, is it not evident that they who are thus affected are men who already live and feel their bondage? In all this work, preaching or teaching is effectual to the end designed, through the power of God using the word preached. But in all this work, life in the heart is presupposed. These are no longer dead in sin, but so alive to God that they desire to be freed from sin. Then concerning the preaching of Peter at Pentecost, the effect of which is compared to pricking in the heart, is it not evident that such as were thus affected were already quickened souls? Dead men may be pricked in the heart and there will be no response from them, but to prick a living man in the heart is to cause him to cry out. These Scriptures then do not teach that these men were used to quicken dead sinners into life, but rather to do good to living souls by instruction, warning, guidance, consolation, or in any other way by which living souls may receive blessing from God, and all other Scriptures which have been referred to as sustaining this view stand upon the same ground, they do not, any of them, refer to the work of quickening the dead. Thus the work of God, which he works alone and directly in the soul, and that which he is pleased to do through his chosen servants in their ministry, or by his providences, for the spiritual benefit and growth in knowledge and in grace of his people, are very distinctly divided one from the other. Into the mysterious path by which life comes, God alone enters, but into that work which may be made use of to bless and do good to the living, the gracious Lord is pleased to bring his chosen ones, that, giving a cup of cold water to his disciples in the name of a disciple, they may receive a disciple's reward. It was a blessed work when Jesus said to his disciples, Roll away the stone. It was a blessed work when again shortly afterward he said to them, Take away the graveclothes from him, but it was his own immediate work to say to Lazarus, "Come forth." When, in that instance, the disciples had removed the stone, Lazarus was still dead. When they had removed the graveclothes it did not add to the life which was already his; but to take away the stone opened the way for him to come forth when the voice of the Master should bid him live, and taking away the graveclothes unbound his hands and feet, so that he could walk and act freely as other living men did. What the disciples could do the Master bade them do, but what they could have no part in was the giving of life to the dead. We have here used this narrative as an illustration, and we think we may say with truth that if the voice of Jesus alone could raise the dead naturally into life, much more must it be true that his voice alone can raise up the dead in sin to love and serve God in the life of the Spirit.

But it has been asked, Is it not the blessed Lord after all who ministers comfort through preaching? Do not instruction and warning and reproof and consolation depend upon his power, through the Spirit, for their success? Now if this be so, it is said, and it is the work of God through his servants to do these things, why should he not also make use of men to quicken the dead and it still be his work alone? We answer that the Bible must settle what is the fact of the case, and not what might seem reasonable to

ourselves. We think that we have shown what the Bible teaches in the thoughts presented above. What our God could do and what he has done may be two different things. Our God does bring blessings to living men by preaching and in many other ways, and he does indeed bid his servants feed his sheep, feed his lambs; he bids them comfort his people, and by their ministry he does indeed build his people up on their holy faith, and his servants are commanded to go about this work and to strive to this end. In a ministry of nearly forty-four years we have ever felt to strive to feed and comfort the needy in Zion, but we have never felt to strive to quicken the dead, and we do not believe that any true servant of God ever goes into the pulpit with any such effort in view. He does go into the pulpit with the solemn desire to comfort and instruct and edify the living in Zion, yet he knows that even these things are from the power of God, manifested through his ministry, and he will seek to always render praise to God alone for all the access which his ministry has had to the hearts of men. He is bidden to feed the sheep, but he is not bidden to quicken the dead. Here is the whole difference, right in the solemn heart-work, by which he is prepared to go forth preaching the word of God. If the quickening of the dead were instrumentally in the preaching of the word, as instruction and consolation and edification of the body of Christ are, then indeed the Lord would impress upon his servants the desire to put forth their efforts in that direction, even as they do in the direction of feeding the flock. The sum of the whole matter is, ministers are bidden to feed the flock, but never to quicken the dead. C.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Florence Elizabeth Peters, daughter of Peter and Elizabeth Kephart, was born near Spencerville, Ohio, Dec. 6th, 1862; was married to Henry M. Peters April 22nd, 1885; died at her home near Lightsville, Ohio, March 3rd, 1908. Besides her husband and two sons, Ralph and Brice, she leaves an aged mother, one sister, Mrs. B. S. Shoots, of Bellefontaine, Ohio, and three brothers: Joseph D. and Samuel F. Kephart, of Spencerville, Ohio, and J. E. T. Kephart, of Waldron, Kansas. As a daughter she performed willingly and lovingly the duties of daughter and sister to the ones composing the family circle so dear to her heart. As a pupil in the public schools of Spencerville, she was a general favorite with teachers and pupils alike. As a teacher in the public school, she governed with discipline that commanded equally the respect and admiration of her pupils, and made of each a loving friend. As a friend she was loyal and true, rejoicing with them in gladness and speaking comforting words to those in sorrow. It was indeed hers to speak words "fitly spoken." As a wife she was ever eager to further the best interests of her husband, and as a mother she with an untiring devotion ever instilled into the minds of her two darling sons the principles of true manhood. She united with the Old School Baptist Church in Spencerville, in April, 1882, and ever remained steadfast in the faith and belief that "The Lord knoweth them that are his." Words cannot express the beauty of her character, it was beyond description. Just at the dawning of morning of March 3rd, 1908, her spirit left the weary body and returned to God who gave it, to dwell forever in "a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

MAGGIE SHOOTS.

BELLEFONTAINE, Ohio.

AT her request no funeral sermon was preached, but she desired prayer at the family home; then we repaired to the cemetery at Rose Hill, Darke Co., Ohio. Her husband and youngest son were very sick with pneumonia at the time of her death, and this perhaps was why she requested to have no funeral discourse, as it was impossible for her husband and son to hear it. They have partially recovered at this writing (March 19th), and we trust may fully recover. The above obituary was written by her sister, Mrs. Maggie Shoots. N. PETERS.

PORTLAND, Ind.

James Higgins Hill, our aged brother, departed this life Monday, Sept. 2nd, 1907, at the residence of his niece, Mrs. J. M. Dalrymple, in Hopewell, N. J., in the 87th year of his age. Brother Hill had been a member of the Second Hopewell Church, at Harbourton, N. J., for about sixty years, and was clerk of

that church for fifty-five years. For many years, ending about thirty years ago, he was a teacher in the public schools of Mercer County. He was the oldest ex-member of the New Jersey legislature, being elected to that body in 1853. For many years he followed the occupation of farming, but retired from that and had lived in this village for perhaps twenty years past. He was a man of active mind and body, and up to within a couple of years of his death no man moved about the village with more activity than he. He had been married twice, his second wife departing this life a few years ago. Several children were born to him, but only one survives him: Kendrick Hill, of Trenton. He was the last of quite a large family, several of whom were well known among Old School Baptists in this section of the country. Brother Hill was one of those who are deeply exercised with regard to the things of the Spirit. We have often heard him tell of the early convictions of his mind, and then of the sudden deliverance which was afforded him into the light and liberty of the gospel. In after years, through many deep afflictions which were his to bear, this hope proved as an anchor of the soul to him, and he was not left to doubt and fear as much as is the case with very many. In his outward afflictions the Lord was pleased to keep him from much of inward darkness, so that he was sustained, and his mind stayed on God. Brother Hill was naturally a kind-hearted, honorable man, but in these things he was not exalted in himself, but walked humbly before God and his brethren. He commanded the entire respect of all who knew him, and all felt deep sympathy for him in the trials of his life, which were many and great. But he reached the end of all sorrow and pain, and rests, we doubt not, with the Lord.

The funeral service was held on Wednesday, Sept. 4th, and a large concourse of people testified to their esteem and sorrow at the loss from their midst. It was the privilege of his niece and her family to care for him during the last sickness of about three weeks, and to see that he lacked for nothing that human hands could minister to him. For ourself, we would say that we feel we have lost a friend indeed, whom we shall greatly miss. C.

Howard L. Hopkins, son of Leonard H. and Annie Hopkins, was born in Whiteside County, Ill., Sept. 2nd, 1906, and departed this life March 13th, 1908, aged 1 year, 6 months and 8 days. Little Howard's life was one of sunshine and joy to his parents, brothers and sisters. His disposition was lovely. His death was as one entering a peaceful sleep. He leaves to mourn, his father, mother, two brothers and three sisters.

The writer was called by wire and tried to speak comfortingly to the bereaved family from 1 Cor. xv. 26, after which his little body was laid in the Leon cemetery. I would say to brother and sister Hopkins, He has only gone before, sorrow not, therefore, as those who have no hope.

S. H. HUMPHREY.

Lizzie Clendenin, a member of the Welch Tract Church, Delaware, departed this life Sept. 20th, 1907, of a complication of diseases. She was baptized in 1868, by Elder Barton, assisted by Elder Leachman. Funeral services were held at Welch Tract, Monday, Sept. 23rd, at which time Elder Wm. Grafton and Elder John G. Eubanks spoke very comfortingly to her brother, Edwin Clendenin, and to her many friends. Her age was 68 years and 11 months. Edwin Clendenin, her brother, is the only remaining member of the family.

EDWIN CLENDENIN.

NEWARK, Del., April 1, 1908.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE following are appointments for Elder H. C. Ker in Canada:

London, April 16th; Lobo, 17th; Ekfrid, Sunday, 19th; Duart, 21st; Dunwich, 22nd; St. Thomas, 23rd.

DUNCAN McALPINE, Church Clerk.

IF the Lord will, I will attend appointments as follows:

Tuesday night, April 21st, Mt. Sterling, Ky.; Wednesday night, 22nd, Winchester, Ky.; Thursday night, 23rd, Georgetown, Ky.; Friday morning, 24th, Sadieville, Ky.; Saturday and Sunday, 25th and 26th, Mays Lick, Ky.; Monday afternoon, 27th, Little Flock, Ky.; Tuesday, 28th, Shelbyville, Ky.; Wednesday, 29th, Bethel, Ky.; Friday to Sunday, May 1st, 2nd and 3rd, Nashville, Tenn.; Monday night, 4th, Turners, Ky.; Wednesday, 6th, Mill Creek, Ohio.

SILAS H. DURAND.

ELDER John Slauson will fill the following appointments, nothing preventing:

Otego, N. Y., Tuesday, April 21st, 2 p. m.; Brookdale, Pa., Wednesday, 22nd, 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m.; Waverly, N. Y., 23rd, 2 p. m.; Broughton Hollow, Pa., 24th, 7 p. m.; Cammal, Pa., 25th and 26th, Saturday evening, 7:30, Sunday, 10:30 a. m., 2 and 7 p. m.

D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Ann Wicks, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. C. White, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. N. E. Askew, Ark., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THERE will be a three days meeting held with the Sidling Hill Church of Primitive Baptists, situated in Fulton County, Pa., the first three days of May, 1908. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth, and especially to our ministering brethren. Come on Thursday to Hancock, Maryland, on the B. & O. or Western Maryland railroad, where you will be met and cared for.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Harford Church, Harford County, Md., May 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1908.

THE Delaware Association is appointed to be held with the Salem Church, Philadelphia, Pa., May 27th, 28th and 29th, 1908, in the Odd Fellows' Temple, corner Broad and Cherry streets (eighth floor). Those arriving in the city on Tuesday will please go to 1910 North Twenty-second St. (B. F. Coulter) or 1735 North Seventh St. (Mrs. Craven.) Those coming on Wednesday morning will go direct to the place of meeting. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

B. F. COULTER, Pastor.
FRANKLIN TERRY, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, N. J., June 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1908.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., June 10th, 11th and 12th, 1908.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

THERE are a few Old School Baptists in Riverside, Cal., and they have meeting the first and third Sundays in each month, at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

W. D. BALL.

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11:00 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

BY J. E. BEEBE & COMPANY,

MIDDLETOWN, ORANGE CO., NEW YORK,

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Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 76. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1908. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Dec. 23, 1907.

BELOVED BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS, AND THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH, ONE IN THE CRUCIFIED REDEEMER:—I trust that God for Christ's sake hath given me a name which is more precious to me than any the world can afford. The world with all its wealth gives no hope beyond this life. As I am nearing the close of another year I try as much as in me is to return thanks to our all-wise and loving Benefactor for the preservation of my unprofitable life. I have been abundantly blessed with reasonable health even down to old age. I am now in my seventy-sixth year, and have had a name among Old School Baptists, if my memory serves me right, about forty-five years. I feel to hope that I have not disgraced the name, but when I look at myself I find nothing but dross; there is no soundness in me, if I compare my righteousness with that of the blessed Savior. He was perfect in all things, and fulfilled every jot and tittle of the law; he made it honorable, and magnified it; he shed his blood for such poor, unworthy creatures as we are. We, none of us, have any merit to offer that would serve to bring us into his favor. To me the great question is, "Am I his, or am I not?" Without his grace, love and mercy I am forever lost. It was a great wonder to John when he was given the vision of the woman who is the bride, the Lamb's wife. She was clothed with the sun, which is Christ our righteousness, and shone forth in the glittering rays of the Bridegroom's glory. This is so great a wonder that it is the admiration of both men and angels.

This gospel is revealed to us, and the angels desire to look into these things. But while we are such poor, sinful creatures, yet we have the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ, according to the riches of the Father's grace, and we cry out with the apostle, "O the depth of the riches both of the knowledge and wisdom of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" The obedience of the Son of God is our righteousness. Such sinners as we feel ourselves to be need the infinite grace of this righteousness for our salvation, and this grace is the endless wonder of men and angels. God had purposed this grace to come to his elect chil-

dren, who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. The natural man has never known this nor understood it, it has never entered into his heart. Natural men say it is a foolish thing to claim that we shall be justified by the righteousness and obedience of Christ, exclusive of our own works, but the redeemed of the Lord have received not the spirit of the world, but that which is of God, that they may know the things which are freely given to them of God. This righteousness is a free gift, revealed to them by the Spirit. This is one of the deep things of God which are hidden from the natural man, but heaven-born souls know it by revelation from above through the Spirit. What a true and happy change is wrought in the poor sinner when he receives these heavenly instructions from the lips of our blessed Jesus and learns meekness from his example, and wisdom, and the image of the blessed Lord is implanted in his heart to shine more and more until the Sun of righteousness arises in everlasting day. The crown of glory and the fullness of joy we owe alone to our Redeemer's righteousness. Now if we are the children of God through the suffering of our blessed Redeemer, let us glorify our Father who is in heaven, for we are created in Christ unto all good works. I will put my Spirit in you, saith the Lord, that ye may walk in my statutes. Unbelieving Pharisees, being ignorant of God's righteousness, go about to establish their own righteousness, but "the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it; and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it." That soul built upon Christ shall never be removed by the isms, floods, afflictions, temptations and trials of all kinds that may arise against him; these things shall never destroy his salvation. Christ, the Rock of immutability, will hold that soul unshaken through life, and in death, and forever. These things shall be for the true followers of Jesus, the faithful believers in him. Jesus said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." O the folly of poor sinners who plead their own righteousness, and who build their hope of life upon it; it will prove but a sandy foundation which cannot stand, and great will be the fall of that building built upon it when the floods come. What a disappointment to the Pharisee, who claims to be doing God's will, to be found upon the left hand, with the sorrowful sentence, Depart from me, I never knew you. There is no true refuge but Christ, the Lord our righteousness. This is that glorious hiding-place which God has prepared for poor sinners, such as we are. What a grievous wrong it is for men to press sinners to obey the law, and so make themselves righteous in the sight of God, when there is no law given that can give life to any man. There is but one way for a sinner to be justified before God, and that is by the obedience of Christ alone. Had there been a law given which could have given life, righteousness would have come by the law; but as there is no law given which can give life, it is a vain and foolish thing to exhort men to become righteous by the work of their own hands. The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise of life might be by faith in Christ. Man may labor all his days to make himself righteous before God, and to make his peace with God, and all his labor shall be lost at last, he being unable to reach the portals of the holy city in that way. These have never seen that righteousness which is revealed in salvation and wrought out by Christ. How

shall this glory be declared to those who have never seen it for themselves? And how shall it be declared by those who have themselves never seen it? Is there not reason to fear that many who are called ministers of the gospel are preachers of Moses rather than of Christ? Their ministry rather tends to lead souls into bondage and death than to liberty and life in the gospel. But how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, that bring glad tidings of good things. This is through the justifying righteousness of the Son of God, and faith in Jesus is wrought in the sinner, and so this salvation is brought to him. Those who have attained to the knowledge of God's free mercy in Christ are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and are washed from their sins in his blood and clothed with his righteous robe. Our Redeemer, without stripping himself, hath clothed us; he hath clothed us with the garments of salvation. How bright these ornaments shine! How white these garments are!

"The Spirit wrought our faith and love,
And hope and every grace,
But Jesus spent his life to work
The robe of righteousness."

In his holy life and death Jesus stands related to his people; he said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." The Gentiles are grafted into Christ and partake of the substance of the vine and of its fatness, and are filled with its blossoms and laden with its fruit. If then we are one with Christ, as much as the branches are one with the vine, it must follow that his wisdom is ours to enlighten us, his righteousness is ours to justify us, his Spirit ours to sanctify us, and his redemption ours to make us completely and eternally happy. Christ is united to his people by a tie closer and nearer than any earthly tie. Not only are we said to be his children, but also his spouse. He said, "I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness; * * * and thou shalt know the Lord." Christ is head over all things to the church, to rule in their behalf supremely. Literally, the head and the members are of one nature, so Christ and his members make up one mystical body. As we are so nearly related and so closely united to the blessed Jesus, we shall hereafter be partakers of the same heavenly glory. "My beloved is mine, and I am his." This is the undoubted effect of this divine union. "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." What a great mercy bestowed upon poor sinners, and what a favor it is to obtain the least regard from the King immortal. What an honor to be admitted into this family. What an honor to be admitted as one of the meanest of the family. How wonderful to be his espoused bride, to be of his sacred body, to have him for our everlasting Father, to have him for our Bridegroom, our heavenly Head, he who is the Maker of all worlds, the Sovereign of all creatures. How our hearts must admire the condescension of the adorable Redeemer; and what are the fruits of such fellowship, the consequences of such a union? With great humility we must say, May this be the position which we shall share with all the saints of God. This salvation is of the Lord; in no other way can a poor sinner be saved. The Son of man spent his strength seeking out the poor and afflicted; he rescued wretched souls from darkness and from sin, he made his followers partakers of the divine nature and prepared them for never-ending bliss, and he is still carrying on his great work. Nothing could divert him from attending

to his Father's business in the days of his flesh. He sought no honors, he coveted no rewards of men, but he wore out his life, and laid it down at last, for the ransom of his spouse. This was all his desire. He longed for the fatal hour till he should be baptized with the baptism of his sufferings, being bathed in his own blood and plunged into death. Through his obedience and death he procured all these inestimable blessings, and the pardon of our sins, and our reconciliation with God. O what unmerited love for prodigals, for rebels against God! By him we have free access to the Father in all our difficulties and trials, and we hope to reign with him in everlasting glory. This doctrine was promulgated centuries ago by able ministers of the new testament, and it is still taught by His true and faithful servants. For this the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is still contending, for the benefit of God's dear children scattered abroad in the world. The Lord, as of old, still reserves unto himself a remnant who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Such stand firm upon the walls of Zion, holding up the blessed Savior as the friend of sinners. He is their righteousness, and not the works of the law.

I have written here some paragraphs from able ministers who stood firm for the faith in time past, and I trust the household of faith may be benefited. I feel to rejoice that this is the doctrine of revelation. It is contrary to nature, and therefore the world will not accept it. I send this to you for your consideration, and would like to have it published, as I believe it to be the truth, pointing out the only road to everlasting happiness. God's faithful ministers are made zealous to proclaim these glorious tidings of redemption.

Now may the love of God abound with the household of faith, that they may abide the day of his coming, is the prayer of your brother in hope of eternal life through Christ,

O. B. HICKERSON.

FRAGMENTS.

WHEN the Lord told Gideon that by his hand he would save Israel, Gideon must have a sign, for surely the thing appeared impossible. He thought he could propose a sign that would satisfy him, so he asked that dew should be on the fleece which he would put in the floor, and all the ground be dry. It was so, but he was mistaken; doubts were still in his mind. So he said, Let me prove thee this once; "Let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew. And God did so that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground."

It does not appear that Gideon expressed any further doubt, or a need of more signs. Three most wonderful signs had now been given him of his own choosing, but as the Lord reduces his army, sending back twenty-two thousand who are afraid, and then nine thousand and seven hundred more, retaining only three hundred who have a peculiar way of drinking water, it is evident that there is still doubt in his mind, and that he fears to go down to fight that great host with only three hundred unarmed men. Only by faith could he possibly believe that he could thus overcome that countless multitude.

When a sinful man sees the terrible array of enemies within him; when the multitude of his sinful thoughts and words and acts rise up against him, it seems impossible for him to believe any promise in his favor; a successful warfare

against these terrible enemies appears impossible. Gideon did not know what sign or proof he really needed, nor does the poor sinner know what will bring sweet assurance into his soul and cause him to believe, but the Lord does; the word of power must come from him. Thomas did not know what was needed to make him believe that Jesus was risen from the dead, but when Jesus called him by name then he knew.

The Lord sent Gideon down to the host, and there in the midst of his enemies, that lay along the valley like grasshoppers for multitude, he was to hear from one of them, through a dream, the very thing which the Lord had already told him he would do. "A man that told a dream to his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along. And his fellow answered and said, This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host." Thus the Lord gave the dream and its interpretation, and Gideon feared no more; his hands were now strengthened, as the Lord had told him they should be. But what a wonderful figure. A cake of barley bread to represent a victorious sword; so small, and yet to smite and overturn a tent. And it was not sent, to human appearance, but came tumbling, as though without purpose or aim; but it was bread, a sustainer of life. The power by which we live and overcome is bread; it is only a cake, and of the commonest kind of bread, but it is the sword of Gideon. "I am the bread of life," said the dear Savior. "He that eateth me, even he shall live by me." The three hundred represent those to whom the apostle says, "Ye are one bread." That peculiar oneness represented by a loaf of bread is only known and felt by faith.

When the truth and power of God's salvation is made known to a sinner by the Spirit of God, compelling belief, the word of assurance seems to come while we are right in the midst of our enemies; we seem to see them acknowledging their overthrow, as those Midianites in the tent acknowledged their defeat in the hearing of Gideon. Right up out of the darkness of our nature comes the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, as God commanded the light to shine out of darkness in the natural creation.

It is only by faith we can see and believe that things impossible with men are possible with God. We have this treasure, "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God," in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of men. Therefore in this wonderful battle the three hundred are so placed and so armed as to represent the power of God alone in salvation. Three companies, three dispensations, so placed that all are looking at Gideon; not looking at the enemy, as in worldly warfare, but at Jesus. "Look on me," said Gideon, and "as I do, so shall ye do." All of the Lord's people throughout all time are looking on Jesus. A very few, as they appear to human view, but seen by faith, a company that no man can number. But they are before the throne, looking unto Jesus, a little cake of barley bread tumbling into a host of ten thousand tents, as in the sight of men, but in the sight of faith a sword which overthrows all the tents of Midian and smites them that they lay along. Armed only with lights in empty pitchers, and a trum-

pet to sound the victory even before the battle begins. What assurance! The assurance of faith. "And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal; and they cried, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon. And they stood every man in his place round about the camp: and all the host ran, and cried, and fled." "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." This good fight of faith still goes on; it is in the hearts of God's people, and out of the sight of the natural man. The earthen vessels must be broken, and then the light shines out and the enemies are overcome, and we see the excellency of the power is of God and not of men. It is only through affliction that we overcome. It is only through great tribulation that we enter into the kingdom. It is only as the sufferings of Christ abound in us that our consolation aboundeth by Christ. It is only through suffering with him that we shall reign with him. It is only as we bear about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus that the life of Jesus is manifested in our mortal flesh.

How wonderful is the love of God in the heart of a poor sinner. How wonderfully is it manifested toward his children here in this world, in emotions of spiritual affection and in thoughts and acts of brotherly kindness toward them. Here is as nearly an experience as can be felt in this world of the fulfillment of that sweet command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The dear Savior is the only one who ever did or could fulfill any part of the law, and it is only as Christ is manifestly in us the hope of glory that we can experience and manifest this precious brotherly love. Those toward whom we feel that pure and holy love are very near to us, and their interests are ours to such an extent that we in spirit desire their welfare as we desire our own. We would not say a word that would lessen them in the love and esteem of any other. But O how the flesh in us lusts against the Spirit, so that we have to be upon our guard constantly in this respect against our vain, deceitful and malignant carnal mind, that it should not influence us against the current of this spiritual, brotherly love. We have the law written in the fleshly tables of our hearts by the Spirit of the living God, that we shall do unto others as we would that they should do unto us, and that we should put off the old man with his deeds; that we should put off hatred, and strife, and variance, and wrath, and malice, and all the works of the flesh, and put on loving-kindness, and mercy, and forbear one another in love, and forgive one another, if any have a quarrel against another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us.

What contrasts are seen in the character and in the circumstances of the experience of different people who are called by grace. Saul of Tarsus, fierce, full of cruel zeal, struck down to the earth in an instant by a great light, and made to cry humbly, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Lydia, a quiet, industrious woman, having her heart opened to attend to the things spoken by Paul, and immediately asking, as a great favor, the privilege of ministering to the saints. Manasseh, the terribly wicked and bloody king, sent down into a dungeon, there to be heartbroken for his crimes, and to beseech the Lord for mercy. John, the beloved disciple, leaning on Jesus' breast.

Jonah sent down to the bottom of the mountains and crying out of the belly of hell unto the Lord, and made to acknowledge that salvation is of the Lord; and the afflicted father, pleading that Jesus will heal his son, and crying, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." These, all so different, and in such different circumstances outwardly, are prepared by the same grace to sing together in glory the same new song, which no man can learn but they that are redeemed from the earth.

"FOR they are without fault before the throne of God." What a wonder this appears to be to the poor sinner who feels that he is full of faults, and yet has tremblingly rejoiced in a hope through rich and abounding grace. What a contrast is presented to his mind between them, so pure, and himself, so vile and full of evil; and how it almost takes away his hope of ever coming into such a holy company. But the gospel is again preached to him, and his heart is opened to receive it; how blessedly comes again the sweet truth that it is in Christ and not in ourselves that any do stand holy and unblamable before God in love. It is in Jesus and not in ourselves that we, redeemed by his blood from sin and death, are without fault before the throne of God.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

CHAGRIS, Okla., Feb. 12, 1908.

ELDER H. C. KER—MY BELOVED BROTHER:—I am a stranger to you in the flesh, but I hope we are kin in the spiritual kingdom, although I see no beauty in myself to claim such, but my hope is in Jesus, the finisher of our faith and salvation. Brother Ker, I feel too little to address you in spiritual talk, but I just want to tell you how your writing has comforted me; and all the messages in our good paper bring joy. Dear brother, if you will allow me to call you brother, I know if you could be with me you would have no fellowship for me, for I feel to be a castaway. I never hear any preaching from the Old Baptists, and they are the only people I have ever heard that feed me. Sometimes I get hungry to hear the pure word of grace preached as it is in Jesus, and often this hymn is a great pleasure to me:

"How tedious and tiresome the hours,
When Jesus no longer I see;
Sweet prospects, sweet birds and sweet flowers,
Have lost all their sweetness to me."

Yes, dear brother, it seems at times that my soul is cast down in sorrow and grief, and I say, O Lord, hear my cry. My heart is filled with sorrow and made to cry, Unclean, unclean; dear Lord, undertake for me. Yes, I hope the Lord will undertake for me. I hope the Lord has planted me here by his own right hand, and if I am one of his he will nourish and water me with his everlasting love; by his grace I shall be as a rose in the desert. The Lord has appointed a way for the feet of the saints, and "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." This Scripture has been a great comfort to me in my lonely sojourn here. I journey by this way still; when I look back over my sinful life and remember the hand of the Lord through it all I am made to say, as David did, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" I hope I can say in the spirit, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." We have

plenty of preaching in this country, but it is man's wisdom and preaching; their cry is for money to save sinners. Yes, the Lord said that deceivers should come and deceive many, but not the elect. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Yes, my brother, the Lord that I try to worship is the God that created the heaven and the earth, and all things therein, the God that fills immensity, "saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." My word shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish the thing whereunto I sent it. Hear, O Israel, the word of the Lord; there is no failure with him, for he saves his people from their sins, without any of their work. Israel is my anointed, and I will save them with an everlasting salvation; therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed. Jesus, the Son of God, was sent by the Father to save his people from their sins, and he said he came to do the will of the Father, and in his last moment he said, "It is finished." So, my brother, our eternal life and salvation are in Jesus. My soul's desire is to wait on the Lord. I find no place in my experience, if I have any, nor in the Scripture, where we are justified by works. What am I but a poor, sinful creature in the hand of the Lord, to do with me as seemeth good to him? "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun; which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it; and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple: the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes."

I will close, I did not intend to write so much. I wish you to send my paper to Duncan, Okla., instead of Chagris, as we will make our home there in a few days. You may publish this if according to your own judgment, for I know you are a better judge of spiritual things than I am, and please remember me at the throne of grace.

I send a letter for you to publish in the SIGNS, from a sister I have never seen in the flesh, but she has fed me with the crumbs of our Father's table, and I feel like dividing it with you all. O praise the Lord.

Your sister, in hope of an eternal home with Jesus,

NANCY CREEL.

SILVERTON, Texas, Feb. 23, 1908.

MRS. NANCY CREEL—DEAR AND PRECIOUS SISTER:—This Sunday evening my thoughts are of you, and of how you have ministered to me when in trouble, nakedness and want, with sweet words of comfort that caused me to look forward in hope of that blessed promise that the Lord will never leave nor forsake his people. Although poor and cast down at times, feeling his mercies are clean gone forever, and that none have ever had such burdens to bear, and that surely I cannot be one of them, often such blessings are sent me. I was not at home when your letter came, and did not return for some time, owing to the sick-

ness and death of a dear granddaughter, so please excuse me for my long delay, for I have often had you in mind, and when I received the SIGNS in which your good letter appeared, in turning through it to see the writers' names, I was thinking of you, and as my eyes rested on your name I wondered why, if the Lord did not reveal this to me, I was looking for it right then; and surely it is so, he gives the hunger and satisfies the same. But often in trying to comfort his children I feel my nothingness so keenly that I think I will never attempt the same again; then again I feel he is able to make something out of nothing, and bring water out of a rock. I know I am nothing and less than nothing, and my righteousness is as filthy rags; and the greatest wonder is why such a sinful mortal has ever been shown mercy of God, and how he could ever bow the heavens to sinful, mortal man and visit him in mercy. I hope never to be found openly denying his all-powerful name, for I believe he is God and beside him there is no Savior. My great desire is to honor his great and holy name before all men, and pray that I may ever be shown the right way, and that when I am called to lay this old body down I may feel his presence in whatever pain I must bear, for he can sweeten every pain. Dear sister, it will not be long until you and I will fall asleep, to awake no more to pain and sorrow which have so long been ours to suffer. I cannot tell you as I would like the way I see these things. I feel my great weakness in telling what seems plain to me of the absolute power and foreknowledge of God our Savior in all things pertaining to earth and heaven. I believe he is God, and beside him there is no other. "Fear not, little flock." Yes, the little flock is spoken to.

I will hope for a reply soon. Lovingly, a sister, I hope,

E. C. FOGERSON.

THE EMPTY VINE.

I AGAIN resume writing upon the above subject, which for several months has so irresistibly impressed my mind with its importance, not only as being typical under the law and prophetic age, but equally in representation and appropriateness applies to the militant church in the gospel dispensation. The old vine, or covenant of works, could only extend to the coming of the Messiah, at which time all the types and shadows of the old testament were fulfilled in Christ, as the types cease when the substance is reached. "Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."—Heb. viii. 13. This is a sublime subject, in common with, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."—2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. Therefore we see definitely the purpose and specific object of the written and revealed word of God as given to the church and perpetuated to the end of time as her only infallible rule of faith and practice, which contains every needful provision for the mutual welfare, comfort and protection to the "elect lady," the "bride, the Lamb's wife," so many metaphors like that of a vine, as trees, or plants, to indicate some circumstance or condition of the church in her travels through this world of tribulation, sorrow and adversity, demonstrated in the experimental life of every heaven-born heir, joint-heirs of the Lord Jesus Christ. We hear the prophet saying, "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry."—1 Sam. xv. 22, 23. King

Saul did not keep the law, neither did the carnal Israelites, and it was a great breach to them, which they never could remedy by any means on their part, because of their judicial blindness and the unprofitableness of the flesh; they could not meet the demands of injured justice as thundered from Mount Sinai. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" nevertheless the means to rescue this fallen people, or chosen heritage, was devised in the council chambers of eternity and manifested in the person of Christ, the anointed. (Dan. vii. 13; 1 John ii. 27.) The old Jewish vine, which symbolized the whole house of Israel, when they were living upright in humble obedience to the statutes and commandments of God, when the staff of Moses was lifted vertically to the heavens, then they were the very dread and terror of all the surrounding nations. (Exodus xvii. 11.) But when they went out after other gods whom they knew not, to worship idols and to rejoice in the works of their own hands, then the enemy prevailed, and Israel became sickly, and, like the empty vine, languished and became a reproach in the eyes of all nations. (Exodus xxxii.; Acts vii. 41.) Notwithstanding the waywardness, sin and rebellion of this vine, and its destitution, the Lord God would again from time to time visit them in loving-kindness and tender mercy, bringing them from the land of the enemy to worship God under their own vine and fig tree, to rejoice and magnify the name of the Lord their God, whose long forbearance and compassion overshadowed them in all their journeyings through the wilderness and brought them as a vine out of Egypt, cast out the heathen and planted it, (Psalms lxxx. 8,) yet often given into the hands of a cruel oppressor. Unmistakably this vine stretched from Abel to Moses, and from Moses to David, and from David to the carrying away of the Hebrews into Babylon, and from Babylonian captivity unto the birth of Christ, where the types and shadows, with all typical service, ended forever. In the gracious promises of God he said by his prophet, "Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered? But thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children."—Isaiah xlix. 24, 25. The captivity of this people and the subjugation of their city had been predicted by the prophets previous to the occurrence of that event: seventy years servitude under Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, at the expiration of which time, according to previous appointment, God saith of Cyrus, "He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid." —Isaiah xliv. 28. Did this purpose fail of accomplishment? No, in no wise, but was fully consummated in the restoration of the Jews to their own land. (See Isaiah xxvii. 3; Zech. iv. 9.)

Please pardon this digression, and I will pass to the New Testament and notice a few things there. Jesus said, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman." "I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."—John xv. 5, 6. Passing from one event to another, and from one eminence to another of the

old covenant or Jewish vine, is very interesting, and significant of the earthly temple that should pass away, which was glorious in the ministration thereof; "How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?"—2 Cor. iii. 7, 8. In view of the vital sonship of Christ and his peculiar treasure, or chosen people, to an inheritance beyond the shadowy veil, the prophet in sweet anticipation could hopefully declare, "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."—Hab. iii. 17, 18. This hope the twelve tribes of Israel lived in prospect of and desired to come. (Acts xxvi. 7.)

This is a time of great leanness of soul and declension among our churches in these parts, as the howl of the wolf may be heard in the camps, and the old mother Rome, with her thousands of institutions to deceive and to ensnare the simple, by promulgating the works of men as means of grace, based on conditions to be performed by the creature, and through their popular false religion of human devise, have exercised their poisonous influence over many, and often God's dear children are bewitched by these Judaizing teachers. "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." The days of tribulation and anguish seem to be gathering round the true church to destroy the liberty of conscience and to block the way to civil and religious freedom, under the reign of the second beast, or papal power; but the daughters of Babylon are enough divided so they cannot exactly shut the mouths of the Old School Baptists; therefore with Christ at the helm as our only Potentate we do not fear the rage of men nor the corrupt seas of religious fanaticism. Hence Christ is the way, the truth and the life, the true Vine in the blood of the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, the Branch that shall reign in righteousness and true holiness, as the resurrection life of all the saints, whose spiritual comfort, knowledge and consolation are derived from an invisible root, the Head of the church. In this new vine relationship in Christ is the vital union of the church that shall never wither, but endure as the sun of heaven throughout the vast amplitudes of never-ending eternity. The Lord bless and keep the feet of his poor, afflicted people everywhere.

I hope I have done no violence to the subject, but desire, however, that the dear editors and readers of the SIGNS cast over this the mantle of charity, and remember me at the throne of grace. Wishing you all a prosperous new year, with an increase in the circulation of the SIGNS, praying for the peace of the church, if it is the Lord's will, to revive his work in our midst, to the glory and praise of his great name. "In the way of righteousness is life; and in the pathway thereof there is no death."

In afflictions of the gospel,

ASA HOWARD.

KELLER, Texas, Jan. 24, 1908.

FRANK, W. Va., Feb. 20, 1908.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—And all who read it and love the doctrine of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I am, and have been for some time past, impressed to give a brief account of what I hope have been the dealings of the Lord with me, but feeling my weakness as I do, I have long hesitated to do so;

but now I will make the attempt and send it to you to do with as you think best.

I was born October 10th, 1850, in Franklin County, Virginia. My first serious impressions about death and the judgment were at the age of eleven. My good mother died when I was about three years old, and shortly after this time I was brought under a cruel stepmother, consequently when I became old enough to earn wages I was hired out (my father being poor), and my lot was generally among members of the Old School Baptist Church. At the time of these impressions I was hired to an uncle, who was an Old Baptist. He and his family were prompt attendants at their church meetings at old Bethel Church, in Franklin County, Va., at which place I heard Elder J. R. Martin preach. At that time I knew but little about what he preached or believed, but I thought he was something more than a man, and wished that I was a christian. These feelings would soon leave me, only to return with more force. Thus time passed until I was married, at the age of twenty, at which time I lived in Mercer County, W. Va. I often felt the necessity of being born again, but would console myself with the thought which I cherished, that I was a moral boy. I had never sworn nor run into numerous vices like many others had, especially one of my brothers, who was very wicked, and who would swear until I have been made to tremble at his rage. Still we were together a great deal, and often talked about getting religion, when I would think, Your chance is hopeless, as you are so outbreaking. In 1873 I moved with my wife and little son to Putnam County, Va. It seemed I had become careless as to my promises to do better which I had made. Shortly after I moved to my new home I received a letter from this very brother referred to above, stating that there had been a revival in the Laurel Creek Church and that he felt the Lord had pardoned his sins, and that he had joined the church. While reading this letter my poor heart was pierced; I now felt that I was the bad boy instead of my brother. My feeling now was, God, be merciful to me, a poor, hell-deserving sinner. Shortly after receiving this letter my trouble was so great I felt that I must go back to Laurel Creek Church, a distance of one hundred and forty miles. So I boarded the train with a heavy heart, and arrived at my destination in due time. I met those good people, but my trouble was so great I heard but little of what the preacher said. After the meeting was over I went home with one of my cousins to stay for the night, with several others who had just united with the church. All of these dear ones tried to comfort me, but in vain. I tried to hide my feelings from them. We finally retired for the night, though I did not feel like retiring, but wanted to go to the woods, where no eye but God's could behold me, and there implore His mercy. My burden of sin and guilt was so great I felt that I could not lie on the bed; but I retired, while in my bosom I was secretly begging forgiveness. Some time late in the night these beautiful words came into my troubled mind:

> "Show pity, Lord, O Lord forgive,
> Let a repenting sinner live;
> Are not thy mercies large and free?
> May not a sinner trust in thee?"

At this moment I felt that Christ was my Savior; I could view him expiring between heaven and earth to save a poor sinner like me. After some time in this happy frame of mind I slept for a short time, then I awoke and got up, my burden gone. But doubts began to enter my

mind so soon that I did not know whether Christ was my Savior or not. I much desired to be under my burden again, so that I could know more about it; I felt I lacked something, I knew not what. The next night I staid with the clerk of the church, and in a consoling way he said, "Cousin Creed, have you not an experience?" No, I replied, but went on to tell him what deep trouble of mind I had been in, and how I had been so sweetly relieved the night before, and made to rejoice in Christ as my Savior. I did not think at the time he would mistake what I had been telling him for an experience, but to my surprise he replied, "You have an experience of grace; go tell the church what great things the Lord has done for you." This gave me a great deal of trouble, for I had not thought of telling him an experience; I thought, He has misunderstood me, and I will try to say no more about it. I returned home to my little family, and found my dear companion and another one of my brothers under conviction. In a few days there was meeting at Providence, and I went; Elder John Byrnside preached, and took for his text 1 John iv. 18: "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear," &c. I felt it was all for me, and O how my poor soul drank in the precious words spoken by this dear old soldier of the cross; truly he was one who had the cause at heart. I had never heard such wonderful preaching before, although I had heard him, and others, preach many times, but not with the hearing ear, as I hope I did at this time. I shall never forget how he applied the text. He made it so clear to me that it strengthened me and renewed my hope and confidence in the perfect work of the great Mediator.

About this time I began reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which I borrowed from Elder Byrnside. At one time at his house I picked up a book, of which he had many; the title of it was, "Advice to Young Christians," but he handed me "The Old Baptist Test," and said, "This is a better book for you to read; take it home with you, read it and return it." He also kept me supplied with the SIGNS, as stated above, all of which I eagerly read. I subscribed for the SIGNS a few years later, and have been a constant subscriber and reader ever since (about thirty years).

How often my mind reverts to those happy seasons that are passed and gone, when the church was full of life. We met in an old log meeting-house, at the head of Turkey Creek. There was not so much fashion in those days, but all seemed to be filled with the love of God shed abroad in their hearts. Time passed on for about four years, and I could not stay away from meeting, though I would often resolve to go no more, as I could not keep from shedding tears, and was often ashamed of myself. In the year 1878, at a conference meeting, an opportunity was extended to any one who desired membership with the church. I went forward and in much weakness related a part of what I have here written, and to my surprise I was received as a candidate for baptism. There were others to be baptized, and the next Sunday was set to administer the ordinance. Accordingly we met, when with my dear wife and four others I was led down into the beautiful stream by Elder John Byrnside and buried in the watery grave, and arose to walk in newness of life. I have had a home with this people for about thirty years, and have never regretted casting my lot with them, but I have many times wondered why or how any of God's dear

people could have the love and fellowship for me which they have all along so abundantly manifested. With all my doubts and fears as regards the reality of my own case, I often feel a love for God and his poor and afflicted people which is worth more to me than all the wealth of this world, and my greatest pleasure is to meet with the saints of God in the house of the Lord, the place of worship, and, if not deceived, I have known something about the working of God's Spirit in the hearts of his people, which would make me almost forget my poor, sinful self for a few moments of time.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

C. M. BIRD.

PSALMS XLIV. 6.

"For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me."

The psalmist begins this song by calling to remembrance the work which the Lord did for Israel in the days of old: "We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old." We may look back in remembrance to any time in our lives and find dotted all along our journey times and places when and where the hand of God has been made manifest in leading us in the right way. If we notice the record of the footsteps of the children of Israel in their travel through the wilderness, we will see that their travel was straightforward and in uprightness as long as their walk was in obedience, but when they rebelled and disobeyed they walked very crooked indeed. In view of this fact regarding ourselves, and also the church in the literal wilderness, we are called upon to remember always that it is the Lord that worketh in us and setteth our feet in the way of life everlasting. The truth is presented to them in the third verse, that: "They got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them; but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favor unto them." These are wondrous declarations of promises fulfilled, and sweet evidences that the sure promises written in our hearts will also be all fulfilled.

In the days of old the bow and the sword were trusty weapons of warfare; the nations round about Israel put their trust in the bow and the sword to conquer and to put to flight their enemies. They did not know the power of God, who by his word could put thousands to flight before three hundred, and they without a bow or a sword. They had no knowledge of the God who could cause the stripling David, without armor, to slay the mighty giant of the Philistines. Even Israel in her ignorance and natural mindedness made gods of gold and silver and other things of earth, and said, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." But at this time in their history they were brought very low, and were made to see the hand of the Lord in their deliverance from their afflictions and all their host of enemies. They were brought to see that which was afterward experienced and recorded by the apostle when he said, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, and having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is ful-

filled." This is the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit, the fight of faith, in which the bow is laid aside and the sword sheathed. We trust in the victorious triumph of the Captain of our salvation, who is mighty in word and in deed to overcome all the combined powers of darkness. No man can be a good soldier if he trusteth not implicitly in his leader. If we would be followers of Christ and good soldiers of the cross, we must deny self, take up our cross and follow him, in which condition the following would be in true obedience. The Lord prepares his chosen soldiers for the hardships through which they must necessarily pass; he feeds them upon the healthy diet of his precious truth, and gives them exercises of heart and soul, which cause them to endure hardness. The Lord worketh in us by the spirit of his grace, by which we are made meet for his service. "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." The apostle therefore admonishes, "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ," and presents this excellent trait in all good soldiers, that "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." Now if you cannot any more trust in your bow, and you have received knowledge that your once trusty sword shall not save you, what manner of weapons will you use? You once thought you had a strong right arm, and you trusted in your good judgment that after a few more days of pleasure and sensual enjoyment you would by that same strength and judgment become a good man and righteous, but these vain boastings have been swept away as the bright shining of the sun dispels the morning dew. The good soldier tries his weapon before he goes to the battle; he first measures his own strength and then the strength and power of his weapon, what it will accomplish in his hand. These measurements and trials of our faith for the spiritual warfare have been made by the Spirit which worketh mightily in us. Our strength and dependence come from what has been wrought in us, and not the outward man. Therefore our whole armor is prepared for us, and the weapons of our choice are those which have been chosen for us of the Lord, and so the apostle gives us testimony and instruction: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." Now are you fully equipped with all power and strength from on high. You shall overcome, and put all things under your feet, because all things are put under the feet of Him who is our life, our strength and our salvation.

May we all be so armed and swallowed up of victory, and after this warfare is accomplished sing anthems of praise and glory eternally to Him who hath redeemed us and cleansed us from all sin.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan. 7, 1908.

"IN THE MOUNT OF THE LORD IT SHALL BE SEEN."

"AND Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen."—Gen. xxii. 14.

In the margin it sets forth Jehovah-jireh as meaning the Lord will see or provide. We know the Lord provides all temporal as well as all spiritual blessings, but in the meaning set forth in the experience Abraham had when he called the place Jehovah-jireh, was the provisions made by the Lord, and seen only in the mount of the Lord, and my mind is to write of what is signified by the word "it" in the declaration of Abraham: "In the mount of the Lord 'it' shall be seen," and before I proceed will state that where Abraham used the words was on one of the "mountains," as stated in the second verse of the chapter, so it is presented to my mind as the mount of the Lord as being the church, the body of Christ; Mount Zion, new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, and the mountains of God's economy of grace and purpose surrounding the mount of the Lord as the walls of salvation around Jerusalem, and I conclude that these mountains are built compact together, and entirely and completely encircle this one mount, the church of the living God, which towers above and is preeminent in its position; Christ is the head, life and directing power and guidance in the midst of her. The mountain that Abraham was on was the mountain of faith, and I will follow these around "the mount of the Lord." Adjoining faith is the mountain of love, the mountain of predestination, the mountain of election, the mountain of grace, the mountain of mercy, the mountain of righteousness and the mountain of glory, and others that exist go to declare the perfection, wisdom and attributes of God in surrounding "the mount of the Lord" in such a manner that no foe shall be able to invade or enter therein. In no wise are there any weak points in any of these various mountains surrounding the mount of the Lord, the church of God.

I shall briefly touch upon what I understand these various mountains set forth, and in the first place will state that no one ever yet was upon one of these mountains prior to traveling through a valley, nor can any be brought from one mountain to the other except they be made to travel, as it were, downward, then through the valley, then upward to the mountain again.

As Abraham was upon the mountain of faith when he used the words, "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen," I will speak a little upon that. Abraham had been commanded of God: "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of."—Gen. xxii. 2. And the testimony following is to the effect that Abraham obeyed, believing God, and counting that God was able to raise Isaac from the dead even though he should slay him. Could we in any wise picture a more severe trial of faith than this of Abraham's? I have in my imagination seen them walking together, the wood upon Isaac, the fire and the knife in Abraham's hand, and they climbing up this mountain, God leading

them, and Isaac saying to his father, "Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" And Abraham's prophetic answer, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together." Let us go back and consider briefly God's dealings with Abraham prior to Abraham's being brought to this mountain of faith. Isaac is set forth in this Scripture as the only son, in that he was the son of promise, by that it was the work of God manifested in a son being born to Abraham and Sarah, when it was contrary to the reasoning of the carnal mind, and was the fulfillment of a promise of God to Abraham and Sarah; Sarah laughed at the idea. To my mind Abraham's faith in God was strengthened in the birth of Isaac, but as Abraham is the father of the children of faith he was to be manifested as such by a more severe trial of his faith, and I have every reason to believe that as Abraham and Isaac went on their way together Abraham's mind was led back to meditate upon the way God had dealt with him, and no doubt fully expected to offer his son as a burnt sacrifice, until the angel stayed his hand from performing that which he was about to do, that was, to take the life of the boy. I cannot picture the scene and all that is in my mind which I meditate upon: the love of Abraham for his only son and the struggle of his love and earthly attributes against that faith he had in the eternal God. Now in this trial he is led to use the words, Jehovah-jireh, "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." My dear readers, I have no doubt but that some of you have had similar trials of your faith in the parting of earthly ties from dear loved ones, and if God has blessed your souls to see the mount of the Lord, the new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, may you rejoice in salvation, for "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March 4, 1908.

HELENA, Okla., April 1, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—Your "very important notice" in the first issue for this month of the SIGNS, attracted my attention at first sight. I hope it may attract the serious attention of all your readers. I think there is nothing before the eyes of the subscribers of the SIGNS that is so important in trying to support the publication of "our paper" as to look at the dates opposite their names, and if they are behind in payments to forward immediately to the SIGNS office what is due. I am not the best by any means in keeping paid up, as I have frequently been one year or more behind the date paid for; I am now just seven months behind, but I remit two dollars with this letter, knowing that it will not only help the managers of the paper that much, but it will relieve them of the embarrassment of paying "Uncle Sam" six postages for my one paper. Look at it, brethren, how much good you can do by keeping your dates ahead of your paper. Then, too, you need not feel afraid of receiving a dun, knowing that you have paid in advance. You see the postal department does not recognize any names as being bona-fide except those which are credited in advance. If we intend to continue taking the SIGNS, in most cases it will be about as easy to pay in advance after we once get paid up, as to let the bills accumulate against us for one, two or three years. I have been a reader of the SIGNS for a great many years (about fifty-five), and I know of many losses that the man-

agers have been subject to through neglect on the part of brethren and friends. One case I knew of in Pennsylvania, where subscribers moved away and let the SIGNS go on without notifying brother Beebe, until the postmaster and storekeeper made wrapping paper of them for his customers' goods. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Let us make a little sacrifice of something else, and not sacrifice the best interests of the oldest Old School Baptist paper that we ever heard of in the world. To some of the patrons it will be more than a little sacrifice to get the two dollars ready to send in advance, but think on it carefully, dear reader. The small amount of interest on the two dollars for a year will not nearly pay for the extra postage incurred by neglecting to pay in advance. Just see what a good, bright and neat pamphlet the SIGNS is to-day; in workmanship it is not excelled, in freedom from typographical errors it is a leader. I have wished that the former volumes were in pamphlet form, as they could have been preserved in better shape for future reference.

May the Lord bless us all, and enable us to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

WAVERLY, Pa., Feb. 28, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE OLD LANDMARK, SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—It is excellent, and I love it. I inclose a short letter from Elder Harris; he likes the SIGNS, too, and so I think he is all right religiously. Do as you think best with it.

Your brother, D. M. VAIL.

FORDYCE, Ark., Feb. 13, 1908.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER:—You are far away from me, and I suppose will be greatly surprised to hear from one in the southern part of this continent, but after reading your letter headed "Church News" I felt that I must write you and tell you as near as I can how I enjoyed reading it. You spoke of the small congregations of faithful brethren and sisters being preferable to a house full of those that were careless and unconcerned. Well, I am a young minister (if one at all), but this has been my feeling ever since I have had a name among the Old Baptists, and, too, I have watched most carefully at many of our "big meetings," and have to my sorrow seen more or less confusion and jealousy creep in, and to a great extent destroy the joy of such meetings. We here, however, are but a remnant compared with the religious world, none of our churches numbering over thirty members, but some of the best meetings that it has ever been my privilege to attend were when there were only a dozen or so present, who had forsaken all and were following the Lord through evil as well as good report, and had assembled themselves there, and were there absolutely because the good Shepherd had led them there, hence they were there in his name, and in him, and rejoicing in him, and were all testifying to one and the same thing, and that was Jesus and his love, that which cleanseth from all sin. And not only that, but they rejoice that they were counted worthy to suffer afflictions, and that as he was tried, and despised of the rulers of darkness, they, too, should also suffer the scorn and contempt from the religious Pharisees of to-day. These things encourage them and build them together, and, too, upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone, and that also in which all the building fitly framed together groweth

unto an holy temple in the Lord. God's people, I am persuaded, are but few in number, they are the children of the legitimate wife, hence they are legitimate children, and they are the true heirs of God and joint-heirs with the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I feel, my dear brother, that these are the characters you speak of as being the faithful that meet in their devotional service to their God, and that is what builds up the poor old minister who goes for miles through heat and cold to meet them. Here in this country we have a few who are always found at their post of duty, and are always ready and willing to help encourage their pastor with good words of comfort, and I say without fear of contradiction, that where six such characters are met together, there will be more real spiritual enjoyment in it than a hundred who have not the love of God in their hearts. Give me the small congregation, give me the love of God, and I will show the church of God worshiping him in spirit and in truth, rejoicing in Christ Jesus and having no confidence in the flesh.

Well, brother, I think I had better not write more, as I might weary you, you not knowing anything of me, but I just wanted to tell you how I enjoyed your letter in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES headed as above mentioned. Write again to the SIGNS, I like to read your writings; all that I read in the SIGNS is sound, and I have been taking that paper some fourteen years.

In hope, V. R. HARRIS.

FARMINGTON, Ill., Dec. 27, 1907.

VERY DEAR EDITORS:—I am writing you a few lines to send the pay for the SIGNS for 1908. I have just received the number for the new year and have read its contents, and it has proven very comforting to me. I would not know how to get along without the good old SIGNS; it tells of my daily experience with its fiery trials and warfare, the flesh warring against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh. I get low down in doubts and fears, and often fear that I have not been born again, but when I receive the SIGNS and hear from those dear ones who tell the same things, and who are traveling the same road, it gives me comfort. I was told not long ago by a Baptist preacher that I must not take the dark side. He appeared to be dwelling all the time on the mount. I feel that I cannot act the hypocrite in so important a matter; when it is night with me I have no power to make it light. The Lord created light and darkness, and all are alike to him; he makes peace and he creates evil. I feel to say to all the readers of the SIGNS, with the editors, Write on. I love you all better than I do myself. If I felt that I could, I would write some for publication; but I shall be satisfied with the precious crumbs that fall from the Master's table. I have been a reader and subscriber of the SIGNS for over fifty years, and it is the same now as it was fifty years ago. I love to read the late Elder Gilbert Beebe's editorials.

Your brother,

E. D. VARNES.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON our list are many whose subscriptions are two or three years in arrears, and we would esteem it a great favor if all such would drop us a line, stating whether or not they are receiving their paper and wish it continued.

We often receive letters censuring us for not discontinuing the paper when the time paid for has expired, but should we adopt this rule we would on the other hand offend many.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1908.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

GENESIS II. 17.

A DEAR sister, who does not wish her name to appear, has within a few days written us, asking that we say something upon the words found in Genesis ii. 17, which read as follows: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

We feel willing to reply to this request, and desire to say in the first place that we have nothing new to say about it. Our understanding of it is just what the text has been understood to mean, so far as we know, by many who have in past centuries written about it, and what the great body of the church of God still understands it to mean. We do not think that the church has been mistaken as to its meaning all along these past years, and so we do not expect to present anything new regarding it, and certainly nothing in contradiction to the views held generally by the churches concerning it. We frankly confess that we are afraid of new light, when that light stands in contradiction to the understanding of our brethren in general, and also in opposition to the understanding of the church of Christ in past ages. We rejoice, however, in new light, when that light presents itself in full harmony with what has been the faith of the people of God in the generations past. We do not believe that our God has given to his people in this generation any more understanding of the deep things of his word than was given to those of former generations; it would be arrogance on our part to think so.

Now to speak directly of the text. We first desire to call attention to the meaning of the word "die," or "death." Some months since we had something to say about this word, and will partially repeat what we then said. First, death, as the word is used in the Scriptures, never signifies annihilation or cessation of existence. It signifies that one has ceased to exist in that state in which he once lived, so that he is said to be dead to that state. But this never stands in contradiction to the truth that that person still lives in another place or state. For instance, men since the transgression are said in the word to be dead to God, dead in sin, yet these men are still living in this natural life or state; they are united to sin and separated from God. So also men are said, after grace reigns in them, to be dead to sin; that is, separated from it in the sense that it has no more dominion over them and cannot again separate them from God. Likewise what we speak of as death, the death of the body, never means in the word anything more than that he that is said to be dead has been separated from this life and this world. All men still live, either in heaven or hell, in happiness or in misery, but they are dead to this life and this world. So also eternal death does not signify cessation of existence, but simply that the subjects of that death are separated forever from God and holiness and heaven; they still exist consciously, but are still dead in sin and separated from all that is heavenly. It seems to us all-

important that we bear this truth in mind, because if we do not we shall form conclusions that are false, not only with regard to the text named at the beginning of this article, but also with regard to many other portions of the word. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," then does not signify that Adam should cease to exist, in fact we know that he did not cease to be; but it does mean that he became dead to the former state of innocency in which he was created, so that without a Mediator there could be no more communion between him and God, and so that sin now reigns in him and over him, rather than uprightness and holiness. He became dead in trespasses and sins; he became dead to God and righteousness, and at the appointed time must die to this mortal life and this mortal world, and unless redeemed by grace through Christ must continue in death forever and forever; yet neither of these three things imply cessation of existence, but only cessation of existence in that life which had before been his.

Concerning death in sin and death to God, in which state all mankind by nature are, the Scripture testimony is plain. We do not need to refer to many texts which show this. "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." "As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." "Even God, who quickeneth the dead." "As those that are alive from the dead." "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us." All these Scriptures refer to that present state of death into which all mankind have been plunged by the transgression of our first parents. That the death of these bodies, which after death are to be laid away in their graves, is also because of sin in us, is clearly taught in the word. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned;" and that what we ordinarily speak of as death is meant here, appears clearly from the second following verse: "Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." There is not the slightest room to question that this whole fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians refers to what we call death. Every assurance of redemption from this death implies that it comes to man as a penalty for sin. Redemption means always redemption from sin and death, and therefore, if there be redemption from the death of the body, that death must have been included in the penalty announced in the text against sin, and the eternity of that penalty for sin is clearly declared in such Scriptures as these: "Fear not them which kill the body," but rather "fear him which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell." "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." Concerning this last text it seems needful only to say that if the life eternal signifies the state of the righteous beyond this life, then everlasting punishment signifies the state of the ungodly beyond this world; and if this Scripture does not relate to the future state of men, then it would be indeed hard to find any Scrip-

ture of which we can be sure that it does relate to that world; and if no Scripture relates to the future life and the future world, then we do not and cannot know that there is such a world. The Savior said, as recorded in John v. 28, 29, after speaking of the present quickening of his chosen ones, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, [but it is not now] in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." If language has any meaning whatever, we are here clearly taught that the evil doers have before them a resurrection, and a damnation which is to follow that resurrection, or in other words, everlasting punishment. This is not figurative language, and it does not apply to any present experience, either of the righteous or the wicked, but "the hour is coming." Thus the Scriptures plainly show that the expression, "in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," includes first, becoming dead to God, or dead in sin, second, what we call natural death, and third, everlasting death. Again we call attention to the fact that neither of these three things signify cessation of existence. Still further, if eternal life means conscious peace and happiness, then everlasting punishment must also mean consciousness, for without consciousness there is neither happiness nor unhappiness, neither joy nor sorrow, neither ease nor suffering. All men by nature are subject to this curse for sin and transgression; all alike fell into condemnation in Adam; in Adam all sinned, and all have also personally transgressed the law of God; death hath passed upon all, for that all have sinned. All alike might have been left to perish in eternal death, and no injustice could have been charged against God; all would have been just and right. This the Scriptures testify, and this the heart of all who feel what sin means will also confess; indeed, it is the great question with all quickened souls before life and salvation in Christ is revealed in them, How can God be just and save a sinner like me? How can a sinner be just with God? Such a soul feels that "iniquities prevail against me," in the sense that he has no plea against them before God and in his own conscience. Why should not this sinner be banished from my presence forever? seems to him to be the word of God in his soul, and he finds no answer; called into account for his sins he cannot answer one of a thousand of them; he is vile, and God is just and holy, and his law holy, just and good; this he confesses, yet his cry is, "Save a trembling sinner, Lord." The threatenings of the broken law fill his soul with dread, yet he confesses, My condemnation to everlasting woe is just. The sin is become in his eyes so exceeding sinful, and is against so good and holy a God, that he can only see the purest justice in the penalty pronounced against it. Every word in the Scriptures which describes sin and which declares its penalty, commends itself to the conscience of such a convicted sinner, and he has not one word of fault to find with either the commandment or the penalty. The pains of hell get hold upon him here, even as afterwards the joys of heaven shall fill him when the assurance comes that his sins are blotted out, and when the blessed Master communes in secret with him and shows him his covenant. But as in the one case he still knows that the heavenly joys are but a little foretaste of the joys beyond this life, so also he knows that these

pains are but a drop from the bitter cup that remains to be given to him because of his sins. Now through some experience of these things, and from the testimony of the word of God sealed to his conscience in condemnation, such a soul comes to realize something of that from which Christ has redeemed him, and something of the exceeding greatness of that price of his redemption which Jesus paid. As he comes to see the penalty of sin, death in sin, death naturally and death eternal, sin becomes exceeding sinful; and as he sees something of the holiness of his Maker who gave the law, sin abounds more and more. Then out of these two things, the greatness of the penalty due to sin and the fullness of holiness in God, there comes some knowledge of the greatness of that mercy which gave Jesus to die, and of the work of Christ finished upon Calvary; and as sin is magnified and its penalty is magnified, grace is also magnified exceedingly; the wonders of redemption are exceedingly enhanced in the view of such a soul by a view of the depth from which he has been redeemed. To be redeemed unto God comes to mean more and more the plainer we see the depth into which we had fallen; the measure of the penalty due to sin gives us to see something of the holiness of that God against whom we have sinned; therefore it is good to remember "the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." If these things are not needful for us to know and to teach and to consider, there is no reason why the apostles should have by inspiration of God taught them in the word. The Savior came to bring life and immortality to light through the gospel, and these things could have no meaning to one who does not know what darkness and death signify. Redemption revealed in the gospel could have no meaning to one who has not known of sin and its condemnation. It is as needful to preach the law as it is to preach the gospel, but each in its place. It is needful to present the total depravity of man, his state of death in sin and the eternal punishment due to the sinner for his sins, in order to magnify the holiness of Christ, the life that is in him, and the everlasting happiness awaiting the redeemed. This is the experience of our own soul, as we humbly hope and believe. Because our God is thus magnified in his justice and in his mercy, the Scriptures testify these things and the Holy Spirit seals them to our understanding. Our authority as ministers, and as the children of God, for believing and teaching these things, is the fact that they are taught in the word. If it be said that we do not know the future, and that therefore we ought not to testify of it, the sufficient reply is that prophets and apostles did not know the future either, except as the Holy Spirit revealed that future, and yet they spoke and wrote of it. If what we speak and write be just what they spoke and wrote, then there is light in us; if we speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in us. What we have here said concerning the text named at the beginning has been the faith of the church in all ages, and we are persuaded that the doctrine of the everlasting punishment of the wicked is recorded upon nine-tenths of the church books of the three thousand churches of our faith in this country, and of the churches regarded by us as being of the same faith wherever they are found in the world, and in the articles of faith of most churches where this doctrine may not be expressly stated there is no contradiction of it. This doctrine was incorporated in the London confession of

faith, and is stated in the confession of faith adopted at Black Rock when that church was organized, in 1828. We do not mention these things as authority, but simply to show how our fathers have always understood the teaching of the Scriptures regarding this matter. We have not often spoken upon this subject, and perhaps have never before written regarding it, but still we have always thought of it as one of the things that ought to be affirmed constantly. The fact that it has, so far as we know, always been the accepted doctrine among our people, may have been the cause why we have not felt to say very much regarding it except that often we have in preaching alluded to it in presenting other subjects. If any object to this doctrine upon the ground that it seems a harsh doctrine, we feel that we have nothing to do with that; such a controversy is not between them and ourself, but between them and the testimony of the inspired word; if the word teaches it that is enough; what may seem harsh or mild, just or unjust to us, matters not. We must all bow to the word of God, and if the word does not teach the everlasting punishment of the wicked, and that the redeemed are saved from everlasting punishment, it would be impossible to put language together that would teach it.

We now leave these thoughts to the perusal of our sister and to the consideration of all the brethren. C.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906; 07 means 1907; 08 means 1908, &c.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

2 PETER III. 13.

THE text on which we are requested to write reads thus: "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Not any the less do we look for the fulfillment of the promise of God, because that change and decay are so strongly marked upon all things pertaining to this world. In the context the apostle stirs up the pure minds of the saints by way of remembrance of the words of the holy prophets, and of the commandments of the apostles of the Lord and Savior, in which they had been faithfully admonished of the transitory nature of all earthly things, of the great apostacy from the faith that should precede the final dissolution of nature and indicate the near approach of the great day of the Lord, which should surely come suddenly, like a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. How appropriate is the appeal: "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness; looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens, and a new earth," &c. Some writers have supposed that the day of the Lord, in this chapter, was the day when the judgments of the Lord should be executed upon Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, when the old Jewish heavens should be dissolved and

all the elements of Judaism should melt away, and that the new heavens and earth which were to succeed was the establishment of the gospel kingdom among the Gentiles. It is very possible that the apostle had some allusion to those events, which were then upon the eve of being fulfilled when this epistle was written. Certain it is that the Jewish heavens and earth, with all their elements, did then pass away, and not one stone was suffered to remain on another. It is also true that that new organization, or gospel kingdom, is one in which dwelleth righteousness, as it is the dwelling-place of Christ, who is our righteousness. But the declarations of the apostle in this case were prospective and prophetic, not only as to the dissolution of the old heavens and earth, but also in regard to the new heavens and earth, which were to succeed. Although the destruction of Jerusalem, by Titus, was subsequent to the date of this epistle, it must be conceded that the kingdom of Christ was duly organized on the day of Pentecost, some thirty years before Peter wrote this letter. Again, others have supposed that the apostle was here speaking of what is called the millennium, when it is supposed the present condition of the world will be essentially changed, the earth purified by fire, sin banished, Satan bound for a thousand years, and Christ shall reign personally with his saints on earth. But as we know nothing of this theory we must be excused from offering any opinion. To our mind the obvious meaning of the apostle is to stir up the pure minds of the saints in reference to the final destruction of this world, with all its elements and all its works. This day of the Lord is particularly characterized in verse seven as the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men. When, according to our understanding of the subject, the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and when the dead shall be raised, and all who are, or then shall be, in the graves, shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth, when the kingdom of God in its fullness shall be delivered up to God, even the Father, and all the ungodly shall receive their final and everlasting doom and sink down into irretrievable perdition. Whatever grand events may be predicted to transpire before that great day when God shall come to raise the dead and judge the world, should not divert our attention from what God has spoken to us by his inspired servants in relation to the certain coming of that period in which the wheels of nature shall cease their revolutions, when the natural heavens shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shall be folded and be laid away. The solemn grandeur of that day we have no ability to describe. The most sublime language is employed by inspired men; Paul says, "And to you who are troubled, rest with us; when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day." While wicked men and devils may dread the approach of that great day of our God, the saints who love the appearing of their Lord will hail its approach with joy and gladness, looking for and hasting

to the coming of it, because "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation."—Heb. ix. 28. "But we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."—1 John iii. 2. While we contemplate the final dissolution of all earthly things, we are not only hasting to, but looking for the event with peculiar joy, for resting upon the promise of our God, who cannot lie, we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. The heavens and earth are figuratively used, to signify that happy state to which all the saints shall be brought. The new heavens will not require the glittering scenery of the natural heavens; sun, moon and stars will not be required, for God himself, and the Lamb, are the light and glory of that happy place.

"Its skies are not like earthly skies,
With varied hues of shade and light;
It hath no need of suns to rise,
To dissipate the gloom of night."

The irresistible attractions of the new heavens and earth for which we look are such as earth cannot present. Here we have to use the lamentation of the psalmist: "Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar! My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace. I am for peace; but when I speak, they are for war."—Psalms cxx. 5–7. But there peace and joy shall forever reign without intermission or interruption while immortality endures.

"Long nights and darkness dwell below,
With scarce a twinkling ray;
But the bright world to which I go,
Hath everlasting day."

Sickness and sorrow, pain and death attend us here, but there the inhabitants shall no more say, I am sick. There shall be no death there, mortality shall be swallowed up of life. In this Bochim, or place of weeping, floods of grief gush unbidden from our streaming eyes, but there, "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."—Rev. vii. 16, 17. Our present trouble is that this earth is polluted with sin, our own lips are unclean, and we dwell among a people of unclean lips; but in the new heavens and earth to which we go there dwelleth righteousness. Nothing unholy, nothing unrighteous, can enter there. The psalmist said, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."—Psalms xvii. 15. Upon this glorious prospect the apostle grounds an exhortation: "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." And, "Seeing that all these things [of earth] shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness." None but the children of God have the promise of such things; none but they are looking for such things. God has taught them by his word and Spirit to look within the veil—to look on the things which are not seen, which are eternal, and soon, according to the rich provisions of his grace, shall they all come up out of great tribulation, with garments washed and made white and clean in the blood of the adorable Lamb. Can such a prospect fail to stimulate them to vigilance, to diligence, in the cause of God and truth? To be found of him in peace, not murmuring, fretting or impatient, without spot, unblemished by the spots of the pollutions of the flesh, but crucifying the old

man with his affections and lusts, and putting on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. He has warned his children to come out of Babylon, to touch not her unclean things, and if we would be found blameless of him at his coming, blameless in our walk and deportment, we should, as we desire his approval, bow to his authority and walk in all his institutions, that we may walk worthy of the high and holy vocation wherewith we are called.

One important consideration in connection with this subject, to which Peter calls attention of the saints, is that before the coming of this day of the Lord, "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts." And in closing his exhortation in verses seventeen and eighteen, he says, "Ye therefore beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."

All the admonitions of the apostles to the saints in regard to the peculiar developments of the last days, treat of the great apostacy which shall in these last days be seen among those who have at least been professors of the faith, and of the great temptations the children of God should encounter, as calculated to shake them in regard to their steadfastness. Some who have formerly seemed valiant for the truth begin to show alarming symptoms of instability, and others seem to have tasted the wine of the cup of her who reigns over the kings of the earth, the intoxicating poison of which has maddened the nations of the earth. The apostle bids us beware. "Touch not; taste not; handle not;" and let him that thinketh that he stands, take heed. And let us, one and all, watch and pray, lest we fall into temptation.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 1, 1863.

POETRY.

ISAIAH XXXV. 1.

My soul, long desolate and dry,
Was like a cold and barren field;
Unto the Lord I raised my cry,
That by his power it yet might yield

The fruits of righteousness and peace,
The praises due his holy name;
Nor could my supplications cease
Until the blessed answer came.

It came as comes the fragrant wind
Of heaven across a dreary waste;
The Holy Spirit o'er my mind
The power of God's salvation cast.

How gently dropped the rain and dew
Of Jesus' doctrine in my soul,
Raising the fading plants anew,
Reviving and refreshing all.

The Lord came down as drops the rain
Upon the mown grass from above;
The drooping graces bloomed again
In the sweet atmosphere of love.

The heart's dark wilderness was made,
Rejoicing, to forget its woes;
The solitary place was glad;
The desert blossomed as the rose.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

Why should cold or stormy weather
Keep me from the house of prayer?
O, where christians meet together,
Let me still be with them there.

If I loved my God sincerely,
If my heart approved his ways,
It would grieve my heart intensely
To be kept from prayer and praise.

When on earth the Savior wandered,
Oft for us his cheek was wet;
Oft in silent prayer he pondered
Through chill night, on Olivet.

Then shall cold or stormy weather
Keep me from the house of prayer?
No, where christians meet together,
Let me still be with them there.

(MRS.) GEORGE R. YARD.

HOPEWELL, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

BROTHER **F. H. Furbush,** an esteemed member of the church at Rewastico, Md., departed this life at his late residence, Wetipquin, Wicomico Co., Md., March 20th, 1908, that being the sixty-seventh anniversary of his birth. He was baptized by the writer in the fellowship of the church at Rewastico about seven years ago, continuing a worthy and faithful member to the day of his death. About nine days before his decease he was paralyzed, from which he did not rally. He leaves a widow, one daughter and several grandchildren. His life was spent in the vicinity where he died, and where by industry and economy he had accumulated a competence. He was highly esteemed by his neighbors as an honest man and a good, kind neighbor. His hope of salvation was in the atoning blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." We would extend to the bereaved companion and children our sincere sympathy, and pray for them that they may receive of the rich consolations of the gospel to comfort them in their affliction.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., April 20, 1908.

Emily Palmer Litchfield, daughter of William and Sarah Palmer, was born in England, near Ramsey, Feb. 26th, 1832, died at her home in Toluca, Ill., April 6th, 1908, aged 76 years, 1 month and 11 days. She came to America with her parents when quite young, and they settled in Vanderburg County, Ind., where she resided until 1853, when she was married to John Litchfield, March 17th, at which time she came to Marshall County, Ill., where she resided for over fifty-five years. Mr. Litchfield died Feb. 9th, 1907, thus they were separated by death a little over one year. She was the mother of ten children, nine of whom survive her: George E., Sarah A., William R., Martha J., John P., Robert I., Mary E., Charity D. and Emily L., and the deceased one Joseph G. Two of these, Charity D. and Mary E., belong to the same church of which their mother was a member. Sister Litchfield united with the new Salem Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, in Indiana, in 1850 or 1851, and was baptized by Elder Elihu Halcomb. After she was in Illinois for a short time she went into the constitution of Salem Church, in Marshall County, and was a faithful attendant, always filling her place unless hindered by sickness. She was certainly a mother in Israel, and her delight was in ministering to the brethren and sisters, and to all in need. Her delight in reading was first her Bible and second the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which she took for over fifty years. The church feels its loss keenly. She was the last one living who was in the organization of that church. We do not know that she had an enemy; all who knew her loved her; her many acts of kindness will live for long years to come.

The writer, assisted by Elder Downey, spoke to a large concourse of people at her residence, from the text she had selected, Psalms cxv. 3: "Our God is in the heavens," &c., after which her body was taken to Pattensburg, about seven and one-half miles, and laid beside that of her late husband, there to await the trump of God.

S. H. HUMPHREY.

Mrs. Elizabeth H. Smith was born Feb. 21st, 1847, the daughter of the late Elder William Martin; was married Dec. 19th, 1875, to Mr. Silas Smith; departed this life July 20th, 1907, her stay upon earth being 60 years, 4 months and 29 days. To this union were born five children, of whom three survive, namely, Mrs. Mina Draper, George and Levi Smith. Sister Smith received a hope in Christ while living in the State of Indiana, and was received into the fellowship of the church at Antioch, in Boone County, Ind., in or about the year 1888, and baptized by Elder P. Jones, whom we have often heard her speak of as an humble servant of the Lord. Shortly after she had become a member of the church she, with her husband and little children, decided to return to their old home State, West Virginia, to spend the rest of their days among the Primitive Baptists of the Pocatalico Association, of which her father had been moderator for some thirty years before his death. She asked for her letter, which she presented to the church at Hopewell on Saturday before the first Sunday in November, 1905, was received, and lived a consistent member of the Hopewell Church. O how we miss sister Smith; she was one who seldom failed to be at the regular meetings of her church. She was a kind, loving and true-hearted wife, a devoted mother and dutiful child to her old sainted father and mother. The home of sister Smith and her husband surely was a good and quiet stopping-place for traveling ministers of the Primitive order, as they lived in West Charleston, near the capital of the State; their house was a home indeed, and great is the company of them who have partaken of the bounties of her extended hand. As a mother she was all to her children that the word means; she so lived to them and for them as to impart to them the best of her life. The writer visited their home the night before she died, and spoke to her of the preciousness of the doctrine she so dearly loved. She said it was just as precious to her then as it ever was, and quietly fell asleep in Jesus.

On the morning of July 21st her body was taken to the depot at West Charleston, put on the west bound train and conveyed to Raymond City, from there to a beautiful burying-ground on Mr. R. N. Lilly's farm. The writer offered a few words in prayer at the grave, then spoke forty minutes, using Job xiv. 14, as a text, to many friends and relatives, after which

she was laid in the silent tomb to await the resurrection of her body. She leaves a kind husband, three children, four brothers, two sisters and two grandchildren to mourn their loss. Dear friends, weep not, for she is with God in the city above.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

James Harkness departed this life Oct. 26th, 1907; he was a little more than 73 years of age. His last illness lasted but a few days; he was taken with a violent chill, which alarmed us; we lost no time in calling medical assistance, and after a few days, as he grew no worse, we thought it broken up, and we were encouraged to hope, and on the morning of the fourth day we thought him much better, but about noon that day he began to grow worse. The following morning when the doctor called the right lung was nearly solid, and from that time he failed very rapidly, passing away on the morning of the sixth day, with pneumonia. The children were all home before he died, except one son, who was in the west, and only arrived in time for the funeral. He knew every one until the last. He had been a member of the United Presbyterian Church over forty years, and an elder and clerk of the session for several years. He always enjoyed going with me to Baptist meetings, and had great respect for the Baptist people, but seemed to have a veneration for the religion of his fathers. He lived and died on the same place where he was born, and where he brought me as a bride forty-five years ago. While I am left to mourn a dear companion, and our children (four sons and two daughters) a loving father, we feel that for him to die was gain, that he has entered into rest, and we desire to be in submission to our heavenly Father's will.

The funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Mr. W. M. Ferguson, assisted by Mr. J. R. Frazier, of Davenport.

HARRIET N. HARKNESS.

DAVENPORT, N. Y., April 4, 1908.

Martha A. Knight, the beloved wife of Thurston Knight, died at her home in Blue Springs, Mo., Sunday morning, March 29th, 1908, in her 86th year. She was born in Bourbon County, Ky., Feb. 14th, 1823, and moved from there to Shelby County, Ky., where on Sept. 11th, 1849, she was united in marriage to Thurston Knight. To them were born five children, whom, together with four children of a former wife, who was her sister, she raised with tender care and fondness to mature years. She united with the Old School Baptist Church Dec. 26th, 1853, and had ever since by an orderly walk and conversation exemplified the Spirit of her Master, in whose service she was ever delighted, for the "truth as it is in Jesus," was her constant theme and comfort. Few indeed manifested a more earnest zeal, a more tender reverence for the promulgation of the gospel than did she, and a "Thus saith the Lord" with her filled all requirements. She possessed a wonderfully sweet voice in singing, and was able to the last days of her life to lead in the hymns we would sing together, and often when there was no one present but her husband she would sing clearly and distinctly her favorite hymns. A few days before her departure, when in her usual health, we sang together; there seemed to be no constraint of waiting, but one sweet hymn after the other followed in close succession, and when by her request we sang, "I know that my Redeemer lives," she listened closely and spoke of the beauty and solemn surety of the hymn with much solicitude and comfort. I know that in her heart she realized fully the blessedness of each line. How precious to my memory are the little interchanges of thought that we enjoyed in these seasons together, and we often felt blessed with the presence of Him who hath said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Sister Knight, until the last few months of her life, read with a confident trust her Bible, and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES from its first publication. It was my privilege and pleasure to often read to her, as she thought I spoke distinctly and she could hear me without the use of her ear trumpet, and as I did so each communication elicited some comment of approval and strength to her hope; so we feel truly that she is enjoying the glorious realization of that hope, and for her to die is gain. Besides her sorrowing husband she leaves two sisters, one brother, six daughters, thirty-three grandchildren and thirty-two great-grandchildren, with many relatives and friends to mourn her departure.

NELIA M. STARTZMAN.

BLUE SPRINGS, Mo.

APPOINTMENTS.

IF the Lord will, I will attend appointments as follows:

Tuesday night, April 21st, Mt. Sterling, Ky.; Wednesday night, 22nd, Winchester, Ky.; Thursday night, 23rd, Georgetown, Ky.; Friday morning, 24th, Sadieville, Ky.; Saturday and Sunday, 25th and 26th, Mays Lick, Ky.; Monday afternoon, 27th, Little Flock, Ky.; Tuesday, 28th, Shelbyville, Ky.; Wednesday, 29th, Bethel, Ky.; Friday to Sunday, May 1st, 2nd and 3rd, Nashville, Tenn.; Monday night, 4th, Turners, Ky.

SILAS H. DURAND.

THE Lord willing, Elder P. G. Lester will fill the following appointments in Kentucky:

Little Flock, Friday, 2:30 p. m., May 22nd, and Saturday and Sunday, 11 a. m., 23rd and 24th; Goshen, Tuesday, 11 a. m., 26th; Salt River, Wednes-

day, 11 a. m., 27th; Elk Lick, Thursday, 11 a. m., 28th; Sulphur Fork, Saturday, 11 a. m., 30th; Turners, Sunday, 11 a. m., 31st; Pleasureville, Tuesday, 11 a. m., June 2nd; Finchville, Wednesday and Thursday, as suits, 3rd and 4th; Bethel, Saturday and Sunday, 11 a. m., 6th and 7th; Winchester, Monday, as suits, 8th; Mt. Sterling, Tuesday, as suits, 9th; Sharpsburg, Wednesday and Thursday, as suits, 10th and 11th; Mays Lick, Saturday and Sunday, 11 a. m., 13th and 14th.

ERRATA.

On page 243, current volume, last column, near the bottom, the expression in brother Z. M. Beal's letter, "In Psalms cix is recorded a wonderful ministry," should read, In Psalms cxxxix is recorded a wonderful mystery.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Texas, $1.00; A Friend, D. C., $1.00; Nancy Stathers, W. Va., $3.00.

MEETINGS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Harford Church, Harford County, Md., May 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1908.

Those coming by way of Baltimore, take train that leaves North Avenue station at 3:25 p. m. for Long Green or for Forest Hill on Tuesday before; those from the north, take train that leaves York, Pa., at 1:50 p. m. for same stations.

A cordial invitation is extended to lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren.

NATHAN GRAFTON, Church Clerk.

The Delaware Association is appointed to be held with the Salem Church, Philadelphia, Pa., May 27th, 28th and 29th, 1908, in the Odd Fellows' Temple, corner Broad and Cherry streets (eighth floor). Those arriving in the city on Tuesday will please go to 1910 North Twenty-second St. (B. F. Coulter) or 1735 North Seventh St. (Mrs. Craven.) Those coming on Wednesday morning will go direct to the place of meeting. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

B. F. COULTER, Pastor.
Franklin Terry, Church Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, N. J., June 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1908.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., June 10th, 11th and 12th, 1908.

Those coming from New York city and points in New York State, New England States or Canada, will travel via Erie Railroad, changing at Greycourt for Warwick. Those coming from Pennsylvania, New Jersey or southern points may take train leaving Broad St. station, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania R. R., at 12:03 p. m. via Belvidere division, changing at Belvidere for train to Warwick. Trains will be met on Tuesday.

Ministers of our faith and order and lovers of Bible truth are invited to meet with us.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
K. V. Beebe, Clerk.

The Siloam Association of Oregon and Washington will be held this year at Dayton, Wash., with Harmony Church, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in June, at 10 o'clock, and continuing over Sunday. Those coming by railroad come so as to get here on Thursday before.

B. S. PATE.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

There are a few Old School Baptists in Riverside, Cal., and they have meeting the first and third Sundays in each month, at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

W. D. BALL.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at the Hall, corner of 19th St. and 8th Ave., fifth floor. Elevator entrance on either 19th St. or 8th Ave.

11:00 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Mississippi River Association will be held next fall, with Mt. Enon Church, at Coles Academy, one and one-half miles northeast of Middleton, Tenn., on the Southern Railroad.

R. R. CRAWFORD.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition, which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at the following rates, viz: a single copy for 10 cents; 12 copies for $1.00; 25 copies for $2.00; 50 copies for $3.00; 100 copies for $5.00. Address,

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The Minutes of the seventy-fifth anniversary meeting of the Black Rock Convention, of 1832, held Sept. 28th and 29th, 1907, are now published and ready for sale. They are published in pamphlet form, and contain forty pages. They contain the minutes of the anniversary meeting, together with a history of the church since her organization in 1828, and of her connection with what our brethren all over the land know of as the Black Rock Convention of 1832, also the address adopted at that convention is contained in the pamphlet, together with the names o all who were then present and affixed their names to that document. There is also a portrait of the present pastor of the church, Elder J. T. Rowe, and of the meeting-house itself, which still stands as it was at that time, with no change in its outward appearance. The pamphlet can be obtained by addressing Elder J. T. Rowe, 704 Linwood Ave., Station L., Baltimore Md. The price is fifteen cents per copy.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK, compiled by Elders Silas H. Durand and P. G. Lester, $6.00 per dozen, sent at expense of purchaser; 70 cents for single book, sent by mail postpaid. Send all orders to Elder Silas H. Durand, Southampton, Pa., stating which kind of note is desired—round or shape.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 76. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1908. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"GOOD THINGS TO COME."

(Hebrews ix. 11.)

CHRIST'S everlasting gospel ever heralds glad tidings of good things to come; yes, there are good things in the start, and from step to step in all the pilgrimage quickened sinners have this declared unto them, There are "good things to come." In sickness, in health, in poverty's vale, abounding in wealth, in all our distresses, temptations and conflicts this hope is set before us, there are "good things to come." In life and in our dying hours these good things will be ever flowing, ever coming to believers in Jesus, and throughout eternity there will be good things coming, coming, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb. "Good things to come." Ah, now also we have bitter, evil things coming to us, but enough new covenant good things come unto us to sweeten all, to stay us up and cause us still to be hoping for good things to come. Mercies present are blessed, sweet, refreshing, but more and more a rich, abundant harvest, yes, an infinite harvest of good things is stored up for the saints to reap. All is promised, all is secured and sure to all the seed in Jesus Christ our Lord. He is our High Priest of good things to come. (Heb. ix. 11.) During our earthly pilgrimage, in the solemn, precious moment of death and throughout eternity these good things are ours in and through and with our precious Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the church. Read the following Scriptures and see if it be not so: Psalms lxxiii. 24; 2 Cor. iv. 17; Rom. viii. 17–39; 1 Thess. iv. 13–17; 1 Peter i. 4, 5; 1 Cor. ii. 9. The children of God on earth have their fears and sighs, yearnings and anticipations regarding eternity; they are of God, and his good work begun in them exercises them to know him now by faith in the face of Jesus Christ, and in eternity to know him by sight, face to face in the face of Emmanuel, our Jesus Christ. "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."—1 Cor. xiii. 12. "We shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." With the saints the time on earth is but a sojourn, they are now pilgrims and strangers journeying home, looking forward to the better, heavenly country. They sigh and long for that

city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. (Heb. xi. 10–16.) Eternity is not dense obscurity, a blank to those born of God, for the Holy Ghost has given them glorious revelations in the Scriptures concerning it; and these testimonies in his word, sealed home in the hearts of his chosen, beget in them sighs and longings to come into the full possession of the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, which they hope is reserved in heaven for them. They are believers in the gospel, and are sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. (Eph. i. 13, 14.) Look at the following Scriptures and ask, Are these things meaningless in the faith of God's elect? I will answer beforehand, They are not, but reveal to us things that are eternal. "Looking for that blessed hope, and glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ."—Titus ii. 13. "He said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."—Luke xxiii. 42, 43. "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better."—Phil. i. 23. God "hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus."—1 Peter v. 10. I am a "partaker of the glory that shall be revealed."—1 Peter v. 1. "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."—Psalms lxxiii. 24. "Christ in you, the hope of glory."—Col. i. 27. "And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."—Romans ix. 23. "When he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."—1 John iii. 2. "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."—Col. iii. 3, 4. "Then face to face."—1 Cor. xiii. 12. "They shall see his face."—Rev. xxii. 4. "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."—Psalms xvii. 15. "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."—Heb. vi. 19, 20. Our good hope through grace enters where Jesus our Forerunner has entered, and we hope to enter whither our hope now entereth. Christ, our Head, our Husband, Redeemer, High Priest, our Forerunner, made his way there in our behalf through seas of affliction, with strong crying and tears, in agonies and blood he tasted death, its sorrows were his for our sakes, he passed through death and hell, and triumphed over the grave; he gave himself a ransom for us; he arose, and ascended, and passed into the heavens, there he appeareth in the presence of God for us, our King and High Priest upon his throne of "good things to come." And there, through the everlasting love of our ascended Head, we, too, shall arrive.

> "Jesus, my All, to heaven is gone,
> He whom I fix my hopes upon!
> His track I see, and I'll pursue
> The narrow way, till him I view."

This hope we have now, and which will be ours in our dying moments, is not a cunningly devised fable. The apostle Paul, in prospect of his near departure from the earth, says, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge,

shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."—2 Tim. iv. 48. The martyr Stephen, being filled with the Holy Ghost, called upon God, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit! And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep."—Acts vii. 59, 60. He died in faith, and so do all who have the faith of the operation of God. "These all died in faith."—Heb. xi. 13. This is written of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. (Matt. xxii. 32.) The Sadducees' idea of death was annihilation; they "say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit."—Acts xxiii. 8. The bodies of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob now lie in the dust of earth, to be raised immortal and incorruptible when Christ shall descend from heaven and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, yet their spirits are now with God in everlasting happiness and glory. For our Lord Jesus Christ "died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him." "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."—Romans viii. 16. Our spirit does not die; (Matt. x. 28,) the body without the spirit is dead; our spirit is life because of righteousness. The souls of all departed saints are with Christ, even as the soul of the thief that was crucified. They are now with Jesus in paradise above. "The spirits of just men made perfect."—Heb. xii. 23. And when Christ Jesus shall descend from heaven to raise from the grave their sleeping bodies to glory and immortality, they shall be brought with him, (1 Thess. iv. 14,) come with him, (1 Thess. iii. 13,) and take possession of their now risen, spiritual, glorified bodies. And we which are alive and remain, who are then on the earth, shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and we shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, (O what a meeting, Christ the Head, and all the congregation his body!) and so shall we ever be with the Lord. (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17; 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.) God hath put a seal upon his regenerated people, whereby they are sealed unto the day of redemption. (Eph. iv. 30.) This is "that day" (2 Tim. i. 12,) that shall witness and yield to us all that we now hope for, all that we are now waiting for. Our Lord Jesus Christ, who reigns in heaven in eternal glory, is expecting this day; for he, "after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting [waiting] till his enemies be made his footstool."—Heb. x. 12, 13. "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."—1 Cor. xv. 25, 26. Also the glorified souls of all Christ's sleeping saints, who now dwell with Christ in heaven, are in delighted expectation that their bodies (which are the members of Christ, bought with a price, 1 Cor. vi. 15-20,) now sleeping in death, in the dust of the earth, shall come forth from their graves in resurrection glory, spiritual, immortal, fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Lord Jesus, which he now has in glory. (Phil. iii. 21.) Will Christ's expectation be cut off, come to naught? Never, O never. He paid the price for our release from sin and death, hell and the grave. By his own blood he entered in once into heaven itself, having obtained eternal redemption for us. (Heb. ix. 12.) How blessed are faith's contemplations! Our Jesus, the Son of God, who once suffered for sins,

the just for the unjust, to bring us to God, is now ascended far above all heavens, and reigns on high our Savior God in delighted expectation of the ultimate and eternal triumph of all his church over all their enemies.

"Triumphantly glorious, our Head has ascended
O'er death and the grave, all their power laying low;
This gains us a rising when time shall be ended;
Death no more shall hold us, ah never, O no."

Saith Christ, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in heaven."—Rev. iii. 21. O we have some precious moments of divine exaltation when by faith we see all things overcome. Our sins and temptations, all the powers of hell, sickness and pain, the world, the flesh and the devil, death and the grave. Our faith and hope are in the Lamb that was slain, now the Lamb in the midst of the throne, and in our faith we are risen with him. (Col. ii. 12.) O blessed, blessed are these moments of the power of Christ's resurrection while thus we sit with him, our glorified Jesus, upon his throne. Then, in our faith, all adversity, darkness, condemnation and fear are overcome, put under our feet, and we are in bliss triumphant with our Savior. O the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord! Such soul-exalting, blissful experiences of being risen with Christ are but moments of things hoped for; they are but sips of the cup of glory; they are but the first-fruits of the Spirit in our hearts. (Rom. viii. 23.) Only a taste of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. But because Christ is our Head, because he is our almighty Husband and Redeemer, because he is risen from the dead, because he is the first-fruits of them that slept, and we are his, we, his ransomed body, the church, shall (not as now in faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, but) in actual glorified, immortal, incorruptible being appear with him in glory, and sit with him in his throne, his glorified bride, in the image of our heavenly One, our Husband, our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Then shall the church, the Lamb's own bride,
Both crowned and seated at his side,
Outshine the sun's meridian ray;
While Jesus, smiling at the sight,
Shall then with a supreme delight
The travail of his soul survey."

Is our ascended, glorified Jesus upon his throne henceforth expecting, waiting the last enemy to be destroyed? (Heb. x. 12, 13.) So the saints here below have wrought in them by the Holy Spirit, and are moved with the selfsame expectation, and are waiting, even as Christ, the ascended Head of the church, the glorious, actual, eternal consummation of his mediatorial reign. Most explicitly and blessedly the apostle Paul declares the things that are embraced in this earnest expectation. This is his doctrine, and those who are of God know the verity of it, by divine tuition, in their soul's experience. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not

willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope; because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."—Romans viii. 14–25. O the glory that shall be revealed in us! This is our earnest expectation, the manifestation of the sons of God, deliverance from vanity to which we are now subjected, deliverance from the bondage of corruption, the glorious liberty of the children, the adoption, the redemption of the body. "Good things to come." Truly a glorious harvest to reap, and we have the Spirit of promise, the earnest of the Spirit, the Spirit of adoption, the first fruits of it all in our souls now. This doctrine, testified of in the Scriptures, is vital, and is wrought in and lives in those who are of God, renewing them day by day. "Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given us the earnest of the Spirit."—2 Cor. v. 5. Ah, our earnest expectation, hope and waiting is mingled with fears and sighs and tears; such buffetings we get from the adversary, and unbelief assails us, and sometimes we are much burdened with the bondage of corruption. But Christ our Head has overcome, he is triumphant, and reigns in glory. O afflicted, tempest-tossed believer, drink this cup of consolation. The expectation of Christ the Head above, and of his body the church below, is one; the selfsame expectation. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. xv. 51–57. This is the hope of the gospel to which the saints hope to come. (Acts xxvi. 7.) This is the earnest expectation of all the church of God; then shall we verily be conformed in the entirety of our being to the image of the Son of God. We then shall be like him, and see him as he is. O to attain unto the resurrection of the dead. (Phil. iii. 11, 12, 20, 21.) O dear kindred, I hope I hope I shall be with and like our Lord and dwell with him forevermore. I hope

"I shall be with him when he comes
Triumphant down the parting skies,
And when his voice breaks up the tombs,
Among his children I shall rise.

Among his children I shall stand,
When quick and dead his throne surround,
Blest with a place at his right hand,
And with immortal glory crowned."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

FRANK, W. Va., March 21, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR EDITOR AND BROTHER:—I am sending you herewith an article on predestination, by Elder J. C. Hall, of Virginia, which if you think fit I would like to see in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as it seems to be the opinion of some brethren in this State that the Baptists of Virginia do not, and never did, believe the doctrine of absolute predestination, and in order to correct this mistake I would like to see this article in the SIGNS. It was written by one of the ablest and most widely known preachers of Virginia, and published in *Zion's Landmark*, March 15th, 1901.

Yours in tribulation,

G. B. BIRD.

THAT WHICH THE LORD HATH PURPOSED SHALL COME TO PASS.

FROM some cause my mind has been much exercised for several days upon the purposes of God. I do not know why I should be so constantly meditating upon this, to me, wonderful, deep and sublime subject, yet it is so. A kind of irresistible impression seems to impel me to write, notwithstanding my great weakness. I am fully aware of the fact that I am not able of myself to grapple with so deep and sublime a subject, therefore it is with much fear and trembling that I approach it. I think it is with a heartfelt desire that the Lord may direct my mind that I may write so as to glorify his name, and thereby edify his saints, believing that when God is honored through our Lord Jesus Christ the saints rejoice and are edified.

It was the purpose of God to speak the earth into existence. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."—Gen. i. 1. This proves a purpose to create. In fulfillment of his purpose he made the firmament, that his handywork might be shown. For, "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handywork." That the dry land might appear, it is written, "And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good."—Gen. i. 9, 10. This his purpose carried out. Take into consideration the fowls, the beasts, the fishes, the herbs, &c.; then come to man, and in his creation we see the plural used. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."—Gen. i. 26, 27. In their creation the male and the female. It is said that while they were in this state they were immortal; but God did not say so, and I shall not. It is also said that he was made able to stand, but liable to fall; but God did not say so, and I shall not, for I do not know. That he did transgress and fall is certain. If he had never transgressed, I own that I cannot trace the purpose of God in the perfect work of salvation; for if the man had not fallen, I own that I cannot see for the life of me why God should from before the world have given any of the fallen race grace in Christ. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9. This is an affirm-

ation of the apostle, as the preceding verse shows. This grace which was given in Christ Jesus before the world began, consequently was before the creation of man. If this was according to God's own purpose before the world began, it seems to me there must of necessity have been a purpose in the fall or transgression of the man, without which he never could have been the recipient of this grace; for none but fallen, depraved sinners stand in need of saving grace. I do not think that it is blasphemy to assert that as God purposed grace in Christ Jesus before the world began, that he also purposed that the sinner should stand in need of it. I am not able to see how the Lord could declare the end from the beginning, and not see and know every event from the beginning. And he by the prophet declares or commands thus: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isa. xlvi. 9, 10. I am not able to see how he could declare things that are not yet done unless he purposed or predestinated that they should be done. To say that he permitted things to take place that he did not purpose, seems to me to contradict itself, and makes the Creator no higher than the creature. Man purposes and plans, but his purposes fail, his plans are frustrated; not so with God, he purposes and it comes to pass.

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." —Eccl. iii. 1. Is this not according to God's predestination? The Lord's will cannot be frustrated in the least by any event that takes place under the sun, because every event is according to his purpose and predestination, hence it cometh to pass. "A time to be born and a time to die: a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted."—Eccl. i. 2. Who can put off his birth? Not one. If there is a time for man to die, and he by some chance is cut off before his time, who is to die at his time? Can he fill the time if he is cut off before the time? If he passes over time, then what? Who is to take him away after his time has passed, seeing that he has passed his time? Yes, says the objector, but Hezekiah had fifteen years added to his days. Yes, and if you admit that, then you can never object to God's predestination, and are compelled to honor his purpose, and will be compelled to acknowledge the chance system to be false. For, saith the preacher, "I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it that men should fear before him."—Eccl. iii. 14.

We have seen that he declares that he will do all his pleasure. Then nothing can be put to it, and nothing taken from it, and it is clearly proven by this that all the idle cant about God being desirous to save all, and some will not let him save them, must be of the devil, and they that preach it must be the devil's tools, for the above is sufficient to show his sovereignty. Every purpose of the Lord against Babylon shall be performed. See Jer. li. 29. If against Babylon, why not in all things? It is certainly taught in the Scriptures that God worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will, and then we clearly see that nothing in the heights or depths comes to pass without his purpose; no, not the falling of a sparrow or the rustling of a leaf.

The saints are saved according to His purpose and grace. The apostle says, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."—Romans viii. 28-30. But, says the objector, all good things work together, and not evil things. I answer, He that purposed the good, also purposed the bad, and he controls both alike. But the objector says that predestination, calling, justifying and glorifying refer to the apostles only, and not to the saints generally. I answer, If so, then the apostles are all who are saved, because without this calling, justifying and glorifying, it certainly must follow that none could be saved or are saved. Besides, there were only twelve of the apostles, and the number saved, and consequently were predestinated, called, justified and glorified, is a great host or multitude that no man can number. So the idea that it was only the apostles, must be of the wicked one, and not of God. In the purpose of God we are taught the principles of election very plainly in the following: "(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."—Romans ix. 11-13. Are we to believe these verses and yet condemn God's purpose, election and predestination? Surely not. Then we certainly are bound to reverence God's way of saving his people, or contradict his word. Are we to suppose that his purpose of election in the case of Jacob and Esau differs from his purpose with the rest of the children of men? It cannot be, without denying his right to govern and dispose of his as seemeth to him good. Again, read Eph. i. 11: "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." I would ask, Who worketh things that are not after the counsel of his will? Since God worketh all things, from whence cometh other things? I must confess that if there be things either in providence or grace that are outside of God's purpose, then am I a deceived mortal. I do rejoice that the saints have hope, "According to the eternal purpose which he [God] purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Eph. iii. 11. For it does seem to me that if we ignore his eternal purpose we are without hope.

I think there could be no quarreling and wrangling among the Baptists if all would be strictly attentive to the Scriptures, for they certainly do teach the sovereignty of God clearly; his eternal purposes, election and predestination are stamped upon every page. Our exalted Creator certainly purposed all events, or else he purposed a part and left some to chance; and we know that if it is based upon chance it may or it may not be. Far be this from God. There is no chance work in grace nor in providence; all things have fixed laws, and one law does not annul another, so far as it relates to the works of the eternal God.

"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."—1 John iii. 8. He

did destroy the works of the devil, and thereby proved himself the Son of God; if not, then he has failed to prove his sonship. Then predicate the events of time upon chance, and to my mind we dishonor God and make his Son out to be an impostor. I know carnal reason revolts at the idea of God's complete sovereignty, but we are to understand that carnality never believes in anything above itself. It is the Spirit that reveals Christ as a complete Savior, and that clearly proves the purpose of God. Every purpose of God is for some wise end. When he said to Pharaoh, "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee."—Romans ix. 17, evidently the purpose of God according to what God in his foreknowledge intended or purposed, was fulfilled in him. Certainly he would not purpose the course of Pharaoh and leave the rest of men to work by chance; no, no, he declared the end from the beginning. Was not this the end of all things, acts or events? To deny it, it seems to me would be blasphemy. Then if man cannot fathom the deep things of God, none should ask why or what doest thou. The Lord saith of the church, or at least to the Ephesians by Paul, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints."—Eph. i. 18. Then the saints have the eyes of their understanding enlightened; therefore they alone can see a beauty in the purposes of God and look for the fulfillment of them all, and God will not disappoint them; if so, then some things will work together for their ill, and not for their good. It is a comforting truth that God purposes and none can frustrate him. Let us keep silent and hear the Lord speak of his purposes by the prophet: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand: that I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth; and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all nations. For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back? In the year that king Ahaz died was this burden."—Isa. xiv. 24–28. Looking at this wonderful prophecy, who can doubt the fulfillment of all the wonderful purposes of God, or question his sovereignty, or deny his predestination? To my mind, if in the wisdom of God anything visible to mortals or invisible to them was to work contrary to the purpose of God, then all that was purposed in Christ would be likely to turn out to be a failure in what Christ purposed to accomplish; and should his purpose fail in one instance, it follows of course that all might fail and that Christ hath died in vain. O how discouraging, how horrible to think of even a remote possibility of a failure in the complete and perfect salvation wrought out by Christ at such an awful and wonderful cost. What a howl of triumph would rise from the dark dungeon of hell if one purpose of God were to fail. All the demons of that awful abode would rise and with demoniac yells make universal space resound with their shouts of triumph over the conquered Son of God, and I think Christ and all the angels of glory would stand trembling for the safety of the throne of God. If one link in the chain of God's purposes (election,

predestination, or of the reign of grace through Christ,) could be broken, then farewell to the whole race of man, for all would be forever gone, eternally gone. But to my mind all things were purposed by the eternal "I AM," and that his purpose is as sure to be accomplished as it is sure that his throne stands. I cannot see how his honor can be maintained if we teach a probability of the failure of the reign of his grace. Never, to my mind, has one sinner been quickened to life only by the Spirit of God, and this, it seems to me, is because of the reign of grace. This grace was given in Christ before the world began, and consequently was bound, in the very nature of things, to have been before there was a man made, and that must of necessity prove that God purposed to make man, and that man would need a Savior, because of his death in sin.

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."—Romans xi. 33–36. Now, if in the wisdom of God all things are for him, it does seem that it is reasonable to conclude that all and every event that taketh place in the heights above, or the depths beneath, or in the lengths or breadths, either in earth or hell, are under his control, and that he purposed and foresaw them, and overrules them to his own glory, or else events are not things. Then, taking this view of the wisdom, power, mercy and love of God, I feel safe in believing and teaching that the God of salvation is a complete Sovereign, and therefore live in hope of his mercy, and that through the efficacy of the blood and righteousness of his adorable Son I shall yet praise him who is my "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."—1 Cor. i. 30. Then God forbid that we should glory save in the Lord.

Dear brethren, I have written these thoughts under the most trying circumstances, with much fear and trembling, knowing that I am imperfect, ignorant and shortsighted, often wondering, Can it be that such a creature as I am can be a child of God, saved by grace? I have written my own imperfect views, without consulting any man for his views, and I alone am responsible for what is here presented. I desire that if this is published none will take offense because of it. I hope that I have had the honor of God in view, and trust that I have the mind of Christ. My race is nearly run, I shall soon go hence and shall soon know the reality of these things. I am looking forward to the time of my departure, and when I go I expect and believe that I shall meet a satisfied Savior. My hope is to see the King in his beauty, and the whole of the purchases of Christ's blood, which will be a train that shall fill the temple; not one left out for whom he atoned; if so, it will be because of his eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ before the world began. Then I shall be as the glorified saints, and methinks that all the hosts of heaven will be shouting, "Crown him Lord of all!" Then I shall be completely happy, as I stand with the sanctified family of God, and to his name be all the praise now and in the world which shall never end.

J. C. HALL.

GOGGINSVILLE, Va.

[As a general thing we do not copy

matter, because sufficient original matter is nearly always on hand, yet for the reason that the publication of the above excellent article is especially requested, to the end that the position of the old time Baptists in Virginia may be known, we have concluded to give it place.—C.]

BROOKLYN, N. Y., Nov. 22, 1907.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Inclosed you will find a letter written by brother F. Selby Fisher, which you can give space in the SIGNS if you deem it worthy. I do not think there is a more valuable paper in the world. One might ask why I should make this assertion. I make it because it is absolutely true. I will try to give my reasons for saying this. In the first place, there is nothing so important in the sustaining of this life as the food we eat. Nothing in nature can live without that portion of food that is designed for it. That food which sustains the life of any one thing is the death of another. But all must be fed with that which the Lord has designed for them. This is true of the smallest plants that grow out of the earth, they must all be fed and nourished from their mother earth. As the babe is nourished at its mother's breast, so must every plant be nourished from the breast of the mother earth. This is true of all natural things. Now did not our God have a purpose in thus creating all these things? Did he not make the first man Adam of the earth? The second man is the Lord from heaven. The things of this earth bear, or set forth, the image of heavenly things, so, to my mind, it is just as much a necessity for the people of God to be fed with spiritual food as it is for all things in nature to be fed with natural food. But what is this food, and how is it ministered to them? It is the kind of food prepared especially for them, and none but the people of God can eat that food; neither can they eat that which the world lives upon, nor can they prepare this food any more than the Israelites could prepare their food in the wilderness. They had to wait until it pleased the Lord in mercy to send down manna, but even then they did not know what it was, they only knew that it sustained life. So spiritual Israel to-day is made to cry out for spiritual bread, and in his own good time the Lord sends down the true manna from heaven, and we are fed. We know no more about it than the Israelites did about the manna. But how is this heavenly manna ministered? Shall I say, In several ways? But yet all comes from the same great storehouse, which is never exhausted. Many times it comes with that "still small voice" which none but those to whom it is spoken can hear. It may come upon our beds at night, it may be while we are laden with the busy cares of the day, or it may be through reading the Scriptures of divine truth; it may come in conversation with some one of the Lord's people, or it may come through some one of the Lord's dear servants whom he has called, and qualified, and sent forth to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, or it may come through the writings of some one of the Lord's people who write for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. This is why I say it is the most valuable paper in the world. It carries the good tidings of great joy to hundreds of hungry souls who are isolated from the brethren and deprived of many things which afford spiritual comfort. The SIGNS brings to them good news as from a far country, and for this they are longing, as did the Israelites for food in the wilderness. Besides this, the SIGNS is a

medium of correspondence which brings the scattered people of God closer together. Many, by reading the writings of some one in the SIGNS, have felt as though he or she was very near to that one, and have wished that it could be his or her privilege to meet that one and have the pleasure of clasping their hands together. Why do such ones feel thus? Because the things which were written have been meat and drink to them. It is not that the one writing was able to prepare the food, but the Lord prepared it and then stirred that one up to write these things which were meat and drink to his people. He said, As the snow and rain come down from heaven and water the earth and make it bring forth and bud, so shall my word be which goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall accomplish that which I please, and prosper in the thing whereto I send it. His promises never fail. So when he has put it into the heart and mind of one of his children to write a word for publication in the SIGNS there will be some one comforted by it, because that word will not return unto him void.

It may be that some of our brethren who publish papers will think I have been making broad assertions. I willingly admit that others are good also, so far as they are in accord with sound doctrine, but I believe, with all brotherly love and kindness, that all will agree with me that no other paper has so well stood the test and so long and continuously set forth the truth, and nothing but the truth, as has the SIGNS.

I did not think to make this letter so lengthy when I began, so will close lest I weary you. May the Lord be with the editors and publishers of the SIGNS, that they may be blessed in their work. Also may his blessing rest upon those who write, giving them liberty to feed those who hunger.

I remain your brother,

JOHN L. HASTINGS.

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2 CORINTHIANS VII. 10.

"FOR godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death."

In the connection the apostle refers to a previous letter to them which had caused them sorrow. He says, "Though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent." But after learning that their sorrow was godly sorrow he rejoiced even in their sorrow. I think that every one who has a hope rejoices that they have been made to sorrow and grieve, as did these Corinthians. If godly sorrow works repentance (or a turning again) that is not to be repented of, we should and do rejoice that we have had this sorrow. I feel that this is the main evidence upon which I can base my hope. I have previously written you that were it not for the suffering, sorrow and bitter anguish which I have passed through, and am still in, I would have no hope at all, and would not be concerned in the things that belong to life eternal. I thought that my suffering or sorrow was death, but I find, as I hope, that it was to know the Lord, and to know him is life eternal. We are glad to sorrow in a godly way, because when we thus sorrow we do not repent of it. If we have sorrow in a godly way it is not we that sorrow, that is, not the flesh, but it is in spirit. To have His life is to have a suffering and sorrowful mind, for he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. When one is given his Spirit they can never turn away from it. The Savior's prayer to the Father was, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me," but

if not, thy will be done. It was impossible for that cup to pass from the dear Lord, and how much more must it be impossible for these things to pass from his people. How many of us in our distress have thought of that prayer to the Father in His hour of grief and sorrow. This sorrow that the Lord's people see is godly sorrow, and cannot be repented of. It is impossible to turn away from it, because of its source. These sorrows issue from God, and how can man turn them away? Our God has designed that we should pass through these things, and therefore we cannot turn from his appointed ways. After David had caused Uriah the Hittite to be slain, and had taken his wife to himself, he saw his sin and was sorry that he had sinned, but he did not die; his sorrow worked repentance. One cannot repent of an act unless he is sorry for it. Dead men never repent of anything. There must be life before there can be godly sorrow; and when we see how great our sins are, then we begin to sorrow, because there is life, and then action. Repentance is an act, and repentance is unto salvation. Not that one can reform his ways and lead a moral life, and at the end, because of this, claim and receive life eternal. To live justly and honestly is the duty of man, but this is not taken into consideration as regards man's eternal salvation. Then if one lives as he thinks is right, and is satisfied with his way of living, there cannot be any sorrow of a godly sort in him; and if no sorrow, there can be no repentance. How can a man repent of what he never did? If he is blind he cannot see the things of which he is guilty, and if he cannot see them he is not aware of them, but still sin is in him. No man ever saw himself a sinner before the just and holy God until he had been given sight to see within, then godly sorrow begins. That man must be living, or he could not see his sins. Now he hates the deeds of the flesh, and this is godly sorrow; it is the Spirit condemning the deeds of the flesh. Therefore I have hope in this, for I find a warfare going on in my own body, condemning myself, a sorrowing to repentance, and it is not to be repented of, for I would not know where to go were it possible to turn away from it. I once tried everything else and found no relief. There is life in one who labors. Before he can work he must be alive. It is not simply reforming one's self. When one repents of his ways and reforms of his own accord, it is to be repented of. When a man turns himself one way he can turn himself another; he can turn back to his old ways, and will do so. This kind of repentance is not brought about by godly sorrow; it is only godly sorrow that works repentance not to be repented of. When godly sorrow brings repentance to a man he cannot turn back any more than could the children of Israel turn back, even though they desired it. The Lord's people now sometimes wish this very thing. There are times with me when I see others enjoying the things of this world, and happy in those things, and it is bitterness to me; I wish that I could be happy as they are. This I know is nature, but I cannot go back, and it is impossible for me to even retrace one step in this journey; I cannot turn about, for I did not turn myself in the first place. This I know. Why would one turn to a thing that was unpopular, unpleasant and ridiculed by all, and above all things, which would rob him of all things which he claims as strength, and which would reduce him, a man of boasted power, to a helpless babe that must be carried everywhere, and

must have the very food he needs put by the hand of another into its mouth? Such an one is unable to take one morsel of food from the great storehouse unless it be given him, and after all we cannot turn away from this weakness; God works this sorrow in his people unto salvation. The Israelites sorrowed in their bondage; this sorrow worked repentance unto salvation; they were turned from their bondage to deliverance, which was their salvation, and when they were turned to deliverance they could never go back again into that captivity from which they came. Neither can one who repents with godly sorrow; "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

But the sorrow of the world worketh death. Cain killed his brother Abel through jealousy, which was of the world, and the act of his offering was also of the world, the labor of his hands, and therefore not acceptable to God, as was Abel's offering, which was of the firstlings of the flock, a thing which his hands had not wrought. His offering came from the Lord, and this alone can return to God. The Savior said, "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's." The things of the earth are acceptable to and return to the earth, but the things of God alone are acceptable to God, and return to him. For this reason Cain's offering was rejected and Abel's accepted. Cain was angry and jealous, which was but worldly sorrow; it was a worldly act, a wicked act, and therefore it worked death. Everything of a worldly nature must return to the world, which is death. The sorrow of the world is caused by envy, jealousy and strife. There is no envy or jealousy in spiritual things. Our God does not strive with himself; it is the same God working in one that works in another, for they are one body, and He is in that body, and so there can be no strife. But there is strife in nature, and natural or worldly sorrow generates it and it works death, because life in nature is unto death, but life in the Spirit is life eternal. Jonah said, "I do well to be angry, even unto death." Jonah had quite a supply of nature, as well as one with whom I have quite an acquaintance. It was the natural man who was angry, and that brought the sorrow of the world. He was angry because the people of Nineveh repented and were sorry; but this was because this repentance of Nineveh was the work of the Spirit of God, and he was not allowed to do his way. If they had refused to listen to the preaching of Jonah I do not think he would have been sorry or angry, but they listened, and his nature was angry even unto death. Everything unto death is of the world, but the suffering which is of the Spirit is never unto death. The sorrow of Judas was unto death, because he had done that which he had done, and his sorrow was so great that he went out and hanged himself. What prompted him to do as he did? Nothing but a natural desire, a worldly lust, to gain thirty pieces of silver. It was prophesied how it should be, yet Judas was not trying to fulfill the Scripture. It was not so with our Savior, he knew that all the prophecy must be fulfilled, hence his sorrow was different from the sorrow of Judas. As their knowledge was different, so were their thoughts and ways and sorrows different. The sorrow of Judas, being of the world, worked death.

When Ahab went to Naboth and asked for his vineyard he was refused, Naboth saying, "The Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee." Then Ahab went home dis-

pleased. This is all, to my mind, from and of a natural cause, and so his sorrow worked death. There were strife and evil stirred up in the heart of his wife, and she planned a way to get this vineyard, so that Ahab could possess it, and he sold himself to wickedness, and death was brought upon his wife and son, if not on himself. All this was of the world, and worked death; and everything of which a man can think in the world works death. How many still think that by works we live; but instead, works are but the evidence of life, and when one is alive in the Spirit his sorrow is godly, and it works repentance unto salvation not to be repented of. The people of God repent in a godly way. Repentance which is not godly is not unto salvation.

From one who sorrows, and who hopes it is a godly sorrow,

F. SELBY FISHER.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I inclose this good letter from dear brother May for publication, as it is in harmony with the doctrine of the Bible and of the SIGNS.

Yours in Christ,

P. W. SAWIN.

PINSONFORK, Ky., March 1, 1908.

ELDER P. W. SAWIN—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I am at home this Sunday morning and have some desire to write you, although I feel unworthy to do so, and have been halting between two opinions for several days as to writing you.

As the years go by the glorious doctrine of him who is the Sovereign of all worlds, beings and things seems more precious and interesting to me. I love even to think of it; how precious and how great is the sum of it. The wonderful truth of sovereign grace has been lingering in my mind so much the past week that I have decided to suggest to you a few of my many thoughts along this line (the line of God's previous appointment), therefore will quote a clause of Scripture which has been in my mind occasionally all this week; it reads as follows: "For that that is determined shall be done."—Dan. xi. 36. Now without going into detail of the things mentioned in this chapter, or in the prophecy of Daniel, which were previously appointed and determined by the all-wise and omnipotent God, I will begin to suggest some of my thoughts on the subject this way: Forasmuch then as "that that is determined shall be done," does not the implied text hold good: that that is not determined never was done, nor ever shall be done? It has seemed clear to my mind for several years that there never has been one single iota in all the vast universe of Jehovah manifested or done but what was previously determined to be done just as it was and is done, also where and by whom. This is not only true with relation to the economy of grace, but all things on time's side of duration. Job would say in reference to mortal man, "Man that is born of a woman, * * * seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass." The question might be asked thus: Man cannot pass what? The answer is at hand: Man cannot pass the bounds that God appointed for him. These are things that the all-wise and unchangeable God determined, settled and fixed, for the word "bounds" means limits or destiny, therefore we cannot believe this previous appointment of mortal man's bounds or limits are confined alone to just the length of his natural life, but

to all his avocations and environments as well. Hence the bounds or limits of God's creation are unchangeably fixed, as absolutely as that of man that is born of a woman, and the all-wise and all-powerful God has been, is now and shall for evermore carry out his eternal design to a jot and to a tittle.

It seems plain to my mind that the reason all things do and act as they do is because they are just what they are, just what their Creator made them for. He did not intend a wolf to be a lamb, or to act like a lamb; neither did he intend a serpent to be a dove, or to act like one; so everything of God's creation is precisely what he intended it to be, and wants it to be, and invariably answers his eternal purpose in and of his entire creation. While this Scripture in the fourteenth chapter of Job has reference to the entire progeny of the earthly Adam, there is no doubt in my mind but it includes Christ also in his human nature and relation with his elect people according to God's foreknowledge and determinate counsel. All things are by the previous appointment of God; without this appointment nothing can be. The manifestation or existence of anything is *prima facie* evidence of previous determination of God; therefore I must believe that which is not determined cannot be, never was nor ever will be. "For that that is determined shall be done," and it being done demonstrates the fact that it was determined to be done. "For the Lord God of hosts shall make a consumption, even determined, in the midst of all the land. Therefore thus saith the Lord God of hosts, O my people that dwellest in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian: he shall smite thee with a rod, and shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of Egypt."—Isa. x. 23, 24. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."—Isa. xiv. 24. God's thought is equivalent to his purpose or eternal design, and we have in these verses the groundwork or basis of gospel commands, exhortations and admonishments, and that is, that all things are determined, settled and fixed; therefore the prophet Isaiah could and did say to the Lord's people that dwelt in Zion, "Be not afraid of the Assyrian," for I have appointed his bounds and fixed his limits, although he shall come against you, but just so far, and no farther. "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn." Notwithstanding I have created the waster to destroy, I have also appointed his bounds, I have determined his course and consequences. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father."—Matt. xxviii. 18, 19. "That that is determined shall be done." "But, behold, the hand of him [Judas] that betrayeth me is with me on the table. And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined."—Luke xxii. 21, 22. Here is another plain manifestation of the previous appointment and determination of God of his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. "Him [his Son] being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."—Acts ii. 23. Luke says, "Truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined." Therefore the fact is clearly demonstrated that the determinate counsel settled and unchangeably fixed everything that Christ must suffer or undergo, even that wicked hands

should crucify and slay him. Hence it was as absolutely determined that there should be wicked hands to crucify and slay him, as it was that there should be a Jesus to be crucified and slain by wicked hands; all was determined, therefore all was done. Truly the Son of man went as the eternal counsel determined. "For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together. For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."—Acts iv. 27, 28. These Scriptures, brother Sawin, together with the entire tenor of Scripture, prove conclusively that all that ever was, is now, or ever shall be, was previously appointed and determined of God from the ancients of eternity.

Yours in much love,

W. J. MAY.

RICHMOND, Me., Feb. 4, 1908.

MISS BONNIE CHICK—MY DEAR NIECE: —As has always been the case when you have written me, your letter brought a feeling of joy. I should know your mind if you were rejoicing in the altogether lovely One, or if you mourned for an absent Lord; in either case I would know the place you were in. I often think I enjoy those letters which tell of lonely hours, and of the cry, Where is my Beloved? Tell me where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon; for my own long journey in the wilderness gives me sweet fellowship for all those who are traveling that way. How many, many times in my lonely years my cry was, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" I felt alone, I could not speak of the precious things as once I had, and I longed for him to restore unto me the joy of his salvation. Sometimes I would feel in my heart the dreadful question, when sister Attie would speak of being so full of rejoicing and confidence, Why is she given so much fullness of joy and I left with only now and then a crumb? I did not want to question God's goodness, but thoughts like these would come unbidden. How glad I am that my repinings were not heeded, but that, rather, he chastened me sore. We know that "no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Do you not see how good God has been to me? He has given me the oil of joy for the spirit of heaviness. "My cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life;" and my desire is that I may dwell in the house of the Lord forever. At the feet of Jesus is a safe place. Your grandmother used often to say: He that is down, need fear no fall. I thought sometimes that if I were like her I should not fear at all. She seemed to walk with God in a sense that I despair of ever knowing anything about. Surely in all the cares and griefs of her life she must have realized the truth of the text, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be."

I have not written as I thought, dear child, but you will know that I feel it is well with you, even though you cannot feel the same joy as in the early days of your spiritual life. "Great is the mystery of godliness." You will realize this more and more as the years go by, and more and more will you also realize that of yourself you are nothing at all, but more and brighter will the perfection of Jesus appear, until at last death is swallowed up in victory, then we shall see him as he is, and be like him. I hope that in view

of such glorious things you and I may be patient, walking humbly before him all the days of our lives. Write when you have time. Love to all the dear ones.

As ever, your loving aunt,

ANGIE J. THOMAS.

LEBANON, Maine, March 19, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER LEWIS FORD:—I received your good letter in due time, and was more than glad to hear from you, and pleased to hear that brother Ker is to be with you next Sunday and Monday; I trust the Spirit of the Lord will be with him and that you will have a good meeting. I would like to be with you, but my son Everett had the misfortune to have his forefinger cut off the other day while working in a portable sawmill, and he is unable to do any work, and will be so for some time, but I hope the time will come when I can go to see you and hear brother Ker. I have an impression to write a few words so that all may know I am still hoping, waiting and trusting alone in Jesus. I have endured many trials and passed through many conflicts with the flesh and Satan, but these things have only tended to increase my confidence in the Lord and to rely more on his promises, believing his grace is sufficient for us, and that he will never leave us nor forsake us; he rules supreme and doeth all things well. I have often doubted my being one of God's children, and have almost given up in despair. Within the past two years or so I have been greatly tried along this line; it seemed Satan was ever near, telling me I was not a child of God; it seemed my hope was in vain, and I suffered more than pen can tell. At last I almost concluded I would have to entirely give up my hope, but the Lord knows just when and how to comfort his children, and I feel that at length he was pleased to comfort me again, thus reviving my drooping spirit to declare that "God is love." His mercy and grace know no bounds, and he is full of pity and tender compassion. I wish I might be more filled with his dear presence and rich love to help me each day to overcome my vile nature, which gives me so much sorrow. The good I would I do not, and that which I hate I do. I am a sinner, and trust alone to God's mercy to be saved. Could we stand a day or an hour did not his hand continually uphold us? To poor, weak, helpless ones how comforting are these words: The Lord upholdeth all that fall and raiseth up all those that be bowed down. The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and of great mercy.

But I will close, with love to the rest of your family. I wish to be remembered to brother Ker and to all of the dear brethren.

From your unworthy brother, who is less than the least of all saints,

ALMON H. CHICK.

DUART, Ontario, May 7, 1907.

MISS ANNIE MURRAY—DEAR SISTER:—Once again I will try to reply to your very welcome letter, which I received before the May meeting. It was not our privilege to visit with you, nor to see you at that meeting. It is a hard matter for me to tell you what I had been passing through before and during the meeting, but I hope you will bear with me in love and patience. Before going to the meeting I was rebellious, and determined in my own mind that I did not want to go, and would prefer staying at home, but at times such a cry would come out of my wicked heart, Not my will, but thine, be done. Saturday morning we got ready and

went. We missed the morning sermon. In the evening Elder Ker preached, and I enjoyed hearing him very much. The trouble that was on my mind was about the supper. What was I to do? On Sunday morning when I awoke out of my sleep I was weeping, and the words were with me, Glory only in the cross. Elder Ker described the cross beautifully on Saturday; he said the cross was not a stick set up with another across it to form a cross, but it was the suffering and agony through which the dear Savior must pass. I felt that I knew a little of His sufferings, but only a little of what he endured, for he sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, and died on the cross. How extreme his suffering must have been. Dear sister, what was I to do? While I was eating my dinner the words came to me very powerfully, as though they were spoken with a voice, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Such a wonderful feeling came over me just then; I felt that I could take the communion with my dear Lord and Savior, which I did, and felt it to be one of the most glorious communions I ever experienced; it was with my Lord and Savior. I remember you told me in one of your letters of how you enjoyed the communion one year ago, at the May meeting. I came home rejoicing, but was sick in body, as I took a bad cold, but I feel better now. I wish to be remembered to your mother.

Your sister in love,

(MRS.) DUNCAN SINCLAIR.

LIBERTY, Mo., Jan. 6, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I want to write you a few lines to say that I feel to thank the great Creator that he has spared my life to see another year pass away; but I do not see one thing good that I have done. I rejoice that the people of God are saved by grace, and not by works, and this is so lest any man should boast. We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, that they might show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. My dear brethren, children of the Father, I trust I have been brought to that light. I did not come of myself, the Lord brought me all the way, and keeps me by his power. I hope to live and die in that faith in Christ. I was fifty years old last October, and have lived in this faith twenty years.

I receive the SIGNS regularly, it brings me good news as from a far country, so I will say to all, Write on for its pages, and may the Lord help you to do so. Dear brother, do with this as you deem best, and all will be right with me.

Your brother, C. BIRD.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, Elder P. G. Lester will fill the following appointments in Kentucky:

Little Flock, Friday, 2:30 p. m., May 22nd, and Saturday and Sunday, 11 a. m., 23rd and 24th; Goshen, Tuesday, 11 a. m., 26th; Salt River, Wednesday, 11 a. m., 27th; Elk Lick, Thursday, 11 a. m., 28th; Sulphur Fork, Saturday, 11 a. m., 30th; Turners, Sunday, 11 a. m., 31st; Pleasureville, Tuesday, 11 a. m., June 2nd; Finchville, Wednesday and Thursday, as suits, 3rd and 4th; Bethel, Saturday and Sunday, 11 a. m., 6th and 7th; Winchester, Monday, as suits, 8th; Mt. Sterling, Tuesday, as suits, 9th; Sharpsburg, Wednesday and Thursday, as suits, 10th and 11th; Mays Lick, Saturday and Sunday, 11 a. m., 13th and 14th.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. R. S. Scroggins, Ill., $1.00.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1908.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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REPLIES.

BROTHER D. Kennard, of Delevan, Cal., asks for some thoughts from us regarding Matthew xii. 24. A similar request has also come to us from others. The special subject that is in the mind of brother Kennard is concerning the going out of the unclean spirit from a man. The same parable is recorded in Luke xi. There it is coupled with the parable of the strong man who is overcome by the stronger man. In brief we will say that we have for a long time understood that the parable of the strong man sets forth the effectual work of grace in the hearts and lives of men, wrought there by the power of the Spirit of God, while the parable of the unclean spirit going out and returning refers simply to a work that it might be proper to call a moral reformation, but without any manifestation of the effectual grace of God in it. The parable of the unclean spirit evidently was intended by the Savior to apply to the Jewish people, who had charged that he cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils. It did not apply to believers in him, or to regenerate men. It presents a state of mind and feeling into which natural men may come. For a time that Jewish people were ready, apparently, to receive him as he appeared when the multitude spread palm branches in his path and shouted, "Hosanna," as he entered into Jerusalem; but in a few days that same multitude were crying out, "Crucify him, crucify him." The unclean spirit had gone out, but no better spirit had come in, and they were simply natural men still. It pleased them as natural men to acclaim him as their King, because they had hope that he was now about to restore the kingdom to Jerusalem and exalt them to great heights of glory in that kingdom, but still they felt no need of salvation from sin, death and bondage. Then soon the old spirit of enmity to true godliness returned, and with such added rage that it could be expressed in no better way than by saying that he had taken to himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and the result was that that people were in a worse state than before. If this parable applies to anything in men now, it seems to us that the modern revival system is well calculated to lead to it. Men become excited under the influence of professed revivalists and are led into a profession of religion, and really suppose that they have experienced the work of God in the soul, and for a time maintain this profession, but when the exciting cause has departed from them this exaltation of the natural feelings begins to subside, and soon they find they are the same kind of men as before. Then there is an open door for skepticism as regards all religion, and still more does the spirit of unbelief and a reckless disregard of all godliness possess them. Seven other spirits more wicked than the first have now come into that man. Or it may be that this man continues to be religious; but as his religion is not of God, but of the flesh, he may become an open hater of the truth

and of those who love it, and to the extent that he is permitted he seeks the harm of all who hold the truth. The spirits of religious persecution have now taken possession of that man, and his last state is worse than the first, when he was but a natural man, without the spirit of persecution in him.

What a great contrast between this parable and that of the strong men! In this the unclean spirit is not bound, but goes out; in the other the strong man is not cast out, but is bound. In the first the unclean spirit goes out of its own will; in the other the strong man is bound against his will. In the first there is no better spirit named; in the other a stronger man comes in. In the first the cleansing of the house by the going out of the unclean spirit does not abide, for it is said that still more and worse spirits return; in the second the work abides and is never undone. The second is the Lord's gracious work, and the first is not. Whatsoever is of God abides, all else is but temporary; being of the flesh it cannot endure. Blessed are they of whom this second parable speaks.

Brother Z. Ward, of Bear Wallow, Va., speaks of Ecclesiastes i. 4, 5, and desires that we comment upon it, saying that there is some difference of view upon the fifth verse. Our brother does not say what that difference is, and so we do not know just what is on his mind regarding it.

The whole chapter presents the experience of the vanity and sorrow that is connected with all earthly things, including wisdom itself. Nothing abides here below; even the labor of man, whereby he seeks to accumulate the goods of this world, can be but for a time, for one generation passes away and another generation comes upon the stage. Man at the best cannot long enjoy the fruit of his labor. Even the sun is not in one place, but hasteth on its course, and it is now night and then morning. The wind is continually shifting its direction and whirling from one quarter of the sky to another. The rivers cease not to run into the sea, and yet the sea is not full, and still demands more. The rivers come from the sea, and return thither again. There is nothing new, for what has been shall be, and so all things are restless, unstable and unsatisfying. There is nothing solid and lasting, and realizing all this the Preacher declares that all is vanity and vanity of vanities; yet we must not suppose that the Preacher designs to speak of all these works of the Lord in creation as though they served no purpose at all; they are all the creation of God, and were in the beginning pronounced very good. They are all still good, if used lawfully and in the fear of God. It is in a comparative sense then that they are said to be vanity. The most enduring of them all must pass away, but the things of the spiritual world will abide forever. The thought beneath all these reflections of the Preacher is that it is not worth while to set our affections on things below, but rather, as the apostle has also said in Colossians, set them on things above. The Lord sets the sun in the heavens, and establishes the earth, and marks out the course of the rivers, and holds the oceans in his fist, but all these things, it is declared in the word, shall perish when they have fulfilled the will of their Maker. He who sets his heart then upon these things is not wise; in the end he shall find no foundation in them; he shall find they all are but vanity. This is the general theme of the whole chapter. When

it is said in the fourth verse that the earth abideth forever, the language does not at all contradict the declarations of the word that the earth shall in the end be destroyed; the expression is similar to the expression, "the everlasting hills." The words in both texts are used in a comparative sense. All we see on the earth that relates to the condition of man changes often, while the hills do not change and the earth still is solid and goes on its course as at the beginning, yet even the solid earth is sometimes shaken by earthquakes and convulsions within. The expression, "the earth abideth for ever," is not meant to contradict this fact.

In the fifth verse there could not be more expressive language used to describe the course of the sun hasting, or, as the margin reads, "panteth," on his course from day to day. To the sight of man every morning it has returned to the place from which it set forth the preceding morning; it rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race, and in the text the sun is figuratively represented as one who runs the race set before him with haste, and panting for breath. Yet even the sun shall cease his course at the end. If we depend upon the solid earth, or even upon the unwearying sun, at the end we shall find that they are but vanity, for they shall cease to be. But how blessed are they who dwell in the new earth and under the new heavens, and behold the light of the Sun of righteousness. These shall endure when earth and seas and river and the sun itself shall be no more; and to realize the exceeding great excellency of these things which endure, the soul must come to realize the vanity of all that is below. The wise man had come to see this, and so he wrote of it. The people of God, taught in the same way, now say the same things.

OUR aged brother, John Grange, of Lynnville, Ind., asks that we say something concerning the words found in Genesis ii. 21, 22, and we feel to comply with his request in a few words.

The whole narrative is full of mysteries, the mysteries of the creative wisdom and power of our God. Our brother in his letter speaks of these words as being full of mystery. These mysteries no man can solve. If it be asked how our God could bring all existence into being out of non-existence, there is no reply, either in the wisdom of men or in the word of God. We are not told how these things are done, but simply that they were done. In these particular verses it is simply recorded by inspiration of God that the Lord saw it was not good for man to be alone, and therefore he made woman and gave her to Adam. It is also simply said that the Lord caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and while he slept took a rib out of his side and made a woman and presented her to the man; and then it is said that Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: and she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." This is the God-given narrative of the formation of woman, and it must be accepted, and will be accepted by all who believe the Bible to be the word of God in simple faith.

There are some suggestions which seem proper to be made here. First, woman was not taken from the head of man, nor from his feet, which might show on the one hand (had it been so) that she was superior to him, or, on the other hand, that she was inferior to him, but from his side, to show that she was to be considered his equal, and to be one with him in sympathy, and in all that pertains to the marriage relation ordained of God as be-

ing good for man. Adam at once recognized this oneness, or union, as being a union of life, by saying, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." Second, we are authorized in the word of God to believe that in this relation we have a type of that indivisible union that exists between Christ and the church, his bride. The children of God are one with their blessed Lord in real vital union, which shall endure forever and forever. As Adam loved Eve as his own bone and flesh, so Christ loved the church and gave himself for it. When Eve transgressed and fell under the curse, Adam went into the transgression with her out of the love he bore her. So Christ loved the church in such a manner that he took upon him her sins and lived with her on earth, and suffered for her in the flesh that they might be one forever. These things are set forth in other Scriptures. While we reflect upon these things and rejoice in them, we must still first of all receive the simple narrative and believe it as it is recorded. God's wonderful work in creation must be admired as well as his work in salvation.

BROTHER Edwin Newton, of Ashville, Ohio, asks our views in regard to infant salvation. He says if it be so that all who die in infancy go to heaven, we had all better die then. It is our belief, and we think we have some Bible testimony which justifies us in it, that all whom our God has purposed to take away from earth in infancy he has also purposed to save in his Son Jesus Christ. This salvation is not upon the ground that they die in infancy, and therefore have done no evil, or that they are holy and pure and so ought to be saved, but solely upon the ground of election, the election of grace, the same election by which all others who are saved are chosen to salvation. We read nothing in the word of God about infant salvation, or about adult salvation, as though age had anything to do with this matter, but we do read about the election of grace, and that the elect have obtained the blessing. Still further, nothing can be clearer than that all who are saved are saved upon precisely the same ground, so that all alike shall say forever and forever, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the praise. There is no divided song in the hearts of saints on earth, and there shall be none to all eternity. It cannot be that one shall say, I was taken home in infancy, and so had not been left to sin, while another shall say, I was old in sin, and I turned myself about and sought the Lord, and therefore I am in glory, while still another shall sing, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, because he has redeemed me. The substance of the testimony of all the saved shall be, The Lord hath triumphed gloriously.

Infants are saved just as all others are saved, by the atoning blood of Christ, and by the birth of the Spirit. All who are saved are sinners saved by grace. All have been under the curse and must be redeemed from it, and there is but one way of redemption for any one. Not good works, or baptism, but the cleansing blood of Christ avails to salvation. Old School Baptists can believe that all infants who die in infancy are included in the covenant of redemption, or are numbered among the elect vessels of mercy; they can believe this consistently, and no others can. The Romish church holds that the souls of unbaptized infants can never see the face of God. An expression of one of their preachers was this: "The wailing cry of the souls of unbaptized infants is heard throughout the re-

gions of darkness forever." All who practice infant baptism do so upon the ground that their infants dying unbaptized will lose something in that world, owing to this neglect. If the souls of any ought to cry and wander through the regions of darkness forever because of the neglect of baptism of infants, does it not look as though it ought to be the souls of the parents who neglected to do this, rather than the infants? If children lack anything in that world that would have been theirs had they been baptized, does it not look as though their parents should be the ones to suffer that lack rather than they? What utter folly all this is! It is almost inconceivable that any one could possibly believe such absurdities, and, beside, there is not the slightest word in the Bible capable of being construed in that way. It suited, in the first place, a grasping, covetous priesthood to inculcate this theory, and it suits such a priesthood to-day, and poor dupes are willing to be deceived and are deceived by designing teachers. When the child given to the woman at the intercession of Elijah had suddenly died, and the mother had gone forth to seek the prophet, and he had said to her, Is it well with the child? she said, It is well. David said that his child could not come to him, but that he should go to it. In neither case could it have been known that the faith of Christ dwelt in these children by any testimony that they had borne while they lived, and so the assurance expressed by both the woman and David must have rested upon a faith that these children were included in the election of grace upon some general ground. What could this have been if not the confidence that as God had seen fit to take them away from earth in infancy, it must be that they were included in his everlasting covenant of grace? These two narratives have wrought in our mind the conviction that our God has included all those whom he purposes to take away in infancy in his election and in salvation. C.

DIFFERENCES OF OPINION.

PERHAPS a few thoughts along this line would not be out of place at this time, should we be given to write in that spirit which offends not. It seems strange, nevertheless true, that few men agree on any one subject; this is not confined to the world, but is also found among the people of God. The saying, "Many men of many minds," is correct. The cause of difference is, of course, different understanding, and while often unpleasant, what kind of a world would we have if all men saw alike? Difference of opinion is not a new thing, either among natural men or the children of God; such can be traced to the beginning of the world, and we feel sure the same condition of things will continue. No man since the apostles "fell on sleep" has been or is infallible, hence could, and can, only give his own opinion on Bible subjects; but this fact is often apparently forgotten, and men are credited with wisdom and knowledge close kin to infallibility. When our opinion is such of a man we shall do well to examine ourselves lest we be found worshiping an angel, which worship Paul speaks most positively against. Often men who have finished their course and are resting from their labors are mentioned by the saints as authority on this or that subject, and unless the servants of God of the present day agree with the opinions of our fathers they are considered heretics, hence false teachers. When we speak of "our fathers," we mean those of our faith and order who were as able

men, no doubt, as the church has known since the days of the apostles, but it should always be remembered that they were only fallible men, and as liable to err as those of the present day, and that no man whose name does not appear in the Bible is nor has been authority on any subject of gospel truth. "To the law and to the testimony," which "word" is ever the standard by which all opinions must be tried. The early church did not think it an incredible thing for God to reveal some things to the apostles which were not clear to the prophets. Why should it now be considered incredible that God should reveal some things to his servants which were not clear to our fathers nor even to the apostles? For instance, it is evident from the letters of the apostles that they verily thought "the end of the world" meant the end of this material world; they watched daily for that to come. The saints believed it and sold their possessions that distribution might be made according as every man had need, thinking that only a few days, weeks or months at most they would have need of those temporal things. We hear Peter saying to them, "The end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." Nearly two thousand years have passed since that time, and the world stands, with perhaps less signs of ending than then. The world that did come to an end, the heavens passing away with a great noise and the earth melting with fervent heat, all the works therein being burned up, was the passing away of the old covenant that the things which cannot be shaken nor destroyed might appear. If "the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day," should we not expect clearer light and more perfect understanding of heavenly things as we journey on nearer and nearer until the Daystar shall arise in our hearts? Often brethren write for the SIGNS, giving their opinion of some deep and mysterious point of doctrine; it is done in all honesty and sincerity, with prayerful desire for the welfare of the church, hoping that the brethren may consider what they say and that the Lord may give them understanding in all things. This is what Paul said to Timothy; he himself, though an apostle, realized that God must give the understanding; nevertheless what he wrote to Timothy should be considered by him. But instead of considering and thoroughly investigating the opinion of a brother, when it differs with that of the reader, he is stamped as a heretic and dangerous man. We should be willing to hear the opinions of our brethren, and when we differ with them, examine more carefully our own idea; in so doing we consider their view, and it may be that we shall be surprised to find that we have held an incorrect view for years simply because we did not investigate the first opinion we heard; or it may be that we shall be convinced that both opinions are wrong and we become established in the true import of whatever Scripture is under consideration. Let it be remembered that no man can do more than to give his opinion, and in doing so he should have no thought nor desire to compel the church or any individual to accept and be governed by what he suggests. It is not necessary therefore for any to be troubled if views appear which seem new; first examine the thought, regardless of what your own opinion or that of some one else may be. If you find that it will stand the "fire," accept it, if not, reject it, but in a brotherly way to the face of the writer or preacher. This was Paul's course when

he did not agree with Peter concerning a certain matter, as will be seen in Galatians ii. 11–21. Not much good is done in withstanding a brother to the face of some one else. The SIGNS has ever published opinions from time to time with which it does not agree, yet has never claimed infallibility, and is willing that brethren should give their opinions, and never has accused any one of being a heretic unless he denied the principles of the doctrine of Christ. The editors from the first issue to the present have written at the request of brethren upon various subjects, always giving only their opinions. Sometimes one such article calls forth much criticism, and many private letters have to be written trying to explain our position more fully. All this is because of difference of opinion. It should be remembered that the editors of the SIGNS are not more wise in the mysteries of the Bible than other men, and can but at best give their own views on this or that subject. It is a decided mistake to credit any man with infallible wisdom and knowledge, and therefore hold tenaciously to an opinion because this or that man held that view. Remember that all men are liable to mistakes. Sometimes a brother or an editor is asked to give his view on "the resurrection of the dead," and presenting his opinion of it as being entirely or altogether spiritual; some one will at once accuse him of denying the resurrection of the body, when there can be no resurrection of the dead except it be of "a body." "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." No man with hope in God ever means to deny the resurrection of "a spiritual body," yet in expressing his opinion he is often stamped as "a nonresurrectionist." Another brother writes on the same subject, and while his faith may be the same as that of the other brother, he expresses himself in such a way regarding the body raised, that he is accused of presenting "a material resurrection;" he speaks of "our vile bodies," "our Adamic bodies," "this old sinner," "the very dust," and many like expressions, which convey to the understanding of those who write of "a spiritual body" being raised that this brother believes in the resurrection of the very body without change that was sown. Hence a difference of opinion on a subject that the apostles did not understand, neither did one of them mention directly the resurrection of "a body" except Paul. Why should any of us, dear brethren, war with each other and harshly denounce one another concerning this subject which no man understands, and which will ever remain "a mystery" to all on this side of glory?

"Eternal conscious punishment of the wicked" is another subject of disagreement. One brother who does not find, in his understanding of the word, the record of such punishment, honestly and kindly asks where it can be found; without investigation, another brother accuses him of denying the Scriptures which teach, in his understanding, the resurrection of the ungodly to everlasting conscious suffering, and perhaps unconsciously excites a bitter feeling against that brother. Would it not be better to investigate carefully the Scriptures and cite the brother to the place where such record can be found? Another brother says, The gospel cannot be preached without declaring the resurrection and eternal punishment of the wicked. In this he, of course, expresses his own opinion. Another brother, who differs with him, asks, What is the gospel? He answers, The gospel "is the power of God unto salvation." Then,

says the brother, it cannot be the power of the devil unto damnation. He continues by saying, The gospel is "glad tidings of great joy;" wherein then does the gospel declare eternal conscious punishment to the wicked? Thus another difference of opinion on a subject perhaps little understood even by the most able of men. The subject of hell, and its horrors, seldom brings comfort and confirmation to the troubled, doubting and perplexed child of God. The apostles and ministers of their day preached salvation to sinners in the name of Jesus Christ, and such would be wise to-day in all of us who are called to preach the "unsearchable riches of Christ." The opinions of men can never change God's plan or purpose, therefore if there is a place of literal fire into which the ungodly are to be cast, all the opinions of men contrary to it will make no change in it. On the other hand, if there is no such place, all the opinions of men who believe it can never cause it to exist. Why then be disturbed on either side? as this one illustration answers to show the powerlessness of the opinions of men.

Again, one minister of the gospel says this or that Scripture is figurative, and teaches some hidden truth, and he attempts to explain that point. Some of the brethren agree with him, and feel sure the Lord gave him the true interpretation of that Scripture. Another minister of the gospel says, That portion of the word is not figurative, and means just what it says, and there is no obscurity in it. Hence he says the other minister was entirely wrong in his opinion. Both of these men are credited with more or less ability, and when the saints, especially the lambs of the flock, see the difference between their opinions, confusion of mind takes hold of them. Some ask, Who is right? Others say, Perhaps both are wrong; trouble of soul and spirit seizes them; they become unsettled with regard to those things in which they should be established. May we ask, How shall the church be united and established while such differences of opinion continue with the ministers on whom it looks as the servants of God sent to minister in holy things? If "we speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen," we shall do well, but to ever be preaching and writing upon such mysterious and hidden subjects as the resurrection, and eternal conscious punishment of the wicked, is unwise, and means sooner or later confusion, strife and division. May the Lord grant us peace.

K.

NOTICE.

Allow me to say that I have collected nearly 500 sketches for proposed Book-Biographies of Primitive Baptist Ministers of U. S. Many other sketches have been promised. Please send them on, brethren. If only a few words about life, labors in ministry, age, &c., that will do, but give all the information you wish. I will rearrange for publication. Now please do not delay. There is not a more worthy, self-sacrificing and honorable body of men than the ministry of the Primitive or Old School Baptist Church. A book of this character will be interesting and useful, as well as commemorative of their memory. The work will have an appendix containing much useful and valuable information, in brief form, gleaned from the best authorities. This alone may be worth the price of the book to you, which will be between one and two dollars; cannot name exact price yet, it depends upon size, number of photos, binding, &c., and the orders I receive. The larger the edition the cheaper the book. Now if you would like to help commemorate the memory of these "Soldiers of the Cross," then send me your order for one or more copies. Do not delay, but tell me how you feel about the matter. It will cost me about a thousand dollars, and if the Baptists and their friends do not want it I cannot afford to publish. Kindly write me.

R. H. PITTMAN.

LURAY, Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mr. N. L. Furman, our friend and neighbor, died April 3rd, 1908, having just completed his 73rd year. He was one of the five children of John and Anna Furman, and was born near Spring Valley, Rockland Co., N. Y., in the vicinity of the Ramapo Old School Baptist Church, which is now nearly extinct. Mr. Furman was a prominent citizen in his community, and had held positions of responsibility and trust, which had brought him the respect and esteem of a wide circle of friends. His mother during her life was a member of the Methodist Church, but his father had been a member of no denomination. Mr. Furman himself never made a profession of religion. For many years he attended the Dutch Reformed Church, but notwithstanding attempts to get him into that church he remained outside as long as his body kept its strength and vigor, and his mind its clearness. During the last two years of his life he occasionally attended the meetings of the Old School Baptist Church, and showed an interest in its doctrine as well as its welfare, but seldom spoke of his thoughts or feelings to any one, being rather a quiet man in matters that concerned him deeply. About a week before his death Mr. Furman sent a message to the writer, bidding him to his bedside. As I stepped to his side and took his hand, he, weeping, assured me of his gladness at my coming, and continuing, he expressed his enjoyment of our meetings that he had attended and of the preaching heard there, regretting that he had not gone more frequently. He said: "I love to hear the Scriptures explained, and that is what you do, and the explanations suit me." Speaking of the goodness of God he said: "I have been balancing my books. On one side is the mercy and the gifts of God. He has guided and kept me all my life, and I knew it not. On the other side of the account I see how ungrateful I have been and how undeserving." Speaking of his approaching end, he said: "I do not dread death. Whatever is God's will is all right. If I am lost, it is all right, and if I am saved, it is not of myself. I have a hope, not in my merits, but in God's mercy, that the change before me is for the better." He asked my views upon knowing each other in heaven. I tried to present the Scripture showing that to be where Jesus is is to be like him, and being fully perfected in him we are not known after the flesh, but are one in him, being conformed unto his image. In other words, that no such recognition prevails in heaven as prevails on earth, there being no flesh and blood there, and our identity in Christ not being our identity in Adam. He said this comforted him, and so I left him, feeling I had breathed the free air of eternity.

Mr. Furman, from among his nearest kindred, is survived by his wife and his two sisters. Beside these are nieces and nephews, and a host of friends who feel their loss.

At his funeral the writer addressed the large assembly from Luke xx. 34–36. Interment in Warwick cemetery.

ALSO,

Mrs. Mary E. Hyatt died suddenly of pneumonia, April 24th, 1908, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Mills P. Carey, in Brooklyn, N. Y. She was the widow of George A. Hyatt, of Warwick, and spent all her life here, with the exception of the last few winters, which she spent with her daughter in the city. Mrs. Hyatt never united with any church, but always attended the meetings of the Old School Baptist Church. She loved the doctrine of God our Savior, and believed the only salvation for sinners was by the grace of God in Jesus Christ our Lord. She was the mother of six children, two of whom survive her. Two died in infancy, one daughter at the age of thirteen, and one daughter in 1890, who had just begun what promised to be a happy wedded life. These losses, together with her husband's death, made her life acquainted with sorrow; but she also knew that other sorrow, consciousness of indwelling sin, without which there is no fellowship of Christ's sufferings nor knowledge of the power of his resurrection. Her sorrows were also to her a door of hope, and through them she became rooted in the faith of God's elect. She passed from earth in the 76th year of her age, and was buried from the home of her son, George W. Hyatt, at Warwick. The writer used as a text 1 John iii. 1, 2, and read hymn 978 (Beebe's collection), one of her marked favorites. Interment in Warwick cemetery.

ALSO,

Mrs. Jane Elizabeth Sayer, widow of George W. Sayer, died at her home in Sayerville, town of Warwick, N. Y., April 27th, 1908, aged 58 years. She was a daughter of the late John G. and Sarah E. (Bigsbee) Benedict, and had always lived, since her marriage in 1867, on the homestead, which her husband inherited of John Lathrop Sayer, who was a deacon in the Old School Baptist Church. Mrs. Sayer had been ill for many months, and suffered greatly, but without complaining and with the utmost resignation. She was possessed of a bright, cheerful disposition, which made her the life of any gathering in which she mingled. This buoyancy of temperament was prominent throughout her last illness. She never made any religious profession, and in this present day when many are professing godliness who know nothing of its power, it is something to hold aloof from any profession rather than to make a false one. Mrs. Sayer is survived by a son, William E., of Newburgh, N. Y., and by a daughter, Mrs. John Baird, of Chester, N. Y., also by two sisters, Mrs. Emily McCollum and Mrs. Isaac Baird, and by one brother, Henry W. Benedict, all of Warwick. She had the utmost respect and esteem of all who came within her range of acquaintance.

At her funeral, which was largely attended, the writer spoke from Psalms xxiii., and by request read hymn 1289 (Beebe's collection). Interment in Warwick cemetery. H. H. LEFFERTS.

WARWICK, N. Y., May 1, 1908.

Captain Albert Laws came to his death in a most mysterious way. At his death he was 39 years of age. He entered West Point at the age of twenty, and graduated in the class of 1889. He served three years in the Philippines, and at the time of his death was a captain in the twenty-fourth infantry. He served in the Spanish war as major of the thirty-fifth infantry, and distinguished himself at the battle of San Juan. His regiment returned from the Philippines last March. He had been at Fort Ontario, at Oswego, N. Y., one week. He was making arrangements to come home within a month to see his dear mother, of whom he thought so much, but his plans all failed. The night of his death he had been engaged with other officers in the examination of some papers until about 10:30 o'clock, when he retired to his room for rest. In a short time some one in the adjoining apartment heard a heavy fall, and upon investigation found him lying at the foot of the stairs unconscious, dressed in his night clothes. Doctors were soon on the spot, who found that his head was crushed. Thus ended the life of a noble man, a true and brave soldier. The writer had been acquainted with Albert ever since he was an infant. He was a fine boy, and as the years passed the noble qualities of manhood developed. He never had any patience with, or confidence in, modern ways of getting religion. He was born August 6th, 1868. He leaves to mourn, father and mother, one sister and one brother, four half-brothers and many friends, with the writer, who mingles his tears with theirs. We look to the Lord as our only strength. His father is Mr. Levi Laws, whose wife is a member of the church at Indiantown, in the Salisbury Association.

The writer was called to officiate at his funeral in the presence of a large company of friends and neighbors. The fortieth chapter of Isaiah was read, and comments made upon the first verse: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." Afterwards all that was mortal was laid away in the home cemetery, to awake in the morning of the resurrection.

I send a letter sent to sister Laws by one of the officers, which she desires published in the SIGNS with this obituary. It has been of much comfort to her.

T. M. POULSON.

MADISON BARRACKS, N. Y., April 5, 1908.

MY DEAR MRS. LAWS:—I have so much to tell you about our Albert that could not be expressed in a telegram that I am taking the liberty of writing. I have known Albert continuously since the spring of 1896, and from that day to this I have never heard an unkind word spoken of him by any one, and nothing but love and admiration expressed for him. I learned to love him very soon after becoming acquainted with him; he was so manly and unselfish that we could not help loving him. My family and myself were especially drawn to him on account of his courtly attentions to my dear old mother, seventy-two years of age, who makes her home with us. Toward her he was always the courtly southern gentleman, one of that type so rare in the present day. In losing him we have lost one of our truest friends, so close in relationship as such that we regarded him as almost a member of the family, so that we have claimed the right to mingle our tears with those of his intimate loved ones. God bless you and all his loved ones, and enable you to derive some comfort from the knowledge of the facts I have related.

Sincerely, WM. R. DASHIELS.

Mrs. Joanna C. Staples, of North Berwick, Maine, departed this mortal life to be with Christ, which is far better, March 31st, 1908, aged 92 years, 3 months and 3 days. It pleased the Lord to call her by his grace when she was about fifteen years of age, and she was baptized by Elder Philander Hartwell, and united with the church at North Berwick. Until the infirmities of old age prevented her she was ever constant in attending the assemblies of the church to worship God, and when no longer able to meet with the brethren her constant inquiries after the welfare of the church showed the living, abiding interest she had in those who fear the name of the Lord. The Scriptures and dozens of hymns were stored in her memory, and in conversation upon heavenly things she often very fittingly quoted verses of hymns to sustain the theme under consideration. The Bible, hymn-book and SIGNS OF THE TIMES were her daily companions, and this had ever been so since she first tasted that the Lord is gracious. Boston's "Crook in the lot" was a little book that she thought very highly of, and she had so often read it that she had well nigh memorized it. During the last eight years of her life she was confined to the house, and through her bodily infirmities was often a burden to herself and a very great care to her daughter, our sister Annie Staples, who in unwearied filial affection waited upon her day and night. So much attention the dear old sister required, but our sister, with barely strength enough for the day, and none to spare, unceasingly cared for the wants and wishes and comforts of her mother. Those who were acquainted with our old sister know that the one subject she talked upon, and that she desired others to speak of in her company, was the things of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. One could scarcely be seated before she would begin to converse about the things of God, and only for a little moment could she endure any

other theme mentioned. She was very much gratified to have singing, and those who visited her, if they could sing at all, would have to sing a number of hymns before she could be willing they should take their departure. She was firm as a rock in her belief of the doctrine of God our Savior, but ever spoke tremblingly of her hope in God's salvation, always expressing her longings for continued evidences of her acceptance in the Beloved. She hungered for "daily bread;" the past mercies, though appreciated and sacred memories, did not suffice her craving heart. Her husband died some seventeen years ago. They had six children, five daughters and one son, of whom the son and two daughters survive.

At her funeral the writer preached from the words, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."—Luke ii. 29, 30. Her body was laid in the family burying-ground to await its resurrection at the last day, when the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

Dorcas Jones Ammerman Gard was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, March 28th, 1820, and died April 14th, 1908. She was the daughter of Benjamin Jones, who was a sound, consistent Old School Baptist, familiar with the Scriptures and fluent in conversation. The same spirit and energy and industry was manifest in his daughter Dorcas. She with her parents moved to Preble County, Ohio, in an early day, and June 10th, 1841, she was married to Martin Ammerman. To them were born three children: Lorinda Jane, Mary Ann and Wm. Martin. Nov. 23rd, 1845, her husband died. She remained a widow until March 30th, 1860, when she was married to John Gard, who died Oct. 19th, 1904, at the age of 98 years. When her last husband died her guardian grandson, Wm. McDivitt, took her to his home in Illinois to care for her, but being discontented away from her old friends and neighbors she returned in one year and spent the remainder of her days at our house. I cannot give the date of her baptism, but she was for many years a faithful member of Sugar Grove Old School Baptist Church, filling her place in the church, and her home was a place of welcome to all lovers of truth. Her house, heart, hands and purse were always open to the poor and afflicted in her neighborhood. For several years she was nearly blind and deaf, and so frail that she was confined to the house. She was familiar with the SIGNS from her youth, and took and read it as long as she could see to read, then she loved to have us read to her. She leaves one son, five grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

I spoke at her funeral from 1 Cor. xv. 21.

W. N. THARP.

DIED—Sister **Annie Hilton,** who was a member of the Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C. I had known sister Hilton for nine years, and although I did not meet her often I found her a faithful member, one who was ready to speak of the blessings of her Savior, and talked very interestingly on the subject of grace. I visited her in her last sickness, and found her apparently reconciled to the will of the Lord. She departed this life on Saturday, April 11th, and on the 14th, according to her request, Elder F. A. Chick, her former pastor, and who also baptized her, and myself were present and spoke on the occasion, after which she was laid to rest in Rock Creek Cemetery until her body, which was sown natural, shall be raised spiritual. In the death of this dear sister Shiloh Church and her pastor feel that they have sustained a great loss, but it is her great gain.

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

POETRY.

CAVE CITY Ky., March 23, 1908.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—The inclosed lines are yours now to do with as you think best, and all will be right with me. Thinking of the goodness of the Lord, his great love and felt presence when his devoted servant, my beloved husband, was walking through the valley of the shadow of death, fearing no evil, suggested the lines I am sending you.

Yours in the love of our blessed Redeemer,

SALLIE M. BARTLEY.

"I've seen the wondrous love of God
  Displayed to dying saints,
As on the brink of death they stood,
And grief o'erwhelmed me like a flood,
  At which my heart now faints.

When suddenly upon the scene
  A holy Presence came;
And peace, prevailing as a stream
Of glory from the world unseen,
  Proclaiming Jesus' name.

Then death and anguish fled away,
  My eyes forgot to weep,
The holy Presence seemed to say,
I came to give, this blessed day,
  My well beloved sleep.

The loved ones entered into rest—
  A calm and blest repose;
Their heads reclined on Jesus' breast,
Ah, never more to be oppressed
  With earthly cares and woes.

And some sweet day they shall arise,
  And in His image shine,
And sing with rapture and surprise
Redemption's song beyond the skies;
In sweetest notes this song shall rise;
  Be all the glory thine.

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Harford Church, Harford County, Md., May 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1908.

Those coming by way of Baltimore, take train that leaves North Avenue station at 3:25 p. m. for Long Green or for Forest Hill on Tuesday before; those from the north, take train that leaves York, Pa., at 1:50 p. m. for same stations.

A cordial invitation is extended to lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren.

NATHAN GRAFTON, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware Association is appointed to be held with the Salem Church, Philadelphia, Pa., May 27th, 28th and 29th, 1908, in the Odd Fellows' Temple, corner Broad and Cherry streets (eighth floor). Those arriving in the city on Tuesday will please go to 1910 North Twenty-second St. (B. F. Coulter) or 1735 North Seventh St. (Mrs. Craven.) Those coming on Wednesday morning will go direct to the place of meeting. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

B. F. COULTER, Pastor.

FRANKLIN TERRY, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, N. J., June 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1908.

Persons coming to this meeting from Philadelphia will leave Broad St. station by the 3:43 train, coming to Stockton or Frenchtown on Tuesday, June 2nd, where they will be cared for. Those coming from New York city will come on New York Central Railroad to Flemington, arriving there about 3:30 p. m. June 2nd, and will be conveyed to places of entertainment.

All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

CYRUS RISLER, Church Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., June 10th, 11th and 12th, 1908.

Those coming from New York city and points in New York State, New England States or Canada, will travel via Erie Railroad, changing at Greycourt for Warwick. Those coming from Pennsylvania, New Jersey or southern points may take train leaving Broad St. station, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania R. R., at 12:03 p. m. via Belvidere division, changing at Belvidere for train to Warwick. Trains will be met on Tuesday.

Ministers of our faith and order and lovers of Bible truth are invited to meet with us.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.

K. V. BEEBE, Clerk.

THE Siloam Association of Oregon and Washington will be held this year at Dayton, Wash., with Harmony Church, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in June, at 10 o'clock, and continuing over Sunday. Those coming by railroad come so as to get here on Thursday before.

B. S. PATE.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

THERE are a few Old School Baptists in Riverside, Cal., and they have meeting the first and third Sundays in each month, at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

W. D. BALL.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at the Hall, corner of 19th St. and 8th Ave., fifth floor. Elevator entrance on either 19th St. or 8th Ave.

11:00 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Mississippi River Association will be held next fall, with Mt. Enon Church, at Coles Academy, one and one-half miles northeast of Middleton, Tenn., on the Southern Railroad.

R. R. CRAWFORD.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

BEALE, W. Va., April 1, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I received a letter from a friend some time ago, which I have read and reread with a great deal of comfort, and as I believe others would enjoy it, will send it to you, and if it meets your approval you can publish it in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. His dear old mother is a firm Primitive Baptist, and his father a strong believer. I trust you will not think me hasty, as we are strangers in the flesh, only having met once, but I hope we are not strangers in the Spirit. I should like to talk with you a few minutes, yet feel unworthy to be reckoned among the Lord's people, but bound to say as did Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee." I have no shelter except salvation by grace.

Yours in hope of a better world,

S. A. CLEAVENGER.

PITTSBURG, Pa., March 8, 1906.

MR. S. A. CLEAVENGER—MY DEAR FRIEND:—I have your very kind letter of February 28th, but am very sorry to have missed your first letter, which has so far failed to reach me. I am glad to get the location of Maple Creek Church, and if it is at all possible to get away on the first Sunday in May I will be at your meeting. My work is very exacting, and we do not stop for Sunday; it is not always possible for me to get off on Sunday night, although I have done so once before, when I paid a visit to my sister near Wheeling. I am entitled to one night off each week, though, and hope to be able to arrange it so as to get up to Charleroi and see you and meet the Old Baptist friends you refer me to. It will be a great break in the monotony to meet a genuine Old Baptist. We have a great deal of religion here of a kind; some of it I suppose is genuine, since I cannot think that all the people who are making a profession of service to God and fellowship to Jesus Christ are either hypocrites or deceived; but there is a great and depressing lack of what I conceive to be the Spirit of God and the genuine example of Christ in the religion that is apparent to the public gaze. The great effort here seems to be to impress the world with the worldly achievements of christianity. Ministers, almost without exception, are "Rev. D. D.'s," and their congregations are very particular as to

their educational and social equipment. The churches are very fine specimens of architecture generally, and nearly every minister I have met has impressed upon me the value of his "church plant," the enormous amount of work he has to do, and most every one has incidentally dropped a hint that his salary is inadequate to his needs. Some of them preach sermons that, from a literary point of view, are first-class and take high rank; many of them preach with courage and conviction against the reign of vice and political corruption in the community, and some of them have used their pulpits to urge upon citizens to become better citizens and use their suffrages to overthrow vicious practices in public offices. They often preach of the duty of men to God and the beauties of a life devoted to the great Father of us all, but beneath it all and running through it all there is the commercial idea, intensified and magnified until it is hideous and grotesque, and there is an entire absence of humility and of that intense love of mankind that marked the life and teachings of the Savior. I do not know that it is true, but I do not believe that any one of the prophets was a sleek, well-fed, high-salaried preacher, who dressed in the height of fashion and selected his words from the most imposing list in the lexicon, and I doubt if the disciples were selected because of their social or educational standing, and I doubt, too, if a single real servant of God ever hesitated to answer a call from the Master because the salary was inadequate, or complained of the amount of money he was paid, or even distressed himself for a moment about the smallness of the estate he was likely to leave to be administered upon. The brightest examples of preachers, whose names have lasted the longest and whose teachings have done most to impress upon the minds and hearts of men the greatness and mercy of God, have been those who were fed by the ravens or ate locusts and wild honey; whose garments were skins or coarse cloth, and who were not countenanced in the polite society of their times. All this effort to make the service of God conform to popular ideas and to make religion and modern business methods harmonize, gives me a great weariness. It does not harmonize with my Old Baptist-taught ideas of God and religion, and the older I get and the more I see of the effort, the more I become convinced that the things which Christ rebuked are as prevalent and as tenaciously held on to by those who pretend to be living up to the "law" now as in the days when the money-changers profaned the temple without rebuke from the priests.

I am pining to hear a sermon free from worldliness and the taint of the dollar. It seems to me that I would again have the faith of my childhood in men and mankind if I could hear again Uncle David Murphy breathe defiance to all disputants for "the sake of the truth," or James Murphy plead for kindness and humility for the sake of Christ Jesus. I want to hear preaching that has sincerity and faith in it; a sermon with an unflinching faith in God and an unqualified belief in the divinity of Jesus Christ, behind which is the undoubted authority to carry a message. I am tired of those who, like the runner to David, have volunteered to run and have been given no message. To my mind, like that runner they fall on their faces and say, I saw a great crowd, but I came away just then to bring the news, and I know not what it meant. I want to hear some one bring the message who has been through the

fight and waited until the enemy was overcome and buried under the rocks and earth, and has been told to take the particulars of what he has himself seen and felt and known, and who delivers it without diplomacy and equivocation and an effort to please and make it less hard to hear. The messenger to David, who had been given the message to deliver, did not run so fast as the other. (Perhaps he was not a trained athlete, and perhaps the other was, and thought that circumstance fitted him better for the work in hand.) It is noticeable, too, that he who said, "Let me run," was recognized, and the king said of him, "He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings," and when he came up he gave David good and pleasant news, and although he must have known of the death of Absalom, he could not brook the displeasure of the king, from whom he derived his living and on whose pleasure his fortunes depended. But the slow runner, whose only qualification was that he had been sent with a definite message, did not consider the feelings of the king; he remembered that his superior in command had told him what message to take, and this he gave, although his words gave the deepest pain and humiliated the king beyond all that he could have been told. He had no thought of the effect upon his fortunes, but he told the truth as he had been commanded. These are the messengers I want to hear. They may be slow runners and ungraceful, weighted down with surplus flesh and accouterments that they have carried into the battle, and without polish in their manner of delivery, but behind their words there is sincerity and authority.

But I did not mean to give you a sermon on preaching, only I sometimes get my mind on these things and it runs in this channel, and this is about the first time I have had an opportunity to relieve it. I remember very well the time we ate supper together at my sister's, because I very much enjoyed the conversation of the evening. I did not know, however, that I had left the impression on yourself and Lonna Corder that I had any concern about the hereafter. Frankly, I have felt concern for some time, and still do, over finding the truth about the future and the many things that seem impossible of solution. What is God? Who was Jesus Christ? What is the hereafter, and in what condition shall we be after this life? These are questions that I doubt if the ordinary mind can answer. I know there must be an infinite Being who designed the world, who created us and who sees our lives and characters; the unfailing and uniform harmony of all things is conclusive evidence to the reasonable mind. There being a Creator, it must follow that the highest type of his creation is man. But how insignificant we are! Here is a mind that did create a world and all things in it, the elements that sustain life and the creatures that breathe and live, and gives the means for their subsistence, and there is not a single fault in the whole arrangement; and here are we, his creatures, who cannot fathom the simplest of his works, and are often led to doubt his existence. O the depth of our ignorance! So far I can go, but there is an end. I can only wonder at the power and might of the Almighty; I cannot understand him. We must know that there is eternal life, and we are taught that there is eternal death. Of the latter I have never felt the terror that the idea would ordinarily convey, but how to get the former is one of the unfathomable mysteries to me. I do not know that I want to "get"

religion, but I would love above all things to know God and his will, and have the consciousness that I am as he would have me, and have the willingness to do his will freely and willingly.

I have written more fully to you of this matter than I have spoken to any one except my wife, who is, I am convinced, a thorough christian in all the word implies, because I think you will sympathize with the condition of mind in which an inquirer necessarily must be. I do not expect aid, in working these things out, from human sources, because I feel sure the knowledge I lack can only come from the divine Source. Humanity is too weak to be able to point the way to others, and our means of expression are too limited to explain the things we may feel of this kind. I believe a knowledge of God must be implanted in the heart, in the feelings, and that our mental scope is too narrow to contain it or to express it.

I am very glad you could be with my parents at the time of the death of my dear sister Ethel. She was a lovely girl, and the comfort of our father and mother, and their sorrow over their loss is very deep. At the time of her death my wife and baby were both very sick, and I could not get away from them to go to the funeral. It was all very painful, but I am comforted to learn that there is evidence that she is now happy. My parents were fortunate in rearing a large family, through much hardship and privation, until they were grown to manhood and womanhood, but death has been a frequent visitor amongst our dear ones since arriving at maturity. It must take all their fortitude to bear their sorrows without complaining. I hope you can sometimes meet with them and comfort them with kindly words and assurances. They are both very dear to me, and it is a source of great sadness to think of them in their loneliness and sorrow, while circumstances have placed me so far from them that I cannot even see them and join in their griefs.

I shall be glad to hear from you any time you can find time to write me. I am rather a poor correspondent myself, since I am often prevented from answering letters promptly, owing to the nature of the work I do. I am employed at night entirely, and spend most of the day sleeping, and seldom feel in a suitable frame of mind to write letters; and again, when I get at it I wear my reader out with the length of it, as in the present case, but your letters will always be received with pleasure and answered as promptly as circumstances will permit.

With best wishes for yourself and your family, I am, as ever, very faithfully your friend,

FLOYD J. TRIPLETT.

"REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE."

(Luke xvii. 32.)

A COMMUNICATION over my signature, on the above words, was published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in 1894, but by request of a dear sister in Canada I will write again on the same subject, although my views remain unchanged. After I was ordained to the work of the gospel ministry I fully decided in my mind that I would not use the same Scripture the second time as a text, but in looking over the things in the storehouse of my memory I find a large pile of unfulfilled promises. I find also in that storehouse a promise that I will be more careful in the future in making promises, for I have discovered that (notwithstanding the good intention) all such promises are of the flesh, and therefore do not endure.

The words quoted are the words of Jesus, which he preached to his disciples in the days of his flesh, when he told them of the dreadful things that should happen in his last days upon the earth, in which he reminded them of the days of Noe, when the flood destroyed the living upon the face of the earth, except the eight souls saved in the ark, and also reminded them of the destruction of Sodom, and of the four righteous who were saved therefrom. In which connection he enjoins upon them to "Remember Lot's wife." These are solemn words, deep with warning, yet full of precious promise.

"Remember." What a flood of memories break in upon us at this word from the Lord! We scan the pages of the book of our unprofitable life, in which our weaknesses and infirmities are laid bare, and with the dear old prophet of old, "Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope." We remember the Ebenezers and Bethels set up along our pathway, to remind us that there the Lord remembered us in mercy, restrained our evil passions and kept us from sure destruction. Just before the death of Moses, he wrote that memorable song as recorded in Deuteronomy xxxii.; he embodied these words: "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee." By that process which we call christian experience we are made to remember that we are dust. We remember, too, his marvelous works which he hath wrought in us. We remember the name of the Lord, for in his name we obtain mercy. We remember when we were poor, blind beggars, and he took us from the dunghill and set us among princes. But why "Remember Lot's wife"? Does it not correspond with our own travel from darkness to light? Her's is a character that has stood throughout all ages as a memorial to poor pilgrims who pass that way, and as our minds are brought to contemplate the sad result of her disobedience, so the very remembrance is a lesson learned to the girding up of our loins, and although we have to learn the lesson many times, yet each time we remember we are still strengthened to hold on our way. In this character which we are to remember, there are three things to be considered: first, the wicked city from which the woman fled; second, the act of disobedience and its results; third, the working of all the circumstances together for good to them that love God. Sodom represents clearly "the whole world [which] lieth in wickedness." A city doomed to destruction; a multitude of people, all actuated by the same spirit of the flesh, eating and drinking, giving in marriage, seeking riches and honor and glory unto themselves, fulfilling the desires and lusts of the flesh, loving darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. In that wicked city, as in the world in all ages, there was a little remnant according to the election of grace, (Lot and his family) they were in the city, yet not of it. The things which they loved the people of the city hated (righteousness and holiness); they lived unto themselves quietly and peaceably, giving no cause for the exhibition of hatred and spitefulness which was manifested by the people of the city. In other words, the church was the hidden treasure in the field of the world of that wicked city, which was to be sought out by the angels of God who visited Abraham on their way to destroy the

city. Abraham, a patriarch of God, pleaded for the little city within the great wicked city, and his prayers were answered. Every child that is born of God (from above) of the generation of Jesus Christ, is baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. The stronger man cometh and binds the strong man and destroys his goods (burns the wicked city), and the child escapes through the avenue of grace.

The act of disobedience and its results: The angels of God came to Sodom, found the little remnant in the great city, warned them to flee from the wrath to come. After receiving the message, Lot visited his sons-in-law, who had married his daughters, saying, "Up, get you out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city. But he seemed as one who mocked unto his sons in law." Only the circumcised in heart can receive the warning messages of love and mercy from the Lord. Then the angels said to Lot, "Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city." When they had gotten them out of the city, and out of the plain round about, "The Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah, brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven." It was at this dreadful time that Lot's wife "looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt." Jesus said, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." By which kingdom we understand him to mean, not the heaven of immortal glory, but the kingdom which he has set up within us. Let us try for a moment to enter into the feelings of that poor, heartbroken mother, when she turned her back upon her own daughters who were left in the burning city. When each one of us has been called upon to deny ourself and take up our cross, surely the thing which is the hardest for us to turn away from is that which we have loved the most in the flesh, that which has entwined itself most closely about our heart, that which is a part of our very life. In the case of Lot's wife every natural mother will truly say, I would have done as she did. Let us then remember her in her affection, her weakness, and the love which was hers naturally for her children. Can any one of us say, I am strong, I have never looked back? Then does not our fellowship go out to this poor woman in her weakness? "But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt." This she did in direct disobedience of the commandment of the angel of the Lord, who said: "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed." The becoming a pillar of salt is of the most important significance, it stands as an unalterable truth in proof of the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. Jesus said, "Ye are the salt of the earth." Let us remember her always as "salt," and every grain of salt has full fellowship for every other grain, and however much it loses its savor by and through disobedience, it continues always to be salt, it never changes to some other substance. The causes therefore by which the savor of the salt is lost are those which bring tribulation, sorrow and affliction upon the fleeing one from the burning city. In the hour of weakness he falls from his first estate, he looks back to the place from whence he came; his comfort and joy and consolation are all taken from him, and he becomes a standing pillar of warning, and of remembrance of his own weakness, and a memorial of the tender

forbearance and pity and compassion and loving-kindness of Him with whom we have to do. Therefore all who pass by the "pillar of salt" will "Remember Lot's wife," not with censure and derision, but with love, forbearance and tender pity, as doth the Father. When we think we are strong, and may not fall from looking back, then do we discover how weak we are. Often are we unconscious how strong are the earthly ties which are pulling us away and making us unfit for the kingdom. It is a hard thing to say, yet it is true, that there are some of the Lord's people who (by reason of their peculiar weaknesses) cannot live in the visible church, yet the fellowship of the Spirit remains and is never destroyed. The working of all the circumstances together for good to them that love God. This is marvelous in our eyes, to think that we are recipients of such wondrous grace. Whether we sorrow or whether we rejoice, the circumstances which lead to either condition work for our ultimate good. The peculiar character of the conditions which led the wife of Lot to disobey in looking back does not make the sin less sinful; so in the rejoinder to remember her we are to look beyond the mere fact that it was one of the salt of the earth who looked back, but we must look to the inner life of her who yielded to great and manifold temptations, even greater than any presented to us, and we have fallen. We often make the mistake of looking for perfection in our brethren; all our perfection is in Christ Jesus the Lord. The righteousness with which we are clothed as children of the Most High is the righteousness of Christ; it was because of this that Lot's wife was turned to a pillar of salt, and not to a pillar of some other material. Out of the carcass of the lion Sampson obtained sweet honey; so the treasure of the sweet and rich grace of our God is found in earthen vessels, "that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." So, remembering Lot's wife, may we by strength of grace be enabled to gird up our loins, press forward and turn not back.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

FAIRFAX, Va., March 8, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I inclose a copy of a letter from brother Oliver, of Herndon, Va., which you will please publish if you think as I do, that it is too good to lay in my desk idle. I felt while reading it that it belonged to the household of faith; I wrote him, asking his consent for me to do as I thought best, and he gave me the privilege. It speaks for itself, and therefore I make no comment. I would like to write to all those dear ones who write to me through the SIGNS, but I have no gift. I would like to tell dear old brother Hickerson how I enjoyed his good, sound, brotherly letter in the SIGNS a short time ago. I met him at our meeting-house some years ago; he used to live here in Virginia; but I cannot write as well as he does.

Your brother, I hope,

ELI T. KIDWELL.

HERNDON, Va., Dec. 5, 1907.

MY DEAR BROTHER KIDWELL:—It seems a little strange that I should attempt to write to you or any one else, knowing the dark condition of my mind so well that I almost feel sure I cannot write to the comfort of a child of God, but when you were here last you quoted the words, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," and you told me they were

the first words that came to your mind after you had been delivered of the heavy burden of guilt and shame that pressed you down so heavily, and you were made to feel you wanted to tell it and preach it to the people. O my brother, what a high and holy calling, to be called to preach Christ "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." The apostle said, "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ." Paul truly knew that by the deeds of the law no flesh could be justified in His presence. The law works death, and Christ brings life and righteousness. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death," so says the apostle. Then, dear brother, you and I are brought into sweet fellowship with the apostle who said these blessed things, which point out to us Christ, the end of that law, which no man could keep, and which Christ, our Elder Brother, put away for us. For it is written, "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." What could you and I do working under a law that we could not fulfill? None but Christ could fulfill that law; he fulfilled it for us, and for every one who believes in him. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life," and it comes to us through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. But the whole Arminian world is working under the law, which manifests death in all who do not believe in Christ. God first saves his people, then calls them "with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

My dear brother, if I should just stop now and write no more, I have said enough to convince any sound mind that Christ is the only way to happiness beyond this vale of sin and tears. Our dark seasons must come as long as we remain here in this earthly house, yet we are made to still cling to our hope, which sometimes seems to be very small, but is an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast. Yes, my brother, I do believe we are fellow-travelers, for you speak and write the very things I believe with all my heart. I am glad the Bible is full of wills and shalls; I will and you shall. "He shall save his people from their sins." It is not, I will save you if you will do thus and so to save yourself, but, "I will" and you shall, are God's own words, and do not belong to man. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." He will have mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thus we see God is all-powerful; none can stay his hand or say, "What doest thou?" He is the God of purpose, and works all things after the counsel of his own will. "I am the Lord, I change not;" "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." What he has done will stand forever, for there is not a shadow of turning with him. O my brother, what can harm us if we are his children? "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Sometimes I get so low down that I fear I know nothing of spiritual things. I feel now while writing this letter that it would be better for me to stop and burn it and give up writing altogether, and I do believe I would do so, but I will have to use the word "if" it were not for the love I hope I have for the Old School Baptists, but the doctrine they hold is the doctrine I love, and it is the only doctrine that comforts the sinner who comes to God through our Lord Jesus Christ. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every

one that believeth." This doctrine does not suit the worldly-wise of to-day, neither did it suit the wisdom in Paul's day, for it was foolishness unto them, because it is spiritually discerned; but Paul says, "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." Thus we see to preach Christ the end of the law would be preaching foolishness unto the world and a stumblingblock to them, for they cannot accept Christ as the end of the law which they are trying to fulfill; they want to rob God of all the glory, to show that they are doing something that Christ failed to do, or left undone, so that they will have more praise in the eyes of the world than Christ himself. But the people of God will always (when in their right mind) praise God in all things, both in heaven and in earth, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh. Take Christ our Head from us and we will have no body, which is his people, the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife, and there would be nothing left. For Christ is "head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." O what a Husband we have; death cannot separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. O how firm is the foundation, for it "standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."

Brother Kidwell, I began this letter two weeks ago, and laid it aside, thinking that I might burn it, but to-day I thought I would send it to you with all the mistakes and blunders, feeling sure you will cast the mantle of charity over my imperfect way of writing; let me hear from you soon. I hope this will find you both well and doing well. A happy new year in Christ the Lord.

Your brother, I hope,

J. F. OLIVER.

BLUE SPRINGS, Mo., Jan. 16, 1908.

MY DEAR SISTER JONES:—I feel ashamed to think your letter to me has remained so long unanswered, but I hope you will forgive me. Your letter has been of much comfort to me, and I have read and reread it many times, and each time found some sweet morsel for one so unworthy of any. In my mind I have written you many times, but when I go to put my thoughts on paper they leave me and my mind is a chaos. I will try now, though it be little.

It seems as far back as I can remember I have thought much of the earth and the things in and on it, how they could be, and why people die, and if death was all, and I worried more than I cared to tell; it all seemed so strange to me. I went with my father and mother to meeting, but I could not understand the things that were preached and talked of, but I did try to be good, as people called goodness, but the more I tried the less I did. I thought as I grew older I would do good, so for awhile forgot these things, and really thought at times I was doing good, and in a way felt contented with myself; but this was only one of the ways in which I was being led, or I have looked at it so since, that each and everything I did and do is what was laid out for me to do. This contentment did not last, my mind grew very heavy, and I tried to justify myself by deeds of the flesh, but justice was not there. Down and down I went, until it seemed there could never be mercy for me, and the wretchedness of mind I cannot tell, only that the worst sinner was better than I.

As I laid down to sleep there appeared before me the most beautiful river of clear running water, and there were angels bearing palms to the head of the river, (which was so bright I could only glance at it) and each angel was singing, Glory, glory in the highest. O it was beautiful, but it soon vanished. When it was gone the worry and fear were gone from my mind, and such a calmness stole over me that I had never known before, and I wept for joy and thankfulness. Everything was beautiful, and spoke of peace to me for days, but I kept it to myself, fearing that my parents might think I was or had been dreaming. About this time there was a protracted meeting at the Presbyterian meeting-house, and I went each night, singing in their choir and playing for them, but it seemed I was doing wrong, and I told them I could not feel I was good, as they spoke of being, for they said they were always happy, and if I would put my whole trust in Jesus I would never fear. One night while singing and playing for them the words of the song sung appeared to be blasphemy rather than praise, and O the horror of blaspheming his name. I stopped singing, but kept on playing until the song was ended. The next night I did not go, for it seemed as wrong to play those songs as to sing them, and I discontinued going. This caused many to say that as my parents were Old Baptists they would of course influence me; but my parents knew nothing of this, for I had never told them, and if they knew, they did not say anything to me, and I know these things were not taught me by man. I prayed that I might be led in the right way, if I was being led at all, but I did not know then that the Old Baptist ways were Bible ways, any more than I knew that other denominations were not, for I did not hear them preach; in fact, I did not know hardly what was right, though I studied hard to know. One night as I was studying this verse came to me: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." It was all plain to me, and I knew his people would be saved, and man, who could not move one thing, (were not power given him from above) could do nothing to save the world or one thing in it. I felt glad, for I knew these things were not taught me by man, and if I had to do something to be saved I would indeed be lost. There were other parts of the Scripture opened to me, and from that time on I knew that this doctrine was right, but I did and do doubt much if I am at all right. In June, 1905, I visited my grandmother, and on returning home I arrived late and unexpectedly, and found no one at home, but saw there was preaching across the street at brother Knight's, and I went over and in unseen. My father was preaching, and it seemed he was preaching to me, although he did not know I was in the place. It was a wonderful sermon to me, and I felt I would like to tell him that he described my feelings, but I did not. It was the last time I ever heard him preach, and the first time I ever heard with, I hope, an understanding heart. He died July 25th following, and in October I went before the little church he had ministered to the last eighteen years of his life, and they received me, though I often wonder what I said and why they took me in, but they did, and I was baptized the following meeting. That was the happiest, most peaceful day of my life, and now in the dull, dark days of my life (spiritually) I like to look back and remember the days of my youth, when the evil days came not.

Well, I have written and written, yet I cannot tell as I would wish of the wonderful works of our God, who "moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform; he plants his footsteps in the sea, and rides upon the storm." Yes,

"More than in the school-room taught,
Myself, alas, I know,
Too dark ye cannot paint the sin,
Too small the merit show."

I must stop now, lest I weary you. Remember me to all your dear family, and when you can, think of me as the smallest of the flock, if one at all,

MARGARET M. STARTZMAN.

[THE above good letter was forwarded to us by sister Adela Jones, of New York city, and we gladly give it space in our columns.—ED.]

JUDE 1–3.

"JUDE, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ and called: Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

These words have been in my mind more or less for some days, and I have felt a desire to pen a few thoughts for the SIGNS, should the editors think proper to put them in.

First of all the thought comes to my mind, What is it to be a servant of Jesus Christ? Jude calls himself a servant of Jesus Christ. What an honored position, and yet how humble it makes one feel. When we think of Jesus Christ as God, the question comes, What can we do for him? Much is said in the world about working for the Lord. But Jesus says to Israel, (Psalms l. 12,) "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof." No, we cannot add anything to God, but Jesus, as a man in the flesh, could be ministered to; certain women followed him and ministered unto him, and he is in his people, and therefore says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." When Jude wrote to the dear ones confirming their hope, stirring up their pure minds by way of remembrance of the precious things of the kingdom, he was serving Jesus Christ. When any gospel minister in this day comforts the hearts of God's people he is serving Jesus Christ, and how our hearts burn within us while he thus talks to us by the way, and we say, What a grand thing it is to be a servant of Jesus Christ. So it is, but not only in those things which appear so wonderful to us, but in the every day things which seem small his people serve him. He says, And whosoever shall give to one of these little ones a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple shall receive a disciple's reward. All the children of God are in some sense his servants; the minister of the gospel, as he declares the truth to the glory of God and to the comfort of his humble poor; the deacon, as he serves tables, that of his pastor and the poor of the flock; the brethren and sisters generally, as they minister of their carnal things to him who labors in word and doctrine, and the poor of the flock, and any and all, though they be too poor to give carnal things, they show their interest in the church by their presence; although they cannot speak a word, they are yet servants of Jesus Christ, for their very presence ministers comfort to both pastor and church, and all these things, though they seem small to us, are yet great things, for they honor God and glorify Jesus Christ, and cement and mix, in one, the children of the heavenly King, and Jesus says, "Ye have done it unto me." Would we with-

hold anything from him who loved us and gave himself for us?

Jude remarks that he is the brother of James. I see nothing in this, only a means of introducing himself; James was better known. Then he speaks to those who are sanctified, set apart or appointed to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ, in whom they are preserved, spared, borne with because of his righteousness until God's appointed time to call them into the knowledge of his appointment to salvation and his preservation in Jesus Christ; this he does by the appearing of Jesus Christ, whose coming brings peace and love. Now the prayer of the servant is that this peace and love shall abound and increase more and more, that the tempest-tossed child may find Jesus Christ a present help in every time of need. This people he addresses as "beloved." Can one who has Christ in him the hope of glory help loving those in whom he sees the marks of the Lord Jesus? "Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him." Jude then without unnecessary delay gives due attention to the work of the ministry. (All diligence to write to them of the common salvation, that salvation in which all the redeemed are interested, which is Jesus Christ; he is become my salvation, said David.) There is no other salvation, it is an undivided inheritance, a joint heirship. Glorious thought, Jesus Christ, the mighty God, the everlasting Father and Prince of Peace, is the salvation of all God's chosen ones. His peace, his love, his care, his rod, his judgments, are all his peoples in common; individually they are his servants and he is their Lord; collectively they are the bride and he is the Husband, and all the blessings of his kingdom are in common.

"It was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." The saints need to be reminded of the love and constant care of God towards his people in all ages of the world, to have their pure minds stirred up to a remembrance of what the Lord has done for them, and to an earnest contention for the faith or truth which was once delivered unto the saints, which faith is that God is holy, all-powerful and just, and yet has compassion on them that are out of the way, and so has laid help on One that is mighty to save, even Jesus Christ, and by his blood saves the sinner from sin and hell, and his people in all ages and all countries have ascribed the glory of salvation to him, saying, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake." The faith once delivered unto the saints taught them their dependence upon God; it teaches us the same. The Scriptures and our experience teach us our dependence upon our God for salvation and comfort, and we know that vain is the help of man. Let us contend earnestly for this solemn yet glorious truth, both in word and deed, and pray God that his glorious name be exalted in his church and in the hearts of his dear people, and we given grace to be reconciled to his holy will.

Your brother in hope,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

BALTIMORE, Md., March 6, 1908.

GEORGETOWN, D. C., Jan. 3, 1908.

ELDER J. T. ROWE—MY DEAR PASTOR AND BROTHER:—I have often intended writing to you after the third Sundays, to let you know how much I enjoyed the hymns, which I could read, and especial-

ly one some months ago: "Happy the church, thou sacred place," which I feasted on for weeks, and especially the line, "The guards of heavenly warriors." I feel too small to write one with such a gift to comfort the poor and needy, but this bright sunlight morning I will try to follow the admonition, "Quench not the Spirit." It is indeed a joy unknown to the professing people who flock in crowds to their fashionable buildings to hear a fine and ably written discourse, such as, "The world is the better for our preaching," as I have read in the daily papers. Well, the world may be, but not God's poor and needy.

I have of late read several of your articles, and where you wrote that you had never heard any Arminian say that salvation was not of grace, but that they would say, "We must do something to obtain that grace," there you came right to the point, and explained the difference between will-worshipers and those who know the God of love, mercy and grace, and that unmerited favor bestowed freely and forever. Our blessed Jesus told the people that they knew him, and from whence he was, by nature, but He who sent me ye do not know. Therefore we must know the Father to really know and believe in the Son. From a child I knew there was a God who ruled, and that nothing was impossible with him, but there was something, I thought, that we must do. I never found out what that was, and none could tell me, but I do know that in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, every devoted pleasure that gave my heart delight was taken from me. But I did not see it in that light until I read in the SIGNS of a conversation which Elder Chick had with a lady who said that she had given them up, when he replied, "No, you did not give them up, but they were taken away from you." Then light was given me to see it so. My mother was a humble christian, and was baptized by Joseph Jones, who was once all right in his standing with the church. I saw something in my mother that the world did not possess, but she was very quiet upon that subject, so I concluded there was something sweet that must be made known, and I would say that I believed in a secret salvation of the soul. Yes, the preaching of the gospel of the grace of God is sweet to the believer, and nothing else will suit him, and so we catch a word now and then that causes light to spring up when God says, "Let there be light."

I now call to mind a circumstance years ago, when the Corresponding Meeting of Virginia was held in Alexandria. My sister, brother Fox and myself were stopping with Mr. Waddy's parents, and as we three sat together a conversation came up upon the judgment. I do not now remember what was said upon the subject, but the words came before me and I remarked, "If I am to be brought before a greater bar of judgment than I am every day of my life, I do not know what I will do or what will become of me." Brother Fox said, "You have come right to the point." Several years since, at a May meeting at Broad Run, Md., in company with Elders Beebe and Sawin, conversation again turned upon the judgment. I related the conversation named above, when Elder Beebe said, "For the deeds done in the body." Here again light was brought out, and I saw it as never before. What a condemned feeling will at times come over me, and I feel to sink to rise no more. This morning while waiting for breakfast the Scripture came to my mind, We "are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be

revealed in the last time," and then the joy of His salvation was restored to me. This is here in the body, even as the deeds are done in the body. O how much I have missed such delightful conversations, but it has in deed and in truth been made up to me in other ways. A few days before Elder Lundy, of North Carolina, had an appointment here, I was reading where the ark of our God was carried from place to place, and each cried out, Take it away, until it reached its destined place. The people were in the field, and when they saw the ark of God they rejoiced. The words came to me, Here is a figure. What is it? But my mind was a blank until the day that Elder Lundy was to preach for our little band, and then it was made known to me that here in this great city were a few who were rejoicing to see our strange brother and listen to the gospel, while thousands passed by with contempt, crying, Away with such doctrine.

I have been several days writing this letter, feeling at times that I would throw it away. I have been much alone since Christmas, as my niece, Alicia Waddy, has had quite a bad spell of "la grippe," as also her brother and family, and my granddaughter, with whom I was stopping before I came here, so I have spent some time in writing my thoughts and some of the circumstances of my life, and I hope that I now live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. This is Paul's language also. He once lived a different life, as also many others who can now testify to the same. This is all the apology I can give for writing this to you. Sister Dardy, who you know is Elder Trott's granddaughter, came to see me yesterday. I was very glad to see her dear face again. I am trusting the God of love for strength at my advanced age to endure my trials.

But I will close. My love to sister Rowe and your family, and accept the same for yourself.

Your sister in tribulation and hope,
RUTH ADAMSON.

GLENBROOK, Va., Dec. 27, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find check for four dollars for the renewal of my subscription another year, and the new subscriber I have the pleasure of sending you, as the inclosed subscription blank will show. Please start sister Peck's subscription with the January 1st number. I tried to get more subscribers for you. I would like to see the SIGNS in all the Old Baptist homes, and I hardly see how they can do without it; I do not think I could. It is only a fraction over eight cents a copy, and I am sure it is worth far more than that to any of us; in fact I do not think I could part with mine at any price, it is such a comfort to the weak ones and a welcome visitor in many homes. I look forward as anxiously for the coming of the SIGNS as I do for our meeting days, and it always comes on time. I have only been with the dear Old Baptists one year, and I have been taking the paper during that time, and I hope the Lord will bless me with means to continue to take it as long as I dwell in this sinful world. May the Lord bless you, dear editors, to continue its publication, and may the dear brethren and sisters continue to write. I have just received my January 1st number and find it filled with good things as usual. I see a letter in it from a sister in Alexandria, Va., I would like to know her address, Hannie B. Grehan is her name. Most of my people live in Alexandria, and if I

knew her address I would like to visit her some time when I am there; though she is a stranger in the flesh I feel she is not in the Spirit, as I do all the dear brethren and sisters who write for the SIGNS; I love them, though I never saw them, and dearly love to meet with them. What wonderful love the Father has bestowed upon us, causing us to love one another with a pure heart fervently. This love has been most wonderful to me, and very comforting and strengthening also, for Paul says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," and I feel sure, if I know anything, I love the brethren with a love the world knows not. I often wondered why the Old Baptists love each other so much, and love to be together, but I think I know now, for I love them better, and had rather be with them, than any other people in the world. Is not this the love of God shed abroad in the heart? If I am not deceived, I think it is. All good and precious gifts come from our heavenly Father; he gives us all things and teaches us all things; we do not need a Sunday School to teach us how to pray, as brother H. H. Bentley says in his letter in the SIGNS, which I have just read with much comfort. Truly we have no covering from the Lord; we stand naked before him, feeling our sinfulness, our unworthiness and our nakedness, and we are brought penitent before him.

The children of our heavenly Father show that they are all taught by the same Teacher, and are therefore one in Spirit, for they all talk and write the same, always praising God above all things. God's children are praising him always, not with their tongues outwardly, but in their hearts, and they do pray without ceasing, and when they are enabled through faith to get a glimpse of the dear face of Jesus they can rejoice beyond measure, and say, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." We know that of ourselves we can do nothing. "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak," and therefore "the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do;" and though we are erring children God loves us still. He says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Yes, he draws us to him with love in such a sweet way that we are not aware of it until he reveals himself to us. He leads us in paths we know not, and when he speaks to us in his loving way, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," how sweet it is; we feel that we would like to "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith."

Well, dear brethren, I must bring this letter to a close. I did not intend writing so much when I began, and I find it is like myself, very imperfect. Please cast the mantle of charity over all imperfections, and do with it as you think best.

With love and best wishes for the dear brethren and SIGNS, I am your unworthy sister,

LENA HUNTT.

REVELATION XVII. 17.

"For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled."

The word "fulfill" means to carry into effect. There is a difference between doing a thing and carrying a thing into effect. I am writing to those who are not afraid of strong proof from the Scripture of the power of God, who is the only Being who is not limited. God, who made the world and all that is in it, is not limited, neither has he any bounds. The devil has no independent power of his own; he cannot move or act only as he is limited by the power of God. God's purpose in Satan and in the wicked is plainly revealed in Daniel xii. 10: "But the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand." The word says, "To depart from evil is understanding."—Job xxviii. 28. Thus we see that the wicked shall not depart from evil, for God has said so. Solomon said, "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." Again, we read, "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."—Proverbs vi. 4. Now all this is sure to be fufilled. Again it is said, "He is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him."—Job xxiii. 13, 14. Then he adds, verse 15, "Therefore am I troubled at his presence: when I consider, I am afraid of him." When his children consider his great power and the working of his hand they do tremble at his presence; they see that their life and all their welfare is in his hand. Now all things are fixed to an accomplished end, both to the righteous and to the wicked. The righteous lovingly do the will of God, and the wicked wickedly fulfill his decrees in doing what he has said in the Scripture they shall do. "The Scripture cannot be broken."—John x. 35. "The Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so. Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee."—1 Kings xxii. 20–23. Again, the Lord said, "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things."—Isaiah xlv. 7.

Some one may say that I am an extremist, and make these points too strong, but I love such extremes when they are in accordance with Holy Writ. In his "hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind." "Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again; he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening." "With him is strength and wisdom: the deceiver and the deceived are his."—Job xii. 10, 14, 16. Jesus said, "When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness."—Luke xxii. 53. Jesus answered Pilate, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above." John the Baptist said, "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven."—John iii. 27.

Brethren and sisters in the Lord, who have been taught by the Holy Spirit of God, let me say to you who may read these lines, I believe that all power both in

heaven and earth is in our God, and he does that which he pleases with all of his creation, for he knows all about them, while we do not, and he has revealed as much to us as it hath pleased him to do. "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent."—Job xxvi. 13. In Revelation we read the expression, "That old serpent, called the Devil." I am constrained to believe in the absolute predestination of all things and all events, and that nothing takes place by chance. I believe that our God is absolute, unlimited and unbounded, and that his almighty power and presence is everywhere all the time, and has been. I believe that he does his will in heaven and in earth, and that Satan is limited so that he cannot go beyond his bounds. In conversation with the Lord Satan said concerning Job, "Put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand." In this we see that Satan could not have destroyed the substance of Job had not the Lord given him the power; and also the Lord limited him; he must not touch him. Now "Who is wise, and he shall understand these things?"

Dear brethren, I have felt compelled to do this writing; examine it and publish it if it is the truth. The SIGNS is the best book I ever read, except my Bible. May God bless the editors, and all the children of God who write for the SIGNS, and all his people everywhere; this is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

From a poor sinner,

S. N. BUTLER.

TOONE, Tenn., Dec. 27, 1907.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., March 27, 1908.

MRS. EMELINE E. WORKMAN—DEAR SISTER:—How glad I was to receive the letter from you dated on the 15th inst., and how it pained me to think I could not write you a long letter in return, from the effects of old age and infirmity, holding both my hands up to heaven from day to day to God for help, like a little child to its mother; truly as David said: "Now also, when I am old and greyheaded, O God, forsake me not." Before the gospel dispensation came, "they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it," &c.—Mal. iii. 16.

My dear sister, whom I highly esteem for the truth's sake, you desire me to give my opinion on the following Scripture: "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Romans viii. 1. I would like to take up this subject and write about three or four thousand words if my health would admit of it, but I must submit to God's will. In short, the work of the Lord must stand forever; nothing can be added to it nor anything taken from it. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." The full redemption price was paid on the cross, so said Christ, and the work was finished. Our Lord "by one offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." Again, it is said, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."—1 John iii. 9. The flesh of God's people is not born of God, in a strict sense; if so, they would go home to heaven like Enoch and Elijah, but they have received

the Spirit of adoption, crying, Abba, Father; thus they are called the sons of God; it is imputed to them as in Abraham's case; he believed, and it was imputed to him for righteousness. The Master said, "I give unto them [his sheep] eternal life; and they shall never perish." He says also, It is not my Father's will that one of these little ones shall perish. Having loved his own he loves them to the end. Christ has the keys of death and hell, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against the little flock of God. She, the church of God, is built on the Rock of Ages, a sure foundation which will stand forever. But you may say, Sometimes I am led by the flesh. So say I, but then how we smart for it, and groan, as Paul says, "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."—2 Cor. v. 4. The saints are dead to sin and are alive to God; the body of sin has been crucified and is just as loathsome to a saint as a dead person who died with some contagious disease; the living are not much inclined to be about it only as necessity compels them. Job said that he loathed his life, he would not live alway. Paul says, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"—Romans vii. 24. "We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe;" but the dregs of sin left in the flesh after the new birth give the saints much trouble; the Lord hides his face for a moment to humble them and bring them nearer to him in prayer and supplication. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." His grace is sufficient for all our needs. Paul says in Hebrews x. 26, 27, "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries;" not devour the christian. The people of God sin knowingly, but not willingly; there is a principle of grace within in opposition to sin that makes the warfare.

Dear sister, you have followed the counsel of your dear Master: after you received a hope in the precious Christ in the pardon of your sins you went into the water and were baptized; you bore testimony to the truth before many witnesses. What more? And now with me, a poor, helpless sinner, you count all worldly things, with all their pomp and show, as nothing, that you may win Christ.

I must close. J. S. CORDER.

WORTHINGTON, Minn., Dec., 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars to pay my subscription for the SIGNS for 1908. I have been a reader of the paper for twenty-eight years, and can say from my heart that I love the doctrine it teaches, because it was taught by the Lord Jesus Christ. He said to his disciples that he would not leave them comfortless, but that he would send them the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, and that when he was come he should teach them all things whatsoever he had said unto them. Now this Spirit is Christ's own Spirit, and it is a guide to the person to whom he gives it. He said, My word shall not return unto me void, but it shall

accomplish the thing whereto I sent it. So then there is no condition in its coming, but the word rests in that person, and it is the Spirit of Jesus our Lord himself. When I look into my own heart I see no good thing; it is but a den of sin all the time. I cannot control my evil thoughts, and so am doubting, and fearing that I may be a castaway at last. If any person is possessed of the Spirit of Jesus He has given it to that person, and at death it returns to God who gave it because it is his own. That person has eternal life in the grace of Jesus Christ his Lord; the very language of that person will betray him, that he is possessed of the love of Jesus. It is by this Spirit that we are heirs and sons of God, and shall at last be altogether one with him, when death calls the spirit home to him who gave it.

I have pondered these things over in my mind day and night, and can see nothing in man that can be acceptable to God only the spirit that Jesus gave him, and it seems to me the righteousness of Jesus Christ is in his own Spirit. I ask your prayers to God for me at the throne of grace. I am a poor, old sinner seventy-six years of age.

Yours with love to all of the same faith,

HENRY JAMES.

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn., March 29, 1908.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—My time for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES having expired, on renewing I want to offer what may be my final adieu to the editors, contributors and readers of our most excellent family paper. If I had the promise of multiplied years I should want to continue a subscriber and reader to the end, if I could raise the funds; as it is, I am expecting that to be the case. The prospect is altogether that way, that the six months for which I herewith inclose money order for one dollar will cover the condition contemplated, viz., that I continued a subscriber to the end. I think it has been nearly twenty years that I have been a subscriber, and I can scarcely believe that you have had in all that time a more interested and approving reader. Somewhat critical in such things, I have found no occasion to indulge that faculty toward the SIGNS; on the contrary, it has been a source of spiritual edification and enjoyment, provided I know what that is. As to that I cannot tell, I only know that I am a very great sinner. But withal I find much to enlist my liveliest interest in behalf of the Lord's kingdom on earth. Any doctrine proclaimed, or practice indulged, in the name of the religion of the Lord Jesus, that has not a "thus saith the Lord," is apt to seriously arrest my attention. I have at least a mental interest in Zion's welfare, such as I have in nothing else, whereas the reverse of this was true up to a few years ago. I was altogether worldly minded, but now I have a hope of better things, and trust that I have been made to feel resigned to the dispensation that makes the end seem so near at hand. I am very feeble, and seem to be declining rapidly. I am not able to write more.

Again I bid the brotherhood an affectionate farewell.

WM. P. TOLLEY.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1908.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MATTHEW XXVIII. 19, 20.

OUR friend, Wm. J. Tindall, of Seaford, Del., requests our views upon Matthew xxviii. 19, 20. He says that his desire is to know the truth, and asks the following questions regarding this subject. First, Are all men teachable in things spiritual, as well as in things natural? Second, Does mankind possess in their moral constitution the capacity to be religiously taught? Third, If not, wherein does their responsibility to God consist? Fourth, Did not the apostles preach the gospel as recorded in the Acts in obedience to the Savior's command indiscriminately to all mankind? Fifth, As there were no christian churches existing when the apostles began their ministry after Pentecost in different countries, to whom did they preach, and what was the tenor of their preaching? Our friend adds to the above questions that it is not curiosity which prompts him in this matter, and that he occasionally reads the SIGNS and finds some things that seem to him excellent, and that he asks our views seriously, and that, though a member of the Methodist Church, yet there are some things taught by them which are not in harmony with his feelings.

The text to which our friend refers contains the commission given by our blessed Lord to the disciples just before his ascension to glory: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." In Mark the commission is thus recorded: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." In Luke it is recorded that the Master, after his resurrection, said to them "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." In the gospel of John there is no reference at all to this commission. The three evangelists who do refer to it, while differing in language, yet are one in recording the substance of the Savior's commandment.

First, we desire to give some general reflections regarding the commandment to preach the gospel to every creature. Teaching all nations, preaching the gospel to every creature, and preaching among all nations, the three different expressions used by the three evangelists, are but different forms of saying the same thing. A careful reading of the four gospel narratives will show that the disciples, up to the day of Pentecost, had little if any conception of the truth that under the gospel the Gentiles were to be embraced as well as the Jews. Even after that day we find Peter still ignorant of this truth. This was so with him until the Lord called him to go to the Roman (Cornelius), and removed all doubts from his mind by the vision of the sheet filled with all manner of fourfooted beasts

and creeping things. In the commission the Savior says to them in substance, After this hour the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile is broken down. I have redeemed a people to my name out from among the nations of the earth, as well as from the Jews. My church is to be made up of mine elect in all kindreds, tribes and tongues. This is the design of the dear Redeemer as he goes away from them to heaven. He shows them that their ministry is not to be now confined to the Jews as it had been before. Just as the gospel of the kingdom was to be preached to the Jews, so was it to be preached to the Gentiles. This does not define what it is that is to be preached, nor how men are to preach, but simply that to Jew and Gentile, both, the same things are to be proclaimed, and whatever reception shall be accorded this blessed news of the gospel among the Jews shall also be accorded it among the Gentiles; and in whatever way a Jew shall be prepared to hear and understand it, in like manner shall Gentiles be prepared. The middle wall of partition, consisting in the ordinances of the old testament, given to the Jews and not to the Gentiles, no longer exists, either for Jew or Gentile, but the glad tidings of salvation takes in both.

Second, it is the gospel of repentance and remission of sins that is to be preached, and preached among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. The substance of this preaching is that Jesus is exalted a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance unto Israel and forgiveness or remission of sins. What men could not of themselves accomplish Jesus has been exalted to do for them and in them. So to preach the gospel is to preach that Jesus works both within in giving repentance and without in giving remission. Jesus works by the Spirit within his redeemed, causing godly sorrow and a turning away from their sins, and he has wrought out remission of sins by his finished work upon the cross. This is the gospel. To preach this is to preach the gospel. Nothing aside from this, nothing short of this, is the gospel. It is all embraced in the finished work of the blessed Lord. The gospel is not an offer of salvation upon any terms whatever; it is salvation itself, as finished by the Son of God for poor sinners. Now to preach this gospel is to preach to poor sinners that a full and perfect Ransom has been found. It is the glorious sound of the trumpet upon the day of jubilee which proclaims deliverance to the longing and mourning captive, and that his chains no longer bind him. It does not say to him, You may be free if you will, but, You are free. It does not say, If you will comply with the conditions you may be free, but it does say that Jesus has complied with all that is demanded as the price of your freedom, and you are free. What good news it was to that captive who waited and longed for the hour of his deliverance from bondage when he heard the jubilee trumpet sounding throughout the land. It said to him, The hour of your deliverance has come, and at once he was free from his bondage, whether he would or not; but that he would not is not to be supposed for a moment. No man loves bondage when he feels that bondage. The bond-slave of sin, when he comes to feel his servitude, must long for deliverance. How blessed when it is said to him, "You are free." This is the gospel message: Salvation is finished for the lost, freedom is won for the slave.

The gospel does not imply that men are on probation while they live on earth,

and that the future shall be for them according as they conduct themselves. It does not say that if they do good then shall they live, but if they do evil then shall they die forever. Men are not on probation, they are already as much condemned and as completely lost as they ever will be. On the other hand, the saved are as much redeemed and as completely saved as they ever will be. More happy indeed, but not more secure, the glorified saints in heaven than are all who are embraced in the covenant of redemption. Men are lost already by nature. Jesus came to save the lost; he did not come to prevent men from being lost, but to find the lost and save them. If there ever was such a state as might be called by the name of probation, it is sure that no man has ever been in that state since the transgression of our first parent. The criminal arrested, judged and condemned, is not now under probation, whatever might have been his state previous to his transgression against the law. We need not, for the purposes of this argument, stop to consider in what state Adam was before he transgressed. Since the transgression death has reigned over all men, because all men are sinners, and again we say that no man is now under a state of probation, so far as his condemnation before God is concerned. Jesus came not to strengthen men that they might so do as not to be lost, but to save his people who were already lost. The good news of the gospel comes to souls who are past all probation, and who are without hope in the world.

Now this gospel is to be preached among all nations and to every creature. This is the Savior's command. Each servant of God is to remember that he is the Lord's servant, to go where he sends him and to proclaim what the Lord bids him. Where each one shall go is to be determined by the inward command of God in the heart, and by the openings of His providence, in all cases. No man, or society of men, has any right to send any man; it is seeking to usurp the authority of the King when any undertake to do this. Neither has any man or society of men right to forbid the servant of God going forth as the Lord bids him. Each servant is beholden to his Master, and to no one else, in this great work. The faithful servant will find himself watching the indications of the providence of God and the leadings of his own mind in subservience to the teaching of the Lord in the Bible. As the minister goes forth he is to sow the word of God, and to sow it beside all waters. It is not his to know the hearts of men, and so he is to proclaim the word to all who will hear him. This is his duty, a duty which becomes to that servant a great and solemn privilege; but he cannot give the hearing ear, and neither by his preaching can he prepare the heart to receive the word. It is not by his labor that the ground is to be prepared, this is the work of the Spirit of God, and into this prepared ground the word will fall and bring forth fruit. As the servant proclaims the lost estate of men, and then the one Ransom that has been found, the prepared heart will recognize, first, the truth of the message of condemnation as being what he now feels in his own soul, and then will hear with longing the message of salvation from so great a condemnation, saying in his heart, O can such good news be for me? If any man say to such a sinner, You must repent and do good, else you cannot find favor with God, that soul will reply in thought and feeling, I have no strength to work out such a sal-

vation. If, however, one shall say to him, There is full salvation completed in Christ for just such a sinner as you, and this message be applied by the Spirit, that one can say, If this be so, then there may be hope for such a sinner as I. He that hath ears to hear will hear the message, but it is not the work of the minister to circumcise hearts and ears. All men are under law to God, and because under it are condemned by it, because all are already transgressors. To preach the law is not to preach the gospel, yet the law must be preached or else the gospel has no significance at all. But to preach the law is simply to declare that men are sinners against God, and that his law pronounces death as the penalty for sin. The law has no mercy in it, it is simply just; it is righteous, and demands righteousness. How then shall a sinner be saved? How shall a man be just with God? To answer this is to preach the gospel, and the answer is, Christ has died and risen again; died for our sins, and risen again for our justification, and by his death we are justified from all things from which we could not be justified by the law. Thus we are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. In Christ and his finished work justice and mercy have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. It was said to a criminal about to be executed for his crimes, "You are soon to die and go before the bar of God. It is time that you were seeking to make your peace with God." To this the criminal made answer, "There never was but one man who made peace with God, the man Christ Jesus." The first remark is a denial of the gospel, the reply is the gospel itself.

Returning to the questions proposed by our friend, it appears to us that in substance we have already answered them. All men are not teachable in things spiritual, as they are in things natural, but only those to whom it is given to hear, and these are the prepared ground; yet we are to preach everywhere the gospel; God alone, by his Spirit, can apply it, and we know not to whom the word shall come. It is because of this that we must preach to all who will hear us.

To the second question, it seems enough to say in reply that men can be religiously taught so far as the letter of the Bible is concerned, as the Jews were under the old covenant, and as false religion is taught among myriads of mankind. But this does not impart spiritual life; it does not make any man live in the kingdom. Head knowledge is not heart knowledge. The last, God alone can give by the daily travel of his people as he guides them by his Spirit. But the spiritual, who are possessed of eternal life, can and do hear the word and receive it as seed sown in good ground. In them the word produces humility and every heavenly grace, while such teaching as natural men may have gained in the letter of the word tends to puff them up with pride, and tends to cause them to boast over their attainments in the knowledge of the Bible.

To the third question, "In what does the responsibility of man consist?" it seems to us that we need only refer in reply to what we have already said regarding the idea of probation. Man is responsible to God, because he is the creature of God, and to man God gave the law. But man is already lost and dead in sin; he is so, not because he has rejected an offered salvation through the gospel, but because he is a transgressor

of the law. No man perishes as the penalty for refusing the gospel, for there is no condemnation in the gospel, but only salvation; it is the law of God that condemns. The gospel does not say, If men reject me, then will I appear against them at the bar of judgment as a swift witness. There is nothing but mercy in the voice of the gospel. Again we say, salvation is not offered to men, and so no man can reject it, but it is proclaimed to men as the work done, as salvation finished for such as cry out for deliverance.

Fourth, the apostles did indeed preach as the Lord commanded them, as is set forth in the Acts and in the epistles, and they preached to all whosoever would hear them. But they did not preach to men that they might all be saved if they would only repent and believe; this would not have been the gospel had they so preached. They did preach to all who would hear; whether men would hear or forbear hearing they still went on preaching, and their message was that men were sinners and lost, but that Jesus had died for his elect people, and that all who were mourners because of sin were saved in the Lord, and saved effectually and eternally.

How may one know that Jesus died for him? There is but one way by which any one comes to know this, and that is by feeling his need of such a Savior. The answer to the fifth question, it seems to us, is embraced in the reply to the fourth question, and we will dwell no longer upon this theme. It is sure that there can be no more important theme brought to the attention of any of us. We hope that we have not darkened counsel in the mind of our friend by words without knowledge. May the Lord lead him, and us all, into clear knowledge of the word of God, and by blessed experience bring us all to say from a full heart, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and that hath redeemed us unto God by his blood, to receive blessing, and power, and honor, and glory.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

SOLOMON'S SONG V. 9.

"WHAT is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? what is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?"

It is generally admitted that in this song of songs the pen of inspiration is employed to set forth the glory of Christ and the beauty of his church, under the figure of the beloved and the spouse, the bridegroom and the bride, and the spiritual communications of Christ and the church, their mutual love and heavenly intercourse, which are exemplified, portrayed and illustrated by the strongest, and yet most endearing figures which nature can afford. The frequent use which has been made in various parts of both the Old and New Testaments of the same figure to set forth the union and relationship of Christ and the church, by Isaiah, David, Jeremiah, and nearly all the prophets, by John the Baptist and the apostle John, by Paul, and even by our Savior himself, are amply sufficient to satisfy all candid inquirers after the truth that Christ and the church are intended in our text by the beloved and the fairest among women. God himself declares that he has espoused the church to himself in righteousness, in faithfulness and in indissoluble union, and by his prophets assures her that her Maker is her husband, the Lord of hosts is his name, and her Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall he be called. Throughout this song of

songs the relationship, the love, the high appreciation of each other, is strikingly set forth; but in our text the daughters of Jerusalem demand of the spouse wherein her beloved is more than another beloved.

The first important point we will notice is the acknowledged beauty of the spouse, surpassing all other women in her loveliness, and commanding the admiration of all the daughters of Jerusalem: "O thou fairest among women." We are led to inquire after her incomparable beauty, saying with the amazed daughters, "Return, return, O Shulamite: return, return, that we may look upon thee."—Song vi. 13. And in our investigation let us hear from her own lips what she can say for herself: "I am black," she says. A color not much admired for beauty; until very recently at least it has been regarded as the very opposite of beauty, and so indeed the spouse herself regards her own color as loathsome, revolting and degrading, and in humble confession she acknowledges that she is as black as the filthy tents of Kedar, because the sun had looked upon her. But this humiliating complexion is only applicable to her as a polluted sinner, as she stands in her earthly relation to an earthly Adam, as a servant of sin, a slave to vice, a guilty, wretched, helpless convict, condemned by the law of God and under sentence of death. In all her nature vile, and as long as her connection with the earth shall endure she is environed by the tents of Kedar, and has to feel the deep mortification of a black and unsightly complexion. It cannot then be that in her carnal and earthly nature she excels in beauty. But the secret is told when her God informs her that she is comely through the comeliness which he has put upon her.

"Defiled and loathsome as we are,
He makes us white, and calls us fair,
Adorns us with a heavenly dress—
His robe of perfect righteousness."

And then she can say not only that she is in her depraved nature black as the tents of Kedar, but in her Savior's righteousness as white and comely as the spotless curtains of Solomon. Now she can greatly rejoice in the Lord, and her soul can be joyful in the God of her salvation, who has clothed her with the garments of salvation, and covered her with the robe of righteousness. Washed and cleansed in the fountain of her Savior's blood, purified as gold, refined as silver, beautified and adorned with jewels, her garments are of wrought gold, and she is all glorious within, as she is brought unto the King in raiment of fine needlework, clothed with the sun, and elevated above the moon, and wearing on her head a crown of twelve stars. Well may she now, glorying only in her Beloved, challenge comparison, as she "looketh forth as the morning," just emerging from the blackness of night, "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." O thou fairest among women! "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency." This description of the spouse, we presume, has special reference to her in her gospel organization, and as presented in her primitive faith and order. The daughters of Jerusalem, under the Sinai covenant, like Leah, were tender eyed, who "could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished."—2 Cor. iii. 13. But she is, like Rachel, well favored and beautified, having blessed eyes which can see what kings and prophets have desired to see, but were not able. In the vision which John saw, the bride, the Lamb's

wife, descended from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; to her is well awarded the superlative degree of beauty, as the very fairest among women. Compared with threescore queens and fourscore concubines she stands preeminent as the only one of her mother, the chief one of her that bare her, and compared with the richly attired mistress of abominations, who, with her harlot brood of daughters, has intoxicated all the kings and governments of the earth with her fascinating trappings and wanton allurements, how supremely excellent does she appear in her heavenly charms. Compare the two, and although the world has given a verdict in favor of her who sat upon a scarlet colored beast, and reigned over the kings of the earth, and in whose skirts was found the blood of slaughtered millions, how revolting does that devouring vulture appear when contrasted with the harmless dove of our Redeemer; the one a ravenous wolf forever howling for blood, drenching the earth with human gore, whose house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death, the other in angel form of loveliness, breathing only peace on earth and good will toward men; the hideous ugliness of the one is in all respects the opposite of the transcendent loveliness of the other. Not only is the spouse more lovely than the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth, but beyond all comparison more beautiful than any of her harlot daughters. Although, as we have admitted, the world may admire antichrist in all her diversified departments above the church of the living God, it is because the world has drunk deeply of the golden cup of her abominations, therefore in their intoxication they love sin and hate holiness. They love all the characteristics of that harlot family, Arminianism, will-worship, hatred, variance, wrath, strifes, seditions, heresies, murders, adultery, thefts, witchcraft, priestcraft, &c., and have no ability to appreciate the glory of the kingdom of Christ. They cannot discover why or wherein the church of God, as organized by our Lord Jesus Christ, is more fair than those who wear the alluring attire of harlots, but this is because none but such as are born again can see the kingdom of God. To the unregenerated, the women (churches as they profess to be) which reject the gospel of peace, the doctrine and ordinances of God our Savior, and hold the doctrines of men and the doctrines of devils, who teach for doctrines the commandments of men, with imposing show of Sabbath schools, mission societies, worldly pomp and vain glory, have greater attractions. Neither the Jewish church nor any other religious organization can compare with the church of God in her gospel establishment. She is pronounced the perfection of beauty, and out of her God himself hath shined. For "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early." He is a wall of fire round about, and the glory in the midst of her. This constitutes her supreme glory; she never pretended to have any other beauty or superior comeliness.

> "Her beauty this, her heavenly dress,
> Jesus the Lord, her righteousness."

Identified with Christ, her Head and Husband, she is a partaker of him, of his divine nature, and she is made the righteousness of God himself in him. She is not only adorned with superlative beauty, but she is in all respects prepared for her Husband. His law is written in her heart, his love is shed abroad in her spirit, his Spirit and his mind are imparted to her, and his image is enstamped on

her, and thus she is made the very fairest among women.

But what is her beloved, and wherein or in what particulars does he excel other beloveds? All other religious bodies have their beloveds, to whom they manifest their partiality. The daughters of Jerusalem, under the Levitical priesthood, as wedded to Moses, or the law, had to recognize a husband who was stern and inexorable in his demands, lavish in his curses, and never known to bestow any blessings; always condemning and exposing all their faults, demanding everything, but supplying nothing, and utterly unable to either justify or to give life, with neither ability nor disposition to give them a kid with which to make merry, sternly ruling with an iron rod, demanding perfect, unremitting and perpetual obedience to his every precept, and for the slightest breach or delinquency consigning the convicted to wrath, condemnation and death.

The Beloved of the gospel church is the very opposite in all these particulars. He supplies all, and demands nothing as a condition or consideration. He is merciful to her unrighteousness, and her sins and iniquities he will remember no more. He not only can and has given her eternal life, and pledged his veracity that she shall never perish, but he is himself her righteousness, her sanctification and her redemption. He never curses, but always blesses her. He has made a feast of fat things for her to feast upon, with wines on the lees well refined. He has brought her to the banqueting-house, and his banner over her is love.

But the disparity between her Beloved and the beloved of the daughters of the uncircumcised is still greater. Although all false religionists, or legalists, or what claim to be wedded to the law, in modern parlance are called Arminians, yet Moses, or the law, spurns them, admits no affinity. They cannot approach him without being stoned to death or thrust through with darts. All the diversified daughters or departments of antichrist claim that the Lord Jesus Christ is their beloved, but in works they deny him, and not only in their works, but in their doctrine, order and ordinances, and in their persecution of his people. Like the carnal Israelites, who professed to be looking and waiting for and desiring the coming of the promised Messiah, when the Son of God made his advent it was soon discovered that he was not the christ they desired. So with all the daughters of the uncircumcised in the present day, they have painted in their vain imaginations that kind of a messiah which would suit their unregenerated hearts, but their imaginations paint such a being as the murderous Jews were looking for, and they have no knowledge, conception or love for such a Christ as God has by his Spirit revealed in the hearts of his children, and such as the inspired Scriptures testify our Redeemer to be. Some, and perhaps the greater portion of them, describe such an imaginary savior as has attempted to do more than he can accomplish, who desires greatly to save everybody, has died to redeem everybody alike, has done all that he can to procure the salvation of everybody, but would succeed in saving very few if unaided in the work by the plans, inventions, contributions and activity of men. They portray one who can only go where they carry him, and do only what they do for him. Or, to use their own words, he works by instrumentalities, means, &c., in saving sinners. Thus they attribute to their imaginary christ the same and no more than the Pagans attributed to their stocks and

stones, and they imagine that the Savior is pleased, and even delighted with them for their zeal in teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, and that he is highly honored by the improvements that they have made on his doctrine and ordinances; and, whereas his kingdom was not of this world, they have fixed up what they imagine his kingdom ought to be, and have made it altogether a worldly concern. His kingdom no man without being born again could see, but they have assigned to him a kingdom which is visible to the unregenerate. His kingdom, his religion, his doctrine, were so offensive that he was hated, his religion opposed, and his doctrine controverted and blasphemed by all unrenewed men; they suppose that they have made such improvements that the world admires, loves, and is ready to indorse and defend his kingdom, embrace and commend his religion, support and preach his doctrine, not as set forth in the holy Scriptures, but as improved by their wisdom and adapted to the taste and disposition of unconverted men. The spouse of Christ can confidently claim that her Beloved is a real, full, complete sovereign and almighty Savior, while all other beloveds are only imaginary. Their rock is not as our Rock, our enemies themselves being judges, for they do not claim for their rock the attributes which belong to our Beloved. They do not pretend to believe their beloved is the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace; that he has all power in heaven and earth; that he doeth his pleasure in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth; that he is of one mind, and none can turn him. In all these, and in every divine attribute and eternal excellence, the Beloved of the spouse is more than any other beloved. It is the delightful employment of the spouse to extol and praise her Beloved, and to testify that he is glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders. She loves to tell how far he excels all others, for he is altogether lovely and the chief among ten thousand. Being filled with his love, she is sick of all other objects, sick of self, sick of the vanities of the world, sick of wandering from him, and can only be cured by the light of his countenance. She says she is sick of love. When one is sick of love, or lovesick, nothing short of the presence and enjoyment of the object of that love can possibly relieve him, and it is certainly so with the church; when mourning the absence of her Beloved there is not another being or object in heaven or earth that will satisfy her. Palaces would be gloomy prisons to her in his absence, but in his presence there is fullness of joy, and at his right hand pleasures forevermore.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., April 1, 1863.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906; 07 means 1907; 08 means 1908, &c.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, Elder P. G. Lester will fill the following appointments in Kentucky:

Little Flock, Friday, 2:30 p. m., May 22nd, and Saturday and Sunday, 11 a. m., 23rd and 24th; Goshen, Tuesday, 11 a. m., 26th; Salt River, Wednesday, 11 a. m., 27th; Elk Lick, Thursday, 11 a. m., 28th; Sulphur Fork, Saturday, 11 a. m., 30th; Turners, Sunday, 11 a. m., 31st; Pleasureville, Tuesday, 11 a. m., June 2nd; Finchville, Wednesday and Thursday, as suits, 3rd and 4th; Bethel, Saturday and Sunday, 11 a. m., 6th and 7th; Winchester, Monday, as suits, 8th; Mt. Sterling, Tuesday, as suits, 9th; Sharpsburg, Wednesday and Thursday, as suits, 10th and 11th; Mays Lick, Saturday and Sunday, 11 a. m., 13th and 14th.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Miss Mary Blain, only child of the late John and Ann Eliza (Benedict) Blain, died at the home of her cousin, Mrs. Ann Knapp, Sugar Loaf, N. Y., May 4th, 1908, in the 72nd year of her age. Her father and mother during their lifetime were regular attendants of Old School Baptist meetings, her mother being a descendant of Elder James Benedict, the first pastor of the Warwick Church, and being also a sister of the late Elder Wm. L. Benedict, at one time well known among our people. Miss Blain attended Old School Baptist meetings until the last three or four years, when she was too feeble and in too poor health to attend any meetings. She never made any public profession of religion, but during her last days upon earth, in the midst of suffering, manifested a beautiful spirit of resignation to the Master's will, ready to depart at his call. She believed in salvation by grace through the Lord Jesus Christ. Her only surviving relative of near kin is an uncle, James Blain, living in Kansas. There are several cousins and many friends who will miss her presence in their midst, and who tenderly cared for her in her last illness.

The funeral was held from Mrs. Knapp's residence, in Sugar Loaf. Text used by the writer was John xi. 25, 26. Interment in Belcher burying-ground, near Warwick, N. Y.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

WARWICK, N. Y., May 7, 1908.

BROTHER **T. A. Eastin** died at his residence, east of Miami Co., Mo., about Dec. 13th, after an illness of more than five weeks, during which he suffered much in body, which to some extent affected his mind, yet he did not murmur, but would often pray that the Lord would come and take him home, saying he was ready to go. He would frequently engage in praising the Lord for the rich blessings he had bestowed upon him, and would often tell his experience, and how the good Lord had cared for him and blessed him when he was in a far distant land, away from his kindred, and had redeemed him from all evil. Brother Eastin and his wife, sister Eastin, gave in their experience to the Primitive Baptist Church called Hope, then holding her meetings in Carroll County, Mo., in October, 1874, and were baptized by the writer, and their membership continued in that church until his death; her membership still remains with the same church, which now holds her meetings in Saline County, Mo. Brother Eastin was born, raised and educated in Palmyra, Mo. His parents were Dr. William and Mary Eastin, who had two sons and a daughter, of whom our brother was the last living member. He was born in August, 1830, went to California when he was nineteen years old, stayed six years, then returned to his native home; was married to Miss Nancy E. Parrish in March, 1859. Six children were born to them, of whom five are living, four sons and one daughter; they were all present when their father died except the eldest son, who lives in Nashville, Tenn. After brother Eastin married he engaged in farming, and lived several years in northeast Missouri; then in 1874 he moved to Saline County, Mo., and although he made changes sometimes in his location and business, being part of the time in mercantile business and part of the time engaged in farming, yet most of the time he lived in Saline County, and died on the farm, eight miles east of Miami, and was buried near by.

A meeting was held, sacred to his memory, in Miami, the first Sunday in April, 1908, at which the writer tried to speak words of gospel truth for the healing, soothing and consolation of the bereaved and mourning ones. R. M. THOMAS.

ST. JOSEPH, MO.

Miss Martha Lee died at her home in Loudoun County, Va., Jan. 23rd, 1908, aged 72 years. She was the daughter and the last of the family of brother Matthew Lee, a long time member and deacon of Mt. Zion Church, and a prominent man in his community for many years. "Miss Mat," as we loved to call her, while not making a public profession of the faith which doubtless was in her, manifested a sincere regard and, we believe, love for the truth and the people of her father's choice. Her place in Mt. Zion congregation was regularly occupied by her whenever her health and circumstances would permit. Her life was quiet and unassuming. Blessed with abundant means, she chose to use them in deeds of love, helping the needy and relieving the wants of the poor and destitute, rather than in making an ostentatious display in the eyes of the world. It seems she chose to live and care for an aged father and mother, who depended upon her for those ministrations the aged so much need, rather than live a life particularly for herself. No doubt she was blessed in this, going down to her journey's end in humble, quiet resignation to the divine will. A brother's widow, with two of that brother's children, are all of the immediate family who survive her, and by whom she is held in loving, grateful remembrance.

ALSO,

Thomas T. Palmer died at his home near Bloom field, Loudoun Co., Va., April 24th, 1908, in the 75th year of his age. He was married March 5th, 1868, to Miss Annie Silcott, to which union were born four children, three of whom, and his widow, sister Palmer, survive him. Mr. Palmer had been an industrious, hard working man all his life up to a few months before he died; he had a kind, manly disposition, which won the esteem of all who knew him. He was an honest man, a good neighbor and citizen, a kind husband and father, and, we fondly believe, a subject of God's grace. While he never made an open profes-

sion of religious convictions by identifying himself with any church, it was very evident that in mind and heart he was in sympathy with the Old School Baptists. His widow is an esteemed member of Ebenezer Church, and he generally attended the meetings with her when circumstances permitted. We cannot doubt by those tokens and signs which Mr. Palmer gave that he had a love for the truth and for those who love the truth that is not found in the heart of the ungodly man. How empty and vain are mere professions when the test comes and they are found as unsubstantial as the shifting sand, with no more solid foundation.

I must add that those like Miss Martha Lee and Mr. Palmer are far more helpful and encouraging to our poor and afflicted people in these times of trial, than those zealous professors who, when trials come, fall away. May God comfort the mourners.

J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., May 13, 1908.

Hester Owens, our beloved sister, fell asleep in Jesus April 8th, 1908, after six months of terrible suffering with that dread disease, cancer of the stomach and bowels. She was born May 27th, 1855, and so lacked but one month and nineteen days of being 53 years of age. She was the daughter of Thomas J. and O. E. Hooks, and was married to Mr. I. N. Owens, Dec. 14th, 1871, in the State of Alabama. Together with her husband she moved to the State of Texas in the year 1877. They had lived in Hopkins County, where she died, nearly twenty-nine years. She leaves to mourn their loss, besides husband, the church and many friends, nine children, three children having preceded her to the grave. Mr. Owens tells me that they lived together nearly forty years, and I doubt not that their life's journey together was as near one of continued peace, love and genuine devotion to each other as can be found. I feel that it can be truly said that the husband has lost an affectionate wife, the children a loving, devoted, faithful mother, and the church a consistent member. I served the church of her membership as pastor a number of years, and I ever considered sister Owens one among the most humble and devoted sisters in the bounds of my acquaintance. I would say to the bereaved husband and children, and all who are left to mourn, Let us not mourn as those who have no hope, but let us think of her as released from all her suffering and sweetly fallen asleep in Jesus, sweet and blessed sleep, a sleep from which none ever wake to weep. Let us think on the sweet, quiet, humble disposition that was hers, and the image of Jesus as manifested in her countenance, walk and conversation; all these evidences which she left us that she is now in spirit at rest with the blessed Savior and Redeemer. We, too, are fast moving on toward the end of our mortal career. Let us hope that it will be ours to sleep as she sleeps, leaving the blessed assurance that when we awake it will be with the likeness of the glorified Christ.

H. B. JONES.

MT. VERNON, Texas.

Mrs. Othelia Anne Duncan died suddenly of pneumonia, after an illness of nearly two weeks, at her home near Wagram, Va., April 30th, 1908. She was the widow of John R. Duncan, who was a devout member of the Old School Baptist Church. She never united with any church, but when she attended meeting at all it was the Old School Baptist. About a week before she died I was sitting by her bedside, and she told me that she must die, and I said, "Grandma, if you are at rest you will be better off than to be in this world." She said, "Well, I am in the hands of the Lord, it is nothing that I can do or say." She was quiet and composed throughout her sickness, nothing seemed to excite her, and she never seemed to think that her suffering was too great for her. She leaves six children: Bertie A. Holland, my mother, Rebecca J. Byrd, Meshack, Samuel, William and Letcher Duncan, nine grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. She passed from this earth in her 70th year, and was laid beside her husband in the family burying-ground.

This is two of our loved ones who have passed away within the past year, the other being my sister, Bertha Lee Pilchard, but we do not want to complain or murmur, for we know the Lord knows best, and we hope that our loss is their gain.

Her granddaughter, GEORGIA A. BYRD.

I heartily indorse the above notice. She was sister to my wife. I attended the burial service.

T. M. POULSON.

Anna Shepherd Davis, wife of John M. Raab, died at her home in the town of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., May 8th, 1908, aged 34 years and 2 months, after an illness of two weeks. She was the youngest daughter of the late George W. and Roxy Davis, and was married to John M. Raab, of Prattsville, Greene County, in 1894. She is survived by her husband and five children, as follows: Henry, Mabel, Nettie, Charles and Edith, also three sisters, to mourn the loss of a devoted wife, indulgent mother and kind sister. (MRS.) H. BOICE.

KINGSTON, N. Y.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Thomas W. Records, Missouri, $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Delaware Association is appointed to be held with the Salem Church, Philadelphia, Pa., May 27th, 28th and 29th, 1908, in the Odd Fellows' Temple, corner Broad and Cherry streets (eighth floor). Those arriving in the city on Tuesday will please go to 1910 North Twenty-second St. (B. F. Coulter) or 1735 North Seventh St. (Mrs. Craven.) Those coming on Wednesday morning will go direct to the place of meeting. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

B. F. COULTER, Pastor.

FRANKLIN TERRY, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, N. J., June 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1908.

Persons coming to this meeting from Philadelphia will leave Broad St. station by the 3:43 train, coming to Stockton or Frenchtown on Tuesday, June 2nd, where they will be cared for. Those coming from New York city will come on New York Central Railroad to Flemington, arriving there about 3:30 p. m. June 2nd, and will be conveyed to places of entertainment.

All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

CYRUS RISLER, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Middleburg, Schoharie Co., N. Y., has appointed its yearly meeting to be held the first Sunday, and Saturday previous, in June, (6th and 7th) 1908. A cordial invitation is extended to ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

ADDIE COOK, Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., June 10th, 11th and 12th, 1908.

Those coming from New York city and points in New York State, New England States or Canada, will travel via Erie Railroad, changing at Greycourt for Warwick. Those coming from Pennsylvania, New Jersey or southern points may take train leaving Broad St. station, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania R. R., at 12:03 p. m. via Belvidere division, changing at Belvidere for train to Warwick. Trains will be met on Tuesday.

Ministers of our faith and order and lovers of Bible truth are invited to meet with us.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.

K. V. BEEBE, Clerk.

THE Siloam Association of Oregon and Washington will be held this year at Dayton, Wash., with Harmony Church, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in June, at 10 o'clock, and continuing over Sunday. Those coming by railroad come so as to get here on Thursday before.

B. S. PATE.

THE yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held, the Lord willing, in the schoolhouse in the township of Brooke, Lambton County, Ontario, five miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1908, and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

THERE are a few Old School Baptists in Riverside, Cal., and they have meeting the first and third Sundays in each month, at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

W. D. BALL.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at the Hall, corner of 19th St. and 8th Ave., fifth floor. Elevator entrance on either 19th St. or 8th Ave.

11:00 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 76. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1908. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE SHEEP AND THE GOATS.

(Matthew xxv. 31-46.)

WITHIN the past forty-four years I have expressed my thoughts through the SIGNS upon a great variety of scriptural subjects, but do not now remember that I have ever particularly alluded to the above named subject in writing. I have tried to be very careful in considering any theme not to even appear to contradict any Scripture without full explanation, and not to neglect to notice any Scripture which appears to stand in the way of my view. In writing upon the great and solemn mystery of the resurrection of the dead, which I have done at some length in former years, I have desired to have in view every expression found upon that subject in the inspired Scriptures of truth, and to see that my belief is conformed to each one; as well to Luke xx. 37, 38, where it is declared by our Savior that Moses showed that the dead are raised up, when he called the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, for God is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for all live unto him, as to 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52, where it is declared that the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. While I have not understood the resurrection of the dead to be a material resurrection, bringing forth to the natural view the form and features and size that were seen by weeping friends in the hour and article of death, for Jesus alone has come forth from the tomb without having seen change by corruption, yet I have strictly contended that it is our vile body which shall be changed, "that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."—Phil. iii. 21. It is the same body which is sown a natural body that is raised a spiritual body; not raised and changed into a spiritual body, but raised a spiritual body, which can never be seen by natural eyes.

I want to hold fast the form of sound words, which we have heard of Paul and other inspired writers of the New Testament, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. (2 Tim. i. 13.) I cannot understand how the Lord's work is done, but I want to hold fast and rest in whatever is declared by inspiration. Paul said, I

have hope toward God, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust, therefore I believe it. How it shall be, and what shall be afterward, I do not know. I do not know, nor desire to know, what we shall be, nor how either the elect or nonelect shall appear after the close of this mortal state of existence. Concerning the unjust, as presented in the parable referred to at the head of this article, the dear Savior said, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment," and this, therefore, I believe. The characters concerning whom it was said are definitely described, and this sentence closes up their history and fate. I wish to consider this parable briefly.

First, I will say that I have never seen reason to believe that the punishment of the wicked after death is by physical suffering and torment. I have not regarded the lake of fire, the fire and brimstone, the chain and key, the dragon and beasts, and other things of this kind, as literal, any more than I have the pure river flowing from the throne, the tree of life on either side of the river, the street of gold and gates of pearl, and other things connected with and illustrating the glorious salvation of God and the infinite joys and blessedness of his redeemed in glory. I have regarded those terrible things as presenting the awful wickedness of men and nations, and the stern judgments which God has visited upon them and will visit upon them here and hereafter. Brother Ker presents good reasons for regarding all these things as figurative and spiritual in his article upon the rich man and Lazarus, in the SIGNS of January 1st. I think his view is the true meaning of that parable. I have always regarded the rich man as representing the self-righteous Jew, and the poor man the quickened Gentiles. When the apostle Paul says to the believing Gentiles, "Ye are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise," I understand him to be one of the angels who carry Lazarus into Abraham's bosom, into the Abrahamic covenant. Abraham's bosom is not heaven.

In considering the parable of the sheep and the goats we first think of the time of the Son of man's coming. Some regard this coming as at the end of time, and others regard it as the coming of Christ in his gospel kingdom on the day of Pentecost and during the gospel dispensation. This difference will not affect the subject I have particularly on my mind, which is the sentence pronounced and executed upon the wicked. This is the same at whatever period it is pronounced.

"Unto them that look for him [and to no others] shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation." This is that final coming of the dear Savior which the saints now, and in all gospel ages, are "looking for and hasting unto." It is that glorious appearing which every living soul longs for, when we shall "appear with him in glory." It is that appearing which shall at once conform every believer, every living soul, to his glorious image. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him."

When Jesus ascended and was received out of the sight of his disciples, "he sat on the right hand of God," "on the right hand of power," "on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens." He is now, during all the gospel dispensation, reigning as King in Zion. In a sense all his holy angels are with him. As Moses and Elias appeared with him

in glory on the mount, showing the law and the prophets to be with him, speaking of his sufferings "which he should accomplish at Jerusalem," and also of his glory, so now all the holy men of old, all his ministers and messengers, are with him and declare his kingdom and glory. They did not know when they wrote of him the manner or time of his coming, but now they speak plainly, and the mystery hid from them in the past ages is now made manifest to the saints, and they all, as Abel, being dead, yet are speaking in the church to-day.

Before his crucifixion Jesus commanded his disciples not to go and preach to the Gentiles, but only to the Jews, for they were the only nation that was before him. But after he was risen from the dead before him were gathered all nations, and he commanded his disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, to teach all nations, and he said, "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." So the Son of man, who "is the power of God, and the wisdom of God," and who reigns in glory, "shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." Thus the gospel has a dividing power, and the separation is ever going on during the dispensation of the gospel of God's grace. It is Jesus, the King, who does the separating by the word of his power. No change is made in the character of any one of the infinite number that are before him; they are each, those on the right hand and those on the left, the same before as after they are separated. It is to be remarked with wonder and admiration that in this parable, in which his people are to be distinctly manifested, Jesus has named two animals which appear in some manner alike, and yet which must always remain absolutely and forever distinct from each other; they cannot be crossed. To some Jesus said, "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep."

The King speaks first to those on his right hand, whom he himself has placed there. No one can tell where the King's right hand is until the King tells him. The sons of Zebedee did not know what they asked when they requested to be allowed to sit the one on his right and the other on his left in his kingdom. He told them that this was not his to give, but it shall be for those for whom it is prepared by the Father. These things, like many of the things in the Bible, are figurative. The right hand signifies favor and power, and the left hand disfavor. Those on the right hand have a kingdom prepared for them before the foundation of the world, and now they inherit it. Nothing they do or do not do can prevent them from inheriting that kingdom. Those on the left hand go into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. To those on the right hand the King says, "Come, ye blessed of my Father." He thus tells them who they are, and where, and why. None of the blessed know that they are in the King's favor till he tells them. They know how they feel towards him and his, but not how he feels toward them. This love in their hearts toward him and the things that belong to him, has been their chief, their only joy. Now he calls forth into manifestation the sweet spirit of love within them, and thus distinguishes them from those who are called "Cursed." There is a "Come" for them in the gospel, which is to them "the power of God unto salvation," and they love the joyful sound; while to those on the left hand there is in it a repelling power, a "Depart." It is hateful to them.

To the sheep, the chosen, the words of Jesus are as silken cords of love drawing them to him. He thus "calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." "I have loved thee," he says, "with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." He tells them of their good works to him, and they are astonished, for they can recall to mind nothing good that they have ever done. Then he tells them of this sweet love and tender care that have been in their hearts toward his little ones, and gives them to understand that this sweet heartwork is the true and only good work, and that they who love his little ones are near and dear to him. They are not chosen and blessed because of this love in their hearts, but they have this love because of the choice and blessing of God. This that they felt of nearness and love to the lambs of Jesus is the only reliable evidence that they have been placed at the King's right hand, and to them his word is never "Depart," but always and forever "Come."

To them on the left hand the King shall say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." How well for James and John that their selfish desires were not granted. How well for us all that our own will is overruled and our selfish wishes denied. Well may we ever be thankful to the God of all grace for the will and power to say, "Not my will, but thine, O Lord, be done." Those on the left hand said, "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?" When did we ever fail to do our duty? If they had done one of these things to one of his little ones it would have been merely as a duty, which would have destroyed all goodness in the work. It is love that makes the work good. Love is the fulfilling of the law. The Pharisee prayed in the same spirit of self-exaltation, seeing no reason why he should not be commended and rewarded. Jesus said of them, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." It will be noticed that the words "everlasting" and "eternal" are from the same word in the original Greek. The punishment of the one and the eternal life of the other are of the same duration. This is always too much for my weak mind to contemplate. Everlasting punishment! I know in my own experience the truth of Paul's declaration that "the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." I see this opposition in my own flesh to the doctrine of election and predestination; but, thanks be to the Lord's most holy name, I know that he has given me faith to receive unquestioningly his word and doctrine, and to rejoice in the truth, and to rest blessedly at times in his most holy will, and to say with the dear Savior, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."

The apostle says of the same characters as those on the left hand, who know not God and obey not the voice of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints and to be admired in all them that believe. (2 Thess. i. 9, 10.) The words "punish" and "punishment" prevent the thought of annihilation.

The Lord has redeemed his people from sin and all its direful consequences, for which they shall always praise his matchless name. Why he has left any in that

terrible death which came upon all men the day that Adam sinned, we can never know, except that such was his infinitely wise and holy will. If we ask, "Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" we are simply asked, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?"

Neither in the resurrection of the just nor of the unjust do I understand a physical appearance of the mortal body to human sight, nor in the everlasting punishment of the one, or the eternal life and blessedness of the other, do I understand a physical suffering of pain or an enjoyment of carnal delight. But the infinitely terrible reality of the one, and the solemn and glorious realization of the other, are infinitely beyond the reach of my understanding. I can only rest in the inspired language of truth. I do not want my natural sympathies to affect my belief in spiritual things; I do not want to hold what is only traditional and natural, and I would not lightly cast aside a doctrine which has been held by the church, without being well assured that such belief is not according to the Scriptures.

I will close with a few clear and definite and truthful expressions of a dear sister:

"I cannot see how any one who has felt the plague of his own heart can imagine any punishment too great for the infraction of God's holy law. A full view of that holiness and of our own iniquity most surely drives away such a thought as that. For my own part I have never had any doubt but that I fully understood the psalmist's language when he said, 'The pains of hell gat hold upon me,' and I have never questioned that there is a hell, since I have tasted it. There is no need of any second sentence, 'In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.' Execution of that sentence was not delayed an hour. The whole human race were then in death, a state of separation from God, and all have ever since remained there, and ever will remain there, except those who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. In due time Christ came to save these chosen ones, and 'to redeem us from all iniquity.' His name was called Jesus, for he should 'save his people from their sins.' Our experience of this here in time is all we dare talk about. We believe we have sometimes a foretaste of the joys of heaven, which means union with God, but how soon the natural feelings assert themselves, and we are at home in the body again. We are almost always at home in the body while we remain here. A great mystery covers the world of the hereafter. We die, that is all we know with our natural minds. Faith enables us to believe we shall partake hereafter of God's holiness, and this is our chief desire; but we know nothing as we speak of knowledge concerning other things. Faith does not enter the realm of the nonelect, the unregenerate, the wicked, who 'shall go away into everlasting punishment.' They are in that state to-day, but the veil of flesh, which prevents our being able to conceive the joys prepared for those who love God, except by revelation, also prevents the prevision of the unregenerate as to the dreadful realities of their future state. No description of material torment which the ingenuity of man has invented can possibly equal the condition of those eternally separate from God."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April 10, 1908.

LANCASTER, Ohio, Feb. 2, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I hope that my love for you is all for the blessed truth as it is in Christ our Lord. As it is about time for me to remit my subscription, I will say that the editorial upon "the rich man and Lazarus" was worth more to me than the price of two remittances could have been. Although I have never had the pleasure of meeting either of you, yet it does seem as though I had known you for a long time. I hope you will pity and forgive me for writing, as I am shut in with no one to talk to—all alone as to the kindred in Christ in my household.

Our church is in a sad condition, all of us old in years, and all but one poor in this world's goods, and our pastor, who has served us for thirty or forty years, has become feeble and not able to serve us; but we are in the hand of the Lord, and what he does is right. I feel that I have great reason to be thankful for the privilege of reading the SIGNS. All the good letters are a blessing to the hungry and thirsty ones. The editorials often seem to remove at least some of the scales from my eyes, as, for instance, "the rich man and Lazarus," and the "many mansions." The members of the body all have their places, yet differ as much as the stars. I look at times up to the firmament; how bright some of the stars are, and others hard to be seen; but God has a great storehouse, in his bright undershepherds, to hand out to the dim ones, so they go in and out and find pasture. Many times I feel starved, and think I must go away and die to all hope of life in Christ, but some mysterious power still holds me to remember my Creator. We read in the seventeenth chapter of John the prayer of the Savior for himself and then for his disciples, and then he said, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." I take it that there were those, and are those yet among the elect of God, who are not taught by the Holy Ghost, but when some received the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, then they saw with the eyes of their understanding, and the wonderful works of God were brought to their knowledge; then they understood the prophecies which Jesus had fulfilled; then they remembered his words. We see in the eighth chapter of Acts where Saul had not yet finished his course of wickedness, and the disciples were scattered abroad and went everywhere preaching the word. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them, and when they believed the things concerning the kingdom of God which Philip preached, and on the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. They were believers in Christ through the word of preaching. So when the apostles at Jerusalem had heard that Samaria had received the word of God they sent Peter and John to them; then they prayed that those might receive the Holy Ghost, for as yet he was not fallen upon them; only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. They were not taught concerning the Holy Ghost, but believed on the Lord Jesus Christ through the word that was preached unto them. I understand the nineteenth chapter of the Acts to teach the same as does the eighth. It is said that as Paul went through where Apollos had been he found certain disciples who had not heard of the Holy Ghost, yet they were believers. Paul asked them, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" They used the same language as did Paul; he said,

"Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism." Then he declared to them what John had taught the people to believe concerning Jesus Christ, and in this way they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. All that Paul is said to have done was to lay his hands upon them, and the Holy Ghost came upon them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied. On the day of Pentecost, when Peter preached, some were pricked in the heart and cried out, "What shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Repentance is the gift of God. Then we must believe that it is given before the gift of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost gives us to see the wonderful works of God, and to love them; it enlightens the understanding. In first Corinthians Paul rebuked his brethren, and asks if Christ was divided, or if Paul was crucified for them, or were they baptized in the name of Paul. He then thanked God that he had baptized none of them, save Crispus and Gaius and the household of Stephanas. And beside he knew not whether he had baptized any other, for he said Christ Jesus sent him not to baptize, but to preach the gospel. He preached the gospel to them and laid his hands upon them, and the Holy Ghost came upon them, and through their word there were added to the church such as should be saved. Christ prayed for them that should believe on him through their word. Paul in first Corinthians calls them brethren, but says that he could not speak unto them as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. He declares that he must feed them with milk, and not with meat, for hitherto they had not been able to bear it, and neither yet were they able. Then he says, "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?" I remember that Paul said he had caught some with guile. This last expression I do not understand, and I should be glad if one or both of you editors would give your views through the SIGNS upon it. I can find no record so far as I can see where the gift of the Holy Ghost was bestowed upon any before they were baptized. The household of Cornelius was made to see that they were sinners by the work of the Holy Ghost, and confessed that they were sinners.

Dear brethren, bear with me for writing all this; all the apology I can make is that it has been running through my mind, and I thought that to write would give my mind rest. All the editorials this year seem to have been written especially for me. It does revive us when God gives to his undershepherds out of his great storehouse to hand to the weak ones, that they may feed and lie down. If I could write as the dear sisters, whom I have never met, but who write giving God all the glory, I would write to every one of them, for in reading their letters there is a oneness. We are bound together with a threefold cord. Please write about this threefold cord. We have a dear pastor for this year; if I know it, he preaches the gospel; he is a dear, humble man; his name is Shomaker. We feel blest.

I will close, with love to the editors; I wish you Godspeed. Now remember a poor old sinner, saved by grace if saved at all,

SARAH B. PEARCE.

2 PETER III. 9.

"THE Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Dear brother Chick, the above text of Scripture has been in my mind for a long time, and I feel impressed with a desire from some cause to write, if I can, words of comfort to the household of faith, using the above text as a foundation. I will try, if the Lord will, to notice briefly each thought contained in the text in the order in which they are written.

The apostle says God is not slack concerning his promise. He is not slack in anything he does. The prophet says, He speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast. As God is all-wise and perfect, we cannot think for a moment that he would make a promise that would not be fulfilled. If such a thing were possible God would not be perfect. As we have such a perfect and all-wise God let us notice a few of his promises. The Bible clearly states that God has a people, and that they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. For them he made the atonement; to them he promised eternal life; not to all of Adam's race, but to as many as the Father had given Christ. Had the promise been to all of Adam's race they would all have been saved, or God's promise would have failed, which in view of his perfection is impossible. There are many promises in the Bible for God's people, but it is not my purpose to occupy much space in speaking in reference to them. The angel said to Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." What a precious promise this is, and how it comforts our poor hearts to know that he is not slack concerning it, but that it is sure and steadfast; "heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not," sayeth the Lord. The question that occurs in my mind is, Am I one of those to whom the promise was made? If so, I am saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. We must walk by faith, not by sight. We learn from the text that his promise is not only sure, but his longsuffering is to usward.

The text further says he is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Does this embrace all of Adam's race? If so, they will all be saved, as he is not willing that they should perish. The apostle says God works all things after the counsel of his own will, and that all power is given into his hands, both in heaven and in earth; he has the power and the will, so none can be lost that it is his will to save. Many are so ignorant in regard to gospel truth that they argue that God consults the will of man in regard to his receiving or rejecting Christ. If this is true, God could not work all things after the counsel of his own will, as he would have to submit to the will of man. O how wicked and dishonoring to God is such doctrine. I fully believe that nothing has or ever will transpire contrary to God's will.

He further says that it is his will that all shall come to repentance. It is argued by many false teachers that repentance is the act of the creature; that all men have the power to repent, and that repentance brings them in favor with God. The Bible teaches that repentance is the gift of God, and that Christ is exalted a Prince and a Savior to give repentance to Israel, and he never promised repentance to any but Israel. Now let us examine the Scriptures and see how repentance comes. The apostle says that godly sorrow for sin worketh repentance unto salvation. How does the

sinner come into possession of this sorrow for sin? It is by revelation from God; until he receives this revelation he does not know that he is a sinner. Why did not Paul know he was a sinner when he was persecuting the saints? Because God had not revealed it to him; but when the revelation came O what sorrow and anguish filled his soul; here he received godly sorrow, that worketh repentance unto salvation, that needeth not to be repented of. This is a part of the good work that the apostle says he begins in the sinner, that he will perform until the day of Jesus Christ. When I look at this precious truth it causes my poor heart to rejoice, and gives me courage to press onward toward the mark for the prize of our high calling in Christ. The apostle said He bore our sins in his own body, and if he did this they never can come against us. The high priest confessed his own sins and the sins of the people, with his hand laid heavily on the head of the scapegoat; the goat was then taken by the hand of a suitable person into the wilderness, or into a land not inhabited, representing Jesus Christ as the great antitype bearing away the sins of his people.

Brother Chick, after examining the above closely, I fear it is not worthy of publication in the good old SIGNS. You must be the judge, as I am not competent to judge my own writing or preaching. I have often been drawn near to you while reading your able editorials in the SIGNS. I have a great desire to see you and hear you preach, but perhaps I shall never have that privilege. May God bless you, and enable you in the future, as in the past, to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

SILAS WILLIAMS.

ALBANY, Oregon, Jan. 8, 1908.

PRINCETON, Ky., Feb. 18, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have been requested by brother H. H. Bentley, of Atlanta, Ga., who says he has been a reader of the SIGNS for about thirty years, to write an article for the SIGNS on the subject of Primitive Baptists patronizing Sunday Schools. I will not attempt to dictate to the Baptists what they should believe and practice, but, dear brethren and sisters of all true Predestinarian faith, come let us reason together on this one great point of practice of which some among us are guilty.

First, we know no flesh can produce a spiritual birth, neither can flesh teach flesh to know God. Adam is the father of all the human family. Adam was not born of woman, but was made of God, and all the rest of the human family are born of women, and of few days and full of trouble. God is a Spirit, and is the Father of all born of the Spirit, and spiritual life is eternal life. God is love, and he loves his children. God is just and right in all that he doeth; he made the wicked for the day of evil, and said the wicked shall do wickedly and shall not understand. God did not make the righteous to do wickedly, but the wicked shall do wickedly, sayeth the Lord. Now keep this in mind: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Brethren, the Scripture says, "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Do you believe in Sunday Schools? Is there any scriptural authority for Sunday Schools? Is not the Sunday School an invention of men? If so, is not the Sunday School an idol? Are God's children taught in

the Scriptures to worship idols? Are not God's children taught in the Scriptures to keep themselves from idols? O but, says some brother or sister, we do not patronize the Sunday School idol. But, I ask, do you not send or permit your children to go? Yes. Well, then, I ask you, Are the Scriptures profitable to you? Do you train up your child in the way he should go? Are you not bidding the Sunday School idol Godspeed when you permit your child to attend it? Are you not fellowshiping their unfruitful works of darkness, when you are commanded rather to reprove them? If you do not believe the Sunday School is right, then you do believe it is wrong, and I ask you, Do you want your child to do wrong? If you do not, then it is your duty to teach your child that the Sunday School idol is wrong, and it is your duty to teach your child what is right, and to shun wrong, just as you would shun the wrong yourself. Remember, it is the wicked who shall do wickedly, not the righteous, and it is your duty to search the Scriptures, study to show thyself approved unto God. Do you do that? If so, does God approve of your wrong? Do you not feel in your heart that you do wrong when you go to your own church, and your child whom you love is taught by false prophets to bow the knee to idols, and then grow up and mock you, and show no respect for your church or your brethren who visit you? You know that is wrong; well, then, you train your child up in the way he should go, and in after years you will not be ashamed of him, and he will respect you and your church and your brethren. A Baptist that is a true believer in God and salvation by grace will insist on his children attending his church with him, or else he does not love his child as a father should. One of the qualifications of a minister is, "that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity." Likewise the deacons ruling their children and their own house well. How many of our Old Baptists to-day are doing this? Dear brethren and sisters, I ask you to think on these Scriptures and ask yourself if you are right in these things, and pray God to direct you and help you; remember that for every disobedience there is a just recompense of reward. When you do wrong you feel guilty, and God's goodness and mercy bring you to repentance, therefore you are under obligation to keep your child in subjection. You teach your child what is right and what is wrong, and the child will love you. We love God because he first loved us. There is a reward to the righteous, and thou shalt see the reward of the wicked. I say, if we do wrong or permit our children to go wrong we ourselves are bidding that wrong Godspeed, therefore are guilty, not only in our talk, but also in our walk; so let us walk in the light of the Lord, "the fool walketh in darkness." We know it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, but God's children walk by faith, therefore they should not walk after the flesh, but after the Spirit; and we know when we walk after any of the inventions of men we are walking after the flesh, and not after the Spirit, and therefore not by faith. "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." So you see, dear brethren, we should watch, and not be caught or dragged in the net or snares of the wicked. I pray the dear brethren everywhere will be sure to search the Scriptures as our Lord commanded us, and let us heed the witness, and shun all idols and inventions of men, and may God's mercy be with

you and guide you in all truth, now and forever. Amen.

Your servant, in bonds and afflictions,
C. K. HAINES.

TOUCHET, Wash., May 3, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have a desire this morning to communicate my thoughts, or some of them, to you. This is no new feeling, for I have destroyed no small amount of paper in trying to satisfy or relieve my mind in this direction, but when I would read after writing, it came so far short of describing my feelings that I could not send it to you, and it may be the same this time. I must say, and often I feel it to be so, that my exercises of mind may be a delusion; this God only knows. One thing I do know: the communications which are sent out in the SIGNS to feed the spiritually-minded are comforting to my soul. There is but very little in that paper that does not accord with the exercises of my mind, and in this my hope is strengthened. When I read, it is so seasoned with the will and testimony of God, and with grace and mercy, and is so firm and unmovable, that I am built up and strengthened indeed. Moses said that he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than enjoy the wealth of Egypt, and he said that the doctrine of God should drop as the rain, and distil as the dew upon the tender herb. Then follow the words, "Ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect." The herb, the rain and the dew are all His work, and he has ordained both the rain and the dew to stimulate and cause to grow the tender herb. No one can tell how he has made the earth to give forth its substance to the herb through the scent of water, neither can the natural mind tell how or why God in his everlasting covenant has so wisely ordained the salvation of his heavenly plants, and everything needful for them. It is said of them that they are "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." It is also said, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." In the parable of the vine we have the same grand lesson taught: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away." Now, dear brethren, let us notice this lesson very closely. My mind is somewhat stirred up upon this subject. Let us examine the testimony of Jesus with prayerful desire to know the truth, and not to establish some theory of our own. Brethren generally take the position that this Scripture is applicable to the church today in the sense that the branches grafted in by grace can forbear bearing fruit to the extent that God will cut them off, not from eternal life, but from the enjoyments of religion. I do not so understand this text; but while I say I do not understand the text to apply there, I do not mean to say that I do not believe in good works, for I do believe that by their fruits ye shall know them. Let us bear in mind that good works are fruit, and that fruit is evidence, and evidence, too, which is of great worth to the church today, as well as in all ages. Now let us with these facts before us examine the text. It is a fact that God had a peculiar people or nation under the law, and that this people were a shadow of a people or nation which should bear fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. Paul, speaking of this people under the law, says that they were cut off. How were they cut off? The same law that the

Lord gave them cut them off, for the law had a provision or condition in it, which was: If you will keep my law, then I will bless you. This they failed to do, and for this reason they were cut off. When the fullness of time came, God sent the true Vine into the world. This true Vine was planted by promise, and is the Vine of faith, therefore the branches now are branches by grace through faith. These are they which abide in the Vine. "Who," says the prophet, "may abide the day of his coming?" Every one who abides in the Vine bears fruit, and faith purges such that they may bear more fruit. Such as God has purged from their sins bring forth more fruit. For said Jesus, the true Vine, "I come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." The Holy Ghost through the prophet said, "Cry unto her [Zion], that her warfare is accomplished, * * * for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Thus we see in the Vine of promise the perfection of beauty. So also the branches bear divine fruit. Not unto us, but unto thy name give all the glory; and, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." One said, "The Lord is good." Another said, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." Another said, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." These are some of the fruits of the branches which abide in the Vine, and these are only representative of all the branches which abide in the Vine.

Now let us consider a few of the branches which were cut off. "For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold, a man gluttonous, and a winebibber." Again, he said in the parable, Thou knewest that I was an austere man, reaping where I had not strewn, why then didst thou not put my money to the exchangers? Now take from him that which was committed to him and give to him that had five talents, and cast the unfaithful servant into outer darkness. Now carefully read the sentence. Did you ever read of grace or mercy pronouncing such a sentence on one of its subjects or branches? No, dear brethren, were we not embraced in a better covenant, based upon better promises than the law, we should all be cut off, but the grace of God (who is the husbandman) that the branch draws from the true Vine was given us in him before the foundation of the world, and he said, "Because I [the Vine] live, ye shall live also." But this subject is too vast to be brought within the bounds of an article of reasonable length, so I will say in short, all law or legal branches are cut off, and all who are by grace remain to all eternity, and all our good works are evidences that we are in the true Vine, and partakers of the life and fatness of the Vine. "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin."

Now, dear brethren, for the sake of Him who called us by his grace let us sing of his grace, for it is by the grace of God that we are what we are. Not only what I will be in eternity, but what I am now, is by grace. I am a poor sinner, resting in grace for a prosperous journey and a safe landing upon the banks of deliverance. It is all for the sake of Jesus my Master.

Your brother in the gospel,

J. T. BARNES.

NORTH YAKIMA, Wash., Dec. 30, 1907.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—VERY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your highly appreciated letter of December 1st came to hand nearly thee weeks ago, and should have been answered before now, but I was preparing to take a trip to Astoria and Oregon City, Oregon, and was very busy with my work, so I put off writing you until I returned. Your former writings published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and other papers have been of such comfort and benefit to me that I am made to feel glad when I see your name in our family paper, the SIGNS, so I hope you will forgive my apparent negligence.

Yes, we did enjoy sister Rachie Hogland's visit with us, and are always pleased to have such orderly Baptists visit us. We had an excellent three days meeting while the sister was here. Elder W. T. Eaton, of Cheney, Wash., and Elder W. T. Branson, of South Dakota, were with us and preached ably, and our hearts were made to rejoice when we heard the doctrine of salvation by grace set forth in the power of the Spirit, which makes it always sound new. Soon after our meeting I sent an appointment to Astoria, Oregon, where I have a sister living, and she is also a sister in the faith. I had not visited the place since 1878, and there were great changes; young people had grown to manhood and womanhood, had families of interesting children, but the most interesting part to me was that a number of them seemed to be interested listeners to what I had to say. I preached three times, and at my invitation a dear friend and former acquaintance accompanied me to Oregon City, where the Cedar Creek Church meets; there we met Elders J. P. Allison, G. E. Mayfield, Ames Horner and S. B. Moffit, the last being pastor of the church there. The meeting was held at the home of old brother Joseph Bruce, who told me he met you at Owensville, Ind., in 1868, during the session of the Salem Association, and I want to tell you he is still a spiritual-minded, faithful, loving brother. Well, the meeting was so harmonious, and there was such unity in the preaching, love and fellowship abounded so manifestly, that when an opportunity was given on Saturday for the reception of members, my friend and brother, J. N. Heckard, came forward and related the dealings of the Lord with him. He spoke clearly, giving a reason of his hope in the crucified and risen Redeemer, and was received, and baptized on Sunday evening. Most of the members went to witness the ordinance, walking a mile through a drenching rain, yet apparently suffering no inconvenience, because their hearts were warm. This church is prospering, having received one addition at each of its last six meetings; I feel to rejoice with them that they are so highly favored. They have an able pastor in Elder Moffit, and peace and harmony seem to prevail. Your unworthy servant attempted to preach about four times at those meetings, and the kindness and forbearance of the brethren and sisters will be long remembered; God alone can repay them for their courtesies extended.

Dear brother, you spoke of having a desire to visit this coast, and if it is the Lord's will I hope you will be able to do so. Many of the brethren here expressed a great desire to see you, and I hope we would all be benefited. I can assure you that the doctrine and sentiments you set forth in your writings are in unison with the faith and practice of the Baptists on this coast. I have often been strengthened and encouraged by your timely ad-

monitions, both in doctrine and discipline, and also the good and wholesome instruction of Elders Chick, Ker, Coulter, Norton, and many others who contribute to the columns of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. To me all of you exhibit an excellent spirit, which commends itself to the household of faith, hence those of like precious faith are built up and strengthened to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, and as an encouragement to you and all such writers I will quote Paul: "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things." Again, "But to do good, and to communicate, forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." "For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God." So it appears to me from the above quotations that not only are the contributors blessed and enriched by making these sacrifices, but the recipients are constrained to praise God. This final result of all the combined efforts and good works of the saints is a living witness that they are actuated by the Spirit of Christ, for when we are made to search for righteousness in the flesh to commend us to God we search in vain; but we come to the man Christ Jesus, and there we find the "Lord our righteousness." How beautifully did he exemplify the perfect walk of obedience, fulfilling every jot and tittle of the law, thereby consecrating himself as an obedient servant; not doing his own will, but the will of the Father that sent him. "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things that he suffered." But these sufferings of the beloved Son were to terminate, and Paul tells us of the reward to the obedient Son. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor: that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." Now as Jesus fulfilled the law, both in the letter and in the spirit, he takes his people from under the law of works and bids them to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. My dear aged father in Israel, I wish to say that your writings, with many others of God's humble poor, manifest the spirit of God's obedient Son in laboring for the peace and upbuilding of God's beloved Zion.

I will close, wishing you all the peace and comfort of God's divine presence.

Your brother, I hope,

W. H. GILMORE.

HUNTER, N. Y., March 10, 1908.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I send you a letter I received from my brother Henry, which I think very good and which has given me great comfort in my sad, lonely hours. He has never made a profession, but I have received several such letters from him in the last year. I send this, and if you think best you can publish it; use your own judgment in regard to that, but I want you to see it. He has been a wonder to me for years; how he has shamed me for my lack of trust in God in my own troubles. I have been too much in the slough of despond this winter to either read or write, though he has requested me to do so. He has been sick all winter, and my son is only far enough recovered to begin to go out a little at a time. Sometimes it seems to me my cup is filled with gall, but something secret sweetens all at times, and I can praise His holy name. O how I would love to see you; you have been

made very near and dear to me while sitting under the sound of your voice. Hoping to be granted the privilege of again hearing from you, I will close.

As ever, your unworthy sister, if one at all,

(MRS.) G. H. FAULKNER.

LEXINGTON, N. Y., Dec. 12, 1907.

DEAR SISTER:—As I have not received a letter from you in some time I will address you again. The SIGNS and the little book are at hand, and I see those people seem to have received a great hope that gives peace to their souls, although some of them are in doubt as well as myself. When I look back over my past life I cannot see any good in it, nor can I even find anything that gives me reason to hope in the Savior or claim eternal life; I am as the dry bones in the valley. Sometimes I find comfort in reading, and at other times there is no consolation in it for me. It may be because our parents believed this doctrine that we do likewise, for it is written, "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Without the Scriptures the whole creation would be without hope, and these people, the Old Baptists, are the only people who preach the Scriptures as they are laid down. According to my understanding, and according to the apostles' preaching, salvation is by the will and mercy of God. As to my works, and by my works, I am as the thieves on the cross, justly condemned. I can say, I believe there is a God, but how can I serve One whom I have never known, and how am I to know him unless he reveals himself to me by his Spirit, as he did to Paul? My humble belief is that if he never sees fit to do so there is no way of obtaining his mercy, either through preachers or by our own works. I am almost afraid to speak of myself, although it seems I have been led by some unseen power or hand, wandering through life, and not altogether contrary to myself, and it seems to me it was so ordered that I should know of a certainty that my condemnation is just. I have nothing to boast of, but, like Adam, I am ashamed of my nakedness. I can only bow my head and wait in my shame for the will of God, whether it is to the saving of my soul or the condemnation of it. I do not want to tire you with my complainings, nor do I want to complain, for whatever I receive from his hand will be just; what he does he does well, but I would like to have some one in whom I could confide to tell some of my thoughts. I find the ways of God are wonderful, and past finding out, and I am willing to leave all of those things in his hand, although my soul is not at rest in me. I wish you would write oftener for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; I like to read it, I like to read the different experiences, and see if any have been called out like Ananias was. Not being brought up by Old Baptist parents and shown the people who preach Jesus and him crucified; all of these things go to prove to me that there is an all-powerful God, the same as in those days when the children of Israel were in bondage, and that he has mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardens. Dear sister, pray for me, that if it be possible my sins may depart from me as far as the east is from the west, and be remembered against me no more. I would like to see you and talk with you about the glory God has prepared for his people. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of God than to have all the kingdoms the devil showed the Savior when in the wilderness, but such is too

good for me in my polluted state to hope for. O that God would be mindful of so vile a mortal as I. It seems to me the elect of God are kept from their youth from committing so much sin as I have. Who knows these things? My prayer is that I may find peace to my soul in God's own time. Dear sister, I do not want to die yet, I do not feel prepared by grace, and I may never be; but who can stay the hand of the Lord? If I was prepared through the death of Jesus to enter the city of our God, eternity cannot be too long to sing praises to God for his love. I see the beauty in his creation here, and the works of his hand, but what must its beauty be in that other creation, the heavenly creation, where there are no tears or devilish power to mar the joys of his beloved children, chosen and blest in him before the world was? These things are too good for me to hope for in my sinful condition.

I will close for this time, hoping to hear from you soon, and when it is well with you remember me.

Your brother in sorrow,

H. P. BANKS.

OLIVE HILL, Ky., Feb., 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I desire to write you a few lines. I was born in 1855, and was raised among Campbellites and New Lights, now called christians, or church of Christ. I united with the Campbellites in my fifteenth year. I married Henry C. Hicks in my eighteenth year, and some time in May, 1878, he professed a hope in Christ, and united with the Methodists; but in a year or two he became dissatisfied with them, and went to the Old Regular Baptists and united with them, and was baptized by Reuben Tipton, in the fellowship of Mount Pleasant Church. We went on until in 1885, when I was made to see that I was lost and undone before God. This state of mind continued all summer, until September, when I was relieved of my burden, as I hope. But I sometimes fear that I only caught the shadow and missed the substance. I am such a vile sinner that I cannot see any justice in saving such a sinner as I am. I then united with the Old Baptist Church called Mount Pleasant, and was baptized the second Saturday in September, 1885. It was shown me that was the place for me.

My husband began to speak in public about that time, and the church gave him license to speak; after that he was away from home most of the time, so I have had many cares and trials during my life, but of all, the death of my husband was the hardest. The Lord had said, Thou shalt not worship any god but me, and so he took him from me. It is hard to give him up, but the will of God be done. I am left with three little girls to care for, and am getting old and not able to work. I lost all my household goods in a flood last January, and have nothing now, and no health, and so am alone and almost helpless as to worldly goods; but the will of God be done.

I read the SIGNS regularly, and am glad when it comes; I am lonely and it comforts me. The letters in it are good; the writers all seem to be taught of the Lord. I wish to thank you for your kindness in sending the paper to me, as it is a great help.

I have been to several good meetings this last summer. I went to the Rock Spring Association and the preaching was all good and sound, declaring salvation by grace. I have attended several other meetings. I hope I may see some of you some time, if the Lord will. I have heard Elders S. H. Durand, A. B.

Francis and F. McGlade, and I would like to hear them all again. Our church has twenty-nine members. Sometimes at our meetings we have from two to five ministers.

With love to all, I remain your sister,

R. E. HICKS.

SADIEVILLE, Ky.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed find a letter from our dear young brother, Elder C. W. Bond, who has left us for his far away home, as you see. May it suit you to give it a place in our dear family paper, which is nearly all the preaching I have; and is not that enough for one so unworthy as I? Yet I must be still while He whispers, Fear not, I will never leave nor forsake thee. The kindest love for your families. May you be led by that kind Hand that is all strength and love, is the prayer of

(MRS.) E. THEOBALD.

BAKER CITY, Ore, March 29, 1908.

MRS. E. THEOBALD—DEAR SISTER:—You requested me to write you when I got settled here, and I will try to do so to-day. If I were back home I would likely be at Little Flock to-day, but here I am at home with my folks, taking a little rest. I am glad to have a chance to rest a little, but I miss my church associations very much. I have put in all my spare time since arriving here in writing to friends and brethren. All of us will send out a dozen or more letters on the morning mail. We have about gotten fixed up for living again, and will begin farm work to-morrow. We have friends here, and they have been thoughtful of us, and have assisted us very much. I have had an invitation to preach, but declined until I get more settled. We arrived here on the night of the 16th inst., and began housekeeping on the 18th. We are in a pretty country, but are undergoing the worrying ordeal of refitting ourselves for the business of life; when we get supplied I think our situation will be much better than the one we left. I hope then to have some spare time and liberty of soul to enjoy the blessed things of spiritual life, yet I know that such blessings are not of man's planning, but must be received according to the will and dispensation of an all-wise God. I have felt that my coming here was of Him, and that my destiny for a long time was being shaped for this purpose, and now, while not so well fixed as I was in Kentucky, I have no regrets, and never stop to look back, for the Scripture which says, One who layeth his hand to the plow and looketh back, is not fit for the kingdom of heaven, is always before me. It is true the love and esteem of my brethren is always before me, and I am glad I have that, but that is not an indication to me that the path of duty is in another direction than the one I am pursuing. No more pathetic scene is recorded in the Scriptures than where Paul told his brethren farewell, and that they would see his face no more. They sorrowed most that they should see his face no more. But christians never say good-by for the last time; even though separated by many miles they are together in spirit, and if called to another world they are still together and one in Christ, one family, of one calling, and for one purpose, viz., for the praise of Him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. I tried to visit you all before I came here, but could not. I hope in the providence of God to see you all again in life, but if that is not his will, may we all be among the blessed company that composes his glorious fam-

ily in the resurrection. There will be no parting then, and no tears will be shed by his beloved bride, the church, as they rejoice forevermore in the fullness of his blessed presence. I often think of you and sister Aggie in your lonely life, and then of the christian husband taken from you years ago, whom I never had the pleasure of knowing, and wonder at the strange providence of our God in ordering things as he has; but we are told he makes no mistakes, and does everything right. The right of these and all other things we cannot see now, because he has hedged us about with surroundings as walls, holding us to these conditions and teaching us to be patient; but the time is coming when all these mysteries will be solved, when his beloved children will see as they are seen and know as they are known, and be like him. May his grace sustain you in your declining years, and may you realize the fulfillment of the promise that even down to old age his sovereign love and protection are the same.

Write to us when you feel to do so. I feel to be but a child desiring encouragement from the fathers and mothers in Israel, of whom I feel assured you are one. Sister Bond sends her love and christian fellowship.

Yours in hope, C. W. BOND.

ALEXANDRIA, Va., Feb. 25, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—After reading Ruth Adamson's letter of October 30th, I feel like adding a few thoughts to her gleanings. I have known this dear sister for quite a number of years. Her sentiments are so beautifully expressed in her letter, and breathe such a true spirit of God's redeeming love, that I am made to feel weak in comparison. My love and sympathy for this dear sister prompt me to write about her sufferings. She has just passed through a very critical operation for cancer, from which she has been suffering for a long time, but her faith is undaunted. I feel that she is resting on the everlasting arm of the true Friend, who has promised never to forsake his children; though they walk through the valley of the shadow of death, they are made to feel that afflictions are sent in mercy. Where can we go in our dark hours of trouble and distress, if not to this Friend who has redeemed us with his blood? "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."—Heb. xii. 6–8. But still we groan, being burdened; it is so hard to live perfect, to love our neighbor as ourself, and glory in tribulation. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life."

Sister Adamson's dream recalls to my mind one that I had when quite young. I was thoughtless and gay in those days, and the frivolity of the world was all I needed or cared to have, though sometimes very serious thoughts would come, and even passages of Scripture would come to me unsolicited. I read the Bible as a history of ancient times, and was fond of pouring over its mysterious pages. I can truthfully say it was read for instruction, for my carnal mind was enmity against God, and I could lay it aside without regret or any spiritual enlightenment. From my early childhood I had been taught by my parents to love and respect the Old School Baptists; my father's house was their home. On one

occasion, I can distinctly remember the time, I had returned from some place of enjoyment, and remarked that I had never enjoyed myself so much; but that night I had a dream which has always remained with me: I was in a large circular room with many windows; in this room was a circular seat crowded with many people. I could see the lightning flash and hear the thunder roll; it was fearful to look upon. Then a beautiful angel appeared in our midst and flitted around the room, touching one here and one there, until it had finished culling, then we had to descend a stairway. I was gathered up with the selected number, and we were about to descend when instantly the stairs were removed. Some one remarked, We cannot go down; then a loud voice was heard, This is a lack of faith. Instantly the stairway was replaced, and we descended. At the foot of the stairway we were met by guards with golden crowns on their heads, and we were passed to an outer court, a beautiful place that I cannot describe, but I was impressed by the sweet serenity of the place. I remember seeing a long, lofty room, with many people sitting around a very long table; some of them I knew, but no one recognized me nor those who were with me, but all seemed to be intensely happy. I awoke, but this dream has always remained with me. I related it to my mother, and she looked at me with a happy smile on her face, remarking, You are not at the last of that dream, my dear child, it will remain with you. Her words were prophetic, the dream is as vivid to me now as it was then. The Lord's plan of salvation seemed to be revealed to me, and I was led along very slowly until, I hope, the Lord spoke to me by his Holy Spirit, and numbered me with those who sing:

"My spirit looks to God alone;
My rock and refuge is his throne:
In all my fears, in all my straits,
My soul on his salvation waits."

This is a never-ending theme, but I must close this imperfect letter, lest I weary you and take valuable space in the columns of our dear comforter, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. May the Lord protect its dear editors, and give them strength sufficient to comfort those who await his coming.

HANNIE B. GREHAN.

GREENWOOD, Colo., Dec. 24, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Please find inclosed money order to renew my subscription to the SIGNS. I do not have the privilege of hearing much gospel preaching, but I enjoy many sweet messages by reading communications from the dear brethren and sisters, who are scattered all over our country. If I could write as the dear saints do, whose communications have often cheered and gladdened my heart, I would be much delighted to do so; but I realize my weakness, for when I would do good, evil is present with me. Many crumbs have fallen from the Master's table for me. O if I were only able, or had strength to gather the crumbs that have fallen from the Father's table, crumbs which the dear saints of God have strewn around near by. I will trust in thee, and in thee alone. I will not be afraid, for the Lord Jehovah is my strength, and has become my salvation. But I will close, lest I impose upon you. Please pardon my imperfect letter. May the blessings of our God rest and abide with you all; may he speed you on in your good work, is the prayer of the weakest one of all the flock, if I am one at all. Will you pray for me?

Yours in hope of immortality,

M. J. DUNCAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1908.

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JOHN III. 16.

A FRIEND who wishes his name unknown, and who signs himself "Subscriber," from Baltimore, Md., requests that we have something to say regarding the Scripture found in John iii. 16. It reads as follows: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Subscriber" states that he does not make this request to gratify idle curiosity, but because he desires to know what is right and in harmony with the mind of God. This request was made some time ago, and the delay in replying has not arisen out of any indifference to the wish of our friend, but because of many other somewhat pressing matters which seemed to require attention. We suppose that the mind of "Subscriber" has been called to this Scripture because it is one made use of by conditionalists in their contention for a salvation that, in its finality, is based upon the choice and decision of man, and not upon the election or choice of God.

In the first place we would say, it is sure that salvation is not partly of God's work and partly of man's work, partly of God's choice and partly of man's choice, but it is altogether of one or the other. The work and choice of God exclude the work and choice of man, and so the work and choice of man would exclude the work and choice of God when we search for the first and original cause of a sinner's salvation. This Paul declares in Romans xi. 6: "And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." The slightest mixture of our works, according to Paul, would entirely nullify and destroy the very nature of grace, and the entrance of grace at once entirely nullifies and destroys the efficacy of human works. This should be settled at once in our minds. Now the soul that is convinced of this one great truth, viz., that salvation is not of both grace and works, will at once desire to know of which it is, and here the inspired Paul declares, or the Holy Spirit declares through him, that it is not of works, but of grace, for in verse five he declares that it is according to the election of grace.

Now whatever the text in John iii. 16, may mean, it cannot mean anything contrary to Paul's statement as quoted above, and neither does Paul in this language contradict in the slightest degree the language of the dear Savior. Still further, the blessed Redeemer does not in this language contradict his own testimony when he said, John vi. 44, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." And verse 45: "Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." See also verse 65 of chapter vi. Also, "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last

day." We have not here laid special emphasis upon the words of Jesus as compared with the words of Paul because we for a moment attach more importance to them, but because some have arisen in these later days who claim to reject all save the sayings of Jesus as being infallibly true, really denying that Paul or any of the disciples were inspired of God in their teaching and writing. If then any one feels disposed to belittle the words of Paul, as though he might be mistaken as any other man may be, we have quoted from the words of the Master himself, and would say again that he could not contradict his own testimony. If any one charges that he did so contradict himself, we have no argument with him, but will let him settle with the inspired word itself. Such an one does not really believe in Christ as the Son of God, and denies that he is the perfect Savior of sinners. Still further, if any one feels to claim that Paul might be mistaken in his assertions and reasonings, then it might equally as well be that the four evangelists who wrote the four gospels might have been mistaken in what they recorded, and we shall then have no certain word of the Lord to flee to. The Savior was not mistaken in his teachings, and the disciples, including Paul and all the rest, were not mistaken in what they wrote; if we think they were mistaken in anything, we are making God a liar rather than man. O that we may have the mind always to let God be true, as he is revealed in his written word, even though every man be proven a liar.

Now briefly we will call attention especially to the text named by "Subscriber." The word "world" attracts our attention at the first. What does it embrace? It is not claimed, so far as we know, by any one that it means this round globe upon which all creatures crawl, and from the products of which natural life of all kinds is supported. It does not include all beasts, birds, fishes and creeping things; yet the word "world" might include and does include in other connections all these things. Neither does it include every individual of the human race, for the Lord himself excluded Esau from this love, saying, "Esau have I hated." These things, then, the word cannot signify. But what does it mean? In our own mind we have no manner of doubt that here, as often elsewhere, it is used to set forth the truth that He came to redeem souls who were eternally loved of God out of Gentile nations as well as out of the Jews. Our God restricted the revelations of himself and of his will, under the former covenant, to the chosen people, the Jews. Now, and from that time on to the end, he would show salvation to a chosen people, elect vessels of mercy, among the Gentile nations also. In like manner in his first epistle John declares that "he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world." Even under the former covenant there was an elect among the elect, if we may so speak. There were spiritual men among the great mass of the Jews who were carnal and rebellious. These were the election of grace then. Now Gentiles are to be brought into a hearing of the word of the gospel, as the Jews once heard the oracles of God, and now the chosen vessels of mercy everywhere are the subjects of God's love and redemption.

Now it ought to be noticed that the text does not read that whosoever will believe on Him shall be saved, but it is "whosoever believeth." The language is very carefully written, so as to exclude

honor to the saved sinner. He cannot say, I chose to believe and receive the Lord, while others did not, and therefore I am blessed and they are lost. This faith in Jesus is the gift of God, as inspired Paul tells us. The election is seen in this very thing. God gives faith to some, and to others he does not give it. Faith is one of the fruits of the Spirit. If the Spirit be in man faith will be produced; if faith be not in a man it is manifest that he has not the Spirit of God. Here again is election seen. God gives his Holy Spirit to some, and to others it is not given. This text then simply teaches, first, that God loves a people among the Gentiles as well as among the Jews, and bestows upon that people his mercy as revealed in the gospel. Second, it teaches that the saved are those who believe, which belief is the fruit of the Spirit, and not of the choice and will of man. This Scripture is in full harmony with the doctrine of grace, and there is no room in it for human merit or choice.

We leave these reflections with "Subscriber," and with our readers generally. May God bless and sanctify his word to us all. C.

CHURCH ORDER.

A BROTHER writes regarding some questions which he says have arisen as to the proper order to be observed in the churches under some circumstances which have been called to his attention. We most always hesitate when such questions are proposed to us, lest we, in the first place, darken counsel by words without knowledge, and, in the second place, lest we be thought desirous of directing others in matters of which we could at the most know but little; and, in the third place, lest we should be supposed to desire to take sides in any controversy; and, in the fourth place, because it is not well, if trouble does exist in any place, to have it spread abroad through the SIGNS or in any other way. Still we have never felt like withholding such thoughts as we have, and in this case feel the same way. We can but present what seems to us right and proper, and we think as did Paul on one occasion, that we have the mind of Christ.

First. Is it right for a church to receive a member excluded from another church?

It seems clear to us, and is in accord, so far as we know, with the general view of the matter taken by all Old School Baptists, that if a member be excluded from a church which is herself walking in the faith and order of the gospel, and so is held in fellowship with all other such churches, no other church can have any right to receive that one to her fellowship until he is restored to his former membership and regularly dismissed by letter to another church. We do not remember any instance recorded in the New Testament bearing upon this matter directly, though there may be such instances recorded there; but one injunction certainly would apply, and would be violated should another church receive one who had been excluded from his former church, and that is the injunction to be courteous. Certainly it would not be treating the church of his former membership with courtesy to ignore her act in that manner; it would be saying, We, who are at a distance, are better judges of what is right, and of what ought to be done with this member, than you who are at hand and know all the circumstances.

Second. Suppose the excluded member removes to another section and seeks for recognition among churches there, and it seems to his new friends that he is a good

man and one that ought to be again recognized as a member.

In this case it would be right, as it seems to us, to give him a letter stating that now he is walking uprightly, for him to present to the church which has excluded him; but even then there ought to be great care lest there should be the appearance of meddling, which is condemned in the word of God. If the church where this excluded member has moved asks the former church for a statement of the circumstances, it seems to us that courtesy demands that the church of his former membership should with respect and faithfulness reply. Brotherly kindness and consideration for each other would seem to demand this to be done. Still, if it be thought best not to give the information, it would be right to state the reason why, and there might be good reasons why the information should be withheld. Each church ought to remember that all are alike brethren in Christ.

Third. Suppose that the one excluded writes back to the former church, making such confession as seems satisfactory to the church where he is now living, and, after all, the former church refuses to restore him, what then ought to be done?

It seems clear that there is nothing this church where he now lives ought to do. It is their place to say, We have done what we thought was right in approving the letter which this excluded member sent, and we can do nothing more; the matter is entirely with the other church and between them and him whom they have excluded. Even though there be deep sympathy for the excluded man or woman it should be remembered that if indeed he or she has been treated harshly, there is one Judge of all, and he sympathizes with the one who has been harshly treated, and he will bring the truth to light, and we must not seek to take the time of judgment out of his hand. If that brother has done wrong, and is now really sorrowful and repentant over his wrong, in some way and at some time his former church will come to know it, and will, if the Spirit of Christ be in them, be glad indeed to restore him; but until then he and the brethren must wait.

Should the church from which he has been excluded declare nonfellowship for the church which has, in violation of gospel order, received him?

We think not, without loving and long continued efforts to bring the church to return from the ways in which it has wandered. Here also patience should have her perfect work. Nothing ought to be done hurriedly. The church which has excluded this member should not say, We are offended, but should seek to show the other church that the Lord of Zion is offended, and that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than himself," applies to churches as well as to individual members. How true it is that when walking after the flesh one hasty act begets another in return. We ought to be careful lest by sinning ourselves we also cause others to sin. The expression in the gospel, Take heed how ye offend one of these little ones, in the margin of most large Bibles will be seen to read, Take heed lest ye cause one of these little ones to offend. The greatest offense that one can commit against another is to cause that other one himself to offend.

Suppose that the church receiving this member shall be convinced that she has acted unadvisedly, and contrary to the order of the gospel, what shall she do?

It seems, does it not, as though it would be right, first of all, to communicate either by letter or messenger with the former church, confessing this fault, and if the church to which the letter comes be herself in a proper spirit she will gladly hear this message, and be ready to forgive freely, and to pass the matter lovingly by; and more than this, the church should state to the brother thus wrongfully received that they have done wrong in receiving him. If he has the proper spirit he will take blame to himself for seeking to gain membership among them except in the way of gospel order. Thus the church, and the excluded member, and the church from which he has been excluded, and all who know of this, will be impressed more and more with the importance of seeking to do all things according to the pattern. It does not seem to us important by what name the rescinding of their former action be called; the substance must in any event be that the church come together and confess to each other that they have done wrong in this matter, and that the only thing now to do is to acknowledge it and set the brother or sister aside, either by rescinding the act of his reception or by entering upon their church book that as he or she has been received wrongfully, the church now desires to set aside their former act, and that they will no longer regard this brother or sister as a member with them. It may be called rescinding the act of the church, or the exclusion of this man of woman. The good or bad life of such a person meanwhile cannot enter into the matter of which we are speaking. In either case this one thing is right to do. Let such persons seek restoration to the church from which they were at first excluded.

We are all liable to make mistakes; we are all liable to let our human sympathies or our human antipathies run away with us, and they will always carry us away from the plain, simple order of the church when listened to. We cannot write these things as one free from all fault or weakness, for it seems to us that wherein any are weak we are weaker still; but this is our judgment of what is wrong or right in such cases. C.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. T. Rowe.)

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Harford Church, Harford County, Md., to the churches composing the same sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As usual you will expect something from us in the way of a Circular Letter, and if the Lord blesses us we will not disappoint you. We feel to call your attention to 1 John ii. 1, which reads as follows: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

Now, brethren, who of us would not join the apostle John in his admonition to the dear children of God, that they sin not? Have we not learned that it was sin that in the first place separated man from his God? And is it not true that sin is the cause of all the suffering to which man is subject, finally resulting in death? Then who would not advise man not to sin? But the children of God bear about in their bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus, and daily feel the sting of death, which is sin, and they know the truth of the prophet's words to Israel, that thy sins have separated between thee and thy God, and so they are

often crying, "O wretched man that I am!" and are they not continually advising and exhorting themselves and one another not to sin? Yes, they say to each other, Do not do that which grieves the Holy Spirit, brings reproach upon the cause we love and wounds your own conscience; and they are often promising themselves that they will do better in the future than they have been doing in the past, only to find themselves the same miserable sinners to-morrow that they have been to-day, and because of their failure to improve in word, thought and deed they often become discouraged and write bitter lines against themselves. You cannot convince human nature that it is without merit, or is unable to do things acceptable to God by which it shall find peace and salvation, and while thus looking to ourselves and having to confess our sins, because of which we are altogether unworthy of the blessings of God, and having the law of God written in our hearts, which law demands perfect and continual obedience, which we know we have not rendered, and the law pouring its curses upon all who have not continually obeyed in all points, we cry, Justly condemned, and no hope for a poor sinner like me. And now how wicked all our actions appear, and how vile our nature from which all our actions proceed, so that in our despair we cry, Lord, save, I perish. How helpless, how vile and how undeserving the poor sinner now realizes himself to be; but listen to the apostle of Jesus Christ, he not only exhorts you not to sin, the thing which you hate and which has brought condemnation down upon you, but he also writes to you saying, "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father." O what a glorious truth, that a helpless, unworthy sinner has an advocate, one who pleads his cause before a God offended by sin; the plea is the merit of Jesus' blood, and with it the Father is well pleased. Our advocate is Jesus Christ the righteous; he has come in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh; he was made of a woman, and under the law, so that all its requirements fell on him, and being God as well as man, he was equal to the task and fulfilled it to every jot and every tittle. But, says the poor sinner, what is that to me? Why, you were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that you should be holy and without blame before him in love. O what a boon to a poor, vile and miserable sinner; by the obedience of Jesus Christ, his glorious Head, he is made holy and without blame before God. Then the work is perfect, for nothing imperfect can stand before him. He says, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." Wonder of wonders, the black is made white, the guilty is made innocent, the vile made pure. With this material Jesus has built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. And now, saith the Lord, I see not iniquity in Jacob nor perverseness in Israel. Washed in the blood of the Lamb, the bride, the Lamb's wife, stands above the moon (the law), clothed with the sun (Jesus Christ), crowned with the glorious gospel of Jesus as preached by his twelve apostles. But, says one, if all sin is put away from the church of God, and I belong to that number, why do I sin and suffer in my flesh for the same? I am afraid I do not belong to the redeemed family. Ah, dear child, you are of the body of Christ and a member in particular, and do you not hear Paul say, I make up in my body that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ?

Christ in his body (the church) is still suffering for sin; he is continually our advocate with the Father, and he is Jesus Christ the righteous, whose blood cleanseth from all sin, past, present and future, and as the body of Jesus, after it had lain in the earth its appointed time, came forth and ascended to glory, so your vile body shall be changed and fashioned like unto his own glorious body. The end of salvation is the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body, and then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory." Until then Jesus is our advocate with the Father, and makes full satisfaction for all the sin, weakness and imperfections of all his dear people, and his people are sinners as long as they live. As the apostle says, He that saith he is without sin deceiveth himself; there is none that liveth and sinneth not.

Little children, shun every appearance of evil, and may the God who "brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep," assure your hearts that he is your advocate with Him, and that all shall be well when this terrible storm is over, and to his dear name shall be the praise forevermore. Amen.

WILLIAM GRAFTON, Moderator.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

(Written by Samuel T. Cubbage.)

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Salem Church, Philadelphia, Pa., May 27th, 28th and 29th, 1908, to the several churches composing this Association sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is our desire in writing this, our Circular Letter, to be guided by the Spirit of our Master in the setting forth of the truth upon which we, as Old School or Primitive Baptists, trust that our hope of life eternal rests, and upon which we lay claim to the name designating our denomination, knowing that except we be so guided we shall be unable to present Jesus as the life, the way, the author and finisher of our faith, and what we may write will be but error, and therefore unworthy of acceptance and adoption as our Circular Letter.

It has often been said concerning our form and order of worship that we should have a "Thus saith the Lord" for that which we do; and in organizing a stated number of our churches as an "association," and in our correspondence with other associations, we may well ask if we have a "Thus saith the Lord" for such a custom, either directly or indirectly. If not, the Lord is not in it; as one of old said concerning the followers of Jesus at that time, "For if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought. But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God." We are admonished to "hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) and let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." Again, the apostle Paul said, "For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ." Jesus has also said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them;" and many are the times that we have seen this declaration fulfilled at these annual meetings, in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon

our ministering brethren, in the preaching of the gospel to the comfort and edification of all present, who were in the spirit and with us in spirit, rejoicing and beholding our order, which order is but the manifest love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us, as shown in our worship of his great and holy name. Thus, from the foregoing, coupled with our experience in the past, we feel that our custom of meeting as an association once a year is, at least, not inconsistent, nor contrary to order, which is an abiding in the love of God and a thorough devotion to the cause of our Lord and Master; and nothing that is done, either by the church or an individual member, not actuated by love and an interest in the welfare of Zion, has any claim to what has been spoken of as "gospel order," a term which has been instituted by man. But if it means anything it means worship of God in spirit and in truth, and the observance of the ordinances of the church, as instituted by, and under the direction and teaching of our Lord and Master. But we should not get confused on the difference between gospel order and order or regularity in church government and the attendance to business matters. The apostle said, "Let all things be done decently and in order." That is, let all be done in love. Differences of opinion may arise and be expressed, and our way of doing things may be awkward and bungling, but charity covereth a multitude of sins, and charity hideth a brother's faults, and so if in these matters we are actuated by love to God and to our brethren, instead of a desire for the emulation of the flesh, and if the teaching of the Spirit be our guide we cannot go far astray, nor into a state of confusion. But in the providence of God the teaching of the Spirit is not always our guide, else there would be no such experience of the churches as is set forth in the message sent to them by the servant John, who said, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna," &c. To each one of the seven churches the Lord sent a message, pronouncing either his favor or his disfavor upon them, according to the manifestation of their guidance by the Spirit of Jesus or by the spirit of man. In all these congregations, except at Philadelphia, the Lord had somewhat against them. According to the reading of the testimony may we not conclude that the experience of these seven churches forms one chain of experience through which the church of God must pass in time, in the gospel day? May we not also see this experience existing in the churches to-day? one church or congregation being in the condition as then found at Ephesus, another at Smyrna, and another at Thyatira, and so on throughout the whole experience. We may all well feel a desire for our respective churches to be in the Philadelphia state, but some of us, no doubt, are members of churches in the state of experience found in some of the others, or it may be that the whole seven churches in Asia are at this association represented; if so, our beloved John is here also with a message from on high, and let us who may be members of churches upon which God hath by the mouth of his servant spoken his fatherly disapproval, enlist our prayers, let us all supplicate at the throne of grace for an abiding in our former love, and in an ex-

perience that shall manifest a steadfastness of faith in Christ and of love to God, that brotherly love may continue, for Jesus hath said, "That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." We might go on looking for evidence of the smiling approval of our heavenly Father, but it is enough to realize that he fulfills his promise by his Son, that "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Since the passing of the time that the fathers worshiped in the mountains and at Jerusalem there is no particular time or place set forth in the Scripture at which we shall worship, other than as Jesus said, Ye shall worship God in spirit and in truth. This is any time or at any place when or where one of God's people may so worship him, whether it be alone at the midnight hour, or whether two or three are gathered together at an appointment of the church at a specified place on Sunday, or at a brother's or sister's house through the week, or even at the appointment of this association, the test of the worship is, is it "in spirit and in truth"? and the evidence is in "the Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." But "believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God." So God's ministers when in the Spirit on the Lord's day confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, and will know nothing but Christ and him crucified, which together with the resurrection form the foundation of our hope of life eternal.

As to our right to be called Old School or Primitive Baptists, we have but to go to the record of the Word to find that one of God's chosen vessels of mercy, who filled a special mission in the manifestation of his salvation, was called John the Baptist; "Baptist" being added because he baptized with water. Thus there can be no question about our right to the name, and we believe that we are the kind of Baptists that lived in the days of John, and of our Lord and Master, and of Philip, who baptized the eunuch, both going down into the water and coming up out of the water, representing the burial with Christ into death and of being raised again to walk in newness of life, that we should no longer live in sin and disobedience, but should live unto God, manifesting the same as disciples and followers of Jesus. Baptism is also an ordinance by which we must be received into the membership of the church, with all her privileges. Our Savior spoke of another baptism, however, when James and John asked to sit one on his right hand and the other on his left hand in his glory. "Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask. Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" This baptism, which was of the Holy Ghost, required the crucifixion, burial and resurrection of our Savior, who died for our sins and was raised again for our justification; and just as his death carried with it a crucifixion, a burial and a resurrection, so our baptism by the Holy Spirit of God also carries us through

the same in experience; that is, a crucifixion or killing to the love of things of the world (sin), and a complete overwhelming in godly sorrow for sin (burial), and a raising again from this condition to newness of life, into the joys of a sinner saved by grace (resurrection), and here is the whole experience of God's people set forth. Hence in conformity to all this the apostle said, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."

B. F. COULTER, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

NOTICE.

Allow me to say that I have collected nearly 500 sketches for proposed Book-Biographies of Primitive Baptist Ministers of U. S. Many other sketches have been promised. Please send them on, brethren. If only a few words about life, labors in ministry, age, &c., that will do, but give all the information you wish. I will rearrange for publication. Now please do not delay. There is not a more worthy, self-sacrificing and honorable body of men than the ministry of the Primitive or Old School Baptist Church. A book of this character will be interesting and useful, as well as commemorative of their memory. The work will have an appendix containing much useful and valuable information, in brief form, gleaned from the best authorities. This alone may be worth the price of the book to you, which will be between one and two dollars; cannot name exact price yet, it depends upon size, number of photos, binding, &c., and the orders I receive. The larger the edition the cheaper the book. Now if you would like to help commemorate the memory of these "Soldiers of the Cross," then send me your order for one or more copies. Do not delay, but tell me how you feel about the matter. It will cost me about a thousand dollars, and if the Baptists and their friends do not want it I cannot afford to publish. Kindly write me.

R. H. PITTMAN.

LURAY, Va.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at the home of the bride's parents, in Albany, N. Y., May 25th, 1908, Charles Henry Schraeder and Miss Mae Catherine Schade.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Ruth Adamson, our sister in Christ, died March 8th, 1908, at 3 o'clock p. m., in Washington, D. C., in a hospital to which she had gone some weeks previous for treatment. We have not learned her age, but it was something over 70 years. We had known this dear sister for about forty years, and for many years previous to our leaving Maryland we saw her frequently. We have known of no one who loved the truth of God more than she manifested in all her walk and daily conversation. She was well known among the friends in Washington, D. C., and among some of the churches of the Corresponding Meeting of Virginia. All who were spiritual could walk in fellowship with her in one common experience, one common hope and in mutual esteem. We are among those who sorrow that we shall see her face on earth no more; but how joyful the glorious hope that we are one in Christ, and that we shall finally dwell with him in heaven. Her pastor, Elder Rowe, writes us as follows concerning her life, death and burial:

"I send you a letter written by our dear sister Ruth Adamson while at the hospital. It was my privilege to know sister Adamson for nine years, and I can truly say it was a pleasure to know her, for she was spiritually minded indeed. It would, I am sure, have been a still greater pleasure to her, and to those she loved for Jesus' sake, had she not been so greatly afflicted with deafness, especially in her latter years. She became so deaf that she could not hear preaching at all. But notwithstanding this affliction she came to her meetings when able to do so, and most always had a cheerful expression on her face. Some of the brethren would point out the hymns to her, also the text that was read, and she used to say this helped her, as she felt that she knew something of what was being said. She passed from this life, I have no doubt, to a higher and holier one. March 10th I spoke upon the occasion of her funeral, treating upon the blessed and comforting doctrine of the resurrection of the dead; after which all that was mortal was laid in Oak Hill Cemetery, there to remain until the resurrection day, which Jesus said was the last day."

ALSO,

Catherine Hixson, our dear sister in Christ, departed this life April 19th, 1908, aged 70 years, 2 months and 4 days. She was the daughter of Stout and Eliza A. Hunt. She was married to John W. Hixson, Jan. 26th, 1859; was baptized by Elder Philander Hartwell in the fellowship of the church at Hopewell, in September, 1861. She was the eldest of six children, and leaves two brothers: Garrett S. and

George W. Hunt, and one sister, Mary A. Chamberlain, also two children, William S. Hixson and Mary J. Ege, who deeply feel the loss of their mother.

The above contains the items which belong to the outward life of our deceased sister, but we feel that it is right that something should be said of her life in connection with the church of God as it was known by her kindred in Christ to the praise of the grace of God which reigned in her. Of her it could be said most truthfully that she was steadfast in her faith, and that she held fast the profession of her faith without wavering. She walked in the confidence of her brethren continually from the first of her connection with them in church relationship. We always knew where to find her, for she was unwavering in her adherence to the truth. She walked quietly, humbly and without effort at display before us all. Her heart and hand were open to all the calls that must necessarily be made upon those who are united together in church relationship. She was not much of a talker, but lived so that her life spoke for her. This we do not say to her praise, only as she thus made manifest the grace of God that lived in her. She was in feeble health for something more than a year before the end came, but endured what of suffering was hers patiently, and even cheerfully, and in that time when it was possible she was to be seen in her place in the sanctuary. How great is the loss when such an one is called away from the church.

The funeral services were held on Thursday, April 23rd, prayer being offered at the home of her daughter, where she had spent the last few months of her life, and the full service at the meeting-house in Hopewell. The subject presented by the writer upon the occasion was that found in 2 Cor. iv. 13, 14; after which all that was mortal was laid to rest in the cemetery adjoining. Our sister lived and died in hope of the resurrection of the dead.

We can but express our feeling of sympathy for the bereaved family in their sore loss. May the blessed Lord be their comfort and stay. C.

SISTER **Maria Gavitt** departed this life May 12th, 1908, at the age of 65 years. Her maiden name was Townsend. She was married to Rufus Gavitt; to them four children were born, three sons and one daughter, of whom three are still living: Arthur, Charles and Mrs. Cornelius Ackerly, of Margaretville, N. Y. Sister Gavitt united with the Middletown Church, in the town of Middletown, Delaware Co., N. Y., Dec. 22nd, 1887, and was baptized by the late Elder J. D. Hubbell. Her life had been an exemplary one; it can be said of her the life she lived was by the faith of the Son of God, who loved her and gave himself for her. She was very patient during her last sickness, and felt that all would be well. She left this world of trouble as one falling asleep, without a struggle, passing peacefully away. Jesus can make a dying bed feel soft as downy pillows are.

Her funeral was held from the home of her daughter, Mrs. Cornelius Ackerly, Margaretville, N. Y., and was largely attended by friends and relatives. The writer conducted the services, and tried to speak to the comfort of all who mourn.

May the husband and children be reconciled to the will of our God, who doeth all things well, and may they feel that their loss is her gain.

J. B. SLAUSON.

POETRY.

A TRIBUTE OF RESPECT TO ELDER WILLIAM MARTIN.

(By his daughter, Elizabeth Smith.)

ANOTHER soldier's work is done,
The battle fought, the victory won;
His troubles are forever o'er,
His body racked by pain no more.

His voice no more our ears will greet;
With sadness view the vacant seat,
Which he no more can ever fill,
His body lying cold and still.

His counsel we no more will hear,
And oft is shed the briny tear
Which will oft unbidden start,
And brings a sigh from every heart.

How oft we've seen him fill his place,
And preach to sinner's saved by grace,
Who fell with Adam in the fall,
And saved by grace, if saved at all.

Why do we sigh and grieve and mourn?
Why are our hearts with anguish torn?
His fettered soul has found release,
And soared to realms of joy and peace.

His body molders in the ground
Until the last loud trumpets sound,
Then in the Savior's image rise,
And meet King Jesus in the skies.

O may we hear the joyful sound,
Awake, ye nations underground;
Arise and view your Savior's face,
And sing the song, Redeemed by grace.

O happy, happy, happy day,
When saints shall soar from earth away,
To that bright world, with Jesus dwell,
Nor ever hear the sad farewell.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

W. H. Wicks, Pa., $1.00; J. F. Oliver, Va., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Siloam Association of Oregon and Washington will be held this year at Dayton, Wash., with Harmony Church, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in June, at 10 o'clock, and continuing over Sunday. Those coming by railroad come so as to get here on Thursday before.

B. S. PATE.

THE yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held, the Lord willing, in the schoolhouse in the township of Brooke, Lambton County, Ontario, five miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1908, and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

THE seventy-seventh annual meeting of the Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will be held this year, the Lord willing, with Union Church, at the residence of Deacon B. F. Myers, one-half mile from Colchester, McDonough Co., Ill., on September 4th, 5th and 6th, 1908. Colchester is situated on the Quincy Branch of the C., B. & Q. R. R. All trains will be met on Friday and Saturday. Brother Myers requests that as many as can conveniently, to come by rail. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially our ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

THERE are a few Old School Baptists in Riverside, Cal., and they have meeting the first and third Sundays in each month, at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

W. D. BALL.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

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EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

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11:00 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 76. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1908. NO. 13.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SAVED AND CALLED.

TO-NIGHT I shall read the ninth verse of the first chapter of second Timothy: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

The salvation of sinners ought to be of great interest to all the human family. I want to notice the difference between religious people on the subject of salvation. When I speak of religious people I do not mean that everybody who is religious has the religion of the Lord Jesus. It is a well known fact to most people of the civilized nations that according to history man has always been religious. We might say that there are many religions, yet there are really but two: one is the true, which is pure and undefiled, the other is false. I want to tell you to-night of things that you have heard at revival meetings. I have been at revival meetings, and speak from personal knowledge. Doubtless you have heard preachers say at those meetings: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve," without giving the connection. This phrase is abstracted from its dependent clauses, and we cannot get its meaning without the context. Revivalists say that you can choose to serve God or the devil; that this passage of Scripture teaches the doctrine of the freedom of man's will. That the Scriptures may speak for themselves, let us turn to the twenty-fourth chapter of Joshua, the only place where this language occurs. Joshua was speaking to the children of Israel, hear him: "If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." We positively know that this Scripture does not teach that the children of Israel or anybody else can make a choice between God and the devil at pleasure, but it does teach that worldly religionists, who do not worship God in spirit, nor know how to worship the true and living God, can choose between the different false ways. It made no difference with Joshua which false god those Israelites worshiped, if they could not worship the true God;

with him one false god was just as good as another. Why do preachers at revivals, and on other occasions when they are trying to incite people to join their churches, so misrepresent the Scriptures? Another Scripture I shall name, which no doubt you all have heard at revival meetings: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," and sometimes they quote it your own soul's salvation. In using this extract from the exhortation of the apostle Paul as he wrote to the saints at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons, they have diverted it from its true meaning by not giving the other portions of Scripture that show the force of language. The writer follows up this declaration closely by giving the reason why they should work out their own salvation. Now notice carefully what follows: "For [meaning because, a very good reason,] it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." This clearly proves that salvation does not depend upon creature work. The will and the do is of the Lord; he should have all the praise. I have often been asked the question by preachers and many others, Are you saved? My answer has been, I hope that Jesus saved me when his blood was shed for the sins of his people. A great many people reverse the order of the Scriptures in regard to the saving and calling; they claim that this Bible which I hold in my hand contains the call of God to every man of Adam's race. The Scriptures are the testimony of the Word, and testify of God's truth, yet it does not make the call to dead sinners; the Word alone exercises the power to call sinners unto himself. Some say that the call precedes salvation, but the apostle declares that they are saved before they are called. This agrees with the teaching of other portions of Scripture. Some say that after they are called and saved that they have perfected themselves by righteous living, in doing good, keeping the law, praying often, until they have become sanctified, after which they do not commit any sin whatever. I met a man once in the month of August, who said to me: "Sir, since the 23rd of last April I have not committed any sin; on that day I was sanctified." My reply to him was that he was better than the apostle Paul ever was while he was on earth, for he did not claim to be above sinning. God's order about things is always the reverse of man's. The Scriptures declare that God's people are "sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." You see that the "holy calling" of God manifests to poor sinners that they have been saved a long time ago, with an everlasting salvation. This knowledge made known to them causes them to rejoice with joy unspeakable. The prophet says of the Savior: "He bare them, and carried them all the days of old." Yes, hundreds of years before he was manifested in the flesh to put away their sins by the shedding of his own blood. That we had no power to accomplish that salvation, or to aid in any way whatever, is evident. The prophet speaks of salvation as being appointed of God for walls and for bulwarks. Salvation is indeed a strong fortress for all who trust in Him. Especially is this true to the conscience of all believers in this gospel day. The age of its appointment and its accomplishment is great compared to our short mortal life. It makes the heart glad to know that these things are revealed unto us by his Spirit. That there is only one way of salvation for sinners, is an established truth; that way is not through the work

of them who are saved, but through the work of the Savior. He is rightly called the Savior, because he saves. I shall refer you to the language of Paul to Titus, as proof of the way of salvation and the manner of its accomplishment: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Savior." This is good and plain proof, so plain that any person ought to be able to understand, yet many will not take it as proof. The way of salvation is through mercy, the mercy of God, and not through our works or because of our works. This fulfills the prophecy of the psalmist, who calls "my Lord" "the sure mercies of David." He also says, "I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever." You must know if salvation is by the mercy of God, it cannot be by the works of the creature under any law or rule that can be given to him; in fact, mercy is not an attendant or a belonging to any law or rule.

The word "regeneration" occurs but twice in the Bible. There is a great difference among Bible readers with regard to the meaning of the word. Jesus uses the word once to his disciples, and speaks about them following him in the regeneration. This use of the word by our Lord does not detract from the meaning which the apostle has placed on it in his one use of it. You see that believers have been saved by God's mercy; that is the way. What is the method of cleansing sinners in this holy way of God? They are cleansed or purified "by the washing of regeneration." This washing could not be accomplished except by a great sacrifice, the greatest sacrifice that was ever known on the earth, and the like shall never be again, "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." I think Jesus had reference to this awful time in his experience on earth when he said to his disciples, "But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" Another rendering of this passage is, How am I pained till it be accomplished. This baptism was in the future, it is evident, because this language was used long after he had been baptized in the river Jordan. It could not refer to water or christian baptism, but must refer to some overwhelming sorrow, for he could not be free from pain till it was accomplished. This baptism was of great importance, so important that the Savior prayed for it to pass from him, yet he was willing to be submissive to the Father's will. This baptism into death was the washing of regeneration, the cleansing of his people from their sins. They are saved according to God's mercy, and by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. If we apply this passage to mean the experience of the saints, how can it be said of them that the Holy Ghost is renewed? This means that the Holy Ghost comes again, signifies that it has been withdrawn. This cannot be applicable to a sinner who has just received the first-fruits of the Spirit. When did they have access to the Holy Ghost and knew it not? Can it be said of them when they are born again that the Holy Ghost has come again to them? I think not, but it can appropriately be applied to Jesus in his resurrection; he was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. The washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost was shed abundantly on us through Jesus Christ our Savior. The words, "our

Savior," are very important in this connection, because salvation is the important work; there can be no salvation without the Savior. The call of God, which is a holy call, makes known to the poor soul that his salvation was accomplished by his Savior before he was born to the knowledge of it. This call is a holy calling, because it proceeds from God, who is holy. God's people are not saved according to their works, neither are they called according to their works, but they are both saved and called according to God's own purpose and grace, which purpose and grace were given them in Christ Jesus before the world began.

Dear brethren editors, I have sketched a portion of a discourse delivered about two weeks ago, in a neighborhood sixteen miles from here, where an Old School Baptist had never preached before. The language is not verbatim, but the general tenor of the subject is the same. In meditating on what I had said I was led to write some of the things spoken at that time. If you think it worthy a place in the SIGNS you can use it.

As ever, in hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

HELENA, Okla., April 24, 1908.

FARMINGTON, Ill., March 26, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—For some reason I am tempted to write to you, if you can bear with me this one more time. I feel as though I would like to speak to all the dear readers of the old SIGNS once more before I go hence. I want to tell them how dearly I love them, although many of them I have never seen; but I feel that we have all been taught by the heavenly Teacher, having been born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, that liveth and abideth forever, and this incorruptible seed cannot sin. "O for such love let rocks and hills their lasting silence break." This love has been bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God. "And it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." And we shall be satisfied when we awake with his likeness.

My dear brother, I have been sorely afflicted this winter, both in body and mind. I have had rheumatism, and during this shut in affliction I have done lots of reading in the old volumes of the SIGNS, from the seventies up. How sweetly those dear old saints speak; though many of them are dead, still they speak to us; and many dear living ones have written often in days past, and I took much comfort in reading after them all. I put in many lonely, wakeful nights, and my mind travels in sweet fellowship for you all.

I have a letter from a dear sister in Christ that is two years old, and I feel like sending it to you. I have read many of her loving letters in the SIGNS in years past, and have found much comfort in them. Had I the gift that this dear sister has I would delight in writing. I hope that she may write oftener.

Dear brother Chick, there is a portion of Scripture which has been resting upon my mind for some time, and I will in my weak way give my views concerning it. It might seem that there is a contradiction by the same inspired writer, but that I cannot believe. Our own daily experience might also appear contradictory, for we all feel to be poor sinners, and we learn daily, as the apostle said, "I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." The apostle declares, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in

him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." I verily believe, and it is according to the Scripture, that he who is born of God has Christ formed in him the hope of glory, and it would be as possible for Christ himself to sin as for the new man in Christ to do so. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." In the flesh is where sin dwells, not in the new man. Here is the old and the new; here is manifested the children of God and the children of the devil. Before we were born of the Spirit we were in the flesh, but if Christ dwells in us we are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. When born of God we experience a holy birth, a holy seed, which cannot sin. Christ is the Son of God, and if we be born of God we are bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh. In him there is no sin, but our flesh is all sin, and death is the result of sin. Sinful flesh will never reach heaven, but this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality; but while in the flesh there is, as it were, the company of two armies; one is pure and holy and is born of God and cannot sin, while the other is carnal, sold under sin.

Yours in love and hope,

E. D. VARNES.

MACOMB, Ill., August 21, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER VARNES:—After reading your good letter in the SIGNS I have had a strong desire to write to you, but I am not sure whether the desire is prompted by the right spirit or not. I feel to be sinful, weak and ignorant, and altogether unworthy to write to one of God's children, especially to one whom I esteem so highly for the truth's sake, so I hope you will excuse me for writing. I know I cannot say anything to comfort or encourage one who is so strong in the faith and in the knowledge of the truth, and a tried and faithful soldier of the cross of Christ, but I wish you to know how much comfort and consolation your letter was to me and others. You said you felt more like burning than sending your letter, but how glad I am you did not do the former, for I read it with tears flowing down my cheeks, for O, it touched my heart and was in full fellowship with my feelings, telling them much better than I can myself. If I know anything of the christian warfare, you told it in your letter, for my time is mostly spent in darkness, and I travel much of the time in the valley, have many doubts and fears, and I, like you, must daily cry, Lord, have mercy upon me; be merciful to me, a sinner. I feel compelled to do this, yet often feel that my cries and complaints are unheard. Sometimes I almost give up and think His mercies clean gone forever. Why is it we often have a stronger fellowship for those who travel in darkness, than for others who seem to dwell on the mount and praise seems ever on their lips? I do not know, for praise is comely, and all praise is due to him who hath brought us to see our vileness and given us a hope in his name, which we cannot lay by, though ofttimes it seems so small. But, my dear brother, to be brought into fellowship with Christ's sufferings his children must also suffer; not only must they suffer in body, but in spirit, be brought low, be made to see and feel the weight of sin in their mortal bodies, and the more light they have the more hateful their sins appear, for if there were no light we could not see our sins. So with this light of the knowledge of the glory of God we view our guilt and wretchedness, and our guilty distance from him, and we also see our

utter inability to do any good thing, and we cannot even do the things we would, and sin is mixed with all we do. When we are brought thus low we are made to cry for help, for we feel to be lost. The buffetings of Satan (the thorn in the flesh) are ever with us, tempting us, as we often feel, beyond what we are able to bear. When in this dark place we know that if we are ever saved it will not be by our good works, for we cannot do good. Here is where grace comes in. Our salvation is all of grace, for have we not tried our works and found them a failure? Grace shows us our need of a Physician, and grace is the remedy that cures the sin-sick soul; it is the all-sufficient remedy for all our distresses. Sister Shields and sister Randolph, my two natural sisters as well as spiritual, both spoke of your good letter, sister Shields saying that it was worth a hundred sermons such as the evangelist Sunday preached; yes, because your letter was of grace, which saves poor, lost sinners, while his was man's works, wherein is no salvation and which must fall to the ground. I am sure you referred to William A. Sunday in your letter. I think you are right in your opinion of such meetings, and could you have been in Macomb during the time he was here I am sure you would have been horrified at the great mockery and blasphemy then indulged in. Perhaps I am too severe, too harsh, but I considered it idolatry, as I told some. Although I only heard him once during the four weeks, yet we took the daily paper with his sermons of the day and night before in it, and not much else was talked of at the time. My own family went quite often. I had no desire to go and hear such blasphemy, but after many persuaded me I went. I never want to hear him again. No language was too rough for him to use, and he made himself almost equal with God, saying he was there for the salvation of souls, and if they did not give money to help him and the Lord he could not save them. It seemed the people went almost wild over him. Part of the time business was nearly suspended, and the streets blocked with people from twenty and twenty-five miles away. It was estimated that fourteen thousand people outside of town were there one day. The tabernacle held between three and four thousand, and would be packed and thousands turned away. He received nearly seventeen hundred converts (your estimate was too low) and raised nearly seven thousand dollars. He received $3,100, and the rest went to his assistant, the musician and the tabernacle. Everything was carried on in a business way, banners were tacked all around with inscriptions, "Macomb for Christ," &c. The last meeting was called "Sunday's day," and they took up a "free will offering" for him. Thirty ushers went through the crowd, begging, screaming and almost forcing, until after an hour's work they raised $3,100 at the one time. My son said it was like a great auction, women fainted and great excitement prevailed. There never was such a time here, and many old drunkards, gamblers, &c., were among the converts. Nearly everybody thinks he was a great man, and did much good, but I think he was a deceiver and has deceived the people. When Old Baptists would say a word against these things they would consider us as bad as heathens, but I always told them what I thought of such things, saying there is no authority in the Scriptures for such proceedings.

I must draw this letter to a close. I know not why I have written all this,

only your allusion to the man brought it all to my mind. We were much disappointed in not seeing you and family at Greenbush. This was the only time I have been there since last October. My health has not been good. I hope to see you all at the association. Give my love to sister Varnes; tell her this is for her, too, if there is any comfort in it. Also remember me to sister Mamie. I will not ask you to write, as this is not worthy an answer.

With christian love, your sister in the faith,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

[OUR sister has well characterized the above work as blasphemy. What may not be blasphemy is irreverence, and all is falsehood from first to last, and his converts are twofold more the children of hell than himself, as Jesus testified of those in the days of his flesh, who in like manner compassed the earth to make proselytes. It is sad indeed to witness such delusion: men being led to think that such excitement is the religion of Christ. But why be surprised? we are warned of these things in the word of God: "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." The whole testimony and work of such men is to the exaltation of men, and the glory of God is not there.—C.]

GROVER, Pa., March 5, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As it is time for me to renew my subscription I will tell you a portion of my early experience, which I wrote out about thirty years ago and laid aside, thinking it of no value for publication; but lately it has been on my mind to copy it and send it to you, and I leave it to your better judgment whether it would be of interest to any of the readers. Please do not let it crowd out better matter. When a child I used to think a great deal about being a christian. My father was an Old School Baptist, and always took the SIGNS, and my mother used to have me read it to her while she would be sewing, as I was a very good reader when seven years old. In winter I could not go to school in very cold weather, and thus I became familiar with their sentiments when very young. At one time while witnessing the ordinance of baptism by Elder Hewitt, it seemed to me a very solemn ceremony, and I had a great desire to follow the Savior in the ordinance. I wished they were not so particular about experience and would take children into the church. I thought I could not tell any experience such as I had read in the SIGNS or heard others tell. While the Elder was preaching, my mind was so much exercised I could not help weeping, but fearing some one would notice me I checked my thoughts as far as possible, and concluded I must wait until I was older. Soon after this the Methodists held a revival meeting near our place, and nearly all my schoolmates went forward to the anxious bench. One day while thinking the matter over I concluded to go forward the next evening, but when the time came their proceedings seemed to me more excitement than religion. I began to think I was as good as they, for I prayed and did other things which they taught were requisite in living a christian. One evening as I was about to kneel in prayer these words came to my mind, The prayer of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord. I dared not kneel in prayer with those words sounding in my ears; my own works seemed as filthy rags, and I felt I had no righteousness to plead. At the

age of sixteen I began teaching, and my mind being thus occupied, and being away from home most of the time and among different denominations, it became a great query to me how all the different denominations could claim to base their beliefs on the Bible, for I found even the Catholic's Bible was nearly like our own. I then began to study the Bible more thoroughly, and compare it with what I heard and read of the different creeds, but ever with the same conclusion, I felt I must be born again, and that "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Still I could not see how God could be just in saving one and not another, and I would sometimes say I could never believe in such a God as that, and yet I could not give up and believe the Bible was all a myth. It seemed to me that so much of it was true in nature that I became more and more impressed with the great truths contained therein, and gradually came to think it very comforting to the christian, but how to become a christian was my great trouble; I could find no place of repentance. I had always been a moral child from my youth up; I had always believed, or nearly always, as I still thought the Bible taught, and I seemed to have no power to repent, although I felt the need of the Savior and could not help crying to God for mercy. These words came to me:

"And if my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well."

I felt I was in the hand of a just God, and all power was in his hand, and none could resist his will. A cloud seemed to settle upon my mind which I knew no earthly hand could remove. At one time while lying on a sick bed I seemed to see the river of the water of life flowing from the throne of God, but I could not drink, and upon awaking to consciousness I felt I might never drink of that blessed river. Thus about three years passed. I attended the different meetings, and when possible the Old School Baptist as usual, and heard everything to comfort the christian, but not for me. At one time while hearing one tell his experience it seemed to give me a little hope that I might some day know what it was to say my sins were washed away in Jesus' blood. Some time after, as I opened the Bible my eyes rested on the words, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." I thought, If I only could take those words to mean me I would be very happy and would gladly obey. Not long after this my trembling heart was raised to God in the Lord's prayer, and I was enabled to say, My Father which art in heaven, and some time afterward my mind was very much comforted by a sermon from Elder Durand, of God's people wandering alone in a solitary way, finding no city to dwell in. (Psalms cvii. 4.) The Lord led me forth by the right way, and I found a city of habitation.

Yours in christian love,

NANCY M. OWEN.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March, 1908.

MRS. LIZZIE SHEPPARD—DEAR SISTER:—Yours received this morning, and I was very glad to see your handwriting, and also enjoyed the letter, and when I sat down this afternoon and read it over again it contained a message for me that I did not get this morning. I took up the Bible to look for the words you had quoted and enjoyed, and I was interested in reading not only them, but the whole chapter, and also the twelfth chapter of John. The words you mentioned are in

John xiv. 27: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." If we should look to find what this peace is, would we know more than to look in our own experience when all within has been peace, a sweetness that we find no words to fully express? All without may be trouble; there may be those about us who trouble us and worry us, or there may be conversation going on which we would rather not hear, some subject may be discussed that only harrasses the mind, death may be in our midst, some fearful calamity may have aroused the minds of our community; does any of it disturb this peace? No; at such a time this peace is in the heart, and nothing disturbs us; we feel that the Lord is near and can do all things for us, and we are not troubled, neither are we afraid. As I read I found these words were spoken by Jesus to comfort his disciples. The disciples could not comprehend the words of Jesus; they could not understand his going from them and the Comforter coming to them, and when he told them, "I go to prepare a place for you," Thomas said unto him, "We know not whither thou goest." Often I have thought, I do not see how those who were with Jesus on earth were so blinded to his being the Christ, the Son of God, for he certainly did tell them plainly. In one place he said to them, "And now I have told you before it is come to pass, that when it is come to pass, ye might believe." "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." It was all in accordance with the will of the Father. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." This verse is rich to me; I heard Elder Grafton preach from it one time, and it was so fruitful that I do not think I can ever forget it. He spoke so forcefully of the manner of the love. And as we think of it does not the manner of the love come before us differently from any other love? See Romans viii. 35: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" Then verse 38: "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." What love this is that nothing can change or cause to waver. Can we say this of any flesh? No. I am reminded of myself, how soon a little thing will turn me. O how faithless I am. I do not dare look at myself when writing of these glorious things, for when I look within I find fears and doubts of myself. I know I can do nothing; I cannot love if I hate; only the one can reign at a time. How I do wish hate would never reign. My reading this afternoon has been with an assurance that only as the Lord opens can we enter in and partake of these glorious truths. Only a short time ago I read these chapters with no special enjoyment of them, and do not remember of having one lingering thought about any of it, but I feel that I can never forget the reading of them this time. Blessed truth; if we do not see it, or if we do, it stands just the same, and nothing can change it, nothing can erase it. Dear sister, you are of such a very different mind from myself; it does not seem to me you ever

doubt as I do. I look at you this way: you read and you understand that it is true, it is the word of God, and nothing can change it; that is impressed on your mind and you never doubt it; and so is your life. I read it, as this afternoon, and feel I will always know how that is, and maybe before the going down of the sun I will begin to doubt the word of the Lord. If I only had strength enough to tell Satan to get behind me, but no, he seems continually by my side to cross my happiness and bring me woe, and I do not dare raise my voice and say, God predestinated it; but instead, I know it is in my flesh that this evil dwells, and I seem powerless to turn from its wiles.

I hope there may be a crumb in this for you as there was in your letter for me.

With love to you,

MARY HILL TERRY.

RATON, N. M., March 19, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—We received a letter from sister L. J. Dawson, of Hayden, Colo., a short time ago, and the friends who have read it want to see it in the SIGNS, that others may read it. I have erased the latter part, which contains simply friendly items.

Your sister,

ELIZABETH BOGGS.

HAYDEN, Colo., Feb. 20, 1908.

ELDER G. M. FETTER—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—It has been on my mind for some days to write you a few lines, and I hope you will bear with my many infirmities for a few moments, and when you have read this if you find no comfort just commit it to the flames. I am not satisfied that I should bother you any way, but sometimes our minds seem relieved if we can but tell to others a few of our thoughts. I can only do so with the pen, and I do not wield the pen of a ready writer, therefore I cannot give my thoughts as I would wish. I have been reading the different views upon God's foreordination and foreknowledge, and my mind is not at rest, many thoughts come welling up. Could the weak mind of man reach out and view eternity I do believe we would put our hands upon our mouths in the dust and cry aloud for mercy. The great almighty God, who fills immensity. We cannot even think what that is, much less dare to question what he did and does. Before the earth was formed the plan of salvation was made and the sacrifice prepared. John saw it when on the isle of Patmos. (Rev. xiii.) The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Others saw and wrote of it, so that we have the testimony in holy writ of both prophets and apostles. If there was to be no sinner, then why was there a sacrifice prepared before man was made? Everything was made before man; vanity was there, and the creature was made subject not to grace, but to vanity. He was made of the earth, therefore was a part of it, and the dust must claim its own. The serpent was there in the garden; man was there, and at ease, for his surroundings were good to behold; but the Lord had given him a law, and by the transgression of that law death came to man. There to me is the mystery, and I do not think we should say any one is the author of sin, for it came by transgression, and man being the transgressor, the sin must needs lay at his door. But Paul says the woman "was in the transgression," and "Adam was not deceived," but followed his wife; for he said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh. * * * Therefore shall a man leave his father and his

mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." All this was of the flesh, which must needs come first; sin must come, and then the sacrifice, and it must be a perfect sacrifice. Where could it be found? Not in the earth, for God cursed the earth for man's sake, and all that dwelt thereon was under the curse, for all came from the earth. Cain thought to bring a sacrifice from the production of the ground, but it was not acceptable to the Lord. While he raised up Pharaoh for one purpose and Moses for another, and made everything that was made, even the wicked for the day of evil, yet he had before declared the end from the beginning, and had remembered his people long before they were born, and in due time sent the perfect Sacrifice, even his only begotten Son, to die the ignominious death of the cross to save them from their sins. Was ever love so great? Can the mind of man grasp the meaning of such love? There is the great mystery. Man by transgression had become lost in the maze of sin and polluted, and nothing that he could do could cleanse him; turn where he would guilt stared him in the face, and he was unclean from his head to the sole of his foot. He is conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity, the very earth cursed for his sake; but God in his infinite wisdom had before time fixed the bounds of man's habitation and made the way for his escape; not possible, but sure, fixed, determined, steadfast, "having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."

I will not intrude on your time longer, for I fear lest I weary you, but I felt I must write, and it seemed to my mind that I desired to write to you. If you find any comfort in reading this you may let others read it, but if not, consign it to the flames; like the writer, it is very imperfect.

Your sister, L. J. DAWSON.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 11, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I send the inclosed letter for you to do with as you think best.

I remain your brother in the gospel,
S. H. DURAND.

OXFORD, N. Y., Dec., 1906.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I am up in Oxford again, but do not expect to stay more than a month or so. I came here to attend the funeral of my brother's wife, and have been here since. I am not near any Baptists, and how I miss them after being constantly among them for the past year. How I love these people. I have the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and brother Fenton writes me precious letters, beside many others of the saints of God write to me. This is now my preaching, and it is good, but I want to be where I can sit down by them and grasp their hands and hear them talk and sing. But O the thought comes to me, What am I that I should expect this great blessing? I am but a poor worm of the dust, and not deserving of one good thing, yet the Lord is good to me in leading me about here and there, and in enabling me to hear his precious truth. The last time I heard you was in October, in Philadelphia, the text was, "Salvation is of the Lord," and was much enjoyed by me.

Is sister Wells with you yet, and how is your family? I wish I could write to you concerning spiritual things, but my mind seems far from God to-night. It seems to me I am either exalted way up upon the mountain-top, or else away down in the valley. However I never get weary of singing the old, old story of Jesus. "If I must sing, I'll sing of grace." If I ever knew anything about this new song it was far back, when I was a child. How

hard I tried not to sing this song. I tried to content my mind with dancing, card playing, theatres and all the things of the world. I went on very well for a time, then I felt that the pangs of hell got hold upon me, and there was no rest for me day or night. On my bed I sought him whom my soul loved; I sought him, but I found him not. I went on in my mad career, denying his commandment, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," and like Peter, I denied I knew the Lord. At last I came to the Red Sea, with Pharaoh's host behind me and the sea in front, and there was no way of escape; then the Lord opened the way and brought me to his banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love. I needed the hard plowing and harrowing; yes, I needed to be digged as with a mattock, for the ground was hard; there was in it no fit place for the seed; and often I doubt whether the seed is rooted and grounded in me.

I often have to go back to the time when dear Elder Chick preached at that Saturday meeting, and said, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee." The most I could tell them was that I loved the brethren, and longed for a home with them. Since then it has been a home of rest. So if I do know anything about these things, I know that salvation is of the Lord. Now each day I have some sweet message from the Lord, in reading his word, or the SIGNS, or letters, and this keeps me up and revives my little hope. Jesus said, If I go away the Comforter will come.

My dear brother, I have written far beyond what I intended, but if the Lord has directed my pen all is well. I hope some time to visit the church at Southampton with brother and sister Fenton. What dear visits I have had at their home. I hope this letter will find you well in body and mind.

With love and fellowship, I am, I hope, your sister,

MARY E. BREWSTER.

BOOTHWYN, Pa.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The inclosed letter, written to us, is for publication in the SIGNS if it meets with your approval.

Very truly, B. F. HAMILTON.

NORFOLK, Va., March 30, 1908.

DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER:—Things are coming to pass at such a rate that we hardly know how to begin to tell you about them. We are now feeling quite differently about our being so alone in Norfolk, as we have before expressed ourselves. On Saturday, when I came to dinner, there was a carriage in front of our door, and when I went in I found Elder Rowe and sister Thomas visiting with Alice. I cut my lunch short and had a nice visit with them before I went back to work. Sister Thomas is much improved in health, and we were certainly glad to see her, as she was to see us.

Now for the strange part of our late experience. For about two years Elder Rowe had been burdened in his mind with the feeling that he must come to Norfolk, for he felt that there were some of the Lord's people here who were needy of spiritual comfort and communion, which kept on with him until he and sister Rowe came. On reaching here he and sister Rowe, together with sister Thomas, began inquiring around for Old School Baptists. Sister Thomas had the same impression as Alice and I, that we were alone in this vicinity. Their minds were directed in various ways until it

was found that quite a company of Old Baptists are here and in the surrounding cities and suburbs. When they came to see us they had completed arrangements for a meeting on Sunday at Masonic Temple, Port Norfolk, at 3 o'clock. We all went, and had a rare treat. Elder Rowe was helped to preach to us in the power of the Spirit, and what a comfort it was to us. There were hungry ones there, and they feasted. Many were in tears. We all had felt as though we were alone, and we are now found, and are quite a company. Elder Rowe's theme was death in sin and life in Christ. O it was preaching indeed. When the meeting closed you can imagine how soon we gathered together and talked as fast as we could. We returned almost all in company, and kept up our visit until we reached Norfolk, where we separated. After the meeting Elder Rowe told us his mind was relieved and his burden gone. We got Elder Rowe to give us the fifth Sunday in May, meanwhile prayer and conference meetings were appointed. Now I want to ask you if you do not think it wonderful how the Lord has dealt with us all? We feel amazed when we think it all over. Outsiders paid respectful attention to the preaching, and one lady expressed herself as having had the treat of her life, and that she never before heard anything to compare with the preaching. You remember my sending a telegram rejecting one good offer that I might locate in Norfolk, and the relief I felt from my burden of mind when I so decided. You will also recall our writing to you that Alice and I called on sister Thomas some time ago. If we had not become acquainted with her we would not have been so promptly found. So in all these things we see the network of God's providences working for the good of his people. Truly we have learned, as well as Cowper, that

> "God moves in a mysterious way
> His wonders to perform."

We can hardly tell you how grateful and happy we are to find so many brethren and sisters of our faith living near us. Although we like Norfolk very much, our former feeling of loneliness is gone, and we are contented and happy. "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them."

Affectionately,

CHARLES HAMILTON.
ALICE HAMILTON.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 11, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER MONROE:—When I took up the *Landmark*, which came a day or two ago, I was very pleasantly surprised to see your letter to Elder Lundy. I surely read it with great interest. There were some parts of it in which I was greatly touched, so that the tears sprang into my eyes. I was pleased with the simplicity in which you told your exercises, only I felt that you did not tell enough. I could seem to read between the lines all the way. In all of our papers there is nothing that so deeply interests me as an experience of grace. There are no two exercised just the same, and yet all touch the same points. Some have deeper views of their sinfulness than others, and such, I think, are raised to greater exaltation. The Lord knows how to bring every one, and it is not the way we have imagined. He brings the blind by a way that they know not, and in paths they have not known; he makes darkness light before them, and crooked things straight, and O what a blessed thing that he has promised never to for-

sake them. When we first come into this new and living way what a heavenly place it is, "a heaven below, the Redeemer to know." I remember feeling that I had just begun to live, that all my life before was a blank. How blue was the sky, and how green the earth. O how I would like to feel that way to-day, but I am helpless to bring myself into that heavenly frame of mind, but the Lord can do it, for

"His love in time past forbids me to think
He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink."

I just took my pen to tell you how I enjoyed your letter, as I thought it might be of encouragement to you. My love to sister Carrie and all of your dear household.

In love and fellowship, your unworthy sister, BESSIE DURAND.

[THE above pleasant letter was forwarded to us by brother J. M. Fenton, to whom it was written.—ED.]

DAYTON, Wash., March 15, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —I wish this morning to make some notes on the times and seasons, which God hath hid in his own power, as Jesus plainly told his disciples when he left the world. Our people are often perplexed with the plausible theories of men, and sometimes their faith is overthrown and they become entangled in the meshes of Satan, purposely spread for their feet. One of these is the exploded theory of an after time dispensation, which they are pleased to call the millennium, patterned after the Hebrew national economy. Now as to the time of the Jews, I will give some specific dates notable in the Old Testament. I will begin first with the first verse of the sixth chapter of first Kings: "And it came to pass, in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord." In this record of the kings of Israel we see specific dates, which by the Hebrew calendar may be set down as a guiding principle in determining the times and seasons of the Hebrew nation, from their beginning to their disastrous end in the destruction of their city and temple by the Romans. There are specific dates, tracing backward to their beginning as a nation, four hundred and thirty years after Abraham's call and blessing of God. Four hundred of these years they were in bondage, terminating on the very day in which they were made free from Pharaoh and Egypt, which was the tenth day of the second month. The language reads thus: "And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you."—Exodus xii. 1, 2. Now we have it definitely stated in the first book of the Kings of Israel precisely how many years had passed when Solomon began to build the temple: four hundred and eighty years. I shall not seek to trace the line after the beginning of Solomon's temple, my purpose being to show the uncertainty of prehistoric time before Abraham, if we consider the line of the Jews separate and distinct from all other times and seasons preceding them. No man knows or has known the beginning of the Egyptian year, or the date of the epoch on which it was established, or in what year of the world from the creation and from the beginning. Therefore there is no data in the knowledge of man whereby to fix the times and seasons which God hath put in his own power, and this fact completely overthrows the foundation on which the

latter-day prophets found their exploded Judaistic theories about the millennium.

This is written to call attention to the fact many false prophets are gone out into the world with new gospels and false christs. I. N. NEWKIRK.

NACOGDOCHES, Texas, March 1, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have just been reading the SIGNS of above date, and have been greatly lifted up by the many good letters and the editorials. While reading yours upon "Adoption" I felt to say in my heart, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."—1 John iii. 1. This subject has been on my mind much of late, and like many brethren, as you say, I could not understand why God's own children are adopted; but it was made clear to me a short time ago that the word "adoption" in the Scriptures does not apply to adoption among men, or the law of adoption, as will be seen in the following Scripture: "Now I say, that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father."—Gal. iv. 1, 2. Here a man's own son is under consideration, and Paul makes the comparison, "Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: but when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father." This adoption is the bringing of us into the manifestation and glorious realization of redemption which we have through Jesus Christ our Lord, therefore Paul says, "Thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." This is the regeneration, I think, which brother Chick has so clearly set forth in his editorial, and all forms of conditionalism and selfishness are excluded from this new kingdom.

I would like to mention every letter in particular, as they are all comforting, but time and space forbid. I do not see how I could do without the SIGNS, yet I hate to have it at your expense. I hope I am thankful to the goodness of the dear Lord and for your kindness in sending me the SIGNS, and I think I shall soon be able to send in my remittance. May the Lord bless you in your work, and may you live long to comfort the poor who are yet infinitely rich, being heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ.

Unworthily your brother,

ROBERT S. PACE.

WALLACETOWN, Ontario, Aug. 21, 1907.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—It would be ungrateful in me did I not try to thank you for your kind, reassuring letter. There is nothing in this world that I prize like the fellowship of my brethren and sisters in Christ, and I hope that I love the church too well to ever desire to hurt them in any way.

"He stills the storm without, within,
He calms the waves of doubt and sin;
He feels each pain, he knows each cross,
Without his aid all would be lost.

But O, the Savior he is kind,
And tenderly each wound will bind;
I'll trust his wisdom, seek his will,
And in his love learn to be still."

That was how I felt after hearing your letter read. I wish it could be always so with me, but I too often doubt where I ought to trust.

What a wondrous clearing of mystery there will be one day, when the redeemed shall see their Savior face to face. I often

wonder why such a precious hope is mine, for I am less than the least of all. Yes, we were all strengthened and made exceedingly glad on hearing the good news from Lobo. The Lord has not forgotten us, and we feel that we have been blessed indeed through your coming among us. We trust that you may visit us soon again. We also rejoiced greatly when we heard of your daughter's hope, and of her baptism; it must have been a time of gladness and thanksgiving to you, but Zion is not divided, and the little hills rejoice. I would like to know your daughter's name, but perhaps she will let us hear from her from time to time through the SIGNS.

Now I must close, with love from all, and also thanking you again for your kind words of encouragement and assurance.

I cannot help telling you how deeply interested I was in your editorial in the SIGNS for August 1st; it was far too short. I had always thought it was eternal life that Adam forfeited in the transgression, but I think that I understand some things differently now.

Your sister,

LIZZIE McCALLUM.

[THIS dear sister is blind, but writes with her own hand, and this letter shows that spiritual sight is hers.—ED.]

UPPERCO, Md., Jan. 22, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I know you have more labor to perform with hands and mind than falls to the lot of many, and so it does me the more good to be assured you have a place in memory for one so small and insignificant as I. When I take a retrospective view of my life, especially the years I have been identified with the dear ones at Black Rock, I see there is nothing in my life among them to cause such tokens of love, and, I may say, forbearance, as I have received at their hands. I feel that all these years I have been nothing but a blank, yet I feel a desire that they may bear with me, if in the providence of God I shall remain in this tabernacle a few days longer. In writing to a brother not long ago I said I could not write upon deep things, so I wrote mostly about myself to keep in shallow water, and yet I think sometimes I know less about myself than anything I can write about. I realize there are many things I desire to know, and sometimes can almost say I do know them; so blundering on in this dim and darkened way I can always say, "What I am 'tis hard to know."

> "I am so vile, so prone to sin,
> I fear that I'm not born again."

I am so fearful and unbelieving. I remember telling you at one time about my fearfulness of speaking of Jesus and his love, fearing it would be nothing but formality, or a repetition of something I had learned from other lips.

I fear I am taking up too much of your time if you should attempt to read these lines, but I desire to say I look with longing for the coming of every number of the SIGNS. Since my hearing has failed I do not know how I could get along without such good reading matter as we get twice a month in our family paper. Glad to see the names of the "young men and maidens" to such good and comforting communications, along with those of maturer age. Surely out of the mouth of babes and sucklings the Lord hath ordained praise, and the others bring forth fruit in old age.

Perhaps I have written too much. I am in feeble health, but able to get around a little, and would like it if you and I might meet again, but the Lord's will be done.

Your brother, I hope,

JOHN P. KELLEY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1908.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JOSHUA XXIV. 15.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—Will you give your views upon Joshua xxiv. 15? A Methodist was talking to me the other day about religion, and at first I thought I would not say anything to him. At last he said, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." At that I could not hold my peace. I told him that Joshua said this to the children of Israel, and that he said, "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Joshua did not say to them, Choose between the true God and idols, not one word of it. I said, The world is full of false gods. To my surprise he did not say another word.

Your brother in hope,

WILLIAM GRIGG.

MT. BRYDGES, Ontario, Feb. 25, 1908.

This request has remained unanswered for some time, but not for want of a desire to comply with our brother's request. We trust he will pardon the delay. It appears to us that he has already given the true explanation of the Scripture to which he calls attention. The friend to whom he was talking did well to keep silence. The letter of the Scripture had more effect upon him than it does upon many. When perhaps about thirteen years of age we heard a Freewill Baptist minister use the same words as a text: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve," and we recall that it seemed to us as though we could make no reply to this text. We thought, Is it possible that men are told to choose between serving God and serving idols, after all? We did not know the connection of the text, never having heard it referred to before. We went from the meeting full of perplexity and distress. Was it possible that man had a free will and could choose of himself good or evil? As soon as we reached home we got the Bible, looked up the text, and as we read it all seemed plain to us. It was not a choice between the true God and idols, but between different idols. At that moment, as we recall, we felt sure the preacher had wilfully held back part of the text to deceive the people, and from that moment we lost all respect for him as a man. These were our childish thoughts and feelings. Perhaps our personal judgment of him was harsh; perhaps he had not wilfully deceived the people, but still it is hard for us to believe that any one can thus isolate one expression of the Scriptures from the connection and be honest.

We ask nothing better of all who may read these words of our brother, than that they turn to the text and read it and the connection carefully. It is not true here, and it is never true anywhere, that our God puts himself down upon a level with idols, and enters into competition with them for the service and the affections of men; his commandment is to serve him always. Men have no right to think of choosing, as between Him and false gods; he has never held himself out by the side of any rival, bidding men to choose, as between them, and it was not so here. Joshua saw in the people a mind to depart from God and to turn to dumb idols; seeing this he calls upon them to choose between one set of idols

or the other, to settle their minds upon something, for it did not matter at all what they served if it seemed evil to them to serve God. One set of gods of the production of men's hands or of men's imagination was just as good as was another. They did not need to hesitate at all in this matter; it needed no deliberation on their part. The same is true still. It matters not if it seems evil to men now, to serve the Lord Christ and to look to him for salvation, whether they depend upon morality, religious professions, religious ceremonies, birthright blessings, baptisms, or what not to save them; all are equally futile and vain. One road leads from God as well as the other; this the true follower of God knows now as well as Joshua did then. Believers can say now, just as did Joshua, If it seem evil to you to follow and serve the Lord Jesus, turn to anything that you choose. There is no choice between them; all are alike of no avail. But Joshua says, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." In other words, he said, We do not need to choose, the matter is already decided for us; the Lord he is our God; we know what he has done for us and what he can and will do; in him is salvation and blessing; all idols are vain things, the work of men's hands; men have made them out of stocks and stones, but our God was not made by men, but he has made us all. In this God is our help and salvation; to him will we render service, the free, willing, glad service of his willing people. Happy indeed was Joshua and his family; happy indeed is that man whose heart turns from all else and cleaves unto the Lord. That man is happy indeed, because this is the Lord's work in the first place, and it proves that the love of God is set upon him. He is happy because the work thus begun in him the blessed Lord will carry on to the end. He is happy because he has God for his help, and if God be for him who can be against him? If God be for a man he will bring that man off a conqueror, and more than a conqueror, through Jesus Christ. Had it been true that all Israel had forsaken God then and there, leaving Joshua and his family alone, still God was on his side and the victory was sure to him. Believers do indeed choose to serve God, but this choice is decided upon the revelation to them of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Once they did not choose him, but rather their own folly. Why do they choose him now? Why are they not still going on in their former course? Why was it that such a mind was in Joshua and his house while it was not in the mind of the people? Who had produced in him such a different mind? Surely we need not dwell upon the answer. The Lord had turned him, and he was turned. There was no praise therefore to be rendered to Joshua or his family, all the praise belonged to grace. God had chosen them and sent his Spirit into their hearts, and therefore they chose him. The needle in their hearts had been magnetized with his love, and so it pointed true to God, who is love; there is, there can be, no other reason given.

We leave these remarks to the consideration of our brother. C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

THE STRANGE WOMAN AND THE BEAUTIFUL WOMAN.

BROTHER J. T. Brand, of Lithonia, Ga., asks concerning the strange woman named in Proverbs vii., and the beautiful woman named in the Song of Solomon. He asks if the woman named in Proverbs represents the church in her corrupted state, and the woman in Song of Solomon the true or redeemed state of the church.

We do not suppose any one questions that the woman named in the Song of Solomon presents to view the bride, the Lamb's wife, and that she was intended so to do by the Holy Spirit who indited this Song of songs, which is Solomon's; and under the figure of a woman the church is presented as being all fair and without spot or blemish. This church is composed of men and women redeemed from among men and brought nigh to God, and quickened by the Holy Spirit so that they now live unto God. These men and women are not by nature without spot or altogether lovely, but only as they are clothed with Christ's imputed righteousness. It is in Christ first, and then because of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in them, that they are called righteous. This we need not here enlarge upon. Every true believer knows this for himself, and that it is the plain, simple teaching of the Bible.

In Proverbs and in the chapter named the practices of a woman abandoned and vile are named, and also the terrible results upon those who follow her. Every word in this chapter is true when applied to those women who are vile in any community or at any time. But as the good and virtuous woman is used in the word to set forth the church, the Lamb's wife, so these vile women are used to set forth those who forsake God and who would allure the sons of men to be their lovers, in the sense that they are led to follow after falsehood and evil rather than God. False doctrines, false practices, perversions of the true gospel held forth in alluring colors, are the practices of the false woman, by which even the sons of God are sometimes ensnared and held fast, to their hurt and sorrow. As the false woman decks herself out in alluring attire, and practices apparent modesty, that she may more surely ensnare the unwary, so do false churches hold forth that which is attractive to the minds of men, so that even the children of God may be led to think, Surely there can be no harm in going after these things. In this sense the woman spoken of in Proverbs vii. may well be taken to represent all false churches in distinction from the true church.

Perhaps we do not quite understand just what is in the mind of our brother when he speaks of the corrupted state of the true church, and asks whether this false woman represents this corrupted state. The people of God are fallen sinners, just like all others of the race of Adam; they were by nature the children of wrath, even as others; but the church of Christ is never spoken of as being any other than fair, all fair. This church is made up of sinners called out from the world, washed in the blood of the Lamb and made partakers of the divine nature. They were, all of them, as are all others, dead in trespasses and in sins. Some of them have belonged to false churches, and have partaken of their evil deeds, but have now been called out and separated unto the service of God. It should be remembered that when we speak of the church being fallen, it simply means that all who now compose the church, or who ever will compose it, are the children of fallen Adam, and that when we speak

of the church as being redeemed, it simply means that men and women are redeemed, for these are they who make up the church, and so these redeemed men and women may have been members of the false woman once in their lives; but it is sure that the church as she stands redeemed by blood and quickened by the Holy Spirit is not said to be vile, but altogether lovely.

There is a broad distinction between those who serve God and those who serve him not. The Scripture never speaks of a man as being a believer and an unbeliever at the same time. Men are not thieves, murderers, drunkards, libertines, adulterers, and at the same time saints. Paul said to the Corinthians after naming these sins and vices, "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." This distinction ought ever to be kept in mind. Within are the redeemed, but without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and all who love and make a lie. These are never within, yet all the people of God confess themselves vile, and say, "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." It is not our mind that the false woman is the church of God in any sense, but all those represented in the word as the synagogue of Satan. Paul once belonged to the synagogue of Satan, but after being called by grace he belonged to the true church, the beautiful woman of the Song of Solomon. C.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906; 07 means 1907; 08 means 1908, &c.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder F. A. Chick.)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, convened with the church at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., June 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1908, to the churches of which we are messengers sends greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—In the second epistle addressed by the apostle Peter to those who had obtained like precious faith with himself, and all the apostles of the blessed Lord through the righteousness of God and the Savior Jesus Christ, he said in the beginning of the third chapter that one object which he had in view in writing both of his epistles to them was to stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance, that they might be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandments of the apostles of the Lord and Savior. Three times in the first chapter of this epistle he uses the word "remembrance," declaring first, that he will not be negligent to put them in remembrance of these things; second, that he thought it meet to so do as long as he was in this tabernacle; and third, that he thus endeavored to do that they might have these things in mind after his departure. Paul in both of his epistles to Timothy also exhorts him to be careful to put the brethren in remembrance of the things of which he is speaking, and Jude likewise declared that he desired that his brethren might have the things of which he wrote in remembrance; and it is manifest that to this end the apostles both wrote and preached the word again and again to the churches and brethren.

From all these scriptural examples and testimonies it appears to us that we have full warrant for the writing of such letters as this for all personal correspond-

ence with regard to the things of God among brethren, and for spreading abroad the teachings of the word of God through the press, or in any other way by which we may communicate one with another, which things we have learned by the teaching of the Spirit, and have seen recorded in the Bible, which is the revealed word of God to us. It surely is important that we all give heed to the word of the Lord by the prophet, saying, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." It has been the glory of the church of God in all ages that they have demanded a "Thus saith the Lord," written in plain terms in the Bible for all that they believe and practice. For the past few centuries this has been one peculiar thing which has distinguished the people known as Baptists, and now, in this past seventy-five years, this has been specially insisted upon by all those known as Old School Baptists, or as Primitive Baptists, in this land. But as the people of God are still in the flesh, that flesh which lusts against the Spirit, so that they cannot do the things that they would, they are often prone to forget the word of the Lord, and that they have been purged from their old sins and that they are now the Lord's, being bought with a price, and therefore ought to always glorify God in their body and spirit, which are the Lord's; and for this reason, in infinite pity and love to them, the blessed Lord has ordained pastors, teachers, evangelists and other gifts for their instruction and to put them in remembrance of these things, together with the ordinances of his house, such as prayer, singing, baptism and the supper. In all these things the blessed Lord has remembered his chosen in mercy, and in these things he has designed to come to them in blessing. We all know that again and again has the preaching of the word, praying in the spirit and singing with the spirit, together with the administration of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper, been blessedly applied to our souls, so that we have thereby grown in knowledge and understanding of the word, and have felt our hearts and thoughts lifted above the things of time and sense and fixed upon things above; there cannot be a greater blessing than this. All these things are but putting us in remembrance of the things which are first written in the Bible, and then, as we trust, written in our minds and hearts; and because the people of God realize with sorrow their proneness to forget the truths revealed in them they count it a blessed thing to be put in remembrance again and again of them. The Lord's people, one and all, can say of a truth, I love to hear preaching that tells me of my faults. Seeing and hearing their faults they come to rejoice in that preaching which sets forth Jesus as the sum of the gospel and the only name whereby any are saved. Of all these things the apostle desired to remind his brethren, and of all these things the brethren desire to be reminded. There is welcome in all such hearts for the blessed word of salvation and deliverance, and also for the word of exhortation that they walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called.

But the special things of which the apostle was here writing embraced, beside that which pertains to a personal experience of salvation, references to wicked men and wicked deeds of men. The apostle here describes the condition of the ungodly, who know not God, as well as the hope set before the saved in Christ. He speaks of false professors and false teachers who speak great swelling words

of vanity. Of these teachers he would have his brethren beware, lest they be led away and forsake their steadfastness in the faith and order of the house of God. It was needful that the pure minds of the brethren should be stirred up by way of warning against that which was evil, as well as with regard to the faith and order of the house of God. Not only would he seek to guide their feet in the way of peace, but also to point out the ways of error; not only would he point out those who truly worship God in spirit and in truth, but also those who professed to know God and did not. It seemed needful in his view to declare that which was contrary to God and to Christ as well as that which is approved of God. We say that it seemed needful in his view to do this, and this means that it was needful in the sight of God also, by whose inspiration the apostle wrote all these words. Nothing is unimportant in the Bible, which, we must not forget, is God's book. There is not one word in the Bible which God would not have there, and that which he places there cannot be of little or no importance. The world, that is, the religious world to-day, counts the teaching of the Bible as of little force unless it agrees with their boasted reasonings. We all, for many years, have been accustomed to hearing such expressions as this concerning some portions of the word: That is impossible to understand; Why dwell upon these deep things when there is so much in the Bible that is plain? But when we come to examine this apparent solicitude for the simple, plain things, we always find that it arises out of hatred of the strong statements of doctrine in the word. It is nearly always the very plainest statements of truth in the word which are by these false teachers declared to be hard to be understood. As Old School Baptists our people have always protested against such teaching as this. The people of God claim and assert that not one word of God is in vain. It has been and is their faith that when the Holy Spirit takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto any one, that one will see that all the Scriptures say is real and vital, and there will be begotten in that soul a great reverence for every word that is in the Bible. All that our God has given his inspired servants to write is and must be true. It must be true that Satan said just what he is recorded in the book of Job as having said. It must be true that Job's friends said just what they are recorded to have said. The historical statements in the Old Testament concerning Israel and concerning the heathen nations round about them, must be just as narrated there. The words of Satan and of the friends of Job were not true, they were not God's words, but they were said just as is recorded. The writer was inspired, so that the words which he wrote should declare the exact facts.

Now while we insist that it will not do for men to treat any portion of the word as being trivial, and not to be regarded or preached, let us also beware lest we fall into the same error. There is absolutely nothing in the Bible that is not important to be considered and that ought not to be preached faithfully by faithful men. It is as important, for instance, that the first three chapters of Romans should be presented as that the rest of the epistle should be insisted upon in our preaching. It is as important to preach the total depravity of all men as it is to preach the perfect righteousness of Christ. It is as important to preach the fact that sin is in the world, and that death comes as the penalty of sin, as it is to preach

that there is righteousness in our Lord Jesus Christ, and life through that righteousness. It is as important to proclaim the penalty of sin as it is to proclaim that there is salvation in the Lord. It is as important to declare that election means nonelection as it is to preach election. If it be important to preach salvation from death and hell, from final destruction and everlasting punishment, secured to the elect through the finished work of Christ, it is also as important to declare that all others are left to this destruction and this punishment; it is as much the word of God that the wicked go away into everlasting punishment as that the righteous are received into everlasting life. The only way in which we can come to know either of these truths is because it is in the testimony. If it be in the testimony of God, then it is important, and if the revealed word of God has declared either of these things then we are to receive them with reverence, and to talk about them, to teach them and to preach them, that the pure minds of the brethren be stirred up to remember them.

The servants of God are to preach the gospel; but to preach the gospel is to preach salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ; this is the gospel. But what are men saved from, and what are they saved to? It is a truth above all controversy that no man can preach the gospel without also pointing out the law. No man can proclaim a finished righteousness without pointing out why there must be such a righteousness. If it be declared that the gospel reveals such a righteousness, it must also be pointed out that the law of God demanded it. Our failure under the law must be pointed out, if the gospel of the finished and perfect work of Jesus is to have any meaning to us; and when it is preached that men are saved, it must also be declared that they are saved from sin, death and hell. The full glory of salvation cannot be understood, only as we come to see the things and the state from which we are saved. As sin becomes magnified in our view, so will salvation from that sin become magnified. If the penalty for our sins is presented to our view, then our salvation from that penalty will be magnified; and how wonderful will that salvation appear when we come to remember that it is not only from present condemnation and sorrow, but also from everlasting punishment.

The preaching of the gospel will take in all these things, and all that the Bible teaches. It cannot be reiterated too often, "To the law and to the testimony;" and when we remind the brethren of the testimony of the word of God, with regard to anything that is presented there, we are calling their attention to the things which concern them. The fallen and lost state of mankind concerns them, for they were by nature children of wrath even as others are. When we preach that they are redeemed from sin, death and hell, this also concerns them, for without election and redemption in Christ they would have abided in sin, death and hell forever; and when we declare that the unredeemed portion of mankind do still abide in sin and death, and that they shall be everlastingly punished, we are simply pointing out that from which saints are saved. By all these reminders the pure minds of believers are stirred up to greater thankfulness and wonder; and seeing their own lack of merit over others who perish they will say again and again,

"What was there in you that could merit esteem,
Or give the Creator delight?
'Twas even so, Father, you ever must say,
Because it seemed good in thy sight."

But after all, surely it is not needful to reason upon these things; it is sufficient for every gospel minister that he finds any truth declared in the Bible. He knows that that truth cannot be of little importance, and that if God declared it, and inspired prophets and apostles preached and wrote it, he must not say it is unimportant.

That natural religionists make use of any truth and abuse it, is a still greater reason why believers in the Lord should hold to that truth and not abuse it. If men hold the truth in unrighteousness, this furnishes all the greater reason why believers should steadfastly hold to and contend for the truth in righteousness. Some men pervert the doctrine of predestination and seek to take shelter behind it when they sin, saying it was predestinated and they could not help it, and therefore are not to be blamed. Shall we therefore fail to preach this glorious doctrine? Some men have perverted the doctrine of election, seeking to justify themselves in their careless life by it. Shall we therefore fail to proclaim it and to show that in it is all the hope of right living that any sinner can have? Some men pervert the doctrine of the everlasting punishment of the wicked, especially those who are called revivalists, seeking to frighten men into a profession of religion that they may thus escape and be saved. Because men thus pervert the truth embraced in the teaching of the Bible regarding this doctrine shall we fail to insist upon it, that the people of God may be stirred up to still more gratitude, love and praise for sovereign mercy? Rather, concerning all these principles of truth, the fact that men pervert them furnishes all the greater reason why men of God should proclaim them, setting them forth in their true light as reasons for praise, love and obedience to that God who has done such great things for us and has had such compassion upon us.

Following the words quoted at the beginning of this letter, the apostle also said to his brethren that one reason why he thus wrote them was that in the last days scoffers should come, walking after their own lusts, and denying the simple teachings of the word. Lest his brethren should be ensnared by such falsehoods, it was needful that these principles of truth should be firmly impressed upon their minds, and so in both epistles he wrote of them. In like manner did Paul in all his epistles and in all his ministry. So did the Master teach his disciples by parables, and in all other ways. To this end the people of God are enjoined not to forsake the assembling of themselves together, and not to fail to speak one to another and stir each other up by way of exhortation. That we may thus do is the chief object of these meetings which we call associations, and they are profitable to us just so far as we are reminded in them of the words of God, spoken by the prophets and apostles as recorded in the word.

Now, dear brethren, in all your gatherings from day to day, and from week to week, for the worship of God publicly and in your homes socially, may this blessing abide with you, that the name of the Lord may be magnified among you.

D. M. VAIL, Moderator.

CYRUS RISLER, Clerk.

WM. HOBENSACK, Assistant Clerk.

(Written by Elder H. H. Lefferts.)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Warwick Church, June 10th, 11th and 12th, 1908, to the churches of which this meeting is composed, sends greeting with love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We now follow our usual custom of addressing you in a Circular Letter, which procedure is of no value to the church of Jesus if adhered to simply because it is customary. Some spiritual motive must exercise us in bearing and fulfilling every church relation if our service to one another is to be profitable alike to servant and served. Following custom for custom's sake, form for form's sake and such like is an abomination in the sight of God, who because thereof caused the first heaven and the first earth (legal covenant) to pass away, and established through the mediatorial work of Jesus a new heaven and a new earth (gospel church). In this new heaven and new earth dwells righteousness, and here are they who worship God in spirit and in truth, not in forms, ceremonies, rituals, bloody altars or holy days. With this service God is well pleased, and accepts it, for he is a Spirit. (See Heb. x. 5–9; Rev. xxi. 1; Isaiah lxv. 17; John iv. 23, 24.) In addressing you in this letter, should our desire be simply to follow a custom and adhere to a form, we may as well desist. Unless there is spirit and truth in it there is no gospel service, and if our service be legality, barrenness is its reward. Because of their love for and interest in the churches the apostles frequently wrote them letters of encouragement, instruction, reproof and exhortation, so we hope and trust that our motive in now writing you may spring from the same love and fellowship as theirs, and that we may, by the grace of God, impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end we all may be established, and that we may be comforted together by the mutual faith which we have in our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans i. 11, 12.) The true church to-day, as always, is set up a monument of God's mercy in the midst of an ungodly world drunken with the wine of the fornications of the mother of harlots. Respect for godliness and sobriety is on the wane; love of wealth and sensuality is increasing. One who wills to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world will reap from the world ridicule and opposition, and the discomfort of the church in this particular is not likely to abate, for "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—2 Tim. iii. 12. Corruption in the family life of the country is attested by the never-ceasing activity of the divorce courts; corruption in government, by the predominance of wealth over principle; corruption in business by the mad rush to get rich regardless of means used to that end; and corruption in religion is fast revealing all man-made creeds in their true light, which is infidelity. We live in an age of "higher criticism of the Bible," which scouts divine inspiration, calls miracles fairy tales, denies revelation, and declares the Christ to have been but a high type of morality with no divinely conceived being. Evil men and seducers are waxing worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. It is a shame even to speak of many things uttered by professed preachers of Christ under the guise of gospel truth. They have a form of godliness, (and what a form) yet deny the power thereof. (2 Tim. iii. 5.) Much of this false teaching is so easily distinguished from truth that even the simplest child taught of God can detect it. Such teaching being self-evi-

dently false, is not so dangerous to us as that which so closely counterfeits the truth as to lead excellent brethren astray and damage their standing ere they are scarcely aware of its delusion. This evil usually arises from among our ownselves, for of our ownselves do men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. (Acts xx. 30.) Those who desire to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace should jealously seek to guard the churches from this subtle danger, being quick to detect and swift to warn the sheep against error, without fear of or favor to the enemy. This danger usually puts itself forward under the semblance of friendship and brotherly love, professing to desire the welfare and comfort of the church. Personal attraction and seeming sincerity enable its advocate to gain a following among those who either pity, sympathize or believe. What a blessing it is to have a God-fearing ministry, not afraid of men nor currying their favor, who will instruct in sound doctrine, exhort to sound practice and warn of error and its accompanying evils. Knowing full well that what God has ordained shall surely come to pass whether man will let or hinder, does not prevent a faithful ministry from warning the flock of their care of any errors in doctrine or in practice that threaten them. The Babylonian captivity was a preordained event on the part of God, yet he raised up prophets whose burden it was to warn Israel of the approaching danger and to plead with them to repent lest God smite them. That they did not heed the prophets is a fact, but nevertheless the messenger had delivered what God had commanded him, whether men heeded it or not. Every true minister knows that his preaching will effect nothing unless God spiritualizes it to the hearts of his people, yet he cannot cease from preaching simply because his words are unheeded. Jeremiah made an attempt to stop, but the effort nearly ruined him. (Jer. xx. 9.) Probably never before were our ranks so serried with isms contrary to Bible teaching. The apostles foretold that this very condition should come to pass, and our being witnesses to the fulfillment of their words should encourage us (who abide steadfast) to believe that we are walking in their doctrine and fellowship. (Matt. xxiv. 11, 12.) Could we but have at all times an eye single to the glory of God, and to the welfare of the church, we would bring every utterance of every man that comes in the name of the Lord to the test of the Scriptures and the heart-experience of God's people, and our bidding them Godspeed would depend upon their having a "Thus saith the Lord" for all their views. (Isaiah viii. 20; Acts xvii. 11.) It is not agreeable to have one's feelings hurt, nor to hurt those of any one else, but when we must decide between offending one person and offending the whole church, there is but one right course to pursue. Should a brother in the ministry be holding and promulgating views contrary to Scripture without himself being aware of his error, they who are spiritual should in brotherly love and kindness meekly labor to show him his wrong, and should he acknowledge it no necessity will exist for displaying his weakness to the whole church. (Gal. vi. 1.) But if after such faithfulness on the part of brethren he persists in preaching what is contrary to Bible truth, he is dangerous, not only to himself, but to others as well, and our duty lies in faithfully warning the church or churches of such an one. This should not be done in ridicule, sarcasm, irony,

anger nor personalities, but in an honest, God-fearing, simple exposition of the Scriptures, proving the falsity of such an one's position. Thus do we study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Tim. ii. 15.)

Exhortation and warning are not only justifiable in opposing false doctrine, but as well in reproving false practice. It would be wonderful indeed, since we are all partakers of flesh and blood, if some of the corruption which fills every walk of life in the world should not invade our own ranks and allure into captivity. The love of ease and pleasure, the selfishness of greed which is so visible in worldlings, does indeed have its effect upon us. We are admonished not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, but to exhort one another. (Heb. x. 12.) And again, to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service. (Romans xii. 1.) Fifty years ago it took some unsurmountable obstacle to keep our people away from their church privileges, but to-day some stay away for trivialities, such as bad weather, bad roads, slight indispositions, entertaining friends or visiting them. Such practice is evil, and contrary to Bible teaching. So also is indulgence in worldly amusements, which infatuates and leads to more ungodliness. The visible church of Jesus Christ is distinguished from the world not only in doctrine and in order, but in practice and deportment as well. (Philippians iv. 8; 2 Cor. vi. 17; Titus ii. 11, 12; 1 Tim. iii. 15.) Surely we need to be kept alive to the preciousness of our church relations, and through the indwelling of godly charity bear one another's burdens in love, and so fulfill the law of Christ, upholding the weak hands and confirming the feeble knees. Certainly we all, both pastors and flocks, need divine guidance and sustaining grace, not every hour, but every moment. The need always is, Lord, save, I perish. The danger is in not realizing our need, but in thinking we are rich and needing nothing, when in reality we are poor and naked. If our God will by the indwelling of his Spirit constantly make us sensible of our need and infirmities, we shall not go wrong, for in sensibly realizing our need there is prayer and asking in faith, which God always hears, yea, and answers before we call. (Isaiah lxv. 24.) And if, by the grace of God, we are all in this life that we ought to be, as regards doctrine and practice, what shall we say? That we are deserving of the highest seats in heaven and a starry crown? No, but we are unprofitable servants, for we have done but our duty, (Luke xvii. 10,) and that only by reason of the Word made flesh. Unto us, at no time, is any glory due. If we have aught of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus we possess it in an earthen vessel, so that the excellency of the power is of God, and not of us. Every good gift and every perfect gift cometh from the Father of lights. Faithful pastors, able preachers, wise teachers, hearing ears, seeing eyes and understanding hearts are all gifts of God. May he be pleased for his mercy's sake to quicken us according to his word and to enlarge our heart, then shall we run the way of his commandments. (Psalms cxix. 25, 32; 2 Cor. iv. 6, 7; James i. 17.)

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."—Jude 24, 25.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Association, in session with the Harford Church, Harford Co., Md., sendeth greeting to the several associations and meetings with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have had a pleasant and, we feel, profitable meeting. The Lord has seen fit to send the rain that waters the earth, and we feel that he has also sent that rain that waters the soul of his people.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, Baltimore, Md., the usual time next year, when and where we hope to meet your messengers and receive your messages of love.

WILLIAM GRAFTON, Moderator.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with our sister church at Salem, Philadelphia, Pa., sendeth love in the Lord to the churches and associations with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Another year has passed away, and the Lord has again favored us with the precious privilege of meeting you in an associate capacity and to enjoy your love and fellowship in the precious Savior. We feel that the Lord has manifested himself to us through the gospel, declared by your messengers, ministering servants, who have come to us in the fullness of the power of the truth as it is taught by Him who is the way, the truth and the life. We desire a continuance of your love and fellowship through your correspondence with us.

Our next session has been appointed to meet with the Bryn Zion Church, in May, 1909.

B. F. COULTER, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., to the several associations with whom she corresponds, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—By an all-wise, eternal and covenant-keeping God we are again brought together as an association, which we are glad to state has been characterized by peace and harmony and brotherly love. Your messengers have come to us laden with the good things of the kingdom of God, and we feel to say that we have been built up, edified and comforted by being stirred up in our pure minds by way of remembrance of the things which we do know by experience. We desire to have your correspondence continue.

Our next session is appointed to meet with the Southampton Church, Bucks County, Pa., beginning on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, where we hope to meet your messengers.

D. M. VAIL, Moderator.
CYRUS RISLER, Clerk.
WM. HOBENSACK, Assistant Clerk.

The churches composing the Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., June 10th, 11th and 12th, 1908, to the churches and associations with which we correspond sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have gladly received your messengers and Minutes. The gospel has been preached with power during our meeting, much to our comfort, assuring us that the foundation of God standeth sure.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the New Vernon Church, to begin Wednesday after the first Sunday in June, 1908, when we shall hope to again receive your messengers and messages of love.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

ORDINATIONS.

PURSUANT to a call by Denton Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists, at Keller, Tarrant Co., Texas, on May 2nd, 1908, at the regular term of an annual three days union meeting, for the purpose of considering the propriety of ordaining brother W. V. S. Allen to the work of the ministry, the following Elders and Deacons responded: Elder Asa Howard, Elder J. G. Ellis, T. Blevins, D. F. West, Allen King, C. Y. Osteen.

The presbytery organized by choosing Elder Asa Howard moderator and brother T. Blevins clerk, after which brother W. V. S. Allen was presented to the council, whereupon the matter touching the qualifications and fitness of the candidate were thoroughly discussed to the satisfaction of the council. Therefore the church, the candidate and the presbytery being of the same mind, holding the doctrine of special atonement by Jesus Christ for the elect of God, who are predestinated unto the adoption of children and kept by the power of God unto glory, the absolute predestination of all things, the positive certainty of God in the fulfillment of all his purposes, evidenced sufficiently to the presbytery the gift and calling of brother Allen to preach the gospel.

The council proceeded as follows: prayer by Elder J. G. Ellis, laying on of the hands of the presbytery, charge delivered by the writer. The right hand of fellowship and welcome was extended to the candidate by the presbytery and all the church, commending our dear brother to the consideration of all Old School Baptists wherever God in his providence may cast his lot, as an Elder clothed with the full functions of a gospel minister.

Also, the church liberated our dear young brother, W. S. Bourland, of Vernon, Texas, (a son of Elder A. D. Bourland, now deceased,) to exercise a public gift as a licensed preacher, after which the church went into communion, administering the sacrament and washing each other's feet, in the presence of a large concourse of people.

Thus our meeting closed with the best of consequences, reminding us that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, and what a great blessing it is to dwell together in unity. ASA HOWARD.

KELLER, Texas.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at his residence, Hopewell, N. J., May 30th, 1908, Russell W. Holcombe and Miss Edna I. Blackwell, both of Hopewell, N. J.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. S. F. Gandy, N. J., $1.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

James L. Chamberlain departed this life at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Emma White, near North Yakima, Wash., May 13th, 1908, aged 77 years, 5 months and 19 days, after an illness of more than a year's duration, which he bore with remarkable patience and fortitude. At times his suffering was intense, yet every breathing of his soul was a desire to be reconciled to God's will. With all his suffering he had seasons of rejoicing which were joyous to see. For a few days he talked as if preaching sermons, telling of his hope and the doctrine he loved. When his children wished him to rest he said he was buoyed up by an unseen power, and must talk; said he had prayed for two months that utterance might be given him so he could tell his children and friends of his hope and faith, and he felt his prayer had been answered. He made arrangements for his funeral and burial, requesting his pastor, Elder W. J. Hess, to use as a text the words of Job: "If a man die, shall he live again?" Elder W. H. Gilmore to assist in the services.

Our dear brother was born in Kentucky. His father, Elder P. P. Chamberlain, moved with his family to Missouri in 1844. Brother Chamberlain crossed the plains to Oregon in 1851, was married to Christina Kincaid August 7th, 1853, received a hope in Christ the same year, and was baptized by Elder John Stipp, Jan. 1st, 1854. For more than half a century he has been an exemplary christian, always on the side of peace, faithful in every duty. He leaves his companion of nearly fifty-five years, four daughters, three sons, many friends and the church to mourn their loss, but we desire to be reconciled to God's will. We feel to say, He has fought a good fight, he has kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give him at that day. He had been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for upward of fifty years, and during his illness would call our attention to the different articles that had been of special interest to him as read to him by his dear companion. SONORA A. HESS.

Mazie M. Davis Mabe, wife of Moses Mabe and eldest daughter of A. F. and Callie Davis, was born in Smith County, Va., March 26th, 1866, died at her home west of Eugene, Oregon, May 2nd, 1908, after a short illness of pneumonia. Her death is especially sad, as it falls heavily upon her husband and nine children, the eldest being twenty-one years, the youngest a babe of two years. One infant daughter preceded her. She also leaves a father, two brothers and three sisters; her mother died in 1897. Our sister first felt the hand of the divine Teacher, causing her to mourn because of sin, at a very tender age. Her sins were first made known to her while attend-

ing a revival meeting. Her parents gave their consent for her to select the church of her own choice, and she offered herself and was received into the Elk Creek Church, in North Carolina, being baptized by her grandfather, Elder Enoch Reeves, while in her thirteenth year. Our sister endeared herself to the church. She was in possession of a quiet, humble disposition of character, lying close to that inner soul which so beautifully marks the walk of a true child of God, and is held far above price by Him who gives it. She was permitted to meet with us for the last time at our last May meeting. We can now vividly call her presence to mind as she joined in singing the songs of Zion, and as she listened to the gospel as delivered to us, the tears, which speak from the soul, forced themselves down her cheeks, thus showing how eagerly she grasped each crumb as it fell from her Master's table. Her quiet life was such as we would all wish to emulate. She has gone from our number to join, as we believe, the throng of dear ones gone before to sing around that great throne and see Jesus as he is. May her mantle fall on her dear children. May He who alone can, heal the wound so deeply made, and lead the husband in such a path that he may be enabled to say in gospel truth, "Thy will be done."

Written by a voted request of the Coast Fork Church in behalf of the bereaved relatives, by

(MRS.) J. B. POWRIE.

DRAIN, Oregon, May 17, 1908.

Mrs. Eliza Wallace Frazier died Dec. 15th, 1907, at her late home in Kenton, Del., aged 69 years. She was sick but three days, dying of complicated stomach trouble and heart failure. Mrs. Frazier was the wife of the late Deacon Alexander Frazier, of Bryn Zion Church, Kent County, Del. She never joined the visible church, but was a manifest believer in the doctrine of God our Savior, and since before the earliest recollections of the writer to the time of her death was a regular attendant of the Baptist meetings. She left no children. Her kind and easy manner, her sweet disposition and steadfast walk in the paths of uprightness, endeared her in the hearts of her family and relatives and all who knew her. She will be sadly missed by her family and friends, and also by Bryn Zion Church. May the God in whom she trusted sustain those who mourn their loss, which must be her eternal gain.

Interment in Bryn Zion Cemetery.

ALSO,

Howard S. Meredith died April 12th, 1908, at the home of his father, in Viola, Del., of pleurisy, aged 38 years and 11 months. He was the only son living of brother William W. Meredith. Being unmarried he leaves a father and two sisters, Mrs. Willard S. Cubbage and Mrs. Harry H. Jones, both of Viola, Del. Howard was the stay of his father's declining years. The writer was very closely associated with him; we played together when children, in youth we were together, in early manhood our hopes and aims and interests were mutually understood. I loved him as a brother. His sunny, kind and genial disposition made both the old and the young his friends; and better still, he knew and felt that he, too, was a sinner, therefore we can leave his eternal salvation in the hand of Jesus, the friend of sinners, with the same comfortable hope of a blessed immortality beyond the grave. That he felt an interest in the meetings, was known by those who knew him best. Near the end a frown fell across his countenance, but as he passed from this life to that beyond a smile took its place and was left for the loved ones in evidence of comfort.

The writer spoke from the following words: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The Lord is the refuge of his people. Interment in Cow Marsh Cemetery.

B. E. CUBBAGE.

BROTHER **Thomas Whittaker,** of Boone County, Ky., and a member of Mt. Pleasant Church, passed away May 8th, 1908, in the 86th year of his age. Brother Whittaker was for many years a faithful member of Mt. Pleasant Church, where he will long be missed. He had been a lover of the SIGNS for many years, and was firmly established in the doctrine of grace.

The funeral service was conducted at Bullitsburg meetinghouse on Sunday, May 10th, in the presence of a large and solemn audience. He leaves no children, but a widow, sister Sally Whittaker, and other relatives to mourn their loss. The remains were deposited in the public vault in Bullitsburg Cemetery to await the burial.

It is sad to part with our aged and faithful brethren; we miss them here, miss their company, their counsel and their godly example, but they are gone to that rest for which they long have sighed, and for which we who are left still hope and long. May God give grace to all his tried ones, and enable them to run with patience the race that is set before them, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

ALSO,

Brother **William T. Smith** was born in Madison County, Va., Jan. 22nd, 1819, and died near Burlington, Ky., April 13th, 1908, in the 90th year of his age. Brother Smith had been a faithful and devoted member of Mt. Pleasant Church, Ky., for a number of years, and was well established in the faith and order of the gospel. He leaves one child, Mr. James E. Smith, of Burlington, Ky., two grandchildren and other relatives to mourn for him.

The funeral service was conducted in the Universalist meetinghouse in Burlington, and was attended

by a large concourse of Kentucky's most respected people. He will be long and sadly missed by his community and by the church, but we have good ground of hope that he has gone from the infirmities of old age to immortal youth, and from the image of the earthy to bear the image of the heavenly.

One by one the faithful pass away from this earth, and may the God of all grace give his saints a glad looking forward to the day when mortality shall be swallowed up of life. H. M. CURRY.

Amanda M. Wragg died May 19th, 1908, aged 79 years and 4 months. The subject of this notice was born in Fairfield District, S. C., Jan. 22nd, 1829, and as I remember, her father was John Williams. When about fifteen years old she joined the Old Baptist Church, in Mississippi. Soon after this she was married to Reuben M. Wragg. In 1850 they moved to Anderson County, Texas. During his lifetime they took the SIGNS. About 1851 they joined Fort Houston Church by letter. He died in 1883. She was the last one of the number when I joined Fort Houston Church, in 1883. U. J. BELL.

PALESTINE, Texas, May 26, 1908.

Henry Clay Herndon, my brother, died at his home near Greenville, Ky., Thursday, May 28th, 1908, aged nearly 65 years. He leaves six children, two sisters and many friends to mourn their loss. He was born in Logan County, Ky. He was a member of the Old School Baptist Church for many years, and loved to talk of the things of the kingdom of Christ, believing in salvation by grace alone. He is at rest. God's will be done. (MRS.) E. C. PHELPS.

MEETINGS.

THE Abbington Old School Baptist Church, at Justus, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting to be held on Wednesday and Thursday, August 12th and 13th, 1908. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited. Those expecting to come by rail are requested to write to G. W. Goodrich, Olyphant, Pa., R. F. D., so that arrangements may be made to meet them on Tuesday. G. W. GOODRICH.

THE seventy-seventh annual meeting of the Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will be held this year, the Lord willing, with Union Church, at the residence of Deacon B. F. Myers, one-half mile from Colchester, McDonough Co., Ill., on September 4th, 5th and 6th, 1908. Colchester is situated on the Quincy Branch of the C., B. & Q. R. R. All trains will be met on Friday and Saturday. Brother Myers requests that as many as can conveniently, to come by rail. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially our ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

THERE are a few Old School Baptists in Riverside, Cal., and they have meeting the first and third Sundays in each month, at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

W. D. BALL.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at the Hall, corner of 19th St. and 8th Ave., fifth floor. Elevator entrance on either 19th St. or 8th Ave.

11:00 A. M. 2:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition, which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at the following rates, viz: a single copy for 10 cents; 12 copies for $1.00; 25 copies for $2.00; 50 copies for $3.00; 100 copies for $5.00. Address,

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 76. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1908. NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

KEARNEYSVILLE, Va., Feb. 4, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—Not long since, I was talking with friends upon the subject of the study of the Bible and the teaching of the truth that is in it. Since then a great many things have filled my mind regarding this subject, and as to how the children of God learn the truth. The world is full of teachers and preachers who are continually teaching people the Bible and how to be saved. They use many men and means, and great talents also, I have no doubt, in their efforts. But not one will ever learn these things in that way. It is only as the Holy Ghost takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us that we can know anything about the way of salvation. It is said under the new covenant, "They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." The apostle upon one occasion said, I do not tell you these things because you do not know them, but because you do know them.

In talking with my friends they thought that the Old School Baptists ought to teach the Bible to their children, and that Sunday Schools for that purpose should not be objected to, not as a means of salvation, but that they might become familiar with the letter of the word. They also said that our preachers ought not to preach so much upon predestination and election; that, said they, is very comforting to you who understand it, but why do you not tell poor, hungry sinners, such as we, how to find the way? I believe it to be proper and right for parents to teach and advise their children to read the Bible, it is the Book of all books, yet I know that one might be able to repeat every word of it from memory and still know no more about the truth that is in it than a heathen who never saw the Bible. A minister might preach with the eloquence of an Apollos and yet not be able to reveal one truth to one who was listening, but when God's time comes the message from the Bible and the message from the minister will be heard.

I have heard some say, I was raised a Baptist and I think that may be the reason I am one now. No, never; all the eloquence of man never caused any one to love the truth, but produces the opposite effect in natural men. When the scribes

and Pharisees could not gainsay the teachings of Jesus they were made angry, and many times would have killed him if they could. In calling to mind my own experience (and that is the only way we can come to know these things) I would say that I was raised by Old School Baptist parents and taught to read the Bible, and not having many books to read, and being fond of reading, I suppose that by the time I was ten or twelve years of age I had read it through several times, but my reading of it had given me no understanding of the truth contained in it, neither by knowing Old School Baptists did I ever learn to love them during my girlhood.

While dwelling under my father's roof there was an Old School Baptist minister who came to our home regularly, and preached there many times. I was compelled to listen to him against my will. I disliked him and what he preached so much that I could not be compelled to treat him civilly. Many times I thought, When I have a home of my own you will never enter it. No one ever lived who was more bitter against the truth than I. In my nineteenth year I was married. It was my parents' wish that this old minister should perform the ceremony. I said, "I will leave home to be married first." Not wishing me to do that, I was permitted by my parents to select my own minister. My intended husband being a Presbyterian, I selected his minister, with the intention as soon as I became good enough to unite with that denomination. The next year after I was married I began trying to get religion. I watched over my actions as carefully as I could, and read the Bible more diligently than ever; but alas for my hopes; while in my outward life there were no outbreaking sins, the wickedness of my thoughts overwhelmed me, until I was afraid the Lord would strike me dead. I trembled at every cloud that arose in the sky, for I feared that the lightning would take my life. It seemed to me I hated God, his truth and his people, and I did not know how to love, and could not. One day this Scripture came to me, Unless the love of God be in us we are none of his. I said, How can I love God? I do not know anything about Him, and how, therefore, can I love him? Then this Scripture came as an answer, If ye love not your brother whom ye have seen, how can ye love God whom ye have not seen? Immediately the aged minister, whom I had always hated, appeared before my mind as the loveliest person I had ever seen; my heart overflowed with love toward him, and I said it would be a privilege to wash his feet. I knew nothing about foot-washing then, or that it was practiced by any as an ordinance, but I believe in the spirit I did wash his feet, and I believe that it cannot be done rightly in any other way. Some time after this, one day there was just a whisper, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Then baptism was brought to my mind, and I thought, How gladly I would follow the Savior were I only fit; only good people unite with the church, and I am not good, but am a sinner. I did not need a preacher to tell me I was a sinner; I knew it for myself. I said, I will not act the hypocrite; I may not be able to control my thoughts, but I can and will control my outward acts. But how little I knew about God's way of teaching, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. I was continually followed with, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," and also with the knowledge that I was a guilty sinner. Had any one told me that Christ came to save

sinners, it would have done me no good, I could not have believed that it meant a sinner like me. One evening I was walking back and forth through the room when the conflict within me was great, the one telling me to be baptized and the other telling me I was not fit; I felt the clashing of the two swords, and felt as though I should be torn asunder, and I cried out, O Lord, am I beset with devils? Then the answer came: "What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies." Reading the Bible never taught me that Scripture, I did not remember that I had ever seen it. Many years after I had learned that lesson, I attended a meeting where I heard Elder Durand preach of the conflict between the old man and the new. I was taken back to the place where I first learned the lesson, and every word that fell from the preacher's lips found a response in my heart, and to-day that sermon is as fresh in my memory as when I first heard it. For a long time I was much troubled; I thought if God would save everybody then I might have hope; but I could not see why he should save me and leave any one else to perish. I thought there must be some reason why he should save men, and I would ask over and over again, Why should he do this? One day this Scripture came to me: "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." I said, Why, here Jesus gives no reason, only that it seemed good in the sight of his Father. Should I dare to ask any other reason? Then this Scripture followed: I have not chosen you because ye were greater than others, but because I had favor unto you. There I learned another lesson that has satisfied me to this day: that he saves whom he will, without any merit in the creature. Again, I was followed by this Scripture for days: "Make your calling and election sure." I thought, Why that seems as though there was something for me to do, and how can I do this thing, viz., make my calling and election sure? One day Elder White took for his text, The sacrifices of God are a broken and contrite heart. As he showed the law nailed to the cross of the Savior, and compared the experience of the children of God with that of David and the prophets and apostles, I listened like one in a dream. I said to myself, Surely these people are my people and my brethren. Then the Scripture came again, like a whisper, That is making your calling and election sure. We listen often to the word preached by the brethren, the servants of Christ, and enjoy it for a time, then it vanishes, leaving, however, a sweet fragrance. But it seems to me that there have been three messages given to me by the hand of God's ministers that have never left me, but remain just as fresh in my mind as when I first heard them.

It has pleased the Lord to lay his afflicting hand upon me in the last year, and all the sorrows of my former life seem to fade into nothingness before this one great grief. But as the blow fell, the words came, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." I thought, O how can I ever be comforted? How can I ever say, "Thy will be done"? I would think, Why could it not have been in some other way? Why must sorrow come this way? But I feel to-day that the Savior has verified his promise. Some time since, I attended a meeting, and on the last day Elder Lefferts preached from the way of the hewn wall. Dur-

ing that sermon I was entirely lost to all things around me. I seemed to be going along a narrow way with a high wall, smooth, hewn on both sides; there seemed to be stones in my path, which I was stepping over. I came to myself as one awaking out of a dream, and, without premeditation or forethought, was speaking of things that had lain all my life along my way; and I was made to say, This is the way. It could not have been in any other way. To me that was a sermon long to be remembered. To-day I feel to say with David, The Lord is good, and his mercy endureth forever. How different His teaching from that of men. A few nights since, I went to bed with a heavy heart, I felt as though I could hardly live, and I lay there quite a while thinking of heaven; I fell asleep with the words on my lips, Dear Savior, what is eternity? Then I was awakened by a voice which seemed to be within me, saying loudly,

"When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright, shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise,
Than when we first begun."

"By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation." All along our pathway, like Jacob of old, do we raise Ebenezers, thus saying that here the Lord met with us.

This is at your disposal.

SUBSCRIBER.

NACOGDOCHES, Texas, May 31, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Your kind and brotherly letter of April 23rd was received some weeks ago, and especially commended itself to me by the unoffending way in which you wrote. I desire to be led by this meek and lowly spirit in what I say or write at all times. God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, and if we are led by his Spirit we will not be found biting and devouring one another because we cannot agree. Knowing that there are differences of opinion in regard to a subject should not deprive us of the privilege of expressing our opinion, nor exonerate us from our duty to set forth the truth as we understand it, but should prompt us to a more diligent search of the Scriptures to know their teachings and to become more grounded in the faith, that we may be strong in the Lord. The presentation of our views in a brotherly way should not excite a bitter feeling in a brother who may differ with us, and, if led by the Spirit, the investigation of a matter, though there be diverse opinions concerning it, should not lead to strife and division, but rather to a better understanding and a closer union in the truth. Though we cannot be perfectly agreed upon all that the Scriptures teach while we have our finite minds, yet we should be faithful to our convictions and not shun to declare our belief because some believe differently.

The question that has been upon my mind for several days is this: Do the Scriptures authorize us to, or sustain us in contrasting good and evil? Some have an idea that we should present only that which is good and leave off speaking of all that is evil, and it has been remarked that the command to preach the word does not warrant us to contrast truth and error, and I have known able ministers of the gospel to be censured for contrasting the doctrine of God our Savior with the doctrines of men and devils. The Bible has many contrasts, a few of which I will mention to show that evil is often held in view with the good, that we, seeing the contrast, may behold how much more precious is the good. In the beginning, when God created the

earth, all was darkness; then he created the light, and separated the light from the darkness. Here is a contrast which we all can appreciate. Were there no night, the day would lose its significance. So it is in our experience; we must know something of the horrors of sin before we can appreciate the glad tidings of salvation. We must know our own weakness, and how unprofitable are our best efforts, before we can praise Him for the work he hath wrought for us. In the disobedience of one man (Adam) and the obedience of Christ we have a contrast that exalts our Savior above every name that is named in heaven or in earth, and abases man in the very lowest dust of the earth. By the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One are many made righteous. Our sinfulness does not come from what we do, for we were sinners in Adam; neither does our righteousness come from what we do, for it is the obedience of Christ that makes us righteous. Having been under the dominion of sin we are better prepared to worship him "who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." It was not enough that Paul should say we were in the kingdom of Christ, but he as clearly presents the fact that we had been delivered from the power of darkness. In Joshua's last address to the children of Israel he did not only tell them the Lord had given them a land for which they did not labor, and cities which they built not, but reminds them of their suffering in Egypt, and that the Lord had put darkness between them and the Egyptians and had destroyed the Egyptians in the Red Sea. How could the children of Israel have known the power and love of God in delivering them from bondage and giving them the promised land if they had not known the cruelties inflicted upon them in Egypt by Pharaoh, and their utter inability to save themselves? It is as clearly taught in the Scriptures that God raised up Pharaoh for the place he occupied as that Moses and Joshua were raised up for the place they occupied. Another contrast is found between the elect of God and the nonelect, represented by Jacob and Esau: "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." The hatred which God had for Esau is as clearly taught as the love which he had for Jacob, and the Scriptures not only reveal the fact that God hath mercy upon whom he will, but also that he hardeneth whom he will. As his love for Jacob is everlasting, so also must his hatred be for Esau, for he is an eternal God and changeth not.

When Christ was upon earth preaching his own gospel he not only taught his disciples what he came to do, but warned them of the leaven of the Pharisees. He taught them how to pray and also condemned the way the Pharisees prayed. He showed the fallacy of the missionary work of the scribes and Pharisees, and told them that in his kingdom they would all be taught of the Lord; but if we mention these moneyed pretentions of to-day some one will say we should not talk about other people's religion, saying it is not preaching the gospel and will drive people from us. But why should we be fearful if the world hate us, since Christ hath said, "If the world hate you, ye know it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you"?

If we bear in mind that Christ often

used contrasts to emphasize his teachings it will help us to understand them. One instance I will notice where the glorious truth which he wished to emphasize is often overlooked by many in trying to reconcile themselves to the opposite of which Christ meant to teach, not observing that he was using a contrast to magnify one important lesson. I refer to where he says, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." To illustrate to his disciples the absolute security which was vouchsafed to them in these words he makes use of the following contrast: "But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep." In their misunderstanding of the use of contrasts, and believing that Christ is here teaching that he leaves his people under the care of hirelings, some try to reconcile their views to this matter by applying the words "catcheth them" to the hireling, thus making it appear that the wolf not only scatters the sheep, but catches the hireling. But how about the preceding verse, where it is said, "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy," does this mean that the thief wants to steal the hireling? Surely not, but he is after the sheep, and so it is with the wolf. This is just what Christ means to impress upon our minds, that we may then see how precious he is to us. The thief comes to steal and to kill, but Christ comes that we might have life, and that more abundantly. We see the central truth presented here is the purpose of the coming of Christ, and the coming of the thief is only contrasted that we might see the exceeding graciousness of the coming of Christ. So the glorious theme that the Lord is our Shepherd and careth for us is magnified by the carelessness of an hireling. Jesus says in substance: Fear not, little ones of the flock, for I am not a thief or a robber come to steal and to kill, nor am I an hireling to flee when danger cometh, but I am the good Shepherd, who careth for you, and I lay down my life for you.

I might write at greater length, giving one example after another wherein good and evil are contrasted, but I do not think it necessary, as the foregoing will amply show that we are justified by the Scriptures in condemning error as well as presenting the truth, and that we should declare the truth concerning evil things as well as the good. So let us not shun to declare the whole counsel of God, contending earnestly for the faith and opposing the doctrines of men, and while we magnify the grace of God and his love for his people, also declare his judgments against the wicked. But let us remember in all that we say or write, as you said in your letter, that the Bible is our only standard; by it all our views must stand or fall.

Now I shall present one more scriptural contrast and leave the subject for your consideration. "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm. * * * Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." May the Lord bless those who love the peace of Zion.

Your brother in a precious hope through Christ, who gave himself for us,

ROBERT S. PACE.

[WE are glad of the above good letter from our dear brother Pace, and commend it to all our readers. If all of us were led by the spirit which prompted him to write, there would be much less

backbiting and devouring in our ranks. Difference of opinion should never cause one brother to desire the death of another, but such is too often the case, and because of such spirit it is often better not to present those things which stir up carnal minds. Peace is prosperity; war is death. He who loves Zion should study the things which make for peace and which edify the saints. No better evidence can a man present to the church that he really loves Zion above his chief joy; but when he backbites and slanders a brother, all his words of peace and love are as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.—K.]

CAVE CITY, Ky., March 19, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Sister Laura M. Baird has requested me to ask you to look over some letters from my dear husband, which she has copied for the SIGNS, and arrange them as you think best. She has also written a few things in his memory, which I think dear and true, and this I hope you will also publish.

Your sister,

SALLIE M. BARTLEY.

CARLISLE, Ohio, June 13, 1902.

DEAR SISTER BAIRD:—On our return here last night yours of the 6th was received and read with much comfort by us both. Dear sister, I am poor and sorrowful because of the evils and trials in the world and in myself, which oppress me; yet these are appointed to us in the purpose of God, and they are sanctified by his love, so that they seem to manifest his rich mercy to us in our salvation and make us desire a heavenly country; our rest is not on earth; the world, and the fashion of it, is passing away, the Lord is leading us and teaching us these things in our experience, and showing us his salvation and preparing us for the kingdom which he has prepared for us. When his kingdom shall have come, and his will shall have been perfected in us, then we shall see and know that all is for the best. I long to enter into his blissful presence, where his beloved Son is, to see him as he is in his glory and be with him and like him. This is a wonderful desire and hope, and it seems too good and great a blessing for a poor one of sorrow like me. I have had to suffer and endure reproach as a servant of Christ, and many have been my afflictions, but all this is as nothing, dear sister, if he will receive me to himself when he comes. He is my hope, my salvation, my all, and my spirit trusts in him. When I pass through the veil you will know this was true of me. God bless you all.

Your brother in sorrow,

D. BARTLEY.

LEBANON, Ohio, May 9, 1903.

DEAR SISTER BAIRD:—We have just returned from our little meeting here in town this (Saturday) afternoon, and I feel like writing to you. We know that there must come to us all, sooner or later, much tribulation, trial and sorrow, even as the Lord and his apostles have told us. On the other hand, for our comfort he has said that in him we shall have peace, and that he will not leave us comfortless, but will come to us, and that because he lives we shall live also.

I spoke this afternoon from Romans viii. 10, 11, and tried to show the meaning of the text: that the children of God are identified with both Adam and Christ, sin and righteousness, death and life; that they therefore have a painful experience, a conflict and warfare, doubts and hopes, darkness and light, sorrow and

joy, trouble and peace, fightings and triumphs, dying and behold we live, and at last death and resurrection. All this because of sin and righteousness, both of which are our inheritance, as one with Adam and one with Christ. How wonderful, yet how real and true all this is; it is all according to God's choice and appointment, and it is all for the lifting of Jesus on high, and to the praise of the glory of God's grace. How blessed it is, dear sister, to be one with Christ in his life of suffering, and his life of rejoicing and glory. If we be dead with Christ we believe that we shall also live with him. We not only know the fellowship of his sufferings, which were unto death because of sin, but we shall also know the power of his resurrection, which is unto holiness and eternal life. Our God and Father, who raised up our dear Lord from the dead, "shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." This was the substance of my talk; may you find a little comfort in it.

Our fervent love to you all. In trial and hope, yours,

D. BARTLEY.

LEBANON, Ohio, June 11, 1903.

DEAR SISTER BAIRD:—Your very welcome and comforting letter just came this evening, and my wife read it to me. I am thankful to know all goes as well with you as your letter tells me. It was in my mind to send you a letter soon, hoping to cheer you a little, and now that I have your letter I will wait no longer. Dear sister, I feel that I am a poor one to talk of comforting others, for I am so poor and disconsolate and cheerless myself, which makes me feel that all christians are better and happier than I, for I am a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; if in anything I am like Christ it is in this. But he was without sin, and holy and harmless, while I must cry with Paul, "O wretched man that I am!" I do so long to be without sin, and as harmless as the dear Lamb of God, but I am encompassed about with all the infirmities of the sinful flesh, which keep me very low; but I should not burden you with the cross that is given me to bear, knowing that you have had your appointed tribulations and afflictions. It is well that the Lord has given you grace and patience to meekly bear them. Paul says tribulation worketh patience. You ask me if you are wrong in saying the fearful disasters of late are not chance events or accidents. No, dear sister, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, and where there is almighty power to control and infinite wisdom to dispose all things, there can be no accidents, but God has a purpose in all things. What Elihu and the Lord said to Job is proof of this, as you will see. The late destructive storms and floods, and many fearful calamities, sweeping off hundreds of lives and millions of property, are evidently the righteous judgments of the Almighty visited upon the earth to teach us all to remember our dependence upon God and humble us before him; hereby his people will lay these things to heart, learn their own nothingness and cease from man, in whom is no help. I am thankful for you all that your health is not seriously worse, and that the Lord has been good to your children in sparing you; may he long do so, if it seem good in his sight. Yet for you to depart and be with Christ is far better, the word assures us; nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for us.

At the meeting here last Sunday they sang, "Jesus! and shall it ever be, a

mortal man ashamed of thee!" &c. I told them of my peculiar experience forty-nine years ago that day, the second Sunday in June, 1854, the solemn day of my baptism, when they sung this hymn at the riverside; and I am left here yet. O how wonderful the Lord's mercies have been to me! The second Sunday in November, 1844, he showed me my sins and guilt and awful condemnation, while my dear father was preaching. The third Sunday in July, 1854, I took my first text, Isaiah xxxv. 10. Truly can I say, my dear sister,

"Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

Greatly have I suffered in my life, both bodily and mental affliction, and quite a number of times have I been snatched from death's door, and my friends despaired of my recovery, but here to-night I have written you this letter without glasses, and I am wondering what the Lord yet has for me to do and to suffer, but above all I wonder whether the high and holy and glorious God will in the end receive a poor sinner like me to himself in eternal glory. O, it seems too much to hope for, yet I cannot help but hope. Paul says, "For we are saved by hope." This is a precious and blessed hope to us, dear sister. In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie promised before the world began.

Express my love to all your children and our spiritual kindred, and be assured of my high esteem and fellowship for you. The Lord sustain and comfort you all.

Your ever poor brother,

D. BARTLEY.

OLNEY, Ill., August 4, 1905.

MRS. L. M. BAIRD—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—Noon to-day brought me your good letter of the 1st, which was a real comfort, especially to know that you are much better in health than when we left you. We have received the sad intelligence of the death of Elder Wm. Startzman, which came as a sad shock to us. Death is God's appointment once to all in this life. How blessed are they who die in the Lord; for if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him, says Paul. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." Christ suffered and died for sin and unto sin. They that are Christ's thus suffer and die with him. His word to us is, "Because I live, ye shall live also." He takes away our sin and death, and gives us instead his holiness and life. The experience of this in us is one of suffering, weeping and mourning, and also of rejoicing in the Lord and praising him. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." He will wipe away all our tears. He gives us now to sow in tears, but they that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

I am humbly thankful that you have been comforted through any of my writings in the SIGNS, yet it is God that comforteth, dear sister, and he knoweth how to comfort his poor and afflicted children in the time of their need. May the Lord evermore bless you all, your family and the kindred in Christ. Remember me to all in love and best wishes. It would indeed be a comfort and privilege to visit you all again, and may the Lord grant us this favor.

Your brother in affliction,

D. BARTLEY.

IN MEMORY OF ELDER D. BARTLEY.

A BELOVED servant of the Lord, whose voice during his sojourn on earth often sounded praise unto God, pouring forth the doctrine of sovereign, eternal and almighty love, and the efficacy of the atonement of our Lord Jesus in removing all guilt from every soul for whom it was made. The little band of believers at Oak Grove, Barren Co., Ky., who often perused his writings and sometimes had the privilege of sitting under the sound of his voice, will feel thankful for the blessed privilege as long as life and reason remain. He was a minister of wonderful power and intellect, but we can only think of him as the beloved disciple walking so close to the Master that the beauty of the Lord our God was upon him. The peace that passeth all understanding gave to his face an expression of wonderful sweetness, and he made the religion he lived so precious, and so greatly to be desired, that all things of a worldly nature sank into nothingness in comparison or beside it. It is not that what Elder Bartley said was so different from what other ministers of our faith and order have said before, his peculiar charm of manner and speech, his abiding faith that with him Christ was in very truth a living presence; it was the grace of God in him. The most effective preaching is not always that which comes from the pulpit; it is that which comes from the lives of those who claim to be the people of God. Ye are our epistle, known and read of all men.

"Soldier of Christ, well done;
Praise be thy new employ,
And while eternal ages run,
Rest in thy Savior's joy."

L. M. BAIRD.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, April 10, 1908.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—Inclosed you will find a letter which has meant much to me, and means much to me to-night. I should like to see it in the SIGNS. To me it has been several times as the message of God; surely to others there is comfort in it. Brother Wesley is now at his home in Mattoon, Ill.

Your sister in Christ,

RUTH KEENE.

SCHENECTADY, N. Y., Jan. 16, 1908.

MY DEAR SISTER RUTH:—I desire to write you and express my sincere thanks for the little memento which you have sent me. I assure you I have had much occasion to view it intently, thus bringing back into closer remembrance the original. I have not felt much like letter writing for the past week (I cannot tell just why), but I shall run the risk of tiring you in order to show you I really care for the precious answers.

My mind runs upon Job ii. 6: "And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life." There is a great deal to think of in that passage, "Behold, he is in thine hand." My sister, you and I know what it means to be in the hand of Satan; everything seems dark and gloomy, we cannot see God or feel his presence, but at our very elbow is Satan, well and attractively clad. He pleases our eye, he suggests such alluring things that we wonder why those things seem so attractive which before seemed so repulsive when we saw others doing them; surely it was only prejudice that we have never entered quite so fully into the pursuit of worldly pleasures. Satan proves to our eyes that it is good to do those things we have heretofore thought wrong. Henceforth, think we, we will be more charitable and broad-

minded, we will do as others do and forget our former old-fashioned ways; we will live for pleasure only; was that not the reason why we were put on earth, to enjoy the fullness thereof? O Satan, wily deceiver. Beautiful and tempting was the fruit of the forbidden tree. By this time we have either forgotten God altogether, or if we do think of him we cannot feel like worshiping him and thinking upon heavenly things. We are in Satan's hand. Perhaps there comes to us a silent voice asking whether all is really as good as it seems; are we really satisfied, or is there not a suspicion that all is not right? If there is, surely it is due to our imagination, or perhaps to that detestable habit we have fallen into of carefully weighing our thought and speech to see if it be acceptable before God. Well, let us forget all that, and just enjoy ourselves. Why have we been such fools as to let such good times pass by without enjoying them? Surely we did not enjoy going aside and meeting with a few unattractive people to talk doctrine. All the world is doing as we are now, surely we must have been mistaken; so in we plunge. But hold! "But save his life." What does this mean? Satan has us under his control by this time, why are we hindered from partaking of the alluring feasts of the world? "But save his life." Ah, beloved sister, Satan has not full possession of us even now, for God hath said, "But save his life." Yes, Satan has led us away from God, he has caused us perhaps to sin, but he cannot take away our interest in that salvation purchased for us by the blood of the Man of sorrows; God in his divine wisdom, mercy and power has set a limit to that which Satan can do to us. We are led back gently and tenderly into the fold, truly thankful that though we had forgotten God he has not forgotten us, and takes us to live with him throughout eternity. But Satan does not try us the same way every time; he even enters our hearts and minds, destroying the remembrance of that time when the Red Sea opened for us and let us escape the punishment we so richly deserved for our immense and awful sins. We are made to forget that sweet voice which first proclaimed that we were free; that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should never perish, but have everlasting life." We forget what it means to our poor, weak souls to feel the presence of the beautiful Savior, or how we loved to drink in his words as they fell from his precious lips. O where is God? Is there a God? Is this not really a chance creation? Did there not happen to be centuries ago (yea, a million centuries ago,) some rolling orb that threw off particles into space? And did not upon one of them (the earth) life begin by some unknown chance, through something like spontaneous combustion? Are not the hills, now so dark and forbidding, the result of upheavals of nature, due to purely scientific causes? Or if there is a God where is he? "My soul is weary of my life: I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul." I was mistaken when I said, I feel that the Lord has been very gracious to me. I cry to him, and he answers not. O Lord, where art thou? "Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble." But let us not forget there must be, there surely is a God. Because we cannot see him is not really proof to us, even in our darkest hours, that he does not exist; that he does not hold the reins of control upon vast creation; that he does not

know the strife our souls are passing through. But weary and footsore, with much wandering and with worrying over our troubles, there yet comes a change for us, for suddenly God appears to us. "And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before." Perhaps we appreciate now more than ever the tender joy at the renewed presence of our Lord, and we feel that we have never loved him as now. Surely our bitter strife has been that we might the better enjoy that perfect peace and rest which is at such times given us for a season. "Also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before." Surely, dear sister, you will agree with me that our treasure has increased after our wandering; we really are made rich through tribulation, for then we need Jesus the most, and then he appears to us in such radiant glory. What is our treasure here on earth? Is it that which moths may corrupt or thieves break through and steal? Do we consider our wealth that which we can accumulate of earthly goods, which perish with these weak bodies of ours? Or are our treasures rather the pearls which fall from the lips of the Master? Is our wealth that which may be taken from us, or is it not rather treasure laid up for us in heaven? Is not our treasure here on earth the daily blessings falling freely upon us, the walks of our spirits with God, the assembling of a handful of the brethren in worship?

"So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning." Rich as we were before, we are immensely more rich. See those beautiful hills now in the bright sunshine, no longer gloomy and forbidding; they were put there to show the handiwork of the Creator. All nature now seems to us to be rejoicing, and we are with God. Now we know with reverence what the name Father means to us, and we feel inspired with a holy fear. "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High."

And now, in reply to your forebodings of the future, just turn with me to the ninety-first Psalm, and read this with comfort: "Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day. * * * Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation, there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." Beautiful and soul-satisfying words, they express better than I can frame, the promises of God to us. He shall be with us in many troubles. Fear not, O my soul, for I shall yet praise him. Since God has given us such promises, and since we know that he is from everlasting to everlasting, and that in him is no shadow of turning, we can rest sure that all will come out right in the end. For we know that all things work together for good to those whom the Savior has redeemed.

In closing, I feel to say with John, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." Many as are His blessings and tender acts of mercy toward us, we cannot express them

all, even in so many books as should fill the world itself, so let us, as you say, trust in him; though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, let us fear no evil, for he is with us; his rod and his staff they comfort us.

But I cannot write forever. May Jesus come very close to you and make his presence known to you, and may he be very precious to you. May he keep you very close to him, and keep your heart and mind upon him. With him you can with assurance pass through every storm, feeling sure that he is able to bring you safely to that haven of rest prepared for them that love him.

WESLEY N. SPITLER.

SHERWOOD, Oregon, Dec. 28, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Inclosed find three letters, which will speak for themselves. If you deem them worthy of a place in the SIGNS please publish them.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. P. ALLISON.

BLUE SPRINGS, Mo., Dec. 10, 1907.

DEAR AGED BROTHER ALLISON:—If one so unworthy may be allowed to address you thus. I did feel unworthy to be under the roof of such a brother as yourself. I think of the many miles and of the many years which you have spent traveling over the mountain States preaching the kingdom of God to the people. You are about the only one left of the early preachers in the mountain States. I cannot help commending you highly for the work's sake. The Lord's holy angel has stood by you in your going. You have seen many young ministers come up, and you have been very kind to them; may the Lord reward you, my dear, aged brother.

I want to try to write you upon the subject of the Old School Baptists. By this name they are distinguished from the followers of the noted John Calvin, Luther, the Weslyans, the Campbellites, Fullerites, and others. All these endeavored to change the worship, which is of grace, to the works of the law and doctrines of men and devils. We have never changed our doctrine, but still contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, and we are still following in the same path and contending for the old landmarks, and do not follow the new things which have come up during the past five hundred years. They have given up trying to proselyte us as a people, and confess that we do not err in our doctrine, and that we have never changed; but they have said of us that we would soon die out, for we did not have Sunday Schools among us, nor seminaries, nor colleges to prepare ministers, and they say we have contented ourselves with the idea that the Lord would attend to his own business, and that he would work in his people both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Yes, he will ordain peace for us, because he hath wrought all our works in us. Thus "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Our opponents say in their history that the Old School Baptists have but one periodical in the United States. Their history was finished in 1845, and they did not say who edited that paper. They did say however that it was published in New York, so I take it to have been the SIGNS, published by Elder Gilbert Beebe, the first in the United States in defense of the faith against the follies of this untoward generation, from which we are exhorted to save ourselves. These are the ungodly men who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, and deny the only

Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ in the salvation of poor sinners.

His name shall be called "Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." He came out of Zion to turn ungodliness away from Jacob, and so all Israel shall be saved by him, as it is written. He will not cast away his people, whom he foreknew. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." O the heights and depths of the glory of God, and his ways are past finding out. "He is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." And all "the powers that be are ordained of God." He holds the destiny of all nations in his hand, and he will say to those who are the Father's in the last day, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," and enter into the joy of thy Lord.

And so, Amen, dear brother.

W. L. B.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., August 16, 1907.

ELDER J. P. ALLISON—MY DEAR BROTHER IN THE BLESSINGS OF THE GOSPEL:—While reading your excellent letter a few days ago in the SIGNS of August 15th, written to brother Newkirk, I became possessed of an irresistible desire to write to you. While we have not looked upon each other face to face, yet my love has gone out to you while reading letters in the SIGNS over your signature. We cannot tell how divine love cometh, or whither it goeth, but we recognize it by its effect upon our inner secret feelings, and if it is true spiritual love which prompts and impresses us to communicate one with another, then our object in writing can be no other than the love of God and the lifting of Jesus on high. My prayer is that this may be true in my case. I have longed to see you, for I have felt it would be profitable to talk to you, or rather to listen to you talk. There is a sweetness in gospel tidings which none can appreciate save those who know the joyful sound. To know the language of Canaan is to know the Lord, and to know the Lord is to be in possession of life eternal. How wonderful is our hope, dear brother, and how strong and secure is the Foundation of it. The experience of God's grace embraces all of the doctrine of God our Savior; so that when we try to separate doctrine and experience we interfere with the fundamental truth of the gospel of Christ. In your letter to brother Newkirk you have presented the doctrine of Christ as you have been enabled to behold it through the eye of your heart's experience, and I feel confident that such is the way that the Spirit takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us. The Lord is not an uncertain teacher, but we are uncertain creatures; we are often too ready to jump at conclusions emanating from the natural mind. When we declare the truth of the gospel, as we have experimental knowledge of it, we are not far from the kingdom, and those who hear will say, Amen. I am glad you wrote as you did on the subject of the soul. I fully agree with every word you have said on the subject, and I believe you wrote carefully and prayerfully. I could not make use of the term, "the soul of man," for as you have quoted, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Surely this is the same creature of whom the apostle said, "For the creature was made subject to vanity," &c. It is the creature that sins

(not some part of him); it is the creature that repents, and the creature that is saved. The creature which is of the posterity of the generation of Jesus Christ is the same creature which is of the posterity of the generation of the first Adam. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." It is the subject of both births, the one from the earth (the flesh), and the other from above (the Spirit), which is required to make up the saint of the living God. It is this same creature (possessing as he does the two great principles of life and death, viz., the mystery of godliness and the mystery of iniquity,) who hopes in the mercy of God, who looketh beyond the boundaries of time "for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Then surely the creature which hopes is the same which realizes and enters into the full fruition of his hopes.

But, my precious brother, I did not intend to say anything on this deep and important subject, I meant only to inform you of my pleasure in what you so ably wrote. I do not wish you to consider this letter as adding anything in the way of light and understanding to your letter, but please accept it as a small token of my esteem and fellowship for you in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. That many more years may be added to your hitherto useful life, is the prayer of your unworthy brother,

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Dec. 4, 1907.

MY DEAR BROTHER ALLISON:—Your very kind and interesting letter came to hand while I was in Maine attending the associations there. It was a pleasant greeting on my arrival home, and I assure you I enjoyed its perusal. A few days ago I had the privilege of reading a letter written by you to Elder Durand, in which you spoke of my poor little letters written to Elder Durand and afterwards published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. In your letter to brother Durand you unconsciously reversed the proper order of things by speaking of me in the terms which properly belong to you, and speaking of yourself in the terms which belong to me. My precious brother, I would gladly open up all my secret inner heart to you if I could express myself properly. I want you to still love and esteem me for the truth's sake, but not for any qualifications that I might possess. If indeed I am one of the children in our heavenly Father's family, I am the least among the thousands in Israel. All my life I have been a slow learner and an unprofitable servant. When I was received into the church, twenty-four years ago, all I could say was that I had a desire to be an humble follower of the meek and lowly Jesus. To-day I cannot say more than that, I have not attained unto the wisdom and knowledge which I hoped I would. With David I can say, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." My walk has been crooked; I have listened to the dictates of my own flesh; I cannot do the things that I would; I am poor and weak and ignorant, yet I hope, dear brother, I do know that the dear Lord does not require at my hands any of the work necessary to my salvation. I feel to hope that I am fully grounded and settled in the truth of inspiration, as expressed by the apostle when he said, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." I also feel to know that the Lord can take a worm like me and thresh a mountain, if it is his pleasure.

Brother Durand has been a dear father in Israel to me. We live only sixteen miles apart, and see each other frequently; he is wise in counsel and excellent in judgment, and a sweet and instructive preacher. Our little church in Philadelphia has twenty-seven members, and our congregation numbers from fifty to one hundred. We have meeting every Sunday morning, and nearly every Sunday evening we meet together for singing and social intercourse. Peace, harmony and love reign in our midst. Our association (the Delaware) will meet with us next spring.

Please excuse this disconnected letter; I would write you a better one if I could. My wife joins me in love to yourself and your wife.

Affectionately your unworthy brother,
B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., April 15, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Having written some on that portion of Scripture recorded in Genesis xxii. 14: "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen," being the words of Abraham after the trial of his faith in offering Isaac upon one of the mountains God led him to, I would call attention to two facts, viz., Abraham was in the flesh when on the mountain, and also the trial was to prove to Abraham his faith in God. Not that God was unacquainted with the faith of Abraham, but that Abraham was to know in a measure his faith in God, and the trial manifested his faith. "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth even for ever."—Psalms cxxv. 2. Abraham was upon the mountain of faith when he quoted the words, "Jehovah-jireh" (the Lord will provide). "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." From the mountain of faith Abraham saw the mount of the Lord, the church. As Jesus told the Jews, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." So every child of God, when brought to see the day of Jesus Christ upon any one of the mountains round about the heavenly Jerusalem, rejoices in the salvation of Jesus Christ for lost and guilty sinners. God has surrounded new Jerusalem with mountains and bulwarks so no enemy is able to find a weak point; adjoining faith is the mountain of his love. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." He sends the rain on the just and the unjust, and maketh the sun to rise on the evil and the good. God displays his love to mankind in his creation of all that exists, and in placing man above or over all the animal creation, giving him power and dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air, over the cattle and over all the earth. (Gen. i. 26.) God's love exists toward all his creation in the fact that he feeds and clothes every living thing. "Thou givest them their meat in due season." I have often wondered at the great providing love manifested by God in supplying all the needs of all created things, and only they to whom the Son reveals him know God, and they come to know Him more and more as they are placed upon the mountains round about the mount of the Lord. The greatest manifestation of God's love is in the gift of Jesus Christ and all the blessings treasured in Christ for his people. Hear, O heavens, and rejoice, O earth, for the Lord hath done it. God in his creation of man made him subject to vanity, so that we by nature are the opposite to God, who is holy. God's love

is manifested in the very fact that he loved them chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world with an everlasting love. John says, "We love him, because he first loved us." God's love is shown by the fullness of his riches treasured in Christ Jesus to be bestowed upon the church, and these are in nowise dependent upon any arm of flesh, but were treasured in Christ before we had an existence in Adam, for Paul says in Eph. i. 3, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Also, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9. This last quotation shows the declaring of the end from the beginning by the eternal God, and shows the blessings of God given the church in Christ before the world was. Remember these truths are only seen in the mount of the Lord. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and how can one be brought to the mountain of faith, as Abraham was, except he be born again? Or how can we know the love of God except we have passed from death unto life? The love of God to them chosen in Christ embraces, as I said, the fullness of all the riches treasured in Christ. A part of these riches we experience while in this valley of the shadow of death, others are yet to be bestowed when we shall have passed beyond the vale of the flesh and awake with His likeness. In this life we experience sanctification by operation of the Holy Ghost, whereby we are set apart in our exercise to pray unto God, to praise his holy name. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Neither can one pray unto God with the carnal mind, for the carnal mind is enmity to God; so it must stand a fact that to pray to God one must receive the drawing power of the Spirit and be set apart from the entanglements of the world before the mind flows out to God. Jesus in the seventeenth chapter of John, when he prayed to God, prayed that they (his people) be sanctified by the truth. Thy word is truth, and my faith lays hold that every word of prayer by Jesus in that seventeenth chapter is to be fully answered, and is prophecy, for we believe he prayed according to the will of God. The word "sanctify" means to separate or set apart to a sacred use. A part of the riches treasured in Christ we experience in this life is our hope as an anchor of the soul; another is our faith, "most precious faith," as one writes; then the love of God shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost. These and many others we now experience when on the mount of God's love, and from this mount we look by faith, as did Abraham, and can say, Jehovah-jireh (the Lord will provide). "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." There is an infinite height on beyond, and we are lost in contemplation of it; here we only know in part; we know just in the measure of the spiritual wisdom given us of the mind of Christ. The love of God is set forth in bringing one that is vile and polluted, corrupt and base and in the lowest hell, to sit in heavenly places in Christ, and not only place him there, but to make him a joint-heir with Christ and a son of God, and change his vile body and fashion it like unto his glorious body.

I have only touched upon the mountain of his love.

J. M. FENTON.

MUIRKIRK, Ontario, March 13, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—May one so prone to wander in by and forbidden paths address any of the Lord's servants who have been favored to stand upon the walls of Zion in this way? My feeble excuse for writing you is this: While I was busied about the things of time my mind was caught away to contemplate the wondrous glories of the gospel, and I felt constrained to pen a few of the thoughts that passed and repassed as consolation wafted from the garden of spices, where dwells our great High Priest, the Mediator between God and man. Could I write my thoughts as they came to me, without the fear of the adversary, who still tries to overcome me, I would be more at ease. But I still find

> "'Tis self, that legal thing and base,
> That keeps me from my rest;
> Me from myself let Christ release,
> And soon I shall be blest."

When once raised above self, and given to see things inexpressible and full of glory, and feeling the refreshing light, and lisping the sweet songs of Zion, how loath we are to leave the place and to remember that we must consider the days of darkness, for they shall be many. We must again tremble with fear at the growls of the chained lion which seems to shake the earth at times, causing the poor, halting, hoping, crying lamb, who feels to be at the end of the earth, to once more look to Him who has promised, saying, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Then the lion again comes down with the lamb, and he "shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord." "We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." He made atonement for his bride, the church of the living God. Paul writes, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live." Peter says, "Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings." I fill up what is behind of the sufferings of Christ. He cried at the last, "It is finished." His sufferings are past, but the bride redeemed must suffer to fill up what is behind of his sufferings. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us."

A few years ago, in a dream or vision, I was given a wonderful view of the church, which is still much upon my mind; I saw her in the form of a woman in white linen raiment. I have said her raiment was as white as snow, but this winter I have seen no snow in purity of whiteness as I saw that blood-washed robe of righteousness. She was in the wilderness; her head was not visible. In another moment I saw a great dragon pass to make war on the woman. Though not visible to the natural eye, I thought there was warfare. Again, I saw the dragon return, and his body was sunken and the power was taken from him. He will bruise Satan's head. As I awoke I said, The power is taken from the enemy, and I will suffer no longer, which was verified at the time. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings." And the words were with me, That ye may be able to comfort others with the same comfort wherewith ye are yourselves comforted of God. This is the worthiness, not of him that willeth, but of God that showeth mercy. That we may have fellow-

ship with him we both must suffer. He slept in the grave, but was raised again by the same power that in the beginning breathed into the nostrils of Adam the breath of life. Jesus is our very life, which is hid with Christ in God. "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." We taste his sufferings, and when he who is our life shall appear we shall appear with him in glory. How good it is to feel that power which raised us to walk in newness of life. It was the same power which gave light when it was said, "Let there be light." If not deceived, I have felt that power when listening to you preach the gospel from the words, He was "declared to be the Son of God with power," and also when it was my blessed privilege to be buried with Him in baptism, that sacred ordinance which he commanded his followers. Yet he says, "Without me ye can do nothing." That I, so unworthy, should be thus favored, is a wonder of wonders to me. The natural heavens seemed resplendent with glory; I could say, Christ is risen. Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness leaning upon her Beloved? He is her strength, her very life, and she must be leaning upon him all the way. I believe, as Elder Ker wrote, that we do feel a foretaste of glory while here below, a being raised to taste the sweetness of the streams of the city of our God.

If this is written amiss, may it be forgiven, but I hope that it is in love and charity to all who have been enabled to say with Thomas, "My Lord and my God."

From a hoping, halting, doubting one, who needs charity,

(MRS.) D. T. GILLIS.

WILMINGTON, Del., June 18, 1908.

MRS. MARY PURINGTON—VERY DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD:—This beautiful morning I am blessed to enjoy the comforts of brother F. Selby Fisher's home here in Wilmington. I spoke to the church here last evening, and if the Lord will, will again this evening. Dear sister, I have thought of you every day since I visited you in your home while at Hopewell. I feel that my visit with you and your dear sister was one among many of the high blessings to me of God which I am not worthy to receive. I feel that you are a mother in Israel. I was much comforted in hearing you relate your christian experience to Elder Chick and myself. I felt how rich you were in faith, and although you are so afflicted in body, yet it is a miracle how God blesses you to retain your mental faculties; what a great blessing to you. I know you realize that the Lord has been with you all these many years. When you have been called upon to walk through many waters of affliction, and felt that the angry waves and billows were about to overwhelm you, and you would cry to the Lord, as did Peter, then he would speak peace to your troubled soul and there would be a great calm; then you were made to say like one of old, The Lord was with me, and I knew it not. I know, dear sister, that you have experienced with David, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."—Psalms xxiii. 1-4. What a solid comfort and solace this is!

"The Lord is my shepherd." If so, all is well with us. A shepherd is one who watches over his flock to protect them from all harm. Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."—John x. 11. Yes, Jesus is the good Shepherd, and has given his life for his people and has saved them forevermore. This is their happy approbation: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Again, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." The call comes to every heir of God for whom he prepared his kingdom before the world was, and the power accompanies the call, which is effectual. They are called from death unto life, so the life of Christ is made manifest in them, for the life that we now live in the flesh we live by the faith of the Son of God. Our faith and hope reach beyond this mortal life into the haven of eternal rest, where we shall sing redeeming love unto God and the Lamb forevermore.

Dear sister, may the Lord sanctify my imperfect letter to your comfort. Please accept my many thanks for the remembrance that you sent me by Elder F. A. Chick. I am unworthy to be remembered thus by you. I know that you are only waiting on the Lord until he shall come and take you to himself. Please receive my christian love and fellowship. Remember me to your dear sister, who so lovingly cares for you. I desire to be remembered to brother Chick and family, also to all the church there.

Your unworthy brother,

MARION BARTLEY.

[WE publish this comforting letter at the request of our aged sister Purington. —ED.]

POTTER, Ark., April 29, 1908.

ELDER H. C. KER:—As my husband is writing to renew for the SIGNS, which we feel we cannot do without, I will also write a few lines; not that I have anything to write that I think will be of interest to you, but I am the one that will be benefited, I am sure. I sometimes feel that I am very selfish, for I am always asking my friends for favors, yet I never do any in return.

I want to thank you for your views on the rich man and Lazarus, which appeared in the SIGNS of January 1st, 1908. I had been wanting to ask you about that parable for some time, but kept putting it off. I think you explained it well, and all in harmony with the word of God, but there is one thing more in this same chapter (Luke xvi. 28,) that I would very much like your views upon through the SIGNS; that is, about the rich man's five brethren, who were they? I have no light on that part of the chapter at all.

I have another request to make through the SIGNS, and that is this, I would like to have the name of the person who wrote me from New York last August, giving me their views on a question which I had asked brother Chick, concerning Joseph's cup, and which he had answered through the SIGNS. I suppose it was some one who reads the SIGNS. It seemed to me that I had been looking for that letter before it came, and I was not the least surprised by receiving it.

I have just read a letter in the last number (May 1st) from a dear sister in Oklahoma (Nancy Creel), which tells my feelings better than I can tell them myself. If I could write such comforting letters I would like to write for the dear old SIGNS, but alas, I know that "in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to per-

form that which is good I find not." I do not wish to be understood as saying that letter was the only good one there was in the number, for they were all good; but you know that sometimes one letter will fit your feelings better than others. I want to say to all the writers of the SIGNS, Write on, and feed poor, hungry souls.

LAURA A. WILSON.

[THE question of our sister, regarding the brethren of the rich man, is answered in the last paragraph of the article referred to my her.—K.]

DANVILLE, Ill., May 4, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Please find inclosed two dollars for the SIGNS another year. I have felt encouraged many times in reading the precious truth contained therein; surely the Lord has been good and blessed the editors and writers that they have so earnestly and boldly contended for the truth in such a brotherly way, which makes me feel that although I am poor, and sometimes wonder as to whether I should stop taking the paper or not, when I consider the many times I have felt much cast down, feeling anxious to know the truth as it is taught in the Bible, how my poor soul has rejoiced in the privilege of reading the many good letters in the SIGNS, so I do not want to stop as long as I can pay for it. I sometimes am made to wonder that so many claiming to be Old Baptists, and love, or claim to love, Bible doctrine, can help enjoy reading the SIGNS, unless they, as the children of Israel, have become tired of the old way and are seeking something new and more pleasing to the world, as we believe some are over-anxious as to the numbers, and seem to forget that it is no bad sign if only a few are found contending for election and predestination; but I think it is poor evidence of an Old School Baptist when one shows so little interest for the SIGNS and shows much more concern for something more corresponding to the wisdom of this world.

I must not try to write much, but thank you for the patience and love you have shown in sending the much esteemed paper as you have so long after the time paid for. I hope, if it is the Lord's will, to see you all. May God uphold us and sustain us and give us courage to do his will.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

OWEN HUGHES.

QUINCY, Mass., June 24, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—My father, Donald McKay, of Scotsville, Cape Breton, has been suffering from a stroke of apoplexy during the past five months. He is in his seventieth year. Although physically incapacitated, his mind is clear and he derives greater comfort than ever before from reading the SIGNS, to which he has been a subscriber since he first saw a copy of it, twenty-five years ago. He is being cared for at his home, and has the benefit of skilled nursing and medical attendance. He has had his share of temporal adversities, but his mind being stayed on the things that are eternal his life has been full of happiness. Like the psalmist he can commune: "Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord has dealt bountifully with thee." The brethren are requested to remember their brother McKay while at the throne of grace.

J. D. McKAY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1908.

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EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—There is a Scripture upon which I would be glad if you or some other brother would write through the SIGNS. This Scripture came to me in a dream several years ago. I had been meditating upon the love and mercy of God, and the long-suffering of the Redeemer of Israel. I had read the Scripture, but had no recollection of it at the time it was presented to me. It is to be found in Revelation xv. 8, and reads, "And the temple was filled with smoke." When these words were spoken I awoke. If you feel that it is of the Lord I would be glad for you to give your views upon it, especially the words "temple" and "smoke," and oblige a hobbling, halting brother,

JOSEPH H. BOZEMAN.

TEHUACANA, Texas, April 2, 1908.

We have never felt that we knew or could say much with regard to the figures used in the book called Revelation, yet some things seem clear. We have felt much in the same way regarding the types recorded in the Old Testament. Some of those types are explained by the pen of inspiration in the New Testament, and of the meaning of these we are sure. Thus we are sure what the abiding of Jonah in the whale's belly was intended to signify, because the blessed Redeemer himself tells us. So Paul in the letter to the Hebrews has set forth what some of the types did signify. Of these things we may speak with all confidence and boldness, but with regard to the meaning of other types, such as are not directly explained in the New Testament, we feel to tread softly. We can say of some of them that they appear to us to mean this or that thing, but still we cannot feel to speak with authority of them, because we do not find a direct explanation in the word. This is true also of much that is recorded in Revelation. We may feel sure that the general meaning of all that is contained in this book is the testimony of Jesus and of his kingdom, yet the highly wrought figures of speech by which these things are set forth are, many of them at least, very dark to us, therefore if we speak of them at all it must be rather in the way of inquiry than in the way of assertion; and in replying to the request of our brother we can only suggest a few things, and desire to be understood as speaking in the way of suggestion rather than in the way of confident assertion.

It seems clear that the words "temple" and "smoke" must be used with reference, in the first place, to the typical temple and smoke often spoken of in the Old Testament, and we have Bible authority for saying that the temple at Jerusalem was a type of the church of God in her union with Christ, whose body was the true temple; as he said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again." This he said with reference to his body, we are told. The apostle Paul also said of our bodies, that they are the temple of the Holy Ghost; but rather, by the temple at Jerusalem the whole church is set forth. This we need not pursue further here and now. There are also references in the Old Testament to there having been smoke in the sanctuary. In Exodus xl. 34–36, it has appeared to us that the word "cloud," which is said to be upon the sanctuary, presents the same thing as the word

"smoke" in the text, and in Exodus this cloud is associated with the glory of God. Also in 1 Kings viii. 10, 11, it is said that the cloud filled the house of the Lord, and that the priests could not enter and minister there because of the cloud. This also was evidently the manifestation of the glory of God. Also in 2 Chronicles v. 13, 14, we see in substance the same thing stated, and in this place it is said, "For the glory of the Lord had filled the house;" and in the vision recorded in Isaiah vi., when he saw the glory of God, and his train filled the temple, it is said that "the house was filled with smoke." There can be no doubt, as it appears to our mind, that here also was set forth the glory of God. In Ezekiel x. 4, we also read of the cloud that filled the house of the Lord, and here also it appears to set forth the manifest glory of God.

We have referred to these other Scriptures because they seem to set forth the same thing that the word "smoke" in Rev. xv. 8, does. In the New Testament we also read of the cloud upon and around the Savior and his disciples when in the mount he was transfigured before them. The Lord is said to come with clouds, and to ride upon the clouds, and, as we have seen, the smoke and the cloud seem to be connected in the figures of the Old Testament. Thus it seems to us that the word "smoke" in the text signified that the presence of God was in all the temple. The text reads, "And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power." In the true temple, the church of God, the glory and power of God appears, and in his glory must be included his wisdom, mercy, faithfulness, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, and all that he is to his people in all their needs. Here is the dwelling-place of God, in the sense that here he makes his glory known to the sons of men. In vision John saw this glory and was inspired to write it. By living faith all the way along, our God is pleased to give to his servants glimpses of his glory in his holy temple. It is true that the whole earth is full of his glory, but what he is to his own peculiar people appears only in his holy temple; here he has to do with men as sinners needing redemption and cleansing, and here only the glory and the wonders of redemption appear.

We feel here to leave these reflections for the consideration of all. As we said, they are but suggestions concerning this Scripture.

SOME time since, sister Ella Davis, of Triffe, Oklahoma, made a request that we should present some thoughts with regard to the words found in Malachi iv. 3: "And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts."

First, it is in our mind to say that this is the work of the Lord, and not of man. There is no warrant here for believers to harbor or gratify a spirit of revenge against those who have persecuted them. The blessed Lord does not say this to encourage any such spirit of revenge in the hearts of his people. Personal ill-feeling and vengeance are always condemned in the word of God. But the wicked are they who are enemies of God and of truth; they are proud, and speak against the heavens; they are proud, and even the people of God, seeing their prosperity and their own faith being small, call them happy. David was once envious at the foolish when he saw their prosperity. But the Lord is presented as making the proud and all the workers of iniquity (see chapter iii., verse 15,) as ashes under

their feet. The day that cometh shall burn them up and shall leave them neither root nor branch. After stubble shall be burned only ashes are left. The people of God whom these wicked have oppressed do not kindle a fire to burn them. In the church of God there is no room for hatred, revenge, or the use of sword and fire against the foes of God. The Lord holds all this in his own hand, and he has said that he will fight against all the foes of Zion. God's people are to stand still, and will have no need to fight in this warfare. Those who fear the name of the Lord receive the victory, and go forth and grow up as calves of the stall, rejoicing and leaping for joy. Their enemies have been found liars unto them. They are delivered from all this oppression, and their God has caused a day to come upon them which to them is the day of deliverance, but to their enemies the day of burning and destruction. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

It is this spirit written in the hearts of his people that enabled Stephen to pray after the pattern of his divine Master, "Lay not this sin to their charge." It is this spirit that has reigned in all times of persecution, and which has forbidden believers to take the sword in their own defence; it is this spirit that has enabled the servants of God to do good to them that have done evil to them, and to pray for them who have despitefully used them. This spirit has conquered self in them, that self which would be quick to seek revenge, and to do as did Peter when he cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest. The wicked shall be visited with the anger of the Almighty. Here the servants of God may rest in full assurance that the final victory is theirs over every foe. We do not understand that it is needful to think of the bodies of men being burnt to ashes and cast out upon the highway to be trodden under the feet of the righteous, but the language does represent the most complete triumph on their part, and that all their foes shall be as completely overcome as though an enemy were burnt to ashes. Fire is a most complete destroying element, and the figure of fire is taken to represent their utter destruction. The people of God may be content to leave all in the hand of their God; they do not need to fight in this great warfare. Whatever of triumphs may be given by faith to believers, while here subject to all the reproaches of ungodly men, it is sure that full triumph will be theirs at last. When David came into the sanctuary of God he saw the end of the wicked, of whom he had been envious, and that they were set in slippery places, and should be cast down to destruction. Then he could be envious no more; and the people of God still, when they are brought into the sanctuary, see how vain and hollow are the exaltations of the wicked, and that all this prosperity shall have an end, while the troubled ones who love and serve God shall obtain a final victory, and reign with their blessed Lord in glory, and so, like David, can at the last in the power of living faith say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever."

AMONG a number of questions sent us by dear sister Carter, of Mayfield, Ky., some time since, was the following: Do you teach the doctrine of eternal justification?

We do not know precisely what was in

the mind of our sister when she penned the inquiry proposed above, but feel to say a few things regarding the doctrine of justification, as it is spoken of in three different ways in the Bible. First, it is said in the word that we are justified by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Second, it is said that men are justified by faith; and third, it is also said that a man is justified by works. We do not know of any Scripture which speaks of any man being justified eternally, or before the world was. It was the purpose of God that an elect people should be justified by grace through the redemption which was in Christ Jesus, when he should die for their sins and rise again for their justification, but this does not justify us in saying that sinners were eternally justified. There could be no justification of a sinner until his sins were atoned for, and that was not until Jesus died and rose again from the dead. But our God had purposed this (as he had all other things relating to salvation) according to his eternal purpose, which he purposed in himself before the world was. The word "purpose" always relates to things not yet done. When the thing purposed is done, the purpose is completed. In a sense inconceivable by any mortal mind, we may say that all things are one eternal now with God; but we cannot even think of this, it is so inconceivable to our finite minds. We read of God's purpose and grace purposed before the world, and this purpose embraced among other things redemption and justification.

Now to say a few words regarding the three things said about justification. It has been our mind these many years that when it is said we are justified by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, it is meant that by his resurrection we are justified, really and actually, from all our sins in the sight of the law and justice of God in the sight of God. When it is said that we are justified by faith, it is meant, not that faith is the procuring cause of our justification, or that it constitutes in the sinner a degree of human merit upon the ground of which the sinner is justified, but that by faith that justification which was accomplished by the resurrection of Christ is sealed to the conscience so that that sinner can now read his title clear to mansions in the skies. We will put the matter in this form: He is now justified in his own sight. When a man is said to be justified also by works, the meaning is that now by his works his justification is made manifest, or it is clearly seen that the work of God has been wrought in him. And living faith has produced in the believer living works.

We leave these few thoughts with our sister and all who may read them. C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

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JEREMIAH XVIII. 4.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—It is past the time that I should have renewed, but hope you will excuse my neglect. I herewith inclose one dollar, to be placed to my credit for the SIGNS; we cannot well do without it. I get very little gospel preaching except through the SIGNS. I think brother Chick's article good on the Adamic man and the old man, in volume 74, Oct. 1st, 1906, page 603, and brother Ker's in volume 75, April 15th, 1907, page 248. I think it the best I ever read on that text. Brother Ker, if not asking too much please give your view on Jeremiah xviii. 4, on the last vessel.

HENRY WILSON.

POTTER, Ark., April 30, 1908.

The above request has been delayed on account of many duties other than writing. Such requests inspire in us desire to write and speak of the wonderful works of God. Yet there is with us that awful realization of our utter unfitness for these things, and we are continually between the two powers, and often in a strait as to whether we shall give up "the ship" or continue in "the race."

The Scripture to which our brother calls attention reads as follows: "And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it."

It is one of those Scriptures which show the dealings of the Lord with Israel under the law, and yet the gospel is hid in those sayings. In that day the Lord revealed his ways and purposes to the prophets in visions and by signs, and thereby prepared them to speak to "the fathers." Israel was God's peculiar treasure—the only people in that age of the world recognized by him and the prophets as his. Their blessings were many, and God's faithfulness to his promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was ever in evidence. Yet the people denied, forsook and rebelled against him, and because of their transgressions and idolatry the prophets were sent to tell them of the Lord's displeasure and to warn them of the judgments surely to be visited upon them except they repented. If they would repent, God would repent and not do the evil he thought to do unto them. The repentance of God has ever, more or less, confused the minds of his people who are established in the doctrine of his sovereignty and immutability, believing him to be the same yesterday, to-day and forever, that he changes not. We should not forget that he dealt with Israel in the law, in which was every commandment, every ordinance and every ceremony, and also the punishment for every transgression. "The law is holy, just and good," and in all the messages to Israel, and of all the judgments sent upon them, there was nothing contrary to the law, nor was anything added. When they sinned, the Lord sent prophets to remind them of his anger, as was in the law, but when they were obedient, blessing and prosperity followed, in which the Lord's pleasure was made manifest according to the law. For instance, we of this country have what are called "United States laws" governing our country. When one transgresses any point of these laws the anger of our government is made manifest. When we live in obedience to the laws, peace is the fruit, but the government has in nowise changed. Therefore it is seen that God in his infinite character and being did not change in that age of the world, nor does he change now. "I am the Lord, I change not." His anger and his kindness were both made known through the law, neither did he deal with that people in any other way.

In the case before us, Israel had departed from the law and its precepts, and therefore the judgments of the law (anger

of God) were to be visited upon them. The Lord sent Jeremiah down to the potter's house and there made known to him the condition of Israel at that time; he told the prophet that there he should hear his words. When he arrived the potter was at his work, and Jeremiah observed a work wrought on the wheels. The vessel first made by the potter was marred in his hand, but of the same clay he made another vessel as seemed good to himself. This was a sign or figure. Then the word of the Lord came unto the prophet, saying, "O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel." In this very declaration is the sovereignty of God presented, that as the clay was in the hand of the potter and he could form and fashion it as it pleased him, so Israel was in the hand of the Lord to do with them as was good to him, yet nothing was done to or for them contrary to the law.

To reach the essence of the subject of the potter and the clay we shall have need to go back to the beginning, when the great Potter formed and made a vessel of earth. That vessel was made in the image of the Potter, was good and blessed far above all other vessels of the Potter, so that he had dominion over all others, yet was the first to be marred, but in his fall all other vessels were marred also, and death and decay of all things and beings are in evidence. Shall we say that the chief vessel was marred in the hand (purpose) of the Potter? Most assuredly.

"Life, death and hell, and worlds unknown,
Hang on his firm decree;
He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be.

Chained to his throne a volume lies,
With all the fates of men,
With every angel's form and size,
Drawn by the eternal pen."

The marring of that vessel was to make known the power and purpose of the Potter to make of the same clay one vessel to dishonor and another to honor. Had not the first vessel (Adam) been marred, nothing more than vessels of earth could ever have existed in this world, and not one of them in heaven. But now there are vessels of mercy, vessels of salvation, vessels of righteousness and vessels to honor according to the purpose of the Potter, wrought, not on the wheels, but by Him who was made of the same clay (flesh and blood), yet holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners.

"Thus saith the Lord, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there." Christ must come of that nation, according to the promise to Abraham, therefore the new wine was in the cluster, and the Lord would not destroy that people (clay), but make through Christ, of the same clay, a spiritual Israel who worship him in spirit and in truth, keeping the law not written upon tables of stone, but in their heart, and put in their mind. In which is made known to the vessels of mercy the pleasure and anger of the Lord.

Paul, in his letter to the church at Rome, presents the doctrine of the Potter and the clay to prove the doctrine of election, and says there is no unrighteousness with God, though he did make one vessel to dishonor and another to honor. It was his sovereign right as the

Potter to make and endure vessels as seemed good to him. It is not the right therefore of the thing formed to say to him who formed it, "Why hast thou made me thus?" The question, Why are we so blessed? or, Why are we so punished? was not the right of the Israelites; they knew by the law why both came to them. Why the Lord chose and blessed Abraham alone and his seed after him, no man has right to ask. Why he hides the things of the gospel from the wise and prudent and reveals them unto babes, is answered by one man only, the man Christ Jesus: "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."

Jeremiah delivered the message of the Lord to Israel, and by reading the chapter in which is our text, the result will be seen. We therefore shall state but briefly that which follows the text, and in conclusion try to show its application now in the church. The people said to the prophet, "There is no hope; but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart." They either looked upon God, or his law, as a hard master, requiring that which was impossible for them to perform, or that there was no profit in serving the Lord, as is recorded in the book of Malachi; at any rate it was more agreeable to serve the lusts of their flesh than the law of the Lord. They dishonored God in rejecting his prophet and seeking his life through treachery and falsehood. When Jeremiah was made acquainted with their desire to kill him, he went to the Lord, asking that death and disaster be sent upon them; not that malice or hatred was in his heart, but because of their further rebellion and transgression against the law. Let it be remembered that the words of the prophets to Israel were the words of the Lord, and as true and powerful as though He had descended the heavens and spoken to them as he did from Mt. Sinai when the earth trembled because of his presence and the people feared and quaked because of the dreadfulness of his voice; but many would not hear the prophets.

When the church in the years prior to 1832 departed from the spiritual law and ordained order of the house of God, messengers were sent declaring the word of the Lord, and they beseeched Israel to repent and do the first works. But the messengers were despised and their messages rejected. The Lord had a people, however, among them as in the days of old, who feared him, leaned upon him and stayed upon their God. Hence the work of those servants in those perilous times was not altogether vain. To-day there is again discord, division and declension, every one going his own way or serving the imagination of his own heart, refusing to be warned, hating exhortation, denying the God who bought them, backbiting and devouring one another. True servants of the Lord are continually upon the walls of Zion, sounding the alarm, beseeching the people to flee from "fleshly lusts, which war against the soul," and from highmindedness, which exalts man above all that is called God. But instead of hearing and turning from their evil ways, they persecute the servants of God and would take their lives, in the church, if they could; death and destruction seem to be in their wake; and the only comfort and stay one can find is that we are the clay and God our Potter, he will fashion us as his wise decree determined before time began. This is our only hope and salvation.

We now leave this feeble effort for the consideration of brother Wilson and our readers generally. K.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at the residence of the bride's mother, Philadelphia, Pa., June 23rd, 1908, George D. Kuhn and Lillie May Foreaker both of Philadelphia, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mary A. Hatfield Reeves passed away at her home near Barnes City, Iowa, Saturday evening, June 6th, 1908, aged 59 years, 7 months and 29 days. She was born in Allen County, Ind., Oct. 7th, 1848, the fourth of six brothers and sisters. In November, 1864, she removed with her parents to Mahaska County, Iowa, and was united in marriage to Wm. J. Reeves, Sept. 12th, 1867. To this union were given three daughters and one son: Lillie V., Leona V., Lydia V. Will and W. Lee. The two first named died in infancy. My wife united with the Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, Mahaska County, Iowa, in 1881, and adhered steadfastly to that faith until her death. She was a kind neighbor, and will be greatly missed. She was full of life and energy, yet patient, and made many friends. She is survived by her husband, one son, one daughter, two brothers and one sister. A loving wife and devoted mother has laid aside the mantle of earth.

Funeral services were held at the family residence, conducted by Elders I. Sawin and Fred Elmore. The body was conveyed to Olivet Cemetery, by way of Rose Hill, for interment by the side of many near relatives gone before. Here service by Elders P. Burgher and Fred Elmore was held on account of many relatives and friends who could not be present at the residence. While the casket was being lowered to the last resting-place the hymn, "Asleep in Jesus," was sung, and the body was left until the resurrection day.

During the past year my wife had not been in her usual health, but was able to attend to all her duties, and no special anxiety was felt in regard to her condition until the 15th of December, when she grew worse and a physician was called, who pronounced her sickness Bright's disease. She was confined to her bed until the 8th of January, when she began to slowly gain strength and was able to be up part of the time, and we were hopeful that the progress of the disease had been stayed for a time. On the 11th of March she was able to accompany me on a visit to our daughter and her family, who live nearly fifty miles from us. After a visit of nearly four weeks we returned home and soon afterward she had a relapse, and in spite of all that the physician and friends did she declined rapidly. The last few weeks of her life her suffering was great, but she bore it with much patience and christian fortitude, and was thoughtful for others to the last. Before she died she called her family and friends who were present to her bedside, and told them she was going to leave them and wanted to bid them all good-by. She was perfectly resigned to the will of the Lord, saying, "The gates are open for me," and, "I'll soon be resting in the cleft that's made for me." She told us not to look on the dark side, but for us to think of her as sweetly resting. WM. J. REEVES.

MONTEZUMA, Iowa, July 1, 1908.

Ernest W. Wien, son of William and Alice Wien, was born in Spencerville, Allen Co., Ohio, Jan. 29th, 1883, departed this life June 16th, 1908, aged 25 years, 4 months and 17 days. June 21st, 1906, he was united in marriage to Mary E. Roberts. His late home was in the oil fields near Kiefer, Creek Co., Okla. The evening of June 4th, while returning from the post-office to his home about twilight, he was held up by two highwaymen, who intended to rob him. He started to run, and they shot him through his body about one inch below the heart. The bullet went through the lung and broke two of his ribs. His wife, who was visiting in Kansas, was sent for, and arrived on the 11th inst. His mother, who lives in Spencerville, Ohio, hastened to him and reached him on the 12th. He was taken to the Tulsa hospital as soon as he was shot, and everything done for him that mortal hands could do. When his wife and mother reached him he was cheerful and improved, and all felt hopeful until Saturday night, the 13th, when the wound bled internally and filled the lung, and then inflammation set in and he gradually failed until he passed away at noon on Tuesday, the 16th. He suffered greatly all through the twelve days that he lived after he was shot, but bore it all very patiently, and was only heard to complain once during the twelve days suffering, and then he said, "O why cannot a man die when he is suffering so much?" His wife, his mother and his uncle, C. G. Miller, accompanied his remains to Spencerville, Ohio, arriving there on Friday morning of June 19th. His funeral was held at his mother's residence on Saturday, the 20th. He gave evidence of a good hope through grace, and of late had taken considerable interest in searching the Scriptures. He did not belong to any denomination, but believed in the Primitive Baptist doctrine. He leaves to mourn, his loving wife, a widowed mother, two brothers, two sisters and a host of relatives and friends. His father preceded him to the spirit land several years. The funeral service was conducted by the writer, and on account of having to leave for a train home I could not accompany the procession to the cemetery, but Elder B. F. Hutchinson closed the services at the grave and remained over Sunday to comfort and visit the family. We felt while at this funeral that it is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of mirth. May God's grace enable the bereaved

family to bear their affliction with christian fortitude, for soon we, too, must bid adieu to earth and enter that rest which awaits us.

NEWTON PETERS.

PORTLAND, Indiana.

Mrs. Mary Jane Simpson Ring was born in Muskingum County, Ohio, Nov. 30th, 1838, married to James H. Ring at the home of her parents Oct. 15th, 1861. The family removed to Illinois in 1864, where they lived until 1888, when they came to Nebraska, settling near Cheney, in Lancaster County, where they resided on their farm until the year 1900, when they took up their residence at 1219 South Twenty-second St., Lincoln, Neb., where on June 18th, 1908, she passed peacefully and quietly away. She united with the Salem Primitive Baptist Church, near Gratiot, Ohio, in October, 1857, and her life had been a living example of the power and influence of a living faith that works by love and purifies the heart. She was truly a mother in Israel, as well as at home, a true helpmeet to her husband, ever ready to help and encourage him in his trials and his ministerial duties. Ten children came to bless their home, two of the number took their departure from this world of sorrow in early infancy. The living are five sons, Charles M., George S., William F., Thomas E. and Samuel C., and three daughters, Mrs. Francis M. Macy, Misses Grace E. and Penelope P.; the two last named live at the home in Lincoln. Sister Ring was possessed of that peculiar faculty of making every one her friend with whom she came in contact, and her heart and home were always open, and every one was a welcome guest; once her friend always her friend.

The funeral services consisted of a short service in the home in Lincoln, after which the remains were taken to the meetinghouse at Cheney, where the services were conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder C. M. Cooper, in the presence of the family, friends and neighbors, who filled the house to overflowing, and bore testimony to their sorrow and sympathy by tears. Floral offerings completely covered the casket and the robe on which it stood. The burial was in the Cheney Cemetery near her church home, where the dear one will rest.

S. KETCHUM.

CHESTER, Neb., June 26, 1908.

Elizabeth R. Coddington Decker, my beloved wife, was born at what is now Craggsmoor, Ulster Co., N. Y., July 5th, 1846, and fell asleep June 20th, at 3:20 a. m. Although she suffered greatly in the flesh for the last eleven weeks, her soul was at peace with her God, as she was continually praying for death, and was confident that the blessed Master was ready to receive her and release her from her great sufferings here below. Of course myself and family feel very lonely without her, but we were thankful when she passed away to have the assurance that she entered into that rest for which she was continually asking. She leaves myself, her husband, with whom she had lived thirty-eight years, beside three sons, two of whom are married, and four daughters, three of whom are also married, and one daughter, Annie, at home. We all feel our loss greatly, but do not mourn as those who have no hope.

She was buried Monday, June 22nd, at 2 p. m., at Westbrookville, N. Y. The funeral service was held at her home, Mr. Crane, of Wurtsboro, officiating. He spoke very beautifully and encouragingly to us on the occasion. Her favorite hymn, "Pass me not, O gentle Savior," was rendered by Mr. and Mrs. John A. Kopp, our good and kind neighbors, to whom we feel very thankful. All our neighbors were good and kind to my wife and family all through her long illness. The funeral was largely attended by our friends and relatives. The bearers were her three sons and three sons-in-law.

GILBERT B. DECKER.

Mrs. Lydie Jane Ragan Armstrong, my dear mother, died June 8th, 1908, at her home near Graefenberg, Shelby Co., Ky. She had been in ill health for fourteen years, and was a great sufferer the last month of her life. Her age was 45 years, 1 month and 14 days. She was young and precious to us children, but the Lord said, Come unto me, all ye that are weak and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. We do not see why the Lord called her away from her children, who are young and need a mother's care, but we trust in One who is higher and stronger than we that he has called her home. She leaves a husband, Launta Armstrong, and four children: Lester C., Allie R., Walter T. and Launta Sawin, also one sister, Mary E. Roe, of Shelbyville. Mother joined the Little Flock Baptist Church at Alton, July 29th, 1894, was baptized by Elder John Sawin. Mother was the daughter of Mr. A. D. and Rebecca Cotton Ragan, of Alton. She moved her letter to old Bethel Church, in Shelby County, a few years ago. She gave up at first when she was taken sick, and was willing to go. She died of stomach trouble.

She was buried at Alton, her birthplace, June 10th, at 11:30 a. m. Elder P. W. Sawin, of Shelbyville, preached the funeral sermon at Little Flock Church, in Alton. We miss her from our home, but hope she is at rest where sorrow and death are unknown.

Her son, LESTER C. ARMSTRONG.

Oliver Bragg was born in Barre, Orleans Co., N. Y., March 22nd, 1826, and came with his parents to Michigan in 1833, and grew to manhood in Lenawee County. In 1847 he moved to Deerfield, and in 1849 married Nancy Carpenter, daughter of William and Sarah Compton Carpenter. They lived a short time

in Summerfield, Monroe Co. They were blessed with six children: Luana, Chester, Diana, Lorenzo, Ollie and Della, all of whom are living. Since 1867 he lived on the farm where he died March 8th, 1908, respected by all who knew him.

ALSO,

Nancy Bragg, his wife, died Sept. 27th, 1907. Both were members of the Old School Baptist Church of Fairfield, and were sound in the faith. Sister Bragg was a great sufferer from rheumatism many years, but it was a joy at all times to meet her, and for all she had a welcome smile. She trusted her God and waited patiently for deliverance, and we sorrow not as those who have no hope, for we believe she will come forth in the resurrection in the likeness of her dear Redeemer and be satisfied.

SARAH WYMAN.

MEETINGS.

THE Abbington Old School Baptist Church, at Justus, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting to be held on Wednesday and Thursday, August 12th and 13th, 1908. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited. Those expecting to come by rail are requested to write to G. W. Goodrich, Olyphant, Pa., R. F. D., so that arrangements may be made to meet them on Tuesday.

G. W. GOODRICH.

THE Des Moines River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Greens Grove Church, near Marion, Linn Co., Iowa, August 15th, 16th and 17th, 1908. Persons coming to this meeting will be met at Marion. A cordial invitation is extended to ministers and brethren to meet with us.

W. S. GOTT.

THERE will be a two days meeting held in the Old School Baptist Church on Schoharie Hill, August 19th and 20th, 1908. All lovers of the truth are welcome. Those coming from the west will be met at Howes Cave August 18th, and Wednesday morning, August 19th. Those coming from the east will be met at Schoharie and taken to the home of sister Kinney.

GEO. A. MIERS.

THE seventy-seventh annual meeting of the Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will be held this year, the Lord willing, with Union Church, at the residence of Deacon B. F. Myers, one-half mile from Colchester, McDonough Co., Ill., on September 4th, 5th and 6th, 1908. Colchester is situated on the Quincy Branch of the C., B. & Q. R. R. All trains will be met on Friday and Saturday. Brother Myers requests that as many as can conveniently, to come by rail. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially our ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

THERE are a few Old School Baptists in Riverside, Cal., and they have meeting the first and third Sundays in each month, at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

W. D. BALL.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

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11:00 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition, which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at the following rates, viz: a single copy for 10 cents; 12 copies for $1.00; 25 copies for $2.00; 50 copies for $3.00; 100 copies for $5.00. Address,

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 76. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1908. NO. 15.

POETRY.

THE LEPER'S PRAYER.

(Luke v. 12.)

LORD, if thou wilt thou canst remove
These leprous stains of sin from me.
O that my burdened soul might prove
Thy blessed power to make me free.

I dare not ask, for what am I?
A wretched, vile, polluted worm.
How dare I think that thy pure eye
Can look upon this loathsome form?

But though thou art of purer eyes
Than to behold iniquity,
I know that thou canst make me rise,
From all this vile corruption free.

And as I thus before thee lie,
And humbly plead thy power and grace,
A strange and sweet expectancy
Is in my heart that thou wilt bless.

A holy, solemn joy is felt
In my poor soul so black with sin,
While I can say, Lord, if thou wilt,
I know that thou canst make me clean.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

AN AFTER-THOUGHT.

I CANNOT call affliction sweet,
And yet 'twas good to bear.
Affliction brought me to Thy feet,
And I found comfort there.

Lord, grant me grace for every day,
Whate'er my state may be;
Through life, in death, with truth to say,
"My God is all to me."

—*Selected.*

CORRESPONDENCE.

TOUCHET, Wash., May 26, 1908.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, AND ALL THE FAITHFUL IN CHRIST JESUS:—It is to you I want to speak this morning, and while my desire is toward you, yet the sensibility of my weakness is felt more vividly, so with this twofold feeling it is with much fear and trembling I attempt to speak to you upon the divine yet sublime theme of the christian's hope. I know there are many opinions and theories in the world on this sublime principle; the hope of Israel is not a mere fiction for the sons and daughters of Adam to theorize upon, but it is a vital principle on which the poor wayfaring pilgrim rests all, while in this journey here in the wilderness of sin and sorrow, and it proved itself to be a vital principle in the afflictions of the prophets and apostles in the ancient days, and I believe is a vital fact felt and known to Israel to-day, for God is the author of it, and he is the Rock, his work is perfect. He says, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord," and I believe his teaching is effectual, for his words are spirit and they are life; but he is not man, neither

does he teach as man, nor are his ways as man's ways. Man's ways are earthy, God's ways are heavenly. Man's ways are the ways of death, God's ways are life.

The thought which so interests my mind this morning is found in Deuteronomy xi. 11; it is Moses' language to the children of Israel, and reads thus: "But the land whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven." I want you to read the tenth verse of this chapter and see the difference in the land of the two countries. I want to show the difference in the two countries in an experimental way, and as briefly as I can, for time and space will not let me enter into all the history of this peculiar nation and the wonderful works of God with it. This nation, and God's dealings with it, was a figure or type of the church under grace. I understand Israel and the old or law covenant to all be types and shadows of good things to come, but I would not like to be understood by this expression to mean that Israel was not a real people, and the covenant which was given them was not real, nor that God's dealings with them were not real facts, yet all these only pointed to the new covenant, and its subjects in Christ Jesus, which is ordered and sure.

Now let us notice the land of Egypt—how beautifully it represents the land of darkness. Can you with me call to mind the lay of that country? It was a low valley, dark, cold and damp. I labored, sowed my own seed and tamped them in, and received my wages in return, which was death; one continual valley, the valley of death, completely sold under sin. The tyrant hand of Pharaoh (devil) was sore upon me, and O how I groaned in soul under the felt consciousness of my own sin, sold myself for naught; ten thousand talents in debt, and not a farthing to pay. I would try to pray, and sin (darkness) was so mixed with my prayer it seemed to rise no higher than my head, one continual valley of death; I would try to think one good thought, but all contaminated with sin, my very heart was deceitful, I could not know it; the very seat of affection, where praise should be going up to the God who gave me a being above all the rest of his creation, was and always had been full of enmity to him, and now my king (death) is pressing me with the thought that eternity was to be spent in this valley, for there was no law to justify me; but its demand was, Pay that that thou owest, and its just sentence cannot be denied, for the law is just, holy and good, but I am carnal, sold under sin. Such was the case with Israel as a nation in Egypt, and Moses in his last testimony before that people called to memory the low lands of Egypt, and showed the difference between the land of Canaan, the promised land; it is a land of hills and valleys. But, poor soul, fear not, for your God has brought you out of the low land of Egypt with outstretched arm, and has led you all through the wilderness, fed you and has given you drink and all things needful through the journey, which has been long and tiresome. Now it is meet for us to consider the wonderful works of God in our travel, for this is the way we are to know him whom to know is life eternal. Recall his mercies while in the valley of Egypt, when we were pressed as grapes in the press and no way in or of ourselves to escape, God in his mercy laid help on One mighty to save, and sent him into the low ground of Egypt to redeem us from that low

valley and bring us to the land of promise, where hills and valleys are. I often wonder whether I have ever tasted the good word of God, or have all these bright scenes which have so often ravished my vision on the top of the holy hill Zion been all delusion. Why, O my soul, art thou so disquieted, why so cast down? I often think if indeed I am a true Israelite I would not be so tossed to and fro by the storm of doubt and despondency; yet such is the land of promise, but fear not, God who begun the good work will carry it on to the day of Jesus Christ; he will bring us off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him who loved us and gave himself for us. Poor soul, is the land you now travel in as the land when you had no hope? If not, why are you so fearful? My mind is often cast down, for I cannot do the things I would. Sometimes my mind is completely baptized in the sweet mercies of God, and the saints all seem lovely. O how I love to meet them and hear them sing of the good fruit of the land; and then again my mind is so barren, my heart so cold, I fear to meet them, for I fear my coldness will hurt any of them, and I had rather suffer the loss of all things than offend one of these little ones. Yes, it is a hill country, up and down, some long and lofty hills, some long and lonely valleys; it is the land of promise, but it is as a strange land to me, for I am a stranger here below, and what I am it is hard to know. A mixture of joy and sorrow I daily pass through, but it is through great tribulation we are to enter the kingdom. The land you shall possess is a hill and valley land, but you must not fear to go on, for the Lord your God will drive out these nations before you and you shall possess the land.

The seventh chapter of this same book tells how this nation shall prosper in and eat of the fruit of the promised land. This is a type of the church of Christ, the promised vineyard of spiritual Israel. How careful we should be to take heed to the things spoken, for they are the words of the King, and they are irrevocable; he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast, and with an understanding of this fact Paul, a faithful witness to the heirs of promise (church), would say or admonish the subjects to take heed unto themselves whether they be in the faith or not. It is by faith we are to stand in this land, try ourselves and see whether we abide in the doctrine, see if we hold the form of sound words. Brethren, there is a controversy in this land (church) to-day over the doctrine. Moses says in the eleventh verse of this seventh chapter to forget not the Lord God in not keeping his "commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which I command thee this day," then goes on in the twelfth and thirteenth verses and tells of the graces and benefits which they will find in this land. Beware, take heed lest after you have been so wonderfully blessed, that your heart is not lifted up in self, and you forget that you are still mortal and finite, and by so doing believe your own arm or your obedience or good works brought this blessing on you. As the good Lord has led us faithfully out of Egypt, and all through the wilderness, and planted us in the promised land (church) in sweet communion with saints, with all the rights and privileges of the land, then if God, who is the cause of all these blessings, has given his dear presence, blessing us with able ministers who can enter into rich vineyards and reach up by faith and gather the ripe clusters of grapes and

hand them to hungry, fainting Israel, do not, dear preachers, forget the fact that it was not you who did the work, but the grace of God in you, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, watch over them as faithful sentinels in the house of God. Beloved brethren, let me say to you also: Watch, take heed, do not worship the preacher, for what is he but a minister of the gospel to you? Be careful lest you be lifted up and forget the God of mercies who has blessed you in this land. Dear brethren, I do not tell you these things because you do not know them, for they grow or are in this land; the nations which were driven out left these plagues in the land. "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind." Then beware, for you must fight and hold this land; but remember you have the promise of God, and when you lose sight of him by faith and look to self you have no promise of peace, for he who trusts to man or the arm of flesh shall fail. Dear ones, I have been trying now for twenty years to gather the rich clusters from the prolific vine in this garden, or land, and have been a constant beggar at the feet of the Vine (Christ) to season the grape (doctrine) with milk (humility) and honey (a godly walk). O how sweet to the undershepherd (preacher) to hear the little lambs say, How gently and tenderly he walks among the plants in the garden (church). During all these long years of labor in this land I have experienced some sweet seasons on the hills of this country, and also some of gloom and fog that settle in the low land. Beware, brethren, and do not forget the God who brought you to this land; as you have received Christ Jesus, so walk ye in him. How did you receive him? Just as helpless as a little babe. O for His sake, and for the sake of the inhabitants of this land, continue in him, rooted and grounded in him.

Now, dear ones, I must close my letter, hoping God may bless Zion with grace to hold and possess this beautiful land in fellowship of the spirit, and God forbid that I, or any of the children who possess this land, should get lifted up in our own hearts to think or feel we are superior to our brethren to the extent that we should say, I am more holy than thou, and I have obtained this knowledge of myself; but may we all remember God, who delivered us from Egypt and proved us in the wilderness before he brought us to this land.

Brother Ker, I think your editorial in the last number is some of the fruit of the promised land gathered in season; also Elder Chick's, and the communications are good. I dearly love to read the paper, because it reminds me to look to God for all blessings, and that all my good works are the fruit of the Spirit and an evidence that I am blessed of the Lord.

I spoke in this article of trying to preach for this dear old church for twenty years, and I have never made the attempt with the thought that God would owe me anything for my services, but I have felt many times like calling on my soul, and all that is within me, to praise his holy name for his unspeakable gift; and the same cause that causes me to try and tell of the beauties of the kingdom is the cause of this poor letter to you. I love God, I hope, I love the grace he has treasured up in himself for his dear people; I love the dear people, and I love to tell them of these precious promises, so the love of Christ constraineth me.

Yours in a blessed hope of immortality beyond this veil of tears,

J. T. BARNES.

KENILWORTH, N. J.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I send this good letter for publication. I am sure it will be all right with our dear sister.

MARY HAYNES.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Sept. 1, 1907.

MY DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—Monday morning I read your letter in the SIGNS, and the first that came in my mind were these lines: "Glorious things of thee are spoken, Zion, city of our God," and ever since I have felt a desire to write to you, though why I do not know, for I surely have nothing to say of any consequence, being very poor in spirit. Possibly it may be because we both love to look back to the same day: June 4th, 1871. I think that was a day which will be remembered by us as long as we retain our memory, and what a glorious day it was, everything seemed to be praising God. This week I have been going all over it by myself, the beauty and solemnity of the scene at the water, and the loving-kindness manifested by the brethren, but have often had to wonder whether I really was prepared of the Lord to take part in it. Like you, I have often felt that I ought to withdraw from the church, that it must have been a mistake and I was only a trespasser, but could never get any further than thinking about it. About five years after we were baptized, sister Permelia Lemming came forward at church meeting. Elder Hartwell asked her from when she dated her experience. She said from seeing a young person baptized five years before. At the time that did not appear so very striking to me, but when meeting had closed and she came to me and said, You are the one I saw baptized, I felt very differently and very humble. It has always rested with some weight on my mind, but I had never gained any comfort from it until the morning sister Bonnie Chick was baptized. When Elder Chick spoke in the sermon of the tears of gladness he saw in the eyes of so many at the waterside, my mind went back to the morning of my baptism, and I wondered if any were pricked in the heart at that solemn scene as she was at the waterside, and then as I thought about it I was given some hope and comfort. It is often a question whether I did not go to the church too soon, if I ever should at all, but this view of it gave me a hope that after all it might have been of the Lord, and that he may have had a purpose in it. Why was it not brother Stout, or you? Why was it me? And somehow it came to me, If it had not been right would it have been blessed to her and been the means God used to show her the plan of salvation and turn her feet Zionward? It was not on account of any fleshly feeling, for up to that time I had no acquaintance with her, but ever afterward she was a very dear sister to me; and since I have felt more assurance that it was the time appointed of the Lord. He knows all things and makes no mistakes, and who am I that I should question what he does? But it seems to me had it not been that dear Elder Hartwell came to me that Saturday after meeting out in the yard and took my hand and said, "I had hoped you would come to-day," I would have been outside yet. Before that the thought of offering myself to the church had never entered my mind, and I had no idea a soul on earth knew anything of my condition; then after he said those few words I could not stay away, and I verily believe that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. God has a time and place for every purpose under

the sun, and who shall say him nay? The trouble is all in myself, and I often have to say, "What I am 'tis hard to know," and, "If I love why am I thus?" And many times, especially lately, I wonder why I am so abundantly blessed above what I deserve. But there it is again, I do not deserve anything, and his blessings do not come that way. Sometimes I think I do feel thankful for the protecting care of the all-wise and gracious God. "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." There have been times when my pathway seemed to lie through fiery trials, but his grace was sufficient, and afterward I could look back and see that the clouds I had dreaded were big with mercy and had broken in blessings on my head. It is a source of comfort to me that the Lord has not designed that I should be among the popular religionists of the day, but that he has gathered me with his poor and afflicted people. I suppose if I were of the other class I would feel just as they do, but their worship seems so hollow to me, a mere form of words, with no glad tidings, no joyful sound. The poor are the ones who have the gospel preached unto them. The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

The sermon this morning was a feast, I felt that I sat in His banqueting-house and his banner over me was love. The text was 1 Thess i. 4: "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God," and some remarks on the preceding verses. Our dear pastor was enabled to speak very comfortingly from the clause: "Remembering without ceasing your work of faith." Of late it has been much on my mind what my faith is worth, and what it would be worth to me in the last trying hour, and this morning it came up in my mind, and I wondered if when the time of my discharge comes I shall be able to read my title clear to mansions in the skies, and felt to say,

"Yes, I shall soon be landed
On yonder shores of bliss,
There, with my powers expanded,
Shall dwell where Jesus is."

I have never forgotten one remark made at sister Kate Hill's funeral. Elder Chick said we did not need grace to die until the time came, then it would be given us. That has often cheered my fainting soul, and I hope it may be my unspeakably happy lot to have that grace given me, and be enabled to pass the river, telling the triumphs of my King.

My dear sister, this letter is very imperfect, but I wanted to express the enjoyment your letter gave me. After you have read these fragments you can destroy them, and no one but you will know of my feeble attempt at writing, and I feel sure you will kindly throw the mantle of charity over all. The letters you write to the church when you cannot attend church meetings are very cheering to me, and I wish more of the brethren were moved to do the same. It is a great grief to me to see the love of any seem to grow cold. O that we may be firm and steadfast in the faith, and our conversation as becometh the gospel of Christ. Dear sister, let us hear from you often; it is good to be reminded that you are with us in love and fellowship, if we cannot have your bodily presence.

Your sister in hope,

ANNA J. SUTPHEN.

ALBANY, Oregon, April 4, 1908.

DEAR SISTER MARGARET STEVENS:—Yours of March 19th, 1908, received, and from the reading of your letter I infer that you are one of those who are embraced in the everlasting covenant of

grace, and for whom the atonement was made. You request my views on the parable of the shepherd and the sheep, and especially that part relative to the hireling who fleeth when he sees the wolf coming. The question with you is, Did the wolf catch the hireling or the sheep? Our Savior while in the world spoke often to the disciples in parables, and they asked him why he thus spake to them. His answer was, Because it is given to you to know the mystery of God, but to them that are without it is not given. Then, my dear sister, what can we know in regard to spiritual things without revelation from God? for we learn that he has hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes. The parable representing the shepherd and the sheep is recorded in the tenth chapter of John, and shows the relation between Christ and his people. The sheep is an animal that is very timid, and I have thought the most harmless of all animals, and wild beasts are anxious to catch and devour them, so it is highly necessary to place a strong guard around them when they are exposed to the wolf.

We will now notice the relationship between the good Shepherd and the sheep. Christ says, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." O what a price he paid for them. They were not purchased with gold, or silver, or the cattle of a thousand hills, for this could not pay the debt, but by the precious blood of the good Shepherd. No one else could purchase them, as He only had the right of redemption. Though they often go off from the fold and are exposed to the wolf, his all-seeing eye is over them, and though the wolf may catch and wound them, and take part of their fleece, he cannot destroy them, for the apostle says they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. Jesus says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life." Our Lord says, The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep; he is much more interested in the wages he receives than he is in the flock.

Now, sister Stevens, we have arrived at that part of the parable to which you call my attention in your letter: The hireling "seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep." My sister, it is not the hireling the wolf is after, but the sheep; the hireling was not there, he saw the wolf coming and fled. The wolf is a very cunning animal, hard to catch, and attacks the flock when the shepherd is not looking for him; this is a type of the wicked one. They hear my voice and I know them. Christ said, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." How precious are those shalls and wills to the dear children of God. Dear sister, if you are his no doubt you have heard that voice whispering in your heart, saying to you, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He says, "I give unto them eternal life," so we see that eternal life is a gift. If it were in consideration of anything we could do it would not be a gift. "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Here is a gift from the Father to the Son, and they were given to him in the everlasting covenant of grace before the world began. O what a sure foundation on which

the heirs of grace build their hope. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

Before I close there is a little incident I want to notice, which occurred with me out here on the Pacific coast some years ago. I had a fine flock of sheep in my pasture, and I looked out one day and say them running in every direction, and in the midst of them was a large dog trying to catch and kill them. I ran to rescue them from the dog, but he was so eager to kill them that I had hard work to drive him away. I found on examination that many of my sheep were badly torn by the vicious animal, though none were killed. This truly illustrates the condition of all the people of God, for they are in the midst of wolves. I have often been caught by these vicious animals, but thanks be to God, the good Shepherd has always come to my relief, and has not suffered them to kill me, though I have fought many hard battles with them, and have often come out covered with scars, but by the grace of God I am what I am, and I trust that his grace, which was bestowed upon me, was not in vain.

Sister Stevens, I have tried in my weakness to give you my views in regard to your question, and at your request will send this to the editors of the SIGNS to be thoroughly examined, and if not found worthy will go to the waste-basket, where it may belong.

I am yours in hope of eternal life,

SILAS WILLIAMS.

HAMPSTEAD, Md., January, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am attempting something I thought I never would, but I have learned (and I believe I have been taught by my dear Savior) that it is not in man to direct his steps. My dear sister, Emma Kelley, has frequently made the request that I write something for the SIGNS, and the answer always was that I did not feel I could. This is the second year her father (brother Kelley) has paid for the SIGNS for me, which you all know is a great comfort to me in my lonely hours. While writing and thanking them for their many kindnesses (and as I thought with a grateful heart) the thought flashed upon me, If thankful, why not show your appreciation by trying to grant the request of your dear sister? As a rule it always gives me pleasure to try to do what I believe to be my duty, but, dear kindred, my great trouble is with that unruly member James speaks of; then may I ask you all that your prayers be that I be endowed with power to overcome? Brother Luke Ensor once said (I was then teaching, and it was years before I knew the true love of the precious Savior,) that he believed I would say what I had to say if a cannon was pointed at me. I speak of this to show you how weak I am on this point.

Now you see I have wandered off on poor self, instead of speaking of the goodness and mercy of our covenant-keeping God. I know you all know these things, and no doubt have oftener received the smiles of our loving Father than I; but it is well to stir up the pure mind by way of remembrance, and perhaps it may be that there is one among the thousands that will read this who may find a crumb as that dear sister did in my last. I have been taught that this, too, comes from Him who reigneth and ruleth on high. How often I have read, "Dead to all that I desired to be alive to," but I have thought this is to show us our dependence upon our God, for you know how prone we are to forget from whence our comfort comes, and to cry, Abba, Father; but as he takes the weak things to con-

found the wise I feel encouraged to cry aloud for his mercy which endureth forever. How oft of late have I been comforted by the words, Chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. When cast down by the weight of sin that doth beset me, and Judas arises before me, deliverance comes with these words, and I feel to hear the words, Stand still and know that I am God. Why my unprofitable life is spared must be to verify the dream which I had about two years after I was baptized. In my dream I was wrangling with some one, and prayed I might be taken from this world, as I could not live as I desired; the answer was, You are left until the dross be consumed. But in all these years patience has never gained its perfect work; still I am clinging to his sweet promises, believing there will be a time when I shall be like him, and satisfied. The same winter I dreamed that I fell into a stream of clear water; I could hear my friends searching for me, and I thought I should be drowned, but I had no fear of death. To my surprise I glided down this beautiful stream until I came to where it was so shallow I could see the pebbles, and as I glided to the edge and was safe I awoke. My interpretation was comforting. The Lord Almighty reigneth, and that is why the sons of Jacob are not consumed, and with all my murmurings (which you know bringeth leanness of soul) I know God is good, a present help in time of trouble; too wise to err, too good to be unkind.

When sorely pressed and, as it were, hedged in, I have pondered the words, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light;" but a short time ago I saw it was not the yoke of Jesus or his burden that I was bearing, but it was all of self and none of him. Tell me, am I not right?

Now I hope you will not think me presumptuous, but I would like to say a word to those who feel themselves too unworthy to come into the fold; it has been upon my mind since receiving a letter from my esteemed pastor. I know you will be made willing in the day of His power, but I much desire God's people should all feel the sweet peace and rest that I received in obedience to his divine command, which was only a few months after I had received a hope in Christ. I think I was greatly blessed in being enabled to look unto Christ as my righteousness. You know Christ said, "It becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." Then if it was right for Christ, who is our righteousness, is it not right for poor, weak mortals? Bless his holy name that he has shown us the way, after teaching us to believe that he is our Savior, our King, our Redeemer, able to save unto the uttermost. I felt all unworthy then, I am all unworthy now, in myself. "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." Though he chasteneth, he will not withdraw his loving-kindness; hence he is with us as we pass over the rough and thorny way, bearing us onward and upward until we are among those who washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; and do not we all at times rejoice at the approaching hour? Therefore my desire is to run with patience the race that is set before me, "looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

My dear friends, I love to write about the goodness and mercy of my Lord and

Savior, who has given me a good hope through grace, but you see I have not the pen of a ready writer, therefore I desire to leave it to the gifted. I kindly thank all who sent me sample copies of their papers; it is out of my power to do more. I wish all of God's people a happy and prosperous new year.

GEORGIA D. ENGLAND.

MEDICINE LODGE, Kan., Oct. 15, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I send inclosed a letter written by brother Owsley, of Helena, Okla., and if you deem it worth publishing you may give it a place in the SIGNS. It is a comfort to me to read such letters, which give to God all the praise.

Yours in hope,

C. J. MILLER.

HELENA, Ark., Oct. 8, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER MILLER:—I have been trying to answer your kind letter, which I received last Sunday week; when I saw it was from you I was surprised. I was glad to receive it, but yet I could not get the benefit out of it that I had hoped for. Christ said, "Without me ye can do nothing;" and we cannot enjoy anything concerning Christ except he is with us. Sometimes I feel that I have completely covered him up, so it would be impossible for any one to tell that he was with me, if so be that he is with me at all. I can look back to a time when I did not doubt this, and I do not doubt now that we are saved by grace.

On Saturday brother Beeman preached on faith. He was speaking of Martin Luther, and that he had said that in some translation it is said we are saved by faith only. It seems that the apostles hold faith to be the most essential thing for a believer to have. Paul when telling the brethren to put on the whole armor of God, said, "Above all, taking the shield of faith." Paul also tells us that faith is the gift of God. When we think of the time God brought us up out of darkness into light, Paul expresses it in this way: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Then Paul right here goes on to speak of a treasure which we have in earthen vessels, and surely it is a treasure that all the redeemed desire to keep with them, and from which they never expect any trouble. "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." Does not this agree with the faith of every child of God? They are born by the Word of God, and they receive the evidence by revelation, which teaches them that the excellency of the power is of God. Then, as Paul has further said, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." We are brought over the same road as were the apostles: the strait and narrow way, and this was and is by faith. "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law." "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." I well remember writing to a sister in Kansas City that all was peace with me, and I did not ever expect anything else. But my faith is so small sometimes that I almost doubt everything. How can we doubt that as we were blind spiritually we now see, not

with the natural eye, but by the eye of faith? Were we not as blind as the man that was born blind? That man did not know by what precious ointment his eyes had been opened, but he did know that they were opened. We were also blind, with no hope of ever seeing, but, like his, our eyes have been opened. Brother Miller, do we not know by experience that the excellency of the power is of God? Paul says, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." With all the testimony of the Savior and the apostles, and our own experience of the Lord's dealings with us, we can only say that we are saved by grace if saved at all; and so Paul said, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." Faith excludes all works as the ground of salvation. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Could we have any hope without the mercy of God?

I hope nothing may be in the way of your being home the next meeting. We had meeting at our home last Sunday the same as we do when you are here. Elder Beeman in all three of his sermons excluded works entirely. He said he was baptized forty-seven years ago Sunday, and in all that time had never doubted that salvation is by grace, but he had often doubted as to whether he himself was one of the heirs of promise, if I have not mistaken his words. We find by the testimony of the apostles, as well as by experience, that all have doubts, and we desire to know, "Am I his, or am I not?" But as the song says, "When I count up all the cost, without free grace I know I'm lost."

I noticed in the last SIGNS that they requested the brethren, if they so desired, to write for publication. I thought I would tell you this so that if you felt impressed to write you might know they would be glad to have you do so. This is a call for the truth which Paul said is a part of the armor of God, and he tells us to put on the whole armor of God.

From your brother, as I hope,

D. S. OWSLEY.

HERNDON, Va., June 1, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Some of the brethren say to me when giving me the money to renew their subscription to our family paper, Why do you not write often for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES? I then feel to say to them, Why do you request a thing of me that you are not willing to do yourselves? for you are far ahead of me in letter writing. It is no trouble to me to send in renewals of subscription for my brethren, but with great labor and much trembling I attempt to write a letter for publication. I have been a subscriber to the SIGNS for more than twenty years. I took it for more than a year before I was received into the fellowship of the church at Frying Pan, Va. O how many strange things have taken place since then. Most all of my near relatives in the flesh have passed away since that time, and beside them many dear brethren and sisters of the church. I have only one sister in the flesh living, Mrs. Mary V. Hall, of Fairfax, Va., and she is a member with me in the church at dear old Frying Pan. I often feel sad and lonely in remembering the past years of my life in the church; I often feel that I am left shivering on the brink, to be dashed down into the

great deep, never to rise again. I do not feel that I am any account to my brethren in the church, but only a drone (so to speak), and suck honey sometimes when it justly belongs to them. O what a disobedient creature I feel to be, "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." I am now fifty-nine years old, and it seems to me that with my many troubles and afflictions a stony heart like mine might be softened to a heart of flesh, to worship the God of heaven and earth in the beauty of holiness. O what hard things I am ready to say of myself, for I know I am a sinner, as I am in the flesh, and the Bible tells us that "man at his best state is altogether vanity." Again, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." Who then on earth can we trust in? God's people cannot trust in man, for they are cursed in doing so. Not even could the prophet of old do so, for he said, "Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." O that I could be made willing to trust in him always, but the flesh is weak. "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." What can a sinner find in this life to give comfort to his soul? Hope then would be gone, and he would be without God in the world. Paul tells us, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Does not every quickened sinner know this? Paul knew it, for he hath said, "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." "Let patience have her perfect work." "God said, Let there be light: and there was light." Each day of God's creation of the world he used the word "let," and everything was made according to his word, and he saw that it was good, and the evening and the morning were each day, to the sixth day, and he finished his work on the seventh and rested, and blessed that day and sanctified it. What for? For the good of his people; a rest from their labors, a sabbath, a day of rest. Jesus said, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." "It is finished," he cried, and gave up the ghost. O what a sweet day of rest for the people of God, chosen in him before the foundation of the world, made holy and without blame before him in love.

I see I am drifting too far out into the deep, but I see a ship far out at sea, well anchored, and I hear that "still small voice" of the Captain saying, I will land you safely over on the other side. I now lay my pen down, I cannot write more, my eyes swim with tears, I weep, for joy fills my soul. I have been shut in all the past winter with rheumatism in my right hand and arm, and did not get to our meetings since January until last fourth Saturday and Sunday. Elder Eubanks surely did preach on Sunday. I felt at the time it was all for me, but after the meeting I found others had feasted on the same food that fell in handfuls from the Master's table.

I leave this poor letter in your hands; do with it as you think best, and all will be well with me.

Yours in fellowship and love,

J. F. OLIVER.

FORT WORTH, Texas, June 27, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS, and loved ones scattered abroad, especially those whom I met during the four associations I attended in the east last year:—I want to say that I hold each one in sweet

remembrance, and though absent in body I was with you in spirit again this year. I thought of you daily, and wondered, Who is filling the stand? Who is feeding the little lambs? O how I longed to be with you and partake of your joys. I cannot realize that it has been a whole year since I was with you, everything is so fresh in my memory. I was greatly blessed with the hearing ear during the entire time, and yet remember quite a number of the texts used by the Elders, and it is a comfort to me in my loneliness. I have been spiritually dead all winter and spring, and yet there is a hungering for a refreshing from the Lord, a longing for something I do not possess. "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon." I gladly would lie down in green pastures with them and rest. Ah, how the very word rest appeals to the weary pilgrim. I am glad that a rest remains to his people, and some day, beloved, we will enter that haven and rest from our labors. O glorious thought, no more sorrow, no more pain, just one eternal rest.

Not many weeks ago I had a refreshing from the Lord, and it came to me in a very unexpected way and time, and I feel I would like to tell you about it. It has greatly comforted me, and I hope you will bear with me in relating the circumstances connected therewith. I was riding in a street car through the resident portion of our city, on my way to the business part of town, and was struck with the beauty of some of the palatial homes that I passed, and I began to wish for a mansion and all things pertaining thereto; I could not see why I should not have riches as well as others. I felt that I could really enjoy the luxury of a palatial home, and I began to build air-castles to that end, when all at once the lowly Nazarene seemed to pass before me, and I heard him saying, I have not where to lay my head. I saw him as he walked through the hot sands of the desert, bowed down, as a cart under many sheaves; I saw him as he sat at meat with the publicans and sinners; saw him as he traveled on foot through Galilee, healing the sick, restoring sight to the blind, preaching to the poor, raising the dead and comforting the broken-hearted. Ah how soon my desire for riches melted away like snow, and I was made to cry in my heart and say, O that I could have been permitted to follow him and minister to his wants as Mary did. No sooner the wish than the answer came: Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these, my little ones, ye did it unto me. Yes, I answered, though they be kings on their thrones or beggars by the wayside. Why all of his little ones are beggars by the wayside; they are made to cry for their daily bread. Where is the wayside? "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." Yes, all his little ones are by the side of the Way; yea, more, they are in the Way, and while they are beggars they are kings and priests, and are kept by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

O that I had the pen of a ready writer, that I might tell you of the glorious things that came to me as I rode along in that crowded car. O what a rich feast I had; no longer did I see any beauty in the houses to admire or desire; I felt to say, You may have all this world, but give me Jesus. Having him I possess all things. Then what more should I want?

Begging pardon for writing so much, I will close, with love to the little flock who trust in the Lord.

Your sister in hope,

LYDIA C. RAY.

EDGEWOOD, Ga., June 1, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Inclosed find two dollars, for which continue sending me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have been a subscriber for it only one year, and feel that I received two dollars worth out of the first paper. I have found many comforting letters and editorials in it, and would be glad to see it better circulated in Atlanta. I have had my experience told through it better than I knew it myself. I did not know such was my experience until some one told it to me through the SIGNS, and I felt I had been along that road. I do not know that I could call to mind the first impressions I had; for some time I was in much trouble about myself, I did not know what was the matter with me, and the weight seemed to get heavier every day. One day while at work in the shop I became very much troubled in mind, and felt I was a sinner, and began to beg God to help me. My weight seemed to get heavier and heavier; I sought a place to hide my face from the rest of the men in the shop, for I wanted to be away from them; my mind was not on my work at all. I went back into the washroom and begged God to help me, but did not find any relief until about three or four hours later, when a light seemed to shine around me. I felt as though my eyes had been closed, but now everything looked bright to me; the weight had gone, and I felt calm and happy, but did not think at the time it was an evidence that I was a christian, but thought it was a token of something the Lord was going to do for me in the future. After that I felt I loved God's people, and wanted to be with them as much as possible; I liked to talk with them. Previous to that I felt myself as good as any church member I ever saw, but O how different I felt after that. I did not feel I was fit to join the church, and felt the meanest man I ever saw was better than I, and did not know I was such a sinner until God showed me I was. I did not say anything about my feelings to any one until about one year and a half later. I sat down one Sunday and began to write something about what I had felt, and read it over to mother, and she said, "Henry, I thought there had been a change in you, and it is your duty to go to the church." I told her I did not know what church to go to. She said, "You seem to know where the truth is preached, and that is the place for you." The most of my Sunday School teachers said I was a "Hardshell," and I began to go to hear them preach, and found that I was, but did not join them until about one year and a half later. I joined Saturday before the third Sunday in last March, and was baptized the third Sunday in May last. I had a travel of mind for about three years, but felt alone, and was not satisfied with the life I was living; I felt I could say with one, The things I once loved I now hate. I felt I knew what God meant when he said, Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, for I am God, and beside me there is no Savior. I found no pleasure in the things I once did; my desire for dancing was all gone; the very thing I thought I never would give up was the thing I first stopped. I did not feel that I brought myself to the ends of the earth, but that God had given me a willing mind to turn from the vain and perishable things of this world and look to him, the author and finisher of our faith, who rules and works all things after the counsel of his own will. I feel that God has taken away that stony heart of mine and given me a heart of flesh, and has put his law in my mind and written it in my heart, and given me a desire to keep it.

Brother Ker, I did not intend writing as I have when I sat down, but have let my pen follow my mind a little.

I will bring this to an end, hoping to see the SIGNS continued. May God bless the editors, and all who wait on Him, is my desire. Do with this as you see fit.

Your brother, I hope, in hope of eternal life,

HENRY O. NASH.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., July 4, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN:—By request I send you this letter for publication in the SIGNS. My acquaintance with brother Ashurst began in September, 1865. I regarded him as a spiritually minded man. In our conversation and correspondence his theme was always of a spiritual kind. I am glad and thankful to learn that his release from the bondage of mortality was a joyful one. It was what he longed for, that he might see his Savior at the last. I deeply sympathize with our dear sister in her bereavement and loneliness. She has the same precious hope which her husband had, and my desire is that she may enjoy the comfort of it while she waits in these low grounds of sorrow for the coming of her Savior.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

JUNE 29, 1908.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—It is my sad duty to tell you of the death of my dear husband, R. P. Ashurst, who passed away May 6th, at our home, near, Blackburn, Mo. He died rejoicing in his Savior, and very happy. He saw Jesus beckoning him home. He pointed it out to us, but of course with our natural vision we could not see. Several of the family were around him, and he talked a great deal to us about spiritual things; nothing more. He sang the good old song, "Amazing grace" alone all through. He lived two days after that, and was rejoicing that the end was near, and that he would be freed from this body of sin. He was a great sufferer for several weeks. My children and myself ministered to his wants all of the time. All of our children were here before his death save three, who were too far away to get here. Our eldest son has been in the Philippines ten years. We were married in 1858, almost fifty years ago. I have twelve sons and daughters and have lost none; the head of the family was taken first. We buried him in Lexington, Mo., in Macphelah Cemetery. He united with the church at Georgetown, Ky., many years ago, I cannot remember the date; it was while Elder Thomas P. Dudley had the care of that church. You remember how he loved the church militant. We are left to mourn, but not without hope; we feel that he is now basking in the smiles of his Savior; no more tears. What a glorious ending. Mr. Ashurst was born October 30th, 1831, and died May 6th, 1908.

I received a letter Saturday telling me of the death of his brother, James J. Ashurst, of Mount Pulaski, Ill., but have had no particulars as yet.

Brother Durand, remember us at the throne of grace. Praying that you and yours are enjoying the blessings of this life, I send this to you to send to the SIGNS. They are all gone now; the last one of the family has passed away. You knew them so well at Georgetown.

A stricken sister,

(MRS.) S. V. ASHURST.

SILVERTON, Texas, January, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will please find money order to pay for the SIGNS another year. I would like to tell you how much I have been comforted in reading your editorials and the many good letters from the dear brethren and sisters scattered abroad, yet bound together by the sweet cords of God's love shed abroad in their hearts, teaching them the selfsame thing everywhere, that salvation is of the Lord, and that teaching never fails to give God all praise; He overrules all evil to the good of the objects of his love. O dear brethren, what a sweet consolation, sweet to know in time of great trouble, that what is not for our good and his glory will and must fail in every sense of the word, and what he chooses that he does, and without any mistake, and though surrounded with ten thousand foes with the most evil designs, nothing, no nothing, can ever harm them or touch them only as he will permit for their good. Although we try hard to prevent things, and fail in doing what we think our duty, with no avail in the way we purpose, yet we must know when all is overruled that it is for the best, and then God is praised, for his wisdom and righteousness far exceed anything man can ever think of. I once was young, but now am old, and the way I thought I would walk in old age has never come; which was without sin, for I find in all I do so much imperfection that I often grow sick at heart and long to put off these shackles that bind me here and lie down to rest in the dust of the earth. I do not wish to speak of my sorrows, which have seemed to be at times more than I could endure, for I have deserved no better, but have sometimes in them taken courage in reading how God's people, from their earliest history, have been afflicted even to prison and death.

I have thought, dear editors, I would never trouble you again with a letter, but I awoke the other morning and had been writing to the SIGNS in a dream. I feel to thank the Lord for the gift of such a good paper, and for the comfort of eyesight and mind to understand and to read and feast upon the good things it comes laden with, and feel to ask your forbearance for disturbing you with such a poor letter, which may not be of interest.

Pray for me, the most unworthy mortal on God's footstool.

E. C. FOGERSON.

DUNCAN, Okla., April 4, 1908.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I will write you a few lines if you will permit such a poor worm of the dust to address you. I know we are strangers in the flesh, but I hope by the grace and mercy of God we are the children of God, but my time is spent in a solitary place, and I feel to be a cast off in this world. Tribulation and sorrow, persecution and trials are my heritage here, but I have hope and consolation, too, that the God of all the earth rules in the army of heaven and earth, and none can stay his hand or say, What doest thou? He shuts and none can open; he opens and none can shut. "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." The Lord is high and lifted up, and his train fills the temple. "Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee. Sing, O ye heav-

ens; for the Lord hath done it." Yes, the poor child of God who is of a lowly and contrite heart can say, "The Lord hath done it," and hitherto hath helped me, and I will wait on the Lord, for he is my guide, strength and my high tower. "Shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel." So, my brother, he will be glorified in all things, for he is God, and beside him there is none other; wisdom, power and knowledge belong to him, and his chosen people are walled around with his wills and shalls. "Thy walls are continually before me." He promised to save his people from their sins, and when he cried, "It is finished," then was redemption complete in him, and, dear brother, this is my hope. O how wonderful these divine things are to me when I am carried away from this earth and have a foretaste of his love, for sometimes my soul feels to be wafted on wings of love.

Well, I must close, for you will, I fear, be ashamed of me; but, my brother, I have only written what was on my mind. I did not intend to write so much.

The SIGNS is all the preaching I have. You have written some excellent articles, and all the writers speak good things to me. O how unsearchable are the riches of Christ.

Pardon me for intruding upon your time, and if I come into your mind when at the throne of grace, make supplication for me. May the Lord still remember the household of faith.

Your sister, I hope, in a crucified and risen Savior,

NANCY CREEL.

LOCKPORT, N. Y., June 28, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed one dollar to pay the balance of my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the present year. According to present appearances another six months will end my ability to read it, even should the Lord spare my life longer, for I have only the use of one eye, and that growing dimmer every day, yet I feel grateful to God that he is "letting me down" so gradually that I scarcely realize the change. Although the terror of blindness occasionally troubles me, yet there is no terrible shock of total and sudden blindness overwhelming me. I try to get comfort from the prevailing idea that God is just and merciful and does all things well. He knows what is best for his children, and notwithstanding their waywardness and disobedience, he leads them into green pastures and makes them lie down beside the still waters, even when perishing with thirst and hungry for gospel food and worrying over their unworthiness; and when I think this over I am reminded that they are wholesome lessons, well to be remembered in our perplexities. Yes, I learned these lessons many years ago, and have had them rehearsed to me, like many others, by writers in the SIGNS, until I can repeat them very correctly at times when I am in the mood, and I ask myself, Are they not simply lessons learned from Old School Baptists from my youth up? I heard them in my father's family, from him and from visitors, and I read them in the SIGNS, and heard them preached from the pulpit until they seem to have established themselves permanently in my mind. I love to think them over, because they seem right. But if I have learned them may I not forget them? Whatever a man does may easily be un-

done, and although a man may devise his way, the Lord directs his steps; he cannot do one thing, but it will come to naught. So with all these lessons, and many more, assuring him of his almost certainty of salvation, he may only be simply a scholar learning lessons soon to be forgotten. But somehow there seems to be something tangible, by which my interest is involved in the scheme of salvation by grace, about which all Old School Baptists seem to agree. The Savior said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." His first birth was of the flesh and according to nature, and that not of himself, but he "must be born again," and that birth must be of the Spirit, and born into the kingdom of heaven, as his natural birth brought him into the kingdom of nature. He then had natural eyes to see natural things, but now in this new birth he is born with spiritual eyes, with which he sees the kingdom of heaven; with spiritual understanding, so that he comprehends spiritual things, and grows in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But is not this one of those lessons imperfectly learned, and which may be easily forgotten? I am sometimes afraid I have only learned the letter of the lesson and know nothing of the spiritual import of it. But when I consider that "the Son quickeneth whom he will," and that he who hath begun a good work in us will carry it on to the day of Jesus Christ, who has said, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish," I am inclined to be comforted with these assurances, and many others scattered all through the Scriptures for the encouragement of those who frequently find themselves floundering in the slough of despond and almost ready to sink out of sight.

Dear brethren, here I have written some things that sometimes trouble and perplex me, but I have failed to satisfy my mind, only as a duty done, however imperfectly. It may be my last effort to communicate with the readers of our blessed family paper, as my ninety-second year of life is nearly completed and my sight nearly obscured. When I contemplate how completely I am isolated from those who can sympathize with me in my religious views I feel lonely indeed; still not alone, for I sometimes feel an assurance that Christ is with me, comforting me with assurances of his love and watchful care, so I feel to leave all to him and trust in his arm alone for all spiritual blessings.

Unworthily yours, P. WEST.

WEISER, Idaho, Dec. 18, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars, which please place to my credit and send me the good old paper another year.

I have often thought I would try to write something for our paper, but have as often thought it would be so like myself it would not be worth the paper it was written on; but I do wish to say to our dear editors that I believe the Lord is the general manager of our paper; for except the Lord keep the city the watchman crieth in vain. We know the Lord has called some of our dear editors and able writers home, but generally at a ripe old age, and he also, through his kind providence and mercy, raises up others, just as able as the ones he calls home, to fill their places, so, dear brethren, we should take fresh courage by the way. We hear many of our name crying out, O if the brethren would not say so much about the predestination of all things, we would like the SIGNS much better. This only fulfills the prophecy that the time would come when they would not endure sound doctrine; so, dear brethren, be of good cheer. I hope the Baptists will not neglect our good old paper, nor the assembling of themselves together, as our Master has commanded them, and watch for our Lord's second coming, for it does look as if the time is drawing near. I hope I have an interest in the prayers of the Lord's people.

A poor sinner, L. J. BARTON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1908.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JOHN XXI. 20–22.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR FRIEND:—I would like your views upon John xxi. 20–22. To whom did Peter refer when he asked the Lord, "And what shall this man do?" I am ignorant in spiritual things. I do not ask this out of curiosity. I have been a reader of the SIGNS for forty years or longer. My father was a subscriber from the first issue. He died in 1857, then my mother took the paper until her death, some sixteen years ago, and I have taken it since then. I am almost blind, but I expect to take it as long as I live and can get any one to read it to me. It is my meat and my drink, and all the preaching I get. If you reply, just give my name as

A FRIEND.

LATHROP, Mo., July 3, 1908.

The Scripture to which our friend refers reads as follows: "Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved, following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? Peter, seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me."

It has been the judgment of all with whom we have conversed upon this matter, and of all who have written regarding it, so far as we have read, that the disciple whom Jesus loved was John himself, the writer of this gospel, and we see no reason to think differently. In chapter thirteen, verse twenty-three, the same expression is used; also in chapter nineteen, verse twenty-six, the same expression occurs; also in chapter twenty, verse two. That all these expressions relate to John is, however, made clear by the testimony given in verse twenty-four of this last chapter. There it is distinctly said, "This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things." John avoids the use of his own name in his narrative of the life and crucifixion and resurrection of the blessed Lord, but his name is used by the other evangelists. Various suggestions may be urged as to the reason why John avoided the use of his own name, but they all must be largely, at best, but speculation; no reason is assigned in the word of God. The reason we do not know, but the fact we do know.

Having thus briefly answered the question proposed by our aged friend, we feel like also adding some remarks in connection with the subject of the text in general. In all four of the gospels the names of Peter, James and John stand forth with greater prominence than any others. We do not know why this is so, but we do know that it is the fact. We do not know why our sovereign Lord assigns one of his children to one place and another to another place, but we know that he has done so, and that he still does the same, and we know that this is right and best, since our God is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. These three named disciples were in the mount of transfiguration with the Lord, and then were taken further into the garden of Gethsemane, and nearer to the scene of his conflict there, than the other disciples. Beside, in all four of the gospel narratives more is said concerning Peter and John than concerning any of the other disciples. In these two men it pleased God to show

forth in an especial manner what man by nature is, what the warfare between the flesh and Spirit means, and what divine grace can do and does accomplish in the wonderful work of redemption. The questionings, temptations, weaknesses, follies, ignorance, presumption and failures of men in general are set forth in these two men with special clearness; and, on the other hand, the power and fullness and glory of divine grace are made most clearly manifest in them, just in proportion as their need was made manifest.

We need not seek to follow the narrative which leads up to the words of the text. Peter denying his Lord, after having boasted that he would not do so, no matter what others might do, had been subjected to sore temptation. Satan desired to have him that he might sift him as wheat, and so destroy that faith which was his; but the Lord had prayed for him, that his faith fail not, and it did not fail. But Peter said, "I go a fishing," and the others, including John, said, "We also go with thee." It would seem that all confidence was gone out of their hearts as regarded the hope that had been theirs of the kingdom of Christ, and now they see nothing to do but resume their old avocation. They toiled all night and in vain. They are to learn that without Him they can do nothing. His disciples must have his blessing both in the needful toil of this life and in the labor that shall be theirs in the kingdom of heaven. They are to be taught that this same Jesus whom they had seen crucified, is, after all, both Lord and Christ. So, in the morning, at the bidding of the Master, though they knew him not, they cast their net on the right side of the ship, and were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. Then follows the memorable conversation between the Lord and Peter, in which the Lord probes his heart and reveals Peter to himself, even as the blessed Lord already knew all that was in his heart. Then the Lord declared to Peter something of his future, as he should go forth testifying of the Master. He should go on no errand of pleasure that would command the applause and approval of the world of mankind. When he was young he indeed girded himself and went whither he would; then he was not doing that which would incur the enmity of men; in his business of fishing there was nothing but what all his associates would approve. Now he must go forth as a fisher of men in the kingdom of God. In this sort of fishing, men would not be his friends; in this business he must expect no aid, no approval, but rather opposition. In his old age, instead of girding himself and going where he would, unopposed by men, he should be girded by them, and carried whither he would not. No man left to himself goes forth to prison, persecution and death. But the Lord said to him, This shall be thy end. We are not told whether Peter fully understood this at the time, but John says that Jesus spoke this, thus signifying by what death Peter should glorify God. Whether any of the disciples who were on the seaside when the Lord thus spoke, understood what the Lord meant, we do not know, but we know that afterward they did understand; and so we have the explanation that the Lord meant to say to Peter that he should die a violent death at the hands of the enemies of the cross of Christ. Then the Lord said to him, "Follow me." The Lord had been crucified and was risen again from the dead, and by the words, "Follow me," he declares the oneness of his disciples with him, both in sorrow and in the suffering of death, if need be. They are

to follow him, not only in the way of obedience to his Father and their Father, but in the way of the cross, including all suffering, and, if need be, resisting all evil unto blood; hence thousands and millions have not counted their own lives dear unto them, if so be that they might be followers of their Master and Savior. The words, "Follow me," seem very simple on the face of them, but no disciple has ever lived long enough on earth, nor borne a cross heavy enough, nor received victory glorious enough, to reveal all that these two words contain, whether of burden or deliverance, whether of death or living again, whether of the weight of the cross or the glory of the crown.

It would seem from the narrative that they were walking as they talked together, for in the next verse it is said that Peter, turning about, saw John following. It is our mind that this conversation was between the Lord and Peter alone. It was a conversation into which no other one could intrude. It was an unbosoming of the heart of both the blessed Lord and of Peter in close and sacred communion one with another. The Lord took Peter here and now into a close and intimate communion with himself, as though he would make manifest his unbroken love for his erring disciple in the view of all who were present, and especially for the lasting consolation of that disciple who had denied him. In all aftertime how must the heart of Peter burned within him as he would think of his folly, his vain glorying, and then his fall, and then of the amazing condescension of the Savior, against whom he had sinned so grievously. The blessed Lord comes nearer to him than ever before, and he comes into the presence of the Master with a better understanding of his need of that presence than ever before. It is his joy now that the blessed Lord knows all things, and so knows that poor, broken-hearted, erring Peter does indeed love him. The Lord has now shown him something of what he must suffer for the sake of the Lord whom he loved. What a wonderful mark of love and favor the Lord has conferred upon him. Once he had failed, because boastful in his own strength and purpose, but now he should not fail, because the strength of God should be with him. By his failure, in three times denying his blessed Lord, he had been cut off from self-confidence. In the future, when he is imprisoned, and bound, and led forth to death, he shall not deny his Lord, because another strength shall have become his. Peter sees this, perhaps dimly; perhaps also there arises in his heart these questions: Is this reserved for me alone? Am I to tread this thorny road alone of all my companions? And turning and seeing John, who, with James, has been most and closest with him as they have accompanied the Lord, he says, "And what shall this man do?" How hard it is to get away from the questionings of flesh. How hard it is to come into realization that it is the Lord alone with whom we have to do. How often our eyes are not fixed upon the Master alone with an eye single to know his will, and to do it or suffer because of it. It is the nature of the flesh to want to meddle with the Master's business. We want to say what others shall do or suffer, or, at least, we think that they ought to have as heavy burdens placed upon them as are ours to bear. So Martha was fretted that Mary was not standing by her side in the cares and burdens of providing for the temporal welfare of the Savior and his disciples as they abided in her house: "Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone?" How often has

this complaint found room in our own hearts. It seems to us that Peter voices this feeling in the question, "And what shall this man do?"

In the reply of the Savior we are told that it was not meant that John should not die as other men, but only were it the will of God that he should tarry in this life till Jesus should come, what mattered it to Peter. Both he and John were servants of the one Master, and the one motive of each should be to do what the Lord required of him, leaving what others might do to the Master, who knew best. The disciples understood the saying of Jesus to mean that John should not die, but live on until the coming of the Lord. That was a mistake; but suppose it were the will of God that John should not die, but remain until the end of time, why should Peter question about this? Why should he concern himself in the matter at all? There is but one thing needful for a disciple to do, and that is to not concern one's self regarding the duties of another, or concerning the place allotted them in the house of the Lord, but only with the question, What will my Lord have me to do? And so he said to Peter again, "Follow me." This means clearly, Follow no one else. It means that disciples are to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, rather than worldly gain, or applause, or ease. They are not to follow after their own lusts, whether this may mean the things which the world calls innocent or the things counted vile in the world. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." If the affections are set on things above the world, where Christ sits at the right hand of God, and not on the world, it is sure that there will be a far different behavior toward the world, and its pleasures and vanities, than what appears when the heart is set upon the world. "Love not the world," must mean something, and one thing is sure, viz., that it does mean separation from what worldly people engage in, whether it be the manifestation of the spirit of worldly gain, or worldly pleasure. Again, it means that to follow Christ is to live alone, misunderstood, and the subject of reproaches from men. It means to receive his doctrine, and to abide at his feet, as learners of him who is meek and lowly of heart. It means forgiveness of injuries, love to him who misuses us, pity for him who has wrought us wrong, and prayer for our brethren that they may be restored, if we see that in any way they have departed from the spirit and life that becomes the gospel. To follow Christ means to seek to obey him in the order of his house, not in the mere form of it, but in the loving, gentle, forgiving spirit of it, which seeks not satisfaction, but rather salvation for the erring one. This was the Spirit of Jesus, who was meek and lowly in heart, and who when reviled, reviled not again, and who came even to that disciple who denied him again and again, with still greater manifestations of love, and bade him be his disciple indeed, saying once and again to him, "Follow me." Was it not a wonder to that disciple all his life long that the Master should still allow him the privilege of being his disciple? C.

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EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

1 CORINTHIANS IX. 27.

"BUT I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

The above named Scripture is frequently referred to by those work-mongers who deny the efficiency of the grace of God to secure the eternal salvation of those on whom it is bestowed, with a manifest design to make the impression that the apostle Paul taught the doctrine of falling from grace. Infidels themselves in regard to the testimony of God on that subject, they desire to strengthen their skepticism by dragging the inspired apostle into their company. They would make it appear, if possible, that the same Paul who had so constantly and persistently contended that salvation was by grace alone, who declared to the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, that it was by grace they were saved, through faith, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast; and who elsewhere contended that if salvation were of grace it could not be by works; and if by works it could not be by grace; and who positively and emphatically declared that it was not of works, but that it was by grace, and grace alone; that this same Paul was, after all, a poor, blind Arminian, and did hold that christians were liable to fall from grace and be damned if they trusted alone in the grace of God for their salvation. Well did this apostle anticipate their infidelity, their cunning craftiness, and their handling the word of God deceitfully, when he charged them with turning the truth of God into a lie. This they do when they make the Scriptures say what they never said, and testify the opposite of what they have always testified. But it is only necessary to examine attentively, candidly what the apostle and all other inspired writers have said, to expose the deception of those God-defying skeptics who lie in wait to deceive. Those base deceivers would represent that the works of men are more effectual in securing salvation than the grace of God; for they represent that men may be the subjects of grace, have the grace of God in their hearts, feel its power to the extent that Paul had felt it when God himself had told Paul personally, "My grace is sufficient for thee," and afterwards that grace prove insufficient, they fall from it and perish forever, and that the works of men are more reliable than the Savior's blood and righteousness; that they may be of the number for whom Christ shed his blood, to whom God has imputed his righteousness without works, and yet if they fail to secure their salvation by their own willing and doing, they will be lost, notwithstanding the grace of God and the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul said by the grace of God he was what he was; but they would make him say by his own works he was what he was.

In urging on the Corinthian saints that they should abstain from idolatry and carnal lusts, that they might thereby enjoy the fellowship and communion of all who were of the household of God, he in the commencement of this chapter adverts to his own standing and experience. Of his standing in the house of God, he says, "Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen the Lord?" &c. His standing was such as could not be questioned as a child of God, an heir of immortality and an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, yet with all this array of incontestable evidence in his

favor, to enjoy the confidence and fellowship of his brethren he had to keep under his body and to bring it into subjection. Keep his body under what? Bring it into subjection to what? He has informed us that with his mind he served the law of God, but with his flesh, or body, the law of sin. He found another law, that is, another from the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus. This other law in his members, namely, the members of his body, bringing him into captivity to the law of sin which was in his members, for in his flesh dwelt no good thing. He had a continual warfare between the flesh and Spirit. When absent from the body he was present with the Lord, and when at home in the body he was absent from the Lord. The body naturally struggling for the ascendancy in the conflict, but the Spirit warring against the flesh, suppressed the corruptions of the body and kept it under, and in subjection to the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. But why this conflict? Not to save his soul from hell; that salvation was already accomplished, and the assurance given him by the seal of God himself. Why then did he struggle with the corruptions of his flesh? Ah, if he had been an Arminian perhaps he would not, for they have often said if they were only sure that they would be saved at last, they would give a loose rein to all their wicked propensities; they would steal, murder and commit all manner of wickedness, and take their fill of sin. Well, they can never have that assurance until they are born of God, and if they are ever born of God they will never use such language, for they will then find in them a principle which aspires after holiness and struggles against the lusts of the flesh.

But the question is, In what sense Paul, after preaching to others, could himself be a castaway? We understand him to mean in regard to his usefulness to the saints as a minister of Christ unto them. He tells us in this chapter of his labors and sacrifices in the work of the ministry for the sake of the saints. He had waived his right to be supported by his brethren, and had accommodated himself to the condition and capacity of Jews and Gentiles, to the strong and to the weak, that his labors might be beneficial to them. In all his labors and sacrifices he had conferred not with flesh and blood, he had not pursued a course gratifying to the body, but in fastings oft, in afflictions, stripes and imprisonments oft, he had kept his body under and brought it into subjection, that his ministry might be useful to the saints. Suppose that Paul, while preaching the truth to the people, had indulged the unhallowed propensities of his depraved nature, mingling with scoffers, in rioting, drunkenness, fighting, or in any manner unbecoming his high and holy calling, would not such indulgence of the flesh have lowered him in the esteem and fellowship of his brethren? We have some painful examples of those who preach good, sound Bible doctrine, but their conduct out of the pulpit is such as contradicts the spirit of the truth which they proclaim. We have heard it said of some that when in the pulpit they never ought to go out, and when out they never ought to be allowed to go in. Christ compares his ministers to salt, but he says, If the salt have lost its savor, it is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, or cast away, and trodden under foot of men. When cast away from the fellowship and confidence of the saints their preaching cannot be edifying, and if cast out, the world has no use for them, and they are trodden under foot of men.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 15, 1863.

HEBREWS VI. 4–6.

"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."

The inspired writer of this text had been discoursing on the subject of a progression in the knowledge of divine things in the school of Christ, and under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, through the gifts bestowed upon the church; but he found some of the Hebrew saints who had been so long under Moses as a schoolmaster that they were exceedingly dull to comprehend the perfection of the gospel, for the old schoolmaster, the law, made nothing perfect. Like the pupil in school always studying the alphabet, dwelling on the form and sound of the letters, but never instructed in combining them to spell words or to express sentences, or like children accustomed to be fed on milk, but never having their senses exercised to use meat. The principles or elements of the perfection of the gospel of Christ, such as repentance from dead works, faith toward God, the doctrine of baptism, and of laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment, all these had been set forth in the types of the law and predictions of the prophets, but as the types were only shadows of good things to come, the body or substance being Christ, as set forth in the gospel, therefore he says, leaving the principles of the doctrine which were in the types, as the first rudiments or first lessons given, Let us go on to perfection; like the child in school who, after learning his letters, is exercised in spelling, and from lesson to lesson, until perfected in the use of letters; and as the living child, when sufficiently nurtured on milk, should be fed on stronger food until he is able to digest the strongest meat, so these Hebrew saints, in the a, b, c of their religious instruction, under the law as their schoolmaster, had learned that without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sins; and as they had been accustomed to offer their sacrifices for sin year by year continually, because the law could make nothing perfect, so they seemed to still cling to the impression that under the gospel new foundations of faith and repentance would still require to be made, and they were dull to comprehend the absolute perfection of the mediatorial work of our High Priest, who by one offering has perfected forever them that are sanctified. The foundation of our faith and repentance, and of eternal salvation, is permanently laid, and "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus." And in demonstration of this plain position he argues the impossibility of any new foundation for salvation; for to lay another foundation would require that Christ should come again in the flesh, be crucified again on the cross, and so put to open shame. Having once assayed to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and cried on the cross, "It is finished," and ascended in triumph to the skies, believing that he had forever saved his people from their sins, if it should prove possible that his mediatorial work had failed to accomplish what he intended and designed, and he had to come back and do his work over again, this would be a blemish that would put him to an open shame. But observe, the apostle does not intimate that it is possible either for the saints to fall from this foundation already laid, or that it is possible that any new foundation should be laid, but he

says, "It is impossible," "if they [the saints] shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance." And to prove the impossibility shows that it would require what is altogether impossible, namely, that Christ should again be crucified, and so put to an open shame. Some, in commenting on this text, have supposed that Paul intended to convey the idea that there was a liability that some of those described may fall away, in order to harmonize their understanding of it with the certain preservation of all the saints in grace to glory, have assumed the position that persons may experience all these things and only be "almost christians;" but if there be a saint on earth who has any further or additional evidence, we never met with him. Beside the absurdity of being almost a child of God, almost born of God, almost begotten of God; a child of the devil, though almost a child of God; they find no such logic in the Bible. Let us examine these evidences, and if any who read this on examination shall find that they have additional or more reliable evidences, we desire that they will immediately inform us.

"Those who were once enlightened." Are the dead enlightened in regard to spiritual things? tell us, ye that were sometimes darkness. We read that, In him, Christ, was life, and the life was the light of men. Hence light and life are synonymous terms, as used in the text. Those who were once enlightened are those who once were quickened by the light of life and immortality, while all others are held in chains of darkness, having eyes, but see not. The only way in which a sinner can be spiritually enlightened is this: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ."

"And have tasted of the heavenly gift." Christ is the heavenly gift; he is the true bread which God has given for the life of the world; he that eateth of this bread hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.

"And were made partakers of the Holy Ghost." Is it possible for any to partake of the Holy Ghost who are not born of the Spirit? Is there any other way possible for men to partake of the Holy Ghost? "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." Can we then partake of the Holy Ghost, partake of the divine nature, and not be quickened by it? Is not this partaking of the Holy Ghost the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father? Does not this Spirit seal all the children of God as such, and bear witness with our spirit that we are the children of God? Are not as many as are led by the Spirit of God the sons of God?

"And have tasted the good word of God." "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." Has any sinner ever tasted the good word of God without being quickened by it? Never.

"And the power of the world to come." A foretaste of heaven, the earnest of an inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. Without being born again we cannot have the faith of the Son of God; without that faith no man can enter within the veil or taste of the power of the world to come. Paul had a taste when he was

caught up to the third heaven, but whether he was in the body or out of the body he could not tell.

Now if all these do not constitute reliable evidence that they who have experienced them are the children of God, tell us, ye who know, what more is required? Well, having these indisputable evidences that ye are the children of God, if it were possible that you should lose all this, do you know of anything else that could save you, without involving the preposterous idea that Christ should come again in the flesh, and suffer again, and do all the work of redemption over again? Then the absurd doctrine that sinners can pass from death to life, have all these evidences of a gracious state, fall away, or fall from grace, as it is called, and then get religion again, or be restored to a gracious state, is what this text declares to be simply impossible, and that impossibility he proves by the fact that it would require a second Christ, a second crucifixion, a second redemption, all of which would tarnish the unsullied glory of Christ and put him to an open shame. Arminians may fall from works for want of grace, but for saints to fall from grace for want of works is impossible.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 15, 1863.

CHURCH NOTICES.

PROVIDENCE permitting, the next meeting of the Woburn Church, in Woburn, Mass., will be the third Sunday in August instead of the fourth Sunday, as is usual when five Sundays appear. We cordially invite all of our brethren and friends, who can, to meet with us.

H. C. KER, Pastor.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

W. D. Ball, California, $1.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Benj. E. Cubbage, at his residence, Felton, Del., July 2nd, 1908, Alexander F. Meredith and Mrs. Della M. Edge, both of Kent County, Delaware.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Melissa Cator, wife of Hiram Cator, of Sanitaria Springs, Broome Co., N. Y., died April 17th, 1908, aged 69 years. She was baptized by Elder S. H. Durand, uniting with the Otego Old School Baptist Church Sept. 1st, 1872, and moved her membership from that church to the Brookdale Old Baptist Church April 6th, 1901, remaining in the sweet and perfect fellowship of said church until called to her eternal home. She was held in the highest esteem by all of her dear kindred in Christ, and by all others who knew her. She was a lovely christian woman, sound in the faith of the gospel of the Son of God. It could be truly said of her that she was rooted, grounded, established, settled. I have served the church of her membership for several years, and knew her long before, and can say that she was truly a mother in Israel to me. Her conversation was heavenly, which made her company very sweet and precious to all of her friends. She leaves to mourn her absence, two sons: James, of Binghamton, N. Y., and William, of Catatonk, N. Y., with many other friends, beside her dear kindred in Christ. She died of cancer, with which she had been afflicted for several years, but bore her affliction with that sweet spirit of reconciliation which had been clearly manifest in her afflictions, which had been many years. What wonderful power to reconcile.

Elder Charles Bogardus officiated at the funeral, which was held at the home of her son William, Catatonk, N. Y., after which her body was taken to Sanitaria Springs, N. Y., and buried. She is with Jesus, and like him, and is satisfied. God bless all the mourning ones for his dear Son's sake.

ALSO,

Sister **Alice Elliot** died Feb. 20th, 1908, of pneumonia, having been sick but a few days. She was 52 years old, and had been a member of the church at Cammal about twenty-five years. She was baptized by either Elder St. John or S. H. Durand, and was a lover of sound doctrine. She leaves two children, boys grown up, and other relatives and friends. She is at rest.

ALSO,

Miss Lucy Jaynes died March 1st, 1908, aged 78 years or more. She was living in Bainbridge, N. Y., at the time of her death. She died suddenly, of heart failure, I suppose. She was a lover of good, sound doctrine, although not a member of the Old School Baptist Church, and had no use for anything

but their preaching. She has gone to her eternal home.

ALSO,

Nelson Drake, of Rikers Hollow, N. Y., died March, 1908, of heart failure, aged about 50 years. He was a single man. He was not a professor, but expressed love and fellowship for the doctrine of grace as preached by the Old School Baptists. May the Lord bless all the mourning ones.

ALSO,

Mary Grigg died June 20th, 1908. Her maiden name was Phillips. She was born in Cornwall, England, in 1830, came to Canada in 1848, was married to brother Wm. Grigg the same year. They lived two years at St. Catharine, then moved to Casodoc in 1850, living there until called to her eternal home. There were born to them twelve children, six boys and six girls, all living. She was sick five or six months of a complication of diseases. I am told that she loved to hear the truth preached, and enjoyed entertaining Old School Baptists. Brother Grigg, who is in his eighty-first year, is very sad and lonely, but having a good hope through grace he does not mourn as those who have no hope. Mrs. Grigg was not a member of the church, but gave evidence of being born of God.

May the dear Lord comfort our dear old brother in his affliction, and the children, together with all of the mourning friends, for Jesus' sake.

ALSO,

Mrs. Gunn, of Dutton, Ontario, Canada, died June 21st, 1908, in the 80th year of her age. She leaves one son and one daughter, with other friends, to mourn. She was sick several months, her illness beginning with the death of a son. She was not a professor, but manifested a living interest in the church for many years. She has gone home.

ALSO,

John Kugler, of or near Frenchtown, N. J., died of dropsy, June 29th, 1908, aged 84 years, I think. He was able to be around up to the time of his death, but had been very lame for some time. He attended one day of the last Delaware River Association, at Locktown, N. J. He was a regular attendant of the Old School Baptist meetings at Locktown and Frenchtown, when he was able to go, and always seemed to enjoy the preaching very much. He was a kind husband and father, a good neighbor and citizen, an honorable, honest, upright man. He leaves his companion, one sister, several children and many friends to mourn their loss. May the dear Lord comfort, strengthen, uphold and guide all of the sad, lonely, mourning ones, is our prayer for Jesus' sake.

The writer officiated at this and also at the five funerals preceding this.

D. M. VAIL.

Mrs. Lottie Frasher, widow of Richard Frasher, of Petersburg, Del., died April 17th, 1908, aged 65 years. Mrs. Frasher was paralyzed about five years before her death, and from that time was a great sufferer. She made her home with Thomas Meredith, her son-in-law, in Willow Grove, Del., where in her affliction she received the kindest attention of her daughter Lizzie. She lost her husband, and afterward two daughters, and the sorrow and trial of affliction rested heavily upon her until her strength gave way. The writer often visited her home when she was in health, and her happy, genial, sunny disposition made those around her happy. She, with her husband, used to attend the Baptist meetings, which she continued to do until she was afflicted. She leaves a son and one daughter, namely: Milton True Frasher and Mrs. Thomas Meredith, both of Willow Grove, Del.

Funeral service was held at her home in Willow Grove, Del., conducted by the writer. Interment at Cow Marsh Cemetery. May those who mourn for her rejoice that affliction, sorrow and suffering hath given place to peace and rest.

ALSO,

William C. Frasher, of Petersburg, Del., died May 18th, 1908, at the home of his son, Arlie C. Frasher, 3202 Summer St., Philadelphia, Pa., where he had gone some weeks before for treatment at the hands of specialists for a tumor on the spine; but medical skill could give him no relief. Mr. Frasher was 69 years of age, and widely known in Kent County as a man who enjoyed the confidence, respect and esteem of all who knew him. He was an excellent business man, and quite prominent in political circles. None will be missed more in the community in which he lived. He was a man good at heart, who ever held fast to his ideals of justice and right, a good neighbor, a kind friend. He leaves the son herein mentioned and a daughter, Mrs. Elma Barber, of Philadelphia, Pa., and many relatives and friends to mourn their loss and remember him in love.

The service was conducted by the writer, after which interment was made in Cow Marsh Cemetery, near the home of his father and relatives.

ALSO,

Thomas J. Hastings, of Delmar, Del., died April 23rd, 1908, at his home, aged 48 years and 7 months. For several years he had been failing in health from tuberculosis of the throat and lungs. He could not speak above a whisper for more than a year before his death. His suffering was very great, especially the last few weeks of his life, but he was rarely ever heard to complain or speak of his suffering. Brother "Tommy" was the eldest child of the late brother Caldwell Hastings and Sarah A. Hastings, of near Delmar, Del. He married Miss Mary Cubbage, of Kent County, Del., Nov. 22nd, 1899, to which union one child, Bernice Elizabeth, was born. He

was baptized when quite a young man by Elder E. Rittenhouse, and received into the fellowship of Little Creek Church, Sussex County, Del. His walk as a christian from that time until his death was that of a consistent follower in the doctrine of the apostles and of the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. In church relation he was widely known and appreciated, ever faithful, kind and loving. He was a loving and trusted husband and father, a dutiful son and brother, a good citizen, a useful man, who made those who knew him hold him in highest regard for his worth as a friend and neighbor. His kind and even disposition made for him no enemies. He leaves a wife, one daughter and many relatives and friends to cherish his memory. What a comfort that we can remember our friends as we loved them, after they are taken from us.

His funeral, which was largely attended, was held at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Delmar, Del., conducted by the writer in the absence of Elder A. B. Francis, his pastor. Text used, Job xiv. 14: "If a man die, shall he live again?" Interment was made at Smith's Mills Cemetery, Sussex Co., Del.

May the Lord comfort and keep those left to mourn his death in the flesh, which is his gain of life eternal with Christ at home. B. E. CUBBAGE.

John M. Cummins, my beloved brother, departed this life at his residence near Touchet, Walla Walla Co., Wash., July 2nd, 1908. He had reached the age of 71 years, 3 months and 29 days, and like a shock of corn, fully ripe, he fell asleep, as we trust, in Jesus, nevermore to awake until raised by the same omnipotent power in which he had trusted for time and eternity. He was born in Perry County, Ind., March 11th, 1837, emigrated with his parents to Iowa in 1848. He was married to Miss Mima Beaty, Nov. 28th, 1861. The fruits of this union were three sons and six daughters, all of whom are living except an infant daughter. In 1864 he emigrated with his family to Utah, and in 1867 to California, and in 1877 from California to this valley, where he had lived, enduring the hardships of early pioneer life in a new country, raising his family to manhood and womanhood, and seeing all married and with families except two. His living children were all permitted to be with him in his last hours except one daughter, who lives in Oregon, some distance away, and was sick in bed. He seemed to suffer but little the last week of his sickness, but was quite nervous and restless most of the time, and four days before the close of life he expressed the opinion that he would never get well, and expressed himself as desirous that the will of the Lord be done in his case, and the close of his life was like one falling asleep. He professed a hope in early life, but did not identify himself with the church until 1888, when he joined the Mizpah Church in this place, by experience, and was baptized by the late Elder J. A. Bullack, and a few years later was chosen clerk of the church. He was also made deacon of the church, which office he filled with full satisfaction to the close of his life. He was strong in the faith, a close Bible reader, and his walk in life was strictly according to his profession, and his seat in the church meetings was seldom found vacant. He was loved and respected by all his brethren wherever known, and his acquaintance was pretty general among the churches here. As a brother, husband and father, none could more than equal him. The writer and one brother in Iowa are now the only ones living of the six children of my father's family by his first wife, and the loss to me is inexpressible, to feel and know we shall see him no more in this world. May the dear Lord humble our hearts and give us strength and the will to say, "Thy will be done," for our loss is truly his gain. And the dear sister who has been the helpmeet of his life to old age, may it be the pleasure of our dear Lord to take her into sacred nearness, guide and protect her through her remaining years. May it be his will to reconcile the sorrowing family to his providence in calling him to that better world, where sorrow, pain and death are unknown.

The funeral service was conducted at his residence, where a large number of friends and brethren gathered to pay the last tribute of love and respect. Elder J. T. Barnes officiated, using as a text 1 Cor. xv., after which the remains were taken to the Touchet Cemetery, their last resting-place, till death shall be swallowed up in victory.

R. CUMMINS.

TOUCHET, Wash., July 5, 1908.

Mrs. Annie E. Garrett died at her home, near Philomont, Loudoun Co., Va., July 3rd, 1908, aged about 73 years. Sister Garrett was baptized in the fellowship of Ebenezer Church, Loudoun County, Va., by Elder R. C. Leachman, in what year I cannot tell. Comfort and prosperity seemed to mark the years of her life until well advanced. She, with her husband, the late brother J. W. Garrett, walked together in loving union, blessed with an abundance of this world's goods and enjoying the love and fellowship of their brethren in the church. In later years misfortune came, with heavy loss and severe trials. After several years of struggle and suffering brother Garrett was removed by death and his wife left to bear her burdens in lonely widowhood, as she had no children. Thanks to her merciful God, she was wonderfully sustained by his almighty grace. That grace sanctified a naturally cheerful disposition, so that it was remarkable to see with what cheerfulness and resignation she bore afflictions seemingly sufficient to crush such feeble worms as we are. Sister Garrett was faithful to her privileges and obligations in the church, and was always in her place at its

meetings, unless hindered by ill health; none among the little company at Ebenezer are esteemed more highly. After several years of ill health, which kept her from the meetings much of the time, she seemed to regain her health in a large measure, and we flattered ourselves with the hope that she might yet be spared to us a number of years. Alas, how little we know of what a day may bring forth. It seems she had been subject to some form of heart trouble, and on the night she died while preparing for bed she felt a choking sensation and called for aid. Sister Annie Thompson, who had lived with her many years, ran to her assistance. Without obtaining relief, she soon fell quietly into that sleep that knows no waking; so sudden was her departure. She had anticipated such a death for some time, and had remarked that if it came it would be all right. How sweet that we can feel she sleeps in Jesus, but how sad when we think of the depleted number at Ebenezer. It is startling to see how rapidly our faithful people are being called away. "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord," is a saying being verified among us now. Sister Garrett leaves many devoted friends, but no nearer relatives than nieces, I think. Sisters Margaret and Annie Thompson have shared her home for many years, and have cared for her, and received from her a mother's care. Their loss is the greatest of all.

May God supply all their needs and have them continually in his holy keeping.

J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., July 15, 1908.

MEETINGS.

THE Abbington Old School Baptist Church, at Justus, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting to be held on Wednesday and Thursday, August 12th and 13th, 1908. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited. Those expecting to come by rail are requested to write to G. W. Goodrich, Olyphant, Pa., R. F. D., so that arrangements may be made to meet them on Tuesday. G. W. GOODRICH.

THE Des Moines River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Greens Grove Church, near Marion, Linn Co., Iowa, August 15th, 16th and 17th, 1908. Persons coming to this meeting will be met at Marion. A cordial invitation is extended to ministers and brethren to meet with us.

W. S. GOTT.

THE Bryn Zion Old School Baptist Church will hold its yearly meeting at its usual appointed time, the third Sunday in August and Saturday before (15th and 16th). A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. Meeting will begin Saturday afternoon at 2:30 o'clock and continue all day Sunday. DAVID M. CLOUD, Clerk.

THERE will be a two days meeting held in the Old School Baptist Church on Schoharie Hill, August 19th and 20th, 1908. All lovers of the truth are welcome. Those coming from the west will be met at Howes Cave August 18th, and Wednesday morning, August 19th. Those coming from the east will be met at Schoharie and taken to the home of sister Kinney. GEO. A. MIERS.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Cammal, Pa., expects to hold a two days meeting the fourth Saturday and Sunday in August (22nd and 23rd), 1908, and hope to have Elder Charles Bogardus and our pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, with us, and as many of the brethren and friends as can come. Place of meeting is only a few rods from Cammal station, on New York Central R. R., forty miles from Williamsport, Pa., and seventy miles from Corning, N. Y.

SAMUEL MAFFAT.

THE seventy-seventh annual meeting of the Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will be held this year, the Lord willing, with Union Church, at the residence of Deacon B. F. Myers, one-half mile from Colchester, McDonough Co., Ill., on September 4th, 5th and 6th, 1908. Colchester is situated on the Quincy Branch of the C., B. & Q. R. R. All trains will be met on Friday and Saturday. Brother Myers requests that as many as can conveniently, to come by rail. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially our ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Mt. Pleasant Association will meet with the Beech Creek Church, Shelby County, Ky., on Friday before the first Saturday in September, 1908. Those coming by rail will come to Waddy, on the Louisville Southern R. R., where all trains will be met Friday a. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth. P. W. SAWIN.

THE Licking Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Mt. Gilead Church, near Mays Lick, Ky., Sept. 11th, 12th and 13th, 1908. Those coming from the east, south and west, by way of Lexington and Paris, Ky., will please reach these places on Thursday, Sept. 10th, in time for L. & N. train leaving Lexington at 11 a. m. and Paris at 11:55 a. m., arriving at Helena station at 1:27 p. m., where all will be met and conveyed to places of entertainment near the church, which is about six miles distant. We request as many as can do so, to reach Helena on Thursday at the time above named. Those coming from the east or west by way of Maysville will please write to me, stating day and

time of arrival, so you will be met. We extend a cordial welcome to all lovers of gospel truth.

R. L. TURNER.

MAYS LICK, Ky.

THE Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association will be held with the First Church of Roxbury, at Vega, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 23rd and 24th, 1908. Trains will be met at Roxbury on Tuesday, Sept. 22nd. A cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth is extended, especially to ministers of our faith and order, to meet with us.

V. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

THERE are a few Old School Baptists in Riverside, Cal., and they have meeting the first and third Sundays in each month, at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

W. D. BALL.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 76. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1908. NO. 16.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FT. JENNINGS, Ohio, July 20, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—If not asking too much, I would like to see the views of Elder Wm. J. Purington on absolute predestination of all things, found on first page of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for June 16th, 1856, republished. A great many of our brethren think it something new gotten up among the Baptists.

Yours in a blessed hope,

J. G. FORD.

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS.

BELOVED BROTHER BEEBE:—As a subject of grave consequence has exercised my mind for some time, I feel disposed to give vent to some of my thoughts through the medium of the pen and send them to you on paper, but after you examine the cogitations of my mind, as penned down, if you think the sentiment unsound, or tending to dishonor the cause of truth, you need not publish my views, and in refusing you will not mar my feelings of special regard to you.

I shall found my remarks upon predestination on the following declaration: "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isaiah xlvi. 10.

Predestination is from *prae*, before, and *destino*, to appoint; therefore a before appointment is the technical meaning of the word. If anything is predestinated, the act of setting apart, whether physical or mental, must be absolute, otherwise it has not been separated or determined. A person may meditate upon a subject or subjects and arrive at no definite conclusion; such meditations are not predestination, but merely reflections of the mind; but if a man selects a location for an edifice, the act of choosing was absolute; if he changes his mind the next day, it was an absolute, mental act in the first choice, and will be in every succeeding one, though his mind change hourly; and his mind may change concerning the materials, yet in every change there is an absolute determination for the time being. Men often determine mentally, but they lack physical power to accomplish their designs, yet the predestinating purpose of the mind was absolute.

"Declaring the end from the begin-

ning." The Being who uttered this by the mouth of Isaiah says, "I dwell in the high and holy place;" also, "I am that I am." "Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." It was predestinated in the eternal Mind that this earth should have a place in the universe, and that immutable laws should govern it while passing around the sun, and according to chronology it has obeyed the sovereign mandate of the Creator for nearly six thousand years, without any deviation from his fixed laws, and who can gaze at the starry heavens and not own the absolute predestination of all things? Verily it seems as though the almighty edict has been proclaimed in tones of thunder from the battlements of heaven, through the pen of inspiration, that all things must transpire according to the will of God. Known unto God were all his works from the beginning, consequently nothing has transpired counter to his omniscience; if nothing has occurred not known to Jehovah, it must have been included in the "all things." Objection: I think wicked acts are suffered to transpire, not predestinated. Supposing a man knows that on the morrow an event will occur, and should say, I do not want it to take place, for it is very wicked; I have sufficient power to prevent its transpiring, and yet I know it will certainly come to pass on the morrow. Would not all sane persons say or be led to conclude that such a person is insane? Yet the logic is equally as good as it is to assume the position that events transpire by permission, and not according to predestination. Every flower, every spear of grass, every kernel of grain, every shrub, every tree that has been or ever will be on the face of the earth, was determined before time was; every birth, every death, every war, every commotion which has taken place or ever will, was determined with Jehovah in eternity, and the time when all should occur.

Query: Do you think that wicked acts of men were predestinated by an unalterable decree, and that it was according to the will of God for sin to enter into the world? Do we not behold the two opposites in the visible creation, such as light and darkness, heat and cold, land and water, summer and winter, good and evil, black and white, salt and fresh? "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these." God knows how "to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." If you take such broad ground relative to the purpose of God in all things, will you not represent him the author of sin? Because a faithful follower of Christ contends for the absolute sovereignty of God, why must it be said, If things are thus and so, God is the author of sin? Does it not look something like attempting to expound that part of God's mystery, which is too profound for angelic wisdom, for any one to attempt to clear the character of God from what men call sin; but because the Bible declares things are thus, are we justified in attempting to explain it away or alter the plain construction? Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay, for shall the work say of Him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding?

It was the will, pleasure and purpose of God to form that worm of the dust called man, and implant within him, that awful and inscrutable being, the human soul, and give him a command, the transgressing of which justly brought death

and condemnation upon all his progeny. Was there a tempter ready to seduce? The Scripture reads thus: "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made." Whether the archadversary approached our first parents in the serpent or snake, or assumed the form of a serpent, affects not the question at issue, for he approached them with a lie in his mouth, declaring that what God had pronounced upon them if they transgressed should not come to pass; but they listened to his deceitful charms and yielded to the temptation, thereby incurring the wrath of God, received in full the penalty annexed to the restriction. Now was it by divine appointment that they transgressed, or was it a casual circumstance? All orthodox Baptists will admit, I presume, that sin must enter into the world in order that grace might abound, or that the blessed Redeemer might be manifested in the flesh, satisfy the justice of God and redeem the church; otherwise how could the fountain be opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem? for said David, "With thee is the fountain of life." If it was by divine appointment that sin should enter into the world, the channel through which it was to flow must have been ordained of God. Now if God knows how to reserve the ungodly to be punished, does he not know how to introduce sin into the world and not be the author of it? O, dear brethren, let us beware how we indulge in the expression, Author of sin, for sin's being introduced into the world is one of the hidden things of God which has been brought to pass according to the divine arrangement. The enlightened child of grace sometimes hardly knows which should receive the greater degree of admiration, the remedy or the disease; for says the poor creature, Who ever would have known the riches of God's grace had it not been for transgression? According to Scripture, man was the proper subject for Satan's wiles to be practiced upon, and man either possessed the inclination to listen to his device, or the devil was empowered to impart the same; but be that as it may, we see that there was an innocent man and a malicious devil, and the combination of these two elements or dispositions has caused all the calamity amongst the family of man from that day to the present time. Now the grave question arises, Is Satan self-existent or a created being? If self-existent, then he is independent; if created, then he is to fulfill a design, and the Scriptures plainly point out that wicked men and devils are environed by almighty power, consequently their acts are limited according to God's will. Now because Satan possessed a malicious, deceitful disposition, averse to God's law, and man an upright, innocent nature, and the weaker being tempted of the stronger, and yielding thereto, thereby bringing sin into the world, causing that sable mantle of gloom to be cast over this earth and all that pertains to it, shall we dare to accuse God, in this mysterious transaction, of being the author of sin? Supposing a steam-engine had a very intricate machine attached to it, and the inventor should say to all, Touch it not, lest you be destroyed, and a man should attempt to manage it, contrary to the express command of the architect, and in so doing should be destroyed, would it be just to accuse the inventor of the machine of being a murderer? We find by careful observation that it requires, in many instances, a combination of elements to produce a result. For instance, the storm for watering the earth and

nourishing the vegetation is the result of wind, clouds and water combined, and the awful storm of sin, resulting from transgression, was just as necessary for the development of the church as the storm of the natural elements is for the maturing of the vegetation upon the face of the earth. After the serpent beguiled our first parents he received his doom, which was: "Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." The literal serpent is deprived of feet, and as a general thing he is found hidden away in the grass or shrubbery (not liking the sunshine very well); by which we can see shadowed forth the hidden, treacherous manner in which the adversary of souls sows broadcast the seeds of disunion and strife among the dear people of God, and it is declared dust shall be the serpent's meat. We will briefly notice the manner in which the literal serpent takes his food: it is not masticated, but swallowed whole by a gradual process, whether it be a frog or a bird; also some serpents charm their prey. It is a lamentable truth that some of the dear people of God are, to a certain extent, for a time swallowed up of the great adversary, but they do not perish in his huge stomach as the prey does in the literal serpent, but in God's own time they are spued out again, by which absorption they learn obedience. Did the enemy of all righteousness show to the christian the final issue of his temptation at once, instead of leading him off by degrees, he would perhaps be more on his watch, but like as the snake takes the frog, in the grass, by the foot and swallows him gradually, so are the dear people of God led astray gradually, until they are swallowed up; but, thanks be to God, they will not perish. Truly dust is the serpent's meat, for that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and the carnal or fleshly mind of the christian is what Satan loves to feed upon, and though he may have occasion at times to use Scripture, as he did when he quoted it to the dear Redeemer, yet he cannot feed upon spiritual food, for dust is his meat, and if he ever has a feast it is when the dear people of God are at variance and feel to bite and devour each other. Has not the end been declared from the beginning in giving Satan his doom?

"From ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." God is perfect, pure and holy, and nothing can add to his essential glory or diminish aught therefrom, consequently what transpires in the visible creation as well as in the church of the dear Redeemer is for God's declarative glory. When God made promise to Abraham concerning his seed, that they should sojourn in a strange land and be cruelly treated, and at the set time be delivered, the way in which they were to go down into Egypt was not made known to Abraham, and for aught we know he had no just conception of God's method to bring to pass the declaration made to him, but none will deny its ordination of God at the time it was uttered to Abraham by Jehovah, and if ordained of God it must have been absolutely predestinated.

Jacob had twelve sons, and one of them (Joseph) had two dreams or visions, which his brethren understood as an omen against them, and they resolved to rid themselves of the dreamer. While Joseph's brethren were feeding the flock in Shechem, Israel sent him unto them, and when they saw him afar off they conspired against him to slay him; but God would not permit them to destroy him, for Reuben delivered him out of their

hands and said, "Let us not kill him." He was stripped of his coat of many colors and cast into a pit, but while he was in the pit there passed by Ishmaelites, and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit and sold him to the Ishmaelites, and they carried Joseph into Egypt and sold him unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's. Though Joseph was in bondage, God gave him special favor in the sight of Pharaoh, and though Joseph was unjustly cast into prison, he was not forsaken, and when the time had come for his deliverance from prison he was set free. It seems that Pharaoh's dreams could not be interpreted by any but Joseph, and after the wonderful explanation of the dreams Joseph was restored to be the first in Egypt, Pharaoh only excepted. During the years of plenty, Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, and after the years of plenty came on a sore famine, which was over the face of the whole earth, and when Jacob heard there was an abundance of corn in Egypt he sent his sons thither to buy corn for sustenance, and we find by tracing the history of this wonderful transaction that Joseph's dreams concerning his father's family were fulfilled, and in the ultimatum Jacob and his posterity went into Egypt. And Joseph said to his brethren, "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you, to preserve life." Joseph was either mistaken or God did send him into Egypt, but we conclude that God did send him, and as God sent him, was not the way ordained in the mind of Infinity in which he should go into bondage? Was not the course pursued by a majority of Joseph's brethren to all human appearance very wicked? Surely it was; yet it was the appointed way to save much people alive, and dare any accuse God of being the author of sin in this mysterious transaction? Did not Joseph's brethren act out voluntarily their envious disposition towards him? Yet it was to be for their own good at last. Truly God's judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out. Verily, "Secret things belong unto the Lord our God." Did not God's counsel stand, and he do all his pleasure concerning Joseph and his brethren? We can plainly see that God appointed the sending of Jacob's family into Egypt as the way in which Abraham's seed should go into bondage, and as time passed on and Israel multiplied they became sorely oppressed, and their lives were bitter by reason of their hard bondage. As Israel multiplied, an edict was issued that all the male children of the Hebrews should be slain, but notwithstanding this, Moses was reared to be a leader to Israel, and through him God was to multiply his signs and wonders in Egypt. Pharaoh could not let Israel go until the appointed time, and if he promised to let Israel go while the judgments were before him, soon as they were removed his heart was hardened so that he would not let Israel go. God said unto Pharaoh, "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." "For this." Was Pharaoh raised up to oppress the seed of Abraham and bring all those dreadful, vindictive judgments upon the Egyptians, even to the slaying of the firstborn, before Israel could go? So says the Scripture. After the host of Israel left Egypt Pharaoh's heart was again hardened, and he pursued Israel; and as they were in great fear, having the Red Sea before them, the mountains upon each hand and Pharaoh and his host be-

hind them, God said, "I will get me honor upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen." After the children of Israel had passed through the sea, Pharaoh and his host pursued them, but their chariot wheels were taken off so that they drove heavily, and in the morning all the host of Pharaoh were overthrown in the midst of the sea. Did not the counsel of God stand and he do all his pleasure concerning the seed of Abraham and the Egyptians? Jesus told his disciples that he must go unto Jerusalem and what he must suffer. "Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." If the things which Jesus was about to suffer were of God, they were so by divine appointment, consequently could not be revoked. It seems that Peter possessed a wonderful degree of love and sympathy, declaring, "This shall not be unto thee;" and how often do we hear it said, Such things need not be, for God did not predestinate that they should take place; but let us remember Peter's zeal, and the exceedingly severe rebuke of the Master to him. Jesus came down from heaven not to do his own will, but the will of Him who had sent him, therefore it was appointed for him to be rejected of men, to suffer and die on the cross. In the garden of Gethsemane he prayed to his Father, saying, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." It was not possible for the cup (of almighty vengeance, which he must drink for his dear people,) to pass from him, for God said by the mouth of Hosea, "Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." Behold the awful agony of the dear Redeemer in the garden; still justice knew no forgiveness. Shocking precept, mysterious mandate, that he who was spotless was doomed to suffer. When he was delivered into the hands of wicked men, one of his followers manifested a carnal disposition, for he used the sword, but the command was, "Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword, shall perish with the sword." Then said Jesus, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" "Thus it must be;" therefore the decree could not be changed, and Judas was as absolutely predestinated to sell his Master for the thirty pieces of silver, and then repent and hang himself, as Christ was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was, that he might in the fullness of time be manifested in the flesh, to be delivered up for the offences of his people, die for them and be raised again for their justification. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Christ was not only delivered by God's counsel, but it was by his determinate counsel, and he was crucified by wicked hands. Did not God ordain that wicked hands should crucify his Son? And though it was done by wicked hands, still it was for the glory of God and the redemption of the church. Verily the wrath of man is made to praise God, and he restrains the remainder as seems good in his sight. Said Christ, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a

devil?" Also, "Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripure might be fulfilled." How could Judas be the son of perdition unless he was born of perdition?

While Jesus was enduring contradictions of sinners against himself in the judgment hall, Pilate said unto him, "Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?" To which the blessed Son of God responded, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." Pilate received his power against the Son of God by divine appointment, consequently the Jews and Romans were about to do what his hand and counsel had before determined should be done, therefore it was impossible for the decree to be changed. At the time when Christ was to be mocked, scourged, spit upon and crucified, there were characters possessing the very disposition and will to accomplish the purpose of God. Now were not those very characters prepared of God to accomplish his will in proclaiming, "Crucify him, crucify him," and let his blood be upon us and our children, and to conduct the dear Lamb of God to Calvary, and then and there to nail those dear hands and feet to the cross, as much as the blessed Redeemer was ordained of God to suffer the awful agony about to be inflicted upon him? Was it not according to the counsel of God that in the fifteenth century a Columbus should be raised up to discover the continent of America, in which place the Gentile church should find an asylum and her members be favored with the blessed privilege of worshiping God according to the dictates of their own consciences? Was it not according to the will of God that this country should be inhabited by another race, and the aborigines be disinherited? Such sayings or questions may be termed very severe, but have we not examples recorded in Scripture equally severe? Samuel, the prophet of the Lord, said unto Saul, the king of Israel, "Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." Objection: Amalek had done evil unto Israel, therefore justice demanded retribution, consequently the aborigines of this country were not guilty like the Amalekites. Such an inference does not affect the grave question of absolute predestination; they (the Amalekites) were to be utterly destroyed, infants and adults, as well as all their substance; but, admitting the fact that the sin of the Amalekites was the only cause of their destruction, how do we know that the aborigines of this country had not committed as great or greater sins against the Almighty? "And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord. And Samuel said: What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" Saul said, "The people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God." What wonderful benevolence and charity Saul possessed, for he chose to listen to the people rather than obey the voice of God. Was not Saul's benevolence the same kind of charity which Peter possessed when he said, Far be it from thee, Lord? Saul spared Agag, the king, but Samuel said, "Bring ye hither to me Agag the king of the Amalekites: and Agag came unto him delicately. And Agag said,

Surely the bitterness of death is past. And Samuel said, As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal." What, after Saul, king of Israel, had spared Agag, must Samuel, the prophet of the Lord, hew him in pieces? I might refer to numerous other examples of what men call cruelty, recorded in Scripture, to prove all things transpire according to the eternal purpose of God, but if the instances already cited are not sufficient to prove the absolute predestinating purpose of God in all things, I despair of substantiating it, either by Scripture or argument. The emperor of Russia, the sultan of Turkey, the emperor of France and the queen of England (all of whom were lately engaged in war) are just as much God's instruments to fulfill some wise design as Alexander and Cyrus were, and all the tumult now abroad in the earth is for the good of God's dear people, or else the inspired apostle was wrong when he said, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Said the Redeemer by the mouth of David, "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." We are led to conclude from the declaration of David that God has absolutely predestinated the number of the children of promise (or recorded in the book of life all the members of Christ's mystical body), and as "there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven," the time when each one shall be developed in the flesh, and how and when each one of them shall be brought to a knowledge of the truth, is unalterably fixed in the eternal Mind. And there is a definite number of faithful ministers to be developed for the comfort and edification of the church, and though there be some now among the families of men upon the face of the earth wicked and envious as Saul of Tarsus was toward Jesus of Nazareth prior to his being called of God to the work of the ministry, if God has designed them to be servants of the church, they will be made willing and obedient at the appointed time; therefore all the efforts of men will not add one to the fixed number, neither will their malice take one therefrom. It is to be feared that many are crowding themselves into the ministry among the different religious sects who have no knowledge of the justification of the church through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Some go into the ministry for money, some for a good name, some to be elevated to honorable stations, and a few are driven by almighty power to proclaim to the church of Christ the riches of God's grace, and such ones feel, "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel."

Brethren, may we all remember that God works all things after the counsel of his own will, therefore let us be still and know that he is God.

WM. J. PURINGTON.

NORTH ANSON, Maine, Jan. 14, 1856.

[IT is rather unusual for us to republish matter in the SIGNS, except the editorials of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and that for the same purpose that brother Ford wished the above good article from the pen of the late Elder Wm. J. Purington republished; but that the brethren may

understand the doctrine of "absolute predestination of all things" is not "a new thing" among Old School Baptists, but one of the solid foundations ever contended for by our people, we take pleasure in granting the request of brother Ford.—ED.]

LUKE XVII. 17.

"AND Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?"

Who among all the members of the body of Christ can say in full confidence, I am one out of ten that returned to give glory to God? Jesus was passing through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. "As he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: and they lifted up their voices and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw them he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole." This is the simple gospel record of a miracle performed by our Lord Jesus Christ, with its attendant results. Whence cometh gospel comfort and gracious consolation out of this mystery of godliness to the saints of the living God? If the reader's own heart's experience in his travel from darkness to light can be portrayed from the narrative, then the writing will not be in vain. The outer garment which Jesus wore during his ministry was without seam, woven throughout in one perfect whole, beginning at the top, setting forth the complete fulfillment of the work of Christ in the salvation of sinners. That perfect, mysterious work began at the top (in heaven) when Jesus left the glory he had with the Father before the world was, working throughout with one continuous thread until the whole was completed, when he ascended unto his Father. So also the narrative already quoted presents to the mind of faith the work which Jesus came to do, and which is being done from the beginning to the end, without a flaw or a broken thread in all the way of salvation. Jesus entered into a certain village; like the seamless garment he must take the certain way which was laid out in the Father's will; no chance work or happenings in all the work of Jesus. In this place "there met him ten men that were lepers." Every man who is a leper is conscious of his disease, that it is horrible, that it is incurable, that it separates him from the whole world. The law of leprosy in Israel caused the leper to be separated from all Israel, to be placed without the camp, and if one approached he must stand afar off, crying, "Unclean, unclean." This in type sets forth the work of the Spirit of Christ begun in the sinner; the leprosy of sin is upon him, he is convinced of sin, he stands afar off, conscious of his dreadful position, and like the poor "publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." So these ten lepers "stood afar off: and they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." This is the feeling and the cry of the repenting sinner, who realizes that he is justly condemned under the violated, holy law of God. No one ever did cry unto Jesus

for mercy until the heart was circumcised and they were conscious of their need of mercy. Such prayers are always answered by Him who inditeth prayer and answereth it.

"And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests." They as well as Jesus were still under the law, the work of the office of the priesthood must all be performed according as it was shown unto Moses on the mount. Thus he demanded obedience as he himself was obedient in all things.

"And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed." The law could not cleanse them, but the word of Jesus could cleanse them every whit.

"And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan." This doth manifest true repentance, spiritual joy and a witnessing to the truth of the power of God. This man was a Samaritan, who had no dealing with the Jews, neither did he worship in Jerusalem, but in the mountains of Samaria.

"And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?" Let us first place the one who returned to give glory to God in his proper position in the church, and then see if we can search out the nine who went on their several ways. In all the record of the word of the testimony of Jesus, both under the law and under the gospel, we find those who have been chosen unto salvation in different conditions and various circumstances, and in them all, all things have worked and are working together for good, to complete the way of salvation which God designed before the worlds were made. There has been manifest in all ages those who served the Lord with undivided hearts, and at the same time, others who because of worldly cares and the many weaknesses of the flesh appeared to be indifferent to the service and the love due Him who had so richly blessed them, yet they were subjects of the same salvation which is vouchsafed unto all the church of the living God. Such conditions and circumstances are clearly illustrated (as has been the case in all ages) in the memorable address of Joshua to the children of Israel in the closing days of his earthly pilgrimage: "Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Many other parallel Scriptures show unto us that "many are called" unto salvation, to whom God's work in the heart will make manifest in his own time, "but few are chosen" to be witnesses of him on the earth, and to shew forth his glory in a "whole heart" devotion and a whole life of service. The man who returned to give glory to God was a Samaritan, as has been said, and not a worshiper at Jerusalem, showing that God is no respecter of persons, but he taketh the beggar from the dunghill and setteth him among princes. This man is surely of that precious company, "the ransomed of the Lord [who] shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads;" of those whose heart is prepared to receive the seed sown, bringing forth fruit to the glory of God; he is

of that number who forsake not the assembling of themselves together, "as the manner of some is;" he is of that number who esteem every brother better than themselves, who desire to give God all the glory, and who obey the injunction, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness." But the nine, what of them? Let us not for one moment lose sight of this one truth: that the whole ten were cleansed. Leprosy is the type of sin; as the power of the word of Jesus cleansed the ten lepers of their foul disease, so also the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin; he shed his blood for his own, those whom the Father had given him, therefore, being cleansed, all such are of the flock of the fold of Christ. Then having found the nine to be heirs of the kingdom, with the one who returned to give glory to God, we still must ask, "Where are the nine?" Let us remember that when we have come into the knowledge of the wondrous truth that our sins have been forgiven and that we are cleansed, that we are still in this body of flesh; the evil passions thereof have not been obliterated, only subdued, and we have been given a heart of flesh, wherewith we serve God with the measure of grace that is given unto us. "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." The fruit yielded in the life of the pilgrims of Zion is in the glory that is given to God in all their walk. As in the parable of the sower, so in the church of the living God we find "wayside" travelers, upon whom when the seed falls, the heart is hard and receiveth it not, but it lieth upon the surface and the fowls (evil thoughts) devour it, and there is no fruit. We also have stony place hearers, who have not much depth of earth, the seed springeth up, the sun falleth upon it and it withereth away, there is no fruit. Again, we find the thorny ground listeners, who, when the seed takes root and comes forth, the thorns (cares and anxieties of life, the pride of life, and of the eye,) choke it out, and there is no fruit. Can you not now see the nine where they are? But I think I hear you saying: Is this a transcript of their whole life? Do they never show forth God's glory? Surely they do, all his works praise him. "He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." His work therefore, which praiseth him and giveth him glory, perfects in each one of them his full salvation, and sets them down in that "great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, [which] stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." Of whom one of the Elders said to John: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." The nine therefore had the cares of the world upon them to the extent that their zeal and love were concealed; one his merchandize, another his oxen, and another his wife, until the Spirit wrought mightily in them to the subduing of the flesh. The Lord's work in the hearts of the children of men is a fulfillment of the type which the Lord declared to Samuel when he said, "Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end." The work of the Lord is indeed marvelous in our eyes.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., May 7, 1908.

OLATHE, Colo., Feb. 21, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—I received the inclosed letter from my brother in the flesh, and, I hope, in the Spirit. It was a great comfort to me, and I would like to see it in our family paper, the SIGNS, if it meets with your approval.

Your brother in hope,

Z. I. JONES.

KNOXVILLE, Iowa, Jan. 29, 1908.

MR. Z. I. JONES—MY VERY DEAR BROTHER:—This will say that I received your letter some days ago; I was glad to hear from you again. I have been gone almost every Sunday for a month or more, and I received a card from Elder Young, saying the church at Mt. Zion is expecting me there next Sunday. I have enjoyed it in a sense, but to say that I am entirely reconciled, I cannot. I try to tell the people where I go the truth as I understand it, but I fully realize that the world will not receive the truth. I feel to assign a logical reason: his eyes are badly affected, he cannot see; that is, he is totally blind. You know that is a bad thing. Next his ears are out of order, he cannot hear, deaf, an awful thing; next his heart is desperately wicked and deceitful; his tongue has the poison of asps under it. Do you think that a human being in such a condition could hear the truth? I think not. Then who can open the blind eyes and unstop the deaf ears? Surely nothing in the catalogue of human remedies can cure such an one; God's power alone can do all this for a poor sinner. So, my brother, human means are a failure, so far as a cure is concerned. The Physician that cures the sinner has taken his ills and given him a clean heart; eyes that he can see with, ears that he can hear with; hence that character can say, To Him be all the glory for this wonderful work to the children of men. Such men can hear the truth and rejoice in it. Jesus is the truth. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. The plan of salvation is according to the strict principles of justice; no man was ever saved at the expense of justice. We read in the Scriptures that the names of God's people were in the Lamb's book of life before the world began; and David says, "In thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." This shows that they were legally his (that is, in covenant,); this being the case, he was legally responsible for them. One illustration: If I had fifty sheep, and they should trespass on your farm, I, being the owner, would be legally responsible, and not the sheep. So their trespass is legally charged to me, so Christ could die for our offenses and rise again for our justification. It was of necessity that there should be a perfect Sacrifice made for that atonement. Here is much to think about; the offerings under the law all pointed to the one great offering, Christ Jesus the Lord. In the redemption of his people the sacrifice was sufficient, he having obtained eternal redemption for all who were given him in covenant before the world began. I am going to leave you to think out a great deal of this, as my hand is getting tired. Let me hear from you soon. I know I have not said what I should, but it is all I have at present.

Jan. 30th.—I feel like going farther with my letter of yesterday. The subject is Christ; the church that he gave himself for is called his bride, hence he is married to her. Under the Jewish law

a man was responsible for the debts of his wife. You know if your wife should make a purchase of goods you would be legally responsible for her debt; so I understand Christ was legally obligated to pay the debt of his bride. The necessity of redemption comes in the fact that she was sold under sin, badly in debt, and nothing to pay with; so she was bought back with the precious blood of Christ. One peculiar thing about this is, that the preparation for this antedates the debt; Christ was as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. The absolute inability of man to atone for his own sins is clearly set forth in the history of the children of Israel, hence the apostle could say that by the deeds of the law no flesh could be justified. All of the sacrifices under the law were but the shadows or types of something better: the one great Offering for sin, the man Christ. The world looks upon the atonement as general, but it does seem that if the word means anything, it means complete satisfaction; that is, the debt is canceled which was against them. If you held a mortgage on my farm my debt would be a just one, so recognized by law, but I only have the right of redemption, and if I pay you all I owe, the debt is canceled. Is that not complete satisfaction? I take the position that there cannot be such a thing as conditional atonement or redemption; He could only pay the debt of his bride, all that the Father gave him in covenant before the world was. Another thing, when a man goes out to choose a wife he does not choose all the women in the country, he simply takes his choice; no one questions his right to do this. This is election or choice. So the bride of Christ was chosen from among the sons and daughters of men, to love and serve him as their Lord and Master, which they are under deep and lasting obligations to do. The great trouble is, men in nature cannot understand the revelation or the manifestation of God to his people. It is only when the light that shined out of darkness has shined in the heart and brings to view the corruption that this character sees his works are as filthy rags in the sight of God. It is necessary that the sinner be born again in order that he shall enjoy spiritual things. He cannot see the kingdom of God until he is born again. This doctrine of the new birth is no greater mystery than it was in the days when Christ was upon earth. The world did not understand it then, and it does not understand it now. Here is a new creation, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God before ordained that we should walk in them. I would rather say, Live and do, than to say, Do and live. Any man knows, who will stop and think, that life always precedes action. To command one to obey before he has life is sheer nonsense; or to command a man who is dead to walk, would be an evidence of insanity. So you see man can look only to Christ for salvation.

I guess I had better stop. I hope you will see that some things I have said are true at least.

With best wishes for you all, I am your brother in love,

G. J. JONES.

ELKINS, W. Va., July 9, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST:—I have been requested by a dear brother and sister to write my experience and send it to the SIGNS for publication.

I was born in 1831, in Tygart valley, in the county of Randolph, and was raised by Old School Baptist parents; they

taught us to be truthful and honest, but they never tried to teach us religion. They taught us to read the Scriptures from our childhood up, which I always liked to do. I felt when quite young that I was a sinner, and not prepared for death. O how I dreaded death, for I believed that none but christians would go to heaven. As I grew older I would hear the idea advanced that we must do good works to please the Lord, but the best I could do was sinful. At the age of thirteen one of my brothers professed a hope in Christ and joined the Primitive Baptists; the day he was baptized was a sad day to me; I believed he was a christian and I felt to be a poor, lost and ruined sinner and that I was doomed forever, because there was no mercy for me. O how I mourned and wept over my lost condition. I would try to pray to God to have mercy upon me, but my prayer seemed to go no higher than my head. I went on in this condition for almost three years; I never can tell the trouble that I passed through. I would think that the doctrine of election and predestination was true, and that I was a reprobate, and that I was cast off forever, and then again I would think there had been a time when I could have been saved, but that time had passed. O what anguish of soul I passed through. My dear christian friends who have traveled the same road can know something of what I passed through. About this time I was worried about good works, for I could do nothing that seemed right to me. I had the opportunity to hear brother Joshua S. Corder preach from the words, "Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works."—James ii. 18. He explained so clearly that I could see just how, as I felt, his sermon was all to me. I saw my lost and helpless condition plainer while he was preaching than I ever had before. As soon as meeting closed I left for home, feeling so sinful in the sight of God that I thought every one in the house knew what a great sinner I was. This was Sunday night, and from then until Wednesday following I can never describe the anguish of soul that I experienced; the pains of hell gat hold upon me, I felt that every breath I drew was, Lord, have mercy on me. It was a bright day, but O the awful gloom that hung over me. I was given faith to view my blessed Savior hanging on the cross, bleeding and dying to save me from that awful death in sin, and it seemed as if he said to me, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you," and while I was there beholding my blessed Savior on the cross I was as helpless as a little child, and in this situation viewing my blessed Lord was the first time that I ever could pray and feel relief, for while I was praying, the awful gloom that had settled over me began to pass away like dark clouds, and I felt that all my sins were gone, a peaceful feeling, such as I never had felt before, came over me; how wonderful it all seemed. I thought, Can this be religion? It seemed as though something said to me, You are deceived, then I commenced doubting, and O what darkness came over me, and how distressed I was for four days and nights; but my blessed Lord came and gave me sweet peace. On Sunday morning my husband and I commenced singing some good old-fashioned hymns, and if ever I felt the love of God in my heart I felt it that day; I felt that I would like to tell every one how rejoiced in the goodness of God I was. Jesus all the day long was my joy and my song. I

could not believe that I ever should grieve, that I ever should suffer again. I felt I must go to the next church meeting at Hepzibah Church, in Taylor County, where we lived at that time. These words came into my mind, The bride says, Come; and the Spirit says, Come; and the church of God says, Come. I firmly believed the Old School Baptists were the church of God; there was where I wished to go. Elder Joshua S. Corder was pastor of the church at that time. The first Saturday and Sunday in April, 1849, brother Corder spoke from the text in Psalms: "He hath brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." That was a heavenly day to me; his preaching seemed so plain. After preaching was over the door was opened if any wanted to talk to the church. I went forward, they received me, I was baptized the next day by Elder Joshua S. Corder, and have been a member ever since, and hope to die an Old School Baptist. I visited brother Corder and family the fourth Sunday in June, at their regular meeting. I enjoyed the meeting very much. Brother Corder is eighty-eight years old, and his noble wife is somewhere in the eighties also. By their request I have written my experience, and if you think this worthy a place in your valuable paper you may publish it. I am an old subscriber to the SIGNS. I am seventy-six years old, and do not expect to be here much longer. I am a poor, unworthy worm of the dust, but my blessed Master has never forsaken me, and I hope he will not forsake me in my old age. David says, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." There are many precious promises in the Bible, and O how they sustain me in my old age. I send my love to you all.

Respectfully yours,

EMELINE FINDLEY.

LANHAM, W. Va., Dec. 18, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER G. BIRD:—I received the Minutes all right, and am sorry that I have not been well enough to visit you all this fall. I am suffering with rheumatism the most of the time, and this is bad weather for it, as it is damp. I was surely glad to see your short but appropriate letter in the last number of the SIGNS, for I am sure the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is the doctrine of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, yet I am aware of the fact that there are some who claim to be Primitive Baptists who do not indorse the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS. The doctrine of predestination seems to be the great scarecrow with many who claim the Baptist name; they seem not to like the term "absolute predestination." I am sure that predestination is absolute, or it is no predestination at all, and I do not see any need of any one objecting to the term absolute. Webster is acknowledged everywhere as authority, and his definition is, unconditional; as an absolute promise; existing independent of any other cause; as, God is absolute; unlimited by extraneous power or control; as, an absolute government or monarch. The prophet (Isaiah xlvi. 9, 10,) uses this strong and positive language: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." This settles

the matter as regards predestination and election, for if the end was declared from the beginning, and the things which were not yet done are seen and arranged, so they must be; there can be no failure unless the eternal God fails or alters his purpose, and to say that he does change in the least degree is to give him the lie. As he has predestinated the end, and the things not yet done, and will do all his pleasure, it is safe to preach his eternal purpose in the salvation of the church, his elect. Of Israel the Lord hath said, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." How shall we understand this if predestination is not absolute? I have noticed that those who oppose the term absolute predestination have coupled conditional time salvation to salvation; so they have two salvations: one by grace, the other conditional; one for time, the other for eternity. The salvation for time is obtained by the works of the flesh, the other is the free gift of God, and is all of grace. Paul says Christ is not divided, and since Christ is not divided he is the salvation of his bride, the Lamb's wife. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished [not will be], that her iniquity is pardoned [not will be if she works]: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."—Isaiah xl. 1, 2. Language could not make this stronger; and Jerusalem here certainly means the whole church redeemed by Christ, and proves conclusively that God had elected her, and accomplished her warfare, and pardoned her iniquity all himself. This is proof sufficient, as her battles are fought, and the victory won, and her iniquity pardoned, that there can be no question or doubt of her acceptance in glory, and all through the effectual work of her glorious Husband.

As I close for this time I must say that the Predestinarian Baptists of this part of West Virginia do not indorse this conditional time salvation, we believe that salvation is of the Lord from start to finish; for we believe that God works in his people to will and to do of his good pleasure, and they shall be willing in the day of his power. We believe that Jesus is our salvation, both in time and eternity.

You may send this to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES if you think it will be worthy a place in its columns.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

LEAD HILL, Ark., March 3, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS AND READERS:—As I must pay up for the dear old SIGNS, and as I want to let you know that I am comforted and built up by the good letters, experiences and editorials, and sometimes hope that poor and unworthy as I am, I am permitted to feast upon the bounties and rich provisions which our God has prepared for his little children, through the sweet messages of love and meekness in the writings of the dear brethren and sisters, I will take the liberty to write these few things. Sometimes when reading such articles as those of Elder Durand upon "the wolf and the lamb," and dear old Elder Beebe's editorial on "the invitations of the gospel," and brother Chick's editorial upon "the leper," and many others too numerous to mention, my eyes are often caused to overrun with tears of joy, and, if not deceived, my poor heart is filled with love to all of like precious faith, and I want to write and let them know how this poor old sinner is comforted. A wish arises in my soul to

be able to write to the comfort of those who comfort so many of the little ones of the fold, but, seeing the SIGNS filled with so many good and consoling letters, I forbear, fearing to crowd out something better than anything I could write; yet as the desire is in my heart to write a few lines this morning, I will try to do so, and leave them to the judgment of the editors to do with as they wish. I will call attention to 2 Samuel xxiii. 5; David there said, "Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." Now the few preceding verses show what kind of a man a ruler should be: he must be just, ruling in the fear of God, and as the light of the morning, even a morning without clouds. This presents a perfectly good man; and the old servant, viewing the weakness of the flesh, confesses his faults and admits that his house is not so, and has not been so ordered, and he has not so lived and acted as to merit such a glorious blessing of an everlasting covenant. Yet according to God's promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, God makes and confirms the same everlasting covenant with David; and this just filled all David's desire. Why? Because in this was all his salvation. What more could he desire? This is also experimentally felt in all the children of God when brought to see the end of all flesh; they are taught that they merit nothing save condemnation and death, and confess that they have not so lived and acted as to merit the blessings of such a covenant; yet I am made to hope I am embraced in this covenant, ordered in all things and sure. I think this is the new covenant which our God writes in the hearts and puts in the minds of his people, and which is all their salvation and desire, for it secures to them the glorious inheritance reserved in the world of glory; and this is not upon the ground of their merit, but upon the merit of Jesus. He has made an everlasting covenant, and all those embraced in it will be, like David, satisfied when they awake with his likeness. May God bless editors, publishers and readers.

From your brother in hope and in the tribulations of the gospel,

WM. J. CASEY.

RIGGINS, Idaho, March 5, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—I have been thinking of writing to you some of the dealings of the Lord with me, yet I feel unfit to write to the brethren; but I can say that I do love the brethren, and enjoy hearing the word preached by them.

I will try to tell some of my exercises, in doing which I hope the Lord will guide me. I cannot remember the time when I did not love the word of God spoken, and when I did not feel that I wanted to be a christian. I would always go to my Bible when I was in trouble, and I would make promises to myself that I would do better. When I was twenty I was married, and settled down in life. A little daughter was born to us; she lived to be eleven months old, then sickened and died. This was my first trouble after I married. How it grieved my heart to give her up. I would pray for the Lord to take me also. What matter it if I should die? I would be with her. Then a little son was given us, and at the age of seven months he also died. It was the same with me as when my first died; it seemed that it was more than I could bear. I was sick and troubled. Time went on, and I hope the

Lord revealed to me that I was a sinner, then I knew if I died I could not be with those little ones. I thought that I must repent of my sins, so I resolved to try and live a better life and join the church. I united with the Methodists, as that was the only denomination near us, but I was not satisfied to unite with them as a full member. My parents were Old School Baptists, and I longed to be with them in the church, but thought I was not good enough. I thought I would unite with some other denomination until I became good enough. Time went on until I had to give up another little girl. That was more than I could bear; I concluded that I would go into a lonely place in the wood, and there I would pray once more, and leave it with the Lord to deal with my soul, as I could do nothing. I went about a quarter of a mile, and there gave myself, as I thought, to the Lord to pardon my sins. It was a hot day in August, and the road seemed long to where I wanted to hide myself from all but God, to whom I desired to pray. When I started to return to the house how differently I felt; the road was short and easy, and everything seemed more beautiful than it did going, and I wanted to sing rather than cry. I went on a long time hoping to some time become a christian and unite with the church. I longed to unite with the Baptist Church, and to be baptized; but the Baptists are scarce here, and no church is nearer than a hundred miles. But the Lord arranges all things well; the time came that I could go to meeting with my parents, and an opportunity was given me to unite with them, so my dear sister and I joined the Old Baptists, and were baptized at Man's Creek. I have one sister, two brothers and my mother who are Baptists. My father was a Baptist, too, but he is with his Lord now for almost three years. He was a kind and loving father, and I feel sure that he is in the promised land. It has been a great comfort to me to be assured that he is at rest with Jesus. I am the daughter of Isaac Irwin. My father had many friends among the Baptists. Some of my father's friends will be glad to hear from us, and we would be glad to hear from them by letter.

If you think best you are at liberty to publish this.

Your sister,

REBECCA CLAY.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., July 28, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I sent notice of Mt. Pleasant Association to appear in August 1st number of SIGNS. If not gone to press please withhold, as in consequence of sickness the church thinks it not advisable to hold the session there. If you have gone to press a notice will be sent in time for the August 15th number.

P. W. SAWIN.

[AS no other notice has as yet reached us we publish the above from brother Sawin. Shall be glad to publish any other notice that may come.—K.]

WE are in receipt of a letter and newspaper clipping from brother M. C. Reeves, of Paris, Ill., announcing the death of Elder James M. True. Knowing of his age and enfeebled condition we are not surprised, but are indeed grieved. He was one of the faithful soldiers of the cross who never compromised with error, but instead, held fast his profession without wavering to the end. Surely a good and great man has fallen. A suitable obituary notice will no doubt appear soon.

We all extend our love and sympathy to his much afflicted widow, and also to the churches in that part of the vineyard.

K.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1908.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ISAIAH LXV. 8.

A FRIEND at Aldboro, Ontario, has requested that we write something with regard to Isaiah lxv. 8. The text reads as follows: "Thus saith the Lord, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all."

We wish to say first, that in his editorial found in the number of the SIGNS for July 15th, Elder Ker has given in brief what we understand the text to signify. The new wine, as he has declared there, is unquestionably the Lord Jesus Christ, and the cluster was that national people through whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ must come. However, we feel to respond to the request of our friend more at length, and suggest some thoughts which seem to us to grow out of the text and to be in keeping with the meaning as referred to in the clear and excellent editorial of brother Ker. First, there seems to be reference primarily to the condition of Israel at that time, which is described in the preceding portion of the chapter. These things are stated concerning them there. They were rebellious, and walked in an evil way after their own thoughts; they provoked the Lord to anger; they sacrificed in gardens to idols, and burnt incense upon altars of brick, instead of stone, which the Lord had forbidden; they consulted wizards, and those which had familiar spirits, which is signified by the expression, "which remain among the graves;" they had eaten swine's flesh, and broth of things abominable was in their vessels; yet they said, "Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou." These iniquities of themselves, and of their fathers before them, called for judgment from God upon them. Yet even then they were not to be destroyed utterly, but only chastised. Even then, as in the time of Elijah, there was a remnant who had not done those things and who abhorred such transgressions. The Lord had thus dealt with Israel many times before. During the wilderness journey they had often transgressed, and had been smitten, but still they had been preserved as a people, because there were among them always those who mourned because of these evil things, and who did love and serve God. There was, all the way along, new wine in the cluster. The vineyard might have many barren vines and much blighted fruit, but still there was a remnant according to the election of God, and so final judgment was withheld, because there was a blessing still in the cluster. So at the time when this prophecy was written, although evil of many kinds abounded, there was still some new wine, some fear, and love, and reverence, toward God; some who mourned and were burdened because of the reproach of Israel, and so the Lord would not destroy them all, or wholly, but would preserve them and bring to them a deliverer. But, as said by brother Ker, the chief blessing was that through Israel and Judah and the family of David

Christ should come. This was the appointed and declared way, and it would not fail. It must be clearly known when Christ did come that he was of the family of David, in order that the prophecy might appear to be strictly fulfilled. Had the nation of Israel been destroyed from being a nation before that fullness of time had come, it could not have been clear that Jesus was born of that family. If the nation had been destroyed, their family records must have been broken and all their genealogies lost. As it was, they were preserved, and so Joseph and Mary went to their own city to be taxed. It was known that they were of the family of David, and so it was seen clearly that the prophecies of the birth of the Messiah were strictly fulfilled. All this magnifies the purpose of God, and shows forth his complete control in all the families of men. The blessing, according to the prophecy, must come through this one channel. The nation of Israel was preserved until the prophecy was fulfilled, and then they ceased to be a nation, because the blessing had developed, and there was no more need that that nation be preserved as such.

The word "blessing" in the text is full of peculiar meaning. In this Blessing that was in the cluster, all the nations of the earth shall be blessed. Temporal mercies came, all the way along, to the Jewish nation, under the old covenant, because thus they were preserved to the coming of Christ in the flesh; but now, and ever since his coming in the flesh, all spiritual blessings have flowed out from him to the people elected from among all the nations of the earth. There was indeed a blessing to them during the time before his coming, but how infinitely richer are the blessings which now flow through him to believing Jews and Gentiles alike. What a mercy to poor sinners is in that word of the prophet, "Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it." In the writing of this, and in the reading of it, something of that need of blessing in Christ comes to us. We are to-day sharers of the faith, love, hope and salvation of the gospel, because of this declaration and its fulfillment. That those who love God may come into his courts from time to time as they are on their pilgrimage here below, is one of the fruits secured to them by this new wine found in the cluster. In this blessing is wrapped up the atonement, the redemption, the justification, the sanctification, the preservation and final glory of all the elect of God; all this our God purposed to do for his people through Christ, and therefore the cluster must not be destroyed. Is it not this same blessing, the power and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and his indwelling in all the saints, that saves us day by day now, notwithstanding our transgressions? The church has not always walked closely in the order of her Lord, and each one who goes to make up the number of that church must and will confess that he has erred many times from the way, and still the church lives and has a visible continuance among men, and each believer lives and hopes and struggles on. Why is this? The answer is that of the apostle: Having obtained help of God, we continue unto this day. After all the departures of heart and life, both as churches and as members, there is still the new wine of the kingdom within. Christ still dwells within, "the hope of glory." Our bodies are still the temple of the Holy Ghost, and the members of Christ. Deep heart-searching thoughts often come to the true disciple; he says within himself, Why am I still hoping? I am often a wanderer; I

forget God and his ways; I find envy, jealousy, strife, debate, pride and all manner of selfishness in my heart, and I have sought the gain and the follies of the world often, and I have been neglectful of the house of God; and both in my spirit and in my conduct there has been little if any evidence that love to God reigns within. Then why do I live on, and hope on? There is but one reply to give, it must be that after all there is new wine in the cluster, and he confesses: I should long since have utterly perished and been destroyed had it not been for the truth that God looks upon me in Christ and clothes me with his righteousness, and in him receives me, although I am such a wanderer, such a vile transgressor. This indeed is all the hope of a believer, but it is all the hope he needs. God said, "New wine is found in the cluster;" and that new wine is, in this personal view of the text, still Christ. Christ Jesus was the new wine that preserved Israel nationally, and Christ Jesus is the new wine that preserves each poor sinner individually. Here may we hope with confidence indeed. We believe this is the hope of the dear friend who desired that we should write of this text; if so, nothing shall ever occur to make this hope void.

We leave these reflections to our readers, in connection with what brother Ker has said. C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EXODUS XVII. 11, 12.

Elder G. M. Berry, of Fayette, Ala., desires our views through the Signs upon the words found in Exodus xvii. 11, 12. This narrative, with the connection, records how Israel fought with Amalek in the wilderness. Moses commanded Joshua to go out to this fight with chosen men. Moses must stand upon the top of the hill, not in his own strength, nor in the strength of the army, but with the rod of God in his hand. This rod was the visible emblem of the presence and favor and power of God. It came to pass that when the hand of Moses was held up with the rod of God, Israel prevailed; when his hand was heavy and fell by his side, Amalek prevailed. Israel could not prevail in their own strength, for Amalek was stronger than they. Moses also had no might within himself. Had he held up his hands all day without the rod of the Lord, Amalek still would have prevailed. All the virtue and power was in the rod, as the emblem of the presence of God, and, like the brazen serpent, the rod had no efficacy in itself, but was the emblem of that which had power. The brazen serpent we know was a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, and so also, we doubt not, was this rod a type of him who is the rod of strength in Zion. The hands of Moses were weak even to hold forth the rod; there is no strength in man at all. If the Lord Jesus Christ is still to be lifted up at all, it must be by hands that feel their weakness. In him we also conquer; this we know, but O how often we have not strength of faith to hold forth this Savior. Our hands grow weary, as did the hands of Moses, still we know that here alone is victory. Israel to-day has mighty foes to fight within and without. The foe within is the mightiest of all. Sometimes our faith is almost overcome,

our hands which take hold upon the rod of His strength falter and fall, our faith and love grow dim and faint; the rod is still in our hands, but we cannot hold it up, and all these inward and outward foes seem to prevail against us. Thus it was then with Israel and Moses.

Is there not some reference here to the fact that it was the law which demanded that Christ should be lifted up? Moses stands as the representative of the law of God; sometimes his name is used as a synonym of the law. Thus it is said, "They have Moses," meaning the law. It is Christ lifted up, in whom we hope and in whom we conquer. When the true Israel goes forth to the conflict against every opposing power it is in the faith that Jesus has been lifted up, and it is as by faith they see the crucified Savior that they have strength to prevail over all their foes. When to this faith Jesus does not appear, lifted up and being crucified for their sins, they are always discouraged, and their foes prevail against them. Thus believers learn that all their hope of victory in every conflict is in him who died but lives again, and who has said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." "This is the victory that overcometh the world, ever our faith." Faith always has respect to Jesus Christ and his finished work. Our strength and faith do not go together; if the one is to reign, the other must be dethroned. The weak believer has need that Christ should be lifted up at all times. But what does it signify that Aaron and Hur should accompany Moses into the mount, and that they should hold up his hands there? So far as the narrative is concerned, it is plain that Moses was possessed, as a man, of all that weakness of body that other men are subject to; he needed companionship and help from his brethren, as well as we. God had graciously given his servant Moses friends of like precious faith, who felt an equal zeal for the victory of the hosts of the Lord; they saw his hands, with the rod of God, fall in weakness, and they placed under him a stone for a seat, and then, one on either side evidently, held up his hands. They saw as well as Moses by what power Israel prevailed, and so helped him to hold forth the emblem of God's power. By it spiritual Israel is now taught that the victory is the Lord's victory; thus they are humbled, and not exalted before the Lord. It seems clear also that we need the help of each other in our conflicts as believers; the Lord has put his people together for mutual helpfulness and strengthening. Thus Peter was told to strengthen his brethren. There is need of reproof, consolation, to be reminded of the promises, and of expressions of sympathy one with another; but as in the narrative of which we are writing, one cannot minister real consolation to another who is weak, except as we hold up the hands of that one. It is good to this end to hold forth the Scriptures with their promises, their declarations of doctrine, their testimonies of Christ and his victory over every foe, and his finished salvation. The sum of it all is, that we hold up each other's hands by putting each other in remembrance of what the Lord has done, and that in him is the final victory. To make mention that the Lord is exalted is all that any soul needs, whatever be the warfare. Jesus answers every claim, every need, every supply; all, all is in him. Aaron and Hur were given to Moses in this conflict, and well is it for us that brethren of like precious faith are given to us. How often are our hands, as members, as ministers, in all our burdens

stayed up by the hands of true, faithful, God-fearing men, who themselves know what the weakness of the flesh means.

We believe that these suggestions are according to truth and in harmony with what we all have at times realized for ourselves. C.

JAMES 1. 26.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—When you have opportunity I would like to have your views on the general epistle of James i. 26.

Your brother in Christ, I hope,

F. W. WATERBURY.

WESTWOOD, N. J., April 13, 1908.

For several reasons we have delayed replying to the request of brother Waterbury. The Scripture suggested by him, and its connection, will call for some expressions which may strike so close to the line as to cause some of us to feel the shock. The text reads as follows: "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." It is difficult for the children of God who confess their faults to him and to one another, to read expositions of such Scriptures without feeling and perhaps saying, That is for me, when no thought of accusation was in the mind of the writer. This is one reason why we have felt delicate about replying, but the chief reason is self-condemnation.

James from first to last in his epistle sets forth things of great importance, and no letter of the New Testament is more comprehensive or instructive with regard to pure and undefiled and vain religion. The brethren addressed must have had notions contrary to the law of liberty; they perhaps thought that all things were lawful unto them, as Paul said concerning himself. All things are lawful in the sense that nothing can again bring the redeemed of the Lord into condemnation, but all things are not expedient, nor is their liberty to be used for a cloak in evil or wrong doing. Paul was so completely delivered from the Jews' religion that he could eat meat forbidden by the law, yet he would eat no meat while he lived if it would cause his brother to offend; and while he was so firmly established in the gospel that all days were alike to him, he would not condemn the weak brother who did esteem one day above another. Well might he say, "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any." This is the lesson James also taught his brethren, and the same lesson is most important now for us all.

There seems to have been an idea in the minds of those brethren that when they were tempted to evil the Lord did it, and therefore what they did and said was lawful or right. James would not allow them to so accuse the Lord, and said to them, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." He most positively told them that their temptations were not of God, and that they erred in so thinking. Every man is tempted when drawn away of his own lust and enticed; nothing wrong can be charged against God; every good gift and every perfect gift comes down from

him. Predestination never justifies a man in wrong doing, neither does it make God the author of sin.

Three kinds of religion are spoken of in the Bible: pure and undefiled, the Jews' and vain. Pure and undefiled is the religion of Christ; it causes a man to visit the widow and fatherless in their affliction, not only with good words, but with food, fuel and clothing. It is sufficient to live with and to die with. The Jews' religion consisted in rites, forms and ceremonies, and has no place in the gospel. Vain religion is that which does not glorify God nor benefit the man who has it, in the eyes of his brethren and neighbors, and is made manifest by the tongue, that "unruly member." Jesus said, "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." These, like all other words of the Lord, are true and sure. Men therefore should be swift to hear, but slow to speak, slow to wrath, for the wrath of man worketh not (manifests not) the righteousness of God. "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue, keepeth his soul from troubles," and escapes the judgment surely to be visited upon the man who does not bridle his tongue. We put bits in horses' mouths, and their whole body is turned thereby; we govern the course of the ship with a very small helm; all beasts, birds and serpents have been tamed, but the tongue can no man tame, it is full of deadly poison; "it sitteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell." With the same tongue we bless God and curse men. Well did the apostle say, "My brethren, these things ought not so to be." Yet they were and are now, and doubtless will continue as long as man lives upon the earth. How weak and frail man is! O that we could all "apply our hearts unto wisdom." How much we all need the power and grace of God to keep us, but by our constant failures we are made to feel that we have neither, and that our religion is vain, our hope vain, and that we are still in our sins.

James speaks of a "tongue among our members;" did he mean in the church, or among the members of each individual body? Perhaps some have observed the work of the tongue in the church, ever stirring up strife and bitterness. One such tongue can do more mischief than a thousand tongues can do good which speak of love and mercy. A man may feel hurt at some intentional or unintentional thing of a brother, and speak in justification of himself, yet ninety-nine times out of a hundred he deceives his own heart, and condemns himself in his speech. If he uses harsh or unkind language he is condemned; if he speaks of the injury to another before speaking to and having an understanding with his brother, he condemns himself; if he refuses in his heart to forgive his brother, who may not ask it of him, as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us, he condemns himself; if he continues to talk of his brother's offence and to justify himself when the brother accused is not present, he deceives his own heart, condemns himself and his religion is vain. How natural it is for every man to see the mote in his brother's eye, but never to observe the beam in his own, neither can he be convinced that even the smallest atom is in his eye. How prone all men are to speak of the faults of others, but seldom, if ever, speak of their own. Perhaps none of us can imagine the intense anxiety of the apostle when he said to his brethren, "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness,

longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness." How few of us seem to be clothed with the beautiful garment, charity. It "suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." Why is it that we cannot all be and feel as we did when first we knew the Lord? Then the brethren had no faults, hence there was no criticism in our tongues, but our hearts were filled with love to them, and like newborn babes we needed their care, love and forbearance. Charity surely was put on, we did not think evil, we did not speak hard things, we did not curse men, we were not puffed up. But children grow to be men very soon, and then charity is not in evidence; faults are many, love waxes cold, we think of man as man, and not as a brother in the Lord; we become great men, in our own estimation, and unrighteous judges; we want prominence, and envy those who have it. When we sum it all up we have become such as other men are who have not known the grace of God, or in other words, we have received the grace of God in vain. (2 Cor. vi. 1.)

If we have no understanding of any other portion of God's word, we feel that this text suggested by brother Waterbury is fully understood, experimentally, by us, but while the Lord shows us our weakness and sinfulness, may he also show us his power to save. K.

MATTHEW V. 25, 26.

WILL Elder Ker please give his views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, when convenient, on the text recorded in Matthew v. 25, 26: "Agree with thine adversary quickly," &c.? and oblige one of the least, if one at all, WM. F. SLOAN.

LEXINGTON, Ky., June 2, 1908.

Not long since, we were requested by sister Mary Hill Terry also to write upon this text. The Scripture reads as follows: "Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing."

The two preceding verses to those of the text are the key to the subject, and show the impossibility of offering gifts upon the altar when enmity exists between two brethren. The gift in itself may be right, but the man with ill feeling toward his brethren is not in the proper spirit to worship God in the offering of sacrifices. On the other hand, if a brother who desires to offer a gift remembers that his brother has "ought against" him, while he may have nothing against the offended brother, his gift in the eyes of his adversary would not be spiritual. Therefore the gift must be left at the altar, and the presentation of it delayed until reconciliation is made between the two brethren. No worship can be rendered to God except in the spirit, and while a man may sing the songs of Zion, pray and even preach eloquently, nothing reaches the altar of God if he has hatred or malice in his heart against his brother for whom Christ died, or while one remembers that his brother has aught against him.

The language, "Agree with thine adversary quickly," does not mean that the

devil is the adversary, and that we must fall in with his evil and sinful designs and therefore be one with him, nor that we shall agree to anything wrong regardless of its source, but the brother who has "ought against" us is the adversary. Hence to "agree with thine adversary" is to become one with or reconciled to the brother offended with us because of something done or said, or it may be only an imaginary wrong; but whatever it is, while we are in the way (church fellowship) with him become reconciled to him. If we have wronged him, confess the wrong, ask his forgiveness; if there be a misunderstanding on his part, explain if possible to his satisfaction that no wrong or insult to him was meant in our conduct. Some men feel it too humiliating to confess a wrong, and many have died without doing it, but no principle in man is greater than that which prompts him to confess a transgression. This is the proper and only way to avoid more serious trouble. If a matter of difference continues, it grows until the offended brother feels that he must have justice, and at last the matter is brought into the church, then when the accused brother is brought before the church (judge) he must pay the uttermost farthing; that is, he must then make whatever confession and amends the church demands; should he fail to do so he is "cast into prison," "bound," (excluded) until he does as the judge demanded.

We have now given what we understand the text to teach, and hope at least we have not abused the Scripture. K.

CHURCH NOTICES.

PROVIDENCE permitting, the next meeting of the Woburn Church, in Woburn, Mass., will be the third Sunday in August instead of the fourth Sunday, as is usual when five Sundays appear. We cordially invite all of our brethren and friends, who can, to meet with us.

H. C. KER, Pastor.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence, July 11th, 1908, Wm. H. Smith and Miss Martha J. Wood, both of Slate Hill, Orange Co., N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Miss Mary Benedict, our beloved sister in Christ, entered eternal rest July 21st, 1908, as dawn was breaking over the earth. She was in the 63rd year of her age, and came of an Old School Baptist family, being the daughter of Abner and Julia A. Van Duzer Benedict, both deceased. Sister Mary was one to whom the doctrine of God our Savior was an actuating principle of her every day life. To her the assembly of saints was a real home, her only abiding-place upon earth. She was at the time of her death one of the oldest, in point of membership, of the Warwick Church, having been baptized by Elder J. N. Badger during his pastorate here, in 1871. Her immediate family circle comprises a sister, two brothers and two nephews. The surviving sister is a member of the Old School Baptist Church, and the others are believers in that doctrine. They mourn their loss, but rejoice that their departed one is at rest after so many weeks of physical suffering. May the God of all grace sustain and guide them for his name's sake. It was my privilege as her pastor to spend many hours at her side during the last six months of her life, portions of which meant physical agony to her. Never as long as I retain my reason can I forget those hours. The peace and quietness of heaven itself dwelt around and within her, for all that the body suffered could not once disturb the calm resignation to the divine will which controlled her spirit. Not one murmur, not one token of impatience, not one questioning word escaped her; everything and all things seemed perfectly right to her, her faith perceived God's hand in it all. That same night in which she left us I was with her, and as I stepped to her side she took my hands and bidding me farewell said, "All these things are appointed unto me." I asked her if she were suffering. She said, "Yes, but O what peace." At her request, I attempted to speak in prayer at her side, and I found involuntarily welling up within me the desire, which I expressed, that she might have a happy release from her weary load. The prayer was answered, and on this wise: not long before she breathed her last she was heard to say, "A stream! a stream!" Then the words, "Some one is holding me up." Finally with such a sweet, calm, painless expression, "So comfortable!" Thus did our loved one in sublime trust approach what we call death, but found there that it is not death to die, for the everlasting Arm of redeeming love was underneath to bear her through

the "river" to the glad beyond. Our little church will sorely miss her presence in our midst, for she was faithful, but we do not wish her back.

At her funeral service I tried to speak to the comfort of the living from Job's words: "He performeth the thing that is appointed for me." Also read, as sister Mary had requested, hymn 1256 (Beebe's collection).

May the God of all comfort and consolation abide with all who mourn. H. H. LEFFERTS.

WARWICK, N. Y., July 25, 1908.

Charles Savidge departed this life Monday, July 27th, 1908, at 11 o'clock a. m. at his home in Newtown, Pa. He was born Jan. 23rd, 1835. He was a shoe merchant, and had lived in Newtown about forty-two years. During all that time he was a regular attendant of the Old School Baptist Church in Southampton, which is seven miles from his residence. Before coming to Newtown he had attended at Hopewell, N. J. He received a hope of salvation by grace about forty-three or four years ago, but did not feel at liberty to go before the church until May 13th, 1906, when he told of the dealings of the Lord with him and was baptized in the fellowship of the church at Southampton. Although he had been so regular in his attendance, and so faithful in his regard for the interests of the church, and had been held in high esteem by the brethren and in christian fellowship by those well acquainted with his exercises, yet when he was made willing in the day of the Redeemer's power to follow him in the ordinance of baptism, it was a season of great rejoicing for both himself and the church. His health was broken at that time, but he was enabled to continue his business until within a few weeks of his departure, and whenever his health would allow he was in his seat in the meetinghouse. He was twice married; his first wife died without issue; she had a good hope through grace, and was always with him at meeting when able. By his present wife he had two sons: Morris, aged twelve, and Clarence, aged seven, who with their mother survive him. Sister Savidge received a hope about three years ago, but dated her exercises back some years. She was baptized Dec. 10th, 1905. This was a great comfort and joy to her husband, as well as to all the brethren. Both have been good and faithful members, and held in most affectionate esteem by the church. Brother Savidge said he had no fear of death. When he told me that the doctor had told him he could not be cured, his face had the same pleasant smile as when he was talking of other things. The last time I saw him (Thursday before his death) he spoke with difficulty, but so as to be clearly understood. He repeated the line, "Jesus, lover of my soul," and said, "Jesus is my only confidence, my trust is in him alone," and repeated the publican's prayer: "God be merciful to me a sinner," and some other expressions of Scripture. May the Lord comfort our dear sister, who is greatly bereaved, and her little boys. He is the widow's God and the Father of the fatherless. Two brothers and a sister are left, with numerous relatives and friends. He was esteemed very highly in the community. Places of business were closed during the funeral, which was on Friday afternoon, July 31st, when I tried to preach the gospel for the comfort of mourners. SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

David M. Thomas died at his home near Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa., April 8th, 1908. Services were held at the house, after which his remains were removed to Rock Springs for interment, to rest with his people who have gone before. It was the privilege of the writer to administer the ordinance of baptism in this case, and to be intimately acquainted with him for many years previous. He was baptized in September, 1881, in the fellowship of Rock Springs Church. Brother Thomas served this church for a number of years as deacon, with entire satisfaction. Although much afflicted in his limbs, he was always at his post, and took a great interest in this meeting-place and its surroundings; sound in the faith, giving glory to God. He often lamented leaving without seeing some one to take his place as deacon, knowing the male membership there was so reduced by death, yet for his own part desired to be away, which is far better. He leaves a widow, but no family, and he was the only branch left of the Thomas family. We miss him much at our meetings, but hope his place may be filled, and the broken ranks filled with such as have fallen asleep.

ALSO,

Sister **Mary I. Jenkins** died at her residence, at Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa., May 9th, 1908. Our sister was well known in her neighborhood and fairly well in the Delaware Association, as she was fond of attending the association when her health permitted, and enjoyed visiting with the friends. She was rather feeble in health, and had been most of her life, but remarkably patient and hopeful, endowed with an excellent mind and memory. She would at times speak of her departure with a great degree of composure; to be with Christ is far better. She was a daughter of the late brother George and Susan Jenkins. She and two of her sisters lived near the meetinghouse, and had a comfortable and pleasant home. She is much missed from home and from the church where the most of her life was spent. She was blessed with a clear view of her acceptance with God, in whom she believed. Her death was rather sudden and unexpected.

Her funeral was largely attended. Service was at the house, after which she was taken and gathered

unto her people at Rock Springs, where many of them sleep. She leaves a number of brothers and sisters and an extensive acquaintance to mourn their loss. WM. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md., July 20, 1908.

Miss Helen M. Fitchett died at the residence of her aunt, Mrs. S. J. Thomas, No. 609 Colonial Ave. Miss Fitchett was the daughter of Mrs. Emily E. Fitchett and the late George Fitchett, of Northampton County, Va. For many years Miss Fitchett has made her home with Mrs. Thomas, and had a great many warm personal friends and acquaintances in this city. She was 49 years of age, and for several years had endured much physical suffering, although until very recently she maintained her happy and cheerful disposition. She was a woman of sterling character, fine mental attainments and lovable manner. Her death will be sincerely regretted by many friends.

The funeral, which was private, was held from her late residence, conducted by Robert Gatewood. Interment in Cedar Grove.

[BY request we copy the above from a Norfolk, Va., paper, and desire to add a small tribute to the memory of one who was to us a long time and valued friend, and to extend an expression of sympathy to those who were dear to her by ties of nature. All that is said above is true of her, as we can bear testimony. She was lovely and pleasant in her life, and amid the sadness which all who knew her must feel there is yet the comfort of pleasant memories which all of us will cherish. She never made a public profession of the religion of Christ, yet we have for a long time had assurance that she thought upon the name of the Lord, and for such the dear Lord has said a book of remembrance has been written before the Lord. She was well known in former years among many in the Baltimore Association, and also among many in the Corresponding Meeting of Virginia. May the blessed Lord comfort all who mourn that they shall see her face on earth no more.—C.]

Helen Clark Guernsey died at her home near Howes Cave, N. Y., Sept. 6th, 1906. She left a husband and seven children, five boys and two girls, besides numerous other relatives and friends to mourn her departure, yet it can be truly said of her: Our loss is her eternal gain. She was an esteemed sister in the church, and a devoted mother; her home was always open to all lovers of the truth, and no pains were ever spared to make all her friends comfortable and welcome. She was baptized by the late Elder B. Bundy, Sept. 27th, 1873, and united with the Schoharie Old School Baptist Church, of which body she ever remained a consistent member. For several years she had been afflicted with a complication of diseases, and at the last she had the added misfortune to fall and break her hip. This shock was too severe for her in her weakened condition, and she survived only a few days.

The funeral was held at the home, Elder John Clark officiating. A very large concourse of people had assembled, and he delivered a comforting and powerful discourse, after which her remains were laid to rest to await the morning of the resurrection.

ALSO,

Since her death, in December, 1907, occurred the death of her husband, **Matthew Guernsey.** He had not been feeling well for some time, but his illness was not regarded as serious, since he was able to be about the house all the time. The morning of his death he arose very early, and when the members of the family came into the kitchen they found him reading the Bible. For several weeks prior this had been his constant practice. He was not a member of the church, but I believe he knew and loved the truth. On this morning he was carrying a pail of water, and after emptying it he sat the pail down and fell dead on the floor. He was an upright man and a kind father. Besides the members of his immediate family he is survived by numerous friends and relatives, who mourn their loss.

The funeral service was held at his home, Elder John Clark officiating. He delivered a sermon full of sympathy and comfort to the large audience of friends and relatives who had gathered to show their esteem to the departed one and their sympathy for the living.

His sister, who truly mourns her loss,

LUCY J. BORST.

SEWARD, N. Y.

Samuel V. Arnold died June 9th, 1908, at the home of his sister, Mrs. Kate Longacre, aged 63 years, 9 months and 19 days. His disease was heart and kidney trouble, from which he suffered two or three years, but at last dropsy ended his life. Our brother had once been married, but for many years had been a widower, and having no home he made his home with me for the last twelve years. The last year he was almost blind, which made his affliction the greater, yet he bore it all with great patience. During the time of this affliction it pleased the Lord to show him the way of life and salvation through Christ giving him hope in the mercy of God, which was a great comfort to us, as well as a stay and support to him. The change was so great that all around could see and take knowledge that he had been with Jesus. He never had seemed to show any interest in spiritual things, but to the reverse he would often leave the house to evade hearing the SIGNS read, but after this change took place, about one year ago, he saw things in a very different light, and had love for those very things he once so much hated; he could hardly wait until the SIGNS came, and would want to hear it read often, telling me in a

flood of tears, O that is good; that is just how I feel. He manifested a desire to hear singing, and would select hymns to have sung when any one came to see him who could sing. He had a desire to unite with the church, but felt his unworthiness and thought he was not fit, yet felt very anxious, and when our meeting time came he told the church what he hoped the Lord had done for him, was received, and baptized the third Sunday in August last, by Elder A. Mellott. Though very weak, and nearly blind, he was given strength to go down into the water, be baptized and go on his way rejoicing to the end.

His funeral took place June 11th; service was conducted by Elder B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., who spoke to the comfort of the little church, which feels its loss, yet feels to hope its loss is his eternal gain.

His sister, (MRS.) KATE LONGACRE.

PORT ROYAL, Pa., August 2, 1908.

SISTER **Nancy Clark,** daughter of brother and sister T. W. Frost, and wife of J. J. Clark, of Goshen, Ark., was born in Bedford County, Tenn., July 2nd, 1844, and in childhood emigrated with her parents to Washington County, Ark. In her thirteenth year she professed a hope in Christ and united with the Primitive Baptist Church, living a faithful, humble and devoted member until death, which occurred Sunday, June 20th, 1908, the result of a severe stroke of paralysis. She was stricken about 2 o'clock the morning before, followed by a continuous struggle for life, lasting some twenty hours, when she sweetly and quietly fell asleep in Jesus to await the final call of the Master. In her sixteenth year she was married to J. J. Clark. To this union were born ten children, five sons and five daughters. Three sons and three daughters, together with the heartbroken husband and a large connection, and friends innumerable, are left to mourn their loss, but we should not mourn for her as for those who have no hope, knowing that our loss is her gain. While the vacancy in the dear home, caused by the departure of sister Clark to a more restful and joyful home, can never be filled as was filled by her, yet we should take courage and be comforted by the precious word of God teaching us that the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Friends, in this sad hour of bereavement and sorrow look to the Rock from whence ye are hewn for everlasting consolation and joy that will never be taken away.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer, in the presence of many weeping friends and relatives, who with sad hearts had assembled to pay the last tribute of respect to the mother in Israel. She was interred in the Clark Cemetery, near her home. She was a firm believer in the faith and doctrine of the church with which she lived and worshiped for fifty years or more. Let us remember that though our dear sister is absent, yet she is not dead, but has just entered the real life. Jesus said, I am he that was dead, but live again, and live forevermore, and, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

J. R. LOVING.

Philip W. Hall departed this life at the advanced age of 82 years and 9 months. The infirmities of age were the main cause of his death. He died at his son-in-law's, Mr. Theodore Toadvine, near Salisbury, Md. Brother Hall was baptized by the writer in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Nassaongo, Wicomico Co., Md., August 2nd, 1874, and was soon afterward appointed church clerk, which office he filled very acceptably. He was a man of good mind, well versed in the Scriptures and also in the general affairs of the day. The religion that he professed was lived out, which showed that the Spirit and the root were there at the bottom of all. We as a church do and shall miss him much, but he is at rest.

Elder A. B. Francis preached a comforting discourse. His remains were laid away in the old home cemetery to await the trump of God. He leaves to mourn with the church, four children, all girls: Mrs. Ellen Taylor, Mrs. Christian Parker, Mrs. Mary LeCates and Mrs. Anna Toadvine. We would commend the sorrowing ones to the word of God's grace, which is able to build them up. T. M. POULSON.

James J. Ashurst was born March 3rd, 1827, and died June 22nd, 1908, aged 81 years, 3 months and 19 days. He was married to Mrs. Mary E. Ashurst, March 3rd, 1864, and to this union two children were born: John K. and James J. Ashurst. John K. died at the age of thirteen. Brother Ashurst leaves one son and three stepchildren, two daughters and one son, namely, Mrs. Carrie T. Birkes, of Latham, Ill., Miss Lillian, at home, and Robert Spurgeon, of Kansas City, Kansas. Brother Ashurst united with the Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church at Lake Fork, in 1871, and was baptized by Elder J. H. Myers. He had been a consistent and faithful member since, although in his later years on account of poor health and irregular preaching he did not get to meet with his church as often as he wished, but remained firm in the faith of that church. He was beloved by his neighbors and all who knew him; thus we lose an indulgent father, a good citizen and a faithful christian.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer. Text used, Romans viii. 29: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." His body was laid in the beautiful cemetery at Mt. Pulaski, there to rest until his Savior calls him forth in his own likeness.

J. B. DOBBS.

SPRINGFIELD, Ill., July 15, 1908.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

G. W. Horner, Oregon, $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Des Moines River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Greens Grove Church, near Marion, Linn Co., Iowa, August 15th, 16th and 17th, 1908. Persons coming to this meeting will be met at Marion. A cordial invitation is extended to ministers and brethren to meet with us.

W. S. GOTT.

THE Bryn Zion Old School Baptist Church will hold its yearly meeting at its usual appointed time, the third Sunday in August and Saturday before (15th and 16th). A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. Meeting will begin Saturday afternoon at 2:30 o'clock and continue all day Sunday. DAVID M. CLOUD, Clerk.

THERE will be a two days meeting held in the Old School Baptist Church on Schoharie Hill, August 19th and 20th, 1908. All lovers of the truth are welcome. Those coming from the west will be met at Howes Cave August 18th, and Wednesday morning, August 19th. Those coming from the east will be met at Schoharie and taken to the home of sister Kinney. GEO. A. MIERS.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Cammal, Pa., expects to hold a two days meeting the fourth Saturday and Sunday in August (22nd and 23rd), 1908, and hope to have Elder Charles Bogardus and our pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, with us, and as many of the brethren and friends as can come. Place of meeting is only a few rods from Cammal station, on New York Central R. R., forty miles from Williamsport, Pa., and seventy miles from Corning, N. Y.

SAMUEL MAFFAT.

THE Hazel Creek Association will hold her fifty-fourth annual session with Providence Church, Appanoose County, Iowa, commencing on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1908, and continuing three days. Those coming by railroad will be met at Plano. Persons coming on the C., M. & St. Paul R. R. will be met at Jerome if they will notify Elder S. B. Jones, of Plano. H. C. CATE.

THE seventy-seventh annual meeting of the Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will be held this year, the Lord willing, with Union Church, at the residence of Deacon B. F. Myers, one-half mile from Colchester, McDonough Co., Ill., on September 4th, 5th and 6th, 1908. Colchester is situated on the Quincy Branch of the C., B. & Q. R. R. All trains will be met on Friday and Saturday. Brother Myers requests that as many as can conveniently, to come by rail. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially our ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Maine Conference will assemble, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church at North Berwick, York Co., Maine, on September 4th, 5th and 6th, 1908. We shall be glad to have visit us all who love the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Those coming on the train will be met on Thursday, Sept. 3rd. FREDERICK W. KEENE.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, Lincoln Co., Maine, Sept. 11th, 12th and 13th, 1908. Those coming by rail take Maine Central R. R. trains for Wiscasset, there change to Narrow Gauge R. R. for Whitefield. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

GEO. R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

THE Licking Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Mt. Gilead Church, near Mays Lick, Ky., Sept. 11th, 12th and 13th, 1908. Those coming from the east, south and west, by way of Lexington and Paris, Ky., will please reach these places on Thursday, Sept. 10th, in time for L. & N. train leaving Lexington at 11 a. m. and Paris at 11:55 a. m., arriving at Helena station at 1:27 p. m., where all will be met and conveyed to places of entertainment near the church, which is about six miles distant. We request as many as can do so, to reach Helena on Thursday at the time above named. Those coming from the east or west by way of Maysville will please write to me, stating day and time of arrival, so you will be met. We extend a cordial welcome to all lovers of gospel truth.

R. L. TURNER.

MAYS LICK, Ky.

THE yearly meeting at Rock Springs, Pa., is appointed for the second Sunday, and Saturday preceding, in September, 1908, commencing on Saturday, Sept. 12th, at 10 o'clock a. m. Those coming by rail will take trains at Philadelphia and Baltimore for Perryville, over the P., B. & W. R. R., to connect with the 4 p. m. train on the Port Deposit & Columbia R. R. for Conowingo, Md., arriving there at 4:30 p. m., where they will be met and cared for Friday evening. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth who wish to meet with us.

C. J. ROWLAND, Church Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association will be held with the First Church of Roxbury, at Vega, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 23rd and 24th, 1908. Trains will be met at Roxbury on Tuesday, Sept. 22nd. A cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth is extended, especially to ministers of our faith and order, to meet with us.

V. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 76. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1908. NO. 17.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May 12, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send this experience of Miss Mamie Kennedy for publication in the SIGNS. She was received by the church in Canada, at Duart, last February, and then I asked her if she felt willing to have her experience published. She felt much shrinking and fear concerning it. I think it will be good for the brethren scattered abroad to read it. I have known her from a child, and am glad for her, as I am for all who receive this precious hope. In her last letter to me she expresses great comfort and gladness. The meeting which has just past at Dunwich, was the time appointed for her baptism. I hope she has received that solemn and sweet ordinance, and is now in full fellowship with her dear mother and all the spiritual family who meet for worship in Duart, and in the other places of worship which belong to the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

TORONTO, Canada, March 4, 1906.

DEAR ELDER DURAND:—I have in my thoughts been talking with you all the past week, and cannot throw off the impression to write you. All last evening I felt very strongly that I must write, and yet I felt that I could not and dare not presume to do so, and again this morning comes the same desire, and I find myself wondering why it is. I felt last June, when I knew you were to be with us, if I could only be favored to be in your company how I would like to talk to you, but when the moment came, in some way that I cannot explain, as is often the case with me, my mouth was closed and I could not say a word, and then the thought came, Why need I be surprised, as I had nothing to tell? it was all imagination. How thankful I should be that I was kept from deceiving you as I had the two or three to whom I had talked. But the few words which you said to me encourage me to write this morning, and I know the mantle of charity will be thrown around and over my pitiable effort.

It is in my mind to try and tell you the way I sometimes hope the Lord has led me, but the time seems so long, and only a little here and there, that I wonder

why my little hope is so precious to me. I do not think that when a child I ever had any serious thoughts of the better things, only that I wanted to be good. The first my mind goes back to was one Sunday in February, while I was attending high school at St. Thomas, you were speaking from the Psalms. I cannot now recall the exact text, but you spoke of what it meant to wait patiently on the Lord; as you spoke, the beauty of it seemed to be shown to me, so that when I came to myself, as it were, I felt that I must have been standing up and that every one must have noticed me, but as I looked around, every one seemed indifferent to me. The words "wait patiently" have ever since been with me when I have come to the point of despondency of ever knowing anything of the things I have longed for, and they have sometimes made me patient. From that time I went along, taken up with my lessons, and not often having my mind at all stirred up; or if at all, thinking the Old Baptists were good, but a little behind the other denominations. Hearing Elder Pollard one morning comparing the natural birth with the spiritual, he said the first sign of life in a child was the cry, and the same was true with a child of God. He spoke powerfully, and I thought, O if I could only know that cry in my heart now, how patiently I would wait. But how ignorant and foolish! I ask now, Was that a natural feeling? Perhaps it was. But I go back often to the times when it seemed I was left to enjoy, as it seems to me, all the things of this life. I was in St. Thomas, and sang in the choir three years, and attended their endeavors, and yet, though urged, I never felt I wanted to join them, for it would hurt my mother. My aunt, Mrs. Williams, would often say to me that she did not see why I attended so regularly, and I did not like it. I thought she did not want me to be good, as I have told her since.

One morning I was reading the Bible, where they had been studying it at the C. E. meeting, and all at once I felt I could never have anything to do again with all that, for the Old Baptists did not believe in it, and I threw the Bible across the table. So I stopped going to those meetings, but I would never fail to go to hear our own preachers when they came to the city. Then I seemed to go along in an indifferent state for some time, but always in my very heart longing for some light. May, 1902, I felt I must go to the May meeting. I could not get away Saturday, so got up at four o'clock on Sunday, and took the express to Dutton. I felt very happy going along, and questioned myself, and felt it must be that I wanted to hear the preaching; and it seemed I could hardly wait until the meeting began. The Elder spoke of how Christ suffered in the garden of Gethsemane, but said it was not often he felt drawn to speak upon that portion of the word. In his speaking he said there was not a living soul in that meeting-house but that had passed through the garden of Gethsemane in the soul's experience. O how that came home to me. Where did that place me? I knew nothing of all he was talking about, and from that time I knew no peace. Circumstances placed me so that I left my position before the June meeting. I was anxious to attend, thinking perhaps I would hear something to give me hope. My sister-in-law, brother and I drove over on Saturday, and all through that beautiful meeting, which every one enjoyed, there was not a crumb for me. That was the June brother Young was

received. On Monday I thought my heart would break; must I go away without one ray of light? Then I thought, You once wanted to get away from these people, and now you are separated from them by an insurmountable wall. O the rebellion in my heart as we drove along; it seemed every wicked thought came. Then the words seemed to drop, "Be still, and know that I am God." The next morning I could hardly work for tears blinding me, and trying to hide it so my mother would not ask me about it. After dinner, as I came out to the door of the summer kitchen, the words, "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless," came to me. O, I thought, where have I heard those beautiful words? I could not recall at any time hearing or reading them. I went out and asked my mother; she told me they were in the Bible, and she would find them for me. Why do you ask? she said; but I turned it off. Every chance I got that summer I would read the SIGNS and Bible when no one was looking, but there was nothing for me. That fall I came here to Toronto, not expecting to stay: I came here to go to Winnipeg, but it was ordered differently, and I remained here. There was preaching on Sunday before I came away, and I felt I could not bear to live away from those people. I had often thought, If I were away from that people I would soon find there was nothing with the Old Baptists, and it would be better for me. The next six months I can hardly describe to you; I could scarcely attend to my work. Though surrounded by a throng, I felt I was alone in a bleak desert. I have heard others describe it as a night of awful tempest: to me it was a black night of awful silence; a silence that could be felt; that made me feel to cry for help, and yet not dare to utter a sound. My roommate, a dear little girl, would go to meeting, and when she would go I would get my Bible and read, but everything was for those who had tasted that the Lord was gracious. One morning I think I prayed that if there was in the Bible one thing that suited my case I might find it, and I would be satisfied. I threw myself in a chair, and opened the Bible to the one hundred and sixth Psalm. I read mechanically until I came to the fourth verse: "Remember me, O Lord, with the favor that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation." I had been so hard, but now there came a flood of tears, and I felt overjoyed to find the very desire of my heart recorded in that Psalm. The words seemed to stand out, and I felt, O if there was some one to whom I could talk. Mrs. McColl was to come down in October, and how I looked forward to her coming; but when she came I found I had nothing to say, or that I dared to talk about. Many times I would go over, thinking perhaps that day she would talk in some way that I could get into conversation; but it was small wonder she did not think of talking to me, for I was always so light-minded and foolish.

I went home in February to the meeting, hoping against hope, but there was nothing for me. I went along in the same way, even getting so far as to wonder if there was a God; then I would feel, There is a God to the dear people of his choice, but not for me. The next summer I was home, and was anxious to be there for the Sunday that Elder Carnell was to preach; but, as usual, there was nothing for me. I came and went in all those times, but still there was nothing for me except "wait patiently." How I longed for some assurance that I was

even traveling along the road of one of his children. One thing I knew: I did hunger and thirst after righteousness; that was often a comfort to me. The Sunday Mr. John Walker passed away the Elder stayed up for meeting, and came in to tell us he would come for dinner the next day, and said he would like for me to tell him how I came to love the Old Baptists, for he said he felt sure I did. That night I never closed my eyes until the sun arose. I dare not say that I had anything to tell, for what had I but darkness? I wished I might be sick, so that I need not talk to him. Was not that a wicked thought? But as daylight broke, the words came to me, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." I thought, If these words are for me, and from the Lord, how can I lie still and not shout aloud? A quietness came over me, and I fell asleep, and when I arose I could hardly wait for the Elder to come. After talking with him I had a most peaceful feeling for about a week; but soon I was back to the old way, and felt to know that all this was but my own imagination. I often went with my roommate to the James Street Baptist meetings, and shortly after my return, one Sunday evening before tea, as I was getting ready, I felt that I should not go. But still I was getting ready, when the words came into my mind, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." I thought I had heard Miss Bessie Gillis repeat that a few weeks before, and that this was what made me think of it, so I thought I would go this time anyway, as I was nearly ready. Then came the words, "Touch not the unclean thing." I knew I had heard no one mention these words, and did not know they were in the Bible. But I was quite determined to go, and went down to tea. I was depressed in feeling, thinking that I ought not to go. But why not go? As I was eating, the words came with much power, "Touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." That was enough; I got up from the table and went into the reception room, and when my friend said, "You are going to-night?" I said, "No, not to-night," almost before I realized it. I went upstairs and searched the Bible, but could not find the words. I threw myself on the bed, and picked up the SIGNS that Miss Wells had given me, and which I had read, as I thought, but I found one letter I had not read, and at the end of it found the whole connection of the words that had come to me. Since that time I have felt no desire to go to the meetings here, but still have not felt I had a right to claim anything with the people I love. Sometimes I am made to feel how very dearly I love them, and what a comfort this is to me at times. It is always such a grief to me that since the sermon at the May meeting, about the garden of Gethsemane, I think that I have not been able to hear any preaching as I hunger to do. I would go home with such a desire, and see others enjoying it, and know that it was truth, but still there would be no food for me. The last June meeting, I went with an anxious desire, but came away feeling that surely I was an outcast, and was striving to make the people believe by my going among them that I was interested; and I had a sad and heavy heart as the train pulled out of Glencoe; but it had not gone the length of the town when the words came to me, It shall yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Then I thought, I am again trying to think of things, and it seemed wicked of me; but in a few mo-

ments the words came, Dear "as the apple of his eye," and graven on his hand. O the unspeakable power and sweetness of these words, so beautiful to this poor, miserable mortal. The train was so crowded I had to share my seat, but I almost forgot any one was near. I try sometimes to bring back the sweetness of it by repeating it to myself, but the sweetness is not there. There came a quietness stealing over me, and then came the thought, Surely this is being led by the still waters, and lying down in the green pastures, of which I heard you preach one time on a week-night at Duart. Those moments are precious, and they always come when I am alone.

But I am writing so much to say so little. I have been writing along without realizing I have been covering so much paper. This last time I went home, but not with much thought of the preaching, for last fall it seemed I was left much to myself, and was dead to all things that I had been most anxious about. There was preaching on Sunday after, and I was made to feed upon the beautiful truth which was set forth from the sixth chapter of John, the latter part. It was just what I had hungered for all these years, and, as often had been the case with me, it came when I was not looking for it. O how wonderful are the ways of the Lord, and past finding out. I often wondered when I would hear others say that they were brought by a path they knew not. I have traveled a path I knew not, and sometimes I do hope the Lord's hand hath led me, but most of the time I am possessed with a fear that it will be shown me that all has been just self, self.

My thoughts have formed themselves so much more rapidly than I have been able to write, that I am afraid you will not be able to read this with much comfort. As I glance over what I have written, it seems empty of anything that could make you feel to say, I have come along that path. The other morning, as I was getting ready for business, the wonderful experience of one with whom I am favored to talk at times, was in my mind, and I thought, O to have such a clear experience as that, one would never doubt. In glancing over my own path, it has been but crumbs, crumbs; but to be assured they are crumbs from the Master's table would suffice for me. Since writing the above, I feel the burden raised from my heart, and again feel refreshed. My prayer is, O that I may not be left to myself.

Thursday evening.—Several days have passed since I wrote you, and though I found comfort in writing it, and wrote much, I see I have told but little, and I have feared to send it. I always feel myself so little and so very unworthy to be in the company of the Lord's people, but being as I am here, surrounded, yes, overwhelmed at times, with those who do not know the truth, my heart goes out to those who do love it. I find my mind and heart ready and full to write more, but I must not. Could one ever tell it all?

I have just read Elder Bartley's letter in the last SIGNS, December 1st number, and it has strengthened and helped me to withstand the doctrine, as they call it, that is heard on every side in this city.

I must say good night.

Yours sincerely,

MAMIE KENNEDY.

HARMONY OF MEANS AND END.

HAVING just fairly entered the last stage of convalescence from a very severe sickness, I feel to record a brief reflection upon the use of a physician. Honor thy physician, for thou hast need of him, is a wholesome thought; it is however understood differently by different minds. While the natural man, even the most educated physician, who boasts his skill, reasons as though scientific knowledge, attainable at schools, is about all that is essential for a good physician, there are men of deeper thought, who feel an influence of reverence while they seek to find a reason for the recovery of the sick; even so it is also with those who suffer. The people are divided into innumerable individualities, who must experience for themselves the interpretation of health and disease, decline and recovery, life and death. I do not think my experience is more instructive than any other, yet it comes back to me in a way that no other's experience can; it calls back to me a long cherished faith in "the true God, and eternal life;" it leads me to reflect upon the way of God with man; it confirmed a feeling of weakness, ignorance and indecision, out of which faith came as a miracle. One week or more is almost a blank to me. I remember but few thoughts, and the most of the treatment that I have been told about is forgotten. There was no emotion of discontent or fear of death that I remember, or have been told that I manifested. The fleeting thoughts that now return to me were quieting, soothing trust and resignation to God. I recall but one brief desire or prayer to live. I had no choice of physicians, just accepted the treatment of the one who had just treated my wife, who was slowly recovering from "la grippe," but who took all the toil that was her lot to wait upon and care for me. One week, as I have stated, was almost a lost week of thought. My family changed doctors, and for another week I was scarcely sensible even of suffering, although the new physician has assented to the fact that he was scarcely sanguine of curing me. Curing me, we all say, just the same as any Arminian would who believes in "means" almost entire; yet I slowly recovered. This is the query now, Who or what cured me? Both doctors prescribed for me, both claim the honor of my recovery. In whom do I believe, the first, the last, or the prescience and purpose of the infinite One? Or shall I divide the honor? I will not contest the question with either of my physicians, but will respectfully honor their apparently equal attention, skill and kindness, yet I am not sure that either of them perfectly diagnosed my case, or was positive as to the real action of their remedies (one of them admitted as much), yet I recovered and am still apparently gaining. I do not wish to be ungrateful to them, nor say I would have recovered without their care, but I will say that my quiet faith did not wholly trust in either of them, and I recall that Christ said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," just as he said, "They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick." O how mysterious are the ways of God; yet we act just the same as the infidel, who does not believe there is a God. In fact, are not our natures, derived from natural generation, equally as destitute of faith as they are? God has made us all earthy, planning, reasoning, seeking out new thoughts, new laws, new results and new appliances to secure them. Yes, God made us so, and suited our natures to this state

of our being. Can you now see just where my actual faith rests? The varied phases of fleeting phantasies that flit before the sick man's fevered vision—is he, was I, a free agent, qualified to direct the means of my recovery? Was the first physician free to use the means or medicine after his dismissal? The natural laws of our being act of themselves within us. We never choose our afflictions. I have more than ever felt, during and since my sickness, that God designed it all, planned it all, predestinated it all.

"Times of sickness, times of health,
Times of penury and wealth,
Times the tempter's power to prove,
And times to taste a Savior's love."

The objector has often said that if he believed that doctrine he would not take medicine, if he were to get well he would get well anyway. Others say if they believed that doctrine was true, and Christ saved his people, they would go on in sin. They surely must be ignorant of the Bible, for the same Bible that says there is a time to all things under the sun, a time to be born and a time to die, also says, Honor thy physician; and predestinarians do honor them and feel their need of them the same as others. Some have even taunted me with sneering jibes to sting my faith by saying, If God predestinated men to do wickedly I would not reprove them, forgetting that God had predestinated the reproof to be a witness of his righteousness; forgetting that the Bible teaches us to "reprove, rebuke," &c. A like remark came once from a man professing to be an Old School Baptist, who said Christ taught to let tares and wheat grow together, forgetting that Christ only referred to the fact that wheat and tares grow together in the world, but that we should not try to pluck the tares out of it, but told his disciples they were not of the world, and also instructed them that they must forsake all and follow him. Of course he forbade them to kill, but told them to bless their enemies. Here also is positive proof that God had purposed to have the tares grow with the wheat, or the bad and good to grow together in the world. I have not forgotten that an enemy sowed the tares, but if God had not designed that those tares should answer some purpose he could have kept out the enemy, even as Satan confessed that God had built a hedge about Job so that he could not take his life. O how much like my own sickness; I felt so secure, so trustful, and repeated to a friend:

"Though men and devils aim to kill,
They can't exceed my Master's will."

My physician said I was delirious. I asked him if I were in any way violent. He answered, No, but that I talked after the kind of my reading; but the doctor with all his wisdom could not see that I read after the kind of my faith; even the wise of this world cannot see what is revealed to babes. How helpless I was, and yet how strong in trustful confidence in God, to whom I looked for all he pleased to give me; and then to remember that that quiet trust was so different from my natural disposition. Very nervous, emotional and impatient, I could scarcely have composed myself for three weeks in health to endure the fatigue of lying in bed.

I feel to call attention to the heading of this article: "Harmony of means and end." I have felt a solemn faith in the most discouraging events of my life, and each one has seemed to be the worst, but I will confine my remarks mostly to disease and cure. The proper use of medicines is granted to be the method of curing us often, and yet they sometimes fail because of lack of faith. Faith

being the "substance of things hoped for," must be in union with the will of God or it cannot be a substance, for a substance is a reality; therefore where the will of God leads a physician to prescribe the proper remedy the patient survives. But why? Because the harmony of God's will is infinite, both in time and result. God being unchangeable, he so fixed the whole line of means and end in perfect harmony of fixed laws that they must fulfill the divine purpose without an exception. This does not consult the will of man, the skill or scientific wisdom of men, but uses such part as pleases God to use, and leaves the wisest, most skillful to fail in their work; for often the remedies so confidently relied on fail to cure, and the slightest variation in a patient's condition places the physician in perplexity. An old physician of this town years ago confessed to me that he met cases where he almost lost confidence in the science of medicine. We need not go so far, but we who believe in God should reverence and adore that wisdom which has declared the end from the beginning, "saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

A. B. BREES.

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio.

SOUTH ST. JOSEPH, Mo., 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I have had so much comfort in reading the SIGNS, I venture to say some things, though I hesitate, feeling unworthy, weak and ignorant, too ignorant to say anything upon such important subjects as are treated upon in the SIGNS. I feel that I should take my shoes off my feet, for the place when I approach seems holy ground. The writers come bringing the testimony of others who have been in like condition, and have the ability to tell of the dealings of the Lord with his people, and how they are like the blessed Lord, who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. From this I take a little courage, and trust that I do see the blessed Lord in his dealings with his people.

A brother preached for us at our schoolhouse a few nights since; he was from West Virginia, and his name was Wyeth; it had been some time since we had a preacher with us. He took for his text, "She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." I had read this text many times, and had heard it quoted many times by able ministers of the word.

We read, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," and "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." He said, "I and my Father are one," but he took on himself the form of a servant and was made like unto his brethren in all things. Again, we read, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." God made the beasts of the field, and everything that creepeth on the face of the earth, and ordained that all should bring forth after his kind. Then "God said, Let us make man in our image." "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." Adam was made of the dust of the earth, and God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and he became a living soul; and he was to have dominion over all the beasts of the field, all fish, all herb and all earthly things, except one tree in the garden, of this he must not partake, and

he was told, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." He did eat of the tree. Did he die? We find him hiding and hear him saying that he was naked. He was not naturally dead, for the Lord told him he should eat bread in the sweat of his face, and that he should till the ground from whence he was taken. We know that Adam was dead in some sense, for God told him that he should die if he partook of the fruit of the tree. In time there was a child born to them, and Eve said, "I have gotten a man from the Lord," and they called his name Cain. Then Abel was born. Cain brought for an offering the fruit of the ground, and Abel brought of the firstlings of the flock. His offering was accepted, and that of his brother rejected. Then Cain slew his brother because of this. Now who wrought the difference between Cain and Abel? Do not the words apply, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children"? Was Cain thus taught? I think that God taught Abel, so that he brought a lamb of the flock. How many times sheep are named in the word of God. John the Baptist said of the Lord, "Behold the Lamb of God." Abraham received a lamb at a very trying time with him. Isaiah speaks of the sheep being dumb before her shearers, and says that his life was taken from the earth, and adds, "And who shall declare his generation?" Note the difference. John said, "O generation of vipers." Isaiah said, "He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand."

The Lord said that he would put enmity between the Seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. Then we hear the Lamb of God saying, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." My Father gave them me, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. He said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." There have been differences of opinion as to how He came into possession of his sheep, but Paul seems to answer this when he says, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." Again, Paul said, "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Again, he said, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." And again, "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." The Lord said that he came only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but he came that those who were lost might have life, and have it more abundantly. He that hath an hundred sheep, if one be lost, will leave the ninety and nine and go after the one that is lost until he finds it; and when he findeth his lost sheep he layeth

it upon his shoulder. The lost sheep was a sheep before it was lost; the son was a son before he wandered away from his home; the father said, "This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." Has he ever been anything else but a son? But there has been a great change; he went off arrogant, he came back humble, and no more worthy to be called a son; he said, "Make me as one of thy hired servants." But what is bestowed upon him? The father calls for the best robe, and the ring, and the fatted calf to be slain. Are not the robe and the ring the emblems of adoption? The best robe is given him, and the best robe is the robe of righteousness, which Christ the Lord shall give. Was not the ring the emblem of the everlasting love of God? It is written, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." No doubt the prodigal son, when he fain would have filled himself with the husks that the swine did eat and no man gave him, was in great tribulation; he had spent all his living and was filled with his own unworthiness, and surely this was tribulation indeed. The Savior said to some, "Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world;" "ye are of your father the devil." John said of him that he was the true Light that lighteth every man who cometh into the world. All these declarations are in the word of God, and are the words of God. The Lord took his disciples apart from the multitude and explained to them the parable of the wheat and tares. The field was the world, the good seed were the children of the kingdom; the son of man sowed the good seed, and the tares were the children of the wicked one; the reapers are the angels, and the harvest the end of the world. "And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God;" but not unto the world. Jesus shall see his seed and be satisfied; he said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." I trust we are of that kingdom, and feel to say, as did David, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul. * * * Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

Your brother, J. L. MINTER.

ELGIN, Oregon, Jan. 18, 1908.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I herewith inclose a letter written to me by Elder J. P. Allison. The contents have been a source of great comfort to me; I recently mentioned the fact to Elder G. E. Mayfield, and he rather insisted that I send it to you for publication, as we all know that such messages of truth and upbuilding in the true Zion of God cannot proceed from the dear aged brother in Israel for more than a brief season.

(MRS.) M. J. LEE.

SHERWOOD, Oregon, Dec. 31, 1907.

VERY DEAR SISTER LEE:—After an almost unpardonable delay I will make the attempt to address you a few lines in reply to your last letter to us, which letter I sent to the editors of the SIGNS OF

THE TIMES, and you, no doubt, have seen the same in that paper. One reason for my long delay in replying to your most excellent letter was that we did not know where to address you; we supposed Touchet was still your address, though your letter was mailed at Elgin. We supposed you were at Elgin on a visit, but the fourth Sunday in this month we met Elder G. E. Mayfield at Oregon City, and he informed us that your address is now Elgin, Oregon, and so we are trying to write you something in the shape of an acknowledgment, and thereby let you know that we still remember sister "Martha," and sympathize with you in your struggle against the wiles of the flesh and the old archenemy of righteousness. If I should write just as I feel I could fill up my letter with the words of David: "My leanness, my leanness," and, "I have heard of thee with the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself." But whether I repent in dust and ashes is sometimes a serious question with me. That I do abhor myself I feel sure, and I hate my own life, because it seems so full of carnality, vileness and sin, and so void of the fruits of the Spirit; nevertheless I do hope that I can understand the apostle where he said, "We know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law, that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." Now they who are born again and have Christ formed in them the hope of glory all know that in them, that is, in the flesh, dwelleth no good thing; yet the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in us is not of the flesh or by the flesh, but by and of the Spirit, and the apostle, feeling sure of this fact, added the parenthesis, "that is, in my flesh," knowing that if Christ dwell in us the hope of glory something very good indeed dwells in the child of God. Such are spoken of in the Scriptures of truth as the "King's daughter," all glorious within, because Christ is in her the hope of glory. Her clothing is of wrought gold, because she is clothed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and "she shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework," because she is his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God had before ordained that she should walk in them.

But to return to the apostle's statement; he says, "For to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Now this is my experience, for of myself I can do nothing, and without Christ we can do nothing. It seems to me that the apostle here shows plainly that reigning grace, through the mighty working of the Spirit in us, is the true incentive to all the good works performed by God's children, for we may look in vain to the carnal mind or our own resources for the "how" to do good, and if the inspired apostle did not know the "how" to perform that which is good, much less we poor, vile mortals; so we see how needful it is for God to work in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. "For thou also hast wrought all our works in us." So we see how true the words of the apostle are: "For the good that I would, I do not." If he had been a conditional salvationist it

seems to me with all his knowledge of spiritual things he surely could have found the "how to perform that which is good." It seems easy, according to the teaching of some, if the apostle had been obedient; but then right here is the great trouble with me: for without the quickening power of the Spirit I cannot find the "how" to be obedient. He says, "The evil which I would not, that I do." I consider this expression voices the experience of every child of God.

I beg your pardon for imposing on you such a long letter, and it seems useless for me to further continue writing on this theme, as you are so superior to myself in spiritual vision, and know all about what is contained in this glorious subject, and know that it is alone by grace that we are saved, from start to finish.

We had a glorious, good meeting over at Oregon City, and felt that the dear Lord was with us. Elder Mayfield preached very ably, and his preaching was very strengthening and encouraging to poor sinners who are so afflicted, yet who trust alone in the Lord for salvation. Elder W. M. Gilmore was also present, and was blessed with a good message to the hungry, waiting children of God who were present; also Elder Horner was with us, and helped us both in prayer and preaching. Elder Moffit did not preach any, but had the pleasure and joy of receiving a member Saturday by experience in the Cedar Creek Church, of which he is pastor, and administered the ordinance of baptism Sunday.

We are all as well as usual, and hope this will find you all well; I mean the brethren, sisters and friends, and yourself in particular.

Your loving brother and sister,

J. P. AND MARY ALLISON.

GENESIS VII. 16.

"AND the Lord shut him in."

Now how is salvation come, by the creature or by the Creator? It seems to me by these few sacred words that it is proven conclusively to be by the Lord, and not by man. The Lord commanded Noah to build the ark, also instructed him exactly in all details as how to make this vessel of safety that should shield him and his family from the destruction that was to be sent to destroy the wicked, Noah and his family being typical of a people, a chosen people. Noah was a preacher of righteousness and a man who walked with God. Noah might be a type of Christ, and his family the church, and the ark as safety, also typical of Christ and his safety, for it was said of him that he should come traveling in the greatness of his strength; at any rate the ark was a place of safety prepared for only Noah and his family, and no one else. No one else knew of what was to come; none else had any part in the ark, neither does any other than the Lord's people know of Christ and his safety. Noah, being the head of the family, might represent Christ, he being the head, and his wife, his three sons and their wives to represent the church, and that shows the relationship between Christ and his people. The relationship between Christ and his people is clear and distinct, as is the relationship between Noah and his family. Noah and his wife were one, for man and wife are no longer twain, but one; then their children are one with them. The children being men when they took wives, the wives became one with them, so the sons were one with Noah and his wife. Now since they were married, they, their husbands, Noah's wife and Noah were one body, and not several bodies. Had the children been

females and married they then would have been one with some one else, but as they were males their wives became one with them. There is no good in speculating as to what it would have been had some been something else than what they were, but I only try to show how the wives were one with Noah, to show how they had a right to be in the ark and be saved; it was not for anything they had done, but because God had joined them to Noah in the way of their being Noah's sons' wives, and that is the relationship that Christ's people bear him; they are one with him, and not separate and distinct bodies; neither is the church a separate and distinct body from Christ, but they and Christ are one, they, his members, are a part of him, he a part of them; each one would become useless were it possible to separate them, but that is impossible. Noah then wrought this ark according as the Lord commanded, height, breadth and length, inside and outside just exactly as commanded, with the one window, which was in the top, and with the one door, which was in the side, and it was prepared at the proper time, not built way ahead and had to wait for the rain to come, but just at the appointed time. Then there were the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air and every creeping thing that had the breath of life in it, two of every kind saved. I do not think these things represent that any other than they had life, which represents that every living creature that has eternal life is saved in the eternal salvation of Christ our Redeemer. Had they been left out it would not have been a complete salvation, and would show that some would be left out; but not so, every living creature created in Christ is safe in the ark (Christ), and no power can hurt or destroy them, for "they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain." The fact that the Lord shut him in shows that it was of the Lord. God commanded Noah to build the ark to prepare safety for his people, and he, being the head of the family, did so; then after that was accomplished and all the animals of the earth and fowls of the air had gone in, and Noah, with his wife, his three sons and their wives, the Lord shut him in, showing that it is not of man to secure himself; showing the power of God and the inability of man; that even so as the ark was completed, and Noah and his family in the ark, yet their safety depended on the Lord to shut them in, which he did; there they were safe from the storm and rode in safety upon the waves. The spiritual man cannot shut himself in, Christ the Lord must shut him in, which to me is great satisfaction; it is a theme I enjoy when my mind dwells on it, to know that salvation is of the Lord, and not of man; to know that there is but one Power, and all other powers are ordained of him and are in subjection to his holy will, and that he rules and controls all things; that the devil is subject to him, and cannot hurt nor destroy one of his people, otherwise my fear would be greater than I could bear. I think if my hope was in a god that was only equally matched in strength to Satan I would be of all men most miserable; but I hope and trust in the God whose power and wisdom are unequaled and unlimited; that the Lord's people are safe in Christ, that the Lord has shut them in, that he has already safely and thoroughly forever conquered the enemy and safely landed his chosen in his holy mountain; that is, the powers of destruction are as much overcome and He and his people are as safe from the enemy as Noah and his people were safe

from the destruction by water. That God who rules heaven and controls hell is sure, and in him are no mistakes, no weak spots which can be taken advantage of, for the fight is fought, the victory won; it is all accomplished. It is not something to come, but has taken place already. The Lord's people are safe, this I know, but do not know whether I am one; whether I am or not does not affect the safety of it, but the Lord's people are one with him, and he is sure, and so they are sure with him.

This is the way this appears to me, and I willingly submit it to your better judgment. I think quite often, if not all the time, that I should not try to write on these things, and have made up my mind to not do so, but if this gets mailed I will have broken another resolution. If you get it, and it is anything, use it if you wish, if you do not, throw it away, and remember the poor writer,

F. SELBY FISHER.

ORLANDO, Florida.

DEAR EDITORS:—While I am sitting here this morning, feeling sad and lonely, thinking about the dear children of God, how they can meet together and sing and pray and hear the gospel preached, and that I have been deprived of the privilege for many years, I feel like one alone, not worthy to be among them. I feel to say to the dear editors, and all the brethren and sisters, Write on, for you can tell my travels better than I can myself. I love you all better than I do myself; although we are strangers in the flesh, I hope we are not strangers in the Spirit.

When fifteen years old I was cautioned in a dream to try and live right; I saw myself a sinner, and was very much concerned for some time. Time went on until I was nineteen years old, then I was cautioned again in a dream. I dreamed I was out in the yard, walking around the house, and came to the door to go in; my father was in the house, and when I stepped in he raised up and said, Sarah, you must try and live right, for the devil is trying to get all young people in subjection, and you must try to guard against it, and not be led to do wrong. Then he looked around at the other children and talked to them, and wanted us all to try and do right. Then I awoke. Not long after that I was in the loomhouse weaving, and a kind of stupor came over me, as if I were in a deep study, and I would catch myself with my head down on my hand, and then I would rouse up and think I must not let the loom stop, I must weave on; directly my head would be down on my hand again. Then I began to wonder what made me do that. Then it seemed there was some great trial before me; I could not understand what it could be, but I felt sure something was going to happen. A thought struck me it was death, and I knew I was not prepared to die, and I got into deep trouble; the more I thought about it the greater the trouble was. I was so full of sin my breathings were, O mercy, O mercy. On the sixth day of July I went with my father and the other children into the field to pull flax, and we worked until a little before noon, and my trouble was so great and the weather so hot it seemed that I would be overcome. I left the field and went to the house and sat down on a bench outdoors, but I could not stay there. I got up and walked along an old road that went off into the wood, where no one passed, to try to pray to the Lord for mercy, but when I attempted to get on my knees it seemed that I was almost pushed back; I was such an awful sinner it seemed that

if I were to get on my knees before the holy God I never could be forgiven for it. I walked back and forth, and sat down on a large rock, and then walked again, begging for mercy, but it seemed there was none for me. After I had been there quite awhile I thought I had better try to go to the house, for they would be wondering where I was. I started along a few steps, but it seemed as if I could not go. I turned around and walked back a few steps, and the most dreadful feeling came over me: weakness and trembling and shaking; I thought death had struck me, and I was then going to sink down. I threw out my hands and said, Lord, save, I am forever gone. Then my strength all left me. It appeared just then the Lord came right down from heaven, and it seemed he was coming to take me to heaven. I was caught away from this world entirely. I knew nothing of this world for awhile, and the sweetest words were put in my mouth, and sweeter than honey the words came out of my mouth; but it was not I talking, for I had no strength. When I began to come to myself I was walking along with my arms stretched up toward heaven and slowly clapping my hands and saying, This is more than man can do. Then that great load of sin was gone, and I felt I would never see any more trouble. I said to myself, I will go to the house and tell father and mother what the Lord has done for me. I think it was about three years before I went to the church after I received that precious hope. I told a little of what the Lord had done for me, was received, and baptized the next day by Elder Joseph Hartly.

When the time was out for my paper I felt I would not need it longer; I was very poorly, and so weak I could not read, but I have gained a little strength, so I can read and do a little housework. My daughter and I live alone; she is nearly fifty years old, and not strong. We cannot maintain ourselves altogether, but have to be kept and cared for.

The SIGNS is the best paper I ever read, at least it suits me the best, for the writers give God all the glory; he has all power both in heaven and earth. I have passed through many severe trials and temptations, and when I look over my past life I see many wrong things I have said and done, and what a wretched, wandering mind, it grieves me sore. O the sweet peace that came to me when the Lord took me out of that horrible pit and placed me on the solid rock, and put it in my mouth to say, This is more than man can do, and I do believe it. I do not doubt it is the Lord's work, but my nature is so prone to sin, my doubts and fears are all in myself, fearing all the time I will be tempted to do wrong and dishonor my blessed Savior.

Dear editors, do with this poor letter as you think best. Farewell to you all.

SARAH J. BRANSON.

MAY 21, 1908.

DEAR SISTER TERRY:—When my birthday came I received many cards and some beautiful letters, and among the rest one from you. But I must tell you that I never enjoyed one of them as I have today, nor felt that I could answer one of them. Your letter to-day seemed so full of love and good wishes. I know that the fault has been in me, and not in the brethren and sisters who wrote. I wonder who from Salem are with the Harford Church to-day. I doubt not many are there in spirit if not in the flesh. Soon they will be meeting with the Salem Church, and I hope that not a cloud will

mar the peace of one who may be permitted to meet with them. I hope that they may be given the hearing ear and the understanding heart; and that God may direct my steps is the prayer of my inmost soul. I know that there is no other one to succor, and none to save if he withdraws his everlasting arm. There are many of his precious promises continually passing through my mind to-day, which make me hope that they are for me. It is seldom that, even for one brief moment, I can feel that the cloud is lifted; but it is said that the darkest hour is just before the dawn. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak, and "I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." At times the only thing I can feel to rest upon is that it is said that through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom; I do hope I have entered that everlasting kingdom, and the arm of God will not be entirely withdrawn from me. There are times when every prop seems to be gone, and it seems I must surely sink, yet still there has been strength given me.

I received a beautiful letter from Elder Francis some time since, which I much enjoyed. There is an old saying that truth crushed to earth will rise again, and so I hope that while all I say and do has the appearance of evil, which you know we are commanded to shun, it may not always be so. But God knows all, and he alone can help us; he alone can save even a wretch like me. Many precious promises come to me and many beautiful hymns, yet in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, they all seem to be gone. "Like one alone I seem to be," and I must say, "O is there any one like me?"

I hope this may find you and dear brother Terry well, and that you may always enjoy that sweet peace and comfort which belong to the children of God. I am a poor scribe, but hope I have said nothing amiss. These words often come to me, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" And then I feel at the time as though I am surrounded on all sides by his wills and shalls. If God be my Shepherd enemies cannot wholly prevail. With Christ in the vessel we are safe in the storm; the flames cannot hurt us; he only designs to consume the dross and to refine the gold.

I will add but little more, but trust that he who is mighty to save may be nigh each and every one of his people, and that he may give them day by day their daily bread. My faith is weak and my foes are strong, but though the conflict should be long, our God has engaged by his firm decree that our strength shall be as our day.

With much love to you and brother Terry, I am, I hope, your sister in Christ Jesus,

M. E. NICOLL.

LANHAM, W. Va.

BRETHREN KER AND CHICK:—By the request of S. L. Melton I make the attempt to write a short sketch in memory of C. L. Melton, his father, who departed this life in September, 1895. He was a son of the late Elder William A. Melton, and was an able defender of the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists. Nothing pleased him better than to be in scriptural conversation with those who loved the doctrine of salvation by grace, and when the enemy would attack the doctrine he so dearly loved, with a feeling of solemnity and soundness of speech he would shut the mouth of the gainsayer. Surely one shall chase a thousand and two put ten thousand to flight. He was

well versed in the Scriptures; not easily frustrated, and usually spoke positively. His speech was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit. O how I miss him. We had grown up together from the days of our boyhood, and many happy hours have we spent together after we had grown to manhood, talking of the goodness and mercy of God to us poor, sinful worms of the earth. Now, children, your mother was called home to her sweet rest in the paradise of God in the year of 1879, if I am not mistaken. I can say you had a good, loving, christian mother; and your father and mother have been taken from the evil to come, and you are left to mourn your loss, but not as those that have no hope.

I will pen down your father's experience as he gave it to me. "You have asked me to give you my christian experience; I fear that I am not able to give such an experience; I can only give my thoughts and feelings. When young I often had serious thoughts about the great hereafter. I did not like my thoughts to dwell upon the regions of woe and eternal darkness; it seemed for the time to crush out all the joys of life to think of being doomed to such a place, but these were only fleeting thoughts, like the breezes of a summer day, that seemed to waft the little clouds, and scatter afresh the golden sunshine, and make the pensive heart assume its wonted cheerfulness. When my thoughts were most serious I desired to be alone. I have often gone to some dark, secluded spot to hide from all eyes save Him whom my soul desired should hear my humble petition. I desired to be resigned to the Lord's will, stop doing wrong and be a better man. My earnestness would make me believe it was prayer, but I would soon discover I knew not how to pray, and could not utter one word. I desired the Lord to instruct me, and not let me sin. By begging Him to change his will I would often grow careless about myself, and often forget to think of our kind Benefactor as I should. My beloved father was a very devoted Baptist; the trivial things of life never prevented him from going to the Baptist churches. Being very devoted to him I loved his people, and claimed them as kindred in the morning of life when too young to know the difference between the natural and spiritual relations, but when I grew older my father explained that the natural was for our good here, but it being earthly would end with time, while spiritual ties had no ending, and would live through all eternity. Who would not desire the link that would bind us in heaven to be embraced in God's holy love? I desire it, but do not the unregenerate also? If I have ever been born of the Spirit I know not when or how. I know that there is a change, but I doubt its being spiritual. For the last twenty-two years I have had no desire to listen to the denominations that are always doing so many great things for the Lord, and working for the highest seat in heaven, and the crown that will glitter with the most stars of honor. I do feel an interest in all true Baptists, and love their preaching and conversation. One of the pleasantest seasons of my life was the last of October, 1895. While preparing to visit our association, I was thinking of the dear Baptists and of the good meeting that was coming, when I was made very happy; I felt it was sweet to love Jesus and to be enabled to praise him. I remained in a pleasant frame of mind while at the association; they were lovely people, dearer

than ever. It was a good meeting, and they were so pleasant to dwell with that I felt sad when the association closed and the good-byes were said. If meeting with precious ones here thrills us with such sweet delight, what will it be in that beautiful city of the great Shepherd, where praises never end, congregations never break and there are no farewells? My life has been full of doubts and fears, with few and short seasons of joy. Even upon the bed of affliction, and in the most trying moments, Jesus has seemed near to comfort and reconcile me to his dispensations. How sweet when we can rely upon him, willing for him to choose our way and lead us as seemeth good in his sight, knowing that he doeth all things well. I have tried to claim this as a manifestation of his love, and have at times taken comfort in it, as well as in the words, 'We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.' If not deceived, I do love them and earnestly desire a home with them, but am too unworthy to ask them to fellowship me when I cannot fellowship myself. When I read the experience of christians, I find they have bright evidences of being children of God, yet there is something that seems to touch some secret spring in my poor heart, and a thrill of pleasure encircles me and makes me love their very sayings."

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

PORTLAND, Ind., May 18, 1908.

BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I inclose a letter I received from brother C. E. Jackson, that seems to breathe the true christian spirit. It is well seasoned with true christian meekness and humbleness of mind, having a realization of the great suffering of our Savior and what it was for, and what was accomplished by it. Like David of old, he is kept in daily need of God's help, the way being dark except as God in his own way and time has seen fit to reveal it to him. I trust God's children realize the source from whence all light is derived, for in Christ was life, and the life was the light of men. Brother Jackson has been set apart by the brethren to exercise his gift, and this cross, together with the knowledge of his dependence upon a higher power for strength and wisdom, grace and faith, we feel is why he has felt his weakness more severely.

NEWTON PETERS.

BUCYRUS, Ohio, Dec. 12, 1907.

ELDER NEWTON PETERS—MY DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—If one so unworthy as I dare address one of the Lord's dear children thus. Your kind and welcome letter was received to-day, and I am glad to hear you are well, also to hear you were at Cæsars Creek, and had a good meeting; and also glad to hear the few brethren there were well. Your letter came to me as a refreshing shower on dry ground. I have been seemingly so dead to the love of God and his many rich blessings bestowed upon me, and so ungrateful for his tender mercies, that I have thought, Surely I do not know anything of the Lord or that strait and narrow way; for surely if I have ever been born of the Spirit I would set my affections on things above, and not on things on the earth. It seems I am continually thinking and worrying about earthly things, and O dear brother, how often I am made to cry as the apostle Paul, "O wretched man that I am!" How often I find that "law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members," and how I would like to get away from myself.

Dear brother, you ask if I can at all times read my title clear? It seems all right for all of the brethren and sisters, but for me,

"When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark, and vain, and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?"

This hymn tells my feelings most of the time better than I can. Some things in the Scriptures give me a little hope now and then; this is one of them: "I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." That is, I see things differently than I once did, and I know the whole religious world sees them as I did, and I know the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God; so then the doctrine of the world is opposite to the doctrine of God our Savior. I know also that God would be just if he sent my soul to hell; this I could not see at one time. I know I am altogether sin and vanity, and like the old prophet, full of wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, and no soundness in me. There was a time when I cried for justice, but now I cry for mercy: "God be merciful to me a sinner," for I know if I received justice I would be forever banished from his sight. I am glad the Master said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance," and I am glad the apostle Paul said, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." If the apostle should have said, was chief, then poor, wicked me would have found nothing in this Scripture but condemnation. Dear brother, there have been a few seasons in my short and unworthy career when the Lord has blessed me with a hope that I believe enabled me to look to that within the veil, and to say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth;" and to say, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." One thing you spoke of has been worrying me for a long time, and that is, the Lord removing his old soldiers and not raising up younger ones to fill their places, and I have often wondered if I were not the one whose sins had caused this. We know that many times the whole house of Israel suffered for one man's sins, and when I see myself so prone to go wrong I think of this; but be that as it may, we know the Lord will never leave himself without witnesses. When Elijah thought he was the only one left, the Lord told him he had reserved to himself seven thousand men, and so we see the Lord is carrying on his own undisturbed affairs.

Well, Brother Peters, I must close, or you will get out of patience. I have written a great deal and said little.

I had the pleasure of reading the debate between you and Mr. Buckles, and enjoyed it very much; it handled predestination the fullest and best of anything I had ever seen. This leaves us all well, and I trust it will find you and yours the same. With love to you all who love the truth, and hoping to hear from you soon, I remain your unworthy brother, if one at all, C. E. JACKSON.

BAKER CITY, Ore., July 3, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—In obedience to a request from some of my brethren, and with a desire to reach many of my correspondents who read the SIGNS, I write this for publication, if it meets your approval.

On the 26th, 27th and 28th of June I visited the brethren of Big Spring Church, at Elgin, Oregon, where they held a three days meeting on those days. I never had seen any of the brethren of that section before, and went among

them as an entire stranger, but was received with the same kind hospitality and fellowship that characterizes the Baptists of the east. This church is mostly composed of Baptists from the eastern and southern States, and is an interesting band of brethren, living in the peace and fellowship of the gospel of the Son of God. There were several visiting Baptists at that meeting from quite a distance. One company drove about two hundred miles in a wagon. Elder G. E. Mayfield is pastor of the church, and is an able minister of the Word, and occasionally contributes to the columns of the SIGNS. On Sunday we witnessed the baptism of an aged brother by Elder Mayfield. While among those brethren, who are natives of eight different States, and hearing them speaking the same things, and seeing them rejoicing in the same blessed truth, I felt to realize the force of the Scripture which says, "They shall all be taught of God," and also that there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." We feel assured that the Lord does indeed and in truth carry on his own work in all the ends of the earth, and brings his witnesses from the far countries, testifying to the honor and glory of his sovereign grace. May the knowledge of these wonderful things so contrasted with our own weakness and helplessness keep us in humility and ever relying upon the security we have only in him by faith. To his name be all the praise.

Yours in hope, C. W. BOND.

POLO, Ill., May 11, 1908.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES: —Years ago I used to take your paper, but had forgotten who to address to send for it again, until I received a number from a dear sister in the east, and it seems so good to hear the words of truth and comfort once more that are contained in your paper that I inclose the money for a year's subscription. It has been about thirteen years since I heard an Old School Baptist sermon; that was at Gilboa, Schoharie County, N. Y., at an association. My home is here in Illinois, and there are very few Baptist members and no church organization near here. There are enough so-called churches, but I seldom go to hear them, and when I do, I have to say, I have not so learned Christ. Years ago, when a young girl, my mind was drawn to the Old Baptists, and I united with the church at Plattekill, N. Y., and was baptized by Elder Hewitt. I have passed through sore trials and afflictions, and often feel to say, "Like one alone I seem to be, O is there any one like me?" I often think of where He trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him. When we are brought low at his feet, and feel our unworthiness, and how little there is in us to merit his approval, and feel to say, Lord, save, I perish; then to feel that underneath are his everlasting arms; and sometimes I can really say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," then what a comfort fills my soul; that is peace the world knows not of, and I do have a hope that when done with the cares of this life I may rest with the redeemed of the Lord. Be that as it may, I leave it all with him, knowing there will be no injustice with him.

I submit this to your judgment, hoping I will receive the paper soon.

Unworthily,

(MRS.) REBECCA SWEET.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1908.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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"HARDSHELL."

BROTHER C. G. Irwin, of Wilmar, Ark., asks the following questions: Where, by whom, and why did the term "Hardshell," as applied to Old School Baptists, originate?

As to where and by whom it originated we do not know. We know it did not originate from any man who could be called a disciple of the Lord Jesus, nor even from one who could be called a gentleman by any stretch of charity. It evidently arose from some source that was opposed to the truth of salvation by grace alone, which truth necessarily embraces the doctrine of predestination and election, of special atonement and effectual calling, of the preservation of the elect in this life and their assurance of final glory. As to why it was given us, it seems clear that, as Old School or Primitive Baptists were ready to defend the truth of the gospel to the end, and would not make any compromise with what was opposed to this truth, and would neither yield the truth, nor hold in fellowship those who opposed it, they were thought to be selfish and unyielding; and so the term "Hardshell" seemed appropriate to the mind of the originator of the term. Unyieldingness, against which neither fear nor flattery could prevail, is what is intended by the terms "Hardshell," "Iron Jacket," and similar names. In this point of view, these terms are an honor rather than a reproach; we have never felt to resent them, or to be restless under them, or to protest against them. Some one, replying to another who had used the term "Hardshell" against him, said, "Well, a hardshell is better than a softshell, and far better than no shell at all." We have felt much the same way about it. We do not think it right for Old School Baptists to use these terms when speaking about themselves, for they know that our righteous Lord has called the church of God his bride, and that she is to be honored in him and with him; and as, with love and reverence, we speak forth the things that are to his praise and exaltation, so we ought to speak of the church, his bride, in terms of affection and honor. But as men called the Master of the house Beelzebub, let us not find fault if they designate His bride by opprobrious titles. It was said of the blessed Redeemer that he was a friend of publicans and sinners. This was meant as a reproach, but it was his glory then and it is his glory now that he is a friend of publicans and sinners; in this is the hope and salvation of such sinners. What was meant as a term of reproach against him then, was really a term of the highest honor, and a perfect description of his intent in coming into the world. He has on earth no more glorious title to-day than "Friend of sinners." They called him a winebibber and a gluttonous man falsely, because he did eat and drink in common with ordinary men, and rejected none of the good gifts of the Father. How common it is to-day for fanatics to call men by similar names because they believe that everything created by God is

good, and is to be used but not abused. The Savior knew nothing about prohibition, but he did teach and practice temperance; for this these opprobrious names were hurled against him by religious, self-righteous fanatics. The same class of men say the same things to-day. Why should believers be restless under these names, since thus they are one in their temptations with the Master?

The disciples were first called christians, at Antioch, as a term of reproach, yet we do not read that they murmured because of this, and soon they adopted the name as a term of the highest honor, and as being fully descriptive of what they were glad to be indeed. Wherever the name of Christ was honored this name would be an honor, but where the name of Christ was a term of reproach the name christian would be a reproach. This reproach the early believers gladly bore, and their enemies, in giving this name to the disciples of Christ, acted more wisely than they knew. They meant it for evil, but God meant it for good, that the name of his Son should remain on earth, even in the name of his people. Christ means the anointed One, and so christian means an anointed one. Truly the same Spirit that anointed the blessed Savior without measure, does anoint all his true disciples; for of his fullness they all have received, and grace for grace. Then let not believers grieve over the name "Hardshell," rather let us so live among men that it will be seen that we are not hard in our conduct and in our feelings toward man, but rather gentle and loving toward even the unthankful and the froward. But let us remember that we do indeed have a solid foundation, and that there are around us the solid walls of God's truth, which no weapon shall ever make any impression upon. Let us also remember that the real meaning of the name "Hardshell" is aimed at the doctrine which we love, rather than at ourselves as men. "This is hard doctrine," is what men mean to say by this term; but so said they of the doctrine of the Master. "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" If hard sayings make us hardshell, then indeed we are in fellowship with our dear Redeemer. The hard sayings of the Master were meat and drink to the disciples; not one doctrine that he uttered would ever break the teeth of his feeblest child; rather, in the hard doctrine was the milk of the word fitted to nourish an infant of days. That which is hard to the enemies of God is softer than downy pillows to the weary head of a disciple. Brother Irwin, and we all, know that these who are hardshells to the ungodly, the unbelieving and the Pharisee, are the true followers of the meek, lowly and gentle Savior, and are meek, lowly and gentle themselves.

In replying to our brother we felt like adding the above reflections, and hope that they will not be considered out of place. C.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

ALL having notices which they wish published in the September 15th number of the SIGNS will please send them to this office immediately, as we expect to send that number out ahead of time.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

ELECTION.

It seems needful now, as it did to the apostle, to stir up the pure minds of the people of God to remember all the various principles of the doctrine of the word of God. This doctrine is believed among us as a thing most sure, and just because it is so believed it may well be that but little might be said about it, in the way of presenting the Bible proofs of it. That this doctrine is in full harmony with all real vital experience of godliness is most certainly true, and yet it is needful that the children of God be taught to see how this doctrine is plainly declared in the Bible, and that their experience, which includes this truth, is in harmony with the word of God in the Scripture. Our experience is to be interpreted by the Scripture; if any experience is not in harmony with the plain letter of the word, it is because that experience is not of God. The Scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation; that is, while reading the Scriptures will not give that experience to the heart, after that experience has been felt, the Scriptures interpret it to us. In that revelation to the soul of its guilt, and death in sin, and just condemnation and inability to live, repent and believe in and of itself, the doctrine of the election of God is necessarily implied; but to know whether that experience is a revelation from God of the truth (the truth concerning ourselves and concerning salvation) we must turn to the Bible, and if what we have seen and felt speaks not according to that word, it is because the light is not in it. At the last the important question must be, What does the Bible teach as being true of salvation? Do the Scriptures teach the doctrine of election? And if so, what do they say regarding that doctrine? Some things are declared plainly of this truth. It is the election of God; that is, it is God who chooses his people; he chooses them, and not they him. It is an election or choice made before the foundation of the world; that is, made eternally, so that there has been no change in the immutable mind and will of God, as would have been the case had he chosen his people even millions of years ago, but not eternally. It is an election of persons, not of tribes, or families, or nations, although families, tribes and nations, in an inferior sense, have been chosen to certain ends, as the Jews were chosen to be a typical people. It is an election without regard to human goodness or merit, seeing that it was made before men had done any good or evil. It was an election to holiness and blamelessness before God, and not that men were holy and blameless, and therefore were chosen of God. It was an election according to the foreknowledge of God, which foreknowledge embraced all men, things and events from the beginning to the end. Therefore this election could not fail, seeing that nothing that could affect the chosen vessels of mercy was unforseen. It was an election in Christ, which means that it was through Christ that mercy should flow to the elect, and that in him they should find all their righteousness, wisdom, sanctification and redemption. Christ is also called "the elect" in a preeminent sense. In his election is the election of his people, even as in his sonship is their sonship, and in his anointing by the Spirit is their anointing also. They were elected in him, or chosen in him, even as all spiritual blessings are theirs in him.

Still further, it is an election of men, that to men (vessels of mercy) might flow out all mercy and grace, even unto the final glorification of all the election of grace. It is an election of just such men

as have descended from that man who was made of the dust of the ground, and into whom God breathed the breath of life so that this man became a living soul. It is worthy of careful notice that man was called man before he was given life. Man was not a heavenly being, but an earthly being, according to the narrative given in Genesis, and all that this man was in his creation, is that man who is chosen to salvation. It is this man of whom the psalmist says, "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee." It is this man to whom the Savior said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." It is this man who has been predestinated unto the adoption of children through Jesus Christ. Election, then, is for poor sinners, and for no others. Eternal life is not elected, but men are chosen unto eternal life; and of them the Lord declared, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish."

Election necessarily implies rejection. If all men are to be saved, it would be a perversion of language to say that the elect were saved. All cannot be elected, seeing that then there would be no choice or election. This distinction is made by the apostle when he said, "The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." When it shall be said next November that either Mr. Bryan or Mr. Taft is elected, it will mean the defeat of the other candidate to the office of president. It will not need to be said one is defeated, it will be enough to say that one of them is elected. So likewise, to say that God hath chosen some of mankind to salvation, is to say without its being stated in direct language that he hath passed by the rest, and left them to the condemnation justly due to all men.

Still further, if everlasting condemnation be justly due to all men, those who are left in that condemnation are not treated unjustly because mercy has been shown to others. All, considered in themselves, might have been left to perish, and the throne of God ever have remained without spot or blemish. As it is, in the infinite wisdom of God, his justice is magnified in the final punishment of the nonelect, and his mercy and grace are magnified in the salvation of the elect. This all the saved do now feel to be true, and this to all eternity all the saved shall magnify before the throne of God.

"Lord, should thy judgments grow severe,
I am condemned, but thou art clear;
And if my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well."

Still further, if any deny this doctrine their controversy is not with us, but with the inspired apostle. We hope not to be left to seek to say more than the apostle has said, as recorded in the ninth chapter of Romans: "The children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election, might stand, * * * it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger." It is not ours to seek to apologize for the works and purposes of God; rather, if aught that would appear to be a questioning of God should arise in our minds, let us remember that the apostle has said in reply to all such questionings, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power [right] over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" Upon the foundation of this doctrine, as

stated in the Scripture, is founded all present experience of grace and all future glory. Salvation, both here and hereafter, is in it, and is to be found nowhere outside of this glorious doctrine. This doctrine exalts the grace of God, while to deny it, is to exalt the goodness and merit of man. To believe it, is to believe salvation by grace, while to deny it, is to deny salvation by grace. Election stands or falls with all the doctrine of grace, while all the doctrine of grace stands or falls with election. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

PSALMS CXXII. 6–8.

"PRAY for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee."

In times of war how irrepressibly are our thoughts at times drawn to the contemplation of peace. When in the bitterness of his soul the psalmist cried unto the Lord, saying, "Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar! My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace. I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war."—Psalms cxx. 5–7. He said the Lord heard him, and this affords great encouragement to the saints of God to call on the name of the Lord in all their tribulations. The church of God is in a state of conflict, God has chosen her in the furnace of affliction, and he has ordained that in the world she shall have tribulation; but as Christ has overcome the world, in him the saints shall have peace. Therefore David was glad when they said unto him, "Let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together: whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord. For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David."

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem." This admonition to pray for her peace clearly implies, first, that her peace is liable to be interrupted, and second, that God alone can prostrate her enemies, allay her fears and hush to silence every jarring element of strife and disorder, and cause her peace to flow unto her as a river and her tranquillity as the waves of the sea. We may also infer that no treaty that we can make with the enemy, or bulwark we can set up for ourselves, are reliable; that God alone can heal all her maladies, settle all her conflicts and afford her deliverance; and furthermore, we may joyfully infer that the saints in all their conflicts, whether with foes without or foes within, have access unto God, and may come boldly to his throne with their prayers and complaints with a cheerful assurance that he will not send them empty away. We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. There is encouragement to pray for the peace and prosperity of Jerusalem again, from the consideration that our prayers are in accordance with the will of God; for he has spoken good concerning her, yea, for glorious things are spoken of the city of our God.

Jerusalem, in the type, was the capital of Israel, her throne of power, her palace of government was there established, there stood her temple, and thither went up her chosen tribes to worship. There stood the altar of the Lord on which all her offerings were made; the ark of God was there, and all their interests centered

there. So Jerusalem, which is above, which is free, which is the mother of all who are as Isaac was, the children of the promise, is the city of the great King, and her name is called, "The Lord is there." God has invested her with thrones of power and palaces of joy. He has there set the King upon his holy hill of Zion; there the King shall reign in righteousness, and his princes shall rule in judgment; there shall Christ our King sit upon the throne of his glory, and with his apostles on the twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. To the thrones, palaces and powers invested in this Jerusalem every heaven-born soul owes his allegiance, and it is high treason against the King eternal for them to acknowledge any other ecclesiastical power, or submit to any other religious dominion, for there the tribes of the Lord go up. They are not permitted to worship at any other shrine or serve at any other altar. The constancy and chastity of the faithful wedded bride to her Husband is unchangeably binding on her with all her citizens. "This people," saith God, "have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." John, in vision, saw her descending from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride prepared for her husband.

To pray earnestly for the peace of Jerusalem, implies an appreciation of her exposure to invasions and assaults from without, and from dissensions, disorders and divisions within. The gates of hell assault her invincible walls, and the powers of darkness vainly attempt to sap her solid foundation. The kings of the earth set themselves, and rulers take counsel against her, the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things, but God has assured her that no weapon formed against her shall prosper, and every tongue that ariseth against her she shall condemn. In the awfully solemn time described by the prophet, when the sinners in Zion are afraid, and fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites, when the heart shall meditate terror, even then the Lord says, "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us."—Isaiah xxxiii. 20–22. Impelled by our fears, alarmed by our foes, and encouraged by the gracious promises presented in the word to our faith, we are constrained to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and we offer our prayers to Him in whose power and wisdom, goodness and truth we fully confide, to do for her what we feel conscious we cannot do, and with a firm conviction that these aspirations arise from hearts into which God has poured the spirit of grace and supplication. Nor shall we pray in vain, for

"They shall prosper that love thee." How many trembling lambs who bleat around the fold of Christ, how many guilt-stricken, conscious sinners cast their longing eyes towards her precious gates and mentally exclaim, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God." "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house," &c.—Psalms lxxxiv. 1, 2, 4, while they feel themselves to be but aliens and

foreigners, and dare not indulge the hope that they will ever be permitted to enter her peaceful gates or taste a crumb of her provision which her God has abundantly blessed, every pulsation of their fearful heart responds to the words in the same Psalm: "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness," but still feel so utterly unworthy to mingle with the citizens of the new Jerusalem that they despairingly conclude there is no hope for them. But is it possible that any can be thus exercised who do not love Jerusalem? From what other source can such desires arise? Certainly they who do not love Jerusalem can behold no loveliness in her, nor can they feel any other attraction drawing them towards her gates but that of love. If there can be any other attraction than that of love, what is it? It is, it must be love. Cherish then, fearful, doubting, trembling soul, the hope that God has shed abroad the Savior's love in thee, and he has promised to prosper thee. Whatever bitter things thou art writing against thyself, this city God has graciously prepared for thee. To all such souls who are ready to take their cross and follow the Lamb, the word of the Lord says unto you, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without?" "Take my yoke upon you; and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." They shall prosper that love Jerusalem. Not a single cup of cold water shall be given to one of the least of Christ's disciples that shall not be rewarded. Prosperity shall not be perhaps, as Job's friends erroneously supposed, in temporal things, as heaping up gold as the stones of the brook, or silver as the mire of the streets, but it shall be a spiritual prosperity, overruling all things for their good and God's glory. This pledge embraces all who love Jerusalem, for all who love her love God who founded her, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

"Peace be within thy walls." The walls of Jerusalem not only separate between the citizens and those who are without, but they are intended as a protection to the city which they inclose. Much is said in the Scriptures of the walls of the city of our God. One prophet proclaims that, "Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks," and another informs us that God himself is a wall of fire round about Jerusalem, and the glory in her midst, thus at once showing us that God is our salvation. Hence he is called our Refuge, and our Shield. The safety of a city depends upon the strength and invincibility of her fortifications, and so we are taught that nothing can endanger the church so long as God himself retains his power to defend her. Within these impregnable walls a certain class, which are described in the divine record, have a right of citizenship. In Isaiah xxvi. 2, the Maker and Builder of this strong city has given orders, saying, "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." While the prophet denominates the citizens of Zion "the righteous nation which keepeth the truth," and Peter calls them a holy nation, John designates them a blessed people, who "do his [Christ's] commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolators, and whosoever loveth and maketh

a lie." From all of which we learn that those who belong to this city are the chosen, redeemed, regenerated and obedient people of God; and all who love this city have a birthright inheritance within her walls, and heartily pray for her peace and prosperity, and say continually, Peace be within thy walls. They not only pray and desire that God may deliver this city from all foreign invasion without, but also preserve peace within her precincts; that her citizens may love and be at peace with each other, love as brethren, and keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; that they may be at peace with God, with one another, and as much as in them lies, live in peace with all men. They desire and pray that they may be enabled to follow after the things that make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another. These peace-loving citizens of Zion are characterized as walking righteously and speaking uprightly, despising the gain of oppression, shaking their hands from holding of bribes, stopping their ears from hearing of blood and shutting their eyes from seeing evil. Such shall dwell on high, their place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given them, and their waters shall be sure, and their eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off. (Isaiah xxxiii. 15–18.)

"And prosperity within thy palaces." A palace is the place of the royal family, the home of kings and princes, the place of thrones of power and glory; the church of God, the residence of kings and priests, and the home of those whom our God has taken from the dunghill to set them among princes. "A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary." Here Jesus reigns, his mediatorial throne is here, and with him, occupying the twelve apostolic thrones, his princes rule in judgment. All the saints desire that the government of Christ may prosper, that upon his own head his crown may flourish, that his horn may be exalted, that as King, Christ may be higher than Agag, and his kingdom higher than the kingdoms of men. Also, they desire that the decisions of the apostles in the judgments which they have recorded on all the laws and ordinances of his church may be duly observed and faithfully obeyed by all the saints, not only for the benefits which each shall derive from the prosperity of the government of the church of God, but for the general benefit of all, collectively.

"For my brethren." The children of my Father, and of Jerusalem, my mother, these are my kindred and brethren, and for their sakes, as well as my own personally, will I now say, "Peace be within thee." We expect this peace will be enjoyed in heaven uninterruptedly, by and by, but even now, for my companions' sakes, will I pour out my prayer to God that peace may be within the church and kingdom of our divine Lord and Master. Even now, while Zion is compassed about with enemies, while her citizens are here in the flesh, and subject to a militant state. While earth and hell oppose, and she is in conflict with the world, the flesh and Satan, while noise and discord, strife and carnage spread far and wide around her, and while some of our companions have suffered the loss of all things, and some have been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, whose souls are seen under the altar, waiting to be avenged, and waiting for the filling up of the sufferings of those who remain, and are also to be persecuted and slain, even now, for their

sakes, will I say, "Peace be within thee."

"Peace be within this sacred place,
And joy a constant guest,
With holy gifts and heavenly grace,
Be her attendants blest.

My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life and breath remains;
There my best friends, my kindred dwell,
There God, my Savior, reigns."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., July 15, 1863.

POETRY.

DOVER, Del., April 7, 1908.

MY DEAR MAMIE:—Please hand this poetry to Elder Chick, and if he thinks best he may put it in the SIGNS. I think it is the travel of the Lord's poor and afflicted people here in these low grounds of sorrow. It is very ancient, probably written one hundred and fifty years ago. It seems like an heirloom to me, as I have always seen it since my first recollection in my grandmother's old Bible as a bookmark; she died seventy years ago. She was an old time Baptist, and I think a very spiritual-minded christian. Her father, Elder Phelps, was a Baptist minister, and traveled around a great deal. He died away from home, among strangers, and no one knew him until a minister was called to preach his funeral sermon; he said, "I know him, it is Elder Phelps." I believe he lived in Vermont. There were no railroads, stages, telegraph or telephone lines in those early days, so different from to-day, but the Lord had a people, true followers, as he has always had from the beginning.

Your loving mother,

LUCINDA B. BREWSTER.

TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW.

TO-DAY the saint with time things has to do,
To-morrow, joyful, bids them all adieu;
To-day he darkly sees as through a glass,
To-morrow views his Jesus face to face;
To-day corrected by a chastening rod,
To-morrow solaced by the smiles of God;
To-day he's burdened with the weight of sin,
To-morrow purified from every stain;
To-day he's watching, fighting, full of fears,
To-morrow palms of victory he bears;
To-day he's persecuted, jeered and scorned,
To-morrow with a glorious crown adorned;
To-day he feels his wants exceeding great,
To-morrow he enjoys a large estate;
To-day a suppliant at mercy's seat,
To-morrow casts his crown at Jesus' feet;
To-day he sighs, he mourns, he looks, he longs,
To-morrow all his sighs are turned to songs;
To-day he's racked with pain and sore distress,
To-morrow triumphs in eternal bliss;
To-day to sow in tears is his employ,
To-morrow bears his sheaves of heavenly joy;
To-day he lives by faith and leans on hope,
To-morrow in fruition swallowed up;
To-day with saints on earth he dwells in love,
To-morrow joins the glorious hosts above;
To-day he gets a taste of peace and love,
To-morrow drinks full draughts of bliss above;
To-day his sweetest frames may from him fly,
To-morrow filled with joys that never die;
To-day in God's commands he loves to run,
To-morrow hears the plaudit of, Well done;
To-day he's on the road to happiness,
To-morrow shall the same eternally possess;
Then welcome to-morrow, the christian may say,
That ends all the sorrow and cares of to-day.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mary G. Tawresey Carman died March 20th, 1908, at the parsonage of the M. E. Church at Forked River, Ocean Co., N. J., after an illness of three weeks of acute Bright's disease. She was the youngest daughter of the late Joseph S. and Mary Tawresey, of Philadelphia. Readers of the SIGNS in that city may remember her as a girl, when she frequently attended the Baptist meetings with her father. She was born in Wilmington, Del., Sept. 12th, 1877, and united with the Methodists when about twelve years of age, that being the denomination of which her mother was a member. Dec. 12th, 1905, she was married to Mr. Joseph P. Carman, a minister of that denomination. She was a dutiful daughter, a faithful wife and a loving and beloved sister. She leaves to mourn their loss her sorrowing husband, widowed mother, two brothers and one sister, but not as those without hope. May the Lord reconcile us all to his will, knowing that he doeth all things well, and it becometh us to be still and know that he is God.

Her remains were brought to Philadelphia to her brother-in-law's house and funeral services according to the rites of the Methodists were held, conducted by her pastor. The following day she was brought to London Tract, where she had requested to be buried, where there was a short service, and Elder Eubanks spoke comforting words to the mourners, after which the remains were laid to rest beside those of her father.

Her uncle in sorrow,

WM. B. TAWRESEY.

WILMINGTON, Del.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

O. F. Ballard, New York, $1.00.

NOTICE.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., August 11, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—There will be no Mt. Pleasant Association held this year. The conditions which confront it at this time make it unadvisable, though with deep regrets to the church and friends.

By order of the church. P. W. SAWIN.

MEETINGS.

THE Hazel Creek Association will hold her fifty-fourth annual session with Providence Church, Appanoose County, Iowa, commencing on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1908, and continuing three days. Those coming by railroad will be met at Plano. Persons coming on the C., M. & St. Paul R. R. will be met at Jerome if they will notify Elder S. B. Jones, of Plano. H. C. CATE.

THE seventy-seventh annual meeting of the Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will be held this year, the Lord willing, with Union Church, at the residence of Deacon B. F. Myers, one-half mile from Colchester, McDonough Co., Ill., on September 4th, 5th and 6th, 1908. Colchester is situated on the Quincy Branch of the C., B. & Q. R. R. All trains will be met on Friday and Saturday. Brother Myers requests that as many as can conveniently, to come by rail. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially our ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Maine Conference will assemble, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church at North Berwick, York Co., Maine, on September 4th, 5th and 6th, 1908. We shall be glad to have visit us all who love the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Those coming on the train will be met on Thursday, Sept. 3rd. FREDERICK W. KEENE.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, Lincoln Co., Maine, Sept. 11th, 12th and 13th, 1908. Those coming by rail take Maine Central R. R. trains for Wiscasset, there change to Narrow Gauge R. R. for Whitefield. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

GEO. R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

THE Licking Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Mt. Gilead Church, near Mays Lick, Ky., Sept. 11th, 12th and 13th, 1908. Those coming from the east, south and west, by way of Lexington and Paris, Ky., will please reach these places on Thursday, Sept. 10th, in time for L. & N. train leaving Lexington at 11 a. m. and Paris at 11:55 a. m., arriving at Helena station at 1:27 p. m., where all will be met and conveyed to places of entertainment near the church, which is about six miles distant. We request as many as can do so, to reach Helena on Thursday at the time above named. Those coming from the east or west by way of Maysville will please write to me, stating day and time of arrival, so you will be met. We extend a cordial welcome to all lovers of gospel truth.

R. L. TURNER.

MAYS LICK, Ky.

THE yearly meeting at Rock Springs, Pa., is appointed for the second Sunday, and Saturday preceding, in September, 1908, commencing on Saturday, Sept. 12th, at 10 o'clock a. m. Those coming by rail will take trains at Philadelphia and Baltimore for Perryville, over the P., B. & W. R. R., to connect with the 4 p. m. train on the Port Deposit & Columbia R. R. for Conowingo, Md., arriving there at 4:30 p. m., where they will be met and cared for Friday evening. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth who wish to meet with us.

C. J. ROWLAND, Church Clerk.

A YEARLY meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the Clovesville Old School Baptist Church the second Saturday and Sunday in September, (12th and 13th) 1908. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren of our faith and order. Trains will be met at Fleischmanns station on day of meeting.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association will be held with the First Church of Roxbury, at Vega, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 23rd and 24th, 1908. Trains will be met at Roxbury on Tuesday, Sept. 22nd. A cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth is extended, especially to ministers of our faith and order, to meet with us.

V. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa on the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (7th and 8th) 1908. We cordially invite all who love to meet for the worship of God to meet with us, especially ministering brethren. Those coming on the U. & D. R. R. will be met in the afternoon of the day previous, and if any should be missed take stage to Miss Jennie Leonard's. The Saturday following is our regular monthly meeting, and all who can stop over will be welcome.

Done by order of the church.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

THERE are a few Old School Baptists in Riverside, Cal., and they have meeting the first and third Sundays in each month, at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

W. D. BALL.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

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IN

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11:00 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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THE

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 76. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1908. NO. 18.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ROMANS I. 18.

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness."

The above text and its connection, with Paul's application of it to his subject in this letter to the Romans, has at times been upon my mind, and I desire to give such views as I have regarding it. The sixteenth and seventeenth verses of this chapter declare the gospel to be the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, and that therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith. In these three verses we have two things revealed, first, how and to whom the righteousness of God is revealed; second, how and to whom the wrath of God is revealed. It is in my mind to set forth some thoughts regarding both these things. One thing the apostle very plainly states in this letter: that all men have sinned and come short of the glory of God. The apostle would not allow, for one moment, that salvation is obtained by works, saying, "We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin," and that there is none that doeth good. Therefore it matters not by what means men may try to justify themselves, it is still true that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and that there is none that doeth good. Men may think their works are good, and hence ought to be good in the sight of God, but Paul sets all such ideas aside by saying, "There is none that doeth good." The apostle here seems to refer to those good works by which men seek to obtain righteousness and justification, and he teaches that no matter how good men's works may seem to themselves, they cannot come before God glorying in them. He says, "If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God." His meaning seems to be that if Abraham had felt his works were good enough to glory in, he must bring them somewhere else than before God. Paul declares that the righteousness of God is now manifested without the law, and this truth he says is witnessed by two good witnesses: the law and the prophets. This righteousness is by faith of Jesus Christ, and instead of being justified by works we are justified freely by the grace which is in Christ Jesus, whom he hath declared to be the propitiation for our sins,

through faith in his blood, that his righteousness might be declared for the remission of sins that are past. Paul repeats this truth by saying, "To declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Hence the doctrine of salvation by keeping the deeds of the law is forever set aside and made null and void. God found none good, none righteous, none that sought after Him; and all had gone out of the way, so that all stood in a lost condition and were fit subjects for the wrath of God and his condemnation. Hence none can boast of being justified by their works, for all, as considered by the God of heaven, are as filthy rags, and every man stands equally condemned with every other one. Hence all were in need of a better source of righteousness and justification than by their own works. But the apostle presents the true plan of salvation, and says, "Now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested," and to the truth of this he called the law and the prophets to witness. It is the righteousness which is by faith of Jesus that is now manifested unto all and upon all that believe. The apostle explains it thus: Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. This is why Christ said unto the disciples, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved." He did not command them to baptize those who were doing good works and keeping the commandments, but those that believe. There is no rule nor custom among the churches of God that when one wishes to unite with them, they shall seek to know whether he is keeping the commandments, and offering this as his witness that he is prepared to unite with the church; but, on the contrary, when Christ sent his disciples into all the world to preach, it was he who believed on Christ that was entitled to baptism at their hands. Hence it matters not how good a man's works are, if he does not believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for all his salvation, the church would not admit him to membership.

Now to return to the text, it is through the gospel that the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, meaning that through preaching, the righteousness of God is revealed to them that believe. It is God's righteousness that is revealed, and not ours. In the epistles to the Romans, the Galatians and Ephesians, the apostle has set forth with especial clearness that salvation is by grace alone, and in no degree by works. But now after all this setting forth of salvation by grace alone, I wish to speak of why it is that Paul insists upon all his brethren maintaining good works, still keeping these two things separate and distinct. In reading the Bible men see at once how the apostles insist upon their brethren walking uprightly, and to be careful regarding their whole conversation. Hence it is needful to show the necessity of good works, and that nothing short of a godly walk and chaste conversation is pleasing to God in the conduct of his children. When we see brethren who do not walk in godly fear and try to honor their profession, we are grieved, and hence the truth of our text is applicable to them: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness." The truth the apostle here sets forth in the first chapter of Romans is in harmony with what we find in the second and third chapters. God chastens his own

children who walk in an ungodly and unrighteous manner, as he requires good works of them. God hath shown them the truth, and if so, they are born of the Spirit, and bear the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, &c. The apostle also tells us what the works of the flesh are, that they are all of them evil works. Paul found both in himself, hence with his mind he served the law of God, but with his flesh the law of sin. He found a thorn in his flesh, and a warfare between the flesh and the Spirit; and where this warfare is, that one will find that when he would do good evil is present with him, and that while formerly he loved sin, now he hates it and loves righteousness.

One truth revealed in our text is that God chastens all his children who do not maintain good works; for good works should emanate from all who are born of the Spirit, and this Christ and the apostles insisted upon in all their teachings, not to make men children of God, but because they were children. Our God simply commands good works in all his children, but this does not prove that salvation depends upon these good works, for the Savior and the apostles set aside all such ideas as gross error by declaring that salvation is by grace, without works, and that it is the gift of God. Paul said, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. * * * But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby." Thus we find harmony in the Scriptures. First, that salvation is by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, or not of works, lest any man should boast; second, that good works should always be maintained by those whom God hath saved by his grace. Paul said, "If Abraham were justified by works, he had whereof to glory; but not before God," and the apostle James said, "Was not Abraham our father, justified by works, when he had offered Isaac, his son?" Thus unless the word be rightly divided there will appear to be a contradiction between Paul and James, yet there is no contradiction at all. The sum of it all is, we are saved by grace, through faith in Christ, and then by works make manifest our salvation. The good works are the evidences of living faith.

In conclusion I would say it is always sufficient reward to the people of God to know they are serving their Father in heaven. Thus their reward is in the obedience, and not for it; and we learn obedience by the things we suffer, as did the Savior.

Your brother,

NEWTON PETERS.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, July 9, 1908.

DEAR FLORENCE:—I have just read your letter dated June 30th and July 4th, and will try to write now and tell you in my poor way how glad I am to get it. Situated as I am, every message from my brethren in the church is full of sweetness. I find much comfort in the messages of love and fellowship I receive from the household of faith, but make little returns for them. I can only hope that God in the riches of his mercy may see fit to give me some word of comfort to one of his flock, for if I cannot write to the praise and glory of his name I had better be silent.

I do not know whether you heard what I had to tell of my life, or if it would be of advantage to you, but I will write somewhat of it, hoping that you may find some fellowship in it. God's people are led in a peculiar way; he has chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise. Until I read John Bunyan's relation of his experiences, I felt that I was alone in mine.

When I started to school my father had me excused from the religious exercises, and I only remember once, when eight or nine years old, that I took part in them for a short time rather than be different from the other children. It was told at home somehow, but instead of correcting me, mother told me to continue if I thought right. This affected me in such a way that for years after I could not even join in the school songs which mentioned anything I considered sacred. A great fear and awe of such things took hold of me. The first time I remember calling on God in prayer was when lost in the woods, in the wild country between here and Lake Superior. I think I was nine or ten years old. I had wandered about and called repeatedly with no answer, and when I had given up all hope I cried to Him, and on rising to my feet, my first shout was answered by one of the men from camp. During the time from then until I was about fourteen I cannot remember much except that I was very sensitive in all things pertaining to religion. Then I was given a desire to lead a better life, which I thought depended on myself. Every attempt lead to failure, and my sinfulness became more and more in evidence. My condition grew worse and worse, and I could not tell how to escape. The Bible gave me no comfort, but appeared always to condemn me. Every evil thought imaginable came into my mind, and while I had never used profanity, a desire to speak blasphemous words persecuted me continually. I would be in misery all day in school, and on coming home would go up to my room and shout hymns to try and drown my thoughts, and pray for mercy while doubting if there was any hope for me. The thought of being estranged from God through my sinful condition was the greatest trouble, rather than the fear of death or final punishment. I began to fear lest I had committed sin beyond pardon, and at last could not even pray, as I felt it an abomination to God. I do not know how long this trial lasted, but it was not short. I was afraid I should lose my mind and then fall a prey to the evil thoughts and blasphemies that persecuted me so. My first consolation was in the thought that God wrought all things with a purpose, and that if it were his holy will that I should be cast off it was right, but I longed even so to be reconciled to him and to be able to praise his name. One morning when I got up the burden which had been torturing me was gone; everything seemed beautiful, and to be praising God for his goodness; I felt that he had made a new covenant with me, and that my sins were forgiven. I thought my troubles were ended forever, but before the day was over I saw I was mistaken. I have been much troubled since by evil thoughts, but not in the same way as before: it is sorrow for the presence of evil in my flesh. I have often wondered how one so vile can be of His chosen people, but I know that there is nothing good in our flesh, and it is in the righteousness of our Mediator, Jesus Christ, alone that we can live blameless before God. I know there is no merit in myself; in my heart I have committed all manner of sin, and if I have been pre-

served from any evil it is due to the grace and mercy of God. I have often doubted myself, whether I am one of the vessels of his mercy, owing to the constant presence of sin in my heart, but I can rejoice in the many unmistakable blessings he has given me, of which I have told you a little before. After being received by the church at Southampton, and baptized, I did not experience that joy which I realized when the load of sin was first removed, but felt that the greatest of privileges had been bestowed on one altogether unworthy of anything. All through the years I have spoken of I tried in every way to conceal my troubles from every one. I did not know that what I had passed through had anything to do with the belief of the Old School Baptists; I thought I was alone in the world. For years I waited, hoping that God would send a revelation of himself to me, not realizing that the light had come. It was after reading "Grace Abounding" that I in fear and trembling wrote Elder Durand of my feelings. Perhaps you can see some likeness in our experiences. I love to read the prophecies of Isaiah, they point so wonderfully to the redemption of Zion. Is it not marvelous how Christ seeks us when altogether uncomely in sin? it being so purposed that all our beauty may come from him, so we have nothing in ourselves to glory in.

You have asked me to tell you again the experience I had at brother Durand's on the Monday night following my baptism. There was a meeting at his house in the evening, and after it I went to bed, desiring that I might praise Him in spirit and in truth, for I knew no other praise was acceptable with God. I had been asleep for some time when I felt myself lifted to my feet, and words of praise exalting God came from my lips. I did not feel as though I were standing on my feet, but seemed to be supported in a very high place, and the words filled my soul and came forth with irresistible power. While there was no exaltation of myself, the words seemed to have wonderful power, and to fill everywhere. This was not as a dream, confused, but so real that I do not know when I awoke, and it was some time before I could make myself believe I was really lying down. It left me with a great feeling of awe, and for a long time I lay praising His name, with tears streaming from my eyes. I told you, I think, of how, just after I awoke, a bird flew in the open window, and after flying backward and forward about the room several times went out again. This impressed me, coming at such a time, as I felt the flutter of its wings passing my face in the darkness.

I have just been reading this issue of the SIGNS. Elder Durand has a beautiful poem there, and the editorials and letters seem exceptionally good. I have longed that in God's mercy I might be more profitable to the church. I am so ignorant of the things of his kingdom, tempted by the evil one in all manner of sinful thoughts, and my mind so deeply engaged in things of this world, that I travel much in the valley; but God be praised, who makes us more than conquerors through Christ, he has not forsaken me, but strengthens me by his grace, and gives me periods of rejoicing in him, who is our righteousness.

Read Psalms xlii. and Isaiah xl. 1–11.

Your brother in christian fellowship,

GILBERT McCOLL.

[THE writer of the above is a grandson of the late Elder Wm. L. Beebe.—ED.]

UNITY OF THE SPIRIT.

(Ephesians iv. 3.)

In close connection with this subject the apostle has set forth the great oneness existing throughout the kingdom of the Lord Jesus. This being a "one kingdom" all that pertains to it ought, by the apostle's argument, to have a oneness. It seems that by his way of speaking he would have it known "to the faithful in Christ Jesus" that the love of God among them is sometimes hindered or obstructed. He has used the phrase "endeavoring to keep the unity," as though the unity of the Spirit was liable to be endangered. The word "endeavor" signifies an effort, a trial, as though it could not always attain that which was sought after. This agrees with Paul's experience as he tells it in the seventh chapter of Romans. However, it is enjoined upon the "faithful" to endeavor to lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset them. This power cannot be exercised beyond the limits of God's grace, which is delivered unto each individual in the kingdom of grace. For unto every one "is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." This is shown by Paul in the chapter containing my subject. "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." A difference of the gifts bestowed, but all by the same Giver, by the same Spirit. To keep the unity of the Spirit, is as much enjoined as to "put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness." The words "put on," used several times by Paul, I think essentially mean the same as endeavoring, trying, willing to do and having a holy desire to do that which is beautiful in holiness. So when he said as above: "Put on charity," it means the same as if written: Put on love; for the charity that Paul dealt in was nothing less than love of God. His meaning cannot be misunderstood in the quotation: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."—Col. iii. 12, 13. They are to put on bowels of mercies: help their brethren by kindness and humility. This shows forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. It is not argued for a moment that we can force the love of God, but, on the other hand, we emphasize the fact that having the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us, that it is only by the grace given that we are enabled to love them whom God has loved, and who are by the power of God enabled to show unto us through faith their love for God and his cause. When this is clearly done by the Spirit of Truth we are made to love them, for, if we love Him that begat, we also love them that are begotten of him. It is the fleshly mind that prevents the free course of heavenly love; it is the flesh that sometimes holds in check the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. For this contagion Paul has given a remedy: "Put off, * * * the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Again Paul speaks: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth." These are vile propensities and passions, as in

this connection he still further says: "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth." Right here is abundant labor for every christian; his worst enemy belongs to his own household, and he will ever be a member of his household, as long as the warfare lasts. The unity of the Spirit is hard to keep during this warfare. If it were not for grace given it could never approach a oneness; but, "thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory," we are sometimes made so wise unto salvation that all is calm, so that the fruit of the Spirit hangs in great clusters, and it is a sweet surprise to get a single eye to view them in their beauty, and to be enabled to point out, and to feast upon these spiritual fruits, such as love, called eternal love, great love, and the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law. When this fruit is seen and enjoyed, we are not sensible of being under any law, but of being under grace to Him who died once under the law, but who now is above and beyond the reach of any law. It is according to the arrangement of the Father that unity should prevail in all the highest places. It pleased the Father that in the Son all fullness should dwell. The Father is one with the Son; the Son is one with the Father. There is one body, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all. There was one offering for sin, and but one. There is one Savior, and but one. There is but one name given under heaven among men whereby any can be saved. The chosen people of God are one people, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." The chosen people are called in the one hope of their calling; they have faith once delivered unto them; they are one in Christ who is their sanctification, atonement and redemption. Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one. By that one offering He perfected forever them that are sanctified. Because of this unity "he is not ashamed to call them brethren." Jesus being so near to us in all his work, may we count it all joy to crucify the old man, and walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called. May we look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, for the pattern of good words and works, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

Brethren, this is at your disposal.

J. F. BEEMAN.

HELENA, Okla., Jan. 29, 1908.

HAMPTON, Iowa, July, 1908.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—My mind has been running upon many portions of God's word, and more especially upon the ministry of the word. Our God has placed gifts in the church as it hath pleased himself. In 1 Corinthians xii. 28, the apostle names the diversity of gifts, and then in the twenty-ninth verse asks the question, "Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers?" Now these gifts are all profitable, each in their proper place; all have a place in the church. God will make each gift manifest in his own time, and the church has the authority to sit in judgment as to the gift, whether it is profitable, for she is the highest power upon earth. There can be no appeal from her decisions; her decision settles all difficulties and controversies forever. Her discipline is strict in every sense and all must be submissive to her.

Among the many gifts described in this twelfth chapter there is one gift of which I wish especially to write: the call and qualifications of a minister. First, he must be a man of God and of good report among them that are without; he must not be a brawler, and must govern well his own house; he must be established in the faith, doctrine and practice of the word, a lover of hospitality; he must not strive, and he must be apt to teach. Many other quotations I could mention. We know that all men are not constituted alike; the propensities of some differ from others. Some by nature are full of self-conceit, and some do not seem to have enough. One may have a gift in prayer, another in exhortation, each in its proper place, and all edifying to the church. These gifts are to be tried, if they are of the Lord, the church will be the judge; if the gift be not from the Lord it will not be profitable. Paul said all are not teachers. A minister must be apt to teach, and if so he will be profitable to the church, and the church will know it. Such an one can feed the sheep and lambs and can build them up. Then the church should loose the gift, and give him authority to administer the ordinances of the church, and God will open the way for him to go among the churches and preach. Many things could be mentioned of the duties enjoined upon the God-called minister. We know that there are men who have been quickened, or made alive, to God by the invincible power of God, and taught by the Holy Spirit, and led into a blessed measure of the deep things of God by the teachings of the great Teacher, and who have been qualified and sent forth with spiritual power to preach. (Acts xiii. 2; Jeremiah iii. 15.) It is one thing for a man to rush into the ministry, and if no door is opened to him to be determined to lift one off its hinges, or to be sent by man, but it is a very different thing for the Holy Ghost to send him. It appears to me that at times some of the people of God have acted presumptuously in this solemn business. Moses appeared very ready to go before the Lord's time had come, and he met with a just rebuke which stopped his mouth forty years; nor was he willing to open it again at the end of that time. When in very deed the Lord called him he felt his own weakness and inability for the work, and made excuses. (See Exodus second and third chapters.) When the Lord said, "Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say," he still wished to be excused. How different this to the conduct of numbers of men professing to preach the truth of God in our day. Brethren, when you see a man who wants to rush into the ministry, and in the pride of his heart lifted up by his imaginary gift and talents, and by the wonderful depths of his experience and knowledge, and who thinks every one else either an enemy or a fool who does not encourage him to run, and who sets all down as enemies of the truth of God who have honesty enough to tell him that they do not profit under his preaching and they cannot believe God has sent him, and who is still determined to preach so long as he can get a few people to hear him, whether the church can profit under his ministry or not, no matter how sound such a man may be in the letter of the word, nor what depths of experience he may attempt to describe, we may rest assured that God has not called him to the work; such an one is his own servant, or of some other man's sending. Those whom the Lord sends forth will always go with tender-

ness of conscience, with a great sense of dependence upon God, and with fear and trembling; they will not be found going in pride, arrogance or presumption. Even Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles, whose calling is so gloriously conspicuous to the church, said to the church at Corinth that he was with them in weakness, in fear and in much trembling. But some men who think they are called to preach know very little about the trembling, and if they do tremble, it is with vexation because others do not encourage them, or with mortification because they cannot succeed to their own satisfaction. Even some good men, who were useful in the church in a private capacity, have rendered their own lives, in a measure, wretched, and have brought a great deal of distress upon the church because they would insist upon preaching, notwithstanding that very few, if any, beside themselves believed they were called to preach; and some have been left to be so obstinate in their own views and proceedings that many who had esteemed them as christians before, began to stand in doubt of them, and feared they were deceived in them. It is not enough that a man be experimental, and that he can tell his own experience, but under the teachings of the Holy Spirit he should be able, in some good measure, to uphold some of the glorious mysteries of the gospel of the blessed Lord. He should be apt to teach, and be able to do the work of an evangelist, and make full proof of his ministry. I have known men professing the truth of God who have insisted upon it for years together that they were sure the Lord had called them to preach, and that the church was opposing God because they would not encourage them. Some such I have known, and the only proof they ever gave that the Lord had called them to this important work was their own word. There are others in the letter of the truth who attain to what the world would call respectability, and it might be said of them in their way: "They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag: therefore they rejoice and are glad. Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous." But neither one nor the other ever gave proof they were sent of the Lord, or that they are of the number of Zion's nobles.

I will now close this poorly written article, and if I have here written anything that will be of any benefit to the church, or to the poor and afflicted ones, give to the Lord all the praise. I am now in my sixty-eighth year, and the thirty-sixth year of my ministry. What I have here written I have experienced, and known personally of some such men. By such men trouble has been caused in the churches.

Your brother,

E. A. NORTON.

[WE think brother Norton has here written sound and good words. How solemn is the work of the ministry! No man taketh this honor to himself, save he who is called of God, as was Aaron. Of the ministry it is true: He that climbeth up some other way is a thief and a robber. The sheep will not hear him. It is true that the called ministers of God will be found hesitating at the greatness of the work. How careful ought all of God's ministers to be in entering into the work, and the churches in putting one forward; yet it is needful to encourage the hesitating servants of God. What need of wisdom we all have to know

what to do and say, either in the way of encouragement or in the way of a faithful discouragement.—ED.]

KELLER, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—Elder Samuel McKelvey has gone to that bourne from whence no traveler ever returns. Truly a great man in Israel has fallen; received his discharge from the church militant to unite with the church triumphant in the city of our God beyond this vale of tears, where the wicked cease to trouble and where the weary are at rest. I am not writing an obituary; I presume the matter of data will be furnished later on, and that some brother will write a suitable notice for publication. This is a voluntary expression of my own; having known Elder McKelvey personally for thirty years, and having been closely associated with him most all this period, I know he was a true yoke-fellow, one who did not swerve from the truth, or shirk from duty to please the fancy of men, or the fastidious notions and whims of the world, yet he was meek and lowly in all his deportment, ever ready in deep humility to get down on his knees to wash his brethren's feet. There is no minister of my knowledge throughout this country whom I hold in higher esteem for the truth's sake, than I did Elder McKelvey. Often we went to the house of God and took sweet counsel together. The announcement of his death threw a dark pall over my poor heart, and therefore I must pass under the rod of this sad dispensation, to be still and know that God reigns. Recently I read in the *Record and Chronicle*, a newspaper published at Dentontown, the account of his death from paralysis, and the approaching dissolution on that solemn night. He was alone in his room, at his table, and wrote his last words before he became speechless, and I herewith copy the two sketches just as he wrote them.

SCATTERED THOUGHTS BY S. MCKELVEY.

"The little bark upon which we have sailed so long upon the sea of time has been scattered and disabled by the storms, and is being driven by tide and tempest upon the breakers, yet for a little time it holds together and floats helplessly toward the rocks; but soon it will strike, and all will be over. The sublime utterance of the apostle Paul on Mars' Hill comes echoing down the ages to us, reminding us that Jehovah is yet an unknown God to the wise and prudent of earth, but to the meek and lowly in heart those declarations of Paul sparkle with the scintillations of deathless truth, and we thank God that those glorious truths uttered by Paul on Mars' Hill still exist to furnish joy and inspiration to the weary and heavy laden. Sometimes when we read those inspired words the peace of God, that passeth understanding, seems to surround us, and the heavenly prospects of an endless life fill our hearts with joy inexpressible and full of glory. The long catalogue of sin, sorrow and suffering that make up the warp and woof of human life is often beautified by adversity, developing in trial a multitude of noble traits, which in prosperity would never have been seen. Something is wanting in man who has never known misfortune; to have really lived he must have suffered. Life consists of three parts: youth, a delusion; manhood, a struggle; old age, a regret. How true this is, all old people can attest."

The above words are solemn, and will long live in the hearts and affections

of his brethren, relatives and friends in fond remembrance of his uprightness, integrity, firmness, faithfulness and christian forbearance in the house of God as an exemplary man and christian gentleman; in every sense a gospel minister. He was tall and very graceful; a type of splendid manhood; grave, with a deep penetrating expression pictured in his countenance, desiring that truth and justice should guide him in all things to walk circumspectly, "As wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil." As a fluent, logical speaker he was past the average, and without an equal in our State among the Baptists, a thorough Biblical scholar, brilliant in oratory, clear and forceful in his arguments, an able expounder of the Scriptures, yet good-humored, manifesting a meek spirit in that holy vocation he had professed before many witnesses.

Elder McKelvey's membership was with the Bloomingrove Church, in Denton County, Texas, of the Trinity River Association, and a time or more presided as moderator of this Association, and served his church as pastor for a great number of years. In worship he would read such hymns as "Keep silence all created things," &c., "While sorrows encompass me round," also, "Poor and afflicted, Lord, are thine." (Beebe's collection.) Our dear brother traveled and preached extensively over Texas, as long as his health would permit, and was well known abroad. Many sore trials and persecutions were his lot, but by the grace of God he was made able to endure those things, and to withstand all the fiery darts of the enemy. The dark storm-cloud of the tornado that sweeps over the earth, spreading terror and destruction in its pathway, is unheard and unnoticed by him; he now reposes in everlasting love, at rest in the port of peace, freed from the buffeting waves of time's ocean. O what emotions of joy, in sweet anticipation of endless rest in the city of eternal light, hope swallowed up in the full fruition of immortal life. I will here quote the words of the poet, the sentiment of which is so striking and appropriate to the subject of this memoir.

"Fast my sun of life declining,
Soon will set in endless night;
But my hope, pure and refining,
Rests in future life and light.
Cease this fearing, trembling, sighing,
Death will break the sullen gloom;
Soon my spirit, fluttering, flying,
Must be borne beyond the tomb."

I feel that his place shall hardly be supplied. However, God has never left himself without witnesses. We keenly miss him, but our loss is gain to our dear departed brother, Elder McKelvey, and O may we thus be resigned to the divine will when the summons comes.

In deep sorrow, I am yours to serve in the gospel of Christ,

ASA HOWARD.

RICHMOND, Me., March 29, 1908.

DEAR NIECE BONNIE:—Your last letter of several weeks ago was gladly received, and I thought I must answer soon. I could only find one fault in it, and that was that you esteemed me and my few words too highly. It made me feel humbled, yet so thankful that one of God's children felt that I had been taught of him who spake as never man spake. It is such a sweet evidence that I am not deceived in the right to claim God as my God, when a dear brother or sister tells me that they have fellowship for me. This you did, and it comforted me and encouraged me to go on my way rejoicing. I was interested in your account of faith and trust in the words, "Seek ye first the

kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." That was of God surely, for of ourselves we cannot trust him for his grace. Instead of relying upon Him for all our needs, we are prone to put forth our own hand (efforts) to steady the ark. But, like one of old, we lose our life, in a spiritual sense, and are shown that salvation is of the Lord; that all good things come from Him, and that nothing can come to pass without Him. Are ye not of more value than many sparrows? Yet not one of them falls to the ground without Him, has always been precious to me. When I have been led to think upon those words they have always comforted me. I could feel to say truly, Lord, thou dost care for thy children. Thou, who gavest thine only begotten Son, that we might live, will bestow upon us, while here on the earth, the things needful for us. It may be we desire many things which would not be for our good, but we are of more value than many sparrows. He notices their fall; how much more will he notice me and withhold the hurtful things, and bestow the needed things. It may be that I shall not think, at the time, that my path is ordered in love; but sooner or later I shall say, As far as the heavens are above the earth, so are thy ways higher than my ways, and thy thoughts higher than my thoughts.

There was one thing you said about telling me of the experience you had the last evening you were with us, that I hope some time to hear. I remember distinctly at the tea table of being in conversation with Nellie, I glanced at you as we talked, and the expression of your face made these words of the apostle come into my mind, Caught up into the third heaven, and saw and heard things not lawful to be uttered; that is, not possible to be expressed; so whether you feel to talk about it or not I shall know that you were favored of the Most High.

Last night, just before sleep came to my eyelids, you came into my mind, and in thinking of the wonderful dealings of God, and how greatly magnified was his grace in your heart, I went back in my mind to the conference meeting at which I related my experience. It was on the second Saturday in July; the early afternoon sunshine flooded our church-room with a golden radiance, the tender leaves of the trees and the waving grass made a picture of the goodness and wisdom of God that fixed itself in my memory, and never fails to bring something of the sweetness and solemnity of the day to my mind whenever recalled. As the members one by one spoke of their exercises of mind, I felt that God was in the place. There was a peace, a oneness of feeling that strengthened my mind, if that were possible, that the Old Baptists were the church of the living God. I could hardly wait for an opportunity to ask a home with them. I remember saying these words, Ever since I have had a hope given me of God's mercy, I wanted to go with that people who give God all the glory. I can still say the same. No other people draw out my heart in love, and I can say with Ruth of old, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go. * * * Where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried." Dear child, I know that is the language of your heart, too. Would all that the world could give tempt you from following after the people who declare that, Salvation is of the Lord; not of works lest any man should boast?

Give my love to your aunts, Mary and Ada. I hope all is well now with the

home folks. Does your Aunt Mary remember being at an association at South Gardiner somewhere about thirty years ago? It seems to me that is my first recollection of seeing her. I remember her and sister Campbell speaking to me one noon at a Mr. Peacock's, where dinner was served. The preaching was the truth I knew, but I felt that I had no lot or part in it. I remember my own feelings better than anything else; my great fear was that I might betray my interest.

Well, now good night. Elizabeth says, "Tell Bonnie I enjoyed her being here last summer," so did we all.

With love to you all, I am as ever, your loving aunt,

ANGIE THOMAS.

NEWARK, Del., Aug. 3, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—If you will permit and approve, I desire to comment and express through the columns of the SIGNS our home appreciation of the earthly life and characteristics of the late George W. Lindsey, whom you personally knew and sincerely admired, and who in turn was always a devoted follower of the faith and principles of the Old School Baptist cause. I have been prompted to refer to his past life through your columns, and feel assured it will not only comfort his dear sister, but perhaps may reveal more forcefully his true inward character to those of his friends who were not in a position to possibly enjoy his confidence in all respects, and who never realized his true worth. Literally speaking, he followed "the simple life." The mental endowments and attainments allotted him by an all-wise Providence were not of an exalted character, compared to some, yet they were appreciated by himself as God-given, as was demonstrated by his strict fidelity to and zeal for the position of trust he held for years in the public institution, the National Bank, of Newark, Delaware. He recognized and admitted the fact that all knowledge and understanding came direct from one grand Fountain-head. He showed his appreciation of this fact by strict application to both worldly and spiritual duties, which no doubt was pleasing to God. It is obvious to my mind, knowing him as I have, that God has spoken to him: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." His early years were spent in tilling the soil, under the direction of his father, who was a Presbyterian. His next avocation was that of clerk and bookkeeper in a grain depot near his home, within a stone's throw of old Welsh Tract Church; and after a few years he was directed to follow the banking business for a period of about forty years, to the time of his retirement from business. His life from boyhood days to the day of his demise was one of exemplary habits. He sacrificed his position in society during his early and middle life for his grand old mother, Francina B. Lindsey, who was a consistent member of the Baptist Church from her early baptism to the day of her death, being immersed in the Potomac, near Mt. Vernon, at the tender age of eighteen. He and his worthy sister guarded and protected her for many years in her widowhood. His life on general principles, was a virtuous one; he was never attracted to the vices of this world, and never was beset with the temptations which ensnare the great majority of the human race; and why? Because he was protected by the grace of God. His mind was deeply embued with religious

thoughts. He was a great student of the Bible, that great book of revelation, and to my mind it is apparent that he often held sweet communion with the Father and Son during many of his lone and quiet hours. In short, knowing him as I have since a child, I feel satisfied that notwithstanding the fact that he was not a member of the visible church, he must have surely been baptized with the Holy Ghost. Only a few days before his death he told a friend he had no trouble to worry him, thus verifying my belief that he was reconciled to the end, and when the death summons quietly and quickly came his features were almost wreathed in a smile. He died as he had lived, a silent and peaceful man. He was a most extraordinarily reserved and uncommunicative man; his right hand never knew of that which the left hand gave; the charity he bestowed was retained within himself. He dearly loved little children, bachelor that he was, as he often demonstrated by caressing them fondly, particularly in his last years. I have no desire to exalt him as a perfect man, as he would be the first to resent it were he able to peruse these notes, yet his character is worthy of some mention, as his friends can well testify. He will not only be missed in this community, but more so by old Welsh Tract Church, where he was always considered and revered equally as much as a brother or sister in communion. We can but believe that he was called home as one of the elect. We hope, as he did, for a better country, which hope is wrought through the trials, tribulations and rebukes we have been brought to see. Be it ours to live the life of the righteous, that we may come at last to die their death.

J. B. M.

DRAIN, Oregon, March, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The time has arrived to renew our subscription, and I always feel I would like to say something by way of encouragement to the editors and correspondents of our highly prized paper, but realize my weakness so much lately that I feel it would be presumption for me to undertake to say one word. My days are like one asleep or in a dream. I often ask myself the question, Did I ever know Christ, or have I ever been taught of him? But I take courage when I read from the able writers of the SIGNS, and think many express the same feelings. We can write nothing new; but the dear saints of the most high God do not want to hear anything new, they want the same old, old story of Jesus and his love. David says, "Thou [the Lord] hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth." Those who are given strength to speak or write of the goodness, power and majesty of our Lord and Savior unfurl the banner that he has given all who fear and love him. If I should wait to feel worthy or competent to testify of Jesus, I never would write again; but I feel it a duty to give thanks and praise to his holy name after he has done so much for poor me. If I am one of his chosen, I hope I do love the brethren and sisters, and like to meet them and be in their company, and talk on heavenly things. We do have glorious meetings at our home nearly every month. I do not know what the custom is in your churches in the east, but our church, after preaching, gives all the members the privilege of speaking if they have anything to say, and sometimes we have lots of preaching. It is such a comfort to us to hear the dear ones relating their experiences and the dealings of the

Lord with them. To those who cannot speak, I say that tears are just as strong evidence of the Spirit's work as the gift to speak. Our meetings are old-fashioned, the world has no use for us, but that is not discouraging. Jesus says the world hated him before it hated us; and he said to be of good cheer, that he had overcome the world. The Baptists generally are poor in this world's goods, but I feel they all can say with me,

"He that has made my heaven secure,
Will here all good provide;
While Christ is rich I can't be poor,
What can I want beside?"

Dear ones, I have you all in my mind a great deal. I love to think of you, and, better still, would like to meet you face to face, but that will never be here on earth, but I hope to be gathered with all the redeemed of the Lord, in the above and better kingdom.

If I could only write like others, I surely would write often, but I cannot, I have no gift. Dear editors, I would rather not see this in print, but it is yours, and if you can see the least thing in it that you think would be of interest to any poor, hungry soul, you can use it. The dear old SIGNS comes to us laden with the precious truth of the gospel of Christ; if I am any judge, it is sound; it suits all the brethren of our church. May Israel's God guard and guide us all in the true paths of righteousness, is my prayer.

A poor little sister, saved by grace and grace alone,

S. MORNINGSTAR.

MANORKILL, New York.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel to write a few lines to inform you that the SIGNS comes regularly, and its contents is cheering "when the Spirit breathes upon the word and brings the truth to sight," so write on, brethren, as we read, "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." I, too, would be pleased to write you a good letter to cheer you on your pilgrimage journey. As said, No good thing will be withheld from them that walk uprightly. I am constrained to say at times, "O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people."

"O that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still;
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will."

The prophet asks, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." While in darkness, and faith also faint, the promises seem to be gone and we go about the streets inquiring, "Watchman, what of the night?" Like the disciples who could not cast the evil spirit out of the man, and Jesus said, O ye of little faith, wherefore did ye doubt? we being destitute of faith doubt, as said, in an hour when we think not the Son of man cometh, and he told them to watch lest they enter into temptation. If it is needful, he can come leaping upon the mountains and skipping upon the hills, and we are made to say, as Jacob did, "The Lord is in this place, and I knew it not."

I have tried to write you something to cheer you, and find "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." I will close, and if it should be the pleasure of the Lord to fill this earthen vessel with the rich treasures of his grace I may pen a few lines, but at present the vessel is dry, so good-bye.

March 28,—This morning the Com-

forter has come and all is well, and the Lord has given me a goodly portion, and so I can say as the lepers did, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." And the psalmist said, "Mercy shall be built up." So let the arrows of deliverance fly to earth's remotest bounds, that the children may rejoice in Christ their Savior. The six hundredth hymn seems very expressive of my feelings.

"Jesus, source of our salvation,
May we now thy nature know;
Then more bowels of compassion
We to thy dear saints shall show.
May the grace thou hast imparted,
In relieving our complaints,
Make us kind and tender-hearted
To the feeblest of thy saints."

Now, brethren, I feel to say with Paul, "My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved."

D. S. ELLIOTT.

RATON, N. M., May 27, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—As the Delaware River Association is so soon to meet at Kingwood, N. J., my mind is constantly going back to a meeting there sixty years ago, in 1848. I had the blessing bestowed on me to be at that meeting; Elder Wilson Thompson was there. The meetings then were held on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. I was not there on Friday, I was teaching a few miles from there, and after school Friday afternoon friends took me to brother Risler's. When they got home they regretted that I had not been there, for Elder Thompson preached such a great sermon. Saturday morning he preached again; he spoke for three hours; his text was Daniel ii. 44: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." Sunday morning he spoke again; he spoke from Luke xxiv. 26: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" He spoke three hours on Sunday. Elder Joseph L. Purington spoke on Saturday from Philippians i. 6: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." His sermon made a lasting impression on me—a sermon I never forgot. Elder Beebe was there, and a number of other preachers, but I cannot now recall much but Elder Thompson's sermons and Elder Purington's. His seemed to be especially for me. I hope you will have a pleasant meeting. If I live until then I shall be with you in mind, if absent in body. Please extend my kind, christian remembrances to all of the household of faith you may meet there. Elder Fetter joins me in kind, christian remembrances. My kind regards to all your family. I hope sister Bonnie will be at Kingwood and have as enjoyable a meeting as I had there sixty years ago.

May you enjoy the presence of the Lord at the association, and believe me your unworthy sister in hope,

ELIZABETH H. BOGGS.

WILMAR, Ark., March 15, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—There is much that I would like to say concerning my appreciation of the SIGNS. I have, if not very much deceived, been in a condition that I could rejoice that I was enabled to realize my great weakness, my great unworthiness, the cold, lifeless feelings, the great darkness of my mind, &c., but most of the time I cannot help taking all of these things as good evidences that I

have been altogether mistaken, and have never had an experience of grace. If I am not deceived, I do love what is generally set forth in the SIGNS, but am so incompetent to give expression in writing, or any other way, of my understanding of spiritual things, if indeed I have any, that it seems too presuming for me to attempt to utter, yet I have attempted to say a few words in our church meetings just a few times, but never have enjoyed any liberty in those attempts; hence I have grieved that I ever made even one effort to speak in His holy name. I do not know what is right for me to do, unless it is that I should stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. If there is anything that I have ever doubted the ability of the true and living God in, it is that he could ever enable me to speak to the comfort of his people; so it may be if I should send these rambling thoughts to you that I will be sorry for it. I have felt many times after reading the SIGNS that I wanted to offer a word of encouragement to the editors, brethren and sisters, whose writings I have enjoyed so much up to this time, but my insufficiency has seemed so great that I could never feel like making the attempt.

There is much more I would like to say, but it seems that I have taken up too much space already to no profit, so will close for this time, and perhaps forever.

Your very imperfect and unworthy brother, if one at all,

J. W. BRADLEY.

RATCLIFF, Ky., June 22, 1908.

A. G. HERNDON—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—The apostle says, "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, and of one mind."—Phil. ii. 1, 2. This word "if" in the inspired apostle's writing does not to my mind imply doubt, but rather signifies because of the existence of consolation in Christ, and the comfort of love and fellowship of the Spirit, that the saints in Christ at Philippi were to fulfill the apostle's joy, which is the only joy and consolation the saints have while here in this world of privation. They have the same love, which is the love of God shed abroad in their heart by the Holy Ghost, which he hath shed abundantly upon us through Jesus Christ our Lord, and they are of one mind, which is the pure mind, the spiritual or the mind of Christ, and not the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, which is not subject to his law, and neither indeed can be. "For to be carnally minded is [not will be] death; but to be spiritually minded is [not will be] life and peace." This is realized in the experience of every child of God; they know by experience that if they live after the flesh they shall die, but if they through the Spirit (not will through the Spirit) do mortify the deeds of the body, they shall live. This is known by the servants of God, and none others, for they only, and none others, have the Spirit, and none who have not the Spirit can through it mortify the deeds of the body, nor can any but the children of God pass through or experience that death. "Ye [a definite person or individual] shall die," yes, "shall," in gratifying the lusts of the flesh, die to all spiritual enjoyment, fellowship and communion with Christ and his church. Living such a life, they are made to sorely repent, by being chastened of the Lord, which at the time is not joyous, but grievous, but "afterward it yieldeth the peaceable

fruit of righteousness unto them [and no others] which are exercised thereby." Then, my dear brother, and only then, that is, when they are led by the Spirit of God, they do or can mortify the deeds of the body and live. This is not the life of the natural man, it is the life of the spiritual man; the old man is brought into subjection, then the servant of God lives to all spiritual enjoyment and fellowship of the saints of God in light, which light is Christ. Ah, yes, by the blessed and holy Spirit's teaching they are caused to shun the very appearance of evil, and enter into the joy of the rest of the gospel day, and then they experience the blessedness of brethren dwelling together in unity, and being of one mind, without which there is no unity; and without unity there is no fellowship, but confusion and discord, which is hurtful, to the marring of fellowship and spiritual comfort. Now may the God of all grace guide, keep and direct his children in the way of righteousness, and may peace and fellowship abound in all the churches, to the honor and glory of God the Father, who loved us and gave his Son to suffer and die for our sins; may He who is the strength and support of all his poor and afflicted people be your guide, your light, your all in your declining days, and, if it be his will, may we meet again.

I must tell you that my visit among you in May was very helpful and very strengthening to me. The unity, or oneness of mind, which was manifest among the dear brethren and sisters with whom it was my blessed privilege to meet has given me great confidence in them that their love for the brethren is unfeigned, and no doubt it can be truly said that you are taught of God to love one another. If it is the will of God, I hope to be blessed to visit and see you all again.

We are all well at this writing, and hope you and yours are enjoying good health. Remember me to your wife and brother David, also your daughter, and may the blessings of God's grace rest upon you. I would like to hear from you. Hoping you may have a mind to write, I close for this time.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. E. THORNBURY.

BENNINGS, D. C., Sept. 1, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I take my pen in hand to-night to write a few thoughts that have occurred to my mind with regard to the depravity of man, and how God in his great wisdom defeats all his plans. Soon after the flood men commenced to build the tower of Babel, and the whole earth was of one language and one speech. It is written, "And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said to one another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar."—Gen. xi. 1-3. We read in the same chapter how God confounded their language and scattered them abroad; thus we see that man hath not the guiding of his own steps, and that all things were predestinated of God before the world began. How thankful should we poor worms of the dust be that we have such a God, and such a High Priest in things pertaining to God to govern all things after the counsel of his own will. How much cause for praise have we that Christ finished and completed the whole plan of salvation, leaving nothing undone. Christ said, "He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." I

first began to see my lost and ruined condition before the just and holy God about twenty-five years ago. I read the Bible, but it seemed to be a sealed book to me. I would cast it one side, and think I had committed the unpardonable sin, and would wish I had never been born. I would look at the birds flying, and wish I were like one of them. I saw men go before the church and give an account of their experience, and I thought they must be different from me. I continued in this state of mind until the first Sunday in June, 1903, when I felt I could stay sway from the church no longer. Now it seems to me that the Lord was leading me all that time, and I did not know it. If not deceived, the day I was baptized was the happiest of my life. I thought I would never see any more trouble, but it has been quite different; I find that my nature is the same. I have found that when I would think good thoughts, evil would be uppermost with me. But, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth."—Psalms cx. 3. I believe the Bible is all one series of connected links from Genesis to Revelation; it is all concerning God's sovereign grace and electing purpose. I believe he knew all things from the beginning, that the hairs of our head are numbered, that he knows the thoughts and intents of our hearts, and that we are as prone to do evil as the sparks are to fly upward, but "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." Well might the apostle say, "blessed," for we poor sons and daughters of Adam, were all lost in the fall of Adam, but God in his great mercy loved us with an everlasting love before the foundation of the world, and sent his only begotten Son to redeem us. Well might the psalmist exclaim, Praise him with all thy might. I often think of hymn number 744.

I have read Elder Chick's editorial upon Joseph's cup, and I certainly was pleased with his views upon the subject; it just meets my mind. The editorials of both Elders Chick and Ker are very comforting to this poor, mourning soul. May God bless you both in your work of love, is my prayer. I will say, Write on, dear brethren and sisters, your letters are all good and encouraging. I must speak especially of sister Corder, of Philippi, W. Va., and her beautiful verses, "I am dreaming of those mansions far, far above the sky." Dear sister, what a precious dream that would be. I have read these verses a number of times, and what a comfort they are to me. I read Elder Ker's editorial of April 15th, upon permissive decrees, or limited predestination. I certainly do agree with him upon that; it is truth.

Well, I must close these rambling remarks. May the God of all grace be with you both as editors, and guide you in your good work.

Your brother,

THOMAS ALDEN.

MASON CITY, Neb., May 12, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have just been reading the SIGNS, the favorite paper among all we take, and I observe with sorrow that the fund for sending the paper to "the poor of the flock" has fallen off of late. I want to say that the brethren who are making these contributions are doing a noble work, and I sincerely wish they were more liberal, so

every one who appreciates the paper as I do could have and enjoy it in the sweet assurance that it is fully paid for, and that freely, by the brethren who desire above all things else to feed the flock of God, and especially those who are so situated as to have no church privileges. Thank you, brethren, for the splendid feast I have so long enjoyed at your expense. I hope some day to be able to give as much to some one else as you have given to me. I could not have had the paper without your generosity.

Our little church here is in rather a cold state, I am sorry to say. We have had no visit from our pastor since last fall. He lives at Chester, Nebraska, and it is a long, inconvenient road which he has to travel to visit us, and we hate to ask him to come, especially in winter. We hold our meetings upon the third Sunday in each month, at a sod house we are buying, three miles west of Mason, and we would be pleased to have any of the brethren who can do so visit us. Brother W. C. Harman and myself have tried to talk a little at our meetings when our pastor has not attended, but it is new business for both of us, and is rather tame preaching compared to what we have when our able and faithful pastor is in his place. Brother Ketchum is expected to be with us next Sunday, and we look forward to a pleasant and profitable time. May the Lord meet with us, comfort and sustain us is, my prayer. We have been blessed with bounteous harvests for some years past, and are so prosperous in a worldly sense that I am not surprised at our coldness, and am made to fear for the life of the little church. Keeping up our meetings is about the only ambition I have, coupled with doing what I can to comfort and sustain my aged mother, who is now in her eighty-second year, feeble and helpless as a child. She is very faithful and devoted to the church, which no doubt makes me more persistent in church matters than I would otherwise be. She has managed to attend our meetings for some time past, and does much to encourage others to attend. In my work as a rural carrier of the United States mail, I am permitted to see my mother each work day, and while my call must necessarily be brief, it is a comfort to see her and to inquire about her health and comfort, and then, too, I can carry to her any little thing that she may need without interfering with my other duties. Mother persists in staying in her old home where my father died August 6th, 1907. She can see from her window the cedar that waves over his grave. It is her wish to spend her last days surrounded by her twelve children, all of whom, with one exception, live in this county. Brethren, pray for us, and come and see us when you can.

In a precious hope,

J. M. AMSBURY.

OMAHA, Texas, July 28, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been a little tardy in sending in my remittance, but I hope you will forgive me, as I am such a poor, sinful creature, and it seems to me as I get older I get more careless, or forgetful of some things at least. It seems to me I must read the dear old SIGNS as long as I live and am able to pay for it, for of all the religious papers I have ever read it is the best. My observation is, that where the SIGNS has been read the Baptists have peace and are sound in doctrine; although there has been at times, and is now, more or less coldness among the churches, and the cause is given in the Bible: Where iniquity

abounds, the love of many waxes cold. But God has a set time to favor Zion. I feel sometimes that I would like to visit the dear saints in the north and east, as I hope I love them for the truth's sake; the dear editors and writers so often voice my sentiments that I feel we are related and one in Spirit, all taught in the same school; then for this same reason we should all strive together to sustain our one medium of correspondence, that if it is the Lord's will it may stand as long as time shall last. I am now seventy-six years old, lacking a few days, and remember clearly at the base of Rockyface Mountain, above Dalton, Ga., on the night of May 8th, 1864, when I was made willing to speak in the name of Jesus, and to try to declare his wonderful works to the children of men. God gave me faith to believe that all the powder and all the bullets could not take my life until he called me hence. I was made to rejoice in the thought that Israel's God created all worlds and all things for himself, and that he rules and controls all things by the word of his power, and he holds the keys of death and of hell. By his ignominious death and triumphant resurrection from the dead he alone was able to deliver us from death and save us from all our sins.

I have written more than I intended when I began, but will say in conclusion to all the dear writers for the SIGNS that I have sweet fellowship for you all, as you have all contributed to my comfort, and you, dear brethren Chick and Ker, may the Lord spare you long to edit the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I desire you all to pray for me and mine.

Yours in fellowship and sweet hope in our Lord Jesus Christ,

J. E. KNIGHTEN.

ELIZABETH, N. J., July 24, 1908.

MY DEAR PASTOR:—I had hoped to see you and family and all the dear brethren and sisters in the church Saturday, but am so indisposed bodily that I fear I cannot be there. I am very much disappointed; still I may be able to come Sunday morning. There are a number of people ill around us, and while we feel the warm weather greatly we are glad to keep on our feet, and we have cause to be ever thankful to the Giver of all joys and blessings. I often think and speak of you all, and especially of the sermon last July. Your text, "I have no greater joy," has been food to me many times, for it is my greatest joy to be among the brethren, and although I do not go often, it is my greatest enjoyment. In speaking of the SIGNS this week, I said to my husband, Why, I would as soon think of giving up the Old School Baptists as giving up the SIGNS. They go together with me; in fact I always thought an Old School Baptist had to take the paper.

I hope this will find you all in health. My love to sister Chick. I hope sister Bonnie is feeling stronger, and enjoying the presence of Him who dwelt in the bush. Remember me in love to the church, should I not get there, and know that I often desire that you may be strengthened as your day.

Hoping to see you, I remain your sister, I trust, RHODA L. COOPER.

CLAIRETTE, Texas, Dec. 27, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my paid up time for the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES has expired, and as I do not want to do without it, notwithstanding the crisis in money matters I am still blessed with sufficient to live on and take our family paper, for which I hope I feel thankful to the Giver

of all good gifts. I would have sent it sooner, but waited to see if I could get some one of our brethren to send with me, but it rained so we did not meet for services, and our little body is so scattered I scarcely see them only at preaching. I would be glad if the whole household could read the SIGNS; I think it would strengthen many weak brethren in the doctrine, as it was the first after the split with the Missionaries, and shows what the Primitive Baptists have always held to, and what they are still contending for.

I did not intend to write you, only to send money order for two dollars, so excuse me for taking up your valuable time.

Yours in hope,

W. H. CHANEY.

MOOSOMIN, Can., June 24, 1908.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find two dollars to pay for my subscription for another year, and may you be long spared to publish the dear old paper, is the prayer of my heart, as it is all the preaching I get way out here. I look forward to its coming every two weeks, as I do much enjoy reading all the letters from the different parts, and I would like to meet the writers. If ever you come out this way come and see us; we are two hundred and twenty miles west of Winnipeg, on the main line, and would be more than pleased to have a visit from any of the brethren.

To-day is the June meeting in Ekfrid, Ont., and how I would like to be there. Just four years ago this time at this same place I was taken into the church, and well I remember how I thought all my troubles were at an end, but I was mistaken, for I have passed through many dark clouds since that, but our heavenly Father has watched over me with tender love, and his everlasting arms have been underneath me all the way. Bless his holy name.

Now, dear brethren, I must bring this letter to a close. With love and best wishes for all the brethren, and also the SIGNS, I am your sister in hope,

(MRS.) ANGUS McCALLUM.

1047 LINCOLN AVE., LOVELAND, Colo., July 14, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—I want you and the readers of the SIGNS, especially those who have written to me, whose letters I have failed to answer, to know that God in his goodness and mercy still spares my unprofitable (natural) life. I want to make this a letter of inquiry. As I have lost the address and the names of some who have written to me, I would like to know the name of the aged sister (eighty-four years old) who wrote me from Evans, Colo., she lives with her daughter at that place. Also, I want the address of Mrs. Maggie Flournoy Ballenger, who wrote me from Pueblo, Colo. These, if living, are readers of the SIGNS, and if not asking too much of you I wish you would publish my request. I want to say to sister Abbie Coddington that I do not hear from her.

In hope of eternal life, which God alone can give to poor sinners of Adam's race, I am unworthily yours,

J. H. YEOMAN.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906; 07 means 1907; 08 means 1908, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1908.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
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1 TIMOTHY II. 5.

"FOR there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

In this short text we have presented the three most important truths of the word of God, and two of them contain the substance of the whole gospel. "There is one God," was revealed under the old covenant as well as under the new, but the special truths of the gospel are, "There is one mediator," and that mediator is "the man Christ Jesus." The blessed Savior seems to have made the distinction when he said to the disciples, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." Believing in God involves also belief in his perfections and attributes, such as his omnipotence, omnipresence and omniscience, in his justice, holiness and truth, and that he alone is the Creator, Preserver and bountiful Benefactor of all. These things were revealed to the people of Israel by the law and the prophets; these things the Jews believed. Again and again was it said to them, "Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord." As this great truth was revealed to them, and impressed upon them by judgments and mercies, they were weaned from open and outward idolatry, and came to reject with abhorrence the many gods of the heathen nations round about them, but in this truth, "there is one God," with all that it involves when sealed to the conscience of sinners in every age, there is condemnation, judgment and wrath revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. The revelation to the hearts and consciences of men of this one truth brings conviction of sin and knowledge of the justice of God in the condemnation of sin, so that such a convicted sinner can only confess his transgressions, and acknowledge that if his soul were sent to hell, God's righteous law approves it well. There is but one God, but there is now revealed to the conscience of such a sinner the sad truth that he has been ready to bow down to idols of all kinds, and to ascribe to them that which alone belongs to God. Though he may not have ascribed divine honors to wood and stone, or gold and silver made into the likeness of men, yet he has, after all, in thought and feeling ascribed salvation to houses made of wood and stone and ornamented with gold and silver, and he has thought that by the use of gold and silver with sufficient abundance men may be saved, thus saying that we are redeemed with corruptible things, as gold and silver, rather than by the precious blood of Christ. Or he has worshiped idols not to be seen, as wood or stone are seen, but still having existence in the mind, such as learning, wisdom, morality and such like things, and so has denied the one God as completely as have others. All this knowledge when sealed to the heart shows this man how vile he is before God, and that he has always violated the first and great commandment, viz., to love God with all his powers. It is a deep knowledge of this, and then, beside, of transgressions against the law of love to

one's neighbor (which also are transgressions against God first of all,) that leads a man to say, as did David, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." Thus David confessed that God was clear when he judged men, and thus the dying thief confessed the justice of his condemnation, and thus have all who have come to live before God made confession that God is just, and that they are justly condemned. This all is the work of the law in the sinner's heart. Strictly speaking, the gospel is not in this work, but it is a preparation for the revelation of the work of the gospel. There can be no revelation of the one Mediator until after the revelation of the one God. There can be no revelation of the need of the Mediator until there has been a revelation of the condemnation resting upon the souls of men by transgression against God. To learn that there is one God then, is to learn that he is all and all in the work of creation, in providence, and as regards our relation to him as his creatures in every way. If we have duly considered these things, we shall certainly be prepared to say this one truth, that there is one God, lies at the foundation of all true knowledge, of all true righteousness and of all true understanding of our relation before him. Without this one truth being revealed men could neither see any force or meaning in the law, nor in the revelation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is, then, all-important to weigh these things well in our hearts and minds.

Without this one truth: "There is one God," the second truth of the text could have no force. There is "one mediator between God and men." First, the need of the Mediator arises out of the fact that we have transgressed against God and have incurred the visitations of his justice and judgment. This means, according to his word, the only way by which we can come to know anything concerning our relations to him as his creatures, that by sin we have become dead to God, and have incurred everlasting death as well. It means also that there is no way in which we can come to God under the law. By what shall a sinner come to God, that God against whom he has sinned? How shall the unholy approach the Holy One? How shall he that deserves death come to receive life everlasting? Our works, our promises, our prayers, our repentance, our sorrow over our sins, while they all constitute our acknowledgment that we have sinned, will not make reconciliation for sin. To confess that we have sinned does not atone for it. In spite of all, our iniquities prevail against us before the bar of justice. This we need not enlarge upon, for we are persuaded that every heaven-born child knows and confesses this. "In vain we seek for peace with God by methods of our own." How then shall we approach before God? The answer is, we must have a mediator between us and God. Where shall such an one be found? Will we strive to find some man, some priest, to intercede for us? That man, that priest, is a sinner like ourselves, and needs also some one to intercede for him as well; and he who needs intercession for himself cannot be a mediator for others. Job felt this when he said, "Neither is there any daysman betwixt us." Job had come to feel his need of such a Mediator, but he had not yet seen the provision which God had made for him and for all like him. True, in the types of the old covenant, such a Mediator was shadowed forth, but what this meant was seen but dimly. God had

reserved some better thing for us. Certainly we may conclude, without doing violence to the word, that the more full revelation of the mediatorial work of Jesus Christ was involved in this better thing, and in the text the inspired apostle says plainly we have a Mediator, and more than this, he testifies that there is but one Mediator.

Let us ask for a little what is meant by the word "mediator?" First, we do not take the place of mediators when we pray for each other. When Paul besought his brethren to pray for him, and when he said they helped him by their prayers, and when he made mention in every prayer of his of his brethren, he was not implying that in all this there was mediation between God and the sinner. It still remained true that there is but one Mediator. If we pray for each other, still it is true that we can bring no gift before God, we can bring no atonement by which he may be satisfied. In prayer we can only make confession of our need, of the need of others, of our sins and of the sins of others, and humbly ask for blessing and salvation. One sinner cannot mediate either for himself or for others.

Second, a mediator must be equal with both the person for whom he mediates, and with him before whom he presents that person's case. Where shall such a mediator be found among all the sons of men to come before God for us? There is but one divine Man. God was manifest in the flesh, and Jesus Christ is declared to be both the Son of God and the Son of man. It is not ours to undertake to explore this great mystery of God "manifest in the flesh," but it is ours to receive this blessed truth, and believe it and hold to it, for it is all our hope of life and blessing here and salvation beyond.

Third, a mediator must be acceptable before God. To be acceptable he must be holy and wanting nothing before God. This was most blessedly true of our dear Redeemer; he was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. Also he must be made higher than the heavens. All this is declared of the man Christ Jesus. This could be true of no other man.

Fourth, a mediator must have something to bring as the ground and reason of his mediation, and this, the man Christ Jesus has. He brings, not anything good that we have done, not any sacrifice that we have made; he confesses, first of all, that we are sinners, and that the law of God is just in condemning us. He urges no palliation, no excuse, thereby seeking to make our sin appear light and trivial, but confesses for us how vile we are, and that we have nothing of our own to offer that the holy God can accept. He pleads none of these things before God, but rather, he pleads his own atonement, his own finished work, and says, Father, I have died; and this is, we know, the sinner's perfect plea all the days of his life here. There is but one answer that can prevail against all fear and doubt and all attacks of the enemy of souls, and that is, this one truth: Jesus died. But even in pleading this in our intercession we are not taking the part of mediators before God. Jesus before the throne does, however, plead as our Mediator, the one Mediator between God and man. He, and he alone, is the propitiation for our sins. He is our propitiation. He, as the Mediator, for us presents himself in his perfect obedience, and his atoning sacrifice, and this always prevails, and so he is our propitiation.

Fifth, a mediator must be as close to us as he is to God; and this our Jesus is.

There is no sinner so vile that Jesus does not altogether know his case. He can reach a self-righteous Saul, or a penitent robber and murderer on the cross. We, poor sinners that we are, need no priest to stand between us and our Mediator. No "mother of God" can pity us half so tenderly, nor understand us so perfectly, nor be near to hear our cry, as does this divine Man. Those who seek to put Mary before us as an intercessor with the blessed Redeemer utter a libel against the loving, tender Savior. Mary cannot be half so tender as her beloved Son; before her heart could begin to move toward us, his heart has already gathered us in. Romanists are guilty of idolatry when they ascribe the power of hearing prayer to Mary; for to hear prayer, the prayers of all saints, she must be omniscient and omnipresent, and these are attributes of God. No man, be he priest or what not, can know us altogether, and if he does not, how shall we be sure we have told him all our sins? How can we be sure we have been honest with ourselves and with him? Even if we were, how can we be sure, such are the limitations of human language and thought, that we have made him know all the truth concerning us? Thanks be to God we have such a High Priest as this, who knows us altogether better than we know ourselves, and, knowing all our sins of thought, word and deed, sins which are secret, even to our knowledge, we know that when he says, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," there can be no mistake; and this is our Mediator before God. Who shall find words or thoughts to measure the full blessedness of this truth?

The third truth in the text is, that this Mediator is the "man Christ Jesus." Something more than fifty times is the Savior in the New Testament called the Son of God, and nearly fifty times is he called the Son of man; thus his divine and his human natures are equally emphasized by inspiration. But it is not said the God Christ Jesus is our mediator, but the man Christ Jesus; surely this is not without signification to us. Thus is assured to us one who is one with us to mediate before God. Jesus our fellow, as well as God's fellow, intercedes for us before God. This man, Christ Jesus, was first born of the virgin Mary a babe, just as has been true of all men. He grew in wisdom and stature to childhood and youth and manhood as all men grow. He labored and was in subjection to his reputed parents until the time when he should enter into his public ministry had come. This man was tried and tempted, and was an hungered, thirsted, was filled with grief, and in all things was made like unto his brethren, that he might know how to save them. This man was betrayed into the hands of sinners, was mocked, spit upon, buffeted, and then crucified and was buried in Joseph's new tomb, and on the third, the appointed day, arose from the tomb and many times appeared to his disciples, not to all of them, but to witnesses chosen before of God, eating before them, showing them the wounds in his hands, feet and side, saying also to them, "A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have," and, at the end leading them forth into Olivet, he blessed them and was caught up into heaven, and a cloud received him out of their sight. This was the Mediator, the man Christ Jesus, who now lives at the right hand of God, and who shall so come again in like manner as he has ascended. This was the promise of the angel which stood by them after his ascension and disappearance

from them, and so our Mediator is still the glorified Son of man; to him it is our privilege to look, and in him is our assurance of peace with God and final salvation. Because he is the Son of man in glory, even as he was the Son of man on earth in his humiliation, we know that he knows how to be our true Mediator, and that we who are his shall also, though now in the body of our weakness and humiliation, be forever with him, glorified in him in heaven. This is the glorious hope that revives our courage by the way. The sight of all these glorious things which Jesus did and taught was in the days of his flesh accorded to but few of his chosen ones, but there is a revelation of himself in which all the chosen share: to some it was given to know Christ in the flesh, and after the flesh, but not to all; but it shall be given to all his people to know him in the salvation of the soul, and to worship him in spirit and in truth. Three were in the mount with him, and the same three were in the garden with him. It was not given to all who believed on him to witness his ascension at the last, but it is given to all who believe, to know him in spirit and in truth. Jesus in the days of his flesh did not visit Rome, or Greece, or Corinth, as he dwelt in Judea and Galilee; but now he dwells in the Spirit and in the revelation of his power to save wherever one who believes is found all over the world. A cloud received him out of the sight of those who saw him ascend, but he is revealed in the Spirit, and no cloud can hide him from the view of those who walk in the Spirit. We are not told what sort of a cloud it was that received him as he ascended, but that does not matter, it was a cloud that they could and did see. It may have been such clouds as we see now in the skies, we are not told, or it may have been (and we confess that this last has been rather our mind regarding it) a cloud such as covered him and the three disciples in the mount of transfiguration, or such as went before Israel in their wilderness journey. It seems needless to discuss this, however; it is sufficient to know that the disciples saw it, and saw him disappear out of their sight in it, and it is enough to satisfy all who love him that the heavenly messenger declared that he should in like manner come again. C.

REVELATION III. 20.

"BEHOLD, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

In the first chapter of this book we read the revelation to John of seven golden candlesticks, and in the midst of them one like unto the Son of man. In his right hand he held seven stars. These things were wonderful and mysterious to John, therefore further revelation of them was made to him. The candlesticks were the seven churches of Asia. He in the midst of them was Christ, who upholds the entire church, represented by the number seven. The stars were the angels or ministers of the seven churches, or in other words, all ministers of the gospel of the grace of God, all are in his hand (under his control) and are accountable to him only for their stewardship. A message was sent to each angel or pastor of the seven churches by Him who is in their midst. Our text is embodied in the message to the angel of the church of Laodicea. Five of the churches were in disorder and were sharply rebuked. One had left her first love; another had those who held the doctrine of Balaam; another suffered that woman Jezebel to teach; another had a name as though she lived, but was really dead; another was rich

and needed nothing, while indeed she was poor, miserable, naked and blind. To each church the Lord said, "I know thy works." The works were then described and the remedy for each transgression given, which was repentance. If they did not repent, the candlestick should be removed out of its place. The church of Philadelphia was commended for its steadfastness, and blessing was pronounced upon it.

If we note the time and circumstances under which the writings of the Bible were penned it will give us a more proper conception of their import. This book, Revelation, in which is recorded the seven messages to the churches of Asia, was written in the gospel day, therefore sets forth gospel order and discipline, not legal commandments and legal obedience. While the church is freed from the law, it is under law to Christ, and he demands gospel obedience, hence order in his house must be maintained or the candlestick will be removed out of its place. He is fully acquainted with all our works, we therefore should be careful to keep his house clean. None of us should forsake our first love for gold and silver. We should not hold the doctrine of Balaam and put a stumbling-block in our brother's way. We must not suffer a woman to teach and usurp authority over the man. None of us must manifest false zeal, thereby giving others to think we are alive when we are in reality dead.

The church of Laodicea seemed to be in a deplorable condition, notwithstanding they thought they lacked nothing, being rich and full. The message says they were "lukewarm," and because of such condition the Savior would "spew" them out of his mouth. This lukewarm condition seems to be the state of many of us in this age of the world. If such condition was distasteful to the Master of the house in the days of the churches of Asia, is it not equally so now? There seems to be much indifference in all the world toward church privileges; if everything is favorable we will go to meeting, if not we remain at home quite satisfied. This was not the case with us in our first love. If a man comes along bringing the doctrine of Balaam, some one will say, O he may have been embarrassed, we should be charitable toward the poor fellow. Such was not the case with us when we lived upon the sincere milk of the word, and would not even for a moment tolerate anything that gave a shadow of Ashdod. We do not seek the society of each other as we once did when the relation of the experience of the sheep and lambs was precious to us. The Scriptures seem old and we read less than in former years. Do we who are pastors visit our flocks and thereby keep up that warmth of feeling between pastor and people, as we once did? Do we render all the service we can to the church? or do we render as little as possible? Is our conversation seasoned with salt, that the hearers may be edified thereby? or is it upon worldly topics mingled with levity? Is our walk before men such as commands respect and has influence for good? Do we seek to have variety in our preaching that the interest of the church and congregation be kept up? If we, together with the churches, are neither hot nor cold, we surely must be lukewarm.

This knocking at the door by the Savior is not at the heart of the dead sinner for admittance, as many imagine, but each knock is a revelation to the church in disorder, whether individually or collectively. To the church or individual who says, I am rich and increased in goods and have need of nothing, the revelation

from God that they are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked," is the knocking at the door. To be shown that we must buy of Him gold tried in the fire, that we may be rich, is to reveal to us that our gold is not refined or purified. To be shown that we need white raiment that we may be clothed, that our barrenness and destitution appear not, is to reveal our righteousness as filthy rags. To make known to us that our eyes need anointing with eyesalve that we may see, reveals our blindness to spiritual things. When He thus knocks the door opens and the poor sinner or church sits down with him in his kingdom which cometh not with observation. In his light they see light; in his righteousness they are clothed; in his riches they are rich. Through this operation of the Spirit order is restored; true zeal and warmth of love are again given. Is not this supping with him? Is not communion with God and with his Son Jesus Christ supping with him and he with us? It is because of his love to the church that he rebukes and chastens it. He deals with us as with children; we overcome through his strength the powers of evil and sit down with him in his throne, even as he overcame and is set down with his Father in his throne.

K.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence, August 20th, 1908, Thomas A. Brome and Miss Esther E. Morss, both of Sullivan County, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder P. J. Powell was born at Gusseta, Ga., June 4th, 1841, departed this life July 8th, 1908, at his home in Pratt City, Ala. He was the son of Richmon and Eliza Powell. He moved with his parents from Georgia to Alabama at the age of eleven years. where he resided until called to serve in the Civil war. He was shot and thought to be dead, but his work here on earth was not finished, and God spared his life and he reached his home in 1865. In 1866 he moved to Pike County, Ala., and remained in that county until 1868. He was married to S. A. Sellers, the daughter of S. J. and Rebecca Sellers, in the city of Troy, Pike Co., Ala., Sept. 22nd, 1868, and in December following moved to Jefferson County, Ala., near Birmingham. To them nine children were born, five daughters and four sons, six of whom preceded him to the grave. The last two were men with families, S. K. and I. G. Powell, and were killed in the Virginia City disaster, in February, 1905. He was reared by moral parents, his father being a Primitive Baptist minister. He lived a moral life, but in 1875 it was shown to him that he was a lost and ruined sinner. In October of that year it pleased the Lord to pardon his sins and show him he was a child of God; still he had doubts and fears, and lived among the world until he was made willing by His power to do the will of the Father. June 15th, 1883, he offered himself for membership to the Primitive Baptist Church, was received, and baptized, with his wife, the next day. Soon afterward he began to speak in public, and was soon liberated to preach wherever the Lord directed him. July 26th, 1884, he was ordained to the work of the gospel ministry, which was a great satisfaction to many. He received many invitations to visit churches, which he did, and the brethren were ever ready to give him their hand in token of their love and esteem. He had been a subscriber of the Signs for many years. He had been in feeble health for several years, and Feb. 7th, 1908, was taken suddenly worse; he said from the first he never would get well. He regretted very much to leave his churches, and especially his home church. He gave instructions how to manage everything, of the home affairs and his funeral and burial. He leaves his widow and three daughters to mourn their loss: Mrs. Alice Smith, Pratt City, Ala.; Mrs. Laura Douglas, Pratt City, Ala.; Mrs. Odie Moore, Woodlawn, Ala. Also three brothers, one sister and many friends. He never seemed like him-

self after he lost his two sons; he was heartbroken and grieved very much over the loss of them.

S. A. POWELL.

Jesse Coberly died at his home at Montrose, W. Va., August 18th, 1908, aged 79 years. He is survived by his widow, who is eighty years of age and very feeble; one sister, Mrs. Maria Johnson, is also left, who is the last surviving member of the immediate family. Mr. Coberly was not a member of the church, but a believer and highly respected by all who knew him. MARY FERGUSON.

NOTICE.

LIBERTY GROVE, Md., August 25, 1908.

OWING to the impaired health of our pastor, Elder Wm. Grafton, and the inability to get the help of any of our ministering brethren, we are compelled to recall the yearly meeting which was to have been held with the Rock Springs Church, Pa. Sept. 12th and 13th. C. J. ROWLAND.

MEETINGS.

THE seventy-seventh annual meeting of the Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will be held this year, the Lord willing, with Union Church, at the residence of Deacon B. F. Myers, one-half mile from Colchester, McDonough Co., Ill., on September 4th, 5th and 6th, 1908. Colchester is situated on the Quincy Branch of the C., B. & Q. R. R. All trains will be met on Friday and Saturday. Brother Myers requests that as many as can conveniently, to come by rail. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially our ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Maine Conference will assemble, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church at North Berwick, York Co., Maine, on September 4th, 5th and 6th, 1908. We shall be glad to have visit us all who love the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Those coming on the train will be met on Thursday, Sept. 3rd. FREDERICK W. KEENE.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, Lincoln Co., Maine, Sept. 11th, 12th and 13th, 1908. Those coming by rail take Maine Central R. R. trains for Wiscasset, there change to Narrow Gauge R. R. for Whitefield. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

GEO. R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

THE Licking Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Mt. Gilead Church, near Mays Lick, Ky., Sept. 11th, 12th and 13th, 1908. Those coming from the east, south and west, by way of Lexington and Paris, Ky., will please reach these places on Thursday, Sept. 10th, in time for L. & N. train leaving Lexington at 11 a. m. and Paris at 11:55 a. m., arriving at Helena station at 1:27 p. m., where all will be met and conveyed to places of entertainment near the church, which is about six miles distant. We request as many as can do so, to reach Helena on Thursday at the time above named. Those coming from the east or west by way of Maysville will please write to me, stating day and time of arrival, so you will be met. We extend a cordial welcome to all lovers of gospel truth.

R. L. TURNER.

MAYS LICK, Ky.

A YEARLY meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the Clovesville Old School Baptist Church the second Saturday and Sunday in September, (12th and 13th) 1908. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren of our faith and order. Trains will be met at Fleischmanns station on day of meeting.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE seventy-third annual meeting of the Pocatalico Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held the 18th, 19th and 20th days of September, 1908, with the Sarah Church, Boone County, W. Va., three and one-half miles from Lora, on the Coal River R. R., a branch line of the C. & O. Those coming by rail should leave St. Albans, W. Va., on the 4 o'clock train Wednesday evening, arriving at Lora 7 o'clock, where you will be met. All lovers of the truth are invited to attend.

G. B. BIRD, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association will be held with the First Church of Roxbury, at Vega, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 23rd and 24th, 1908. Trains will be met at Roxbury on Tuesday, Sept. 22nd. A cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth is extended, especially to ministers of our faith and order, to meet with us.

V. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THERE will be a two days meeting of the Woburn Church, Woburn, Mass., Sept. 30th and Oct. 1st, 1908. All brethren and friends are cordially invited.

L. B. FORD.

THE Old School or Primitive Baptist Church of Lexington, N. Y., Lexington Association, has appointed a two days meeting to be held on Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 3rd and 4th, 1908. Ministering brethren and others of our faith and order are cordially invited to attend. As the association is to meet with the Gilboa Church on the Wednesday and Thursday following, perhaps some who expect to at-

tend that can come this way and attend our meeting. To any such I will say, I will provide a way for you from here to Gilboa. The distance is thirteen miles.

FLETCHER MACKEY, Church Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa on the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (7th and 8th) 1908. We cordially invite all who love to meet for the worship of God to meet with us, especially ministering brethren. Those coming on the U. & D. R. R. will be met in the afternoon of the day previous, and if any should be missed take stage to Miss Jennie Leonard's. The Saturday following is our regular monthly meeting, and all who can stop over will be welcome.

Done by order of the church.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

THE Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury will hold a two days meeting on the second Saturday and Sunday in October, (10th and 11th) 1908, at Roxbury, N. Y., commencing on Saturday at 11 o'clock a. m. All who love the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. J. B. SLAUSON.

THERE are a few Old School Baptists in Riverside, Cal., and they have meeting the first and third Sundays in each month, at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

W. D. BALL.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 76. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1908. NO. 19.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FRAGMENTS.

LABORING and heavy laden. Jesus calls all such to come unto him. Many labor who are not heavy laden. They work, perhaps, to the limit of their strength, but they finish their task at the appointed time and its burden is gone. It may require them to work early and late and every day, but when the work of each day is done its load is upon them no longer. They labor, but are not heavy laden. But if one while engaged in a task that must be done becomes lame or maimed or blind, and can only accomplish a part of that work, the unfinished part still rests upon him, and is accumulating every day; and if he finally becomes unable to work at all, the whole task is upon him still, and if not accomplished will press him down to ruin. He still works and struggles, but in vain; he is laboring and heavy laden.

This is the case and condition of a poor, sensible sinner under the felt condemnation of the holy law of God. He learns by a sad experience that by the works of the law no man can be justified. His inability to do the law does not remove or lessen his responsibility. By the law has come to him the knowledge of sin, and the knowledge that it abounds unto death. The law measures him, and he comes short. There never has been one thus measured that did not come short, but Jesus. Now to every one thus laboring and heavy laden Jesus says, "Come unto me," "and I will give you rest." This is not a proposition made by the dear Savior to a poor, trembling sinner, that he may take it into consideration and decide whether he will obey it. It is not as though Jesus had said, If you will come unto me I will give you rest. This is the work of Jesus we are considering, not the work of the sinner. The sinner does not know the meaning or power of these precious words until they are fulfilled in him, as we do not know anything about the sun until his rays reach us.

What a surprise it always is to the heavy laden sinner when he finds his burden gone and his poor soul at rest. It is always unexpected. He had never thought of it that way; he never expected deliverance except through some work he might by grace be enabled to do. Now he has done nothing good, nothing

to merit the esteem or favor of God, and yet he is at rest and rejoicing in the Lord, and desires to praise his holy name. These words of the dear Savior may not have come to his mind, but their power has been felt in his soul, and now there is a blessed meaning in them to him.

The work of salvation is done while we are hidden in the cleft of the Rock and covered with the Lord's hand, as Moses was. The dear Savior's words to us always tell what has already been done for us and experienced by us. When the blind man, whose eyes Jesus had opened, was asked, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" he said, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?" Jesus did not say, Go to such a place, or do such a thing, and you shall see him, but he pointed him back to what he had already experienced, and said, "Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee." Moses could not see the Lord's face, could not see the Lord coming toward him, but could see his back parts. We cannot see or know what the Lord will do to-morrow, but are shown what he has already done. The rainbow is seen in the cloud after the storm has passed by.

"TAKE my yoke upon you; and learn of me." Those who have been called by the dear Savior into his gospel rest are prepared for gospel teaching. "They shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." —John vi. 45. Jesus teaches as no other man ever taught. He puts his law into the mind and writes it in the heart; they must, therefore, think about it, even in the midst of all worldly care, and they must love it, though it crosses the desires of the flesh. Throughout all their lives in the gospel day Jesus is saying to them, "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." When they try to learn of the world, and seek worldly wisdom, they find death there—death to every spiritual comfort. "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." But when they are made desirous to learn of Jesus they find rest to their souls, even though made destitute of worldly things; and when they experience this sweet spirit of obedience, and are enabled to rest in the Lord, they feel that all thanks and praise are due to his own blessed name, who has so kindly and mercifully worked in them to will and to do of his good pleasure. How wonderful it is that no living soul, when exercised by and manifesting the meek and lowly spirit of Christ, ever feels any disposition to claim any credit to himself for this, but wonders at the condescending goodness of the Lord to such a sinful being, and is humbly thankful to his most holy name.

ELDER R. C. Leachman, of Virginia, once told me of a peculiar dream he had when he was exercised about baptism, and seeking assurance as to which was the true church. Elder Samuel Trott was then serving a few scattered churches of the Primitive order, while popular preachers were preaching to large congregations of the New School. Mr. Leachman liked the preaching of Elder Trott, but the question would often arise in his mind, Could so few be right and so large a number be wrong? One night in a dream he saw large fields of wheat, and men with cradles cutting it down. He admired the large fields and the fine appearance of the wheat standing so erect; but when he took some of the fine appearing heads of wheat in his hand he found no grain, only chaff. Then he

looked more particularly at an old man whom he had noticed gathering with an old-fashioned reap-hook or sickle some scattered stalks of wheat in various fields. He observed that the heads of wheat which he was reaping were hanging down, and as he took some of them in his hand he found they were well filled with sound and excellent wheat. When he awoke he had no longer any doubt as to where the true church was. He was soon after baptized by Elder Trott. I was favored to travel some with brother Leachman, and to hear him preach many times, and I think I never heard a more powerful preacher nor a more eloquent speaker.

THE rocks were smitten by Moses to give the children of Israel drink. The first was in Rephidim, about two and a half months after they had departed out of Egypt. (Exodus xvi. 1; xvii. 1–7.) The second was in Kadesh, in the desert of Zin, nearly forty years after that event. The first was before they came to Sinai, and before the Lord's first message was given them from Sinai by Moses, which was in the third month after their departure from Egypt. The second was after the death of Miriam, and but a short time before the death of Aaron (Numbers xx. i. 29,) and of Moses.

In the first instance the Lord stood upon the rock in Horeb, and at his command Moses smote the rock and water came out. The apostle Paul says, They "did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ."—1 Cor. x. 4. The apostle here evidently sets forth the truth that Jesus was with the church in the wilderness, supplying all their needs. I do not think we are to understand the apostle to indicate that the literal rock followed them, nor that the water flowing from that rock literally continued to follow them during all their forty years journey. If this had been the case they would not have thirsted in Kadesh, and complained again because there was no water there. As the rock was smitten by Moses, so Christ was presented in that figure as smitten by the law, showing the only way of salvation and the only source of supply for those who thirst for the water of life. The smitten Rock is the only way of salvation for those who lived before Christ suffered in the flesh, as well as for those in the gospel dispensation. To show this the rock in Horeb was smitten by Moses at the beginning of the wilderness journey. But Moses does nothing in smiting this first rock to bring upon him the rebuke of the Lord; for his work as a leader is not to stop here, but to continue nearly forty years.

The smiting of the second rock, in Kadesh, is of special import, for something more is to be presented here than was shown in the first rock. The forty years during which the Lord had declared that the children of Israel should wander in the wilderness were nearly expired, and the leadership of Moses must end in such a way as to show the work of the law fulfilled, and the law removed from over them, never to appear against them any more.

"Then came the children of Israel, * * * into the desert of Zin, in the first month: and the people abode in Kadesh, and Miriam died there, and was buried there."—Numbers xx. 1. And there was no water for the congregation, and the people murmured, as they did, and have always done, on every occasion of disappointment, and the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, "Take the rod, and gather

thou the assembly together, thou and Aaron, thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give to the congregation and their beasts drink. And Moses took the rod from before the Lord, as he commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock; and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly: and the congregation drank, and their beasts also. And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them."

The fault of Moses was that he was angered with the people at the waters of strife, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips, and therefore, the psalmist said, it went ill with him. (Psalms cvi. 32, 33.) He claimed the power for himself and Aaron, instead of ascribing it unto the Lord. He is thus shown to be a sinful man, and from this time he is made to know that he cannot take the people over Jordan. His work is done in having brought them thus far, as the work of the law is finished in bringing the Lord's people to Christ. (Gal. iii. 24.) The rock smitten represents Christ crucified. Its work ends there; it cannot take one over into the gospel land. The work is taken up here by Joshua, who had not departed out of the tabernacle of Moses while the Lord was talking with him. (Exodus xxxiii. 11.) Joshua represents Jesus, risen from the dead. He was with Moses during the giving of the law and during all the journey through the wilderness.

Moses greatly desired to go over Jordan, but he could not, because he must set forth the law in its power and work and limits. When he urged that he might see "that goodly mountain, and Lebanon," the Lord commanded him to speak no more of this matter. He looked from Pisgah over all the land of Canaan, and he sang of gospel truth. (Deut. xxxii.) Then he died, and the Lord buried him, and no man knoweth where. (Deut. xxxiv. 6.) His eye was not dim at the moment of death, nor his natural force abated. So the law does not grow weak gradually and lose sight and strength gradually, but at the moment of its death its sight is as keen as ever to see the least infraction of the law, to see the least sin, and its strength to bring to justice is as great as ever. The devil disputes with Jesus about the body of Moses—about the law, insisting that it is still in force against the Lord's people, that it is still the rule of the christian's life, but the answer of Michael, our Prince, is, "The Lord rebuke thee." Those for whom the Rock was smitten, for whom Jesus died, are no more under the law, but under grace. (Rom. vi. 14.) It is not a natural life, lived according to the law given by Moses, written on tables of stone, in which the Lord's people appear before God, acceptably, but a life of faith upon the Son of God. Christ is our life, and when he shall appear, then we shall appear with him in glory.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., August 19, 1908.

MT. VERNON, Texas, September, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—The greater portion of the time for thirty years or more the SIGNS has been a constant and very welcome visitor to my humble home, often bringing comforting assurance and recalling spiritual instruction, I hope, to my poor heart and tempted, burdened spirit. Many times during these years I have felt to write a few lines, as an attempt to express my appreciation of the spiritual matter contained in editorials and contributions, and of the loving, humble spirit characterizing the different writers, and to throw my mite into the common stock of testimonies of those who know the truth as it is in Jesus. Since my last effort I have several times felt inclined to write something, if only to say that I still find comfort from time to time in perusing the columns of the SIGNS. Sometimes the testimonies therein contained seem wonderful, and I feel thankful to the Lord for the gifts he has set in the body, and again I am indifferent, my mind fruitless as regards spiritual things. Sometimes when I feel some desire of heart in the direction of writing I decide that my poor productions, if published, can but take the room of more spiritual and profitable matter, and the SIGNS cannot suffer loss by my withholding. The paper has long filled a useful place among the Lord's humble poor in this sinful world of ours, going into many homes, no doubt, where there are lovers of truth who do not have the opportunity of attending church meetings and hearing the gospel proclaimed regularly. I do not take the view of periodicals and books among our people as some I have met with; I think, however, and so I feel inclined to do, that when papers are started and books come among us we should apply the rule given us by an inspired writer: "Try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." If any of these seem to be the moving cause in any work we may well withhold encouragement from such a work. Ambition for notoriety, worldly honors or wealth, aspiration to leadership, desire for vainglory, &c., in fact anything short of a desire for the spiritual welfare of Zion, the propagation of sound doctrine and to promote the peace and fellowship of God's people on sound principles, and that in that meek and humble spirit that characterized our Lord and Master, should not be encouraged, but rather discouraged by those who sincerely desire to follow the spirit and teaching of the Master. I think it entirely too much for any paper, preacher or set of preachers, or others, to assume the role of regulator for the church, and in my humble judgment any church, brother or set of brethren, are altogether wrong should they look to men for guidance in matters pertaining to the order of God's house. While we may be justifiable in looking to the gifts in the house, in a sense, we need to look beyond the gifts to the great Giver of all, knowing that every gift comes from him, and it is he must give judgment and understanding even to those gifts he has given us. When a paper goes out to its subscribers it visits many different sections of country; it goes into sections where there is trouble among the brethren, perhaps in places where the church has divided over some point of order. There are always two or more sides to every trouble, and no paper or preacher at a distance can be expected to know the circumstances and surroundings, and therefore ought not to be expected to give advice, and I will say, ought not to be disposed to do so

until after a thorough investigation of the matter, and then not to publish the trouble broadcast among the brotherhood, for we are perhaps all more or less inclined to take sides, and often without the knowledge of the matter that we should have before rendering an opinion. I have often heard it remarked: I object to religious periodicals among the Baptists, because they spread and promote discord and strife among us. My answer generally is: There is not a blessing conferred upon us poor, sinful creatures but we more or less abuse, and I think this is no more true of periodicals and books than of many other blessings. Because some abuse or misuse the blessing of correspondence and interchange of thought through the medium of books and papers, is not a good reason why we should have no medium of correspondence at all. As before stated, many of the "little ones" of our Master's house find much comfort and instruction through this medium who, for aught we know, must but for this medium do without. I will here relate a circumstance that came under my observation some years ago. There was a man living in the town of Longview, Texas, a photographer by trade, who was for a number of years identified with the New School Baptists. Becoming dissatisfied with them because he was an Old School Baptist in principle, he left them and became a member of the Old School Baptist Church, about four miles distant from his home. He soon after became a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which as he read he forwarded to his mother, an aged lady whose home was in the State of Louisiana. This lady knew nothing of the Old School Baptists, and received her first information of the sect everywhere spoken against through the SIGNS. Though at first somewhat opposed, she soon saw and confessed that the SIGNS was contending for the doctrine the Scriptures taught, and was in strict harmony with her own experience. Thus she wrote to her son, and expressed a longing desire and hope to yet have the privilege of coming out of Babylon and of having a home with the believing children of God. Through her solicitation and that of her son (she being old and feeble at this time) the pastor of the church made an appointment near where the sister lived, and two or three of the members accompanied him, and having been previously instructed by the church, those members had the sister relate her experience, which was very satisfactory, and she was received, and baptized the following day. This was the first Old School Baptist preaching she had ever listened to, she told us. In the relation of her experience she said that in her youth, shortly after she received a hope, she united with the Methodist order, but in a short time became dissatisfied with what was called their mode of baptism; searching the Scriptures convinced her that immersion was the mode of the primitive church, so she changed her home and took up her abode with the Missionary or New School Baptists, but she was not long in finding out that this was not a home for her. She was without the knowledge for several years that there was any organized body or church of her faith. At the time of her baptism she was nearly seventy years of age. Not many months after this she was blessed with the privilege of visiting her son and the church and participating in the communion service, which seemed to be a great comfort and joy to her.

There are many who have the privilege of regular attendance upon the monthly

services of the church to whom our sound periodicals come as welcome messengers, containing as they often do spiritual communications from many different States, that seem to draw us closer together in the bonds of love and fellowship. But how good and highly appreciated must the visits of those spiritual communications be to those who are in the providence of God denied the happy privilege of church meetings, and of hearing the proclamation of the gospel; I think one must have an experience in this situation to be able to appreciate it.

Dear brethren, I have just followed the wanderings of my mind in penning these lines. Most of what I have written was not in my mind when I began, and now I am unable to judge as to whether it is profitable matter for the SIGNS, but have a mind to submit it to you. If you cast it aside all will be right with me.

I am, I hope, your brother in bonds,

H. B. JONES.

MATTOON, Ill., April 12, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I am inclosing a letter I received some time ago from Elder Keene. It has done me much good, and I would like to share it with others. I have obtained his permission to send it to you.

W. N. SPITLER.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, Jan. 30, 1908.

WESLEY N. SPITLER—DEAR BROTHER IN THE COVENANT ORDERED IN ALL THINGS AND SURE:—All day long I have been letter-writing, and now it is night. Though I have written upon various subjects, amidst them all I had another train of thoughts, being upon my own peculiar personal pathway. However paradoxical it may appear, I was thinking upon many subjects at the same time. Concerning the one peculiar to myself, in the midst of it the words came again and again:

> "His purposes will ripen fast,
> Unfolding every hour;
> The bud may have a bitter taste,
> But sweet will be the flower."

I remembered how comforting they had been to me some months ago, and to-day they were again soothing and cheering. The Lord knows our needs, and to-day I have felt I very much needed those consolations which only the Lord can give. This afternoon I looked up for a moment from my writing and saw the snow falling down upon the earth, then the words in Isaiah lv. 10, 11, flowed into my heart: "As the rain cometh down, and the snow, from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." This was satisfying, and my soul feasted upon it. In a few moments I contemplated the doctrine of God our Savior. I looked at the whole testimony of the Scriptures of truth, and in my faith my heart said, "Thy word is settled in heaven."—Psalms cxix. 89. Not one thing that the Lord has spoken shall be frustrated, for "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations."—Psalms xxxiii. 11. In the twinkling of an eye I reviewed his word to my soul, upon which he hath caused me to hope, and I was strengthened, my hope abounded and I could feel, I shall yet praise him, for he is the health of my countenance and my God.

"My conflicts are oft so severe,
I cannot tell where they will end,
Till Jesus, my Captain, draws near,
To act the kind part of a friend.
He shews me that all shall end well,
His blood is my prevalent plea,
And this to his glory I tell,
He saved a sinner like me."

The apostle Peter had need of the intercession of the Author and Finisher of his faith, that his faith should not fail, and so have I. Innumerable discouragements from within and without so beset my steps that I feel I should fall by the way only that the Lord, I hope, is himself my Rock and Fortress, my strong Tower, into which I run and am safe. Some professors of the name of Christ get along in an easy-going style; there are no intimations that they have any felt need of God and of Christ; they can manage their own affairs, and find no insurmountable difficulties to impede their steps. It is not so with me. He with whom we have to do (Heb. iv. 13,) is not a myth, a something conjured up in our carnal, sickly imagination, but I believe that he is (Heb. xi. 6); the pure, the just, gracious, almighty One whom I so much need, and whom in some mysterious, gracious way (although I am a poor sinner) I am drawn unto, and in my heart I worship, and whose loving-kindnesses are more precious than all things else. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."—John i. 18. O thus it is, as revealed in Jesus, that I know him, and long for more and more intimacy with God. I am that foolish and sinful I have need every day to have that intimacy with him in his forgiveness. I long for that knowledge that his blood was shed for me, and have need to be nourished by his doctrine and encouraged by his precious promises. O let such communion, such intimacy, be mine, and whom shall I envy? Then I can sing,

"More happy, but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven."

I have just glanced over your letter again, and you tell of periods of destitution when, as far as you could discern, the marks of God's grace were lacking. Ah, well I know such times, and also well know that only the kindness of the Lord can lift me out of them. It is well for us to distinguish between what is the grace of God in us and what is not. For instance, the narration of the heart's depravities, the infidelities, seditions and heresies that infest mankind is no evidence of the grace of God; there are manifold reprobates in the world who could tell the dismal, God-dishonoring story of iniquity. What then is the narrative betokening the grace of God? O that which declares one to be called by his grace is that when under the pressure of the heart's vilenesses, when buffeted by temptations, when plagued with infidelities, that we are moved toward God, to sigh and mourn unto him, that we loathe ourselves in our own sight because of these abominations, that we blush before the Lord and our aching hearts entreat him to have pity upon us, to shew us his forgiveness, and that in his mercy he would deliver us from all the ungodliness so hatefully felt within us. Yes, our sighing hearts yearn for the blessing of Jesus ever to be ours in turning us from our iniquities. (Acts iii. 36.) The grace of God teacheth us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. Those who are not born of God can treat sin as though it were a trifle, and revel in its pleasures, but the grace of God will move us to turn from our transgressions. (Isaiah lix. 20.) Surely

we loathe them, and would flee from them. Some professors of the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ speak of their disinclination to read the Scriptures, they have no time to do so, that it is no use, for when they do they do not understand them. They mention all this as though it were sufficient excuse for their conduct. Any unregenerate person might say the same. But, my dear brother, do we know what it is to bemoan our indifference, hardness and worldliness? Do we pray to the Lord, or even sigh to have a heart to pray that he would arouse us from our lethargy, to revive our souls, to so animate us by his gracious power that we may find a sacred pleasure in the things of Christ? Fleshly lusts war against the soul, shall I indulge them? Shall I have intercourse with them? Shall I take them to my bosom? O if I do I shall find I have taken poisonous vipers to my breast. Have I not known that fleshly lusts make havoc of my peace and communion with the Lord? By them I am plunged into darkness and sore distress. Ah, yes, too well I know that if I am drawn away by fleshly lusts it is not long before I am in straits, in dismal, vile captivity, and my heart cries out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" How affectionately the apostle Peter presents the gracious counsel of the gospel; he says, "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul."—1 Peter ii. 11. Our way is as though we were journeying through a foreign land, through the enemy's country. On all sides and in every shape our enemies make their appearance; they lie in ambush to entrap our steps; with fair promises and alluring appearances the pleasures of sin would impede our journey, draw us aside from the paths of righteousness, and when enticed and held in their grasp we find them wretched tormentors; for fleshly lusts war, not in behalf of, ah no, but against the soul. Abstain from fleshly lusts. O where is the power to do so? O God, have mercy upon me, and save me, that I may not drink of the waters of iniquity; let me not taste sin's dainty morsels. May my conversation be as becometh the gospel. Am I not thine, hast thou not loved and chosen and redeemed me, hast thou not called me unto thyself, and am I not a pilgrim to the city that thou hast prepared for thine own? O then, my God, for Jesus' sake have pity upon me and guard me, and so bless me that I may abstain from all pollutions, and that I may be enabled to yield myself unto thee as one that is alive from the dead.

There, my dear brother, I will close. By what I have penned you know something of my own heart in things pertaining to God, and as in water face answereth to face, so I trust your heart is companionable with mine.

I am your brother, affectionately in Christ Jesus,

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

[We think brother Spitler did well to forward this excellent letter for publication. As we have read it our own heart has been compelled sweetly to respond. We know something of the depths of Satan, and we trust that we also know something of delivering grace. Here is the gospel that grace reigns over sin, and that where sin abounded grace much more abounds. There is indeed no glory to grace in our sin, but there is glory to grace, in that our sins are overcome by it.—C.]

PSALMS XLVI. 4.

"THERE is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High."

The river we understand to set forth that pure stream that flows from the throne of God and the Lamb. While the things of the kingdom of our God flow each way, yet we do not understand that the river spoken of ever flows but the one way, and that is, coming down from God out of heaven. It says "river," one river, but "streams;" this river I understand to embrace all that God has treasured in Christ for his people, and, proceeding from the throne of God, is pure even as he is pure; nothing to pollute it, for this river is composed of the attributes of our God, as love, mercy, goodness, peace, forgiveness, grace, eternal life and all that is embraced in it. This river is free, the gift of God, "the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God;" one river, but many streams. Each stream reaches to every thirsty subject of God's love and mercy, for "Blessed are they [right now] which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." I have no reason to believe but there is a subject of grace for each and every stream that proceeds from this one river; in other words, God does not send forth a stream in expectation of possibly finding some one, "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow, from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."—Isaiah lv. 10, 11. "I have purposed it, I will also do it," and the ways of God are eternal, so it is according to his eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus before the world was, so the streams shall find the subjects chosen in Christ, as the river is pure so are the streams, and God's people know this when the effect of the stream begins its work. While the stream is pure, there is so much of the flesh in evidence that we poor, finite creatures would like to help it along, and some of us would have Bible studies, teachers' helps, Sunday Schools, tracts, prepared sermons, missions of various sorts, with religious instruction of the young; none of this in the pure river, nor are any of them in the foundations of the city of our God that John saw and wrote about in Revelation. That city had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel; and the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and that foundation of the wall was laid by One that is mighty in counsel, wisdom and knowledge, and did in no wise fail in any portion of its construction, or in necessary material; the flesh or carnal reason will have no place to add to or take from that which hath already been laid, and we as followers of Jesus Christ have no right to go anywhere, but to the foundations (apostles) for our instruction in righteousness, and whatever we do not find in the testimony as given us in the New Testament we are to reject; as I say, when first we are reached by the streams of God's mercy we want to tell all around what a dear Savior we have found, and the way of salvation is so clear to us that we feel we will be able to tell all the good people around us, but when we tell them of the doctrine: election, predestination, effectual calling, they tell us that

is hard doctrine, and will have nothing to do with it. It is the weakness of the flesh that causes us to think we may impart some of the blessedness of this stream we have just had revealed to us, but as we get farther up this stream toward the river, we find the stream widens and we have no room for the flesh. John says, "He must increase, but I must decrease." It is as Ezekiel in being led through the waters: they were up to his ankles, then to his knees, and further on the water was to his loins, and further it was a river that he could not pass over; for the waters were risen, waters to swim in.

"There shall I bathe my weary soul
In seas of heavenly bliss,
And not a wave of trouble roll
Across my peaceful breast."

No, I calculate when God's people are where the river is risen they are off of their feet and cannot confide in any flesh as a foundation, but as long as they can wade about they will be trusting in it and feel able to stand, or in other words, mix works with grace; they walk about, they stand around and devise ways and means to increase the flow of these streams, but when the river rises and takes them off their feet then they find

"On Christ the solid Rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand."

Ezekiel was brought to return to the brink of the river, and could relate a much better experience than before the river rose on him and he swam in it. The river is pure, the streams are pure, but the flesh is corrupt and seeks out many inventions, not mechanical, but inventions as to how to get back to where it was before we fell in Adam God knew what was in man, and placed the cherubim with a flaming sword to keep the way of the Tree of life; the many inventions of men are to find some process by which they may attain to this Tree of life without the atonement of the Savior; they are willing he shall help a little, but not do it all. This river, this pure and holy river and streams are unlike the natural rivers and streams; the streams naturally go to make the rivers, and the rivers to the sea. When we are troubled about what sinners we are in the sight of God, and are brought to the ends of the earth, and ready to perish, then does this river put forth its streams and we are found, as was Jacob, in a waste howling wilderness; so we see the flowing is in an entirely different way from nature. Nature and grace are always opposite. I heard a voice behind me, "This is the way, walk ye in it," and the feet that were going the downward way to destruction were turned by the grace of God to follow this stream toward the river, to seek an heavenly city, whose builder and maker is God, and the testimony of the word is, "He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." So we can assure our souls if we have partaken of the streams we shall be brought into the fullness of the river. The city of God which is made glad is the dwelling-place of the Most High; God dwells in the high and holy place and inhabiteth eternity, and also with him that is of an humble heart and contrite spirit, ye are the temple of the Holy Ghost. "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." This is the city of God that is made glad, and rejoices in the Lord, and has no confidence in the flesh.

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Aug. 7, 1908.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., Aug. 27, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Through the mercies of God I continue to this day. How good the Lord is to us poor sinners. We are but few in number, but that few have never been crushed by the many who would destroy us. Why is this? Surely not because of the strength of the few, but because of the strong arm of their King. The blessed gospel land in which they live was given to them by him for an everlasting inheritance. They got it not in possession by their own sword, nor did their own arm save them, but it was because He had a favor unto them. This forever cuts off the works of righteousness which we have done or may do and honors the King in his holy reign of grace. Thus each member of the holy family looks upward from the earth and all powers of the flesh and looks to him who has bought them by his own precious blood. How good the prophet must have felt when he saw Jesus by the eye of faith enthroned and looking upon the travail of his soul in perfect satisfaction. This could not have been if any whom he had redeemed should ever sink down beneath the quenchless fires of hell. Such a thought is too God-dishonoring for an established christian to believe. So perfect is this redemption that it needs not the efforts of men nor the communications of angels to add anything thereto. Surely salvation is complete in the Lord; he, as the divine executor of God's eternal will, has done all things well and fulfilled that sacred document to the very letter and in the Spirit of God; therefore it is perfect, for he did it by the fullness of the Godhead that dwelt in him in all of its fullness. The fullness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily, therefore there was not one of the divine attributes of the Godhead that was not in him in all of its fullness in all his work in this world. At the same time there was not an attribute that God had given to man that was not in Him as a man, therefore he was the God-man, the Mediator; he felt all the infirmities of the one and possessed the eternal power of the other. Now he is a fit High Priest, who has offered up the blood of the new covenant. This blood is holy and perfectly acceptable to the whole Godhead, and cannot be offered again. This was not so with the blood of the old covenant; that must be offered once every year to make atonement for the sins of Israel. In that old covenant there were changes in the priesthood, and some of them were without faith, and therefore they could not please God only in a legal way. The High Priest of this new covenant is without any guile; he is so full of faith in God as to be the very author and finisher of it. Not one word of his ever fell helpless to the ground, even though it were the great Beelzebub who was commanded by him. Sins were forgiven and all manner of diseases were healed at his word, and deputies returned to the judges and said, "Never man spake like this man." How wonderfully great is our King, but he does not stop at this. In the midst of life he had power to die, he could lay down his life of himself; then in the midst of death he had power to live, for of himself he took that life again. When he arose from the dead he became the first-fruits of them that slept. Just as the virtue and promise of the harvest was in the first sheaf as it was waved before the Lord, even so was the virtue and power of the resurrection of the dead in Jesus Christ when he arose so acceptably to the Father. His acceptance at God's right hand is a blessed assurance of the resurrection and

acceptance of all the household of the saints. As the acceptance of that first sheaf was blessed to Israel by the continual remembrance thereof, even so, and more so, is the intercession of our High Priest blessed to Israel to-day. He has sent his Spirit to continually dwell with us, therefore the same Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead dwells to-day in all who have been born of God, and that Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead shall also quicken their mortal bodies and fashion their vile body like unto his glorious body. That Holy Spirit is to-day dwelling with the saints, and it is his holy work in the economy of salvation to take of the things of the Father and show them unto us, and to bring all things to our remembrance that the Lord has said unto us. Therefore he is our divine Guardian, and ministers to us daily of the things which are given to us in our Father's will, giving them to us in the earnest thereof. The continual ministering of this earnest is bringing us nearer and nearer by faith to the full assurance of that which our Lord hath given us in his Son Jesus Christ. Thus we see the whole Godhead working together in the same holy cause to bring all the elect of God into that blessed and sacred oneness with him in his eternal glory. There sin, strife, disputings, nor anything to disturb the peace of God's people shall ever be known, but love, joy and unity in our dear Savior shall be ours, and we shall be like him. There we shall bring forth the royal diadem and crown our Savior Lord of all. This is the heritage of the saints, and they shall see it and be glad. Praise ye the Lord.

Your brother in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

MOLINO, Mo., Aug. 6, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—For some time I have had thoughts about Sunday Schools, and brother C. K. Haines' (of Princeton, Ky.,) article in June 15th issue causes my thoughts to be so revived that I would like to express them just as they are; not that I think myself able to instruct any one, or to comfort any, neither do I insist that you publish my expression; at the same time if you see the least indiction of consoling words in my letter and feel disposed to publish it, I have no objection. If I am wrong in my thoughts I pray to be righted, and so long as I have a different thought about Sunday Schools to that of brother Haines I will express my thoughts with loving-kindness toward him, so as not to offend. I appreciated his letter, but I differ with him in his expression that he disapproves of permitting children to attend Sunday School: "Are you not bidding the Sunday School idol Godspeed when you permit your children to attend?" is one of his inquiries, on page 362, which I have in mind to write about.

I have no faith in Sunday Schools; I have no love for Sunday Schools, neither have I any hope of an improvement in my boy by the Sunday School worker, neither have I any fear of him being injured by Sunday Schools. I would, I think, rejoice if he never wants to attend. I shall have a natural thankful feeling toward my Sunday School neighbors if they will respect my authority over my own son, and not exercise their influence to cause him to do anything or go anywhere contrary to my will; but if they do, and he follows them, even out of the way, I claim no power to prevent it, but I hope I would be reconciled, and I believe I would be, because I know,

brethren and sisters, that even though my son shall be at the farthest extremity of waywardness or utterly swallowed up by false doctrine, when the Lord our God calls him he will come; he will come all the way out of his lost condition; he will not come a minute sooner by any of my efforts to prevent him from attending Sunday School. I believe that if it is Arminianism to send children to Sunday School it is also the same if we prevent them from going. I do not feel disposed at all to send my boy to Sunday School, because I think it wrong for a father to encourage his child to go in anything that he for conscience's sake could not go in himself, and if he were to ask me about the matter, I hope I would answer him according to the dictation of my heart; if so, I could not, no, never, say, I am willing for you to go; God forbid that I say, You shall not go; but that I would ask the Lord to take care of my boy. In my estimation Sunday School is nothing to help or to fight; nothing for our help or for our hurt. It does not cause an increase in the number of spiritual births, neither does it decrease the number. Things are going right, for all that seems dangerous to us in this world cannot do more than the Lord sees fit for them to do. If my child is to be born again, God only knows what he must pass through; he does know how, when and where he will reveal the blessing of hope of salvation by grace alone, and at that time and place, if my son has been led off by such things as Sunday Schools, or which are vain, I think I see him wilted with shame—ashamed of the way he had been going, and thanking the Lord for the gift of real repentance, the gift of sweet hope and spiritual understanding, which he would have to acknowledge was not taught him in Sunday School, and indeed it could not be.

Please excuse me for not keeping my thoughts to myself, and remember me as a lonely Old Baptist.

IRA S. FISHER.

[WE much admire and fellowship brother Fisher's faith in the sovereignty of God, and the certainty of all his elect being called by grace, but we know brother Fisher would not allow his son to frequent the saloon and gambling den upon the belief that God is able to take care of him there; why allow him to attend Sunday School, where the name of God is blasphemed? Death itself could not hinder God's purpose in saving and calling his people, but this does not relieve us of our watchcare over and careful guidance of our children that they become not entangled in the meshes of the world's delusions and snares. Knowing brother Fisher as we do, we are of the opinion that his mind on the subject will change by the time his son is old enough to attend Sunday School.—K.]

TOONE, Tenn., March 31, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS WHO ARE IN CHRIST:—I desire to write to you again of the precious promises of our Savior, King Jesus, whom God has appointed heir of all things, whom God hath highly exalted with his own right hand to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins, and such mercy cannot be obtained in any other way, and this good work is going on day and night all over our land and country, Jesus Christ our blessed Savior and King is teaching his people by his Spirit to know him, and granting them repentance and forgiveness of sins, for it is the goodness of God that leadeth them to repentance, for he

said, "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance;" also he said, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit." There is no other way to learn them, and there is but one way to worship God, and that is in spirit and in truth, for Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." I have learned this in my suffering. There are people in this world who worship God in spirit and in truth, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. God said, "A book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." Dear ones, if you have ever at any time had one good thought in your heart on the name of God, heaven is your home when you are called away from this world of sin, sorrow and suffering. Children of God, take encouragement, and press forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, for he will come soon and will take his children home. Now listen to Christ, what he said by David's mouth: "O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not to thee; but to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight."—Psalms xvi. 2, 3. This Scripture causes my poor soul to rejoice in Christ Jesus with great consolation; all of my hope is centered in Christ Jesus, and I "can't help it," and all of my dependence and confidence are in him; I have no confidence in myself, but it is all in Jesus of Nazareth, the blessed Son of God, our dear Redeemer, to whom I give all the glory, honor and power. Amen.

Dear editors, you can do what you please with this. I am in the hand of the Lord, and he will dispose of me as he pleases. The Lord has shown me much suffering for his name's sake. I feel unworthy to trouble the SIGNS with my writing, but I know the editors can burn my letters if they see proper, so farewell. This may be the last; God knows.

In hope of a brighter day in the Lord,

S. M. BUTLER.

BARING, Missouri.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am alone to-day, and very lonely, and feel that I want to write a few lines to the dear readers of our precious paper. I am isolated from any of our faith, and not one to speak to of this way that is everywhere spoken against, but I feel sure that it is the way, because Christ said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life," and I am sure that the Old Predestinarian Baptists are the only ones who believe it; the others think they must work their way; they think they are saving the world for Christ, but the Father fixed all that before man had being upon the earth. He tells us in his word to let them alone. The time was when I did not believe in the predestination of all things, but I always did believe he predestinated all things pertaining to his kingdom. About thirty years ago I was talking to our dear pastor (who has long since gone to his reward) about predestination of all things pertaining to his kingdom, when he said, "You think that all things pertaining to the earth come by chance, do you?" I never was so surprised in my life. Soon I said, "Well, brother Jackson, I do not know what I believe about that." He

said, "God rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand." I had read this Scripture many times, but failed to see in it what I did then. I have stopped believing in what man can do, I know that without our Savior we can do nothing. I look at the whole human family as a little lump of clay, as helpless as a babe, capable of doing good only as God works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. When we say we will do this or that, He tells us to say, If God wills, we will do this or that. I was like the eunuch, how could I understand except some one guide me? But before one can learn, or be guided, he must have a hearing ear and an understanding heart; he must be quickened or born again before he can understand spiritual things, or before he is a subject of gospel address. I know that if I am saved at all, it will not be through any good that I have done or can do, but through his pity and his mercy he saved me by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

Dear brethren, I started to thank my dear sister in the flesh (Mrs. Belle Frazee) for sending me the SIGNS as a pleasant surprise and as a present from her kind hand. Dear sister, I want all to know how you have favored me. You know that I am poor and weak. You know that I am lame.

(MRS.) E. J. GROVE.

EUFAULA, Okla.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—As I am in receipt of your notice of my negligence, inclosed find post-office money order, together with some of my thoughts of the teaching of the Scriptures as given by inspiration of God. Notwithstanding my negligence, I am much more attached to the position of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES than any other paper I have seen advocating the primitive teachings of the Scriptures of eternal truth. I admire much the principle or spirit as advocated by the SIGNS, that we are not all supposed to see and understand just alike, technically, but are all bound together in love one toward another. "See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." If ye love me ye will keep my commandments, and this is my commandment, that ye have love one toward another. If these things abound in us: love, faith, hope and charity, we are not barren nor unfruitful, but if these be not in us we are blind, and cannot see afar off. If we do differ in our opinion and judgment we cannot differ in the spirit of love, for he that loveth is born of God, and he that loveth him that begetteth, loveth also him that is begotten of him. How can we say we love God, whom we have not seen, and become offended at or hate our brethren whom we have seen? These things ought not so to be. If we have envy, strife and contention are we not carnal (natural)? But God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

In closing my few scattering thoughts I will say that I have not taken pains to look up quotations of Scripture I referred to, but hope I have not misrepresented in such a way as to mislead or wrongfully impress any one. I also feel like making this statement in view (to me) of the increasing cunning craftiness, chicanery and audacity of the opposers of truth, and the success they seem to be having in misleading the ignorant (uninformed) lovers of the truth as it is in

Jesus. I feel that in the near future I would like to write for your consideration upon the subject of foreordination and predestination. To me there is couched in the unfurling of the true doctrine of God the battle-ground and slaughtering-place of the enemy of the lovers of truth, who have been led captive by the devil at his will.

I will now close; do as you think best with this. Farewell.

Yours in hope and faith,

F. B. MORRIS.

SYRACUSE, Kan., Aug. 13, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find one dollar to pay for the SIGNS for six months; also change my address, Mrs. T. M. Grissom, Syracuse, Kan., to Twin Falls, Idaho.

I would like to ask through the SIGNS if there are any readers of the paper who know of any Baptists in or near Tiwn Falls? If so I would be very thankful if they would write me. I have had the pleasure of being near enough to attend our church meetings ever since I have been a member, also of having the dear brethren visit us and have meetings in our humble little home. It is hard to say good-by to those who have counted me faithful, but the Lord has blessed me above all I could ask. I want to be submissive to his will, and if it is my lot to be cast alone in the world to mourn as the dove, I will still praise his holy name, for he is my hope, my salvation, my all.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) T. M. GRISSOM.

WE are in receipt of a notice of the death of Elder J. S. Corder, which occurred August 26th, 1908. A suitable obituary will appear later.—ED.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder F. W. Keene.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Conference to the churches composing the associations with whom we correspond. We wish you health and prosperity in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

ANOTHER year has passed since we last corresponded with you, and we trust we are not unmindful of the mercies of the Lord, but are moved in our souls to say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." You with us, dear brethren, so well know that without the kindness of the Lord we could not continue, for the pathway is so beset with temptations, and we find ourselves unequal for the daily pilgrimage toward the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. We have a pitiful, sin-pardoning God; this is encouraging to us poor, unworthy worms. To him our cries ascend in our Jesus' worthy name to obtain that mercy, and find that grace to help in time of need. Upheld by the Lord we hold on our way, and we are ever experiencing that all our sufficiency and times of refreshing flow from him who is the Fountain of Israel. While now speaking to you, beloved saints of the Lord, several portions of the holy Scriptures are brought into our thoughts; the apostle Paul says, "Wherefore also we pray always for you."—2 Thess. i. 11. "Finally, brethren, pray for us."—2 Thess. iii. 1. "Pray one for another."—James v. 16. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee."—Psalms cxxii. 6. This is no irksome task, but sacred heart-service to pour out our supplications to our God for each other. A very expressive prayer is recorded in Psalms xxviii. 9: "Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them

up for ever." Is it not suitable to us this day? O that our hearts were moved by the Holy Spirit thus to pray. Will not the Lord in very truth do all that is asked for in this prayer? O yes, he will indeed. Then why do we pray to the Lord to do what he has said he will do? To enter into this is to enter into that mystery of divine intimacy between God and his sacred ones. The Lord has said, "It shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer: and while they are yet speaking, I will hear."—Isaiah lxv. 24. He has all prepared, stored up, all in readiness what his chosen ones need, and what in his eternal purpose he will bestow upon them, and how wonderful, effectual are his providences, and the working of his mighty power in their hearts, that bring them to feel their need of his help, and put forth in them fervent yearnings for his graciousness. Thus his people are called by the Lord, "My suppliants."—Zeph. iii. 10. They are drawn near and worship him, fall down and kneel before the Lord their Maker, making entreaties for those mercies of which he only is the fountain. In Ezekiel xxxvi. there are unconditional, new covenant blessings promised. "I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it." Then again he speaks, "Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them." He moves them to solicit these new covenant favors from his bountiful hand.

"Save thy people." Those whom the Lord has loved from eternity, and hath chosen them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, whom he has ransomed from sin and death, from hell and the power of the grave unto himself by the precious blood of his only begotten Son, whom he hath called by his grace unto the fellowship of their dear Redeemer.

"Save thy people." So many are their enemies, so many snares beset their path that they need unnumbered salvations (Psalms lxxi. 15,) all the way through the earth to heaven. Is it not our most sacred happiness to witness the children of God continuing steadfastly in all holy conversation and godliness, walking in the truth, continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and in the breaking of bread and in prayers, and thus shewing forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light? Yes, our prayers to him who heareth prayer shall ascend, O Lord, save thy people. They have need that God's gracious power shall deliver them from every evil work, and preserve them unto his heavenly kingdom. The snares of this wicked world are everywhere ready to entrap their steps and hold them in captivity. They have need to be saved from the indulgence of the carnalities of their flesh, and to be so graciously exercised by the Holy Spirit that they may be found crucifying, and not God-dishonoringly indulging the vile appetites of their sinful nature. Then the saints of God have need to be saved from false teachers, who privily bring in damnable heresies, which like a canker eat away the beauty, fellowship and spiritual health and happiness of the household of God. Surely if we are of God, and truly love the church, the body of Christ, we shall find our hearts sometimes moved to pray, O Lord, "save thy people, and bless thine inheritance." "Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is."—Deut. x. 14. Yet the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. They are his chosen, pe-

culiar treasure. Surely as we behold them in Adam, poor, sinful, mortal, corruptible creatures, we might well inquire, What portion and inheritance can the Lord have in them? But the Lord has predestinated these elect human beings to be conformed unto the image of his dear Son, and with him to be glorified, and they shall eternally glorify Jehovah in eternal glory. Thus in the immortal splendor of that glorified state it is said God has riches of glory in his inheritance in the saints. (Eph. i. 18.) But even now, while on the earth, poor, weak, sinful, mortal, he loves them, owns them as those whom he has apportioned to himself, his inheritance. "Bless thine inheritance." Bless them with peace and gospel fellowship. Let the rain and dew be upon them. O let a plentiful rain be given to confirm thine inheritance when it is weary. (Psalms lxviii. 9.) O for such an outpouring of the Holy Spirit that the inheritance of the Lord might be abundantly fruitful with the fruits of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. O then would all our backbitings, evil speakings, jealousies and everything that is contrary to sound doctrine be crucified and thrust away from among us, and we should be a delightsome land. O dear brethren, do not our hearts long for such an estate as this? May the Lord have pity upon us and cause us to pray one for another, "Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever." "Feed them also." Yes, this petition is in our supplication: that our God would declare himself the Shepherd of his people, and rule them with his own pastoral rod. Ah, even the dear saints sometimes appear as though they had no shepherd. They are scattered in the cloudy and dark day, they become footsore and stumble upon the dark mountains of error, whither they have been drawn aside and have wandered. O Lord, feed them, nourish and cherish them, lead them into thine own green pastures, thy living, cherishing truth, give them pastors after thine own heart, that shall feed the flock with knowledge and understanding. Has not the Lord said, "I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land, neither bear the shame of the heathen any more. Thus shall they know that I the Lord their God am with them, and that they, even the house of Israel, are my people, saith the Lord God. And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God"?—Ezek. xxxiv. 29–31. Our Jesus is this plant of renown, the bread of life. He has the words of eternal life, and much we need his gracious lips to speak those words to us. This world and all its doctrines, and our own fleshly nature, and the temptations of Satan, make our pilgrimage to be as through a famishing land, a land of drought and the shadow of death.

"Bread of heaven, feed us till we want no more." "Lift them up for ever." Who but the Lord can lift them up? No arm but his own gracious, omnipotent arm can raise them on high. When dead in sins he found us, we were sunken exceeding low, but he remembered us in our low estate, and proof of his love we proved, for he quickened our souls into divine life, forgave us our sins and taught us to love his great name. Thus he lifted us up to behold with eyes of faith and love the reconciling, sin-pardoning face of Jesus, our Emmanuel. O that first lifting up was from the gates of death to

hope of life eternal in Christ Jesus. But conflicts, woes and sorrows are in measure (just such measure as the Lord decrees for each one) the portion of believers while they are in the world. We are cast down by our adversities, afflictions and buffetings of Satan, and sometimes in low, low places, in pits and dungeons, or in the deep waters, many of the dear children of God are found. "Again they are minished, and brought low through oppression, affliction and sorrow."—Psalms cvii. 39. Ah, though it be a humbling thing to tell, yet it must be confessed that sometimes some who profess to fear the Lord appear to be sunken low indeed in worldliness, covetousness, buried in earthly cares or follies. The world (earthly things) has its heels upon their necks and is treading them under its feet and burying them in the mire of the earth, and they, as those asleep, know it not. O Lord, awaken thy dear saints, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known, in wrath remember mercy and lift them up to live to thine honor and glory. It is so much needed that the Lord lift us up, that we may be exalted in the sanctification of the truth above the doctrines of men and devils, the heresies of the times. "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury. Thus saith the Lord, I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and Jerusalem shall be called, A city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts, The holy mountain."—Zech. viii. 2, 3. May all our hearts respond, Amen. Then how beautiful is Zion in her glory resplendent, her most fine gold undimmed. Some of our dear kindred in Christ Jesus are cast down, and kept down in low, dismal places through an evil heart of unbelief, and there, buffeted and tried, their days are spent with sighing, in alternate hopes and fears. Do not our hearts go forth in sympathetic longings for these tossed about ones? O Lord, lift up the weak in faith, that they may triumph in the blood and righteousness and that sweet love of the Redeemer, thine only begotten Son. Then they shall come and sing in the heights of Zion, and shout unto God with the voice of triumph. As we look with longing hearts to the exceeding great and precious promises of the gospel we may well cry unto God for their glorious fulfillment. It is in his name our horn is exalted. There is a lifting up day by day, the inward man is renewed day by day. The Lord's gracious ministrations are our stay, and when we draw near our journey's end and come to our dying hour then how blessed it will be, for underneath are the everlasting arms and we shall not sink, for when our soul is in departing (Gen. xxxv. 18,) and our body dies the Lord shall bear us away to everlasting bliss. Blessed departure! "To depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better," and our bodies laid low in their graves. Shall death forever hold them captive and celebrate its victory forever over our bodies, which are "the members of Christ," bought with the price of Jesus' precious blood? (1 Cor. v. 15–20.) Ah never, O no. Our bodies sleeping in the dust shall not remain the everlasting prey of mortality, corruption and death, but he who raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in us. They shall rise again from death, changed, immortal, spiritual, incorruptible, fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus, our ascended Head and Redeemer. This,

dear brethren, shall be the consummation of all our prayers, the crown of our hope. Eternally lifted up above sin and mortality, the bondage of corruption, redeemed unto God, exalted in immortal holiness, we shall bear the image of our heavenly One, the Head of the church. We shall see Jesus face to face, we shall forever reign with him and be in all actualness joint-heirs with him in happiness, in life eternal. Yes, we shall ever in immortal delight dwell with our dear Redeemer, who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and ours shall be the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. O Lord, save thy people, bless thine inheritance, feed them also, and lift them up forever.

FREDERICK W. KEENE, Mod.
JOSEPH F. HALL, Clerk.

(Written by J. T. McCoun.)

The Licking Association of Old School Baptists, now in session with the Mt. Gilead, Church, at Mays Lick, Mason Co., Ky., Sept. 11th, 12th and 13th, 1908, to the churches composing the same sendeth christian salutation.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—For almost a century of time the churches have been sending up messages of love and fellowship, telling of their trials and conflicts, and how weary the journey from year to year as they have been fleeing from this or that enemy, and all the time, like David, expecting to be slain by some pursuing Saul, but some Jonathan, as in David's case, has been knit to them in love. So we are again met, and again as an association we will ask that ye continue the new commandment: "That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."—John xiii. 34.

How are we to measure this love and its wonderful power? It exceeds our richest praise and goes beyond our highest hopes. We cannot by any natural attainment and powers reach its largeness—cannot by human standards analyze or compare it. We cannot thus learn his wondrous way, the firmness of his truth and the riches of his grace.

"He takes his mercy for his throne,
And thence he makes his glories known."

His love has existed from all eternity, and by it we learn the second great commandment: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."—Matt. xxii. 39. We also learn, dear brethren, what great liberty we are called unto, not for any advantages we may take in the flesh, but that we may by the Spirit learn to love and serve one another, and we also learn from our soul's experience how all the law is fulfilled in these great commandments, and if we are led by the Spirit we are not under the law. Paul says, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."—Romans viii. 2. By the working of this law of the Spirit we are made to know how the Father is in Christ, for by this we learn we are condemned sinners and cannot by any words of our own righteousness remove this guilt, but the Father sent forth his Son to dwell among us in the flesh, but without sin, that we through his righteousness should be free from sin, and death should not hold dominion over us, for we see all these taken away in Christ, and we thus see how Christ was in God reconciling us unto him. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the

atonement."—Romans v. 10, 11. We learn also how we are one in Him, and we learn, too, by this that the world may believe that God hath sent his Son. "God is love."—1 John iv. 16. These surely are wonderful things for his pilgrim saints to contemplate through his love and mercy to us. Let us cast all our care on him, and willingly, like John, lean our heads on his breast. Most surely we have our songs in the nighttime.

Let us again go over the words of this new commandment: "That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." It looks like he feared his believing children might not know all the spiritual meaning of this sweet expression: "That ye love one another," so he places the latter clause, "as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." This love is an everlasting love; before we had an existence its provision was made to embrace all the elect, before they had done good or evil. Without variableness or shadow of turning is our Surety, closer, truer than a brother, never leaving or forsaking; yea, dying for us, that we might have life eternal. But so often when left alone, like the ruler, are we asking, What shall we do to inherit eternal life? and have to be taught again and again the true meaning of the love of God and how his commandments are kept. Our Lord is ever ready to turn and look upon us, and piercing through our best intentions and bring us again to know that he ever liveth at the right hand of the Father to make intercession for our sins and short comings. We learn why we forsake and leave the things we do "for the kingdom of God's sake."—Luke xviii. 29. "Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting."—Luke xviii. 30. We do not have to visit the land of Palestine to learn of Him, for he dwelleth in us, and we walk with him, and fill up the measure of suffering under the law. "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body."—2 Cor. iv. 10. To us this is a most sacred communion of spirit in which to go over these memorable events, and in our soul's experience we see the Bethany home, the sea of Galilee with its storm, we have them, and hear the words, It is I, be not afraid. Gethsemane, the cross, the crucifixion, where are grouped about the rabble, the soldiers and the loved ones, his mother, and John his loving disciple. What a touching and memorable picture! Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. It is finished. Thus our souls drink in the full meaning of a complete atonement. His blood and his righteousness, the true God and eternal life. This is the full measure of his love for us, and with all this poured out upon us we ought surely to love one another, as Christ hath loved us. "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world."—1 John iv. 17. "Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen."—1 John v. 21.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.
J. T. McCOUN, Clerk.
T. J. RATLIFF, Assistant Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER J. E. W. Henderson having changed his address from Troy, Ala., to Glenwood, Ala., requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1908.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SEVEN QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

OUR sister, Mrs. J. I. Carter, of Mayfield, Ky., some time since forwarded to us several questions which she desired answered at our convenience. They were questions which she had seen asked and answered elsewhere. One of the number was, "Do you teach the doctrine of eternal justification?" This we made some reply to a few numbers ago. We feel like considering the rest, if the Lord will, at this time.

First question. Do you teach that God from eternity ordained that Adam should eat the forbidden fruit, together with the motives and circumstances by which he (Adam) was coerced to violate the law? In the SIGNS for August 15th there is reprinted an article written in 1856 by Elder Wm. J. Purington which completely covers this very question. We do not know that we should desire to change any expression in that article, or erase anything written there. It seems to us that we need say nothing more than that we believe the Bible teaches that our God from eternity did predestinate all things whatsoever come to pass, and yet so that the accountability of man is not destroyed, nor any excuse afforded him for his sins. All we would say and all we believe concerning this truth is summed up in two discourses of the apostle Peter, recorded in Acts ii. 23, and Acts iv. 27, 28, and all the objections we ever heard alleged against this doctrine that amount to anything worthy of notice are answered in the ninth chapter of Romans, from the eleventh to the twenty-fourth verses. We never have felt like making this doctrine, or any other Bible teaching, a football to strive over in heated debate, but always have desired to receive the doctrine reverently, confessing our inability to enter into all the depths of it, or, for that matter, our inability to enter into the depths of any other principle of the doctrine of God; all of it is too deep for reason's line to sound. We have before this written several times in response to requests with regard to this very truth, and do not feel to do more here than to just state what we believe the Bible does teach regarding it. When men can solve all the difficulties that arise in our finite minds regarding the revealed things of God, such as his foreknowledge, his unchangeability in knowledge and in will, then we may have all the difficulties regarding this doctrine also solved. Any reasoning that would seem to show that the doctrine of the predestination of all things could not be true, would also show the same regarding the foreknowledge and unchangeability of God. We hope always to be content to leave the matter to the revealed will of God, and desire to bow in reverence to his decrees, knowing that they are just and right, and that he is the God of truth. We frankly confess we cannot undertake to solve all the dark things (dark to us poor mortals we mean,) that are to be found in any of the principles of the doctrine of God.

Second question. Do you teach that

Christ died only for such as will be saved? We most emphatically say that this is just what we do understand the Bible to teach. All the types of the old testament prove it, for every sacrifice offered upon Jewish altars was for a specified person or people, and for no others. The angel heralded the name of Jesus, saying, "He shall save his people from their sins." It is inconceivable that were it to be the mission of Christ to die for all mankind, the angel at this notable time should not have said so. The very term, "his people," necessarily implies that there were those who were not his people. Reversing the question and asking, Will all for whom he died be saved? the answer must be equally decided in the affirmative. It is no less true that all for whom he died will finally be saved than it is true that he died only for such as will be saved. It certainly is true that if Christ did indeed die for some who are finally lost, then to some extent he died in vain, and he will not see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. But he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied, is the divine word of promise. How glorifying is this truth to our blessed Lord and how consoling to the lost and justly condemned sinner, who by no means can redeem either himself or his neighbor to God. If indeed Christ did die for any man, that man is secure of all that heaven provides for the dear Redeemer and his people. The apostle to the Gentiles was inspired of God to write these comforting words to the Romans: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." We quote this to emphasize one special truth, viz., that foreknowledge, predestination to be like Christ, calling, justification and glory, all take in just the same persons from beginning to end, no more and no less, and the language of this text also necessarily involves the thought of some who are not included in these glorious purposes of God. There is nothing in all this text for the nonelect. Surely we need not call attention to the fact that justification, one link in this glorious chain, is wrought out only by the death of Jesus Christ, therefore his death was only for such as shall be finally glorified and who were foreknown as his before the world began.

Third question. Do you make a distinction between the death of Christ and the atonement? If so, what distinction? The death of Christ was that by which atonement was made. The word atonement is the same word that is elsewhere translated reconciliation. It signifies at-one-ment. It means bringing that which was alienated to be one, and to dwell together in one. Men were alienated from God by wicked works, by the death of Christ they are brought nigh to God and reconciled to him. It is never said that by the death of Christ God is reconciled to sinners, but that sinners are reconciled to God. His death was the cause, the atonement was the effect. The work of Christ resulted in the atonement, the reconciliation. The payment of the debt releases the debtor. The payment is one thing, the release is another. We are said to be redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. The blood is one thing, the redemption is another; one is the cause and the other the effect.

Fourth question. Do you teach universal or a restricted atonement? It

appears to us that what we have said in reply to the second question fully answers this also. Nothing is surer than this, that universal atonement means universal reconciliation to God and universal salvation in glory. Who shall condemn him for whom Christ died? God will not, the devil cannot and the poor sinner, though he must write many bitter things against himself, still has One who is his Mediator, and therefore he must still hope, as it were, and faith within his heart, when in exercise, will answer every charge which a guilty conscience brings with this one truth, "Jesus died." But the Bible teaches through the lips of the blessed Redeemer himself that some will perish everlastingly, therefore he did not, he could not, have died for them. The election of grace and the atonement are of equal breadth, as regards the number who are embraced in them.

Fifth question. Upon what is man's responsibility predicated? We do not know that we fully understand the thought which led to this question, but we will suggest a few thoughts in reply. One thing is sure, that man is not held accountable to God for his sins upon the ground that to him has been given a free will. It is impossible that a creature could ever be free in any real sense of the word; he is bound on every hand. He did not give himself being, he does not hold himself in being, he did not give himself any of the faculties that may be his, he is not independent nor able to stand alone for one instant of his life. If the reverse of any of these things be true of any being, that being is not a creature, but is self-existent and never began to be, and he who is self-existent and who never began to be is God. The only absolutely free will in all the universe is the will of God. The responsibility of man to God is not then based upon his free will. We do not purpose entering into a discussion of the many deep and intricate questions which have arisen in the minds of men concerning this question, it seems to us enough to say that we owe our existence, and all that we have and are, to our Creator, and that therefore we must be accountable to him and to him alone in all things. It is his right to command his creatures, and it is the duty of creatures to obey. This seems plain to our mind, and we do not feel like going beyond this one great truth in answering this question. We have not found that the Bible gives any other answer than that we are his creatures, and that we owe all to him.

Sixth question. Are the elect children, children before they repent in Christ? They were the elect vessels of mercy, the chosen of God before the world was. But there must be a birth before one can be known as a child of God. We do not find in all the New Testament where any one is called a child of God until after he has come to believe in Christ. It is said that we are the children of God by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The apostles do not address any man as a child of God while yet in nature's darkness. Still further, it is worthy of note that the two words "elect" and "children" are not, so far as we have been able to find, coupled together in the New Testament. The elect are spoken of many times, and the children are also spoken of many times, but we have not found that the phrase elect children anywhere occurs. It would seem that if election also involves the thought of rejection, the two words could not rightly be joined together. There are no nonelect children of God. The people of God chosen in Christ are called to be saints, to be children of God through faith in Christ Jesus, but they are known

of God, and were known of him to all eternity, and all whom he thus foreknew shall each in his appointed time come to believe in the blessed Lord, and thus be known as the Lord's, and recognized as his children.

Seventh question. Do you teach that God through Christ made no provision for those who will be lost? If he had done so then they would never be lost, for none of his provisions in grace shall ever be in vain. Right here is the key to the whole purpose of God in the mystery of redemption. It is wonderful, and every truly humble heart stands with awe before this great mystery of the everlasting choice of God from among men to salvation of some men and women. If we ask the question, Why was it so? we have no answer save this, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." Laying aside the testimony of the word of God and turning to what would seem reasonable to ourselves, it certainly is unreasonable to say that our Savior died for those who from eternity he knew were not chosen to salvation, and it is a libel upon the wisdom of the eternal God to say that he holds out offers of salvation in Christ for, or to those whom he has from eternity decreed to pass by and leave to perish in their sins. What mockery is it to say to men, Believe on Christ, and you shall be saved, when those men are not chosen to salvation, and Christ did not die for them. We recall that when we were but a boy it was said by Old School Baptists in our hearing, more than once, that the New School Baptists were more inconsistent than the Methodists. Methodists said men were free to choose, and so they could tell them very consistently to run heavenward; but New School Baptists would first, in their teaching, bind men hand and foot, and then call upon them to run. Methodists did not admit that men were dead in sin, but only in a lethargy or asleep, and so were consistent in trying to arouse them out of their sleep, but New School Baptists, in our section at least, taught that men were really dead to God, and then would call upon the dead to move and run heavenward and so escape final death. Man is dead to God, and salvation must come to him through election, and there is no provision in Christ for any save the elect.

We have thus tried to suggest such replies to the questions as have seemed right to us. We leave what we have written to all our readers. These are all great mysteries, deep things of God, and we would handle them, not lightly, but with reverence always.

C.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

By request of several Primitive Baptists living in Norfolk, Va., and vicinity, that they be formed into a regularly constituted Primitive Baptist Church, a meeting was called for that purpose at 10 o'clock a. m., August 30th, 1908, in hall corner of Camp Ave. and Poole St., Norfolk, Va.

The services of the day were opened by the singing of hymn 547 (Lloyd's selection), after which Elder Joshua T. Rowe, of Baltimore, Md., preached from Psalms cxxxiii., presenting some of the benefits and pleasures of the union of the Lord's people.

After preaching, a presbytery was formed, composed of Elder Joshua T. Rowe, of Baltimore, Md., Elder Charles Meads, of Weeksville, N. C., Deacon C. C. Aydlett, of Elizabeth City, N. C., and Deacon John T. Walker, of Washington, D. C.

Elder Meads was appointed moderator, and brother John T. Walker clerk.

The letters of dismissal from the home churches of those wishing to form the new church were called for, and thirteen received.

After the above letters had been read and passed upon by the presbytery, a request by the above brethren was made that the name of brother Warren E. Brickhouse be added to their number, brother Brickhouse having been baptized a few months previously by Elder J. T. Rowe. The same was granted, and his name added, making in all fourteen.

Then followed the reading of articles of faith by Elder J. T. Rowe, which the above fourteen brethren unanimously adopted.

Church covenant was then read by Elder J. T. Rowe. Moved and carried that same be adopted.

These brethren about to be formed into a church were then asked by the presbytery by what name the church should be known, and by their vote decided it should be called the "Primitive Baptist Church of Norfolk, Va."

Elder C. Meads then spoke to the above brethren in a very feeling way in regard to the duty and responsibility of members towards each other and the church, after which Elder C. Meads declared the Primitive Baptist Church of Norfolk, Va., duly constituted, and that all Primitive Baptist churches throughout the country would recognize them as such. The right hand of fellowship was then given each member by the presbytery.

The Primitive Baptist Church of Norfolk, Va., then met in conference and chose Elder C. Meads, of Weeksville, N. C., moderator, and brother John T. Walker, of Washington, D. C., clerk.

Elder Meads opened conference by inviting all present of like faith and in good standing in their churches to seats with them. An invitation was given to any who felt a desire of the fellowship of the church to come forward during the singing of a hymn.

Then a charge was given the church by Elder J. T. Rowe. He also spoke on his impressions to visit the brethren in Norfolk and his experience among them to the present meeting. Elder Rowe then read from the Scriptures the qualifications and duties of a deacon, also spoke of the relation of the church towards its pastor and the business of the church. It was then voted that the office of deacon and pastor be considered at a future church meeting.

An unanimous vote was then taken, appointing sister (Mrs.) Mary Jane Price, of 530 Fort St., Norfolk, Va., church clerk.

It was then moved, seconded and carried that the church meet for worship and business every Saturday before and on the third Sunday of each month. Prayer meeting on first Sunday in each month, and next communion third Sunday in November.

An unanimous call was then given by the church to Elder C. Meads, of Weeksville, N. C., to preach for them on each third Sunday and Saturday before in each month for the present, and that Elder J. T. Rowe, of Baltimore, Md., preach every fifth Sunday during the year.

It was then ordered by the church that the clerk send a copy of the minutes of those meetings for publication to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and *Zion's Landmark*.

At 2 o'clock meeting adjourned, after singing the Doxology, to meet again at 3 p. m.

At 3 p. m. services opened by singing hymn 300 (Lloyd's selection), and prayer. Elder Meads preached from Matthew xi. 28–30, a most feeling and impressive discourse. At its close the ordinance of the Lord's supper was observed, after which we sung hymn No. 50 (Lloyd's selection) and went out.

Thus ended, we believe, a day spent in the service of our God, one that will be long remembered by those taking part, one on which the Master Builder smiled. For unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. There was quite a large congregation present, composed of members of other Primitive Baptist churches and friends. It was a fine day, for all of which we desire to thank God and take courage.

Done by order of the church.

C. MEADS, Moderator.

JOHN T. WALKER, Clerk.

NORFOLK, Va., August 30, 1908.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, Thursday p. m., Sept. 3rd, 1908, at the bride's residence, Hopewell, N. J., Geo. W. Harrop, of Garfield, N. J., and Miss Sara E. Hill, of Hopewell, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder James M. True. This highly esteemed and well known minister of the gospel of Christ has passed from his labors and toils here below to the mansions above. He was born in Kentucky, October 14th, 1823. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Little Bethel, near Mattoon, Ill., and was baptized by Elder Threlkeld, in March, 1843. For years he was engaged in mercantile pursuits at Mattoon, Ill., where he was married to Miss Nancy B. Threlkeld, Sept. 21st, 1843. Six children were born to them, four dying in infancy, and one, Alvira Ellen, at twenty years of age. One daughter, Mrs. Lily A. Hayes, survives him. His wife having died at Seward, Neb., in 1890, he was again married, to Mrs. Candace Mariam Kester, at Kansas, Ill., June 1st, 1891. At the beginning of the Civil war, in 1861, he organized a company of which he was commissioned Captain, June 20th, 1861, and it was known as Company E, 38th Illinois Volunteer Infantry. He was promoted to Colonel in June, 1862, and placed in command of the 62nd 811 Infantry. He held this rank until March, 1865, when he was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General, and was discharged May 1st, 1865. He was appointed U. S. Consul to Kingston, Canada, Feb. 20th, 1874, the appointment being acknowledged by Queen Victoria, April 6th, 1874. He served in this capacity for four years. He was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry October 18th, 1879, in West Liberty Church, Des

Moines County, Iowa. Elder True was an able expounder of the word, and uncompromising in doctrinal positions, but mild and humble in his presentation of the truth. For several years his health had been failing, and he fell asleep July 28th, 1908, aged 84 years, 9 months and 14 days.

Short funeral services were conducted at the family residence in Kansas, Ill., by Elders M. B. Moffitt and D. W. Owens, and at the grave, in Mattoon Cemetery, by Elders J. G. Sawin and M. B. Moffitt.

Elder True was truly a noble man, respected alike by friend and foe for his steadfastness and unswerving honesty in whatsoever he deemed to be right, and loved by all who were favored by an intimate acquaintance with him. He hath done what he could, always contending for the right as he was enabled to see it, and he died rejoicing in the faith of the Son of God as his blessed and only Savior.

May he rest sweetly until the Master calls.

ALSO,

Mrs. Candace Mariam True, widow of Elder James M. True, was born in Kentucky, March 27th, 1833. Her maiden name was Stout. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Elk Creek, in Kentucky, Sept. 20th, 1851. After coming to Illinois she united by letter with Concord Church, Clark, Co., Ill., August 27th, 1859, and with Little Bethel Church, Coles County, Sept. 10th, 1898. She was married to R. N. Kester, March 17th, 1859, who died Dec. 5th, 1887. She was again married, to Elder J. M. True, June 1st, 1891. She died August 9th, 1908, aged 75 years, 2 months and 13 days. Sister True was a noble christian woman, kind and gentle in her disposition, but firm and unyielding in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, and was much loved by all who knew her. She leaves one brother, John Stout, of Nevada, Mo., two half-brothers in Kentucky and one half-sister, Mrs. Charles Kester, of Terre Haute, Ind., with loving brethren and friends to the extent of all who knew her.

After a short service at the residence the remains were conveyed to Concord churchhouse, where funeral services were conducted by Elders D. W. Owens and J. G. Sawin. Interment in Concord Cemetery.

Truly two of the prominent landmarks have been removed.

D. W. OWENS.

HERSMAN, Ill.

Elder William Simpson Mathews died at his son's house, in Salem, Oregon, August 18th, 1908, of jaundice, aged 80 years, 5 months and 21 days. Deceased was born in Howard County, Mo., Dec. 27th, 1827, moved with his parents to Johnson Co., Mo., and from there to Platte Co., Mo., where he grew to manhood. He experienced a hope in Christ July 3rd, 1843, at the age of fifteen years, and joined the Primitive Baptist Church called Hillsborough the third Sunday in August, same year, and was baptized by Elder Wm. Simpson, his mother's brother. He was married to Miss Frances Deshazen, in DeKalb Co., Mo., Nov. 15th, 1846. To this union were born seven children, four sons and three daughters: John P., of Oklahoma, James, of Oregon, W. D., of Salem, Ore., Charles, of Roseburg, Ore., Mrs. A. W. Drager, of Salem, Ore., Mrs. D. W. Collard, of Arizona, and Mrs. J. J. Thornton, of Oak Creek, Ore. He moved with his family to Nemaha Co., Kansas, in 1859, where he was licensed to preach by the Harmony Church, July 4th, 1874, and was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry by the same church May 8th, 1875, Elders Joseph Meredith, C. B. Lee, and deacons I. R. Points and D. Bainbridge forming the presbytery. He, with his family, moved to Oregon in the spring of 1879, settling on a farm near Salem, where he continued to reside until a few years before his wife's death, which occurred Nov. 9th, 1905, since which time he has lived among his children, traveling and preaching among the churches as much as his health would permit. He was chosen moderator of the Siloam Association soon after coming to Oregon, which honored position he held to the time of his death. He was also pastor of four churches most of the time since coming to Oregon.

The writer was called by telephone to Roseburg (where the remains were shipped for interment) to conduct the funeral services, which I tried to do, using for a text Job vii. 1-3: "Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth?" &c. Many sorrowing relatives and friends had gathered to pay the last tribute of respect to the aged pilgrim.

Few men are better known throughout Oregon and Washington than was Elder W. S. Mathews, he having traveled a great deal visiting the churches and brethren throughout these States since settling in Oregon. But he is gone, his day's work is done, the Master saw fit to call him from labor to reward. We mourn not as others who have no hope, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, He that raised up Christ from the dead will also quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit, which (we believe) dwelt in him. He leaves seven children, thirty-three grandchildren, thirty great-grandchildren and a host of relatives and friends to mourn their loss, his wife, eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren having preceded him. Three of his sons and two daughters were at his bedside when death came. The other son, living in Oklahoma, and daughter in Arizona, were not present. He was buried beside his wife in the Oak Creek Cemetery, twelve miles east of Roseberg, Ore., there to await the last loud trumpet.

S. B. MOFFITT.

NEWBERG, Oregon.

Mary Yerkes, daughter of Wm. H. and Eliza B. Yerkes, was born Jan. 17th, 1835, and died July 15th, 1908. She was one of eleven children, and consequently was very young when she began to assume the responsibilities of life. From childhood she was energetic, capable and self-reliant. On account of her good judgment and quick decision, her family learned to turn to her for advice, and her loving sympathy made her their mainstay in time of trouble. Always busy, she still had time for the bright, the friendly word and kindly deed, which endeared her to a large circle. Her sociable disposition and ready humor made her companionable for old and young, and she was never so happy as when entertaining her friends in her home. She was always interested in the Old School Baptist Church, of which her father and mother were members, and about thirty years ago became a member of the Southampton Church, having been baptized by Elder Wm. J. Purington, August 13th, 1876. She always retained her membership there, though she generally attended the Salem meeting in Philadelphia, this being more convenient to her home. Her connection with the church was a never-failing happiness to her, and her faith and devotion were a beautiful example to us all. In her last illness she bore her long suffering with scarcely a murmur, her first thought being always for others. When she realized that the end was near she felt no fear, only an abiding faith in her heavenly Father, saying, "I am not afraid to die, though not because of anything I have ever done."

Her loving niece, EDNA K. CHEYNEY.

By request I send you this obituary notice of our dear sister, Mary Yerkes. In her death this church has lost a most devoted and faithful member, highly esteemed and dearly loved. She was present at our covenant meetings and communion seasons whenever she could be, and often expressed it as her greatest comfort to meet with her brethren and sisters in the church of the living God. I saw her several times after her health began specially to fail, and her conversation was upon the things of the kingdom. Though often tried and tempted to doubt, yet her hope remained as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. In her home her absence is most deeply felt; a faithful and loving sister has gone out from that dear family, but they also know the infinite value of spiritual blessings, and are assured that she is infinitely blessed in the presence of her dear Savior. May the God of all grace be their stay and comfort.

Elders B. F. Coulter and J. C. Mellott were present at the house in Frankford on Friday night, July 17th, and had funeral exercises. On Saturday noon there were funeral exercises at the Southampton meeting-house, when I spoke from Phil. iii. 20, 21: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." SILAS H. DURAND.

Southampton, Pa., Sept. 7, 1908.

Elder Alfred Huddleston Hagans, my father, was born July 14th, 1831, in Sangamon County, Ill., and died April 6th, 1908. He came to California in 1852, where he resided until 1877, when he moved to Oregon, and then to Washington, where he lived until 1891, when he moved back to California, where he remained until his death. Father was married to Miss Mary Hall, July 16th, 1865, and to this union were born five boys and five girls, seven of whom survive their parents. Mother died June 14th, 1889. Father united with the Old School Baptist Church at Santa Rosa, in 1859. He was licensed to preach the gospel in July, 1862, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry Oct. 26th, 1867, at Santa Rosa Church, Elder Thomas H. Owen presiding. He was 76 years, 8 months and 22 days of age at the time of his death. The principal cause of his death was old age and a general breaking down of his vitality.

W. A. HAGANS.

I first became acquainted with Elder Hagans in 1860, in Green Valley, Sonoma Co., Cal. He was a member of an Old School Baptist Church which belonged to a body of six, calling themselves The Corresponding Meeting of California. Later he and his father moved to Oregon, near Hepner, thence to Columbia County, Wash., where he, with Elder J. P. Allison, organized Harmony Church, near Dayton, of which he was pastor several years. He afterwards moved to Los Angeles, where he died as his son herewith states. Elder Hagans' moral character was good; he was honorable in business, a faithful friend and neighbor, a good husband and father and faithful christian. I. N. NEWKIRK.

Dayton, Wash.

John Quincy Whitehead was born in Princton, Butler Co., Ohio, June 17th, 1824. He was educated in the common schools. In 1859 he left Princton and moved to Shelby County, Ind., where he resided for a number of years. At the call of duty, Feb. 9th, 1863, he enlisted in the Civil war, Company I, 123rd Indiana Infantry, where he served for two years, after which, on August 23rd, 1865, having been a brave and faithful soldier he was honorably discharged, returning home without an injury. After his war experience he came to Illinois and located in Woodford County, near Washburn, where he remained three years, thence to Dewitt County, and settled near Kenney. In October he moved to Maroa, on account of poor health. He had been failing for

the past year, and on Tuesday last became unconscious and passed away Friday, August 21st, 1908. His death was due to old age, and his last moments were peaceful. He was twice married, first to Miss Lelah Lightner, of Peru, in 1847, who passed away in 1860. To this union four children were born: Mrs. Anna Young, of Rushville, Ind., James, of Texas, John, of Shelbyville, Ind., and Mrs. Emma Scott, of Bloomington, Ill. The two latter died some years ago. Mr. Whitehead was again married in 1868, to Miss Marilda Phillips, of Indiana, who, with six children, survives him. Three have passed on before. The living are: Mrs. Mollie Thompson, of Rolla, Mo., Mrs. Ella Harry, of Decatur, Ill., George, near Clinton, Ralph, of Decatur, Oma, of Milroy, and Chalmer, who resides with George. All were present at the funeral. Thirty-five grandchildren and eighteen great-grandchildren also survive.

The funeral services were held at 2 o'clock Sunday afternoon, August 23rd, 1908, from the Texas Church, conducted by J. B. Doobs. "Jesus, lover of my soul," and "Nearer, my God to thee," were sung by old members of the Baptist Church. The pall was borne by his grandsons. Several beautiful floral designs were carried by the granddaughters. The funeral was largely attended. Interment was in the Texas Cemetery. Thus an old and honored citizen has passed away. JENNIE BLUE.

CLINTON, Ill., Sept. 17, 1908.

Clayton Shockley departed this life August 6th, 1908, at his home in Southampton County, Va., in his 42nd year, after a painful illness of ten days of typhoid fever. He was married in December, 1890, to Miss Ida West, by the writer. Three children was the fruit of that union, one dead, two living. Immediately after their marriage they left for the south, and were there until his death. He was wonderfully experienced, and though separated from the church the mysterious work of divine grace went on. Like Jacob of old, the Lord led him about, instructed him and kept him as the apple of his eye, and there was no strange god with him. I visited him once a distance of two hundred miles, and preached twice, as he said, much to his joy and comfort. He would drive about thirty-five miles to hear Elder Hassell. Finally he became so wrought upon in his mind about the church and his obligation to his Lord and Master that he came all the way from his home to the Old Baptist Church at Nassaongo, in Wicomico County, Md., was received, and baptized by the writer, Oct. 12th, 1907. Brother Shockley was a noble man in every relation of life, strong in the faith of salvation by grace. He seemed to have a presentiment of his death from the very first of his sickness, and asked his wife to stay with him until the last, whether he knew her or not; she did so, with his hand in hers when the breath left him, leaving a heart-broken woman who has my deepest sympathy. May she lean upon One who is able to bear her up under her heavy trial.

His remains were taken to Snow Hill, Md., where the writer tried to speak to the comfort of the bereaved ones, reading the Scripture in Deuteronomy: "The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye * * * and there was no strange god with him." His remains were then laid away to rest undisturbed until the trump of God shall sound and the archangel's voice is heard; then shall the grave give up its dead. T. M. POULSON.

David Stam died Feb. 17th, 1908, aged 66 years. He united with the church Oct. 21st, 1872, and was baptized by Elder Durand. He was sound in the faith, and loved to talk on spiritual things, having a very clear understanding of the doctrine of God our Savior. Though not as bright as some in natural understanding, yet in spiritual things he always contended earnestly for the faith. He was never married, but made his home wherever he was staying, and was a very regular attendant at the meetings, setting an example that might be followed by many of us. He often walked ten to twenty miles, and sometimes more, to meeting. He certainly was faithful in following the apostle's exhortation not to forsake the assembling together, as the manner of some is. He was taken away very suddenly; he had often expressed his desire that he might be. He was at sister McWilliams' house and had put on his overcoat to leave, when he suddenly fell to the floor, and I think never spoke afterwards. Surely a blessed death—no care, no pain, no worry, but just a yielding up of the spirit to God who gave it. May such be my lot if it be the will of God concerning me.

Elder Wyman, of Michigan, was sent for to attend the funeral, but on account of trains being blocked with snow he did not arrive until the funeral was over. Brother John Pollard spoke in prayer.

R. SCATES.

WOODSTOCK, Ontario, August 30, 1908.

Mrs. Susan House died Sept. 13th, 1908, at her son's, Frank House, Bullock Hill, Delaware Co., N. Y. She was the daughter of Horace and Anna Jenkins. She was 78 years old Jan. 24th. She leaves of her father's family one brother, Wm. Jenkins, of Trout Creek, and one sister, Mrs. Miller, of Hancock, N. Y. She was seriously ill but a short time, of heart failure. She was baptized by Elder Isaac Hewitt when about thirteen years old, uniting with the Middletown Old School Baptist Church, and lived in the faith of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the end of the world with her. May the dear Lord bless

the children, brother, sister and friends who mourn her absence with grace to strengthen them in their affliction, is my desire for Jesus' sake.

The writer attended the funeral Sept. 15th.

D. M. VAIL.

MEETINGS.

THERE will be a two days meeting of the Woburn Church, Woburn, Mass., Sept. 30th and Oct. 1st, 1908. All brethren and friends are cordially invited.

L. B. FORD.

THE Old School or Primitive Baptist Church of Lexington, N. Y., Lexington Association, has appointed a two days meeting to be held on Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 3rd and 4th, 1908. Ministering brethren and others of our faith and order are cordially invited to attend. As the association is to meet with the Gilboa Church on the Wednesday and Thursday following, perhaps some who expect to attend that can come this way and attend our meeting. To any such I will say, I will provide a way for you from here to Gilboa. The distance is thirteen miles.

FLETCHER MACKEY, Church Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa on the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (7th and 8th) 1908. We cordially invite all who love to meet for the worship of God to meet with us, especially ministering brethren. Those coming on the U. & D. R. R. will be met in the afternoon of the day previous, and if any should be missed take stage to Miss Jennie Leonard's. The Saturday following is our regular monthly meeting, and all who can stop over will be welcome.

Done by order of the church.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Old School or Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Fairview Church, in Fulton County, Pa., on Friday, October 9th, and continue over Sunday. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth. We hope to be remembered by our ministering brethren. Those coming will come on the B. & O. Railroad, or the Western Maryland to Hancock; come to the Hancock side on Thursday, where you will be met and conveyed to place of meeting.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury will hold a two days meeting on the second Saturday and Sunday in October, (10th and 11th) 1908, at Roxbury, N. Y., commencing on Saturday at 11 o'clock a. m. All who love the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting will be held, if the Lord will, with the Frying Pan Church, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 14th, 15th and 16th, 1908. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren of our faith and order. Trains will be met at Herndon, Va., on Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning; first and second evening trains on Tuesday leaving Washington, and only morning train on Wednesday, which is due at Herndon 9:29 a. m.

W. A. THOMPSON.

THE Welsh Tract Church has appointed her yearly meeting to commence on Saturday, Oct. 17th, 1908, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue two days. Those coming from Philadelphia, Baltimore and other points by rail will come via B. & O. R. R. on Saturday. Trains leave Philadelphia at 8:15 a. m., and Baltimore, Mt. Royal station, at 8 a. m. Get tickets to Newark, Del., where all will be met and conveyed to the meetinghouse. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, and especially to ministering brethren.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Nassaongo, six miles southeast of Salisbury, Md., commencing on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1908, and continuing three days. All coming by rail or boat get tickets for Salisbury, where they will be met and cared for. We would like for all who can do so to come with conveyance; it will be a help to the friends. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren. We want to say to brethren in the ministry that the meeting is to continue three days, so make arrangements at home before coming to the meeting to remain until a little after noon Friday; we close with a conference of all the brethren in the ministry, which is the very essence of the meeting; but for two-thirds of the preachers to leave on Thursday confuses the whole congregation. A word to the wise is sufficient.

T. M. POULSON, Moderator.

WM. E. BAILY, Clerk.

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11:00 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 76. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1908. NO. 20.

POETRY.

"HE KNOWETH THE WAY THAT I TAKE."

WHEN surrounded with clouds of darkness,
When temptations and doubts overtake,
And sin rises up in its blackness,
"He knoweth the way that I take."

Yes, he knoweth me altogether—
The crooks in the path that I make,
How I veer like a wind-tossed feather;
O "He knoweth the way that I take."

He knoweth my sins and transgressions,
My promises made but to break,
All my fruitless and vain resolutions;
Yes, "He knoweth the way that I take."

He knoweth how weak my endeavor
The enemy's thralldom to break,
Which naught but his strong arm can sever;
O "He knoweth the way that I take."

He knoweth my hungering and thirsting
Of his righteousness pure to partake,
Yet how feebly in him I am trusting;
Yes, "He knoweth the way that I take."

Can I think amid fiery trials,
With sorrow and shame in their wake,
I shall "come forth like gold" from the ordeal,
If "He knoweth the way that I take"?

I sometimes dare hope in great mercy
He laid down his life for my sake,
That I may behold him in glory;
But "He knoweth the way that I take."

If once he has loved he will love me forever,
For his promise he never will break,
But sadly I fear he has loved me never,
For "He knoweth the way that I take."

ABBY G. CLARK.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, August, 1908.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JOB XXII. 21.

"ACQUAINT now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee."

While reading of Job's afflictions, and meditating upon the cause of them, and seeing some of the arguments put forth by his comforters, I have been led to consider who Job represents, and who his three comforters represent. First, his afflictions did not come upon him because of his sins. This is certain, for God himself told Satan that Job was a perfect man, who did good and eschewed evil, and that there was none like him in all the earth; yet he was so afflicted that he loathed himself, and felt it better to die, and desired to be hid in the grave until God's wrath should be overpast. He craved death above all else, and wished he had never been born, saying that a hidden and untimely birth was better than to be afflicted as he was. One of the things I wish to present is that the affliction of Job was not because of his sins; God had a hidden purpose in it all. The Lord gave him into the hand of Satan for a season, to prove that Job would not curse God, and that he could cause Job to maintain his integrity not-

withstanding all that Satan could do to him. Job well knew that his affliction came from the Lord. He said to his wife, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" He answered his comforters, and said that God had fenced up his way that he could not pass, and that the Lord had set darkness in his path, and had stripped him of his glory, and taken the crown from his head, and had destroyed him on every side. When the Lord shuts, no man can open. He said to his comforters, "O that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances together! For now it would be heavier than the sand of the sea." Job in all his afflictions declared that they came from God; he also declared that the Lord was just, saying, "Blessed be the name of the Lord."

I have wondered who, outside of God's own children, feels as Job did. We think that in his affliction we see the sorrows of God's people. His afflictions caused him to loathe himself and to hate his life, so that he felt he had better have died at his birth. Who hate themselves beside God's children? Who do the comforters who came to comfort him represent? Like whom do they talk? and to what do they attribute his affliction? What did they know as to the cause of his affliction, and what was the remedy they proposed? It appears to me that here is a great lesson which ought to profit us. First, I believe Job represents all the children of God, and the afflictions sent upon him, which caused him to abhor himself, are similar to the afflictions which sin has wrought in all His children, who know the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Second, these three comforters had no more conception of the cause of his affliction than the Arminian of to-day has of the cause of the troubles of the children of God. To Job they offered the same remedy that Arminians do to soothe the hurt of one whose sins are discovered unto him. The truth is, they are mistaken as to the cause of trouble to God's children because of their sins, and they are mistaken as to what will relieve this affliction. Both Job's comforters and all Arminians offer as a comfort this statement: It is your wickedness has caused all your affliction. Job's comforters felt sure he had sinned greatly, else he would not be so deeply afflicted. Bildad said, chapter eight, "Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice? If thy children have sinned against him, and he have cast them away for their transgression; if thou wouldest seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty; if thou wert pure and upright: surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous." Who can find better Arminian doctrine than Bildad here produced? How could such words help Job? He said, "Miserable comforters are ye all." He knew his affliction was from God, and he also felt sure he had not lived unrighteously, for God had said he was perfect in his walk, and yet he was afflicted, and made to cry out and to abhor himself. Zophar also told Job that if he would prepare his heart and stretch out his hand before God, and if iniquity were found in his hand put it far from him, and if wickedness did not dwell in his tabernacles then he should lift up his head without spot, and be steadfast and not fearful, and by so doing he should forget his misery, and only remember it as the waters that pass away, and that his old age should then be clearer than noonday, and he should shine forth as

the morning, and be secure. Then he should dig about him and take his rest in safety, and when he should lie down none should make him afraid, and that many then should make suit unto him. Eliphaz also said, "Is not thy wickedness great? and thine iniquities infinite?" He charged Job with taking a pledge of his brother for naught, and with having stripped the naked of their clothing. All these were accusing Job instead of comforting him. They held up before him that his affliction was because he had not given water to the weary and had withheld bread from the hungry. They did not see the purpose of God in any of it, nor that God had given him into the hand of Satan, but said all this had come upon him because he had sent the widows away empty, and that the arms of the fatherless were broken. Hence they said, Snares are round about thee, and sudden fear troubleth thee. Now to help Job out of his affliction Eliphaz told him to now acquaint himself with God, and be at peace, thereby good should come unto him. He also entreated him to receive the law from the Lord, and to lay up the words of God in his heart. Then he comes up with the common Arminian plea, "If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles. Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks. Yea, the Almighty shall be thy defense, and thou shalt have plenty of silver. * * * Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee." Did ever Arminians have other conception of the reasons why God afflicts his children than did those three comforters of Job? And was not the remedy which they offered Job, word for word, just what Arminians now offer to comfort them that mourn? Job was indeed grieved because God had afflicted him and had withdrawn himself from him, and he utters the very words of sinsick souls when sin by the law has become to them exceeding sinful. Job said, "O that I knew where I might find him!" This was troubling Job; he felt that he was lost from the Lord, and if he could find him he would order his cause before him. He said, "I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him." Job closed the mouths of his comforters by saying of God, "He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." He knew it was all a trial of his faith; he said, The Lord "is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him."

There seem to be two things set forth in all this. The children of God are the antitype of Job; they may flourish and live as good lives as the best Arminian, but suddenly the law of God is written in their heart. Satan smote Job with boils, and this brought corruption and made Job abhor himself. The law sets sin in motion in the hearts of the Lord's people. So Paul was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and he died. Without the law sin is dead, without the law sin has no strength, and where there is no law sin is not imputed. The law is the strength of sin, and sin does not cause any of the children of God trouble until his law is written in their hearts. Sin by the law becomes exceeding sinful, and Paul said, "The motions of sins, which

were by the law, did work in my members, to bring forth fruit unto death." The whole of Paul's teachings are that God writes his law in the hearts of all his children, and by this law is the knowledge of sin; hence whenever this law is written there it brings the knowledge of sin. All of them, like Paul, were alive without the law once, but when the law came, sin revived and they died; and sin, by the commandment, became exceeding sinful. Like Paul, they now delight in the law of God after the inward man, but they see another law in their members, which law is against the law of their minds, bringing them into captivity to the law of sin, which is in their members. Then, like Job, they abhor themselves. When they would do good, evil is present with them. When they come before the Lord Satan comes among them, and because of this the things which they would do, they do not, and the things that they would not do, they do. The flesh wars against the Spirit, so that they cannot do the things that they would. In such a state as this how wretched it is for a Job's comforter, a Methodist, to come and tell such an one, All this is because you have done much evil, and now acquaint thyself with God, and prepare thine heart before him, and return to the Almighty and thou shalt be built up. No Methodist or other Arminian ever produced better arguments to sustain the thought of creature power than did those comforters of Job, but all this did Job no good, and it does no one good now of all who have the law written in their hearts. To tell them that by good works they must attain to peace with God is vain, for the good they would, they cannot do, and from evil they cannot abstain. When they would do good, evil is present with them, and they feel that God has sent this trouble upon them, and that when he has tried them, and not until then, they shall come forth as gold. They receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall they not receive evil? And they believe that he performeth the thing that is appointed for them.

The apostle Peter, after assuring the saints of that eternal inheritance reserved for all who are kept by the power of God, said, "Though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory." Therefore those who are kept by the power of God have their faith tried as Job's was, and it often seems that it is tried by fire, yet, like Job, they still maintain their integrity, and feel assured that when they are tried they shall come forth as gold. Job in the midst of his affliction said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."

After these three friends had ceased trying to comfort Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes, another one, Elihu, had his wrath kindled against Job and against his three friends, because Job justified himself before God, and against his friends, because they were not able to answer Job. It reminds me that these three Methodists failed to answer Job, and now some one of another Arminian denomination comes up and tells Job what to do. He said, "For the

work of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his ways." "If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures; but if they obey not, they shall perish by the sword, and they shall die without knowledge." "Even so would he have removed thee out of the strait into a broad place, where there is no straitness." But justice and judgment hath taken hold upon thee. Another preacher of good works takes the floor, and all is do and live, and temporal blessings for good works. But all this did not comfort Job. God had lifted him up, and had cast him down, and had performed the thing He had appointed for him, and Job felt that he would wait until all this was accomplished.

But now against Eliphaz was the wrath of God kindled, and against his two friends, for he said, "Ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right as my servant Job hath." They all had assumed it was because Job had done wickedly that he had been afflicted, and they had preached the doctrine of good works as a remedy; but they were mistaken, both as to the cause of Job's trouble and the remedy. But Job said, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" And, "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." And he said God had performed the thing that he had appointed for him. "I know that my Redeemer liveth," &c. Here we have before us the two doctrines, and we are told which God approves, yet Satan often tempts us to think that our afflictions are from our evil deeds, and holds out before us good works as a remedy.

Your brother,

NEWTON PETERS.

NACOGDOCHES, Texas, Feb. 11, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed herewith are two letters from Elder J. W. Martin, which I have enjoyed very much and am sending to you for disposal as you see fit. The SIGNS is especially dear to us since we cannot meet with the brethren and enjoy their company.

ROBERT S. PACE.

MAY, Texas, Oct. 3, 1907.

R. S. PACE—VERY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I will try to write you a few lines in answer to your much appreciated letter, which came to hand some time ago. I do not know that I have anything to write of interest to one of God's dear children, for it is not the things of this world they are interested in as much as things pertaining to the kingdom of God and his righteousness. It would be useless for me to try to tell you how blank I am of these things. David said, "Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works."—Psalms cv. 2. The works of God are indeed wondrous to us, and they are marvelous in our eyes, so much so that the finite mind cannot comprehend them. The natural or carnal mind, even in the children of God, is enmity against him, and is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be, so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. This will apply to the children of God as well as to others, because they all have that same old carnal mind, which is not subject to the law of God, and which sometimes leads them off into the flesh and causes them to rebel against God and against his works. All the works of God are perfect from the beginning to the end, from the greatest to the smallest, he has made nothing without a purpose, and as his works are all perfect it is therefore im-

possible for any of his works to fail to accomplish his purpose. If a failure should occur at any time in anything it would be positive proof of an imperfect work, and an imperfect work would be good evidence of an imperfect workman, and to say that God has made or done anything without a purpose would be charging him with folly such as we would be likely to resent if it were charged to us. When we try to meditate upon the wondrous works of God we soon find ourselves lost in amazement. His works are too wonderful, too high and too grand for our poor, weak, finite minds to fully comprehend, and we can only understand such of them as it pleases him to reveal unto us; for as the heavens are above the earth, so are his ways above our ways, and his thoughts above our thoughts. Yes, his works are so perfect and complete that the wise man, Solomon, said, "Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it that men should fear before him." This statement of Solomon will apply to the work of redemption as well as to any other work of God. If it were not so, then we would not have a firm foundation for our hope to rest upon. If anything could be added to that work, then it would not be complete and perfect; an imperfect redemption could not benefit any one. If anything could be taken from it, that would destroy the perfection of the work and would render it worthless, and we would all be left without a reason of hope. My dear brother, we must have hope that is based upon the perfect work of God, or else we would be without foundation. The work of God in regeneration is as perfect and as independent of human will or effort as his work was in the creation of the world, or as it will be in the resurrection of the dead. If God could be influenced by the creature, then he would be imperfect like the creature, because any being that can be influenced by another is imperfect in himself, and is always subject to changes, and has no independent will of his own, but his acts are to some extent governed by the will of others. But our God is in the heavens, he hath done whatsoever he pleased in heaven and in earth, in the seas and all deep places. This is the kind of a God the Old Baptists believe in; no other kind would satisfy or profit them, for they are a poor and an afflicted people, who have no confidence in themselves, therefore their only trust is in the Lord, who works all things after the counsel of his own will. A god that does not do all of his pleasure may satisfy some people, but would not suit my case, for I know that without the sovereign, independent, irresistible grace of the all-wise, all-powerful, merciful and independent God all would be a failure with me. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

Your little brother in hope,

J. W. MARTIN.

MAY, Texas, Nov. 24, 1907.

R. S. PACE—VERY DEAR BROTHER:—I received your highly appreciated letter of the 3rd inst. in due time, and was glad to hear from you again, and I assure you that I can and do sympathize with you

in your loneliness in being deprived of the privilege of meeting with and enjoying the sweet pleasure and comfort of the company of true believers in and followers of the meek and lowly Nazarene. When we get low down in spirit, of which you complain, (and I must say it is my condition a good portion of the time) it is a great comfort to meet some humble saint of God who rejoices in Christ Jesus and has no confidence in the flesh, and hear him talk of the sure promises, the loving-kindness and tender mercies of the all-wise God of both heaven and earth. If his promises depended in any way upon anything that we might or might not do, then they would be like we are, so uncertain that they would not do to depend upon. If our mourning here is of a godly sort, then we have the blessed assurance that we will be comforted, for Jesus said to his disciples, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. * * * Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Their mourning, hungering and thirsting are not the cause of their being blessed, but the blessing is the cause of the mourning, hungering and thirsting. Mourning is not a voluntary act of man, for it is the very thing he tries to avoid as much as possible, and when he does mourn it is because he cannot help it. None of us would ever be in a sad and gloomy state if we knew how and were able to keep out of it. If we could do this, then we would be as independent as we are now dependent, and a man who thinks he is so independent that he can do as he pleases, is one who is to be feared, because he will neither fear God nor regard man. When a man is brought down so low that he can see and realize his own nothingness, that he of himself can do nothing, and that his whole dependence is in God, then he is in about the best condition he can ever hope to be in in this world; but he who thinks he is to be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease will some day find he is sadly mistaken, for that is no part of his heritage in this world. Jesus said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." Paul said, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Peter said, "For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." So we learn from this that suffering, even for well doing, is a part of the heritage of the true servants of the Lord while they remain in this world of sin, sorrow, trials, tribulations, sore persecutions and afflictions. Remember poor old Job, the most perfect and upright man in all the earth, what great trials and afflictions he had to endure, yet he did not charge God falsely, nor speak unadvisedly with his lips, but he said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Could we but see the hand of the Lord in all our sorrows, trials, afflictions, persecutions and seeming misfortunes as some of the ancient saints did, then perhaps we could say as Paul did: "And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." Peter, speaking in regard to that

incorruptible inheritance which is reserved in heaven for the saints, says, "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." He said again, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." But O how unbelieving we poor, sinful mortals are; we are so ready to complain if things do not go our way. If we could only be fully reconciled to God at all times and in all things, realizing of a truth that whatever he does is just and right, and that he will never leave nor forsake his people, and will not suffer any of them to be tempted above that they are able, but with every temptation he will make a way of escape, then how much better it would be for us. If we could only do this we would save ourselves from many troubles and sore heartaches, and our fiery trials and afflictions instead of seeming so heavy and severe would seem comparatively light, and we would not be always saying, as Jacob of old said on one occasion, "All these things are against me."

May the Lord bless you and all of his dear people with the spirit of humble submission and reconciliation, comfort and sustain you in all of your trials and troubles, is my sincere desire. Write again.

Yours in hope,

J. W. MARTIN.

BOWDOINHAM, Maine, April 2, 1908.

MISS ABBIE G. CLARK—MY DEAR SISTER:—You may think it strange and may also be somewhat surprised to receive a letter from me, a poor old sinner, but you have often been in my mind, together with others of the North Berwick Church. Some of them whom I knew and loved with love unfeigned have returned to the dust from whence they were taken, and their spirits have returned to God who gave them. I know I shall see their faces no more, but I believe that Jesus hath given unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; they are in the hand of one who is called "the mighty God," and there is none able to pluck them out of his hand; for he is God, and there is none like him, "declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Yes, my dear sister, our blessed Jesus led captivity captive; he conquered death, and by the Spirit and power of God he was raised from the grave and exalted at God's right hand far above all principality and power and every name that is named. He holds the keys of death and of hell, he shuts and none can open, and opens and none can shut. Sister Clark, this is our hope, our salvation, our foundation; on this Foundation is our hope built. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever."

"Jesus, the very thought of thee
With sweetness fills my breast,
But sweeter far thy face to see,
And in thy presence rest."

How I rejoice to cease from my own works and carnal thoughts and reason-

ings, and rest in the finished work of Jesus. He came to do the will of his Father who sent him, and his Father willed that of all that he had given him he should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day, and that every one who seeth the Son and believeth on him should have everlasting life. He said, "I will raise him up at the last day." By faith we see him nailed to the cross, and hear the agonizing cry of his flesh: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Can we realize the sufferings of him who came into the world to save sinners? It sometimes seems incredible that such a vile sinner as I was included in the number that Jesus was delivered unto death for, and rose again for their justification; but God only knows who were sealed in Christ with the Holy Spirit of promise. In the last expiring moments of the agony of Jesus he said, "It is finished;" he then gave up the ghost. He had finished that which his Father had sent him into the world to do. We believe he came to save his people from their sins, all that God had given him in the covenant of grace. He had glorified the Father on the earth; yes, God gave him power over all flesh, that he should give (not to offer conditionally) eternal life to as many as the Father had given him, not one more nor one less. From the wise and prudent of this world God has hidden these things. Who by searching can find out God? "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." I am aware, sister Clark, that there are men in this world to-day who claim to be very wise, but all their wisdom is vain, and if ever they get into the kingdom of Christ they will have to leave their boasted wisdom outside, for "Except a man be born again [born from above] he cannot see the kingdom of God." When Jesus was in the world the world knew him not, for "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." My dear sister, has Jesus finished the work that his Father gave him to do? has he saved his people from their sins? has he given to them eternal life? are they freely justified by his grace? has he obtained eternal redemption for them? have they come unto Mount Sion, unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem? have they come to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel? O yes, when the Son of God cried, "It is finished," when he bowed that head of flesh and gave up the ghost, he had satisfied the demands of the law and redeemed his bride, his loved one, his chosen, from the curse and condemnation of it. He could then say, "Behold, I, and the children whom the Lord hath given me." The pleasure of the Lord hath prospered in his hand. He hath said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." He is exalted at God's right hand a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

Twelve years ago last August I received a letter from you. You wrote that there was a passage of Scripture which troubled you. I did not doubt you, my sister, for you are not the only one troubled in the same way. The Scripture you referred to contains the words of Jesus to the multitude, in reproof of their carnal views, and is found in John vi. 35: "And Jesus said unto

them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." These words are truth, because Jesus is the truth. Many are the ways the enemy of truth takes to trouble and deceive those who have no strength or sufficiency in themselves. When the devil tried to tempt the Son of God he quoted Scripture to him, He could not be tempted with evil. Who are those who come to Jesus and believe on him? There are none who can come to him except the Father draw them, and it is the work of God that any believe on him. This Scripture cannot apply to the natural man, because the natural man can only discern the letter of the word, and there is no life in the letter, for the letter killeth. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned, therefore it cannot be the natural man who hungers and thirsts, but those who have been "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." Do you not at times rejoice with joy unspeakable, and does not your soul speak forth in the language of David: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul"? My dear sister, it is a God-given hunger his children have, and their desire is unto him; there is a blessing in connection with it, and also a promise: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." It is good to hunger; how sweet to the taste of the hungry soul is the fullness of Jesus; it maketh our cup to run over. How sweet and precious it is when we are heavy laden that we are drawn to Jesus and find rest to our souls.

I fear I am making this letter too long; if so, pardon me. I hope I have not written anything that will cause you grief. I do not know that you can fellowship what I have written, but it is the best I have. May love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Remember me to the church at North Berwick.

Your brother, I hope,

Z. M. BEAL.

RIPYVILLE, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITORS:—This good letter fell into my hands, and as I thought others would be edified as well as myself I want them to enjoy it, and so send it to you for publication. As I am blind, my granddaughter, Grace Hanks, has written this for me.

SMITH HAWKINS.

RATCLIFF, Ky., June 4, 1908.

ELDER S. HAWKINS—DEAR BROTHER:—May such a poor, weak, insignificant worm of the dust thus address you? Or may I claim such an endearing name? I cannot tell what binds me to you so closely unless it be the work of the Spirit of God, which brings us into sweet and loving fellowship with Christ and one another, if so be that we have been brought to be partakers of his suffering, and from darkness to light. This is being brought to Christ, for he is the true Light which was and is and shall be in and with his beloved, his bride, his chosen or elect, whom he hath loved, redeemed, saved, justified and glorified. These were redeemed out from every nation, kindred and tongue under heaven and made kings and priests unto God, and are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. They

are heirs to all that he is heir to, even the eternal inheritance; that is, as joint-heirs they equally share it and are each one heir to the whole of it; for it cannot be divided, and neither is it committed to them to keep, but is reserved in heaven for them who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Were it committed to them, then indeed they would lose it or it would be neglected; but he keeps this inheritance just as he does his church, by his own omnipotent power. Brother Hawkins, I cannot admit that our blessed Lord has failed to keep and preserve his kingdom, or church, in all ages unmoved, unshaken, unchanged and uncorrupted, and for any one to say he has failed to thus keep it, as it seems to me, is to doubt his sure word of prophecy. What a blessed comfort to the poor, trembling, halting, doubting ones to have the blessed assurance that their King, Captain, Lord and Savior, who is their strength, never fails, but that he speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. The blessed and wonderful assurance is given them by the Spirit that their Covenant, Surety, Mediator, High Priest, Sacrifice and Passover, even Jesus, who is also their head and life, their all, and who is the precious free gift of God the Father, hath suffered all things for them, and hath reconciled them unto God by his death, and now much more, being reconciled, they shall also be saved by his life. Jesus suffered and died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, and just as certain as the covenant of God is ordered in all things and sure, the whole election of grace, every heir of promise, every vessel of mercy, shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God, and they all shall be brought into the enjoyment of their eternal inheritance. Ah, blessed hope! This hope is sure and steadfast, and is entered into that within the veil, whither Jesus our forerunner hath for us entered, making intercession there for the saints, according to the will of God the Father, and for no others. The Father always hears him, therefore his intercession is just as effectual as was his suffering or atonement. Not one for whom he suffered and now intercedes shall fail to enter into the enjoyment of the eternal inheritance, and to receive the precious and free gift of God, which is eternal life. My dear brother, when God shall make up his jewels, even his peculiar treasure, the whole mystery of his love will be made known, then there will be no mist nor darkness. Here we see as through a glass darkly, but then we shall see face to face, and shall know as we are known. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." O blessed hope! O blessed consolation! Is it not enough to cause every poor sinner saved by grace to give God all the glory in their salvation?

I must tell you that I never enjoyed a visit among the dear children of God more than I did my visit among the brethren in your locality. They were all nearly of one mind, and a oneness and brotherly love seemed to exist, which made me feel when with them in their meetings that it was a heavenly place and the house of God. Their kindness to me was far more than I am worthy to receive. My heart goes out in love and sweet fellowship to all the dear brethren and sisters with whom I was blessed to meet during my visit among you. I would like to write them all, and hope that I

may be blessed to see you all again. We are all in fairly good health, for which I hope I am thankful. With kindest love to you and yours and to all the dear ones, to whom I ask to be remembered in fellowship and the love of the truth, I remain your brother in hope,

J. E. THORNBURY.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March 16, 1908.

DEAR FELLOW-TRAVELERS:—If you climb a mountain and successfully reach the top, about the first thing you do is to take a long breath of satisfaction. The next thing is to view the beautiful panorama spread out before your wondering vision; hills and valleys with sparkling, laughing streams between, grazing cattle and waving fields of grain, joyous songbirds gracefully flitting from tree to tree, giving vent to the beauty of life which is theirs to enjoy; then over all, the deep blue vault of heaven, in the midst of which you behold the sun shining in his strength. Thoughts all-glorious fill your mind, because the Creator of all, the Master of all, is seen and felt in all created nature; the heart leaps with joy, the whole being echoes her delight. So also as you travel over the hills and valleys of Canaan, and as you reach the summit of one of the delectable mountains of God's love you feel that same sense of satisfaction and peace, a desire to rest; there in God's holy mountain you behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The beauty and order of the house of the Lord is unfolded to your wondering vision, and with the poet you sing,

"Father, whate'er of earthly bliss
Thy sovereign will denies,
Accepted at the throne of grace
Let this petition rise:

Give me a calm and thankful heart,
From every murmur free;
The blessing of thy grace impart,
And make me live in thee.

Let the sweet hope that thou art mine,
My life and death attend;
Thy presence through my journey shine,
And crown my journey's end."

You feel in your heart you are now forever free from sin, from anxious cares, turmoil and doubts. Bathed in heavenly light, crowned with the star of hope, draped with the dazzling, flowing robe of the righteousness and holiness of Christ the Lord, you fain would sit and sing yourself away to everlasting bliss. But alas, all too soon are you called back to earth and earthly things, your feet are sore, your weary limbs bespeak a tedious, tiresome journey, your whole body is racked with pain, a long drawn sigh escapes you, while your soul longeth for a quiet, peaceful rest. Just then a voice, not audible to your natural ear, speaks sweetly to your soul, There is a rest that remaineth to the people of God. And O what a rest!—a restful, abiding faith, secure in the lap of precious grace, and stimulated by the fondest and cheeriest hope. So you look about you with rapturous gaze, your eyes turn to the deep valley below from whence you came, and the tortuous way along the mountain's side, where many days and nights were consumed in fear, in doubt and in trembling. "Remember." What a word and how full of meaning. Remembering all the way our weary feet have trodden, all the way the Lord our God hath led us, remembering the strength, the cunning and the hatred of our enemies, and, with Jeremiah, "Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope." We remember the many obstacles in the tiresome way, our thoughts fly back to the

ends of the earth, the place of God's creation, from whence we were called to the light of life, to the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a lively hope by his resurrection from the dead. How dim the distance as memory travels, yet how bright and clear in remembrance the places of conflict and deliverance, where the gracious hand of the blessed Redeemer led us in the right way. Long were the valleys and short the hills, but very steep, as we traveled on, sometimes in hope, sometimes in fear, and often in dismal doubt. Now however we have reached another summit and are looking back in fond remembrance of the hand which lovingly, kindly, secretly, surely led us by the still waters and into green and quiet pastures. Seeing as through a glass darkly, (the glass darkened with sin and evil thoughts,) we never could have found our way alone, indeed we would not have sought the way at all had not the soft, kindly touch of the Elder Brother's hand encouraged us to press forward and scale the mountain's side. How wonderful was this leading when we call to remembrance the time of our awakening, that we were enemies to him who redeemed us, "Enemies in your [our] mind by wicked works," and that "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." And because he loved us, by his own lifeblood he removed from us the stain of sin, and clothed us with pure linen, which is the righteousness of saints. Turning the eyes from the fitful, feverish journey, from the blackness and deceitfulness of the flesh, and by faith looking not at the things which come up out of the earth, but at the things which come down from heaven, beholding the beauty of the Lord and the order of his house, then have we entered into rest, the gospel heavens are filled with the glory of the Majesty on high. We behold Jesus as the end of the law for righteousness, and "the fullness of him that filleth all in all." "And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them." This is the peace that passeth understanding, made known only to the saints of God who reach the summit of the holy mountain of the Lord; then the ever-watchful eye of the Lord of the mountain protects and keeps his children in perfect security. "The cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

May grace, mercy and peace rest with all the saints as they travel the dark and dreary way.

B. F. COULTER.

HOPEWELL, N. J., April 11, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR PASTOR:—I feel like trying to put some of my thoughts on paper.

Wonderful, wonderful, are the ways of the all-wise God. This is a beautiful spring morning, and as I sit and gaze about me, how grand it all seems. The winter is past and gone. Watching my brother getting the ground ready for the planting of seed, the thought comes to me, The seedtime and the harvest time. This is the seedtime, when the ground

must be plowed and raked and harrowed, and all made smooth for the seed to take root and grow; then it must have the warm sunshine, the gentle rains, and soon the roots will shoot downward to get a strong hold. Then the tender blades will appear above the ground, and the tender branches will appear, and soon the fields of wheat, with its golden tops full and ripe, will stand waving in the breeze gently and gracefully, awaiting the time for the reaper to come and cut it down and convey it into the garners. I liken all this this morning to the children of the loving God, but I cannot put on paper the sweetness of it all as it comes to me. Sometimes the ground is hard and full of roots and briars, and needs much digging to get it in good order. It must be digged with a mattock. This causes me to think of my own experience: it took years of grubbing and digging to tear out the roots and branches of the old nature, but one by one they were torn away. Many of these things spring up to choke the better seed which I hope has been planted in my heart, but my heart is so cold that at times the seed almost seems to be killed by the long cold winter seasons, but let the sunshine of God's grace appear, then again it springs up into living green fields of beauty, and blossoms, thrives and grows, until it fills a large place. First, fields of living green, then ripe and golden for the harvest time. This is glorious to behold. We see God's children ripening, their bowed heads soon to be cut down, and they taken to the everlasting kingdom, where there shall be no more winter, nor tears, nor sorrows, and pain and death cannot enter there. They shall be one with Christ, all who love him and have heard his voice. Their song will be, A sinner saved by grace. This precious seed can never be lost. I do feel I know little of these precious things, yet I cannot refrain from writing some of my feelings from time to time. I thought last night in my wakeful hours, What a complaining, ungrateful creature I am; our God has bestowed so many good things upon me, such as food and raiment, pleasant surroundings, kind words and deeds, dwelling among the people I love most, the church of the living God, and hearing the gospel proclaimed each Sunday, and sometimes other days in the week, yet I find fault, poor, halting, doubting one that I am, when will I be satisfied? I do desire to be thankful to the great Giver of mercies. Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and all the crosses and trials have been for my good. May I at all times be enabled to say, "Thy will be done," in all his dealings with poor unworthy me.

May God bless you, our pastor, and comfort you while you are feeding the little ones, is the prayer of the hindmost one of the flock, if indeed I am one at all. God knows the heart. Grace be with all his loved ones.

Your sister in hope,

MARY D. BREWSTER.

COMANCHE, Texas, Dec., 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN:—God is a Spirit, and seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth. Jesus said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." He also said, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." Paul said, We are of them that worship God in the spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh.

With such Scriptures as the above before us I cannot see how any one can claim

that the flesh can worship God. With me the flesh is humbled only when under the chastening rod, which brings it into subjection. We are admonished to present our bodies a living sacrifice, which is our reasonable service. We read of one great offering of the body of Jesus once for all, and none other has ever been offered as was his body. Paul said, "With the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." He also said that God accepteth no man's person. He said to the church of Galatia, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect through the flesh?" It seems to me from all these Scriptures that all conditionalists place themselves under the law. I have heard some speak of being under the law of grace, but I do not so understand the matter. Law is based upon conditions, and there are no conditions resting upon the creature in the kingdom of grace. We have the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law. They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts thereof. Paul said, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." Have not all who have received him at all, received him with confidence and trust, believing him to be a full and complete Savior? Paul says, "So walk ye in him," trusting him for all. Every little act that I do thinking to get deeper into Christ is just stepping that much further away from him. The Spirit must always be in the lead, for Paul said, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." Notice that nothing is said about taking sin out of the flesh, and so it is that this poor old sinner has to carry it around, mixed with all he does or says, and feeling the condemnation of it. The only consolation I have is when the Lord enables me to realize that God is a Spirit, and that I worship him in spirit and in truth, putting all my trust in the finished work of Christ, for the past, the present and the future.

Your brother,

J. T. EVANS.

COLUMBUS JUNCTION, Iowa, April 28, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As my time has expired for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I will remit. Inclosed find post-office money order for two dollars, for which extend my subscription another year. I am well pleased with the SIGNS, and consider it the best medium of correspondence the Old Baptists have, and wish that more Old Baptists would read it. I have read it since I was a child, and detect no difference since I first began to read and understand. The editorials of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe are as a revelation to me, and Elders Chick and Ker seem to know just the kind of food I need. I hope the correspondents will continue to write comfortably to Zion. It is indeed meat and drink to

read the messages of those who are traveling the same road, hoping and trusting in the crucified and risen Redeemer, having no confidence in the flesh, having put off the old man and have desire to be found in the courts of King Immanuel. Oftentimes I am moved to tears when reading some letter that seems addressed directly to me, and I am not ashamed, for it is written, "Jesus wept." He wept that we might weep. Each sin demands a tear, and I despise my sinful nature, being utterly incapable of attaining unto that which I desire, for I find a warfare in my members, the flesh and the Spirit warring against each other. I am torn with conflicting emotions, and am often made to exclaim, "Is there any one like me?" Yet whither shall I go? There is no other name given whereby we must be saved.

Remember a poor sinner at the throne of grace.

J. L. THURSTON.

DUNCAN, Okla., March 4, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—As it is my duty to send in some money on my subscription, being hindered heretofore, I will send in what little I have, asking forbearance. It is like all my works, which come far short of the standard of perfection. I do not feel I can get along without the dear old SIGNS in this isolated part of the country, for it is all the preaching I have. I do not think there is another Old Baptist in or around here, and O how lonely I get; how I do long for the company of my heavenly Father's children. Although I know I am unworthy to be in their midst, yet I long to be with them and hear them proclaim salvation by grace for time and eternity without the works of man.

I only wanted to write a few lines to thank our dear editors and all the contributors to the SIGNS for their many excellent letters that I have enjoyed, and O how I would like to tell them how much comfort and consolation they have been to me, but I am not gifted in writing. I would like to tell them how many beautiful things of our heavenly Father's kingdom have been shown me by reading their writings, but I am so ignorant I cannot express myself in a way to be understood, so I will bring this to a close, asking an interest in the prayers of the dear brethren and sisters everywhere, and if any of the dear old brethren or sisters who formerly knew me in Texas would write me a line it would be highly appreciated. May heaven's richest blessings rest on all the dear ones everywhere, especially the dear editors.

From a little sister,

S. E. ELLIS.

EAST DIXFIELD, Maine, Nov. 20, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF THE GOSPEL:—Your last letter has remained a long time unanswered, but by no means forgotten; I enjoyed it in a marked degree, as my mind was and is dwelling more on the things of which we hope to attain than upon the conditions through which I am now passing. The apostle says, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." The path of the just is indeed a shining light, but still how often obscured by clouds and tempests, so that we feel beaten hither and thither with abated strength, so that we are made to cry out, O is there any one like me? Satan desires to have us that he may sift us. O for more of that rejoicing of which you wrote; O that we might trust our all with God, though he slay us. I know that my

Redeemer liveth, and because he lives we shall live also.

I thought of you often while you were visiting the churches in the summer. It seems to me that it is a peculiarly enjoyable season when those who are isolated in a measure, can have the privilege of these two days meetings; I have often thought of it. The news from the Bowdoinham Association was most cheering. I felt while I was at Auburn that I was a little nearer to them than when at home. I have been able to travel but little, and even the little that I could travel I could not go alone. Since returning home from Auburn I have had a bad cough, with other troubles, and am not now by any means in my usual health, but hope I am gaining. At my time of life I can expect no great degree of bodily strength, and am thankful I am able to be around and care for myself. I was hoping to go more from home, but we have had quite a cold fall, though now it is a trifle warmer. I can but feel that I am a stranger here, but I have no desire to worry or fret. I hope all my days may be days of peace and joy. I trust you have become rested, and that you are feeding upon the precious promises, which are all yea and amen in him. O what a bounteous store is laid up for all believers. How many comforting words the Master left for his sorrowing disciples. The work is finished and the victory indeed is won. The robe of Christ's righteousness covers every foul blot, and his blood washes whiter than snow. I am often quoting this portion of a hymn:

> "God, my supporter and my hope,
> My help forever near,
> Thine arm of mercy held me up
> When sinking in despair."

I think that as the years go on I have a more abiding sense of the goodness of God in giving me hope in his mercy, in covering me with his feathers, and in permitting me to cast all my cares and burdens on him. For he careth for us. "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life." How merciful and gracious is he in all his dealings with his people.

You will find this a poor apology for a letter, but I am feeling quite poorly, bodily, still I did not like for so many days to pass without attempting to answer your very comforting letter. I hope this will find you and yours in usual health, and with the sunshine of peace and rejoicing faith.

Your sister in hope,

ELIZA WHEELWRIGHT.

HURRICANE, W. Va., May 17, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I have had a desire for some time to write and ask you, if not asking too much, to give through the SIGNS your views upon 1 Kings vi. 8, which reads as follows: "The door for the middle chamber was in the right side of the house: and they went up with winding stairs into the middle chamber, and out of the middle into the third." If you have a mind to do so, I would appreciate your views, but if not, cast this into the wastebasket, and all will be well so far as I am concerned. I feel to be weak and imperfect and less than the least of all the children of God, if indeed I am one at all. O what a great God we have. He has all power and works all things after the counsel of his own will, and will do all his pleasure, yet some claim that their blessings here in time depend upon their good works. Now let us consider, dear brethren. Was poor old Job afflicted on account of his disobedience? And does not the Bible say the Lord's people are an afflicted and poor people?

Paul said, "The good I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I feel this to be the case with me, and so if I am saved at all it is by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. He "hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Dear brethren, when at the throne of grace remember this poor worm of the dust.

A. L. THORNTON.

[WE do not feel that we have any special understanding of the Scripture proposed by our brother, but would be glad to hear from any one who has aught to say about it. The Scriptures do not say what this type may apply to. One thing we may learn from it, viz., that all that pertains to the house of the Lord is made strictly according to the will of God, and that nothing is without meaning and that nothing is unessential. Our God takes care of the minute things in his kingdom as well as the greater things; all fit together as one harmonious whole. Of this we may be sure, even though we do not see the meaning of much that is in that kingdom.—C.]

HOPEWELL, N. J., July 18, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I feel unworthy to address you by that dear name. It is three weeks to-day since I came away, and it seems like a long time since I was at the meeting, but my mind has been with you all. Sometimes I feel as though I were not worthy to have my name with you, but it is the dearest place in all the world to meet with the children of God and hear them tell of his love to poor sinners, such as I feel myself to be. But "we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I often think of those who can stay away from their meetings and go to some place of worldly amusement or religion, and that if they have ever had the love of God shed abroad in their hearts it could not be so. When I am away from my home I do not have any desire to go, and I know that I have no right to go with them, for I know what I would hear. I am now near the place where I was a member for six years. I thought it all right then to follow the commandments of men, but the Lord's good time came, when he brought me out from among them. I was in a horrible pit and miry clay. I hope to be with you next Saturday at the meeting, but if it be the will of God that I should not be there please remember me to them all.

I hope you will excuse this poor letter; it is like the writer, of not much account, still I felt like writing a few words to you. I would not mind being away from Hopewell if it were not for the meetings. It is hard for those who have the desire to go and yet cannot do so. Brother Fetter told me once that it was better to be a long way off and have a desire to attend than to be near by and not have that desire. I feel it is that way.

But I must close now. I hope you are all well. With love to all, I am your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) GEORGE GOLDEN.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906; 07 means 1907; 08 means 1908, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1908.

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EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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"AND ALL YE ARE BRETHREN."

(MATTHEW xxiii. 8.)

THESE are very gracious words, spoken by the Master to his disciples, and the occasion upon which they were spoken was such as to make the words especially impressive and full of meaning. How full and rich the words of Jesus all were; there is not one who has made the Bible his study but admits that the deep meanings of it grow and continue to grow upon him the more he meditates upon its words, and yet while these meanings grow, it is only a development of that which was made known first of all to him. . So in these words the beginner in grace sees something of heavenly beauty, and as he goes on to know the Lord their beauty increases. The little child knows something of the love of a brother, but how much more he comes to know with the growing years. The thought embraced in the word "brother" comes to have a deeper and deeper meaning as our infancy grows into childhood, and then youth, and then manhood, yet it is the same relation, the same kindnesses and the same associations all the way along, only growing deeper and deeper in their meaning to us. So, likewise, the brotherhood that is in Christ is very sweet, and more full than we can tell at the beginning of the experience of it in the soul, but still it is only as the passing of time brings brethren more and more into association with each other, and also shows them more of the love of the Elder Brother toward them all, that they can come to realize the riches of this truth, "And all ye are brethren." This is true, not only as a matter of inward feeling or experience, but also as we consider what doctrine is involved in it. If "all ye are brethren," there are some things that are fitting in our lives one with another, and there are some things that are not fitting, and so also, if we feel like brethren, there are some things that will not abide in our hearts and our thoughts, and there are some things that will abide with us. A brother does not feel toward a brother as he does toward a stranger or toward an enemy. A brother will not act toward a brother as he will toward a stranger or an enemy, and the inward emotion can appear in no other way than by word and deed. Some of these things we desire to speak of.

First, brethren are equal. That word is used in the New Testament to set forth the relationship among God's children in special; the word "fellowship" means equality. One is the fellow of the other. When in the Old Testament we read that the command of God has gone forth that the sword of divine justice and vengeance should smite, it is to smite the man who is "my fellow;" that is, mine equal, the man Christ Jesus. What an exaltation is thus put upon the man Christ Jesus. The word has in it the meaning of companionship or friendship. The very word "friendship" implies equality. There can be no true companionship or friendship without equality. So the word "brethren" implies equality, and this in-

cludes equality in birth. All these are the children of God alike. It signifies equality in all the Father does for them, and all these brethren were loved alike from everlasting, and were all redeemed alike, and were all drawn alike by the Spirit of God, and are all alike heirs to the same inheritance, reserved in heaven for them, and all are sustained by the same hope and faith, and all are filled by the same love shed abroad in their heart by the Holy Ghost which has been given to them. Thus the blessed Redeemer is here saying to his disciples, Ye are all one indeed in Christ Jesus.

It is well to notice the occasion of these words. Nearly all the teachings of Jesus gain much of their meaning from the circumstances under which they were spoken. This is true of all words that men speak or write, but it is especially true of the words of Him who spake as never man spake. In all our thoughts about the words of the Redeemer we ought to carefully consider the connection. At the best and with the utmost care we shall often err, but to undertake to speak of any text in the Bible without considering the connection carefully is handling the word of God carelessly, to say the least about it. If we have the Spirit that leads to considering and meditating upon the word day and night, it is sure that the Lord will give light, even as he has first given the desire for light. So let us call attention to the immediate connection of these words. Jesus spake to the multitude and to the disciples, saying to them that the scribes and the Pharisees did sit in Moses' seat. That is, they were the appointed guides in all that pertained to the law of Moses. Therefore, he said to them, they were to observe all that the scribes and Pharisees bade them do, but they were not to do as those teachers did, for they said, and did not. Binding heavy burdens upon men, they did not so much as move them with one of their fingers. And all that they did do was to be seen of men. To this end also they made broad the phylacteries of their garments, and enlarged their borders, and loved the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts, and greetings in the market, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. Jesus taught them that all this was entirely contrary to the whole spirit of his kingdom. His disciples were not to be called "Rabbi," for they all had one Master, Christ, and instead of one being better than another in dignity and in office, they all were brethren, or equal, as has been said before. In all the relations that pertained to his kingdom they were to call no man father upon earth, since they all had one Father which is in heaven. Neither was any one of them to be called master, since they had one Master, even Christ. Jesus proceeded to say that he who should be great in his kingdom was that one who was possessed of the spirit of humble service, while he that sought to exalt himself should be abased in the kingdom of the Lord, and he that humbled himself was to be exalted. This is the connection of the text, and it all throws light upon the chief truth enunciated by the Savior: "And all ye are brethren." In it all is set forth the vast difference between that which appeals to the flesh of men and that which is pleasing to God. The stamp of condemnation is here set upon all in man, even in his own disciples, who would seek exaltation above others; all that proceeds out of vain ambition, all that would cause any man to lift up his head and count himself worthy of more than another. It is all a solemn warning against that spirit which in all ages has exhibited it-

self in priestcraft and kingcraft, which have again and again devastated the world with fire and sword, and which in disciples of Jesus themselves has wrought sorrow and division and death in hundreds of the churches of the saints. It is not the name so much as the spirit that loved to be called "Rabbi," "father" and "master," which the Master here condemns. Even in the church of God there must be officers appointed to attend to the special affairs of the church. We read of bishops, deacons and elders appointed by the apostles, who did this under immediate divine direction, so that we know what they did was the mind and will of God. These, all three, are scriptural titles, and are used to distinguish those who were chosen to minister especially in the temporal and spiritual affairs of the churches. This is not wrong, and neither does the Redeemer here condemn the use of these titles, but he does condemn that spirit which loves to be called bishop, elder and deacon. He does condemn that spirit which claims special honor, even though he commands that special honor should be bestowed upon those who do well in these offices. It is an entirely different thing to demand honor from men from what it is to bestow honor. Our God honors those who do not seek to be honored, but the proud he knoweth afar off. Our blessed Master and Lord did not seek honor of men, but yet to him in all ages have hosannas been rendered from spiritual and grateful hearts. He made himself the servant of all, serving in both the spirit and letter of service; serving in the letter, because serving first of all in the spirit of service. It is not wrong to covet the best gifts in the service of the people of God, but the more excellent way is love. Love seeks nothing for her own, but seeks to give all. Love is humble, and not self-seeking. If we love as brethren there will be no room to desire to be called Rabbi and father and master, yet the service of love will be acknowledged among them that are spiritual, and such as thus serve will be counted worthy of double honor. How wonderful to think not of honor, and yet, just because we think not of it, to be honored. The praise of some was in all the churches, and yet they did not seek praise nor deem themselves worthy of it. It is this spirit, but poorly described in these halting sentences, that the Master commended in the connection of the text. The love of honor is one thing, the love of service is another. Scribes and Pharisees loved the uppermost rooms at the feasts and the chief seats in the synagogues. Some indeed must fill the uppermost rooms and the chief seats, but disciples were to beware of loving to be in such places. Some men must be rabbis, fathers and masters, but disciples are not to love to be called so; rather, they are to love to be called brethren one with another. He who among man is greatest, if the Spirit of Christ be in him and rule in him, loves the fellowship of the humblest among men. "All ye," great or small, learned or unlearned, bond or free, wise or unwise, are one in Christ, and in him are just brethren one of another. What a lovely description of that which the Spirit of Christ wrought in Jesus while on earth as our fellow, and of what that Spirit does still work out in the hearts of his followers in some dim measure at least. So also men are chosen to be bishops or elders or deacons, to be pastors and teachers, and to rule in the house of God, but all this is as brethren, belonging to one common brotherhood. These titles are all only names by which different kinds

of servants are to be designated. All are servants alike of one Master. Some indeed are doorkeepers, some are cup-bearers, some are serving tables, some stand and wait before the King, but all are equal among themselves, and equally subject to the one Master, and among them all, one cannot boast over another, as though his place of serving is superior to that of his brother. As fellow-servants one has no right to lord it over another, and as brethren one can have no desire to be supreme, or to dictate to others. If the spirit of service and the spirit of brotherhood be in us it forbids that one should be a lord over another; and, in like manner, the spirit of brotherhood will forbid that there should be any claim to superior titles, "But be not ye called Rabbi." If the spirit of true humility be in us we shall all shrink from being called by any title that would imply superiority in any form. How easy is it to feed our pride upon that which is to the praise of men. Being given some title, and being called by it, soon produces in us the feeling that it belongs to us, and we straightway begin to resent any failure upon the part of others to accord to us that title. Pride, self-esteem, vanity, are all immediately up in arms to insist upon the homage implied when men designate us by these titles. How much need have we to watch unto prayer against this evil spirit, the spirit of the devil. As pastors and elders, brethren in the ministry have great need to also be watchful. Like Timothy, the admonition belongs to us all to take heed first of all to ourselves; it is all-important to consider the manner of spirit which actuates us. We are not above our brethren; it is not ours to dictate to the churches. If it is ours to admonish the churches, it is theirs also to admonish us. If it is ours to preach the gospel, with all that that word means, to the churches, it is theirs to judge our preaching. If it is ours to reprove, rebuke with all long-suffering and doctrine, it is ours also to listen to admonition and reproof from spiritual men in the churches. If it is ours to comfort God's people, it is sure that we also need comfort from their hands. If it is ours to serve them, it is our need also to be served in the same things. Pastors ought to remember that they are brethren and fellow-servants with all the flock. If we be counted worthy of honor it is not because we make claim to that honor, but because our life and our service are of such a sort as to command that honor. It is ours to, first of all, remember that we are the servants of God, so also it belongs to every brother to remember that he, as well, is a servant of God. "All ye are brethren." If it be true that disciples of the Lord are not to love even the divinely given titles which belong to the offices in the church, what shall we say of that disposition that seeks to claim titles which do not belong to any man in the churches? What shall we say of that pride which would ascend even to the throne of God and claim for poor, sinful, feeble man titles that belong alone to Deity? The names of blasphemy are such as Reverend, Doctor of Divinity, Right Reverend, Holy Father in God. One name alone is reverend, one alone is the Physician of the sinsick soul. The Savior said, "Call no man your father upon earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven." Reverence is indeed enjoined toward aged men and women, but this belongs to all, and is not a title to be rendered to here and there one. If any are holy so are all holy brethren, and not one above another. All such words used as titles are an abomination to him who

possesses the spirit enjoined in the text and its connection, and that child of God who is seduced into either claiming such titles or into giving them to others, does despite to the spirit of grace as manifested in all humility and brotherly love. He is guilty of refusing to hear or to heed the solemn admonitions of the word and the express commandment of the Son of God. O that more of the Spirit of the meek and lowly One night be manifest in all our conversation.

In conclusion, let it be remembered that meekness and lowliness and brotherly regard for each other do not open the door for carelessness in defense of the word and ways of God. To abide by the doctrine of the word is perfectly consistent with walking as brethren. Our fellowship and brotherhood rest upon one faith and one experience of that faith, and the wisdom, which is from above, is first of all pure, which must mean uncorruptness in doctrine as well as other things. It is in the belief of the truth that we know each other as brethren. Believers are brothers in one faith, and that faith takes in every principle of doctrine taught in the Bible, and so, like Timothy, we are not only to take heed to ourselves, but also to the doctrine. C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder G. B. Bird.)

To the churches composing the Pocatalico Association and the associations with which we correspond.

Beloved Kindred in Christ:—It is according to the purpose of Him who is sovereign over all created things that our lives have been spared to thus meet again to sing our dear Redeemer's praise, and to greet those of like precious faith with that love and fellowship which we hope is from above.

We now desire to call your attention to the Bible doctrine of predestination, and what the Baptists have believed in regard to it in time past, and while it does not matter so much what men have believed, or do now believe, still we feel glad to know that we are contending (while perhaps not as earnestly in some instances as we should) for the same faith and practice as did those of our brethren in the past ages, whom we believe to have been taught of the Lord, though we much prefer to be in harmony with all the teachings of the word of God, rather than that of man, and we hope by the grace of God to be enabled to measure all points of doctrine by the great standard, the Bible, and reject those that do not conform to this great rule. We shall now give a few quotations from Baptists of the past, with the date of same: "The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom and infinite goodness of God so far manifest themselves in his providence that his determinate counsel extendeth itself even to the first fall, and all other sinful actions both of angels and men, [and that not by a bare permission] which also he most wisely and powerfully boundeth and otherwise ordereth and governeth in a manifold dispensation to his most holy

ends, yet so as the sinfulness of their acts proceedeth only from the creatures." —London Confession of Faith, c. 5, art. 4, July, 1689. "Predestination is not confined to the adorable purpose of salvation by grace, but it has a direct bearing on all things; not a sparrow can be brought to the ground, nor can the troubled ocean dash her foaming waves one inch beyond the limits of God's decrees; if anything was left upon uncertainties everything must have been equally uncertain. If the smallest atom in creation were suffered to fly at random, in the full sense of the word, God himself not knowing where or when it would alight, it would prove what cannot be proved, viz., that God is deficient in knowledge. The omniscience and the predestination of God must stand or fall together; they cannot be separated." "The doctrine of absolute predestination when rightly understood does not involve the idea of man acting involuntarily in sin, nor does it exonerate him from accountability."—Elder Gilbert Beebe, first editorial on the subject, Feb. 6th, 1833. "So that whatsoever befalls any of his [God's] elect is by his appointment for his glory and their good."—London Confession of Faith, 1689. "But while we hold that he is supreme in power, and that he works all things after the counsel of his own will, we are certain that he reigns in righteousness, and that there is no unrighteousness with him. To admit the universal government of God is to admit the predestination of all things, from the falling of a sparrow to the dissolution of a world. In the absence of predestination with what certainty could the Holy Ghost inspire the holy prophets and apostles to foretell all that should ever come to pass? If it were undetermined in the purpose of God, how could the apostles tell us of perilous times that should come in the last days; of apostasy from the faith, and spiritual wickedness in high places?"—Elder Gilbert Beebe, last editorial on the subject, 1880. In reference to the editorial of which the above is an extract, Elder S. Hassell in his church history says: "I append the last editorial of Elder Gilbert Beebe on the subject of predestination, showing his views in full in regard to God's absolute yet sinless and righteous predestination of all things, which are substantially the same as the old London Confession of Faith." And again, Elder Hassell says, "I believe, and I think that every Bible Baptist believes, that God is the almighty, all-wise and all-holy sovereign of the universe, that he could have prevented the entrance of sin into the world; that he had a purpose worthy of himself, however inscrutable to us, in regard to the entrance of sin, as well as in regard to all things else; that by his supreme power and decree he restricts all the rage and malice of wicked men and devils to do no more nor less than what he will overrule for the good of his people and for his own glory; that men act voluntarily when they commit sin, and are neither tempted nor compelled by God to sin." Space will not admit of further quotation, but what has been said along this line is sufficient to prove that our views on predestination are the same as those held by our brethren in the past, and that there has been no departure from the faith on our part. It should be borne in mind that the old London Confession of Faith was an expression of the messengers from over one hundred churches in England and Wales in 1689, and the same articles of faith were adopted by the Philadelphia Association in 1742, and by the Kehukee Association in

1765. Such expressions as quoted above are to my mind in perfect harmony with the following Scriptures: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isaiah xlvi. 9, 10. "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations."—Psalms xxxiii. 11. "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things."—Isaiah xlv. 7. "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." —Genesis l. 20. "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."—Romans ix. 15, (also read to the 23rd verse.) "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."—Acts ii. 23. "For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together. For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."—Acts iv. 27, 28. From the above quotations of Scripture it seems clear that the absolute predestination of all things is a Bible doctrine, yet in the face of this Bible testimony there are men who deny this God-honoring doctrine, which proves clearly that there are still some who cannot endure sound doctrine, who will say, These are hard sayings, who can hear them? And, "Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"—Romans ix. 19, 20. But unto you, dear saints of God, this is a precious doctrine, for in it is your salvation for time and eternity secured; by it the Rock was smitten which affords living waters in this desert land to weary, thirsty souls; by it you are safe, kept through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed at the last time. "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith."—Heb. xii. 1, 2.

"Fear not, brethren, joyful stand
On the borders of your land;
Christ, your Father's elder Son,
Bids you undismayed go on."

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen."

J. H. TERRY, Moderator.
G. B. BIRD, Clerk.

(Written by Elder J. B. Slauson.)

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the First Church of Roxbury, at Vega, N. Y., Sept. 23rd and 24th, 1908, to the several churches of which this association is composed, sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—One more year is numbered with the past, and it has brought with it many conflicts and trials in our souls' experience, yet through the mercy of a covenant-keeping God we have been sustained and privileged to meet you again in an associate capacity. We feel to thank the Giver of every good and perfect gift for the many blessings

bestowed upon us in the year past, and we desire to praise him for his mercy bestowed upon us in keeping us in the bond of peace and unity of the Spirit. "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" While we have had many conflicts in the year past, there have been many pleasant seasons also, as we have felt the presence of our dear Redeemer in our very souls, causing darkness to flee away and bringing seasons of unspeakable joy. The presence of the Spirit of our Master makes the wilderness to blossom as the rose and springs of water to break forth in dry places. Among the manifold blessings bestowed upon poor mortals here below, none can compare with the presence of the Spirit of our adorable Redeemer. What a mercy that he should ever visit our poor dark and benighted souls by his Spirit, or bestow the power of redeeming grace upon such sinful creatures as we. Ought we not to love him more and serve him better, and should we not love one another with a pure heart fervently, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace? O that we may look to the rock from whence we were hewn, and to the hole of the pit from whence we are digged, and thus behold what we were by nature: poor, blind, naked and miserable, without hope and without God in the world; and now, being delivered from the powers of darkness to enjoy the presence of our loving Savior, and to enjoy the blessed privileges of our Father's house, where there is enough and to spare, and at his right hand are blessings forevermore. Could our finite minds comprehend in some slight degree the glories of the eternal abode of our God, we would long to fly away and dwell forever with him there, but in his all-wise providence he has hid the glories of that future world from our view, as it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but suffice it to say that we shall be satisfied when we awake with his likeness, when we shall see him as he is and be like him. My dear kindred in Christ, what can poor dying worms of the dust hope for beyond this: to appear in the likeness of our risen Lord, and to be in the presence of God forever; is not this infinitely sweet beyond comprehension? How precious is the hope of a poor sinner saved by grace, whose hope the Lord is. As an anchor holds the vessel when anchored in a rock through the storm, so the hope of God's poor children as an anchor of the soul will hold these poor frail vessels of ours through the tempest of life, for it is anchored in the Rock, Christ Jesus; a sure foundation-stone is laid in Zion. The powers of darkness may rage against these vessels and threaten them with destruction, yet why need we fear? our Father is at the helm. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." How wonderfully favored are the people of God, how sure are the promises of our God to them: he is of one mind, and none can turn him; "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." Dear brethren, if God loved us in eternity he loves us still, his love toward us has never changed, he is of one mind. In a covenant of love before the world was we were chosen in Christ and ordained unto salvation, predestinated unto the adoption of sons by Jesus Christ unto himself according to the good pleasure of his will, who was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification. Dear brethren, what a victory our dear Redeemer has won for us; he has paid the debt we owed and set us free; if the Son

makes us free we are free indeed. Our God works like himself: a wonder-working God, who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. When Jesus said, hanging on the cross, "It is finished," the work of redemption was complete; all that was included in the covenant of love before the world was redeemed by his blood and cannot come under condemnation again; all our sins were laid upon him. What a victory over sin, death, hell and the grave! O that we might comprehend in some measure this great and glorious achievement of our Lord and Savior for his people; yet how forgetful of his mercies bestowed upon us, how forgetful of his sufferings, in which he suffered for us, sweating great drops of blood, falling down to the ground under the burden of sin which was laid upon him. O wonder of wonders, mystery of the great deep! How can one who has felt the cleansing blood of the dying Redeemer applied to his poor guilty soul ever forget the mercy of him who has redeemed him by his blood and called him by his grace? How can one forget the duty that he owes to his God and absent himself for months from the house of worship, apparently having forgotten his duty as a member of the church and also of the body of Christ? We feel to admonish those who are burdened with the cares of this world, to "lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." O that we may let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven, by a faithful walk and observance of our duty toward the church and our heavenly Father. The most sacred cause of Christ should be first in the mind of every heaven-born child, and the one to be loved and cherished above every other cause. O that we could be more zealous toward the cause of Christ, feeling it a duty and esteeming it a privilege to lay aside the cares of this life to serve and worship him in our bodies and spirits, which are his. God forbid that we shall shrink from any duty (whether great or small) that we owe to our God, who hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad. Dear brethren, let us arise and put on our beautiful garments, inasmuch as we know that our labor is not in vain in the Lord. May love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, the fruits of the Spirit of our Master, abound in us to the praise of his great name forever.

J. B. SLAUSON, Moderator.

D. T. KEATOR, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Pocatalico Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Association, to the several associations with which we correspond, sendeth salutation.

DEAR SAINTS IN THE LIVING GOD:—The time has again come for our annual meeting. The good Lord has blessed us with this another privilege of meeting with our beloved brethren and highly esteemed correspondents from sister associations. We desire a continuation of your friendly visits with us. Our Minutes will inform you of the time and place of our next association. Farewell.

J. H. TERRY, Moderator.

G. B. BIRD, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, Oct. 6th, 1908, at the home of the bride's parents, near Locktown, N. J., E. Robinson Suydam, of Jersey City, and Miss Hulda Hyde Risler.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at the home of the bride, Sept. 1st, 1908, Elmer Dickson, of Livingston Manor, and Miss Mary P. Jenkins, of Union Grove.

By Elder Joshua T. Rowe, assisted by Elder Wm. Grafton, Sept. 19th, 1908, at the residence of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Abel D. Wilson, Forest Hill, Md., Alvis Sylvester Rowe and Miss Elizabeth Frances Wilson.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Joshua Simmons Corder fell asleep in Jesus on the evening of August 26th, 1908, in the 89th year of his age. He was born Feb. 15th, 1820, at the old Corder homestead, on Hacker Creek, then Harrison County, Va., now Barbour County, W. Va., and where (with the exception of a dozen years or so) he spent his long lifetime. At the age of thirteen years the Lord appeared unto him as his Redeemer, and two years later, in April, 1835, he was received and baptized in the fellowship of Mt. Olive Baptist Church, where his membership remained until the day of his death, a period of seventy-three years. In 1839 the church divided on the innovations of that day, and father was marvelously sustained in his youth by the power of God to remain with what was then called the old side. At the age of twenty years he was given license to preach, and preached his first sermon in April, 1840, from Col. i. 13, and his last sermon the fourth Saturday in June, 1908, at Mt. Olive Church, from John i. 11, 12, making sixty-eight active years in the gospel ministry, the first decade of which he traveled considerably in Virginia, Ohio and Indiana, but after settling in life his labors were confined principally in the churches surrounding him, where they were wonderfully blessed. He served the Tygarts Valley River Association as moderator for thirty-three sessions. The Lord chose him and made him a valiant man of Israel. As a peacemaker, a comforter, a sweet counsellor, a faithful soldier of the cross, a fisher and feeder of the Lord's people, his life is before his brethren, who loved him dearly for the truth's sake and who are deeply mourning their loss in his departure. June 18th, 1850, he was united in marriage to Miss Virginia Ann Grant, daughter of Deacon Wm. Grant, of near Front Royal, Va., who survives him, and who proved to be unto him a helpmeet indeed. To this union were born three children (daughters): Ann Belle, wife of Elder J. N. Bartlett, Blue Dell, wife of Truman E. Cole, and the writer of this notice, who, together with seven grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren, form the family circle which father never saw broken by death, except two infant great-grandchildren. Father possessed rare intellect, and we depended on his sound judgment in the affairs of this life. My aged mother and I shared with him for many years his sorrows and his joys, and knew in part what great things he suffered for Christ's sake in these perilous times, enduring persecutions, and witnessed in a measure how the Lord strengthened him, and how through Jesus he overcame and was made a pillar in the temple of God. His mind remained clear to the last, and his fatherly and solemn admonitions to the church will doubtless be long remembered. As the end drew near the Scriptures opened wonderfully to his mind, and his conversation was in heaven. He preached with power, sitting in his chair, as can be testified to by brethren who visited him. On the evening above mentioned, after conversing with mother about Zerubbabel being the type of Christ, he walked out of the house, and in a few minutes we went to look for him and found him lying dead, and from his position we have doubted that he was conscious of the sting of death. He had been having symptoms of heart trouble for five years, and we had tenderly watched over him day and night; but for all that, when the time came for the dear Lord to take him to himself he took him from us as he did Moses, whom he "knew face to face."

In compliance with his request, services were conducted by Elder J. N. Bartlett, assisted by Elder J. Floyd Cole. Hymns used, 1249 and 1257 (Beebe's collection); text, 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8, after which we laid his body in the Mt. Olive burial ground, in a plain wooden coffin, as he had told us to do, without flowers or display of any kind, or, to use his own words, "without formality," like the saints of old, to rest until the resurrection day, about which we so often heard him say, "What a great day that will be."

SEMMA ELL CORDER.

PHILIPPI, W. Va.

Mrs. Sarah Golden, our aged sister, fell asleep, as we fully believe, in the Lord, Feb. 11th, 1908, aged 89 years, 1 month and 7 days. She was a daughter of John and Elizabeth Wyckoff. A twin sister died August 29th, 1825. Her mother's maiden name was Ege. She was married to Abram S. Golden, March, 1837, who went west, and died in 1839. She was married to her second husband, William Golden, a brother of her first husband, in 1855, and he died in February, 1901. She was one of nine children, all of whom are dead except one sister, who resides in Flemington, N. J. She was baptized in the fellowship of the First Hopewell Church about the year 1850, a little preceding the coming of Elder Philander Hartwell to Hopewell as the pastor of this church. There is no one now left of all who were members

prior to his moving here. Our aged sister was confined to the house, and to her bed mostly, for some two years before her death. She passed away peacefully, from the failure natural to old age. She went down gradually to her grave, as a shock of corn fully ripened for the harvest. She had walked in full fellowship with the church from the time of her baptism. She was quiet and orderly in all her behavior, and was esteemed and honored by all her brethren, and by all who knew her. No one ever doubted the reality of the religion which she had professed, and to the end she delighted most of all to have her brethren come to see her, and when she could hear at all, loved nothing so well as spiritual conversation with them. But the blessed Lord has taken her away from earth, and we believe that she rests in the full glory of the redeemed.

The funeral service was held on Thursday, Feb. 13th, at the meetinghouse in this borough, a discourse being delivered from Psalms cxvi. 15, after which the body was interred in the adjoining cemetery until it shall please God to raise it up again.

C.

Miss Alice Carlile died at her home near London Tract, London Brittain township, Chester Co., Pa., Dec. 18th, 1907. Miss Alice was born within a few miles of the place of her decease, April 22nd, 1821, making her age 86 years, 7 months and 26 days. Her entire life was spent in that community, more than seventy-six years on the farm where she died, her parents having moved there with their family when she was ten years of age. She was a devoted daughter, sister and friend; her life was spent in the labor of adding to the well-being and increasing the comfort of others, being one of the most unselfish persons I ever knew. I believe both her parents were members of London Tract Church. Her mother, "Aunt Betsey Carlile," as she was familiarly called, lived to an extreme old age, passing away in the year 1884 at the age of ninety-six years. She was a remarkably bright, active woman, retaining her faculties to a wonderful degree to the time of her death. Miss Alice never united with the church, but manifested a great interest in and love for the Old School Baptists, so that we feel sure she was taught of the Lord. The writer asked her only a short while before her death if she had ever felt that she would like to be a member of the church. Her reply was, "Yes, but I always felt too unworthy." She leaves one sister, older than herself and very infirm, living in western Pennsylvania, several nieces and nephews and a large circle of warm friends, but upon none does the blow fall as upon "Miss Mary," as they have been together ever since Miss Mary's birth, and after the death of her own mother, which occurred when she was a little child, "Aunt" Alice had been a second mother to her, and a good, faithful one she had been, too. We miss her at London Tract; as long as she was able to go her seat was never vacant. Besides, she was ever ready to aid with her substance whenever asked for help in any good cause. We believe our loss is her gain. May the Lord care for the bereaved and orphaned niece, and manifest to her the unsearchable riches of his love by Christ Jesus, that she may ever find him "a very present help in trouble."

A. B. FRANCIS.

Mr. Hugh McPhail died at his home near Dutton, province of Ontario, Canada, August 17th, 1908, at the age of 86 years. His parents came from Scotland in 1819, settling in the township of Aldborough, where, three years later, Mr. McPhail was born. He knew Ontario in its pioneer days, and endured the hardships and privations incident to the opening up of that province. He lived to see it become a flourishing country and was permitted to share in its prosperity. He was widely known and universally respected, having held various public offices during his lifetime. Mr. McPhail never united with any church, but was a firm adherent of the Covenanted or Old School Baptists. When in conversation with members of that church he openly manifested his love for the truth, and ardently contended for it to the end. In his declining years the Bible and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES were his constant companions. He is survived by eight children, four sons and four daughters, and by one brother and one sister. He was a man who will be much missed in the community. The large assembly of people at his funeral was a silent witness of the respect in which he was held. He was an exemplary father, and the vacancy in the family is being keenly and sorrowfully realized by his bereaved sons and daughters. May they be comforted in the contemplation of a life so virtuously spent.

The text used by the writer at his funeral, which was held from his late residence, was John xi. 25, 26. Interment, Black's Cemetery.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

WARWICK, N. Y., Oct. 7, 1908.

Amanda E. Hilterbrand Ketchum, daughter of Isaac and Elizabeth Hilterbrand, was born Nov. 13th, 1842, at Ox Bow, Putnam Co., Ill. She was the fifth child of a family of fourteen children, four girls and ten boys. She spent her early life at home with her parents, in Putnam County. She was married to Eliphalet Ketchum, Oct. 24th, 1861, at Hennepin, Ill. They commenced housekeeping in the home of his father, Deacon Eddy Ketchum, six miles west of Henry, Ill., remaining there a year, when in the spring of 1863 they moved to Henry County, near Kewanee, where their children were born. In the summer of 1876 they moved to Clevens, Ford Co., Ill. In 1892 they moved back to Henry, Ill., where

they spent their declining years. She was the mother of four children, two sons and two daughters, all of whom are living. They are: Mrs. Elizabeth Moore, of Paxton, Ill., Mrs. Mary Potter, of Henry, Ill., Eddy and John, of Clarence, Ill. All, with the husband, were with her in her last sickness to minister their loving care. She was taken with "la grippe" last November, after which time she failed rapidly, her disease being cancer of the stomach. She leaves to mourn for her, besides the husband, four children, seven brothers and seventeen grandchildren, several nieces and nephews and a host of friends. She was not a member of any denomination, but always when convenient attended the Primitive Baptist Church with her husband, and was a great reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. She was a faithful companion and devoted mother, and was loved by all who knew her. She bore her sufferings patiently, being always bright and cheerful.

Her funeral was attended by a large gathering of kindred, neighbors and friends, and was conducted by Elder S. H. Humphrey, of Galesburg, Ill., at the family residence; his text was 1 Cor. xv. 55. Her body was buried in the Henry Cemetery, there to rest until the second coming of the Lord, when it will be raised in the image of our blessed Savior to reign with him forever.

S. H. HUMPHREY.

Warren S. Records died at the home of his mother, Mrs. L. E. Records, Salisbury, Md., May 12th, 1908, aged 21 years and 9 months. He was the son of the late Willard S. Records, who preceded him to the grave fourteen years. His disease was tuberculosis of the stomach, of which he was a great sufferer for one year. The last four months he was confined to his bed. He bore his affliction with great patience, always hopeful until a few days before he died. He told me he had prayed, and not to worry about him when he was gone. A few hours before he died he said, "Mother, I want to go home." I told him he was home with me, but he said he knew that, but he wanted to go to that sweet home where he was going to rest and where he was going to stay. He also requested me to sing. O it is so hard to part with him, but I desire to be reconciled to God's will. "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." He leaves one brother and one sister to mourn their loss.

MOTHER.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Sept. 2, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Our dear afflicted sister Records has handed me this notice of the death of her son to send for publication in the SIGNS. This is the second son she has lost, and it is a most sad bereavement, but the Lord has given her grace to be patient and in a measure reconciled. I attended the funeral May 14th, reading for a text Romans v. 19-21. Both sons were amiable young men, and held in high esteem by all who knew them. The mother and remaining children have the sympathy of all. May the Lord comfort them.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Thomas Vannatta was born Jan. 6th, 1844, and died July 18th, 1908, in the full triumph of living faith in Jesus his Redeemer. The subject of this notice was a member of the Missionary Baptists at Clay Village, Ky., but often attended our meetings at Bethel, and was a reader of the SIGNS, a lover of sound doctrine, an exemplary, honorable and highly respected citizen. He often spoke of his only hope as being in Christ, and during all his sufferings from heart trouble he neither murmured nor complained, but awaited the end, as Job said, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." What blessed consolation. He leaves a widow, who was a devoted wife, one son and one daughter, Mrs. De Horner, of New Orleans, an aged mother, one brother and four sisters to mourn their loss; they keenly feel the sad bereavement.

The funeral was largely attended on Sunday, July 19th, and was conducted by A. R. Willett, of the Missionary Baptists, after which the remains were laid to rest in the cemetery in Shelbyville, Ky. I deeply regret that I was not able to attend the funeral; I deeply sympathize with the dear family, and pray God in their behalf for grace to sustain and reconcile them to his will.

P. W. SAWIN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky.

George Perry Jeffers died at his home in Windom, Minn., August 27th, 1908, aged 59 years. He was born in Beloit, Wis., April 11th, 1849. Although Mr. Jeffers had been in poor health all summer, he was feeling no worse that morning. Mrs. Jeffers had gone to prepare some toast for his breakfast; when she returned her husband was moving, but slightly conscious and drawing the last faint breath. The deceased had been afflicted for several years with stomach trouble. His only daughter, Cleo, died Dec. 18th, 1907, and he began to fail and at times was well-nigh prostrated. His heart was badly affected, so much so that relatives expected him to pass away suddenly, but it was a sore shock to Mrs. Jeffers, following so soon after they were called to mourn the loss of their only child. It also moves his friends with sorrow, for Mr. Jeffers had many of them, at all times being one of the most cheerful and accommodating of men. He was not one to long entertain a resentful spirit toward any one who may have wronged him, always ready to meet them half way. He was married to Miss Kate Thompson, Nov. 7th, 1878. He came with his parents to Cerro Gordo County, Iowa, in 1871, and to Cottonwood County, Minn., in 1879. He was the son of the late Elder Nelson and Lydia Jeffers, and one of nine children

only three of whom are living: W. R. Jeffers, of Windom, Mrs. A. W. Scott, of Canada, and Mrs. Ida Hill, of Colorado.

The funeral was held Sunday afternoon, August 30th. The writer made a few remarks at the house. The sermon was preached by Mr. Savidge, an Old School Presbyterian minister, a close friend of the family.

The deceased was a cousin of the writer. He was not a member of any church, but when I was called last December to attend the funeral of his only daughter, he gave me a reason of his hope in Christ, and believed the doctrine of the Old School Baptist faith. E. A. NORTON.

HAMPTON, Iowa, Sept. 12, 1908.

MEETINGS.

THE Welsh Tract Church has appointed her yearly meeting to commence on Saturday, Oct. 17th, 1908, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue two days. Those coming from Philadelphia, Baltimore and other points by rail will come via B. & O. R. R. on Saturday. Trains leave Philadelphia at 8:15 a. m., and Baltimore, Mt. Royal station, at 8 a. m. Get tickets to Newark, Del., where all will be met and conveyed to the meetinghouse. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, and especially to ministering brethren.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Nassaongo, six miles southeast of Salisbury, Md., commencing on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1908, and continuing three days. All coming by rail or boat get tickets for Salisbury, where they will be met and cared for. We would like for all who can do so to come with conveyance; it will be a help to the friends. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren. We want to say to brethren in the ministry that the meeting is to continue three days, so make arrangements at home before coming to the meeting to remain until a little after noon Friday; we close with a conference of all the brethren in the ministry, which is the very essence of the meeting; but for two-thirds of the preachers to leave on Thursday confuses the whole congregation. A word to the wise is sufficient.

T. M. POULSON, Moderator.

WM. E. BAILY, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie will hold its annual meeting the fourth Sunday, and Saturday previous, in October, (24th and 25th) 1908. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Trains will be met at Howes Cave on Friday before the meeting. If any cannot get here on Friday by rail, if they will write me at Schoharie I will meet them at Howes Cave on Saturday morning before the meeting.

J. E. LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

THE Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church will hold, nothing in providence preventing, their yearly meeting on the first Saturday and Sunday in November, (7th and 8th) 1908. Those coming by rail will be met on the day previous in the afternoon at Olive Branch and West Shokan.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting, the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, of the Roxbury Association, will hold a two days meeting on Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 21st and 22nd, 1908. Ministering brethren and all other lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

By order of the church.

A. BOGART, Church Clerk.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

THERE are a few Old School Baptists in Riverside, Cal., and they have meeting the first and third Sundays in each month, at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

W. D. BALL.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at the Hall, corner of 19th St. and 8th Ave., fifth floor. Elevator entrance on either 19th St. or 8th Ave.

11:00 A. M. 2:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 76. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1908. NO. 21.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CEDAR FALLS, Iowa.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Feeling somewhat burdened in mind, and with some desire or inclination to address a few lines, first for you to pass upon, and if in your judgment they would not be detrimental to the general interest of our beloved Zion, then submit to the many readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which began its existence nearly one year before I was born. I have been a reader nearly all the time for half a century, and am not yet tired of perusing its columns. How many of its contributors' voices are silent, they having fallen asleep one by one as the Lord has been pleased to call them home. One by one he has been pleased to call faithful servants of his vineyard into the sheepfold. I remember well the names of many of the contributors to the SIGNS in the last half century, almost household names, being so familiar. My productions are so much like myself, so imperfect, I can hardly ask for space, as it might crowd out more important matter, but feel to venture a few thoughts as the dear Lord may direct. As a basis, let me invite your attention to Hebrews xii. 25: "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven." This letter, conceded to be Paul's writing, says, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." This Son is the appointed heir of all things, by whom the worlds were made, who is the brightness of his Father's glory. "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son." "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom: thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." The apostle Paul is, in this Hebrew letter, contrasting between the legal and gospel heavens, old and new covenants, a covenant of works and the covenant of grace. The Son has removed the first, that he might establish the second. Paul, together with all the Hebrew saints, was brought experimentally

from under the first, or legal covenant, to the realities of the second, or new covenant of grace, "being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." Paul begins the second chapter: "Therefore we [including himself with the brethren] ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" If what God spoke through and by his angels, prophets and seers was steadfast: justice meted out to the offender for every transgression, not one escaped, how shall we under the gospel, under grace? As our text says, "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh [for it is now the Son that speaketh from heaven]. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: whose voice then shook the earth:" the legal heavens that were made. He says, "Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." We have the gospel church or kingdom now before us, under law to Christ, under law to him who speaketh from heaven, who is her Judge and Lawgiver, at whose word the legal heavens fled away, hence are the new heavens and new earth, "wherein dwelleth righteousness." See that ye turn not away from "him that speaketh from heaven." "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses." Dear and precious brethren in the Lord, let us remember that this is applicable to all the saints of to-day, under like conditions, as it was to those in the apostle's day. "Let us lay aside every weight, [hindrance or impediment] and the sin which doth so easily beset us:" unbelief, to disbelieve or trust not in Christ. I know that is the most besetting sin; but as God's children are dual in their nature, and are new creatures in Christ Jesus, old things having passed away, behold, all things are become new; then in this dual life there should be a putting off and a putting on. The child of God should imitate Christ's life. "This is the way, walk ye in it." It is spoken of as a race: "Run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." He is our forerunner, he is our perfect example; we should examine ourselves and see whether we be in the faith, the faith of faithful Abraham, who believed God and it was accounted unto him for righteousness. If we are in possession of this righteousness there ought to be fruits (see John xv. 16): "That ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." Continuously bear fruit, should not be a barren tree. (2 Peter i. 5–8): "If these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful." (See James iii. 17, 18.) All the chapter down to the verses named is showing the carnal nature side of our life and its sad effects unrestrained; the direful effects of the unbridled tongue, the lever of the busybody, the instrument used in all cunning craftiness, is from beneath. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. "This wisdom descendeth not

from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion." Let us remember and not refuse him that speaks from heaven, whose voice not only shakes the earth, but heaven also. That which cannot be shaken will remain; but the shaken, the tossed about with every wind of doctrine, unstable, like the waves of the sea, casting up mire and dirt, restless spirits, heady, highminded, rulers, dictators, &c., will not. Dear brethren and sisters, you may ask if God's children do these things. I certainly believe they do, but are not listening to the voice that is speaking from heaven, who is Judge and Lawgiver. When we walk or live after the flesh we walk in the broad way, and that way leads to destruction, and that destruction will surely come—come here in the time state of the church. He that uses the sword (the flesh) to slay or kill shall perish with the sword. King Saul represents a principle in the dual life of the saints. Goliath-like, men may boast and vaunt, defying the armies of Israel, but God fights her battles. David comes in the emergency. Saul's armor did not fit the little David, but he used a smooth stone and the sling; by faith he faced the enemy; he drew at a venture, the enemy fell. David ran and drew out the giant's sword and cut off his head. How true they who kill with the sword shall perish by the sword; the wicked are God's sword. Dear brethren and sisters, please read the thirty-third and thirty-fourth chapters of Ezekiel, in reference to the watchman and shepherd, which are synonymous terms. The point is the especial duties of the undershepherds in that Jewish dispensation, and is now applicable to all His undershepherds in the gospel dispensation; the church is to be the judge. They are to judge angels, and those angels are the gifts, her ministers. But first the church should have the mind of Christ, and to have the mind of Christ is to be of one mind, and if not of one mind there is something wrong, some or all have failed to hear the voice that speaks from heaven. I am using the word "hear" in the sense of belief following in the line of obedience. "If ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart, as in the day of provocation." To-day is the day of salvation; but, as stated, having the mind of Christ, all are of one mind, and able to judge with right judgment, with single eye, and need not be afraid to mete out to you. Please note this danger point by reading the first verse of the seventh chapter of Matthew. This is the closing chapter of Christ's memorable sermon on the mount. He was addressing his disciples, telling them how and what to do and what not to do. "Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." Dear brethren, let me say once for all, "The wages of sin is death," and death, physically, morally or spiritually, is the result of sin. It has caused blight and mildew, it has caused sorrow and sadness, it has caused divisions and subdivisions, it has divided churches, it has alienated dear and precious brethren. O let us stop and ask, Is it I? God is our Judge.

In conclusion, I desire to call you back to the third chapter of James, especially the seventeenth and eighteenth verses: "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, [free from any alloy, dirt or rubbish,] then peaceable, [quiet, not a disturber of the peace,] gentle, [not fractious] and easy to be entreated, [easy to approach, will kindly listen and consider,] full of mercy and good fruits."

Yes, full of mercy; just as we are merciful, so shall we expect mercy; just as we forgive, have we a right to expect forgiveness; with that measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. This "once again" means that not only the earth, but the heavens will be shaken. Good fruits only come from those principles named which are embodied in Christ, our wisdom, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Remember he says, "Thou hypocrite." What is it to act the hypocrite? Is it not to pretend great love and respect for one, and in the next breath or move thrust a dagger into his heart or sever the head from his body? Brethren, please read 1 John iii. 15. If we should follow after the flesh, or live after the flesh, as it is possible for God's children to do in this dual state, does not this fifteenth verse show the result of such a life? He that hateth his brother is a murderer. In James v. 20, is clearly shown an effort to save the erring, and, if effectual, a soul is saved from death; saved from excommunication, saved from death to the privileges of the church militant. This would be a death, but the murder in 1 John iii. 14, 15, is caused by false charges made by an envious, jealous brother or sister, which at first might be whispered around, though false. The Savior says, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you," &c., and further says, "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven." A conscience at ease, a heart filled with love, can and does endure hardness as a good soldier; does not rail out against his enemies, but can and does pray for their forgiveness as further evidence of the fruit of righteousness (see the eighteenth verse coupled with the seventeenth, as already shown); and the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

Dear brethren, should this escape the wastebasket and reach you, I trust you will throw the mantle of charity over the frail production, as it may be my last. I am now nearly seventy-five years of age, and have been numbered with the Primitive Baptists for fifty-three years, and I hope I love them for the truth's sake. May we ever be found contending for the old landmarks, the footsteps of Jesus. See Gal. vi. 16: "As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."

Your brother in a precious hope,

ISAAC SAWIN.

HERNDON, Va., Aug. 17, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—My wife in cleaning out my desk a few days since found a letter I received from brother B. F. Coulter over a year ago; in reading it over this morning and finding much comfort in it, thought I would send it to you for publication in the SIGNS, if in your judgment you see fit to do so. While reading over brother Coulter's letter the following words came unto my heart and mind with some degree of sweetness: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garment." Jesus said, and still says, unto his true servants, Feed my sheep, feed my lambs. Peter said, "Lord; thou knowest that I love thee." Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep, feed my lambs. To my mind, the best evidence we have of a true shepherd of his flock is that he feeds the sheep, and is not forgetful of the little

lambs. I do believe that dear brother Coulter is a true undershepherd of the little flock, and if I am one of the lambs of our Father's kingdom then I can claim that he fed me bountifully at the meeting at Frying Pan, mentioned in his letter. Brother Coulter is a stranger to me in the flesh, as I have only met him twice face to face, but I am led to believe he is not a stranger to me in the Spirit, and for this cause I am glad to write good things about him, and the unity that exists between Christ and his church. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" And it is written that we should endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love. John said, "Behold, what manner of love." Is it hard for us then to love God's people? No, it runs together like two drops of water, we are joined together as the Father and his Son, I in you and you in me, a love that cannot be severed, a unity, the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. "Behold, what manner of love." It is love that the world cannot buy. It is of Jesus, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world, and it is sure and steadfast. He says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." O then, dear brethren, how careful we should all be not to hurt one of these little ones; let us give unto them comfort instead of sorrow, for Jesus says, "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." And again, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." If we say things which hurt our brethren we hurt Jesus, and hurt the cause of truth; let us then, dear brethren, remember our undershepherds, for they all feel little, too, when clothed with the spirit of love. Paul felt little when he said, I am less than the least of all saints; so when we hurt one of God's dear servants we hurt one of the little ones of God's kingdom. It is written in the Song of songs, "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes." A little word spoken in the nature of a fox, though it be a little fox, spoils the cluster, it hurts the vine, it makes a large wound that takes a long time to heal. O that I could always remember this blessed truth, and behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.

Excuse me, dear editors, I did not intend writing so long a letter, but after reading brother Coulter's letter I seemed to lose sight of the old man and have written what I have. I do hope it is the spirit of the new man in this poor old sinner that has prompted me to thus write. I am battling with the old man daily, and he fights me hard, too, and tells me for pride's sake to lay my pen down never to take it up again to write to educated men, as I am so illiterate.

Your poor, weak brother, if one at all,

J. F. OLIVER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., June 12, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER OLIVER:—I was greatly pleased to receive your precious letter of May 20th. I have been visiting the different associations, and have not had a minute's time for writing in the last four weeks. I visited all except the Baltimore Association, which followed the meeting at Frying Pan. We had good meetings all the way through. My

absence from home and my many duties while at home are the reasons that I did not answer your letter sooner. Your letter was good news from a heavenly source, and welcome news, because it was the answer of faith to faith. It was the confession of sweet fellowship which sprung up from our coming together face to face, and partaking together of the fruit of the garden of God's grace. I had learned before I went to the Frying Pan meeting that you had been ploughing in the cold for a long time, and the cry of your heart to the Lord was, "My leanness, my leanness." Such exercises of mind and heart and such experiences are peculiar only to the children of the living God, therefore, my brother, you may, with the apostle, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations, knowing this: that the trying of your faith worketh patience, &c. In every trial and affliction through which we are called to pass there comes in the end, from the Lord, a sweet and precious deliverance. We can then say, "The Lord is my shepherd." As you say in your letter, times of darkness must come all along the way, but we have a sure Foundation, God is our deliverer. You have my full fellowship, my dear brother, in all you have told me in your letter. If I am not greatly mistaken, I have been all along the road of which you speak. In looking back over all my journey, remembering how the dear Lord has restrained me and cared for me and watched over me, and how ungrateful I have been through it all, the times I have fallen, have been lifted up, the times I have walked in darkness, having in myself no light, and the Lord has been light to my feet and a lamp in my pathway, ploughing in the cold, without prospect of seedtime or harvest, and he covered me with mercies, he led me to the house of my Master's brethren, and nourished with the sincere milk of his word my famished soul, and when I call to remembrance all the way he has led me I am ready to say, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow."

My first visit to the old Frying Pan Church was very pleasant to me, and one which I hope will long be retained in my memory. Our spring associations have been well attended and very pleasant. Our Delaware Association will be held (the Lord willing) in Philadelphia next spring, and we will be glad to see you here with us.

With love to all who may inquire for me, but especially to yourself and family, affectionately your brother in hope of life eternal, B. F. COULTER.

SHERWOOD, Oregon, Sept. 9, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —Inclosed I send a letter written us by sister Stuart, for publication in the SIGNS, if, after examining, you think it would be good reading for the patrons of the paper. I think it has the true ring of the pure gospel. I surely need not say that we are blessed with your editorials. It seems to me the SIGNS was never better edited than now, and we feel proud that the work is so well executed.

In gospel bonds,

J. P. ALLISON.

LENTS, Oregon, Sept. 3, 1908.

ELDER J. P. AND MARY ALLISON—DEARLY BELOVED FATHER AND MOTHER IN ISRAEL:—How long and lonely the time seems when I do not hear often from you; but I think I am at fault this time. I have not intended to be so careless as it appears, and I hope you will have charity; you know that charity is the greatest of the christian graces; it

suffereth long and is kind, and if we have not charity we are as sounding brass, or as a tinkling cymbal. O how empty and hard our poor, sinful hearts would be if we could find no love to forgive the faults and failings of one another. No matter what they are, if we repent, all should be forgiven. Is not this charity which covereth a multitude of sins, this love we have for dearly beloved brethren in Christ? When we behold their tears, which speak well of their broken and contrite heart, do not our hearts respond quickly, and with joy we mingle our tears, while we from the heart forgive all in the name of our precious Jesus, whom we feel indeed and in truth to be in our midst as we are so sweetly bound together with the golden chain of the love of our God? O what could we not forgive when we think of all that the most gracious Father did for us? We hope He hath drawn us unto himself with his love, his everlasting love, which never fails us. O the wondrous love of God to poor, finite creatures. John calls to this same poor creature, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." Perhaps this is why the called of God are so evilly spoken of, the world knows not the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the great Jehovah, who holds all things of heaven and of the earth in his hand, and what he wills he doeth, and none dare to ask the reason why, nor God the reason gives. When I am made to feel the love of the Father for his children all else which is so very disturbing seems to flee away, and sweet peace fills my soul with the fullness of God, and I rest easily in the finished work of our dear Redeemer, and songs of praise fill my soul for his loving-kindness to one so poor and unworthy. But, how well you know that we have to come to the low ground as well as go up the high way, and we get into the fog and clouds of blinding mist as we grope along, cold and trembling with fear, for we are alone, with no light, and much weariness; we are almost ready to despair, when a ray of light is given as we again take the higher flights, where we are allowed for a moment to gaze on the glories of our Lord and Master, while permitted to feast on his goodness and mercies to poor, weak worms such as we. O yes, it is not that you do not know, but that you do know, brings the comfort to my lonely heart. We might as well talk to the deaf and dumb as to one who has not been brought in the way which we hope the dear Lord hath led us. O what a comfort to speak with those we love and have fellowship with; our fears, our hopes and our aims are one, and we can go together over the dark, rough places as well as by the still waters, where Jesus leads those who are lame and blind, and all those who love and fear the Lord. His children have throughout all ages feared the Lord, and have spoken often one to another, and the Lord has hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance is written before him for them. How comfortingly sweet all this is to our souls as we read and find that it is unto those who fear his name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings. It is the sick who need the great Physician, and need his attendance every day and hour. O how we need his Spirit in all our attempts to worship him, for without him we can do nothing; he is all and all unto his true followers, and for them other foundation can no man lay, for Jesus is the Lord our Righteousness,

and may we be always found glorying in the honors of his most holy name.

My dearly beloved ones, in this long, imperfect letter I feel that you are wearied, but I must tell you how I long to see you, and how I long to kneel again by your side while our dear old father offers prayer for us all, in which he is always so wonderfully blessed, and at the throne of grace I long to be remembered, although absent from you, and may the grace of God be ever with you, making your last days your best, being kept by the power of God unto salvation.

I cannot say good-bye without speaking of the death of our precious old brother in Israel, Elder W. S. Mathews. O how shocked and grieved I was, as I did not know that his death was looked for. Siloam Association of Old School Baptists will feel their loss, which we feel sure is the blessed old brother's eternal gain. I heard the sad news at our church meeting of last month. Indeed the news was sad; to think we would never have him with us again, the dearly beloved old pastor of Cedar Creek Church, which he attended so faithfully for many years, and in loving remembrance all present rendered tearful tribute of love to his memory. Elder Moffitt came to the meeting directly from attending the funeral of our aged brother, and he was much affected in his sermon on Saturday, speaking very lovingly and kindly of him.

Now I must say good-bye for this time. I am sure you will think of my broken arm and overlook all that is amiss in this poor letter.

With much love, I am, as ever, unworthily your sister,

(MRS.) S. L. H. STUART.

VACATION REMINISCENCES.

How blessed are experiences that lead to a feeling and sensible nearness of heart to the divine truths of gospel instruction and admonition. Of such was that which opened the way for me to use the first day of my year's vacation in attending the opening session of our three days meeting, and the preaching seemed a continuation of the previous year's sermons. We were painfully reminded of absent ones, and pleasurably surprised by the presence of others whose coming was for the comfort and upbuilding of Zion, yet I felt to be alone, and could only think back to that charge once delivered to the daughters of Jerusalem, and I seemed living in the past rather than in the present year's meeting. In that strange and wonderful way I was made to rejoice at the thought of Mount Sinai, which none of God's servants approach except with two tables of stone in their hands, and blessed are they when the first set is broken.

A few days since I stood beside that aged and beloved minister, Elder W. S. Mathews, and it was truly a blessed privilege to witness his patient resignation to the will of Him whose goodness and mercy has crowned his years with rich gifts to the church militant. After a few minutes I took farewell in a way so far removed from any former thought or experience that it has seemed the dawn of another existence, one absolved from hopes and fears, sunshine and shadow, river, or desert, and full of rejoicing in the blessed assurance of that promise of God to his servants, "that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

I then proceeded to the abode of another aged saint, not reckoned among the prosperous and favored, but whose words

were as a well of living water, and I witnessed the power that in all ages has manifested itself by lending a strength not given by course of nature. Loving messages and kind remembrances reached me from Sister L. Pitman, who was not able to return home, owing to an attack of chills while on a visit to her children.

Another of the especial wonders of grace were in the words of dear, aged sister Bruce, whose trying affliction was stayed for one brief moment as she prayed, "O Lord, remember me." Truly her cry was out of the depths, and the time is not distant when God himself will wipe the tears from her eyes.

"Of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh." Assembling with the hundreds of co-workers, in the cause of humanity, and standing in their group, no one among them more humble or less worthy to be exalted to a place of highest honor, yet in the midst of it all I was reminded of that Book of books, which, if my name be written there, it shall never be cast out, and a tenderness and yearning of heart went out toward all, until it reached that bounding line, The Lord will bring them off more than conquerors. For he says, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." Then, while so pleasantly surrounded, and in view of many of the beautiful works of art and the triumphs of science, there arose before my eyes a mystic cross and the precious Savior stood forth, "Lord of lords, and King of kings." Then fade each earthly joy, I stand as one alone, for all the powers of earth are as naught and all its glory as the flower of the grass.

For the past few days I have been much in the company of dear sister Lash, whose eightieth birthday was celebrated on the 24th inst., and her words of comfort and encouragement bear testimony that in Zion there is a rest prepared for those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

With the dawn of another week begins another year's duties. And while our physicists would disclaim all times and dates, as revealed, I rejoice that with God one day is as a thousand years.

While we are reminded that in the world's history primitive man was savage, yet how refreshing to read that God dwelt among some of them to teach and instruct them as the salt of the earth, and he knows all languages, he is not confused with the confusion of our tongues, for he speaks as never man spake, causing his righteous servant to say, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him," and that ever-present, eternal salvation extends through all created time and existence to every chosen vessel of mercy, and God, who is rich in tender mercy toward us while we are yet dead in trespasses and sins, will, through the merits of Jesus, bring us to the final rest of the saints.

(MRS.) M. J. LEE.

ELGIN, Ore., Aug. 24, 1908.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., Aug. 21, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I hesitated some little time before using the word brother. Was there ever any one like me; so unworthy, so helpless and so incapable of sending a message containing one single thing to interest or arouse any feeling save that of sympathy? But I do love, I trust, the Lord with all my soul and mind, and that is not saying very much, yet it is to the extent of my capability, and I do love his people with a love that I cannot express, with a love

that I cannot account for, unless it be that he has put his Spirit in my heart. How I long to be with them to-day and to-morrow, and all the remaining time of my sojourn here. I had thought to attend the Virginia Association this fall, and to go as far east as New York, and wrote to brother Badger to that effect, but at present cannot see the way clear for me to do so. I grieve over it, for every thought in connection had given me great pleasure, but I want to say that I am as firm in the faith as ever, and every one of life's vicissitudes only tends to confirm my belief. A few weeks ago I was cold and indifferent, and after considerable persuasion consented to accompany my family to a Congregational meeting; I was disgusted, as usual, but upon retiring that evening had a precious season of prayer, and felt such a oneness, such a nearness to God and his people, that I tried to thank him over and over again. I remembered the beauty of his courts, and the comforting utterances of his ministers, and I said, My God and my people; yet I find myself dishonoring him most of the time; doing the things I should not, and neglecting my duties in various ways, one of which is, my omission to send money for the SIGNS. I thought so intently of doing so that I imagined I had, but was awakened to the true state of affairs a few days ago, so I hasten to send it, with many apologies. I am getting old (was sixty-one this week) and worldly cares encompass me; I could and would throw many of them aside, but my family has those tendencies, and I have no control over them. In the spring Mr. Wright and I went to Los Angeles to visit our daughter, then the coming of the fleet occasioned a great celebration, bringing company and diversion in many ways. Now the season is at its height, and the house is full most of the time, but never a syllable of gratitude, thankfulness or reverence, never anything but a desire to drink the cup of pleasure to its dregs, and the claim that it is due them. Above me is God and his goodness, but around me is the smoke of offense and indifference; I fear for myself, until I long to get rid of it all. Indeed I am sometimes in doubt and perplexity, wondering if any of us have ever been made white; if our calling and election are really sure; but the SIGNS comes, bearing words of comfort and helpfulness, teaching as no other ever taught except the Master himself, telling of the sorrow for sin, and the wonderful deliverance, of living trust and faith, of One strong to save and mighty to redeem, and I read until the clouds roll away, until his sunshine is reflected on my face, and the dewdrops of gratitude fall from my eyes. There are oases in this desert of life, and when we do reach them they are all the sweeter for the long, tedious journey between. There are times when we feel to trust him, and that nothing can separate us from his love, but it must be that it is not best to always feel so, for we are more frequently at the foot of the mountain than on top of it, oftener walking in darkness than in the light, and sometimes forgetting him altogether. It may be that I have described myself more accurately than any one else, and I hope such is the case. I do not desire that any one should be denied the privileges, the companionship, the reproof, the sweet counsel, that have fallen to my lot, but if I am walking in the road that leads unto Him I shall try to be still and murmur not. If I am included in the remnant saved by grace, if I am to share his glory, I should be content to suffer, with the

knowledge that He who was perfect endured the cross, despising the shame.

Your writings are always comforting to me; they breathe such a deep spirit of love and humility, such a great desire not to wound or offend, such a knowledge of the Way, the Truth and the Life, and yet I have never lost sight of your responsibility; at times your labors must bear very heavily upon you. I enjoy everything that is said in praise to the Master, everything that gives him all the glory and all that denies man as being "a free moral agent," capable of saving himself if he chooses so to assert himself. If left to myself I would be without God and without hope.

But I must conclude; when I began I only thought I would fill one sheet, but it continued to grow into a medley of but little import, and is so confused that I am ashamed to send it. All are tolerably well, and hope this may find you and yours in a like condition, and securely resting in the hope of a better life.

Please be kind enough to forward this to brother Badger. I ought to write to him, and will some day.

With love for you and for him,

(MRS.) J. L. WRIGHT.

RICHMOND, Maine, Sept. 15, 1908.

MY DEAR NIECE BONNIE:—Just a few words, to tell you that your letter reached me to-day. I have been thinking much about you of late, and your letter is an answer to many of my silent thoughts. When you were here I felt to rejoice with you that it was well with you. I could but live over again my own early experience, when it was well with me. I think I told you of your father asking me once, a year or two after I had been brought to the church, how it had been with me spiritually during that time. I remember well my reply, "It has been peace." But, dear one, I do not feel to thank God for that time more than I do for years I was left to wander in the waste howling wilderness; there was a growth in grace that the years of peace did not give. Growing in grace is but being shown more and more of the sinfulness of our nature; it is showing us the need, yea, the crying need of just the kind of a Savior that is ours: the Savior all-powerful, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. When fears, doubts, unbelief and coldness of heart come upon us like wild beasts lurking in the wilderness ready to devour, how ready the cry comes to our lips, Lord, save, I perish; and the thought comes, I am afraid I have been deceived, I felt sure of his favor and love, and now his mercy seems clean gone forever. I remember that Elder Keene, at our association, preached from the text, He found me in a waste howling wilderness. I could follow the travel of his feet through all the terrors of the way, but at the end of his sermon I was left out. Darkness that could be felt was around me, and I felt ready to sink, yet at times a glimmer of light would come through the words, Whom he loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

But I fear I shall weary you, so from this experience I will hasten to say that I found the lurking beasts to be the sinfulness of my heart; their name is "Legion." I am never sure I have ever seen, or even known them all; some little, hateful meanness, that I hoped I was above, often thrusts itself forward and brings these words to my lips, "I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." So I do hope he has led me about and instructed me; I hope that the fruits of his chastening have been the peaceable fruits of righteousness; if so,

what wondrous love he has shown toward me, what cause I have for gratitude that he has counted even me worthy in some small measure to have fellowship with his sufferings.

You will see that I have written hurriedly, I have so much to say, but I have not half expressed it, yet you will know I am sure that it is well with you now, as it was when Jesus all the day long was your joy and your song. He is still your joy and hope, but he knows that we are so prone to forget all our help must come from him, and he withdraws his presence that we may realize, as we can in no other way that, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

Friday evening.—The boys are busy and they will not have much chance to write this time, so I will send this that you may know I felt glad to hear from you. I did not go to the association at Whitefield. We all regretted very much that your father could not come. Sister Attie has written me that she will soon spend a few days with me. You can imagine how I shall enjoy her company and to hear about the meeting.

With love to all, I remain your aunt,

ANGIE J. THOMAS.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., July, 1908.

TO THE HOPEWELL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH—DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I had planned in my mind to be with you to-day, but our God has a right to frustrate or overthrow our plans when they are not made in accordance with his will, and this is so, more particularly that we may be called to remember that in and of ourselves we can do nothing, and that all must be in accord with our heavenly Father's will. How little would we think of the Creator of all things that exist were all our plans carried out in a way to suit ourselves; then how selfish and void of good would we be. Very recently I was thinking of how much I needed to be made to stop and think from whence come all blessings, yea, the blessings of my whole life. I have continually been blessed, even when at the time I have looked at events in my life as all sadness. Many of them have indeed been buds with a bitter taste, but when they have been fully blown I have reaped sweetness from them. For a long time I have not enjoyed spiritual things, but have felt the unprofitableness of my days. A short time before our association I was thinking of this, when the words came to me: He giveth meat in due season; and there was such a sweet assurance in them that I was filled with faith in his promise. One of the sermons at the association was filled with meat to me; now I am desiring to be fed with such meat again, and I feel to trust I will have it when the season is due. My mind is not in frame to write as I would like, yet I desire to speak with you all at this time. It is, I think, now twenty-eight years since I was numbered among your visible members, and right here comes the important question, Is my real membership with the invisible church and is my name among the elect of God for whom Christ died? If I could but feel sure my name is among that election, then I could be at rest, but I am so very little of the time allowed to feel that I know my name is written there, and then only for brief moments. Most of my time I am desiring, and then doubting. I do not recall ever having a mind fully satisfied, or filled with assurance, that I am one of that redeemed family, the elect for whom Christ died, but I know we will not be satisfied until we awake with his likeness, so I desire to be content with the many

promises and comforts I feel have been handed me from the hand of the never-failing and merciful Father. How does this agree with your travel, dear ones? Do you feel to go beyond hope? or do you feel willing to abide in the shadow until the full light shall be revealed? I was very glad to hear of the additions to your number the last meeting. It was not a strange thing to me, for a long time ago I thought brother Leigh was interested in these great matters. How sad it is to see our older members suffering and feeling the infirmities of their mortality, but with the sadness comes the thought that the harvest is near, and then the great Husbandman will gather the sheaves; but the aged may not be gathered first, for he gathers as he will, and what is mysterious to our minds, he often leaves some poor suffering one and removes some one who has been healthy. We can only say, The Lord doeth what seemeth good in his sight. I desire greatly that peace may dwell among you, and that you may be continually drawn nearer together and closer in feeling, and that you all may be as one man, fighting in the strength of the Lord.

But I do not want to weary you. This is not as interesting as I would have it, but perhaps you can see the thoughts that have been in my mind. With love to you all,

MARY HILL TERRY.

NORTH WHITEFIELD, Maine, Sept. 20, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I will attempt to write you a little if possible. Our nearest neighbor, almost right in our yard, was stricken this morning with a paralytic stroke in her right side. I was called at about half past four to her, and now while others are there I will try to write you, but I am liable to be called at any moment.

I want to tell you about our association, and what a delightful meeting we had. I felt very sorry not to meet you there. I did want to see you again, as it has been a long time since you were here. I know you were as much disappointed as any one; but the Lord knows best. Elder Slauson was, as you know, with us. He is a lovely brother and a good minister, and we were all glad to have him with us. I enjoyed all the preaching; it all had the certain sound. Elder Beal preached once. I hope Elder Slauson will come again. Sunday noon, at the hall where we had dinner, he told us his experience and call to the ministry. It seemed wonderful to me. Surely the Lord works and none can hinder. There were not as many there as usual. None of Deacon Williams' family were there. Some from North Berwick and Gardiner, and some from Bowdoinham were with us. I think I have enjoyed the preaching as much every day since I returned from the meeting as I did during the time. I have had a continual feast, and have felt to rejoice that our God has a people saved by grace, chosen in Christ before the world began. I rejoice that we have a God who has all power, who works and none can hinder, who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast; and the foundation stands "sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." No man by searching can find him out, but He finds us and leads us about and instructs us. He found us in a waste howling wilderness; he brought us up out of the horrible pit and miry clay and put our feet upon a rock, and this Rock is that sure foundation; he put a new song in our mouth, even praise unto his holy name. He has promised never

to leave nor forsake us. He will be with his people at all times; it does not matter how dark the way may seem to us, he will be with us. How dark and cold it has seemed to me for a long time, but he has heard my cry, and he has again led me into the light, if I am not mistaken. I can once more sing his praise, and feel to rejoice again in the Rock of my salvation. Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for his rod and staff shall comfort me. He knows how to deal with us at all times, and he knows how to save us from temptation. I have been tempted at times, but the Lord has saved me from it all. He knows I am but dust; yea, nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity. In and of myself I am nothing; my own righteousness is as filthy rags.

I much enjoy reading the SIGNS. There was a long time I did not enjoy reading, but the good Lord has seen fit to bring me out of that place, and now I can and do enjoy reading it again, together with my Bible and hymn-book.

I am sorry your aunt is so poorly, but am glad you are where you can be of comfort to them both.

You will, I fear, think this a very poor letter, but it is the best I can do. I sometimes think I will never write again, my letters all seem so much like the writer; but when I receive letters from some of the people of God they seem so good I feel that I must sometimes write to them; I feel as though I just want to talk with them. You have always, as well as others, had so much charity for me that I keep on writing. I hope you may always feel the same charity. The people of God are the only ones who understand me. I love them above all others.

With best love to you and sister Chick, I remain, as ever, your little sister,

MARTHA E. GLIDDEN.

HELENA, Okla., August 5, 1908.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Although not personally acquainted with sister Nancy Creel, I have received a number of precious letters from her, and the one I now send you is the last one, but it bears the same mark of the Spirit as the others. I have taken the liberty to send it without her consent, but I trust she will acquiesce in our judgment.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

DUNCAN, Okla., July 14, 1908.

ELDER J. F. BEEMAN—DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER IN THE LORD:—My mind has been to write you for some time, ever since I read your article in the SIGNS about the "little spot." O what a comfort it was to me; it carried my mind back to the spot, not to one only, but to two spots. The first one was after I had traveled seven long years mourning on account of sin. O the deplorable condition I was in all those seven years, asking and begging for mercy of my Lord, for I fully believed that he had all power in heaven and in earth, and that all love, mercy, justice and judgment were his, and that he was holy, just and good, but how he could bestow such love on me I could not see. Then I would sink down in despair, and, dear brother, I could not feel there was pardoning love for me, yet I could not hold my tongue from begging the Lord to have mercy on me. When I would ask for mercy I could not raise my eyes, I felt it was a sin to ask the Lord, the righteous Father, to have mercy on me. I would look on other people, and they would seem to me to be happy and contented, and I would think, O if I were just like you then I would be happy, too, for you are not condemned

sinners. While having these thoughts my inward soul was urging to be freed from this burden. I had two hymns I sang, these are the ones: "Show pity, Lord, O Lord forgive," also, "Jesus, my all, to heaven is gone." One day as I was mourning, this beautiful spot appeared to me, and it was a spot of feasting, back in Mississippi, thirty-nine years ago. That spot and that day were glorious, for everything seemed to be praising the Lord; the heavens showed his handywork and the firmament his glory. My brother, my tongue was loosed, and instead of begging for mercy I was praising the Lord. I like to think of that spot, for then I could sing, Bless the Lord, O my soul, for all his benefits to me.

The second spot was here, in 1890. The first gospel sermon I ever heard was delivered by brother A. J. Gilbreth, who preached to a little band of believers that had heard the old "Hardshell" Baptist preachers all their lives, but he was the first one I ever heard. That was a day which I shall never forget; O my soul, it seemed to be a flame of love. The mighty power of God took possession of my soul, and my very breathing praised the Lord, and I said to myself, Surely he is the servant of the Most High. Brother Beeman, to make it plain, I just felt that I had been in prison all my life until that day, for then I heard glad tidings of great joy, and my soul was made glad in the Lord. O that spot, memorable to my soul, for it did seem while he was preaching that I could hear the voice of Jesus say, Hear ye him, for this is my servant. To me that was a glorious habitation of the Lord, for it seemed that everything was praising the Lord; the twigs and the trees were obedient to his will; I felt they were helping me to praise his holy name. A glorious spot it was to me, and whenever I pass that spot I feel I want to shout aloud praises unto the Lord.

Well, brother Beeman, I will close. My mind has been to write you ever since I read your letter, so if this is any comfort to you and sister Beeman give all praise to the Savior. I would like to hear you preach, but then I have heard you in the SIGNS. We came to this town in March. I have not been to hear any preaching since we came here, but, praise the Lord, I found sister S. E. Ellis, who is the only Old Baptist I know of here. I hope the blessed Lord will send his servants this way; not my will, but his be done. Please pardon me for trespassing on your time. Pray for me, a sinner saved by grace, if saved. May God's blessing rest on you and family.

I remain your unworthy sister,

NANCY CREEL.

LANHAM, W. Va., July 20, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I have a letter from Elder G. B. Bird which I will send to you for publication, if it meets your approval. He is a precious young brother in the ministry.

Yours truly,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

FRANK, W. Va., July 5, 1908.

ELDER J. W. McCLANAHAN—DEAR BROTHER:—I received your letter in due time and was glad to hear from you. We were disappointed at our last meeting on account of you not being there. We had a very large congregation on Sunday, and brother Terry did preach well indeed, the ablest, I think, I ever heard him. He took for his text, "I am black, but comely," and he clearly presented who it is, and how they are black in sin in their standing in Adam, but comely in their standing in Christ, that in him they (the

redeemed family of God) are holy and without blame before him in love. This was truly a feast from the Lord, for he preached Jesus, and him only, and he is our meat and our drink. O how wonderful and soul-cheering such meetings are! I came away feeling rejoiced within me, and felt to exclaim with Jacob of old, "It is enough: Joseph my son is yet alive," and that for our justification and to intercede for us, for it is written that he (Jesus) died for our sins and rose again for our justification. Again, He ever liveth to make intercession for us. So, then, it is only through him that we can ever supplicate the throne of grace, for he is the source of mercy, the great Mediator that reconciles us to God. He goes before his people, and will be their rearward, or be behind them, and not only so, but is in them the hope of glory. What a blessed unity, and O how wonderful to say with Paul, Who shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? Then Paul mentions a great many things, and embraces everything, whether present or to come, among them these gracious words: "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us." So, then, love is the great incentive, the great power-wheel, the great cause that he hath called us, not according to our works, but according to his purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus; when? after we had accepted the terms of the gospel? No, but before the world began. How different is this from the way the poor, deluded Arminians teach it; they teach the same doctrine that was preached in the garden of Eden to our mother Eve. She believed and listened to it, just like thousands of men and women do to this day, but "we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

But I must stop, I had no thought of writing more than one sheet at most, but you see I have overdone the matter, and must ask you to excuse me.

Yours in hope, G. B. BIRD.

OCEANPARK, Cal., Sept. 17, 1908.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—We received this good letter from sister Rose Tamsett some time ago, and think it too good to lay aside; we think it breathes the true spirit of a child of God. We leave it to your better judgment to dispose of as you think best. We are both well, and hold yourself and family and the church at Middletown, N. Y., in grateful remembrance.

Your sister in Christ,

BERTHA BOES.

OTEGO, N. Y., April 26, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER J. M. BOES:—How are you this beautiful morning? For some reason my mind is with you in your far away western home, and I would like to step in and hear you talk of the goodness of God, who has kept you so far on the journey of life. As that privilege is denied me I will try and talk with you in this silent way. Truly the Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him. Now comes the question, Do I really know this by experience? I can only hope it is so, for sometimes the way is very dark, and then again I feel to hope that the Lord has done great things for me, a poor, miserable sinner of Adam's race. What a mystery I am; my thoughts and my life are so different

from what I think they should be; then why do I not live differently? I have to confess that "to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not," yet the desire is still with me to know more of the things of God's kingdom, and I would at all times praise him from whom all blessings flow for even a glimpse of his love that was shed abroad in my poor heart years ago, when I was made to rejoice in his presence for a time, and to feel satisfied with the fatness of his house; but how oft we murmur and complain with blessings in our hand. I do not know anything about being situated where I cannot always go to meeting once a month at least, as you are, but I go a great many times when I do not get a crumb, yet I feel sure the preaching is good; the trouble is with me, I am so dull and dead to all that is heavenly and divine. I often say with the poet, "Hardly, sure, can they be worse who have never heard his name." I have always admired and envied the spirit of contentment brother Boes enjoys, being content with such things as he has; it is much to be desired, for we know with all our trying and fretting we cannot change one step we take or make any change in the path that is laid out for us to walk in, for we read, God made the world and all things therein, and "giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation," &c. Then why not be content? I am sure we will never be satisfied in this life, but when we awake with His likeness we shall be satisfied, for we shall see him as he is. What a blessed thought.

May 14th.—You will see I wrote this some time ago, and as I look it over I feel it is not worth sending; however I will venture to send it, knowing you will overlook all blunders. I wanted to let you know I often think of you.

From a sinner saved by grace, if at all,

ROSE B. TAMSETT.

BENNINGS, D. C., Feb. 18, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I feel inclined to write a few lines for the SIGNS, and if God directs my mind it will be for some good, but if not, it will be vain; for without him we can do nothing.

Our church here in Washington, though few in number, is in peace and harmony, for which we feel to thank God. It does me good to meet with them and to hear the blessed truth preached.

"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" —Isaiah liii. 1. These things are revealed unto them who are born again, born of the Spirit, and none but such can know the joyful sound. These are the poor and helpless ones who feel their unworthiness before the just and holy God. It is said, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." What a great comfort it is to know we love the brethren. I feel at times that I am a poor, helpless sinner, and I doubt that I am born again. Our dear Savior was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. To whom did he preach? to the proud Pharisees? No, to the poor the gospel is preached, and he called poor, illiterate fishermen. He came to save that which was lost; to call not the righteous, but sinners to repentance. He came not to do his own will, but the will of his Father in heaven, and to finish the work given him to do, and this work is altogether like all the work of God, complete. Known unto him were all his works before time began. How

can a child of God believe anything but the complete sovereignty of God, that he rules supreme, both in heaven and in earth, and that he created all things for his own purpose and according to his own will?

How wonderful is the love that God has for poor sinners. Christ said he came to save sinners. The whole need no Savior, but they who feel their lost and ruined condition need him.

Brother Ker, I agree with your editorial in regard to "Holiness People." No child of God could believe such doctrine as that. I often think of the words: "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear." That is one of the things which comfort me, and the love I have to meet and talk with the children of God encourages me. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments."—Psalms cxxxiii. 1, 2. Yes, it is wonderful that such poor, unworthy worms of the dust enjoy such glorious privileges; how thankful we should be. True religion brings the soul into vital and immediate union with God. False religion, on the other hand, sets the soul at a distance from him. We see the peculiar feature of vital godliness very clearly in the Psalms, and in other parts of the holy Scriptures, where the saints of God breathe forth their desires after the Lord; the desire of their soul to get near to God and to receive mercy from his gracious hand. Look at the wisdom of the plan of salvation: how wise it is; the natural man cannot comprehend it, it is completely hid from him. It is by the free and sovereign grace of God that we are saved, and these things are hid from the wise and prudent but revealed unto babes. Christ said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The doctrine of sovereign grace and predestination of all things certainly is what the Bible teaches, and is my experience, if I have any.

Dear brethren, your editorials are good, and I enjoy them, also the good letters the brethren and sisters write. It does me good to read the SIGNS, for it contains the glorious truth that our Savior taught, and that his apostles preached: it is by grace we are saved, and not by works, lest any man should boast.

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word."

It is founded on the Rock Christ Jesus. He is far above all principality and power; he is the head of the church; he is the Vine, and ye are the branches. He says he will never leave nor forsake his people. How comforting are these words to his poor, trembling children.

Please pardon me for intruding upon your time. If you see anything in this you can publish it, if not, throw it aside. May God bless you, brethren editors, and all the dear writers for the SIGNS.

From your unworthy brother,

THOMAS ALDEN.

BLUE SPRINGS, Mo., March 27, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Here are some verses which I feel many readers of the SIGNS would enjoy. Do with them as you like. They were written by a dear friend of ours, and a minister of the gospel.

I have just finished reading the last SIGNS, and I cannot begin to tell you how good it all was. What a blessing it is that I, even I, can enjoy and understand it. Both your articles on "Sunday Schools" are clear and good. I would

like to tell of all the enjoyment I get from the writings, but I cannot.

In hope of a better life,

MARGARET M. STARTZMAN.

O Lord, prepare my praise for me,
In songs of sweetest melody;
While on earth let thy joy be mine;
In thy kingdom the praise be thine.

O Lord, prepare my heart to pray
For thy rich grace, yes, day by day;
O may I thy sweet love implore;
O hear me plead at mercy's door.

O Lord, prepare my eyes to see
That Jesus shed his blood for me;
On Calvary's brow thy groans were heard,
For thou, dear Lord, wast crucified.

O Lord, prepare my eyes to read,
And then prepare me, Lord, to heed;
O may I feast upon thy word;
O bless me, help me, gracious Lord.

O Lord, prepare my tongue to tell
Thy wondrous love, and power as well;
For thou didst come and suffer shame,
That we might always praise thy name.

O Lord, prepare me for the skies,
And bid my sleeping dust arise;
O may I with the angels praise
Thy holy name in joyful lays.

WM. L. HALL.

FEBRUARY 5, 1905.

DONIE, Texas, August 24, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR AND PRECIOUS BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your preciousness to me has grown out of the many encouraging articles which have come to us through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the last twenty years. There are many, very many, able writers who write for the SIGNS whose writings make it valuable, instructive and encouraging to the saints scattered abroad. I hope my love for the doctrine of its pages is not in the letter, but in the spirit; not hysterical, but experimental. The doctrine of God's sovereignty in its magnitude, in height and depth, is great, so immense, so vast in extent, as to be altogether without limit; it reaches out in every direction, encircling everything in all creation, both in heaven and in earth. The Lord God of hosts is great in greatness, that is, he is rich in greatness. The Lord our God is a great God. Thou art great, O Lord God, none is like unto thee. "There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God," appointed by him for the accomplishment of some particular end. The Lord means something by all he does; his every act is significant of something, but to pry into or learn what it is that he means by this or that act of his is quite beyond the capacity of any human being; to know them they must be revealed unto us by his Spirit, "for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" Notice, "Even so, the things of God knoweth no man [does any man know?] but the Spirit of God." So we see that without the spirit of man no man could know the things of man, or that which pertains to him, and even so, without the Spirit of God no man can know the things of God, things of a spiritual nature or kind. Spiritual things are understood and known to the spiritual mind, or to the spiritually-minded. All are not spiritually-minded, for the Bible tells us of some who have not the Spirit; and those who have not the Spirit can perform no spiritual acts, whether prayer, praise, belief, repentance or anything else of a spiritual or godly kind. He that doeth righteousness is righteous; he that believeth is born of God; also, he that believeth hath everlasting life, and he that believeth hath the witness in himself, yea, more, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.

Yours with love, WM. LITTLE.

TRENTON, N. J., Aug., 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN OF THE HOPEWELL CHURCH:—I would like to meet with you, but it is ordered otherwise by Providence. My love is for you all. I am confined to the bed, but like to converse with all lovers of truth on spiritual things. I love this people with an unspeakable love that passes all understanding. I think I can say, I know I have passed from death unto life, because I love the brethren. I have had many pleasant thoughts on passages of Scripture, but at the present time my mind wanders, and I fail to see the beauty I saw a short time ago. The Lord has been very good to me, giving me all the comforts that can be had here on earth. These are temporal things and pass away, but I know I have a home waiting for me, where there is no sin or sorrow to worry or vex me. These words have been frequently with me, "And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee." I know the Lord rules and reigns, and he knows what is best, and I hope he will be with me to the end. If we never meet again on earth, may we meet in heaven, for where the Lord is, there shall we be also.

(MRS.) SARAH DALRYMPLE.

[WE feel sure the foregoing little letter will be read with interest by many, as it was full of interest to the church here at Hopewell when read at our August church meeting. This dear, aged sister is past her fourscore years, and is now confined to her bed. Her membership has been with this church many years, and she has walked steadfastly in the faith of the gospel and with the church. It has pleased God to give her strong consolation during the latter years of her life; of this she speaks in her letter. When the Lord shall call her home we shall miss a dear and valued member.—C.]

TOONE, Tenn., Dec. 9, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS AND CHILDREN OF GOD:—I feel this rainy morning a desire to confess my faults to you. James, the servant of the Lord, said, "Confess your faults one to another." Brethren and sisters, I know that I have many faults; the good Lord is continually showing me my faults and my sins. I am often in company with Peter; when he saw the great draught of fishes and the power of God in the same, he cast himself into the sea; so when the good Lord shows me my faults and my sins, which he often does, I feel badly, and would hide if I could, but I am in company with Peter again, and fall "down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord."—Luke v. 8. So I see and know that my life and all of my welfare in this world, and that to come, are in his hand, and all I can do or say is, Lord, be merciful to me, a poor sinner. I see great beauty and glory in the Lord, and have a little hope of that glory through Jesus Christ our Lord by the shedding of his blood. O brethren, I feel unworthy of anything good of the Lord, for I have sinned and trampled the mercy of God under my sinful feet all the days of my life. Brethren, the following Scripture is a comfort to me, and I "can't help it:" John said, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God."—1 John v. 1.

It is a great pleasure to me to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; the letters written by the editors and other writers are precious; I shed many tears reading them; it makes me want to see them all.

Do what you think best with this letter. I am a poor, weary sinner.

S. M. BUTLER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1908.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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HEBREWS VI. 19, 20.

"WHICH hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

There can be nothing more needful for believers to contemplate, nothing more needful for them to believe, than the truths presented in these words of inspiration. The promise of grace, daily grace, as we have need of it while in these low grounds of sorrow and temptation, is exceeding precious and full of consolation, but the promise of future glory, after all, is that which must always chiefly animate the drooping spirits of all who are tempted and sorrowful among our Father's children. What richly comforting words were those of the psalmist: "The Lord will give grace and glory." It is an absolutely true comment which has been made of these last words, he will give grace here and glory hereafter. It is this glory hereafter which is especially the subject of hope in the believer. It is indeed most blessedly true that the christian's hope embraces all the future of this life, giving assurance of sufficient grace to sustain and help us day by day in the way that we take. Such hope is based upon such promises as these: "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." And, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." These are sufficient promises for the future of this pilgrimage, but it still remains true that, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." It is good, no doubt, that we should consider why we are most miserable if there be no real ground of hope beyond this life, but, after all, whether we clearly see why it is so or not, it remains true that divine inspiration has told us that this is the fact; so we can rest upon it, that there must be something beyond, as yet unfulfilled, for the tried children of God, else they are worse off than all other men, and it is this which is yet beyond that constitutes the ground of that hope which enters into that within the veil.

We need scarcely pause to say here that the word "hope" always has in it the two thoughts of expectation and desire. Still further, both these things relate to the future, and not to the present or the past. We cannot expect that which is at hand or past, neither can we be said to desire what is present or past. Desire alone is not hope, neither is expectation by itself hope. One may desire that which he does not in the slightest degree expect, and on the other hand, one may expect that which he does not desire. Expectation is not hope, neither is desire hope, when each is considered alone, but these two things felt at the same time constitute hope. A criminal expects execution to-morrow, but he does not hope for it. A beggar desires riches, fame and honor, but he does not expect them. Neither can be said to hope in what is expected or desired. Desire arises out of need, and expectation arises out of our knowledge of another person or other thing. Desire may be very

strong, and yet there be no hope. Under this condition the heart may break. Expectation may also be very strong, and yet there be no hope, and under this condition also the heart may break. All this applies to hope, of whatever sort or kind it may be. But that hope of which the believer thinks, and which is as an anchor of the soul, entering into that within the veil, rests upon better and more certain promises than any earthly hope can do, and this hope, like all hope, relates always to the future. "We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." When we speak, write or think of the hope that is set before us, our theme is that which we have not now, but shall have hereafter; but what we have received is the earnest of what is before us. Present experiences of the joy of salvation increase our hope for the future. Grace begun here below is our assurance of finished grace or glory beyond this life. The guideposts and milestones along the way are not the city to which we journey, but they point the way, and assure us that we are in it, and that we are making progress. We welcome the waymarks which give us such sweet assurance of the city to come, and that we are in the way to it, but we do not sit down under the guideposts, nor upon the milestones, as though our aim and end were now attained. No, at each milestone we count not ourselves to have attained, nor think that we have already apprehended, but are encouraged to still press on toward the mark for the prize of our high calling. Believers need all these encouragements, and the blessed God and Father of them all, knowing their weakness and pitying them, has supplied them with frequent consolations along the way. But as long as this life shall last it will be still true that we must not count that we have apprehended, but that our attitude is that of following on, that we may apprehend that for which we are apprehended of Christ Jesus. It is because of this that such frequent references are made in the word of God to the future hope of believers. The love of God shed abroad in the heart is the mainspring of all love and of all that obedience which springs out of love, and of the power to endure, as seeing him who is invisible; but still the hope of deliverance one day, and of final victory over sin, death and hell, and of being with and like the Lord, is needful to encourage and revive the fainting spirit, and we have the assurance that this happy end will make amends for all the toil along the way. Therefore, very often in the word do inspired writers speak of the future home of rest and holiness, and of the crown of righteousness which the Lord shall give to all them that love him, in that day. So also it is written of the Elder Brother, "Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Because of this hope many suffering saints have been cheerful and content, waiting the blessed deliverance to come. Because of this hope millions of dying saints have shouted victory with their last laboring breath. Because of this hope thousands of martyrs have faced shame, spitting and stripes, counting it all joy that they were counted worthy to suffer for his sake, that they might at last wear the crown of victory with him. It is this hope of which the apostle speaks in the text, and this hope is the anchor of the soul. The comparison is striking. The anchor is to hold the vessel in a

storm, and save it from danger and destruction; so also does this hope hold the soul steadfast when trials, temptations and sorrows assail; but this spiritual anchor is more sure than any earthly anchor can be. The anchor is firmly settled out of sight; our blessed hope is within the veil, we cannot see the holding-ground. There is no need that we should see in either case; but the ground holds fast. The anchor belongs to the vessel, and is a part of its necessary equipment. So there is no soul that belongs to the Lord unprovided with hope. It is our hope. It is ours because it is given us of God. What is given us belongs to us. But there is one difference between the figure of the anchor and our hope: that is anchored beneath, our hope is anchored above. The storm may rise so high that a vessel may be pulled under, and the anchor that was meant for safety thus become the medium of destruction; but not so with the christian's hope, it is so anchored above that the higher the waves rise, the vessel rides with all the greater ease and safety; the higher the storm, the less danger of the vessel being overwhelmed because of the anchor dragging the vessel down. How rich and glorious the thought that our anchor is above and not beneath.

The hope spoken of in the text is both sure and steadfast, because it enters into that within the veil; there is good holding-ground indeed; this anchor cannot drag. What is it that holds the hope of the believer firm and unmovable? It is that within the veil. What is there within the veil? Jesus has entered there, the crucified, risen and ascended Lord. We feel like calling attention to what it is that constitutes that safe holding-ground within the veil. That Jesus has entered there, and entered for us, signifies, first, a finished atonement, a sacrifice offered unto God, in which and with which he is well pleased, and which is fully commensurate with all that divine justice holds against the sinner. It signifies, in short, that Jesus has died for our sins and has risen again for our justification. As our forerunner, having risen from the dead, he ascends on high, and leads captivity captive, and receives gifts for men, even for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. As concerning him within the veil, the inspired John has written that if we sin we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, the propitiation for all the sins of his people in all the world, and not merely as were the sacrifices under the old covenant the propitiation for the Jews only. Also, he is the intercessor for all who believe, both Jew and Gentile, and not only as was the high priest under the old covenant, for the Jews only; and our hope enters into this truth of the finished work of the dear Redeemer. Upon this finished work it rests, and in it finds sure anchorage-ground. One may say, The atonement of Christ, and sovereign mercy through that atonement, is all the hope that I have. But such an one can say more than this, he can say, This is all the hope I need. Having the finished work of the dear Redeemer, we need no additional work upon which to rest. Here may a poor sinner look, and looking live indeed. For ourself, we trust that these many years it has been ours to say, All our hope is here, and also that we want no other foundation than this.

The word says that Jesus has entered within the veil as our forerunner. John the Baptist was said to be the forerunner of the man Christ Jesus. So this man Christ Jesus is here declared to be our forerunner. Under the old covenant the

high priest once a year did enter within the veil into the holiest place of all; but under that covenant none could enter there save the high priest. It was death to any one who should dare to come within the veil, save the high priest, and even he must not come except he had somewhat to offer. That which he must have to offer was the blood of the slain beast, which he was to sprinkle upon the mercy-seat before the Lord, and this offering he must make for himself first, and then for the people. The high priest under that covenant was not the forerunner of the people; he entered there alone, and no one else could follow him, the worshipers must stand without; but Jesus enters into the holiest, having obtained eternal redemption for us, and he secures for us what the Jewish high priest could not secure to his people, viz., the right to enter within the veil also. The way into the holiest is made open for all the chosen people of God, therefore Jesus is the forerunner. He has entered within the veil, into heaven itself, as the apostle elsewhere explains it, and all for whom he gave himself shall also enter, following after their forerunner. This is the hope set before us, and which is sure and steadfast; it is the hope of heaven and eternal glory. These were believers to whom the apostle was here writing. They had already fled to lay hold upon the hope set before them. They were already heirs of promise, and they all possessed in their souls the assurance of this hope of glory. Whatever belongs to the treasures of the children of God here below, they already were in possession of. This was as true of the believer of days as of the believer who was aged; it was as true of one who was called into the everlasting kingdom yesterday as of one thus called a half-century ago. But to all these, both the aged and young, there is given added assurances of things future, things which they have not yet realized. Paul had not as yet attained any more than the least one to whom he was writing. Paul was still following after, that he might attain; and this he did as long as he lived in this time state. His faith to the end embraced the precious promises of future glory. The hope of the text then does not refer to that which our God has and does bestow upon us in our earthly pilgrimage, but rather to that which awaits us at the end. Then shall we be with and like our risen Lord; then we shall be satisfied, for we shall see him as he is, and we shall awake with his likeness.

"This glorious hope revives
Our courage by the way;
While each in expectation lives,
And longs to see the day."

How often does the fainting, struggling believer look forward to this glorious consummation of all his desires, this full satisfaction of all his expectations.

"If I in thy likeness, O Lord, may awake,
And shine in pure image of thee,
Then I shall be satisfied, when I can break
The fetters of flesh and be free."

To this glorious hope all the true Israel of God hope to come. C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder S. W. Gard.)

To the Elders, messengers, brethren and sisters composing the Hazel Creek Association, when convened with Providence Church, Appanoose County, Iowa.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—Another year with its joys and sorrows has passed, and we are again permitted to meet together, I hope, to sing and pray and preach in the Spirit of Jesus Christ, and as I was chosen to write the Circular Letter I will proceed.

I will call your attention to the third verse of the third chapter of Paul's letter to the Philippian brethren. In the first place, Paul is warning the brethren to beware of dogs and concision and evil-doers, which I understand to be those who are under the law of works. Now Paul addresses himself to the brethren and says, "We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Now I understand those to be of the circumcision of the heart, and that is, the spiritual law written in the fleshly tables of the heart. Yes, Paul received that law on the road to Damascus and fell to the earth and said, "Who art thou, Lord?" That was the first time he ever knew the Lord indeed. So it is with every one who receives the law of the Spirit of life; they fall to the earth and for the first time in life call on the Lord indeed and in truth. Yes, every particle of the work system is taken from them, and they are ready to say, Lord, save, I perish. And now, brethren, as we hope we have been born of the Spirit and have been made to rejoice in Christ as our Savior, let us be faithful and obedient to our heavenly Father; there is plenty for us to do in obeying the spiritual law. Yes, we are told not to quench the Spirit. We know that in obedience we receive the blessing, and in disobedience we receive the chastisement. We know it is the living who are called on to obey the law of the Spirit of life, and not the dead, for those who are dead in trespasses and sin are not subject to the spiritual law, neither do they know that law; none but those who have been born of the Spirit can obey or please the Lord. Brethren, we know that the apostle Paul was obedient to his call; after the scales fell from his eyes he said straightway, "I conferred not with flesh and blood," but he went preaching the word of God as he went. Now, brethren, we all have a work to do, not to save us in eternity, but in order to receive the blessing in this life. Jesus says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." "Take my yoke upon you." "I am meek and lowly." "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." "Follow me." Jesus was speaking to the living, not the dead. The dead know not anything, but those that are born of the Spirit rejoice in Christ as their Savior and have no confidence in the flesh. I hope we are of those who are led by the Spirit of God, and I also hope the Spirit of God bears "witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him." I also hope we are of those that Paul spoke of who shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Yes, we rejoice in Christ Jesus as a full and complete Savior, as our only hope of heaven and immortality.

Now, Elders, brethren and sisters, my prayer to God is that the Spirit of Jesus Christ may be with you in all of your de-

liberations, and finally save us all in the kingdom of heaven.

S. B. JONES, Moderator.
H. C. CATE, Clerk.

(Written by Elder R. W. Sanford.)

The several churches composing the Lexington Association, now in session with the Old School Baptist Church at Gilboa, N. Y., sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As in former years, we send you this our annual epistle of love and fellowship. We desire to exhort you to faithfulness in the name of Him in whom you have believed, to be watchful over yourselves and the brotherhood, bearing your own burden and that of one another, so fulfilling the law of Christ. We find in the epistle of Paul to the Ephesians the exhortation to be followers of God as dear children. The name "children" implies relationship, a birth of God, as taught by Christ. (See John i.) To them belong all the blessings of God in Christ, for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. Life and immortality come to sinners in the flesh by the sacrifice of Christ the Son of God; through him we have forgiveness. In this life we find a body called the old man, in constant opposition to the new man, bringing us into captivity, so we are not able to do the things we would do, and leaving the things undone we desire to do; yet His compassion and love are still upon the members of his body, the church, in whom all the fullness dwells. It is our duty to lay aside the works of the flesh and put on the new man, which is created of God in righteousness. Pray that we may not be found as one asleep and negligent, wasting our time indulging in the things of the world, to the neglecting of our place in the church. Encourage your pastor with your presence; he has trials to encounter that you know not of. He has to watch the flock against the attack of the enemies of Zion, both from without and within, of whom his duty calls him to sound the alarm, even weeping (Phil. iii.) that they be the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction. These are trials the apostles had to experience. O could we rejoice that we are partakers with Christ in his sufferings, "that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." May none of you suffer as an evil-doer or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a christian, let him glorify God on this behalf. (1 Peter iv. 13–17.) May we cast all our care upon him (God), for he careth for us. Though Zion be surrounded with enemies like a roaring lion, his arm is not shortened that he cannot save his poor and afflicted children; not one can be lost; his everlasting love embraces them all; nothing can sever them from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Cheer up, ye trembling saints, he sees you when you do not him, and always hears your cry.

R. W. SANFORD, Moderator.
JAMES AVERY, Clerk.
J. H. BEVIER, Assistant Clerk.

(Written by S. B. Paxson.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, October 14th, 15th and 16th, 1908, to the several churches composing this Association, sendeth greetings in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is our desire in writing this, our Circular Letter, to be guided by the Spirit of our Lord and Master, and to be a comfort to the saints who are led by the Spirit of Christ and who follow not after the lusts of the flesh.

We are a poor, weak and afflicted people, by nature sinful, a mass of corruption, even from the crowns of our heads to the soles of our feet. We form good resolutions to live less after the flesh, fulfill the requirements of the law, do unto others as we would have others do unto us, love our neighbor as ourselves, only to find this to be impossible with man in his fallen state. Like the apostle Paul, "What I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I," showing forth the weakness of man and his inability to follow after spiritual things except his heart be endued with God's Holy Spirit. "Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile. But glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: for there is no respect of persons with God." "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one." "They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." How true we find this to be in our daily experience, a daily warfare going on in our members, the flesh warring against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh. How we are made to mourn on account of the sinfulness of the flesh. Man, at his best, is nothing but vanity, and prone to follow after the sinfulness of the present evil world and the weakness of his carnal nature. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." "Where is boasting then?" "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." He took upon himself our sins and died upon the cross that we might live. His blood cleanseth from all sin. In our weakness and inexperience we can only see and understand these great mysteries by faith, and faith is the gift of God, "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial that is to try you. * * * But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings." And the words were with me: That ye may be able to comfort others with the same comfort ye are yourselves comforted of God. This is the worthiness, not of him that willeth, but of God that showeth mercy. Jesus is our very life which is hid with Christ in God. "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." How can we feel like boasting of any good act or deed we may do if we have become as little children? The little child is entirely dependent upon its earthly parent for its existence, so also are we dependent upon God for every good and perfect gift which can be bestowed upon us. Therefore let us walk blameless before him in love, having charity one toward another, willing to cast ourselves at the feet of our brethren with all humility and humbleness of spirit, making sacrifices, crucifying the flesh, not that we do this for a reward in the life to come, but believing that our reward will be in this present life. At the feet of Jesus is a safe place, where we can rest peacefully, trusting in him for spiritual blessings. Jonah, for his disobedience and hardheartedness, was cast into the bottom of the sea, to dwell in the whale's belly for three days, in order that he might be made submissive and willing to go forth and proclaim the word of the Lord. "For

the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish." May we be enabled to proclaim with the psalmist, "O Lord my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me."

May love and peace reign with you, and our meeting together be profitable spiritually to the honor and glory of our Lord, who rules all things in the heavens above and in the earth beneath.

J. N. BADGER, Moderator.
S. B. PAXSON, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the First Church of Roxbury, Vega, N. Y., Sept. 23rd and 24th, 1908, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends christian greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—Another year has passed and we have met, according to previous appointment, in the capacity of an association. Behold how good it is for brethren to sit together in heavenly places in Christ, "according as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Your messages of love through your Minutes are thankfully received by us. Your messengers have come to us laden with the rich treasures of the gospel, for which we feel to praise God, and for every blessing. We desire a continuance of your correspondence.

Our next session has been appointed to be held with the Second Church of Roxbury, on Wednesday and Thursday following the third Sunday in September, 1909, commencing at 10:30 o'clock a. m. on Wednesday, where we hope to meet your messengers and receive your Minutes again.

J. B. SLAUSON, Moderator.
D. T. KEATOR, Clerk.

The churches composing the Licking Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Mt. Gilead Church, Mays Lick, Mason Co., Ky., Sept. 11th, 12th and 13th, 1908, to the churches and associations with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—We have been spared by the kind providence of an all-wise God to meet again in the sweet fellowship of the Lord, and have received your messages, and the sweet peace of the gospel of truth has been the theme at this meeting.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Salt River Church, Anderson Co., Ky., on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1909, where we hope again to meet and receive your messages of love.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.
J. T. MCCOUN, Clerk.
T. J. RATLIFF, Assistant Clerk.

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Gilboa Church, Gilboa, N. Y., October 7th and 8th, 1908, to the associations and other meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—Through the riches of God's grace and mercy we have been privileged with another annual interview, and have realized the presence of the God of our salvation. Truly the lines are fallen to us in pleasant places, and we have a goodly heritage. As usual, the time we have been together has been spent in the worship of God, which has been no uncertain sound, and we have

been comforted and strengthened, and we hope for a continuance of the same. We desire a continuance of your correspondence, and hope we shall receive a goodly number of your messengers at our next session, which is appointed to be held, if the Lord will, with our sister church of Jefferson, Schoharie Co., N. Y., at the usual time, first Wednesday and Thursday in October (6th and 7th), 1909, when we hope to meet your messengers again.

R. W. SANFORD, Moderator.
JAMES AVERY, Clerk.
J. H. BEVIER, Assistant Clerk.

INFORMATION WANTED.

BROTHER A. L. Bandy, of Winters, Cal., wishes to know if there are any Old School Baptists near his home, which is thirty miles west of Sacramento. His address is, A. L. Bandy, Box 904, Winters, Cal.

POETRY.

A BENEDICTION.

"THE Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."—Numbers vi. 24–26.

The Lord Almighty bless thee
From his own heavenly store;
The fullness of his presence
Be with thee evermore.
Exodus xxxiii. 14.

The God of glory keep thee—
Keep thee in perfect peace,
Leading thee bravely forward,
Till every conflict cease.
Isa. xxvi. 3, 4.

May his own arm be round thee,
And compass every side;
Under his soft wing nestling
Mayst thou for aye abide.
Deut. xxxiii. 27; Psa. xci. 4.

In blessing, may he bless thee,
Filled full to flowing o'er
With gifts from heaven above thee,
Both now and evermore.
Mal. iii. 10.

—*Selected.*

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, Oct. 17th, 1908, at the home of the bride's parents, at Denton, Orange Co., N. Y., Charles Spencer Harding and Miss Sarah Jane Sly.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, Oct. 14th, 1908, at the residence of the bride's parents, 4133 Parrish St., Philadelphia, Pa., Mark L. Long and Miss Clara J. Disharoon.

By the same, at his residence, Oct. 14th, 1908, Herbert R. Neisser and Miss Sara Hancock.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon Malcom McAlpine, of Brooke, Ontario, Canada, died Oct. 8th, and was buried the 12th. A suitable obituary will be sent later. D. M. VAIL.

Mrs. Mary Q. Purington departed this life at her long time residence in Hopewell, N. J., in the early morning of Saturday, Sept. 19th, 1908. She was born in North Anson, Maine, Sept. 7th, 1819, making her stay on earth a few more days than 89 years. She was a daughter of William and Anner Quint, and the sister of the late Elder Wm. Quint, for more than forty years pastor of the church at North Berwick, Maine. At an early age she made profession of her faith in Christ, and was baptized in the fellowship of the church in North Anson, Maine, by Elder Philander Hartwell, about the year 1837. She was married to Elder Wm. J. Purington, July 4th, 1848, at her home, at which time and place Elder Wm. Quint and Mary Macumber were also married. In the spring of the year 1855, with her husband she moved to Washington, D. C., and became a member of the Shiloh Church in that city. In 1867 they moved to Southampton, Pa., where they resided twelve years, moving in the fall of 1889 to Hopewell, where she resided until her death. For more than thirty years she had been afflicted with a cancer in her head, and suffered greatly, yet bore the pain with wonderful fortitude. For more than two years she had been a constant sufferer, as the disease was making rapid headway. All that kind physicians and faithful nursing could do was done to relieve and sustain her during these weary months. During the last three months of her life it was not thought she could survive from day to day. Most of the time a trained nurse was with her. It would not be right to omit to speak of the faithful care of her only surviving sister, who sacrificed all her ease and freedom for months and years to care for her sister and to see that nothing that could be done should remain undone for her relief and comfort. It is not often that any one bestows so long and so faithful care upon another as she has done in all these years of her sister's illness. During the

past few weeks of life opiates were the only remedy to save her from extreme suffering, but at the last she passed away as quietly as a child falling asleep. Our sister had been a faithful, steadfast member of the church wherever she had held her membership. For nearly or quite two years she had not been able to meet with the church in worship. The last time she met with us was at the association in June, 1907, when she was present two days, but became much exhausted from the exertion. As she was faithful in her attendance upon the sanctuary, so also she was steadfast in the faith of the gospel. It was specially her delight to speak of the doctrine of election, effectual calling, the atonement upon Calvary and the resurrection of the bodies of the dead at the last day. Many who have visited her during the past few years can testify to this as well as we. She was grieved and hurt whenever there seemed to her to be any departure from the faith which had been hers from the beginning of her life as a believer. All who knew her at all intimately knew her as a woman of decided views, and as one not easily moved from her convictions. Her father's house was a home for all Old School Baptists from her childhood, and beside, many friends and neighbors delighted to be visitors there. It was seldom that some one was not being entertained in her father's home. This was also true, as many know, of her own home in Washington, D. C., at Southampton and at Hopewell. Hospitality has always been the rule of her home, and this hospitality was extended to all. Many have pleasant recollections of hours and days spent in her home. While Elder Purington lived, he, with her and her sister, Miss Ada Quint, welcomed all who came, with open hearts and hands. About a month before her death she sang one day three hymns; the first was, "How firm a foundation," the second, "How tedious and tasteless the hours," and the third, "O when shall I see Jesus?" Just before her death she feebly sang the hymn, "That awful day will surely come." Those present were deeply moved to hear her sing these hymns, so full of the believer's hope and faith.

The funeral services were held on Tuesday, Sept. 22nd. At the home prayer was offered by Elder A. B. Francis. At the meetinghouse the Scriptures were read and prayer was offered by Elder Horace Lefferts, and Elder B. F. Coulter preached a very appropriate and consoling discourse from the words found in John xxi. 18. Elder Francis conducted the service at the grave. A very large concourse of people were present to witness and take part in the sad services of the occasion. The remains were laid to rest in the cemetery adjoining the meetinghouse, by the side of her husband, to await the resurrection of the dead.

C.

John Archibald Leitch died May 23rd, 1908. He was born Oct. 10th, 1843, in the township of Dunwich, county of Elgin, Canada; he was educated first in the public schools of his native section and afterwards in the grammar schools of London and St. Thomas. His parents, Archibald and Flora Leitch, emigrated from the Highlands of Scotland, Argyleshire, in 1842, and settled in the wilds of Dunwich, where they made a home for themselves in what was then a dense forest. He early applied himself to acquire such an education as would fit him for teaching, and began that profession at the age of eighteen, spending years in his native section, after which he removed to Ancaster and taught there for six years, after which he removed to Brantford and embarked in the insurance business, in which he continued until shortly before his death.

The subject of the above sketch had been known to the writer for nearly twenty-three years as a lover of truth and of God's people, and whose life was ever above reproach; none could know him long before finding out his sterling qualities as a man and citizen; neither could one be in his company long before he found out their views upon eternal things, for he ever seemed to be searching after those who loved God and thought upon his name. He never made an open profession of Christ by public baptism, but would go miles to hear the truth of God once delivered to the saints. He had not once missed the May meetings at Dunwich for forty-nine years, and always returned with some thoughts for his most intimate friends, to whom he would talk for hours, which showed how much hold eternal truth had upon him. He was ever ready to defend the Old School Baptists and the truth they teach, and was a great lover of the SIGNS, and whenever opportunity afforded would get the Old School Baptist ministers when passing through Canada to stop off and preach, renting a hall in which to have them preach, and invite people to come and hear the gospel as the apostles used to preach it. We have had many conversations upon spiritual subjects, and I always found him filled with thoughts of love to God. Many enemies he had for the truth's sake, but all believed him honest and placed him in positions of honor, trust and influence, both on the school boards and in the council of our city, where he served for many years, and no doubt would have been elected to the mayor's chair had not his health failed about the time of the death of his older son, which seemed to take a great hold upon him; he never fully recovered from the shock. During the past sixteen years I was most intimate with him, and have no doubt but that our loss is his eternal gain. On the night of May 23rd he took a walk and visited his friend, Mr. George Teakle, with whom he remained until after 10 o'clock, talking of the love and goodness of God, and who went with him to within a few steps of his

own door. After making arrangements to visit a sick person the next day he went to his own room and in twenty minutes he was past all human aid, hardly able to speak a word to his wife and son who were with him. He leaves a widow, one son, a daughter, a daughter-in-law and two grandchildren to mourn their loss. We extend to them our heartfelt sympathy, feeling we have lost a friend indeed, and a brother in the Lord. May the God of all comfort guide and lead us all, so that be his coming at midnight or at the morning light we may have hope in the resurrection of our blessed Lord. He "is not dead, but sleepeth."

Elder F. A. Chick conducted the funeral services before a large company of friends and relatives, and he exalted not the dead, but the living Christ, who ever liveth for his people. F. SIMMONS.

MEETINGS.

THE Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church will hold, nothing in providence preventing, their yearly meeting on the first Saturday and Sunday in November, (7th and 8th) 1908. Those coming by rail will be met on the day previous in the afternoon at Olive Branch and West Shokan.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting, the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, of the Roxbury Association, will hold a two days meeting on Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 21st and 22nd, 1908. Ministering brethren and all other lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

By order of the church.

A. BOGART, Church Clerk.

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Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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11:00 A. M. 2:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THERE are a few Old School Baptists in Riverside, Cal., and they have meeting the first and third Sundays in each month, at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

W. D. BALL.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 76. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1908. NO. 22.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE.

"THEN they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."—Malachi iii. 16, 17.

It was a time of affliction and desolation when these words were uttered. Iniquity abounded in the nation, and yet the outward worship of the Lord in his temple was maintained, but it was a hollow mockery; though they drew nigh unto God with their mouth, and honored him with their lips, their heart was far from him. The Lord was not deceived, for all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. The Lord by the mouth of the prophet Malachi unmasked their hypocrisies and laid bare the carnality of their reprobate worship. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. Were there any such in Israel then? Yes, there was a remnant according to the election of grace, and in our text they are described: "Then they that feared the Lord." Precious ones, in whom the Lord delighteth, the salt of the earth. Such they were then, and to-day such are God's sacred ones. It was because of God's intimate dealings with them that they reverenced his name; they were the workmanship of his grace; for thus the Lord speaks in the new covenant: "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."—Jer. xxxii. 40. Ah, unless the Lord himself does it his fear is not in us. All mankind are estranged from God, and there is no fear of God before their eyes. Putting his fear in our hearts is God's own gracious, transforming work. It brings them that were alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that was in them because of the blindness of their hearts, into intimacy with the Lord their God. The fear of the Lord in the heart is vital and animating; that one becomes conscious of emotions toward the Lord; he now is moved with a sacred reverence for God, he thinks of the majesty, the justice and purity of the Lord, and in reverential trembling of soul he feels to bow before him. Ah, in a feeling sense he now knows he is a transgressor; vile, depraved, he loathes his sins, and loathes his own black self. The Lord is

not now despised, unsought, unknown, but the heart of the quickened sinner with sacred awe, with entreaty, is turned unto him. Yes, as the Holy Spirit discovers more and more the attributes of God to us, the more hallowed becomes his glorious name. And O, when we are given to taste the forgiveness of our sins, when his salvation sets us free from guilt and condemnation, O then, contemplating his mighty and gracious acts in our behalf, our God becomes in very heartfelt experience our "exceeding joy," and our heart says, "Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name." If the fear of the Lord is in my heart will it not be a living power there? It is a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death. This is the blessed God-glorifying effect of the fear of the Lord, we are turned from our iniquities. (Acts iii. 26.) The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life springing up within us, lifting us up, away from evil. Ah, when sin and Satan would drag us down and bury us in darkness and despair, the fear of the Lord is our defence, refreshing the soul and animating us with hallowed emotions toward the Holy One of Israel. Thus in all our temptations and all adversities we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another." God hath set them apart unto himself. (Psalms iv. 3.) They feared the Lord, and this precious fear drew them forth, separated them from the ungodly. In the sinful and dark times, and amidst the hypocritical worship of the Most High, there was a coming together of those who feared the Lord. They sought out one another, for they were of kindred minds, they had the selfsame hopes and fears, and their hearts throbbed in unison in the things pertaining to God. They "spake often one to another." This does not mean that when they met they spent their time gossiping one with another, discussing the affairs of the mere natural life. All of the world are capable of doing this. The theme of their conversation was the Lord, and their relations unto him. The prophet Daniel says, "Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed."—Daniel viii. 13, 14. And once two that feared the Lord walking to Emmaus talked together, and as they communed together and were sad Jesus himself drew near and went with them. (Luke xxiv. 13.)

"Mid scenes of confusion and creature complaints,
How sweet to my soul is communion with saints!"

This fellowship and communion is one of the very blessed fruits of God having wrought his fear in our hearts; it makes us fellows, companionable companions. So the beloved John declares himself, "Your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ."—Rev. i. 9. It was in the midst of trying dispensations that they that feared the Lord spake often one to another. They felt they could confide in one another, they were spiritually bosom friends pouring forth to each other their sighs and fears, desires and hopes. They could not but be sad in their communion one with another when they had to witness sin so abounding in the nation. No doubt they recognized and spake one to another of the manifest chastening hand of the Lord. But how compassionate

was the Lord unto them amidst all their troubles. Did he not speak by the mouths of his prophets very comforting things? Yes, the Holy Ghost moved Malachi to speak glorious, uplifting revelations. The cup of their griefs was sweetened, and their souls were animated with hope. Though at present all was dark and their heart-griefs were many, yet this is the word the Lord hath spoken: "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall." They "spake often one to another." There was an attraction which drew them into frequent intercourse one with another; it was so congenial, soothing and profitable. The Lord had given them one heart and one way, that they might fear him forever, for the good of them and their children after them. (Jer. xxxii. 39.) How could it then be otherwise than that they should speak often one to another? Is there any such thing as this in the world now? There is indeed; but in some places where there are those who profess to fear the Lord it is hardly discoverable, and instead of sacred communion together in the things of Christ, worldly-mindedness is manifest. The apostle Paul said, "For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults."—2 Cor. xii. 20. O what a heart-saddening picture! No wonder that the apostle shrank from beholding such a scene. It is so becoming the household of God to speak often one to another, and where there is that spiritual recognition of one another as those who have obtained like precious faith, our speech should be always with grace seasoned with salt. (Col. iv. 6.) There are words of counsel, admonition and exhortation to be spoken, there are words of sympathy, of good cheer to be said, and if I have offended my brother it is good to confess my fault to him, and if any one has transgressed against me how good it is to have a forgiving heart to speak to him words of forgiveness. O whatsoever we may find to speak one to another then in our tongue may there ever be the law of kindness, (Prov. xxxi. 21,) and all will be God-glorifying and to our mutual edification.

"And the Lord hearkened, and heard it." This is infinite condescension. What, such a Listener to our poor, imperfect utterances one to another? Yes, the Lord hearkened. He inclines his ear unto the speech of those that fear him. O dear kindred in Christ, we ever have our holy, heavenly Listener, the Lord our God. How blessedly this gives us glimpses of his beauty. Though he is high, yet he has respect unto the lowly, he will not turn a deaf ear to beggars, (1 Sam. ii. 8,) he hears the speech of dust and ashes. (Gen. xviii. 27.) Poor, destitute soul, he will regard thy cry, he hears the groanings of the prisoner (Psalms cii. 17–20,) and the sighs of the needy. (Psalms xii. 5.) He inclined unto me and heard my cry, saith David, and this poor man cried, and the Lord heard him. (Psalms xl. 1; xxxiv. 6.) Sometimes when we talk one to another our tongues fail to tell all that our hearts would speak, and sometimes our language is so imperfect we mistake the meaning of one another; but the Lord hearkens and knows exactly our heart's language. It is very encouraging to needy souls that God heareth prayer, for while the children of God are pilgrims and strangers in the earth, so many are their needs, so many straits attend their

journey, and so unequal in themselves are they in their conflicts with the world, the flesh and the devil, that if succor were not given them from on high they would soon perish from the way.

"A book of remembrance was written before him." This is the most wonderful book that was ever written; it contains so much that were all the pens of mortals employed to tell its contents the half could not be told, and the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. In considering this book let us contemplate, first, the book and its contents; second, the writer of the book; third, where it was written; fourth, for whom it was written, the readers of the book; fifth, where it is read. The title of the book is of sacred significance, "a book of remembrance," but of this I will speak further on. This book contains the records of eternity, the thoughts and acts of Jehovah, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost before the creation of the world. In it is found the revelation of the good pleasure of God in creation, providence and grace. In its pages is unfolded the everlasting covenant of grace, ordered in all things and sure. It is the book of Jehovah's infinitely wise and glorious and immutable decrees, that embrace and determine all things in heaven and earth and hell. In this book you will find the Lamb's book of life. Is my name written therein? All the holy Scriptures are in this book; yes, this book also embraces all those wonderful, divine, ineffaceable writings of the Spirit of the living God in the hearts of the elect. In the Scriptures we read of a book in the right hand of him that sat upon the throne, written within, and on the back side, sealed with seven seals, and the Lamb opened the book. (Rev. v. 1–10.) Also a book was opened, which is the book of life, and whosoever was not found written therein was cast into the lake of fire. (Rev. xx. 12–15; Phil. iv. 3.) David speaks of his tears being in God's book, (Psalms lvi. 8,) and saith he, "In thy book all my members were written." —Psalms cxxxix. 16. And Jesus said, Your names are written in heaven. This, beloved ones of God, is but a bare outline regarding the book of remembrance.

The writer of the book is the Holy Ghost. Shall I speak of him as the Recorder who writes in imperishable lines the memorials of the everlasting kingdom and dominion of the Lord God Omnipotent who reigneth? Every word written in this book is such that none could pen them except the Spirit of the living God. (2 Cor. iii. 3.)

Where was this book written? It is before the throne of God, and there it was written. "A book of remembrance was written before him." The Lord is not forgetful; he is not as that king who, in his restlessness, one night called for the book of records of the chronicles of his reign to be read before him. (Esther ii. 23; vi. 1.) The book was written before the Lord, but the Lord of hosts himself hath no need of it, it was not written for his benefit. Our God has an all-glorious and infinite sufficiency in himself; his understanding is infinite. (Psalms cxlvii. 5.) For whom then was this wonderful book written? It was "written before him for those who feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." To them it is read by the Holy Spirit, and taught of the Lord they themselves read its living words.

The book of remembrance is written before the Lord, and only there can any one read it understandingly. It is written in the prophets, "All thy children shall be taught of God." Now the Lord,

who loves his people, and is himself their Teacher, constrains them by his divine operations to come before him to receive instruction from the book, and his gracious, pitying eyes are ever upon them as they ponder over its lines. He knows all the difficulties that they experience in spelling and pronouncing and understanding some words that are hard to be understood. (2 Peter iii. 16.) Often while we are reading we find things of deep signification, and our puzzled hearts look up inquiringly to the throne of our compassionate God, saying, What is the meaning of this? Yes, our God is very indulgent, for this is written for the encouragement of all who sit at his feet: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

The saints living in the days of the prophet Malachi read the book of remembrance and were no doubt comforted and strengthened as they pondered over the remembrances that were called forth by their perusal of the book. The Scriptures written in former times by holy men of God, the prophecies and the history of the nation of Israel read before the Lord would revive in their minds how holy, merciful and covenant-keeping was Jehovah their God. And also looking over those divine leadings, the things of the Spirit wrought in them, they would trace how wondrously mindful of them the Lord had been.

"I muse on the years that are past,
Wherein my defence thou hast proved:
Nor wilt thou relinquish at last
A sinner so signally loved."

Let us now come to ourselves and trace what intimacies we have had with the book of remembrance. Can you recall the time when you began to read in the book? You were before the Lord, the book was opened, you had eyes to see and a little understanding to know what was written on the page which God set before you to read. This was something new; it was the beginning with you of a new, undying life. Yes, we were before the Lord, raised up from death in trespasses and sins. (Eph. ii. 1.) In our spirit we were thus in divine life before the Lord. In times past we were without God, then our thoughts were only such as a darkened imagination could picture. To us God was a far off, dreaded being, or we conjured ideas of him that were flattering to ourselves; he was, we vainly thought, one like ourselves, one who would consider himself favored if we only would turn our thoughts unto him and worship him, and in consideration of this he would reward us on earth and give us everlasting happiness in heaven. How sacred and yet how awful was our soul's first experience of being before the Lord, and the book was opened. We were in this quickening life before the living God. He was near, and yet how far off, separated we felt to be, by our iniquities, from him. In our spirit, in a way that we had never known before, we now knew that the Lord was holy and just and almighty, and we saw, "Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance." Shame, guilt, condemnation was ours as our transgressions were called to our remembrance. Ah, in our consciences we were made to possess the sins of our youth, we found a power moving the emotions of our quickened souls before the Lord; we were exercised in humbleness and self-loathing, and with a contrite heart before him. To thus read our just condemnation out of the book causes us to fear and quake. God, before whom we stand, is terrible in majesty, the Holy One, a con-

suming fire. (Heb. xii. 21–29.) This trembling of quickened sinners is sacred, not like the trembling of devils, (James ii. 19,) for when those who are brought before him tremble at his word there is so graciously wrought in them by the Holy Ghost that humble and contrite spirit. Blessed tremblers, the eyes of God's eternal pity are upon you while you read. (Isaiah lxvi. 2.) Some that fear the Lord are kept many days reading these sin-convincing, soul-afflicting lines in the book of remembrance, others are but a little while reading these heart-grieving remembrances. The Lord times our reading, he is the Judge, and determines when we have read long enough this and that page in the book. When he says, Thou hast read the page of thy sins and condemnation "long enough," (Deut. i. 6,) then his own hand (not ours) turns over the page, and our eyes look with glad surprise upon a more glorious page. The ministration of condemnation declares God's glory, but the ministration of righteousness and life far excelleth in glory. (2 Cor. iii. 7–11.) Our first reading in the book was the law, but this page is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Here we read in glowing, animating, comforting lines the exceeding riches of God's grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus, even that grace which reigns through righteousness unto eternal life. Exceeding glorious remembrances are in the gospel of Christ. In the crucifixion of the Son of God we read that God remembered our sins, visiting them upon our Surety, who made atonement for them and put them away by the sacrifice of himself. With the eyes of our spiritual understanding we read so comfortingly that God remembered us in our low estate, remembered us in mercy, and the more and more our eyes are enlightened, (Eph. i. 18,) and as again and again we read in the gospel, we see, and we shall continue to see, that God hath remembered us from everlasting. This is not all understood at our first reading of the revelation of Jesus Christ. Comforting glories shine forth to faith's vision in every word of the gospel, and God in all the glory of his attributes is remembered to us in our Emmanuel's dear face. If now, while we are absent from the Lord, while as through a glass darkly so comforting and glorious is our view of Jehovah's glories, what must it be when faith is turned to sight? Then we shall be with him, be like him, and face to face see him as he is. (1 John iii. 2, 3; 1 Cor. xiii. 12.) The Bible is a book of remembrance given by inspiration of God; it was written before him for our comfort and learning, and only before the Lord can it be read understandingly. Heresies arise in the minds of the untaught of God. Such persons in their self-sufficiency read the Scriptures a little, it may be, but not before the Lord. It is a very blessed experience of those who are of the truth to sit down at the feet of the Lord and there receive his words. (Deut. xxxiii. 3.) But those who disseminate false doctrines are not those who sit at Jesus' feet; they are not those whose hearts' entreaty before the Lord is for wisdom. (James i. 5.) But stirred with false spirits that have gone forth into the world, they corrupt the word of God, (2 Cor. ii. 17,) wrest the Scriptures, (2 Peter iii. 16,) handle the word of God deceitfully, (2 Cor. iv. 2,) and in their vain imaginings with sleight, (Eph. iv. 14,) as "a dice thrower" they juggle wrested texts of the Bible, and invent such doctrines as would pervert the gospel of Christ. They receive not the love of the truth; for this cause God sends them strong delusion,

that they should believe a lie, (2 Thess. ii. 11,) and though they sport themselves with their own deceivings, (2 Peter ii. 13,) and are transformed as ministers of righteousness, of what profit is it? Their end shall be according to their works. (2 Cor. xi. 13–15.) What a painful picture! O dear children of God, how happy are we if we have that grace to examine ourselves whether we are in the faith. Are we ever found sitting at Jesus' feet as little children, teachable, inquiring, reading the precious Scriptures? Though the heady and highminded in their hearts sneer at this humble waiting upon the Lord, our safety and blessedness is in it. The apostle prayed for the saints at Ephesus; we have need of the same mercies. (Eph. i. 17–19.) Christ is the center, the heart, the Alpha and Omega of the revelation of God. Bear in mind, dear child of God, that it is not in your power to say what pages in the book you will read to-day or to-morrow. I am not meaning alone the Bible, (though we are not self-determiners what we shall read with our natural eyes in the Scriptures) but I am meaning that reading with our spiritual understanding (Col. i. 9,) the revealed things of God. Sometimes you may say, I should like to read here to-day, this bright and cheerful page, I should like to read just what that dear saint has been reading. I know from the past and from what has taken place this day that I am writing that I cannot select what I shall read. Early this morning some dark, bitter lines were spread before me; I looked upon them with an aching heart, all was obscurity to me, a voice in me seemed to say, Can you see the end of this, can you read the will of God in this? My eyes filled with tears, and my throbbing soul cried to the Lord, O I cannot understand this. Do you understand, dear reader, what I am writing about? Perhaps not. It is not for us to choose whether to read upon the mount of transfiguration or in Gethsemane's garden, but our God and Father opens the book of remembrance to the page where we are to read to-day, this month, this year. Some of us are not far enough advanced to read certain parts of the deep things of God; we have to come into deep waters to read understandingly certain lines in the book; words of one syllable are all we are capable of reading just at present. Milk is the seasonable diet of those who are not of age for strong meat. Some indeed of those who fear the Lord have the eyes of their understanding so marvelously enlightened with the light of life that they read in the twinkling of an eye or in a little while what others are years in attaining unto. (See that thief upon the cross, Luke xxiii. 42.) This is all according to the good pleasure of the Lord of hosts, before whom and by whose grace alone the book of remembrance is read. It is very difficult (I find it so) to put into human speech the transactions of the Holy Ghost wrought in our souls, in his glorifying Christ, in his taking the things of our Emmanuel and shewing them unto us. We have to be brought into such manifold conditions, experiences, to prepare us to have the excellencies of Christ made known unto us. Sometimes we are much stirred up to read in God's book. Whether it be the words of the Scriptures, or the book of our souls' experience of divine realities, or God's providences, we long to learn the will of God, but it is not always an easy thing to do this. We come before the Lord to read, but we are much buffeted and tormented while endeavoring to understand the good pleasure of our heavenly Father. There arise in our

souls such questionings, and whisperings of unbelief. Satan is at our right hand to resist us, (Zech. iii. 1,) he would throw dust in our eyes and blear our sight. At times it is as though a very battle were being fought between the devil and our spirit that is yearning for Jesus Christ and his precious doctrine. Our souls cling to the Lord, our face with entreaty is turned to him, we long for the book to be unsealed, and for eyes to see, to read and understand, to find food and encouragement, but even while we are praying before the throne we are assaulted with the insinuations of the adversary. What is this that you are studying so intently, child of God? You say, There is that rod, it has been cruel to me, its strokes have put me to grief; truly these chastenings are grievous, I cannot see how all things work together for good; this trial, these strokes, seem to me only for evil. Ah, dear kindred in Christ Jesus, we never can read aright our chastenings away from the Lord. It is our mercy to be driven, and to be drawn when under the rod to the throne of our God, and there to fall at his feet while our chastened souls sigh and cry before him, Tell me wherefore thou hast afflicted me. The Lord opens the book of our chastenings and little by little we begin to read. This is one of the most difficult parts to read in the book of remembrance. The Lord has written, and there is so much to read in the chastenings of his children. Our reading times are before him. The Lord of hosts, our heavenly Father, speaks: "Hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it."—Micah vi. 9. Our ears are opened to discipline, (Job xxxvi. 10,) and the voice of the rod speaks to our hearts humbling and comforting things. Our trials are God's covenant chastenings in faithfulness and everlasting love, and are all to bring forth unto us the peaceable fruits of righteousness. We look into some of the mysterious providences toward us, but we cannot read their signification; all is to us dense, painful obscurity, we can see nothing in our afflictions and temptations glorifying to God, and nothing of any hope or benefit to ourselves. But God is very gracious to his chastened ones, and even though we have been self-pitiful and fretful, we are, as I have intimated, both driven and drawn, in due time, to come before him, and to his chastened, grieved, wearied, fretful child God opens the book of his chastenings. The Holy Spirit pours a little divine enlightenment upon the eyes of our understanding, and we begin reading before our Father in heaven, line upon line, here a little and there a little. Here are some things that the hearts of chastened children read: "Then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." "Fools, because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted." When we read this before the Lord it is a humbling remembrance, and our bowed hearts confess that we have strayed away, and that we have been foolish indeed. (Psalms lxxiii. 22.) This also is the doctrine we read: "I have not done without cause all that I have done in it, saith the Lord."—Ezek. xiv. 23. Hard, soul-abasing words, they stir up remembrances of our vain life. Here is another line to read in chastening's book: "Ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and

scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."—Heb. xii. 5, 6. O what memories these words of our Father stir up; they bring us with contrite confession before him, saying, I know that in faithfulness thou hast afflicted thy wayward child. "Hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it." The voice of the rod is the voice of our Father in heaven, and as we ponder over our chastened pathway we at length say, "Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not."—Lam. iii. 19–22. And when after many times reading our chastenings before the Lord we are brought into subjection to the Father of spirits and live, and lift up our faces unto him, then we can see "Love inscribed upon them all." O happy is that chastened child who with eyes of faith and love can see the end of the Lord, that he is very pitiful and of tender mercy. (James v. 11.)

"Bastards may escape the rod,
Sunk in earthly, vain delight;
But the true-born child of God
Must not, would not if he might."

The Lord's supper is a book of remembrance to the churches of Christ; many consoling remembrances are ours therein. "This do in remembrance of me."—1 Cor. xi. 24. In God's dealings with the elect of mankind his attributes are so fully declared that heavenly beings, the holy angels in glory, contemplate with holy adoration God's glories therein. There were cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy-seat whose faces looked one to another; "Toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubims be."—Exodus xxv. 20. And, in a figure, may we not say that the church of the redeemed is the most comprehensive book that the angels in heaven read? For unto them principalities and powers in heavenly places are made known, by the church, the manifold wisdom of God. (Eph. iii. 10.) "Which things the angels desire to look into."—1 Peter i. 12. The apostle Peter had a never to be forgotten time reading in the book of remembrance. Look at him denying Christ with oaths and curses, he did not appear to be reading just then. But the Lord Jesus turned and looked upon Peter. That look was the look of incarnate omnipotence, and drew the eyes of sinful Peter to look into the eyes of Jesus. O Emmanuel's eyes were then a book of remembrance indeed to Peter. He read, shall I say, volumes in a moment; he read the unfailing pity of the Son of God to him, an unworthy wretch; he read in Jesus' eyes the story of injured love, and he knew that it was he himself who was the guilty, injurious one. "Peter remembered" (Luke xxii. 61,) the words of faithful warning, "Thou shalt deny me thrice," and the words of everlasting love, "I have prayed for thee." Surely Peter never forgot all this; throughout all eternity he will remember it. I have thought very much upon the dear children of God who lived on the earth in old testament times. As I have mused about them I have felt at home with them. Their regenerated spirits are now with Christ in heaven itself, even as the spirits of that once crucified thief, (Luke xxiii. 43,) and the martyr Stephen. (Acts vii. 59.) Some of these saints now with Christ in heaven have their regenerated bodies, too, as Enoch and Elijah. The bodies of these two did not die, they were translated that they should not see death. (Gen. v. 24; 2 Kings ii. 11; Heb. xi. 5.) God translated them from earth to heaven, he

quickened their mortal bodies, he changed them in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and they put on immortality and incorruption. Thus it shall be with the resurrected bodies of the saints at the last day, and also with the saints who are alive on the earth at the time of the resurrection, and thus Enoch and Elijah are now in heaven in their regenerated, spiritual bodies, fashioned like unto the glorious body of the ascended Savior Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. xv. 51–54; Phil. iii. 20, 21.) O comforting, glorious hope! There took place in these dear saints while on earth very sacred transactions of the Holy Ghost. Ponder over the following description of it: "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."—1 Peter i. 10, 11. These saints were, to use our present similitude, reading the writings of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts. Are you looking at the picture? Contemplate their inquiries, their diligent searchings, their hopes and expectations, yes, even some moments were theirs of holy rapture, as by faith they looked forward and caught glimpses of and ascended with Christ into "the glory that should follow." These saints of olden times would be very companionable, would they not?

There are many things pertaining to our reading the book of remembrance before the Lord that I cannot now enter into. Therein we read our title deeds to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, which is reserved in heaven for us. Pleasant reading! Very blessed indeed it is to read our names in the Lamb's book of life. Sometimes we read the book of remembrance with fears and weeping, and the pages are tear-stained. Ah, sometimes we cannot read a line therein, the book to us is sealed and we cannot open it. Then it is given us by our merciful God to read in joy the covenant ordered in all things and sure, wherein we see God hath from everlasting been mindful of us, and hath predestinated us unto eternal glory by Christ Jesus. Strong consolations are given us in times of trouble while reading the book before our God, we are stayed up to endure our conflicts by the way, our hope is made to abound, and in our earnest expectations of ultimate triumph we are enabled to sing, "We are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

"A book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., October, 1908.

DEAR KINDRED IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—Being kept in my room for some time with rheumatism, I have been consoling myself by looking over the last volume of the SIGNS. The very first article in January 1st number chained my attention so that I have to peruse it all over again, finding it more full than when I first read it. I was more interested as it was from the pen of our youthful brother, Horace Lefferts, who but a few years ago was a small child playing with the little children here. Now he is a minister of the gospel, proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ with comfort and satisfaction to the Lord's people, causing them to exclaim in thought, Behold, "what hath God wrought?" How wonderful are his works; his way is in the sea, and his footsteps are not known.

The next letter is from sister Martha Hubbard, who has passed through the deep waters of sorrow, and very sore trials, which have proved a refining furnace, and she realizes the promise that they will all work for her good, so she praises the Hand that dealt the blows. Then came two messages from our dear young sister, Bonnie Chick, whose warblings have been so sweet since she was brought into the fold, "with believers enrolled," causing my mind to go back to my own early experience, when I wondered how people could find anything to talk about but that which pertained to the kingdom of Christ, for

"Jesus, all the day long,
Was my joy and my song."

How often have words of that lovely hymn come singing through all my being, for surely

"Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

Then come fitting words from several brethren and sisters, comforting the scattered waiting ones; and especially would I mention the letter of sister Allen, who is deprived of her natural sight, but who has been given that spiritual vision which is of priceless value, for it enables her to realize that even this severe affliction is among the "all things" that work for her good. Her interesting letter, dictated to brother Fenton, who, since he came into the church, has been such a comfort to her, reminds us of the time when she was able to attend our meetings, always with some comforting word for her brethren and sisters.

In this first number sister Nancy Creel, so far away, yet near, sings a song of praise in the same harmonious strain. Since that was written her location is changed to farther west, where she is entirely deprived of hearing the gospel's joyful sound. O how many of our dear kindred are in the same situation; but what a sweet blessing that they can come together on the wings of thought, brought nigh by that love that can cross the broadest rivers, and scale the highest mountains.

The New Year's address was filled with refreshing words that distilled as the dew, and the editorial was full of deep thought and instruction. Often in reading the SIGNS, it seems as though I were in one of our conference meetings, where

"Each can feel his brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part,
Where sorrow flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart."

One may speak with hesitation what is felt by him to be a very poor message, and these very words may prove the most valuable to another who is traveling in the same low place, feeling entirely alone. So, often in the SIGNS we read our own exercises, and feel drawn to those we have never met, scattered from Maine to Florida, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, and to some across its great waters, and to the far off islands of the sea, and at times a message comes winging its way from those distant shores, telling the same old story of Jesus and his love. Often those who feel that their letters are the most worthless are the very ones bearing to us the greater comfort. One dear, afflicted sister, who thought she was writing a very poor letter, said though she could not write as others, yet each one came right into her heart; and she crept into mine, for her words were full of that love that is divine. One sister in Florida was sad and lonely, thinking of the Lord's people meeting in different localities where they can hear the gospel preached, while she had not the privilege of hearing a sermon

for many years, I am sure if she had the opportunity to listen to the "joyful sound," a little rain or worldly company would not keep her away from the place of meeting, and what would she and others do without these voiceless messages of love and sweet fellowship such as are contained in the SIGNS?

In February I read "Gleanings by the Way," by sister Ruth Adamson, which was certainly very touching, and manifested that she was ripening for glory. She has since entered its portals, where all hindrances to her joining with the saints in praises are done away, for she is now in the countless throng of those who came out of "great tribulation," clothed in white robes, singing praises to God and the Lamb.

In reading over all these precious messages I see so much that I would like to mention, only I fear that it would make my letter too lengthy. The clear and beautiful unfolding of Scripture by watchmen on the walls of Zion is always gladly welcomed by the longing, thirsting soul, and, as the gifts are varied, each striking a different chord, so there is always some sweet morsel for each waiting one, and the soothing words from the fathers and mothers in Israel fill a large place, and from all the brethren and sisters who write, some walking in the valley and some on the mountain-top, all come to me with tenderness, for I feel that a heart has been given me to rejoice with those that do rejoice, and to weep with those who weep.

Reading over the letter of sister Ruth Keene, written on the first day of the week, early in the morning, brought to my mind her sweet experience which appeared in the SIGNS a few years ago, when she was very young. I have since felt an interest in all that flowed from her pen.

"A spot of earth," from the pen of Elder J. F. Beeman, was very interesting to me, and while reading it I could almost see the pictures that his ready pen portrayed. He feared it was weakness to tell this experience, and it was with hesitation that he sent it, but I am very sure many have read that narrative with pleasant participation in those early remembrances.

I have now been reading over the very interesting experience of sister Mamie Kennedy, and I cannot tell how it has penetrated the deepest recesses of my being. Many of her thoughts and feelings it seems she has written out of my own heart, and I am glad for her that in "waiting patiently" she has found Him whom her soul loveth, and entered the banqueting-house, where she has food suited to her taste, and that she is in company with that blessed household that is most dear to her heart. In the same number that contains this letter is an editorial from the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, from these words, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces." It was after reading this editorial when it first appeared that I gathered strength to write to him, at the same time trembling at my boldness, and I can never tell what strength and comfort was in his reply that very soon came back to me. His love and kindness cannot be forgotten. He was truly a father and teacher in the church of God, and ever ready with help and instruction for poor little, stammering ones, who loved to lisp

the name of Jesus. Though he possessed so noble a mind, filled with true wisdom, none were too small or ignorant for his notice. Such a character continues to exhale fragrance as long as memory remains among those who loved him. I have just been reading again the experience of his great-grandson, Gilbert McColl. He has told much in few words. It was a very interesting meeting when he related the reason of his hope to the church here. Tears sprang to many eyes while listening to his childlike story. It was most touching to see him receive the beautiful ordinance of baptism, coming into the church with gladness, such a great distance from his home. We enjoyed very much his visit here in our home with his mother, whom we had not seen since, as a young bride, she left Middletown, N. Y., for a home in Manitoba, many years ago.

While I have been writing another name has often come to my mind, a name we have missed the past year, and for a longer time, and many readers of our dear magazine will remember the sweet songs of sister Attie Curtis. Her letters were always cheering and heavenly. Her harp has been hanging on the willows till we are longing to hear the sweet vibrations again. We hope the Lord will soon enable her to tell of some things she has learned in this nighttime, for, "Darkness shows us worlds of light we never saw by day." The Lord maketh the clouds his chariot, and on the darkest cloud is painted the most beautiful rainbow.

With love to all who are among that number chosen in the furnace of affliction, and who desire to be true followers of Him who was meek and lowly, I am, unworthily,

BESSIE DURAND.

VIENNA, Va., Oct. 17, 1908.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I am sending you a letter written at my request by Elder H. H. Lefferts, on the beautiful twenty-third Psalm. He says it is a mere skeleton and not worth publishing, but it has been more than a skeleton to me, and I leave it with you to do with as you think best; if you do not publish it, please return it to me.

Our association closed yesterday, and we feel to thank God for his blessings, for he certainly blessed us in many ways, with beautiful weather, good preaching, hearing ears and understanding hearts to receive what is good meat and drink to his children. The gospel is certainly good for the children of the living God; it feeds, strengthens and builds them up, and they are made to "lie down in green pastures" and be content. Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, is always caring for them, and not one little, weak lamb shall perish; though one stray from the flock, Jesus will find him and bring him back safely into the fold. I can say, I enjoyed in a measure every sermon that was preached at the association, and especially yours on the "Ark." I had never looked at the ark in that light before, and it was quite a revelation to me and very interesting; I could feel the truth of every word in my heart, and feel to say, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." On the last day of our meeting the subject was the love of God shed abroad in the heart, the love of the brethren for one another, and that is always interesting to me; it seems as though that is all I can talk or write about, for it is a wonderful love, a love I never dreamed of. I once thought the Old Baptists did not think nearly as much

of each other as they pretended; I did not think they could love one another so much, but now I know they do love as much as they express, and far more, they cannot show outwardly all the love they have in their hearts for the brethren. I feel as brother McConnell said of himself on the last day of our meeting; I often wonder if it is the right kind of love I have for my brethren, if I love them in the right way. I do not doubt the love of the brethren for me, but am I not deceiving them? God grant that I am not; I hope I love them with a pure heart fervently. I know I would not be satisfied with any other people, and when I look back and see all the way the Lord has led me I cannot help but have a little hope in the redeeming blood of Jesus. All of my relatives who are members of any denomination are Methodists, but I thank God that in his wise providence he saw fit to lead me in a different way. When I first became aware of my exercise of mind in regard to spiritual things I began to attend the Methodist meetings, and for six months I attended the meetings as regularly as it was convenient for me, but I could not find what my heart desired, they did not look like I felt; they seemed selfish one with another, each seemed to think himself better than the other; that was not the way I felt, I was hungering and thirsting after righteousness, longing to find some one like myself, or some one who felt as I did, that I might talk with. The Methodist preacher came to see me one day, but I soon found he did not feel as I did. He told me I would have to do something whereby I could be saved, that I could not expect God to do it all, I had to help him. What! this poor, vile sinner help God? Ah no, what could I do? I felt that God must help me, that if he did not have mercy on me I was lost, lost forever, and I was made to cry for mercy day and night until he saw fit to calm the troubled deep, saying, "Peace, be still," and, "Fear not, trembling one, it is I." The first day I went to the Old Baptist meeting I knew I had found the people I was looking for; they looked like I felt, except they seemed so happy in each other's company, and I felt so miserable, and alone. I would like to have told them how I felt, but I dared not, something held me back, but my love went out to them and I knew I could love no other people as I did them. I have loved them from that day to this, if I am not deceived, but I fear I have deceived them, "For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am, 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

I love to read the letters in the SIGNS from different brethren and sisters everywhere, from far away States; though I never had the pleasure of seeing them face to face, my love goes out to them, for they write of the same things I love to write and talk about, and I feel to say, Write on. If I could write like some of you, I would write, too, but I cannot, and I feel to say with brother Chick, (in his editorial in Oct. 15th SIGNS) O that more of the spirit of the meek and lowly One might be manifest in all our conversation.

O what a long, rambling, worthless letter; please cast it aside, my dear brother, and forget you ever received it, it is so much like the writer. May you all be strengthened and kept by the hand of God, is the desire of my heart.

Your sister in weakness,

LENA HUNTT.

WARWICK, N. Y., Nov. 25, 1907.

DEAR SISTER HUNTT:—You request me to write you with regard to some things in the twenty-third Psalm. This Psalm is a most precious bit of Scripture, and has often been a comfort to many of the Lord's people.

"He leadeth me beside the still waters." One cannot lead another unless he goes before. Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, is the forerunner of his people. They never are called to go but where he has already been. "Still waters" signify waters that are quiet, peaceful and deep. "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of our God." This river, which is the water of life, flows from the throne of God and the Lamb; that is, it issues forth from the place of his power and dominion and is sent forth by his decree. Those who drink of this shall never thirst again (for earthly water), but it will subdue their murmurings and unrest, thus making them quiet, and will afford them a rest and peace which the world cannot bestow nor withdraw. But the stillness of these waters also shows they are deep. Nothing can be deeper or more mysterious than God's plans and purposes, his ways and thoughts. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" This water of life which God gives to his people is full of his rich wisdom, his rich knowledge, his unsearchable judgments and his mysterious ways, therefore it is deep water; and still, because it is deep. It is babes and sucklings that are hither led, not grown men. These things are hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes; they are to the weak, not the strong; to the foolish, not the wise; to the self-conscious sinner, not the boasting Pharisee.

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." Pastures are feeding-places for the sheep. Green signifies new, fresh and living. To lie down signifies contentment and satisfaction. The gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is the pasture in which the sheep of the great Shepherd feed and lie down, it contains such nourishment and food as hungry sinners need. The gospel is green; that is, it is always new, always fresh, and is full of life; there is no death in it. Whenever this glorious news is proclaimed in the heart of a tempest-tossed and trial-ridden sinner it suddenly makes him contented, happy and satisfied, for it says: "It is I, be not afraid." We do not lie down of ourselves, but he maketh us to lie down, but it is in such a sweet, compelling way that we do not realize at the time that we are being forced into it. He constrains us by love, and moves us by the Spirit's indwelling, to lie down and be happy, contented and satisfied in what he has prepared for us. Such as has been given unto me, give I unto you.

Yours in love of Jesus' name,

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

I JOHN III 1, 2.

"BEHOLD, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."

These words, with the next verse, have been much in my mind for months past, and I have often felt a desire to give expression to some of the thoughts which have come to me.

John, the apostle, has often been called the apostle of love, no doubt because he so often speaks of that attribute of God. "God is love," and is John not often spoken of as "that disciple whom Jesus loved"? But he has very little to say about his love to God. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." The love of God to his church and people seems to have been uppermost in John's thoughts when he gave expression to these words, "Behold, what manner of love," &c. Well might we ask the same question. The love of God is infinite, unchangeable, everlasting. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." "We change, he changeth not." Infinite love, because it changeth not. ("The same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.") "The Father hath bestowed upon us." The thought fills one with wonder and amazement, "bestowed upon us;" how can you and I, my friends, claim to be among those whom the disciple describes as "us?" Is he not writing to those whom in the foregoing chapter he addresses as "My little children?" If then we can claim any relationship to John, can we not reasonably hope that we are included in the word "us?" A very small word, but fraught with much meaning if you and I are not found included in it. The Holy Spirit, by the pen of Peter, says, "And be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." Can you and I, my friends, say with the poet,

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness"?

Can we say with any degree of comfort, He hath brought us to see our helpless state by nature, and given us a faith's view of his finished work? And this embraces, not only the work of shedding his most precious blood, but also the electing love of God the Father, the gift of the Father to the Son, and the redemption of his people from their sins. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." If, I say, we have had a faith's view of his finished work, and felt the operation of his blessed Spirit upon our hearts, bringing us to cry, "What must I do to be saved?" rest assured, my friends, nature does not bring a man thus to cry, but "He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ," and we will yet be brought into the liberty of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and claim the relationship, and by the Spirit cry, "Abba, Father," and have a hope which is sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, and that we are his children, chosen in him before the foundation of the world; "and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ." To separate a joint-heirship, both parties must be agreed to the separation. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us." With Paul we become persuaded that nothing can do it, not even our sins, though they often bring us

into bondage, and at times we cry, "O wretched man that I am!"

"That we should be called the sons of God." Sons of God? Yea, sons by the new birth. Ye must be born again or ye cannot see the kingdom of God. If then we know anything experimentally of these things, we are sons of God. "Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world," said the Master. "If ye were of the world the world would love its own," but I have chosen you out of the world, and ordained you that ye bring forth much fruit and that your fruit might remain. Here then comes the testing point: Does the world realize we are not of it? Are we so mixed up with the world that none can say whether we are children of God or of the wicked one? We who believe the doctrine of election according to the foreknowledge of God, and salvation by grace alone, are charged with looseness of living; I sometimes ask myself, Is there any truth in this? Are we always ready to "let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven?" Can we be said to be doing so when we neglect God's house and worship? Do we neglect the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is? I have thought much of this point. Do I hear one saying, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth?" True, nevertheless, is a church or people who never meet unless a minister comes (who often are few and far between) be said to be letting their light shine, and does it not rather show to the world that we want to glorify the creature instead of the Creator? I often feel condemned.

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God," &c. We do not have to wait, however many doubts we may have: "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." We say faith is the gift of God; it is, and if we have grace at all in our hearts, we have faith, howsoever little it may be. Christ said to his little ones, "O ye of little faith." You and I will never be condemned for our great faith. If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye could say to this mountain: Be thou removed and cast into the sea, and it should be done. Why is it we are so filled with doubts and fears? Is it because we have no faith? We believe not; but because we look too much to self, and not to Him, the author and finisher of our faith. Looking within, we find nothing but a cage of unclean birds, looking to Christ we find our all in all, and the fairest of ten thousand to our souls. "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee," saith the Bridegroom. The bride did not mourn because of her lack of faith, for did she not say, "My beloved is mine, and I am his"? but because she could not find Him whom her soul loved. Is this not often the case with us? But why this condition? Is it because we are so taken up with the world and looking after the things of time and sense? We can talk upon any subject but God's salvation; we are such poor, worthless creatures. Is it any wonder we feel our worthlessness when we neglect the word of God? Is it not said, "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another"? Why do we not, I say, when we are commanded to rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoice? Let your affection be set on things above, (where Christ sitteth) and not on the things of earth; "for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which

are not seen are eternal." "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." If we believe not God we make him a liar. Why then go on doubting his word, which says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God"?

"It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Look up, doubting one; look up, fearful one, your Lord shall appear for you in glory; yea, more, is there now interceding for his bride. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." May we, with the psalmist, say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." "He knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust," and, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."

"For we shall see him as he is." "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Now we see as through a glass darkly, then face to face; now we know in part, then shall we know even as we are known.

My thoughts still run on. O the blessedness of these words of the apostle whom Jesus loved, what comfort for the poor, afflicted in Zion; and so I have found it during the past month, while being unable, through illness, to attend to my duties.

Yours in hope,

FRED SIMMONS.

BRANTFORD, Ont., March 16, 1908.

LAKELAND, Florida, April 7, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I have a letter in charge from Elder C. K. Haines to the Mt. Enon Association which I will send you for publication, as it was comforting to the brethren there, and I feel sure will prove the same to others. Elder Haines is an able gift, and a strong defender of the doctrine of unlimited predestination and salvation by grace alone.

Yours to serve in the gospel,

J. W. FUTCH.

PRINCETON, Ky., Nov. 2, 1907.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—And all the faithful in Christ Jesus, members of the Mt. Enon Association, when gathered together at your yearly meeting with the Mt. Enon Church, may God be with you. I did aim to be with you in body, but as in body I am far from you, my mind is with you, and I hope that all you do will be done to the honor and glory of God. Remember that as our God delivered Moses and the children of Israel from the Red Sea, so did he deliver you all from the bondage and evil of conditionalism, and placed your feet upon the rock of predestination, which is a rock that crushes all things that oppose it, and has done so in every age of the world. Men have tried to destroy that doctrine, but they have all failed, and to-day there is a remnant according to the election of grace who still proclaim that doctrine to a little flock, to whom it is God's pleasure to give the kingdom. Dear brethren, stand fast in the faith of God's elect, and compromise nothing. You know the devil offered to give Jesus all the kingdoms of the world if he would fall down and worship him, but the dear Savior would not do this. We may rest assured that our God hates the proud and boastful who boast of their good works and of great numbers, but remembers the little ones who follow the Savior. The truth was not popular

in his days on earth, and the truth is not popular to-day, and he who preaches the truth to-day is hated by the so-called religious world just as Jesus was hated by them in his day. It is a sure and positive fact that men who attempt to limit God's purposes and decrees do not believe in God, but deny him in all his attributes. Our God said by the mouth of his holy prophets that he had declared the end from the beginning, saying his counsel should stand, and he would do all his pleasure. He also said he had made the wicked for the day of evil, and that they should do wickedly and should not understand, and we find in this day of evil that bold and wicked men do wickedly, doubting God and limiting him, and offering to compromise the doctrine of salvation, by offering to men blessings for good works. This is conditionalism on the part of the creature, and denies the very rock of salvation by grace. In this God has given them up to a reprobate mind; this is why they do not understand. But our God has said the righteous shall understand, for it is given to them to know the mysteries of God. This is why they believe that all things work together for good to them that love God, and who are the called according to his purpose.

May God ever keep you all in his love, is my prayer.

Your servant in hope,

C. K. HAINES.

LA GRANGE, Ill., Oct. 16, 1908.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I am going to try to tell you, and any of my dear kindred in Christ with whom you may care to share this, of a meeting I attended here in Illinois last month. It was the Spoon River Association, and was held at the home of a brother and sister Myers, at Colchester, Ill., two hundred and sixteen miles from Chicago. I attended the two last days; starting from home without knowing even one name of those I should meet, but never doubting a welcome. As long as life lasts the memory of that sweet season with God's children here on earth will stay with me. I was shown great kindness, but it was not that which made all the enjoyment. The unity of the Spirit, the freedom given individuals to tell of the loving-kindness and great mercy of God, and the power and liberty given the ministering brethren to reveal God's hidden truths, resulted in joy and peace that passeth all understanding. I had a great desire to go, but dared not hope for a feast such as I had. There were ten or twelve Elders present, some of whom I did not get to hear, as they preached before I arrived, or else they belonged to the association and gave place to the visiting preachers. Elder Scott, of Springfield, Ill., Elder Carnell, of Duquoin, Ill., and an Elder Frazee, (of this State also, but I do not know where) preached more than once each, and I found them taught by the same great Teacher. Had my eyes been closed I would have believed I was at our own meetinghouse at an association. They differ a little from us, in the fact of their having a custom of shaking hands at the close of a session; while the last hymn is being sung all travel to the pulpit, giving the right hand of fellowship to the right and left as they go singing, and then to the Elders. My heart went out in love to them, and I felt that I knew them all. I found no one who lives very near me, but a greater number who have been taught of God and are led by the Spirit than I expected. I have an address of a man who lives in Chicago, I think his wife and daughter with him are all Old School Baptists. I hope to hunt them up

soon. A few of those I met I had known by letters in the SIGNS: Mrs. Ella Parrott, Mrs. Susie L. Bloomfield, Sarah Runkle and brother Varnes. Mrs. Sarah E. Runkle is a sister-in-law of Deacon Myers. The preaching was held in a grove, and from one hundred to one hundred and fifty ate and slept at this home. It gave a chance for a sermon in the evening, and more thorough acquaintance. They are in the habit of holding the association at the home of a member or members each year. Sisters Bloomfield and Reece, of St. Joseph, Mo., invited me to their association next year, and I hope to attend that or some other. Is it not a kind mercy shown me that I can through Nettie get a pass once or twice a year and visit some church? I feel it is. I am not worthy, I am nothing, but God is my strength, and if I can be led by him I shall be safe. It is my wish that you give the brethren and sisters my love; I never forget them in my prayers. I neglect a duty in not writing sometimes to them, but my attempt is always so poor, and then the excuse of having so many home duties keeps me from it. Give my love to sister Ker and the children, and write me when you can.

With fellowship and love I am,

LUCY BROME.

[SISTER Brome, the writer of the above letter, is a member of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church, situated in Sullivan Co., N. Y. She for the past few years has been deprived of church privileges, having moved from Fallsburg, N. Y., to La Grange, Ill. We are glad she could meet with the brethren mentioned in her letter, and that she enjoyed the presence of the Lord and communion of saints.—K.]

BIOGRAPHICAL HISTORY OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST MINISTERS.

Last appeal for photographs, with a request for subscriptions.

I have collected and am arranging for publication in book form between six and seven hundred sketches and about two hundred photographs. This book, if published, will also contain sketches and pictures of a few of our spiritually-minded and talented sisters who are well known by their writings, together with an appendix of much useful information in brief form that I have gleaned from various sources. I feel to say that the work will be fairly representative, reasonably correct and of unusual interest to every Old School or Primitive Baptist. I want to make it so, and I again ask those ministers who have not furnished me with a sketch and photograph to please do so without delay. However, if they will not, because of a feeling of modesty, &c., as is the case with many, will not some one write me a sketch of the life and labors of such Elders? Do you want your pastor represented? If so, ask him about this matter, and assist me in getting information at once. I hope to complete and have the book published this winter. It will cost me about a thousand dollars to do so, and I want all who read this and feel that they want one or more copies of the book to write me a postal card saying how many they will take. It will cost you but one cent to do so, and will enable me to know if I can afford to publish, and how many copies to have published. The book will be more representative, much larger and therefore more expensive than I first anticipated, but I want to make the price not over two dollars. A large edition will enable me to do so, I think. So please help me make the price cheap to all by ordering now and paying later when the book is published. If you will write me, please do so soon.

R. H. PITTMAN.

LURAY, Va.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1908.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

DEUTERONOMY XXIII. 2.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—If not asking too much I wish your views upon Deuteronomy xxiii. 2, which reads as follows: "A bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord: even to his tenth generation shall he not enter into the congregation of the Lord." I am asked so often about this text that I am interested in it.

Your sister, (MRS.) E. J. HEARST.
CLARENDON, Ark., October, 1908.

In this chapter there are several prohibitions recorded concerning those who must not enter the congregation of the Lord. Some of these prohibitions are to be forever and some for a time. Eunuchs must not enter that congregation at all. An Ammonite or a Moabite must not enter there before the tenth generation. An Edomite must not enter there until the third generation, and an Israelite must not enter there until all uncleanness shall have been purged from him, if he has in any wise become unclean. All these things were ceremonial and typical. Of this we may be sure. It may not be that we rightly understand of what things these are typical, but still we may be sure that they are types of better things. Reasons are given in the connection as to why an Ammonite or a Moabite must not enter the congregation until the tenth generation, and why Israelites must not seek their peace or prosperity forever. Reasons are also given as to why Israelites were not to regard an Edomite or an Egyptian as they were to regard the Ammonites or Moabites. Reasons are also given why Israelites themselves, who had become unclean, must not enter the congregation until they had cleansed themselves. Concerning all these things we may be sure they were enjoined upon that people for their own good and for the glory of God. Beside the fact that all these things were types of spiritual things, they were also needed for the moral and physical well-being of that people. Ammonites and Moabites were the hereditary enemies of Israel, and had before sought their destruction. One instance is specified in this connection: they had hired Balaam to curse Israel, unto whom, Moses reminds them, the Lord did not hearken, but turned the curse into a blessing. But the Edomites were their brethren, and they had received kindness at the hands of Egyptians in former times, and all this they were to remember, and not abhor them. Some have thought that this prohibition concerning the Moabites and the Ammonites related only to the males among them, inasmuch as Ruth, the Moabitish damsel, was afterward received into the congregation, and came to stand among the ancestry after the flesh, of the blessed Lord. But we do not purpose to enter into all the things contained in this chapter, merely calling attention to them.

The one chief thought all through is, that the people of God must not become defiled nor mingle with that which is opposed to God and godliness; they must take all care to avoid being ensnared by the idolatry and vice practiced among all the nations round about them. To them, in all their generations, there was to be

but one God, and among them there was to be no vile or idolatrous practices. With regard to the first two prohibitions named, one design no doubt was, so far as that people was concerned, to discourage the habit of making eunuchs of their children, with a view that they might be given places of honor in the houses of the rich and great, also from mingling in the common vices of the heathen round about them. That eunuchs and children born out of wedlock should not be allowed to enter into the congregation of the Lord would have a tendency to check the above named practices. We have suggested these things, although the question of our sister did not cover this ground.

But are we to suppose that the prohibition of bastards entering the congregation of Israel means that such as these will, none of them, be saved? We have no hesitancy in replying, no, to this question. Ceremonial uncleanness would forbid that one should enter the congregation, to enter into and partake of the ceremonial observances of their worship or their social life. But some of these uncleannesses were of such a nature that one who was possessed of the love of God in his heart, and who desired above all things to honor him and obey him, might unwittingly contract ceremonial defilement, and so be barred from the congregation, until he should be cleansed according to that same ceremonial law. Yet that one would still be a child of God, and a lover of righteousness, and to love God and righteousness is to be saved in the Lord; and so a eunuch or a bastard might be forever disqualified from partaking of the ceremonies of that worldly sanctuary, while yet he might be a child of God indeed. One such case, (the eunuch of Ethiopia) is recorded in the Acts. Let us note also that concerning the bastard the prohibition is to continue to the tenth generation, to their children and grandchildren, who might themselves be born in lawful wedlock. Under the gospel dispensation these types and ceremonies are all fulfilled in Christ, and are done away, so far as the continued practice of them is concerned, and the general teaching of the text, and the whole chapter, is, as we have before said, that there must be carefulness and holiness in the house of the Lord. They that bear the vessels of the Lord must be clean. There must be purity in doctrine and in practice. Unchaste doctrine and unchaste men may dwell and reign in Ashdod, (see Zech. ix. 6,) but must not dwell or reign in the house of God. Principles and practices that are made up of a mixture of truth and of human falsehood have no place there, according to the word of God. If Israel sinned and allowed bastards to come into the congregation before the tenth generation, they did it at their own peril and in violation to the commandment of God; and so to harbor teachers of false doctrine itself brings harm to the children of God, and mars their service and worship. This seems to us to be the general lesson taught by this text, but there can be no thought connected with it that would show that those unfortunate men and women who have been born out of lawful wedlock may not have a part in the congregation of the first-born, either in earth or in heaven. C.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906; 07 means 1907; 08 means 1908, &c.

TEMPERANCE.

THE Bible doctrine concerning temperance is important to be considered. The word occurs in the New Testament, but not in the Old at all. There are injunctions, however, in the Old Testament which cover the same ground as the New Testament word, temperance. The word is used only six times; in five of these places it signifies self-restraint, continence. In Titus ii. 2, it signifies sober, grave, prudent. In this last place it is not used as an injunction, but as a description of what aged men should be. In 2 Peter i. 6, it is used as an exhortation. In other places it is used to describe the christian life and disposition. It is never used in the Scriptures with special reference to intoxicating drinks. There, in all places where used, it is a word that covers all the life of men. Self-restraint, continence, sound-mindedness and prudence become the whole walk of believers; these things are enjoined upon believers as being such fruits as are becoming the christian profession which they have made. The state of mind or feeling which is described by the word temperance can only proceed out of the indwelling Spirit of the blessed Son of God and Son of man, in whom dwelt all that this word means; the opposite of temperance has always, since the fall, dwelt in the earth; men have not been self-restrained, continent, sound-minded, prudent. Read the first two chapters of Paul's letter to the Romans for an inspired description of what all men are, both by nature and practice, when left to follow out the evil that is in them. The true knowledge of the true God alone can produce real temperance. Men strive to produce temperance by working from without inward; the Spirit of God works in just the opposite way, from within outward. Man's efforts fail because he cannot touch the heart, or produce love of all that is righteous there. God by his Spirit produces love of righteousness in the heart, and then comes the doing of righteousness by him in whom it is wrought. Man would dam up the stream and must fail; our God makes the fountain pure, and then pure waters flow forth. Man may enact prohibitory laws, hoping to cure some sort of intemperance, but at the most, such laws only express the opposition in the hearts of some men to some outbreaking evil, while those who love and practice those evils still love them, and seek for occasions to practice them. The evil passions of men checked in one direction burst out in other directions with greater violence. If the fountain remains untouched, soon the streams will flow forth in some direction; if not in one direction, then in another. With reference to the evil of intemperance in the use of intoxicating drink, we have seen men extremely intemperate in their opposition to it. If they indeed exercised self-restraint and prudence in avoiding strong drink, they went to great excess of intemperance in combating it. We have seen men carried beyond all prudence, and throw away all self-restraint in their arguments against men who failed to see that the course which they advocated was wise or prudent. This was and is in the sight of God as displeasing as what is commonly called drunkenness. Temperance in all things is enjoined upon all believers. Believers are to restrain themselves from all that would mar their profession. To use intoxicating drinks until the mind becomes blurred, and the body helpless and useless, is a violation of God's commandments, and a great sin, and its consequences are horrible. That man who

loves God will feel to flee from all such excesses as from an adder in his path; he will abominate the very thought of subjecting himself to such a master; he will desire that every faculty of mind and every power of body shall be held ready to serve and honor God. An intoxicated man cannot serve his fellow-man, how then can he serve God? The same is true of all other forms of intemperance; inordinate gratification of any desire weakens and helps destroy the usefulness of any child of God. Evil speaking is not prudent or temperate; so also of haste in speaking; and all extravagant expressions come under the same head. If we remember that by temperance is intended self-restraint and prudence, then to even touch some things is not temperance, but excess. Paul showed what he understood prudence and self-restraint to signify when he, out of consideration for his weak brethren, said, "If meat cause my brother to offend, I will eat no meat while the world stands." If eating would cause his brother to err and sin against God, then it would be the worst sort of intemperance for him to eat. This must be so if we understand the meaning of temperance to be given above. There was no rule in the church, no commandment laid down in so many words upon parchment, that commanded this of Paul, but there was a law of life in his heart, the law of love to God and to those who loved God, which led him to seek the welfare of them all above self-gratification, and so he would abstain even from things lawful to him, if his brethren were to be encouraged by his so doing not to sin against their conscience in the sight of God. Self always leads away from God, is always in opposition to God, if left to itself. Well is it that the love of God is shed abroad in the heart of his children, for nothing less than this can turn any one away from self and self-indulgence into the road of temperance. We share with all who love God in the abhorrence with which intemperance in intoxicating drink is regarded by multitudes. Yet we and all who love God feel an equal abhorrence to all other forms of intemperance. It is the constant desire of all who serve God in sincerity to be kept from all intemperance in thought, speech and action, but we have no hope that any form of intemperance will ever be banished from the world. In truth, the word of God teaches that sin shall continue to abound to the end of the world. Not only shall sin abound as regards its more gross outward forms, but also spiritual wickedness shall still more abound. Like the Athenians at Mars' Hill, as recorded in Acts xvii., men still remain "too superstitious," or as the word superstitious really means, too religious. All Pharisaical religion is intemperance, there is a lack of sound judgment in it, for a sound mind does not boast of its own righteousness. True temperance, then, takes a humble and lowly place, and seeks not its own exaltation. That man who regards himself as poor and needy, who is described in the word as being lowly and of a broken heart and contrite spirit, is the temperate man, so far as religion is concerned. Temperance excludes all boasting. When one hears any man boast of his own good and perfect work, and of the power that is in him to do good, he may know that this man is not sound-minded, is not temperate. Self in him may be restrained in some one or more directions, but it has leaped forth in some other direction; if outbreaking sin is held in check, religious pride and vainglory reign in him, and religious pride and

vainglory are as much in opposition to God as are crimes against the law of the land. Saul of Tarsus by nature, notwithstanding his religion, was as much the enemy of God as the thief on the cross. Believers desire a higher motive than the restraints of prohibitory laws made by men; they desire that the law of God shall be so wrought in their hearts that its righteousness may be fulfilled in them, and that they may walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh. This is to walk at liberty, and not to be governed as a slave. Men count it freedom if they do what they desire to do unhindered. It is freedom when believers walk obediently in the service of God, for they are doing what they want to do, therefore they need not the, "Thou shalt not," to govern them, but walk as those who have the mind of Christ, and so, as he walked at liberty, they also may be free. What infinite grace it is when men come to abhor evil, and so run from it gladly, and not because some law announces a penalty if they do not run from it.

In these remarks we have not desired to meddle with the strivings of the potsherds of the earth, but only with what the Scriptures say concerning the children of God. The Scriptures have nothing to hold forth to the natural man, but do come to the spiritual man, and to the spiritual man are all the promises and precepts addressed, and to the spiritual man these words of counsel and admonition come as dear and precious things. The law of God is not a bond to him, because it is his to say, "O how I love thy law!" Such have great peace, and nothing shall offend them.

C.

LUKE XVIII. 17.

WILL Elder H. C. Ker kindly give his views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on the words found in Luke xviii. 17?

Hoping the friends remember me at the throne of grace, DONALD MACKAY.

SCOTSVILLE, Cape Breton, August 29, 1908.

The text reads as follows: "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein."

We are glad to comply with the request of our friend, Mr. MacKay, as best we can. We are sorry to know of his affliction: paralysis, but glad his mind is clear and stayed upon the Lord. We also hope the spirit of reconciliation to the will of God may ever be with him. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."

The text to which our attention is called is in the midst of many sayings of Jesus which seem to clearly show its import. The chapter begins with the parable of the unjust judge, and while it was spoken to the end "that men ought always to pray, and not to faint," the character opposite to that of a little child is clearly shown. The unjust judge was strong and opinionated, fearing neither God nor man. The second parable in the chapter was spoken concerning those who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and who prayed with themselves. This is also contrary to the dependent child.

While Jesus was speaking these things they brought unto him infants, the most helpless and dependent of all living creatures, that he might touch them. The bringing of infants to Jesus was not by mere chance or accident, but in the purpose and plan of God to more fully establish the lesson in the minds of his disciples, who needed to be thus taught. Jesus had not before dealt with infants; it therefore being a new thing the disci-

ples rebuked those who brought them, but Jesus said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." This saying was no doubt a surprise to the apostles, and they wondered what it could mean. They themselves had manifested a spirit and disposition of importance in more ways than one. The very act of rebuking those who brought the infants said, We are the important and needful ones, Jesus has no time to devote to children. At another time the apostles were disputing among themselves as to which of them should be greatest in the kingdom of God. James and John desired the most prominent places in the kingdom, and the ambition of their proud mother desired it also. Under the old covenant some men held prominent places and were reckoned as superior to others. As leaders, judges, kings and priests, it was their right to demand of others what they would, and to command the people as it pleased them and fulfilled the law, but no such thing should exist in the gospel day. No one should be above another; equality, fellowship, must be the order. Therefore Jesus sought such means of teaching his disciples as would be most effectual. On one occasion he presented himself as an example, saying, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Notwithstanding that in him dwelt the fullness of the Godhead, his entire life, in the flesh, was that of childlike simplicity and humble-mindedness. He "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant." He, the King of kings, washed the feet of men; was the friend of sinners, dwelling with the poor and needy. He never manifested the slightest feeling of anger, malice or revenge. He confessed time and again his dependence upon God. Every word he uttered, every step he took and the works he did were all of God. His dependence upon his Father brings us to consider the infant, which is utterly helpless. And except men receive the kingdom of God as little children they shall in no wise enter therein. How severe this lesson Peter must learn! He was sincere in his boasting, but was not manifesting that childlike trust and dependence. Jesus told him that at Jerusalem many things should come to pass; the Son of man must suffer and be put to death and rise again on the third day. Peter then rebuked the Lord. Again Jesus said to his disciples, "All ye shall be offended because of me this night." "Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." And, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." In the first place Peter boasted of his power to prevent those things Jesus said should take place at Jerusalem. How strong he must have felt; how unlike an infant. In the second place he boasted of his ability to be more loving and faithful than any other one of the disciples. He felt sure he could keep alive his own soul and do whatsoever he pleased. How different from the poor, humble-minded child of God; how different from Peter himself after he had been sifted by Satan. Instead of preventing the sufferings of Jesus at Jerusalem he forsook him; instead of loving him more and being more faithful than the other disciples, he denied him even with cursing and swearing. He must have felt ashamed of himself when he realized he was doing the very opposite from what he had said he would do; but how much more ashamed and debased he felt when Jesus turned and looked upon

him, not with a look of anger or disappointment, but with pity and compassion. This was Peter's conversion from a proud, boastful man, to that of a weeping child. He then entered into the kingdom "as a little child," which kingdom is righteousness, joy and peace in the Holy Ghost, and is entered only through tribulation. After this he could out of his own dependence and nothingness strengthen his brethren. Each vessel of mercy must have just such a sifting by Satan as Peter had, to convert them from pride, self-righteousness and arrogance. "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

In the midst of these sayings of Jesus, a certain ruler came and addressing him as "Good Master," asked, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother. And he said, All these things have I kept from my youth up." In this assertion is manifested the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, which was in the law, and which must be shown to the children of God as not the righteousness of Jesus Christ our Savior. Saul of Tarsus was taught this lesson in such a way that he never forgot it, neither do we, nor did that "certain ruler." The Savior told him he lacked one thing: "Sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me." That "one thing" (riches) kept him out of the kingdom of God. The poor are made rich through Christ; the poor have the gospel preached unto them; the poor are with us always, and we can do them good; the poor inherit the kingdom of heaven. The rich are independent, as was the unjust judge, having need of neither God nor man. Such self-righteous souls can no more enter the kingdom of God than can a camel go through the eye of a needle.

The law of commandments was given by Moses, not that Israel could keep it, for none but the Lamb of God could keep that law; it was given to prove them sinners in the sight of God. Likewise, Jesus did not say those things to the rich ruler that he should do them and thereby enter into the kingdom, but in order to prove him a transgressor of the law he so assuredly said he had kept from his youth up. The law said, "Thou shalt not covet," and when Jesus told the rich man to sell all he had and distribute unto the poor, that man saw for the first time that he was guilty of the whole law because he had offended in one part. He was covetous, and could not therefore bear the thought of selling all his possessions and giving it away, hence he went away very sorrowful. Paul said, "I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, [Thou shalt not covet] sin revived, and I died," to self-righteousness, riches. In that death he was made alive unto the righteousness of God, and from that moment he hoped to be found having it rather than the riches or righteousness which was of the law.

Except we receive the kingdom of God as little children we can in no wise enter therein. By no effort of our own can we become little children in this peculiar sense, but the Lord makes us all little children in teaching us our utter dependence upon him, and our nothingness in the flesh, for in it dwells no good thing.

We now leave the subject for the consideration of our friend, and brother we believe, hoping he may find a little here and there to encourage him that he is taught of God. K.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder S. H. Durand.)

The ministers and messengers composing the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with our sister church at Nassaongo, to the churches whose messengers we are, send christian salutation.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—The letters from the several churches have told us of their condition, and have expressed their steadfast adherence to the doctrine of God, our Savior, which has been briefly outlined in some of them. We are glad to see that each church is in peace in her own borders, and that there is no indication that any root of bitterness is springing up to trouble you; also we rejoice to feel assured that this family of churches still maintains toward each other the feeling of love and fellowship and brotherly kindness which is so becoming in the members of a family.

In writing this letter to you, according to the custom which has always prevailed among us, we wish to express only such sentiments as shall prove to be the sentiments of all the members, churches and sister associations represented by us, and, above all, according to the mind of Christ. Thus shall it appear that we are of those true believers who are of one mind and one soul. We regard this oneness of sentiment among the people of God as of the utmost importance, and something to be most carefully maintained. The apostles manifested this strong desire that the brethren should strive "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Naturally we differ greatly in sentiment concerning many things, but spiritually there is not one particle of difference, for we all have one spirit, one mind, one soul, therefore any difference there may be between two of the Lord's manifested people must be of the flesh. How very carefully, then, should we examine ourselves when any difference appears. We can very easily and very zealously examine the brother who differs from us, but can we as easily and faithfully examine ourselves? It is hard to feel the hurt of self-disapproval. We may be most honest and most diligent in striving to assure ourselves that we are right, and be well satisfied that we are, and then at an unexpected time, and in an unexpected way, we may find that the error is wholly, or in great part, with us. So the apostle says, Examine your own selves, prove your own selves. When we are enabled to take our own views on the subject under consideration, and look at them as from our brother's standpoint, and can feel assured that brotherly love for him is in our hearts, and that we have a prayer in our soul for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, how different are our own minds in the work of thinking. Self gets down out of sight then, and the flesh loses its controlling power.

Should there be any subject upon which there is important difference among brethren we would not feel that it would be best to make that a subject to discuss in a Circular Letter, unless we should be favored to become of one mind upon the subject. We think that even in a conference meeting we should feel well assured that the spirit of love and peace and of a sound mind is directing us when we discuss differences. The flesh is so apt to be overbearing and self-assertive.

We are so prone to think that our brethren ought to see as we do, and to feel honestly that they are to be blamed for not doing so. When we find our voice elevated in the conversation, and an inclination to say, Why, you do not believe so and so, do you? then, instead of regarding ourselves as strongly zealous for the truth, and most surely in the right, we would do well to fear that it is the flesh that is rising. The Spirit is quiet in its movements. One who is assured by the Spirit of the correctness of his position is apt to be patient, and is willing and desirous to hear and consider carefully whatever a brother has to say. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"—Psalms cxxxi. 1. When the psalmist said this he was moved, and enabled by the Spirit of Christ, to look into the gospel land, and to see what is referred to in Acts ix. 31: "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied." Such a description of gospel goodness and prosperity is very sweet, it reminds one of the reference to gospel churches, under the figure of the new earth in the sixty-fifth Psalm, where the Lord is said to visit the earth and water it, and greatly enrich it with the river of God, which is full of water, watering the ridges thereof abundantly, settling the furrows thereof, making it soft with showers, causing his paths to drop fatness upon the pastures of the wilderness, while the little hills rejoice on every side. Those who are now dwelling together in unity have had varied experiences of trouble. The ridges and furrows tell how their hearts have been torn up by the ploughshare of sorrow and affliction. Their cries and prayers have been answered "by terrible things in righteousness," and they have been scattered to the ends of the earth, and afar off upon the sea. But now the deep furrows are settled by the showers of grace, and the precious seed takes root downward, and the springing thereof is blest. "The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn: they shout for joy, they also sing." Thus the spiritual goodness and pleasantness of brethren dwelling together in unity is well described. The description is none too vivid to tell what has been felt and known in these churches of our association. All have had drawbacks; sorrow on account of sin and iniquity felt in our vile nature, backslidings, sore afflictions and deep heart troubles; but also there has been felt the solemn sweetness of repentance, the strong crying unto God with tears, and the blessed feeling of humility under the tender assurance of forgiveness. How good and how pleasant it is when brethren come together in love, and speak with each other of these wonderful changes, these dealings of the Lord with their souls. Thus the unity is manifested in which the people of God dwell together. Remember, it is in unity that they dwell together, not merely harmony. One Spirit has led them all; by one Spirit they have been baptized into one body. Not only are they one body, moved by one Spirit, but they are one bread; a very close union.

The psalmist says this dwelling together is like the ointment poured upon the head of Aaron. It went down to the skirts of his garments. The whole body is reached by the anointing. This represents the anointing of Jesus by the Holy Spirit of the Lord. This unction from the Holy One caused the saints to know

all things. They cannot learn in any other way. They have no need, John says, that any man teach them; for this anointing which they have received of him abideth in them, and teacheth them of all things (1 John ii.); and we are solemnly enjoined by the apostle to abide in Him who is our only Teacher. This teaching of the Holy Spirit which causes the brethren to dwell together in unity is like the dew of Hermon, abundant, refreshing, exalting; like "the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." The blessing was commanded; the power of God is in it. It is eternal life in all the saints. This makes them one; and how infinitely sweet and solemn is the thought, and how it causes the scattered people of God to be drawn in holy love toward each other, and as they experience forbearance toward each other, and forgiveness when it is required, and loving-kindness, and tender compassion, and mutual love, "which is the bond of perfectness," they illustrate this sweetest of all expressions, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

T. M. POULSON, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

APPOINTMENTS.

I WILL, by divine permission, be at Duart, Ontario, Canada, on Sunday, Nov. 29th; Dunwich, Tuesday, Dec. 1st; St. Thomas, Thursday, 3rd; Ekfrid, Sunday, 6th; Lobo, Tuesday, 8th; London, Thursday, 10th.
P. W. SAWIN.

ELDER J. E. Thornbury will, Providence permitting, fill the following appointments in Anderson County, Ky.: Thursday, Dec. 24th, 1908, Goshen, as suits; Friday, 25th, Salt River, 11 o'clock a. m.; Saturday and Sunday, 26th and 27th, Little Flock.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at the residence of the bride, Wednesday p. m., Oct. 14th, 1908, Jasper Frazier, of Philadelphia, Pa., and Miss Edith I. Titus, of Hopewell, N. J.

By the same, at the residence of the bride, Thursday noon, Oct. 29th, 1908, Wilson B. Drake, of Pennington, N. J., and Miss Eva N. Reed, of Hopewell, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Miss Emeline McEwen died at Hawthorne, N. Y., after a lingering illness, Oct. 25th, 1908, aged 69 years. She was the daughter of John and Frances Horton McEwen, and was born in Bullville, Orange Co., N. Y. Of her immediate family one sister survives: Mrs. Carrie E. Rockafellow, Montgomery, Orange Co., N. Y. She made no profession of religion, but her sympathy and fellowship were with those who have no confidence in the flesh. Shortly before her death she sent for the writer, and confessed to travel of mind never before spoken of to others. She knew the truth that by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God. She believed God was able to justify the ungodly, and all her hope was in his faithfulness to continue the goodness and mercy that had followed her all the days of her life. The trial of her faith was a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, counting her worthy of the kingdom of God. (Romans xi. 33-36.)

Interment in Kensico Cemetery, Oct. 28th, 1908.
JOHN McCONNELL.

Deacon Malcom McAlpin died Oct. 8th, 1908, in the township of Brooke, Ontario, Canada. Brother McAlpin was born May 6th, 1834, in the township of Euphema, Ont., making his stay on earth 74 years, 5 months and 2 days. In 1858 he was united in marriage to Miss Isabella McNab, and this death is the first break in the family. He leaves a sorrowing, lonely widow, six boys, three married, and two daughters, single, three brothers and two sisters, with a host of friends, who will greatly miss "Uncle Mac," as he was quite generally called. A great vacancy is made in his dear family home, also in the little Beulah Church, of which he had been a faithful member and deacon many years. I am told he was baptized by Elder McColl, but do not know the year. Brother McAlpin was faithful to his brethren, sound in doctrine, clear in the order and thorough in practice; he filled his place in the little church to the perfect satisfaction of all its members. O how I shall miss that dear man of God as an adviser and com-

forter, a dear friend and brother to me all the time I have been going to Canada, which is nearly or quite twenty years, but he has gone to his eternal home with Jesus and is in his likeness. As a citizen and neighbor he was held in the highest esteem; an honorable, honest, upright, God-fearing man in his relation to the church. He was a good spiritual gift, often opening and conducting the meetings to the comfort of his brethren. Who will supply this need? None but Almighty God can. May the dear Lord comfort, strengthen, uphold and guide his dear, lonely, sorrowful companion, with all of the dear family of mourning ones, is my desire for Jesus' sake. I believe that the whole family love the truth—a remarkable family. He was sick only a few hours; blood clotting between the heart and brain was the cause of death.

The funeral was largely attended Sunday, Oct. 11th, the writer officiating. D. M. VAIL.

DIED—**Jerome Bundy,** of heart disease, at his home in Bainbridge, N. Y., Sept. 20th, 1908. He was born in Otego, N. Y., Dec. 8th, 1833, the son of Moses Bundy, and was a brother to the late Elder Balas Bundy, whom many of our readers loved for the truth's sake. Brother Jerome united with the Old School Baptists nearly forty years ago; his life was consistent and his walk upright. He was highly respected in his town and community. The church of his membership (Otego) though some distance away was well represented at his funeral, thus manifesting its love and respect for him. A little more than a year ago he lost his faithful and loving companion, with whom he had held sweet communion and walked in the church many years. After that time he was sad and failed in health. He is survived by three daughters, one son and several grandchildren, who feel very keenly their loss.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer, from his home. The text used was 2 Cor. v. 1-5. The interment took place in the Bainbridge Cemetery, beside the remains of the companion of his youth and old age.

May "peace like a river" be ministered to the children by Him who is faithful. K.

MEMORIALS.

(Virginia Corresponding Meeting.)

WE desire to give some expression upon our Minutes of our sorrow in the loss we, as an association, have sustained in the death of our brother, **George G. Galleher,** in the past year. He had been clerk of this association for many years, and none can know as we know the value of our dear brother as a man among men, as a citizen, neighbor and friend, a faithful follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was lovely in character, and manifested the love of Jesus in his walk and conversation. We have full assurance that it is well with him forever. May the Lord give us grace and enable us to say, Thy will, O God, be done. Especially to his bereaved companion do we extend our sympathy. May the God of mercy sustain and comfort her.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. J. W. Rockafellow, New York, $1.00; "A Friend," Maryland, $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Olive and Hurley Church, of the Roxbury Association, has changed the date of its two days meeting from Nov. 21st and 22nd, to be held Nov. 18th and 19th, Wednesday and Thursday before the third Saturday, commencing at 10:30 o'clock a. m. on Wednesday. All who love the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. Nothing preventing, we expect Elder F. A. Chick to be at this meeting.

J. B. SLAUSON.

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11:00 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

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SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 76. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1908. NO. 23.

POETRY.

WHY?

A GLOOM of thick darkness obscures the dim vale
Through which lies my pathway below,
And surges on surges of sorrow assail,
Till hope sinks in fathomless woe.
Amazed and affrighted, my soul is oppressed;
Despairing, to Jesus I cry,
Shall troubles forever thus rob me of rest?
If thou art my Lord, tell me, Why?

The evil I hate prevails in my heart,
The good which I would is not done;
When I seek from the mazes of sin to depart,
To folly that moment I run.
Led captive, in sin's heavy bondage I groan,
To God for deliv'rance I sigh;
Yet from his salvation to wander I'm prone;
If thou art my God, tell me, Why?

Reproach and oppression embitter my days,
Nor can I in sleep find repose;
Deep groans interrupt each attempt at thy praise,
My heart is o'erwhelmed in my woes;
My trust is thy grace; I have hoped in thy name;
To thee in each trial I fly;
From thee, hitherto, my deliverance came;
If now thou withdraw, tell me, Why?

But hark! from the word of his grace the reply
Is given in mercy unknown;
The wisdom of Him whose bright throne is on high,
Hath chosen this path for his own.
His love is assured in the gift of his Son
To suffer, to bleed and to die
That sinners might live, with their Savior made one—
His mercy alone can tell, Why?

Dear Lord, can thy kindness forgive my complaint,
Ungratefully doubting thy love?
O suffer me not under trials to faint,
Nor from thy salvation to rove.
Kept in thy pavilion, and trusting in thee,
No terror my soul shall come nigh,
Assured by thy love that whatever may be,
The God of my life knoweth, Why.?

DECEMBER 8, 1881.

[THE foregoing poetry was written by the late Elder Wm. L. Beebe, and is republished by request of his sister, Mrs. Harriet M. Larue.—ED.]

WHY should we shrink at death's cold river,
Or dread the dark and silent grave?
A little while these frail forms shiver;
God takes the spirit that he gave.

While weeping friends mourn o'er their loss,
He cometh soon to our relief;
He teacheth us to bear the cross,
He doth assuage our deepest grief.

Though long they suffer, and severe,
The sweeter there shall be their rest.
Death and the grave he came to cheer;
The weary are forever blest.

No more to sigh, with pain to groan,
The night is changed to brightest day;
To worship neath the great white throne,
To dwell with Christ the Lord alway.

Soon shall we meet to part no more,
To praise forever with the blest
His sacred name, whom we adore.
How sweet shall be our peaceful rest!

(Composed forty years ago by M. J. Rhodes, Hinchburg, N. Y., now Miriam J. Brehm, Logan, Ohio.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

DWELLING TOGETHER IN UNITY.

"BEHOLD, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"—Psalms cxxxiii. 1.

How wonderfully precious this sentence is to read; how far more precious it is to feel. It goes down into the deep places of the heart, and makes its power and effect and sweetness to be felt there, and then it goes out to all the ends of the earth and recalls the varied experiences of sorrow, condemnation, affliction and loneliness there felt by those who are now dwelling together in unity. These brethren who have now been gathered together in the name of Jesus, were first scattered to the ends of the earth. They were made to feel their need of salvation, and sought for it by the works and ways of men until they came to the end of all their earthly strength and wisdom and righteousness. Then from the end of the earth they cried unto God, who heard their cry, and made bare his holy Arm in their sight, and caused them to see the salvation of God. (Psalms lxi. 1; Isaiah lii. 10.) What a blessed season it is for these subjects of God's wonderful grace when they first find others of like experience and learn the inexpressible sweetness of gospel love and fellowship. When these "ends of the earth" are first brought together how easy it seems for them to love one another; how impossible it appears that anything could occur that would cause discord or separation. It seems to the child of grace, when first breathing the fresh and fragrant air of this spiritual morning in this new gospel world, as though there is, and must be always, absolute agreement between all these dear people of God in all things. How startled and grieved, then, must each one be when he finds a difference arising between any of them, and especially when he sees in his own mind opposition arising against something said or done by a dear brother, and perhaps a feeling of anger stirred in his heart. Then comes a sense of opposition and a conflict within himself, against himself, which causes a feeling of astonishment and of self-abhorrence in his own soul. How much each child of God has to learn through suffering before he is prepared to know in any great measure how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. In Adam this unity is not to be found. Although all nations of men that dwell on the face of the whole earth were made of one blood, yet there is not unity either of body or mind among them, but infinite diversity. Unity is only found in the family of God; in Christ, and not in Adam. All of them have been born of the Spirit of God, and are, therefore, "of one heart and of one soul."—Acts iv. 32. But each one of those who have been born of God has still a fleshly, sinful nature, and soon must experience sadly that that which is born of the flesh is flesh still; that the fleshly nature has not been changed to a spiritual, sinless nature in the new birth, but a new, sinless nature, the divine nature, has been given and is made manifest by contending against the sinful inclinations of the carnal nature, which is "enmity against God." So the apostle says: "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."—Gal. v. 17. Now when one has experienced some of these bitter conflicts within himself, and has had some sad conflicts with brethren, and has known the sweetness of forgiving and being forgiven, then he begins to

be able to appreciate the goodness and pleasantness of brethren dwelling together in unity. How poorly off we are when alone; how sad and sorrowful we are when separated from those we love in the Lord, but how infinitely more so when at variance and angry with them. We cannot live to ourselves alone; we need our brethren all the time; we need their help in difficulties; we need their sympathy in our trials; we need their daily experience. We are one with them in the living things of the Spirit, and we must have them in our lives as we have them in our hearts. So the apostle says, "I beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."—Eph. iv. 1–3. In the Spirit we are one. "Baptized by one Spirit into one body." Our spiritual desires are the same. But what a wonderful work this is, "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Because we differ from each other so greatly in the flesh, what longsuffering is necessary, what self-denial, what forbearance. Because we are one in Spirit we know that every difference must be in the flesh. But how difficult it is to allow that this difference may be in our flesh instead of in that of our brother. It is for us to decide this important thing ourselves, if the decision is that the blame is in our flesh. The grace of meekness and lowliness comes in to help us here. But if the fault is most surely with our brother, then what longsuffering is necessary, and what forbearance. We cannot insist upon the legal standard, "An eye for an eye." We cannot insist upon acknowledgment always, but must wait till the Spirit causes him to see and feel the wrong in himself. Forbearance! We cannot forbear where there is nothing to forbear. Sometimes one will not acknowledge the wrong that he sees in himself. Pride and a stubborn will prevent. But love tells us what to do: We must wait the Lord's time. Forbear one another in love. Love saves the fellowship. Love insists that we wait till the Lord works meekness and tenderness of conscience in him. The bond of love and union grows stronger as we have more of these bitter struggles with our own unruly natures, and more need for the exercise in our own souls of these fruits of the Spirit. Now we are learning how good it is, how valuable; how mutually helpful and serviceable it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, as well as how pleasant, how sweet and full of heavenly comfort and peace. The psalmist makes a wonderful comparison here in saying that this dwelling of brethren together in unity is like the precious ointment that was poured upon Aaron's head, and went down the skirts of his garments. But this brings to the view of faith the anointing of Jesus with the Spirit of the Lord, by which he was prepared to bring all the infinite blessings of the gospel to the poor. This anointing is as the dew that descends upon the mountains of Zion, for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forevermore. This is the unction from the Holy One by which the saints know all things concerning the spiritual life. It is the anointing which they have received of Jesus Christ, as the apostle John declares: "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall

abide in him."—John ii. 27. How greatly important it is that every one of this family of God should carefully guard the unity of the Spirit, so far as it can be guarded by human effort. The apostle implies that it can be guarded in a sense, by exhorting the brethren to endeavor to keep it. It is over himself particularly that each one is to watch; it is his own words, and acts, and thoughts, and emotions, that each one is to guard; it is his own self that each one is to prove. Where each one is thus laboring with himself there will be found but little need for him to labor with any other member of the dear family. While all are in this state of mind this sacred unity is, without conscious effort, kept in the bond of peace. This is dwelling together in unity.

Love is said by the apostle to be "the bond of perfectness," and we are told to put it on, and to walk in it. How easy that is, at times. How easy it is to bear and forbear in the case of one we dearly love. How easy it is to forget or deny self when the welfare of a dear child is involved.

The word "good" means all that is valuable, substantial, beneficial and absolutely suitable to our need, while the word "pleasant" means all that is agreeable and gratifying to our purest, most exalted and most sacred desires. For those thus dwelling together nothing more can be wanted for this time state. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the goodness of the Lord's house. The longer we dwell upon the earth, and the more of trials and afflictions we endure, the more highly shall we value and prize this sweet fellowship and unity, and the more ardently shall we endeavor to keep it. The greater also will be our desire, and the more earnest our prayer, That we, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God. (Eph. iii. 17–19.) Whatever we do, and say, and comprehend, when thus dwelling together in unity, we do and say and comprehend "with all saints." No discord, no division here. In this is realized as fully as can be in this mortal state the fulfillment of the dear Savior's prayer: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us."—John xvii. 21. And so, as this mortal life goes on, with the trials and deliverances, the sorrows and joys, which are appointed unto us here upon the earth, the sweeter and more precious to us will be these blessed words of the psalmist: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Oct. 27, 1908.

DRAIN, Oregon, June 16, 1908.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—My two precious sisters in the flesh (and I trust in the Spirit) have written their travels out of darkness into God's marvelous light and sent them to me as a gift upon the passing of my fortieth milestone. What a precious gift to present; I could cherish no other so highly, unless I am indeed one of the heaven-born heirs of grace, and Christ has given me the gift of an inheritance eternal. I hold a precious hope that this may be true, but dwell so much in doubting-castle that I am almost overthrown, yet I cling to this little ray of hope as I can cling to nothing else. Many beautiful thoughts flit across my

mind as I speak of these letters of experience as a birthday gift. Think of the precious gift our Father has given for the redeemed of the Lord: the gift of his only Son, that Son so precious, and caused him to bleed and die the shameful death of the cross. Think of the beautiful gift of love, uncontaminated with sin, given such worthless sinners as we. The love of that Son so tenderly picks up all the broken threads of our sore, aching hearts and binds them together in sweet unity and fellowship for the dear saints, that we long to clasp the hand of every true born child of God over this wide universe. O what grace God does bestow, as we look back and see how he has led us to see ourselves sinking in sin. I remember a time when I was employed to impart knowledge to children in the schoolroom; as I stood before my pupils there was a divine Teacher speaking to me constantly of my sins, and I was led to see the dear Savior hanging on the cross.

The past five years have kept me continually under the shadow of sorrow, so much so that at times I almost despair, but God has as often come to my rescue. We have given up in death our three precious children; one after another we have had to give the parting kiss; our hearts are nearly crushed, and we sometimes feel that we long to put forth our empty arms and beg Christ bid us come. We know we should rather ask for strength to bear our sorrow, looking ever unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Dear brethren, I cannot close without telling the household of faith what a glorious meeting we have just had in our little church of Coast Fork. Our precious old Elder and pastor, W. S. Mathews, was very ill, and my own brother, Elder C. F. Morningstar, only just started in the work of the gospel ministry, felt his weakness very much without the help of our dear pastor, but God showed His gift to His children, my brother's mouth was filled, and he preached an able sermon upon God's grace, leaving all to grace as the precious gift of God, and plainly proving that none can be saved but by grace. At the close of the meeting one dear sister, Mary Heaton, one very precious old brother over eighty years of age, Thos. Stephens, and dear young brother James Brookhart, offered themselves by experience for baptism, and were gladly welcomed. Now again we trembled, as my brother is very badly crippled, having but little strength in his right arm; but O how gloriously did God show to us that not the arm of man was needed only; I never saw a more beautiful baptism. That loving arm of Christ was above, about, beneath, how could any wrong befall?

I will add that we three writers are daughters of Deacon and Sister A. and S. Morningstar.

I would kindly request you to take our letters according to our ages; I am eldest, then sister Dollie Walker, last, sister Sibyl Morningstar. If you find them unworthy of notice, cast them in the wastebasket, and all will be well. Sister Sibyl is now Mrs. Fletcher England.

Since writing the above I have the consent of another precious sister to add her letter (another gift to me), so you may kindly place it among the list.

Yours, unworthily, in hope of Christ,

(MRS.) OLIVE M. POWRIE.

WALKER, Oregon, April 13, 1908.

DEAR SISTER:—As I have often wanted to write of my experience, or the

Lord's dealings with me, and my hope in Jesus, now in my feeble way, if it is the Lord's will, I will tell the dear brethren of my feelings.

When I was a little child other denominations had their exciting meetings, and my little friends would join them, some being baptized at night, for fear they might die before morning. Children sometimes asked me to join, and I told them if I ever joined any church it would be the Old Baptist, but in my own mind I felt I never would be good enough. I had dear, good parents, A. and S. Morningstar, who were Baptists, and I felt I would be ever so glad if I could be only half as good as they. I went to Coast Fork Church with my father and mother when I was very small. Though children, we enjoyed having the brethren come to father's home, and loved to hear them talk. Dear father and mother Walker, Elder Allison, Elder Williams, dear old, Elder Mathews, who is our pastor now, are the ones I remember best from childhood. Then the church meetings were moved down the valley farther from our home, and we did not hear preaching except when brother Walden came to our home, and that was not very often. My husband was at that time going to school at Drain, near my girlhood home. We were boat-riding, and the subject came up how our parents loved the church and brethren, we said maybe the church would meet again. He had told me his experience, which was dated as far back as the thirteenth year of his age. He said, Will you come into the church? It was as if a knife had pierced my heart; for me, a vile sinner, without hope and without God. I told him, no, I was not good enough to join the church, and my warfare commenced from that time. I was sixteen years old. Sometimes it would leave me for a few days, then come back with double force; it seemed my sins were so heavy they would crush me to death. I would steal away alone and try to pray, but I knew not how to pray. I would steal the SIGNS OF THE TIMES out and read it; I did not want my folks to know. We had only one very large Bible, that I could not conceal and carry out. My mother had a small one I would read when I got a chance, but she was a great Bible reader and always read at night. They would gladly have bought me a Bible if they had known I wanted it. I visited at father Walker's house; on Sunday they said Elder Walden would preach about two miles from there. George (now my husband) knew I was under conviction, and was eager to provide a way for me to go. I thought I never had heard such a sermon as Elder Walden preached. I do not remember his text, but his preaching went to my heart; the first Old Baptist preaching I had heard since a little child. I went on this way until after we were married, in November, 1893. Elder Walden married us and preached a good sermon after the ceremony. All this time I was in great darkness; I cannot express what my poor soul suffered. I would cry, O Lord, have mercy on me, a poor, lost sinner. I would read the Bible and cry myself to sleep. My dear, faithful companion would tell me the Lord came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. His words were comforting, but they were not all I needed; still he was so loving and kind to read and talk to me.

In the summer of 1894 we went to hear brother Walden preach again, and that night was one of my worst nights; I could not sleep, nor did I let my husband sleep, for I thought I was sinking down

to hell and could not get out. I cried, O Lord, have mercy. I do not know whether I said it aloud or not; my burden was gone, and the brightness that shone around me I do not know that I can ever express. It was a lovely night, the moon and stars seemed to be praising God, everything I could see seemed to be praising his mighty name. I thought I would never sin again. I flew as on eagles' wings, I read the Bible and thought I would grow in grace. I went on in this way until our little baby girl was born. November 29th, when she was three days old, I had company all day, and in the evening my mother told me I had better go to sleep, I was tired, and she left the room, and as I closed my eyes it seemed I was in a coffin. My first thought was, I am going to die, and I was very happy, I was going to heaven. I opened my eyes and shut them again, and felt that I was going down, down into the bottomless pit. O the darkness of my poor soul at that time. The third time I closed my eyes I saw Jesus and a group of angels. O how I did rejoice, for I was like the children of Israel crossing the Red Sea; the Lord had given me light, but I had not done my duty; then I wanted to be baptized.

The Coast Fork Church commenced holding meetings near our place in May, 1895, and in June of that year my sister, Mrs. Olive Powrie, united with the church; I wanted to offer myself at that time, but felt too unworthy. The second Sunday in October I offered myself, and to my surprise was received, for I could not tell one word of my experience. That same day sister and I were baptized by Elder N. B. Walden. The water was beautiful, it being a lovely place and a bright day. I never again have had that burden come over me as it did before I was baptized, although I get very low. It seems I am in darkness more than light. If I ever am in the strait and narrow path, it is just when I cross it. When I am done with this world if I enter the home eternal it is by grace, and grace alone.

For many years I have often been comforted by the correspondence from the brethren scattered over the broad land, and the able editorials in our dear, old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) DOLLIE S. WALKER.

DRAIN, Oregon, Feb. 27, 1908.

DEAR SISTER OLLIE:—When our sister Dollie was here visiting we were speaking about a remark you had made to mother, which was to the effect if each of your brethren and friends would write you a letter for your birthday you would appreciate it more than any other gift. She (Dollie) made the suggestion that we each write our christian experience for you. I promised if God gave me sufficient strength I would try to write my reason for claiming a hope, which at times seems very small, yet dearer to me than all the gold of this world. I cannot remember when I did not dread to do wrong, for fear the God in heaven would wreak his vengeance upon me. I used to look at my schoolmates, and wonder if they, too, had such thoughts as I. It seemed that my mind was so depressed on account of my sins, I felt there was not another whose heart was burdened with such unworthiness.

Time passed on; I succeeded as well as I could with my studies, but still I could not shake off my dark thoughts. As you will remember, I used to sing for all the entertainments of our school, also

in the M. E. choir, and received much praise, and everything looked bright before me, as far as worldly prospects were concerned, yet I could not find one ray of light as to spiritual things. Once when mother was away from home, caring for sister who was ill, you were staying with us, keeping house in her absence. I arose one morning with my old, weary burden bearing very heavily upon me. You were assisting me with my toilet when everything became very bright, and upon looking out of the window on the mountains I could see bands of beautiful angels descending and ascending to and from heaven. I remarked to you, "Don't those mountains look nice?" You answered, "Yes, they look homelike." But that was not what I meant, and I longed to tell you then what I saw, but was afraid to, lest you would think me foolish. I was very happy for a time, but my old burden soon returned, and I was plunged into deeper darkness than ever before. Once while riding in the wagon with my father and brother on my father's farm, I again saw those beautiful angels ascending and descending from heaven. This was in the tenth year of my life; then I passed through much darkness, with occasionally a "wee bit" of sunshine, when I could sing, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear." I loved to go to meeting, but O I did feel so unworthy. It seemed to me God had shown me those beautiful angels to show me the difference between a pure being and my own impure self. When the sixteenth year of my life began, it found me prepared in my work to enter the Normal school, but my health was very poor; I was told by our family physician that if I went on to school I would die. It was a sore trial for me to give up my school-work, which I loved much, but the thought came to me, What if I should die while in this guilty state? One night I dreamed I was at the resurrection morn and Jesus appeared very plainly to me in a cloud of light in the east. The skies were beautifully bright, but the earth was blacker than night, and it seemed all my loved ones were ascending to heaven, while I was sinking down in an unfathomable depth of darkness, down deeper and deeper in this earth. I tried to cling to the garments of those going upward, but I could not touch them. I awoke in a very depressed frame of mind, and remained so for several days, when Jesus saw fit to relieve my torture. Mother being away from home, I was sleeping in the spare bedroom, so as to be near the room of my father and brother downstairs, for it was lonely while mother was gone. I had retired for the night, but I could not go to sleep because of my weight of sin. The shade of the east window had not been drawn, and I was looking out into the night, gazing at the moon in her first quarter, when suddenly (as if by magic) the skies became brighter than the noonday sun, my room was lighted with what seemed a sacred light to me, and upon looking again at the moon the Savior appeared standing on its downward point. I thought I had never seen anything so lovely; my heart was very light, and I felt so happy I wanted to sing, but laid very still, drinking in every detail of the lovely scene, not knowing when I fell asleep; but when I awoke next morning my burden was gone, and I felt that Jesus had pardoned my sins. I had many serious thoughts about offering myself to the church; I felt so unworthy that while I longed to go forward it seemed I could not, but God in his own

time gave me courage to join his little band, and, as you know, I have been numbered with them a little more than a year, and am happy to say my meeting with the brethren is always afterward a green spot in my memory. I still feel very unworthy, and pass through many dark hours, but my ardent prayer is ever unto Him who doeth all things well, that he may lead me in the path he would have me follow. Many times of late these words (sung by a dear friend) come to me,

"I need thee, precious Jesus,
For I am full of sin;
My soul is dark and guilty,
My heart is dead within."

These words seem to fit my case. May God lead us in the paths we should follow until he sees fit to take us unto himself, and may you, dear sister, have many happy returns of your birthday.

Your loving sister in the flesh, and I hope by the grace of God, a sister in Christ,

SIBYL C. MORNINGSTAR.

WALKER, Oregon.

MRS. OLIVE POWRIE—DEAR FRIEND: —I am sorry you seem so down-hearted, but you cannot be more so than this poor, unworthy writer; I do believe I am the most miserable being on earth. O how I used to try to find some way out of this world without falling into the hands of the just and holy God, and how often have I wished I had never been born, or could have died in my infancy, and even wished I had died instead of my infant twin sister. How wicked of me to have a desire to lay my burdensome life on another. I tried O so hard to get rid of this terrible burden which was so hard to bear; even went to the mourner's bench (of which you are not guilty) and would try to do as the christians, as they called themselves, told me to do. They almost made me crazy with such talk as this: Put your trust in God; believe on him; you can, if you will; it is your own fault if you are not saved; only trust Him; He is calling now; believe, &c.; but if I have to depend on anything I can do to be saved, I will have to give up in despair. If I am saved it will be by grace, and grace alone, and that grace the gift of God, for there is no good in me. I would try to pray to become a christian, generally wishing to begin with a new year of my life. It did grieve me to find I could not pray, as I thought we had to put our thoughts into words and repeat them, asking the desires of our hearts. The thought that the dear Lord knew the innermost thoughts of our soul did not come into my mind until dear Elder Mathews preached at our schoolhouse on christian experience, saying that a child of God can pray even though his tongue move not. O what a comfort that sermon was to me; he told my feelings better than I could.

On Christmas eve of the year 1882, I believe I spent one of the most miserable evenings of my life. My sister with her children had come home, so I walked out into the orchard to hide my troubles and try to pray, but all I could do was to wring my hands and cry, God, God. (I wanted to say my God, but feared to.) I thought if the earth would only open and close above me, (at one time it did appear as if there were a great gaping gulf just in front of me, why I did not fall in I know not,) but then I would have to fall into the hands of the just and holy God, so I gave up in despair, dropping down on the ground beneath a tree, as I feared, never to rise again. I felt I had not a friend on earth or in heaven. I did not want to live, but was

afraid to die. It being dark, and I subject to sinking spells, I knew the folks would grow uneasy and be looking for me, so I dried my eyes as best I could and went straight to my room. When I passed through the sitting-room I felt all eyes were turned on me. I was taken ill and confined to my bed for some two weeks. Father got the doctor against my wishes, for I did not believe that to be the kind of physician I needed, but I could not tell father what was the matter with me, but I believe he suspected, for he would sing those Old Baptist hymns. I longed to ask him to pray for me, but could not. When any one came into my room I would try to be very cheerful, but when left alone I would begin to weep. One night during my illness (I do not remember the date) it seemed to me I was robed in white, perfectly calm and happy, two white-robed angels came, one standing at my feet and one at my head to bear me to my immortal home. Dear Olive, if I have a hope in Christ, right here is where it sprang up. I have passed through many dark and trying hours since then. My thoughts run in this way: My walk, thoughts and talk are already marked out for me, and I cannot change them. I often wonder if any one agrees with me.

The above I never dared tell any one before. This is a subject I have often longed to talk on, and would think if I could meet some certain person I would talk upon this precious subject, but when I would meet with that one my lips would be sealed. I have longed to talk with you, but when with you could say but little, as you well know.

Yours affectionately,

MARTHA.

NOTE.—This letter has been in my possession over eighteen years. It seems to me too good to be held as private property. It belongs to neither the writer nor myself, but to the household of faith. The writer has long since connected herself with our church, viz., Coast Fork. She is the daughter of brother and sister J. F. Walker, and beloved wife of Riley Wiseman, and held very precious in the bonds of christian fellowship by all.

O. M. P.

BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST.

"WHEREFORE I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men."—Matt. xii. 31.

The Jews were a chosen people unto God. "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."—Deut. xxxii. 9. The Lord manifested himself unto his people in many ways. He delivered them from the famine by the hand of Joseph, and when the Egyptians made their lives bitter with hard bondage he delivered them by the hand of Moses, and what proved their salvation was the destruction of their enemies. "And Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses."—Exodus xiv. 31. Then it would seem from the song which Moses and the children of Israel sang unto the Lord, that these things would forever dwell in the hearts of God's people; but soon we find them forgetful: "And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness."—Exodus xvi. 2. Then the Lord said, I will "prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no."—Verse 4. O the many ways in which God made this test: he fed them in the wilderness, he guided their footsteps, he led them into the promised

land, he fought their battles for them, he delivered them out of the hand of their enemies; every blessing that man could wish was bestowed upon them, and every opportunity was given to test them to the uttermost; but alas! "All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people."—Romans x. 21. Still there was another trial for them; as it is written: "But last of all, he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son."—Matt. xxi. 37. How good and how loving the Lord had been to his people all the days of their rebellion, and now he would send his Son, as they had rejected all others, and see if they would receive him. They had slain the prophets and all that were sent unto them. O vain man, who art thou that wilt say, God is still giving opportunities to man to see if he will accept them or no? When he sent his only begotten Son, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not."—John i. 11. "But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him."—John xii. 37. They had sinned against God, times without number, and it was forgiven; and even now the Son, who was sent last of all, said, "And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."—Matt. xii. 32. All legal means had been used, and all to no avail; they had disregarded every one of them. Now, as all legal means had failed, there must be a better covenant established; there must be a power to work within man, as it had been thoroughly demonstrated that man had no power of his own. This power is the Holy Ghost. He does not work from without, as was the workings of the old covenant, He enters the house. (Matt xii. 29.) This is the difference between the old and the new covenant. The first was to try man and to prove whether he would serve God or no, and it was found that he would not. "O generation of vipers! how can ye, being evil, speak good things?"—Matt. xii. 34. Man must be born again before he can serve the Lord. This new kingdom is a kingdom of power, and was prophesied of from days of old, and now this kingdom had come, and was manifested by Christ casting out devils, as he said: "But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you."—Verse 28. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people."—Hebrews viii. 10. In this new kingdom it is not left with man whether he will walk in God's law or not, for it is written: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."—Psalms cx. 3. Surely this is making the tree good, and it manifests who are the children of God and who are not. In this new kingdom God is working in the hearts of his people, he is making them willing; and now, if a man is untouched by this Spirit, and denies the power thereof, saying it is Beelzebub, the prince of devils, it is evident that he is not the Lord's. In this new kingdom every one is taught of the Lord, as it is written, "And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." So then, if the Jews, who were the typical people of God, are still unbelievers, after so much had been done for them outwardly, it

shows they have not his Spirit. "For the tree is known by his fruit."—Matt. xii. 33. "Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believed not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."—John x. 24–27. We see then who it is that blasphemes against the Holy Ghost. It is not God's sheep, for they are taught of the Lord, yes, every one. For they shall all be taught of the Lord, and, "They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." —Jeremiah xxxi. 34. It must be those who are not included in this new covenant, for it is written, "And as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed."—Acts xiii. 48. No man has ever blasphemed against the Holy Ghost who has not heard with the natural ear the gospel of this new kingdom. It was after Jesus had preached this gospel that the division of the Jews took place. The Jews were divided when they saw the power of God manifested in opening the eyes of the blind, some saying, "This man is not of God," and others said, "How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?"—John ix. 16. Then Jesus preached the election and security of his sheep, and taught that he had other sheep that were not of the Jewish fold, and that he would lay down his life for his sheep, saying, "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again."—John x. 18. This is the power of the Holy Ghost, and wherever this power is preached, it manifests who are the sheep, and the others are thereby separated from the sheep, as it is written, "There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings. And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?"—Verses 19, 20. Surely this was blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. "Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?"—Verse 21. Here was the elect of God made manifest; and this division has attended the gospel that is preached with power and in demonstration of the Spirit since it was first preached by John the Baptist. Some said he had a devil. (Matt. ii. 18.) This was blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. When the gospel was preached on the day of Pentecost, some mocked and said, These men are full of new wine. But some gladly received the gospel. (Acts ii. 41.) Thus there was a division manifested. So when the gospel was preached among the Gentiles, some of the Jews were filled with envy and spoke against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Paul had preached of the hidden mysteries of the kingdom, the workings of the Holy Spirit, and it was this they blasphemed against. But when the Gentiles heard the word they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed. Here is the foreordination of God set forth in its beauty. None that are ordained to eternal life are allowed to sin against the Holy Spirit, but they are made to believe and rejoice in His power; and not only are they made to believe, but their fruits are also ordained of God. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—Ephesians ii. 10. How

different from the old covenant that was to prove man and see if he would walk in the law of God or not. As it is written, "Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways."—Acts xiv. 16. Notice that he saith "in times past," and also that he suffered them "to walk in their own ways." God has ever been the ruler and disposer of all things, but now is the day of his power, when men are no longer suffered to walk in their own ways. "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."—Jeremiah x. 23. And again, it is written, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow, from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh [yes, maketh] it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."—Isa. lv. 8–11. The time of man's choice to do good or evil is past; his ways are at an end. He must now travel in the ways which God hath ordained. Even the wicked can do no more nor less than whatsoever his hand and his counsel has determined before to be done. (Acts iv. 28.) God placed in Zion a stumbling-stone, and gave the Jews eyes of slumber that they should not see, so that they stumbled, but their fall was not the height of God's purpose. As it is written, "I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles."—Rom. xi. 11. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

Humbly your brother in the faith,
ROBERT S. PACE.

NACOGDOCHES, Texas, Nov. 8, 1908.

DADE CITY, Fla., Oct., 28, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS AND BRETHREN:—I inclose you the experience of sister Deshong for publication, if you can find space in the dear old SIGNS for it. This dear afflicted sister is one of the most faithful and uncompromising in the provisions of our salvation and the sovereignty of God that I have ever met. She cannot sit still and hear any preacher who claims to be an Old School Baptist say that our salvation is based upon creature conditions, or that any obedience flows from the volition of the flesh. She, as well as all who are taught of God, knows that all obedience, all righteous acts, are the fruit of the Spirit. Should one say that our spiritual joy and comfort depend upon our obedience, we can as truly say that our obedience depends upon the Spirit. We control not the Spirit, but the Spirit controls us. "There is no man that hath power over the Spirit, to retain the Spirit."—Eccl. viii. 8.

Your brother in hope,
M. L. GILBERT.

PORT TAMPA CITY, Fla., Aug. 10, 1908.

ELDER M. L. GILBERT—MY DEAR BROTHER:—As I am hungry for com-

pany, and lonesome for a good talk with some one who is congenial to me, I will write you some of my experience to relieve my mind. I hope the Spirit of God may prompt me, if not, I know what I may write will be good for nothing. When I meditate on the goodness and mercy of God to his people I am made to rejoice and my hope is more established, yet surely I feel to be a stranger in this world, having no abiding city here, but my hope is of a better place. When I can give my Redeemer praise for his goodness and mercy with a clean heart, unmixed with sin, I feel blessed indeed. No one knows better than I do the depravity of human nature, and my proneness to sin. I am made to mourn on account of my sins, and have no righteousness of my own to claim; but indeed if Jesus is formed in me the hope of glory, I can claim the imputed righteousness of him. What a glorious hope it is. But what am I that I should make such claim? Sometimes I am afraid I am mistaken, but I cannot give up my hope. Now I want to tell you the reason of my hope as well as I can; I do not think I have ever told you. I was raised by Methodist parents, who believed that we can work ourselves into favor with God. I believed as I was taught by them; in fact, I thought I was a very good girl, and I was going to do better and earn a place in heaven when I got older. I will tell you more than I have ever told any one except in an indirect way; I will try not to keep anything back. When I read the Bible, I thought Jesus was an impostor, and I hated him in my heart with an uncommon hatred. I can hardly write this for my tears. Surely I was the most wicked of sinners, but thought I was all right until I was overtaken by the justice of God. I do not know that I had ever heard a christian experience, and if I had I did not know it in my godless state. When I was about fifteen years old I attended a protracted meeting, and during that time God showed me my sins. I went up to the altar one time to be prayed for, but I got worse, and never went again. The women at the house where I was staying met one afternoon in a room to pray for the meeting, and I was among them, miserable, without God and without hope in the world. They asked me to pray. In the agony of my despair I laid down and groaned, (words here fail to tell the story) but I saw that I was ruined and lost forever. Suddenly I thought of Jesus, who is able to save to the uttermost, and my prayer was, Jesus, be merciful, to me, a sinner; and my sense of condemnation was all gone. (Here again words fail.) I was so happy, with my heart full of praise to my God for the gift of his Son. Many doubts and fears have I had since that time, but I have rejoiced in the hope given me then. I know I love the things I once hated and hate the things I once loved, and have learned that in my flesh dwells no good thing. When I would do good, evil is present with me. But God, who is rich in mercy, has given me some seasons of rejoicing, which seem to my poor soul like glimpses of glory.

I want to tell you an experience I had about two months ago. I was in one of my doubting spells, and was almost ready to give up hope, but I earnestly prayed that if I were a child of God that he would in some way confirm my hope; and that night I dreamed that I was on the bank of a river, I was on bluffs, the roughest place I had ever seen in my life, and all at once I came to a beautiful, smooth bank, and I stood on the edge, and a company of angels came over

the river and Jesus with them, the most beautiful of all. My first thought was that he was coming for me, and it meant death for me, and I flinched for a moment, (you see my sinful flesh is carried with me continually,) then I stood and held out my arms and begged him to take me, for I realized that I could never praise him as I should while I lived here; I longed to praise God unmixed with sin. Standing there with Jesus, as I believe, in the Spirit, he answered my prayer, and I was able to praise God with a clean heart for a little while. It was a most glorious experience. If it is a presentiment of my death, how glorious it will be if I can feel His loving presence when I come to die, as I did then. The first thought when I awoke was praise to my God; and I do not think I can ever forget his goodness in remembering me in such a way; it is a great consolation to me. I love the people who give God the praise for their salvation, and look to Jesus who is able to save, and have no confidence in the flesh. I know I am not worthy, but I am thankful for a home among such people, and if they will only let me live among them while here I will be thankful for the blessing.

I trust I will be able to get to our next meeting, but will have to get a great deal stronger than I am now. You know my strength has been failing for some time.

Dear brother, you can show this to my kindred in the Spirit if you are so inclined, but I only wrote it for you. It is my most sacred experience of life. Please excuse my blundering way of writing, I seldom ever write. May God bless you with all needful blessings, and give you abundantly of that grace of Jesus Christ, that you may ever serve and praise him, and be a comfort to his dear people.

Your unworthy sister, I hope,

LEAH DESHONG.

NORTH YAKIMA, Wash., Aug. 14, 1908.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I herewith send you a short communication written by our dear old brother, Elder I. N. Newkirk, who is now in Julietta, Idaho. He is very much afflicted in body, but his mind is still occupied with things of the kingdom of Christ, and the impression to contribute his mite to the upbuilding of the Lord's dear people seems to grow stronger, while the body is slowly wasting away. These incidents that come under our almost daily observation only prove to us that the Lord prepares and leads the minds of his servants to fulfill the office to which they are called, not for reward or filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. This self-sacrificing spirit leading the true servants of God and causing the crucifixion of the flesh, proves again that the work of conformation is going on to the image and likeness of God's beloved Son according to God's predestinated purpose. This gives us strength and encouragement that the work of the Lord is still going on in the preparation of his people for all the trying ordeals of this life. The God of the Old Baptists is always present, for he has declared, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," and his faithfulness is proved to us in so many different ways that the evidences are complete to the spiritually taught mind, yet the unquickened world cannot see it. In their blindness they invent many different ways to accomplish what they think is the Lord's will, but the great difficulty is that the Lord's will is only made manifest to them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant. (Psalms xxv. 14.) And again, "For the froward is abomination to the Lord: but his secret is with the righteous."—Prov. iii. 32. God's discriminating grace has

wrought all these wonderful works, and it is marvelous in our eyes. The only reason that I can give that it is so is this: "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."

Submitting the inclosed to the good judgment of the managers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I remain your unworthy brother in hope of a better life,

W. H. GILMORE.

THE MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT.

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant."—1 Cor. xii. 1.

The ministration of the Holy Ghost was with the apostles exclusively. Said Jesus to the twelve, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."—Luke xxiv. 49. We see in these Scriptures that this ministered gift was with the apostles as witnesses. The power of the apostles was judicial, testimonial and administrative over and in and through the whole church, with the keys of the kingdom to bind and to loose on earth, consequently the very office and functions of the Spirit were in their hands, and what they bound on earth was bound in heaven, and what they loosed on earth was loosed in heaven. Thus was established the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, and they were endued with power from on high, as is said in Luke xxiv.

Briefly considering the fourth to the sixth verses of the twelfth chapter of 1st Corinthians, let us notice the seventh verse: "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." This connection clearly shows that every member of the church over which Christ is the head (the church being his body) is given a measure of the Spirit to profit. All do not have the same gift of the Spirit which was bestowed upon the apostles. All the measures and gifts of the Spirit constitute the ministry of the Holy Ghost in the world, and for all succeeding time, and in all the world, until the end of the world. The Lord has said, "And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." These words declare the perpetuity of the apostolic churches in the order of Christ and his apostles till the world shall end and time be no more. Consequently it is not possible for any other order or church to be set up with the approbation of God, and in the fellowship of Christ and the apostles. Hence all reformations of the church are deformations instead. "Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of the laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment." All these principles and doctrines are perfect in Christ, who is the foundation laid in Zion, the atonement by his blood perfecting them that are sanctified. He is the chief corner-stone of the apostles' ministry in the spirit, including all the manifold operations of the Spirit in the gifts and measures and dispensations of it to every man in Christ, to perfect them withal. We are also taught in the above Scriptures the perfection of Christ in redemption, the complete fullness of the Spirit in the ministry of the word, and the effectual working of God's mighty power through the blood of Christ, and the heavenly calling by the Spirit of them who shall be heirs of salvation through the name of Christ.

Now, concerning the coming of the Holy Spirit, Jesus said just before his departure, "If I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." This shows that the ministerial work of the Holy Ghost did not begin until after Jesus had finished his work and gone above. And Peter, testifying of him, says, Whom the heavens must receive till the restoration of all things spoken by the prophets. The conclusion therefore is that the ministry of Christ, as Mediator and Intercessor, and the ministry of the Spirit, are two ministries. The first ministry, that of Jesus Christ, is a finished and perfect work, and the second, the ministry of the Spirit, is a successive and as yet unfinished work to be continued to the end of this material world of earth, sun, sky and water. This includes the fulfillment of all the prophetic Scriptures, thus including the perpetuity of the apostles, both in faith and practice, and hence the perpetuity of the church to the end of time, that she may be presented to the Lord as a chaste virgin at the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Until the prophecies concerning Christ are fulfilled, the church must stand united in one in Christ, who is her Founder. In the Spirit Jesus Christ is himself the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into a holy temple in the Lord. Now if these scriptural principles and ordinances do not establish the truth that the Primitive Baptists are built on Christ, the Rock of Ages, and on the apostles' doctrine and practice, there is no other ground upon which they can stand.

I will proceed with this subject no further, but will leave the readers of these thoughts to judge them for themselves.

Your brother,

I. N. NEWKIRK.

[WE take pleasure in commending these thoughts to the careful perusal of our readers. If we mistake not, Elder Newkirk is now the oldest living correspondent of the SIGNS. We mean that no one else now living has been writing longer for our columns than he. We are glad that he is still able to write, and to travel and preach the word of God. As the infirmities of age press upon him may he find that the solid truth which he has loved and preached is a sure foundation to his feet. May his bow abide in strength, and the arms of his hands be made strong by the hand of the mighty God of Jacob. And may he still bring forth fruit in old age to show that the Lord is upright. If it be the will of God, we hope that he may be spared to the cause that he loves yet many years.—ED.]

ALVINSTON, Ont., Oct. 8, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—We have a letter from brother Case which we believe to be from the abundance of his heart, and if it seemeth good to you, we ask that it be printed in the SIGNS.

ROBERT WATT.

LONDON, Ont., Sept. 17, 1908.

MR. ROBERT WATT AND FAMILY:—I write to say that your short but welcome letter came to hand this a. m., and we both were indeed glad to hear from you, as you are often in our minds, and, I hope, our hearts; and if my last poor letter to you did you any good, or stirred up your pure mind by way of remembrance of that pure love and sweet fellowship which exists in and between all

the children of God, then I say, I have gained all that I desire, remembering that John says, "And truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." As I read your letter these words came into my mind with a measure of comfort and love, As poor, yet possessing all things, and the thought came, Can it be that poor, groveling, hell-deserving creatures are possessed of all things? What a wonder, dear brother! So poor are we that we have not even a rag to present before our God; full of wounds, bruises and putrefying sores from head to foot; not able to present the good will of men nor the religious world. In a word I may say, such as our lives are, such is the life of all the children of God, always bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus; truly we are poor, there is no thinking, no imagination about it. But blessed be that dear name which is as ointment poured forth. To be poor in themselves, is the lot of all God's children; but to be poor is not all their lot, for I think it is Paul who says, As poor, yet possessing all things. Is there anything, dear brother, outside of the all things of God? Something in me says, No; and I think you will agree with me. I will state a few of the all things that we are in possession of. We have been given to know our lost and undone condition before the holy and righteous God; that we cannot better our condition; the sentence of death has been written in ourselves; we die daily; we have been given repentance, so that we can hate sin, and also our lives because of sin, and our sins as a thick cloud have been blotted out by rich and sovereign grace, and we know that He is mighty to save; that he does not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets like the begging, pleading creatures we hear at every turn; "For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." Dear brother, read the whole of the thirty-third Psalm, and may the opening word of it be the language of your soul. I feel to bless God with all my soul that he is not such an one as I am; that as high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are his ways above our ways and his thoughts above our thoughts. O what a wonder of wonders that poor sinners such as we should feel constrained to break out in the language of one of old: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." O that they may be in our hearts from day to day, constraining us to love him (and one another) because he first loved us.

We had Elder Ker here a short time ago; we all, I think, enjoyed his visit. I think Elders Chick and Coulter will be at the October meeting.

With love and best wishes from my wife and myself to you and sister Watt and children, I am your brother in the blessed hope of the gospel,

R. CASE.

WAVERLY, Pa., Nov. 5, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE OLD FAMILY PAPER, THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—And truly "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." Inclosed you will find a letter from our dear deceased brother, Malcolm McAlpine, written last February. In it he speaks of desiring to hear Elder Ker preach, which desire was granted in September. The sermon filled his soul to overflowing. Several brethren

who saw him after that said it was a great comfort to them to hear him talk. I was there in October, and heard a great many speak of the sermon as being a most wonderful and glorious one to them. Gospel preaching is gospel teaching, and subjects of God's grace are taught by it as they are qualified to understand it by the Spirit of God.

I will now give a short account of the churches I am trying to serve. There are ten of them, one in New Jersey, four in Pennsylvania, four in New York State and one in Canada; also five other places of meeting where there is no church organization. There have been a few additions and a few deaths the past year. The two days meetings of the churches were pleasant, the preaching excellent, no jargon. Elders Lefferts, Ker, Slauson and Eubanks preached for us the unadulterated gospel of the Son of God. The Delaware River Association was held with the church that I am now serving, at Locktown, N. J., called the Kingwood Church. We had some good preaching there, a fair congregation and a number of preachers. This is the only church I am serving that belongs to an association. Elder Lefferts preaches for them every first Sunday, except the months following the fifth Sunday. The third Sunday is my regular appointment with them. Elder Lefferts preached for the Otego Church in September and Elder McConnell in July. Their preaching was enjoyed very much by the brethren. Elder Ker preached the funeral sermon of brother Jerome Bundy in September. Brother Bundy was a member of the Otego Church, living at Bainbridge, N. Y. The brethren and friends were very much comforted by the precious truth presented to them by the servant of God at that time. We are always glad when we can have visits from gospel ministers and brethren generally. Friends of the cause of truth, come and see us, we will try and use you as well as we can. We need you; God bless you.

A worm, D. M. VAIL.

AUGHRIM, Ontario, Feb. 10, 1908.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER:—I feel I must answer your letter; I should have written before, but neglected it. I was very sorry to hear of you being so sick, but glad to hear you were better again. I saw your appointments published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and am glad the Lord has spared you to declare the unsearchable riches of Christ. I met Elder Lefferts at Duart a week ago, and he told me you were sick with "la grippe," and unless you were better you would not be able to fill these appointments, but I hope you are better by this time. I wanted to go to Duart to hear Elder Ker, so I left home the Friday before and went part of the way over. It was fortunate we did; it stormed Friday night and all day Saturday, so if we had not started that day we would hardly have gone the next. We got there for the morning meeting. Elder Lefferts preached, and I felt it was good to be there. Elder Coulter preached in the afternoon. On Sunday morning Elder Lefferts spoke from Numbers xix.; it was a wonderful sermon to me. We had a good meeting. I would like to have heard Elder Ker, but he could not be there; he had a good article in the last number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

We are all as well as usual, and I hope this will find you feeling better and your family all well. My wife and family join me in love to you.

I remain your brother,

MALCOLM McALPINE.

YOUNGSTOWN, Ohio, Sept. 9, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please give through the SIGNS the articles of faith of the Old School Baptist Church. I ask this for the benefit of my friends.

Yours in hope,

JOHN C. HAMILTON.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, devoted exclusively to the Baptist cause, maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1st. The extensive sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfection of the great Jehovah—the revelation which God has given of himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one."—1 John v. 8.

2nd. The absolute predestination of all things.

3rd. Eternal and unconditional election.

4th. The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

5th. That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

6th. The sovereign, irresistible and (in all cases) effectual work of the Holy Ghost in quickening and regenerating the elect of God.

7th. The final perseverance and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

8th. The resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.

9th. That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers; that to her are given able ministers of the new testament; that the Scriptures are the only rule of faith and practice to the saints of God.

10th. That there is no connection between church and state, and as touching the proposition of a marriage between them, the Hon. R. M. Johnson, in his report on the Sabbath Mail question, has amply revealed our faith.

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath School Unions, &c., &c., waging war with the mother Arminianism and her entire brood of institutions.

Plan.—The paper will be divided in two parts, viz.:

1st. Jesus Christ set forth.

2nd. Antichrist exposed.

[THE above articles are copied from the first number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and have ever been the articles of faith of the Lord's people.—ED.]

TOUCHET, Washington, Sept. 16, 1908.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—This being my eightieth birthday, I shall try to write a short communication. I am not only lame on both feet, but also full of wounds, bruises and putrefying sores; I am altogether out of joint; there is no soundness in me; all is darkness, yes, darkness that can be felt; I seem to be altogether shut up. O if it be but for a small moment that He hath forsaken me, if only in a little wrath he hath hid his face from me, then will he return with everlasting kindness and have mercy, that the floods of waters overflow me not, for like a bubble of the ocean I am tossed, and well-nigh broken. O let me cry, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth: keep the door of my lips. Incline not my heart to any evil thing." "Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities." "But mine eyes are unto thee, O God the Lord: in thee is my trust, leave not my soul destitute." Again, "I looked on my right hand, and

beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul. I cried unto thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my refuge, and my portion in the land of the living." Let no man enter into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no flesh living be justified. What is man that the Lord taketh knowledge of him? What is the son of man that the Lord taketh account of him? Man indeed is vanity; his days are as a shadow that passeth away. It surely appears that as the winds cause the falling of the autumn leaves, and we say winter is at hand, so also we realize the saying of the Lord that there must first be a falling away before the second coming of the Lord. It seems to me that this time is near, for there is much falling away and falling out by the way. Sometimes it would appear as the apostle said, "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work." So I would only use these words: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work." Dear household of faith, this is my prayer, that we may be established in the faith, not seeking words to battle over. Thus far I hope that I have kept the faith, yet I do not seem to have done as the apostle who said to the brethren, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." I have stood still, perhaps, while others fought the battles. I cannot go forward unless the cloud removes. My christian love, with charity to all the tried ones.

Your sister,

(MRS.) S. J. CUMMINS.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Nassaongo, Wicomico Co., Md., October 21st, 22nd and 23rd, 1908, to the several associations and meetings with whom we correspond, sendeth love in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—Through the abounding mercy and loving-kindness of the Lord we have met, according to previous arrangement, in this, the one hundred and twenty-sixth annual session as an association of churches. You will see by our Minutes that ten of the churches are represented by messengers, and all report peace and quietness within their borders. The several associations of our correspondence have been fairly well represented, a number of ministers have been in attendance, and we can truly testify that they have all come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. The preaching has been in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the church at Indiantown, Wicomico, Co., Md., to begin on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1909, if the Lord will, when and where we hope to again have the privilege of receiving your messengers and communications, and greet you in the Lord.

T. M. POULSON, Moderator.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1908.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ROMANS XVI. 20.

"AND the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen."

It is a wonderful blessing if we are prepared to receive the words of the apostles, not as their own words, but as they are indeed, the words of God. Once the apostle commended his brethren for so receiving his teaching among them. Well it is for us at this day when we have this mind in us. Having this mind, we shall come to this Scripture with full confidence that it all shall be as it is written here by the apostle. He has stated not only his own mind, but the mind of God as well. Let us all read these words as the words of God. We speak thus here because there has gone out into the world in these later years a spirit of denial of this great truth that all that is written by prophets and apostles is of God. It is denied that holy men of old were moved by the Holy Ghost to write. It is said that the Bible is, very largely at least, only the product of the opinions and reasonings of the writers. All these assertions are making light of the Scriptures, and the tendency of them is to weaken the faith of the hesitating and tempted. If it can be shown that any portion of the Scriptures is of man, and not of God, at once the one important question is, What portion is of God? Who shall decide what is of God and what is not of God? In such a case every man will have a right to his own opinion, and all may be equally wrong. If it be admitted that any sayings of Moses, the prophets or the apostles might have been mistaken sayings, then the poor and unlearned will read all portions of the word with the awful fear that they rest upon no other foundation than the fallible opinions of men. In such a case the Bible is entitled to no more weight as our authority for doctrine or for practice than any other book written by wise and good men; then, when we quote some Scripture to prove this or that doctrine, we can never be sure that that Scripture is truth and not error; the children of God then could have no certain foundation for their faith. No one can be sure that there is any such thing as sin or redemption, guilt or atonement, hell or heaven, any future life, or even that there is a God at all in such case. We speak here of these things because this leaven of unbelief not only exists in the world at large, denying the most sacred truths of our holy religion, but because this same leaven assails the children of God. It is a dreadful fact that there is no evil among men from which the people of God are safe if left to themselves even for a little time. Therefore the Bible is full of solemn warnings to beware of false teachers and of the leaven of worldliness, of unbelief or of heresies. When prophets or apostles wrote or spoke of things past, present or future, they only declared what the all-seeing mind of God embraced from the beginning. When prophets or apostles declared that Satan, or evil men, or the

people of God, said or did certain things, it is sure that they all did say or do just what is declared of them. Satan's words, the words of evil men, and sometimes the words of God's children, were not inspired of God, but the record of them was inspired, so that it is sure that they all did say or do just what is recorded of them, and when Moses and the prophets say, "Thus saith the Lord," it is God's word that they speak forth. When apostles wrote the New Testament they also wrote just what Jesus did and said in the gospels, and just what the Holy Spirit indited in them as they wrote the epistles. Holy men of old did not write as ministers now speak or write, viz., simply from the authority of God's word in the Bible, but from direct breathing forth of the Spirit, who in them wrought so that they were inspired and also so that the very words they used were inspired. Unless the Bible was verbally inspired we cannot be sure of the facts concerning any statement in the Scriptures. For instance, when the sacred writers declare that Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice," &c., or that he raised up Lazarus from the dead, we know that he did say just those words, and he did do just that thing. The Holy Ghost so dictated in the mind and in the hand of the writers that the words which they used were not the product of their own judgment, but of the will and mind of God. These words therefore are not mistaken words; they are not words used unwisely or loosely, but are just such words as the Holy Spirit put into the mind of him who wrote. We may misunderstand the language used, but when we do come to understand it we have the mind of the Lord revealed to us. How good it is to read the Bible, knowing that it is of God in word as well as in thought, and that all that it declares is plain truth, without any mixture of error. Believing that the Scriptures are the infallible word of God, the believer is more certain that the Red Sea was divided literally, as is recorded, though he himself saw it not, than he is of anything that he ever looked upon with his eyes. Our eyes may deceive us, but the testimony of the Lord cannot deceive. The believer is more sure that there is a heaven and hell beyond this life than he is of any pain or pleasure here, because his senses may be so perverted as to deceive him, but the word of God cannot lie. And because the Scriptures are not the words of man, but the word of God spoken and written by man in the very words that God gave to men, believers can rest upon every word of promise as being absolutely sure, and believe that all shall be fulfilled as the Lord has said. And so the promise given in this Scripture is one upon which the children of God can rely; it is sure of fulfillment. It was a sure promise to the brethren at Rome, and it has been a sure promise to all who fight against the great adversary of souls in every age. This declaration assures them of victory complete and glorious at such time as it shall please God to bestow it upon them.

There is, no doubt, reference in these words to the first great promise, given in these words: "It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." The same truth is also taught by the apostle Paul in these words: "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." As Satan is presented in the beginning as the arch-enemy of God and man, and as being the tempter through whom all that is evil has entered into the world, and as he who constantly distresses and

perplexes and deceives the children of God, so here the apostle comforts his brethren by declaring that the God of heaven shall shortly bruise or tread him under their feet. This last expression is strongly figurative, meaning that God will shortly deliver his children, and give them the victory over this greatest of all their foes, and that they shall enjoy the triumph of conquerors. It was thus that in ancient times the conquered became the footstool of the feet of their conquerors. We are informed in history that it was a common thing for him who had conquered to signalize the completeness of his victory by literally compelling the conquered king or ruler to bow before him, and to place his foot upon his neck. Nothing could more completely show the abject humiliation of the conquered king than this act. Thus it was declared before all who witnessed this act that he was made a slave to him who had conquered him. This figure the apostle makes use of to show to his brethren the completeness of the victory which God should give to them. We desire to notice that it is the God of peace who shall do this. He is the God of peace in direct contrast to the divisions which were among them. These divisions were the work of their great adversary, the devil, who went about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he might devour; and as the roaring of the lion would scatter the sheep, which would flee in every direction in their terror, so the assaults of the tempter had tended to divide these brethren from each other, one saying, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," &c., as is recorded of the church at Corinth. In the seventeenth verse, the brethren are exhorted to mark those who would cause divisions among them, and avoid them. Satan would always stir up strife, taking advantage of the lusts of our own flesh to produce wars and fightings. But our God is the God of peace in contradistinction to this; his work in the heart tends to peace. Making through Jesus Christ peace with God, he produces also peace one with another. He is the God of peace, in that he has made peace through the blood of the cross, first unto uniting Jew and Gentile together in one, then making peace in the heart with God, and then making peace in the churches. Peace with God wrought in the soul will produce peace with each other, and if there be warfare one with another it is sure that peace with God does not reign in such hearts. Peace has been indeed made through the blood of the cross, but where warfare and strife exist among believers that peace is not reigning in its fruits. Now christians realize this warfare within and among themselves with sorrow and shame. They earnestly desire a better state of things, but how shall we attain to this better state? We deplore the evil, but how to attain to that which is good we find not. Will it always be so? we say. Will there never be a victory over the wiles of the devil? And here the blessed words of the text come in. Yes, there shall be a victory. It is not by might or power, but the God of peace shall bruise Satan shortly under your feet. Through grace you shall be able to rise from the dust of the conflict, and your proud foe shall be humbled, and God shall place him under your feet. His wiles shall all fail; his malice shall prove innocuous; his boasting shall be put to shame. He who has bruised the heel shall be put down, and in Christ, our conquering Redeemer, we shall bruise his head. Thanks be to God, Satan only touches the heel, he cannot

wound in a vital part. But he shall be crushed, and his works in us shall be destroyed. The victory is the Lord's, and we shall reap its fruits. This promise is good for all seasons and all times. It takes in all temptations, and all sorrows, and all conflicts of the spirit, and gives security against all that men or devils can do against the children of God. "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." For wise purposes our God allows his servants to be tried and tempted here below. Satan is loosed for a little time. But all this is for the lifting of Jesus on high. In the end it shall be shown clearly that the victory is the Lord's. It is good to come to know how weak and ready to sin we are, that we may be made watchful even unto prayer; and that when the victory shall be given we shall know that to God belongs all the praise. These temptations come to us in manifold ways, but so do the times of victory come in ways that are suited to our need, and in ways that always exalt the blessed Lord as the God of victory and salvation.

This bruising of Satan under our feet seems to us to apply chiefly in two ways. First, in the victory of that faith which reveals Jesus and his finished work in redemption. Satan brings many charges against believers; there is but one answer to them all, and that is, Jesus died. This is the victory of faith, that faith which overcomes the world. What a triumph it is when the believer is given to see, even in the presence of his enemy, that Jesus has paid all his debt, and that the sin which Satan hurls against us as that which must condemn us is covered by the dear Redeemer's righteousness. What a victory when the soul is given to say, True, O mine enemy, my sin is all that thou declarest it to be, but know, O thou mine enemy, that I have righteousness in another, even the Lord Jesus Christ, and that not one of these my sins shall ever appear against me before God. True, I am a sinner, but I am justified before God. How completely, to this man of faith, is the text verified. Satan is now indeed bruised under his feet. In the second place, this text is fulfilled not only in point of justification before God, but also with regard to daily temptations to depart into the ways of evil, against which the apostle continually warns his brethren. Satan would always lead the children of God into open transgression, and this he seeks to do in a thousand ways, and by myriads of suggestions. How often the warfare seems to go against the believer! Looking back over the most perfect day that he has ever lived, each child of God sees many failures; he has been overcome by temptation, and has sinned in thought, in purpose, in word and in deed. This is his grief and shame. From this proneness to sin he desires to be delivered. "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" is his cry. This must be his cry as long as he lives in this mortal state. But also concerning this warfare, the promise is sure that the God of heaven shall soon deliver him. In this also Satan shall shortly be bruised under his feet. This is fulfilled in some measure here and now, but the complete fulfillment will be when we shall see Jesus and be like him. At the longest it will be but shortly.

The truth contained in the closing words of the text is that through which both present and future victory is secured. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be

with you." All, all depends upon grace. The desire for this victory is of grace; the fulfillment of this desire is of grace. For this grace Paul prayed that it might be with them always. What more can the believer desire than this? And so our God shall cause grace to abound toward his people. Faith beholds this grace in Christ, and so the soul obtains the victory daily. Beholding this victory in Christ, he can say, Rejoice not over me, O mine enemy; though I fall, I shall rise again. And until that day when the God of heaven shall finally bruise Satan under our feet this grace shall be with us. How blessed the promise! How glorious the assurance! C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

1 CORINTHIANS III. 16, 17.

"KNOW ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

Among the numerous figures employed in the Scriptures by the Holy Ghost and applied to the church of God, this of the temple of God is of frequent recurrence, and, like all others, is appropriate and full of instruction. The temples in Jerusalem, both the first and the second, were types of the church of the living God, and are applied to her as the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, in which the fullness of the Godhead dwells. The same apostle who wrote our text has shown in Eph. ii. 18, 20, that all the election of grace, Jews and Gentiles, are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord, a habitation of God through the Spirit. Peter also uses the same figure. (1 Peter ii. 4–7.) The history of the building of the temple by Solomon, and also by Zerubbabel, the selection of the materials, the places where they were found, the manner of their being gathered and brought to the building, their preparation for the places which they were ordained to occupy, the perfect harmony in bringing the parts together, the arrangement, consecration and appropriation of the whole, beautifully illustrate the glory of that house whose maker and builder is God. In his application of this figure in the text on which our views are desired, Paul calls our attention to the foundation on which the temple rests, the sanctity of the building as the temple of God, its consecration as the dwelling of God by his Spirit, and the fearful consequence of a desecration of it. The foundation is Jesus Christ, and no other foundation can any man lay. No other foundation can sustain the building. This foundation is of God, it stands sure, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." He is the foundation and chief corner-stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into a holy temple in the Lord.

This temple of the Lord is holy, for God has consecrated it and set it apart as a habitation of the Spirit; nothing unclean is allowed to enter it. It is a place for worship, a house of prayer. In it God has placed the ark of the covenant, the mercy-seat, the cherubims of glory, the golden pot of manna, the fruit-bearing rod of the priesthood, the golden candlestick, the shewbread and all the holy furniture belonging to his house. Thither the holy tribes of the Lord go up, and here the God of Israel meets his chosen ones and communes with them over the mercy-seat, between the cherubims. It is no light matter then to defile the temple of the Lord. By reference to

the types in the ceremonial law we learn in what manner the sanctuary of the Lord was defiled. See Lev. xv. 31; xx. 3; Num. xix. 3; Psalms lxxix. 1; Ezek. v. 11; vii. 22; xxiii. 38, 39; Zeph. iii. 4. Those who defiled the sanctuary of the Lord under the Mosaic law were to be put away from the congregation of the Lord, or put to death, and under the gospel dispensation they are to be destroyed, at least so far as relates to their privileges in the church of God. By a careful reading of the passages referred to above, it will be seen that the Israelites defiled the sanctuary by their own uncleanness, by their contact with things which were unclean, by idolatry, and by a profligate priesthood or ministry. As God's sanctuary was holy, and the Israelite was required to keep his foot when he went into the house of God, so God's church, which is his true or antitypical sanctuary, is a holy and consecrated place, and no spiritual Israelite is allowed to defile it by his own inventions, issues, doctrines, plans or works, nor by holding fellowship with things unclean. There must be a coming out from the world, a separation from antichrist, and a renouncing of false doctrines, ordinances, and of all religious institutions which are not clearly authorized by the law of Christ. The temple of the Lord is not to be used as a place of merchandise or traffic. When the carnal Jews had made void the law of God by their traditions, they were charged with making God's house of prayer a den of thieves. Their excuses for thus defiling the temple were as plausible as the excuses made by the Pharisees of modern times. The Jews from distant nations were required to bring their offerings to the temple on certain occasions, and as it was inconvenient to bring their oxen, sheep, lambs, kids and doves so great a distance, the pious Jews and accommodating Levites had conceived the idea of having a stock of offerings on hand, which they could supply to the worshipers for a small percentage, and so make the temple-worship more convenient, and the hardship of complying with the divine command more easy; so a market was established in the temple. And as the money to be put into the Lord's treasury ought not to bear the superscription of a Roman prince, it was a great accommodation to the pilgrim Jew to find money-brokers in the temple ready to exchange, for a small discount, their uncurrent funds, so the tables of the money-changers were allowed a place in the temple also. But all these pious pretenses did not avail them when our Lord entered the temple with a scourge of small cords, and drove the traffickers out, and overturned the tables of the money-changers.

"My Father's house, said he, was made
A place for worship, not for trade;
Then scattering all their gold and brass,
He scourged the merchants from the place."

Answering well to this figure, in modern times a great amount of religious merchandise is carried on in what is claimed to be the temple or church of God. Almost everything is offered for a price. Salvation, grace, justification and a passport to heaven are offered conditionally to all who are disposed to make a bid, and memberships, directorships and honorary titles and positions are crowded into the market, while a very brisk trade is carried on in Sabbath Schools, Mission, Tract and Bible Societies, Theological Seminaries and other wares of the kind; all of which, if brought into the temple of the Lord, would defile that holy place. Mystery, Babylon the Great, is described in Revelation xviii. as a great market; her mer-

chants drive a heavy and lucrative trade in merchandise of gold and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner of vessels of ivory, and all manner of vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, and odors, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men, and of fruits which their souls lusted after. But the value of Zion's commodities is far above rubies; they never were bought nor sold, all are freely given and freely enjoyed by the people of God without money and without price.

But the solemn warning in our text seems to be given to the saints who belong to the building. They are under a solemn charge, lest they should defile the temple or church of the living God; they are not permitted to bring in anything that defileth; they who bear the vessels of the house of God should have clean hands, and all the members of the church of God are required to put off the shoes from off their feet, for the ground on which they stand is holy. They are to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts. Their hearts are sprinkled from an evil conscience, and their bodies washed with pure water. They are the circumcision who worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. They put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, and they are called to walk in all the ordinances of the house of God blameless. Such is the high vocation wherewith they are called.

"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." This admonition seems to have reference to their works. Paul says he has laid the foundation, and warns the saints to take heed how they build thereon; for every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire. If any man's work abide (or stand the fiery ordeal) he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire. To attempt then to build on this foundation hay, wood and stubble, is to defile the building; but God will try every man's works by fire, and all that will not stand the test shall be burned, consumed, destroyed. "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire." Yea, and the prophet says he shall sit as refiner's fire and as fuller's soap, and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

We understand then that God will, by his dealings with his children in Zion, in subjecting them to fiery trials, bringing them through the furnace, burn up all their hay, wood and stubble, and if any are found in the christian profession who have nothing but hay, wood and stubble, they shall be utterly consumed, according to Malachi iv. 1. It shall leave them neither root nor branch. But God's own children, though they suffer loss, so far as their works are concerned, shall themselves be finally saved, yet so as by fire. The discipline of the house of God, the laws of the kingdom of Christ, shall separate from the communion of the saints those who walk disorderly, and their expulsion from the fellowship of the saints

and from the privileges of the church of God, will answer to the figures in the ceremonial law, wherein the offenders were put to death, or separated from the congregation of the Lord. "For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" There was no evasion of Moses' law, neither shall the saints evade the law of Christ. He will visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes; nevertheless his loving-kindness he will not utterly take from him, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. "My covenant [saith God] will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me."—Psalms lxxxix. 34–36.

In conclusion, let us bear in mind the distinguishing grace bestowed on us in assigning to each his place in the house of God, as component parts of the building, as lively stones built up a holy temple in which God has condescended to dwell, and where he has said he will dwell forever, for he has desired it for an habitation. What astonishing dignity has he bestowed on us, how high and holy the calling, how honorable the position! Consecrated and set apart for a habitation of God by his Spirit. With what reverence and godly fear then does it become us to serve him in all things, and let us beware that we defile not the temple of the living God.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., August 1, 1863.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Susan E. Dill, of Gardiner, Maine, departed this life August 10th, 1908, aged 32 years, 7 months and 1 day. Our sister when a girl united with the Methodists, and for a time was satisfied with her religious profession among them. In the year 1895, while carelessly handling a revolver she shot herself in the breast. This confined her to her bed for some time, and during this time I visited at the home of her mother, where she was lying wounded and sick. I did not see her, though I stayed there one night and nearly all the next day. Her mother told me she did not like the Old School Baptist doctrine, and she thought on that account she would not wish to see me, and she suggested that we should not speak too loud lest she should hear our conversation, and that it should prove an annoyance to her. So nearly an entire day was spent in conversation with her mother and her sister, Mrs. Mabel Weeks, talking about the precious things of Christ, but in rather suppressed tones of voice lest the wounded, sick one should be disturbed. Two years later, in 1897, at the Maine Association, held at South Gardiner, I saw her for the first time. I remarked to her, "I was once quite near you in your mother's home, but I did not see you." "Yes," she replied, "I well remember the time; I lay there in bed, in the next room, listening with all attention to every word you were saying to my sister Mabel, and I think I heard every word you said; I was feeling I was a poor, guilty sinner, and I was sorely troubled before God, and what you were saying to my mother and Mabel was so comforting to me, and since then I have been wishing to see you to hear you speak about these things." "Why," I replied, "I was endeavoring all the time to speak in an undertone so that you might not hear." "But I," she replied, "got my ear as close as I could to the wall to listen to you through the plastered partition between us; it was such a comfort to me." "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." She then, through the kindness of the Lord, had come to a trembling hope that Christ was her Redeemer, but was yearning for some further confirming evidences of her acceptance in the Beloved. On Sept. 20th, 1900, she was received into the fellowship of the church at South Gardiner, and was baptized by the writer. Now she has departed this life to be with Christ, which is far better. She was loved by the church, and had their fellowship and sympathy in all her trials and sufferings. She left a husband and two children, mother, brother and sister, but we sorrow not even as others which have no hope.

At her funeral I preached from the words: "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he

might be Lord both of the dead and living."—Romans xiv. 8, 9.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

IT has been my sad duty, frequently recurring of late, to send for publication in the SIGNS obituaries of our precious brethren who are rapidly being gathered home, leaving sweet memories it is true, but sadness and desolation in our hearts as we realize the places which knew them once shall know them no more forever. This time the little band at Ebenezer is called to mourn the loss of another of its members. **Mrs. Susan E. Chamblin** fell sweetly asleep in Jesus, we believe, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. John Chamblin, in Hamilton, Loudoun Co., Va., Oct. 6th, 1908, aged nearly 76 years. Sister Chamblin was the widow of brother Albert Chamblin, who died several years ago. Their home was near Bloomfield, Loudoun Co., and their house had been the hospitable home of their brethren in Christ for more than two generations. Sister Chamblin's maiden name was Humphrey. Both her family and that of her husband belong to a class of people which is a blessing to the land which gives them birth. It was my privilege to baptize sister Chamblin in the fellowship of Ebenezer Church, Loudoun Co., in July, 1899, and her husband in August; both in old age. Sister Chamblin was one of those whose lives seem consecrated to the service of God almost from their birth. If I remember rightly she dated her experience back to early life. Contemplating the life of such a woman one might ask, Wherein is the lack of any christian virtue? All that can be seen seems combined to make a complete christian character, yet what called forth the love and fellowship of the Lord's people was not so much the noble and lovely traits naturally distinguishing sister Chamblin, as the Spirit which taught her to say and to feel she was "less than the least of all saints." In that sweet spirit of humility she reflected the image of her Master and won a lasting place in the love and esteem of her brethren. For many years she had been in feeble health, a constant sufferer from the infirmities of a frail body. She attended a two days meeting at Mt. Zion in September, after which she went to her daughter's home at Hamilton, where she expected to spend the winter. Not being even as well as usual when she arrived, she failed rapidly until the end came. She sank into unconsciousness a few days before she died, quietly falling into that sleep which knows no waking. Two sons and one daughter, with three sisters and numerous relatives and friends, with her brethren, not only of Ebenezer Church, but all who knew her, are left to mourn their loss.

J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., Nov. 10, 1908.

MEMORIALS.

RESOLUTION passed by the Mount Olive Primitive Baptist Church, October 24th, 1908.

Forasmuch as God in his wisdom has removed by death from us our beloved pastor, **Elder J. S. Corder,** who had been a consistent and orderly member of this church for seventy-three years, who had labored with us and for us in the cause of our blessed Redeemer in the gospel ministry for sixty-eight years, and was wonderfully gifted as a gospel preacher; who had served us faithfully as a pastor of this church for twenty-eight years, even unto the time of his death; he preached unto us the word of God, the doctrine of Christ and his apostles; he gave us instruction in the way of truth and righteousness and in the order of God's house; he stood the storms of persecution and false representation which God's ministers have been subjected to in all ages, and amid all this he was steadfast, unchangeable, always abounding in the truth; therefore

Resolved, That we as a church in his death have suffered a great loss, but we believe that our loss is his eternal gain. While we miss him in our assembling together to worship God, and we will hear his voice no more on earth, we desire to set forth as a solemn duty our sincere and heartfelt respect, love and true devotion to the memory of our beloved pastor. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

WE, the members of the Tygarts Valley River Association, are made to mourn the death of our former moderator and father in Israel, **Elder J. S. Corder,** who died on the 26th day of August, 1908, aged 88 years, 6 months and 11 days, having been a useful and devoted member of the Mount Olive Primitive Baptist Church seventy-three years, a sound, orderly and faithful minister of the gospel of Christ for sixty-eight years. He was pastor of the Mount Olive Church for twenty-eight years and moderator of this association for thirty-three sessions. With this wonderful record before us we recognize that God in his wisdom has taken from among us to himself a good and useful man; one whom we loved for the truth's sake; one who was strong in doctrine and wonderfully gifted as a preacher of the gospel; one with whom we often took sweet counsel; one who served us long as a faithful moderator of this association. In consideration of these things we desire to set forth as a solemn duty our sincere and heartfelt respect, love and true devotion to the memory of our beloved father in Israel.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

BROTHER J. T. Barnes has changed his address from Touchet, Wash., to Dayton, Wash., where his correspondents will hereafter address him.

APPOINTMENTS.

I WILL, by divine permission, be at Duart, Ontario, Canada, on Sunday, Nov. 29th; Dunwich, Tuesday, Dec. 1st; St. Thomas, Thursday, 3rd; Ekfrid, Sunday, 6th; Lobo, Tuesday, 8th; London, Thursday, 10th. P. W. SAWIN.

ELDER J. E. Thornbury will, Providence permitting, fill the following appointments in Anderson County, Ky.: Thursday, Dec. 24th, 1908, Goshen, as suits; Friday, 25th, Salt River, 11 o'clock a. m.; Saturday and Sunday, 26th and 27th, Little Flock.

MEETINGS.

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W. D. BALL.

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Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.
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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 76. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1908. NO. 24.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HELENA, Okla., Oct. 21, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Very much has been written since the beginning of the gospel day upon the subject of the resurrection of the dead. It must be conceded by Bible readers that the apostles were inspired of God, hence their testimony cannot be doubted. As to how it shall be accomplished, will always be a mystery to mortals, yea, even to angels. The literal meaning of the word "resurrection," is a rising again from the dead, resumption of life by the dead. According to this meaning of the word there can be no resurrection of anything only of that which has died. To comprehend how the bodies of the saints shall be brought forth from death and the grave is an impossibility by mortals, but it is ours to believe that they shall come forth to a state of glory into the fullness of immortality. I feel satisfied that it is the Adamic man, the man born of the flesh, the man born of a woman, that dies and that is laid in the grave. To him death has a sting, because he has sinned; over him the grave has its victory. But the hope of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ is that the sting is taken away from death, and that the victory of the grave is not everlasting. It is certain that all who possess this hope shall be conquerors through the Redeemer of sinners, and they shall be able to sing the song of victory that was written in olden time: "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" This is certain to come to pass, because the Lord says by the prophet Hosea: "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." This man who rises a conqueror over death and the grave is the man who was of the earth, earthy. He is the man who sinned against his Maker, but was redeemed by his Maker. He is the man who received the sentence of death for sinning. He is the man upon whom the sentence was executed; he dies and he is put in the grave. This man in the grave shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and he shall come forth. If there be any other man or being that sins and is sent to the grave besides the Adamic man we cannot find him by reading the Scriptures. This man is operated upon by the Holy Spirit,

and he is the character, or person, pointed out by holy writ who was "once enlightened," and "tasted of the heavenly gift," and made partaker of the Holy Ghost, and "tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come." Though he be a sinner, and vile before God, yet the Lord is merciful to him, and more than kind in giving him a foretaste of the powers of the world to come. He is not forgotten by the Lord, nor forsaken by the Most High. The manifestations to this man who sinned are not the man, but holy principles imparted to him for his instruction, comfort and sealing to that great day of redemption, which is still in the future. These manifestations are called by different names throughout the Scriptures. These names indicate the great latitude of the Spirit's teaching. I shall take notice here of some of the most important names in connection with this subject: "The new man."—Eph. iv. 24; Col. iii. 10. "Inner man."—Eph. iii. 16. "The inward man."—Rom. vii. 22; 2 Cor. iv. 16. "The hidden man of the heart."—1 Pet. iii. 4. "New creature."—2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 15. "An unction from the Holy One."—1 John ii. 20. "Treasure in earthen vessel."—2 Cor. iv. 7. "The firstfruits of the Spirit."—Rom. viii. 23. "The earnest of the Spirit."—2 Cor. i. 22; v. 5; Eph. i. 14. Called a "seal."—2 Cor. i. 22; Eph. i. 13; iv. 30; 2 Tim. ii. 19; Rev. ii. 17. "Christ in you the hope of glory."—Col. i. 27. "Mystery of God."—Rom. xvi. 25; Eph. i. 9; iii. 3–5; Col. i. 26, 27; ii. 2; iv. 3; 1 Cor. ii. 7. "Secret of the Lord."—Psa. xxv. 14; Prov. iii. 32. "Circumcision."—Rom. ii. 29; Phil. iii. 3; Col. ii. 11; 2 Cor. iii. 3. "New covenant, or law in the heart."—Psa. xl. 8; Jer. xxxi. 33; Ezek. xi. 19; xxxvi. 26; 2 Cor. iii. 3; Heb. viii. 10. "Spirit."—Num. xxvii. 18; Psa. xxxii. 2; Isa. lvii. 15; Eccles. xii. 7; Matt. xxvi. 41; Mark xiv. 38. All these names, and some others given in the Scriptures, are identical in meaning; they are names given to the holy principle imparted to man in the second birth, or birth of the Spirit, or the birth from above. According to the mention of this work recorded in John iii. 6; Heb. xii. 9; 1 John iii. 9; v. 1, 4, it is the product of the Spirit of God, a begetting from on high. This holy gift unto man never needed redemption; it never was subject to death, neither can it ever be. It is eternal life, or eternal life principle, which shall blossom on until the ripe fruit of immortality shall appear in perfect order. The resurrection of the dead is so very important in the doctrine and in the arguments of the apostle Paul that without it the hope of the saints is vain; without it all the preaching of the apostles and preachers of the gospel is also vain. He sets it forth as the crowning work of redemption. His arguments lead to this conclusion: If the dead rise not, then there has been no atonement for sin. If the dead rise not, then the sins of the saints remain. "For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised."—1 Cor. xv. 16. "If Christ be not raised, * * * then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."—Verses 17, 18. Just so sure as Christ was raised from the dead, so sure it is that the dead will be raised; and that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead there can be no doubt in the minds of those who have living faith in the Lord and in his testimony. Peter testified on the day of Pentecost before a great multitude: "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." Peter, refer-

ring to King David, speaks of the psalmist's knowledge of this important event: "He, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses." When Peter says, "we all are witnesses," it must embrace the testimony of the prophets as well as that of the apostles. Paul also refers to the Psalms for proof of the resurrection of Christ. We suppose that Paul was not an eyewitness of the resurrection of Christ, but he bears testimony as though he were a witness of that great event, for on every occasion where it is needful for him to speak of it he uses the strongest language to establish the fact. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept."—1 Cor. xv. 20. Because that, "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." God's way of doing his will is all of perfect order. So in the resurrection of the dead there is order, "Every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's, at his coming." There is a firstfruits from the dead; this firstfruits secures all the crop of its kind from the dead. There can be no doubt about this as being established by Scripture teaching. It was ordained before the world was that the Head of the church should be the first begotten of the dead, that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, that he should be, The firstborn from the dead. (Acts xxvi. 23; Col. i. 18; Rev. i. 5.) Viewing Christ as the first that should rise from the dead, bringing immortality to light, inspiration could say this: He is "the firstborn of every creature."—Col. i. 15. It can be truly said in the sense that he is absolutely the first to rise from the dead, that he is the firstborn, the Elder Brother, in the new Jerusalem. There is no doubt of many persons coming back to natural life who had died previous to the coming of the Holy One, but it was reserved for Jesus, the Elder Brother, to be the first that should pass through death and come up victorious on the other side of the grave, thus bearing the palm: "firstborn from the dead." Being the first one to enter his kingdom of glory, he is really "the firstborn of every creature." The experience of the saints cannot be complete until they shall experience that change in their bodies that brings them to glory. It is through the resurrection that perfection comes to the saints. Now we see as through a glass darkly, now we know in part only. We prophesy in part only; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. Now we have the Spirit of adoption, but in the resurrection we shall have the full adoption, the last and crowning work of redemption, to wit, the redemption of our body. There is nothing too good for those for whom the Savior died, because they are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. But they must suffer with their Lord and Savior on earth before they enter into their inheritance, which cannot be corrupted nor defiled, neither can it fade away, because it is secured by the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. He is the firstfruits of that incorruptible kingdom. The firstfruits secures all that shall ever enter the clime of immortality. (See 1 Peter i. 3; iii. 21.) Basing all our information upon the testimony of the word of God, we fail to find that angels, or any beings, can aspire to the great height of immortality, except sinners who have been redeemed by the precious

blood of Christ. The redeeming power of that blood is beyond the conception of mortals. These things angels have desired to look into. That blood of the everlasting covenant, the blood of the Lord Jesus, is holy. There never was and never can be any like it; it came from the body of the first begotten of the Father. This first begotten is called the Word. In the beginning was the Word; the Word was God; the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth. He took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham. His blood which was shed for the cleansing and the redemption of his people was the blood of the Word, the blood of the Son of God. How sacred and solemn to contemplate the mighty power of redemption through the blood of the Lamb. The redeemed of the Lord, only, shall reach the exalted height of immortality, which is the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself. This adoption is the redemption of our body. The saints are sealed by the Holy Spirit "unto the day of redemption." One place the seal is called "that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession." In these two passages let it be noticed that the sealing, or preservation, is "unto" and "until," the future redemption. I have always thought that Job had a view of that final redemption where he asks the question: "If a man die, shall he live again?" Though he does not answer this question directly, he continues his discourse as though an affirmative answer was well understood; for without answering, or without any apology, he continues, as it were, in the same breath, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands." —Job xiv. 14, 15. In another place Job speaks freely upon the same subject; his language is simple and plain, so that there ought not be any doubt in the mind of the believer in the Lord Jesus as to the truth of the quickening of the bodies of the saints in the great day of the resurrection, which shall manifest "who are Christ's, at his coming." Job is in great anguish of soul, as well as in bodily affliction; hear him cry: "O that my words were now written! O that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! for [because] I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."—Job xix. 23–27. In the above, where he says, "Though after my skin, worms destroy this body," &c., the margin reads: "After I shalt awake, though this body be destroyed, yet out of my flesh shall I see God." If his body be destroyed, how could he see through his body unless it be quickened or revived? "Mine eyes shall behold, and not another," or, as in the margin, not a stranger's eyes. He was certain that he should be able to reach the height of immortality through his living Redeemer. Some object to accepting Job's language here as having reference to the resurrection, where he speaks of seeing God: "Yet in my flesh shall I see God." As I have quoted from the text and the margin, both set forth the fact that the body is first destroyed before he has the power to see God through his resurrected body.

I will give my opinion why he uses the word "flesh" in connection with his sight of the Redeemer. Because he uses the word flesh does not signify that in the resurrection morning he shall be flesh, as he was at the time he uttered these words; but to establish the fact of his individuality, or identity, or that not another man should be able to see for him the wonders of the crowning work of redemption, but that he (Job), the afflicted, should stand in his lot in that day. David says: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."—Psalms xvii. 15. Death and the resurrection of God's people are set forth in the Scriptures as falling asleep in the Lord our Savior, and awaking to life from the dead in Him, even in him. Daniel had a view of the final, wonderful work of redemption. He is firmly assured of the safety of the Lord's people "at that time," or "at that day." For, "at that time," the great Prince shall stand up for the delivery of the Lord's people. There is still another reason of the safety of these "little ones," and that is because their names are written in heaven, or as stated by Daniel: "And at that time thy people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book." Is not the writing of their names in "the book" a seal from on high? Surely they are sealed "with that holy Spirit of promise" until the day of final redemption, or deliverance. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."—Dan. xii. 2. It appears from the above that the prophet had a view of the resurrection of the "just and the unjust." I do not understand that the rising from the tomb in any way separates, or prepares to separate, the righteous from the wicked, but that the separation is made before this appointed day. Election secures the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory. The others of mankind are blinded by the god of this world. Jesus says the sheep are placed on the right, but the goats on the left; this is all done before the King calls his sheep to their final inheritance: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." The righteous shall go away into life eternal; the goats shall go away into everlasting punishment. There is proof in the Scriptures that the unjust, or the wicked, are resurrected, but this cannot affect in any way the title of the righteous to their kingdom of glory. Neither have they the right to ask their Lord and Savior why the goats are resurrected unto damnation. "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."—John v. 28, 29. The testimony of Paul before Felix, the governor, on the resurrection, agrees with the above: "But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets; and have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."—Acts xxiv. 14, 15. This great apostle understood that the law and prophets taught the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. We must accept the truth. I feel safe in say-

ing that the sheep shall be glorified before the goats have their final sentence pronounced against them. How long a space between, as we count time, I know not; I have noticed, however, that where the righteous and wicked are spoken of in regard to the future, that the righteous go first in the order of language. The most elaborate instruction on the resurrection is contained in 1 Cor. xv.; I think the apostle here speaks wholly in regard to the resurrection of the saints. It is all-important for them to know what is revealed in regard to their future blessedness. It is not so important for them to know much about the future of those who know not the Lord Jesus. The wrath of God abideth upon all workers of iniquity; God alone can mitigate or increase his displeasure as he sees fit. The resurrection of the saints is in view where Paul uses the language: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."—1 Cor. xv. 19. But his teaching leads us to have hope in that resurrection life which is to be manifested "at that day" to all them that love His appearing. The precious hope in the Redeemer of sinners will not be consummated until the resurrection life is experienced. If our hope falls short of that life, then we are of all men most miserable, because the resurrection life is the acme of our hope which we have while here in the flesh. As the saints fall asleep in Jesus their "flesh shall rest in hope" of the resurrection. As we count time, with some it may be for ten thousand years, with others it may be for a thousand years, and with some a hundred years, or less; but that holy sleep in the Lord shall be a peaceful rest to every one who has been sealed by the Holy Spirit. Ten thousand years shall not be more to some than one night to others. That there is a set time, or great day, the day of the Lord, is plainly taught throughout the Scriptures. It is not given unto the saints "to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." Jesus says: "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only."—Matt. xxiv. 36. Paul in 1 Thess. v. 2: "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." From this it seems that the early saints knew perfectly, or that it was well understood by them, that the day of the Lord would come as a thief in the night, unannounced. This agrees with the testimony of Peter. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night."—2 Peter iii. 10. We who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep from rising in the power of the Lord. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."—1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. To me this is positive proof that mortals shall put on immortality. Again: "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."—Rom. viii. 11. This mortal must put on immortality, this corruptible must put on incorruption; mortality shall be swallowed up of life. We are exhorted to comfort one another with the precious promises of deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the glori-

ous liberty of the children of God. It seems evident from several places in the Scriptures that there shall be a time for the gathering together of the saints from all parts of the earth and heaven. Is this to be the great congregations spoken of by inspiration? (See Psalms xxii. 25; xxxv. 18; xli. 9, 10.) "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him."—Eph. i. 10. "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints." And, "Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him." And, "The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." And, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him." (See Deut. xxxiii. 2; Dan. vii. 10; Zech. xiv. 5; Matt. xxv. 31; Jude 14.) I appeal "to the law and to the testimony." It is from this source I have tried to set forth the power of Christ in the resurrection of the dead. That power was declared by the apostles, so that the Sadducees were "grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead." Paul said: "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." Closely following the above language Paul declares that the Lord Jesus Christ "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."—Phil. iii. 21. The power of our Savior is such that he is able to subdue all things unto himself. There will be no power lacking in the resurrection. When our Life shall appear then shall we also appear with him in glory. As wise as the apostles were by the personal knowledge received from Jesus, and by inspiration, yet they could not tell us what we shall be; they could not enter into any details of the future life, they could only point us to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Perfect. That all saints shall be perfect in him is the assurance of the prophets and apostles. John tells us, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Dear brethren, may we all be satisfied in the precious promises of a better life.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

WOODSTOCK, Ont., Nov. 15, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN:—With the permission of the editors, I feel like addressing you all as fellow-travelers through a wilderness world, in which I feel to be a stranger and a pilgrim, as I believe all the children of God ever have been, wanderers in the wilderness of sin, led about and instructed by God in a manner contrary to all their expectation or their wishes, feeling they are led in a lonely and sorrowful path; oftentimes, nay, most always, with the writer, being afraid they are on the wrong road, and not in the highway of holiness, not knowing whither they are drifting, and in that respect are like old father Abraham, who, it is said, went out, not knowing whither he went. O how many, many times do I feel that I know not whither I am going; I am all alone, no company, no fellow-travelers, all is darkness around me; I am full of doubts and fears as to my own standing, and, worse still, doubts as to the reality of religion, and whether there be any God or no, for how do I know there is a

God except when he reveals himself to me? People talk of believing in Jesus, but I can just as easily believe I am a millionaire as believe in Jesus unless he makes himself known to me and comes into my heart with the visits of his love, chasing away the darkness and doubts which often perplex and environ me; and as my daily needs and necessities make me to know I am not rich in this world's goods, so my perplexities in spiritual things, my doubts and fears and the many questionings constantly coming up in my heart make me realize that I am a poor, helpless sinner, and I must have God's grace and presence every day of my life or I will sink in despair or run into all kinds of wickedness and vanity. I have thought a great deal lately of the case of Peter, whom we read was always a prominent disciple of Jesus, and who felt sure he would never deny his Lord, even though every one else did, but Jesus said to him, "Satan hath desired to have you;" and O I think how often this is the case with me, Satan, who dwells within me, constantly desires to have me, and often I feel I am completely in his power. There seems no way of escape, my way seems inclosed with hewn stone, which I believe represents God's eternal purposes hewn and fitted so tight that there is no escape except by the same hand that incloses me. As one of old says, He kills and he makes alive, and there is none that can deliver out of his hand. But Jesus said to Peter, "I have prayed for thee." O what mercy to have Jesus pray for us, he who said to his Father, "I knew that thou hearest me always." If we could only feel and believe that Jesus has prayed for us how our hearts would rejoice, and we would be able to realize that all our afflictions are but for a moment. What does it matter what we suffer or endure here below if it is only for a moment? It may be for years, but it is only for a moment in comparison with the endless ages of what we hope will be a blissful eternity. What a wonderful thought that our whole life is but a moment in God's account, and is but as yesterday when it is past. But further, the Lord Jesus said to Peter, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Now the world's estimate of conversion generally is, I think, to be made the children of God, but I will not enlarge upon that; but here was one who was before a subject of God's grace, for Jesus had before told him that flesh and blood had not revealed to him the Christ, but my Father which is in heaven, so we know he was a subject of God's grace; but he was strong, and I rather think had many other objectionable traits of character, shall I say, as alas, I feel I am full of such; but now he had to be weakened, converted from a strong, selfish man, to a poor, weak, dependent creature, and made to know that all his strength was in God, that he had none of his own. What was all this weakening and stripping for? So that he could strengthen his brethren, so that he could feed the lambs, the little, weak lambs, and the sheep, as Paul did when he said, "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." O how much weakness and fear and trembling does the poor child of God have as he stumbles along through this wilderness of sin. So Peter, after his conversion, could come down right where I often am and tell how strong he had felt, but O, now I know I am weak, and unless God keeps me I will go down to destruction. Just think what a wretch I am to deny my blessed Savior, and that with oaths and curses. O the amazing power of grace

and the longsuffering of God to give me repentance and manifest his loving-kindness to me. Thus he was led in a way that he could strengthen his brethren, which he could never have done had he not been left to fall, being handed over to Satan, as it were, to be sifted as wheat, but only the dross was consumed, the pure gold (the love of God) remained, and he was now in a condition to comfort the poor, weak ones with the same comfort wherewith he himself was comforted of God. How often it is that when a minister of God gets way down in his feelings and feels so weak and poor and ignorant that he cannot say anything profitable to God's people, that even this very poverty of spirit is what comforts them, and they feel they are not alone.

I was reading a circumstance about Mr. Gadsby to-day, who was a wonderful preacher in England the forepart of last century. He owed twenty pounds, and had promised to pay it in a week, and as he had much more than that owing him he felt sure he could collect it, but could not; then he thought he could borrow it from among his friends, but again he failed. The week passed away, leaving him in terrible trouble, fearing that he could not fulfill his promise and that the man would prosecute him. (The law was very different then from what it is now, as he could be thrown into jail without a trial.) Saturday night came, and he was unable to raise the money. He went to his room and fell on his knees, but all he could say or think of was, "Lord, help me," and in the morning, after having passed a sleepless night, that was still all he could think of, and he preached three times that day from the words, "Lord, help me." He had good liberty and preached with power, and in the evening after meeting was over a young man came to him and wanted to speak to him, and he, supposing he wanted to talk about his soul, took him into the vestry, and the young man then told him that his mother had died a short time before, leaving him all her money except five pounds for a poor woman and twenty pounds for Mr. Gadsby. He had paid the five pounds, but decided to keep the twenty pounds, as no one but himself knew that his mother had left it for Mr. Gadsby, but the sermons had such a weight and effect upon him that he had to come and pay it and tell all about it. Mr. Gadsby (they were not called Elders in England) received it, trembling from head to foot; he went home and told his wife that he then knew why he could not get it any other way, for God had it all prepared for him in his own way, and he hoped he would praise him as long as he lived. What a refuge in time of trouble! I have read many of Mr. Gadsby's sermons, and they are very comforting to a poor, tried child of God, as he was tried and tossed on the waves of temptation, sorrow and trial, and certainly seemed to know the plague of his own heart, and knew by painful experience how weak and sinful and ignorant he was, and thus was able to comfort others in the same trials and sorrows. If he had not been tried and tempted as he says, and often fell, not outwardly, but in his heart, how could he have comforted others? But above all, I think of the dear Savior, who was tempted in all points like unto his brethren, or, as the apostle says, as we are, and then I think, O no, it cannot be that he was tempted like I am. I dare not tell of many temptations I have, but God knows them all, and I hope I am glad he does, for how could he suffer for and forgive what he never knew? There have been times when I hope I have

poured out my heart to him, telling him what a miserable wretch I am and how unworthy of his mercy, and there has come a peace and quietness into my soul that the world could not take away, but O, it has been so short that no sooner had it come than it was gone again, and I left to barrenness, coldness and indifference, so I know not whether I am in the way or not, and until Jesus comes to me and makes me know that he is the Way and that I am in him, I will wander in the dark, not knowing where I am drifting.

But I must stop, feeling I have not written as I intended or as I could wish, and hesitate very much whether I should send it, but I know if it is not right, or you think it not profitable, it will not be published, and I shall be satisfied. I realize that it is like the writer, poor and unprofitable, but you know God says, by the mouth of the apostle, that he hath chosen base things, and things that are despised, and things that are not, to bring to naught things that are; so the Lord can make my poor writings profitable to some poor soul that may be in trouble like myself. I suppose I have written because I had to.

Unworthily, your brother in sorrow,

R. SCATES.

DUNCAN, Okla., Oct. 26, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—As another year has about passed, and my unprofitable life has been spared through the mercy of the Lord, who has abundantly blessed me, I feel to thank him for all his goodness and mercies, who is the giver of every good gift. It is now time for me to renew my subscription for my good paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which contains all the preaching I get, and, dear friends and kindred in Christ, it seems a wonder that one so unworthy as I should be permitted to read the sweet messages that come to me in our paper; it does seem a great blessing. O what comfort and consolation I receive reading after the brethren and sisters, just leading me along and dropping handfuls of delicious fruit that the Lord has given them for the comfort of the feeble and poor ones, and I feel to be the poorest of the poor, but "out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." It does seem to me that the writers of our paper speak in the spirit of truth; they all bear testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus, for surely they could not write as they do had they not been taught of the Lord. Goodness and mercy have been over and around us all our journey of tribulation and sorrow in this world. Jesus said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation:" but in me ye shall have peace, and, dear brethren and sisters, his shalls are sure; when he speaks it is done. O glorious faith that he has all power in heaven and in earth. Where would my hope be if I did not believe he had this power? Bless the Lord, O my soul, while persecution, pestilence, famine, nakedness, peril and sword may be ours to endure, yet "in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." How true nothing can separate us from him, for our life is hid in him, therefore we have hope. Many troubles and sorrows we have, but our hope is in God; our hope is Zionward, where the Forerunner for us hath entered, and at times

our hope is delightful; we are carried away with exceeding joy, and made to skip, and sing the sweet songs of Zion, the city of our King, and say he is our Deliverer, for he hath fought all our battles. Dear friends, when we are given this spirit we can say, "'Tis a heaven below the Redeemer to know." Then we run with patience the race set before us; the Lord is our buckler and high tower. We also say, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage. I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel; my reins also instruct me in the night seasons. * * * Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. * * * Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." I sometimes ask myself, Do I believe this? Yes, I believe this language belongs to the children of God, and they can sing it as they go along through this dreary wilderness. My dear kindred, how can we have hope and not sing praises to the Lord? "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." "Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net." But my cry is, O Lord, examine me, and prove me by my reins. "For thou art my rock and my fortress: therefore, for thy name's sake, lead me and guide me. Pull me out of the net they have laid privily for me; for thou art my strength." Yes, my friends, when I am weak then I am strong, for the Lord strengtheneth me. I know if it were not for the mercies of the Lord I should fall by the way, for I find in my flesh there dwells no good thing, for when I would do good, evil is present with me. I find in my daily walk evil is present with me. O times and times I have tried to keep my mind off of worldly things, and could not for a moment; in this I am taught my dependence. Then, again, I have tried to read my Bible, or sing some spiritual song, and could not do either. Dear friends, tell me, have any of you ever been in such depths of wickedness? O what sorrow fills my soul; maybe I will remain in this dark dungeon for days; then all at once, like the sun that springs from behind a cloud, some word of Scripture will come into mind, and great peace and comfort fill my soul, then I can read my Bible and my paper and sing,

"Prepare me, gracious God,
To stand before thy face;
Thy Spirit must the work perform,
For it is all of grace.

In Christ's obedience clothe,
And wash me in his blood;
So shall I lift my head with joy
Among the sons of God.

Do thou my sins subdue,
Thy sovereign love make known,
The spirit of my mind renew,
And save me in thy Son.

Let me attest thy power,
Let me thy goodness prove,
Till my full soul can hold no more
Of everlasting love."

Dear brethren, I will close, for I am so cast down. You can judge by my writing that I am in the dark, or I have never seen the light of eternal love, but all the writers of the SIGNS have seen the light of the Most High. Praise ye the Lord, for salvation is of the Lord here and in eternity; he will keep the feet of the saints. If I have an experience of grace it is a free gift from the Lord. The one hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm seems glorious to me. O that I could walk as a dear child of God.

Now I will send this; please criticize it well, and see if it deserves a place in the SIGNS; but do not let it crowd out other

matter. When I get my paper I most always read it over twice, for it builds me up on our most holy faith. Remember me at the throne of grace. Let our faces be turned toward Jerusalem, asking the Lord to keep us in the way of peace.

Your sister, I hope, in the bonds of love, NANCY CREEL.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Oct. 11, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—Your editorial in the present number of the SIGNS is a great treat to me; I trust the good Lord hath given me to understand it. Worldly religionists cannot feed upon such food as is given from God; it is too pure, is not mixed with the works of men; but such food is given to us poor worms of the dust to feed and strengthen the inner man, and it builds us up on our most holy faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The questions which were propounded to you to be answered were answered, I believe, by inspiration of God, as also the first, formerly answered by the late Elder Wm. J. Purington; no natural or self-righteous man could pen such wonderful expressions. But there are some who know God, according to what I understand by Paul's teaching in 2 Tim. iii. 7. Paul there said to Timothy that he should be partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, according to the power of God and the grace which was given him in Christ before the foundation of the world. The true followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God will have to pass through many afflictions and trials in standing firm upon the doctrine of God's absolute decrees embracing all things. The lovers of God's truth, because of false prophets which come in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves coming among the flock to spoil them, must be careful. Paul, speaking of the wickedness of the last days, said, perilous times should come; and that men should be lovers of their ownselves and haters of the cause of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. From such he said turn away. They are ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Jude in his epistle also admonishes in love to constancy, saying "Beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These [he said] be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit." I believe that this has reference to those spoken of by Paul who are never able to come to the knowledge of the truth, but only have a form of godliness. Paul also said to Timothy, Thou hast fully known my doctrine, and what persecution I have endured, from which the Lord delivered me. This is true of the faithful among Old School Baptists today. He did not trust in the law for righteousness, but to be made wise unto salvation, through faith, which is in Christ Jesus. God does not look upon the outward appearance of man, but on the heart. Nature's works are always opposite to the ways of grace, and this grace is given of God. This house is not made with hands; the maker and builder is God. We trust by faith that God has given us his Son Jesus Christ, and so we have no confidence in the flesh. All the work of our covenant-keeping God according to His purposes and decrees was embodied in his covenant of redemption of His chosen sons and daughters, chosen out of Adam's race. He did foresee all

things in the fullness of His Godhead, even the narrow compass of our hearts. He declareth unto man just what his thoughts are. The Lord of hosts is His name. He possesseth all power and wisdom, and being supreme, He knew what was in man before it disclosed itself in action. The hidden things of darkness were open to him also; all was present to his eye. Also the unthought of revelation of distant ages, the dissolving of nature and the awful processes of everlasting ages he clearly foresaw and foretold. He overrules the operations of the soul. Those who appear to be so zealous, like the Pharisee, setting up bars of fellowship against those who feel their nothingness in and of themselves, and who are trusting in God to fight their battles, are not fighting against men, but against God. David said to the Philistine, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied." All the Lord's true followers shall know that the Lord saveth, not with sword and spear, for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give the victory through the Lord Jesus Christ. All hearts are in His hand, and he turns them as the rivers of water are turned. Every way of man is right in his own eyes, but the Lord pondereth the heart. In the days of His flesh He spake and it was done, and all whom he called were constrained to come with love, and in the assurance that Jesus was with them. Yet His people are sneered at by idolatrous worshipers in their self-righteousness. The thoughts of those who claim that they have part in the saving of the soul are lighter than dust compared with the words of Jesus of Nazareth. The conquests of the glorious gospel declare his dominion over the world of mind as well as over the world of material nature. All is open to His inspection and subject to his control. He is the great Mediator. He opened the eyes which were closed and sealed in the tomb; he bade the heart to live which had forgotten its vital motion in the tomb; the crimson blood, long congealed by the icy hand of death, circulates again through veins and arteries in its order; the spirit which had taken its flight into the invisible state returned at our Redeemer's signal again to the mouldering clay, and thus proclaimed His absolute sovereignty over those unknown realms. He admits into and recalls from those abodes of eternal happiness. Our Jesus treads upon the powers of darkness; he receives his children as the angels of light. Darkness is the abode of those who are ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Such as these are causing sorrow among Old School Baptists now. Paul's admonition to the Corinthian brethren was that they all speak the same things, and that there be no divisions among them, but that they be perfectly joined together in one mind and judgment. It seems that there were great divisions with the brethren then, some claiming to be of Paul, some of Cephas, and some of Apollos, and some of Christ. He asks of them, "Is Christ divided?" What a revolution there will be some time in the religious world, with the destruction of antichrist; then shall the Lord Jesus be manifested in unspeakable glory in his omnipotence. What then will be the horror of hell, the joy of heaven and the wonders of eternity! The trumpet will then rend the universal vault of death; all the dead shall hear his voice, whether in the deep or in the earth, and shall come forth,

though worms have destroyed the body. Then shall the unnumbered departed arise from death through the power of him who is the Resurrection and the life. His word is settled; his immutability seals, and eternity executes whatever he decrees.

Dear brother, my mind has led me to give my thoughts as I trust the Lord has instructed me. I believe that His sacred word bears me out in the above. I know that our God does not accept the wisdom of men; therefore it becomes us to ask for instruction from Him who giveth liberally. I truly know that in myself dwells no good thing. Unless it pleases our covenant-keeping God otherwise, I am but as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. When it is well with you, dear brother, remember a poor sinner at the throne of grace.

Your brother in hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

WHITEFIELD, Maine, Oct. 3, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed you will find a letter written by our beloved pastor, Elder Z. M. Beal. I think it too good for me to keep myself, so I send it to you to be published in the SIGNS if in your judgment it seems best.

We were much disappointed that you could not come to our association this fall. It seems a long time since you came among us to declare the wonderful works of the Lord. When we heard that you were not to be here, I felt as though I could not enjoy the association, but Elders Slauson, Beal and Keene all preached so good of the wisdom, power and goodness of God, of his election, love, predestination and foreknowledge of all things, that those bad feelings left me. I think that we were all given the hearing ear and the understanding heart as the precious truth of the gospel of Christ was preached in its purity. I felt the love of the Spirit of Christ as the truth flowed from the lips of those who preached. The love of the truth was shining in their faces, and it was not of earth, and we felt that we loved them for the truth's sake, with that love which is stronger than death. This love the world cannot give, and neither take it away. It was a heavenly sitting together in Christ Jesus; love, joy and peace flowed like a river whose streams make glad the city of our God. O what a great and wonderful love is the love of God that is shed abroad in our hearts; it is boundless; we have no control over it. The love and gladness that I felt in my heart all through the meeting, and most of the time since, was like a well of water springing up within my heart and going out to the children of God. I am talking with them in my mind through the day, and even at night when awake it is the first thing that comes to me. Sometimes I awake singing, or praying, or praising the dear Lord for his goodness and mercy to such a poor worm as I. Songs in the night he giveth. "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." This is my hope, that I have been washed and cleansed in the precious blood of Christ and made white, yes, whiter than snow; and though I am black with sin, yet I am comely in his Son. My righteousness is of him. My own righteousness is as filthy rags. As the days and years roll around I learn more and more of self, of this poor depraved heart, and the hidden evils within, which are ready to creep forth at any time, unless restrained by the love of God, which alone keeps me. Without this love I must surely fall daily, for my own strength is perfect weakness. It is

the desire and prayer of my heart daily that I may honor my profession by a well ordered life and godly conversation. I desire that all the household of God may walk as becometh the children of God. May we all be meek and lowly in heart, forbearing and forgiving one another in love, each esteeming others better than self. As for myself, this is no hard command, for they all seem good but me; yes, I feel to be the black sheep of the flock, if one at all. I want to be made willing to suffer, if need be, and to bear patiently whatever our blessed Lord is pleased to lay upon me, knowing that he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. In his love and pity he sends every trouble. There is no place to which he calls us but where he has been there before; he clears the way. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. He trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him. How can we ever praise him enough with these sin-polluted lips for the many manifest blessings that he bestows upon us? If numbered, they are more than the hairs of our head; they are numberless. O how great a God is our God; when he speaks it is done, when he commands it stands fast. How dare I, who am such a poor, insignficant creature, less than the least of all saints, hope in such a great God as this, who knoweth the end from the beginning? The thought makes me tremble, and yet, notwithstanding all this, I have a hope which is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, that I shall one day meet him face to face, and reign with him above, with all the blood-washed millions surrounding the throne of God and the Lamb, crying, Grace, grace unto him.

Wednesday p. m.—Dear brother, as I have not sent this letter I feel I must talk with you a little longer, and tell you something about the cold, dark and barren places through which I have been called to pass. In this shall I say that I was led by the Spirit? It is said of the Savior that he was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. During this past year, as it seems to me, I have been led to see that during the cold and barren states of mind in which I have walked the Lord had a purpose, if for no other thing, I feel sure to burn up the dross, for the most fine gold had become dim. We need a cleansing sometimes, that the dross may be consumed and the gold refined. I lost all interest, at times, in the meetings; except at times when I would feel if I could only hear such an one preach I would be glad. I did not feel that drawing of love to the people of God that I had in days past. I did not have any interest in reading the Bible, and only read it out of a sense of duty; but it was a sealed book to me. Sometimes it seemed as though it was sealed with seven seals. I forgot to pray; life was almost a burden; I was restless and discontented and filled with murmuring at my lot, because I was sick and had to suffer. I contrasted my life, within and without, with that of others, and sometimes felt almost hard toward the God I love. This makes the tears flow from my eyes, and they almost blind me as I write these lines. I would say to myself, God has all power in heaven and in earth, why then will he not change things? Why must I be sick and shut in all the winter? If we had a meeting I could not go to it, even should I feel as though I would like to. Sometimes I would think this is all just, for at times I would feel sorry to hear that Elder Keene was coming and I so poorly. At times I

seemed to lose all interest in everything, even in my home, for it seemed lone and dreary. I was tossed to and fro, and felt to cry out as our Savior at one time did, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." I felt alone and forsaken, and often I cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" I would sometimes feel that I would like to write to you, and others, but could not. I have commenced many letters only to have to give up writing; not a word would be given me. At times I would question in my mind, Is there a God, or any reality in anything? I sometimes think that I was given over to Satan to be sifted as wheat; but, my brother, I think I needed the siftings, they showed me my faults. I began to think that I had had my day, and that there was no more spiritual enjoyment for me on earth. I knew that I did not deserve the least of mercies from his hand, yet I could not help crying to the Lord that I might feel his love and presence in my heart, and with Job I felt to say, O that I might plead with him as a man pleadeth with his friend, and that I could pour out my heart to him in prayer and supplication. O Lord, thou hast searched me, and art acquainted with all my ways, for there is not a word in my tongue but, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. With all my shortcomings, how glad I am that God sees and knows me exactly as I am.

One year ago I went to our association so cast down that I thought there could be but little enjoyment for me; but the Lord heard the cry of the destitute and restored to me the joy of salvation, and I never enjoyed a more precious season. It seemed like our old associations, such as we used to have in my youthful days, when in Christ I walked in the light of his countenance and his banner over me was love. The ministering brethren came to us in the fullness of the gospel of Christ. Elder Coulter I had never met before, but when he began preaching he was no stranger; he came to my heart, and I loved him fervently for the truth's sake. The love of God cannot be separated; hearts where it dwells run together as two drops of water. That was a season long to be remembered. Your daughter, dear sister Bonnie, was with us, and how we all enjoyed her sweet talk. The truth just flowed out of her mouth. Her talk carried me back to my childhood days in Christ, when I wanted to and did talk all the time, and did not want to hear anything else; Jesus was my theme. How we all love her, and we hope to see her with us again. Dear brother, since then I have felt my spiritual strength renewed day by day; I have had a feeling of trust given me, so that I could trust all in his hand. Everything has seemed to turn right about; gladness and joy fill my heart, and everything is all right, for all is in the hand of God. Jesus comes and talks with me, and by times I feel my heart burn within me as he talks with me by the way and opens to me the Scriptures. So I have no time to be lonely, but feel to praise him for ever and ever.

I have written a long, mixed up letter, but it has relieved my mind, and I hope it will not weary you to read it, for I could not rest night or day, and if it has been given by the Spirit of Christ, I trust you may also be given the same Spirit to receive it.

I remain yours in hope of a blessed immortality,

(MRS.) F. A. PULSIFER.

BOWDOINHAM, Maine, March 2, 1908.

MRS. ELLA L. PULSIFER—MY DEAR SISTER:—I have been feeling for some time past that I ought to write to you, and now I will make the attempt to do so, but the question in my mind is, What shall I write? God's people are a peculiar people, there is none like them on earth; neither do the children of this world (that is, the children of the bondwoman) know them, but they are known of God, for known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. He showed his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel; he hath not dealt so with any nation; and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the Lord.

I do not know that I can write anything that will be interesting to you or any of the redeemed of the Lord. I am getting old and stricken in years; soon, if I should live, I shall be seventy-three years old. It is written, "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow: for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."—Psalms xc. 10. When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return, and then what will be the state and condition of this poor old sinner? My only hope is in Jesus, who came into the world to save sinners. No, dear sister, I cannot deliver myself from sin, nor from the body of this death, but, thanks be to God, there is One who can and will deliver all that the Father gave to him. Whether I am included in that number God knows, and in this thought I rejoice: "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." What a wonderful thought, I cannot attain to that wisdom which is pure, and that cometh down from above; I cannot elect myself into that company which Christ died for; I have no righteousness of my own that exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, neither can I redeem my soul from death, nor unto God. Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, (which I think must be the love of God in the heart) it profiteth me nothing. The children of God do hunger after righteousness; they want to be holy as he is holy; they cry for wisdom, not the wisdom of this world, but that which cometh down from above, which is pure; they desire to be freed from their sins. By their strivings and vows and prayers they cannot attain (in this flesh) to what their tried souls desire. Hear the testimony of one of the witnesses of Jesus, one who preached Christ crucified: "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence." But all of him (God) "in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." In all the foregoing Scripture God is glorified and man is abased. Man has nothing to glory in. In the foregoing it is all declared to be the work of God. There are some things that the children of God do glory in; they glory in tribu-

lation, they glory in the cross of Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto them, and they unto the world. Dear sister, you need not that any man teach you of these things of Jesus, for the anointing which you have received of him abideth in you, and teacheth you all things, and is truth, and is no lie.

I presume that you would like to know how we are getting along temporally. My wife and I have been at home alone so far this winter, except when some of the children came home on a visit. Neither of us are very well, but we have gotten along quite well. I have had one sick spell, and had a doctor to see me once; have been able to do my work so far, except about one week. We have not been from home except once I went to West Bowdoin to the sawmill with a load of logs. I have not been to meeting since last fall, and am getting homesick to see some of the flock of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. At times I feel that I know something of what I have written to you. God knows, and in this I rejoice. Give my love to your husband, and may you, with all the church, grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; to him be glory both now and forever.

I am, I hope, your brother in Christ,

Z. M. BEAL.

HAWLEY, Texas, Oct. 25, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As my time has expired for the SIGNS I will remit. Inclosed find two dollars, for which extend my subscription another year. Thank you for your forbearance with my neglect. The SIGNS is all the preaching I get, as I am a long distance from any Old School Baptists. There are none in this part of the State, and I feel to be alone, and sometimes think there is no one like me, but when the SIGNS arrives I find it full of good news, as it were, from a far country, which fills my poor soul with unspeakable joy to know that there are a few scattered abroad to speak of God, their Maker, having no confidence in the flesh. Dear brethren and sisters, you who contribute to the columns of the SIGNS, may the God who declared the end from the beginning forever guide and direct your pen, that the poor of the flock scattered abroad may be edified and our God glorified; may the God of peace rest and remain with the editors, together with the household of faith, is the prayer of your unworthy brother,

A. M. WILKINSON

FEARNS SPRINGS, Miss.

DEAR EDITORS:—If we could write, we would try to tell how we appreciate the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; we do not think that we could hardly get along without it. Our little church has no minister living near, and in the winter season it is impossible for us to have preaching regularly, and when we get the SIGNS we can read the many good letters from God's dear children, who, though they be many miles from us, can tell our feelings better than we can ourselves. We are often made to shed tears while reading the many comforting and upbuilding communications from different ones scattered abroad over the land. Hoping that the good Lord will enable you to live long and to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, as you are now doing, we will say no more, except to ask an interest in the prayers of God's people.

Your brother and sister in hope,

B. L. AND L. A. BOYDSTON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1908.

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EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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JOHN IV. 24.

"GOD is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

There is no sentence more pregnant with meaning in the word of God than are these sentences. The first declares the essence and the being of God, the latter sums up all that belongs to a proper worship of him by man, and these truths were spoken, not to an Israelite, but to a Samaritan; not to one who could boast that she attended upon the worship of God in the temple at Jerusalem, but to one who was regarded as an outcast, because she belonged to a people which worshiped in Mount Gerizim; not to one well spoken of for good works, but to one whose life had been filled with evil. Here is another witness that Jesus came to seek and to save the lost, that he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. To this woman not trained in the forms of Jewish worship, to this woman not a good woman, but living in adultery, Jesus uttered the deepest truths of religion, and to this woman was given a heart to feel the power of his words and to understand the mysteries of his kingdom. Here was fulfilled the testimony of Jesus: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Jesus did not teach as men think it needful to teach; he began by enunciating the most profound truths; that God is a Spirit, and that they who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth, was the beginning as well as the ending of his teaching. These truths were the milk as well as the meat of which Paul afterwards spoke. To the beginner in the knowledge of grace they are the milk, and to the fathers in Israel these same truths are as meat. The little child of days and the old man of a hundred years, both are fed by the same truths; to the one it is milk and to the other it is meat. Let us be sure that what we call the strongest doctrine is what the child must have, and the aged need nothing more. If in our preaching either the little child or the aged man fails to understand, the fault is not in the doctrine, but in ourselves who present these things; we have failed to choose right words. The deepest truths are presented in the simplest language. Those who are heaven-born and heaven-taught will know the true bread when it is given them. The little child is warmed by the same sun and sees by the same light as does the aged man. The little child beholds the same landscape, the same moving things and hears the voices of the world around him just as does the aged man; and these things are sweet to the child, as well as to the man of full stature. The truths of the word of God are all sweet to children in grace as well as to the pilgrim of many years.

But let us consider the first truth of the text. "God is a Spirit." He is a Spirit preeminently, as no creature of his can be. Angels are said to be spirits, but of none of them can it be said, He "is a Spirit." Men have spirits, but men are

not spirits; believers are spiritual, but they are not spirits. "God is a Spirit," he has not earthly substance; he has not parts as we have, such as hands, feet and face. True, God is spoken of as having a heart, ears, face, hands, feet, throughout the sacred word, but all these things are but figurative, and are used to set before our finite minds some feeble understanding of his love, power, favor and salvation. None of these expressions can be understood to contradict this one great truth, "God is a Spirit." Here is truth stated in plain terms, to which all that is figurative must be moulded in our thoughts and understanding. "No man hath seen God at any time," but the Son of man has declared him. He is the invisible God. In this he differs from all the idols of men. It is sure that whatever can be seen or handled is not God. Herein is the one essential difference between God and all else: he is unseen, but all his creatures, animate and inanimate, can be seen or touched, can be heard or felt by some of the senses. In this truth that he is a Spirit many things are included. He is omniscient; that is, he sees all things in all the universe at all times. He sees the mote that floats in the sunbeam as well and as perfectly as any of the suns that roll in their mighty spaces. He sees or perceives the inmost thought of all hearts as well as the loudest roar of crashing thunder. In this is infinite consolation to the repentant and the sorrowful, to the tried and the tempted. He beholds him that is in the pit as well as him who is upon the mountain-top; he sees those who stumble in the darkness as well as those who walk in the full sunlight. The blind are with him, as well as those who see with clear vision. He not only knows the thoughts of our hearts who love him, but also the thoughts of evil men who seek to destroy those who love him. But how can we describe his knowledge? We must say, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain to it." He knoweth our downsitting and uprising; he knoweth our thought afar off. All this belongs to him, because he is a Spirit. He is omnipotent. No creature can grasp this truth: all power. As we cannot put our hand upon anything and say of it, This is not known to God, so we cannot think of any power aside from his power. It is vain to undertake to measure that which is omnipotent by any combination of thoughts that we may be able to put together. To omnipotence a world is no more than a mote. The poet has well said of this, "With thee, great God, there is nothing great, with thee there is nothing small." His name is "Almighty;" and in this truth also is wonderful consolation to the weak and impotent. Why do not all weapons prosper against us, who have no might against them? There is but one reply: Our God has all power in heaven and in earth. How often have saints of God confessed before their inward and outward foes, We have no might against this great company that comes against us; neither know we what to do; but our eyes are unto Thee. Here is safety and here is rest; especially when we remember that our Savior said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," do we find strength and help as our need requires. This could be true of God only because he is a Spirit. In this truth is also involved this other truth that he is omnipresent; not only does he behold all, but he is with all. So David could say, Whither shall I flee from thy presence? And the Master could say, "And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Not a sparrow falls to the ground

without Him. Sometimes the children of God miss the force of this last sentence by thinking of it and speaking of it as though it read, Without His notice. It is most blessedly true that not one does thus fall without His notice, but the deeper truth stated by the Savior is that not one falls to the ground without Him. He holds the sparrow in his hand as well in its fall as in its flight; he holds us in his hand as well when we die as when we live; and it is in him that we live, move and have our being. Now all this could be true only as God is a Spirit.

As a Spirit, he also is unchangeable. Change and decay belong to that which is material. We say decay as well as change, for all that can change must decay; in fact, all change on earth but leads to dissolution. Our God is eternal, and he is eternal because he is immutable. Of Jehovah alone is eternity predicated; all other beings began to be, all other beings were created, therefore change can come to them, but our God never began to be. The thought is incomprehensible to the finite mind. We may apprehend all these truths concerning the being and nature of God, but we can never comprehend them. Here again we must say, Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, I cannot attain to it. And when it is said that he changes not, this signifies that there is no change in his will, his purpose or his knowledge; he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. All this also belongs to him who is a Spirit. Because he is a Spirit he abides the same in all his being. There can be no increase in his knowledge; there can be no decrease in it. Nothing can surprise him; nothing can disappoint him. He is infinitely above and beyond all that causes creatures disappointment, grief or surprise; and all this is involved in the truth that he is a Spirit.

Still further, because he is a Spirit he is all-wise and holy. He is called in the word, the all-wise God. Again and again he is declared to be the holy God. All-wise he is, not because he has acquired wisdom; then he could never be all-wise. While we must acquire wisdom it is innate with him. So also of holiness. He is holy, we are made holy. We are made wise unto salvation, and we, as men and women, grow in wisdom and understanding. There is, therefore, a limit to our understanding, but there is no limit to his; perfect wisdom and perfect holiness belong to him who is a Spirit. Of no manner of being can they be predicated, save of him who is a Spirit.

This God who is a Spirit is also declared to be love. God is love. He that loveth is born of God. Love is of God. We receive of this love which is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, but he is the source of love. A christian loves, but he is not love. God is love, and because he is love he loves. Here is the vast ocean, while in our hearts are the little springs which are supplied by the deep fountain, and which send forth their streams back to the ocean from which they came. Our love needs to be kept alive, as does every other heavenly grace. The sun does not need to be fed with heat or light, but our earth does. Our God is the Sun and we are the earth. This fountain cannot be decreased by its outflowing nor increased by any inflowing of love; this could not be true of any material substance, it is true only of "a Spirit." So also the infinite fullness of the divine love declares him to be a Spirit. As this one great truth is received and perceived, we shall find that as we go on to know the Lord it will appear that all

we come to know of him declares him to be what he has declared himself to be, a Spirit. Now out of this first truth follows the second truth: they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth; and the first thought, as it seems to us, presented in these words, is that his worship is not confined to place nor to any form. Neither in this mountain, nor at Jerusalem, shall men worship God, said the Savior. That is, they shall not worship him in either of the places exclusively, as Jews and Samaritans thought. Men must worship him in spirit, and the spirit is not confined to any place. As God is everywhere, so his worship may be anywhere. Where God is, there is holy ground. Where he is manifest to a soul, to that soul that place is holy ground. It is holy because God is there; the presence of God is its holiness. Where God manifests himself to any soul, in that place does praise and prayer arise; and praise and prayer constitute all worship. Where there is a praying soul there is a temple of God, and in this temple does true incense arise before him. As this worship is not confined to any place, so also it is not confined to any form. The outward form may indeed be the true expression of what is felt within, but even if so, God looks not at the form, but the spirit within. Jesus said to the woman that the hour was coming, and that it had then come, when all true worshipers should worship in spirit. All the old forms were now to be laid aside; the temple-worship was to cease with its sacrifices and its waving incense; something richer and better was to now be realized. In this gospel kingdom, worship should be the communion of a soul with its Maker and Redeemer.

What is worship? It is to confess that our God is what he is. It is to ascribe to him all power, praise and dominion. It is to remember his attributes and acknowledge him to be Lord of all; and this not with words only, but truly, or "in truth." The worship that is in the spirit will be also in truth, for the spirit is the spirit of truth. Reverence, fear, love, praise, prayer, adoration, these are all inseparable elements of true worship. Out of love, fear and reverence will spring up adoration, prayer and praise. The convicted sinner, as he confesses his guilt and his just condemnation before God, is rendering worship, and when to that sinner comes the voice of pardon, and unutterable praise and gratitude spring up in his heart, in these things also is worship. He that sits in silence because he is a man of unclean lips, deep down in his heart worships God, and the reverence and fear that is in him, which in the sight of God is true worship, are the very things that make his lips to be dumb. Then when these inward emotions break forth into speech, that speech is in truth, and God owns and blesses his own word. Then the "heart is inditing a good matter," and the soul speaks of the things that it has made touching the King. But here also language fails, and our highest thought cannot attain to the wonders of the worship of God. How wonderful it is to every believer when he feels within the uprising of the spirit of devotion.

C.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 99 means 1899; 19 means 1900; 01 means 1901; 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906; 07 means 1907; 08 means 1908, &c.

CLOSE OF VOLUME SEVENTY-SIX.

FOLLOWING our usual custom, we shall make a brief statement regarding the success of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES during the year 1908, and also call attention to some things of importance relative to its future welfare. The SIGNS has now lived and prospered six years beyond the allotted time to man on the earth. One after another of its editors has passed away, yet, like the Levitical priesthood, another of the same family (sons of God we humbly hope) has been raised up to serve, or minister, in the sanctuary. Perhaps we would be pardoned if we relate just here a coincidence in connection with the SIGNS. In the summer of 1832 our mother, who was then a girl of fourteen years of age, now deceased, in company with her father, Elder Daniel Davis, then pastor of the Baptist church of Salisbury, Md., visited her brother, Noah Davis, who lived in Philadelphia, being connected with the Baptist Publication Society. During their visit her brother remarked to his father that Elder Gilbert Beebe, of New Vernon, N. Y., had started a paper called the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that a division was to take place among the Baptists. Our mother told us this a few years ago, and said, with tears of joy stealing across her cheeks, "And I have lived to see my youngest son, of a family of eight children, ordained to the work of the gospel ministry, serving the same churches then served by Elder Beebe and an editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. O how wonderful are the works of God." If seventy-six years ago, twenty-eight years before we were born, the Lord had in his plan and purpose that we, together with Elder Chick and all who have preceded us, should occupy this position on the SIGNS, why not trust him for preparation and continuation of the SIGNS seventy-six years to come?

During these seventy-six years the SIGNS has perhaps had the largest circulation among Old School Baptists of any paper of its kind in the world, having ever received the kind support of the brethren, for which we all feel grateful.

With this number we finish our labors, in this direction, for the year 1908. At the beginning of the year we looked forward to the work before us with much anxiety, and while in some respects we have all been much burdened and perplexed, yet as our day so has our strength been. The desire of Elder Chick and ourself has been, not to offend our subscribers and writers in any way, and to answer as best we could all questions regarding the Scriptures. If in the first place we have failed, and any have been hurt, we assure them it was not intentional. If, in the second place, we have failed to respond to requests, or our views have not met with approval and indorsement, it was because of our lack of wisdom and knowledge. We have served to the best of our ability, and therefore hope the brethren and friends may forgive all that has been said amiss.

The circulation of the SIGNS has decreased slightly during the year, owing to our desire to comply with the new postal law, viz., that no subscriber shall be carried on our list who is more than three months in arrears, except we pay extra postage on all such mail. This law is now being enforced, and if our subscribers do not pay up promptly we shall suffer great loss in the next few months. Please remember, brethren, that we cannot trifle with the laws of our land, therefore examine the date of your subscription, which will be found on the little pink slip on each number of the SIGNS,

and send in at once all that is due us, that we may be enabled to continue the SIGNS in accordance with the law, which must be kept even though it should cause us to discontinue the publication. After a short time, allowed us by the post-office department to get the SIGNS on a cash basis, we shall be compelled to discontinue the paper to all who are behind on their subscription; therefore if any fail to receive their paper they may understand why. In such cases the fault will be yours, not ours.

In conclusion, we desire to thank our brethren for their articles for publication during the year, and ask that the same favor be conferred upon us during the year 1909. K.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Donald A. Campbell was born in Argyle, Scotland, and came to Ontario, Canada, early in life, died at his home in Ridgetown, May 21st, 1907, in the 74th year of his age. Mr. Campbell never united with the church, but was a firm believer in the principles of the faith and doctrine as held by the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada. A deep sense of his unworthiness and unfitness kept him away. He was a very quiet man, honest and sincere, attending to his own business and providing things honest in the sight of God. He gave abundant evidence of grace in the heart; grace that reigns through righteousness unto eternal life. He began failing in health some months before his death, but bore all his suffering with patience and godly resignation, without a murmur or complaint, often speaking of his hope in Christ and of the blessed assurance of heaven and immortality. He was married to sister Emma Leatherdale in 1864. To them were born four children, two sons and two daughters, who survive him, together with our dear sister, his devoted wife and companion in sorrow and joy for more than forty-four years, with her aged mother, dear old sister Leatherdale, now past ninety years, two brothers, I think, and many friends and relatives, who mourn their loss, yet feel their loss is his gain. "To live is Christ, and to die is gain."

May the Lord in his tender mercy remember them in the abundance of his grace to comfort and support the weary, lonely one as she journeys onward to fill up the remainder of her days, is my prayer.

ALSO,

Mrs. Altha Walker, of Muirkirk, Ontario, was born in 1838, died Oct. 17th, 1908, in her 70th year. The subject of this notice was a woman of wonderful character and disposition, one who commended herself to all who came in contact with her. It can truly be said of her that she heeded the apostle's admonition, laying aside all malice, guile and hypocrisy. Her lips seemed forever sealed and her tongue silent in speaking unkindly or reproachfully of any one. She was a good neighbor, motherly and kind to every one. Her maiden name was Ford. She had been twice married, but had been a widow many years, and a widow indeed, chaste in all her ways. Sister Walker had perfected arrangements to visit friends in St. Thomas, I think, and to spend some time with them. Having her grip packed, she went across the railroad tracks to procure a one cent stamp to mail a card before leaving. Returning, in avoiding one train she crossed the track in front of another, and was so nearly out of the way that it is supposed only the cylinder head of the engine struck her, killing her almost instantly. It was a severe shock to the community. This beloved sister was received in the church at Duart at the February meeting, and baptized by Elder Pollard at the May meeting in Dunwich, in 1889, and ever lived a faithful, devoted member. I have listened in solemn thought and wonder as many have narrated to me her spiritual and heavenly conversation in the past few months. It has seemed to us as the ripened harvest to be gathered in. She was a mother indeed to the children she took the care of in her last marriage, two daughters and one son. They were truly devoted to each other to the end. Two sisters and three brothers survive her; all but one were present at the funeral on the 21st. It seemed remarkable that she should have prepared herself for burial, there being but a slight change made in her apparel when laid in the casket.

Short services were held at the house, after which her remains were buried in the cemetery at Duart, and it can of a truth be said, as of Stephen, devout men carried her to her burial. After burial the large concourse of people gathered at the Duart meeting-house, where I endeavored in a feeble way to declare the wonderful works of our God, from the words, "What hath God wrought!" It was a solemn assembly; all seemed to be in deep sympathetic mourning. Believing our loss is her eternal gain, we can only sorrow that we shall see her face no more.

May God sanctify this dispensation of his providence to our good, and enable us to see his hand in it all, and bear witness to his living truth in our hearts. "Thy will be done." P. W. SAWIN.

Mary A. Danks, my dear sister, died at Fresno, Cal., Oct. 31st, 1908. We moved to California early in October, and soon after our arrival sister Mary took a

cold, which seemed slight at first, but would not yield to treatment, and it finally developed into typhoid pneumonia. We were visiting our two brothers in Fresno at the time, and everything that medical aid, loving hearts and willing hands could do was done, for we loved our sister dearly, but we could not stay death's hand, and after great suffering for over a week she quietly passed into the great beyond. We felt willing at last to let her go, that her sufferings might cease. Sister Mary was born in New Jersey, in May, 1846. In 1864 the family moved to Cincinnati, Ohio, where she had lived ever since. She was the eldest daughter of a large family, and upon her fell the chief burden and cares of the household, for our dear mother was not strong, and cheerfully did our sister bear the responsibility. Many years ago she was baptized in the fellowship of Mill Creek Church, near Cincinnati, and remained a devoted member there until her death. While she was so ill she told me that the text, "My presence shall go with thee," was with her through all the preparation for and through all the journey to California, and once with feeble voice she sang the verse through: "The Lord my Shepherd is," &c. When struggling hard for breath she said, "I am going to breathe a purer air: life forevermore." She sent loving messages to all the absent ones, and expressed her willingness to depart, telling us not to grieve, that it was all right. At her own request she was buried in Rosedale Cemetery, Los Angeles, and never did the grave receive a better woman. She had been failing in health for some time, yet was very cheerful and patient with it all. It has made the entrance into our new home a very sad one, yet we feel comforted in the thought that she has reached a home where she will suffer no more, and is forever with the Lord.

HANNAH E. DANKS.

ONTARIO, Cal., Nov. 14, 1908.

SISTER **Mary R. Tompkins** died in East Millcreek township, Sunday evening, Oct. 18th, 1908, in her 70th year. Funeral services were held at the residence of Mr. W. R. Kelley, Buffalo Road, Tuesday afternoon at 2 o'clock. Interment at Wesleyville. She passed away very peacefully, and longed for the time of departure to come, having no fear of death, desiring to depart and see Him as he is and be like him. Some thirty years ago she came to Roxbury, N. Y., and went before the church, related the exercises of her mind, was received by the church and baptized by Elder Isaac Hewitt. For one year she had the privilege of meetings; since then the greater part of the time she has been deprived of the company of the saints. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was a constant companion, which she enjoyed very much during this time. She was a consistent Baptist, steadfast in the faith, and remained firm unto the end. She leaves one sister and many relatives to mourn their loss.

D. M. LEONARD.

Ruby Narelle Myers, daughter of George W. and Gertrude Myers, was born March 10th, 1906, died Oct. 16th, 1908, aged 2 years, 7 months and 6 days. Ruby was an unusually bright child, very affectionate and of a gentle disposition, and tender-hearted to that degree that she required very gentle treatment from all with whom she mingled; love ruled her into obedience and held her close in the affections of all. She, being the youngest grandchild, was a family pet, hence her demise is keenly felt by more than the home family, and while we are not able, without the assistance of our heavenly Father, to be reconciled to the inevitable, yet we pray God may give us strength to bear his stroke with christian fortitude, trusting that in some way unknown to us it is best. She came into our lives a little spark of sweet sunshine to light life's pathway and to inspire our hopes to fight life's battles for a little while, and then her light went out of this life, and, we trust, was borne to that heavenly paradise where all of God's children sleep in Jesus until the glorious morning of the resurrection, when the dead in Christ shall rise first, and we that are alive shall not prevent them that are asleep.

Elder McGlade was present and preached a comforting funeral sermon from the text, Jesus took them in his arms; chosen words, well suited to the occasion. We learn from this stroke how hard it is to say, God's will be done, except by God's help.

NEWTON PETERS.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

RIVERSIDE, Cal., Oct. 18, 1908.

AT a meeting held in accordance with a call issued at a meeting held at this place on July 19th, 1908, for the purpose of organizing a church, the following is the record:

After singing, and prayer by brother J. W. Carter, brother Carter was made moderator, and O. P. Speirs continued as clerk.

The object of the meeting was set forth, and the call for the committee's report, which follows.

Claremont, Cal., Sept. 27, 1908.

We, the committee to draft a form of confession of faith, constitution, rules of decorum, &c., for the organization meeting to be held at Riverside, Cal., on Oct. 18th, 1908, beg leave to report as follows:

Being convinced that the presence and counsel of J. W. Carter, of Covina, would be of service to our work, we invited him in council with us, as all other brethren of our faith and order. We met at the residence of O. P. Speirs, at Claremont, Cal., on above date, and formulated the constitution and rules of decorum for the consideration of the brethren who are interested in the organization of a church.

We believe that the time is at hand to organize a regularly constituted Old School or Primitive Bap

tist Church, composed of properly baptized believers of our faith and order, and to this end we hereby proclaim that we have this day perfected such an organization, to be known as the Little Flock Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Church of southern California. To all lovers of the truth who may be sojourning in reach of our meetings, we extend an earnest invitation to come and go with us. "For the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel."

W. D. BALL,
G. A. DUNDAS, } Committee.
O. P. SPEIRS.

ORDINATIONS.

PURSUANT to the call of the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church of Christ called Bethel, Kay County, Okla., for a council to take into consideration, and, if expedient, to ordain brother W. T. McCann to the full work of the ministry, the following brethren responded to the call on Saturday, Nov. 14th, 1908:

From Ebenezer Church, Alfalfa Co., Okla.—Elder J. F. Beeman, brother O. S. Womack, sister Mary E. Beeman.

Sandy Creek Church, Putnam Co., Ill.—Elder W. A. Thompson.

Shiloh Church, Logan Co., Okla.—Elder Thomas Veach.

1st. Organized the council by choosing Elder W. A. Thompson moderator, and Elder Thomas Veach clerk.

2nd. Called on the candidate for a relation of his experience and call to the ministry, when he responded in a clear statement of the work of the Lord in his heart to the satisfaction of the council and all the brethren present.

3rd. The council agreed to proceed to the ordination of brother Wilson Thompson McCann in the following order: Elder J. F. Beeman to speak in prayer, Elder W. A. Thompson to give the hand of fellowship and the charge, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

This was a solemn day for all present, who stood near witnessing the most solemn ordinance among the children of men.

At the close all the brethren present gave Elder McCann the hand of fellowship.

W. A. THOMPSON, Moderator.

THOMAS VEACH, Clerk.

Bethel Church, of which Elder McCann is a member, is located near Eddy, on the Frisco R. R., southwest of Blackwell. This meeting was another token of God's care for his people, and shows the wonders of his grace, in that brother McCann is put in the ministry at sixty-three years of age.

J. F. BEEMAN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Attie A. Curtis, Mass., $1.00; Norman Brown, N. Y., $1.00.

APPOINTMENTS.

ELDER J. E. Thornbury will, Providence permitting, fill the following appointments in Anderson County, Ky.: Thursday, Dec. 24th, 1908, Goshen, as suits; Friday, 25th, Salt River, 11 o'clock a. m.; Saturday and Sunday, 26th and 27th, Little Flock.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at the Hall, corner of 19th St. and 8th Ave., fifth floor. Elevator entrance on either 19th St. or 8th Ave.

11:00 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue,
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

THERE are a few Old School Baptists in Riverside, Cal., and they have meeting the first and third Sundays in each month, at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

W. D. BALL.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 77. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1909. NO. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HOW THE LORD BRINGS THE BLIND.

"I WILL make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools."—Isaiah xlii. 15, 16.

These mountains and hills represent the exaltations of human merit and excellence, the fancied heights of self-righteousness, where the natural man is confidently feeding, glorying in his wisdom and strength and gratifying his vanity and pride. When the Lord will call one of his redeemed people we are here told how he begins, by making these mountains waste and drying up these herbs, so that the one who is hungering for true righteousness can find nothing to eat. Yesterday we were satisfied with what grew out of the wisdom and power of the world, as the animals are satisfied with the grass that grows on the mountain side, and could feed greedily upon the herbs of creature merit; to-day we find nothing to give our souls any comfort in all that the wisdom and knowledge of the world can present. All this high feeding-place is now a desolate waste, and all these rich herbs are dried up. We cannot feed any more upon our own works; they do not satisfy the hunger for righteousness which we now feel. The preaching of man's goodness and power no longer pleases, but distresses our souls. The Lord has called for a famine upon all this goodly land, and has broken the whole staff of bread. (Psalms cv. 16.) From these mountain heights of creature power and merit and good works we had seen, as we thought, rivers of salvation flow abundantly. We were sure that by our good works not only ourselves but many others would be saved, and we were proud of that power, believing that salvation was flowing from it like rivers, and proud of the pools of human wisdom, of which we drank with such vain delight. Now we look for those rivers, and lo, no water is there, but only islands, only land, and that not even in the form of rivers. What a mistake was ours. We turn to the pools of human wisdom, trying to quench the great thirst which is now afflicting our souls, but they are all dry; nothing there to satisfy our thirst for righteousness; nothing there to give hope of salvation to a sinner. No works of a sinner can be good. The wisest man that ever lived cannot tell how a corrupt fountain can send forth pure water. No righteousness can come from a vile source,

and the sinner cannot see any other way of salvation than by some good works of his own, and those good works he cannot perform. He cries, "God be merciful to me a sinner," because he cannot help the cry. But can mercy, even if it could reach him, make a guilty man innocent? Can mercy make a sinner righteous? Not a drop of the water of life in all these waste heights of our nature, much less a flowing stream. It is from another and a far different source that we shall find the flowing streams and well filled pools which fill the thirsty sinner's heart with joy and "make glad the city of God."

There is a way of holiness for even the vilest sinner, but he cannot see it yet. Then he must be blind. When one cannot see what is just before him it is an evidence that he is blind. It is only the convicted sinner who is blind in this sense; the Pharisee is not thus blind. They said to Jesus, "Are we blind also?" He said to them, "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."—John ix. 41. Their assurance that they could see holiness coming to the creature through the works of the law was an evidence that they were yet dead in sin, not blind. The Lord's people are born blind, being alive to know themselves sinners, but unable to see the way of holiness for such sinners. "Bring forth the blind people that have eyes." "Who is blind, but my servant?" "Who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the Lord's servant." Jesus came to open the blind eyes.

"And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known." These two sentences are often read as though they referred to the same thing, in this form: And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not, and in paths that they have not known. This does not seem to express their full meaning. They refer to different points in the life and experience of a christian. The first refers to the bringing of the Lord's people from darkness to light; from a state of condemnation to a hope of righteousness. This bringing of poor sinners to rest in Jesus is always by a way that they knew not. By no possibility can one ever know this way before the Lord brings him by it to himself. The wisest man in the world, the best christian, even an apostle or an angel, could never communicate to any one the knowledge of that way. The Lord alone can give that knowledge, and he gives it by bringing them into that way and saying to them by the power of eternal life felt in their souls, "I am the way." The experience of this blessed way is always amazing to poor souls, unexpected, surprising. They are so surprised to find the load of sin gone, when they have done nothing to deserve it. This is a new and living way, through the flesh of Jesus. It is not by a gradual approach unto Jesus, as one would draw near to a man, knowing where he is going, but in a moment Jesus appears and the burden of sin is gone, and a wonderful hope is felt, and that righteousness which is by faith in Jesus Christ manifests itself, and is, and will be through all this mortal state, a wonder of wonders. "They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them." When the sorrows of death are upon them, and they are broken down with weeping, how little they think that this is God's way of bringing them; that they are learning in some measure the fellowship of Jesus' sufferings.

There is a sense in which they are still blind, unable to see the paths that lie be-

fore them, unable to walk alone, but must be led. So the second part of this sentence is now brought to our consideration: "I will lead them in paths that they have not known." As they were brought from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to the kingdom of God's dear Son, "by a way that they knew not," so now, from this time on to the end of their mortal pilgrimage, they cannot know from one day to another the paths in which he will lead them. They are still blind in this sense, and his paths they cannot trace; but they are "the blind people that have eyes," and as he brings them forth from time to time, he opens their eyes to see spiritual and heavenly truths, and often they can exclaim with wonder, love and praise, "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." But they still need his leading hand, and rejoice with a solemn joy when they can say, "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." They cannot know to-day what path of tribulation or joy they will be in to-morrow, but must and do trust in him who leadeth them.

"I will make darkness light before them." This is another of the wonderful works of God experienced by his people, in which they are distinguished from all other people in the world. We know in nature how to remove darkness by putting light in its place, but to make darkness light is beyond human power or wisdom. But this is what the Lord does for his people, as he leads "them in paths which they have not known." He does not take away the darkness and put light in its place, but he makes the darkness itself light. He makes the darkness a lamp which sends clear rays of light before us along the path in which we are being led. Afflictions, disappointments, self-abhorrence, griefs, what terrible darkness these are to us as we struggle wearily onward. How they seem often to shut away from our sight the way in which we desire to travel. But while "we grope for the wall like the blind," and the dark shadow of some terrible affliction seems to hide the way from us, all at once the affliction shines as a clear light before us, and by that light we see the way of the Lord in his mercy and grace as clearly as natural things are seen in the light of the noonday sun. In the clear radiance of that affliction, which is thus made light before us, we see the trial of our faith brought to view, which is more precious than of gold that perisheth. In the light of this experience of tribulation working patience, so that we can even glory in it, we can understand how Abraham and Job and David and Daniel, and all the holy men of old, could rejoice in tribulation, even though it came as "an horror of great darkness," and laid them "in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps," because of the wonderful things of God that were revealed to them when the darkness was made light before them. How often we have felt to praise the Lord and thank him for sore afflictions sent upon us, because of the mercy and grace and wonderful love which have thus been made to appear so sweetly in our view when the dark afflictions were made light before us.

"And crooked things straight." Things that are crooked in nature, and remain crooked, and yet are made straight before the people of God by the God of grace, defeating the purposes of wicked men and working for the fulfillment of the Lord's purposes of love and mercy. How often the crookedness of natural things and the wicked wrath of men appear terrible to the child of God, and yet

he is assured that the wrath of man shall praise God, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain. (Psalms lxxvi. 10.) How crooked appeared to Jacob all the sad and trying circumstances of his family when he said, "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me." But in the end of all the trouble, when he saw the purpose of God in it all, he could see that all was made straight in this sense. How crooked were the ways and works of Joseph's brethren, and how great their wickedness. That could never be less terrible and abominable, and they could never cease to reproach themselves for it. But they and all others are to be made to know that wickedness is not to rule and be victorious, but that God's wise and holy purposes are all going to be fulfilled; and therefore Joseph said to them when they had been broken down and humbled, "So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God." "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good." "He sent a man before them, even Joseph."—Psalms cv. 17.

How terribly crooked and wicked were the works and ways of those who crucified the dear Savior, our spiritual Jeseph; but God meant it unto good, to effect and show forth the salvation of all his brethren. The apostle Peter told those who crucified Jesus that "those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled."—Acts iii. 18. "'Twas all for the lifting of Jesus on high." In nature the crooked things are still crooked, wicked things are still wicked, but grace shows them made straight to the view of faith when the purpose of God is fulfilled.

Peter said confidently that he would never leave Jesus, even though all others should. So said they all. In a short time he was denying with oaths that he even knew Jesus. Then at a look from the dear Savior the poor man went out and wept bitterly. What an awfully crooked way to travel in so short a time. Yet it seems to have been a very direct and straight way from Peter's self-confidence to his proper knowledge of himself and his deep and suitable sorrow and humility. His dreadful sin never ceased to be a sin, but through that awful sin he learned more fully than he had ever known before what a sinful man he was, and how helpless in himself; then he abhorred himself.

We must remember that the fear of the Lord is in the heart of the child of God, and therefore he must hate sin forever, even though he may feel assured that sinful things are so overruled that they work for good to those who love God, as did the crucifying of Jesus by wicked hands. Also we must remember that it is only before these blind people who hate sin and love holiness that darkness is made light and crooked things straight.

"These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." How infinitely tender is this gracious assurance; how well suited to the timid and fearing condition of mind which these blind people are often in. So unable are they to see any worthiness in themselves, so conscious of their inability to do any good thing, that they cannot understand how the high and holy God can be favorable to them. His love to them appears so wonderful that even when assured of it they often wonder if it can continue. How carefully and jealously they hold to the hand of him who is leading them. If that hand seems to loosen its grasp of them for a moment how anxiously they reach for it again. If for a moment their Leader

seems to be separating from them how they cry out, The Lord hath forsaken me, my God hath forgotten me. So again and again, to quiet their fears, as he again makes them feel the holding power of his hand, with loving-kindness he says: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." "These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 20, 1908.

SMITHSHIRE, Ill., Nov. 8, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —In response to your request I will now try to write you an account of those experiences which have led me to have a hope in Christ and a place among the Old School Baptists.

When I was yet a child it was very forcibly impressed upon my mind that my soul would surely be lost, because I was so very wicked. I think this thought preyed upon my mind until it affected my health. I thought I was much worse than the other members of my father's family, and now, looking back over my life and into the recesses of my heart, I still believe I was born with greater tendencies to evil than my sisters or my one brother; but the Lord has mercifully chastened me, and permitted me to live a life of morality and integrity, for which I praise his holy name.

When I was still a very young girl, one afternoon I was outdoors with my mother while a terrific storm was approaching; some work detained us out in the open, and I was intently watching the storm, not frightened by it, but thinking in despair of the terrible fate awaiting me, when these words came into my mind as if some one had spoken them: Grace, you are brooding on these things so that your usefulness is threatened. Life and duty lie before you; do what your hand finds to do the best you can. If God condemns you forever he still is good, and cannot err; leave it with him. This brought me great relief, but not entire peace of mind, for I had no evidence that I would not be lost, but I had from that time full assurance that I could safely leave the matter in the hands of the infinitely wise and good Creator. I loved books and music, and began teaching in my seventeenth year, not because I was qualified, but because slack laws at that time allowed children to assume the grave responsibilities of the schoolroom, and by this time I had learned enough of music to play the organ in Sunday School, where I went whenever I desired. We seldom had an opportunity to attend Baptist meeting, and there was a Methodist meetinghouse in easy walking distance of our home. My parents were Baptists, and very seldom attended other preaching, but I think they were wise to let us children go if we wished. I am sure with such a wilful girl as I it was best. I had the profoundest respect for the religion of my parents, just because it was their religion, and because I had profound reverence for them. But if they had been arbitrary with me in the matter I would have felt at once that there was something very weak in their faith or it would bear comparison with others and competition for my advocacy. Our dearest friends were members of the Methodist denomination, and they and their pastors were often entertained at our home, and I believe I would have been led to unite with them but for my mother's firm and tender guidance. We always had the SIGNS to read, and our mother read the Bible with us and showed us the best she could the right and the wrong ways, and so I came gradually to

believe that the Arminian system had very grave errors in it at least.

When the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle was organized my mother feared the religious ideas it sought to instil, but it appealed strongly to me, because it offered a long desired opportunity for wider, better directed and more systematic reading, and so, after some discussion, I was enrolled with the class of 1883. I completed the course, and think it was a great benefit to me intellectually, and I will always feel grateful to Bishop (then Dr.) Vincent and his colaborers for giving this outlook upon the world of letters to many struggling ones like myself. Doubtless you know that the religious teaching was directed mainly toward meeting scientific infidelity on its own ground and defeating it. The best talent of the nation occupied the platform at Chautauqua, you know, and we home readers got it all. But to my mind, then and now, all such efforts are futile. All their verbiage only proves what an old book teaches so succinctly: God is not known by the wisdom of this world. By this time I was mostly occupied with teaching and study, and had become somewhat indifferent on the subject of religion, but the faith was still in me that God was good, and that I would be satisfied with his disposition of me. I had become familiar with the poems of John G. Whittier, and was saturated with his doctrines and much of the time forgot how very unworthy I was to feel the deep, sweet peace that pervades his writings. Then came the W. C. T. U., under the leadership of Frances E. Willard. There was everything in this movement to tempt an ambitious young teacher—social and educational advancement, a field in which to display leadership, to gratify oratorical and literary pride, and subtlest of all that appeal to the noblest impulse of a good woman: to lend a helping hand to poor, frail humanity. I think each of all of these touched me. But my mother said, No. She thought it a movement to do things "in His name" that the great Master had never commanded. I considered this matter a long time, and finally determined to make one more investigation and then join the society, even against mother's wishes, if it seemed right to me. As I drove along to the meeting I prayed, or tried to pray, to be guided aright in the matter. At that convention I think I was shown fully that my place was not in that organization.

I had decided to spend the winter of 1890 and 1891 at home, but by a series of events that have always seemed more markedly providential to me than ordinary events, I was led to take a school among the Old School Baptists. I boarded in the family of one and went often to their meetings. But most eventful to me was meeting Elder Samuel Dark. His keen intellect, ready wit and gentle courtesy made him most companionable and lovable as a man. His great knowledge of the letter of the Bible and his interpretation and application of it seemed almost marvelous to me. His fervent piety, fearless devotion to the cause of the Master and his sacrifices for his brethren placed him near the level of the apostles, in my mind, and I listened to him gladly, but not without fear, and as I looked into my experience the old condemnation seemed fastened upon me, and I grieved again with the old grief for the great wickedness of my heart. While in deepest sorrow one day at school the old thought also returned: If God condemns you it must be right, but this time it was followed by a beautiful vision of the Re-

deemer, and he seemed to say, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Great peace flooded my soul, and everything looked unusually bright and beautiful. The mountains broke forth into singing, and the trees of the field clapped their hands for joy. That old schoolhouse, now in sight of my window, is one of my "consecrated spots."

Soon after this I was led to feel it my duty to become a member of the visible church. I had often felt before that it would be a great privilege if I were only fit. I did not feel any more fit now than before, but felt that the great Lover of sinners stood to receive me, and I could plead his fitness instead of mine. I was baptized in the fellowship of the church at Greenbush, Ill., in October, 1894, by dear Elder Vanmeter, who was soon after called to his reward, I being the last person he baptized. I never thought of uniting with any but the Baptist Church.

As I am closing this story it seems very good to me that you asked me to write it, though I shrank at first from the idea. It is indeed profitable and sweet to review the way we have come and to praise the Lord for all the steps that have led us home. Skeptics might say the things most precious to me were only tricks of the imagination; others would say a good mother's influence had saved my soul, but I must say that God spoke the word of condemnation and also the word of forgiveness; that God gave me the good mother, and to him be the praise. In deepest sorrow I must add that he has taken her to himself. On the night of the 16th of September she fell asleep, and we confidently believe she will awake with the likeness of the risen Lord, whom she had served so many years. I told you I am a widow, I am also childless. My mother was the center of all my worldly hopes; she was the joy of my two homes (her home and mine), where I lived with her all my life until she was called to the home eternal. I am indeed bereaved, but sometimes find consolation in the thought of her great gain; then again everything seems changed and saddened by my loss; even inanimate things outdoors seem to say, She is gone; there is no home on earth, we have no continuing city here. During her illness my prayer was that when the end came she might go peacefully and without fear, and this was graciously granted. I never thought to ask for sustaining grace for myself, but God's unasked, unmerited favors are ever repeated to me, and I feel that through all the heartache of this sore trial he has not left me utterly alone, and I am sometimes made to feel:

"So long thy power has led me on, it still
Will lead me on,
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
The night is done."

I am sorry I have made this so long; I have omitted many things of deep interest to myself, among others an account of meeting a dear invalid sister named Rittenhouse, in Millville, N. J., in August, 1876, and promising her to write her if I should ever be given a hope, which I never did. I have tried to write briefly, and hope I have not wearied you, and that you can find time to write us before long.

Nov. 17th.—I have delayed finishing and mailing this to you on account of the illness of my poor dear father, now a little past ninety. Again I am keeping lone watch with the sick, with no hope of the recovery of the patient, and again I ask an interest in your prayers.

Very sorrowfully,

GRACE VEECH SMITH.

PINSONFORK, Ky., Nov. 28, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS AND BRETHREN:—Often I find myself with some impression of mind to write something for the columns of the highly prized medium of correspondence, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but a deep, heartfelt sense of my weakness and unworthiness to write anything that would edify or comfort the household of faith has been so much in my way that I have but seldom written; but since I have received and read the SIGNS for December 1st my desire to write has increased to such an extent that I am now writing, and what I shall write will be at your disposal. I am well pleased to see the scriptural sentiments, or Articles of Faith, reprinted in this number of the SIGNS. I do most assuredly believe that it was highly necessary for them to be published now, for at this present time there are some among us who, when they started out to preach and write, started out champions for "the absolute predestination of all things," who are now suggesting that the brethren leave off the phrase, "the absolute predestination of all things." Now I am not sure that I know the cause of these things, but the Lord does. There is a cause why some precious brethren have come to this conclusion in these perilous times, and there is a cause also why the editors and contributors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES have had no occasion whatever to come to any such conclusion, although it has been seventy-six years to-day since the publication of the first number of the SIGNS. I did not know, neither was I thinking of the date of the first number of the SIGNS until I had written down to this point, and my mind became interested about the date of the first number, and I turned to the book of Editorials and saw that it was Nov. 28th, 1832, just seventy-six years ago, and I again thought, "Is there not a cause" how it is or why it is that my mind was weighted more than usual to-day, and I had not thought of this when I began writing? Notwithstanding so many years of sore trials and persecution the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has invariably contended for the truth of God as taught in the Scriptures, and has never swerved from the faith once delivered to the saints and the principles laid down in the prospectus for the SIGNS seventy-six years ago. I am aware of the fact that none of us believe that the word "absolute" attached to predestination makes it any more forcible, for if it is not absolute it is not predestination at all. But there is one thing that I do believe, and that is, in these trying times it is highly necessary for the Lord's called servants to distinctly use the phrase, "absolute predestination of all things," so as to be plainly understood. "And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame [in understanding] be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed."—Heb. xii. 13. One reason why I thus believe these things is, there are many Baptists in these days who profess to believe the predestination of all things, or unlimited predestination, who try to explain it away by saying that a part of God's predestination is only permissive. Therefore, in order that the candid and earnest inquirer for the truth as it is in Jesus may understand us, we must on many occasions add the term "absolute" to the phrase, "the predestination of all things," which means the purpose of God from eternity respecting all events. If I am not mistaken, the terms "predestination" and "permissive" are conflicting terms. The word "permit," or "permissive," means to license, authorize, justify, &c. So if God

did not purpose and predestinate that sin should be in the world, with all its dire effects and horrid consequences, but only permitted it, we must at once see that He licensed or authorized some other power to thrust this dreadful evil into his dominion, either against his will or according to his will, one or the other. How can these things be?

While I am at this point I want to say that I must believe that there are some, yea, many, able and God-called brethren who have this view of the matter; I cannot tell why, but there is a cause, and the Lord knows why it is so, and while I cannot see things that way, I have love and sweet fellowship in the Spirit for those brethren whose views differ from mine in this particular, and shall not speak or write so much as one word to hurt their feelings; no, never, but I only lack a few days over one month of being seventy-three years old, and I want to be understood; I want to know the truth, I want to ascribe greatness unto our God, the Sovereign of all worlds, beings, things and events, and I do not feel that I can ascribe greatness unto the God of the universe by using the terms, "permissive predestination," or "permissive decrees," &c. I have thought for many years, when thinking along the line of permissive predestination, that it is the darkest reflection that was ever thrown on the stainless and thrice holy character of the all-wise and all-powerful Creator of all things, for it was either his will and purpose for all things to be just as they have always been, are now, and shall forever be, or it was not his will; one or the other. I cannot see how anything could have been different, even for one moment, unless the divine mind could have changed. Sometimes unthinkingly we say things could have been otherwise, but when we come to consider this is only saying that the Lord could have changed. How careful I feel I should be to let my words be few, lest I should charge God foolishly or say, "He is John the Baptist," or one of the old prophets. There are new gods that come newly up; they do not come down; they are of an earthly origin. But to us there is but one God, by whom all things consist, and who is not only Head over all things to the church, but is far above all principality and power.

I have written this with fear and trembling, but this and a similar line of thought is on my mind almost continually, and has been for many years. I hope the Lord's people will bear with me and pray for me.

Yours in sore conflicts,

W. J. MAY.

[THE first number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES was published August 8th, 1832, instead of Nov. 28th, as stated by brother May in the above letter. It is true that the first volume of editorials begins with Nov. 28th, 1832. There was no issue of the paper between August and November of its first year. An apology, by the editor, for the long delay will be found on page 9 of the first book of editorials. —ED.]

UPPERCO, Md., Nov. 15, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER AND ONCE PASTOR:—I feel to-day, not in body, but my mind inclines me that way, to write you a few lines, acknowledging the receipt of your very good and comforting birthday letter. With yours I also received some twenty-five or thirty other letters and postals. Looking into my past life I can but wonder that the dear household of faith, or my neighbors and friends, can see in me that which

should cause me to be the recipient of such tokens of regard and esteem as I have received at their hands; but if indeed I have been enabled to live in such a way as to obtain and retain the respect and good will of my friends, both in and out of the church, it is not of any goodness or worth in me, but of Him, who, as I trust, has held and upheld me all of these eighty-three years of my life, and if any of those who have kindly remembered me can see anything in my past life to hold in loving remembrance I ask them to give God all the praise, who has, as I trust, hitherto led me, and who, I trust, will lead me to the end; for at this late day in my life if left to myself I shall fall by the way.

In looking back over my past life, even to my childhood, it seems to me I can see the hand of the Lord directing my steps; and the furthest back I can remember is the love, care, counsel and guidance of a godly mother. How careful she was, as I grew up, to watch over my steps, and to train me up in the way I should go. I remember how careful she was to guard us (brother and I) against contact with the wicked and evil around us, and to choose for us associates only of those who were brought up and trained by parental guidance in the ways of strict morality and uprightness.

I will here mention a circumstance that had its beginning away back there, almost eighty years ago. There were some in the neighborhood with whom we were allowed to mingle, and others not. I kept trace of each class until nearly all have disappeared from the stage of action, but I have my mind especially on one of each class. The one of the first class is living yet, two months older than myself, and has always been a highly respected man all his long life, and is a member of the church of which my father and mother were members in the days of my childhood. But the one of the other class, sad to say, was vulgar and repulsive as a youth, and grew up a drunkard, and continued as such even to old age. Now I am glad to have this one thing to look back to in remembrance of my mother, and her care of my associates. I do not say that had I been allowed to associate with the one of the class last alluded to I would have grown up a drunkard, but I believe that it was right, as much as in them was, to bring up their children with as little immoral filth adhering to their skirts as possible. All this cannot change the heart, or, in other words, give spiritual life; but when that life is given, it is good to look back, even over the journey of this earthly life, and have some pleasant remembrance of the days of our sojourn here. I remember, too, later in life, when I became, as I fondly trust, concerned about things pertaining to the life beyond, that mother was the first to discover it, although I tried hard to keep it all secret, and I would evade all her questioning concerning the matter; and now at this late day in my life's journey it seems to me that it would be my greatest pleasure if I could remember that if I had been given strength to have come to the church a year sooner, or that my parents could have lived a year longer and could have stood upon the banks of the flowing creek near Black Rock meeting-house and been eye-witnesses to your leading their unworthy son down into the baptismal waters, and we could have had a home together in the church, even had it been but a few days.

Although I have referred especially to my remembrance of mother, yet I would not forget to name that my father was equally careful and mindful of our wel-

fare; but it seems to me that there is something in a mother's love almost beyond all other earthly loves, for the Lord by the pen of the prophet Isaiah asks, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, [a bare possibility, as it seems to me,] yet will I not forget thee." Dear brother, I sometimes look over the pages of the diary of my past life, not written with pen upon paper or parchment, but upon the tablets of memory, and there are many pages that I would gladly blot out; but there they are, and they stare me in the face many times. I try to turn over the leaves as quickly as possible, and look upon the brighter ones, and among the brighter ones, written during the past thirty-five or forty years, since our acquaintance began, of which you speak in your letter, are the scenes and incidents which you name.

But I must close for the present, for I am but a poor scribe at best. If you can make anything out of this you may hand it over to sister Chick, or to any others that you might think would be interested in hearing from us. She, too, was reared by God-fearing parents as well as yourself. All of us can call to mind the godly counsels and admonitions of father and mother. My family unites in sending best wishes to yourself and to those of your household. We would be glad to meet with you all again, if it be the will of God.

Yours, with unabated love and fellowship,

JOHN P. KELLEY.

[BROTHER Kelley's name has been from time to time recorded in the columns of the SIGNS. His name has been written in the hearts of his brethren and friends these many years past. His has been a life of unswerving devotion to the cause of his Master, and of faithful service to the household of faith. It is loud preaching when one preaches more with his feet than with his tongue; a steadfast life is better than words. We feel persuaded that there is not an old man or woman, or one who is middle-aged, who will not read the above letter with tender emotions, and this whether they have known our aged brother personally or not. What a blessing to be able to remember such a father and such a mother. We knew them both for a few years, and know they were all that our brother has testified of them. May the dear Lord bless our aged brother as his days require.—C.]

LOVELAND, Colorado, Nov. 3, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—In my wakeful hours last night I felt a desire to write to all the saints in Christ Jesus our Lord. The question came into my mind, But what shall I write? I have no excuse to offer for remaining silent so long, only it seems to me the Lord has hedged me about so that I cannot get out, when I cry unto him he shutteth my mouth. If I approach unto him in prayer, my words seem to be but a noise, as of the chattering of some strange bird. I feel he has led me into darkness, and not into light. How truly have I learned that the Lord can open and none can shut, and shut and none can open. I am in such darkness of mind that I greatly fear I never knew the Savior's love shed abroad in this sinful and deceitful heart of mine. O where is the blessedness I knew in years past and gone? Is it clean gone forever? I know that it is of the Lord's mercy that I still live. My whole life seems to me to have been an utter failure; I cannot comprehend why I should live longer. Our God is a God of pur-

pose. The wise man said every purpose of God is established by his counsel. The prophet Isaiah declared that every purpose of the Lord shall be fulfilled. Then if God had a purpose in casting my lot in this part of his earth will not his purpose be accomplished in me? I believe it will. I love to sing with the poet,

"His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower."

Ah how bitter it has been to me to be deprived of the company of the dear saints of God: deprived of church privileges; no one near me with whom I can converse upon the things pertaining to the Master's kingdom. I would that I could be more reconciled to the Lord's will with me here in this world of sin and sorrow. I so often find myself murmuring and complaining with blessings in my hand. I have no great bodily afflictions for one of my age as many have, and I desire to be thankful that it is as well with me as it is. It is my leanness or darkness of mind, as to spiritual things, that causes me to mourn most. Earnestly have I begged the Lord that it might be otherwise, but it seems that the older I get the more dull and lifeless I am, spiritually. Peter admonished his brethren to steadfastness; to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It seems to me that if ever I had any grace, or knowledge of spiritual things given me, instead of growing in them I have gone backward, for my spiritual understanding of the Scriptures seems to grow less and less. This worries and troubles me; I wonder if there is any one like me. Will you, my brethren, pray the Lord of light and glory, that if it is his will, he may lead me out of this darkness? If I am a child of grace, the least of all,

J. H. YEOMAN.

[BROTHER Yeoman in the above letter is speaking the language of Canaan. They that mourn are blessed. They that walk in darkness are blessed. They that tremble at his word are blessed. He has no doubt learned that "We walk by faith, not by sight." We wonder how the prescription of the "conditional time salvationist" would work in his case. If he has tried it we venture to say he has found that "None can keep alive his own soul." Many and severe are the lessons we must have to rid us of legality. We hope that the captivity of our brother may be turned as the streams of the south; that his mouth be filled with laughter and his tongue with singing.—K.]

LOVELAND, Colorado, Nov. 11, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have in mind to write a little for your perusal, and for the dear old SIGNS, if you think it worth space and worthy of the perusal of its readers. I say "dear old SIGNS," because the paper was first published two years before I was born.

In my meditations of late my mind has been on the subject of prayer. I asked myself this question, What is prayer? Hannah, when praying before the Lord, spoke in her heart. Only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard; Eli, the high priest, thought that she was drunken, yet the Lord heard and answered her prayer. May we not say then that prayer does not consist in the utterance of a form of words, but is the sincere desire of the heart? Paul said, "We know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us." I conclude that this is the same Spirit by which we cry, Abba, Father. The disciples asked of Jesus that he would teach them to pray as John also taught his disciples. In response he bade them not use

vain repetitions, as the heathen did, for their Father knew what they had need of before they asked him. Then he said, "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven," &c. This is what is called the Lord's prayer, and is used among most all religious orders of the day, and is often repeated in unison in their worship, but invariably they leave out the word "in" and use the words "on earth." Is it prayer if we learn a form of words and repeat them over and over again and yet have no feeling of them in heart or spirit? We read of Jesus going up into the mountain to pray, and that he continued all night in prayer. He told the disciples that he would pray the Father and he would send them another Comforter. But the prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of the gospel by John should be called the Lord's prayer, I think, above all others recorded in the New Testament. No other chapter in the book gives me the same comfort this does. At the tomb of Lazarus "Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always." In his prayer, as recorded by John, he said, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." The angel said unto Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." The apostle Paul said, "But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." The blessed Savior declared the Son of man came to save that which was lost. He said, I must work the works of him that sent me. Now if the salvation of his people, the redemption of those who were under the law, and saving that which was lost, was not the work God gave him to do, I do not know how to apply these plain Scriptures. If I am correct in my application then all the work in the plan of salvation for the saints is finished and complete, for so said Jesus in his prayer to his Father. Dear brother, there is nothing left for you and me to do to make our salvation more secure, if indeed we be of the number whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life; it is all finished. The last words of the blessed Redeemer on the cross were, "It is finished," then he bowed his head and gave up the ghost.

There is much in this prayer of the blessed Son of God that I would like to notice, but I know my insufficiency; I am but a poor, ignorant creature. I often wonder why I try to write anything concerning the goodness and mercy of our God or the Scriptures of divine truth, I am so ignorant, so unworthy and so undeserving of the least of the blessings of God which he has bestowed upon me all the days of my life. The blessed Master, speaking of his disciples, said, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." O if I only knew I were a true believer in Jesus, then I would know that Jesus had prayed for me. I can say that I hope I am a true believer on the Son of God, but I do not know it. I have had this question asked me, and that, too, by professors of religion: "Don't you know you are a christian?" If I were to ask you, brother Chick, the same question, I think your answer would be the same as my own. No, I do not, but sometimes I hope I am. This has been my answer. No one can hope for anything they already possess. Hope that is seen is not hope, the beloved apostle

testifies, for what a man sees or possesses why doth he yet hope for it? I am a believer in hope. I feel sometimes that I hope against hope. I have earnestly desired the past few years to be so situated that I could be among the brethren, and hear some true servant of Christ preach the truth as it is in Jesus, as was my privilege in days past; but I know not that it will ever be mine to enjoy these privileges again.

I remain yours in hope of eternal life through the full and complete Savior,

J. H. YEOMAN.

LOCKHART, Texas, Nov. 4, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS AND KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I want to pen a part of my exerience. When I was a child I would ften cry and weep after going to bed at ight, while my parents would sing good d hymns. After I was grown I thought ould not try to get religion until I d had all the pleasure I wanted, then I ld get good and remain so. But be- e I got ready I had a dream: My time xpire had come, and I was before the eat Judge pleading my cause when I woke. I was so glad it was a dream. thought I would try right then to get forgiveness, but I could not pray; the words I uttered would not go above my head. I was awfully cast down for awhile, then my burden grew lighter, until at length I had another dream, almost like the first one. By this time I could carcely think of anything but how to ork my way to heaven. I would try one thing and then another, until I tried all of my plans. I only grew worse. While I was in this condition I lost my dear mother. When I was at her bedside she told me that all she dreaded was her suffering here. I would often think of those sweet words in her last hours, and wished I, too, could say that. But I had to learn that I could do nothing but look to Jesus and beg for mercy. One night before I went to sleep the last thing I remembered was trying to give myself to God; next I dreamed I was in heaven hearing the sweetest music I ever heard. If all the bands I ever heard were put together they would not be half so sweet as that music. Before I got entirely away from it I said, Maybe I am deceived. Then I heard it again. When I would think of uniting with the church and had so little to tell, I would think how the good Lord had called me twice.

I united with the Old Baptist Church fourteen years ago. The two years I spent out of the church after I received a hope were full of thorns. Now I am not able to attend my meetings often, but it does me good to know I have been buried with Christ in baptism. If I am anything I owe it all to the Lord.

I want to tell you of one more instance where the Lord showed his power so plainly to us. We had been to meeting; on our way home my husband and myself got out of the carriage to get some water, and left a big team of mules hitched to the carriage with five little children in it. The team got frightened and ran away; the lines were on the ground, I tried to catch them, but in vain. I then began screaming to my husband, but they were out of his reach, so I began to call for help. It seemed I could not get a word above my head. I knew the Lord had all power in heaven and on earth, and I could do nothing but trust all with him. One trace came off, a singletree broke and the carriage came uncoupled just before crossing a deep ditch. This let the children fall to the ground, and none was injured so much as a broken limb. So we had none to thank but

the good Lord; they were saved by him, and him alone. We never have been able to thank him enough.

You can do with this as you think best; I wrote it to relieve my mind. I hope the Lord has been with me and helped me to think what to write. The SIGNS is a great comfort to me in my afflictions; I feel that it is kept up by the great I AM to feed the poor, hungry children.

Your very unworthy sister,

M. S. HAWK.

ROCKY FORK, W. Va., Sept. 1, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST:—I have felt impressed for some time to write what I hope the Lord has done for me. In the beginning of the year 1901 I got in deep study about my condition, and would wonder what would become of me if I should die. I thought I would be lost if there was not a change in me, and I will tell you how I thought the change would be: I would go to work to do good and be good, and the Lord would bless me for doing so. So I tried for nearly three years to do good, and the more I tried the worse I got. O the trouble that came upon me; to think how hard I was trying to do good, and could see so plainly I was growing worse all the time. I would try sometimes to pray, but these were all the words I could utter: Lord, prepare and fit me, so when the time comes for me to die I will be a fit subject to enter thy kingdom. At last, in December, 1903, I seemed lost, and hid from the pleasures of this world, and there seemed to be a burden on me pressing me into the earth; the burden would be so heavy at times I could hardly walk. I was in this awful condition three weeks, and I lay down one night, not knowing if there would be rest for me or not, as I had had no rest day or night. I had about given up in despair. I had no more than laid down when these words rang in my mind as if they had been spoken in my ear: You have to die. O how it frightened me, for this was the thought that came to me: I have tried nearly three years to do good, and have gotten no better, and now the time has come for me to die, and I am sure to be lost, for there is nothing I can do. I lay all night in this awful condition, and these are some of the words that rang in my mind: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want;" I can be raised up at the last hour; and my soul began to beg for a resting-place, if it did not last but a moment of time, but not one word could I utter, my tongue was dried up and parched, my strength was all gone and I lay helpless as an infant, and these words I heard: Now do not be frightened, for this old body is going to be taken away; it does not amount to anything anyhow, and you will be given a new life, and that is everlasting life, it will never perish. Then I began to soar upward, and these were the words I began to say: I am going home; "Jesus, lover of my soul," &c. Then all my burden was gone, and I thought I never would see any more trouble, but my troubles had just begun. I then became troubled about joining the church. I wanted to be with the Primitive Baptists, for they could tell my feelings when I could not tell them myself, and this gave me such love for them that I can never describe it, but I felt so unworthy I never asked for a home with them until February of this year, when I went forward and told them some of what I have written; they received me, and I was baptized the fourth Sunday in April by Elder J. W. McClanahan, my dear uncle.

Dear brethren, (if you will allow such as I am to address you thus) let us all lift up our voices together in praise to our heavenly Master; if we feel we are commanded to do these things may we do them, for it is recorded in that holy Book in Rev. xxii. 14: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

From an unworthy sister, if one at all,

ERNIE S. NULL.

PIEDMONT, Ala., Dec. 1, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I received the copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES you sent me, and will now send you a remittance, as I do not think I can get along without the paper.

I want to tell you some of the dealings of the Lord with me, and I do not know why, but it may be because I have been reading so many good experiences in the SIGNS, and my mind is so stirred up that I cannot go to sleep, and I thought if it were the Lord's will I would try to tell you some of what I hope are his dealings with me. This seems to me to be a very serious thing to think about, and much more so to talk about. It was about twenty-five or twenty-six years ago that I began to be in great distress and trouble about myself, and did not know what was the matter. I thought the first day it came upon me that perhaps by the morrow it would all wear away and I would be all right, but the next day I was rather worse, and I kept on getting worse. It seemed to me that I was going to die; that some strange disease was preying upon me, and I would soon leave this world. I could take no pleasure in anything, and did not want to be in company; even my own little family was no comfort to me, and I wanted to be alone, away off in the wood, for it seemed to me that everybody would know that I was in great distress, and I did not want them to think there was anything wrong with me; I would avoid company all I could at home, but would go to town sometimes and go into the barroom where there was music and dancing, to see if I could not get rid of my troubles, or forget them; but my distress was with me everywhere. It was on my mind the last thing at night, and the first thing I thought of when I awoke in the morning. Well, the spring of the year was coming on, and I had to try to make a crop, but thought there was no use trying, for I never would live to finish it. Time passed on, and I did go to work, not expecting to live to profit by my labor, for my distress was so great. In the fall of the year I remember well how sure I was that the time I had been looking for had come, and that I could not live longer. I told one of my little children to go into the other room and tell its grandmother to come to me, for I did not want to die alone. I see I am getting along in my journey and not telling what I want to. It seemed to me that I was in more distress and trouble than any one had ever been before, and that every one in the world was surer of salvation than I could be, and my cry was, Lord, have mercy on me. Everything in nature looked dark, and gloom seemed to cover all.

I cannot begin to tell in a single letter all my experience; it takes so much space to tell a little, so if you, brethren editors, see fit to put this poor mite in print, I shall have to finish some other time. When I began this letter I felt I wanted to cast in my little mite, and maybe it would be a comfort to some poor little child of God, as theirs have been to me. When reading so many good letters in the SIGNS my heart goes out in love to the writers.

A. P. HICKS.

MEDITATIONS.

It has been some time that I have been sitting with my pen in hand, my mind meditating, as I hope, on the deep things of God. "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" For who hath been his counsellor? God be thanked that "unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." My mind is led to that Counsellor to thank him, and humbly feel that he this morning is leading my poor soul in the green pastures of his love, that I see his banner unfurled over me. I know it is over his dear people, but is it over me? "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." May he continue to draw me and all his dear children by the cords of his love, and bind them so closely around me that I may never be left alone to depart from the God whom I trust I love, and trust it with him that the reason of that is, that he first loved me.

I feel this morning that I cannot describe my feelings to any one, but I hope that I can adore, by the power of Israel's God, the God of the whole earth, and say with David, "The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me." I hope I have been brought so low as to know that "in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing," but I put all my confidence in God that "I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." I think I know that the two I spoke of above are the Shulamite, the company of two armies, the flesh and the Spirit. I know that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. This is what makes me cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Do I know anything of this death? I hope so. I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord that he is my deliverer, that sometimes I think as our dear little sister in Christ, Mary, (our child in the flesh, but God's after the Spirit,) said, "I think sometimes that he will take me to dwell with him;" that I experience that rest. I think I see a perfect work, the complete work, in the eternal mind of God before the foundation of the world; that he "saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began: but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." The only way it can be made known to any of the dear children of our heavenly King is by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ. When Christ, who is our life, appears, then do we also appear with him in glory; then are we prepared by him to bring forth the royal diadem and crown him Lord of all; not unto us, not unto our worthless names, but unto him whose name is above every name, which is called by his bride, the children, the heirs of glory which are his: "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace," and unto his name be all the glory, now and forever.

May God, by the love of his Son, shed, and continue to shed abroad his love in us, that we may be able to comfort one

another, being built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

J. C. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pennsylvania.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The above was written by my father, John C. Fenton, about the year 1888, when at Danville, Pa., and was found among some precious letters he and mother received from the members at Southampton, Pa., on the twenty-fifth anniversary of their wedding. My father departed this life December 28th, 1907. J. M. FENTON.

POUGHKEEPSIE, N. Y., June 21, 1908.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—Allow me to write you a few lines this beautiful Sunday p. m. I have often felt a disposition to write you, but always desisted, for the fact that I knew I was not capable of writing anything of profit or interest to you. I never read your writings without feeling that I want to write, telling you how much I enjoy them, how they cheer, encourage and strengthen me; they appeal to my understanding and arouse in me such interest that I am made to feel glad. I see frequently that the writers through the SIGNS refer to this fact, reminding you that they enjoy your writings, and while you have many reminders in this way, I feel that there are many others you never hear from who enjoy them and are benefited just as much as those who have the ability to write you. There is something peculiarly interesting to the readers of the SIGNS in your writings. You are blessed with an ability to deal with subjects in a way that many are not much accustomed to; in a way that appeals to their understanding. I am so ignorant of spiritual things that I cannot either write or talk of them, but do hope I am blessed with an understanding of such things, and that I can rejoice in them when they are dwelt upon by others. Brother Ker, you are, and long have been, a subject of great interest to me, knowing you personally as I do, and have for a goodly number of years, prior to the time, perhaps, you knew anything of the things which are now so dear and sacred to you, or had any interest in them, and from the time that you became interested to the present your advancement has been rapid and your attainments great; it makes me feel my own littleness, unworthiness, ignorance and nothingness keenly. But I hope and feel that I fully realize the source of it all; it is in no wise to be accounted to you; it is nothing that you could do, have done or ever will be able to do, but solely and entirely of the Lord that you are filling and performing in every way the special vocation and work for and to which you were appointed. You were appointed to a high position in the church and among the brethren, to feed the flock, while I, a poor, worthless worm of the dust, am allowed, if anything, to follow along and pick up a crumb here and there. But I am not complaining, I do not mean to complain; I often say, If any are permitted, or in other words, blessed with an understanding of spiritual things, that they may hear and understand, if they cannot even so much as open their mouth, as is the case with many, they are of all God's creatures most blessed. The blessing exists, first, in being given an understanding of spiritual things, being born again, being brought into that newness of life whereby we know the truth as it is in Jesus.

Well, dear brother, I purposed to write you a short business note, and a few lines in addition to try to tell you how much I

appreciate your writings and enjoy reading them. I know I have failed in this last; I do not think I can convey that to you, but I want you to know that such is the case. I know and understand the laws of language fairly well, can detect grammatical errors as I hear or read, and if I know anything of things in nature I can write of them, describe them, but when it comes to spiritual things I am utterly inadequate for the task. I will not further burden you.

I am working in Poughkeepsie now; have been here three weeks, and may stay a few weeks longer; if I do I want to go over to see you some Saturday or Sunday. I have it in my mind to go next Saturday p. m. or Sunday a. m., as I can best do, if I can get off. My family is in Brooklyn; I was home last Sunday; all are well. I send two dollars to pay my subscription to the SIGNS. The SIGNS is profitable and interesting to me; and my wife, I am glad to tell you, is deeply and sincerely interested in the things it contains.

I hope this may find you and family well. May the Lord be with you and bless you in your labors, and may you long be spared to the church and people you so faithfully serve, is the prayer of your unworthy brother, if one at all,

C. J. MORRIS.

[WE appreciate very much the kind expressions of brother Morris regarding our position, and labors in the gospel. We have always appreciated the commendation of our brethren, and have been much helped thereby, though we have seldom spoken of it. Brother Morris having known us personally for the past twenty-five years, and as he says, long before we knew or cared anything about the secret and mysteries of God, looks upon our conversion, and position in the kingdom with greater wonder than those who have known us, or known of us, since uniting with the Old Baptists. Saul of Tarsus was not a greater hater of the doctrine and saints of Jesus Christ than we were at one time, but what we are to-day is by the grace of God. We are fully convinced that He can cause the vilest rebel against him to love and adore his great name. He can also make a preacher of his everlasting truth of the most ignorant and unlearned of men as well as of the most intelligent and dignified. His wonderful and mighty dealings with us have fully proven his unlimited power and loving-kindness.—K.]

PORTLAND, Ind., Sept. 17, 1908.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—At the request of some of the brethren I will give a brief account of a yearly meeting, held with the old Pleasant Hill Church, near Delaware, Ohio, on Saturday and Sunday, September 12th and 13th. Brethren came, some of them from quite a distance; I counted eight ministers present, and heard most of the preaching, and felt it was good to be there. The preaching was all of one piece, and joy and gladness were plainly depicted on the countenances of the brethren. On Sunday morning brother C. E. Jackson, of Galion, Ohio, was ordained to the full work of the ministry after a council of ministers had become satisfied with the brother's call. This solemn ordinance was to have been attended to on Saturday, but owing to the serious sickness of brother Jackson's father he did not arrive until Sunday, and had to leave for home soon after the ordination was attended to. The doctrine of salvation by grace for all our salvation was the theme insisted upon by all I heard preach, and the presence of God's Spirit seemed among us, filling our

hearts with gladness, causing songs of praise to flow from the lips of the brethren. It seemed to be a time when the Beloved spoken of in the Song of Solomon went down into his garden among the beds of spices, causing the fragrance to flow out; that he came down to see how the vine and the pomegranate flourish. We felt we tasted some of the fragrance of the spice beds that the presence of the Lord caused to flow. These beds of spices I understand to be the bands of brethren bound together; "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst." The fragrance from the spice beds I understand to be the love that flows from the heart among brethren when their Lord is in their presence, causing the love or fragrance to flow. I felt when I saw the harmony in doctrine and fellowship, that strong are the bulwarks of the Zion of our God, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes shall ever be removed or one of the cords broken, for the glorious Lord will ever be unto her a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein goeth no galley with oars, neither gallant ships pass by. The solemnity in the ordination of brother Jackson made us feel we should take off our shoes, because the place we trod was holy ground; we felt to walk in the fear of our Lord, feeling that the ordinances of his house are sacred, and should be regarded as such. I had felt at times perhaps we would not see any more undershepherds sent out to feed the flock of God, because the flock seems to be diminishing, and there seems to be a lukewarmness in many places, but at this meeting I beheld two young ministers, and many hungry lambs to feed. I felt somehow it was a time of reviving, at least for the present, and that it was one of the set times to favor Zion. I felt that at least some were inquiring where the Lord is making his flock to rest at noon, and felt to say, If thou knowest not, my fair one, go thy way by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents. I understand this admonition to be to all God's inquiring children who are mourning his love to know, and, like the apostle Paul, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" I feel this answer to the daughter of Zion is enough for all inquiring souls: "Go thy way by the footsteps of the flock," follow them, for "there remaineth a rest to the people of God."

NEWTON PETERS.

OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla., Nov. 15, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—I wish my address for the SIGNS changed from Muncie, Ind., to 500 W. Eighth St., Oklahoma City, Okla. I should like to know if there are any readers of the SIGNS in or near this city, or any of like faith and order. If so, I sincerely hope that they will write or call to see me. I think I shall remain here for some time, but I have been such a pilgrim or wanderer for the past few years I scarcely know when I am permanently located. In the past year I have visited the church at Helena, Okla., (Elder J. F. Beeman is the pastor) several times. Last winter I attended the South Fort Worth (Texas) Church three regular monthly meetings, and at Keller, Texas, one time, where I heard what seemed to me sound doctrine preached, which I greatly enjoyed, beside meeting many pleasant members, who made me feel much at home among them. I took copies of the SIGNS with me always, and met one firm believer (who, however, is not a member, but the husband of a member) who had never before seen a copy, but

had often heard of it. He seemed to greatly enjoy reading it. I also met a brother Staggs, of Weatherford, Texas, who is a nephew of the late Elder Wilson Thompson. I spent the winter and spring at Ft. Worth and Brady, Texas. My second daughter lives at the latter place. I spent the most of the summer with my only son, in east St. Louis, where I heard of no Old School Baptists, but found a church in St. Louis composed principally of Illinois Baptists. I met there in their midst a brother Dudley, wife and family, who certainly entertained me well, and who talked of the same precious truth I had found in my Bible and felt in my experience. He is a nephew of the late Elder Thos. P. Dudley, who was such a good friend of my grandfather years ago in Kentucky; in fact my uncle, Dudley G. Johnson, was named for him. I spent nearly two months in Brady, Texas, before coming here, where I expect to remain with my eldest daughter for some time. I would be glad to hear of a church nearer here than Helena, or of any members or believers in the gospel as set forth in the SIGNS, a paper that I feel I cannot do without if I can manage to get it. I much enjoy reading it, and wish I were sufficiently gifted to write for it as I would like and sometimes dream of doing, but I hope that those who can, will continue to do so. May the Lord guide and direct them, as well as the faithful editors and publishers, and when they are gone I feel sure that others will be raised up as in days of old, that the word of God may stand firm, as it always has from the beginning of time, and will to eternity. How good to think that we have a God who is all-powerful. I often feel that his everlasting arms must uphold me or I would certainly sink.

Yours, I hope, in christian love,

EFFIE JOHNSON BOLTON.

BLUM, Texas, Dec. 8, 1908.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—I wish to have the death of our dear aged sister Strong announced in the SIGNS. She passed away last Saturday, the 5th. She has resided the last few years away from her old home, but was brought back and buried at Cressons, Texas, near her old home. I hope to prepare an obituary soon to be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Yours in hope,

W. L. ROGERS.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Fairview Church, Fulton County, Pa., sendeth greeting to the churches and associations with whom we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED:—By the love and mercy of God we have been gathered together, we trust, to speak and hear from one another of the things of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We have been blessed in hearing and believing in his salvation which he finished, even our salvation in time and eternity. We are few in number, but we humbly pray for the upbuilding of Zion, whereby we may edify one another. May the Lord guide us in all things. We greatly desire the continuance of your christian correspondence. May the God of all grace keep you and us and all the church of the saints from every evil way, is our holy desire and prayer to God.

We hope to meet with you all again at our next association, to be held with the Providence Church, Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1909.

A. MELLOTT, Moderator.

J. C. MELLOTT, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1909.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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GREETING.

AT the beginning of another year, (as we divide the years) when kindly greetings are upon the tongue of every one, it is only natural that we, the editors and publishers of the SIGNS, should also feel the stirrings of a desire within to in like manner greet our readers and express our desire and humble prayer for them, that the blessings and good will of Him who dwelt in the bush may be with them during the coming year. In this greeting and prayer we all heartily join, praying the dear Lord that grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, may be with you all; and, together with you all, we desire to confess the goodness of the Lord during the past year, and from that goodness to take courage that it shall continue the coming year as it has in the past. We all, both our readers and ourselves, ought to make mention of the thousands of temporal mercies which have been vouchsafed to us: life, a measure of health and strength, temporal supplies of daily bread for our continually returning wants, friends, homes, labor, social enjoyments, the privilege of dwelling in safety and peace, the sunshine and the cloudy weather and rain, each in its turn, the fruits of the earth, a much better government than we in anywise deserve, and above all these temporal blessings, the hope of everlasting life beyond the grave, together with some seasons of daily communion through the Spirit with the Father and the Son, have been given us. It is true that when we speak of temporal mercies we also remember that they are only earthly and temporal, and are mixed with much that is evil and which we ought to deplore, and, like Jonah's gourd, they may perish in a night. But the chief thing that we all must deplore in them is our own base ingratitude when they are multiplied upon us, and our fretfulness and peevishness and rebellion when in some measure they are withholden. What father would be so patient with his children as our heavenly Father has been with us, his wilful and impatient children? Not only for these blessings, but also for the patience and forbearance of the Father of all mercy, do we owe continued praise and thanksgiving. He bestows the blessings for which we are so unthankful and forgives the unthankfulness. Like as a father pities his children, so does the Lord pity us, for he remembers that we are dust, and he knows our feeble frame. All this is true of his temporal blessings, and it is also, in great measure, true of the spiritual blessings of the new and everlasting covenant. In all our spiritual travel sin is mixed with all we do. If for a time we are conscious of the spirit of prayer, or of praise, or of receiving some blessed word from the mouth of our God, soon again we come to realize that we are yet in the flesh, and that not only do we owe praise for that salvation which was finished on Calvary, even our justification through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, but also we owe unceasing praise for unceasing supplies of grace, for

unceasing forbearance, for unceasing forgiveness, for the unceasing watchfulness of our covenant-keeping God and for unfailing support against every inward and outward foe. Remembering all this, and more than we can speak of, or even remember, we must be humbled and exalted; humbled in and because of self, and exalted in and because of Jesus Christ. All this experience of sin on the one hand, sin manifested in rebellion, irreconciliation to God, and alienation from him, and of grace on the other hand, grace made manifest in the patience and forbearance of the blessed Lord toward us all, but proves our oneness with those who in the word are spoken of as the subjects of a warfare within as well as without. In this very warfare is the proof of two lives within. The Scriptures declare that in all who believe there is a warfare; it is the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that he in whom these two opposing forces dwell cannot do the things that he would. It is the old man warring against the new man; it is the law in the members contending against the law of the mind, and the child of God is the battle-ground where these two forces contend. He then, who complains of such a warfare, confesses that not only does sin dwell within, but also that within is righteousness; not only does he possess the flesh, but also the Spirit. If he complains of the law in his members he also makes known that the law of the mind dwells within him. In this very warfare then, which brings sorrow, there is that which brings rejoicing. It is sure from Bible testimony that no unregenerate man ever confesses to the indwelling of that which is evil, or ever is troubled by it. If then, one has this trouble, he is not any longer in the flesh, but in the Spirit, as Paul declares in Romans, and all this double experience is described when Paul said, "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." It is a solemn consideration that many, as it is to be feared, profess godliness who never feel this warfare, who, at least, realize no distress regarding it, who lose no rest because they cannot do the good that they would, who never are driven to their wits' end by the unequal strife, who never realize the power of the Savior's commandment to his dear disciples to watch and pray, or as one evangelist records his language, Watch unto prayer. It seems to us sure that where the Spirit of the blessed Redeemer dwells, there will be such a cutting off from the pleasures and vanities of the world, such a desire to escape from all that is godless, that the soul will be driven to prayer and confession, confession of his great weakness, and prayer for divine help, and there will be in this prayer and confession that which cannot be put into words, unless they be the words of inspiration itself; there will be in that heart groanings which cannot be uttered. He who feels this warfare within will turn with abhorrence from all these enjoyments of which the world is enamored. In such hearts this commandment among others will be found written, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." True godliness is at a low ebb indeed in that heart that can find its pleasure away from the blessed Jesus, and His presence is not in places which the world loves. One cannot dance, attend theatres, play games of chance with the ungodly and at the same time commune with the dear Savior, or be filled with longing for his blessed presence. A form of godliness

without the power is perfectly at home with these things, but true godliness will suffocate in such an atmosphere. We know whereof we affirm when we say this. Not only is this the testimony of the word of God, but it is the testimony of all who have walked with God on earth, and it is the observation, as well, of us all. The spiritually-minded do not frequent these and other places of amusement, and they who do frequent these places, if indeed children of God, know for themselves that they have never felt the presence of the dear Savior while mingling in such worldly pleasures.

It is a sad consideration indeed that in this age vital godliness is held in but light esteem. Christian experience of the Bible sort is laughed at or scorned, as being but the fancy of a half-crazed mind. Conviction of sin, and a feeling of condemnation under the broken law of God, are barely touched upon, if indeed noticed at all, and the soul's deliverance through a heartfelt assurance of pardon into peace and rest is regarded as the vision of a dream. These things are true of the great body of the religious world, and the people of God are not exempt from the temptations of the world. It is to be feared that there are many "stony ground" hearers, without depth of earth; the ground has not been broken up deep in their soul's travel. But he who has bestowed upon him a good conscience will be very tender regarding all these things indeed. He will fear for himself greatly, lest he be not a "good ground" hearer; he will feel like avoiding even the appearance of evil. He will desire to hold his feet as far from the way of ungodliness as possible. He will not question, What can I engage in that belongs to the world, without danger to my spiritual life? but, rather, will pray God to keep his feet as far as possible from that which is evil. Because it is the state of a believer here on earth, and will continue to be while he remains here below, to be engaged in this warfare, such an one as we have been speaking of will not say, There will be a warfare, and the flesh will always remain with me until I die, and I might therefore just as well be at ease regarding it. No, such an one will look upon the matter as did Paul, who, knowing that the warfare must continue in his soul while he lived, yet cried, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" As well expect a criminal who, to expiate his crimes, has been chained hand to hand, foot to foot and face to face with a dead body, to say, This is my fate until death shall come, and therefore I might as well not complain, and so seek to stifle all desire for relief, and all cries for that relief, as that a child of God bound hand, foot and face to the body of his sin, should be quiet and cease to groan, cry and struggle for release from the loathsome bondage. He who can lie down in peace with his sin is himself dead in sin; and only the sleeping child of God can make his bed with the dead in the tombs; when awakened out of his slumber he will seek to flee to the habitations of the living.

But we had not thought to write thus when we began. It was in our mind to make mention of some of the mercies of the Lord during the past year, and of our feeling of need for the year to come, if God shall spare us to its end. In his editorial in the closing number of the old year brother Ker has spoken of the welfare of the SIGNS temporally, and we both, together with the publishers, desire to remember with gratitude all that measure of support extended to us who have to do with the work of preparing and publish-

ing the SIGNS. Our gratitude is due first to God, who holds all hearts in his hand, and then under him, to our friends and brethren for kindness and forbearance toward ourselves. As he has said, we feel well assured that we have made mistakes, but still we have not been left alone, and we can but wonder at the long-suffering of God and his patience with us, who are so prone to forget him and to wander from his ways. We are sure that we but express the desire of all who are connected with the publication of the SIGNS when we say that we do desire more and more of the spirit of meekness and patience, of love and of a sound mind, of trust and wisdom from on high, that we may not err, nor lead others to err through anything that we may say or do. For our own self we desire to say that it has long been our mind that as we do ourself go astray and need, and have again and again received, the tokens of forbearance and forgiveness, as we trust, from God, and then from his people, so we also ought to be forbearing and patient if in anything others may err. What a solemn injunction is that, "The servant of God must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves." This we have desired always. We do need this spirit, and then also we do desire to be found faithful in this spirit, giving instruction as we may be able to do concerning the word of God. Of one thing we have many times felt glad, viz., that the dear Lord has given to his children an unction from the Holy One, so they need not be taught, but know all things. No man can teach another to love and fear God, but it is ours, if called to that work, to instruct in the teaching of the Scriptures, and to show that they testify to the will and work of God. One thought that has been with us in all our ministry has been to set forth this, that all christian experience is in harmony with the word of God as revealed in the sacred Scriptures. We have desired to set forth what they declare. To expound the Scriptures is one part, and a most important one of the ministry of the word. What they declare let us all declare, and may we be found believing all that they do declare, whether they be things that we have seen and handled of the word of life, or whether they be declarations of the wondrous works of God in the miracles which he wrought in the olden time in Zoan, in the wilderness or at Jordan, and in the land of Canaan. Let us also be found bearing testimony to all that God has promised for his children, both in this present state and in the world to come. The wondrous works of God in ages past confirm our hope that he is able to make all grace abound toward us now; and that he has fulfilled all his word in the past is an added assurance that he will so do in the future. Let us all remember that Jesus and his salvation is the substance and spirit of all true preaching. To preach the word is to preach him who was promised by the mouth of prophets, who was born of the virgin Mary, who lived on earth a man of sorrows, who died and was buried and rose again according to the word of God, and who appeared to witnesses chosen before of God, and who ascended on high, and who there ever lives to make intercession for us, and who will finally receive us to himself to be like him and to abide in his presence forever. To preach Jesus is to also preach his living power in the hearts and lives of all who truly believe, producing in their hearts holy affections and desires, and in their lives without, holy and heavenly fruits, to the praise of the glory of his grace.

But the theme is endless, and we must close now. Brethren, pray for us all, that the wisdom which is pure, peaceable and full of good fruits, may abound in us during the year. May the blessed Lord give us grace to know and do his will.

C.

DEACONS, DUTIES, PRIVILEGES.

It having been suggested that we write along this line, we shall try to do so in a brief way, touching only upon the most important points. There are some things in this direction we do well to keep in mind, therefore we shall endeavor to remind the brethren of what they already know. The first record we have of the appointment of men to this office will be found in Acts vi. 2–6. In those days believers in Christ were selling their possessions and laying the price at the feet of the apostles, and distribution was made according as every one had need, but when the duties of the apostles in the ministry of the word increased, some of the widows of the Grecians were neglected in the daily supplies, and complaint was made of the apostles because of the omission of such duty. Then said the apostles, "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word." The saying pleased the people, and the seven men were chosen to attend to that "business," which was, and is, to take care of the funds of the church, to look after the poor and needy as well as to attend to the needs of pastors, and to relieve them of all care and responsibility possible, such as laboring with the erring and being appointed on any committee whose duty it is to perform some unpleasant task. Deacons and pastors should counsel each other, and nothing but the very best of feeling and confidence exist between them. Deacons should prepare for the ordinance of the Lord's supper and serve the church, pastor and each other. Each church should have stated times for this ordinance and observe it if only "two or three" are present. Should any church not have deacons, any brother in good standing can pass the emblems and such service be in order, but we question the order of believers in Jesus Christ handling his flesh and blood with gloves on. Perhaps this is a matter never before brought to the attention of the church, but none of us would go to the table of a friend with gloves on, and should we not have more respect for the Lord's table? Deacons fill a very prominent place in the church, and in choosing a man to that office the qualifications and spiritual attainments, as set forth in the Scriptures, should be carefully considered. Is he sober, grave, temperate? Is his tongue single, slow to speak and what he says ever depended upon? Is he free from the drink habit? Is he free from a greedy disposition for filthy lucre? Does he hold the mystery of faith in a pure conscience? After considering these things and finding a man "blameless," he may be appointed or ordained to the office. Such men have the utmost confidence of the church as well as that of the community in which they live and are ornaments, so to speak, in the house of God.

It is the privilege of deacons to look after the business affairs of the church without special appointment, except such business as comes under the supervision of trustees, which every church must now

have according to law. Should deacons be members of the board of trustees it is not the privilege of any one of them to proceed in any matter without the knowledge and agreement of the entire board. It is the deacon's privilege and duty to visit the sick, the widows and orphans, and minister to their needs; it is their privilege and duty to visit and labor with the erring and unruly, endeavoring to convert them from the ways of death. It is their right, in the absence of their pastor, or other minister, to conduct the service in the way of song, prayer, praise, Scripture reading and talk as impressed or moved by the Spirit. Should it be necessary, it is their duty to assist a minister in the ordinance of baptism. When visiting meetings of our faith and order and called upon to speak, it is their privilege as deacons to do so in whatever line of thought may be given them. No one should think a deacon officious when attending to the duties and privileges of his office; if he is to be bound he had better not be appointed, as it is necessary for a deacon to have all the liberty of the office in order to be useful. Years ago in some churches the deacons often conducted the entire service very acceptably, but were not ordained to the work of the ministry except in cases of special gift for that work. Men who can talk long and well of the Scriptures and experience are not all preachers. This is a matter which cannot be too carefully considered before putting a man into the ministry. No man can judge his own gift, such judgment is given to the church. It is not an uncommon thing for men, especially young men, in their early life in the church to feel impressed to tell what great things the Lord hath done for sinners, and often mistake the impression to thus glorify God as an impression to preach the gospel. Some have been given opportunities to speak, and after failing several times were convinced that the Lord had not called them to that work. Others have never tried to preach, yet have carried the burden for years, even to the grave in some instances. A license is not at all necessary that a man shall exercise whatever gift he has; neither is there authority in the Scriptures for such action of the church, and because of this each church should be careful in that direction. Usually it is thought and understood when a man is licensed to exercise his gift that he is called to preach, but some sad mistakes have occurred in judgment and discernment along this line, and some good, loving and faithful brethren have had to suffer embarrassment for life. Solomon says, "A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men," and while we believe this saying, primarily, referred to those who sought kings and others of authority, and could stand before them only through their gifts which preceded them, we also believe it has its application with regard to the gifts in the church. Hence if a man's gift makes room for him that he shall appear before great men (saints of God), who shall hedge about his way by saying, You cannot do this or that, go here or there, except as we think and decide as best and proper? The gift itself is the license, and all the license a man needs who is called of God. The ordination of a man to the ministry can never make a preacher of him any more than a diploma would make a physician of a man who had never studied medicine. Ordination only sets a man apart to the work whereunto the Lord has called him, whether bishop or deacon, giving him right to all the privileges of the office. When the Lord called Saul of

Tarsus to preach the gospel, Saul did not confer with flesh and blood (counsel man), neither saw he any of the apostles for three years after he had been preaching. Stephen and Philip (deacons) preached when moved by the Spirit, and an open door was set before them, and no one of the apostles, or church, criticised them for so doing. There is not a greater sermon on record than the one preached by Stephen, Acts vii. 2–53. Philip once used as a text Isaiah liii. 7, 8, and preached Jesus unto the eunuch and also baptized him. The Spirit then caught Philip away, and the eunuch went on his way rejoicing. Have we any record that either Stephen or Philip were ordained by the laying on of hands to the work of the gospel ministry? If so, we do not recall it just now. It is evident nevertheless that their gift made room for them.

If all were satisfied to have the different gifts remain where the Lord has placed them, the church would suffer less confusion and embarrassment, but as long as the eye is put where the ear should be, and the mouth where the hand should be, we shall continue to have confusion or disorder. If we have a deacon who can exhort, pray, sing, read and talk of the Scriptures, let us be thankful to the Lord for the gift, but not feel that he should be ordained to the work of the ministry except he manifests the God-given ability to expound and rightly divide the word. When such gift is manifest there need be no delay in the ordination of the man who has it. Some of our ablest ministers of to-day were once deacons. There are many good, faithful deacons, however, who have no gift in prayer or praise, but fill well the place to which they are appointed, ever looking after the affairs of the church and the welfare of the brethren; are able in counsel and most dearly loved and appreciated.

In conclusion, we desire to say that we have not meant to criticise any church or brother in what we have said, but merely to suggest along this important line. If not deceived, we do desire above all things the peace and spiritual upbuilding of the house of God. "Let all things be done decently and in order." K.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Moses Starr.)

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association convened with the Fairview Church, Fulton County, Pa., October 9th, 10th and 11th, 1908, to the churches composing the same sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year of our mortal pilgrimage has gone by, and we are again brought together under the kind providence of God to greet each other and to send to you our annual communication called the Circular Letter. We hope to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance. In looking back and calling to mind our life-work and conversation, what have we to say for ourselves? Have we first sought the kingdom of God and his righteousness? Has Christ, that great Shepherd of Israel, been first and last among us? Has he been the chiefest among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely to us? It is indeed a blessing to have a name among the Lord's people, and to have our eyes opened to behold the beauty of the wonderful plan of redemption and see the glory that fills forever the church of the Most High. We are glad to find that you are blessed with the same love for the doctrine of God our Savior. It is true that there have been but few, if any,

added to our churches, but we must remember that it is upon the little flock that the unspeakable gift of the kingdom is bestowed. The Lord's people have ever been but few in numbers, so, dear brethren, let us not be discouraged at the smallness of our numbers. It is sad to see those who have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts seem to think more of this world's goods than they do for the welfare of Zion. Dear brethren, ever put your trust in the Lord, he will surely care for you. Set not your affection upon worldly gain, for what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world but lose his own soul? We still humble ourselves before those with whom we are in fellowship and correspondence. May the Lord our God ever find us looking unto him for all our needs. This is our prayer for Jesus' sake.

A. MELLOTT, Moderator.

J. C. MELLOTT, Clerk.

ORDINATIONS.

PURSUANT to a call of Little Flock Church of Primitive Baptists in Cass County, Mo., the following Elders and deacons met and ordained brethren Wright Davis and Nelson Kimbell to the office of deacons: Elder Wm. L. Hall and Deacon James Webb, of Little Blue Church; Elder W. S. Jeffrey and Deacon Edward Odell, of Little Flock Church.

Elder W. J. Hardesty, of Siloam Association, being present, was invited to a seat with the presbytery.

Deacon James Webb was chosen moderator, and Elder Wm. L. Hall clerk.

Elder Wm. L. Hall was chosen to deliver the ordination prayer, and Elder Hardesty to deliver the charge to the deacons.

Then proceeded with the ordination by prayer and the laying on of hands by the presbytery. The right hand of fellowship was given by the presbytery and the church. A general good feeling prevailed.

The presbytery then adjourned.

The church directed the clerk to send a notice of the meeting to be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

JAMES WEBB, Moderator.

WILLIAM L. HALL, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. S. Pate, Dec. 9th, 1908, Henry A. Hayes, of Prescott, Wash., and Miss Rebecca Barnes, daughter of Elder J. T. Barnes, of Dayton, Wash.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

BROTHER **Ankeny K. Reese** was born in Carnarvon, Wales, in April, 1856, and died in a local hospital of this city Nov. 16th, 1908, from injuries received in an ascending elevator of the Morris Packing Co.'s plant, aged 52 years. The accident was caused by a misinterpretation of signals by the operator. Brother Reese was superintendent of the pork department of this great institution. General Superintendent John S. Ward said of him: "Mr. Reese was one of the finest men I ever met. He was kind and courteous, and a model man. He was loved and respected by all the men under him. His death is a great loss to the company." His parents emigrated to America in his boyhood, settling first near Scranton, Pa., but later moved to Iowa, where brother Reese grew to manhood. His father's name was Jonah Reese. On March 10th, 1881, he married Miss Katherine Byram, daughter of David Byram and sister to the late Elder Milton W. Byram, all well known to the Primitive Baptists of Iowa. In October, 1887, it pleased God to reveal to brother Reese the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and also to reveal Christ as the end of the law for righteousness. He related his experience to the Cedar Creek Primitive Baptist Church, near Highland Center, Iowa, and was baptized by the late Elder Robert Spears. He was humble in spirit, and walked and talked his religion daily. He let his light so shine before men that his good works glorified God.

His funeral was largely attended, and many sorrowing relatives and friends attested to his worth as a man. The floral offerings almost covered his grave from sight. More than one hundred of his fellow-employees acted as an escort to the cemetery. Elders Walter Cash and J. C. Jones spoke comforting words to the grief-stricken widow and three children, who are left to mourn his absence in the home. He was a loving husband, a kind father, constant and unfeigned in brotherly love and very hospitable. He had been a reader of the SIGNS for many years, and rejoiced in the doctrine of the sovereignty of God as set forth in its columns. During the past five years brother Reese and I have exchanged many pleasant visits in each other's home, and his constant theme was Jesus and his love to poor, fallen sinners, of whom he felt to be chief. His death is a great personal loss to me. I trust our love for each other was a kin to that which knit David to Jonathan. We can look alone to God for comfort in this hour of sadness.

A. W. BLOOMFIELD.

ST. JOSEPH, Mo., Dec. 7, 1908.

SISTER **Lena W. Cubbage,** wife of Deacon Willard S. Cubbage, died Oct. 10th, 1908, at their home in Viola, Del., after an illness of four months of typhoid fever. Sister Cubbage was 45 years of age. Her health had been poor for several years, and her system was not equal to the disease that took her away. She was the daughter of brother William W. Meredith, and was baptized by the late Elder E. Rittenhouse, uniting with the Cow Marsh Church, Kent County, Delaware. She was blessed with a clear understanding of the things of the kingdom of Christ, and especially enjoyed conversing upon the doctrine of God our Savior, strong in the faith and patient in suffering. Her very cheerful disposition was appreciated by all who knew her, and in her home, though ofttimes a great sufferer, she would seem to forget her own suffering in her desire for the comfort and enjoyment of others. She was a precious sister in the church, and O how much we miss her face in the congregation and in her home. She was tried indeed, but her faith was in the risen Redeemer, and her trust was well staid, and the fortitude with which she bore her suffering showed the victory over death. Early in her illness her nerves became so shattered that she could not bear even her friends to enter her room, but she bore testimony of the truth as she lay waiting the end, to her husband, in a beautiful and sacred manner, praising the God of her salvation, and committing herself into His keeping. May the grace of God help those left to bear the separation, and give like assurance that it is her eternal gain. "God is the refuge of his people." There are left of her family, a husband and one son, Clifford M., her father and one sister, Mrs. Ada W. Jones, of Viola, Del.

Funeral service was held at Cow Marsh meetinghouse. The writer spoke from John xv. 9: "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love." Interment in Cow Marsh Cemetery.

BENJ. E. CUBBAGE.

Mrs. Cornelia Green was the wife of Mr. M. S. Green, of North Cambridge, N. Y. She died at her home of pneumonia Nov. 26th, 1908. She and her twin sister, Mrs. Cordelia Green, of Zion City, were the youngest of twelve children of the late brother David and sister Charlotte Odell, of the town of Tyre, Seneca Co., N. Y. To her marriage with our dear friend, M. S. Green, were born three children: Allen S., of New York, Mrs. George S. Tefft, of North Cambridge, N. Y., and the late Odell S. Green, who also died in the faith. Her twin sister, and a sister, Mrs. Eunice Marsh, of Tyre, N. Y., and two grandchildren also survive. Sister Green experienced a good hope through grace in her girlhood, and "was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision," but made a confession of that hope to the church. Sister Hattie Seward, of the church at Albany and Troy, writes that its record reads: "Mrs. Cornelia Green received as member of the church on recommendation of Elder Charles Bogardus, she being a member of a disbanded Old School Baptist Church at Mays Mill, N. Y., Elder Bogardus being their pastor and Elder Vail and Elder Bogardus both were serving the church when she united here. Mrs. Cornelia Green received by voice of the church Sept. 21st, 1900." While sister Green was not privileged to attend her church very often, there was no doubting her love for it, for she was ever ready to contend for the faith, and was anxious for the welfare of the brethren. Her home was, and is, an example of christian hospitality, and we feel that all who have enjoyed it will sympathize with the bereaved ones there.

Her pastor, Elder John B. Slauson, of Halcottsville, N. Y., attended her funeral at 1:30 p. m. Nov. 28th, 1908, and preached from John xvi. 5–8, which many of a large and very attentive audience of friends and relatives declared was a most able and comforting discourse. The burial was in the family plot at the Stump meetinghouse.

E. R. KINNEY.

Zellie T. James, daughter of Robert and Susan James, was born March 24th, 1898, died Sept. 17th, 1904, aged 6 years. Her disease was diphtheria. On the night she died, at about 1 o'clock, she called on the Lord three times to have mercy on her. She did the same again a few hours later. Her pleadings were very earnest, in a pitiful way, no doubt feeling the need of her Savior. She passed quietly and peacefully away, falling asleep in Jesus, to suffer no more. While on a visit among the Old Baptists at Cory Switch, brother J. P. Whitt and wife, sister Missouri Whitt, the grandparents of the little girl, told me of her death and how she talked. I was so impressed with it that I have written the above at their request. The Lord no doubt showed this dear little one her need of the Savior, though I was told she was a very quiet, meek and gentle child. This verifies the language of our blessed Lord, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. All who enter there must enter as little children. The Lord by his Spirit does work in the heart of all his dear ones, and by his grace they are all saved. May the Lord give grace to the bereaved father and mother of this dear little one, and may they be brought to trust in him as firmly as did she whom he hath taken to himself, and may they be reconciled to his blessed will. It is grievous to give up such dear, precious ones, but what God doeth is right, because he doeth it. Our loved ones who are gone have entered into the enjoyment of their eternal inheritance unto which they are begotten and predestinated. O blessed hope of entering into the enjoyment of our eternal inheritance. In this is our comfort and consolation. When we awake with his likeness then shall we be satisfied.

J. E. THORNBURY.

RATCLIFF, Ky., Dec. 9, 1908.

George L. Gilbert, my dear father, was born in Sussex, England, Jan. 31st, 1832, and died Sept. 1st, 1908, at his home in Mazon, Ill., at the age of 76 years and 7 months. He came alone to this country at the age of seventeen years, living near Buffalo, N. Y., for some time, and afterwards came to Illinois, finally settling in Grundy County in 1854. He was married to Sarah Carrick in 1869. He had been gradually failing for several months, and in spite of all that physicians and loving ones could do for him we had to part with our dear father and husband, but while we mourn our irreparable loss, we feel assured it is his eternal gain. Some time before he took to his bed he lost interest in worldly affairs, and told me he had no desire to get well; he said his hope was stayed in Jesus, and what he had done for him was more than everything else, and we have nowhere else to look. The Bible and the SIGNS were his daily companions until his eyesight failed, a couple of months before he was called home. His disease was of the nerves, which caused intense restlessness, which was distressing to witness. He was constantly praying for deliverance, often saying, "Lord Jesus, come quickly," and would quote Scripture in abundance until strength failed and his spirit took its flight to the God he had worshiped ever since he was a boy. He was baptized by Elder Chenowith, in Bureau County, Ill., over fifty years ago, soon afterward moving his membership to the Ebenezer Church, in Grundy County, where it remained. Many will remember how he enjoyed attending the associations and other meetings of our order. He had the confidence and good will of all who knew him. He was a man of ability and good judgment, taking quite an interest in the welfare of his community, holding different offices. He leaves to mourn, an affectionate wife, five children, eighteen grandchildren, one great-grandchild, one brother and two sisters.

Elder S. H. Humphrey, of Galesburg, was present, and preached a very able and comforting discourse on the occasion. Interment was in the Ward Cemetery. JENNIE G. ASH.

DWIGHT, Ill.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. W. J. Peck, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. E. Chandler, N. Y., $1.00; A Friend, D. C., $2.00; E. M. Faulkner, N. Y., $1.00; Thurston Knight, Mo., $1.00; Richard Waller, Mo., $1.00.—Total, $7.00.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

WM. Little has changed his address from Donie, Texas, to Pottsville, Texas.

Eppa Norman has changed his address from Middleburg, Va., to Round Hill, Loudoun Co., Va.

MEETINGS.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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POETRY.

WAIT.

WEARY with wandering through the desert lonely,
A pilgrim fainting watched the dying light;
Heartsick in hearing of the bleak winds only,
He spoke his sorrows to the falling night.
"In fields whose harvest promised a rich treasure,
My golden seeds were sown with joy elate;
In youth and health I sought enduring pleasure,
For which my longing heart thought not to wait.

Cold o'er the frozen clod the snow is drifted
Where, buried deep, lies hid my precious grain,
And wearied love with wistful eye uplifted
Watches my darling on the bed of pain.
Where is the promise of that brighter morrow
Illusive Hope saw in the future great?"
Sink not in unbelief, O child of sorrow,
But learn in patient trustfulness to wait.

Wait till the balmy breath of breezes blowing
From sunny skies, shall melt these hills of snow;
Wait till the rising sun, with lustre glowing,
Dispel the gloom, and healthful light bestow.
Wait till the purpose of the great Refiner
Shall be fulfilled in purging from all dross
Thy golden faith, and then the wise Designer
Will give thee gain exceeding all thy loss.

Looking at things unseen by mortal vision,
Thou shalt rejoice to see thy buried seed
Yielding an hundred fold in joys Elysian,
Unstained by sin, and from corruption freed.
Thy loved one, purified by pain and anguish,
Touched by the finger of the faith of God,
May yet adore the love that made him languish,
And thus, in waiting, thou shalt kiss the rod.

Or if in deeper seas the way is hidden
Through which his gracious hand is leading thee,
Still trust his love; no trouble comes unbidden;
Each sorrow breaks some bond, to make thee free.
Wait then, though gloomy be the way he leadeth;
Wait till these transient troubles shall abate;
Thy Lord will bring thee where his flock he feedeth;
Wait for his word; and if it tarry, wait.

JANUARY 18, 1882.

[THE foregoing poetry was written by the late Elder Wm. L. Beebe, and is republished by request of his sister, Mrs. Harriet M. Larue.—ED.]

AFFLICTIONS.

OUR light afflictions here
Are working for our good;
Although they seem severe,
And are not understood,
They all are sent by God's command,
And all are governed by his hand.

They all are but a moment long,
They are not sent to stay,
And neither are they faults, nor wrong,
Come to us as they may.
We then with patience wait to know
The wisdom of our God below.

Things seen on earth can't show
One glimpse of Jesus' face,
But things eternal go
Beyond all nature's space,
While faith beholds them all complete,
And that, in Him, they all do meet.

We learn thy will, O God,
By all our sufferings here;
Thy kind and loving rod
But teaches us to fear.
Then fear not, he will bring to pass
All things decreed by him, at last.

J. G. EUBANKS.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NACOGDOCHES, Texas, Nov. 12, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—How unworthy I feel to claim this union with you, but I feel to say, O that I had heeded your fatherly advice, and had waited upon the Lord, as you instructed me. But I said then, "Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity." How anxious we are to be weighed at times, when we have contention with a brother and feel sure we have the Scriptures on our side and are supported in our views by most of the brethren; but when God comes to judge in the matter he lays the axe at the root of the tree, he goes to the bottom of the matter, he searches all things, even the very secrets of the heart, and when he makes his judgments known, behold he says, "Only by pride cometh contention," and O how sinful we feel to be when his judgments are against us, even if we are right in our views. When called upon to answer our righteous Judge we will say, "Behold, I am vile: what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth." This has been my sad experience, dear brother. I know you will not be surprised at hearing it, and I hope you will forgive me for not abiding by your brotherly counsel. There was no trouble in our church to amount to much, but O the trouble and sorrow I have experienced in my heart. The rod of correction has been laid heavily upon me for these three years, and what I have suffered no mortal knows, only those who have been rebellious as I have been. I feel I have paid my own fare, and that the Lord is not accountable for my overthrow. But to-day I have been given to rejoice in these words: "Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah." How sweet is the thought that the Lord has prepared these afflictions for me. God's people, when they fall, fall into his hands. The chastening of the Lord is severe at the time, but we rejoice when he enables us thereby to see how infinitely better it is to fall into the hands of the living God than to fall away from him. Only false professors fall away; they are not in trouble as other men. But it is different with God's dear children, "for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." O how can the Lord love such a vile sinner as I am? But my experience has given me hope, and with a full realization of the truth in my heart I can say with Jonah, "Salvation is of the Lord." O how little I now feel to be. It is no longer a mystery how a whale could swallow a man, when we feel ourselves to be so little, and cry unto the Lord in our affliction. Then the Lord hears us, and we receive more than we ask for. What a loving and gracious Father we have. "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" My experience has taught me to see how weak I am and how glorious is the grace of God. How strong are the everlasting arms that have brought salvation. The Scriptures do not say in vain, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." I do not feel that it is because of any good that I have done, but because of his great love that I am enabled to rejoice in this sweet peace. I can now see that the hand of God has been with me in all this affliction, and I feel that through this tribulation I have entered the kingdom. I have seen my weakness, I have discovered the plague of my own heart, I have sat in darkness, but praise the name of the Lord, for I feel to be among the people who have seen a great light, and among those who sat in darkness

and in the region and shadow of death, who have seen the light spring up. O glorious light! The Sun has arisen upon me; it is the Sabbath day. O rest, sweet rest! How blessed are they who have entered into this rest; they no longer think their own thoughts nor speak their own words, "for our conversation is in heaven." The days of labor are over in which God "suffered all nations to walk in their own ways." Notice the Scripture saith he suffered them, thus signifying that even in those days men could do only that which the Lord suffered them to do. And now is the day of the Lord. Thou shalt keep the Sabbath holy unto the Lord. He no longer suffers us to walk in our own ways, which in time past he did to prove us, to see whether we would walk in his law or not. (Exodus xvi. 4.) It was found that we would not thus walk, so now is his time. In six days we labored under the burden of sin, and the seventh, or last day, is the Lord's. He puts his law in our minds and writes it in our hearts, and causes us to keep his Sabbath as a sign unto us and him. When we enter into this rest our minds are turned unto the Lord; we remember all the way in which he has led us, and we feel to say, Surely thou hast led us by a way that we knew not, and in paths that we had not seen. Thus the Scripture is fulfilled which saith, "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called, The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it: but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." Why shall they not err therein? I once thought it because the way was so plain; but that is not it. "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." But God's dear people are led by him. "And I will cause [yes, it is the day of his power, and he will cause] them to dwell safely: they shall be my people, and I will be their God; and I will give them one heart, and one way." This is the day in which the Lord gives his people everything; he gives them sorrow, repentance, faith, peace and joy. Yea, "What have we that we did not receive?" "Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?" "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Wonderful gift! I feel to write of the effect of this gift. The way is called the way of holiness, and no unclean thing shall pass over it. But it is also written, "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." Notice they crept in unawares; the Lord did not bring them in, as he brings his people in, and their condemnation is foreordained. There is a beauty in the predestination of God in all things, but it is not given to all his people to see it, and, brother Chick, I believe that some of God's dear children are among those who speak evil of the way of truth, by reason of these ungodly men and those who follow their pernicious ways. If not so, then I must turn against the dearest friends that I have met among Old School Baptists.

I will tell you of my first trial in this matter; it occurred soon after I united with the Old School Baptist Church. I had never heard them preach in my life, until a few weeks before I united with them, but I had always heard of them as a people who preached that "what is to be will be." There was one of that faith who was living near me when I was first given to rejoice in the hope of the

Lord. I was so full of rejoicing that I wanted to tell my joy to others, and as this was my nearest neighbor, I would often talk with him. After I became a member of the church with him our conversations were frequent, and one day I used the term, "absolute predestination" in a way that showed my belief in the doctrine. He replied, Some of the Baptists object to that doctrine. I thought at first he meant that they objected only to the term, but I found differently, to my surprise.

I was baptized by Elder W. M. Bryan just a short time before he died. I was with him several times during his illness, and he talked much to me of the glorious things of the kingdom, and in his conversation I was greatly comforted and strengthened. The doctrine of predestination had not been discussed between us, but I felt sure that brother Bryan and I were agreed, as we were so perfectly agreed upon the glorious truth of salvation by grace. The last time I visited him before his death he was too weak to talk much, but I could see that his mind was burdened to say something. He finally said, "Brother Pace, the doctrine of absolute predestination I cannot indorse." We had not talked upon this subject before, and I knew that he was not alluding to my views, yet I was grieved in my heart to hear him object to what seemed to me so full of comfort and consolation. I kept these things in my heart. My faith in the doctrine was not changed in the least, but I was puzzled to know how any one could preach the blessed gospel of salvation through Christ as Elder Bryan did and then speak against the glorious doctrine of predestination.

Soon after Elder Bryan died I met Elder W. J. Adams, and I found him to be a precious brother, too, and I learned that for many years he had been a yokefellow with brother Bryan in the ministry. They had traveled and preached together much, and were joint-pastors of several churches, and in all their labors there had not been the least difference in their views. I found that brother Adams was taking the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that comforted me. I was however afraid to approach him upon the doctrine of predestination, for he had said there was no difference between him and brother Bryan in their views. After a time he said to me, I have been told that brother Bryan had gone off with the limited predestinarians, but I cannot believe it. This made it plain. I did not tell brother Adams what I had heard from brother Bryan's lips; I was too full of sorrow over the matter. I thought, O is there any reality in the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ? Is the doctrine of predestination to deceive us here, and when we come to die we must give it up and say it is of the flesh? O the grief of a soul in such bewilderment. But the matter was afterward told to me, and I came to see why brother Bryan spoke as he did. There was one of these ungodly persons who had come in unawares, and many were his followers. He preached the predestination of all things in the following manner: he said all things are predestinated of God, and we cannot help what we do. At times in the pulpit he said he thought evil things in his heart, and he could not help it. He said that in the new birth man was not changed in the least, and of course if given opportunity he would carry out the thoughts of his heart, and, as it was predestinated, he could not help it. He said Christ himself was not a perfect man, and it was not to be expected that we should be more perfect than

he was. This man unwittingly acknowledged a truth in his language: "Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin." Brother Bryan had heard this man preach all of the above, and more, too, and he opposed it. This man contended that this was the doctrine of the SIGNS and of all who held to the doctrine of predestination. After this brother Bryan avoided that man as much as possible, seeing that the people were being carried away by his pernicious doctrines, but that man would raise the matter every time he met with Elder Bryan, claiming that he wanted to reason with him and show him that such was the doctrine of the Bible and of all sound Baptists. On one occasion Elder Bryan told him plainly that he would hear no more of it from him. Then that man started the report which Elder Adams had heard. Is it any wonder that Elder Bryan told me with his dying words that he was opposed to such a doctrine as this?

I have written you this because it is the truth, and because I believe there are many other brethren who are opposed to the predestination of all things for the same reason that Elder Bryan was. We should be careful how we present this glorious truth. The same God who by the pen of Jude said that these ungodly men were before of old ordained to this condemnation, also said by the pen of Paul, "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." If our lives do not show forth the fruit of the Spirit, and we preach the predestination of God as a cloak, we are preaching our own condemnation.

I will now close. Pray for me in my lonely hours. I do not meet those to whom I can unburden my mind, and therefore I have written as I have; I hope I have said nothing amiss.

Your brother in the faith,

ROBERT S. PACE.

[WE desire to say that brother Pace's letter commends itself to us very much, and the sentiments of it have always been commended to our mind. It is true that the editors and correspondents of the SIGNS have always advocated the Bible doctrine of the predestination of all things, but the man of whom our brother writes as advocating this doctrine as a shelter for his sins, was among those who are spoken of as turning the grace of God into lasciviousness. The Lord was crucified according to God's appointment, but men did it with wicked hands, and these men needed forgiveness. Joseph was sold into Egypt, according to God's appointment, but still his brethren meant it for evil, and did not seek to excuse themselves because it was also God's appointment. We feel to approve heartily what our brother has said regarding this matter.—C.]

BENNINGS, D. C., Nov. 1, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I feel like trying to write a few lines, if the Lord will guide my pen. I know that without him I can do nothing, for I feel unworthy and helpless. We are told, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." No wonder that natural men thought the teachings of Christ hard to understand. Some of his disciples walked no more with him; they were false disciples I suppose. But to the others he said, "Will ye also go away?" Peter said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe

and are sure that thou art the Christ." There is but the one way. Christ said, "I am the door." He that climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. Who can know these blessed truths save those who are born of God? And they are "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering. O that we could bear these fruits all the time, but our vile nature rebels against these things, and this causes the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, so that we cannot do the things we would. How we do at times feel our dependence upon the holy and merciful God. One may attend meetings all his life, or be taught at home or elsewhere, but if the Lord has not wrought his own work in that soul, as he did in Saul of Tarsus, he will never become a child of God. Our blessed Savior said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Of such as these he says, "I will in no wise cast out," but "will raise him up at the last day." Dear brethren and sisters, what blessed promises these are from him who, we know, is sure to fulfill them. He is one upon whom we poor, despised creatures can rely. Our Lord said again, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Is the natural man poor in spirit? No, he has more than heart can wish; he knows nothing but this world and its pleasures and its gains. A fountain cannot rise above its own level; so such a man is at home in this world, which to the people of God is a waste howling wilderness; but we look for a city whose Maker and Builder is God.

I enjoyed the association at Frying Pan, and I thank the brethren and sisters one and all for their kindness to me. I felt at home among them, and if I am not allowed the blessed privilege of meeting with them again, may God bless them all, is my prayer. The ministering brethren preached the good old doctrine of salvation by grace. Some of them live hundreds of miles apart, yet they all preached the same glorious doctrine, showing that they were not taught by men. Paul said, "For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." What a glorious privilege it is to meet with the dear brethren and sisters who can speak of the glorious doctrine of God's sovereign grace and the absolute predestination of all things. Known unto him were all things from the beginning; he created all things out of nothing, yet man thinks he can help him; poor, proud man, who is nothing, and less than nothing in his sight; what can man do? I often hear men talk of self-made men. Adam, our first parent, was made of the dust of the ground, but he did not become a living soul until God gave him breath; so every one is just as dependent upon God for spiritual life as Adam was for natural life, so what can poor, helpless man do? Nothing. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."—Eph. ii. 1. Dead certainly means no life, and as God is the giver of all things there can be no chance for man to do anything himself. Christ said to the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth," for the Father seeketh such to worship him. He did not say they seek him with man's inventions. "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." To the natural man there is no chance to find Him out only as God reveals himself

to him. By grace ye are saved, and not of works, lest any man should boast. There is that great gulf between the natural and spiritual man which no one can pass. God created everything for himself, and there is nothing that he created but what serves his purpose. Christ says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Some contend that is an invitation to all mankind. God is a just God, and knows all things; knows what man is and what man can do. He does not ask man to do what he knows he cannot do. Christ says none can come to him unless the Father draw them, and as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up. There was but one serpent lifted up, so Christ rose once from the dead; he then finished the whole plan of salvation for his people, the church, that is, his bride. He said to Peter, Upon this Rock I will build my church, and nothing shall prevail against it. How comforting those words are to his poor, afflicted and tempest-tossed worms of the dust.

This Scripture has been on my mind for some time: "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."—2 Thess. ii. 14. Now do we believe the above Scripture to be true? Do we love to believe it is spiritual food to us? If so, then we are fellow-citizens of the city of God, and are no more strangers and foreigners. Again, Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." This wonderful argument of the Master establishes the fact that all the corn that is brought forth was virtually in the seed cast into the ground before it died. The corn of wheat I understand to be Christ himself, and that before he died on the cross all the spiritual seed that was or ever shall be brought forth was in him by gift as the lot of his inheritance. There would be no use to plant seed if it did not bring forth after its kind, and if the seed bears of its own kind, it is a strong argument that what is brought forth was virtually in it before. Christ is compared to an apple tree, and every apple that is produced must in the tree be brought forth virtually, or it would never be brought forth; all the fruit is of the same nature from first to last. It is the tree that puts forth the fruit, and not the fruit of itself. First make the tree good and the fruit will be good. God in his own time puts forth fruit by his quickening power. This divine Spirit creates a swelling desire for righteousness and holiness that kills to the love of sin, and gives in place thereof a love for all righteousness. The Lord opens the eyes of our understanding to see the beauty in holiness, and to see ourselves poor lost sinners, so that our hearts swell with grief and we mourn over our lost condition, and "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." This is why at times quickened sinners feel as though their hearts would burst with sorrow, and at times feel so sinsick and sin-burdened that they can hardly go on to these blessed promises that are in store for them who love him; but Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." By the power of the spiritual life flowing through this tree our souls are brought into a panting condition, and the soul says, Give me Jesus or I die. "As the hart panteth after the

waterbrooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." This panting of soul carries with it the petition, "God be merciful to me a sinner;" Lord, canst thou have mercy on me? Thus the Spirit is making intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered. This continues until they are humbled at the feet of mercy, and are cut off from all dependence upon anything that they can do, and to feel that God will not be merciful to them, and that they have no friend on earth or in heaven. This is a dark time with the soul, but "weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Thus the convicted sinner comes to feel that he is not worthy of God's notice, and that his prospects for life and salvation are dark as midnight; here God will bring him and prepare him to acknowledge that all is of grace, or that salvation is of the Lord.

Dear brethren editors, please pardon me for writing this poorly composed letter; it is like the writer, of not much account, but these things have been on my mind since the association at Frying Pan, and I thought I would try and write a few lines on this wonderful subject upon which my mind has been stirred by way of remembrance, as Peter said on one occasion. I cannot express how I enjoy your editorials and the letters from different ones: they all speak the same language: salvation by grace. May God bless you all, is my humble prayer.

From your poor and undeserving brother, if one at all,

THOMAS ALDEN.

WINONA, Wash., Dec. 7, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—You are dearly beloved and much esteemed for the truth's sake, and I suppose oft persecuted for the truth's sake, for Jesus, with whom I trust ye are crucified, hath said to his disciples, "Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets." But ye have not so learned Christ. "We are persuaded better things of you." We have fellowship with you because of your sufferings for righteousness' sake, because your righteousness has and does exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. In filling the measure of the sufferings of Christ it is manifest that you are one with him and the Father; being made partakers of his sufferings you are made conformable to his glory, and in that we rejoice and are exceeding glad, for we have a foretaste of his rejoicing, for he "maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered," "being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Yea, "for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." Those things that are evil, that persecute us, that cause us to suffer as we are beset without and within, even the thorn that is in our flesh, the messenger of Satan, are according to God's will. If this were not plain to me I do not see how I could say with the apostle and the brethren, "We glory in tribulations also," when I am made conformable to his image, made partaker of his suffering, been crucified to the law, taught by that still small voice that all is good, in that it works "together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." After having

thought the law promised life, as it was with some whom Jesus admonished to "search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me," I sought to obtain that life by obedience to that law; I stumbled at that stumbling-stone, and the word said, "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." While I was trying to fulfill that law I read, "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." The law that I thought was ordained unto life I found unto death, because I sought to be justified by my own deeds, by my own actions, and in my best deeds I found sin; my best thoughts I found to be vile, for they sought the glory that belongs to the Father, and at a time when I expected it not, because I had come to the end of the law. I could do nothing more, the law condemned me in all I said or did, there was no hope there for me. I was crying, Lost, for no favor had been shown me. I was full of wounds and bruises and putrefying sores from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head; I was neither mollified nor bound up; I was without hope and without God in the world. I was crying, O that I might find him in whom my soul delighteth. O that I could say, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." I could not go forward, I could not turn to the right nor to the left, neither could I retreat, for death was there, and under such conditions could pray like the Master in the garden. How could I, one so vile, one so sinful? I am not deserving of the least of his favors, how could I borrow the prayer of the Son of God? I truly thought the very pangs of death had taken hold upon me, and the prayer of the poor publican was all that I could think of. Then in my reconciliation I cried, Not my will, but thine be done; and as I have written before, at a time unexpected he fell upon my neck and kissed me, and commanded the fatted calf to be killed, yea, he took me into his banqueting-house and his banner over me was love; his loving-kindness O so great; then I was raised by faith in likeness of his glory. He had gone to prepare a place for me, that where he was there I might be with him; and while we were upon the mountain-top, and he was transfigured in my sight, I wished to remain there forever; but right there in the midst of glory, a foretaste, as it were, of the only real pleasure I had ever known, an evil thought entered my poor finite mind: I wanted to build a tabernacle for him, one for Elias, and one for Moses, but he reproved, saying, "Ye know not what ye ask." The Elder Brother understood all things, he having the Spirit without measure; yea, he knew how to sympathize with me. We are given faith by measure; he knows our infirmities, he knows the sin that doth so easily beset us, he knows the fiery trials that we shall pass through, and he oft overtakes us by the way and opens unto us the Scriptures, takes us unto himself and gives us to feast, while he breaks the bread. In that he has called us unto himself, taken us out of the world, the world hates us, speaketh all manner of evil against us falsely for his sake, and this is an evidence of his gracious work within, and in this can we rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is our reward; in that we are hated of men for his sake, is an evidence that we are crucified with him. What does it mean to be hated of all men? "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." "With the mind [of Christ] I myself

serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." "I delight in the law of God after the inward man." "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." Like expressions, with my own experience, teach me there is a constant contending of two armies. We are so complex that we hate the oft besettings of flesh, the lusts of the flesh, and die in them; and were it not for the constant watchcare of the Spirit, bringing into subjection the old or outer man, we could not be hated of all men.

But I have written too long a letter now. I do not often write, because it takes me so long to tell a little, and when that little is told it is so poorly expressed I always wish I had not started to write. Let me beg you to once more extend to me your charity, once more pass my imperfections by. Finally, dear brethren, farewell.

Unworthily yours,

A. G. JONES.

HERNDON, Va., Dec. 15, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—A few nights ago a young man came to me and wanted me to tell him something about the language and the true meaning of the words recorded in Revelation iii. 20, which read: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." When the young man first spoke to me about it I felt to tremble from head to foot, and imagine I felt something like John did when Jesus came to him to be baptized of him. "But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" Yes, I felt very barren at the time, and thought perhaps the young man could instruct me, instead of me instructing him. He went on with question after question, and finally asked, "Don't Jesus knock at the door of all men?" I said, "No, he never knocks at a door where all are dead within, but to the living, and they always respond, and the door, or heart, is open for his reception." I then referred him to what was said in Solomon's Song in regard to Christ and his bride, the church, fifth chapter and second verse, which reads, "I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night." Hence the words, "If any man hear my voice." Not as some quote it: If any man will hear my voice, but, If any man hear it. How can a dead man hear? He must have life given him before he can hear. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." We are told that when Jesus speaks it is done, and when he commands it stands fast. Thus we see he knocks and the door (heart) is opened unto him. The bride says, "I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh." Yes, dear child of grace, even in the darkest hour of our nights we are sometimes awakened by that still small voice which whispers in our heart, "Peace, be still."

"Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled." O what joy and gladness is felt in the poor sinner's heart

when awakened to that joyful sound. "It is I; be not afraid." He then comes in to us and sups with us, and we with him. O what a joyful feast, for he tells us, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and made holy and without blame before him in love. He loved us before we could love him. Dear, doubting child of grace, I am a poor, weak worm of the dust, and feel sometimes that I am lost to all that is good and great, and when I feel that I am almost gone forever I hear that knocking: "Peace, be still." Jesus is then all and all to me. O give me Jesus, I want nothing more. I think I can see him now by faith, "wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger," and the shepherds going to worship him, the holy child Jesus. Well might the poet exclaim:

"Hail the blest morn! when the great Mediator
Down from the mansions of glory descends;
Shepherds go worship the babe in the manger,
Lo! for his guard the bright angels attend.

Cold on his cradle the dewdrops are shining,
Low lies his head with the beasts of the stall;
Angels adore him, in slumbers reclining,
Wise men and shepherds before him do fall."

O yes, they slumber, reclining their heads at Jesus' feet; they worship him, they love him because he first loved them.

The book of Revelation is mysterious to the carnal mind, and I must confess it is mysterious to poor me. I know if I should go on and commit every word of it to memory, and not see Jesus and his bride, it would be no revelation to me, for it reads, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." It was a great revelation to John to behold things shown unto him. John uses the words, I saw and I heard. "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." She was clothed in linen white and clean, washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. They are joined together, and let not man put asunder. The door is now open, they sup together in unity. He calls her his sister; he her Elder Brother; he calls her, My love, my dove, my undefiled.

Dear brethren editors, you can see that I have only hinted at a few things in connection with the language given me by the young man. I would be glad if Elder Chick, Elder Ker or Elder Durand would write upon the same text. It may be that I do not know what I have been writing about, still I trust I love you all for the truth's sake, and I can tell you, one and all, who write for the dear old SIGNS, if I did not love you, you would never see my name in print in the good old paper.

I do hope that all who are behind on their subscription will come at once to the front and pay up to date. Do not let this dear medium go down, for it is too old to be neglected; our forefathers supported it, and so should we.

Love and best wishes to you all; a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Your brother, I hope,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

[A SHORT editorial on the above subject was published in the SIGNS for September 15th, 1908. We are sure that brother Oliver knows and fully understands the matter, and though he may feel he has but faintly expressed himself, he has told the story and his brethren will understand him. We would be very glad indeed if brother Chick or brother Durand, or both, would write on the text as suggested by brother Oliver.—K.]

NEW CASTLE, Pa., Oct. 22, 1908.

TO THE SALEM CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA, PA.—DEAR PASTOR, BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I have been asked to write a letter to the church, but until recently I have felt reluctant to do so.

Now, dear friends, with regard to the state of my soul at the present time, what can I say? Very little. How wonderfully rich are those who have grace. How many there seem to be around us who are satisfied with a sort of religion; they seem to be at ease, while I cannot rest for one moment. If I do not know Christ I want to know him and enjoy his presence. I often wonder what the church saw in me, such a poor, sinful creature. I felt to be so dumb when asked to speak, but the peace that flowed into my poor soul when I was received into the church was unspeakable; it gives me hope that I have found forgiveness with the Lord. If I remember right, it is about twenty-five years ago that I went to the quarterly meeting in Canada with my mother, and Elder Lester preached from the words, "And thou shalt call his name Jesus." I think it was his first visit to Canada. If ever a poor soul was convicted, then it was I, but the pleasures of the world choked my convictions, and I went on sinning as before. The next sermon I heard (I mean with a spiritual ear) was from the dear pastor of Salem Church, from the words: "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." That was a precious feast for me. Another time I visited Cleveland, Ohio, and heard Elder Alexander speak from the words: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." I felt there was no one in the little company as poor in spirit as I, and I felt a blessing from the sermon. How often the words come to me, "God moves in a mysterious way," when I think of the way he has led me. My heart seems to be broken at times with a sight and feeling sense of the way the Lord has borne with me, and I feel afraid to go any farther than the poor publican: "God be merciful to me a sinner." I am full of doubts and fears, and as prone to do evil as the sparks to fly upward, and if it was not for the grace of God I would be undone forever. I feel assured none but a covenant-keeping God could have instructed my poor soul of its state and condition.

I must close or I will weary the church; I did not intend to write such a long epistle. I would be pleased to hear from any of the brethren or sisters.

From your unworthy sister, if one at all, HELEN McCORMICK.

NEW CASTLE, Pa., Oct. 27, 1908.

MY DEAR BROTHER AND PASTOR:—I duly received your kind and welcome letter, and truly felt in reading it that it was very encouraging and sweet food for my poor soul. You have learned by this time that with the help of the Lord I made the attempt to write to the church. I tried to banish the very thought of such a thing, but the Lord's ways are not our ways. I always feel timid in writing to the church, feeling that they are an experienced people, and are well fed every Sunday. I feel at times like a sheep without a shepherd, I seem so far away, and I seem to be in such a cold, careless state that it makes me wonder if I am an experienced woman. Yesterday Angus and I attended the funeral of one of our neighbors (a Methodist of course). O such a way as that preacher did speak, how he had won souls for Christ and had made his peace with God. As I sat there

the words came to me, The blind lead the blind and both fall into the ditch. When I came out I said to Angus, How thankful we should be that we are what we are. Sometimes I feel discontented because I cannot hear the gospel every Sunday, but when I see many others I feel I should never be done thanking and praising God for the way he has led and cared for such a great sinner as I am. I would not give up my little hope for a thousand worlds.

I received a letter from my sister, telling me how much she enjoyed the company of the Lord's servants, and what wonderful liberty you had, especially the night you spoke in London. I would have enjoyed being there. I felt disappointed in not being able to be with you the last of this month, but the way was hedged up and I could not come. Angus and I often speak of all the people, and still think we will some day be residents of your city. We join in love to yourself and family.

With christian love, I remain yours affectionately,

HELEN McCORMICK.

WAVERLY, Pa., Dec. 9, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Please find money order for four dollars, apply same to the credit of sister Ruth Drake, of Prattsburg, N. Y., R. F. D. 3. I also send two excellent letters, one to the Otego Church, from sister Hallenbeck, of West Davenport, N. Y., who is a member at Otego, and sorely afflicted with a cancer. Brethren, write to this dear, afflicted sister, she cannot get out, and it would do her much good to hear from her friends. You do not know how much good a few lines would do her in her distress; and do not forget sister Laura Bailey, of Schoharie, N. Y., who is a young member at Schoharie, and one of the little doubting ones, as you will see by her letter. I know there are a great many among God's people who feel just as she does; write and let her know that she is not alone in her peculiar experience; such need encouragement, and I do hope that you who can write encouragingly to such dear, doubting children will feel impressed to do so. While you have your pen in hand do not forget dear old brother Walter Reed and his companion, of Hammondsport, N. Y., R. F. D. They live all alone, and miles away from the church, and are so old and infirm that they cannot get out to see their dear kindred in Christ; please remember them with messages of love to cheer them on their lonely and sad journey. Yes, dear brethren, remember all of God's dear, mourning, isolated, afflicted people, and then if you have a little time, and think I am worthy of it, think of me, who am less than the least of all, if one at all. I cannot comfort you, but you can comfort me.

Your helpless and sometimes almost hopeless brother, D. M. VAIL.

WEST DAVENPORT, N. Y., Nov., 1908.

TO THE OTEGO CHURCH—DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I would like very much to be with you at this the last meeting of the year, but Providence orders it otherwise, therefore I have yielded to a desire to write a few lines to be read at the meeting. I do not know what I shall say; I can neither edify nor instruct, but perhaps some of my thoughts and feelings at this particular time may interest you. As I sit here day after day alone, with no one to speak to of the things most interesting to me, I think much about the other and better life, and the great Being who holds the destiny of

all nations in his hand. Sometimes he is high and lifted up, and I am overwhelmed with his majesty and sovereignty, and can only prostrate myself at his feet, confessing my sins and utter unworthiness, begging mercy and forgiveness; at other times he seems very near, and I can tell him all my wants and needs, how sinful and weak I am, how sorely I feel the affliction he has laid upon me and how much I need his sustaining grace to help me bear it, and I plead:

"All my hope on thee is stayed,
All my help from thee I bring;
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of thy wing."

At such times I feel the sweet assurance that he will be with me to the end. Again doubts and questionings arise. How do I know this? Did I not learn it from my parents, or from reading the SIGNS, which I have read from my youth? and instantly all is confusion, dark and vain and wild, there is nothing stable, no rock for me, all is sinking sand. In despair I go back to the time when a guilty sinner before God, with my sins weighing me down I was given faith to say, Lord God, I do believe, and my burden of sin was removed as completely as if it had never been. Again faith revives, the rock is beneath my feet and my hope in the Savior of sinners, who died that we might live, and I can say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him," and pray that I may come off more than conqueror through him that loved us and gave himself for us.

But I am saying too much. Think as charitably of me as you can. Pray for me, that my faith fail not. May love and peace be with you all.

A sinner saved by grace,

M. JENNIE HALLENBECK.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., Nov. 17, 1908.

DEAR ELDER VAIL:—I have been in trouble for a couple of weeks, and have felt that I was the worst hypocrite on earth, and truly wondered why God spared my life. What I have written and said has all come to my mind, and it seems nothing has come from my heart, and I believed I had been trying to make myself an Old School Baptist, and I know that a sheep cannot be made out of a goat. I truly believe that the Old School Baptist Church is the true church of the living God, and every one for whom Jesus shed his precious blood will certainly be saved. It seems if I could feel for a moment that I am one I would be willing to suffer as long as I live, then again, I know I would complain. Others tell such beautiful experiences it seems they could not doubt; they tell when they first knew they were sinners, lost, and also when they were delivered from death, but I cannot. I know that I am lost unless God saves me, and if I know myself I am as helpless in regard to saving myself as I was the day I was born. I was not as happy after my baptism as others tell about, and never had any beautiful experience. I do wrong every day, but if I could would live godly.

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know."

I do not think I belong in the church, nor in the world, and I do not want to be a burden to the church, so I am telling you as nearly as I can how I feel, and want you to do what you think best.

I received a lovely letter from sister Rose Tamsett, asking me to Otego in December, when you will be there, but I do not feel that I can go feeling as I do. The brethren tell me I write good letters, and that they knew I would join the church, they could judge from my face,

and that frightens me. The children of God have such a good, peaceful expression, different from worldly people; I never could see that before I was a member. Do you think there is any one like me?

I would like to hear from you, but I believe you will be tired of my troubles. All the members have been very good to me. I hope you are well.

I will say goodnight.

LAURA BAILEY.

FARMINGTON, Ill., Dec. 27, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Another year has rolled around, and I am reminded that it is my duty to send you my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the year 1909. I have been a subscriber for over fifty years, and this will in all probability be my least year. I have received the number for January 1st, 1909, have read it through, and was glad to hear again from our venerable brother Yeoman. His experience is mine, his darkness and doubts and destitute condition of hearing the gospel preached are the same with me.

"Like one alone I seem to be,
O is there any one like me?"

While he seems not to suffer bodily, I have suffered much, being afflicted with a stroke of paralysis in July last, affecting my head and one side of my face, which reminds me that my time is short in this world. I am past my threescore and ten, yet it seems but as yesterday when it is past. What is man, that thou art mindful of him and rememberest him in long forbearance and mercy, when all nations are but as a drop in the bucket, and as small dust of the balance, and vanity in thy sight? To what shall we liken the great "I AM," he who created all things by the word of his power? He created all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil; he has declared that thus far shalt thou go, and no farther. Nothing has ever taken place but what is known to him; even a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his power; the hairs of our head are all numbered. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth; who was then to direct him what to do? He created man of the dust of the ground, and placed him over the workmanship of his hand; he was the author of everything that did exist; he placed man in the garden and gave him a law as to what he should and should not do. Man being created with lust, we see that he lusted for things forbidden. Then by man did sin enter the world. "So death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." I believe that all this was embraced in his eternal purpose; it did not come by chance. God could have had it otherwise if it had been in his purpose; but we see that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. By man came death, so by man came the resurrection. The man by whom came the Resurrection was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, made of a woman under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. This man, at the appointed time, was made manifest, and in due time was baptized by John, and was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. He was tempted in all points like unto his brethren; so God must have had a purpose in Satan's being a part in the eternal purpose. We see in the case of Job, that when the sons of God came to worship, Satan came also. God has a purpose in him in the trials of all his children; he only can work in the flesh; dust is the serpent's meat. I firmly believe, brethren, that

God is a Sovereign, ruling in heaven and earth, and Satan can go no farther than God will let him. I believe he is chained to go thus far and no farther.

"And not a single shaft can hit,
Until the God of love sees fit."

Dear brethren, I have hastily written this, and hope you will overlook my weakness. If you think best you may publish it; if not, cast it away. I am well pleased with the editorials of both editors, and love to read all the communications in the SIGNS. I think it is the best paper printed among our people, yet I find many good people who do not think so. May the dear Lord keep us as the apple of his eye. Pray for the poor sinner, E. D. VARNES.

THORNTON, Ark., Dec. 1, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will send you for the readers of our family paper a message of different dates from our much beloved old sister, or as we esteemed her, a mother in Israel. Mary McDonald and Elder Wm. McDonald were as lovely old soldiers of the cross as I ever knew. He was the moderator of the South Arkansas Association for a long time, until affliction disabled him. My wife and I visited them often during their confinement at home, and their communion was always sweet and soul-cheering to all the faithful in Christ as long as she could talk. After that when I went to see her it was sorrowful, as she would try to talk but we could not understand some of her last words. We were called to attend the funeral, but as my wife could not go I went alone, and accompanied the dear old father through the solemn farewell day of his partner in this to that eternal home of rest, to which we hope to go when our time of trials and afflictions is done here below.

Your brother in tribulation and hope,
A. HOLLOWAY.

AMONG the papers of Mrs. McDonald, who entered into rest October 25th, was found this simple sketch of a long life full of duty and good works.

CAMDEN, May 24, 1896.

I, Mary McDonald, do write this for the benefit or satisfaction of my children. I was born Jan. 18th, 1828, in Duplin County, North Carolina. My father was Elder James Norman, my mother Elizabeth Norman. My mother's parents were William and Sarah Waterman. My mother was born in 1795 and died in 1879. My father was born 1798. My mother's first husband was Stephen Edward. He died and left my mother with two children, the older a boy, named William Stephen Edward, and the other a girl, named Sarah Ann. In a few years mother married my father. In the year 1835, I think, my father and mother moved from North Carolina to Alabama, first to Autauga County, and from there to Lowndes County. They brought four children with them and four were born in Alabama. William McDonald and I were married on Sunday, the first day of January, 1843. I joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Cool Springs, Ala., the third Sunday in July, 1842, when I was fourteen years old. I have tried in my weak way to do the best I could. Mr. McDonald and I moved from Alabama to Arkansas in November, 1858, stopped in Dallas County and came from there to Calhoun County in 1872, and from there to Camden in January, 1889. We have raised thirteen children. We lost one, our first child, in 1844. We have raised some grandchildren also. We are now old, and will soon have to leave this world, but do not think but that death

will be a welcome messenger, though I am content to wait my Master's time.

Seven years later, Jan. 18th, 1903, Mrs. McDonald writes:

As I am still permitted to stay here, I will try to write some more. I am now seventy-five years and a few days old, and waiting for a call from our heavenly Father. I feel that I am least of all saints, if one at all, but feel that I have done the best I could.

And again in 1906 she says:

My next birthday will make me seventy-nine. We are living with our oldest grandchild, W. L. Wood. I am very feeble; I have nothing to look to but our heavenly Father. He has been my hope and my all-sufficient Savior; he is very good and kind to us. I feel now that my time is short.

The remaining two years of this venerable lady's life were years of illness borne with a never-failing patience. To such as she death is indeed a welcome messenger. Looking into her serene face one could think how fair it was when a dainty bride, twelve days less than fifteen years of age, she gave her hand to her bridegroom, himself six days less than nineteen, on the first day of the week, of the month and of the year, in 1843, and entered upon the almost sixty-six years of wedded life, of which these few lines are but the "short and simple annals."

[THE above clipping was taken from another paper and forwarded to us for publication by brother Holloway.—ED.]

LOCKPORT, N. Y., Aug. 1, 1908.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—How often since I received your letter of April 17th last have I thought I would write you, but did not, because I did not feel capable of expressing my feelings and sentiments. What a thief time is; while we hesitate he filches from us our opportunities and our faculties and leaves us destitute of every good thing the Lord has given us, and the older we become the more hesitating and faltering we are; yes, and the less able we are to perform our usual duties and desires. So this era comes and we are left stranded on the shifting sands of difficulty and disability. I have entertained myself with the experiences of old age, and studied to know the whys and the wherefores of the Lord's peculiar dealings with me during all the past of my unprofitable life, and now in my extremities of physical exertion and helplessness, I think I do at times feel the loving care of his providence over me, and my heart swells with gratitude when I think it all over, in view of my utter unworthiness.

But I was going to say that your letter was an encouragement in the midst of my misgivings, for I feel so unworthy of the love and fellowship you manifest toward me, and so fearful of offending the good sense of those whom I love in the Lord. O I have so little confidence in the flesh! and why should I have any confidence in it, for I am told it is contrary to the Spirit of Christ? and yet I am constantly trying to find some good in it. Self-justification is a universal quality of the human heart, and our most earnest endeavors are put forth to establish ourselves upon that solid basis, but I find constant failure in my own case.

Sunday morning, Aug. 2nd.—I want you to understand my physical condition, which at my age may be interesting; at least it interests me to "a wonder" why God in his dealings with me has so far preserved me from the common infirmities that seem to belong to old age. I have the use of my limbs to a remarkable de-

gree, compared to some who are many years younger than myself. The physical difficulties I have passed through during the past year or two have reduced my strength and my ability to perform labor. A sunstroke, many years ago, rendered me unable to bear much heat, and these hot days just passed have incapacitated me for any sort of exercise, and compelled me to avoid it as much as possible, and to fear its inroads upon my mental faculties, for I know several persons younger than myself whose minds wander in uncertainties.

My writing and reading are done with half an eye, I may say, for one eye is totally blind and the other half-covered with cataract, so says the oculist who lately fitted it with a glass that helps me some. The will of the Lord be done, and I hope to be reconciled to it. I do believe he has taught me many lessons in the immediate past which have given me a more intimate knowledge of my relation to spiritual and natural things. What is in the future I cannot tell, I leave all to him who has cared for me in the past and preserved and blessed me beyond my deserts.

If you find it in your mind to write me again I shall fully appreciate your kindness and brotherly love.

You speak of meeting me in Canada; that was a joyful meeting for me. You also mention meeting me in 1865; I am not sure what year it was, but I recollect first seeing you at Lakeville, with Elder Beebe, and I wondered then why a young lawyer, with bright prospects in business before him, should throw himself away among so unpopular a people as were the Old School Baptists. I remember also that Paul was an eminent lawyer, but sacrificed all his worldly prospects for the love of Christ. May that love continue to sustain you in the future as in the past.

Love to yourself and family.

PERRY WEST.

(See obituary notice on page 61.)

LEAD HILL, Ark., Dec. 27, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—As it is time for me to renew my subscription for this blessed medium of correspondence among God's dear children, unworthy as I feel, and in the dark as I am, I want to write a few words to you, and the brethren and sisters who write for the SIGNS, to let you all know how this poor old sinner and his companion have been comforted in reading their communications. I had almost lost hope of being able to pay for the paper this next year, and was grieving about it, when the December 1st number came, and the poetry written by the late Elder Wm. L. Beebe fitted my case so well that I was filled with love to all who could fellowship and appreciate the sentiments contained in it. I would read and then sing it, until I committed it to memory, and I think I have sung it every day or night since. Then the experiences of those three sisters, and others, were comforting, and showed the power and love of God in so wonderful a way, that I told my wife they were worth the price of the paper for a whole year, and I could not think of being deprived of such blessings. Not only the articles spoken of, but hundreds of others which I cannot mention; but thank the Lord, he has blessed me with means to pay for another year.

I want to speak of some good meetings in our church. I had the privilege of baptizing one sister in the fellowship of the Little Hope Church the first Sunday in September, and two brethren and one sister at Mt. Enon Church the third Sunday in September, and one brother is to be

baptized at Enon the second Sunday in next month. I feel unworthy of such blessed privileges, but hope I am thankful to the great Giver of every good and perfect gift for such blessings. May God bless the editors, publishers, contributors and readers of the good old SIGNS, and may the year 1909 be a happy and prosperous one to you all, and to God's children everywhere, is the desire of one who hopes he loves you for the truth's sake. I want to say to you all, Write on, you do not know how many of God's little ones you may comfort.

As ever, your little brother, in hope of eternal life, WM. J. CASEY.

SHERWOOD, Ore., Dec. 7, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—The little pink slip on the margin of my good old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, reminds us that it is about time to renew our subscription to the dear old medium of correspondence, of which we cannot speak too highly. Glorious truth fills it columns, and I do hope I feel thankful to our God for the precious and able gifts he is pleased to give to cheer us in our pilgrimage here in this life of sin and sorrow, whose precious and comforting articles and letters appear in the dear old SIGNS. It seems to me the SIGNS was never better edited than it is now; every editorial seems to be the best one. I have been a subscriber and reader of the paper over forty years, and expect to continue to read it while I am blessed with the ability to do so. I am now nearing fourscore years, and of course I will be here but a short time, but I am very thankful that I am reconciled to my lot in this life. I have fought as good a fight as God has enabled me to do, and through the mercy, reigning grace and power of God I have kept the faith, and can say, I am ready to be offered up, or to cease my labors here when it pleases our ever-merciful Father to call me hence. How glad I would feel to be able to let all the dear writers who write for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES know how sweet, how gloriously enjoyable and comforting their letters have been to this poor old sinner. I cannot express in words the comfort I enjoy in our being in possession of that hope in the finished work of our dear Redeemer; that enables me, a poor, vile, sinful creature, to know that I have the sweet fellowship of the dear people of God, and I know that their fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.

I am sorry I cannot send some new subscriptions, but cannot now. I inclose two dollars for my own subscription.

Very unworthily,

J. P. ALLISON.

WESTON, Michigan.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS AND READERS OF OUR BELOVED PAPER:—Once more I will try to acknowledge the goodness and mercy of our God for all his mercies. Though he suffered, yet he never complained, but I, who am sinful, when enduring severe pain often cry aloud, and only a few days ago, while suffering extremely, I cried aloud for mercy, when immediately these words I seemed to hear spoken:

> "Must Jesus bear his cross alone,
> And all the world go free?
> No, there's a cross for every one,
> And there's a cross for me."

I was made to see it right for me to suffer, and was given strength to bear all, for his love and mercy were round about me, and "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Now is this all fancy? No, no; God speaks and we know his voice, and our mourning is turned to joy. These

are the "spots" Elder Beeman has so beautifully spoken of, and we look back to them with joy, and cannot forget them. O, dear tempest-tossed ones of the little flock, do you ever get so low you seem to lose all hope, and seem to be sinking down? Then does He not appear and take you up and put a new song in your mouth? Then you can praise him who has loved you with an everlasting love, and died to redeem you, and will bring you to behold his face, where you will praise him forever. This glorious God is ours. Can I, a poor, miserable sinner, be of that number? Will I ever behold his precious face? Have my cruel sins been washed away?

"Dear, dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved to sin no more."

Suffering and sorrow are ours while here in this world, but soon it will all be over. Some faces I remember and love to think of: Elders Wm. L. Beebe, S. H. Durand and Joseph Johnson. I well remember the text Elder Durand used when here: Amos vi. 4–7. But now our church is gone, our songs are turned to weeping, and perhaps His mercy is not for such unworthy ones, yet hope is not gone; we hope in his mercy.

SARAH WYMAN.

ASHLAND, Ill., Nov. 22, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—If it is not asking too much, I wish you would give through the SIGNS your views on the Scripture where it says, Greet one another with a holy kiss. Does it mean what it says, or does it mean that when we meet in love and fellowship, and all of one mind, that we greet one another with a holy kiss?

I still love to read the SIGNS and the good letters that are in it; the editorials are splendid, and so are the letters from the brethren and sisters. Brother Bird wrote an excellent Circular Letter in the October 15th number. I have often wondered why the brethren did not write more such letters, for the doctrine of predestination is so bitterly assailed, as is also eternal salvation for time and eternity. Brother C. K. Haines, of Princeton, Ky., also had a splendid little letter in the November 15th number; it was small in size, but big in doctrine and truth. I hope they both will write again; that is the kind of reading I like: salvation by grace, and grace alone. I cannot name all the good writers, there are too many, but those two letters were so good I had to speak of them.

D. S. KOONTZ.

(See editorial reply on page 53.)

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, there will be preaching in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., by the pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, the fourth Sunday in January, 1909, meetings to begin at 10:45 a. m. and 2:30 p. m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

L. B. FORD, Church Clerk.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1909.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE HOLY KISS.

In reply to the question concerning the injunction to greet one another with a holy kiss, referred to by brother D. S. Koontz in his letter on page 52, we will say a few things. It was then, and is still, a common form of salutation among men in the east when they meet, and desire to testify to their gladness in meeting each other, and their esteem and affection for each other, to greet each the other with a kiss. Men greet other men in this way and women greet other women thus. When in the Scriptures such greetings are spoken of, it must not be thought that this custom existed in such a way that opposite sexes kissed each other, but only as named by us just above. This was and still is their custom, as we have read, while in our land and time a hearty grasp of the hand is our method of greeting friends. Five different times in the New Testament are the disciples of the Master enjoined to greet each other with a kiss, but in each case the word "holy" is added to the word kiss. This implies that while christians use the ordinary forms of greeting toward each other, yet there is in their greeting that which does not exist among others. They are to bestow these greetings upon each other in christian affection and kindness. The form of greeting is the same, but the spirit that is to be in it is not of the world, but of the Lord. So now members of families, neighbors, and even strangers when introduced to each other, exchange a hand clasp. Likewise, believers when they meet do the same, but what child of God does not know that his greeting of a brother in Christ in that way has in it a feeling of warmth and of fellowship that is far above all that belongs to earth? Therefore the apostles speak of "a holy kiss." It is a greeting into which enters no fleshly feeling, but only a recognition of that brotherhood which is in Christ. Sometimes in times of great gladness men will turn in the midst of an assembly and grasp each the hand of the other in token of a mutual interest in that which has made them glad. We have read that in the early churches it became a custom at the close of the Lord's supper for brethren to thus greet each other. This would be in token of the mutual fellowship they had in Christ and of the gladness aroused in their hearts at this season; they were reminded of what Christ had done for them and of what he was to them; it would be an expression of deep feeling on their part. Men are so made up that in any great sorrow or joy they desire sympathy and companionship, and instinctively turn toward each other. This is much more the case among those who partake of the joys and the sorrows that are beyond all things earthly. Who can adequately express such fellowship as this? The apostles in giving this injunction were simply telling their brethren it was right that they should express to each other the emotions of their hearts, and who is he that loves God and the brethren, and that has been made to

greatly rejoice in the truth, who does not know what it is to desire to make it known to others? Who has not sometimes in these times of deep feeling turned to his brother and clasped his hand warmly in the fervency of his feeling? Such a hand clasp is a token of fellowship and love in the Lord; such a hand clasp would be a holy one, as in those early days the kiss thus given was a holy kiss. Any method by which such fellowship is made known is a holy thing. For our own part we will say that it is seldom indeed that we take the hand of a brother and look into his face and speak to him the words of kindly welcome which we feel, without some remembrance of the holy relation in which we profess to stand to him: he is our brother in the Lord.

To this we desire to add one additional thought, viz., that, as we know, it is difficult for many of the fearful-hearted ones to bring themselves to use the word brother or sister when addressing the children of God. This arises, not out of any feeling of coldness or indifference to the others, but solely out of the feeling that they themselves are not worthy to use such an endearing title. We recall that for a long time after we were baptized it seemed more than we could do to use the word brother when speaking to those whom we loved more than all earthly friends; it seemed to us that if we should use that word they would look at us with surprise, and for a long time we would speak to them without using that word, while yet we longed to do so. We could not bring ourself to say Mr. or Mrs. to the Lord's people, and we were not worthy to say brother or sister, so often we would speak without using either title. We, for many years, have used the title brother or sister invariably when speaking to our kindred in Christ, but still feel as unworthy as ever, or even more so. The apostles used these words in addressing their brethren, and they have set the proper example for all who love God and reverence his word. The Lord has made these words sacred through his inspired apostles, and as believers use them they are holy words, and it is right, and after the example of the apostles, for all who believe to greet one another with the holy title brother or sister.

We know that societies of men use these words toward each other, and we remember that one man, whom we used to know, addressed every one as brother, saying, when asked about it, "Are we not all children of Adam?" There is nothing sacred or holy in these words as thus used among men, but these common words are sanctified and put to a sacred use among believers, and among them are holy greetings. This is just as the common use of a kiss in greeting in the east was enjoined upon believers then: to be used by them as a holy thing. Whatever the Lord has set apart to himself becomes holy. So sinners set apart to the Lord become holy brethren; so the ground whereon Moses stood at the burning bush became holy ground, simply because the Lord was there. Moses, a sinful man, as are all men, was called near, but he must come and tread here with solemn reverence. So all the children of God are called near and stand in all the privileges of the house of the Lord, but they are taught to come with lowly reverence. How gracious is that attitude of mind and heart in which the children of God come near to him and are prepared for a right use of the privileges of his house; and among those privileges are the mutual greetings which belong to them as brethren. These privileges are

sacred and holy, and God gives all his children to know this and to partake of them with sacred awe, and yet these privileges are all theirs, and none can lawfully forbid that the least and most unworthy should enjoy them.

C.

GENESIS I. 28.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been reading the SIGNS since 1845. Of late years I have been renewing for six months at a time, feeling that my voyage of life would soon end, but for some purpose unknown to me I have been spared to the present time. I am now nearly seventy-five years of age, and have been a Baptist forty-eight years.

Will Elder Chick please give his views through the SIGNS upon Genesis i. 28, especially upon the part which says, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it"? By so doing you will oblige an unworthy old sister in hope of eternal life,

(MRS.) M. M. COKER.

ATHENS, Texas, Dec. 1, 1908.

It seems from what our aged sister has said above that she was called to the love and fear of God in her early life. She speaks of beginning to read the SIGNS the year that we were born. We have had a membership in the church forty-five years. We speak of this because it was interesting to us to learn these particulars concerning our aged sister.

As regards the text referred to above, we will say but a few things. We have no doubt that these words were spoken to our first parents with regard to what should be done by their descendents, as well as by themselves, as dwellers upon the face of this natural world. Our God created this natural world, as well as the world in glory. He is also the God of providence as well as of grace. He is glorified in his works visible in the earth as well as by his works of grace. It is as important that his people come to trust in him for time as it is for eternity; he directs their steps in their relation to this world as well as with regard to the kingdom of heaven. It is as much to the glory of the blessed Lord that he healed the sick and raised up men from the dead as it is that he saves men from their sins and gives eternal life to them. There could be no force nor beauty seen in the declarations of the word concerning spiritual things were we to lose sight of his eternal power and Godhead as they are made known in his works in nature or in his providential dealings with the children of men. Natural things are made use of in the word of God to set before us spiritual things, but these natural things, in themselves and by themselves, do also show forth the glory of God. The creation of this natural world, with all the starry heavens that surround it, testifies to his power and wisdom as well as his goodness, and this it would do were there no unseen world beyond; but the unseen world is often described by the use of things that belong to the world below. So the formation of all that has life in the earth, of shrub and tree, of that which inhabits the waters, the earth and the air, and the preparation of all these unnumbered millions of creatures, each to fill his place and perform his part in the earth, all declare the glory of God. Thus the language of the text relates to that which is natural, and testifies to one of the purposes of God which should be fulfilled in the earth. The command of the text was a living command, and was spoken with power, and man has gone forth and accomplished, each in his measure, that which was commanded in the text. Let us also remember that this whole earth, with all that it contains, was created, that the wonders of redemption might appear. Some one has well said that the whole earth is but a staging, put up by the great Builder for the erection

of the building of mercy, and when that building shall be completed then the staging will have accomplished its purpose and will be taken down. That mankind should multiply and replenish the earth was needful for this one thing among other things: that the chosen people of God should be born and come into being upon earth, and that in each the wonders of his redemption might be made manifest to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the Beloved. Thus the various nations have covered the face of the earth, that in every nation a people might be reserved to the Lord, and that out of every nation, tribe, tongue and people should be gathered a people for his name. The staging is a wonderful structure, but how infinitely more wonderful is the building of mercy erected within it. The one shall perish, but the other shall endure. The one is cursed by sin, but the other is blessed forever with righteousness. The inhabitants of the one are dying creatures, but the inhabitants of the other shall never say, I am sick. In the one, sin has reigned unto death, but in the other, righteousness reigns unto life. Elect vessels of mercy were chosen of God out of the mass of mankind, and, for the coming into natural being of vessels of mercy, must multiply and replenish the earth. And by the law of their own being men have thus multiplied, and will continue to do so as long as earth shall endure. The elect are a definite number, not known of man, but known unto God, and when that number is filled up according to the will of God, then the everlasting purpose of God in establishing the very universe will have been completed, and the end, of which the Bible speaks again and again, will come. The times and seasons are hidden from men, but all is known to God, and it has pleased God to declare future things in his word, and these future things are the subjects of that hope which is given us. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." The things that are ours now, are not the subjects of hope, and cannot be, "for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" Believers experience a little of the joy of the Lord here, but the fullness shall be there.

> "O who in such a world as this
> Could bear his lot of pain,
> Did not one radiant hope of bliss
> Unclouded yet remain?"

We do not know what heaven will be, but neither did the apostles, yet they spoke about it, and so may we in harmony with them. We do not know what it will be to awake with His likeness, and neither did holy men of old, yet they testified to this hope, and so may we. This hope encouraged them in trials, and so it must encourage us; and so the words of the text were fitted to encourage the faith of our first father, and to bring to his mind the assurance that the work of the Lord should not be hindered. The wonders of redemption should be made known to an elect people through all the ages to come, and not one of all the good purposes of God should fail. Thus may we to-day be encouraged in our weakness, and notwithstanding our transgressions, by the assurance that his purposes of grace are sure, and that even that which is to us only grief and pain works together with all other things for our good and his glory. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ASSOCIATIONS.

REMARKS ON ELDER BLAKESLEE'S LETTER.

It is not our desire or intention, either by special or common pleadings, to encourage a controversy on the subject of Associations, as, to our mind, there are many other subjects at this peculiarly trying time of vastly greater importance to the peace, comfort and edification of the people of God, which claim our columns. Especially should we regret to enter the list with a veteran of the cross whom we so highly esteem as our brother Blakeslee. Indeed, had he confined his remarks to the issue, as stated and defined by himself in the closing portion of his article, there would probably have been no room for controversy, but the principal part of his letter is confined to the extravagant proceedings of two New School Baptist associations, which probably all but New School Baptists would blush to be concerned in. Now, in justice to the Old School Baptists, it should be known that no such high-handed proceedings have ever been tolerated among them.

In our reply to brother Ausmus we stated that an association of churches may be anything the associated parties choose to make of them. We admit that brother Blakeslee has given two sad examples of the prostitution of the name, but we cannot perceive that he has even attempted to show that all associations of churches are unscriptural. He says the question at issue is not whether they have been productive of more good than evil, neither is it, we presume, whether there have been instances in which they have been perverted to be the most outrageous instruments of tyranny and oppression. We presumed that the question of brother Ausmus related only to associations of churches as they are recognized by the Old School Baptists. Two questions seem to us to be involved: first, Do the Scriptures warrant any association of gospel churches for any purpose whatever? Second, If they do, are ours such as the Scriptures sanction? If, by a careful and prayerful searching of the Scriptures, we find that the primitive churches did associate together, then we have clearly authority for them by apostolic example, and however much wicked men may pervert them, the example of the primitive churches cannot be thereby invalidated. The pattern and example of primitive saints associating in churches is admitted by brother Blakeslee, although it is known to him that there are very many religious organizations called churches whose practice is as grossly antichristian as that of the two associations instanced by him.

The primitive christians and churches either did or did not, under the direction of the apostles, associate together. We assume that they did, as individual christians, associate in church relation, and, as churches, so far as to recognize, correspond, and, so far as practicable, unite together for social devotion and for mutual advice and edification, while none were allowed to lord it over God's heritage. Without any kind of association there could be no union, sympathy or identity; but we have palpable evidence that the apostolic churches did maintain a correspondence with each other, and their members met together in such harmony for the worship of God whenever they found opportunity, without regard to what particular branches of the church they belonged. This is evident from the fact that Timothy and Titus, though pastors (or bishops) of particular churches,

had a charge to ordain elders and attend to other services in sister churches. All the churches of Galatia were addressed as one community, or association of churches, in one epistle written to them by Paul. Messengers were sometimes sent from one church, or churches, to another church of the same faith and order. It would be difficult to find an instance where christians or churches of the primitive faith and order ever refused to associate together when favored with opportunity because they were members of different branches of the church of Christ. It is not our impression that the churches of the apostles' day were as formal in their distinct organization as they are now, but where two or three were gathered together in Christ's name, there Christ himself was in their midst; and if, as at Pentecost, the number were increased to thousands, they were still of one heart and one mind. Hence we read of "the church in thy house," as well as the church in a city or nation.

None of the branches of the church of Christ can any more be independent of the other branches than any one member of a natural body can be independent of its fellow-members. The hand cannot say to the foot, I have no need of thee, nor the eye to the ear. Christ says, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." This figure seems to represent the perfect vine as embracing all the branches which have grown out of it, and all alike invigorated and made fruitful by their common relation to the whole vine. A still stronger figure is used by the apostle, 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." The same apostle also in Ephesians iv. dwells largely on the vital and inseparable unity and fellowship of all the saints at Ephesus, and all the faithful in Christ Jesus, wherever they may be: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all;" and in the twenty-fifth verse he adds, "For we are members one of another." Now can such identity and vital union exist without association, without harmony of action? Can one member be independent, or have no need of all the other members? Can the foot travel on and leave all or any of its fellow-members behind? Can all these members, which make up the perfect and complete body of Christ, being many, keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and yet hold no correspondence or association together? We presume brother Blakeslee will not assume that they can. But still the inquiry returns, Do all these Scriptures justify the association of churches in the manner in which they are held by the Old School Baptists of our day? The affirmative or negative response must depend on how they are held or practiced by the Old School Baptists. It is more than possible that some of our Old School Baptist associations may practice some things which are not justified by the law of Christ. We would all do well to look to this. Brother Blakeslee found in the New School Baptist associations which he has referred to, "legislative, judicial and executive" powers assumed, none of

which have we ever found in any of our Old School Baptist associations. Neither the churches, nor even the apostles, were ever invested with legislative power. Christ has made all the laws his kingdom can ever require. The apostles are enthroned in the church to judge the twelve tribes, but not to make any new laws; nor has the church any judicial or executive power beyond that of strict obedience to the laws of Christ as adjudged and defined by the inspired apostles. In obedience to Christ's laws, as expounded by the apostles, the church, and every member thereof, whether individually or associated, are required to withhold their fellowship from the hidden works of darkness, and to withdraw from every brother that walks disorderly. But the rule of order by which the extension or suspension of fellowship is to be regulated is the law of Christ. Those unassociated churches in the north and northwestern part of this State are only unassociated in form; that is, they reject the name and formalities of associations, because, as we presume, they became so disgusted with the abominations which they have witnessed in the associations in their vicinity that they are jealous of all formal associations; but they are in reality associated in a form of their own, which they consider less objectionable. It is common with them to hold yearly meetings, at which brethren and sisters and Elders come together for social worship and mutual correspondence, and, for aught we could perceive, they really associate freely by meeting and greeting each other in the love and fellowship of the gospel, and they appear to be as fond of associating in their way as those who organize for conducting a more general correspondence with the churches and associations scattered abroad. Our ministering brethren from that vicinity also occasionally visit our associations and associate with us, and we hope enjoy the seasons with us. Now we do not wish to be understood as advocating any of the excesses or abominations which prevail among the New School order, which are complained of by brother Blakeslee, but we wish to discriminate between a christian and an antichristian association. There is something social in the very spirit of christianity which should be cherished by all who can appreciate it. "Let brotherly love continue." "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." These injunctions are not restricted to organized branches of the church of God, but they are addressed to the whole brotherhood, and we believe if ever there was a time when they that fear the Lord should meet frequently and speak often one to another, that time is now. Some have objected to associations because they drop from their connection such churches and associations as they believe have departed from the faith. But do not the unassociated churches do the same? and are not the brethren individually required to do the same? "Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth." When churches depart manifestly from the faith and order on which our fellowship is based, we are bound, individually and collectively, to withhold from them our fellowship, or recognition, until they return to the order of the house of God. Indeed, we are greatly mistaken if we have not witnessed great evils growing out of the oft reiterated cry of the independence of churches. How far is a church independent? It is simply this: A church of Christ in gospel order, governed only by the word and spirit of the gospel, has authority to discipline her own members without inter-

ference from any other organized body, court or council on earth, and her decisions are entitled to be respected by all other churches. But churches, as well as individuals and associations, are liable to err, both in the spirit and letter, and in such cases she has no right to drag other churches or individuals into any disorder or heresy whatever; and any church who feels a consciousness that she has acted in the fear of the Lord, been governed in her actions by the divine rule, will rather court than shun investigation. She will frankly say, Come and behold our order; for if she is governed by the spirit of the gospel she will desire to secure the confidence and fellowship of all her sister churches. We always regard it as a suspicious circumstance when churches, ministers or other individual members put themselves upon their dignity and bid defiance to their sister churches under the plea of independence. It is virtually saying, We regard not your approbation; we do not appreciate your fellowship or care for your correspondence. Certainly such is not the way pointed out in the divine rule for keeping "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."—John iii. 20, 21. This rule bears the sacred seal of the eternal King, and may be relied on with implicit confidence.

Again, in conclusion, we wish to say that our object in this article is not to disagree with the views of brother Blakeslee, for we as decidedly disapprove of the ungodly course which he condemns as he does, but our design is, while we repudiate and condemn the wrong, to discriminate between the right and the wrong, and we trust that he will understand and appreciate our motive. We cannot resist the conviction, from an experience of fifty-two years, that a general meeting of the Elders, brethren and sisters of churches of the same faith and order once a year, or oftener, if convenient, is both lawful and expedient. The primitive churches and members did meet as frequently as possible for mutual edification, without any restriction on account of distinct organization into separate branches, and every expression of admonition recorded, to our understanding, tended to encourage, if not to absolutely enjoin such gathering, as both duty and privilege. If churches are to isolate themselves from each other, pay no regard to the order nor seek the general welfare of the whole body, what is to become of that sympathy, concert and identity which is to distinguish all the members of Christ as one body, animated by one life, fed at one table, on the same food, having but one and the same interest, and all bound to the same destiny? Why should a single branch of the church wish to isolate herself from her fellow-branches and eat her morsel alone? The very spirit of vital christianity calls for association. "Come and hear, all ye that fear God," whether belonging locally to this or that branch. All who fear the Lord and obey the voice of his servant, are members of one Christ, governed by one Head, constituting but one body, and members one of another in union so close, and sympathy so vital, that if one member suffers all the body feels the pain. We do not argue that for such association any distinct organization or written constitution is indispensable, only so far as may be useful to preserve harmony and good order. The yearly meet-

ings in some sections, and conferences, or corresponding meetings, in other sections of the country, may secure all that is desirable, but those who are partial to the one form should be slow to censure their brethren who see cause to promote the same object substantially in another form, unless such form shall be manifestly subversive of the order of the gospel. Not only the organized associations, but all other forms of meetings are liable to abuses, and it becomes the saints to watch diligently, and see that all things be done decently and in order. Let us prove all things and hold fast that which is good.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., December 1, 1863.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Frederick W. Keene, at the home of the parents of the bride, Wesley Newton Spitler, of Mattoon, Ill., and Miss Ruth Ada Keene, of North Berwick, Maine.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Wilson Peters, son of Oscar and Lucinda Peters, was born in Darke County, Ohio, Sept. 18th, 1875, died at his late home near New Weston, Ohio, Dec. 21st, 1908, aged 33 years, 3 months and 3 days. He was united in marriage to Maggie Myers, Oct. 14th, 1897. To this union were born three children, one of whom preceded him in death. Wilson was of a quiet disposition from youth up, and of good morals. His parents, grandparents and great-grandparents on both his father's and mother's side were Primitive Baptists, therefore he had some literal knowledge of the people of God, and we trust he gave evidence of a good hope through grace. Some six weeks before he died he was about a mile from home, and on looking toward his home thought his buildings were on fire and ran all the way home, only to find his wife had been burning trash near the buildings. He complained that he hurt himself in running, and was not well from that time. He felt he would not get well, and visited and talked to his mother, telling her that he did not expect to get well, and desired to depart and be at rest. He came to see his parents during this time, with the view of talking to his father of the things on his mind. He found his father busy, but told his mother of his feelings; he also told his wife how she should arrange his business when he was taken away. He seemed to feel, in some mysterious way known only to those who receive this summons, that his time was at hand to depart, yet he was going about attending to his duties and visiting friends. On Monday morning, Dec. 21st, his wife heard him making some strange noise, and on reaching his bed found him dying. None of his family except his wife was with him when the spirit took its flight. He had told his relatives and friends during the six weeks he was not well that he was not the same man that he was, and yet his relatives did not fully realize what the change was, but after he was gone they realized what change had come over him. This change in some way caused him to desire not to get well; he seemed to be given a longing to depart, and I have wondered if this desire could come to those who have not tasted that the Lord is gracious. He leaves to mourn, a widow, two children, father and mother, five brothers and four sisters, besides a host of other relatives and friends.

A very large concourse of relatives and friends attended the funeral and showed marked respect. The writer was called to preach his funeral, and noted the marked esteem in which he was held in the community where he lived. After the funeral the body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Rose Hill, Darke Co., Ohio. NEWTON PETERS.

Perry West was born Oct. 9th, 1816, and died in Lockport, N. Y., in November, 1908, being a little more than 92 years old. He was born in Susquehanna County, Pa., in that part which is now Luzerne County. When he was about two years old his father moved to "The Lake Country," in New York. From 1850 until about four years ago he lived in Danville, N. Y., where Elder J. L. Purington and I staid at his house one night, and where I spoke by his appointment in a Methodist meetinghouse. The Old Baptist Church of South Danville became extinct many years ago. He never united with any other. He has written briefly for the SIGNS about once a year. My last letter from him was written Oct. 30th, 1908. I send one written August 1st to be published in the SIGNS, if you think best. Brother Perry West was a nephew of Elder Hezekiah West, whose name appeared often in the early volumes of the SIGNS. I met him often some years ago, but have only seen him once in many years, and that was at an evening meeting in New York. He has one daughter living, Mrs. Horton, the only member of his family living. In his last letter he wrote: "It seems a paradox for me to talk of blindness when I do as well as I do in writing or reading. Having abundance of time on my hands I can devote as much of it as is necessary to carefully and slowly follow my habit of writing; so with the light of my east window concentrated in a right angle upon my sheet, with my eye fully shaded and at a right focus, I spend the

time necessary to follow the written lines upon my sheet, so I accomplish what I do slowly. You will do as you please about submitting my letters to the judgment of the editors, but I think they are unworthy of that consideration. I feel that the Lord of all the earth will do right, and am willing to trust all to him."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 24, 1908.

Thomas Wyatt, of Sergeantsville, N. J., died Dec. 14th, 1908, aged 79 years, 2 months and 10 days. He was the husband of sister Sarah J. Wyatt, formerly Myers, who, with a stepdaughter, survives him. He was born in Newport, N. J., and was buried Dec. 17th, in Rosemont Cemetery. Mr. Wyatt was a Methodist many years, but finally experienced a hope in God's mercy and grace, and was a firm believer in the doctrine of grace. About three years ago, I think it was, he told me his experience, and what he believed from his experience, and I found that we saw eye to eye in regard to salvation, the second coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, hell and the devil. I found him to be sound in the faith, and we had a good spiritual visit. He was a poor, afflicted man all his life, at least since I first saw him, about thirty years or more ago. He suffered much with cancer on the side of his head for nearly two years, but he has gone to his eternal home, where he longed to be. He is not waiting for the resurrection morn, no, no, no, he is in eternity; no waiting there, only the living are waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body; he is in glory and glorified, wants no more, needs no more. May the dear Lord comfort the mourning ones.

The writer officiated at the funeral, which was held in the Methodist meetinghouse at Sergeantsville Dec. 17th.

D. M. VAIL.

Deacon James A. Buck died at his home in Upper Dorchester, N. B., Dec. 23rd, 1908, in the 74th year of his age. The subject of this notice was a man of sterling worth, a good neighbor and citizen, a faithful and kind husband, a loving and devoted father, and it can be truthfully said of him that in all the walks of life he was a man of peace. Brother James Buck received a hope in Christ in early manhood, and became a worthy member of the church at Dorchester Cape, his native place, which membership he retained unto the end, firm and unwavering, not being moved about by the lo here and the lo there of the world by which he in after life was surrounded. His great theme was salvation by grace, and in him that change from nature unto grace was so marked in his life that even the world acknowledged it, always very humble, esteeming others better than himself; to use his own words: "In me that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing, the chief of sinners, and if a saint, the least of all." His disease was internal cancer, and during his sickness he had all that medical aid, the untiring care of a devoted and faithful wife and kind and loving daughter could give. Brother Buck was twice married, his first wife being a sister of the late Captain William E. Buck, known to many of the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. She preceded him some twelve years. He leaves two daughters and one son, all married, and the widow, with a large number of relatives and friends, to mourn their loss.

May God sanctify this dispensation of his providence to our good, and enable us by faith to bow in humble submission to the supreme will and decree of our God. Knowing he doeth all things well, and believing our loss to be his eternal gain, we can only sorrow that we shall see his face no more.

WILLIAM C. HASTINGS.

DORCHESTER, N. B., Dec. 31, 1908.

Mrs. Nancy Gulick died at her residence in Loudoun County, Va., Dec. 2nd, 1908, aged a little over 87 years. Sister Gulick was baptized by Elder R. C. Leachman in the fellowship of Mt. Zion Church near the close of his ministry, I think. As the years multiplied upon her sister Gulick seemed to exhibit more and more the divine Spirit of her Lord and Master, both in walk and conversation, also in unswerving fidelity to the privileges of the church, in whose meetings she found her chief delight. If she was able to ride the distance from her home she was sure to be at those meetings, not merely through a sense of duty, but it was her joy and comfort. In her last years, which were years of frequent bodily suffering, she often exclaimed, "God is so good." She spoke thus of his mercies and goodness up to the last days, yes, hours of her life. Dear, humble soul, she denied herself indeed, and in abasing herself she was exalted in the mind and heart of her brethren. Sister Gulick was left a widow several years ago, but not until she saw her children, one son and three daughters, grown to manhood and womanhood. She was favored in her old age to see her three faithful, loving daughters walking in the church with her and blessed with the same meek spirit of their mother. "E'en down to old age all thy people shall prove thy sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love," are words peculiarly appropriate to sister Gulick.

J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., Jan. 5, 1909.

Elizabeth M. Graddy died Dec. 6th, 1908, at the residence of her daughter, Mrs. W. H. Phipps, Carmi, Ill., at the ripe age of 80 years, 7 months and 8 days. She was born in Posey County, Ind., near New Harmony, April 28th, 1828; was married to Richard C. Graddy, Jan. 1st, 1844, by Elder Peter Sautzman; to this union nine children were born, three of whom survive: Mrs. W. H. Phipps, Mrs. Henry White and

John Logan, one sister, Mrs. E. A. Norton, of Hampton, Iowa, together with several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was the daughter of Ignatius and Mary Taylor. The wife of the writer is now the only one living of her father's family of eleven children. Sister Graddy united with the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church called Bethany in the year 1844, was baptized by Elder Joel Hume, and lived a faithful member until her death. Her husband departed this life Feb. 11th, 1894. May the God of all grace reconcile us to our loss, is our humble prayer.

Her funeral was held on the 8th, conducted by Elder J. Hunsinger. Her body was laid to rest by the side of her husband to await the resurrection morn. E. A. NORTON.

HAMPTON, Iowa.

DIED—**Charles F. Hunt,** in the city of Middletown, N. Y., June 19th, 1908, aged 23 years. He was born Oct. 30th, 1885, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Benj. F. Hunt. June 29th, 1904, he was married to Miss Mattie Wherry, of Sussex, N. J., who, with one little son, together with the parents and one sister, survives him. He never made a profession of religion, but this does not hinder any of us from having hope for him.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer and largely attended; interment in the New Vernon Cemetery. This father and mother, the latter a member of the Middletown and Wallkill Old School Baptist Church, have been wonderfully sustained.

K.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $5.00; N. E. Askew, Ark., $2.00; Wm. Allen, Okla., $3.00; Mrs. M. A. Barnett, N. B., $3.00; H. J. O'Bannon, Va., $1.00; Lavinia Morgan, Mo., $1.00; Mrs. John Pettit, N. Y., $3.00; Mrs. H. Scarborough, Md., $1.00; Mrs. M. M. Rounsavell, N. Y., $1.00; Elder T. R. Pittman, Kans., $1.00; First Independent Baptist Church of Woburn, Mass., $6.00; J. A. Tandy, Okla., $1.00; Isaac Larowe, N. J., $2.00; Thos. A. Ardies, Ont., $1.00.—Total, $31.00.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

BY J. E. BEEBE & COMPANY,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 77. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1909. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Dec. 23, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I was born in Edinburg, Johnson Co., Ind., Jan. 2nd, 1844; my parents, James H. and Caroline Sawin, were Primitive or Old School Baptists. In early life I began to be exercised as to my future state. I felt there were some needed preparations for peace at God's right hand, but of that I could do myself. The good I thought went to heaven, the bad to hell—eternal darkness. I was a moral boy in every sense of the word, therefore but little effort on my part would bring about the desired end: obey my parents, tell no falsehoods and not get angry, would meet every requirement. While yet in my ninth year these thoughts had serious consideration, and for a time I was resolved to begin the work. After some reflection I thought to live the life of a christian, but to begin so early in life would become irksome, and as I was so young in years there was plenty of time, therefore I would wait until I was older. But in a few weeks' time a child in the neighborhood died; this reminded me of the uncertainty of life and alarmed me. O, I thought, if I should die hell would be my portion, so to the work I must go. I found it somewhat difficult to reform myself of the three great evils above mentioned, and, mark you, they were all the sins I then saw that needed to be atoned for, or rather, to make amends for; there was no Christ, no prayer in it. After some months of earnest effort I had succeeded quite well, and felt if the Lord should take me away I was a fit subject for heaven at any time, and such was the vanity of my heart, that I thought the Lord would point to me as an example. From a moral standpoint none could excel, but I was looking on the outside; man does this, but the Lord looks within. While thus sailing under a clear sky, dark and threatening clouds began to gather, and, ere I was aware, the storm was raging. One look within nearly drove me to despair; there I saw my heart the very cesspool of sin. I sank to the lowest hell, and felt I was a hypocrite of the deepest dye, for I was pretending to be what I was not; appearing fair in outward form, while all defiled within. I felt I was without hope and without God. I was utterly ignorant that there was a Jesus, the Savior of sinners, and felt eter-

nal darkness was my portion. In this condition I went on for some time, when I was brought into the knowledge that there was a Savior of sinners, but would he save one so vile as I? Here I first began to try to pray, and to feel that he was able and efficient, and could say, as did the leper, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," but I could not see how one so vile as I could ever find such grace or divine favor. I was brought to feel the condemnation just, and was reconciled to God, yet there was a constant pleading for mercy. After many weary months of groans and cries the end seemed to draw nigh, when the momentous question would be forever settled, my doom would be sealed. As I sometimes roamed the field I would think, O, if I were only as the beast, when I died there would be no more of me; but there was a consciousness that mine was a never-ending punishment; gladly would I have exchanged my being with them. My tears seemed to be dried up, I could weep no more. I lay down for the night feeling the sun had set to rise no more on me, I should never see the light of another day, ere the day dawned I would receive my portion forever. I do not think I closed my eyes in sleep, but awaited the summons. But the morning came, the sun arose in a cloudless sky, but a deep gloom hung over me, I felt the Lord had only spared me that I might feel more of his righteous indignation. I wandered about in this awful gloom until about 4 p. m.; as I came to a fence and was in the act of getting over, I thought when I landed upon the other side all would be over, the sentence spoken. I paused; O if I could only make one solemn prayer and confession, and speak the words, gladly would I do so, but I dare not take that blessed name in my sin-polluted lips. I did not know my every groan was prayer. With a bowed head, as a doomed man faces death, I stepped over the fence; instead of the sentence, "Depart," these words lived in my very soul: Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee. I shouted aloud, My Jesus, my Redeemer; it seemed to me all nature was praising him. He appeared to me in his blessed and holy character at an angle of about forty-five degrees above me. I thought, O why did I not see him before? It was so satisfying; I thought I could go and show him to others, and they need not mourn as I, but all see him and have every sorrow banished; yes, I would proclaim him to the ends of the earth. But O how mistaken in this. I had heard this Jesus preached by gospel ministers, but could not believe he was my Savior until he revealed himself. That day I can never forget; the tears of sorrow had been dried, but freely flowed the tears of joy, a fountain of tears. I was then in my twelfth year. My love went out toward the little church called Lewis Creek, in Shelby County, Ind., (long since dissolved) in a desire for baptism, but I was young and very small for my age, and I reasoned, I am but a child, and therefore felt I would be debarred from that blessed privilege, and was patiently waiting until I grew older. During this time my brother John united with the church, and I thought, O if it were only I to be baptized I would give all this world if I had it, but I thought, I am a child, and must wait. Finally I read Elder Gilbert Beebe's experience, and that he was baptized in his eleventh year, and I saw at once the age was not a hindrance if we were gospel subjects. I had not in all this time been subjected to many doubts and fears, for the most of

the time I was feeding upon the mountains of Israel. The Lord for a purpose must have kept me in that blessed state. On the third Saturday in September, 1859, as some of the family were getting ready to go to meeting, I intimated I would like to go, though it would be necessary for me to walk alone. I started with hymn-book in hand, and as I walked along I opened the book and my eyes fell upon these words:

"If by Jesus you are prized,
Rise, believe, and be baptized."

(Hymn 1150, Beebe's collection.) I said, I will go if they will receive me. Elder A. B. Nay was present, and spoke with joy to my soul, yet I had solemn thoughts regarding the step I was about to take. When the opportunity was given I went forward, but could not tell much of the way I had been brought, yet the Elder said, In words few, in comprehension much. I felt that I had told so little they could not receive me, but I was received, and baptized on Sunday following, by Elder J. G. Jackson, the pastor. That to me was the day of days, peace flowed as a river; I was happy beyond description; I felt now, I shall always be happy, sorrows and tribulations are forever past; I could sweetly sing,

"O how happy are they
Who their Savior obey."

How little I knew of the way; I knew not that "in the world ye shall have tribulation." I did not stay there long until I was plunged into the wilderness.

CALL TO THE MINISTRY.

Not long after this blessed season I was walking along the road, my mind, or thoughts, must have been somewhat exercised about the ministry, as the words were spoken, You must preach. I turned and looked behind me, thinking some one had spoken. I tried to treat the matter lightly and think no more about it, but somehow they seemed living words, and the more I determined to rid myself of them the more they seemed riveted in my mind. I then began to examine myself, and could not find one single qualification, and so said to myself, It cannot be. I was yet in my fifteenth year, very small of stature, it was said the smallest person ever seen baptized, yet an old brother said he had seen a preacher baptized. This I knew nothing of for several years after I had been preaching.

But I am digressing. I began reading the Scriptures to see if I knew anything about them. Sometimes they seemed a sealed book, at other times they seemed to open to my understanding and I would be disposed to give the matter a more favorable consideration, but one look at myself would banish every thought. I sank down in darkness and gloom, and felt I was mistaken in the whole matter, that I was not even a child of God. I cannot describe my feelings; one moment I would think to obey the voice, but after one look at myself I would say, Lord, I cannot. The burden became so great that sometimes I felt eternal darkness could be no worse. During this time I was taken down with pneumonia; with the burden of mind I was suffering with a burning fever; it seemed beyond endurance. I felt it was for my disobedience. I turned my face to the wall and prayed, O Lord, if thou wilt raise me up I will go. There came peace to my burdened heart, and the fever seemed to pass away as a shadow; with ease of mind I began to mend rapidly, but the first examination of myself again evidenced the utter impossibility of my ever preaching. I was willing if I could, but I was sure I could not, there was not a single member of the church but what

was better qualified than I, for a more backward, bashful, ignorant boy it seemed to me never lived. In all this exercise I told no one, as I had heard old brethren say that if the Lord called one to preach it would be manifest to the church often before it was to the person, and I had no evidence whatever that the church knew anything about it, and my feelings were I would die before I would tell any one. Many times I would find myself preaching, Scripture would be on my mind and would open to my view, and would be refreshing to my soul, but to appear before the people I could not, I could not even recite before a school. I eventually broke down in health, I could scarcely eat or sleep. I would go to meeting sometimes resolved to tell the church my exercise, or make an attempt to satisfy myself that there was no gift, and so ease my mind, but would as many times go away without doing so. Finally in October, 1861, I was so depressed in spirit I again resolved to tell my exercise to the church. I could not live, and could not die, and often prayed that I might die. I went to our meeting, but returned as before, sick and helpless and ready to die. In the evening about sunset I, with the family, sat down to supper, and became so burdened it seemed I must give vent to my feelings in groans and cries. I arose without eating one morsel and went out; I cried from the depth of my soul, O Lord, what wilt thou have me do? I cannot longer forbear. I remained out until after dark, and then went to my room and laid down. (I will here state the family was keeping watch over me, but I knew it not.) My sister soon came in and asked what was the trouble with me. She asked in such a loving way that I told her a little of the exercise of my mind. I was surprised to hear her say, We thought we knew, but were not sure. After some reflection I deeply regretted I had told her my trouble. In December following, Elder Joseph Withans visited our church, and an appointment was made for Saturday night at Elder Jackson's house. After the Elder had spoken I was called on for the first time. I had no intimation of it before, and had had no thought of speaking, but arose with much trembling and read the hymn beginning,

"The Lord my Shepherd is,
I shall be well supplied,"

after which I spoke for twenty minutes or more. All were in tears when I sat down. I was calm in feeling, a wonderful change had come, my burden was gone and sweet peace flowed into my soul. I was then in my eighteenth year. I am sure nothing but the power of God could have caused this poor, ignorant, bashful boy to stand up and speak in his holy name, whatever have been the failures since. During the following year I would (though often under protest) speak when called on, until the September meeting. In August I attended the Whitewater Association; on Thursday night a large company gathered at an old brother Pennell's. The word had gone out about the boy preacher, and it was arranged for me to speak that night. As there were several old Elders present I plead with them to excuse me, but to no avail. I even went out and remained until after dark, but they came after me and reasoned thus: If the Lord had bestowed a gift upon me, it was to the church, and the brethren had a right to hear me. I consented and went in. I have no idea how long I spoke, but my tongue was loosed and I was carried away in the spirit. I believe I can say now that in all my ministry I have never

seen a deeper feeling manifested; I suppose being so youthful had something to do with it. There was much commendation, no doubt intended for my encouragement, and to the glory of God; but the flesh is weak, I began to feel elated, puffed up I guess in my vain imagination. I had been getting on badly, but now thought I could preach, and was soon feeling anxious to get home and to our meeting and show the brethren how well I could preach. I came home; it was two weeks until our meeting, and the time seemed long. I had a text, and had gone over it many times, it seemed clear and plain. The meeting time came, and I was quite anxious to go into the stand. I had always before felt to hold back, but now I could preach and was willing to go into the stand at the first solicitation of the pastor. I arose, feeling strong, read a hymn and prayed in a way, I was more anxious to preach. After prayer, I read my text, but somehow it was changed, it seemed empty. I made an effort to say something, but sat down in more than midnight darkness; I seemed to stagger as I turned to sit down. O, thought I, what have I done? the cause is disgraced, I am disgraced; O that the earth would open and swallow me up. I turned to see if there was not a back window that I could get out and away. We were eleven miles from home, with other members of the family, so I could not go home, but must remain over the Sunday meeting. I pondered over the matter, and settled it as I thought forever: never will I again attempt to preach. I met our pastor the next morning, and told him my determination that I would die before I would attempt to preach again. I fought it again for two long years. I sank down again to the lowest hell, and the sorrows of death compassed me about. I went mourning, being burdened all the day, but so determined was I in all these months that I have no recollection of ever looking in my Bible. When I could bear it no longer I thought to get away from the church, so I called for my letter, intending to hold it, and went over in Illinois to my brother John's, thinking if I could get away among strangers I would find relief, for the word of the Lord was oft as fire shut up in my bones, and it seemed sometimes must break out. I did find relief, but not as I expected. It seems strange to me yet that at the very place to which I had gone to evade it all, ere a month passed I should make the attempt again. When my brother asked me to take part in the meeting I protested, and contested every inch of the ground, but being crafty he outwitted me, and I could no longer forbear. I again found sweet peace and rest. This was at the church called Pleasant Grove, Moultrie Co., Ill. I soon after returned to Indiana, replaced my letter in the Cons Creek Church and was liberated to speak wherever God in his providence cast my lot. In April, 1865, I was married to Miss Cordelia E. Topton, of Moultrie County, Ill., and we began life's battle. In October, 1868, the church took up the matter of my ordination. I again raised my protest, telling them I had all the liberty I needed, but when asked if I were not willing to submit it to the church I could but answer yes. I fully believed the council would not ordain me at that time at least. The council was called, and met with the church on the second Saturday in November; there were nine Elders present, I think. When organized, I was called upon for the reason of my hope in Christ, and my exercise or call to the ministry, after which the council retired

for deliberation. While they were out I was pondering in my mind as to the result, and felt sure they would go no further, and so was surprised when they returned and stated the evidence was entirely satisfactory, and they would proceed to set me apart by solemn ordination. It was solemn indeed, but I have believed to this day my ordination was premature, for I cannot see where I was any benefit to the church as an Elder. For many years it was a conflict between serving the churches and providing for my family the necessities of life, for the churches in Indiana at that time, at least, did but little for their ministers. I had been preaching for several years before I knew there was anything done for them, never having heard such a thing mentioned. In 1885 I suffered the loss of all things in this world, a wreck financially, physically and almost mentally. In the years past I had labored hard and had done but little preaching, and made a failure both in temporal and in spiritual things. I had felt to provide things honest in the sight of God. My mind had often been burdened with the word of the Lord, but the necessities of my family, and my obligations to men, seemed to always forbid my going. I was often in straits, feeling the hand of the Lord was against me, and that I was forsaken of God and man; I felt I would die and not live. Going to Indianapolis on a little matter of business, I was walking down East Washington St., a deep gloom was hanging over me, and fearing I would bring disgrace and shame upon the church, I cried in the deep agonies of my soul, O Lord, take me away; let me die, and not live. While going along in this deplorable state a voice spoke to me, saying, Thou shalt bear my name from hence unto many people. I turned and looked behind, no one was near, a calm feeling of peace had come over me, I felt it was the Lord that had spoken, and my poor heart responded, I will go. I here turned, or was turned, with my back upon the world. I returned home, and soon after left to fill appointments in Illinois, and later an extended trip south through western Ohio, Kentucky, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania. I want to state here that when I left home for this extended trip I had not to exceed two dollars. My first appointment was near Connersville, Ind. I was given faith to believe that if the Lord had sent me he would provide all things needful. (I wish I could always go that way.) I traveled over five thousand miles, and all things needful were supplied of the Lord. None but the dear Lord knew of my needs, none other needed to know of it. I speak now to his honor and glory. From that time until the present day I do not remember of having missed an appointment, except by providential hindrances, and but few that way. We were without a home, just drifting with the tide of circumstances. We suffered for a time many privations, but the Lord accomplished his purpose with me. Through these losses and crosses I was removed from Indiana. I had felt for two years or more that my labors were ended there, and my only desire was to know the will of the Lord. If he had called me to preach there was a place for me, and to that place only I desired to go. I believe the Lord appoints the field and sets the bounds, and my one desire is to go to all he shall send me, to no more; so after a time we were settled in Kentucky, and I feel to say the Lord gave me a goodly heritage; yea, my lines have fallen in pleasant places, and I can truly say the Lord is good, his mercies endure forever.

In conclusion I want to say that in reading this exercise one might be led to think the subject of it is a great preacher. Do not be deceived, I am not. There is not a gospel minister that lives but what excels me; this I know well. Regarding my experience of grace I am by no means satisfied with it. I go back often, trying to find something more satisfying, but this is all I have, just a morsel of hope, and ever feel to be "a stranger here below, and what I am 'tis hard to know."

"To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all," I submit the above, with peace unto the churches by Jesus Christ. Amen.

Written by request of a dear sister in Christ. P. W. SAWIN.

RANDOLPH, Maine, 1908.

ELDER H. C. KER—ESTEEMED BROTHER AND PASTOR:—At this hour I expect you are standing before the people, declaring the unsearchable riches of our adorable Redeemer, and in one short week, Providence permitting, you will be in Woburn, talking to that little band of worshipers about the same truth. May the hungry souls be fed by the precious gospel prepared by our heavenly Father and given to you to take and present in simplicity, and yet with power and earnestness, to the comfort and edification of all those whose privilege it is to be present. It does not now appear that this poor, sinful child, if indeed I am a child, will be with you in person, although I shall be in thought, and, as I hope, in spirit. The meetings in Woburn last April, June and September were indeed precious seasons to me, and many things in your sermons are still fresh and rich in my memory. As you present the messages which the blessed Lord has given you may your own soul be comforted, strengthened and encouraged.

Tuesday afternoon.—It is cloudy and looks like a storm, but I hope it may be favorable weather when the time comes for you to go to Woburn. I have decided that it is not best for me to undertake the trip this time, and shall look forward to your next appointment. I have many conflicting feelings with regard going to Woburn to live: my sister in Jay would like very much for me to go there and live near her, and there would be many old friends there, but no company of that precious kindred who are, as I hope, more to me than earthly ties. During the last six months it has been my earnest thought and meditation, and the only place where my mind can rest is at Woburn, and yet it would be bad were I to be taken sick there alone. Right here comes up the question, Can you not trust the Lord? May the Lord direct and guide my steps.

March 18th.—Dear brother, your favor was received while I was at Whitefield, and was very comforting to my troubled heart. I hope you will pardon me for troubling you with my temporal affairs. I want to say that both the Psalms and many hymns have been many times a comfort to me. Sister Glidden writes me that she much enjoyed my visit to her, and that she had read and reread the SIGNS. I hope it may prove a comfort and spiritual benefit to her.

I do not remember that I have ever asked any one to write in the SIGNS upon any text, but of late I have thought much about the words, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." I would very much like, if you feel so inclined, for you to write an editorial upon these words. I have in the past heard you dwell richly upon the joy and happiness of the saints.

I inclose a letter written by sister Bonnie Chick, to be published in the SIGNS if you think best. It has been much comfort to me.

This has been written at intervals as I have had opportunity.

Your sister,

MARTHA K. HUBBARD.

[SINCE the above letter was written sister Hubbard has located in Woburn, Mass., and is happy and very comfortable in her new home. The brethren of the Woburn Church are glad to have her near them. The church and congregation are entertained at her home on Sunday at dinner at each meeting of the church.—K.]

HOPEWELL, New Jersey.

DEAR SISTER HUBBARD:—If one who has known the meaning of that word for so short a time may call you by it. I cannot seem to keep from using it, for ever since the day I was baptized it has been uppermost on my lips when I speak to or of God's children. Sometimes I check myself, feeling my unworthiness, and then I think that surely those who are so many years older in the faith than I will think me forward.

My thoughts and feelings in regard to spiritual things are continually undergoing a change. Many times I find them fleeing far away, and when I try to check them in their course I find I cannot restore the spirit within myself, and then I go groping along, not knowing which way to turn. God in his own good time gives back the trust I long to live in, and I am made to rejoice and feel thankful that there is a God who rules over all and plans our every step. What a merciful God he is! I am often made to sink in deep humility and shame when I am given to see his wonderful mercies to such a sinner as I. When such moments as these come, I think it will be so much easier from then on to walk more godly, but perhaps it will only be a few moments when the flesh will exert its sinful self and I am doing the very things I thought I would not do. O sinful one that I am! I need reminding often, and God does bear so patiently with me, and every day I am made to feel that God does not deal with me according to my sins. I am glad that man cannot direct his steps.

How often since my return home I have thought of the pleasant meeting at Bowdoinham; it was a sweet time to me. God surely brought me among a forbearing people at that time, and O how I loved each and all. They were all so patient to talk to me, and I often felt that I surely must have wearied them, but when with those who know the truth I do have such strong desires to converse only on these things that I cannot check this spirit within me. If it is God's will I do not want to, but if it is a fleshly desire I pray that God may quench it.

It has been a dull and cloudy day, but we had about forty at meeting. I am going to inclose a postal of our baptismal stream; it a dear spot to me.

Elder Vail comes Thursday, and they have made an appointment for that night. I look forward with much pleasure to having the brethren visit us, for I like to be with them and hear them talk.

I felt that if I could I wanted to tell you a little of how it has been with me, but now that I look back over what I have written I feel that it is hardly worth sending, for I have told of God's goodness in such a feeble way. It is not for me to have words to express the deepest feelings that come to me.

Give my love to sister Jennie and brother James. May God bless and keep

you all in his peace, which none else can, is the prayer of your poor and unworthy little sister, BONNIE CHICK.

GENESIS IV. 3-5.

"AND in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his offering: but unto Cain, and to his offering, he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell."

We see in the very beginning in the Adamic race the principle to worship. We have in the offering of Cain and the offering of Abel the false and the true. Cain's offering was of his works, the labor of his hands, whereas Abel's offering was by faith, the lamb, the firstlings of his flock, upon which he had bestowed no labor. Throughout all the dispensations of time there have been two classes of worshipers: false and true. The false are many generations, the true are one generation, the generation of Jesus Christ, the children of the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus said, "The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seed; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof."—Matt. xiii. 31. This grain of mustard seed is faith, which was first given to Abel and on down in the manifestation of the kingdom of God. We read that Enoch by faith was translated that he should not see death. "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became the heir of righteousness which is by faith. By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. * * * For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."—Heb. xi. 7, 8, 10. And of Isaac, Jacob, Moses and the prophets, Paul says, Time would fail me to tell; these all grew from that one faith, the faith of God: "like precious faith" that all the children of God receive, it being the gift of God. Abel by faith offered the lamb unto the Lord as his offering, and was accepted of the Lord. Paul says in his letter to the Philippians, iii. 9, "And be found in him [Christ], not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Faith, the tree, becomes great and is a resting-place. The man that planted the mustard seed is the man Christ Jesus, the field is the earth, for the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof. I have had presented to my mind, the patriarchs and prophets as the roots and body of that tree, planted in the eternal decree and purpose of God in the secret counsels of eternity, when God declared the end from the beginning, and it pleased him that the fullness of the Godhead bodily should dwell in Christ Jesus. The twelve apostles as the limbs extending from the body of the tree, and the true branches of Zion extending from the apostles, earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, "and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."

Let us examine the offering of Cain, the fruit of the ground. Cain's offering was of the creation of God, and no doubt Cain gathered the best fruit he could procure, the fully ripe, the best cultivated; let us see what the fruit of the ground

sets forth. Fruit of the ground is produced of the substance from the ground, and coming from the ground, returns to the ground; in its production it is mysteriously brought forth upon the vine, tree or wherever it grows, and all will agree that it is at its best just as the life from the vine, tree, or whatever produces it, ceases to mature it; even then it is nothing more than dead fruit, for as soon as it is gathered it ceases to receive life. Well, this is what Cain had, and he did not have to keep it long after the Lord rejected it before it perished. So we conclude that all offerings unto the Lord arising from the earth or earthly nature are dead, and never acceptable unto the Lord. "For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption."

Let us consider the offering that Abel offered unto the Lord: the firstlings of his flock, the lamb, a type or shadow of the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. The lamb when slain poured forth its blood, a type of the Lamb of God that was slain upon Calvary, and without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. (Heb. xi. 22.) "For the life of the flesh is in the blood." —Lev. xvii. 11. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he, being dead, yet speaketh." Abel's faith was the faith of God's elect. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, so then if our faith rests in Christ, in the offering of himself unto God for the sins of his people, and our faith is in Christ as our Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption, Daysman, Mediator, Intercessor, High Priest, Husband, Friend and Elder Brother, if we rest in him, trust in him, dwell in him, and feel as did the apostle Peter when he said, "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," then we have evidence that we are possessors of that faith, which is the gift of God. There is but one faith, so Cain was not possessor of the faith of God's elect, but relied on dead works to reconcile him to God. Faith is the gift of God, and whatsoever is not of faith is sin. I said there is but one faith; the works spoken of by James, the servant of God, are works wrought through faith, as Christ is the Head and all his members in him; he is head over the church, and guides and directs each member, and if any one can tell me how much time is taken for my hand to obey my mind, then I can tell you how soon a member of Christ obeys when directed of the Lord.

"And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind." "And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind," &c.—Genesis i. 11; i. 24. The living creatures are possessors of life of a higher order; they have the breath of life, and are conscious of physical suffering. The lamb slain by Abel set forth the shedding of the blood of the dear Redeemer, for he "poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."—Isa. liii. 12. The faith of God is found in "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Dec. 7, 1908.

DAYTON, Wash., Nov. 26, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —My mind is peculiarly exercised upon the church of Jesus Christ and his wonderful way of making known his mercy and grace in the church. Our God tells us that his ways are not as man's ways, nor his thoughts as man's thoughts. They are as far above our ways as the heavens are above the earth. His ways are fixed, and there can be nothing added to or taken from them, for he is God and changes not, and because of his immutability the sons of Jacob are not consumed.

I want to pen a few of my thoughts and exercises of mind, if God will, to the household of faith, and especially to the many of my correspondents of whom I have been so negligent in replying personally. I want to write from an experience of the ways of God toward his beloved church, for I do believe this is the only way that any poor soul can have true knowledge of him, or of his way in the salvation of sinners, for it is written that the world by wisdom knew not God, and neither can man by searching find him out. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." So it is the work of the Spirit to make known the riches of God's grace, and this is the reason that I say we must have an experimental knowledge to know him at all. We read in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews a wonderful testimony as to the way in which the Lord teaches his children. The eighth and ninth verses of this chapter are fraught with comfort to my soul. This is the reason that I feel to hope the Lord has in like manner worked in me, bringing me into a perfect oneness with Abraham, who is the father of all the faithful. I want to call particular attention to the effectualness of the call of God, because this is the beginning of his work manifestly in the heirs of promise, and to how foreign are his ways to the ways of man. By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed, and he went out, not knowing whither he went. This is proof of the effectual work of God. Abraham went out according to the command of God, and this was not because he knew where he was going. Abraham was one of those who in this age are called old fogies, who do not know whether they will be successful or not in the journey, for it is all strange to them; old things have passed away and all things have become new. But Abraham was in possession of that which was essential to a prosperous journey: faith in God, and he must travel in this new land by faith, not by sight. He went out, not knowing whither he went. How softly must he have walked, trying every step, and O how sweet to my soul is companionship in this with our father Abraham. My journey also is dark, and I know not which way to go, for there are two ways. One is of man, and is the way of death, but it seems very pleasurable, and it reasons with me very reasonably. It tells me I am getting old, and that this is a hard world upon old people, and that I had better stay or go where I can make the best living. It says, Your companion left the shelter of her father's home and took shelter under your promise to maintain her and the family she bears to you, and now why should you go into that strange land, not knowing whither you are going? O brethren, tell me, is it thus with you? Have you ever been called to leave all that is dear to you in nature

and turn your steps toward the wilderness? If so, was not the association of some Philip all and in all to your weary soul? Have you ever been called to leave Israel, the church, who are your people, and travel all alone, not knowing whither you were going? Has it been so that in the moments of doubt as to whether God was in the matter at all, and despair was almost overcoming you, to your surprise you saw a man sitting beside the brook, and tenderly you approached him, for his countenance did not look as though you had ever seen him before, but his countenance was sad and his feet were worn and sore; but his every appearance was so like yourself that you drew near to him and asked his name and why he was here; then in relating his experience he told yours better than you could? This is Elijah, the prophet of Israel, that favored people, who were a type of the church. Why is he here? There is a famine in the land, a drought has come, Israel has stepped aside from the path of rectitude, and God, their King, is teaching them that he is God, and beside him there is no Savior. While there I drank of the brook. Yes, dear brethren, we never can rove beyond the limits of his love, and I drank freely of the brook. But at sunset I was hungry and all alone, and what should I do, for my soul was almost starved? To my surprise, the ravens came bringing bread and flesh. The raven, that most foul bird, is made to feed the soul. I think that the ravens represented the flesh. How can this be? By its being subdued and made subject to the inner man. And thus it was fulfilled, "He went out, not knowing whither he went." And yet he travels on, and while it is a strange land, yet it is the land of promise, and God demonstrated his power in him, as he did by giving Elijah of the water of the brook, and the food that the ravens brought him. Here I am brought to the wise man, Solomon, who says that there is a time and a purpose to everything under heaven. And there was a time for me to leave this brook also, for it was dried up. Can we not see how true the word of God is: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power"? The same power that filled the brook with water dried it up again, and it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure. So when the brook failed I still journeyed on, not knowing where I was going. But God had provided, and the prophet asked of a poor widow drink and a little bread, and she replied that she was gathering sticks to cook the last cake for herself and her son that they might eat it and die. Here again was demonstrated God's mercy and care for his church, for while the church, like the poor woman, is lingering upon the last morsel of hope and feels there can be nothing but death before her, God calls an Elijah, a man of God. I have before called attention to the effectualness of the call of God who changes not. Elijah said to the widow, Fear not, for the meal and the oil shall not fail. O how the glorious gospel comforts when the promises of God are applied by the Holy Ghost. Thus Abraham sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange land, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise.

Now, dear brother, I have not satisfied my mind at all in this letter, for it is not what I wanted it to be. I have written you several others, but they were so far short of what I desired to write that I have not sent them, but I will send this to you, and if you can see any mark of the grace of God in it you are at liberty to do with it as you will. I will close now

by subscribing myself a poor, wayfaring pilgrim,

J. T. BARNES.

HAYDEN, Colo., Dec. 27, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —I herewith send you a letter which we recently received from our esteemed brother, W. S. Bourland. It was very comforting to me, and before I had read it through I decided that others ought to have it to read also, and when I came to the last, the dear brother said that I was at liberty to do as I wished, so I send it to you, and if you approve you can publish it in our family paper that others may read.

I have thought many times of late to ask your views upon Romans viii. 23, especially the latter clause, "The redemption of our body." This Scripture has been on my mind much of late, and I have felt as the eunuch did when Philip asked him if he understood what he was reading. I feel as did he, that I need instruction, or some one to guide me. I do not want you to give me your time if you are busy with other matters which may be of more consolation to the little flock.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

L. J. DAWSON.

VERNON, Texas, Nov. 27, 1908.

MR. AND MRS. J. B. DAWSON—MY ESTEEMED KINDRED IN CHRIST:—Not having had any word from you for a long time, and being housed to-day because of rain, I have a mind to write you. I have been musing in my mind over the past, and the many pleasant hours I have spent with you in your home, hearing you both speak of the wonderful works of God in the creation of the universe, and of his unbounded goodness, love and mercy to poor, fallen, sinful sons and daughters of Adam, and have been made again in my loneliness to recall those hours, which are held as almost sacred by me, and to wish, were it possible, to live them over again. But our omniscient Creator has so ordained it that we cannot turn back and live over again those seasons of rejoicing, when our souls were made glad; we must still go on living, suffering, expecting, hoping; living and meeting each day the troubles that are incident to this present life. We suffer by reason of sin, in both body and mind. I believe we are sinners, and that we suffer excruciating pain in this old body because it must die and go the way of all the earth. We expect this, because we know of a truth that all flesh is grass, and that it is like the flower of the field that withereth and soon falleth away. Because of this, we all the more expect the summons that shall bid us quit the walks of men, yet we hope that when it is ours to cross over the Jordan of death the dear Lord will be with us. He will be with us in six troubles, and in the seventh he will not forsake us, and he is merciful to our unrighteousness, and because this is so we may hear the welcome words, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Dear kindred, it seems too much to hope for, as we remember the depravity of our nature and the wickedness of our hearts, but thanks be unto his holy name for the gift of his dear Son to die, the Just for the unjust. He declared that the Father hath given him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him. What a blessed hope is this, to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past

finding out!" We are heirs to an inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in heaven for those "who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." How glad I am that the final consummation of our hope is not conditioned upon our acts, for if it were, my hope would be vain; but our hope is based upon the sure promises of God, of whom we are told in the Scripture that he cannot lie. He said, I am he that was dead, but am alive, and live forevermore, and, he said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." Again, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Again, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." These, with many other glorious expressions from him who spake as never man spake, cheer our hearts by the way, and we are made to exclaim, like doubting Thomas, My Lord and my God. May the blessings of God attend your way while you sojourn in the flesh, and when it is ours to cross over the Jordan of death may his countenance light up our way, that we may fear no evil; and may we through a ceaseless eternity be able to sing praise to the worthy name of our blessed Redeemer.

If you feel that any of my friends would like to read this letter, you are at liberty to do with it as you think best.

In unworthiness, but in hope,

W. S. BOURLAND.

[In response to the request of sister Dawson, will say that some two years ago we wrote upon the text named, and do not feel like now calling attention to it again in an extended manner. We have no doubt that by the adoption, the redemption of the body, the truth of the future resurrection of the body is intended by the apostle, and for this believers wait in hope, though groaning now, because of the image of the earthy which they shall bear as long as they continue in this mortal state, but then shall all that pertains to mortality, including death itself, be swallowed up in victory.—C.]

West London, Ontario.

Elder F. A. Chick—Dear Brother:—I have put off writing to you until today. I am all alone this evening, and the bells are ringing, calling people to the different churches. As I see them going I have no desire to join them, I would rather be trying to write to one of the Lord's called ministers, but I feel very little in trying to do so. May the Lord give me some words out of his dear storehouse, and if he does I can joyfully pen them to you. No doubt, my dear brother, you often want the refreshing showers of God's love in your soul, as well as myself. I used to look upon the dear ministers of the gospel as being so good and perfect that I would think, If I were as good and perfect as they, I would be happier. But as I grew in grace, and came to have more knowledge, and heard them tell about the feelings of their hearts, I realized that they were beset with sin, and that their minds were exercised about the things of time, as well as others, so that they also could not do the things they would like to do; and indeed, if they were not tempted as others how could they preach to the comfort of the Lord's people, who are tempted to walk in forbidden paths, and who often do so?

I was sorry I could not be with you much at the quarterly meeting at Lobo. I love to be in the company where the ministers go, and hear them talk about portions of Scripture, and hear the com-

forting words and sweet messages of the word of God explained. This is why I love to be with them, as I hope. For a time it has seemed to me that we as a church have not had much of this pleasant conversation, and there seems to be coldness and barrenness. I always feel that we have enough of the world to contend with all the time, and that when we meet we ought, if possible, to speak of our trials and joys. This is my delight. I cannot say much, but I love to hear others speak of all these things.

I did not get to hear brother Coulter on Monday, and they said I missed his best sermon. I enjoyed his preaching this time very much. I took dinner with him at sister McArthur's, and had a lovely and profitable talk with him.

Our quarterly meeting was peaceful, as it has been in former years, and the preaching was seasoned with grace. You are loved by the people here in Canada, and may the Lord bless you with wisdom from on high to rightly divide the word of truth and not fear what man will say, and may he give you grace to stand firmly upon the walls of Zion, and shun not to declare his electing love and the predestination of all things, is my prayer.

I awoke from sleep the other morning with this beautiful passage of Scripture upon my mind, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." It was sweet to me, but I felt my unworthiness of such lovely words. I think I felt to bless him with all my heart, and was filled with contrition and solemnity because I was favored with such beautiful words. I think, dear Elder, if not deceived, they came from the Fountain-head, from the throne of King Immanuel. I have great trials to pass through in this world, but am kept pleading for mercy, that he will not leave me to sink at last under my trials. I do at times come up out of the wilderness, leaning upon the arm of my beloved Savior.

The other day I was reading a sermon about how the Lord's people are stripped of their own righteousness, and the speaker quoted the words,

> "In every state secure,
> Kept as Jehovah's eye,
> 'Tis well with them while life endure,
> And well when called to die."

These last two lines came to me years ago when in great darkness of mind, and I would then repeat them over and over, and when I read them again, repeated by a man whom I never saw, it gave me sweet evidence that it will be well with me when called to die; then I will bid farewell to all my tears and sorrow here. It is only vanity and vexation of spirit here below a great deal of the time. Now, dear brother, I must close lest I weary you. Will you write me a few lines when you can do so? Love to you and yours.

In gospel fellowship,

(MRS.) FLORA J. SINCLAIR.

GOIN, Tenn., Oct. 10, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I am one who believes in the predestination of all things, and yet acknowledge that I might be wrong, I feel like asking a few questions in order that I may get right before I die. It makes no difference as to how many are concerned in the answer to these questions, the truth is what I want.

First. Did God foreknow all things that come to pass, from all eternity? Second. Will all things certainly come to pass, just as God foreknew they would? Third. If so, what made them certain? Was it predestination, foreknowledge, or blind chance (fatalism), or what did make it certain that these things would come

to pass? If the things that God foreknew are not certain to come to pass, is it not a fact that there may be no resurrection of the dead, no future happiness to the righteous nor punishment to the wicked? and may it not be a fact that this material world will eternally remain, and the dead remain in their state of death eternally? Again, if the predestination of all things is fatalism, is not the predestination of some things fatalism in part? If not, why not? If so, were not all the writers of the Scriptures, to some extent, fatalists? See Daniel xii. 10; Jeremiah x. 23; Ecclesiastes iii. 15; 1 Peter ii. 8; Jude 4; Acts iv. 27, 28; Matt. vi. 27, with many other Scriptures to which I could refer. Now were all, or any, of these fatalists in part? If believing that God decreed the wickedness of man is fatalism, how can it be said that the writers of the above were not fatalists?

Again, if some, or all things are going on contrary to the will and pleasure of God, why does he allow or suffer it to go on? In other words, why does he not put a stop to it? Is it for want of power, or is it for want of inclination, or is it for want of knowledge of it, or is it for want of will, that he suffers it to go on? If, after due consideration, you conclude it is not for lack of either power, will or knowledge, then please give your best impressions as to why God does not stop all such things.

Again, did God from all eternity absolutely determine to save sinners from their sins? (See Rom. viii. 29.) If so, was not the fall of Adam absolutely necessary, in order that his decree of salvation might be carried out? Was not the crucifixion of Christ absolutely necessary for the salvation of sinners, according to his decree? If after due consideration, you conclude that these things were necessary, and were all included in the decree of salvation, how can it be said that God did not include in this decree all things whatsoever come to pass, both good and bad? In case it is concluded that the fall of Adam and the crucifixion of Christ were both necessary that there should be salvation for sinners, and that both were included in the decree, can you not see from the word, that God did not approve of any wicked thing, nor influence men thereto, but all parties acted freely their own choice and were responsible for their actions according to the testimony of the Bible; and that God so governed their actions that nothing could take place save that which was necessary to the accomplishment of his decree of salvation? Carefully consider these things, and if it can be pointed out wherein I am wrong, I shall look upon that one who does point out my wrong as being my best friend on earth.

In conclusion, I will say, if not deceived in myself, I believe that God has decreed all things that come to pass, or he has decreed nothing. He has decreed that all righteousness shall take place by his authority and power, and that all wickedness shall take place without his command and influence; and that God governs all the actions of men, so that nothing can come to pass save that which will aid the fulfillment of his decree in the salvation of sinners.

If after reading all this, you can fellowship me in this doctrine, and think that God for Christ's sake has pardoned my sins, why not come with us and fight the battle? God has said that such shall not lose their reward.

I will close, hoping that you will give this careful consideration.

I am yours to serve,

P. N. MOYERS.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 22, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have hundreds of letters that I would like to have published because of the rich experiences and sweet expressions of truth they present, but of course that cannot be. It is only now and then one that for special reasons I feel constrained to send you and submit to your judgment whether to publish or not. The following letter to my sister, Bessie Durand, with one previously written to myself, is from sister Lizzie Schiefer, a member of this church. Although I know it was far from her thought that they should ever be published, yet I take the liberty to send them to you, asking for them a place in the SIGNS, because I feel sure that they will be read with comfort by many, and I am equally sure that sister Lizzie would never send anything of her own accord to appear in public.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

DECEMBER, 1908.

MISS BESSIE DURAND—MY DEAR SISTER:—It did me much good to get your very kind letter, and I feel I want to tell you so, but I know it will be in such a bungling manner that you cannot help feeling amused; nevertheless I am going to try.

I was very sorry to hear of your having typhoid fever in your house. I do hope your nephew will soon be over his sickness, and that sister Durand, in her weakness, has recovered from the shock she must have felt. My dear sister, you have my sympathy. I think I know what rheumatism is. I did not know you had been confined to your room so long, but I hope you will be better soon. I am glad to say I am feeling a little better in my mind. I can read the Bible again, and feel a drawing toward the things of the kingdom of God, which gives me some encouragement. I wrote to your brother in August; it was very short. I had written him a long letter, as I was in great darkness of mind, and felt I must tell him about it, but my heart was so hard that when I looked over it I laid it aside, and decided I would not send it. I thought I had destroyed it, but to my surprise I came across it the other day, so I will send it to you, and if you can bear with me I will ask you to cast it into the waste-basket after reading it. I do not know that you can read it, as I have written with a pencil. You will find many mistakes, please excuse them. I have the last SIGNS; it seems good to see your name in it once more.

Unworthily, but lovingly, your sister in hope of a better life,

LIZZIE SCHIEFER.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—MY VERY DEAR PASTOR:—Doubtless you will be surprised to hear from me, as I have been slow to express the exercises of my mind to you in this way, simply because I am no letter-writer. But there are times when every evil thought is brought into subjection, and the love of God constrains us to do whatever he gives us to do. How many times my mind turns to you and your dear family I can never tell; always when I am in great darkness and trouble of mind. Is it because you have been so charitable? I believe that is the reason. I cannot think of a time when you were not; so with this assurance I feel to make the attempt, even though I fail. What I am about to say surely cannot be of any benefit; but when one is in darkness he is looking for some way out.

How strange it all seems to me when I look back to the time when I was brought out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God. How easy it was then to love the church of God, and to feel to be loved by them; all was sunshine, and how often my mind goes back to the joyful times when I first sat under the gospel's joyful sound. O how my heart did rejoice in the wonders of God's love; it was all so very wonderful to me. This was about all I could say: O how marvelous, how marvelous! And it is just as wonderful yet, whenever his love is felt in my soul. I did not then think I could ever be ensnared in worldly things. How insignificant all things else looked to me. But now darkness prevails, and O so many heart-searching questions are felt, such as: Are you sure that what you thought to be religion, or a change of heart, was indeed the work of God? Are you sure that you have felt the Savior's love? Are you sure you are not mistaken in the whole affair? Are you sure it has not been a delusion? O how dreadful when I feel to be left alone, no one near me, and all pollution within, my heart desperately wicked and deceitful above all things; a sink of sin I feel myself to be, and as sister Durand said in her last letter to me, "We cannot possibly see ourselves viler than we really are." I thought, O how true, and if I cannot bear this sinful self, how must I appear before the just and holy God, who cannot look upon iniquity? And I, that am altogether one great mass of sin, cannot possibly think one good thought. To know, to be fully convinced of this awful truth, is it not indeed terrible? I find it so more and more. There are times when I do not seem to have natural affection, my heart cold and hard as marble. I do not see how any could see themselves blacker than I have seen myself. Of course I could not live long with this terrible wave upon me. It passes over only to return again just when I am trying to gather some little hope that I can recover by mending my ways, by trying to be a little more kind, a little more patient; all out of a selfish heart after all. But when the time has come again, after O so many hard strokes, I am made to look up, and feel and know that all my righteousness must come from God, who said, Thy righteousness is of me. I have been told that I could be and do differently if I would try. Would I go stumbling if I could walk upright in thought and act? Surely not. I feel that God knows my every weakness, and of one thing I am sure: all I can do is to stand still, and when I do that all the rest is done.

LIZZIE SCHIEFER.

SENECA FALLS, N. Y., Dec. 9, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Another year has passed away, and again it is time to send on my remittance for the dear old SIGNS, and I assure you it is given most freely, for I love it and it is all the preaching I have. I do so enjoy the editorials. I feel very lonely in my declining years without any people of like precious faith, and would like to have some of the brethren write to me, for I love to hear them tell of our precious Savior. There are none but my daughters here, and one of them lives some little distance, and you know that there is none of any other faith who like to talk of Jesus, but I trust that I may live nearer and nearer to him, trusting more in his strength until the call comes.

Inclosed you will find two dollars for the SIGNS and one dollar for the indigent fund. I hope both editors will be

kept in health and faith to go on for many years, for I think the paper still maintains that good old sound it had some fifty years ago.

Yours in love of the truth,

(MRS.) E. CANDLER.

SENECA FALLS, N. Y., Dec. 8, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—As my mother was sending on her remittance for the SIGNS another year, I thought I would inclose one dollar to aid the poor of the flock a little. I would like to give more, but do not feel that I can just at present, but may later. I am sorry to see by the SIGNS that the contributions are so small of late, for I do so love the dear old SIGNS, and wish that every true lover of it was able to take it. I live near my mother, Mrs. E. Candler, who has taken it for about one-half century, so I have it to read all the time, and can hardly wait for it to come, as it is all the preaching I have. I feel very much cast down most of the time, and sometimes I am made to wonder why the dear Lord withholds his presence from me so much of the time, but I am weak and sinful, and often repeat that dear hymn, "I am a stranger here below, and what I am 'tis hard to know," and my daily prayer is that it is his will to bless me with more knowledge of him, that I may grow in strength and enjoy his presence more fully, for I know there is no other name given whereby we must be saved. May God's richest blessings rest on all the dear ones everywhere, especially the dear editors.

A little sister,

(MRS.) W. J. PECK.

HAYDEN, Colo., April 9, 1908.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—We are still alone in this part of the country, and so far as people of our faith and order goes, there are none that we know of in less than seventy miles. I was meditating a few days since on the loneliness we appeared to be in, when this question seemed to be put to me, Have you not the Lord? I could say no more, for if we have the presence of the Lord, as I sometimes feel and hope we have, where can we be lonely? Truly we mortals are unthankfulness itself; we are of little faith. I much enjoy our dear papers, and we read and talk them over; there are many of the little ones who give my experience, and I rejoice when I read from their pens, for it strengthens my little hope and I feel to go on putting my trust only in the strong arm of Almighty God, who is his people's strength, their portion, their Lord and their all. Having him, how can we bereaved be? Though friends should all fail us, and our home be in a desert land, God is everywhere; we look to the east, and he is there, to the west and see the sun set, and we know he is there, and his promises are sure to his children. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Precious promise, to be known of the Lord, not for our own merit, but for the great love he had for us before the foundations of the earth were laid.

Farewell, and may the God of Israel be our God. Throw the mantle of charity over my shortcomings.

LAVINIA J. DAWSON.

UPLAND, Cal., Nov. 30, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—As I am renewing my subscription to the SIGNS, I thought I would write you a few lines by way of remembrance. It is a little more than a year since we parted from our dear spiritual kindred in far off Canada and arrived in

the southwest. We still cherish (and, I trust, ever shall) very many pleasant recollections of that dear people in our native land, the Covenanted Old School Baptist Church. It has many times been a wonder to me that one so unworthy as I should have a name among the Lord's dear people. I do hope and pray that the dear Lord may keep me from ever bringing reproach upon the cause which I hope I so dearly love.

Well, dear brother, we felt discouraged when we first came here, as we did not find any of our faith and order for some time, but I am thankful to say that we have since found those with whom we can commune and hold sweet fellowship in the truth, one of which number is the name inclosed as a subscriber to the SIGNS, O. P. Speirs, a son of Elder Robert Speirs, of Hedrick, Iowa, and clerk of the little church in Riverside, which, as you are no doubt aware, has been recently organized in, I trust, true gospel order.

Dear brother, I hope this may find yourself, brother Ker and all the dear brethren in the east, whom I love in the truth, enjoying much of the Lord's presence. My wife joins me in love.

Your brother, I hope,

G. A. DUNDAS.

BLACKLICK, Ohio.

MOST PRECIOUS BRETHREN:—Inclosed find post-office money order for three dollars, two for which please give me credit on my subscription for the SIGNS and one dollar for which send the SIGNS to sister Sophia Gorsuch. Please accept my love and best wishes, and I hope to be remembered by all those dear brethren I met in the east. I have been a constant subscriber for the dear SIGNS for more than fifty years, and send in advance, that when I am gone it will be paid for. I am just waiting and longing for the end, when I will be free from sin, for it is mixed with all I do. I am still afflicted in body and mind.

Most sincerely your unworthy brother,

L. B. HANOVER.

FRANK, W. Va., Jan. 8, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars, for which please credit brother Green Woodrum, Hill, W. Va., with one year's subscription as a renewal. I shall in the future, as in the past, do all I can towards increasing the circulation of the paper in these parts, and to get those already taking the paper to renew promptly. I would be glad to see some one at each church of our people who would be interested enough in the welfare of the SIGNS to look after those who seem to be so forgetful and negligent. All ought to be interested this much, but all are not, and some of them good brethren, too, who would not want to miss a single copy of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Yours in hope,

G. B. BIRD.

LOVELAND, Colo., Jan. 16, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please give notice through the SIGNS that my post-office address hereafter will be Clarendon, Texas, instead of Loveland, Colo. Also, please change the SIGNS from Loveland, Colo., to Clarendon, Texas, at your earliest convenience, as I do not want to miss a number of the paper. I will be in Clarendon, Texas, January 20th, Providence permitting. Clarendon is in the Panhandle of Texas. If you know of any of our faith and order in that vicinity, will you kindly inform me so that I may look them up?

I am yours in a precious hope,

J. H. YEOMAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1909.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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MATTHEW XX. 16; XXII. 14.

A DEAR sister in Illinois, who is a long time subscriber for the SIGNS, and who has been an occasional correspondent for our columns, and who desires her name withheld, has requested that we say something about the expression, "Many are called, but few are chosen." These words are found in two places in Matthew; one is in chapter twentieth, and the other in chapter twenty-second. The first is at the close of the parable of the laborers in the vineyard, and the other at the close of the parable of the wedding supper. It is a short but pregnant sentence, like so many of the sayings of the Master. The sentence in both places has the same meaning, but not the same application. In the first place, chapter twentieth, it seems to apply more to the spirit manifested in the hearts of men; while in chapter twenty-second it applies, as it seems to us, more to the outward life. Yet, after all, in both places the spirit which actuated the characters named must not be ignored, and also in both places the spirit possessed by the different characters includes also the thought of the fruit that is borne in the conduct and speech of the characters named. In the first parable it has always appeared to us that the chief thing emphasized is the manner of spirit that is in a man, while in the second the course of life produced by the spirit is more especially intended. It remains true however in both parables that the spirit and the fruit of that spirit are not disjoined. They cannot be disjoined in any man and they are not disjoined in the Scriptures named, yet one may be more particularly emphasized than the other, as the circumstances may demand.

We will say, in the first place, there is no reference here to what most of our articles of faith call "effectual calling;" neither does the word "chosen" here mean the same as in Ephesians i. 4, that is, the choice of the people of God in Christ before the foundation of the world. The text does not mean that the Lord calls all men, or invites them, to be saved, and then chooses those who accept this offer. In neither place where the sentence is used is there any reference to the work of redemption through Christ Jesus, or to the final salvation of men. In both parables the dealings of God with his own disciples as servants, as in the first parable, or as guests, as in the second parable, are presented. In both parables his disciples are presented as making manifest the spirit that is in and of the flesh, in one way or in another; and in both parables is recorded his manner of dealing with the manifestation of the flesh in them. As the words to which our sister has called attention occur at the end of the parables, and are evidently intended to set forth that which the Savior taught in the two parables, we must look at the parables themselves for their meaning, and their meaning must be limited and defined by that which is set forth in the parables. The only safe way to define the meaning of any Scripture is to give it the applica-

tion forced upon it by the connection. We will, then, briefly turn to the parables and strive to learn what is set forth in them. In the limits of an editorial we can do no more than give a sketch of what the two parables contain. Turning to the one in Matthew, twentieth chapter, it will be noted that the last portion of the nineteenth chapter contains the incident concerning which the Savior is discoursing in the first half of this twentieth chapter. In chapter nineteen it is recorded that the young man who had said he would follow the Master, had gone away sorrowful afterward. He had great possessions, and could not give them up. Now, right upon the heels of this, Peter comes forward and says to the Master, "We have forsaken all, and followed thee: what shall we have therefore?" Let it be noticed that the occasion of this statement and question of Peter was what the Savior had said to the young man, and then his going away. Peter would say, If this young man has gone away, not being able to endure this test, we have endured it, and have not gone away. We have left all, as thou hast bidden this young man to do. He has failed, but we have endured. What shall we have for this as our reward? Now the Lord declares to Peter that which shall be bestowed upon all those who really follow him: he shall have much in this life, and life everlasting also; such shall sit on thrones in the kingdom of God. The meaning is, All who possess such a spirit as prepares them to be my true followers, are exalted in my kingdom; not only these, my twelve disciples, but all disciples everywhere and in all time are exalted or abased according to the spirit of their service, rather than the form of it; and so at the end of the nineteenth chapter Peter is told, The first shall be last, and the last first. That is, he that has left all literally, may be the last and least in the spirit of that service, while many who are slow to forsake all and to engage in the labor that belongs to the vineyard, may yet be actuated by such a spirit of lowliness and unselfishness that they shall be counted first, instead of last, in the kingdom of God. True, Peter and the rest had left all, but, after all, it might be that he should be counted last or least, because of this very spirit in him that sought to know what his reward should be. To serve God, and to serve self, are two things. The work done is marred or made according as one serves God or serves self in it. One may give alms to feed the poor; if it be to the Lord, that is good and acceptable in the kingdom of Christ, if it be done to serve self, then in the balances of the kingdom the service is of no weight. In the words closing the nineteenth chapter this warning is set before Peter and before us all.

Now the parable of the laborers in the vineyard only illustrates and makes clear this one truth. (We need not repeat the parable here.) At the close of the day, when the master settled with his servants, they who had come in with an agreement as to wages, or as hirelings, murmured when they who had come in last, and with whom no bargain was made, received each his penny as did the first. When they murmured the master rebuked them: I pay you your hire; I do you no wrong in this. What if I show favor to these, does that injure you? These first are legalists, and all who ask, What shall I have for my labor? as though they felt that payment ought to be made to them, are legal in their spirit. The Lord's own servants are of a legal spirit if this be in their hearts, as well as others. In them that spirit must be rebuked, and in them

it is rebuked in this parable. At the close of the parable the Savior uses the same words that close the nineteenth chapter: The first shall be last, and the last first. The fact that these words stand before the parable, and also end it, shows that the parable is intended to illustrate what the Lord had just before said to Peter. Its substance is that no amount of labor, of deprivation, of suffering in the heat of the day, counts in the kingdom of God, if behind all this labor and suffering there exists a disposition to think that for all this we ought to have a proper reward. Service to be of value in the kingdom of God must be free, willing service, wrought in humility, with dependence alone upon the favor of God for all things. After all, the true servant of God counts himself unprofitable, so that when he receives anything from the Lord he cannot count it a reward, but a bestowment of grace. I have not deserved the least of all thy mercies, is his constant feeling before God, and so to that one who has been most steadfast and obedient the blessing always comes as a sweet and glad surprise. He who thinks he ought to be first shall be last, and he who thinks that he ought to be last shall be first. It is what disciples feel, rather than what they do, that decides their place in the kingdom of God.

The words to which our sister calls attention are but the summing up of this whole matter. The kingdom of Christ calls all the members of it to this free, willing, unselfish service, but how many are like Peter was, as spoken of above: What shall I have for what I have done and am doing? How foreign this is to the spirit of the kingdom of God. It is our firm conviction that every child of God has times of heart-searching, when he comes to see and feel that he has little of the spirit of humility. In his view at such times others stand far above him. We all have learned for ourselves that when self reigns in our service it spoils the service. All have been called to this true service of God, but how few are found serving unselfishly. We know from the narrative that, at that time, Peter was not thus serving; he was not at that time among the chosen ones. He was a child of God, and a servant of God indeed, but not now serving in the spirit of the kingdom of God. Summing up the matter now in as few words as possible, it appears to us that all the children of God are called to this willing service, but how few are found among the chosen ones, the choice ones. Thus the Galatian brethren were all called, but they were not all among the chosen, in the sense of the text; and there is not a church where these differences do not exist. It was so in Sardis, where there were a "few" names who had not defiled their garments. These would be the "chosen," in the sense that this word is used in the text.

Turning to the second use of the word, in Matthew twenty-second, we will attempt to say a few other things. As we have said before, the signification of the sentence is in itself the same as in the other parable, but yet it relates here to the fruit rather than to the spirit, as it appears to us. We would call attention to the thought that the robe which one man had not on at the supper, does not here refer to the robe of imputed righteousness, through which sinners are accepted before God forever, for it is sure that no one ever gets into the feast at all without that robe. At such a supper as the parable presents, all who were bidden were provided with a special garment by the master of the feast, and this garment was the token, or evidence, that they had a

right there. This was called a wedding garment in the parable. All present had on that garment, save the one man. All the guests were showing their respect for the giver of the feast, and for his guests, save this one man. He despised the favor of the master, and showed no regard for the place to which he had been bidden. The robe had been provided, so that when he was asked how came he in without it, there was nothing that he could say by way of excuse; he was speechless. It seems to us that in this parable the wedding garment represents that behavior that is becoming those who enjoy the privileges of the feast. This man had not on the proper garment; he showed no regard for either the master or the guests; his appearance was a blot amidst the company; he was saying, by his appearance, that he had no regard for a proper behavior, or a proper appearance in such a sacred place. Such a man the Master of the feast will judge; he shall find that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. This man shall not abide in the house, nor partake of the feast, but is commanded to be cast out, away from the light, and life, and comfort of the feast. This man was one of those who had been gathered in from the streets and lanes, or from the highways and hedges. He was not one of those who had bought a farm, or oxen, or married a wife, and therefore desired to be excused from the feast, having something that they loved better, but he had been brought in, compelled to come in, and was among the hungry and lame and halt ones. But now he is not behaving himself in the house of God, and the command is to cast him out. It is sure that when any child of grace so behaves himself that he must be cast out, not from heaven, but from the gospel privileges which belong to the orderly children, there will follow weeping and gnashing of teeth, and without will be darkness so deep that it will be felt. He is now delivered to Satan that he may learn not to blaspheme. Now he finds that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

The wedding garment, then, in this parable is not the imputed righteousness of Christ, but the orderly walk of the believer in the gospel. This was wanting in this man. It appears to us that it is concerning this one thing that the Savior repeats the words again: "For many are called, but few are chosen." All who believe are called to an orderly walk in reverential obedience to the King, and the chosen in this case are those who are walking steadfastly in the way. In the parable of the laborers in the vineyard the chosen were those who have the spirit of the gospel, and not of the law, actuating them. Here it is used to present those who walk in harmony with the order of the Lord's house, and we know that some who are sound in doctrine are not careful of their manner of life. In almost all churches perhaps are those who walk far off, and who show but little regard to the behavior that is becoming; these get cast out into outer darkness sooner or later and reap shame and sorrow. One thing we feel sure of, viz., that those who are among the chosen in both applications of the word do always feel to greatly question both what manner of spirit is in them, and what manner of life they are living outwardly. This is one mark of the truly humble.

C.

JOB XIV. 14.

WILL one of the brethren please write on the Scripture, "If a man die, shall he live again?" and oblige a poor sinner,

M. M. MILNER.

Out of his dire distress and affliction Job said and asked many things that come very close to the tried and sorrowful now, and which are often the longings and questionings of their own heart. This is, no doubt, why our sister asks that the text be written upon. In this fourteenth chapter he describes man as born of a woman, and of few days, and full of trouble. He compares him to a flower that cometh forth in beauty and glory, but is soon cut down. He also says, Man fleeth as a shadow, and continueth not. Then, realizing that he had described himself, asked the momentous question, "And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest me into judgment with thee?" Then followed the question which will confound every perfectionist in existence: "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" But he immediately answered in the most brief and positive way, "Not one." All men are conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity because of original sin, hence the only way a man can be just with God is as he stands in Christ Jesus the Lord. After describing man in his natural state and condition, he gives us a sermon, in few words, on predestination by saying, "His days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass." Can it be possible that Job knew the days of a man are numbered of God, and that he cannot die before the appointed time nor live a moment after that time, and men in this age of the world have not as yet learned that the doctrine of "absolute predestination of all things" is a Bible truth which cannot be refuted by all the wisdom of the world?

In verse six there seems to be something like prayer in the heart of Job, for himself, no doubt, more than any other man: "Turn from him, that he may rest, till he shall accomplish, as an hireling, his day." With the important question still in his mind: "If a man die, shall he live again?" Job then talked of a tree in contrast with man, saying, "There is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant. But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" He answered his own question: "As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up: so man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep." He felt that the grave would be preferable to the condition he was in, and expressed willingness to be kept secret until the wrath of God had past. But yet the anxiety of his mind was to know, "If a man die, shall he live again?" which question he could not answer, nor could any one in that age of the world answer it for him. Faith and hope were all he had, by which he walked through darkness, believing that the Redeemer lived and that he should stand in the latter day upon the earth and that he (Job) should see him for himself and not another. Yet notwithstanding his faith and hope, the same important question was with him, and no doubt with all the old testament saints, but was never answered until God sent his only begotten Son into the world.

Then for patriarchs, prophets, apostles and us he answered it, saying, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." "Because I live, ye shall live also."

We think it well to make mention of the fact that the word "again" in the text is supplied, hence the Scripture properly reads, If a man die, shall he live? This gives a different aspect to the question which was really in the mind of Job. There is a sense in which a man dies, and there is a sense in which he does not die. In our earthy head (Adam) we die because of sin, but in our heavenly head (Christ) we do not, cannot die. "Whosoever liveth [spiritually] and believeth in me shall never die." Again, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." How precious and comforting are the promises and declarations of the New Testament to all who believe in God and in redemption through his Son Jesus Christ. What a blessed age we live in, when all darkness and shadows have passed away, and we have the true light and knowledge of God's plan of salvation or eternal purpose, which he purposed in himself before the world was. Our God is the God of the living, we therefore sit down in his kingdom with the "fathers," or in other words, we have come "to the spirits of just men made perfect." Law and justice having been fulfilled and satisfied through the work of Christ, sinners who died in Adam live unto God, and shall never again come into condemnation. Therefore we may say with all authority that if a man die, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, he shall live.

K.

UNKNOWN TONGUES.

BROTHER KER:—I would like to have your views on where the Bible reads of speaking with tongues. We are surrounded somewhat with Mormons and Holiness, who jabber a great deal and call it speaking in unknown tongues.

Oblige an inquiring brother,

WM. H. H. GILSTRAP.

ELK CITY, Kans., Nov. 28, 1908.

The gift of tongues began with the apostles on the day of Pentecost. On that day devout men (Jews) out of every nation under heaven were present, and notwithstanding the fact that the apostles were Galileeans, every man heard in his own tongue (language), wherein he was born, the wonderful works of God. The gift was confined to the apostolic age, though not confined entirely to the apostles, as is clearly shown by the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of first Corinthians, from which many special lessons are to be learned. The Corinthian brethren were of the opinion that the gift of tongues was the chief of gifts in the church, and therefore most to be desired, but the apostle taught them otherwise. While it was right to covet the best gifts, he would shew unto them "a more excellent way," or course, which was to "follow after charity," for though he or they understood all mysteries, could speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and had all faith so that they could remove mountains, and had not charity, they were "nothing." He speaks of the gift of prophecy as being superior to that of tongues, it being more profitable to the hearers. Those who spoke in unknown tongues spoke to God, but not to men, as a general thing, therefore the apostle said, "If there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God."

The gift of prophecy, we think, was also confined to the early age of the church, it being necessary then that fu-

ture events, such as persecution, apostasy, wars, &c., should be known. Such knowledge being of special interest and importance to the church, the gift of prophecy was more to be desired.

The man in this age of the world who imagines he has the gift of tongues and that he speaks to God in an unknown tongue, exposes his ignorance and superstition, because God does not so deal with men to-day. It is true, however, that men of every nation speak in their own language to God, but this is different from the gift of tongues in the apostles' time. Then men spake in tongues foreign to their own nationality, it being a gift, and not something acquired. And the man in this gospel day who undertakes to prophesy of coming events relative to the church of God, will, if he lives long enough, learn to his sorrow that the Lord has not bestowed that gift upon him.

The great and sorrowful calamity which so recently came upon Italy, in the form of an earthquake, where hundreds and thousands of men, women and children were swallowed up, has given subject matter for most every pulpit in the United States as well as elsewhere. Many are using as a text, "The signs of the times," which were the words of Jesus regarding the things that took place, according to prophecy, when he was in the world. Men take the earthquake in Italy as an omen, they say, of the approaching end of the world, and are persuading men to prepare to meet God. Some quote the words of Jesus recorded in Matthew xxiv. 7: "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places," to prove their opinions, as well as to excite men, but they all fail to quote the sixth verse of the same chapter: "And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet." Those signs were significant of the end of the old covenant (legal world), and that Scripture absolutely has no reference to the wars, pestilences and earthquakes of the present day, inasmuch as Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." Hence many will be found false prophets, and their notions, ideas and wisdom will all come to naught.

The gift of tongues at the first was "a sign" for the furtherance of the gospel of Christ, and we have no reason to believe other than it was ever to that end, rather than for edification and comfort in what we call conference or covenant meetings. (See 1 Cor. xiv. 26–28.)

Our brother calls it "jabbering" in his country, and we think it well named. There is much jabbering going on in the world, called speaking of God and to God, but when summed up is found to be empty sound, absolutely nothing in it to the glory of God or to the comfort of his people. Certain services in our land are conducted in Latin, and nine times out of ten not one in a dozen understands a word said. Who is benefited by such service? Paul said, "I speak with tongues more than ye all: yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue."

May none of us depart from the old "landmarks," but rather be satisfied with the fatness of the Lord's house. Then shall we not be bewitched by the ignorance nor by the cunning craftiness of men.

K.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by J. C. Clark.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1908, to the churches of which she is composed sends greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year has rolled around, and again it becomes our duty to address you in a Circular Letter, and we desire to address you in love and fellowship in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the third chapter of first John, first verse, the apostle writes: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God," and then goes on to say in the last of the same verse, "Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." How many reasons we have to glorify God. In the first place, the apostle tells us to behold God's love in choosing us to be his sons. This, according to the apostle's writing, the world cannot do. Now, as we desire to claim that assurance that we have been chosen out of the world, and can behold the love of God in choosing us to become his sons, although we may not know the reason why, yet we may look within, and we find a spirit which desires to be pure even as God is pure; a spirit which can behold God's love in a measure; a spirit of love toward him, because of the faith we have that he has chosen us to be his heirs, sons of God. Perhaps we may look to the time when he put a new song in our mouth, even praise to his name, and has not this song been in us even to this day? Does the world praise God? No, the world has many gods, and they choose to become the sons of their gods, and become co-workers, and claim an inheritance by so doing. We only behold the love of God through that incorruptible Seed of God; we behold by the eye of faith, faith of the Son of God. It would seem that the apostle almost with the same breath tells the brethren to behold the manner of love God has bestowed upon them, that they should be called the sons of God, and that the world knew it not because they knew him not. In the second verse we read: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." We know of a brother who saw in a vision the Son of God, as it were, hanging between heaven and earth. Was not there a new song put in his mouth, and has it not been there until this day? Did not this brother behold the manner of love God had bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God? We do not doubt but there has been a desire in this brother to purify himself, even as that new birth is pure. How contrary the teaching of this new birth is to our carnal nature; the discerning between the two is evidence of eternal life. The apostle goes on to say in the fifth verse of this same chapter: "And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins." This whole chapter, like all of the Scripture, is precious when we are made to know the joyful sound. The manifestation of the Son of God to us not only makes manifest his love and eternal life, but it makes manifest to us our deceitful nature, our carnal nature, which, when we walk after it, there is condemnation, and we go about bowed down and mourning. Even this is manifestation of the manner of God's love. He was acquainted with grief, and a mourner all his days. When we behold God we behold a holy and perfect being,

one whom our flesh is not in harmony with. This spirit within us which beholds the love of God is that which is born of God. This spirit is contrary to our flesh; in this the children of God are manifest.

Dear brethren, we confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, and the apostle says this is proof that we are the sons of God. Dear brethren, beholding the manner of love God has bestowed upon us, what manner of men ought we to be? Let us pray one for another that the love of God may dwell in us, that we may love one another.

Z. M. BEAL, Moderator.
GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, Sept. 11th, 12th and 13th, 1908, to the associations and other meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—Through the riches of God's grace and mercy we have been privileged with another annual meeting. We desire to maintain a friendly correspondence with all such as are traveling the way with us. The way in which we desire to be found is in the Scriptures called the way of holiness, a highway in which the ransomed of the Lord shall walk. The vulture's eye has never seen, nor the lion's whelp trodden it, neither has any ravenous or unclean beast ever been able to go up thereon.

We desire a continuance of your correspondence, and hope to receive a goodly number of your messengers at our next session, which is appointed to be held, if the Lord will, with our sister church of South Gardiner, Maine, at the usual time, on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1909, when we hope to meet your messengers again.

Z. M. BEAL, Moderator.
GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, Dec. 3rd, 1908, at the home of the bride's parents, Charles N. Covington and Miss Ethel E. Powell, both of Wicomico County, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Julia Bissett departed this life on Thursday, Jan. 7th, 1909, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Retta Grant, in South River, N. J. She was 76 years old in July. Her husband, Mr. Asher Bissett, died June 21st, 1885. Since that time she has lived with her son, Mr. Asher Bissett. A few weeks ago she went to her daughter's for a visit, and while there she was taken sick. She was in bed only one day. Her death was very quiet and peaceful. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at South River by Elder Curtis about fifty-five years ago, and was always a most devoted and faithful member. She was never absent from the meetings of the church when it was possible for her to go, and she has gone to meeting when the weather was such that strong men thought it unsuitable for them to go, although she was weak in body. She was a great help and encouragement to the church, and to the ministering brethren who visited there; was held in affectionate esteem by all the brethren, and indeed by all who knew her. She was a dear and noble woman. The loss is deeply felt by her two children and five grandchildren, to whom she was very dear. She is also mourned by two sisters and many other relatives. She was deeply exercised upon spiritual things, and loved to hear and talk of them. For more than twenty years I have been held as the pastor of that little church, now reduced to four in number, visiting them as often as I can, and I cannot speak too highly of her christian character and her walk and conversation in the gospel. The little company of members and the friends who love to meet with us will deeply feel the loss of this loved sister. The following extract from a letter she wrote me last February will show how she regarded herself: "Not long since, before I rose out of bed, these words came to me: The chariot and the whirlwind. Then I took the Bible to try to find them, and in the last chapter of Isaiah, fifteenth verse, I found some words relative to the subject. I have many precious assurances given me, but am still a frail, weak creature, too unworthy to abide in the love of the dear

Savior. 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee.'"

The funeral was on Sunday, at 2 p. m., when I spoke to a large congregation of mourning and sympathizing friends concerning the chariot and the whirlwind, in which the Lord has his way, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding. The hymns selected by herself were sung by friends, 1052 and 1243 (Beebe's collection), and I read also 1290.

About Christmas time she was very happy; it was a time of rejoicing in the Lord with her. Now she is with the dear Savior, sweetly and gloriously satisfied and rejoicing evermore.

May the Lord comfort those who remain.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

Mrs. Judith Ann Clark, widow of D. F. Clark, and one of the oldest and most esteemed residents of the Clayvillage community, died at her home last Tuesday morning, Nov. 17th, 1908, at 11 o'clock, of the infirmities of age. Mrs. Clark was nearly 81 years of age, and had lived in Clayvillage, or that immediate vicinity, all of her life. She was married fifty-nine years ago to Mr. D. F. Clark, who died four years ago. Seventeen children were born to them, twelve of whom grew to manhood and womanhood, and eleven of them survive their mother. Mrs. Clark was a good woman in every sense of the word, kind, hospitable and charitable, ever willing to assist the unfortunate and always ready to help those who were in need of her assistance. She had been a life-long member of the Old School Baptist Church, and her funeral services were conducted by Elder P. W. Sawin, after which the remains were interred in the cemetery at Bagdad.

To the above from our county paper I would add that our dear sister and mother in Israel was received in the old Bethel Church in 1842, in the fifteenth year of her age, having had a membership of more than sixty-six years, and in all these years of conflicts and cares her faith was in God, who was her stay and comfort. She knew well of the temptations, doubts and fears such as are common in the life of every heaven-born soul, and would often question her identity in the Spirit, but Jesus was her only hope. She would sometimes express a fear of death, and for that reason feared she was not a child of God. I would say to her, You want living faith now, dying faith will be given you when called to die. I went to see her a few days before she so peacefully passed away, and as I took her by the hand she looked up with her countenance radiant with a heavenly glow, and said, "O, I am not afraid to die now," and repeated it. "Yes," I said, "the God in whom you have trusted all these years is faithful to every promise." As the end drew near, brighter and brighter were the heavenly scenes before her, until the room seemed filled with the presence of the Lord. In her enfeebled state she would break forth into singing. As the family told me of the heavenly scenes as this dear sainted mother passed away, I could say, Blessed death to die, gate of entrance into eternal joys. Can we not say of a truth, Her religion was of the heart, that which she lived, and therefore could die by? How much she will be missed in the church and out of it, but we think of her in the church triumphant, and sorrow only that we shall see her face no more.

Her remains were borne to their last resting-place by her five remaining sons and one son-in-law. May we all bow resignedly to the will of the Lord, and his blessings be upon all the family.

P. W. SAWIN.

Nancy Louisa Agee was born August 27th, 1845, and died Jan. 4th, 1909, aged 63 years, 4 months and 8 days. Sister Agee joined the Primitive or Old School Baptist Church called Little Hope on the first Sunday in September, 1883, but on account of poor health was not baptized until about two years later, by the writer of this notice. Our sister had been in poor health for forty years or more. She was a firm Bible Baptist, believing in the doctrine of predestination, election, &c. She had been a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for a number of years, and indorsed the doctrine it contains. She was a humble, devoted christian, and when it was possible her seat was always filled at meetings. She loved to mingle her feeble voice with the brethren and sisters in praise to the God of her salvation. She was well versed in the Bible, which was her theme. She delighted to hear salvation preached; conditions were of no benefit to her, as she believed in salvation that was complete in Christ, and that poor sinners have nothing to do in their salvation. She ever had an encouraging word for the church to which she belonged, and especially for the pastor, the writer of this sketch. Sister Agee had been living with her brothers and sisters for several years, as her parents are both dead. Her father was a Baptist preacher of the same church to which she belonged. She made some visits last summer in southeast Missouri, then came home and visited her brothers and sisters in the vicinity. She was taken with pneumonia, and died at her sister's, Mrs. J. A. Druin. The little church will miss her much. She leaves four brothers, four sisters, one half-sister and the church, besides a host of other relatives and friends, to mourn, but we sorrow not without hope, for our loss is her happy gain.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort at the home of her brother-in-law, J. A. Druin, from Matt. v. 8, after which the body was laid in the tomb in the family burying-ground to await the resurrection morn.

J. F. MATTHEWS.

MINT HILL, Mo.

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Mrs. V. A. Taylor, W. Va., $1.00; Mrs. C. Schade, N. Y., $3.00.

ERRATA.

In the article of brother E. D. Varnes, on page 47, first column, current volume, where it reads, "affecting my head and one side of my face," the word "head" should be hand.

MEETINGS.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

"SONGS IN THE NIGHT."

This is the title of a little book now in the hands of the printer, containing the last five beautiful and richly experimental poems which my brother, James B. Durand, wrote during the last year of his life; also a memoir of his life prepared by me, his experience of grace and an account of his last hours, closing with his wonderful return from apparent death to tell of the exceeding love and glory of the dear Savior which had suddenly broken in upon his soul. I have been asked to publish these poems in book form. I know the book will be of deep interest to those to whom I am addressing this notice. It will be neatly and attractively bound in cloth, and will likely be ready to send to subscribers early in February. The price will be fifty cents, sent by mail postpaid. I would be glad if those who wish to get the book would send me their orders as soon as convenient.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 77. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1909. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MANASSAS, Va., January, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—If I have any portion with the Lord's dear people while pursuing this mortal pilgrimage it is especially with the afflicted poor of the flock, and it is in the valley and shadow of death that I realize the nearest fellowship with them, and, I hope, with their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. If I know anything of the work of Christ, it is far more in bearing the cross than realizing the victory, though I have a little hope that I know something of the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord. I sometimes think my infirmities, my sinfulness, my weakness, are so pronounced, so conspicuous, that everything else, if there is anything else, is hidden, and I can only see and realize the barrenness of the land in which I dwell, and can only feel my great and sore needs, without the assurance that those needs are all supplied. When a glimpse of comfort comes it is more often indeed than any other way as oil out of the rock and honey out of the flinty rock. This may be the reason why in my poor efforts in the ministry my mind is generally led to the afflictions peculiar to the saints, which are abiding evidences to them of the work of grace in their hearts. Of late I have had some thoughts relating to this, regarding the significance of the cruel scenes before the Jewish priests and Pilate, in Pilate's judgment-hall. I have the conviction that there is significance and instruction in every detail of those scenes enacted in that terrible night when the enemies of God and his Christ seemed for a season to have triumphed. After cruel scourgings and bitter mockery they put a purple robe upon Him, such only as emperors and rulers were allowed to wear among the Romans, in his hand a reed and upon his head a crown of thorns, and in insulting mockery bowed before him crying, "Hail, King of the Jews." In this appearance Pilate led him forth and said, "Behold the man!" words so significant and of such import at the time that I am inclined to believe God himself put them into Pilate's mouth. We must remember that this "man" was the Elder Brother of the family of God, the Shepherd going before the sheep, the "head over all things to the church, which is his body," who in all things has the preeminence. Now, what I wish to call particular attention

to is the marvelous truth that His people in their measure drink of the cup which he drank and are baptized with the baptism he was baptized with, in their being brought to know the fellowship of his sufferings; so the scenes I have called attention to have a great meaning to them for whom he prayed that they may "be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory." It is to "the man" our attention is called, as he is pointed out to us by his enemies and our enemies, in the darkness of our minds and in our unbelief. He stands alone in the midst of his enemies, not a disciple, not a friend to say a word in his behalf or defence; he says not a word in his own defence. Art thou a king? What mockery in the question.

Now, my dear brother or sister, set your own case before your eyes and see if you really, in spite of all your fears, do not know something of the fellowship of the "man of God." You are set before a tribunal of law righteousness, of creature merit, that is, before your own carnal understanding, your steps are well-nigh slipped, your feet are almost gone, faith and hope even are well-nigh dead within you; you had indulged the fond hope that the enemies of your soul's peace were subdued, that your sins were all forgiven you through the precious blood of Jesus, and this glorious righteousness as a kingly robe clothed you before the all-seeing eye of your God; you had hoped you were of that number who had "washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb;" but now it comes into your mind that you were deceived in the whole matter. Look at yourself: "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." In what am I better than the ungodly man? says that legal judge within you, the spirit and reasoning of the Pharisee. What hypocrisy, what mockery for you to pretend you are clothed in the kingly robe of righteousness provided for God's saints. A king indeed! Rather a slave to all manner of evil and to every lust obscene, which you know is in that vile heart of yours.

"Behold the man!" Let us look at the crown of thorns upon the head. The apostle Paul writes that after the abundance of the revelations he had from God, lest he should be exalted above measure there was given him a "thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet" him. He besought the Lord thrice that it might be removed from him, but the Lord's answer was, "My grace is sufficient for thee." In this connection we hear him using this remarkable language: Nevertheless I will "glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." I must believe that the infirmities of his flesh constitute the thorn he complains of. We hear him groaning under the prickings of those cruel thorns in wretchedness and lamentations. At any rate we know the crown is an emblem of kingship, of rule and power, so, poor soul, look at that which is so conspicuous in your own humiliation, which seems to crown all and justify the cruel mockings of your adversary and plunge you into the deepest affliction. "I would do good," say you, but "evil is present with me." "The good that I would, I do not," while the evil I hate, I do. "O wretched man that I am!" "I am carnal, sold under sin." Who can interpret the cry that goes up to heaven out of a burdened, breaking heart, "My sins, my cruel sins"? We know it was the sins of his people the dear Redeemer bore; his soul was lacerated by their cruel sting; sin is the sting of death itself. The literal thorns

were not so hard to bear as the sins of his dear people borne "in his own body on the tree." The crown of thorns bespeaks the reign of sin. As Jesus, who knew no sin, was made sin for us, he bowed his head under its power and dominion, confessing the mighty power of darkness, voluntarily entering under that power, for there is where his people were. In his sublime humiliation the crown of thorns was wonderfully appropriate. In wearing it he shows he was "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," and was tempted as his people are. Looking at the things that are seen, or as they appear, we see a shameful end to a singular life, cruel disappointment and an ignominious death. "By his knowledge," thus obtained in his own soul's experience, he justifies many, for he bears their iniquity. I think the disciple Peter illustrates what I am trying to express; at the very time, a few short hours before the dear Savior was presented before his enemies in that mocking garb, Peter had professed, and no doubt felt, the greatest love and zeal for him, seeming ready and willing to sacrifice even his life for him. He appeared just such a follower as you and I, my brother, have long desired to be, but now, as Pilate says, "Behold the man!" Peter sees him, and himself enters into the hour and power of darkness, into the valley and shadow of death, under the siftings of Satan. He sees the man whom he had thought so faithful, even unto death, he sees him a vile traitor, a man of profane lips, a most wretched apostle; in a word, he sees himself, and how terrible the sight is shown by the bitter tears he shed. We can only see "the man" in our own case in the light of that look which Jesus cast upon Peter. How awful were those words as they were recalled to his mind: "Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice." How cruel the pricking of the thorns, his own miserable, wretched infirmities, the weakness and wickedness of his vile flesh. Judas the betrayer could hardly be worse, but Jesus had said, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Thanks be to God, there is a victory, but it must come through death. It is not in the mighty plan of salvation that death remain unconquered; that Jesus and his dear people are brought to its borders and then delivered from going into it; no, a thousand times no, that dread enemy, that last enemy, is not left behind unconquered; it is through death that death itself is destroyed. "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." The Captain of God's host did not turn back, but to appearances death was victorious, so the disciple thought, so his disciples almost conclude to-day when they look at things which are seen; surely "my hope is perished from the Lord."

The closing scene is on the cross, the end is come. "We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel," but they have killed him; put the dear body away, embalm it carefully and tenderly, it is only now a sad but sweet memory. But what word is this brought by those who were early at the sepulchre? the grave empty and a vision of angels? My soul, what means this shout that Christ is risen and become the first-fruits of them that slept? Death itself conquered. "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through Christ Jesus our Lord. My dear brother, death is conquered for us and in us, and we are given a crown of life, but remember the entrance into life is through the gates of

death. The crown of thorns first, the mocking robe and scepter whereby our cruel enemies mock our hope and trust when we look at what we really are before the just and holy God. But by faith, the power of the resurrection of the dead, a glorious victory is given us over death, hell and the grave. A great wonder appears in our heaven, "a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet." Poor Thomas says, I will not believe. A mighty voice says, Thomas, and Thomas lives. "My Lord and my God," is his profession. Paul writes as follows: "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." The power of the resurrection is the power which conquers death, the power of an endless life. Being made conformable to Christ's death is manifest to Paul and to us, if we are his followers, in the fellowship of his sufferings, being with him experimentally in his temptations and trials, in mockings and scourgings for his sake, by treading the wine-press alone, by bearing the cross, by dying to the law, by being "always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh," by our appearance to ourselves as we look upon our kingly dress, for we had hoped we were kings and priests unto God, our sceptre of rule, for we had hoped also we reigned over self and sin, and by the crown of thorns, for we find those cruel sins do reign in us unto death; indeed, we are led captive by the law or power of sin which we find in our members. It is a comfort to remember, when we can, that sin is a burden and a sting only where Christ is. It is the element of all who love it and live in it, but an element of death to all who are in Christ, or in whom Christ dwells by his Holy Spirit. So the crown of thorns is Satan's emblem of power and rule; that is why it is such a wretched disgrace and shame to all who love the Lord. The "glory" of Jesus as it is revealed in this conflict, and which his people behold in him, and which they partake in and by him, is illustrated in the case of Job, that representative man. After the climax of his afflictions, and he sat among the ashes of his prosperity, with his three friends around him dumb with astonishment at such wretchedness, his wife said to him, "Dost thou still maintain thine integrity? curse God, and die." Job's reply shows a conquering power, the power of an endless life, the power of the love of God, which is stronger than death; he says, "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" So Job sinned not with his lips, nor charged God foolishly. Job's faith failed not, for it is the power of the resurrection and the life. We "believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead." We hear Jesus say in the darkest hour of his adversity, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" Here we see the loving obedience of the servant and the Son in which we behold his glory, if we are experimentally with him. By his obedience even unto death the law is honored and fulfilled; by his resurrection from the dead the sting of death is taken away, the strength of the law is removed, and life and immortality brought to light. The reign of sin has its limits, it is unto death. I have power to lay down my life, "I have power to take it again. This commandment I have received of

my Father." Now by his resurrection from the dead he is "declared to be the Son of God with power," so "as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to those that believe on his name."

Dear brethren editors, I submit this article to your judgment; it is of great length, but at the same time contains only hints, fragmentary at best, of what I wanted to say. Do not let it cumber the SIGNS to no profit.

Affectionately your brother in hope,

J. N. BADGER.

UPPERCO, Md., Jan. 7, 1909.

ELDER J. T. ROWE—DEAR BROTHER AND PASTOR:—I have seated myself to answer, as well as I can, your congratulations on my having reached my eighty-third birthday. But, dear brother, my head and hands are failing fast, and the indications are that my brethren and friends will soon have to excuse me from the pleasure it would afford me if circumstances were different. It seems to me that it is good to grow old, if for no other purpose than to receive so many tokens of regard and esteem as I have received from yourself and many others in the last two months. I try as much as possible to let them know by letter or personal interview how much good their remembrances have done me; and right here it seems proper that I should notice a request you made of me in your letter, which was that I should write something of my eighty-third birthday thoughts for publication in the SIGNS. Perhaps I might have taken your request under consideration but for the fact that I wrote a private letter to brother Chick, as I am now trying to write to you and have done to others, which he saw fit to publish in the SIGNS, and I think it best that my name should not appear again in print for a time at least, if ever. In this connection allow me to make a request of you: that you write more frequently for the SIGNS, as the space your writings would occupy would be worth much more than anything I could write or have written. You excuse yourself on account of barrenness of mind and of not being a ready writer. Well, I feel incompetent to advise, but feel to say, Just sit down and write what the Lord gives you at that time, and I think he will make no mistake. I think one has said, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen," and think it would be profitable for all who write or speak to tell that which they know and feel at the time, and I have not the least doubt but that what they speak or write will find a lodging-place in the hearts of those to whom they speak or write. Now, brother Rowe, I think you will agree with me that under the circumstances named I should not attempt to have the columns of the SIGNS again burdened with anything from me, but I do want you to write, whether it be upon that Scripture you were requested to write upon, or any other theme your mind might be directed to at the time of writing.

We all felt sorry that none of us could be at the meeting the first Sunday, but neither Emma nor I felt well enough to risk the journey, and wife thought the morning looked a little too threatening at starting time, and our roads up here are very rough. I hope the dear Lord gave you sweet meditations upon a portion of his word, and that your own heart was comforted with the same comfort wherewith your hearers were comforted. My bodily ailments are some better than formerly, but I am strictly charged by the doctor to take particular care against exposure.

Dear brother, at this point your card of the 5th inst. was laid on the table before me. Thanks again for your kind remembrance of us.

I cannot write more now, but will again if able. Write whenever you feel to do so, if not asking too much.

J. P. KELLEY.

BALTIMORE, Md., Jan. 14, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—You will see by the inclosed letter from brother Kelley that he requests me to write about the things I know, and I feel impressed to try to do so. First, I will say I know that I was born in sin, and have lived until now a sinner. When about seventeen years of age sin became a burden to me, which burden grew heavier as the days passed by, until the time came when I saw myself a hell-deserving sinner, and I was in hell, and therefore know there is a hell, which shall be the everlasting doom of those not redeemed by the blood of Christ. When this awful fate stared me in the face Jesus appeared and removed from me the fear of hell, and gave me sweet peace in believing in him, and one day as I worked in my father's field, about two miles from the Primitive Baptist churchhouse, and the most of that distance woods, he showed me the true church. I did not see the exterior, but the interior of the house, with the members in their accustomed places, and this poor, sinful boy who had mourned so long on account of his sins now rejoiced on account of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and on the first Sunday in June, 1876, I was baptized in the fellowship of the same church I saw in the vision of God, by her pastor, Elder Bryan Whitford, whom I had from a child been accustomed to hear, and whose preaching sometimes affected me as far back as I can remember, and with my mind's eye I can see him now as he stood preaching, while the tears rolled down his aged cheeks. I know that after I was baptized there was peace in my heart, the like of which I never felt before, and this continued with me and in me for about one month and a half, when very suddenly one day as I sat eating my dinner these words came to me as though some one said them: You have got to preach, and in an instant all my joy was gone, and the same heart that was so full of joy and peace but a little while ago was now sad and heavy. I saw that I was not fit for so great a work; in my own estimation I had not one qualification, and O the trouble and distress into which I sank I shall never be able to tell. I went on in my trouble, saying nothing to any one about it for the next month and a half. I was going to school, but could not put my mind on my books. The first of September the church held a three days meeting, as was her custom, and on Sunday a. m. Elder A. Jones, a very lovely and lovable servant of God, said to me: "Brother Joshua, myself and the rest of the brethren feel that you have to preach, and I want you to tell me whether we are mistaken or not." Here for the first time I confessed to man the burden of my heart, telling Elder Jones that my heart was burdened because I did not know whether the Lord had required me to preach or not. My trouble was not so much an opposition to preaching as the fear that it was not of the Lord; and just here I will remark that I am not now opposed to preaching, for I love to speak when I feel that the dear Lord is with me, and while I often dread it, because of a feeling sense of my weakness, I do not feel that I want to stop entirely. Elder Jones spoke to others about me, so

at night there was an appointment for my brother, the late Elder John R. Rowe, and Elder L. H. Hardy, of Reidsville, N. C., who were both young preachers at that time, and at this meeting they prevailed on me to open the services and talk some, which I did, greatly to my relief. How others felt about it I can only judge by their making appointments for me and asking me to speak. I have continued on to this day, and I feel like saying, with Paul, by the grace of God. I think surely no one has discovered my weakness more clearly than I have, or felt my shortcoming more sensibly, and yet I feel that very many of the Lord's people have been comforted by things I have been given to say, and if so I know that no sinner has been more highly favored than I, and I know that all this joy, as well as sorrow, has been experienced by the same sinner. I know of no sinner whose sins trouble me as my own do, and I know of no being so benefited by the righteousness of Jesus as this same sinner. I know that Jesus has promised to be with those sinners of Adam's fallen race whom he has redeemed by his blood, even to the end of the world. I also know that he has promised to change our vile body and fashion it like unto his own glorious body. I know therefore that it is this Adam sinner, soul, body and spirit, that is the subject of the salvation of Jesus Christ. In this tabernacle he groans, but in that spiritual body he shall forever sing, Thou art worthy, for thou hast redeemed us by thy blood out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people. I know I am a sinner still, and I know that I need the sustaining grace of God every hour of my life, and I know that brother Kelley is a child of God, and a servant of the church, and I know that such letters as this one from brother Kelley to me is a source of great comfort to me, and I do not think he will object to my sending it for publication.

I have written hurriedly as my mind has run. May God bless us to think on what we know, and to his name be glory now and forever.

Your brother, I hope,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

MONROE, Ga., Jan. 1, 1909.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—Time has made my subscription to the SIGNS about due, so I must remit, and will send you a few lines. The coming of the SIGNS reminds me of my grandparents and parents, who enjoyed the reading of its pages many years ago. The doctrine of God our Savior which it continues to contend for is food to the children of God without doubt to me. The life of Elder Joseph L. Purington, of Maine, and that of Elder William L. Beebe, of New York, who married our southern women and were pastors of our churches here, are among the circumstances which gave the SIGNS a welcome in Georgia over half a century ago, and my three visits north among your people in the last eight years, and the marriage of Elder H. H. Lefferts, of Warwick, N. Y., to my sister, cause me to want to write you, wishing for you and yours, and all the readers of the SIGNS, a happy new year. To-day I take down the picture from the gallery of my memory that was made in the spring of 1906; it is vivid and soul-cheering to me now, seeing brother William and myself shaking hands at the association at Hopewell with the brethren and sisters, receiving their kind hospitality and christian care for us in the homes of Elder Chick, sister Purington and others. The spread of good things upon the table out of doors for the

friends and brethren to eat was only an index to the spread of the gospel feast that was enjoyed by us. Turning the picture I see ourselves at Elder J. G. Eubanks' enjoying the kindness of his family, also at his church, Welsh Tract. Then also Elder S. H. Durand's home and pleasant family were ours to enjoy; brother Terry also added to our pleasure at his home. Then the association in New York city gave us a hearty welcome, enjoying the preaching full of the power of God and the wisdom of God. From there to Warwick with brother Horace and sister Ella, who, with their friends, made it very pleasant for us at his church there. Then to your home and city, where your good wife and family made it so pleasant for us, showing us your brethren and sisters in the city, also the old church building where Elder Gilbert Beebe, who also visited us years ago, preached so many years. Then to the office of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, where the neat and correct work of printing is done, which demands the prompt payment of our subscription. To look at this picture does me good, I can enjoy it as well in the nighttime as the day. We have a mind to visit up there again next spring, but we fear that it might be intruding on your people; I hope the Lord will direct me when the time comes. My imperfection and insufficiency to know how and when and what to do gives me no little concern. I love the doctrine of God our Savior, whose blood cleanseth us from all sin, who was declared to be the Son of God with power, to do the will of his Father, to redeem his people, to deliver them from the power of darkness, to make them walk and faint not, to make them lie down in green pastures, make them sit together in heavenly places in himself, to make them suck honey out of the rock, to give them repentance, to give them knowledge of his love, to kill them to the love of sin, to hide their life with Christ in God, and when he who is their life shall appear they shall appear with him in glory, giving them an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them who are now kept by the power of God, ready when this earthly house dissolves to bear the image of the heavenly, made ready by the power that raised up Jesus from the dead, notwithstanding some men were paid to tell the falsehood that the disciples came and stole Him away. I have thought those men did not know for certain how it was, because of the earthquake, the countenance of the angel being like lightning, and his clothing being white as snow; one of the writers said it was yet dark. Just think of such an occurrence, it must have been a fearful time. The wisdom of man in making the tomb secure proved ignorance, but the wisdom and power of the Son of God was proven beyond any reasonable doubt. He had power to lay down his life and power it take it again. There were some who did not think about being paid to tell of the coming forth of him, it was great joy to them, they were more than willing to publish it. There are some now who love to tell of his wonderful power and love and ability to save all that the Father gave him; to tell that there is no other name given under heaven whereby we must be saved, because He is the way, the truth and the life. It is not true that he came into the world to try to save sinners, to offer salvation to sinners, that they may accept or not. I feel it is dishonoring to Christ to say that he has done all he can do for sinners; that he wants all the family of earth to be saved; that he got Noah to

build an ark to save all that Noah could get to heed him. Redemption in and through Jesus Christ is the only hope of a child of God, for He is sufficient.

Since looking over this letter I feel ashamed of it, but it is the best I have this time. Let the mantle of charity fall upon it.

Your unworthy brother,

J. M. ADAMS.

[WE are very glad indeed of the above good letter from brother Adams; glad the last visit north was so gratifying to him and brother William. The memory of it seems pleasant to him. We were all glad to have them at our meetings and in our homes, and assure them of a hearty welcome should they come again this year.—K.]

VIOLA, Del., Nov. 3, 1908.

DEAR SISTER TERRY:—Your kind, sympathetic letter was received some time ago, and I have wanted to answer it, but did not feel that I could, and I do not yet feel so, but I must tell you that I appreciate it very much. I have passed through a season of great trial, and yet I can say, The Lord has not forgotten to be merciful. At times I felt to be cast down, and to say, "All these things are against me." The trial is almost more than I can bear, but the everlasting Arm, I hope, is beneath me and bears me up, and I have been made reconciled at last to the will of God. I cannot wish my loved one back, to suffer again as she did, though the loss to me is great, and I feel it keenly. The loss is mine, the gain hers. I feel that she now enjoys the full fruition of that for which she hoped, and had, for a number of years, been an advocate of. She was a sound, spiritually-minded woman, and a companion to me in every sense, hence my great loss, and now that it is all over, and I have had time to think and realize the extent of my loss, it seems to me that that part of my life is a sealed chapter, sacred to me, and I must begin my life anew. From now on it will be different, and must be built up according to circumstances that may be brought to bear upon my walk through this world of sin and sorrow. But wherever I may roam, or whatever may be in store for me, what of joy or sorrow may await me in after years, can have no part with the past fifteen years, that is, so far as the blending of our lives is concerned. She has done her work, and filled her place in my life, and it is full and complete, sealed by death, and all I have is the memory, which is sacred to me alone, and ever will be. I know that time and the grace of God can and does heal the wounds, and there may be new attachments formed and we seemingly go on through the world forgetful of the past, but says the wise man, There is a time for everything under the sun; there is also a place for everything, and everything fills its allotted time and place, and can have no part with that which is gone before. We live the life marked out for us by the all-wise Creator, and when our journey is complete and it pleases God to take us away from these low grounds of sorrow our work is done, we have filled our place in the world and it is full and complete. Lena said awhile before she died, in reviewing her life and suffering, that she had not always lived just as she would like to have lived, or done just as she would like to have done at all times, but her life was just as God would have it, for he had a purpose in all he did, and there was nothing by chance. I wish I could tell you all she said, but cannot. She talked for about an hour of the goodness

and mercy of God, to his praise, honor and glory, and the abasement of self, and finished all with a beautiful prayer. As she talked I was made reconciled to the will of God. But, dear sister, we cannot always feel this reconciliation; our nature will rebel, and there have been times that I have questioned why it was necessary that she and I should suffer so: she to suffer pain and affliction, I a broken heart and the loss of the, to me, dearest being of earth. But it must be so; it was the will and purpose of God that she should be carried to the realms of immortal glory, to join that great throng around the throne, and join in the song of everlasting praise, where there is no more sin or sorrow, sickness, suffering, pain or death. I am left for a time in this world of trials and tribulation, to endure until the Lord shall say, It is enough, child, come home; if so be I am one of his. May the Lord give us each and all strength to endure and bow in humble submission to his righteous will, and grace to say from the heart, Thy will, O God, not mine, be done.

But I must close these rambling thoughts lest I weary you. I have not been left comfortless in my bereavement. I have had good support, and feel I have many dear friends, whose sympathy I greatly appreciate. I have received some very comforting letters, and wish I could answer them as they should be answered, but I am not equal to it; in fact, I have had little inclination to write, but have locked my sorrow in my heart, and go about my daily avocation with such strength and composure as is given me. I feel sure that you will throw the mantle of charity over all my weakness and imperfections, for this is like the writer, imperfect, and written under difficulty in the tower, with trains running to break into my thoughts. When it is well with you, and you so desire, I would be glad to receive a letter from you; they always bring me comfort, hence are welcome, though I am a poor correspondent myself. Remember me in love to brother Terry.

In christian love and fellowship, I am yours in affliction,

W. S. CUBBAGE.

LANHAM, W. Va., Sept. 1, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have a letter from brother O. B. Hickerson which I believe will be received by all the readers of the SIGNS, so I will send it to you for your consideration.

Your brother,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Aug. 25, 1908.

ELDER J. W. McCLANAHAN—BELOVED BROTHER IN THE LORD:—Your good letter in the SIGNS of the present month seems to me to have been written with true knowledge of the teaching of the word of God, which embodies all things. Isaiah was given faith from that lofty One who inhabiteth eternity to prophesy as follows: "Remembering the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else." He is all-wise, and above all power in heaven and in earth, declaring "from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." This one sentence ought to keep the mouths of the world closed, for the end that was declared must come to pass, every jot and tittle of it. There is no uncertainty in that which was given to Isaiah to prophesy, and there will be no failure. The counsel of the Lord standeth firm, and none can disannul it. There are many devices in man's heart, but the

counsel of the Lord shall stand. There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord; indeed there can be none. The natural man is too short-sighted to comprehend the least of God's wisdom. God hath spoken, his purposes and decrees have gone forth, and he will not reverse them. Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. "O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvelous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory. The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen." Not in the wisdom of men, but in the hope of eternal life, which he purposed before the world began, hath he manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto his servants, according to the commandment of God our Savior. "Among the gods there are none like unto thee, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto thy works. * * * For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: thou art God alone." There are no conditions required upon the part of man in order to the performance of all the precious promises unto the redeemed who are to be brought forth with singing, giving everlasting praise for the victory of the everlasting covenant, which is sure and steadfast. The Scriptures are still being fulfilled, and not one thing of all that God has declared shall ever fail of fulfillment; they are from the Most High, who is in and of himself absolute in all his attributes and purposes. He is not to be limited in his bounds, as some who claim the name of Primitive Baptists would contend, claiming as they do that his predestination is limited to that which pertains alone to his church, and that if God is absolute in all things he is the author of sin. They acknowledge him to be just in all things, but cannot be reconciled to the term "absolute predestination of all things." I hope, my unknown brother in the flesh, but not in the Spirit, that I am not deceived. I feel sure that had it not been for his predestination and decrees I would be of all men most miserable, but trust that it was through his wise purpose, not known to man, that I had to be brought down, as it were, like Nebuchadnezzar, to eat grass in order that I should be brought to acknowledge that there is a God that giveth unto whom he chooses. But his kingdom dwells on the earth with his redeemed sons and daughters, who were chosen in Christ of the race of Adam before the world began.

Dear brother, I write you this letter in token of the love and fellowship which I have for your good letter. I felt that I wanted to talk to you in writing for the love of the truth published in the dear SIGNS. I have been a reader of it for fifty years, and it is still good and sound; the editorials are good. This letter may surprise you when you receive it. I have written as I trust the dear Lord has given me utterance. Remember me when it is well with you.

I am your brother, in hope of immortality,

O. B. HICKERSON.

MASSEY, Va., Jan., 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Perhaps it will do no harm if I should pen a few lines for the inspection of the editors and readers of our dear old paper, the SIGNS, which is one of the most precious of message-bearers, except the Bible. It brings tidings from all over the States and from the Canadas, causes people to become acquainted who would have never known each other, causes the sweet tears of fellowship to flow, and brings them so near

together that they can almost imagine they have them in their arms. Through this medium they tell the reason of their hope. I tell the reason of my hope, and the echo embraces the others like the grasp of arms together, giving the strength of many arms instead of two. This is one of the ways in which we help each other.

Dear brethren and sisters, yesterday I celebrated my seventy-eighth birthday. I read the SIGNS for January 15th, and received quite a number of beautiful cards expressing greetings and wishes for a happy birthday, and hoping that I might enjoy many more. Thus I have passed seventy-eight of my natural birthdays, and, if not deceived, I have passed fifty-seven anniversaries of my spiritual birthday, having received a hope through the mercy of God in August, 1851. I confessed the same before the Old School Baptist Church in March, 1852. By this you will see that I have been traveling with that dear people fifty-six years. They are dear to me, although their religion is despised by the world, and now, with tears in my eyes, I want to say that it has been a sweet home to me. The provisions of the Lord's house have been, all of them, suited to my need, the companionship and fellowship of the household of faith have been precious to me, and I do sincerely hope that nothing will ever take place to mar it now in my old age. I have been trying to speak of the glory of God's kingdom and talk of his power about forty-three years, and yet with all this I am still a poor, helpless creature, but hope I am thankful to our heavenly Father and Benefactor for the degree of physical health and strength which enables me to still go on filling my appointments regularly, traveling about twenty-five hundred miles a year, nearly all by private conveyance. O how much I have longed to be a living example to the flock, but how far short it appears to me I have come. About the time I begin to think I am getting along very well, there will appear a black spot, which stains it all; then I have to begin again. There is something in me that craves godliness in thought, word and deed. Why is it that when I would do good evil is present, with me, hindering me from doing the good I would? It does make me feel so wretched at times. Does is not seem that after one has been in the warfare over half a century he would learn to fight better, and that he would learn more of the craftiness of the enemy? But his attacks do not always come in the same way or form, nor from the same point of the compass. I never thought much about becoming a great preacher, but I never was profane, nor intemperate in any way, and I certainly thought I should grow in the christian graces and subdue all corrupt thoughts and practices and ungodly habits of all kinds, but the warfare has waged until the battle is harder than ever. The great Captain has led to victory, over and over again, so that with Paul I can say, Who hath delivered me "from so great a death, and doth deliver," so my hope is that he will continue to deliver.

These imperfect lines will let my kindred in Christ know that I am still living. I want to say in closing, that the Lord is good to me, and so are his people, although I am but little deserving. I want to say that the SIGNS grows better and richer all the time. This is true of both the editorials and the writings in general. This may be because my needs increase. I wish the SIGNS, with its editors and correspondents, a happy new year. Amen.

T. M. POULSON.

MANORKILL, N. Y., Dec. 6, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I feel to address you at this time, as your editorial in the SIGNS of November 1st was so timely, as was also the one in November 15th number. Elder Durand writes a pleasant Circular; it presents just what all of God's people should try to put on; it is good to wear everywhere we go. Sister Bessie Durand gave me much pleasure in setting forth the number of biographical remembrances of loved ones. It cheers the drooping saint to hear of loved ones. You that have the pen of a ready writer, keep not silent. The experiences also were cheering, and the readers generally appreciate them all; they all tell more or less of the wonderful works of God.

I was highly favored of God in hearing the truth proclaimed at our association; it was good to be so greatly blessed. At the meeting at Schoharie I heard Elder Eubanks with much satisfaction, and felt to say, "The Lord is good: for his mercy endureth for ever." Let the redeemed of the Lord say, His mercy endureth forever. I also attended a meeting at Olive and Hurley, and heard the Elders preach the word, and heard numbers tell of the Lord's protecting care. All were of one mind, giving God all the glory; they all seemed to be led by the Spirit, and I felt to praise God and take courage. He had not left us comfortless, but had come to us, and Satan was bruised for a little while under our feet, and we could say, The Lord has "triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea," and soon, dear brethren, may we add, we trust that we shall see Satan no more forever.

I read on the fifth inst. the eighty-fourth Psalm, and the eleventh verse seemed to cheer me much: "For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." On the fifth I was on my way for a visit, or to attend a meeting of the Lexington Church. Sister Griffin being called home, the meeting was held after the funeral service. I returned home feeling that I could see how our comforts could be taken away and yet we not be left to repine.

I have written this to relieve my mind and to commend your editorial. In hope that God may hush all disturbances, if it be his holy will, I would say, as did Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

D. S. ELLIOTT.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Sept. 24, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER CHICK:—You may be surprised when I tell you that I have not in truth ignored your kind message to us so many months ago; indeed I have often had it in my mind to write you, but did not know what to say, as is the case with me much of the time, as regards letter-writing. I might however have expressed appreciation of your kind interest in us when we were first called upon to face the fact that a dear face was never more to be looked upon in life, and a pleasant voice was forever hushed to our natural ears. Now months are passed and my heart of motherhood is not less full of tears than in the beginning, but there is a better thought abides with me, which seems to cover the other, that with him who has gone before there is no more sorrow, pain or sighing, and all tears are wiped away; and there comes a still better thought, the hope and belief that as Christ is risen above, his children are with him. I believe that our dear one knew experimentally what is given His people to know, something of the meaning of

the Savior's words to the sisters of Lazarus, "I am the resurrection, and the life." He did indeed daily and hourly need to know the power of the resurrection, inasmuch as he knew much of the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ. He must needs learn obedience by the things that he suffered, like others of the tried children, and he knew well that the flesh profiteth nothing. Such learning seems like that wisdom which is from above, which is pure and peaceable. I am not the circumspect walker by any means that our dear son was, I am slow to learn obedience, but I hope there is a willing and a doing of the sweet, broad commandment wrought in me, by the Spirit of Christ being poured out upon me, which is the light of truth shining in darkness. O how dearly have I learned that the darkness of my nature never can comprehend the truth of Jesus in any degree.

You are now called upon to do the last things that human hands can do for our aged sister Purington. We would have been glad to have been in your midst at this time, but I feel this last sad laying away of the body is not the saddest of all, for your hearts have been keenly alive to her suffering of years, in which you could afford little relief. The great Physician has taken her out of her prison of clay, and while we cannot measure her wealth in Christ, nor that which is beyond this mortal life, we believe, as we have experienced it, that the mercy of the Lord faileth not, and in the power of an endless life and in the earnest of the Spirit there seems proof that all the promises made of old shall be fulfilled. The promise that the Spirit, the Comforter, will come, is the sweetest thing we have to live upon. But we have not yet attained, we are not yet satisfied, we are looking for purity and love and bliss without alloy. I think of you often in your home, which seemed like heaven to dear Arthur Vail, so peaceful and loving was the atmosphere in it. How it quieted him to be with you, and you have done much for our little Ruth, who thinks of you with the greatest pleasure.

Your sister in hope and love,

WATIE A. BEARD.

CENTERBURG, Ohio, Jan. 19, 1909.

BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—Through the mercy of our kind and merciful heavenly Father I am still permitted to live. I have been somewhat afflicted since Christmas, as I had the misfortune to fall and dislocate my right shoulder and sprain parts of my hand and arm. My heart not being very strong, the doctor could not give me an opiate, and I was very doubtful whether or not I could endure the pain to have it set. While I felt to be reconciled to the dear Lord's will with poor, unworthy me, I could but call upon him mightily for his help this one time more, and after the third effort the doctor replaced it, and I have gained rapidly and am now writing with my right hand to those I love in the Lord. I have had time to read the many blessed communications I enjoy so much. There is much I would like to say, but I do not feel it would be profitable while there are so many more worthy to fill the columns who can tell those blessed truths so much better than I can. Something says to me the Lord's work is perfect. I have the reading of another Primitive Baptist paper, but it is not to me in all points what the dear old SIGNS is. I find but few who see things as I do. Brother Robert S. Pace tells some of my experience, and I am sometimes made to say, I glory in tribulation, because "tribulation

worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." By the help of the Lord, I trust, I have been able to continue in Christ as I received him. As far as doctrine is concerned, I have never felt to change, though I have had some hard battles on some points, and many calls saying, "Lo, here is Christ," but I have never been inclined to follow, though it has been some of my dear ones in the flesh. I do not want to take any of this glory to myself, O no, for we know that we are kept through faith, and that not of ourselves, but it is the gift of God.

I am blessed to meet with a little band that gives God all the glory. It is the little church of which Elder Peters wrote you, regarding a yearly meeting in September, near Delaware, Ohio, twenty miles from me. In good weather I go, but in winter it pleases our Father to shut me in for some purpose known to himself; but it gives me time to read and meditate, and think upon the Lord. I feel that perilous times are upon us, and sin abounds; it seems that God is suffering people to follow their own ways, and they are going as fast as time and opportunity will let them, right on to destruction. The blind lead the blind, and all fall into the ditch.

I have much in my mind, but I only intended to send money for the SIGNS. I like to read and hear from the dear afflicted ones who feel as I do, and can tell it so much better. I feel sure they are the poor and afflicted ones we read of, a peculiar people. O, am I one of them?

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know."

I ask an interest in your prayers, if it be the will of our Father to continue his great mercies and keep us by his grace.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

(MRS.) S. C. BOYD.

NEEDMORE, Pa., Dec. 14, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—The time has arrived for the renewal of my subscription to the SIGNS, and I do not feel like doing without it, as it gets more precious to me every year, for it gives no uncertain sound as to how sinners are saved: by grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began, without any conditions on our part, but according to His electing love and predestinating purpose, which he purposed in himself. I love to read the experiences of God's dear children as they are led along by his hand from nature to grace, and O how little and humble they feel, unworthy of the fellowship of the brethren. Could this feeling of love and humility always remain with us there never would be any strife among brethren, but we soon learn to our sorrow that we are still in the flesh, and all the seeds of sin still remain; the flesh is not changed, and it is only by the grace of God that we do not indulge in the lusts and passions of our carnal nature, for Paul says with the flesh he served the law of sin, but with the mind the law of God. It is a continual warfare, the flesh against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, so that we cannot do the things we would, but the things we would not are the things we so often find ourselves doing, and those we desire to do we seldom do them. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

I have been in the field of battle almost fifty-six years, and in all that long experience I have only learned two lessons;

one is, that I am a poor, helpless sinner, just as dependent upon God for his support as the infant a day old is upon its mother's care. The other is, if ever saved it is all of free grace. I believe God has set our bounds and ordered our footsteps that we cannot pass, and that all our days are numbered.

One thing in particular makes me love the SIGNS: it closes its columns against all controversies or janglings about things that do not edify. Brethren, let us contend for the things that make for peace and harmony in the camp of the saints, that we may be found marching shoulder to shoulder under the blood-stained banner of King Emmanuel. Farewell.

Your little brother, if one at all,

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

PENNINGTON, N. J., Nov. 8, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER AND PASTOR:—I feel like writing you a few lines this evening. I was out to the meeting this morning, and brother Stout, in your absence, spoke from John xv.: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman." What a comfort it would be did I know surely that I am one of the branches of the Vine. I think the Lord was with brother Stout this morning, for he spoke so freely of the things we love. Some years ago, when I first had a desire to come before the church, I thought I could not wait, yet I did put it off, hoping that I would get better; but instead of getting better it seemed I grew worse every year. Last winter, when I was very sick, one evening I saw myself as I had never done before; I saw that my life had been a sad mistake. When I would fall into a doze I would hear the most beautiful singing; it seemed like angels' voices. As soon as I was able I came to the meeting, and I do not think I ever heard such a good sermon as you preached that day. Nearly every sermon afterward had in it something that I had felt. It was food to my soul, which was hungry. The Saturday meeting in May was very dear to me. I longed to come before the church, yet felt so unworthy. My health was very poor at that time, and I did not know whether I would be able to be baptized, were I to be received. As you know, the Saturday meeting in June my wife and I came and were received. I think that I realize every day what a great sinner I am; how far short I come from being what a child of God ought to be. Sometimes I have a little hope that I may be one of the weak branches, for I do know that I love the brethren.

Brother Chick, I hope you have had a pleasant trip, and that you have been able to speak a word of comfort to some poor sinner, as you often have to me.

With love to you and family, I remain your unworthy brother,

PAUL M. LEIGH.

PINSONFORK, Ky., Oct. 28, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—By request of sister Mary Runyan, a subscriber of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I send this letter written her by her sister, Sarah A. Hankins, just a short time before she passed away from time and time things to that blessed immortality. Sister Hankins was a worthy member of the Big Creek Church of Primitive Baptists a little over sixteen years. Her husband, Abel Hankins, preceded her to the glory world a few years. Sister Hankins was baptized by the unworthy writer, who also spoke on the funeral occasion to a large and sympathizing congregation of friends and relatives.

W. J. MAY.

CANADA, Ky., April 25, 1908.

MRS. MARY E. RUNYAN—MY DEAR SISTER:—I received your very welcome letter, which "Flossa" could read all right, and words cannot express how much comfort it was to hear it read as I lay on my bed and listened. I think the Lord has given me understanding to see the Scripture as you wrote, knowing that I was left undone and cast out unless saved by grace. I do not know much Scripture, only my experience, but I hope the Lord God has given me the right understanding. I have lived in the Old Baptist Church sixteen years, and feel at home, though I feel to be the least among the saints, if one at all. I know not how many days on earth I am to spend, but Jesus knows all things best, so his will be done.

Dear sister, do not worry over the disputes and tribulations in the churches, God rules all things well, both in heaven and on earth, therefore, earnestly believing that we are the true church of God, I hope we may continue on in the good old way. All through my sickness, and through many trials and tribulations, I am content with my belief, believing if saved at all I am saved by the grace of God, and not by works; there is nothing good that I can do. I always enjoyed being with you, for you can tell my belief better than I can explain it myself, though it gives me great comfort as I sit and tell "Flossa" while she writes for me, my belief. As I now have sat up an hour, I will have to lie down. Hoping your health is better by this time, I will close.

Your loving sister,

(MRS.) SARAH A. HANKINS.

DENTON, Texas, Sept. 29, 1907.

ELDER W. L. ROGERS—MY VERY DEAR OLD BROTHER:—Your token of sympathy, love and christian fellowship reached me in due time, and found me down in Lodebar, not only lame on both feet, but lame all over. Your remarks about the mystery of death and of the great future did not suggest a new topic of thought to me, for my feeble mind dwells on that mystery much of the time. Of course it is, as you say, I have been hovering on eternity's shore for some time, and have even felt its cold waters gathering about me, and a few times have been so far gone that I did not feel the chill, yet for some reason or purpose the Lord keeps me lingering on the shore. Of this I am convinced, we will never fully understand that mystery until all mysteries are cleared up, or until we know even as we are known. Our heavenly Father brought us into this world without consulting us about it, and he will take us out of it in the same way. He evidently has a wise and righteous purpose in doing both, and we know it is right and best, otherwise the Lord would not do it. Therefore, my dear brother, as we have for so many years prayed for the will of the Lord to be done, let us not cease so to pray now, but let us earnestly and faithfully continue to pray, knowing that the will of the Lord is righteous, and that he will be true and faithful in all his promises to us. Though he slay us, let us still trust in him; all he does is for our good.

I fully appreciate what you say about your shuddering to think how near the grave I was recently, but, dear old brother, it affords me great comfort to be able to say in truth that death and the grave are not so terrible for me to contemplate now as formerly. Earth once was very

attractive to me; its changing and transient beauties, together with its varied products and the society of its creatures, held me captive, but earth and its charms are to some extent losing their power to attract me. Dear brother, is it not so with you? You are certainly right in saying that there cannot be many years between the time of our departure, and you are right in saying that if I am called home first you will have lost a true friend and brother, and with all my heart I can reciprocate the sentiment if you should be called first. Yes, our faith and hope are the same, our God and Savior are the same, our infinitesimal nothingness is the same, and our eternal home will be the same; and as the God of Israel is our God, and heaven is his home, even so will heaven be our home; never doubt that, brother. Now I may be too positive about it, but I feel it that way at this time, for He will never disappoint any who put their trust in him, and surely we trust in him implicitly, confidingly and absolutely, knowing that he alone has the words of eternal life. If our trust, as well as our faith and hope, are not in him, then we have neither, for they are certainly not in anything that is earthy or that pertains to earth. The primitive saints acknowledged themselves to be sinners, yet they trusted in God, and they received what other trusting sinners will receive. Dear brother, I being now near the end of my earthly pilgrimage, feel like saying that I am ashamed of the life I have lived, it has been a sad failure, sin and weakness have characterized it from infancy until this day, but I glory in the life of Him who is meek and lowly in heart; his life was and is a divinely glorious success. I claim his life as mine, and thank God, who gives me the victory through him. So my only hope of an endless life in the sweet bye and bye is centered in the sovereign grace of a sovereign God. This is something like the last message I would send you if I had reached the end of mortality. Thousands around me know my form and face, and yet I am a stranger to them. My family all know my external appearance and my sinful ways, yet I fear some of them do not know me as I am. Sometimes when thinking of my approaching dissolution I wonder who will attend my funeral, and will there be any one there who really knew me to speak words of comfort to loved ones left behind?

Pardon me for saying so much about myself; much of what I have said applies to you, as unto all of God's children. May the Lord help me to walk humbly before him, and to meditate much on the things contained in your letter, which I enjoyed so well.

Some days I feel as well as when we were last together, but my spells seem to come more frequently and to increase in severity. Omie is as well as usual; the children are well as far as we know. Omie joins me in sending love to all.

Your afflicted, though hopeful brother,

SAMUEL McKELVEY.

(See obituary notice on page 124.)

DELPHI FALLS, N. Y., Dec. 29, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I again through the mercies of our dear Lord am able to send you a postal order for the SIGNS. The paper gives me much comfort. I am left alone, no members to meet with, but our much beloved Elder D. M. Vail calls once in a long time, which is kind of him, but my Bible, my hymn-book and the SIGNS are my companions, and when the presence of the Lord is with me I enjoy them. I have

had my faith tried, for it seemed as if I could not get the money, but the mercies of the Lord are with me continually; all praise to his blessed name. I will say, Salvation is of the Lord; without him I can do nothing. My only hope is in God the Father, his Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost, for I have no confidence in the flesh in any form. Christ said to his disciples, "If ye love me, keep my commandments;" but I come very far short of doing so, and I feel to bow at his feet and say, Lord, be merciful to me, a poor, helpless sinner. The most of my time is spent in supplication to him to guide me by his Holy Spirit in the way of truth and righteousness, to his honor and glory; I most earnestly desire so to live. He gave his commandment to all who were weary and heavy laden to come and he would give them rest. I understand it is not an invitation, as many call it, for if he calls they will surely come. If at any time I called my children to come, I did not invite them, but ordered them to come. God speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast, and I am glad it is so. I love to read the SIGNS, for it adheres strictly to the word of God in its fullness, and does not add anything to his word, neither takes anything from it; if it did I would not take it.

Dear brethren, I think of you every day, and pray the Lord to sustain you in your labors of love to the afflicted and poor people who trust in the name of the Lord and have no confidence in the flesh. May the blessed Spirit and his grace be and abide with you, is my earnest desire in love and fellowship in the truth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I am nearly eighty-one years of age, so please excuse blunders. Do with this as you will.

From a poor, unworthy worm of the dust, JAMES TAPNER.

PINEVILLE, Ky., Oct. 26, 1908.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—In volume 76, page 625, of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I see that brother A. L. Thornton has requested your views upon 1 Kings vi. 8, which reads as follows: "The door for the middle chamber was in the right side of the house: and they went up with winding stairs into the middle chamber, and out of the middle into the third." As you have asked some one to give their opinion upon said text, I shall send you mine for what it may be worth to inquiring minds, but do not take my opinion as an ironclad one, for I have been in the kingdom of heaven only two years, and in the ministry about a year and a half, if indeed I am one in the kingdom at all.

This Scripture is describing Solomon's temple, as far as it goes. It speaks of three chambers: the nethermost chamber, which was five cubits broad, the middle, which was six cubits broad, and the third, which was seven cubits broad. This house, or temple, was built for the Lord as a dwelling-place for him, and where the children of God are, there the Lord is also. These three chambers represent the three places in which the Lord's children dwell, or, in other words, the three heavens. These three heavens are the first or legal heaven, the new heaven, or the kingdom of God, wherein dwelleth righteousness, and the third, or celestial heaven.

"The door for the middle chamber was in the right side of the house." They had to pass by this door to enter the middle chamber. Right side, or right hand, represents love, favor, mercy and grace. It is by the love, favor, mercy and grace of God that poor mourning souls pass out of the wilderness, which represents the legal heaven, through old Jordan, which

is represented by the winding stairs, into the land of Canaan, which represents the new heaven or kingdom of God. From the middle chamber they enter the third chamber, which was seven cubits broad, seven representing the perfect number. The children of God pass from the kingdom of God, or new heaven, into the third heaven, or their immortal home, where they will be perfect, in the image and likeness of their Lord Jesus Christ.

Your unworthy brother,

L. D. HOSKINS.

[WE willingly give place to the above brief letter. Our brother's views upon this matter may be right. As we said in the editorial referred to, we have no special light upon it, further than to say that it shows the perfect order of all that our God has appointed, both in the worship of the old covenant, which has passed away, and in the new. The types are, some of them, explained by inspired apostles, and these we may be sure are rightly explained. Those portions of the types of which we do not have a direct explanation in the word we have felt like handling with care, and not as though our understanding of them is sure to be right. Without the direct word of God it is very easy to be wrong, yet it is right for brethren to confer together regarding all these things, and it is right for each one to express his mind if he be indeed impressed so to do.—C.]

FORT SCOTT, Kans., Dec. 29, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find the amount to renew my subscription for the SIGNS for the year 1909. I have taken it continually since I came here, which, I think, was in the fall of 1871; before that time I lived in Virginia, and had access to my father's paper. I know he was taking it as far back as I can remember, and I cannot feel willing to do without it. In reading the SIGNS I sometimes see a communication that expresses my condition. If I thought it necessary, I could give some of their names, but when I tell you some of my wanderings in sin's dark maze you will know whether it is you. In the first place I am a mystery to myself, for "what I am 'tis hard to know." The poet said sin was mixed with all he did, but with me it is worse still, it is all sin with nothing mixed with it. I sometimes meet with those people who have great power—claim they can and are doing many things for the Lord. I feel so needy of His help. As little as I know about spiritual things, I do believe I know worldly religionists are wrong. If I could feel as well convinced that I know the truth as I am that they do not, I think I would be better satisfied. It may appear strange that one who has these feelings should feel interested in such doctrine as the Old Baptists believe and preach, but no other will do. I wish I could have had such a change as brother Ker and others have had; could look back to the time when I despised the doctrine the Old Baptists preach, then I would know a change had been wrought in me.

"Like one alone I seem to be,
O is there any one like me?"

I know this is not worth publishing, so dispose of it as you choose, and I will not care.

Unworthily your brother,

M. B. WEEDON.

FRANKLIN, Tenn., Dec. 28, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—No. 1 of the new year came this a. m. I am always glad when the SIGNS comes, and frequently sit down and read it through before I

stop. I am getting old and cannot do much work, and feel somewhat like old Jacob when he said, All the days of my pilgrimage have been but few and evil. If it please God that I should live so long, I will have completed my threescore and ten on the 21st day of February, 1909. The Lord has been good to me, and I have much indeed to be thankful for, yea,

"Ten thousand, thousand precious gifts
My daily thanks employ,
Nor is the least a cheerful heart
That tastes those gifts with joy."

"When all thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view,
I'm lost in wonder, love and praise."

On last Saturday at conference meeting of the church at Big Harpeth, one of the oldest churches in the country, having been organized on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in May, 1800, my brother, Dr. R. H. Harvey, was ordained to the full work of the ministry. He dated his experience back to his boyhood days. When about fourteen years old, out in the tobacco patch, in the absence of any preacher or other living mortal, the very heavens seemed to open and he was made to rejoice in the pardon of his sins, and he felt right then that he wanted to go into the pulpit and tell it, and for all these years he has refused to be ordained, yet has been talking in public all the while. He now is in his sixty-eighth year. After the ordination he was called by unanimous vote to the care of the church.

May the Lord continue to bless the SIGNS, with the editors, correspondents and readers, and please accept the continued assurance of love and esteem from yours unworthily,

J. W. HARVEY.

OLIVE, N. Y., Dec. 28, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—The January 1st number of the SIGNS is at hand, thereby reminding me that another year's subscription is due, so inclosed find postal money order for two dollars. I have tried to get one or two to subscribe for the paper, but have not succeeded. I feel anxious that you receive enough to enable you to continue its publication, for it is a great privilege to be able to read so many comforting letters from brethren and sisters from every part of our country, and all speaking the same language, all having been taught by the same Teacher, and all singing the song which none can learn only those to whom the Lord has revealed it. I can hardly find words to express the joy and comfort I receive in reading the able writings by the dear brethren in the ministry. The one by Elder Beeman, of Oklahoma, on the resurrection, in No. 24, was food indeed to my hungry soul. It is a beautiful theme. I can truly say with the psalmist, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness," but when I look within I hardly dare claim any of the glorious promises; but if he died for me I can claim them through Him who paid the ransom for his bride. The one written long ago on predestination, by Elder Purington, and republished in August, I think shows plainly that the writer was taught of God, and of whom we can truly say, Though dead, yet speaketh, for it still feeds and sustains the dear children of God. Dear brother Scates, too, who talks much of darkness, is a comfort to me. Those who are much in sorrow are the ones my heart goes out to in sympathy most, for so much of the time I am in darkness and sadness, and when brother Yeoman, of Loveland, Colo., wondered if there is any one like him, I

felt to say, Yes, dear brother, your very lack in the things you complain of makes me better able to endure my own leanness and darkness. Just to illustrate what I am saying, I must tell one trouble that made my heart sink to-night: I was reading hymn No. 1272 (Beebe's collection), the judgment of hypocrites, when all at once it came in my mind with a great heaviness that I was the character. Everything I could do or think seemed to crush me with the weight of that thought, until my mind went back to the days of my early childhood, and the hope that, I trust, was given me then. Sometimes it is so small I almost give up, but still it is all I have. I realize daily that I am a sinner, and if saved I am saved by the precious blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin.

Dear brethren and sisters, write on, your letters are glad tidings in a weary land, and my earnest desire is that the SIGNS may be supported, so that it may continue to proclaim the truth in the future as in the past.

With love for the dear children of God scattered through our broad land I am, if one, the least of all,

MARY B. KEOGAN.

MADISON, Ga., Nov. 10, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I feel like writing a few lines to let you know the SIGNS is still a welcome visitor. I have read it for more than seventy years, and now enjoy the many good letters written by dear brethren and sisters as much as ever. They tell my experience better than I can myself. Many years have passed since I was able to attend the meetings of our church at Shoal Creek, Newton County, Ga., twenty miles from me. I have been confined to the house three years, and am now scarcely able to walk, but I feel that the Lord has been good to me; yes, much better than I deserve. I have occasionally had the pleasure of hearing sermons at my home. About two weeks ago Elder John Almond and several others spent the night here, and the former preached. We liked his sermon and appreciated their visit. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I feel that I have this evidence. I was eighty-five years old the 3rd of last September, so my time on earth is short, and I desire an interest in your prayers. I have a sister, Mrs. M. A. Carter, who was eighty-eight years old last June. She is a firm Primitive Baptist and lover of the SIGNS. May we meet in that blessed world and unite in praising the Lord forever.

Your sister in hope,

L. L. PERRY.

ELGIN, Ore., Dec. 16, 1908.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—The time to renew my subscription has come and inclosed you will find money order for two dollars. I heartily indorse the doctrine contended for by the editors and correspondents, as well as the spirit of love in which all seem to write. Love should be the motive that prompts all the Lord's people to either speak or write, and love never works any evil. Paul tells us that all we may do if not prompted by love amounts to nothing: "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." What a needful lesson this is to all the Lord's people, and when they speak or write if they could but remember this, how much better than to speak or write in a spirit dominated by the flesh. Let me here

give more of what Paul says about love: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth." May the Lord grant that all who write for the dear old SIGNS be prompted and guided by this spirit of love in the future as I believe they have in the past, then will it still bear the messages of love.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

INDEPENDENCE, Mo., Dec. 27, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—Another year is numbered with the past, and my unprofitable life is still spared, for a purpose known only to God, who gave my natural life and has given me a little hope of eternal life when I have crossed the dark river, and, if I am not mistaken, he has sometimes given me a foretaste here of the joys that await the redeemed; then for a small moment my feeble cry has been, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." Surely his goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life.

When I read each number of the SIGNS there seems to be something written especially for this old sinner, and I desire to tell the writers of the cup of cold water they have given unawares. Surely many cooling draughts have been sent by God from the editors and correspondents that have strengthened the weary wanderers. I hope we all may be made to feel able and willing to cast in our mite, or, at least, to pay our subscription, so our dear family paper will still come to us filled with the blessed truth of Jesus and his word.

"Lord, may we all at last be led
Where bitter tears are never shed;
Where weary pilgrims do not part,
And Jesus binds each broken heart."

Dear editors, brethren and sisters, write on, and shun not to declare the whole counsel of God, for these are perilous times.

You are at liberty to publish this; but if it goes to the wastebasket I will not feel hurt or disappointed. I always am ashamed of what is my best effort.

Your wayworn and weary sister,

LAVINA MORGAN.

MT. STERLING, Ky., Jan. 21, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—As my time for the dear old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, expired December 15th, I will now forward my remittance at once, for I feel you, with the assistance of those who have written so ably for its columns, have given to the readers several times the price of the paper. If all subscribers would send at once what is due, the publishers could meet all obligations and clear all debts, if any. I prize it above all other papers that come into our home. While there are other Baptist papers perhaps just as good, it has been coming so long, and, so far as I can see, there is no change in the doctrine it has always advocated. Dear brethren, how many homes are made glad by the coming of the SIGNS, for there are many scattered over the United States who seldom hear preaching, and the SIGNS gives them more preaching than they can get in any other way.

Please excuse this letter, I did not intend to write so much.

Your brother, I hope,

T. J. RATLIFF.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1909.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

HEBREWS X. 12–14.

"BUT this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."

Our attention has been of late called to these words, especially to the thirteenth verse, and so we feel like presenting for the consideration of our readers our thoughts regarding them. We do not need to do more than call attention in a few words to the general design of this epistle, nor to the immediate connection of the text. Paul contrasts all former typical sacrifices with the one sacrifice of the blessed Savior. He calls attention to both the similarities and to the differences between the former sacrifices and this one great sacrifice. One of the differences is the very fact that then there were many sacrifices often repeated, but now there is but one. Another difference is that those sacrifices can never take away sin, but this forever removes it. Those former sacrifices could and did make a remembrance again and again of sin, but could not purge the conscience, while here in this one sacrifice sin is remembered once for all, and afterwards is never to be remembered again. The Lord declared he would remember their sins and iniquities no more forever. Some of these differences are especially set forth in the first verse of the text and the verse preceding: "And every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever sat down on the right hand of God." Notice, first, many priests and the one man; notice, second, the standing, and over against it the sitting down; notice, in the third place, the daily service of the first, and the one sacrifice of the other, and notice, in the fourth place, that the first "can never take away sins," while the other does take away sin forever. So the former priests must stand daily, because their work was never finished, but this Priest now sits down, his work being completed forever. It is a wonderful thing just to compare these two verses and see the contrasts in them. The sum of them is that there could be no purging of the conscience from dead works to serve God in the former sacrifices and offerings, but that the blood of Christ does purge the conscience, opening the way for the true service of God by all who are thus purged. Sin, after all the former sacrifices, still remained upon the sinner, and the sacrifices, which he brought, and of which he witnessed the offering, were to him but a reminder that he was a sinner, and also that there was a coming sacrifice which should have virtue in itself to present him cleansed and blameless before God. In the offering of the body of Christ sin is indeed remembered before God, but it is never to be remembered again; by his death and resurrection sin was atoned for and the sinner justified. How blessed are they to whom this finished redemption is revealed, and who are given peace with God, and cleansing of

conscience experimentally, through faith in the blood of the Redeemer. Here is set forth the finished salvation, the perfect atonement; Jesus does not need to do more than he has done for the sinner; his work is finished indeed. So he cried upon the cross, "It is finished." So also in his prayer to the Father he said, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." Twice the Father testified of him in the days of his flesh that he was well pleased in him, and this must mean that the Father was well pleased with him as the Son of man, holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, whose meat and drink it was to do his Father's will. Of him it was written in prophecy, "I delight to do thy will, O my God." So we read in the twelfth verse, not only that he sat down, but was on the right hand of God. The Savior's work was finished, and he also abides in the everlasting favor of God. "The right hand of God," means his favor. The exalted Son of man is received at the right hand of God, and the blessedness of this truth to us is that in him we are accepted also. This one theme has engaged the minds and hearts of the people of God in all ages. Of this one theme prophets wrote, and the law continually spoke in types; and this one theme filled the hearts and lips of the apostles, and it is the one theme of every redeemed sinner to this day, and it shall be the theme of all of the redeemed in glory.

In the thirteenth verse the inspired apostle opens to our view another glorious assurance: Jesus has finished his work, and now on the right hand of God he is "expecting till his enemies be made his footstool." The word "expecting" here is from the same original Greek word that in many places elsewhere is translated "hoping" or "waiting," and in this place the word simply means waiting. In fact, neither hope nor expectation can relate to things already in possession. "What a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" is the question of the apostle. Hope is made up of expectation and desire. Sometimes expectation is the stronger, and sometimes desire. When the thing expected is desirable then we have hope. Our blessed Redeemer is here presented as expecting, in the sense of both desire and expectation. Jesus ascended to the right hand of God from Galilee, in the presence of disciples who saw him ascend, until a cloud received him out of their sight, as we are told in the word. But the work for which he came into the world and lived, and for which he died and arose and ascended to glory, has been going on in the hearts and minds of men ever since; it is not finished yet; our Redeemer is still "expecting," and will be so long as one redeemed soul remains to be brought as a trophy to his footstool. If we understand the text to mean the bringing of the elect to love and serve him, he is expecting that, and his expectation shall not be disappointed. If we understand the text means that one day all the proud, and all who do wickedly, and who exalt themselves in the earth, shall perish before him, that is also true. Let either of these be the meaning of the text, or let both meanings be included, it still remains true that the Savior is waiting, not as one who is uncertain as to the outcome, but as one whose work is perfect and who knows that there can be no failure; and this is our comfort, that our blessed Lord is here presented as having finished all the work, so that there remains no more for either himself or for us to do as an atonement for sin; and for this final glory the people of God are also waiting. "It doth not

yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Paul did not count himself to have attained. Not only saints who yet remain upon earth, but those beyond also, have the promise of awaking with his likeness: "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." If the blessed Lord may be spoken of as waiting on the right hand of God, we fail to see why it is not right also to speak of the redeemed on the right hand of God as waiting for this most glorious consummation, in the same sense that the Savior is waiting. This waiting of the blessed Master has no anxiety in it, no tediousness, no sense of want; in short, nothing that can mar his perfect blessedness, but it is still called an expectation, a waiting, for this final glory, and so to those on the right hand of God with him there can also come no want of perfect happiness; there can be nothing to mar the peace which is theirs. So the apostle could speak of David that he had not yet ascended, but that his sepulchre was with them to that day; and now believers are said to be waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body," and believers are not waiting for uncertainties; their expectation is well grounded upon the oath and promise of God. He hath spoken it, and he will also do it. Here is our rest while we are in these low grounds, and this hope again and again revives our courage by the way, and it is our expectation to see the day when we shall be free from all that here hinders and mars our peace, then we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Believers seek the things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. To these things we have not attained, but faith assures us that we shall attain to them and apprehend the things for which we are apprehended of God.

In the fourteenth verse the apostle gives the one reason why all that has gone before in the text must be true: "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Here the "one offering" is set over against the many offerings; the word "perfected" over against the making nothing perfect of the old covenant; the word "forever" against the yearly and daily offerings which were then commanded, and by which frequent remembrance was made of sin; and the word "sanctified" means here, as always elsewhere in the word of God, a setting apart to the service of God, and in this text is in contrast with the merely outward forms and ceremonies enjoined upon a national people. In this text that sanctification is meant which is of the heart and life. The perfection here presented, as it appears to us, refers to the justification of the people of God through the atonement of the blessed Lord. In him all his redeemed are regarded as being perfect before God, and although while in the flesh each believer confesses that he is sinful, yet faith assures him that he is perfect in the Beloved.

There remains a full personal perfection to all who are perfect in Christ when they shall awake with his likeness; then shall we be like him, for we shall see him as he is. This perfection Paul did not think he had attained to when he wrote the epistle to the Philippians; he says there, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect." He also says, "I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." Yet it is still true that the one offering of Jesus did perfect the people of God in such a sense that they can never again come under condemnation. They are free from the law that condemns and free from the bondage of sin, and "there is therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." They are said to be "justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." This is completed, not for a day or a year, or for time only, but for all eternity; it is forever. How perfect the security of all who were chosen in Christ to this redemption; nothing shall ever separate them from this inheritance of righteousness which Jesus has secured for them, and the text declares that all this is done for them that are sanctified. If all men are sanctified, then all men are perfected by the one offering of Christ; then the teaching of universalism is true. But we know from the teaching of the blessed Master that some go away into everlasting punishment; these therefore are not perfected forever, and therefore these are not among the sanctified; beside the form of language used in the text forbids that any should think that all men are perfected or sanctified. It would not be said, "Them that are sanctified," if all men are sanctified. No man ever has or ever will use language in that way, unless that man does not know the force of language. If all men are sanctified, it would not be needful to designate the sanctified as the recipients of this perfection. But the important question for all who feel their need of salvation, and who desire this perfection, is, How may I know that I am sanctified? What does sanctification mean? First, it does not mean election. Election is the choice of God of a portion of mankind to be vessels of mercy from before the foundation of the world. Sanctification is the actual work of the Spirit in the heart, by which men and women are set apart in desire, in feeling, and prepared for the worship of his name. The vessels of the literal temple, or sanctuary, were first chosen from the great mass of the vessels that were among the people, and then these vessels thus chosen were consecrated, or sanctified, (for the two words mean the same thing) by the washing of water and the sprinkling of blood, and then were fit for the service of the temple. So vessels of mercy were chosen in Christ before time was, from out of the great mass of mankind, to be fitted for the Master's service in his great sanctuary, the temple of the living God; and now in time he who chose them works in their heart to actually separate them to his service, and all those in whom this separating work has been wrought are the sanctified in Christ Jesus, and are perfected forever through his atonement. These have not separated themselves, but the Lord has separated them. As the vessels of the temple, though consecrated, were still vessels of clay, brass, silver or gold, as the case might be, so believers, though set apart for the service of God, are still vessels of clay made unto honor at the will of the Master. In the flesh there still dwells no good thing, but still we

are washed, and the blood of the covenant has been sprinkled upon our consciences, preparing us to serve God. The sanctification of the vessels of the temple-worship did not at all change the nature of the vessels, they were still the same in kind, but now prepared for other service than had been their service before. So believers are still men and women, poor, weak, sinful, and are in no wise by nature better than before, but the dear Lord has purged their consciences from dead works, and has washed them with pure water, and so they are, in heart and mind, in body and soul, set apart to love God and to walk in his ways and to be used in the true sanctuary. The evidences of our sanctification are that we love God, that we delight to hear of him and to follow him, that we love his courts and his worship, that we love all who bear his image, and that we cannot live any longer in sin, being dead to it. If these things be in our hearts, even though we but faintly see them there, then we are among them who are sanctified, and then also the glorious truth is ours that Jesus has perfected us forever through his one offering upon the cross. C.

NOTICE.

In Nos. 7 and 8, Vol. 76, we published a "Very Important Notice" to our subscribers, in which we stated that on account of the new postal law we were not allowed to carry subscribers who are more than three months in arrears. The department has taken up the matter now, and given us until March 1st to bring our list to the required condition, and so after this number we will be compelled to discontinue those whose subscriptions are in arrears, and any who do not receive their paper for March 1st, and whose subscription is in arrears, will understand the reason. Look to your dates, and if you are not paid up please send on your subscription at once.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Benj. E. Cubbage, at the home of the bride's parents, Dec. 28th, 1908, Lonza Hands, of near Harrington, Del., and Miss Emily C. Frasher, of Petersburg, Del.

By Elder D. M. Vail, Nov. 21st, 1908, at Cherry Flats, Pa., George Weld, of Ingleside, N. Y., and Miss Florence Ely, of Cherry Flats, Tioga Co., Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Samuel McKelvey died Jan. 27th, 1908, at his home in the city of Denton, Texas. The subject of this notice was born in Franklin County, Tenn., Dec. 1st, 1839, professed a hope in Christ and joined Macedonia Church of Old School Baptists in 1856, was baptized by Elder John P. Walker, pastor of the church, was married to his first wife, Miss Bass, who died at about the beginning of the war between the States, leaving one child, a little boy, Henry, who is still living in Tennessee. After the death of his wife brother McKelvey went to the war and was a good soldier until near the close of the struggle, when at the battle of Drury's Bluff he was seriously wounded and carried from the field as dead. He carried thirteen scars with him to the grave from wounds received in the war. After the war he went to Alabama, where he met his second wife, Miss Naomi Embry, to whom he was married in 1866. He moved with his family back to Tennessee in 1867, where he remained until 1873, when he moved west. In 1871 he was ordained to the ministry by Wagner's Creek Church, Franklin Co., Tenn. He was received among Old Baptists wherever he was called to go as a sound, able and gifted preacher. He moved to Texas with his family, settled in Denton County, was received in the fellowship of Blooming Grove Church of Old School Baptists in 1879, and for many years served the home church and other churches as pastor, and as clerk of the Trinity River Association. In 1892 he was elected tax assessor of Denton County, and served six years in that office with great fidelity. His theme in preaching was the sovereign grace and mercy of God abounding to the chief of sinners, which he at all times freely confessed himself to be. No mortal suffered more in soul and body for many years than did Elder Samuel McKelvey; he hated his own life by reason of indwelling sin. No one who knew him could doubt for a moment that the precious blood of Christ cleansed him from all sin.

His remains were followed to the grave by the largest procession that ever went to any funeral from the city of Denton. Elder Keith, an Old Baptist, conducted the funeral services at the residence, after which the old soldiers took charge and interred his remains according to the rules of their camp (the Sul Ross) of which he was an honored member. He

leaves a sorrowing widow, four sons, six daughters and many grandchildren to mourn their great loss, but we mourn not as those without hope, for we feel sure that our loss is his eternal gain.

W. L. ROGERS.

BLUM, Texas, Jan. 17, 1909.

Cornelius Palmer was born in Marshall County, Ill., near where the town of Toluca now stands, Feb. 22nd, 1870, and departed this life Nov. 27th, 1908, at Bartonville asylum. He was the last of a family of five brothers and one sister, who with father and mother preceded him in death, three of his brothers dying within forty-eight hours of each other in the spring of 1897. Cornelius united with the Salem Church of Regular Baptists Nov. 22nd, 1896, and on the same day his mind became a blank. He was taken to Bartonville, near Peoria, Ill., where he remained until called by death.

His body was conveyed to Pattonburg and there laid beside the rest of the family, after services by the writer.

ALSO,

Simeon C. Hilterbrand was born in Robinson Co., Tenn., Sept. 18th, 1826, and died at his home in Tonica, Ill., Jan. 10th, 1909, aged 82 years, 3 months and 22 days. He came with his parents to Illinois in 1828, locating in Putnam County in 1829. He was united in marriage to Miss Hannah A. Funk, March 29th, 1855, moving to a farm, where he resided until the year 1901, when they moved to the town of Tonica, where he resided until his death. He, with his wife, united with the Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church called Sandy Creek, at Caledonia, Oct. 14th, 1866, of which church he remained a faithful member until called to come up higher. This worthy couple had no children of their own, but raised three, two girls and one boy, all being highly esteemed in the neighborhood. Uncle Simeon, as he was called, was respected by all who knew him, and in church relation was ever faithful to the trust his brethren put in his hands. His home was always open to his brethren, and several times he entertained the entire association. He was a constant reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and took great delight in perusing its columns. His aged widow is left, but not alone, for the same Hand that led him across the shores of time, is leading her, and we would say to her in the language of David, "Be still, and know that I am God."

The writer spoke to a very large concourse of friends and neighbors, after which his body was laid away to await the resurrection, when it shall come forth a spiritual body.

ALSO,

Clarissa Oaks was born April 18th, 1837, in Lawrence County, Ind., and died at her home in Farmington, Ill., Jan. 15th, 1909, being 71 years, 8 months and 27 days old. Her husband departed this life about six years ago. She lived to see all her children grown, seven of the ten surviving her. Sister Oaks and her husband united with the Predestinarian Baptists in Indiana over fifty years ago (the data could not be obtained), coming to Illinois in 1867, bringing letters with them and uniting with Fountain Church, remaining faithful attendants until released by death.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in all three of the above occasions.

S. H. HUMPHREY.

Mrs. Rebecca Frazier, wife of brother James Frazier, late of Dover, Del., died Nov. 12th, 1908, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. John Redgrave, near Middletown, Del. Mrs. Frazier had been suffering for many months from Bright's disease. She lost the use of her limbs early in her sickness, was confined to the bed, and her suffering from that time on was intense. She was a woman of wonderful forbearance and fortitude, and was not a stranger to sorrow and trial in this life. Her kind, thoughtful and motherly care had made comfortable and restful the bed of affliction to many, as she ministered to those about her. Her life was a fulfillment of the true saying, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." When the hand of affliction was laid upon her she knew whence it came, and did not complain. As she saw that which was mortal passing away, her hope was well stayed on the immortal, invisible, only wise God our Savior. She was never permitted to unite with the church, but for many years she testified of a hope in Christ, and her life was a witness of the truth. She told the writer at her bedside just a short time before her death, that she was ready for the change, and satisfied save on one point, viz., why she had never been given strength to unite with the church and be at home with the people of God, whom she loved. I tried to comfort her with this truth, that the blessing was hers, in that our heavenly Father in bringing her to the church, not in time, but to the church triumphant in glory, would give her to see as she is seen and to know as she is known, the fullness of glory. While here we know only in part and see only in part, until that which is perfect shall appear.

Her funeral was held at Cow Marsh Church. The writer spoke from Song of Solomon ii. 12. Interment in Cow Marsh Cemetery.

B. E. CUBBAGE.

FELTON, Del., Jan. 28, 1909.

Mary Jane Butler Turpin died at her home in Yoncalla, Oregon, Dec. 13th, 1908, after an illness of several months. She was afflicted with a partial stroke of paralysis, accompanied by a general breakdown of the nerves, which finally ended in her death. She was born in Ohio, Nov. 19th, 1836, and was married to John Turpin June 30th, 1852. To this union were

born fifteen children, six of whom preceded her, while nine are left to mourn their loss, besides an aged husband, who is feeble. She united with the Old School Baptist Church at Oak Creek, near Roseburg, Ore., in 1903; her husband also united with the same church the next year. She was a great comfort to our little scattered churches in southern Oregon, and her death will be greatly felt. She was of a loving and charitable disposition, never turning even a tramp from her door without feeding him, and was ever ready to visit the sick and afflicted, which marks the path of a true christian and proves to us that she was laying up for herself treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal. I can well remember a visit she made to my parents' home, near Drain, in 1898, and of the precious conversation we had together.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer, who spoke from the following words: "For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."—Rev. vii. 17. The interment took place in the cemetery at Yoncalla, Dec. 15th, 1908.

C. F. MORNINGSTAR.

George Deniston, of Okome, Lycoming Co., Pa., died Jan. 19th, 1909, of pleuropneumonia, aged 69 years next birthday. He lived about twelve hours after taken. He leaves a wife, two children, a son and daughter, two grandchildren, one brother and two sisters, with a host of friends to mourn their loss, which we believe is eternal gain to him. He did not make a profession of religion, but was a believer in the precious doctrine of grace, and as belief in the truth is evidence of eternal life, we believe he is living in eternity in the presence of Jesus Christ. May the dear Lord comfort his dear, sorrowing widow, son and daughter, with all others called to mourn his absence.

ALSO,

Sister **Sarah Jane Wyatt** died Jan. 25th, 1909, aged 72 years, 6 months and 14 days. Her home was at Sergeantsville, N. J. Her husband died Dec. 14th. Her disease was dropsy and heart trouble, from which she had suffered for some time. She leaves one daughter, sister Gibson, of Atlantic City, four grandchildren, one brother and, I believe, one sister. She was the daughter of Deacon Cornelius and Charity Myers. She was baptized by Elder Gabriel Conklin about forty years ago, uniting with the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church at Locktown, N. J. Her whole life was spent in looking after the interest of others, both in her family and neighborhood. Sister Wyatt loved to meet with her brethren, which she did when she could, and her brethren loved to meet with her. She lived in the fellowship of the church until death. God bless the mourning ones with great grace.

Services were held in the Methodist meetinghouse. The writer officiated at both of the above funerals, which were largely attended. D. M. VAIL.

WAVERLY, Pa., Jan. 19, 1909.

Bonnie Lee Richardson, daughter of James P. and Katie Lee Richardson, was born April 26th, 1905, and died Nov. 22nd, 1908, while on a visit to our home in Neshoba Co., Miss., aged 3 years and 7 months, lacking 4 days. Bonnie Lee was an unusually bright child, very affectionate, of a gentle disposition and tender-hearted; love ruled her into obedience and held her close in the affections of all, hence her demise is keenly felt by more than the family. We are not able without the assistance of our heavenly Father to be reconciled to his will, therefore we pray God for strength to bear the stroke with christian fortitude, trusting that in some way unknown to us it is best. She came into our lives a little spark of sweet sunshine to light life's pathway for a little while, and then her light went out of this life, and, we trust, was borne to that heavenly paradise where all of God's children rest in Jesus. We learn by this stroke how hard it is to say, "Thy will be done." Everything that loving hearts and willing hands could do was done, for we loved little Bonnie Lee dearly, but we could not stay death's hand, and after great suffering for the last twenty-four hours she quietly passed into the great beyond. We felt willing at last to let her go that her suffering might cease.

Her grandfather, A. J. RICHARDSON.

MY beloved mother, **Mrs. Esther A. Pipe,** formerly Mrs. Esther A. Odell, died Jan. 24th, 1909, aged 74 years, 6 months and 18 days. If I am not mistaken, she was baptized by Elder F. A. Chick, and united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Rikers Hollow, Steuben Co., N. Y., nearly forty years ago. She had always been a devoted christian and a kind and loving mother. She enjoyed reading her Bible and the SIGNS. The last few hours of her illness she was apparently unconscious, gradually sinking into that sleep where the pain, sorrows and cares of this life are all forgotten. The writer is the last of seven children, who with three grandchildren are left to mourn their loss. EDWARD ODELL.

WATERLOO, N. Y., Feb. 4, 1909.

Elmina A. Kilpatrick Griffin died Nov. 26th, 1908, aged 57 years, 1 month and 7 days. She was born in Roxbury, N. Y., Oct. 19th, 1851, the daughter of Robert and Thirza Kilpatrick. She was the youngest of six children and one adopted daughter, who have all preceded her except one sister, Mrs. Fletcher Mackey, of Lexington, N. Y., and the adopted sister,

living in New Haven, Conn. She was married to Edward Griffin Dec. 3rd, 1878. Sister Griffin united with the Lexington Old School Baptist Church and was baptized May 3rd, 1896, by the writer, and ever remained a faithful and consistent member until called home to dwell with Him she so much loved to praise and adore. She was a good singer, and sang in the spirit. The church feels its loss deeply, and with her husband and great-niece, a girl of ten years, mourn together, but not as those who have no hope, being confident that their loss is her gain, and that she is at home, perfect through the redemption and resurrection of her Elder Brother, the Lord of lords and King of kings, to whom be praise forevermore.

R. W. SANFORD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

S. R. Campbell, Ill., $2.00; J. F. Oliver, Va., $1.00; Mrs. T. V. Richardson, Md., $3.00; John Walker, D. C., $4.00; Deborah Baker, Md., $3.00.—Total, $13.00.

MEETINGS.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 77. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1909. NO. 5.

POETRY.

ONE IN CHRIST.

"How precious that truth to my soul,
That Christ and his people are one!
He the life-giving Head to the whole,
They members; e'en bone of his bone.

A union so firm and so sure
Not Satan nor sin can undo;
In Jesus the whole is secure,
And since he lives they shall live too."

A PRAYER.

My soul is now longing to see thy dear face,
And dwell in thy bosom, my sweet resting-place;
For all things are empty and vain here below—
No rest, animation or rivers to flow.

All barren the desert and wilderness here,
No comfort, no waters my spirit to cheer;
I long for pure fountains that flow from above,
That spring from the bowels of Jesus' pure love.

No city on earth has foundations to stand,
They all must decay that are built by man's hand;
But the city of Zion, the building of God,
Is built by Jehovah for the saints' sure abode.

We'll rest in thy favor through Jesus' rich blood,
With nothing to offer but sin—nothing good;
Thy favor to sinners, amazing to tell,
Is rich in its fountains to save them from hell.

O wonder of wonders, amazing and free,
That rescued poor rebels as wretched as me,
To stoop from thy throne, that's all sparkling and bright,
And live here below in the confines of night.

O may thy correction now bring me to thee,
And stamp thy blessed image forever on me,
By sore tribulation, true patience to work,
With experience to anchor in pure gospel hope.

JOHN G. EUBANKS.

Newark, Del., Dec. 22, 1908.

THANKSGIVING.

Father, I would mark this hour
With a glad thanksgiving song,
From the depth of darkness lifted
To the light I've sought so long.

With thy Spirit's soft caresses
Thou hast banished all my fears;
In the glory of thy presence
I forget my foes and tears.

Many days and nights I've waited
For the coming of the King,
Looking, longing, seeking, sighing,
For some token of the spring.

Now the wintry gloom has faded
In a radiance from above,
And my frozen heart has melted
In the sunshine of his love.

On the Rock I'm sweetly resting,
Breathing joys so pure and deep;
Harm cannot come near my dwelling,
For the Lord his own doth keep.

O what peace, what hope, what comfort,
In a camping place like this,
To a lonely, weary pilgrim
Traveling through the world's abyss.

Like a beacon ever shining,
Which no storms can overthrow,
And our faith at each remembrance
Must a little stronger grow.

LIZZIE MACALLUM.

Wallacetown, Ontario.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"MY JEWELS."

"AND they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."—Mal. iii. 17.

"The Lord of hosts." The revelation of our God in this name is as a mighty fortress; his majesty and omnipotence are so assuring to frail, sinful creatures. Our God is Lord of the multitude of the heavenly host, (Luke ii. 13,) the holy angels, those heavenly intelligences who excel in strength, who do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word. (Psalms ciii. 20.) "Thou, even thou, art Lord alone: thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshipeth thee."—Neh. ix. 6. He is Lord of all the human race; he is Lord of the host infernal, the devil and all his angels, those wicked spirits whom God hath reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day, even unto everlasting fire which God hath prepared for them. (Matt. xxv. 41.) God reigns over all the hosts in heaven and earth and hell; all are subject to his omnipotence. If God be for us, who can be against us?

"They shall be mine." Who are these? They have been described in the preceding verse; they are those who feared the Lord and thought upon his name; they are the true worshipers of the Lord, they hallowed the name of God in their hearts; his name was in their thoughts. Not as an enemy who with mighty power has made his entrance, not as an intruder, not unwelcome, but they thought upon his name reverently, believingly, affectionately, prayerfully and profitably. The name of the Lord is not meaningless, but as his name is, so is he. Therefore those who thought upon his name lived in very intimacy with the glorious dear name of their God and Savior. "They that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee."—Psalms ix. 10. It is Jesus, our Redeemer, who brings near and declares so fully and blessedly the name of God; he sings into the hearts of his people the praises of our Father in heaven, "saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."—Heb. ii. 12. Look through the Scriptures and see how manifold are the revelations of his name, and in every aspect in which his name is declared we find all our sufficiency and blessedness. In every condition, at all seasons, his name so answers all our needs, and thinking upon his name our hope revives and our trusting souls say, He will surely be to me, a poor sinner, all that his name declares.

"They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts." The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof, the world, and they that dwell therein. (Psalms xxiv. 1.) The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. (Haggai ii. 8.) "All things were created by him, and for him."—Col. i. 16. But in a way more intimate than all this the elect of God are his, "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."—Deut. xxxii. 9. "Ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine."—Exodus xix. 5. They are the Lord's in his eternal election of them in Christ Jesus; (Eph. i. 4,) they are his by redemption, bought with a price; (1 Cor. vi. 20,) they are his by the sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; (1 Peter i. 1,) they are the Lord's, in communion with him, and as

instructed in the faith of the gospel in many intimate relations they are made to taste the blessedness that they are the Lord's. Yet all this does not fully set forth the preciousness of the words, "They shall be mine." They are even now his jewels, he has begun his good work of making them up; but there is to be that final, completing, crowning work wrought by the Lord in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, when I make up my jewels. The chosen of the Lord shall each and all of them, in their body and spirit which are his, be made up, and in all spiritual and eternal excellency be conformed to the image of Jesus, the ascended, glorified Redeemer; and though sin and death have put their disfiguring hands upon them, and hold them in their grasp as lawful captives, they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels. Is such a hope of all this blessedness mine?

"In that day." This day is all the gospel day, unto the end of the world, to the end of time. The personal, experimental beginning of this day with each one of these "my jewels" is that moment when God quickens them into divine life. He begins the transforming good work in them, (Phil. i. 6,) which he continues from that moment to perform. He is making up his jewels, and thus wrought by God, moulded by him, his own workmanship are they until the day of Jesus Christ; the day when all the jewels shall be gathered together in one, perfected, made up, and in all their immortal splendor they shall shine in the beauty of Jesus. He that hath wrought us for this selfsame thing is God, who also hath given us the earnest of the Spirit. (2 Cor. v. 5.) The work of the Holy Spirit quickening our souls with divine life animates us with holy fear and sacred love toward the everlasting God and his dear Son Jesus Christ. We are moved by his divine power to love holiness, to love God's truth. Yes, most blessed is the work wrought in us; we are moulded, transformed, animated in our souls to see the beauty of the Lord, and as shown to us by the Spirit, the attributes of the Lord absorb our delighted eyes, and beholding in the light of life, by faith, the loveliness of God in the face of Jesus Christ, he is our soul's very admiration, our loved and worshiped One; and looking to Jesus, in faith apprehending his atonement and righteousness, our hearts in hope say, Who is he that condemneth? We are perfected forever, we are washed from our sins, redeemed from the curse of the law, justified, beautified, accepted in our beloved Savior, the head of the church. This is in faith, in our hope we thus speak, for we are not yet actually what we shall be. Ah, while we are pilgrims below, in our Adamic life and nature, we feelingly know that we are yet poor, sinful, vile mortals, often constrained in the bondage of corruption to sigh and moan forth our sorrows and desires before our God. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

"In that day when I make up my jewels." That day is spoken of a number of times in the Scriptures; it is that day spoken of by Paul: "Nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."—2 Tim. i. 12; iv. 8. It is designated the day of

Jesus Christ: "He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."—Phil. i. 6. It is the day of redemption, unto which believers are sealed; (Eph. iv. 30,) it is that day of God, that appointed day. For God "hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."—Acts xvii. 31. It is the last day, the resurrection day. (John vi. 44, 54.) "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."—Acts xxiv. 15. It is that day "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day."—2 Thess. i. 7–10. And in our text, "that day when I make up my jewels."

"My jewels." In my mind I have been looking upon these two words, and have been awhile absorbed in the sight. But how shall I find words to depict the scene that has been before me? I have seen they all are fondly loved by the Lord. As the words, "my jewels," signify, they are his "special treasure," and if they are his peculiar treasure his heart is in them. (Matt. vi. 21.) His heart and his eyes are with them perpetually, (1 Kings ix. 3,) and in the gathered, clustered, made up jewels I see one resplendently, preeminently, transcendently glorious, and all the others shine and are glorified in the likeness of this chiefest One. This preeminent One is Jesus, in whom it pleased the Father all fullness should dwell. Who is Jesus? Very many do not know who he is; of his being and person they have no scriptural apprehension. Then there are many others who have a theoretical knowledge of him, and yet in the deep, true sense do not know him; that is, they have no spiritual, intimate knowledge of the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, whom to know is life eternal. (John xvii. 3.) As all the making up of Jehovah's jewels is ever in association with Jesus, the preeminent, chiefest jewel, it will become us to contemplate this altogether lovely One. His majesty, glory and exaltation and eternal excellency are such that he has a name above every name. (Phil. ii. 9.) Christ Jesus, the head of the church, is none other than the incarnate Word. Being in the form of God, and the brightness of his glory, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God; in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. (This is the most wonderful theme presented in the Scriptures, and I should like to speak to you at some future time upon the subject, but just now simply wish to look at Jesus our Lord as the preeminent, most glorious jewel in the gathered peculiar treasure of Jehovah.) Jesus was verily of the seed of Abraham; to him was given the Spirit without measure. Yes, that "holy thing" which was conceived by the Holy Ghost in the womb of the virgin was taken into indissolvable union by the Son of God to himself, and thus he that is Jesus, verily the virgin Mary's child, is verily God. Christ Jesus, the last Adam, the second man, is the Lord from heaven, (1 Cor. xv. 45–47,) and to him, our Jesus, (our fellow, Psalms xlv. 7, the man, Jehovah's fellow, Zech. xiii. 7,)

every knee shall bow of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. (Phil. ii. 10, 11.) While he was upon the earth there were some who were eye-witnesses of his majesty; (2 Peter i. 16,) they beheld his glory, the glory as of the only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. (John i. 14.) O what exaltation our manhood has in Jesus, that the eternal Son of God has taken it into union with himself. Yes, he was made flesh and dwelt among us. I mention again that Jesus, the virgin's very child, is the preeminent jewel of Jehovah; no other one, save the child Jesus, has such union with God or hath such infinite and eternal exaltation. He is endowed, anointed (the man Christ Jesus) and glorified with the glories of God; in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. All the attributes of God, all the beauty of the Lord Jehovah, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, shines in the face of Jesus Christ. Through the manhood of Christ irradiates the brightness of Jehovah's glory. And when our beloved Christ, the Son of God, had by himself purged our sins he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, and to him Jehovah the Father saith, "Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool."—Acts ii. 34, 35. Christ is the head of the chosen congregation, and all the excellencies of the church ("my jewels," "ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's,") are derived from and are ever found possessed by them in union with Jesus, the anointed one, the head of Jehovah's peculiar treasure. Of Jesus, God the Father speaks, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles."—Isaiah xlii. 1. As then Jesus, the chiefest among ten thousand, is now glorified in heaven, so all the chosen in him shall be gathered unto him in eternal glory in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, when I make up my jewels. The ultimate and the eternal purpose of God in Christ Jesus our Lord; (many of the purposes of God decreed in eternity relate only to temporal things, and are consummated in time, but this in Christ Jesus extendeth throughout eternity) the ultimate purpose of God therein is his own eternal glory in having near unto himself in highest exaltation the congregation of his chosen of Adam's race; a church of redeemed, regenerated, immortal, incorruptible, glorified beings; the objects of his love from eternity, who shall worship him forevermore, and who in immortal delight shall dwell with him throughout eternity. How near unto him and exalted they are, and eternally shall be, can be seen in its infinite height and glory in Jesus Christ, the head of the church. (But let it be confessed that while we are on the earth we are capable of attaining to the knowledge of this only in part; it is but glimpses that we can now endure of such glories. 1 Cor. xiii. 9–12.) Jesus, verily of the seed of Abraham, verily the virgin Mary's child, was in the moment of his conception by the Holy Ghost in her womb taken by the Word, the eternal Son of God, into unity of person with himself. The Word was made flesh; the Son of God was made of a woman. How near then is our manhood unto God in the person of Christ. Of all that are born of women not one has this nearness, this infinite and eternal exaltation and glory, save Jesus, the virgin's firstborn child. He is our Life, our Head, our Husband, our Redeemer,

our High Priest; such an one became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and O, he is made higher than the heavens, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named. We see him crowned with glory and honor, and to him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that our Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Has Jesus Christ this nearness and exaltation? Then his ransomed church shall be brought into eternal participation with him of this nearness, blessedness and eternal weight of glory.

"In that day when I make up my jewels." There is no work like the Lord's; his work is perfect. O that transforming work of God in quickening us, when we were dead in our sins; in being born again of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. In this the hidden man of the heart is made up, beautified, endowed by the Holy Spirit with imperishable graces. From the moment that the Lord quickens the soul into divine life his working in us goes on; yes, it is continued all the time of our earthly sojourn. The vessels of mercy are afore prepared unto glory. Who are these vessels of mercy predestined to glory? Elect human beings. "Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." —Romans ix. 24. "Now he that hath wrought us for this selfsame thing [that mortality shall be swallowed up of life] is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit."—2 Cor. v. 5. All the time that Jehovah's jewels are on the earth they are led and taught by the Spirit, and as they are being moulded by his ministrations they are brought into more and more intimate knowledge of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. No other hands but the Lord's gather together and make up his jewels. "I make up my jewels." He knows just where they all are, and he knows with what riches of glory he will have them adorned to shew forth his praise. He will be glorified in them, and admired in all them that believe in that day.

The apostle John was shown the holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God, and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. The light and glory of the jasper stone is derived from the sun. The light and glory of the city is from Jesus Christ, the Lamb is the light thereof. (Rev. xxi. 11–23.) So the eternal excellencies in which the souls of the elect are wrought, made up in the new birth, are all derived from Christ; they are in that life by which our souls are quickened. So we live unto our God, in the life, in the graces of the preeminent Jewel, even Jesus Christ; we are in Christ, and Christ is in us; we are new creatures. Is it verily so with us? Then, love and truth and holiness inspiring, renewing, lifting up the inward man, we worship God in our spirit, and find peculiar, divine delight in the law of our God. Yes, it is God who hath wrought us, made us thus.

The inheritance reserved in heaven for the saints is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. (1 Peter i. 4.) How then shall corruptible man inherit such an inheritance? In our defiled, Adamic condition it is impossible; but Jehovah, who hath predestinated his chosen unto this inheritance, will fashion them; yes, they shall be wrought by his transforming power for this selfsame thing.

The jewels of the Lord are made up by the atoning sacrifice of Christ. This brings them near in reconciliation, in

peace, in at-one-ment with God, for by that sacrifice they are perfected forever. (Heb. x. 14.) Their sins and blots and spots are all purged. Wonderful, wonderful! How very precious is this to the soul! The blood of Emmanuel cleanseth us from all sin. O wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Contemplate also this, The righteousness of Jesus Christ is unto and upon all that believe. In such a glorious robe the jewels are perfect in God's sight, for Christ's comeliness is put upon them. By the faith of the operation of God we enter into this blessedness. God's jewels are described as being born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, that liveth and abideth forever. Being the subjects of such a birth they are capacitated in their souls of tasting this glorious, immortal inheritance. The Comforter, the Holy Ghost, takes of the things of Christ and shews them unto us, and this is our sacred, comforting earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession. O this earnest is so blessed. Yes, we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith, and we (amidst the tribulations of our pilgrimage) abound in hope by the power of the Holy Ghost of its unfading, immortal, infinite fullness. That eternal excellency, loveliness of the church set forth in the gospel, is so comfortingly apprehended in our faith and hope in Christ Jesus, and though now we have only the hope, the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts, yet so gladdening and assuring is this foretaste to us poor sinners that having this hope in us we say, We shall be like Jesus, our Savior and Head, for we shall see him as he is. In that world of immortal glory we shall then in our very being be without sin, and robed in all spiritual beauty we shall be conformed in all things to the image of our precious Christ. O so blessed. We shall be incorruptibly glorious forever with our God. The church is Christ's fullness, the fullness of him who filleth all in all. He filleth his people with his Spirit, life and graces. Thus he makes up his church, he makes her meet (Col. i. 12,) to present her to himself a glorious church, having neither spot, nor wrinkle, nor any such thing, but holy and without blame before him in love. (Eph. v. 27.) Having ransomed her by his precious blood there shall be a final gathering together in one, even in Christ Jesus, of all the special treasure of Jehovah, even in that day when I make up my jewels, saith the Lord of hosts. Not one jewel, not one saint, not one vessel of mercy, will be missing, and not one but what will be most gloriously and eternally made up in the likeness of their Lord and Redeemer. The apostle Paul says, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect," &c. —Phil. iii. 12. He so well knew (as all believers in Jesus know) that the good work of making up the jewels is but begun, to be performed until the day of Jesus Christ. But though now it doth not yet appear what we shall be, yet we are not left in the dark, not left to conjecture what we shall be; we shall be like Jesus, for we shall see him as he is. This is the hope in us. (1 John iii. 3.) We then shall appear with our Head, our preeminent One, with our precious Christ in glory, and be glorified in his glory. So transitory, fading, unsatisfying, are all terrestrial things. Ah, even though we have the first-fruits of the Spirit, nevertheless through the bondage of corruption in which we are tabernacling we are found groaning within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. (Romans viii. 23.)

Our natural bodies are corruptible, mortal, they are therefore in their earthy condition incapable of participation in that inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for the ransomed ones. "Now this I say, brethren, [saith the apostle] that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." Our bodies then in death return to the earth from whence they were taken. (Gen. iii. 19; Eccles. xii. 7.) Our bodies are the members of Christ, bought with the price of his precious blood. Shall these blood-purchased bodies of his jewels remain the prey of death forever? No indeed, he will raise them up at his coming, at the last day, fashioned like unto his own glorious body. Be of good cheer, believers in Jesus, contemplate with earnest expectation that which we are waiting for; here are the glad tidings of the hope of the gospel: "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" This is the final, completing work of the Lord in making up his jewels. "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him."—Heb. xi. 5. Elijah also was taken up into heaven without seeing death. (2 Kings ii. 11.) They were "changed" when God translated them from earth to heaven; changed from natural to spiritual, their manhood, mortal and corruptible, put on immortality and incorruption. What a work is this, that our bodies shall be changed to be fashioned like unto the glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ, made up by the regenerating, transforming power of God; changed from the image of the earthy to the image of the heavenly; by redemption, regeneration and resurrection made up eternally glorious. All the stains, wrinkles, blemishes and spots removed, in immortality and incorruption the glorified church shall possess with Jesus all the blessedness of eternity, and in ceaseless adoration, in everlasting gratitude, "so shall we ever be with the Lord."

O dear brethren, how blessed is this hope to us poor, tried sinners. No more shall sin intrude to stain, to deface and annoy; there shall be no more sighing, no more crying and tears; there shall be no more curse and no more death; never shall there come any symptom of mortality, pain and sickness; wrinkles, blemishes, spots, never shall be known. The jewels all made up in immortal youth and beauty shall bear the image of the heavenly. They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 17, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I inclose a letter from Elder R. S. Pace, which I think would be profitable to the readers of the SIGNS, and if you have the same mind when you have read it, please have it published. I remember times in the past when I had sweet and precious letters from you, and I realize that it is my own fault that I have not had any lately, be-

cause you have not failed to answer every letter that I have written you. I have fallen short in my letter-writing during the last few years, and I can hardly tell the reason, unless it is that I feel a greater sense of spiritual poverty than formerly. (I wonder if I am growing careless of my privileges, or if I am less thankful for them.) Often my mind is led to the words of the psalmist: "But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me," and my hope is strengthened and my strength renewed. I go on from day to day hoping I may yet attain to a clearer consciousness of my right to the "tree of life," but alas, each day shows me more and more the corruption of my flesh, so that the glass becomes more and more darkened through which I look into the perfect law of liberty. If you can spare the time I would like to have a line from you.

Affectionately your unworthy brother,
B. F. COULTER.

NACOGDOCHES, Texas, Nov. 1, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER COULTER:—If one so low down by the mountainside as I feel myself to be may thus address a fellow-traveler who is sweetly resting upon the top of Mount Zion, the mountain of God's everlasting love, as you seem to be, and I am sure you were lifted up by the Spirit and led by his guiding power to write that good letter to the SIGNS. When I read it I felt to say, Yes, I have been there, I have traveled the same highway, "the way of holiness," and to better express myself I will quote from your letter: "The beauty and order of the house of the Lord are unfolded to your wondering vision, and with the poet you sing,

'Father, whate'er of earthly bliss
Thy sovereign will denies,' &c.

You feel in your heart you are now forever free from sin, from anxious cares, turmoil and doubts." Yes, brother Coulter, that was my joyful experience when I first came to the church, but alas, as you say, soon I was called back to earthly things, and now I go all the day long mourning my loneliness, crying with David, "My sin is ever before me."—Psalms li. 3. Again you say, "Seeing as through a glass darkly (the glass darkened with sin and evil thoughts) we never could have found our way alone; indeed, we would not have sought the way at all had not the soft, kindly touch of the Elder Brother's hand encouraged us to press forward and scale the mountain's side." This brought to my mind a passage of Scripture: "I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me."—Romans x. 20. Then the question arose, Is man a free moral agent? We have but to take the history of God's dealings with Israel under the old covenant, and their continued rebellion, to find that if an Ethiopian can change his skin or a leopard his spots, "then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil."—Jer. xiii. 23. The Lord designed to prove this fact to the uttermost before revealing the hidden mysteries of his kingdom, that this wonderful mystery might appear the more glorious.

The Jews were a favored people of the Lord, whose love for them was made manifest in many ways, and times without number. It is not necessary to refer to all the wonderful dealings of the Lord with them to show they were set apart for a special purpose; suffice it to say, "He hath not so dealt with any nation."—Psalms cxlvii. 20. To them were all the promises given, and every advantage that man could have, every opportunity one could wish was bestowed upon them,

yet "He came unto his own, and his own received him not."—John i. 11. Who then in the face of this testimony will yet say man is a free moral agent? But man must have a fair trial. He came unto his own, though they would not receive him. He worked miracles, healed the sick, raised the dead and convinced some of them that he was the promised Messiah; but all the day long did he stretch forth his hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people, as it is written, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"—Matt. xxiii. 37. Truly, brother Coulter, you have well said that if left to ourselves we would not have sought the way at all, even if we had beheld the Son of God with our natural eyes and witnessed all his marvelous works. "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him."—Isaiah liii. 1, 2. Where O where is the free will and ability of man? "Though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: that the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe."—John xii. 37-39. That forever settles it; God hath said it, and who art thou, O man, that repliest against him? The ability of man was thoroughly tried and proven a failure in every instance. With all the advantages, and the promises which were given to the Jews, when the great supper was ready and they were called, "They all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come."—Luke xiv. 18-20. This was the condition of the Jews under the old covenant; it was conditional; they were consulted in the matter, and it was left with them whether or not they obeyed. Everything that could be done under that covenant was done for them, yet still they rebelled. "So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things," and O what a solemn event, what a wonderful change took place: they which were bidden were not worthy. "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."—Matt. xxiii. 38. The old covenant with all its conditions passed away; the new covenant of sovereign grace came in. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people."—Hebrews viii. 10. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."—Psalms cx. 3. Yes, it takes power to bring one to Christ. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him."—John vi. 44. It is no longer left with man, neither is the gospel any longer confined to the Jews. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations."—Matt. xxviii. 18, 19. They were first commanded, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into

any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And, as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand."—Matt. x. 5–7. Jesus himself said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."—Matt. xv. 24. But all his life of suffering and grief was of no avail, so far as its influence upon national Israel was concerned. "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes."—Luke xix. 41, 42. These are solemn things to think about; the Son of God weeping over Jerusalem. "So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled."—Luke xiv. 21–23. Under this new covenant there are no invitations in the gospel or offers of salvation; there are no conditions upon which man may decide the matter. "I was found of them that sought me not." "What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith."—Romans ix. 30. "I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the Scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them: let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway. I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy."—Romans xi. 1–11. So if man had been a free moral agent, (the term itself is contradictory) and the Jews had proved worthy, where then would there have been any room for us poor Gentiles? But God was not experimenting, he knew it all the time, and the first covenant was to try man and prove his weakness, that the power of the second covenant might be manifest. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever."—Romans xi. 33–36.

In fear and trembling I am,

ROBERT S. PACE.

ELECTION.

"KNOWING, brethren beloved, your election of God."

The above quotation is found in 1 Thessalonians i. 4. Election is a Bible doctrine wherein God, exercising his sovereign power and right, chose his people in Christ before the foundation of the world. Election is a doctrine that has been despised and rejected by the natural man in all ages of the world; it is and has been so offensive to the unregenerate man that when the subject is broached he becomes enraged, and declares that God would be cruel and unjust to thus deal with his creatures, and while men think it perfectly right that they should choose or reject anything they wish, and not consult any one about the matter, feeling they have a perfect right to do so, yet when it comes to the God who made heaven and earth exercising his sovereign right as the Creator of all things, they deny he has the right to thus act, and by such reasoning they deny his right to dispose of his creatures as he will. In the days of the apostles the people rose up in opposition to the doctrine of God's sovereignty and rebelled against it. Paul in Romans ix. 18, in writing on that subject, says, "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." In the nineteenth verse the objection is raised, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" As much as saying, If what you say is true: that God has the power and right to do whatsoever he will, we have no power to resist his will, so we do what he causeth us to do, and therefore he cannot rightfully find fault with us, and so we are not to blame for what we do. But Paul in answer to that argument says, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" They, the objectors, dare not deny that statement of a recognized fact that the potter had perfect right to do so. So we see in the first century of the setting up of the kingdom of Jesus Christ in the world that this doctrine of election was repudiated by the people, and from that time until the present the same objections are raised against God's sovereign right to have mercy on whom he will have mercy. But the poor sinner who has felt the power of God's mercy and compassion poured out in his soul, a hell-deserving sinner, as he realizes himself to be, is ready to lay down the weapons of his warfare against God's election, for God will show such an one that in that act of God's choice lies all his hope of at last entering God's holy presence to live and reign with him forever. Without election no Redeemer would have made his appearance here in this world to die for the sins of men and to rise for their justification; there would have been no cleansing fountain opened to wash away sin, no door of hope, no mercy-seat would have been prepared for poor sinners to approach unto to obtain mercy and grace to help in every time of need; so those born of God are made to see the blessedness of God's choice of them. But as glorious a doctrine as election is, there

must be evidence of it in the children of men before it can be enjoyed by faith. Paul in the Scripture quoted at the head of this article, said, "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God." Paul knew they were the elect of God, and in the following verse gives the evidence he had of it in them. Those Thessalonians were citizens of Thessalonica, the chief city of Macedonia; the people were idolaters, worshipers of gods of gold, wood or stone, but at the time when he wrote this epistle he declared that those addressed were of the election of grace. Now the evidence that he saw in them was this: "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." The gospel was a power in them; they believed it, thereby giving evidence they were chosen of God. Dear brethren, what a wonderful transition from bowing down to gods made with their own hands, to turn to the worship of the living God, being temples of his grace. This was Paul's evidence of grace in them. But in order for the elect of God to feel the blessedness of God's choice it must not only appear to our brethren that we are the children of God, but each one must have the evidence within himself so that he can know for himself. Many times the brethren can see the evidences in another child of God, but the person himself can see but little, if anything, in his life to warrant such a conclusion, and until God makes it plain to such an one he cannot rejoice in being of the election of grace. The faith in God of these Thessalonians, and their love of the truth as preached by Paul to them, were so manifest that the apostle was enabled to say of them that they were ensamples unto all that believed in Macedonia. So Paul found that God had a people chosen and precious in that great heathen city, and as in the case of those brethren to whom he wrote, there is still an election of grace in the world. The Holy Spirit teaches poor sinners that salvation is by grace, and grace alone. By faith they realize that there is no other cleansing fountain but that of Jesus' blood, no other refuge but in Christ, the cleft Rock; all other refuges are "refuges of lies," and when the vials of God's wrath are poured out upon them they will be swept away. The man unrenewed by grace sees nothing in election that appeals to him as a gracious truth, but rather finds it a stumbling-stone, or something to stir up all the enmity of his sinful heart, and when the subject is presented to him his wrath and indignation burst forth and have no bounds; every faculty of his unrenewed nature rises up in opposition to such a monstrous doctrine, as he is pleased to call it. How wonderfully does this prove what the apostle says in his letter to the brethren at Rome. He plainly sets forth their condition, Rom. iii. 13, 14, and says of such, "Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness." Nothing but a power that can conquer a rebel sinner can ever make such an one as the apostle here describes love and bow to the will of God in sweet submission. Blessed power that conquers rebels and makes them loving subjects of God's government! Faith shows such the blessedness of the doctrine that they once abhorred, and by that faith which is given unto them they come and sit down in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and with singing unto Zion. When we are thus brought by God's conquering love and grace to love that which we hated, we realize how great is the change.

In view of such wonderful manifestations of God's mercy and grace to us we should live so as to glorify God, and so set forth what he has done for us in making us fit subjects to dwell in his glorious kingdom, and become, as were those Thessalonian brethren, ensamples unto all that believe. My prayer is, that the church of God may arise and shine, showing forth the glory of her King, and so be a sweet resting-place for weary pilgrims.

E. S. CULY.

FRANKLIN, Ohio, Dec. 10, 1908.

EAST SHOKAN, N. Y., Nov. 3, 1908.

ELDERS CHICK AND KER—DEAR BRETHREN:—I want to pay for the SIGNS, and write a few lines once more, but so many things come into my mind at once that I feel confused. I love the SIGNS, it seems to get better all the time. The editorials are plain to me, as also was Elder Durand's views upon the lion and the lamb: the Spirit and the flesh, but when I read your views upon one God and Mediator, and Elder Ker's views upon the seven churches, I was much lifted up in my mind, and these words came to me, "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God." All the dear Elders and brethren write in a lovely way. The Lord knows what I am better than I do, and I am glad he does. I love all the dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, for they believe in the predestination of God. I believe that when Jesus died the work of salvation was finished and he made all things new.

I am living among self-righteous people, who can obtain their own salvation. When they see me mournful they say, Why are you so sad? If you were a christian you would be more cheerful. They say, Here are two churches, why do you not go to one of them? I have told them I wanted to go where I could hear the gospel preached, and that the Old School Baptists were the only true church of God on earth, as I believed. Then they become angry, as they hate the doctrine and those who love it. I have been a mourner from a child. It seems to me that the greatest comfort I ever had was when I was burdened and saw no way of escape, and then these words which I read in the Bible came to me, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." A light seemed to shine around me; I wanted to tell it to every one and speak of the dear Savior I had found, but I did not tell any one except Uncle Isaac Avery. He wanted me to go to the church, but I waited for some time, and then he urged me again. I loved the ordinance of baptism, but I wanted to get better.

I think brother Horton is right about how men are ordained for gospel preaching. It seems that people are becoming worse. I remember Deacon Montrose, my grandfather, telling my mother that before her generation passed away there would be perilous times. I believe we are near the last days. My father, mother, four brothers, three sisters and my husband are all gone from earth, and I am living with my daughter now. I have one sister left. All this makes me feel solemn. Many times I have shed tears when reading the book of Job. His comforters were just the same as are around me, they all talk the same language, they say there is no experience or revelation from God, that all such things are imagination; but I know better, for everything that I have seen, felt and heard was not imagination; it all came when I least expected it. What you wrote to me in the SIGNS is true. None but Jesus knows what all these revelations mean. I could

not tell, but I thought a few words from one of you dear Elders might comfort me a little. Your words were comforting and tender. If I could see some of the Elders to talk with them, I feel that I could tell them of my travels through life better than I can write. There have been times in days gone by when I have been lifted up and felt as though I could have leaped over a wall; but it is not so now, gloom or darkness surrounds me, yet I know that the Lord is ever nigh; I am, however, much confused in mind. Many read the Bible and apply it to suit themselves, seeking to support Sunday Schools and Sabbath days. Do you not think when the Lord said, "It is finished," he included the Sabbath days also? We are observing Sunday, and Sunday is not the Sabbath. As for me, I cannot keep any day holy; I esteem every day alike, and cry unto the Savior, Hide me till the storm be past.

I hear the language quoted, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." He was talking to the people of earthly things, and he knew they would do just as they did. I find my own righteousness so vain that when I count up all the cost, without free grace I know I am lost. I live in fear and trembling. If I have little seasons of peace, something will come in to annoy my mind. Though Satan appears to stop up our way, and to fill us with fear, he cannot take from us, though often he tries, the heart-cheering promise that our Lord will provide. Yet often I feel as though the Lord had forsaken me, and that he will be gracious no more. It seems to me if I could get a little word now and then from some one who knows the Lord it would be of much comfort to me, for I have no one to talk with about the things I love.

"As on some lonely building's top,
The sparrow tells her moan,
Far from the tents of joy and hope
I sit and grieve alone."

But I cannot write as I wish. When I am alone, then the Lord seems nearer.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear."

I have loved his name from a child. A neighbor came in to-day and told me about the two days meeting, and that you were there. I felt well-nigh heart-broken, and could not help shedding tears. Had I known it, I would have been there and heard you, and had you stay with us over night. I am sure we would have enjoyed a visit from you.

I have written this letter at times, as I was moved. It is now near the end of the year, and another sorrow has overtaken me: my last sister, and only earthly comfort, was called away one week before Christmas. Her name was Polly Winchell; she was a firm believer in our faith and order.

I remain your afflicted sister, as I hope, in Christ,

(MRS.) HANNAH HURLBURT.

HAMPTON, Iowa, Jan. 19, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—This has been a beautiful day, and my mind has been resting upon the works of nature. How complete are all things which were created by our God, and how completely everything works, as he purposed it to do, since the creation of the world. We have the seasons: spring, summer, autumn and winter; seedtime and harvest, all for the benefit of mankind. Also the world of nature remains just the same as when he made it; there is no change, for he pronounced everything good, and very good. But what a vast difference between the inhabitants of this earthly globe, that is, the human family, and

how few realize the great goodness betowed upon them by their Creator. He has given all the natural blessings they need. For one moment look at the wickedness that is in the world; for this wickedness he once destroyed the inhabitants from the earth, saving only eight persons. What a few! And there are but few at this present time saved in the antitype, and these I believe to be the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. They number only a few out of every kindred, tribe and tongue under heaven; they are an afflicted and poor people, who shall trust in the name of the Lord. Noah and his little few, who were saved in the ark, trusted in God, and it has been so down to the present time. The world of mankind little knows why this natural world stands; with all the wisdom they possess, or ever will possess, they cannot know the reason why; worldly wisdom cannot know. Only the few can tell the reason, and they hold the secret locked up in their own hearts, written there by the finger of God, and they did not learn it by worldly wisdom. They are the only people who can answer the question, and the answer is, that it is because of the elect of God. The world would not endure one moment longer, only for the elect's sake. Dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, as Moses could say, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thy enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places." We can trace this little few down to the present day. When Jesus was here in humanity they were his followers; see them to-day surrounded by worldly religionists. How these prosper, and what numbers are added to them; the more they catch in their net the louder they shout, saying, What great things we are doing for the Lord. It is more for filthy lucre they desire them than for anything else. But the foundation of this little few is as solid as the days of eternity, and so they do not rest upon filthy lucre, Jesus Christ is the chief corner-stone, and they are built up an holy temple in the Lord; he is the rock of their salvation, and shall stand forever. This rock shall break in pieces all other kingdoms. So we see that this natural world is as good as when the Lord made it, and without change, though man is fallen. It is so with eternal salvation to the little few; in this there is no change since the beginning. All of them are taught of the Lord in the heart; a religion of the heart, and not of the head. O may God deliver all his saints from the snares of the wicked one. May they be kept watching as well as in prayer, looking to Jesus, who is the author and finisher of their faith.

Brethren, I have written these lines with much fear and trembling. I look over my religious life, and see the crooked way that I have taken, and my sinful nature, which is prone to sin, so that I know that in my flesh dwells no good thing, but by the grace of the Lord I received a hope in Christ, if not a poor, deceived mortal. I think often of the changes which have taken place in our borders since that time; some have gone off and denied the faith, and are now our worst enemies; they have joined some of the daughters of the mother of harlots. I could name many of her daughters, one in particular is called "Christian Science." Some have forsaken the faith and advocated other doctrines, but Paul gave the church warning of these perilous times, and our God

has a purpose, and all shall work together for good to his church and people. He will always have witnesses, and will never be left without them, so, dear brethren, be of good cheer, our blessed Lord will never forsake us, and when life's journey is over he will take us to heaven to rest.

May God bless you, precious brethren editors of the SIGNS, and give you wisdom from on high to conduct the SIGNS as well in the future as you have in the past. I hope that brethren will write for the feeding of the sheep and lambs of the fold and for the upbuilding of the Zion of our God. This is the humble prayer of one of the least of all.

Your brother,

E. A. NORTON.

NEWARK, Del., Jan. 29, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—I herewith send you a letter written to me by our dear young sister, Lida Davis. She was baptized last meeting, and as she was not allowed, through great fear and trembling, to say much when she came to the church, I thought it would interest others, as it has me, to read her experience. She is still in her teens, and all she writes is the language of her own heart. It speaks for itself.

Your brother,

J. G. EUBANKS.

NEWARK, Del., Jan. 14, 1909.

DEAR ELDER EUBANKS:—I have been troubled in mind ever since I left you the other morning, for I am afraid I said something that would cause you to misunderstand me.

In some way, about two years ago I was brought to see how sinful I was. I was in darkness and there seemed to be no way out, and I felt that I was lost. I would get off by myself and read the Bible, but I did not get any comfort from it. I prayed and prayed to God to guide me and show me the way, and I know he did. I went to the Presbyterian meetings several times, and listened to the minister preach, but I could get nothing from it; I would leave feeling just as hopeless as when I went. One Sunday I went to Welsh Tract and heard you talk of salvation by grace, and I seemed to reach out and grasp a little hope. I wanted to hear more, so I went regularly for a while. The sermons seemed for me. The little hope I had was strengthened, and I would always leave feeling comforted. Then I thought I would go back to the Presbyterian meetings, for I wanted to see if I felt that way there, but it was the same thing as before: as if I had nothing to do with them, and always there was something that drew me back to Welsh Tract. I loved to be with you all; it seemed as if I could not stay away.

You used to tell me to come to your home and talk with your wife, and sometimes I would go just for that purpose, but when I got there I could not say a word. I wanted to ask her about these things, but could not. Several times I wanted to speak in meeting, but could not tell them how I felt, and I thought they would not understand. But that Sunday I could not leave without going to you; I was drawn by a power I could not resist. O how I wanted to be with you all. I knew then, as I do now, that God had led me to the Old School Baptists. I know I could never be satisfied unless with them, and O the happiness I feel when I think of that blessed hope of one day living with Him. I have never done anything to deserve his goodness. How thankful I am for his mercies to me.

I hope you will pardon my writing to

you, but I know you will understand. I hope you will allow me to sign myself, your little sister in hope,

LIDA DAVIS.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 6, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I send you a letter written to me Dec. 15th, 1881, by the late George W. Lindsey, of Newark, Del., in which he relates a portion of his experience. He was well known by all of our ministering brethren who have visited among us during the last forty-five years, and you, brother Chick, have known him nearly as far back as that. All brethren who have served the Welsh Tract Church had fellowship for him, and would gladly have welcomed him into the church. In a letter written to me in December, 1873, occurs the sentence: "About twelve years ago I found myself to be a poor, lost, wretched sinner, and have a little hope that I have since then had a view of the glorious plan of salvation by grace, and have been led to rejoice in it, but feel too sinful, unworthy and rebellious to do what I have really felt my duty to do."

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

NEWARK, Del., Dec. 15, 1881.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR FRIEND:—I feel as though I would like to have a good long talk with you through the medium of the pen, but my mind and memory have become so impaired from so much worriment and mental labor I can scarcely write, talk or think much of my time. I suffer very much with a nervous oppression in my head, the result of overwork, but have reason to be thankful to God that he has preserved me thus long on my mortal pilgrimage, a poor, sinful and rebellious creature. I feel myself an unfit companion for the world; have long felt it a waste howling wilderness, while I have long felt a desire to have a place in the visible church, which I feel to be my home, but I have always felt myself so small and unworthy that I fear I could not fill even a doorkeeper's place.

About the year 1863 I began to have serious impressions. I was then in the employ of John W. Evans, at the Newark depot, a dealer in grain, coal, &c. I became very much drawn to old Elder Barton, and when I would have leisure I would go to the large grainhouse, which was quite elevated, where I had a good view of Welsh Tract meetinghouse, also the residence of Elder Barton. Time and again I would visit the place, and really thought the place was holy. I continued in this frame of mind for some time, and finally Mrs. Griffith, of our town, was baptized and received in the fellowship of the church. Elder Leachman preached on the occasion from the text, "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels," &c. I then and there first saw my condition, a lost, perishing sinner. His discourse was powerful. I was then employed in the bank as clerk, and my misery and lost condition nearly incapacitated me for business at times. Every day I would long for the time to come to close, so that I could go to a wood about three-fourths of a mile distant to try and pray for relief, but when the bank would close I would start for the wood, and the nearer the wood the worse I would get; everything seemed to be blackness and darkness upon me, and I would not go to the wood at all, but wander about until night, and then return home again, and still no relief. This state of affairs continued all one summer. I would take my Bible to

some secluded spot in the bushes, but often would not open it; it would seem like presumption for me to do so. Finally I began to receive great comfort in hearing the gospel preached; the plan of salvation through grace seemed to be opened up to me in great beauty, and after hearing a discourse preached my mind would be so completely absorbed that I could scarcely separate from the minister and members of the church. I would, however, keep my feelings concealed, and when I would go outside and mingle with the congregation my mind would be so completely absorbed it would be impossible for me to carry on a conversation on ordinary subjects, and to this day I experience the same feeling. It is written, He who knoweth his Master's will and doeth it not shall be beaten with many stripes. Again, it is written, I will put my laws in their mind and write them in their hearts; and, my dear friend, how often have I pondered over these things to know whether I knew anything about the Spirit of Christ. The wicked, vile nature I still carry with me, which keeps up a constant warfare against another nature or mind within me, encourages me sometimes to think that I have a little hope.

I have given you a few hints of some of my exercises, yet hesitate whether to send them or not, fearing I am talking about something I know nothing of, but hope you will overlook my imperfections and shortcomings. I would like to see your views in the SIGNS of when Israel came to the Red Sea, Moses, a type of the law, commanded them to stand still and see the salvation of God; hence all who crossed over represented spiritual Israel, yet it seems some fell in the wilderness, and if I am not mistaken, a larger proportion remained on this side of Jordan than those who crossed over into the promised land, which I take to be a type of the church.

I will not try your patience longer. Please consign this letter to the fire when you read it, and believe me your friend,

G. W. LINDSEY.

TEHUACANA, Texas, Dec. 31, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The time is a little past for me to send my renewal subscription for the dear old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It contains nearly all the preaching I get, outside of the Bible, and it would be a hard task for me to do without it. I would like to talk with all the dear brethren and sisters who contribute to its columns, but I can hardly write at all, on account of nervousness, and, beside, I am such a poor, ignorant, insignificant worm of the dust that I fear I might bring reproach or disgrace upon the cause of my Lord and Master, and I would rather close my mouth in silence the remainder of my days than do that. I receive so much comfort and encouragement in reading the good letters that I would like to take the writers all by the hand and tell them how much I love them for the truth's sake. It seems I am so low down in the pit of darkness that it would be impossible for me to write anything that would be of interest to the household of faith. I often think, Is there any one in the same condition? for I am made to cry out often, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Why hast thou left me so long to grope in the darkness? I also am made to cry, O Lord, "restore unto me the joy of thy salvation," if indeed I have even known anything about it. The question often comes to my mind, Is it possible that a child of God can have the evil, wicked thoughts and imaginations

that are mine, for they are many? Then there is another question that arises in my mind: Is it possible for one who has not been born of the Spirit of God to enjoy the presence and association of the followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God?

But I had better bring this letter to a close. If, after examination, you should publish it, correct all mistakes and forgive me for troubling you. When it goes well with you remember me, a poor sinner saved by grace alone, if saved at all.

JOSEPH H. BOZEMAN.

GLENS FALLS, N. Y., Dec. 18, 1908.

DEAR ELDER KER:—It is the spirit of the law of life in Christ Jesus that is referred to in Eph. ii. 1: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." This operation or quickening process is a transpiring process in the hearts of the people of God now and here while we live in the flesh; those who were "pricked in their heart" and said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" were raised above the law to believe on Jesus. One cannot know him without knowing the power of his resurrection, for in the salvation of his people the events of his death and resurrection are inseparable. If then I claim that "the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me," it must be that I also have part with him in that operation, else "we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not." If there is no such thing as knowing the power of his resurrection to-day, or in our experience, then we are yet in our sins. But he has given us the victory over death, and it has lost its sting. I know full well that I do not dread it as I did before I had a hope in the power which raised up Christ. I am hoping this is the same power that quickened me to walk in newness of life. It is a ceaseless operation in us, going on all the time toward its perfection, whether we realize it or not. It began when in our experience we first saw as through a glass darkly, and will continue until we see him face to face. The spiritual vision grows more and more vivid as we go from strength to strength; so are we raised or removed farther and farther from the law, as to hoping in it for salvation. By the grace of God I feel farther from it each year, if not each day, as by here a little and there a little I am assured again and again that by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified. Shall we not consider the operation of faith in our hearts as a constant one, working in us every moment according to the measure of the gift of grace?

Sincerely, E. R. KINNEY.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906; 07 means 1907; 08 means 1908; 09 means 1909; 10 means 1910; 11 means 1911, &c.

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1909.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 CORINTHIANS XIV. 34, 35.

SISTER Belle Rupert, of Altoona, Pennsylvania, desires our views upon 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35. Like all the admonitions of the inspired apostles this is of importance to be considered. The two verses named read as follows: "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak: but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church."

Perhaps it is well at this time to call attention to this subject, for the reason that in different sections of our country among the churches of Christ there are divergences of practice as regards the part which women take in the affairs of the churches. In the north at conference meetings, as they are called, all members, whether men or women, are at liberty to take part, by speaking as their minds may be led, upon whatever may then be impressed upon their minds; in most of the churches in the north, but not in all, women do not vote upon any subject. In the south it is not the custom for the women to speak in the church meetings, which are the same thing as the conference meetings in the north, but they vote upon all questions; at least, all that we have known anything about vote just as do the men. We do not know the custom in the west at all. It may be that in some sections in the south women do not vote, but we have never heard that this was so. Beside, in the north social meetings are sometimes held for narrations of experience, or the speaking of the minds of brethren and sisters upon some portion of the Scripture, or upon some scriptural subject. We have never heard of this being done in the south. We believe, however, that in all the churches, both north and south, it is the custom for all who wish to become members of the church, by way of baptism, both men and women, to give publicly a narration of the reason of the hope and faith that is in them; so that once, at least, in the life of members of the church all alike speak publicly in the church. These differences of custom have never called forth any difference in fellowship among the churches, and this is right, yet it is right also to seek to know what the will of God is in this, as well as in other matters pertaining to the order of the church. The testimony of the Scriptures must settle this matter for us all, if we may come to understand their teachings.

We desire to add another thought right here, or rather to enforce it, viz., that there can be no real contradiction in the testimony of the Scriptures, however much seeming difference there may to us appear to be in them. The fact that the apostles gave to one church directions regarding this or any other matter, differing from what was said to another church, does not imply any contradiction whatever, but only that the circumstances in the two churches differed. Thus it has been thought by some that Paul and James

differed with regard to the doctrine of justification; one saying it was by faith, and the other by works. But when it is remembered that Paul was correcting one error, and James the opposite error, there is seen to be perfect harmony in their teachings. So with regard to the subject named in the text; the teaching of Paul here in nowise contradicts what is elsewhere said with regard to women who did speak in the gatherings of the churches, and who were, as it appears, approved by the apostles in so doing. The apparent difference in the teachings of the apostles was not a difference of faith or practice at all, but simply implies a difference of the circumstances surrounding those to whom they were writing. Also in this text it must be manifest that the apostle forbids something different from what he seems to command and does give rules for in another place in this same epistle. From the teaching of this text some brethren in the north have gathered that women ought not to vote in the business of the churches; on the other hand, our churches in the south have gathered that women ought not to speak, but have a right to vote, yet all, both north and south, think that women should speak once, at least, publicly before the church, viz., when they offer themselves as candidates for baptism. It appears to us that if the text under consideration forbids women to speak at all publicly, it would also forbid that they be heard the first time; and if the text does not forbid that they shall speak in the way of giving a narration of their christian experience once, how can it be made to appear that they shall not have the privilege of speaking in the church of the daily and hourly ups and downs of their travel in after days as well?

We will briefly call attention to several places in the Scriptures which seem to show that in some manner and at some times women were accustomed to speak publicly in the churches. First, we know that under the old covenant there were women who held public places among Israel, and who were accustomed to taking part in public exercises pertaining to the worship of God. There were women who were recognized to have the Spirit of God upon them and who were regarded as leaders; and some are called prophetesses, as, for instance, Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, Noadiah and others. In the New Testament we read of the prophetess Anna, and in Revelation we read that the evil woman Jezebel claimed to be a prophetess. It may be well here to call attention to the fact that the word prophesy in the Bible does not exclusively mean the power of foretelling future events, but, often, the power of speaking in the way of teaching, exhortation and warning, and of setting forth the will and word of God in a general way. Those who gave instruction, with the power of the Spirit in any way, were called prophets or prophetesses. In the New Testament we also read of women accompanying the Savior in his journeyings, and of their ministrations to him, and of the active part which they took after his death and burial, and that they were among those who, after his ascension, continued in prayer and supplication with other disciples. (Acts i. 14.) Philip, as we are told, had four daughters, which did prophesy. (Acts xxi. 9.) See also the quotations from ancient prophecies in Acts ii. 17, 18, in which it was recorded that their sons and their daughters should prophesy. Whatever else this word prophesy included, it did include the thought of open or public teaching, or exhortation, or confession of the work of the Lord. Beside this, Paul recognizes

the right of women to pray, or prophesy, in the churches, and gives strict rules as to a becoming behavior in so doing. In chapter eleven he declares that it is a shame for a woman to pray or prophesy with her head uncovered. The whole connection shows that he is speaking of the custom of prophecy and prayer in public worship. Paul does not contradict himself in these two places; we must not, we dare not, for a moment think this; it must therefore be that he does not mean the same kind of speaking in the one place that he does in the other. Our judgment, after much thought for many years past, is this: that while he does not forbid that women who have the Spirit should speak in the assemblies of the church, of things that pertain to vital godliness, whenever occasion offers, yet it must be humbly; not as one teaching with authority or assuming to dictate, but with humility and submission in feeling and in manner. They are not to usurp authority; it is to be in the church as in the home. Paul, and all the word of God beside, forbids that women should seek to rule in the home, so also he forbids that they should seek to rule in their spiritual home, the church of God. But as women may in the home commune of all that is in their hearts with their husbands, yet so as to be in subjection, so in the church they may commune of what is in their minds and hearts with the church, yet not as assuming authority, but simply bearing testimony to the teachings of the Spirit in their hearts.

We present these thoughts as what seems to us to be the teaching of the Scriptures regarding this matter, and the meaning of the text under consideration.

C.

GENESIS XXIV. 27.

"I BEING in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren."

Sister Mary E. Lake, of Hurricane, W. Va., desires us to write something with regard to these words.

Many years ago, one who was very dear to us said of this very text, "There is much in being in the way." The expression has never been long absent from our mind since then. This language, "being in the way," is but one form of saying, being about the business which my Master put in my charge; going on in the way in which my Master had bidden me. Thus Peter was in the way when upon the housetop he was praying to the Lord, and the Lord brought him to the household of Cornelius. Philip was in the way when he went at the bidding of the Spirit down into the wilderness and there preached a full Savior to the eunuch. Paul was in the way when he obeyed the voice of the Spirit, going where he was led, though not knowing the future, only that in every city wheresoever he might go bonds and imprisonments awaited him; and again and again the Lord led him to the house of his Master's brethren. The same thing is true of every servant of God who is careful to go forth as the Lord commands him. Being in the way, not out of it, it is true still that the Lord leads his servants to those who are brethren of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul plants and Apollos waters, but it is God who gives the increase, or, in other words, prospers the planting and watering.

It is not needful that we repeat the narrative which leads up to this confession of the servant of Abraham, but some few things we may refer to briefly. First, the name of this servant is not given at all in the narrative, he is simply many times

called Abraham's servant; and when speaking, calls himself by no other name. This was claiming a far greater dignity than his own proper name could have conferred upon him. In the thoughts of all who knew his master, to proclaim himself Abraham's servant was to confer upon himself honor, and to secure their attention and regard; all who honored Abraham would also honor him. Ambassadors for any government to any other country do not receive honor there in their names, but in the name of the government which they represent. Thus also in the kingdom of heaven, nothing ought to be considered, nothing before God is considered, except this one thing, Is this or that person a servant of God? All the honor, praise, regard or favor shown to him there is not because of any earthly position or name he may bear, but solely because he is the Lord's servant. In and of himself he may be of small account among men in every way, but if he be the servant of the Lord all who love the Lord will hold him in esteem and honor him; by so doing they honor the Master whose servant he is.

The narrative also shows that this man was possessed of the spirit of a servant. He was a willing servant, who, first of all, honored Abraham. This spirit cannot be wrought by any master in the heart of any servant, and yet no man is a true servant of his master without this spirit. Abraham could not confer this spirit of faithful service upon his servant, yet he was such a servant; the Lord had made him so. What masters on earth cannot do with their servants, the Lord does do in preparing his servants to serve him; he gives them a willing mind, and then their service is accepted. Solomon gave thanks to God that the people were able to offer so willingly of their substance. How happy would be that government whose citizens paid their taxes willingly and gladly. How happy are the citizens of Zion, for theirs is a willing service; they long to render more service.

It is, in the third place, this willing spirit that kept Abraham's servant in the way. It is this that leads all the people of God in their service. So Paul could say, "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." The blessed Master was possessed of this spirit of willing service, and so he could say, It is my meat and drink to do the will of my Father in heaven. By the inspired psalmist the dear Redeemer also said, "Mine ears hast thou opened." That is, mine ears hast thou bored, as was provided under the Mosaic law. If a man desired of his own will to be a servant to another, he was brought to the door, and against the post his ear was bored with an awl. This was a token in the eyes of all who should see him that he was a willing servant. So Jesus said, "I delight to do thy will." How blessed are they in whose hearts have been wrought this willing obedience to God; these partake of the Spirit of the dear Redeemer, and are his own treasure. So this servant of Abraham stands forth as a type of him who was to come, and to whom all the types pointed. Such as these the blessed Lord brings at last to dwell with their Master's brethren. With all the willingness, and all the service rendered, they never claim any merit, nor boast in the results of their service, but always say, The Lord led me to this place, and they thank God, first, for the willing mind, then for the power to in any measure act out this willing mind, and then for being kept in the way, and for the outcome, dwell-

ing in the house of their Master's brethren, and so one song only is sung, and that to the praise of God. C.

THE TWO WITNESSES.

DEAR EDITORS:—Having been a reader of the SIGNS for nearly a half century, I take the liberty to ask brother Ker's views on the eleventh chapter of Revelation, concerning the two witnesses. I was much entertained by reading brother Chick's "Greeting." I am eighty years old, and all the preaching I get is through the SIGNS, so if I have asked too much you can charge it to the account of one who hungers much for the truth as is given by God's ministers.

LUCINDA RILEY.

BOWEN, Ill., Dec. 30, 1908.

The request of sister Riley would lead us into deep water should we attempt to grant it. Many of the sayings of the book of Revelation are shrouded in mystery, owing to the highly figurative language used. Because of the enmity and wicked persecution of kings and others of authority, the Holy Spirit was pleased to speak in parables or figures, often using the term "Satan" with reference to those who practiced such tyranny and malicious wickedness; at other times applying the term, "the beast," to the same characters. The word "days" is often used when years are meant; hell, when tribulation and sorrows are meant; heaven and earth, when the old covenant, with its rites, forms and ceremonies, is signified; new heaven and new earth, when the gospel dispensation is presented. Hence, without definite knowledge of those wicked characters, and events as to when and where they took place, it is impossible to give an opinion that would be correct or satisfactory. The same difficulty confronts us in attempting a solution of the subject suggested by our sister. If commentaries were consulted, perhaps no two would agree, and as the Lord does not reveal natural things, such as characters, dates, &c., we are utterly unable to understand much recorded in Revelation. There can be no question but that John, and the other servants to whom they were signified, understood those things which were "shortly to come to pass," but our opinion is that very few, if any, understand them now. While we would desire to know such things, and while we have as much pride perhaps as most men, we frankly confess that there is much more in the sacred word of God that we do not understand, than there is which we hope we have some knowledge of.

Now with reference to the two witnesses, some things might be suggested as to how the Lord has dealt with men, and the benefit derived from the testimony of his witnesses. To some witnesses of ancient times power was given which corresponds with that given the two witnesses mentioned in Revelation. When the Lord began to speak to men by man he did not send one witness alone, but two. When the time came that Israel, in Egyptian bondage, should be reminded of the promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and to be delivered from the power of Pharaoh, the Lord sent to them Moses and Aaron. He told Moses that the place whereon he stood was holy ground; not the literal earth upon which his feet rested, but as a witness between God and his people, the place he occupied was holy. The same was also true of Aaron, who was the high priest between God and the Israelites. Moses and Aaron traveled together, both witnesses, speaking the same things. To them was given "power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues," which power was fully demonstrated in the land of Egypt. Then Elijah and Elisha, two witnesses, speaking the same things, had power given them

to shut up the heavens, that it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months, and to call down fire from heaven. Thus "the law and the prophets were until John," and were not they clothed in sackcloth and ashes? Was it not a dispensation of days and years of darkness and sorrow? But "since that time [the coming of John] the kingdom of God is preached." Here two witnesses meet: the law and the prophets and the preaching of the kingdom of God. The sending of witnesses by the Savior was two by two speaking the same things: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." It has ever been necessary that one witness should corroborate the testimony of another to add strength thereto, and thus confirm the testimony. Of the law and gospel referred to as two witnesses, each is found corroborating perfectly the testimony of the other; the law testifying of certain events to take place in order to salvation. The gospel testifies to the fulfillment of every declaration and type of the law. Without the law and the prophets we would not understand the gospel dispensation, and without the gospel dispensation the law and prophets would be without signification. The witnesses above mentioned, with many others, have presented themselves to our mind, and we refer to them because we are sure of presenting the truth in connection with them, even though we may utterly fail to touch the subject suggested by our sister.

With regard to the two witnesses lying dead in the street three days and a half, we shall merely state that they were in open view during that time. While the law was fulfilled in every jot and tittle it was not destroyed, and while the kingdom of God was persecuted and the testimony thereof suppressed, it was not overthrown. Daniel said, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed." The period while no testimony was being given may be synonymous with the declaration of Zechariah the prophet: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: but it shall be one day, which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light." Of one thing however we are sure: that during the time Christ was in the tomb there was no testimony of God and his works, neither by the law nor the gospel. The law was fulfilled and all types and shadows done away. But no testimony of that great work could be given until the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Thus darkness covered the earth. We have no record of a spiritual emotion in all the world during the terrible three days and nights while Jesus was in the heart of the earth.

The two witnesses mentioned in Revelation are said to be "the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth." When Zechariah saw in vision these things he asked the angel who talked with him what they were, and he replied, "This is the word [testimony] of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Thus we see these witnesses testifying to the power and grace of God, which is the testimony of both the old and the new testaments. Not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of God the dead live, the house is reared and sustained.

The two anointed ones mentioned in the same chapter of Zechariah, that stood before the Lord, were, no doubt, Zerubbabel and Joshua, the king and priest of

God at that time, but they were only types of Christ the two in one, he being anointed of God both King and Priest, and in this character he ever stands before God. As King, reigning over all worlds and beings, executing the will of the Father. As High Priest, having obtained eternal redemption for his brethren, he ever liveth to make intercession for them. K.

PSALMS CXXXIX. 7–10.

WILL Elder Ker please give his views through the SIGNS on Psalms cxxxix. 7–10: "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." And oblige yours in hope,

WM. F. SLOAN.

LEXINGTON, Ky., Jan. 31, 1909.

The personal experience of each pilgrim of Zion is so clearly presented in the Psalms that we are apt to forget the statement of Peter: "The Spirit of Christ which was in them [prophets] did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." Peter most positively declared David to have been a prophet. Hence it was Christ in him testifying beforehand, saying, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."—Psalms cxxxix. 14–16. Taking therefore this view first that it was Christ in David who uttered the words suggested by brother Sloan, we see not man, with all things put under him, "but we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the sufferings of death, crowned with glory and honor." He, the Son of man and the Son of God, asked the questions, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" Not that a shadow of prospect existed that he might wander from the Spirit of God, nor that the faintest desire would arise in him to flee from his presence, but realizing the omniscience and omnipresence of God, he declared that truth, or doctrine, in the questions.

In Psalms twenty-two, Jesus describes his life from his birth to the cross, with all the dire distress between the two most wonderful and sacred events. Yet in Psalms twenty-three he declares the Lord to be his Shepherd, and because of that truth he should not want. In God's faithfulness there were given pastures and still waters, and through his watchcare the Son should lie down in the one and be led beside the other. Yea, though he walked through the valley of the shadow of death, he would fear no evil, for the reason God would be with him. His rod and his staff in that very place would be made manifest. His Shepherd would restore his soul, bring him forth from the dead and anoint his head with oil that his cup might run over, he dwelling in the house of the Lord forever, the Head of that house: the redeemed of God.

The Father was with him and in him while in the flesh, yes, in every step, in every word, in every work. When at the age of twelve years talking with the lawyers and doctors, the Spirit of God was there. When in Jordan at his baptism the Spirit was there, and also in the wilderness the presence of God was there

to keep his Son in the days of temptation. If he ascended into heaven, there he found God, it being his throne; if he made his bed in hell (grave or earth), there he found God, because it is his footstool. The two extremes, so to speak, are here presented: the perfect joy and peace of heaven and the anguish and bitterness of the earth. God is in each place, beholding the glory of the one and the tribulation of the other. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."

"If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." Should he consider the greatness and the depth of the sea, and the "living creatures" thereof, even there the creative power of God would be manifest and his dominion over all things appear, so that Christ, as man, could not doubt God. Or should he, in mind, go into the very depths of the law, and there behold the wonders of the deep, ordered in the unfathomable mind of Jehovah, as figures of himself, which must be fulfilled in him, all shadowing forth his sufferings and death, even there the Shepherd's hand should lead him, and his right hand hold or sustain him.

The children of God also know, experimentally, that all things are open and naked to him with whom they have to do; therefore they cannot go from his Spirit nor flee from his presence. His Spirit being in them, it is impossible to go from it, and "the angel of his presence" being with them, they cannot flee from that. Yet with sorrow and shame we often are made to confess in the language of the poet:

"Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it!
Prone to leave the God I love!"

Were it not for his unchangeable love and perfect work we would be forever banished from his courts, but though we forget him and wander away, kindly he follows wherever we stray. Yes, even now the ninety and nine are safe in the fold while the Shepherd seeks the one astray; he always finds him, and restores him to the flock. He is our Shepherd, we shall not want. He leads us in pastures fresh and green; he also gives us to drink of bitter waters. He has promised never to leave nor forsake us, therefore he is ever present. K.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at the residence of the bride's parents, on Thursday, Feb. 4th, 1909, Frank A. Hixson and Miss Mary S. Hart, both of Pennington, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Miss Mary Eva Sayer, our dearly beloved sister in Christ, passed out from this life Feb. 12th, 1909, in the 65th year of her age. She was born at Sayerville, near Warwick, N. Y., Oct. 18th, 1844, the daughter of William Ellison Sayer and Mary Ann Brook, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Warwick by Elder J. N. Badger, June 27th, 1875. Sister Eva had not been in good health for a number of years, but nevertheless her death came suddenly and unexpectedly to us all, being due to organic heart trouble, while visiting at the home of her sister, Mrs. Joel H. Crissy. The Sunday before she died she attended both the morning and afternoon meetings of the church, but her weariness of body afterward was extreme. Surely it can be said of her that her devotion to the cause of Christ was unswerving to the end. A member of the Warwick Church, baptized fifty-nine years ago, says she cannot recollect sister Eva ever missing a church meeting. If absent from home, she made it a point to always return in time for those meetings. In later years, when compelled to reserve her strength, it was not unusual for her to decline invitations out from home if she felt that accepting them would weary her too much to enable her attending meeting the following Sunday. The church and all things pertaining to it, temporally and spiritually, were first in sister Eva's mind and heart. Being such a faithful one as she was, our loss is truly a sore one, and her departure being so sudden, we cannot yet realize that she is really gone from us. Being not merely a

"hearer of the word," but a "doer of the word" also, we have for her a strong hope that she has entered into the fullness of her eternal rest in the Beloved at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Many portions of the Scriptures were dear to her, but especially the twenty-third Psalm and Paul's letter to the Philippians, which she had read and reread many times. She had marked in her Bible the first verse of the fourth chapter, which was very characteristic of her attitude toward the truth, and this was the text used by the writer at her funeral. The church was her "joy," her "longed for," her "dearly beloved" and her "brethren." It was her desire to see and to hear of Old School Baptists everywhere standing fast in the Lord, and not taking up with any of the modern ideas in religion as they come along. She leaves one brother, Wm. Benjamin Sayer, one sister, Mrs. Joel H. Crissy, and her family, and one half-sister, Lydia Ellison Sayer, to mourn her departure, to say nothing of other more distant family connections and a host of friends and brethren here and elsewhere, for sister Eva has visited the eastern associations of the Warwick correspondence and was known among them all. Her brother, Wm. Benjamin, is now left alone at the homestead, where for so long he devotedly cared for his sister. Our hearts go out to him in sympathy, and to the sisters, and to all the mourning ones.

The funeral was held from the home of Mr. Joel H. Crissy, services in the church she so dearly loved, and interment in Warwick Cemetery.

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

WARWICK, N. Y., Feb. 18, 1909.

Mrs. Anna Eliza Hancock departed this life at her home, in Pocomoke City, Md., Jan. 20th, 1909, after a lingering illness of eleven months. The dear sister was a great sufferer for at least five or six months; the disease was supposed to be spinal rheumatism, dissolving the marrow of the back. She gradually weakened and died like the going out of a lamp as the oil is consumed. Sister Hancock was born April 11th, 1834. She was baptized by the writer in fellowship with the Old School Baptist Church called Pitt's Creek, Worcester County, Md., Oct. 20th, 1878, and from that time until her death her walk was consistent, and the testimony that she bore with her lips was clear and explicit. No one could be with her long but to learn where her faith and hope rested. She had quite a travel in the wilderness before she found her home and people, but when she found them it appeared as clear as crystal, and she never questioned again where the church of God is, but had serious questions about herself. Thus one more of the precious ones has been removed from the militant state, and while we sorrow that we shall see her face and hear her sweet voice no more, it is not without hope, for the apostle Paul said for our comfort: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." In this is indeed our comfort in the midst of our sorrow. She has left behind her to remember her as a shining light in the family, in the church and in the neighborhood, her aged companion, four children, (one son and three daughters,) quite a number of grandchildren, a few great-grandchildren, with the little church and a host of friends.

Her funeral took place at her late home in Pocomoke City, Md., where the writer tried to comfort all who mourned, using the words in Romans viii. 18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us," after which all that was mortal was laid to rest in the Old School Baptist Cemetery in Snow Hill, Md., until the trump of God shall sound, then all that was sealed by the Holy Spirit shall come forth in the glory and image of the Son of God. Amen. T. M. POULSON.

MASSEY, Va.

Mary Ann Walling Street, widow of Joshua Hill Street, was born Dec. 2nd, 1838, in Plymouth, England, the daughter of John and Mary Walling (nee Mary A. Taylor), of that place, and departed this life Tuesday, Jan. 28th, 1908, at the home of her nephew and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. R. Street, Boissevain, Manitoba, aged 69 years and 2 months. She came with her parents to Montreal, P. Q., in 1842, and upon her profession of faith in Christ was immersed by Mr. Lillie and admitted a member of the St. Helen St. Baptist Church, Montreal, at the age of fifteen years. She was married to Mr. Joshua Street in 1864. For many years she was a prominent member and a Bible class teacher in Montreal. She with her husband moved to Brantford, Ont., in 1871, and both were esteemed members of the old Tabernacle and Park Baptist Church there from that time until October, 1888, when they withdrew their membership and opened their home for the meeting together of the followers of the Old School Baptist doctrine, and it was there the members of that body held their meetings every Sunday afternoon, both being devoted to the cause, until Mr. Street's death, which occurred May 4th, 1900; since then Mrs. Street had lived most of the time alone, still continuing to hold the meetings, her greatest ambition being to keep what she called the little band together. I have heard her say that was really what she cared most to live for. She was a sincere christian, and was thoroughly acquainted with the Bible, and her greatest delight was conversing on the Scriptures. She was a faithful follower of the truth, striving always to serve the Savior whom she so dearly loved, and was a true friend of all who loved the truth. She

was a constant reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. In August, 1907, she spent a few weeks visiting Mr. and Mrs. J. P. May, at Dudley, Muskoka, and for some time after her return home was feeling fairly well, until November, when she was taken ill and sent word for me to come and nurse her. In two months she had so far recovered as to feel capable of accompanying me to my home in Manitoba, wishing to spend the rest of her days with us. It soon became apparent that the end was not far off, as she contracted a cold on the journey, which resulted in her death in two weeks after reaching here; her end was peaceful and happy.

Funeral service was conducted by Mr. A. Hamilton, with the members of the family and a number of neighboring friends, after which the remains, accompanied by Mr. R. Street, were transferred to Brantford, Ont., for interment, where a goodly number of her old friends were assembled in loving respect to witness the words which were uttered to her memory by Mr. Emmerson, who at that time officiated at the Park Baptist Church, after which the remains were laid to rest beside her husband in Mount Hope Cemetery, on Sunday, Feb. 2nd, 1908. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth."

Written in loving memory by

(MRS.) R. STREET.

BOISSEVAIN, Manitoba.

Orpah A. Messick, wife of J. H. Messick, departed this life Jan. 19th, 1909, at the age of 62 years, 9 months and 6 days. Her maiden name was Short. She was a granddaughter of Elder Rogers, who was for several years pastor of the Broad Creek Church. She was married to Joel H. Messick Dec. 16th, 1868, and was truly a helpmeet indeed. She was the mother of seven children, five of whom are yet living, three daughters: Mrs. Lily Dolby, Mrs. Canola Phillips and Mrs. Dora Brown (all of whom are members of the Broad Creek Old School Baptist Church), and two sons: Peter J. Messick and Forris Messick, all living in Sussex County. It was my privilege to baptize sister Messick at Broad Creek, Sussex Co., Del., some time in the year 1891. Her husband writes me that she had a hope about ten years before she came to the church, and often expressed a wish to be baptized, yet feared the privilege would never be hers; but the Lord gave her strength to testify of his goodness and mercy to her in the year above mentioned. She had great enjoyment in the church, and was privileged to see her husband and three daughters baptized and walking in the order of the gospel. I have enjoyed great satisfaction and comfort in my association with this family, having been partaker with them of their joys and sorrows now about twenty years. I have baptized five, married several of them, and in their bereavements have tried to minister of the consolations of the gospel. Dear brother Messick feels his loss very severely, but takes comfort in the assurance that to his beloved one it is eternal gain. May the good Lord uphold him in this trying hour, keep him by His grace and power through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

ALSO,

E. Frank Holloway departed this life at his father's residence, in the city of Salisbury, Md., Jan. 10th, 1909, at the age of 21 years, 5 months and 17 days. His health began to decline some time last spring, and on the 25th of last June he was taken down with typhoid fever, and although he recovered from the typhoid and was able to go about he was never well and strong again, and on the 10th of January was released from his sufferings. Frank was a noble boy, a good son and brother, and of a disposition to make friends, the large number being quite in evidence by the number that attended his funeral in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse at Salisbury, on the afternoon of Jan. 12th, when the writer tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved family. He leaves father, mother, four brothers, one sister and a large circle of relatives and friends to mourn. The exemplary life of the subject of this notice leads us to hope that he had been taught of the Lord, and that the gracious Redeemer of sinners has now taken him to dwell with him in glory.

May the Lord comfort the bereaved ones.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., February, 1909.

BROTHER **Jason Morse** departed this life Jan. 11th, 1909, in the 75th year of his age. His death was very sudden, and was a great shock to all. Brother Morse had been complaining for several days, but was able to go about and to attend to some duties. On the day of his death he drove to town, although not feeling very well, and after putting out his team went into the post-office to mail some letters, and was taken suddenly with acute indigestion and only lived about half an hour. The last he ever did was to inclose in a letter to the SIGNS his subscription for another year, and died about five minutes later in the post-office at Halcottsville, N. Y. He was received by the Second Roxbury Church on Saturday, Sept. 8th, 1893, and baptized on the following Sunday, by the late Elder J. D. Hubbell. Brother Morse had always lived a faithful and consistent member, and was held in high esteem in the community where he resided. He leaves a widow and five children, two daughters and three sons, beside the church and a host of friends and other relatives to mourn their loss, but we do not mourn as those who have no hope, "for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

His funeral was held from the Old School Baptist Church at Halcottsville, N. Y., and was conducted by the writer. Burial was in the Hubbell Cemetery at Kelly Corners.

May the God of grace comfort all who mourn.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Elder William H. Gilmore was born in Des Moines County, Iowa, Nov. 4th, 1848, and moved with his parents, Beverly W. and Lucinda Gilmore, to Oregon in 1852; received a hope in Christ in 1873, and was baptized Sept. 10th, 1876. He was married to Miss Ailey Darland in December, 1880. He began to preach in March, 1891, and was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry May 9th, 1896. He preached an excellent discourse less than two weeks before he was called home, Feb. 4th, 1909. I had known him for nearly forty years, having been much together, and were baptized and married by the same Elder (James A. Bullack), our membership always having been in the same church, and in the ministry we were true yokefellows, so that my loss seems irreparable. He leaves a loved companion, nine children, the church and many friends to mourn. I feel I can truly say of him that he has fought a good fight, finished his course and kept the faith, and that he entered into rest with the full assurance that "when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." Gone is the sting of death, the grave has lost its victory. He shall come forth all glorious, like unto the Holy One.

W. J. HESS.

David Birdsell, of Otego, Otsego Co., N. Y., was born in 1826, the son of John Birdsell, and died Feb. 14th, 1909. Deceased lived in Otsego County all his life, and was a quiet, unassuming, good neighbor. He leaves two brothers and many relatives. Mr. Birdsell was an Old School Baptist in belief, but not a member.

Funeral services were held in the churchhouse of the Old School Baptists in Otego, Feb. 17th, the writer officiating. He is in eternity, where is no tomorrow, hence no waiting to be with the Lord. This truth our faith embraces. May God bless the mourning friends with this faith, if it is his will.

D. M. VAIL.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 77. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1909. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"BE YE SEPARATE."

THESE words occur in 2 Corinthians vi. 17. I do not know that they are found anywhere else in the Scriptures bearing the same relation to the context. The Scriptures, however, teach the same important lesson to the children of God as taught in the verse mentioned. Let us read two verses: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."—Verses 17, 18. The apostle here exhorts the Corinthians in regard to idols or false worship. The all-important thing touching their conversation and walk is to be "not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," and to "come out," and "be ye separate." In this respect God's obedient people walking in the fear of the Lord are "a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Their zeal is not as the false teachers and hypocrites who love the "uppermost seats" and the applause of the world, but it is to dwell alone and not be reckoned among the great in religious circles. There is much fault found to-day with God's humble poor because they will not mingle with other religious bodies; they are charged with being selfish and holding themselves as being more righteous than other professors of christianity. Consistency separates believers from unbelievers, so the decree of Jehovah that, "Israel then shall dwell in safety alone," works no hardship to the saints, but rather is relished, because there cannot be concord between righteousness and unrighteousness, neither fellowship existing between believers and unbelievers. Sometimes some of the Lord's chosen ones desire to be exalted through fleshly lusts and long for the fleshpots of Egypt, so that they feel like making a little compromise with the enemies of truth to escape their venom. When brethren are overtaken in a fault of this kind the exhortation at the head of this letter will lay heavily upon their hearts, if they be spiritually-minded: "Be ye separate" from worldly religionists and false teachers. If this be a hardship, then think of the language of Jesus in Matthew x. 37, 38: "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daugh-

ter more than me, is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me." Again, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."—Matt. xvi. 24. Again, "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."—Luke xiv. 33. The last mentioned Scriptures may allude more to our conscience than to our demeanor towards our earthly treasures. Certain it is that idolatry or false worship is the greatest sin charged against the children of men. If we be spiritually-minded we are unselfish, and in this sense fill the requirements of Scripture teaching. A denial of self is the most important effort enjoined upon the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus; without that denial they cannot be his followers. In all the instructions given to the saints by all the apostles this idea is kept in view. If the saints were above temptation and could be fully spiritually-minded at all times, then it would be altogether unnecessary for any exhortation from the apostles or men. Deny thyself and be thou separate is in conformity with gospel lore from beginning to end. Then it becomes us who trust that we love Jesus and his kingdom to take heed more to the sayings of our Lord Jesus and his inspired "princes" than to our surroundings on earth. By nature we seem to be married, or joined together, with things of earth. These things of earth may be flesh and blood, or the ways and opinions of men. To be sincere followers of Jesus we must regard the opinions and ways of men as against our growth in grace and in knowledge of the heavenly kingdom and our spiritual enjoyment with the saints in light. Paul would be energetic and forceful, saying, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."—Romans xii. 1, 2. This Scripture would seem to say, Do not forget to put off the old man, crucify the old man with all his lusts, deny thyself and take the yoke of Jesus upon you and learn of him. Does not all this mean, Be ye separate from the world? John says, They are of the world, we are of God. Is it necessary for us, who declare that salvation is all of the Lord through abounding grace, to follow the instructions given us by Jesus and his apostles? If so, let us look to our religion. Is it of the purest gold? Do we do good to the poor and afflicted, and keep ourselves unspotted from the world? There are many worldly religionists who visit the widows and fatherless in their affliction, who do not, nor cannot, keep themselves unspotted from the world. "They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them." Doing good to the needy and afflicted is a reflection from the true light, but not light itself. If a man be of the world he cannot keep himself unspotted from the world. Jesus says to his disciples, which holds good to all the saints in every age and everywhere: "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given."—Matt. xiii. 11. If we desire to study to show ourselves "approved unto God," may we refer to Peter's exhortation on the day of Pentecost: "Save yourselves from this untoward generation." This accords with the phrase at the head of this letter: "Be

ye separate," and it will do no violence to the language of James: "Keep himself unspotted from the world." These all show the pureness of the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ; none other like it. Shall we in our lives on earth be ashamed of the narrow way of the Lord? Do we want less of the reproach of the cause of truth by giving heed to those who would pervert the truth "just a little" to gain favor with religious bodies which are not of the Lord? Surely if we are obedient children walking in the fear of the Lord, we as much as in us lies will exercise caution that we be found separate from all of the organizations of men, whether they be secret or otherwise. In this respect we will hold the ancient sign of the royal priesthood, a peculiar people, dwelling alone, not mixed or mingled with false worship, which tends to idolatry, if not idolatry itself. We shall not escape from sin while on earth, but we may keep aloof from the false ways of the great enemy of souls. This is accomplished by being separate, dwelling alone; there may be few, two or three, (or even one,) which are "by pureness" "unspotted from the world." How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of the unspotted little ones who trust alone in the Lamb and have no confidence in man. They stand out boldly, in that their names are written high up, even in heaven. O let us praise the Lord for Jesus' sake, and trust him that he will keep us separate and unspotted, and present us unto himself without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.

In hope, J. F. BEEMAN.

HELENA, Okla., Dec. 1, 1908.

HAMPSTEAD, Md., Jan. 20, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—When I came home this fall I found myself often writing to you, but being busy in my slow way I did not get my thoughts on paper, and often the words have come to me, "Quench not the Spirit." I think one cause of my desire to write was to speak of brother Luke Ensor. I was glad to get to see him, just one month before his departure; he was sitting in his chair, and I never shall forget his smile of welcome as I entered the room. He said that he had given up the things of this life, and I thought afterwards that he was just waiting for the Master's call, but he looked so well I little thought it would be so soon. The next week I left my relatives in the vicinity of Union Bridge and was in Hanover when Leah wrote me of his death. I was sorry I was not near enough to be with them; but God knows best. I know you would have been glad to have been with them also. I shall ever respect his memory for his kindness to me when an inmate of his family; and since then, as you know, there has been a closer tie, the tie that binds christian hearts in love.

I had the pleasure of reading brother Kelly's birthday letters. What a pleasure it must be to him in his advanced age to feel that he has been kept by the divine Hand, and therefore has been enabled to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he has been called. If I cannot walk therein, I rejoice to see those of like precious faith in the path, not only for their sakes, but also for myself; for if I love these things in others, does it not show forth a desire for holiness, even though I do not attain thereto? With all my

shortcomings I feel that I have much to be thankful for. I remember that every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down from above, from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning.

I am again the recipient of the SIGNS, through brother Kelly's kindness. When I wrote you last I did not know that the publishers had given me nearly two years' subscription. I highly appreciate their kindness, and, being strangers in the flesh, I think there must be that sacred tie that binds in christian love, and, as I have nothing to give in return, I hope they have received their reward.

I want to thank sister Bonnie for sharing her aunt's good letters with the rest of us. I find fellowship in them, and therefore comfort, but I would like to read some from sister Bonnie also. Had I the pen of a ready writer, as has sister Bessie Durand, there are many things I would like to say about the contributions to the SIGNS, but I will have to leave that to those who can so beautifully express themselves. But I want to speak to you a little about your editorial upon the words, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." I had more than once given the passage a passing thought as I read it, though feeling I did not understand it, for my thought of it was about like the minister's of whom you wrote, and I knew that did not agree with that part of the Bible which I thought I did understand. So having, as I hope, the love of Christ, which passeth all understanding, I stood still until it was opened to me. If you remember, the expression of it by Elder Beeman in the same number, was very similar to yours in the editorial, and O how plain it seemed. How could I read and not understand? But such is my weakness. So you see that through brother Kelly's kindness, and the contributors of the SIGNS, I am edified and instructed. If I believed that I was left to my own self, and was not upheld by an unseen hand, I think that of all mankind I should be most miserable. The hymn says, "I need thee every hour," but I think I need Him every moment, every second. Though I dare not ask for his presence every moment, yet I do believe the everlasting arms are always underneath me and will never let me sink in despair. Wonderful words in the book of life I see, these are the dearest, that Jesus loves me, even me.

Since the new year I was reading the pamphlet of the anniversary of the Black Rock convention, and I thought, as I read over the names of those whom you had baptized there, how thankful I ought to be that I was among the number, with also a blessed hope that my name is written in heaven.

I was glad to hear from brother Yeoman again, even if he is, like myself, murmuring with blessings in his hands. But is it not good that we long for the society of the people who are healed by the stripes of the dear Redeemer and who are kept by the power of God? Is this not evidence that we are of that number? The skies of the Lord's people are seldom cloudless. This brings me back to last May; I was all ready to go to the all day's meeting at Black Rock, but the weather looked very threatening, and I decided not to venture, but it turned out a pleasant day. I believe if every one suffered, as I did, for letting such things disappoint them they would not try it again. In addition, the tempter kept telling me, You know that you wished it would rain. "But he knoweth the way that I take." O what a blessing! He, too, knows that the flesh is weak, and that,

"He who can for sin atone,
Must have no failings of his own."

He was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ," &c. How comforting is the whole chapter in which these words are contained.

Through the kindness of brother Kelly, I went to Black Rock the first Sunday in October, but found no pastor there, but we gathered in, though disappointed, and had a nice little meeting, the services being led by brother Frank Scott, and I felt that it was good to be there, even though the pastor was absent. I thought it was for the bringing out of the gifts in the church. I have heard but one sermon during the year, but our God knows it all, and I think that I can say yes to your question: "Do you not feel just as sure as did Paul that the strength of the Lord has been made perfect in weakness?" O for a more trustful and thankful heart. In a communication many years ago you wrote, "Can you say I am a poor sinner, and nothing at all, but Jesus Christ is all and in all?" Yes, this is the way I feel, and I think, too, that I can testify to the witness of the Spirit of which you spoke in the same article, and can join you in the closing of it: "I do love God and his truth and those who bear Jesus' image," but still I can but cry, O that I had more life, more light, more zeal and more of the meek spirit of the Redeemer.

"O for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame,
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb."

I fear I have not that humility, that feeling of unworthiness which a child of God ought to possess, and of which I so often read from the pen of others. Isaiah wrote, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." But how often is this peace disturbed by the things of this mortal life. When it is all summed up it is just this: Jesus Christ is our righteousness; and our constant prayer should be: Ever keep us looking to the Rock that is higher than I. Perhaps that is why I am shut in the most of the time, for I seem to be easily drawn from the things of the kingdom; but when my meditations are of him it gives me joy, and they are sweet.

Brother Kelly was in town yesterday and gave me a call. These little visits from the family are more than a cup of cold water to me. He said he wished I would write something of my travels, and I would love to do so if I could. You may remember that about the time I went to the church you told me you would write for me if I could not for myself, and instead of thanking you, I said, No. But that is only one of my many blunders. I certainly love to read the narrative of the experience of a child of grace.

When I was, at the beginning of this letter, writing you about brother Ensor, I thought of how I had met you there, not knowing the whereabouts of any other Baptist minister, and I knew I did not have fellowship for the doctrine that I heard elsewhere, for I felt that salvation was of the Lord, by grace and not by works. To walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, does not make us heirs.

But my letter has grown too lengthy, and is not an answer to your good letter. I have written just as my mind has been led. My love and best wishes to you all, and a happy new year.

Your sister,

GEORGIA ENGLAND.

HEBREWS XI. 4.

"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he, being dead, yet speaketh."

The apostle here refers to the two offerings made by the two brothers, Cain and Abel, and I wish to offer a few thoughts on the two offerings, and why Cain's was rejected and Abel's accepted. "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life: thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field." Let us not forget that cursed is the ground for man's sake, and that "thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee;" "and it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground [thorns and thistles] an offering unto the Lord," and the offering was rejected, because it was the production of that which was cursed, and was the fruit of the labor of man, who was also under the sentence of death, for out of the ground was man taken, so that here we see nothing clean can be brought out of an unclean thing. This offering of Cain to my mind represents all the works of man in nature's darkness, dead in trespasses and sin. "An evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil."

"And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." Now here we see that the reason given why he did not do well was, sin lieth at the door. Sin is the ground and reason for all wrongdoing; it lieth at the very door of all wicked thoughts and actions. I do not understand the Lord said this to Cain as though Cain could have brought the same kind of offering as did Abel had he of himself so chosen. Cain brought all he had, and what all men do in nature's darkness, prompted either by fear or selfish motives, and how natural, too, is it for them to manifest the spirit that Cain did when their supposed good works are rejected, and there is no faith in the crucified Savior in their work. Cain is not said to have brought his offering by faith, it was the product of his own labor, so no need of faith, he would expiate his sin by the offering of his own works. Here we have, to my mind, a true type of that plan of salvation by the deeds of the law, and the way that Solomon speaks of: "That seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death." There is no manifestation in the offering of Cain of the need of an atonement being made for him by the shedding of blood. John says, "Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." John here asks the question why Cain slew his brother, and also answers the question by saying, "Because his own works were evil." As I have said, sin lieth at the door of all evil works; yes, as the Lord himself said, had this not been so he would not have slain his brother, and this gives the reason why his offering was rejected: evil works.

"And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his offering." Let us notice here that the Lord had respect unto Abel first, and then to his offering. I want to show, if the Lord will enable me, that the respect the Lord had unto Abel had all

to do with the acceptable offering. Paul tells us, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was [then] righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he, being dead, yet speaketh." When we notice what the Scriptures teach about faith we very clearly see its importance in the acceptable worship of God. So essential is it that it is said, "Without faith it is impossible to please him [God]." Since all men, as Paul teaches, have not faith, it follows that faith is not an inherent principle in human nature, that is, it is not common to man, for were it, all men would have faith. We see now why the apostle said, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." Since Abel pleased God, it is evident that he was not in the flesh, as the apostle said to his brethren, "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." This, to my mind, shows that all who are born again have passed from death unto life and possess the divine nature Peter told his brethren they possessed, and such only have faith. Abel was one of these blessed characters, and he brought the lamb, and in it by faith was enabled to see the way of life and salvation through the atonement that was to put away sin, and no doubt was made to realize the need of the shedding of blood for the putting away of his sins. The innocent lamb did not represent the labor of his hands, but it did represent suffering, in that its blood must be shed. All the offerings on Jewish altars were but types. While it was not possible that "the blood of bulls and goats" could take away sin, it all pointed to one perfect Offering, and when the appointed time of the Father came we heard the Son say, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." "By the which will [says Paul] we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once." This was the end designed by all the types and shadows. "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." This was the faith of Abel in the offering of the lamb, and the act was a righteous one, for God testified that he was righteous; the tree had been made good, and the fruit was good. "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous." The doing righteousness then is not in order to be or to obtain righteousness, as is believed and preached by the Arminian world today, but doing righteousness, as only they who have faith can, manifests their blessed state. Men do not gather grapes of thorns, neither figs of thistles.

"My faith would lay her hand
On that dear head of thine,
While like a penitent I stand,
And there confess my sins."

Dear brethren editors, I send you these scattering thoughts to be disposed of as you think best. I hope they are in accord with the doctrine of salvation by grace, so faithfully contended for by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. May the Lord bless his Zion everywhere, is my prayer.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

ELGIN, Oregon, Feb. 8, 1909.

FRANK, W. Va.

DEAR EDITORS, AND KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I have a mind to write to you to-day, as I have been requested of late to write for the SIGNS, and in order to answer such requests I wish to say that it is only at times I have a mind to write, and I much fear that what I write is al-

together unprofitable, knowing also that I am but a youth in the church, all of which increases the burden to me. However, if the Lord has been pleased to confer on me the gift of preaching or writing, the gift then belongs to the church, and I am sure the church only is able to decide whether one is gifted or not; if in their judgment they see in me a gift, then it is not mine to withhold from them. I do not feel that I should write often when so many older and abler write so seldom, such as the following dear brethren, whose names are familiar to all who read the SIGNS: Durand, Vail, Sawin, Keene, Beeman, May, and many other gifted brethren and sisters who write for the SIGNS. We read that "a little child shall lead them," and unless the Spirit is with us and leads our minds out upon the Scriptures of truth we cannot even think rightly of them, much less write upon them; but when our minds are led forth it is then with us that, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters," and "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." Then when we try to speak of these things our "tongue [seems to be as] is the pen of a ready writer," and we enjoy trying to preach, and unless the same Spirit is with the hearer to open the eyes of his understanding he will hear but in vain; the gospel has never been preached but by the direct power of God, and it can be understood only by the same power. Our God is a God of purpose, and I am glad that I believe the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things, for without it I would be lost; but all things are fixed, and nothing shall ever fail which he has purposed, and I feel sure he has purposed all things whatsoever come to pass, whether good or bad, great or small, seen or unseen, whether they be things present or things to come, heights or depths, principalities or powers, and none of these shall be able to separate God's people from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, for the safety in time and eternity of the redeemed family of God is among his glorious purposes. The third chapter of Ecclesiastes is certainly speaking of the absolute predestination of all things. The first and part of the second verse reads: "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven. A time to be born, and a time to die." Yes, in God's divine arrangement there is a set time for everything to come to pass, and nothing can pass over this time, and nothing fall short of it, and I feel to say with the prophet, "I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it." There was a time when Joseph should be sold into Egypt, a time when he should be falsely accused by a wicked woman and cast into prison, a time when the butler and baker should also be cast into prison and there dream each his dream and be interpreted by Joseph; there was also a time when the king should dream, and a time when the butler should remember his faults and speak of Joseph, though it had been two full years since he had been released from prison; but he could not possibly remember Joseph until God's appointed time, and yet he felt it to be a fault. Joseph's brethren knew they had done wrong, and were sorely troubled; Joseph told them, Ye meant it for evil against me, but God meant it for good. Surely no one can deny that everything connected with the selling of Joseph into Egypt, and his stay there, both before and dur-

ing the famine, was according to the purpose of God, yet it is no more true of this than it is of all things whatsoever come to pass; even "the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." O how weak is the mind of poor, mortal man; how impossible it is for him to comprehend the mystery of godliness. Hark, I hear one who is called of the Lord to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, one in whose heart the law of God is written, saying, "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" and I feel that this is the conclusion of every heaven-born soul on earth. Is this not your experience? Do you not often fear and tremble when you try to speak of these solemn mysteries? But fear not, dear saints of God, your life is hid with Christ in God, and he has said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." What a blessed hope is ours; it is that by which we can live, it is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. The children of God are safely housed in the glorious ark of the new covenant, chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began, and while the great deluge of Satanic power may rage without, you are still safe and securely kept by the power of God, for the gates of hell shall not prevail against this lovely bride; she is loved with an everlasting love by that God who knows no change, who is the same yesterday, to-day and forever.

I must soon close, but I want to say that the SIGNS is of much comfort to me. I enjoyed Elder P. W. Sawin's experience and call to the ministry; his words were very encouraging to me, and I would be glad to hear from him again. O how I seem to be drawn to such dear brethren by the cords of love and fellowship, I hope. I would be glad to meet all who so ably write for the SIGNS, but I know this is impossible, for I am not able financially to travel much, but the thought is, that when we are done with time things and this vain earth, yes, when we shall be released from these sinful, aching bodies, we hope to meet in that celestial city, where parting is no more. Pardon my awkward way of writing. Remember me at the throne of grace.

Your little brother in hope,

G. B. BIRD.

MUIRKIRK, Ontario, Dec. 14, 1908.

DEAR ELDER KER:—Ever since the death of our dearly beloved friend and sister in the church, Mrs. Altha Walker, I have talked much with you, though far apart, on spiritual things. I did hope you could be with us at her burial. You were much on her mind; she enjoyed your preaching and conversation; that was one reason you were sent for. In her life I often thought of her as Mary, who sat at the feet of Jesus. While I feel Martha's serving is needful, Mary hath chosen the better part. She was truly a good woman; she was indeed my neighbor. I am one of those who so often fall among thieves (the things that destroy our peace), and when the priest and the Levite come along they look and pass by on the other side (apply the law), but when she came to me she would pour on the oil and the wine and would help me on my way; so this I feel is another prop taken away, to direct me to Him who is my refuge and strength. How wonderfully my mind has been directed there since her death, yet not death, but life. A few days after she was laid away I was taken sick, and as I was recovering I thought to review the SIGNS of the year, and found many things that before passed unnoticed. In November 15th number, as I read sister Lena Huntt's letter to

Elder Lefferts, sister Bessie Durand's, and others, a feeling of shame came over me that there had ever been a letter of mine published. I assure you I felt small, and realized my unworthiness, and as I read I could see the glory of God and his wonderful works held up, until I was made to shout, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." This is the being led beside the still waters that Elder Lefferts so beautifully describes.

To-day I am almost useless, so far as the world is concerned; I am given to meditate on the wonderful ways of God, the wonderful things he doeth in righteousness. I believe I have seen him whose name is "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." In the midst of all this my husband came in and we spoke of you. I said, Some of the brethren seem to be looking for him yet to come, but I am not. What have we to offer him to leave his home and people, we are so scattered? The thought came, Who and what am I but a vile sinner? Then all at once the same wonderful feeling came back with the words, "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here." I was searching, and as my eyes were turned to the earth (my own heart) I found every weakness there I see in my brethren, and with this came charity. "He is not here, but is risen." I had only been viewing the graveclothes. I would like to tell you all that I saw in those words, but I am not able. Please write a few thoughts on that Scripture some time when you can, and see if they answer as face to face.

I have many thoughts I would like to mention, one is, the resemblance I have seen in the three sons of Adam, to Egypt; the wilderness and the promised land, also Moses, Elias and Christ; his birth, his death and resurrection, three in one. Now I will not go further, I know you will think me presumptuous in going as far as I have, but you must forgive me. I do not feel I am searching those things, but I feel they are searching me.

Again I sit down to write, after laying this letter aside for a week, having had a sister with me until last night, thinking I could lay those things aside. To-day I find myself unable to take up the duties of life properly, having such a desire to read and think on the wonderful ways of God. Every time I am searched I find I am a poor, undone sinner, having no righteousness of my own. I feel now as if I have been taught that I cannot worship God in the flesh, or by any desire of the flesh, as God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. The flesh profiteth nothing.

Again I have been detained in finishing my letter, owing to the sickness of one of our children. Now, Elder Ker, while you may think I write from a high place or a strange place, I seem to understand those who write from the low grounds of sorrow, as I am down there most of the time. When my daughter was taken sick I thought it might be unto death, but I could not pray to have her restored, on account of my unworthiness, yet the Lord did not deal with me according to my sins, and as she recovered I was able to offer up a prayer of thanksgiving. I feel that only as the Lord taught his disciples to pray do I know how to pray; my own prayers would lead to death, as death is stamped on every desire of my fleshly heart, so most of the time I live in fear, being conscious of my weakness.

I have laid this letter aside from time to time, fearing yet desiring to send it to

you. I have had little rest, being much burdened with cares, and surrounded by sickness in my own and connecting families most of the time since I saw you, have been much disturbed in body and mind. I have often felt to say with the apostle, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable," and, on the other hand, I have from time to time been made to feel that the Lord is good, that his ways are perfect, and have been made to glory in the sufferings of my flesh. The thought comes, Why do I trouble you with my uprisings and downsittings? But it is not to that end, but that I may learn the truth of the things I have spoken. A few days ago I heard you would be with us at the Duart meeting; I hope to see you then if it is the Lord's will.

I will now close by wishing you and family a happy new year, hoping you are all well. Two of my family are in bed sick at the present time, but are recovering.

Hoping I am a fellow-citizen, if the most unworthy, I am your sister in hope of immortality,

(MRS.) PETER ALLISON.

[SINCE the above most excellent letter was written the dear sister has been called to her heavenly home, where no cares, sickness, sorrow, doubts and fears are known, and where no desire ever arises to know more of the fullness of God. The letter clearly shows that she at that time was living above this world, hence was not found "among the dead." She was very ill at the time of the Duart meeting, of which the letter speaks, and entered the house not made with hands February 15th. We conducted the funeral service in the Duart meetinghouse. We deeply sympathize with the family and church; surely their loss is great. The sorrow is theirs, the glory hers.—K.]

SHERWOOD, Oregon, Jan. 20, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I inclose a letter written by our brother, Elder W. J. Hess, which I think is excellent and will make good reading for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but of course submit it to your better judgment.

Your brother in hope of the resurrection, J. P. ALLISON.

NORTH YAKIMA, Wash., Nov. 22, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER ALLISON:—After waiting and working all summer, I am now thinking of trying to cultivate the things that are "more excellent," viz., spiritual intercourse, but I fear I have lost all skill in that line, if I ever had any, for my soul cleaves to the dust and I cannot seem to shake it loose, turn which way I may. I feel a longing for a word from you, dear old father in Israel, telling me how you are getting along Zionward, and it may be, too, the Lord will give you for me a word to uplift me on my pilgrimage, as he often has in your excellent letters heretofore. I have thought, and I wish you would tell me if I am right or not, that all christian service is offering and sacrifice corresponding in spirit to those offered on Jewish altars. To illustrate: I had been much exercised about going to Goldendale to hold meeting and to see the brethren and sisters, but was very much behind with necessary work, and it would take at least two days to go, two to come and two or three there, making a week. Could I afford so much time, and would my preaching be worth to those brethren what it cost me? The answer was easy, and it was, no, for I felt as though I could not preach if I went. That ought to have settled the matter, but it did not. I got to thinking of the time as an offering to the Lord, and it looked better that way, and if I

only knew he would accept it I would drop everything and go. O for some sign that I might know. But I thought, I have never read of a Jew receiving assurance that his offering would be accepted before he brought it to the priest and actually offered it, and that freely of his own accord, and then, too, I have never read of a priest refusing an offering made according to law, which was but a shadow of good things to come, but the substance is of Christ, who is that great High Priest passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, who receives our offerings and makes them acceptable to the Father. "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me," thus showing us with a glow in our hearts that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." We went to Goldendale for the second Sunday meeting in November, viz., brother Akers, wife and I. We camped under the open sky among the trees, the Lord provided dry straw to spread on the damp ground under our beds, and also hay for our horses. But let me explain. We left brother Stephens', not taking any hay, because we intended to drive to the summit, where we could get hay and also shelter for ourselves, but mistaking the road we were delayed. About sundown we met a man with a bale of hay in his wagon, and inquired how far it was to the summit. He said it was ten or twelve miles. I said, "We want to get there to camp, as we have no hay for our horses." He said, "You cannot make it unless you drive late, for the road is very rough." I said, "Can you spare me enough of your hay for my horses night and morning?" Well, he did not know but he might, but he said, "I brought this from Klickitat, and hay is very high over there, twenty dollars a ton." I said, "I am willing to pay whatever you say, if you think you can spare me what I need." So he got back in his wagon and divided his bale, giving me all I wanted. When I asked how much I should pay, he answered, "Nothing; you can pay it back to some one else, for I may be caught out in the same fix some time myself." We urged him, but he would have nothing. Now such conduct is so unusual in this selfish world that I say the Lord must have put it in his heart to show kindness to us, so I thanked the Lord for his goodness, feeling glad in heart that the milk of human kindness was not yet all dried up. The Lord and his goodness was our theme as we sat and talked until a late hour around the camp-fire that night. We spoke also of offerings, and concluded that faith was necessary in making any acceptable offering. That turned us back upon our helplessness with the prayer, Lord, increase our faith. We went to bed on straw, which a previous party had put under a spreading tree and kept dry for us, and though the ground was damp and the night cold we rested quite comfortably, not taking any cold. When we got to Goldendale and saw the dear, glad faces of brethren and sisters and felt the Lord put words of comfort and cheer into my mouth for them, I felt, I am content, for He has accepted my offering and I feel almost restored to my "first love," a thing I had desired and longed for, yes, and had prayed for years. We had meeting morning and evening both Saturday and Sunday; brother Cheyne was up from High Prairie, and brother and sister Hartley were out. I feel quite encouraged the way matters are there, to see the interest manifested among dear brother John's children, especially Charley and Mary. The Master grant that they may know the truth, and that it will make them free. There were

others who seemed interested, but I need not mention their names. The Lord knoweth them that are his, and I feel assured he will in his own time make them to know him whom to know is life everlasting.

We turned homeward early Monday morning and arrived safely Tuesday, finding all well. We had good weather for our entire trip, and feel grateful to our Father for his goodness to us. Brother Gilmore's team ran away with him, hurting him so he did not go to Touchet as he intended. I do not think his injuries are very serious, though he felt very sore from his bruises. Wife is not well, having a severe cold, with fever, but others are as well as usual, so far as I know. Alva Hughett preached an excellent sermon for us yesterday.

Brother Allison, I feel I have written you a very poor excuse of a letter, but it is the best I can do, and I feel you can pardon the lack or I would not send it. I must close. How I would like to see your dear faces again instead of writing, it seems that I would have something to say. Please accept my love and remember me at the throne.

Your weak brother,

W. J. HESS.

ARENA, N. Y., Jan. 30, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—While I write to renew my subscription, I will add a few lines which will be at your disposal.

Through the mercies of an indulgent Providence my unprofitable life has been spared another year, while many, as good by nature, have been called away from the things of this time state to enter into their inheritance which is eternal in the heavens. As the years come and go, we are constantly reminded of the brevity of time, and of the vastness of eternity, to which we are all hastening; it becomes us to walk circumspectly the few days we have yet to remain on this, His footstool. Like one of old, I sometimes inquire, What shall I render to my God for all his benefits to me? The reply seems to be, Nothing. Ten thousand talents in debt, and nothing to pay; a most deplorable condition truly; but our Surety is good for all demands; he is rich; he possesses all things. What do we need more? Not anything. As Joseph was sent down into Egypt to save his brethren when the terrible famine came, so in like manner our spiritual Joseph was sent in the fullness of time, not too early nor too late, but just at the appointed time, to redeem and save his brethren from going down to death. He who was rich, for our sake became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be made rich.

I would here mention my visit to the Warwick Association last June, which to me was quite an event, as I had for years felt a strong desire to visit Middletown and Warwick; the former because it was the home of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, whom I loved so much to listen to, and better still to read his writings; also the home of Elder Benton Jenkins and his estimable wife, both of whom I loved for the truth's sake. Again, it is the home of our family paper, in which we should all feel a great interest; and I can truly say I was much pleased with my first visit to those places. First, I was entertained by kind friends at Middletown about three days, and on Sunday I attended the church of which Elder Ker is pastor. On Tuesday I visited his pleasant home and spent one night there. Here I met a brother and two sisters from Canada, who were very agreeable people. Elder Ker invited us to go with him to the SIGNS

office, which we did; we also called on Dr. G. A. Emory, who is now an invalid, but his mind seemed much animated on the subject of religion, and he is very interesting to converse with. The next morning we took the train for Warwick, which seemed to be a very pretty place, though I did not see the whole of the village; here I was kindly entertained at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Van Gilder. I felt it a great privilege to see those old veterans of the cross, Elders Eubanks, Durand and Francis, once more, and hear them sound the gospel trumpet, also the younger ministers, in all more than a dozen. Elder Francis gave quite a historical review of the different ministers connected with the Warwick Association since he first became acquainted with it, covering a period of about forty years, which was very entertaining indeed. The preaching was excellent and the Baptist friends at Warwick entertained bountifully; on the whole I felt I had a very enjoyable time, and was glad I had made an effort to visit that association.

I will now close, as the space can be better filled by others.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) J. H. DICKSON.

RATON, New Mexico, Jan. 19, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—Ever since I became able to write I have been thinking of writing to you, but one thing and another have prevented. I inclose in this a letter from sister Dawson, which I want you to see.

As I look over each number of the SIGNS I am impressed with the fact that the king of England, in taxing and oppressing the colonies upon the Atlantic coast, meant it for evil, as did Joseph's brethren in selling him into Egypt, but the Lord meant it for good. The Lord meant for good the severity of the English king in taxing the few settlers upon the Atlantic coast, and the people were compelled to resist the burden laid upon them, and men were raised up by the Lord to establish a free government, giving religious liberty to all, and now from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and also under English rule in Canada, and from the Gulf to the Arctic Ocean, we have religious freedom. You may be of one denomination and I of another, but we both have a right to our opinions, and to worship according to them, and so, as each number of the SIGNS reaches us, I am impressed with the fact that the Lord intended all the former persecutions for good. I could express many more things upon this subject, but will not weary you. Elder Fetter joins me in warm christian love to your family and self, and to all the brethren in your vicinity.

May Israel's God strengthen and support you in all the arduous duties that devolve upon you.

Your unworthy sister,

ELIZABETH H. BOGGS.

HAYDEN, Colo., Dec. 20, 1908.

DEAR KINDRED IN THE LOVE OF JESUS:—It has been some time since we heard from you, but I have received your letter, dear sister, and was glad to see your handwriting again. I had written you just before I received your letter, and Laura had also written you, so I thought I would not write for a little while. I find that my strength fails every year a little, and each year brings me to realize the littleness of time things, and how soon all will pass away; and we will also pass away, and the place which now knows us will know us no more forever.

Elder Chick has written very comforting editorials in the last two numbers of

the SIGNS. I do not think I ever realized the spirituality of the Scriptures as I did in reading the editorial in the December 1st number. I do not think we can always enjoy the spiritual offerings in the same way. I cannot express myself as I desire, but you know my meaning; we do not always grasp the substance, but see the shadow, as it were, and there is comfort in that also. The dry bones rattle at times when there is no life apparently, but when the cloud breaks and the sun shines forth what joy there is in our hearts. Then we feel as though the light would shine always, but soon again doubts arise, and fears take hold upon us, and we see so many imperfections in our hearts that we cannot look away to the glory of the risen Savior upon whose merits our salvation rests. But we look at ourselves with condemnation, and forget that salvation is not of man, but of the Lord, a free gift to all his people, for whom he suffered and died, and for whom he rose again for their justification. How can man be just with God? It is only through Jesus and his blood; and when we can taste of his goodness and love we have happiness which cannot be expressed in words.

I do not know what I have written here, and have gone on in a rambling way, but I know you will forgive all errors. Write and tell us all about yourselves, either you or brother Fetter. May Israel's God be with you.

Remember your unworthy sister in hope, L. J. DAWSON.

GRAHAM, Texas, Nov. 15, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—I send a short contribution to the SIGNS; it expresses the doctrine I hold, and that also held by the churches of my care here in Texas. Some of the members take the SIGNS, and have patiently and lovingly suffered great persecution for these things. We have made many mistakes, and our daily imperfections often cause us to cry out in sorrow and grief, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Yet we find some seasons of joy at times in such things as the apostle further expresses when he says, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."—Romans vii. 24, 25. Our grief in many ways has pressed us between the upper and nether millstones until we despair of life, and even long to quit this mortal clay and run up the heavenly way, but Jehovah's providence veiled in clouds bids us be still. We cannot tell for what we are still left to suffer in this world of darkness, but in the deepest darkness we have found a sweet and precious hope that He knoweth the way that we take, and when he hath tried us we shall come forth as gold. (Job xxiii. 10.) I have ever loved the doctrine of salvation by grace as taught by the SIGNS, and the perfect sovereignty of God as taught in its columns, and want to read it and support it for the truth's sake.

"It is of faith, that it might be by grace."—Romans iv. 16. Neither faith nor grace is fully understood. The word faith may be omitted and the name Christ used in most passages without doing violence to the Scripture. Try some of them and see.

Faith in Christ means faith in him as the only Paymaster. If I pay for my salvation by works, how can I believe in Jesus as the real Paymaster? Jesus is then only a figurehead in such doctrine, and self is to be praised; it rules Jesus out in fact, but puts in his name to take away the reproach.

Prayer. If I pay for my salvation by my works, and it is conditional with me,

why pray to the Lord for time salvation or anything since regeneration? Why not pray with myself and beseech myself to get up and perform the conditions and receive salvation from my obedience? If we beg the Lord for the blessings of time salvation, how then can they be dependent on us? If we have the ability, why pray the Lord to help us, or ask him for any assistance whatever? Conditional works seem to me to do away with prayer and every other grace of the Spirit in the child of God.

Thanks. Why thank God for time salvation if it is conditional and we have performed the conditions? Why not thank and praise and honor ourselves and boast? Why not thank ourselves for the good works and faithful obedience, which were the conditions through which the blessing came? Can a thing be partly by grace and partly by works? But if it is wholly by grace, and not of our works, then is it not reasonable that we should give God through Jesus all honor, praise, credit and glory? There is a people who can honestly and sincerely from the heart give all the praise, honor and thanks to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob for all they have ever received; they are the Old Predestinarian Baptists; they believe and preach salvation all by grace for time and eternity, now and forevermore. It does seem to me that any one can see that those who advocate conditionalism cannot fully thank the Lord from their hearts, but must hold a little in reserve for themselves for what they have done in performing the conditions; they do not see Jesus as the source of every blessing, hence they do not pray for the things they believe they are able to get and do get by their works. Conditionalism thus denies faith, prayer and thanksgiving, at least in a large degree.

J. H. FISHER.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., January, 1909.

DEAR SAINTS:—The sun is shining brightly to-day, after many days of clouds and rain, warming and cheering my cold, lifeless soul like the smile of an old friend. It is thus with the Sun of righteousness when he arises with healing in his wings, he shines through our doubts and fears and we are made to feel God's love and tender mercy for a few moments.

"Our souls that long in darkness lay,
At length have seen a glorious day;
Sprung forth from Christ, we must declare
He is our soul's sweet morning star.

But when this heavenly scene's away,
We're apt to think, and often say,
We've been too forward to declare
He is our soul's sweet morning star."

Dear kindred friends, with the coming of this new year, and the turning of a new leaf in our lives, we are admonished with sober thought of our near approach to that great change that must come to us all soon, especially those who, like myself, have passed their threescore and ten milestones.

"God reigneth, and I must not fear,
But trust my way with him;
I go to meet another year
With faith, I hope, though dim."

If he leads me what have I to fear? I have long known that without him I can do nothing. I am very poor, unworthy and helpless, often feeling too much cast down with sin to look unto our great Burden-bearer, who says, Come unto me, and I will give you rest. David says, "The Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory." I do love David's prayer: "Bow down thine ear, O Lord, and hear me; for I am poor and needy." I am glad his want is the same as my own, and most of the dear saints who write for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES comfort me by telling of their poverty and infirmities, and claim no power in themselves to come to Christ.

When I go among the good workers who do so much for Christ (indeed, often they seem to do it all,) I feel very worthless and alone in this great world, and sometimes groan and say, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." I have heard many sermons with not one word about Jesus, but now in my declining years, with my bad eyes and dull ears, I do not go much among the people who feed on husks. I love the people who know the joyful sound, but fear I have no right to be of their number.

I have just been reading our dear family paper, and find many kindred in Christ who speak the language I love; I am thankful I understand them; they are all taught by the same great wise Teacher. One brother, after asking the brethren to remember the poor and afflicted of the flock, and those so far from church assemblies, shut in with cold, wintry weather, then said, "After you pray for all these, if you have a little time, and think I am worthy, then remember poor me, who am less than the least of all, if one at all. I cannot comfort you, but you can comfort me." Such language I think I do have fellowship for; often I feel there is none so unworthy as this poor sinner.

My heartfelt sympathy is with the dear, afflicted sister who has a cancer. May God help her and give her grace and patience to bear all her sufferings. May she feel the tender, loving arms are upholding her in this great trial, and making her say, My light afflictions here are working for my good. Although they seem severe, and are not understood, they all are sent by God's command, and all are governed by his hand. Like the dear sister, I sit much alone, shut in by snow, and meditate upon the way I have been led from childhood, even down to old age. Every moment brings me nearer to my long sought rest. I am glad we have such a loving, merciful Father, who knows all our infirmities.

The SIGNS is still very comforting to me. I would like to clasp the hand of each contributor, and the many redeemed ones who feel too little to say so; I love them all for the blessed Master's sake. I like the editorial on The Holy Kiss. I saw my sainted father take a brother (who had been absent from the church many years) by the hand and kiss his forehead. Dear kindred in Christ, may the Lord be with you all. He said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." So you are blessed.

With abiding love,

LINA W. BECK.

CORBETT, Va., January, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—While reading the communications in the SIGNS from the dear saints scattered abroad we are sometimes made to examine our own hearts. Do we have sympathy and love for these sorrowing people who are ridiculed by the world? They have no merits of their own, but are always poor and needy, always disclaiming their right to that precious inheritance reserved for the children of promise. There is a mysterious love that draws us to them, and it gives us assurance to know and feel that we can or do walk with them; their lamentations compare with Christ's sufferings, and we humbly trust that we have been partakers of the sorrows of the lowly Lamb. "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Just a remnant, reviled by the world, but still clinging to the faith that was once

delivered to the saints. Sometimes we are grieved to see our congregations so small, and we wonder why those who bear the time-honored and precious name, Old School or Primitive Baptists, do not meet with us; they are members of the visible church, still they alienate themselves. If we love to hear the truth preached in its purity, it does not matter who delivers the sermon, or what our surroundings may be, it is our duty, and should be our pleasure, to attend the meetings, and if the Lord is with us he will give us a hearing ear, and his glory will shine in our hearts to the exclusion of all trivial matters. "All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes: but the Lord weigheth the spirits."—Prov. xvi. 2. We are subjects of his holy will, and though we are made to pass through many dark and dreary days, the Lord is our haven, our shield and guide; he makes us to lie down in green pastures, and his banner over us is love; but our minds are prone to suffer changes, our thoughts wander away to our carnal ties, then doubts arise and we travel in darkness; we have natural ties that claim our love, and while they are alienated from us spiritually, our hearts cling to them. If we could only raise the barrier and say, Follow me, I will lead you in a way that you know not of, self would be asserted, and we would try to lead the blind; our carnal nature for the time would ignore the power of God. Have we forgotten "that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin"? —Romans vi. 6. O how weak and dependent we find ourselves to be, and as we wander along the shores of time, growing old in years, and our faith in the Lord's protecting care, we lean more heavily on his everlasting arm, sometimes anxiously waiting for "the redemption of our body." But we should be patient, if we have hope in Christ. We pass through many hard fought battles, and though our chances of success seem unequal, we have that precious promise, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you."—John xiv. 18. I feel confident that every child embraced in the grand total of God's election is saved in time and eternity. Every nation or people on the earth that professes to believe in the Bible has some creed, and construes some portion of the Scriptures to suit themselves. Even the Pagan worships his idols, or some unknown deity, and not only these, but some of the brightest minds have the most ludicrous and inconceivable ideas of christianity. Where does this confusion of tongues come from? Christ says, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."—Mal. vii. 15. We walk with them, but we must beware. We must "be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." In his sermon on the mount the Lord commands his disciples, "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil, and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." O how often we fall short of these commandments.

"But what says our Shepherd divine?
For this blessed word we shall keep;
This flock has my Father made mine,
I lay down my life for my sheep.

'Tis life everlasting I give;
My blood was the price my sheep cost;
Not one that on me shall believe
Shall ever be finally lost."

I leave what I have written to the better judgment of our dear editors. I am afraid if it is published the space could be filled with matter more comforting to the saints. May the coming year bring prosperity to our family paper, the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and to those the Lord has placed in guardianship over its interests. I would send affectionate greetings to all who read its pages.

Your sister in hope,

HANNIE B. GREHAN.

BLUE SPRINGS, Mo., Dec. 14, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It has been my custom for over forty years of sending regularly with my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that also of our old colored brother, and the inclosed letter from him to me, received a few days ago, will speak for itself. I have known this brother for fifty years, at which time he was under the tutorage of a fleshly master and was a worthy subject, and it rejoices my heart to see that under a spiritual Master and a subject of divine grace he rejoices in the doctrine so ably set forth in our family paper. If I am not mistaken, he is in his eightieth year, and though I have not seen him for several years, we have had a pleasant correspondence, and I know of no Baptist in whom I have more confidence. His word is honor itself, and his walk has been exemplary and Christlike. I enjoyed this letter, and can fully agree, I trust, in all it has expressed, thus proving that

"E'en down to all age, all my people shall prove,
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love."

Dear brethren, if I live until the 20th of next June I will be ninety years old, and it seems that the older I get the more I enjoy reading the precious SIGNS, and I cannot see how any Baptist can claim to be a Bible Baptist and do without it; for my own part I cannot tell how you are ever to be rewarded sufficiently for its publication. In each number I have found some article that I must acknowledge is worth the price of the subscription, and always I am blessed with a desire to read the SIGNS as soon as it is received. How long this may continue the dear Lord only knows; I feel that it will be right and just when for me he closes the volume and bids me come.

Thanking you again and again for all the comfort and joy I have received by your steadfastness in the faith, which is given you from above, I am, I trust, your brother in a precious hope,

THURSTON KNIGHT.

LIBERTY, Mo., December, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER KNIGHT:—The time is near at hand for me to renew my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for which I send you three dollars and ten cents, two dollars to pay for the SIGNS, one dollar for its support, and ten cents to pay the postage. It is true I am almost blind and can hardly see to read, yet I do not want to be without the SIGNS as long as I can see to read or hear it read, for it sets forth the truth of salvation by grace as I understand it to be: altogether by the grace of God, without the help of men or angels, for we hear Paul saying, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Thanks be to God, the whole plan of salvation is of God, without the help of man, who tries to put himself on equality with God in saving sinners. But away with such God-dishonoring ideas; they

are an abomination in the sight of God, for he works all things, not a part of them, after the counsel of his own will, and none can hinder, and I am glad it is so.

We are all up and around, and hope this may find you well and still looking "to the Rock that is higher than I." My wife joins me in love to you. May you in your old age be kept by the power of God. RICHARD WALLER.

FLEMINGTON, N. J., December, 1908.

MY BELOVED BRETHREN:—One year more has been numbered with those that have passed, and soon we shall be enrolled with the great majority and shall have done with things of earth. It is a sad and solemn thought. Memory carries me to the days of my youth, and how I always looked forward to the "Merry Christmas and the Happy New Year," because of the good times I enjoyed then. Rapidly the years have come and gone, and with them I have arrived at the period which is called old age, yet I do not feel old in spirit; but this tabernacle must be dissolved. The dear ones of my brethren, and natural kindred whose life journey has closed in the past year, come before my mental vision as I now write, and I would clasp their hand and say, "All hail," as did the Master to his disciples as they journeyed to Emmaus, but their eyes were holden so they could not know him, as are mine, yet he opened their vision to behold him, as he will the vision of all the brethren. Dear ones, how we change with the going of the years, not only with the outward appearance, but in a spiritual sense as well; the trifling things of earth no longer satisfy the spiritual children, and we wonder how they ever did. The visits and promises of our dear Lord and Master are the only enjoyments we crave now, yet his visits are few and far between, while we would have them always if we could. I recall a number of dear ones whose faces I miss when I meet with you, and in this coming year there will be others, and perhaps mine among the rest, to take their departure for the eternal shores, and we must weep because we shall see their faces no more. How merciful is the dear Lord to withhold from us the knowledge of those who shall be called in the coming year. We would be unfitted for our daily labor did we know the time when our dear loved ones would leave us; so we will trust Him for all we need, both here and hereafter. He is worthy of all our trust, our best affections and of all we have; he is our all in all, our hope and our delight, and all that tongue can express, and we shall be satisfied. Is not that enough? Just think what his loving-kindness means to a poor, condemned sinner (and justly so) that his sins are all forgiven, and he will remember them no more forever. Then how can we forget him and sin against him as we do so often? Yet "he remembereth that we are dust;" the lambs he pities and carries in his bosom. Dear ones, what can earth give us to compare with this hope that we have, which is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast? At times this hope grows very dim, so dim that we feel sure we never possessed it, and we are so troubled, with no comfort, until again it grows brighter, and we feel that we are ready to go with our best Beloved when he calls us to leave our earthly tenement. I often envy you when in imagination I see you receiving the bread of life as it is being distributed through our beloved pastor, yet I suppose it is not right to do so, for it is the will of God, and I want to be

submissive. He has stopped my ears by his dear hand for a wise purpose, and because it seemed good in his sight, and so I do not feel to murmur, but would say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." And with old Job I would say, Shall I receive good at the hand of the Lord, and not receive evil?

Wishing you a happy new year, I am yours unworthily,

MARY E. FISHER.

Bow, Wash., Jan. 17, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I often think of you and the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and wish I could enjoy reading it. It seems that God's children are a poor and afflicted people, and if I am one (and I sometimes hope I am) and a sample of the rest, it is a wonder to me they are not more afflicted than they are, for I am so rebellious, giving so little evidence of having been born again that I do not deserve the many blessings I receive from day to day from the bountiful Giver of every good and perfect gift. I can say, Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all my days. When I am the lowest down in the slough of despondency, then it is he appears to me as the complete, all-supplying Savior. I call to mind one time when in Kansas, we had several failures of crops in succession, and this with a sick wife to care for, and four small children to feed and clothe, besides being in poor health myself, the time came when our last sack of flour was gone, and we had no sugar. I loved my wife and children dearly, and to see them denied even the necessities of life was almost too much for me. I had nothing to buy even flour with, and the stores were not letting anything out on time, but my wife begged so hard for me to go and try to get some flour and sugar on time that I went, though very reluctantly, for I hated to be refused credit. I went ten miles to Hays City, our nearest town, and begged of them to let me have a sack of flour and twenty-five cents worth of sugar, but they said they could not let anything go without the money. You can imagine how I felt, starting home to those dear ones without anything; there was considerable bitterness in me, and I left town with a heavy heart, but had only gone a short distance when I thought I heard a rustling noise above and to the left of me, and I looked up, and O such joy as filled my heart, soul, body and mind. God was so near me I could feel his very presence, and I forgot my poverty, for I was filled to overflowing with his love and presence, with that joy which is truly inexpressible and full of glory. I went along the road weeping and talking to him, for he was surely very close to me, but I could not see him, and I am even now loth to leave the subject. After a little while he left me, but O such a peace he left with me, and he was surely leading me, for before I reached home I got work husking corn in the shock, and the next day as I was sitting by a shock husking he came to me again, and we had a love feast, or at least I did, out there in the cornfield, and I think if any one had come along they would have thought me crazy, weeping and praising God, but I was happy, and cared not if the whole world saw me. Does it not seem to you that in the face of such unmistakable evidences one would never doubt again and would be very dutiful? But alas, "I am so vile, so prone to sin, I fear I am not born again," yet I love Him and all his children.

Well, I see my mind has wandered from what I intended to write. I wanted to ask if there are any Old School Bap-

tists living near Sedro Woolley, Wash., or if there is a church any place on Puget Sound. If so, please let me know.

Your brother in hope,

DAVIS BURCH.

RISING SUN, Md., Jan. 1, 1909.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHEN EDITORS:—I have been trying for some time to get the opportunity to write a few lines in addition to sending in my subscription, which is past due, but have no particular excuse, only my inability to write anything to edify the dear children of God, as I feel in my weakness that I have not language to express myself. If I could only write a letter as I do after I retire for the night, but ah, when I take my pen to write it is all gone; over the mind we have no control.

This is a beautiful New Year's day, everything seems calm and serene, and as I look back over the past year I hope I am thankful to the Lord for his goodness and mercy to an undeserving wretch like me, in sparing my unprofitable life, while so many useful members have been called hence. The blessed Lord has a purpose in all things. I know in myself I am nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity, and why should I, the least and most ignorant of the household, attempt to write for the SIGNS? I used to think as I grew older I would be better versed in the Scriptures, but alas, most of the time it is a sealed book. I am in the hand of the Lord, and he doeth what seemeth good in his sight; blessed be his name. While I am not deprived of meeting with the brethren, my hearing is very much impaired, but nevertheless I enjoy the sweet fellowship of the saints. We are blessed with a faithful pastor, Elder Wm. Grafton, now past fourscore years; he has served Rock Springs Church for over fifty years. He is greatly loved by all the churches he serves.

Our meetings are small, as our number has been reduced by the loss of two of our beloved ones: our deacon, brother Thomas, whom we greatly miss, as it leaves us but one male member, brother Huff, and he lives such a distance from the meeting that it is impossible for him to be with us on all occasions; but it is the Lord, we should bow in humble submission to his will; also sister Mary Jenkins was a lovely sister, we miss her pleasant face and her kind admonitions. There was only a month and a few hours between their deaths. It was my lot to be with them both, and closed their eyes in death, which was a hard thing for me to do, but is the way of all flesh.

I have written this at intervals, as my thoughts have run, although my mind is a great deal of the time on the world and its vanities.

Farewell. Affectionately,

SALLIE LOWE.

ASHLAND, Ill., Dec. 28, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST:—Another year has passed away with many changes in life, but our God, who is rich in mercy, has blessed us in many ways. Our dear old paper, that has been a comfort to us for many years, is still upheld by his loving care, and the dear editors, and the loved ones who write for our comfort, tell us of the love and truth taught from above. O, does not our heart burn within us as we read each word from those who are so gifted in God's word to teach, to explain and to write of the many truths we longed to understand? Dear brethren and sisters, this is the reason I am trying in my feeble way to tell of the blessed comfort of our dear paper. As I linger here and

ponder over the many peaceful moments I have had reading the SIGNS in the past, how I do hope it may be God's will for each one to write often as he gives the spirit. He alone knows where it will go to comfort; he knows our every need; he leads beside the still waters, gives us the spirit to say, Thy will be done in all things, and it is his will when first he shows us we are sinners in his sight, to feel and know it is by grace we are saved through faith, and not of ourselves. This is why I like to read from your pens, they testify the same things. I often wish I could see each and every one of you, for then I could tell you how I love you all for the truth's sake.

I was blessed to visit two associations this fall, and will long remember the pleasant hours spent with dear brethren and sisters as they told in their own sweet way of their hope and fears, their love for the truth, the old, old story of Jesus and him crucified. I never can tell in words how my humble hope was built up as we talked by the way; all seemed to be peace and love. While helping the dear old sisters dress for meeting each one would ask, Do you take the SIGNS? Before I could answer them, with the love of Jesus on their peaceful faces they would name each writer, saying, O how I love to read from each one. They write what I love to read, it is the truth, and it is all the preaching I have. Then, dear brethren, the SIGNS is a blessing in many ways. A dear sister who lives far away from any church read in the SIGNS of this association at Colchester, and the Lord blessed her to come, and all who met her were built up in spirit, though living many miles apart. Her faith and hope were with us. We also met brethren and sisters from Missouri, which was a great comfort to us; they could tell us the good old doctrine of the SIGNS was what they loved, and wanted nothing else. I often think in kind remembrance of all who so kindly cared for the friends at the associations, and hope God in his mercy will bless them with his love and care. May God give to you all his richest blessings.

Your little sister, the least of all,

ELLA M. PARROTT.

BURDETT, N. Y., Nov. 29, 1908.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The time is near at hand when I should renew my subscription for the SIGNS, and I must express my thoughts in some way to you for the companionship through the SIGNS I receive from time to time as it comes to me; I feel,

> "O to grace how great a debtor
> Daily I'm constrained to be."

I send my subscription feeling that it does not begin to pay what I owe, for I feel it would take more than a lifetime to repay, so it is surely not by works, but by grace, free grace, that we are saved; salvation is of the Lord. The dear Lord has caused a book of remembrance to be kept for reference, and as we think on his name, and are lonely at times, when we can read and eat his word it is the bread of life to the hungry soul. I was greatly revived when I received the November 15th number, and read and reread the first article, on the Book of Remembrance, (Malachi iii. 16, 17,) and also the other letters written by the brethren and sisters. I could say, Jesus all the day long is my joy and my song, and, "Tongue cannot express the sweet comfort and peace of a soul in its earliest love." There is quite a difference in feeling God's love in the heart so as to tell what the Lord has done for us, and of the experience we pass through to know that

God is love; he is not of confusion, but of peace and rest, and we can say, as did John, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." I often feel I would like to tell the brethren what comfort and joy I take in reading their writings.

Please find inclosed postal note for two dollars, to send the SIGNS to whom God may direct.

I will close, hoping that this will not tire you.

Your brother in hope of a better life,

NORMAN BROWN.

TOUCHET, Wash., Dec. 5, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—As my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is nearly due, I send you a money order to renew for another year. I have taken it so long I would hardly know how to get along without it. It is the standard of all our Baptist papers with me. I have taken quite a number of our publication, but have dropped them all but the dear old SIGNS, which I have been reading for sixty years. A great number of its early writers have passed from time to eternity, but younger ones are filling their places, and as far as I am able to judge, are advocating the same blessed truth as when I first commenced reading it. It stands next to my Bible for religious truth, and has been a wonderful comfort to me in reading the experiences of dear brethren and sisters whom I have never been privileged to see; their trials and conflicts harmonize so nearly with my own daily experience that I am made to feel to be one with them. Brother Durand's article, "Dwelling together in unity," was comforting to me, and in perfect harmony with my own feelings. I might mention many others, but will not at present. Brother Ker, your writings have been very acceptable to me, and if it is the will of the Lord, I shall be glad to see more in the SIGNS from your pen.

Yours in hope,

R. CUMMINS.

NORTH YAKIMA, Wash., Feb. 10, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As the time approaches for the time of the meeting of the Siloam Association, (June 18th, 19th and 20th, 1909,) we desire to say to brethren and sisters who plan to come west to attend the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, which opens at Seattle, Wash., June 1st, that North Yakima is on the main line of the Northern Pacific Railway, four miles from the place where the association is held, and we hope all will get stopover tickets and attend the meeting. To any one who contemplates locating in the northwest the Yakima valley has many inducements, and we especially desire to see an influx of sound Old School Baptists. The N. Y. & V. R. R. passes through my place, and the Cowyche station is only a few hundred yards from my house. Trains leave North Yakima each week day at 7 o'clock a. m. and 2:30 o'clock p. m., reaching Cowyche a few minutes later.

W. J. HESS.

NOTICE.

IF nothing in providence prevents, we expect preaching in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse by the pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, the third Sunday in March (21st), services to begin at 10:45 a. m. and 2:30 p. m. All who love the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1909.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

3 JOHN 4.

"I HAVE no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."

In the second epistle John again said, "I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth." Paul also speaks often of his gladness when he heard of or found his brethren walking as believers ought to walk. Paul also calls many of those to whom he wrote his children, his little children, and he also speaks, more than once, of having begotten them through the gospel. We desire to call attention to some of the things that seem embraced in these expressions of the apostles. There are fathers in the church, according to the testimony of the apostles, and if there be fathers in the churches there must also be children, in the same sense that there are fathers. Paul said once, There are not many fathers in the church. In what sense are men fathers in the church of God? In what sense could John and Paul speak of their brethren as their "little children?" In what sense had Paul begotten those, to whom he was writing, through the gospel? In the primary sense of the word, one only is our Father, and of him only are we begotten. In this supreme sense of being the children of God all alike are brethren; the oldest is but an elder brother; the youngest is also a brother. In this supreme sense, ministers are no more the children of God than are those to whom they minister; all alike are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus; all alike are born of God, born by the Word of God, born of the Spirit. Before any one can be rightfully a member of the church, or fill any place in it, that one must be born from above, or born again. In this neither John, nor Paul, nor any man, could have any part; this is a miracle of grace wrought in the heart, by which a man who was dead is alive again. It is nowhere intimated in the word that man has any part in performing this gracious work. It is never said, And you hath he quickened by the preaching of men, nor by human prayers, nor by any human effort whatever. It is simply, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." It is nowhere said that men are born by the preaching of the word, but by the Word of God itself; and this is that Word which by the gospel is preached unto the living. Not by the preaching are they born, but by the Word which is preached. The Holy Spirit deals with the soul, as it were, face to face, with no medium between. The voice of the Spirit is heard, and the soul lives, and then comes the word of preaching as a witness that this work has been wrought. Disciples were never commanded to go forth and bring souls to the new birth, or to quicken them from the dead, but to speak of Him who does all this work at a word. Here also, "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." Disciples are commanded to go forth as fishers of men, as pastors of the flock, to feed them with knowledge, to edify and to comfort them. When the ruler's daughter lives, then

she is restored to her family to be ministered unto; when the widow's son is raised up from his bier, then he is restored to the ministrations of his mother; when Lazarus comes forth living from the grave, then disciples loose him and let him go, and he sits at meat with his sisters in their mutual home; but the work by which these all lived again was the work of the Lord, and no man interfered between the Lord and the dead. There was a point when they were dead, and no human arm could aid them, then there was a point when they lived again, and became the subjects of help from their kindred. None, of all who loved them, could go down beneath them in death; Jesus only could do that. But it pleased the Master when he had wrought his own peculiar work to give to his disciples the privilege and duty of helping the living; and this is true still. Literally we cannot reach the dead; they are unmoved by all our sighs and tears; our longing, breaking hearts do not reach them; our words of lamentation fall upon unhearing ears; but could another miracle be wrought by the same power that raised the dead nineteen centuries ago, and some one whom we loved live again, then our voice could reach them, and there would be a response from them, and so we should know that life had been given them again. John and Paul preached the gospel, with all its doctrine, and all its promises and all its truth, but men still remained dead, dead to God and in sin. But when the divine life came into some soul, then first that soul really heard the preaching and found in it a fountain of life indeed, that could and did minister to him. If the needle points infallibly toward the pole we know that needle has been magnetized; so if a soul points to the heavenly things we know that soul has become possessed of that which is heavenly. He who desires to breathe the air of heaven must possess a heavenly nature. The divine nature must be first in a man, and then the longing for heavenly things will spring up in that man. So far, then, as relates to all this great work, neither Paul nor John could have any share in it. But still it remains to ask, What does it mean that these disciples could speak of their children in the gospel, or of having begotten them through the gospel? Perhaps the language of Paul to the Galatians may help us a little to an understanding of this: "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you."—Gal. iv. 19. Here it is manifest that Paul was addressing those who had been born of God, else they would not have been his brethren at all. All these were members of the churches addressed by Paul; all of them had received the Spirit; all were partakers of the liberty that is in Christ Jesus; the work of the new birth, of quickening, had been wrought in them already, and yet he said that he travailed in birth for those already born of God until Christ should be formed in them. It is manifest here that his meaning was that he was burdened in heart and filled with deep anxiety for them, that they should come to see clearly that they were free from the old legal things, and that no longer were they to consider themselves in bondage to the law. Paul desired that the brethren might stand fast in the liberty and enjoy the freedom of the gospel. This deep anxiety and earnest labor in the ministry toward them he compares to a travailing in birth for them. Through his teaching and exhortations he hoped they should be set free from the entanglements of the law covenant, and walk in

the liberty of Christ. It is in this sense that Paul could say to the brethren at Corinth, "For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." That is, by his teaching and labor among them they had been instructed in the truth and had come to walk in the truth; through his preaching they had come to know what the salvation that is in Christ embraced. Already, having hearts opened to attend to the things which he spoke, they had received them, and had come out from their former heathenism to walk as little children before the Lord. Paul rejoiced that the Lord had so much blessed his labors among them, and he felt toward all these among whom he had labored as a father toward his children. In this secondary sense only had Paul begotten them, and in this secondary sense only could either John or Paul call their brethren "my children," "my little children." We recall that in our youth some aged men in the ministry thus instructed us, and we felt toward them as we would toward a father, and they were tender toward us, as a father toward his children, and by their teaching, either in the pulpit or by their pens, we were instructed more clearly in the truth. In this sense they were to us fathers indeed.

John said he had no greater joy than to hear that these who had received the truth through his ministry continued to walk in it. There is no minister called of God who does not know that it is a wonderful joy to find some one whose ears are opened to his preaching, and who receives the word at his hand; it is joy inexpressible to find one soul who now begins to love the word of truth. How blessed it is to know of the work of the Lord going on in some heart that but the other day was perhaps an enemy of the truth, or, at best, but a hearer of the letter of the word, without knowing or feeling its power. This joy many have known since the days of John and Paul; this joy they both knew. But as great as is this joy, it is not greater than to find that such as these continue to walk in truth. So John could write these words to the beloved Gaius, after hearing testimony to the fact that he had heard of him that he did the works that were suitable to the profession he had made. It is a glorious thing indeed to see humble, willing souls gathered into the fold, and to witness the first love that can hardly find expression, so full and wonderful it is. That minister or pastor who is truly a pastor, longs to witness such seasons as this, and every fountain of feeling within him will be broken up when such seasons come to any church that he is serving. But, after all, as such a pastor sees these who have entered the way continuing in it steadfastly, both in doctrine and in practice, there will be in his heart just what John here declares, such joy as is at least equal to the joy of his heart in their ingathering. It is not the same kind of joy, but it is equally as great as the other. We hardly know how to express the difference. Is there not a difference between the gladness that fills the heart of parents when God gives to them children to love and serve, which kindles in their hearts inexpressibly as they gaze upon the face of their darling child at the first, and the joy in after years that is theirs when that child, growing in stature and wisdom, continues to be kind, truthful, upright and sincere? There is joy in the one, and in the other. So there is joy in witnessing the coming to the fold of the newborn child of gospel grace, and there is joy afterward, when they continue to walk in truth. But what is it to walk in truth? We need not go outside of this

epistle to find the answer to this. If we know what John commended in his beloved Gaius, we shall also know what it is to walk in truth. It was such a walk as the brethren could see, for they had come and borne testimony of it. He was doing steadfastly whatsoever he did, to the brethren and to strangers; that is, he was not doing this to-day and neglecting it to-morrow, neither was he doing this to one and not to another, but he was steadfast in it all. This, which he was doing, John calls in the sixth verse, charity. He was, in charity, aiding the servants of God on their way. He was doing this in love to them and to the cause of God, recognizing that the Lord had sent them forth for his name's sake among the Gentiles, from whom they took nothing, that the gospel might be seen by them to be free and without charge. Gaius, in order that this might be done, helped the servants of God, so that it should not be charged against the disciples that their labor was for gain. Paul himself followed this principle, as he declares in the letter to the churches at Corinth. He did this in order that none among them should have reason to say he was seeking to make merchandise of the gospel. This was most commendable. But other churches aided him that he might not be chargeable to the church at Corinth, as he tells them. Now these other churches were doing just what John commends Gaius for doing, and this was walking in truth indeed.

It is manifest that here the word "truth" means all that belongs to soundness in doctrine, and an orderly practice. This, every one who loves God at all will desire to maintain. Charity, or the love of God in the heart, will produce charity in the secondary sense of the word. It did so in the case of Gaius, as this epistle testifies, and this same John says, If one "seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" This, beyond all question, means that if indeed the love of God be in us it will cause us also to love all his children, and if we love our brother indeed and in truth, and not only in profession, we shall desire to aid him if he has need. If we do not, the apostle does not say, How dwelleth the love of that brother in you? but, "How dwelleth the love of God in you?" If a man "loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" To walk in truth indeed, is to hold fast the doctrine that exalts the Lord; but it is more than this, it is to hold fast all works of charity and good will; it is to feed the hungry, and to clothe the naked, and to visit the widow and the orphan, and to, as much as in us lies, live peaceably with all men; it is to confess the word of truth before men at all needed times; it is to be steadfast, as was Gaius, and not to forsake the testimony of the Lord; it is to be humble in the midst of reproach, and patient in the day of adversity; it is to live soberly, righteously and godly before all. Who does not rejoice to see these fruits made manifest in all who believe? These things all glorify God and edify his children. On the other hand, what sorrow and shame will bow the head when it is known that some are not walking in truth. If they still have a name to live, yet they are as a dry and withered branch. The spiritual cannot get near to them, much as they desire it. O how important that all should walk in truth. To do so is to glorify God and edify all who love him. C.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

James Emery (Imrie) died at his residence in Scotland township, Day Co., S. Dak., Sunday morning, May 24th, 1908. Mr. Emery was born in Roxburyshire, Scotland, Feb. 20th, 1830, came to this country in 1852, and settled in Lisbon, Kendall Co., Ill. In 1856 he moved to Odell, Ill., and in March of that year married Alice Allan. He came to Dakota in 1882, and settled in Scotland township, Day County, where he resided until his death, surviving his beloved wife three years. Mr. and Mrs. Emery had seven children, five of whom are living: Mrs. Mary Murray, of Roscoe, S. Dak., William D. Emery, of Odell, Ill., Mrs. Belle Denholm, Mrs. James Ahern and John Emery, of Andover, S. Dak. He is survived by his brother, Abram Imrie, and two sisters: Mrs. Elizabeth Halliday and Mrs. Agnes Denholm, of Andover, S. Dak. Mr. Emery was a member of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland, was a man of good morals, a consistent christian and a devoted husband and father. His mind was always more engaged with spiritual than material things, and in his declining years he expressed himself as being willing to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.

Funeral service was held in Bethel meetinghouse, and the remains were laid at rest in Scotland Cemetery.

The above is copied from our local paper, but I would like to add, as far as I know, something of his religious life. When a mere boy he joined the Presbyterian Church in Scotland, as is the custom there, but never felt satisfied, and would go miles to hear different preachers, hoping to hear what he longed for. After coming to America he did the same for a number of years, but the privilege was denied him, and many times he said he never heard a gospel sermon nor joined the church, as there were none of his choice near, but gave during his life every evidence of belonging to the invisible church. About twenty-six years ago a sister living in Illinois sent him a year's subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, being the first publication setting forth the doctrine he loved. He fully indorsed predestination in all things, and salvation by grace; he was a great Bible student, and could quote whole chapters, but was always very timid, as he so often expressed himself as being fearful of the pride of the human heart. When asked his views on certain passages of Scripture he would give them with much enjoyment when asked in the right spirit. His life was one of contentment and peace, never complaining, only of indwelling sin; often in later years he spoke of being very sinful, when to all appearance his life was faultless. He is gone, we miss his counsel and example, but hope it may be our happy lot to embrace the precious hope and faith which were his, by reason of which he passed away so quietly and peacefully into eternal and undisturbed rest, to come forth in the resurrection in the likeness of his dear Redeemer, and be satisfied.

ALSO,

Mrs. Elizabeth Halliday died at the home of her sister, near Andover, S. Dak., Nov. 2nd, 1908, aged 83 years and 11 months. She came with her father's family to America in 1852, and to Dakota in 1883. Her husband died in 1885, leaving her and an only son, who survives her. She never was permitted to join the church of her choice, but was a firm believer in free grace, and enjoyed reading her Bible and the SIGNS when able to do so. In her younger days she went among her friends and neighbors, lending a helping hand wherever needed, and was beloved for her kind, gentle and mild disposition. She was a woman of strong mind and body until the last few years, when her mind became a blank. Her body was laid away to await the resurrection, when it shall come forth a spiritual body. B. S. D.

Elder John W. Moon was born in Halifax County, Va., April 24th, 1848, died Feb. 9th, 1909. The cause of his death was dropsy. He was the son of Elder James and Permelia Moon. He moved to this part of the country soon after the Civil War, and united with the church shortly afterward. He was married to Miss Ada Coffman Jan. 6th, 1875. To this union were born eleven children, of whom five are dead, three daughters and two sons. Brother Moon was ordained to the ministry July 1st, 1893, and was indeed a sound and faithful minister of Jesus Christ, and never shunned to declare the whole counsel of God. He never stopped to consider what men might say of him, but had only the glory of God in view; this he believed could be done only by pointing the saints to Jesus as the only "name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" in time and in eternity. He was a firm believer in the absolute sovereignty of God over all worlds, creatures and acts of creatures, and that God had ordained all things to His glory and the benefit of his children. Speaking after the manner of men, he was a good man, though he often (to the writer) complained of his imperfections. As a citizen or neighbor none surpassed him. It is the talk of the community that no one had aught against John Moon as a man. His death has cast quite a gloom over the Baptists in this county, especially the church at Boaz Chapel, where his membership was. The stroke was very heavy upon the writer, as I had been so long and intimately associated with him, and knew his love for the truth. He stood firm against the "means" and the "conditional time salvation" heresy, that so disturbed us here. He has gone to his reward. Besides the church, he left to mourn his widow, three sons and three daughters. They are heartbroken, for he was a true husband and loving

father. His last moments seemed to be very pleasant to him, for he crossed his hands upon his breast, closed his eyes and lips, with a smile on his face, and passed away without a struggle.

On Feb. 10th the writer, together with Elder A. J. Luther, tried to speak words of comfort to the grief-stricken family and the sorrowing brethren and friends. The congregation was large and many were in tears; after which his body was laid in the grave in Boaz Chapel Cemetery to await the resurrection.

May God in mercy bind up our sorrowing hearts.

R. H. BOAZ.

FULTON, Ky.

Mrs. Emily Thomas died at her residence, near Bloomfield, Loudoun Co., Va., Nov. 25th, 1908, aged 80 years. Sister Thomas' maiden name was Hamilton, and I think she was the last of her immediate family. She was the widow of brother J. W. Thomas, whose obituary appeared in the SIGNS several years ago. It was my privilege to baptize them both in the fellowship of Ebenezer Church, Loudoun County, probably twenty-five years ago. It has fallen to my lot to send several obituaries of late to the SIGNS of aged members of our churches who may well be called "mothers in Israel," and sister Thomas was surely of that class; none of the little company at Ebenezer were more highly esteemed or beloved than she. Her meek and gentle spirit, her humble, quiet ways and her unselfish love of her brethren endeared her to the hearts of all; faithful to the profession she made when she took the name of her Redeemer publicly in baptism, she was found in her place in the church as long as she had strength to attend the meetings. It is a comfort to know the Lord was manifestly with her during the long, weary months of her last illness. I think she was confined to her house, and to her bed much of the time, for four months, a part of the time in severe suffering, but she was greatly blessed with a spirit of quiet resignation to the will of her Savior, of whose great goodness she loved to speak. Death had no terrors for her, she rather looked to it as a longed for release. She leaves two children: brother Ira Thomas, M. D., of Mt. Zion, and sister Martha Hutchison, of Washington, D. C., whom she was favored to see identified with the people of her choice. She also leaves three grandchildren and one great-grandchild to mourn their loss. I feel to acknowledge my own obligations to sister Thomas and her family. Her house has been a sweet home to me for more than thirty years. The Lord made her a ministering angel to me when in sore need, but she did not realize it. She was one of those who are sure to say when they have done all, "We are unprofitable servants." Sister Thomas was faithful and true in all the relations of life, a self-sacrificing and devoted wife and mother, a kind and helpful neighbor, a woman of sterling integrity, esteemed by all who knew her. We miss her sadly from our little company at Ebenezer, but we thank God for the record she leaves among us, and also of the numbers who, like her, have finished their course and have kept the faith, who have recently left us to grieve that we shall see their faces no more, and yet to rejoice that they have been kept by the power of God through faith, ready to be revealed in the last time. May God comfort those who mourn.

J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., March 4, 1909.

John D. Shorb was born Feb. 13th, 1822, in Carroll County, Md., died at his home in Gales Creek, Ore., Feb. 14th, 1909, aged 87 years and 1 day. He received his education in what was known as the Keys schoolhouse, and finished his course in a select school of Carroll County, Md. He taught school in his younger days in the State of Maryland, and later clerked in a dry goods store in Baltimore, and about this time was married to Miss Elizabeth Kesslring, March 12th, 1843. In 1856 he went to Kansas to locate a home, and was there during the border ruffian trouble in that year. He moved his family there in the spring of 1857, and remained there until 1864, when he started west with one team of horses and two teams of cattle, arriving in the Grand Round valley, Oregon, in November of the same year, and in the fall of 1865 he came with his family to Washington County, Oregon, where he has resided ever since, stopping one year in Scroggins' valley and about three years on East Dairy Creek, near what is now called Roy. In the fall of 1868 he moved on his homestead, near Hillside, where he resided until the spring of 1888, when he sold the homestead and moved to Forest Grove, where he was living when his wife died, May 5th, 1892. About one year later he came to Gales Creek, where he resided until his death, as above stated. There were born to them eight children, five girls and three boys, of whom seven now survive: W. S. Shorb, of Scotts Bar, Cal., John F., of Sunny Slope, Alberta, Canada, Mrs. Addie Burns, of Nome, Alaska, Mrs. Maggie Brown and Mrs. Alice Coffin, of Condon, Oregon, H. T. Shorb and Mrs. C. S. Lafferty, of Gales Creek, Oregon, with twenty-four grandchildren, thirteen great-grandchildren and five great-great-grandchildren, with many other relatives and friends to mourn his departure. Mr. Shorb always lived a straightforward, honest and moral life, and his motto was, Do unto others as you would have others do unto you. He never made a public profession, but was a firm believer in the doctrine held by the Primitive Baptists, and seldom missed a meeting when able to attend. The writer has often seen the tears trickle down his furrowed cheeks while trying in my weak way to present the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I was called to conduct the funeral services, which

I tried to do, using for a text 1 Cor. xv. 19: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." He was laid to rest by the side of his wife (who was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church called New Hope) in the Buckston Cemetery, one mile north of Forest Grove, Oregon, there to await the last loud trumpet.

S. B. MOFFITT.

NEWBERG, Oregon.

Joseph F. Garrett died Feb. 6th, 1909, near Airmont, Loudoun Co., Va., in the 78th year of his age. He was married to his cousin, Esther Garrett, June 16th, 1859; to this union were born three children, the two oldest dying in infancy. Mr. Garrett was not a member of any church, but believed in the doctrine preached by the Old School Baptists, which is the doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was a true and faithful friend, a kind and loving husband and father, and firm in his convictions in what he believed to be right. He was stricken with paralysis March 17th, 1904, from which he never entirely regained use of himself, and was a great care to his faithful companion and loving daughter, who were always ready to wait on him. He was again stricken Jan. 2nd, 1909, followed by two more strokes Feb. 4th and 5th, and died on the 6th as peacefully and quietly as an infant going to sleep. While he desired to remain with his family, he said he did not fear death, and I believe he died in full hope of eternal life in Jesus. He leaves his companion, our dear sister, who is a member of Ebenezer Church, and one daughter, Miss Hattie, who was faithful to him until the end, also two brothers, one sister, several nieces and nephews and a number of friends, beside Mrs. Alice Reed, whom they raised from a child; she was faithful to him and he was a father to her.

In the absence of a minister of our faith and order, sister Garrett desired that I should speak on the occasion, which I tried to do in my weak way, to a large number of friends, after which his body was laid to rest in North Fork graveyard to await God's appointed time and eternal purpose concerning these mortal bodies.

F. E. ROBEY.

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Laura M. Baird, Ky., $1.00.

CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 77. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1909. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JAMES II. 26.

"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

I desire to notice some things said concerning the faithful believers in God, and also make some contrasts between those who have works to show their faith and those who have not works. There is much said in the Scriptures concerning those who have faith, also there is much said concerning works. But Paul said that "without faith it is impossible to please God."—Hebrews xi. 6. Also in 2 Thessalonians iii. 2, we read that "all men have not faith." We also read that faith is given by measure. (Romans xii. 3.) In Hebrews xi. 1, we read, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Paul continues by describing those who had faith: it was by faith that "Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts." His gifts showed his faith in God, but these gifts were not the cause of his faith in God, but his works did show his faith, God testifying of his gifts, yet let us ever remember the words, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." From this it is evident that faith in God is the moving cause, and we must first have faith in God that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. This faith in God was manifested by all those commended by Paul in this eleventh chapter of Hebrews; they showed their faith by their works. "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house." Noah by his works showed that he believed God was a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Noah saw no evidence of the flood when he prepared the ark to the saving of his house, but his faith was such in God that he was moved to thus do, "by the which [flood] he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Here was living faith manifested; "eight souls were saved by water." (Read 1 Peter iii. 20.) Their works showed that they believed God; that was the only way they had of showing they had faith in God. Remember the words

of our text: "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." Now let us reason together. What shall we say of those who claim to believe God and claim to be strong in the faith, and yet are indifferent as to whether they attend their regular church meetings? Such ones are not holding fast the profession of their faith without wavering. Paul said to the Hebrew brethren, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)." If we do not hold fast the profession of our faith, we then are like the body without the spirit, dead also; we have no works to show that we have faith in God. Let us ever remember that "without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." If we do not hold fast the profession of our faith we are not diligently seeking the Lord. In Paul's day it was the manner of some to forsake the assembling of themselves together; all such were not holding fast the profession of their faith without wavering; they were not diligently seeking the Lord; their works showed a lack of true and living faith in God; they were lacking in the faith that moves God's people to obey him. James said, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations. [He did not say, however, Count it all joy when ye yield to divers temptations.] Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." (Read connections.) The works of these brethren showed that they had yielded to many temptations. James said, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed." James here is teaching the same as Paul taught: "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." These brethren's works showed that they had not been asking in faith, but that they had been asking amiss, that they might consume it upon their own lusts. O how sorrowful when we thus ask, rather than asking in faith, nothing wavering. Christ taught his disciples saying, "For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." —Matt. vii. 8. Also the eleventh verse reads thus: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" It is right to ask for good things, but it is wrong to ask for evil things. James' brethren were asking for evil things, they were asking amiss; this was the reason they received not. My brethren, how are we asking? Are we asking for good things, or are we asking amiss to consume it upon our own lusts? What do our works show? Are we holding fast the profession of our faith without wavering? Remember that "he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed." James continues, "For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord." Again he says, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation." He did not say, Blessed is the man that yieldeth to temptation. These men had yielded to temptation, and, saddest of all, in their carnality they were asking amiss that they might consume it upon their own lusts, rather than asking for good things; they were not asking for that

which they really needed. James continues, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." These brethren had not endured temptation, but did yield to temptation. No doubt Noah was surrounded with temptations, but evidently he did not yield. He believed God, his works showed that his faith was in God. O how different it has been with many of us; we have been drawn away of our own lusts and enticed, some one way and some another; one is at war with another; some that have been comfortably located and blessed with church privileges have been drawn away and enticed to deprive themselves of all church privileges; some moving away where all are strangers and none care for the church of Christ; others are enticed to go into some business, and are so lustful as to deprive themselves of assembling together, yet many of them pride themselves on being sound in the faith. Dear brethren, if we are thus doing, what do our works show? Surely not such faith as Noah had. Suppose Noah had yielded to some temptation; for instance, some one had offered him great inducements to abandon his labor on the ark, offering him abundance of this world's goods if he would cease the building of the ark, such works would look like many of our works in this our day; it would look as though Noah did not have faith in God, but would follow his own lusts, being enticed, drawn away after perishable things soon to be destroyed. God, however, did give Noah faith, and he showed his faith by his works.

James continues, "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." We see death on every side. I doubt if there ever was a time when there was more lustfulness after the things of this world, or more things calculated to entice and draw away God's people from serving the true and living God, than now; it does seem that death and destruction reign on every hand, yet sorrowful as it is, many look on with unconcern, as though the Lord God had pleasure in these things. O what do our works show? Do they show that we are asking for good things, or are we asking for carnal things to consume it upon our own lusts?

James continues, "Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." All who have faith in God receive their good gifts from him; they come down from the Father of lights. All of God's people alike are dependent upon him, yet in our carnality we seem to forget where these good things come from. Our works will show whether we are asking in faith for the good gifts or whether we are asking amiss to consume it upon our own lusts. We have no other way of showing our faith except by our works. James said, "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." Hearers only do not show their faith by their works. James did not shun to declare that hearers only were deceiving themselves. Hearers only are like the body without the spirit: dead, they have no works to show their faith is in God. James said to his beloved brethren, "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" Devils do not show their faith in

God by their works, yet they can make as much pretension of believing God as men can; but they have not works to show their faith in God. The third chapter and fourteenth verse indicates that these brethren were trying to screen themselves, and charge their sins to God. James says, "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not; and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above." As bad as it is to be guilty of all the evil things condemned by James, evidently the greatest of all evils would be to claim that such wisdom comes from above. If any had bitter envying and strife in their hearts, James in faithfulness would say to them, "Glory not; and lie not against the truth;" do not claim that you received this wisdom from above. "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." O how careful we should be lest we lie against the truth and try to screen ourselves, and claim that all our evil works, and the confusion which now exists among God's dear people, come from the Father of lights. James has shown the contrast between this earthly, sensual, devilish wisdom, and the wisdom which is from above. "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." O how sad it would be if we were destitute of these good gifts, and yet claim our faith was in God; we then would be like the body without the spirit, we would have no works to show our faith in God; but our works would show that we had been asking amiss to consume it upon our own lusts. See how full of love James was; he called them his beloved brethren, he treated them as a father would treat his own child, he plead with them for their own good, he was faithful to tell them their wrong doings, yet he did so in love; he was without partiality, he loved them all. O that we had works at all times to show that we received our wisdom from above, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. It would be hypocrisy on our part to be engaged in wars and fightings, as these brethren were, and at the same time claiming to love God or his people; our works would show different. "The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like," said Paul. He also shows the contrast between the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit; the contrast is so great that it would seem we could at all times distinguish between them, yet when we consider the condition we are in when living after the flesh, especially if we have hatred toward our brother, we then are declared to be blind. Read 1 John ii. 11: "But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes." This is a most sorrowful condition to be in; it is also sorrowful for any one who will follow any brother thus blinded; yet when thus blinded we will see such an one claiming to love God, yet no works to show that he loves God. John says, "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar." Hatred is the work of the flesh. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace," &c. What do our works show? Do they show that faith which causes God's people to love

and obey him, or do they show that we are living after the flesh? Paul said, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption." How would it sound to say that he who soweth to the flesh, or to his flesh, could, when thus sowing, show his faith in God? No, we would not have it that way; we cannot thus sow and at the same time manifest living faith; our works will show what we are sowing. "For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." What a sorrowful crop it is when sowing to our flesh; nothing but corruption will be reaped from such sowing; if we persist in such sowing the end will be death; our peace and comfort are destroyed; we are like the body without the spirit, no spiritual life manifested. All these sorrowful things go to show our lack of faith in God; it shows that we have not been asking in faith nothing wavering; our faith is like the body without the spirit, dead also. The more we realize our own weakness the more we will feel the need of God's sustaining grace; the greater our faith in God the more we will go to his throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. May our works be such as to show our faith in him who said, Ask and ye shall receive, knock and it shall be opened. What a blessed promise. Do our works show that our faith is in him, or is it like the body without the spirit, dead also? Let us examine ourselves and see whether we be in the faith. Paul said to his Corinthian brethren, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." These brethren were losing faith in Paul. In 2 Cor. xii. 3, he says, "Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me." O how sorrowful was their condition that they could not see a proof of Christ speaking in Paul. Paul said, "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved." Paul showed his faith was strong in the Lord, and that his love continued true, even to those who were seeking a proof of Christ speaking in him. O that our works manifest such faith in God and love toward our brethren as was manifested by both Paul and James, as well as many others referred to in the Scriptures. Evidently if we had such a measure of faith we would love more. May we first of all examine ourselves whether we be in the faith, prove our own selves before dealing harshly with our brother.

I hope this letter is written with no ill will to any one, and that we all may be doers of the word, and not hearers only. If you feel it will be profitable for the Primitive Baptists, please publish it, if not, kindly return it to me.

I appreciate very highly much of the writings of the brethren, yet some I feel are unguarded about making extreme expressions, or, I should say, unscriptural expressions. My wish, if I know my heart, is that all of God's people had more charity one for another than is manifest in many places. I do not mean that we should compromise with error, but that we should love our brother, even though he is in error. We should always hate false doctrine and false practices, but evidently our bounden duty is to love our brother, which if we do there certainly would not be so many ready to make wholesale declarations of nonfellowship for all those who do not come up to their standard in belief, while at the same time we ourselves may be in a greater error in another direction. We all should labor in love for each other's benefit, and bear

one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. This spirit I see manifested by many of the writers for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; especially is this so with dear brother Chick, as it seems to me.

Yours in hope,

JOSEPH FORD.

SENECA, Kans., Jan. 18, 1909.

ACTS VIII. 35.

"THEN Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus."

I have often thought, when seriously meditating on the subject of preaching, that Christ Jesus was and is the author and subject matter of all gospel preaching, and while thinking over the matter to-day the above portion of holy writ came to my mind in a way that impressed me to suggest a few thoughts upon it and send them to the editors of the dear old SIGNS for their disposal. It seems to me that there is a wonderful lesson in this narrative of Philip and the eunuch to all the Lord's people, and especially to his ministering servants. First, we have in this a lesson, a pattern of gospel preaching; second, a subject of gospel address; third, a plain and unmistakable pattern of gospel baptism. Philip, a gospel preacher by the will of God, began at the same Scripture that the inquiring eunuch, a gospel subject, was reading, and preached unto him Jesus. He did not just preach to him about Jesus, but preached unto him Jesus. The place of the Scripture which he read was this: "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." The Spirit of the Lord commanded Philip, the gospel preacher, to go and join himself to the chariot, wherein was a gospel subject, an inquirer after the truth of God, and was convinced of the fact that he could not understand those wonderful and mysterious things unless some man should guide him, and his desire was that Philip the preacher, whom the Spirit had sent to him for that wonderful work, preach Jesus unto him. I have said Christ was the author and subject matter of all gospel preaching; it seems to me that the following declaration of the apostle Paul declares the same truth: "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him [his revealed Son] among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood."—Gal. i. 15, 16. Hence all the apostle Paul had to preach was God's revealed Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified (preached) in due time. (1 Tim. ii. 6.) Most assuredly Philip testified or preached Jesus the ransom and ransomer in due time, or at the appointed time, according to God's divine arrangement, for the Spirit directed the matter. When Jesus is preached everything pertaining to the salvation of each elect vessel of mercy, both for time and eternity, is preached. "For it pleased the Father that in him [Jesus] should all fullness dwell."—Col. i. 19. And he is not only Head over all things to the church, but he is far above all principality and power. No matter what text of Scripture the God-called and God-sent preacher uses, if he is blessed to preach he is sure to preach Jesus, for the Scriptures testify of him. Even in the volume of the book it is written of him that he came to do the will of God, and finished the work he came to do. Now the man whom God has called, qualified and sent to preach the gospel, preaches out of the depths of a heart prepared of the Lord, to those whose hearts also are pre-

pared of the Lord to receive the preached word, the gospel of their salvation, as in the case of Philip and the eunuch. "And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water, and the eunuch said, See, here is water: what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip [the preacher] said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he [the eunuch] answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he [Philip] baptized him [the eunuch]. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing." Therefore we see that in order to gospel baptism there must be a sufficiency of water for both the preacher and the one to be baptized, to both go (wade) down into the water and the preacher baptize the candidate, immerse him in the water and then both come up (wade) out of the water. O how wonderfully beautiful this proves the way and manner that the Old School or Primitive Baptists follow the precise scriptural mode of baptism; they come to the water as they did at Enon, near to Salem, because there was much water there, and the preacher takes the believer who desires baptism and has brought forth fruits meet (proper) for repentance, leads him down into much water and baptizes him, then leads him up out of the water. So in order to baptize there must be a sufficiency of water for the preacher to lead the candidate for baptism down into it and immerse him. Just a little water in a cup or glass will not do. How could Philip have baptized that humble child of God, the eunuch, with a cup or glass of water? Such could not be, such never has been, no, never. Therefore the way and manner that Philip baptized the eunuch was and is the New Testament rule, and in harmony with its teachings throughout, and as many as walk according to this rule, peace be unto them and to the Israel of God. This God-given rule or golden reed is not only to measure the sacred ordinance of baptism, but to measure the entire city, (Rev. xxi. 15,) and when the city was and is measured with the golden reed by the angel, it was and is found complete in all its parts, lying foursquare. The city or church of God is not oblong, but is square in every sense of the word; the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal—found equal when measured. It was not measured to make it square and equal, but when tested or tried by the golden reed it was found that way; so that all the inhabitants of this city, the church of God, have the same rights and privileges, enjoying the same benefits, having the same power and ability, or rather inability—all dependent. Forasmuch then as this wonderful city is foursquare it fronts or faces the four cardinal points: east, west, north and south, and has three gates at each point, being twelve in all; and the twelve gates are twelve pearls, every several gate is of one pearl, which I have thought and yet believe is Christ, the way, the truth and the life, the only way and by whom only can any enter the city; and no matter from which point they come, they enter through Christ, the one Pearl, of whom is each and every gate. A pearl is a white, hard, smooth, shining body, and is not the work of man, and amply sets forth Christ, the Rock of our salvation. This city has no need of the sun or moon to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and

Jesus is the light thereof. This city is wonderfully great; her walls are salvation and her gates praise, and her watchmen all preach Jesus unto her, and proclaim unto her that her warfare is accomplished, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. It is said of Zion, the city of God, "Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion."—Isaiah lii. 8. The word "together" in this text means harmony; all gospel preaching harmonizes; all the watchmen whom God has called and set upon the walls of his beloved Zion publish peace; they preach Jesus, the salvation of Israel. Jesus is the end of their conversation, the same yesterday, to-day and forever. This same Jesus that Philip preached unto the eunuch is the life and resurrection of all the promised seed, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."—Eph. i. 7. All of the election of grace have forgiveness of sins in Christ, their dear Redeemer and covenant Head. In him they have every blessing they ever can need for time or eternity, for in him all fullness dwells; he is all in all to them. If there were so much as one moment of enjoyment or needful desire that was not absolutely secured in Christ Jesus from everlasting to everlasting, this phrase, "all in all," could not have been used; but we have now all in all in Jesus, whom we preach, beginning at any and all Scripture.

W. J. MAY.

PINSONFORK, Ky., Feb. 25, 1909.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 14, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have just heard of the death of brother Leigh, and I am sad that such a good man and good brother is taken from our midst, yet we must remember the kindness of the Lord in preparing us for this loss. How sad it must have been to see him in his affliction, but the release must have been sweet to him. Often have I felt to envy him, with regard to his walk and conversation; surely he did show forth his religion by the way he lived. One time in my presence he spoke about religion, and as to what was pure religion, and quoted, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Then he spoke of the need of the presence of the heavenly Father every moment, and all the time, to keep us unspotted, because, he said, "There are stains everywhere in the world, and it is beyond the flesh so to live." He added that only one had lived this pure life, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. But brother Leigh did live forth this pure religion as nearly as any poor mortal can. I have often thought of his many kindnesses, and I know that you, too, have done so. No brother could be kinder, and how much he will be missed in the church, and among his family, and in the family of his brother William, with whom he lived; he thought so much of them. I am sad, and feel to sigh when I think of the kindness, goodness and truth of some brother or sister when they have departed; I think of the words, A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches. I cannot think that I can ever deserve such an epitaph as they.

To-day I have been at home, not being able to go to the meeting, and have been reading the SIGNS for February 15th, and

when I had finished I closed it, and thought I had certainly enjoyed that number from beginning to end. That part of it which stays with me and has given me the greatest enjoyment and has seemed to come closest to me, is the closing paragraphs of your editorial. They were surely a comfort to me, for often my sins seem so great I wonder how they all could have been put away by the one great Sacrifice, for I am continually sinning; but there came a lightening of the burden in those words.

I have often desired to write to the comfort of the dear brethren, but I seem so barren, so void of good, so unable to give a cup of cold water to the thirsty. I know that if I take my pen in my own strength, there will be only that which savors of my own flesh, but when I can take my pen under the guidance of the Lord how easy it is to give a cup of cold water to the thirsty. I often wish I could be of more use to my brethren, yet I know I am of as much use as I was ordained to be, so I must feel that all is well, yet my great desire all my days has been to be useful, to wait on others, to give good cheer wherever I could and to know and love the dear children of God. I desire to visit the sick and afflicted, and to do good wherever I can; but I pass through the day, and look back to the morning from the evening, and see much that I could have done that I have not done that would have been well to do. Sometimes when I have gone out on some mission, or have done something for some one, I look back over it all and the thought comes, That was nice and kind of you; and the pleasure is taken all out of it, for I see that this is all self. Self does creep into almost all I do.

Dear brother, I intended to write only a few lines, and inclose a letter which we received, and want you to use according to your judgment for the SIGNS.

With love to yourself and family,

MARY HILL TERRY.

MR. AND MRS. FRANK TERRY—DEAR FRIENDS:—I presume you have looked over many of the admonitions in the Scriptures pertaining to the little word "come," and in examining the meaning you have concluded that it is not an invitation, whether spoken directly or by parable, but, rather, it is spoken by a law and a power, such as spoke the world into existence; it was spoken by the same power that spoke all existence into being. Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Here certain ones are classified, and they come because they are heavy laden, and none others are included in the command. To the weary, faint and oppressed there can be no sweeter bidding than, Come into my rest. No one knows this save he who is weary from laboring. What is our labor? Is it not striving to keep the law as it was given to Israel? It means to be obedient, to pay for all that we possess, just as the Pharisee boasted in the temple when he went up to pray. Let us look at Israel during the forty years' journey in the wilderness, with their faith in the promise of God to their father Abraham that they should yet possess the land of Canaan. They followed Moses, their law-giver, (he himself being the type of the law) faithfully, believing that he would bring them to the promised land. But did he? No. As Paul said, If salvation were by the law, then is grace no more grace. It was not for the law to bring salvation; it was not for Moses to deliver Israel out of the wilderness into the land of Canaan; Joshua, the type of Jesus, must do that,

and say, Come into the land of Canaan; enter into thy rest, for there remaineth a rest to the people of God, and this "rest" was typified, I believe, by this land of Canaan, promised to Israel through their father Abraham. Our rest is in Jesus when we have ceased from our own works, and have entered into belief that "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Therefore we believe that it is not the obedient follower of the law that Jesus came to save, but the sinner. He said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." The sheep have wandered away from the flock, away from the fold, away on the mountains, where there is no food or water, and cannot find their way back. What does the Shepherd do with these wanderers? Does he send out a call to come back? No. He goes after them and finds them and bears them in his own bosom; they are the lost ones, the helpless ones, the halt, the lame, the blind, the maimed, and are all treated the same way. This seems to me to be the very essence of the meaning of the word "come." This is the way that Jesus says "come." When all things else fail, all human aid refuses to help them, then he says, "Come," by putting them upon his own arms and bringing them back. Like the good Samaritan, who put the poor man upon his own beast and brought him to the inn, and paid all his debt. It is then found that Jesus paid the price, and not we by our labor. What is that price? and what is the place he prepares for them that love him? He prepares a mansion in the Father's house, which is a dwelling-place for both himself and them. He says this is done "that where I am, there ye may be also." He goes down into death; a broken heart and contrite spirit are prepared in us, and there he dwells in Spirit to commune with us, and this is when we "come."

It seems to me I see some things differently from other men. I see myself always as legal Israel was, believing, as they did, their prophet's word that in after years the Messiah must come in splendor as King over all the earth. I want to see him to me what I seem to know he is to all the saints. They (Israel) believed in God, and in his word as they understood it, and looked for his coming as they had mapped it out, and as all legalists do to-day; but when he came as a poor Nazarene, associating with sinners, he was rejected as the Christ, despised as an impostor and put to death at the same legal Israel's demand. I wonder how many of us to-day are the same legal Israel when we go to church, having mapped out the way in which he will come, and how we are going to enjoy the preaching, and the communion with the brethren, and all this fixed up in advance; but alas, when too late, we find that this has crucified and put to death all our meekness and humbleness of heart, and we are disappointed in what we had looked for, and then we go home sorrowful because he was not there; at least this is the way with me. The Elder had much to say, but it was all for others, and nothing for me; I was poor and needy, and was not fed. Here was legal Israel again. But to tell me that Jesus came to his own and they received him not, that he was hungry and they fed him not, thirsty and they gave him not to drink, poor and they gave him no place to lay his head, places his case somewhat on a parallel with me, and somehow hope begins to spring up and live again that I may yet see the lowly Nazarene.

But I must close, as it is getting late. A few verses tell the story very well.

With tearful eyes I look around,
Life seems a dark and stormy sea,
Yet midst the gloom I hear a sound,
A heavenly whisper, Come to me.

It tells me of a place of rest,
It tells me where my soul may flee;
O to the weary, faint, opprest,
How sweet the bidding, Come to me.

When nature shudders, loath to part
From all I love, enjoy or see,
When a faint chill steals o'er my heart,
A sweet voice utters, Come to me.

Come, for all else must fail and die,
Earth is no resting-place for thee;
Heavenward direct thy weeping eye,
I am thy portion, Come to me.

O voice of mercy, voice of love,
In conflict, grief and agony,
Support me, cheer me from above,
And gently whisper, Come to me.

I may some time again try to write upon this subject, but feel to-night that I have utterly failed, and have not written at all as I intended, but my pen got away, and I lost sight of nearly all I thought to say.

Begging your charity, because of your knowledge of my weakness, I am yours truly,

THOMAS CUBBAGE.

DAYTON, Wash., Dec., 1908.

EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—This hope is what stimulates me to use that vital word "brethren." This hope is the anchor of my soul. This anchor is to stay the vessel, and not the vessel to stay the anchor. Paul said, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels." O how gracious are the mercies and the grace of God to a poor tempest-tossed soul. What a sure refuge is here in the time of trouble. How wonderful are his ways; they are as high as the heights and as deep as the depths. Though the poor soul is tossed and driven almost to despair by the surges of sin, which is condemned in the flesh, and all other hope fails, those who have Christ, the hope of glory, in their souls, by the eye of faith see Jesus high and lifted up, walking as a mighty conqueror upon the troubled waters, and over all our foes, and saying, "Peace, be still," and to his disciples saying, Fear not, it is I.

Dear brethren, the sun of 1908 is now fast setting, and soon will be numbered with the things of the past, of which the word of inspiration says they shall fail, "But the word of the Lord endureth forever." He also declares, "This is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." So we see the essence of the gospel is a vital principle, and its rich message is that which the soul lives on. While it is pleasant to sit and look with our natural eyes into the face of a humble servant of God as he calls upon the cast down soul by faith to walk about Zion and view her bulwarks and her towers, and to consider her palaces, yet to our astonishment this glorious gospel is sent to the ends of the earth, and because of this, my pen is trying to congratulate you upon the advent of the new year.

The past year has been one of marked interest to me. My soul has been made to try the heat of the furnace of affliction, and the darkness of Egypt, and the parched desert, and the roaring of the waves, and to enter the realities of the past. I have been made to know that

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know."

Now, dear brethren, here was the trying point in the assaults of the enemy of my soul. I reviewed all the contests through which I had passed during the twenty years of my ministry, and none of

them seemed to be so close a conflict as this one. It seemed to be a hand to hand conflict, and while, in all the past, I could call to mind the victories which my dear Captain had given me, in this last one it seemed that I was like Job: I went forward, and he was not there; and to the right and left and behind, where he did dwell, but could not preceive him. I was almost brought to the point to be convinced that I had answered to the wrong call, and that all my twenty years' labor was in vain, and that now at the end of this eventful life, or race, or warfare, I must lay my armor by in shame and disgrace, because I had labored all the time under a deluded impression, and that I had no God, no Christ and no true call to the ministry.

While in this state of mind I received the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for December 1st, and the first thing my eyes fell upon was a piece of poetry written by the late Elder Wm. L. Beebe, portraying his pathway in life, and, as I read, light began to spring up in my soul in this way. I thought if one who had such a measure of the Spirit and of the grace of God had such trials, should I think it a strange thing for one like me to have the fiery trials which had fallen to my lot? By this we can see that the word of the Lord does endure forever. While this venerable servant of God has passed away, yet the word of the Lord which was in him did not pass away, but remains to cheer and strengthen us who also follow on. Then came the article of M. J. Rhodes, pointing the tried soul to the final victory over all its enemies. Then Elder Durand wrote of the wonderful revelation of the gospel of peace, which conquers all the enemies of Zion, and causes fellowship to flow as a mighty river in the borders of Zion. Then the three experiences published by request of sister Olive M. Powrie, and her own good letter showing the wonderful way of God in the performance of his own glorious work toward the heirs of promise. Then brother Pace's explanation of the sin against the Holy Ghost was very full of fatness to my soul. How wonderful are the grace and mercy of God in raising up such fearless soldiers, who are not afraid to declare the counsel of God. Then I read brother Gilbert's request for the publishing of the experience of sister Dishong, showing plainly that God has but one way of showing his covenant to his people, and Elder Gilmore's excellent letter, followed by the letter from Elder Newkirk to him. Both of these Elders I am personally acquainted with. Elder Gilmore is not as old in the ministry as is Elder Newkirk, yet God has blessed him with the things essential to the comfort of Zion. Dear Elder Newkirk is now confined to his room at his daughter's, in Waitsburg, Wash. and is not able to visit with his brethren as he has been faithful to do for so long a time; in fact, ever since I have known him, yet the perfect work of the Comforter, of which he has spoken much in past years, is rich to his soul. Let us bless God for the promise of Jesus that the Comforter shall abide. Then comes brother Robert Watt's letter from brother R. Case, which plainly draws the line between the poverty of the children of grace, in and of themselves, and the riches of God's grace in Christ Jesus to them. It made me rejoice to feel I was counted worthy to suffer for Jesus' sake, for the promise is that we shall also reign with him. Also the letters of brethren Vail and McAlpine declared the same glorious truth as those before named. Brother Vail has been a companion to my soul for many years.

As I stated at the beginning of this letter, it is pleasant to meet the servants of God face to face, yet the gospel of the grace of God is not confined to the narrow bounds of our bodies. This is the reason I love the good old SIGNS so well; its pages are laden with the gospel of the Son of God our Savior. If time and space would permit, it seems that I could fill volumes with the sweet emotions of fellowship which I have been made to share with its many able correspondents.

This brings my letter to the abstract of faith upon which the SIGNS was founded, and which is and ever has been the faith of the people of God. I hope my heart is thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift that he has raised up such men as Elders Ker and Chick, and endowed them with grace and wisdom to still conduct and send it forth among the household of faith upon the same principles advocated by it when it was founded. I was delighted to see the able and well seasoned article from the pen of sister Cummins, of Touchet, Wash., (my former home) who is one of the oldest members of the church at that place. She has passed her eightieth year, and the greater portion of those years have been spent in the ranks of that number who have kept the faith; and if one so aged must cry to the Captain of salvation to set a watch upon her lips, is it vain for me to cry day and night for his dear Spirit to guide me in this dark and gloomy day of confusion and distress through which we are called to pass? May the grace of God sustain her, and all the dear ones who are trying to maintain the cause.

Dear editors and readers of the SIGNS, and especially those who contribute to its columns, I would like to write more of my appreciation of the writings of you all, and of the evidence of the grace that shines so brightly in every word and line, although most of you I never saw in the flesh, but my daily meat and drink is to visit and commune with you in spirit and mind, and to try to pray to God to give me grace to wait with patience his time to bring me, with you, into the full possession of our desires and longings, to see him as he is, and to be like him.

I want to say in conclusion, that from my very soul I indorse the doctrine set forth by your pens; also the cleanness of the SIGNS in every respect is much appreciated. If this poor letter finds room in the SIGNS, I want all who read it to know that the sentiments set forth in it are the exercises of my heart. While it is poorly put together, I give it to you in hope of that hour when mortality shall be swallowed up of life, when we shall cease to see in part and to know in part, but shall see as we are seen and know as we are known; then shall we praise him in the perfection of holiness. May God bless us all, according to his will, in the year that is before us.

Yours in bonds of love,

J. T. BARNES.

RICHMOND, Maine, Jan. 12, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I am sending you a few letters from our dear Bonnie. I had hoped to see you last fall and ask you if you published them to leave out of her letters her very kind and pleasing expressions concerning my letters to her; I cannot think others have enjoyed them as much as she feels to have done. I have still others of her letters, but they are more broken with matters of a worldly nature. I must tell you, as others have done, that I missed seeing you last fall. We all hope that

you can come another year. We as a family are all well now. I had a letter from sister Attie, telling me of Elder Beal's sickness; he is much better again, and is with one of his daughters. A year or two ago, in one of our conference meetings, he spoke of the fact that in the course of nature he could not expect to go in and out before us many more years, and that he wanted to say a few words to us before that time, and would say them then. First, he said he wished to declare that he loved his brethren, and that we were in his heart, and that his love and fellowship were ours, and also that the thought he was loved by his brethren filled him with joy. Then he said that he wanted to tell us that in spite of all his failings and ignorance he had tried to preach unto us Jesus Christ and him crucified, and that his desire had ever been that we might be fed and comforted. He talked with such sweetness and sadness that the solemnity of his farewell words fell upon us all, and when he ceased speaking the shadow of the time when we shall sorrow most of all that we shall see his face no more fell upon my heart. He has been with us several times since, but we have his farewell words I know.

Sister Ella Raymond is much improved in health, and I am very thankful. We are so few, and we need each other so much, that I feel I must rejoice; indeed, we cannot help rejoicing when one is spared to us yet a little longer.

I think of you often, and wonder if with all your work you still find thoughts of the old days coming to your mind. I think Bonnie is her mother's child, so like her in disposition and with the same bright manner. I enjoyed her visit so much.

The January number of the SIGNS seemed especially good. I think as you said, that every one would have a feeling of tender emotion when reading brother Kelly's letter. There is nothing in this world that would tempt me to forget the memories of my childhood and entire home life, for over all is the halo of my mother's love.

Before closing I must say this, that I am glad you have been kept in that mind which is able to discern truth from error, and that you have been given wisdom to rightly divide the word of truth. Please give my love to your family.

I remain your sister,

ANGIE THOMAS.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Sept. 27, 1907.

DEAR AUNT ANGIE:—You wrote me such a comforting letter that I feel a desire to write and tell you how I cherish what you told me of your experience. How beautiful and clear it all seemed to me, and how wonderful that I should be given an understanding of these things. At times it comes over me with such force that I long to sing praises to God for bringing me out of the world and putting love for these things in my heart. How satisfied I was with the world before, but now it is all so different. The joy which has been given me in this love is so far above what I found in the world that I look back over those years and wonder how I was so well contented. The thought comes that my Savior was caring for me then as he is now, and he had me to pass through those years that I might more fully realize the difference when he manifested his Spirit in me. What a comfort it is to know that he doeth all things well, and that even though we are cast into the fiery furnace he has a purpose in it, and can make us to say, It is sweet to suffer affliction. There are

no clouds too dark for his love to penetrate. What a beautiful hope it is. In the flesh we had no desire to be humbled, but now the prayer is with me often to be made humble in the sight of God. There is so much in me which I have been made to see is contrary to righteousness that I feel burdened with sin most of the time, and instead of growing better I grow in sin. There is surely no other so full of sin as I. God has shown me plainly that my efforts to grow in grace are fruitless, and that it is through his great mercy and love alone that we can be saved. When I think of the great sacrifice he made for me I long to live as he did, but these words are put in my heart many times a day:

"Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love."

Often they bring a feeling of sadness with them, and it seems I have to be reminded many times. How gently God deals with me, and yet at times my flesh is more rebellious than I can tell at even these gentle commands.

Last night I was surprised when the clock struck ten. The children had gone to bed and were sound asleep. Papa and mamma left for Maryland yesterday morning, so I am keeping house. I took your letter down and read it to Aunt Mary; she enjoyed it very much. I think she fails every day. This morning the phone bell rang, and I was surprised to hear brother Fenton talking to me from Philadelphia. He wanted to know how he could best get to Black Rock. He and his daughter want to go down this afternoon.

Last Saturday, a week ago, I went home with brother Vannoy's family and spent the night. We had church meeting in the afternoon. He is very gifted in speaking, and I like to hear him talk. None of us were sleepy at 11 o'clock, but thought best to go to bed. I never grow weary talking of these things, and it seems much easier for me to talk of God's wonderful goodness than it ever was for me to talk of other things. It is God who now tunes my heart and makes it to overflow with joy and gladness, and I can see how helpless I was when depending on self. I opened the Bible last night to these words in Isaiah: "I will declare thy righteousness, and thy works; for they shall not profit thee." Also, "I create the fruit of the lips." What a comfort these promises are.

Now, dear aunt, I have written a poor letter in return for your comforting messages, but these thoughts have come to me while writing and I cannot help but tell them. May God bless and sustain you in future as he has done in the past.

Ever your loving niece,

BONNIE.

OCTOBER, 1907.

DEAR AUNT ANGIE:—Your letter came laden with precious thoughts. It seemed to me while reading I felt the things you wrote of, and my heart was melted. I can never tell the peaceful feeling that came over me, and how my heart went out in love to all the dear saints of God. Can it be that I am one of these? You say you cannot grasp the meaning of this. O Aunt Angie, I look at others and have no doubts as to their being heirs to this wonderful salvation, but I am so full of doubts and fears, and at times I have so little trust, that I fear I am deceived. I loved the evidences you gave in the letter, because I could feel a little hope rising within me. For the past week my mind has been much troubled and I could see no light, but tonight my burden is lifted and I feel to

rejoice in these sweet promises. It is after such dark times that I can say, "How tedious, how tasteless the hours, when Jesus no longer I see." Not long ago I was feeling terribly destitute, and had no peace of mind until I picked up the Bible and opened to these words: "Therefore also will I make thee sick in smiting thee, in making thee desolate because of thy sins." Then my sins appeared as a mountain before me, and I was humbled and made to see that my sufferings are light in comparison to what Christ suffered when nailed to the cross. How plain God makes his word to his children. Sometimes I wonder why it is that all cannot see it, but God tells us these great truths are foolishness to natural men, and as we go among them we find they have no desire for these things.

Elder Durand and brother Fenton came to the visit. I can never tell in words the sweetness and joy that filled my heart over the speaking that night. All during the early part of the evening the sitting-room was filled with those who love to talk of spiritual things. I had to keep very quiet, but I was made to rejoice when one after another came and sat down by me to talk of these things. Then about 7:30 Elder Durand, papa, brother Fenton and several of the members of this church spoke, and God surely was in the midst, for their words touched many that were here that night. All thought it one of the most pleasant gatherings we have had, and the words spoken have remained precious in the minds of those who know something of their meaning. One of Elder Boggs' (who preached here one hundred years ago) grandson's was present, and read a poem that Elder Boggs had written. Perhaps you have heard us speak of Dr. Garrison, who is treating Aunt Mary. The folks had a pleasant visit with Lucy. Sister Brewster spent the night with me while they were away. I am to spend to-morrow with her if all goes well. I often feel that I wish you knew each other in the flesh. I feel that you do know each other in Spirit. She is so spiritually-minded all of the time. Each letter that I receive from you stirs my mind up in way of remembrance.

Friday night.—I did not think Monday night that it would be so long before I finished this letter, but our time has surely been full since then, and now I can tell you a little of the pleasant visit we had with Elder Vail. He came about noon yesterday. We had other company for dinner and also a number here to supper. I do love to have the Old Baptists come. Elder Vail's mind was wonderfully peaceful and calm. Only a few days before he had been lifted out of a darkness that had filled his soul for almost two years, and he was able to rejoice and spoke with much feeling of the great Shepherd and his lambs. He was feeling in spirit that it was God alone could feed his children, and many hearts were comforted as he told of the power and glory of our great Redeemer. It is only when God reveals these things that we can understand, and O how thankful I feel that he has made me to know something of these truths, and the prayer for faith that was in my heart Monday night seemed to fill me with more fervor as I heard Elder Vail talking. As you said in your last letter, we know not for what we are praying when we ask for faith, but the desire comes and we know that faith can lighten any trial. The thought comes, Why do I try and write of these things when I cannot tell you the half of what was said? Yet, Aunt Angie, you come into my mind very often, and I

want to tell you the little that I can. I feel that even with this little you can read much more than I have written, for you have traveled the same pathway, and even though I had only told you that Elder Vail had been lifted from darkness into light you would know something of the joy that was his. He left this morning for Nutley and New York, and I feel that my prayer is that he may comfort God's children there as he did here.

This letter has grown and grown until I wonder if I ought to send so much, but I did feel a desire to add what I have tonight.

With much love, I am your affectionate niece, BONNIE.

NOVEMBER, 1907.

MY DEAR AUNT:—I feel that I want to write to you, but again the thought comes, What have I to say? How true we find it that when left to ourselves we are powerless to even think of those things which at times are more to us than all the grandeur of this world. My heart cries within me that God will fill me with expressions of his wonderful love and mercy, but I know that if this prayer is given by the Spirit, God will do so in his own time, and not until then will it be fulfilled. How many are the blessings that I have received from his hand, and I have nothing to give in return only a load of sin that Christ bore on the cross for me. Is he not a merciful God to be so longsuffering and forgiving? O that I might grow in grace and be kept humble, but it is as you say, the flesh is deceitful, and even that which we think good brings a pride which makes us conceited. How thankful we should be when we are made to feel our nothingness, for it is then that we can give God all the praise. I do love those moments; they make me feel glad that salvation is a free gift, for there is nothing in me to merit esteem.

Elder Vail preaches in Trenton tonight, and papa and mamma have gone to hear him; they expect to get home on the eleven o'clock car. He comes here Thursday, and an appointment has been made for him that night.

You asked me to tell about the visit of Elders Durand and Ker. Elder Ker was here the week before the visit. Brother David Blackwell came up to take supper with him that night. We had a good talk before the meeting, and also one after we came home. He preached a strong sermon on predestination.

You are so good to me to write me such beautiful letters when I have so little to write to you. I know I do not deserve them, but I look forward with eagerness to getting them, and long to be able to express myself as you do.

Sister Mary Terry spent last Sunday night with us; we enjoyed her visit and it was all too short. When I get stronger sister Brewster and I want to spend several days with sister Mary and then go to Philadelphia. We had planned to go in October, but how glad I am that I have been made to feel that our days are planned by One so much wiser than man. My disappointments do not seem so keen when I know He has a purpose in all things.

Saturday morning.—I did not intend leaving it so long before I finished this letter, but have not felt that I could write. Elder Ker came yesterday and preached last night. It was the first time I had been able to go to meeting for several weeks, and I cannot tell you how glad I was to be there. He left this morning for Kingwood, and expects to come back again Tuesday on his way

home. Elder Durand comes Wednesday and will be here for the annual visit. I had a lovely letter from Vernie, and want to write to her soon; give her my love and tell her I appreciate her letters. They do not give me much chance to write, for my spare moments have to be spent out of doors, and then I rest all I can. I hope it will be so I can come to Maine again before many years pass by. I did feel so drawn to you all.

Love to all, from BONNIE.

MAY 3, 1908.

MY DEAR AUNT ANGIE:—As your letters come this question arises oftener and oftener in my mind: Why does she write me such wonderful letters? They do me so much good, and I love to read them over and over. Since your letter came the experience I had the last night I spent with you has come into my mind often. This evening I feel glad in my heart, yet I know it will be impossible for me to tell the gladness of those hours. The last night of the meeting after I went back to Aunt Bell's I was upstairs alone, and a strange feeling came over me. I could never explain the condition of my mind; I was tempest-tossed, in fact I felt that all my hope was lost, and I did not know where to turn or look for help; I could hardly sleep. The next day while the others were apparently gay I was in darkness, and it seemed I could not even smile; an omen of some dark time was hanging over me. During the drive from Aunt Bell's to your place, while Nell and Loie were talking I felt destitute and separated from them. You no doubt remember my trying to stay in the kitchen and talk to you. I was in terrible agony of mind. After Nell came out to talk to you I went upstairs and picked up some of the SIGNS that were on the table in the hall and tried to read, but found nothing to comfort me. I picked up my Bible, but there was nothing for me. While I sat on the bed a ray of sunshine entered the room, and it was the brightest I had ever seen. I walked to the window and saw a black cloud from which the sun had just risen. The sun rose in my soul at that time, and I have never known such joy before or since; I stood spellbound. Just above the sun were fleecy clouds and then clear, blue sky. I sat down and wrote; I felt that I could never stop praising my God. I came down in the sitting-room and read some of Mary Parker's writings, all the time rejoicing. Then I opened the hymn-book to the hymn beginning, "Where must the weary sinner go, but to the sinner's friend?" A tune came to me, and I sat there and sang it through. Soon I started to help bring in the supper, and each time I came into the dining-room my eyes wandered toward the sitting-room; I felt I never wanted to leave that spot. During the trip home the fleecy clouds passed through my soul, but when I reached home all was clear. I remember I felt so glad that evening that I could be cheerful with the boys my last night. I have not told you as I would like to; it was far beyond any description I could write.

For some time I have been thinking of how interesting the pathway of a child of God is, with its ups and downs. How we wonder at times what God's purpose can be in bringing certain things to pass, and then in God's time seeing how everything has worked together for good. Then it is that he makes us to sing songs of praise to him for planning all things according to his will, and not ours. Sometimes I find myself trying to express a desire in words, but a number of times at such moments the words, God knows, will come to me with great comfort.

BONNIE.

SOUTH FALLSBURG, N. Y., Jan. 29, 1909.

ELDER H. C. KER, AND ALL THE DEAR LITTLE BAND AT NEW VERNON:—It will soon be time for church meeting again, and as I have no hope of being able to meet with you, I thought to try and write you a few lines, but I cannot explain my feelings in regard to making such an effort. Nearly every time appointed for the meeting, when unable to be present I would like to write a little, but the thought quickly follows: It is impossible, I cannot do it, and so I drift along; but it has come to me now that I must, and I feel I can have no peace of mind until I at least make the attempt. I feel just as insufficient as one can possibly feel; I am dissatisfied with my walk, talk, thoughts, and such a lack of every christian grace as becomes one who has had a name and place with the dear children of God as long as I have, and feel ashamed to try to speak of spiritual things. I know all my brethren and sisters have the same carnal nature to fight against as I, yet I fail to see it in them as I do in myself. I do not want to write altogether about my own struggle with sin and the flesh, and if the Lord will be mouth and matter I fain would speak of his power, wisdom, love and mercy to us poor worms of the dust, and of the precious promises left on record for our comfort and edification, and when applied by him to our poor souls are as food to the hungry and drink to the thirsty. When we have exhausted all our little strength trying to walk softly before him, and long to follow our dear Savior's meek and lowly footsteps, and find we have made, to us, a complete failure in every way, how comforting are Paul's words (one inspired of God): "When I would do good, evil is present with me," that I cannot do the good I would; and how sweet to remember, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." Again, when it seems we are given over to Satan, wholly without strength to let or hinder, find ourselves in a cold, lifeless state, our minds all engrossed with fleshly things, no zeal or apparent love for God, we desire to be in a different frame, but with no power of ourselves; we try to beg God for Jesus' sake to release us from this state of bondage, yet we travel on week after week, month after month, until we feel of a truth his mercies are clean gone forever, and feel surely we have no part or lot in these glorious things we so much desire; but in his own time we hear perhaps the wonderful promise, "Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." Also, "Fear not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength." Thus we see it is not our righteousness, but the righteousness of "Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Still the warfare goes on, trials and trouble of every kind it seems assail us, our belief is despised and even ridiculed by the world; then come our dear Savior's words, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." What an assurance to be able to think of these things. There seems to be a sweet promise for every trial and affliction if only our Father but speaks peace to our doubting hearts. But we cannot apply them ourselves, and we must be still and know that he is God, wait his

time to make his mercies known to each one. The above promises, with many others, have come to me with comfort in time past. I find I cannot write as I would like, but want to let you know these things are still precious to me, and I would love to meet with you, and hope to as soon as the way seems open.

With love to each and every one, I am unworthily yours,

MARY M. DUTCHER.

SALEM, Oregon, Feb. 15, 1909.

MR. AND MRS. TURNIDGE—MY DEAR FRIENDS:—In sorrow I write you the sad news of my dear mother's death, which occurred Feb. 9th, 1909. Her death was painless and peaceful, just like a little child going to sleep. I had often asked our heavenly Father in my prayers that her last hours would be painless, and I feel that my prayer was answered; it seems she has just passed into that new and better life. She told me she was trusting only in the righteousness of her dear Savior, and said not to grieve for her, she was so weary and longed to be at rest. She had been gradually failing for a long time. The last week her mind seemed perfectly clear, and she said she was so glad and happy, there was nothing to frighten her. This has been a great comfort to us. Elder Moffit came to visit her about two weeks before she passed away, and read from the Bible and talked to her, which was a great comfort to her. We were all by her bedside when she passed away, except Percy. She told me to tell Percy the best thing in life is to follow Jesus. In her weakness and helplessness she looked to Him who changes not. She told us she did not wish to have a funeral sermon, so we had Mr. Knight, an old friend of the family. He read some beautiful verses from the Bible that she loved, and after prayer her dear form was laid to rest by the side of her husband, whom she had mourned so long. We feel very sad and lonely, and how we shall all miss her. She had been my companion all through life, and my heart grows faint when I think how hard it will be to go on without her. We would be glad to hear from you. Mother never forgot you. We all send love.

In sadness,

(MRS.) MARY JENNINGS.

(See obituary notice on page 222.)

PENNINGTON, N. J., Jan. 31, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER AND PASTOR:—I feel like writing you a few lines this evening. We have had very bad colds for a few days, and were sorry not to be able to get out to the meeting this morning. We had a good meeting last Saturday; the sermon was, to me, beautiful indeed, and seemed full of good. Among other things, you spoke of your preaching getting stale to yourself, but such preaching as we had on Saturday the little flock will never get tired of. And the other brethren I thought spoke well indeed of these precious truths. I am so glad that some of them can speak to our comfort. I hope also that the meeting was very pleasant to some of the dear friends outside of the church who meet with us so often. We all hope, if it be the Lord's will, that we may call them brother and sister some day. I often feel thankful for the privilege we have of meeting with our brethren. I believe it is good for us to meet together and to speak about these glorious things. I feel sorry that some of the brethren so often miss the Saturday meetings; they are too good to miss. How thankful we should be that the dear Lord has spared our lives, while so many have lost their lives and property by the earthquake in Italy. We poor worms of the dust cannot understand at times the ways of the dear Lord, yet we know that these things are for some wise purpose. May the love of God abound with us all.

From an unworthy brother, if indeed one at all, PAUL S. LEIGH.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1909.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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2 TIMOTHY III. 16, 17.

"ALL scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

The verse preceding reads thus, "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." We have quoted this last verse because it defines clearly what Paul means by the word "Scripture" in the first text quoted. Timothy was a Jew, as was Paul, and had from his childhood been taught in the Scriptures held sacred by the Jewish people, and these Scriptures are just what we know as the Old Testament, with all the various books of which it is composed. These were all given by inspiration of God to the prophets, and to Moses, who wrote them as the Spirit wrought in them to show them what to write. To many other spiritual men it was then, as now, given to blessedly know by experience the things which were written by inspiration, but only the prophets and Moses were inspired to write infallibly what God would thus reveal to his people for their guidance in faith and practice. Since the coming of Christ, and his departure again, the Holy Spirit has given us the Scriptures of the New Testament, also inspired of God, and with the writing of the last book of the New Testament inspiration has ceased among men, and the volume of inspiration is closed. Now all must speak according to that word, else there is no light in them. That the New Testament must also be called "the Scripture" is proven by the language of Peter, who said concerning the writings of Paul that in them were some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures. But this we need not here dwell upon, since all to whom we are writing will not question that the New Testament writings are also numbered among the Scriptures inspired of God.

There is a difference between revelation and inspiration. All who were inspired of God to write the Scriptures received the truth from God by revelation; this they must have received before they could have written these things out of their own hearts. Our God could indeed have revealed the truth to men in other ways. He did speak through the dumb ass to Balaam; he did speak his word through Balaam himself, who was utterly ignorant of any saving knowledge of God; and he made use of the wicked priest Caiaphas to also declare solemn truth at the time of the betrayal and sufferings of the blessed Redeemer. (See John xi. 50, 51.) But in all his revelations to his people it has pleased him to speak through devout men who feared and served God. Men who knew him have testified of him in the Scriptures, but there have been in all ages thousands and millions who have received his word by revelation to their souls, who have not been inspired to write or to speak his word; and since the

last word written by inspired apostles no one has ever written or spoken by inspiration. To his chosen our God by his Spirit brings his living word, showing to them what is in their own hearts, and what they are in his sight as guilty sinners, and as prisoners justly condemned, and then he is pleased to also show to these same convicted souls that salvation that is complete through the finished work of the dear Redeemer, and that it is sufficient for them, and to sweetly apply by the power of the Spirit these truths to them, so that they feel in themselves that they are healed, and are made ready to give to him praise and glory. But in this there is nothing additional to the testimony of the Scriptures; all this is just what the Scriptures have revealed before. To these inspired Scriptures must every thought, every experience, every imagination of the thoughts of the heart be brought and tested. "If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Many thoughts come to believers which seem to them very pleasant, and reasonable also, and which they are inclined to accept and cherish. Sometimes these thoughts come as a flash of light, and do not seem to have originated in our own reason; sometimes they come in a way that seems to the believer like a revelation, and he is inclined to think it must be of God; still, no matter how any such apparent light may come, we all ought to be sure that what we have seen is taught also in the Bible; then, and then only, can we be sure that what we have thought and seen and felt is of God. There has been no new thing revealed to any man since the canon of the Scriptures was closed. Our thoughts and feelings are altogether unsafe guides. We have known men of experience of the grace of God who have thought that sprinkling or pouring was scriptural baptism, and have rested satisfied in it, but we know they were altogether wrong; they have substituted what they thought was right for the plain truth the Scriptures teach. The same thing is true of all human thoughts: if not according to the Scriptures, they are contrary to the mind of God. The same is also true of exercises of the mind, they may be of the flesh, or of the devil, and yet seem to us like angels of light; nothing can test them but the word of God in the Bible. Men, for instance, claim to be holy and free from sin, and say that it is an experience, and that because it is an experience they know it is true. But this experience is of the flesh, or of the devil, or of both, because holy men of old who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost do not so testify. It seems to us important that we keep these things closely in mind. Some experiences that at the time we thought must be of God, we afterward could find no warrant for in the word of God, and so we have been compelled to believe they were not of God. All men have some sort of experience, even the Pharisee; but that experience which God gives we shall know to be of him indeed when we find it recorded in the Bible; and the experience of the Pharisee is declared in the word to be of the flesh. To all who believe, is this gracious experience given; they all come to know the things which are given them of God; they all, as their several needs require, find precious things in the word of God, precious because they declare the same that they have themselves felt. But again let us say that this is not inspiration; it is revelation, but not inspiration. The servants of God know this to be true, and so when writing or speaking in the name of the Lord it is

their constant appeal to those who hear them to test what they say by the word of God; and more than this, they do not declare anything as though they were to be looked upon as authority, but simply as what inspired men have declared ages before. They do indeed feel often to say, These things have been made precious to our hearts, and we trust that we testify what we do know and what we have seen, but after all, these things that we have known and seen must be in accordance with the Bible, else it is all but a vain show. Each minister of Christ will feel to say to all who hear him, "Search the scriptures." It is still true that they who do search the Scriptures are the more noble, as were the Bereans, who searched them to see if the things declared to them were true. While the preaching of the word is a special gift, and none can take this honor to himself, except he who is called of God, as was Aaron, yet they who are thus called may not know any more about the way of life than the humblest of the flock. Indeed, we know that one man, at least, who was eloquent and mighty in the Scriptures, needed instruction, and that a man and his wife, Aquilla and Priscilla, expounded the way of the Lord to him, in one particular, more perfectly. But to Apollos, after all, was given that which Priscilla, at least, did not have: the gift of the ministry. It was our lot to labor for many years, while but a youth, among aged believers. Many of them were more deeply led into the meaning of the word, and were given a far richer experience than we have ever known, but still it was given to us of God, as we trust, to minister in word and doctrine as was not given to them; but neither to them nor to ourself was ever given of God anything either contrary to the Scriptures or anything beyond them; both they and we were solemnly bound to bring our every thought to the test of that word which is quick and powerful.

To prophets and apostles was given inspiration in such a sense that all they wrote was not only the thought of God, but also the very words of God. Men now may have the mind of God, but fail in stating that mind by reason of misuse of language, but in the Bible this is never so. When holy men of old spake as they were moved, the words were selected for them and put into their mouths; yet they spake out of their own heartfelt experience also. How wonderful is all this. Men differed in manner, in style, in feeling one from another, but all of them were so moved and controlled by the Holy Spirit that all spoke just those words God would have them speak. Isaiah spoke like himself, and Paul spoke like himself, and no one would ever think the language of the one was the language of the other, yet all that both wrote was the language that God gave each to use. This must be so, else we cannot be sure they did not misuse language, even as we may and do misuse it, and so darken counsel, rather than set forth the plain truth. We can therefore turn to the word of the Scriptures with security. Whatever else may be wrong or false, there is the truth declared by right words, and our one study is to carefully see what the words signify. From the first we have felt we must come to the reading of the Bible with full belief that all which is written there is written just as God would have it, and that we must accept it, however wonderful, or even contradictory, it might appear to us to be. If this be not so, then we have no sure ground to stand upon for our faith or practice. If it be proved that any por-

tion of the Bible declares things that are not so, then we cannot be sure any portion of it is absolute truth, or that any portion is inspired of God, and where then do we stand? We do not stand at all, but are left to drift upon a boundless sea, without sun, or compass, or rudder, and with no shore in sight. We cannot then be sure about any ordinance of the church, nor about any doctrine declared there. Jesus declared that the Scriptures testified of him, but if they may not be true their testimony of him is without value. How wretched must be the heart of a poor sinner if he be convinced there is nothing certain in the testimony of Jesus given in all the Bible. Inspiration, verbal inspiration of the Bible we mean, is essential to our finding any solid consolation in Christ. How shall we know our consolations are of the Lord? The one reply must be, Are they in harmony with the consolations testified to by holy men of old? If so, they are of God; if not so, they are not of God. We must not substitute our experiences for the testimony of the word of God in the Scriptures. It has been the special glory of the Baptist Church in all ages that they have demanded a "thus saith the Lord" for all they believe, teach or practice. Has our God commanded this or that? has he declared this or that? has been their constant question. By this test they have received what they have received, and have rejected what they have rejected. May God grant that this shall ever be so. We do not know how many times the expression occurs in the Bible, "Thus saith the Lord," or some kindred expression, but they occur almost constantly. Let us be found standing by this one truth, viz., that we must not take the traditions of men, or the authority of a priest, or even the authority of the whole body of the church, as our authority, but solely the Bible. Even an apostle could say, Follow me, as I follow Christ; and even apostles did not claim dominion over our faith. It is a sorrowful thing when people are content to take the word of a pastor for any principle of faith or practice. It is a good and wholesome thing when they look beyond the word of the minister to the Bible to see if what he has to say is in accord with it, and it is a blessed state to be in when we can come humbly to the word of God, praying for the presence and enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, that we may read as a little child, and heed as a little child, and receive with simple faith what we read, as a little child hears the words of its father. We have had cause for gratitude all our life that brethren where we have labored have been among those who searched the Scriptures for themselves, and were not afraid to call our attention to anything in our teaching that to them seemed wrong. It has been good to be driven again to search the word, for sometimes we have been convinced that we were wrong and they were right, and that was our gain. In all this, brethren came to the Bible to see what it taught, and this is good and wholesome for us all. May the word of God continue to be the man of our counsel always, and our guide until death.

We have written here what we have felt deeply for many years, and what we have desired to abide by.

C.

JOHN XX. 7.

ELDER KER—MY DEAR BROTHER:—Will you please give your views through the SIGNS on John xx. 7: "And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself"? and oblige one who enjoys reading your writings. I never heard you preach, but hope to some time.

From one who loves you for the truth's sake. ***

The above request reminds us of a like inquiry in our own mind some years ago. We thought many things and searched diligently to see if the apostles made reference to the matter. It hardly seemed that John would so minutely describe the location of the linen clothes and the napkin if nothing were signified by them. Yet in all our searching we failed to find any direct reference to the circumstance, hence were left in darkness regarding the text, and much uncertainty as to what is signified by those things remains with us. We are glad, however, to give such views as we have.

The text and its connection embrace a most wonderful subject, one never to be lost sight of by those whose sins the great High Priest bore. Of some of these things we shall make mention as leading up to the text suggested by our unknown brother or sister.

The offering of Christ was the fulfillment of prophecy, both in word and in symbol. No blood of the old covenant could take away sin. No man could atone for his own sin nor that of his brother. Silver and gold could not redeem man. The transgressor has never been able to undo what he did. No law of this world can justify a guilty man, and as all were guilty before God, and as no law was given that could give life, some other means of redemption and justification must be made manifest. This was done in the appearing of Christ, made of a woman and made under the law, to redeem them that were under "the law of sin and death." When born in Bethlehem shepherds were advised of the fact; a star guided wise men to the place; there they worshiped the Savior which was Christ the Lord. From that time his life was sought, but without effect. He came to die, but not until the appointed time. His works must testify of him; every declaration of prophecy concerning him must be fulfilled. He healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, cleansed the leper, raised the dead and preached the gospel to the poor. He called men to be his disciples and apostles; them he ordained to preach the kingdom of God. Those men did not forsake him when he said, "I am the bread of life," and "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." They were to them the words of eternal life, while the same were hard sayings to other men who followed Jesus no more.

In the choice of the twelve disciples, one was "a devil." This reference was to Judas; a special work he must do, but which he could not do until "the hour" came. Then Jesus was betrayed by him into the hands of wicked men to be crucified. False witnesses appeared against him, but his own testimony must condemn him in the eyes of the council. The high priest said unto him, "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus said unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." It was a transgression worthy of death for a man to make himself equal with God. When before Pilate and asked if he were the King of the Jews, he answered, "Thou sayest." Pilate seemed to know that in him was something holy, just and good.

He desired therefore to release him, but such was not the purpose of God, hence the Jews cried, "Crucify him." He was not delivered unto them, however, until after Pilate had washed his hands of the matter, and Jesus had assured him that they who brought him to Pilate had "the greater sin." He was then led away, bearing his cross, to be put to death. Some have thought that he was so fatigued that another had to carry the cross for him, but that could hardly be, inasmuch as he was strengthened by an angel to do the work given him of God to finish. He never faltered nor failed in any of the work he came to do. It is true than when on the outside of the walls of Jerusalem another was compelled to bear the cross. When being put to death some said, "If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him." What would such a miracle as that have been compared with that of raising the dead? They could not have believed had he come down from the cross. His victory was not to be through life, in saving himself from the cross, but through death he should destroy him that had the power of death, and deliver all his chosen ones from its dominion. When pronounced dead, Joseph asked that he might have the body. The request was granted, and he and Nicodemus prepared it after the custom of the Jews for burial, and laid it in the new tomb wherein man never had laid before. The Jews then remembered things which seem to have been forgotten by the disciples. They had in mind the words of Jesus that, "After three days I will rise again." And they said to Pilate, "Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead; so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch." But at the appointed time he came forth from the dead. "It was not possible that he should be holden of it." After the great victory the watchers were paid to tell a falsehood: that while they slept the disciples came and stole him away, and this is believed among the Jews unto this day.

Of the disappointment and anguish of soul of the disciples during those days and nights no heart can conceive. But very early in the morning of the third day a desire arose in the heart of Mary, and other women, to visit the sepulchre and anoint the body with spices. They began the journey, but all the way something was between them and the body of Jesus, and they said one to another, "Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" But on reaching the place the stone had been rolled away and the sepulchre was empty. Mary wept much, thinking the body had been taken away, and she knew not where it had been laid. Luke tells us that two men in shining garments stood by the women and said unto them, "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen." These things the women told the disciples, but "their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not;" but to satisfy themselves Peter and John ran to the sepulchre and went in and found it even as the women had said. Just here it may be well to remark that except a man be a witness of the resurrection of Jesus no testimony of men can convince him of that truth. Each one must know for

himself that Christ lives, then such testimony is precious.

When Peter and John entered the sepulchre they saw the linen clothes in one place and the napkin in another by itself. Concerning this we will say first, that it was the custom of the Jews to wrap the bodies of their dead in linen clothes and to put a napkin about the face. It was in this manner that the body of Jesus was put in the new tomb. Had the body been removed and laid elsewhere, as the women thought, the linen clothes and the napkin would not have been removed from the body, but instead would have been taken away with it. It seems therefore that they were left as a witness of the resurrection of Jesus, and that as he lived, there was no further need of them. While Lazarus was dead the graveclothes, and the napkin about his face, remained, but when Jesus had raised him from the dead he said to the apostles, "Loose him, and let him go." Then the graveclothes and the napkin were removed. He lived, hence no further need of graveclothes and the napkin. In this is seen the wonderful works of God. First, the life-giving power of Christ made manifest in a dead sinner, then the command to the ministry to take the graveclothes off of living characters, or in other words, through the preaching of the gospel instruct them in the way of righteousness, thereby removing the fetters of the law, traditions and the hope of justification by the deeds of the law. In the same way, preaching Christ, the napkin or vail is removed, that they no longer dimly see the reflected glory in the face of Moses (law), but "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." The apostle says, "Until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses [law] is read, the vail is upon their heart." In the napkin and linen clothes, left in the tomb after the resurrection of Jesus, this same truth was presented: that everything pertaining to the law was then buried, and that Christ, through his death and resurrection, had brought in "a new and living way." The same truth is also set forth in the death and burial of Moses, and in the leadership of Joshua; Moses a figure of the law, Joshua representing Jesus. Moses filled his place, and filled it well, but when the time came for Israel to enter the land of Canaan, Moses (law) had finished his work; therefore he died on the mount, and the Lord buried him, and to this day no man knows of his sepulchre. After his death and burial Joshua (Jesus) became their leader, leading them into the land that flowed with milk and honey. So also is the church of God dead to the law by the body of Christ. Moses is dead, or the law fulfilled, that she might be "free" to become the bride of the Lamb, her spiritual Joshua. The redeemed of the Lord should not henceforth seek the living among the dead. "He is not here, but is risen. * * * If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above [the law], where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."

K.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

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MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, March 18th, 1909, at the residence of the parents of the bride, Orlando R. Soden, of Pennington, N. J., and Miss Edith M. Hoagland, of Hopewell, N. J.

By Elder Frederick W. Keene, March 11th, 1909, Joseph F. Hall and Miss Alice M. Ford, both of North Berwick, Maine.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon Elijah Leigh died, after a lingering illness, at the home of his brother, William Leigh, in Princeton, N. J., Friday morning, Feb. 12th, 1909, in the 82nd year of his age. He was the third child of Albert and Mary A. (Birch) Leigh. They both were honored members of the First Hopewell Church for many years. He was one of a large family of children, all of whom lived to an advanced age, the youngest passing away from this life at about the age of sixty-four years, some two years ago. Brother Leigh is the next of the family to be called away. He had always been an active business man, first engaging in blacksmithing near Cedar Grove, where he was born, then engaging in merchandising at Mt. Rose for a few years, in company with Reuben Savidge, and then moving to Princeton, where he was for many years engaged in the grocery business, first in company with his brother, and then with his nephew, Mr. Van Cook. About one year ago he withdrew from partnership with his nephew on account of failing strength. He was well known in all this part of New Jersey as an honorable, active business man. Pleasant and affable in his manner, all were glad to come in contact with him. He always took an active interest in all that pertained to the welfare of the town of Princeton, in which for many years he had lived, and he was connected with various interests belonging to that town. The judgment of no man had greater weight where he was known.

These are the facts of his outward life among his fellow-men. We now turn to speak of his connection with the church, and of that spiritual life by which believers are united together as one. He was baptized in the fellowship of First Hopewell Church in June, 1858, and was chosen one of the deacons of the church in 1864. He was chosen treasurer in 1867, and elected clerk in 1887. After he became a member, for twenty-four years he missed but two communion seasons, and in all the fifty-one years of his membership we think it is within bounds to say that he did not miss any Sunday service in the church of his membership more than two or three times in a year. Service has always been held in this church every Sunday, and he much of the time lived nine miles away. The Lord gave him the spirit of faithfulness, and this record speaks for itself. Beside this, it was seldom that visiting ministers came here at any time that he did not meet them when service was held, either day or evening, and for their benefit, and the help of his pastor, and for any needed expenses of the church, his purse was always open. Once he said to us that he had no great desire to accumulate a fortune, but felt that if he could be of any use in the world by helping others who had need, he preferred helping them while he lived. This spirit governed him all his life. He never married, but lived with his family. During the last more than thirty years he had made his home with his brother William and his family, and his departure has left them very lonely and sad. We have never known any one who more completely exemplified in his life the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians than did he. He indeed hoped all things, believed all things, was kind, was not envious, did not vaunt himself, was not easily provoked, did not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoiced in the truth, and did not think evil. In all the years of our acquaintance we never heard him utter an unkind word of any one. If any pursued a course he thought was wrong, it was his feeling always to attribute to them good motives, and to leave it in the hand of God to show them the better way. What better things could be said of any one? And all this was to the praise of the grace of God. The love of God was shed abroad in his heart, and this love went out to all his brethren. This was true not only of the church of his membership, but of the churches everywhere. He loved his pastor, and he also loved all who preached the word in truth. We could say much more, but those who knew him do not need that we should, and it was never his desire that his name should be exalted. He leaves two brothers, six sisters and many other relatives, all of whom feel that they have lost a friend indeed.

The funeral service was held on Monday, Feb. 15th. A brief service was held at his place of residence, after which the body was brought to Hopewell, where services were held in the presence of a great company of his brethren, relatives and friends. Elders Durand, Coulter and Eubanks were present, the first two named taking part in the service. The text named was 1 Corinthians xv., first clause of tenth verse. After the service all that was mortal was laid to rest in the family plot in the cemetery adjoining the meetinghouse.

In conclusion, we will only say that our desire is that the consolations of the gospel of God may abide with all the family, and with the church, and with all who knew and loved him.

ALSO,

Professor Abel W. Hartwell died at his home, near Titusville, N. J., Dec. 4th, 1908. He was born July 16th, 1840, and was the youngest son of Elder Philander Hartwell, formerly well known to all Old School Baptists in the eastern and northern States, and to most of the readers of the SIGNS, and who was

for about twenty-five years the well loved pastor of the church at Hopewell, N. J. Mr. Hartwell was in the 69th year of his age, and his life was devoted to the interests of education. In early life he taught in the public schools of Mercer County, N. J., and for many years was principal of a large school at Princeton. The latter years of his life he was school superintendent of Mercer County. Two brothers and one sister survive him, beside a host of other relatives and friends, all of whom knew him but to love him.

The funeral service was held on Tuesday, Dec. 8th, at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Hopewell, where his father preached the gospel for so many years, and where he attended during all his early life, and often in later years. The funeral service was conducted by the pastor, Elder F. A. Chick, and the interment was in the adjoining cemetery. A very large assemblage of friends from all parts of Mercer County was present to pay a fitting tribute to the memory of a kind friend and honorable man.

The above presents the bare statement of the life and death of one who will long be remembered by all who knew him. We desire to add to this a few words of personal tribute to his memory. We have now and then met him during the past forty years, and since coming to live at Hopewell, twelve years ago, we have known him well. It has been ours to receive many tokens of kindness at his hands, and to enjoy many pleasant conversations with him. We have never felt greater respect for any man than we have had for him. He was always courteous, genial and kindly. We never heard him speak unkindly of any person, and did not discuss the faults of other men. A remark made by one of the members of this church the day of the funeral service covers all that need be said: he said, as he turned away from the coffin, with emphasis, "Professor Hartwell was a gentleman." What more could be said?

In compliance with our own feelings, and at the request of his family, we have written the above, knowing that very many who knew Elder Hartwell, even though they did not know the subject of this sketch, will be interested in again hearing of the family, and will sympathize with the friends who are bereaved. C.

Mary McKenzie Allison, wife of Peter Allison, departed this life Feb. 15th, 1909, at her home near Muirkirk, Ontario, aged 45 years and 6 months. She was married to Peter Allison March 25th, 1891, who, with four children, three daughters and one son, survives her. She is also survived by her aged mother, four sisters and one brother. She was confined to her bed a little more than a month before death relieved her of her intense suffering. Sister Allison was received in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada in February, 1900, and was baptized by the late Elder William Pollard, the fourth Sunday in May following. She was a woman of unusual understanding in spiritual things, and her gift of expression wonderful, often sealing comfort and instruction to her kindred in Christ. In all the walks of life she was faithful; a real helpmeet to her husband, a loving mother and kind neighbor. The loss to her family and to the church sustained in her death is beyond conception, so also is the glory she now enjoys beyond the comprehension of mortal man.

A very large gathering of brethren, relatives, friends and neighbors assembled at the home, where the usual brief service was held; then all proceeded to the Duart Cemetery, which is situated between the home and the meetinghouse, and there the remains were interred; after which we all gathered in the Duart Old Baptist meetinghouse, where the writer tried to comfort the sorrowing, yet realizing that God alone can speak peace to the broken-hearted. The text was Hebrews xii. 1, 2.

May the Lord remember in much mercy the family, but especially the husband and children, and reconcile the church to his will.

Written by request. K.

Mrs. Virginia R. Weeks died at her residence, near New Baltimore, Fauquier Co., Va., Feb. 26th, 1909, aged 71 years. Her maiden name was Florence. She died of pneumonia, that dread scourge of this climate. Her health had not been good for a number of years. Her daughter writes that her health failed rapidly the past fall and winter; she had not been out of the house since Thanksgiving day. She contracted a cold on the fifth Sunday in January, which was not considered dangerous at first, but pneumonia developed, and after a brief illness she passed away very quietly, easily and peacefully; she seemed perfectly reconciled. It was my privilege to baptize sister Weeks in the fellowship of Upper Broad Run Church, Fauquier Co., in the early part of my ministry here in Virginia, probably about thirty years ago, I have not the date. She was one among quite a large number who were added to the church during those years. She remained true to the vows she took upon her in public profession until the end. Sister Weeks lived a widow many years. Her home was quite a distance from the place of meeting of the church, so that, with other causes, often of late years hindered her getting to her meetings and enjoying those privileges she loved, but her heart never wavered or wandered after strange gods or false doctrines; salvation by grace was her only hope and trust. Her life exemplified her faith; nor was her love in word only, but in deed and in truth. It is a comfort to know that she retained the love, confidence and fellowship of her brethren from the beginning to the end of her life among them. It seems superfluous to add that her life in all its relations was above reproach, both in her family and in the world. She leaves a son and daughter to mourn the

loss of an affectionate mother, with two brothers and two sisters of her immediate family, and numerous kindred and friends, besides her brethren in the church, but who still remember that their loss is her gain. May God bless his afflicted people.

J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., March 10, 1909.

Zebulon McMillen died at his residence, Danville, Ill., July 4th, 1908. He was born in Newark, Licking Co., Ohio, in 1821. At the age of seven years he came with his parents to Danville, Ill., where he grew to manhood. In 1843 he was married to Mary Phillips, of that place; to this union were born three children, all dying in infancy. The mother lived but a short time after the death of the last child, in 1848. He moved to Monroe, Green Co., Wis., in 1852, and was married to Miss Mary Stillwell in the spring of 1862. He enlisted in Company C, 31st Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, where he served to the close of the war. He united with the Old School Baptist Church near Danville on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1858, and lived a consistent member until his death.

His remains were brought to this city and his funeral preached in the Christian's meetinghouse by Elder W. M. Rose. The body was interred by the side of his last wife, who departed this life July 4th, 1893.

I knew brother McMillen over forty years, and he was a man of strict honesty. He left to mourn their loss S. Bailey, Mrs. Samuel Butler, brother-in-law and sister-in-law, of this city, and Elder Wm. Stillwell, of Webster City, Iowa, brother-in-law, beside many other relatives. May the God of all grace reconcile them to their loss, is the humble prayer of the writer.

E. A. NORTON.

HAMPTON, Iowa, March 17, 1909.

Mrs. Mary Earnest, widow of the late Wm. B. Earnest, died Feb. 9th, 1909, at her home in Polk County, Oregon, nine miles south of Salem, where she had lived since 1852. She was born near Lexington, Ky., Feb. 26th, 1819. Her maiden name was Mary Morris. She was married to Wm. B. Earnest in 1840. With three small children they crossed the plains in 1852, and settled on their land claim, where her husband died in 1876. She professed a hope in Christ in 1852, and was baptized by Elder Stipp, uniting with the Baptist Church soon after coming to Oregon. She had passed through many severe afflictions. In 1870 her two sons, just entering manhood, were taken by that dread disease, smallpox, in one short week. One daughter, Mrs. Jane Crooks, died in 1879. Mother had almost reached the age of 90 years. She had moved around about six years in a wheelchair. Her only surviving child is the writer.

(MRS.) MARY JENNINGS.

SHERIDAN, Oregon, March 8, 1909.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

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"SONGS IN THE NIGHT."

This little book has been published about a month, and orders for it have been received from near and far, even to the most distant States. All from whom I have heard have spoken to me very highly of the book. For forty years it has been upon my mind to publish these poems and the experience of my brother, together with the account of his last hours, and have wondered why I did not do it. I felt sure it would be for the comfort of many, and the many expressions I have already received assure me that it is so. Elder P. D. Gold writes: "I have read the poems and experience of your brother with much pleasure. How wonderful was the view of divine things given to him. Surely to be absent from the body and present with the Lord is far better." Elder S. Hassell says: "I shall have a commendatory editorial notice in April. I hope you may dispose of several thousands for the comfort of the Lord's scattered people." Elder H. C. Ker writes me: "Your little book, 'Songs in the night,' was duly received, and has given me more comfort than any reading I have done for months. Surely every lover of truth should have it." The price of the book is fifty cents. All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 77. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1909. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE MYSTERY OF INIQUITY AND THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS.

THESE contrasting thoughts are revived (as I have often thought them before) by the reading of our venerable old sister's letter, written at Touchet, Wash., and signed (Mrs.) S. J. Cummins. Both are mysteries; no scientific research can explain them. If God really reigns we may well ask why he permits iniquity to exist, since darkness and light are alike to him, therefore with him there are no mysteries. In early youth the mysteries of sin began to dawn upon me, and I was led to wonder whence, why and wherefore. All around me were sinners, but I little cared or noticed the difference until I felt some mysterious power directing me to search my own heart; that was a mystery to me, and I felt to abhor a sinner—a person who sought and loved the mysteries of iniquity. I was led by them into secret vices, as yet ignorant of their import; led by Sunday School scholars and taught by Sunday School teachers to follow the ways of vanity and sin by their example, but to no profit. Thus I learned the mystery of iniquity. Only he who now letteth, will let, until all enemies be put under his feet. The sovereignty of God was in it. "The mystery of godliness" was so vividly evident in his purposes of mercy to me that I shall never be able to explain it on any other hypothesis than that of grace. I felt to abhor sin, but sin was a very part of my being. Can it be that this mystery is explainable by any law of my simple being as a man, or is there some mysterious existence in me as a new man, a renewing spirit, by which I am able to see new beauty in righteousness and understand new aspirations after holiness? O the blessed mystery of purpose that God must have had toward us as sinners! To us the mystery is magnified day by day; for how could God have mercy on us as sinners? and yet mercy is only for sinners. "Peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Surely this is a wonderful mystery of godliness. "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh." But since, "in the wisdom of God, [that is, since he wisely created man incapable of knowing

him by his natural capacities,] the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." I never believed anything in order to make it true, but only believed preaching in proportion to the evidences of my inward thought; no logical deduction of science is necessary to convince a quickened soul that he is a sinner. The law of Moses cannot do more than to condemn the sinner, either dead or alive. The law of a quickening power alone can make the dead hear, but the coming of the law of life in Christ Jesus awakens to a new capacity of understanding through the energies of a new life given. "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." There are now two lives, the Adamic and the Godlike. The one is dead, or destitute of spiritual sensibility; the other is under the law of life in Christ Jesus, and free from the law of sin and death. Now if we are dead to the law by the body of Christ, we should not argue any inability to live soberly and honestly before the world, for our ability is all in Christ, and he hath promised never to forsake us. So great is the mystery of iniquity that we are often perplexed at its many phases. In the world it abounds under cover of church and professional piety and benevolence, but there is an ever-present mystery of godliness with his children, which proves his power to care for his people in spite of all environments of evil. He can take one of a city (corrupt as Sodom), or two of a family (however inconsistent it may seem), and bring them to Zion. Godliness is profitable unto all things, for though our old man may not consent to practice it, yet the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, has the power of God and the leading of the Spirit to sustain and guide into true obedience, in proportion to the "measure of faith" that God giveth to every man to profit withal.

The mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth, will let, until all enemies be put under his feet. We may marvel at the presumption of pious (?) sinners, even among the very saints of God, whom we feel loth to censure as hypocrites, but can only say, "The Lord rebuke thee." Alas, what desolations are locally proving the sad truth that "because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold," yet I find even in scattered Israel, where once flourished prosperous churches, a few names still who mourn over the church's desolation. "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, * * * smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." This is the mystery of godliness; God still reigns. He will hear in Jerusalem all those who pray looking toward his holy temple, though they be scattered among the heathen, where iniquity abounds by license, law and practice; and they who seem the nearest like the pattern in form, without the Spirit are the most misleading. The popular claims of universal charity and offers of church union are the most envious, hypocritical and pernicious (even spiritual wickedness in high places), calculated often to lead astray the confiding child of God, who has been taught of him without the use of words or true pastoral hearing, until the Lord sends his servant, who is shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, which when they hear they are blessed with the witness in themselves, accepting his ministry of truth, and so saved by the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation; and the true serv-

ant of God will not say it was his preaching the gospel that was the power of God unto salvation, but that he preached the gospel of Christ, which gospel (not the preaching of it) was the power, and the glad tidings were thus made acceptable. Another mystery of iniquity may sometimes be clothed with great soundness of speech, learned by rote from history, articles of faith or catchy expressions from the lips of a true and gifted minister of Christ, without the actual experience of true spiritual, gospel power—the power of God unto salvation, which includes a keeping power. "Kept by the power of God through faith;" preserving power; a very present help as well as a theoretical harmony of thought. I had never known half the power of the mystery of godliness had I never been tempted and delivered by an unmistakable yet mysterious Presence that saved me. I cannot dwell too long on the blessedness of God's power in every condition of life. My soul is wrapped in the ecstasy of joy, while I am alone and sometimes feel the darkness and gloom of desolation around me, to feel so near to Him who has proven his words of promise true, for he has never forsaken me; and then to think I was so unworthy on account of inbred corruption, which he would not let me show to the world, and I feel in debt to his grace for the fact that I have no enemies for any improper conduct. Only lately a retired M. E. minister quizzed me so persistently that I had to acknowledge I did not know any better than to trust in the wisdom of God, while many were boasting and preaching the wisdom of men. Peter testified that, "The time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries; wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you."—1 Peter iv. 3, 4.

O how strange it seems that I should read in the last SIGNS the letter of sister Sarah Wyman, closing with the sad moan of her soul: "But now our church is gone, our songs are turned to weeping, and perhaps His mercy is not for such unworthy ones, yet hope is not gone; we hope in his mercy." "Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder: he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God." —Psalms xlvi. 8–10. The old meeting-house is fast passing to decay where once I felt the sweet consolations of His grace. I well remember that sister Wyman was the only young member (received a few years before I was) in all of my knowledge when I joined the Baptists, forty-five years ago; all others of the church were old. What a mystery there is in God's ways; what power there must be in godliness; how mysterious that hope should not perish, even under such desolations. Surely, "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

I insert this paragraph in order to show my appreciation of the old memories revived by sister Wyman's letter.

We preach in vain if we have not the experience of the gospel we talk about. We make light use of the sacred mystery of godliness if we frequent the house of God with careless frivolity. That sacred place always had, since I had any true spiritual sensibility, a solemn sacredness that seemed akin to heaven, and I feel to

say with the poet, "Let my religious hours alone." Exhaustless theme, the mystery of godliness, the secret of the Lord, in contrast with the wisdom of man, which is foolishness with God; they must both be seen on earth that we may be resigned to lose the man, and so forever find satisfaction in the power of God.

A. B. BREES.

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio, Nov. 30, 1908.

SYDNORSVILLE, Va., Jan., 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—My mind has been burdened for some time with a desire to write you a few lines to let you know how much I appreciate the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Brother C. M. Turner, of Roanoke, Va., subscribed for me; he enjoyed it so much he said he wanted me also to read it, and I certainly appreciate it and his kindness. Reading it carries me back to my boyhood days, when my father, Elder E. B. Turner, read it with much delight. He was a subscriber for many years. Well do I remember Elders Gilbert Beebe and Leachman coming to my father's house in 1860, on their way to the Pig River Association, and how much their visit was appreciated by us all. I was a poor sinner in nature's night, without hope and without God in the world, but I can remember how well those old servants of God, Elders Beebe, Leachman and Turner, together with my dear mother, enjoyed themselves, and that there was no disagreement at all, but all were of one accord, which makes me think they had all been taught of God, and taught the same great lessons. I hope so indeed, for if not, I am certainly a stranger to grace and to the covenant of promise, and am without hope and without God in the world.

My dear brother, (shall I take the liberty to claim such a relationship in the Lord, when I feel so unworthy of such fellowship?) I feel I am not worthy of the least of all God's mercies which he has bestowed upon me; I fall far short of rendering the praise that is due to his holy name. But we are told by the word of inspiration that he will be merciful to our unrighteousness. He knows that I am but dust, and he remembers my poor, feeble frame.

I desire to tell you, dear brother, some things that are on my mind upon the Scripture recorded in Romans viii. 28: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." This was written by Paul, who was inspired of God to write for our learning and instruction, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Although he was here addressing the church at Rome, yet these words will apply to all of God's elect or chosen people. This takes in Abel, and from him all to the last heir of promise who shall be brought to a knowledge of the truth. It seems to me that the "all things" named in the quotation takes in everything, whether good or bad. It takes in not merely the good things, but "all things." We know, for instance, that while Cain slew his brother Abel, yet it worked for his good, for God had accepted his offering, "God testifying of his gifts: and by it he, being dead, yet speaketh." Also take the case of Joseph and his brethren. All that his brethren did was evil upon their part, yet it all worked together for good. Our God made the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder he restrained. They sold him through malice, and ill-will toward him, but God had predestinated it beforehand; it was among the "all

things" that work for good. Joseph must be sold and put in prison in order that he might interpret the king's dream, and provide food for his father and brethren who had hated him. Also the Hebrew children, who were cast into the fiery furnace, but made manifest the power of God in perfecting and saving them; and Daniel in the lions' den but gave opportunity for God to make known his power in closing their mouths; and I am sure that Daniel felt as safe as though he had been thrown among a flock of sheep. God must be glorified. They all loved the Lord, and would not bow down to the will of the wicked king. All this was wicked upon the part of their accusers, yet God was not the author of their wickedness, but because they were wicked it was the will of God for them to show forth their wickedness in this way, as was said to Daniel afterward, The wicked shall do wickedly, and they shall not understand. So then these are among the "all things."

Look again at the case of Stephen; although he was engaged in preaching the glorious gospel of the kingdom, these wicked men who stoned him to death did not know that all was working for the good of Stephen, for he, while dying, saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and his prayer was, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Paul was just as willing for the death of Stephen as were those who stoned him, yet the dear Lord had mercy upon him and forgave him, and wrought such a change in him that he loved the same doctrine which he had hated with all his soul, mind and strength; so much so that he did not confer with flesh and blood, but went immediately and preached Jesus. These were some of the "all things." Thus we see from Paul's own experience that he was not guessing at this when he wrote these words. I am glad indeed that in the beginning of this verse he says, "We know," for it seems to me that he brings in every little child of grace.

In the next verse he adds, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." The foreknowledge of God reached to them before there were any of them, for he declared "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." It is not as the Arminian world would have it: that his foreknowledge did not know whether Adam would fall, and that after he did transgress God prepared a remedy. No, this will not do for a heaven-born child to believe. It seems safe to me to believe that our God was not in the least disappointed in the transgression of Adam. I believe he knew all about it, and had already prepared the remedy, and that counsel of peace which is between the Father and the Son had already been made for the salvation of his chosen people. Paul testifies regarding this, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Not that we make ourselves holy and without blame, but because of his choice or election. Our God did not wait to see what Adam would do, but all the grace and blessing were treasured up in Christ before the world began, before the breath of life was breathed into Adam, and before the morning stars sang together or the sons

of God shouted for joy. Yes, as Watts has it,

"Before the sun, the fount of light,
A single round had run,
God's church was present in his sight,
As chosen in his Son."

"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." All of this was foreknown and predestinated of God to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved. Again, the apostle said, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." I never have been able to separate God's foreknowledge and predestination. Just as soon as he foreknew his people he predestinated them to be conformed to the image of his Son. Jesus was the firstborn, the first to rise from the dead, and so also shall our vile body be changed and have the image of Jesus, and be like him. As he predestinated them to be conformed to the image of his Son, he also called them, "and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" It seems to me that were the apostle living now I would say to him, What things? and his answer would be, "All things" are to work for the good of the chosen people of God. What more could the child of God ask? God is for them, and no charge can be brought against them. And now, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us." Still further, Paul writes, "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Dear brother, I have written this in order to relieve my mind, and I hope you will throw the mantle of charity over it. I fear to write much, lest I darken counsel by words without knowledge, or hurt the cause of God, but I want to be faithful in the discharge of my duty. If I am not mistaken, God has called me to feed his sheep and lambs; he has not called me to make sheep or lambs, but to feed them. I have no use for the doctrine of instrumentality, or means, in quickening the dead; the Lord alone must quicken poor sinners, and he alone can save. I am not in the least uneasy about the salvation of the church, for it is sure that the last one the Father gave to the Son shall be brought into a knowledge of the truth.

Do with this as you think best; examine it, and if you cannot indorse it throw it into the wastebasket.

Your brother in a precious hope,

Z. T. TURNER.

NEWARK, Del., Feb. 12, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—By request of sister Staton I send the inclosed letter, written to her son-in-law. It was not written for publication, but we think the readers of the SIGNS would appreciate it,

and we have brother Rittenhouse's consent to send it.

I wish I could tell you how much I enjoy your editorials. The one on, "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing," appealed to me so much that I read it over many times. If every one who has the impulse to tell you what a comfort your writings are to them should just sit down and write, I suppose it would be a burden to you to read all the letters. As I have been an invalid for over ten years I cannot go to meeting, and get most of my preaching through the dear SIGNS. I am better in some ways than when you made us that short visit at the W. T. parsonage some years ago. You will be glad to know sister Staton is able to attend meeting this winter, and visit. Many a "cup of cold water" has she given to me in my affliction, and I missed her visits last winter while she was crippled. I am ten thousand talents in debt, with nothing to pay.

Your unworthy sister in affliction and hope,

(MRS.) LUCY M. ROUNDS.

STATE ROAD, Del., 1908.

MR. JOHNSON—DEAR FRIEND:—You have called up more memories by one sentence than have passed through my mind for a long time. Who are we and what are we, and why are we thus? Who and what were the Welsh who left their fatherland and settled at Iron Hill, Delaware? I shall try to be plain, and shall quote some passages of Scripture, as, I believe, most educated men believe the Bible to have been written by inspiration, and they interpret it by the best light they have. I will give chapter and verse, so you can easily find the quotations and see the connection, so as to compare my applications with your opinions. You say you are not orthodox. If I know what that means, you mean you do not quite follow any of the established creeds, nor do you think anything just because some other man thinks so. Sometimes we move along quietly, our beliefs fixed in our minds; the path seems smooth, and then suddenly we are confronted with an accusation, and brought to trial where argument is wasted, and we have to hunt our records for our best evidences, and be always ready to give an answer to every man that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us with meekness and fear. (1 Peter iii. 15.) In the trial that follows, the lawyer who has the opposite side of the case has never been found wanting when a case was called, and has been noted many years for his capacity to argue well. "When the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them." —Job i. 6. Some years ago a young woman I knew well went with a relative a long distance to a Baptist association; after the meeting she said, "Those people seemed to take that all in, as if it were really so." It is not often one is met by a challenge like that, of utter unbelief where only good evidences would count. But the world or public opinion is a vast court, and we stand before its bar constantly; in argument we are hardly one to the thousand; but there is a more critical court, where our wily adversary puts in his most searching arguments. When we come together for worship before the Lord our own minds question, Are we what we profess to be? Have we a right to say, "For Christ's sake"? Has he given us a right to use his name? We know enough of his power to know that we cannot forge his name. Do you wonder when we meet such arguments, either when at our work, on lonely rides, or by

night, for years together, that we sometimes seem a little indifferent to what vain man has to say of our doctrine? Has he been in the toils for twenty years as I was? If he has been through that school we will soon be comparing notes of the way, not arguing doctrine. How sweet in my memory is the sermon I heard father preach, from the text, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass."—Deut. xxxii. 2. Not long before my deliverance from the slavery to sin I was chopping cordwood in the forest alone, and had argued and met arguments all day, and talked with my wife in the evening. She was a member of the Presbyterian denomination, although her affections were with the Baptists (she was afterward a member), and as I started to bed first I said, Well, religion is good for children and for old folks. By the time I was upstairs the argument came back to me that if it is good for children to keep them moral and with a hope before them, and is good for old folks to rest on and to die by, it must be a pretty good thing for people in middle life, too. I slept on it, and have never been able to answer back. But still the gloom of a guilty conscience hung over me. Sometimes there were bright days, and sometimes dark ones, until one clear, sunshiny day, nearly at noon, I was walking along thinking over these things, when the sky seemed to open above me, and I saw a large book open, with a page full of charges of evil, and broken promises, and a hand passed over it, blotting it beyond the possibility of reading, and I heard, or seemed to hear, these words: Thy sins and iniquities are remembered no more forever. Immediately there seemed away across the distance, but on the earth, Christ hanging on the cross. It had all come so suddenly, so unexpectedly, and passed in such rapid succession, that I was somewhat dazed, but the sight of that book and the complete blotting out of the account brought the feeling of lightness and freedom, and there came an evidence of a good hope in the mercy of God through the crucified Savior that nothing yet has shaken; and if you talk with these Welsh Tract Baptists, or any others of the same faith and order, you will find they have all passed through a conflict and a deliverance. I have told these evidences to show who and what the Welsh Tract people are. Are we deceived and deceiving ourselves? We must go back again to our evidences, for arguments do not satisfy in such courts. John, the forerunner of Christ, got into doubt after his bright calling and evidences, and sent to ask Christ, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?"—Matt. xi. 3. Christ sent him the evidences: "Go and shew John again those things ye do hear and see." The years of longing for a purer life, with a sense of guilt all the time over me, and the deliverance from it (and with me it was sudden and final), and the longing to go into the water, even when I saw water with ice on it, and the blessed peace at the baptismal waters, these things were real; and if we yet are but animals, and die like beasts, I still say this faith is good for children to trust in to make them more upright, and for old folks to rest on in their declining years. But the very thought of infidelity shocks me as I write; God forbid that I should ever be as nearly an infidel as I was once, when I searched the air and earth for conclusive evidence that there was a God, or heaven. The plants grew from seed, and

the stars moved in their order, but when direct revelations came to me, by day and by night, for which there was no natural reason, I began to count my evidences and to treasure them, and silently pray for more. Now this is who and what we are; why we are so the Lord knows. He has always found the members of his church before the church found them. We are entirely dependent upon him for ministers, and if he ceases to keep us up one generation will wipe us out at any place, or all places. But the Lord has never left himself without witnesses to his own work of grace, and for his own reasons they are scattered all over the earth. Look over a few of the addresses in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and see that they are in every State in the union: "One of a city and two of a family;" not often more than a dozen in a great city. Do these scattered people have much to do with moulding the thought of this or any other country? I think not. I think they must always remain a mystery to those around them, because of their simplicity, their lack of forms, their indifference to grand houses of worship; it is their experience in coming to know this religion that makes these things as they are. "Consider the lilies, how they grow." They grow in simple, natural truth, as God made them, yet no amount of forms of worship will take the place of simple truth. This is a stumbling-block to those who teach how to worship God, and educate ministers to tell people how to get to a heaven of which they themselves have not had a foretaste. "Unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness." Again, "The foolishness of God is wiser than men."—1 Cor. i. 23, 25. They must always be a part of history, because they are intended to be. Go back to Cain and Abel, Noah, Abraham, Moses, the breaking of the papal power; we see the coming of one after another colony of those who were persecuted to America, only to be scattered more and more. Only a few years ago their funeral finale was written by one Mr. Cook, of Wilmington, but Mr. Cook has passed on, and I hear no more of him, but we know that wherever the Lord has begun a good work in any mortal he will finish it in his own time and to his own praise. I believe in education, all that it is possible to attain to, that we may enjoy more fully the beauties of God's creation, but no teacher, science, book or school ever gave the peace and lightness of soul that follows a christian baptism, nor would any mortal dare to promise it to any other mortal.

"'Tis Jesus, the first and the last,
Whose Spirit shall guide us safe home;
We'll praise him for all that is past,
And trust him for all that's to come."

On these evidences I am going to rest my case; I am unworthy of these things, but it is a pleasure to be a witness of the Lord's work.

I hope you will take this in the spirit in which it has been written. I have found your texts rather deep in whatever direction they look. Write to me often.

Yours truly,

ALANSON E. RITTENHOUSE.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 16, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The twenty-eighth chapter of Exodus is the word of the Lord unto Moses, relating to Aaron as high priest to perform in that office in the visible sanctuary and tabernacle. What I wish to write about is the breastplate of judgment, recorded in the fifteenth, sixteenth and thirtieth verses. We read also about the ephod and the two onyx stones with the names of the children of Israel engraven on them, six on each

stone, and these two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod for the stones of memorial unto the children of Israel: And Aaron shall bear their names before the Lord upon his two shoulders for a memorial (twelfth verse). This signifies the government and power, for "the government shall be upon his shoulder;" that in the reigning of our Lord and Savior, the King of kings and Lord of lords, he bears his chosen upon his shoulder, denoting a position of power, might and strength, and it being upon the top of his shoulder shows that Jesus is the power underneath his people, bearing them up, and when they experience the deliverance from the horrible pit and miry clay they can say with David, "He brought me up," and it sets forth also that their names are continually presented upward toward the Father, as Jesus says, Behold, I and the children that thou hast given me. The two stones with the names of the children of Israel engraved thereon were set in ouches of gold; the gold represents faith. The Lord's chosen are established by faith, the faith of God's elect, and from the ephod to the breastplate of judgment there was pure gold wrought in chains to bind them together. The breastplate of judgment was foursquare, being doubled, and the names of the children of Israel, twelve, engraved thereon upon precious stones. "And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the Lord: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually." The judgment of God strikes terror to the hearts of his subjects when they hear the thunderings of Mt. Sinai, and they fear and tremble, for the law condemns them; they see all their righteousness as filthy rags, and the eternal God as holy; so when we think of being brought into judgment in any manner there is dread and terror in our souls; but when the judgment of the law has spent its force, and we are killed to all creature merit and self-righteousness, then the judgment of God in our acceptance in the Beloved, when we were chosen in Christ Jesus "before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love," appears with healing in its wings. The law is our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ.

This breastplate of judgment was made foursquare, and doubled, showing in the pattern, as it were, a double judgment. As I said, the judgment of God to his elect was in their favor, when in the secret counsels of eternity God chose his people in Christ Jesus, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, and had there been no existence of that chosen elect tribe in Adam, our earthy head, there would have been no place for the second judgment; but in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. In Adam all sinned and came short of the glory of God, and in Adam's transgression all were separated from God, for all die, and death is a separation. Right here we see the need of a Redeemer, one to satisfy and fulfill the law, the second judgment. There are only two judgments represented, the one, as I said, that they should be holy and without blame before God in love, and by transgression or disobedience in Adam they were lost, and Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost. So the second judgment was the law that justly condemned them, and Jesus was "made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law," and

having redeemed them by his own blood he rose from the tomb for their justification. Well might the chosen seed exclaim, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us," &c.—Romans viii. 33, 34. In this we see Jesus as the great High Priest, of whom Aaron was a type, now reigning King in righteousness upon his kingly throne at the right hand of God, and he shall reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet. God's people, like the psalmist, say, "I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O Lord, will I sing." Isaiah prophesied, saying, The Lord "hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness."

The breastplate of judgment was foursquare, setting forth the city that John saw coming down from God out of heaven; on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates, and the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel were written upon the twelve gates, and there were twelve angels at the twelve gates, setting forth the ministering spirits of God, that testify to our souls' experience in the entering into this city is through the experience of the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage and darkness; and having entered into the city we see the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, showing that none other foundation can any man lay than that which is laid, and that is given us by the apostles, Jesus Christ himself the chief corner-stone. The breastplate of judgment was foursquare, and Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, setting forth the redeemed as being in the heart of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also," are the words of Jesus in his sermon on the mount, and the children of God are a peculiar treasure unto him, they are as precious jewels. Anything is reckoned in value by what it cost, so there can no value be placed upon the redeemed of God, for they cost the precious blood of Christ. Peter counts silver and gold as being corruptible as compared with the precious blood of Christ. Also the heart is the seat and fountain of life, so if the Lord bears his people upon his heart they are then written in the Lamb's book of life, are continually before him, and he lives in them and they live in him, and his life is the light of men. So we see wonderful truths set forth in Aaron as high priest unto God for the children of Israel, and speaking better things fulfilled in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for his people.

J. M. FENTON.

WAVERLY, Pa., Feb. 23, 1909.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed you will find two letters, one from sister Giberson, the other from Ernie S. Null. They are both excellent letters for God's needy poor to read, I think. I wish to say to the brethren, Remember and write to sister Marietta Dickerson, Wheelerville, Sullivan Co., Pa., and her dear old mother, sister Amy Shadduck, Shunk, Sullivan Co., Pa. Sister Dickerson is nearly seventy-seven, and her mother ninety-eight in April, I think. Also sister Alveretta McKay, Shunk, Sullivan Co., Pa. They are separated from the brethren by a long dis-

tance, and it would do them good to hear from you; it will do you good to write to these isolated ones, and in return you may get letters from them for your comfort. D. M. VAIL.

PORT REPUBLIC, N. J., Feb. 14, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER VAIL:—It is with a feeling of sadness that I attempt to write to you. I told you when you bade me good-by at mother's grave that I would try to write to you, so now I will make a feeble attempt. I do feel to be one alone; I have no one to say a word to who feels as I do, I am such a poor, wretched sinner, with not one good thing, not even a good thought in me. Why, I am so base as to even think sometimes there is no God, but when I have those thoughts I am made to shudder within, and something seems to say, For shame, who made this world? and I cry, Why God, the almighty God. O that it were with me as in days past, although I do have many sweet seasons when I am alone, when there is the falling of a tear, the upward glancing of an eye, when none but God is near. I think that is so beautiful, and if I ever prayed I have prayed many times that way. I cannot think any Old School Baptist ever felt as I do, nor was ever so base as I. Why, I have in my younger days shunned everybody, and would not read the Bible for fear I would see something that would make me think as the Old Baptists do. When I belonged to the Adventists I had my Bible all marked with pencil to tell the passages I liked best, when lo and behold they were changed in their meaning, they were all predestination from beginning to end. I cannot tell when they were changed to me, but some time in the year 1884 I read sister Clara Parsons Gilbert's experience in the SIGNS, and feeling drawn to her I wrote her some of my feelings and received a very precious answer, and I felt I must tell some one, so I think in November of the same year we had Elder Joseph Staton come home with us for dinner, and I told him of the letter I had received and showed it to him. He turned to me and said, "It would be very interesting to see the one you wrote to her." He spoke to me about going before the church, but I had not thought I dare do that; I thought I had to experience some great change; in other words, I thought something would happen to convince me that I was one of His, but that never happened. One thing I was convinced of: that I was a very great sinner, hoping in God's grace, and I really felt that I loved the brethren, and we know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. I traveled on that way until Saturday before the fifth Sunday in May, 1885, when I went before the Salem Church, in Philadelphia, where there were thirteen members; then on Sunday morning my cousin, Martha Myers, came and asked a home with them, and we were both received. The week following we attended the association at Southampton, and what a precious season we enjoyed. The meeting was opened with the hymn, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear." I never expect to experience anything like that week again. I felt, "How happy are they who their Savior obey." The Saturday following we, with a few others, went to Welsh Tract, and on Sunday morning another sister from there, Martha and I were buried with Christ in baptism. I was so happy then I thought I never could be otherwise. We went to a sister Frazier's to change our clothing, and while I was changing mine sister Frazier said to me,

"Are you happy?" I said, "Why?" She said, "You are singing;" then I thought what I was doing, I was singing,

"Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow thee;
Naked, poor, despised, forsaken,
Thou from hence my all shall be."

I have had many ups and downs, more downs than ups, and I am still a poor, miserable, sinful creature, with no hope of ever being different, but I still cling to my faint hope. I feel deeply the loss of my dear mother, and have felt very rebellious at times, it is so hard to give her up, but God's ways are not our ways. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord."

I only intended writing you a few lines when I began, but it seems I could not stop. I have been very much impressed to write a little for the SIGNS, but do not think I can, so will not make the attempt. My husband and daughter Ruth both send regards to you. Hoping I shall hear from you soon, I will close for this time.

Yours in sorrow,

AMY J. GIBERSON.

ROCKY FORK, W. Va., Jan. 16, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—I received your letter to-day, and feel I will have to answer it, and I trust it is of the Spirit. O you do not know how unworthy I feel, and if you feel you have been comforted by my writing give God the praise. It was a comfort to me to hear you say you were a helpless sinner, for that is just what I feel myself to be, and I can say with Paul that in my flesh dwells no good thing. Yes, I am just as prone to sin as sparks are to go upward; but I have an inward desire to follow the blessed Savior all the days of my life. This brings some more of the apostle's writing to my mind; he says, I myself with my mind serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin, and the sweet prayer of David comes to my mind: Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Brother Vail, this prayer seems to suit my case. I do believe whatever befalls the children of God it is for their good, but we cannot at all times see these things, and I believe the Bible teaches this. Paul says, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Yes, I am a sinner, and hope I can see it in a different sense from what I once did. Where I once loved sin, I now hate it and would love to be freed from it; but I shall have to carry this old sinful body with me as long as I live. These words of the poet come to my mind very forcibly, and it is so with me:

"If I pray, or hear, or read,
Sin is mixed with all I do:
You that love the Lord indeed,
Tell me, is it thus with you?"

But O what a glorious thought, that we are in the hand of the just God, who doeth all things well and never makes a mistake. He is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, and we have to be submissive to his will. You know the Bible plainly says it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

I will stop right here, for I do not feel that you can fellowship this. If you cannot will you be kind enough to tell me so?

Your unworthy sister in Christ, I hope,

(MRS.) ERNIE S. NULL.

FAYETTEVILLE, Georgia.

DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I have been requested several times to write what, I hope, have been the dealings of the Lord with me, but, feeling my weakness as I do, I have long hesitated to do

so. I do not feel I can write anything that will interest any of the Lord's people, but I feel it my duty to try.

As far as I can remember, it was some time the first of the year 1905 when I began to fear God. My father and mother always attended the Primitive Baptist meetings, and took their children with them, and I was always anxious for meeting-day to come, for I surely did love to go. I have said, ever since I can remember, that I hoped to be a member of the church some time. I was going to school when I began to be troubled, and began to feel uneasy about the way that I was living. I felt I was not living right, and tried to do better, but the more I tried the worse I got. I began to sorrow over the wrongs I did, but did not know what was the matter with me. I got to where I could not enjoy being with my schoolmates, but would rather be away in a secret place where none but God could hear, and cry, for it seemed that this would do me more good than anything else I could do. I felt I was such a sinner that no one on earth wanted to be with me; it seemed I was forsaken, and that I had not a friend on earth. What could I do? I would go from place to place and see the young people enjoy themselves, and wonder why it was I could not enjoy myself as they did, but there was no comfort for me. The people would often say, "What is the matter with you, Esther? You must be sick." I felt worse than if I were sick. I got to feel that I did not want to go anywhere. I did not feel that I had any welcome but at home.

I went on in this way, not knowing what was the matter with me, until the third Sunday in August, 1906, when I saw five of God's dear ones baptized at Hopewell Church, not very far from here, and O how I wanted to go down into the water and be baptized with them. I felt it would do me more good than anything else. I never passed a stream of water after that but what I thought of wanting to be baptized; that made my trouble worse. I tried to do better, but the more I tried the worse I got. I wanted to join the church and be baptized, but thought they would not receive me I was such a sinner. I would go to the meetings and hear good preaching, and it seemed that it was all to me and about me. The first time I heard brother Caldwell preach it seemed that it was all about me. I went to the meeting Saturday before the second Sunday in May, but when the opportunity came I was as far from joining them as I could be. I was in great trouble that day, and when I entered the house it seemed as though some one spoke to me and said, Take up your cross and follow me. I cannot express how that made me feel. I put it off, and kept putting it off, until I gave it all up. I felt that I was deceived and every friend on earth had forsaken me. What could I do? I had no friend on earth and no friend in heaven. I could do nothing but cry, Lord, have mercy upon me, a poor sinner. I could not rest anywhere I would go. My pillow was wet with tears almost every night before I went to sleep. Some told me if I would join the church my troubles would be gone, and I would find sweet rest in Jesus; but I thought, O if you knew just what a sinner I am, you would not be telling me that. I did not believe I would ever find that rest. I went to a union meeting at old Bethel Church, about thirty-five miles from home, Tuesday after the third Sunday in August, 1907, and I believe it was the most precious meeting I have ever attended. Seven preachers were there,

and it seemed that I enjoyed the preaching better than I ever did before in my life. I was filled with joy all the time I was down there. I did not want anything to eat, and did not eat anything at all sometimes. I had heard young people often say that they lived on love; I think I lived on love down there, but it was the love of God, and I enjoyed it all with tears.

The next meeting at our church after I came back was a sweet, sad one; I wanted to go home to my people and tell them what great things the Lord had done for me. It seemed that I could not live another month without being baptized, and when the opportunity was given and they were singing that dear old hymn, "Come, ye that love the Lord," I sat trembling like a leaf. I did not go forward that day, but my cry was, Lord, have mercy upon me, a poor sinner. When the meeting was over some one asked us when we got home from the union meeting, and brother Caldwell said that he did not think I had gotten home yet. I turned away from him in tears; it seemed as though I could not leave the church that day without uniting with them. The month between that and the next meeting was the saddest of my life; I seemed to want something and did not know what. I was in more trouble than ever; I had a still greater desire to go home to my friends and tell them what great things the Lord had done for me than before. I intended to go forward on Friday of our next meeting, but gave it up. I could hardly stay where any one was without crying. I was altogether in trouble. I went to bed Friday night crying, and my sister asked me what was the matter. I inquired why she asked me, and she said there must be something the matter. I told her I did not know it. I slept but little that night, and the next morning I arose in the same trouble, only worse. I did not eat any breakfast, but went to the table to keep them from noticing that anything was the matter with me. I was so weak and trembling that I could hardly stay up that morning, but did not let any one know it. I wanted to unite with the church, but was afraid they would not receive me, for I knew there never was one so bad as I. I would say to myself, I will not try this time, but I do not know how I can live another month. Just before we started to the meeting, in distress I said, Lord, have mercy upon me. What can I do? There was no peace, no comfort, no joy. Then all at once sweet peace came, and I never felt better in my life. I felt my sins were forgiven, my troubles gone and that peace had come. We went to the meeting, but when I got to the place my trouble had returned, all my peace was gone, and sorrow and tears had come back. When I entered the house everybody looked so lovely I wanted to grasp every hand there. When brother Caldwell entered the pulpit I dropped my head and sat there in tears all through the preaching. He took for his text, Noah's ark. He preached the best sermon I ever heard, and when the opportunity was given I went forward. When he asked me if I felt my sins were forgiven, I answered, yes, and I believe I told the truth, for I believe my sins were forgiven that day. That was Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1907. I was sixteen years of age. I was gladly received, and baptized the following day by Elder Caldwell. It was the pleasantest day of my life. When I went to brother Caldwell in the water I felt just like I was going to an angel from heaven. I entered

into that sweet peace which remains to the people of God; and I have been abiding in it since, although I have made many mistakes, and have not been thankful as I ought to be for His goodness and love to me.

I will close. I have written much more than I intended when I began, but I trust you will excuse me, for I hope the dear Lord has directed me in the writing of it. Pray for me.

Your unworthy sister,

ESTHER JACKSON.

[A BROTHER of the writer requests us to publish the foregoing narrative of experience, with which request we gladly comply—ED.]

HARBOURTON, N. J., Feb. 2, 1909.

MRS. GEORGE YARD—DEAR MOTHER: —Recorded somewhere in the Bible are these words: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." I often feel many things upon my mind that I ought to speak of, but do not. We are bidden to comfort one another with the words wherewith we are comforted ourselves of God. When these precious words are given to one, it is God manifest in the flesh, for in the flesh there dwells no good thing; and, mother, I keenly feel this nothingness daily in my heart; but in that other life that dwells in these mortal bodies there dwells nothing but perfection. The feeling I have toward Jesus and his precious people, his favored few, at times makes me hope against all the powers that Satan ever tempted me with; he then is left behind me, and nothing but the sweet and dear Redeemer is left in my mind. O what precious moments are those when one's soul is filled with the Holy Spirit; I could sit and sing myself away to everlasting bliss. In such a place is my soul to-night, Jesus has lifted me up, and I can say with joyful tears, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." He has spread his banner of love over me, and I can sit down in his kingdom with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, for he has put a new song in my mouth, even praise to his great and holy name. At such times I can see how grace and faith work in the heart of man to turn his wayward steps to God, and to subdue his evil passions, and to make him love the Savior more than words can tell. This is that love that caused the dear Redeemer to suffer, bleed and die the cruel death of the cross. I feel very, very thankful, and do thank him always for his tender care over my dear family and myself; and then when he feeds me with the bread of life I get above all earthly hopes and desires, and even dread to think of old Adam again; it always strengthens me so much that I am made willing to bear testimony to his goodness so long as it pleases God to let me live. I think then that I will forget his mercy no more; and that he has not bidden me to go with him yet, is full proof that he knows best. O may I be submissive to his will always, and under all circumstances.

I often think of our precious talks together when I lived at home. How much you did rejoice my downcast heart when you talked upon things divine. You know well, mother, that I love you most dearly, and father, brother and sisters, too, notwithstanding my very poor way of showing it; it is my nature that gets so far away at times. In the providence of an all-wise God, as I trust, I have gone out from home and settled over

here with my wife. I think now I can plainly see how dark things can be made light, for the good Lord has not forgotten me and mine, (praise the Lord forevermore,) neither have I forgotten you or the old home. There is such a burning love in my heart to-night that I am made to believe the dear Savior has redeemed my soul from under the curse of the law, and that it is precious in his sight; but when I look within I cannot find the needed evidence to put my hope beyond doubt. It may be that doubts are what we need sometimes. You know that John the Baptist doubted his hope in the Savior, and his evidence needed renewing. David came into doubts and fears, as did also Job and Peter, and, in fact, all the holy men of old. Jesus said, "If it be possible, let this cup pass," yet he came to redeem his people, and by the Holy Spirit we hear him cry, "Not my will, but thine, be done."

By one man's transgression sin came and death passed upon all men, and so by one man's righteousness, the man Christ Jesus, all his chosen are made alive. Now what more can I say to you but to hope on and endure to the end? The Bible speaks much of endurance. Your trials will soon be over. May the dear Lord be with you in death, as he is in life, is the prayer of your son. We are told to watch and pray, for we know neither the day nor the hour when the Son of man shall come. May I ask an interest in your prayers, that your boy may be led into all truth, and not bring reproach upon the Name that he has named, is my continual feeling. So may he bless you in your calling, and keep you from falling, and always keep you before him in love. Good night.

WM. T. YARD.

LAMAR, Colo., Feb. 24, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—As my subscription to the dear old SIGNS has once more expired, I inclose you remittance for another year.

The Baptists here are in peace and fellowship, and the Lord still, as of old, adds to the church such as shall be saved. At Bethel Church, near Lamar, of which Elder W. C. Perdue is pastor, a young brother awaits baptism at our next meeting.

I feel to write you a little of my experience within the last year that seems strange to me, and I have wondered if any of God's ministers have had such feelings. If they have I should be comforted to know it. About a year ago I fell into a very dark and distressed state of mind. It seemed to me that if the blessed Lord had ever required a work of me that it was ended; all the joy of his salvation seemed clean gone forever. I went about my religious duties without any spiritual light or comfort, and was made to cry with David, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me?" While the thought and conviction that God had cast me off forever distressed me, yet I could not help but feel that it was just; that I had no cause for complaint, for the favors, the manifold favors, he had hitherto shown me were wholly undeserved. I had deserved cursing, as I had been barren and unfruitful through all the years of my life, but instead I had received many, many blessings; but now I was impressed that God was purposing to withdraw from beneath me his everlasting arms, and to suffer me to go to my own place, as did Judas. Truly this conviction of mind caused me the deepest sorrow. I was as a sparrow on the housetop, as a reed shaken by the wind. Though I tried to

escape it my efforts were in vain; like an impending doom my banishment from God seemed to await me, and it was just; God was holy still, though I should be a castaway, even after having tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come. This fate seemed so certain and so just that I almost at times felt resigned to it. When I would go to my appointments, many times I would have no message, and even the most familiar passages of Scripture I could scarcely quote. I was made to say with the poet:

> "Like one alone I seem to be,
> O is there any one like me?"

This state continued for three or four months. I desired to know the Lord's will concerning me, and prayed (if I could pray) to be wholly reconciled to it, whatever it was, and at last I did feel reconciled to whatever was to befall me. In this state of mind I went to one of my appointments with fear and trembling, for I had come to think I had been a hypocrite all those years, deceiving the precious brethren, as well as myself. That meeting I shall not soon forget. With the very first hymn a solemn awe seemed to fall upon all the congregation; I could feel it throughout my whole being, a sensation one might feel in the presence of the angel of death, and it continued through the opening prayer. That prayer was a petition for light, for life, that God, who is life, would return and lift us up from death. That solemn feeling continued through the sermon. There was no excitement, just the hush and awe that surround some mighty presence. At the end an opportunity to talk with the church was given, and a dear young mourner in Zion came forward, and with broken voice and tears asked a home, and she was baptized the next day. The next month, at the same place, another came, and a month later two others. Truly the church rejoiced. When Zion travaileth shall she not bring forth her children? Now, my brother, the darkness has fled, the prison doors are opened, the shackles have been stricken off, all by the almighty power of God. David says, "For thou wilt light my candle; the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness," and so it is. May God give us grace to dwell in the light of his countenance.

We cannot do without the SIGNS. May God spare you many years to edit it in the spirit of peace, which has been your evident purpose as a meek and lowly disciple of the Prince of peace. "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

In gospel bonds,

D. B. NOWELS.

BRADENTOWN, Fla., March 14, 1909.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—As the winter is far spent, and the singing of birds has returned, and the sunshine has warmed the earth, it reminds me of a time when, I hope and trust, the sunshine of God's love warmed my heart and gave me joys that the world knows nothing of, and this beautiful Sunday morning I feel that a breath of his love has blown on my cold, stubborn heart and caused it to melt to tears, when I remember his watchcare and all his benefits to me, a poor, vile sinner, and makes me feel to confess how prone I am to wander from the God I love, or profess to love. Last fall, before I came here to Florida, I had become very despondent and gloomy, and thought I had never known anything of spiritual things, but only imagined that I had, and I would go away among strangers and forget all

about it; but the next day or two after I arrived here and saw the new beauties of his creation and felt the warm rays of the sun that could warm the cold, icy winds of winter, and looked at the soft, blue heavens, that seem so much nearer the earth here than at home, and while I was musing on the works of nature, David's words came in my mind: "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." I looked at the beautiful sunset on the water, and it seemed to reflect the smiles of His loving face, and I felt to thank his holy name that I was not left to follow out the suggestions of the tempter or the imaginations of my own evil heart. What a comfort it is to feel that we have a Leader who is stronger than all our enemies, and that he leads us for his own name's sake, and all the works of his hands shall praise him in his own appointed time and way.

I was saddened soon after coming here by the death of dear sister Griffin, who had been a close friend of mine ever since I first knew her, even before she united with the church, and after she united she was doubly dear to me. I shall miss her sadly, but I consider whose hand has removed her from earth and left me here for some wise purpose known only to himself. Again I was saddened to hear of sister Sayer's death; although I only met her once, I felt a peculiar interest in her and her brother, who seemed so kind and good to all, and I feel to sympathize with him in his loneliness, and trust that God will in his own time bring him into his fold, where there is rest for them that love him.

Now, Elder Ker, I have written more than I expected, and feel that what I have written is like the writer, very poor and feeble and of but little account, but as some of my dear sisters have inquired after my health and welfare, I would like to say to them that I am comfortably well most of the time, and able to do enough to keep my family comfortable, but have not yet realized as much benefit to my health as I hoped to from the change, yet feel thankful that I have been able to enjoy the warm, beautiful climate, which seems to me to be perfect, and try to think that my Father in heaven knows what is best for me, and only will send to me what is for my best good. I feel I have been somewhat benefited by the change, and may yet feel more good effects from my stay here. We expect to return north about the middle of April.

Now, dear brother, if you think this worthy a place in our family paper, and it will not crowd out better matter, you may publish it. I have often thought of you, and felt an almost resistless desire to be where I could hear the truth proclaimed, but all the comfort I have had has been in reading the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and once in a while a letter from my brother Henry, who always writes good, soul-cheering letters.

With best wishes to yourself and family, I remain your very poor and unworthy sister,

(MRS.) G. H. FAULKNER.

UPPERCO, Md., Jan. 7, 1909.

MISS GEORGIA D. ENGLAND—DEAR FRIEND AND SISTER IN CHRIST:—As you, with others, seem to desire that I should continue to expose my ignorance in writing, I will try it again, with the confident assurance that I shall succeed, that is, in exposing my ignorance and incompetency. I have just been reading over again two or three of your good letters to us, and would like to reply to them

sentence by sentence, but to do so would take up too much time and space for the ability which I possess. I will simply say they are good and comforting, and such as we would be glad to receive as often as possible. When I receive such good letters my mind is that I would like to reply; but my mind, like the fool's eye, wandering to the ends of the earth, is so confused that I really do not know what to attempt to write about. Perhaps you might say, as I am so near the end of life's journey, I may have some glimpses of the life beyond the vail; but, dear sister, the vail is yet there, and I do not know as much about the future as I imagined I did threescore and ten years ago, and can only say with the apostle, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be;" but I do think the desire of my heart is to see Jesus and be like him. I said just now that I thought when a child that I knew more about the future than I do now, but that was all a conception of my natural childish mind. At a very early period of life I was taken to church by my parents, and as I grew in years began to catch some words and phrases spoken by the minister, and I had a heaven pictured in my mind for the good, and a hell for the bad, and the latter was a place of terror to my childish mind. But of that I have written before, as you have, no doubt, read. Now these thoughts of a sort of natural heaven and natural hell will cling to us as we grow older, when we ought to be satisfied with the assurance that we shall see Jesus and be like him if indeed we are his children, and when we awake with his likeness we shall be satisfied. Much has been written about heaven, whether it is a state or a place or a condition. I hope you will not think it a wild thought in me to suggest that it is both a place and a condition.

I have not been in the habit of writing out my dreams, although I have been very much interested in the dreams of others, but right here seems to be a fitting place for me to speak of a dream I had a few years ago along this line. If I only could relate it to make it appear to you as it did to me I should be satisfied. I dreamed of seeing a company of beings engaged in worship, and the object of their worship and adoration was in their midst, yet was hidden from my sight; they were singing that which seemed to me to be a song of thanksgiving and adoration in music that I knew, although the words I could not understand. Although I was not one of them, being on the outside, an onlooker, yet I was deeply interested and charmed with what I was seeing and hearing for a considerable space of time. But after awhile the scene began to recede, or disappear, and grow fainter, yet the music continued with me, and I began to understand the words. By this time I was fully awake, and the scene remained with me, but it would be impossible for me to find language to convey to others what it was to me. If I may be allowed to attempt a faint description of the scene, I will say, those beings did not appear to be exactly like human beings in color, shape or size, yet in color alike, in shape alike, and in size not a particle of difference to my eye; and the place where they were was not a place confined by walls; I cannot describe it better than to call it unlimited space. The vision was clear, although the light did not appear as the light of the sun, nor any artificial light. Do not think me too much of a believer in dreams if I write some of my thoughts concerning what I saw in my dream. They sang a song, the words of which I could not understand. Will not the saints in glory, in their immortal state, sing a new song, which none on earth can sing while clothed in mortality? I could not see the object of their adoration, being yet in the flesh. Will not the saints in heaven see their Lord face to face and be like him? As the vision began to pale, words of prayer began to sound in my ears. Do not the saints live a life of prayer while remaining in the flesh? and do not the saints in glory sing a new song, their prayer being turned to praise? Again, they were precisely alike in size, shape and color, which is far different from this life.

I remain your brother in hope,

JOHN P. KELLEY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1909.

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EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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ISAIAH XLIX. 20, 21.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I would like your views upon Isaiah xlix. 20, 21, especially upon the words, "The place is too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell." By complying with this request you will confer a favor upon one who wishes to know the truth.

Yours in gospel bonds,

B. S. PATE.

DAYTON, Wash., March 6, 1909.

The Scripture to which brother Pate refers reads as follows: "The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say in thine ears, The place is too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell. Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? and who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been?"

It is often the case that the prophets, and especially Isaiah, speak in the same connection of the restoration of Israel from captivity of the seventy years in Babylon, and of the coming glory of the Redeemer's kingdom under the gospel, when the lawful captive should be taken away from the mighty, and the prey of the terrible should be delivered. (See verse twenty-five of the same chapter.) It is so in this chapter. By the guidance of the Holy Spirit which was in them the prophets were given to see in that literal restoration of Israel a figure or type of the coming deliverance from the bondage of sin and death which should be accomplished through the coming of the Son of God in human flesh. In this chapter both of these deliverances are spoken of, and in this chapter, as well as elsewhere, the truth that the Gentiles should share in the redemption which should be accomplished upon Calvary, and should come to share in the glory of his kingdom, is declared. All this is declared again and again by the use of various figures of speech in which by natural things the glory of the coming kingdom is declared. Thus in this connection the restoration of Israel from the Babylonish captivity is declared, and a picture of their prosperity after that restoration is drawn by the inspired writer, and among other figures in the text to which brother Pate has called attention, that of a household which has been bereaved of its children and left desolate, but which now is again supplied with more children than before, is presented. In such a family the children are represented as being so abundant that they cry for more room; the house is not large enough for their comfort. In the former times children were greatly desired by all, and they were considered a blessing from the Lord; it was said of children, "Happy is that man that hath his quiver full of them." In this last quotation they are compared to arrows which one could hurl against his enemy. A warrior with his quiver full of arrows would be well provided against his foes; so he who has many children has a strong provision laid up. In the text the future happy state of Israel after the restoration is depicted by the figure of a family abounding in children, so much so as to

demand more room in the house, and in the second verse named, the twenty-first, Israel is represented as being surprised or astonished that now such prosperity should again be theirs. The same thought in substance is presented in the one hundred and twenty-sixth Psalm. At the close of verse twenty-one Israel is represented as asking the question concerning these many children now given her: "These, where had they been?" In the twenty-second verse the Lord answers by saying, "I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders." In this figurative way the increase of their numbers as a people and the abounding of their prosperity after the captivity should end, is described, and, as said before, there is a looking forward to the true Israel, when Zion shall be spread abroad, not only among the Jews, but among the Gentiles. Jesus himself said concerning this increase of the kingdom, that many should come from the east and the west, and should sit down in the kingdom of God with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. These patriarchs were spiritual men as well as being the fathers of the Jewish people, and in this spiritual relationship to God they should be found, with all who are spiritual in every land and in every age, sharing the privileges of the kingdom of God; and this increase by the coming in of the faithful among the Gentiles is also set forth in these two verses and those which follow. The family has increased, and so their borders must be enlarged and their cords lengthened, or, as in the figurative language of the text, more room must be made for them. In all this, whether as regarded Israel literally, or as regards the church of God, there is no thought of any want of foreknowledge or of provision upon the part of the God whom we serve, but rather, it is presented in a way suited to the minds of men, to set before them the wonderful goodness of God, and the abounding of his grace.

We now leave these thoughts with brother Pate and our readers. C.

JEREMIAH XII. 9.

ELDER F. A. CHICK:—If not asking too much, will you give your views upon Jeremiah xii. 9?

Your brother in hope,

WILLIAM GRIGG.

MT. BRIDGES, Ontario, March 3, 1909.

The text named reads as follows: "Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird; the birds round about are against her; come ye, assemble all the beasts of the field, come to devour."

Quite frequently we have heard this Scripture quoted and explained as referring to the persecutions of the Lord's people by all who are opposed to God and his truth and to those who maintain it. Taken by itself, and without regard to the connection, it would seem that this view of it would be justified, but it has for a long time appeared to us that the connecting verses would not admit of this as being the right understanding of the text. Persecution has been indeed the lot of the people of God in the world; but this is stated in many portions of the word of God, so this text is not needed to prove it.

Reading the first four verses of this chapter, we shall find that Jeremiah lays before the Lord his great perplexity with regard to His judgments, as they appeared to him. The wicked were prospering, and they that dealt treacherously were happy. Such as these were planted, and had taken root, and were flourishing, and bearing fruit; and these of whom he

speaks were professedly religious people, and all these dwelt in the land of Israel. The prophet was speaking to God of His own heritage. It was in Israel that all this wickedness was found of which he complains. In the next two verses the Lord replies to the prophet, calling his attention to former troubles which had wearied him; but these former troubles were but as running with the footmen, while these later troubles would be as one running with or contending against horses. If he were wearied with the former, what should he do in these greater troubles? His soul was vexed at the former wickedness that had been in the land, how much more vexed should he be at that total departure from the right ways of the Lord which was now to be seen. In the seventh verse the Lord declares that because of all this wickedness he had departed from the land, he had forsaken his house, and had left his heritage. Often during the history of Israel was it said that the presence of the Lord had departed from them, and this was always because of their departures from him and his commandments. Not only had the Lord forsaken them, but he had given them over into the hand of their enemies. Then in verse eight the Lord said, "Mine heritage is unto me as a lion in the forest; it crieth out against me; therefore have I hated it." How terrible is this language! How deplorable must have been their wickedness when the Lord, who had loved them and chosen them as his own peculiar treasure, could by the mouth of the prophet declare that he hated them. It was sin that separated between them and their God. It is sin always that lies at the door when for a little season the blessed Lord visits his people with calamity; and sin would separate forever between us and God had it not been that he found a ransom, and an atonement was made for us which fully satisfied divine justice. Our God dealt then with his people in judgment. From the words, "Therefore have I hated it," we are not at liberty to conclude that it is intended to be said that the Lord had come to hate them as men hate one another, but that in this way he expresses his everlasting abhorrence against sin, even in his own people. Like a lion of the forest, they had roared against him; they had despised him, and had spoken stout words against him; now they must also experience the hidings of his face. His favor to them is spoken of as the shining of his countenance upon them, while his displeasure is spoken of as the hiding of his face, and in the text the greatness of his displeasure against them because of their sins is expressed by the use of the word "hated." Then continuing the same theme in the verse to which our attention is called, the Lord declares that his heritage is unto him "as a speckled bird." If in the eight verse he compares his heritage to a roaring lion raging against him, here he continues the same thought by comparing his heritage to a ravenous bird. Literally the expression "speckled bird," reads, a bird with talons; and only birds of prey have talons, as the hawk, the eagle, and others. It seems clear that the meaning is that the very heritage of the Lord has so fallen that they not only rage against the Lord, but also actually seek out foul carrion, which, being offensive to man and to all clean birds, fittingly represents the vice and sin in many forms in which they had indulged with delight. They had come to delight in their own ways, rather than in the ways of the Lord; they had come to delight in swine's flesh, and broth of abominable things was in their vessels. The

Lord had prescribed all that Israel should seek after, either in their behavior or in their eating and drinking; unclean things were forbidden them. These unclean things, of which they must not eat, represented that which was evil in heart and life in the sight of God. But while they were called unto this holy life, instead they had gone in the way of evil; they had become unto him as "a speckled bird," or, literally, a bird having talons. Now because of this, all the birds round about are against her. The Lord rebukes and chastises her through other nations and peoples, and these nations and peoples are the birds round about her, and the word of God to these nations is, "Come ye, assemble all the beasts of the field, come to devour;" and so in the twelfth verse we read that the spoilers who are come upon all the high places (the places of defense) in the wilderness are the sword of the Lord; and as was the case then, often the wicked have been called "the sword of the Lord."

In all this sad presentation of the case of Israel, and of the anger of the Lord against them, there is one thing to comfort, this is, that the sword is the Lord's. The Lord corrects with judgment. He has doomed the ungodly round about his chosen people to destruction, but not his people. He corrects them severely, but in mercy, and by his corrections restores them. He does not so deal with any other people. As the wicked, godless nations should sweep over their land and bring fire and sword and death and captivity in their train, and should do this with no intent to do the will of God, but rather to gratify their own hellish passions, those who really knew the Lord among Israel would find consolation, as faith would show them that, after all, the wrath of men was but working out the praise of God. The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder he shall restrain.

Since in all this the hand of God must be seen, another consolation follows, viz., that when he has accomplished the needed chastisement, and has purged his Zion, they shall come forth as gold. When his wrath is past, which endures toward his redeemed but a little season, then will he remember them with everlasting mercies. When the seventy years' captivity was ended the heart of Cyrus was stirred up to bring the people back to their own land. The hearts of the Chaldeans, which swept over the land in destruction, and the heart of Cyrus, also a heathen king, were alike in the hand of God, and it was his to turn them as the rivers of water are turned.

How solemn are the dealings of the Lord with his chosen ones! That which was true in the type concerning Israel literally is also true of all the people of God spiritually. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." This he does, not wantonly, but because they all sin and need correction. Thus the churches in Asia were chastised, and thus he who holds all the candlesticks in his hand will purge them all, as their need requires; and he who sins and is not chastised therefor, is a bastard and not a son, as the word of God has said. This is the one consolation: if one is chastised of the Lord he is a son of God. C.

It is with heartfelt sorrow that we announce the death of Elder Wm. Grafton, of Forest Hill, Md. Also that of brother John P. Kelley, of Upperco, Md. Both were members of the Baltimore Association. Obituaries will appear later. We all sympathize with the bereaved families.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ROMANS XIV. 5; GALATIANS IV. 10; COLOSSIANS II. 16.

BROTHER BEEBE:—If it will not be too much trouble, please give your opinion through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on Romans xiv. 5, Gal. iv. 10, and Col. ii. 16. I do not ask your views on each of these verses separately, but as they all seem to embrace the same subject. What I desire to know is, whether christians are required to observe the Sabbath as now kept by most professors of christianity? By giving your opinion on this subject you will much oblige your brother in Christ, if I am worthy to be so called,

ISAAC TUCKER.

ROSE BOOM, N. Y., Sept. 5, 1863.

Although we have frequently given our views on the subject of the Sabbath, we do not hesitate to say we know of no divine authority requiring christians to observe a Sabbath in the manner in which the first day of the week is generally kept by most professors of christianity. So far as our knowledge extends, the great majority of modern Sabbatarians profess to regard the first day of the week as a substitution for the Jewish seventh day Sabbath, which God commanded the carnal Israelites to observe, in common with other Sabbaths, as a sign between himself and that nation throughout their generations. If that law is or ever was binding on the Gentiles, or on christians, for it does not appear from anything contained either in the law or gospel, in either the Old or New Testament, it would require not the first, but the seventh day to be observed. We have never been able to find in the Bible the slightest intimation of a first day Sabbath, or of any other day of the week, except the seventh day, and that was to be observed by the Israelites exclusively as a sign, type or shadow of good things to come. All signs must necessarily signify something definite and particular. When we see over the merchant's door the sign, "Wholesale and retail," the sign signifies to us that the merchant has commodities to sell in large or small quantities. When God placed the bow in the cloud it was for a sign of his oath and promise that the earth should never again be deluged with water. The sign of circumcision in the flesh was to signify that those on whom it was found were debtors to do the whole law. The Jewish Sabbath being a sign, must also have some definite signification. God has told us plainly, by the mouth of Paul, that it, with other handwriting of ordinances, are a shadow of good things to come, but the body, or thing signified, is Christ, or the gospel. The Sabbatic law required those unto whom it was given to abstain totally from work, and to keep the day as a Sabbath of perfect rest, in which no manner of labor was lawful for the Israelite, his servants, or even his beasts; no preaching, no going to meeting, no Sabbath schools, no ringing of bells, harnessing of horses, no riding in chariots, no cooking of food, no kindling of fires nor gathering of sticks; they were not allowed to go out of their tents to look for manna or for any other purpose. All this does not compare well with the modern style of professed Sabbatarians; but, when viewed as a sign of gospel rest, which is found alone in Christ, we see harmony between the sign and the rest signified. Salvation is not of works, but exclusively of grace, and none can keep the gospel, or antitypical Sabbath, until he is made to cease from his own works, as God did from his. "For we which have believed, do enter into rest."—Heb. iv. 3. The Sabbath of the law was a rest from physical labor, but the antitypical Sabbath is a spiritual rest, which is only found in Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

It is a perfect release from the works of the law as a ground of acceptance with God, and a confident resting on Christ, who is of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. None but believers can enter into this gospel rest, nor can even christians enjoy it only when their faith triumphs over their doubts and unbelief. For christians to go back to the blotted out handwriting of ordinances of the law to observe days, and months, and times, and years, is to turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto they desire again to be in bondage. (Gal. iv. 9, 10.) As all kind of labor was prohibited to the Israelites on their Sabbath days, or Sabbatic years, so christians are forbidden to perpetuate the abrogated types and ceremonies of the law of carnal commandments. They find embodied in Jesus all that the types and shadows signified. He is our Sabbath; all fullness is embodied in him; in him the weary and the heavy laden find a perfect Sabbath of rest, for his yoke is easy and his burden is light. If the inspired apostle had understood that the legal Sabbath of the Jews was still binding on the Gentile saints, he could not have treated the subject of a preference for days as a matter of indifference, in which one christian should not judge another, as in Romans xiv. 5, for if that law were still binding, he, as a faithful witness, set as he was for the defence of the truth, would have required a strict observance of it. Much less would he have been afraid that he had bestowed labor in vain on the Galatian churches because they, under the pernicious influence of Judaizing teachers, were observing the Sabbath days, Sabbath weeks and Sabbath years which the old covenant had enjoined upon the carnal Israelites. (Gal. iv. 10, 11.) But as a final settlement of this matter he commands the saints and faithful brethren at Colosse to "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." —Col. ii. 16, 17.

Before we dismiss this subject it may be useful to remind our brother that the seventh day Sabbath was not instituted as a day for public assemblies, or for public or social devotion. The Jews had no command in their law to assemble at the temple or elsewhere to read the law, or for any other purpose, but they were charged with making void the law of God by their traditions. The Jewish elders had taken the liberty to so modify and change the law of the Sabbath as to allow what they were pleased to call works of necessity and mercy; to perform what they prescribed as a Sabbath day's journey, to travel to their temple or synagogues to read and hear the law, or to rescue an ox or an ass that had fallen into a pit. But all this was forbidden in the law which they professed to venerate and obey. From their perversion of the law, and manner of assembling on their Sabbaths, modern Sabbatarians have inferred that the design of the Sabbath day was for public worship, and as the primitive disciples were in the habit of meeting on the first day of the week for social devotion, that the first day was substituted for the seventh, and to be regarded as a christian Sabbath. But this is all speculation, and without a particle of divine authority, for as the Sabbath of the Jews was given them by express command of God, in which the seventh day was specially designated, and the command restricted to the Jewish nation, no alteration from the seventh to the first

day, or extension from the Jews to the Gentiles, could be made without the same express order from God himself. It is true the primitive christians did sometimes meet for worship and for breaking of bread on the first day, and it is equally true that they also met for the same purposes on every other day of the week. (See Acts ii. 46.) The saints have therefore a sufficient authority for assembling on the first or on any other day for social worship, and they are admonished to forsake not the assembling of themselves together, but that they are not to attach any more sacredness to one day than to any other day, appears from Gal. iv. 10, and Col. ii. 16, as well as from many other portions of the Scriptures. The Jewish Sabbath being a type of that rest which the children of God enter when delivered from the toil and labor of the works of the law, and by faith enter into that rest which now remaineth to the people of God, the true antitypical Sabbath of the gospel began when Christ arose from the dead, after having nailed the handwriting of ordinances to his cross; and the Sabbath of every individual saint begins experimentally as soon as they are enabled to believe on Jesus, and enter into rest, and cease from their own works. Their rest is spiritual, not physical, and not limited to one day in seven, but is required at all times alike. Casting all their cares on Christ, who careth for them, the believing christians enter into Christ as their spiritual Sabbath, and his rest is glorious. Abiding in him, they are relieved from all legal works, for they are no more under the law, but under grace. They are dead to the covenant of works, to which they were once wedded, that being now dead to them in which they were once held, and they are now married to their risen Savior, that they may henceforth bring forth fruits unto God, not in the oldness of the letter (or type), but in the newness of the spirit; not for one seventh part of their time, but in a perpetual and everlasting union, in which the Lord has betrothed them unto him forever in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies, and in faithfulness. (Hosea ii. 19, 20.)

"To all God's people now remains
A Sabbatism, a rest from pains,
And works of slavish kind;
When tired with toil, and faint through fear,
The child of God can enter here,
And sweet refreshment find.

To this, by faith, he oft retreats,
Bondage and labor quite forgets,
And bids his cares adieu;
Slides softly into promised rest,
Reclines his head on Jesus' breast,
And proves the Sabbath true.

This, and this only, is the way
To rightly keep the Sabbath day,
Which God has holy made.
All keepers that come short of this,
The substance of the Sabbath miss,
And grasp an empty shade."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., December 1, 1863.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder D. M. Vail, Sunday, March 28th, 1909, at the residence of the bride's parents, James S. Sparks, of Eagle, Pa., and Miss Celinda L. McKane, of McKane Valley, Pike Co., Pa.

After wedding services were ended, preaching service began 4:30 p. m., after which the bride presented herself to the church, was received, and baptized by the pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, the following morning.

By Elder J. T. Rowe, at his residence, Roland Park, Baltimore, Md., Saturday, Jan. 13th, 1909, Victor Ensor and Miss Eureka Ensor, both of Baltimore County, Md.

By the same, Thursday, March 25th, 1909, at the Primitive Baptist meeting-house, Baltimore, Md., James E. Myers, of New Cumberland, Pa., and Mrs. Elizabeth E. Kramer, of Washington, D. C.

By Elder H. C. Ker, March 6th, 1909, at the home of the bride, in Middletown, N. Y., Floyd Hultslander and Miss Delila Brink.

By the same, March 24th, 1909, at the home of the bride, near Howells, N. Y., Zelotes G. Hoyt and Miss Addie May Derby.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder I. N. Newkirk was born near Fulton, Callaway Co., Mo., May 16th, 1833, and died March 13th, 1909. He first joined the Christian denomination, but was afterwards deeply convicted of sin, and on obtaining a hope united with the Davis Fork Church, at Mexico, Mo., in 1855, and was ordained to the work of the gospel ministry in California in 1869. He was married to P. E. Allen, March 23rd, 1856, and to them were born the following children: Julia, who is now Mrs. A. B. Crawford, of Juliaetta, Idaho, Colman S., of Nezperce, Idaho, Lizzie, now Mrs. Henry Opperman, of Waitsburg, Wash., Mamie, now Mrs. J. O. Harman, of Waitsburg, Wash., and I. N. Jr., of Kennewick, Wash. He and family crossed the plains by ox team in 1862, and lived in California until 1880, thence to Dayton, Wash., near which place he died. Elder Pate, and all Old Baptists who knew, loved and were kind to him, he loved you and longed to be where he could have your company. My father had a lovely spirit, though, like all men, possessed weaknesses of the flesh, which often grieved him; he was kind, forgiving, self-denying almost to a fault, if possible, and always studied that which made for peace. (MRS.) A. B. CRAWFORD.

JULIAETTA, Idaho.

THE above is a copy of a letter written me. Elder Newkirk united with Harmony Church in September, 1881, and was a faithful servant of the church as long as he was able to attend to the meetings. His wife preceded him to the grave, she died in November, 1895; he leaves the above named children and the church to mourn their loss, but we do not mourn as those who have no hope, for we believe that our loss is his eternal gain. I feel I have lost a true friend, a good and safe counselor, and the church a devoted servant.

The writer spoke to a large and attentive congregation Monday, March 15th, from Romans viii. 11; then the body was taken to the grave, and after prayer by Elder J. T. Barnes was laid to rest by the side of his wife, to await the time when they shall hear the voice of the Son of God and come forth in the likeness of their Lord and Master.

B. S. PATE.

DAYTON, Wash.

Olive Cudney, wife of Hiram Cudney, died suddenly at her home in Olive, N. Y., Feb. 18th, 1909, in the 65th year of her age. Sister Cudney arose in the morning feeling as well as usual, and while dressing herself complained of feeling chilly and asked her husband to get some quinine. He went to the store and procured a small vial of quinine pills and handed them to his wife, not thinking anything serious was the matter, and returned to his duties. Sister Cudney took the vial in her hand, preparing to take some of the medicine, but her time had come, and she sank to the floor expiring. Her daughter was in an adjoining room and heard her mother fall and hastened to her, but found her unconscious, and she only breathed a few times and was gone. Sister Cudney had been in poor health for several years, and often was deprived of attending meeting, which she much enjoyed. For many years her home has been a home for her Baptist friends, whom she dearly loved for the truth's sake. She took delight in making her home pleasant, and all who visited her could not help but feel at home. It can truly be said of her that a good woman is gone, and the church will miss her in many ways, especially in singing, as she was an excellent singer and enjoyed singing very much. Sister Cudney was received in the Old School Baptist Church of Olive and Hurley May 29th, 1870, and baptized by Elder Samuel Moore. She lived and died in the faith once delivered to the saints. She leaves her husband, Hiram Cudney, a daughter and one son, beside many friends and relatives. May God comfort all who mourn.

Her funeral was held from the Old School Baptist meeting-house at Olive, N. Y., on Sunday, Feb. 21st, and was conducted by the writer; it was largely attended. Her body was laid to rest in the cemetery near the old homestead of Elder Jacob Winchell to await the coming of the Lord from heaven, who shall change our vile body and fashion it like his own glorious body.

ALSO,

Mrs. Prudence Faulkner departed this life August 1st, 1908, after a brief illness, at the home of her daughter, near Denver, N. Y., in the 85th year of her age. She was the widow of Thomas Faulkner, who died some years ago. Since the death of her husband she made her home with her daughter, sister Mary Slauson, at Halcottsville, N. Y. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and often spoke of her weakness, and how unprofitable she was. I well remember her asking why it was that she was spared and so many younger taken, to which I replied that all must wait God's time, our days are as a hireling, even our months are numbered. She never made a profession of religion. For many years her hearing was so impaired that she could not hear preaching. She loved to read the SIGNS, and would often speak of the comfort she received from reading it.

Her funeral was held from the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Vega, N. Y., where she had resided the greater part of her days, conducted by the writer, and was largely attended. Burial was in the cemetery near the meetinghouse. She leaves three daughters and many friends to mourn their loss.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Mrs. Lourena Smith, oldest daughter of T. W. and Jane E. Peeke, was born in Polk County, Ga., Feb. 11th, 1864, and died in Hopkins County, Texas, Jan. 19th, 1909. She came to Texas with her parents in 1878, and in 1888 was married to G. T. Ellis. To this union were born three children, two boys and one girl; the two boys are living, but the girl died in infancy. Her first husband died in 1894, and she struggled through the many hardships of this life in supporting herself and children until in 1904, when she was married to Mr. H. W. Smith. To this union were born two children, one boy and one girl. Truly it can be said she was a good mother, a good stepmother and a true helpmeet. I cannot express my feelings in reference to this good woman; she lived in my home for two years, and I often reminded her of the duty of uniting with the church, and her reply was, "I do not feel that I could tell anything the church could fellowship." She told me of her trouble of soul after the death of her first husband. She said while in the field at work these words were spoken to her, Fear not, it is I, and she became calm, and afterwards more reconciled. Truly she had the walk of one born of God, manifesting the grace of God that brings salvation by an orderly life and godly conversation. She was loved by all who knew her.

On Jan. 21st, after a funeral discourse by the writer, her body was laid to rest in the Spring Hill Cemetery, there to await the resurrection of the dead, when she will come forth with all the redeemed of the Lord fashioned like unto the glorious body of our blessed Jesus. Then, dear father, mother, husband, children, brothers and sisters, let us mourn not, but be reconciled to God, for "the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

May the dear Lord prepare us all for that great day. J. E. KNIGHTEN.

OMAHA, Texas.

A. J. Phillips was born in Newton County, Ga., Nov. 5th, 1836; he was married to Mrs. Lizzie Morris in 1859, and died Dec. 16th, 1908. He leaves his wife, three sons, five grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, one stepdaughter and a host of friends. He was a kind husband, a loving father, a good neighbor and loved by all who knew him. Brother Phillips joined the army in Virginia in 1861, and in 1862, while in sick camp, obtained a precious hope in Jesus. As soon as he was able he went home, and on Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1862, joined the church at Holly Springs, Ga., and on Sunday morning was baptized by Elder Joseph L. Purington, and lived an humble, Christlike life the remainder of his days. He moved to Texas in 1882, and was a member and deacon of Salem Church, in McLennan Co., Texas, when he died. Brother Phillips loved the good old doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone, and had no confidence in the flesh; his only hope for salvation was in Jesus. He was willing and ready to go, said he was tired of this old, sinful world, and now he has gone to rest with Jesus, to bask in the love of God forevermore. May the dear Lord bless and comfort our dear sister in her old age, and reconcile her and the afflicted family to this stroke, and cause them to say, "Thy will be done." By the grace of God the writer has served Salem Church the last four years, and we will miss him much, but we feel that our loss is his gain; he is now at rest. May the Lord bless us all, and enable us to live at each other's feet, in love and meekness.

C. T. NANCE.

WHITEFIELD, Texas.

Eugene Gass was born at Jewett Center, Greene County, N. Y., June 20th, 1849, died at his home, New Haven, Oswego Co., N. Y., Feb. 7th, 1909, aged 59 years, 5 months and 17 days. He was the sixth child of Elder Lambert and Sallie Ann Gass. He professed a hope in Christ and united with the Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie, N. Y., and was baptized by Elder Earl, who was pastor at that time. He was united in marriage to Mary E. Patrick, and there were three sons born to them, one dying in infancy. He leaves his wife, two sons, one brother and three sisters to mourn their loss; but we cannot mourn as those who have no hope, for we have no doubt that he is now in the presence of his Savior singing praises to his great and holy name, as was his chief delight while on earth. He was stricken with paralysis in the year 1903, which left him almost helpless, and able to read, write or talk but little. Three months before his death he was taken with dropsy, and was a great sufferer until death came. Through all his affliction he was cheerful and patient beyond human comprehension, often expressing a willingness "to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better." As we gazed on his peaceful face as he lay in his casket we could not help but feel, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." After a short service at the house his remains were laid at rest in the Mexico cemetery.

ALSO,

Mrs. Minerva N. Austin was born at Jewett Center, Greene Co., N. Y., June 14th, 1843, and died March 16th, 1909, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. L. Z. Wilcox, Chester, Orange Co., N. Y. She was the fourth child of Elder Lambert and Sallie Gass. She was married to J. W. Austin, who departed this life about five years ago. To this union were born two daughters, Mrs. May Traphiggin, of Flushing, N. Y., and Mrs. Jennie Wilcox, of Chester, N. Y. She professed a hope in Christ and united with the Old

School Baptist Church of Lexington, N. Y. She was afflicted with rheumatism, and was almost helpless for many years, but it was her chief delight to meet with the brethren at the place of worship whenever her health would permit. She was taken with pneumonia March 12th and lived but four days. Her funeral was held at the Old School Baptist meeting-house at Lexington, N. Y., March 20th, Elder R. W. Sanford officiating, speaking words of comfort to the mourning ones, after which her remains were carried to their last resting-place and buried in the Lexington cemetery. W. P. GASS.

Mrs. Emily Fitchett died at her home in Lake City, S. C., Nov. 22nd, 1908, in the 78th year of her age. She was born on the eastern shore of Virginia in September, 1831, and was, if we mistake not, the last surviving sister of Mrs. Fannie Thomas, of Norfolk, Va. After her death her body was brought to Norfolk for burial. It was our privilege to baptize this dear sister at Black Rock, Md., in May, 1887, and we well remember the happiness that was manifested in her whole manner upon that solemn occasion. Her faith had been the faith of God's elect all her life, and she had hope in the blessed Savior many years before being strengthened to follow him in his appointed ordinance. From time to time we had seen her before this time, and a few times afterward. She abided to the end faithful to the profession which she had made. It was not her privilege to share many of the privileges of the church after her baptism, as it had not been before for many years, but the dear Lord was her stay and help, and kept her steadfast in the faith. We do not know many of the particulars of her last days, but feel glad to speak of what we do know of her general travel in the way. We know that her surviving sister, who is a member of the church in Baltimore city, deeply feels her loss, as also do her children. They have the sympathy of all who know them.

ALSO,

Mr. S. J. Thomas died in Philadelphia Monday night, March 29th, 1909, aged 77 years. We copy the following from a Norfolk paper: "Mr. Thomas until he removed to Philadelphia for his health was one of the most prominent merchants of Norfolk. He established the firm of S. J. Thomas & Co., shoe dealers, but retired from business eleven years ago. He did not recover from his illness, although he was thought to be getting along all right until a month ago, when he began to fail rapidly. He is survived by his wife and one daughter, Mrs. Claude W. Northern, of this city. He is also survived by three sisters and two brothers."

We are informed by Elder J. T. Rowe that he conducted the funeral service at the home of Mr. Northern, in Norfolk, on Monday, April 1st, speaking by request of sister Thomas from the twenty-third Psalm, and reading hymn 747 (Beebe's collection) upon the sad occasion. The remains were interred in Cedar Grove Cemetery, near Norfolk, to await the resurrection.

We knew Mr. Thomas well for many years, having for a number of years visited at his home. He was always a kindly, quiet, friendly man, giving his friends a hearty welcome at his home. While not a professor of religion, his life was humble, and he delighted in giving his companion all the privileges of attending her meetings that he could. A sincere and honorable man has passed away, leaving a good name, which is more to be preferred than great riches. We cannot refrain from an expression of our deep sympathy for sister Thomas and her daughter in their double bereavement. Afflictions have fallen upon them often, and very heavily of late, in the removal of dear ones by death, but sustaining grace has been theirs, and will be, we are sure, to the end. C.

Mrs. Julia Ann Meek Chenoweth was born in Augusta County, Va., Dec. 8th, 1812, departed this life Feb. 21st, 1909, aged 96 years, 2 months and 13 days. She came to Randolph County, West Virginia, at the age of twelve years, with her sister, in which County and State she resided until her death. She was united in marriage to Noah McLean Oct. 15th, 1835, to which union were born two children, Perry and Eliza; Perry now resides in Indiana. Noah McLean departed this life Feb. 1st, 1842. She was then united in marriage to Hickman Chenoweth, July 13th, 1844, who departed this life Jan. 1st, 1891. To this union were born five children, two of whom survive her: George W. and Emma, who were with her at the time of her death. She lived to know of her fifth generation, seven children, three of whom survive her, twenty-five grandchildren, forty-one great-grandchildren, twelve great-great-grandchildren and two great-great-great-grandchildren, most of whom survive her. She had been a member of the Old School Baptist Church for fifty-five years, and always walked according to her profession and faith, and was a loving, kind mother.

Elder J. B. Cross of the Old School Baptist Church conducted the funeral services in the presence of a large congregation at the church, and delivered a very comforting discourse from 2 Tim. iv. 6–8. Her remains were laid to rest in Israel Cemetery by the side of her last husband. A GRANDCHILD.

I WILL say in addition to what the grandchild has written, Julia Ann Chenoweth was a member of the Leading Creek Church, always filling her seat when she could. She and her husband were always very attentive, he being church clerk and deacon ever since the church was constituted, some fifty years ago; the admonition of the Lord seemed always with

them to neglect not the assembling of ourselves together. Many were glad to meet with her at the association last summer, that being the last time she met with the church. Truly it is sad to think we shall never again meet with her in this life. With Paul she could say, I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith; there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord will give me; and not to me only, but to all them that love his appearing.

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER Ahimaaz Mellott has changed his address from Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa., to Harrisonville, Fulton Co., Pa.

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My Biographical History of Primitive or Old School Baptist Ministers of the United States is in the hands of the publishers, and they promise to complete, ready for shipment, about June 1st. It contains 864 sketches and 340 pictures, besides some sketches of deacons and pictures and sketches of lady writers, "mothers in Israel," &c. Other sketches may be added if sent to me by May 10th.

I wish to say also that I have spent several hundred dollars in the prosecution of this work thus far, and will have to advance several hundred more before even the first shipment is sent me by the publishers; therefore if you can conveniently send me your order with cash, and feel disposed to do so, such orders will be of material assistance to me, will be appreciated, receipted for, carefully booked, properly credited and the order filled immediately on completion of the work.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 77. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1909. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DENVER, Colo., Feb. 20, 1909.

DEAR SISTER PARKER:—In your letter to me you speak of listening to a discourse in which the speaker referred to the parable of the two men being in the field and the two women grinding at the mill, and of one from each of the two being taken and the other left, and he remarked that some believed that one went to heaven and the other to perdition, but did not say what he himself believed. You say you had never heard any of our preachers have that view of it. You also say you had thought of it as referring to the call from nature to grace, and you ask me what my understanding of the parable is, and to write you regarding it. Although it may seem strange to you, yet it is true, that my understanding of the matter does not agree with either view. Then well may you ask, What is your belief? I have, since I received your letter, had many thoughts concerning this parable, in connection with the other parables used by our Lord. To my mind the doctrine of election is so clearly revealed here that none need to differ on that question. I would gladly comply with your request if I could feel that I were able to enlighten your mind regarding these parables. I have with such ability as God has given sought to find the truth, as nothing short of the truth can do us good, and at the end of these inquiries I find no reason for changing what has for a long time been my belief: that He who spake these parables was and is the omnipotent, immutable builder of all things, and that his eternal perfections are manifested in all his works, and that there is no new thing under the sun; that which is has been, is now, and whatsoever God doeth it shall be forever; and these parables to my mind have no connection whatever with the departure, or condition, of any from this earthly sphere, nor concerning their eternal salvation, for that was settled in the eternal decree of God in the ancients of eternity, before the hills were brought forth or dust was fashioned into man. Since you have called my attention to these parables it has awakened in me a desire to know more of the mysteries of God in his dealings with the sons of men in the past, present and future. This also is as it should be, and I am impressed that this, too, is of the Lord, and that what I may

be led to say will be God's eternal truth; if not, may he show it unto me. While meditating upon these things in my wakeful hours in the nighttime, and when neither sleep nor slumber would come to my eyes, I in my folly thought to search out wisdom, but "better is a handful with quietness, than both the hands full with travail and vexation of spirit;" for "while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue, Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am." "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity." I had thought to be able to share with you some of the fruits of my labor, but alas, the beautiful structure of my own building, the hay, wood and stubble, had vanished and wasted away in the smoke, something in the nighttime had entered the field and gleaned all the rich, golden grain, and to me there is nothing but chaff; the cold north wind had blown upon my promising fig tree, from which I had expected to gather so much fruit, alas, that, too, how soon is it withered and dried up—nothing but leaves. The gourd of my own planting, a greedy worm hath destroyed its root; that, too, is blasted and withered in a night. "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity," and I have again to refresh my memory in the lesson I had thought I so well understood, that "except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." And now except the Lord of the harvest bids me abide fast by the side of his maidens in the field to glean, I am impoverished and found begging that Bread which came down from heaven, which if a man eat he shall never hunger. It is no uncommon thing in these days to hear preachers declaring from the pulpit that all the human family will in the judgment day that is yet in the future be called upon to give account of the deeds done in the body. But I am convinced that such sentiments are unwarranted by the Scriptures. The wicked need not to be brought to a judgment-seat at any time in the future to be condemned, for the wicked are already condemned, and the wrath of God abideth on them. We have scriptural evidence, and the fact is well established, that the present is the day of judgment, and God, the Judge of all the earth, is to-day seated on his judgment-seat, and I think that the Scriptures will fully sustain me in this assertion. When the Son of God was raised from the dead he was declared to be the Son of God with power, and that he would sit at that time in judgment in the throne of his glory. "Thy throne, O God, is forever." And it was for judgment he came into the world. This was written of him. And to him was given all power in heaven and in earth.

But to come to the parables. It seems important to inquire here what a parable is, and what they were by our Lord intended to teach. A parable is not the rehearsing of an event that has actually transpired; that would not be a parable. A parable must be understood by having a knowledge of him who speaks it, and to them to whom it is spoken, and to such it reveals spiritual truth. It seems that the motive of the Savior for speaking in parables was both to conceal and reveal the truth which he intended to convey. To conceal from those who had not the hearing ear or understanding heart; so to him who hath it gives more, and to him who hath not it takes away the little that he hath, and it is the light thrown upon it from the Sun of Righteousness that reveals to the one and withholds from the

other, and to him who knew not the Christ it had no special meaning more than an every day occurrence. This parable which I am now considering is, as I understand, one of a cluster of parables spoken by our Lord to a mixed multitude, and as the new wine was in the cluster, and one said, "Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it," so I hope to draw from it for the mutual benefit of us both, that we may receive a blessing. You will remember that when Moses sent out spies to search out the fruits and products of a certain country, they brought back with them as a sample of the fruits a cluster of grapes of immense size, and said, These be the fruits; so it appears to me, if I rightly understand this one parable, it is a fair sample of all the teachings of the others, for they are all of the same cluster, and put in our hand a key, so to speak, to unlock the casket that contains the precious jewels. I have thought that I could discover in this cluster of parables the history of the church of God from the earliest dawn of its existence in Christ, her living Head, until every member of his body has been brought into the unity of the spirit unto the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ, but in this thought I may be wrong. I will now try to give what is my understanding of the parable to which you have called my attention: of one being taken and the other left. Let us remember that these were representative persons. Then the question follows, What or whom do they represent? Where there is a choice, as in this case, there must of necessity be a cause for the choice. Our Lord in one of his parables said, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom." He also said, "And I appointed unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me." We know the kingdom appointed unto him was of a spiritual nature; so also would he appoint unto his disciples a spiritual kingdom. His mission was to finish the work his Father gave him to do. I believe that when he arose from the grave it was as a mighty conqueror over death, hell and the grave, and left nothing unfinished, so far as eternal redemption of all those who by the one offering were perfected. But was not his mission also to bind up the testimony, seal up the vision and to take away the daily sacrifice? But was the daily sacrifice taken away, and the temple worship discontinued, until he who was to come should be revealed in the destruction of the holy temple, with its altar and incense, so it should no more be called the holy city? Not one stone was to be left upon another when the Son of man should be revealed in power and great glory. But as the Father had appointed unto him a kingdom, which I understand to be the church in connection with her Redeemer, her Head, and is a spiritual structure, composed of spiritual men and women, made meet for the Father's use, so he sets about his Father's business to gather together such material as would be acceptable to the building up of the spiritual kingdom that was to replace the one that was at that time yet to be laid low. But was this work at that time completed? Is he not yet selecting out suitable material for the erection of that temple that is not made with hands? But because this parable has not been as plain to me as some of the others, nor as plain as I would like, I need not be disturbed, for I am assured that God has (not will, as though it were an uncertainty,) caused to be erected above the ruins of that idolatrous city the new Jerusalem, she who is so beautiful for situation;

peace is within her walls and prosperity within her palaces. God hath appointed salvation for her walls, and for her gates praise; no weapon that is formed against her shall prosper. God is in the midst of her and will help her, and what her soul desires that he will do. Her walls are invulnerable, they cannot be moved; no galley with oars shall come within her borders, neither shall gallant ships pass thereby; not one of her cords shall ever be broken, nor one of her stakes removed; her inhabitants rise up and call her blessed. He who spake these parables likens this one unto a householder who went out very early in the morning to hire laborers to work in his vineyard. Notice, he went out early in the morning, does not wait until the eleventh hour. With some he agreed for a penny a day, and sent them into his vineyard to labor; and about the third hour he saw others standing idle, and said, Go work in my vineyard, and I will give you what is right; and again at the sixth and ninth hour, and told them the same: Go work in my vineyard. Again at the eleventh hour he found some still standing idle, and said, Why stand ye here idle? They answered, "Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive." When the evening was come the lord of the vineyard called the laborers to give them their hire, beginning at the last; they were the first to receive their hire, and they received every man a penny; but when the first came they supposed that they would receive more; they also received their penny. They began to murmur against the good man of the house, saying, They who have wrought only one hour have received the same as we. But he answered one of them, Friend, I do thee no wrong; I have done as I agreed. Take what is yours and go your way. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Why complain because I do good? For many are called, but few are chosen; so the last was first, and the first last. Now which of these do you suppose the good man would take when he came to choose a servant for his master's kingdom, the one who murmured against his benefactor, who had taken him in from off the highways, or he who was thankful to him who had befriended him? As to the two women in the field, there is no question in my mind as to whom they were meant to represent. The one is the strange woman, the other the virtuous wife. The one, Solomon says, is loud and stubborn, her feet abide not in her house, she is on the street, and lieth in wait at every corner to deceive, and by her fair speech deceiveth the simple. Solomon counsels his son to beware of her, as her feet lead to the gates of death. The other is the married wife, and the heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, for she will do him good and not evil all her days. She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness; her children also rise up and call her blessed. Is it any wonder that the wise man when he came to choose between the two should say of the one that he had chosen, "Give her of the fruits of her hands: and let her own works praise her in the gates," for "many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all"? Is it not plain why and when the one was taken and the other left? Again, how significant are the words of the old patriarch when he called his eldest servant and made him swear that when he went to choose a wife

for his son he would not take a wife for his son of the Canaanites in whose land he dwelt. But thou shalt go to my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son. And Isaac, when he went to claim his bride, met Rebecca in the field, and she said, I will go with the man. It is remembered that when the Son of man left his Father's house in the heavens to claim his bride, the church, he was only to go to those to whom he was sent, and as he went forth from the Father, bearing precious seed, so also should he return again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. His mission was to finish the work given him to do from the foundation of the world. So we hear him, when in communion with the Father, say, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do;" "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me." Holy Father, keep them that thou hast given me, for they are thine. Prophets and holy men of old had prophesied of the coming of the Son of man as being yet in the future, and to them this was true, yet with prophetic eye they could speak of it as being already accomplished; but with this Man with whom we have to do, which was God veiled in flesh, there was neither beginning of days nor end of years, neither was there anything new or old, but with him it was at all times and in every event one eternal now, so he could speak of things in the future, as well as those that were past, as being present with him. This we should strive to impress on the mind, that we may have a clearer understanding of the parables used by the Lord, which were to impress upon the minds of his disciples the admonitions given concerning the judgments which were soon to come, when God would execute his indignation against that old Jerusalem that then existed and was in bondage with her children, but which was only to continue as a type until all that had been written of her in the law and prophets had been fulfilled. Then at that time the Son of man should come in his glory and all his angels (ministering spirits, his apostles,) with him, "and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." Then, at that time, shall he say to those on the right hand, Come in; and to those on the left, Depart. Then again Jesus likens his kingdom unto a certain king who had made a marriage for his son, and he had sent his servants out to bid the guests to come, as all things were ready; the oxen and fatlings were killed, and all things were ready. When the king saw the guests he found one who had not on the wedding garment, and he bade his servants to take him and bind him hand and foot and cast him into outer darkness; there should be weeping and gnashing of teeth. He who spake these parables had left his Father's house to claim his bride; so he likens his kingdom unto ten virgins, five were wise and five were foolish, who went out to meet the bridegroom; while the bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept, but at midnight a cry was made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh. All arose and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones had no oil (grace) in their lamps, and they said to the others, Give us of your oil; but the wise ones were fearful that they had not enough for their own use. The foolish ones went to buy oil, and while they were gone the bridegroom came, and they that had oil in

their lamps (grace in their hearts) went into the marriage, and the door was shut, and those who had gone to buy oil, when they returned, finding the door shut, said, Open unto us, but the Lord said, I know ye not.

I am extending this article to a greater length than I had intended, and must bring it to a close or I will weary you. It is with me that I have no gift to condense language (and thereby say much with few words), but at times when I attempt to write, so much opens up to me that I would like to say, and the Scriptures seem so full of meaning, and so clear, that I say, Surely all who read must understand; take it, read it, it is an open volume; forgetting for the time that the kingdom of God cometh not with observation, nor by searching can man find out God.

I will now try to close with as few words as possible. The Savior had by his many parables instructed his disciples by likening them to his kingdom, and they evidently understood the likeness in a measure. He had also told them of the fearful calamities which were to be visited upon that nation, or generation, before the Son of man should come to set up his kingdom. He had told them of the signs that would appear before that event, that those signs were only the beginning of sorrows; but when they should see those signs then they might know that it was near at hand, even at the door; therefore watch, for in such a time as ye think not the Son of man cometh. He had also taken his disciples up into the mountain, aside from the multitude, and there instructed them as to the use of the talents he had distributed among them, which were needful in his kingdom, and as to how they were to deport themselves when they were persecuted, and in all things needful for the peace and welfare of that kingdom. In short, he was setting his house in order, preparing to take his journey, for he had told them that he was going away, and that his kingdom was as a man taking a journey. It is needful that I go away; if I go not away the Comforter will not come. If I go away the Comforter will come, and will guide you into all truth. I go to your Father and to my Father, to your God and to my God. If I go away I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also. I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you. His coming was to be sudden and in an unexpected manner to them, and it was to be with the swiftness of lightning.

Now for brevity's sake let us turn our minds to the second chapter of the Acts of the apostles, and see if we do not find indeed that his coming was not as they expected it should be, for were they not all amazed, and marveled at the unlooked for visitation from on high? But there were some then even at that age of the church who mocked, and said, "These men are full of new wine."

I have left much unsaid that I had in mind to say, and perhaps have said things which I ought not to have said, so I will leave it, although I do not wish to tax your patience, for I know I am tedious, but I would beg of you to put on charity, that best robe, and listen, for it is not I that speaketh. From our low place here in the valley of the shadow of death, where there are all manner of four-footed beasts and creeping things to terrify and affright the soul, we look to the hills from whence cometh our help, and to Mount Zion, the city of the living God, and to an innumerable company of angels. How bright their garments

shine. From whence came they? These are they who have come up out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and we are longing to be with them, but the hill is so tedious and difficult to climb, and besides a lion guards the way; we shall be slain in the street. He who dwells in the midst of this eternal excellence and beauty has also in this valley a garden inclosed. He has come into his garden to gather his fruits and to see if his vines flourish. Is it an illusion of the brain, or is it a vision, that he who has come into his garden has seen my mournful state and promised me, even me, that he will send one of his angels to cleanse my robes also, and transport me that I may dwell there forever? If it be a vision, I will wait for it, for at the appointed time it will come, and will not tarry.

In conclusion, I want to say that I know what it is to want and to abound, and also what it is to be in the depths, with the seaweeds wrapped about my head. I know, too, what it is to be shipwrecked and to be imprisoned, but I have not yet learned to say with Paul, that in whatever state I am, I am content, nor with the psalmist have I learned to bridle my tongue; they are too high for me, I cannot attain unto them; but I do know what it is to stand every day at the judgment-seat of God to be judged of the deeds done in the body, and for every idle word spoken. There are three things that I have desired and have sought after: the grace of God in my heart, the law of kindness in my tongue, and the pen of a ready writer in my hand; then would I order my steps aright and be found declaring the works of God with gladness; but how far, seemingly, do I come short of possessing either of them. Could it have been the will of God, I would have desired to spend the remaining days of my pilgrimage among my kindred, to go in and out among them. I would like to be able to control every impulse of the carnal mind while I live, and bring it into subjection. I believe God is able and will so control events that the ultimatum will be: Not unto us, not unto us, but to thy name be all the glory.

Dear editors, as I am writing you today to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, and you have so kindly encouraged me to continue my writings for the paper, my mind is strongly impressed to send this to you for publication, if you see fit to do so. I thought it best to send it to you, and as sister Parker takes the SIGNS she will receive it in that way. I will inform her of what I have done. If you do not consider it worthy a place beside the many good letters, cast it aside, and may you with a feeling of pity more than contempt, say, She hath done what she could. Farewell.

ABBIE CODDINGTON.

HUGHESVILLE, Va., Feb. 8, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Ever since our dear and aged sister, Mrs. Nancy Gulick, died, I have been impressed to write out the narrative of her experience, in which she was brought from darkness to light. Brother Badger wrote a beautiful obituary about her walk, and conversation on heavenly things. Her conversation was always delightful to listen to. I never saw greater love for the brethren than she possessed. In her eighty-seventh year, bent with age and sickness, as long as she could do so, and many times when she was not able to go, she felt that she must go to dear Mt. Zion Church. She lived one mile from the church, and many

times she had sat there and listened to the word. I have often looked at her and thought, O if I could only be like her. She was humble and Christlike; to talk of Jesus and his love was her delight, and singing his praise was like music to her soul. She and I have sat together for hours talking, and I always felt that I was talking to one of God's little ones, but she would not take any praise to herself. She could see the good in others, but could see none in herself. One time she told me that she often wondered if she loved the brethren with that pure love she ought to have. At another time she told me that she had been sick and had not seen any of the members for a long time, and that she longed so much to see them, she felt such love for them; so one day brother Badger came to see her, and when she met him at the door she was so glad to see him that she felt as though she could have put her feeble arms around his neck. Her love went out to the brethren, and she said, "I felt that I knew I loved the brethren."

Many years ago she told me that when she was young and gay, and never thought about anything but having a good time, she went with the grandmother of brother Ira Thomas, of Mt. Zion, to a meeting; there was to be preaching at a brother Stringfellows', who lived near Ebenezer Church; Elder Leachman was to preach that night. She said she was having a good time; after having helped to arrange the room she was going to enjoy herself with the young people. Elder Leachman took for his text, "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I." She had never heard such preaching; it seemed like a flash of lightning to her, and there, for the first time, she saw herself a wretched sinner. She had not loved the Old School Baptists, and had said hard things about them, but after that sermon she became troubled about her soul, and for twenty years, she told me, it seemed as if her life hung over the pit of destruction on a frail thread, and if it broke she would be lost. Time passed on, her dear mother was taken very sick and they told her she was going to die. At the news she fainted away, and when she revived she asked them to let her see her mother, and she was led to her. She said, "Mother, will you forgive me everything I have ever said and done that was wrong, and what I have said about the Old School Baptists?" Her dear mother said, "I freely forgive you everything." Many times before she had desired to ask her mother's forgiveness, but could not. After that, still in much trouble, she thought she would read the SIGNS, and took her money one day to go and send for it. At a certain place on her way she stopped and prayed that the Lord would forgive her many sins. She went on, and when she had returned to the very place where she had prayed, she heard these words spoken to her: "If your earthly parent forgave you, how much more will your heavenly Father forgive you." She said she ran a mile or more before she came to herself, as she was so happy, and felt that the Lord had forgiven her sins, and through the many years she could look back to that happy hour when these words came with such power. There was the beginning of her hope, and O what beauty she saw in the doctrine of Jesus Christ: that he ruled in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none could stay his hand. I heard her say that during the time of the Civil war, when her darling son was killed and brought home, that she could not have endured the trial if she had not believed that God was ruling and that his time

had come to die. She contended for the faith once delivered unto the saints as clearly as any one I ever talked with; she ascribed to Him all the power, and believed that vain was the help of man. I miss her much, for I loved her and miss her sweet conversation. She was the mother of sister Ida Marmon and sister Emma Young, near Mt. Gilead, and sister Sallie Gulick, and one son, John F. Gulick. These last two lived with their mother at their home at Aldie, near Mt. Zion. Later she was moved to the house of sister Emma Young. She moved there October 2nd, and died December 2nd. For two weeks she was much better, and then began to fail rapidly, but in this time she was very spiritually-minded. Her daughter Sallie one day said to her, "I hate to see you suffer." She replied, "O Sallie, do not mind, the Lord is with me, and will help me to bear my sufferings. He said he would put no more upon us than we are able to bear." Often she would repeat the words,

> "Show pity, Lord, O Lord, forgive,
> Let a repenting rebel live;
> Are not thy mercies large and free?
> May not a sinner trust in thee?"

One day she was happy and clasped her hands together, and said, "O help me to praise my heavenly Father for the many blessings he has bestowed upon me; I feel as though I cannot praise him enough." She reminded me of the last Psalm, and I turned to it and read it for myself. One evening I was with her, she was sitting in her chair and seemed too weak to hold her head up, but she wanted to talk, so I raised her head upon my hand and held it there, and she closed her eyes and commenced to talk. She spoke of Elder Coulter, and said she had told him at Mt. Zion of that time when she trusted the Lord had spoken the words to her: "If your earthly parent forgave you, how much more will your heavenly Father forgive." Then she spoke of dear Elder White, and continued talking of Jesus and his love, and of the brethren. Her daughter, sister Sallie, with myself, could but weep. I told her of sister Margaret White having written to me once of a sweet season of rest which she had at a pleasant meeting, and that she had said, "If it be so sweet here, what will it be when we awake with His likeness, and are satisfied at last?" She replied, "O will I awake and be satisfied?"

The last time I went to see her, on Thursday before she died, I read brother Keene's letter in the SIGNS to her. As I was reading where he said, "God's loved ones' names were written in the Lamb's book of life," she said, "O is my name written there?" I read to her sister Lena Huntt's letter, written after the association, and she said, "It is so good." I said, "Sister Lena is in her first love." She replied, "O how little did I think when I was in my first love that I would have to fall so low." Then she raised her feeble hand, and said, "That takes me back to that spot where Jesus spoke peace to my soul, and I ran a mile before I came to myself, and was so happy." I told her that now I should have to leave, and she said, "I hate to see you go." I told her it was our meeting-day on Saturday, and also on Sunday, and that after that I would come and tell her about the meetings. She told me to tell Elder Lefferts that she was a poor old sinner lying there. I said, Sinners are they whom Jesus came to save. I know our sister's heart was with us, and that

she thought of us at the meeting. I gave brother Lefferts her message. He told me to give her his love, and that he was glad she felt herself to be a sinner, for Jesus came to call sinners; but I did not get to give her his message, for on Wednesday night she passed away, in a calm, peaceful sleep, without a struggle or a groan. She never heard brother Lefferts' message, but it was not lost, for I have told it to others, and have seen the tears run down their cheeks, giving evidence that they, too, felt to be sinners. Her funeral was at sister Emma Young's home. I saw her lying in her casket, her dear hands folded across her breast, and O what a calm, peaceful look was upon her face; I thought of what sister White had said: she was satisfied now.

"O happy soul, who safely past
Thy weary warfare here;
Arrived at Jesus' feet at last,
And ended all thy care.

No more shall sickness break thy rest,
Or pain create the smart;
No more shall doubts disturb thy breast,
Or sin afflict thine heart."

Her children bow in sweet submission to the will of their heavenly Father. They sadly miss their mother, but feel that their loss is her gain. Her three daughters love the Lord their mother loved, and may her son, whom she loved so much, and his family, be also brought to the fold, to worship the God his mother worshiped, with all the rest of her loved ones, and when time shall be no more may they all meet around the throne above.

I have written this by request of her daughters, and because I loved her.

Your unworthy sister,

FANNIE BALDWIN.

PORTLAND, Ind., Feb. 17, 1909.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I inclose a letter I received to-day from sister Lida Keller, of Dayton, Ohio, who is isolated from Baptists who rightly divide the word of truth, and I feel as she has endured some of the raging of life's billows, her source of comfort in all her trials has come from Him who has promised to be with us alway, and I feel many brethren and sisters of like sorrows will be comforted by reading her letter in our family paper, if in your judgment it is best.

Yours in bonds,

NEWTON PETERS.

DAYTON, Ohio, Feb. 16, 1909.

ELDER NEWTON PETERS—MY DEAR BROTHER:—This dreary looking winter morning, as the ground is covered with a mantle of white, and at the present time the snow is falling in large, fleecy flakes, I shall try and answer your precious letter of January 23rd, which came duly to hand, and was much appreciated by sister Mary and me, for, brother Peters, we feel at times low down in the valley of despondency on account of being deprived of hearing good Old Baptist preaching, as I have told you previously. You cannot wonder, dear brother, that we many times hunger and thirst for the crumbs that fall from the Master's table, when in memory I go back to the happy golden days when I was baptized, when on the wings of his love I was carried above all sorrow, temptation and pain, and the almost unalloyed rapture of peace and bliss that came to me when I went down into the watery grave was only surpassed by the dense darkness that soon after enveloped me and seemed to effectually shut out every ray of light from the glorious Sun of Righteousness. I had thought to walk O so softly, all sin, all

earthly passions seemed ended and dead, but alas, how soon I knew they had slumbered to awake with renewed strength upon my startled senses. O how it grieves me because I cannot always feel His dear presence, cannot always sit at his dear feet and learn of him in whom alone is fullness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures forevermore. Why is it, dear brother, if I am truly a child of God, that I am so often in doubt and darkness, and again when I feel the dear Savior's presence I can praise and adore him and everything seems bright and my soul's salvation sure? Then when he withdraws himself I am ready to faint, and think, Surely I will sink beneath the waves, and cry out, as did Peter, "Lord, save me." How very often my frail bark is tossed on the pitiless waves of a Galileean sea, yet Jesus has never failed to soothe and quiet me by his word, "It is I; be not afraid;" has never failed to speak the words, "Peace, be still," to the raging billows, and give me a gentle calm. O the safety of his sheltering care. How could we bear our earthly afflictions and sorrows were it not for the promised blessing of the holy Comforter, who at times comes into the chambers of our souls, and grace, amazing, soul-sustaining, saving grace, did not give us something of the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness?

Tell your daughter, dear brother, that I deeply sympathize with her in her bereavement in the loss of her little daughter, and tell her at times since the death of my husband it has seemed I could not bear the great sorrow, and have waded through deep waters of affliction, and have felt all the waves and billows of human suffering and woe pass over me; but blessed be the name of God, he has kept me by his almighty power, he has made me lie down in green pastures, he has led me beside the still waters, and in all my bitter sorrow and woe his rod and his staff have comforted me. Ah, my brother, it is after the angry flood-tide has swept its raging billows over us that the still waters seem so grateful, so calm, so wonderful to us; thus do we realize it is good to be afflicted, it is good to mourn, it is good to weep, for in it all and through it all we shall be comforted. Daily, hourly, does he shed the golden sunshine of his love and care about me; he causes blessings to flow into my darkened life, distilling dew, refreshing my drooping, weary soul, and filling my heart with thanksgiving and praise; blessed be his holy name.

I was glad to hear there is a Baptist sister in our part of the city, whom you wished me to call and see. I went the next afternoon after your letter came informing me of her, and found her, but she is frail and looked badly, having contracted a severe cold, but I have not seen or heard of her since. She clasped my hand warmly when I told her I had a letter from you in answer to a letter I had written you, and who I was. She said, "O dear sister, I am so glad that you have called on me; I shall certainly come and see you as soon as I am better."

Sister Mary and I have had "la grippe" for three weeks, sister having had a more severe attack than I; but now we both are on the road to recovery, and hope soon to be in the enjoyment of good health. You cannot conceive how I miss the kind ministration of my departed companion; he was a skilled physician, as well as pharmacist. Sister and I feel loath to call a strange physician, but we each and all must submit to God's de-

crees. It will not be long until this life to all who now tread the earth will be ended, and the place that knows us now will know us no more forever. Swift as the weaver's shuttle speed our years, nor would I stop their flight; so hasten and bear me to that golden shore, where eyes shall cease weeping and hearts break no more.

In looking over my long letter, and seeing how little of interest I have given you, I am almost tempted to destroy it and begin anew, but fearing a repetition of the same subjects I will leave it just as it is, hoping you will pardon my imperfections and shortcomings.

I must tell you of a letter I had last week from cousin Nettie Denny, formerly Nettie Debolt, in which she informed us that Aunt Ann is yet living, but that her mind is almost a blank, being nearly eighty-six years old. She was one of the youngest of our grandfather's children of thirteen, our father, Peter Mikesell, being the oldest. Aunt is the only one now living, and surely, according to nature, she cannot be here much longer, and then what a glorious change awaits her: to put on immortality. Blessed thought. Shall I be satisfied? O no, not here.

Not here, where all the dreams of life deceive us,
  Where the warm spirit never gains its goal,
Where haunted by the thoughts that grieve us,
  And o'er us floods of bitter memory roll.

There is a land where every pulse is thrilling
  With rapture earth's sojourners may not know;
Where heaven's repose the weary soul is filling,
  And peacefully life's time-tossed current flows.

Far out of sight, while yet the flesh enfolds us,
  Lies the fair country where our hearts abide,
And of that is naught more wondrous told us
  Than these few words: I shall be satisfied.

Satisfied! satisfied the spirit's yearning
  For sweet companionship of kindred minds;
The silent love which here meets no returning,
  The inspiration which no language finds.

Thither my weak and weary steps are tending;
  Savior and Lord, with thy frail child abide;
Guide me toward home, there all my wanderings ending,
  I shall see thee and be satisfied.

LIDA KELLER.

FAIRFAX, Va., March 13, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I will try to write a line or two to tell you I am still in a land of affliction, and in that particular place of sadness which makes all things wear a gloomy appearance. I have been sick all winter, in addition to my painful mishap last October, the night after the close of our association with the church at Frying Pan. I was stopping with our niece near Herndon, Va., and I stepped out on the porch after supper, and the night being very dark, I stepped off and broke my foot and sprained my ankle badly. I suffered much for six weeks or so, and had to lie in a helpless condition a long time, but in it all the Lord was good and gave me a tender mother's care in the person of our dear niece; nothing was left undone for my comfort, and why I could not be comforted in this I cannot tell. I never felt more unreconciled in all my life; her husband was also as kind as could be, but I felt away from home and a burden to every one and could not come away; no use in the world, and yet could not leave it. I would call to mind years that are past, when I felt I was on the eve of my departure for so many months, and of the sweet communion I had with the dear Redeemer, but not for one moment could I hear his voice as then: "It is I; be not afraid." Three of the brethren came to see me and tried to comfort me, but I felt as a whipped child, to be all crouched down and expecting a frown from every one, where there was no eye to pity or no arm to save. I would lie there on my

cot and weep at night after all had retired until I was so weak I could scarcely move. I would think, Here is the end of all those years I have professed to be a Baptist; and what am I now but a poor castaway? And to make it appear worse to me, many of the dear saints of God have expressed such confidence in and love and fellowship for me that I felt it were better to die than have them know how wretched I was, and that they should find at last that I was not suitable company for them. I wonder if any of my dear brethren have ever been so low down as I. Has any one come to this dark place where the hand of God is not seen nor those everlasting arms felt? There is only one thing I feel to know: that I am a poor, vile sinner. I would delight in the law of God, but that law does not seem written in my heart; if I knew it were there I could count it all joy, for those afflictions which seem so heavy now would be light indeed compared with that eternal weight of glory which the apostle saw in store for the saints of God. But he saw Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory, and seated on the right hand of the Father, who in his death had brought light and life to the dear saints of God. O why cannot I feel its power in my poor soul at this time? Surely there are none so dead or so cold but that even the thought of such glorious things should bring cheer and comfort, for

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear;
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

But to me, with such an unbelieving heart, it can bring naught but shame and fear. Ashamed of self in all things I do or think, I am trying to tell you of myself at this time, and I am ashamed of it, for it is self all the way through; I cannot get self to stand aside for a moment that I may pen a few lines to the dear ones, a word of comfort, or show some token of real fellowship in the gospel of God's grace, and fear lest I am a castaway. I do hope the saints of God can feel it in their heart to pray for me, that he may appear with healing in his wings and brighten this gloomy place, that I may feel with one of old when he awoke out of sleep and exclaimed, Surely the Lord was in this place and I knew it not, and he went about to build an altar that should be to the honor and glory of the Lord, for there it was made known the Lord was there; then my song would be:

"Here I raise my Ebenezer,
Hither by thy help I'm come,
And I hope by thy good pleasure
Safely to arrive at home."

How can I explain my situation better if I continue writing? These few lines are for the children of God to judge whether I can be tolerated as knowing anything of the way they have heard in their pilgrimage, and if such a wayside beggar ever stopped at their door, came in and dwelt there, and if this last state does not look worse than the first. Who is such an one anyway? Is it life or death that holds the house? I hope these questions are not speculative, nor yet do I intend a hint at two dispensations, but rather in an experimental way, as I am too illiterate to know anything in any other way. Please pardon all I have said amiss, and remember I am all mistakes.

I did not intend to write as I have, but just wished to tell you why I did not renew for the SIGNS earlier. I just got home in February last, and have been too sick to attend to business, but am thankful to say I am much better now. Love to the household of faith.

ELI T. KIDWELL.

LAURELVILLE, Ohio, Feb. 3, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—While confined to the house with "la grippe," I will attempt to write a few lines of appreciation and send you my renewal. Our dear old family paper still, if I am a judge of the truth of the revealed word of God in the beloved record of truth, contends for the pure, unadulterated doctrine held by the prophets and apostles, and taught by the Father and the Son by direct word and revelation in the ages past. As I told a dear sister some time ago when talking about the SIGNS, we need not fear when beginning to read a piece published in it that we will find unscriptural ideas advanced before the close of it. I am glad the SIGNS is not a place where new, fleshly-conceived ideas may be flaunted for the indorsement of those of like (fleshly) mind, and the condemnation of the spiritually-minded, thus creating contention and malice, which edify not the church of Christ. To attempt to commend the many writers who so ably set forth the truth of God, both in doctrine and experience, is unnecessary and I will just say to all who write: Persevere in the course you are; you know not what word or expression may encourage some dear child of the kingdom. You need not have fears of putting in some expression contrary to sound doctrine, or unprofitable, because the kind and faithful editors will carefully weigh and inspect it to see if there is any counterfeit in it before its publication.

One dear brother's name I have missed from the columns of the SIGNS for some time: Elder Frank McGlade; I hope if he sees this he will take heed that I am not the only one who remembers him and craves a communication from his pen. If I could write as instructively and comfortingly as the majority, at least, of the brethren whose names appear in the SIGNS, my name would appear often, but when I write it is through sufferance that my communication is ever published. One so ignorant as I should never be permitted to hinder those mentally favored of God. But I have such abundant reason to thank him that it is as well with me as it is. I can see his loving, merciful hand in all my travel along the way; but O my leanness, my leanness, my barrenness, my unprofitableness to his cause, my darkness of mind, my coldness of heart. My mind is like the fool's eye. Say, is any one like me? I used to be, or imagined that I was, blessed with liberty in expressing my thoughts, but now I am shut up and cannot come forth; but, thank God, he is the one who shuts and the one that opens. I would pray to await the good pleasure of his will. I crave an interest in your prayers, kind editors and readers, that he may be with me through this valley and shadow of death.

I inclose a short letter from sister Amanda Schaal to do with as you think best. Sister Schaal, owing to bodily affliction, has never been permitted to spend a day of her life in the public schools, but I am confident that she has attended the divine school, and has been taught of the Lord.

God continue to bless the SIGNS, is the prayer of the least of the flock, if one at all,

GEORGE W. HARTSOUGH.

LAURELVILLE, Ohio, Jan. 17, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER HARTSOUGH:—Your request of me to write something for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been on my mind very much, and I will now in my weak way try to tell you

why I did not write. I feel so poor and blind, and seem to be so low down in the valley, that I am made to cry out and say, O this valley of dry bones, who shall deliver me? Feeling thus, I knew my writings would be of no comfort to any one. I must say I have enjoyed reading the dear old SIGNS, and have often thought I would like to tell the writers how much comfort their letters have been to me, but feel too weak and unworthy to try to address them through the SIGNS. I did enjoy Elder Chick's New Year's greeting very much. I can look back on the past year and see how often the Lord has blessed me and visited me in my low estate. Yea, his mercy endureth forever, and I hope he will be with me in all the sad trials through which I am called to pass. O Lord, help me to put my trust in thee, for I have nowhere else to go. "Thou hast the words of eternal life."

I was sorry I did not get out to meeting this time, but hope you had a good meeting. Pardon me for bothering you with this poor letter. Pray for me when it is well with you.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

AMANDA SCHAAL.

NEW YORK, N. Y., April 6, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—"As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country." Thus the inclosed letter came to me; it recalled experience of long ago when my heart was overwhelmed with trouble and distress, yet underneath all there was comfort and peace indescribable in the assurance of hope that Jesus justifies his people in all their weakness and infirmities by his knowledge in bearing them. In the fellowship of his sufferings in the flesh they are justified by his word: the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. The word came to me then in power and much assurance, "Have I been so long with you, and yet hast thou not known me?" and that day I believe I knew his word was truth: "I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you;" peace was given me, not as the world giveth, and trouble and fear were swallowed up in rest and assurance. But such seasons have been few with me. An evil heart of unbelief is my besetting sin, and again and again I have to be told how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. "And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."

This letter of sister Slawson's seemed to bring nigh a land that was very far off, and the Lord of old appeared unto me, "saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." I would like her letter to be published; it would be welcome to many I am sure; at least it will be so to any one like me.

In love and fellowship,

JOHN McCONNELL.

ROCKLEDGE, Fla., March 21, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER McCONNELL:—We are resting at this quiet hotel, situated on the Indian River. We were for a while at Miama and Nashua.

My mind goes out to each one this afternoon, as you come together in my dear little home church, and I can think of no place I would rather be this bright Sunday. For the first time since leaving home I attended services in a crude little Presbyterian meetinghouse here. I was made to feel I am different from others. All whom I heard speak about the preaching, said, "What a fine sermon," but to me there was no gospel in it. I did have a little season of refreshing, I believe,

when he read for his subject the parable of the "ten virgins." The way he presented it you know: the world sees nothing but good works and oil at their command, which they are at liberty to use at will. After reading the text there was considerable form service, which was no part of divine service to me, I was carried back in memory and was given, I trust, to read from the book of remembrance written before Him for them that fear the Lord, and that think upon his name. My mind reviewed the experience of some years ago when I was ill with pneumonia. While it did not bring the comfort and peace I then enjoyed, it was refreshing to remember the mercies of the Lord in time of conscious need. At that time my bodily suffering was nothing compared with the depths of despair I found myself in. I felt to be without hope and without God in the world; all my past hope seemed to mock me, and I was tempted with the question, "Where is thy God?" How I desired some manifestation of the Holy Spirit in my behalf! Then came to mind the parable of the ten virgins. The five wise ones with their lamps trimmed and burning going forth to meet the bridegroom. How I longed to join them, but in the depths of despair I saw no oil in my lamp, and the words came, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" I felt to say, Yes, Lord, thy righteous law approves it well, if I am cut off it is just. Then there appeared to my view Christ in the garden, bearing the sins of all his people, and the burden seemed to me so great that I said aloud (I was told later), Pressed down like a cart under many sheaves, (not just as it reads, for I did not know then it was in the Bible) and then I was made to feel my cruel sins were part of that great burden. It seemed so great, so real, that I remembered no more for a while, but when I rallied there came to me words I can never forget: "Behold his bed, which is Solomon's." I felt I was resting on a bed that my spiritual Solomon had made for me, and I was resting like a little helpless babe. I rejoiced inasmuch as I believed I was made worthy to partake in a small measure of the sufferings of Christ, and reigning grace filled my heart. I found tears had come to my eyes as this past experience was recalled to mind; I presume if any saw me they thought the dramatic way the minister presented the scene was the cause, but I believe I had meat they knew not of. And to-day seems most solemn, and sweet sadness fills my heart. Past experiences I am sure are not lost to us, but we are made to know all the way the Lord hath brought us; we remember the wormwood and the gall, and as one of old said, "Therefore have I hope."

I hoped we might return in time for me to meet with you next Sunday and I again could hear the gospel sound, but I find we will not. Kindly remember me in love to each one. As a church we are truly blessed, walking together in love and sweet fellowship; I believe esteeming others better than ourselves. I would write to the church, but feel my insufficiency, and the message you give will be received, I am sure, in the spirit it is sent: the spirit of love.

We are having an enjoyable trip, and I think are being benefited by it. The climate here is pleasant; not too warm, yet we wear summer clothing. Remember me in love to sister Hooton, brother and sister Risler, sister Hartford and all who inquire about me. I hope this will find you both in the enjoyment of health and in the enjoyment of spiritual blessings. We expect to go farther north

this week; a letter addressed to me here, however, would reach me. I am sure your hearts have charity enough to overlook errors when you remember the weakness and shortcomings of your unworthy but loving sister,

SARAH E. SLAWSON.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, Feb. 7, 1909.

MRS. OLIVE M. POWRIE—DEAR SISTER IN THE COVENANT ORDERED IN ALL THINGS AND SURE:—The days are gliding by since I received your letter. I have been much occupied, and even tonight I do not feel fitted, either bodily or mentally, to begin letter-writing. I have proved, however, many times that "our sufficiency is of God;" he can equip us for whatever relations in life we are called upon in his providence to fulfill. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." "My grace [saith the Lord] is sufficient for thee." The children of God are ever learning their nothingness and helplessness, and are thereby prepared to appreciate the sufficiency and preciousness of those mercies which are only found in Christ, the Head of the church. "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." I have many times during the past year been thinking how very wonderful it is for a poor, vile sinner to be sighing after intimacy, and to be in very truth (in a way that the unregenerate can never understand) living in very near relations with the high and Holy One that inhabiteth eternity. The Lord of old said, "And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them, * * * and there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony."—Exodus xxv. 8, 22. So in Christ Jesus, the Antitype, we meet, we have communion with the Lord. O what nearness, what friendship there is between a poor, vile sinner and God when he abundantly pardons, when he, in his everlasting, covenant love reveals to the sinner's heart that he is justified freely by God's grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; and then, my dear sister, from day to day, in the midst of earthly perplexities, trials, afflictions, and amidst the spiritual conflicts and adversities of the soul, how needful in our pilgrimage is the nearness, the succor, the upholding pity of the Lord, that we may hold on our way. It all is very wonderful, and all is the fruit of the everlasting love of God.

"O had he not pitied the state we were in,
Our bosoms his love had ne'er felt,
We all should have lived, should have died, too, in sin,
And sunk with the load of our guilt."

Do we not find, amidst all the changes of our life, how preciously adapted to every condition is the truth of the gospel of the grace of God? All things that pertain unto life and godliness are communicated unto us by God's divine power, (2 Peter i. 3,) and thus ministered unto, the inward man is renewed day by day. (2 Cor. iv. 16.) When, by the Holy Ghost, we are living in reverential nearness with the Lord we are delivered from the fear of man, that bringeth a snare. Our heavenly Father hath said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."—Heb. xiii. 5, 6. What can man do? Man has no power at all against us except it be given him of God. (John xix. 11.) God may suffer man to persecute us, to cast out our names as evil, to torment us even unto death, and after that there is no more that he can do. But our dear Savior saith, "Fear

not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able [after he hath killed, Luke xii. 5,] to destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows."—Matt. x. 28–31. Can we believe this? I find I can only do so according to the working of God's mighty power, (Eph. i. 19,) and then how comforted is my soul. The other night, upon my bed, I was thinking of the vicissitudes, the anxieties, that attend my life; I looked forward, but all was obscurity, and my soul was cast down within me. Then in a quieting, soothing way came the thought, Is not the Lord your friend? Instantly in my comforted soul I said, I hope he is, and my heart with entreaty turned to Jesus, Be my friend, O be my friend. I looked then over the pathway to the end of my pilgrimage, yes, even into eternal glory, and in the picture in my mind, with me always my Companion, my Guide, my Upholder, I could see him that wise, compassionate, almighty Friend. Though I am foolish, weak and sinful, though the way be rough and snares and pitfalls are everywhere, though enemies internal and external would impede my way and cast me down, all is well if thou, Jesus, art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. These contemplations were consoling and strengthening to my heart, and thus once more encouraged I was able to cast all my care upon him who careth for me. O to think that the merciful loving-kindness of the Lord is to one like me! I see myself vile, (Job xl. 4,) less than the least, (Eph. iii. 8,) base, despised, a thing that is not, (1 Cor. i. 28,) dust and ashes, (Gen. xviii. 27,) yet I am moved to hope, in spite of the insinuations of Satan, that the Lord thinketh upon me. (Psalms xl. 17.) But, my dear sister, disquietudes again enter into my life, I am seldom long at ease, I find myself as needy as ever for the Lord to appear and bring me forth to the light, or to light up my gloom with the lamp of his counsel. The following verse has come into my mind many times during the past month:

> "His purposes will ripen fast,
> Unfolding every hour;
> The bud may have a bitter taste,
> But sweet will be the flower."

I have often purposed, but many, many of my purposes utterly fail; they no doubt are contrary to the purposes of the Lord. But what his hand and counsel hath before determined to be done, that shall stand, that shall be fulfilled. My heart as I pen this says, O let me say, Thy will be done. It is otherwise with me sometimes, I find I am fretful, murmuring (God knows it, though no creature has knowledge of it), yet I long, yes, I entreat the Lord not to leave me, but to bring me and to keep me waiting upon him, acquiescing in all his ways. Without the riches of his grace subduing me I am a very rebel. In the depravity of my sinful heart I see I should set aside all regard for the good pleasure of the Lord. O the unsubmissive creature! I should enthrone myself, and have myself a self-determining being. Ah, what presumptuous vanity! Some in their folly claim to be such. But God is merciful, and in my spirit I say unto him, Let me worship thee, love thee, glorify thee, and ever say amen to all thy counsel. In times of my

weakness, when unbelief plagues me and I am drawn aside from the Lord, very little then discourages; I am cast down and the way looks difficult and rugged, and unless divine help is afforded me I am dismayed. But the Lord is greater than all my fears, and O he is so merciful to my unrighteousness, and my shameful forgetfulness of his loving-kindnesses. Memories of his goodness, and how he hath been my help, revive me, my soul is drawn out to our covenant-keeping God, and I feel, What time I am afraid I will trust in thee, thy faithfulness and mercy shall shelter me; let me hide in thy bosom; let the everlasting arms encompass me. Then, though the world, the flesh and the devil are more than I can withstand, and my soul is wearied in its conflicts, I shall overcome them all by the blood, thy precious blood, O Jesus.

Let thy blood for me avail,
And though sin and hell assail,
I shall then the victory gain
Through the Lamb, who once was slain.

Here I rested in my writing, and mentally reviewing what I had written I said to myself, What does it all signify? It signifies that there is a sinful, weak creature upon the earth moved toward the everlasting God, and exercised concerning things that are eternal. God has come into his life; he is not without God, without Christ and without hope in the world. (Eph. ii. 12.) I hope it all signifies that I am one of the taught of the Lord, and that in very truth Jesus is precious to me. Very sacred indeed is the hope that we are vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory.

May the Lord bless you and crown your life with his compassion and salvation.

I am your brother in Jesus,

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

EUGENE, Oregon.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have been requested to write my experience for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but really my experience of grace is not nearly so brilliant as that of the brethren and sisters often published in the SIGNS. I have been thinking for some time, however, that I would write a sketch of my past life, just to let your readers see how varied it has been, and so will now send you the same, but if you think it at all unworthy a place in your columns, do not publish it, and I will think just as much of you.

I was born in Putnam County, Indiana, January 14th, 1840; my father (John Nosler) was a devoted Old School or Predestinarian Baptist. Of course as a boy I did not know much about them, although I thought then, as I do now, that there was no other church. There were two meetinghouses belonging to Baptists within a few miles of us, in different directions: Deer Creek and Salem, and O how I loved to hear those old servants of God preach; they were old Benny Parks (as we loved to call him), Joel Vermillion and Richard Sinclair, our home preachers, and the two Shields, William and John, mighty in handling the word of God, but I think they lived in Illinois. I tell you, brethren, it makes me feel lonely when I think of those old times, the happiest days of my life, from a worldly standpoint, when father, mother and nine of us children were alive and at home, and now I am the only one left on this mundane sphere.

We left Indiana in 1850, and moved to, or near, Des Moines, Iowa, where we found a goodly number of Baptists, which, however, did not do me much good, for at length arrived that fatal day which so often happens with the children of good

Old Baptists, when I attended a Methodist revival, (I was then seventeen years old) went to the mourners' bench, professed (?) religion, and it makes me laugh yet when I think of what father said when he heard it. Father lived in Missouri at that time; when my sister told him that "Will" had joined the Methodists he hung his head a moment and then said, "Well, maybe it will keep him from stealing horses, or something that way." Well, my religion did not last very long, and I was soon back into sin and wickedness as bad as ever.

In 1861 I enlisted in the army, and served my country a little over four years, during which time my father died. While I was in the army I invariably carried a Testament in one pocket and a deck of cards in the other. I would play cards until I would get disgusted, and then go away off in the wood and read my Testament, and sometimes try to pray, for not infrequently I did feel myself a sinner. After I came out of the army I got to reading *Manford's Magazine*, the great Universalist of Chicago, and the first I knew I was a confirmed Universalist, and preached that doctrine for fifteen years. There is one thing I must say, I always did believe in the sovereignty of God. I then drifted into infidelity, and concluded it was all a hoax, Bible and all. In all my wanderings I must say I was honest; I was just simply seeking for the truth, or thought I was. Yes, and I neglected to say I did at one time actually join the Campbellites. (Not much sovereignty about that, was there?)

But time moved on and my life was spared, and in 1896, when I was fifty-six years old, it pleased the good Lord to show me I was the greatest sinner on earth, and seemed to say to me, You have denied the God who bought you; you have denied my precious word; you have taught your children infidelity; and O how miserable I felt, I did not even know what was the matter with me, and told my wife so, and although she did not tell me, yet she knew. I was in that miserable condition for about three days, when everything I ever did seemed to loom up before me, but blessed be the name of the Lord, at the end of the three days I hope that God for Christ's sake spoke peace to my poor soul and I was made to rejoice. It seemed I was in a new world, every one I saw seemed to look like an angel.

Now this is all I have; as I said in the outset, my experience was not as brilliant as that of some of the dear brethren and sisters. I have not gone on in this condemned condition for months or years; I have never once thought I was going to die; but this I do know, I am living in a new world, I do certainly love the things I hated and hate the things I loved. I actually loved to dance, as old as I was, and would sit up until midnight playing cards, but when the change came I hated those institutions of the devil. Now I love Jesus, I love thy church, O God, I love the dear brethren and sisters, and John tells us, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Like all the rest of you, I have my doubts and fears, but Jesus is my stay, my city of refuge; if I am his child he has made me so by his grace alone. Brethren, pray for poor me. I was perfectly ignorant of church matters, I only knew that God was sovereign; all so-called churches seemed to me alike; members of every denomination in our little town (and there were six or seven) were at me to join theirs, but I said, No, I do not want to join any of them (there

were no Old School Baptists within one hundred miles of me). My wife, that is, my second wife, was a Missionary Baptist, and I thought if I joined any it was my duty to go with her, so I finally joined the Missionaries, but soon learned that they were not what I thought they were. I supposed a Baptist was a Baptist wherever you found him, but O how mistaken I was. My wife, too, having a mother who was of the Old sort, began to be dissatisfied with the Missionaries, so in 1900 we moved from Coos County, where we had been living, to the Willamette Valley, Oregon, where we thought there were certainly some Old Baptists, but after making inquiries for them from time to time we had about concluded there were none; men who were members of our church, and who had been raised with Old Baptists, and at that time lived within one and a half miles of them, told me they did not know of any. Finally I wrote to old brother J. P. Allison, of Portland, Oregon, and he told me there was a church at Drain, Oregon, some forty miles away. We lost no time getting there, and were so overjoyed in finding the true people of God that the second meeting we attended, the second Sunday in last October, we cast in our lot with them, and were both baptized by brother C. F. Morningstar, and have been praising God ever since for leading us to his fold. Brethren, we have been wandering sheep, but how many of God's dear children are in Babylon.

Brethren editors, I have written at greater length than I intended, so look it over, and if you find anything in it that would in the least edify the brethren you may publish it.

Ever your brother in the blessed Lord, I hope,

W. H. NOSLER.

EXPERIENCE.

THE word "experience" is used very often among the Lord's people, both in conversation and in preaching, but the word occurs only three times in the Scriptures, yet those three times are just enough, they are sufficient to supply all that the meaning of the word implies, both in natural and in spiritual things. The use of language is to convey to our understanding the circumstances and conditions round about us and within us, therefore, "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver," or they express the hidden things of our heart, the things which we have lived, and which we understand by passing through them. The first occasion of the word "experience" being used in the Scriptures was when Laban plead with Jacob to remain in his service, saying, "I pray thee, if I have found favor in thine eyes, tarry: for I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake." The blessings he received for Jacob's sake were natural blessings, and he had knowledge they were from the Lord. When Jacob went to him he had but little, and he increased in basket and in store, in herds and in flocks. Laban took knowledge of the blessedness of the Lord in prosperity. His experience was a daily living experience, whether natural or spiritual, but with the old patriarch Job, he made manifest the spiritual, divine nature, in that he saw the blessedness of the Lord both in prosperity and in adversity; he said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." He also said, "What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Natural blessings come through experience to all men, but to the children of God every motion, thought or act, is blessed to the

upbuilding (directly or indirectly) on their most holy faith. These are the things we live (experience) from day to day.

The second place in which the word "experience" is used is in Ecclesiastes i. 16: "Yea, my heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge." Solomon had given his heart to "search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven," therefore his experience of wisdom and knowledge was attained unto by searching, and his qualification to search was received when he prayed to the Lord for an understanding heart to rule the kingdom of Israel. These are the things he lived (experienced) day by day.

The third place we find the word "experience" is in Romans v. 3, 4: "But we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope." In this phase of experience the child of the living God is alive to the beauty and the glory of the Lord, alive to the tribulations which accompany the taking up of the cross of Christ, alive to the vanity of all things under the sun, which Solomon found out by searching, alive to the hatred of self and to every evil of the flesh, alive to the longing for holiness and righteousness. In this case experience worketh hope, "and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." These are the things we live (experience) day by day. It does appear that these three instances make clear to us all that is embraced in the christian experience. The first, a bestowal of the blessings of God on the natural man (or legal character) in prosperity, for the sake of (Jacob or Job) the church of Christ. To Jacob, a manifestation of divine favor in the blessing of God, both in prosperity and in adversity. The second, setting forth the wondrous experimental knowledge attained unto by searchings of heart, by that work of grace in the heart which tears down and builds up, making waste mountains and hills, drying up all herbs, making rivers islands, drying up all pools, preparing the heart for precious things in righteousness. The third embraces an experimental knowledge of all the work which Jesus came to do, as well as the motions of sin which war against the law of our mind. The hidden mystery of the wisdom of God is experimentally revealed to us according to the measure of the gift of Christ; our walk is of faith and not of sight; time things vanish away in the light of the truth of God, which is eternal; the flesh continues in the service of sin, but we have the mind of Christ. May our hearts yield to the sweet influences of the spirit of grace, that we may behold the beauty of the Lord in the spirit of holiness.

B. F. COULTER.

STONY CREEK, Conn., March 4, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I want to tell you how I found the Old School Baptist Church after my conversion, or awakening. My stepfather's wonderful deathbed experience impressed me so very deeply that I often wondered what were his peculiar views or faith, after he had passed away. My first impressions of him, when a child, were in hearing his conversation about Abraham, Isaac and the promised seed. Six or seven years later he became my stepfather, and was much interested in my welfare, most of all fearing lest I might be drawn into the "popular church" after a revival in the school. He was always more or less exercised in spiritual things, although never attending

meetings, having no sympathy with the religious denominations of the day. A cousin who had passed away was also a a dear kindred spirit. Meetings were held in a chapel, several miles away, which he often attended and enjoyed greatly. In the great revival of 1857 both my husband and myself became interested, and we were solicited to unite with the Congregationalists, but the doctrine of election troubled my husband, and he was not free to do so, very much to my regret, for I felt I must wait for him. Some few years after, while visiting a cousin in New York, and listening to her husband and his mother in religious conversation, I was forcibly reminded of my father's peculiar views that I had so long desired to know. As I was to remain over two Sundays, and desired to hear Henry Ward Beecher, (my husband's favorite preacher, and by whom we were married,) I was quite ready to listen to Elder Goble, in Thirty-sixth St., the following Sunday, and that was the first gospel sermon I ever heard. Words fail to describe my feelings and experience during those two weeks. I subscribed for the SIGNS and a hymn-book, and the following spring (1869) it was my privilege to attend the Warwick Association. After great trouble and exercise of mind the way seemed opened for me to unite with that dear people, and I felt I had found the true church I had so long desired. I have attended nearly every year one of the associations, that being all the preaching I have had, so the SIGNS, of course, is a welcome visitor. Of late I have been much interested in reading Elder Durand's "Memoir" of his gifted brother, the very beautiful hymns and rich experience, recalling my once meeting with him; it has greatly edified, strengthened and comforted me, and I wish all my friends might be privileged to read "Songs in the Night."

Nearly a year ago I found among old papers "The journal and experience of David Bradley," my father's cousin, and imagine my surprise to find he united with the Baptist Church and was licensed to preach in 1822, before the division. Thus I feel to trace my heavenly Father's hand in many of the ways I have been led along life's pilgrimage of seventy-five years. I desire to ever praise Him from whom all blessings flow.

(MRS.) SARAH J. CLARK.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER W. S. Alexander has changed his address from Midland, Pa., to 704 Monroe St., Wilmington, Del.

NOTICE.

NORTH YAKIMA, Wash., Feb. 10, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As the time approaches for the time of the meeting of the Siloam Association, (June 18th, 19th and 20th, 1909,) we desire to say to brethren and sisters who plan to come west to attend the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, which opens at Seattle, Wash., June 1st, that North Yakima is on the main line of the Northern Pacific Railway, four miles from the place where the association is held, and we hope all will get stopover tickets and attend the meeting. To any one who contemplates locating in the northwest the Yakima valley has many inducements, and we especially desire to see an influx of sound Old School Baptists. The N. Y. & V. R. R. passes through my place, and the Cowyche station is only a few hundred yards from my house. Trains leave North Yakima each week day at 7 o'clock a. m. and 2:30 o'clock p. m., reaching Cowyche a few minutes later.

W. J. HESS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1909.

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EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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THE OMNISCIENCE OF GOD.

It has been asked us what we mean by the omniscience of God, and what are the proofs that he is omniscient. We feel at this time like presenting a few thoughts in reply to these questions. If we engage in the worship of God at all, it surely is all-important that we know something of his attributes. In fact, true worship consists, first of all, in ascribing to him those attributes that belong to him. To confess his omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, holiness, truth, beneficence, mercy, justice and love, is to worship him indeed, and if we have been brought to admire and love these attributes of Deity, and really from the heart to praise and adore him because of them, then we worship him in spirit and in truth. To acknowledge these things in our hearts is to worship God in spirit; and to make mention of these things in public singing, prayer and preaching, or in testimony of any kind, is to worship him in the assembly of his saints. Public worship is but making mention before men what we have already felt in the heart, and if we declare these things publicly, as a matter of form, while our hearts are far from God, then is he not worshiped either in spirit or in truth.

Among other solemn confessions before God his people confess his omniscience. What does this mean? The word omniscience is not used in the Bible at all, but the doctrine which this word declares is to be found there. We will try to present what the word signifies first. It is formed from the two words, *omnis*, "all," and *scientia*, "to know." Literally it means, to know all, and when used as applying to the knowledge of God it means that he knows all things at once, past, present and to come. There is no succession of knowledge with him if the word omniscience applies to him. In his knowledge he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. A succession of events, thoughts and truths are passing in long procession before our mind; some are forgotten in the past, some we are holding in mind now, and some thoughts and some knowledge will be ours to-morrow that we do not possess to-day. As creatures this must be so with us. Neither men nor angels are omniscient; neither men nor angels ever shall become so. Omniscience belongs alone to Deity; that Being of whom omniscience can be declared with truth is God. Whatever heights it may please God to raise us to, we shall still worship God alone, and ascribe to him alone the attributes named above. In one thing only shall the redeemed be like God, and that is, they shall be holy. In them shall then be fulfilled his own command, "Be ye holy; for I am holy." But God alone shall ever be, as he has forever been, and as he is now, the God of omniscience. Not only must the knowledge of a creature be successive, but it must always be partial; creatures cannot know all things; omniscience alone grasps the universe; the word itself means that. When the apostle said, We shall see as we are seen, and

know as we are known, he was referring to that which concerns us as sinners: the great work of redemption, in which the grace, mercy and love of God, together with his holiness and justice, shine forth, and which we now see in part and know in part. In the world of glory this wonderful mystery of redemption shall be fully revealed. Then shall the redeemed sing as they cannot sing here, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and honor, and glory, for thou hast redeemed us by thy blood out of every kindred, tribe and nation. Again, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be praise. It is impossible that any Scripture should mean that a soul redeemed from among men should in that world, any more than in this, possess omniscience. We shall not be raised to a rivalry in anything with almighty God. How blasphemous is the teaching of the Romish church, which ascribes to glorified saints, and to the virgin Mary especially, the attribute of omniscience; and this they do in that they teach that Mary can hear, from all over the world, men and women when they cry to her. God alone is everywhere, and knows every event, and hears every cry of the children of men.

But let us define the word more closely, if possible. Omniscience means that God knows everything that has ever happened among all men who have ever lived, and in all parts of the world. He knows everything that every man, woman and child has thought, felt, said and done; he knows also everything as well as every event that has taken place in the past. There has never been a grain of sand on the seashore, nor a mote that has ever floated in the sunbeam, nor an insect so minute but what he knows them all. He knows all we are saying, thinking, feeling and doing now, and there is not an atom in the universe that he does not know it altogether. He also knows all things that ever will take place, and all that people who live now, or ever will live, shall ever think, feel, say or do. We finite creatures think that some things will happen again because they have happened before; we expect the sun to rise in the future, because it has always risen in the past; we expect that after summer and autumn are gone winter will come again, because this has always been the case, so far as our knowledge extends; but we all know that about a vast number of things we cannot tell how or when they will take place, or whether they will take place at all. God never expects or guesses what will take place, he knows certainly and exactly everything that is to take place to-morrow, or the day after, or in millions of years to come, if indeed time shall endure so long; and he knows all that eternity embraces as well. All this can be put into the one word "omniscience." Let it be shown that there is one thing or one event that ever has or ever shall be that has escaped the knowledge of God, and at once he is robbed of omniscience.

The above is the definition of the word. When we say these things we say that he is omniscient. But, after all, the important question is, Do the Scriptures teach the omniscience of God? It is vain for any of us to say so unless we can find it is so taught in the Bible. We may find great delight in such contemplations as the above, but, after all, our delight is vain unless the word of God so declares the things in which we delight. All our joy is vain in anything, unless it has a "Thus saith the Lord," for it. So the final test of the truth of this doctrine is, What do the Scriptures say about it?

First, this much, at least, is sure, that if omniscience be not truth, neither is the doctrine of his omnipresence true. If it be true that he dwells in all places alike, then he must know all things alike. If the one be not true, neither is the other. We do not purpose here to call up the Scriptures which declare so often that our God is omnipresent; that is, present everywhere alike, for we do not suppose for a moment that any brother or sister will doubt that truth. His omnipresence proves his omniscience.

Second, every prophecy proves his omniscience. What is prophecy? It is the foretelling of future events, in its primary meaning. The word is indeed used in the Scriptures many times with a secondary meaning, to signify teaching rather than the prediction of future events, but still the primary meaning is declaring that which will in the future come to pass. God did show to his prophets how, when and where future things and events should occur. Those prophets to whom he revealed future things thereby knew that they would come to pass. Telling to others what the Lord had shown to them was prophecy. When things prophesied of did come to pass, then others would know that those men were true prophets. False prophets would be known from the fact that what they foretold would not come to pass; such men were not prophets of the Lord, and their prophesies, if not wilfully false, were mere guesses as to what would be. No man of himself can look into the future, for all that men may think shall occur in the future is liable to be wrong, because no man can see the thousand things which may interfere with their anticipations, but our God has declared the end from the beginning, from ancient times the things that are not yet done, his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. The declarations of the Almighty concerning the future are not suppositions; the words "shall" and "will" are attached to all that he has declared, and these are positive words. Were the shalls and wills taken out of the Bible what a ragged book it would be, and of how little account it would be. We desire to speak reverently when we say that without omniscience in the God of all prophecy, all his declarations regarding the future could not be positive, and there could be no certainty that any of them would ever be fulfilled. He who believes in the certainty of prophecy must believe in the omniscience of Jehovah.

To declare that any one event would take place at any given time, among men, would require that millions of things connected with it and leading up to it should be fully known, else that declaration would be but a mere supposition. To know that any given man shall die at a certain time and place involves unnumbered things connected with his birth, his parentage, his bringing up, his employments in life, his education, his association with others with whom he does associate, and what he shall eat and drink, which all will have more or less influence upon his strength and health. It also involves the lives of thousands of other men who shall be more or less connected with him and have more or less influence upon his life. All these things, and ten thousand more, must be known fully before it can be known that he will die at a given time or place; and the same is true of all events that are foreknown. In order for some things to be foreknown all things must also be foreknown; this is omniscience. Ten thousand things are prophesied in the word of God; if we believe in the truth of them,

and in their certain fulfillment, we must believe that all other things were also foreknown that were in any way connected with them, or that could have any influence upon them. This certainly cannot be gainsaid. The omniscience of God as necessarily fixes the certainty of all events and things as does the doctrine of predestination of all things. If he knows that one grain of sand shall be in any given place at any given time, then that grain of sand must be there at that time. If any one is disposed to say that this involves the doctrine of unlimited predestination we shall not dispute their conclusion.

But we have left ourself little space to present the plain, definite declarations of Scripture concerning the omniscience of God. All the above, however clear it may seem, is, after all, but our reasoning. If there be any one Scripture that declares that our God is not omniscient, all the above reasoning, and all other reasoning in the same direction, is vain; but if the above be in harmony with plain declarations of the word, then it will stand. We can here only refer to some portions of Scripture, without comment, and then will leave these thoughts to our readers. "Thou God seest me."—Gen. xvi. 13. "The Lord is a God of knowledge."—1 Sam. ii. 3. "The Lord looketh on the heart."—2 Sam. xvi. 7. "Thou only knowest the hearts of the children of men."—2 Chron. vi. 30. "The Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts."—1 Chron. xxviii. 9. "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth."—2 Chron. xvi. 9. "Shall any teach God knowledge?"—Job xxi. 22. "He knoweth the way that I take."—Job xxiii. 10. (See also Job xxiv. 1; xxvi. 6; xxviii. 10; xxxi. 4; xxxiv. 21; xxxvi. 4; xlii. 2.) "For he knoweth the secrets of the heart."—Psalms xliv. 21. "All my ways are before thee."—Psalms cxix. 168. "There is no searching of his understanding."—Isaiah xl. 28. "Before they spring forth I tell you of them."—Isaiah xlii. 9. "Declaring the end from the beginning," &c.—Isaiah xlvi. 10. "I have even from the beginning declared it unto thee," &c.—Isaiah xlviii. 5. "I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins."—Jer. xvii. 10. "Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord."—Jer. xxiii. 24. "I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them."—Ezekiel xi. 5. "He knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him."—Dan. ii. 22. "Thy Father, which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly."—Matt. vi. 4. "One of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered."—Matthew x. 29, 30. "God knoweth your hearts."—Luke xvi. 15. "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world."—Acts xv. 18. "The only wise God."—1 Tim. i. 17. "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."—Heb. iv. 13. He "knoweth all things."—1 John iii. 20. "His understanding is infinite."—Psalms cxlvii. 5. "To God only wise."—Romans xvi. 27. Read also the whole of the one hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm. To have quoted all these Scriptures at length was impossible in the limits of an editorial.

In conclusion, we can but say that these things have come to us many times (as they have while we have been writing these thoughts) with a sense of consolation and strength. Will not such a God

do to trust in? Cannot such an one help in every time of need? How good to know that he always sees us, and always sees every foe that can assail us. Here is our help. C.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 19.

"IF in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."

Having been requested by several during the past few months to write upon the above text, we shall now endeavor to do so.

The text is one much in the mind of those who have lived to see the vanity of all things here below, and whose faith in Christ reaches beyond the grave. It seems very evident that the apostle in this chapter is establishing the resurrection of Christ from the dead. That which he first received he declared unto the church at Corinth, how that Christ died for sin, was buried and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. Then feeling that the appearing of Christ to Cephas, then to the twelve, then to about five hundred brethren at once, then to himself also, would more fully confirm the doctrine of the resurrection of Christ, he called special attention to all those who had seen him after he was made alive from the dead. This truth had been preached to them by Paul, and in this letter he is only reminding them of what he had "delivered" unto them. They at the first received and believed his preaching that Christ had risen from the dead, but in his absence they either had heard it denied by some who did not believe in Christ, or disputations among themselves regarding it had arisen. It was therefore to confirm the doctrine he first preached to them that this letter was written. He rather suggested that some had believed in vain, or had at the first received the testimony of the resurrection of Christ and afterwards departed from it. He declared that believers were saved (from error) by the gospel he preached unto them. He seemed to express some surprise that after he had proven to them by the Scriptures that Christ died, was buried and rose again, and that many had seen him alive, that they should doubt and turn away from the truth of the gospel. He then asked the question, "If Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" Or, in other words, After we have established by the Scriptures and by eye-witnesses that he was raised, how say some among you that Christ was not resurrected? For "if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised." Here the resurrection of Christ is presented, not only as the foundation of faith toward God, but the foundation of the gospel or preached word. Yes, all things are vain and without foundation if Christ be not risen. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept," or the first to be delivered from the curse and condemnation of the law. We all should be careful to observe the language here used: "of them that slept;" not of them that sleep. In the resurrection of Christ his mystical body (church) was raised in him and with him from under the same curse and condemnation, hence delivered from sin and all its consequences. Therefore the apostle said, "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead."

The word "came" puts the one as much in the past as the other. It is true, however, that the word "came" in each instance is supplied, but we have not heard any of our brethren object to the word as it is used in this verse, as it (the verse) refers more particularly to the vital and mystical union of Christ and the church; that as all the elect of God died at one time in Adam because of transgression, they all at once were raised in Christ from that condition. Yet it is as verily true that every one in his own order, or time, since the resurrection of Christ has been quickened or made alive from the dead, and this work will continue until the last vessel prepared unto glory is made manifest.

The hope in Christ of the apostles reached beyond this life, and Paul would confirm the brethren in the truth of the resurrection of Christ, that their hope might also be in the living Savior. For if he were still in the grave, no atonement for sin had been made, and they were yet under the curse of the law; and if he were not yet risen, no justification had been wrought; therefore all who had believed Christ to be the Son of God were deceived and deluded. But again and again the apostles declared to the brethren that Christ lived; he was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit; he was crucified through weakness, yet liveth by the power of God. Surely if faith, hope and charity were for this life only, we who believe in Christ would be no better off at last than the infidel. Would we not therefore be of all men most miserable, deceived, deluded, if Christ was not the Son of God and not raised from the dead? The Scriptures would then be without meaning, and we die not to be resurrected; no immortality for us, no future blessedness with God. What could be worse? But such is not the case; all believers know that Christ lives, and that they do and shall live in him and by him. Therefore our faith is not vain, by it we walk; our hope is a good hope through grace, and is the anchor of the soul, and charity does cover a multitude of sins. The language of Job is that of the faithful: "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

Our love, peace, joy and knowledge do not end with this life, but their fullness will be known and felt in heaven. Instead therefore of being of all men most miserable, we who believe in Christ are of all men most blessed in this life and shall be in that which is to come. While here, we see as through a glass darkly; we see in part and prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. Then shall all who now believe and hope in Christ be with and like him. Faith and hope will be swallowed up of fruition, but charity, the love of God and to God, will fill our spiritual being.

O happy day, O blessed abode, when we shall be with and like our God. K.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906; 07 means 1907; 08 means 1908; 09 means 1909; 10 means 1910; 11 means 1911, &c.

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Nancy Stathers, W. Va., $3.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

John P. Kelley was born October 31st, 1825, and departed this life March 23rd, 1909, making his stay on earth 83 years, 4 months and 22 days. It had been my privilege to know brother Kelley for the past ten years, being pastor of the church of his membership for that length of time, and I always found him to be a true Baptist, a loving and lovable brother, always interested in and ready to do what he could for his church, pastor and all the members. Brother Kelley was a good talker and a good writer. I always felt that I missed a great deal by his being so deaf. Although he could not for years hear much of the preaching, he always filled his seat when physically able to do so. On the day of his interment I was in bed with an attack of "la grippe," and unable to be present, but brother Frank G. Scott spoke in prayer at the home, and read hymns 751 and 1052 (Beebe's collection), and at the Black Rock meetinghouse he read hymn 1257, also read and spoke from the twenty-third Psalm, much to the comfort of the bereaved ones and others. Then on the first Sunday in April the writer spoke in his memory, reading as a text Romans viii. 29, 30, and felt that he presented that doctrine and experience which was according to the faith of our dear departed brother. We all miss him, and feel our loss, his family, of course, more than any one else, especially his widow, sister Kelley, and daughter, sister Emma. He leaves a widow, four sons and two daughters, together with the church of his membership, to mourn their loss, but we all feel that for brother Kelley it is far better, for he is with Jesus, free from sorrow, sickness, pain and death. May God give us all grace to be reconciled to his holy will.

His loving pastor, JOSHUA T. ROWE.

[In compliance with the request of Elder Rowe and of the family of brother Kelley, we will add a few words to the above. It was our privilege to know him for more than forty years. During twenty-eight years of that time we saw him constantly at the meetings of the church at Black Rock. It was our privilege to baptize him in the fellowship of that church Nov. 2nd, 1873, and for more than thirty-five years he walked closely with the church, loving all and loved by all. Brother Rowe, his pastor, has already said, and well said, all that we could say of him as a man and as a believer in the Lord. While he was firm and settled in his faith, he was also very kind and forbearing toward any who might seem to him to err from the way. He was not given to seeing the faults of his brethren, but he saw much and confessed much of his own failures; these he could see far more than any others could see of them in him. How greatly all who knew him will miss him. For many years his house was a home to us. It has been a welcome home to others who know the truth. But he is beyond all strife and weakness now. We do not doubt that he is forever with the Lord. May the dear Lord bless with reconciliation and peace all the bereaved ones.—C.]

Sister **Cornelia H. Myers,** wife of brother Ephraim Myers, of Locktown, N. J., died March 29th, 1909. Her maiden name was Fox. She was born in the State of Ohio April 10th, 1837, moved to New Jersey in 1855, was married Sept. 15th, 1860, to brother Myers, was baptized by Elder Gabriel Conklin and received in the Old School Baptist Church at Kingwood, N. J., November, 1868. Sister Myers was a noble christian woman and companion, a kind and affectionate mother, dutiful to the church, her family, friends and neighbors, and was respected and loved by those who knew her. She was sound in the faith of the gospel, and I believe she followed the injunction of the apostle: Touch not, taste not, handle not the unclean thing. She leaves a sad, lonely companion, brother Myers, four children, twelve grandchildren and one sister to mourn the loss of one they loved. God bless them all with reconciled wills to his mysterious providence. Sister Myers was afflicted with cancer, was blind two years or more and longed to be free, to be at rest. I saw her a few weeks before she died; she said she was longing and waiting for the end to come, that she might go home, where there is no waiting nor do any return to earth again. She is now at rest, eternally with God.

The writer of this officiated at the funeral, which was largely attended at the meetinghouse at Locktown, N. J., Thursday, April 1st.

D. M. VAIL.

MEETINGS.

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore city, commencing on Wednesday, May 19th, and continuing three days. Those coming to the city on Tuesday p. m. will go to the meetinghouse, Madison St., near Calvert, which will be open from 1 to 5 p. m., where the friends will meet them and provide places of entertainment. Those coming to Union station, Pennsylvania R. R., will take any car going south on Charles St. and get off at Calvert and Madison. Those coming to Camden station, B. & O. R. R., take cars marked St. Paul St., and get off at Calvert and Madison.

By order of the church.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Delaware Association is appointed to convene with the Bryn Zion Old School Baptist Church, near Kenton, Kent Co., Del., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 26th, 27th and 28th, 1909. Those coming Tuesday afternoon before the meeting, stop

at Clayton, where the north and southbound trains will be met. Daily train service will be had from Clayton to the meeting by the southbound morning train from Clayton to Kenton, which leaves Clayton 9:55 o'clock a. m., stopping at Baptist crossing each day of the meeting. Also the northbound afternoon train will stop at Baptist crossing each day of the meeting to receive passengers, &c.

A cordial invitation is extended to all of our faith and order to meet with us.

B. E. CUBBAGE.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Pa., June 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1909.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the New Vernon Church, New Vernon, N. Y., June 9th, 10th and 11th, 1909.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at the Hall, corner of 19th St. and 8th Ave., fifth floor. Elevator entrance on either 19th St. or 8th Ave.

11:00 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

"SONGS IN THE NIGHT."

This little book has been published about a month, and orders for it have been received from near and far, even to the most distant States. All from whom I have heard have spoken to me very highly of the book. For forty years it has been upon my mind to publish these poems and the experience of my brother, together with the account of his last hours, and have wondered why I did not do it. I felt sure it would be for the comfort of many, and the many expressions I have already received assure me that it is so. Elder P. D. Gold writes: "I have read the poems and experience of your brother with much pleasure. How wonderful was the view of divine things given to him. Surely to be absent from the body and present with the Lord is far better." Elder S. Hassell says: "I shall have a commendatory editorial notice in April. I hope you may dispose of several thousands for the comfort of the Lord's scattered people." Elder H. C. Ker writes me: "Your little book, 'Songs in the night,' was duly received, and has given me more comfort than any reading I have done for months. Surely every lover of truth should have it." The price of the book is fifty cents. All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

My Biographical History of Primitive or Old School Baptist Ministers of the United States is in the hands of the publishers, and they promise to complete, ready for shipment, about June 1st. It contains 864 sketches and 340 pictures, besides some sketches of deacons and pictures and sketches of lady writers, "mothers in Israel," &c. Other sketches may be added if sent to me by May 10th.

I wish to say also that I have spent several hundred dollars in the prosecution of this work thus far, and will have to advance several hundred more before even the first shipment is sent me by the publishers; therefore if you can conveniently send me your order with cash, and feel disposed to do so, such orders will be of material assistance to me, will be appreciated, receipted for, carefully booked, properly credited and the order filled immediately on completion of the work.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 77. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1909. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HARD SAYINGS.

THE truth of God is not according to human reason. Ever since man has been on God's earth men have been trying to reconcile the testimony of the Lord with their natural wisdom. They have all failed to do so, and to counteract this failure much of God's testimony is turned around to mean anything except what the Holy Ghost conveys to the understanding of the saints. "Is any thing too hard for the Lord?"—Gen. xviii. 14. "And there is nothing too hard for thee." "The Great, the Mighty God, the Lord of hosts, is his name."—Jer. xxxii. 17, 18. Soon after the fall of man it was developed that his carnal reason could not comprehend the way of the Lord nor understand his message to his sanctified people. There is no wonder that men rejected the testimony of the Lord, because it never appeals to man's carnal reason. It is recorded in many places by the prophets of the rejection of God's seers because they prophesied "hard things," and the cry against them was, Prophesy unto us smooth things. The smooth things were such that would be pleasant for them to believe and do. Whenever a self-righteous Pharisee is told that salvation is altogether by the grace of God, he will call it a "hard saying," and say, Who can believe it? They are just as dumb and devoid of spiritual understanding as those who came out to meet John the Baptist at the Jordan. They could not bring any evidence as proof of their sincerity in that great ordinance which was being administered by the forerunner of the Lord. They being devoid of the truth, John gave them a stunning blow when he said: "God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." To make children out of stones, surely is a "hard saying." When Jesus told his disciples that, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God," even his disciples were amazed, saying, "Who then can be saved?" They as much as said, This is a hard saying, who can hear it? Jesus understood the shock against their mortal sensibilities, and explained to them where the power of salvation rested. "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible." It was also demonstrated how the mighty

power of God outshines all other power, when the angel of the Lord appeared unto Mary, the mother of our Lord, as he told her that she, a virgin, should bring forth a son, and that her cousin Elizabeth, in old age, and barren, should also bring forth a son, both being contrary to nature. The angel clinched his testimony by saying, "For with God nothing shall be impossible."—Luke i. 37. "Ah Lord God! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee."—Jer. xxxii. 17. "Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?" —Verse 27. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life." He repeats it to his disciples, that it may appear of great moment to them that his flesh is meat indeed and that his blood is drink indeed; that except they eat his flesh and drink his blood they have no life. "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life." "This is that bread which came down from heaven, * * * he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever."—John vi. 54, 58. "Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" The language of Jesus caused murmuring and offense among some of his disciples, so he gives them more of his hard sayings: "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Many things written in the Scriptures are hard to be understood, even by the saints, but faith teaches them to believe what the Lord says, though it be inexplicable. Peter speaks of Paul's writings as being according to wisdom given unto him, in which are some things hard to be understood; but it seems that the failure to understand his writings are mainly confined to the "unlearned and unstable," who wrest them "as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." There are so many things spoken of in the Scriptures that conflict with the natural reason of man that we must conclude that the gospel is a mystery. The apostle calls this mystery the hidden wisdom of God. Jesus said to his disciples, "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." Though it is given unto the saints to know the mysteries of the kingdom, and not given unto the world, yet they remain mysterious to them, tuning their hearts forever to sing His eternal praise. Regarding the truth of God as set forth in the Scriptures as mysterious, is there any wonder that many portions are really "hard sayings"? If we measure God's sayings and doings by our understanding of right and wrong, we sink in insignificance. In the case of the king, Pharaoh, why did God raise up such men? Let God himself answer: "For now I will stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth. And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth."—Exodus ix. 15, 16. "And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: and I will get me honor upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen."—Exodus xiv. 17. "But I will harden his [Pharaoh's] heart, that he shall not let the people go."—Exodus iv. 21. "And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and wonders in

the land of Egypt."—Exodus vii. 3. "And he hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said."—Exodus vii. 13. "And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had spoken unto Moses."—Exodus ix. 12. "For I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might shew these my signs before him."—Exodus x. 1. "And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt."—Exodus xiv. 8. These are "hard sayings," who can receive them? Why was it necessary for God to harden the king's heart more than once? If the Lord meant for the children of Israel to depart from Egypt, why so much preparation and delay? When I was a boy reading this history of Pharaoh and Israel, it first seemed foolish to my mind that God would have all those things that way when he could just as well have had them in a better way; that was my mind, God's way is not our way, his way is everlasting. If we suggest that God had a cause for treating the king of Egypt as he did, we may appeal to the inspired apostle: "For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth."—Romans ix. 17. The power of God shown in the king of Egypt was his complete control over him, for it is written that the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, showing this mighty power over the king to push him forward, then bring him back, push him forward again and again, and as many times bring him back, was a great lesson for the kingdoms of men, it declared His name throughout all the earth. I want to speak of another king that the Lord completely controlled: "But Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him: for the Lord thy God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into thy hand."—Deut. ii. 30. "For it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favor, but that he might destroy them, as the Lord commanded Moses."—Joshua xi. 20. It is a "hard saying" to admit that the command given to Moses and Joshua to destroy all those cities that opposed them with utter destruction was right, when we think of the women, children and little ones that were killed by the command of God; none were left to breathe. Think of the great slaughter recorded in Deuteronomy iii. Sixty walled cities, "beside unwalled towns a great many. And we utterly destroyed them, as we did unto Sihon king of Heshbon, utterly destroying the men, women and children of every city." Some will say, Why speak of these things? Let us hunt through the Scriptures for pleasant things, and pass these hard things by. The Scriptures say that revealed things belong to us and our children, and what was written aforetime was written for our learning. How unsearchable are God's judgments! What the Lord has left on record of himself, of his commandments to the children of men, of his mighty works of creation, of his lifting of men to honor, of his bringing them down to dust, and of his mighty decrees to do whatsoever it pleases him, are for us to know, consider and talk about. And why is this our privilege? That we may fear his great name. It is one of the greatest blessings ever conferred upon the children of men to be enabled to fear the name of the Lord. Men often have a fear, sometimes of death, future pun-

ishment, or of getting into the hand of the devil, and are willing through this fear to exert themselves in some way to avoid these dreaded things. Such fears are not of the "fear of the Lord," which is "the beginning of wisdom." We never can understand enough of the Scriptures to do us any spiritual good without having the fear of the Lord, as well as having his love. Here again is a "hard saying;" that is, to love and fear the Lord at the same time. This cannot appeal to our reason. "O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear?"—Isaiah lxiii. 17. "Also I heard the voice of the Lord saying, * * * Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed."—Isa. vi. 8-10. "Therefore they could not believe, because Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them."—John xii. 39, 40. This is important doctrine, or the inspired writer would not have repeated it from the prophet when he said it was fulfilled in the ministry of Jesus. How unjust the teaching of the above Scriptures seems to be to our natural mind! Again the "old man" says, "These are hard sayings." Many, very many times men have approached me for argument in regard to God's right of election. Their arguments would always agree with this language: God is unjust if he did choose some men to be saved and let the balance of men perish. It is a "hard saying" to the "old man" to admit that the salvation of sinners is by God's choice, irrespective of what they are, or what they can do. It makes the natural mind and heart whirl in astonishment to think such a thing as that God could love sinners when they were dead in sin, and that these sinners are spoken of as vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory, and that the nonelect are "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction."—Romans ix. 22. Horrible thought, hard saying! In the same line of independence, inspiration continues: "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." God's will is supreme, though men do say we cannot get to heaven by his will alone. Men claim that they have full control over themselves in this life, and that they can so live as to make themselves heirs of heaven. Let such people consider the following Scripture, and I am sure if they do not believe in God's sovereignty they will call it a hard saying: "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."—2 Thess. ii. 11, 12.

A few more "hard sayings" like the above and then I shall not worry the readers of the SIGNS any more for the present. "Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets." (Ahab's prophets)—1 Kings xxii. 23. We read that King Ahab was slain because his prophets testified falsely, and that those prophets were led to these falsehoods by the spirit that God put in them. "And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that prophet; and I will stretch out my hand upon him, and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel."—Ezek. xiv. 9. "Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children

of men."—Psalms xc. 3. The last quotation has always seemed to my mind to mean more than is generally understood by spiritual Bible readers; however, now it is enough for me to say it is a "hard saying," referring to my natural mind. "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things."—Isa. xlv. 7. "Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?"—Amos iii. 6. Among the wonderful things that cannot be comprehended by carnal reason is the testimony in regard to God's Son coming into the world for the express purpose of being put to death. Shall we say to be murdered? Yes, and those who murdered the Son had no cause for it. This is testified to by prophets and apostles. Why should they act so foolishly, according to man's wisdom? Because the Lord had "a cause." "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."—Acts ii. 23. "But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled."—Acts iii. 18. "For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."—Acts iv. 28. The Spirit of Christ was in the prophets "when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."—1 Peter i. 11. There are many Scriptures bearing the same testimony as those cited which show the all-wise purpose of God in sending his Son into the world to be slain by men unjustly, but by the Father justly.

In conclusion I want to notice how hard it is for men to believe the prophecy concerning Jesus. To them "he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows," "and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not." He was wounded and bruised, and the Lord "laid on him the iniquity of us all." "He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief." He was proof against the cruel mockings and punishments to which he was subjected, so "he opened not his mouth;" and as a sheep is dumb before her shearers, "so he opened not his mouth." For the transgression of my people was the stroke upon him. It is also recorded of the Son of man that in this his humiliation "his judgment was taken away." Compare this with another record of the same Son of man: Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; his name shall be called, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, &c. Can creation or the universe set forth a being who hath such vastness and unlimited power? Here let me rest under the shadow of His wing.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

HELENA, Okla., Jan. 10, 1909.

HAVANA, Kansas, April 11, 1909.

ELDER H. C. KER—ESTEEMED BROTHER:—I have read in the April 1st SIGNS your good editorial in explanation of John xx. 7, except that I do not understand that Christ bore the Roman cross any time on the way to the place of crucifixion. In the SIGNS of August 1st, 1907, page 462, was published a letter I had written to brother Edward F. Rounds, in reply to an article he had written upon the trial and crucifixion of Jesus. I wish you would read my letter and compare it with the four versions given by the wri-

ters of the four gospels, and I feel that you will agree with me, as brother Rounds did in his short letter published with mine. The cross he did bear was in the great offering he made for the sins of all his people once for all time. The wooden cross to which he was nailed, and upon which he offered up his life, was only an instrument of extreme of a maddened populace to satiate their own wrath. He died that his people might live, is the great central thought in the mind of every child of his love, and not the manner of his death. The Scriptures do not teach nor did God purpose that his people should make that cruel cross an object and image of worship so much in vogue in the world at this time. Why not look with veneration upon the crown of thorns placed upon His head, the spear that was thrust into his side? These were the cruel instruments of the wrath of man, and should bear no part of worship. Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and he alone is worthy of spiritual worship, and that in sincerity and truth from the heart, in which is written the new covenant of grace, and not by the chisel of the sculptor or the brush of the artist; not by legal form, but by faith. Jesus himself shows how and why his people worship the Father: "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." How deeply important and far-reaching are the simple words, "in spirit and in truth." Many worship they know not what. We see now all over the world a magnificent display of the so-called Easter festivities, making a gaudy display of dress arranged for the occasion, all kinds of pictures and floral display, the colored egg, chickens, rabbits, &c., gaiety, hilarity and gorgeous religious pageantry, the song, the instrument, the eloquence and every conceivable imagination of zealous formalists. For what? Pretentiously to commemorate the crucifixion, death and the resurrection of Jesus, the Son of God, and it is lamentably true that many of God's dear children among the Primitive Baptists are drawn more or less into the meshes of this great delusion. They yield to the cunning artifice of men wearing the guise of hypocrisy and smooth words of Satan. The Galatian church fell into these foolish errors, which drew from the apostle Paul a warning and reproof: "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain." —Gal. iv. 9–11. The great apostle pleads earnestly with that church to be as he was in such things, and asks them the question, "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth? They zealously affect you, but not well," and then gives them such good advice, just as good now: "But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you." The true heaven-born child is not concerned about the annual return of the day fixed by man to commemorate the birth of the dear Savior, but he does rejoice in the spirit in the thought that "unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder." Personally I do not recognize these days as in any way binding upon the church of Jesus Christ. The

modern Sabbath day also had its origin from the same source, and its ardent supporters are found among all law worshipers; governments of all lands are placable to it, and recognize its authority, and yield to it obedience as far as it is convenient for them and their subjects in conformity to the long-cherished traditions and the ignorance of the natural man. To the Hebrew nation alone was given the law of the Sabbath, and exclusively for them and their generation; the Gentile world was never enjoined to keep it; nowhere in the New Testament is it considered as polity of the church. The fifteenth chapter of the Acts establishes the code of procedure for the Gentile church for all time. Some Pharisees had been teaching the Gentiles the necessity of keeping the law of Moses; Paul and Barnabas denied that authority. The whole subject was carried up to Jerusalem and there fully discussed. Peter, after there had been much disputing, delivered to them his argument, declaring that by his mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe, and declared that God gave them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto the Jews, and put no difference between us, purifying their hearts by faith. That latter clause covers the whole ground of hope in Christ. Paul and Barnabas then gave an account of their ministry among the Gentiles, and declared what wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them. It seems after that there was peace. Then James summed up the whole matter and declared his sentence: "That we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: but that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood." The Gentile world had no knowledge of the law of the Sabbath, and these apostles determined not to enforce it upon them. This decision pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church. That decision ought to please the church of the living God to-day. The twenty-first verse reads: "For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him." It is also true even to this day, and they compass land and sea to make one proselyte. Law religion is a natural belief, and easily and readily understood by the children of the flesh. The spiritual knowledge of the religion of Jesus Christ can only be comprehended by them that are born of the Spirit. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Those two declarations embrace the whole distinction between truth and error, light and darkness, life and death.

T. R. PITTMAN.

[WE appreciate the above good letter, and the kind way in which brother Pittman has called our attention to the matter of Jesus bearing his cross. We have carefully examined the record by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and must confess that we are "of the same opinion still." Matthew says, "After that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him. And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross." Mark says, "And led him out to crucify him, and they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross." Luke tells us, "But he [Pilate] delivered Jesus to their will. And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the

cross, that he might bear it after Jesus." John records, "And they took Jesus and led him away. And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha: where they crucified him." Inasmuch as the terms "as they came out," and "led him out," are used, it is evident that Jesus was not crucified within the walls of Jerusalem. And as Simon "was passing by, coming out of the country," it is evident that he was not one of the company while within the walls of the city. Hence he (Simon) could not have borne the cross until the procession was "without the gate" where Jesus "suffered." Therefore if Simon did not bear the cross in the city of Jerusalem, who but Jesus did? Brother Pittman says, "The cross that Jesus bore was in his suffering for sins, once for all." The record is most positive that Simon bore the cross of Jesus. He could not possibly have borne the cross of suffering which was given Jesus of his Father to bear. Hence there is no opportunity whatever for argument concerning the "cross" meant in each of the four places mentioned above; the Roman or wooden cross is unquestionably the one signified. In the record by John, brother Pittman has supplied to make his understanding of the matter clear, as follows: "And they took Jesus and led him away. And he [Simon] bearing his [Christ's] cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull." We hardly think the construction of the language will allow the supplement. "Jesus" is beyond doubt the "object." "And they led him away. And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, where they crucified him." Who, Jesus or Simon? Brother Pittman in his letter to brother Rounds, to which he calls attention, says, "Seemingly John did not know the name of Simon, therefore omitted it and used the personal pronoun instead." He may have been ignorant of the name, but we hardly think so, nor can it be possible that the personal pronoun "he," in the verse cited, is applicable to any save Jesus, who bore the cross and was crucified. While we differ on this question, brother Pittman, it shall not cause unpleasantness between us. The truth that Jesus suffered upon the cross for sins, redeeming us to God, is the all-important matter to us. Minor things should not cause brethren "to fall out by the way."—K.]

RATCLIFF, Ky., March 18, 1909.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I have been impressed for some time to write a short communication for the consideration of the many dear kindred in Christ who read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Christ Jesus, our High Priest and Elder Brother, said to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. * * * Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."—John iii. 3-7. Never did man speak as this man spake; all that other men have said on this wonderful yet mysterious subject of the salvation of men has added nothing to these brief words of our blessed Redeemer. The Teacher who came from God told the whole truth, and no man can ever know any more on this sublime subject than the Son of God taught, for he verily dwelt in the Father and knew the mind of God, and the Father committed all

judgment unto the Son, and in the Son were hid all the rich treasures of knowledge; he knew what was in man, and what man is, for he made him. He is the Heir and King of the kingdom of God, and knew perfectly the necessary qualifications for entrance and inheritance in his Father's kingdom; all must recognize these glorious truths. It is our blessed privilege to seek to understand the meaning of our Savior's words of truth, but not to add to nor take from them. Let us consider his words to Nicodemus, so, as being born again, that we may receive instruction, if the Lord will. Nicodemus, who was a ruler of the Jews, evidently desired and sought instruction of Christ, and honored him in confessing that he was a teacher come from God, saying, "For no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." He no doubt sincerely desired to be received into the kingdom of God, but he was yet under the law, and sought to enter the kingdom by his own works of obedience to the law, for he knew of no other way of acceptance with God. In this he represented all other sincere religious men who want to do some good thing that they may obtain the kingdom of God, which is the natural religion of all men, yet it is all legal and all depends on their own works; it is also selfish, for its motive is the honor of man's happiness, in saving himself. Christ knew this was true, for his first words cut this man off from the law of works, as it cuts off all other men who depend upon their works to obtain the favor of God. Every man must experience this in himself before he can enter into the kingdom of God; he must become dead to sin and to the law, as Christ died unto sin in the body of his flesh under the law of God, for God's unchangeable decree is, the man upon whom sin is found must die, hence before he can see and enter into the kingdom of God he must pass from death unto life. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Thus the Lord spake to Nicodemus.

"A man." These words apply to man, and to all men who enter the kingdom of God; but Nicodemus took the words in a natural sense, as meaning that he must be born over again, as in his first birth. (John iii. 4.) Jesus then told him the nature of the second birth, saying, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." He then said to the inquiring man, "Ye must be born again." The word "again" means a second time. A man is the subject of the two births, and he is as verily born again as he was born first. In Christ's teaching he shows most positively that they who see and enter the kingdom of God are men, the children of men, they are born again; this much is forever settled, and there is no room for controversy. The whole work of redemption and of inheritance in the kingdom of God pertains to the sons and daughters of men; the Scriptures abundantly establish this truth.

Let us consider the words of our Lord as showing it to be man that is born again. His words are as plain and emphatic as his doctrine, that Nicodemus, and all other men, must be born again to see and enter into the kingdom of God. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."—John iii. 6. This applies to every man or person who is born again, as truly as the first statement. We should notice that Jesus distinguishes very clearly between the first and second birth as essentially different in nature or kind,

showing that which is first is of the flesh, the second of the Spirit. The life of the first birth is natural, but the life of the second is spiritual. The people of God are given these two lives; in the first life and first birth they are the children of Adam, but in their last life and second birth they are the sons of God. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Our eternal life, sonship and heirship to God are in our Lord Jesus, and only as the inheritors of his life are we the children of God and the heirs of his kingdom. "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life."—1 John v. 11, 12. When a man is born again he is a partaker of the divine nature, and the life of Jesus is made manifest in his mortal body. The mortal body is not changed in its nature, neither is the natural life or spirit made spiritual, as shall be when raised with the likeness of Christ, yet the man is so blessedly changed that he is a new creature in Christ. All the change wrought in him is made by his new life, which God gave him in his only begotten Son. To his disciples, who were men, Jesus said God was their Father, because being born again they are his children. Adam was the father of their fleshly life, and they were not spiritual in their flesh, but natural and sinful, even as we all are now. To sum up our dear and blessed Lord's teaching to Nicodemus, he most blessedly shows that God gives his kingdom, which is spiritual, holy and heavenly, to his chosen people; that to fit and qualify them to see and enter into it the Son of God redeemed them by his own blood, and God by his Spirit quickens them and gives unto them eternal life, hence they pass from death in sin to newness of life in Christ Jesus our Lord, who will also raise them up in his own likeness at the last day; this is the doctrine of Christ and the gospel of our salvation. The life that God gave us in Adam, the first man, is no more our own life than the life he gave us in Christ, the second Man, is our own life; these two lives, the first earthy, the second heavenly, we receive in the first and second Adams. Jesus was the Son of man according to the flesh, and the Son of God according to the Spirit of holiness. He said unto Mary, "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." He sent this word to poor, sorrowing men, as we are. As born of the flesh, woman is our mother, as she was the mother of our Elder Brother, and as born of the Spirit, God is our Father, as he is the Father of his beloved Son, and the Father loved us, even as he loved his Son. This is the experience and hope of every one who is born again, that he who raised up Jesus from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in us. "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." "When he shall appear we shall be like him."

Submitted in love and fellowship of the truth.

J. E. THORNBURY.

SHERWOOD, Ore., Jan. 9, 1909.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—I am sorry you cannot write me a sermon on the text, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given," for I am satisfied that you could write very interestingly upon that subject. As to writing upon that subject myself, I will say that I cannot write upon any por-

tion of the word satisfactorily to myself, and do not feel competent to write therefore for publication upon any portion of the Scriptures of truth. Yes, I believe you are right; of course it is the church that is meant by the words "unto us," but I wanted you to show the material of the church that is called "us." You know that the persons, people, or children of men, constitute the church, which Jesus Christ purchased with his own blood, were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and it seems to me that they were not spiritual or holy when chosen, but were a portion of Adam's posterity, and were sinners, but were chosen that they should be holy. "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)." This is the same people embraced in the "us" of the text, so it is plain that the subjects chosen in Christ were not always spiritual children, but were the children of promise, for "the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."

But I am not going to write, or try to write, my views upon this momentous subject, as I cannot say that I have any particular view upon it, but would like for you to write. I will add, with regard to the children of the flesh not being the children of God, that it seems to me the meaning is that the promised seed were not born after the will of the flesh, but according to promise, and this birth is a miracle. These who were not the children of God were by ordinary generation, and were not the children of God in the covenant. Brother Durand, I want you to correct me if I am wrong here. It seems to me that these children of promise are the "us" unto whom the child is born, for "he said not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." It was through this lineage that Christ came, and unto them this child was born, and the blessing is he was born a Savior. Now, my brother, the main point I want you to notice when you write is, that these children of promise were real human beings, and were sinners, and were given to Christ, and that these are the children of God; they did go astray and were captivated by the devil, and were not spiritual; and Jesus Christ came into this world to save these very identical people unto whom this child was born, and he did save this people by the sacrifice of himself, and by one offering forever perfected those that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, or set apart, chosen in him in the covenant of redemption. These are the people of God who were, and some are yet, dead in trespasses and sins, of whom Paul said, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins," and of whom the Savior said, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." Of these also he again said, "My sheep hear my voice." Hearing his voice did not make them his sheep, any more than quickening a dead sinner is the cause of his being chosen to be a child of God, but the quickening manifests him a child. "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." These are sons according to the promise, chosen sons, elect sons, and by the operation of this Spirit in the heart of this son, or child of God, or sinner saved by grace, he becomes manifestly a child of God.

"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son

is given." My brother, I do not feel at all able to write upon this part of the subject, or upon any part of it, for that matter. The sonship of Christ is a deep and mysterious subject, and brethren differ somewhat relative to it, but the "us" to whom this Son is given is not so much controverted now. I will just quote a few texts which will give you some idea of my thoughts upon the sonship of Christ. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Here is the first intimation that we have in the Scriptures of the Son of God. "And they heard the voice of the Lord God." "And the Lord God formed man." "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman." "And the Lord came down to see the city." "Then I was by him, as one brought up with him, rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." These men are the "us," to whom the Son is given. They are not spirits, they are children who could have instruction and inhabit the earth. We read in Isaiah, "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him. * * * He shall feed his flock like a shepherd." This flock again is the "us" of the text; they are also the children that God hath given him; and, blessed thought, all power, both in heaven and earth, is given unto him, and of all that the Father hath given him he shall lose nothing, but shall raise it up again (not something else, but the same that was given him) at the last day. "Unto us a son is given," not offered. "In the beginning was the Word," and the same was in the beginning with God. By him were all things made, and without him was not anything made that was made. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." These men, as it seems to me, are the sons given to Jesus by the Father. These also are the delights which were with the children of men. Jesus truly is the life and light of his people. We read further on that "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." To these the Son was given. Again we read, "As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed." And these were not born of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, for the children of the flesh are not the children of God. The children of promise are counted for the seed. And now being born again, born from above, born of God, they only of all the Jews are manifestly the children of God. For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly, but he that is one inwardly, whose circumcision is that of the heart; not in the letter, but in the spirit, whose praise is not of men, but of God. "In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is the name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness." And he "of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

My dear brother, I do hope that I know this glorious truth by experience in my own heart, even though I am a poor, ignorant sinner. Now I will stop writing and try your patience no further. I cannot write as I wish.

Your brother,

J. P. ALLISON.

FELTON, Del., Feb. 18, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —Having been asked to answer the following question upon the Sabbath day, for one who loves the truth, I will submit the following to your better judgment, for the readers of the SIGNS also, in the full assurance that you will only publish that which is in perfect accord with the teaching of the Scriptures.

Question: How do the Old School Baptists get around the question of the Sabbath day?

There are two very important features in the question of the Sabbath day. There was a Sabbath day under the old or Mosaic dispensation, there is also a Sabbath day in the new or gospel dispensation. The first was a shadow or type of the second, but let us bear in mind that they are no more the same than the shadow and the substance are identical, or the same. That which is in or under the old dispensation is under the law (works); that which is in the new dispensation is under grace. I judge the question is, Why we hold the first day (Sunday) as the day of worship, and not the seventh day (Saturday), as Moses commanded the Israelites to do? "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."—John i. 17. "For ye are not under the law, but under grace." —Rom. vi. 14. Then the law hath no more dominion over you. The commandment given by Moses to remember the Sabbath day (the seventh day) to keep it holy, was given under the law, and does not pass down from the legal dispensation to the gospel day. The seventh day Sabbath is therefore restricted to the old covenant; it cannot enter the new covenant, for all things are made new. Among the commandments given to the children of Israel, is the one relative to keeping the Sabbath day; then let us bear in mind that this commandment, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," is a part of the law of the Old Testament Scriptures, which is fulfilled in the death and resurrection of Christ. "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God."—Exodus xx. 9, 10. It is always the day following the handiwork of God that is blessed. Six days of labor were required at the hands of the Israelites before the day of appointed rest, their Sabbath day. The Jews could not receive the blessing of the high priest until they had kept the commandments of the law, or confessed their sins in the failure to keep them, be forgiven, &c., then they could receive the blessing, and enter into the rest from their labors, their Sabbath day, which the Lord blessed to them. This all applies to those under the covenant of labor, works, the law. To keep the seventh day as the Sabbath was a vital point to the children of Israel under the law. But if our hope be in Christ, then there is no preeminence of one day above another. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."—Rom. x. 4. The Sabbath day in the new covenant of grace, is the substance of which the old seventh day Sabbath was but the shadow or type. The Sabbath day is a day of rest, blessed and hallowed by God the Father, on which he rested from all his labor. The work of God was not finished when he gave the commandments in the old covenant; he further gave his Son to fulfill those commandments. Following all the labors under the law, Christ's obedience thereto, and death, is the glorious work of the raising of Christ from the dead. In his death and resurrection, the law

was satisfied, and the labor under the law at an end. Hence the day of rest is at hand; not the seventh day, for it had a commandment resting over it, but a new day, the rest which the Father giveth in the Sabbath day of the Lord thy God, in the resurrection of Christ, "the day of Jesus Christ."

Christ's death in obedience to the law was the end of the legal dispensation. The six days of labor and seventh day of obligatory worship came to a close. Likewise in his resurrection was the dawn of another day, a new day, the first day of a new dispensation, the gospel day, which Christ the risen Lord is the light of. The gospel has no end, but shineth more and more to the perfect day. Christ also ended the work the Father gave him to do, entering into rest, and is set down at the right hand of the Father on high. For those of God's people, whose hope is in the resurrection of Christ, to legally hold to the Jewish Sabbath day is nothing short of crucifying Christ afresh, and putting him to an open shame. They would just as well adopt any of the dead types and shadows of the law of dead works as this one in question. This is where the seventh day Adventists blend the two covenants; they cling to the shadow of the old testament, and also claim the substance (resurrection of Christ as their hope) from the new testament. I can see no harmony in such a position, and surely it is not scriptural teaching.

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away."—Rev. xxi. 1. John saw the old covenant worship of God displaced by the new. The six days of labor under the old covenant represent the first earth. The Jewish seventh day Sabbath, wherein they worship God and glorify his name, represents the first heaven. John saw the revelation of Jesus Christ that both the six days (the earth) and the seventh day (the heaven) had passed away. The new heaven is the day of rest, the Sabbath day, the gospel day, that day that follows the ending of both the six days of labor and the seventh day of obligatory worship of God. The new earth is the obedience to the law of love to Christ that God's people are under when brought out of bondage into the glorious light of the gospel day, loving, forbearing, forgiving one another his brother his fault, rather than demanding justice, &c., as was required under the law.

When the sixth seal was opened (see Rev. vi. 14,) John saw an end of things that had been. "There was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, * * * and the heaven [legal worship of God under the law] departed as a scroll, when it is rolled together." Thus was rolled away all the types and shadows of the first covenant. The seventh day, Saturday Sabbath day, went with them. It was Christ who fulfilled the law and ended the legal dispensation. It is the revelation of Jesus Christ to John of which he (John) testifies; therefore is it not plain that to deny that the seventh day (Saturday) Sabbath question is ended is but to deny Christ's teaching, and the power of his resurrection? When the subjects of God's love and mercy are given to behold by faith Christ the end of the law, Christ their risen Lord and Savior, there is rest in that day to them from their burden of sin; there is joy and praise in their hearts to the God of their salvation; Christ is risen, their hope of life eternal. Thus it was that Christ ap-

peared to his disciples on the day of his resurrection. Their hope in him went down with him in the tomb; they were comfortless. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and hath appeared unto Simon. It was the day of his reappearance; a day of remembrance to every one to whom he appears. There was great reason to praise God and glorify the name of the Lord. The four evangelists all corroborate the fact that Christ rose from the dead in the morning of the first, our present day of worship. It matters not the name of that day, it was the first day upon which Christ appeared to the disciples as their risen Lord. It was upon the first day, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, that Christ stood in the midst of the disciples, and said unto them, "Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. * * * Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Again, as his disciples were within, and Thomas with them, after eight days, (the following first day of the week) he likewise met with them, thus establishing his divine favor for all believers. The religion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is free from conditions of any kind on our part; the grace of God is our hope; it is sufficient.

Unworthily your brother in hope,

BENJAMIN E. CUBBAGE.

ELGIN, Oregon, Feb. 28, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have desired to write to you, and to others of like precious faith, but not because of any earthly merit or endowment. Nothing but truth will do us good. It is the lack of those of like faith which makes me feel so lonely and so far from that charmed circle, within which sits the Lamb of God, and it is to him alone that each heart pours forth its song of praise.

Last December I walked to the church here in Elgin, and as the door opened the words of a precious sermon were being addressed to the assembled worshipers, and O it seemed too great a blessing for me to once more hear Elder Gilmore. I went over to Touchet to visit my aged parents, and after the long interim it seemed a great boon to see them again, reasonably well. We went to hear Elder Gilmore preach, and it seemed that some wonderful presence surrounded him, and the glory of heaven shined forth, and the thought of those who never tasted death arose. So vivid was the thought that I exclaimed, "So near." Since that time I have been engaged in the hard task of reviewing many difficult branches of study, and I have sometimes wondered at the dispensation of Providence that puts such duties before me; but, blessed be his holy name, there is no work assigned that we are not given strength to accomplish.

It is a great blessing to get back to Elgin, and to assemble with the little congregation of true worshipers, but it is so sad to know that Elder Gilmore will meet with us no more forever. Sister Gilmore I have known since her early school days; and as pupil, friend and sister, I have ever found her worthy of the highest esteem, and in this letter I wish to express sincere sympathy for her and the dear children who mourn the loss of a noble father and an able minister of the gospel, who was possessed of great gifts for the church. He was blessed in a marked degree with humility, which worked to the good of the cause. I well remember the old home where my three brothers older than I, and the brothers William and James Gilmore, would meet on Sunday oftentimes to read and sing. The book in most repute with them was

the Bible, and as a child I stood aloof to hear those young men talk earnestly and reverently of a book that seemed too sacred for my touch, and yet on other days I would hide myself in the study room and read by chapters and by books. I earnestly desired to get a knowledge of it that would be of as much comfort to me as I seemed to see in the speech and manner of those earnest young men. It was not long afterward that two of my brothers came to the church, and soon afterwards their worthy associates, William and James Gilmore. Now two of them, my eldest brother and Elder Gilmore, have gone to their long home. I still think of their exemplary, humble-hearted, noble lives, and I am almost made to say, Surely there are few whose lives show forth more of the true greatness and mercy of God as he shows his people the way of life than these men in their far off western homes, where church privileges are so limited. Yet God is everywhere, and blesses whom he will.

Your sister,

(MRS.) M. J. LEE.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., April 6, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I went away last week to attend the funeral of a dear brother, and then to go on my usual monthly trip to the sea coast, but last Wednesday I was taken suddenly ill, and came home on Thursday, since which time I have been in the house, and when I have been strong enough I have been reading. To-day I have been reading the SIGNS, and have just read the short letter of brother Paul S. Leigh, and I read this expression: "Among other things, you spoke of your preaching getting stale to yourself." Dear brother, I had not thought that you were having that to complain of. That is a thing I have felt many times, and have wept because it appeared to be to me an old sound, and I thought the brethren and sisters were tired of it. At times for a few meetings there appeared to be a falling off in the congregation, and I thought that it was because they were tired of hearing the one thing so much. When a thing was to be illustrated, only the same thing came as an illustration, and I have gone on without using it because it appeared as old or stereotyped matter. I had not thought that you were afflicted in this way. There have been times when I have received a little comfort in this by thinking of our Lord in Gethsemane, when praying in great agony he used the same words again. Then I have had trouble another way: when I have been blessed with a very free and sweet opening of a subject, and have had that subject in my mind again, I have felt very badly because it was so shut up from me that the whole time appeared as one beating the air. I have felt to be so much more crossed than many of my brethren whom I have been blessed to hear. They appeared to go freely out into the heights and depths, the lengths and breadths of the blessed gospel, and to bring out of the treasury of the Lord things both new and old in such an easy and humble manner that it would get under such an one as I, and lift me right up under the crown of King Jesus and leave me there. How can such preaching as this appear stale to one who is thus feeding such a hungry soul?

It may be my needy condition just at this time, but the SIGNS for April 1st has been a precious loaf to me, and I have eaten my bread in tears of joy and my soul is comforted.

I am far away, but feel to miss our dear, faithful brother, Elijah Leigh, and

know that you all do miss him. I hope you are well and enjoying the blessings of the Lord.

Your little brother in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

BLACKLICK, Ohio, April 25, 1909.

ELDER H. C. KER:—My father, Elder L. B. Hanover, received the inclosed letter, which I send to you at his request. It did him much good, and the writer is such a dear and precious sister and friend of the SIGNS, that he would like to have it published, but submits it entirely to your judgment and consideration.

Very respectfully yours,

NANNIE HANOVER NEILSON.

MARENGO, Ohio, April 8, 1909.

ELDER L. B. HANOVER—BELOVED BROTHER AND FATHER IN ISRAEL:—I know that I am not worthy to address you thus, yet I have felt a desire for a long time to write to you, but a feeling sense of my great unworthiness has kept me silent, and even now it is not that I feel worthy, or that I have anything of special interest to write, but that you may know you are held in loving remembrance by us all, for we often think and speak of you and all the dear ones in your home, wondering how you all have been during this past winter. I hope you are in usual health and still abiding in the precious faith of God, whose wondrous grace I have so often heard you proclaim with such love and faithfulness, and O how often have I sat at your feet feasting upon the crumbs, and was comforted in the blessed truth which the dear Lord gave you; such deep knowledge and precious gift, telling it to others. Truly you have long been blessed of the Lord in being so highly favored. How often my mind goes back to my first remembrance of you, when but a child I went with my parents to Refuge to meeting and heard you and old Elder Powell preach. Young as I was I have not forgotten some things which greatly impressed me there, when you used to take me on your knee and talk of the blessed Savior, of his tender mercies and loving grace. O yes, I think I can never forget those early years of life, and I often go back, gathering, as it were, evidences of God's goodness to me, a poor, sinful child. I thought then when I grew older I would be as you and all those dear saints seemed to me: true, faithful and loving followers of Jesus. The dear Old Baptists I felt sure were the children of God, I loved them, and while I could not comprehend their preaching, yet somehow I felt it was the truth, and young as I was I longed to understand its grandeur and beauty, and in my childish way I often tried to pray to the good Lord to reveal it to me; somehow I seemed to think I must be taught of him. I often think, Elder Hanover, that the Lord was teaching me even then, but it was his good pleasure to gently lead me along for many years before I realized it was indeed his precious Spirit teaching me to know Him whom to know is eternal life. How wonderful it all seems to me now. Just where, when or how I was given faith to humbly hope in the pardoning love and grace of God I have never been able to tell, and I have often taken comfort in those words of the Savior to Nicodemus: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Surely this is true in my case, if indeed I have been born again, for I cannot tell how it came, but feel to hope I have felt some of the pre-

cious evidences of the working of the Spirit. The Lord has been so good to me, a poor, sinful wretch, his mercy and love have been so graciously bestowed upon me, that I feel I have great reason to praise and adore his blessed name forever. I feel sure true religion and a knowledge of spiritual things must be personal things; we cannot know them except the Spirit reveals them, and we have the living witness within us. Without the teaching of the quickening Spirit we can never know the fullness of salvation, the faithfulness of God nor the perfection of redemption, nor comprehend the sweetness and glory and harmony in the doctrine and sweet promises and ordinances of the gospel of grace. All knowledge short of this will do us little good. The Spirit leads us into all truth, and we remember it is written, "They shall be all taught of God." How blessed then to be taught of God who is mighty, for he says, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish," and, "Because I live, ye shall live also;" for "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." What blessed promises these are, and how very glad I am that the final consummation of our hope is not conditional upon our acts, for if it were my hope would be vain; but I am trusting in the sure promises of God, who we are told in the Scriptures cannot lie, and that we are heirs to an inheritance that is incorruptible and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for all those who are kept by the power of God through faith, revealed in the last time. What a comfort and strength to have our hope centered in Him who is our righteousness, wisdom and redemption, yes, our great covenant Head; in him all fullness dwells. O how comforting to feel abounding love and faith in him, yet we must suffer afflictions, temptations and distress and endure our sinful depravity in the great warfare while we dwell here below, and sometimes we feel to bide the time and sing,

> Why, O my soul, these anxious cares?
> Why thus cast down with doubts and fears?
> How canst thou want, if God provide,
> Or lose thy way with such a Guide?

I do not know how it is with others, but it is not that I doubt the Lord, for I feel sure he is faithful to all he has promised in all things, for he changes not, but is the same to-day and forever, merciful and good; but it is myself I am so dissatisfied with, certainly there can be none so vile and sinful and wayward as I. I seem to be such an empty-hearted, indifferent wretch; if I have a little glimpse of heavenly things it seems so fleeting, and my thoughts are so soon carried away with vanity, that I am made to cry, Lord, save, I perish. This thorn in my flesh has ever been very humiliating and caused me much pain and distress, and keeps me low in the valley, often praying for grace and strength to endure, yet I sometimes feel that "when I am weak, then am I strong." I am such a mystery to myself, and am just good for nothing, so unprofitable in all things, so void of all the fruits of the Spirit; I am often discouraged and cast down, and ask, Can it be I am mistaken in it all? The Lord knows them that are his, and I want to love, serve and obey him.

> "Change and decay in all around I see;
> O thou who changest not, abide with me."

Elder Hanover, when you read these lines you will know that I am still a stranger here below, and what I am 'tis

hard to know. I often think of what you said to me after I united with the church, that I would have a dark road to travel, many trials, conflicts, doubts and fears. Very true indeed, and if it were not for the abiding faith and sustaining grace of our merciful God I surely would despair.

But I must bring this to a close. I would like to see you and hear you talk of the precious theme of salvation. I so much enjoy hearing others talk of spiritual things, but I cannot talk or write of them myself, it is not given me. I hope I feel thankful for the privileges I have and for the little understanding I have of the glorious plan of salvation by grace, and of the blessing of hope. Pardon me for thus troubling you, and please accept it as a little token of our loving remembrance of you. May you ever abide in the precious faith of the Lord and feel the riches of his sustaining grace in your declining years, and may you feel the sweetness of the sentiments of that old hymn, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord." Next Saturday and Sunday are your meeting days; I trust you still meet for services. Remember me to all the little band, I often think of you all. We are sorry to hear of Uncle Enos being so afflicted; would like to go to see him. I hope the rest are all well. We are about as usual here, except father has been very poorly all winter, not able to work. Brother Peter Sipe, of the Harmony Church, was buried yesterday; he died of paralysis, at his daughter's, three miles south of us.

We would be glad if you could write to us. I felt pleased to see your short letter in the SIGNS recently. I enjoy reading the SIGNS very much.

Yours unworthily,

BELLE GORSUCH.

LANHAM, W. Va., Jan. 14, 1909.

ELDERS CHICK AND KER—VERY DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I have a mind to pen a few thoughts for your consideration, and if you think it worthy of a place in the dear old reliable paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, you may publish it.

"But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people."—Jer. xxxi. 33. Yes, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people," not a single "if" in it. What a sure promise to the house of Israel, the ransomed of the Lord. The value of a covenant depends upon the ability of the contracting parties to do just what they agree to do. "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them." When God covenanted with Noah that the world should never again be destroyed by a flood of water, and put his bow in the cloud as a token of that covenant, there was no longer any fear that the world would again be destroyed by a flood of water. Why? Because he who had promised had the power to carry out his covenant, had the power to shut heaven, that it rain not. We see the bow in the cloud and remember God's covenant with Noah, who was a type of Christ, the ark a type of the covenant ordered in all things and sure, which bore Noah and his family above the mighty deluge of water and safely rested upon the mountain of Ararat without the loss of one of the inmates. So this glorious covenant made with the house of Israel

is just as sure and steadfast as is the covenant made with Noah thousands of years ago; the new covenant rests securely upon the sure mercies of the great Jehovah God. But who is the house of Israel? The prophet Ezekiel says, "These bones are the whole house of Israel: behold they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O my people." So we see the whole house of Israel represents the Lord's people, the ransomed of the Lord. Fear not, O my people, though you may feel to say, Our bones are dried and our hope is lost; weep not, for the Lord Jesus took upon himself the seed of Abraham, and by offering himself to God purged our conscience from dead works, to serve the living God; weep no more, O house of Israel, for by the one offering of himself on the cross, the Just for the unjust, the Head for the body, he hath forever satisfied the demands of a broken law, satisfied the eternal justice of the God of peace that raised the great Shepherd of the sheep again from the dead in triumph over death, hell and the grave, through the blood of the everlasting covenant made with the house of Israel, in which there are no conditions.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

KANSAS CITY, Kansas, March 17, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—If you will allow one so unworthy as myself to address you so. We are strangers in the flesh, and this is my first attempt to write a word to any of God's chosen few, for such I feel the Primitive Baptists to be. I have been a member of that dear band for about nine years, but I have ever come far short of showing my faith by my works. I have never seemed to be able in this world's goods to subscribe for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but my dear sisters Forbes and Knaus have handed me the SIGNS a great many times, and I can truthfully say there is nothing in the way of literature that I can get so much comfort, consolation and education from as I can from that dear paper. It expresses my sentiments much better than I can myself; it seems to teach me the very things I believe. I never pick up a copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES but what I get a "feast of fat things" from it. There are a great many Baptists in our country who do not believe in absolute predestination, but I am one they call an "absoluter," for I do not believe God does things by halves. They say he predestinated all things concerning eternity, but I believe, according to Scripture, experience and surroundings, he predestinated all things, both in time and eternity, and if I understand the reading of the SIGNS I think it advocates the same thing. My life has been full of trials and misfortunes, far different from what I would have had it if I had been the one to map it out; but God works all things after the counsel of his own will, and none can stay his hand, and my life has been just as he would have it, and far better than I deserve. When I read the beautiful letters from the writers of the SIGNS I am almost made to cover my face with shame, for I look within myself and see how unworthy I am of classing myself with such gifted people.

But, dear brother, I did not begin this letter with the intention of writing more than a few words to ask your views on 2 Kings xx. 1–7. Some say Hezekiah's days were numbered by the Lord, and then the Lord added fifteen years to his days, but I believe Hezekiah's days were numbered by himself, and the Lord added

unto him fifteen years. Would you kindly send me a copy of the SIGNS with your reply in it? I hope if it is the Lord's will that I some day will be able to subscribe for your paper. Since we are strangers in the flesh, and this, like the writer, is so imperfect, will you please pardon every error? I feel to know and love you in the spirit, as I do every one when I hear them say they know and love the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists.

One of the least of God's creatures,
(MRS.) SARAH COLLINS.

(See editorial reply on page 314.)

DES MOINES, Iowa, Feb. 21, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As it is time to send my remittance for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I thought I would like to write a little to you, as I have read your paper from girlhood, and taken it for many years, if the Giver of every good and perfect gift will give me something to write, of myself I can do nothing. If I could write one word that would be strengthening to you in your labors of love and devotion to the great cause of true religion, I would be amply paid for my effort. I must say you deserve great credit for the style and workmanship of the SIGNS; I seldom see a typographical error, and it is always a little ahead of time, which is a very pleasing feature. Elders Chick and Ker surely deserve great praise for their wise and spiritual writings, and for the kind and loving way they oppose error; and we think of the many able correspondents, who write so comfortingly of their journeying through the bleak desert. Ah, yes, sometimes they are on the mountain-top, drinking from that pure stream which never runs dry. Write on, dear ones, you never know how many of the hungry poor you are feeding. Many have no opportunity to hear the sweet gospel preached, and what a trial it must be. To those we may be assured it comes with a double blessing. Ah, yes, when days of darkness come, as they come to all who feel the need of a Savior, if they can read a line from some poor pilgrim-stranger who has been three days and nights in the desert without water, and when coming in sight of the waters of Marah find them bitter, yes, ready to turn back, but when the Deliverer comes and casts in the tree, and sweetens the waters, how their thirst is assuaged. O is there not then a gleam of hope found springing up in the reader's breast? Yes, here is one who has been along this way, now I know I have company. We have a description of this journey all the way along, from Genesis to the last of Malachi, preparation for the ushering in of the new covenant or glorious gospel as taught by the great Teacher, who taught as man never taught. Now it comes to me, if I could know I have received his teaching, have drank of the pure fountain, happy indeed would I be; but I am such a doubter, my faith is so small I often think if I have a hope it is the least of all. My membership is with Little Flock Church, Pleasantville, Iowa, about thirty miles from here. She is composed of a band of brethren and sisters united in doctrine and love. Our dear and highly esteemed pastors are Elders Wm. Rose and G. J. Jones, whom we love for the truth's sake. This city claims one hundred thousand inhabitants now, I think, and I know of but one Primitive Baptist here except myself, that is Elder John Cline.

Now, dear editors, do with this as you think best; it is like the writer, very imperfect.

Your unworthy sister,
(MRS.) JACOB SMITH.

MANSFIELD, Ohio, Feb. 27, 1909.

ELDER KER, AND ALL THE SAINTS OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—I will write for the SIGNS my experience.

When I was a child I had serious impressions, and believed then that there was a God who knew all things, and that he would take care of his people. Time went on, and as I grew older one day I went to the funeral of a little child, and before the services began my grandfather said to a friend, "It is for the righteous that the world stands," and in an instant something said to me, Are you one of the righteous? Then and there was I stricken; I thought how much better off was the little child than I. Later in my life I attended an association, and during the meeting I was cast down. Returning home I took the Bible and read the passage of Scripture, O Lord of heaven and earth, I thank thee that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Then my burden was gone, and all I could do was to say, Praise His holy name, for I could understand that God was good to me. At the next church meeting I went forward and told my experience and was received in fellowship with the church, and was baptized by Elder Levi Sherwood. Since that time I have had crosses to bear, having laid away a precious daughter, who was my companion, yet I am trusting in that God who will take care of me till the end. This passage of Scripture comes to my mind often: "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." In all my travels in life I can truly say, Mercy and goodness have followed me all the days of my life. May I dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

There is no Old School Baptist Church in this city, and I miss my church very much. Press on with the good work, brother, and when the end is come we shall be more than conquerors. The SIGNS is my companion.

Yours truly,

CLARA SPITLER.

JULIAN, Cal., Jan. 25, 1909.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS OF THE COAST FORK REGULAR PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH:—It has pleased the Lord through his mercy and grace to let you know that I am among the living. I believe it to be the duty of God's people to confer with the church as often as is possible when they are so situated that they cannot attend in person. O how I long to be with you, but God's will be done, not mine. My heart and my prayers are with you always. Brethren, pray for me, as we are commanded to be instant in season and out of season, and earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Were it not for my hope in Christ I would be most miserable, as I am twelve hundred miles from my church, and were it not for my Bible and many good books containing soul-cheering experiences I would be very lonely. When I feel as though I want to hear a good sermon preached I read Christ's sermon on the mount, as I hold that the true foundation for God's children to build upon. Brethren, we should all take care and not build on sandy foundation, for all such buildings will fall, and great will be the fall thereof. Christ says, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Brethren, the children of God are commanded not only to be dutiful in attending to the things of the church, but also in our daily walk that we let our light so shine that God be glorified. May the Lord give us light, faith and love, that we may serve him in the true light of the gospel. Dear brethren and sisters, all of you who are in reach of the church, do attend the church meetings, and think of me so far away, but just think of what the dear Savior has done for his children; we ought to take time to attend to the duties and precepts that are laid down for us.

Now to the dear young brother who has just enlisted in Christ's army to battle for the faith once delivered to the saints: may he long live to stand on the walls of Zion to proclaim aloud the glorious gospel of Christ to the glory and honor of God; may he feed the hungering saints who hunger and thirst after righteousness. Dear brethren, how I long to be with you, but a few more days and my trouble in this world will be over. God only knows when that will be; I have outlived all of my expectations long ago; I am now nearing the close of my eighty-eighth year. I would not exchange my hope for all the kingdoms of the world. We suffer the pains and trials of this life, but O what are they as compared with what Christ suffered for the sins of his people?

In conclusion, if in my weakness I have said anything that would mar the fellowship of the church or any member, I ask forgiveness, for it is not of the heart, but of the head. God says if we offend one of those little ones we offend him, for we should always seek to love, and not to offend.

I feel that I have already trespassed in writing so much, but when I contemplate the glorious plan of salvation by grace I never tire of singing praises to the King of kings and Lord of lords. May Israel's God be with you and bless you, is my humble prayer.

Yours in hope,

S. S. MILLER.

DRAIN, Oregon, April 20, 1909.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—Our church often receives letters of inquiry concerning her welfare from brethren who are anxious to visit us, and we, as all flesh, find ourselves weak and full of forgetfulness. Many times of late we have left off answering letters until probably addresses are lost, and fear we have unintentionally wounded our inquiring brethren. If so, we desire forgiveness, and ask them to charge the same to the thief of time: procrastination. At our last meeting we talked this matter over and decided to write to our dear family paper, feeling sure it would meet with more eyes than in any other place. We extend a very hearty invitation to all inquiring brethren of our faith and order, especially to ministering brethren. We hold our meetings on Saturday before and second Sunday of each month, and will say to any one wishing to come, Drop a card to Deacon A. Morningstar, and you will be met at the train, and the hospitality of all brethren here will be given as best our homes afford. We feel sure if our meetings continue to be as full of divine love and fellowship, and the manna that falls from heaven showered upon us as it has been in meetings just past, our brethren who visit us will be enabled to say, It was good that we were there. Christ is indeed blessing us beyond measure. At our last meeting four were received by experience and now await baptism. Surely we can say, Our cup runneth over.

Written by request of Coast Fork Church. OLIVE M. POWRIE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1909.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MATTHEW VIII. 12.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I would like to have your views upon Matt. viii. 12.

A poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,
(MRS.) MARGARET STEVENS.

LONE STAR, Ark., Feb. 21, 1909.

The Scripture upon which sister Stevens requests our views reads as follows: "But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." The children of the kingdom who shall be cast into outer darkness, as narrated in the text, are the unbelieving Jews, who rejected the Lord and crucified him at last. They did indeed belong to the kingdom of God under the former legal dispensation, and laid claim to all the favor of God. God had shown to them special favor in all that old covenant time; but now a new dispensation was ushered in, when neither at Jerusalem, nor at Mt. Gerizim, nor at any other particular place, should men worship God, but everywhere they should worship him in spirit and in truth. The gathering of the Gentiles had indeed been prophesied of again and again in the Old Testament Scriptures, but the eyes of the Jews were blinded, and so they despised the Gentiles and rejected them. Now it was to appear, and that very soon, that in this new kingdom, the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, which was to be spiritual, both Gentiles and Jews were to share. The middle wall of partition was to be broken down forever. All this is plain, and all this is fully believed by all Old School Baptists. We refer to it here as a sort of preface to what is presented in the narrative connected with the text to which our attention is called. A Roman centurian had come to the dear Lord, beseeching him in behalf of his servant, who was very dear to him, and who was sick, entreating him to heal him. Jesus said, "I will come and heal him." But the centurian said, "I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it." It seems evident to us that his meaning was this: I, a mere man, have power to command men, though distant from me, and they obey me; how much more canst thou say to this disease, Go, and it will depart from my servant. If I have such power, thou hast much more, and even diseases will obey you. Jesus said, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." Jesus had healed many who were sick before this; many among the Jews had brought their sick to him that he might touch them and they be healed, but there is no record that any among them had thought that he could just as well heal their suffering ones at a distance from them as when near at hand. This man, this Gentile, believed that the Master could heal with a word one who was not near him. We have another instance of similar greatness of faith in a Gentile woman who entreated him for her

daughter who was tormented of a devil. Her daughter was not near the Master, even as the centurian's servant was not at hand, and these two Gentiles were given more wonderful faith than had been in all the Jewish people, although they had the Scriptures and had shares in all the ritual of that old covenant all their lives. Here we learn that faith is indeed the gift of God, and that it does not come by religious training of men. In both the centurian and the Syrophenician woman, to whom we have alluded, we see another thing made plain, viz., that their great faith went hand in hand with great humility; neither felt worthy of anything at the hand of the Lord, yet their need was great, and this compelled them to continue to cry to the Lord, and faith overcame the greatest obstacles in both. Great faith always goes with great humility; there could be no faith without humility. No one can come to have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ until stripped of all that they have boasted in of themselves. This is to be humbled in the dust, and this is the only way in which one can be prepared for the coming in of living faith in Christ. These two Gentiles had this faith and this humility. After commending this great faith, Jesus said that many should come from the east and the west and sit down in the kingdom of God with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. These three men were men of faith. Abraham is called the father of the faithful. But the Jews, his natural children, were not therefore possessed of faith. But Gentiles, from all parts of the world, should come into this great faith, even as the centurian already had done. So far as the testimony of the word goes this centurian was the first Gentile to manifest faith in the blessed Lord. But Jesus declared that many Gentiles should possess like precious faith in the ages to come, and we to-day hope that this faith has been bestowed upon us so that we believe that in Jesus is all power over all things, and that he speaks and it is done. We hope that he has healed us with his word, as he did literally the servant so dear to the centurian, and the daughter of the Syrophenician woman. These were the beginning of a great army, who in after generations should be witnesses to the power of saving faith in Christ. This is to sit with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God. But while Gentiles should come to the brightness of the rising of the Sun of Righteousness and should walk in the light of the day, on the other hand, the Jews should not enter there. None can enter there who trust in themselves that they are righteous. Jesus alone is the door into this kingdom, and Jews, as a whole, have always rejected Christ, save a very few, ever since the apostolic age has passed away.

All this is declared in Acts xiii., from the forty-fourth verse to the end of the chapter. Let all turn to this, and read it for themselves. And all this was prophesied of in the Old Testament Scriptures. This is what we have always understood the dear Redeemer to mean by the words referred to by our sister: "But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." But this weeping and gnashing of teeth does not indicate godly sorrow, rather it indicates rage against the gospel and against the dear Savior. The gospel still is a stumbling-block to the Jews; it declares their birth and their sayings that Abraham is their father; their religious zeal and their careful observance of forms and rituals avail them nothing. It declares that even

the strictest morality brings no blessing of salvation. It declares that they must be saved, if saved at all, just as the poorest and vilest must be saved, and this is still a stumbling-block to the Jews. Self-righteous men are still enraged against that doctrine and that Savior who saves sinners; but those who are taught, like this centurian, their poverty and need, rejoice that salvation is of the Lord. C.

2 KINGS XX. 1–7.

"IN those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, saying, I beseech thee, O Lord, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore. And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the Lord came to him, saying, Turn again, and tell Hezekiah, the captain of my people, Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the Lord. And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria: and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered."

Whatever may be the meaning of such expressions in the Scriptures as this to which our attention is called, one thing is sure, viz., that there is and can be no change in the mind, will or purpose of God. He is of one mind, and none can turn him; he is the same yesterday, today and forever. "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." "The Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent." "With whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." These portions of the inspired word clearly show that our God is immutable, and certainly show there is no change in the knowledge, will, purpose and appointments of him who holds the destinies of all men in his hand. There can be no change in his knowledge; he must ever have known all things. He cannot know more to-day than from the eternity that is past. Nothing can transpire that he did not know would transpire before time was, else there is change in his knowledge and he is not immutable. There can be no change in his will or purpose from eternity to eternity, if we may be allowed that expression. If his will or purpose can be changed in any way he is not immutable, and therefore is not God. God forbid that such a thought as this should enter our mind.

We do not suppose that any one who is numbered with Old School Baptists entertains any question in his or her mind regarding the above remarks, but we thought it best to emphasize this truth in the beginning. But what then do such Scriptures mean as speak of the repentance of God? What does it mean that God should say to Hezekiah, "Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live"? And then, "I will add unto thy days fifteen years"? This was the testimony of the prophet Isaiah to the king. In these apparently opposite testimonies, as said before, it is sure that there was no change in the mind and will of God, and neither did Isaiah lie under a misapprehension concerning the word of the Lord in either case. In both testimonies of the prophet to the king, Isaiah was not speaking from himself, his word was the word of the Lord, both when he said, "Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live," and when he said, The Lord has added fifteen years to thy days. It has for a long time seemed to us that there was given to Hezekiah just that same experience that

all the tried ones of the Lord's people experience from time to time. The experience of sickness by the king, and the word of God to him by Isaiah that he should die, drove him to prayer and to confession. Our God heard his prayer, as he has said that he will always hear the cry of all his suffering ones. He bends down his ear to hear the crying of the prisoners, and to loose those who are appointed to death. Hezekiah was appointed to death, and felt the proof of it in himself by the sickness that was upon him. It is in such ways as this that the dear Lord brings all his servants to lie low at his feet and to call upon him in truth. This does not mean that he has ever been against them and now becomes pitiful to them and merciful at their crying, but that, having mercy and blessing in store for them, he will bring them to feel their need of it; he will be inquired of by the whole house of Israel to do these things unto them. Having favor for his chosen, he will so work with them that they shall come to feel their great need of it and to ask for it. It is true always that asking must go before receiving, seeking before finding, knocking before opening. The mercies of God are not bestowed upon men who do not want them and who are not hungry for them, but the hungry shall be filled, the sorrowful shall be comforted, the sick shall find the physician. In the daily experience, of which the above is but a sketch, there is no indication of change in our God; he loved us before and he loves us still; both the conviction of our need of his grace, and the bestowal of the grace, are equally evidences of his unchanging love.

In all christian experience, conviction of sin and the feeling of condemnation to death must be felt in the soul first. To feel this is the work of the Lord. It is no falsehood when it is testified to the soul, "Thou shalt die, and not live." This word comes to the soul under the law, which says, "Thou shalt die." It is a true word that is then spoken to the soul, yet, after all, to that soul there is life everlasting reserved. God speaks to us as we are at the time when he speaks, but his thoughts are the same. Every minister of righteousness now declares to every such convicted sinner the same message: "Thou shalt die, and not live." We well remember that one, many years ago, in telling to us her experience, said that she came to the service careless, as she had come many times before, but then there was something different in the preaching. All at once every word was a word of cursing. (This was her own word.) All through the sermon it was the same, and she drew her veil over her face and wept and trembled. Again she came, soon afterward, expecting to hear the same, yet not being able to stay away, and took her seat in the corner behind every one else, with her face concealed again; but then, she said, "Every word was a word of blessing," and hope and joy sprang up. We have no idea that the last sermon was in anywise different from the former in itself, but to her it was as different as blessing from cursing. Every gospel sermon says to him who is under the law, "Thou shalt die," but every gospel sermon says to him who has come to the end of all his own strength, Fifteen years have been added to thy days.

It seems to us that Isaiah was the messenger of the Lord to Hezekiah in that time, just as every gospel minister is a messenger from the Lord to every soul with whom the Lord has dealings in mercy and grace. The first message to

the sister of whom we spoke just now was true, and the second message was also true, yet God, her God and Savior, was the same; there was no change in him, nor in his purpose of mercy toward her. Hezekiah's prayer did not at all change the mind of God, but the spirit of prayer in him was the very mind of God speaking in him. Prayer in no case can, or ought to, change the purpose of God. Who would dare to pray if the will of God could be thus changed? Who, at least, but a proud, self-confident Pharisee? Sure it is that His little children must be silent if prayer changes the mind of God, for they well know that they do not know what to pray for as they ought; and so in conclusion we will just add that all the change there is in answer to prayer is not in the purpose of God, but solely in the manifestations of his one purpose to his people, which seem to them to change just as day follows night, but all in strict accord with the one eternal purpose of God. C.

NOTICE.

If the Lord will, we shall expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., the fourth Sunday in May (23rd). Services at 10:45 a. m. and 2:30 p. m.

L. B. FORD.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Everett R. Kinney has changed his address from Glens Falls, N. Y., to Schoharie, N. Y.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. P. Allison, at his residence near Sherwood, Oregon, April 8th, 1909, Elder Wm. J. Reeves, of Poweskirk, Iowa, and Mrs. Elizabeth M. Adams, of Portland, Oregon.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Amelia Argow Schade, wife of Deacon George Schade, departed this life Thursday, April 22nd, 1909, after a lingering illness of about four months, in the 64th year of her age. Sister Schade was born in Templin, Usmark, Prussia, July 2nd, 1845. When about eight years of age her mother died, leaving her without any home or any one to care for her, so she was obliged to seek employment wherever she could in order to provide the necessities of life for herself, and endured many hardships and cruel treatments from her employers in her childhood, which she endured without murmuring. When about sixteen years of age the gracious Lord revealed himself unto her as her Savior and Redeemer, and gave her a good hope through grace. She united with the German Baptist Church at Templin, Prussia, believing at this time that this was the true church. In the year 1870 she resolved to come to America, where she hoped to find the burdens of life easier, and at this time her brother, William Argow, was pastor of the German Baptist Church at Albany; so putting her resolution in action set sail for America, and was met by her brother William at New York. They came to Albany, and she united with the German Baptist Church of Albany, of which her brother was then pastor. Here she met brother George Schade, and they were united in marriage October 21st, 1870, by her brother, William Argow. Sister Schade remained a member of this denomination for some years, but finally began to feel that it was not her home, and after a long struggle she sought a home among the Old School Baptists, and was received by the Albany and Troy Church July 24th, 1898, and baptized by Elder D. M. Vail. Sister Schade has lived an exemplary life and was faithful to the profession she had made. Reticent by nature, she never murmured or complained, though her life was filled with trials and sorrows. She had suffered from poor health for many years, often being confined to her bed for weeks at a time, and yet without a murmur. She bore her last sickness very patiently, waiting for the end to come, having no desire but to depart and be with Christ. Sister Schade leaves a husband, brother George Schade, five sons and four daughters, beside the church and many friends and relatives to mourn their loss.

Her funeral was held from her late residence, 472 First St., Albany, N. Y., Sunday p. m., April 25th, and was largely attended. Burial was in the Pine Hill Cemetery, near Albany. By request, the writer tried to comfort the friends, using for a text Hebrews iv. 9, 10. Sister Schade had also requested that two hymns be sung in the German tongue. It can truly be said that a good woman is gone, a loving wife, a kind and devoted mother has been taken.

May the grace of God sustain all who mourn.

J. B. SLAUSON.

A. B. Medlan was born in Morgan County, Ala., Jan. 8th, 1825, died at his home in Young County, Texas, April 13th, 1909, of diabetes, making his stay on earth 84 years, 3 months and 5 days. He came from Alabama to Navarro County, Texas, in 1851, and moved to Young County in 1853, and settled on the place where he died in 1854. He was the first treasurer of Young County. The Lord gave him to hope and trust in his sovereign grace for the forgiveness of his sins, and he was baptized in the fellowship of Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church by Elder D. P. Thomas in 1880. He was ordained deacon of Mt. Zion Church the third Sunday in May, 1882, which office he used well, and purchased to himself a good degree and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. His help financially to the poor and to the needy is seldom equaled. In 1882 he built and paid for a stone meetinghouse, furnished neatly and seated, which he presented to Mt. Zion Church. Twenty-six years later he donated one hundred dollars to assist in repairing the house, the roof having been damaged by a heavy hailstorm. In the year 1900 he donated two hundred and ten acres of good land to this church in addition to the plot he had donated with the church building. He was a man of peace; no bitter, loud or fierce language ever escaped his lips, and his countenance was that of great meekness, and honesty was conceded to be a most prominent feature in all his dealings.

He was married to Nancy Ellen Timmons, his first wife, in his thirties; she died Oct. 17th, 1878. After this he was married to Mrs. Bettie Willis, widow of George Willis, who died in Tennessee, and was a brother to Elder A. J. Willis, of South Pittsburg, Tenn. She survives brother Medlan.

Brother Medlan told me that he had asked his heavenly Master to let him go easily and quietly when he was called to the eternal world, and so it was, the Lord graciously answered this prayer. Brother W. B. Blackwood was with him several hours before he died, and watched every moment. Brother Medlan did not talk much, but seemed to want to rest, and stated that all medicine was useless in this sickness, for it was unto death and he would soon go. Early in the morning of Tuesday, April 13th, he showed signs of death, his breathing became heavy. Brother Blackwood helped to get him in another position and he soon fell asleep apparently. Brother Blackwood watched him, and he gradually, quietly and silently passed away. His death as well as his life testified to the power of the amazing grace of God.

The writer spoke of the life and character of the deceased, at his grave, and his choice hymn was sung, which was, "When I can read my title clear to mansions in the skies." His remains were laid to rest in the family cemetery near his residence, but no doubt the spirit of this man of God was delivered into the hands of his almighty Shepherd. May the grace of our Lord Jesus be with his bereaved and afflicted widow and the step-grandchildren. The church has lost a great stay, the pastor a great helper, the community a noble citizen.

J. H. FISHER.

SISTER **Polly Lyon,** wife of brother Louis Lyon, departed this life Feb. 7th, 1909, at the home of her son-in-law, B. F. Thornbury, in Elliott County, Ky. Sister Lyon was born in Lawrence County, Ky., Nov. 3rd, 1834, and was married to brother Lyon Jan. 5th, 1854. She received a hope in Christ, and joined Union Church of Old School Baptists the third Saturday in December, 1872, and was baptized by Elder Samuel Smith. Sister Lyon was one of the most pious christian women I ever was blessed to meet with; she was indeed a real mother in Israel. She was blessed with a bright experience in spiritual things, and enjoyed conversing on that subject. She was sound in faith, being a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation through Christ by grace alone. She never failed to fill her seat in the church when she was able to attend. She took great delight in caring for the Old Baptists at her own home, the doors of which were always open to them whom she loved in truth and for the truth's sake. The writer of this had been personally acquainted with her for more than twenty years, having served the church of her membership as pastor for the last fifteen years, and during all this time I never saw any difference in her. She greatly enjoyed the fellowship of her brethren, though she spoke of her unworthiness. Her husband found in her all the qualities of a perfect helpmate, being to him all that a true and devoted wife could be to her husband. She was also a kind and loving mother, a good neighbor, always ready to relieve those who were in need. Sister Lyon had been in very poor health for several years, yet she never murmured, and looked forward to the time of her departure without fear or dread. She was attacked with pneumonia, and passed away in eight days, to receive her reward; to wait and hope no more, but to enter into the enjoyments of the blessed inheritance reserved in heaven for all the election of grace, unto which they are begotten and predestinated.

There was no funeral at the time of her burial. She leaves her husband and children, together with the church and her many friends, to mourn her departure, yet we sorrow not as those who have no hope, for we are comforted in the hope that she shall awake with His likeness and be satisfied.

May God give grace to the bereaved, that they all may be reconciled to the will of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will.

J. E. THORNBURY.

RATCLIFF, Ky., April 30, 1909.

Mrs. Drusilla E. Graham departed this life, to enter into everlasting rest and peace, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Calvin English, Dec. 16th, 1908, at Mardela Springs, Wicomico Co., Md., at the age of 69 years, 1 month and 13 days. Her end was peaceful. Her health had not been good for years, yet she led quite an active life, and her family did not anticipate that the end was so near. She retired the evening before her decease at her usual hour, seeming about as well as usual, and was found by her daughter, when she went to call her for breakfast the next morning, still and cold, without evidence of the least struggle, having apparently passed away while asleep. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Rewastico Church, in Wicomico County, Md., about fifty years ago, by Elder Geo. W. Slater, who at the time was pastor of that church. She continued a steadfast, faithful member of the same during all her life. She was married to Mr. Levin Graham, Sr., about fifty-one years ago. He died about eight years before she did. She leaves two sons and one daughter, two stepchildren, a number of grandchildren, one sister and three brothers, beside other relatives and the church, to mourn the loss of a good mother, an affectionate sister and a faithful member of the church, but we mourn not as those without hope, for we believe her eternal dwelling-place is with the Lord. I miss the dear sister sadly. For twenty years I have stood in the relation of pastor to her, and she was a good, true friend and helper to me in my service of the church. Her seat was always filled whenever it was possible for her to be at the meetings, encouraging by her presence and a cheering word in many a weary hour.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., April, 1909.

John Fairclough was born in England, April 23rd, 1836, and died at Salt Lake City, Utah, March 29th, 1909, making his stay in this world 72 years, 11 months and 6 days. The Lord called him to the knowledge of His power to save sinners when but a lad, but for some unknown reason to us he never joined the church. He came to this country when nineteen years of age, and soon afterward he saw a copy of the SIGNS and at once became a subscriber, reading it to the time of his death. His second marriage was to Mrs. Whitehead, of St. Joseph, Mo., two years ago, and she was indeed a lovable companion to the end. They had resided in Twin Falls ever since their marriage. On March 1st she went with him to Salt Lake City, Utah, for the benefit of his health, but it pleased the Lord on the 29th of March, while at that place, to call him home. The prayer of his heart was answered. She went with his remains to St. Joseph, Mo., where he was buried beside his first wife. He leaves beside the widow, a sister in England and many friends to mourn their loss. While I knew Mr. Fairclough but a few short months, to know him was to love him as one born of God. He was always thoughtful regarding the comfort of others. It was through the dear SIGNS that my daughter and I met him soon after our arrival in Twin Falls.

May the Lord comfort and bless the bereaved widow in this her great loss.

(MRS.) T. M. GRISSOM.

TWIN FALLS, Idaho, April 22, 1909.

Mrs. Maria Livingston, of Schoharie, Schoharie Co., N. Y., died May 1st, 1909, aged 90 years. Her maiden name was Kniskern. She was the wife of Peleg Livingston. The cause of her death was old age, with heart trouble. She died at the home of her brother, Calvin Kniskern, with whom she had lived several years, who is her only near relative living. She was baptized, I am told, by an Elder Hart, uniting with the Old School Baptist Church at Schoharie Hill, N. Y., about sixty-five years ago. Sister Livingston was esteemed very highly as a sound, consistent Old School Baptist, and lived in the love and fellowship of the church until called by her heavenly Father from time to eternity. I have had many pleasant visits with her during the last thirty-two years. I had a good visit with her not long ago, and found her trusting and resting in the finished work of Christ her Savior.

The writer spoke at the funeral, which was held at her brother's home Monday, May 3rd, a goodly number of neighbors and friends attending. May the Lord comfort all who mourn, is my desire.

D. M. VAIL.

John S. Fenton, son of Julia A. and the late John C. Fenton, died Dec. 3rd, 1908, 1216 N. Fifty-seventh St., West Philadelphia, Pa., in his 31st year. While not a member of the church, he was given to leave evidence of a hope in the mercy of God through Jesus Christ by his conversation with members of the church when they were visiting mother's home. I saw him just before he passed away and asked him if he was afraid to die, and he replied that he was not. I then spoke of a member of the church and his talk with her, and his reply was, "She is a good woman." I feel to say I believe he has gone to that inheritance that awaits all the redeemed of God.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder B. F. Coulter at the above address, and also by Elder Silas H. Durand at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse, both speaking words of comfort to the sorrowing, after which the remains were laid away in the burying-ground.

May the God of all comfort minister to them that mourn.

His brother, J. M. FENTON.

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore city, commencing on Wednesday, May 19th, and continuing three days. Those coming to the city on Tuesday p. m. will go to the meetinghouse, Madison St., near Calvert, which will be open from 1 to 5 p. m., where the friends will meet them and provide places of entertainment. Those coming to Union station, Pennsylvania R. R., will take any car going south on Charles St. and get off at Calvert and Madison. Those coming to Camden station, B. & O. R. R., take cars marked St. Paul St., and get off at Calvert and Madison.

By order of the church.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Delaware Association is appointed to convene with the Bryn Zion Old School Baptist Church, near Kenton, Kent Co., Del., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 26th, 27th and 28th, 1909. Those coming Tuesday afternoon before the meeting, stop at Clayton, where the north and southbound trains will be met. Daily train service will be had from Clayton to the meeting by the southbound morning train from Clayton to Kenton, which leaves Clayton 9:55 o'clock a. m., stopping at Baptist crossing each day of the meeting. Also the northbound afternoon train will stop at Baptist crossing each day of the meeting to receive passengers, &c.

A cordial invitation is extended to all of our faith and order to meet with us.

B. E. CUBBAGE.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Pa., June 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1909.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the New Vernon Church, New Vernon, N. Y., June 9th, 10th and 11th, 1909.

O. & W. trains from the north will be met at Winterton Tuesday afternoon before the meeting, and Wednesday morning. Those coming from the south and New York Tuesday will take train leaving West Twenty-third St., New York, (Erie R. R.) at 4:25 p. m. Get tickets for Howells. Train leaving West Twenty-third St. at 7:10 Wednesday morning will also be met at Howells. Any coming from the west via Erie R. R. will please drop H. S. Collard, Winterton, N. Y., a line, saying what train they will use, and they will be met at Howells. A cordial invitation is extended to all of like precious faith to meet with us.

H. S. COLLARD, Church Clerk.

NOTHING preventing, there will be a two days meeting held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse on Schoharie Hill, June 15th and 16th, 1909. Those coming by rail to Howes Cave drop a card to Geo. A. Miers, Schoharie, N. Y., R. F. D. No. 3. Those via Schoharie write Mrs. Helen Kinney. All lovers of the truth are welcome. GEO. A. MIERS.

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11:00 A. M. 2:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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1315 Columbia Avenue,

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Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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DAYTON, Wash., Jan. 21, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—My mind seems to be entirely overcome this morning upon the vital principle, love. I have spent a very restless night as regards the natural man, but the spiritual man has been renewed in strength through my mind having been led into this wonderful field of love. I have had an interest in this love for thirty years, but my mind was, as it seemed, permitted to dig deeper into this rich treasure last night than ever before. All that I know of the things of the Spirit has been given me by experience of the deep things of God. I have been trying to tell to my brethren the value and glory of this love for nearly twenty-five years, but have made a complete failure, when my weak efforts are compared with the value of love. The text upon my mind, by which we must be tested whether we have passed from death unto life, is this: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." All mankind can read this declaration, but do all men believe it? Now here is the standard by which all are to be tried. But what is love? The word says, "God is love," and he therefore that is born of God is born of love, and loves, because God is love. And no man, said Jesus, can come to me except the Father (love) draw him. And every one who has been taught of the Father comes to him. Now let us try ourselves by this rule and see whether we be in the faith. This taking heed to myself, dear brother, is what has led my mind into this subject so deeply. I have always walked softly, or tried to, for the reason that I have felt a deep reverence while walking upon such holy ground; but my experience during the past year has led me in deeper waters than before. The circumstances which have surrounded me have caused an uneasiness of mind, and a fear that all my past evidences have only been the craftiness of that old serpent, the devil, which deceived our mother Eve, and so grievously assaulted our dear Jesus, and that my soul had been led into the wilderness to perish. This has caused deep restlessness, and a searching, and the standard was raised to test my soul to see whether or not the work that I have hoped has been done for my soul was real. Do I love the brethren? My

soul could quickly answer, Yes. Well, then, why should I fear? Perfect love casteth out fear. It is thus we must be tried as gold is tried; we must go into the furnace with the fire heated above what it is wont to be. These exercises last night called my mind back to the beginning of this marvelous work with me. I have never before written an account of my experience, but it seems necessary here to give you a sketch of it at least.

My parents were among the captives in Babylon, and I was born and raised in Babylon, and when born of this love that I cherish so I was for the first time in my life made to see and to be dissatisfied with the people I was with. I suppose I was the most ignorant of any one who ever lived. I tried to conform my feelings and exercises of mind to theirs, but the more I tried the deeper I seemed to sink in despair. I truly felt to be one alone. My mind became so burdened that it seemed impossible for me to live long. My sleep went from me. Here I came into fellowship with the church as described in the Song of Solomon. While I lay upon my bed my Beloved knocked at the door. Why did I not arise at once, and not raise the argument that I had put off my coat and how should I put it on? But my sleep left me. Why did it leave me? Because this was the work of God, and God is love. Here love first began its work, and it was a vital work. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." So I, in my distress of soul, arose and opened to my Beloved, and he was gone. O what sadness! I saw him not. But while he was gone, he had left the myrrh which was on his hands upon the opening of the door; this was love. When I took hold of the door it clung to my hands, and O how sweet were the promises. While it seemed there was no one like me, yet I kept begging for Him whom my soul loved. I was acquainted with almost all the religious orders of the day; I went to them all in search of him, and all were to me just what Job's friends were to him. All the comfort I could get was while reading the experiences of the prophets and apostles. How I did desire to meet just such as they were. I wanted to tell them how I loved them. But this I thought was too good for me. I had heard of the Old School Baptists, but they had been described to me as a people who were narrow, and I did not want to see them. I was hunting a people like the prophets and apostles. I knew all the denominations around me but the Baptists, and I did not want to find them, so I had given up all hope of finding the people that I desired, and was trying to pray God to reconcile me to my lot. I felt that the time would not be long ere, as I hoped, I should meet all the prophets and apostles and the dear Jesus in a better world. One night while at home with my family and my step-grandmother, who was making her home with us, and who was of the New School Baptist order, a neighbor whom we called Aunt Jennie Linton came in to see us. It was a cold night, not only outwardly so, but also as I felt in soul. The two old mothers got to telling of the dealings of the Lord with them; they called it experience. This was the first time that I had ever heard of the like. The old mother Linton told of her people and her brethren. Light and warmth broke in on my soul after five years of searching for some one who felt as I did. When all hope seemed gone the Lord led me to the light. When she told me she was an Old School Baptist it caused a desire in me to see more of them. She informed me that a few of them held regular

meeting on the second Sunday, among the hills, twelve miles from us. I then spoke to my father of their meeting, and that I wanted to go. It suited his feelings to go with me. On Saturday morning we started to find them. We had but little trouble in finding the place; it was a schoolhouse. When we entered the room we saw six or eight persons. All had silver locks on their heads. And there was another place in my journey where I set up a monument. To this my mind last night went back. I felt a holy reverence take hold upon me while sitting in the presence of that little congregation and listening to their godly conversation, and when the Elder arose and spoke of his trembling soul feeling such a deep reverence as he stood before them in the presence of God to declare the glorious gospel, he reached out by his words and embraced me in the bosom of his love. I could but think of Lazarus in Abraham's bosom. Here I was now where I had unceasingly prayed to be for five years. Now my chief desire was to feel fit to cast in my lot with them. What caused this desire? It was love, wonderful love, so strong that nothing was able to separate me from it. All his people are taught of the Lord. And "every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me," said the dear Savior. I lingered, and wrestled, and tried to feel worthy to unite with that loving and well loved band, but the more I tried to feel worthy the more unworthy I felt. At last this glorious love so overpowered all my powers that I was made to throw all my unworthiness upon those dear brethren, and ask them in love to bear with me what few days I had to spend. To my great joy and comfort they seemed delighted to bear with and help me bear the burden, and on the third Sunday in June, 1881, my father and I were baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Little Rock, in Saline County, Mo. In my mind there was another stone set up in my pilgrimage. I truly felt when raised up out of the water, to breathe the sentiment of the poet: "O how happy are they who their Savior obey." This was twenty-eight years ago. But this was only the beginning of trials by which I have proven the eternal love of God, which is the evidence of our change. I then knew nothing of discipline or order of the church; I wanted no more, I was perfectly satisfied. It was a heavenly place to me. The brethren were so loving; it seemed that they were all of one mind and one heart. I firmly believed they were all one with the Father.

Here begins my call to the ministry, if indeed I have been called. I had no thought at all of trying to preach, or of the brethren having any such thoughts of me. I did feel impressed in heart to unbosom myself concerning the wonders of his love, which had so wonderfully led me out of bondage into peace and liberty with the dear saints. I suppose the dear brethren understood me better than I could understand myself. One day, after the Elder had gotten through preaching, he asked me to speak to the church and unburden my mind. The reason was, I suppose, that I was so overcome that I could not control my feelings. So for a few moments I tried to tell the brethren of the love of God which passeth all understanding. This, my first attempt to speak in the name of the Lord, is very much in my mind now. To see the tears flowing from the eyes of those dear old saints while this poor, stammering tongue was trying to lisp the undying love of God, which is the tie that binds our hearts, is

touching to remember. From that time the brethren insisted that I should tell them the same things, although none of them had as yet breathed to me that they thought I was called to preach the gospel. They only asked me to speak as my mind was led. About this time other brethren who had visited us and heard me began to ask me to visit them and talk to their churches. Now, dear brother, here comes the greatest cross that I had ever met. I was very timid about trying to talk to the brethren at home, and to visit other churches and try to speak was more than I felt I could do; but my own brethren counseled me to go if the churches wished me. Then, to help me, the brethren at home as a church gave me license to exercise my gift and to preach Christ wherever God in his providence might cast my lot. This was the first that I knew or thought that the church had any thought about my preaching. Such a title was too much for me. At that time it was hard labor for me to use the word "brother." Dear brother, you fully told my feelings in your last editorial, when you spoke of the sacredness of this title, and of how hard it was for you to use the word, and of how hard it is for the young and tender babes in Christ to use such a word. But how much more humbling to use the word "minister," concerning ourselves. I have now been ordained nineteen years, and still the title "Elder" makes me feel very little. While the desire of the brethren was to encourage me by what they did, it was more than I felt I could bear. Then I thought I would speak no more in the name of the Master, for I thought the brethren were deceived in me. Come, all who may read this, tell me, has it been thus with you? Have you at the throne of grace tried to promise your God that if he would forgive you for making this effort you would never reproach his name and cause again, as I did the first time? But this was not the last time, for I have been foolish enough to continue to make such promises, after breaking hundreds of them. But to go back to this first promise. The words rang in my troubled soul: He that denieth me before men, him will I deny before my Father. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." He that putteth his hand to the plow, and looketh back, is not meet for the kingdom. And, It had been better never to have known the way of truth than to turn back. Such declarations as the above so pressed my soul that I hardly knew what to do or where to go. To turn back was to turn from love and from all I could hope to possess, and to go on seemed to me to bring disgrace upon the cause and to be an offense to my brethren whom I loved. So I found that in the trial of this love there must be a crucifixion of the flesh. Now in this perplexity of mind Satan persuaded me to believe that there was nothing real in it, and that in my own imagination I had become attached to the brethren, and that it was only natural love and that I had given way to my natural feelings, and that I had made them believe that I could preach and tell them of the divine love when after all I knew nothing of it. Then the thought that the only thing to do was to separate myself from them and move off into a new country. Satan suggested, You are young and just starting in life, and are blessed with a faithful companion, and that will enable you to fulfill the solemn obligations which you made to love and maintain her as long as you live. This reasoning suited my feelings, so I sold my little property, and, like poor Jonah, paid my fare to a place where my mind could be at rest.

Here I must mention a little circumstance which to me seems like a great mountain. Father lived at that time in the town where I was to take the train for the Pacific country where I now live. That morning before taking the train I went to my father's. Elder Moore was there. He had been a father to me in all my tribulations, and his counsel was always kind and meek. I want to say, though now he sleeps, that he was a father in Israel to me indeed. He accompanied me to the train, and as he took me by the hand his last words were, "You can run from my presence, but you cannot run from Him who has called you to the work." My last words to him were: "You believe that our God is a God of purpose, and is a sovereign who is able to perform his will?" "Yes, dear brother," he said, "that is why I hate to see you fight against him." This ended our talk and my presence with the saints at that time. But as we sped on (I say we, yet I was all alone so far as any acquaintance was concerned with any one on board) Satan yet accompanied me, and I was very jovial and much enthused at my prospects for the future. I could not help telling Satan that while I could not see the saints, nor talk with them, I still could not get my mind from them, and could not help feeling that I was leaving all that I could hope to possess. But he told me that all this was only natural. Only look, he said, into the future, and these feelings will leave you after you get to your new home and see the opportunities for poor people to get themselves comfortable homes for this life. After four days and nights the conductor informed me that my station was reached; so I had arrived at the promised land. But a very high fever was upon me, for I had taken a severe cold crossing the mountains; I was twenty-two hundred miles from the brethren and from wife and children, very sick and knew no one. I had an old friend sixty-five miles from the station, and he must be reached by stage. I obtained a room at the hotel, and the third day I felt able to try the trip to my old friend's home. At that time my old counselor, Satan, seemed not to have much trouble to soothe my afflicted mind. At three o'clock in the morning I took the stage, and at four in the afternoon I landed at the home of my friend, and they were friends indeed. I was with them three months before I was able to get away, and they were like a father and mother to me. Would space allow, I should like to mention many things here which would show my crooked and rebellious nature, and the loving hand of Providence so mercifully shown me in my rebellion. The prophet said, They shall be all taught of God, and I firmly believe they are. He moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. I could not at that time believe in the absolute predestination of all things, and really believed that if the Lord's people would be good he would bless them. Now right there I was made to see and know that he had blessed me, who had been as rebellious and disobedient as the Lord would let me, and through his blessing I trust that my stubborn heart was made willing for his will to be done in earth as it is in heaven. So from that day to this I try to thank and praise his name for every good thought and act. I feel that the blessing bestowed causes the thought and the act; the fruit is only the evidence of a gracious season. The sunshine and the rain must come or there can be no fruit; so also must the light of the Spirit and the showers of grace come into the heart before praise can flow out. It is

God that works in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. This is what I learned of God's sovereignty and predestination of which I spoke to Elder Moore when I parted from him. I lay on my back in my room, a window on each side, east and west; the house was in a narrow valley, but one that was very rich; there were great mountains on either side. The mountains were full of mines, but nothing grew upon them to sustain life, so the freight wagons were going daily from the valley loaded with provisions. Thus God, as I hope, taught me a wonderful lesson there: he made me see how necessary it was that there should be valleys in the promised land. The Israelites were told that the land which they were to possess was a land not like Egypt, from which they came, a low, flat land, a continual plain. In their land of bondage there were no ups and downs. So in our travel toward Canaan the soul is under the vail of condemnation, and this condemnation abides constantly upon the soul; but in the land of promise there are hills and valleys. Sometimes we are upon Pisgah and sometimes in the valley of Achor. But the lesson taught me while on my bed was, the necessity of the valleys, for while on the mountain we produce no fruit, for it will not grow there. Jesus said, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." So if we bear fruit we must go into the valley of suffering, for it was through suffering that Jesus learned obedience. I was made to rejoice in tribulation which worketh patience, for this is what it seemed I needed above all things.

As a child of promise, God had promised me all things good, both in time and eternity. Then why art thou so disquieted, O my soul? Wait on the Lord, for he has promised that you shall not be tempted above what you are able, but with the temptation he will also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it. He has promised to bring us off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him who loved us and gave himself for us. I learned that he was God, and that he ruled in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. Whither should I go from his presence? Paul uses the text of which I am writing in this way: "For the love of Christ constraineth us." So I feel to say that the love of God constrained me, not in a tyrannical way, as some say when his children speak of his power to work his will; but in my rebellion he was so merciful and compassionate, he ravished my soul, he conquered my rebellious nature, and I was made in joy to say, "Not my will, but thine, be done." And at that time my prayer was changed, and I was constrained to say, If it be thy will that I should be made a reproach in the world for thy sake and the gospel's sake, Lord, give me thy presence and grace and love, and I will try to follow thee; and I returned to the little band that I had left. O how glad I was to see their faces again, and to clasp their hands in token of that love which is our evidence that we are His. From that day to this I have been trying to tell of this love, although not yet free from rebellion, for I still feel that I am unfit to assume such a high calling as that of an undershepherd. I have tried as hard to stop as I have tried to preach, but the reasons are different. I try to preach because I love the gospel, and I want to leave this world trying to tell of its glories. I try to stop because I fear that my weak and stammering efforts are more of a detriment to the cause of my dear Lord than they are of profit.

Now, brother Chick, this is a faint ef-

fort to sketch the exercises of my mind up to the time mentioned. I had no thought of writing as I have, although I have been requested by some of my brethren to write my experience for the SIGNS, but have not done so until now, for the reason I felt it was too poor, and that it would not be of use to any one. At times it all seems blank to me, but at other times it seems to be all in all to me. At times it seems as if I can see the love of God to me so plainly manifested that I could say with John, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." While my nature has been everything that was evil, so far as it could be, and strife has occurred, and false prophets have risen up, and grievous wolves have broken in and scattered the sheep in many places, and some have been led off after deceivers, yet I still love her courts, I love her solemn feasts. If I should forget her, may my right hand forget its cunning and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth. Yes, let me dwell with her, let her sorrows and reproaches fall on me, and when no more here, let me rest in her bosom in glory, for Jesus' sake.

Yours in love, J. T. BARNES.

VICTORIA HOSPITAL, LONDON, Ont., April 11, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY PRECIOUS BROTHER:—Truly I am very sorry that I have been so neglectful in writing to you, and I trust that you will forgive me. I thought when I entered training that I would write to you often, but it is so different from what I expected. How often we are disappointed in our plans! There is only One who knows what the future has in store for us. The Lord has blessed me with health and strength, and I should be thankful, but I am often filled with fear lest I wander in the broad way which leads to destruction. Most of my time is occupied with things of this world, and seldom is my mind stirred up to meditate upon the things of our Father's kingdom; I feel that I am a backslider. Will it ever be again with me as in the days of my first love, when all was peace and love and joy? I feel now as sister Bonnie did when she wrote:

> "Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
> Prone to leave the God I love."

Yes, when left to ourselves we will naturally follow after the things of this world. I often wonder why it is so. Life is only short, just a few days compared with eternity, which lasts forever and ever. O that I might first seek the kingdom of heaven, and all other things will be added unto me. "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." If we could only have faith to trust in the Lord at all times and for all things, but no, we forget the source from whence all things come.

I tried to write this letter last Sunday, but failed to finish it; truly it has become a great task for me to write. I wish it were now as in days that are passed, when I could not be still, but was filled with praise to his holy name. Now my harp is hung upon the willows, and I cannot sing the Lord's song in a strange land. Could any one become so cold and indifferent as I, and yet have a knowledge of grace? What has the past all been, a delusion? I trust not. The precious promises I cannot give them up. I will put a new song in your mouth, a song of praise unto our God; and as I go back

I trust my heart was tuned to sing the new song, which the Lord puts in the mouths of his children.

I inclose letters of a precious young friend; they are good to me and I wish to share them with others, if they meet with your approval. Please pardon all I have written amiss, and may the Lord bless you, is my prayer.

Yours in hope of life eternal,

LOLLIE M. CAMPBELL.

APPIN, Ontario, Sept. 16, 1908.

VERY DEAR FRIEND:—I thought when I received your letter that I should answer it soon, and here it is within one day of a month and I have not done so yet. Many times I have thought of doing so, but when I would have time I felt too miserable to attempt it, and I feared lest I should make you to be downcast also.

Since coming home from London I have been very well. O what a blessing it is to have good health, and yet my poor heart is so ungrateful for it all. O that I might praise His name for all these wonderful blessings bestowed upon me; every moment I have reason to praise his name. I am so unworthy and so undeserving of all these blessings, yet he who is the Giver of all good gifts has looked upon me in mercy and spared my unprofitable life so far.

One week ago last Thursday we had Elder Ker to preach in our meetinghouse. I met him at the 3 o'clock train, and then we called for mamma and went on to the meetinghouse. He returned with us and spent the night. I did enjoy the meeting very much, but I said nothing to any one as to whether I had enjoyed it or not, and when coming home mamma and Elder Ker were talking, and she said that she and every one else to whom she spoke had enjoyed his preaching that afternoon. He turned to me and said, "Yes, even Eliza enjoyed it, although she did not say so. Sometimes we are betrayed when we do not know it." Surely this was the case, for I had hardly dared think that I had enjoyed it, for to enjoy preaching we must understand it, and to understand it we must experience it; at least it seems to me that way. But that day he spoke of love, and it seems as if that is my only ground of hope: the love I have for the brethren. We are told, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." O may I grasp that precious evidence, or am I deceived and deceiving others? God forbid. If I am not what I profess, may I in all humbleness be made to confess it, and may all see me as I am.

Have you any hope of being out to the meetings? Elders Chick and Coulter are expected to be there, but God alone knows what the future may bring forth.

But I must stop, although I feel that I could write on and on. I will write again before the meeting. I still think of you and love you.

ELIZA McDONALD.

APPIN, Ont., Dec. 7, 1908.

VERY DEAR FRIEND:—I have been thinking of you so much of late that I could not refrain from writing you this morning. Why I feel this desire to write I cannot say, but God knows, and may it be to his honor. If I write anything that will prove of comfort to you it will be of God's mercy.

I missed you very much at the meeting. We went to your home for dinner

on Monday, and I felt lost without you. On Sunday night I was at Flo's, and after retiring I was thinking of you and wondering why it was that one so unworthy as I should be permitted to hear the word of God as it was proclaimed by his ministers, and that you, who are so much more worthy of these blessings, should be shut out from it all and cast out in the world that knows not of your heart-aches because you desire to live a life entirely devoted to the honor and glory of God, and that would scoff at you were you to tell them that your hope of salvation is entirely in the mercy of Jesus, and that he alone can wash away the stain of sin. As my thoughts ran along in this line I was made to feel, surely "God moves in a mysterious way." Then again I was made to question, Why should this all be so? and the answer came:

"His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower."

I wish I could tell you all the good things we heard, but the words are all gone; however, I feel that the power with which they came has not left me. I enjoyed the meetings on Sunday afternoon and Monday morning more than I did the first part. But that was not the fault of the Elders, but because of my own cold, unruly heart. I have heard you say often that you felt as a little child, and I think I never felt so much that way before. I was tired of all the vanities of this world, and longed for rest, and felt like a little child alone and lost, and crying that it might be taken home. I feel I have no home here in this cold, hard world; all things here will soon pass away. I feel that vain is the help of man. I am helpless and alone, Jesus can save; but I am sick and blind, and cannot go to him, yet I know that he can come to me; he can bind up the broken-hearted. My very heart and flesh cry out, O living God, for thee.

Elder Chick came down to Ekfrid and we had meeting Tuesday afternoon, which I enjoyed very much, and desired much to have a visit with him, but he had to go on the other way from the meeting in order to meet Deacon McAlpine.

When I started I only intended to write you a little note. I hope, my dear, you will pardon all the many errors, which are in this as in all my letters. You have always been so charitable to me, and I do not deserve it. Now if we do not meet on Sunday write me whenever you feel like it.

ELIZA McDONALD.

APPIN, Ont., April 7, 1909.

DEAR FRIEND LOLLIE:—I have been thinking much of you of late, and of writing to you. I have tried to dispel that desire, but to-night in order to relieve my mind I am going to make the attempt to write just a little note by way of remembrance. How have you been getting along of late? I hope the Lord has blessed you with his presence, and that he has led you into green pastures and beside the still waters. This morning I was standing on the porch just after the rising of the sun, and O how beautiful all nature seemed; the fields were all covered with a coat of green, and the birds were singing so sweetly I rejoiced in the beauty of it all. Then I looked up to the sky and at the sun, but the sun was so bright that my eyes immediately became dazzled. I thought, How beautiful it is when the Sun of Righteousness arises with healing

in his wings, and then the thought came that we could not gaze on him any more than we can on the sun in the sky. Here we see in part and know in part, but in the great beyond the saints shall see as they are seen and know as they are known; they shall see him face to face. It seemed sweet to me to think of this for a time, then I feared it was all but vain imagination, and thought that I should not speak of it to any one; but since I have started writing it has come to my mind and I have written it.

I suppose you have heard of the prospect that Elder Ker will come to the May meeting. I am looking forward to the pleasure of attending it, but the Lord alone knows what may happen before that time to prevent. I feel very hungry to hear preaching, and have longed much for a letter from you if it were only a line in remembrance. I enjoyed those letters of Bonnie Chick's in the last number of the SIGNS, they were so filled with love; I have read and reread them. I suppose you do not expect to be able to attend the meetings. I heard yesterday that Elder Coulter is expected also.

I am the same poor, fickle-minded creature; sometimes I think it is best to let others decide for me, and then again I feel I am too unworthy to have anything that comes from my pen in the SIGNS; but I desire to bear whatever the Lord sees fit to place upon me, if by so doing the saints of God may receive comfort. I think you will understand how I feel.

I think you can tell from what I have written the state of my mind, and hope you will overlook all my weaknesses, for I am so young in years and have but little wisdom.

Your loving friend,

ELIZA McDONALD.

FRAGMENTS.

I AM thinking of what reason I can give for the hope that is in me that I have been born of God, redeemed from sin, and am an heir of glory. I am often tempted to doubt and question the validity of this hope, yet the evidences upon which this sweet hope rests must surely have been given me from above. It is in my mind at this time to look these evidences over, and while I shall try to recall and examine what I have hoped were evidences of divine life in my soul, may the Spirit witness with my spirit that I am one of the children of God, and may the testimony which I may be enabled to give be blessed to the strengthening and comforting of other doubting souls. I shall not try to speak of these evidences in the order in which I have experienced them, but as they may be brought to my mind while I write.

Belief. This appears to me just now as one of the strongest and clearest evidences that I am a child of God and a subject of grace. I believe in God and in his Son Jesus Christ. I see that belief in my soul, fixed and settled there by a power other than my own. I did not cause it to be there, and I cannot remove it. I see at times in my mind (it must be my carnal mind) all the questioning concerning God, and all the opposition to the doctrine of the Bible which infidels express, yet my belief in God, in Christ and in the truth of the Scriptures, is not in the least degree shaken or disturbed by them, nor is my love for all which this sweet belief embraces affected in the least degree by this opposition of my carnal mind. This has often been a cause of wonder to me. I can see by this, as also by many other things, that it is not by natural reasoning that this holy belief is produced, nor upon natural

evidences that it is founded. Natural arguments with reference to the things of God, for or against, do not reach to the secret place of this spiritual belief, nor do they affect it in any way, although they may and do affect our rest and enjoyment in it. In the Scriptures I find this true belief delineated, its characteristics described, its cause and origin declared, and all that attends and follows it in our experience detailed and explained, even to the very opposition to it which exists in all the world, and which we realize in our carnal nature. I find it taught in the Bible that it is by the working of the mighty power of God, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, that any one truly believes in Jesus; (Eph. i. 19, 20;) that it is given us to believe in him; (Phil. i. 29;) that faith is the evidence which causes our belief in Jesus; (Heb. xi. 1;) that faith is the gift of God and a fruit of the Spirit, and that Christ is the author and finisher of it, both as a spiritual grace and as a system of doctrine and order. He that believeth on the Father and the Son hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. When I think of the love which is inseparable from this belief in the dear Son of God, and which distinguishes the belief of a christian from the belief of wicked men and devils, I find that belief and love are one and the same evidence of divine life in the soul, and my heart is lifted up in praise to the blessed and precious name of Jesus.

"DEEP calleth unto deep."—Psalms xlii. 7. What a wonderful expression is this. The judgments of the Lord are a great deep. Into that great deep the dear Savior went down in order to save his people from their sins, while all those judgments, like waves and billows, went over him. It was under the awful weight of that unspeakable sorrow in the garden, and that terrible anguish on the cross, when the Father forsook him, that he said, "Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps." It was for his people that he cried, "Save me, O God; for the waters are come into my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me." "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord." Have these cries of Jesus been lost in the ages that have passed since they were uttered? Have they been swallowed up in the infinite atmosphere about us and forgotten, like the multitude of other cries that have gone out upon the air since the world began? No, not one of all the cries of the dear Savior to his Father was ever lost, was ever forgotten, was ever in vain. They have all been preserved for an infinite purpose of love and mercy. As all of his tears were put into the bottle of God's remembrance, and are in his book, (Psalms lvi. 8,) so all the depths into which the Savior went down, and out of which he cried unto the Lord, have been laid up in storehouses and preserved for use in time to come. Psalms xxxiii. 7: "He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap," and brings them over his people, causing them to cry unto him, as he brought them over Jesus and drew out from his agonized soul the cry, "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." When the Lord calls his people he makes them to know their sinful and lost condition, and to feel the just judgments of God against them on account of their sins. Then they go down into the depths, each one feeling to be lower than any

one else has ever been. Then they do business in great waters, as they feel the waters of affliction and the waves of God's wrath coming over them. It is then that they "see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep." They see that God is just in condemning them, and cannot see how he can be just and save them. They cannot see how a guilty man can be just with God. Then they cry unto God out of these terrible depths for mercy, and to their wonder and joyful surprise they hear an answering cry, and learn that another has felt all the pains and bitter anguish that they are now feeling, and that he cried unto God out of the same depths ages ago. Now deep is calling unto deep at the noise of God's waterspouts; now the poor soul finds the language of Jesus, when he cried out of the depths, just suited to express his own condition, and there is felt by him a strange and unexpected relief as the words of Jesus sink down into his heart. As the whirlwind, in which the Lord has his way, comes down upon the waters, tearing them up and gathering them together as a heap, and causing the waterspouts to rise up with terrible noise to the clouds, disclosing the awful depths, then it is that the deep into which the dear Savior went down under the wrath of God, calls unto the deep into which this poor soul is sinking down, and to his unspeakable wonder he finds his own feelings told in words of the inspired Scriptures of truth. What a wonder it is that these words should just suit his case. Yes, it was for this very occasion that the suffering of Jesus was felt, and the language uttered to express it. Jesus experienced every pain, felt every sorrow, uttered every cry that all of his people ever experienced, felt or uttered, or ever will to the end of time. The treasure-houses in which these depths are laid up are full; every depth to which Jesus went down, even to the lowest hell, and where he did business, and out of which he cried unto God, is laid up there, and will call unto the deep in which any of his dear people are groaning just at the right time, and then what wonders will be seen by them when his glorious works appear. Deep calleth unto deep across all the ages. Time does not separate the dear Redeemer and his people; it is always to-day when he appears to them. The same Jesus who cried out of trouble, and who "sweat as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground," under the pressure of the awful load of his people's sins, delivered them from that burden by his death. He cried unto God for mercy; he needed none for himself, but for the great needs of his people who were in him. He prayed for mercy for them, and because he prayed and suffered for them, and because deep calleth unto deep, all poor, sin-burdened publicans can cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

DEAR BROTHER:—I am glad to have the full and particular statement which you have given in your letter. I desire much to see peace and fellowship restored between the two churches, and hope that this will yet be my privilege. But this so desirable a thing must come about through the ruling power of the only officers which God has appointed in Zion. "I will also make thy officers peace." When these officers are at work all disturbances and dissensions between living souls cease at once. The apostle says, "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts."—Col. iii. 15. And again, "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and

minds through Christ Jesus."—Phil. iv. 7. When the heart is thus kept, fault-finding on both sides will stop, and the experience of salvation will fill the hearts and minds of them all. I look for the time when all bitterness and recrimination and suspicion will be dropped, and there will be a disposition on the part of all the brethren to forbear one another in love and to forgive one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven them. I do not think you ought to refuse to commune. I do not see in the Bible any direction for one member to decide that the church of his membership is in such disorder that he cannot commune, unless he has lost all fellowship for it, when he must withdraw. If members from either of those churches should be with us we should receive them. If I should meet with either of those churches I should commune with them. I cannot see any gospel reason for them to stand apart from each other. But it is not for me to decide for either of them, or to dictate, but at the proper time and place it might be my privilege and duty to give my view of the gospel order touching the case, and to exhort as I might feel myself directed by the Spirit. I do not feel that I have anything more to say at this time, only to urge that before you or any other venture to speak in the church on such a matter of difference you ought to be very sure that you are not moved by any hasty or excited feeling, but only by such a feeling as is caused by the meek and lowly spirit of Christ. Also remember that the Lord is not a God afar off, but near at hand, and that he will hear the prayer of faith, and that it is the God of love and peace and mercy who rules in Zion. I would love to see you and brother S. together, yet I feel too poor and ignorant to be of any use in the church of God. You may read this letter to any of the brethren.

My health continues good, but my mind is much in the dark and in a cold state. I have much reason to praise the Lord, but fear that I have but little of the spirit of praise and thankfulness in my poor heart.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

PIEDMONT, Alabama.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I again take my pen in hand to tell what I hope is the work of the Lord with me, a poor sinner. I have thought since I wrote my first letter that if I had it back I never would say anything about it, but as I have begun to tell something, I think it would be worse to stop now than it would to have never begun, and I do hope the Lord will guide my pen, so that I may just speak the things I have seen and felt. My other letter closed by saying I came back in the house and went to bed. That night, or very soon after that, I dreamed I was at a meeting somewhere, but I did not know where it was nor who were there, but I thought they were singing, and I thought I was among them, and I was the happiest person that had ever lived in the world. From that day my troubles began to leave me, but they went so slowly that I cannot tell how nor when they went. I did not know what to think about these things, and I wanted to tell some of the good old church members about my feelings, but the thought would occur to my mind that I had better not say anything about it, for I had nothing to tell that they would want to hear. Then I began to want to hear preaching more than I ever had before, and I went to meeting often. There

was a traveling preacher who had an appointment at Cain Creek, the church where I always attended meeting, and I went to hear him. In his discourse he said a person might have a great load of guilt, trouble and distress of mind, and it might go away so slowly that he could not tell when nor how it went; he said it was like taking a sack of sand on your shoulder, and there was a little hole in the sack, and the sand would leak out little by little, and after awhile it would be all gone and you could not tell when it went. I thought it suited my case the best of anything that could have been said, and that it was spoken expressly for me, and hope sprang up in my heart then and there, and my love for the Primitive Baptists began to increase, not only for the people, but for the doctrine they preach. I always thought well of them, and never hated them as some say they did. But here is another trouble I want to speak of: in all my great distress and trouble I never saw myself a lost and ruined sinner, as most every one else has. It seems to me that if I could have seen myself a lost and ruined sinner, and been relieved all at once of the great burden, and been made to rejoice as some have, that I would not have any doubt, but my case is such a doubtful one I sometimes think I have no hope at all. I tried for twenty years to throw it away, but I could not, neither could I make it any better. I used to think when I would hear the Old Baptists telling about their experience and being in so much distress of mind, If I ever get in such distress and trouble as that I will know it is just the Lord's dealing with me, and will not be troubled about it; so you see how blind I was. I believe the Lord always comes in a way we are not looking for, and at a time when we are least expecting him. I could have as easily turned over a mountain as to have believed the Lord was leading me when I was in so much trouble. But time passed on, and the years came and went, and hundreds of times my mind would run back to those days of distress to see if I could not get something more out of it than I had gotten, and I thought if I could go through with the trials again I would watch more closely and know more about it, but I never could get any more than I had in the beginning, though sometimes I would think I had a little hope. But all of these years I have loved to go to meeting and hear the gospel preached; it was the joyful sound to me, for the preacher could tell my feelings better than I could myself, and I always got a feast every time I went. I never thought I would join the church until last summer, when I began to be impressed to go and tell those people some of my feelings, and of the love I had for them and for the doctrine they preach: salvation by grace, and grace alone. When that love which cometh down from above is in exercise it overcomes all opposition and makes us willing subjects, and although I felt so little and so unworthy I was so impressed to go to the church it seemed it was more than I could do to stay away; so one day last June, while in the field cutting oats, I made a promise that if the good Lord would spare my life I never would let another opportunity pass. About this time, one night I thought I would talk to my wife a little about these things, for I believed she was about in the same condition I was, so I asked her if she had ever thought anything about going to the church. She said she had, and began to tell me of the condition of her mind, and soon I found we felt alike. She was at

that time sick in bed, but we talked the matter over and agreed that if she was able we would go the next meeting and tell the church some of our feelings (which would have been the first Sunday in July or Saturday before), but she did not get well enough to go at that time, so we had to put it off another month, and then she still was not able to go at the August meeting. O how anxious we were for her to get well; it seemed like the longest time from one meeting to another that I ever saw; but thanks to Him who doeth all things well, by the September meeting she was some better, so I could go to meeting and leave her at home. When the opportunity was given for the reception of members I went and paid that vow I had made, and told them part of what I have written here, and they received me. My wife was able to go to the October meeting, and discharged that duty she felt to owe her Lord and Master. We were both baptized the first Sunday in October last, by Elder J. C. Chandler. We know the happiest part of our lives was the first few weeks after we were baptized; we feel that we had the answer of a good conscience toward God.

Now, brethren editors, I have written some of my thoughts, but I see I have left out many things that I wanted to tell. When I am writing my mind goes so much faster than my pen that I leave out about half I want to tell. I will, however, speak a little about the love that is shed abroad in our hearts. I remember very well last June, while plowing in the field, I was meditating on these things and was made to rejoice, and the tears flowed from my eyes, and the thought sprang up in my mind so plainly, Why should you ever doubt again? It seemed that if I could have remained in that condition always I never would have needed anything else. I believe this love is something the world cannot give nor take away. If it were not for this love I believe I would give up in despair; this love is the greatest evidence I have of a change from nature to grace.

I will have to stop, for I cannot tell it all. Brethren, I fear you will be greatly wearied before you get through with all this, and I know you will find many mistakes, but please excuse them. May God bless you, brethren, and spare you long in your labors of love, is the prayer of the very least one, if one at all,

A. P. HICKS.

DIGHTON, Kansas, Feb. 17, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I will say brethren, for I feel you are such, if I am included with you in the family of God, for it does seem certain to me that the dear, precious Predestinarian Baptists are his own dear children and precious family, the church of the living God. I long to know that I am one of the little ones, but if one of the redeemed at all I surely am the least lamb in the whole flock, often stumbling and nearly falling as I go longing for the Shepherd and the flock. I am very lonely, as there are none near me who believe as I do. It is over one hundred miles to where I can meet with and hear Primitive Baptists preach, and that is the preaching which suits me; I like to hear how poor, helpless sinners are saved and redeemed by the precious blood of Christ on Calvary, for when he said, "It is finished," I believe his work of redemption was done, everlasting salvation was secured for every one of the heavenly Father's children who ever has or will live on the earth. Yes, I believe surely they were elected and their everlasting salvation sure be-

fore the world was, for his promises never fail. O how glorious, He says, I have loved you with an everlasting love, I redeemed you, I have saved you with an everlasting salvation, I give unto you eternal life, and you shall never perish. All these things are sure for the people of God, and as enduring as eternity, and their sins and iniquities he will remember no more forever. He rules and reigns supreme, and does his will among the inhabitants of earth and in the army of heaven, and I am thankful that we have an all-powerful, all-wise and all-merciful, gracious and loving Savior, for it required just that kind to save poor, helpless sinners. I have no confidence in the flesh, and desire to worship the Lord omnipotent, who appoints what is best for us, whether joys or sorrows, trials many or few, and I believe they are all for our good and his glory, for he knows just what we need; he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, and when we have sojourned in this world our allotted time he will take us all to that glorious, happy home purified and glorified, to see Jesus and be like him and dwell forever with the Lord. Not one will be lost, but the full number will be there complete. I want to tell you, though weak and sinful as I am, I sometimes have short seasons of rejoicing in a little hope that I have a part in this great inheritance, for we read, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," and if I know my heart I do love the people of God (Primitive Baptists) and have had a name with them forty years. When I was young I thought when I looked at other members of the church that when I got old I would be good like them; but I am disappointed, for I still have my many shortcomings, and think now I will have as long as I am in this sinful world, though I do long to live better, but sin is mixed with all I do, and I often think if there is any good it is hard for me to see, so I feel there is little hope of getting any better in this life. I am now seventy-two years of age, and have had several severe spells of sickness within the last four years, three of which my physician said I was dangerously ill and liable to die any hour, and my dear children and friends were at my bedside day and night, thinking every hour I would. For days I told them I might go, but I did not think I would just then, but if I did it would be all right with me; I felt reconciled to the Lord's will. I have been told often since then that I was the calmest person in the house, though they talked with me of death and told me they thought it very near; but I felt Jesus was with me, and his promise that he will never leave nor forsake us comforted me. O may I have the comfort of his blessed presence in the hour of death. Though I am sick and suffer intensely, almost beyond endurance at times, the Lord in his kind providence has given me very good, kind children, who do everything that can be done for me to make my journey as easy and comfortable as possible, and I am surrounded with good, kind friends, who are more than willing to do anything possible for my relief, for which I hope I am thankful to Him who gives us all we enjoy. O that I could love him more and serve him better. I sometimes feel that the Lord is so good to me I never will complain again, but the first thing I know I am finding fault. I think sometimes I am like a fretful, sickly child: hard to please. There is much so-called preaching and worship in this little town, but no food for me. I get hungry and weak with great supplies of this food all around me,

but I cannot eat of it. I beg the Lord to permit me to eat at his table just a little food, a little drink of the sincere milk. O how strengthening it would be, if according to his will. I am thinking of attending the May meeting at Lamar, Colo., over one hundred miles west of here. We have a Baptist brother and sister living at Scott City, twenty miles west of here, and if we can so arrange we can go together. I want to go, if the Lord will, but my children are not willing I should go alone, for I have been taken very suddenly sick twice recently. I have some of the very best of preaching, and I get it every two weeks, it comes in that blessed medium, the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I read it and reread it, and do not see how I could get along without it, for it contains such comforting editorials and letters; I read them often with tears of joy. Last August, while recovering from one of those spells of sickness, as soon as I could sit up in bed I began reading the SIGNS. I read the August numbers over and over, and it did me much good. Although a stranger to the editors and most of the correspondents in the flesh, I feel drawn to them as my best friends and kindred with a love not of this world, though few among them I am personally acquainted with, but those I wish would write for the SIGNS often, as well as all the other writers. Dear sisters Eliza J. Grove, Belle Frazee and Sarah Runkle, it does me much good to learn that you whom I knew when I was young are still going on in the good old way, not listening to and following the lo heres and lo theres. My dear brethren, I must say I think the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the very best paper published that I know of. I have read several Baptist papers, but it brings more comfort and joy to me than anything I read except the Bible. It is all the preaching I have, and I feel I cannot get along without it, though it seems I have been negligent about remitting, but sickness has hindered me from doing as I would, so please forgive me for my shortcomings and excuse this long, poorly composed letter, and do as you like with it and all will be right with me. Please remember me and my children in your prayers.

Your little sister, saved by grace, if saved at all,

NANCY A. McCOY.

DADE CITY, Fla., April 22, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Inclosed find money order for two dollars to renew my subscription for another year. I have been a reader of your paper for many years, and I have yet to notice a doctrinal principle advocated in its pages, either by editors or correspondents, that I did not think was taught by Christ and his apostles. True, I have never used the expression, "absolute predestination of all things," but if I have understood the meaning of those who have thus spoken, I am with them in doctrine, and have ever been since I have claimed a hope in God's salvation, never thinking that my orthodoxy would be questioned upon that point for not using the expression. I heartily approve of your course that no matter should be published in its columns that is not in accord with its doctrinal principles. I once thought the Primitive Baptists were one in experience of grace and in doctrine the world over, and I yet believe that if they will let their experience and the doctrine He has written in their hearts talk, they will see eye to eye and speak the same things, but in nature they will differ according to the teaching of man,

from jealousy, prejudice, envy, strife and environments. Would it not be well for each one that hath the Son to examine himself to see what spirit actuates his walk? If I am at your side I am surely near you, can talk with you, touch you, embrace you; and so, having quickening grace operating in our hearts, the fellowship of love of kindred minds is felt. What a privilege to commune, to be on familiar terms, to go up to the house of the Lord in sweet counsel as brethren, and to so walk in Christ is to have the faith of God's elect. The edict that has gone forth from some dear brethren and churches: "Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou," I fear is not the fruit of the Spirit. What a lot of pretense is made under the garb of religion! The word "religion" is only found five times in the Bible; the first four times in a bad sense, such as pharisaical, hypocritical, &c.; once in a good sense: pure, charitable, unspotted. The Spirit of the Lord, which gives "a broken and contrite heart" acceptance, will make the man who has it to acknowledge that he is the chief of sinners and the least of saints. By nature man grows large; even the child of God may do so in his own estimation; yea, striving to be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven cropped out of the nature of the disciples. But to all such Christ would say, "Except ye be converted, and become as little"—how little? Not how big, how grand, how great shall I be, but how small, how little shall I be? As a newborn babe. Peter says, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word," the honest, unadulterated milk of the gospel. I have often wondered why the preaching of the sovereignty of God over all worlds, beings and things, and of the gospel of his grace alone in salvation, should meet with so much hostility, especially from any of God's children. It must be because by nature they are not friends to God or his grace, for all is offensive to man's free will, and takes all the merit out of his Arminian nature and gives all the glory to God.

Yours in the faith, I hope,

M. L. GILBERT.

LOVELAND, Colorado.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have received a number of letters from brethren and sisters, strangers to me in the flesh, which I have read and still read over again and again with much comfort, which letters still remain unanswered. But if they knew what great cares and sore trials of this life, together with the temptations and buffetings of Satan I have passed through the last three or four months, I know they would pardon my seeming neglect to answer each of their precious letters. The over burthen of my mind with the tribulations of this life has been so great as to almost entirely bury all the spirituality of my mind, if indeed I ever had any. If you could but know what great conflicts are mine to bear, I know you would pity me. Then as I grow older in years, (now in my seventy-fifth) my knowledge of the Scriptures of divine truth seems to grow less and less, so I feel at times that I have no hope and am without God in the world. With such feelings and state of mind, how can I write and comfort any of God's dear children? And especially so when I feel, as brother Scates says in his letter to me, myself less and less an example of what a christian ought to be here in this world. Ah, yes indeed, brother Scates, do I feel more and more the need of the grace of God to sustain and uphold me in my old age. "I often

feel forsaken of the Lord." O what comfort these words of yours were to me. The closing words of sister Bailey's letter: "O God, have mercy on me, for I am weak," sank deep into the depths of my troubled soul, and caused tears of sympathy and joy to flow from mine eyes. I would like to mention each one who has written me words of comfort, but I cannot without asking too much space in the dear old SIGNS for my poor, imperfect thoughts to be published, to the exclusion of better material.

May God's grace sustain you all in your trials, tribulations and afflictions, is my prayer. Remember unworthy me.

J. H. YEOMAN.

ATLANTA, Ga., May 17, 1909.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—If one so unworthy as I may thus address you. This is the first time I have ever written to the SIGNS, and it is with a sad heart I try to write, but I want to inform you of my dear husband's death.

I have had a little hope for about thirty-eight years, though it seems very small, the least of all, if one at all. There was a time when I felt that I was a sinner in the sight of God, and that he was angry with me for sin, and that I stood self-condemned before him, without any hope in his mercy, but in a short time a calm feeling came over me, such as I had never felt before, and hope sprang up that this was the evidence of his love, and I did believe that this was the work of the Lord. I have many doubts as to this being a christian experience; there is so much self about me, no wonder I doubt. I have but sketched at my little experience, if I have any at all.

Please publish the notice of my dear husband's death, also my little experience, if you see any evidence of grace in it; if not, pardon me, for this is my hope, if I have any. Do with this as you think best; I will leave it to your better judgment. O may I live and die in the everlasting love of Jesus.

May God be with you and protect you through life, and be with you in death, is my prayer.

(MRS.) M. E. BENTLEY.

(See obituary notice on page 350.)

SYCAMORE, Ohio, February, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I feel like writing you some of my thoughts this morning. I often think of you in your busy work and labors of love. Your writings have been of great comfort to God's humble poor; your New Year's Greeting was especially so. You manifest humility, which causes a sweet fellowship to spring up. While in such a frame of mind we esteem others better than ourselves. I know that I have been led in a way that I knew not, and that crooked things have been made straight and darkness light, and that I have been made to hate evil and to love holiness. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

"Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

I feel reconciled to His will. God is good to me, far better than my fears, and I have been led to say, "Thy will be done."

This is my first writing to any of God's ministers. I am eighty-two years old and have taken the SIGNS fifty years. May the blessing of our heavenly Father rest upon you.

With love to all who love the household of faith,

ELIZABETH BRETZ.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1909.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

EXPERIENCE.

Is it true that one who has become conformed to the world, who seeks too much the company of worldly men, whose conversation has become filthy, who is slothful in the service of the Lord, who has lost his humility, who seeks to rule instead of being in submission to the church, and who allows jealousy to reign in his heart, will complain of being in darkness? Is it true that he who behaves and feels in the opposite manner will be in the light at all times? We have often seen assertions like the above of late, coming from those who advocate conditionalism in our present salvation. It is claimed in substance, that the obedient will be happy, while the disobedient will be unhappy. By obedience is meant inward heartfelt obedience, as well as that which is outward, and by disobedience is meant heartfelt disobedience, as well as that which is outward. Will jealousy, rage, envy, pride, anger, love of the world and its vain show within, and carnal, worldly living without, always cause that he who thus walks will feel to be in darkness, and to mourn that it is so? On the other hand, will he who feels humble, who bears no malice, who has a loving, tender heart toward all those who love God, and a spirit of forgiveness for all who evil entreat him, and who outwardly walks as becometh the gospel of Christ, always be happy and joyful in the Lord? Do the Scriptures teach all these things? Does our observation of the testimony of God's children furnish proof of this? Does our own personal experience show that this is true? It has not seemed so to us. It has appeared to us that the above questions if answered in the affirmative are well calculated to distress very many of the Lord's humble poor who walk much of the time in darkness and who yet do above all things desire and strive to walk godly in this present evil world. We are here attempting to write of the experience of those who are the children of God, whether they are walking obediently or disobediently. Are the disobedient always unhappy? Are the obedient always happy? Does the man in whom all evil passions are raging, ever complain of darkness? Rather, is it not true that the humblest of all the brethren we know oftener complain of darkness than those who go in the way of the ungodly? The Scriptures do not teach that those who were in olden times men after God's own heart, like David, always felt that the Lord was with them or that they were always walking in the light; they do not teach when any of his servants forgot him and walked in evil that they complained of darkness at that time; rather, the godly were those who walked in darkness and complained of having no light. We need only turn to the testimony of David, as recorded in the Psalms; in them he records his daily travel, and even when at his best estate and serving God most faithfully he was often full of bitter complaining. It was so also with Job; his friends indeed could not conceive of any other cause for his trouble of mind and

body than that he had sinned in some way, and so their advice to him was, "Acquaint now thyself with him [God], and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee." This was the substance of their advice in all they said to him, and Job could only say of them and their advice, How have ye helped him who is without strength? Miserable comforters are ye all, physicians of no value. All who to-day advise those who walk in darkness to turn and serve God are successors of the friends of Job, and all such troubled ones must feel as he did, that their advisers are physicians of no value. But the Lord had no controversy with Job in the afflictions that were given him; Job was a just man, who feared God and eschewed evil. This was God's own testimony concerning him, and, more than all this, our blessed Redeemer, who was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners in all his life in the flesh, was also a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was subject to temptation, and often went to God in prayer. It is never but once said of him that he rejoiced, but often that he was oppressed and that he wept. Should his followers then expect to be exempt from darkness of mind?

It is true that the Lord chastises his children when they stray, but there is no such provision named in the gospel covenant as that there shall be so much joy given for so much obedience, and so much trouble for so much disobedience. The sorrows of the one are such as grow out of the wrong, and the gladness of the other is such as grows out of the right. The children of God never feel that their joy has come to them as a reward for doing right; could they feel so, there would be room for self-praise; but it is the attitude of the spiritual mind to count oneself, after having done all, an unprofitable servant. He has not earned one smallest atom of reward from God, and so all of joy, light and gladness that are his come to him as a sweet and glad surprise. His feeling is, If indeed God is with me, what a wonder of mercy and grace that he should dwell with such a poor, vile sinner. All the way along he must bring forth the headstone, crying, Grace, grace unto it. No servant of God who has had any spiritual experience would say to another downcast child, If you will only live right, and serve God more faithfully, you will have comfort and relief from your darkness. Job's friends said this, but they only added to his distress. The Scriptures do not teach that the disobedient are always sorrowful. True, they do walk far off from God, but the one special thing which marks their absence from God is that they do not feel to be far off. It is indeed often true that those who are far off from God think themselves nigh to him, while those who are nearest to him very often feel themselves far off. This may seem like a contradiction, but there are many such contradictions in the travel of the believer. When one does not clearly see that which is perfect he may think himself near to perfection, but as he comes to see that perfection more clearly he also sees more clearly his distance from that perfection; and the moment one begins to complain of darkness and distance from the Lord, that moment he begins to come near to him; If such an one has been walking away from God, now he walks toward him.

Our God has not promised happiness for obedience under the gospel, nor sorrow for disobedience, in the sense that every one who walks obediently shall be happy, and every one who walks disobediently shall be unhappy. Paul said, If

we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption; but if we sow to the Spirit, we shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. Mark, he does not say that sowing to the flesh, we shall reap sorrow, and sowing to the Spirit we shall reap happiness, but his words have a deeper meaning than that. Sowing to the flesh, we shall reap just what we have been sowing: corruption; and sowing to the Spirit we shall also reap just what we have been sowing: life everlasting. There will always be a mixture of happiness and sorrow scattered along in the pathway of the obedient child, but the result of his sowing to the Spirit will infallibly be everlasting life; while if such a child of God sows to the flesh, the reaping will infallibly be corruption. Happy would it be indeed for the one who sows to the flesh should sorrow overtake him for his sin, for such sorrow is not corruption at all, but it contains the very essence of everlasting life. Such sorrow is not the fruit of his sowing to the flesh, but it is the gracious gift of God to a poor sinner, that he may be restored from the evil way; and He restores the soul for His own name's sake.

To these testimonies from the word of God there also may be added the result of our own observation. Our observation has been that often the most godly men and women have walked in, and complained most, of darkness; the most godly men have ever complained most of their own ungodliness. It would be improper to call any names of brethren and sisters here, but very many whose whole life seemed to us full of godliness, with all that that word implies, have been much of the time in Doubting Castle, as Bunyan has it, and sometimes well-nigh overcome by the power of Giant Despair. We could not see why they should be so much of the time doubting and dark in mind; but this was their testimony. Some of the most humble-minded and faithful members in the churches of Christ that we have ever known have seldom, if ever, been able to read their title clear to the heavenly mansions. They have been all their lifetime fearing and doubting, and could seldom speak of visits from the Lord in the way of giving them assurances of his love. Had such ones read in the word of God that the godly were always in the light, even most of the time there, all their feeble hope would at once have perished, since they were not walking in the light, but in darkness. It will not do to say that the good are happy always; it will not do to say to them that the closer we live to Jesus the greater will be our joy and peace of mind. Job knew the falsity of this assertion, and so will all the people of God learn it sooner or later. The most perfect in life of all men that we have known, complained often that their conscience was defiled. It is not always because we have sinned that the Lord withdraws himself. Our faith needs testing to prove it, and for this we are sometimes left alone, to see whether our faith is genuine. The faith of many in the former days was tested in that way, and the most godly man must often complain the absence of his Lord. This is darkness indeed to the heaven-born soul.

It is true that when the Lord convicts one of his children of his sin, as David was convicted when Nathan the prophet was sent unto him, and that man becomes conscious of his distance from the way of the Lord, there will be in his heart repentance and godly sorrow. But now he is no longer running after the evil; he turns from the world, seeks not the company of worldly men, his conversation is

no longer filthy, he is no longer slothful in the service of God, he is humbled low in the dust, jealousy ceases to reign in him and he seeks not to be a ruler, but rather a servant of all; now the mercy of the Lord has come unto him and has saved him from his sins, and right here he begins to be exceedingly sorrowful, and sits down in darkness. But so long as he was following these evil things he was not sensible of darkness at all. He was in darkness indeed, in the sense of ignorance, but not in the sense of unhappiness, until he ceased to be under the darkness of his ignorance, and came out into the darkness of sorrow and repentance. The Lord has turned him about, and the first evidence that it is so is that he begins to complain of the darkness. Now he can see; before this the darkness and the light were the same to him. Instead of his turning from the evil, and so coming into happiness, he has been turned from it and has come into darkness that can be felt. The true minister will say of this darkness, It is the evidence of the work of the Lord turning the sinner from his sins. He will not say to that one, Turn about and do good and thereby you shall find peace, and walk in the light. The Lord has already turned that man about, and the true minister knows that it is so, else he would not be complaining of darkness. Such a minister will say to such a complaining sinner, The Lord has granted you repentance, and he has forgiven your sins. He will tell that sinner what the Lord has done for him, in his heart, and not bind burdens upon him that neither he nor his teacher could bear. While a child of God is conformed to the world he feels no sorrow. Sorrow begins with him when conformity to God begins.

In all that service that measures out rewards for corresponding measures of obedience man has always proved a total failure. It was so under all that legal covenant which embraced the Jews as a nation. "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the food of the land." But see how constantly they fell. How often were they led into captivity because of their transgressions, until the Lord in abounding mercy once more stretched out his hand toward them in blessing, and freely restored them. Was the new covenant like the old, then would there be total failure again; the failure is in ourselves, not in the Lord. All must be of grace abounding to the chief of sinners. The promises in Christ (and they all are in him, under the new covenant) are yea and amen to the glory of God. None of the blessings of the new covenant are to the praise of men, as though we had deserved them because of our obedience. "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." Yes, let us praise him from whom all obedience is given, and let us praise him, as believers, that he does not reward us according to our imperfect obedience, but according to the perfect obedience of the blessed Lord in our behalf. We indeed walk in heaviness often, but by this we learn our need of divine strength once more, and so at last we bless God for the burden of sorrow, and bless him again for the deliverance from it through faith in Christ Jesus our Lord. We bless him for both, because both the evening and the morning are needed for the completion of the first day, and both the complaining and the rejoicing are alike the evidence that to us the day of the Lord has come. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

LUKE XVI. 9.

ELDER BEEBE:—Please give your views on Luke xvi. 9. There is a command given by Christ to make friends with the "mammon of unrighteousness," and when they fail, these receive them "into everlasting habitations." Who are they that are to make friends with the "mammon of unrighteousness"? What are the "everlasting habitations"? You will greatly oblige by giving your views on the above mentioned verse. PHILOS.

PORT FEAR, August, 1863.

Mammon, according to Webster, signifies riches, wealth, or the god of riches, and in this signification the term seems to be used in this text, as also in the sermon on the mount. The unjust steward in the parable had charge, so long as he held the stewardship, of his master's goods, and was empowered legally to appropriate them. He was unjust, first, because he had wasted what he was in duty bound to faithfully take care of, and secondly, in making a fraudulent settlement with his master's debtors; but he manifested commendable wisdom in so using his office while he held it as to secure the permanent friendship of those on whom he was soon to become dependent. We presume this parable, as well as that of the prodigal son, which immediately preceded it, had a primary reference to the Jewish nation, which was very soon to fail, and lose its nationality, and be removed from its special stewardship of the oracles, covenants, worldly sanctuary, carnal ordinances, &c., but the special admonition to the disciples has a much broader application. God has made his children stewards of so much of the riches, or mammon, of this world as lawfully belongs to us, and Paul says: "Moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." God in his wisdom knows and in his providence commits to us the exact amount of worldly wealth of which it is his pleasure to make us stewards, and it is not wrong for us to hold it in charge, as faithful stewards, to be disbursed by us as his word and Spirit shall dictate. But we are restricted as stewards, and solemnly charged to use these things as not abusing them, knowing that their fashion passes away. We really possess nothing independently of God, for the world and the fullness thereof are his, and we ourselves are not our own, we are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

Now then, as the unjust steward was commended by his lord, in that he acted wisely in disposing of the goods entrusted to him in such a manner as to secure the good will and permanent friendship of those on whom he was so soon to become dependent, so it would have been wise in the Jews to have secured, as far as possible, the friendship of the Gentiles, among whom they were so soon to be dispersed, and on whose favor they were soon to become dependent. And the disciples of Christ should receive from the parable a lesson of wisdom in regard to their stewardship of the riches of this world, and so use the uncertain and transient things of this world as to secure a reciprocity of kindness when they should themselves become poor and destitute. So Jesus taught his disciples on the mount, saying unto them: "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again."—Luke vi. 38. Our stewardship over and possession of worldly treasures is brief at the best, but we are liable at any and every moment to fail, or to be deprived of it all, and

then to become dependent on the charity of those who have the means to relieve our necessities; therefore, as we would that others should do to us, we are told to do even so unto them, that when ye fail, when your stewardship of the things of this world shall fail, and yourselves become needy and destitute, your deeds of hospitality will be remembered, and your bread cast on the waters shall be gathered after many days.

Perhaps we have our best illustration of this subject in the course pursued by the saints at Pentecost. The persecution was raging against christianity at that time, and all who confessed their faith in Jesus were liable to lose their property, and we are told that all who had possessions sold them and brought the proceeds and laid them down at the feet of the apostles. "And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need."—Acts ii. 44, 45. Thus as their stewardship of their own possessions and goods was to be taken from them, they acted wisely in making provision, while it was their undisputed right to do so, for their future support; that when they failed, or were reduced to dependence, they were received into everlasting or a permanent and reliable home.

We therefore conclude that the mammon of unrighteousness is the wealth or possessions of this world. Mammon not of righteousness, or to those who righteously possess and use them, but mammon or idolatrous, when unrighteously held, desired or used; that the disciples of Christ were those commanded by him to make to themselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that their failing was when they should be deprived of the treasures of this world, and become dependent; that their reception into everlasting habitation is their being received into permanent homes, after the manner of those disciples at Pentecost.

We have thus briefly answered the several interrogatories of "Philos." If what we have written shall be of any use to him and others, we shall have cause for humble gratitude to the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

Before dismissing this subject, we feel constrained to call the attention of the saints to some further considerations having a bearing on this subject. In his sermon on the mount, and in the thirteenth verse of this sixteenth chapter of Luke, Jesus distinctly tells his disciples that they cannot serve God and mammon, and by the repetition of this instruction, almost in the same words, in Matthew vi. 24, and Luke xvi. 13, we may infer its weighty importance, and in order that we may clearly understand and duly obey this divine instruction, and at the same time make to ourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, we must carefully mark the difference between the one and the other. It is one thing to make to ourselves friends of the riches or treasures of this world, and quite another to serve them as idols. If, in the providence of God, we are put in possession of earthly treasures, we would make friends of them, we should use them as not abusing them, knowing that their fashion passeth away. "Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving."—1 Tim. iv. 4. Receiving then with thanksgiving is an acknowledgment that we regard them as the gifts of God, for which we are obligated to thank him and to use them in his fear. But to set our affections on the things of the earth, and

forego our religious duties and privileges for their acquisition, and make them the paramount object of our pursuit, is to serve them as a mammon, or idol of unrighteousness. Then they cease to be our friends, but become our idols. The loving apostle John in his last admonition said, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." With such an earthly nature as we possess we need the admonition, for we are informed that covetousness is idolatry. Look to this, brethren and sisters. Have you not sometimes been so eager for obtaining riches as to sacrifice some religious principle for their attainment? Have you at no time absented yourself from the house of prayer, or from some of the solemn feasts of Zion, to serve this mammon? If so, this mammon has, so far, become your master, not you friend; for his servant ye are to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey. Paul charges the saints to avoid the example of Esau, who for a morsel of meat sold his birthright. We have precious birthright privileges in the church of God, which we should not barter away for carnal gratifications, lest we be found servants of the mammon of unrighteousness. Have there not been cases where brethren in comfortable circumstances, and living in the bounds of a gospel church, for the sake of making a little more money, or of accumulating more wealth, have pulled up stakes and moved to some country where they could gain more wealth, but lose all the social privileges of religious society? Do such brethren serve, or make a friend of the mammon of unrighteousness? Brethren, except when compelled by actual want, who relinquish spiritual privileges for worldly gain, forget, or at least neglect the instruction which Christ gave the disciples in his sermon on the mount: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven; * * * for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air," &c.—Matt. vi. 19, 20, 21, 24–26. We read also to the end of the chapter. Here we have the commentary of our Lord upon the text, and the text also. We do not understand, however, that our Lord commands his servants to be indolent, neglectful or lazy, for Paul commands the saints to be diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Not serving mammon, but the Lord. By serving him as our Master, and making friends of the good things of this world, which, under his blessing, crown our labors, we shall make the discrimination required: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness." These are of the first and highest importance to christians. "And all these things shall be added unto you." All these things, such as food and raiment, or whatever our heavenly Father knoweth that we have need of. Relying on this gracious promise, trust all consequences to him, only see that he is our supreme Master, and he will make these earthly things our friends.

There are many ways in which the fidelity of christians is tried as to their choice of masters. The poor, the sick,

the destitute, the widow, the orphan, ask for our sympathy. The Savior says, Give to him that asketh. Mammon says, You had better hold on to what you have, you may need it. Which master will you serve? Can you obey both? Jesus says, and you find the saying true, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

Again, if we would make friends instead of masters of what is called the mammon or god of unrighteousness, we should regard ourselves as stewards of those things, that they occupy a position of equality with us, inasmuch as both we and they are the creatures and property of God, only temporarily entrusted to our stewardship for a trial of our fidelity; both we and they are our Lord's goods, and if we would have them for our friends, let us so use them that when we fail, or become destitute, those who have shared in our bounty will be ready to reciprocate the favors they have received at our hands. This we will do, not by defrauding our Lord, as the unjust steward did his lord, but by using our stewardship as our Lord has commanded us, by holding all his goods as only entrusted to us, and at all times subject to his order.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., September 15, 1863.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at his residence, Hopewell, N. J., May 8th, 1909, Theodore Matthews, of West Amwell, and Miss Matilda Q. Vandyke, of Hopewell.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder William Grafton was born Oct. 5th, 1824, and departed this life April 6th, 1909, making his stay on earth 84 years, 6 months and 1 day, and he spent his long life above reproach as a man, as a member of the church of God and as a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Elder Grafton was married in early life to Miss Mary Varnes, of Pennsylvania, who bore him seven children, five daughters and two sons, and preceded him to the grave about sixteen years. He was blessed to baptize four of his daughters in the fellowship of his home church, which he served as a much loved pastor for about fifty years, having been ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry at the request of said church in May, 1859. Elder Grafton spent his entire life in the neighborhood where he was born, and was as much beloved by old and young, perhaps, as any man ever was. His life as a man was quiet and unassuming; as a minister he was gentle, earnest, faithful, kind, true and gifted. I never heard any one more clearly separate between law and gospel than he. Well do I remember some of his sermons upon this subject, when I hung upon his words with interest and delight, and no one was more clear and interesting upon the future resurrection of the bodies of the saints of God than he, always contending earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. At the time of his death Elder Grafton was the pastor of three churches: Harford and Warren, in Maryland, and Rock Springs, in Pennsylvania, and they loved him as a father in Israel; but now they are left sad and lonely, and feel their bereavement much. May the great Head of the church, whom their late pastor so faithfully preached to them for many years, remember and bless them. His children, especially his three daughters at home, perhaps miss him more than any one else. May the God in whom they trust be with them and comfort them as no one but their heavenly Father can. We all miss him; the whole Baltimore Association, of whose sessions he had been the beloved moderator for many years, will miss him; it will seem strange without him, but with all this bereavement and sadness his family, his churches and association, and brethren generally, have a great deal to be thankful for; our God gave him to us, and how we should praise Him for such a friend, father, brother and preacher for so many years, faithful in every calling.

On April 9th we gathered at his late residence and conveyed the loved remains to Harford meetinghouse, where a large congregation of sorrowing brethren, sisters and friends met to pay respects to their loved one. At the request of the daughters, the writer spoke on the occasion, reading Acts xxvi. 8, speaking principally upon the subject of the resurrection, and telling the plain, clear and interesting manner in

which our dear father in Israel presented it. There were present also Elders S. H. Durand, J. G. Eubanks, J. McConnell and B. F. Coulter, all of whom made some remarks, testifying to the true worth of Elder Grafton by the grace of God, after which all that was mortal was laid to rest beside his beloved wife to await the resurrection at the last day, when Jesus shall come without sin unto salvation to gather his own to himself; then this mortal shall put on immortality, (1 Cor. xv. 53,) that body sown natural shall be raised spiritual, (1 Cor. xv. 44,) so that in all our sorrow we have comfort in the sweet remembrance of the fact that this was the hope of our dear one, and for him it is far better to depart and be with Jesus. Let me say to all who mourn, Be comforted with the thought that he is free from sorrow, pain and death, dwelling with his Lord. Peace to his ashes.

Written by request of his sorrowing family.

I subscribe myself one who loves his memory,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

Mrs. Eliza J. Barton departed this life Jan. 29th, 1909. She was for three or four years a regular attendant at our meetings in Baltimore; a very earnest listener, who knew and loved the truth as it is in Jesus. We had all learned to love her much for her christian character and devotion to our church, and we miss her much from our assemblies, but feel sure that she rests with the general assembly and church of the firstborn in heaven, and for her we know it is far better to be with Jesus. The bereaved husband has our sympathy; may the Lord bless him.

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

I am requested by the husband of Mrs. Eliza J. Barton to add to the above a small tribute to the memory of our dear, departed friend. She was a loving and devoted member of the congregation of the Salem Church in Philadelphia for several years before she and her husband moved to Baltimore. She was loved and esteemed by all who knew her because of her love for the truth and her interest in the faith and order of the church. She was the daughter of the late Alexander and Sarah Jane Wilson, of Newark, Del. Her husband, Maskel Barton, is a lover of the precious doctrine of Christ.

Elder Joshua T. Rowe conducted the funeral services at her late home, preaching to the comfort of those who hunger for the word. Our love and sympathy go out to the lonely, bereaved husband.

ALSO,

Mrs. Mary Rebecca Smith died at her home, 1946 N. Twentieth St., Philadelphia, Pa., in the 65th year of her age. She was the daughter of the late William E. and Sarah M. Riggs. When twenty years of age she married Benjamin H. Smith, of Smyrna, Delaware. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Bryn Zion Church, Kent County, Delaware, in August, 1866, by Elder E. Rittenhouse, transferring her letter to the Salem Church in Philadelphia in 1893. She was a faithful and devoted follower of Christ, and manifested beautiful christian fortitude and patience in her lingering and painful illness.

Elder J. C. Mellott and Deacon J. M. Fenton conducted the funeral services, speaking words of comfort to the living. B. F. COULTER.

SISTER **Harriet Ann Taylor,** wife of George Washington Taylor, died at their home, near Queens, Upshur Co., W. Va., March 21st, 1909, after a lingering illness of typhoid fever, followed by pneumonia. She was the daughter of Levi and Emeline Findley, and was born at the Findley homestead, near Leiter, Randolph Co., W. Va., April 3rd, 1863; was married to George Washington Taylor Nov. 17th, 1882. To them were born six children, who, with her husband, her aged mother, four sisters, three brothers and a host of other relatives and friends, are left to mourn their loss. Sister Harriet received a hope in Christ, and went before the Tygarts Valley Old School Baptist Church on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in August, 1888, during an association at that place, related her experience and was received into the church. She was baptized the following day by the late Elder J. S. Corder, who was then moderator of the association. She lived a distance of thirty-two miles from the church, and could not often attend, but came gladly when she could, and was held in high esteem by the church. She was a consistent christian, a faithful and devoted wife and mother, a kind friend and neighbor, and will be sadly missed by the community in which she lived. I visited her during her illness, and she told me she had thought from the first she would not get well, and that her trust was in the Lord and that she did not desire to live longer. I asked her if there was anything she wished us to do for her. She replied she had made her funeral arrangements, saying she wished her body taken to the old home, and her funeral preached there by her pastor, Elder J. N. Bartlett, of Philippi, W. Va. I left her fearing I would not see her again alive, and two days after I reached home I was stricken with pneumonia, and though she lived for nearly three weeks after that I was not able to visit her again or to attend her funeral when she was brought home. How sad it was for us, but through it all the Lord did what was best for us. Her children feel their loss is irreparable, but we hope they may be brought to trust in the Lord as she trusted him, and to feel that their loss is her gain. She desired much to depart and be at rest, and though a dear mother, a loving daughter and sister is gone from us, and we feel sad and lonely, yet we feel her desire has been granted and she has entered into that blessed rest that awaits

the people of God, and we know that he can enable us by his grace to say, "Thy will be done."

ALSO,

George Washington Taylor, husband of the above, departed this life April 4th, 1909, just two weeks after the departure of his beloved wife. He was born May 22nd, 1863, near Queens, Upshur Co., W. Va., and lived and died near the old homestead. The 6th of November last he was stricken with paralysis, and could not use his left side for quite awhile, but had partially recovered and was able to walk again. When his wife died he was so heartbroken he was unable in his weakened condition to bear so great a grief, and it pleased the Lord in his goodness to make their separation short. He accompanied the remains of his beloved wife to her old home, attended the funeral services and after returning home was taken down with typhoid fever. He leaves six children, two sisters and two brothers to mourn their loss, together with a host of other relatives and friends. The children are indeed left desolate, father and mother both gone, and a once happy home completely broken up. He professed a hope in Christ about twelve years ago, but had not joined the visible church. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and trusted in the Lord, and so in his death we also have hope. David said, "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever." He was honest and upright in his daily walk, a good neighbor and respected citizen, and the broken family will be sadly missed by their many friends. How unsearchable are the ways of God!

May the Lord in mercy through grace enable all the relatives and friends of the deceased ones to feel and say, Thy will, not mine, be done, is the prayer of a bereaved sister,

EMELINE E. WORKMAN.

Mrs. Henrietta Parker died at her home near Redwater, Texas. She was born in Eufaula, Ala., Feb. 21st, 1854, where she was raised; moved to Lawrenceville, where she was married to Steven Parker Jan. 18th, 1871; they moved to Titus County, Texas, the same year. She, with her husband, joined the Primitive Baptist Church in 1872, of which church she lived a consistent member until called home. I feel that too much cannot be said of this good woman. She bore all the marks of an humble christian. She was an affectionate and faithful wife, a kind and loving mother. Though she was deprived of her church privileges for many years, by long distance from her church, she remained steadfast in the faith of the doctrine believed by the Old School Baptists. She was afflicted with tuberculosis of the stomach for about four months; she bore her affliction with patience, desiring she might live, if it were the Lord's will, only for the sake of her children, as she had four boys and four girls. She longed after her girls, the oldest of whom ministered to her all through her long illness. She was the mother of sixteen children, eight of whom died in infancy. Her husband died four years ago; he was strong in the faith. She died at 8 o'clock April 20th, 1909.

I responded to the call of the children, and we followed her remains to the Redwater Cemetery, where I tried to speak to the comfort of a very large congregation of relatives and friends, after which we laid her body to rest in the grave until she shall be called forth in the glorious image of Christ.

Dear children, try to follow your mother's advice, and may the dear Lord give sustaining grace.

J. E. KNIGHTEN.

OMAHA, Texas.

Minerva Martin Rouse was born August 18th, 1829, and was married to Edward Rouse Oct. 4th, 1846. Husband and wife were companions for over sixty-two years. From childhood she was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and held these sentiments sacred to her death. She united with the Hopewell Baptist Church twenty years ago, and was a devoted member. The husband is now eighty-four years of age, and is becoming infirm by reason of his advanced age. Ten children and thirty-eight grandchildren, all industrious citizens of good character, survive. The children were all present at her funeral. One child died at the age of fourteen. Her entire life was spent in the neighborhood where she was born, and she was a most energetic and conscientious woman. Throughout the community she was well known for her hospitality, and her kindness was distributed among her friends. She lived near the church which she loved very dearly, and was always liberal in her contributions to its support. Besides being among the first to visit sick persons, she was a good nurse and was a loved neighbor, and was most skillful in preparing simple remedies. She gave great care to her children, all of whom have married, except one: Miss Susan Rouse, who is at home. Mrs. Rouse suffered much during her long illness, but the pain mercifully grew less toward the end, and she passed away peacefully to the rest which she so greatly needed and which she had often said she was waiting for.

The funeral was held at the family home Thursday afternoon, April 29th, 1909. Elder J. H. Oliphant, the pastor, conducted the services. Burial followed in Springhill Cemetery.

Clarissa E. Beauchamp was born April 7th, 1834, near Danville, Ill., died March 12th, 1908, at the home of her son, W. I. Huston, near Winfield, Iowa. She was married to Mahlon M. Huston at an early age and afterward moved to Louisa County, Iowa. She united with the Christian Church in Illinois, but

became dissatisfied and was received by experience and baptism into Oak Grove Primitive Baptist Church near Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, being baptized by Elder Isaac McCarty. Afterwards, for convenience, she removed her membership to Old Stone, near Sperry. Four years ago she entered into the organization of Harmony Primitive Baptist Church, near Columbus Junction, Iowa. Sister Beauchamp was a strong believer in the doctrine of grace, trusting her blessed Lord in life and in death for salvation. She loved God's word and delighted in his holy service. She studied her Bible much, having read it through twenty-two times. Her last sickness was attended with great suffering, but she bore it patiently. She often spoke of "going home to rest," saying finally, "I shall soon awake in the new Jerusalem." This family, church and community are bereaved to-day because a mother indeed, a mother in Israel, and highly respected resident is gone beyond recall. "Grandma" leaves two sisters, two brothers, three sons, one daughter, fifteen grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, besides many friends to mourn their loss.

Services were conducted at the home of her son, W. I. Beauchamp, by the writer, using as a text 1 Cor. xv. 57: "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." We then laid the precious form to rest in the Beauchamp Cemetery, consoled with the hope of the resurrection.

B. L. N.

Duncan A. P. Graham died very suddenly at his home in Lobo township, Ontario, Canada, Dec. 26th, 1908, in the 74th year of his age. The date of his birth was June 4th, 1835. He married Margaret, daughter of the late Archibald Campbell. His wife and one daughter, Mrs. Ellis Hodgins, of London township, and one son, Carlyle, of London, survive him. Brother Graham was received in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada in June, 1904, and was baptized at Poplar Hill in July of the same year, by Elder W. I. Carnell. His life exemplified that his faith and love were not in word only, but in deed and in truth.

A large assembly of friends, relatives and neighbors gathered at the funeral of brother Graham, which was held from his late home Dec. 29th, 1908. The text used by the writer upon this occasion was 1 John iii. 1, 2.

May the consolations of the gospel abide with all that mourn. H. H. LEFFERTS.

WARWICK, N. Y., May 10, 1909.

H. H. Bentley, of Atlanta, Ga., passed away March 12th, 1909; the cause of his death was Bright's disease. He was a loving husband, a kind father and a true Primitive Baptist. He leaves a widow and four children: two girls, Mrs. Rosetta Bradford and Mrs. Luna Bartlett; two boys, Howard and Clifford. H. H. Bentley has written several articles for the SIGNS, which paper we have been taking for thirty or thirty-five years, and which has always been read and appreciated by us both. He has gone to his reward, and is at rest in the bosom of Jesus. If he had lived until April 28th he would have been 62 years old. He had been failing in health for more than a year, but was confined to his bed only about five weeks. He suffered a great deal, but bore it with christian fortitude. Truly a good man has fallen.

His sorrowing widow, M. E. BENTLEY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Thos. W. Records, Mo., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Pa., June 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1909.

Those coming by way of Philadelphia will take the train leaving Reading Terminal at 4:23 p. m. or 5:27 p. m. Tuesday, June 1st, or 9:45 Wednesday morning, and will be met at Southampton. Those coming by way of Belvidere R. R. will change cars at Lambertville, cross the river to New Hope and there take a train to Ivyland, where they will be met. All who desire to come will be cordially welcomed.

SILAS H. DURAND.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Middleburg, N. Y., has appointed their yearly meeting to be held on the first Saturday and Sunday in June (5th and 6th), 1909. A cordial invitation to ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

ADDIE COOK, Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the New Vernon Church, New Vernon, N. Y., June 9th, 10th and 11th, 1909.

O. & W. trains from the north will be met at Winterton Tuesday afternoon before the meeting, and Wednesday morning. Those coming from the south and New York Tuesday will take train leaving West Twenty-third St., New York, (Erie R. R.) at 4:25 p. m. Get tickets for Howells. Train leaving West Twenty-third St. at 7:10 Wednesday morning will also be met at Howells. Any coming from the west via Erie R. R. will please drop H. S. Collard, Winterton, N. Y., a line, saying what train they will use, and they will be met at Howells. A cordial invitation is extended to all of like precious faith to meet with us.

H. S. COLLARD, Church Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church, of Canada, will be held, the Lord willing, in the schoolhouse in the township of Brooke, Lambton County, Ontario, five miles from Alvinston station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1909, and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

NOTHING preventing, there will be a two days meeting held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse on Schoharie Hill, June 15th and 16th, 1909. Those coming by rail to Howes Cave drop a card to Geo. A. Miers, Schoharie, N. Y., R. F. D. No. 3. Those via Schoharie write Mrs. Helen Kinney. All lovers of the truth are welcome. GEO. A. MIERS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at the Hall, corner of 19th St. and 8th Ave., fifth floor. Elevator entrance on either 19th St. or 8th Ave.

11:00 A. M. 2:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THERE are a few Old School Baptists in Riverside, Cal., and they have meeting the first and third Sundays in each month, at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

W. D. BALL.

"SONGS IN THE NIGHT."

This little book has been published about a month, and orders for it have been received from near and far, even to the most distant States. All from whom I have heard have spoken to me very highly of the book. For forty years it has been upon my mind to publish these poems and the experience of my brother, together with the account of his last hours, and have wondered why I did not do it. I felt sure it would be for the comfort of many, and the many expressions I have already received assure me that it is so. Elder P. D. Gold writes: "I have read the poems and experience of your brother with much pleasure. How wonderful was the view of divine things given to him. Surely to be absent from the body and present with the Lord is far better." Elder S. Hassell says: "I shall have a commendatory editorial notice in April. I hope you may dispose of several thousands for the comfort of the Lord's scattered people." Elder H. C. Ker writes me: "Your little book, 'Songs in the night,' was duly received, and has given me more comfort than any reading I have done for months. Surely every lover of truth should have it." The price of the book is fifty cents. All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition, which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at 5 cents per copy. Address,

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"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

BY J. E. BEEBE & COMPANY,

MIDDLETOWN, ORANGE CO., NEW YORK,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 77. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1909. NO. 12.

POETRY.

FAITH.

By faith we climb the mountain's height,
And view the promised land;
Upholden by Jehovah's might,
Led by his powerful hand.

This wondrous faith is not our own,
Nor comes at our command;
'Tis treasured up in Christ the Son,
By it alone we stand.

Our Father gives us faith to see
This land so fair and bright;
Before this faith the shadows flee,
And all the way is light.

By faith in God through Christ we live,
Through him salvation's won;
The Lord with him doth all things give,
And owns us as his own.

This living faith his own partake,
It shows how weak they are;
And oft with fear his people quake,
And plunge in deep despair.

They grope about, the way to find,
They weep, and mourn, and cry,
And fear as those whom fetters bind,
And who in dungeons lie.

But ah, he never will forsake,
Nor leave a little one,
But in his own dear arms will take,
And safely bring him home.

This faith O give to me, I pray,
May I in thee be strong;
Be near me, Lord, from day to day;
Let Christ be all my song.

Then all my praises shall be thine
For all that thou hast given;
With thee in glory I shall shine,
Crowned with thine own in heaven.

And I shall sing eternal love,
When once I'm gathered there,
And in the glorious heights above
Admire thy beauties rare.

SELBY FISHER.

HEAVEN.

I see in my visions
Of faith, hope and love,
The saints all assembled
In mansions above.

Their robes ever shining,
Like rays of the sun,
In the realms of bright glory
With the Father and Son.

Now mark well, ye pilgrims,
The road to the skies
Through great tribulation,
Through death's valley lies.

For Jesus, your Captain,
Has passed through before,
And bids you to follow
To heaven's bright shore.

Then mind not the sorrows
You meet on the way,
They will brighten the glory
Of that holy day.

And rest there forever
Is waiting you now,
While cares of the evening
Still darken your brow.

I. N. NEWKIRK.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May 20, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a few extracts from the last three letters of sister Nannie Edwards, of Georgia. I have not asked her consent, but think she would be willing to leave it with me. I have lately requested her to write some of her experience for the SIGNS, but she feels that she cannot. I have had many letters from her, and never one that did not contain some sweet thought or expression that I felt would be a savory message to some kindred soul. Some of her letters have appeared in the SIGNS, and it will probably be remembered that she was an invalid in bed for many years. Then a few years ago her health improved so she was able to drive out with her husband and attend the meeting where their membership was, which was a joy to them both. It was a great delight to her to be once more under the clear blue sky, and see all the beautiful outdoors, and to again enter the sacred place where she first heard the gospel's joyful sound. Her pastor told her he could scarcely keep from shouting when he saw her come in the open door after so long an absence. She has suffered much since then, but has not continued prostrate, but able to be about the house some. Her suffering, shut-in life has caused her heart to flow out in sympathy to all who are afflicted, and I trust that a message, in these selections from her letters, will reach with comfort some sorrowing, lonely one who is traveling a weary way, longing for companionship. This silent messenger, the SIGNS, enters many homes where there are varied afflictions, yet the Holy Spirit can send comfort through the feeblest source.

Just now there comes to my mind our beloved sister, Hannah E. Danks, of Ontario, California, who is in great sorrow, far from her native home, as a precious sister left her and all these fading scenes soon after arriving in a new home in that strange country. Sister Mary was so dear and so devoted to all her family that it seems hardly possible for them to exist without her. Who can tell how the heart is torn in bereavement to see a dear one closed away from our sight? The knowledge of such a beautiful life and lovely character extends far among those who loved her, and she was very dear to many. But what a solace in this great sorrow to know that she is now in a home where there are no more sorrows or pain, but where "peace flows like a river" and joy is triumphant, and where she, with the countless throng, is singing praises to God and the Lamb. It just now occurs to me that she sent me a hymn about a year ago that came to her with great comfort during a severe illness, and while lying helpless for many days the words were echoing through her mind with great sweetness. I will copy the first verse:

"Some day the silver cord will break,
And I no more as now shall sing;
But O the joy when I shall wake
Within the palace of the King.
And I shall see him face to face,
And tell the story, saved by grace."

Now the name of another dear sister in that far away land darts through my mind: Mrs. Agnes Errett, of Canada, who visited us in our old home in Herrick at the time of her early experience, when her heart was filled with unspeakable joy. She has since then been greatly afflicted, having passed through much suffering and deep sorrow.

"Some time we shall know why our sunniest mornings change to noons of rain,
And why our steps are shadowed so by pain,

And why we often lie on couches sown with thorns
of care and doubt,
And why our lives are thickly hedged about
With bars that put our loftiest plans to rout.

Some time our eyes shall see the silver lining to the
darkest cloud,
While silvery echoes follow thunders loud;
Some time our hearts shall be content, forgetting all
our restless mood,
And knowing everything has worked for good,
The how, and when, and why, be understood."

As I write, how many of our dear family of brethren and sisters come to my mind; they are scattered far and near, all looking for some word as they glance through the pages of our messengers of truth and love, and what a comfort when they are not disappointed. Sometimes when enjoying fruit from the pens of those who love the Lord and exalt the name of Jesus, I feel that I am in some afternoon meeting, where a little handful are speaking together in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, and making melody in the heart to the Lord, and,

"Where each can feel his brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part;
Where sorrow flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart."

With love to all in this blessed relationship, I am, I trust, your sister in hope,

BESSIE DURAND.

LA GRANGE, Ga., Feb. 23, 1909.

MY DEAR SISTER BESSIE:—Through much weakness and great depression of spirit I will try to reply to your precious letter, received some time ago.

I do hope you are feeling better, and that your dear nephew has nearly recovered. How my heart goes out in sympathy to you in all your afflictions. Having suffered so much, and being still a sufferer, my heart becomes burdened with the afflictions of others. I trust sister Clarice is well now; she, too, knows how to sympathize; so it is we are brought into fellowship with each other. My husband is not at all well; he has been able to work but little for several months, and has not been well since his spell of fever last summer, and he feels very much depressed. I tell him that the day seems dark now, but behind the clouds the sun is still shining, and that into each life some rain must fall and some days must be dark and dreary. Our lives have indeed had much rainfall, and it is only now and then we can catch the faintest glimpse of sunshine, but the battle will all be over after awhile, and then there will burst upon our immortal vision the glorious rays of an eternal sunshine; that is, if we are what we hope. O how sweet to think there shall be no night there. When I think of all this, my dear sister, I feel like exclaiming, "I'll bear the toil, endure the pain, supported by thy word." My daily, yes, hourly, prayer is for grace to sustain me. As you say, "I often feel so far away, and the cry of my heart is, 'Nearer, my God, to thee.'" I often wonder if I am any nearer him than I was long years ago. Last night, while feeling greatly depressed in some way, these words came to me: Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations. I then thought, Surely he will sustain us, both temporally and spiritually, and I was glad to know that his word was settled forever in heaven, and that he has not left us comfortless.

I had a very dear letter from sister Pittman recently. I feel almost that I have seen her. It may be that invisible tie that binds us together. I often think what a pleasure it would be to have you come into my room and talk with me.

The SIGNS is precious, and the last one especially so.

Vera and her father join me in love to

you and yours. Vera is a perfect sunbeam in our home.

I am so tired. Lovingly,

NANNIE.

MARCH 5, 1909.

BELOVED SISTER BESSIE:—Your card and the precious little book are received. After opening it I never laid it down until I had perused its every page. How very sweet it is, and, my dear sister, while reading of the last hours of that dear brother I found myself with you and your other loved ones, standing around his bed, mingling my tears with yours. What a beautiful departure, and what a glorious change. O that I could feel as he did when I come to lie down at last. His "Songs in the night" filled me with such solemnity. "The dirge and the anthem" also impressed me very much, so did all the others. Vera thinks "Over the sea" the best of all. My husband also enjoyed the book very much. A dear aged sister in Christ is reading it now. Thank you for sending it to me, and I do truly appreciate your kindness. When I look at the picture I think of the beautiful soul within, and what a comfort it must be to you all that he has found sweet rest in the bosom of God. Though we may often "sigh for the touch of a vanished hand, and the sound of a voice that is still," such evidences as he left should enable us to say, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." I wish I could tell you just how I feel about it all, that we could talk over our sorrows and joys together. I think it is all these things that have brought us into this invisible union.

My husband has improved very much, and has resumed his work, for which I am more than thankful. We received the sad intelligence yesterday that my older brother is very ill with pneumonia. He has been a great sufferer with rheumatism for a number of years, and we are greatly troubled about him. I have not seen him in ten years, and he is such a precious brother, too. How I long to relieve him. If I could only meet him once more. My heart is too full to write.

In much weakness, NANNIE.

APRIL 29, 1909.

DEAR SISTER BESSIE:—It seems a long time since I received your letter, and yet I think of you every day with the tenderest love and affection. I have been very sick about two weeks; my fever was very high and I suffered much. I am better, but feeling more feeble than for a long time. I hope you are much improved, and that your brother's family are all well. I never forget to personate your names in my prayers. This is an ideal spring day, and in seeing the people going to and fro I think how thankful and appreciative they ought to be. I have spent the most of this year studying my Bible; that is, when I have been able to read, and I have certainly enjoyed it. I feel sometimes that it will be the last time I shall ever read it through. I had just begun to read the book of Ezra when this last illness came on, and I feel that God has been with me in every word I have read. How often I have found myself weeping for reasons I cannot tell, unless it was for the disobedience of some in those days, and of the many trials through which others had to pass, and the wonderful blessings bestowed upon us since time began.

Sister Bessie, I am sorry that I cannot comply with your request in regard to writing for the SIGNS; I am just too weak in every way. I feel that your extreme kindness to me places me under obliga-

tions to try, and yet I cannot make the effort. I do not feel competent, either spiritually, physically or mentally, to write for such a paper as the SIGNS. While I have often desired that its writers might know how I feast upon their communications, and how many of them have expressed my feelings, yet I cannot tell them. I do hope you will consider my weakness, and love me just the same. My father is very feeble and failing rapidly. My brother is slightly improved since I wrote you last.

I had a precious, helpful letter from sister Pittman some time ago. Now I know the Lord put it in her heart to send it. She always speaks of you in her letters. May the Lord bless her and brother Pittman, and deliver them in every trouble. Sometimes when the way seems dark and lonely I think of how gently the Lord has led me, and find myself trusting him for all future blessings. How kind of dear sister Lawshe to sympathize with one she has never seen, and I accept her token of love as coming from the hand of God, and my heart is full of thankfulness. Vera and her father join me in love to you. Her father had quite a painful accident yesterday, and he suffered intensely all night, but is working some to-day. Surely if we ever enter heaven it will be through great tribulation. How sweet of you to think of me, and how beautifully this Scripture applies to you in my case: "I was sick, and ye visited me." My tender love for you none but God knows. The worth of the dear little book, "Songs in the night," is beyond expression, for all it contains is like "apples of gold in pictures of silver." I am feeling some better. My husband and Vera have lost much sleep in caring for me. Thank God for such a husband and such a child.

With a heart full of love, sympathy and gratitude, and hoping the Lord may bless and comfort you in all your afflictions, I must close, with love to sister Clarice and all.

In much weakness, your unworthy sister, NANNIE EDWARDS.

PROVERBS XXXI. 10.

"WHO can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies."

For many days past my mind has been upon this portion of Scripture, and I feel impressed to pen a few of my many thoughts, if the Lord will, hoping that what I write may be of comfort to some lonely one of our Father's children.

It should be remembered that these are the words of King Solomon, who was blessed with the gift of prophecy, and spake as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, therefore they are by no means idle words, but are big with meaning (spiritual meaning), having direct reference to the church of God. Women are often used to represent churches in the Scriptures, both the true church and the false. There are but the two, the true church being represented as, or compared to, a virtuous and pure woman, while the church of antichrist is represented by a woman possessing the opposite or contrary qualities, such as, "And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots [all the many branches of the church of antichrist] and abominations of the earth. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus," &c.—Rev. xvii. 5, 6. "Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac."—Gen. xxi. 10. "He who was of the bond-

woman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."—Gal. iv. 23-26. Solomon in his beautiful song speaks of this church as follows: "My dove, my undefiled is but one: she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her." "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." "Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb; honey and milk are under thy tongue; and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon." John, when he was carried away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, was shown the bride, the Lamb's wife, and thus viewing her in the spirit he describes her beauty, (Rev. xxi.) and I think that every child of God at some time is enabled in the spirit to view her beauty with John, and none but these can ever see her as she stands before God justified and glorified in Christ Jesus, her Husband and Head. She is "holy and without blame before him in love." She is not her own, but she is bought with a price, and that price is far above rubies; indeed, rubies could never pay her debt. She was not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. How great, how marvelous was the love he had for this bride, that he could come to her in her poverty, her distress and guilt, and lift her upon high, that where he is she might be also, thus making her equal with him in the inheritance. "Heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." She is equal with him in the inheritance in time, as well as when time and time things shall end. "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."—Isaiah liv. 17. This wonderful, mysterious inheritance is eternal, so is his love an everlasting love, and the object of his love is equally everlasting, and he has never loved one in vain, for he has said, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." She is a free woman now, being made free from the power of the law by this price, which is far above rubies.

We look around us at the many daughters of this mystery Babylon and see their corruption, see each one worshiping idols, all teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, all trusting in the flesh, boasting of the filthy rags of their self-righteousness, hoping or expecting to gain admission into the glory world beyond by their good (?) works, hating the redeemed of the Lord, and are glad they are not like the poor publican (a sinner saved by grace). "Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird; the birds round about are against her." "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves." We hear them crying, Money, money, money, having a golden cup in their hands full of abomination and filthiness of her fornication. "Blind leaders of the blind;" outwardly they appear very beautiful, but inwardly they are full of all manner of uncleanness. Thus looking upon all those harlots we are ready to exclaim, "Who can find a vir-

tuous woman?" Jesus has found her, as he did Jacob of old, in a waste howling wilderness, and has led her about and instructed her, saying unto her by the mouth of the prophet, "Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called." "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Dear children of God, your former husband (the law) is dead, and you are forever released. You are no longer under the law, but under grace, and now you are free indeed, for the Son hath made you free, and he says in the most positive and affectionate language, "I am married unto you." Thus to be married unto God is perfect freedom forever from all that oppresses and causes sorrow. "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Let us own God and his church as our all; he is your heavenly Father, your Husband and Head, the end of the law; "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Now, dear children of God, since you have been brought into his banqueting-house, since you have been led by the Spirit of God to forsake the vain world and cast your lot with the church of God, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, and since you have been enabled by the eye of faith to view this beautiful woman, and do love her far above any earthly thing, then forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is.

"She looketh well to the ways of her household." How necessary it is that a church meet together often and look after each other for good, ministering to the temporal needs of the poor ones and speaking a gentle, encouraging word to the sorrowful. We know not the value of such words, only as we have each been comforted by them in time past. "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." How necessary also that strict discipline be used in the house of the Lord.

I must close. Do with this as you see proper.

Yours in affliction,

G. B. BIRD.

FRANK, W. Va., March 3, 1909.

CENTERBURG, Ohio, May 17, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter I received from brother George L. Weaver, of Galion, Ohio, and if it meets your approbation I would like to see it in our family paper. This brother has passed through some severe trials; he is young, and has the care of two small churches, one at home and the other at Delaware, forty miles away. Young brother Jackson was ordained last fall, and his gift is making room for him. He is a great help to brother Weaver, as also to the churches.

I was blessed with the health and strength to once more meet with the dear ones last Saturday and Sunday. I have to go twenty miles or more, but am always well repaid, because I feel that I am blessed to hear the gospel preached in its purity. Brother Jackson was with us; he told me that he and brother Weaver both have or are receiving the SIGNS. I

am very glad to know they are, and I think they will be more interested as they read it. They have had severe trials, both in the church and in the world. Brother Jackson is a farmer and brother Weaver a carpenter.

I am writing more than I intended. I have so many good sermons I received from dear ones while I was shut in the house this winter, I felt I would like to have others share the benefits. I may send other letters if my life and health are spared. I am very weak in every respect.

Your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) S. C. BOYD.

ROMANS VI. 17.

"BUT God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."

The apostle shows us very plainly in the first part of this chapter how impossible it is for us to serve two masters; either we are the servants of sin or else we are servants to God. There are two ways: the strait and narrow path that leadeth to life, and the broad way to destruction. Let us notice for a little the servants of sin. I will take for an example Saul of Tarsus. Saul in his early life was educated at the feet of Gamaliel, and I believe he was just as good a preacher as any seminary has ever turned out, for when he graduated he did not know the truth; neither can any one learn Christ in the schools of men. Paul profited in the Jews' religion; so do others profit in the religion of the world. Saul was such a zealous servant of sin that he persecuted the church of God, consenting to the death of some, committing others to prison, being exceedingly mad against them he persecuted them even unto strange cities. My dear brethren of the household of faith, was there not a time when you thought you ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus, and if certain others of your town went to heaven that you would risk your case? Did you not feel a little bit better than some others? You may have belonged to some denomination, and no doubt made long prayers, and thanked God you were not as other men; you paid tithes and fasted, you were girded in the armor of self, you kept your palace, and your goods were at peace; you did not worry about your sins, no, you were working for sin and rolling it as a sweet morsel under your tongue. It was through the fear of punishment that you were good. I think I see a great benefit in this fear religion; it seems to be a vision of an awful monster which keeps them under subjection. How often have you been told by this class that, "If I believed as you do I would go on and take my fill of sin"? It shows where their heart is, and what they would like to do; but no, they say, salvation depends upon our works, it does not depend upon God. They do not know God, they are serving sin, and Paul says, Thank God that ye were the servants of sin.

Now we will leave sin and turn to the servants of God. You have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine delivered you. The wages of sin is death, and in the experience of God's people they have their fill of sin; they do not desire to go after these things; they are ashamed of sin; they have died to sin, and from the loving hand of God there has been delivered unto them that form of doctrine. The strong man is bound, his armor is taken away, and a voice from heaven is saying, "Why persecutest thou me?" and

you answer, "Who art thou, Lord?" Ye have obeyed from the heart. God's people are a willing people, made willing in the day of his power, and sin with all its blackness is shown you, and you find yourself a helpless creature, bound, your armor taken away, your goods spoiled and you utterly helpless. You find yourself entirely lost, and you smite upon your breast and cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner;" ye become servants of righteousness, and have your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life. Now you do not cry, Do, do, but your cry is, It is finished, it is done. For his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, he stopped us in our mad career, by the cords of love he hath drawn us and made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, for by grace are ye saved, not of works, lest any man should boast; "for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Sinners by nature, we fell by transgression, were condemned by the law and served sin with all our might until redeemed by the Son of God and became servants of God. Once our religion was fear, now it is mercy and love, and we feel confident that what God has promised he is able to perform, for he is a perfect God, omnipotent in power, unchangeable in mind, sovereign in ruling, and he hath said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Our dear heavenly Father is so kind and good to his people in caring for and watching over them. Let the world serve the gods which were before the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, but as for us, we will serve the Lord.

I am, as ever, a poor sinner,

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

BLUEMONT, Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—The letter inclosed was written by me for the Corresponding Meeting, to have been held with the Valley Church, but owing to the illness of brother White the meeting was postponed and this letter was never used. Recently I have been requested by several of the members of Ebenezer Church to send it to the SIGNS, and I have agreed to do so, leaving it to your better judgment as to whether it is profitable or not. As I have always been too unworthy to write anything for publication I felt a delicacy in sending this.

Yours unworthily,

F. E. ROBEY.

The Old School Baptist Church of Ebenezer, Loudoun County, Virginia, to the Corresponding Meeting, in session with our sister church at the Valley, Loudoun County, Virginia, October 17th, 18th and 19th, 1906, sends christian love.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more by the will of God who, according to his mercy and forbearance toward us, has spared our unprofitable lives, we are blessed with the privilege of writing you again; and as we write this letter our prayer is that God will direct our heart and mind, that we may write something that will be of comfort to those who hunger and thirst after the things of the kingdom of God. We do not desire to write that which will be pleasing to the natural mind, but that which will be of comfort to those who feel to be poor and needy and feel they cannot help themselves and must depend upon the grace of God, for we all feel so helpless and weak that we cannot take one step right unless the Lord leads us. We do not believe the self-righteous feel this way. If we know our own hearts we do thank God that we of ourselves can do

nothing. Much of the time the way is so dark, our hearts so cold, our ears so deaf and eyes so dim, that we cannot feel, hear or see; oftentimes like Simon Peter we go fishing, toil all night and catch nothing, but when almost ready to perish with hunger we hear a voice, and it is the language of a Friend, it is the voice of Jesus saying, "Children, have ye any meat?" The answer is, "No." Dear child, hear the sweet message that now comes from the One who is able to supply all our needs: Children, come and dine. Jesus appears just at the right time. "Cast the net on the right side of the ship." There are but two sides: the right and wrong, and when we try to secure the righteousness of Jesus by our own works we are always on the wrong side. The gospel message is to the living, to those who are born of God, and the command is, "Come and dine;" to "buy wine and milk without money, and without price;" it is free to all the children, for Jesus has paid the ransom.

We could not be in a darker state of mind than we are at this time; is it an evidence against us? Our prayer is that God will give us some evidence that we are born of God. O, our brethren, tell us, is it thus with you? Has God forgotten to be gracious? is his mercy clean gone forever? The voice of Jesus, to come, is the word given to us through those whom God has called to preach his word, and that word is Jesus. O how sweet it is when we hunger and thirst after it, when our hearts are prepared of the Lord to receive it; it is far sweeter than anything of this world; if we have not Jesus we are without everything.

That word which is Jesus and was preached by Elders Gilbert Beebe, Wm. L. Beebe, Leachman, Purington and others now gone, is preached to-day by Elders Chick, Ker, Durand, Badger, White and many others we have not space to mention. Preach on, dear soldiers of the cross, shun not to declare the whole truth, for nothing less will the poor child of God receive. May our hearts be prepared by the Spirit of Christ to shun all that is not the truth as it is in Jesus.

Since we met last some of us have been compelled to drink of the cup of sorrow; one we wish to make mention of is sister Martha Anderson, who for over forty years has had the cup of sorrow to the full measure. More than forty years ago her husband was taken from her in a most cruel manner, and on down through life her two grown daughters one after the other was taken, and recently her only son was taken; he could have been such a help and comfort in her declining days. She has only one little granddaughter left. May God bless her and make her to feel as poor Job did: "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold;" "though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." We believe she does trust in the Lord. O what a humble christian walk we see in her; what a bright evidence she gives that she has learned of Jesus. Brethren, may God put it in your hearts to pray for sister Anderson that God's grace may be sufficient, and that she may trust in the arm of the Lord in this dark hour of her life. God has promised never to leave nor forsake his children, and God grant that our faith be increased to believe on his word and to trust him in all our trials and tribulations.

We have preaching the second Sunday in each month, and Saturday preceding (unless otherwise ordered of the Lord) by our pastor, Elder J. N. Badger, who comes to us as a little child, so far as his own

strength is concerned, but in the power of Almighty God with the Spirit of the Lord to preach the whole truth as it is in Jesus. We are living in peace with each other, bound together by the love of God, and firm in the belief that the blood of Jesus cleanses his children from all sin, and have no confidence in the flesh, "for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

We hope you will have a good meeting, and a number of ministering brethren prepared of the Lord to preach Jesus, which is the salvation of poor, lost sinners.

HOPEWELL, N. J., March 30, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS AND BRETHREN:—Looking over the SIGNS to-day the thought occurred to me what a source of comfort it must be to those who are deprived of hearing preaching to receive it. I felt assured that those also who do hear preaching, often love to read the good articles written by those who love and contend for the same truth, and the doctrine that they do. It is a glorious doctrine. I have been trying to share the joys and sorrows of this dear people for forty years, and the older I grow the more I enjoy these precious things. I believe there is such a thing as growing in grace. Your good paper is about my age; I am in my seventy-seventh year. Well do I remember the time when six dear ones, with myself, tried to tell what we knew about this precious truth. I know that I could say but little, but these words were with me, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I felt sure of that then. Three of those dear ones have passed away, and we miss them. Very few of my age are left to meet with us. I miss our dear brother, Elijah Leigh; we were boys together, we were men together and we were brethren together. I looked to him for advice, his judgment was good. He was always in his place in the meetings, unless sickness or very stormy weather prevented. We all miss him, but we believe that our loss is his gain.

What a blessing to meditate upon the wonderful works and ways of God. The psalmist said, "My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord." It is a great thing to know that His words are from everlasting. It is not so with earthly things; they all perish with the using. I enjoy these abiding things, I know that they are true. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Still,

> "Oft it causes anxious thought,
> Am I his, or am I not?"

I hope that I am. I feel to be a poor, trembling worm of the dust, but as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him, and "he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." O can I say, as did Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth"? "The redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." The Lord said, I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of man whose breath is in his nostrils? Man is as the grass. The grass withereth, and the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord hath blown upon it, but the word of the Lord shall endure forever. It is declared that Jacob was the lot of God's inheritance; he kept him as the apple of his eye. He found him

in a waste howling wilderness; he led him about and instructed him. "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." "He made him suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock." He heals the broken-hearted, he leads the blind in a way that they have not known, he makes crooked things straight. In affliction we sorrow not as those who have no hope in Christ. He said, I will gather the sorrowful for the solemn assembly. I will give thee praise, and a name among all nations. He is an all-wise and just God, who rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. He is the Rock, a God of judgment without iniquity, just and right is he. Great and marvelous are His works, just and true are His ways. He speaks and it is done; he commands and it stands fast. He holds the waters in the hollow of his hand, and he says to the troubled waves, Be still, and there is a great calm. He said, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." O blessed thought, he carries the lambs in his bosom. Then, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." He says, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." The children of God are poor, but he has eternal riches; he has an everlasting supply for all the needy. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." His promises are sure and steadfast. Though the winds of adversity howl around us, or the storms of persecution burst upon us, we may be still, for he says, I will be a hiding-place from the wind and a refuge from the storm. He will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy, and compassion upon whom he will have compassion, and whom he will he hardeneth. Hath he not power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? To his disciples he said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." He has loved us with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving-kindness hath he drawn us. We are told not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. We are told that it is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting. I think that I can say as did Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me." Not long since, in the silent hours of the night, in my loneliness these words came to me with much force, "Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Were they meant for me, such a poor worm of the dust as I?

I have written here more than I intended, but Bible words kept flowing through my mind. Should this tend to cast out better matter, lay it aside.

From one who loves the truth,

DAVID L. BLACKWELL.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., March 5, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—BELOVED BROTHER:—I have been meditating upon the goodness of God, and I am reminded of his handiwork; he hath spoken all things into existence; he is above all and in you all; his purposes show forth his power in all things, and they are for his glory. He made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil, and his will revealed in prophecy shall not be annulled. It pleased God to reveal his will to the prophets and apostles to make known what should come to pass in time to fulfill the Scriptures. I try, as much as in me is, to be reconciled to his will while traveling through the thorny paths in the flesh; I know that God knows what is best for me. His grace, I trust, has given me the will which enables me to stand fast in his truth as it is in Jesus. As it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, I feel to know that without His strong arm to hold me I am forever lost. My desire is to be submissive to him in whatever state I may be. How wonderful are all his blessings to the family of Adam; he supplies all our needs in this time world. Dear brother, I feel very unworthy at times; I feel the weakness of the flesh, and am helpless, and must depend upon our loving Father to give me the comfort and consolation of mind which will draw me away from earthly things to those mansions above which are prepared for His elect children, who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. We must suffer reproach, as did our dear Savior, if we stand firm in the truth. He was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. He was absolutely pure in all his walk among men while in the flesh. He was perfectly obedient to the will of his Father, and was far above all men. He was God as well as man. He was able to subdue Satan, and all the hosts of wickedness. Such divine perfection ought to command our confidence in all ages. As the apostle affirmed, "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." The fullness of the Godhead dwelt in him with unerring wisdom and almighty power; he was the great Jehovah, possessing every adorable attribute of Deity. By him we are circumcised, putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, and being thus circumcised, we are complete in the righteousness of Christ our glorified Redeemer. We cannot go too deep in our meditations upon this great and wonderful subject. The righteousness of Christ is the great pillar upon which our eternal welfare rests; it is this which keeps us from sinking into endless perdition. What a legacy it has pleased God to bestow upon such poor worms of the dust; he is mindful to look upon such a poor sinner as I feel myself to be. This legacy was given to poor, lost and ruined sinners, through the Lamb who was slain according to the will of the Father, and I trust that he was crucified, by wicked hands, for poor unworthy me; blessed be his holy name. What wondrous love he had for his bride, to come down from his lofty habitation. He was spit upon and mocked, but still he opened not his mouth. What a friend he was to sinners that he should suffer for them, that he might present them to the Father spotless, to be numbered with those who glorify the Father in heaven. Having His righteousness, let us dismiss every fear. We shall be presented before the throne without spot, and faultless in His sight. What a gift is the righteousness of Christ; bless him for his unspeakable gift. Dear brethren, I have nothing to offer in return for such a gracious gift;

I do not feel worthy to be called a son. O for his healing balm to strengthen the inner man. I do at times hope that I can say, as did the apostle, "I know whom I have believed." I am assured that Jesus is faithful and will not desert me, and that my faith in him cannot deceive me. "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." If we are numbered with the redeemed there will be no fear, for it is certain that there can be no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. This is the work of God, and none can lay anything to their charge; God justifies his people; he pronounces them holy. As their sins have been laid upon Christ, he pronounces them righteous, and blesses them, and gives entrance into the joy of their Lord.

"My God, I would not long to see
My fate with curious eyes,
What gloomy lines are writ for me,
Or what bright scenes may rise.

In thy fair book of life and grace,
O may I find my name
Recorded in some humble place,
Beneath my Lord, the Lamb."

Dear brother, the above verses are my prayer and hope, and what I have written is, as I trust, because the Lord has given me the spirit of utterance and understanding to write, and I hope it may be read with spiritual understanding.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,
O. B. HICKERSON.

ECHO, N. Y., Jan. 18, 1909.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—Your letter, dated December 20th, was duly received, and I have wanted to reply, but could not seem to do so. I said to Mrs. Norton, my daughter, that I wanted to write you to-day. Last week I thought to do so, but could not go on. When our Lord sent forth his disciples to preach he told them to take no thought what they should say; the Spirit would lead them and teach them; so if I am not led by the Spirit while attempting to convey my thoughts to you, it will be vain for me to try to do so. All those who are born after the flesh to us, although they may be weak and sick, are still our children; and so they that are born of the Spirit may feel weak and doubtful, yet they are the Lord's children. What I mean to convey is, we are his, or we are not. I feel deeply my weakness, but the Lord knows them that are his. I feel to trust him and to rest upon the finished work of the Redeemer. Sister Hait once said to me that she went to hear Elder William L. Beebe speak to the people; he talked for a time, and stopped short, and said, "I have no more thoughts to give you upon this portion of the Scripture," and closed the book.

Elder Jenkins has been on my mind very much lately. He was very pleasant with me, and when I visited my brother in Middletown, he would drop in to see me, and would say, "I am glad to see you among us again." Many there have fallen asleep since then. Our Lord called death sleep; he said of Lazarus, "I go, that I may awake him out of sleep." It must be glorious to awake with the likeness of the Lord. My mind has been drawn lately to that portion of Scripture recorded in Genesis, where the famine was sore in the land. Hymn 1078, composed upon that, is good to read:

"I am Joseph, your brother, he said,
And still to my heart you are dear;
You sold me, and thought I was dead,
But God, for your sakes, sent me here."

We can but view that it was the Lord's dealing with them to save them from dying for want of food to sustain life during the famine.

Now the old year is passed, and with

regard to myself it has been filled with many failures, but our Savior is the same. Who can measure the depths of his love? In his gracious hands we are, all his people. The hands that were pierced for us are ours to guide and keep us; nothing can separate us from him. I am well advanced in years, and, too, I feel that I am pleasantly situated. The "Brethren" have regular meetings here, and I see nothing they do that I cannot receive, according to the Scriptures of our Lord and Savior. He told his disciples to meet, and he said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst." It is very pleasant for me when they gather here. Your letter to me was read to them, and they thought, and expressed themselves, that it was good. We are poor, weak mortals; the earthquake in Italy shows that we have no power over the elements. I feel sad to read about it, and yet I desire to do so. We do not know what suffering is. In my brother's last letter he wrote that sister Hait was very poorly. I feel sorry for them. They are well advanced in years, and not well. I will say with regard to myself that I am quite well, and all here are very kind to me.

Now I will close, wishing you a happy new year. I trust that you are all well.

Your sister,

ELIZABETH SMITH.

LIBERTY, Mo., March 9, 1909.

ELDERS CHICK AND KER—VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—I am drawing near the end of my pilgrimage in this vale of tears. I have lost the sight of one eye, and the hearing of one ear. If I live until the twenty-eighth day of this month, I shall be eighty-one years of age. A little more than forty-nine years of this time I have been trying to follow Jesus, but when left to myself, rough and thorny has been my way. It is by the grace of God that I remain unto this present time, still "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures in Egypt," yea, more than all the treasures of ten thousand worlds like this. "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" What are a few days of pleasure in sin when compared with a never-ending eternity? I do hope that I have been kept by the power of God from falling in with any of the inventions of men and devils; I choose rather to stand alone than to be entangled again with the yoke of bondage. It is said, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

I have lived in sight of an Old School Baptist meetinghouse since 1833, and have seen two divisions in the church, and in that time have known twelve ministers who have had the care of the church, and there is not a member living to-day who was here in 1833. In those days there were over one hundred members belonging to that church, now there are about thirty. I think it has been about twenty years since I have seen any of the people where I was first a member, except one, a very dear old brother, I think he is at least nine or ten years older than I am, and he lives at Blue Springs, Mo.; his name is T. Knight. I will just say to that dear brother in his lonely pilgrimage here on earth in a foreign land, away from home, that the words are true:

"A few more days on earth to spend,
And all our cares and toils shall end,
And we shall see our God and friend,
And praise his name on high.
No more to sigh or shed a tear,
No more to suffer pain or fear,
But God, and Christ, and heaven appear
Unto the raptured eye."

Dear brother, may you still be kept by the power and grace of God to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and endure hardness as a good soldier of Christ, I pray for Jesus' sake. It is through much tribulation that we enter the kingdom.

From a poor sinner,

RICHARD WALLER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I will try to write you a few lines as I promised you a year ago, but I could not get courage to do so until now. I have been in darkness, and very low in the valley; I would almost feel that my little hope was gone; I did not know whether I loved the brethren or not. But I have hope now that he, the great God of all mercy, has turned my darkness to light. This is not of myself, but I hope that it is of the Lord of all grace and love to poor sinners like me. I am at brother Terry's writing this. O what a wonderful blessing it is to me to hear them talk of our Savior, that he died and rose again for sinners, of whom I am chief. How good it is to dwell in the house of the Lord and to drink of that living water prepared for his people before the foundation of the world. I want to give all the glory to our heavenly Father, to him all the glory belongs. I am so ignorant that I cannot tell my feelings. I have many doubts and fears, and am surrounded by the tempter on every side. I often feel that I shall faint by the way, but I hope God will give me strength and grace in every time of need.

Please excuse all mistakes. My reason for writing now is that I was reading in Psalms lxxii. 16, these words: "There shall be a handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains." I wish I could tell you the beauty I saw in that passage of Scripture, but my feeble tongue cannot tell it.

I will close. Pray for me.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

MARTHA J. BAILEY.

GLENWOOD, Ala., April 21, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Your excellent paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, has been coming to our home twice every month for some time, and it is read by my aged wife and me with much pleasure, appreciation and profit. Allow us to thank you heartily for your great kindness in sending it to us free of charge. I remember having read it with great interest and comfort way back in my early days among the Old School Baptists, when it was edited by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and I received, through the blessing of God, some instruction in things pertaining to the doctrine and order of the true and only gospel church that I still retain in memory, and which has been, I hope, a lifetime benefit to me, and to others with whom I have been associated during my humble ministry. Since then quite a number of years have elapsed, during which I seldom saw a copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES until you began sending it to my address at Troy, Ala., some two or three years ago. I beg of you to pardon my long neglect to acknowledge this esteemed favor, and believe me that it is not because of any prejudice against the paper or its editors, neither against any of its contributors. True, I have not read all of its contents, nor do I profess to have understood all of what I have read in its columns, for this would be to boast of capacity which I do not possess, but what I have been enabled to comprehend clearly I have enjoyed, and I hope

I have some understanding of the blessed truth so ably expounded by the editors and many correspondents. I am far advanced in age, having passed my threescore years and ten, and have learned by much painful experience "that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing," and am quite confirmed in the belief that salvation is of the Lord, by sovereign grace, freely bestowed upon God's chosen people through the meritorious, all-cleansing blood of Jesus Christ. My experience under a sense of the condemning power and dominion of sin, and of my impotence to recover myself from it, in 1862, and from then until now my utter helplessness and dependence upon God to keep me by his power and preserve me unto the perfect day, has been in harmony with this precious doctrine of salvation by grace.

Thanking you sincerely for the benefits of your valuable paper, I am your unworthy but grateful brother, in hope of the glory of God,

J. E. W. HENDERSON.

OVALO, Texas, May 11, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have been impressed for some time to write a little for the SIGNS. I feel so ignorant and unworthy I thought I would never trouble you again with my poor writing, but somehow I feel this evening that I must write, so with fear and trembling I make the attempt. I cannot see why one so ignorant and sinful as I should be impressed to write for publication, but God works in a mysterious way his wonders to perform, and if it be his will to give some one of his humble poor a crumb through my writing he has the power to do so. I will do the best I can, and let the faithful editors be the judges whether to publish it or not, for I feel sure they will not publish anything that is not according to sound doctrine.

Some time ago there were a few words of Scripture given me with much sweetness, and I would like to tell my beloved kindred in Christ something about it if I can. I had been in darkness for some time, and could not read or sing with any understanding; I was so worldly-minded, often doing things I ought not to do, or leaving undone that I ought to have done, yet there was an indescribable longing in my heart for the manifest presence of my blessed Savior, a great desire that I might walk as becometh a child of God. I would think, Surely if I were a child of God I would do better, and I would go back in my mind over my past life, searching for my Savior, but I could see nothing good that ever I did. Then I read these words: "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here." Then, O wonder of wonders, the darkness was lifted, and the beautiful soul-cheering rays of the Sun of Righteousness shone in upon my poor benighted heart, and I was made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and it was plain to me then that I had been seeking the living among the dead; I had been trying to find my Savior in some of my good works, in this old body that is dead because of sin, therefore I could not find him, for he was not there. Then where must I look for him, for he has promised never to leave us nor forsake us? Well, when I am enabled by grace to look with an eye of faith at this hungering and thirsting after righteousness, this longing for the manifest presence of my Savior, these great desires to walk as becometh a child of God, then I find my blessed Savior there, and, behold, he was with me all the time, and I knew it not.

My dear kindred in Christ, I want to

say to you that this experience I have been trying to tell you about has seemed to lift me up, my hope is strengthened and I feel encouraged to press on toward the mark of the high calling in Christ Jesus our Lord. It seems as though I will know from now on where to look for my Savior; not among the dead, but among the living—this living spirit in the inner man that loves holiness and hates sin. Dear brethren and sisters, there is where our precious Savior dwells. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, praise his holy name. Glory, praise and honor be unto him forever and ever. I feel now as if I never would doubt again, but I know not how soon I shall be in darkness, for I have learned by experience that these sweet moments do not last long. I am thankful for a few moments of sweet, heartfelt meditation upon heavenly things, for I am so weak and helpless I cannot think on these glories in and of myself; no matter how hard I try, my mind will wander on worldly things. Surely I do know that salvation is by grace, both for time and eternity, and O how glad I am that it is so.

Brethren, do with this as you think best, and all will be well.

A little sister, I hope,

(MRS.) J. H. GRIFFIN.

RATCLIFF, Ky., May 16, 1909.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I inclose a short but very precious and comforting letter, written me by my poor, afflicted and suffering daughter, Mrs. Katherine Kendall, of Newfoundland, Ky. It was my blessed privilege to hear her tell to the Rock Spring Old School Baptist Church, on the fourth Saturday in July last, what great things the Lord had done for her, that he had compassion upon her. It was also my privilege to baptize her on the fourth Saturday in September following. She is now a great sufferer. Her letter is very comforting to me, a poor weakling, and I desire to share it with others, who may receive comfort from it. The letter speaks much to the glory of God.

Yours to serve,

J. E. THORNBURY.

NEWFOUNDLAND, Ky., May 10, 1909.

MY DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER:—I will write you a few lines this morning. I am feeling very weak and bad, and I cannot eat anything or take my medicine. I am much weaker this morning than I have ever been. I had several spells of smothering last night, and suffered more with my side and lung than common, yet I am still able to say, Thy will, dear Lord, be done. I suffer so much I often pray God, if it be his holy will, to take me to his dear breast, where I shall rest forever; yet I must wait his call. There are times when it seems to me that I can feel the very presence of my Lord with me. O blessed hope, the only comfort, peace and joy of my heart. What would my life be without that sweet and blessed hope of eternal life? Without it I could not live. I now feel that when I depart this life I shall be with Jesus and see him as he is, and yet, dear papa, I feel so unworthy, so little and weak to claim the dear name of Jesus. While fearful at times that I know nothing as it should be known, being so ignorant and blind, yet I can say of a truth, I love the dear people of God; although they are despised by the world, and not reckoned among the nations of earth, I would rather be a door-keeper in the house of the Lord than to sit upon any earthly throne and have the world at my command.

"My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life or breath remains;
There my best friends, my kindred, dwell,
There God my Savior reigns."

I hope you are all well and that mamma will be able to come with you. Love to all.

I am always your affectionate child,
KATHERINE KENDALL.

SMITH CENTER, Kans., April 6, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I have many times thought of writing, besides I have been requested by dear brethren to write, yet I put it off, feeling my weakness and unworthiness, knowing that of myself I cannot write anything that will be of comfort to the Lord's humble poor. I want to say to the correspondents, as well as to the editors, that I do enjoy reading their precious letters in the SIGNS very much. I am not situated so I can attend meetings regularly; the last meeting I had the privilege of attending was held near Glen Elder, Kans., November 8th. I went home (about forty miles) the 9th, and had an accident with my team, through which I was brought very near death's door; the doctors did not think I could live, but the Lord spared my life for some purpose of his own, and while I never expect to be strong again I am much better than I expected I ever would be when I left the hospital five weeks later.

One article came to me with special comfort while I was in the hospital, it was written by Elder Keene: "The book of remembrance," and I find many comforting letters in every number. The writers can tell my feelings much better than I can myself. I feel that I am a poor, sinful creature, and not worthy the fellowship the brethren seem to have for me, which makes me feel very humble.

Our church here thought best to disband and take letters elsewhere, one year ago last August, as our pastor, J. A. Moore, and others, were moving away. While there were several members who had not taken letters, we felt we were too much scattered to keep up the meetings, and others have moved away since, so there is no one that I know of living less than fifteen miles of where I am living. If I know my own heart I fully indorse the doctrine set forth in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and hope the Lord may spare the present editors and managers for many years to conduct the same.

I will close; you can do as you like with this very imperfect letter, and all will be right with your brother, I hope,

W. S. AYDELOTT.

POLO, Ill., April 19, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As the time draws near for me to renew my subscription for the SIGNS, I feel like telling you how much I have enjoyed reading the precious letters from the brethren and sisters, as I am almost alone here, there being but few believing as I do, and I hear no gospel preaching that harmonizes with my belief. The SIGNS seems to come laden with the truth of the Bible, and I am made to rejoice that others have traveled the same path that I have, and have the same doubts and fears. I often feel to ask,

"What was there in me that could merit esteem,
Or give the Creator delight?
'Twas even so, Father, we ever must sing,
Because it seemed good in thy sight."

If I am ever saved it will be by God's grace and mercy; not for anything I have done, for it seems that I am the most unworthy of all he has caused to hope in his mercy. I want to live to his honor and glory, but I am as prone to do evil as the sparks are to fly upward. I do not know that I will ever hear any more

gospel preaching, but the Lord knows what is for our good, and I feel to leave it all with him. I beg an interest in the prayers of all God's children.

Though unworthy, I am, I hope, a sister in Christ,

(MRS.) REBECCA SWEET.

LOVELAND, Colo.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is said, "Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble." I have asked myself sometimes, What man is here spoken of, is it the spiritual man or the natural man? I am inclined to believe it is the latter. The apostle says, That which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and that which is born of the flesh is flesh. It is evident then that it is the man of the flesh, or natural man, that is born of a woman, for that which is born of the Spirit is born of God. It has always been my understanding of the teaching of the Scriptures that it is the natural man, fleshly man, that sins, for says the same apostle, That which is born of God cannot sin, for his (God's) seed remaineth within him. Hence I conclude that it is the natural man that is born of a woman that is full of trouble. We all know that his days are, at best, but few upon earth. He cometh forth as a flower and is cut down, he fleeth also as a shadow and continueth not. Some men have more troubles than others; why this is so I know not. My earthly troubles in the declining years of my life seem to me at times to be more than I can bear much longer, so much so I sometimes yearn for the time to come when I shall depart from earth and earthly things. I have lately received a number of letters from those whom I trust I can claim my kindred in Christ Jesus which are greatly deserving an answer from me, but I am so overburthened with the trials and troubles of this life, and am in such darkness of mind and spirit, I cannot do so now, and I ask them to pardon my seeming neglect to answer their letters. It is said the prayers of the righteous availeth much. Will you pray for unworthy me? Pray that the darkness of my mind be removed, and my pathway in life the few remaining days allotted to me may be made clear and pleasant.

Yours in much tribulation,

J. H. YEOMAN.

NEWBERN, Tenn., April 1, 1909.

DEARLY BELOVED EDITORS:—Inclosed find my remittance for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the fifty-third time. I have been a reader of your valuable paper since 1838, and I find that my eyes and nerves almost refuse to serve me, I being now nearly eighty-four years old, but I have never failed to read a number and rejoice in reading each since 1866, for I feel assured it has always contended for the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, the only doctrine that can save a poor lost and ruined sinner; a doctrine wrought and finished by our blessed Jesus on the cross.

Love to the editors and contributors, for I know my old eyes will trace but few more of your sweet lines, and unless I subscribe again please discontinue when the time expires, for my eyes will not let me read longer.

Your brother in Christ,

M. A. WELBORN.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906; 07 means 1907; 08 means 1908; 09 means 1909; 10 means 1910; 11 means 1911, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1909.

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EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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ROMANS I.

ELDER J. P. ALLISON, of Oregon, whose name has become familiar to our readers, through occasional communications in our columns, has requested us to write something with regard especially to the first chapter of Romans, and the connection. It will be impossible in the limits of even a lengthy editorial to write at length upon so large a subject, but it may be profitable to suggest some general thoughts regarding it.

Paul, in the first place, declares his call of God to preach the gospel of the Son of God, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and was declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. After stating his call of God to this ministry, he proceeds to set forth his love for and interest in the church at Rome, and his thankfulness for them that their faith was well known everywhere, and that it was his constant prayer that he might come to them, that he might, with them, be comforted by their mutual faith. He declares his readiness to preach the gospel to them also, as well as to others. Of this gospel he was not ashamed, because it was the power of God unto salvation to all who believed. In it was revealed the righteousness of God which their faith had embraced and which they rested upon as their one hope of salvation. This is the substance of verses sixteen and seventeen, and in these two verses he gives the keynote of the whole epistle, and indeed of the whole gospel of salvation. This he has at once made prominent, because this is the one thing which must be received and believed if any man is to rejoice in good hope. There is, there can be, no other way of salvation, if the condition of mankind be as Paul declares in the twenty or more verses that follow. If we carefully consider these following declarations, this one thing will be seen to stand forth so prominently that nothing can hide it from view, viz., the total depravity of all men ever since the fall in Adam. It is not alone the condition of the elect before their call by grace that is set forth, but the fact that all men are alike guilty before God, and all alike without excuse. Paul here sets forth just what he has declared in the epistle to the Ephesians in one brief sentence: "And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." In the connection under consideration, he declares that "there is no difference," that "all have sinned," and all have "come short." But in the closing portion of this first chapter, and in the beginning of the second, he not only has given these general statements concerning the wickedness of mankind, but also many special declarations, in which he describes the outbreaking wickedness of the world at that time. Times and customs, with regard to that sort of wickedness which is popular, may and do change with passing years, and are diverse at the same period of time in different nations, but the root of evil is at all times and in all places the

same. Unnamable vices are spoken of by the apostle as having a common existence everywhere at the time in which he was writing; even the Jews, who had the law of God and who claimed superiority over other men in point of righteousness, were not exempted by the apostle from these sweeping declarations concerning mankind. They indeed were full of all kinds of wickedness that were the shame of other nations, but they were guilty of still another evil above and beyond that of other people, in that although full of dead things, like whited sepulchers, they still boasted of righteousness, which Gentile nations did not do. A false religion went along with their outbreaking sins; they paid great attention to forms, but robbed widows' houses, and oppressed the needy and the orphan. By nature all alike were children of wrath, but outwardly some had sunken to a lower depth than others. It is very hard for one who is known as a moral man, a kind, good neighbor, an upright man in his dealings with his fellow-men, a religious man indeed, to believe that all this that Paul here wrote can by any possibility belong to him. No principle of doctrine has been more disputed, or incurred the hatred of natural men, especially of the religious portion of them, than this doctrine of the total depravity of all mankind; and this, not only because thus the grace that saves is so abundantly exalted to the humbling of all creature merit in salvation, but also because the doctrine that all alike are depraved in every part seems to place the moral among the immoral, the refined among the unrefined, the kind and loving among the unkind and the unloving. But whether the objection to this doctrine arises from opposition to the soul-humbling doctrine of the cross, or from what appears to be the vast differences among men in the things stated above, all opposition of whatever kind is put to silence among all who receive the Scriptures as the infallible word of God, by the teaching of the inspired Paul in this chapter, and the following, and, in fact, by the teaching of the Scriptures everywhere. It is not our purpose here to do more than to call attention to this immediate connection, in proof of the doctrine that all men are alike guilty before God. Paul states that all have sinned, and come short; he declares that there is no difference. He makes no exception in all his terrible indictment of mankind; he includes all in unbelief. He declares that the feet of all are swift to shed blood, and that the poison of asps is under the tongue of all men, and that no man has known the way of peace. One sin of our first parents sunk all mankind in this condition; out of that one transgression has grown up the fact that all men have sinned; condemnation has passed upon all men. All sin and condemnation proceed from the first transgression. How exceeding sinful then is sin. The one transgression made manifest what was in the heart, that fountain out of which proceeds all manner of evil thoughts, words and deeds. The lust was conceived in the heart before the deed was done. It was in the formation of this lust in the heart that the real sin consisted, and it was this that separated between God and the children of men. Out of the corrupt fountain of our hearts proceeds all manner of blasphemies, adulteries, murders and sin of every kind. Here on the heart the burden lies. One bitter apple from a tree is as full and clear proof that the tree is a bitter tree as hundreds of such apples could be; one bitter sup of water from a fountain makes manifest that the fountain is bitter as

completely as a river of water from it could do; one transgression proves the existence of an evil heart in man as completely as do hundreds of such transgressions. What man is, leads to what he does. God judges the heart as well as the outward life. Taking the terrible sentences of this chapter which describe mankind, and looking at each vice that is named, horrible as they are, we must remember that the heart out of which they proceeded was still more vile. When the work of the Lord has been wrought in any man, it matters not what his outward life may have been, nor how admirable his conduct may have seemed to himself, or to his fellow-men, that work convinces that man that he is the chief of sinners; it places the righteous Saul by the side of the dying thief, and convinces both that mercy alone can avail to save. Men saw a great difference between these two men, but God saw no difference. Paul has said so: "There is no difference." But this innate wickedness of all men had been allowed to run to great excess of riot at the time when the dear Redeemer came in human flesh, the whole world was debased and practised commonly the most shameful vices. But let us not think that we are in anywise better than they. If restraint has been thrown around any of us, so that we have been kept from such excess of wickedness, it is not therefore to be believed that we are any better by nature than they, for we have all "sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Paul declares all this, and so lays the foundation for the praise of grace in salvation. If man be indeed under such condemnation, then it must be sure that a wondrous atonement must be found. If man be so utterly depraved, then it is sure that he cannot turn, in and of himself, to righteousness, some supreme power must be called upon to do this great work. The first the dear Redeemer has accomplished by his sacrifice upon Calvary, and the second is accomplished by the quickening work of the Holy Spirit in the heart of sinners. Whether then we speak of the atonement or of repentance and faith wrought in the heart, all is of God, and to him must belong all the praise of salvation. Man cannot atone for himself; the curse resting upon him is to eternal punishment. Eternity can never end, hence man can never find the end of the punishment that the justice of God has declared against him for his sin. To all eternity man cannot fill up the measure that justice exacts from him, therefore he cannot atone for himself. Man, again, cannot turn and live of himself, because there is nothing in him by nature that desires to turn to God and away from his sin. He who loves sin cannot have any will to turn from it so long as he loves it, and when God has wrought in him that will, so that he desires righteousness with all his heart, he finds that still more is needed, viz., the power to do what he desires. By nature he has neither the will nor the power to do good in the sight of God, and when God has wrought the will in him, the power is still wanting. If, therefore, any man does desire the good, and then is able to do that good at all, it is because God works in him to will and to do of His good pleasure. Thus all the work of redemption is of God, and in time and in eternity the redeemed must ever say, Not unto us, not us, but unto thy name be all the praise. Our natural pride rebels against all this, and just because our nature rebels we may feel sure that this doctrine is of God. It is sure that no one would ever receive such a soul-humbling doctrine if left to his own will

and understanding. The fact that some do believe and love this doctrine of the cross is proof that the Lord has wrought his work in them. We say "believe and love," because there is a belief without love: devils believe and tremble, but more is needed than the mere assent of reason to arguments; more is needed than the theory of grace. One may believe the doctrine in the form of sound words, and yet may be utterly destitute of saving power in the soul. We have known drunkards, and blasphemers of the name of God, to shout aloud in the streets, "I believe the doctrine of Old School Baptists." Such men believed the doctrine of grace, but it was manifest that they knew nothing of the grace of the doctrine. The grace of the doctrine produces love to God, and to all righteousness. Paul was himself a case in point; he not only had been brought to believe and teach that doctrine which he once hated, but his whole heart was filled with love for it; he could not speak of anything else; he determined to know nothing anywhere save Christ and him crucified. He not only gloried in the cross of Christ, but he said, God forbid that I should glory in anything save the cross of Christ. Christ to him had become all in all. Deep views of himself and his depravity gave him preparation for exalted views of the blessed Redeemer. Deep views of the immeasurable guilt of sin, and of the punishment due it, prepared him to exalt that grace which had saved him. Those two things must go together. How must one love that which saves him, if indeed he has ever known what it means to be lost.

As Paul, in the opening portion of Romans, brings out the innate depravity and the just condemnation of all men, so then after this, in this epistle, he magnifies the grace of God that can and does save such sinners; but the greatness of this salvation could not be set forth without first setting forth that from which man must be redeemed. The lawful captive is delivered, but he is not delivered at the expense of the law which condemns him, and so the wisdom of God is magnified, not only in that man is redeemed from everlasting punishment, but in that this redemption is in full harmony with the law of God. Justice and mercy are met together in Christ, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. The question, How can a sinner be just with God? is here answered. Christ in his sinless life and his bloody death and resurrection from the dead, is the key to unlock the whole mystery. There is redemption in no other, and so man is saved. The same man who fell and is lost, and who abides under the wrath of God, is redeemed, is quickened into divine life, is raised up again, and is finally glorified in Christ. It is a wonderful mystery that Christ saves, and it is a wonderful mystery that it is man whom Christ saves.

We have not attempted an exposition of the chapter to which Elder Allison has called our attention, but have only sought to make some suggestions regarding the teaching of the whole connection. We trust that these thoughts may afford some satisfaction to our brother, and to others also. C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. T. Rowe.)

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Ebenezer Church, of Baltimore city, May 19th, 20th and 21st, 1909, to the several churches composing the same, greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—We feel at this time to write you upon a cardinal principle of the doctrine of the church of Christ from its organization until now, to wit: the resurrection of the dead, and in doing so will call your attention to the fifteenth chapter of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. First of all, we would impress upon your minds its importance, as the apostle declares that unless it is true all our preaching and your faith is vain. In other words, the religion of Jesus Christ is all a farce, and we are false witnesses of God, because we have testified that he raised up Christ, whom he raised not up if so be that the dead rise not; but now is Christ risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept. It was not a question among the brethren as to whether or not Christ was risen, but whether his children rise, and Paul refers to the resurrection of Jesus as proving the necessity for and the assurance of our resurrection. You are the body of Christ and members in particular, and Paul says in 1 Corinthians vi. 14, 15: "And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power. Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid." This resurrection is the bringing again to life that which was dead. This is what the word means. It is not, therefore, a new creation, but a living again of something that was dead. These vile bodies which are the members of Christ are made to live again by the Spirit of Him that dwelleth in you. Seeds are sown for the increase, and the Lord of Sabaoth hath left us a seed which is Christ, hence he is the firstfruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming. Not in the past, not in the present, but in the future is the resurrection of the dead. Paul had not need to speak of the time of the resurrection, and did not, for Jesus himself had already plainly told that, saying four times in the sixth chapter of John (of the believer), "And I will raise him up at the last day." Shall Jesus come up alone? No, he will bring with him his own, every part and particle that it requires to make up the Adam sinner; otherwise there is no increase and Christ is dead in vain. To deny the resurrection of the bodies of the saints is to deny that Christ is risen, and that all who have fallen asleep in him are perished. Jesus said, "David is not ascended into the heavens," and he never will, unless there is, as Jesus said, a resurrection of believers in Him. "By man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." This does not mean that the resurrection is past, or that all the resurrection there is for a child of God was in the body of Christ when he arose, but that the power of the resurrection is in Jesus, and by his resurrection is the resurrection of the bodies of his people made sure. "Every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's, at his coming [clearly in the future]. Then cometh the end." See what the apostles had to endure for Jesus' sake, what the prophets suffered for their faith, and what the true followers of Jesus endure to this day; troubled within because of a carnal mind

that is enmity to God, at the same time desiring to be like Jesus, and cannot do the things they would. Well did Paul say that if there is no hope of a life beyond this, "we are of all men most miserable," but, "blessed be God," this poor, vile worm of the dust, whose heart is burdened and whose eyes are wet with tears and whose head is bowed down because of sin, shall be raised from the dust and made pure and holy as Jesus is holy, freed from all care, pain, sickness, sorrow and death, and shall live forever, because Jesus, his Redeemer, lives. Yes, Paul says this mortal must put on immortality, this corruptible must put on incorruption, and when this is done then shall they sing defiance to death and the grave, saying, Where is thy sting and where is thy victory? The grave is robbed and death itself is dead. Glorious thought for a poor sinner; wonderful work of our God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?"—Acts xxvi. 8. But the carnal mind never has confidence in God, and is, therefore, always questioning as to how these things are so. Paul, apprehending the question of the fool, answers it before it is asked, and goes on to tell the manner (not the time) of the resurrection of the dead: "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." Not spirit, but a spiritual body. The same body that is natural now, in the resurrection shall be spiritual. Of this there can be no mistake, it is the word of inspiration. Now then by our faith in the blessed promise of our dear risen Lord and Master we look beyond this life of sin and trouble to one of perfection and glory, when we shall be like our Lord, both mind and body, for he shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. (Phil. iii. 4.) And who can say that the body of Jesus is not the same as it was when seen to ascend by some of those who loved him, to whom two men in white apparel said: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come again in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."—Acts i. 11. So come again in power and in appearance the same; then shall the dead in Christ rise triumphant over the grave; this resurrection is unto life, and also the wicked to the resurrection of damnation. (John v. 29.) At this the carnal mind complains, but the redeemed say: "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints;" and they also which are alive and remain shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and caught up together with those who are resurrected, to meet the Lord in the air, and so the saints shall ever be with the Lord. Dear brethren, this is the end of God's purpose in sending his Son into this world to become a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, and this is the end that Jesus has in view in all his sufferings and death; not to save his own Spirit, but sinners from their sins, and this is the end of the hope of poor sinners burdened with sin against a just and holy God, and through the never-ending ages of vast eternity they shall sing to the praise of Jesus, their Lord, who was delivered for their offences and arose again for their justification.

Brethren, what a glorious hope is ours! Lift up your heads, burdened sinners, and shout for your triumphant King.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

FRANK SCOTT, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Ebenezer Church, of Baltimore, Md., May 19th, 20th and 21st, 1909, to the associations and other meetings with which we correspond sends greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—Through the grace and mercy of God we have been privileged with another annual interview, and have realized the presence of the God of our salvation. The ministering brethren have ably declared the full counsel of God: salvation by grace. "If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious," this declaration is precious to you, for unto you who believe he is precious. As usual, the time we have been together has been spent in the worship of God, and we have been comforted and strengthened, and we hope for a continuance of your correspondence, and hope we shall receive a goodly number of your messengers at our next session, which is appointed to be held, if the Lord will, with our sister church, at Black Rock, Baltimore Co., Md., at the usual time, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday after the third Sunday in May, 1910, when we hope to meet your messengers again.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

FRANK SCOTT, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder D. M. Vail, at his residence in Waverly, Pa., May 11th, 1909, Wm. T. Jones, of Justus, Pa., and Chloe J. Ellis, of the same place.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

A. M Miles, Pa., $2.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **Hettie Gladding,** whose maiden name was Bailey, was born Oct. 29th, 1833, and in early life was married to James Topping, by whom she was the mother of nine children, six of whom, together with her husband, preceded her to the grave. She was afterwards married to Captain E. D. Gladding. Sister Gladding experienced a hope in Christ about fifty years ago, but a feeling sense of unworthiness kept her from the church for some years, but she was finally given strength to offer herself, and was gladly received, and baptized by Elder T. M. Poulson in the fellowship of the church at Mossongoes, Va., about thirty-seven years ago, and lived a consistent and much beloved sister until the day of her death, Jan. 31st, 1909. It was the privilege of the writer to know sister Gladding for ten years, and some eight or nine years ago she obtained a letter of recommendation from Messongoes and united with the Ebenezer Church, of Baltimore. Sister Gladding was much beloved by her brethren and sisters for her humble, christian character, quiet and unassuming, always filling her seat when able to do so. She suffered much with rheumatism, and was sometimes unable to get out. Her sickness and death were wonderful manifestations of the all-sufficiency of Jesus, her Savior; through his grace she triumphed over her pain and fever, and talked beautifully of his amazing grace. On Wednesday before she passed away on Sunday a. m. she talked to the writer of her experience, giving in detail the circumstances as they occurred in a very interesting manner. She talked so long that some of the family feared she would overdo her strength, and told her she had better stop. She answered, "I have never talked much about these things, and now is my time to talk; if I get weak the Lord will strengthen me again," and so continued for some time. Then again at night she began talking to her loved ones, and had a special message for each of them. She fully realized her end on earth was near, and was anxious to go. On this occasion, notwithstanding her weakness, she talked for about three hours so wonderfully and gloriously of the journey before her, and how she longed to go, that her son Douglas, who was also her brother in the church, said, "Mother, you have turned a house of mourning into one of rejoicing." She answered, "No, my child, not I, but the Lord." She had the family sing for her, and requested her son Douglas to sing at her funeral, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord." He said, "Mother, I do not know whether I can or not." She answered, "The Lord will give you strength to sing it." After this I think she did not talk so much, but gradually grew weaker until Sunday a. m., when she passed away from this life, we have no doubt, into a blessed realization of the sweetness of her hope, and now sings the praises of her Savior, Jesus.

On February 2nd a goodly number of her brethren, sisters and friends met at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Sarah Jenkins, where the writer spoke on the occasion of her funeral, telling and commenting upon the blessed evidence she had left of her salvation through the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and, according to her request, her son sang in as clear a voice as ever I heard him the hymn she wished him to sing; surely the blessed Lord was with him. Later they took her remains to her old home in Virginia, where her former pastor, Elder Poulson, also spoke at her burial; then they laid the loved remains beneath the ground to await the resurrection at the last day, when it shall be changed and fashioned like the glorious body of Christ. May the Lord bless the bereaved ones.

Her loving pastor,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

I WISH to add my testimony to what is herein written. It was my privilege to unite the dear sister and Captain E. D. Gladding in marriage March 10th, 1877; it was also my sweet privilege to baptize her April 21st, 1872, and it was always pleasant to think of. She leaves three children, fifteen grandchildren, twelve great-grandchildren, with the church, to miss her pleasant smiles and her mild and pleasant words. It always gave me pleasure to be in sister Gladding's company, but she is gone, yet speaketh. As much has been said I will add no more.

T. M. POULSON.

MASSEY, Va.

Charles Earnest Parks, son of Deacon Andrew and sister Emma Parks, was born in Bourbon County, Kans., July 20th, 1889, and died at their home in Elgin, Oregon, March 18th, 1909. Although he had never united with the church, yet he was as prompt and regular in attendance as any member could be. Shortly before his fatal illness he said to an aunt that he did not mind being called an Old School Baptist, and only a few days before his death he remarked that "a sermon without the word grace is of no interest to those who feel the need of grace." These are some of the precious words of his which now stand as a source of great comfort and assurance. Charley attended the Elgin public school until he completed the course, then studied bookkeeping, and had become proficient, so that he was greatly admired for thoroughness in business matters. It was in the home that his qualities of mind and heart were most admirable, not an unkind word or deed, and his chief delight seemed to be in making a visiting brother or sister feel at home in the family. I will now quote from the Elgin paper:

"Local physicians say that his case was a strange one, and of unusual interest, and attribute his death to old age. In growth and disposition he had never been a boy, being of diminutive stature, and for a few months previous to his death had appeared like an old man aged with toil and strife. He had but little vitality, and at no time during his life did he have boyish ways, yet despite his condition of health he bore his infirmities with fortitude and without a murmur. At the beginning of his fatal illness little hope was entertained for his recovery."

When quite young it was found that he had deficient or weakened valvular structure of the heart, and recently dropsical symptoms had developed. His strength failed rapidly for a few days previous to his death, and although he suffered no pain the breathing grew continually more difficult. On the evening of March 17th sister Lash and I were present with the family and remained. About 9 o'clock he grew rapidly worse, and the physician remained several hours, sustaining the feeble pulse with hypodermic treatment. He rallied beyond all expectation, and after 3 o'clock a. m. rested until morning. The forenoon passed comfortably. He saw the relatives and asked after the welfare of others. At 12 o'clock he took some nourishment; soon fatal symptoms developed. He was carried from his Morris chair to a sofa, where he closed his eyes as in gentle sleep. The father, mother, one brother and one sister are left sad and comfortless, but God in his great mercy will yet manifest his goodness and wisdom in taking the loved one to that eternal home where no pain or sorrow ever comes, and where the redeemed of the Lord shall be gathered. We miss him when we meet to worship; we miss his discerning judgment, quick conclusions and readiness of mind and heart. May the Lord enable each to look beyond and realize by true and living faith that God does all things well. The memory of Charley is written upon the hearts of all who were so blessed as to come in touch with him, and will live while they live.

The funeral was conducted by Elder G. E. Mayfield, assisted by Elder T. E. Attebery. By mutual consent every business house was closed and all public occupations in the town suspended during the appointed hour. The Missionary Baptist meetinghouse was used for the occasion, on account of its size and convenience to the home. A large and sympathetic audience was present. (MRS.) M. J. LEE.

Mrs. Lucy Laura Perry died at her home near Madison, Ga., March 17th, 1909, being 85 years, 6 months and 14 days of age, having been born Sept. 3rd, 1823. She was married to Jesse M. Perry in 1846, who preceded her to the grave years ago. She was a most devoted wife and mother, and ready to extend help and sympathy to the needy at all times. She was a rare woman with a brilliant intellect, and retained her mental faculties through her entire illness to the last. Though she had suffered and been much confined with rheumatism for many years, yet the im-

mediate cause of her death was paralysis, from which she suffered agonizingly for about three months. She had very strong convictions of right, and was a most ardent believer in salvation by grace. I never met one more in perfect accord with the doctrine of the Primitive Baptist Church. Again, I never knew one who loved the Savior more deeply; she seemed always thirsting for more of his love and grace, and how she hungered for more of the preached word, and for the companionship of her brethren in the long years her health prevented her from attending divine service. Her church was very distant, and that, with the infirmities of age, made attendance with her for about twenty years impossible. How often she would write, lamenting that she was denied church privileges, and say the only preaching she got was from reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. (The editors and brethren will remember her letters to the SIGNS.) God however fed her hungry soul, and wrote his loving epistles upon the fleshly tables of her heart. She never seemed to grow lukewarm; her Savior was her theme, and her heart seemed always brimming with love and longing for a home with the blood-washed throng, "Where sickness, sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more." How often she would meekly write, "Pray for me, that I may be ready when the final summons come." She was born of God, and craved the spiritual bread, and the things of the flesh could not satisfy her. She loved God in spirit and in truth. The loss to her one son, G. D. Perry, and to her four daughters, Misses Amanda and Clara Perry, Mrs. Burress and Mrs. Wrench, cannot be told. They nursed her, and would have stayed the hand of death had it been possible, but unselfishly and resignedly they will forget their sorrow in contemplating the immeasurable joy and rest to which she has attained. The writer knew her long and intimately, and feels almost on this side to share her ecstasy as she joins in the shouts of the redeemed host and sings praises to "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Like her, we shall be satisfied when we awake with His likeness.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder Robert Cook, of Social Circle, Ga., he using as a text Job xiv. 14: "If a man die, shall he live again?"

Her niece,

(MRS.) MITTIE DAVIS ROBERTS.

COVINGTON, Ga., May 16, 1909.

Catherine Carmichael, my mother, was born Oct. 24th, 1835, and died May 14th, 1909, in the 74th year of her age. Mother had been in failing health for about three years, but was not confined to her bed until six weeks ago. She was the youngest daughter of Malcolm and Mary Campbell, of Caradoc, both members of the Primitive Baptist Church. She was married to Duncan Carmichael Feb. 6th, 1856, and was baptized by Elder Chick July 21st, 1907. She is survived by her husband and four children, two sons and two daughters, two children having died in infancy. When speaking of her death she said that all she wanted said of her was that she was a sinner saved by grace. She realized that the end was near, and calmly directed her youngest daughter as to what she wished done after her death. She spoke several times of the wonderful beauty she saw in the words in the sixteenth chapter of John: "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world," especially the words, "I have overcome the world."

Her daughter, ELIZABETH MOORE.

LOBO, Ontario, May, 1909.

MY acquaintance with brother and sister Carmichael extends back to my first or second visit to the church in Canada, more than forty years ago, and I felt drawn to them in christian fellowship and love from the first, although they were not then members of the church. It was three years ago that he received strength to confess his hope in Christ and ask for baptism at the hands of the church, and it was my privilege to administer the ordinance to him August 15th, 1906. His wife was baptized some later by brother Chick. They were dear to me, and it is my desire and prayer that the dear Lord will support and comfort our brother in this great bereavement, and will give consolation to each of the children and mourning friends. SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., June 1, 1909.

Alfred Kerby, of Oglesby, Texas, died suddenly of epilepsy, early in the morning of April 6th, 1909. He never spoke after he was stricken, but expired in a few moments. The subject of this notice was born in North Carolina, August 19th, 1829, was married to Miss Katie Carson Sept. 27th, 1849. He and his wife professed a hope in Christ and joined the Old Baptists in 1851. He, with his family, emigrated to Texas in 1852, and were among the first settlers of Coryell County, in 1854, and resided in that county up to the time of his death. His and his wife's connection with Old Baptists of Texas dates back to about 1869, and for many years they were faithful members of Salem Church, of Oglesby, Texas. When the division came in that church on the doctrine of predestination a few years ago they stood with Elder Nance and the little company that came out with him. Brother Kerby was a very humble, peace-loving brother, was a good neighbor and was highly esteemed by the brethren and friends of his acquaintance for his upright conduct as a citizen and as a brother in Christ. Eleven children were born to them, of which two sons and four daughters are still living. Twenty-six grandchildren and twenty-three great-grandchildren are also living. This dear brother was pleasant in life and beautiful in death.

The writer was called to attend and conduct the funeral at the grave, in Gatesville Cemetery, but was so hoarse that it was impossible to speak on the occasion. However, an old friend of the family held a short service, after which the remains were consigned to the tomb to await the resurrection of the saints at the last day.

May God comfort his aged widow and all who mourn. W. L. ROGERS.

BLUM, Texas, May 21, 1909.

Peter Carpenter was born in Lenawee County, Michigan, May 22nd, 1840, and died at his home in Manton, Mich, April 19th, 1909, of "la grippe." He was a member of the Old School Baptist Church for many years, and a faithful follower of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He was a kind and loving husband and father. He was united in marriage to Miss Alvira Kempton, May 12th, 1861. To them were born six children, three girls and three boys, of whom five are living to mourn, with their mother, the absence of one dearly loved.

LOUISA PEASLEY.

MEMORIALS.

THE Baltimore Association of Old School Baptists desires to record upon her Minutes some expression as a memorial to **Elder William Grafton,** who was our moderator for forty years, and who has recently passed away from our midst and been called home to his reward. It is not possible for us, by any words that we may use, to tell what by the grace of God he has been to us all these many years as a brother beloved, as a minister of the word, as pastor of two churches in our body and as moderator in the sessions of this association. Beside this, he visited in past years many other churches, and always with loving acceptance by them, and everywhere his faith was known, for he concealed nothing; it was not in him to do so. Fifty years ago, at the session of this association, and on Thursday of that session, he was ordained to the work of the ministry. We who were best acquainted with him in his ministry knew that he never wavered from the faith that has been dear to the hearts of the children of God in all ages. The principles of doctrine that were dear to him, and that were set forth constantly in his public ministry and in his private conversation, embraced predestination, election, special atonement, effectual calling, the resurrection at the last day, the change of these vile bodies and the final glory of the redeemed in heaven. There never was in all his long ministry a time when he made a hobby of anything pertaining to the gospel. He never was drawn aside from the plain, simple testimony of the word of God. He was of mild and peaceable mind, and never cared to take part in heated controversy, yet no man was ever more firm and unwavering in testifying to the truth. The weapons of his warfare were not carnal, but mighty through God. He lived every day before the people in godly sincerity and truth. Even those without were compelled to bear testimony to him as a sincere, upright, humble-hearted man. How can we sufficiently set forth the power there is in such a life to magnify the grace of God, to which alone such a life is due? But we need not multiply words here, though our hearts prompt us to do so. We are sorrowful that we shall see his face on earth no more. We deeply sympathize with the churches of his former charge, and extend an expression of sympathy to the family who were so dear to him and who loved him so well.

MEETINGS.

NOTHING preventing, there will be a two days meeting held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse on Schoharie Hill, June 15th and 16th, 1909. Those coming by rail to Howes Cave drop a card to Geo. A. Miers, Schoharie, N. Y., R. F. D. No. 3. Those via Schoharie write Mrs. Helen Kinney. All lovers of the truth are welcome. GEO. A. MIERS.

THE yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church, of Canada, will be held, the Lord willing, in the schoolhouse in the township of Brooke, Lambton County, Ontario, five miles from Alvinston station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1909, and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

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Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THERE are a few Old School Baptists in Riverside, Cal., and they have meeting the first and third Sundays in each month, at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

W. D. BALL.

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"SONGS IN THE NIGHT."

This little book has been published about a month, and orders for it have been received from near and far, even to the most distant States. All from whom I have heard have spoken to me very highly of the book. For forty years it has been upon my mind to publish these poems and the experience of my brother, together with the account of his last hours, and have wondered why I did not do it. I felt sure it would be for the comfort of many, and the many expressions I have already received assure me that it is so. Elder P. D. Gold writes: "I have read the poems and experience of your brother with much pleasure. How wonderful was the view of divine things given to him. Surely to be absent from the body and present with the Lord is far better." Elder S. Hassell says: "I shall have a commendatory editorial notice in April. I hope you may dispose of several thousands for the comfort of the Lord's scattered people." Elder H. C. Ker writes me: "Your little book, 'Songs in the night,' was duly received, and has given me more comfort than any reading I have done for months. Surely every lover of truth should have it." The price of the book is fifty cents. All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

My Biographical History of Primitive or Old School Baptist Ministers of the United States is in the hands of the publishers, and they promise to complete, ready for shipment, about June 1st. It contains 864 sketches and 340 pictures, besides some sketches of deacons and pictures and sketches of lady writers, "mothers in Israel," &c. Other sketches may be added if sent to me by May 10th.

I wish to say also that I have spent several hundred dollars in the prosecution of this work thus far, and will have to advance several hundred more before even the first shipment is sent me by the publishers; therefore if you can conveniently send me your order with cash, and feel disposed to do so, such orders will be of material assistance to me, will be appreciated, receipted for, carefully booked, properly credited and the order filled immediately on completion of the work.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 77. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1909. NO. 13.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THOUGHTS OF THE MORNING.

WHAT does the morning bring to you through all your daily life? Does it not announce to you a renewed vitality, a hopeful, cheerful spirit, a cessation of the gloomy forebodings of the night, with bright anticipations of the day, with a disposition to make promises for a better future than the past? On the wings of the morning comes the light of day. The moonbeams pale, and the morning star loses its lustre as the great orb of day appears amid the shadows of the east. All this is the signal to awake from sleep, and arise to newness of life. All nature answers to the morning call to be up and doing. The mountains receive the kiss of the rays from the morning sun, the vegetation thereof sparkling with the dew of the night, strengthened by growth in the darkness, welcomes the coming light as a harbinger of good things to come. The evil beasts of prey seek their hiding-places, their deeds being evil they love the darkness, but the birds, the busy bee and all creatures of light rejoice and sing their morning song with joy and gladness. Look back now with morning thankfulness upon the perilous, troublous journey of the night through which you have passed and see if you can find what its signs of promise were to you. It is in the light of the morning that our thoughts go back to the travel of the night through the darkness. Now we see the hand that has led us all the way along, an unseen hand, a loving hand, bringing sure mercies and certain deliverance.

The Scriptures are plentiful in setting forth the morning as contrasted with the night, the one, light and warm, dispelling the dew and dampness; the other, darkness, setting free the motions of sin and evil in a heart of unbelief. The word of the Lord by the mouth of the apostle John in declaring Jesus as in the beginning with God, also declares him to be our life, and the life the light of men. So that, in the arising of Jesus out of the darkness of death (night) upon the wings of the morning, with healing in his wings, as the Sun of Righteousness, shines in our hearts, illuminating the darkness, making all glorious within, subduing all the powers of darkness, causing those who were once servants of sin to become servants of righteousness. The prayerful song of the psalmist was,

"My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up." He heareth all the prayers of the upright in heart, and inclineth his ear unto the broken-hearted, and to them that stay upon his word. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning," and cometh with a glad surprise and wonder, revealing to our joyful hearts that even our filthiness and unrighteousness cannot hide us from his omniscient eye. The word of the Lord came unto Ezekiel, saying, "Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down. Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind the tire of thine head upon thee, and put on thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not thy lips, and eat not the bread of men. So I spake unto the people in the morning; and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded." How wonderful is the power of grace. Even when the desire of our eyes is taken away, we are made willing to say with Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." How great are our troubles in the nighttime, they loom up before us as dread monsters, but in the morning they dwindle in the bright shining of the sun. The growth is accomplished mostly in the night, but in the morning the glory of the work doth appear.

"Early in the morning." This expression is used about thirty times in the Scriptures. It is suggestive of the mind that is alert to every requirement of the work of the Spirit of Christ; it shows a tendency to be watchful in the necessity which sends us to the altar of prayer and supplication, also those sacrifices of thanksgiving which betoken a broken heart and a contrite spirit. The two Marys and Salome, very early in the morning, the first day of the week, came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun. Of himself Jesus said, "I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." He had already risen from the grave, when at the rising of the sun the women appeared at the sepulchre. As the bright and morning star is a signal for the approach of the morning and the rising of the sun, so our gracious Redeemer appeared in the dark and cloudy day, under the gloomy curtain of the law, manifesting his excellent glory and wondrous power in many signs and wonders, signalizing in the darkness of the morning, by his presence in the darkness as the morning star, his own glorious coming, as the Sun of Righteousness with healing in his wings, putting away the darkness of the long legal night, and opening up the new gospel heavens with the glory of the only begotten of the Father, reigning as the King of glory, and holding out the golden sceptre of his righteousness and holiness to his hoping, expectant, waiting bride.

"The wings of the morning." This denotes a motion that cannot be measured or calculated. We do not know of any motion as rapid as the diffusion of the sunbeams at the breaking of the day. Jesus said, "Behold, I come quickly." Can any one tell the exact moment when the light of life eternal first entered your soul? It came like a voice from behind as a joyous wonder. When Jesus spake to the stormy wind and roaring sea, which was as though it would founder the vessel in which the disciples and Jesus were, the elements obeyed the word of command, and all was calm and peaceful, and immediately they were at the shore,

(as by the wings of the morning) where they were going.

"The morning watch." The courts of our beloved Zion, and the walls round about her, are never without the watchmen, day or night. The morning watch is more carefully guarded, and the watchmen more on the alert than any of the others, because it is a time when the enemy is apt to make his most venomous attack. "And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians."—Exodus xiv. 24. Jacob wrestled with the angel until the ascending of the morning, and at the rising of the sun he said, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." What a wonderful sight, and what a glorious morning upon the third day after Jesus was crucified, when they went to the sepulchre and found it empty, and "a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment," who said unto them, "Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him." Their sorrowing hearts hoped for and sought a living Savior, and what wondrous joy to find the answer of their heart, the realization of their hope. How precious to the sorrowing, doubting children when they feel the touch of his loving hand, and hear the still small voice saying, "Peace be unto you." The natural sun rises every morning; the apostle said, "I die daily." A daily dying implies a daily rising of the Sun of Righteousness. May we be ever able to sing the songs of Zion in our own land with joy and gladness of heart.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., May 25, 1909.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April 28, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending you two letters which I think the readers of the SIGNS will be glad to read. The one from Elder H. B. Jones I have obtained his consent to send you. His name has seldom appeared in the SIGNS, and I think he has never been in any of our corresponding associations. He has written much and very clearly and forcibly in some periodicals published in Texas. Elder L. H. Hardy we know well as a visitor, and as a correspondent of the SIGNS, and are always glad to see him with us, and to read what he has written. I know he will not object to having this letter published.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

MT. VERNON, Texas, March 31, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—It has been some time since your last good letter, together with the books, reached me. I consider the book a bright little gem, a rich feast to those who have a spiritual appetite. I read it with much interest, and, I hope, profit. Amidst so many assaults of the evil one, so many fiery trials and temptations, doubts and fears as have fallen to my lot within the past few months, it affords some little consolation, a little encouragement to still hope that my hope in the years past and gone has not been vain; to find there is still life enough within to feel, to feast on such beautiful expressions of high and lofty things as are presented in that little book. What a pleasant companion your brother must have been to those blessed with qualifications to enjoy such companionship. To you who were so blessed as to have and to enjoy this companionship for a time here below it must have been given to know, just a little foretaste,

as it were, of the blessed associations of the eternal habitation of the blessed abode of Jesus and all the blood-bought host who praise him through the ceaseless ages of eternity. Soon it will be your lot, dear brother, to join that blessed throng. I have been an interested reader of your writings in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for more than thirty years, and as far as my limited understanding extends, your writings in the main have been strictly in harmony with the teachings of the Scriptures, and I always felt your evidence of a deep experience in the things of our Master's spiritual kingdom, and the gifts bestowed upon you have been instructive, edifying, comforting and encouraging to many of the Lord's little ones. I never see a manifestation of such spiritual gifts and spiritual-mindedness but I feel sure there must have been much in the way of temptation, trials and sorrow intermingled through the life's experience of the one in whom they abide. I hope, dear brother, you will not think this reference to your gifts is an effort to flatter. These have been my feelings, though very inadequately expressed, for a long time. It has always been (seemingly at least) natural for me to be candid. I know you have been a long time in the Master's service, and, according to the course of nature, must soon quit the field, so I desired that you know this little of my feelings toward you before our passage hence. However, while I am younger in this life than you, I am not forgetful that my time to go may come first. I am now in my fifty-third year, and the thirty-fourth year of hope in Christ. I have never been more tempted to doubt my right to a claim on spiritual life and spiritual blessings than within the past few months; this by reason of the uproar within of the wicked propensities of nature. With the poet I mournfully sing,

> "I am so vile, so prone to sin,
> I fear that I'm not born again."

I wonder if I understand anything of the meaning of the apostle when he says, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Or is it not presumption on my part to claim to know anything of the spirituality of the Scriptures? Sometimes I think perhaps it would be best for all concerned for me to creep away into some obscure nook of the world and never let any one know that I ever named the name of Christ. I feel sometimes that if my brethren could see me as I really am they could never have fellowship for me. I sometimes wonder that they cannot see enough that they would cease to call year after year for my poor services in going in and out before them. That I have been so kept for thirty-four years that I have never had a charge in the church against me, and but little in the way of trouble with any brother, instead of being encouraging, makes me fearful lest I have been a deceiver. These are bitter things to write against one's self, are they not? But this is only a hint at the things that have been felt of late. A little drop of comfort now and then comes in the thought that I still find a little pleasure in reading and talking of the Scriptures and the writings of those who are spiritual. With these exercises there seems to be a closer clinging to the doctrine of justification for poor sinners only through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, and acceptance before the Father in the imputed righteousness of the blessed Redeemer of sinners. If these fiery trials and temptations really bring me closer to and cause me to realize more fully and love more dearly those Bible

truths, or principles of doctrine, then is it not good for me to encounter and endure them? O for more of the spirit of true prayer and supplication, and for more patience, that I may be able to bear up under all that falls to my lot, and never bring reproach upon our Master's cause. The doctrine I have contended for through the years that are past and gone does not seem any the less true or sacred than formerly, and I have felt no disposition to compromise with any form of error. My trouble is not with the doctrine I have been, and am yet, trying to preach, but with myself altogether. Sometimes it seems too sacred for such a sinful worm as I to be trying to write or talk about, and so conclude I had best stop, but yet I keep on. A few more years, or perhaps months or weeks, of this terrible struggle I know will bring it all to an end, so far as this life is concerned. I know not what is beyond the end for me, still a favorite verse is often running through my mind:

"How long, dear Savior, O how long,
Shall that bright hour delay?
Fly swift around, ye wheels of time,
And bring the promised day."

I had no idea of writing so much when I began; pardon me if I have wearied your patience.

Yours in fear, yet in a little hope,

H. B. JONES.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., April 6, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—When I wrote to you last week I was at my brother's, near Goldsboro, where I spoke twice that day. There I had a severe attack of "la grippe," and a very bad throat, with much fever and intense suffering, which caused me to turn back from seven appointments and come home. I am now better, but very weak, and my throat is yet bad, so that I could not attempt to speak if I were there. Thus I miss my April appointments in the east.

Yesterday our little Pearl came in from school and handed me your acceptable present, "Songs in the night," and I began at once to read it. It has been many days since I had anything do me more good. When I got to reading the travels of soul of brother J. B. Durand, and saw that he and the psalmist were so much together, I joined in the company and listened attentively to their words as they dwelt so much together and feasted so often at the same table, and drank of the same depths. They saw the storms together and heard the same roaring tempests. The waterspouts tossed each in the same current, so that they viewed the same delivering hand and experienced the same goodness and mercy. Dear brother, this has been my company for years, and many times I would be lost if these were not there. I get where I cannot see the compass nor use the anchor; I have to steer by the tempestuous mind, and just before I fall upon the terrible rocks and quicksands the Captain changes the wheel and I find myself going out again in the rough and breaking sea. The tempest thickens and looms up just ahead, and I tremble as a timid child, for I can see nothing but sudden destruction awaiting me, until I am made to feel that He who is at the helm has gone over and through every inch of these waters, and that it is only deep calling unto deep at the noise of His waterspouts, and that the waves and billows which have gone over me are all his, that when I go down in the belly of hell it is his. These things make faith look bright, and the compass comes in view, the winds get fair, the seas cease to rage, the haven comes in sight, and I realize that I am headed homeward, where hope lies buried deep

in the bosom of my Beloved; my eyes fill with tears of joy and my hands clap with praise to Him who has shown his mighty hand in my deliverance. I know it is good to wait on the Lord, and I become patient and all fear leaves me, for I know that all things are in his hand and he reigns. Then I take courage in the thought that,

"No raging storm, nor howling winds,
Can this sweet union break;
In these we're humbled in our minds,
And his sweet praises speak."

There are many of these companions by the way, who have gone on before and left such confirming testimony behind them that we cannot doubt their glorious acceptance with God. Then having the very same experience in our own hearts it does brighten our faith and make us hope for the day of our deliverance, and hoping for it we do with patience wait for it, and confidently believe that it will come. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

The Lord bless you and your family.

Thanking you very kindly for your kind remembrance of us, I am your brother in hope, L. H. HARDY.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March 14, 1909.

DEAR ONES OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—My mind has been much disturbed for a time with regard to writing to you all. My hesitation has been because of my own unfitness and leanness, for I feel so void of good things that it has seemed presumptuous to attempt to write to you; but I am making the attempt, with a strong desire that the Lord may permit me to be of some little comfort to the little ones; I can only trust him for guidance. For some time back my mind has been resting upon the words, "Abstain from all appearance of evil," but the field is so large that I tremble, for I cannot even tell the many things about which I have thought. To "abstain" is to keep from, and evil is such sin that we are told to abstain from the very appearance of it. When we think it over, as I have been doing for some time, we will find that all that has not a "Thus saith the Lord" for it, is evil. I may be wrong here, but the Bible gives us such full and plain instruction concerning our lives or our walk through life that I can but think that to go beyond that is evil. But the solemn question comes, How nearly do I walk in that path? Sorrowfully and seriously I can only answer, I do not know, for I am continually going astray in word and in deed. There are many evils that come up in our minds. Dear brethren, remember I am speaking of the evils that will come to the saints of God in this life; I am not speaking of the world, for with them evil does not seem to be just the same as to the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus; it is to believers that it is said, "Abstain from all appearance of evil." As I stop and think of myself for a moment my first thought is of my own ambition to appear in keeping with the world, and of how much it takes my mind and time from the better things, for my strength and time will not permit me to do all, and so, often I neglect going to visit the sick, and speaking with them of the better things, or going to some afflicted one and striving to give comfort, or to the poor in spirit, or the poor in this world's goods, and giving alms to the one, or comfort to the poor in spirit, with the comfort that I have been comforted of God.

We are told to be humble, or of humble spirit; we are warned against covetousness, and against this unruly member, the tongue, which is so apt to say of a brother or sister that which we

would not feel just free to say to them; in fact, would not want to say to them. We are told of honesty in the word of God, and when we come to examine just what honesty means, it is a solemn question whether we live within its bounds. Do we pay all the hire, and not covet some of it for ourselves? Are we true to all our brethren as we should be, or do we look at some with mistrust, and at others as though they were beyond the flesh? Do we not have a preference for the rich more than for the poor? And here comes a thought that has troubled me very much, Do we not shun some of the truth at times, especially when talking with worldly religionists? Are we abstaining from all appearance of evil when in some questionable place, as, for instance, a public bar, or any place of drinking? Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its color in the cup, for it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder. How true this is. Look at the stings in the homes where we have known this to be the case; how plainly we see the sting in the faces of those whom we love in that home; note the sad countenance and the heart-broken sigh. Ought we not also to abstain from all places, the very going to which would bring a worried conscience, thus giving us to know that it is wrong? Is it right for us to gather with worldly religionists in their assemblies? If made a practice of does it not appear as if we were departing from the good old way? Feasts, music, dancing and amusements of various kinds, are very enticing, and yet, if we have taken up the cross, they must be laid one side, or else we are entering into the appearance of evil. If we enter into these things, and enjoy them as of old, where is the evidence that the old things have passed away, and that all things have become new? What evidence is there that we are new creatures if we follow after the old things? Where then would be the cross? If we are so much interested in them that we yield to the temptation of them where is the abstaining? O that we might always have strength to say to Satan, Get thee behind me.

There comes to my mind the thought of an experience of my own, and one that caused me to see how far astray I had been in confiding so much, as to the right and wrong of things, in those who were not members, being advised by them, and not feeling a greater dependence upon the aged brethren and sisters in the church, who have had such experiences as have qualified them to advise and help the little ones, the younger, from being led astray by the sweets scattered along the way, which afterwards leave a bitter taste; and beside, if they turn not aside the church has the more confidence in them. What is the effect of the newspapers of the day? Do they not in great measure take away our interest in better things? With some there is so much time taken in reading them that not much is left for better things, and much in them poisons the mind and unfits it for a deep interest in the divine word. Does not the word speak of men who are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God? Do we not see the appearance of this too often, to our grief? The word says there is a time to everything under the sun; but do we not often have things out of their proper time? And we often distress some dear one by so doing.

I feel I have merely touched this great matter, but it may be the little mite cast into the treasury which will be magnified by the Lord to the comfort of some one. I have written as I often see myself. I

am so prone to evil, as much so as the sparks are to fly upward. I do however desire to live a better life, but I am so weak.

Now I leave this matter. I would be glad to have some one else write upon it. Love to one and all. You all seem very near to me.

Your sister,

MARY HILL TERRY.

[OUR sister has presented in the above letter weighty matters. It is good to have our minds stirred up often to a remembrance of these things. Such writing is good to consider. For ourself, we are glad to be reminded of these things. —C.]

WOODSTOCK, Ont., May 30, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I inclose you for publication what I consider a wonderful relation of an experience of the grace of God toward a poor sinner, who was made to see late in life the wonders of redeeming love. To me it has been exceedingly good, as I had known him for more than forty years, and he was one of the last that I would look for or expect to feel the power of that love that levels all distinctions, and raises the beggar from the dunghill to the wonderful title of a son of God. O the wonders of God's grace and redeeming love. The reading of his experience to me was very strengthening and comforting, and I felt the truth of Paul's expression that God hath chosen the poor of this world, &c. I believe many who knew him in this part of Canada, especially among the older generation, will, like me, rejoice to know that the Lord had mercy on him, and shewed him so clearly his salvation, and enabled him so beautifully to pen it down. Of course I leave it with you, to do as you think best about publishing it. On account of knowing him so long and well my natural feeling may have been touched, and you can judge more impartially.

I was glad that you and sister Ker enjoyed your visit to Canada so well, as I am sure the brethren, sisters and friends here appreciated your visit very much; I have heard many speak of it. The baptisms were solemn and yet beautiful. Though the weather during part of the meeting was unfavorable, it did not seem to mar the enjoyment in the least.

I have just received the SIGNS for June 1st, and it is good. I enjoyed brother Barnes' communication very much, as well as all the rest.

I had written a short article on the words of the psalmist, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." I awoke in the night and the words came to me with some strength and comfort, and the next morning I wrote some of the meditations I had on them, which seemed good at the time, but the comfort has gone, so I will not trouble you with them. I felt God was our refuge, because we had nowhere else to go; driven out of every other refuge we were forced to go to him, and then, a present help right near us, we do not have to go to look for it, but it comes to us, and O that is what we need. I am poor and needy.

Unworthily your brother,

R. SCATES.

JAMES HAMILTON, formerly of Ekfrid, after being an inmate of the House of Refuge here for about fifteen years, died there March 6th, in his 76th year. Interment took place in Strathroy Cemetery. He was well known to many in this county, especially the older residents, to whom the following relation of his re-

ligious experience, as it was taken down from his own dictation in March, 1896, will be of no little interest. But it is also useful, striking and instructive for all, as showing the reality of true religion, and proving that genuine conversion is the best antidote to skepticism. Through all the years since that time it was evident that the change was deep and permanent. He was sustained in his last painful illness by the comfort of the same gospel, and the gracious presence of the same Savior, and died in confident hope of a blissful immortality.

I WAS born in Ireland in the year 1832, and when quite young, in the year 1839, came to Canada with the family and settled with them in the township of Ekfrid. All my surroundings and influences were of a religious and moral nature, and I was brought up under the sound of the gospel. Though never guilty of any outward immorality, the natural heart was prone to evil, and as I grew up and read and studied much, I began to read and study infidel works, which had a great influence on my mind. I became a skeptic of Christ, and called him by names I am now ashamed even to repeat. I got into such a state that I hated his name and his word, and would not learn anything that had his name in it. I believed in God; I could not do otherwise, because I saw him clearly revealed in science and natural law. As I advanced in years my health failed, and I found myself without a home. Then I became deeply troubled about my condition, and though a disbeliever in Christ, often prayed to God to forgive my sins, to give me a sign that they were forgiven, and to provide for me a place of residence. I kept on praying in this way for three or four years, until at last, about the time of my coming to the House of Refuge, God arraigned me at his bar of judgment, where I was kept on trial for several months, the whole record of my sins and shortcomings like a dreadful indictment arrayed against me. I saw clearly in the light of this arraignment that if I were to die I would be eternally lost. I tried to reason with God, and asked him who Christ was, and why I should believe on him. One night the power of God was so strong on me that I thought he would strike me dead, and in my fear and trembling I jumped out of bed. As I was pleading for forgiveness I got back into bed again, and said, "Lord, what shall I do to be saved?" The answer came at once: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." My unbelief, however, was obstinate, and I struggled on for several weeks refusing to believe in Christ. At last, one night when praying, I saw as if in a vision a paper about one foot long by six inches wide, with the words printed on it, "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." Another night soon afterward my mind was so powerfully wrought upon that I said, "I will believe in Christ." It was like making a full surrender, like a miser giving away his last dollar. This was the closing act of a great inward struggle, during which I never shed tears, though I groaned under my burden, and the fear of God made me tremble. Soon after saying I would believe in Christ, the thought came, If Christ be a myth what will you do? I at once answered, "Get thee behind me, Satan," and knowing it was death or life, said, "Christ and God, I am in your hands, do with me as you please." I kept on praying, and He removed my burden and gave me peace and joy in believing; by a gradual process he cast out all fear, and implanted

love to himself and to his word, and has ever since been my loving Savior. The following are some of the portions of Scripture that were sweetly and blessedly applied to my soul by the Holy Spirit: "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself."—1 John v. 10. "When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."—Romans v. 6. "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."—Romans iv. 25. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."—Romans v. 10. But more than any the following gave me comfort: "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."—Isaiah xli. 10. I was led to see that the same Christ I had so shamefully despised and so wickedly hated was the loving and adorable Redeemer who became my surety, who bore my sins in his own body on the tree, and carried them away forever. A believing view of him in his perfect beauty and infinite worth completely destroyed all my skepticism, and I was most willing to bow at his feet and "crown him Lord of all." I can say with Cowper:

"From the dear hour that brought me to thy foot,
And cut up all my follies by the root,
I never trusted in an arm but thine,
Nor hoped but in thy righteousness divine."

Changes, hours of darkness, an inward warfare with the flesh, I yet experience, but I look forward to the day of dismissal from this body, when I will see him as he is and give to him all the glory.

I make this statement of my experience as a witness to the value and power of the gospel, and the reality and personal knowledge of the crucified, risen and glorified Christ. I am not, and have never been, a member of the visible church, but I belong to His invisible church, his mystical body. The change from skepticism to faith, from the burden of sin and a lost state of ruin and misery to the liberty and privileges of a child of God, was accomplished not by me, or anything I could do, but wholly by the power and grace of God. I could no more work faith in myself than I could climb up to the heavens, and I bless and praise and love the Friend who sticketh closer than a brother, who so wonderfully appeared for my deliverance and salvation.

JAMES HAMILTON.

[THE above experience, which was published in a Canada paper, was sent us by brother Robert Scates, with the suggestion that it be published in the SIGNS.—ED.]

RATCLIFF, Ky., March 19, 1909.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I send this excellent letter, written by Elder W. J. May, of Pinsonfork, Ky., which I would like to see in the SIGNS.

Yours to serve,

J. E. THORNBURY.

PINSONFORK, Ky., Oct. 31, 1908.

ELDER J. E. THORNBURY—MY DEAR BROTHER:—Since I returned home from Cherokee I have thought over the question you asked me there, in regard to the golden pipes, &c., recorded in the fourth chapter of the prophecy of Zechariah. Of course I had the same view of the matter then that I have now, but I felt so weak and imperfect that I could not express my few thoughts concerning it; but after thinking over your request with much seriousness I have concluded that

perhaps I ought to suggest to you a few thoughts on the subject. I know they are weak, and perhaps will be awkwardly presented, yet I have some thoughts about the candlestick, bowl, seven lamps, seven pipes, &c., and probably it is not my privilege to withhold them on account of my weakness and droll way of expressing myself, therefore such as I have give I unto thee, I humbly trust, and I am sure this is all you will ask of me.

Since I came home and have read the narrative as contained in the fourth chapter of the prophecy of Zechariah, I find it reads a little different from what I thought, and from the way I understood you to quote it. Instead of the two golden pipes emptying the golden oil out of themselves, it seems to me that it is the two olive branches emptying the golden oil out of themselves through the two golden pipes. Read verse twelve.

I want to mention a few of the wonderful things that present themselves to my mind this evening while I am writing. In the first place, it is plainly shown in the first verse that there was, and is, a special calling of God to prophesy and to the ministry, for the prophet Zechariah says, "The angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep; and said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold." The word "again" means the second time, and the idea is clearly set forth here that the angel's coming the second time to the prophet was to wake him up to the vision of the church of God, shadowed forth by the wonderful candlestick, to which the prophet was asleep, but then was awakened to see Zion in her beauty, and to walk about her, and mark well her bulwarks, consider her palaces and count her towers, that he might tell it to the generation following, the chosen generation, the generation of Christ. Dear brother, all men are asleep to the church of God, and to all spiritual things, until God awakens them and gives them an understanding to see and behold this wonderful structure, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, and whose builder and maker is God. "Ye are complete in him."

As to the word "seven," which is used so many times in both the Old and New Testaments with reference to both good and evil, it is a complete number, denoting perfection or completion. Therefore the candlestick as was revealed to the prophet represented the church complete in Christ, who is the Head over all things to the church, and not only Head over all things to the church, but he is above all principality and power. The seven lamps with the seven pipes thereto represent, to my mind, the seven attributes or divine communications of God, which illuminate the church with their seven-fold or various operations.

But now to the point you ask about: these golden pipes, or branches, which empty the oil out of themselves (verse twelve). I have thought for many years that these two anointed ones that stood by the Lord of the whole earth (verse fourteen), were the law and prophecy, represented in the persons of Moses and Elijah. The revelator calls them the two witnesses, saying, "These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth." We might here ask, "These" who? It is the two witnesses mentioned in verse three; these are the two olive trees; they are called two olive trees, (Zech. iv. 3, 11,) and two olive branches (verse twelve), and the two anointed ones (verse four-

teen), and, as before mentioned, the revelator calls them the two witnesses, two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. (Rev. xi. 3, 4.) All meaning the one and the selfsame thing, I believe; if they do not, I cannot discriminate between them.

I will here adduce some evidence of these two anointed ones being law and prophecy. "For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John."—Matt. xi. 13. "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it."—Luke xvi. 16. Again, "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets."—Romans iii. 21. Here Paul quotes the law and prophets as two witnesses, so I am led to the conclusion that the two anointed ones—these two olive branches which emptied the golden oil out of themselves through the golden pipes, were law and prophecy. The word "anoint" means to consecrate and set apart to a special office or work, and to denote the person endued with the gifts and graces of the Spirit, even the Spirit of illumination and great knowledge of heavenly things. Hence the peculiar application of the term "anointed" is to Jesus Christ consecrated to the great office of Redeemer, called the Lord's Anointed, and then to his anointed ones, his witnesses. And another strong evidence of the idea conveyed is, when and where Christ was transfigured and his face did shine as the sun and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias (Elijah), talking with him, &c. (Matt. xvii. 3.)

My dear brother, I have suggested in a very brief way a few of my many thoughts of this sublime subject, and they are and shall be subject both to your criticism and correction. Hoping to hear from you soon, I will submit the above.

Yours in sore conflicts,

W. J. MAY.

PLANT CITY, Fla., June 2, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Through the tender mercy of a covenant-keeping God I am given the high privilege to drop a few lines for your consideration, not that I feel worthy, or that what I may write will be worth your notice, for surely if I am one of the family I am the least of all; sometimes I am ready to despair, and would if I could, but some power that I have no control over has kept me from my earliest existence to the present.

Predestination is on my mind, and I want to pen a few thoughts on the subject, not to teach any one of God's family, for I am sure the least one can teach me; it seems that my own weakness is all I can see, but "if God be for us, who can be against us?" Predestination means God's purposes covering all events. God is an absolute sovereign over all worlds, things and events, declaring the end from the beginning. God rules everything to his own praise, and to the good of his people. David said, "The wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." When Joseph was carried into Egypt the wrath of man was engaged carrying out the purpose of God, though his brethren were ignorant of it. God had told Abraham many years before that his children should dwell in a strange land four hundred years, and should be evilly entreated. All the evil in all that matter: Joseph being sold, their bondage, hard taskmasters, Moses being brought up by Pharaoh's

daughters, the ten plagues, the paschal supper and the carrying out of Israel by a high hand and an outstretched arm, the pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night, were all in God's absolute predestination before time began, and were all carried out in time to his praise and their good. Hence Paul says, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." The term "all things" embraces evil things as well as good things, sorrow as well as joy, darkness as well as light, springtime as well as winter. We find all this in our experience, and we know nothing but by experience, so predestination covers all the ground from a to z, and God reigns in righteousness. He chose his people because it pleased him, not because of any good in them, nor for any evil, but alone because of the great love he had for them before the world was. It was for Israel that Joseph was sold into Egypt, so was it for the elect family that Christ came and saved them from their sins, and he said on the cross, "It is finished." The Son was ever with the Father, and his delight was with the sons of men.

I have made this article too lengthy, but I cannot stop yet. If I am what I hope I am, it is all of the free grace of God, unmerited favor; then how could I compromise with conditionalism and claim I am an absolute predestinarian? I have had a name among the Old School Baptists for twenty-five years; what a high privilege to be numbered among such a good people.

Unworthy as I feel myself to be, I believe you are honest, and I will send you this letter to do with as you please; if you see anything in it that in your judgment will encourage any of the family you can give it room in the SIGNS, if not, cast the mantle of charity over it and throw it in the wastebasket, where I feel it belongs, and remember me at the throne of grace, for I am a poor beggar, not for money, but for mercy.

I want to say that I love the doctrine the SIGNS sets forth, because it is Bible truth; I see no compromise in it, God's word is yea and amen. I hope God will continue to bless both the editors, Elders Chick and Ker, and all near and dear to them by ties of flesh and blood, and I pray that you may both be kept by the power of God so you may neither turn to the right nor to the left, but that you may be kept unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. May grace, mercy and peace be with all the good writers of the SIGNS, as well as the editors. Amen. J. W. FUTCH.

CEMENT CITY, Michigan.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—In looking over the SIGNS for March 15th, I read the communication of our dear colored brother, sent by brother Knight, with delight. Our God truly has chosen a people out of every nation, kindred and tongue under heaven, and hath determined the bounds of their habitation, that they should seek him, and they that seek shall find him, black or white, bond or free, and shall be led into the knowledge of the truth which maketh them spiritually free, for saith Jesus, If ye know the truth, the truth shall make you free. This is the ground of all true fellowship; age, color, nationality or natural relationship has nothing to do with it; this fellowship leaves no room for carnality. I think there is a disposition to depart from the simplicity of the gospel in some places among the Primitive Baptists, and to substitute some of the doctrines and commandments of men. These are perilous

times, and no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light, and his ministers as ministers of righteousness. What is righteousness? Every word that has proceeded out of the mouth of God for doctrine, reproof, instruction and correction for the man of God. The Scriptures are a thorough furnisher unto good works, which God ordained that his people should walk in; these the ministers of Satan manipulate to suit themselves, adding to or taking away, by slight or cunning craftiness, from the apostles' doctrine; we should ever remember that their writings are stamped with the seal of infallibility by the great Head of the church. Listen: "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." The true church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone in doctrine and practice. But the great God has said he made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil, and when he places the two-horned lamblike looking monster that is now rising up out of the earth, with all his sickening sentimentalism and blasphemy into the saddle, it is for his own glory; so this nice looking beast can speak as a dragon with lamb power. God is the only one who can take him out of the saddle when he is ready. This monster beast claims to be very Christ-like (christian), and if it were possible would deceive the very elect, doing great wonders with their god; but he is a limited god, so it must be Satan, for he is most certainly chained by the all-predestinating power of the most high God. This beast hates election, and his subjects claim that their god and savior is so good that he has given everybody a chance to save themselves by the death of Christ, if they will let him (very limited indeed). The apostles admonish us that there are many false prophets gone out into the world. Of course we cannot expect the subjects of this beast to love the doctrine of the true God, "and for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." What is unrighteousness? Anything that loveth or maketh a lie, false doctrine, daring to dictate to the Almighty what he must do and what he must not do to save his honor and glory from the puny judgment of man. Like our colored brother, I say, Away with such false doctrine that would think to make the Almighty out to be such an one as themselves. Of this sort are those who have gotten down to the point that they will admit that salvation is all of grace, but you must work for the grace. Ashdod. Faith is the gift of God, and doing, or the will to do, is the gift of God. I hope all true Predestinarian Baptists will not bow the knee to this modern Baal, nor their lips kiss him, for he looks very lamblike, who by good words and fair speeches deceives the hearts of the simple. Read Revelation xiii., commencing at the eleventh verse, for a description of this beast that is doing such wonders at this day, dealing in the souls of men, thinking to change laws which God has ordained for the government of the human family, taking children away from parents to teach them their pernicious doctrines and corrupting the earth for all nations, or drinking the wine of her fornication spiritually. If there are any among the Old Baptists who want to drink with this beast, now is their time, for it looks as if the times would be given

into his hand for a season to prove and cleanse his church, for Edom he casts off his shoe, Moab is his washpot; both idolatrous nations, not of Israel. It does not make any difference what kind of a god we serve if we do not like the true God and his doctrine. The apostle speaks of some who worshiped devils, and sacrificed to them which the world wonders after. Satan can claim to be a very earnest and devout christian, but always hates the truth.

These things have been on my mind, and I will send them to you, brethren editors, to publish if you see fit.

DAVID TITMUS.

VIENNA, Va., Jan. 5, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Please find inclosed two dollars for the continuance of my subscription to the SIGNS another year. I do not know what I would do without it. It really seems to me that I could not get along without the welcome visits of the dear old SIGNS, for it always comes laden with good things, things that are meat and drink to the children of the living God, and I am sure there are always a few crumbs, at least, and often a great feast, for many poor, hungry souls scattered here and there in this sinful world. Sometimes it comes with very little for me, only a few crumbs as it seems, then again it is full of good things for me, and I am made to rejoice in the love of the blessed Savior and his dear children. When it comes with but few crumbs the fault is not with the paper or the writers, but myself. I know I am not worthy of one crumb, as vile and sinful as I am, for I can say with Paul, I am the chief of sinners. I cannot even think a good thought or do a good deed, for sin is mixed with all I do; "When I would do good, evil is present with me," so I find "the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do," yet I hope, by the grace of God, to be kept in the faith, "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation," for if we are not kept by the power of God we are indeed lost by the way, for is there one who can keep himself? No, not one; if left to self for a moment we stumble and fall, and stray from the path and cannot find our way. Are we not a most dependent people, dear brethren? Others claim to do so much for the Lord, while we have to look to him to do all for us, for without him we can do nothing, and I, for one, am glad that we are not of the class that does so much work for Jesus outwardly, for inwardly I fear they are not doing so much. They claim to save souls for Jesus, but O how can they make such a claim? Did not Jesus redeem all that should be saved when he hung on the cross and cried, "It is finished"? And he says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." He does not depend on poor, weak, puny worms of the dust to do his work. He says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me," and his wills and shalls are sure. He speaks to a poor, weary,

sin-sick soul, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." How sweet and how precious are those words spoken by Jesus to a poor sin-sick child. I have felt the sweetness of those words, dear brethren, and know whereof I speak, for they were among the first passages of Scripture revealed to me in my early experience, if I have an experience. O that we could all learn of Jesus to be meek and lowly in heart.

Wishing the editors and readers of the SIGNS a happy and prosperous new year, I am, by the grace of God, your sister in Christ,

LENA HUNTT.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been on my mind for some time to write you. I have been putting it off and promising the good Lord if he would spare me that I would try to express my feelings to the brethren. As far back as I can recollect, I had serious thoughts of death, and realized I was a sinner. I read what others had experienced, and thought if I could have an experience like theirs I might know that I had been born again. When I was growing up I desired that the Lord might change me from nature to grace. Even when young I realized that there must be a change in me before I could be in fellowship with the people of God. When I was seventeen years old my troubles increased, I was in a most distressed condition and thought I was going to die, and without hope; I felt that my pleasures on earth were at an end. I was no comfort to myself or to any one else. I would take my Bible and go to the wood, where I thought no one would see me, and read, and try to pray to the Lord to deliver me. I felt that my prayers were not heard. I went about with my head bowed down and did not know what was the trouble with me; sometimes I feared I was losing my mind. I thought if it were the Lord working in me I would know when I was delivered, but I did not. It was with me as expressed by Christ to Nicodemus in the third chapter of John: "The wind bloweth where it listeth," &c. In about two years I was impressed to offer myself to the church; that was a task, as I felt to be a poor, unworthy one, not fit to be among the dear people of God, though it was my heart's desire to be in fellowship with them. On Saturday before the fourth Sunday in June, 1895, I went before the church at Beulah, Hyde County, N. C., and was received for baptism that evening. I felt fearful that perhaps I had done wrong, and prayed the Lord if I had that something might prevent my going next day. Sunday came, all seemed well with me, and these beautiful words were presented to my mind as though they had been verbally spoken:

"O do not be discouraged,
For Jesus is your friend,
And if you lack for knowledge
He'll guide you to the end.

Neither will he upbraid you,
Though often you request,
But give you grace to conquer,
And take you home to rest."

These words gave me great comfort. I was baptized by Elder L. S. Ross, and felt glad and rejoiced that the Lord enabled me to do what He had impressed upon my mind.

My prayer to God is, if I am deceived to undeceive me. May the Lord remember His people everywhere, is my prayer.

LIZZIE SPAIN.

(See obituary in this number.)

BOWDOINHAM, Maine, Feb. 2, 1909.

SISTER MINOTT:—We received your letter Monday, and were pleased to hear from you, but sorry that you have been sick. In Ecclesiastes vii. 14, we read, "In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him."

I suppose you would like to know how we are getting along. We are quite comfortable in some respects; we get enough to eat, and wood enough to keep us warm, but we are not free from aches and pains; Phebe has had rheumatism quite badly in her back; last week she had sore throat; I was afraid she was going to have a serious time of it, but it is better. As for myself, I hardly know what to write; I am not able to work yet, and do not know what is in the future for me in this world, but I believe that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

The epistle of Paul to the Romans is addressed "To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." Sister Minott, if you and I are beloved of God and called to be saints, (and of these) it is written, "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living."—Romans xiv. 7-9. But do I know that he died and rose again for me? Do I have this experience in my heart? If God has given me a new heart, and Jesus dwells there by faith, and I am rooted and grounded in love, I may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that I might be filled with the fullness of God. "Unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end." I often wonder if I have the faith that works by love and purifies the heart, and overcomes the world. I know that it is only the faith of Jesus that can do this; "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." I rejoice that he can work and none can hinder. The world is full of ways and means to help God on with his work of salvation, but he is the mighty God, even the Lord; he "hath spoken and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof;" he saith, "I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds. * * * If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof." And "whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God." I have nothing to boast of over my brethren, for I am nothing but a poor and needy sinner, and sometimes I feel to say as Job in his affliction said: "I have said to corruption, Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister."—Job xvii. 14.

Our children, James and Mary, have been having a hard time; I am sorry for them, but my sorrow will not do them any good; I would help them if I could.

I was glad that brother Wilson was able to attend Mrs. Merriman's funeral; they wanted me, but I was not able to go.

No, I did not get a wedding card from brother Clark, but I got the wedding. They came here on the 25th, in the snow-storm, and I married them. They only stopped an hour or two. I have looked for brother Tedford up to see me, but I suppose he is busy with his work. Brother Clark and his youngest daughter came to see us before we came over here. These, together with you and Lorenzo, are all of my brethren I have seen. It is now between three and four months that I have been shut in, and I do not know how much longer it will be, but God knows, and I ought to be still and know that he is God.

Thanking you for your letter to this poor old sinner, and with love to you and Lorenzo, I am yours, hoping in the mercy of God through Jesus Christ the Lord,

Z. M. BEAL.

STATE ROAD, Del., April 23, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have copied my brother Arthur's letter and am sending it to you to use as you may think best; it was written a short time after his baptism. He did not often speak or write of his personal experience, and this letter which has laid away for more than twenty years is the fullest expression of his feelings that he ever gave us, but he filled well his place in the church the few years he lived after he united with it, and, as I write, the sorrow that we all felt at losing him comes back afresh to my mind.

Your sister in hope,

K. RITTENHOUSE.

BROOKLYN, April 24, 1887.

DEAR FATHER:—Elder H. in preaching to-day said he had often wished to have his load of sin back, that he might convince himself by the evidence of its going away that he really has a hope. I think I must have been in that path, too, unless I deceive myself, for I have often desired the same thing, that I might know how the load went away, and be sure of my hope, that it is not a delusion. The load certainly went, and I am almost ashamed to say it was about fifteen years ago. In a day or two I doubted about it, and have often wished for the burden again, that I might be certain of the relief, and not deceive myself, but the load will never come back to either brother H. or to any of the remnant according to the election of grace. I tried hard to get it back last fall, but it is where Babylon will presently be: "found no more at all." The Savior knows what became of my burden. So I went on, hoping for something to convince me, and for a time when I would be better and more like a christian. For some time I was, I believe, without much interest in spiritual things; I did not go to the meetings in New York, and was in a state that I do not now understand, unless through displeasure the Lord kept the blessing from me. But I found my interest renewed, and ceased to go to other places of worship, as I wanted the truth. Then came the necessity of obeying the command, Why tarriest thou? for who yet waiteth for what he hath received? So I went. But though I find many places in which I see I have been in the same path with the servants of God, I still look for evidences; except I see the prints of the nails I will not believe. One day, while riding up to meeting, I wondered how it was that my brother had received such an assurance on the day of his baptism, and I had not, and wondered whether I was deceiving the church, or if the blessing was withheld on account of my disobedience and unbelief, when this thought

came into my mind: Whether is there a difference, if I say, Thy sins be forgiven thee, or, Arise and walk? So my caviling for a form of words was silenced, and I felt rebuked. I expect I have written this before, but I do not tire of speaking of it, for I was not impelled by my own devices, the necessity was laid upon me by an awakened and severe conscience, that not for a moment became quiet until I obeyed, then I had "the answer of a good conscience toward God." I rejoice even in relating what the Lord has done for me, and am glad with great thankfulness that I can, as I trust, sing the new song, even praise to our God.

A. W. RITTENHOUSE.

HILL, W. Va., Feb. 12, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—In reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as I have a great love for reading it, I thought I would like to write a few words concerning my experience. I have been a member of the church but a short time. Last May I was taken ill with typhoid fever. When I was taken sick I knew I was a sinner, and had not thought any of what would be my awful condition if I should die. At last I began to think that my time on earth was spent, so I tried to pray. It seemed as though I had been such a sinner that my prayers could not be heard. I was earnestly praying, Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner. I wanted to hear some one praying, so I called on some of my brethren and sisters to pray for me. It seemed as if they were praying, but I could not hear them, and at last I called on my mother, who is Louisa Woodrun, to pray for me, and she bowed by my bedside and began praying. It seemed as though I never heard such a prayer fall from the lips of any one, and there on my bed I felt that the Lord had pardoned my sins, and that I never would sin again; but there comes that awful doubting. I knew all my days that I loved my dear old mother sincerely, but not with such a love as I loved her then. She has been a member of the church for many years, and I sincerely believe I have a christian mother. It seemed as though I did not fear death in the least; in my sufferings death would have been a relief to me. I felt that when death set me free from this body of clay my troubles and trials would be over. It seemed that I could not wait until I had strength enough to go to the church, and obey our Father which is in heaven by being baptized. I feel sometimes that I did something I ought not to have done by going to the church, but then I feel that I would not give the little hope I have in the Lord for all the gain of this life. But O the blessed thought comes to me, What am I that I should expect that great blessing? I am but a poor, sinful being, not deserving one good thing, yet the Lord is good to me, and enables me to go and hear what I believe to be the truth. It seems as solemn to me while I am trying to write this as if death reigned in the room.

I will not intrude on your time any longer, for fear I weary you, but felt I must write. If you find any comfort in reading this you may let others read it, if not, consign it to the flames, as the writer is very imperfect.

Your sister in the hope of the Lord,

T. DOLIN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1909.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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ACTS II. 47.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—If not asking too much, will you please give your understanding as to when one should join the church? Also give your views upon Acts ii. 47.

Your brother in hope,

ROBERT S. PACE.

NACOGDOCHES, Texas, June 5, 1909.

We reply all the more willingly to the above request, as the matter has been of late somewhat upon our own mind. It seems to us impossible to lay down any rule which will apply to each and every believer as regards this matter. The teachings of the Scriptures and the leadings of the Spirit of God in each heart where he dwells must decide the case for each one. All those who prayerfully wait upon the Lord for guidance, and who are diligent to search the Scriptures for the knowledge of the revealed will of God, will not be left to greatly err in this, or in any other matter pertaining to the obligations of the saved in Christ. We can only call attention to the teaching of the word of God, and suggest some thoughts for the consideration of all who love him.

Negatively, we would first say that it is not at any time the duty of one who has not been called by grace to unite with the church, or to be baptized. Whatever else may be true of baptism this is also true, that it is believers' baptism that is commanded in the New Testament. It is not infant baptism or adult baptism, but simply the baptism of believers. This means, not such belief as children inherit from their parents' teachings, which amounts to no more than a belief in what history records of events in the lives of men and nations in the past, but such belief as is formed in the heart of needy, poor, sinful, condemned men and women when Christ is revealed to them as their Savior from sin, death and hell. It is a real, living, loving faith in the dear Savior, which will be accompanied by a desire to follow him in all his commandments and ordinances. Children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus, are the rightful recipients of baptism, and of membership in the church of God on earth. Still further, it is not the duty of even the children of God to unite with the church and be baptized before there is given to them this living faith in Christ. In plain words, we mean that until one has come into possession of a good hope in Christ as their own personal Savior this command cannot be laid upon them. Men are to be baptized upon confession of the Lord Jesus Christ, and until one has been brought to know him in the forgiveness of sins he cannot be said to have living faith in Christ; he is not as yet a believer, in the Bible sense of the word, and for him to be baptized would be to profess that which as yet he does not possess. For a convicted sinner to be urged to unite with the church, and to be baptized before he has some experience of what salvation in Christ means, is to urge him to confess what as yet he does not know, and to testify to that which he has not as yet seen. Unregenerate men have no right to church membership, and con-

victed sinners, before the Lord has graciously led them to humble faith in Christ, cannot rightfully receive these sacred privileges. The one necessary thing is faith in Christ, not as our example or our King, but as our Savior. But if faith in him as our Savior be ours, we shall also gratefully and lovingly acknowledge him as our example and our King. Confession of sin in ourselves, confession of condemnation by the righteous law of God, confession of conviction that we cannot by any means bring atonement for our souls, and then confession of the revelation of salvation through the finished work of Christ, are essential things to be wrought in the heart before any soul can be rightfully exhorted to follow the Lord in the ordinances of his house. It is all summed up in the expression, "Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." For ourself, we will say that we have never once felt that it was our right to urge any one to come to the church and seek membership there until we have had assurance from that one that he or she had some humble hope in the blessed Savior as their Redeemer and Savior. This has been so, even when we were assured that the gracious work of the Lord had been begun in their hearts; but the work of God in them was as yet under the law, and such had not as yet been brought out into gospel liberty; there was a confession of sin, but not as yet a revelation of him who is the Savior of sinners to their faith. We still believe that our course has been scriptural. Believing in Christ as a personal Savior is then the one essential requisite to a right to partake of the ordinances of the house of God. Brother Pace asks the question, When should one join the church? We think it scriptural to reply, As soon as one has come to believe in Christ; first, as the Savior of sinners, and second, as his or her own personal hope. Christ must be formed in one the hope of glory, and then that one is entitled to all the privileges of the church of God. The exhortations and practice of the apostles, as recorded in the New Testament, and the examples given there with regard to the coming of believers to the church and their baptism, must and will settle all questions in the minds of believers regarding this matter. These teachings and examples must answer the question proposed by our brother. What then do the Scriptures of the New Testament say? We will say nothing here regarding the baptism commanded and performed by John the Baptist, and by the disciples of Jesus previous to his death and resurrection (although it is our firm belief that this was also gospel baptism) further than to say that repentance was required by John, and faith in the coming Messiah, and that of all who had a right to be baptized at all, not one is recorded as having been instructed to delay for a moment; they were rather enjoined to thus confess their repentance and faith. It is our mind to speak rather of the instances recorded after the resurrection and ascension of the Redeemer to glory. The first is recorded in the second chapter of the Acts, the closing verse of which is that referred to by brother Pace. Briefly, we will notice first, that those baptized were those who professed repentance and faith in Jesus. To these, second, Peter preached the word and exhorted them to repent and be baptized. This they gladly received, and were baptized, confessing their sins and their Savior. It is not recorded here, in the third place, that any one of them was told to delay for a moment. According to the example given here, in the formation of the first

gospel church ever organized, there is no shadow of warrant for any minister to advise any one to delay obedience to this command of God one instant, rather, the example is to say to all who believe, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you." Peter preached thus to believers, but he did not thus preach to any others than believers. Still further, it is not recorded here that those who believed were required to wait until they were instructed in all the order and all the principles of doctrine taught by the apostles. It was made manifest that the grace of God was in their hearts, and this grace would teach them, so that there was no need to wait longer. It is the one important thing, which will lead to all else in the kingdom of God, Is there grace in the heart? Such as these the Lord will guide by his counsel, and we need not fear that he will not guide them into all truth, and cause that they will gladly receive the doctrine of God our Savior.

The next recorded instance in the Acts is that of the baptism of the eunuch by Philip. Here also, as at the day of Pentecost, we find an inquirer, and a preacher sent to reply to his inquiries, and to proclaim Jesus Christ to him. Then we find a confession of faith, and a request for baptism. It is not said in so many words that Philip included baptism in his preaching, but the language of the eunuch implies that he had done so, and the example of Peter at Jerusalem, who did exhort to baptism, certainly gives support to the conclusion that Philip had now also pointed out this ordinance. At all events, this believing eunuch asked for baptism, and was not told to delay, but that he might if he believed with all his heart, and he confessed that he did believe in Christ, and he was at once baptized. This also answers the question of our brother as to when a believer ought to be baptized and unite with the church.

The next recorded instance of baptism in the Acts is that of Paul. First, the Lord wrought in him, working repentance and faith in Christ, that Christ whom he had hated and whose disciples he was bent upon destroying from the earth. The darkness in which he sat literally, was an emblem of the inner darkness and sorrow of his heart, because of the condemnation which was upon him as a sinner. The Lord sent his servant Ananias to him to comfort him, and that he might receive his sight. This receiving of his natural sight was also an emblem of the light and peace which now came to him through faith in Christ, the Savior of Saul from his sins. At once upon the receiving of his sight (not before be it remarked) he was baptized. Not before, but at once afterward. Here also there is no delay mentioned.

The next recorded instance is the baptism of Cornelius. Here, after Peter had preached all that was commanded him of God, and the Holy Ghost had fallen upon them, Peter at once said, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Here again it is evident that there was no delay, but baptism followed belief at once. It is our mind that all who have come to believe, as did the eunuch and Cornelius, will desire to follow the Lord in all his ways as they did, and if this desire be in the heart, who can forbid them now any more than then? All these who have thus far been noticed, followed and obeyed the commandment of the Lord with willing hearts.

The next recorded instance is that of Lydia, and shortly afterward the jailer

at Philippi. These both believed and were baptized at once with their households. Lydia was already a devout woman, while the jailer, so far as we are told, was an unbelieving Gentile. But the Lord opened the heart of Lydia and gave her to attend to the way of salvation as preached by Paul, and she was at once baptized; not before she heard of Christ and believed in him, but at once afterward. So also the jailer was convicted and cried out in his distress, "What must I do to be saved?" Here also faith in Christ was pointed out to him as the only way, and he believed and was baptized at once, that same night. We would remark here that the genuineness of the faith of each was made apparent by the works which followed. First, Lydia besought the disciples to come into her house and abide there, as a token of their confidence in her faith in God, and second, the jailer brought the disciples into his house and gave them meat to eat, having first washed their stripes.

The next record is that of Crispus and many of the Corinthians, of whom it is said that they believed and were baptized. We learn from first Corinthians that Paul himself baptized Crispus and one other, Gaius, and then the household of Stephanas. All these instances recorded in the inspired narrative ought to be a full reply to the question as to when one should be baptized and become a member of the church, and there is nothing in all the word of God which in the slightest degree implies the contrary.

Now it is our mind to close with a few general remarks. The special words to which our brother calls attention set forth the truth that it is the work of God to add believers to his church. The work wrought in the hearts of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost was the Lord's work; the preaching of Peter was also the work of God; the effect wrought in their hearts by the preaching was also the work of God. The apostle, and all who believed, took no power or praise to themselves in all this. It is ours to plant and water, but it is God that must give the increase. Peter and others planted and watered upon this great day, but the fruit of their labor was of the Lord. There was no Arminianism in all these exhortations of the apostles to be baptized, there is none when the servants of God now exhort his children, their brethren, to fulfill any obligation that the Lord has in his word enjoined upon them. Arminianism means that men seek for salvation, through human merit and work, in any way; but exhortation to good works, not to save the soul from death or to secure a righteousness that will justify the soul, but to glorify God thereby, and to edify all who love God, is not Arminianism. It is not conditionalism to urge upon the children of God humble obedience to the heavenly Father in all things, in baptism as well as in all other things; were it so, then in the instances named the apostles of the Lamb were guilty of conditionalism and Arminianism in their preaching. We have no other safe pattern to follow in our ministry than the directions and examples of the apostles of the Lamb.

In conclusion, it is in our mind to say this, that the command to be baptized as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, does not stand upon any other ground than does every other commandment of the gospel. It is one command in common with the command to observe the ordinance of the supper, and to walk in fellowship and order with the church, and to seek to live without blame before all men. One commandment of the Lord is

to be regarded as well as any other. All alike are to be observed to the praise of the glory of his grace. The first step in that obedience under the gospel is baptism, then others are to follow in their order. C.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder B. F. Coulter.)

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bryn Zion Church, Kent County, Delaware, May 26th, 27th and 28th, 1909, to the several churches of which this association is composed, sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—While the Minutes of the association furnish the churches with the proceedings of the body in session, the object of the Circular Letter is simply a fraternal greeting from the association to the churches, and not for the laying down of rules of order, or of establishing dogmas, or of setting forth some finely spun theory regarding disputed points of doctrine, not to distress or to discourage you, or to cause you to mourn because of vain jangling, and of bringing confusion and discord in our midst. We would greet you as holy brethren in the Lord.

We call your attention to the words of inspiration as recorded by the psalmist in the one hundred and thirty-third Psalm: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

"Behold." This word carries with it a scriptural expression of faith. By faith alone can we behold the beauty and order of the church, and thus beholding, all tendency to strife and self vainglory is swept away by the pure atmosphere of divine love. When the psalmist recorded the word "behold," it was a present experience with him; his pure eyes of faith beheld in the brethren the effect of righteousness, which is peace and joy in the Lord, and thus it is with every living child of God, who beholds the beauty of the Lord with eyes of spiritual understanding. But there is a beholding which is not of faith; we look through the windows of the flesh, and the carnal mind presents us with desires of comfort, and ease of body, it conjures up an easy conscience, it promises us exaltation of self rather than the lifting of Jesus on high; but alas, with Jeremiah we cry, "We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble!" Faith however shows us wondrous things in righteousness. We behold a risen, living Savior, a salvation complete and full, the manner of love that shows us that we are called the sons of God. But now are we beholding the church of Christ dwelling together in unity. What a lovely sight! Each loving the other better than himself; each with holy zeal desiring that in all things God may be glorified. All good things are pleasant things, therefore did the psalmist "behold" it as being both good and pleasant; for where grace abounds over the abounding of sin, there follows a manifestation of the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. To dwell together in unity the eye of the whole church must be single to the glory of God; there must be one mind, and that mind the mind and spirit of the church. One faith, one hope and the knowledge of one God over all. The psalmist in another place, in confessing to the Lord, says, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations." The place of our dwelling in the world as natural men and women is the place dear to our hearts, and there is no other place like it in all the world; but the dwelling-place

of the saints in the Lord is not only good and pleasant and precious, and a place of rejoicing, but it is a holy place, a place where God's honor dwelleth, and we must never lose sight of the fact that all who dwell in the Lord's house are brethren. When the substance of Abram and Lot increased in "flocks, and herds, and tents. And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together. * * * And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle, and the herdmen of Lot's cattle. * * * And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between thee and me, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren." On one occasion when Jesus was teaching his disciples, he spake unto them of certain characters who spent their time to do works that they might be seen of men, "they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi, but be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." The evidence that we have passed from death unto life is because we love the brethren. The fellowship of the brethren is that perfect bond of unity which draws them together into one bundle of divine love; their dwelling-place is in heaven, their hope is in Jesus. The apostle says, "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." It is this work of his Spirit that qualifies us to walk together as brethren. May all our days be devoted to his service, that we may live to the praise of the glory of his grace.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

(Written by D. M. Vorhees.)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, convened with the church at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., June 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1909, to the churches of which we are messengers sends greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—In the providence of the all-wise God we have been permitted to assemble once more, as has been the manner of God's chosen people since the church has been established, and at this time we freely believe in this gathering together we are fulfilling the command of him who said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." This is one of God's commands, and shall surely come to pass, for he speaks the word and it is done, he commands and it stands fast; what is done by him is done forever, and he does it that men should fear before him. That fear is not found in the boasting and vainglorying world, but in every trembling child of God, who is fearful that the bruised reed will be broken and the smoking flax will be quenched; but all such trembling ones may rejoice, for the sovereign God has said the bruised reed he will not break, nor the smoking flax he will not quench until he send forth judgment unto victory.

Brethren, we have at this time no new things to bring unto you, but desire to still contend earnestly for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints, for

such faith only comes from him who has declared "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

But we would at this time speak more of how God's people by thus gathering together are fulfilling the divine command of Him who has said, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

The first thing we would notice is that it is a divine command from God to his people, his elect, they who are chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and made manifest in the last time that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. They are children of wrath, even as others, but through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ they are now no more foreigners and strangers, but fellow-citizens with the saints.

"Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem." What is more comfort to a trembling child of God than to preach unto him Jesus? He who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works. But why are his people zealous of good works? Because they are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which he hath foreordained that they should walk in them. When Philip was sent unto the eunuch he preached unto him Jesus, and the eunuch believed and was baptized and went on his way rejoicing. Paul's charge unto Timothy was to "preach the word." The poor, trembling sinner says, Give me Jesus, give me Jesus, nothing else can do helpless sinners good; therefore how can we speak more comfortably to Jerusalem than to preach unto her Jesus?

"Cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished." The angel said unto Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." This is one of the shalls of him who spoke as never man spoke, whose word "is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." How it pricks the poor, trembling child of God in the heart, and makes him to see that all this righteousness is as filthy rags; but thanks to the ever-blessed Jesus, who suffered and died on Calvary's cross, her warfare is accomplished, her iniquity is pardoned, and she has received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. Surely "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

S. H. DURAND, Moderator.
CYRUS RISLER, Clerk.
J. M. FENTON, Assistant Clerk.

(Written by Elder H. C. Ker.)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the New Vernon Church, June 9th, 10th and 11th, 1909, to the churches composing the same, together with the associations and meetings with whom we correspond, sendeth christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We shall again endeavor to address you by way of a Circular Letter, and in so doing our desire is to present a few thoughts for your con-

sideration, hoping that mutual benefit may be derived therefrom. The weight of a Circular Letter, like gospel preaching, cannot be determined by its length, but by its importance. We shall therefore be as brief and pointed as possible in what we have to say.

Much has been said and written concerning associations, as to whether they are scriptural or not, and as to their authority to regulate the affairs of the churches, &c., but we do not remember of having seen a Circular Letter upon the word "association," what it means and the good that should be derived from it. The word "associate" signifies, among other things, companion, mate, fellow. A "companion" is one agreeable to another, in whom is the entire confidence of the other. A "mate" is one like or similar to another in every point. A "fellow" is one's equal. A companion is not therefore one disagreeable. A mate is not one unlike the other, nor is a fellow inferior to his companion or mate.

The word "association" means, first of all, "union," hence an association of churches is a number of churches of the same faith and order organized into one body. Usually every association of churches holds a two or three days session each year, first with one church, then with another, until each church is thus visited. And as the word "association" means "union," we are supposed to assemble ourselves together as associates, mates, fellows. The word "union" is one of the strongest and most significant in the English language, and should be peculiarly applicable to Old School Baptists, who are separate and distinct from every other denomination and people on earth. Without "union" there can be no such thing as communion, even though we be members of the same organization, sit under the sound of the gospel and partake of the bread and wine in remembrance of the blessed Son of God. Union therefore means more than form or ceremony, and without it there is no such thing as association. "How can two walk together except they be agreed?" There have no doubt ever been minor differences of opinion between brethren, and we may be assured that such differences are always the fruit of the carnal mind, because the Spirit of God is one, and is in no sense divided, nor does it teach one brother one thing and another something else concerning the same point of doctrine or passage of Scripture. Therefore when we assemble as an association of churches, together with the messengers from other associations of our correspondence, it should be in union one with another. If different ideas exist as to the spiritual import of this or that Scripture, an association is the last place in the world to manifest it by warring and striving, often about words to no profit. The pulpit of all places on earth is the most unsuitable to argue or debate points of difference, and especially so when anger instead of love is evident. Association should be association in the fullest sense of the word; all should assemble in love and fellowship, laying aside every thought of difference, anger, hatred, malice and envy, thus endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Nothing distresses the aged pilgrims more than contention among the ministers of Jesus Christ, and nothing is more hurtful to the lambs of the flock, nor can anything be so harmful to the interest and well-being of any association of churches. First of all therefore let us take heed unto ourselves as to what we speak and how we speak,

that no offence be given our brethren, and that the gospel of the grace of God be preached in love and meekness, that the tried and weary may be comforted and encouraged, that the lambs be instructed, and that which is lame be turned not out of the way.

In the days of Jesus it could be said of his disciples, Behold, how they love one another, and this characteristic is supposed to denominate them to-day from every other sect and people. But the solemn question is, Are we really known as the disciples of Christ by our love one toward another? How can one who loves another, even in a natural sense, backbite and slander that one? And is not the love of God, shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, stronger than natural affection? If we, therefore, really love our brethren, how can we do them harm? Let us remember the admonition of the apostle: "If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." If there is a difference between brethren in any sense, the Bible gives the rule by which all should be governed, and when one goes beyond that rule and speaks hard and slanderous things against his brother, he disregards brotherly kindness and every other gospel law.

May we all be careful in the future, and remember that our associations are for our mutual comfort, joy and peace, hence not a time or place to debate controverted subjects. How good and pleasant it would be if we, like Paul, would determine to know nothing among our brethren save Jesus Christ and him crucified.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with our sister church, Bryn Zion, Kent County, Delaware, sendeth love in the Lord to the churches and associations with whom we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Again having been permitted to meet, in the providence of God, and according to appointment, for the preaching of God's word and in the hope of feeding upon this heavenly bounty and in the unity of the Spirit of our blessed Savior, we esteem it a heavenly privilege to address your messengers. We feel that your messengers and our brethren in the ministry have come in the fullness of the gospel of Christ, preaching Jesus and him crucified. They have through the Spirit been enabled to take of the things of Jesus and declare them unto us. We are made to rejoice in the precious truth and sit down under the shadow of Him with great delight. There has been nothing said to mar the peace nor to molest nor make us afraid. We therefore earnestly desire a continuance of your love and fellowship through your correspondence with us.

Our next session is appointed to meet with the Welsh Tract Church, in May, 1910.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Southampton Church, at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., to the several associations with whom she corresponds sends greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We feel to render praise and thanksgiving to the God of all mercies that we have been gathered together in the providence of

God and our souls have feasted on the word preached. Your messengers have come bearing evidence that they have been with Jesus, and we desire to express our gratitude and thankfulness for the absence of far-fetched views or theories, and can say our meeting was characterized by the testimony of what they had heard, seen with their eyes and looked upon, and hands had handled of the word of life. We desire to have your correspondence continue.

Our next session is appointed to meet with the First Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J., beginning on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1910, where we hope to meet your messengers.

SILAS H. DURAND, Moderator.
CYRUS RISLER, Clerk.
J. M. FENTON, Assistant Clerk.

The churches composing the Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the New Vernon Church, Sullivan Co., N. Y., June 9th, 10th and 11th, 1909, to the churches and associations with which we correspond sendeth greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We have gladly received your messengers and Minutes at this meeting. During the three days of this meeting there has been presented in the preaching the doctrine of God our Savior, the experimental work of grace in the lives of its subjects, and that exhortation which accords with the imprint of the Spirit in the hearts and minds of the Lord's people. All this has been in the spirit of esteeming our brethren in Christ better than our individual selves, and with no self-exaltation. "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Middletown and Wallkill Church, beginning Wednesday after the first Sunday in June, 1910, when and where we expect to again receive your messengers and messages of love and fellowship.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, it hath pleased the Lord to remove from our midst our dear brother in the Lord, **Elder William Grafton.** While his membership was within the bounds of the Baltimore Association, he served churches in the Delaware Association for many years. He was indeed a father in Israel, a faithful pastor, an able minister of the word, a genial fireside companion, and especially qualified of the Lord to administer comfort to the mourners in Zion while upon the bed of sickness. He was loved by all who knew him personally in the church, and having a good report from without, he was esteemed by his friends and acquaintances as having rare christian and social qualities. Therefore be it

Resolved, that the Delaware Association express its heartfelt sympathy for the family, for the churches which he served so long and so faithfully, and for the brethren with whom he was so closely and intimately associated in the two associations above mentioned. And be it further

Resolved, that this public expression be placed upon the Minutes of the association, and also be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Done by order of the Delaware Association, in session May 26th, 27th and 28th, 1909.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE messengers of the churches composing the Delaware River Association desire to record upon our Minutes at this session some expression of our sorrow because of the departure from this life during the past year of our dear brother, **Elijah Leigh,** of Princeton, N. J. Any words that we may use must come far short of expressing all that for many years he was to the whole membership of this association. As a man, none could know him long without coming to respect him for his steadfast integrity, his courteous consideration for others, and his excellent judgment in the affairs of life. But it is as a brother in the Lord and as a member of the church of Christ that we shall remember him with a sad pleasure. He bore about with him the marks of the Lord Jesus. He always lived in the presence of his brethren, and his faith was known by his life among them. He was gentle, kindly and sympathetic in heart and life.

His time, his hand and his purse were all freely given to the cause that he loved above all else. He was the clerk of this association for many years, and we all felt his advice to be invaluable in all matters of business that came before us for consideration. The thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians expresses the manner of spirit that was in him better than any words we can use. We as an association shall greatly miss his presence at our sessions and at our homes. We know that the First Hopewell Church, of which he had been a member for fifty years, and of which he was deacon and clerk, will long remember him as one who always sought their best interests and who loved them all. We trust that his family will accept from us an expression of our sympathy and sorrow with them in our mutual bereavement.

S. H. DURAND, Moderator.

CYRUS RISLER, Clerk.

J. M. FENTON, Assistant Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Alvah Bogart died at his home in West Shokan, Ulster Co., N. Y., June 5th, 1909, aged 74 years, 2 months and 11 days. Brother Bogart had been in his usual health until two days before his death, when he was taken with acute indigestion, from which he was relieved several times before the final attack which took him away. He was married when nineteen years of age to Miss Sarah Keator, who with one son, Elva H. Bogart, of Kingston, N. Y., survives him. He is also survived by one brother and one sister, both of Illinois. The shock to sister Bogart and the son was most severe, and they are completely heartbroken, as brother Bogart was not excelled as a husband and father. Two children preceded him some years to the beyond. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Olive and Hurley Church, of Ulster Co., N. Y., Oct. 30th, 1859, by Elder Jacob Winchell; was a consistent and devoted member until his death. His home was indeed a pleasant resting-place for all lovers of the truth; his genial manner and pleasant disposition endeared him to all who came in contact with him.

The writer conducted the funeral service at the home; many were present, attesting their regard for him and their sympathy for the family. Interment was made in the family burying-ground, situated on the old homestead in the Catskill Mountains. We think we know how to sympathize with sister Bogart and the son in their great loss.

By request. K.

Lizzie Spain, wife of D. R. Spain, was born March 31st, 1875, and died Jan. 15th, 1909, making her stay on earth 33 years, 9 months and 14 days. She was a devoted wife and mother, filling both of these positions well. She feared God and loved his works, and gave God all the glory and praised him to the end. She leaves a weeping husband, five children, father, mother, two brothers and two sisters, together with a host of relatives and friends, to mourn for her. She was taken in the night of January 13th with a congestive chill, called her husband and told him she was cold. He put on more covers, and in a short time she became so warm she began to throw them off; then he said, "I will go for your father and let him come and give you some medicine," which he did. Her father came, gave her medicine and thought she would soon get better, but she continued to grow worse, and died at 3:30 o'clock on the 15th of January. She joined the church at Beulah, Hyde Co., N. C., on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in June, 1895, and was baptized by Elder L. S. Ross the following Sunday, and lived a consistent member of the Primitive Baptist Church until her death, always filling her seat when possible. We hope by the grace of God to be prepared to meet in the happy beyond, when this day of life is done.

By request of her husband I send this for publication. E. E. LUNDY.

SISTER **Lizzie Phillips,** widow of A. J. Phillips, soon followed her dear husband home to rest with Jesus. Brother A. J. Phillips died Dec. 16th, 1908, and sister Lizzie Phillips died May 16th, 1909, there being only five months between their deaths. Brother and sister Phillips were strong believers in the doctrine of the Bible, that salvation is alone of the Lord. They lived and died near Moody, Texas, and were both members of Salem Church in McLennan County, Texas, and were loved by all who knew them. They loved the company of their brethren much, and were humble and kind to all. Salem Church misses dear brother and sister Phillips very much, but we feel that our loss is their gain. Sister Phillips died very suddenly, of heart failure. She was born in 1836.

May the Lord comfort and bind up the broken-hearted and help them to say, Thy will be done in all things.

Mrs. Margery Elizabeth Vail died Thursday morning, June 17th, 1909, at the home of her son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. James C. Beard, 950 Union Ave., Bronx, New York city, aged 92 years.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

George W. Leap, Missouri, $1.00.

NOTICE.

EXPLANATION.

As many friends have sent cash orders for my book, Biographical History of Primitive or Old School Baptist Ministers, with the expectation of receiving same in June, I beg space to say that the publishers have found it a larger undertaking than they anticipated, and that they now write me that it will be about the middle of July before the book is complete and ready for shipment. Let your order come forward, which will have my careful attention and be filled just as soon as possible, and, too, with a book that I trust, and have reason to believe, you will consider fully your money's worth.

R. H. PITTMAN.

LURAY, Virginia.

MEETINGS.

THE Lord willing, the seventieth annual session of the Des Moines River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene with Des Moines River Church, near Eldon, Iowa, August 14th, 15th and 16th, 1909. A cordial invitation is extended to all, and especially the ministering brethren of our faith and order. Eldon is on the Kansas City line of Rock Island system, also C., M. & St. P. R. R. Trains will be met Friday and Saturday mornings.

I. J. YOHE, Moderator.

J. L. THURSTON, Clerk.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1909, at 10 o'clock a. m., at the residence of brother John McFadden, six miles west of Table Grove, Fulton Co., Ill. Those coming by rail will be met at Table Grove on Thursday before and early Friday morning. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THERE are a few Old School Baptists in Riverside, Cal., and they have meeting the first and third Sundays in each month, at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

W. D. BALL.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at the Hall, corner of 19th St. and 8th Ave., fifth floor. Elevator entrance on either 19th St. or 8th Ave.

11:00 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 77. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1909. NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MARK VI. 31, 32.

"AND he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. And they departed into a desert place by ship privately."

The curious multitude so intruded itself that Christ and his disciples had no privacy, no leisure moments to rest and eat together, so Jesus and his wearied disciples departed from the disturbing throng. You see the picture, Jesus and his followers in all privacy resting and eating together; there are no intruders, they are apart from the coming and going of disturbing visitors, Jesus and his own are alone, all around them is the desert. There is nothing there; the one attracting green spot is here: Jesus and his disciples resting and eating together. This is the oasis in the desert.

I penned these few lines and sat musing; after some moments I said within me, How sacred is the mystery of my life since Jesus came into it. Before this I wandered in the world unconcerned with regard to things eternal; I was dead in trespasses and sins, an enemy of God; Jesus was unknown, undesired, at that time. Saith the apostle Paul, "Ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: but now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ."—Eph. ii. 12, 13. It is all a divine mystery. Yes, I felt I was a sinner doomed for my sins to endless woe, a poor, guilty worm; I trembled with a broken and contrite heart at the feet of him whom I knew had not only power to take my life from the earth, but had power after he hath killed to destroy me both body and soul in hell. (Matt. x. 28.) In my sin-stricken, law-condemned heart I feared I should die in my sins, (John viii. 21,) and that I should be driven away in my wickedness from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. (2 Thess. i. 9.) I could see no hope of escape for such a great sinner, but at length the Holy Spirit revealed Jesus to me, he opened up and sealed to my heart the sacred mystery of the shedding of Christ's precious blood, then I tasted the blessedness of the forgiveness of my sins, that all was covered by the blood and righteousness of the Lamb of

God. (Romans iv. 6–8.) As I have expressed it, Jesus came into my life; since then the companionship of the Savior has been my highest blessedness. But I am finding continually that there is much to interfere with this fellowship; it appears at times to be suspended, and sometimes such seasons are so long I fear that intimacy between Jesus and me, a poor, sinful one, will not be resumed. I say in my fearful heart, Surely he is wearied of me, one so worthless, perverse, ungrateful, and yet I am forced by a power within me to cry out, Do not abhor me. (Jer. xiv. 21.) Only those who are of God and called unto the fellowship of God's dear Son know what it is to live by faith upon Jesus, and such only know how many are the hindrances from the world, the flesh and the devil that would so interfere as to cause to cease all privacy, rest and communion with our Redeemer, who only hath the words of eternal life. Those words are our sustenance, and only by them can we live, but the coming and going of intruders at times is such that we can find no leisure, and have not a moment even to eat a few crumbs in private with Jesus.

No doubt that was a mixed multitude with mixed purposes that so thronged Christ and his disciples. So in a spiritual sense there are various things with whose coming and going we are buffeted, and our spiritual leisure with our Savior is much broken into. If in very truth we are Christ's, believers in him, we cannot remain very long indifferent, at ease, having no intimacy with him. No, we are poor sinners, and the pressing needs that the Holy Spirit causes us to feel awaken in us pinings of soul for the words of eternal life that flow from Emmanuel's lips. "None but Jesus can do helpless sinners good." The cares attending our earthly life, the occupations we are engaged in, or the well-nigh all-engrossing business, and the unceasing intercourse with our fellows, each or all of these as a coming and going throng must absorb our time, and then sometimes we are so pestered with incoming and outgoing carnal thoughts, a thievish swarm infests our life, and we are much buffeted, and though Jesus be in our sight, yet there is no leisure, no privacy, no time so much as to eat our morsel with him, our life becomes so unsatisfying, there is an aching void because of the coming and going of the distracting, wearying depravities of our fleshly nature.

The senses of the natural body are the channels by which we have participation in natural things, and are requisite to our living upon the earth. But as our bodies are mortal, vile, dead, because of sin, so all the senses are depraved; therefore our seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling and feeling are all the inlets and outlets of our depravities in our natural lives, and sometimes every outlet and inlet are so taken possession of by Satan and sin that we have no leisure to rest, or to eat a crumb of the Bread of life. We have many foes, the world, the flesh and the devil, who all conspire to allure or to vex and to overthrow us. Yes, many are our foes, but we have one ever-gracious, almighty Friend, who sticketh closer than a brother. (Prov. xviii. 25.)

> "An earthly brother drops his hold,
> Is sometimes hot and sometimes cold,
> But Jesus is the same."

If ever a poor sinner upon the earth has been favored by faith with moments of sacred intimacy with Christ, I feel I can say I have, and yet very often I find my heart pining for yet nearer and nearer communion. My yearning heart tells

me that it is only glimpses that I have seen, only moments of intimacy by faith have been mine; it is only in part, just a little that I know of Him whom to know is life eternal, and I know I can only be satisfied when that which is perfect is come, when I shall be like him and see him as he is, (1 John iii. 2, 3,) then face to face, (1 Cor. xiii. 12,) immortal, incorruptible, conformed to the image of the Son of God, (Romans viii. 29,) so shall we ever be with the Lord Jesus Christ, our heavenly One. (1 Cor. xv. 49; 1 Thess. iv. 17.) Jesus knows all the hindrances from without and within that we have to encounter, and he knows that we find ourselves at our wit's end in our plans and endeavors to escape from the engrossing, harrassing throng that so interferes, suspending those intimate private relations with himself, our Savior and dear, dear Friend. We have not the sufficiency in ourselves to dismiss the thronging multitude. The vanities, cares and fleshly lusts of our natural lives come and go, and our lives appear to be the very playground for the world, the flesh and the devil. There these loathed enemies engage in their vile traffic to the unrest and disconsolation of the quickened sinner. I repeat, we become conscious of our insufficiency in this conflict, we cannot drive the enemy from the field, and if all depended upon us when should we do exploits? (Daniel xi. 32.) "I can do all things," says the apostle Paul. How? "Through Christ which strengtheneth me."—Phil. iv. 13. "My grace is sufficient for thee."—1 Cor. xii. 9. Here lies the secret of the believer's triumphs. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."—1 John v. 4. Christ is the nourisher and cherisher of the church, (Eph. v. 29,) and receiving succor from him we are helped to lift up our heads, yea, in all our trials we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. The inward man is renewed day by day. (2 Cor. iv. 16.) Though thronged and disturbed by the multitude Jesus speaks, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while." At his word immediately we privately take ship and sail away. The spouse of Christ exclaimed, "Or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Amminadib."—Solomon's Song vi. 12. So the voice of Jesus, or a glimpse by faith of his loveliness, is so alluring. His one word, "Come," takes hold of our hearts and we follow him into the wilderness. (Jer. ii. 2.) There we are apart from the disturbing powers, and alone with him. He speaks to the hearts of his people. "I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her." (speak to her heart)—Hosea ii. 14. One word of Christ spoken to our heart and the vexing powers are held in check, they recede from us, and we are apart with Jesus. That word, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place," separates us, and all around is a desert. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, we see the world with all its inviting charms to be blighted, fading, perishing; it is all to us a desert.

"Let earth's alluring charms combine,
While thou art near in vain they call;
One smile, one blissful smile of thine,
My dearest Lord, outweighs them all."

By the operations of his gracious power the emotions of the depravities of our flesh are stilled. The disciples of Jesus in that literal desert place were free from alluring or vexing intruders, they then had leisure to rest and to eat. There are quiet resting-places in the gospel. (Isaiah xxxii. 18.) There is the place where Christ maketh his flock to rest at noon. (Song i. 7.) Ah, sometimes so far have

I wandered and become so confused I have forgotten my resting-place. (Jer. l. 6.) Our God has his pavilion in the secret of his tabernacle, where he shelters and consoles his troubled ones. (Psalms xxvii. 5.) "And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark."—Gen. vii. 1. There were eight souls shut in with the Lord in the ark, and all around them was the desolating flood of mighty waters. Those moments when with Jesus we have privately taken our flight by ship to a desert place are very sacred. Because, while the tumult of the vanities and cares of life, while sin and Satan suffer us to have no leisure, we find many things arising that demand attention. There are hard questions that we would like Jesus to solve; there are dark sayings, (Psalms lxxviii. 2,) mysteries of the kingdom all so wrapped in obscurity, and our anxious, yearning heart longs to enter into these things. Because of the disturbing, coming and going multitude we have no leisure to eat, and the pangs of hunger are felt, we become faint from the lack of food, we are stricken through for want of the fruits of the field. (Lam. iv. 9.) A true child of God must have food to live, he must have the words of eternal life, he must feed upon Jesus, the Bread of life. Jesus in the desert is the one attraction, our one consolation, our all. "Without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples."—Mark iv. 34. There is no one else near, no attracting strange god nigh, (Deut. xxxii. 12,) our eyes and our hearts are toward Christ when he openeth our understanding to understand the Scriptures. It is so blessed to be by faith alone with Jesus, and to have our souls absorbed in his gospel; here we enter into his rest. (Heb. iv. 10.) Believers are the sheep of his pasture and the people of his hand, and he maketh them to lie down in green pastures, and leadeth them beside the still waters. Ah, everywhere else is a desert place. To rest and eat with Jesus, this is the oasis in the desert, the one green, fruitful, happy place. O what a bauble, a waste howling wilderness is all the world, and all that is in the world (the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life). All is an empty show, vanity of vanities, when we are taken apart into sacred repose and are favored to hold communion with Jesus.

"I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."—Rev. iii. 20. "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved."—Solomon's Song v. 1. Let this be my portion and no one will I envy. While we are plagued with the coming and going multitude so that we have no leisure to rest and eat with Jesus, then our devotions decline, our faith and hope, our prayers and praises, all spiritual emotions, become languid and ready to die. (Rev. iii. 2.) But when Christ says, "Come up hither,"—Rev. iv. 1, "Come ye yourselves apart," then immediately we are in the spirit, and we privately take ship and sail away with our Beloved. O more frequent let this be. O, Savior, thou knowest all my conflicts, how buffeted often I am by the world, the flesh and the devil; come and take me away with thyself apart, I will sit down under thy shadow with great delight, and thy fruit shall be sweet to my taste.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

SALVATION.

SALVATION by grace, free, unmerited and bestowed upon a people chosen of God in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before God in love: foreknown and predestinated of God to be conformed to the image of his Son, elect according to the foreknowledge of God, being born again of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. "Of his [God's] own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures," showing that God took counsel with no one when he made choice of the chosen in Christ; did not even consider the mind of them that were chosen, or leave it optional with them whether they would be saved or not, so that all that can be treasured up in our minds as to our own free agency in the matter of salvation, whether in time or eternity, is the product of the carnal mind, which is enmity against God. God holds man accountable for his transgressions, as we see by the dealings with our first parents in the garden of Eden. When the command was given to Adam not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, God declared, "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Adam did eat, and Adam died in that day to his former estate and uprightness before God, and was separated from his Maker and that relation that preexisted. Then lest Adam partake of the tree of life and live forever, God drove them from the garden and placed cherubims and a flaming sword (violated law) which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life. Hence we see no way to have right to the tree of life, except upon the ground of merit or acceptance with God, and such was not in Adam, but in our Lord and Savior who died that we might be holy and without blame. Jesus as a man in the flesh came under that sword, received the stroke upon Calvary's cross and poured out his soul unto death, was laid in the grave, and the third day arose again, showing that he had destroyed the power of death, for it was not possible that he should be holden of it; yes, he broke the bars asunder and arose triumphant and victorious over death, hell and the grave. This he did not do upon his own account, but to do the will of the Father who sent him, and to redeem them that were under the law, the elect of God, so they are no longer under law, but under grace.

I understand that none but God's elect are redeemed from under the law of sin and death, hence the law is in full force and all the nonelect are under its curse. To illustrate this point I will refer to our state law: a man commits a crime that the law says is punishable with death, the law seizes him and puts him to death; the law is satisfied, but still remains in force as before. God gave Jesus power to lay down his life and power to take it again; no other person but the Son of God was given that power, and Jesus laid down his life for his own, who were given him before they fell in Adam, for it is evident they were his sheep, otherwise he could not have redeemed them, as no man can redeem anything that did not previously belong to him. So we see the law is holy, just and good, and in nowise is God to be charged with being the author of sin because the nature in man was such as to transgress his law. God made man upright, not holy, and the man remained upright and free from sin until he followed his bride in the transgression. Sin is the transgression of the law; then how utterly absurd to charge God with being

the author of sin when man's transgression was its origin. Suppose we should take the ground that man should have been made so he could not have sinned, then he could not have fallen, and he would have remained "upright" and "very good" as he came from the hand of his Maker. Where then would be his avenue to heaven? God's way is perfect, for "he is the Rock, his work is perfect; all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." Such are the words of Moses, the servant of God. If man had in himself remained innocent and upright there would have been no grounds or necessity for God to have given him eternal life to inhabit the realms of eternal glory, which God purposed before the world was. If the disobedience of Adam had not come to pass, sin and its penalty (death) would never have had an existence, there never would have been the fall, and hence no need of a Redeemer. But on the other hand, we see God the sovereign Ruler of the army of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth, doing his will in heaven and in earth, yet we must admit man's accountability for his transgression, which is conclusively proven in the Scriptures. God made man upright, and sin entered by the man's disobedience, and we are further told that Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression, so Adam knew the law and its penalty. God never designed to take one to eternal glory by any act or acts, nor merits of the creature, for how can a corrupt fountain send forth sweet water, or a bad tree bring forth good fruit? It is by their fruits ye shall know them. The fountain must be made pure before that which proceeds from it is pure; the tree must be made good before it bears good fruit. There is no virtue or holiness in man by nature, and there can be no fruit unto righteousness proceeding from an unholy and polluted thing, for "who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?"

God's people are set forth in many figures of speech in the Scriptures, and one is, "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." Jesus said, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up," showing there are some who claim to be God's planting who are not. Jesus in his sermon on the mount said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven," and Paul tells us that "the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal."

In conclusion I will say, God is the giver of every good and perfect gift, the most glorious gift being his Son, in whom is treasured the fullness of infinite blessings, both for time and eternity. God is praised, honored and adored by all his subjects. Jesus Christ is exalted above every name under heaven, and salvation is entirely by grace.

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., April 24, 1909.

MAPLEWOOD, W. Va., Feb. 26, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I have been reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for about two years, and it has been of great comfort to me, as I see some have been made to travel the same path of life that I have. I have been thinking for some time about writing concerning what I hope the Lord has done for a sinner like me, after trying very hard to keep the commandments of the law twelve years in order to be saved,

and it seems to me that I got worse all the time instead of getting better. When I was eleven years old I first saw myself as a sinner in the sight of God, and then I began to try to do good, and if it had been possible for a kingdom to be divided against itself and stand I would have accomplished what I tried to do; but I believe the Lord showed me a better way than that of mine. When I was about fourteen years old I had a dream, and in my dream I thought I was walking along the road and I met a woman and told her my dream, and I thought she said it was a sign I was not going to live long, that I would live until I was twenty-three years old, and this dream gave me lots of trouble until I was twenty-three years old. After I had this dream I tried with more determination to do right than I had before.

When I was seventeen years old I went to a protracted meeting, which was held by the Missionary Baptists, and I went to the mourners' bench to get them to pray for me, but I never saw that it did me any good. I was so determined that I fasted two days, but that did no good, so, without any change of heart, I thought I would join the church and be baptized and do good. I thought probably by this act I would be all right, but it did not make any change in me; I seemed to get worse. I would take my Testament and go out in the wood by myself and read and pray, and make vows to serve the Lord, but I would not get ten steps away from the place before I would have bad thoughts, so this would convince me that there was no good in me. I got away from the church that I joined and did some bad things, which made me think I was a backslider. I visited another place where the Missionary Baptists were holding a meeting, and tried to get good again. I would go out by myself to pray, but my heart seemed so hard and I felt so unworthy to call on the Lord that I could not pray. I went out in the wood one Sunday, in the same old way, to try to pray, but I did not get an answer to my prayer, so I said to myself, I will serve the Lord, and from this determination I seemed to get happy, and I was happy for three days, rejoicing in my own righteousness, for after the three days I was as bad as ever, if not worse. If this righteousness had been of the Lord it would not have worn out, because we find that it is said in Malachi: "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." So while I was happy the three days I joined the church again, and tried the old "do good" system again, but being out by myself one day I got to meditating upon the Lord's supper, and the question seemed to be asked in my mind, Why do the Missionary Baptists believe in close communion? As the thought came to my mind that there were just as good people among Methodists as there were among the Missionaries, the thought came that they were all working to get to one place, and they would work together in their meetings, but when the Missionaries would go to the Lord's supper it was, Stand back, Methodists. Now the thought came to my mind that there was no occasion for them to differ. I thought if they got to the good place, that they would have to be as one there. I see now that the Scriptures hold up the idea of oneness, as we will find it written in Galatians: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." By this meditation I think I lost forever my confidence in the Missionaries, so after this time I would go to hear the Methodists

sometimes, but it did not seem to do me any good, for I was losing confidence in all denominations, and did finally lose all confidence. The only reason I could find for this was that I had made such a mock of religion that I came to be a hardened sinner. I went on this way until I was twenty-three years old and I felt very well, but a day or two afterward I began to feel very badly, and then the dream came to my mind, and the thought came to me in this way, You are going to die, and there is nothing that can save your life; you need not send for a doctor, for the doctor cannot save you, and all this seemed to strike me as forcibly as if some one had been talking to me, and then the dreadful shock was upon me; I had tried to do right for twelve years, but I saw myself a wretched sinner, and as such I had to die; what should I do? Everything looked dark before me, and the people appeared unnatural to me. Two of my brothers were with me at this time, but I did not tell them any of my inward feelings. This feeling stayed with me three days; the third day I went out by myself to pray once more, and said, Lord, if it is thy will for me to live, I will live, and if it is thy will for me to die, I will die; Lord, save me, a sinner, I perish.

I think my dream came to pass, for I have not had any confidence in myself since that time. I saw that I could not do anything to keep myself alive, neither could I do anything to save myself after I died. I was made to look to the Lord for all blessings, both in time and eternity.

Then came the thought that there must be one denomination that preached the true gospel, and only one, and the assurance was given me that the Old School Baptist was the true one. My mother was a member of the Old School Baptist Church for several years, but she died when I was young. My father is a believer, but he has never united with the church. When I was ten years old I went out to work for myself, so I was reared with the Missionary Baptists, and never heard the Old School Baptists but about three times before I was twenty-three years old.

I would go to see my father sometimes, and I would argue with him that the way I believed was right. The difference between us was this: he believed that the Lord saved his people, without the effort of the creature to assist him, and I thought the creature had to make the start, and then the Lord would help him. My father told me if I could do right to go on and do it, and I tried to do so, until the Lord, I hope, showed me that he had all power in heaven and on earth, and then I saw myself such an awful sinner in the sight of God that I felt unworthy to call on him to save a sinner like me, yet I was made to know that if the Lord did not save me I would be lost, so I now say, as my father told me, that they who can do right, go on and do it, but I cannot do any good myself. Paul says in Romans vii. 19: "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do."

In the spring of 1907 I became very anxious to hear the Old School Baptists preach, and did not know of any nearer than one hundred miles. I went to hear them in the summer, but the first sermon I heard did not seem to have very much affect on me. Then I went to hear Elder J. W. McClanahan the fourth Sunday in August, and I think he is a most noble speaker in the true gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, giving God the praise for the gift which he hath bestowed

upon his people. He took for his text Matthew xi. 28: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," and while he was preaching it seemed to me that Christ was telling me to cease from my own works, and put my trust in him, saying, And in me there is rest, for I have redeemed you from under the curse of the law. I never will be able to tell how sweet that gospel sounded to me that day, because I had made some very hard struggles in my life to do right, but I could not.

The first Saturday in October, 1907, I joined the church which is known as the Hopewell Church, where Elder J. W. McClanahan now preaches every first Saturday and Sunday.

I must close for this time. I have written this feeling so unworthy that I could hardly write, and now, dear editors, if this goes before the household of faith I hope you will correct all mistakes. Do with it as you see fit.

From an unworthy brother, if one at all,

W. C. PENNINGTON.

ALBANY, Oregon, May 25, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have just received a letter from Elder James Vanderpool, which I will take the liberty to send to you for publication in the SIGNS, if you think it will be comforting to the household of faith. Brother Vanderpool is an able minister of the gospel, and is well known and highly esteemed among the churches of Oregon and Washington, and no doubt they would read with interest a letter written by him.

SILAS WILLIAMS.

PORT TOWNSEND, Wash., May 22, 1909.

ELDER SILAS WILLIAMS—VERY DEAR BROTHER:—I am thinking of you, and will lay aside all restraint and try to commune with you by letter, but would much rather see you and talk of things we hope for and believe we know. Although I am deprived of the privileges of the church, yet I hope my conversation is with them in heaven, and still hope to be permitted to meet with them in church capacity. With all the enticing allurements of the world I find no consolation or rest, and thus am made to indulge in the fond hope that I am crucified to the world and the world to me. It does my soul good when I think I am made to know and understand a people whose ways are so strange to and despised by the world. Surely this must be the people of whom it is said, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." The Savior said of them, "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." Now in manifesting ourselves to them do we find a waiting hand of fellowship for our reception? If so, from whence must it arise? Surely such union cannot arise without a proper record, "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life." In tracing the mystery of this union and fellowship we may refer to many incidents and places of its wonderful demonstrations; suffice for the present to illustrate by the example set in the case when Cornelius had been saved and called with an holy calling, (and I may of him say with Paul, and as Paul says of all saints,) "According as he hath chosen us in him [Christ]

before the foundation of the world. * * * Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." "Not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began: but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." "By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," and that perfect work was manifested at the preaching of Peter to Cornelius, the centurion, at Cæsarea. Yes, that was a manifestation of "the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known, by the church, the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Truly that was a display of the manifold wisdom and grace of God, which all the churches and principalities and powers in heavenly places were constrained to greet with the hand of fellowship, for all were fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God, and it makes no difference where the habitation or what the nationality is, they are no more foreigners or strangers; for they are come unto "mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect. And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

Brother Williams, when I take my pen and begin to walk about Zion, and tell the towers thereof, and mark well her bulwarks and consider her palaces, I must repeat with the psalmist, "This God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death," and of them Moses said, "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee; when the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." And of Jacob and Esau it was said, "The elder shall serve the younger," and it was impossible for it to be otherwise, for the Lord had spoken it. And in a certain place and on a certain occasion we hear Jacob saying, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." This is the place of which it was said by the angel to the shepherds, "For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." And it is the place over which the star came and stood when it had gone before the wise men of the east, and there was born the Builder of the house of God, in whom dwells all the fullness of the heavenly Jerusalem. This is he of whom it is written, "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his

way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. * * * When he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of the deep; when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth; then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." And when he was manifested in Bethlehem Judea, Herod the king was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him, because the fullness of the time had come when, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."

Now, brother Williams, lest I weary your patience I will close, hoping to see you before long. Give my love to the brethren generally. May grace abound with all the true Israel of God. Farewell.

JAMES VANDERPOOL.

LANHAM, W. Va., Nov. 12, 1908.

ELDERS CHICK AND KER—VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel this morning I would love to see you, that we might talk of the beauties of the written word of God as we hope it has been revealed to us, for it is by revelation that we have spiritual perception of it. The revelation of Jesus Christ in man causes that person to show forth the praise of the Lord. While naturally man desires to exalt himself, the effect of the revelation of Jesus in man is to exalt the Lord. I often tremble when I am permitted by the light of the knowledge of Jesus, as a lamp within, to see the evil disposition and propensity of my nature; it is then I can say with Paul, In my flesh dwells nothing good. Here for a little while I have the spirit of meekness, which is one of the jewels shining in the child of God, if one at all. We feel too vile to be worthy of any blessing, and consider that we deserve to be condemned, and thus we abhor ourselves; we feel as did Job of old. Unprofitable I feel my life to be, sin is mixed with all I do, or ever have done, and I have no claim for labor done, and feel the need of forgiveness. Out of a sense of self-abasement and self-abhorrence grows the desire to forgive others if they have wronged us, and to regard with pity and compassion the wrong doings of mankind, and with toleration to view the infirmities of all men, and we feel to leave the outer court without and measure it not. O, my precious brethren, how fruitless have ever been our efforts to change our old carnal nature, and yet having this knowledge we continue looking to the flesh to see if we cannot find some evidence that it is growing more spiritual, forgetting that that which is first is natural, then afterward that which is spiritual (new man in Christ). So we have our natural standing in Adam, and our spiritual standing in Christ, and we who worship Jesus have no use for conditionalism, for we know that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." We have learned in the school of Christ to worship in newness of the spirit, and not in the oldness

of the letter, for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful: but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." The blessed man walketh not in order to be blessed, but because he is already blessed he walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly. The counsel of ungodly men has ever been diverse from the truth; they make a loud profession of christianity, and boast of their numbers, but they deny the power of God and limit the Holy One of Israel, and limit the doctrine of predestination and election, deny the two main hinges upon which our eternal destiny hangs; they deny that "every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." The blessed man is not seated with the scornful, and his walk is not in the counsel of the ungodly, but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night, for God has said that he would write his law in their heart and print it in their mind, and he would be to them a God and they should be to him a people. In their experience they are taught to have no confidence in the flesh; they are taught to stand aloof from all the institutions of men, and with Paul they can say that all things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to his purpose.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

HILL, W. Va., May 27, 1909.

EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have all evidence from a spiritual standpoint to believe that there is only one living God, all-wise, all-righteous, and ever to be adored, and one who has a chosen people who do worship him in spirit and in truth, and one who so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

As an evidence that election is sure, and why I believe it sure, I will relate a short sketch of my life. A few years ago I was thinking on God's mercies, and his great love to his people, when a dream which I had when I was about the age of ten years came uncalled across my mind: I dreamed that God, my mother, father and I, together with a number of other people, were in a garden, and that the end of time had come, that the earth would soon be destroyed by fire; it seemed to me I could see the beestands on fire; all at once I saw God dividing the righteous from the the wicked, and as a child I know how thankful I felt when I found that I was one of the chosen to remain in the garden with him who is able to take care of his own anywhere and under all circumstances. (I believe that every one saved had his name written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world.) I remember how I rejoiced in God's love. After this, for a short season, God put me into the hands of Satan, but, thanks to His name, Satan was not able to hold me. I have a hope which, if it were mine to give, I would not give for all the riches of this world. While Satan had me, as he thought, I must confess, to my great regret, that I was very wicked (as Satan would have all people be), and did most

all kinds of wickedness, but I did not kill any one, neither did I swear any lies or steal.

At the age of about twenty-six God caused Satan to relinquish his hold on me, as I hoped, and still do hope. In the year 1866 God took from me my loving wife; it seemed to me that she was too good for me. In the year 1874 I united with the Old School Baptist Church, of which I remain an unworthy servant yet.

From a natural standpoint it seems almost a miracle how I was spared through all the dangers of the Rebellion of 1861 to 1865, of which I was a soldier. I remember one particular event, which I will relate: I was surrounded by Barker's regiment, and it seemed that all the soldiers of his regiment were firing at me at once; thanks be to God, I never felt a ball. It has been a wonder to me how it was that I was not killed, but, according to my understanding, my time had not come, and they could not hit me. God preserved my life for some purpose best known to himself; but I cannot help wondering why he saved such a vile wretch as I was.

I have been afflicted with disease for a long time, but through all my distresses and miseries I rejoice in the Lord, for I know that it is he who sustains me, and I have been happier in my old days than ever before. O brethren, I do praise the holy name of the most high God, and feel it is but just for me to lie here suffering. When I think in this light I am made happy in God's love. Praise his holy name, I am willing to suffer threescore and nine years more, if need be, for his sake, if it is his will. I would like to tell the whole world how I love God, and how merciful he is to me in my afflictions, and how unworthy I am to have such a hope in so wonderful a grace as his. I love all his people, for I know they are his workmanship. I recall people who have had my displeasure in days gone by, and who were my enemies, but I forgive them and love them for the sake of God, who did forgive my sins, as I hope.

Not many days ago I had a vision, in which I was told I must preach. I feel as Paul did: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" I am willing to do anything that is his will.

Your brother in hope,

GREEN WOODRUM.

ELGIN, Ore., June 3, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I send you a copy of a letter received from sister M. E. Carter, that I believe will be read with interest by lovers of the truth. Sister Carter's membership is in our little church here, but it has been many years since she met with us, she living some five hundred miles from here. I have visited her and her son three times at their present home, in "the woods," as I called it, where we held meeting at their home, as it is a sparsely settled country round them. There were but few out, but the few were interested hearers. I visited her and her son last summer, in company with Elder Wilson, and we had a pleasant meeting with them. There was a sister Hickerson and husband, who live in Seattle, present, and one other lady I believe composed the congregation. But the two or three were gathered together, and we felt it to be in the Master's name. There are quite a number of Baptists scattered over western Washington who do not have church privileges. There are three churches in western Washington, two on the Cowlitz River and one at Oakville. There was

some talk of organizing another church in or near Bellingham, where there are several Baptists, but I do not think it has been done. If the Lord will, I now have it in mind to take a tour through that country some time this summer, and visit as many of the scattered Baptists as I can. I have sister Carter's consent to send you her letter for publication.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

SUMNER, Wash., Jan. 14, 1909.

ELDER G. E. MAYFIELD—MY DEAR PASTOR AND BROTHER:—We received your very welcome letter, containing one from dear Elder Durand to you, and we thank you for writing, and also for the privilege of reading Elder Durand's letter. He truly has much sickness in his family, and, like Paul, in his own hired house, receives all that come unto him. Yes, I am interested, and we both are, in the account you gave of your meeting, in all the hymns of praise and texts used. Yours of John xvii. 4, is not a text, it is a world: "I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." Can mortal mind conceive, or mortal tongue ever tell the magnitude of the work "Thou gavest me to do"? None can have any conception of it until "born of God," and given his Spirit, and by the Light that shined in darkness, realize the purity and holiness of that God who humbleth himself to behold the things which are in heaven, and who cannot look upon sin. The light that manifests his holiness manifests our total depravity, for we did not even desire to love him with all our heart and all our soul and all our strength until he shed his love abroad in our hearts by his Spirit which is given unto us, and however much we may have walked in uprightness in the sight of men, the motive was self. The flesh profiteth nothing, and that was all we had until the light shined, and we can never tell all the exceeding sinfulness of sin in our own case, but our dear Savior bore not only all the sins of the "hundred and forty and four thousand" sealed of the twelve tribes, but also of an innumerable company that no man can number, and glorified his Father on earth, and finished the work he gave him to do. My dear brother, this is text enough to last while time does, and in eternity.

"He left his radiant throne on high,
The seat of heavenly bliss,
And came to earth to bleed and die;
Was ever love like this?"

I have no doubt an account of the trip that Elder Durand asks you to write of would interest the readers of the SIGNS, and help those of the laborers in the vineyard who are burden-bearers.

Yes, I would be glad to see and hear Elder Durand, and all who have ever heard him would also. Many preachers through his influence have been helped to come and attend what are called in the east the "spring associations," each succeeding week, and meetings at different churches in the interim. We will do all we can financially toward it, if spared to hear of his coming. It is over thirty years since daughter Edith and I came west, and my two youngest sisters are all I have seen of my kindred from the old home. The most we left behind are dead, but we have not lacked, the Lord hath opened rivers in the wilderness and springs in the desert, and you have served through toil and hardship. One of the many trips you have taken in winter over the Blue Mountains to feed the few at Big Spring would surprise, and surely it was not for price or reward; the Lord knoweth. Still the God who put you forth, and goes with you, enables you to

tell the glad tidings: "Thy people also shall be all righteous," and to tell it all and add no word. I am glad of the visiting preachers who come to cheer you, and desire to ask for you and all the church of your care that the Lord will supply all your need, and grant you the shield of faith, whereby you may be enabled to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one, and bless your wife and children.

In love and fellowship with you and all the dear ones whom you feed,

MARTHA E. CARTER.

GLENWOOD, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending money order to pay for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and hope you will not think hard of me for waiting so long. A dear old sister and myself take the SIGNS together; she has been in bed three months with rheumatism. We are hardly ever blessed with preaching, except through the SIGNS, and would miss it very much, as we get much comfort from reading it.

I will try to tell what I feel the Lord has done for me. I am nearly forty-nine years old, and my first impression of my sinful condition was in my ninth year. My mother had told me there was a God and a devil, and that the good people went to God when they died and the bad went to the devil. One day I was alone at the house taking care of my baby sister, and all at once the thought came to me that I was going to die and my soul would be lost. I got down by a chair and tried to pray. The feeling wore off after awhile, but would come back every now and then, until I was in my sixteenth year. In July I went to a Missionary Baptist meeting, and when they called for mourners I was weeping over my condition, and a lady came and took me up to the mourners' bench, and I kept going, but got no better. One day at noon a lady took me to the wood to pray for me. She prayed, and told me to pray, but I told her I did not know how. She said, "Give yourself to Jesus." All I could do, say or think, was, Lord, save me. We went back to the house; I was feeling worse than ever, and when evening services were over and every one was leaving the house, I remained until nearly every one had gone, and it seemed to me that I could not leave; but I got up, still weeping, and went out. Two ladies saw my condition and came to my aid just in time to keep me from falling on my face, and tried to comfort me. After dark I went out in the yard to try to pray. I was looking at the stars, and they were so beautiful I forgot my grief. I went in the house, but could not stay; I wanted to go and pray again and look at the stars. I went to hear preaching next day, and after we started home I felt that I could not wait until next day to join the church. The next day I offered myself and was received, and stayed with them eighteen years, but was not satisfied all that time. In 1893 I went with some friends to their "Hard-shell" meeting (as I had always heard them called), and I still love the name. Brother Jones told my feelings better than I could myself, and O how lovely the brethren and sisters looked; I did not want to leave them. I began searching the Bible to see if I could tell whether they were right or not, and could find nothing but their doctrine. I read and studied a year on the matter, and wanted to join them, but did not know what to do. The time had come again for a three days meeting, and I was troubled about what to do. I went to the meeting the next morning and felt that it would be right, so I offered myself and

was received, and have always been content with them.

This is my second attempt to write, and I hope you will excuse my mistakes. Do with it as you think best.

Your little sister, in hope of eternal life,
ANNIE ROBERTSON.

DUNCAN, Okla., Feb. 14, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It is again time to renew my subscription to our family paper, which has been a comfort for many years, and is all the preaching I have in this lone wilderness country. I would feel sad to give it up, which I thought a short time ago I would have to do on account of times being so hard financially, and I could not get what were my rights. It is next to the Bible with me, and I thought, How will I give up anything that has been such a comfort to me? I tried to pray, O so earnestly, that the good Lord would provide me with means to again pay up, that our editors would not have to be burdened on my account, and that I might have the privilege of reading the sweet messages of love from the dear brethren and sisters from far and near, all telling the same sweet story of Jesus and his love. Yes, dear brethren and sisters, it is an old story, yet it is ever new to the dear children of God; it is a precious story that I love to hear, for it cheers my poor, drooping heart when I am lonely and sad. May it ever be the will of our heavenly Father to sustain the editors, and help them wield the sword of the Lord to the comfort of his dear children and his own glory. I have thought of late that surely I prized the SIGNS too highly, for I felt so grieved at the thought of giving it up; but then I am reminded that it only contains Bible doctrine, and tells my experience of grace far better than I can. It is not of the world, for no one here cares to read it or subscribe for it, and that is why its seems not to be of the world, for the Savior says the world will love its own. Dear children of God, you are not of the world, but are new creatures in Christ Jesus, and are partakers in his heavenly kingdom; this is why you are prepared to comfort his little ones; so write on as your Master bids, and may he ever guide one and all in the way of truth, is the prayer of your little sister.

But I find I am saying too much, and hope you will forgive me; I only intended to say a few words and send on my remittance, which I am thankful to do, and ask you to please send the paper to the above address. Pardon my negligence in sending my remittance, I hope it may never be so again. I ask an interest in the prayers of God's people everywhere.

As ever, a little sister, if one at all,
S. E. ELLIS.

LOVELAND, Colo., June 15, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have at last found a few in northern Colorado who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal, or rather they found me by seeing my address in the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. They wrote to me, and we arranged a meeting together at brother J. H. Rector's home, in Greeley, Colo., which meeting was on the 9th day of this month. There were present at the meeting brother and sister Rector, their daughter, who is also a member, sister V. McCullum, who is in her eighty-fifth year of age, who lives in Evans, Colo., brother and sister A. G. Johnson and their lovely daughter Mabel, who ought to be a member with us, and myself. Brother Johnson lives near Fort Lupton, Colo.

Brother Ker, I write this to ask you,

and all the readers of the SIGNS, that if you know of any of the Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists in northern Colorado that you write to me, giving me their names and post-office addresses, so I can hunt them up. Who but God knows but that my heart's desire may be granted me in my declining years: to meet with a little band of true worshipers of our God? Dear brethren, and all who may see my request, do write to me if you know of any of our faith in this part of Colorado.

I remain yours in tribulation and hope of life eternal,

J. H. YEOMAN.

PENNINGTON, N. J., Feb. 28, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER AND PASTOR:—We feel this evening as though we would like to answer your good letter. It was very comforting, and we were very glad to know that yourself and family thought of us in our affliction. Our little Mary was taken down with pneumonia, and we had very little hope of her recovery for a few days. We were very nearly discouraged, yet we believe these things are for some wise purpose, and now we feel thankful that she is improving. We hope that we shall never cease to thank our heavenly Father for the many blessings that have been bestowed upon us. We were glad indeed to get out to the meeting Saturday afternoon, for it was such a good meeting, and so was the meeting this morning. Elder Coulter preached from Job xxviii., and it was a very comforting sermon. I thought of you as I was listening, that you were at that time speaking to the little flock in Philadelphia, and the prayer in my heart was that you might be filled with words that would comfort some poor, weak sinner.

You spoke about our children; I do hope and pray that they may be brought to the fold some day. The other evening when our folks got home from Rosedale I asked about the sermon; my boy said it was the best sermon that he had ever heard the Elder preach. I was indeed glad that he had been listening. I am afraid that my letter in the SIGNS was not fit to take up space there; I know that it was very imperfect. You must not think that I expect my letters to you to have a place in the SIGNS, I do not write them for that purpose. I often feel like talking to you a little while, and so I take up my pen to write a few lines, though I feel afraid that you will be wearied with my letters. I often feel as though I would like to write a few words for our dear paper, but do not feel able to write upon such precious things, yet I do love to write and talk about these glorious truths.

I am thinking about the words of which you spoke Saturday afternoon: "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing." How true that is with us poor sinners. How often we feel sorry because of our sinful natures, and then sometimes we feel to rejoice because we have a little hope that we are of the number that Jesus came to save. If we are of that number we know that it is not because of anything good in us. We know that we are not deserving of the least of the many blessings that we receive. What great love it was that led the blessed Jesus to lay down his life for us. Do we realize what this means? I do not believe that we do. How we ought to love such a Savior! How much he suffered for us! "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear!" I sometimes wonder how I dare hope that I am a child of God, when I know that I am such a great sin-

ner. Then the thought comes that he did not come to save good people. They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick, who believe in his name; there is comfort in that. O that we could live more like our dear Savior! but when we would do good, evil is present with us; sin is mixed with all we do.

My dear pastor, please excuse this long and imperfect letter; an old farmer like me is obliged to write a long letter to say a little. I will try not bother you with my letters for awhile.

With love to all, we remain your brother and sister,

PAUL F. AND SARAH M. LEIGH.

BUTLER, Md., March 14, 1909.

MY DEAR DAUGHTER:—Your letter was received yesterday, and you have no idea what a pleasure it was to me to receive it, as it came with all the comfort of an assurance that you are a child of God. It seems to me that it was a God-send at this time, as I have been down in the valley. This winter I have not been well, and then things have not gone with me as well as the natural man would like to have them, and this you know causes the natural man to worry. And now to receive a letter from one so much younger in years and in experience than myself is more cause for gratitude than I can express. Your letter has been surely a great comfort to me. Why should I worry and fret if indeed I am a child of the King? Yet you know that as long as we stay in this world we carry this old nature with us, hence the warfare that is always going on within us. I am glad that we are able to feel ourselves sinners, for Jesus came to save sinners; the sick, not the whole, need a physician. Sometimes when I review my past life it makes me feel to be the most ungrateful being in the world, and sometimes I get so low as almost to doubt if I am a child of God at all. If a child would I have done the things that I have? But thanks be to God, we are not always left in the valley of the shadow of death, but at times are permitted to see him as our God and Savior. If weighed in the balance we are found wanting; if judged by the law we would justly be condemned; and if our souls were sent to hell, his righteous law would approve it well. Where else can we go but unto him, and say with one of old, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." After the natural man we are very ungrateful, but after the spiritual man surely our hearts melt with gratitude to God for all his love, mercy and kindness which he has shown to us unworthy creatures. Our God is a God of love and mercy; he is the same unchangeable Being yesterday, to-day and forever, and because he is God and changes not, therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed. He cannot be found out by searching; it is by revelation only that we know anything about him. When Christ asked Peter, "Whom say ye that I am?" he replied, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. * * * Upon this Rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Now it seems to me that if this was a revelation from God to Peter, it must be just as much a revelation to us also. The natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God, and if Christ Jesus has been revealed to us as our Savior we can say there will be nothing

that shall be able to separate us from the love of God, since he has purchased us with his own blood, and has redeemed us from our sins, and has risen again for our justification. If he has made us free, then are we free indeed, and we love God because he first loved us. I often wonder why God should so love us as to give his only begotten Son to redeem us. O how good it is for us that we have such a wonderful loving God for our Father. How different he is in his works and ways toward us than we are towards our fellow-men. He makes the sun to shine and rain to fall upon the just and the unjust. He has ever been thoughtful of our every want, both in natural and in spiritual things. He says, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" While the Lord has been so very kind to me in all the long years of the past in supplying my every real want, yet at times I find that my faith is weak. My prayer is that I may not be left to the inclinations of nature. May God give us grateful hearts for all the mercies and kindness shown toward us, is my prayer.

With love to all, from your father,

PETER KESSLER.

UPPERCO, Md., April 9, 1907.

ELDER J. T. ROWE—DEAR BROTHER AND PASTOR:—Can you forgive an old sinner in his weakness for having the desire to write you a few lines this stormy morning to let you know that I have you often in mind, although we are not often in each other's presence? Wife and I had expected to go to Black Rock on Sunday last, and even had the conveyance ready, but snow, hail and rain dampened our ardor, and we remained at home. We yet had in mind the experience of Emma and myself, coming home through the blinding snowstorm the first Sunday in March.

Dear brother, one thing which perhaps is the leading cause of my attempting to write you this morning is that I was very much pleased and interested in an article from your pen, which appeared in the SIGNS for April 15th, which came to hand yesterday. I have for many years been sorely grieved on account of a tendency towards strife and debate of some of our ministers and writers, and in perhaps nine cases out of ten their hearers and readers are not nearly so much interested in those things about which they strive as they would be in hearing about the things upon which all seem to be agreed, viz., salvation for poor, helpless sinners. As you say in your article referred to, when quoting from John, when they speak what they do know and what they have seen, they never have trouble; and when preachers and writers adhere to this, one blessed result is that the hearers and readers have less trouble also. I think most of the weak ones, including myself, would rather hear them, as you say, talk of the wonders of Jesus and of what we hope he has taught us of himself. I do think, and have for years past thought, that the gospel should be preached to you that fear His name, to you that are afar off, to you that are troubled, to you who have been pricked in the heart and made to cry, Men and brethren, what shall we do? These all give evidence that they are the ones to whom Jesus and his salvation come with power and effect. If I should live a few days yet I would like to read more from your pen along the same line. You know my difficulty about hearing preaching.

We had sister England and a friend with us last Thursday, and had a very pleasant time. Such visits we like, but the brethren and friends seem to think the distance too great to our place of abode. We are all able to be about, and all send love to you and your family. Come any of you when convenient, and write if you feel to do so. I would have written you a better letter if I could.

Yours in love,

JOHN P. KELLEY.

[SINCE the above letter was written brother Kelley has passed away from earth, yet by this letter he will yet speak to those who love the Lord. Our brother was a living epistle, setting forth in his life the things of which he has here written. He was steadfast to the doctrine of the cross, and yet mild and kind in all his life among his brethren. Those who knew him will say that he lived out what this letter contains. The remembrance of such a life is precious.—C.]

DAYTON, Wash., June 23, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —I have not attempted to write anything for our beloved paper for quite a long time; my reason has been because I have had such a felt sense of my imperfections, but while sitting in the cool shade this afternoon reading the SIGNS for June 15th, the many good letters from our beloved brethren, scattered abroad in our land, have stirred me up to write something to let the dear brethren know that I still live, and that the rich blessings of our dear Lord and Savior are still manifested to me and felt way out here in this northwestern part of our nation.

We have a small church here (eleven in number), but we are established in hope, and feel that the glorious promise of our dear Savior is fulfilled: that where two or three are gathered together in his name, there is he in the midst. We are at times made to realize how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, and it seems that we do enter into that sweet love, joy and peace, that all the world with its boasted wealth cannot give. At our three days meeting, in May, Elders Mayfield, Hammon and Barnes were with us. We had dinner at the place of meeting both Saturday and Sunday. That sweet joy and peace that cannot be told so as to be understood, except by those who have been enabled to realize the same, was with us. One dear sister, who lives about twenty miles away and who was a stranger in the flesh to all of us, came forward on Saturday, and was received and baptized on Sunday morning. This added greatly to our happiness. Then at our last meeting another dear sister was received on Saturday and was baptized Sunday morning. As I raised my eyes they rested upon the beautiful shade trees just in front of me, and as I saw the little branches waving and bending, it was an evidence to me that there was a gentle breeze blowing. I thought, It is not the waving of the leaves that causes the wind to blow, but it is the breeze that causes the leaves to wave. Even so it is an evidence that one is born of the Spirit when we see the little lambs moved by the Spirit coming home; these bear the fruit of the Spirit. We feel that the Lord is with us in this far away land, and may he continue his rich blessings.

I would like to know if any one knows the post-office address of Nelson Simmon. If so, and they will furnish me with it, I will consider it a favor. May the rich blessings of God rest with you and all the Israel of God.

Your brother, B. S. PATE.

UPLAND, Cal., May 16, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Your good and welcome letter is at hand, and such precious tokens of love and fellowship as you express for me, unworthy as I am, lead me to ask myself the question: Who am I that one of the Lord's servants should take notice of me? for surely I am the least in my Father's house, if a child of God at all. But how blessedly sweet and mysterious is that unity which exists between the Lord and his people; it is the precious ointment that covers the whole glorious body, and, if not deceived, I hope that I have had some precious evidences of being accepted in the Beloved. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." This is a most blessed Scripture to me, but I have sometimes wondered whether we might not come into such a dark state of mind in our experience that even this precious evidence would not be for us to claim. How my poor heart goes out at times to my brethren in the love of the Spirit, as I trust, who are scattered over this vast continent; I hold sweet converse and communion with them in the spirit, and I would like to write to every one of them, but of course that is impossible. I have thought that some time, if the Lord would enable me, I would address them all through the SIGNS, and tell them how I hold them in loving remembrance. How thankful we should be to the Father of all mercy and the God of all grace for such a medium of correspondence as the SIGNS has proved to be to the Lord's scattered people, and I trust that you and Elder Ker may long be spared to as ably defend the truth in the future as in the past.

Last Sunday Elder S. B. Moffitt, of Newberg, Oregon, was with us in Rvierside. He is an able preacher, and, I believe, sound in the faith. I desire to say that we meet in Ontario the first Sunday in each month, and in Riverside, corner of Park Avenue and Fifth Street, the third Sunday. I hope this may find you enjoying good health, both temporally and spiritually. My wife joins me in love.

Your brother in hope,

G. A. DUNDAS.

LANCASTER, Ohio, March 10, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—Our God has seen fit to spare my unprofitable life yet another year, and it is time for me to renew my subscription to the SIGNS. I am one among the aged writers, and soon must let my pen lie idle. This may be the last that I shall ever write. If I knew how to write so as to edify the readers it would give me pleasure, but alas, I am nothing but a poor old sinner. I have had a name among the Old (so-called "Hardshell") Baptists for fifty-seven years. If only I could be sure that my heart is right with God, and in the sight of the blessed Savior, I would not care what they did call me. If I could only have the assurance that I had when I first heard the gospel and tasted the blessed sweet and heavenly gift of God, when Jesus was all the day long my joy and my song, but now my harp is hung upon the willows. I groan within myself waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of this sinful body. This makes me to cry out, Lord, save, or I perish. Canst thou, Lord, have mercy upon such a wretch as I am? Some, I see, love to call themselves christians, but I feel that this is too great a name for such a poor sinner as I am. May the God of all grace be with his church and people everywhere, that they may walk humbly before him, is the prayer of one of the least of the flock, if one at all,

SARAH B. PEARCE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1909.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

LIMITED REDEMPTION.

DEAR BROTHER:—Some time ago I wrote a letter to the editors of the SIGNS asking their veiws upon the resurrection of the dead, and also sent for the SIGNS for six months. The paper is coming all right, but I have not seen any reply to my question. What I am trying to find out is this: Do the Primitive Baptists believe in a limited redemption? I united with the Primitive Baptists a great many years ago, and did not know that they believed in a limited redemption, but it seems from the letters I read in the SIGNS that some do believe in redemption being limited. If we are to believe that only the church is redeemed from the curse of death, what are we to do with such Scriptures as 1 Thess. iv. 16; Heb. ii. 9; 1 Cor. xv. 22?

Do the Primitive Baptists believe in eternal torment for all who are not of the church? Please excuse me for troubling you, but I am very much interested in these things.

Yours in the blessed hope of the resurrection,
FANNIE CLANTON.

ESPERANZA, Texas, April 17, 1909.

We feel like replying at this time to the questions of sister Clanton, not only for her sake, but because there may be others who also are questioning in the same way, as to what Primitive Baptists believe regarding these important things. We are not sure that we understand just what was in the mind of our sister by the term "limited redemption." She asks, Do the Primitive Baptists believe in a limited redemption? If the meaning is, Do they believe that Christ died only for his elect people? then we reply, They do believe this. This is a fundamental article of their faith; it is so much so, that one denying this could not be regarded as a Primitive Baptist. The doctrine that Christ died only for the elect is what distinguished them and separated them from the followers of Andrew Fuller nearly a century ago. This English writer and preacher was a Baptist, but he taught that while the doctrine of election was true, yet Christ died for all men, but that the efficacy of his blood was applied only to the elect. He believed in universal redemption, but in a special application of that redemption. From this departure in his teachings from the plain record of the word, and from the generally received faith of all sound Baptists of his time, arose that separation, which culminated at Black Rock, Md., in 1832, of the Old School Baptists from those of the new order. There were other things taught by Andrew Fuller and his followers equally as unscriptural as the above, but of them we do not need to speak here. The well known London Confession of Faith, adopted by one hundred Baptist congregations in or near London, in 1689, which was in substance that adopted by seven Baptist congregations in 1643, stated clearly their belief in a limited redemption; that is, that Christ died only for the elect. The same truth was adopted in the old Philadelphia Confession of Faith, which was at that time generally accepted by all the Baptist churches in this country. This principle of truth was also embraced in the articles adopted at the Black Rock convention in 1832, and was nailed to the masthead of the SIGNS when its publication began in the same year. Right in this one thing begins the line of demarkation between believers in salvation by grace and all

Arminianism of every name and form. We do not stop here to argue for the doctrine, or quote Scriptures which declare it, but simply answer the question of our sister as regards what is the faith of Primitive Baptists.

As regards the second question: Do the Primitive Baptists believe in eternal torment for all who are not of the church? we are not sure that we altogether know what was in the mind of our sister. Does she mean by the expression "of the church," those who are not visible members of the church, or rather those who are not numbered among the elect of God? If the former, we do not believe that all who are not members of the visible church are among the lost. Very many have saving faith who have never been baptized, and some, no doubt, who have been baptized have not saving faith. The obligation rests upon those who believe to confess their Lord in his appointed way; but many, like the penitent thief, have no opportunity to unite with the visible church. These are redeemed and cannot perish, as the Master has said they have eternal life, and none shall pluck them out of his hand. But if the question means, Do all go into everlasting punishment who are not numbered among the elect vessels of mercy? or rather, Do all Primitive Baptists believe that they do? we can only reply by again referring to the confessions of faith adopted by our fathers. The London Confession of Faith, before referred to, asserts this as their faith. It was contained in the old Philadelphia Confession of faith, and it was adopted at Black Rock in 1832, and was among the articles for which the SIGNS OF THE TIMES was pledged to contend when the first number was issued. Strict Baptists of England hold this as one article of faith now, and we think we are safe in saying that nearly all our churches in this land embrace this truth in their articles of faith. The doctrine of Universalism and of annihilation are alike foreign to the faith of Baptists, as all their articles of faith in the past plainly show. The blessed and merciful Savior declared that the blessedness of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked should be alike without end. Of the one he said, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal." The word "everlasting" and the word "eternal" in the above quoted Scripture are from the same Greek word. We do not know why the translators used different words in their translation, unless they thought the language would sound better to the ear.

Our sister asks, If redemption be limited what are we to do with certain Scriptures? First she names 1 Thess. iv. 16. We suppose that the one special clause referred to in this verse is this: "And the dead in Christ shall rise first." We think that if sister Clanton will read carefully the text and the connection she will see that the apostle is not here treating of the redemption, but of the resurrection, which is there declared to be as yet in the future. "And the dead in Christ shall rise first." We do not see how this text can have any bearing upon the doctrine of limited redemption, except as it shows that at the last some are spoken of as being "the dead in Christ," which of course would imply that some of the dead are not in Christ. It is as though the apostle had said, The redeemed shall rise first. The use of the word "first" must of necessity imply that the rest shall rise afterward.

The text referred to in Hebrews ii. 9, at first sight seems to give some support for the theory that the atonement covered

the sins of all mankind: "That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man;" but a careful examination of the connection will show that the "every man" there signifies the "many sons" who shall be brought into final glory. Similar expressions are used elsewhere in the New Testament by Paul and the other inspired writers, but always in connection with language which shows that the words "all" and "every" are limited in their application to all or every one of a certain class. Here the "every man" is shown in the next verse to include all of the many sons. The object of the apostle in this connection is to encourage those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage, not to be fearful when they contemplate the dread monster, death, since Jesus himself tasted death with them and for them. He conquered death and brought life and immortality to light for them through the gospel. In this living faith they, like Paul, can exult over death and the grave, saying, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" But there is no contradiction here of the blessed truth of limited redemption, and how blessed is that redemption which is secured to the elect when compared with that redemption which is secured to nobody. A redemption left to be secured to man by his own choice or work would leave heaven unoccupied by a single son of Adam.

The Scripture referred to in 1 Cor. xv. 22, does not refer to the atonement, or to what we commonly call redemption, neither does it refer to what is spoken of as the new birth, or to that quickening to which Paul referred when he said to the church at Ephesus, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." This language in first Corinthians is in the future tense, while that in Ephesians is in the past tense. Those to whom the apostle was writing in the letter to the church at Corinth were already quickened, in the sense meant in Ephesians, else they could not have been members of the church at all, and could not have been addressed by the apostle as those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be saints (see chapter one, verse two), and already had their redemption, through the resurrection of Christ from the dead, been secured. Both that and the quickening from the dead were past with them when the apostle wrote this letter to them. The language is, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." It does not read, As in Adam all die, so in Christ are all made alive; the word is "shall," the future tense. This, manifestly, refers to a making alive that was yet in the future for all to whom he was writing, and here again there is nothing that refers to either limited or unlimited redemption, in the sense of the word as used by sister Clanton, if we understand her thought aright.

We feel to add to the above a few general remarks regarding the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. First, every type proves it to be limited to those who are its subjects. In the type, under the old testament Israel was chosen from all other nations. For them alone was sacrifice commanded. No Gentile nation ever shared in the benefits bestowed upon the children of Israel; no other nation or people were ever commanded to offer sacrifice to God. Other nations did offer sacrifices, but the Lord declared that they were offered to idols and not to the true and living God. These sacrifices were an abomination to God, because offered to idols. But still it remains true that

all these nations were not embraced in the old covenant and were not bidden to do any of the things enjoined upon Israel in that covenant; it was a covenant between God and Israel alone. If there be any meaning in a type at all, it is clear that spiritual Israel is also a chosen people, separate from all other people, and it is also true that for them the one great sacrifice was made, and for no other people. Here is limited redemption, so far as the number of those for whom it is made is concerned. But the power and efficacy of that redemption are unlimited; that is, they are sufficient to accomplish all the purpose of God. If it had been indeed the purpose of God that Christ should die for all mankind, then indeed all mankind would finally sing his praises in glory. The only reason that all mankind shall not finally do so is that it was not the purpose of God that Christ should die for all men. Jewish sacrifices upon Jewish altars were limited, in their effect, to the Jews. In like manner, the sacrifice of Christ was limited to that people chosen out of every people, kindred, tribe and tongue under heaven, otherwise the type had no meaning.

Second, plain declarations of the word of God in the New Testament set forth the same thing. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." "His people," in the text just quoted, must mean something definite. Were it indeed true that Jesus came to save all men, this language of the angel was not in harmony with the truth. "His people" necessarily implies that some were not regarded as the people belonging to Christ. To deny this is to rob language of all its force. To deny this would be to cast a cloud upon all Bible testimony, since if language here is not definite, we have no certainty that it is so in any other part of the Bible. But the angel came with a special commission to Mary, and we may be sure that these are the very words of God; let us be careful to give them all the meaning that belongs to them. The language of this Scripture, then, teaches a limited atonement; it also teaches a complete atonement, and an effectual one. "He shall save." Not only is the word "shall" always a word of the future, but it is a word of certainty and fixedness. It is so when men utter it, so far as their wisdom and power are found able to make it. Men's shalls and wills are however liable to failure, because of weakness, instability or lack of wisdom in them, but with our God there is no want of wisdom or power, therefore "will" and "shall" in his mouth mean that which cannot fail of fulfillment. How glorious this is to all weak, trembling sinners who come to the Lord for salvation; nothing can hinder their salvation, according to the testimony of the angel.

We trust that these thoughts in reply to our sister will be satisfactory to her mind, and that she may gather what Primitive Baptists hold with regard to the questions proposed in her letter.

C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EZEKIEL XVII. 22–24.

"THUS saith the Lord God, I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent: in the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it; and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell. And all the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I the Lord have spoken, and have done it."

Brother Z. Ward, of Bear Wallow, Va., wishes that we give our view upon verses three to seven of the above named chapter, and especially asks information concerning the second great eagle. We have named verses twenty-two to twenty-four as our text because the preceding verses set forth in a figure what is meant by the parable contained in the text. We shall try to give our understanding of the parable of the two eagles before reaching the verses quoted above.

About the time that Zedekiah was devising to revolt from Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and to form an alliance with the king of Egypt, Ezekiel, who was called "son of man," was commanded of God to put forth a riddle, and to speak a parable unto the house of Israel. Every word of that riddle was put in his mouth by the Lord, hence he said first of all, "Thus saith the Lord God." This was intended to call special and careful attention to what the prophet had to say, and to establish the fact that he had not prepared some false or uncertain statement of his own to speak before the people. The riddle began thus: "A great eagle with great wings, long-winged, full of feathers which had divers colors, came unto Lebanon, and took the highest branch of the cedar; he cropped off the top of his young twigs, and carried it into a land of traffic; he set it in a city of merchants." Nebuchadnezzar is here described under the emblem of "a great eagle," because of his towering ambition and his preying on all mankind. The great and long wings of this eagle denoted the extent of his dominions, both in length and breadth. The feathers of divers colors signified his splendor and riches. This eagle, Nebuchadnezzar, came unto Lebanon or Jerusalem and took the highest branch of the cedar, and cropped off the top of his young twigs, in that he besieged Jerusalem and took Jeconiah, who was of the family of David and heir to his crown, and his young princes to Babylon, which was a city of merchants and a land of traffic, being very prosperous under the rule of Nebuchadnezzar.

"He took also of the seed of the land, and planted it in a fruitful field; he placed it by great waters, and set it as a willow tree. And it grew, and became a spreading vine of low stature, whose branches turned toward him, and the roots thereof were under him: so it became a vine, and brought forth branches, and shot forth sprigs." Nebuchadnezzar took every precaution to prevent the Israelites revolting from him, hence instead of placing his own princes over the Jews he took Mattaniah, also of the family of David, and having engaged him to agreement, and by solemn oath to be faithful to him, changed his name to that of Zedekiah and made him king over the Jews. Thus the seed was planted in a fruitful field, and it flourished for a time as a willow tree planted by great waters.

"There was also another great eagle with great wings and many feathers; and, behold, this vine did bend her roots toward him, and shot forth her branches toward him, that he might water it by

the furrows of her plantation." This other "great eagle" was Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who was as ambitious as Nebuchadnezzar, but not so powerful. This eagle is presented as having great wings and many feathers, but not equal to the first eagle. The vine nevertheless bent her roots and shot her branches toward him in order to be watered by the furrows of her plantation. Thus Zedekiah entered into an alliance with Pharaoh, hoping to be benefited by his assistance. He and the Jews fully expected to prosper by their policy, but God would not allow such wicked perjury to go unpunished. The power Nebuchadnezzar exercised had been given him of the Lord, and Zedekiah had accepted the kingdom upon terms proposed by him, and had taken a solemn oath to be faithful to the covenant or agreement, but had broken it by turning away from Nebuchadnezzar to Pharaoh. Instead therefore of prosperity of the vine, the Lord said, "It shall wither in the furrows where it grew." See verses twelve to twenty-one.

At the end of the first parable, and the pronounced judgment upon the Israelites for their sin, God by the same prophet put forth another parable unto the same people, declaring that as Nebuchadnezzar had taken the highest branch of the cedar and planted it in a fruitful field, He would also take the highest branch of the high cedar, and set it, and crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and plant it upon a high mountain and eminent. This "tender one" should also be of the house of David, even the Branch that should grow out of his roots. In this special work the Lord was to manifest his faithfulness to his covenant made with Abraham that in his seed all nations of the earth should be blessed. The "tender one" was manifested in the birth of him who was born King of the Jews, the highest branch of that nation or cedar. He is established forever upon the throne: the holy mountain, the high and eminent place, and unlike the other vine shall never turn toward Pharaoh or powers of the world. He being the root and offspring of David dwelleth in the Father, and the Father in him. And instead of being a vine of low stature, he is the high and lofty One, reaching from earth to heaven; the only way to God. "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Instead of needing or desiring the waters of Egypt, he is the fountain of living waters. "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." The river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God, proceedeth out of the throne of God and the Lamb, "tender one." Instead of this vine withering, it is ever green, ever bearing. "He ever liveth to make intercession." Instead of failure in any of his purposes, "the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." This is a "goodly cedar" indeed, "and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell." The immensity of the tree is here presented, in that all fowl of every wing shall rest in the shadow of its branches. The election of grace is also shown in this figure, the secret kept from the foundation of the world but now revealed, that God has vessels of mercy in every nation, tongue and people, and all shall come to rest in the shadow of the great and goodly cedar, which is the kingdom of God and his Christ. The gathering together of all nations unto the one mountain, high and eminent, was the establishment of that kingdom God set up in the days of kings, spoken of by Daniel. It is called

by the Lord, "My holy mountain," and there shall neither wild beasts nor venomous reptiles hurt or destroy. It is a place of safety, because the Lord is a fire round about and a glory in the midst. It is our abiding-place, because "the Lord is there." All the trees of the field shall know that the Lord has brought down the high tree and exalted the low tree, dried up the green tree and made the dry tree to flourish. The term, "all the trees of the field shall know," embraces every tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord. Every manifest vessel of mercy is therefore taught the same lesson Paul learned: the cutting off of the green and flourishing tree (national Israel), and the bringing in of the dry tree (Gentiles), being very dry indeed, without God and without hope in the world. Yes, God's judgments upon the Jews, and his extended mercy unto the Gentiles, caused Paul to exclaim, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." Such is the exclamation of each tree of righteousness when made to know and feel the goodness, mercy and longsuffering of God.

We have now given such views as we have upon this wonderful subject, and leave them for the consideration of brother Ward and others who may condescend to read what we have here written.

K.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, June 30th, 1909, at the residence of the bride's parents, Denver, N. Y., Orley H. Slauson, of Vega, N. Y., and Miss Effie Morse, of Denver, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Solomon Harris was born in Maury County, Tenn., Feb. 5th, 1825, died Oct. 23rd, 1908, aged 83 years, 8 months and 18 days. He was the son of Solomon and Lucinda Harris, the fifth child in a family of seventeen children, all of which lived to be grown. He came with his parents from Tennessee to Morgan County, Ill., in 1828, and to Adams County in 1833. After his marriage he lived on the same farm until 1892, moving to Camp Point in September of that year, where his death occurred as stated above, and the interment was at Ebenezer Cemetery, the funeral being conducted by the writer. He was married to Miss Caroline Lionberger, June 12th, 1851; to this union one child was born, William P. Harris, the mother dying when the babe was two weeks old. In 1853 he was married to Miss Elizabeth Kennedy; to this union five children were born, one dying in infancy, and one, Mrs. Melissa Willard, in 1882. Those surviving are Mrs. Mary F. Cossart, Mrs. Josephine Sherrick and Joel Harris. The mother of these children having died March 11th, 1864, he was again married in June 1865, to Miss Lucinda Jenkins, who died early in 1907. To this union three children were born, all dying in infancy. He had deep and solemn impressions regarding life, death and eternity, from his earliest recollection, but his first spiritual impressions were in 1857, and he experienced full deliverance in two years and seven months from that time. At the time of his deliverance his mind was impressed with the Scripture quotation, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," and in a vision, as it were, he saw the blood flowing down over the garments of the Son of God. He united with Bear Creek Church, near his home, in April, 1843. His first impressions to preach were in 1883, when "Here am I; send me," was so indelibly fixed upon his mind that it stayed with him until his death. He was licensed to preach in 1888, and his ideal was Enoch, the seventh from Adam, both in his christian life and in his public life as a minister. I was with this dear brother often in his declining years, as he always attended our meetings at Coatsburg and Columbus when it was possible for him to do so, and would frequently occupy for ten or fifteen minutes with words most comforting. Of his sterling worth, and earnest and steadfast determination in what he deemed to be right, all know, and those who knew him best admired him most for his integrity.

The notes from which the above was written were given me by brother Harris many years ago, and have been laid away so securely that I could not find them for many months. I make this statement in explanation of my delay in preparing this notice, which I do at his request.

D. W. OWENS.

David M. Botts, son of Seth and Mina Botts, departed this life June 5th, 1909, at the age of 68 years and 6 months. His parents settled on Muddy Creek, in Pettis Co., Mo., March 7th, 1833, they being among the earliest settlers in Missouri, hence endured many hardships and privations incident to pioneer life. He of a family of six children leaves one brother, Deacon D. M. Botts, a member of long and good standing of the Predestinarian Baptist Church. Nov. 22nd, 1866, our brother was united in marriage with Frances P. Thomas; to this union were born one son and two daughters. They with their mother survive, all with a precious hope in Christ our Lord and only Savior, the mother and two daughters being members of Walnut Branch Church of Predestinarian Baptists, and the son holding membership with the Missionary Baptists, yet a reader and lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

The funeral, preached by Mr. Rodgers, of the Missionary faith, was at his home Sunday morning. Funeral exercises by the writer and interment at 2 p. m. June 6th, at the Botts Cemetery. A sweet testimony of his high standing was the large concourse of friends and relatives assembled at the grave for a last look at all that was mortal. He was a lover of the Old Predestinarian Baptists; he never went to the table to eat but that his heart went out to his Maker in thanks for all blessings. A useful citizen, a good neighbor, an indulgent father, a tender and sympathizing companion is no longer living here among us, but we believe he is at rest.

J. A. TEAGUE.

SISTER **Angeline Jenkins** departed this life March 24th, 1909, in the 95th year of her age. She was the widow of Levi Jenkins, who died June 22nd, 1886. Sister Jenkins united with the First Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, N. Y., May 29th, 1859, and was baptized by Elder Isaac Hewitt. She lived a faithful and devoted life to the church and also to the profession she had made. She was a woman of sterling integrity, loved and respected by all who knew her. The last few years she was deprived of meeting with her church people, whom she dearly loved, by the infirmities of old age.

Her funeral was held from the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Vega, N. Y., conducted by the writer. She was buried in Vega Cemetery.

ALSO,

James Ballard departed this life at his home in Clovesville, N. Y., May 26th, 1909, in the 81st year of his age, after a lingering illness of heart disease. Mr. Ballard was the oldest son of Jonathan Ballard, who was one of the pioneer residents of Batavia Kill, now Vega. Mr. Ballard married for his first wife Nancy Travis; to them were born two daughters, Roxie and Exie. Exie died some years ago, and Roxie married Seely Slauson, and lives on the Ballard homestead in Vega, N. Y. James Ballard married for his second wife Betsy Croft, who survives him. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of the Old School Baptists; salvation by grace was his theme. For many years he cherished a hope in the blessed Savior, but never united with the church. He was a kind and devoted husband, and was highly respected by all who knew him.

His funeral was held from the meetinghouse in Vega, N. Y., burial in cemetery near by. The writer tried to comfort the friends with such as I hope the Lord gave.

ALSO,

Mrs. Sarah Sanford, wife of brother David Sanford, died at her home near Halcottsville, N. Y., April 15th, 1909, aged 56 years. Mrs. Sanford was sick but a few days, and her death came suddenly. It was never my privilege to talk with Mrs. Sanford on the subject of religion, yet feel that she left evidence of a good hope through grace, which has been a comfort to our brother in his sad affliction.

Her funeral was held at Halcottsville, N. Y., and was largely attended. The writer tried to comfort the friends in their affliction, using for a text Rev. xx. 12-15. Burial in Hubbell Cemetery, Kelly Corners, N. Y.

JOHN B. SLAUSON.

BROTHER **A. G. Dawson** was born December 15th, 1862, near Weatherford, Texas, and died at his home, in the city of Denver, Colo., Feb. 28th, 1909, aged 46 years, 2 months and 13 days. The summons which called our brother home came very suddenly. Returning from a business trip to the scenes of his early manhood, he was taken sick the same night (Thursday) and passed peacefully away the following Sunday morning. Brother Dawson was married May 25th, 1866, to Miss Bennie Sydner, at Mt. Sterling, Ky. One child, a daughter, was the fruit of this union, born Jan. 16th, 1888, at Raton, New Mexico, where ten days later the mother passed away; the daughter, Margaret, still survives. He was married again at Palo, Iowa, June 27th, 1892, to Miss Della McKean, who survives him. Three children were born to this union: Leo Henry, aged 15 years, Geraldine, aged 12 years, and John, aged 6 years.

Brother Dawson confessed a hope in Christ and united with the Shiloh Church of Primitive Baptists, which held its meetings at the old John B. Dawson homestead, near Raton, New Mexico, Elder G. M. Fetter being its pastor. He was baptized in the beautiful Vermejo River by Elder Howard, of Texas, the first Sunday in November, 1895. He was chosen clerk of the church, continuing in this office to the day of his death.

Several years ago he moved with his family to Routt County, Colo., residing there awhile, but three years ago came to Denver, where he was residing at the time of his death. The writer, assisted by Elder

G. M. Fetter, of Raton, New Mexico, conducted the funeral service from the home, using as a text Paul's words from 2 Tim. iv. 6, in the presence of a large concourse of sorrowing friends and relatives, after which his body was laid to rest in the Fairmount Cemetery, near Denver. To one more of his beloved hath our God given sleep, and those who are left, with aching hearts must await their own time until he shall also summon them. God give us grace to patiently await that hour, and may his love and tender mercies be over the bereft widow and children left behind. He hath promised to be a Husband to the widow and a Father to the fatherless, and his promises can never fail. May he comfort, too, the aged parents, who will miss the loving son very much, and may he pity us all in our distresses and comfort us at last.

D. B. NOWELS.

Robert Annett, of Euphemia township, Ontario, Canada, died June 18th, 1909. He was born in Euphemia township, Lambton Co., Canada, August 22nd, 1851, and married to Sarah Campbell Jan 12th, 1876. He was not a member of the church, but was an attendant with his wife and daughter at Old Baptist meetings, and from conversation I had with him I believe that he knew the grace of God in truth. I have the same feeling concerning the sad, lonely widow and daughter. I have not known any others of the family. May the dear Lord bless the heart-broken widow and children, and all other mourning kindred and friends, is the desire of the writer of this short notice, who officiated at the funeral June 20th, at the home of the deceased, a large concourse of people being present; after which the clay was taken to the cemetery at Alvinston.

D. M. VAIL.

Fannie L. Herndon, widow of Elder T. C. Herndon, died at her home in Logan County, Kentucky, May 8th, 1909, of heart trouble and nervousness. She left to mourn their loss five sons and three daughters, all grown except the youngest son. She was born in Tennessee, March 23rd, 1876, was married to Elder T. C. Herndon Dec. 18th, 1881, joined the Lebanon Old School Baptist Church, in Logan County, in October, 1894. She was a good mother and a consistent church member until her death. Her home was at all times open to the Baptists. We miss her. May God sanctify the loss to the orphaned children.

Her sister-in-law,

(MRS.) E. C. PHELPS.

SISTER **Ella M. McColl,** daughter of the late Elder Wm. L. Beebe, died at her home in Winnipeg, Manitoba, July 1st, 1909. A more extended obituary will be published later.—ED.

APPOINTMENTS.

IF the Lord will, I will attend appointments in Canada as follows: Dunwich, Friday night, July 20th; Duart, Wednesday night, 21st; Detroit, Mich., 730 Howard St., Thursday night, 22nd; Ekfrid, Saturday, 23rd, at 4 p. m., and Sunday 24th; Lobo, Monday night, 25th; London, Tuesday night, 26th; St. Thomas, Wednesday night, 27th.

It is expected that the ordinance of baptism will be administered at Ekfrid on Sunday.

SILAS H. DURAND.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

G. W. Horner, Oregon, $3.00,

MEETINGS.

A MEETING has been appointed to be held on Saturday afternoon, July 31st, and all day Sunday, August 1st, at the Otego Old School Baptist Church, Otego, N. Y. Trains from Albany arrive at 10:41 a. m. and 1 o'clock p. m. Saturday, and from Binghamton at 11:30 a. m. and 4 p. m. On Sunday trains from either place reach here at 11:30 a. m. We hope all those who can will visit us at the time given.

S. C. F. GUERNSEY, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Brookdale, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting for Tuesday and Wednesday, August 3rd and 4th, 1909. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited and will be well entertained. Come to Conklin station, on the Delaware and Lackawanna R. R., which is three miles from Brookdale. Trains leaving Binghamton 5:30 p. m. Monday and 5:50 a. m. Tuesday will be met. Write to Mr. Wm. M. Hart, Halstead, Pa., R. F. D., who will arrange to meet and convey friends to place of meeting.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Lord willing, the seventieth annual session of the Des Moines River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene with Des Moines River Church, near Eldon, Iowa, August 14th, 15th and 16th, 1909. A cordial invitation is extended to all, and especially the ministering brethren of our faith and order. Eldon is on the Kansas City line of Rock Island system, also C., M. & St. P. R. R. Trains will be met Friday and Saturday mornings.

I. J. YOHE, Moderator.

J. L. THURSTON, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Cammal, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting for August 21st and 22nd, 1909. Cammal is a station on line of New York Central R. R., seventy-five miles from Corning, N. Y., and forty miles from Williamsport, Pa. Place of meeting is five minutes walk from station. Brother Samuel Moffat lives three rods from station. All who love the truth are invited to be with us.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Ingleside, N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting for August 28th and 29th, 1909. All who love the doctrine of grace are cordially invited. Ingleside is five miles from Atlanta, N. Y., station on the D., L. & W. and Erie railroads. Trains will be met on both roads Friday, 27th. Write to George Weld, Prattsburg, N. Y., R. F. D., or Harvey Graves, same place.

D. M. VAIL.

THE First Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, at Vega., N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting to be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, August 28th and 29th, 1909. Trains will be met at Roxbury on Friday before the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

V. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1909, at 10 o'clock a. m., at the residence of brother John McFadden, six miles west of Table Grove, Fulton Co., Ill. Those coming by rail will be met at Table Grove on Thursday before and early Friday morning. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Pocatalico Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Good Hope Church, in Kanawha County, W. Va., commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1909, and continuing three days. Those coming from the west, over the K. & M. R. R., will be met at Raymond City, W. Va., Thursday evening. Those from the east, over the C. & O. and C., C. & S., will be met at Charleston, W. Va., Thursday until 3 o'clock in the evening. Those coming from the southwest, over the C. & O., should come to St. Albans, cross the river to Sattes depot and there take the west bound train on K. & M. for Raymond City, to meet conveyance Thursday evening. A cordial invitation is extended to all of like precious faith to meet with us.

This done by order of the Good Hope Church, at her May meeting.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Moderator.
G. P. HIGGINBOTHAM, Clerk.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

THERE are a few Old School Baptists in Riverside, Cal., and they have meeting the first and third Sundays in each month, at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

W. D. BALL.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at the Hall, corner of 19th St. and 8th Ave., fifth floor. Elevator entrance on either 19th St. or 8th Ave.

11:00 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 77. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1909. NO. 15.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BERLIN, Md., May 19, 1863.

ELDER E. RITTENHOUSE—MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have been impressed for some time with the thought that I would write to you, and now proceed to do so, but I must say I have seldom felt less like writing, still the strong disposition I feel to communicate with you induces me to make the attempt, and without further preliminaries I will at once proceed to the subject of all others which should claim all the time, attention and powers of mind and soul of all God's dear children on earth. O, my dear brother, the subject of all others that should most employ our minds and hearts in this lower world is the one, which we hope will employ us in the next, in praising God the Father, who chose us before the world was made, and the Son, our blessed Savior, who suffered the penalty of our sins in his own body on the tree, and the Holy Spirit, who brought us to see ourselves lost and ruined sinners, and to see our all-sufficient Redeemer in the covenant of grace. My brother, what a theme; I sometimes wish I could never think, talk or write of anything else. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." The men of this world are proud to be called the sons of great and distinguished men, but we are the children of Almighty God, the Maker of heaven and earth, he who holds the destiny of the whole universe in his hand, and who by the power of his will can blot all things out of existence; what condescension to notice such poor worms of the dust as we are, who have dared to lift our puny arm in rebellion against him. "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." But how we are clogged here by the flesh, what a warfare we have on earth; at least it is so with me. I often think, What if I am deceived? What if, after all, I find myself at the great assize without the robe of Christ's righteousness to hide my naked soul, and am forced to say,

"'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought,)
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?

If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse
Who have never heard his name."

Sometimes I feel as if God could not be just and save such a sinner as I am. At the close of the day, when all my words, actions and thoughts rise up before me, I could weep to think how unfaithful I have been, how far I have wandered from God, how the things of this poor, perishing world have occupied my mind to the exclusion of Christ, who died, I trust, for me, and I am almost ready to despair of ever having a seat in the new Jerusalem; but what can I do? To turn back to the world I should be more miserable still, for I have lost all relish for the things I once loved. I can only fall down in the dust before my heavenly Master and pray, Lord, save, I perish; I have no other hope but Jesus' blood; if I am sent to hell my sins deserve nothing else; I can do nothing for myself, yet save a trembling sinner, Lord. But thank God he has left some sweet promises on record, and sometimes I do believe the Holy Spirit applies them to my poor sin-sick soul, and I have a taste of Jesus, the heavenly manna, the bread of eternal life. Last Sunday week I had two texts of Scripture brought home to my heart, and I enjoyed a happy day. Both were from the Psalms: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want," and, "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." O what precious promises! But after feeding for some time on them the devil took them from me; he said, Perhaps you are not one of Christ's sheep, then he is not your Shepherd, he is only the Shepherd of his own sheep, and only promises to guide them by his counsel and receive them to glory. So the old archenemy of my soul snatched these precious promises from me, and so, my brother, it goes with me; sometimes I have a sweet and blessed hope that I am a child of grace, and often I am led almost to despair. If I am saved it must be by free, sovereign, unmerited grace, and if I am lost I can only say, "Thy righteous law approves it well."

If you can spare the time I would be glad to hear from you, but I know your time is all occupied. Go on, my brother, in the strength of God; preach the everlasting gospel; the Lord has called you to a glorious work, and O may your labors be blessed to the building up of the church, and may you rejoice in your labors. Think of the destitute condition of the churches in the Salisbury Association, and come and visit us whenever you can. Write me soon, and may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ sustain and comfort you, is the prayer of your unworthy brother in Christ,

G. W. STATON.

BERLIN, Md., June 10, 1863.

ELDER E. RITTENHOUSE—MY DEAR BROTHER:—Your favor of the 1st instant came duly to hand, and I hope has been blessed to the comfort and joy of my heart. I was glad to hear of the good meetings you had at the associations; I hope you were enabled to worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and to cast off all confidence in the flesh. May our blessed Lord enable you to go on in his strength, not only forty days, but forty years, or until you shall put off this body, which is only the shell of the soul, and mortality be swallowed up in everlasting life. Although deprived by circumstances and the position in which God has placed me from attending and rejoicing in many of those meetings which you have enjoyed and are now enjoying so much, my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by his Spirit does sometimes condescend to visit my poor, hungry soul,

and give me a taste of his heavenly love, and O, my brother, if I could only retain the heavenly visitor how happy I should be, but my poor, wicked, corrupt, deceitful heart is not a fit dwelling-place for my dear Savior, and I wonder not so much that he does not remain longer with me, as that he should stoop from his lofty position as the God of heaven and earth, the creator and upholder of all things, infinitely happy in his own eternal attributes, to visit my poor soul at all, even me, who am the vilest of the vile, and who for forty years have sinned against him, and continually trampled under my unhallowed feet his tender mercies and his loving-kindness. Why, O why did he not hurl me into everlasting perdition? Why did he ever put it into my heart to cry to him for mercy and, as I humbly hope, hear my cry? O, my God, when I contemplate all thy mercies to me I am lost in wonder and astonishment that thou hast not long since consigned me to everlasting punishment. O give me grace to trust thee, for I have no other hope but thee; if not saved by free, sovereign, unmerited grace I am lost forever.

There is one part of your letter I know not how to answer; may the Holy Spirit direct me. You say you have thought whether there might not yet be a place for me in the gospel field. If you knew my weakness, my ignorance and, above all, my sinfulness and my corrupt, deceitful, wicked heart, you would not believe the Lord would ever call such a worm as I to such a work. Why, my brother, I tremble every day lest I should do something that may cast reproach upon my Master's cause. If he will only give me grace to live so as not to wound the brethren, or to dishonor his cause on earth, in the humblest place in his church I will praise his name forever, but the thought of assuming a place among his chosen ministers is too much, I am not equal to the task. But I will confide in you and tell you the whole truth, hoping you will never tell it to any one. My mind has been often led to the subject, and indeed for some time it has hung like an incubus about me; something seems to tell me it is my duty to try to tell others what the Lord has done for me. I have thought of the destitute condition of all our churches in this region, and I have and do earnestly pray the Lord of the harvest to raise up, fit and qualify, and send forth laborers among us. I know he is able, and in his own good time will do all his pleasure. But in regard to myself, I am tossed to and fro; sometimes I think it is the Holy Spirit at work in my heart, and I try to pray, "Thy will be done;" Lord, do with me whatever thou wilt; at other times I think it a temptation of the evil one, that he is tempting me to take a position in the church that I am not competent to fill, knowing thereby that he will bring reproach on the church and on the cause of Christ, so I am tossed about, and there is hardly an hour in the day that the subject does not recur to my mind. I can only pray my heavenly Father to direct me aright, and work out his own will in me in his own way and in his own time. Write to me and give me your advice, but do not tell any of the brethren what I have told you, at least not for the present.

My sheet is nearly full, and I am admonished to stop. My mother has been spending several weeks with me, and wishes to be kindly remembered to you, as does also my wife. I hope to be able to see you at the yearly meeting at Nassaongo, the Lord willing. May Israel's

God support and comfort you in the proclamation of his own blessed gospel, and give you many seals to your ministry, is the sincere prayer of your unworthy brother in Christ,

G. W. STATON.

BERLIN, Md., July 3, 1863.

ELDER E. RITTENHOUSE—MY DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—Yours of the 29th of June received, for which you will please accept my thanks. I was glad to hear you intended to pay a visit to the Indiantown Church during this month. I was at brother Stanton Adkins' some time ago, and he showed me a part of your letter to him, and said he should publish the meeting, and I am sure he is expecting you, and, I suppose, has written to you before this time. I hope to be able to go to the meeting and to see you. I was rejoiced to hear of the series of good meetings you have recently had the privilege of attending, and should have been glad to have been with you. It is indeed joyful to meet our fellow-citizens of the household of faith from all parts of our country who all speak the same language, owe allegiance to the same Sovereign, are subjects of the same King and Lord over all. How comforting amid the fall of empires and tottering of human governments to think that we, if we are the children of God, are citizens of the government which will last forever. Amid all the revolutions and convulsions of human institutions our constitution is safe, the charter of our liberties is safe, it is signed and sealed by the eternal God, ratified and confirmed by the blood of his own Son, and must stand forever sure. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." I thank my heavenly Father for the security of his church; all earthly governments must pass away, but the church shall live forever. I thank you, my brother, for your kindness and the interest you manifest in a poor, weak, ignorant, sinful brother, and especially in regard to the subject of my last letter, and for your advice, &c. I dare not say to the Lord, I will not do whatever he has for me to do. I try to leave all things with him, and desire to pray to him to dispose of me as shall please him best; I try to submit my will to his, and desire to be willing to become anything or nothing according as he may see fit to dispose of me. If he has a work for me to do, he is able to give me strength to do it. I am less than nothing, but he is all-sufficient. I do not feel as if I can say anything that would enlighten or instruct the dear saints, and am sure that if left to myself I should make an entire failure and wound the feelings of the brethren, yet when I see the entire destitution of the churches in our country I do pray that the Lord will raise up or send among us some one to talk comfortably to Zion. Let him do what seemeth him good; so far as it relates to myself, I know that I am not sufficient for these things. But here another text occurs to me: "Our sufficiency is of God." I submit in all things to the will of the Lord and the judgment of the brethren.

I think, my brother, you must have misunderstood my letter; I certainly never intended to say, or to intimate, that I could do anything for the salvation of sinners. Salvation is entirely of the Lord; he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." All that any of us can do for sinners is to point them to

the Lamb of God. But is it wrong to weep over them and pray for their salvation when we ourselves have had our sins forgiven, and have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and felt the sweet love of Jesus in our own hearts? Is it not right that we should feel anxious that our acquaintances, our kinsmen according to the flesh, should taste with us and see that the Lord is good, that he can forgive sins on earth and make us unutterably happy? Our Savior said to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, * * * how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not," and Paul wept over the unbelieving Jews, and said he could wish himself accursed from Christ for his brethren, his kinsmen, according to the flesh. Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. My brother, I feel there is no difference in our views on this subject, for I trust we are both taught by the same Spirit and have both drank of that same spiritual Rock, which Rock is Christ, but if I am wrong correct me, for I am less than a child, and if I know anything of my own heart I am seeking after the truth as it is in Jesus. May the Holy Spirit guide us into all truth, and save us for Christ's sake.

My wife joins me in love. Write me soon, and believe me your brother in Christ, G. W. STATON.

BERLIN, Md., August 24, 1863.

ELDER E. RITTENHOUSE—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I will attempt to answer yours of July 29th, but as I am compelled to write in the store, subject to frequent interruptions, you will please pardon any inaccuracies, or lack of connection you may find. I thank you for your kind and brotherly letter. I was glad to hear the Lord was with you in your trip to Indiantown. O, my brother, our only happiness in this world is when we can enjoy his comfortable presence in our hearts. When we can feel Christ in our souls the hope of glory, then we feel that we have fellowship in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus and give God all the glory.

With regard to preparing something for a Circular Letter for our association, if the Lord will help me I will try to write something and submit it to the judgment of the brethren, and hope some of the other and older brethren will do the same, and the brethren can accept whichever they think best. I feel so ignorant and weak I can hardly dare attempt anything.

I enjoyed myself at Nassaongo in hearing the preaching and meeting you and brother Conklin and all the brethren and sisters; my heart was made glad, and I did rejoice in the Lord. What I said to you in regard to my attempting any further exercise of my poor powers in a public way, I still think is the best course for me to pursue, viz., to give up all idea of ever becoming a preacher. I fear I could never prove acceptable to God's people or be able in any way to honor my Master or his cause; I think I might only mortify the brethren and bring dishonor on the church. I met the brethren at Indiantown yesterday, and in much weakness and fear tried to tell them something of the glory of God and of his salvation to poor, lost and perishing sinners entirely through and by Christ Jesus. We had a prayer meeting; two of the brethren joined us in public prayer, and we had quite an interesting little meeting. I had thought not to have made another appointment, but the brethren

solicited me to make another, and I could not refuse to meet them in a social prayer meeting, so we made another appointment for four weeks from yesterday; they insisted I should attend, and I shall, the Lord willing, try to meet them. I left an appointment at the Head of the Sound for two weeks from yesterday, which I design, the Lord willing, to try to fill. If the Lord has a work for me to do it is perhaps to be found in meeting the brethren in these little social gatherings, and if he gives me a word of comfort for them, and will enable me to speak it, I will do so. I feel willing to become anything or nothing, so that I can honor my Master and be of service or comfort to his dear people. These are about my views now. My earnest prayer to Almighty God is that he will direct me in the path of duty; that if he has a work for me to do he will direct my mind to that work and give me strength to perform it according to his will. I am nothing but a mass of depravity, ignorance and weakness, and feel as though I desire the lowest seat among his saints on earth and among his redeemed in heaven, so that I can see my Master's face and have the privilege of singing his praise through all eternity for that free, sovereign grace which saves a poor, lost sinner, and makes him rejoice in hope of eternal happiness in that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. There Christ is all and in all; there is no more sorrow there, we shall be rid of all this mortality and this old man of sin that clogs our spirit and keeps us under so that we dare not so much as get a glimpse (many times) of this bright home, this new Jerusalem, the city of the living God, which John saw descending out of heaven. My brother, let us thank God and take courage, the warfare will soon be over, soon we shall reap our reward.

Write me soon. Excuse this letter, I have been interrupted so often I cannot collect my thoughts. May God bless you and prosper you, both in temporal and spiritual affairs, and give you many seals to your ministry, is the prayer of your unworthy brother in Christ,

G. W. STATON.

[THE foregoing letters were sent to us by sister Keturah Rittenhouse. They were addressed to her father, as will be seen, nearly forty-six years ago. Elder Staton's name is still held in dear remembrance by many brethren in the Salisbury Association, and by the members of the churches at Welsh and London Tract, where he spent his last years as their pastor. They will, we are persuaded, be found of deep interest to our readers generally, as they give the exercises of mind of one who became a good gospel minister, and who was a faithful man. His praise was in all the churches of his day, and his memory still remains among all who knew him. Such testimonies are of great encouragement to all who are traveling the same road. Elder Staton felt the work to which he was called, to be great indeed. All who are called of God, like brother Staton, must say with Paul, "And who is sufficient for these things?" Also, "Our sufficiency is of God."—ED.]

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., April 8, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—It is time for me to renew my subscription, and I would feel guilty if I did not accompany it with a few lines. I think of you all so much, and wish for the gospel privileges you are enjoying, until sometimes I get dissatisfied with surrounding conditions, and long for the wings of a dove

that I might fly away. My heart goes out to you in a love that would be unaccountable, if I should leave out God and his goodness, and I have a desire to write to each one of you, but I am so unlearned in the things which interest you above all others, that I shrink from doing so. I want to see you all, but when I think of going among you, it is always with this feeling: If I could only be where I could see and hear them, without their seeing me, for at times I believe if they knew me as I know myself they would want nothing to do with me.

I wrote to brother Badger the first of the year, and when he answered it he said he was ignorant and unprofitable in the things in which I was so deeply taught, and I sat down and cried, and prayed that God would forgive me if I had deceived him—if I had said things that I did not believe or feel. I wondered, too, what I could have written, for when I think of him, of you and of all the other preachers called and fitted for the work, you seem to me to be sitting or standing on something far above me, and as much more enlightened, and as much better than I as God is better than you. I am one of the least of all, and am buffeted and tossed by circumstances over which I have no control, until I ask, Who am I, and what am I, that they should even be willing to fellowship me? But through it all, and over it all, comes a knowledge that God is just, and a resignation to banishment from his presence, if it is his will, though it is not without sorrow and tears. Yet we are told that all things work together for good to those who love the Lord, and if I am not chastised, then I am not his child. Away out here I hunger and thirst for the gospel, and I greatly desire the companionship of the Lord's dear people, and still it may be that if I were with you constantly I would not experience those feelings half so intensely, and then the last condition would be worse than the first. At times I begin to reason out how things could be different, and better, but I get caught like a fly in a web, and exclaim, Thou art the Wonderful, the Counsellor, the mighty, mighty Lord, and thou hast done all things well; though mysterious and past finding out are thy ways, they are the ways of pleasantness, and all thy paths are peace. O that I may be enabled to love him more, to serve him more acceptably, and to be reconciled to all his dealings with me. What strange lives we live; one day on the mountaintop of trusting, believing and willing to suffer for his sake, the next we are doubting, despairing and even wondering how we could ever have thought there was salvation for such miserable sinners. But there is balm in Gilead, for in our weakness we find strength in him; when the hour is darkest, the light is made to shine in heavenly places, and when we cry, Without thee we are lost and undone, he manifests himself to us, and we are no longer strangers and aliens, but children of the King.

I wish I could explain to you to-day the dearness and the nearness I feel for all who have been led as I have, for all who can say, Not by works of righteousness that I have done, but by the goodness, mercy and power of God. There is no merit in me, for I believe I was born an Old School Baptist, and in a double sense. In my earliest childhood, before understanding one spoken word, I recognized a peculiarity about them, a superiority as it were, something mysterious, and I listened and enjoyed. It grew with my growth until there came stealing

over me the desire to be as good as I thought they were. I attended the funeral of Elder Samuel Trott, and wished it were I who was lying in the casket, and was astonished that any one should cry, for I felt that it was far better to depart and be with Christ, and surely he had gone home to rest. That day I prayed to God to pardon my sins, and save me by his grace. There was never a thought that I could do anything in so great a work—he must do it all. One year after, it pleased him to give me the evidence that I was one for whom Christ died. I was happy then, and for some time afterward, but it was so new to me that I did not quite understand it. There was no preaching anywhere near, and I hesitated to speak to my mother. I thought then, as now, that I had nothing of interest to relate; it was my secret, so I cherished it, and locked it up in my heart. Soon after, troubles of a worldly nature overwhelmed me, and I am afraid that I almost forgot the one great blessing I had received at his hand, although there was no open rebellion, but my thoughts were of myself more than of him. Then I drifted to Baltimore, and having read one day that you were to preach at Rechabite Hall the following Sunday I determined to go, and in all my life I had never heard anything so beautiful, so comforting, so satisfying; had never heard any one relate their experience, did not know there was a proper time and place for it, did not know under what conditions members were received, but something was tugging at my heartstrings, and that secret could be kept no longer, so I knelt before you all, willing to go with you anywhere, everywhere, and to be your servant for Christ's sake. O the love that filled my heart! How the sacred words of the gospel thrilled me with joy, and how lovely his people looked. That was the second time in God's grace that I was lifted above the things of this world, and made to rejoice with exceeding great joy, and I felt to say, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; * * * thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." You know the result, and I loved you all the more, and praised God continually for having met you.

The third time I was made to experience a joy that was unspeakable and full of glory was when I was baptized by brother Badger. A more humble minister never administered the ordinance to a more humble child, yet no one ever walked into the water more willingly, and that brother is very dear to me; dear by ties of spiritual relationship, by his very doubts and fears, and by his modest estimate of himself; I smile when reading of his leanness and poverty of spirit, for I feel that God loves him all the more for it; those who are puffed up and given to vanity are not those who are living nearest to Him.

Brother Chick, I have wanted very much to see you, and what do you think happened a few weeks ago? Brother Husbands (of whom you have heard) came in and left two little pamphlets for me to read. I became interested at once, for some brother was telling of his travels among the Old School Baptists in the eastern States. He wrote of several ministers he had met, and of whose hospitality he had partaken, then of you, and on the next page was your picture. I was delighted, but could see no resemblance at all to my mind's imaginings; but the same tender feeling for you was present, for I knew you were preaching

the same gospel and serving the same Master.

Why I am writing so much is more than I can explain; I know I have told about the same many times before, yet with us it is always the same old story; science or seminaries have not produced anything better or sweeter. God still saves in the same way, and is the same unchangeable God whom the prophets and apostles worshiped. But you are older in the way and the truth, and have attained to a full knowledge of these things, while my expressions are crude and childish. Even my children marvel if I say I am writing to a preacher; they think, of a necessity, that he must be a graduate of some seminary, and suppose that I am trying to write along learned lines.

Now a word about ourselves; we are usually well, with the exception of a dear daughter-in-law, who has been failing for some time, but we never realized that it was a development of that dread disease, consumption, until a few months ago, and we fear that she will never be better. Our little town is beautiful with its wealth of coloring, and the weather is all one could ask. The people are cultured beyond what you would think, but are self-righteous and God-dishonoring to the same extent.

But I am trying your patience, so will close, with the request that after reading this, you will send it to brother Badger; I can think of but one other who would care to see it, and I want to write to her in the near future. There is one thing about this article that I know you will appreciate, and it is that I do not request an answer. Request it, mind you, but will try to be content to read your writings in the SIGNS.

Hope this will find you and your family well in body and in spirit, and that you may be spared a long time to proclaim the glad tidings of good things to a waiting, attentive people.

With much love, I am humbly, your sister in hope,

(MRS.) J. L. WRIGHT.

KELLER, Texas, May 8, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have sometimes read in the SIGNS some account of churches of long standing, including names of constituent members, and this has always been sacred and comforting to me, I therefore judge that others might feel, in like manner, to be edified, hence I am sending you a sketch of the church on Denton Creek, Texas. I find that a meeting was called April 8th 1855, and the following was adopted: "We, a handful of the scattered flock of Jesus Christ, called Regular Predestinarian Baptists, although unworthy, holding letters in dismissal from other churches in full fellowship, covenant and agree to come together in a church capacity, to watch over each other in love, and to try to keep house in the Lord, although in weakness, believing it to have been designed by the Lord, the great head of the church, for the safety and well-being of his poor and disconsolate children while in this world. It was agreed to petition the following churches for their ministerial aid to sit as a presbytery to constitute us into a church, viz., Cedar Spring, Coney, Pleasant Run and Orchard Gap, to meet on Saturday before the first Sunday in June at the house of sister Medlin, on Denton Creek, Denton County, Texas, brother John A. Fanning to act as clerk. This was signed by all those who desired to thus be organized as a church. On June 2nd, 1855, the presbytery met at the house of

sister Medlin, as requested, and was composed of the following named brethren: from Cedar Springs, F. J. Brown, William Honeyman, J. H. Barlow; from Pleasant Run, Elders Samuel Clark and John Sneed; from Orchard Gap, Elders Wit, Sol and Fisher, brethren L. F. Lucas and M. A. Morris. On recommendation by brother Fisher, brother Morris, of Cedar Springs Church, and brother Turner, of Cross Timber Church, were invited to participate in the constitution of the church. The presbytery was received, and the following named brethren and sisters proceeded to hand in their letters: John Fanning, Charles Medlin, Urias Martin, Samuel Loving, Elizabeth Loving, Rhoda Fanning, Kesiah Martin, Ruth Allen, Delila Medlin, Mary Medlin, Tabitha Steward and Mary C. Medlin. After the presbytery examined the letters they were satisfied, and proceeded to constitute them into a regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Christ."

Now, dear editors, I will make some remarks. I have copied the above covenant from the original records of the church-book. Therein will be seen the spirit of sincerity, meekness and devotion to their supreme King and Lawgiver that moved them as a little handful to come together by mutual consent, and to be constituted into a regular Old School Baptist Church. They came from the States of Illinois and Missouri, to make for themselves homes in this far western country, to brave the hardships and privations common to a wild frontier country, and to endure hardness as good soldiers and faithful followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, the ravages and hostilities of the savages notwithstanding. Therefore, under the guidance and protection of the great Head of the church, they were made able to forego ease, and to suffer for the cause of Christ, and to stand firm in the gospel. Thus they proved how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. They desired the peace and comfort of church privileges before worldly gain, and inspired with the attribute of heavenly love were willing, if need be, to sacrifice their lives for the truth in obedience to the commandment of heaven. After the church was organized it was served by Elders Wit, Sol, Fisher, Clark and J. C. Autry. These faithful, devoted preachers traveled through heat and cold a distance from thirty-five to sixty-five miles, imbued with the feeling of necessity, and the great importance of preaching the gospel to this church, to her joy and confirmation in the truth. They knew that they must pass through many sore trials and conflicts, yet they were made strong in the purpose of God to brave every danger, and to endure the storms of a howling wilderness, amid the fiery darts of temptation, disappointment and affliction untold and indescribable. These ministering servants in the pastoral care of the church were succeeded by Elders J. Sneed, Joseph Loving, Wm. Flanigan, S. McKelvey and A. S. Bourland. All these have finished their course honorably, faithfully and persistently, in the advocacy of Bible doctrine, ever maintaining the absolute sovereignty of God in all things. All the members above named in the constitution of the church have long since passed away to their eternal home, and others have been brought in to take their places. From time to time, down to the present, the Lord has been gracious to this church, bestowing his grace upon her as a beacon light of promise, by which she has been sustained, and her identity preserved on the earth, and

through renewed assurances given her by the great Head of the church she still stands immovably fixed upon the same old platform upon which she began, nearly fifty-four years ago. Doubtless at times she has been assailed by many vexatious questions, but with an eye single to the discipline of the New Testament she soon has disposed of such matters in a lawful way, and has maintained the spirit of peace and love in gospel order. For many years this church had no settled place to hold her meetings, but traveled from house to house among its members for worship, but about twenty years ago the church selected a place and erected a large building in the town of Keller, where they now meet regularly on Saturday before the first Sunday in each month to worship God in spirit and in truth, having no confidence in the flesh. She glories in the doctrine of salvation by grace, unconditional election, absolute predestination and the positive certainty of all events, as declared by the Holy Spirit according to the purpose of the eternal God, yet we are not extremists in the presentation of Bible truth. We desire ever to stay in line with the testimony of our Lord, who is the foundation Rock upon which our hope rests. We avoid, as much as is possible, vain wrangling and unprofitable controversy, which genders strife rather than godly edifying; pursuing the old paths of Christ and the apostles, as the standard of our faith and rule of action; in this we are untrammeled by the wisdom of the world. Through the long period of these years the great incentive of this church has been the worship of the true and living God, to exalt her King, and to rejoice in the Savior's love. As her members have been called to lay their armor by to rest with God in that eternal world beyond, the dear Lord, at his own appointed time, has brought in new recruits to fill the vacancies. Three preachers have been ordained in this church since her constitution: Elders A. D. Bourland, W. V. S. Allen and the writer of this sketch, also licensed a preacher: W. S. Bourland. During the troubles of the Baptists here in Texas this church has pursued a safe course by standing solid, and affirming the Bible doctrine; they have not been moved from their steadfastness "by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." However, fiery darts have been hurled against her by the advocacy of the new and popular theory of conditionalism, but as the weapons of her warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, she did not fear the abuses or onslaught of her enemies. Moreover, her conformity to the principles of the Old School Baptist order, which has ever characterized the predestinarian denomination from the days of the Baptists to the present, made her strong in the Rock of her salvation, enabling her to weather the storm of persecution, and to float above the tide of the angry ocean of vicious assailants. This church has loved the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and has fully indorsed the principles published therein, which have been so strictly in accord with the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Elder A. S. Bourland was pastor of this church for a longer period of succeeding years than any other minister who has served the church as pastor since her constitution. For the past three or four years the writer has served them as pastor, and he prays God to ever be his guide and instructor in wisdom's way. May he through the grace and impulsive influence of the Spirit of the great Shepherd

be enabled to discharge that sacred duty faithfully, and thereby adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.

In giving this little sketch of the travel of the church I have had to omit many things for want of time and space, and to condense as much as possible. I hope, dear editors, that you may find room in the dear old SIGNS for its publication, as a little mite, expressive of our high esteem, respect and veneration to our dear brethren and sisters whose names appear in the foregoing covenant.

In gospel bonds,

ASA HOWARD.

ROMANS V. 19.

"FOR as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

I have been impressed for some days to try to write some of the things which are in my mind concerning this Scripture, and the things that appear to me to be in it. Like all other Scripture left on record for the benefit of the church, this is not without meaning; but still, like all other, it cannot be applied or spoken of according to the will of man. The first part of the text shows clearly what Paul had in view when he wrote the words, viz., that by one man, Adam, many were made sinners. I understand from the Scriptures, and from my own experience, that the fall of Adam, as it is commonly spoken of, placed all generations in all time to come in bondage. The statement, as some declare, that Adam was able to stand, is disproved by his own action. But be that as it may, it is a fact that he did fall, and according to all known law placed all his posterity under the same curse which he found himself under, driven forth from the presence of God. Adam was at enmity against God, but he could not break any commandment until the commandment was given him. The simple fact that God spoke to him, saying, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it [here is the law]: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die [here is the penalty]," does not justify any one to say that Adam was able to stand, or to do as he chose; that is, not to eat and live, or to eat and die. A penalty is not for him who does not break the law, but for a lawbreaker. God well knew that Adam would break the commandment, knowing his nature was earthy, or natural. This proves to my mind the utter helplessness of man. Still I would not justify myself for sin that I have done, or any one else for the sin that they have done, by taking refuge in the fact of our utter helplessness; such a statement will not do; this I know by experience. At one time, for a while, I leaned very hard against it as justification, but it soon proved no refuge to me; and the things which I have tasted and handled I know to be true. Now as Adam disobeyed he went into transgression, and became a bondman to sin. Can science clear the mystery as to how the offspring of bond-parents can free themselves? No. With all the wisdom of the Greek as an opponent, I would pit myself, or the knowledge with which I trust God in his mercy has endowed even me, who am but an unworthy worm of the dust and who am not worthy of myself to even lisp his name, against the claim that any human wisdom can show how a child born in bondage, of bond-parents, can free himself. This was the state that I found myself in, and I do not believe, yea, I will make it stronger, I know that I am no more helpless than

any the rest of the Adamic family. All are helpless, and some are aware of it, while others are not; these travel and labor as blind men; and here is wherein I have reason to hope that God has bestowed a rich blessing upon me by showing me my utter helplessness and his complete power. I think that what are termed the garden of Eden and the fall of Adam are no more than this in a few words. The garden of Eden was typical of the blissfully ignorant state one is in before God reveals man to himself. The fall was the coming to know the utter helplessness of man in the sight of the all-powerful God. So then all have been in the garden of Eden, being placed there at their birth, living a life of ease and without spiritual knowledge; then there is given them an understanding, or knowledge, of their nakedness, and of their true condition before God. This is my thought, in as few words as I can express it. Adam fell no further than I did, provided I have attained to the knowledge of my helplessness and nakedness in the sight of God. Adam could not have been an heir of righteousness, even if he had remained through life without partaking of the forbidden fruit, or without violating the law of God. This may sound like a strong statement to some, and I have no desire to offend any one, but I believe it to be true. This was the first sinful act or violation of the law. I am not trying to prove that it was not sin to transgress, but that it was sin. Adam was created with a nature that would sin as soon as he came in contact with a law, or restraint. His violation of the law was simply a proof of the nature that he possessed, and not only he, but all his posterity possess the same nature, and by his disobedience many were made sinners. We are all sinners, for we are conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity. I will try to show how every one is undoubtedly a sinner. I think that I have read the entire Bible, and I have yet to find any one being described as righteous in and of himself. No, man is not righteous, but "by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." This is the other side of this matter. The fact that Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Ghost of the virgin Mary, brings a new light to bear upon this gloomy subject. We do not find a single time that Jesus Christ while here in the flesh refused or failed to carry out the Father's will to the utmost; his was perfect obedience, very unlike the first man Adam; even unto death was he in perfect subjection, being obedient in all things. He said when he knew that his time was about come, "Not my will, but thine, be done." What a great difference; the one violating the very first law given, while Jesus bore all the transgressions of all his people without a murmur. So now by his perfect obedience we have hope. "Salvation is of the Lord." When the Bible declares salvation to be by grace it declares the salvation of all the chosen of God. This denies salvation by our works. A man fifty years of age is as helpless of himself to do righteously as a new-born babe. Except they become as babes, or little children, they shall in nowise enter the kingdom of heaven. At another time the Savior said, Father, I thank thee, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. Thus it is by revelation that one knows anything about this matter, and in this revelation is revealed the plan of salvation. So it is by the disobedience of Adam that sin is in the world, and by the obedience of Christ that

many are made righteous. Were it not for the fact I know these things are known only by revelation, I would find fault with every one who disagrees with me; but knowing the utter inability of man by nature to know the truth, I have no fault to find with any. When they refuse the doctrine of grace, and try to substitute human works, they are ignorant, knowing not what they do, being still in unbelief.

From one who desires to trust alone in Him who was perfect in obedience, and who came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

F. SELBY FISHER.

WILMINGTON, Del., May 13, 1909.

HAMPTON, Iowa, May 25, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It has been some time since I have written for our family paper. The subject upon my mind is this: To whom is the gospel preached? Concerning this there are many opinions. What is the gospel? Some may differ from me as regards this question. Some say the Bible is the gospel. For centuries there was no such thing as the Bible. Paul called it "inspiration." "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." The word "inspiration" occurs but twice in the Bible: Job xxxii. 8, and 2 Tim. iii. 16. Peter i. 21: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The Bible is but the written word, or the declaration of the word. For three centuries after Christ there was no book called the Bible; that is, what is written there was not as yet printed in book form and called the Bible. God, who is all-wise, put it into the hearts and minds of seventy men to translate from the dead languages under King James what is called the King James' version of the holy Scriptures, into the English language.

But now to the question, What is the gospel, and to whom is the gospel preached? Paul tells us what it is in Romans i. 16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth." There is no power in the book called the Bible, and, as I said before, there was no Bible when Paul was arrested on his way to Damascus. He had read and was well versed in what were called the Scriptures, but it was the power of God that called him, not the literal word. The literal word is the history of events from the beginning of time, and the natural man understands it only as history, and believes it only as any other history, like the history of the world, or the history of the United States. Any natural person who reads the Bible can tell all about it in a natural sense, but can know nothing about it spiritually, for the natural man cannot know the things of the Spirit. There is no quickening power in the letter of the word. Were Arminians to give up the idea that the proclamation of the word is the means of quickening dead sinners into life, their machinery would have to stop and their fabric would fall in pieces; this is their hobby, but it is not Bible doctrine, neither is it Baptist doctrine. It was never believed by the people called Baptists until the idea of a general atonement came into fashion. According to history, this idea came by James Arminius, who died at Leyden, in Holland, in 1608 or 1609. Some have said that the idea of a general atonement was believed by Baptists from the days of the apostles, but all well informed Baptists know better. The Baptists who formed the

first association in America contended strenuously for the doctrine of special atonement.

But to come again to the subject. Is the proclamation of the gospel the means which God ordained for the quickening of dead sinners into life? If so, how many did the Lord intend to quicken by it, a portion, or all of the congregation sitting under its sound? Are not all the means used in each case, and if it quickens one sinner, why not all that are present? Suppose in reply to the question, Why were you quickened into life? one replies, Because I heard the gospel preached. If that were the cause, will not the same cause produce the same effect on all sinners? But, says one, you do not obey it. What! obey a thing in order to be quickened by it? Quickened means to make alive. The idea that we must obey a thing in order to be made alive by it is absurd, to say the least of it. If the proclamation of the gospel be the means of conversion, it must be the only means, for the Scriptures speak of but one plan of salvation. Again, if we must hear the gospel preached in order to be saved, how shall the deaf be saved? The apostle Paul said, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." Is not the gospel one of the things of the Spirit? If so, the dead sinner cannot receive it. How then can it make him to live? Paul tells us again that "the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." From this declaration we can see to whom the preaching is beneficial, and also to whom it is not. Why was the preaching of Paul a stumbling-block and foolishness to a portion of the Jews and of the Greeks, and power and wisdom to others? Paul gives the reason, viz., that a part of them were called. The idea now prevails that the minister is sent forth to call sinners to repentance. If this be the case, then all were called to whom men preached. Peter said, "The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Paul said again, "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." He does not say, If you shall hear the gospel. The angel said, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." He did not say, If they will hear the gospel. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." This is not, If they will hear the gospel, but it is the work of Jesus Christ that saves sinners, and not the work of the sinner or of the preacher. Paul said, "Who hath [notice it is in the past tense] saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace." If we must perform some work in order to be saved, are we not saved according to our works? All the work that is necessary to the eternal salvation of the sinner is the work of Jesus. It is said to be the gift of God through faith, not of ourselves, but of God, from first to last. Paul said again, "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not." "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Are not all works excluded here? But we are told that we must work, will and run, else we will never get to heaven. The gospel is simply glad tidings. Was it not so to the shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night? How they did glorify God. It was true gospel to them, but was it

good news to all? No, it was not good news to Herod. The gospel is the power of God unto all that gladly receive the word, and that word is Jesus Christ. On the day of Pentecost all did not receive it. Men of all nations were gathered together, but only those who were pricked in the heart really heard the gospel; others mocked, saying, These men are drunken. At this day it is good news only to them who have the hearing ear and the understanding heart, being written there by the finger of God.

But I will close this poorly written article. If this is worthy of a place in our family paper, please publish it, but if not published no harm will be done.

Unworthily yours,

E. A. NORTON.

DUNCAN, Okla., June 14, 1909.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I will try to write a few lines for our paper, just to tell you all how much comfort I receive from it in my lonely and desolate journey here. Surely the Lord dwells with you. We read in the Bible that the Lord dwells round about Zion, and that he is a sure refuge for the saints from the storm, and that he will fight all our battles; he is a sure refuge for the little lambs, for he carries them on his shoulder. It is written, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Dear children of God, my daily thought is, Is it my lot to be borne upon his shoulder? are his loving arms underneath me? My hope is in him; in him do I trust, for there is no other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." This sometimes gives me hope, for surely I do love the dear brethren, their company is sweet to me. It is seldom that I am ever in their company face to face, yet I feel to be in their company while reading after them; I feel to be in fellowship with them. Their writing is all the preaching I have in this town, where there are many gods. I never attend their meetings, for they are no company for me. I feel that as I journey here the Lord will lead me, and will be my guide; if I am one for whom Christ died he will ordain peace for me, and will be with me in the darkness and in the light, for he is light, and in him is no darkness at all. He knoweth my frame. O let me say with Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee." She desired to follow after her mother-in-law, the type of the church; so, dear friends, if I know myself, I want to follow our spiritual Naomi, and I know if Boaz (Christ) is my King, he will suffer me to glean in the field with the maidens. O praise the Lord of heaven and earth. When I read the precious letters in the SIGNS I feel that I have gleaned in the field, and that some handfuls are fallen to me on purpose. Dear saints, will you let me glean in this field with you? O how sweet to me to pick up the handfuls that you drop by the way. Ruth said, "I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves." And Boaz told her not to glean in another field, neither to go from hence, but to abide here fast by his maidens. So, dear friends, when I read after you I feel that I am abiding with you in the field. The maidens and the young men are the

members of the church, for they are all reaping or gleaning in the same field. Ruth followed Naomi just as all the children of God want to glean, but know not where to go. In their condemned state their way is hedged up, and they are in darkness, and mourn and chatter as a dove. They cry, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?" Dear friends, I do not want to turn aside from you; I want to glean in the field with you; I want to gather the handfuls on purpose; yes, I want to dwell with the young men and the maidens, and praise the blessed Lord. When I go into another field I find nothing there but bitter herbs, and my heart grows faint, and I begin to mourn for the footprints of the flock, and to say, Where is my Beloved, that I may find him whom my soul loveth? O let me dwell with the flock that he has purchased with his own blood where he makes them to rest at noon. What a resting-place we have in Jesus. O that I knew that I am as Ruth, gleaning some of the handfuls that her spiritual husband gave to her. Dear kindred, if I know myself, this is my desire. I know that the Lord dwells in Zion, and that he keeps the feet of his saints, and that he is a sure dwelling-place for all his people. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Has this love been bestowed upon me? Has the Lord prepared a dwelling-place for me? As I write, hymn 1238 (Beebe's collection) comes to my mind, bringing trembling and fear, and it is a favorite one with me. I know that the Lord knows my frame, and my weakness, and that I am but dust; my times are in his hand, and he appointeth the way for me, and it is not in me to direct my steps. I trust that he will choose all my steps, and that he will hold me by the hand of his power, for I am nothing, and less than nothing, but in him is life everlasting. Surely if I am one of his children he will hear me, for he knows my heart; there is nothing hidden from him, and I am glad that he does know all things. By him all things were created, and by him all things consist, and all things work together for good to them that love him, who are the called according to his purpose; he hath by one offering made them perfect.

This may be my last, and I do not know whether to send it or not; but believing that you are blessed with the Spirit of Christ, and will do justly and kindly by me, I will send it. If there is in it no spirit of the life of the Savior, do not publish it. I had rather read after the others than myself, but this is all the way I have to tell you of my love. May the Lord's blessing richly abound over his house and keep it in order, for he said that he had built his house, and hewn out her seven pillars, and mingled her wine, and furnished her table. Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift. Now good-bye, dear friends.

Your sister,

NANCY CREEL.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., May 25, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—For some cause I feel strongly impressed to write some of the things which I understand the Scriptures to teach concerning the resurrection of the bodies of those who sleep, both of the just and of the unjust, and I pray the Lord to guide me in the attempt.

I have thought whether God's dealing

with Enoch was not a figure of His dealings with all the other members of his mystical body. "He was not, for God took him."—Gen. v. 24. Where was that natural body in which he had lived and walked with God and begat sons and daughters? Was it not that body that "was translated that he should not see death"?—Heb. xi. 5. If so, are there two kinds of people in God's glory, one in the translated body and another in a different or exchanged body? We read of him that he was not found, for God had translated him. Doubtless it was the same body that lived here and in which he pleased God that was translated. If that is true, how can it be otherwise than that it is the same body that is to-day and suffers pain, commits sin, walks as God directs, &c., that shall rise from the dead? Not a natural, but a changed and spiritual body. The body of Enoch was not a natural body after the translation, but a translated, a spiritual body, as all the saints shall have.

Another case was that of Elijah. As he and Elisha walked and talked there came "a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven."—2 Kings ii. 11. Where was his body in which he had prophesied and been persecuted? The sons of the prophets would send fifty strong men to look for it, even after Elisha had protested, and they searched in the mountains and in the valleys three days, but returned empty. They persuaded Elisha until in his shame he gave his consent for them to go, but when they returned the shame was theirs and the prophet had honor with the Lord. Where was the body of Elijah? It was taken to heaven, as was that of Enoch, and was a translated body, or a spiritual body.

It is said of our Lord, "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept."—1 Cor. xv. 20. Why call him the firstfruits if there are none to come after him? In the days of Israel's sacrifices they were commanded to bring to the house of the Lord the first of the firstfruits of the harvest; did not that signify that there should be other fruits to follow the firstfruits? If not, I fail to see the sense of the language. Also in Paul's expression concerning Christ; if there are to be no other fruits from the dead I fail to see the sense of his argument. He was not speaking of the spiritual quickening that the Lord spoke of in John v. 25: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live;" but of that which our Lord said in verses 28, 29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." If this is not what Paul refers to, I fail altogether to catch his meaning. Christ, in his body, is the firstfruits of the resurrection of the saints in their bodies which shall come forth like unto his glorious body. When his body came forth from the dead it was the same body that ministered to the saints and that was crucified, for the prints of the nails and the spear were yet there, and they became a witness to Thomas. It appears to me that the whole of the time that he showed himself to his disciples after his resurrection was for a testimony to the saints for all time. They saw that it was he, the same Jesus who had showed forth to Israel for three years and a half. He had

conquered every one who had risen up against him, and now he had conquered death and the grave with the Roman seal upon it. He who had power over death while he was yet in death, and could take up his life again, can he not bring forth from the dead all who put their trust in him? Yes, verily, for this is just what he has done. In the resurrection of his body from the dead there is the assurance of the resurrection of all the members of his mystical body at his coming. That is the time of the harvest, when the full virtue of the firstfruits shall be known. Christ is "the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's, at his coming." Now if the dead rise not, then is Christ not raised, and if Christ be not raised, then there is no gospel, and those who now live in hope must die in despair. Just as sure as the body of Christ has risen from the dead, just so sure shall the bodies of the saints rise at his coming; and just as sure as the saints now bear the image of the earthy, just so sure shall they then bear the image of the heavenly. Now they bear the image of Adam, the earthy, and are like unto the body of Christ while he was in the flesh, but in the resurrection that earthy image will be fully done away, for it will have been swallowed up of death. They shall be raised up like unto his glorious body. It is the same, however, that was sown a natural body that shall be raised a spiritual body. This fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians is devoted to the resurrection, first, of the actual body of our Lord, and secondly, of his mystical body, the church, and the one is just as sure as the other, for if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not raised, your faith is vain and our preaching is vain. Are not the troubles and deliverances through which we are now passing the earnest of these very things? And what is the sense of an earnest if it is not to inspire hope in that to which it points forward? Surely if the saints are not to rise, faith is vain, hope is vain, our preaching is vain and we are yet in our sins. Let us eat and drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die and will be no more. The anchor is lost, the compass is taken away, the cable is broken and the ship is cast on the rock and beaten to pieces and we will be no more. If this is not the teaching of Paul, I am so blind that I cannot see.

The teaching of our Lord in that before cited text, John v. 28, 29, is that both the righteous and the wicked shall hear His voice and shall come forth. He says, "The hour is coming," therefore it is in the future. We do not know when it is, but if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first."—1 Thess. iv. 16. Evidently the apostle is not speaking of the resurrection of the actual body of Christ, which event occurred nearly two thousand years ago, but of the actual resurrection of the bodies of the saints, who are the members of his body in particular. They shall rise first. What can he mean? To be sure that there is some one to rise afterwards. Who is it? Our Lord said it is they who have done evil, and they shall come forth unto the resurrection of damnation, and of them he has said, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment." For he had said unto them, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

My dear brother, I hope you will be able to gather from what I have written what I understand the Scriptures to teach, and what I really believe to be the way of the Lord with us.

I am in very feeble health; hope you and yours are well. The Lord bless both you and us to live unto him and to declare his word.

Your brother in the hope of the resurrection of this body from the dead,

L. H. HARDY.

DAYTON, Wash., March 23, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a precious letter which we have just received from brother and sister Allison. It is so precious to us that we desire to share it with the readers of the SIGNS, for it is both meat and drink to our souls. We are having some as good preaching, I think, now at our little church as I ever heard, it being done by our dear brethren Pate and Barnes. God has seen fit to take our dear old brother Newkirk to his last resting-place. He fell asleep in the arms of his blessed Lord and Savior on the 13th of this month at six o'clock in the evening; now dear brother Barnes takes his place as assistant pastor. Dear brother Newkirk was always a faithful minister, and we miss him much, but our loss is his eternal gain. He had been waiting for the summons for some time. His whole desire was to be with his dear Savior, where there is no more sickness, pain or death, and where all is love and peace.

As ever,

(MRS.) W. P. SAVAGE.

SHERWOOD, Oregon, March 12, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER SAVAGE:—We have been looking over our unanswered letters, and are surprised to find that your last letter to us was written on February 9th. How time does fly, especially after we become old as we now are. I am past seventy-eight years, and my dear wife will be seventy-six in June. We have read your good letter over again, and I would be glad could I write you a good one in return, but I seem to be wandering in a wilderness in a solitary place, and feel that I have lost my way; but I hope that I sometimes find him of whom Moses and the prophets did write: Jesus of Nazareth. I can use the apostle's words, and say, "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; * * * even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: so that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." This seems to be now all that we are waiting for; but we ourselves feel that we have come very far short of filling the above Scripture. But we read that there was the tree of life; this tree is on either side of the river, because God is everywhere, and even the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Then what must the fruit be, which is laid up for the Lord's children? This fruit is worth waiting for, all unworthy though we feel to be to claim an interest in such a glorious inheritance; but when the good time of God shall come, he will come and will not tarry. He is pleased to give his dear children a little taste of this fruit while they are here in the wilderness, so that when we pass through the valley and shadow of death we shall fear no evil, his rod and his staff will comfort us. Sometimes our perplexities are such that we cannot believe that any one else is tormented with fiery darts cast into their minds as we are; we think sometimes that they are such as no child of God ever

experiences; our darkness, our unbelief and corruption are such as we suppose no one knows but ourselves; hungry and thirsty we almost faint by the way; but what do we hunger for? It is not worldly honor or natural food, but we hunger and thirst for righteousness, that righteousness that is by faith upon the Son of God. This is evidence that we are alive to God, being made so by the quickening Spirit of God, being born again. We are born in the city of Regeneration, in the parish of Repentance unto life, and educated in the school of Obedience, that school where God works in his children to will and to do of his own good pleasure, and we now live in the town of Perseverance, and work at the trade of Diligence, and at times do works of self-denial, and wear plain garments of humility, and have a beautiful suit to wear at court called the robe of righteousness, the imputed righteousness of Christ. Then we are truly blessed, for we read, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." We read that he withdraweth not his eye from the righteous, but with kings are they upon the throne. "Yea, he doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted." Again he said, "Let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice; let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them. * * * For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous; with favor wilt thou compass him as with a shield." Can such blessings be for poor, vile sinners? All our hope for this is that Jesus came into the world to save sinners, and that his blood cleanseth from all sin. I can say with the poet,

"Dear Jesus, 'tis alone in thee I find
All that can satisfy my anxious mind;
I sinful seem, defiled and all unclean,
I need thee, precious Christ, to stand between,
Lest God, whose wrath is a consuming fire,
Should strike me with his sin-avenging ire.
Naught of my own I dare present to view,
Before that gaze which pierces through and through;
But thou art righteous, and in thee alone
I dare approach the Father's holy throne."

With regard to what the workmongers say relative to its being easier to get to heaven than it is to get into the Old School Predestinarian Church, I will say that the poor, deluded creatures know not what they speak, for it is possible, and sometimes easy, for them to creep into the militant church of Jesus Christ, and with fair speeches deceive the simple brethren into believing they are the children of God; but known unto God are all his works, and if they are not of his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that they should walk in them, woe will be theirs, for they cannot deceive the all-wise God, for he says unto such ones, In that day many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able. For broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat. Thousands walk together there, as says the hymn; but strait and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be who find it, and this way leads to life everlasting.

We were glad to learn from your letter that you and your family were all well, and were also glad to know that you were enjoying good meetings, which is no surprise to us, for you have two of our ablest ministers to proclaim to you life and salvation through, not Elders Pate and Barnes, but through the finished work of the adorable Redeemer; it is not of them, but of the grace of God that is in them. We can say of them, as the widow said of Elijah, "Now, by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." We are all well at home, but

our dear sister Stuart is very ill in the hospital.

We remain your loving brother and sister,

J. P. AND MARY ALLISON.

SPRINGFIELD, Mo., May 8, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I hope you will excuse my long delay in sending the money for my subscription, and I will try to do better in the future, if the Lord still spares me. The SIGNS is a great comfort to me, yet I often wonder why, for the writers seem to be such good people, and I am only a poor sinner, desiring to eat the crumbs that fall from the Master's table. The longer I live in this world the more I feel the need of Jesus. He said, "Without me ye can do nothing," and I find that the older I grow the more helpless I feel to be, and the less I know about the way. I grow weaker and weaker, smaller and smaller, and except the Lord saves me I am lost. This is my comfort: Jesus died to save sinners. I was twenty-five years old before I knew I was a sinner, then it pleased God to show me to myself, and I was made ashamed; moreover, I was ashamed to ask him to pardon me, for I could not see one good deed that I had ever done in all my life, but still he had ever been merciful. I thought death my portion, for the wages of sin is death, and this was what I found due me when I came to see what I was by nature. I looked for relief, but no relief could I find. I grew worse and worse, and it seemed that I was the greatest sinner on earth. I found the Lord was righteous and I was wrong, and my reward was death; but the gift of God is eternal life; I needed this, but could not feel that I deserved it. I can never tell how thankful I was on that morning when it pleased God for Christ's sake to pardon me, a poor sinner. "O for a thousand tongues to sing my dear Redeemer's praise."

You must pardon me for thus writing, for I love the truth, and feel like telling how I prize the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I am surrounded by self-will worshipers, who say, You can if you will, and it all depends upon you whether the Lord will save you or not. Our God is trying to get you to come to Christ, and you will not come. This is what I am in the midst of; this is the kind of gods the preachers hold forth here. They do not preach that God who works all things after the counsel of his own will, who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast. When Jesus called his disciples they did not hesitate whether they would follow him or not, they straightway left their callings and followed him; when he called them they came. When he calls there comes a power with the call that cannot be withstood. Peter said, "What was I, that I could withstand God?" If a man says that God sent him to do a certain thing, and he does not do that thing, it is evident that God did not send him, for, as it is written, God speaks and it is done. When God spake to Noah to build the ark, it was done. When God told Abraham that Sarah should bare a son in her old age, it was fulfilled. How is it, is God weak as is man, that he should speak and it not be done? One of two things is true, either God has changed, or else men are mistaken, and the Bible says, God changes not. Thanks be to God, there are yet a few who agree with the Bible, that our God changes not. He is the same yesterday, and to-day, and to-morrow. Men tell sinners that they will wait until it is too late, and that if they wait for God to save them they will die in their sins, but they do not know that they have waited too long already before putting their machinery in operation for the saving of sinners. He "hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling,

not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." This must have been before any preacher was there, therefore such ones are too late. Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath killed her sacrifice and hath furnished her table, but the great wonder with me is whether I am in that building of wisdom. If it be so, I wonder why. O is it possible that Jesus left the glory which he had with the Father before the world began, to come down from heaven to bleed and die for such a sinner as I?

"O for such love let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break,
And all harmonious human tongues
Their Savior's praises speak."

Your unworthy servant, in hope of eternal life,

S. H. BURNETT.

SEAFORD, Del., July 9, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR FRIEND:—As it has been quite a while since we had any correspondence, I am led to again break the silence. I have been very sick of late; the doctor at first entertained but little hope of my recovery, but, as the Lord would have it, I am up again, though not fully well. It was indeed the sweetest comfort to me in my sickness to know that my times are in His hand, and that underneath me were the everlasting arms, and that though my flesh and my heart should fail, God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever. I know that it is all of grace, wondrous grace, abounding to the chief of sinners. I read your excellent paper with much interest, and it was surely a comfort to me. I hope to be able to subscribe later on, but as I have been at so much expense because of sickness I will have to defer it awhile. I read every copy of the SIGNS through the kindness of my friend Mr. Messick. I went last Sunday to hear Elder Francis, and he preached a good sermon. I see in reading the SIGNS that a great deal is said about "absolute predestination of all things" by some writers. There seems to be an unsettled condition of mind with regard to this among many Baptists of whom I read, sometimes causing controversies, and even divisions. Of this I am sorry, for I love the Old School Baptists; they seem to stand so far from the world, and so near to the blessed gospel.

Some time, at your leisure, I would be pleased if you would write an editorial upon the difference between "absolute predestination" and "fatalism." I am, I hope, truly sincere in asking an explanation, or understanding, of just what is meant by "absolute predestination of all things." I do not want to so understand it as that it would make God the author of all the crimes and wickedness of men, as some of the Methodists say the Baptists teach. I ask this of you in all humility of mind, I trust.

Your sermon at Broad Creek on Sunday afternoon has come to me many times, with much sweetness. All your preaching upon that occasion was edifying and comforting to me, and I ponder it over and over again. I thought long ere this to have visited you, but sickness has prevented. Mr. Messick and I were looking forward with bright anticipations to meeting you and others at Smith's Mills last spring, but the heavy rainfall hindered. I read your editorials, and your daughter's letters, with the deepest interest, and while I am not a member of the Old School Baptist Church, I hope I am, through rich and reigning grace, a member of His spiritual church.

I will close by wishing you success from the Lord in your work. It is a work of faith and labor of love.

Your friend,

WM. J. TINDALL.

(See editorial reply on next page.)

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1909.

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EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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PREDESTINATION—FATALISM.

WE are glad to reply, as best we can, to the request of our long time friend, and this especially, because we feel well assured that these things are matters of deep interest to him. They can but be of the highest interest to every one who fears God, and who, therefore, desires to know the things of God. There is not a principle of the doctrine of God revealed in the word that has not been assailed by human reason over and over again. Especially has this been true of the doctrine of the predestination of God. One part of that predestination has fallen under the condemnation of natural men, and has caused perplexity even to spiritual minds, perhaps more than any other truth connected with it, viz., the election of grace. Election is simply the predestination of God in choosing individuals of the race of fallen men, from out the great mass of them, to salvation. Election is but one part of predestination. Predestination covers all things, as well as this one thing of election and salvation. The truth of predestination, whether we apply it to election or to all other things, can only be known by Bible testimony. Keen human reasoning may indeed conclude that these principles of doctrine are true or not true, according to the things which weigh most in the minds of those who reason about them, and human reason, after all, can settle nothing definitely regarding any divine truth; no man by searching can find out God. There have never been in the world men of higher intellectual powers, or who were more capable of keen analysis of causes and effects, than were the ancient philosophers, whose names are so celebrated among men, and yet after all their reasonings they could do no more than arrive at probabilities or possibilities. They could settle nothing upon authority, but in the Bible we have the word of God, who speaks and who cannot lie. It is to the Bible, therefore, that we must come, and to it we ought to come, as to an infallible word, prepared to accept what it declares about anything, without question. The only thing to be settled is, then, What does the Bible teach regarding any question that may arise? This cannot be insisted upon too strongly. All our thoughts, all our feelings, all our reasonings, must be tested by the letter of the word of God; our thoughts, feelings, experiences, reasonings and conclusions must be brought to the law and to the testimony, and if they speak not according to that word, it is because there is no light in them. Do the Scriptures, then, teach the doctrine of the predestination of all things? This is the one question. If they do, that is the end of all controversy with every humble-hearted follower of Christ. If they do teach this doctrine, then we know that all objections arising in our minds are vain and foolish, and if there be any dislike to the doctrine of the Bible in our hearts, we are replying against God in all we say about it. If the writers of the Bible were

uninspired men, and only wrote their conclusions and inferences, then indeed we may question what they say, for they were but fallible men, as we are; but if they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, then if we question their writings we are replying against God indeed. It has been our desire from youth to come to the reading of the Bible with simple belief that every word in it is as God would have it, and that all of it is true, and to be accepted without question. We have indeed felt sure that we did not comprehend it as we would like to, and much of it seems still dark to our mind. We mean that there are many figures of speech used, many allusions to thoughts and customs of that ancient time, that we do not understand, and the fullness of the doctrine taught there we have but begun to enter into. Grace, love, faith and hope are words that are continually growing in meaning with us, yet they mean just what they did to us at first, only more full and rich. Grace is grace, faith is faith, and hope is hope, though they embrace infinitely more than we knew at the first of our knowledge of them. So predestination and election grow in fullness of meaning as we go on from day to day, but they are still the same truths.

Our friend has called up several things in his interesting letter; three things we will call special attention to. First, he refers to what are called "permissive decrees." As near as we can understand the brethren who insist upon the use of that form of expression regarding what is evil or sinful, they feel that it relieves the Almighty of the odium of being the author of sin, while predestination, unqualified by that word "permissive," would involve the thought that he is the author of sin. We do not know of any one who believes in the predestination of all things that come to pass, who would not start back with abhorrence from the thought that they are not themselves justly accountable for their own transgressions. But it has appeared to us that the thought of "permissive decrees" involves just as much as does predestination, unqualified by this word. Our God is not the author of sin, as we view the matter, in either case. But, if to predestinate a thing is to include the thought of being author of it, or if it involves the thought of freeing man from responsibility for his sin, or the thought that our God is alone responsible for it, which we do deny, then "permissive predestination" would also just as surely involve all these conclusions; so nothing is gained by the word "permissive" in that direction. For instance, suppose one sees a man who is careless, or blind, walking toward a precipice, and who knows that that man if left to himself will surely fall over it and perish, and simply suffers or permits him to go on to his doom, but without setting his feet in that way, or pushing him over the brink, would not all men with one voice say that he who saw this and did not put forth his hand to hinder this fatal result, was almost equally as guilty of that man's fall and death as though he had deliberately pushed him over? If then predestination of all things does involve the thought of pushing the man over the brink, as it is contended would be the case, on the other hand, to say that God knew that man would certainly do the wickedness he does unless hindered, and yet that he did not put forth his hand to hinder that fall, would also involve the same horrible conclusion. We cannot think that anything is gained by brethren who use the word "permissive" in

the direction that they mean it to apply. The word "suffer," or "permit," is indeed used in the Bible, but it is used far oftener with regard to the predestination of good things than it is of evil things. Indeed, very often the word "suffer," in the sense of permit, is used without reference to the doctrine of predestination at all, and sometimes it is used in the sense of not giving a thing to be done that some man or men desired to do; that is, our God, it is said, did not "suffer" it to be done. He did not "suffer" it to be done, because it was not his purpose that it should be done, but rather the opposite. Man's purposes ran counter to God's purposes in such cases, and God's will was done rather than the will of man. But we will say no more with regard to permissive decrees.

Our friend asks the difference between predestination and fatalism. One difference is, that fatalism recognizes no God at all, but simply "blind fate," as we say. Webster in his unabridged dictionary defines fatalism in this way: "A fixed, unalterable course of things, independent of God or any controlling cause; an invincible necessity, existing in things themselves." It was, he says, a doctrine of the ancient Stoics. In fatalism there is no personal God, and, therefore, there can be no use in prayer, and there can be no praise nor thanksgiving for blessings; there can be no communication of strength in time of trial and weakness, and there can be no reproof for wrongdoing; indeed, there can be no sin, except as that word may be employed to fit unwise courses by men. But fatalism would destroy all thought of wisdom, or unwisdom in men, since all is fixed in and of itself. Fatalism leaves the world in cold, black despair; it destroys all care of self, all thought of striving for the future; it locks men up in the regions of darkness forever. Predestination, on the other hand, first of all, acknowledges a personal God, who rules in wisdom and power in all the universe, and over all things, from the greatest to the most minute in the universe; it acknowledges a God that is everywhere present at all times, and to all eternity; it confesses a God who does not wind up the machinery of the universe and then withdraw himself to let it run on unnoticed and unguided by his hand, but who moves on instant by instant all affairs and all worlds and beings. It is said of Sir William Herschell, one of the greatest astronomers of the world, that he said, after a long life spent in research into the heavens, that all his researches had only brought him to this conclusion, viz., that all the movements of the planets in space are but God working. Predestination teaches that God so rules in the army of heaven above, and among the inhabitants of the earth, that his will is done in them all. In the predestination of God there is room for prayer and for praise, and in it all the promises are secure and all the hopes of all his children shall find their fulfillment. In his predestination is to be found the present safety of all who love God, and their final salvation is secure because of it. If one event or one mote that floats in the sunbeam in all this universe be left to its own will, or lack of will, rather, where is our security that some day we shall not fall in with that event or that mote and find in it our destruction? What believer could rest satisfied without believing that all things are so ordered that they work for good to them that love God? This is predestination in opposition to fatalism. The one is a dead, blind necessity, having no infinite mind

controlling it, the other is the infinite and holy God ruling and appointing all our steps.

But what does the Bible say about the predestination of evil and about the accountability of man for the evil that he does? We desire to bring up here familiar instances from the Scriptures. These instances cover in themselves the whole ground of God's predestination and man's accountability. Some men bring up all manner of horrible wickedness wrought by the wicked hands of men, and say it is impossible to believe that these things are included in the predestination of God. Well, no more horrible wickedness was ever wrought than some things of which we will briefly speak, as recorded in the Bible, and yet concerning these things the predestination of God is asserted by the side of the accountability, or the wickedness of man in doing these things. God predestinated to save much people alive from the seven years' famine, and to that end decreed that Joseph should be sold by his unnatural brothers as a slave. Nothing more fearfully displays the wickedness of the human heart than this act of the brothers of Joseph, yet our God purposed that it should be done to save much people alive. They meant it for evil, but God meant the same thing for good. Here is the predestination of God, and man's accountability, both involved in the same deed of wickedness. So men who crucified the Savior meant it for evil, but this also God meant for good, to save much people alive forever. This was determined of God, and yet men did it with wicked hands. Man's wickedness in doing a wicked thing is, then, not inconsistent with God's decree of that thing. So, likewise, God raised up Pharaoh, both to live on earth, and also to the throne of Egypt, for the very purpose that he might show forth in him his purpose and power, yet he found fault with Pharaoh, as the word of God declares. (See Romans ix.) The very thing that Pharaoh did, and for which God found fault with him, was before appointed of God, as Paul declares. Now the things which are true of these three instances, are all that any one we ever knew has ever claimed for anything that is embraced in the predestination of God. Concerning all wickedness, as well as concerning these three things, all we say is, that God predestinated it, and yet men did that wickedness with wicked intent and with wicked hands. All objections against the predestination of any wickedness whatever, lies with equal weight against these three wicked things, which we know from the word were predestinated. Argument that denies any wicked thing as having been predestinated would also deny that the wickedness of men in these three instances was predestinated, and to deny this is to deny the Bible.

We will just add that the foreknowledge of God has as many difficulties lying against it as does his predestination. If anything be foreknown, that thing must take place evidently, else foreknowledge is not foreknowledge. If it be said of anything that it must be, that it cannot be hindered, whether it be the predestination of God that fixes it and makes it sure, or anything else, it follows that it cannot be hindered. Foreknowledge, then, would destroy the accountability of man just as certainly as would predestination. But neither destroys it. Will brethren who refuse to accept the doctrine of predestination also deny the doctrine of the foreknowledge of God? If one destroys the accountability of man so does the other. But again we repeat that neither destroys that accountability; or, in other words, takes away the wickedness of man in doing the evil things. May God bless his word, and bless us all with a ready heart to receive it, and rest upon it. C.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Christina Campbell died July 5th, 1909, at the home of her son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. A. McGugan, in Lobo, Ontario. She was born Jan. 7th, 1821, in Ardrishaig, Scotland, the daughter of Dugald and Christina Smith. She came to Canada with her parents in August, 1833, and settled in Caradoc. In March, 1840, she married John Campbell, who died in June, 1882. Ten children were born to them, of whom nine, five sons and four daughters, survive her, all of Canada except one son, of Bellingham, Wash. Her entire married life was spent in Caradoc, where surrounded by her family she executed faithfully the duties of motherhood. She was very mild and gentle in disposition, and bore the crosses and conflicts of life with much fortitude. She never made a public profession of religion, but firmly believed in God and that salvation is of grace through Christ. She followed after the Old School Baptists many years, having their confidence and fellowship. In April, 1901, she suffered a stroke of paralysis, and while she recovered in a measure, there was a gradual decline until the end came. Her daughters faithfully and tenderly ministered to her during her long illness, and feel, as well as the sons, that their loss is very great. Age and infirmities may come, yet mother is mother; yes, the very name seems sacred.

The writer conducted the funeral service, which was largely attended, July 8th, and with such ability as the Lord gave, tried to tell of the victory of sinners over death and the grave through Christ Jesus our Lord, using as a text 1 Cor. xv. 55-57, after which the remains were interred in the family burying-ground in Caradoc.

May comfort be ministered to the family by Him who is able to give, not as the world giveth.

ALSO,

Myron Ford, son of brother and sister Louis B. Ford, of Melrose Highlands, Mass., died July 10th, 1909, aged 12 years. Ten days before his death he injured his foot, but the injury was apparently so slight that it was not thought necessary to call in a physician. The wound was dressed at home and nothing more thought of it so far as danger was concerned, as he continued as usual with his play and sports, never complaining. Wednesday afternoon, July 7th, he drove over to Woburn, a distance of eight miles, and back. In the evening his face seemed somewhat flushed and his eyes red; he said his neck was stiff and that he could not swallow freely. His father questioned him, and learned that he had slept in a draft the night before, and thought he had taken cold. Thursday morning he was much worse, his neck was rigid and somewhat drawn. A physician was at once called, and he called in a specialist in consultation, but lockjaw had developed and the dear child was beyond the help of man. He continued to grow worse until death relieved him of his sufferings. Myron was an unusually bright boy in books and music; indeed, he was all that his parents could wish, and they feel that their affliction is great, as he was their only child, but the Lord is with them, in that they are made to know the power of his grace, which is sufficient for all who trust in him. Myron had many friends among the older classes as well as among the children; many of all ages attended the funeral service, which was conducted by the writer, using as a text Psalms xlvi. 1, 2. The interment took place in Melrose Cemetery. Brother and sister Ford have the sympathy of all who know them. May they be enabled to kiss the rod, saying, "Thy will be done." K.

Margery Elizabeth Vail died Thursday morning, June 17th, 1909, of exhaustion, caused by excessive coughing from a violent bronchial attack, aged 92 years. Mother had suffered for eighteen or twenty years with chronic bronchitis, and it often became acute, causing her painful illness. She had spent the greater part of the last two years of her life with us; previous to that her home had been at Waverly, N. Y., for about thirty-eight years, and for forty years she had been identified with the Old School Baptists as a consistent, faithful member. Father died nearly eighteen years ago; he also was a Baptist, and their home was a resting-place for their brethren; they entertained a great many while they lived in Waverly, and enjoyed the fellowship of the saints; some now living will remember their home. Mother was very tired the last few years, and wished for release from fleshly bondage. Several years ago, when she was very ill, I was sitting beside her bed when she repeated the words: "Tired, so tired of drifting adown the dark stream of life; tired, so tired of breasting the billows of sin and strife." Not long since, while she was yet able to be about the house, she exclaimed, "Although I dread death's chilling tide, yet still I sigh for home." Another time she repeated these lines of a poem: "I am going, surely going, but my hope in God is strong," &c. Mother was very fond of poetry, and especially loved hymn No. 15 (Beebe's collection). She was conscientious, and had done what she could as wife and mother and as a child of God. She was an eager listener to experimental things, and well knew the plague of her own heart.

Brother McConnell spoke in prayer and made some excellent remarks upon the life in Christ and dying to sin, at our home on the evening of June 17th, and on the following day her remains were taken to the home of my sister, Mrs. Elisabeth Corby, Waverly, N. Y., from which place she was buried on Saturday, the nineteenth, in the family plot. Four of us are left to feel the loss of a good mother: Elder D. M.

Vail, Mrs. E. Corby, Mrs. Emma Butler, of Buffalo, N. Y., and myself, two sons having died many years ago, the eldest and youngest sons of our parents. I am glad that I could care for mother at the last, and that she has passed death's chilling tide and is safe at home. Those who have passed through a similar loss as ourselves in this bereavement know how great is the heartache.

WATIE A. BEARD.

Mrs. Elizabeth Cubbage died at her son's home, near Willow Grove, Del., June 15th, 1909, aged 76 years and 8 months, lacking 2 days. Mother was born near Cow Marsh Church, October 17th, 1832, and lived near that church about all her life. She was married to William Cubbage, Dec. 22nd, 1853, to which union were born five children, four of whom survive her: Mrs. Sarah A. Cook and William T. Cubbage, of Philadelphia, James F. Cubbage, of Willow Grove, and Willard S. Cubbage, of Viola, Del. Mother was baptized by Elder E. Rittenhouse in 1895, in the fellowship of Cow Marsh Church, in which fellowship she remained the rest of her life. She came to my home from brother Willard's May 4th, and was taken ill almost immediately, and suffered greatly the last few months of her life. Sister Sallie came to her and did all that loving hands could do, remaining at her side until the end. Her prayer was that the good Lord would have mercy on her and take her to himself, yet seemed unable to understand how he could have mercy on such a sinner as she felt herself to be. She often quoted a part of what is called the Lord's prayer: "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," and also, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord," from which Elder B. F. Coulter spoke very comfortingly to the family at the funeral. She leaves four children, six grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, two sisters and a host of relatives and friends, together with the church, to mourn their loss, but not as those without hope, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

JAMES F. CUBBAGE.

My mother, **Ella Beebe McColl,** passed from this life to her eternal rest on the morning of July 2nd, 1909, at her home in Winnipeg, Manitoba. While she had been suffering for a long time, her last illness lasted only a few days; she gradually sank into unconsciousness, from which she never rallied. She was a daughter of the late Elder Wm. L. Beebe, being born in Covington, Ga., Dec. 6th, 1854. September 9th, 1879, she was married at Middletown, N. Y., to my father, Ebenezer McColl, who preceded her to rest by nearly seven years. She leaves two sons and six daughters, all living at Winnipeg. Mother and father were together received into the membership of the church at Middletown, N. Y., in January, 1884, and baptized there by the late Elder Wm. L. Beebe. She was a firm believer in the truth, resting entirely on the finished work of our blessed Savior, and felt herself to be little and unworthy. For the past thirty years she had been, except for a few short visits east, far separated from her brethren in the church, living almost as a stranger here, except for her own family. To us all she was more as a sister than a mother; she never considered herself in anything.

Her remains were laid to rest beside my father in the burying-ground at Brocks Creek, near Eagle, Ontario.

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

Mrs. M. Alice Godfrey was born Nov. 9th, 1877, and died at her home near Snow Hill, Md., May 1st, 1909, making her stay on earth a little less than 32 years. She was married a little more than six years ago to James C. Godfrey, who, heartbroken, is left with one little boy of five years. She was the daughter of the late Quinton Holloway. Her mother, Mrs. B. B. Hastings, one brother, G. T. Holloway, one sister, the writer, and a number of friends, are left to mourn, though not as those without hope, for while she could not be induced to speak freely of her own personal experience, her conversation, her daily walk, her deep love for the assembling of the saints, showed more plainly than words that she had been with Jesus and learned of him. I never knew any one who had less use for the works of men, and she never wavered in her firm belief that all things are in the hands of the Lord, and what he does is right. She had been frail for several years, suffering with heart trouble, which, following a severe attack of "la grippe," was the immediate cause of her death.

Her funeral, conducted by Elder T. M. Poulson, was held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse at Snow Hill the following day, after which her body was laid away in the churchyard by the side of an infant daughter.

(MRS.) H. W. PERDUE.

Snow Hill, Md., July 14, 1909.

MEETINGS.

A meeting has been appointed to be held on Saturday afternoon, July 31st, and all day Sunday, August 1st, at the Otego Old School Baptist Church, Otego, N. Y. Trains from Albany arrive at 10:41 a. m. and 1 o'clock p. m. Saturday, and from Binghamton at 11:30 a. m. and 4 p. m. On Sunday trains from either place reach here at 11:30 a. m. We hope all those who can will visit us at the time given.

S. C. F. GUERNSEY, Church Clerk.

The Old School Baptist Church at Brookdale, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting for Tuesday and

Wednesday, August 3rd and 4th, 1909. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited and will be well entertained. Come to Conklin station, on the Delaware and Lackawanna R. R., which is three miles from Brookdale. Trains leaving Binghamton 5:30 p. m. Monday and 5:50 a. m. Tuesday will be met. Write to Mr. Wm. M. Hart, Halstead, Pa., R. F. D., who will arrange to meet and convey friends to place of meeting. D. M. VAIL.

THE Lord willing, the seventieth annual session of the Des Moines River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene with Des Moines River Church, near Eldon, Iowa, August 14th, 15th and 16th, 1909. A cordial invitation is extended to all, and especially the ministering brethren of our faith and order. Eldon is on the Kansas City line of Rock Island system, also C., M. & St. P. R. R. Trains will be met Friday and Saturday mornings.

I. J. YOHE, Moderator.

J. L. THURSTON, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Cammal, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting for August 21st and 22nd, 1909. Cammal is a station on line of New York Central R. R., seventy-five miles from Corning, N. Y., and forty miles from Williamsport, Pa. Place of meeting is five minutes walk from station. Brother Samuel Moffat lives three rods from station. All who love the truth are invited to be with us.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Ingleside, N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting for August 28th and 29th, 1909. All who love the doctrine of grace are cordially invited. Ingleside is five miles from Atlanta, N. Y., station on the D., L. & W. and Erie railroads. Trains will be met on both roads Friday, 27th. Write to George Weld, Prattsburg, N. Y., R. F. D., or Harvey Graves, same place.

D. M. VAIL.

THE First Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, at Vega., N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting to be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, August 28th and 29th, 1909. Trains will be met at Roxbury on Friday before the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

V. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Mt. Pleasant Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will be held, the Lord willing, with the Cane Run Church, at Turners Station, Henry Co., Ky., beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1909, and continuing three days (Sept. 3rd, 4th and 5th). Those coming from the north and east will leave Cincinnati, Ohio, about 2:30 p. m. on Thursday, and 7:30 a. m. on Friday, over the L. & N. Railroad for Turners Station. Those coming from the south and west will leave Louisville about 5 p. m. on Thursday and 7:30 a. m. on Friday, over the L. & N. Railroad for Turners Station, where all will be met and cared for. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, and especially to ministering brethren of our faith and order, in good standing, to meet with us.

G. R. TURNER, Church Clerk.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1909, at 10 o'clock a. m., at the residence of brother John McFadden, six miles west of Table Grove, Fulton Co., Ill. Those coming by rail will be met at Table Grove on Thursday before and early Friday morning. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Pocatalico Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Good Hope Church, in Kanawha County, W. Va., commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1909, and continuing three days. Those coming from the west, over the K. & M. R. R., will be met at Raymond City, W. Va., Thursday evening. Those from the east, over the C. & O. and C., C. & S., will be met at Charleston, W. Va., Thursday until 3 o'clock in the evening. Those coming from the southwest, over the C. & O., should come to St. Albans, cross the river to Sattes depot and there take the west bound train on K. & M. for Raymond City, to meet conveyance Thursday evening. A cordial invitation is extended to all of like precious faith to meet with us.

This done by order of the Good Hope Church, at her May meeting.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Moderator.

G. P. HIGGINBOTHAM, Clerk.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THERE are a few Old School Baptists in Riverside, Cal., and they have meeting the first and third Sundays in each month, at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

W. D. BALL.

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IN

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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SILAS H. DURAND,

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 77. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1909. NO. 16.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HELENA, Okla., Dec. 28, 1908.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—My mind has been exercised in regard to the charge made against the Old School Baptists by all classes and grades of Arminians, that they are the antimission Baptists. They design this to mean a name of reproach, and by this reproachful name to claim the church has no standing among the religious princes of earth. It is gratifying to know that their wrath in this respect, as well as in many other instances, gives praise to the mighty God of Jacob. They themselves draw the line that distinguishes (as far as observation is concerned) God's people from the men-made institutions. As far as the commandments of men are concerned they (the Old School Baptists) are antimissionary. They do not want any standing or favor religiously with any other people, because they claim (having submitted proofs to establish their claim) to be the followers of the Lamb of God. Of them it is written: "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." They have no desire to be in favor with the great throng that have imbibed profusely of the wine of Babylon's fornication, which in sentiment plainly says to all who become intoxicated with it: Ye are as gods. Those who have been "sanctified by God the Father" desire to be isolated, separate, distinct from those who do not worship God in spirit, who do not rejoice in Christ Jesus, but who have all confidence in the flesh. Yes, they have so much confidence in their flesh, and in the flesh of their learned leaders, that they claim to be able through their missionaries to gain many souls for the kingdom of heaven. They are absolutely opposed to the scriptural way of waiting for the Lord to endue with power and open the way. As far as it relates to the heathen in knowing of God's judgments, or decisions, they must also abide the Lord's own time, for "the isles shall wait for his law." But those who wear the garments of Babylon are not for waiting for the manifestation from on high, nor for letting the isles wait any longer, but must go at it right away, or else some will die before the gospel reaches them, and they be lost forever. I have thought of Philip; it is plainly taught that his natural mind did not suggest that he "Arise, and go

toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert;" the angel of the Lord directed. Neither is it recorded what the Lord wanted him to do in that desert place. It is presumed from the reading in this eighth chapter of Acts that at the place where Philip joined the Ethiopian in his chariot it was a desert, destitute of water. They journeyed on together, Philip and the eunuch, as they talked about the great sacrifice that was made for sinners. Philip began the sermon unto the eunuch by using for his text the words of Isaiah (liii. 7, 8.) How long that discourse lasted we have no account, but judging his way of preaching from that of other servants of the Lord, we suppose that he rehearsed a great deal of Scripture, showing that all the prophets testified that Christ must come to redeem his people from under the curse of the law, and that he did come as it was before declared, and that now the kingdom of heaven is preached through his name. There is no doubt in my mind but that Philip spoke of Jesus' birth and life-work on earth. Very prominent among these things, as touching the things for his followers to observe, was the ordinance of baptism, giving, too, the reason why believers ought to observe it: from the fact that Jesus himself submitted to the ordinance at the hand of John the Baptist. As they traveled in the chariot, Philip preaching, they no doubt had passed through the desert. For, "they came unto a certain water." Perhaps the eunuch had been looking for a stream of water, but it is not probable that Philip had any anxiety about water, or wanting to baptize the eunuch, up to this time, for at the sight of water the eunuch was the first to speak: "See, here is water: what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Now, Philip's demeanor does not seem to correspond with that of the modern missionary; there is no insistence or coaxing on his part; but if the eunuch believed with all his heart, then he had the privilege and right to be baptized. Though some people to-day may use the exact words of the eunuch in his answer to Philip, this will not entitle them to the right to be baptized: "And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Providence designed that Philip should not travel any farther with the Ethiopian: "And he commanded the chariot to stand still." This was done that Philip might finish the work that the Lord had sent him to do. "And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing." If in any sense we look upon this work of Philip as missionary work, in order to prove that the modern theory of the missionaries is right, we shall fail for lack of proof. We know that this journey and its results were not conceived in the mind of Philip; it was inspired by the Lord himself, and all the natural things used that were necessary to accomplish God's decree. If men want it that way, they may say that Philip was a sent missionary to a heathen.

Now let us look at Peter's mission to a heathen. Is there any account that the brethren sent him to the heathen? None. Did he resolve in his mind to go to the Gentiles? There is no evidence that he did, but rather to the contrary, because he was loth to obey the Lord, when in a vision he was shown God's cleansing power. We notice that Peter reluctantly

accepted the idea that the Gentiles should be heirs with the Jews in the grace of the Lord Jesus. After Peter had met Cornelius and saw the power of God displayed, in that the Holy Ghost was also given unto the Gentiles, he was healed of his unbelief, saying: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."—Acts x. 34. Nowhere is it recorded that Peter took praise to himself for converting the Gentiles, or causing them to believe on Jesus, but we would be led to infer that Peter was opposed to having the Gentiles, or heathens, believe in the gospel, from his reference to his experience when brought into the presence of Cornelius. "Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I, that I could withstand God?"—Acts xi. 17. So, brethren, if it be God's will to save some out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people on the face of the earth, what are we that we can withstand God's will?

Beware of the false doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees. (Matt. xvi.) It is hypocrisy. (Luke xii.) Woe unto ye Pharisees, for ye pass over judgment and the love of God. Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love high seats, and popular greetings in public places. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them."—Luke xi. "Beware," in this connection, is certainly imperative, a positive command. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" This language occurs seven times in Matthew xxiii., as a curse pronounced against false teachers and hypocrites. Is it any wonder that Jesus commands his disciples to keep aloof from false doctrine? "Beware!" How very important it was in that early day to note the difference between the true and the false. Shall that same rule last through the gospel day? Surely it will. Spiritually happy are those who are enabled by God's grace to follow this rule; to hold fast to that which is good and eschew that which is evil. I think that it is the most important of all things in our deportment among the children of men to show to the world of mankind that we cannot bid Godspeed to false teachers, either in their theory or practice of their religion. We, who are constrained by the love of God to search the Scriptures diligently for proof of the doctrine of the salvation of sinners by the grace of the Lord Jesus, cannot receive the testimony of men which teaches that God gives spiritual gifts unto the children of men in exchange for their works of the flesh. We cannot take such into our fellowship, neither dare we attempt to do so without openly violating the express command of Jesus. If we cannot fellowship their doctrine, how shall we walk together or mingle in worship? My heart has been made sad when I have seen brethren, and especially ministers, recognize Arminian preachers as the servants of Jesus. I have seen some who had standing among Old School Baptists, give such men the hand of fellowship, and divide the public religious service with them. The word of Jesus to "beware" of such and their doctrine, certainly did not weigh heavily upon their conscience, neither did they take heed to the exhortations of the apostles, to be separate, and to keep themselves unspotted from the world, and to save themselves from "this untoward generation."—2 Cor. vi. 17;

James i. 27; Acts ii. 40. I have also been saddened, and my confidence in brethren shaken, when I have seen and known of them giving way to false teachers at the time of a death in their family, by employing a learned "clergyman" to pray and preach at the funeral of a member, and especially is this revolting to my spiritual mind, if indeed I have a spiritual mind, when I have knowledge that the deceased was a member of the Old School Baptist Church. I have remonstrated with brethren in regard to this matter, and often said: A preacher that is good enough to preach a funeral for me is good enough to preach for me at any other time. I have passed through sore trials of bereavement, but I have never felt that any religious service performed by enemies of the truth as it is in Jesus would be of any comfort, but, on the other hand, it has seemed that it would rather increase my sorrow. The Arminian boast that has been going the rounds for the last fifty years, that they will be able to preach the funeral of the last Predestinarian Baptist, has been accomplished in some localities to my personal knowledge. Even in some places where there were small bodies of the old order of Baptists, popular opinion had gained such a hold of them that some felt honored to have a popular "D. D.," officiate at a funeral of a friend. I feel that my brethren who desire to walk worthy of the holy vocation wherewith their Lord and Master has called them, must agree with me that it is very inconsistent for the oldest order of Baptists to yield their right as successors of the primitive disciples, in bidding Godspeed to their enemies, by mingling in worship with them, even if it be on a funeral occasion. We are to beware of false doctrine, and of those who advocate it. We are to "touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using; after the commandments and doctrines of men."—Col. ii. We are to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good. Has not our experience proven all things in the Arminian ranks to be failures, because the sovereign God has no place there? Has not our experience taught us the truth of the Scriptures and the power of God's grace? Do we feel to reject the teaching of the Scriptures and the power of reigning grace? As we have dared to name the name of the Lord Jesus, let us depart from iniquity, by rejecting false doctrine and false teachers. "They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error."—1 John iv. 5, 6. I have frequently said in the way of preaching, and I still think my view correct, that the greatest sin charged against the human family is that of idolatry. Idolatry is to set up a false god, and in doing this the God of the whole earth is rejected. The first commandment in the law of Moses forbids idolatry, and Jesus says that it is the greatest commandment: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."—Exodus xx. 3; Deut. v. 7. We are not appealing to the law of Moses for a rule of life, but Jesus was not mistaken when he said that upon the first two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. God's people are not above temptation, and they are liable to be tempted by the beautiful appearance of a false god, and especially so if it appears to be harmless, gentle, innocent and "lamb-like," and if they be cautioned about a little departure from the "right

way," will retort by saying, "Do not be so particular." The apostle John was not forgetful of the deceitfulness of sin, nor of the foolish ways that were open to his "little children," and as a farewell the last words of his first letter carry a whole volume of instruction to the household of faith: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen."—1 John v. 21.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

FRAGMENTS.

It requires a great deal of daily dying to make a vital preacher, and fully as much of daily death-struggles to make a good hearer. If one is left much to himself, to his own natural imaginations and to the seductive influences of this world, and also if he is given to have rest and quietude of mind for a long time, his preaching will lose much of that quality which an exercised soul needs from day to day. But when sorely tried, emptied from vessel to vessel, daily beset with fearful temptations and oppressed by the corruptions of this vile nature, the soul of the preacher will be constantly seeking heavenly help, and will be constantly receiving new insights into the wonders of grace, new views of the glorious excellency of Jesus' name, and will have new and living experiences of the power of the gospel to preach. In that way every old text becomes new, and full of new life, and the preacher who has feared he was becoming tiresome, and dealing in subjects that are threadbare, now goes to the pulpit with quickened steps, feeling the stirrings of a special message in his soul, and gladly hasting to tell the good news of salvation to those waiting and longing to hear it. And while the Lord by his Spirit has been preparing the minister by fiery trials and great tribulations to preach, he has at the same time been dealing in apparent severity with some of his people, running the plowshare of sorrow and affliction through their hearts, breaking up the hard soil, filling them with shame and self-reproach, and making them meek and penitent and tender, and very much alone. Now the preacher sees almost a new congregation before him of anxious, waiting hearers, who respond in their hearts and faces to the preaching of the word. The seed falls in good, well-broken ground, and all are ready to say, both preacher and hearers, The Lord has been good to us to-day. We have had a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

Suppose two come to the church. One says, I wish to be baptized, and to unite with the church. I believe the Lord has given me a hope, and I have been told, and believe, that he has left the matter of obedience with me, and that it is to be according to the exercise of my own will whether I obey or not. I have decided to obey, as I believe it is my duty to unite with the church. This one might be received, if the church saw in what else was said a clear experience of grace, but there would be a feeling of anxiety on the part of the church, and of fear that the brother would sooner or later have some lesson given him, like that of Peter, enough to teach him that his will cannot be depended upon, but that his dependence can be only in the will of the dear Savior. The other says, I am not worthy, but I would be glad to be baptized if the church can receive me. The Lord has been merciful to me, and has given me a hope that my sins have been forgiven for Jesus' sake. But I am afraid I cannot walk as I should, if I should be received into the church. I find that sin

is mixed with all I do, and I dare not trust in my own will nor in myself at all. If the grace of God does not hold me up and keep me I shall surely fall. I desire to put all my trust in the Lord. I can say that I love the brethren, and I count it a great blessing that I have a desire to be with them. As this brother talks the hearts of all the brethren go out to him in love and fellowship, and there is no question to ask.

"WHEN the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory."—Matt. xix. 28. This, I believe, refers to the gospel dispensation. The throne is the church, the place of the Redeemer's power. John saw the Lamb in the midst of the throne. "In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." "A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary." Jesus is seen only in the church, only in the midst of the golden candlesticks. The church has existed in a certain mystical sense from everlasting, and "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." Now, in the gospel dispensation, when he builds up Zion he appears in his glory. (Psalms cii.) As the Head of the church all power in heaven and earth is given into his hands, and all that power is manifested in the church alone. Here is his throne, out of which goes forth his law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. "The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion." Jesus reigns there in righteousness, and his princes, the apostles, rule in judgment. His power as King, and their authority as judges, are felt and acknowledged in all the true, orderly churches of the saints.

I HAVE never found satisfaction or comfort in trying to imagine how heaven will appear. It seems to me almost presumptuous. The eternal heaven of God's glory cannot be seen by mortal eyes, nor apprehended by the natural mind of man. It can only be seen by faith, and I do not want my imagination to interfere with my meditations upon the sacred mysteries of the eternal state of the redeemed in glory. All that this vain imagination can do is to stir up thoughts of worldly and selfish pleasures and try to intrude them into our meditations upon spiritual things, with which they cannot mingle nor have any vital part. All that we can know, while in this mortal state, of the infinite glories and unspeakable blessedness of the dwelling-place of God, where his people shall be eternally satisfied and at rest with him, is what we now know by experience. Hope tells us of the spiritual and pure desires which the Lord has given us, and the expectation he has created within us of their fulfillment. There are sacred seasons when this hope is bright within our souls, making us feel our holy relationship as sons of God. At such a time we do not want to imagine how heaven will appear. We are satisfied to wait until we see Jesus, when "we shall be like him." Faith sees Jesus always. It is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It deals entirely with the holy things of Jesus, and does not take hold at all of earthly things, nor acknowledge any true spiritual value in them. When faith prevails in our hearts we are lifted above earthly agony, as Stephen was, and above every form of temptation, as Jesus was in the wilderness. Faith never tries to imagine how heaven will look, but is satisfied with the glorious excellencies now experienced, and makes us satisfied to wait for Jesus' appearing, when we shall

appear with him in glory. But the most wonderful of all these graces of the Spirit in its power to teach us of heaven, is love. There are sacred experiences of the power of love, the love of God, which can never be described. When this love is shed abroad in our hearts we cannot wish for anything except what the dear Lord is giving us. This love tells us all we want to know about heaven; indeed, it is heaven itself, for "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." With most of the Lord's dear people such experiences are rare, but the briefest of such experiences can never be forgotten. How surely this holy and pure love felt in the heart will turn us away from all vain imaginings, from all worldly ambition and earthly glory. How absolutely it will overcome fear, and make us willing to suffer for Jesus' sake. No wonder the apostle Paul expressed in such wonderful phrase his desire for his brethren that they, "being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God."

JESUS by his Spirit in the prophets often said, "My sins;" "my iniquities;" but he never said, I have sinned; I have committed iniquity, for he never did sin. He knew no sin, as a man, neither was guile found in his mouth. How wonderful that one absolutely pure and holy should have felt all the weight and shame and guilt and curse of his people's sins. How could they have been so absolutely made his that he must die for them?

I cannot describe the astonishing comfort that has been mine in reading such an expression as that in the fortieth Psalm, that he who had been brought up from the horrible pit, his goings established, a new song put in his mouth, and who delighted to do the will of God, and had preached righteousness in the great congregation, should afterward say, "Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of mine head; therefore my heart faileth me." Surely he speaks for all the poor and afflicted people of God when he closes this Psalm with these sweet words: "But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., July, 1909.

GREENCASTLE, Indiana, June 12, 1909.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I am sending to you my mother's experience, for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if you care to publish it. I have offered a word of explanation, and if you use it would you kindly preface what I have written with something of your own, that will make this clear to all the readers? Father has been gone from us ten years, and mother almost two. Both of them live in our hearts, more sacred as time goes by. I am now in the beautiful home of my sister, Mrs. William C. VanArsdel, in Greencastle, the home where mother spent her last days. It was my brother, Mr. VanArsdel, who read to her, and it was their dear little children who knelt with us as she blessed us, and prayed for God to keep her absent son ever in the hollow of his hand, and to keep all her loved ones. Your knowledge of the devoted christian life of both father and mother would, I am sure, suggest more potently to you

what should be written under such circumstances than would any suggestion of mine. May I hear from you if you use this? If not, the return of the manuscript will be kindly appreciated.

Many months have passed since one of the most beautiful influences of my life was taken from me. The task of writing or arranging for publication her "spirit's travail," as she expressed it, was given to me during her last days, and she has written it, evidently not at one sitting, but at different times, and with the purpose in view of rearranging. I found it in her papers, just as she had told me I should; time and again I have started to write it, but my heart has been cowardly, and so have repeatedly put it off; for even now the loss of her is a sorrow so poignant that I shrink from facing the evidences of it. There is nothing that can be said that can ever make one understand that mysterious something which a good woman and a mother transmits to those around her. It can only be felt by those who are in the circle of its influence. Mother was so good that she did not know she was good. She had reached that point where she had no thought of self, but only thought of the good in others, and because she did not think of herself, and could not see how like a saint she was in all she did, she felt that all others outshone her, and that she was really "less than the least." To us, whose lives had been blessed by her every word, there was no doubt as to the wonderful Life that had always been her prop and guide, but with her it was a case of questionings and doubts; but in her last days and hours, when I truly believe that in the midst of her sufferings Jesus came to her, even as the vision came to him to help him on Calvary, there were no more doubts and no more fears. She knew she was leaving the world, and she knew that her God was with her. With strength and beauty born of her strong, abiding faith in His promises, she blessed her children and grandchildren, and all her loved ones. Her blessings were prayers, prayers that were made of verse after verse of the choicest of the promises from the Bible she had so loved. I wish that I might recall the words; they were quietly given, as one by one the heads were bowed to receive them. I can only remember that they were beautiful, but I cannot remember all, for at such times grief makes the memory brittle. I recall that she asked my brother, in whose home she passed away, to read the tenth chapter of John, which had always been a favorite chapter with her. Later he read the fourteenth to the eighteenth chapters, and she said: "Everything in the Bible is beautiful." To-day I looked in the worn old Book of books that she had read for years, and seemed to see again her quiet face, beautiful with its love and purity, as she sat in her easy chair, reading and marking the passages that were comforting to her oftentimes sad and doubting heart. I cannot imagine a heart more empty of everything save love and forgiveness for all, than was hers. She had always been so tender of the feelings of others that even if others had been the aggressors she was ever ready to take the blame, and say, Let there be peace. In her last days her heart was so full and overflowing with love for every one that it was like a garden of flowers, and was her solace, even in the midst of pain. She suffered, that was the bitter part of it; it has always been, and is still, a mystery why the good should have to suffer; but as the last hours of Jesus sanctioned it, like my mother, his followers rise above it as the

gates of glory open to them. For several days we had felt that hope had almost forsaken us, but fought on, buoyed up by the faint encouragement given by the physician; but when the sad, inevitable night came, and we waited, we saw and heard what seemed to us a marvel; for in her quiet moments, between the paroxysms of coughing, she seemed to see a radiance that was not of this earth, and then in the language of the Bible she talked of the glory that awaited her. We could not understand all, for the stroke at the beginning of her illness had paralyzed one side of the face; but when we would quote what we felt she was saying, she would nod brightly that that was what she had said. It was this way for two hours as we watched, and then turning to each of the three children who were with her, she reached for our hands, and as we took hers, she said farewell to each; then with a sigh she said, "I am going home," and the eyes that had always looked love, closed for the long sleep of eternity.

I have not written the above as a chronicle of the going away of one that many of the readers of the paper she so enjoyed could not have known, but rather, as she said of her experience, that some other little one may be reminded of the road of travail and be comforted, for the way of her passing into the better land is like the going of all who live and die in the Lord.

Yours respectfully,

LELLA PARR.

WHEN quite young and while alone, the thought came to me, I will get religion. The next thought was, I will be good and God will save me. I did not believe that I was then ready for salvation, but felt that I must do something to prepare myself to be saved. I resolved that I would not laugh, nor join in pastimes, nor play with my brothers and sisters, as I had formerly done; that I would be a pattern of goodness in all things. I verily thought that in this way I could get religion, and that by a steady continuance I could keep it. When the time I had set for the beginning of my plan to secure religion came, I went to work in earnest, and if ever a Pharisee got religion, I believe that I did indeed. I was so good that in my own mind I excelled all the family, although five of them were then members of the loved Mt. Carmel Church. For three weeks I continued in that perfect way.

How well I remember the time. It was spring, and our farm was where Fortville now stands, and our house was the first one built in that locality. One day when in the clearing, helping my dear old father prepare a piece of ground for the planting of corn, and as I stooped to pick up a load of brush, a voice whispered to me, You are a great sinner. In an instant my mind, which had been so easy, became filled with sorrow; I paused in my work, and wondered and thought, for I knew not what to do because of this new feeling which had taken possession of me. That night when the family had gathered in the circle around the fire, I felt that I could not be with them. I had thought to be the best of all, had planned to be the bright star, the ornament of the family, and now what a change! I knew myself to be deceitful, and my heart so full of sin that I was ashamed to sit with them. It was just about that time that Elder Wilson Thompson came to see my father, Elder Morgan McQuery, and preached in the woods near our house. There are yet some living who will well remember the

place, as we often went to see the spot where he had stood while he preached. It seemed that I desired nothing so much as to be alone with my miserable thoughts. I wanted to read the Bible, but so that no one would see me. One day, with the Testament hidden under my arm, I started as if going to the place where Elder Thompson had preached, but I passed by and went quite a distance beyond into a thicket, and there read from the Bible, but found nothing to comfort one so wicked as was I. I tried to pray, God, have mercy on me, a poor, lost, helpless sinner, but what I said was lip-service, and my poor, little petition went down instead of up. I became frightened at my own thoughts, and went back ashamed of the darkness within me; I had received no help, but felt worse than before. It was seldom that I had the opportunity of going to meeting, but my father had services that week and I went with him, and at the close of the service a lady joined, the first person I had ever seen go to the church. I cannot account to this day for the tears that came to my eyes, and I hid my face as she went to join the little band. As she talked, I thought, She is so good; and my heart cried out, O if I were only as good as she. Soon after this my father moved to Knightstown, and I thought that the change and new associates would drive away my sadness, and that I would leave my gloomy feelings behind, but not so, for I grew more despondent. Lying awake at night, I would try to ask the Lord to have mercy on me, but my feeble petitions were not answered, so I came to think that I was outside the mercy of Jesus, and that I would never try to pray again. I do not know how long I kept this resolve, for it seemed that I only made it to break it. There is something in us always that seeks the light even when we are most hopeless. I well remember that one Sunday morning I felt as if I must pray alone once more, so I walked through a cornfield towards an old plum tree that was loaded with the ripened fruit; but I was not wanting its fruit, for I was hungering for that which drops from the Tree of Life, and for a shade which comes from the leaves which are for the "healing of the nations." I walked far on in the field until I felt that I could go no farther; like Christian, my burden was too heavy. In a whisper I again plead, Lord, have mercy on me, a lost sinner; then these words came to me: Jesus, thou art the sinner's friend, as such I look to thee, and with that thought my burden was gone, and the whole world seemed changed. To this day I can see the spot where I stood and the field in the clearing as plain as ever, and it will remain in my memory until I see the green fields of the country of God. I started home, and my heart was so light that it made my feet glad, and I walked free from oppression. I do not remember that I saw the tree as I went by it, I was only conscious of freedom, and, strange to say, I had no thought of religion. Soon I wanted to see Elder Thompson, and wanted to be baptized, but felt then as I do now, not fit to be among those that I think the loveliest little family on God's earth. Whenever I take a seat among them I feel that I have disgraced the Lord's children. I lived away from them, in the lonely woods, for two years. It was Elder Sparks who talked to me and told me to go to the church and perform the duty Jesus had laid upon his children, but I could not; I was too well aware of my unworthiness to aspire to a seat among

those who were God's chosen people, and I determined not to bring shame upon them by seeking admittance to their circle. On Sunday at meeting, as the invitation was given, and the service was drawing to a close, I went ere I was aware. I cannot recall how I went, save that I stepped from behind the stove with which I had screened myself, and then I remember that I was near my dear father. I was so overcome that I could scarcely speak, and I have never been able to think why I was received and baptized in the fellowship of the church, only in one way, I believe they had love and fellowship in their hearts, and especially for my dear parents; maybe I shall know some day when mortality has put on immortality.

I will soon be sixty-six. I feel to-day that surely not one of God's little ones has ever passed through more gloom than have I. When I meet the dear brethren I feel that I sometimes wound their hearts, and humiliation keeps my face in the dust. Mistakes are my constant companions.

> "'Tis a point I long to know,
> (Oft it causes anxious thought,)
> Do I love the Lord or no?
> Am I his, or am I not?"

I wish oftentimes to ask them,

> "Are these the trials that you know?
> Is this the gloomy way you go?"

JUST here the experience ends, but I seem to have found a continuance in a letter written the year of her death, to her life friend and beloved sister in the church, the wife of Elder Isaac Sawin. She says, I have not been to one of our meetings since July, and I feel at times that I am starving. Again, I have a feast at home, when I feel that I have the presence of my Lord and Master; I can then rejoice, for "His presence disperses my gloom." Sometimes I fear that I do not have the presence of Jesus, but again he seems so near and dear to me that I have good meetings with no eye to see but Jesus', and I can feel him so near that the tears run down my care-worn cheeks for joy at the thought. Pray for me that I may be resigned to all that is my lot to meet while here. At times I feel that I have to drink the bitter cup, yet there are many blessings showered upon me. May the divine One be with you.

[THE dear daughter who prepared the above narrative of the experience and last hours of her mother desires that we should add a few words of explanation, and also by way of adding our testimony to the faith that was in the dear, aged sister, now departed. It was our privilege to once meet in her home the writer of the above. She was the wife of Elder P. K. Parr, of Indiana. We can well recall the pleasant hours spent in conversation, though it was many years ago. From the testimony of others, and from our own brief acquaintance with the dear, aged sister, we feel well assured that she lived a life of faith and fell asleep in Jesus at the last. The memory of such faithful followers of the Lamb is precious to those who have known them. By such memories we are encouraged to believe that the grace of God is sufficient for all our need. Such as these make up the great cloud of witnesses of whom Paul speaks in the twelfth chapter of Hebrews.—C.]

MANORKILL, N. Y., March 24, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I am still in the land of the living, and the SIGNS and its editors are trying to comfort their brethren, I wish to speak a word of cheer also to those who are still pursuing, although they may feel weak, like Gideon and his little band. Remember it is recorded, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." Gideon was not sufficient of himself, but the Lord was with him as a mighty, terrible One, and fought his battles. He also fights our battles for us, and has not only conquered all our foes, but also has triumphed over death, hell and the grave. He assures us that he is our shield and our exceeding great reward, and our redemption draweth nigh, and is nearer than when we believed; this ought to cheer us as our end draws nigh.

"There we shall see his face,
And never, never sin,
And from the rivers of his grace
Drink endless pleasures in."

I am most of the time resting in his promises, for his love in times past forbids me to think that he will leave me at last in trouble to sink. I am sure that he careth for us, and that he does not leave nor forsake us; he does not leave us comfortless. "He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head." He has assured us that because he lives we shall live also. "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." The brook that the Savior drank of is but the travail and trial of which he and his children partake while traveling in this time state; they suffer as did Moses, having respect to the recompense of the reward. If it were not by faith and the assurance that we shall see him as he is, I fear that my poor soul would be compelled to cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" as did the dear Savior. The Father sent his angel and strengthened him, and he said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." If we have heard his voice then all is well indeed. Yes, "the saints unto the end shall endure, as sure as the earnest is given." He said, "I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me." May the Lord protect, lead and guide us all in the strait way, and lift up our hearts to him whose holy arm has gotten us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

"May the grace of Christ, our Savior,
And the Father's boundless love,
With the Holy Spirit's favor,
Rest upon us from above.

Thus may we abide in union
With each other and the Lord,
And possess in sweet communion
Joys that earth cannot afford."

The psalmist said, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." We see that the mind of Christ was as desirous to do the will of God spiritually as the hart desires to drink when thirsty; so David said, "So panteth my soul after thee, O God." "The promise is unto you, and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." It was said of Christ, "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God." This is the brook of which he drank. The prophet said, "In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them: and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." All this seems to me to be drinking of the brook in the way. All that the Father giveth to him shall come to him, and they that come to him shall in no wise be cast out. So we see that he

drank of the cup that the Father gave him, and of him the Father said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Now let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is our reward in heaven. He finished all that the Father gave him to do, and after he arose from the dead he said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." He also said to all his loved ones, "Where I am, there ye may be also." Therefore, dear, doubting, trembling child, lift up your head.

I have written this as a word of good cheer for the weak, and to let you know that I desire the SIGNS continued to me. I am weak, but, as I trust, still pursuing that good old way that leads to God, which saints in every age have trod. I do not write to crowd out others, or to see my name in the SIGNS, but do love the truth. When it is well with you, remember a poor sinner.

D. S. ELLIOTT.

HARBOURTON, N. J., June 13, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—A reconciled feeling has come into my heart, caused, I know, by our all-wise Creator, from the time that I felt obliged to give up going to our association. I trust that you all will forgive my absent body, and think of my present spirit. You know that Paul speaks of being absent in the body, and present in the spirit, in his letter to one of the churches; I felt the meaning of these words during the three days meeting. I have long been settled in my mind that in disappointment it is best to kiss the rod and look to the Savior for comfort, but cannot always do this, although this time I was blessed with his own sweet words. The morning that I had planned to go found me with a very sad heart, hoeing in the potato patch. While I was thinking about you all, a cheerful song from a little wren arrested my cast down feelings, and I thought, If I could only be as happy as that bird seemed to be I would forget my gloomy thoughts. Before I had gotten half way down my row these words came into my mind and are with me yet: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." The tears rolled down my cheeks at the thought of such wonderful words, as they then appeared to me. While they were words I had many times read, yet I had never been given the spiritual understanding that I then saw; the meaning of the words then seemed so plain that I soon was, I thought, as happy as the bird I had envied a little before. The first word, "blessed," took my thoughts to itself, and showed me what a meaning it had as the dear Redeemer spoke it, and it appeared to me to mean very great favor to all to whom it was spoken. It is a wonderful word indeed, and very often used in the Bible. Then the following words, "are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." The words "they" and "hunger" seemed to be linked together; they are the elect, and they hunger for what? For the bread of life, which is Jesus our Lord. The feeling of hunger calls for bread. Then came the word "thirst," of which Jesus speaks in this way, saying, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." This means his blood that saves from all sin. "Righteousness" then came into my mind, and what of that? It takes in all the rest, for he arises, the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in his wings, and I felt that my bleeding heart needed healing. Then the words came, "For they shall be filled," and the word "they" takes in

again the elect. There are no ifs and ands in all this sentence; they "shall" be filled. To whom is he speaking? To those only who hunger and thirst after righteousness; to them the promise is sure, "they shall be filled." I like the shalls and wills of the Bible. I like the epistle to the Romans, it contains such solid principles and good foundations. Many things are hard to see through in times of death, troubles and sickness; at such times if we doubt his decree we are not led by the spirit of reconciliation to his will; if we were thus led we could not doubt his decree. To my mind there is no predestination of the good without the evil, for often it is the wrong that brings the good to light; one is of as much importance in the plan as the other. Fixing over the almighty decrees of God will not do to feed his children, and doing so might lead some weak one into the broad path that leads to destruction. This is why the Lord has chosen faithful shepherds to feed his sheep and lambs. It is a wonderful calling to be a sound minister of the gospel, and such an one must have a great deal of care on his mind for the good of the sheep, knowing that they must be fed on good bread in order to grow. I think often of your steadfastness and weighty spiritual words, which so often find a lodging-place in my heart. May our God still give you wisdom to rightly divide the word of truth, that you may still speak comfortably to Jerusalem, that her warfare is accomplished and her iniquity pardoned, for she has received at the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

I felt like writing you this, and hope I have done no wrong in so doing; you know, dear brother, that if the Spirit of God is in one's heart, that far he is right, even if the pen is wrong. In looking over this I see I have made many blunders while trying to get my thoughts on paper, but know that you will judge it with brotherly love.

I remain your brother,

WM. T. YARD.

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio, July 2, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—It may seem rash in me to so soon write to you, but I have just arrived home this a. m., about four o'clock, after twelve hours ride and close connections of the trains, and found my families of children, their children and my companion, all well and able to perform the duties of life.

I feel a great pleasure in rehearsing a few of the many enjoyments I had on my long-desired visit to the eastern associations. I was so little worthy, so little qualified, to engage in the sacred service of the gospel of Christ, and so feeble-minded in every way, that I did not dare hope for acceptance among those whom I most earnestly desired to meet once in the flesh and behold the power of that gospel that had so long been spoken of through their writings in the SIGNS. To me it was as the opening up of a new era in my life, as the dawn of a new age, and now I can only wonder at the uniformity of the whole month of joy and glory that has so unexpectedly been mine. I dare not begin a rehearsal of the many kindnesses I received on the whole journey, from the first appointment in Jay County, Ind., to the far reach of my first stop at the Delaware Association, with the various meetings between there and the Delaware River Association, and on to the Warwick Association, thence to Roanoke, Va., brother W. J. May's churches in Kentucky, and brother James McDonald's churches in Tennessee, yet I do feel

to ask especial privilege to mention the joy of my last stages of horseback tours through the rugged mountain roads and creek-bed paths, where the saints of God's especial favor find pleasures in his service not to be surpassed in more highly favored natural surroundings. I enjoyed no better worship of God in any other land of beauty or of wealth in all my life. The unfeigned joy, the humble faithfulness, the quiet zeal and the full and free confession of their trust and confidence in God's grace, were special marks of their true piety. I also had the pleasure of seeing Elder James McDonald in the R. F. D. district of Goin, Tenn., whose pastoral service of about two years in the Fairfield Church, Michigan, was both acceptable and profitable to the church. He was faithful in order, consistent in doctrine and judicious in counsel, and yet I learn he has suffered much for his unwavering belief in God's unlimited predestination. But he is still esteemed by a large circle of unswerving Baptists, who speak in the highest praise that is just for christians to bestow on a servant in the church. I have not consulted with him, but I feel that I owe him a little statement to those brethren who feel able to contribute to his comfort in his old age. He is just about eighty years old, and gave his time to the churches, most of whom are poor, and in a rugged country where all have to economize to meet expenses. I speak, therefore, in his behalf, for those who can do so, to send him at least a little to aid him in paying off the last twenty-five dollars due on his son's little home, so he can the more comfortably provide for his old father and mother, who are with him. Brother McDonald's son tells me that his creditor will not force him to pay the note, although he needs it. Now, if we can do a little for them, it will secure the home to them and pleasure to us; let us do it now. Those who can, may send to Elder James McDonald, Goin, Tenn., either by check or registered letter. I know that those who can do so will not blame me for suggesting this, and if more than that amount reaches him it will not be amiss.

Finally, brethren, my past journey has greatly comforted me, and, I trust, will be remembered as long as my declining years and their changes may allow me to think of the past. It may not be long, but it will be sweet.

A. B. BREES.

SALEM, Oregon, May 9, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—I send inclosed a letter written by Elder V. Turnage. It was a great comfort to us, in our late bereavement. Trusting that it will comfort other sad and lonely hearts, I remain yours,

MARY JENNINGS.

SHERIDAN, Oregon, Feb. 19, 1909.

MRS. MARY JENNINGS:—Your letter was received yesterday, and was read with a mixture of joy and sorrow. There was joy in hearing from you, of how peaceful and well reconciled sister Earnest was in her last sickness, and of the beautiful christian-like expressions of her faith in her Savior, and of her trust and confidence for a future world through the imputed righteousness of the Lord as the only foundation of her hope. On the other hand, the thought went through my mind of the pitiful and afflicted condition in which she had been so long, and of how kindly, patiently and tenderly you and your precious little family circle have ministered to her wants, and how the God of all grace, as it would seem, in return

had answered your prayers in her behalf, as well as in fulfillment of his precious promises. Then I thought how you would miss the christian mother, with whom you had been almost constantly for so many long years. These thoughts brought tears from my eyes, and such sadness to my heart that I could scarcely read aloud to my wife and son. Years ago I had to give up as kind and as tender-hearted a mother as ever lived. She also passed away fully reconciled to the will of God and in the full and proper exercise of her right mind. Now, my dear christian friend, I trust we can say day by day, until our change comes to us, as did David, and through faith in the same unchanging Savior in whom he trusted, It cannot come to me, but I shall go to it. Through abiding faith, hope and trust, the Lord can give reconciliation to his will.

I will say that we are in the enjoyment of fairly good health, and are well pleased with our little home and surroundings. We have good, kind neighbors and friends in Sheridan. They are very kind, and voluntarily told me that I could have the use of the Congregational meetinghouse to hold meetings in; so I have announced that I will hold service there the first Sunday in next month, at 3 p. m.

Mrs. Jennings, I feel that your good, christian letter, together with your statement of the sayings of your mother, ought to have a place in our Old School Baptist papers, as is our custom; it would likely prove encouraging to many others who are nearing the end of their pilgrimage journey. If you do not object to this, please tell me her age and the date of her death, how long she had occupied an invalid chair, and how long since her conversion; if you have not made any other arrangements about an obituary, please do this. Your letter will, with a little filling out, as I have mentioned, be all right to have published. Let us hear from you again. Accept our love and our tenderest sympathy in your bereavement. I have no doubt that for your mother it means her eternal gain. I hope you and your family can visit us some time.

As ever, yours in the hope of eternal life, V. J. TURNAGE.

WAVERLY, Pa., March 11, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find an excellent letter from Elder W. J. May, which you may publish if you desire.

Yours in hope, D. M. VAIL.

PINSONFORK, Ky., March 4, 1909.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your short but very interesting letter, bearing date Jan. 7th, 1909, was received several weeks ago. I have read it again and again with comfort and encouragement, and made sure I would have acknowledged the receipt thereof long since, but have not done so, and have concluded to write you this morning, lest you think I have forgotten you. I must confess that it seems strange to me, yea, very strange, how you, or any of the Lord's spiritual children, can get so much as one crumb of spiritual food or comfort out of anything that I write. There is but one way that I can solve the problem, and that is, the Lord alone can and does bless the loaves and fishes, and distributes them to his called servants, and then, and not until then, they communicate these blessed and consoling comforts, the Lord's provisions which he treasured up in Christ Jesus before the world was, but is now making manifest

through preaching, to the comfort, strengthening and upbuilding of his humble poor. Brother Vail, I have believed lo these many years that every creature of God was, and is, wrought for the selfsame thing, and to speak with reference to myself can say, To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, and while I am so vile and insignificant in my own sight that I often fear to mention the loving-kindness of the Lord, or to speak or write a word in his name, yet I must believe that the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, has raised me up for the very purpose he has used me, and that I have not done the will of God or carried out his purpose in and of myself, but that the Lord has carried out (and yet will) his design in me, and also with all his creatures; that all things visible and invisible were embraced in the unchangeable purpose of the unchangeable God, and must all redound to the praise of their Creator, the Lord of hosts is his name. "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee." —Psalms cxlv. 10. It seems from this text, as well as all others, that there is a discrimination in the creatures of God in this particular. While all his works, all his creatures, animate or inanimate, it matters not who nor what, all inevitably praise him, their Creator, yet only his saints bless his holy name. All are his creatures, but all are not his saints; in fact, none are saints but those who were "sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called."—Jude 1. "Called to be saints." I cannot see how any one can read the one hundred and forty-eighth Psalm and not believe in the decree of God by which he hath from eternity unchangeably appointed or determined whatever comes to pass; not but what the entire Scriptures harmonize, but I thought to mention this Psalm, as it is so plainly demonstrated that all God's creatures praise him, and that all his saints are a people near unto him; they praise him and bless his holy name forever and forever.

When we speak of the Lord's people being helpless, we mean in and of themselves; of course, in a secondary sense, they act, being acted upon and moved thereby. Matter is the basis and substratum of bodies, but no particle of matter or bodies, beings or things, can move in and of themselves, but are moved perpetually by their Creator, the supreme Being.

Now, brother Vail, I have written so lengthily and said so little that I am both ashamed and afraid to send it to you, lest it prove a burden rather than a comfort to you. I do not wish to burden any one on earth, no, in nowise, but I may have often done so. The line of thought that I try to present, both in preaching and writing, seems to be inevitable; the Lord knows the cause of these things. I would like much to see you, dear brother, but never shall, I imagine.

Remember me, a poor dust worm,

W. J. MAY.

NORTH WHITEFIELD, Maine, June 14, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —I promised to write you when I felt more like it, and at that time I did not think it would be so long a time before I should do so. I have thought of writing many times since, but could not seem to bring myself to it. I have just been reading again your last letter to me, and it seems such a good letter; I have enjoyed it to-day just as much as the day I received it; I think it has done me

more good than if you had been way up on the mount. One expression in it in particular I like to think about: "What could a great sinner do without a great Savior?" Surely I must say, What could I do or expect without such a Savior? I should have no reason to hope, for surely I am a great sinner. My hope is in that great Savior of whom you speak, and, as you say, "He is all the hope that I need, as well as all I wish to have." I am content to leave all in his hand, for I hope I learned a long time ago that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing. As plain as it seemed to be to me then, as time goes on I see it still more and more plainly. O what evil dwells in me, and how I hate it; how much I wish that I were better. Surely I am a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all, and am glad to know there is One who saves with an everlasting salvation, and that he works and none can hinder, and his grace is all-sufficient for us. How well do I remember the first time I saw that salvation was by grace, and how the people of God were saved. I felt I had no part in it at that time, yet I did rejoice in that way of salvation for his people, even while I wept that I was not included in it. O what dark days followed; it seemed months, and yet it was but a few days, I do not think even a week, I never could tell just how long, all seemed so dark, and there was such a burden, and I craved mercy from God. One night I was given a hope, and when I awoke my burden was gone and I was happy; then I longed for the burden to return that I might know where and how it went, but it never returned again. Jesus was all the day long my joy and my song. But those days are past, never to return, or at least I never expect to have such a long season of rejoicing as I had then; some of the time I did not know whether I was in or out of the body. But how many doubts and fears and ups and downs I have passed through since then, yet I do hope my trust is in that same Jesus now as then; in him is everlasting strength. I long for the company of my brethren, my Father's children; but God knows best, he never does anything without a purpose, and I feel safe in his hand.

I will not intrude upon your time any longer, but will add just a little to say that I enjoy the SIGNS very much; every letter is good. It is all the preaching I get, as I have not been able to meet with our brethren since the association. I am now all alone through the weeks. I hope to soon get down to see brother and sister Cunningham just for a day. If I had but one Old School Baptist neighbor I should be happy.

Dear brother, after reading this over I thought not to send it, as it seems so worthless, but the words have come, Fear not, for I am with you always, even unto the end of the world, so I think perhaps it is best to send it to you. I am so ignorant in spiritual things, and there seems to be no growth in grace; I am far behind. Surely if I am a child, I am the hindmost one. Pray for me.

Your sister,

MARTHA E. GLIDDEN.

SHARPSBURG, Ky., June 21, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The inclosed postal money order, for two dollars, is for one year's subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, beginning with your issue of July 1st, 1909. It may be interesting to you and others of the true faith to know just why I desire to be enrolled among your list of regular readers; and so, in as brief a space as possible, I will here attempt to give at least a few of the more pertinent

reasons. I recently had the great pleasure of reading a copy of the SIGNS, kindly loaned me by an Old School Baptist lady who was a very dear friend of my mother, that mother on whose grave the grass has now for more than forty years been growing, and who fell asleep in Jesus when I was of such a tender age that I have no remembrance of her. From others who intimately knew her I have often heard of her birth into the household of faith, of her love for the gospel of the grace of the God, and of her triumphant entrance into the blessedness of the dead which die in the Lord.

Reminiscently retracing the years that have flown, I recall the times when, as a child and youth, I attended preaching at Bald Eagle Old School Baptist Church, a few miles from this town, in company with my grandmother (the only mother whose love and care I ever personally experienced). Elder Samuel Jones was then pastor at Bald Eagle, whom I often heard, besides, occasionally, such expounders and defenders of the faith as Elders Thomas P. Dudley, John F. Johnson, Gilbert Beebe, Silas H. Durand, Spencer F. Jones, and others whose names I cannot recall. Their preaching was unto me foolishness, because "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

I will here but succinctly refer to my hearing of the more popular methods of salvation, of my vain attempts to become a christian through my own works and righteousness, works that were but evil, and a righteousness that was only as filthy rags, of my wanderings in Babylon, of my despair and utter helplessness, with the just sentence, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," resting upon me. What could I do? Nothing. Then, when no man could save, came One mighty to save, whose hand is not shortened that it cannot save, whose salvation is by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. So that now, in Christ Jesus, he who was without Christ, being an alien from the commonwealth of Israel and a stranger from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world, is made nigh, as he firmly trusts, by the blood of Christ.

It was my privilege, on the 9th inst., to hear Elder P. G. Lester, of Virginia, and as he preached from the text found in Deuteronomy xxxii. 8, 9, the peace that passeth understanding came to my soul, and I could truly say, with one of old, "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."—Gen. xxviii. 17. I have read the following Old School Baptist literature: both volumes of the "Editorials of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES," "The Writings of J. F. Johnson," Silas H. Durand's "The Trial of Job," "Life, Travels and Labors of Elder Wilson Thompson," "Feast of Fat Things," David Bartley's "Priesthood of the Son of God," and the pamphlet, "Bi-Centennial Celebration of the Welsh Tract Church." If there are other Old School Baptist books besides those here mentioned, now published and for sale, I should be glad to be informed of the fact, so that I may avail myself of the pleasure and profit derived from reading such, for the doctrine and practice set forth in those I have read are strictly according to the Bible, so far as I am able to determine concerning these matters.

By his special request, there was engraved on my maternal grandfather's tombstone, immediately following his name, the words, "An Old School Baptist," which causes me to inquire,

"And should I fear to own His cause,
Or blush to speak His name?"

And so I want the semi-monthly visits of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which contends, as I believe, for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

Yours in hope,

J. C. NELSON.

MATTHEW XI. 28-30.

"COME unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Brother Chick, I am impressed to write you some things that are on my mind concerning the above text, not with the thought to instruct you, but to relieve my mind, and if you think it worth publishing you may do so.

"Come unto me." This is not the language of a tyrant to a slave, neither is it the pleading of one who desires and cannot obtain; it is the voice of One who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands, yet his words are sweet and tender and enter the heart of the poor and needy as the dew from heaven and as the small rain upon the tender herb. These words never appeal to the self-righteous, for their labor is pleasant and without a burden, but it does appeal to all "that labor and are heavy laden." The word "all" is significant; there are no exceptions in this class. The poor impotent man waiting at the pool, the thief on the cross, the heartbroken woman of Canaan weeping for the afflictions of her daughter, Saul the persecutor, Cornelius the Gentile, and the Ethiopian eunuch felt the sweet influence of his word and obeyed the holy calling. How wonderful is this text when we are enabled by experience and revelation to enter into it. We often find distress and starvation in the midst of plenty, because those who have plenty do not call to the poor to come to the feast, and eat and drink "without money, and without price," and the poor are ashamed to beg. The welcome to almshouses and asylums is not that of love, but of necessity; those who minister to us in those places do it for hire. In this world it is only those who are able to help themselves that are appreciated; but in the holy, heavenly calling presented in our text, that class is not included. "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." It is the heavy laden laborer who is called; yes, called, not discovered by his neighbors and sent away to get rid of him, for his neighbors know nothing of his poverty, nor could they help him, but he is called with a holy calling, a call of love. "He brought me to the banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love." A calling unto righteousness, for he is made unto us righteousness. A call unto glory, for we shall appear with him in glory. It is also a call to suffering and travailing in pain, for we are made partakers of his sufferings. Then what a glorious rest is given us by him who called us because he loved us. We rest in faith and hope, not as paupers, but as children of the household, beloved of the Father, and having right to the tree of life.

"Take my yoke upon you." The yoke is a bond of union, for the purpose of utilizing strength. The yoke of Christ embraces all the ties that bind us together in Christ, and made manifest in church fellowship. In Ephesians iv. 3, this yoke is called "the bond of peace;" in Colossians iii. 14, it is called the "bond of perfectness." In 1 Cor. i. 10, the benefits of the yoke are presented: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the

same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment." In Col. ii. 2, Paul says, "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love."

"And learn of me." In all these things we learn of Jesus. The things we experience in walking with Jesus lead us into knowledge of him. This walking with Jesus under the yoke embraces every phase of the christian life. How else can we know his burden of sorrow and suffering for us but by bearing the cross ourselves? Others cannot, by telling us, lead us into the knowledge of him. We must walk in him, and our souls find sweet rest. When compared with the yokes and burdens of this world, how easy is the yoke, and how light the burden. All other yokes are galling, and other burdens are heavy, and we are anxious to cast them off, but the yoke of Christ is one we cherish, and the burden "worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

Your brother in hope of the better life,

W. N. THARP.

LIBERTY, Ind., July 16, 1909.

SHERWOOD, Oregon, July 7, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I was much pleased with your reply to my request for your views upon the text in the first chapter of Romans, and especially so with your closing words. You say, The same man who fell and was lost, &c., is redeemed and quickened into divine life, is raised up again and is finally glorified in Christ. My brother, that precious doctrine is the very foundation of my hope. Of course you know that it covers all the ground of salvation by grace through the finished work of our Savior, and I believe that this same man is born again, not of corruptible seed; his first birth was of corruptible seed, but the second birth of the child of God is of incorruptible seed, by the Word of God, that he should be holy. He said, "Be ye holy as I am holy." I think this covers the ground. 1 John iii. 9, says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed [God's seed] remaineth in him." This, it seems to me, is Christ in the man who is a sinner, as the hope of glory, and he, not it, cannot sin, because he, not it, is born of God. In the same book the apostle, speaking of the same character, or the child of God, says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Jesus is not formed in us at all if we can say such an absurd thing as that we have no sin. Now, there must be some qualifying sense in which these two apparently opposite expressions are used. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin," is the language. This is the man who fell, was redeemed and is born again, and this same man must not say that he does not sin, but he can and does sin. Will you write something about this editorially?

In gospel bonds,

J. P. ALLISON.

(See editorial reply on page 502.)

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497 ESSEX ST., LAWRENCE, Mass., July 26, 1909.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—Please change the address of my SIGNS to 70 Union St., Brunswick, Maine. Also put a notice in the SIGNS of my change of address, so that my many correspondents will know.

Your unworthy sister,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1909.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REPLY TO BROTHER ALLISON.

WE feel willing always to present such views as we hold in reply to the request of any of our brethren, but we hope that none of them will for a moment think that it is in our power to understand all mysteries, or that we think we do. We do not know that anything better or more to the point can be said about this Scripture to which our aged brother has called attention than he has himself said in his brief letter on page 501, still we have for years had many thoughts regarding it, and feel willing to present such of them as we can, in response. Many years ago there was much discussion among Old School Baptists regarding this text, many suggestions were made, and some were very positive in presenting their views regarding it; some, just because they could not reconcile this language with the other language of John: "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves," insisted that the two texts related to two men, both included in one body. The one man was of the flesh, born of the flesh, and altogether of the flesh, while the other was an entirely new man from above, coming down, and for a time living in this body, and destined to return at death to the place from which he came. It was this new man they thought that could not sin, because he was born of God, while, on the other hand, it was the old man, concerning whom John wrote, that sinned. These writers felt that they were shut up to this conclusion by the impossibility, that seemed to them to exist, of saying with truth of the same man, that he could not sin, and that he did sin, both at the same time; they felt themselves driven to do violence to the language of the text itself, substituting "it" for "he" and "whosoever," rather than trying to see if both expressions of the apostle were not reconcilable upon some other ground. As brother Allison has well said, the text does not say "it" cannot sin, but "he" cannot do so. We desire to call attention to the words "it," "he" and "whosoever," for a moment. When we speak of ourselves as men or women we always say "he" or "she," we never speak of ourselves by the pronoun "it;" but if we speak of the body alone we say "it;" if we speak of the mind alone we use the pronoun "it;" if we speak of any part of ourselves we always use the pronoun "it." We never use the pronouns he, she or whosoever, unless we mean the whole person, including body, soul and spirit, as the apostle declares it. In the text, had the inspired apostle intended to say that it was the new man that could not sin, because born of God, he would have naturally used the pronoun "it"; he would have said, if he had intended to say the seed cannot sin because born of God, "it" cannot sin, but instead did say, "he" cannot sin. "Whosoever" is born of God cannot sin, &c. The pronouns whosoever, he and she always mean persons, and not things, or any parts of persons. It is clear then, from the reading of the text, that what-

ever may have been the mind of the apostle with regard to the sense in which it is true that one born of God cannot sin, his simple meaning is the man born of God cannot sin; and, as brother Allison says, it is this man who fell, who has been redeemed from death, who is finally glorified in Christ, who is born again, and who cannot sin. Not only do the simple words of the text show this, but some things which the apostle writes immediately afterward plainly set forth the same thing. Consider verse ten, and in fact several verses following. All through them the same pronouns "we," "he," "his," "us," "whosoever," are in constant use; but especially see verse twelve, where the apostle introduces Cain and Abel as illustrations of the two opposing forces: evil and righteousness. The warfare there is not between two principles in Abel, but between two men. Cain hates his brother, and thus it is clear that he was not born of God, while Abel did righteous works, and thus proved that he, as a man, had been born of God. Had John intended by saying, Whosoever is born of God cannot sin, to say that the new man in him could not sin, the illustration would not have been drawn as between two different men, but he would have set forth the warfare going on in the heart of some one man. Cain as a man was still in his fallen condition, dead to God, while Abel was alive unto God, and born of him. In verse fourteen the same truth is set forth clearly: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "We," not "it," are no longer dead, but living. It is not the new nature that has passed from death unto life, but "we" who were dead; it is not the new nature that loves the brethren, but "we" who have come into the possession of this new nature. To be born of God, and to pass from death unto life, are different ways of setting forth the same great work of the new birth, and in both cases it is the "we," or "us," or "whosoever," or the "man" himself. All this is in full harmony with the words of the blessed Lord: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Jesus did not say, The new man, the Spirit of God, must be born again, but simply, "a man" must be born again. In no portion of the word of God is it ever said some part of the man must be born again, or something outside of the man, but the man always; and the definition of what the Bible means by "a man" is given us at the very beginning of the Bible: "God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Some brethren in Christ have endeavored to prove that it must be something less than the whole man, or something outside of the man altogether, that is born again, but it seems to us that the only safe course is to believe and abide by the words of the blessed Savior and of his inspired apostles. The text, then, does not mean that something else beside man is born again, or born of God; it does not mean, either, that believers do not or cannot err, in some sense of the word; it does not involve the doctrine of modern sanctification; that is, that perfection may be and has been attained to in the flesh while here below. Modern sanctificationists cannot find any comfort in these words, because while they say that some men do not sin, and have not sinned for a greater or less period of time, the text says, "Cannot sin." This would prove too much for modern sanctificationists; and it is a principle in all argument that what proves too much proves noth-

ing. The text does not mean by the pronouns "he" and "whosoever" anything less than persons. It is not the new nature that is born again, neither is it the spirit. The text plainly says, "whosoever," "his," "he," and, as has been shown, these pronouns never mean any portion of a man, but the man as a whole. But what then does the apostle mean by his language? In what sense is it said, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God"? It has seemed to us that John is presenting, all through his epistle, the contrast between those who love and serve God and those who do not; and love is the one infallible mark of one who believes and is saved. John all through his epistle contrasts love and hate. Hatred is the mark of an enemy of God, of an unredeemed man, while love is certain proof of salvation felt and known in the soul. God's people love, must love, because born of him who is love. "Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." Love is from henceforth the ruling power in all hearts where it has entered; love is the sum of all true obedience to God. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor;" by this the children of God and the children of the devil are distinguished. The devil hates righteousness, and has sinned in that way from the beginning. Cain was of that wicked one and slew his brother; his works were evil and his brother's righteous. Now John does not, in saying this of Abel, deny what he has said elsewhere: If any man say he hath no sin, he deceiveth himself, but he means that the ruling power in Abel was righteousness or love, and Abel was righteous through faith in Christ, which faith was in him a living power, working righteousness in his life. Thus in contrast with Cain, Abel's life was a life of freedom from the reign of sin, and under the dominion of righteousness. John uses these two men to illustrate what he is presenting in the text and its connection, and just what was true of Cain and Abel is true of all men; that is, some are as Cain was and some are as Abel was. It was true of Cain, and could be said of him, that he sinned as the ruling principle of his life. This could not be said of Abel; as a man of faith he did not sin, and he could not sin as Cain did, or as he himself did before he was called by divine grace. Sin was with him in the heart, just as it is with all who believe to-day, but he abhorred it, and struggled against it, and cried out to God for victory over it, and brought before God in type the one sacrifice by which he confessed his sin, and also that by one offering only had he hope of coming before God in peace. It is the dominion of faith and love on the one hand, set over against the dominion of sin on the other hand; and this truth is set forth all through this epistle, and, in fact, all through the Scriptures. Does not Paul bear the same testimony in Scriptures like these? "Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." "God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" What a difference in Paul's view, between being dead in sin, and dead to sin; and what is the difference between John saying, "He cannot sin," and Paul questioning, "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Again, does not Paul say the same thing in his account of the warfare? "Now, if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." I do not do this thing, but sin within me. (See Rom. vii.

17, 20.) "So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Is not Paul in these Scriptures saying in substance just what John said in the text under consideration? The whole matter has seemed to us like this: In a certain kingdom there are rebels who have arisen in opposition to the authority of the king, they are in the land, they are totally unreconciled to the reign of the king, they make raids against the good and loyal subjects of his kingdom, they often disturb the quiet of his dominion, they continue to strive against his reign and to disturb his peaceable subjects; it may be that from time to time they work grievous harm upon his subjects, yet they do not reign after all; they are in the land, but they do not have dominion. Our sins are these rebels; they dwell in this land, where Emmanuel has set up his reign, they plague the land, and it often cries out with bitter groaning against the evil that this rebel crowd succeeds in doing. Like Paul, they say, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" and, like him, when they are given to remember the King they say, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord;" but, after all, the King still reigns over us and in us. We are not under the dominion of our sins any longer, since Jesus has set up his throne. "Sin shall not have dominion over you," is the testimony of the same apostle who cried out in the same epistle, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" It is in this sense, as it has appeared for a long time to us, that John declares that he that is born of God cannot sin. It is sin that dwells in him that sins; his one desire is to be freed from its presence. The strong man is indeed bound, and therefore cannot rule, but he is not yet cast out, and his presence is a plague within, but the whole attitude of the heart and mind is different from what it was before. There is a vast difference between being a sinner running after sin with all our might, and being a sinner running away from sin as hard as we can, and our God sees the heart and knows what desires and pantings there are within toward God and away from sin; and even when our feet stumble and we fall, as did Peter, it is yet true, as it was of him, "Thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee," and here is the victory over unbelief and sin. Love is obedience, and he that is born of God cannot cease to love, and therefore cannot sin in the supreme sense of the word.

These considerations have seemed to us to be in harmony with the word of God, and we trust that they have been made a blessing to ourself experimentally at times. C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

The last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906; 07 means 1907; 08 means 1908; 09 means 1909; 10 means 1910; 11 means 1911, &c.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

WE have been requested to give our views on the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, recorded in Luke xvi. 19–31, but have delayed our response for several months, partly because we have been absent much of the time, and very closely occupied when at home, but principally because we have no very special light on the parable. Even now we propose only to offer a few general remarks on the subject.

Like most of the parables in the New Testament, we believe this one had a special reference to the covetous Pharisees, who were present when it was spoken. The prophets had foretold of our Redeemer that he would open his mouth in parables, and utter dark sayings, and the evangelist informs us that, "All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them."—Matt. xiii. 34. And when the disciples asked him concerning the application of the parables, he told them, "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand."—Luke viii. 10. This parable of the rich man and Lazarus was addressed to the Pharisees, and was doubtless intended to apply to them. Jesus had been speaking a parable to his disciples of the unjust steward, in the presence and hearing of the Pharisees. And it is said, verse 14, "And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him. And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God." He then told them that the law and the prophets were until John, but now the kingdom of God is preached, and all men (Gentiles) press into it, and the impossibility of justification on an imperfect obedience to the law, and illustrated by the law of marriage, and then added the parable under consideration, all of which was addressed immediately to the Pharisees. We therefore understand that the Pharisees were the certain rich man of the parable. They were clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. They claimed to be exceeding rich in the works of the law, in self-righteousness, in ability to secure the favor of God. They prided themselves greatly in being the children of Abraham, never in bondage to any man; disdaining the idea of being saved by the imputed righteousness of Christ, as they had so much of their own. They claimed to have the covenants; to them had been given the law, and they lived as sumptuously on their own righteousness as their descendants, the Arminians of our day, do at the present time. Like the rich man in the parable, they were covetous, unwilling that publicans, sinners or Gentiles should feast with them. Although possessing so much, not even the crumbs wasted at their banquet would they allow to be given to publicans and sinners at their gate. Circumcision and the law with its ceremonies, carnal ordinances and divers washings, were the wall of partition between them and sinners, who could not be admitted through their gates. The pitiful condition of Lazarus, hungry and sore, wretched and perishing, excited no compassion, he was left to the brutal kindness of the dogs.

Lazarus, in the parable, must represent

those poor, perishing Gentiles and Samaritans, publicans and harlots which were shut out from the privileges of Judaism, who could not be justified by the law of Moses, and who were treated with contempt by the Jews.

"And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments," &c. The time of these deaths seems to have been indicated in the context, when the kingdom of God began to be preached by John, and all men pressed into it. The term of Lazarus' existence in degredation expired at the opening up of the gospel dispensation, in which lost, helpless, sick and sore, wretched, hopeless and dying sinners were to come from the east, west, north and south, and with publicans and harlots sit down in the kingdom of God with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the children of the kingdom, the carnal seed of Abraham be cast out.

When the middle wall of partition was abolished, and when the hour arrived in which the true worshipers of God should no more worship at Jerusalem, nor at the mountain of Samaria, but in spirit and in truth; when he should no longer be a Jew who was one outwardly, nor that circumcision which was outward in the flesh, then died the rich man, and he was buried. But Lazarus, or those who are ready to perish from the land of Assyria, and the outcasts from Egypt, came to worship the Lord in his holy mount at Jerusalem; not the old Jerusalem which was in bondage with her children, but the Jerusalem which is above and free, which is the mother of all those who are of the faith of Abraham. If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Now their conditions are changed. The rich man's house is demolished, his sumptuous fare is discontinued, his days of luxury are numbered, he dies with the expiration of the ceremonial dispensation, is soon buried in pagan idolatry and engulfed in Gentile nations. In hell he lifted up his eyes. Hell sometimes means the grave, or repository of the dead; it also means darkness and torments, &c. It is here used figuratively as a part of the parable, and signifies the rejected state of the carnal Jews, who, like their cities which had been exalted to heaven, were cast down to hell. The Pharisees are thus tormented, and having been only Abraham's children after the flesh, are now cast forth from his embrace, while those who are born of God are by angels (messengers) carried to Abraham's bosom, and are blessed with faithful Abraham.

The carnal Jews are now nationally dead, scattered and buried among the Gentiles, but from their place of torment they see the Gentile church, borne by the apostles, in the doctrine of the gospel, to the bosom of Abraham, and comforted, while they are destitute of even a drop of consolation from the Lord by prophets or apostles to cool their parching tongues. Vainly now they cry unto Abraham to relieve them, by an acknowledgment of their fleshly descent from his loins. This he acknowledges by recognizing this rich man as his son, but says he can do nothing for them, as their day of exultation has expired by the abrogation of the covenant of works, and, like John the Baptist, he tells them to "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." The plea of the rich man for a missionary arrange-

ment cannot be entertained by Abraham, as the faith of Abraham cannot admit that missionaries sent from the dead will be more efficient than was Moses and the prophets whom the carnal Jews had been amply supplied with, and which the five brethren (who probably may represent all the Pharisees or legalists of subsequent ages, including the present time,) still profess to adhere to. None but those who are born of God can have the faith of Abraham, and without that faith they cannot understand the spirituality of the law or the prophets; and should one arise from the dead, he could not make them wise unto salvation. In confirmation of the testimony of Abraham in the parable, the history of all the missionaries sent from the dead, or of dead missionaries from the apostolic age, has utterly failed to convince Arminian legalists of the fatal delusion they are under, as there is a great and impassable gulf fixed between those who are born of the flesh and those who are born of the Spirit, which effectually and forever cuts off all communication between the parties.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., November 15, 1863.

BOOK NOTICE.

I HAVE, ready for mailing, a little work on Christian Science; the price is twenty cents, but to introduce it quickly will at present fill orders at half price, or ten cents per copy, postpaid. I have written it as a faithful warning against this strange wind of doctrine that seems to be spreading everywhere. I will appreciate any orders and fill them promptly as received. S. B. LUCKETT.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Indiana.

[WE can conscientiously recommend the above pamphlet, as we have read it with great interest. There is no more entirely "unchristian science" than the mass of sophistries falsely called "Christian Science." All who love the dear Redeemer's name and believe that which is declared in the Scriptures regarding sin and redemption, will look with abhorrence upon this false science, for in every way it contradicts what the Scriptures say regarding these great themes. This is enough to condemn its teaching with all who love God and his revealed word.—C.]

NOTICE.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., July 23, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In the SIGNS of July 15th I published a list of appointments in Canada and Detroit. I left home Monday night, July 19th, to attend these appointments. I reached Buffalo Tuesday morning, feeling well rested. About twenty minutes before leaving the train a heavy door closed upon the thumb of my right hand, crushing it and inflicting a wound that disabled my hand. At first I thought I must go forward, but several gentlemen who were present insisted that it would be an imprudent thing to undertake, to go from place to place for ten days without being able to use my right hand. I saw how impossible this would be, so I took the returning train for Philadelphia, where Dr. Coulter kindly met me and dressed the wound, and I reached home at 10 o'clock, having traveled eight hundred and fifty miles in about twenty-four hours, the return journey being in considerable pain. At Buffalo I was within one hundred and fifty-eight miles of my first appointment, Tuesday night. I had notice given as soon as possible of my inability to attend my appointments, and hope most of the friends learned of it in time to keep them from going out. Truly, "The way of

man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." It is very seldom that I have had to fail to keep appointments in the forty-five years I have been trying to preach, for which I desire to be thankful to the Lord. When unable to keep them I desire to be submissive to the Lord's will. The wound is painful, and will probably be some time in healing, as the thumb nail is torn loose. Through the SIGNS I here express my regrets to all who are disappointed. I regret the more on account of those who were to have been baptized at Ekfrid.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

POETRY.

IT IS I.

(Psalms xviii. 11; John vi. 20.)

DARK waters of affliction
My soul is passing through;
They swell and surge around me,
And I know not what to do.

In hope some helpful light may fall,
To heaven I lift my eyes,
But all heaven's light is shut away
By thick clouds of the skies.

Then hopeless, helpless, sinking down,
My soul cries out in fear;
The Lord has turned against me,
My prayer he will not hear.

He is just and true and holy,
And I am full of sin;
If he withhold his help from me,
My soul cannot complain.

The midnight sky is fearful
Above my trembling bark,
With the crashing of the storm
On the waters deep and dark.

And around me and upon me
The angry billows leap,
Roaring out their fearful threats
To overthrow me in the deep.

As I struggle, still expecting
To be overwhelmed in death,
Yonder on a rolling billow,
As a messenger of wrath,
Comes what seems to be a spirit
From a justly angry God,
To remove me from his sight,
And cast me in the raging flood.

While I wait the coming terror,
All my trembling soul dismayed,
Comes a sweet voice o'er the waters,
"It is I; be not afraid."

Instantly the winds are hushed,
And the angry waves are still,
And I, in the wished for haven,
Sing, "He doeth all things well."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Margaret Miles Lefferts, my grandmother and sister in Christ, died Sunday morning, July 18th, 1909, at the home of her son-in-law, brother Jacob S. Leedom, near Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa. She lived to within two months of her 97th birthday, having been born Sept 22nd, 1812, the daughter of Christopher and Ann Miles Search. In 1832 she married Elias D. Lefferts, whom she outlived nearly thirty years. To them were born eleven children. Our grandmother is survived by six of her children, four daughters and two sons, besides many grandchildren and great-grandchildren, numbering in all one hundred and twenty-one descendants, ninety-three of which are still living. She received a hope in the mercy of God through our Lord Jesus Christ when seventeen years of age, and was baptized by Elder James Bowen in the fellowship of the Southampton Old School Baptist Church the second Sunday in June, 1842. It can be truly said of her that she held fast the profession of her faith without wavering. The quiet, patient spirit of peaceful resignation which characterized her last years upon earth made these last days of hers seem a holy benediction to crown an humble but well-spent life. The doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of Almighty God, salvation through the blood of Christ alone, and the efficiency of his grace without the interposing of human means, were her spiritual meat and drink. During the last years of her life, when memory of earthly things was somewhat impaired, her recollection of experimental things connected with her God and Savior was as clear as when she was in her youth. She waited long and patiently for the coming of the Savior to take her unto himself, and we can but be thankful he has done so, though we shall sadly miss the precious communion which has been our privilege to have with her. Thankful, too, are we that she suffered very little physical agony, excepting the last ten days of her life.

The funeral was held from the Southampton Old

School Baptist meetinghouse; interment in the burying-ground adjacent, by the side of her husband. Elders S. H. Durand, (her pastor for twenty-five years) F. A. Chick and B. F. Coulter, took part in the services with the writer. Psalms cxxi. was used as a text.

May we ever cherish the memory of this spirit-filled life. HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

MEETINGS.

THE Lord willing, the seventieth annual session of the Des Moines River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene with Des Moines River Church, near Eldon, Iowa, August 14th, 15th and 16th, 1909. A cordial invitation is extended to all, and especially the ministering brethren of our faith and order. Eldon is on the Kansas City line of Rock Island system, also C., M. & St. P. R. R. Trains will be met Friday and Saturday mornings.

I. J. YOHE, Moderator.

J. L. THURSTON, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Cammal, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting for August 21st and 22nd, 1909. Cammal is a station on line of New York Central R. R., seventy-five miles from Corning, N. Y., and forty miles from Williamsport, Pa. Place of meeting is five minutes walk from station. Brother Samuel Moffat lives three rods from station. All who love the truth are invited to be with us.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Ingleside, N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting for August 28th and 29th, 1909. All who love the doctrine of grace are cordially invited. Ingleside is five miles from Atlanta, N. Y., station on the D., L. & W. and Erie railroads. Trains will be met on both roads Friday, 27th. Write to George Weld, Prattsburg, N. Y., R. F. D., or Harvey Graves, same place.

D. M. VAIL.

THE First Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, at Vega., N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting to be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, August 28th and 29th, 1909. Trains will be met at Roxbury on Friday before the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

V. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Mt. Pleasant Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will be held, the Lord willing, with the Cane Run Church, at Turners Station, Henry Co., Ky., beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1909, and continuing three days (Sept. 3rd, 4th and 5th). Those coming from the north and east will leave Cincinnati, Ohio, about 2:30 p. m. on Thursday, and 7:30 a. m. on Friday, over the L. & N. Railroad for Turners Station. Those coming from the south and west will leave Louisville about 5 p. m. on Thursday and 7:30 a. m. on Friday, over the L. & N. Railroad for Turners Station, where all will be met and cared for. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, and especially to ministering brethren of our faith and order, in good standing, to meet with us.

G. R. TURNER, Church Clerk.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1909, at 10 o'clock a. m., at the residence of brother John McFadden, six miles west of Table Grove, Fulton Co., Ill. Those coming by rail will be met at Table Grove on Thursday before and early Friday morning. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Abbington Old School Baptist Church has appointed a two days meeting for Wednesday and Thursday, September 8th and 9th, 1909. The place of meeting is three miles from Olyphant, on the D. & H. or O. & W. R. R., and four miles from Clarks Summit, on D., L. & W. R. R. Those expecting to attend the meeting are requested to write to G. W. Goodrich, Olyphant, Pa., R. F. D., and arrangements will be made to meet them on Tuesday.

G. W. GOODRICH, Clerk.

THE Pocatalico Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Good Hope Church, in Kanawha County, W. Va., commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1909, and continuing three days. Those coming from the west, over the K. & M. R. R., will be met at Raymond City, W. Va., Thursday evening. Those from the east, over the C. & O. and C., C. & S., will be met at Charleston, W. Va., Thursday until 3 o'clock in the evening. Those coming from the southwest, over the C. & O., should come to St. Albans, cross the river to Sattes depot and there take the west bound train on K. & M. for Raymond City, to meet conveyance Thursday evening. A cordial invitation is extended to all of like precious faith to meet with us.

This done by order of the Good Hope Church, at her May meeting.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Moderator.

G. P. HIGGINBOTHAM, Clerk.

THE Licking Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will be held, the Lord willing, with the Salt River Church, Anderson County, Ky., commencing on Friday before the second Saturday in Septem-

ber, 1909, and continuing three days (10th, 11th and 12th). Those coming from the east will come by Lexington, those from the west by Louisville, Ky., and come to Lawrenceburg, Ky., where they will be met and taken care of. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend.

J. J. WATERFILL, Church Clerk.

THE Shohola Creek Old School Baptist Church has appointed a meeting for Monday evening, Sept. 13th, 7:30 o'clock, and Tuesday, 14th, 10:30 a. m. and 2:30 p. m. Friends will come to Shohola, Pa., on Erie R. R., where they will be met Monday afternoon. It would be well for those going to drop a card to Nicholas Hess, Hugh McKean, Warner McKean or Gipson McKean, Shohola, Pike Co., Pa. Hope to see all that can come. Place of meeting is four or five miles from station. D. M. VAIL.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THERE are a few Old School Baptists in Riverside, Cal., and they have meeting the first and third Sundays in each month, at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

W. D. BALL.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 77. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1909. NO. 17.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PSALMS XXXVI. 8.

"THEY shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the rivers of thy pleasures."

Sometimes I think I know something of what the psalmist meant by the above language, and there are times I do not seem to know what he did mean. The Lord's house here spoken of does not seem to me to be that home the saints of God hope to enjoy after death, but is a spiritual house, built up of lively stones, of which Christ is made the head of the corner. Moses was called a faithful servant in all his house, but Christ as a Son over his own house, whose house are we, "if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end." This we understand to be none other than the house of God, which the apostle Paul wrote about to Timothy, that he might know how he ought to behave himself in the house of God, a house builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. I understand in the application of the words, the house of God, or God's house, is meant the church of the living God, the bride, the Lamb's wife, also in Paul's admonition to the brethren to love their wives as their own bodies. This he says he spoke concerning Christ and the church, that no man ever yet hated his own flesh, which seems to agree with the words, "whose house are we." The psalmist and the apostle Paul have used these expressions to set forth first the Builder, and then those that are built. It was said by the apostle Paul of the brethren at Ephesus that they were "no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets;" hence the application given to the terms, house of God, God's house and household of God, seems to agree that it is none other than the church of Jesus Christ. Those brethren at Ephesus were Gentiles, and Paul said they had been aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world, but had now been made nigh by the blood of Christ and were fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God; hence we are made aware that the house of God and the church of God are one and the same. Therefore we would consider some things that belong to the

house of God, his church. The psalmist says in the text, Those who put their trust under the shadow of thy wing "shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house." I certainly do know how a few times in my life I have felt abundantly satisfied with the fatness of God's house; I have been made to say, Lord, it is enough, I am full. The psalmist says in the text that God shall make them drink of the rivers of his pleasures. Truly this has for a few short seasons been my portion, but O how short. The flesh with all its corrupt desires and its deceitfulness has often taken all else from me, but the little tastes of the fatness of the Lord's house and the little draughts from the rivers of his pleasures have so satisfied my hope and love that I am made to hope on and long for more of the fatness of his house, and to drink more of the rivers of his pleasures. One may have an orchard of ungrafted fruit which has continually borne unprofitable fruit year after year, but in one corner of that orchard is one grafted tree of delicious fruit, but it rarely bears, yet what few seasons it has borne the fruit has so perfectly satisfied our taste that we still hope on and long for the fruit of the grafted tree, though most of the orchard bears unprofitable fruit. Just so with the children of God's house; what few seasons of joy and peace they have found in the fatness of the Lord's house and in drinking from the rivers of his spiritual pleasures so fascinate them that they ever hunger and thirst for a feast of fat things from God's house, hence they would not be unclothed, but clothed upon with their house from heaven. We are apt to conclude when reading of the kingdom of heaven, or the bride, the Lamb's wife, or the house of God and the throne of God, that they are as far from us as though they were not in this world; but the apostle said to his brethren, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices," hence it is plain that every one of God's children is some part of the house of God, and when brethren are united they are called the house of God, and they are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit. A habitation is a place inhabited. Christ has said by the apostle John, He that loveth me and keepeth my commandments, I and my Father will come and make our abode with him; hence it is in my mind to consider that the kingdom of heaven so often spoken of in the Scriptures is not off in the eternal heavens, for Christ told his disciples, "The kingdom of God is within you," meaning that God sets up his kingdom in the hearts of his children, he writes his laws there, and God as King dwells in his kingdom, hence all the court trials and judgments against his children are held in this spiritual house, the church of the living God. National Israel had a house built at Jerusalem by Solomon, where all the Jewish sacrifices were made. All this was figurative of the spiritual house that the apostle speaks of: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house." The stones in Solomon's house were only figures of the lively stones of God's spiritual house, and the priesthood of Levi was only typical or figurative of those lively stones, a holy priesthood. The priesthood of the typical house offered burnt sacrifices of slain beasts, but the holy priesthood of this spiritual house offers up spiritual sacrifices, the fruit of their lips, and as the typical sacrifices were burnt offerings, even so the spiritual offerings, the offerings of praise, are made when our faith

has been tried, as it were, by fire. In the typical house were kings and priests, and in the spiritual house we hear it said, By thy blood thou hast redeemed us unto God out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people, and hath made us unto our God both kings and priests. The typical house had a high priest that went once a year into the second tabernacle to intercede for those of whom he was high priest, and now this spiritual house has a High Priest who has gone into the second tabernacle (heaven), there to make intercession for all of his spiritual house.

But to return to the fatness of this house. First, the typical house was built by Solomon; no part of the house built itself, and even so with the house of God, it is built by God; he hath set every member in the body as it pleased him, and he that hath builded the house hath more honor than the house. How good it is when we are down in the valley of despondency over our unprofitableness and our sinfulness, and cannot see what use we are in the building, when we can reflect that God hath set every member in the body as it pleased him, and somehow this makes us willing at times to say, Lord, unprofitable as I am thou knowest my place. I have heard brethren who were generally silent in the church say they do not see that they are any profit to the church, and feel the church would be better off without them, and yet when I go to the church and miss these little ones, as they feel to be, it is quite a disappointment to me, for somehow I have learned these brethren are often the real safe brethren in the church. I mean by this that while feeling so little, they are nearest the feet of Christ, and the least liable to fall and the least liable to err; they trust more in God and less in self, and when it comes to a matter of business in the church such brethren prove often to be the safest counsel, and if all church business were left to such brethren, and ministers left out of the business, I think often many errors would be avoided. The fatness of the house is enjoyed only when brotherly love continues in the household. We have felt to grieve sometimes when a brother through some mistake had incurred the enmity of the brethren, and he was excluded, and the sweet hand of fellowship withheld, and the fatness of the house of the Lord kept from him, and to see that one standing out in the cold, still trusting in God for all his salvation, full of love and fellowship for the brethren, but none in return to him. To me such is painful, and makes me wonder about the fatness of the house of God and the rivers of pleasures from which his children are made to drink. Will brethren try to keep one from quenching his thirst? I trust not to any great degree. May God remember such an one, and may God fill us all with meekness, that each may be at the feet of the other, and they shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of his house. God's children will not need any of the society of the world to satisfy them, for there is a great abundance in God's house to satisfy them, hence they are crucified unto the world and the world is crucified unto them, for they are abundantly satisfied with the fatness of God's house. God shall make them drink of the rivers of his pleasures; they will need no other.

NEWTON PETERS.

PORTLAND, Indiana.

DRAIN, Oregon.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have been many times requested to write my experience for publication in the SIGNS, but feared to do so, lest I should crowd out better material, and again,

"When I experience call to mind,
My understanding is so blind,
All feeling sense seems to be gone,
Which makes me fear that I am wrong."

I was born in the State of Illinois in the year 1870, and in the year 1877 came with my parents to Oregon, locating on a farm near the little town of Drain, which is still my old parental home, while myself and family are but a few miles distant. My early life was spent with my parents on the farm, while all my spare time was taken up with a fishing tackle and gun, including Sundays. My parents were of the old sort of Baptists. There was not another Old School Baptist here at that time, so the Arminians tried hard to get my parents to unite with them. One Campbellite deacon told my father that he had come over to break the "hardshell" on his back, but my father told him to be careful, that a camel had a hump, and he might get his hump broken. My boyhood days soon glided by, and as I grew to manhood I became infatuated with the ballroom and all kinds of vain amusements, giving my parents much trouble, as I was out much nights in bad society, while they at home were saying, "I wonder where Charley is to-night," and as I pen these lines O how my heart aches for those dear, old parents, but "God moves in a mysterious way," for while thus enjoying life I believe that it pleased my heavenly Father to show me that I was a vile and wretched sinner, an alien to God and a stranger to grace. A dark cloud came over me, and I began to try to free myself from it, but could not. I would go back to the ballroom, but I had no pleasure there; the things I had so much loved had lost all charms for me. I had not a ray of hope, for I did not believe God could forgive such a sinner as I; all was dark without, and ten thousand times worse within. For about five years I continued in that awful state of mind, and finally on the first day of May, 1898, I attended a large ball in one of the neighboring towns, and while there it seemed to me that it was the longest night I had ever spent; O how I wished for the dawn of day so I could go home, and when the dance broke up I told my companions I would never attend another ball, and on being asked why, I told them it would never lead to anything higher. The same day I went with my father to hear Elder N. B. Walker preach at Walker Station, in Lane Co., and wished myself out of the sound of his voice, for everything he said condemned me, and only through respect did I retain my seat. The following Monday I separated from my father, and journeyed onward about fifty miles to visit the one who is now my wife, for as vile as I was, I was yet seeking the heart of one of God's precious saints. On returning the following Saturday, I hope that it pleased my heavenly Father to reveal himself to me as the One altogether lovely, the chiefest of ten thousand. While riding alone over a forest road my burden of sin seemed to depart from me, and I, a poor worm of the dust, began praising God, and began at once singing that dear, old hymn, "I'm not ashamed to own my Lord." I wanted to tell every one of this blessed Savior. O how my father rejoiced when I told him I believed that God had forgiven my sins, but my mother doubted me, just as Ananias did Saul of Tarsus, insomuch that I vowed not to offer myself to the

Old School Baptist Church, which was my choice, as long as mother doubted my hope in Christ, but told mother if she would go I would take her to hear Elder Walden preach. She consented, and when the opportunity was given for the reception of members I forgot my vow and offered myself to the church, and mother was one of the first to motion to receive me. Jennie Davis (now my wife) also was received, and we were baptized the third Sunday in June, at the Siloam Association, then held at Walker Station with the Coast Fork Church, and we were married the second day of October the same year.

I then felt at peace with God, and with my young wife started out in life anew. I wanted to go to church often and be with the brethren, and for some time was at rest; I felt that nothing would disturb my peace, and begun working to gain a portion of this world's goods, but one night these words came to me with great force, You must preach the gospel, or you shall never prosper. I thought perhaps it was only a delusion, and I would cast it aside and endeavor to forget it, but the same words rang in my ears, You must preach the gospel, each time with renewed force. I then began to argue with God in the words of Moses, that I was not eloquent, and was of slow speech, and had a slow tongue; I daily found excuses. I never told any one of my exercise of mind except my oldest sister, Mrs. Olive Powrie, but told her I was going to fight it down if possible; her answer was, "Quench not the Spirit." I struggled on for several years in this manner, fighting every inch of my way, until at last death with its cold sceptre laid its hand upon our little babe. From the depths of my heart I was made to cry out with Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" and made a vow that if God would be merciful to me I would declare his name the rest of my days, but was soon finding excuses again. I thought the brethren would not be willing, and my last excuse was that my wife would be ashamed of me, but when I asked her about the matter she asked me why I wanted to preach, and if I could not keep from it. I asked her if Jonah or Saul of Tarsus could keep from doing the will of God. She said, "No, and neither can you, and, Charley, this is no surprise to me, for I have constantly seen you in my dreams preaching, and I am not ashamed of you, I want you to preach, go on and declare the whole counsel of God, contend earnestly for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints," so my last excuse was blighted, and at one of our meetings, when our pastor was absent, I tried to say a few words of comfort to the church, and was surprised at our next meeting to find that the brethren had decided to liberate me to speak, and about one year later I was ordained to the full work of the ministry, which I struggled hard to resist, but I felt I must be submissive to the will of the church.

I feel this is very poorly written, and not worthy of a place in the SIGNS, but will leave it to your better judgment.

Asking an interest in your prayers, I beg to remain your little brother,

C. F. MORNINGSTAR.

NACOGDOCHES, Texas, March 19, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Our God is a wonderful God, and he does wonderful things. O what am I that I should be dealt with in such a wonderful way? Pray for me, that I may not become exalted, on the one hand, nor utterly fall, on the other.

I am sending you a letter without consulting the writer, and my reply to the same. I do not know whether I am doing right or not. I submit to your judgment, whether they will be profitable for the SIGNS.

ROBERT S. PACE.

QUITMAN, Texas, March 7, 1909.

ROBERT S. PACE—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I will again attempt to answer your good letter, which came to me some time ago. My heart goes out in love to you; though we are strangers in the flesh, I hope we have been led and taught by the same Spirit. Your letter gave me great comfort, and I read it over and over. I feel to be ignorant in spiritual things, but it is plain to me that you have written the experience of one who is taught of the Lord. Our Lord reveals himself and all these precious things to his children, and he does so in his own time and way. He alone, as I hope, gave me a heart to love and rejoice in the doctrine I once hated, and he, as I trust, caused me to mourn on account of my sins, yet I long for a brighter hope. How often does my carnal mind deceive me and lead me to believe that I can do something that will be good and pleasing to the Lord, and yet I know in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing, and that without him I can do nothing. I do long to be made willing to trust in him always. How grand and glorious is the covenant of grace! How glorious is Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our faith, by whom salvation comes by grace through faith. But at times I feel to be low down and weak; my way is often dark, and I long to see the marks of grace. O, I think if I could praise him as others do, that my burden would not be so heavy. If I could have light, and could manifest that light to others as they do to me, my life would not be such a mystery to me; but I am so often filled with doubts and fears, and so prone to wander that I think if others could see me as I see myself I would not wonder should they cast me off from among them. But, dear brother, it is one sweet hope I have that I do love God's dear people. I love the doctrine of salvation by grace, and I hope to be kept by his power and to endure to the end. Often when we are cast down, and feel that he has hidden his face from us, and we pass through sore trials, it is then that we seek and knock, and then when the Lord raises us up and gives us a reconciled mind, so that we can be still and know that he is God, we can praise him the more. He has promised never to leave nor forsake them that are his, whom he calls according to his purpose. He leads them in his own way. When we are low down in the valley then we cry unto the Lord and beg for his sovereign mercy; we then see how weak and vain all our help is; we realize our weakness and nothingness, and then look to God as our hope, our strength and our refuge; then we cry unto him to remember no more our sins and former iniquities, and to let his tender mercies speedily preserve us, for we have been brought very low, and when He comes to our rescue and raises us up we rest on him as our strength; then we can look back and say, as did David of old, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes."

Now, dear brother, you speak of my experience being of so much comfort to you. O how often do I feel that I have not the true marks of a believer, and feel that I am not worthy to be numbered among them, yet I have no longer any

interest in this world; it seems cold to me, and grows more and more so every day of my life. How glorious it is to have a hope in Jesus, and to be brought by his power to know and love the truth. After reading your letter I was made to say, "How sweet to my soul is the communion of saints." I felt that it must arise from that love that binds all of God's children together.

But you must be wearied with reading this poorly written letter. If I could write as comfortingly as others do, it would not be such a task. May the Lord bless you, dear brother, according to his own good pleasure, is my prayer, and may he bless all of us, that we may live closer to him.

With love to you and yours, I am your sister in hope,

LENA DAVENPORT.

NACOGDOCHES, Texas, March 10, 1909.

MRS. LENA DAVENPORT—DEAR SISTER:—Your soul-cheering letter has just been received, and I never can praise God enough for his wonderful providence and mercy in bringing this message to me just at this time. You have saved me, dear sister, from death, and from that awful error: conditionalism. In fleeing from one error, I plunged headlong into the pit of creature merit and ability. O how low down I was brought, though in my mind I felt exalted. A few days ago I received a book called "Everlasting task for the Absoluters." O how wonderful are God's ways! The book is intended to teach the doctrine of conditionalism, but God used it to disgust me with its own folly; it does not give God all the praise. I attended a Methodist meeting before I received this book. It was in the providence of God that I did so, that I might be able to compare their doctrine, and to see that the conditional theory is even worse than the Arminian theory, and so I became all tangled up in my mind, and was in much misery; I realized how helpless I was to deliver myself from my sad condition. Then the Lord in mercy enabled you to comfort me, and to save me from another death. "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" It is the Lord's work that should be praised, and not the works of man. All our good works, if indeed we should dare claim anything good, are wrought in us by the Spirit, and are brought about by the promptings of the same Spirit, and by circumstances which he has prepared, and over which we have no control. "By the grace of God I am what I am," and if anything good is ever done by me I wish not the praise, for it is not I, but the grace of God that is with me. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake." Pray for me, for I feel to be an exile from God and a wanderer from his grace. I know that I am utterly dependent upon him for everything in time and eternity.

Humbly yours, in much weakness,

ROBERT S. PACE.

[WE suppose that brother Pace in saying that conditionalism is worse than Arminianism, means that while Arminianism openly claims that all our salvation, both here and hereafter, depends at the last upon creature will, purpose, choice, work and power, and so is consistent with itself all through, conditionalism, on the other hand, in the form in which it has appeared among some of our people, is inconsistent with itself, in that while it claims that our final salvation is all of grace, it contends that our salva-

tion here below depends upon, not grace, but our choice, or our obedience. Conditionalism declares that grace begins the work, but afterwards its fruit depends upon our will or choice. We think this is the meaning of brother Pace, and if so, we do not feel at all disposed to differ with him. Arminianism declares one thing from beginning to end, while conditionalism, in its modern form, puts grace in some places, and our work, or will, or choice, in other places. This does seem worse than Arminianism.—C.]

GREENBRIER, Ark., July 18, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you a copy of a letter from a very dear brother in Christ, a meek, lowly servant of God. By request he has handed it to me, so I send it to you to do with as you think best. It gives an account of his christian travels. I would like to see it in the SIGNS; it may be a comfort to some of the weak and lowly ones. Sometimes I get very low in spirit. I often long for the company of God's humble poor. I am a poor, old sinner, saved by grace if saved at all. I am a widow seventy years old, and have had a name among the Baptists fifty-five years. I am weak and wounded and lame naturally on one foot, and spiritually lame on both feet. Love to all the household of faith.

As ever, a poor wanderer,

E. J. HURST.

REPUBLICAN, Ark., April 13, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I will make this, the second attempt, to pen a few lines for you to look over, and if in your judgment you think it fit for the children of God, you can do with it as you like. I have had a name among the Primitive Baptists for twenty years, yet do not know just what I am. I would like to cast in my little mite and let you all judge. I want to write as my mind is led, and this appears to be a task indeed, for it has been on my mind for more than five years, and fearing it was a whim I put it off from time to time, and even yet I am not sure as to its real source.

If indeed I have ever been favored with grace, it was at a time very unexpected to me, for I was in the woods alone making rails, with not a soul near me. A feeling took hold of me that I could not describe then, and I cannot now. Whatever it was, it overpowered me both in body and mind. I did not want to say anything, as I did not know what was the matter. I was a stranger to grace; all my pride and interests were in the world; but at that point when that unseen power held me fast, and I knew not what it was, in spite of myself I was made to cry, Lord, what is the matter? and worked on as best I could until night. I thought I would tell my wife about it, but when I got in from work I was not so willing to tell her, and I did not. I went for a few days with a heavy load on my heart, but tried to hold my head up as best I could. There was a train of thought running through my mind that I had never known before. I had no Bible in my house, so I got on my horse and went to see my dear old mother, who has since gone to the better world. I borrowed her Bible to read awhile, but did not tell her why I wanted it. When I got home I began with Genesis and read very carefully, and I began to build a house, but sad to say it was found to have no foundation, hence could not stand. The reader will understand that I verily thought I could do something that would cause the Lord to reserve in his kingdom a place for me, so at it I went. I had not yet said anything to

my wife about what took place with me in the woods while making rails, and did not intend to; she was a member of the Old School Baptist Church, and quick to speak her sentiments, so I meant to keep things close. One night after reading late we had gone to bed, and I had fallen asleep; how long I slept I do not know, but I awoke praying and praising the blessed Lord for his goodness to me, a vile sinner. My wife was sitting by me on the bed and began talking to me, but wonder of wonders to me, I did not want to talk to her, and went out of the house, but could not stay, so I came in and we then talked a long while. Dear reader, you may judge the whole matter when I finish. I went on with my reading, and sad to say, again with my building, and got along fairly well until I read through the Old Testament, then when I came to the New Testament it did indeed seem that every word cut my poor heart in pieces, but I pressed on, and the more I read the plainer it set my case before me, for while reading the Old Testament I saw the law of works and the blessings thereof. I read on, as hard as it was for me, and I do feel a desire in my heart to say that I humbly trust through grace it was given me to at last see the light of the secret of salvation for poor, vile sinners, such as I saw myself to be. I then began to gather, as it were, a better light of what an alien from the commonwealth of Israel and a stranger from the covenants of promise I was, without hope and without God in the world. Such I verily felt myself to be. Whether I am a subject of grace I dare not say, but as I read on through the blessed Testament, life or hope began to spring up, for through the pages of the New Testament we are reminded of the prophets who foretold of Jesus and his advent into the world. Isaiah said, He trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none to help or uphold, and that he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. I began to see this in the New Testament as I read. In trying to follow my mind as best I can, will say, I did undertake to write this matter once before, and it was so lengthy and so much like me I thought to let no one see it. I do not mean to say that this is any better, for it is as near like me as it can be, let that be what it may. The Lord knows, not I. The very thought of the poor publican's prayer makes me know that Jesus was his friend; if he is not the sinner's friend, then I have nothing to hope for beyond this world. Now, when I went to the church, I did not intend to, but when they were singing I stood with the congregation while they sang, until the hymn was about half finished, when my poor heart broke and I could stand on my feet no longer. I took my seat and thought I would remain there, but before they were through singing I found myself standing before brother Westall, holding him by the hand. I was so overcome that I could not tell much, but I told as best I could a short sketch of what I have here written. They received me, and I was baptized on Sunday, the next day, by Elder D. Westall, of Pine Bluff, Ark. I cannot give the exact year, I wish I could; it was something like twenty-three years ago. This part I never regretted, as I have felt a good conscience, rest and peace of mind from that day. The brethren have been disposed to bear with me for some reason, I know not what.

I find this is growing too lengthy, I had better close, yet there are many things I

would like to speak of. Suffer me to say that I hope I love Jesus, the Savior of sinners, and I hope also that I love my brethren and sisters most dearly, and desire above all things to be at their feet.

Farewell.

J. A. REYNOLDS.

WARWICK, N. Y., July 30, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—By request, I inclose you the experience of my grandmother, Margaret M. Lefferts, written in a letter to one of her children about thirty-eight years ago. I sent you her obituary a few days ago.

Yours in gospel fellowship,

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May 16, 1871.

DEAR CHILD:—I will now try to comply with your request. When I was about fifteen years old, I was at a cousin's funeral, and the preacher took for his text: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." I wept much, but knew not why, for the deceased was an infant and I had not known much of it. Time passed on, and I found that I was not talking so much foolishness as formerly, but did not realize myself to be such a great sinner until I was in my nineteenth year. At that time it pleased the Lord to lay me on a bed of sickness, then I felt myself to be a great sinner. I thought by day and by night, What would become of me if I were to die? I kept my Testament under my pillow, and when alone would try to read. I did not want any one to see me reading the Testament, but my mother found it there when she made my bed and asked me if I liked to read that book. I told her I did sometimes. My mother was an Old School Baptist, and O how I miss her counsel now that she is gone. I was lying awake one night and thinking a great deal, for I could not sleep, when these words came to me: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."—Matt. xi. 28–30. I wondered where they were; I knew I had heard them before, but did not know where to find them. The next morning I got my Testament and thought I would hunt for them, but I opened the book right at those words. The Lord showed me where they were, and I never saw such beauty in that blessed book as I did that day. This state of mind did not last long, and soon I began to wonder why these words had been applied to me, for I would try to pray, yet could not say anything but "God be merciful to me a sinner." My father was a Presbyterian, but I mostly went to meeting with my mother, for that was more convenient, being only one mile, while my father's meeting was seven miles from home. The Lord raised me to health again, and when I was twenty years old I was married. My husband's family were Presbyterians, and I thought I would go to meeting with him. We lived in a Presbyterian neighborhood, and one afternoon I was in company with several of the neighbors and they were talking about "going to church," as they called it. They said the woman ought to go along with the man. I thought: That is right, and I will do it, so I did for about seven years, but could not find the food my soul needed. There was an Old School Baptist three days meeting at Southampton; it was on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, so I asked my husband

to go with me. He went the two first days, but on Sunday morning he stopped at his own meeting on the way, and I went on alone to Southampton. It was then that I saw a difference in the preaching; I saw I could never go again with my husband to his meeting, so the next Sunday when he began to talk about going I told him that I could not go with him any more, and if he could not go with me we must go each to our own place. He said nothing, but got ready and went afoot alone, and, as I could not walk, I remained at home. When he returned home he asked me what was the matter with the meeting. I told him I could no longer listen to such preaching. The next Sunday he took me to an Old School Baptist meeting, and has gone there with me ever since, and I believe he is as strong an Old School Baptist (in sentiment) as I am, but the Lord's time has not come for him to be brought out. I attended these meetings, often wishing that I was one with the people of God, but realized my unworthiness. Thus I wandered along about four years longer, when I began to be exercised about baptism. One day while going about my work, the words came to me:

> "Do we not know that solemn word,
> That we are buried with the Lord;
> Baptized into his death, and then,
> Put off the body of our sin?"

(Hymn 1112, Beebe's collection.) I felt constrained to go before the church at Southampton and tell them of my little hope and what I thought the Lord had done for me. That was Saturday before the second Sunday in June, 1841; Elder Bowen was then their pastor. I was received, and the next day baptized. I have been led along, sometimes in the darkness, sometimes in the light. I often feel that my conviction of sin was not strong enough. Elder Purington says some persons' burdens are like bars of iron which, when they fall off, give a sudden relief always afterward remembered; others' burdens are as bags of feathers which, disappearing gradually, leave no suddenness of deliverance to be remembered. I think my case was as the feathers, for I never could tell the time when my burden of sin left me.

MARGARET M. LEFFERTS.

ST. ALBANS, W. Va., March 30, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed you will find a letter from brother Hickerson, which, if you think proper, you may publish in the SIGNS.

Your brother in hope,

G. B. BIRD.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., March 25, 1909.

ELDER G. B. BIRD—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—Your good letter in the SIGNS of March 15th was a refreshing messenger to one who loves to read of the dealings of the Lord with poor worms of earth. I have read it over and over again. I felt that I wanted to see you, and hear you preach about the glorious plan of salvation, revealed by our great Benefactor, the Preserver of our unprofitable lives, and about the purposes and decrees and predestination of God, all of which are taught in the volume of inspiration. There are none who can rightly understand these things, save through the revelation of the Holy Spirit, which is shed abroad in our hearts, and by which we are made to cry, Abba, Father. Our Lord foretold the destruction of the temple, saying that of this great building there should not be left one stone upon another that should not be thrown down. Four of his disciples asked privately to know the sign when these things should be. Jesus answering

them said, "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." The disciples were commanded to take heed, for they should be delivered to be beaten for the sake of the blessed Lord for a testimony against them, and this they should suffer for preaching the true gospel among all nations. Thank God, the poor little ones who stand firm and faithful, contending for God's purposes and absolute decrees, are not to take thought beforehand what they shall speak, but it shall be given them in that hour to know what they shall speak. "It is not ye [said the Savior] that speak, but the Holy Ghost." The redeemed of the Lord, Jesus said, shall be hated of all men for his name's sake, but he that endureth unto the end shall be saved. Our Lord will confirm the covenant with many. This is the covenant of grace, and not of the law of works. The blessed Redeemer said those days should be shortened for the elect's sake. Were they not shortened no flesh could be saved. We are warned if any man shall say, Lo here or lo there is Christ, to believe him not, for false christs and false prophets should arise, and if it were possible would deceive the very elect. We are warned by the blessed Savior to take heed; we are living in perilous times. I feel that this is not my home; I am only a sojourner in this body of clay, trusting in the strength of Israel's God to direct my steps. I feel that he is my bright and morning Star. There is nothing that can separate us from the love of God. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast; it enters within the veil. The Lord hath declared that he hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. He hath also created them that are called by his name for his glory; he has formed them and made them, even the deaf that have ears, and the blind that have eyes. If all the nations were gathered together, who among them could declare this? None but the witnesses and true servants whom he hath chosen, that they may know and believe. These have believing faith, and say it is true, and these understand that there is no God formed after him, and that he, even he, is the Lord, and beside him there is no Savior. He said that none can deliver out of his hand. I will work and none can hinder. The wicked he hath reserved unto the day of wrath and destruction. He hath also declared the end from the beginning, "and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

My beloved brother, you seem strong in the doctrine of God's elect, including the absolute decrees and predestination of God in all things, which doctrine I also believe. I trust and hope that the Lord has given me some right conception of his revealed will, and an understanding of his spiritual revelation. I hope that it has been his good pleasure to give me the kingdom, and to meet the Bridegroom at his coming. Paul well said, "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" This also is my experience. I am often down in the valley of dry bones. My hope is in the loving Arm, which is able to bear me up. He is able to bear me up on the wings of everlasting peace, with praise to his redeeming love. It is his precious promise that because he lives I shall live also. That blessed hope no mortal can give, but grace has given the hope that after days and years are past we shall be blessed with a home in heaven, which God hath

wrought; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against his beloved bride. We all shall fully know everlasting love beyond the grave. We shall dwell with Him who knows no change. He is God, and changeth not, therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed.

My brother, we are strangers in the flesh, but your good letter in the SIGNS has drawn me near to you in those ties which bind us to our spiritual Head. This is far beyond all that binds us to our natural head. Our spiritual love is infinitely stronger than all that is natural. We trust that we are sealed by his blood, which is precious, and which made manifest his love to us, which love, as we hope, has been shed abroad in our hearts. We are commanded to love one another for the truth's sake; this is why I have written you so lengthily; I trust that as you read it you will be charitable toward me. I am desirous to know the truth as it is in Jesus. May God bless you, dear brother, in your labors. I trust the Lord has called you to stand upon the walls of Zion, the city of God, to cry aloud and spare not, to proclaim that salvation is of the Lord. My prayer is for you that you may be faithful in this ministry.

Your brother in hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

WILMINGTON, Delaware.

DEAR BROTHER SELBY:—As I was sitting reading the SIGNS just now, a desire to write you took possession of me, and I am going to attempt it. After the talk last Sunday on "It is finished," a thought came into mind, and it is of that I wish to write. I am not going to criticize one word or expression that was used, for to my mind every word was true; my only objection was to what was not said. That the work was finished in the sense intended by the Savior and by the Scriptures, there is no possible room to doubt. The work of the man Jesus, born of the flesh to live among men and set forth by his acts and teaching the gospel of the grace of God, the work of preparation for the setting up of the gospel kingdom, the work of seeking out those who were his followers and who were to act as leaders and supporters in the visible church, the work of witnessing before men the divine character of his mission, the work of salvation by his death on the cross and of his victory over death by bursting the bands thereof and coming forth, thus redeeming his people from death, and the work of justification, in that he being perfect, not only sinless, but as the body of Adam was perfect in that all the human family was created in him, so was all the spiritual family created in Christ, and when he arose from the dead, having paid all the law could demand, so also were they raised and justified before God, because the head had paid the debt the body owed.

Now comes the thought that set me writing: "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen." There yet remains a work to be done, without which you and I have no hope of a part in that finished work already set forth, and it is the bringing home of a knowledge of the truth of salvation by grace alone to the heart of the sinner. Of what use would it be for you or me to search for Christ in Bethlehem? Yet we do; he is not there. Or in Galilee? He is not there. In Judea, is he there? In Samaria? he went there; can we find him? In the garden of Gethsemane? Do we not go there to weep and pray? Do we find him? He is not there. Before Pilate in the judgment hall? Not there. But surely we must find him on

Calvary, hanging on the cross; we hear so much about the cross. But why seek ye the living in such places, they are dead? In the tomb, then, if he died to save some one? No, not even there; no hope even in that, and we see that it was he who had come to redeem Israel. But let us look among the living. The body having risen from the grave, though still a body is now a spiritual character, and cannot be found in its old places, and it is not visible to mortal eyes, nor can the new life be seen or comprehended by the natural mind. My mind was blank for two days right here, and I had to stop, but as I seem to have caught the thread of it again I will try to continue. The natural eye never saw Christ, but only Jesus the son of the carpenter, so now with the natural understanding we can only see Jesus the teacher of morality, and therefore look for the living among the dead. We, who hope we are living men, continually search for a risen Savior among the dead (the flesh), so when we try to set forth the truth let us have no confidence in the flesh, but deal alone with the Spirit, which only hath life. No man hath seen God at any time; that is, no man of flesh, but all men who are born of the Spirit have, for the Spirit taketh of the things of Jesus, of God and of life, and showeth them unto us. Thus do we see him; not as we hope to hereafter when the veil of flesh is rent in twain, but in such manner as it pleases him to reveal himself to us. We cannot stand and look up at the sky and see him there, but except for a miraculous view such as has been granted to some of us when we hardly knew whether we were asleep or awake, in the body or out of the body. We only see him by the manifestation of the Spirit in ourselves or in our brethren, and when we so see him we are purged from dead works, and do verily believe that it is he who came to redeem Israel. Let us draw the line distinctly between the flesh and the Spirit. If, therefore, we declare that "it is finished," and let it stand at that, we have told the truth, but we have told it in a way that is calculated to mislead and send doubtful and fearful ones searching for the living among the dead, finding no hope or comfort because of the overwhelming fear that the work was finished and they left out. To them let us say that a mighty work of grace is still going on, the work of the Spirit in the hearts of the sons and daughters of men, calling them to a knowledge of the truth that they are the children of God and heirs of eternal life, and opening up their understanding so that they may see the church and recognize their right to a place there, that they will be fed and nourished and instructed, led in the right way, that the everlasting arms are always underneath, and though they may seem to be always stumbling and falling, the lower they get the nearer the arms of love and mercy they are. My father once said of such things as these, "Why could not some one have told me?" It ought to be told, and all told, then they who are struggling along in the dark may see at least a little on which to rest their hope or banish their fear. Do not let us preach a Christ who finished a work and died, and leave it so, but rather one who triumphed gloriously over the powers of death and hell, and who lives in the hearts of his people, working mightily through the Spirit, that they should receive all that the love of God ordained for them here in time as a foretaste of the blessed eternity.

I have wasted much paper and time, yet I do not seem to have made out anything. I do not suppose you will even

know what I am trying to say, but to such as it is you are welcome.

With love,

J. R. RITTENHOUSE.

LOVELAND, Colo.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The subject of prayer comes to my mind this morning with greater force than it has for a long time, so much so that I feel like writing a few thoughts as they come to me.

What is prayer? It is the sincere desire of the heart. The wicked then can pray as well as the saint, but the prayer of the wicked is an abomination in the sight of the Lord. David said, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." It is the thoughts and intents of a pure heart that the Lord gives heed to, or hears. Jesus was praying in a certain place; when he had ceased one of his disciples said unto him, "Lord, teach us to pray. * * * And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth," &c.—Luke xi. 2. Most all professed religious orders of the present day have the form of what is called the "Lord's prayer" committed to memory, and repeat it over in their services, and call it prayer. If you will notice they invariably omit one word, and add one that does not belong there. Jesus said, "Thy will be done in earth," not on earth. Well, says one, does that change the meaning? I think it does materially. I believe the christian's heart's desire is, "Thy will be done in earth;" that is, in us, as in heaven. We may, as many do, repeat any form of words called prayer, and if our heart is not in it, it is not right before God, is not prayer, and is not acceptable. Make the tree good and the fruit will be good also; men do not gather grapes of thistles nor figs of thorns. "By their fruits ye shall know them," saith the Master. I know of no better way to judge the little ones of the Master's kingdom than by their daily walk and conversation, their fruits. My dear brethren, when I apply this rule to myself, I greatly fear and tremble, for I seem to bear so little fruit which even resembles that of the good tree that I abhor myself in dust and ashes, yet I continue to beg the Lord that he will give me a heart of understanding, that I may pray with the spirit and understanding also. I often receive letters, messages of love, from my brethren, many of whom are strangers to me in the flesh, who almost invariably ask me to pray for them. While I do try to remember all of God's dear children in my petitions, I feel I have greater need of their prayers in my own behalf. I hear many telling of their good works, in doing good and getting good, while the best I can do has sin mixed with it. I never saw the time but I needed to pray for mercy; yea, beg for mercy, pray the Lord to forgive my trespasses, and keep me from sinning against him. I think I fully realize that I am poor and needy and dependent upon God for even the air I breathe. Is it any wonder then, that I have been a poor beggar all my life?

Dear editors, I have not written as I thought to when I took up my pen; having been disturbed in my writings, the chain of thought was broken, so I will stop, and leave what I have written to you to publish or not, as you think best. May the Lord enable us, his children, to walk in obedience to his commands to the honor and glory of his holy name, is my prayer.

J. H. YEOMAN.

TOONE, Tenn., August 16, 1908.

DEAR EDITORS:—I shall now, if the good Lord will, write something about the strong belief that has been put in my heart by an unseen power, which is ever present, with much fear and trembling. I often think of David when he said, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. In God I will praise his word; in God I have put my trust: I will not fear what flesh can do unto me."—Psalms lvi. 3, 4. Again, David said, "My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments."—Psalms cxix. 120. Paul said, "For our God is a consuming fire." —Heb. xii. 29. We know that fire is an element that will consume or burn up the world and everything that is in it, so I am afraid of God. I have often thought if I had never been born it would have been much better for me, and I often think of the small insects that crawl at my feet, and the fowls of the air, how happy they are, but I feel like a bruised reed and smoking flax. (Matt. xii. 20.) The prophet said, "But the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod."—Isaiah xxviii. 27. Again, Solomon said, "For thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men."—1 Kings viii. 39. I believe that therefore I fear God, for I see, know and feel that I am a sinner before him, and my life and all my welfare in time and eternity depend on him alone. I know he is able to save me if he is willing, but I do not know the mind of the Lord, therefore I fear and tremble at his word, or seeing a display of his power. I always have been an early riser mornings; I get up before day, and look up at the beautiful heavens, at the bright stars and moon, and the burning meteors as they shoot across the starry heavens, and O how it makes the tears trickle down my cheeks, knowing that these things are the handywork of God, and show forth his glory. I fear and tremble and rejoice at the same time, but O, I do feel so unworthy and sinful. In seeing and hearing the wonderful works of God I often think of Peter when he saw the power of God in the draught of the fishes, how "he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." I know that I am a sinner, and imperfect, and I think of Peter again; when he heard it was the Lord he girded on his fisher's coat and cast himself into the sea, for he was naked. O, I so often feel naked before the Lord in good works, and feel so condemned on account of sin, I want to hide like Adam did in Eden in the garden. Brethren and sisters, do you ever have such feelings, or am I alone in these things? I cannot ever hear the true gospel of the Son of God, for there are none of that kind of preachers who come through this part of the country that I know of. There are two or three conditional Baptist preachers in this country once in awhile. Arminians are thick, but the Lord of heaven and earth has taught me to believe and love with all my heart unconditional salvation, for time and eternity, and to have no confidence in the flesh. I have fully experienced this, and I feel sure it is the truth.

Brethren editors, I ask you to excuse my statements, or the way I state them. I want to correspond with the Old School Baptists, for the doctrine they advocate I feel sure is the truth. I see the world is getting together now very fast in organizations and institutions of the beast.

A poor, unworthy sinner, trusting in the Lord,

S. M. BUTLER.

CHURCH.

It is very common among the most enlightened of this world to hear men and women speak of a certain fashionable building constructed of wood, brick or stone as the church. With all their worldly wisdom, how little they know of the true meaning of the word "church;" indeed, they know nothing of the church of God in her "perfection of beauty." How sacred and full of meaning is the word "church" to the children of God; to them it means "a garden inclosed," "the planting of the Lord," "a place of broad rivers," a "banqueting-house," where God's children feast on the heavenly manna, and are made to sit together (God-given fellowship) in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, the branches of the one vine, Jesus, members of the body of Christ, "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people," "an habitation of God through the Spirit," the new Jerusalem, which is above, "the kingdom of heaven," the tabernacle of God with men, Zion, city of our God, "the bride, the Lamb's wife," "the house of the Lord," the lilies of the valley, the valley of dry bones, &c., and while all these applications apply to the same people, they describe their condition under every dispensation and under all circumstances. The valley of dry bones represents the church under the law in their helpless condition and utter inability to free themselves from its just penalties, being by nature (the first man Adam) the children of wrath, even as others; that is, the entire human family have sinned and come short of the glory of God, but there is at this present time a remnant according to the election of grace, the sect everywhere spoken against, to whom all the above applications apply, who have been called out of nature's darkness into His marvelous light, the light that shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not. David was enabled to view her in her justified and purified state, and seeing so much beauty in her exclaimed, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." Moses saw this beauty, and, being led by the Spirit, his choice was to suffer affliction with God's chosen rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, and thus are all God's people made to see her beauty and to choose to cast their lot among that people counted the offscouring of all things, though it may mean a sacrifice equal to that of Moses: of all the honors and wealth of this world, of the enjoyments that belong to the flesh in this life; and I have thought, yes, I have experienced, that the more natural prosperity we have, as a rule the less spiritual prosperity we enjoy. I verily believe that God's people to-day learn obedience by the things they suffer; that each pain, hardship, loss and cross is for their good; yea, all things work together for good to them that love God, and just as sure as God's people love God, just that sure they will love his people, because the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts. Watts saw her beauty and loved her, and spoke of her as follows:

"How did my heart rejoice to hear
My friends devoutly say,
In Zion let us all appear,
And keep the solemn day.

I love her gates, I love the road;
The church, adorned with grace,
Stands like a palace built for God,
To show his milder face.

My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life or breath remains;
There my best friends, my kindred dwell,
There God my Savior reigns."

Yours in hope of eternal life,

G. B. BIRD.

St. Albans, W. Va., July 24, 1909.

PATCHOGUE, N. Y., June 13, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—I see the renewal for the SIGNS is due, so I will inclose two dollars. I receive it regularly, and feel it a duty to keep paid up. I enjoy reading the paper, and find many articles instructive and profitable.

I was reading Psalms xviii. 2: "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower." It is over forty years since I heard Elder Goble take that for a text. I think it was to my mind one of the clearest sermons I ever heard, and it settled my mind that the Old School Baptist doctrine is the truth. How much meaning is contained in that verse: "My God, my strength." I realize that no human strength can rest on the rock, Christ Jesus, the horn of my salvation. I truly believe there is a chosen people, a peculiar people; we read, chosen before the foundation of the world. It is a hard saying for some to believe, but if we doubt, it is denying the Bible. I feel I am one of the least, and can see no good in myself; I am slow to understand, still I would not if I could change my belief in regard to absolute predestination. Out of the depths have I cried to know, "Am I his, or am I not?" then hope will arise. In my mind not one of the Lord's chosen people will be lost. Even the very hairs of our head are numbered; not a sparrow falleth to the ground without Him. O the depths of his mercy.

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I understand we are to be weary before we ask the Lord for rest, tired of this world's vain allurements, then out of the depths we cry unto him who has promised rest to the weary soul and mind. Excuse these wandering thoughts.

JANE E. SMITH.

HERNDON, Va., July 15, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find money order for two dollars, to be placed to the credit of Mrs. Charles H. Glascock, of Vienna, Va., subscription price for the SIGNS one year. I inclose her letter to me, which will explain to you all about how she wants it sent; you will also see where she wants to hold me to a promise she says I made her some time ago. This seems to be one of my greatest weaknesses in life: making promises and hardly ever able to fulfill them; I make them daily; I get up in the morning promising to live out the day as a follower of Jesus, but I fail in that, "For the good that I would, I do not." I am daily made to cry out, "O wretched man that I am!" Sister Glascock is too much lifted up now in her first love to read with comfort a letter written by one so low in the valley as I feel myself to be; I do not want to cast a shadow of gloom over her bright pathway by writing a letter telling her of the "old man," for she says in her letter, "Jesus all the day long was my joy and my song," while I have to bow my head and say with one of old, "O that I were as in months past." I do believe our sister in her tender frame of mind will gladly relieve me of the promise I made her in regard to writing the letter. I may in the near future try and comply with her request, should the good Lord give me some light and liberty to do so. I sometimes receive a little comfort in the thought of the words, "a sinner saved by grace," and I know if I am saved at all it will be "a sinner saved by grace."

Sister Glascock was baptized by Elder Horace H. Lefferts at the time and place mentioned in her letter. I do hope she is now resting in green pastures, and feels that she is at home with the little flock and resting with them beside the Shepherd's tent.

Your brother, I hope,

J. F. OLIVER.

VIENNA, Va., July 9, 1909.

JOHN F. OLIVER—DEAR FRIEND:—Or may I say dear brother? Perhaps you may remember that at the New Valley Association, in October, 1907, you promised me when I gave you my subscription for the SIGNS that you would write a letter to be published at the time you sent in my subscription. I shall now hold you to your promise, as I am sending you in this a money order for the same. I suppose you have heard that I was baptized at New Valley on the third Sunday in June, and I hope you may all be willing to welcome me as a sister, though such an unworthy one. I always thought if I ever united with the church it would be at Frying Pan, but not being able to get there, and having an opportunity to go to Leesburg, I could wait no longer. You doubtless know something of my comfort in being able to rejoice in the Savior's love, after being burdened so long. As sister White wrote to me soon after Elder White left us, "There is a joy in obedience that those in disobedience never know." I have found it true.

"Jesus, all the day long,
Was my joy and my song,
O that more his salvation might see;
He hath loved me, I cried,
He hath suffered and died,
To redeem such a rebel as me."

Your sister, I hope,

FANNIE A. GLASCOCK.

GROVER, Pa., July 28, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—I send you an account of the death of sister Jane Bellows, one of the members of the Canton and Columbia Old School Baptist Church, who died at her home in Leroy, in the eighty-second year of her age. Brother Bellows preceded her some years. They were members by letter in the organization of the Canton and Columbia Church, having been baptized by Elder Isaac Hewit, at Batavia Kill, Delaware Co., N. Y. They both attended our meetings as long as health permitted. I will send what one of her daughters has written, also the last letter sister Bellows wrote to Sister Augusta Vermilya, which we would like published, if you think best.

NANCY M. OWEN.

OCTOBER 23, 1907.

DEAR SISTER VERMILYA:—If you will allow me to thus address you, unworthy as I am. "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." I am often in the dark. Once I thought my mountain strong and firmly fixed, no more to move, then my Savior was my song, then my soul was filled with love. I am now past eighty years old, and shall not be here much longer, but I feel ready and willing to go whenever the summons comes. I feel that I shall go to the just and holy God, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind; he will do me no injustice, but if my soul is sent to hell, his righteous law approves it well. I would like very much to go to the meeting and hear the Elder preach and see you all once more, but think it is impossible at this time.

JANE BELLOWS.

(See obituary on page 540.)

BUFORD, Ga., July 9, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —Inclosed you will find a money order for two dollars, for which continue the SIGNS another year to me. It seems that I could not well do without it. I read letters from different States, and from them the writers seem to have all been taught by the same great Teacher; they all spell alike; it is all testimony to free and unmerited salvation, and if there is anything that I do believe in, it is free and unmerited salvation. There is some Scripture in Genesis xxxvii. which, according to my view, sets forth this free and unmerited salvation by grace. We find Joseph down in Egypt preparing corn, for which at that time there seemed to be no need, but we find later that there was need for it, for his brethren went after that corn, but they never went to Egypt after corn until they had consumed all they had. Then, when they went and carried their money for the corn it was returned to them in the mouth of their sacks. I understand that in this Joseph was a figure of Christ and the corn a figure of free grace. Like the corn, grace was prepared beforehand, before there was any demand for it. Joseph's brethren never went after the corn as long as they had any of their own, and in our experience we find that as long as we have any righteousness of our own to offer we are not in need of anything else; but when all our righteousness is consumed we are ready to go down to Joseph after free corn.

Your brother in Christ,

R. F. HARRIS.

LA GRANGE, Ill., Feb. 26, 1909.

DEAR ELDER KER:—It is time to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, and I inclose the price with this letter. The result of the last letter I wrote you was good; I did not think of its being published in the SIGNS when I wrote it, but through it sister Macfarlane, of Chicago, wrote me, and we have exchanged letters since. She has been to La Grange to see me twice, and I met her on State Street by chance the other day. It also brought me a letter from Sarah Runkle, and a sister Andrus, of Binghamton, N. Y., who is spending the winter at Austin, Ill., a suburb, nearer Chicago than La Grange. She has Elder Vail for her pastor, and belongs to the Otego Church, I think she told me. About three weeks ago both she and sister Macfarlane met here with me for a day's visit. We found plenty to talk about, and it seemed good and profitable to us all. I have not answered sister Runkle's letter; I feel so lean that it seems hopeless to try to write. We both enjoyed the Spoon River Association, and if I could talk or express myself in even a small degree, compared with those I listened to there, it might edify my kindred in Christ, but I have some of the strength and essence of it locked away for myself only; I recall some of the beautiful truths at intervals, and it is meat and drink. How wonderful is God's power! How simple the way when he leads; how dark and dreary when he withholds his presence; I think it is worse than death not to have a feeling sense of the everlasting arms holding us from falling. We are well.

With kindest regards and love, I am your unworthy sister,

LUCY BROME.

INFORMATION WANTED.

IF any of our readers know of any Old School Baptists in El Paso, Texas, they will confer a favor by dropping us a card with names and street addresses.

H. C. KER.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1909.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 CORINTHIANS X. 12, 13.

"WHEREFORE let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

In the above quoted words of the apostle we have both warning and encouragement. The warning embraces the twelfth verse, and the encouragement is found in the thirteenth verse. The warning is against self-confidence; the encouragement is against despair. In the close of the preceding chapter Paul presents the life of the believer as a race to be run which requires that he who participates in it must be temperate and self-denying. One cannot successfully run a race without enduring training, which means deprivation of much pleasure and the endurance of much hardship, and in preparing for such a race some will falter, and so will not be prepared to successfully run. Now in this christian race Paul declares that he runs not uncertainly, but as one who has the goal full in view, and who does not swerve from the straightest line to it. He also speaks of it as a fight, not against trifles, but against the flesh, against his body, keeping it under, or, as the words literally mean, beating it down, as one would beat down and overcome an enemy. Having reminded his brethren that their life as followers of the Lord was not to be one of ease, but of warfare, he still further enforces upon them this truth in the opening portion of the tenth chapter, by calling attention to their fathers while in the wilderness. He reminds them that their fathers, all of them, were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were in this manner baptized unto Moses; that is, by passing through the sea they were forever separated from the former bondage in Egypt, and were now become followers of Moses, whom God had appointed to be their leader. Under this new leadership they were given wonderful spiritual privileges through the miraculous working of their God and Savior. Manna was given them daily; this was a miracle renewed every morning except the Sabbath mornings. They also were given streams of water from the one rock which God had commanded to follow them, and this was a miracle which was before their eyes every moment of all the forty years journeying. These favors were afforded them in such a way as clearly testified to the presence and power of God, yet, notwithstanding all these evidences of the favor of God to them, they were, some of them at least, unmindful of the God who had saved them, of the Rock who was their strength daily. The apostle reminds his brethren then of the grievous falls of that people. The apostle does not say, With all of them was not God well pleased, but "with many of them," and many were overthrown in the wilderness. He has named five special blessings which were afforded them; now he names five special sins of

which they were afterwards guilty: they lusted after evil things, they were idolaters, they committed fornication, they tempted God and they murmured. Remember the apostle does not say that they all did these things, but some of them, and these things they did, notwithstanding the evident tokens of the love and favor of God. How true it is that the gifts of God cannot change the heart. How true it is that miracles cannot cause that any one shall love righteousness and flee from evil in heart and spirit. All the kindly providences, all the wonderful works of God, cannot change the heart or renew the will; only one thing can do this, viz., the direct working of the Holy Spirit in the heart, giving life from the dead (and renewing afterward daily the life that has been given, by stirring the affections) can keep any one of us in the way of the Lord. Miracles did not keep the feet of Israel in that olden time, and in the days of the flesh of the Savior his mighty works did not turn men's hearts toward God in the least. The benefit of these miracles was mainly to confirm the faith of those who already loved and served him. Paul says that these things happened unto them for ensamples; they were for the admonition of those who belong to the gospel day. Paul means, among other things, to remind his brethren that their great privileges as believers, and as those who had become members of the church of Christ, was no reason why they should be high-minded, but rather they were reasons for fear, and for self-examination, and for prayer that they might not fall under the stress of temptation. It was good to remind them of their fathers, and of how it had been with them, notwithstanding their great privileges. These, many of them, fell, notwithstanding all that the Lord had done for them, and all that he still continued to do for them, and to his brethren Paul says, Remember these things, and do not think that your blessed privileges give you room for self-confidence, any more than they in the olden time had a right to be self-confident; they fell again and again, and so may you. He would say to them, True, you have been called by grace; your election of God has been made manifest to you in that calling, you have been blessed to come out from the world and to stand before God as monuments of his sovereign mercy, you have come to know what natural men do not know, and have the sure promise of eternal life beyond the grave, but it is not your privilege to be puffed up by these things, or to think that your standing is secure, so that there will never be need of watching unto prayer. Remember your fathers, and ye are not stronger than they. "Be not highminded, but fear." All this leads up to the words of the twelfth verse: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." The force of the expression in full is this, Let him that standeth and thinketh that he standeth, take heed. The people of God led by his Spirit do indeed stand; they are bidden to stand fast; they are bidden to stand, and having done all, to stand. But those who standing become boastful, as did Peter before he denied his Master, or in other words, come to think that they stand and that they are in no danger of falling as others have done, let such self-confident ones take heed; they are in danger indeed. Our fathers fell in the wilderness, though they were so greatly blessed, so also we may fall. How important is this admonition to us all. Not all of the Israelites were charged with all five of the forms of evil named

in the verses preceding the text, but some were guilty in one way and some in another; but the one had no room to boast over another. If one had not been guilty of the sin of his brother, neither had his brother been guilty of his sin, but all of them, if left to themselves, would be guilty of all. If we have not committed fornication, have we not been guilty of lusting after evil things? If we have not committed idolatry, have we not murmured? And have we not tempted God as did Israel when they murmured that God had brought them out into the wilderness to die? In all these recorded instances punishment followed, and many fell in death. Thus the apostle warned his brethren against the sin of self-confidence: You may fall as did your fathers; you are no stronger to resist temptation than were they.

But now is this all? May not the children of God be confident at all? Is there no security that they shall not all perish through sin? There is no thought of eternal death here, but of falling from their steadfastness, and losing their portion in the inheritance provided for the faithful followers of Christ below. In ancient Israel not all who were not destroyed in judgment by the serpents, or by fire or sword, were saved eternally; their salvation was temporal, and pertained to this life. The Lord's people spiritually may live or die in the sense of which we are speaking without affecting their eternal inheritance beyond the grave. There is no thought here in the mind of the apostle of leaving the impression upon the minds of his brethren that their redemption in Christ is not certain and secure, and the church at Corinth, at least that portion of them that were spiritual, knew this great truth. But still it would be a most solemn question in their minds, as it is in the minds of all who love God, How can I be saved from falling here and now? How can I be kept from yielding to the temptations of the way? If our fathers did wrong, and if some of them fell into grievous sin, what security have any of us that we shall not also go into equally grievous sins? What security have we that we shall not deny the doctrine, or deny the walk that is according to godliness? Remembering what Paul had just been saying to them, they might very readily fall back into despair. Our fathers, they might say, were weak, we are no stronger than they, of what use is it to continue the struggle? We may, after all, fall one day by the hands of our multiplied enemies. To meet this, and to encourage his brethren that they should not despair, Paul declares that no temptation hath taken them but such as is common to man. Your trials, he says, are not greater than those of others. Those who fell under temptation in the wilderness were not tempted beyond the temptations of others who did not fall. Your brethren by your side are tempted as greatly as you are. Multitudes of them have not fallen under the temptation. Remember the victories of faith afforded Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the multitude of witnesses beside them, to the power of this faith, and in all this be encouraged. These did not fall under the stress of trial; these did not murmur against God; these did not worship idols; these did not lust after evil things, nor repine under distress. Some indeed did do all these things and were destroyed at the command of God. These instances should forbid indeed that you become self-confident, but they are not intended to bring you to discouragement and despair. Remember the multitudes who have stood

fast, and be encouraged by this remembrance. But how did they stand, and how shall you stand fast? It is not, Paul would say, by your superior faithfulness or goodness. In the olden time your fathers did not stand by the strength of nature, but by faith. This faith was in God; it was God-given, and it rested upon him who gave it. It is so now, you shall stand because God is faithful. There is no room at all to hope to stand if depending upon self; there is no help in man, and cursed indeed is he who trusteth in man, or maketh flesh his arm, but there is no room for fear when we remember God is faithful. Blessed indeed is the man who trusteth in God, and whose hope the Lord is. The boy on board the ship that seemed ready to perish, and who himself could not have averted the dreadful end one moment, yet was confident, and could laugh and play amid the storm, because his father was at the helm. One can say, I know that I am weak and cannot defend myself against the three-fold host that comes against me, but I do not need to fight in this battle, God will fight for me, and that is my safety and my victory. God is faithful is all that the wearied and tempted soul has need to know. O for more faith in this one truth. But what is the manner of the working of this God who is faithful? How shall he save us? First, he will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able. The least temptation is above all our natural ability, the least sin is stronger than we; indeed, if we flee from one form of evil we straightway plunge into the opposite evil. But the apostle means that our God will supply all the strength that we need. It is the strength of God taking hold upon us, and not we taking hold upon our strength, that constitutes our ability. Thus the apostle speaks to the encouragement of the church at Corinth. Many evils were among them indeed, and spiritual men were distressed with regard to these things. It must always be so with the true followers of the Lord. If any who have run well have departed, it must cause grief and fear in the hearts of the humble and faithful, but let them remember in their fear and sorrow that God is their hope, and that he is faithful. Then, in the second place, he will make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it. This is all personal dealing with the souls of his people, and we ought to note this, that the apostle does not say, He will make a way of escape, that ye may escape from it, or that ye may be able to lay it off, but, "that ye may be able to bear it." But how is this? Can we escape a thing by being able to bear it? Which is best, to escape a burden by getting away from it, or that by reason of the giving of increased strength it shall cease to be felt as a burden? "As thy days, so shall thy strength be," was spoken to Israel in the former days, and "As thy days, so shall thy strength be," sums up the life and testimony of millions of saints in every age. Is it not better to be made strong, to go on bearing the burden steadfastly, than to have the burden removed and continue weak? It is with the temptation that the way of escape is given. Not after it, but with it, and with the thousands of trials of their lives how many of the Lord's people can testify that it has been the case with them all the way along, that they have felt more sensibly than ever before the power and presence of God, and the comfort of the Holy Ghost; this is the way to escape. C.

EPHESIANS IV. 26.

DEAR ELDER KER:—What is meant by the language, "Be ye angry, and sin not"?

A SISTER.

Certainly it can mean in no sense an exhortation or command to be angry, because we are told by Solomon that anger resteth in the bosom of fools. Everywhere in the Scriptures is this principle or fruit of the flesh spoken against. But the apostle, knowing the weakness of man in this special direction, exhorted his brethren not to give vent to their feelings when angry. Jesus said, "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man;" and, "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." Anything one might say produced by anger would be entirely of the flesh, hence contrary to godliness, and a denial of the righteousness of Jesus. It is true that God knows the heart and all therein, and deals with us according to our works, and with him there is no respect of persons in this direction, but our inward feelings of anger are made known to men by our words. All men are at times angry, but it is not known of some of them, because of their power and wisdom to "bridle the tongue." By following this course no offence can be given or sin committed. If no words proceed out of our mouth, we cannot be defiled by them; if no words of anger are uttered, we cannot be condemned by them. What a mercy when one is given power over self, but how unfortunate when we are impulsive, and before taking a moment's thought have given vent to our angry passion, and by our own words condemned ourselves and sinned, in that we denied the grace of God and the blood of Christ which bought us. There is a great deal in being still.

K.

INSURANCE.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I would be glad to have your views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in regard to an Old School Baptist carrying a policy in an old line company, if you think it unscriptural or not, and if it is a custom among Old Baptists.

Your brother, J. R. HEATH.
SILO, Oklahoma.

With regard to insurance, both fire and life, there is a decided difference of opinion, and we do not propose to enter into the controversy, but to simply make a few statements in answer to our brother's questions. First, fire insurance does not protect one against fire, but from loss by fire. Life insurance does not protect one from death, but it does protect the family of a poor man from suffering after the death of him who provides by his daily labor. There seems to be a little inconsistency among some with regard to insurance. For instance, one objects decidedly to life insurance, and will condemn his brother for carrying a policy on his life, while at the same time he keeps his property insured. If we consider the providence of God, his goodness, faithfulness and power, is it not as reasonable to suppose that in case of fire he will provide, as it is to suppose that he will take care of the widow and the fatherless?

With regard to insurance being scriptural, we can only say, "If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel." The extent of the provision all must judge for themselves and act according to their own conscience; no one can judge for another, nor should one condemn another in the matter.

So far as insurance, whether life or fire, being "a custom among Old School Baptists" is concerned, will say, many seek such protection as it affords, and in this

part of the country we have heard no criticism. Of one thing we feel sure: it nor any other legitimate business or political question should ever be introduced in the church of God as a test of fellowship. K.

HOW SHALL WE KEEP OURSELVES UNSPOTTED FROM THE WORLD?

THE word "world" is sometimes used in the broad sense of the term; sometimes it is used in a more limited way, and often it is used with no reference whatever to the globe upon which we live. For instance, when we say, This is a beautiful world, we mean the heavens and the earth and all things therein. When Peter spoke of the destruction of "the old world," he simply meant all things pertaining to the animal and vegetable kingdoms, because the heavens and the earth were not destroyed by the flood. And when the apostle said that the followers of Christ should keep themselves unspotted from the world, he had no reference to the globe, but to things in the world. Paul in few words explains the matter and answers the above question when he asked the brethren, "If ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, [law] why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all perish with the using.)" It is therefore in a religious sense that we are to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. The religious world clings to the old covenant of works, hoping to be saved thereby. The world in this sense teaches every man, saying, "Know the Lord." It is subject to ordinances, rudiments and commandments of men, but the church of God is freed from all bondage through Christ, and commanded to "stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." If any of the redeemed family of God mingle with, sanction or indorse those who have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof, they become spotted or contaminated, hence are not fit for the kingdom of God, having become entangled again with the yoke of bondage. If we be dead to the law by the body of Christ, and alive unto God by his Spirit, we should live unto him, denying every other god and form of worship. In this we keep ourselves unspotted from the world.

K.

REPLY TO SISTER HUTCHENS.

WHAT kind of a wilderness was it into which the Savior was led?

It could not have been what is termed a literal wilderness, inasmuch as Jesus, a few days after his baptism, attended the marriage in Galilee, where he wrought his first miracle, that of turning water to wine. It must therefore have been that place with which all the children of God are acquainted, where the darkness of night steals in upon them, and where the assaults of the devil are known and felt. We have no reason to believe that Jesus was separated in body from those with whom he kept company at that time, but he was given to feel the weight of sin, being pressed down like a cart under many sheaves. It was at that time and in that place or condition he was tempted, as his followers are, as to his sonship. Not one temptation to which his children are subjected was omitted in his temptations; in every point tempted like unto us, yet without sin. The wilderness is that place where no bread is, nor can water be found there, neither can we apply one promise to ourselves, nor find the slightest evidence within that we are born of God. It is a wilderness indeed.

K.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his home in Middletown, N. Y., July 31st, 1909, his daughter, Louisa Davis, to Ernest Remley, of Belleville, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

B. F. Sawin, our dear brother, died April 19th, 1909, in the 75th year of his age. He was never strong and never married. He was brought to see himself a poor, helpless sinner, and to look to Christ for deliverance, and to experience that blessed deliverance in a good hope through grace, early in the sixties, and was received in the fellowship of the Cons Creek Church, Shelby County, Ind., in August, 1866, where his membership remained until 1896, when the church was dissolved, he with others taking letters and placing them in Bethel Church, Johnson County, Ind. He loved the church, and by his works (labor of love) manifested it. He and my then aged mother kept house for several years twelve miles from the church, yet he seldom missed a meeting, winter or summer, going and coming Saturday and Sunday, as he could not leave mother at night. When mother became too feeble to keep house he came to our place, in December, 1902, on a visit, and remained until his death. For four years or more he was a constant attendant at all our meetings here, and often spoke of the sweet privilege and enjoyment as the best part of his life, as he had not a single care and could go to meeting every Saturday and Sunday. After becoming settled here he obtained a letter and placed it in old Bethel Church, near this place. He had been gradually failing for the past three years, and early in last December was taken seriously ill with nerve trouble, so that he could lie in bed but a short time night or day; much of the time he walked the floor. About March 1st his physical powers gave way, and he was confined to his bed. For seven long weeks he lay in that helpless, nervous state, suffering beyond description. He desired and prayed to bear it all with patience, yet longed to be released from this body of suffering. When his mind was clear he would talk of the happy change, and that blessed home beyond, and often was heard to repeat, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." Often he would say, "How bright and cheerful everything appears." Just one month before his death a telegram came announcing the sudden death of our brother, Elder Isaac Sawin, of Cedar Falls, Iowa. He received it with composure, and said, "It is the oldest now, and will be the oldest next." The end came peaceful, just like a candle going out. Thus did his life end in nature, but he lives, he lives in the presence of God.

Elder R. W. Thompson, of Indiana, was present, and spoke words of comfort to us all of the way of life and salvation, after which the remains were laid to rest in Grove Hill Cemetery, at this place, by his request. How much we have missed him in his companionship, but he is asleep in Jesus. Three brothers remain of the family of ten children grown.

May the Lord remember us in mercy and guide us in all the way.

ALSO,

Mrs. Olivia Vannatta died April 26th, 1909, in the 85th year of her age. Sister Vannatta was brought into an experience of grace and the forgiveness of her sins in her youthful days, and united with the old Bethel Church in 1840, in her sixteenth year. How wonderful are the works of God, what a display of divine grace and faith. For nearly seventy years she continued a faithful, devoted member, treading the pathway of an humble follower of the meek and lowly Jesus. She was not only steadfast in the faith, but in her solemn pledge to her blessed Lord and to the church; seldom was her seat vacant. Many times when she seemed so frail that it was hardly prudent to be out, she was there to fill her place, an example to us all. How encouraging to a poor pastor to see each one filling his or her place. How much we shall and do miss these dear old mothers in Israel, as one by one they are passing away. We mourn that we shall see their faces no more, yet know our loss is their gain. Sister Duvall was married to the late brother William Vannatta in March, 1843. To them were born three sons and four daughters. One son and four daughters survive her, who, together with the church and many friends and relatives, mourn their loss. She was a quiet woman, but ever gave evidence of a good hope through grace, and has assuredly entered into rest.

Her funeral was largely attended at Grove Hill Cemetery chapel on the 27th, when the writer tried to present the consolations of the gospel of Christ, after which the body was laid to rest in the family plot in Grove Hill.

May the dear Lord in his tender mercy remember each bereaved one in the family and church. The God of peace be with you all.

P. W. SAWIN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky.

Mrs. Jane Kirby Price, wife of James M. Price, passed into everlasting rest Thursday morning, Jan. 21st, 1909, at her home, 62 East Ave., this city, aged 72 years and 7 days. Mrs. Price had been in poor health for several months, suffering with stomach trouble, but during the last few weeks rheumatism developed, which suddenly attacked her heart, causing her death, which was quite unexpected by her family. Mrs. Price came from good old Revolutionary stock, her great-grandfather, William Kirby, having been one of the pioneers of this section, settling on the hills about three miles southwest of this

city, and known locally as Kirbytown. The deceased was the daughter of Noah and Catherine Van Ness Kirby. Besides her husband she is survived by one sister, Mrs. Catherine E. Doane, and two half-brothers, Gilbert N. and Charles H. Kirby, the latter a well known farmer residing near Slate Hill, N. Y. There were also two sisters and three brothers, now deceased: Mrs. Mary Carey and Mrs. Susan Morse, William, Garret Van Ness and Jacob Mead Kirby. The deceased was the third wife of James M. Price, to whom she was married April 16th 1873. Mrs. Price was a regular attendant and a very devoted member of the Old School Baptist Church. She was of a very cheerful and sunny disposition, a most devoted wife, a very kind and loving stepmother, and will be greatly missed by her family, by her church and by a host of sincere friends.

The funeral services were held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse, this city, at 2:30 p. m. Saturday, her beloved pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, officiating. The interment was in the family plot in Hillside Cemetery.

[THE above obituary of our dear sister appeared in the *Middletown Times-Press* at the time of her death. It speaks none too highly of her worth and womanly characteristics. She was indeed one of the noblest and most faithful women we ever knew. Her devotion to the church of God was demonstrated by her faithfulness in every sense of the word. If not sick, the weather, whether heat, cold, rain or snow, never prevented her from filling her place. Her discernment of things pertaining to the kingdom of God was wonderful, and her gift of expression clear and decided. In disposition she was one of "the meek" of the earth, quiet and gentle in her every word and movement. She was highly esteemed by the church, and is much missed by us all. The faithful and kind companion is lonely and desolate, being now in his eighty-first year. He has the kindest sympathy of all who know him.

May the Lord bless Zion in her affliction.—K.]

Deacon Benjamin F. Tucker was born in Page County, Va., July 21st, 1826, and came to this country when a boy, where he grew to manhood in the pioneer days of Illinois. He was united in marriage to Eva Martha Preston, Feb. 13th, 1851. To this union were born twelve children, five boys and seven girls, of whom eleven, with their mother, survive him, one daughter preceding him to the other world. After five years of their married life they moved to the farm where they afterward lived a happy and contented life and raised their children to manhood and womanhood. Brother Tucker united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Providence, Hancock Co., Ill., nearly sixty years ago, and afterwards moved his membership to Middle Creek Church, where he gave a life of usefulness to the cause of his Master. He served the church as clerk for many years, and in June, 1878, was ordained deacon, which office he filled with credit until death. He was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for over fifty years, and had missed but one number in all that time. He was ever true to his convictions, with a loving and forgiving spirit, and was ever ready to forgive a wrong, but was uncompromising in faith and practice. Brother Tucker's home was always open to his friends, and he was never happier than when his brethren and friends were around him. He, with his dear wife and children, never tired in caring for the association, and many times he fed from fifty to one hundred people at his home for three days at a time. But he served his appointed time and filled up his cup of suffering, his last illness being of extreme suffering, but he patiently waited until the change came, Friday morning, July 9th, 1909, when he entered into that rest which remains to the people of God, aged 82 years, 11 months and 12 days. He leaves to mourn, a devoted wife, eleven children, twenty-seven grandchildren, fifteen great-grandchildren and a host of friends, who will greatly miss him, but may we say, The Lord's will be done.

We tenderly conveyed him to the old church where he always loved to worship, and the writer tried to speak comforting words to a large concourse of people from these words: "I am now ready to be offered," after which we laid him to rest in Harmony Cemetery. L. E. FRAZEE.

BENTLEY, Ill., July 28, 1909.

THURSDAY afternoon, July 1st, 1909, the earthly career of **Mrs. Jane Bellows** was finished and her soul passed into the great beyond. She was a faithful and constant attendant at the Old School Baptist Church during her life while her health permitted, a devoted mother and loving wife, and one whose greatest object was to make home happy and attractive to her family; she aspired to nothing greater than this crowning duty of a woman's life. Her many friends gathered at her home in Leroy, on Saturday, to attend the obsequies and hear the kind words spoken by Mr. Gustin, of East Canton, from the words chosen by her: Psalms xxiii. 6, and her chosen hymn was sung: 881 (Beebe's collection), while the audience of former neighbors and associates recalled the once active form and pleasant face that had been the joy of their neighborhood. Tenderly her six grandsons, followed by her five daughters, four sons and other grandchildren, bore her remains to their last resting-place, near her home at Beech Flats, beside those of her husband, Luther Bellows, who passed away May 5th, 1901, there to await the resurrection.

Her daughter,

(MRS.) HETTIE VAN FLEET.

ELMIRA, N. Y.

Mrs. Lucy A. Plott, daughter of Willis S. and Sarah E. Gott, was born Sept. 29th, 1872, died July 6th, 1909, aged 36 years, 10 months and 23 days. She was born near Toddville, Lynn Co., Iowa, and was united in marriage to John N. Plott, of Nebraska, Feb. 17th, 1897. They moved to Kansas over a year ago; their home was near Herington. The deceased leaves to mourn, a loving, heartbroken husband, four children: Clarence, Bryon, Mary and Jessie, the oldest twelve years, the youngest six years. She was sick but a short time, her death coming suddenly. Her husband tried to talk to her, but she could not talk; her work was done. We will have to think of her as sweetly resting, free from trouble and sorrow. Lucy was a kind and affectionate wife, a loving mother and a good neighbor. She joined the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church of Greens Grove in 1907, and with another sister, Mrs. Remington, was baptized by Elder Nay, of Cedar Falls. She leaves father, mother, four sisters, two brothers, one half-sister, one half-brother, besides a host of friends. One sister and three half-sisters preceded her to the better world. HER MOTHER.

Elonzo Hard was born near Plain City, Ohio, Aug. 25th, 1826, died at the home of his son, Stephen, July 18th, 1909, aged 82 years, 10 months and 23 days. He was married to Ann Rebekah Rannebarger, Nov. 9th, 1848. To that union were born three sons and two daughters, all of whom survive him. Mrs. Hard died April 29th, 1907. Mr. Hard was the last surviving child of his father, Elisha Hard, therefore the last of his generation. Although Mr. Hard never identified himself with the church, he was born, reared and died in the Baptist faith.

After a discourse preached by the writer, the remains were laid in the grave.

L. B. HANOVER.

Alanson Hull, of Thomasville, Mo., died July 10th, 1909. He was a strong believer in election, foreordination and predestination. He loved to read the SIGNS, and so do I, it is all the preaching I get. I am left alone, but my loss is his gain. I am going to my children, in Dunklin County, Mo.

(MRS.) H. H. HULL.

NOTICE.

SERVICES are expected to be held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., by the pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, at the usual hours, the fourth Sunday in August. Any of our friends will be gladly welcomed. L. B. FORD.

[THE above notice should have appeared in the August 15th number of the SIGNS, but as the September 1st number will be issued in time to give notice of the appointment we insert it.—K.]

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

W. D. Ball, Cal., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Lord willing, the seventieth annual session of the Des Moines River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene with Des Moines River Church, near Eldon, Iowa, August 14th, 15th and 16th, 1909. A cordial invitation is extended to all, and especially the ministering brethren of our faith and order. Eldon is on the Kansas City line of Rock Island system, also C., M. & St. P. R. R. Trains will be met Friday and Saturday mornings.

I. J. YOHE, Moderator.

J. L. THURSTON, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Cammal, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting for August 21st and 22nd, 1909. Cammal is a station on line of New York Central R. R., seventy-five miles from Corning, N. Y., and forty miles from Williamsport, Pa. Place of meeting is five minutes walk from station. Brother Samuel Moffat lives three rods from station. All who love the truth are invited to be with us.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Ingleside, N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting for August 28th and 29th, 1909. All who love the doctrine of grace are cordially invited. Ingleside is five miles from Atlanta, N. Y., station on the D., L. & W. and Erie railroads. Trains will be met on both roads Friday, 27th. Write to George Weld, Prattsburg, N. Y., R. F. D., or Harvey Graves, same place.

D. M. VAIL.

THE First Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, at Vega., N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting to be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, August 28th and 29th, 1909. Trains will be met at Roxbury on Friday before the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

V. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Mt. Pleasant Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will be held, the Lord willing, with the Cane Run Church, at Turners Station, Henry Co., Ky., beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1909, and continuing three days Sept. 3rd, 4th and 5th). Those coming from the north and east will leave Cincinnati, Ohio, about 2:30 p. m. on Thursday, and 7:30 a. m. on Friday,

over the L. & N. Railroad for Turners Station. Those coming from the south and west will leave Louisville about 5 p. m. on Thursday and 7:30 a. m. on Friday, over the L. & N. Railroad for Turners Station, where all will be met and cared for. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, and especially to ministering brethren of our faith and order, in good standing, to meet with us.

G. R. TURNER, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine will be held the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing on Friday, Sept. 3rd, 1909, and continuing three days. We shall gladly welcome all who feel it in their hearts to visit us.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1909, at 10 o'clock a. m., at the residence of brother John McFadden, six miles west of Table Grove, Fulton Co., Ill. Those coming by rail will be met at Table Grove on Thursday before and early Friday morning. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE Abbington Old School Baptist Church has appointed a two days meeting for Wednesday and Thursday, September 8th and 9th, 1909. The place of meeting is three miles from Olyphant, on the D. & H. or O. & W. R. R., and four miles from Clarks Summit, on D., L. & W. R. R. Those expecting to attend the meeting are requested to write to G. W. Goodrich, Olyphant, Pa., R. F. D., and arrangements will be made to meet them on Tuesday.

G. W. GOODRICH, Clerk.

THE Lord willing, the Maine Old School Baptist Association will convene with the South Gardiner Church, South Gardiner, Maine, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 10th, 11th and 12th, 1909. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

THE Licking Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will be held, the Lord willing, with the Salt River Church, Anderson County, Ky., commencing on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1909, and continuing three days (10th, 11th and 12th). Those coming from the east will come by Lexington, those from the west by Louisville, Ky., and come to Lawrenceburg, Ky., where they will be met and taken care of. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend.

J. J. WATERFILL, Church Clerk.

THE Clovesville Old School Baptist Church will hold a two days meeting, the Lord willing, Sept. 11th and 12th, 1909. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, especially ministering brethren of our faith and order. Trains will be met at Fleischmanns station on the first day of the meeting.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Shohola Creek Old School Baptist Church has appointed a meeting for Monday evening, Sept. 13th, 7:30 o'clock, and Tuesday, 14th, 10:30 a. m. and 2:30 p. m. Friends will come to Shohola, Pa., on Erie R. R., where they will be met Monday afternoon. It would be well for those going to drop a card to Nicholas Hess, Hugh McKean, Warner McKean or Gipson McKean, Shohola, Pike Co., Pa. Hope to see all that can come. Place of meeting is four or five miles from station. D. M. VAIL.

THE Pocatalico Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Good Hope Church, in Kanawha County, W. Va., commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1909, and continuing three days. Those coming from the west, over the K. & M. R. R., will be met at Raymond City, W. Va., Thursday evening. Those from the east, over the C. & O. and C., C. & S., will be met at Charleston, W. Va., Thursday until 3 o'clock in the evening. Those coming from the southwest, over the C. & O., should come to St. Albans, cross the river to Sattes depot and there take the west bound train on K. & M. for Raymond City, to meet conveyance Thursday evening. A cordial invitation is extended to all of like precious faith to meet with us.

This done by order of the Good Hope Church, at her May meeting.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Moderator.
G. P. HIGGINBOTHAM, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, on Wednesday and Thursday after the third Sunday in September, (22nd and 23rd) 1909, at 10:30 a. m., with the Second Church of Roxbury, Roxbury, N. Y. Those from the west, via Oneonta, will be met at Roxbury Tuesday p. m. Those from the east, via Kingston, will be met at Halcottsville Tuesday p. m. Train arriving at Roxbury 9:30 a. m. will be met Wednesday a. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all who desire to hear the truth to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third

Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 77. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1909. NO. 18.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE MYSTERY OF PARABLES.

"He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come."—Luke xix. 12, 13.

I have not felt to be wise enough to call myself skilled in the mysteries of God, but this subject is on my mind, and I shall only aim to try in my weakness to give a train of thought in my mind that seems to see some harmony in these parables. First, in order to come at once to the point, I will say, if I have any understanding about this parable and its meaning, it is that this nobleman was God, and the ten servants were the Jews when he had got them settled in Canaan. And now for the proof. The fourteenth verse reads: "But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to rule over us." But this nobleman had said to those he had given the ten pounds, "Occupy till I come." They were to occupy Jerusalem and keep the ordinances until he came, and when he returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called. The first came and said, "Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds;" the second had gained five pounds, the third had gained nothing, and felt that the lord was an austere man, taking up that which he had not strewed. The result was they took from him what he had and gave it to him that had. This last clause agrees with what Christ said to the Jews: "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof," and also it agrees with that Scripture which saith, "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." This also agrees with Christ's interpretation of the parable in the next chapter (Luke xx.) where he said, "A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time. [This long time is from Moses until Christ.] And at the season, he sent a servant to the husbandmen [the servant was a prophet, such as Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel] that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard; but the husbandmen beat him, and sent him away empty. And again he sent another servant [prophet]: and they beat him also, and entreated him shamefully,

and sent him away empty." And again he sent the third servant, or prophet, and he fared as the others. Last of all he said, "What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence him, when they see him." The son was Christ, and they killed him. Christ himself in this parable, or figure, says, And what shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them? He answers it by saying, "He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others." The vineyard was the first covenant, or the church under the first covenant; the kingdom the nobleman went to receive seems to be the kingdom of Jesus Christ, or the new covenant. As I said before, the pounds the nobleman left with his ten servants were the first covenant; the servants, the Jews (the citizens) hated him. These were the Jews, and the nobleman said of them, Bring hither those enemies and slay them before me. This was done by the Roman army, for in this nineteenth chapter of Luke, as Jesus came riding into Jerusalem, when he beheld the city he "wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." It has seemed plain to me in reading these parables that most of them were spoken of and against the Jews. The trusting them with God's goods, the pounds, the talents, the vineyard, I have felt for a long time had reference to putting the first covenant and its ordinances in their hands to use, or occupy, until he should come, and the time for him to come and reckon with all these servants was when he came in the flesh. I would understand that he spoke these parables because they were nigh unto Jerusalem, and because they thought the kingdom of heaven should immediately appear. I am aware that I am treading upon controverted ground in handling these parables, but I feel inclined to not contend against any one who may see them differently, for what have we that we have not received? and if we have received it why should we act as though we had not? I feel certain that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. These parables have long been a stumbling-block to me, but they are figures, and we should always while meditating upon them keep before us what Jesus was teaching and whom he was speaking those parables against. The Jews would become angry at them, because they perceived he had spoken them against the Jews. Many have lost the figure Christ was showing, by running after what the ten pounds meant, and the five pounds, and the one who had gained nothing. First, whenever anything is taken from one and given to another in these parables, it has seemed plain to me to mean taken from the people of the first covenant and given to the people of the second covenant. This I feel is a safe basis to start from, and when we keep the figure right before us we need not run off to know what the different pounds mean, or what the different talents mean, or what the vineyard means, or the husbandmen, or the servants. We know that the Lord made a covenant with the Jews, and that he took it away from them and gave it to others, and, as Christ

said, he will miserably destroy these wicked husbandmen and burn up their city. The Jews themselves understood these parables were spoken against them, and owned it, and why not we own the same in Matthew xxiv., where Christ is so clearly making known the destruction of Jerusalem with its awful consequences, and warning his disciples to flee to the mountains and escape the wrath of God upon the Jews? He starts out in the next chapter in continuance of the same subject, and says, "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins." I have understood the ten virgins to mean no more and no less than the ten servants he gave his ten pounds unto, also I understand it to mean the same as the parable of the talents, also in this twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew. The foolish virgins are no more than the slothful servant who had laid his master's pound up in a napkin, or the unprofitable servant who had hid his talent; the five foolish virgins, the slothful servant, the unprofitable servant, all mean one and the same thing, I think. The foolish virgins had only the lamp of Moses, and it went out when the true Light came. I think if we would always keep the figures or parables before us, and not run off after what some word in the parables means, we would get better understanding of these things. All these things spoken of in these figures were given to the Jews, and they made a complete failure in keeping them. They had two thousand years trial, and always failed, so these things were taken from them and given unto another people bringing forth the fruits thereof; it was impossible to get grapes from thorns or figs from thistles, for the Father seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth, for God is a Spirit. It has ever been true that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them. The parable of the wedding supper has seemed to me to fit along with the other parables. The one who had not the wedding garment on was cast into outer darkness, where the unprofitable servant was who had only one talent, and so were the foolish virgins. I have felt the one without the wedding garment, the slothful servant, the unprofitable servant and the five foolish virgins all have reference to the unbelieving Jews; the servant who had gained the ten pounds, or the five talents, and the five wise virgins and those who had the wedding garment on I feel all mean one and the selfsame thing; but spoken in the different figures they refer to the people of God, the believers in Jesus Christ, as all these parables were spoken when Christ was here, and spoken against his enemies and in behalf of his believers. Some have thought these parables set forth different things; that the parable of the vineyard in Luke xx. was of different meaning than the one in Luke xix., of which our text speaks, but a close observation I believe will show they are only different figures, alluding to one and the same thing in the main. It is true we get some lessons out of one that do not appear so plain in another, but to me, in the main, I see the same thing. One brother sees it best through the parable of our text, another sees it best through the parable of the vineyard, another sees it best through the parable of the talents, and so on. There seems to be something in one parable that is plainer to one brother than another, so I would not wish to force my views upon any one who differs with me, neither would I contend with any brother as to the true meaning of any of these parables.

NEWTON PETERS.

LAMAR, Colo., May 18, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I inclose a good letter from Elder L. H. Hardy, which has been of great comfort and encouragement to me, and I should like to see it in the SIGNS if you think it suitable. These experiences of God's people along life's journey are, in my humble judgment, of great value by way of encouragement, making us know that others of our brethren are called to walk the dark and thorny ways as well as ourselves; that ours is not an outside case. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings."

Yours in hope,

D. B. NOWELS.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., April 13, 1909.

ELDER D. B. NOWELS—DEAR BROTHER:—No doubt you will be surprised to get a letter from one so far away, and one who is so small and unworthy of a name among the children of God, but I have just read in the SIGNS a statement of your experience for a few months, and having had a similar experience some years ago, I feel that I want to write you about it. Such things are good to fully establish the bond of union and fellowship of love that is so sweet and soul-binding to God's children. It is here that we find much use for the SIGNS. The Bible cannot be laid aside for anything, but it does not furnish us the privilege of correspondence that we have through the SIGNS.

In my early ministry the doctrine of the Bible had not opened up to me, and I was not established at all in those things which now I see as the foundation of our salvation. In those days I was almost constantly in the ministry, serving churches and filling appointments both by day and by night in sections where our people were known only in derision. I have done as much of that kind of preaching as I could possibly find time to do. In those days I had many friends, or those who spoke in commendation of what I had to say, and I do not remember one adverse criticism from any source. In 1882 I was elected from my county to a seat in our State Legislature, which position I filled to the perfect satisfaction of my constituents in the early part of 1883. When I got home the first thing I heard was the determination of the people to have me fill the same place again, and several of the leaders of the opposite party told me that if I would continue to run they would not put any one out against me, and that it would not be necessary for me to make any political speeches, because in my official work I had known no party, but had given them the best representation they had had since the Civil war. All these things were very flattering to one so young and so needy in a financial way; however, I had concluded that I would not accept of any more political honors, and had written articles for our county paper to that effect. In the month of March, 1883, I read these words: "Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets."—Luke vi. 26. These words were like a dagger in my heart, I had never been hurt so badly before. I knew that I was the man who was condemned by this text, and the woe was on me with all its force. It appeared that every evidence of conviction and forgiveness of sins, and of any call to the ministry, had gone as a bird flying before the

wind. My lips were sealed to prayer, but there was the most unutterable groaning in my heart that I had ever felt. My heart was so hard that my eyes were sealed from tears. I felt that I was completely driven out from the presence of the Lord. This lasted for five months, during which time I could not slack my running in the ministry, and it appeared that I had more calls than usual for appointments in destitute sections, in schoolhouses, Arminian houses, &c., and my field appeared to widen. Those who had before spoken words of praise to me appeared to multiply their eulogies, and others would join them in words of praise. All these things were like daggers to me, because of the woe that was upon me. I think that during those five months the churches under my care were more prosperous than at any other time in my ministry, but none of those things were of any comfort to me, but very often were a burden and added to the terrible woe that was already in my heart. At one time I was in so much distress that I fully determined to ask that my name be erased from the church-book, and I continued in this mind for more than two weeks. When the day came that I must go to the church of my membership my heart was so terribly burdened and I was in such a strait that I knew not what to do. To stay with the church in that unworthy condition was not honest and faithful to them, and if I should ask them to take my name off, where should I go? This kept me from using that awful sentence, "Take my name off of your book."

In the month of June, 1883, a brother who lived in a neighborhood of strict Methodists said to me: "You must make an appointment in my neighborhood at our schoolhouse. You preach better than usual, and I want my neighbors to hear you." After some deliberation I agreed to go on a certain Wednesday night in August. On Monday morning before I was to go I awoke with this text: "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."—John vi. 39. I had no light, no opening up of this text, but just the bare word, and that in such a way that my mind would not travel in it nor away from it. Hence it got to be a great burden on my mind, and I wanted to shake it off, but it clung to me as the burden of darkness had for the past five months. Here, my brother, and in similar experiences since that time, I have been taught to know positively that our salvation for time and our joys in the church, in the walks of a christian life, are not conditional. That passage of Scripture continued with me all that day, and on Tuesday and again on Wednesday. That day the brother sent for me and I went, and when I got there he told me that my appointment was in the new Methodist meetinghouse. I felt badly, because my mind was now dormant and fully blockaded by that one text, with not a ray of light upon it. The hour came and we met with a large congregation. I got up to try to preach with just that passage of Scripture. When I read it the workings of a natural will opened up some, and I began to use that as an illustration. Then the divine will, registered in the high court of heaven, beyond the reach of men and devils, and so sacred that not even the archangel nor any but the Lion of the tribe of Judah dare touch it, containing the glorious doctrine of sovereign, eternal election, the wonderful power of God to keep his saints that they should surely be pre-

served in him and unto him in glory, opened up so beautifully to me that I stood there and talked to that congregation just as if they fully believed every word I was saying. One thing I had never experienced before, nor do I believe I have so fully felt since: with every point of sweet spiritual truth there was an illustration of something in nature that came so plainly and so beautifully connected with the point under consideration that it really had to be plain even to the natural mind. While I was thus speaking I fully lost sight of the woe which had so distressed me for five months, and I have never seen nor felt it since. As our brother and I were going back to his house he told me how the appointment came to be made in the Methodist meetinghouse. He went out on the Sunday before and told the people that I would be down the next Wednesday to preach in the schoolhouse at night, and he wanted all of them to come out and hear something good. The oldest, and the leader of the Methodists, said, "Why do you want to put brother Hardy off in a schoolhouse? He is a good man and a good preacher, and we want to hear him. Now make his appointment here in our new house." The brother consented, and the old gentleman went in and spoke to their minister, and he announced the appointment as follows: "The Reverend L. H. Hardy will preach in this house on next Wednesday night. I want you all to come out to hear brother Hardy; he is a good man, and no doubt he will tell us something that will be of benefit to us in our protracted meeting, which will begin at our next regular appointment." I feel to know, dear brother, that prior to the falling of this woe on me I was preaching what I yet believe to be the truth of God, but only in a practical way. I believe that any congregation of saints would live as weaklings or starve to death on that kind of preaching all the time. I knew nothing of the sincere milk of the word as it comes out of the rock, nor of the fountains springing up in the desert. To feed the children of God with substantial food one must go down into the belly of hell and be raised up to God's sacred word. A dear sister once said to me, "I have heard exhortation and exhortation, admonition and admonition, until I have almost starved to death. I heard you on the two covenants last fifth Sunday night, and then I heard you again today, and I have feasted until I hardly know how to contain myself." Another sister, just after hearing a most excellent practical discourse, said to the pastor of the church, "That was good, as good as I ever heard in that line, but I am glad that he is not my pastor. Why, I would starve to death on that kind of food." Peter was commanded to feed the lambs and sheep, and he gives us a full sample of the food that he had received for them and that he gave to them. After telling them of the sincere milk of the word he begins with the "living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious." Then he brings those who had been made partakers of that sincere milk of the word and shows how they have been joined to that living stone and calls them "lively stones," and tells them that they are built up a spiritual house. This it is, life in Christ from eternity in all time and all eternity.

I did not think to say so much, but it is now written, and I hope you may get a little word of comfort from it.

Your brother in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

PIEDMONT, Ala., Aug. 22, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —It has been in my mind for some time to write you, and I do not know why it is that I have this impression. It is not that I feel capable of instructing you or any of the dear children of God, for I feel to be one of the poorest and weakest, and the most doubting in the whole flock, if indeed I belong in that flock at all. I feel the need of being taught myself. Do not think that I mean to instruct you; I just want to tell you, if I can, some things that have been on my mind for the last few months, but unless the Lord enables me, and guides my mind, I know the attempt will be vain. I desire to write a little about God's plan in saving sinners, and to notice also a little of the world's plan. The Lord's plan is the safe way, the sure way, and the only way by which sinners must be saved. But let us try the world's plan for a little time and see how it works out. They say that Christ came into the world to make a way possible and passable whereby all men may be saved. They claim that all men can be saved if they will. But now to the truth: "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it," but "wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." All religious orders that I know of, except one, the Primitive Baptists, have great revival meetings in order to save sinners, and they preach to men an offered salvation, a conditional salvation, an uncertain salvation, a proposed salvation. Now while meditating upon these things the thought has occurred to my mind to take these conditional doctrines down into Egypt and try them and see what effect, if any, begging and persuading had in delivering the children of Israel out of their bondage there. The children of Israel were down in Egypt in servitude, and in hard bondage; when the time appointed of the God of heaven came that he should deliver them he appeared unto Moses in the burning bush, and made known unto him what he would do. Moses began to complain and to make excuses, saying that he was not ready of speech nor eloquent, and that he was of a stammering tongue. I doubt not that Moses was like all the servants of God: all of them have plenty of excuses, but their excuses have not been at any time accepted. Moses was made willing to go and to do what he was commanded of God. This is what all the servants of God do when they are called of him to a special work.

Let us now try this offered salvation doctrine for a little while. It is said that men can reject the Spirit of God, and that the Lord strives with men, and woos and beseeches them to be saved, but that man is so hard-hearted and stubborn that the Holy Spirit finally takes its flight, never to return. Now suppose that Moses had been one of those who rejected the word of the Lord, and would not hearken unto his word, saying, No, I am not going down into Egypt, I have something else to do, I can make money at something else, O what disappointment would have resulted, for we read that God said he would bring the Hebrews out of their bondage, but if he had not been able to accomplish all his works there must have been a disappointment. But, dear brother, I have never found anywhere in the Bible where God ever tried to do anything. "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." He said, "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass." From all this

I can never believe such doctrine as the world teaches, until they can prove from the Bible that our God has undertaken to do something and failed; but this no one can do. The world of mankind, the unregenerate portion of men I mean, nearly all believe this doctrine of conditional salvation. This is of itself one thing that causes me to believe that this is not the doctrine of God nor the gospel of the Son of God. I do not believe that the unregenerate man has ever really believed the gospel of the Son of God. It seems to me if seeing with the natural eye and hearing with the natural ear would bring men to saving faith in Christ, that every person living on earth at the time when the Savior was here; every one, I say, that saw his miracles and heard his preaching of his own everlasting gospel, would have become christians. We know that this was not the case. But how about those who do believe the gospel of the Son of God? They have been born again, born of the Spirit of God, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. After this they have eyes to see, ears to hear and hearts to understand. When a child is born of natural parents he soon becomes hungry, and must have nourishment or die. So also is it with a heaven-born soul, such an one desires the sincere milk of the word, and this milk, I doubt not, is the gospel of the Son of God. These are the sheep of which the dear Savior said to Peter, Feed them. The Savior knew that they would become hungry, and so bade Peter feed them; he also prepared the food, and he still prepares it, and will continue to prepare it as long as there is one on earth to be fed. My dear brother, this new birth is the most wonderful and the most glorious thing we can think of for poor, lost and ruined sinners; it begets love within us that we never knew before: love to God and to his people. This is the best evidence we can have that we are born again, for God is love, and whosoever loveth is born of God.

But I will now try to return to the subject upon which I began writing. The Lord sent Moses down into Egypt to bring out the children of Israel from their bondage; he told Moses what to do, and what to say to Pharaoh, and we read that he did as the Lord told him. But what effect did all his words have upon Pharaoh in letting the children of Israel go? Instead of letting them go, it appears that when Moses made his business known to Pharaoh it only made matters worse for Moses. The burdens upon the children of Israel were also increased. This was so, notwithstanding all his words and all the signs and wonders which he performed before the king; all this never brought out one of the children of Israel. Now does not Pharaoh represent the power of sin, the power that holds men in bondage even to this day, and that will forever hold them, until they are brought out by the power of Almighty God, just as he brought out the Hebrew children? If beseeching and urging men could not then bring out the people of God, I do not believe the effect of such things can be any greater to-day. It must require the same power to bring a sinner out of the bondage of sin that was required to deliver Israel from bondage. The blessed Lord said, When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come, he first binds the strong man, and then he will spoil his goods. This strong man I believe is the power of sin, and the stronger I believe is the power of the Son of God;

and when this strong man is bound and the stronger takes up his abode in our hearts, right then trouble begins, and we feel as we never felt before and see as we never saw before. Perhaps before that we thought we were getting along all right, but when the strong man is bound we think that our burden is increased, just as was the case with the Hebrews in Egypt when the Lord came down to deliver them.

I have tried in my poor way to write a little of what I believe is God's plan of saving sinners, and a little concerning the unavailing way of the world, and will now close. If I have said anything amiss, and not according to the truth, you will, I hope, forgive and correct me. If you can glean any comfort or consolation from this poor writing you are at liberty to publish it, that is, if it will not disgrace your valuable paper.

Hoping that you may be blessed in the future as in the past, I remain as ever, your brother, A. P. HICKS.

KELLER, Texas, Jan. 20, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The inclosed is a copy of a letter written to me by sister Willburn some four years ago; since then the dear sainted woman has been called away to her eternal home, where the wicked cease to trouble and where the weary are at rest, in perfect love, and peace with her Savior to all eternity. In reviewing the solemn words of her last letter to me, and having been personally acquainted with her and her sterling worth as an exemplary member of the Old School Baptist Church in New Mexico, I felt it would not be out of place to copy her last testimony of faith in the crucified and risen Redeemer, and send it to you for publication in the dear old SIGNS, which she loved so well for the truth's sake during all the years of her pilgrim life. She was verily a Baptist in deed and in truth, and rejoiced in Bible doctrine advocated faithfully in the columns of the SIGNS. Her sister, who resides in Cimarron, New Mexico, writes me the following: "My dear sister passed away Sept. 24th, 1907, and while I feel a loneliness without her, there is a silent joy to feel she is forever at home in the bosom of the Father, where the inhabitants never say, I am sick. God has wiped all tears from her eyes, and she is forever free from sin, which she so much loathed." Her delight was to meet any of the Old Baptists and join them in conversation on some portion of the inspired word of truth, for the christian religion was her meat and drink. Her orderly walk and faithfulness in the house of God, and her devotion to the cause of her heavenly Father, commended her to all the brotherhood that knew her. She was of a lively disposition, industrious, and nothing gave her greater pleasure than to entertain the Old School Predestinarian Baptists. Although her voice is stilled in death, she yet speaketh. The Lord help us to be still and know he is God.

Yours to serve in the gospel of Christ,
ASA HOWARD.

RATON, N. M., Jan. 16, 1904.

ELDER ASA HOWARD—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your letter received and enjoyed very much. I found it very good indeed, but it made me want to see you and continue the subject, for, as you know, that is a fault of mine, talking too much, or I fear it is, in giving my opinion about things, for though so old a subject it is ever new, and yet always something else we wish to speak about. But I often find when I have a chance to

talk on this most glorious subject I have nothing to say, I feel shut up and cannot come forth, and at such times I am made to wonder if I ever did really know anything about it; then I conclude that there is a plague of leprosy in the flesh, and with me it does seem to be a fretting leprosy, and let me do all I can it still spreads the more. In thinking on this subject not long since, I hope it was shown to me very plainly that the house, or this old body of sin and death that I am encumbered with here, will have to be torn down before the strife will end, for to do good I cannot, but the very things that I hate I find myself doing; I fear that too often it is wilfully done. But, dear brother, do we not find that we have a great merciful High Priest, who knows all about us, and was tempted in all points as his brethren are, yet without sin, to whom poor sinners can flee for refuge, and in whom alone the Father views each member of his body fair and spotless in his Son, else what should we do when the Lord comes to make up his jewels? He has said he will come again without sin unto salvation, and with all my sin and uncleanness I at times long for his appearing. It was said to his disciples as they gazed up into heaven, that the same Jesus they had seen go up into heaven would come again, but not to atone for sin, but he is to come the all-victorious Lamb of God, the Wonderful, Counsellor, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. O the wonderful mystery of God in Christ, and Christ in each member of his body, with the church and the fullness of him that filleth all in all, for he is the beginning and the end, the all in all to his chosen people, and in the day of his power they are willing to owe all praise to his gracious name and to crown him Lord of all, and when we have a glimpse of his beauty, glory and superior excellency how small poor fallen man looks in all his seeming greatness—a mere grasshopper in the sight of his Creator without that righteousness which Christ alone can clothe him with. O to be clothed with that fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of saints.

I did not think to write what I have, but got started and maybe have said more than I should, as you know all this better than I can tell it.

We had preaching at Elder Fetter's last first Sunday, and had a good sermon; I wish you could have been with us.

Do you ever hear from our dear brother Elder A. D. Bourland? I have heard nothing from him for a long while, and thinking of you and him it always seems that you both in some way belong to us poor of the flock, for we can claim poverty, if nothing else. I hope that the Lord, who can do all things, will send you both to visit us next summer, and that he will add every needful blessing.

C. F. WILLBURN.

PINSONFORK, Ky., March 30, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have received and read the inclosed letter, written by Elder J. E. Thornbury, and it is of such comfort and encouragement to me, a poor, helpless creature, that I have concluded to send it to you for your disposal. I have been favored to meet Elder Thornbury twice, and to hear him preach so wonderfully the gospel of the grace of God, that I felt in my heart the Lord was there and his ways past finding out. I deem Elder Thornbury an able, sound and consistent gospel preacher, one whom the Lord counted faithful, putting him into the ministry, and does

enable him to ascribe greatness to the name of the Lord our God.

W. J. MAY.

RATCLIFF, Ky., March 14, 1909.

ELDER W. J. MAY—ESTEEMED BROTHER:—Your very instructive and comforting letter received, read and reread. Your thoughts, or views, as given on the mysterious subject recorded in Zechariah xi. were very comforting to me, a poor, short-sighted creature, who feels his need of being instructed by one who is spiritually-minded, as I consider you to be. I had had a faint view, or knowledge, of these wonderfully glorious things of the Spirit, but was afraid I might be wrong, but after reading the narrative over several times and comparing with other portions of the word of testimony, I will say, if you are not right in your views I must confess I know nothing at all of what is foreshadowed or set forth in the narrative.

Dear brother May, my thoughts are mainly resting to-day on the sovereignty of the thrice holy and eternal Deity, Sovereign of the universe. I hope you will bear with me while I attempt in my weak and feeble way to present some of my thoughts along this line. I believe with all my heart that God is sovereign over all worlds, beings, things and events, and there never has been, nor ever shall be, so much as one moment of time since the world began until time shall be no more but that God has, is and will continue to carry out his own holy purposes and designs in all his creation, both animate and inanimate, the salvation, repentance and obedience of his people included. As for predestination, it enters into every rational act of man and of every intelligent creature, and puts them to work to carry out their predestinated plans; it enters into every act of God, the great Fountain of intelligence; his work in nature, providence and grace is but the development and manifestation of his unchangeable predestination. This is no new doctrine among Old Baptists, and this is why I claim to be an Old School Baptist; and I have no compromise to offer to any who oppose this glorious doctrine of God our Savior. My brother, there are but two systems of religion and doctrine; one is a system of works and creature merit, the other a system of grace; one the doctrine of do and live, the other is, it is done. Now shall the ministers of God, with the knowledge and understanding which God has given, hold out compromising propositions and adulterate the truth with falsehood, or shall they try, with all that in them is, to discriminate between them and keep them apart? I contend there is no middle ground to be occupied, for there is no dividing space or line between light and darkness, life and death; light and darkness were never known to dwell together. A dying man is not dead, nor is a dead man dying; it is either light or darkness, life or death. God forms the light, he creates darkness, he kills and makes alive, and these things are brought to pass as God sees fit to momentarily execute his holy will in his own time and way. Who can make darkness that which God has made light, or who can make light that which God has made darkness, or crooked what God has made straight, or straight what God has made crooked? Who can separate what God has made one, or bring together what God has separated? Our blessed God says, "I will bring the blind by a way [Christ] that they knew not; I will lead them in paths [of peace] that they have not known: I will make darkness light

before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." This wonderful work is above and beyond any and all natural wisdom and power; no man can do this, either for himself or another; no, none but God alone can do this for the blind, who are the Lord's servants, born so, not because either they or their parents had sinned, but that the works of God might be made manifest in them as set forth in John ix. 3. O wonderful mystery, glorious truth, all this is God-glorifying.

The above is submitted to you for your consideration and disposal. I trust I have written in the fear of God, with nothing in view but his honor and glory. Write to me when you can, for I am always glad to hear from you. We are all well but my wife, who has been sick for three weeks. I hope you and yours are all well. Remember me to all the dear brethren, and throw the mantle of charity around your unworthy brother in hope, J. E. THORNBURY.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., July 23, 1909.

TO THE FIRST HOPEWELL CHURCH—DEAR ONES ALL:—Again I make the attempt to address you. My desire in greeting you is to say nothing to you except in the one language taught by Christ, and by him alone; that language is: Salvation is of the Lord, and to him alone belong all the praise, honor and glory. When it is his will to supply us with these great blessings, and to give us knowledge of them, then indeed do we return to him all the praise, love and song. How finite we are of ourselves; we can know of all these great blessings only as our eyes are opened to behold them. But how often after such a view do we forget them, and often murmur, even while our hands are full of them. O that we might be content and know that the Lord doeth what seemeth to him best, and that we are as the small dust of the balance before him, so ignorant are we of what is best for us. I am made to think of that time of old when Israel fought against their enemies. When Moses held up his hands Israel prevailed, and it is so yet. But Moses' hands grew heavy, and they placed a stone and he sat upon it, and his hands were stayed up by Aaron and Hur, one upon either side of him. Is it not so now with us day by day? When the Spirit of Christ rests with us the church prevails as did Israel, but when we strive to lift up our hands in our own strength then with you and with me our hands go down, and in some deed or act we learn our helplessness once more; then we must beg for strength to keep us all our journey. Even in our failure is a blessing, as I can see, for if our hands were strengthened at all times how could we know the weakness of our brethren, and how could we go to them in love and in knowledge of their grief? How careful and thoughtful we ought to be not to judge another beyond what we ourselves would want to be judged. How much we need charity at these times, and that a word should be spoken in season to the weary and wayfaring ones. Now, dear ones, how has the past year been spent by you? Have you grown better, and are you further away from following the desires of the flesh? Are you more able to point out the way to the inquiring by your own walk and conversation? If so, then I am behind you, for every day shows me my failures in these great matters. It seems to me that my path grows more and more crooked. Ofttimes I fear judgment from

those who are without, that they must doubt my sincere desire, because of my walk before them. There is with me so much of weak and frivolous conversation, I fear that I may cause some one to enter into judgment as to my being with so highly favored a people, but from my heart I would say to all such, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak," and, "With the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." I do grow discouraged with myself, and know of a truth that in my flesh dwells no good thing, and that I am corrupt from head to foot. In me dwells only the sowing to the flesh, of which the word says, we reap corruption. There is nothing in the flesh to the praise and glory of God, therefore all the praise and glory of God that you ever see or hear to be in me comes from another, whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose, and before whose word I would bow. O how much I do desire to serve him better, and to live ready to do his will at all times. O that I might always be ready to speak a word to the troubled, because of their weakness and sin, and to the grieving and the sorrowing, and to have charity always for all, and not be ready to pass judgment for an act or a word, and not be a respecter of persons. In this last is a great sin; we know this from the divine word. What are we that we can look upon another, and say or feel, I am better or above such an one? God forbid, for by the grace of God we are what we are. Do any of us know where we would have been had we not been kept by the Lord's hand? So let us not be puffed up, but know our own weakness, and so trust in him for all things, and believe that he doeth all things well, even if our desires and projects are crossed and laid low. He gives strength as he knows that we have need. So glory be to God in the highest, holy and reverend be his name. Let us never take the name of the Lord in vain.

I send you love and good wishes, and would love to have been with you at this season. I think it is twenty-eight years now since my name was recorded upon your church-book. But remember the church-book is not the book of life. O is my name written there? I see the mark in your foreheads, and often wonder if it be written in mine. God bless you all, and unto him be all the glory.

Your sister,

MARY HILL TERRY.

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

(Matthew xvi. 3.)

In renewing my subscription to the dear old Signs, the question comes to my mind, What are the signs of the times with us now? Surely in this section the outward appearance of Zion is very discouraging, but this is the most favorable "signs of the times" with the chosen people of God.

I heard two farmers upon one occasion discussing the prospects of their crop, the weather, &c.; the younger said his corn was very small and the cold nights had almost ruined it. The older replied, "It is not hurt. Its outward growth may be checked and its appearance may be discouraging, but while it is not growing upward its roots are growing downward into the rich soil, and when the warm days come it will be better prepared to receive the sunshine, and its growth will then be stronger." It seems that it has been winter a long time; springtime is slow to open up. It looks like everything is checked in outward growth, and many are discouraged by the outward appearance of our churches, and especial-

ly is the world rejoicing over the sad state of affairs which exists among the sheep of God's pasture.

We have those who hold to absolute predestination of all things, and we have those who hold to conditional time salvation. They are seemingly divided, and each side is searching the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation to establish their views, and they are carefully considering the Scriptures used by the opposite side to support their doctrine also. I have a clipping before me in which is found these words: "It seems foreordained from before the foundation of the world that 'Hardshells' should be divided. * * * Their number is growing beautifully less each year." But we are not discouraged, "For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves." The Lord knows what is needful for his people, and he says, "It must needs be that offences come," and during these cold nights of strife and contention the tender plant has been sending roots downward into the rich soil. The Scriptures have been searched more than they would have been otherwise, and thus God's dear children are better prepared to rejoice in the fulfillment of his promises to them, and they will be stronger and more established in the faith when the warm days come and the Sun of Righteousness sends his beams of love through every heart.

The Lord had given Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers, "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior."—Isaiah xliii. 1–3. The warm sunshine drives away the cold, and the fog is vanished by its melting rays; so it is with Zion, the chosen people of God, as it is written, "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee."—Isaiah xliv. 22. Yes, the Lord's people shall be united, and when they come together, confessing their sins, their latter end shall be more blessed than the first. It was so with Job, and it shall be so with God's children in every trial. There must be winter, there must be cold nights even in early springtime, and did you ever think about it, that there were more thunderings and lightnings just before the warm days set in, than any other time during the year? Can ye observe the signs of the times? I will add that when we have winter it is summer at some other place, and when we have storms and thunder and lightning the sun is shining elsewhere, and the same God who made a covenant with the day and night, so they come regularly in their season, (Jer. xxxiii. 20,) also made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder. (Job xxviii. 26.) All these things are decreed, and all are needful in their place and in their season, and their bounds are set, and thus far they shall go and no further. Therefore we are not discouraged when coldness, and even strife and contention are among us, for nothing shall hurt the little ones of the flock. They may take deadly poison, or serpents may bite them, yet they shall not be hurt. No weapon that is formed against them shall prosper; but, while it is needful for all these offences to come, woe unto him by whom they come. When winter has served its

purpose, then it is driven away. The wicked are a sword in the hand of the Lord, and they fill the place they were raised up for, (Rom. ix. 17,) and of his beloved people it is also written, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise."—Isaiah xliii. 21.

These ungodly men are ordained to their condemnation (Jude 4), yet God is just in using them for a purpose in the church.

Now, to sum it all up, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Many of God's dear children may not see this glorious truth, but the Lord will open the eyes of the blind in due time, and light will be given to them that sit in darkness. So we will come together singing a new song, even praise unto the Lord, saying, "By the grace of God I am what I am," and, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory."

ROBERT S. PACE.

NACOGDOCHES, Texas.

LONDON, Ontario, August 8, 1909.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—With a feeling within me that you are possessed of that grace which comes from Him of whom it is said, "He knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust," I will ask you to cover with the mantle of charity my many defects.

In looking through some old numbers of the SIGNS to-day I came to No. 18, Vol. 73, (1905) and on the first page I see the words of holy writ: "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you," and to my mind your comments and conclusions on the above Scripture are so complete, so needful and true, that lest I should mar one word of what you have said in that letter I refrain from any further comments, only to express my heart's desire that the dear brethren and readers of the SIGNS will turn to the SIGNS for Sept. 15th, 1905, and reread it for themselves, and may the God of all grace bring it home to us all, and in mercy give us to take heed. I also wish to mention the present number of the SIGNS, (August 15th, 1909,) first page correspondence, by Elder J. F. Beeman. I feel that every word he has said is timely and needful. To me it is indeed sad to see or know of a dear child of God, who in life cannot endure to hear the name of their dear Savior belied, that when they come to death those men who know not the truth, and therefore love it not, are often brought in to proclaim their falsehood, or else act the hypocrite's part by praising the dead. There are two notable burials in my mind at this moment; the first is that one of whom it is said, This is Jesus, the King of the Jews. I ask you, dear brethren, to think for yourselves, how many of the rich, wise and noble of the earth were there on that solemn occasion, and what were they there for? Was it not "for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done"? But at that burial there was one Joseph, a disciple, and many women. Then the burial of Stephen; it is said devout men carried him to his burial and made great lamentation over him. I am not aware that there was a word of religious service or preaching. I am not averse to preaching being done at such times, but whether it be preaching, prayer, reading the word of God or singing his praise, I would like to have it done by an humble, broken-

hearted child of God, who loves and walks in the truth.

In August 15th number, 1909, I would like to note "Fragments," by Elder S. H. Durand. In the first he makes two solemn and important statements; he says, "It requires a great deal of daily dying to make a vital preacher, and fully as much of daily death struggles to make a good hearer." Allow me (the least of all) to say, Let us one and all, preachers and hearers, examine ourselves, Is it thus with us?

In this same SIGNS there is an editorial by Elder Chick which is good and well worth deep thought and consideration by every child of God; also Elder Allison's letter to Elder Chick, expressing his pleasure in Elder Chick's reply to his request, and Elder Chick's statement that the same man who fell and was lost is redeemed and quickened into divine life, is raised up again and finally glorified in Christ. I say with brethren Chick and Allison, This is all my hope.

In conclusion, may I not in humility, feeling my unworthiness, exclaim with one of old, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God"? A hope so great, so divine, may trials well endure.

Love and fellowship to all the household of God. R. CASE.

ST. ALBANS, W. Va.

DEAR ELDER H. C. KER AND BRETHREN:—"Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation." All of God's dear people agree that Christ will come again, without sin, unto salvation, but they do not seem to be agreed as to when he will come. The apostle Paul by inspiration said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." God's people are said to be waiting for something; this all takes place here in time. They groan within themselves, (for what?) waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. This body is sown a vile body, a natural body, but is not raised a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. I sometimes feel to hope He will appear the second time without sin unto salvation, if it be his will, when we have lived out the number of days allotted us here; then we shall be like him; with us it will be experimentally the last time. We shall not then need the exercise of faith; faith will be swallowed up in victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. God's people here in this time state bear the image of the earthly, but when these vile bodies are changed from natural to spiritual they will then bear the image of Christ, the second Adam. "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" So when we lay the dear forms of our loved ones in their graves, who have had a good hope in Christ Jesus that he had

pardoned their sins, we are reminded of the language of Paul by inspiration: "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." We must also remember that one has said, "We know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. * * * For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even also as I am known." I believe the resurrection to be altogether spiritual, not natural, and beyond the comprehension of the natural mind or sight. The testimony of Christ is, "Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him." How did Moses shew that the dead are raised, if Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were dead at that time, and at the same time also lived unto God?

I submit the above to you and Elder Chick, the writing of which has been some relief to my mind.

Yours in hope, C. M. BIRD.

LAUREL, Del., July 29, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have just read sister J. L. Wright's letter to you in the SIGNS. She expresses my feelings toward you and all the brethren and sisters, and yet when I am among them I feel that I am not worthy to grasp the hand of fellowship. Sometimes when Elder Francis preaches I feel, If he could but know how much comfort it is to me, and yet it seems my mouth is shut, I cannot speak to any one about such things. Sometimes I feel that I have deceived the brethren and sisters by coming in the church as a sister, when I am so unworthy of that privilege; then I think if I should be turned out by the dear brethren and sisters I would have no place to go. I often look back and recall, time after time, incidents where the Lord in his tender mercy has spared me. I was about ten or eleven years of age when one Sunday the preacher in a Methodist meeting compared the christian to a bright, clear stream, and the sinner to a black, muddy stream. I felt that day that I was the black and filthy stream, and for ten years I tried to be good, to get like the clear, clean stream. When Charlie and I were married I soon learned that it was not required of me by the church to feel so good, and yet I could not say one word to any one. I felt too sinful to ask a place among so good a people as I believed the Old School Baptists to be. Sometimes when I would hear some of the brethren tell of how they were led all along the way, I would feel that there might be a little hope for me. I do thank the Lord for the words he gave you and brother Francis, his servants in the work of grace, two years ago, which helped me to take His yoke upon me and go down into the watery grave. May the good Lord sometimes put it in your mind to pray that I may be more worthy of the privileges I enjoy.

I will send two dollars for the SIGNS another year; we enjoy it so much that we do not feel we can do without it. Should this letter prove to you that I am not worthy to be among so good a people, it would be hard for me; I felt I must write it.

We are all enjoying good health at present, and join in love to you and family.

Your sister in hope, if one at all,

(MRS.) C. E. LYNCH.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1909.

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BRIEF REPLIES TO QUESTIONS.

"Is it right to exhort believers to be baptized?"

This question has been asked of us several times of late, and we feel like responding in this way through the SIGNS, because it may be that very many others have the same question in their minds. First, it seems to us right and scriptural to exhort all the children of God to obedience to every command of the Father. The Lord commands his children, and makes known his will concerning their manner of life in his word. He does not exhort, but he commands, but it is not ours to command another; we can only have right to exhort our brethren to walk in the commandments of the Lord. Timothy was instructed by the apostle Paul to reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine, or teaching, as the word doctrine here means. Timothy was not an apostle, and it was not given him to speak by inspiration, any more than it is given to any minister now, but the inspired Paul bade him exhort among other things in his ministry. Exhortation then does not belong alone to the inspired apostles, but to ministers like those of to-day. Paul uses this word several times in his epistles to Timothy, and to Titus, who also was not an apostle. It is then in full harmony with the word of God that ministers should exhort their brethren to all good words and works. But not only do the apostles use the word "exhort" in their epistles to the churches, they also again and again exhort, though not using the word, in all that the Lord has required of them. Fully one-third of all the epistles are taken up with direct exhortation; in fact, the general course pursued by the apostles is this: first, to lay down the strong doctrine of sin and redemption, then to speak of trials and inward experiences of the living child of God, and then close the epistle with manifold exhortations to the living to walk worthy of the vocation with which they were called. We have never been able to see any better rule to follow than that followed by the apostles themselves under divine inspiration. According to Paul, to preach the word includes reproof, rebuke and exhortation. It surely then is right to exhort, nay, more, it is wrong not to exhort; it is refusing to do what servants of God are required as his servants to do. So also it is right to exhort believers to the one act of obedience in baptism, as well as to all other steps in obedience. It is in this also the Lord's work to command, but it is the duty of all his servants to exhort their brethren to walk in his commandments. We are not left to our reasoning however regarding this matter. Examples are given us in the word of God regarding this one thing, as well as regarding other things. Thus Peter exhorted the multitude of believers on the day of Pentecost to be baptized, and they that gladly received the word were baptized. So likewise Ananias exhorted Paul, saying, "Arise, and be baptized."

(See Acts xxii.) These instances show the manner of teaching followed by the apostles in the beginning. We recall as well as though it were but yesterday the solemn words of Elder Gilbert Beebe to ourself, more than forty-five years ago, when we were filled with hesitancy regarding this privilege of baptism which we so much desired; we were drawn out to express our feelings by questions from him, and spoke of the great desire we felt to thus follow the Lord, but that we feared greatly to take this step, lest afterward we might not live as we ought, and so bring reproach upon the cause. We shall never forget his gentle, solemn reply: "If the Lord shall strengthen you to take this step in obedience, can you not trust him for the future? Do what you may you are not obeying him until you obey in his appointed way. The first step in the obedience which he requires is to follow the example of the Savior in baptism; until you do this you cannot obey him in anything." There was encouragement in this to us, and we recall that for the time our doubts and questionings were stilled. All our life since we have believed that the things then said to us were right things. His exhortation given us for encouragement was effectual, and we were enabled to take the yoke upon us at that meeting at North Berwick, Maine. Why should the command to be baptized be considered as standing out separately from all other commandments given in the gospel to believers? Why should it be thought to be outside of the word of exhortation, any more than any other commandment of the Lord? If it is right to exhort to obedience in other things, why not in this also? Is not exhortation needed to encourage believers to walk in this ordinance as much, and even more, than in the obedience which follows after baptism? We say, even more, because there is no time in the believer's whole walk when he more needs encouragement, and the one blessed thing about all exhortation is that there is encouragement in it. Exhortation does not present a burden heavy to be borne, but does stir up the troubled, fainting mind to remember God's goodness in providing such a way for believers to walk in, and in giving to their own hearts such fervent desires to thus walk in that way. Exhortation is to loving hearts a delight and joy; it brings before them just what they most desire, and as the exhortation is blessed of God, by it they sometimes come to read their title clear to these gospel privileges and blessings. Exhortation to them at such times means, Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. It means, Drink of this fountain of dear delights, of which you have felt altogether unworthy, and concerning which you have felt to say, I have no right to them. So Elder Beebe's kind words of exhortation that night gave to us assurance, first, that he had fellowship for us, else he would not have so spoken; and, more than this, they opened to our mind how dear and sweet that fellowship was, as our own heart went out in response to him. Exhortation to believers to arise and be baptized contains in it the assurance of fellowship in the gospel, and so comes not as a yoke laid upon the shoulder, but as a comfort felt in the heart. This is true not only of exhortation to walk in the ordinance of baptism, but exhortation to all other ordinances of the Lord's house. Surely then, it is comforting and consoling, and must be right to exhort believers to be baptized after the commandment of the Lord.

"It is the exhortation of Paul to Timothy to preach the word; what does this include?"

We do not know of any better way by which to answer this question than by considering the preaching of the apostle himself. In his own ministry he must have exemplified just what the preaching of the word signified, as the expression was used by him. We have records of his preaching before rulers and others, recorded in the Acts. His epistle also must embrace the substance of his preaching; he would not write in one way and preach in another way. In his addresses made before rulers and judges, when replying for himself he declared the reason for the faith that was in him. He did this, first, by referring to the narrative of the Scriptures which testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory which should follow. Then he speaks again and again of that experience which was given him, and by which he was called out of the former life of hatred and opposition to God and his people and brought to know and love the things he once hated; it was preaching the word, both in presenting the Scriptures, and in also presenting his personal experience. Were either to be left out the word would not be fully preached. In presenting the word in both these ways two questions were met by him and answered. First, the question, Why believe that Jesus is the Christ that was to come? This he answered by quoting the testimony of the Scriptures and comparing it with the Christ that had come in the flesh. Then, if questioned as to how he had come to believe in this Christ, he replied by a narration of the wonderful work of God in his own heart. Here were two witnesses, each in full agreement with the other. Paul had found in Jesus of Nazareth him of whom Moses and the prophets did write. We have first, then, the testimony of the written word, and then the testimony of personal experience. Paul found in Jesus all that it had been declared that Christ should be. Now to preach what the Scriptures had testified and then what Christ had become to him, was to preach the word. Paul did not always talk or write of his own personal feelings, but he did always talk or write of what he had himself seen and tasted of the word of life. There are epistles of Paul in which he does not refer directly, even once, to the travel of his own mind, and yet he is always writing out of that which he had come to know of Christ. If the example of Paul then, be a true guide to our ministry, we shall be preaching the word when we set forth what the Scriptures say concerning Christ, and what we have ourselves known of him. But first, like Paul, let us declare the word of the Scriptures concerning Him, and, like Paul, it is not needful that we as ministers be always declaring our own ups and downs of feeling. But if Christ be in us the hope of glory, even though we do not once name ourselves in our writing or speaking, we shall always be declaring the name of the Lord.

But what is embraced in the word which we preach? It is all that the Scriptures testify of Christ and his work of salvation. There is nothing needless or useless written in the Bible, all is profitable to the man of God. If aught that we think, feel or say be not sustained by the written word of God, there is no light in it. If we have thoughts of Christ not written in the word, those thoughts are fleshly and untrue. It is preaching the word when we set forth that God was manifest in the flesh, for so the word declares. It is preaching the word when we declare

that in Christ is omnipotence, omnipresence and omniscience; that in him is all wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption; that he was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners; that he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; that he was born of the virgin Mary; that he as a child was subject to his parents and grew in wisdom and stature to manhood; that he spake as never man spake, and wrought miracles of healing and consolation; that he gave life to the dead and cleansed the lepers; that he was at last betrayed and crucified and buried and rose again the third day and appeared to many chosen witnesses in many and various ways, and under different circumstances, and at last in the view of many of his disciples was parted from them and carried up into heaven, and that there he now lives to make intercession for all who are his. It is preaching the word to declare that by his death, and resurrection from the dead, sin was atoned for and sinners justified, that thus he was declared to be the Son of God with power, and that in his sonship is our sonship involved, and that thus also is our resurrection from the dead secured and our inheritance reserved for us in heaven. Preaching the word does not mean that we shall be found preaching one portion of the truth all the time, and ignoring other portions of it. The field is exceeding broad, because it pleased the Father that in Jesus Christ should all fullness dwell. In him is the fullness of the Godhead bodily; in him is the fullness of the church of God; in him is the fullness of all grace and truth. When, then, any of the principles of truth regarding God and redemption are set forth in scriptural light, the word of God is being preached. If we set forth what is declared concerning the natural creation as the Bible declares it we are preaching the word, because by the word of God were the worlds made. If we declare the providential dealings of God with men, still it is the word that we preach, for Jesus has everything to do with the orderings of providence, since it is in that God who was manifest in the flesh that we live, move and have our being. If we speak of the conflicts and victories of the way, it is still this living word that we set forth, since Jesus was tried in all points as we are, and was the conqueror over them all. If we declare the final triumph of the redeemed over sin, death and hell, still it is the word that we are preaching, since Jesus is our victory, and by him alone we are enabled to cry, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" This word which we are to preach is the word of consolation, of encouragement, of certain fulfillment, of reproof, of warning, of rebuke and of exhortation. When the servants of God teach, admonish, warn, entreat, reprove according to the Scriptures, they are preaching the word, and if we have the true spirit of a follower of the Lamb of God there will be constant anxiety on our part lest we mistake the teaching of the Scriptures and declare that which they do not set forth. If we declare that concerning the Master which the Scriptures declare, we shall proclaim that which will be to the strengthening of hope, faith and love, and which will give assurance of final victory in the Lord. To this end the Scriptures were written, that through them we might have hope. The Bereans were more noble than others, in that they did search the Scriptures daily to know whether those things declared to them were so. How good it is when any people, hearing the word, do search the Scriptures daily, comparing what they

hear with them. This does not mean reading them for a few moments and so concluding that we have learned at once their teaching, but searching them constantly. They are the revealed word of our Father in heaven, and shall not the children love the words of the Father? Shall they not be anxious to know what is his will? The word which we preach and which we hear is the word of God. The words of even the wisest of men may be passed by, but it must not be so with the word of God. How evil a thing it is when the Scriptures are regarded as an idle tale, to be read as a curiosity and then forgotten. The world is full of infidelity regarding the Bible, and its teachings are not regarded, even among professed teachers; but how good a thing it is when the heart is filled with reverence for the word. May God give us all more of this spirit of reverence, that when we read the word it may be with the sincere desire to receive it as a little child. C.

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EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

JOHN I. 9.

Brother Beebe:—When you have leisure, please give your views on the words, "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," in its connection with the preceding and succeeding verses.

W. F. KERCHEVAL.

Hannibal, Mo., August 17, 1863.

The Light of which the two Johns (the apostle and the Baptist) bear their concurrent testimony in the text and its connection, is designated as "the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," in distinction from all other lights, and in distinction from all the figures, types or images presented in the law and the prophets pointing to it. In the creation of the natural world God said, "Let there be light: and there was light. * * * And God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night." "And God said, Let there be a firmament," &c. "And God called the firmament Heaven." "And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also."—Gen. i. 3–6, 8, 14–16. The first chapter of John makes a direct allusion to the creation of the world, as emblematic of the creation of the new heaven and the new earth, and begins with the same words, "In the beginning." Moses, in Gen. i. 1, says, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," and John i. 1–3, reads, "In the beginning was the Word, and

the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made," from which we learn not simply the fact that Christ was, at the time of the creation of the natural world, in company with God, as he was ever with God, both before and subsequently to the creation, as one brought up with him, but to us these words imply that the Word which was with God, and which was God, was to be emblematically set forth in the wonderful works of the natural heavens and earth, so that the heavens should declare (Christ as) the glory of God, and the firmament shew forth his handiwork. "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." That is, the natural day figuratively speaks of and to the spiritual day. The old heavens and earth are figurative of the spiritual kingdom of Christ, and Christ and his kingdom are portrayed in all the wonders of the old creation. So the psalmist says, "There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." Everything belonging to the creation and organization of the natural world speaks in prophetic language of Christ and his spiritual kingdom. "In them," the psalmist adds, "hath he set a tabernacle for the sun; which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it."—Psalms xix. 2–6. The firmament, which God called heaven, beautifully describes the kingdom of Christ, in which God has placed all the lights which adorn, beautify and illumine the spiritual firmament. The greater light, which represents Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, to rule the day, or gospel dispensation; the law, as a lesser light, to rule the dark or legal dispensation; and the stars also, for signs, seasons, days and years. Stars are emblematic of the gifts which are given in evidence of Christ's exaltation. He gave some prophets for one season, or set of days and years, &c., and some apostles, evangelists, pastors and teachers, adapted for signs and seasons, days and years, under the gospel dispensation. So that all the lights in the natural firmament proclaim the spiritual lights with which God lighted up the spiritual firmament of the new world, wherein dwelleth righteousness. In the fourth verse of this first chapter the apostle John says of the Word of God, "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." In this verse we not only learn that the light spoken of in our text is life, eternal life, immortality, but also that all mankind are in total darkness, or death, until this life which is light is communicated to them; and the same inspired John says, 1 John v. 11, 12: "This is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, [or light] and this life [or light] is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath life, [or light] and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life [or light]." This life which is light is not imparted, or taken out, of Christ and put in us, for it cannot be separated from him. The light of the natural sun cannot be separated from the sun and given to us, for if the sun were for a moment taken from the firmament its light would cease and all nature would be at once shrouded in darkness. As we cannot have the light of day without the sun, and as all the light beaming on us does not lessen or diminish the fountain of light in the sun,

so neither can we have a single ray of spiritual light only as we have Christ in us the hope of glory, and all the light of immortality poured forth in living floods on all the saints in ages past has not diminished the splendor or fullness of Christ. Paul testifies that He "is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality [or light], dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen."—1 Tim. vi. 15, 16. As in the lesser lights of moon and stars, which sparkle in the firmament of the natural heaven, they only shine as they are shined upon by the sun, so in the spiritual world the law, with all its types, the prophets, the apostles, evangelists, pastors and teachers, would be lost sight of at once if Christ, the source and fountain of life and light, should cease to supply them with light, for they could be supplied from no other source; he only hath it, none beside him therefore can supply it. How dark was chaos before God commanded the light to shine out of darkness! "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."—Gen. i. 2, 3. So we were once darkness, but now are we light in the Lord. But what a dark and shapeless mass were we until the Spirit moved on us with quickening power, until God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. We do not read that God shined into our hearts, but he shined in our hearts; he first took possession of them and shined in them, and thus he gave us the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Christ, who is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person. But in tracing the analogy of the natural with the spiritual world, we remark that the natural sun had been shining in the firmament of the natural heavens nearly six thousand years before any of the present generation of mankind were illuminated by its light. The reason for this delay is very clear: we could not see the light of the sun until we were born into this world on which it shines, until we entered into the world, and we entered into this world by our natural birth. So until we were born again we could not see the kingdom of God, and this kingdom of God which was invisible to us until we were born again, is the antitype, in this figure, of the natural world. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that fleshly birth qualifies us to see the light of the natural sun; but that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and this is indispensable to qualify us to comprehend the light of the Sun of Righteousness. For "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." Now, as we are told positively that only the Spirit of God can know the things of God, and that no man possesses that Spirit until he is born of the Spirit, and that all the things of the Spirit are spiritually discerned, we can see how impossible it is for any one to enjoy the light of immortality until he is born into the spiritual world. God has hidden these things

from even the wise and prudent of this natural world, and he has revealed them to babes. We must be born in order to sustain the character of babes, either in nature or grace. By this spiritual birth God's children are delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the marvelous light and life of Christ, for as he is our life, so he is our light, for the life was and is the light of men. John the Baptist tells us how the children of the light, who believe on the name of Jesus, came into the world, which is lighted with the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. God gives them power to become the sons of God, manifestly, by a spiritual birth. "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Here are three negatives crowded into this sentence, with but one affirmative, for the very evident purpose of settling this matter decidedly, effectually and forever, that the birth which alone can bring us into the world of life, light and immortality, of which he speaks, is not of the will or works of men, but exclusively of God. How impossible it is for men in their unregenerated state to know God, or Christ, is still further demonstrated from the fact that he was in the world, and the world was made by him, and yet the world knew him not. Paul says, None of the princes of this world knew him, for if they had known him they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. To know him is eternal life, or true light. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." —John xvii. 3. When he came unto his own, his own received him not. This is equally true, whether we apply it to his own kindred according to the flesh, his own nation, the Jews, or to those whom the Father had given to him, for no man has ever even felt disposed to receive him as the eternal life and light of the knowledge of the glory of God until this life or light was revealed in him. We know that the Jews did reject him as the promised Messiah for whom they professed to be looking. He was refused by the Jewish builders, but God has made him the head of the corner. So christians feel disposed to say, we also:

> "We turned our eyes away,
> And treated him with scorn."

We hid, as it were, our faces from him, but when it pleased God to reveal his Son in us, when he, as our life and true Light, took possession of our hearts, how changed was our condition, we were brought out of darkness into the true light, from death to life, from condemnation and wrath into justification, liberty and peace.

Still further, we are told in the context that, "The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." It is not only true that the darkness of the Jews and Gentiles was such when Christ was among them in the flesh that they knew him not, but it is also true that the darkness of our earthly nature is such that where he dwells and shines in his quickened and regenerated people the darkness of our flesh, of our carnal minds, of our reasoning powers of the natural minds, no more comprehend him than the carnal minds of the unregenerate can. This, we conclude, is the reason why the christian ever doubts or fears. The sensibilities of our fleshly nature demand some evidence of an indwelling immortality, which only the faith of the Son of God can comprehend. The Jews required external signs such as they could comprehend, like loaves and fishes, and things which the wisdom of this world could un-

derstand, and so do our reasoning powers of mind struggle for some assurance that is clear and tangible to our fleshly sensibilities, and for the want of such evidence the old man is forever disputing the validity of the christian's hope. All our unbelief, all our murmurings, disquietude, rebellion and disobedience arise from our flesh, which wars against the Spirit, and which brings us into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members, and show very clearly that the darkness of our fleshly nature has utterly failed to comprehend the light of immortality which dwells in us, for the life which we live in the flesh we live by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved us, and gave himself for us.

How glorious is the contemplation of this subject; Christ is our life, our light and our salvation. Christ dwells in us, and our life is in him, and he dwells in the bosom of the Father, therefore our life is hid with Christ in God. All the Godhead dwells in him bodily, and the saints are one with him, as he is one with the Father.

"Hail sacred union, firm and strong!
How great the grace, how sweet the song,
That worms of earth should ever be
One with incarnate Deity!

One in the tomb, one when he rose,
One when he triumphed o'er his foes,
One when in heaven he took his seat,
While seraphs sung all hell's defeat.

This sacred tie forbids their fears,
For all he is, or has, is theirs;
With him their head, they stand or fall,
Their life, their surety, and their all."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., September 1, 1863.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

J. M. Fenton, Pa., $2.00; A. J. Black, Ontario, $1.00; L. O. Hinson, S. C., $2.00; F. H. Richardson, Iowa, $1.00.—Total, $6.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Sarah Ann Carter, beloved wife of A. Carter, died Dec. 29th, 1908, at the home of her son-in-law, Wm. Tanner, Melbourne, Ontario, in the 73rd year of her age, leaving a lonely husband, two sons, three daughters, one sister and two brothers to mourn our loss, but which we trust is her eternal gain, for we firmly believe that for her it was a blessed change—a change that no mortal can comprehend, but which we hope faith embraces; a change from sin, sorrow, pain and helplessness, to life, perfect bliss and immortality. She was a faithful wife, a kind and loving mother and devoted christian, a firm Old School Baptist; salvation by grace alone was all her theme, and she was always ready to converse on this delightful subject, and was always glad to entertain any of the brethren or friends who came to visit her. Her house was always open and her hand ready to welcome them with all the cordiality of a frank, warm heart; to this many of the Lord's people can testify. It can be said she was a lover of gospel things and of good people. She was a firm believer in absolute predestination, and the word "absolute" never seemed too strong for her, it was the foundation of her hope. She was born Sept. 22nd, 1836, of Primitive or Particular Baptists, her parents being Baptists in England. She was born, I think, in the county of York, Ontario, and brought up in the town of Dundas, and at about the age of eighteen was baptized and united with the Baptist Church of that town, but, as she often told me, without any experience of the grace of God in her heart, but was, as she said, persuaded by those who had no more grace than she had. The division took place there not long after this, but my sister remained with them some years, until she moved west and became acquainted with her husband, and after her marriage she became concerned about her state as a sinner, and after some years of doubts, fears and many trials she was compelled to go to the church in Ekfrid and tell what God had worked in her, and of her poverty, sinfulness and helplessness, and of God's mercy and grace toward her. She was received and baptized in the year 1880, and ever after lived a consistent follower of the meek and lowly Jesus. She had been in a weak state of health for several years before she died, but in December, 1907, she had a stroke of paralysis, which rendered her entirely helpless, and also rendered her speechless, and for weeks her death was looked for any hour, but she recovered her strength a little and was able to sit up; she did not recover her speech, but could listen to conversation and reading, and one could see from her pleased countenance how she loved to hear spiritual reading and conversation. She was waited on with the greatest devotion by the daughter to whose home she was removed about ten months be-

fore she died, and also by her other daughters, but it was sad to see her in her helpless and speechless condition, yet she was very patient, never showing the least sign of irritation or impatience. She was taken worse only a few days before she died, and gradually lapsed into unconsciousness and died like one going to sleep, and we hope she did fall asleep in Jesus, to awake in immortality, eternal life, and with His likeness, to be forever with him whom she loved so well. One daughter is a member of the church, and I believe all her children are believers in Jesus and firm Old Baptists in principle.

Several Baptist ministers were telegraphed for to attend her funeral, but all failed to get here, and a Presbyterian officiated.

May the Lord grant us reconciliation to his will.

R. SCATES.

WOODSTOCK, Ont., August 7, 1909.

Maxwell Potter Lee, of the same stock made illustrious by General Robert E. Lee, was born in Sullivan County, Ind., April 29th, 1823, and fell asleep at his home in Roseville, Warren Co., Ill., August 12th, 1909. His parents were Samuel E. and Hannah Potter Lee, both of West Virginia. His father died in 1829, and then he made his home with his uncle, Benjamin Potter, in Warren County, Ohio. He was married to Margaret Moore in 1849; they moved to Illinois in 1851. After a short stay in Fulton County they located permanently in Point Pleasant township, Warren Co., Ill., where his years of greatest usefulness were spent, and where the influence of his sterling character has long been felt. Here, too, his wife died in 1879. Three children were born to them: Phœbe Grace, Benjamin Potter and Elizabeth; the son only survives, the daughters passing away in girlhood. Brother Lee was afterward married to Miss Catherine Kritzer Woods, who has been his untiring, faithful companion and nurse. Her ministrations to him failed only a short time before the end, when her own strength failed, and her regret is that she was not able to care for him until the end. For more years than that of the average lifetime brother Lee was a firm believer in the faith and order of the gospel, and in early life united with the Primitive Baptist Church, and it was his chief delight to magnify his Savior in song and godly conversation, and in the councils of the church, where his wise and loving exhortations will be long and sadly missed, but may our loss and sorrows be to our good and to God's glory.

Funeral services were held at the late home, conducted by the writer, on Sunday, August 15th. A large concourse of sorrowing friends were present.

L. E. FRAZEE.

George H. Hearn, of Clayton, Del., the veteran engineer of the Smyrna branch of the B., W. & B. R. R., who was pinned beneath his engine in a wreck, died at the Delaware Hospital, Dec. 28th, 1908, aged 59 years. Mr. Hearn had for more than a quarter of a century piloted the Smyrna train, and to his many friends, as well as to those who were accustomed to seeing him at his post of duty, the news and manner of his death gave a great shock. Mr. Hearn was born at Delmar, Sussex Co., Del., Dec. 18th, 1849. He married Letitia B. Marvel. His affable, genial disposition made for him many friends. His home was widely known by the Baptists as a place of entertainment. While his wife, sister Hearn, was afflicted for many years, so that she could not attend meetings, Mr. Hearn entertained the brethren with wide open house and heart, and to have meetings held at their home was Mr. Hearn's chief delight. He loved the Old School Baptists, and was ever ready to give the hand of assistance in matters pertaining to the church or meetings. He told his wife that while he lay in the grip of death, pinned under his engine, as it were in the very hand of Providence, he was made to see things that he had never seen before—things that he could not tell her, but things that she already knew. He was made reconciled to the end, and but for his terrible suffering was patient and trusting, waiting the will of Him who is our salvation. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Letitia B. Hearn, and three children: Lillian K., Emma D. and Harry R. Hearn, of Clayton, Del.

Funeral services were held from his late residence at Clayton, Elder F. A. Chick and the writer officiating. Interment at Bryn Zion Cemetery.

May the great Comforter minister consolation to the bereaved ones, and guide us all in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

B. E. CUBBAGE.

FELTON, Delaware.

SISTER **Elsie Faulkner** died at her home, in Hobart, N. Y., June 3rd, 1909, in the 76th year of her age, after a lingering illness of several months of neurosis. Sister Faulkner bore her affliction without a murmur, was perfectly composed, and felt that the blessed Lord would do her no injustice. She had found in life that his grace was sufficient for her, and his promises sure and steadfast. Sister Faulkner lived a faithful and consistent member of the Old School Baptist Church for nearly forty years. She was received by the Second Church of Roxbury when quite young, and baptized by Elder Isaac Hewitt. Her home was always open to her kindred in Christ, and she took delight in entertaining them. Sister Faulkner married for her first husband Samuel Carroll. To them were born two sons and two daughters, all still living. Mr. Carroll died some years ago, after a short illness of pneumonia. She then married for

her second husband brother Edward Faulkner, who died several years ago. At the time of his death they resided in Roxbury, N. Y. Soon after his death sister Faulkner moved to Hobart, N. Y., where she spent the rest of her life. This took her from the church, and she was not able to attend meetings very regularly, but was ever mindful of her duties toward her church and people.

Her funeral was held from the Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, and the burial was in the cemetery near the meetinghouse. Her funeral was largely attended by friends and relatives, who came to pay the last tribute of respect to one who was worthy. The writer tried to speak to the comfort of the friends with such ability as the Lord gave, using for a text 2 Timothy iv. 7, 8. It can truly be said that a kind and devoted mother has been taken from her children, and the church has lost a faithful member, but we do not sorrow as those who have no hope, "for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Wherefore may we be comforted by these words.

J. B. SLAUSON.

SISTER **Ellen Thornton** died at her home in Putnam Co., W. Va., August 15th, 1909, after lingering many months with consumption. She was a daughter of J. H. and Martha Terry. She was born April 27th, 1864, and joined the Providence Old School Baptist Church about twelve years ago, where her membership remained until the Sycamore Ridge Church was constituted, in 1902, when by letter she united with them, where she remained a faithful and loving member until her death. She was well established in the faith of God's elect, always delighting to converse with the children of God upon heavenly things. She was very faithful to attend her meetings until failing health prevented, when, to her great satisfaction, several of her home church meetings were held at her home. I have never seen any one more patient, and as much resigned to the will of God as she; surely she was the recipient of dying grace which was sufficient for her to the end. She was deeply rooted and grounded in the doctrine of the sovereignty of God and the absolute predestination of all things, and nothing seemed to give her more pleasure than to listen to the preaching of this glorious, God-honoring doctrine. She seemed for some time to realize that the end was near, and arranged matters pertaining to her funeral and her obituary (requesting me to write the latter) with the greatest composure. She leaves a husband, four children, father, mother and three sisters, together with a host of friends and kindred in Christ, to mourn this our great loss, which is her eternal gain, for she is at rest with God, no more waiting and longing now, but a full realization of the joys of the new Jerusalem, the city of God, for which she longed and hoped while a creature of time for many years past.

May God bless and comfort her dear husband and little children and the Sycamore Ridge Church. May her little children long remember the gentle and loving counsel and advice of their dear mother, is the prayer of her unworthy pastor,

G. B. BIRD.

Mrs. Julia A. Hearn was born Dec. 25th, 1834, and departed this life March 22nd, 1909, aged 74 years, 2 months and 28 days. Sister Hearn was a steadfast and faithful member of the Little Creek Church, Sussex Co., Del., nearly forty years, having been baptized by Elder George W. Staton in the summer of 1869. There never was a more devoted, faithful member in the church. In her last years she was much afflicted, and suffered greatly, but bore all her sufferings with great fortitude and patience. She was twice married, first to Clayton Lecates, who died about forty-five years ago, leaving her with three small children to care for. Afterward she married William Hearn, by whom she had one daughter, Mrs. Rosa Lowe, with whom she had made her home since the death of her second husband. Three of her children survive, viz., John Lecates and two daughters, sister Mary A. Hastings and sister Rosa Lowe, both fine women and good, faithful members of the same church with their mother. She also leaves twelve grandchildren and several great-grandchildren. May the Lord grant unto the bereaved ones the blessed consolations of the gospel.

A. B. FRANCIS.

Laura A. Peters Newton, eldest daughter of Absalom and Famah Peters, was born near East Ringgold, Ohio, June 21st, 1827, and departed this life July 17th, 1909, having reached the age of 82 years and 26 days. She was united in marriage to John D. Newton, March 9th, 1845. To this union were born eleven children, two of whom preceded their mother in death; her husband passed to his reward March 4th, 1895. While mother had never identified herself with the church, she was a firm believer in the faith of the Old School or Primitive Baptists, having taken the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years, it being her preference of all religious papers.

On July 19th, after a funeral discourse preached by Eldar L. B. Hanover, of Westerville, Ohio, her body was laid to rest in Rebel Hill Cemetery, there to await the resurrection of the dead, when we hope she will come forth with all the redeemed of the Lord, fashioned like unto the glorious body of our blessed Jesus. Then, dear children, let us not mourn, but let us be reconciled to God, for "the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

EDWIN NEWTON.

ORDINATIONS.

SATURDAY evening, July 31st, 1909, "The Old School Baptist Church of Nashville," Davidson Co., Tenn., met at Ratterman's Hall, and called the following Elders and deacons as a presbytery for the purpose of ordaining brother George M. Hite to the full work of the gospel ministry: Elders Ben. D. Clark, C. K. Haines, Jas. S. Kinkade, J. K. Womack and C. M. Hood, deacons Calvin Watkins and J. Hunt.

After listening to a discourse from brother Hite, which was delivered with the ability which God alone can give, and to the perfect joy and satisfaction of the presbytery and friends, from 2 Corinthians ii. 16, latter clause: "Who is sufficient for these things?" context: "But our sufficiency is of God," also, "Thanks be unto God, which always causes us to triumph in Christ," the presbytery organized by electing Elder Ben. D. Clark moderator and Elder C. M. Hood clerk.

The moderator chose Elder J. K. Womack to offer the ordination prayer and to deliver the charge.

After prayer and the laying on of hands by the presbytery, the charge was given.

The moderator then stated that any one who desired to examine brother Hite further had the privilege to do so. Brother Womack arose and asked the following questions:

Question: "Do you believe that God is limited in any sense?"

Answer: "I have been greatly comforted by the language of Paul to the church at Ephesus: God 'worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.'"—Eph. i. 11.

Question: "Do you stand on the old confession of faith, found in the third chapter and first paragraph in the London Confession of Faith: 'God hath decreed in himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever come to pass, yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin, nor hath fellowship for any therein; nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor yet is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established, in which appears his wisdom in disposing of all things, and power and faithfulness in accomplishing his decree'"?

Answer: "I do, because the principle of this is found in the language of Paul to the church at Rome, ix. 17-21."

Question: "I want to know whether or not you believe that these vile, natural bodies will be made spiritual?"

Answer: "I will answer that by quoting Paul to the church at Philippi: 'For our conversation is in heaven; from whence we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.'"

Question: "Do you believe that the fall of Adam was accidental?"

Answer: "No. 'The creature was made subject to vanity.' Adam was a type of Christ, and Eve was a type of the church. For the love he had for his bride he ate the forbidden fruit; this he did with a full knowledge of the consequences, hence was not deceived."

Question: "Did it just happen that Satan tempted the woman, and she just happened to fall?"

Answer: "The woman was a type of the church, and she, being deceived, was in the transgression, she being a type of the church, which must be redeemed from sin (in the purpose of God) and the second Adam glorified. For the first man is of the earth earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven."

The moderator then asked for the credentials, which, after being signed by the presbytery, were presented to Elder Hite.

The minutes were called for, read and adopted.

A hymn was sung, the right hand of fellowship extended and the presbytery adjourned.

BEN. D. CLARK, Moderator.

C. M. HOOD, Clerk.

[THERE are three Primitive Baptist churches in Nashville, Tenn. When the one in which Elder Hite was ordained was organized several years ago it was called, "The Old School Baptist Church of Nashville, Tennessee," therefore when that name is used in the above ordination notice no reflection whatever is cast upon either of the other two churches.—K.]

PURSUANT to a call by Shiloh Church of Old School Baptists, at Corinth, Denton Co., Texas, upon sister churches for their ordained help to come and meet with them on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in July, 1909, for the purpose of considering the propriety of setting apart to the work of the ministry brother E. A. Garrison, whereupon the following churches responded, viz.:

Denton Creek Church—Elders Asa Howard and W. V. S. Allen.

Blooming Grove Church—Elder R. Keith and Deacon Allen King.

The presbytery was organized by choosing Elder Asa Howard moderator and Elder W. V. S. Allen clerk.

The presbytery being thus organized, proceeded to inquire into the fitness and qualifications of the candidate, and finding him sound in the faith and orderly in doctrine and practice to the full satisfaction of the presbytery, as one whom the Lord had called to stand as a witness for the truth, therefore the church and presbytery regarding the candidate being of the

same mind, proceeded with the laying on of hands by the presbytery. Prayer by Elder R. Keith, and charge by Elder Asa Howard. Subsequently a hymn was sung and the right hand of fellowship extended to brother E. A. Garrison by the presbytery and all the church.

Hence we rejoice in the fact that God will never leave himself without witnesses.

ASA HOWARD, Moderator.

W. V. S. ALLEN, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

THE Pocatalico Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Good Hope Church, in Kanawha County, W. Va., commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1909, and continuing three days. Those coming from the west, over the K. & M. R. R., will be met at Raymond City, W. Va., Thursday evening. Those from the east, over the C. & O. and C., C. & S., will be met at Charleston, W. Va., Thursday until 3 o'clock in the evening. Those coming from the southwest, over the C. & O., should come to St. Albans, cross the river to Sattes depot and there take the west bound train on K. & M. for Raymond City, to meet conveyance Thursday evening. A cordial invitation is extended to all of like precious faith to meet with us.

This done by order of the Good Hope Church, at her May meeting.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Moderator.

G. P. HIGGINBOTHAM, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, on Wednesday and Thursday after the third Sunday in September, (22nd and 23rd) 1909, at 10:30 a. m., with the Second Church of Roxbury, Roxbury, N. Y. Those from the west, via Oneonta, will be met at Roxbury Tuesday p. m. Those from the east, via Kingston, will be met at Halcottsville Tuesday p. m. Train arriving at Roxbury 9:30 a. m. will be met Wednesday a. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all who desire to hear the truth to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held by the Cow Marsh Old School Baptist Church, Kent Co., Del., on the fourth Saturday and Sunday in September, 1909, beginning Saturday, Sept. 25th, at 2 o'clock p. m. and continuing all day Sunday. Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us. Trains will be met Saturday morning at Felton, Del.

THOS. L. COOPER, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Lexington, N. Y., (Lexington Association) has appointed a yearly or two days meeting to be held at our meetinghouse, in Lexington, Saturday and Sunday, October 3rd and 4th, 1909. All lovers of the truth, and especially ministering brethren, are cordially invited to meet with us.

FLETCHER MACKEY, Church Clerk.

THE Primitive Baptist Church called Columbia, in Cement City, Mich., will hold her yearly meeting the first Sunday, and Saturday before, in October, 1909, commencing Friday evening. All are invited to attend.

M. LINDLEY, Church Clerk.

THE Lexington Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will be held, the Lord willing, with the Jefferson Church, at Jefferson, Schoharie Co., N. Y., commencing the first Wednesday in October and continuing two days (6th and 7th). The nearest station is Stamford, on the Ulster & Delaware R. R., where teams will be provided to bring all who may come Tuesday p. m. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren of our faith and order. Elder Eubanks is expected.

This done by order of the church.

D. C. HIX, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Providence Church, near Rainsburg, Bedford Co., Pa., beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1909, and continuing three days (Oct. 8th, 9th and 10th). Those coming from the south will leave Cumberland, Md., at 3:30 p. m. on Thursday; from the north, Huntingdon, Pa., at either 2 or 5:40 p. m. Thursday. These trains will be met at Bedford, Pa. Should any one arrive in Bedford at any other time, go to 652 West Pitt St. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. For any further information write to Geo. W. McClellan, 652 West Pitt St., Bedford, Pa.

J. C. MELLOTT.

THE Old School Baptist Church in Wilmington, Delaware, has appointed their yearly meeting for Saturday and Sunday, October 16th and 17th, 1909, to commence at 2 o'clock p. m. on Saturday. Trolley cars from the Pennsylvania and the Baltimore and Ohio depot direct to Tenth and Market St., one and one-half squares from meetinghouse. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds meetings every third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

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11:00 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

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All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Southampton, Pa.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 77. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1909. NO. 19.

POETRY.

EXPERIENCE OF ONE OF THE POOR.

In debt to God, in debt to men,
How much I owed no tongue could tell;
My sins were numerous as the sand,
Their weight would sink me down to hell.

But while in depths of dark despair,
A voice more sweet than earthly joy,
As if in answer to my prayer,
At once spoke peace without alloy.

Unmeasured light above the sun!
A vision opened to my view:
I saw in Christ, the Holy One,
A sacrifice both just and true.

There rushed upon my listening ear
A choral strain of heavenly tune;
E'en angels shouted loud and clear
As they beheld how rich the boon.

O life, and joy, and lasting love,
Had come to me, I knew not why,
Descending downward from above
With rapture sweet; how blest was I!

With wings outspread my spirit flew,
And left the noontide far below;
With joy I saw that Jesus knew
The wandering way where sinners go.

Transfixed upon the cross he hung,
And poured his life out wholly there,
And o'er me then his robe he flung;
For my release he did prepare.

A seat on high, a harp of gold,
In heavenly mansions far above,
And treasures there by men untold;
All this was mine, the gift of love.

These gracious gifts shall fill my tongue
With joyous praise while life shall last,
More sweet than e'er an angel's song;
Like the last trumpet's joyful blast.

I'll sing salvation to the Lord,
And make the heavenly mansions ring;
All glory to the Savior God,
My life, my light, my all, my King.

My Savior, Husband, Lover, Friend,
Who took my sins, my shame, my fall,
Who caused my prison bars to bend,
Which did my burdened soul enthrall.

Yet while I suffer here below,
May I rejoice above my pain,
And when I'm called at last to go,
Still may the truth with me remain.

I. N. NEWKIRK.

DAYTON, Wash.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

Come, good Shepherd, blessed Jesus,
Feed thy lambs, feed thy sheep;
Guide us in thy steps, O lead us,
Give thy beloved sleep.

Make thy weary flock rest at noon,
'Neath the banner of thy love;
Draw us to thy heavenly boon,
And raise our hearts above.

"Lead us not into temptation,"
From evil deliver;
Save us from sinful ambition,
And keep us forever.

Seek out thy lost sheep, dear Savior,
Bring them home to thy fold,
Bless them in thy loving favor,
Thy bright face to behold.

D. BARTLEY.

DECEMBER 9, 1903.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JOHN III. 6; 1 JOHN III. 9.

THESE two Scriptures set forth a truth that is hard for mortals to comprehend. The truth presented in these Scriptures, in one sense, does not seem hard to be understood. This is the conclusion with those people who do not make the subject a study nor seem to have any interest in its meaning. With the child of God who loves to investigate and know what the Scriptures tell him about himself, of his origin and his destiny, it is quite different. To him whose mind is led to "think on these things" the subject widens to such an extent that his finite mind is lost in contemplating the depths of the wisdom of God; to him it becomes a mystery. There are mysteries set forth in the Scriptures which men or angels cannot explain to the understanding of mortals. The spiritual birth spoken of by Jesus, and by John, is certainly one of the great mysteries of our God. We keep close to the testimony when we speak of this birth as the "second birth," the "again birth," the "birth from above" and the "birth from God." Quoting from the words of Jesus: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," seems to be a very plain statement of the origin of each what—child or thing? Dare we try to find out what Jesus means in the phrase, "that which"? I do not desire any controversy on this subject, as there has been much said by brethren in the past that did not tend to instruct or comfort, but we ought to be able to talk of this mystery without striving for the mastery. People of a worldly mind may reason together on worldly subjects, so may spiritually-minded people reason together on spiritual things. Then, as it is written, "Come now, and let us reason together." It cannot be supposed for a moment that when Jesus said, "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," that this birth did not have any effect on the man of earth. On the other hand, it did mean that there was a holy principle imparted to the man that did not originate with man. If I may be allowed to use the expression, I understand that this holy principle is a product of the Spirit of our God; I also think that there are some places where it is personified for the sake of distinguishing it from the old Adamic nature, which is carnal, sold under sin. I think this the meaning of the holy writer in the Scripture: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." —1 John iii. 9. In this place the word "whosoever" indicates a person; so also in the balance of the same verse: "for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." By Scripture testimony we must concede that nothing can proceed from God as his offspring but children. If in some places the construction of language indicates that there is a "thing" begotten of God and born of God, it must be parallel or synonymous with the last quoted Scripture. This is the meaning in 1 John v. 4: "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world." I cannot see any difference in the meaning of the phrase, "Whatsoever is born of God," and "Whosoever is born of God," as far as thing or person is meant. So in John iii. 6, where our Lord uses the relative phrase "that which," which by the rules of language would make its antecedent "the thing which," and not "he." This interpretation will hold good just as well in regard to the birth of the flesh as in the birth of the Spirit. If I may be allowed to cite the reader to my un-

derstanding of this passage in the sixth verse of the third chapter of John it would mean as follows: That (thing) which is born of the flesh is flesh itself, and that (thing) which is born of the Spirit is spirit itself. Or we may substitute the word "man" instead of "thing," and then we are sure that one or the other is the true meaning of the Scripture. In the last instance it would read: That which is born of the flesh is flesh himself, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit himself. The reader will notice that I am dealing in personalities, and though this is not becoming among the children of men, I take it for granted that the children of God will pardon me for the liberty which I have taken. The apostle Paul uses personalities in speaking to the saints and of the saints. He speaks of the outward man and the inward man; he speaks of "the old man" and "the new man;" he speaks of the "natural man" as though he assumes that there is a spiritual man. He makes such a strong distinction between natural forces and spiritual forces in the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory, that we are sometimes led to believe that the "two men" are entirely distinct and disconnected. But here is a great mystery and a wonder: a vessel of earth sanctified to hold an heavenly treasure! But there is a vast difference between the vessel and the treasure in the vessel. This difference is plainly and positively set forth in 1 Cor. ii. 14: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." I have always thought that the "natural man" spoken of in the last quotation was identical with the "carnal mind" as used in Romans viii. 7: "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Now if the "old man," "the outward man," "the natural man," "the earthen vessel," "the carnal mind," is so corrupt, dull, vile, and so far from God, in what sense can we say, which is the child of God? I think that I may safely say that this question has been a puzzle to the saints for many years. That there is a vital, close connection between the man who "is of the earth earthy" and "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," I firmly believe. The distinctions which the Lord Jesus and the apostles have made were to show the origin of each. It is most certainly true, according to other portions of Scripture, that these two are combined in one in such a mysterious way by the power of God that mortals cannot comprehend how it can be done. It seems to me that the nearest approach to the understanding of this combination is best expressed by the words: "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."—2 Cor. iv. 7. Next to the above in teaching the same truth, is the sealing "with that Holy Spirit of promise," which Holy Spirit is the "earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession."—Eph. i. 13, 14. "That Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance," may not be the Holy Ghost of the Godhead. My reasons for saying this is, first, because some translations make "that Holy Spirit of promise" a common noun, and second, some connections in passages where it is used imply that it is an abiding principle of life, or life itself. Again, in Eph. iv. 30, where the Holy Spirit of God is spoken of as being subject to grief from the action of the saints, must preclude

the idea that the apostle means in this connection the Holy Ghost. When we speak of the Father, or of the Son, or of the Holy Ghost, we speak of the unchangeable God. If we speak of God in the name of these three that bear record in heaven, we speak of the sovereign God, or if we speak of any one of these three we speak of the sovereign God. Paul exhorts the saints which are at Ephesus and "the faithful in Christ Jesus," to "grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." From this statement it is evident that all the saints who have passed from death unto life are possessed by, or are in possession of, the Holy Spirit of God, and that this Holy Spirit is susceptible of being grieved. I may be wrong in my conclusions in regard to this subject, but I have thought much about the idea advanced by worldly religionists for many years. It has been distressingly absurd to my mind to hear men say that God is knocking at the hearts of all men, trying to gain admission, but that some drive away the Holy Spirit, and that he is grieved because of his failure. As proof of failure and sorrow of the Lord they quote: "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God." I am led to believe that this sealing Spirit, or "Holy Spirit of promise," as used by Paul, means the same as "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus."—Romans viii. 2. This "Holy Spirit of promise" in the hearts of the saints is set forth as the earnest of the Spirit, and also as the earnest of our inheritance. This work of God is also called the anointing of God. (2 Cor. i. 21.) 1 John ii. 27: "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you." This anointing of God abideth in the saints, teaches them the truth, and that they shall abide in God. It is "the new man," and not the old man, "which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." The new man is "after God," hence cannot sin. He abides in the saints. "His seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin."—1 John iii. 9. In several references on this subject of God's manifested power to sinners I have tried to show how firmly the Lord "stays" with his people. This has been shown by the "treasure in earthen vessels." By a seal, making that which is sealed sure to the end; by an anointing from on high, which abideth (or stays) with his saints. All this is done to secure the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory. God's work secures all the vessels of mercy, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. God hath shined in our hearts "to give the light" of God's glorious knowledge in the "face of Jesus Christ." The Lord's mighty work in the hearts of his people is also called a circumcision. Circumcision originally was a "sign" and a "seal" of righteousness that existed before the sealing; it was a guarantee to "the Father of us all" that righteousness by faith was by imputation. This "sign" and "seal" was outward in the flesh; it consisted in cutting away the flesh and leaving an indelible mark that lasted as long as the flesh. It could be done by the hand of man, and the rite was confined to a chosen people. The true circumcision is "made without hands," it is an indelible, eternal mark, and confined to a chosen people. This "circumcision is that in the heart, in the spirit, and not of the letter." Circumcision in the spirit would signify, "in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."—Romans vii. 6. The circumcision of our God manifests the heirs of immortality. It is

called a writing not of ink, but with the Spirit of the living God in the fleshy tables of the heart. (2 Cor. iii. 3.) In view of this wonderful work of the Lord the inspired apostle would say: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."—Romans ii. 28, 29. It seems to be plainly taught that none but real Jews are the subjects of salvation; they are the real seed of Abraham, not through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. They are Abraham's children in the sense that they receive the same circumcision (the true, in the heart) that Abraham did. As Abraham was the father of the Jews, the apostle counts the seed as descending the Jewish line of spirituality. "Know ye therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham."—Gal. iii. 7. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."—Gal. iii. 16. The lineal descent from Abraham by promise, to the heirs, is through Christ in all generations, according to the covenant confirmed to Abraham by God in Christ; before the law was given by Moses Abraham saw Christ; he saw his seed in Christ through the law dispensation and through the gospel day. "Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad."—John viii. 56. Jesus speaks, recorded in Revelation, as though a Jew was an heir of immortality: "And I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan."—Rev. ii. 9. "Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie."—Rev. iii. 9. There can be no doubt in the minds of those who are spiritually taught that these Jews spoken of in the above quotations are spiritual Jews, the "seed" promised unto Abraham, confirmed by God in Christ. "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."—Phil. iii. 3. These are they who are "sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." Called with an holy calling (holy calling because it proceeds from God), not according to their works, but according to God's own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ before the world began.

In hope,

J. F. BEEMAN.

HELENA, Okla., March 15, 1909.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., June 22, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I especially request your views, in a private letter to me, on John v. 28, 29. I hope you may be blessed of the Lord to write soon, for I shall be anxiously waiting to hear. I hope that you and family are well. We are as well as usual.

Yours in a blessed hope,

L. H. HARDY.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 29, 1909.

ELDER L. H. HARDY—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your letter asking my views on John v. 28, 29, was duly received. I appreciate your confidence in me as being able to elucidate this portion of holy writ, yet frankly confess you are mistaken in the man. I have often acknowledged through the SIGNS, as well as from the pulpit, that there is much in the Bible I do not understand, and this text you

suggest is one of the many I have no satisfactory light on, hence am sure it would be a waste of time to try to explain that which has not been revealed to me. Should any one say, The text means just what it says, I would be compelled to reply, If that be true, then the fact stands without argument that there is at least one portion of inspired testimony which the Holy Ghost has no need to shew unto us. This I could not reconcile with Paul's statement: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: * * * neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." If the Scripture you mention is in any sense a part of the things of the Spirit of God, and Paul was correct in his statement, it cannot be comprehended by the carnal mind, hence its import must be spiritual and understood by divine revelation. Further, if it means just what it says literally, no man can enlarge upon it, and it stands open to the comprehension of the infidel as well as to the quickened sinner. The older I grow, and the longer I am in the ministry, the more I realize my lack of understanding in divine things, and the more careful I become with regard to the Scriptures. I used texts in my early ministry that I would not dare touch now without clearer light than I have ever had. Indeed, I often question my knowledge of the most simple text, if there be such a thing as a simple text. Some brethren in different sections of the country seem to be disturbed regarding the doctrine of the resurrection, and all manner of evil things are being said of those who do not use their language when speaking of the subject. But I must confess, dear brother, there is one thing that concerns me and troubles me more, viz., "Am I His, or am I not?" If I am, then all will be well at last. I have never made the subject of the resurrection a hobby, and hope to be kept from ever making any subject a hobby, and especially one that the apostles did not understand nor try to explain. Paul considered the resurrection "a mystery," and John was satisfied with the assurance that "now are we the sons of God;" he was willing to leave the rest until Christ, who is our life, shall appear. Then "we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." I have never taken the resurrection of the bodies of the saints as a direct subject to write upon, and only a few times have I ever tried to speak of the deep and hidden mystery: resurrection; the omission has been due to lack of understanding. My faith, however, as "the evidence of things not seen," embraces the truth of the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust; the one to life eternal, the other to "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." But to describe the glory, joy and peace of the first is as far beyond me as it is to describe the eternal woe of the second. We have descriptive powers, and often use them to advantage regarding things we have seen, but I do not understand how a man can describe that which "doth not yet appear." The attempt to do this, both of the glory and the punishment, has caused all the trouble on the subject that now exists. Do you not think, dear brother, it wise to adhere strictly to Bible language when preaching, writing or conversing upon this deep yet sublime subject? Would it not be better to say, "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body," than to say, These Adamic, sinful, vile, mortal bodies shall be raised? Would it not be better to say, "That which thou sowest, thou sow-

est not that body that shall be," than to say, This very identical body will be raised? Instead of saying, In the resurrection we shall appear just as we do now, except our bodies which are natural shall be spiritual, would it not be better to say, "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly"? Instead of saying, In the resurrection there will be fathers, mothers, husbands, wives and children, would it not be better to say, "In the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven"? This mortal must put on immortality; this corruptible must put on incorruption. "When" this is done, "then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." Is it not better to say "when" this is done, than to say where and how it is done? On the other hand, would it not be better to say of the wicked, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment," than to say, The wicked shall go away into everlasting literal fire, and there suffer forever and ever? Is it not better to say they "shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power," than to say, The nonelect shall be punished with everlasting conscious punishment through the endless ages of eternity? Would it not also be well to get the actual understanding and views of a brother and know exactly how and where he stands before publishing him abroad as a heretic? A man lays himself liable, in every sense of the word, when he so accuses a brother, and also disregards every principle of love, brotherly kindness and forbearance.

I have not asked the above questions to call out a reply from you, but merely as suggestions for your consideration, and that you might know my position on the subject of the resurrection. I believe firmly and absolutely in the resurrection as the Bible speaks about it, for without it there can be no such thing as salvation and final glory, but I do not accept the additional phraseology of uninspired men, notwithstanding the qualifications and attainments of some of them, and the age of others. One man may say, This is absolutely true, because the text implies it. Paul knew fully as well what his language implied as we do, yet to him the resurrection was "a mystery." Therefore what this or that may seem to imply does not warrant me, at least, to conclude that this or that must be so, or this or that way, and preach it and call it "the doctrine of God our Savior." I am particularly desirous while in this "tabernacle" of clay to know the power of the resurrection and "of the world to come," to be a partaker of the heavenly gift, and to realize in my own soul the holy calling. I have not yet attained unto the resurrection, therefore it must be in the future, and my hope is in it through Christ the Lord.

Now, dear brother, I have written you quite a letter in length, with all the sincerity of my being, but before I close I want to assure you, as I have other brethren, that I shall not be brought into any controversy whatever on this subject. I have given in this my belief and faith in the resurrection, and hope what I have said may be satisfactory to you; if not, the matter ends here. This letter is your property to do with as you deem best.

I am, I hope, your brother in hope and faith, H. C. KER.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., August 21, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Your letter written June 29th and postmarked July

14th, reached here July 15th, but by some means or other it was mislaid here at home, and I have just got to read it. I am glad to read that letter. Now I have heard from all to whom I wrote, to wit: Elders Ker, McConnell, Lefferts and Vail, and I feel just as I expected I would: to have sweet fellowship for them; I have always had this, and believe I shall while we live. I do not see anything in your letter that I do not receive. There were a few things in Elder Lefferts' letter that were not just according to my mind on the same subject, but I know I am not perfect, but that I am a very poor sinner, and needing the mercies of God (it appears to me) more than any man, therefore I have just the same fellowship for Elder Lefferts as though we fully agreed.

On each point on which you ask a question I would have to answer in harmony with you, therefore there would be no room for controversy, unless it be like some are by their dressing, just want something a little bit different from "the other fellow." You have seen my version of the text, and I feel sure that you will not declare nonfellowship for me because I hold those views. I do hope the grace of God will keep all controversy out of Zion, but there has to be a broom and a winnowing to cleanse the house.

The Lord bless you and yours. Remember me in love to them.

Yours in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

[THE above correspondence is published for the benefit of those who, like brother Hardy, have heard all sorts of reports, and therefore wonder how some brethren stand on the subject of the resurrection of the dead. We have no desire to hide or cover any thought we have ever had concerning this mysterious subject. On the other hand, we believe it honorable to confess our ignorance of such a great deep. For argument's sake one might say, Paul does not say the resurrection is a mystery, but the "change." He says, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." This change embraces ALL, both asleep and alive, and in the change and after the change he puts no difference between them, consequently the "change" embraces the resurrection of the dead, which is beyond all question a part of the "mystery." To believe in the resurrection is a matter of faith, but to declare how the dead are raised up, and with what body they come, except it be a spiritual body, is another thing altogether. The letters received by brother Hardy from those mentioned in his letter to us have settled his mind that we all believe in the resurrection of the dead, even though we may express our views a little different from him, and he expresses "sweet fellowship" for us all. How good it is to have an understanding one with another, as well as to confess our faults one to another. The man who has reached the place where all who do not agree with him are "heretics," is on a dangerous "pinnacle," and is more likely to destroy himself than any one else. The publication of the above is by the mutual consent of all concerned. —K.]

KEARNEYSVILLE, W. Va., Sept. 12, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I inclose you a letter written to me by my sister in the flesh, as well as in the church, and if in your judgment you think it would be a comfort to the scattered and afflicted children of God it is at your disposal. I have not asked her permission to have it published, but feel certain she will not

object to being a comfort in this way to any of the Lord's afflicted and sorrowing children. Her membership is with the church at Kearneysville, W. Va.

Yours in hope of a better life,

MARY S. MILLER.

OTTAWA, Kansas, Aug. 20, 1909.

MY DEAR SISTER:—It has been a long time since I heard from you or have written to you. I have had many severe trials since I last wrote you, and since Herbert was here. It is through tribulation we enter the kingdom. If I could always feel they were chastenings from a merciful Father to an erring child I almost think I could bear them cheerfully, but I often feel with Jacob of old, "All these things are against me." This morning I felt to say, I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing. The Lord has forsaken me, if indeed he has ever taken notice of me. It seems to me I never knew what a miserable sinner I was, until since I have been so afflicted, or do I grow worse as I grow older? I am continually making promises to the Lord, and just as surely breaking them. I have long ago lost all confidence in myself to do anything for myself, temporally or spiritually; I am helpless as a babe. I take no pleasure in the world, and I shrink from coming in contact with it. There are none near me who believe as I do. I have no one to whom I can unburden my heart but God, and I go to him daily, yes, almost hourly. I am sometimes lifted above my troubles, and cannot look back on them with regret, because of the many sweet promises I hope I have received from him who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. Then again, I fear it has all been a delusion, the imagination of a weak mind and body. One week ago yesterday, Ruth was sleeping, after having passed through one of her severe spells; I was sitting beside her bed reading Paul's letter to the Galatians; I could hardly realize I was reading the Bible, it seemed more like brother White, or some other dear one, was talking to me. The next day was Sunday, I got out some of my old SIGNS, and while reading and enjoying them it seemed I ought not to feel alone with such good preaching at hand. The SIGNS is invaluable to me. Many comforting things come to me, but when I sit down to tell them, they are all gone. What helpless creatures we are, and yet some claim they can do wonderful things for the Lord. I know that I cannot go to him, and when he comes to me, as I sometimes hope he does, I am humbled in the dust, and cry, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. I know if I could save myself or family I would lose no time about it. I feel that I must look to him for strength to perform my daily duties; all my help must come from him. I have felt that if he should see fit to take all that was most dear to me on earth, and I be left alone, I could not turn from him, for where could I go? I would still have to cling to him and beg for mercy.

When I sat down to write I thought I had much to say to you, but it seems I cannot transfer my thoughts to paper. I will try to tell you something of how it has been with us temporally since you last heard from us. Ruth was taken ill last September, and was sick all winter; the attending physician said she had acute Bright's disease. I lost all hope of her recovery, or would have done so had there not been a God in whom I dared trust. I was failing fast, Mr. McKinney began to fear for my reason, and a neighbor who came here often would tell me I ad no idea how badly I looked, and that

if I was not careful I would not be here long. I guess their worst fears would have been realized had not the dear Lord drawn me to trust and pray to him continually, and to hope in his mercy. About three o'clock one morning in midwinter, when all were asleep, my burden seemed crushing me to the earth; I went to the Bible for comfort, as I had done many times before; I opened the book at the thirty-third Psalm, and my eyes fell on the thirteenth verse and I read to the end of the chapter. I felt the Lord had spoken to me, and I felt it to be both a promise and an admonition. So many children here were taken last winter, (as many as three in one family) with diphtheria; I would often think, Why should they be taken and mine spared? Instantly the thought would come, Because the Lord has promised. Ruth lived on malted milk for eight weeks; about the middle of February she began to get a little stronger, and I thought, Now I will have some rest and will get some of my neglected work done. Brother Coulter said, or quoted, in a letter in the SIGNS, not long ago, We look for health and trouble comes, and so I found it. I went out early one morning to find the ground covered with ice from a sleet storm during the night. I stood still and thought I might fall, but said to myself, I have on my rubbers and I will be very careful; in less than a second, it seemed to me, I was lying on the ground with a dislocated and broken wrist. To my mind that is the way we always take care of ourselves. My arm is crooked and weak, but I am thankful I can use it as well as I do. I am not at all well now, some days I can hardly be on my feet, but the Lord has always taken care of us, and I hope I may always be given the strength to trust him. The past few years have been hard on us; poor crops and large doctor bills. We have had so much rain it just drowned the crops. We have had the worst floods this year we have ever had; people on the lowlands lost all they had, and many of them their homes. There are so many terrible disasters, so many earthquakes, it makes me fear and tremble, but people everywhere go on just the same; there seems to be no fear of God in their hearts. In looking over the society column it is surprising in a town the size of Ottawa, but they consider such things harmless and necessary for culture and refinement. Ottawa is called a model and moral town, with its innocent amusements, such as theaters; they paid one singer sixteen hundred dollars for one night. The Chautauqua assembly is held here for ten days every year and they have the best talent obtainable. I went to hear President Taft; I do not think I would go very far to hear him again. They have great evangelists who do great things in converting the people continually. The Spiritualists are holding camp meeting now in the city park; one of their leaders talked with one of the old prophets, so she said, and he promised us a rain yesterday, which we failed to get, but are badly in need of. I do not know what excuse she made.

I feel I have much to be thankful for; while Mr. McKinney does not see and feel as I do, he takes no part with the foolish things of the world, but is always at home with me, bearing more than his part of the daily burdens. Sometimes when reading from the pens of Elders Chick, Ker, Durand, Coulter, Vail, McConnell, Lefferts and others, I feel that I would give worlds, were they mine, to sit under the sound of their voices, if blessed with the hearing ear and understanding heart; that may never be my

privilege; God only knows I feel to desire to follow only where he leads. Have you read the little book, "Songs in the Night," by James B. Durand?* I have never read anything that affected me so much, except Lige's obituary; both seemed like a voice from another world telling me of things I desired to know.

I have written you a long, and maybe to you tiresome letter, but after I began writing I found it hard to stop. Do not think by my silence that I have forgotten you all; I assure you, you are often in my mind, and I am just as much interested in you all as when I was with you. When you have time and inclination I will greatly appreciate a letter from you. Tell me about yourself and all the friends if you feel to do so.

All join me in love to all.

Lovingly your sister,

ANNA McKINNEY.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May 11, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have permission of sister Pultz, whom I have never met, to send this letter to the SIGNS for publication. To my mind it traces with wonderful clearness the effect of the Spirit's work in the heart.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

WHEELING, W. Va., May 2, 1909.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND—MY DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I feel a desire to write and tell you that I have found in some of your writings that which has impressed me deeply. A few days ago I was looking through one of the old SIGNS OF THE TIMES (Dec. 15th, 1907); when I came to "Fragments," especially the last one, I found something that I had pondered over many times. You said that we try (and it is a noble ambition) to build ourselves up in our own esteem upon our own virtue and upon our exemption from meanness and vice. O how hard this hits me; when I had read this much my eyes and heart were riveted to the balance. Dear brother, I have been made so sick of my inclination to do this very thing. How often in a day do I have to stop and try to assure myself that it is not through my own merits I am saved. I desire above all things to be meek and lowly, and to abase myself in the sight of God and his dear saints, but ah, this miserable old self, how it rises up and claims honor and praise. Almost hourly I am beset with pride of self, so much so that I am at times ready to despair. I do a little kind act, or maybe by the grace of God I am given a word to speak in due season, then comes this detestable feeling that they will think me a sensible woman, or a good woman. I feel utterly disgusted with myself for this weakness, and I do try to beg our Lord to remove it far from me; it is the bane of my life. Then you go farther and deeper into my miserable condition, describing the very secrets of my soul. But (you say) every living soul sees some certain thing in his past life which is constantly in his way, constantly interfering with his self-love or self-respect. Dear brother, I do not uphold sin, but I do feel to say, God be praised that there is something to hold us down. If it were not for this condition in us where would our exaltation end? No wonder our Lord chose the vile things, so that no flesh should glory in his sight. I see so many causes to mourn, and that cause me to suddenly cry out to God for mercy. I look back over the different times that I have acted foolishly; in this place or that place I have been puffed up and made a miser-

able fool of myself. Then the wonder with me is this, Am I ashamed of my weaknesses before God or before the people? I do fear it is the people that I fear the most. Some years ago these words came to my mind:

"O vile am I to stand before
The Prince of endless day;
My own eyes view myself with scorn,
I would, but cannot pray."

Of late these words came back to me with renewed force. Never do I feel my unworthiness more keenly than when some one praises me. I am not worthy to be called a christian. I know that I am vile, and yet self often gives me nods of approval when the gracious Master has seen fit to bestow a ray of grace upon me. I have wondered much about our sins being forgiven us, and yet they often rise up before us and fill us with self-loathing; still we read in God's word that this would befall the children of God. I well remember (some years ago) with what satisfaction and joy I read Ezekiel xxxvi. 31. Ah, said I, I have been here in this place; I have experienced this. It appears to me that as I grow older the more I see my faults. I cannot condemn sin without condemning myself, and I cannot judge others without bringing myself into judgment before God. I often feel that I would like to spend the balance of my days in humble contrition before our Lord. The time was when I rejoiced and was glad; my sins seemed not to trouble me; my soul overflowed in hymns of praise. At first Kent's hymns were so sweet, so soul-satisfying, that I have kissed the lines and held the book pressed close to my heart, and O how I blessed and praised God for the gift of such a saint to minister such blessed consolation; I was happy and could sing:

"All nature wears a smiling face,
The birds thy praises sing,
My heart joins in their songs of joy
To thee, my Lord, my King."

During the last two years it has pleased the Lord to leave me much of the time in darkness; I feel that I am too foolish to be indulged with his felt presence; I become vain and puffed up. I am much afflicted in the flesh, so that I feel to be dead to the world and its charms; I want no strength of my own, I long to lean on our Beloved; I want no wisdom of my own, I want to live and move and have my being in our blessed Savior. Dear brother, I ask an interest in your prayers. I know what our Lord said about the prayers of a righteous man.

I read the life or letters of that dear afflicted sister, Mary Parker, and I longed to know about her last hours and her death; will you please write and tell me about her? I am not taking the SIGNS at present, but it is often sent to me by a sister in the faith. I ask you to excuse the liberty I have taken to write you. I am sure I am the least of all the household of faith.

(MRS.) FLORENCE PULTZ.

ALVINSTON, Ontario, August 10, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—I have been impressed from time to time with the thought of writing you a few lines, that you may know what comforting assurances I have received from reading the SIGNS. I think not having the privilege of regular attendance at church service causes me to appreciate it more. It is with fear and trembling that I make the attempt, for I have a fleshly mind and many false impressions, and well I know that in my flesh dwells no good thing, but I want to trust the Lord to guide my pen as I write. I have had a resistless desire

springing up in my heart that you might know of the love and fellowship I have felt while reading the sweet messages published in our dear family paper. I am a poor, lone wanderer in this wilderness, and while no one around me in this town where I live would rightly understand me if I should tell them, "I am a stranger here below, and what I am 'tis hard to know," yet I feel at times that I have been blessed far above any of them, so far as any evidence that the work of grace has been begun in the heart. For this I feel to thank the Lord and take courage, for I know if left to myself I would have chosen the broad road which leads to destruction; but I do hope that the dear Lord has made manifest a new life within, and this life is in his Son. Paul told the Colossian brethren, "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Yes indeed, dead to the pleasures of this world, no enjoyment here, all is vanity, vanity. I am crucified unto the world, and the world unto me. I have but few church privileges, having to leave home to attend meetings, but if I know my heart it is my chiefest joy to mingle with the saints at these solemn meetings. I often am made to experience the joy that is unspeakable and full of glory, and now as I reflect on these times the words of the psalmist flow into my mind: "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord." And, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God."

There are a great many I would like to mention whose words have given me comfort, but I must just mention a few who have been of peculiar interest to me of late. Brother J. H. Yeomans' letter in June 1st number was very expressive of my feelings at the time. So burdened with sin, and the cares of this life weighing me down, it was a comfort to have my feelings expressed by one I felt to be an heir of promise. Then in July 1st number Elder H. B. Jones' letter to Elder Durand appeared, and it touched a tender cord in my heart, so that I took pen in hand and started to address him a letter. He expressed much of what had passed through my mind just previous to reading it, and it did seem wonderful to me. Also sister Terry wrote so beautifully I felt the cords of love binding us together; such unity I am persuaded can only be of the Spirit. Then in the next number was a communication from brother F. W. Keene which was really a sermon to me, and of such comfort and satisfaction that I felt edified and strengthened by it. We did surely eat our morsel with Jesus in privacy, and felt that sacred nearness that none know except those who have been blessed with such communion with the Holy Spirit. I felt at the time that if I had the opportunity I could take the dear brother by the hand and tell him how the dear Lord had graciously fed me through him. "He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." Truly the Lord is good to Israel. My heart was also made glad to read a letter from G. A. Dundas, whom I have met in the flesh and feel to know in the Spirit; I still hold him and his wife in loving remembrance. Then in the next number appeared four interesting letters from brother George Staton, which bore testimony to a true called servant of the Lord. It is encouraging to the poor, weak ones to know that the servants are subject to the same trials and temptations as we. The children of God are continually learning their helplessness

and nothingness, and thereby are led to look to the Lord for wisdom to guide them through the rough and thorny paths of this life. I must mention one more which I read with deep interest and tender emotion: that of P. W. Sawin. The Lord be praised for it all; His greatness is unsearchable. As to the editorials, I am generally blessed with an enjoyment of them, and find them very edifying as well as instructive.

But I have already written too much, and in such a blundering way; I cannot express in words what I have felt in the heart. You all seem very near to me, so will leave it with you to do with as you think best. Love and peace be with you all.

Your unworthy sister in hope of a better life,

(MRS.) W. C. YOUNG.

Bow, Washington, Aug. 14, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—If one so prone to sin may be allowed to call you by that endearing name, which means sons of God, and if sons, then heirs of God and joint-heirs with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Dear brother, is it possible that such weak, sinful creatures as we are will be allowed to share equally in the blessings of heaven, God's kingdom, where Jesus now sits at God's right hand to make intercession for us, knowing our weakness, having been tempted in all points like we are? He knows how to pity us, and I, at least, need his pity and forgiveness all the time, for although I have had a name among the Old Baptists for twenty-eight years it seems to me that instead of trying to serve God, I have been trying to find some excuse to justify me in not serving him, for surely I have not served him much of the time, and I often wonder how he can maintain his honor and still extend his love and mercy to one who has been so faithless and dishonoring, although I was trying all the time to get my courage to the point where I would not be ashamed to own his dear name before any man, but my heart was so weak and the desire to show to the world that I was a friend to it also, that I would go on (I cannot say willingly, but unwillingly) with worldlings, and not even let them know I loved my Savior, and was inwardly weeping while keeping up my end of the sport with the rest. But for all this I never could eat at their table and call it clean, nor yield a single point of God's sovereign, free and reigning grace, without the help of man, and always since a mere child I have believed that God rules and controls everything and has a purpose in doing so, for he is not as man, who needs to cut and try before he knows the result, for he is all-wise, knowing the end from the beginning, and if there is anything going on that God does not know about he is not all-wise, and if there is anything going on that he cannot hinder or control he is not all-powerful. Since he is all-wise, all-powerful and ever-present, and knew the end from the beginning, he surely predestinated all things, for even the devil and his angels are controlled by him, and since they are, God surely had a purpose for them, and they will just as surely serve his purpose, for if he had the power to bind Satan for a thousand years he could just as easily have bound him forever, or destroyed him entirely. But God had a purpose in creating him also, for he shows forth the glory of God. As in the case of Job, when God gave Satan power over Job to afflict him, God knew beforehand that it would redound to his own glory,

and that the devil would be put to shame, as he always is, in the presence of God. There is such a beautiful sermon in this that I could write on and on, for it shows to us that although we are afflicted God is with us still, and will not leave nor forsake us; and there is another lesson in it, which shows that the substance that our hope is composed of is not destructible, as silver or gold, but is sure and enduring, even stronger than death, and when we read such exhibitions of faith it gives us courage to press on toward the prize of our high calling of God, believing and trusting that our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, and so, dear brother, if they do, let them come. O that I were even worthy to suffer for his dear sake. Truly I have been a great sufferer for nearly a year, and I have enjoyed my suffering, for it seemed just and right, and I have been sweetly blessed with his Spirit; sometimes when I was suffering so much pain that I could scarcely lie still, his precious presence was so near me that I wept aloud for joy, for I felt that I was safe in Jesus; and I was, for my life was spared, but for what purpose I know not, yet he knoweth, and that is enough.

Brother Chick, I hope you will not be offended with me because I differ from your views in your reply to brother Allison in Aug. 15th number. It seems to me the Scriptures will bear out the statement that there is an outer man and an inner man, for though our outer man perish, our inner man shall be renewed day by day. What is this outer man if it is not the flesh, or Adamic man? and what better proof do we need of its sinfulness than the feeling in our own hearts? We cannot control this sinful heart nor keep our flesh in subjection to righteousness, or at least I cannot. The inner man, is it not Christ in us the hope of glory? and is it not the spirit which returns to God who gave it when our bodies return to the dust from whence they came? If these bodies were born of the Spirit would they not be spiritual, and hence need no change? Since one born of God cannot sin, and our outer man does sin, we conclude the outer man was not born of God. But the inner man does not sin, but condemns us when we, or the fleshly, Adamic or outer man commits sin. I understand the old man is what we should crucify with his lusts, for the spiritual man surely has no carnal lusts.

Now what I have written is offered in christian love.

Your brother,

DAVIS BURCH.

OTISVILLE, N. Y., June 15, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER CHICK:—You have both been in my thoughts much since our association at New Vernon, and to-day I have a desire to write you, and will try and pen a few thoughts as they come to me. I do most sensibly realize that the preparation of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue are from the Lord. I feel it is presumption on my part to tax your patience and time, knowing how many correspondents you have, still I have a desire to write and tell you how much I enjoyed your sermon on Sunday at Middletown, also our little visit during the noon hour, and the kind words of encouragement you spoke to me. I shall never forget them, they were to me like apples of gold in pictures of silver, words fitly spoken. You said you would like to hear how I was. I think my throat a little better, and I feel stronger; the doctor says it will take a

long time, that I will have to have patience. I was sorry we could not stay until the close of the meeting, but the rain came on and we thought it best to come home before dark. The rain was good, for seedtime and harvest must come in the appointed season, as a blessing given to us all. What a wise and gracious Ruler our God is to feed, nourish and provide for everything, to supply the needs of us all, and what poor, helpless creatures we are without him. It is in him we live, move and have our being. But how often we forget in our weakness, our dependence upon him for all we have and are.

My dear brother and sister, I do not feel I will be able to pen anything that can be of interest in regard to Christ and his ever-glorious kingdom, wherein dwells righteousness and peace forever. I would live to the praise of his holy name for his many mercies and blessings which have followed me all the days of my life; even when sorrows and trials have compassed me about he brought deliverance out of all my trouble, and gave me to feel a living assurance that his tender, strong, almighty arm was underneath to support, strengthen and uphold me in every time of need. I feel many times that the dear Lord has been with me in all my trials as my only refuge and strength. When I look back over my pilgrimage through this life thus far, I feel to say with the psalmist, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" I would love to live nearer his gracious throne than I do. Sometimes of late it has been my sweet privilege to feel, I hope, his divine presence near me, to trust and bless his precious name for the great and manifold blessings I have so bountifully received from his kind and loving hand daily and hourly. All blessings come from his hand; he is our only comfort in time of affliction and trial. How sweet that promise, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Friends may forget us, but his words are true and abiding.

Time admonishes me I must stop lest I weary you with much writing. I commenced this letter in June, as you see by the heading, and thought I would not send it; now it is the 25th of July. Sister Carrie and Mr. Manning have gone up to New Vernon to hear our dear pastor, Elder Ker, proclaim the precious truth as it is in Jesus, without fear, rightly dividing the word of God. He is dear to us all for the truth's sake. I was not able to take the long ride up and back, but I hope to be able to go up to our church meeting, August 7th, if nothing in providence hinders.

I hope this will find you and yours in best of health. Sister joins me in christian love and fellowship to you both.

Affectionately your sister in hope,

ABBIE E. ROBERTSON.

KALAMAZOO, Michigan.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The time to renew for the dear old SIGNS has come, and we think we cannot do without it, for it comes bringing the precious gospel of the meek and lowly Jesus, who was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep dumb before her shearers, so he opened not his mouth. He suffered and died for our sins, being delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification. This gospel is sweet, and we love it. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES carries that joyful sound, and should find its way into every home in this wide world. O what joy there is in doing our Master's will. Think of that little stream where such sweetness came in our poor

hearts the day we were buried with Jesus and raised to live with him forevermore. It makes us poor, it makes us humble, it makes us rejoice and it makes us happy to think that we do rejoice. At other times we cry out, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." Dear ones, wonder of wonders that we ever were made to love that name above every name. We are given only a foretaste here of that world to come; what must it be to be there? I have wondered many times if God intended the evil one to finally overthrow all of His handywork. Ah no, never; enough has been left us that our God shall bring all things unto victory. These meditations do me good in my old age, as I am past seventy-one years, and ere long shall have to bid adieu to all here below, in hope of that better world above, and God shall have all the praise in the world without end.

Ever your brother,

D. D. MAC ALPINE.

LEBANON, Ohio, August 21, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—If I may so address you. I indeed hope that I am one of God's little ones, although in myself I find nothing to warrant it; I am nothing, less than nothing, and my steps are seemingly all crooked and out of the way, but I love the things set forth in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and am writing this to thank you for sending it to me since March, not knowing whether I would send you the subscription price, and to humbly beg pardon for the delay. Inclosed you will find three dollars for the continuation of the precious SIGNS to me. I also inclose a letter written by my brother, Dr. D. A. Williams, who lost his life April 9th, while helping fight the fire which threatened to destroy the town of Franklin, where he resided. I have thought it belonged to the Baptist Church. Now, since God has taken him home, I send it, with a short obituary, for you to do with as you think best.

(MRS.) EVA MORRIS.

FRANKLIN, Ohio, Dec. 23, 1894.

DEAR MOTHER AND FOLKS:—I feel this evening that I must write to you all and tell you that I have been made to feel the Lord is mighty to save, and that his will is to be done in spite of the will of the flesh. Of late my mind has been so wrought upon by the Holy Spirit that I have had no peace either day or night, and last night I lay awake praying the Lord to direct me in the way he would have me to go, and thanks be to God, who gives us the victory over the things of the flesh, he gave me strength to go to his people and tell them what things I hoped he had done for me. I was received in the Tapscott Church, and was buried, I hope, with Christ in baptism, and shall be made to walk with him in newness of life. I have been a terribly rebellious child, having been neglectful of a duty I ought to have performed; but I suppose the Lord's time had not come until to-day. I have been rebuked and beaten with many stripes, but the Scriptures teach us that whom he loves he rebukes and chastens. I have mourned frequently on account of my sinful nature, but am encouraged by Christ's saying, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." I have been very poor, but I hope I have been made rich through the precious blood of our blessed Redeemer, who suffered, bled and died on Calvary for just such sinners as I. As John expresses it in the first chapter of Revelation, He by his blood made us kings and priests unto God. I have been kicking against the pricks ever since that experience I had while attending school at Lebanon, fourteen years ago, and in spite of my rebellion he has led me in paths I knew not, and made me confess his name before men.

I could write more, but this is enough. Tell sister Eva, and mother G. if you see her.

Your loving son and brother,

D. A. WILLIAMS.

(See obituary on page 605.)

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1909.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

HEBREWS IV. 15.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I received your good letter some time ago, and thank you for your kind expressions of love and fellowship, although I feel unworthy of either. This brings to my mind the language in Hebrews iv. 15: "But was in all points tempted like as we are." I have for a long time desired that some one would write upon that text. It seems to me that one with the right kind of hope would not have the temptations that I have, and this often causes me to doubt and to fear that perhaps my hope is nothing but an illusion, yet there are times when I would not exchange the little hope I have for all the world. I much enjoyed the texts you named and from which you preached the Sunday before you wrote me, and imagined that I could hear you. I hope you enjoyed Elder Moffett's visit with you. We miss him during his absence, and hope he will return safely to us.

I did not sit down to write you much of a letter, but wanted to ask if you would write through the SIGNS upon the text which I have named, if you feel disposed to do so. I have enjoyed the SIGNS much this year, and feel that one number is worth more than the price of the subscription. Can you not come out to our association in September? We would be very glad to have you. Please accept my love for yourself and family, and remember one who has a small hope and a large propensity to do the things I should not.

Yours in precious hope, M. C. REEVES.
PARIS, Ill., July 25, 1909.

Many things in the above letter commend themselves to us, and we feel like trying to respond to the request concerning the text in Hebrews iv. 15. Brother Reeves' expressions concerning himself and his travel of mind are such as will fit all, or nearly all, the children of God. Of one thing we have long felt sure, viz., that whatever else may be said about doubts and temptations, this one thing is certainly true: that no one but a child born of God can ever know such a warfare. Some have thought that it is a sin to doubt and fear as to whether we are interested in the salvation of God or not. Be this as it may, it is sure that none but those born of God do know anything about such doubts and fears, because no other people have interest enough in this great salvation to be troubled about it, or to even ask whether it belongs to them or not. But the sinner convinced of his sins every day, and seeing his frequent departures in life and in feeling from the right way of the Lord, must often question whether one who is really born of God, and who knows God, could be left to live such a halting life. It may indeed be that unbelief is at the root of all these questionings, but still it is the believer, and the believer alone, who does thus question, therefore even doubts and fears come to be evidences of the relation of children. The doubtings of God's children in this way come to be the hard and flinty rock out of which they suck honey. The conflicts of Israel against their outward foes were clear testimony that the Lord was with them and that they were set apart unto the Lord; even so their internecine strife and the struggle going on in their own land were turned to them as testimonies that they were the Lord's peculiar heritage, by his rebukes administered to them, as he did not administer to the heathen. The outward conflicts of God's children against all that is evil, no more than the inward conflicts between the unbelieving and doubting and fearing flesh and the indwelling Spirit, testify to the fact that

these are born of God and are his peculiar treasure. We must in one sense deplore these questionings and doubtings, and perhaps be ashamed because of them, and yet they are also to be remembered as witnesses that we are not, as is the world of the ungodly, careless of the things of God. One said, I am not what I want to be, or what I ought to be, but thank God I am not as I once was. Once, among other differences, that one had no doubts and fears, because dead in trespasses and sins, but now, being alive, there were warrings between unbelief and faith. The dead know not anything, not even that they are dead, and they have no fear, neither any hope; but where these things are found men are not dead, but living, though that life be filled with conflict and struggling against that which would stifle and destroy it. We are thinking of prayer in this connection. We do not know that human language has ever expressed the essence of prayer any better than in these words: "Prayer is the christian's vital breath, the christian's native air." As breathing goes on whether asleep or awake, whether we are conscious of it or not, whether we make conscious effort or not, so does prayer go on in the very life of every believer. We do not purpose to breathe; were it so, when sleep overcomes us it would be death; were it so, all the words and deeds of life would cease even when awake, for our thoughts must be occupied with this one thing of breathing. We breathe by a wise provision of the God of nature, just as the blood flows out and back again to the heart, without will or purpose of our own. We are never conscious of breathing, unless some obstruction occurs which makes breathing an effort, then indeed we struggle for breath, and this is painful and we cannot rest. How blessed it is when the tide of life naturally flows on in a normal way and we breathe without consciousness of breathing. Now all this is true of prayer; believers pray always, though unconsciously, when the spiritual life flows on and there arises no obstruction. The admonition to pray without ceasing is not an impossible task set before the child of God; he does pray without ceasing, just as we breathe without ceasing; but disorders assail the soul, just as disorders assail the body, and prayer becomes a labor, just as breathing becomes a labor; then we are conscious, not so much of praying as of striving to pray.

One other thing occurs to us as we write these things: there are times when there is no hindrance to breathing that we do enjoy taking in long draughts of the clear, cool, fresh air. There are times when it is a distress to breathe, but there are also times when it is a joy to breathe, a joy of which we are conscious. Who of us has not so breathed in the fresh morning air again and again, extending the lungs to their full capacity? Again, who of us has not sometimes come up out of some stifled, close room, into the full clear air of heaven, and felt that it was a delight to once more inhale the pure air, and at once felt new strength and gladness? All this is also true of prayer. There are times in prayer when we are conscious of breathing, because of the gladness of communion with the blessed Lord; such seasons may be rare, but still they do sometimes come, then the prayer seems rather to be praise and blessing, and it is good at such times to lay all our case before the Lord, and there is an assurance that the dear Lord hears, yea more, that he is himself the author and the giver of the prayer. Sometimes also it is morning, a clear morning without clouds,

and we are filled with the gladness of the new life, and are buoyant in hope, and love burns within; prayer then is a delight, and we can rejoice in it as we rejoice to inhale the morning air. Or we have been stifled with the cares or pleasures of this life until there has seemed to be no going out of the soul to God in desire, or in confession, or in praise; then when it pleases God to break down the walls of flesh and sense which confine us, and give us access into the large places, there is a conscious breathing, and again we are glad. We think from the short letter of brother Reeves' that he can understand what we have here so poorly expressed.

But we will now turn more especially to the text which he has named: "But was in all points tempted like as we are." As these are the words which have arrested our brother's especial attention we will not attempt to say very much about the connection, yet the connection is full of equally rich matter. First, the words to which our brother calls attention are true words; whether we can see how they can be true matters not, they are true words. If anything occurs to our mind that would cast doubt upon the absolute truth of the language, that thing is a falsehood. Each word in this one sentence ought to be emphasized as we think of it. Jesus "was," that is, in the days of his flesh; he is not now tempted, but he was. It is not true, either, that he was tempted before his incarnation, but afterward, and before his crucifixion and ascension. As a man he was tempted with the temptations of man, and he was tempted in the same life and in the same world that temptation comes to other men. In that other blessed world to which he has ascended, and to which we shall ascend, there is no temptation.

Let us also emphasize the word "tempted." Men have questioned as to how the holy Son of man could be tempted at all. What was there in him that could feel temptation if he were indeed as the word testifies: without sin? But why ask such questions? Is it not enough that the inspired word declares that he was tempted? What need of our seeing how it could be so? We are not here attempting to say that this knowledge may not be given to some, but what matter it if it be not given? He was tempted; this is enough for tempted souls to know. It is wonderful and it is helpful to know that a fellow-traveler, one like ourselves, imperfect and still bearing about a sinful nature, should feel our temptations, but it is still more wonderful, and it is full of helpfulness to know that the sinless Son of man endured not only afflictions and trials, but temptation also. O then let us not be found asking the question, How could this be? as though we were disposed to question the assertion of the text itself. We may indeed ask, How could it be? if the asking be not with doubting of the truth, but with reverent acceptance of it, and an humble desire to know further, if it shall please God to show us further.

Now let us emphasize the expression, "In all points." Were he not presented thus in the word, then somewhere we might fear that we should go and find him not; that somewhere we might go and find no help and come to utter defeat. We do not need here to quote the many expressions of holy writ which declare his power to serve us, and to save us just because he was in all points tempted as we are. Many years ago a dear brother wrote us that he could not reconcile his view of the holy Lamb of God, nor of the sacredness with which he regarded the

dear Savior, with the thought that that Savior had ever known some temptations that had assailed himself. We could but reply, and did reply, "Where then is your help and encouragement to overcome these temptations?" Just because in his flesh as our fellow he was tempted as we are he knows how to save us; just because of this he can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; just because of this he is able to save us to the uttermost. Our brother's trouble then was in this: that he had forgotten for a time that these words are spoken of the Savior under his temptations: but "yet without sin." To be tempted is not sin, but to do the thing one is tempted to do is sin. Jesus was tempted, yet did not do the thing which he was tempted to do. The prince of this world came to him as he does to us, but in Jesus he found nothing. This prince comes to us poor mortals and he finds much in us, therefore we sin, yielding to his temptations. It is this traitor in the camp which opens the gate to the world, and the prince of this world, and lets in all the flood of ungodliness in which the world is drowned. We are tempted and sin, Jesus was tempted and yet without sin, and this means, as the Scripture declares, that there is no place into which we come by temptation but that Jesus has preceded us, therefore he knows how to save, and there is such salvation in no other. Who can measure the comfort of such a broad salvation? Who can tell how hopeless would be the gloom and despair of a tempted soul were this one truth expunged from the record? Most blessed of all, Paul knew of what he wrote, and millions also have known just what Paul knew, and in the same way; they, like him, have felt the power of the presence of the tempted and victorious Savior in their own temptations. It is not needful at all that we seek here to name the temptations which in unnumbered variety assail the believer. Some come to one and some to another, yet to all the truth of the text applies: "Tempted in all points." Brother may not understand brother, because all are not tried in just the same way; one censures another severely, because he has not felt the other's peculiar temptation; we fail to sympathize because we do not know, but this dear Elder Brother pities us as a father pities his children, for he knows our frame, he remembers that we are dust.

"He knows our frame." How should he know our frame except by having taken upon himself our frame? And so while we can know but few, and cannot know that few altogether, he knows all his, and knows them altogether, and so can pity and save. What wondrous consolation Paul ministered to his brethren, to whom he wrote these words, and to us who are favored to read his words and at times to feel their power by the Spirit. And now what is the sum and the comfort of all these considerations? The sum of them is found in these words, which precede and follow the text: "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." What more can any one say than Paul has here said? How could what Paul has here said be made more simple? We have such a High Priest, no longer tempted on earth, but now in the heavens

of glory, and this High Priest is none other than the Son of God, and this Priest, the Son of God, is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and is and was without sin. In his name then we come boldly to the throne of grace and find grace and obtain mercy. All these blessed things belong to the connection of the text.

But we will say no more here. May God bless some of these considerations to brother Reeves, and to all who may read them. C.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Conference assembled with the church at North Berwick, York County, Maine, September 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1909, to the churches composing the following named associations with whom we correspond: the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, the Baltimore Association, the Delaware Association, the Delaware River Association, the Warwick Association and the Roxbury Association.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST JESUS:—We again greet you, wishing you all prosperity in the things of our dear Redeemer. We are still, we hope, holding fast his name, and have once more assembled in his name to worship the Lord our God. The favor that we are the recipients of, that we should be called to know God our Father, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, calls forth from us everlasting gratitude, and much we are in need of the ministrations of the Holy Spirit, of the exceeding abundant grace of God, and faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus. We would have you consider with us a few words of the holy Scriptures, which with the blessing of the Holy Spirit will be for our comfort and edification. The apostle Paul in 1 Thess. v. 9, 10, tells us that "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do." When, beloved brethren, we consider that we were by nature the children of wrath even as others, (Eph. ii. 3,) we can but be filled with grateful wonderment at the exceeding riches of God's grace that is displayed in quickening us who were dead in trespasses and sins, and begetting in us the hope of salvation and eternal glory. If we had not been apprehended by Christ Jesus we should still, as vile transgressors, be treasuring up unto ourselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. (Romans ii. 5.) But our hope is that God hath called us by his grace unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. When the Spirit of truth convinced us of sin, and brought us to a living apprehension of our just condemnation under the law, we felt in our stricken souls the wrath of God revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness, and we feared that we were vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; our hearts were heavy under the burden of our guilt, and we could see no way of escape from the curse of the law. Did we not mourn over our iniquities? Yes, and we sighed for relief from the sickening load; our hearts were made humble and contrite, and our fervent cries went forth unto God for mercy. O that he would pardon my sins, and that he would take me into the arms of his mercy. But we were vile, base sinners, our iniquities were set before us, our secret sins in the light of God's countenance, and we felt God's holy law pro-

nouncing tribulation and wrath upon us, and we feared that if we were to die we should die in our sins, and whither Christ has gone there we could never come. How could we escape the damnation of hell? Ah, then it was that we began to know that it was with God that we had to do, and all things were naked and opened unto his eyes. Our hearts said, God sees me exactly as I am; whither shall I flee from the wrath to come? (Matt. iii. 7.) We could find no refuge, but we felt to be the objects of God's wrath revealed in his law, which we had broken, and at times dreadful thoughts would come into our sin-bruised hearts that we were appointed to wrath; but we longed for mercy, and sighed for relief, for the forgiveness of our sins. Then, in God's time, the Holy Spirit set before us the hope of the gospel. (Heb. vi. 18.) To this we looked, the eyes of our understanding were enlightened, and we saw Jesus, the crucified One, as the hope of poor, vile sinners. With sighs over our sins, and cries in our hearts for mercy, with all desire, with faith and affection, we fled for refuge from our sins, from the wrath to come; we fled unto Jesus. We fled to the life, suffering, death and resurrection of Christ, and we have found (have we not, dear brethren?) a safe retreat, a sanctuary in our precious Redeemer.

"God hath not appointed us to wrath." If the Lord had dealt with us after our sins, and rewarded us according to our iniquities, then we should have been justly appointed to wrath. For thus it is written: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." —John iii. 36. How rich and sovereign is the grace of God!

"God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." What a favor to have the power in faith to say this! We read, "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."—John i. 12, 13, and so this language can only in truth be spoken by us by the enabling power of the Holy Ghost. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."—1 Cor. xii. 3. If God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, how is it so? This is the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world begun for our glory, and is sacredly discovered to our faith in the gospel of Christ. God's appointment of us to obtain salvation is according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. "We are bound [saith the apostle Paul] to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."—2 Thess. ii. 13. Here we trace salvation flowing from the love of God, and God's eternal election of his people. The streams of salvation we trace to their fountain, God, and in his sacred bosom see eternal thoughts of love to us. He hath not appointed his loved, his chosen ones, to wrath, but they are predestinated to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle says, "Our Lord Jesus Christ," and that sacred word "our" gives us to see and most comfortingly to feel how near, how related, how dear, are the ties that bind the church and Christ together. Christ is the Husband and Head of the church,

and he is the Savior of the body. (Eph. v. 23.) O muse upon this sacred revelation, and see the source of our salvation flowing from the eternal purpose which God purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. God hath appointed us to obtain salvation, and as our God performeth the things that he appointeth for his people, (Job xxiii. 14,) surely there will be no failure, but Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. Jesus shall save his people from their sins. Our God is a performing God; he is our King of old, from eternity, working salvation in the midst of the earth. The incarnate Word traveled in the greatness of his strength, mighty to save; yes, he is mighty, he will save. (Zeph. iii. 17.) Christ's own arm brought salvation unto him; he gave himself a ransom for us. While now in the world the elect are brought to the obtaining of salvation in Christ Jesus by faith, in which salvation they greatly rejoice. For God hath from the beginning chosen his people unto salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. (2 Thess. ii. 13.) By the gracious operations of the Spirit the chosen and redeemed of the Lord are set apart to the obtaining of the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory; they are led by the Holy Ghost into the highway of redemption, (Isaiah xxxv. 8,) and taught the truth as it is in Jesus. For this gracious sanctification of the Spirit consists in this that they are born of the Spirit and set apart by a vital experience of the truth of the gospel of Christ in their hearts. Thus our Savior prayed, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."—John xvii. 17. Christ saith of the Spirit of truth, When he "is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."—John xvi. 13, 14. Thus led and enlightened in the things of Christ we poor sinners receive the love of the truth that we might be saved, and we live and walk in the truth of the gospel in faith and love. In the belief of the truth our hearts are comforted, our sins are pardoned, our fears dispelled, and by faith in Christ we receive the atonement. (Romans v. 11.) Yes, in the belief of the truth our hearts are enabled to realize that the blood of the Lamb of God cleanseth us from all sin.

"His blood can cleanse the blackest soul,
And wash our guilt away;
He shall present us sound and whole
In that tremendous day."

With the breastplate of faith and love and for an helmet the hope of salvation, (1 Thess. v. 8,) we will fight the good fight of faith, laying hold on eternal life. The hope of salvation, how inspiring and comforting! We are saved by hope; this blessed hope in Jesus is what is now ours as pilgrims and strangers in the earth. By grace are we saved, through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast, and our "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." While we are in the world God gives unto us the comforting earnest, the first-fruits of the Spirit, and as sure as we have obtained the hope of salvation, for the Holy Spirit hath put this helmet upon our heads, we shall reap and come into full possession in all actualness the salvation brought unto us by the blood and righteousness, the death and resurrection, of our precious Lord Jesus Christ. "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain

salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." Thus there will be no failure of this appointment of God, for all such are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."—1 Peter i. 5. Then we shall come into all the actual blessedness of eternal salvation, we shall be without sin, we shall be immortal, incorruptible, and we shall bear the image of Christ, the heavenly One. Ah, now we feel we are sinful, we are sinners, unholy, but we have obtained the earnest, the hope of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ, and we now through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith; our earnest expectation is to be with Christ, and to be like him, to be free, actually free, from sin and corruption and mortality, that the glorious liberty of the children of God may be ours; O most comforting expectation, "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."—Romans viii. 21–25.

Christ "died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him." He gave himself a sacrifice for us, an offering of a sweet-smelling savor. While we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Did he die for us? Did he die for me?

"Love moved him to die, on this I rely;
My Jesus hath loved me, I cannot tell why;
But this I can tell: he hath loved me so well
As to lay down his life to redeem me from hell."

He made atonement for our sins to reconcile us unto God, he suffered the just for the unjust to bring us to God; to bring us from under the curse, to bring us out of death's embrace, to ransom us from the grave, to bring us forth immortal, and spiritual, incorruptible; yes, the saints of the Lord shall be raised up at the last day, they shall come forth from their graves in the likeness of the ascended and glorified Redeemer. O sin must be atoned for, the justice of God satisfied. Shall sin and the curse, mortality and death hold us their prey forever? O no, for Christ shall swallow up death in victory; he is the first-fruits of them that slept. He now reigns above, and the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. The dead in Christ shall be raised incorruptible, mortality shall be swallowed up of life. Truly, beloved brethren, this hope of the gospel is comforting and glorious. O sin must be made an end of; sin with all its direful consequences must be put away or else we perish, we are not saved. And what shall put away sin and redeem us from the curse? Only the sacrifice of Christ. He gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. Consider what anguish was his when sin's intolerable load he bore. Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. How hateful is sin in the eyes of the Lord that such a sacrifice should be required to make atonement. Can we think lightly of sin that so

weighed down the Son of God our Savior? He was sore amazed and very heavy, and sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, falling down to the ground; he cried, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; and on the cross he cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" It is written, Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin. He poured out his soul unto death. (Isaiah liii.) But the sorrows of death and pangs of hell must loosen their hold of him, our Redeemer and Surety, for he in agonies and blood met all the claims of eternal justice; all the wrath of God against the sins of the elect, Jesus endured. O, he for our sakes, for our salvation, was appointed to wrath, he was made a curse for us, he delivered us from the wrath to come. (1 Thess. i. 10.) He could not be holden of the sorrows of death; he drank the cup to the last dark drop, the last wave of the curse flowed over his soul, and he cried, "It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied."—Isaiah liii. 11. Yes, this shall be the fruit of his death. He "died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him." "That, whether we wake or sleep." The apostle is here taking up again the comforting, hopeful subject which he had been delaring in the preceding chapter. There he tells us of the sleeping saints being raised again from the dead, and those who are alive (awake) at his coming being caught up together with them in the clouds to meet our descending Lord Jesus Christ in the air, and so, saith he, shall we ever be with the Lord. (1 Thess. iv. 13, 18.) The apostle Paul declares the same things in 1 Cor. xv. 51–54: "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." "Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living."—Romans xiv. 8, 9. Whether we wake, therefore, or sleep at the last day when our Lord Jesus shall descend from heaven, the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed. O glorious, longed for change! We look for our Savior from heaven, "who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."—Phil. iii. 21. That "we should live together with him." This is the fruit of his death. The eternal purpose which was purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord that the whole family of the election of grace shall throughout eternity live together with him. There is in our faith in the gospel a looking beyond the scenes of earth and time to that "inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salva-

tion, ready to be revealed in the last time." We shall live together, the whole family, the household of God, we shall meet the Lord in the air. (1 Thess. iv. 17.) O what a meeting that will be, Christ Jesus, the glorified Head of the church, and the members, all regenerated, holy, faultless, glorified in the likeness of Christ. We shall meet Jesus, and never, never part, never more be absent. (for now while in this world, "at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord."—2 Cor. v. 6.) So shall we ever be with the Lord. We shall live together in everlasting friendship, in eternal communion, and immortal love shall reign in us toward each other, and O, we shall all love and worship forever our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him; we shall live with our Husband, our Head, our Redeemer; we shall reign in life with him in eternal excellency. (Isaiah lx. 15.)

"No more shall the wicked our comforts annoy,
Nor conscience from guilt feel a wound;
No tree of temptation, our peace to destroy,
Shall in the blest region be found.

No passions unholy our bosoms shall move,
To taint the fair mansions with strife;
Our Jesus shall feed us on pastures of love,
And lead us to fountains of life."

We shall live together with him; mortality shall be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given us the earnest of the Spirit. "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do."

FREDERICK W. KEENE, Mod.
JOSEPH F. HALL, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at his home in Philadelphia, Pa., Miss Eva C. Peter, of that city, and Benjamin C. Cook, of Pittsburg, Pa.

By the same, at his home in Philadelphia, Pa., Miss Ida Morris, of Delmar, Del., and Angus Mackenzie Campbell, of Brooklyn, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Simon Peacock, of Gardiner, Maine, was born Jan. 17th, 1828, and departed this life to be with Christ, which is far better, May 12th, 1909, aged 81 years. Our brother experienced a hope in God's salvation in early life, and united with the Freewill Baptists, but while among them the Holy Ghost instructed him in the things of Christ and brought him to a clear understanding, both from the Scriptures and his own experience, that the salvation of poor, vile sinners is of the Lord alone, according to the riches of his sovereign grace, not of works, lest any man should boast. Then some forty-five years ago, in the providence of God, he was led to hear Elder Hiram Campbell, who came to South Gardiner to preach. In his preaching he found what his soul longed for: the precious, unadulterated gospel of Christ, the Son of God. It was food to his soul, and the people who feed upon that doctrine, he said, are my people, and their God my God. He united with the church at Bowdoinham, Maine, and was baptized by Elder Hiram Campbell. Our beloved brother was unwavering in the faith, and with him the doctrine of Christ was not a bare theory, but he lived upon it, it was his daily food, and he lived the gospel in his daily intercourse with the children of men. He was a good man, a kind father, a true brother in the church of God, but he was ever accounting himself to be a poor, vile sinner, whose only hope was the grace of God in the blood of the Lamb. He loved the household of faith, and the assemblies of the saints of the Lord, and his life and actions showed it. He looked forward to the monthly meetings of the church at South Gardiner, most of the time walking from his home and back again, a journey of ten miles, which at his time of life, and the frail state of his bodily health, all witnessed his devotion to his dear Savior, and his eagerness to hear the preaching of the gospel of Christ. His life among us was an inspiration, provoking us to love and good works, and we all looked upon him with loving eyes. During his last illness it was my happiness to visit him, and it was comforting to witness the covenant faithfulness of God in supporting him when flesh and heart were failing. He said he was ready to go at any time the Lord should call him, and with sacred delight he talked of his dear Savior. He leaves to

mourn their loss a son, and two daughters and their families.

At his funeral the writer preached from Revelation xxii. 1–5. His body was interred in the Gardiner Cemetery, there to sleep until the last day, when Jesus shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, "and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." FREDERICK W. KEENE.

Mrs. Mary Turner, wife of W. H. Turner, died at her home, near Highgate, Ontario, April 21st, 1909. The subject of this notice was born Dec. 10th, 1855. Her mother was a member of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, which holds the same sentiments as the Old School Baptists. Her father is a member still, but very old and frail, being in his eighty-ninth year. Her mother died many years ago. She was the youngest of five sisters, all of whom were subjects of grace; two preceded her by some years to the better world. The obituary of one was in the SIGNS about sixteen years ago. She had a very remarkable and clear experience and deliverance from the bondage of the law to the power of the gospel. Mrs. Turner was convicted of sin and led to see herself a vile sinner before God when quite a young woman, but from causes I need not mention was led to join the New School Baptists, and was baptized by them, but in a week or two after was led to hear Elder Pollard, and then she knew she had joined the wrong denomination, and she told me, with tears streaming down her face, that she knew Elder Pollard preached her experience, and she saw the Old Baptists were the church of God, and she never again went near the New School Baptists. Though she never united with the church, yet she was a constant attendant whenever she could. She was very clear and decided in her views of truth, and a good talker on spiritual things, and had a good understanding of the Scriptures. I loved to talk with her, and often we talked on these solemn and important things, as for many years while we lived near them she visited us almost every week, and we often visited them, and our acquaintance was very pleasant and sweet, Mrs. Scates and she being like sisters. She had a lump on her side, which troubled her for years and rendered her unable to do her work, and finally was the cause of her death. She had always had a terror of death, but a few days before she died she said to her sister, Would it not be good to die tonight? or words to that effect, showing how the Lord had taken away all fear of death. She was unconscious for some time before she passed away. She was of a meek, humble spirit, but a noble woman by the grace of God, and adorned the doctrine she professed to love by a consistent walk and conversation. She was a kind, loving daughter to her aged father, who lived with them, and a very devoted wife.

Elder Wyman, of Michigan, attended the funeral. She leaves a dear frail old father, a disconsolate and heartbroken husband, one son and two sisters to mourn their loss, but to her we believe it is gain, the change from sinful mortal life to blissful immortality. R. SCATES.

MY mother, **Hannah E. Smith,** was born May 15th, 1824, and died July 30th, 1909, aged 85 years. She was a daughter of Henry and Ann Hait. She was married to Ham Smith, Oct. 27th, 1850; nine children were born to them, three of whom are left to mourn their loss, four having passed away when small and two after marriage, each leaving a child. She was sustained by the almighty Arm to pass through those trying scenes. My father departed this life October 11th, 1888. Since his death she had made her home with her children, most of the time with the writer. July 11th last we took her to my sister's home, Mrs. Lee. In about a week she became ill with indigestion, with which she had been a sufferer for years. A doctor was called; in a few days she became better, and as she was a very ambitious woman, came downstairs. July 25th she took to her bed for the last time. I was with her on the following Monday and Wednesday nights. She suffered considerably then; she seemed to regard it as her last illness from the first, although at times she was hopeful. Once when she spoke doubtingly about recovering I said to her, "Our times are in the Lord's hand, and he doeth all things well." A quick response came with emphasis, "Yes." She loved the Scriptures of truth, and was resting upon the finished work of Christ. She searched the Scriptures, and always looked forward to receiving the SIGNS and enjoyed it contents.

The funeral was held at Mrs. Lee's. A Presbyterian minister read from Gen. xxv. 8; xxxv. 29; Job xlii. 17, and many passages from the New Testament, also made a few remarks concerning my mother, spoke of her as having kept the faith so many years. It is a very deep loss to us all, especially to the unworthy writer, as she was so unselfish and desirous to help, and made herself so useful. I know she is present with the Lord, so do not sorrow as those who have no hope. I do not remember who baptized mother, but know she was a member of Hopewell Church.

Her daughter, SARAH A. NORTON.

[MRS. NORTON, the writer of the above, in a personal letter adds that her mother was born in Fairfield County, Conn. She also speaks of hymns and many portions of Scripture marked by her mother.

We feel that we need add nothing to the above obituary, but will say that we have never known one whose whole heart was more wrapped up in the things of the Spirit than was hers. She loved the courts of the Lord; she loved his salvation. We shall greatly miss her letters to us, they have been coming to us for more than a dozen years. May God comfort and bless her family in their bereavement. We do not doubt that they are blessed according to his will.—C.]

Silas J. Lowe died at his home, Rock Springs, Md., May 19th, 1909, in his 68th year, after being afflicted for twelve years with lung trouble, which he bore with all the fortitude that mortal man could. The last five months of his life he gradually went down, like a lamp going out. He was fond of having the Old Baptists visit our home, especially the ministers. Elder Grafton's death was very hard on him, as he looked forward to his getting better; he was always pleased to see him drive in, but alas, he is gone; he was a lovely minister, and we all miss him. I pray the Lord to give me strength to bear what he has seen fit in his all-wise providence to put upon me, and make me to say, Not my will, but thine, be done. Mr. Lowe never made a public profession, but left evidences which make me comfortable. He had a beautiful view about a week before he died; he aroused about midnight, and he saw the room was filled with little girls all dressed in beautiful white robes, and each carried a light, he said the most beautiful light he ever saw; they were coming for him. I asked him if it frightened him. He said, No, it was too beautiful to get frightened at. I asked him about three hours before he died if the little girls came for him was he willing to go with them? which he responded to at once.

We had Elder Wm. Alexander with us, who spoke comforting words, and sang his favorite hymn: "Asleep in Jesus," after which the remains were laid to rest in the Rock Springs graveyard until the resurrection. He has left to mourn, beside myself, a daughter, wife of Edward Dawson, a brother in Ohio, also nephews and nieces.

SALLIE LOWE.

ROCK SPRINGS, Md., Sept. 14, 1909.

David Albert Williams was born near Lebanon, Ohio, Dec. 26th, 1859. He was a graduate of the National Normal University at Lebanon, also of the Miami Medical College in Cincinnati in 1888, and immediately began the practice of medicine in Franklin, where he resided until his death. In December, 1894, he was received in the Old School Baptist Church at Tapscott, near Franklin, and this letter inclosed was written to mother the evening after his baptism. He was a dear and lovely son and brother, and loved every one, and had a kind word and smile for all with whom he came in contact. Two weeks before his death, on Sunday, he came to visit mother, who is in her eighty-fourth year; he was full of love and joy to see us all and be with us, yet there was a vein of sadness about him; he spoke often of the wounded heart. He just preached us a sermon, his theme was the goodness and faithfulness of God to his children. It was a sore affliction to see our beloved brother, who looked to be in the full flush of health and manhood, so suddenly taken from our midst, but we must be still and know that God reigns. It was said of him that such a calamity had not befallen Franklin in years as the loss of such a useful man as Dr. D. A. Williams. Not as the world thinks do we write thus of our beloved brother, but "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." God caused him to confess His holy name in the true church, and it is a great comfort to those who loved him and had fellowship for him to know that the blessed Savior said, They that the Father gave to me shall come to me, and nothing shall be able to pluck them out of my hand. He died April 9th, 1909, aged 50 years, 3 months and 14 days. There remain to mourn their loss his aged mother, a wife and daughter, two brothers and three sisters, besides a host of other relatives and friends.

His sister in the flesh, and I hope in the Lord,

(MRS.) EVA MORRIS.

(See communication on page 593.)

MY husband, **David R. Mellott,** of Pleasant Ridge, Pa., died June 23rd, 1909, aged nearly 76 years. He was baptized nearly forty years ago, and united with the Needmore Church, which he dearly loved. He was a veteran of the Civil War, and never had good health afterward. Thirteen years ago he was thrown from a train, nearly killed, and never fully recovered. The last few years he was like a child, sitting in a chair, often asking about the church and longing to hear a sermon preached, which privilege was denied him, his pastor, Elder E. V. White, having crossed the river, and as yet no one has taken pastoral care of the church. We believe he is now at rest with his Savior, no more longing—satisfied. He was married twice, and leaves a widow and twelve children to mourn their loss.

Elder A. Mellott conducted the funeral service.

ELIZABETH MELLOTT.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. B. M. Bouton, N. Y., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Lexington, N. Y., (Lexington Association) has appointed a yearly or two days meeting to be held at our meetinghouse, in Lexington, Saturday and Sunday, October 3rd and 4th, 1909. All lovers of the truth, and especially ministering brethren, are cordially invited to meet with us.

FLETCHER MACKEY, Church Clerk.

THE Primitive Baptist Church called Columbia, in Cement City, Mich., will hold her yearly meeting the first Sunday, and Saturday before, in October, 1909, commencing Friday evening. All are invited to attend.

M. LINDLEY, Church Clerk.

THE Lexington Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will be held, the Lord willing, with the Jefferson Church, at Jefferson, Schoharie Co., N. Y., commencing the first Wednesday in October and continuing two days (6th and 7th). The nearest station is Stamford, on the Ulster & Delaware R. R., where teams will be provided to bring all who may come Tuesday p. m. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren of our faith and order. Elder Eubanks is expected.

This done by order of the church.

D. C. HIX, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Providence Church, near Rainsburg, Bedford Co., Pa., beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1909, and continuing three days (Oct. 8th, 9th and 10th). Those coming from the south will leave Cumberland, Md., at 3:30 p. m. on Thursday; from the north, Huntingdon, Pa., at either 2 or 5:40 p. m. Thursday. These trains will be met at Bedford, Pa. Should any one arrive in Bedford at any other time, go to 652 West Pitt St. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. For any further information write to Geo. W. McClellan, 652 West Pitt St., Bedford, Pa.

J. C. MELLOTT.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa appoints the 9th and 10th days of October to hold their yearly meeting, and cordially invites our ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Olive and Hurley will hold a two days meeting, the Lord willing, on Wednesday and Thursday, October 13th and 14th, 1909. Trains will be met at Shokan on Tuesday p. m. before the meeting. All who love the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with Mt. Zion Church, October 13th, 14th and 15th, 1909. Friends coming to the Meeting by railroad will be in Washington, D. C., on Tuesday preceding the meeting, in time to take the train for Leesburg, Va., at 1:30 p. m., where all will be met and taken to places of entertainment in the neighborhood of Mt. Zion. A cordial invitation is extended to all who may wish to meet with us.

J. N. BADGER.

THE Old School Baptist Church in Wilmington, Delaware, has appointed their yearly meeting for Saturday and Sunday, October 16th and 17th, 1909, to commence at 2 o'clock p. m. on Saturday. Trolley cars from the Pennsylvania and the Baltimore and Ohio depot direct to Tenth and Market St., one and one-half squares from meetinghouse. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Indiantown Church, of Wicomico Co., Md., October 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1909. Friends will please come on Tuesday before the meeting. Those coming from the north or south will get tickets for Salisbury, Md., where they will change cars to the B., C. & A. R. R., getting tickets for Pittsville, where all will be met. Those coming from Baltimore will not have to change cars at Salisbury. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren. We will try to give all a warm reception to our homes and make you feel that this is our people. Trains will arrive about 1:30 p. m.

T. M. POULSON, Pastor.

THE church of the Roxbury Association will hold their fifth Sunday meeting, the Lord willing, at Union Grove, N. Y., October 30th and 31st, commencing on Saturday at 2 p. m. All who love the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. Nothing preventing, we expect brother J. M. Fenton to be with us at this meeting. Trains on the Delaware & Eastern R. R. will be met Saturday morning at Union Grove, N. Y.

J. B. SLAUSON.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds meetings every third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.
JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

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All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND,

Southampton, Pa.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 77. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1909. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"A GREAT GULF FIXED."

(Luke xvi. 26.)

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I feel my unworthiness to claim this holy relationship, but the anointing of the Spirit has taught me to love you for the truth's sake, which truth I have somewhat opposed, as you will remember, being ignorant of the deep riches contained in your article on the rich man and Lazarus. I am grieved in my heart at the disappearance of your name from the editorial pages, and feel that my opposition to your views, and probably that of others, is partly the cause of your not writing oftener. How I am made to mourn at the thought, for it has been revealed to me, and made plain, that the rich man does represent the Jews under the old covenant, and Lazarus represents the people who feel their poverty, being without God and without hope in the world. We may differ as to the natural things used in this parable, but in its spiritual import, I rejoice to say, we see eye to eye. I humbly ask you to forgive me for asking a further explanation of your views as I did. "There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets;" and again it is written, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Brother Ker, you have well said that this sovereign work of God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, is the gulf fixed between Lazarus and the rich man. Jesus saith, "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division." Here again is the gulf fixed. God had dealt with the people of his creation in many ways, but this is the first time he had utterly divided them so they could not get back together. When Eve partook of the forbidden fruit she was for a time separated from Adam. She could not get back to him, but Adam could go to her, and he did, and they were again together. God chose Jacob as the lot of his inheritance and blessed them above all nations, so there was a division between them. Other nations could not come in with them, but they

proved unworthy of God's favor and rebelled against him until it was thoroughly proven that they would not walk in the law of God; so when the day of their probation was at an end the verdict was read: "There is none righteous, no, not one." O what a sad condition, yet all men by nature are in it together; there is no division. Other nations could not come unto Israel, but Israel did go back unto the world. So it was the case as long as God suffered man to walk after his own ways, but it is written, "Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways," which signifieth that the time is no more when man can walk in his own ways. "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached." But wherein is the difference between the kingdom of God, and the law and the prophets? The law was to try man, and as it was given only to the Jews, it was therefore a gulf between them and all other nations; but this gulf was not "fixed," it was only temporary, as every nation was suffered to walk in its own ways, and the Jews, who would not walk in the law of God, soon became as other nations. So this first gulf, or middle wall or partition, was torn down, and now all men, naturally, stand together before God; all are alike sinners; all are condemned alike. O where then is there any hope to be found? Man has gone on in his sins until the day of probation is over. But here comes the gospel of the kingdom of God. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." O how great those blessings must be, if indeed they are double for all my sins. But these blessings are not bestowed upon God's people in his kingdom as they were upon the Jews under the old covenant. They received all the riches of the earth; they had every opportunity given to prove them, whether they would walk in God's commandments, but they would not, and it is written in the parable, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." They had rejected Moses, they had slain the prophets, they had stoned all that were sent unto them, and now, in the gospel day, a gulf is fixed between them and the true worshipers of God. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell." Was the city of Capernaum literally exalted to heaven? Will not the same rule of figurative speech apply to the word "hell"? Surely the Jewish nation was brought down to hell when the Lord said, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." But God had a higher motive in casting them down than the mere display of his wrath against them, as it is written, "I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy." Was not the rich man provoked to jealousy when he saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom? Yes, Abraham was afar off,

This is one of the mysteries of the kingdom of God which was first preached by John, saying, "And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." O the power of God in his kingdom. The day of man's power is over, and even then he could only do what God suffered him to do; but now is the day of the Lord; the kingdom of God has come. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." "No man can come to me, except my Father which hath sent me draw him." Again, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." How great is that gulf, and how fixed it is; none but the elect can come, and all of them shall come—a complete separation; the rest cannot come, and the elect will in "no wise" be cast out; so it is impossible for all mankind to get together again. Some think there will be a final separation to take place in that great future day, but even now here in time the separation takes place; the sheep are separated from the goats wherever the gospel is preached. "There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings. And many of them said, He hath a devil." This was blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, which hath no forgiveness, so it was impossible for them to ever repent and receive forgiveness, hence the division was final, the gulf was fixed. Others believed on him, and Jesus said, He that believeth on me hath eternal life, and shall never perish. O how great is the gulf. The gospel divides; it does not make sheep, but divides them from the goats. "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." "Wherefore I give you [to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." Again we see that the great gulf is fixed. If we have not the Spirit we cannot say Jesus is the Lord, and if we have the Spirit we cannot say he is accursed, therefore God's people cannot blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, and if they do sin, it is forgiven, for all manner of sin and blasphemy is forgiven, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is never forgiven. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." It is not left with God's people as to whether they will come. Under the old covenant there were invitations given, and left to man whether he would obey, but under this new covenant, the gospel kingdom, the servant is commanded to go into the streets and lanes of the city, and in the highways and hedges, and bring the maimed, the blind, the halt, and "compel" them to come. This is the poor man, Lazarus, that was full of sores. Notice it says he "was carried" by the angels into Abraham's bosom. So the Lord has always carried his people, and now in this last time he is revealing these secrets unto his children. "But, as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because

they are spiritually discerned." Again, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." O the depth of that great gulf! "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." Here is the secret of the kingdom of God. He works in his people both to will and to do of his good pleasure, even as it is written, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Of others it is written, "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation." O such an ordained gulf. The Scripture doth not say in vain "it is fixed." You will notice that these men crept in unawares, and they have not the wedding garment on them, and those favored ones claim no honor to themselves, as it is written, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."

Brother Ker, I must close. It is nearly midnight now, and I must work hard every day for the support of my family. I know my body needs rest, but I have been keeping late hours this way for two or three weeks, thinking and writing of these glorious things, and I cannot tell that I am breaking down in the least. I feel that this anointing of the Spirit gives bodily rest as well as rest from all our work under the burden of sin. It seems that if I could unburden my heart and write of all the glorious things of the Scripture that are opened unto me, even the world could not contain the books. I am away from any Baptists, and when I get to writing of these things to my few correspondents I am afraid I will weary them, though I will neither complain nor apologize for this letter; it is only the meditations of my heart in my lonely hours. O I long to be with God's dear children, and talk with them face to face, and be comforted one of another by our mutual faith.

I have been working at saw-mills and planing-mills for the past three years, and you know it is a profane class generally around all public works. Pray for me that the Lord may deliver me from this bondage, if it is according to his will. For we are taught to pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." How foolish for a man to pray for a thing when he would not have it when he got it. I have heard people pray as above quoted, and then I have heard them rail against the doctrine of God's sovereign will, and you tell them what the kingdom of God means and they will not have it at all. But we have nothing except what we have received of him, and they are to be pitied, for they know not what they do.

Pardon this rambling mind of mine. I thought I was going to stop, but forgot it straightway. He "that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." I now feel that it is good for me to stop.

Your brother in the faith,

ROBERT S. PACE.

NACOGDOCHES, Texas, Nov. 10, 1908.

[WE have no doubt God gave our dear brother strength of body as well as strength of mind to write the above excellent letter. We freely forgive him for any difference he may have manifest-

ed regarding our article on "The rich man and Lazarus," but assure him that his objection and further inquiry had nothing to do with our silence in the editorial columns. Our lack of time and ability often hinder us from writing, even when we feel that we should. Our private correspondence is sometimes neglected, and questions go unanswered for weeks for the same reason. We hope the brethren and friends will pardon us. —K.]

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Sept. 28, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have asked brother McTaggart's consent to send the following letter to you for publication in the SIGNS, and he has consented, and if it meets your approval I think it will be read with much interest and comfort by the lovers of truth. As will be seen, he is now nearly eighty-four years of age. He was given a good hope through grace long ago, but was not baptized until he was nearly eighty. His wife has been a member of the church many years, and their pleasant home has been one of the homes of the Old School Baptist brethren since, and long before, my first visit there in 1867. They are now left nearly, if not quite, alone of all that generation who came from Scotland about the same time; but they do not seem alone when at the June quarterly meeting; their many children with their families come back from their separate homes, and, with the multitude of brethren and friends, crowd the old home. My first visit to the church in Canada was at this quarterly meeting at Ekfrid, and I remember how cheerfully and cordially Elder McColl gave out the invitation to the great crowd of people: "Go anywhere along these roads, and stop at any house; all are prepared, and will be glad to entertain you." It is seldom I have failed to be at their meeting since then, and that invitation of the dear old father in Israel, who has long since gone to his rest, still holds good.

Your brother in the hope of the gospel,
SILAS H. DURAND.

APPIN, Ontario, August, 1909.

MY DEAR AND LOVED ELDER DURAND:—I am now attempting to answer your kind, loving letter. I never yet have had the courage to call a child of God brother or sister, seeing myself so unworthy of that loving salutation. I was born in the western part of Argyleshire, Scotland. I came to Canada with my parents in the year 1831, and settled on the same farm on which I now live and have lived ever since. I was the youngest of a family of six, two sons and four daughters. My parents were members of the old Kirk of Scotland. My father used to tell me that he was not satisfied there. But there used to come Baptist preachers around whom he thought were from a different college than the Presbyterians, and one that was founded before that of Athens or Rome, and he would go and hear them, with many of the inhabitants of that section of country. Because of his attachment to the Baptists the preacher sent him word that if he would not stop attending the Baptist meetings he would cut him off from the privileges of the church. His answer was that he was not sorry for the change.

In the years 1818 and 1819 there was quite a colony came and settled on the shores of Lake Erie, in the townships of Aldboro and Oxford, and in Duart village; among them was one Dugald Campbell, in whom dwelt the Spirit of his Master, who was a Baptist in Scotland; so my father was determined to follow

him. He was encouraged to hold meetings on Sundays in some of the houses, but said he did not want to disgrace the cause of his Master by going without shoes, for I believe he was barefooted at the time. No comforts could then be had nearer than Toronto or Detroit. In the township of Lobo there were a number more settled from the same part of Scotland. Elder Campbell was ploughing with a yoke of oxen; when in the middle of his work he set the team loose and came into the house. His wife asked him what was the matter. He said he had a call from his friends in Lobo to go and preach the gospel to them, or a call from a higher Power. So he and Thomas McColl, then a young man who was not yet preaching, I think, went and staid a long time among them.

In Lobo the power of God was manifest among the people for years. A young man by the name of Duncan Lamont joined the church, and in a short time began to preach, and a very powerful preacher he was, and a fine walking man. He also was endued with the Spirit of God; his work showed it; but he never spoke but in the Gaelic language, which was understood by all at that time. I remember going to Lobo when I was but a boy; the meeting began Friday and went on until Monday noon, the usual time for the quarterly meetings to last. When Monday noon came the whole assembly urged the speakers to continue another day; when Tuesday noon came they would have a night meeting, so they continued speaking until late Tuesday night. The whole house was like waving corn when the wind blows upon it, and you could hardly hear the preachers speak; some lying prostrate on the floor, some young women throwing their headdresses on the floor and crying unto God to be merciful unto them, sinners. Truly the King was among them. I would like to see another such a time before I go hence and be no more. The Elder got up and sang, mostly alone, the fifty-first scriptural paraphrase, commencing at the seventh verse: "What faith rejoices to believe." Some time after this I was in Lobo at a meeting, not the quarterly meeting, where I staid at night after the meeting. There were a great many folks, mostly young people. Before retiring they were singing hymns and talking, and it seemed as if a wind of mighty power blew among the people, particularly the young. I was smitten among them. I could not then tell of sorrow, but I felt a desire within me for something that would be precious to my heart. For the life of me I could not stop this emotion, but I felt very much afraid that my trouble was not from the right source. The next time I went to meeting I was overcome again with the same desire. I then used to pray to the Lord if the work was according to his will and purpose to continue it, and let me not return from following after him, and although he should not answer my petition until my death, not to let me turn back from following after him. The psalms and hymns seemed to have changed and become sweet to me. I continued this for over a year. After this I became quiet in my mind, but could not say that I had any assurance of my interest in my Savior. I was one day working in the field and came to the house for a drink of water; in returning this Scripture came to my mind: If thou believest thou shalt see greater things than these. I would like to have fallen on my face to the ground to worship Him whom my soul loved, only the folks who were around would see and would think

that something had happened to me. I was reading one day in the eighteenth chapter of Genesis. I saw a great glory in this; I could see him who was to be the Head of his people, the Captain of their salvation, promised through Abraham and Sarah his wife. It broke my heart, it made my eyes run with water so that I could not see; I could not read any more at that time.

When we first heard that we were to have a visit from American preachers I was determined to be at the first of the meetings. My ever-loving Elder McColl was there, and Elder Beebe, whose very appearance I loved. Elder McColl read 2 John 10: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine," &c. Elder Beebe, like a champion of the truth, got up and read the third verse of the second chapter of the same John's first epistle, and he soon answered our preacher. I thought then that he did have the spirit of the Lion of the tribe of Judah in him. I could then feel the drops coming down my cheeks, like the dew that falleth upon the mountains of Zion. I then came home, and I returned a little like the disciples coming communing to Jerusalem with joy. I wish I was to-day like those days. The Psalms of David are my whole delight, and were of the early members. I read the one hundred and nineteenth Psalm like a daily lesson. The early preachers were humble walking persons, in attire and everything else. But you will or can say they could not be anything else; they could not get it. They did not wear long robes or gold rings on their fingers; if they had they would not have been listened to.

I am sorry you will have trouble in reading this writing, it is so bungled with mistakes. I intended to have written it over again, but I am completely done out. Make the best of it with patience. My wife tells me to remember her to you and your family. We were sorry for what happened to you at Buffalo. Hope your hand is better. I will add no more, but will say with Jude, "To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

ANGUS McTAGGART.

P. S.—With Elder Beebe came Elders Hill, of Utica, N. Y., and Meaders, of Mississippi; they were great soldiers of the cross. This was in the year 1857. We had a place prepared in the woods, comfortably fixed. Elder Meaders was preaching about the remnant to a large congregation, who were giving close attention, when the rain poured down in torrents. We then moved into the meetinghouses. The old log house was still standing; the frame house was newly built, so we got along all right. My wife and I had been about a year or so married at that time, and we had quite a number over night. She had never been used to these meetings. I said, "You will feel it tiresome to be attending to so many people." Her answer was, "If I had to go on my knees, if I thought they were the servants of God I would be happy to wait on them." This was encouraging to me, and her a Presbyterian. We were married in February, and the Lobo meeting was the next Sunday. I asked her how she would like to go to the meeting on our wedding trip. She said she could not go to any place she liked better; so we started Friday noon. On the road I said, "You would be used to the Psalms of David in the Sunday School." "Yes," she said, "and I used to learn them by heart." I thought by this that she had an exercise in her heart. When we came home she said, "I noticed

that the people seemed to love one another; it was hard for them to part." After that she had some gracious exercises which she told me.

I want to mention the names of Elder Neil McDonald and of deacons Duncan McCollum, John Ford, John McIntyre and Donald Walker. These were faithful men in exhortation and in preaching. I only intended to mention those I knew in my younger days, whose remembrance to me is sweet. About Elder Pollard and later ministers I will say nothing, as the young people know about them as well as I do, and it is for them I am writing.

Dear Elder, I got started remembering old things, and could not stop. I thought only to write one side of the sheets, but now I have covered both pages. May he who is the King of kings and Lord of lords be with us now and forever.

A. M.

A CONFESSION OF FAITH.

To all the faithful in Christ Jesus I would make this confession of faith. This which follows is a confession of what I believe and preach. I am not ashamed to let the whole world know just what I do believe and preach. I did not receive it of men, and neither was I taught it, but by revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ. I was stigmatized as a "Hardshell" before I ever heard one preach. Dear brethren, there is one point in my experience which I never shall forget: I did see the face of Jesus, and did hear him say, The power is in me, and not in man. From that moment until now I have never been able to recognize any power in anything to think, speak or act, except the power of God. First, God is life, and second, he is the first and last. He is the antecedent life of all life, and everything must possess life before action, therefore the power must come from God. Then all things must take place according to God's most holy and righteous will, or else it takes place against his will.

But let us look to the Scriptures, they are they that testify of Him. Inspiration speaks and says, "He doeth according to his will."—Dan. iv. 35. "That the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men."—Dan. iv. 17. "For I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning, * * * saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." And his will and pleasure was to call a ravenous bird from the east. (Isaiah xlvi.) Now if it were his will to declare the end from the beginning, can anything take place between the beginning and the end that is not according to his will? Predestination means nothing more or less than the purposes of God covering all events, and so inspiration says it was God's most holy will to set up the basest of men to rule over the kingdoms of men. No man really believes in predestination unless he believes it is the purpose of God covering all events. If there be one event between the beginning and the end that is not according to his will, then the chain is broken, and ruin is the result. Therefore, dear brethren, please allow me to believe that my God does rule in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand nor question his authority. He declares that he created evil, and made the wicked for the day of evil, and the wicked shall do wickedly and shall not understand. I believe that these are the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.

These are as brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed; they are the children of the bondwoman, and shall not be heirs with the freewoman. I do believe that by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, and by the obedience of One were many made righteous, and I do believe that every spiritual blessing they ever have received, or do now receive, or ever will receive, comes to them through the obedience of Jesus Christ, and not because of their own obedience. I believe that our God made this body subject to vanity, and therefore the subject of hope. Pilate said, "Knoweth thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?" But Pilate was told by the Savior that he had no power, either for or against him, only as it was given him of the Father in heaven. Pilate had a will to release Jesus, because he found no fault in him, yet he acted against his will; he had not power to do his will, and that is why he failed, and yet in this event he was but carrying out God's purposes, and the end to be obtained justified all the means of which our God made use, whether good or evil. What often to us looks like evil God makes to work together with all things else for good, and it does not work together for evil. This holy doctrine of God does not, neither can it, make God the author of sin, as some claim. Man is the author of sin, for sin is the transgression of the law, and man transgressed the law, and fell under its curse. The one reason why man did not stand is this: that God did not give him the power to stand, and the only reason for this was that it was not the will of God to do so. Had not man transgressed, we should have been without hope and without God in the world. But the mercy of God reached the transgressor, and, I hope, reached even me. It freed man from the curse of the law, for there was no mercy in the law, and no way for man to escape its curse except by death, and so "in Adam all die," for God said, "Thou shalt surely die." Now I ask, brethren, Did not our God predestinate the beginning and the end, and every thought, word and deed of this natural man, which all brought about the end of this natural life? It is all to the end that "the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." For God has called us according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. The first creation was in Adam, and ended in death; the second creation began in Christ, and has no end, for he is our life, and our life is hid with Christ in God, and we shall see him as he is, and be like him.

Now let me say in conclusion, if any link in the chain is a conditional link, or a link of chance is found in all this great and mysterious work of God, how could it be truthfully said, "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning"? "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Which is it that is saved, a sinner or a saint? What are sinners saved from? O am I one of his? Shall I see him and be satisfied, or am I under the curse? But I would say, O Lord, thy will be done. Brethren, I wish that you would for Jesus' sake write me whether I am wrong. Is this only a delusion of an overworked brain? I can but say, "God be merciful to me a sinner." O that I might have more evidence that I am his. But he is just and right in all that he doeth, though he cast me away forever.

Your brother, C. K. HAINES.

PRINCETON, Ky., Aug. 8, 1909.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., July 28, 1909.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you for publication, if you think best, the following letter written to Miss Ida Mann, by Elder E. Rittenhouse, in 1897. She died more than a year ago, not having united with the visible church, of which her mother is a member, but rejoicing in hope. This letter will appeal to many, and those who were favored to know Elder Rittenhouse will be glad to read it.

Yours in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

STATE ROAD, Del., Dec. 3, 1897.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND:—Yours just came to hand this morning. You are justly entitled to a reply, and I am seated to reply to-day for some reasons that seem to urge it upon me. I want to say to you that you have given me all the outlines of a genuine christian experience. You do not go into very extensive details, but so far as you go you have evidently learned the lessons that are taught in the school of Christ. As to believing, the apostle John says, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." When we have the evidence in our own experience we believe, and the belief comes along with the evidence. We believe what we know, and we do not and cannot believe beyond that. If we come to know the Savior it is as a deliverer. We know him in what he has done for us in giving us to hope in his mercy and opening the prison door. No one ever believes in the Savior or loves the Savior until he becomes a Savior to them, then they know what a loving and pitying Savior he is, and they love the salvation that has come to them, and they cannot help loving it. For myself, I did not experience any outburst of joy, or feel like shouting. I was disappointed, for I had been led to think that if I ever experienced that change it would come in a sudden outburst of joy unspeakable. I did not have to say,

> "On the wings of his love
> I was carried above
> All sin and temptation and pain,"

but there was a sweet calm, and an entering into peace and rest, and the condemnation and gloom passed away, but the peace that came to me then came to stay, and the Savior that found me then I still believe in and love, and I love all his little ones, and love to encourage and comfort them. I think that those who have the most trouble with themselves, and the most doubts, and worry about their experience and their fitness, have the most satisfaction afterward. Preaching does them more good, for the reason, I suppose, that they are more needy. I do not wonder that you could get nothing at the kind of meetings you spoke of; there are many places about that city where the bread that comes down from above is unknown. Your experience will lead you to the right place and to the right people, and I cannot advise you to wait to become more fit or more worthy. You do not say whether it has been on your mind to ask a place in the church. It may have been that that was just what you wanted to have some talk with me about. It could hardly be otherwise but that you would feel to want the company and confidence of those who had traveled in the same pathway with yourself. Folks who have waded through trouble and sorrow want sympathy and companionship. The Lord's people are called companions. I wanted to know something more of the state of your mind, so I could know better what I might say to you. The story you have told me will

satisfy experienced people that you have come to know and love the same gospel that they have, and I doubt not you would be gladly welcomed to a home and a place among them. If we have the Spirit of Christ we have also a spirit of obedience to his will, and it leads us to desire to follow him and to confess him before men. We do not persuade people, but we try to encourage them and help them along. We know that they are often timid and weak. Write again if you feel so inclined.

Yours to serve in the gospel,

E. RITTENHOUSE.

COGITATIONS.

How may I best serve God and yet please men? The reply is, "That which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God."—Luke xvi. 15. How many citations might be brought forth bearing especially upon this line; but all Bible readers ought to be posted upon these things. To preach Bible doctrine of salvation alone by grace, through faith in Christ, is to hold up and to magnify the name of Christ, and to please God, and he who pleases God is sent of God and is his true servant. To preach, hold up and magnify works in the salvation of sinners is to please men, to exalt one's self, and in so doing to leave the Bible out of the matter altogether, and to so please men, and to thus persuade men, is to cease to be the servant of God. For "do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." Is not salvation partly of works and partly of grace? and if it be partly of each, may not all be saved, and not a remnant? "Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved." "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if it be by grace, then it is no more of works." "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." If it be a gift, it cannot certainly be of debt. "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith." If it were by works we might have cause to boast, and would certainly boast; and were we justified by works we should have cause to boast, but not before God. But if we believe God, it shall be counted unto us for righteousness. "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." If these things be true, is not salvation beyond creature merit or creature help? and does it not drive all confidence out of man, thereby discouraging him with self? Does it not also abase creature merit and creature help? If the people could see it in that light would it not drive hosts of men out of employment who are now salaried to prove that salvation is by human help or merit? There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved but that of the blessed Jesus, and Jesus is exalted to this end; and if he be exalted, correspondingly must man be abased. It does seem to me that if the people could just see Jesus as their only hope of salvation, yea, as their salvation itself, they would withdraw their hard earnings from all creature help, and this would put them out of business. Only those who are called of God, as was Aaron, and who feel, Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel of the grace of Christ, would continue, and

these will preach the gospel regardless of dollars, and their message will always be good news, or glad tidings, to all who are abased in the flesh, but exalted in Christ. Sweet thought indeed; this doctrine does not divide, but will build up together God's humble poor.

From one who is waiting, and, as he hopes, trusting alone in the grace of God,

J. A. TEAGUE.

LAMONTE, Mo., Aug. 22, 1909.

WAVERLY, Pa., September, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—Beloved of God, heirs to the one common salvation, even Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son. I feel impressed to write a short letter to be published in our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that all of the family who so desire may read what I may write. First, I will say that I am still in much weakness and darkness of mind trying to serve the ten churches formerly mentioned by me. Several of these churches have had two days meetings the past summer and fall, which were greatly enjoyed by all lovers of the truth present; good congregations at each meeting, and the preaching at each one was all that could be desired; as there were no hobbies ridden or theories aired, peace and harmony prevailed. We had at the several meetings mentioned in the SIGNS (not all of them at one meeting), Elders Ker, Slauson, Alexander and licentiate brother J. M. Fenton. I was with the brethren at all except the meeting at Shohola, Pa.; Elder Ker was there. I was called to attend a funeral the same day of the meeting, but I know the preaching was good. The gospel was preached at all these meetings, with no uncertain sound; Jesus Christ and him crucified was the theme, first, last and all the way through. The things set forth in the preaching were plain, simple and experimental truths, so that the little lambs could feed and feast their hungry souls, as well as the sheep, and it was very clearly seen that there was a stirring up of the pure minds of the attentive listeners, and it did my poor, hard heart good; even I, as vile, ignorant and bad every way as I can be, was made glad, perhaps I might say happy, and O how I wished I could preach like that, but I cannot, and I know it. I have also attended the Delaware River, Warwick and Roxbury associations; they were all excellent, especially the Warwick and Roxbury. There were a goodly number of ministers at each one, and they preached well. I am glad that I can say I am personally acquainted with the churches and ministers of the Warwick, Delaware River and Roxbury associations, and the churches that once comprised the Chemung Association. Elder Bogardus and myself serve them, and I can truthfully say that I have no knowledge of any division, or any signs of division, among them because of different views of points of doctrine, or anything else, neither has there been any, and any statement contrary to this is not correct. I do not say that all see alike concerning some Scriptures, or to the application of them, or perfectly alike on every point of doctrine; they at least use different phraseology in explaining their views, but that spirit that would lead one brother to call another brother a heretic because he should differ with him, thank God is not among the ministers of these associations and churches, and I pray God to keep us from acting out such a spirit, for it is like a roaring lion, devouring every one who does not see just as they do. Elder Beebe once said if any of the brethren had a

hobby to ride, to take it in the back yard and ride it to their heart's content, but when they went preaching among the brethren, to preach Jesus, and leave the hobby in the back yard; but it is better not to have a hobby. May the dear Lord keep us poor, blundering, halting, blind, depraved, erring creatures from falling out by the way, to our journey's end, is the desire of an old sinner, saved by grace, if saved, by the name of

DANIEL MARVIN VAIL.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—There is no law now applying to us except that we love one another, and that we cannot help doing, for when the Spirit of Christ in us sees the Spirit of Christ in others there is love inexpressible and never yet explained by mortal man, and none but the redeemed know anything about this love. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Ishmael, the child of the bond-woman, was cast out with his mother, and could not inherit with Isaac, the child of the freewoman. Ishmael was a bond-child, representing the product of legalism, which are all under the law and under bondage; they are children of a harlot, and cannot share with the free or legal child. Isaac represents the children of the freewoman, or the church of God, she who is espoused to one Husband, whose righteous name is become hers, and no one can bring reproach to her, for he will shield her. Still, Ishmael should become a great nation, and I suppose that he did. They of the married wife are legal offspring, and cannot sin, for the seed of God remaineth in them. The question arising in my mind is this, Am I born again? But then I sometimes think about it this way: No one could mar my feelings nor my happiness in the least if they should tell me, Selby, you are not the child of George Washington. That would not cause me any pain or humiliation; but let any one approach me with a strong testimony and say, Selby, you are not a child of Martin D. Fisher by his legal wife, such an assertion would hurt me beyond measure; it would cause me to grieve and mourn, and beg my father for evidence of being his son by his lawful wife and a legal heir. I would continually search for evidence, and trace all records in every way I could to satisfy my mind; but still I might remain in doubt until I should hear in the reading of his will such words as these: I will and bequeath to my son Selby so and so, then I would be satisfied. How often Satan appears to us with a very plausible testimony that we are not God's children, and this grieves us, because we are susceptible to feeling, having been born of God, born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible. It is because we have life that it hurts us to be told that we are not the children of God, and this leads us to search for evidence continually. I have been at this almost every day for several years, searching the old records, searching in myself for some family favor, for I can see the favor in others' ways and actions; but if I am given to see any resemblance to a subject of grace in my reflection, I go straight away and forget what manner of man I am. So I cannot be satisfied here, and will not until I have attained to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, then indeed I shall see him as he is, and shall be satisfied.

Your brother,

F. SELBY FISHER.

[THE above are extracts from a private letter written to us by F. Selby Fisher.—C.]

BENNING, D. C., April 17, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—With much love for the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace I make the attempt to write a few lines, knowing full well that if it were not for grace this poor, helpless worm of the dust would be forever lost. My mind of late has been on Christ's sermon on the mount. (Matthew v.) He taught his disciples, saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." Throughout that whole chapter what comforting words to those who know the joyful sound, having been taught of the Lord, for we cannot know any other way. Christ said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." The servants who testify of him to-day are they who are born of the Spirit; no others can testify of him. Dear brethren, if we love this doctrine then we are the poor in spirit and certainly are blessed. He speaks to those who know the joyful sound. I feel to thank the Father in heaven that he has "hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." When we feel in our hearts that we are the children of God, then we can say,

"Come, happy souls, approach your God
With new melodious songs;
Come, render to almighty grace
The tribute of your tongues.

So strange, so boundless was the love
That pitied dying man,
The Father sent his equal Son
To give them life again."

We know our lost and ruined condition before the just and holy God, and those who know are "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" Now, dear brethren, knowing these things, what manner of love we should have toward one another, for God is love; he loved us when we were dead in trespasses and sins, living in open rebellion against him, as Saul was. We should not let trifles prevent us from attending the meetings of the church. Christ told his disciples to love one another as he had loved them, and to forsake all and follow him, and said, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." What wonderful love, to suffer and die for his people, his church, his bride; such love is past our natural understanding; his ways are as high above our ways as the heavens are above the earth.

Please pardon me for intruding on your time and patience with my poor letter. May God's richest blessings abide with you both, and all the readers of the SIGNS. It is a welcome visitor to my house. If you see anything in this you can publish it, if not, it will be all right with me.

Your unworthy brother, if one,
THOMAS ALDEN.

NEWARK, N. J., July 13, 1909.

VERY DEAR SISTER:—You have been much in my mind of late, and your last words to me when I left you at Middletown come to me often; you said, Write

to me when you can. Now I feel incompetent and unworthy to write or claim the fellowship and esteem of the saints of God, still I love you all, and hope it is godly love; it is different from natural love. The word tells us, "He that loveth not, knoweth not God." To-day I feel a love for the church which cannot be expressed. There are times when I have felt I did not know whether I loved any one, but this week I have been all alone (Mr. Ballard and Sidney are in the country), and I have had sweet meditations. I have not been alone, for His presence has been with me; but O how I reproach myself for my unbelief at times. I am continually working, trying to make for myself a reputation and work out my own will, but that article in the SIGNS of July 1st, by Elder J. W. Futch, on the predestination of God, is a glorious theme to me. I feel glad he who is all-wise rules in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; if he be for us who can be against us? He rules everything, good and evil, for his own praise and glory, and I am glad it is so. Dear sister, what a wonder that he chose me, who cannot think one good thought of myself. Every day I reproach myself for my evil thoughts and deeds, and am made to wonder, Is there any good or any of the Spirit in me? When I look back along the way I have been brought and am made to see the divine hand in the crooked ways made straight, and the light shining out of the darkness, can I doubt his love? Often he has spoken peace to my weary, troubled soul, and the peace that passeth understanding was mine. Again, I ask,

"What was there in me that could merit esteem,
Or give the Creator delight?
'Twas even so, Father, we ever must sing,
Because it seemed good in thy sight."

I have written along as my mind was led, so please cast the mantle of charity over all imperfections, and may this find you enjoying good health.

Your sister in bonds of christian love,
A. BALLARD.

LOVELAND, Colo., Sept. 16, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—My note of inquiry, which was inserted in the SIGNS recently, has borne fruit: I have found through it three more precious and loving brethren, to wit, brethren Virgil Agan, B. Allred and J. B. Adams (an Elder from Oklahoma). We held another meeting at old sister McCollum's, near Evans, Colo., on Saturday evening, and on Sunday in a hall in Evans. Surely our blessed Master verified his promise unto us, that where two or three meet together in his name he will be one in their midst. Another meeting was arranged for October 9th, at brother A. G. Johnson's, near Fort Lupton, Colo., at which time we will consider the advisability of constituting ourselves into a church as a little band of true worshipers of God, who is a Spirit and seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and truth. There is one dear old sister among us whose experience of a hope dates back nearly forty years, but has never been situated near a church of her (our) faith, or near one legally authorized to administer the ordinance of baptism to her during all this time. There are others among us who would cast their lot with us if we had a church in our midst so we could receive them.

I wish to renew my request to the readers of the SIGNS: that if they know of others in this part of Colorado who hold to the faith, and love the doctrine of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists, that they will kindly inform me of their whereabouts. I feel the Lord has heard

my cry, in that I have been permitted to once more meet with a few of those I love so well in the Lord. I desire to praise him for his goodness and mercy to me, a poor old man and sinner. Brethren and sisters, pray for unworthy me.

I remain yours in hope of a better life beyond, J. H. YEOMAN.

BALTIMORE, Md., August 24, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed you will please find two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have nothing to tell, but thought to try and write you a few lines, though I cannot explain my feelings. I am a deaf mute, yet I do not complain about it; but I often wish I could speak and hear, but God knows what is best for me. No tongue can express the gratitude I feel in my heart, for I know I am with God's people, and am a member of the church, which is the Primitive Baptist. I thought I could never explain the condition of my mind with regard to my dear mother's religion, but my mind follows hers. She died four years ago, and I was so sorry to lose my darling mother, but I know certainly she is in heaven, where I hope I will be when God calls me. I feel that I could never stop praising my God, and also never want to leave the church. As I am a deaf mute, I have a very good reason to subscribe for the SIGNS, which teaches me about the love of God, because I cannot hear the preaching. I think every mute should subscribe for the SIGNS, and they could read it in their own homes, and learn more about God and his love. I will be glad in my heart to read the SIGNS when it comes to me.

Well, I had better bring this letter to a close; if you wish to publish it, please correct all mistakes.

Very respectfully,

RAY KAUFFMAN.

ST. THOMAS, Ont., August 10, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have taken the SIGNS for a long time now, and I do not think I was ever so well pleased with any one issue of it as the present one. Elder Beeman's article is good and comforting, and I felt to thank God for raising up good and faithful men like him. I have been made sad when hearing some of our own people say, It is better to have such than none at all. I heartily agree with Elder Beeman: If they are good enough for a funeral, they ought to do all the year round. They may for some of our people, but not for me; I have no use for them whatever, religiously, and I do not think any one as weak and poor as I am, who has a hope in God's mercy, can have any use for them.

Next comes Elder Durand's "Fragments." O how good they are, giving God all the praise in the salvation of his people. Then comes O such a good letter from D. S. Elliott. I just felt lifted up after reading it; in fact they were all good and encouraging, but when I read Elder Chick's reply to Elder Allison it did me much good; I thought it one of the best articles I had ever seen on that subject. I remarked that this issue is worth the price for one year. I cannot see how any old-fashioned Baptist can do without the SIGNS; I cannot. Now, dear editors, and others, I hope you may live long to comfort the weak ones like me; if one at all, the very least of all. I hope I love those articles, and the writers, too. Although contrary to previous expectations, I seem to get no better, rather worse I am afraid. I hope you will remember me at the throne of grace. I can say with Elder Moore,

"My nature is so prone to sin,
Which makes my duty so unclean,
That when I count up all the cost,
Without free grace I know I'm lost."

Inclosed please find one dollar to aid in sending the SIGNS to "the poor of the flock." A. J. BLACK.

PINSONFORK, Ky., July 26, 1909.

DEAR ELDER BARTLEY:—Your postal of the 20th inst. just received. The desire of my heart is great toward you that I might see you once more in this life, but I never shall I am sure, but there is one thing which gives me much comfort, and that is, that the Lord blessed you to visit us and preach unto us the gospel of the grace of God to our comfort and enjoyment spiritually, so much so that it is a feast unto the brethren yet, and I do believe will be unto us while memory lasts. I must mention those two days of the almost (if not altogether) miraculous outpouring of the Spirit of the dear Redeemer upon you, and they were Thursday at Big Creek Church, the day you were sick in the morning, and at Pond Creek Church on Sunday of their church meeting.

My dear brother, while the contents of your note throws a dark gloom over my mind, yet there is a bright side to it, which shines so brilliantly that we can but lose sight of the gloom, measurably. I have no doubt but it will be a happy change for you, dear brother, when that change comes, let it be so very soon or in the further future—great grace indeed. My dear brother, your wonderful clearness and soundness in the doctrine of God our Savior, and your firmness in the faith, gave unmistakable evidence of a vital interest in the saving grace of God.

I feel it my duty to close for the present, but will say, if I am not deceived my soul leaps forward with the blessed thought that though I shall never meet you, my dear brother, in this world, that through Christ, our dear Redeemer, we shall meet in that blessed immortality beyond all sorrow, pain and death, then and there to enjoy heaven with all that heaven means.

My wife and the family join me in love to you and yours.

Yours in abiding love,

W. J. MAY.

[THE above letter, written to Elder Marion Bartley, by Elder W. J. May, was forwarded to us for publication. Elder Bartley's obituary will be found on page 638 of this issue.—ED.]

DIVIDE, W. Va., August 21, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Feeling myself unworthy to call you brethren, or to claim a hope with you, as I feel to be the chief of sinners, I thought I would write a few lines to let you know that I appreciate your kindness for the continuance of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES from June 15th. I was called to this place from Maplewood about the first of May to help my afflicted brother. He has a family, and has not been able to work much for about two years, and I have had quite a burden to bear on account of his affliction, but I hope I am thankful that it has been the will of God for him to still remain with us. I had a friend forward me the SIGNS from Maplewood, and to my surprise I received more copies than I expected, and they have been of great comfort to me, as there is not a body of Primitive Baptists nearer to us than forty miles, and the body I belong to is about seventy-five miles from here. I would love to be with the brethren, but I think it is good for me to be here, as the way of man is not in himself. If you will continue to send me the paper you may send it to Divide, W. Va., and I will send the money as soon as I can get it. Pardon me for writing so much.

Yours in precious hope,

W. C. PENNINGTON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1909.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SOME SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

ANY one who is a careful reader of the Scriptures will not be surprised at the prevailing carelessness among the masses of mankind toward the things that relate to the religion of the Bible, and the gross skepticism and avowed infidelity that exist largely among many who profess to be christians. These things are clearly predicted by the apostle of the Lamb. We can judge of the ages past only as we read of them, but surely there can never have been an age when spiritual wickedness in high places more abounded than in the present age. Indifference to the things of God among professedly worldly men does not surprise us, nor shock us as being something that we need not have expected, but that thousands of those who profess godliness should be found seeking to undermine and break down the faith of others who profess to be followers of Christ in the very truth concerning Christ, must be a shock to all who reverence his name. It would have been thought a thing incredible, not more than half a century ago, that professed christian ministers should be found denying the immaculate conception of the Lord Jesus Christ, and his birth of a virgin, the sacrificial atonement, and imputed righteousness, and bodily resurrection of Christ and of his followers, and, on the other hand, asserting that, after all, Christ was but a man, and not God manifest in the flesh in that high and peculiar sense in which God is not manifest in any man save the blessed Lord; that his death was not sacrificial, but rather that of a martyr; that he was only a better man than most others of mankind, and more perfectly filled with the Spirit of God than others; that he did not really rise from the dead, either because he did not really die, or dying, the disciples were deceived in thinking that he arose; that the Scriptures are not the inspired word of God in any sense, above that sense in which it is claimed that all that is good and true is inspired of God, and that there is no such thing as justification by faith in the imputed righteousness of Christ, nor any miraculous operation of the Spirit, by which men are brought to a living, saving knowledge of divine things; but this is the common teaching of this day. These men say much about the progress of the world toward all that is excellent, and nothing, or next to nothing, about any personal hope beyond this life. They preach about the questions of the day, its politics, its social questions, its philosophies, taking the noted men of the day as texts, and spending Sunday after Sunday in exploiting their names, but preach sermon after sermon which are utterly Christless. We have ourself heard funeral sermons in which the name of Christ was not named. The pulpits are Christless, and the pews love to have it so. The philosophies of men have taken the place of the gospel almost all over the world; men do not hesitate to cast doubt upon the revealed word of God, as not being really, in many portions of it at least, the word of God at all. They

do not hesitate to assert that the writers were mistaken in many of their assertions; that they wrote out of some preconceived notion of their own, which colored all that they said. Thus they say that the gospel and epistles of John were warped by some speculative notions that were in the mind of John when he wrote them, and are not the record of the revealed will of God; that Paul wrote simply as one uninspired, endeavoring to uphold his own peculiar notions concerning predestination, election and salvation by imputed righteousness, and that his conclusions are matters which may be disputed, and ought to be, rather than accepted as the declarations of the perfect will and wisdom of God, and yet the chief shame of all this is that these men claim to be the ministers of Christ whom they deny. They surely must fall under the curse named by the apostle who said, If any man should preach any other gospel "let him be accursed." It is sure also that whatever may be said concerning their refinement, their high ideals of living, their efforts to improve mankind, their polished manners and their claims to all goodness, they are not in any sense of the word christian ministers. If they elevate the people among whom they labor, it is to an elevation of infidelity, and not christianity. If they help men to progress, it is not toward Christ, but away from him, not toward faith, but toward unbelief, not heavenward, but earthward, not toward that humility which Christ exemplified in all his life and teaching, and which is enjoined upon all who follow him, but toward pride of the flesh and boastfulness of its wisdom and goodness. The superiority of man and his capabilities become the theme of preaching, rather than the great and solemn teachings of the Bible as to his total depravity and alienation from good and from God. This being the case, it is no wonder that little is said about Christ, and nothing at all regarding the atonement wrought by his death and resurrection from the dead. In all this modern teaching there is no shame, no offence of the cross; the cross is buried out of sight. Had Paul gone preaching as such men teach now, bonds and imprisonment would not have awaited him in every city where he should be sent. The cross then was what offended men; the cross now is just as offensive as then. But such men do not preach Christ crucified; if they preach him at all, it is as an example of godly living, of kindness, of good will and good deeds, of sympathy with the sorrows of men, and also with their joys. In all this there is no offence to any one, and the persecutions of the ages past could not have occurred at all had this been all that christians asserted concerning Christ. In all this there would have been an appeal to the self-esteem and self-complacency that is natural to men, and such teaching would have been applauded. It was the doctrine of the cross that aroused the hatred of men, because this doctrine asserts that men are vile, that they are slaves bound in sin, and that men are hopelessly condemned to everlasting ruin if left to themselves, and that only by the death and resurrection of Christ can any be saved. This doctrine excludes all the boasting of men, and places the highest with the lowest, and makes all to come to God upon one footing, the pharisaic Saul as unworthy as the highway robber and murderer upon the cross. It is no wonder that all natural men see no beauty in Christ, and that religious men see a visage marred more than any man, since his very person and work declare that they all are

lost and must perish in their sins. But this Jesus, who is thus a stumbling-block to the Jew in his righteousness, and foolishness to the Greek in his wisdom, is, after all, to some men the power of God and the wisdom of God.

But why call attention to these terrible things at all? Is it necessary that the people of God should be aware of them? There can be but one reply to these questions. If the writings of the apostles to the churches may be our example, and we can think of no better, then it is sure that faithful ministers must and will call the attention of their brethren to just such things as these, because it is sadly true that they all are yet in the world and in the flesh, that world and that flesh which loves just such teachings as these, and therefore are themselves in danger of being ensnared and broken away from their own steadfastness to the faith. Thus the Galatians departed from the truth in great measure, and it was needful that Paul should warn them; thus the church at Corinth embraced most grievous errors, both in faith and in practice, and both the epistles of Paul to them are largely taken up with reproof and warning against the errors that were so many and so grievous among them. It needs great watchfulness, watchfulness unto prayer, to avoid being ensnared by the plausible reasonings and philosophies that abound. It needs that every member of the churches should be taught from the word and in the pulpit again and again to beware of insinuating theories. This was needful evidently in the days of the apostles, and it is no less needful now. The Bereans were more noble than others, because they were so anxious to know the truth of the Bible that they searched the Scriptures daily to see whether the teaching of the apostles was true. It is good when the hearts of believers are turned to search the word of God. It is sure that the doctrine of God will stand as it has always stood, but it is also sure that it is a blessed thing to come to a clear understanding of what that doctrine is, and the things named in the beginning of this article are the things which ought to be kept in mind with especial care, for without a belief in these things no one can know what a good hope in Christ means. If that hope which is in Christ be clouded, that means that the very name and work of Christ grow dim, and testimony to him ceases, and the hungry must grow hungrier for the bread of life which is denied them. In all this is manifest that conflict which has been going on during all the ages past, and which (we have the word of God for it) shall continue to go on to the end of time. On the one hand, this world is all and in all; on the other hand, this world is to perish and all its glory fade away and Christ alone is to be magnified. Thus Cain and Abel, Esau and Jacob, Saul and David, in the former times stood as representative men, the one manifesting the spirit of worldly fame, pride and religion, and the other humility, and that wisdom which is not of this world, and that religion which binds men to God and exalts him as the Savior, Redeemer, Law-giver and King. The conflict centers around the blessed Lord; it is all either the acceptance or the rejection of Christ.

Returning to the thoughts at the beginning of this article, to deny the miraculous conception and birth of Jesus of the virgin, his sinlessness, that he was God manifest in the flesh indeed, that he was crucified actually upon the cross as an atonement and not as a martyr, that he actually arose from the dead in the very

body that was crucified and laid in the tomb, that he appeared to men who were chosen of God as witnesses of this very truth, that these evidences of his resurrection were infallible proofs that God raised him from the dead, and that after appearing to different disciples many days he was taken up into heaven in the sight of many, and that a cloud received him out of their sight, and that he now sits at the right hand of God in heaven making effectual intercession for us, and that all this work of the blessed Lord is effectual to the final salvation of his people, is to deny Christ, no matter what great zeal may be professed for goodness and righteousness and the elevation of mankind. If these foundations be removed what indeed shall the righteous do? and what shall be said of those who professing to be teachers of Christ yet deny him that which is his chief glory, namely, the glory of the redemption of men from sin and death.

We are not writing this because we have any idea that the ungodly religious world can be turned from their perversions of the gospel, unless indeed the same power that wrought in the heart of a Saul, or of a dying thief, shall also work true righteousness in their hearts, but that our own minds be stirred up by way of remembrance of the faith once delivered to the saints, and but once delivered and unchangeable forever. Of one thing we have felt glad many times, viz., that those who deny the solemn truths named above do not attempt to justify themselves by the testimony of the Scriptures as the infallible word of God, but soon come to refuse the Scriptures, and to assert that they are not to be received as authority for faith or practice. This is in itself an admission that these principles of doctrine are taught in the Bible, and the only way to avoid believing them, therefore, is to deny the truth of the Scriptures. Thank God we have the Scriptures as our testimony, and that we can rely safely upon their truth. That experience by which we come to rest in these principles of doctrine is a soul-humbling one; but as the soul comes to see and mourn over his emptiness and poverty, his sinfulness in heart and life, and his just condemnation before God because of these things, he is prepared thereby to magnify the grace of Christ as it is revealed in these principles of doctrine. These teachings of the Bible in this way become precious to him. Unholy, he needs a holiness not his own; condemned, he needs a price for his redemption that he can never pay; weak toward righteousness, he needs strength that is able to overcome all unrighteousness. All this he finds in the blessed Son of God, and so the hope of such an one comes to be based upon that redemption which was accomplished upon Calvary when Jesus bowed his head and died. It also pleases God at times to cause these truths to bring gladness to the souls of his people, and in every portion of the Bible, in every step of the believer's pathway, the name of Jesus comes to be exalted above every name, and at last it is sweetly true that Jesus becomes all in all to him, and it is the Savior of the Bible, and not the false christ of the advanced religion of the day, who becomes the sinner's trust and plea, and that hope is a good hope through grace to every one who believes. C.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER Wm. Little has changed his address from Pottsville, Texas, to Donie Texas.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Wm. Sloan.)

The Licking Association of Old School Baptists, now in session with the church at Salt River, Anderson Co., Ky., to all with whom we correspond, and all lovers of the truth everywhere, sends christian salutation and love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—We call your attention to the words of Jesus: "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." All Bible readers know that these are the words of Jesus, spoken to his disciples after he asked them the question: "Whom say ye that I am?" Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."—Matt. xvi. 16. Jesus said to Peter, that "flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." And this is the only way that Jesus is known to-day, or has been known to any of the fallen sons or daughters of Adam's race through ages past, and it is the only way that any poor sinner knows Jesus to-day, (and we are all sinners, ten thousand talents in debt, and with nothing to pay.) He is known only by revelation, through the teaching of the Holy Spirit, that they might know him whom to know is life eternal. All that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh to Jesus, for they shall all be taught of the Lord, and learn to their joy and consolation that Jesus is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. The endurance and stability of a building is due largely to the fact that it is built on a firm and solid foundation, and constructed of good material. The walls and temple of ancient Jerusalem, the city of David, stood for ages, because of having a solid foundation, and built of hewn stone. In fact the Roman general, when he gained entrance into the city with his army and examined the walls and towers and the various defences of the city, declared that such was the strength, that had the Jews been well supplied with provisions and united, the city could never have been taken, but through famine and strife between the various factions of the Jews they were unable to keep up the defence on the walls and towers, so that the Roman army gained possession and slew the Jews within the city, and at once set to work and threw down the walls, digging up the foundations, and so fulfilling the words of Jesus, that not one stone should be left that should not be thrown down. So this temple and this wall of ancient Jerusalem, although it stood for ages, yet fell in ruins, as all the works of man will do in the course of time, as men cannot build a structure that will last forever. Now Jesus is the sure foundation stone upon which his church is built, and it will stand forever. For in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall break in pieces and destroy all other kingdoms, and stand forever. (Dan. ii. 44.) The church of Jesus Christ is built of lively stones, chosen, fitted and prepared to fill the very place the Father ordained that each one should fill in this glorious building, the church, which is his body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. All the heirs to this inheritance were chosen ere time began, and through the quickening power of the Holy Spirit they are brought to know that this inheritance is in store for them. The subjects of this kingdom are born again, not of blood, nor of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but born of God. This is the glorious highway that the vulture's eye hath not seen, but the redeemed shall

walk there. As Jesus has power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all that the Father hath given him, and as he has never lost a battle, but is ever victorious, going forth conquering and to conquer, he rideth on the heavens in their help and in his excellency on the sky; he is King of kings, and Lord of lords, the blessed and only Potentate, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light, which no man can approach unto, which no man hath seen, or can see, to whom be glory forever. He is able therefore to finish this building, and we know that "except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." So not one of his people will be left out from Adam to the end of time; they will all be manifest and brought in, from the least to the greatest, through the abounding grace of the Lord Almighty, for Jesus yielded up his life on the cross, offering himself without spot unto God, and paid every debt that was charged against his people. His work is perfect and acceptable to God, for the Father raised him from the dead the third and appointed morn, and he rules and reigns at the Father's right hand, and ever intercedes for his people. One of the sisters in her letter in the "Signs of the Times" says, "I love the people who trust in the Lord for their salvation and have no confidence in the flesh;" will say, So do we; and will add in the beautiful words of Ruth to Naomi, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part me and thee." Their lot be our lot. Finally, "brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." Be courteous, be kind, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us. May God bless his Zion, and that right early, is our prayer for Jesus' sake, and to his name be all the praise in the world without end. For the "foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." If we are built on this sure foundation, not all the works of the world, the flesh and the devil will ever prevent a single one of his people from coming into the full possession of the inheritance reserved for you or them.

J. G. EUBANKS, Moderator.
J. T. McCOUN, Clerk.
T. J. RATLIFF, Assistant Clerk.

(Written by Elder J. B. Slauson.)

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Second Church of Roxbury, Sept. 22nd and 23rd, 1909, to the several churches comprising the Roxburg Association sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—Once again, through the tender mercies of our God, we are privileged to meet, according to appointment, in an associate capacity, and according to our custom you will expect our annual letter.

We desire first to make mention of the goodness and mercy of God to us during the year past; his loving-kindness and tender mercy have surrounded us, and his watchful care has been over us; out of thankful hearts we wish to say that the Lord has been better to us than all our fears. We have been blessed by the presence of his Spirit in our meetings, and our hearts have been made to rejoice

with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Since our last session we have been called to mourn the loss of some faithful members, whom it has always been a pleasure to meet at our association; but their faces we shall see no more. They have fought the good fight of faith, have finished their course, henceforth there is laid up for them a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give them at that day, and not to them only, but unto all them that love his appearing. Therefore if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, then they also that sleep in Jesus, God will bring with him. We also desire to express our gratitude to the King of immortal glory for his watchful care over this band of churches composing the Roxbury Association, that we have been able to dwell together in bonds of love and unity of the Spirit, and no error has crept in among us to mar our peace. O that we might praise him for his goodness and mercy manifested to us during the year past, and pray for mercy still.

"Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness." We wish to write a few thoughts for your consideration upon the words: "Great is the Lord," as recorded by the sweet singer in Israel. (Psalms xlviii. 1.) Our finite minds can only in a slight degree comprehend the magnitude of our God, whose throne is the heavens and whose footstool the earth is. O what is man that He should be mindful of him? Well did the prophet cry, "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever." As we look at the creation of nature, and behold it in all its beauty, we stop and wonder at His greatness; every blade of grass and everything that our eyes behold speak forth of his handiwork. "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." And as the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon us we fall down before him, crying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was and is, and is to come," knowing that we are nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity in his sight. Who can comprehend the height or the depth of the infinite love of God bestowed upon poor mortals? "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God;" and to make manifest his love he sent his only begotten Son into the world to redeem his people who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and by the shedding of the blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ they are cleansed from every sin, and stand holy and without blame before him in love, for he bore all our sins and iniquities in his own body on the tree; and by the power of his word, who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast, we are quickened from a dead state in sin into life, light and knowledge of the truth, and the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, who loved us and gave himself for us; and thus quickened by his Spirit we see the greatness of his power in bringing us from death in sin to a knowledge of the truth, and to hope in his mercy, and we sit down in the kingdom of God with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, by faith, which is the gift of God; and now as our minds revert to the youthful days in our experience, when the candle of the Lord shone about our own tabernacle, and our

hearts were filled with praise, what a manifestation of the greatness of the Lord, as we were brought into fellowship of the saints, separated from former things which we once loved, and caused to love the things which we once hated, and to seek the things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. No power on earth could have changed the desire of our hearts from following after the things of the world, and caused us to love him as our Savior, and desire to serve him in our bodies and spirits which are his. This great and glorious change that was wrought in us by the power of God, is an evidence that we are born again, born of an incorruptible seed, by the Word of God that liveth and abideth forever, and being born of that holy and divine life, we love all the attributes of that life, so it is written that we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren; and the love for our brethren is a living principle in our hearts, and is a manifestation of the work of grace that we do love one another with a pure heart fervently, and all can testify that the church has been a great blessing to them, and our desire is to live humbly and at the feet of our brethren, that we shall prove a blessing to the church. The desire of our heart is that we shall be "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

J. B. SLAUSON, Moderator.
H. C. ELMENDORF, Clerk.

(Written by Elder W. T. Walters.)

To the Elders and messengers of the Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, now in session with Spring Creek Church, Adair County, Missouri.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—It is by, in and through the tender mercies of an all-wise God that we have passed through another year with its joys and sorrows, toils and cares, and are once more permitted to meet together in an associate capacity, to preach and praise that God who is the high and the lofty one that inhabiteth eternity. Now, very dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, from a long established custom of the Association, every year they appoint some one to write what is called a Circular Letter, and as the Association has said I should write it this year I will try and do the best I can, unworthy though I am to try and write such a letter.

You will expect me to use some Scripture for a starting point, so I will call your attention to Acts xv. 18: "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." Now inasmuch as he was the Creator and Maker of all things, he being all-wise, all things were known unto him, and without him there was nothing made that was made. Inasmuch then as he was the Creator and Maker of all things, then, having all power, he has and does rule them according to his own will, without the counsel of man. "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" Then, all things being known unto God, the plan of salvation was laid, and in due time "God sent

forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law," which we understand to be the law of sin and death. As Paul said, "With the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." Now when God sent forth his Son it was at his good and appointed time, and that was in time to save his people from their sins, from the beginning of time throughout an endless eternity, and that was as many as the Father hath given to the Son. Jesus said, As many as the Father giveth me shall come to me. These we find to be a gift to the Son. "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." Now as they are a gift unto him he has a lawful title to them, and it is the Father's will that of all he hath given him he should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. When the time appointed and known unto the Father had come that Jesus should lay down his life, then the law was satisfied. He paid the redemption price, then they were redeemed, and when he bowed his head and gave up the ghost, and said, "It is finished," the work of redemption was complete. Then he was buried and arose again the third and appointed morn, then his people (church) stood redeemed and justified in the sight of God. He arose for their justification and that they might have life. Yes, "he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; though knowing all things he had to suffer, he murmured not a word. No wonder the apostle John could say, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Dear brethren, our sufferings are nothing compared with what our blessed Redeemer had to suffer when he took the sins of the whole family of God on his own shoulders, and bore them all. Dear brethren and sisters, seeing that Jesus was ever obedient to the Father's will, let us try and be submissive to the will of our Master, and be obedient to the law he has laid down to govern his church. Now inasmuch as all his works were known unto him, then he had all things in view. "The Lord knoweth them that are his." "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?" Now, dear brethren, let each one of us who love Jesus and the truth go forward in every known duty which we owe to our Savior, who laid down his life that we might have everlasting life. May God guide and direct us in all our deliberations for our good and his glory, and may grace, mercy and truth be with all the true Israel of God, is our prayer for Christ's sake. Amen.

S. W. GARD, Moderator.

J. M. CATE, Clerk.

NOTICE.

IF nothing in providence hinders, there will be services in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., the fourth Sunday in October (24th), at 10:45 a. m. and 2:30 p. m. The ordinance of baptism is expected to be administered. All brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

L. B. FORD.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Mt. Pleasant Association of Regular Baptists, now in session with the Cane Run Church, at Turners Station, Kentucky, on the 3rd, 4th and 5th days of September, 1909, to the several associations and meetings with whom she corresponds, sends greetings of love in our Lord Jesus Christ.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—By the kind providence, and, as we trust, divine arrangement of an all-wise and unerring God, we are once more permitted to meet in an associate capacity, and to mingle our feeble voices in the praise of him who rules all things after the counsel of his own will, and is the One altogether lovely.

Dear brethren, we are glad to again meet you as messengers and kindred in Christ, enjoying your messages of love and godly conversation. The ministering brethren sent among us, as we trust, by the Holy One, seem to know nothing but Christ and him crucified, proclaiming the glorious riches of the Son of God, for which blessed privilege we should ever give thanks to him who rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and though we may never again meet in this life, let us ever be found faithful to do the will of our Father, that when time and time things shall be done away we may hear the welcome plaudit, Well done; enter thou into the joy of thy salvation.

Finally, brethren, farewell.

E. F. RANSDELL, Moderator.

G. R. TURNER, Clerk.

N. B.—After due deliberation of this associational body, and with much sadness of heart, it was thought best, owing to the numerical weakness and scattered membership, to discontinue the annual session; there will therefore be no more sessions of the Mt. Pleasant Association. While we as a body feel pained to make this public announcement, we also feel that it is but one of God's ways, and as his ways are far above our ways, and his thoughts above our thoughts, we can but submit, saying, Thy will, O Lord, not ours, be done.

Done by order of the association, Sept. 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1909.

E. F. RANSDELL, Moderator.

G. R. TURNER, Clerk.

The Licking Old School Baptist Association, in session with Salt River Church, Anderson County, Kentucky, Sept. 10th, 11th and 12th, 1909, to the churches and associations with whom we correspond, sends greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Through the grace and mercy of an all-wise God we have been permitted to meet in an associate capacity, and your ministering brethren have come to us with those precious truths, preaching Christ and him crucified to us, a poor and afflicted people, and we hope to have a continuance of your correspondence.

We have appointed the next session of our association to be held with our sister church, Bethel, Shelby County, Kentucky, commencing on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1910.

J. G. EUBANKS, Moderator.

J. T. MCCOUN, Clerk.

T. J. RATLIFF, Assistant Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, at the home of the bride's parents, in Wicomico Co., Md., Sept. 29th, 1909, Isaac H. Powell and Miss Virginia E. Freney, both of Wicomico County, Md.

By the same, Oct. 6th, 1909, at the home of the bride's parents, in Worcester County, Md., Harold W. Powell and Miss Cora B. Thales, both of Worcester County, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Isaac Sawin was born Dec. 15th, 1833, near Edinburg, Ind., died at Cedar Falls, Iowa, March 23rd, 1909, after a brief illness of only forty-eight hours, aged a little over 75 years. Brother Isaac was united in marriage with Mary A. Hill, Jan. 22nd, 1855. Two sons and seven daughters were born to that union, and all survive except two daughters, one dying in infancy and the other some two years since. The subject of this sketch made a profession of religion and united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Lewis Creek, Shelby Co., Ind., and was baptized by the late Elder A. B. Nay on the third Sunday in January, 1854. On the last Sunday in October, 1871, he was set apart to the full work of the gospel ministry by a presbytery of brethren called together at Bethel Church, Johnson Co., Ind., and from that day until his death he was an able, active and zealous doer of his Master's will as he understood it. No sacrifice was ever too great for him when the brethren needed and asked his services in all the thirty-nine years of his ministerial life. Aside from serving several churches almost constantly he traveled extensively, reaching out in a number of different States. In a diary kept by himself it is shown that the distance he traveled by rail was equal to nearly three times around the earth, or nearly seventy-five thousand miles, besides about twenty-five thousand miles in private conveyance. In the month of October, 1895, he traveled by rail six hundred miles, by private carriage four hundred, and preached twenty-seven times. This is only mentioned to show his energy and willingness to serve in the Master's vineyard. His faithful work in the churches bore evidence of divine approval, and many were the seals of his ministry. It is written of him that he never preferred a charge against a brother, while, on the other hand, no charge was ever laid against him, yet he was a firm advocate of strict discipline in the church. Only five times was he ever called upon to vote for the exclusion of erring brethren, and he lived to see three of them returned to fellowship in the church and become worthy and useful members. As already mentioned, his illness was of short duration. He filled his regular appointment in Cedar Falls on Sunday forenoon and evening, and spoke with his usual zeal and animation on the subject of salvation by grace as revealed in the story of the cross, and which had so often called forth his best powers under the seal of divine inspiration. On Sunday night he was suddenly taken very ill, and in a short time passed into a comatose state, from which he never rallied to consciousness. On Tuesday morning following he passed away from earth to join the church of the Firstborn in heaven, where earthly cares and struggles will never intrude. He left a dear companion (since dead), two sons, five daughters, eighteen grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and four brothers (one since dead), with a large circle of brethren to mourn the loss of one beloved by all. A brother writing from Missouri says: "Brother Sawin was a peace-loving, gentle, forbearing minister of the gospel, having a tender conscience for the rights and feelings of his brethren. He was never found looking for occasion to take offence, and always sought carefully to avoid giving offence; his memory will be blessed indeed."

The funeral service was conducted by Elder George E. Edwards, of Macon, Mo., who spoke words of comfort to the sorrow-stricken family, after which the body was laid to rest in the cemetery in the city where he died.

ALSO,

Sister **Mary A. Hill Sawin,** widow of Elder Isaac Sawin, died at the home of her daughter, in Cedar Falls, Iowa, on the morning of August 23rd, 1909, aged about 73 years, after a painful illness extending over a period of several years. Her sufferings at times were very great, but were always borne with that heroic fortitude which could only spring from living christian faith which brought her solace and comfort throughout all the years of her possession of the precious gift of her kind heavenly Father, in whom she trusted daily, yes, every moment of her life. She was an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile. She was a noble woman in all the relations of life. The religion she professed was the religion she lived; her daily walk was evidence of her sincerity. She had her faults, but none regretted and mourned them more than herself. She made a public profession of religion in 1857, and through all the years of her eventful life she kept the faith, and her walk always showed that she was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for to her it had been shown that it is the power of God unto salvation. Fully conscious up to the moment of her death, she looked steadfastly heavenward, whither her companion had so recently gone, and for whom she had never ceased to mourn. She repeated the hymn, "Must Jesus bear the cross alone?" and then added, "O what a comfort to my poor soul is this undying faith," and soon thereafter her gentle spirit went up to God who gave it. Thus her children and grandchildren were in a brief space of time bereft of parents and grandparents, but God, who is rich in mercy, works all things after the counsel of his own will, and will care for the needy and distressed who put their trust in him. May the conduct of the children and grandchildren be an exemplification of that of their parents.

Elder George Edwards, of Macon, Mo., conducted the funeral service and preached a comforting discourse.

JOHN G. SAWIN.

William Henry Moody, of East Pittston, Maine, died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. James E. Hubbard, September 9th, 1909, aged 75 years, 3 months and 5 days. For several years he had been in declining health, and during the last year of his life he was sick indeed, and needed constant attendance well-nigh day and night. This was affectionately given him by our sister, his daughter, who many times found she had barely strength enough, and none to spare, in this constant care her father's sickness demanded, and which she so devotedly rendered. During this last year of his life he became greatly exercised concerning the things of eternity, and his condition as a guilty sinner before God, and as he sat propped up in his chair very much of his time was spent in cries to the Lord to have mercy upon him and to assure his heart of his salvation. "O," he would exclaim, "I am such a wicked sinner; have pity upon me, Lord Jesus, have mercy on me." In the early part of last winter he had word sent to me to come and see him. I journeyed about a hundred miles to his home and found him very sick indeed. Almost the first words he said to me were that he was a poor sinner, and wanted me to preach Jesus to him. I talked to him of God's salvation and sang some precious hymns, and spent the afternoon in this way, as he was physically and mentally able to have me speak to him. After partaking of supper I went into his room to say good night (as I was to go to another home to stay all night), but he would not suffer me to go then, but requested me to stand up and take a text and preach the gospel to him; "I want to hear about Jesus." So we sang a hymn and prayed, and I preached Christ and him crucified to him and to three others. I shall not soon forget this sacred time. Next day I called to see him again, and he said he had found some comfort in what I had preached, and he longed to have more and more evidence that God had forgiven his sins. I saw him a few times during the summer months, and found him sighing and longing after Jesus. He would say, "I am willing to die whenever the heavenly Father will have me, but I want now his pardon all the time." Exercised with hopes and fears, he renounced all worthiness and help in himself. Some months before his death he told me he wished I would attend his funeral, and that I should preach from the words: "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. ii. 8-10. He left a son and daughter. His body was taken to Whitefield, Maine, and there put in the grave to sleep in the dust of the earth until the last day, when our Lord Jesus shall himself "descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

Mrs. Mary Splon, widow of the late Timothy Splon, of Cammal, Pa., died Sept. 11th, 1909, aged 68 years. Her maiden name was Ostrander. Her husband died several years ago. She leaves one son and several brothers and sisters, with a host of friends, for she was friendly to all she met. She experienced a hope in the mercy of God about twenty-five years ago, I believe, and left good evidence that she was born of God. I was personally acquainted with her, and felt drawn to her by the cords of God's love. I believe she is at rest with, and in her Savior and Redeemer glorified. May the dear Lord comfort all the mourning ones.

ALSO,

Mrs. Catherine Roberts died Sept. 15th, 1909, aged 82 years. Her maiden name was Snyder. She was living in St. Louis, Mo., at the time of her death, and had been for several years, but she had formerly lived in Brown Hollow, Luzerne Co., Pa. I think she was born in that county. "Kate," as she was commonly called, was a lover of good gospel preaching. The body was buried at Brown Hollow the 18th. We hope and believe she is at rest in Christ.

ALSO,

Mrs. Lydia Hart, wife of brother Wm. M. Hart, of Brookdale, Susquehanna, Co., Pa., died Sept. 18th, 1909, aged 68 years. Sister Hart's maiden name was Butts. She married for her first husband Lemuel Roe. Two sons were born to them. She lived a widow several years after his death, and married brother Hart twenty years ago. One of her sons died six or seven years ago. Sister Roe united with the Old School Baptist Church at Otego, N. Y., years ago; I think Elder Durand baptized her. When the Brookdale Church was organized she joined with them. After she moved in the bounds of the Caroline Old School Baptist Church, Tompkins Co., N. Y., of which Elder Charles Bogardus is pastor, she moved her membership there. She with brother Hart returned to Brookdale, Pa., after remaining away some twelve or fifteen years, and again united with the Brookdale Church, living the rest of her days in the love and fellowship of the church. Sister Lydia was thoroughly established in the doctrine of grace, and was always ready to give the reason of her hope with meekness and fear. She had no compromise to make with Arminians, but was firm, steadfast and unwavering in the belief God gave her. She is at rest. Brother Hart mourns deeply the loss of his dear companion. May God comfort him in his sad, lonely hours, which will be many, the dear son and other relatives and friends, with the little Brookdale

Church, is the desire of the writer of this notice, who officiated at this and the two preceding funerals.

D. M. VAIL.

Urvin Carter, son of Aardelas and Hannah Carter, was born in Franklin County, Ohio, July 7th, 1842, died in Adams County, Ind., August 27th, 1909, aged 67 years, 1 month and 20 days. He moved with his parents to Adams County, Ind., August 19th, 1845, where he remained until the time of his death. He was united in marriage with Sophia Jackson, Jan. 16th, 1868. To this union were born eight children, one of whom preceded him to the spirit world. He with his faithful wife united with the Sugar Creek Church, in Putnam County, Ohio, where Elder J. G. Ford lived and has served as pastor for many years. While brother Carter had forty miles to go where he could hear the doctrine of God our Savior preached in its purity, yet he felt this was no great hardship, for there was a joy connected with his going that he and sister Carter felt well paid for their long journey by private conveyance that they might be fed from the Master's table by the faithful servant they loved so well. There was a great bond of fellowship between brother Carter and wife and Elder Ford that distance could not lessen, and when age and affliction began to deprive them of their regular meetings, yet there were letters written apprising each of the other's welfare, and while they could not meet so often in late years because of their feeble health and distance apart, yet their love for each other never waned. It was nearer and better railroad accommodations for brother Carter to meet with the Salamonia Church, near Portland, Ind., where the unworthy writer has tried to serve for the last ten years, consequently it was but natural that brother Carter should often mingle with us, where he was greeted with a hearty welcome. Brother Carter as a citizen was highly esteemed in the community where he lived, and had the courage to contend honestly for his religious views at all times when error was set forth before him for truth. He leaves to mourn their loss a faithful wife, three daughters, four sons, six sisters, three brothers and four grandchildren, besides a host of other more distant relatives and friends, and the churches of Sugar Creek and Salamonia feel their loss, but we sorrow not as those who have no hope.

NEWTON PETERS.

Elder Marion Bartley, son of Johnson and Elizabeth Bartley (deceased), was born in Jasper County, Ill., March 11th, 1858, departed this life August 4th, 1909, aged 51 years, 4 months and 24 days. He died in the triumph of living faith in Christ, believing in salvation by grace. March 16th, 1881, he was married to Martha J. Ridlen. To this union were born one son and two daughters, one daughter dying in infancy. Rutha kept house for him, and deeply feels the loss of a loving father, which to her is sorrow, but to him eternal repose. He leaves three brothers and many friends and relatives to mourn their loss. Saturday, July 20th, 1889, brother Bartley, together with his wife, united with the Hickory Creek Primitive Baptist Church of Christ, located in Jasper Co., Ill. December 1st, 1906, he was set apart to the work of the ministry. He traveled far and near, preaching the gospel, the unsearchable riches of his Lord and Master.

The funeral was held at his late residence, conducted by brethren Stretcher and Ferguson, who preached to a large congregation of people, after which his mortal remains were laid to rest by the side of his companion in the Shiloh Cemetery.

JOSEPH BARTLEY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Carrie E. Rockafellow, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. Catherine Walker, Ontario, $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church in Wilmington, Delaware, has appointed their yearly meeting for Saturday and Sunday, October 16th and 17th, 1909, to commence at 2 o'clock p. m. on Saturday. Trolley cars from the Pennsylvania and the Baltimore and Ohio depot direct to Tenth and Market St., one and one-half squares from meetinghouse. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Indiantown Church, of Wicomico Co., Md., October 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1909. Friends will please come on Tuesday before the meeting. Those coming from the north or south will get tickets for Salisbury, Md., where they will change cars to the B., C. & A. R. R., getting tickets for Pittsville, where all will be met. Those coming from Baltimore will not have to change cars at Salisbury. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren. We will try to give all a warm reception to our homes and make you feel that this is our people. Trains will arrive about 1:30 p. m.

T. M. POULSON, Pastor.

P. S.—I have learned since I sent the above notice that there is no connection at Salisbury until 10 o'clock p. m., so we wish every one coming from the north or south to get tickets for Salisbury on Tuesday before, arriving about 1:30. Those coming from Baltimore come by way of Wilmington and join the company down on the Delaware road. All will be met at Salisbury, Md., and taken care of.

T. M. P.

THE church of the Roxbury Association will hold their fifth Sunday meeting, the Lord willing, at Union Grove, N. Y., October 30th and 31st, commencing on Saturday at 2 p. m. All who love the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. Nothing preventing, we expect brother J. M. Fenton to be with us at this meeting. Trains on the Delaware & Eastern R. R. will be met Saturday morning at Union Grove, N. Y. J. B. SLAUSON.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds meetings every third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.
JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 77. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1909. NO. 21.

POETRY.

THE END OF THE WAY.

(SELECTED.)

My life is a wearisome journey;
  I'm sick with the dust and the heat;
The rays of the sun beat upon me,
  The briars are wounding my feet.
But the city to which I am journeying
  Will more than my trials repay;
All the toils of the road will seem nothing
  When I get to the end of the way.

There are so many hills to climb upward,
  I often am longing for rest,
But He who appoints me my pathway,
  Knows just what is needful and best.
I know in his word he has promised
  That my strength shall be as my day,
And the toils of the road will seem nothing
  When I get to the end of the way.

He loves me too well to forsake me,
  Or give me one trial too much;
All his people have been dearly purchased,
  And Satan can never claim such.
By and by I shall see him and praise him
  In the city of unending day,
And the toils of the road will seem nothing
  When I get to the end of the way.

When the last feeble step has been taken,
  And the gates of the city appear,
When the beautiful songs of the angels
  Float out on my listening ear,
When all that now seems so mysterious
  Shall be plain and as clear as the day,
Then the toils of the road will seem nothing
  As I get to the end of the way.

Though now I am footsore and weary,
  I shall rest when I'm safely at home;
I know I'll receive a glad welcome,
  For the Savior himself has said, "Come."
So when I am weary in body,
  And sinking in spirit, I say,
All the toils of the road will seem nothing
  When I get to the end of the way.

EXPERIENCE.

I mourn because I cannot mourn,
  And sigh and grieve and cry;
I know love brought my Jesus down
  Upon this earth to die.

O if I knew he died for me,
  What could I want beside?
Then I would know I'm one of those
  Which constitute his bride.

But O these doubts and fears of mine!
  How often have I thought,
Why do I not praise the Lord,
  And serve him as I ought?

And so God's children will mourn on
  Until the end of time,
And in the resurrection morn
  Will leave all sin behind.

Then what we'll be we do not know,
  But let these words suffice:
We'll be like Jesus, as we're told,
  And, like David, satisfied.

Then we shall know as we are known,
  In that bright home above,
And there in one continual song
  We'll sing our Savior's love.

P. N. MOYERS.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE POOL OF BETHESDA.

(John v. 2-4.)

"Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market, a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda [House of mercy], having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had."

In one of Newton's hymns he says:

"Beside the gospel pool,
Appointed for the poor,
From time to time my helpless soul
Has waited for a cure."

Why this wonderfully experienced and clear-minded man should have called this a "gospel pool" I do not know, since he has acknowledged in this hymn that he has waited in vain, and since, also, he is waiting for a cure, as appears from this same sweet hymn, not from the troubled waters, but from the hoped for appearing of the dear Savior, and the manifestation of his gracious power. There appears in this pool nothing like the gospel to me. We are not told of any one who has been healed by stepping into the troubled water. No individual case is mentioned, but the statement is made in a general way, as one would repeat a tradition. How often the angel came down is not told. "At a certain season;" the seasons may have been far apart. But only one can be healed at each season, and all the rest of that "great multitude" must wait for the next coming down of the angel. We may also be sure of one thing concerning the one who will be healed at each season: he will be the strongest, the least afflicted, of all the multitude; the one who is best able to crowd by the others, who are weaker than he, and to stand nearest the water, and be on the alert, ready to step in in a moment; or he will be one who has some powerful friends to help him, and who can rush him in before the rest who are struggling to get in. There is nothing that has a gospel appearance in all of this, for the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, and therefore it is "glad tidings" to the poor. No rushing, and crowding, and pushing the weaker aside in the gospel, such as we see always in the crowds of this world. When the gospel finds one it finds him alone, helpless, undone, with no strength to go forward any more, nor to step into the pool, even if there were no one to push him aside, and the gospel does not require any movement on his part as a means of cure and salvation, but brings him health and cure just where he is, in a way he had never thought of before, causing his soul to "break out in unknown strains and sing surprising grace."

The way of salvation by unexpected grace is evidently taught in this wonderful incident, as contrasted with that salvation which the natural man expects to result from some effort of his own, or from some help that another man may give him. The two systems of salvation are side by side in this world, among men. The one can be seen and understood by all men; the other can never be seen or understood but in its experience.

"And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years." Here is the gospel character. He has been a long time in this condition. There appears to be no difference between this man and all the rest of the great multitude, only that he has become absolutely helpless. He is still looking to the pool alone for salvation, as all the rest are, and evidently has no thought or hope of help from any other source. He represents the poor sinner who is at the

ends of the earth, unable to do anything for his own help, or to find help from any other. He looks hopelessly at the pool, but cannot look elsewhere, for he knows of no other way in which a cure is possible. To every such poor, helpless soul salvation will come in the Lord's own time, and by a new and unexpected way.

"When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?" What tenderness is expressed in this language, and what care for the poor and helpless. The path of Jesus just now, on this Sabbath morning, passes this way, and comes to this poor man. His paths always lead to the afflicted souls, and always "drop fatness." A wonderfully strange question to ask of one in this infirm condition; but it brings out an expression of his pitiful state, and evidently causes some little hope to spring up in his heart that here at last may be a man who can and will help him into the pool when next its waters are troubled, and he answers by an expression of his sad and helpless state, still looking alone at the pool: "Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me." That will always be the case with every poor sinner who is looking for salvation by any work of his own, or by the help of any man; others appear to him to be getting salvation, but with him it is impossible. There must be manifested to such an one another way, a new and living way.

Now a wonderful miracle is performed; words are spoken such as have never been thought of by this infirm man before, words that are spirit and life: "Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." In an instant the bondage of disease is broken, and the floods of life are flowing healthfully and gladly through his frame; he was made whole immediately, "and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath." It was always the Sabbath when Jesus did his works of healing. Whenever the day is named it is the Sabbath. It is the day when Jesus gives to his poor, afflicted people rest from work, rest from their vain labor under the law, rest from the sickness and pain of sin. The Pharisees never could understand the Sabbath, or anything more or less than the literal seventh day of the week. The natural man cannot see that the end, or spiritual meaning, of the Jewish Sabbath is Christ; that the Sabbath is one of those legal ordinances which are the shadow of good things to come, but the substance or body is Christ; that he has fulfilled the legal ordinances, and rested from them, and that those who believe have entered into this rest of Jesus; and he who hath entered into this rest hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. (Hebrews iv. 10.) So the Jews told the man that it was unlawful for him to carry his bed on the Sabbath; he gave them all the answer he could: "He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk." But he did not know who he was, for Jesus had conveyed himself away in the multitude. "Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." Sin is the cause of the infirmity which renders the poor sinner helpless. He appears to himself vile beyond expression when his sins are shown to him in the light of God's countenance. When his sins are forgiven, and he is made whole of his infirmity, then the temple, the church, is

his dwelling-place, and there Jesus finds him, and teaches him more of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and teaches him of the sad condition into which those are brought who live after the flesh, who sin wilfully, who walk in the ways of the wicked. He teaches them to profit, and says to them: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Sept. 29, 1909.

1 KINGS XVIII. 21.

"AND Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word."

In attempting to expound any text of Scripture it is well to keep in mind two important truths: first, that God reveals by his Spirit, through the Scriptures, to his chosen people, the way of salvation, his own perfect righteousness and holiness, and his love as manifested to his children in the economy of his grace. Second, that the Scriptures are the testimony of Jesus, that perfect Word, which is written in our hearts, of which this testimony is a transcript and a witness. We cannot by searching find out God, but by the prayer of faith, (given us of God) we receive (by revelation) the knowledge of his truth. We have the mind of Christ, saith the apostle, because God reveals Christ in us. Therefore if we truly expound Scripture, it is with the mind of Christ. Elijah was a prophet of the Lord, and the Lord guided his feet and commanded his tongue to do and to say those things which he had afore ordained concerning him.

"And Elijah came;" he came at a certain time, to a certain place, for a certain purpose. The very fact that he came was the certain evidence that the time, the place and the purpose were embraced in the will of God for the salvation of his people. He came bearing the authority of Him whom he served. Ahab was king of Israel, yet he obeyed the commandment of Elijah, who said, "Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table." So all the children of Israel were gathered, and also the prophets. The unfolding of a page in divine history was to be publicly shown to this gathered multitude, the power of God and his Christ was to be set down in type, to be forever read, and shown from time to time to his gathered, waiting people, in beautiful figure the substance of which is written by the finger of God in the heart of each one who trembles at his word, and ceases not to fear his name.

"And Elijah came unto all the people." He came to them, they could not go to him. So also our gracious Redeemer gathers his people, and comes where they are; they cannot go to him, for they know not the place of his secret, wondrous presence. Elijah came to call to their remembrance again their God, who of old had many times delivered them from their waywardness, forgiven their sins and manifested unto them his power and glory. He came unto them, "and said." The things which Elijah said were words of prophecy, for he possessed the spirit of prophecy. "And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." The words of the true prophets are truth, and they carry with them the weight of truth. The declarations of false prophets to kings and rulers are to please and encourage their superiors, while the true prophet is made willing to suffer for the

truth's sake. On this particular occasion he said, "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him." The carnal mind seeks the things of its own belonging, it cannot reach out beyond the things of time and sense, it follows Baal, because Baal is its god. Every unregenerated creature of Adam's race is an idol-worshiper, and creates his own idols (which are many) out of his fleshly, fertile brain. But Elijah is here talking to the children of Israel, to a people separated by the Lord from the nations of the earth, a people who had been eye-witnesses of his power in Egypt, his leadership in the wilderness, and as a constant deliverer in the land of Canaan. And now they had forgotten the God who had done for them many wonderful things, and ran greedily after the error of all things which their flesh dictated. Now he is preparing to show them the vanity of trusting in an arm of flesh, as compared to the power of prayer to the God of their salvation. "How long halt ye between two opinions?" He could have told them it was because of the weakness of their flesh; he knew too well the weakness of his own flesh, but it was his privilege to bring them strong proof, and after this manifestation they need to halt no more; then after bringing before them the test, he could faithfully say to them, "If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him." But "the people answered him not a word." They were not yet convinced, yet without doubt they felt the power of truth in the words which he spake. Now for the test: "Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken. And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many: and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under And they took the bullock which was given them and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made. And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud; for he is a god: either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked. And they cried aloud, and cut themselves, after their manner, with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them. And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded. And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down. And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel shall be thy name: and with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of

seed. And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. And he said, Do it the second time: and they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time: and they did it the third time. And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water. And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me; that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God."

I have quoted at length, that you might the more clearly and deeply enter into the spirit of the knowledge of the power of the work which God works. Thomas said to the other disciples, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." When Jesus had come where he was and told him to do the things which he said he must do in order to believe, "Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God." The Lord has so provided that our faith must be tried, and, like the wayward Israelites, when we are tried, and are brought through the furnace of affliction, then are we ready with them to cry, "The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God." The light of divine truth must shine in our heart, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. We grope in the dark, and cannot follow Him whose footsteps are in the deep waters, until the power of grace through the love of God exercises us unto the obedience of faith, then do we behold him whom our soul loveth. Doubts and fears are swept away like the dew before the morning sun, and we are saved by grace through faith. How do we reach out and grasp and embrace the promises of God? Are they not all revealed in Jesus Christ whom we have not seen, but love? Are not all the promises of God, all the doctrine of God, all the gospel of Christ, embraced in the one sweet, lasting and most precious two words, "life eternal?" Jesus himself said, "And what is life eternal? And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." It is that Spirit of an endless life which shows unto us the power and glory of the Father. In his love which he has vouchsafed unto us, we know him; in the administration of his wondrous power as manifested in all ages of the world, we know him, and in the glory of the sunshine of his presence in our hearts we know him, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. May the healing power of his abundant grace and mercy reach every aching heart, making whole all who trust in him.

B. F. COULTER.

SHERWOOD, Oregon, Sept. 2, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I am sending you a letter which speaks for itself, and after looking it over, if you think best you may publish it in the SIGNS.

Your unworthy brother,

J. P. ALLISON.

NORTH YAKIMA, Wash., Jan. 21, 1909.

BELOVED BROTHER AND SISTER ALLISON:—I received your good and comforting letter a long time ago, but have been prevented from answering it on account of having an attack of "la grippe," which settled in my eyes, so that for a while I could neither see to read nor write, and could not be out on account of the pain the light caused me. You may know I felt lonesome and discouraged, but my eyes have so improved that I can now read and write without pain, if I do not continue too long at a time. I derived much comfort from your affectionate letter, all the time realizing that I did not deserve such esteem from my Lord's "jewels" as was manifest all through your letter. You made me smile when you told me what you had written brother Durand about the preachers of this coast, and how you had put yourself at the foot of the list, and how brother Durand said that you belonged at the head. You may tell brother Durand that I say he is right, and the only other correction I would make would be to erase my name from among the preachers, for I have got so I cannot preach any more, so my name does not belong on the list. The Master has thrown me aside, as a workman does a worthless tool, to rust and perish, and I cannot blame him for it, after having borne with my perverseness all these many years.

Your answer to my question was very confirming, bringing many Scriptures to bear on the subject; I had not thought of it in that connection. I had a very pleasant letter from brother Durand in regard to that letter of mine which you sent him. He seemed very much pleased with it, and said he hoped you would send it to the SIGNS. Now, as for me, I do not care what you do with it. I recall nothing I wrote that would be worth the postage it would take to carry it across the continent. There is a thought in regard to the shewbread in line with the idea of all christian service being offerings and sacrifices, which I tried to give brother Durand in answer to his letter, that I would like to offer for your consideration also, if I might be enabled to present it in a way that would make it clear to your mind. (Leviticus xxiv. 5–10.) Of course that narrative was literal, but "a shadow of good things to come," and the spiritual meaning is what I want to bring out, if I can. The "fine flour" is obtained, or produced, by grinding, trials, temptations, tribulations and distresses, and when the season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord lifts up the heart in praise to God for his goodness and mercy, there is a cake baked into bread of "memorial" which represents not only one tribe, but every tribe of Israel, in that they are all alike two-tenth deals of fine flour, and when we bring them to the door of the tabernacle (church) and place them on the "pure table" (everlasting love of God), which we do when we tell of His love and mercy, they stand there as "meat in my house" (church), and our brethren, the "royal priesthood," eat of it, "it is most holy." You, dear brother Allison, sent some of your cakes to the SIGNS, and they seemed to me to fill the measure, "two-tenth deals," and I, even I, have been permitted to eat of them. They are

"most holy," because the Lord our God has ground the flour and baked the cakes, and we then offer them before him with the "pure frankincense," the prayers offered up under the pressure of the grinding. Dear brother, think of these things, and tell me whether I have it right. If you and brother Durand do not see anything in it I will have to conclude there is nothing there, and yet I have fed on the thought, and it seemed to me my blessed Lord showed it to me that way.

I am glad you and sister are thinking of coming to the association this year, for I am hungry to see your dear faces once more. I hear that Elder W. J. Reeves, of Iowa, is to be here then, and that Elder Moffit, from the east somewhere, is coming out here some time this summer, but do not know if he will be at the association or not. I would like to see Elder Durand, but suppose he is getting too old to venture on so long a journey. I wish I could go and spend a week at his house; I want to learn his manner, to hear him talk, to get acquainted with his family and surroundings. If I could preach any I think I would some time go, if I ever got money enough to afford it; but there is that dread of being asked to preach, when I cannot.

You remember brother Wine, who was baptized at Goldendale, where you were several years ago; well, he came three hundred miles to attend meeting during Christmas holidays, and it did me much good to eat of his "cakes," hearing him tell of the Lord's dealings with him, and to see how the Lord had, in a short time, away off there by himself, taught him lessons which it took me years to learn. Our God is a great Teacher, and it is written, "They shall all be taught of God," and here is a demonstration, a living witness, of the truth of that Scripture. O that men would praise Him for his great and wonderful works to the children of men, and would all exalt him in the congregation of the people. "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

I close, dear brother, in the assurance that you know something of the height and depth, length and breadth of the love of God that passeth knowledge. Wife joins me in sending love and fellowship to you and sister Allison; you may also include Robert, and any others who may be interested in this speck of dust.

Your brother in hope,

W. J. HESS.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Sept. 19, 1909.

DEAR ELDER KER:—With your indulgence I will try, if the Lord will, to write a few thoughts upon the subject of justification; it being upon my mind, I feel like writing and giving my thoughts upon this glorious subject. I hope I have experienced that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. O Lord, correct me, but with judgment." I therefore must look by faith to God to guide and direct my steps. "O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise." The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart. We are justified by the righteousness and obedience of Him "who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Therefore we rejoice in hope of the glory

of God. We also glory in the tribulation which "worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope." The redeemed of the Lord shall all come forth at God's appointed time. All power was given Christ, and he hath delivered us, as we trust, from the power of darkness, and translated us unto his kingdom; in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins; the faithful High Priest pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. He himself having suffered, being tempted, is able to succor them that are tempted. Since the justification of sinners is by the complete obedience of Christ Jesus, we learn what reason we have to admire that wisdom which shows forth the great wonder of grace, which was given to poor sinners before the world began. This hope we have: that God hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, with assurance that we have passed from death unto life; this is a lively hope. This work is seen by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Such faith is given to his chosen, justified by the righteousness of Christ, and is absolutely by divine revelation. The things God hath prepared for his people never entered the mind of the natural man, but the spiritual man knows the things which are freely given of God. God works in man both to will and to do of his good pleasure, but those who are ignorant of Christ's righteousness go about to establish their own righteousness. There can be no true rest for such as deny the power of God in salvation, claiming they have a part of the work in helping to save sinners. "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven;" their self-righteousness being of their own obedience, and not by the justification and obedience of Christ. All who will be admitted will have the wedding garment on. "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength," conquering and to conquer, speaking righteousness, and mighty to save? "He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God." There was none to help accomplish his Father's will, and none to uphold, therefore his arm brought salvation unto him, and his fury upheld him. "O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvelous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him victory. The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen. He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel." Let us rejoice, giving him all praise. He came to do the will of the Father, and make the law honorable; he gained the victory, established his kingdom, the everlasting kingdom. The Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and appointeth over them whom he will, but self-righteous souls claim the honor of helping God save sinners, but there is no way of salvation except through the justification and righteousness of our blessed Redeemer. Dear brother, I hope I have been blessed with the love of God's grace when there was none to help. Yes, it pleased God to send his only begotten Son, full of grace and truth, to be crucified by wicked hands, to fulfill the decree which had gone forth, and redeem such poor sinners as we feel to be in his sight. Our spiritual Head is at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for us. I claim no honor or

merit of my own, but with fear and trembling I approach him, knowing he is holy and I am vile; there is no other refuge. What a glorious hiding-place God hath prepared for poor sinners. If there had been a law given that could have given life, says the apostle, righteousness would have been by the law. May God bless the true believer who has no confidence in the flesh, is my prayer.

Your brother, I hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

[It is good to be established in the doctrine of justification. Brother Hickerson has been long in the way, and has learned that justification through Christ is absolutely necessary in order to appear before God.—K.]

"WILL YE ALSO GO AWAY?"

This sixth chapter of John is made exceeding precious to me to-day. It is a good, long sermon, but the things said were very unpopular to most of those who heard them, yet they sound good to me. The truth is no more attractive today than it ever was. If I were to preach ten years at one place, and my congregation was mostly made up of Campbellites and Methodists, that would be a sign that I had not preached the truth. Christ preached the truth here. It sounds like the truth in my heart, and the hardest sayings are the best there. There is one thing certain: You must say things to please the world if you would have it follow you. If you say that which will please the world you will say things which are not the truth, for it does not love and will not have it. Churches call preachers of ability and attractiveness to build up a congregation, &c., when the truth of the matter is, the gospel scatters wolves but gathers the sheep. Take this sixth chapter and follow it through; of course we are not told just exactly how many were present at the beginning, nor how many dropped in, but we are given to see that most of them soon tired of it, and went away. Some were there who professed to be disciples, but when he called them unbelievers they went away. (Verse 36.) There were also the general atonement fellows, but when Jesus said that only those given him by the Father come to him, and they shall come (verse 37), these went away, and indeed I do not blame them, I think I should go also if I were like them. Then there were the "freewillers," who boasted of the freedom of the sinner's will as being equal, if not superior, to God's will, who said that God left the sinner free to choose either good or bad. The "I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me," sent them away. Then his common, rough expressions, appearance, &c., offended those who took much pride in worldly wisdom; they said: This fellow is common, we know his father and mother, and the whole family, he will not wear, and they went away. And so now they are about all gone but his disciples, and some of them looked as if they would like to go. There were a few conditional time salvation fellows who argued thus: Of course the sinner dead in sins cannot come or do anything, but after he is born again he can come of himself, or stay away, as he wills, else how can there be any disobedience? But the "no man can come," sent them away. Others stood it pretty well until he said what he did about eating his flesh and drinking his blood, and told them what their fathers ate in the wilderness, and died. But the bread of life was superior to the manna. When he said this they went away; not that they saw the true

meaning, and it is doubtful if any to-day understand the meaning from the forty-eighth to the sixty-eighth verse; if any do, it is because it has been revealed to them by the Spirit, or such part of it as divine wisdom designs. But the Jews drew the line at eating; only uncommon and clean things they ate. Only the twelve were left, kept there by that power of which He spoke. He knew they would not go away, because they could not, yet he asked the question, and the answer of the tongue was of Him: "Lord, to whom shall we go?" This was for the comfort of his children in the ages to come. "Will ye also go away?" I have told them the truth, you see what they think of me and it. "Will ye also go away?" The birds of the air and foxes have homes, but I have no place to lay my head; will you go? I am to die, the sheep shall be scattered, you shall be hated and hunted; will you go away from me? But still they stayed. The others could not stay; these could not go. The one was as much a fulfillment of Scripture, and the purpose of God, as the other; both were some of the "all things." There were just twelve stayed. Judas stayed; his time was yet to come. It came, and then he went away to his own place, which was not the same place, but a different place from the place Jesus went to prepare for his saints, who were to be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. There is to be another going away; the time is set for it, all arrangements are made for it, even to the ones who shall go away. He knows them; knows how many. Some who went away from him will go away there; the first time voluntarily, the last time arbitrarily. These shall go away. Well, but Lord, we have done things for thee, &c. Depart from me; go away. This latter going away has troubled me much all my life; a few times I have regarded it fearlessly, but most of the time fearfully, afraid that I shall be one who will have to "go away." Why should not I? I am no better, not even as good, as many I know who show no signs nor make any claim to a hope or experience; why not I? God will do right with me; he does here, and will there in that great day. I am going the way of all the earth, and will soon pass away from it, to a rest where the winds of adversity will never reach me more. If a child of God, one of the elect, I shall come forth to everlasting life, together with all the redeemed.

Again I say this whole sixth chapter is sweet to me to-day; sweeter than the manna in the wilderness, sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. This is all the experience I can get out of it to-day. FRANK McGLADE.

DRAIN, Ore., March 8, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is time for us to renew our subscription for another year for our highly prized paper, which we look for as the coming of a dear friend.

I have a letter in my possession from an aged and beloved brother, which I have not asked his consent to send you, but I do not believe he will object if you see fit to publish it. I feel he has said more that would be of use to the household of faith than anything I could say. There is one expression of brother Allison's, about my being such a great talker on the Scriptures; I hate to have the good people who read the SIGNS find out that I am such a talker. He also speaks of holding my husband and myself in such high esteem. Now, dear ones, he is honest in it, but if all could view me as I view myself they surely could have no

fellowship for me, for I am less than the least of all the saints, if one at all. I feel that no one on earth has had more trials, without and within, than I have, yet I feel an abiding faith in Jesus that he will not forsake me; the tempest never rages so high but that there is a calm afterward. May Israel's God be with us all, is the desire of a poor little one.

S. MORNINGSTAR.

SHERWOOD, Oregon, Jan. 12, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER MORNINGSTAR:—Your excellent and esteemed letter to us, dated the 3rd inst., came to us three days ago, and has been read and reread by us with pleasure, sorrow and interest; first, with pleasure, because it informed us of the welfare of our esteemed and beloved brother and sister Morningstar, in whom we have implicit confidence as being beloved children of God; yea, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." We can pray the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples to pray, saying, "When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven." In another place he says, "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father." What a blessing and comfort it is to us poor, vile, corrupt and depraved sinners to be blessed with such a glorious and exalted privilege as to be able to claim this blessed Savior as our Savior; then it is sweet in our hearts to say, "Our Father," because we realize that through that wonderful love bestowed on us poor sinners by the Father we are the children of God; for "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." So we can say, "Our Father, which art in heaven," because being born of God we are children of God, and heirs according to the promise in the covenant ordered in all things and sure, and joint-heirs with Christ, because we are bone of his bones, and we are also members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones, so we can truly say, Our Father. No one has a right to use this prayer except the heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, and they are the ones who feel their unworthiness so great that it is with awe and reverence that they use it. But what mockery nominal professors make of this solemn prayer, attempting to teach it to unregenerate persons, even teaching little children to say it, when they know no more about its sacredness than those unregenerate Sunday School teachers do who teach the children to say it.

But I did not intend to consume so much space with this part of my letter, and will say, second, that I was pleased and feel grateful, I hope, to know that after I have become old in the service of God and the service of our brethren, and the churches in Oregon, that I am not forgotten in my old age, after my usefulness in the ministry is about ended, but am still remembered by my dear brethren and sisters, and unworthy as I feel of their love and fellowship it is yet mine to enjoy, and I can say, Praise God from whom all blessings flow, for his grace that has enabled a poor, weak servant, if one at all, to still enjoy the love and sweet fellowship of the dear children of God. By this ye shall know that ye have passed from death unto life, because ye love the brethren.

Third, we were pleased, and rejoice with you, dear brother and sister, to know

that the dear Lord has filled your mouth with laughter and your tongue with singing, by blessing your children with a good hope in Christ Jesus, and that they have been, through grace given them, enabled to take up their cross and follow their dear Savior in the solemn ordinances of his church, and are now worthy members of the same, walking in the truth. We read the three articles in the SIGNS written by your daughters, telling so beautifully their experiences, which were a great comfort to us, and also we read sister Martha Wiseman's experience; all four letters were sent to the SIGNS by sister Olive. Of course your cup was full to running over when your dear son Charles was enabled by the grace of God to take his place among the poor undershepherds as a feeder of the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made him overseer, and we are truly glad, and hope thankful, to the good Lord to know that he has called and qualified a young gift to take the place of the dear pastor, Elder W. S. Matthews, who has been called home to his reward, and is now sweetly asleep in Jesus, and he, we are sure, will be satisfied when he awakes with His likeness.

We would be pleased to be able to visit you later, and have the pleasure of hearing our young Elder Morningstar preach. We were indeed sorry to learn of the death of dear sister Turpin, but we rejoice to know that with her it was not death to die, and that our loss is her eternal gain. Where is old brother Turpin? We received a letter lately from brother Nosler, of Eugene, Ore., telling us of his going to your meeting, as I had formerly directed him, and he told me he had united with the Coast Fork Church, and was baptized by Elder Morningstar; we got in correspondence with him through brother Low, who lived in Eugene. He thought the brother to be an Old School Baptist, and gave us his address, and we wrote to brother Nosler; you may be sure we were pleased to know that he had finally found his home among the sect so evilly spoken of everywhere. I will tell one of the remarks he made in his letter: after telling me about finding you, &c., he said, You know what a talker sister Morningstar is; well, he said after hearing her talk while we were there we were convinced that we had before got into the wrong pew.

Well, I must stop writing. With love and fellowship, your brother and sister in hope,

J. P. AND MARY ALLISON.

RATCLIFF, Ky., June 9, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—I send you for publication the experience of my dear daughter, Mrs. Kathleen Kendall, of Newfoundland, Ky. She is now very low, the doctor says she has consumption. She is very patient in her suffering, saying often that she is in the hand of God, who has so wonderfully blessed her with a good hope through grace, and in whom she trusts, not only for things that pertain to this life, but also for eternal life, which he promised in Christ before the world began.

Yours to serve,

J. E. THORNBURY.

NEWFOUNDLAND, Ky., May 26, 1909.

MY DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER:—I feel once more like trying to write to you; whether the desire is of the Lord or of the flesh you will have to judge. I know I am a poor, weak, worthless worm of the dust, helpless and dependent, yet I hope I have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and in him are strength and wisdom. My daily prayer is, O Lord,

lead me in the way, guide and direct my steps, that I may not go astray. Keep me, O Lord, and I shall be kept. Five years ago this spring I began to suffer and mourn on account of my sins; there was a terrible black cloud hanging over me; I could feel it crushing me; my heart was heavy and hard as a rock, and that terrible black cloud did not leave me, and terror seized hold on me; all I could do was to cry, O Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner, but no comfort came to me. After long, sleepless nights and hours of fear and grief the words came to me, "I sought the Lord, and he heard me." Immediately peace, hope and joy filled my soul, and for a short time I could rest, but alas, fears and doubts soon began to assail me, and I was afraid my hope was too small, if indeed I had any hope. One night I dreamed I had started home and was in a large field; all at once I was lost and could not find my way; I stood there looking round about for some way to escape the awful fear that seized me. Near the top of the hill was a flock of white sheep, and far out to the left of this white flock was a terrible black object, but O, father, I cannot describe it; with a cry of anguish I tried to escape, but was powerless to move. The next thing I knew I was with the white flock, and in a very straight and narrow road, and as I reached the top of this hill I awoke. O my dear Savior, I cried again and again, while tears of love and joy flowed from my eyes; I thought my troubles were all ended then, but alas, my fear and grief returned, and I was made to cry out, O is there any one like me? I did not want to be with any one, but wanted to be in some secret place where only God could see me, and pray to him in secret to have mercy on me. One night in a dream I was kneeling in water, with my hands lifted toward heaven, praying; I saw a man before me enveloped in a soft, beautiful light, then the words seemed to be spoken in my heart, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I then seemed to be floating in the air, on and on until I came to a garden. O the sweetness and beauty I saw there! I did not walk in the garden, but sailed back and forth in that beautiful garden, and instead of crying for mercy I was filled with rejoicing, and songs of praise to my God. One day as I sat reading my Bible, a soft, bright light flashed on the page I was reading, and a sweet voice said, The gates are open. I went to bed that night, thinking of that sweet hope, when my soul was overwhelmed with light. I was not asleep, but wide awake, and I again saw that beautiful garden, and a voice said, Daughter, thy sins are forgiven. O, my dear father, if I only had the power to tell you the beauty and the sweetness of it, but I have not. Ah, how much easier my troubles and sufferings are for me to bear when I think of the sweet and beautiful home in heaven; O blessed hope, O sweet consolation; is it not enough to cause every poor sinner saved by grace to give God all the glory in their salvation? As the days go by I have a more abiding sense of the goodness of God in giving me hope in his mercy, in covering me with the shadow of his wing and in permitting me to cast all my cares and burdens on him, for he careth for me. "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life." How merciful and gracious he is in all his dealings with his people, and O what restful, abiding faith, secured in grace, and stimulated by the fondest hope.

There is so much to write that I find

no place to stop, but my letter has grown so long I fear I will weary you. I am no better than I was when you were here. I send this in fear and trembling; it is like the writer, very poor and worthless.

Your loving child, saved by grace if saved at all,

KATHLEEN KENDALL.

WOODSTOCK, Ont., Sept. 10, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Your short letter reached me in due time, and I was glad to hear from you. It made me glad, and sorry, too; glad to know that there was another with the feelings and experience I have, for I assure you I do feel so lonesome, so cast away and such an outside case, that I think there can be no one like me, and often do I cry out for some token or evidence of an experience of grace, and to know that all my religion and profession is not an empty thing, but a living reality, and sometimes I hope I long for the Lord to reveal himself to me as my Savior and my all in all, and that he is precious to me, but O it does seem so much of my time, nay, I may say, all the time, that he is far away, and that my sins, the world and its allurements, and everything of an earthly nature, hide him from my view, and I wander in darkness, not knowing whither I am drifting, and am like a vessel without rudder or anchor, driven by the fierce winds of doubt, fear, and, worse than all, by infidel thoughts and feelings, of which I am ashamed, but which I cannot shake off, and then I am cold, barren, useless and fit only for a habitation of evil spirits, and I wonder why I do not give it all up, and say, Good-bye, religion, hope and profession; but I cannot, for my hope will not leave me, and I have no place to go if I cannot live among the children of God. I know I am neither fit nor worthy to be among them, and yet when I think of leaving them I feel to say with Peter, Lord, to whom can I go? for I know I cannot live with the worldly religionists, and can say with the Hebrew children, If I have no God, and if God will not deliver me, I will not worship nor bow down to the false gods whom the world worship, for I know they are false and of no avail. I said I was glad, and sorry, too, for what you said, or wrote; sorry for the condition of mind you were in. We must have that patience to wait on the Lord, and must look to him for it as for every other spiritual gift.

I was glad to see brother Bird's communication in the SIGNS; he expressed a very significant idea where he spoke of the Lord being the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. They were in their graves, that is, their corporeal frames, or bodies; but God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. I hope we may always look to the Scriptures for guidance, and pray that the Lord may give us a right understanding of them, for we know nothing spiritually, only as it is revealed to us, for the apostle plainly declares that the natural man understandeth not the things of the Spirit, and I do not believe that as children of God we know any more than one who has no grace, only as God teaches us and reveals to us, for my mind sometimes seems duller and more dead than it ever did, only, as I hope, it is wrought upon by the Spirit of God, if indeed I ever have been the subject of that work, which I so often doubt and fear is the case with me, and if I had any power of my own I would not be in such a condition; I am always alive to the world and willing to live after it. I am an old man, having just seen my sixty-fourth birthday; one would think I would be thinking of eternity and of my latter end,

but I do not and cannot, only as the Lord takes my mind away from the world and the things of the world. He it is who must quicken our mortal bodies to run in the way of his commandments, and make us love to worship him, to meet together in fellowship and communion and talk of our mutual joys and sorrows.

I had better close, for I am only multiplying words with no edification.

Unworthily your brother,

R. SCATES.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., Sept. 20, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—After a long silence I have again taken my pen in hand to try in my weak way to talk a little to you, it being my birthday, and I have no one to talk to, and much to study about how I have come through sixty-five years; how the dear, good Lord has led me about and instructed me, and kept me as the apple of his eye. Yes, bless his name, he has instructed poor, ignorant me, and he has chastised me, too, in his love and mercy; he has hid, as it were, his loving countenance from me, and O what sorrow and darkness I have been called to pass through, but he has sent the Comforter in many ways, and at times unexpected, which assures me,

"Though I have him oft forgot,
His loving-kindness changes not."

I have learned in whatever situation I am to try to be therewith content. If I have to spend the remainder of my life (let it be long or short) isolated from my dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, I will try to bear it patiently. Our joy in communication with each other is so short, and partings are so sad, we are admonished to look beyond the shores of time for joy substantial.

Brethren, perhaps this may be my last writing, as I am afflicted with a cough that is wearing me out continually, but I often long and look for the time to come for me to quit the shores of time. I try to be prompt and keep my subscription paid up as best I can, so here is one dollar. If you have a vacant space and can correct what I have written, and put it in the SIGNS, I will be glad.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

NEAME, La., August 11, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I drop you a few lines to let you know I am still on earth with the living, but am very feeble, can hardly get across the floor, but thank my dear Lord that it is no worse with me than it is. I will be seventy-six years old September 17th, and have been afflicted with asthma over half a century, and the dear old SIGNS is all my comfort, as I am deaf and can neither taste nor smell; in fact my strength is gone. My dear wife is sixty-nine years old, and we live about among our children, as we are very poor in this world's goods, and I feel my days in this sinful world are almost spent. I have been taking the dear old SIGNS for fifty years, but am not able to pay for it now, and have to be on the poor list. I receive my paper twice a month all right, and appreciate it highly. I cannot write at all, but have to get some one to do my writing, that is the reason you do not hear from me oftener. I will close for this time.

I remain your brother in Christ, I hope,

C. H. JONES.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1909.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
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TITUS I. 1-4.

"PAUL, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; but hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me, according to the commandment of God our Savior; to Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior."

There are some things common to all the epistles of the apostle to the Gentiles, as he has called himself. There are other things, not opposite, but diverse. The things common were such as were suited to all the churches alike, while other things were diverse, being suited to the special conditions under which each church was placed. So the personal epistles have some things in common also, but yet contain many diversities of thought, suited to the circumstances of those to whom they were written. Among the things alike in all these letters was the substance of the opening words of each epistle. Paul announces himself as the writer at the beginning of each. In some cases he includes with himself those who were with him when he wrote. We are not to judge from this that the others named, in any case, wrote the words that followed with their own pens, but that they joined with him in what he should say to the churches and brethren. It was then customary to begin all letters with the name of the writer, and also of the persons to whom the letter was addressed. In this land it is the custom to name the person or persons addressed at the beginning, and the person or persons who are writing at the close. It was good, for many reasons, that Paul should be careful to give his name as the writer. Not to have done so would have left Titus to conjecture as to the writer, save as he would recognize in the handwriting, and in the substance of what was written, that which was peculiar to Paul. Some writings at this day are judged to have been by some one because the manner of the writing is like that one, but in a personal letter, like this to Titus, it is not well to leave to conjecture who the writer might be. No one who has the fear of God before his eyes, and who loves his brethren, and who feels that reproof, rebuke or censure is needed and ought to be administered, would think of writing to that effect without signing his name, because the writing would be of but little effect, and the recipient would be very likely to think that it was written by an innocent party, and so perhaps be led to feel unkindly toward one who knew nothing about the matter. No just-minded person would wish to bring censure in the mind of another toward one who was not concerned in the matter. Paul wrote often in the language of reproof, rebuke and blame, but in all such cases he was careful to announce himself as the writer. If any were disposed to feel unkindly because he thus wrote to them he would not have the blame rest upon any one save himself. On the other hand, much of Paul's writing is in the language of

kindness, love and fellowship toward his brethren, and sometimes with earnest approval, and the loving hearts of those to whom he wrote would at such times desire to know the writer, that they might thank and love him all the more for his tender words to them. One, however, may write such things as these last without signing his or her name and no harm will be done, for love going out to any one, even to one who is not the writer, can do no harm; but to not sign the name when blame or censure is written is often productive of harm, because the wrong person is often blamed. But Paul was very careful in this matter. Paul further designates himself as the writer of this epistle by calling himself an apostle of Jesus Christ and a servant of God. First, he was a servant of God, and then an apostle of Christ. The word "servant" designates his position before God, who was his Master and King, in common with all who are called by grace, and who are therefore the servants of God, while the word "apostle" designates the special service to which he as a servant of God was called. Paul was no more a servant of God than any other child of God is; all His are his servants, but not all are apostles. Paul was an apostle, serving God in that one special place. Paul wrote humbly as a man among his fellow-men, and as one unworthy of such exalted service, but still he wrote boldly, as one who, though unworthy, was still sent of God with a message; the authority of heaven was with him. An ambassador may be of the humblest origin, and possess little wisdom or merit in himself, but yet he comes before those to whom his government sends him, not as a man, but as its ambassador, and he speaks with all boldness the message which he is sent to deliver. So Paul came in the name of the Lord, and his message was not his, but God's, therefore he spoke and wrote boldly, but with humility, and not with pride.

He next declares his message to be according to the faith of God's elect, and for the confession of the truth which is according to godliness. Paul was chosen as one of the judges ruling in judgment, and from what he might write to the churches there was no appeal. His words were God's words and his decisions were God's decisions; if the faith of any man were contrary to what he wrote, that man's faith was not of God; no divine light could be in that man. The faith of all must be judged by what Paul wrote, whether that faith be of God or not. What he wrote truly was according to the faith of God's elect, still his writing was not judged by their faith, but their faith was to be judged by his writing. One should know whether his was the faith of God's elect or not, according as his faith was, or was not, in harmony with what Paul wrote. So must our faith be judged to-day. It is the glory of all who love God in truth that they demand a "thus saith the Lord" through his inspired prophets and apostles for all they believe or practice. If this at any time be lost sight of among his people only blind speculation remains. His writing and preaching were also for the confession of that truth that is after godliness. All that is in anywise contrary to this is falsehood, and not according to godliness. Things may look reasonable or unreasonable to us, but that matters not; our reason must yield to the least word of God, and we, if led by the Spirit, will be glad to subject our every thought to the word of God in the Scriptures. So here Paul writes to Titus, saying in substance, I am writing to you that which

God approves, and in it there is no admixture of error. Still further, Paul continues to declare that by which he is animated in continuing to declare for the truth against crosses, losses and oppositions, namely, the hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began. This hope abided with him, and encouraged and animated him to go on against wind and tide unto the end. The blessed Savior indeed declared, I give unto my sheep eternal life. This we know to be a present gift, felt and realized in the heart, and witnessed by every emotion of heavenly love, fear, desire and gratitude toward God that ever rises up in the heart. But Paul, who already possessed this gift, and who was in the strength of it doing his faithful work as an apostle, yet speaks here of the hope of eternal life. Hope proceeded out of the indwelling of this life first, and then this hope desired and expected still more of the fullness of it. Whether Paul wrote this letter when at the beginning of his ministry or at the end of it, he was still in the attitude of hoping for something that was yet in the future; he knew of things which he had not yet received. Like us all, he could not have known just what this hope embraced as he would come to know it when he should awake with the likeness of the Lord, but, like all who have tasted and seen that the Lord is gracious, he knew enough to cause hope to dwell in him. Hope is always compounded of expectation and desire. Believers expect the final glory, and they desire it. If either element of hope be wanting hope is not hope. A criminal expects the punishment of his transgressions, but he does not desire it, and so does not hope for it. A beggar desires to be rich, but he does not expect it, and therefore he does not hope for it. But where there is ground of expectation, and desire is also found in the heart, there is hope. Paul had this hope; it was the hope of his calling. It was the theme frequently of his preaching and writing. It is this glorious hope that revives our courage by the way. Why should not believers often think and speak about it? The fulfillment of this hope will make amends for all the toil along the way, and the greater the trials along the way, the more earnest will be the desire for future rest. So Paul could say, I long "to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better." And, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day."

The expression, "eternal life," not only means eternal duration, but a life that is the best of all life. This eternal life is spoken of in the word as the gift of God to his chosen, and is not possessed by any other beings. Angelic hosts are not said to possess this life. Other life may endure forever and ever, but eternal life differs from all other kinds of life. Natural life manifests itself in all natural thoughts, feelings, motions and desires, while eternal life manifests itself in all spiritual emotions. Natural life may exist with that which is unholy, but eternal life cannot exist except in all holiness and truth. He who has eternal life has all holy desires and affections possessing him. In the world to come, when this eternal life is perfected in us, then shall we be holy as God is holy, but in this present evil world we are not yet perfected. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every

man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." Thus this blessed hope leads to holiness here, and assures us of perfection hereafter. Eternal duration does not necessarily mean eternal life, according to the Bible definition of that life; but, hoping for eternal life, the people of God seek for it, and to them it is promised. Our hope depends upon the promise of God, and the text declares that this promise was given before the world began, and we know that it was given, as were all other spiritual blessings, in Christ Jesus our Lord, and now it is true that he that hath the Son of God hath life, while he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. To have Christ in us here, is eternal life; and in the future world, for which we hope, Christ will still be our all and all. He is the way; by him we come to God. He is the truth; by him we enter into the knowledge of the truth. He is the life; by him we live, and shall live eternally. He is the resurrection; by him we shall be raised up. Paul says that all this truth concerning Christ, and our hope of salvation, God hath in due times manifested through preaching, which had been committed to him and to others according to the commandment of God our Savior. It is the one business then of the preacher to make manifest the great truths embraced in the work of Jesus in salvation. It is his to simply proclaim the gospel of salvation through Christ, and God has been most graciously pleased to ordain this preaching, and to bless it to his people as he has not blessed any other ordinance in the church. He commends and commands praying, singing, the supper and baptism, and often blesses them to his own glory and the good of his chosen, but he has blessed the public preaching of His word above all else. This was so in the times of the apostles and in his own days in the flesh, it is so yet. Preaching is not to exclude other gifts, but still it is the chief of all. Its virtue does not consist in the power, wisdom, eloquence or zeal of the preacher, but in the power of God applying it according to his will as the needs of his people require. Let it be noticed that the word in verse three is not "time," but "times." He "hath in due times manifested his word through preaching." This is true as often as the word is preached. It is true in another sense, as often as preaching is blessed to the souls of men; and how many times has this been the case with all the children of God. How many can bear witness to the power of preaching to bless them as their need required. The power of the preaching was in the Spirit of God, and not in the letter of the word.

In conclusion, the beloved apostle prays for Titus that grace, mercy and peace may be his from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior. Grace signifies the freeness of God's gifts, including mercy and peace. Mercy implies unworthiness and sinfulness in those who receive it, and peace presents the result of the grace and mercy of God, viz., peace of conscience toward God and toward all men. He who has grace and mercy must have peace. All these blessings are given in the Father and through the Son; in this way all boasting is excluded, as Paul says elsewhere, and God alone is glorified. C.

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EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ASSOCIATIONS.

In reply to brother Ausmus' inquiry, What is an association? we answer, The word signifies a connection formed of persons or things. When applied to christians, in a religious sense, we understand it to signify a social band of the disciples of Christ in union, harmony, intimately organized on gospel principles, according to the laws of Christ, for mutual edification, in sweet communion and fellowship one with another. An association of churches is almost anything that the associated parties may make of them. If composed of none but regular and orderly churches, of the same faith and order, and conducted on gospel principles, they are, as brother Ausmus has found some of them, both pleasant and profitable. With Old School Baptists, the design of associations is an extension of acquaintance by christian correspondence and personal interviews, the promotion of fellowship and the general edification of all who belong to the household of God, and as they are generally held, by mutual agreement of the associated churches, once a year, opportunity is afforded for brotherly intercourse, whereby each may learn of the state and condition of the others, so as to be able to sympathize together, to rejoice with those who do rejoice, and weep with such as weep. At those annual meetings letters from the associated churches are brought by their messengers, setting forth the general prosperity or adverse condition of each church, with such expressions of love, sympathy and fellowship as the churches are pleased to communicate. This is deemed important, not only that each may know of the other's affairs, but also to regulate the intercommunion of the churches. Churches in receiving members from other churches by letter, should know whether such churches are of the same faith and order, as also in dismissing from one to another. As it takes all the members of Christ to make up his one body, so all the branches of the church are required to make up the general assembly of the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. The same immortal life animates all the members of the one body; the same food nourishes, the same hope cheers, the same faith triumphs, in and through them all. For however distant in locality the branches may be spread out from each other, they are the same one Vine; their vigor is from the same root, and their fruit is the same. None of them bear the grapes of Sodom nor the clusters of Gomorrah, but this Vine of which the Father is the husbandman bears the fruits which are unto holiness, and the end is everlasting life. For "there is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." One church, or branch of the church of Christ, can have no separate interest or independent existence from all the other branches, and all are equally interested in all the affairs of all the fellow-branches.

Much has been said about the independence of churches, of their right to transact their business in their own way, without remonstrance or interference from others. But how is this? Has any portion of the church a right to do wrong, to violate any law or precept of the law of Christ, which is equally binding alike on all the branches of the church of God?

If they have, then may they be independent of each other, but such independence at once destroys all fellowship with each other. Our fellowship is based upon identity of faith and practice. In the primitive days they who gladly received the word of the apostles were admitted to baptism and church membership, and they continued in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship; none were continued in the apostles' fellowship who did not abide in their doctrine. It is no less essential now that christians and churches should conform to that standard of apostolic rectitude in faith and practice, to secure the common fellowship of the people of God, than at that time, for all orderly christians are commanded to mark and avoid those who walk disorderly. This includes those who embrace any other doctrine than that which Paul and the other apostles preached, or are governed by any other laws or ordinances than given in the New Testament. We fully agree with our brother that the church of Christ is the highest ecclesiastical court on earth; and further, we will say she is the only divinely authorized ecclesiastical court on earth. No other court, principality or power on earth has any right to interfere with the discipline of God's house. We would rather have a millstone hanged about our neck, and be cast in the midst of the Atlantic, than fall under the reprobation of the church of God; when she, in her legitimate position, governed by the word and Spirit, utters her decisions, they are binding on earth and ratified in heaven. But here is the point: does the church, in all her several branches, always act in accordance with the word and Spirit of Christ? We are far from adopting the popish doctrine of infallibility. Let it be always remembered that the church is only competent to administer the laws of Christ in the house of God when she occupies apostolic ground, and her enactments and decisions can only meet the divine approbation when they are executed in the Spirit of Christ and according to his laws. It is not, therefore, lording it over God's heritage for any disciple of Christ to repudiate any action of a church, or association of churches, when they have manifestly departed, in their decisions, from the word and from the spirit of the gospel of Christ. In the distinct organization of a branch of the church of God it is fully conceded that such a church, or branch of the church, has full authority to execute the laws and discipline in her own bounds, but with the explicit understanding that she can only act authoritatively when acting according to the divine rule, and this rule is the same in all the departments of Zion, wherever located, and throughout all time.

Associations, in the common acceptation of the term among us, not being an organized branch of the church, do not assemble for the purpose of exercising those prerogatives which belong to the churches as such; but still, to prevent disorder and confusion, they must have the right to withhold their sanction from all that is disorderly and in violation of the law of Christ. Hence when a church which has been recognized in her fellowship manifestly departs from our faith or order, she has, as has every individual christian, the authority of Christ to drop such church from her recognition as an orderly church in fellowship, and from all, either churches or individual brethren, that walk disorderly, to turn away.

Cases like that mentioned by brother Ausmus sometimes have occurred where churches have become divided, and each party claimed to be the church, and have

sent each party their letter to the association, and the duty, however unpleasant or delicate, is forced on the association to decide which, if either party, is walking in the spirit and order of the gospel. In nearly all such cases it is presumable that both parties are, at least to some extent, wrong, and the association should be exceeding cautious how they decide. But when the case is perfectly clear that one party has palpably departed from the order of the gospel, and that the other is contending only for the faith and order of the gospel of Christ, the association has the same power that every individual has to express her fellowship for the orderly brethren and to withhold it from the disorderly. Upon no other principle that we can conceive of can fellowship be maintained among the people of God. If a number of persons, many or few, who have organized as a church, put themselves on their dignity as a church, claim a right to do as they please as an independent church, and refuse to give satisfaction to sister churches in regard to their order, can it be expected that sister churches can continue their walk and fellowship when the erring church is regardless of their approbation? The association of churches, as we have shown, are voluntary assemblages of messengers and brethren from such churches as have professed to be of the same faith and order, and as such, have mutually agreed to associate as long as they can so agree. The undoubted right is reserved to each to retire from the association when they shall see cause for doing so, and the association has the right to drop from her list any church that in her judgment has departed from the faith and order of the gospel. We by no means regard associational compacts as essential to the order of the gospel. Many churches which stand unconnected with other churches in any formal arrangement of association are nevertheless held in bonds of fellowship by the Old School Baptists generally; but these unassociated churches carry out the same order in dropping from their correspondence and fellowship such churches as in their judgment depart from the faith and practice authorized by the divine rule.

Finally, christians collectively in churches, or associations, or individually, are required to adhere strictly to the laws and ordinances of the Lord's house, and so long as they walk orderly they have a right to the fellowship of all the children of God, but in no capacity have they the right to violate any of the precepts, nor to depart from any of the examples of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is but too true, as our brother has intimated, and most of us have painfully felt, the church is annoyed by ambitious and graceless men, who desire to lord it over the conscience of the children of God, but we cannot see that the nuisance would be at all abated by disbanding all the associations. Many such characters infested the primitive churches and annoyed them, as did the Canaanites the people of Israel in former times; but if our associations are properly regarded they will have a tendency rather to detect and expose such vain and troublesome characters. The Old School Baptists have constantly disclaimed all right or disposition to legislate for or to sit in judgment over the churches. We meet for the worship of God, for christian correspondence, for social intercourse and sweet communion with those who truly love our Lord Jesus Christ, and are ready and willing to bear his yoke and to learn of him who is meek and lowly.

We have not written our views to pre-

vent other brethren from responding to the inquiries of brother Ausmus, but we do think if ever there was a time when the saints should associate, and correspond, and speak often and lovingly one to another, that time is now upon us. How long we may be permitted to enjoy the privilege, is with the Lord. Many who have formerly enjoyed it are now deprived. May God enable us to use and not abuse the liberty while we may.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., November 1, 1863.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder James Miller.)

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, held with the Jefferson Church, Schoharie County, N. Y., October 6th and 7th, 1909, to the several churches of which it is composed, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Through the abounding goodness of our covenant-keeping God we have the privilege of once more meeting in an associate capacity, and as is a custom of long standing in the Lexington Association, to address you by way of a Circular Letter. We find the letter of the apostle Paul to the Ephesian brethren (chapter v.) is addressed to the brethren, or children: "Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice." The apostle tells the children in the preceding chapter: "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." The apostle still admonishes the followers to "let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."—Eph. iv. 31, 32. The apostle Peter admonishes the brethren for their good, not to render "evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called," &c. "Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it." "And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?"—1 Peter iii. 9, 11, 13. And to walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us. We read in 1 John iii. 1: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God," and when that love is shed abroad in the hearts of his children they can say with David, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" They then realize, as is expressed in this eighty-fourth Psalm, that, "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. [O yes.] For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee." The apostle Paul to the Roman brethren says, "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another; * * * be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. * * * Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Now to stir up your pure

minds by way of remembrance, we call your attention to what is written by the apostle for the brethren, and those who are called to preach the gospel: "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." —Romans viii. 28. Contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, whether men will hear or forbear. As the apostle charged Timothy in his second letter: "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them." "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following." O that the watchmen whom the Lord has placed on Zion's walls to go forth in the strength of their Master would cry aloud (as we read): "For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest." "Lift up a standard for the people. * * * Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him."

In conclusion, the poet has this verse:

"It shall be well, let Zion know,
With those who love the Lord;
His saints have always found it so
When resting on his word."

JOHN CLARK, Moderator.
JAMES AVERY, Clerk.
DOW BORST, Assistant Clerk.

(Written by Eli T. Kidwell.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the church at Mt. Zion, Loudoun County, Virginia, October 13th, 14th and 15th, 1909, to the several churches composing this Association, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As our custom has been to write you a Corresponding Circular from year to year, we feel to say to you that we have nothing new to excite curiosity, neither do we wish it, but rather to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance of those things that are sweet to us and are believed among us, that which we have been taught, we trust, by that Spirit which takes of the things of the kingdom and shews them unto us in our daily experience, therefore we will cite you to that Scripture found in John viii. 4, 5, not to write you a sermon, but to call to mind how the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, and when we were brought we were found guilty, and made to confess it, too, and were brought before Jesus with all our guilt, with condemnation resting upon us, and our accusers there to pronounce justice and judgment against us; our lips sealed; death seemed to stare us in the face, while Jesus seemed to take no notice. Just here, dear brethren, the words of the poet seem to speak for us:

"And if my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well."

Just at this critical point Jesus raised himself from the ground, and the law was magnified for the first time; how good and holy it was; who indeed should cast the first stone, or be the first to cast one? All have sinned and are under the curse; none left out. Do not let us forget "the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life," and that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified; but to know this we must first know we are sinners; or, in other words, that we are transgressors, and to know this we must be transgressors, and to realize this we must meet condemnation, and to meet that is to stand where this condemned woman stood, for she knew how she stood

before that law which says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." But all the many struggles through which the poor sinner must pass, and the agony of soul under the law of sin and death, are among the "all things" that work together (not separately) for good to those who are the called according to his purpose. The woman referred to above is a representative character, and does fully represent each child of God under the law; and even in their individual experience they feel to stand poor and helpless, with no merit; all their acts, body and soul, are open before the God of that law, and, like their predecessors in the garden, when their eyes were opened they were ashamed; their heart and action were all open to that God whose name signifies good. Such an one turns his eye within, all is dark (death) and vain and wild, there is a voice within: No hope—that way is barred—poor and helpless. But, dear ones, the time is not counted, and let us thank God that it is not, for if it were, no flesh could live. The Lord answers your accusers while you wait. What a good thing it is to wait, though we know not what we are waiting for; and the only reason we wait is, because we can do nothing less, and have learned by bitter experience to "do" is death. But just here the Lord is raised up, and all our accusers are gone out and we are left alone with the holy Jesus, who asks the question, Where are all those who have charges against thee? and we in much trembling answer that they are all gone out and none are left to condemn us. We cannot tell when the law dropped out, but we feel free to confess we are alone with Jesus, and the very breath of life is in his voice, for he says he came not to condemn, but to give life, and we feel and hear his voice speaking gracious words: Neither do I condemn thee; go thy way, and sin no more. Thy way is different now from what it was; your song is praises to his dear name, for none is worthy but Jesus to open this book of revelation to our sin-sick soul, and all our way is in Jesus. To do the will of God, no matter how weak we are, to do his will is our desire, to go where he leads; if in deep waters or tribulation, distress or sorrow, it is the way, and our desires are in that way, for it is the way the Lord hath chosen for us, therefore we hear his voice saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it," and we walk, not in our own strength, but by the will of God given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, and therefore "to obey is better than sacrifice," therefore we walk by faith, the gift of God. We are free, for Jesus made us so, and there is none to lay anything to our charge, and we are free indeed, because Jesus met all the law's demands, died that we might live; and not only died, but rose again to life, justifying those poor sinners chosen unto life in the foreknowledge of God, predestinated to the praise of his glory before the world began, revealed in us as the end of the law to each believer as the all-sufficient hope of glory. Brethren, these things are sweet to us, and we speak of them in this little letter that our minds may be stirred somewhat, inasmuch as coldness seems to settle down on us and among us, and of late especially; but let us remember the Lord neither slumbers nor sleeps, that His eye seeth us at all times, and that he does not condemn, but makes us free, and if Christ has made us free, then we are free indeed. May the Lord guard and guide all his children, that they may go their way in peace and love, walking in the path of peace and love, taking heed to

the doctrine of God our Savior through all their journey, is our desire for Jesus' sake, and unto his great name be all honor and praise, now and forever. Amen.

J. N. BADGER, Moderator.
S. B. PAXSON, Clerk.

(Written by Elder A. B. Francis.)

The Elders and messengers composing the Salisbury Association of Old School Baptists, in session with the church at Indiantown, Wicomico Co., Maryland, October 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1909, to the several churches whose messengers we are, sendeth love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—According to a long established custom, we, your messengers, in association assembled together at this time and place by the good will of our heavenly Father, having you in our hearts, with, we hope, a sincere desire for your welfare, especially in the things of the Spirit, write you this, our annual Circular Letter, not undertaking to tell you what to do in order to become partakers of divine life, or to tell you something that you do not already know, but to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance; for we know that your spiritual comfort and well-being consist not in seeking to obtain salvation by the deeds of the law, or by remembering the things that you have done in the past, but in remembrance of the dealings of the Lord with you, of the way he has led you, how he has wrought in you to give you evidences and assurances that you are of that number whom he of his electing love has chosen unto salvation, and predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. God chose Abram, and called him, separating him from his kindred, and leading him out of his native country into a strange land, blessed him, and gave him a promise of a seed in whom all nations of the earth should be blessed. Isaac was that seed (a type of Christ), and it was in Isaac, that promised child, the seed of Abraham should be called; of Isaac came Jacob and his seed (Israel), unto whom was fulfilled, literally, all that was embraced in God's promise to Abraham. They were delivered over to bondage, and were in servitude to do the will of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, till the four hundred years were fulfilled. At the time appointed God appeared unto Moses, by whom he would deliver his people from their sore bondage, showing his power in Pharaoh, even saying to him, "For this same purpose have I raised thee up;" leading his chosen seed forth out of Egypt and delivering them from their oppressor with a high hand and an outstretched arm, and bringing them by way of the desert and the wilderness into the land which he had promised unto them in Abraham four hundred years before. But they were hard-hearted, and stiff-necked, and rebellious, even forgetting the goodness of the Lord and the abundance of his mercies, while the evidences were yet fresh and new to them; the manna falling upon their camp every morning, and the Rock, from whose cleft they drank daily, followed them. They provoked him to anger, and he swore in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest, and many of their carcasses perished in the wilderness, God thus showing his displeasure toward them. When they came nigh unto the borders of the land Moses assembled the people (all Israel) and said, "Remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty hand, and

by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day." And again, "Thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt: and thou shalt observe and do these statutes." Thus was called to their remembrance what they were, and from whence they were delivered, as the reason that they should do the things God commanded them. (See Deuteronomy v. 15; xv. 15; xvi. 12; xxiv. 18, 22, &c.)

Now Israel of old was a type of the gospel church (spiritual Israel), who were chosen in Christ, the spiritual seed of Abraham, in whom all the true seed of Abraham are called, and who are in a spiritual sense the children of Abraham, and who are now manifested through faith by a spiritual birth, faith being the manifestation of eternal life in them, and Abraham is called "the father of all them that believe." Christ is the antitypical Isaac, in whom all the seed are called, and they are "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." They, too, were in bondage, the cruel bondage of sin, subject to the law of sin and death, but the God of Israel has delivered them from that bondage, not by Moses, but by Jesus Christ, who through death destroyed him that had the power of death (broke the yoke of the oppressor), and delivered them who all their lifetime were subject to bondage through fear of death. Having been redeemed and brought forth out of that servitude, now no longer "servants of sin," we are exhorted unto the service of God; it is a reasonable service, not to bear a burdensome and grievous yoke, but to render service to God, a service of love, which all the saints have found to be a delightful service, in which the only lasting pleasure is to be found, and in this service is a remembrance of the gracious dealings of the Lord, and all his goodness which he has shown toward us, and we desire to praise him "for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men." Dear brethren, ought we not to render ready and cheerful service to One who has been, and yet is, so good and kind and forbearing to us, serving him in his sanctuary, the church, giving cheerfully of our time and substance, ministering unto him in the persons of his needy children, keeping the fast that he has commanded (chosen), "to loose the bounds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? * * * to deal thy bread to the hungry, to bring the poor that are cast out to thy house?" to cover the naked, to "hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health [spiritual] shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee: the glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward," &c.—Isaiah lviii. 6–8. Are not these things worthy of our consideration? Let us then "hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) and let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." Amen.

T. M. POULSON, Moderator.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Second Church of Roxbury, Delaware County, N. Y., September 22nd and 23rd, 1909, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has pleased the Lord in his all-wise providence to spare our unprofitable lives another year, and bring us together in an associate capacity, for which we feel thankful. Our meeting has been most pleasant throughout, not one sentence has been expressed contrary to the gospel of God our Savior. Your ministers have preached unto us Jesus, and our hearts have been made glad.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Olive and Hurley Church, Ulster Co., N. Y., to begin Wednesday after the third Sunday in September, 1910, where we shall hope to again meet your messengers and receive your messages of love and fellowship.

J. B. SLAUSON, Moderator.
H. C. ELMENDORF, Clerk.

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Jefferson Church, Jefferson, Schoharie Co., N. Y., Oct. 6th and 7th, 1909, to the associations with whom we correspond, sends greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—We have great reason to rejoice that we have the privilege of sending to you our annual epistle of love and fellowship, with a desire that truth and righteousness may prevail through all the associations that are in fellowship with the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who came not to do his own will, but the will of the Father, in whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning; the same yesterday, to-day and forever; who knew the end from the beginning, declaring that his counsel shall stand, and that he will do all his pleasure through the works of his creation; that they shall all know him from the least to the greatest, and show forth the praise of his handiwork in bringing all things into manifestation by the word of his power; who is mighty to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him. (Hebrews vii. 25.) To our understanding "thee" by him means Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who is able to present our bodies a living sacrifice to God the Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Truly the lines are fallen to us in pleasant places. The time we have been together has been spent in the worship of God, which has had no uncertain sound, and we have been comforted and strengthened, and we hope for a continuance of the same. We desire a continuance of your correspondence, and hope we shall receive a goodly number of your messengers at our next session, which is appointed to be held, if the Lord will, with our sister church of Schoharie, Schoharie Co., N. Y., at the usual time, first Wednesday and Thursday in October (5th and 6th), 1910, when we hope to meet your messengers again.

JOHN CLARK, Moderator.
JAMES AVERY, Clerk.
DOW BORST, Assistant Clerk.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Indiantown, Wicomico Co., Md., October 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1909, to the several associations and meetings with whom we correspond, sendeth love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Through the grace and mercy of an all-wise God we have been permitted to meet, according to previous arrangement,

in an associate capacity (it being the one hundred and twenty-seventh annual session). A number of ministers have been with us, proclaiming the great and glorious riches of Christ our Savior. The ever-glorious theme of the crucified and risen Redeemer has been fervently and eloquently set forth by your ministers. The messengers have reported peace and harmony within the borders of this association. The associations of our correspondence are moderately well represented.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the church at Broad Creek, Sussex County, Delaware, to begin on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1910, the Lord willing, when and where we sincerely hope to again have the privilege of receiving and mingling with your messengers.

T. M. POULSON, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

MEMORIALS.

(ROXBURY ASSOCIATION.)

WHEREAS, it has pleased Almighty God to take from earth our dearly beloved brother, **Alva Bogart,** we feel that a suitable memorial should be prepared. While we know that words can but slightly express what we feel in our hearts, neither can they do justice to so noble a life as was found in brother Bogart. He was a man of sterling integrity, upright in heart, kind and generous; he was held in high esteem by all who knew him, and to know him was to love him. He lived a faithful and devoted life to the cause of Christ, which he dearly loved; was also a faithful and consistent member of the church, one who tried to fill his place in the church; his seat was very seldom vacant, feeling it his duty and esteeming it a pleasure to meet his brethren. He was a close listener, and always seemed to enjoy the preaching of the gospel of Christ. Brother Bogart served the Olive and Hurley Church as their clerk for many years to the entire satisfaction of all. His home was always the home of his kindred in Christ, whose company he delighted to be in, and nothing would give him greater pleasure than to be of service to his brethren. Brother Bogart for a few years past was afflicted by the loss of his sight, and was nearly blind, yet he felt resigned to that affliction, feeling that it was the Lord's will, and he desired to be reconciled to the will of the Lord. Before being afflicted by the loss of his sight he was a close Bible reader, clear in doctrine and well settled in the truth as it is in Jesus. We as an association deeply feel our loss of so useful and devoted a brother as brother Bogart, and are brought down in sorrow and mourning, yet the all-wise hand of Providence rules. May God be with us in this sorrow, as an association, and our prayers are that he will be with our dear sister, who has lost so kind and loving a husband, and the son so devoted a father.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. G. M. Seevers, of Forest Grove neighborhood, died at her home Sunday night of diabetes. She was a daughter of the late A. D. and Nancy Simmons, of Huron. She was nearly 46 years old, and was born and raised on the farm where she died and had lived all her life, with the exception of one or two years, and had a wide circle of friends and acquaintances. She loved her old home and home neighborhood, and a more universally loved woman, and one who will be more missed, could not be found in any community. She was ever ready to lend a helping hand to one and all, kind and indulgent to her family. Our loss is irreparable; it is a sadly broken home. She joined the Methodists several years ago, but soon afterward called for a letter of dismissal, wishing to place her membership with the Missionary Baptists. She had been more or less afflicted since spring, and to her attending physician this sickness was not unexpected, and being of only three days duration her death came as a shock to her many friends. Like a lamp burning out she passed peacefully away, after bidding farewell to the different members of her family, with a dying mother's advice to her sons: "Be good boys;" and to her husband, "Try and get along the best you can without me," never uttering a murmuring word. She leaves her husband and five children: Orlo, of Purcel, Mrs. Lloyd Hawk, of Effingham, and Willie, Clifford and Gladys, aged respectively sixteen, fourteen and ten, besides her mother, three sisters and one brother. The death of "dear, good Lol," as she was lovingly called, comes as a double affliction to her aged mother, she having lost her eldest son, John W. Simmons, of Kansas City, only last spring. A few years ago she lost her daughter, Mrs. C. C. Marsh, and her husband within a few months of each other. She has now only four left of eleven children.

Mrs. Seevers was buried in the Reece Cemetery, near Forest Grove, Tuesday afternoon, funeral services being conducted by a Methodist minister from Horton.

Donald Mackay died at his home in Lake Ainslie, Nova Scotia, on the 7th inst., after an illness lasting nearly two years, caused by repeated strokes of paralysis. He was 71 years of age, and leaves a widow, three sons and three daughters; one of the sons is employed in the fire department of the city of Winnipeg, Canada, and the other two are practicing law in Massachusetts. Mr. Mackay first saw a copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in the early eighties, and thenceforth he was a subscriber. Next to searching the Scriptures, his greatest delight lay in perusing the SIGNS and trying to catch a larger glimpse of the life that is hid with Christ in God. During his last illness his patience and fortitude were greatly strengthened by reading the testimonies and opinions of the brethren throughout the world. So eagerly did he await each issue of the paper, and so carefully and thoroughly did he read it, that his nurse was frequently heard to say that she wished that paper were a weekly. The passing away of Mr. Mackay has given to the christian people of Lake Ainslie a deep sense of personal loss.

His funeral was largely attended, Roman Catholics and Presbyterians coming with a common purpose—to pay the tribute of respect to the memory of one whose faith in the wisdom of God's decrees was reflected in his life, and whose words and acts gave evidence of the faith that was in him.

JOHN D. MACKAY.

Nancy Jane Moses Maltbie was born July 20th, 1825, died Jan. 16th, 1909, aged 83 years, 4 months and 26 days. She was married to Arthur Maltbie Feb. 8th, 1854. To this union two children were born; they, together with her beloved husband, preceded her in death. Two grandchildren and two sisters remain; the sisters are Mary Conover and Eleanor S. Dey, who are members of the Tappscott Church, in Warren County, Ohio, where the deceased became a member June 19th, 1853, being baptized by Elder Samuel Williams. She was of a meek and quiet spirit, and during all these years since her connection with the church she was a most steadfast, consistent and orderly walking member, sound in the faith and exemplary in her life, and altogether gave a plain manifestation of the birth of the precious Word. She often spoke of her unworthiness and unfitness to be a member, yet spoke in highest terms of her blessed Savior and his kind dealings toward her. She was much esteemed by the church as a mother in Israel, and the loss to the church is great. She had been in feeble health for a number of years, not being able to attend all the meetings. On the evening prior to her departure she retired as usual, but on the following morning was found taking the sleep of death.

A funeral discourse was delivered by the writer to a host of sympathizing friends, after which her body was laid away in the cemetery at Springboro to await the summons from on high.

J. M. STRUBLE.

Miss Ella McColl, daughter of Ebenezer McColl, of Winnipeg, Canada, died Sunday, Oct. 10th, 1909. She was buried near Dutton, Ontario, Canada, Thursday, October 14th. Services were held at the home of her uncle, Samuel McColl, Dutton, the writer officiating.

D. M. VAIL.

WAVERLY, Pa., Oct. 16, 1909.

MEETINGS.

THE church of the Roxbury Association will hold their fifth Sunday meeting, the Lord willing, at Union Grove, N. Y., October 30th and 31st, commencing on Saturday at 2 p. m. All who love the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. Nothing preventing, we expect brother J. M. Fenton to be with us at this meeting. Trains on the Delaware & Eastern R. R. will be met Saturday morning at Union Grove, N. Y.

J. B. SLAUSON.

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11:00 A. M. **2:30 P. M.**

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 77. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1909. NO. 22.

CORRESPONDENCE.

EZEKIEL XX. 37.

"I WILL cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant."

How manifold are the similitudes employed by the Holy Spirit in declaring the dealings of the Holy One of Israel with his people! The form of the language in the above text of Scripture is drawn from a typical observance, and a custom also in the domestic lives of many in Israel. In the gathering of tithes from the people the tenth was the Lord's. "And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord. He shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it; and if he change it at all, then both it and the change thereof shall be holy: it shall not be redeemed."—Lev. xxvii. 32, 33. You see the picture: there passes the herd, or the flock, before him who holds the rod, and the rod is laid upon the tenth; this claims it, separates it from its fellows, it is the Lord's. Now read with me the following Scriptures, and then I will tell you some of my thoughts upon the text first mentioned: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Again in this place, which is desolate without man and without beast, and in all the cities thereof, shall be an habitation of shepherds causing their flocks to lie down. In the cities of the mountains, in the cities of the vale, and in the cities of the south, and in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, shall the flocks pass again under the hands of him that telleth them, saith the Lord."—Jer. xxxiii. 12, 13. "Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage, which dwell solitarily in the wood, in the midst of Carmel: let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old."—Micah vii. 14. The shepherd knoweth his sheep, he knows how many he has, and as they enter the sheepfold he telleth them (counteth) with his rod. He will know if all are there, if any are missing. "The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there."—Psalms lxxxvii. 6. And in that last day, the resurrection day, not one will be missing. (John vi. 39; xliv. 54.) All the chosen flock shall be presented by Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, redeemed, regenerated, immortal, incorruptible, faultless before the

Majesty in the heavens with exceeding joy.

"I will cause you to pass under the rod." The rod here is significant of the rule, the authority, the government of the Lord, who is the Shepherd, Priest and King of his people; and we may assure our hearts that the scepter of his kingdom is a right scepter. (Psalms xlv. 6; Heb. i. 6.) Have you entered into the depths of the riches of God's grace that was manifested toward you in causing you to pass under the rod? I mean that first time when you were brought in a vital, experimental manner beneath the rod of Jesus, our Shepherd, Priest and King. The presentation of the subject in the language of Ezekiel is the bringing back again of God's backsliding children from all the dark, dismal, shameful places where they have wandered, and once more causing them to pass under his divine rule, and that they may be safely folded in the sanctuary of the covenant. But let us consider awhile the Holy Ghost's first dealings with us. Before the Lord called us by his grace we were without God, without Christ and without hope in the world; we loved not the light, holiness and truth, we were estranged from God, enslaved to our carnal mind, which is enmity against God, we were dead in trespasses and sins. Such we were, justly exposed to the curse of the law, fit subjects for the damnation of hell. (Matt. xxiii. 33.) And do we not acknowledge that had God pronounced sentence upon us, saying, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," he would have been just? But instead of this what hath he done? "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ." A wondrous story, surpassing in its depths and heights and glories all the fictions conceived in the minds of men and published to the world. The experience of a sinner called by grace is a divine reality to the everlasting praise of God. The descriptions given in the holy Scriptures of the transactions of God with his chosen ones are not fairy stories; they are not mere petrified theories to which we give our assent, but they are testimonies of the vital, animating, transforming revelations wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost in the souls of the redeemed of the Lord. "Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering from the fold of God." Our souls quickened into divine life, we found ourselves, in our Adamic life, sinners, vile transgressors, exposed to the wrath of the broken law of God; we felt we were justly condemned for our sins, we felt we were not fit to die, for how could we come into the presence of the holy and just God after death? Yes, we believed in the hereafter. The experience of every quickened sinner refutes the fleshly-pleasing fallacy of the nonentity of human beings at death; for every conscious, quickened sinner has had thoughts of after death, and has felt, I am not fit in myself to come at death into the presence of God. And these heart exercises of those who are born of God are in accord with the Scriptures: "The wrath to come."—1 Thess. i. 10. "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, * * * these shall go away into everlasting punishment."—Matt. xxv. 41, 46. "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."—2

Thess. i. 9. Also see Matt. x. 28; Luke xii. 5. "The rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments."—Luke xvi. 22, 23. This is not a fiction, but these things declared by the lips of Jesus, the incarnate Word, are solemn, awful realities, and they are believed by those who are of God. O, it is well for us to believe the plain testimony of the Scriptures, to believe God's truth, though the severity of God (Rom. xi. 22,) be dreadful indeed. What tongue can tell the sufferings of Jesus when he redeemed us from the curse of the law? He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. The sorrows of death compassed him, he poured out his soul unto death. Thus Jesus, our Surety, was bruised, he was put to grief, his soul was made an offering for sin. The travail of his soul to redeem us from the curse is more than mortal tongues can tell. "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied."—Isaiah liii. 11. But with our apprehensions of Jehovah's everlasting wrath against sin there is very sacredly wrought in the called of God a humble and contrite heart that mourns before the Lord over sin. This is the fruit of the sovereign, conquering grace of God. The Lord, according to his purpose and grace, in due times quickens elect sinners, discovers to them their sins, causes them to feel their just condemnation, and brings them to know that they should not be able to stand before God when the great day of his wrath is come. (Rev. vi. 17.) And then how very gracious is our God that he bows down the spirit of the vile transgressor to fall at the feet of the Lord. Yes, our God melts the heart in sorrow and sighing over its iniquities, and moves us with fervent longings for mercy and salvation. The Scriptures tell the story of the believer in Jesus. Look at the following; how divinely true the narrative: "All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."—Isaiah liii. 6. "For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls."—1 Peter ii. 25. Before they are called by grace, the elect, like the rest of the human family, are found pursuing their way according to the course of this world. (Eph. ii. 2.) They are by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Go where they may they are going astray; every one is turned to his own way, and that way is never otherwise than a path of alienation from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their hearts. In paths of sin and ignorance, or fleshly religion, in them all we are only going astray; our own way is not God's way. The sinner's own way, though it seemeth right unto him, (Prov. xiv. 12,) will never bring him from under the curse of the law, never bring him into friendship with God, and can only lead to the regions of woe. O we can never admire and be grateful too much for that grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; that rich and sovereign kindness so blessedly discovered in the time when it pleased God, who sought us out, to take hold of us, and who brought us at length to know and to love himself. He caused us, divinely constrained us, to pass under the rod of Christ, our Shepherd, Priest and King. As the great Shepherd of the sheep, (Heb. xiii. 20,) Christ Jesus has his rod. "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

—Psalms xxiii. 4. As the High Priest of the house of God his rod, as the typical rod of Aaron, both buds and blossoms and bears fruit, (Num. xvii. 8–10,) in behalf of all that obey him. (Heb. v. 9.) And as King, his people are brought to acknowledge his scepter, and very cheerfully confess, "The scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter."—Psalms xlv. 6. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies."—Psalms cx. 2.

"I will cause you to pass under the rod." This power of God that lays hold of sinners and brings them under the rod is very gracious. The apostle Paul tells us of his being apprehended of Christ Jesus, and how being taken hold of by Christ it had a gracious and powerful effect upon him. (Phil. iii. 10–14.) The ardor with which the heart of the quickened sinner is animated to know Christ, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, is far removed and far above that fleshly inquisitiveness with which men enter into the mazes of philosophical speculations. Men may smile upon themselves, yes, become hilarious over the visions of their own hearts, (Jer. xxiii. 16,) and sport themselves with their own deceivings, (2 Peter ii. 13,) but nothing yields true blessedness unto any poor sinner but God's truth, testified of in the Scriptures, and graciously revealed with living power in our hearts by the Spirit of truth. "He will guide you into all truth: * * * he shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."—John xvi. 13, 14. The psalmist exclaims, "God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth;" and that salvation so gloriously wrought by the life, sufferings, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ to glory is very comfortingly revealed by the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the chosen of God. These things wrought in our hearts are not fairy stories that we invent and picture to ourselves, but I am telling of the experiences of the children of God, which are the fruits of the workings of God's mighty power, (Eph. i. 19,) even as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue. (2 Peter i. 3.) Taught and led by the Spirit, we come to Jesus. Our steps in this spiritual pathway have been with sore travail, guilt and fears, sighs and tears; our sin-laden, law-condemned, broken and contrite heart has prayed, God, be merciful to me, a sinner, and as we have been coming to Jesus we have been stripped of all self-confidence and self-righteousness, and poor and desolate and helpless was our condition. We were brought to Jesus. What a mercy! We were brought to the revelation of his gospel in our hearts, brought to submission to him, to pass under the rod, to take the yoke of his doctrine upon us. We became affectionately subject to Christ. (Eph. v. 24.) His law was our delight, and we looked, and looked with loving, delighted eyes into his gospel (and to this day we are still looking), and we know it to be the perfect law of liberty. (James i. 25.) All the humbling discipline of divine teaching was needful to bring us to a living consciousness of being poor, needy, hell-deserving sinners, and to put forth in our soul those spiritual longings for righteousness, forgiveness and salvation. God caused us to pass under the rod. In faith and love we came under the scepter of Christ. O, had he not caused us we never should have been subject to him; unsubmissive, despisers, enemies, we still should

have been, but almighty, rich and sovereign grace rescued us from our thraldom, and brought us poor, perishing sinners very willing to come under the rod, the reign of the lovely, precious Savior. We found Christ Jesus to be our very friend, and in his characters as Shepherd, Priest and King what acts of friendship were shewn to us by the Holy Spirit. O yes, and to this day we are learning more and more what a wondrously blessed thing it is to be under the rule of Christ. His scepter is a right scepter. Thy rod and thy staff, dear Savior, comfort me. Our self-righteousness and self-opinions are laid aside, and we become teachable beneath the rod of our God. God's new covenant dominion is so blessed to poor sinners; under his scepter we live and rejoice, for his scepter gives us pardon and righteousness, and in his fear we triumph over all our enemies. The gospel of Christ is all our blessedness; all elsewhere is sin and wretchedness, the curse and death, but here, passing under Christ's rod grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life. Ah, there had been the rod of the oppressor, (Isaiah ix. 4,) but our victorious King hath broken that. And thou, O Assyrian, art the rod of the Lord's anger, the staff in thine hand is his indignation. (Isaiah x. 5.) But the rod we are now discoursing upon is the rod of our covenant God, our Father's rod, his government of his people in his only begotten Son, and in his characters of Shepherd, Priest and King he reigns, and brings his church to pass under his rod. The church of Christ is composed of elect human beings of Adam's race, eternally loved of Jehovah, redeemed by the blood of Christ and born of the Spirit; they are in due times called unto the fellowship of God's dear Son to be subject unto him. Do you know this delightful subjection? How sovereign and abounding is the grace of God that rescues a poor, vile sinner from his alienation to God and brings him under the reign of Christ, under his grace. (Rom. vi. 14.) O then it is that we know that he is our Lord, and we worship him. (Psalms xlv. 11.) Christ our Shepherd rules his flock. "He shall stand and feed [rule] in the strength of the Lord."—Micah v. 4. His sheep say, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me;" and as our High Priest, how comforting is his reign. (Zechariah vi. 13.) A priest upon his throne is our Lord Jesus Christ, and he must reign till all enemies be put under his feet. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Did Aaron's rod put forth buds, blossoms and fruit? (Num. xvii. 2–8.) Much more in all the unfoldings to our faith of the everlasting priesthood of Christ, from the first bud to the perfected fruit, we find it blessed and comforting indeed. Such an High Priest became us who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; he is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, he was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. He ever liveth to make intercession for us. So excellent is his ministry, and so needful to us poor, sinful worms; for only by his sacrifice, by his blood, can we draw nigh to God and feel that all is well. For his blood hath made our peace, and cleanseth us from all sin. Thus being now reconciled by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. We rejoice in him, our great Melchisedec, who is the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him—that pass under his rod. (Heb. v. 9.) Being caused to pass under his rod we shall not be found saying to Jesus, our Priest, "Ye take too much

upon you."—Numbers xvi. 3. No, indeed, for those who truly pass under his rod do so in faith and love, and know that it is essential that their High Priest should do all that he has done to make reconciliation for their sins. O blessed, merciful, faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God. Christ is also our King, and his scepter is a right scepter. He is the King of kings, the Prince of life, the Prince of peace, and Lord of glory, the King of saints, (Rev. xvii. 14; Acts iii. 15; Isaiah ix; 1 Cor. ii. 8; Rev. xv. 3,) and he reigns on high our Savior God. It is in this aspect of his kingly glory that we poor sinners are brought into intimacy with him; for in a way so refreshing and uplifting to quickened sinners we are taught by the Spirit of God to know that grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. In the incarnate Son of God we contemplate him, our King of old, (from the days of eternity) working salvation in the midst of the earth, (Isaiah lxxiv. 12; Micah v. 2,) revealing it also in our hearts to our everlasting consolation. Christ reigns, and his people shall be willing in the day of his power. So effectual is his power, for he, our Prince and Savior, gives repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. (Acts v. 31.) Thus by the effectual working of his power he takes his people by the heart and brings them under his scepter. Our King is our Savior, and he is the Lord of glory, and as we are led by the Holy Spirit, (for he glorifies Christ, and takes of the things of Christ and shews them unto us, John xvi.) in faith and love to see Jesus, we see him, the King, in his beauty, he is fairer than the children of men; the majesty and glory of his person, and his mighty acts in the redemption of his people, are all alluring to quickened sinners, and bring us most willingly to pass under his rod. To pass under the rod of Christ our King signifies also that we are brought in willing subjection to his government; that his laws are our delight, and we yield ourselves in cheerful obedience to his statutes, as those who are alive from the dead. "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our King; he will save us."—Isaiah xxxiii. 22. We are under law to Christ. (1 Cor. ix. 21.) This may well be so, for he writes his law in the mind and heart, (Jer. xxxi. 33,) and we delight in the law of our God after the inward man. His commandments are not grievous. (1 John v. 3.) An evil heart of unbelief and the base insinuations of the devil would sometimes tell us that at least some of Christ's laws are very humiliating, such as, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." O when the soul is graciously exercised with the commandments of Christ, is there any hardship in it? O no, nothing is more pleasant, more sweet. Is it a grievous thing to be merciful, when our heavenly Father is merciful? O to have a forgiving, a merciful heart, it is so sweet, so blessed. Yes, I say it again, it is so blessed to forgive others their trespasses against us. O precious Jesus, reign over me and in me, to the praise of thine own glory.

"I will cause you to pass under the rod." This at times means that God's children have to come under his chastenings. "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten," and the fruit of all new covenant chastenings is to bring us into the covenant.

"Bastards may escape the rod,
Sunk in earthly, vain delight;
But the true born child of God
Must not, would not if he might."

Have we not found, though the rod is severe, and we are sore broken beneath the rebukes of the Lord, that love and pity are so mingled with the severity that we fall at the feet of the Lord and confess that in faithfulness he has afflicted us? (Psalms cxix. 75.) Or like Ephraim we say, "Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God."—Jer. xxxi. 18. In all the aspects in which the saints pass under the rod the signification is that God sanctifies them, vitally and experimentally sets them apart unto himself. (Psalms iv. 3.) Under his rod Christ brings his own, and they, saith he, "shall hear my voice." "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." There is no other way of entering into the bond of the covenant but to pass under the rod. Our God hath his way, his all-successful way, to cause us to pass under the rod. There is a divine compulsion, "The love of Christ constraineth us." "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." We look over all the way, all the discipline, the teaching that was ours in coming unto Christ, and we see that everlasting love was in it all. The Holy Spirit in love and pity taught and led and brought us to pass under Christ's rod. The covenant into which the Lord brings his people is the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure. (2 Sam. xxiii. 5.) It is sacredly blessed in faith and love to roam in the realms of this covenant. Here God speaks, and his voice takes hold of our hearts, and we are drawn to his voice, and his doctrine is so assuring and comforting. "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people."—Jer. xxxi. 33. "I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God." —Zech. xiii. 9. In this covenant all spiritual blessings are promised, and eternal salvation and glory secured unto all the chosen of God, the vessels of mercy whom he hath afore prepared unto glory. This covenant is the counsel of God the the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost concerning the elect of Adam's race, whom Jehovah hath chosen unto himself for his own peculiar treasure. He has predestinated them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, and in Christ, their covenant Head, they are predestinated unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them. (Eph. i. 5–11; 1 Peter i. 4.) And God hath predestinated them to be conformed to the image of his Son. (Rom. viii. 29.) The eternal power and grace of God shall surely secure this ultimate glory unto his people. Yes, when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory. (Col. iii. 4.) We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. (1 John iii. 2.) We shall bear the image of the heavenly. (1 Cor. xv. 49.) O blessed hope! All shall be consummated when mortality is swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for this selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. This covenant was made in eternity, wherein the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, our one Jehovah, (Deut. vi. 4; 1 John v. 7,) did covenant and provide

all things for the welfare, salvation, exaltation and eternal happiness of the church, those chosen and eternally loved human beings of Adam's race. This covenant

"Was made with Jesus for his bride
Before the sinner fell;
'Twas signed, and sealed, and ratified,
In all things ordered well."

Let us consider a few moments the bond of this covenant. This bond is the promise and oath of God. Wonderful indeed are the doings of our God, that he should, of his own pleasure, not only covenant to bless and to give his own elect eternal and infinite exaltation in Jesus Christ their head, and to make them in him and with him an eternal excellency, but he sware with an oath to the covenant, that the heirs of the covenant might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to the hope set before them in the gospel. And as God could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, "As I live, saith the Lord." "God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath."—Heb. vi. 17. To the priesthood of Christ in this covenant the Lord sware. He saith unto Christ, "The Lord sware and will not repent, thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec: by so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament."—Heb. vii. 21, 22. The blood of Christ is also the bond of the covenant, so it is written, "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water."—Zech. ix. 11. Did not Christ, our covenant Head, say, "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins"?—Matt. xxvi. 28. He sealed it with his precious blood, and the covenant is in force. This we well know, for we are beginning to reap the unspeakably blessed glories of this everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure. He writes his law in our hearts, he is merciful to our unrighteousness, we are tasting by faith the justification of life, and having the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Yes, it is now the portion of the heirs of promise to be having and living upon the first-fruits of the Spirit, and in the day of Jesus Christ, when the dead shall be raised incorruptible, we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality; death shall then be swallowed up in victory, and the whole infinite harvest of the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory shall be ours. In this covenant there is set forth to our faith, in such comforting ways, the love and eternal nearness of the Lord unto us. God has espoused his people unto himself in eternal wedlock. Let us read the marriage bond: "I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies: I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the Lord."—Hosea ii. 19, 20. O it is precious, supporting, so heart-cheering to be brought by the Holy Spirit into heartfelt realization of this bond. Then we can say, "The king hath brought me into his chambers:" "he brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love."—Solomon's Song i. 4; ii. 4. Will he ever write to his church a bill of divorcement? Never, the bond of this covenant is forever, and in faithfulness, and all the church shall know the Lord their Husband is faithful and true. (Rev. xix. 11.) He hateth putting away. (Mal. ii. 16.) He died for his church, to cleanse

her with his blood, beautifies her with his righteousness, and puts his comeliness upon her, (Ezek. xvi. 14,) and by the sanctification of the Spirit she is all glorious within. The inward man is renewed day by day, and he having begun his good work in his own will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, then he will come from heaven and change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. (Phil. iii. 20, 21.) This bond of the covenant binds us to God. Ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. (1 Cor. iii. 23.) What shall separate us from the love of Christ? His love to us is eternal, and we love him because he first loved us. We are bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord our God. (1 Sam. xxv. 29.) Our life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory. He, our glorious Head, is living, surely his members cannot perish. The bond of the covenant binds all the election of grace together. The bond of the covenant is the incarnation of the Son of God. Of this superlative glorious theme I feel I could write very much, but will not pen anything now. The covenant of God's grace is all-satisfying to believers in Jesus. "He will shew them his covenant." This is their sanctuary, here they are solaced with mercies, and their wearied, sin-buffeted souls are refreshed. "I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

WAVERLY, Pa., July 4, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find two letters, one from sister Young, the other from sister Laura Bailey, both I feel to be the pure breathings of heaven-taught children; if not, I am a poor, deceived worm of the dust.

D. M. VAIL.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—ESTEEMED BROTHER:—Sister Kinney, a dear sister and mother in Israel to me, has asked me several times to write my experience for the SIGNS, but I have ever felt that if I have had an experience, it is the most doubtful of all; but I have decided to write it in my weak way, and trust God will give you a mind to decide whether or not it is worthy of being sent to the SIGNS.

I enjoyed reading sister Belle Gorsuch's experience very much, for it seems to be the nearest like mine of any I ever read. Like her I cannot tell where, when or how I was given faith to hope in the pardoning love and grace of God, and I, too, found comfort in the words she did: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Surely if I have been born again this is true of me. I was born, as you know, in the town of Schoharie, and have always lived within one-half mile of the Old School Baptist meetinghouse, and attended meeting occasionally, but until a couple of years ago I knew nothing about their belief, except predestination, and I believed that, and believed we would not die until our time came. When you came here in December, two years ago, I went to hear you, and I enjoyed your preaching, and thought I would go every time, and I did. In May following, my mother died, and either

just before or a few days after I asked father if he would subscribe for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I never had read it at all that I remember, but for some reason I thought the Old School Baptist doctrine was the truth, and I had a desire to understand it. When the SIGNS came I would read each one through, and enjoyed it, if not deceived. If I understand it at all, it was given me so gradually that I am made to ask, Why was I led so gently, and those who are so much better be brought under such condemnation? The only answer I know is: "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." I would often go down to brother Miers', and he and sister Miers would talk with me and explain the meaning of different Scriptures, and we would sing hymns. I believed the Old School Baptist Church was the true church, and knew if I were saved it was by grace. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." I was given a desire, I hope, to be baptized, but felt I was not worthy, and that I could not say anything the church could fellowship, but thought if it were the Lord's will the time would come, and I desired the Lord would lead me the way that would be best for my good and his glory. When you came in April, 1908, after preaching you asked all present to speak, and when you asked me it seemed I could not say anything, and I could not say no; but I was given strength to say a few words, and was received for baptism May 31st. For five months in childhood's hour with careless joy upon the stream I glided, but never experienced such joy as others tell of. At the end of that time I began to have such serious doubts and fears I thought I could not live. I thought I was the worst hypocrite on earth, and that I had deceived the church, and I would go to bed wishing I would not wake up again; I wished I could go where I would not see or hear from an Old School Baptist. I felt to be without hope and without God in the world. I did not know a child of God had ever felt that way, but since have read of two who have. I never have had an assurance that I am one of the favored number, and thought if I should tell the church, surely they would have no fellowship for me; but when I got in the darkness I told them everything, and I thought they would truly hate me, but to my surprise they seemed to have more fellowship for me than before. If not deceived, I feel to thank God that he led me through the deep waters, for I learned that,

> "He in the thickest darkness dwells,
> Performs his work, the cause conceals;
> But though his methods are unknown,
> Judgment and truth support his throne."

For two months I remained in that dark state of mind, with but one ray of light, and after being comforted of God you came and preached two sermons, and it seemed every word was just what I had passed through. Little did I think when suffering, that God was preparing me that I might enjoy that meeting. Truly, "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." I feel to say, Teach me to do thy will, O God, and lead me the way I should go, for like a wayward child of error, I so often lose my way. I would love to live so that every one might know that I was being taught and led of God, but feel that no one comes so far short of living that way as I. "The good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not that I do." "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." I feel I do not suffer near what I deserve for my

sinfulness, for truly I am nothing but vanity. One of the sweetest promises to me is: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." Truly none can be poorer and more needy than I. It seems I have enjoyed preaching and reading the SIGNS more than I did before I walked in darkness, and I love the brethren more from day to day. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

"Blest be the dear uniting love
That will not let us part;
Our bodies may far off remove,
But we are joined in heart."

Before closing I want to mention that I enjoyed our two days meeting the most of any I have attended. Each of the nine sermons was wonderful to me; truly the Lord was in the midst, and much of the time I truly forgot I was in the world. I hope Elder Alexander and brother Fenton may both meet with us soon again, if the Lord wills.

I hope you will pardon me for writing such a long letter, and hope you will do what you think is best with it, for I fear you cannot fellowship what I have written.

From your weak and sinful sister, if one at all,

LAURA M. BAILEY.

ALVINSTON, Ont., June 7, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE: —Your little missive received, and I am pleased to know that your mind wanders to a despised few here in Canada, and that you hope to bring company with you. We would liked much for you to have arranged a visit with us, but will be pleased to see you anyway. I tell you I am hungry for some spiritual food. True, I get a morsel now and again, but I have heard no preaching since you were here last. I do feel empty, and my mind seems filled with worldly cares, and I mourn an absent God much of the time; Scriptures that have come to my mind in days gone by with much comfort and sweet assurance (I mean passages of Scripture) seem to have lost their power and sweetness, so I am made to cry, My leanness. An expression of J. H. Yeoman's in the last SIGNS, seemed to fit me: The burden of my mind and tribulations of this life have been so great as to bury all the spirituality of my mind. O the conflicts are great indeed, and I am made to cry daily, O God, have mercy, for I am weak. Give me wisdom to walk in the strait and narrow way that leads to life. I feel such a desire in my heart that if I could I would write words of comfort to God's dear children. You, my dear brother, have been a source of much comfort to my poor, tried heart in times past, for which God be praised, and may he at this time be pleased to bless you with sweet liberty of soul and endue you with power from on high, and may we be blessed with hearing ears and understanding hearts.

I will write no more just now. I hope to see you soon. We have had some sickness in our family, but all are better. My sister is with me just now, owing to ill health. I trust you all are well as usual.

From your sister in hope,

(MRS.) W. C. YOUNG.

DECATUR, Texas, Sept. 1, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Knowing that I am behind with my subscription, I feel ashamed of my neglect, but thankful to you for continuing the paper. I intended to send my subscription in before the time was out, but I was taken ill, and in bed all winter, and had no idea of ever

being able to read the SIGNS again. My children in New Mexico were sent for, as the physicians did not think I would get up again, but the dear Lord saw fit to raise me, and I can now be up most of the time, but I am still very feeble. Why the Lord spared my unprofitable life is more than I can tell, but I believe that he had a purpose in doing so, for he has a purpose in all things, but unknown to us until it is fulfilled. All things that take place under the sun are only the fulfillment of his purposes, which he purposed in himself before the world began. I feel assured that his wisdom sees through the vista of time, and that he fixed and established and made sure all his creation, not only a part of the things which come to pass, but all things, for he says that without him was not anything made that was made, and by him all things consist. Then if we poor finite beings undertake to leave out some things, and say of them that he did not foreknow them and predestinate them, we shall be at a loss to make the division. But, dear brethren, I fell well assured that there is no such division, for "known unto God are all his works, from the beginning," and he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Not a part of all things, but all things.

About the time that the Limited Predestinarian Baptists began putting up bars of nonfellowship against the Unlimited Predestinarian Baptists, a brother said to me one day while I was in Decatur, "Let us sit down and talk this matter over." Then he said that if he understood the Scriptures he was bound to believe in the predestination and foreknowledge of God. At that time a man came walking across the street, and the wind blew off his hat, and I said the Lord foreknew and predestinated that. He replied, "O I do not believe the Lord foreknew such little things." I said, "Where are you going to make the division between the little things and the big things?" He replied, "That is what bothers me." I said, "Yes, and it will bother any one else who undertakes it, for the things we might think little, in the sight of God might be great, and the things we might think great, the Lord might think little." Then I said, "If we leave anything outside that comes to pass, we limit the wisdom of God, and if we limit his wisdom in one thing, we have just as much right to limit him in all things." "Well," he said, "it does look that way." O if I could only thank and praise the Lord for allowing me to view him as contriving all things, and that he works all things after the counsel of his own will. There is none to make known unto him anything that he did not know before the dust of the highest hills was made. With all the modern discoveries in electricity, and in the use of flying machines, man cannot boast, for God has taught them all the mechanism contained in these wonderful machines. All these modern inventions were embraced in the infinite wisdom of the great I Am before the world was made, and they all appear in their appointed time, and there is nothing new with the Lord; all things that come to pass are but the fulfillment of his purposes and wisdom. O that I could only praise him for the blessings which he has bestowed upon me all the days of my life. What am I that the Lord should be mindful of me? Sometimes I think that the Lord allows even poor, sinful me to view him as my God and Savior, but as I grow older it seems that these bright seasons get further apart, and I am made to tremble for fear the Lord will say unto me, Depart from me, thou worker of iniquity. Still my

little hope that he has truly been my joy lo, these many years, causes me to cry unto him for help. O if I could only feel at all times as I did one night last winter: it seemed to me that I was smothering to death, and I was made to cry out, O Lord God Almighty, if it be not contrary to thy will, I pray thee to send ministering angels to watch over me in my sufferings; and it seemed that two angels stood, one on either side of me, and passed their hands back and forth over my mouth, and I felt so easy with that beautiful vision before my eyes that I dropped off to sleep, and the friends said I slept about three hours, the first sleep I had had for two or three days; but when I awoke the vision was gone. But, dear brethren, I am in the dark so much of my time that I am made to fear that what I have been claiming as evidences of God's love were only of the flesh, and that when I come to die, the little hope that has been mine will fade away and leave me engulfed in darkness. O if I could only live as I ought, and shun all evil temptations, and cast out all sinful and wicked thoughts, which are with me so much of the time, how glad I should be. Dear brethren, I do not feel that I can go through another winter and live. This may be the last time that I shall trouble you with my poor writing. Pray for me, that I may be kept to the end. It seems to me that I am too sinful to call upon Him for whom my soul is thirsting. I have not been able to go to hear a sermon preached for two or three years, but I read some fine sermons in the SIGNS. I hope that the Lord will continue to enable the editors to wield "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon" in the future as in the past. Farewell for this time.

Yours in the gospel,

M. B. F. JONES.

ST. ALBANS, W. Va., Oct. 12, 1909.

ELDERS F. A. CHICK AND H. C. KER—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find a letter from a dear old mother in Israel, which was so much comfort to me that I want to share it with others. I have been blessed to visit her twice, and try to preach unto her Jesus. She is alone, no Old Baptists near her, and seldom ever gets to hear preaching. I had never met sister Johnson until my first visit to her home, but when I went in and found the SIGNS on the stand, together with other books and pamphlets from Baptist writers, I knew she was all right, and soon became acquainted with her, and did enjoy my visit and the conversation with her upon heavenly things.

I have been sick since April 2nd, 1909, and thought much of the time that I could not live, but I am still spared, though able to go but little; have only been at four or five meetings since the above date, so you can imagine how cheering the inclosed letter was to me. I was enabled to attend our own association, but my weight upon my return home was only one hundred and seven and a half pounds. I know that God has a purpose in all things, and my prayer to-day is that I may be kept by God's Spirit from replying against him, or from saying, "Why hast thou made me thus?" Let me be still and know that he is God; indeed that is enough. O what a wonderful text the one above is. Brother Chick, will you write on the same in the near future? How different is this from the way man teaches; he would have it read, Go to work and know that he is some creature about like a man, constantly being disappointed, and seeing his purpose overthrown; but God's little ones feel glad to be still and know that

he is God, whom to know is eternal life.

Yours in affliction,

G. B. BIRD.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., Sept. 12, 1909.

ELDER G. B. BIRD—VERY DEAR AFFLICTED BROTHER:—After long waiting and much study about you, I received your card of recent date, and was very sorry to hear of your low state of health. I had greatly hoped you had recovered so far as to be gone to some healing spring of water, which I hoped might have a tendency to restore you to health, as you are so young.

Brother Bird, I am now at a great loss this beautiful morning, as I have been feeling sad, and a great solemnity has crept over me. This is the third letter since July that I did not know how to answer. A precious niece lost her nine months old baby, July 17th, in Roanoke, Va.; when she told me about it she said, "Aunt Lizzie, it has almost killed me; I do not think I can ever get over it." I tried as best I could to comfort her poor, broken heart. The same night, after writing to her, I had a dream about a lamb and a baby, which I related to her in my next letter, and the response was, "Aunt, I am going to try to stop grieving so much, and do as you say. I read my Bible, and never open it but I find comfort." The second letter was from my own dear youngest sister, Sarah Dillon, whose experience was in the SIGNS a few years ago. She is with Babylon, and has all the trials, seemingly, that the flesh is heir to. She got so far she wrote me she could not ever sing any more. I said, Yes, yes, my dear sister, you will sing again when the dear Savior dispels the darkness. So now, dear brother, the question with me is, Can I say anything to poor, dear brother Bird to comfort him in his severe affliction, whose talents are so much superior to mine every way? The people took knowledge of two disciples on one occasion, because they had been with Jesus, and now if I ever do comfort any of God's children, I hope it is a token that I have been with Jesus. I have been low down many times in the valley of affliction, sorrow and darkness, but Jesus has come again, and the voice of the turtledove has been heard in the land. My brother, I hope your bodily sufferings are all you have to contend with. I do hope divine light is a constant flame in your soul, and that you are blessed with the peaceful presence of Almighty God. Take away every other, and give me this. I would love to impress on your mind if I could use language to explain to you the heavenly radiance that lit up your poor, tottering frame and countenance the night you preached at Long Branch schoolhouse. I never can forget that sad time; when you all went away, how sorrowful I was, and no one to console me. I thought so much of weeping Mary at the sepulchre of her absent Lord; my dear brethren were gone, likely never to return here again. O how I would like to see you and talk with you, but do hope and trust we will meet where there is no sad good-bye. I trust you may be able to answer this.

I am, as ever, a lone pilgrim,

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

RATCLIFF, Ky., May 20, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—If the Lord will I will try to write something concerning the change effected in the children of God by the new birth, and in doing so I shall give the views which to me are true, according to all christian experience, and also as it is set forth and taught in the Scriptures of truth, which views, so far

as I am advised, are the views of all Old School Baptists, whom I claim to be the servants of the most high God, and also my beloved yet persecuted brethren, whom I love in the truth and for the truth's sake. Now my understanding of the matter is that in our unregenerate state, or until born of the Spirit, all our nature is earthly, depraved and sinful; that there is in us no fear of God, no desire after holiness, no love to God, no love of holiness, that we are dead in sins, enemies to God by wicked works, that we are totally ignorant of our condition until it pleases God to call us by his grace, quicken us by his Spirit and make us the subjects of the great and astonishing change wrought in us in the new birth; as such our views of God are different, we then view him as we never did before; his purity, goodness, justice and truth fill us with a reverence for him we never had before; we are astonished that the great and holy God has visited us with such undeserved mercy and blessing; a sense of his goodness leads us to repentance; we are so overwhelmed with a feeling of our own vileness, and feel so guilty that it seems to us there is no way for God to save us without an infringement upon his divine justice. When fully humbled before him under a sense of our vileness, and all hope of commending ourselves to him is taken away, Christ is revealed to us the hope of glory; his blood is applied to us by the Spirit for the remission of sins, and his righteousness as the ground of our justification before God; the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, a new song is put in our mouths and we are made to rejoice in Christ with joy unspeakable and full of glory; we are new creatures in Christ; old things are passed away, all things become new; the Bible now opens to us with new beauty; the precious promises are now applied to us; the church and the people of God now appear lovely; the doctrine of salvation by grace, which we before hated, now becomes food to our souls; we love and desire to walk in all the ordinances of the house of God, and to live in love and fellowship with the people of God; we have passed from death unto life, from darkness into marvelous light, and from prison to liberty; but this is not all; by virtue of the quickening operation of the Spirit of God we begin from the very hour of our being made alive to learn the difference between the two principles or natures which we find within; we find a law in our members (which certainly was not there before we were born again) warring against the law of our mind; we experience an incessant warfare, and become more convinced that while with our mind we serve the law of God, yet with our flesh the law of sin; we find that we bear about with us a body of sin, so experience with all the Lord's servants of old the warfare while we remain in this mortal state of existence.

Such are my views, and as such they are submitted to you.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

J. E. THORNBURY.

LANHAM, W. Va., Oct. 20, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—For some time I have felt impressed to give my views on predestination, and this morning will try to write upon that subject with fear and trembling, because the way is dark before me, and I do not believe I can write upon so great a subject unless God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, directs. I hope I believe as Paul says, there is no power but that of God; the powers that be

are ordained of God; so I understand that it takes power to move everything that moves. Then if it takes power to move all things, surely God moves all things, for there is no power but of God. Now if this power which God has ordained fails to act, then he has ordained something for nothing; but I hope I believe that God is a God of purpose, and that he made all things for a purpose, and if he made all things for a purpose, then did he not foreknow all things? If he did not foreknow all things that come to pass, could we then call him an all-wise God? No! why? Because there would be things done that he did not know anything about, and we would lie in calling him all-wise. I believe that God foreknew all things, and if he did, all things, including all the actions of wicked men and devils, which he would have to know in order to know all things, must come to pass just as he knew them in order to make his foreknowledge true. If these things have to come in order for his foreknowledge to be true, then why not believe in predestination of all things? I do not see any way to believe in predestination in part, because if I say something took place that was not appointed or predestinated, then I limit the knowledge of God; hence for any to tell me that they do not believe all things are predestinated, and that it is wrong and dangerous for me to believe it, they may as well try to make me believe there is no God; for since I am made to believe there is a God, I am made to believe that he is all-wise and all-powerful, knowing all things, seeing all things that must come to pass, which would make him a perfect God. Yes, I believe that God is perfect, which is the foundation of the hope of his people. His people are a spiritual people, who worship him in spirit and in truth, God having sent forth the Spirit of his Son into their heart, and I believe his Spirit is sent into their heart to teach them that he is all-wise, foreknowing all things. I think any doctrine that does not speak of God as a perfect God is not the doctrine of God, but the ignorance of foolish men. I will just say the doctrine of limited predestination is nothing less than ignorance. I do not say this in a boastful way, because I am just as ignorant as any man according to nature, and if anything I am more ignorant. There are many that write upon the subject of predestination who are able writers, and I love to read after them, while others think it not wise to say so much about this question.

Well, brethren, I will bring this letter to a close, hoping that you will pardon such an unworthy one as I am if I have written words without knowledge, as this is the first time I have tried to write anything of its kind. If you count this worthy of publication you may use it.

From one who is a sinner by nature, yet in hope of eternal life,

W. C. PENNINGTON.

DUNCAN, Okla., Oct. 25, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—Again by the help of the Lord I will write you a few lines, as my subscription is due for this year and I must renew, for it seems that I cannot do without our paper, it is so much comfort to me in this lonely country. How I do wish sometimes I might be where I could hear the servants of the Lord preach, but again I know if it were the Lord's will he would send them to us. O how many times I have been made to rejoice in reading our good paper, and what a joy it would be to me if I could comfort the saints in writing as they have comforted me, but if I am a child

of God I am the least of all, and, my dear friends, I can only wait on the Lord for all I do or say in a spiritual sense, for in me (in my flesh) dwells no good thing, for when I would do good, evil is present with me. Paul said he was a prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ, and I hope I am, too, for if I am I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me, and he will be my comforter here in this vale of sorrow. I mourn over my sins daily, and wish I could do right, but I know my righteousness will not justify me; nothing but the righteousness of Christ will. My beloved friends, this I study day after day: Have I been justified by his blood? for the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin; but as I grow older it seems I grow worse. O Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner.

"When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark, and vain, and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?"

I shall trust in the Lord, for he keeps the feet of the saints. "Let mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments." Now are we not glad that he is our Judge, our Lawgiver, our King and Priest, our refuge, our strength, our all and in all? "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." O my friends, I ask as one who is feeble, Can we be glad and rejoice in the Lord without the oil of his righteousness? Surely it is the anointing of the Lord that makes us rejoice in him. "All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad." "Let mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments. Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death." "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth even for ever." The Lord be praised for his goodness to me all the eighty-eight years of my life that he hath appointed for me here. My dear friends, I will trust him in all things, for he is my deliverer, my all.

I want to say that our paper is a most excellent visitor to me; the editorials are like the dew of Hermon, and the correspondence is like apples of gold in pictures of silver. When I read after the writers I weep and mourn and rejoice, and say as I read, How blessed they are in the Lord, and they can sing hallelujah as they go marching home, for their eyes are turned heavenward, and they are looking for the prize of the high calling as it is in Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, who maketh intercession for us according to the will of the Father.

Now, dear brethren and sisters, I ask you as one that feels to be a castaway, pray for me, and throw the mantle of love over this. I ask you not to publish it without criticising it well, for I do not want to be a stumbling-block to the household of faith. I do not want to deceive the saints of God, for I long to be like them, and want to walk, talk and look like them; I want to be made perfect in the obedience of Christ. I hope my spiritual life is hid with Christ in God, and if it is, ere long I shall be like him who holds the keys of death, hell and the grave. May the Lord keep you all as the apple of his eye. Fare ye well.

Your sister, I hope, in the crucified and risen Savior,

NANCY CREEL.

ROMANS IV. 2; JAMES II. 21.

"If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God."

"Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he had offered up Isaac his son?"

To the casual observer it would seem there was confliction in the above Scriptures, and that what Paul affirmed James denied, but when we follow closely the subject of both there is no contradiction; Paul affirmed what James did. There are three fundamental truths that Paul has affirmed: first, he declared again and again that salvation was all of grace, saying, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Again, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Again, "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." He affirmed that God's children are "justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, * * * to declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Hence in his letters to the Romans, and to the Ephesians, and to the Galatians, and to the Colossians, and to Timothy, as well as in all his other epistles, he declares that salvation is all of grace, and that justification is by faith, not allowing for one moment that salvation or justification is by the works of the creature, yet it must be said of a truth that none of the apostles exhorted to good works more than Paul, but not for the purpose of obtaining salvation, but because one is saved by grace, he should walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he is called of God, with all lowliness and meekness, for by their fruits ye shall know them. The apostle admonishes those who are born of the Spirit to manifest the fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, meekness, temperance, faith, &c. Teachers of the Scriptures are charged to rightly divide the word of God, and unless we allow these two positions, vital truths, set forth, we will have a contradiction of Scripture, because Paul affirmed constantly that salvation is by grace, without works, and also affirmed constantly that the brethren thus saved should be careful to maintain good works.

I have now set forth two of the fundamental truths I started out to proclaim, and the other is, that "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons. * * * But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." As many as he loves he rebukes and chastens. Paul was given a thorn in the flesh: the messenger of Satan to buffet him.

Hence these three fundamental truths are set forth in the Scriptures by the inspired writers: first, salvation by grace,

without works. Second, that God's people, above all others, should be careful to maintain good works. Third, instead of hiring his children, or coaxing them to maintain good works, he chastens them, and none of his children escape. Paul says, "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness in them which are exercised thereby." A king has power to compel obedience; Christ inspired his disciples unto obedience by his love. If any of God's children have faith, and have not good works, their faith is dead; good works are the fruits of faith, so in that sense a man is justified by works.

It has been said by some that if salvation is by grace, without works, then all of God's children will be saved, no matter what they do. We are children of our natural father; even though we are disobedient our disobedience does not take away our sonship, but we suffer punishment for our disobedience, and often it makes good children. God has greater power over his children than an earthly father has. God by his grace causes us to obey and love him; it is our joy to obey him. He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and who can disobey or war against God? When he commands it stands fast.

One other fundamental truth I wish to speak of, which is, the law of the new covenant is not written with ink; no man ever read it or taught it; God alone writes it in the heart of his children; he said by Isaiah, "They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord," yet men are endeavoring to do so.

NEWTON PETERS.

PORTLAND, Ind., Jan. 3, 1909.

DRAG, Ala., Oct. 21, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find a letter written by my sister, M. O. Mosley, which please publish in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if you will allow such a letter to be printed in the paper; I leave the matter with you; whatever you do about it, all will be well with me. If you publish it please send a copy of that SIGNS to Mrs. O. Mosley, Trellis, Ala. Also send a copy to Mrs. L. E. Rogers, Healing Springs, Ala. Mrs. Rogers is the one to whom the letter was written.

Your friend,

A. J. DOGGETT.

TRELLIS, Ala., Sept. 18, 1909.

MY DEAR SISTER:—Your sympathizing letter of the 3rd inst. was received the 11th, and it is with a sad and broken heart that I attempt to answer. Yes, our dear child is gone, and it seems more than we can bear. O how hard for us to have to give him up; it seems that we never can endure the thought that our dear Oscar is gone, never to return to us; he suffered much, and was deprived of his sight beside. How pitiful! but we feel assured that his sufferings are over, and that he is sweetly resting in Jesus with his two little brothers, where there is no more sickness, neither sorrow nor parting. While it was God's will to take his natural vision from him, we are sure that He gave him to see with spiritual eyes, as when he would be begging to go home to that "house up yonder," he would say, looking and pointing upward, as if he saw plainly, There is a house up there, a nice one, and the door is open, let me go, and then I can go to sleep; and we feel sure that God gave him to see "an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Oscar looked so natural, his face wore a beautiful ex-

pression, and his lips just parted with a sweet smile. Yes, dear sister, we did all that loving hearts and willing hands could do, and begged God that he be spared to us, but Jesus called and he had to go. Though at times we feel to question, Why, O Lord, why did our dear child have to suffer so and then be taken from us? the answer comes, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." And we trust we have been enabled to say from the heart, Thy will, O Lord, be done, and not ours. We trust it may be the will of God for us all to meet on the other shore, but alas, I have no hope for myself.

Dear sister, I have written this through blinding tears, but perhaps you can read it. We miss our dear boy so much it seems we never can endure it. His vacant chair and plate at table, his empty bed, and O wherever we look we miss him, and I dream of him every night; it seems that I am waiting on him just as I did when he was here. How sad we are that we will never again hear his dear voice calling us. He had ever been a dutiful son. I trust this will find you and all the family well. We are not very well, but are all up. Sister is with us yet, and we do not see how we can let her leave us. It was thirteen months the 15th inst. since I was at Drag, and then dear Oscar went with me, the Saturday that you were there. We will try to go to-morrow if we can.

Your sister in much sorrow,

OPHELIA.

HERNDON, Va., Nov. 4, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a letter I received from dear Elder Coulter. I have read it and reread it with much comfort of heart, and feel that it is too good to lay away in my desk, so send it to you to be published in the SIGNS if it meets with your approval. Brother Coulter writes the letter is mine to do with as I think best, so I send it to you. The letter speaks for itself, and I make no further comment on it.

Yours in hope of life eternal,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., October 22, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER OLIVER:—After meeting you on the train last Saturday my mind has been often with you, and I feel like troubling you with a letter. Just the sight of your face seemed to be an inspiration to me, and encouraged me to feel that if my love goes out to the Lord's dear children surely his love must be in my heart also. Since coming home I found these words of Jacob when he had been wrestling all night with the angel: "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me," and now, when I think of them, for some unexplainable reason, I think also of you. How strange and unaccountable are the actions of the human mind, especially when it is exercised by grace. No doubt you have had some sweet meditations on the wrestling of Jacob with the angel, and the words of Jacob which I have quoted. Of course I know you have had the wrestlings, as has every child of grace, but have they afterward come back to you in sweet and precious memory as tokens of your joint relationship with Jesus to the Father? The blessing which Jacob received was twofold, and not that which he expected. First, he received a new name (unexpected): "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God," &c. Again, he was made lame, and went halting all his days (also unexpected). It would

seem that his desire was that he might make friends with the mammon of unrighteousness, which his brother Esau represented, for he was afraid of him and desired to conciliate him. Oftentimes we cry out for something our flesh desires, and we think our prayer is true prayer, yet that very something is that which bringeth us into the true light. When we pray for light in the Lord our prayer is answered, but not in the way that we expected, for the pathway to the attainment of the light is through darkness, through tribulation and through suffering. The beautiful feature in Jacob's language, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me," is his firm determination and persistence to hold on to the way of life, that he might obtain the blessing, showing this precious truth, that the work begun in the heart goes on and on, never ceasing, overcoming every obstacle, magnifying the law and fulfilling all things in Jesus Christ, and this is the work of the Spirit of divine grace, and not the work of our own hands or minds. To know Christ is to live in him. His children are living children, and they do walk in all the way the Lord has marked out for them. You know what it is, my brother, to plough in the cold, and you know also what it is to live in the light, and you know what it has been, and is, to wrestle all night with the angel, and you also know the joy that cometh in the morning. May you continue to be blessed as Jacob was blessed.

My wife joins me in love to yourself and sister Oliver.

Affectionately your brother,

B. F. COULTER.

RIPLEY, Tenn., Oct. 8, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If one so unworthy as I should address you thus. You will please find inclosed money order for four dollars, to pay for the time that I am behind with my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which I ordered discontinued about two years ago, if I mistake not, on account of my inability to pay for it. I greatly miss the SIGNS since it was discontinued, but am not financially able to subscribe for it at present, so I will have to be reconciled to my lot. Words would fail to express to you how much I love the doctrine set forth in the SIGNS, for it is grace from start to finish. I am constrained to say, Surely the writers have been circumcised in heart who worship God in the spirit and have no confidence in the flesh. Grace underlies every obedience of God's children that is acceptable to God.

"Grace all the work shall crown
Through everlasting days;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

Were it possible for grace to fail my case would be a hopeless one, but the Lord said to Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Inasmuch as God is unchangeable, his grace is sufficient for the chief of sinners to-day, and will be until the last one for whom Christ died and rose again is safely housed in heaven, where there will be no more sin nor death, neither sorrow nor crying, for the former things will be done away and they will all be one in Christ Jesus. My only hope lies in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Your unworthy brother, if a brother at all,

A. E. COX.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1909.

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EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
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EXPERIENCE.

ONE said in our presence, not long since, while narrating the reason of the hope that was hers, before the church into which she was cordially and lovingly received, "Many years ago I felt myself to be a terrible sinner before God, and this was my state for many years, but about one year ago I felt I had a hope given me in the Lord Jesus Christ, and since then I have desired a home with the people of God. I feel that I am not worthy, but I want to be with you, if you can receive me." These few sentences embrace all that she said, but what more could be desired? What more could any narrative of an experience of grace contain, though many words were added? All christian experience is summed up in the few things presented by our sister as quoted above. First, a conviction of sin and guilt; second, a hope being given to that convicted sinner in the merit of Christ; third, a desire to live and to die with the children of God; fourth, a desire to follow the Lord in his commandments; fifth, the feeling of unworthiness still abiding in the heart. All these things are the fruit of the Spirit in the heart; all these things are wrought by the power of God through the Spirit, and one who has come thus far on the road is fitted for the kingdom of heaven; the ordinance of baptism, and all the ordinances of the church belong to such an one; the fellowship of all who love God will go out to such testimony; in this experience is life and salvation. We do not of course mean that each and every one will say just these words when telling of the love and power and salvation of God, but these things contain all that is needful for one to say; in these expressions is summed up the whole gospel of grace; in them is also summed up all that work under the law which prepares any one for the blessed revelation of the gospel. No one, by nature, feels himself a terrible sinner before God, but when the Lord takes his righteous law as a looking-glass, in which to show his elect how great sin is and how great is his or her sin, then indeed is that work begun which prepares a sinner at the end to sing redeeming grace, and this first work is needful before the second work can be wrought. All Israel must pass hard by Sinai, and tarry there awhile, ere they can come to Mt. Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the great King, the city whose walls and bulwarks are salvation. The lightnings and thunders of the wrath of God against all sin must be seen and heard before the gospel's joyful sound can be joyful to any soul, but he who has come to Sinai will surely come to Zion at last. It was so with Israel in the type, and the type is true; as the type was, so must the substance be; no one but "a terrible sinner" needs a great Savior, and such a Savior shall they find, although it may be days, weeks, months or years that the true Israelite must abide under the threatening of the law of God. That is as God wills, and his will is always best. But the end is sure; they who come up out

of Egypt to Sinai shall one day enter the gospel land of rest and peace; for them, one day Jordan's waves shall be stayed, and they shall pass over into their rest. So Paul was persuaded that He who had begun a good work in his brethren would perform it until the day of Jesus Christ; and the beginning is, to come to feel the need of salvation from sin, death and hell, and one who has come to feel that he is a terrible sinner will also desire mercy and salvation from sin and death. As the judgment or condemnation is felt in the soul, so will the word of salvation also come to be felt there. The blessed word of God assures us that Jesus came into the world to save sinners; our great Physician came not to the whole, but to the sick in the days of his flesh, and so one day, though it seem to be long delayed, he by the Spirit will come and save the lost. He has come and wrought out the great work of justification upon the cross, so that he shall not need to die again, but, experimentally, he must come and speak to the heart, Thy sins are blotted out forever, and there is no more condemnation for thee, poor soul; and in the day of salvation to that soul it is his blessed word and presence alone that heals the wounded conscience and gives peace. By the presence of the Spirit he shows to his own the finished work of redemption, and says, All this have I done for thee. Then is begotten in that soul the hope that shall never fail, because it will prove an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, entering into that which is within the veil, whither Jesus, the forerunner, is for us entered. These things were real from the day when Jesus cried, "It is finished." They are real whether or not there be any one to stand up and testify to their power; and they become real to us, not by reading them in the word of God, not by preaching, not by hearing the testimony of others, not by others having assurance for us, and saying so to us, but by the testimony of the Lord himself in the soul; those who have felt it know it, but no one can impart this knowledge to others; and all these will desire the presence of true companions; they will want to be with all who love God and serve him. One said, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." After the resurrection of Lazarus he went home to his sisters, and afterwards many came, not only that they might see Jesus, but also Lazarus whom he raised from the dead. In all the inward life, including the hopes, desires and joys, as well as trials of all who are one with Jesus, Jesus and his people are inseparably joined; he who has been found of the blessed Lord will desire to be with all those who have likewise been found of him; there is love in that heart to them all, because Jesus, whom they love supremely, is manifest in them. It is not the natural qualities of believers that draw them together, but because they bear the image of Jesus. Take away from the most lovable person we know the likeness of the blessed Master, and all fellowship would cease, if indeed such a thing could be. If any one who loves God is tempted as to whether his love to the people of God be merely natural affection, such as we must have for those who are amiable and pleasant in their lives, or whether it be indeed the love of God, let him ask himself the question, Suppose that some for whom I have fellowship, and who are naturally lovely, turn away from the truth, though still remaining as lovely as ever, would they remain the same to me as before? We think the very question would bring its own answer; if such an

one should turn away from the blessed Lord, we could not love them as before. The feeling of unworthiness is inseparable from the feelings of all who love God in truth; so Paul counted himself less than the least of all saints, and the chief of sinners. In this experience is fulfilled the word of the apostle, "Let each esteem other better than themselves." This is also wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit. It is not natural for men to count others better than themselves, but as the feeling of superiority in men causes them to boast over their fellows, and is the chief cause of all oppression and robbery, of all contention and warring, and makes manifest always that there is no real love in their hearts towards those whom they esteem to be inferior or worse than themselves, so, on the other hand, esteeming others as being better, we love them and have fellowship for them; no one ever loved or had fellowship for one whom he deemed worse than himself. If, then, we love and have fellowship for another, it is because we esteem him to be better than ourselves. This is to feel unworthy of their love and fellowship, and this is, at least, to be found in company with Paul, yea, it is to be in company with Him who was meek and lowly in heart; it is a blessed thing to feel this way, because to the meek and lowly there is rest.

There can be no stereotyped form of language in a narration of real heartfelt experience; there will, in narratives of real experience, be as much diversity of words and expressions as there are diversities of individuals. The work of the Lord is indeed one work, and the same work always; it is life from the dead; it always brings conviction of sin, and, at last, testimony to the grace of God; it always produces a feeling of deep unworthiness, and yet a desire, that will not be suppressed, for companionship with all who love God; yet, after all, within these bounds there will be endless diversities of thought and feeling, and different portions of the word will be applied; different sermons will be blessed to different ones; in some the work of conviction will deepen gradually, while in some there will be a sudden full conviction. The work of deliverance from under the burden and curse of the law will in some be a gradual lifting upon them of light, while in others it will be as the flash of lightning in a dark night. All these things are in the hand of God, and all these things the Spirit works according to his will, but in substance, after all, there will be oneness. Timid souls to-day think again and again, O if I only had such an experience as some whom I know have had, I should be satisfied, yet even these fearful, timid ones find consolation and strength in the very narratives that seem so far beyond them. How many have thought, O that I had such an experience as Paul; yet how often they read Paul's testimony and find in it that which they know, so that, after all, Paul is one with them. The sum of the whole matter is this: A sinner saved by grace, a great sinner saved by great grace; abounding sin met and overcome by still more abounding grace. These testimonies are as much the heritage of the smallest as of the greatest in the kingdom of heaven; little children in grace know these things as well as the aged, who have known the power of sin and of grace many years. The son who in manhood is the image of his father, was also in his father's image when but possessing the small features of a little child; the child has grown, but still the features remain. We grow in experience, but it

is the same image, Christ formed in the heart the hope of glory, and it is Christ formed in the different thoughts and feelings of men and women, who differ in a thousand ways, but, after all, it is the one life and the one testimony; all this is involved in the doctrine of our Lord. The doctrine of God is what all his children come to know as they are weaned from the breast, but they know nothing more than has been true in all their experience before; their life and their death were theirs before, but as they are weaned from the breast they come to know more about this life and death, and this is to learn doctrine. Little by little they come to know that in all the Scriptures the doctrine of God is declared, and that what they have learned by the Spirit is that which the same Spirit made known to the prophets and apostles. So the fellowship of these kindred minds is after all in the doctrine which is according to godliness. In the brief experience spoken of at the beginning of this article all this doctrine is declared. C.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906; 07 means 1907; 08 means 1908; 09 means 1909; 10 means 1910; 11 means 1911, &c.

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EZEKIEL XVIII. 21, 26, 27.

ELDER KER:—If you have time and space I would be glad to have you give your views on the eighteenth chapter of Ezekiel, especially the twenty-first, twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh verses.

From one who wants to know the truth.

A SUBSCRIBER.

The Scripture to which our attention is called reads as follows: "But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. * * * When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die. Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive."

In all our meditations, preaching and writing we should ever remember that "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." We should also remember that God dealt with the fathers (Israel) in a legal way, or according to the law given by Moses, and as no other nation or individual received that law, no man except an Israelite could transgress it. Every country has its own laws, and its citizens are governed by them. Therefore the transgressor is judged and punished by the law of his own land. This fact should forever do away with the popular idea that the law of Moses applies to all men, both Jews and Gentiles, and that they are rewarded or punished according to their works. As God gave the law to the Israelites only, and dealt with them according to that law, so he gives or writes in the hearts of spiritual Israel the law of the new covenant, and no other

nation on earth is subject to or governed by it. Just as he dealt with the Israelites, individually and collectively, he deals with his people in the gospel, nor does he deal with any other people in this peculiar sense.

In the second verse of this eighteenth chapter the Lord reproved Israel for clinging to the old proverb: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." They were holding the fathers responsible for the judgments they were receiving, saying, We are made to suffer for our fathers' sins. But they themselves were sinners, having transgressed the law in departing from its commandments and precepts, hence as individual transgressors they were visited with plagues and death. The Lord told them that they should no longer use that proverb, but that every man should be held accountable for his own sin, and not dealt with according to the sins of his father. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

"But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die." In this verse is seen God's mercy to the transgressor even in his legal dealings with Israel. If the man who had transgressed his law and departed from its precepts should turn from all his evil ways and live according to the commandments, he should not die but live. There was such a thing as repentance in the days of Israel, and it always meant blessing or life. Yet every promise of that covenant, to Israel, was temporal, and every judgment pertained to this world only. Their every blessed condition was because of living according to the law, and each judgment inflicted because of transgression. That law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, and of his fullness have we all received, and grace for grace. In obeying Moses (law) the Israelites served God, but as grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, and this being a gracious dispensation, we must have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. The Jews worshiped at Jerusalem, and the Samaritans, who were also Jews, but not countenanced at Jerusalem because of their intermarriage with other nations, and other departures, worshiped in the mountain of that country. To the Samaritan woman Jesus said, "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." This teaching is altogether different from that of the old covenant; all the worship then was in the letter only. The Lord has established this new covenant upon better promises; the first he took away, that he might establish the second. Hence instead of being under the law and having the commandments read to us every Sabbath day, we are under grace and under law to Christ. He speaks to the church, and his words are spirit and they are life; his words enter the soul and cause us to rejoice in our spiritual Husband. It is right and good for every quickened sinner to live according to the law written in his heart; in so doing he lets his light shine and God is glorified. Yes, it is right to deal justly, love mercy and walk humbly. All who profess Christ should be sober, truthful and honest. Yes, the love of God to poor sinners demands our strength, our life, our all.

We have long thought that many have a wrong conception of the rewards for obedience during the legal dispensation, and also in this the gospel day. A mo-

ment's sober reflection should convince any intelligent man that the law never bestows riches, fame and splendor upon any mortal for living orderly and uprightly. When the law of Moses said to the Israelites, "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land," it simply meant that the man who so lived should have liberty, a clear conscience, and not be apprehended and punished by the law. The government of the United States does not give the law-abiding citizen a mansion in which to live, nor does it lead him into gardens of paradise because he keeps all its statutes. The government only justifies such a man as being without fault as touching its laws. This is all the reward that the law of any land has or can bestow upon one for keeping it, or living according to all its requirements. In the gospel it is exactly the same; the man who lives according to the gospel has christian liberty, a clear conscience and is found blameless, or in other words, justified by the law of God in the court of heaven. The Lord does not give visions of spiritual things, nor reveal the mysteries of the word, nor give the hidden manna, nor spiritual songs, neither ecstasy of joy as reward for our obedience to his commandments; but he "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world," to the praise of the glory of his grace. We also think that sometimes we labor under the mistaken idea that spiritual gifts consist in those above mentioned, such as visions, revelations, spiritual songs, &c., but really the apostle spoke of spiritual gifts and blessings in contrast from those of the old covenant, which never could make the comers thereunto perfect, because they had only a shadow, and not the very image of the things of the gospel (spiritual blessings), which do make the children holy and without blame before God in love. The Lord gave Israel a leader and lawgiver in Moses; he gave them a priesthood in Levi; he gave them a tabernacle; he gave them the land of Canaan, which flowed with milk and honey; he gave them judges to judge them; he gave them kings to rule over them, and prophets to declare the coming of Christ and the glory that should follow. These are the principal gifts and blessings of the Mosaic dispensation, and not one of them was because of obedience. To the gospel church he has given his Son Jesus Christ, who is our Leader, Lawgiver, High Priest, Prophet and King. He has given us that tabernacle which shall never be taken down, nor one of her cords broken, nor one of her stakes removed, together with all her ordinances. He has given us the south lands (gospel land), with the upper and nether springs (wells of salvation). He has given us apostles, pastors, teachers and evangelists. These compose the principal spiritual blessings in Christ, and not one of them is because of the obedience of the creature, but each one free and unmerited. And it is also true that every heavenly emotion and every act of obedience are the fruit of the Spirit, because "love is the fulfilling of the law." Yet we have no idea that the apostle had these lesser blessings so much in mind as the greater "spiritual blessings" when writing of God's mercies in the gospel. By careful reading it will be seen that the letter to the Ephesians, in which "spiritual blessings" are particularly mentioned, describes the dealings of God with the Jews and also with the Gentiles, and the difference between his dealings with

them. Now if these things be true, and no man can refute them by the Scriptures, we wonder who the man is that would come before God saying, Because of my obedience to thy commandments I have merited all the spiritual blessings I have ever received. We either receive all by our works, or we receive all by grace; there can be no mixture of grace and works. All will confess, we are sure, that the song of the redeemed is clearly and truthfully presented by Doddridge:

"Grace first inscribed my name
In God's eternal book;
'Twas grace that gave me to the Lamb,
Who all my sorrows took.

Grace taught my soul to pray,
And pardoning love to know;
'Twas grace that kept me to this day,
And will not let me go."

How well suited to the case of a poor, weak and helpless sinner are those words!

Paul exhorted his brethren at Rome to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which was their reasonable service; but that service was not to be rendered in order to obtain the blessings of grace, because they were already in possession of them, as the text clearly shows: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." The blessings enjoyed according to obedience consist in church relationship. A man who walks according to the gospel has the respect, esteem, confidence, fellowship and communion of the household of God; these are blessings indeed. It is sad when any man departs from the order of the church, because by such course he brings swift destruction upon himself, in that he becomes a castaway and loses through disobedience to the laws of the church, or gospel, all that the obedient man possesses. There was a time when Saul of Tarsus lived in strict obedience to the law of Moses, and verily thought he was doing God service. He did not steal, lie, bear false witness, commit adultery or fornication, defrauded no man, nor did he commit murder. In that life, or service, he was happy and contented, but when the Lord appeared and applied the law in the spirit of it, Saul realized for the first time that he was a sinner, and that in the eyes of God had transgressed every point of the law he so assuredly thought he had kept. A Pharisee now can be just as happy, as was Saul of Tarsus, in his own righteousness, and verily think he is doing God service, and that the Lord rewards him for such service; but when a poor soul is brought to know, as Saul of Tarsus was, that in him are all manner of evils, and though no man can lay anything to his charge, God is fully acquainted with his heart, and in thought, if not in deed, he has, and does, commit every sin spoken against in the law of God, that man must go before the Lord with his head bowed like a bulrush and say in substance if not in word what Toplady so strikingly said in the beautiful hymn:

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Savior, or I die."

The man under the law who transgressed and did not repent should die (be separated from his brethren and the temple worship), but should he repent, his sin should not be remembered against him. When we speak of this Scripture in a gospel sense we see that in "that dark and cloudy day" the Lord gave a shadow of what should be in the gospel. If a brother forsakes the way of the Lord

and thereby walks or lives after the flesh, and gives no evidence of repentance, he shall die or be separated from his brethren and the worship of the "holy temple." But if he turns from all his evil doings and walks uprightly and consistently, he shall live: be restored to the church, and when restored it is as though he had never transgressed the laws of the gospel; his sins shall not be remembered against him. If any one remembers his sins as a barrier between the man and himself or herself, he is not restored to that one, and that individual becomes a transgressor of that law which says, If thy brother repent, forgive him. (Luke xvii. 3.)

Deep and wonderful are the works and ways of God; we can at best but faintly touch upon them here and there. We hope that "A Subscriber" may recognize our desire at least in what we have written, to comply with the request. K.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Nathan Broughton died Oct. 24th, 1909, near Hoytville, Tioga Co., Pa., aged 79 years, 3 months and 26 days. He was the father of ten children, of whom one son and six daughters are living, also forty-five grandchildren and eighteen great-grandchildren. His companion, sister Broughton, died about eight years ago, since then he had lived with his children; he was with his son Duryus when he died. He was about the house and yard the day before he died, not feeling very well, but did not appear to be suffering; he died in the night, no one knew exactly when. He was baptized by Elder A. St. John, about thirty-five years ago, and was a member of the Cammal Old School Baptist Church. He attended the two days meeting at Cammal in August last, and seemed to enjoy it very much.

Funeral services were held Oct. 27th at the meetinghouse near his home, burial near the house. A large company of neighbors and friends were present. The church, family and friends will miss brother Broughton very much. He is eternally at rest.

May the dear Lord bless all of the dear mourning ones with the spirit of reconciliation, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore city desires to give some expression of their sorrow in the death of our dear sister, **Mrs. Charlotte Wright.** Sister Wright was not a woman of many words, but one whose adorning was that of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. She attended her meetings when she could, and ever manifested a loving interest in them, and also loving fellowship for the members of her church, and we all loved her for the marks of the Lord Jesus borne in her body. She was born April 15th, 1844, and died very suddenly August 19th, 1909.

The writer attended her funeral Sunday p. m., the 22nd. A large number of her brethren, sisters and friends attended. We miss her from our meetings, but have no doubt that she enjoys a more perfect worship than ours. Sister Wright leaves one daughter, Miss Edith Wright, who feels her bereavement very much. May God in his infinite goodness be with and bless her.

Written by her loving pastor,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

[AT the request of brother Rowe we willingly add a few words to the above notice. All that he has said of this dear sister has been true of her all these many years that we have known her. It was our privilege to baptize her in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Church of Baltimore city in July, 1873. All the years afterward that we remained pastor of that church she walked worthy of her high profession. It was in those years our privilege to often see her, and to hear from her lips many gracious words. She loved the truth, and Him who is truth, and her brethren in Christ. Our sympathy also goes out to the dear daughter, who has been her mother's companion, friend and helper for many years. It is in our mind to some day speak of some striking things in this dear sister's early experience as a subject for an editorial, if the Lord will.—C.]

THE Ebenezer Church of Baltimore city and her pastor desire to give some expression of their appreciation of the friendship and help of their late friend, **Maskell H. Barton,** who resided in our midst for the last few years. Although Mr. Barton made no public profession, we feel he knew and loved the truth of salvation by grace, and we regretted his leaving the city, caused by the death of his dear wife, together with his own sad affliction.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Maskell H. Barton departed this life Sept. 19th, 1909, aged about 54 years. He was the son of Miller R. and sister Margaret B. Barton. He died at the home of his brother, in Newark, Del. Quoting the words of his brother, "He was a kind-hearted man, a true friend and a loving brother," and I will add, he was a lover of the truth as it is in Jesus. His wife

was the daughter of Alexander and Sarah Jane Wilson, residing near Welsh Tract, Del. She preceded him to the grave only a few months. Before going to Baltimore to live they resided in Philadelphia for several years. They were both members of Salem Church congregation, and although they were not members of the visible church, yet they had the interest of the church at heart, and loved to listen to the proclamation of the gospel.

Elder J. G. Eubanks assisted at the funeral service, after which he was laid away in the Head of Christiana Church Cemetery, near Newark, Del., by the side of his faithful wife.

B. F. COULTER.

D. N. Still died at Kirksville, Mo., the 19th inst., where he had gone to visit a brother, John Still, only three days before. He retired at night in his usual health and spirits, and passed away without alarming those in the house with him. He was born Jan. 20th, 1831, at Bennington, Vt., came to Ohio in 1844, and to Iowa in 1854, locating near Birmingham, where he had resided ever since. He was married to Elizabeth Maxwell Sept. 14th, 1869, the wife dying several years ago. They were the parents of eight children, six of whom are living: Mrs. J. D. Mullix, of Downing, Mo., D. N. Jr., and J. M., of Agency, Mrs. E. B. Kracht, of this city, and Nannie and Oren Still at the old home. The brother and a sister, Mrs. L. S. Spitler, of this city, also survive him. Mr. Still united with the Round Prairie Primitive Baptist Church in 1890, and was a strong believer in its teachings and thoroughly established in the doctrine of salvation through Christ, and those who knew the man believe his spirit is at rest.

Funeral services were held at the home the 21st inst., conducted by Elder Pleasant Burger, of Moulton, and Elder B. L. Nay, of Mediapolis. The body was interred in the Birmingham Cemetery.

William Allen died at Independence, Iowa, Sept. 28th, 1909. He was born in Kentucky Nov. 9th, 1829, united with the Old School Baptist Church, in Park County, Ind., in 1866, was married to Tabitha Eggers in January, 1853, to which union eight children were born, two of which are deceased. He left to mourn three sons and three daughters, three brothers and two sisters. He with his family moved from Indiana to Franklin County, Iowa, in 1880, uniting by letter with West Fork Church, and lived a faithful member until death. The writer had been acquainted with him since he came to this State. He was as firm as a rock in the doctrine of Christ. He was very quiet in his manner, but had a gift in singing. He was a kind father, friend and neighbor, and proved by his walk and conversation what he professed, yet the dear old brother never claimed any righteousness of his own, but often said, A poor old sinner saved by grace. Brother Allen's mind gave way at times; he was taken to the asylum, but was brought to his home, and the writer was called to conduct the funeral services, assisted by Elder Emmerson, a friend of the family, after which his remains were interred in the Harlan Cemetery.

May the God of all grace comfort those left behind, is the humble prayer of the writer.

E. A. NORTON.

HAMPTON, Iowa.

David Kennard, who died at the home of his only daughter, Mrs. Joseph A. Sutton, near Maxwell, July 11th, 1909, was a native of Lewis County, Ky. He was born May 15th, 1825, and was therefore 84 years, 1 month and 26 days old. Early in life he united with the Old School Baptist Church, of which he ever remained a devout member. He was married to Mary Richards, Sept. 24th, 1847. To this union were born five children, all of whom, except one daughter, preceded him to the great beyond. Since the death of his wife, two years ago, he had made his home with his daughter. Besides his daughter, he leaves thirteen grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren to mourn their loss.

The funeral took place from the Maxwell Baptist Church, Elder Quick, of Willows, being the officiating minister. The remains were laid to rest in the A. O. U. W. Cemetery, where the wife and two daughters had been buried.

Mrs. Carrie S. Winchell, beloved wife of brother William Winchell, departed this life Sept. 12th, 1909, aged 66 years. Sister Winchell (nee Stewart) was married Feb. 26th, 1860, and was the mother of eight children. About forty years ago she was baptized by Elder John A. Badger, in the fellowship of the Olive and Hurley Church, Ulster County, N. Y., and continued a faithful member to the end. She was a woman of sterling worth, of deep discernment in spiritual things, shewing herself a pattern of good works, adorning the doctrine of God our Savior in all things. Her children, most of whom reside in far distant localities, came at once and ministered to her in this last illness all the comfort and relief that filial love is capable of. May the God of all comfort grant the bereaved husband and family abiding remembrance that it was the Lord who blessed them in the gift of this good wife and mother and friend; that His merciful kindness is great: and his mercy endureth for ever.

Services were held at the late residence of the deceased in Brooklyn, N. Y., Sept. 14th, and also at the meetinghouse of the Olive and Hurley Church the following day. The texts for remarks made were Heb. iv. 9, and 1 Cor. xv. 19, 20. Interment was in the cemetery know as the Winchell burying-ground.

JOHN McCONNELL.

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JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 77. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1909. NO. 23.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., August 26, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I would like to see this letter in the SIGNS, if you think best. It was not intended for publication, but sister Pultz gives her consent to have it published if you think it suitable.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

WHEELING, W. Va., May 16, 1909.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I have taken my pen and am wondering if I will be able to write anything at all, for I feel stupid and worn both in mind and body. I have lately been wondering if it is sinful for us to undertake when we feel that our minds are bound up in oblivion. Now I am reminded of a verse of the first poem in your brother's book. It is all so sweet from start to finish; I have read it over I know not how often, and as yet it has lost none of its sweetness:

"Through the blank, starless void, with anxious yearning,
I seek, but cannot find Him anywhere;
My spirit from its farthest quest returning,
To answer only that He is not there."

This verse describes my present condition, and I have wondered if it is tempting the Lord our God for us to undertake to write or speak in his name, expecting him to perform a miracle by giving us light and liberty to address his saints. We know that in him is no darkness at all, and where he is there is light.

I do feel thankful for your information about sister Mary Parker, and I feel thankful for her little respite from suffering before she died. I was also very glad to hear you speak so well of my sister Burgess; I feel to lay a special claim to her; her letters have always been filled with expressions of love, as if I really were her own sister. It seems strange how we are brought to know and love each other in the Spirit. I think I can begin to understand Paul's meaning when he said, We know no man after the flesh. In a general way this spiritual acquaintance is the best for me; not that I do not desire to meet all the household of faith, but I am physically too weak to engage in much conversation face to face. I had a slight stroke of paralysis about four years ago. I have never been strong from an infant, and am now in my fifty-seventh year, and as I grow older my

ailments increase. I have a weak heart, and am dropsical; often if a neighbor comes in and I talk I am attacked with such a sinking about my heart that I fear I shall fall down dead in their presence. I am so sensitive about showing my weak condition in their presence that I beg our great Physician for help and strength. So far I have ever been helped in these terrible bad cases, so much so that often I have hoped that my condition was not observed by them. I take notice that I suffer less when in the company of the saints; I have often thought that there is more faith in two or three than in one alone. I have noticed that I have felt my strength renewed on meeting and greeting the members at Byesville. Once I started there to attend our meeting, and I was feeling very badly, but I went on my way, begging the dear Physician for strength, but I was left to suffer until I reached Newcomerstown. Elder Carmichael and wife then lived at Justus, Ohio, and I expected to take their train from there (Newcomers) to Byesville. While I waited at the station I felt so poorly that I began to be alarmed. But the train came, and I boarded it, and as soon as I started in I saw them, their dear faces wreathed in smiles of welcome. I made my way to them, and after we had greeted each other and I sat down by sister Carmichael's side, she inquired after my health, and when I thought of myself, behold, my sickness had all vanished, I was well, and was astonished at the change. When we arrived at our journey's end and left the car I stepped out on our way with a stronger and firmer tread than I had known for months. This unusual state of health lasted until I was home again. Several times when I started for our meetings I was helped and strengthened in such a remarkable manner that I could not keep still, I had to tell the members about it.

Dear brother, I think I may have met this sister Woodington. I met a sister at our association at Byesville last August who told me that she passed through Wheeling sometimes, and that she did not live far from Wheeling. She told me her name, but after I parted from her I was sorry to find that I had forgotten it. I liked her appearance, she was so pleasant in her manner. I met many strangers in the flesh there, and tried to get acquainted with all the sisters; I am glad to say I found them all very sociable and kind. I think there were fifteen or sixteen preachers present, and they all seemed to be in a good spirit for preaching. Our own Elder Carmichael gave place to the others, but there was none there more able than he. He is very tender and loving.

This is Monday, the 18th. Last night after I had laid my writing by and retired for the night, I experienced such a feeling of unworthiness; the thought came to me thus: Why are you writing to this brother? what is your object? are you doing it as unto the Lord, or because you love the Lord, or are you doing it to commend yourself to his notice, or with a desire for commendation? I tried to search my poor, foolish heart for a truthful answer. O if our blessed Counsellor and Guide would only instruct me. In Psalms cxix. David says, "O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!" I love that Psalm very much, as it breathes the desires of my own poor heart. I have been thinking of our Savior's words: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest

unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." My prayer to God is that he will teach me how to do this. O if I could only find rest unto my soul. I am so weary of my life; I see so many imperfections in myself, and the thought that I am vile in the sight of God gives me great uneasiness of mind. True, I know that we can only be accepted in the Son, and that we can only hope for mercy through his atonement; I know this, still I cannot rest in it as I desire; I will look at self. I have been thinking of these words: "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body more than raiment?" Nothing would suit me better than this way of living, as far as I am concerned, but I have a family to look after, and have to be concerned for their welfare. We, in this day and generation, feel that we must try to live somewhat in fashion of our neighbors around us; we are not brave enough to seem peculiar, or at least to cause that our husband or sons seem odd and peculiar. With our care for their dress and for something to suit their appetite, with all our household cares, many of which might be avoided only for custom's sake, we seem to be cumbered, like poor Martha, with much serving. We look months ahead, and try to lay by a store for our future use, when we are plainly told to take no thought for the morrow. When our Savior performed the miracle and fed the multitude he only served two courses: bread and fish. Very few of us would be satisfied with such a meal. I often think of the long-suffering of God toward his unthankful children; how abundantly he provides for us. Even though we be termed poor people, we have plenty to eat and wear; that is, we have plenty according to our needs.

Now I will try to draw to a close, after answering your kind inquiries. We have six in family; our widowed daughter-in-law and her son make their home with us; we have three sons living and two dead; two sons are yet at home with us. Now as to our church, I certainly do feel ashamed to say that I do not know what association it used to be in. They do not hold associations. The last one was held (I think) in 1875. I did not unite with the church until the year 1892. We came to this city from Hampshire County, in 1883. Speaking of this time brings many memories of my first exercises of soul, and of my first attempts and failures to be a christian, of my first being a "good Methodist," then finding out through my dear father's letters, in which he took pains to try to lead me to the truth, that his kind of doctrine was what I had craved all the time. In the year 1892 my father died. I went back home on account of his serious illness, and stayed until after his death. Elder B. W. Powers preached his funeral sermon, and I know I can truthfully say it was the first sermon I ever heard; he set forth the righteousness of Christ as ours. Many who had often heard him said they had never heard him preach with such power as on that occasion. My faith was so strongly established in the doctrine of salvation by grace that I loved all those who held that doctrine, and wanted to be baptized as soon as possible. I never thought of my own fitness, but trusted alone in the righteousness of our Savior. I wrote to brother Powers and told him my desire. I was perfectly ignorant of all church order, and am not much advanced yet. My dear mother had stayed

out of the church, I know not why, for she was a devout christian. I asked her if she would go with me, and she gave a very cheerful assent. At the next meeting day we went before the church and were accepted, and baptized that same day, Sept. 11th, 1892. I returned home to Wheeling, and of course was shut out from hearing any preaching, and went to some of the meetings here, hoping to hear the gospel, but was always sadly disappointed. I would return from these quests feeling ten times more miserable than before.

I will not try to relate more of my travels at this time, but will close, thanking you for your kindness in writing to me, and your promptness in sending the book. I was sorry to hear that your wife was not well, and can sympathize with her. Please accept my warmest regards for you all. We live on Thirteenth St.; the number of our house is 77. Our telephone number is 1936x. If this sister should come to Wheeling she could call me up by phone, and I could then give her full directions, or we might meet her. I feel very thankful for your kind interest in wanting us to meet. May the Lord bless and comfort you and yours with his Holy Spirit.

I hope I am your sister, although I feel altogether unworthy of such relationship.

FLORENCE PULTZ.

NACOGDOCHES, Texas, August 29, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The letters herewith inclosed are at your disposal. I have enjoyed them very much, and wish to share them with others.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

ROBERT S. PACE.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., August 25, 1909.

ROBERT S. PACE—DEAR SIR:—Will you please inform me where I can get a copy of the book, "Everlasting Task for the Absoluters," referred to in your good letter in the SIGNS for September 1st, 1909? I have been an "absoluter" ever since I first heard that God declared the end from the beginning. Thus God surely foreknew all things of which he spake, and since he (by revelation) hath spoken of everything, then he must have foreknown everything, and this "absolute" fact has been "an everlasting task" to me ever since I first thought of God knowing what is to be. When a boy, quite young, I contended, If God knows that I am to die in a sandbank (I did hauling then, and we procured sand for building purposes from beneath a bank of clay; had to go under the bank to throw sand out, the bank above us was from ten to twenty feet thick, and looked dangerous, it might cave in on us,) something will cause me to go in just at the time to be caught and buried by the caving dirt, and as dangerous as the bank appears to be, if God knows I am not to be buried there, something will happen to cause me to be out just at the time the bank caves in, so I am as safe under God as I can be. Thus I have felt that everything is so absolutely fixed that "what is to be will be." This cry against the absolute predestination of all things (in this State) sprang up when some who advocated conditional time salvation saw that they could in nowise establish their conditionalism if all things are absolutely or certainly fixed; for if conditionalism could exist, it must be evident that nothing pertaining to conditionalism is certain to be, or absolutely fixed. This restless spirit that brought forth conditional time salvation was the result of a slothfulness about business among Baptists; the Baptists to a great

extent became lukewarm, indifferent about assembling on meeting days, and neglectful about many things, and some very zealous brethren got impatient, and began to plan means to stir up the pure minds of the delinquent ones to duty, and as an incentive, or inducement, these planners offered temporal blessings as a reward for one's obedience. Thus in their impatience they erred, because there can be no obedience save that taught in the Bible, and the only cause (or reason) given in the Bible for obedience is, "For" (the word for used as a conjunction means because); then, "For [or because] it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do," and when God does thus work, the result is that they obey, and they obey instantly, too, for God worketh according to his good pleasure. It will not do to say (as conditionalists have said) that God works in you to will and to do, yet you fail to do, for God's work can in nowise fail, and the result of God's work is always equal and the same; that is, the result of God's working in the Philippians was that they obeyed; then when God works in you (of his good pleasure) you certainly will do, i. e., obey, just as the Philippians did. The obedience of the Philippians demonstrated God's purpose in working in them: they did obey. God always has a purpose in his own works, and he ever accomplishes his own purpose, therefore when he worketh in any one to obey, his purpose in the matter is known, or made manifest, by the obedience done, and no other kind of work of his creatures can be called obedience save just such works as are the result of God working in them both to will and to do. Some one may reply, If that is true, we may as well sit and make no effort at all. Then I would reply, When God worketh in a man to do a thing, that man cannot sit and fail to do it, for every one in whom God worketh both to will and to do will obey just as the Philippians did. Paul said to Timothy, "Exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine." It was with doctrine that Paul exhorted, therefore when he made the Gentiles obedient he said, "I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed."—Romans xv. 18. When Paul labored (obeyed) he said, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Thus Paul's obedience was the result of God working in him both to will and to do. Jesus is the Rock, and whenever any are commanded to do anything they fall on that Rock (Jesus) and are broken, and realize their utter dependence, and can of themselves do nothing, just as it was on the day of Pentecost, when they were pricked in their hearts, and cried, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter told them what they should do: "Repent, and be baptized." Now these people had no righteousness of their own, they had no repentance of their own; then they fell on the Rock (Jesus). Broken in spirit, broken of all selfishness, and thus helpless, how could they repent? Peter did not leave them comfortless, but in continuance of his discourse told them that Jesus was exalted at the right hand of God (or the Father) to give repentance and the remission of sins. Thus the reason why they should repent was because Jesus gave them repentance. They did not get remission of sins as a reward for obedience, for it is Jesus who gives all remission of sins, and the reason Jesus gives them repentance and the remission of sins is because "the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that

are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." God made the promise of these blessings to them, even to as many as he calls, and in him (God) is yea and amen, so his promise to give (unto even as many as he calls) all things that pertain to life and godliness is given by his divine power. God's divine power (unto his people) is Jesus, thus you see it is a wheel within a wheel, and even today, at God's own time, and according to his good pleasure, when his time comes for one to obey he worketh in him both to will and to do, and when God thus works, the one thus worked in will realize there is something he "shall do," and when the time comes for him to do it he will know that the very act, or obedience, whether it be repentance, baptism, or any other, are all acts of obedience. He will also realize at the time that Jesus (God's divine power) gave him the very obedience. Thus God's people are made willing by God's work, and are made to do by the gift in Jesus; thus all the obedience of God's people doth honor God, and while we should and will feel always to encourage obedience and exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine, still we cannot hasten the work or obedience one iota, but must in God's honor wait his own time. If we establish a system of offered rewards as an inducement to incite one to obey, we supersede God, and thus impeach his wisdom.

Please if I err, forgive me.

Yours &c.,

DAVID L. McNEES.

QUITMAN, Texas, August 26, 1909.

ROBERT S. PACE—DEAR BROTHER:—In hope of eternal life, that God promised in the person of his Son before the world began, which is sure of its manifestation in time, though it may sometimes be understood but in part, because of the darkness of the flesh; but it is said by one of the early disciples, "The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." So the number is according to the calling, whether our children, or those who shall live after them, or who might have lived before, as, for that matter, at any time from righteous Abel on to the end of time, and this calling is effectual in every instance, not consulting the will of the creature at any time, but according to his own purpose and power, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." "For you see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise [even a theologian]; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound them that are mighty;" though there be a Goliath of the Philistine army that cometh out against our brother David, who selected five smooth stones out of the brook, wherewith he slew the Philistine, which things serve as a type of how Christ came under the law as a law-fulfiller, and thereby brought his people out from under bondage and the fear of death, and conquered our worst enemy: death. Now, my dear brother, where is our glorying? shall we say in the flesh? God forbid; seeing that we tried with all our might and utterly failed, though we knew it not until we spent all our living with the D. D.'s, and other creature helps, as the poor widow did, having no hope and without God in the world. Now this is a

blessed position to occupy in one's life, for "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." It is the poor who have the gospel of salvation preached to them to the satisfying of their hungry souls, being witnessed by the Spirit. Yes, dear brother, it seems that many of God's little children are first caught in the meshes of the do good and live idea; even the writer was once an enemy of the doctrine of salvation by grace, and I verily thought I had to do many things in the way of good works in order to live, not knowing that life must precede all action, and that good works (if there be any) are the result of life whose source is good; first make the tree good, and the fruit will be good; for how can an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bring forth that which is good? "I am [saith Christ] the vine, ye are the branches," and the child of God could no more bear fruit to God's praise without being connected with Christ by his life, than a twig could grapes without being first connected with a grapevine. If I were traveling through the country and chanced to find a peach on the ground, I would know that there was a living peach tree somewhere, for I would know that it takes a live peach tree to bear a peach, and if I should cast my eye upward and find a tree of similar fruit I would know it to be a peach tree, for we are to know a tree by its fruit. How wonderful are the works of God in every order of life, for everything that possesses life is subject to the law of that life, whether the wicked who are created for the day of evil, or the most consecrated child of God, all things are subject to God, who is above all things, and by whom all things consist.

Dear brother, some time ago you wrote me that you would like to receive a letter from me, and I have kept putting it off, not feeling qualified for the task, and when you read this you will need no explanation, for it is very much like its author, very imperfect; please cast the mantle of charity over it. I have not written as I would like to have done, but such as I have give I unto you.

Your little brother in bonds of love,

S. C. DAVENPORT.

HELENA, Okla., Sept. 19, 1909.

EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Many times I am wondering if my brethren get as low down as I do and then awake to the knowledge that they have been doubting that the careful hand of Providence is blessing them daily. I have supposed that the cause of my unbelief is because I see so much of the apparent prosperity in all classes of humanity, while I mourn in heart when it seems to me that I am left out of what would seem to be a reasonable share of this world's favors. The strangest and saddest things concerning this matter are that I have preached and written to others that God provides all things of this world for all men, and that his elect people are favored as much in this respect, or more, than the people who seem to be the nonelect, yet I am doubting in my mind the very sentiment which I have advocated; this looks to me like inconsistency. Surely conscientiously through experience and Scripture testimony I could not dare advocate anything different than what I have done as setting forth the truth of God. I must therefore realize that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" If I were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and made partaker of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good

word of God, and the powers of the world to come, and if I have been born of the Spirit, or born from above, I must still have down deep in my heart the same old rankling poison that is common to all humanity since Adam's transgression, and in seeing this inbred corruption I am made to bear testimony to the truth of this Scripture: "Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Continually, here, means every day. Can we find any person who is claiming that he has obtained righteousness by his faithful work who will confess that his heart is as faulty as set forth by the above Scripture? I think not. His confession of sin cannot be complete until he goes to the bottom of his heart; this he cannot do unless he has "tasted of the heavenly gift." He is blind to the deep corruption of his heart, yet, he says, I see therefore his sin remaineth. (John ix. 41.)

I had thought to speak to-day of the comfort received in reading the SIGNS, after my mind had been for days wandering through great crowds of humanity on public occasions. I have just returned from attending what is called a "Soldiers' Reunion." It is supposed to be, as all other meetings of its kind, free from the discussion of politics and religion, yet the speakers I listened to tried to discuss both. I was especially disgusted with the talk of some preachers there who did not fail to try to impress upon an audience composed of all classes of citizens, their religious dogmas, to the disgust of many hearers. While these features are distasteful to me, it was friendship for neighbors and friends, and to see some on business, that took me there. My mind is often reflecting upon the abnormal efforts of so many "very pious folk," who are seeking every opportunity to palm off on the people their religious ideas. A few months ago I had occasion to attend a meeting in a grove, held under the auspices of the farmers. It was supposed that the business of farming was to be discussed, to the exclusion of every other subject. A popular preacher was present, and went through religious ceremonies. Some of the speakers brought in their religions, which suited some present while it displeased others. I am glad to know that I have never heard of an Old School Baptist who has made speeches at any worldly entertainment who ever tried to discuss his religious belief; they (the Old School Baptists) feel confident that the Lord is able, and that he will open every necessary opportunity for the discussion of the truth as it is in Jesus. On the other hand, the opponents of the kingdom of our Lord are forcing themselves and their errors upon the people at every opportunity. During a recent "revival" in this town by an "Evangelist" of the Missionary Baptists, they became a "stench" in the nostrils of some people who prefer to be outside of any church organization. Their blind zeal forced them to take possession of the stores and shops, holding their meetings as they compassed the town to make proselytes. In olden time it is said of the same kind of zealots that they compassed sea and land to make one proselyte. They now compass towns and cities, and are not content with just one, but they must have them by the hundreds.

The SIGNS for September 15th has come, and as I take it up to read I note the vast difference in the language set forth by the writers, compared with those people whom I have been speaking about. This (the doctrine set forth in the SIGNS) is a dead language to the worldly-wise.

To them that perish "it is foolishness," but to them who are called with an holy calling, it is "the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

Will the editors of the SIGNS allow me to speak to the brethren and friends who desire the continuance and prosperity of our family paper? Ofttimes it has occurred to me of the many hardships though which the SIGNS has passed in all the years of its publication. Brethren, I speak through some personal knowledge of its history, I have been a reader of the paper most of the time for fifty-six years. It has never carried any paying advertisements, while most, or at least some, of our other Old School Baptists periodicals carry enough advertisements to pay all the cost of publishing, so that the money received for subscription is net above all expenses. Brethren, there is one way in which some can help the SIGNS, and that is, when you have any printing to be done, send it to the SIGNS office, where you will be treated just as well, or better, than by other printing houses. If it be only Minutes or pamphlets, or large books, do not be afraid to entrust to the care of J. E. Beebe & Co. An office that can print and handle a book like that of Hassell's Church History, and do it so well, much better than many large printing establishments in the large cities, can do any kind of printing as cheap, and generally of much better quality, than can be done elsewhere. I have been a critic for years in discovering printers' mistakes, both in periodicals and books; I have many volumes of the SIGNS, Minutes, pamphlets and books printed at the SIGNS office, and I feel safe in saying that it is a very rare thing to find a letter out of place, to say nothing about words with the wrong meaning. I am sorry to say that I have read after the pens of some brethren when words were out of place, and sometimes the mistakes were so serious as to make the writers say things that they did not intend to say, and all the fault was in the printing.

With the kindest regards for all other Old School Baptist periodicals, I am, I hope, your brother, in hope of immortality, J. F. BEEMAN.

SHERWOOD, Oregon, Sept. 15, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I am sending you a letter which I received from brother P. N. Moyers for publication, if you so desire.

Your brother,

J. P. ALLISON.

GOIN, Tenn., Aug. 29, 1909.

ELDER J. P. ALLISON—DEAR BROTHER:—Will you allow me to address you as such? I have had a mind to write you for a long time, and this morning, having the opportunity, I make the attempt. May the Lord direct my mind and hand so that I shall be able to write to your comfort. I have been reading after you for some twelve months, in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and while we are strangers in the flesh, I hope that we are brethren in the Spirit and in the faith that was once delivered unto the saints. I notice that you are anxious about the Adam man, and as I am one of the sons of Adam, I feel very much interested myself. But let this suffice. If the sons of Adam are not the subjects of salvation, you and I need give ourselves no trouble about it. But thank God I hear it said, "Whosoever [which is a relative personal pronoun and belongs to the family of Adam,] believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is [not going to be, but is,] born of God," and is a child of God. (1 John v. 1.) Such ones are

heirs to all that heaven possesses. But some one objects, and says, Is it not the soul, or that which is called the new man, that does this believing of which you speak? Let Paul answer this question: "For with the heart man [not spirit, nor soul, nor anything else but man,] believeth unto righteousness."—Rom. x. 10. "Abraham [not the soul or spirit] believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."—Rom. iv. 3. "And Philip said, If thou [thou, a personal pronoun] believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."—Acts viii. 37. Then Simon Peter said unto him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we [a personal pronoun] believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."—John vi. 68, 69. Now, dear brother, if the foregoing Scriptures do not prove that it is man that believes Jesus is the Christ, then it seems to me that language can have no bearing upon anything in our minds. Jesus said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." It is not the spirit of man, nor the soul of man, nor some other part of man, nor something connected with man, but man himself. If everything in existence were to be born over and over again it would still be the same. But it is a fact that man, here in this world, must be born again, born of the Spirit, to enter the kingdom of God. Without this birth he will neither see nor enter the kingdom. If this be not so heaven is worth nothing to you or me, and all that Jesus did for sinners while in the flesh will profit them nothing in the world to come. But thanks be to God, it is said, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." It is also said, "Verily I say unto you [a personal pronoun still], He that believeth on me hath [already] everlasting life."—John vi. 47. Such an one it is also said is passed from death unto life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. My dear brother, there is nothing more plainly taught in the word of God than that the sons and daughters of Adam are the characters who, being enabled by the Spirit of God, believe that Jesus is the Christ. Nothing can be more plainly taught, nothing is more plainly taught than that the believer is the character who is born of God, whether or not we can tell when it took place, where it took place, or what is the effect of its taking place. But now the great trouble comes up over our not being able to reconcile other Scriptures with these testimonies and with our experience. Such Scriptures as the following come up: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his [God's] seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."—1 John iii. 9. Mark, it is "he" all the way through. The same writer says again, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."—1 John i. 8. He also says, "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him [God] a liar, and his word is not in us."—1 John i. 10. Now, dear brother, did not John make some distinction in these three expressions: "Commit sin," "have no sin," and, "we have not sinned"? I will speak of these three expressions. First, it will not do to say we have not sinned, because it is said that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."—Rom. iii. 23. Second, it will not do to say we have (in the present tense) no sin, for it is a fact that all unrighteousness is sin, and we know that we have a carnal

nature called the old man, the outward man, the carnal mind, and sometimes the flesh, (Rom. vii. 17,) and this is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; therefore it will not do to claim that we are without sin here, which is condemned in the flesh. (Rom. viii. 3.) Now I come to the expressions, "doth not commit sin," and, "cannot sin," and, he "that is born of God doth not commit sin." Having been unable to reconcile these Scriptures with their own daily walk many brethren have been driven to draw some very wrong conclusions, or else this poor sinner is very badly bewildered. To say that we are possessed of a carnal nature, and yet never manifest it in our walk, will not do at all. We do manifest this carnal nature every day we live, and this is so much the case that at times it is hard to tell what we are ourselves. But as you have said in some of your writings, there must be some qualified scriptural sense in which "whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin," and in which they "cannot sin."

Dear brother, I wish to pen a few thoughts for you as they have appeared to my mind. In the first place, I would ask the question as to what is sin? "Sin is the transgression of the law." John here seems to refer to some definite law, and to me that seems to be the law of sin and death, and if sin be the transgression of the law of sin and death, it would seem to me that it could not be committed in the absence of that law, though the character might do the very things forbidden by that law; for it is said, "Where no law is, there is no transgression," consequently no sin could be committed. From this it seems clear to my mind that God's children in the act of being born again pass from under the law of sin and death to a state of justification. Notice the following Scriptures: "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."—Rom. vi. 14. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."—Rom. viii. 2. "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster."—Gal. iii. 24, 25. I cannot see how sin can be legally imputed where there is no law, even though we do the things forbidden by the law.

But now I will speak of another chain of thought upon which my mind has been exercised. Paul speaks of two ruling principles in every child of God, called the old man and the new man, the outward man and the inward man, the Spirit and the flesh, the law of the mind, against which the law in the members wars, and by which he is brought into captivity to the law of sin which is in his members. Paul admonished his brethren to put off the old man and to "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," after the image of him that created him. This is the Spirit of Christ which dwells in us. Paul also admonishes us not to yield our members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, to obey the lusts of the flesh. After Paul had done the things that he would not, he said, "It is no more I [Paul] that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me," and so Paul would acknowledge with John that "whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

My dear brother, I have endeavored to give you some of my thoughts upon this important subject, but may have missed

the mark altogether; but whether I know anything about it or not, there certainly is a qualified sense in which the children of God do not or cannot sin.

After reading this, if you wish to do so, you can send it to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for their inspection.

I remain as ever your brother,

P. N. MOYERS.

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio, Oct. 22, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—It is under a deep sense of my natural inclination to evil that I feel to extol the wonderful power of an all-controlling and purposing God for his mysterious grace toward me, a poor, weak, ignorant and sinful worm of the dust. I realize all this may be said for effect, but if you all knew me as I know myself you surely would not wonder that I say it, and yet if some one should bring specific charges of guilt against me for acts that the world calls wickedness, I fear I might strive to prove my innocence so sharply that my effort would only betray a selfishness, vindictiveness and even resentment so keen as to confirm their suspicion. Alas, what a world of evil and perplexity we are in! And while we feel tremblingly to suspect every one of our own motives, we dare not, cannot raise a charge of error in the all-comprehensive will of God, for we have no superior court before which to arraign Him. We are also too ignorant to plead our cause. Language is not yet sufficiently pure to convey our own unmistakable meaning. There is but one harmonious dialect, and that is not confined to the rules of any spoken or articulated human language. That language can be as perfectly and as easily understood by the illiterate and unlearned as it can by the most erudite professor of rhetoric. It is so full of meaning that each word is unmistakable. We try to express it in human phrase, but often fail to convey its true import to our hearers, and they have to interpret our spoken words by the rules they find written in their own hearts. Let us try a few words as we find them in daily use. If we say we are sinners, we may not mean that we have committed all the evil acts that many around us do without the least apparent sense of guilt. What seems to be considered good by many is all that can give them present success or happiness, and is no more refined than the pleasures of the ancient Epicureans. To us who feel a deeper sense of righteous judgment, there is no measure by which to judge our acts except the very holiness of God, and therefore we feel the sense of our sins so keenly that nothing short of God's own goodness can satisfy us. We say, Show us your faith without works, and we will show our faith by our works; but even this language must be backed by a true experience of grace to understand it. As if one should say a man's harvest is the measure of his labor, and we apparently are satisfied that that is all there is to it, but when we consider it in relation to all the facts in the case we are led to look deeper into all the contributory facts in the case. We are naturally inclined to say, If we work well and sow largely and wisely we shall reap bountifully, and so we use the word "if" as though all our success depended upon it alone; but it only shows our rational mode of reasoning, and yet there is a deeper reality associated with it in which there is no contingency. With us there is apparent contingency, uncertainty and liability to failure, for we may not possess the health at seedtime, or we may not possess the needful supply of teams, implements or

seed, and even if we possess all these and are successful in sowing, God may not have arranged the seasons for a suitable supply of rain, or the canker-worm, the palmerworm, the smut or weevil may destroy, or the frost heave out the growing roots, besides a thousand and one calamities God may have provided for the complete destruction of all our hopes. With us there is contingency, with God there is none. We cannot be sure of success in any of our labors, nor even after we reap, for wars may consume our grain or fire destroy, or thieves break through and steal it from us; but thanks be to God, there is a field in which there are no tares, no lack of strength to labor, no consuming pests, no destroying agencies. "He that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." But how shall he sow to the Spirit who has not the Spirit? How shall he reap until God hath given the increase? He that planteth is nothing, and he that watereth is nothing; God giveth the increase. In this field all originates in God, and he will see to it that all the increase shall be considered as his increase. "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."—Isaiah ix. 7. And in order that the stability of his throne should be proven to be the whole work of his own grace, he hath set all the contrasts of contingent appearances in the world over against the work of his own divine power in his own true spiritual kingdom. So now we see the process of his divine work amidst the very ruins of all earthly labors, hope and results, so that the true vessel of mercy as a unit, wherever we find him, is kept by his power, sustained by his grace, nourished by his bread of everlasting life and delivered at last into the fruition of all his promises. His work is perfect. "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied."

Let us now see how God gives evidence of his work in the church. Paul planted and Apollos watered; that is all they did. Paul sowed the sacred testimony that he had received from God on his way to Damascus—testified of the power of God that had quickened him into a living witness to minister or deliver that truth to the world, so that wherever He had other quickened saints ready to hear his word, they could rejoice in it. Apollos also bore witness as a corroborative witness, so watering or sanctioning Paul's testimony, thus making it a threefold cord not easily broken. Yet neither of their words, nor both of them together, could quicken their hearers into spiritual life, nor give spiritual joy; it must be mixed with faith in them that hear. Therefore as faith is the gift of God, that faith must be first mixed into the mutual experience of both speakers and hearers before there can be any fruit of the Spirit manifested or ripened into mutual spiritual nourishment or consolation. This certain law leads us to the necessity of harmonizing all other appearances of cause and effect to this one absolute and invariable principle. We look upon the acts of men as the index of character, and not as the cause of character. Jesus always reasoned with both friends and foes after this rule, and not the reverse, as Arminians do who place salvation as the effect of good works. This way of reasoning would have led Jesus to say, First make the fruit good, and that will make the tree good; but he said exactly the reverse, or, Make the tree good, and

so on. This rule also applies to quickened sinners, as well as to dead sinners. I do not know what measure of the Spirit God has given to a brother even in the church, only as he profits up to that measure. I have had unmistakable evidence of the correctness of this for over forty-five years observation in the church. I have noticed that that is not always good fruit which bears the stain of art, or is paraded before us as genuine spirituality under the guise of voluntary humility, in a plea for time salvation as the fruit of that effort. Nay; closer search into the dark recesses of my own nature convinces me that without Christ first, last and always with me I shall not, cannot bring forth fruit unto righteousness and at last receive everlasting life. My hope for present fruit is as much dependent upon the present quickening influence of his gracious Spirit as is my hope of heaven. I cannot help but judge all spiritual realities after this one absolute and unalterable law, for I find this law in my members. I cannot help or hinder realities in such a way as to change them. Saints are helpers of each other's joy and profit when mutually led by the same Spirit into the same mind, and find consolation in the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and where this bond is they endeavor to keep it. I pray God to extend this bond.

A. B. BREES.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., November, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—By request of many of my dear brethren and sisters at the Spoon River and Salem associations, I will try to write a little for their comfort, as it has been quite awhile since I have written for the SIGNS, and this may be the last that I will ever write; the Lord only knows, for I am very much afflicted, and am so nervous at times that I cannot make the letters so one can tell what the words are, and I am very much so this morning. My eyes are also failing very fast, and this, together with the cloud that has been hanging over my mind for the last month, made me feel very low down in the valley of despair; but last Sunday morning Elder L. E. Frazee came in and relieved me some, for I always want to see him when I am in darkness, and especially in the thick darkness that was over me then. We went to meeting, as it was our regular meeting time, and brother Frazee spoke with power and in demonstration of the Spirit, so that the cloud passed away, leaving a refreshing shower, and I felt as if I never would feel that way again. His text was, Take heed to the doctrine; and a glorious message was given him to deliver; "putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation." He spoke beautifully of the power and salvation of the Lord, and we all felt revived. We esteem him very highly in love for the work's sake; he has a loving and forgiving spirit, never rendering evil for evil unto any man, but ever follows that which is good, both among ourselves and to all. He lets nothing of this world's vanities come between him and his God; sometimes in speaking to him about some things that are going over the country he will say, Let these pass from our minds, for it must needs be that offences come, but woe unto them by whom they come; so he comforts the feeble-minded, supports the weak and is patient towards all men.

Now, dear sister Ross, I want to speak a word to you in answer to your good and comforting letter. How glad I was to know that you were able to write me

of your ever-living faith in our blessed Lord, and I pray God your whole spirit, soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." You have been much in my mind since we met at the Spoon River Association, as have also a great many others whom I had never met before; it gave me much comfort and consolation to know they were steadfast in the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, and the sweet conversations and joy will remain with me as long as my reason lasts; and the dear ministers who labored among us were ministers of God to establish us and comfort us concerning our faith. How full of the Holy Ghost they were, and, as Elder Ketchum said, If I am any judge, comforting must have been their messages to the household of faith. Yes, dear sister, and readers of the SIGNS, if ever I was in the Spirit I was at that grand and glorious meeting; I felt that every one there surely fed on the crumbs that fell from the Master's table; I felt that holy manna was scattered all around, so that none went hungry for spiritual food. I felt that they were called of God and sent to feed his faithful flock, for we could see the delight beaming in their faces. O how I love to see one feel what he is preaching; it seemed to me that they had on all the armor of God, and shunned not to declare all his counsel, and, dear sister, I felt I could almost see the celestial city; everything was so bright and good that I did not have one pain or ache about me while I was there; it seemed that this world with all its vanities had vanished. But O, dear brethren and sisters, mistaken I was, for I have seen the darkest hour it seems to me since then that I have ever felt; I was soaring too high. Yes, dear sister Ross, since I wrote to you darkness prevailed for over a month, and now it seems as if it is coming back. Write to me again if it is convenient, for I love to receive letters from the faithful in Christ Jesus. I wish they would all write to me, I would try and answer them.

I would like to speak of all with whom I became acquainted, but space forbids, as I am getting my letter too long, but will say a word to brother and sister McFadden, who so royally entertained that vast number: "Ye need not that I write unto you; for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another;" and indeed you did it to all the brethren; how I enjoyed your hospitality. My love to all the household of faith everywhere. "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." BELLE FRAZEE.

WILMINGTON, Del., November, 1909.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I am sitting here alone, and my mind has fallen to musing upon the things of the kingdom, and how the Lord leads his children through the wilderness-journey, and the time has gone quickly while I have been writing. I will send what I have written to you; do with it as you think best.

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness." What does he cry? One thing is, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Dear heaven-born child, when did you first cry? It was when you were first made alive to God. What did the blessed Lord do, allow you to perish? No, he lifted you out of the horrible pit and miry clay, and placed your feet upon a rock. How firm and sure is this foundation; there is no stronger. He said, "Upon this rock I will build my church." He establishes our goings,

How glad I am that he establishes my going; I cannot get far away from it. He does this, yet how often I feel that I am not established in the truth, rooted and grounded in it. Then he puts a new song in our mouths, even praise to his name. What is more sweet and beautiful than to hear the children of God sing? Some of them may have cracked voices, but O how sweet they sing unto the Rock of their salvation. "Let the inhabitants of the rock sing."

What else do we find in this wilderness-journey? We have found a desert, a waste howling wilderness. The desert is of burning sand, with no food and no raiment, and no water to drink; all is desolate. We feel that there is no hope, that the Lord has forgotten to be gracious, and has left us to die. Ah! but he finds us even there, and he makes the desert blossom like the rose, and to send forth richest perfume and beauty when the presence of God is with us. Then he feeds us on his precious word of truth, and we know that it is the Lord. He gives us to drink from the cup of everlasting life, and clothes us in purple and fine linen. He leads us into green pastures, and we come up out of the wilderness leaning upon the arm of our Beloved, and we say, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." "This is my Beloved; his person is divine." How beautifully the words of this hymn describe him.

I have come to the place where nothing seems to give me joy or comfort except these blessed things concerning Jesus. The world is gay, but it has no charms for me. Let me sit down with and clasp the hand of some dear saint of God, or some precious child just learning to walk. These cry in the wilderness, and sing, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear." I sometimes get in such fearful places, and doubt whether I am a subject of grace or not. What if, after all, I should be but a wolf in sheep's clothing? God knows my heart, and I am glad it is so; I cannot deceive him. I often wish that I could express my mind at all times regarding these things, but more often I am shut up. If one asks me to tell my exercises, I stop to think, and wonder if I ever had spiritual exercises. One thing I do know: that I love these dear people who bear the name of Old School Baptists. I cannot remember the time when I did not love them. If I am saved at all it is by the grace of God; it is nothing that I have done, for all my righteousness is as filthy rags. I am glad that when the sheet Peter saw was let down, it was filled with all manner of four-footed beasts and creeping things; even the worm was there. That has been of much comfort to me. I am a poor worm of the dust, so that this suits me. "O thou worm, Jacob." I pray that God may ever keep me walking in that manner which is pleasing in his sight, and that becomes a child of God. May he keep me at his feet. This I know means great and sore trials. I feel that I know something of them, yet I love to sit at his feet, and wash them with my tears and wipe them with the hairs of my head, as did one of old. "Trials make the promise sweet." "'Tis my happiness below, not to live without the cross." Pray for me; I need your prayers. The strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and hold up their hands, and strengthen the feeble knees.

I have written here as my mind has been led; if it be in accord with christian experience God be praised. My dear brother and pastor, may God fill you

with his divine presence, and give you food for the lambs, as he has so graciously done in the past, is my prayer for his name's sake.

From a poor sinner, for whom I hope Jesus died,

MARY D. BREWSTER.

HERNDON, Va., Oct. 31, 1909.

MY DEAR BROTHER COULTER:—To say that I was glad to receive your precious letter of October 22nd would not half express the comfort and pleasure it gave me in reading its contents. O how strange it seems to me at times that I am still remembered by God's dear children, and especially by the undershepherds of the flock; I do not feel worthy of such love as manifested in your letter to me. What am I, that you should be mindful of me? O how shall I, a poor, ignorant creature, be able to answer such a letter with any comfort to you as you wrote me? What a striking subject is Jacob, or Israel, to every heaven-born soul, who is made lame and goes halting all the journey through, not only on one foot, but on both. I felt the lameness and halting very great the day I received your letter, and I wondered why you could describe my condition so perfectly; and yet, as you quoted in your letter, Jacob's blessings came to him unexpected, even in his new name, "Israel," and that is the way comfort came to me in reading your letter—unexpected. Such messages of love from a fellow-traveler do strengthen the feeble knees and lift up the hands which hang down.

I did not attend the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, and think it was more my lameness and coldness that kept me from going than anything else, for at that time I felt like hiding myself from the assembly of the saints, and I felt to be as one alone, with no eye to pity and no hand to save. My little business here seems to keep me in prison walls, and I often wonder why I should be so closely confined to worldly cares, and it seems that I have but little time to meditate or write on better things. I am often made to say in my daily toil that I will never again attempt to write to any of God's dear children, for I am too unworthy to address them as dear brother or dear sister. I feel all of this down deep in my heart more than I can express it on paper; sometimes I say things that I am not sure I know are true, but this one thing I do know: that I am a great sinner, and if it were not that Christ came into this world to save sinners, I should surely be of all men most miserable.

But Israel could no longer be called Jacob after the unexpected blessing. Blessing to the people of God always comes unexpected (crosswise); we cannot realize the blessing until it is upon us, for it is said God's people "walk by faith, not by sight," and how can they walk unless they are led? We are told that Jacob had to be led after being found in the waste howling wilderness: "So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." "He led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." O, my brother, how can I in my ignorance explain the vital tenderness of the apple of the eye? You who have medical skill can explain more about the tenderness of it than I can. I know that it is a very tender member, and must be protected in the nighttime as well as the day. Little did Jacob know when he lighted upon a certain place and tarried there all night with stones for his pillow when he lay down to sleep, that the Lord was over him and round about him, but in his

slumber he saw the ladder reaching from earth to heaven, and he beheld the angels of God ascending and descending on it. "And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." I do believe I know something about the dreadful places in this wilderness-world, where the wild beasts creep forth and the restlessness of the long night causes me to cry out, Has the Lord forgotten to be gracious? is his mercy clean gone forever? The darkest hour of the night is just before day dawns; at that time we are ready to give up all we have (our little hope), and the Lord appears, and the angel of his presence saves us, and, like Jacob of old, we are made to say, "The Lord is in this place, and I knew it not." O how mysterious is the way in which the Lord leads his children; he leads them in paths they have not known. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

But I must stop, dear brother, lest I weary you in reading this poor letter. I am a very poor letter-writer, and that you well know without my telling you, but I have done my very best, and it is all I have at this time. Please cast the mantle of charity over all I have said out of the way. Pray for me that I may be kept in the way, that you will still continue to hold me in your fellowship. I do not want to try to do something to make you love me, but would rather receive it as free love, which runs together as two drops of water.

I was very glad to have the pleasure of meeting your dear companion, sister Coulter. How glad we would be for you both to visit us. I also desire that you give me permission to send your letter to the SIGNS to be published. Please write to me again if you can think of me. My wife joins me in love to you both.

Your brother, I hope,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

AVONDALE, Ala., Nov. 16, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—As I am sending you a remittance I will write a few lines for you to publish, if you feel to do so, for I have not written anything for the SIGNS in some time, and I still have a desire to be remembered by the editors and brethren and sisters who write for the same, often to my comfort and edification. My long silence has not been for lack of interest in the SIGNS, or in the cause which I hold dear to my heart, but I see so much inefficiency in my writings, and in all I do or say, that I often feel it had been better for the Old Baptist cause if I had never opened my mouth in public or written a line for publication. I have been in wretched health for a long time, and seldom blessed with the privilege of getting out from home among the brethren, and I get much discouraged, and fear that I am deceived in the whole matter, and the devil attacks me on every side, but I have not lost interest in the dear cause of Christ. The poet expressed my feelings when he said,

"My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life or breath remains;
Here my best friends, my kindred, dwell,
Here God, my Savior, reigns."

We have no organized church here, but we are having services in a nice hall in Avondale the second and fourth Sundays. There are a number of brethren and sisters within easy access of the place of meeting, but they are careless about attending, being swallowed up by the cares of this world. Beside this,

there are several different factions of Primitive Baptists in this section of the country, which seems to prevent anything like a consolidation or oneness of purpose. I have investigated the cause of these divisions to my satisfaction, and I am satisfied that as a general thing the cause is jealousy and envy, instead of a real difference in doctrine. I have visited and preached with them, and have heard their preachers preach, and if they do not all preach election, predestination, effectual calling and the final preservation of all the saints to glory (in other words, salvation by the grace of God), then I am too blind to see it. There is no scriptural authority for divisions among the people of God; on the other hand the apostle says, Let "there be no divisions among you," and to be "perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment." I have for several years believed in the predestination of God in all things, but to make a belief in that doctrine a test of fellowship seems to me the height of folly, and to disfellowship a brother or brethren because they do believe that doctrine is equally the height of folly. A person cannot help believing what he does believe, and "who art thou that judgest another man's servant?" While it is all right to be sound in the fundamental principles of the gospel, it is our acts and conduct that testify as to our true inward character and designate us as the children of God. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one toward another." A tender, loving, forgiving spirit is worth more than all soundness in doctrine. I would to God our people would stop all this quibbling and warring over things that none of us understand, and come together in the meekness and gentleness of Christ, forgive one another and let the past be the past, and then strive together for the faith of the gospel. "Comfort one another," "Pray one for another," "Forgiving one another," "Love one another," "Be pitiful, be courteous," are scriptural phrases we should try always to keep in mind. May God bless bleeding Zion, is my prayer for Christ's sake. Amen.

In tribulation and affliction,

H. J. REDD.

IOLA, Kans., Sept. 20, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed please find check for two dollars, for which give credit on my subscription; I am very sorry I have neglected sending it before. I could not bear the thought of doing without the SIGNS; I am sure, if I know my own heart, I love the doctrine it advocates. Many, many times I am made to wonder if there is another such miserable sinner on earth as I feel myself to be. I read of others having the same trials and afflictions that I am called to pass through, then it is my little hope, which seems so small, is revived and strengthened, and I take new courage and press on.

In looking this over I see I have made many blunders while trying to get my thoughts on paper, but know you will judge it with brotherly love.

I remain your unworthy sister; if one at all the least of all.

(MRS.) ELLEN E. PRESTON.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1909.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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SPIRITUAL EXERCISES.

In the obituary of sister Charlotte Wright, which appeared on page 701 of the last number of the Signs, we said that it was in our mind to write editorially of some things which we came to know in connection with her experience of the grace of God. It is not in our mind, neither is it in our power, to give a narration of all the early exercises of mind and heart by which she was taught to know the things of God, but to write of some things of which she spoke during our first conversation with her concerning the dealings of the Lord with her. She said (and we give here her exact words), "The name of the Savior has been precious to me from my earliest recollection; I cannot remember when I did not feel drawn to that name. It has always been so with me to the present time, but I cannot speak of sudden convictions of sin, nor of sudden change to joy and peace." We said, "What kind of a change do you desire?" In reply she said, "All christian experience of which I have read, or which I have heard about, tells of a sudden deep conviction of sin, and then of a sudden deliverance into light and peace. It has not been so with me, and so I cannot think that I am a child of God, yet I love the preaching of the name of Jesus, and it is sweet and precious to me." In reply we recall that we said, "What change could take place that would give you greater assurance of the love of God shed abroad in your heart than just this state of feeling? There are some things recorded in the word of God that may prove to be light to your mind and consolation to your heart." We then went on to speak of some things recorded in the Scriptures, of which it is our mind to write here. We will add however to the above, that the Lord blessed the conversation to her, and the next Sunday she came to the church in Baltimore, during the prayer-meeting, and the next Sunday it was our privilege to baptize her in the name of the Lord.

The things of which we spoke to her, and of which we desire to write now, enlarging somewhat upon what we then said, are these: There is no fixed or settled standard of circumstances laid down in the Bible which must always attend the dealings of God with his chosen, neither is there any fixed standard of the travel of the mind and heart recorded there as the Lord leads souls to himself. There are indeed some things inseparable from the works of grace in the heart; of some of these things we spoke in the Signs for November 15th. There must be a conviction of sin and guilt, and of just condemnation, and then of the futility of all human excellence and power, and a coming at last to rest in the finished work of the crucified and risen Jesus for justification and salvation. These things must become real and abiding in the soul of all who are taught of God, and without them there is no evidence that one is a subject of saving grace. The sum and substance of all this is summed up in the

brief sentence, "A sinner saved by grace." Of this we spoke in the last number of the SIGNS, and we do not desire to repeat it here, but in this unity there is wonderful variety of exercise of mind and heart. As no two faces of men are precisely alike, so no two records of christian travel are precisely alike. So the blessed Lord by the prophet has said, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known." Here we see one way, but many paths, and while the apostle meant the various gifts of the church when he said, There is a diversity of operations, but one Spirit, yet we do not think it will be doing violence to the text to speak of the same language as applying to varied experiences in the call by grace.

Still further, as we read of the Lord's dealings with numbers of the children of men in the Scriptures, we see great variety of circumstance, and equal variety of thoughts and feelings; to some was given that which was not given to others. Paul was no more or no less a child of God called by grace to be His disciple than were all the rest of the apostles, and yet of none of them was it true that they were stricken with blindness in that solemn hour of their call of the Lord. Of many of them it is just said that the Lord called them and they followed him. So also in the Old Testament the record of the way in which holy men were led is as diverse as the men themselves were diverse. It is sure that the Lord led each one according to His own will, and that he led them all to know and love him as their Savior and their God, but yet each one was led in ways peculiar to himself. The Lord dealt with each one as each one had need, and as should be most to the glory of His holy name. So also in the record of healings wrought by the Lord in the days of his flesh no two instances are alike. Two things were alike in each and every case, viz., the fact of need and despair on the one hand, and the power of Jesus to save on the other. But what a variety of circumstance appears in the different records. Some were blind, some were deaf, some were lame, some were leprous, some were bowed with a spirit of infirmity, and some were possessed of devils. One man was told to take up his bed and walk; one was told, Thy sins are forgiven thee. Jesus touched the eyes of another; one touched the hem of his garment; one he seemed not to answer for a time, and then apparently rebuffed her altogether; one he healed at a distance, and another he touched, yet all had deep need, and all were healed. Infinite variety, and yet perfect unity in the Spirit. So also to some were given deeper experiences than to others. Moses was led in ways peculiar to himself, for the accomplishment of wonderful things by him, for which he was thus prepared. David could write of experiences peculiar to himself, as a living type of the great King. Visions were given to the prophets that do not seem to have been vouchsafed to others of their time, and there is equally as great a variety to be seen in the lives and travel of mind of the various prophets as is to be seen in their writings, yet they all spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Referring again to the New Testament, we do not read of any having been called up into the holy mount and made witnesses of the transfiguration of the Lord, save Peter, James and John, and of these three alone is it recorded that they were near Him in the garden in the hour of his supreme agony. So also it is recorded of none

but Paul that they were caught up to the third heaven, into paradise; and to John it was given to see visions, as they were not revealed to any other of the apostles.

Now how many of the people of God think of these recorded instances of peculiar experiences and write bitter things against themselves, because they know that such peculiar leadings have not been theirs. How many have wished that their experience had been like that of Paul, or like that of some other brother or sister whose travel they have heard narrated, or of which they have read, and because they cannot tell of such deep convictions, or of sleepless nights and wretched days, when their whole life was a burden to them, nor of receiving such a deliverance that they could not contain themselves for joy, they have sorrowfully thought that they had never known the plague of their own heart at all, nor had ever received any tokens of love from the Master's hand, and yet, when these same troubled ones hear the name of Jesus, like the sister referred to above, that name is precious to them, and when they hear narratives of christian experience they can but feel sure that they do know what the writers mean; and when they read many things which Paul wrote, as recorded in the New Testament, they cannot say that these things sound strange to them. How many times the words of Paul come to the hearts of even such doubting ones, searching their very thoughts, and revealing themselves to themselves. Could this be so did not they also know these things for themselves? While not stricken blind, and while not hearing any voice with the natural ear, as did Paul, yet the things which he writes out of his soul's experience come to them with power, and fall upon their hearts as the words of a familiar friend who has shared with them common experiences. After all, they do know what Paul knew; after all, they do know what those of deepest experiences in the present day know, and so they have fellowship with them in these things.

In response to the words of sister Wright at the time when she said that she had never known any change as had others, but to her the name of Christ had from the first been sweet, we called attention to some instances recorded in the word to which we now also desire to refer, for the comfort of some others who may be troubled in the same way. There are instances recorded in the Scriptures which have always seemed to us to be similar. First, the prophet Samuel was set apart to the service of God from his infancy. This was not only so by the desire of his mother, but he was possessed of a devout spirit; his heart was reverent toward God from the first. It is not our mind that he ever could have pointed to any special time when he was first called by grace to know himself a sinner and to know Christ as a Savior. He could refer to occasions when the Lord spoke to him with reference to the special work as a prophet to which the Lord had appointed him, and special gifts were bestowed upon him, and seasons of blessed communion with God were his in after life, of which mention is made, but, so far as the narrative goes, he was a follower of God in heart and spirit from his earliest childhood. Likewise the prophet Jeremiah is expressly said to have been known and sanctified and ordained as a prophet to the nations before his birth; the Spirit of God was with him from his birth. No doubt the name of the Lord was always his delight, and in the word of the Lord it must have been

his delight to meditate. With him also there is no mention of deep struggles of mind before the coming of peace, nor of great and overwhelming joy when that peace came. Our understanding has always been that he could never have pointed to any period of time as that in which he was called by grace, yet how deeply was he led into the knowledge of the Lord, and how steadfast he was in defençe of the truth. Of Timothy it was said that from a child he had known the holy Scriptures. How wonderful is the inspired language concerning John the Baptist, who by the Spirit recognized his Lord, even before he was born, and thus assured Elizabeth, his mother, that she was come into the presence of the mother of the blessed Lord. In all these instances we feel well assured that from infancy the Spirit of God was with them, and that they could not have told of any special time when the good work of the Lord began with them. There was doubtless a time when that work did begin, but they could not have known of that hour. So there is also a time when the work of the Lord in grace begins with all his, but in many instances the subjects of that work cannot point to the time of its beginning, and this is not needful. It is needful that the work of the Lord be begun, but it is not needful that the subjects of it should be able to fix that time. It is needful however that the fruits of that work of grace should appear, and, as in the natural world, some come to a knowledge of their own feelings, and of the things around them, sooner than others, so also is it, as we have long believed, in the kingdom of God. The evidences of life, naturally, are not deep, profound things; the little child has just as many and just as satisfactory evidences that he lives as does the man of grey hairs. He sees the sunlight, he breathes the air, he hungers and thirsts, he can move, think and feel, he knows what love and fear and hope mean just as much as the man of many years, and these simple every day things are the evidences of life. So also in the kingdom of heaven the evidences of living in that kingdom are just as plain and evident to the little child of grace as to the man who has long traveled there. Love to the brethren, calling upon the name of the Lord, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, desiring to know the Lord and to follow him, a knowledge of one's own sinfulness, and a deep conviction of unfitness and unworthiness, which often produce doubts and fears as to whether the subject of these conflicts can be a child of God or not, are the true evidences of the new birth, and these the babe in Christ knows and feels as well as they of older years.

Again we say that the time when these exercises begin to be felt in the soul does not matter, but it does greatly matter that these fruits of the Spirit be found there, and by the indwelling of these fruits do we know that the Spirit of God dwells in the heart.

Reading the obituary of sister Wright, and recalling her words upon the occasion above named, have suggested these reflections to us. May they be as pleasant to others as they have many times been to us. C.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANKS.

As a majority of our subscribers' time expires with the end of this year, we inclose in each paper of this issue a subscription blank, as a convenience to them in sending new subscribers, as well as in paying their own subscription. All new subscriptions received now will be credited to the end of the year 1910, and back numbers will be sent from September 15th, 1909. Will you please make a special effort to send one or more new subscribers when you renew your own subscription for next year?

"A GREAT SUPPER."

BROTHER Wm. F. Sloan, of Lexington, Ky., asks that we give our view upon the parable of the "great supper," as recorded in Luke xiv. 16–24. We shall endeavor to do so, and as the entire chapter seems a perfect chain we shall name the last three verses as the text and try to build upon them; they read as follows: "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Judging from the first few verses of this chapter, Jesus was at that time in the house of one of the chief Pharisees and among distinguished guests, to eat bread on the Sabbath day, and he asked the lawyers and Pharisees if it were lawful to heal on the Sabbath day, a man being before him who had dropsy. They held their peace, and He took him and healed him. Then, knowing that they condemned him according to their idea of the law, he asked them, "Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?" In this question was shown their condemnation, notwithstanding they claimed to keep the law. Again they could not answer him. Then, when Jesus saw how they chose out the chief rooms, he rebuked them by saying that when they were bidden to a wedding, not to sit down in the highest room, lest a more honorable man should come and the master of the house say, Give place to this man; then with shame they would begin to take the lowest room, but that they, when bidden, should take the lowest room, that they might be honored when he who had bidden them should say, "Go up higher." "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." In all this he condemned the pride and arrogance of the chief men among the Jews. Then Jesus rebuked the Pharisee who had bidden him to the supper, telling him that when he made a supper he should not invite his friends, nor his brethren, nor his rich neighbors, lest they should bid him again and thus a recompense be made him. But he should call the poor, the maimed, the lame and the blind; they could not repay him, but he should be recompensed at the resurrection of the just. When one of them that sat at meat heard him say those things, he said unto him, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God."

In all the above sayings Jesus was teaching mercy and humility, showing what should be in the kingdom of God. The man who said, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God," must have recognized something of the import of Jesus' words, and also that the lame, halt, blind and maimed should be the "blessed" characters of that kingdom, and immediately Jesus put forth the parable of the "great supper" to him, saying, "A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: and sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready." In this verse is taught the Lord's dealings with Israel as a nation, in giving them the promises, the law, the oracles and the prophets to tell them of the great gospel supper. It was in this way that the Jews were bidden, they first being in possession of the kingdom. When supper time arrived the servant (not servants) was sent to say to

those bidden, "Come; for all things are now ready." That servant may have been John the Baptist, and as the forerunner of Christ, preached, saying, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" or, "Come; for all things are now ready." But to our mind Jesus was the servant of the Father, or Master of the house, who preached his own everlasting gospel, declaring that all the prophets had said to the Jews of his coming and work was then manifest: "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth."

"He came to his own, and his own received him not." Each of those bidden began to make excuse; one said, "I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." Not one of them was in need of the supper; one had land he had bought, therefore was not needy; another had oxen, and must go and prove them, hence was neither blind nor lame; another had married a wife, and his own wedding supper was sufficient for him. In this is seen the rejection of Christ and his supper by the Israelites, who had Moses and the prophets, yet did not believe. When the servant reported the situation, the master of the house was angry, and said, "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room." It will be remembered that instead of the scribes and Pharisees, the noble and great in the eyes of men, "the violent" took the kingdom by force; that is, they pressed into it; they were publicans and sinners. "He is a friend of publicans and sinners." To the proud, self-righteous Pharisees Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." Thus when the poor and needy among the Jews, who did believe on Christ, were taken in to the supper, there was yet "room." "And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." This last command seems to have reached beyond the streets and walls of Jerusalem, "the city" of the Jews, unto the Gentiles, who had not been reckoned as fit subjects to sit down to the "great supper." The term, "compel them to come in," simply means that no "excuse" would be accepted by the master of the house, and surely their dire distress and poverty would prevent them from making such excuses as the Jews made. Their poverty consisted in that they were without hope and without God in the world. It would rather seem that their wretchedness and need would make them gladly willing to go in and partake of just such a supper as their souls needed. "Blessed is he that eateth bread in the kingdom of God." Not one brought in, among the Jews, nor one compelled to come in, among the Gentiles, can ever make a supper for Him who had compassion on them, and thereby recompense him, but each one, like Mephibosheth, sits at the King's table forever, and though lame on both feet, his deformity is hid. The house is indeed filled; "his train filled the temple," and none but poor, needy sinners, by nature, are found there; not one of the bidden shall taste of the supper. Here is shown the cutting off of "the natural branches." Wis-

dom "hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table," and to him who is simple she saith, "Let him turn in hither: as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled."

After speaking the parable, great multitudes went with him, and he turned and said unto them, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." This saying shows the wonderful cost of being a disciple of Jesus. It does not say the multitudes followed Jesus; there is a difference between going with and following. There is also a difference between a disciple and a christian. One may be a christian without being a disciple, but one cannot be a disciple without being a christian. A disciple is one who follows Jesus in every sense of the word, believing him to be the Christ, while a christian is one who believes Christ to be the Son of God, yet may not follow him. The faith of the disciples in Christ as the promised Messiah, led their enemies to call them christians; hence the multitudes were neither disciples nor christians, but what He said to them gives light upon the parable of the "great supper." Those bidden were not willing to give up all the world for Christ; one could not forsake his land, another could not give up his oxen, and the other could not hate or turn away from his wife. We know by experience that a man can be a christian, or a believer in Christ, without much sacrifice, but to be a disciple of Jesus costs him all he has in this world. Father and mother must be hated, brethren, sisters and friends forsaken, houses and lands given up, yea, and his own life hated, if he be a disciple of the despised Nazarene. Christ must be first in our affections, first in our duty, first in our service, first in our songs and first in honor. Any one not taking up his cross (making the sacrifice of all things) cannot be his disciple. This cross was too heavy for those bidden to the supper, therefore they could not taste of it. "Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." The Jews had made great profession in waiting for the promised King, and made great boasts of their relationship to Abraham, claiming the promise of blessing, but when Christ came their profession, like the barren fig tree, faded away, and they were found without faith to believe His own words. The salt had lost its savor, therefore as a nation they were neither fit for the world nor the kingdom of God, hence were cast out without kingdom or country of their own. None of those bidden shall taste of my supper.

Just a word in conclusion regarding the text as it applies to the children of God now. If profession is all one has, and therefore clings to the world and the things of the world, he or she cannot be a disciple of Christ, and is much better off out of the church than in it, and the church is much better off without such material. Sooner or later they must be cut off, and when this is done, if not before, it is made manifest that they are neither fit for the church nor the world, having lost the respect of both the church and the world; a sad condition for one to be in. How very important it is to know positively that one is dead before we bury him with Christ in baptism. It is a

fearful thing to bury one alive. How necessary it is to forsake all things of the world before uniting with the church of Jesus Christ; yes, even father and mother, brethren and sisters, worldly amusements and earthly toys. The time to ask a place in the kingdom of God is when we are crucified unto the world, and the world is crucified unto us; then we have nothing to glory in save the cross (sufferings and death) of Christ. Through such conditions the poor and needy are compelled to come in, and they find a pleasant resting-place, sitting down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God. K.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Providence Church, near Rainsburg, Bedford Co., Pa., on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 8th, 9th and 10th, 1909, to the churches and associations with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—In this our annual epistle we will endeavor to comfort God's dear people with the truth as it is in Christ. We call your attention to these words: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might," found in Paul's epistle to the Ephesians, sixth chapter, tenth verse.

The apostle begins this epistle by stating clearly and emphatically the doctrine of salvation by grace. He tells us that "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." He reminds us of our walk before we were quickened, and then tells us that we know "that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." "Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light;" "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called;" "walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God;" "walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil." "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying;" "neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient;" but rather giving of thanks always for all things unto God, "speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." After making mention of how we should walk, and as a climax to all that he wrote, we find the words: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." Every one who is alive to the truth as it is in Christ is strong in the Lord. We learned in the travel of our soul from nature's darkness into the light of the knowledge of the glory of God that there is no strength in man, whose breath is in his nostrils, hence we ceased from man. We also learned that Jesus is mighty to save and strong to deliver, that in him is everlasting strength, for with David we can say, "He brought me up also out of an

horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." Every one who sees this by experience is strong in the Lord. Putting your trust in God, and not in man, is being strong in the Lord. "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be moved." What a tower of strength! David, after uttering the afore mentioned Scripture, said, "Many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." Yes, all who see it do trust in the Lord, are strong in him. Waiting upon the Lord is being strong in him. "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry." When one cries continually it looks as if they were impatient. This the children of God are constantly doing when passing through the fire and water, crying unto the Lord. Though they cry unto him day and night, there is present with them, Thy will, not mine, be done. The patience of God's people is their endurance of the trials, &c., of the gospel; their willingness to let God's will be done, knowing that he will do all things well, and that all things shall work together for their good. In the midst of trials and afflictions we can rejoice, knowing that out of them all the Lord will deliver. How true it is they who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles, run and not be weary, walk and not faint. All who have such experiences as these are truly "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." As we learn to know that all our help must come from him, that without him we can do nothing, that we are nothing and less than nothing and altogether vanity, we also learn to be strong in him. When we are weak in self, then we are strong in the Lord. When we put all our trust in him, when all our confidence rests upon what he has done for us, then we are strong in him; O how strong we are in him. Finally, my brethren, let me repeat it, "be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."

J. C. MELLOTT, Moderator.
G. W. McCLELLAN, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Providence Church, Bedford Co., Pa., sendeth greeting to the churches and associations with whom we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—We feel somewhat disappointed, having received no messengers from corresponding associations, but we feel also to submit to God's providential dealings with us. We greatly desire the continuance of your love and correspondence.

Our next meeting is appointed to be held with the Sidling Hill Church, Fulton Co., Pa., on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1910, where we hope to meet your messengers and hear your messages of love and fellowship in the gospel of the Son of God.

J. C. MELLOTT, Moderator.
G. W. McCLELLAN, Clerk.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE following appointments in Canada are expected to be filled by brother J. M. Fenton, of Philadelphia, Pa.: Duart, Sunday, Dec. 12th; Dunwich, Tuesday, 14th; London, Wednesday, 15th; Lobo, Friday, 17th; Ekfrid, Sunday, 19th; St. Thomas, Monday, 20th.

DUNCAN McALPINE, Church Clerk.

IONA, Ontario.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Harriet Stalnaker Workman was born Jan. 22nd, 1833, on the Stalnaker farm on Leading Creek, near White Station, W. Va., died suddenly at her home, near Laurel, Oct. 21st, 1909, aged 76 years, 8 months and 29 days. She had been blessed all her life with good health, and the morning of her death she arose as usual and helped prepare the meal, and after eating heartily, as usual, died while sitting at the table. She was married to Andrew Workman, Nov. 27th, 1864, to which union were born six children: Mrs. J. L. Foy, of Harding, Mrs. Joe Long, of Parsons, Mrs. L. D. Morris, of Belington, A. J. and Oliver H. Workman, of Harding, and A. A. Workman, of Elkins, who are left, with her sister, Mrs. Wm. Piercy, of Gilman, her brother, Henson Stalnaker, of California, fourteen grandchildren and many other relatives, and a host of friends, to mourn their loss. The husband and two grandchildren preceded her to the better world. At the age of eighteen years she professed a hope in Christ, which hope was to her "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast," in all her after years. She was a true and consistent christian, worshiping God in spirit and in truth, which was giving God the honor due him for the mercy and grace which he bestowed on her, for she felt it was not for works of righteousness which she had done, but because he had loved her with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness had he drawn her and enabled her to walk humbly before him in love, always ready to give meat and drink in his name to the hungry and thirsty. She always had a kind and comforting word for those who were in trouble, saying those things were ordained of God and must come, and would in some way be for the best. She was a good, kind, loving mother and grandmother. How sadly we miss her in the old home where we had seen her so many years, and in our homes, where she came often to comfort us when sickness or trouble came to us, and now in this great sorrow she cannot come to comfort us and say, It was God's will, and must be done, but it is a comfort and consolation to us to remember her faith and trust in God when such sorrow and loss came to her in her lifetime, and still a greater consolation to feel and realize that God has given to us that precious faith and trust in his holy name, making us to hope that we, when done with this life, can go where she has gone and sing with all the redeemed, All glory and honor and power be to the name of our God, for he hath redeemed us. She was a kind friend and neighbor, and will be sadly missed by the community in which she lived.

Funeral services were held at the Coffman meeting-house, and were conducted by Mr. Blakely, of Belington, after which her body was laid to rest in the Coffman Cemetery beside her husband, there to await the morning of the resurrection.

May God in his mercy comfort the hearts of those who mourn for her, and teach them all to trust in his mercy and grace as she trusted him, and when they are done with this life may they, too, hear that gracious welcome, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," is the prayer of her daughter-in-law,

EMELINE.

BROTHER **Miles H. Hassell** was born in Hickman County, Tenn., in 1837, and passed quietly away in Rosebud, White Co., Ark., July 6th, 1909, after an illness of three months, aged 72 years. He joined the Confederate army at the beginning of the war, served about one year, lost his health and was honorably discharged; regaining his health he returned to the army and was wounded, but continued to serve until the close of the war. He came to Arkansas with his family in 1874, and settled on Little Red River, near Heber, where he continued to live until a few years ago, when he moved to Rosebud, in 1898, where he died. For the past twenty-five years his health was good. During the past year he was afflicted with a serious bronchial trouble, which was the cause of his death. He leaves a devoted wife, who is sad, lonely and heart-broken, seven sons, two daughters, a number of grandchildren and many friends to mourn their loss. The brother and his companion raised a family of which any community should be proud, namely, Dr. J. W. Hassell, Searcy, Dr. A. B., Profs. J. B., G. C. and H. D., T. B. Hassell, of Rosebud, Mrs. W. P. Stork, of Miller, Mrs. Joseph Carswell and A. M. Hassell, of Heber. The youngest of the family is twenty-one years old. Brother Hassell joined the Primitive Baptists about thirty years ago. The writer was acquainted with him twenty-eight years. He was a consistent member, and blessed with a forgiving spirit, which brings to our mind the language of our Lord: If we forgive not, neither will our heavenly Father forgive us. I have spent many pleasant days and nights at the home of this precious family, but such is passed, except in our memory. We are commanded to weep with those who weep. We are again commanded to sorrow not as those who have no hope, for surely he is where no wave of trouble will roll across his peaceful breast. Before the brother passed away he called his companion to his bedside and asked her to help him praise Jesus, and then immediately fell asleep in Jesus. Dear, sorrowing ones, weep not, but rather rejoice; he is taken from the evil to come.

The remains were laid to rest at Bethesda, on Wednesday, July 7th, 1909. Service was conducted by G. W. Norman, a Missionary Baptist, as there was no Primitive Baptist near.

MOSES SANDAGE.

George N. Florance died at his home in Manassas, Va., May 16th, 1909, aged about 87 years. Brother Florance was baptized many years ago by the writer, in the fellowship of the Bethlehem Old School Baptist Church, near this place. It is my privilege to testify, from a more or less intimate acquaintance with him, to his sterling worth and integrity, both as a man and citizen of this community, where he was born and where his life was spent, and to his conservative and consistent life in the church ever since he became a member. Brother Florance was a safe counsellor in times of trouble, giving conservative advice when needed, possessing a clear understanding and an active interest in everything pertaining to the welfare of the church. He was of an humble spirit, that bright and lovely ornament of the christian, and showed his faith and love more by his works and walk than by words merely, though his words were words of wisdom. His latter years were years of suffering, through bodily infirmities, but his mind remained unimpaired to the end. In conversation with him I often heard him remark in substance, I have no fears for what awaits me beyond the grave, but I shrink from the pangs of final dissolution. It pleased God to show that those fears were groundless, for he sweetly, painlessly fell into that final sleep which knows no waking in this world. Brother Florance leaves a widow, sister Laura Florance, and two children, a son and daughter, to mourn their loss. The testimony of his neighbors and friends who have known him a lifetime is unanimous concerning the uprightness of his character and his faithfulness to duty, justice and right, both as a man in his family, as husband and father, and as a citizen among his fellows. I loved brother Florance. We miss him sadly from the little company of afflicted brethren at Bethlehem. Comfort for the mourner comes only from God, whom his saints always bless.

J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., Nov. 17, 1909.

Frederick W. Waterbury departed this life Sept. 17th, 1909, aged 62 years. Brother Waterbury was married Sept. 1st, 1870, and with his wife was baptized by Elder Wm. L. Benedict, August 22nd, 1875, in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, of New York city, in which he continued a faithful member to the end. His wife and one of two daughters survive him. The last illness of our brother was long and extremely painful, and it was necessary to resort to surgical operations several times in the effort to relieve and help him. From the last and most serious operation he never rallied. During his illness, when conscious, he suffered intensely, but throughout it all his affection was set upon things above, and he was always ready to speak of the goodness, long-suffering and mercy of God toward him. Shortly before his decease, upon regaining consciousness after an operation, he began to sing in a clear, firm voice, hymn 501 (Beebe's collection), and sang the first verse through without faltering. With our sister, his widow, we mourn his departure, but with her we rejoice for him "to be with Christ; which is far better," and all those who sorrow we commend to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to comfort and sustain them in time of trouble and distress.

The funeral service was held at the late home of our brother; text used, Isaiah xxvi. 12. Interment in the family plot in Hackensack Cemetery.

JOHN McCONNELL.

POETRY.

I ASK NOT.

I ASK not that the way, dear Lord,
In which I walk be smooth and straight;
That there shall be beside the road
No thorns to pierce my wandering feet.

Let not for me too much of joy
Be mingled with my earthly dross;
Let what thou art my thoughts employ,
And let me bear each day my cross.

I ask not that my life be filled
With pleasure ever bright and new,
But that from clouds shall be distilled
The tears which fall like evening dew.

But I do ask for strength from thee
To bear whate'er to me is sent,
That to thy presence I may flee,
And yet pour out no sad complaint.

I ask not that in perfumed bowers
I here may find a dwelling-place,
But that whene'er the storm-cloud lowers,
I yet shall see thy blessed face.

No, Lord, let storms of sorrow fall,
But hide not thou thy face divine;
My "Rock of Ages," all in all,
Just let me feel thy hand in mine.

(Selected by Mrs. E. E. Workman.)

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

MRS. Lydia C. Ray has changed her address from Egan, Texas, to Silverton, Texas.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Lizzie Schiefer, Pa., $1.00.

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JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 77. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1909. NO. 24.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"MARK THEM WHICH CAUSE DIVISIONS."

WE will notice 2 Thess. iii. 6, which reads thus: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us." These are the words of Paul. Now as strange as it may seem, I think that if we will observe those who cause divisions and offences among God's people we will find they all use this Scripture to justify themselves in so doing. What could be more perverting than to so apply this Scripture as to make it teach that which Paul so earnestly warned against? and that was for God's people to live and act as though Christ is divided. In this instance let us notice what the disorder complained of was that caused this command to be made as it is; also let us notice carefully how that church was commanded to treat those who thus walked disorderly, as here pointed out. Let us behold the contrast between the treatment commanded here and the treatment received at the hands of those who cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine that ye have learned. I think those disorderly walking brethren were ministers from other churches, who had come to that church purposely to stir up strife and cause divisions; at least, they were busybodies, who worked not at all. Read the eleventh verse. That these busybodies were not members of that church, I think is evident, from the tenor of the two letters written to the church. That church was commended very highly, and that without reserve. Read the third verse of the first chapter of this second letter; it reads thus: "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth." It does seem that such words of commendation could not be spoken of those who worked not at all, but were busybodies, if they were members of that church, for, let us notice, it is said, "The charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth." Such brethren filled with charity would hardly be acting the part of a busybody, and working not at all. Again, in the third chapter, fourth verse,

we read: "And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you." These brethren had been commanded, even before they received the first letter, to study to be quiet, and to do their own business, and to work with their own hands. Read 1 Thess. iv. 11. If these brethren had turned out to be busybodies it could not have been said they obeyed the command to be quiet and to do their own business; busybodies do not attend to their own business. Paul said, "We have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you." This confidence evidently was because of their faithfulness, so they did say, "So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endured."—2 Thess. i. 4. It seemed the confidence in the minds of these writers was unshaken in the members of that church, they both do and will do what they are commanded. Hence they commanded those brethren to withdraw themselves from every brother that walked disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of them.

Notice the expression, "Which he received of us." From this it would seem that these busybodies had also been commanded regarding how their walk should be. Now notice their arguments on the same line of subjects, to the eleventh verse, which reads thus: "For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies." Notice the expression, "walk among you." It would seem that if some of the members of that church were meant, that Paul would have said, We hear some of you, &c., instead of "some which walk among you." The twelfth verse reads thus: "Now them that are such we command and exhort, by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread." The thirteenth verse: "But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing." Notice again these brethren were here praised for well doing, while at the same time these busybodies were commanded and exhorted, that with quietness they work and eat their own bread. Let us notice that this commandment is claimed to be by our Lord Jesus Christ. Also in the sixth verse they say, "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Then how careful God's people should be to-day to heed these commands regarding busybodies who are going from place to place stirring up strife and causing divisions. "Such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." I think, beyond doubt, Paul had the same kind of brethren under consideration in Romans xvi. 17, as here in Thessalonians, those prompted by carnality instead of the Spirit of Christ; the height of their ambition was to have a following, regardless of the confusion caused by their divisions and offences, which was and is accomplished "by good words and fair speeches." They act the part of busybodies, yet under the plea of serving Christ. Here is where the great danger lies. If it were an outside foe it would not seem so hard, from such we should expect persecution. That church had endured persecutions and tribulations with patience and faith. Read i. 4. But the sad news came, brethren were walking among them, working not at all, but were busybodies. O how many such brethren there are to-day—busybodies stirring up strife and teaching God's people that it is their duty to declare non-

fellowship for all who are not sound like they are. Then, in apparent solemnity, they will refer to such Scriptures as, "Mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." Also the Scripture of our text: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly." This they so construe as to teach that all who are not sound like they are must be excluded, or else bars raised against them and nonfellowship declared for all not sound like they profess to be. Such brethren caused Paul to warn with tears. I do not now remember one instance where Paul wept because of persecutors from the outside; that was to be expected, but the thought of brethren speaking perverse things in order to have followers, caused the warning with tears, night and day, for the space of three years. It seems nothing could be more perverting than to use Paul's words of warning against division-makers and misconstrue them as to make them teach that Paul favored divisions. This would be expected of perverters of the truth, but how careful God's people should be in heeding the commands: "mark" and "avoid" them that cause divisions, which evidently is the same as commanded here in 2 Thess. iii. 6, 15, 16.

Now let us notice how this church was commanded to treat those busybodies in case they continued such. Let us read, beginning at the fourteenth verse: "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." Let us notice the connections carefully here. It certainly is evident that Paul had reference to those disorderly-walking busybodies when he said, "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed." When Paul said, "Mark them which cause divisions," in Romans xvi. 17, I think he meant the same by saying, "Avoid them," as he does here when he says, "And have no company with him," or where it is said in the sixth verse, "Withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly." Again, let us notice, Paul says that they may be ashamed, "yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." Such treatment would be Christlike. Here is a church which has naught charged against it, as living in disobedience and unfaithfulness toward God, yet, notwithstanding these troublesome busybodies walking among them, in turn this church is commanded not to count such as enemies, but admonish them as brethren. Well could Paul say, "I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men." Think of commanding this church to treat such persons as brethren and not as enemies. Such admonishing must be done in love and not in anger; it must be good in return for evil. Such treatment will make God's people ashamed. Such treatment is calculated to save rather than destroy. By such treatment no one will be harmed. It is true the carnally-minded will be brought to shame by receiving such mild treatment, such Christlike treatment, at the hands of their brethren, who are spiritually-minded. The members of that church were evidently spiritually-minded, hence in a condition to labor in a Christlike manner with the carnally-minded, who work not at all, but are busybodies. We should not expect a carnally-minded

person to be engaged in manifesting the fruit of the Spirit. We also should know that to treat a carnally-minded person in a carnal manner will never make them ashamed, but will rather anger them. Paul said to his Galatian brethren, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself." Dear brethren, notice how differently Paul instructs from what the carnally-minded teach. Paul says, Restore the erring; the carnally-minded say, Exclude the erring, raise bars against all not sound as we are. They use good words and fair speeches to deceive the hearts of the simple. All this sad state of things is to be dealt with in love, "considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." This is the law of Christ. It is ours to do, but not to sit as judges. Jesus said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." When we are living after the flesh, we are blind to these sayings of Jesus. We fail to realize that so sure as we establish cruel ways of treating our brethren, we in turn will have the same cruel judgment meted out to us. Christ's law is full of mercy, but not so with man's law, that is still "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." Christ said to his disciples, Pray after this manner, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Mark the contrast between the teachings of Christ and those who cannot tolerate any brother who is not sound, as they feel themselves to be. Christ said to pray to our Father which art in heaven to forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Those who practice making divisions among God's people manifest anything but a forgiving spirit toward all those who may not be sound, like they feel to be; their works do not go to show that they love those who are not gifted with such wisdom as they claim to possess. Let us remember that the majority of divisions are caused by those who claim to be sound in faith, while they point at their less favored brethren, who are not gifted in such knowledge as they themselves claim to have. Let us remember Paul's argument that all else without charity was nothing. Evidently Paul did pray, Forgive as I forgive, but can we say that we have such a forgiving spirit, at the same time demanding every one to come to our way of thinking? And if not, we cannot tolerate such unsound brethren. Then we quote where he says, "Mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them." O how sad to teach as though Christ had taught to pray to forgive us our debts, for we have not forgiven any one who is not sound like we are. Jesus also said, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." In wars and divisions we see carnality in full sway; many personal thrusts are made in order to hurt the character of their opponents, but this excuses no person for retaliating; we should have a forgiving spirit towards those who despitefully use us. How can we love them and pray for them unless we have the Spirit and mind of Christ? In 1 John ii. 9–11, we read: "He that saith he

is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes." Dear brethren, we see how dangerous it is to follow a carnally-minded leader, for he knoweth not whither he goeth. Remember the Scripture which saith, "The leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed." This must be expected of those who would follow blind leaders; all will fall into the ditch together.

Now, dear brethren, one and all, let us remember how the spiritually-minded are commanded to deal with the carnally-minded. Let us always remember that it is the carnally-minded that cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned. It is the work of the spiritually-minded to restore, but never to divide God's people. James has settled that beyond dispute where he says, "From whence come wars and fightings among you?" He says, "Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?" He continues, "Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." This is a sad description of any of God's people, yet is it worse than we behold them in many places to-day? O how sad to think of, and yet we hear the cry, "All is well." How blind we must be to our true condition. We see divisions made; we see the deceived and the deceiver, all treated alike; we see many pretexts to justify these cruel wars, as though it were a fact that wars and fightings did not come of our lusts, which war in our members. James says, "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not; and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish." From James' words it would seem that such brethren were trying to justify themselves in warring and fighting each other, but James in love and faithfulness admonished them not to lie against the truth. Do not claim to be serving Christ and at the same time causing divisions. "For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."

JOSEPH FORD.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 13, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I wrote to sister McKinney, asking if she was willing that I send the following letter to you for publication in the SIGNS, if you think best. I will copy a part of her reply:

"Dear Brother Durand:—Your letter is just received, and I do hope I feel thankful to the Lord for your expression of fellowship. I have been almost in despair at times since I wrote you that letter. In the afternoon before, while busy with my housework, in my mind I was writing to you; as something passed through my mind I thought, O, I cannot tell him that, when like a flash came the words, Keep not back part of the price. Then I said, I will tell it all. It was two o'clock that night when I finished writ-

ing; I then slept an hour or two. When I awoke it seemed surely the pains of hell gat hold upon me. I thought I had tried to deceive you. I feared I might be dying, I felt so strangely. Then I decided not to send the letter; I thought, Elder Durand shall never see that letter, but as the morning wore away a peaceful feeling came over me and I desired to send it. I picked up a late SIGNS, and brother Hess' letter in regard to the shewbread, in line with the idea of all christian service being offerings and sacrifices, decided me. I sent it off, and all went well until evening, when the same trouble came back, but in a different way. I imagined I could see a smile and look of contempt on your face as you read. What I could remember of what I had written seemed nothing at all. That feeling has been with me more or less until your letter came to-day. Now in regard to publishing the letter, I leave that with you and the editors. If I could give a word of comfort to any who have been led down into the very depths, as I seem to have been for some time, I would be glad, no matter how humiliating it might be to the flesh. I have been unfitted for my daily duties, though they are many. My husband cannot see me as I see myself, I am glad to say. Sometimes I am on the mountain-top for a few moments, then I am cast down into the depths, where I feel all the Lord's waves and billows go over me. Your letter today was a comfort. Your explanation of the pool of Bethesda seems clear to me. I am afraid I am one who sins wilfully."

I send this letter to you because I think it will be read with interest and profit by the readers of the SIGNS.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

OTTAWA, Kans., Nov. 1, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—For some time I have felt a desire to write and tell you some of the way I have been led the past year. The first thing I want to tell you is that until the past few months your writings seemed veiled to me. I do not think I ever failed to read them, but could not understand them as I wished. I concluded I was too ignorant to understand anything but experience. How surprised I have been of late to find them all experience. I have been cast down and sorrowful, and at times ashamed to raise my eyes to heaven, because of my exceeding sinfulness. This was my condition a week ago when I read your article on "I know you not." With you I could say, "I could not feel to argue the case with Him. I could not show him any reason why he should open the door to such as I feel myself to be, not worthy of the least favorable notice from him." Surely the Searcher of hearts has been pleased to lay mine bare to me. The more he has shown me the vileness of it, the more righteous I have tried to live. It is needless to say I have made a sad failure, but can say truthfully, I have felt the force of the two armies as I never did before. I know what it is to loathe and despise myself, and to see my heart as a cage of unclean birds; and not my heart only, that unruly member, the tongue, gives me great sorrow. A few days ago I was sorrowing on account of it, and felt discouraged and was ready to give up hope; I felt that I had sinned beyond forgiveness; I went to the stand and picked up the Bible, and as I did so the words came, He is our Elder Brother. We are told to forgive our brother seventy times seven, and how much more will He forgive us. It was made plain to me right there that he was our Brother, God

was our Father and we were brethren. I cannot express the joy it gave me for a little while. One day, not long ago, I was thinking of the fruits of the Spirit; I said, O Lord, I have not one. Then love seemed to stand out above all the rest, and I said, Yes, I can claim love. I have felt that I would be glad, if God would give me the strength, to crawl upon my knees to wait upon the children of God. Not long ago I felt such a love for God and his people that I dared to think I knew in a little measure what he told Moses, that none could see his face and live. I also think I have been brought to say with Moses, I would rather suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season. I can say with brother Vail, "To be compelled to take part with the gay and giddy world would be hell to me."

I have been reading the back numbers of the SIGNS. I have them since I came west in 1900 to live. Yesterday, in one for October, 1905, I read "The sin unto death," by Elder Powell. I cannot tell you what I suffered for a short time. It seemed to me that I was guilty of all, at some time in my life; I felt that was why I had never borne fruit. I almost expected to hear the words, Depart from me, I never knew you. I put the paper away and went in another room to beg for mercy, but none was shown me. I went about my work, and in the course of a couple of hours I went back and took up the paper. I had left it lying open at that letter. Just below the one that had given me such sorrow were the words, "God is love," by Elder Rowe, and as I read it my sorrow was turned to joy. I will quote a few lines from it: "God hates sin, but he loves the sinner, and he punishes the sinner by giving him a knowledge of sin and a love for righteousness. I know I am vile, but I truly believe I abhor myself for it, and my daily prayer now is, Lord, lead me in the strait and narrow path. I desire to walk meekly and humbly before him."

I was thinking to-day that if I could be as good as I wish to be, I could not be company for the dear Old Baptists, or the apostle Paul, whose writings I love so well. I am glad Peter's sins were left on record; his experience has been a great comfort to me. I have been greatly troubled the past summer, fearing I had no right to the privileges of the church. I would not have been baptized at the time I was, had I not been so much encouraged by dear brother White, whose face comes before me as I write, and I feel that it would be joy beyond measure to see him and talk to him once more. If there was ever a time I did not love the Old Baptists and think they were the best people on earth I do not remember it. I always thought it would be the greatest blessing that could be bestowed on me here, that of being worthy a name with them. I had been greatly troubled about my sins, and had wept and prayed to God for mercy, but at no time had I felt it my duty to go to the church. On that Saturday brother White took for a text, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden," &c. I almost wept aloud. I looked at some in the congregation in whom I had confidence and wondered how they could stay away. I thought how gladly I would go were I in their place. Though brother White usually stayed with us Saturday night I felt fearful he would go elsewhere, and asked my mother to see that he did not. He asked me why I did not come to the church. I told him I was not fit; I was too unworthy. After much encouragement I might say I gave up. That night

I shall always remember; I went to bed with a bad headache, and if ever I prayed in my life I did from that time until I reached the water the next day, that if I were doing wrong God would prevent me, and I did not care how it was done; but nothing prevented. My aunt was to be baptized at the same time; she was old, I a mere girl, and of course she was taken first. Just as he was in the act of baptizing her she fell, almost taking him off his feet. No one ever knew how it happened, yet it has been of untold comfort to me; instead of being frightened, I could hardly wait until she came out of the water. I felt that the Savior had lain just where I was to be buried in baptism, and if he had just gone down and come up it could not have been more real. As I write these lines a thought comes that never did before, that I was buried with him in baptism. Is that saying too much? On leaving the water the words of Ruth came to mind, and at no time have I ever felt that anything would ever tempt me to leave them, except my own unworthiness and unfitness to be among them.

I was greatly troubled the past summer, and every word I would see written against encouragement was like a dagger piercing my heart, until about a month ago, when reading the SIGNS for December 1st, 1905, a sister from Georgia, Eugenia Jackson Risk, in closing her letter told my experience. With the joy came the words, It hath not entered into the heart of man the things that God has prepared for them that love him. Before, I had thought of that as referring to a future state, but I do not think now that it does.

You will wonder why I have written you all this. When I began I wanted to tell you how good your writings are to me now, when for so many years I could not understand them. You may have forgotten it, but the one, "Sowing to the flesh and sowing to the Spirit," in August 1st, 1904, was food for me; I could hardly believe I had ever read it before. With the exception of an occasional trip to town I am always at home. This summer I felt that I would like to go to the County Fair, but pondered long in my mind whether it would be right for me to go now. I argued the case pro and con with myself; the children wanted me to go, and could not go without me. I mentioned many who had attended fairs whom I knew to be much better than I. The answer came, "What is that to thee? follow thou me." I hope that settled it for all time with me.

I have written with a pencil, because I find it hard to write with a pen. I know I have made many mistakes, but feel sure you will pardon all that is amiss. I am all alone, no one near to whom I can talk of the things which are of vital importance to me. It is now 1:30 a. m.

With a heart full of love to you, I hope for Christ's sake,

ANNA McKINNEY.

PLEVNA, Ala., Oct. 7, 1909.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been a long time since I have offered a word to your honored paper, but as things have transpired here in the south as they have of late, I feel impressed to write again. I am living in north Alabama among people that have always been called Primitive Baptists, but where are the favored few who tremble for the ark of God? I live in the bounds of the Flint River Association, which has always claimed to be true to the principles of the doctrine of God our Savior. The churches here

in former years all held to the principles of the London Confession of Faith, and I certainly have always believed in the teaching of those articles of faith. I read in that grand old confession that Almighty God is an eternal Sovereign over all worlds, creatures and created things, and is infinite, eternal, incomprehensible and all-wise. He also saw the reign of sin unto death from all eternity, and purposed all things that come to pass. In that Confession it is declared that he saw the fall of our federal head and made the necessary preparation for the salvation of his beloved bride; and now, as touching the predestination of all things, let us hear the eternal Deity: As I have thought, so shall it come to pass. Again, quoting from the London Confession, if I am not mistaken, in the fifth chapter we read that "Almighty God in his eternal power decreed in himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, all things that come to pass, yet so as that he is not thereby the author of sin." Now, dear brethren, one and all, down here we have to meet an outcry for believing and preaching this principle of doctrine of the Scriptures. Nor is this all, for He says, It is given unto you not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake, but some have of late got to contending for a conditional salvation, time salvation they call it, and also the theory of an eternal devil, and that there are two eternal powers opposing each other. Those who believe these principles of doctrine are numerous, and the doors of many so-called Primitive Baptists are shut against the doctrine of the eternal sovereignty of God, or to be plain, the doctrine of the predestination of all things that come to pass. This is the dividing line; but, dear brethren and companions in tribulation, be of good courage and quit yourselves like men; continue instant in prayer night and day; lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh. How painful it is to see brethren divided, yet Almighty God works all things after the counsel of his own will, and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to his purpose, and neither life, nor death, nor any other creature, shall separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus. Brethren, pray for us here in our sore trials. We are now passing through what our dear old companions have passed through in years gone by, for, the same element our dear Elder Gilbert Beebe had to encounter, and that our fathers in all ages have had to encounter since time began, is being measured out to us. Ministers who were once esteemed have come out and denounced the doctrine of the predestination of all things that come to pass, but the greater number of our churches are still contending for the grand and glorious doctrine of God our Savior which the saints of all ages have believed and contended for. Dear brethren, be of good courage, though among the willows in Babylon. Love one another for the truth's sake; this is all that will stand the fire.

Nov. 18th.—Dear brethren, I will begin here and add a supplement to my former letter, if in your judgment you feel to let it go into the paper. I hope that you will bear with my folly for a little. I have been charged with preaching false doctrine among Baptists, viz., that the wisdom, predestination and foreknowledge of God are coextensive. This is charged as being false doctrine by the enemies of God's holy truth. I have

lived these sixty-three years, and have never found any other doctrine taught in the word of God. I hope that I am reconciled to all the dispensations of God's providence in all things whatsoever come to pass. The true Old Primitive Baptists must not say that Peter could help denying the Savior, nor that Judas could avoid betraying the Lord, nor ten thousand other things set forth in prophecy must be fulfilled, and could have taken place otherwise. The word of God clearly teaches the eternal sovereignty of Jehovah in all things that are past, are now, or ever will be, until time is no more; yet some claiming to be Old School Baptists cry out that it will not do to preach the unlimited predestination of God in all things. Some say, O I know that the Bible teaches it, but it will not do to preach it; but we hear Zechariah saying, "And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off, and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and I will refine them as silver is refined, and I will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them. I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God." Brethren, the time is here already that we are to be tried as gold is tried, and this by false brethren among ourselves. Many things falsely are charged upon us by those who deny the absolute sovereignty and predestination of our unchangeable God; it seems to be more so as the great day of the Lord Almighty approaches.

Dear brethren and sisters, and companions in tribulation, let us take courage and be strong in the Lord, for not only is it given unto us to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. O could I only know that I am worthy to suffer for his sake, but I can only hope on until my change comes. I still desire to be humbly resigned to his will, and to rest upon his precious promises and his kind providences.

I will leave these remarks. May God bless you all, in the inner and the outer man, day by day.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

D. H. CORDELL.

[OUR dear brother need not feel anxious, only that he may continue to stand firm for the truth, and against the opposers of the truth, who alone can suffer harm. They who for the truth's sake suffer reproach are blessed, but there is no blessing to those who oppose the truth. May our brother feel well assured that the blessing is his.—C.]

PSALMS CXIX. 89.

"FOR ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven."

This Psalm no doubt was written with a twofold object. The primary object was to sing unto the Lord the song of the heart, touching the many and varied strings and chords in harmonic rhythm, echoing sweet strains of entrancing grace in the fullness of justly measured faith, now soaring to the very top of God's holy mount in heavenly strains of exaltation and praise for God's abundant and enduring mercy, then descending the scale to the deepest depths of the valley of humiliation, sorrow and weeping, with pleadings of a bleeding heart for life and light, strength and salvation, again ascending to the walk of faith in love and obedience, beholding the church in its order and beauty, with the King of saints reigning with power and majesty, clothed in the glory of the Father, full of grace and truth. Clustered together in the many verses of this one hundred and nineteenth Psalm is the burden of the

whole song of the redeemed, in its lights and shadows, in its varied hues of joy and suffering, of heartaches and soul searchings. The transcendent loveliness of faith's view of the travel of the saints from nature to grace can never be attained unto by the natural mind, but when viewed by faith and not by sight we look beyond in flight of time, to the crowning glory of the risen, living Savior, who hath put all things under his feet which stain and spot the raiment of the King's daughter, who "is all glorious within," whose clothing is of wrought gold, who "shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework." Again we hear the enticing music of the soul's confession to the Father of mercies, laying upon the altar of God's grace the body's vileness, blasted with sin, its infirmities, faithlessness, backslidings, with every evil from the heart, which is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," all of which is surely felt and passed through because, "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." This confession which declares the truth of God's salvation is written in the fleshly tables of the heart, never to be erased until "for ever" is dissolved and melted away in eternity. "For ever" applies to time, and embraces the things of time; it is that which is from the beginning to the ending. In time the Lamb of God was led to the slaughter, in time we become followers of him, in time his work is accomplished, in time we fulfill all that God has ordained concerning us. Jesus is the beginning and the end of all our hopes. "For ever" embraces our life under the law and under the gospel. "For ever, O Lord." The confession and declaration is to the Lord alone; no human agency stands between the confessing soul and his God, and when he takes the name of his Lord upon his lips it is with reverence and godly fear, and comes direct from a broken heart and a contrite spirit.

"For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." Jesus is the word of God, that perfect word which is life and light to his people, the glory of which filleth the earth with the "knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea;" it has all power in heaven and in earth, it killeth and it maketh alive, it teareth down and it buildeth up, it changeth the night into the morning, and the morning stars sing for joy. When the legal heaven encompassed spiritual Israel in its firm grasp of death, the "word," yet unrevealed, was forever settled there, guiding the church through every vicissitude, through all dark places and every trial. For the "Word" was in the beginning with God, "and the Word was God." The power of "the Word" delivered the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage, it was a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night to Israel through all the wilderness journey. It was the sword that turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life at the entrance of Eden; its wondrous power turned back the proud waves of the Red Sea, and also the Jordan. It was the end of the law for righteousness. When the settled Word finished the work under the law in righteousness, making honorable the law, in the death of the gracious Word (Christ Jesus), then the legal heaven was put away and rolled up as a scroll, yet still living in the memory of all who continue in time, and whose "for ever" is enfolded in the beginning and the end. Immediately, however, a new heaven and a new earth spread their canopy and carpet about our lives, "wherein dwelleth righteousness." The "Word" fills the new

creation, and is forever settled there. The gospel bringeth good tidings of the "Word," what its signs of promise are, how every promise is fulfilled in the heart of the church, and the faith and the order of the church are made beautiful and glorious in its ordinances and in its assemblies. "Out of Zion, [the church] the perfection of beauty, God hath shined" in his word. In him they obey, in him they walk in the light of truth, in him the little ones of the flock abide, and he in them. "In my Father's house are many mansions." Each individual heart is a mansion in the Father's house (the church), where Jesus, the living Word, has set up his temple and makes his glories known. The church as a loving mother watches over and cares for all her children, and clothes them with the spirit of her precious grace, which the happy bridegroom bestows upon her to comfort them withal. Then the "Word" is to them a strong tower in his garden of nuts and pleasant fruits. Far reaching and in perfect control is the sacred word of God as it becomes settled in every secret place in the gospel heaven. As the dew of heavenly grace spreads its mantle of moisture over the parched earth of our thirsty souls, bringing strengthened hope and renewed life through the night, so in the morning light the Sun of Righteousness arises with healing rays to brighten and cheer our lonely way. God is our sun and shield, whom having not seen, we love, for his word is settled, established and confirmed in our life of faith. Where Christ is, there is heaven; he reigneth a King in his kingdom; throughout all his kingdom his law and firm decrees are all obeyed; his one commandment ruleth all his subjects: "That ye love one another." The song of the redeemed is a song of love, divine, unchanging love. It was love that caused the dear Redeemer to suffer and to die for the objects of his great love. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," and it was while we were yet sinners that Christ died for us, therefore is his love entirely unmerited on our part. May we all sweetly rest in his love and be established and settled therein forever.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

1 CORINTHIANS X. 13.

"THERE hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

There is a vast difference between being tempted without sinning, and being tempted and sinning. "Sin is the transgression of the law."—1 John iii. 4. "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat." Had the command of God ended with these words there had been no law. "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it." Here the law was given, and the penalty for transgressing that law was, "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Thus we read, clearly set forth, God's law given to Adam; also the disobedience or transgression of the law being sin, and the penalty for sin was death, or separation. Adam did not die a corporeal death when he transgressed the law, for his days were nine hundred and thirty years, but he did die, and all his posterity, in being separated from God. When God gave Adam the law, the woman, being yet in the man, received the law, and all the

race of Adam, in a mystical sense, received the law, for all were in him when God created him. He created them on the sixth day, male and female created he them, and called their name Adam in the day he created them. Thus we conclude that when Adam (both man and woman) transgressed, all their race was included in the transgression, for in Adam all die; that is, all the generations of Adam by nature are in the one condition: dead in trespasses and in sin, for a corrupt tree brings forth corrupt fruit, and Eve is the mother of all living. When Satan deceived the woman he approached her with words of truth first: "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" The woman answers, and shows she knows the law. Satan now lies: "Ye shall not surely die," and adds some truth and lie with the final words, "Your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." You will notice the conversation of Satan is so mixed you hardly perceive the lie; it is his art, and he knows how to apply it. Here was an instance of being tempted and sinning, and Satan could no more than present the temptation to the woman, and her partaking constituted sin, and the penalty followed, which was death. "Adam was not deceived; but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression." Adam had a full knowledge of the command (law) of God, and the penalty for the transgression, but as he was made in the image of God, and was the figure of Him that was to come: Jesus Christ, Adam followed his bride into death for the love he bore toward her. So also Jesus followed his bride into death, where she was by transgression, but the coming into death under the law was not sin, for Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, and his following his bride (the church) under the law was for the purpose of redeeming her from under its curse. He paid the debt against her when he died upon the cross, and when he arose the church was justified before God, and the apostle could well declare: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?" The apostle in the tenth chapter of first Corinthians goes over the travel of the children of Israel, and says, "All were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." But they lusted and fell and were destroyed. If God dealt with Israel, the type of the gospel church, in swift punishment, shall we not also expect to be destroyed and die to our spiritual welfare in the church if we follow after the evils of the flesh and fulfill the lusts thereof? We cannot serve God and mammon. The children of God are tempted, but being presented with the temptation does not constitute sin, else the presentation of the temptations by Satan to the Savior would have made him a sinner. No man can say when he is tempted he is tempted of God, for God tempts no man. "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."—James i. 14, 15. To tempt with evil is the work of the devil, and he is the author of all that is contrary to the kingdom of God. When the devil tempted the Savior forty days in the wilderness, the Savior was in the wilderness of our nature, and this temptation occurred

immediately after his baptism by John in Jordan. Satan did not meet with the success as was his first work in the garden of Eden, for Jesus came to do the will of the Father; he came armed and prepared to conquer all his enemies, and his battle with temptations in the wilderness was the overcoming of them for his children, for they were chosen in him, and as in him they partake of his sufferings. Jesus was tempted in all points like as we are, that he might be able to succor them that are likewise tempted. "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down." And Satan also quoted from the Psalms to convince the Savior. How often the children of God are tempted with evil and are presented with such arguments as these: You cannot disinherit yourself, for if you are born of God you are a son of God, and cannot be otherwise than a son. Also, If you commit sin, you cannot cause Jesus any more suffering upon the cross, and the sin must be included in the "all sin" that we are cleansed from by the blood of Jesus. These, with many other arguments, Satan uses, and will quote Scripture to clothe his lies with, to tempt God's people. But the apostle says, "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape," &c. The way to escape is in Jesus, and if the temptation is overcome it is by the power of God, for we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. Faith is our salvation in the temptation, and faith is the gift of God; faith produces prayer in the hour of temptation, and in this prayer we are being kept, and as living subjects of God's love and mercy we are following the Savior in the wilderness, and as children of God are kept by his power. We know of some who have been tempted to destroy their life, and were tempted to commit other evils, but God did not suffer them to be tempted above that they were able to bear, and finally made the way of escape in Jesus Christ. Now this being tempted and not committing the evil presented does not make the one tempted a sinner, else would the Savior have been a sinner when he was tempted.

Now let us look at the other experience of being tempted and sinning, and this applies to God's people, for Solomon says, "There is no man that sinneth not." "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." We are thankful it is the adversaries, and not we, that are devoured. Peter denied the Lord, and said, "I know not the man," but the Savior had prayed that his faith fail not. Peter's denial did not destroy his faith. Satan could not touch Peter's faith, for his life was hid with Christ in God, and his trial in denying Jesus was for the trial of his faith. David sinned wilfully when he put Uriah to the forefront of the battle and Uriah was slain, and David sinned when he saw the wife of Uriah from the top of his house and desired to have her; there was evidently no prayer in David's heart to be kept from evil. Here was temptation presented and the yielding, not being kept by the power of God, but we know not one of the elect shall be lost. Satan could afflict Job, but could not touch his life, for God was with Job. We also hear the words of Jesus: None is able to pluck them out of my hand. "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all;" greater than all the powers of darkness. Satan nor the gates

of hell shall prevail against His church, but the question is, Am I one for whom Christ died?

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 22, 1909.

BOW, Wash., Nov. 14, 1909.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I write to tell you of Elders G. E. Mayfield, of Elgin, Oregon, and A. Wilson, of Oakville, Washington, visiting us few scattered Old School Predestinarian Baptists here on Puget Sound, and of their preaching to us poor and afflicted people the unsearchable riches of Christ, if I am any judge, for it was sweet to my ears and balm to my wounded spirit. I had gotten so hungry for spiritual food that I had gone and listened to the Missionary Baptists to try to get a crumb or a morsel of food, but none could I get. I believe it is all right for those manufactured preachers to be made to satisfy man, for they are men, and they worship man, and they are just like any other machine: they do the work they were intended to do, and they do it well, and like all other machines, they have been improved on until it seems that they are a model of perfection in their line of work (deception). They would deceive the very elect if it were possible, but praise God, through his dear Son, our precious Elder Brother, he has left the rule by which if they are tested they will show their true value, and, like the counterfeit dollar, they are smoother to the touch, more velvety, not such rough edges. Then there is the other test, the ring when dropped upon some solid substance, for instance, that Stone which the builders rejected, which was made the head of the corner. If they are true they will ring true, and show forth the fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, &c., if these be in them and abound it makes them that they are neither barren nor unfruitful, and is that treasure which we have in these earthen vessels, even Christ in us the hope of glory.

These two fathers in Israel surely came laden with that fruit which is comforting to the soul; came with spirits meek and lowly, boasting nothing of themselves, but giving God all the praise through our Lord Jesus Christ. They arrived by appointment in Sedro Woolley, my nearest railroad station, two miles distant, at two p. m., Thursday, November 4th, and I was in town to meet them, and brought them out to my place, where we had an appointment given out for them to preach in our schoolhouse that night. Elder Wilson preached an able discourse to a large congregation of very attentive listeners, and the strange part of it is, this district is noted for its rudeness in time of any religious service, the Missionary Baptists, the Free Methodists and all other denominations having to stop several times to remonstrate with the young people to quiet them so the preacher could be heard, but both nights, for Elder Wilson preached Thursday night and Elder Mayfield Friday night, both preaching predestinarian principles sound and true, yet there was excellent order. These were the first Old School Baptist sermons ever preached in this part of the country, as far as any one around here knows. Friday morning in company with Elders Wilson and Mayfield I went to see a sister Snyder and had a good talk with her; then we went to my father's, George A. J. Burch, and stayed until after dinner; we found them in usual health. They both joined the Missionaries, but are more Old School than Missionaries. We went also to visit brother Odell, who is sound in the faith,

though he has never been baptized, choosing rather to live alone than to be connected with those not of his faith, which I think is the right way, for it is harder to break away from their clutches than from the world in general, though I do not know as there is much difference, except in their form of godliness, but they surely deny the power thereof, and will bend or warp their creeds or rules to satisfy any one's notion if they will only come with their money. To the humble child of God seeking comfort it is only Babylon, and no comfort at all.

Elder Mayfield preached an excellent sermon Friday night. Saturday morning both ministers took the train for Mount Vernon, Wash., where I followed in the evening, and was met at the train by Elders Mayfield and Wilson and brother Beatty, then we proceeded to brother Beatty's, where we had a bountiful supper, after which we repaired to the sitting room, where we talked on that precious subject which is so old yet ever new, with much comfort, without a jar or discord, until late bedtime, when we reluctantly went to bed, to renew the subject the next morning as soon as we were up, and this sweet fellowship seemed to fill our hearts to overflowing with that love which can only come from God, showing forth they were born again, not of an incorruptible seed, but by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.

At two p. m. Sunday, November 7th, we were again fed most bountifully from God's storehouse by Elder Wilson, and again in the evening by Elder Mayfield, after which we talked until we were again driven to bed through necessity for rest. Next morning we reluctantly bid farewell to Elder Wilson, he going to his home, after which Elder Mayfield and myself bid farewell to brother and sister Beatty and took the train for Bellingham, Wash., but owing to the misreading of sister Beatty's letter by brethren Yeoman and Wood there was no one to meet us at the train, so we went to a restaurant and had dinner, then took the street car for brother Yeoman's residence, and gave them quite a surprise, for they read sister Beatty's letter to mean that the Elders would be at my place the fourth Sunday, and had put off their meeting on that date so they could go to Mount Vernon, so we had no preaching while at Bellingham, but we had a very pleasant time talking and singing with brother and sister Yeoman until time to retire for the night. The next morning we spent the time talking, and singing those precious hymns which give God all the praise and all the power as well as all the glory, but ours was the joy. Finally we had to say farewell, which caused us the sadness of heart that all children of our heavenly King feel when bidding adieu to those who are dear to them; but separation is needful, and we must obey. I, at least, hope to meet with them, if the Lord is willing, on Christmas day, this year, where I hope to meet Elders Hess and Barnes, as they have promised to be with them at that time. Then on the morning of the 9th we took the train for home. I left Elder Mayfield on the train at Burlington, he to pursue his way homeward and I to go to my home. He had several appointments to fill on his way, and may the Lord abundantly bless him and be with him on his journey, and be both mouth and wisdom to him as He was here among us. May the Lord spare those dear old servants for many years, and I hope he will put it into their hearts to visit us again, although I feel that I am not worthy to entertain such precious brethren as these, and felt all the time that they were de-

ceived in me, for if they really knew me they would never have traveled so far to meet me, yet I inwardly rejoiced that they did not know, for their talk was surely sweet food to me and I feel greatly refreshed. If any other brother or sister feels that they would like to see an old sinner like me, just come along, you will find a sure welcome, but do not inquire too closely about me. If I am ever saved it surely is by grace, free grace.

Yours in hope,

DAVIS BURCH.

BALLINGER, Texas, Oct. 14, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have wanted to take the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for years; have never enjoyed the different papers, because there are so many letters that do not seem to be written in meekness, and not only that, they seem to deny the great God who bought them with his blood and made them to know that He is God, and beside him there is no Savior. Yet there are many who claim, as far as I can understand in my humble judgment, that they are partly their own saviors in time, but from my poor understanding there is but one Savior, who is over all. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him;" and "him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." This Scripture refers to our being brought from darkness into light, and I feel sure that this is the only way whereby I may fall at the feet of Jesus and say, as did the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner." I cannot come in my own righteousness, for that is as filthy rags in the sight of God, but when I go I go with a song, and it is a new song. I am acquainted with many readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and those who have time and feel like writing to me, your letters will be highly appreciated. I hope I shall have the pleasure of reading many letters in the SIGNS from Tennessee brethren and sisters, with whom I am well acquainted and dearly love. Please find inclosed check for one year's subscription.

Sincerely,

ABEL R. BURKS.

NOTICE.

IF nothing in providence prevents, there will be preaching by the pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., the third Sunday in December (19th), 1909. Services at 10:45 a. m. and 2:30 p. m. We shall be glad to welcome any of our friends and brethren who can meet with us.

L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANKS.

As a majority of our subscribers' time expires with the end of this year, we inclosed in each paper of last issue a subscription blank, as a convenience to them in sending new subscribers, as well as in paying their own subscription. All new subscriptions received now will be credited to the end of the year 1910, and back numbers will be sent from September 15th, 1909. Will you please make a special effort to send one or more new subscribers when you renew your own subscription for next year?

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1909.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ALL ISRAEL SHALL BE SAVED.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Will you please give your views through the SIGNS upon the tenth and eleventh chapters of Romans, especially the twenty-sixth verse of the eleventh chapter? and oblige your little brother,

S. B. MOFFIT.

NEWBURG, Ore., Oct. 21, 1909.

Even had we the ability, space would not allow of a comment upon the contents of these two chapters, so we can but briefly express what has seemed to us more in harmony with the whole context than any other view that we have seen. Many men of much more profound knowledge of the word than we have ever possessed have differed much with regard to the meaning of many expressions of the apostle in these chapters, and so it would not become us to do more than suggest what has seemed nearer the full meaning of the apostle than any other. Paul does not seem to be speaking in these chapters of the doctrine of personal election of individuals of the race of man to final salvation and glory. This he had clearly set forth in the ninth chapter, and in the close of that chapter he declares the unbelief of Israel after the flesh, or nationally, and their rejection of the Messiah, who had come to them according to the prophecies, and then he shows their rejection also from the blessings of the new covenant. Believers might well question with regard to this, as to why God had cast away his people whom he foreknew, and this question Paul seems to meet and answer in these two chapters. Paul does not in these chapters, as said before, treat of the final salvation of the elect, either among the Jews or the Gentiles, but he speaks of them nationally, regarding the Jews as one nation and the Gentiles as another. The Jews as a people, or as a whole, had no place in the blessings of the gospel as yet, they were rejected, yet there was even then a remnant according to the election of grace who were true believers. So, on the other hand, while the Gentiles were now enriched by their poverty, yet it was still true that not all Gentiles were believers or were saved in Christ, but the church as a whole were now to be numbered among the Gentiles and not among the Jews. This was the fact then and it is the fact still; very few Jews are now believers in Christ; the great body of true believers are now, and for nineteen hundred years have been, Gentiles. The first success of the gospel was indeed among the Jews, for the apostles and those who believed on the day of Pentecost were Jews, but in the Acts we see how very soon this ceased to be the case, and the apostles, finding that the Jews counted themselves unworthy of eternal life, turned to the Gentiles, and this has been so ever since. But we have understood the apostle to teach in these two chapters that this should not always be so; there would come a day when Christ should be received and believed on among the Jews as he is now among the Gentiles. This shall be when the fullness of the Gentiles has been brought in. We do not know, and no man knows, when that time shall be, and it is but speculation to discuss the question as to that

time, but when that time shall come then there will be a building up of churches among the Jews, as now is the case among the Gentiles. The expression in the twenty-sixth verse of the eleventh chapter does not signify that every individual Jew shall be saved, or come to believe in Christ savingly, any more than it is true that every Gentile now thus believes in Christ, but then the Jews shall be blessed in the same sense that the Gentiles are now, and the Lord will bring many of them to believe in the Lord Jesus, as he now brings many Gentiles to believe; whatever blessings rest upon Gentiles now through the gospel will then rest upon the Jews. Millions of Jews have passed away from earth in the nineteen hundred years that are passed. The apostle does not mean that they have all been the subjects of salvation when (verse twenty-six) he says, "And so all Israel shall be saved;" in fact we have not understood the apostle to be speaking of the final salvation of the elect vessels of mercy at all, as we said before. There is a salvation connected with the gospel among the Gentiles now that relates to things in the present time; so then will there be a similar salvation to the Jews. Many things said by the apostle in these two chapters seem difficult to be understood, but there seems to us to be fewer difficulties to meet with in this view than in any other. Neither have we been able to understand the Scriptures to teach that there shall ever be a restoration of the Jewish people to their old home in Palestine, although some have thought so, and the Scriptures most relied upon to prove this idea are the prophecies of the Old Testament. A careful examination of those prophecies which speak of the coming glory of the Jewish people will show that they refer to the restoration from the seventy years captivity, and the bringing back again of the Jews to their own land at the expiration of that captivity, consequently those Scriptures have been fulfilled centuries ago. There is no doubt that in these prophecies there is also a setting forth in type of the blessings to be vouchsafed to the spiritual Israel of God under the gospel covenant, but these spiritual blessings are to a spiritual people, whether Jews or Gentiles. As it is written, "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly;" "but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly." In the gospel sense of the word, all who believe are the children of Abraham, and therefore are the true Israel.

We have written these thoughts as suggestions, which seem to us in harmony with the arguments of the apostle in the chapters to which brother Moffit calls attention. C.

HERESY.

OUR brother, Elder T. M. Poulson, in a letter some time ago, asked that we say something about the word "heresy," as used in the New Testament; he asks, What constitutes heresy? Our own mind has for years been much occupied with the same question. It certainly is an important question, because we are told to reject a man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition. It is well first to ascertain, if we can do so, the exact meaning of the word. The original Greek word translated heresy is *airesis*. Literally, it signifies "opinion," "sentiment." The noun for that man who is a heretic in the Greek was *airetikos*, and its signification was, literally, "an opinionative person," or one self-willed and stubborn. We read, "There must be also heresies among you," and, "After the way which they call heresy, so worship I

the God of my fathers." Heresies are named in connection with wrath, strife and emulations; and it is said of some that they should privily bring in damnable heresies, meaning damnable opinions or sentiments. We have here quoted every place where the word heresy or heretic occurs in the New Testament. From all this, it appears to us that every opinion or sentiment that is contrary to the word of God would be called heresy in the New Testament, but not every person who holds an erroneous opinion is a heretic. If, however, that person who holds this erroneous opinion be self-willed, opinionative, or determined to press this opinion forward and insist upon its acceptance by the church, setting up his judgment against the common faith of the church, and insisting that his opinion be accepted, that man becomes a heretic, and ought to be rejected. One who may be honestly questioning regarding the truth, and who fails to see or understand all the teaching of the Scriptures, must not, because of this, be called a heretic, but if that one becomes contentious about the matter, boldly asserting that the opinion which he holds is right, against the faith of the church, and insisting upon its reception by others, he becomes a heretic according to the Bible definition of a heretic, as given before, viz., an opinionative person. It is manifest that the apostles understood best what they meant by the word heretic, and we learn from many things written in the epistles that they rebuked many false sentiments as heresies, when they did not stigmatize those who were ensnared by them as heretics; many false sentiments were pointed out when there was nothing said about excluding those who held them. The apostles did indeed faithfully warn their brethren against these unscriptural opinions, and were not slack to condemn these false sentiments, yet it was not often that they urged upon the churches to withdraw fellowship from a member, either for incorrect sentiments or for departures in his walk. Some things they did point out which demanded that the churches should withdraw from those who held to the error, or practiced that which was evil. On the one hand we may instance the unclean person, and, on the other, those who denied that Christ was come in the flesh. Men might be weak in the faith, yet were to be received, but if they were disposed to be disputatious over any matter they were not to be received; their wrong opinion was in itself a heresy, but unless they were disputatious and opinionative they were not to be regarded or treated as heretics.

The apostles seem to make a difference in heresies; many things were heresies, but not all were "damnable heresies." The word in 2 Peter ii. 1, translated "damnable," is *apoleia*, and it signifies that which destroys or pulls down literally. A damnable heresy then, would be that which would destroy the faith or hope of believers, or which would pull down the very foundation upon which they were standing. There might be wrong opinions regarding some point of church discipline, or some church practice, or concerning the meaning of some portions of the word, or concerning the application of the prophecies in the word, or even concerning the manner of the dealings of God in grace or in providence, which yet would not tend to destroy the foundation of God upon which the faith of his people rests, and which therefore would not be damnable heresy. But to deny that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, that he was born of the virgin, that he

lived on earth as a man among his disciples, that he died as the atonement for our sins, and that he arose again from Joseph's new tomb, and that he appeared unto men chosen before of God in his very body that was crucified, that he ascended in their view, and that a cloud received him out of their sight, or to contend that the new birth is not of God, but simply the reformation which the argument or appeal of one man may produce in another, or to say that the resurrection is past already, and so eat away or undermine and overthrow the faith of others, or that there is any future life of happiness or misery, all these things would be damnable heresies; that is, they would work destruction, or the pulling down, of the very faith and hope that is in the gospel, and which dwells in the hearts of all who have come to believe in the Lord. Of one thing we feel sure, viz., that our dear brother Poulson need not fear that he has ever taught damnable heresies. No doubt he feels to ask very often, as do all humble ministers of the word, May I not have made mistakes in my application of the Scriptures? May I not have held opinions that were not scriptural? but from an acquaintance of nearly forty years, we have the right to say that he has never wavered from the great principles of the doctrine of God our Savior, and that he has not been at any time desirous of going beyond what the plain testimony of the Scriptures will sustain. It is right that we should say this, because it is true, as all his brethren know, and it may be, now in his old age, of comfort to him to know that his brethren so think of him. It must be a great consolation to him as age and its infirmities are coming upon him to feel assured that he has all these many years striven, according to the ability that God has given him, to preach nothing but Christ, and him crucified.

We hope that what we have said may prove to be of some satisfaction to him and to others. C.

CLOSE OF VOLUME SEVENTY-SEVEN.

ANOTHER year has about passed, which brings us to the last number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for 1909. When the year began we felt much anxiety regarding the work before us, often wondering how we should be prospered both spiritually and temporally, but all our fears have been overcome by the providences of God. We have much appreciated the kindness of our writers, and assure them that many hearts have been made glad through the publication of their articles and private letters. Please accept our thanks and write often. We are grateful to all our subscribers who have so kindly and faithfully supported the SIGNS this another year, and all donations for sending the paper to the poor of the flock have been thankfully received. The new postal law compelled us to drop many of our delinquent subscribers, and many more will have to be dropped soon. With the exception of this cutting off, our list is about the same as at this time last year. So far as editors and publishers are concerned, the year has been one of pleasantness, all working in harmony to the end that the SIGNS should be of comfort to its readers. Elder Chick and ourself have written with such ability as the Lord gave, and we hope that no harm at least has been done any one, nor violence to the Scriptures. We have endeavored to set forth the truth of God and avoid the many unpleasant and unprofitable controversies indulged in in so many sections of our country.

With the above brief statements we say farewell for 1909. K.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Benjamin F. Waddy was born in Alexandria, Va., about the year 1829, and died in Washington, D. C., Sept. 17th, 1909. Mr. Waddy was highly esteemed for his sterling worth. As a man he was honest and true, and as a business man in Georgetown he had a rather remarkable record; he had conducted a hat and fur business for sixty-six years, and most of that time in the same house. He is greatly missed by his many friends, but excepting his immediate family none miss him more than the Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C. He had been a regular attendant at the meetings for many years, and while he never openly professed religion, we feel that he had the grace of God in his heart and knew the truth when he heard it. He would often give expression to his views, which were sound and clear. His wife, who preceded him to the grave, was for many years a beloved member of Shiloh Church. Mr. Waddy leaves one daughter: Miss Felicia E. Waddy, and three sons: John A., William S. and Richard P., all of whom have our sympathy in their bereavement, and we could ask nothing better for them than that they might be blessed with the grace and faith which were in the hearts of their parents.

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

[BROTHER Rowe suggests that we add something to the above. We do not feel that we can add to the just remarks written in the above obituary, but we do count it a privilege to say that in all our more than forty years acquaintance with Mr. Waddy we never saw in him any but admirable qualities. He was a quiet, humble-minded man. We never knew him to say one harmful word about any one. During the twenty-eight years that we supplied Shiloh Church he was as constant at the meetings as any of the members. At his home he was hospitable and always kind. We, like brother Rowe, always felt sure that the grace of God had taught him. How greatly he will be missed in the assemblies of Shiloh Church. We also extend our sympathy to his family.—C.]

Joshua M. Arthurs died at his home in Kenton, Del., Oct. 15th, 1909, aged 68 years. He had been in poor health for some years, and had discontinued active business for the past three years. He was a man of wonderful fortitude and very active, and his friends did not realize his failing strength. He was sick about two weeks, and his death was unexpected to his family and many friends. Mr. Arthurs was an excellent business man, and widely known in Kent County. Having lived in Kenton for many years, he enjoyed the high esteem of the community. His chief delights were in his home, his family and the church of his choice. He was kind, genial and helpful, and thoughtful for those about him. He never united with the Bryn Zion Church, but those who have visited that church will no doubt remember his kind and helpful hand in the meetings, and his sympathetic face and heart in the congregation. I never saw a man more closely wedded to his great love of the truth and love of the church, and while in some sad and trying experience and travel of mind he could never feel to tell the church his desire to be numbered with them, yet we all knew his feelings and love, and his loyalty to the church, which was a blessing and a comfort to us, notwithstanding he felt it so insufficient. In belief and doctrine he was veritably an Old School Baptist. He was married Feb. 4th, 1874, to Miss Nancy M. Wright, of Middletown, Del., who survives him. He also leaves three daughters and two sons: Mrs. Dr. Virdin, Misses Sylvia and Susan Arthurs and John W., all of Kenton, Del., and Stanley M., an artist, of Wilmington, Del.

The funeral was held Sunday afternoon, Oct. 17th, at his late residence in Kenton, Del., the writer officiating, together with appropriate remarks by the M. E. preacher of Kenton. Interment Monday morning in cemetery at Middletown, Del.

The Lord knoweth them that are his.

B. E. CUBBAGE.

FELTON, Del.

Sarah Eliza Hobbie Bronson, wife of brother Henry Bronson, died at her home in Roxbury, N. Y., Nov. 14th, 1909, of heart disease. Sister Bronson was born in the town of Delhi, N. Y., July 14th, 1846. She was the daughter of John S. and Sallie E. Hobbie. She was married to Henry Bronson, of Roxbury, N. Y., Oct. 12th, 1871, to which union were born two children: Arnold H. and Carrie E. Sister Bronson united with the Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, N. Y., in 1874, and was baptized by the late Elder J. D. Hubbell. She lived a faithful and devoted member of the church, always ready to lend a helping hand, and until she was afflicted with heart trouble was an active member of the church, and took delight in caring for her kindred in Christ. She leaves beside her husband, brother Bronson, one daughter, Mrs. W. T. Guernsey, and the church to mourn their loss, also one sister, Mrs. E. L. Hall, of Albany, N. Y., and a brother, William Hobbie, of Delhi, N. Y.

Her funeral was held from the "Gould Memorial Church" on Tuesday; interment in the Reform Cemetery. The writer tried to comfort the friends with such as I hope the Lord gave. May the Lord bless our dear brother in his affliction.

ALSO,

Sister **Lucy Dart,** widow of George G. Dart, died at the home of her son, James R. Dart, in Roxbury, N. Y., November 24th, in the 90th year of her age. Sister Dart was born Jan. 20th, 1820, and was married Oct. 5th, 1839, to George G. Dart, of Roxbury, N. Y., who died some years ago. Sister Dart when about

seventeen years old experienced a hope in the blessed Savior, and about two years later united with the Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, N. Y., and was baptized by Elder David Mead. She proved by her true and devoted life a blessing to the church and the church a blessing to her for over seventy years. On my last visit to sister Dart she remarked that she did not want to lose her interest in the church while she lived. Truly we shall miss "Aunt Lucy," as she was commonly known; certainly she was a mother in Israel, and we believe has entered into that rest which remains to the people of God.

Her funeral was held from the home of her son, James R. Dart, in Roxbury, N. Y., after which all that was mortal was laid to rest in the Old School Baptist Cemetery to await the second coming of the blessed Lord. The writer tried to speak to the comfort of the mourning friends from Ruth i. 16, 17.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Lorenzo D. Brewer died Nov. 9th, 1909, near Baptistown, N. J., aged 87 years and about 6 months. His wife, who was Miss Hannah Rittenhouse, daughter of Alanson Rittenhouse, who lived near Locktown, N. J., died about fourteen years ago. He leaves one son, two daughters and many other relatives and friends to mourn the loss of a loved one. Although not a member of the church, he had been a regular attendant of the Old School Baptist Church at Locktown, N. J., for several years, and seemed to be fully in sympathy with the things preached or taught by them, especially the last several years. He was a man of many friends, being friendly and neighborly himself. He is at rest in eternity. May the dear Lord bless all the mourning ones with the spirit of reconciliation to his sovereign will.

It was the request of Mr. Brewer that I should talk at his funeral, which I did with such ability as was given. Funeral was held at the residence Friday, 12th; burial in the cemetery a few rods away.

ALSO,

Miss Nancy Johnson, of Frenchtown, N. J., died Nov. 14th, 1909, in her 75th year. She was a daughter of George and Mary Johnson. Of a family of eleven only two remain: sister Hannah, of Frenchtown, and a brother Henry, of Ravenrock. She had suffered for several months with stomach trouble, and finally had a paralytic stroke, after which she soon passed away. I called to see her in October; she said she thought it was her last sickness. "If it is," she said, "it is all right; I have a hope in Christ, although I am in darkness much of the time." She seemed at that time to be reconciled to God's will. Sister Nancy was baptized by Elder Gabriel Conklin, a dear old servant of God, in 1867, uniting with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, N. J., and lived in the complete fellowship of the brethren and died in the triumph of living faith in Jesus Christ the Savior. Dear sister Hannah is sad and lonely, as she and sister Nancy were living together, and had been for many years. May the dear Lord bless her, her brother and all who mourn their loss, which is great. The church will greatly miss her. She was a noble character in every way and in every sense.

The writer officiated at the funeral the 17th. Her remains were buried in Rosemont Cemetery.

D. M. VAIL.

Martha Arnold, beloved wife of brother Jesse Arnold, departed this life Sept. 3rd, 1909, aged 75 years, 9 months and 2 days. Sister Martha was baptized July 30th, 1899, by Elder A. B. Francis, in the fellowship of the old Tuscarora Church, in Juniata County, Pa., of which church she remained a faithful member until called to join the church in glory, always looking forward to her meetings with delight. It has been my privilege to serve that little church for about twelve years; one by one our members are passing over the river. Sister Martha leaves several brothers and sisters in the far west, but none will miss her more than her dear companion and the church, which now numbers four. As they could get no preacher at the time of the funeral, the writer tried to preach a funeral sermon for the comfort of the friends the third Sunday in November. She rests with Jesus. May God comfort the bereaved.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

OUR dear daughter, **Clara May Norton Polson,** fell asleep in Jesus at her residence, 3600 Stuart St., Denver, Colo., at about 12 o'clock, Nov. 1st, 1909. She was born in Belmont, Lafayette Co., Wis., Jan. 5th, 1875; came here with her parents in November of the following year, where she grew to girlhood. She graduated in the class of 1893, and afterwards taught four years in the county. April 28th, 1897, she was married to Gustaf Edward Polson, who was engaged in business at Buffalo Center, Iowa, where they resided until five years ago, when they went to Colorado, hoping the change of climate would be beneficial to her failing health. All that could be done by a devoted husband and loved ones was done for her, but they could not give back her health. My wife and I were called to her bedside, and were with her in her last hours. She was willing to go, and quoted this Scripture: "In my Father's house are many mansions," and said to her mother, "There is where I am going and be at rest." She gave us a reason of her hope in Christ when a child, and lived a christian life. It was a hard shock to us all, but we mourn not as those without hope.

The funeral services were held at the Baptist meetinghouse Thursday afternoon, Nov. 4th, conducted by Elder E. E. Evans, pastor, where she held her membership and lived a devoted member until death.

Burial was in the cemetery. She leaves to mourn their loss a devoted husband, an aged father and mother, two brothers and two sisters: George I., of Salt Lake City, Utah, Andrew J., of Traer, Iowa, Mrs. H. J. Harney and Mrs. G. A. Frink, of Hampton, Iowa. All were present at the funeral.

Brethren, pray for us, that the God of all grace may sustain us in our old age.

E. A. AND C. H. NORTON.

Cornelius Keator died Sept. 29th, 1909, aged 87 years and 6 months. He was born and brought up in Roxbury, Delaware County, N. Y.

BERT KEATOR.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE following appointments in Canada are expected to be filled by brother J. M. Fenton, of Philadelphia, Pa.: Duart, Sunday, Dec. 12th; Dunwich, Tuesday, 14th; London, Wednesday, 15th; Lobo, Friday, 17th; Ekfrid, Sunday, 19th; St. Thomas, Monday, 20th.

DUNCAN McALPINE, Church Clerk.

IONA, Ontario.

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John Oliver, Va., $1.00; Mrs. W. J. Peck, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. E. Chandler, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. John Pettit, N. Y., $5.00; Mrs. H. J. O'Bannon, Va., $1.00; Z. I. Jones, Colo., $2.00; Mrs. M. L. Hodgson, D. C., $1.00.—Total, $12.00.

MEETINGS.

THE churches of the Roxbury Association will hold their fifth Sunday or quarterly meeting, the Lord willing, in Halcottsville, N. Y., Saturday and Sunday, January 29th and 30th, 1910. Meeting will commence at 11 a. m. on Saturday. We hope to see a large gathering of those who love the truth at this meeting.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

FRAGMENTS.

SATAN tells partial truths, but turns them into lies by not telling all that belongs to them. He tells us of our iniquities, and shows us long, black lists of our sins in thought and word and deed, but he never tells us that Jesus died to atone for sin and to put it away. He insists upon the truth that we are great sinners, but he never intimates that Jesus is a great Savior. If that sweet and blessed truth is in our minds the devil did not put it there; it is there by the power of the Holy Spirit. The enemy tells us of the aboundings of sin, but never alludes to the superaboundings of grace. He does all he can to make us complain of the darkness in our minds, and of doubt because of it, but never suggests that it must be light which reveals that darkness; much less does he ever even whisper in our souls that this light by which we see our sins is itself divine and eternal life, and that Jesus is our Life, and our Light, and our Salvation. This truth that the mournful knowledge of our sins can only come from Jesus finally overcomes the devil and brings us out from under the power of his lies and temptations. Then we are sweetly forced to exalt the name of Jesus, who came to destroy the works of the devil.

WHOSOEVER will. (Rev. xxii. 17.) The pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, which John saw in vision, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb, represents every blessing which is embraced in the new and everlasting covenant of grace. The throne is the place of power; the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every believer. Only the believer sees, believes and feels this truth. From that throne, or power, flows every gospel blessing. These blessings, including every purpose which God purposed in himself before the world began, may well be represented by a river, as they flow forth richly and sweetly to all the children of God through all the ages of time. The psalmist says, "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." The gladness and confidence of the people of God are because God is in the midst of them with all his infinite, loving power. This pure river, flowing from this glorious throne, is ever "full of water;" it can never be

lessened; its sweet and blessed waters can never fail or be diminished. Every promise of our God shall be fulfilled, for they are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus to the glory of God by us, and Jesus is the power of God.

In this city which John saw coming down from God out of heaven there was one street, only one, and that "was pure gold, as it were transparent glass." Whenever and by whomever this gospel city is seen, it is seen coming down. Everything pertaining to the church of God, with every good and perfect gift, is from above, and comes down from God out of heaven. All is from the power of God; the power and works of men have no place here. This one street is the one way in which all the innumerable company of the redeemed walk. Jesus is that way, that street; they all walk in Jesus. He is "the way, and the truth, and the life." The faith by which all of the redeemed walk in him is compared to pure gold, and the trial of that faith is more precious than of gold that perisheth. The tree of life is in the midst of that street, as well as on either side of the river. It is seen and tasted in the old testament as well as in the new. The holy men of old were refreshed by the water of life as well as those in the gospel ages. This river includes all the doctrine of God our Savior, and all of his precious promises, and all of the dear Savior's sweet commands, and all of the ordinances of the gospel, and all of the glorious order of the church of God. Those who are able to see and recognize this river see nothing in it that indicates the works of man—nothing which flows from any earthly power. Every part of the water that fills that river, and every stream that flows out from it, speak alone of the power of that God from whose throne they proceed. Every such soul has been given spiritual life, and is thirsting for the water of life. Such people do not want to hear of the works of men, for there is nothing in all that man can do that can satisfy their thirst for righteousness, but they want to hear of the perfect works of God. The cry of their souls is, "Let thy work appear unto thy servants." By the Lord's work they are made to rejoice, and their sorrowful souls are replenished.

The natural man does not want the water that flows in this river, because it proceeds from the power of God; he "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." He wants to hear men's works praised and men's names exalted; he has no will to hear the doctrine that says, "Salvation is of the Lord." Jesus said to the Jews, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." The quickened soul wants the pure water of life, the pure doctrine of God, unmixed with man's works; he wants to hear God's name exalted, and his doctrine declared, the pure doctrine, clear as crystal; the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation; election, predestination, the sovereignty of God, salvation by grace, sure to all the chosen people of God. All this blessed truth is the pure and clear water that keeps that river ever full. But those poor souls who love this God-honoring truth always feel unworthy to claim it as theirs; unworthy to take one drop of this pure water of life. They have a will, a strong desire for this gospel truth, but cannot see how it can belong to such unworthy sinners as they feel themselves to be. This inability to take of that sweetly flowing river can never be overcome until Jesus commands

them, each for himself, saying, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." This word, "let," is a word of power, a word of sweet command. By it the Lord commanded the light to shine out of darkness; by the same word of power he shines in the poor sinner's heart, "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." Now the thirsty soul is free to take each sweet promise, each precious truth, and say, It is mine. He would have taken it before, but could not. Now the Lord, who worked in him to will, has worked in him to do. From this time he loves to be drinking of this glorious river; from this time his controlling desire is to obey the dear Savior, to work out in his life and conversation that salvation which the Lord has so graciously wrought in him; from this time he desires to "shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light," and who has caused this pure river to flow from his holy throne for the refreshment and comfort of all the people of God.

I have written this in response to a request from sister M. M. Milner, of Vaiden, Miss.

SISTER A. H. Rice, of Macon, Ga., has requested me to tell what I think became of the young man who went away sorrowful because Jesus told him to sell all he had and give to the poor. I feel very unable to instruct the dear people of God in the Scriptures of truth, but I will briefly express my thoughts on this subject for the consideration of sister Rice, and all others who may read this. A relation of the incident is given in Mark x. 17–22; Matt. xix. 16, and Luke xviii. 18. I think the young man is a quickened soul. First, because he shows anxiety on the subject of eternal life, and a desire for it. Second, because although he thinks he has kept the commandments from his youth, yet he feels that something is lacking in his work, and that he ought to do something more, but does not know what to do. Third, it is said that "Jesus beholding him, loved him." We have nothing in the Bible to indicate that Jesus ever loved any but his own chosen people. Them he has loved with an everlasting love, and in his own time, in various ways, he calls them to himself and manifests that love to and in them. To me it appears that the circumstances concerning this young man show him to be one, like the man that was born blind, in whom the works of God are made manifest, bringing him to a knowledge of those works. (John ix. 3.) Fourth, this young man came to Jesus with his questioning as to what he lacked yet, instead of going to the teachers of the law or any of the wise men of the world, showing that he had faith to know that He could answer him, as was the case with the leper and the Syrophenician woman. Fifth, he came running and kneeled to him, showing his great anxiety on the subject and exhibiting a spirit of worship.

The first word that Jesus spoke in reply was to ask, "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one; that is God." This was to show the fundamental truth that goodness is not found in any man by reason of earthly relationship or characteristic, nor by any works that he can do, nor by the teaching of any man, but by vital relationship to God. Jesus was the Son of God, and thus infinitely good, and no true goodness can be claimed on the part of any man except as a son of God in Jesus Christ. All goodness must come from

God. Then he repeats the last six commandments, referring to our duties toward men. The young man said, "Master, all these have I observed from my youth." "What lack I yet?" Jesus said, "One thing thou lackest: go thy way and sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved; for he had great possessions." I have thought he was sorrowful, not so much because he hated to give up his riches, as because he was made by this word of Jesus to see and feel that he had never truly kept the law. In one place Jesus has spoken of the whole law as consisting in two commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." If this young man had kept this law he would not have had all these possessions; he would not have had the mind and heart and strength to obtain them, and if he had them by inheritance or gift he would have already given them away. I have thought the revelation thus given to him of his own vile and selfish heart caused him to be sad. I have thought he mourned because he had come to see that he had not only not kept the law, but was justly condemned by it. I have thought he mourned because he felt that he lacked all true righteousness, and that what he lacked was a vital thing, that could never be supplied. But we know, and he in the Lord's time came to know, that he who thus mourns is one of that great, innumerable company whom Jesus loves, and concerning whom he has said, "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted."

A CHURCH having peace within herself, and at peace with sister churches! How good and pleasant this is. The minister is without fear of hostile criticism as he preaches the gospel; he has no high estimate of himself as a preacher, but feels that he is greatly insufficient for such an important work, yet he is confident that he has the love and fellowship of his brethren, and is sure that they will always listen to him kindly and with forbearance, where that is needed, and with reverence for his office and gift, as from God, and that when any point of difference may arise there will be felt on their part, as well as on his, a freedom to talk about it with him and among themselves in brotherly love. The brethren regard their minister as a gift from the dear Savior to them, whom they are to remember in a gospel manner, as one who has the rule over them, (Heb. xiii. 7, 17,) and he regards them as placed in an especial manner under his care as an overseer, who is to feed them and take the oversight of them. Brethren thus dwelling together in unity are free and cordial with each other, and are inclined to "look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." They have mutual confidence, and instead of magnifying any differences that may arise among them, they speak cordially and freely of them, considering them prayerfully, without being dictatorial or having any fear of giving or taking offence. They desire to be constantly on the watch, that there shall be no division among them, as each knows that he has a vile, unruly nature, which can only be held in subjection by the Holy Spirit. This old man with his lusts they constantly try to put off, and not let him rule. What brethren need to see in each other is an experience of grace,

the felt presence and power of Jesus, a love for the doctrine of salvation by grace, and a sweet belief in the unlimited, boundless power and sovereignty of the God of their salvation. Nothing but a departure from and a denial of these all-important points of truth can justify any inclination toward a division among brethren.

A church or community of brethren not at peace. What a contrast! What a confused and disorderly and uncomfortable state of things! No mutual confidence among them; all watching each other, and watching their preacher with suspicious scrutiny. Some difference, or fancied difference, in some point of doctrine or order has arisen, and has been magnified, and most likely distorted, until they are on the verge of division. The minister feels that duty and faithfulness require that he should have something to say on that point whenever he speaks, and so the difference is accentuated. Some, perhaps many, are in a fighting mood, but do not know it, feeling that they are actuated by pure zeal for the truth. The point of difference is constantly agitated, and a life of faith is almost lost to their sight. Sometimes, as in the separation of the Old School Baptists from the New School in 1832, the difference is important and clear, and the erroneous party is clearly discernible. But often in such cases there is wrong on both sides, and when a division takes place it is quite likely to be on personal grounds, and with no really important scriptural point involved. Each party accuses the other of causing divisions, and both feel that their contention is right, and that all the just blame is on the other side. The trouble is often aggravated by unwise visiting brethren, who seek and receive confidences from one and another, and unwisely interfere and take part with one or the other party, instead of leaving them with each other and their Lord, and under the officers which he has given them. "I will also make thy officers peace."—Isaiah lx. 17. This is a doleful state, a sad picture, but not as dark and sad as I have seen in the past forty-five years. I cannot let my pen go farther in this sorrowful line now. I am thankful that I can tell of wonderful and blessed changes which I have been favored to witness through the reigning power of grace in our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the midst of such a dark time of distress in a church, from which our gracious and long-forbearing Lord has not yet removed the candlestick, a dear child tells a sweet experience of grace. All hearts are at once brought under the controlling power of love, and experience a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. One of the songs of Zion is sung, and at once each one of the company is singing and making melody in his heart unto the Lord. Brethren begin speaking with each other and are surprised to find no difference among them. The disputed points are approached, and no one sees anything to dispute; all belong to the one rich and all-comprehensive theme of salvation by grace. There is nothing worthy to disturb the holy quiet that rests upon them, and the fellowship which binds them strongly together. As they talk, and sing, and worship, Jesus is in the midst of them, saying, "Peace be unto you." This peace of God which passeth all understanding is the only officer needed among them now. It is this peace which keeps their hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Each one has a feeling of repent-

ance, a feeling to turn away, not from his brother, but from his own former selfish and unkind ways. Each one feels that blame was his, and he is ready to confess his faults to his brethren. Their former troubles make them much more careful and tender toward each other than before, and more fearful of hurting one another and of disturbing the holy quiet of the church of God. Their mutual love seems stronger than ever; they feel it to be "the bond of perfectness," and are glad to be putting it on, as the apostle enjoins them. They are now forbearing one another in love, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven them. They are, as at the first, of one heart and one soul; neither say any of them that aught of the things which he possesses are his own, but they have all things common. There is nothing on earth so beautiful and lovely as this. This is that Zion, "the perfection of beauty," out of which God hath shined. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 23, 1909.

SPRINGFIELD, Missouri.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—I feel thankful to the Lord that he has blessed me with the privilege of writing you again. This leaves us well, and I hope that you are enjoying the same blessing. Though sinful and unworthy, I am mindful to write a few thoughts that have come to me about the rich man and Lazarus. (See Luke xvi.) If it be the Lord who has put it into my mind to write, he will teach me what to write, for he has never yet led any one wrong; but we are not always led by the Spirit of Christ. Jesus called the attention of his disciples to the rich man and Lazarus; one was rich and the other poor. These men lived in the days of Moses and the prophets, and they both died. Jesus knew what became of them after their death, he knew where they were and he knew what manner of men they were in this world. These two men set forth the children of darkness and the children of light. Moreover, they set forth those who are blessed, and those who are cursed. "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." This kingdom must have been prepared before Adam was, for we read that God formed man of the dust of the earth. The blessed Lord said in the parable, I was sick, and ye visited me; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; I was in prison, and ye came unto me; I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink. But the righteous shall answer, When saw we thee sick, or in prison, or a stranger, and ministered unto thee? Then the King shall say to them, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." But to them on the left hand he said, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not; I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat; thirsty, and ye gave me no drink. Then the wicked shall say unto him, When saw we thee sick, or in prison or hungry, or thirsty, and did not these things unto thee? Then the King shall answer, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." The stony heart in the rich man enabled him to pass by the poor beggar all scarred with sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's

table. The dogs often passed by and licked his sores.

The blessed word teaches us that "whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" To one the blessed Lord said, Go and sell all that thou hast, and distribute to the poor, and come and follow me, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven. But when the young man heard these things he was grieved, and these things grieve men today. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death." "Blessed is he that considereth the poor."

By and by "the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." The cry of the rich man was just as vain as was the offering of Cain, for they came from the same source. Cain offered the fruits of the ground, which God had cursed, and the cry of the rich man came out of an earthly and stony heart. Blessed are they that hunger now, for they shall be full. Woe unto them that are full now, for the time will come when they shall hunger. Thus, dear brethren, we see Lazarus the figure of that poor and afflicted people, which the Lord said he would leave in the midst of men, who should trust in the name of the Lord. They shall continue to be poor and afflicted until it pleases God to carry them home, where sickness and suffering, pain and death, are felt and feared no more.

May God enable you to continue to send the SIGNS OF THE TIMES among the people of God. Find inclosed money order for renewal of subscription.

Your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life,

S. H. BURNETT.

MICAH V. 7.

"AND the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people, as dew from the Lord; as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men."

The above quotation sets forth some of the purposes of God in scattering his people among the people of the world. Sometimes I have been made to wonder why it is that the Baptists, who are so much despised by all other religionists of the day, are not permitted to form a colony and have a government of their own, and be freed from the surroundings of those who hate them. But then again, when I get a view of the purpose of God in it all, I am made to some extent to understand why it is that the remnant of Jacob cannot be a colony by themselves. "The remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people, as dew from the Lord." Here we see one of the purposes of God in leaving his people in the midst of many people; they are among many people as dew from the Lord. When the rain and the dew of heaven are withheld for any length of time from the earth we behold a drought, the earth is parched, vegetation is withered, and murmuring goes up from man. But a gentle dew has a refreshing influence, and revives the drooping vegetation, and the fruits of earth are strengthened by the dew. Even so are the people blessed who have God's people among them; they are to the people of the earth as dew from the Lord; it has a softening influence. The hardheartedness of the people is softened and

melted by the influence of the people of God, when they return love for hatred, and do good for evil, and revile not again when they are reviled, and as the dew causes the vegetation to look up when it has fallen after a long drought, even so when men have fallen into low, selfish habits, and will only do good to those who do good to them, and will render evil for evil, and when reviled they will revile again, and loan to those only who can return it with interest, together with many other fleshly habits that harden the hearts of men to meet with those who are moved by love to love their neighbors as themselves, it does certainly act as dew from the Lord. I understand the Lord here to speak of how the remnant of Jacob should not only be as the dew among many people, but also that they should be as showers upon the grass.

Let us remember what a shower is like when it is sent to revive the grass, to change its appearance and to cause it to grow and blossom. In like manner we may understand why the Lord's people are called the salt of the earth. The earth is seasoned, or savored, by the salt which they are to it. Thus the remnant of Jacob shall be among all the people where they are found, as the text declares, as showers. The Lord said that his doctrine should drop as the rain, it should distil as the dew. When a poor soul is hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and desires to be fed with some crumbs from the Master's table, and some of the people of God come among such ones and begin to speak of the mercy of God, and of his love, and of his forgiveness of the sins of his people, this doctrine will drop as the rain upon all such ones who have tried to keep the commandments of God and have found that they could not. How such testimony distils as the dew and brings comfort and life to things that appeared dead, and such promises have an influence upon the hearts of men, as the dew upon the grass. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth."

Not only is the remnant of Jacob to be as the dew and the showers, but He has also said that it tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men. This remnant does not abide the will of man, either in coming or in departing, but is as the dew from the Lord. Dew is found in the morning, so, after men have slumbered, or, as it were, have lain dead to the knowledge of the truth, this remnant is as the dew and the showers of heaven, shedding the rays of love upon the people, loving the neighbor as himself. How sweet is this influence thus shed abroad. I have noticed at times that when wicked men were in company of their own, and one came in whom God had called and instructed in the way of righteousness, and spoke in a loving way, and it was known that his deeds were of higher motives than those prompted by the flesh, that it seemed to have a lifting influence, even as the dew from heaven causes the drooping plants to rise and appear to glory in the dew. The people of God always ought to show that their life is above, and thus point to Him who doeth all things well. I understand that this remnant of Jacob is that remnant which is according to the election of grace, of which Paul spoke in his letter to his Roman brethren.

I remember some two or three years ago, when I was severely afflicted in body for several months, and also at the same time afflicted with barrenness of mind, so that I felt I never could again taste that

the Lord was gracious, it seemed there was nothing that could again bring to me the joyful feelings that I had felt among the brethren in days gone by; the ground of my heart seemed parched. While in that condition the brethren desired a two days meeting. I felt it would do me no good, but I was willing to gratify them, so I arranged for Elder McGlade to come and preach for us; I felt that I could not preach again. O the sinfulness of sin, when sin becomes exceeding sinful, when darkness covers the face of the deep; such was my feeling; and when the brethren had come together I still felt that it all could do me no good. When Elder McGlade began talking I still felt that there was nothing for me, but while he was speaking of the sure mercies of God, and the giving of his Son for sinners, and that he came to save sinners, his words began to have a softening influence, and my hard heart began to melt, and I had to say, Surely God is good, and has done wonderful things for his people. To me it was as dew from the Lord; it was a shower upon the grass. As soon as he was done preaching, I arose and began talking about a hymn, and of the mercies of God, who had so long been hidden from me. These rich and sure promises of God, when declared by Elder McGlade, dropped upon my heart as the rain, and distilled as the dew. To distil is to bring out the substance within. So the Lord's people, being scattered among many people as dew from the Lord, must be represented by the dew.

If we had our own way perhaps we would have the dew all the time, and all in one place; we would have the remnant of God all in one colony and leave out the rest of the world. This remnant of Jacob scattered among many people should also be as showers upon the grass, but if we had our own way, and the Lord's children should be gathered in one community, the showers would be all in one place. But we are few in number among many people, there is barely enough of us to become dew, or to be as showers upon the grass. God's people, being as the salt of the earth, could my desire be gratified that all should be together, then all the salt would be in one place, leaving the balance of the world unsalted. I trust that I begin to see some of the purposes of God in scattering his people among the nations of the earth, and they tarry not for men, nor wait for the sons of men. This means that they are not influenced by men, neither are they men-pleasers; they come and go as the dew and rain, which are sent at God's appointed time and way; they trust not in man, nor in the sons of men; they are so scattered that often but two or three are gathered together; in but few places are there large churches. All the Old School Baptists in the land could dwell in the smallest State in the Union, but there are a few scattered in every State and Territory, as dew from the Lord.

I have often wondered why there is so much disfellowship among our people in different places, and grieve that it is so. How often jealousy gets in its awful work, and brethren are scattered among many people. The people of God are not allowed to form a government in the world, for jealousy among leaders and rulers would make havoc with the church. For this reason, if for no other, God's people shall be as the dew among many people, and as showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men.

Your brother,

NEWTON PETERS.

PORTLAND, Ore., Sept., 1909.

"BE YE RECONCILED TO GOD."

YESTERDAY morning, at our meeting here in Warwick, I tried to use these words for a text, and was astonished at the wealth of divine wisdom they contain. They still persist in my thoughts and reflections, however, so I will try to put on paper some few scattered points for the readers of the SIGNS, whose attention I have not engaged in a long time. I do not suppose there is any passage of Scripture in the Bible that has been more abused by the Arminian religious world than the above. These words, or their equivalents: "Get right with God," "Make your peace with God," &c., are shouted at their audiences by revivalists until some of their hearers become actually persuaded the men are preaching the gospel, though it is but a counterfeit, and a base one at that. You will find these words, "Be ye reconciled to God," in the second letter written by the apostle Paul to the Corinthian brethren, fifth chapter, twentieth verse, and if Paul so much as had a single thought for the unregenerate world when he penned these words, then I fail to know how to read my Bible correctly. Nowhere in the entire Bible does the spirit of inspiration call upon men and women in a state of nature, dead in trespasses and in sins, to set about effecting their reconciliation with God. Reconciliation cannot be had that way, viz., as the result of human efforts, and God nowhere requires it that way, but this is the way lost and ruined sinners in Adam are reconciled to God, i. e., "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." Reconciliation then is the work of the God-man, not of the Adam-man. Paul used the words, "Be ye reconciled to God," in addressing his brethren in Christ, the members of the church at Corinth, and if we endeavor to apply these words to any but believers living in a church capacity, we certainly do wrest the Scripture to our own destruction. Probably you will remember in Paul's first letter to Corinth he had some fault to find with them because of certain disorder among them. For their observance of the Lord's supper some ate until their natural appetite was appeased, and drank until they were drunken, then they were not observing this most solemn supper in God's way, they were not "reconciled to God" in this, but were doing their own way, their god was their belly. Others waxed contentious over the subject of baptism, one boasting that Paul had baptized him, another that he had received it at the hands of Apollos, and so on. Here again they were not living after the Spirit, but after the flesh, hence were not "reconciled to God" in this. There was one member of this Corinth church who had committed fornication, having taken his father's wife, and was still retained in the fellowship of the church. Here again Paul condemns such practice as not being gospel order, not being reconciled to God's plan of the new heavens and new earth, and tells them to "deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." Evidently, also, it appears from Paul's first letter to Corinth that some of them of that church had gone to law with their brethren; that is, instead of having stated their grievances to the church and abiding by her judgment, they had aired legal matters in the courts of the land with unbelievers sitting in judgment; this to their shame and to the hurt of the church. God's

way for such matters to be settled is for the church to judge, so they were not "reconciled to God" in this, but had rather take their own head for it. If there was any one thing that rejoiced the apostles more than anything else, it was to see the brethren living in peace with one another, walking in gospel order, remaining steadfast in faith, established in doctrine, bearing one another's burdens, and in all things walking as becometh the children of God. When Paul in his second letter says, "Be ye reconciled to God," he is beseeching them as an ambassador for Christ, praying in Christ's stead, to abide by the doctrine, order and faith of the gospel as he has delivered it to them of God, and to not seek to add to it or to take from it anything that the apostles have not commanded. Along this line he reminds them that Christ died and rose again all for their sakes, "that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." The flesh of even a saint may, and I believe it does, rebel against the doctrine of God our Savior and against the simplicity of his house, as well as against that operation of the Holy Spirit we call "christian experience." But what of that? Is it our flesh that is to be pleased in these things, or is it our God? Since we are bought with a price, and that the precious blood of Christ, are we then debtors to the flesh to live after the flesh? Certainly not. Why then seek to mitigate the "hard sayings" of the doctrine to please the flesh? Why modify the simplicity of our church order to draw large congregations of worldlings? Why try to tone down the crucial things in our experience until even an unbeliever gets to thinking he is one of us? Why have an organ in the church? what good is it? The apostles needed it not, why do we? To be sure David used such things, but woe be unto us if we follow his example. Does not the prophet Amos say, "Woe to them * * * that chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music, like David"? Those things were for types and shadows until that which is perfect should come, and woe be to us if we seek to restore again the weak and beggarly elements of the law which, when we were under it, only condemned us. Or why shall we organize a Sunday School? The apostles had no such thing, nor needed it, why we? And if we could conduct one successfully, would it not be an evidence that we were under the law, and not under grace? Under the old covenant the priests in the temple were wont to teach the people out of the book of the law, but under the new covenant "they shall no more teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest." "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." Under which of these covenants do we hope we are? Then what do we want with a Sunday School? O, says one, to teach our children the literal meaning of the Scriptures, if nothing else. No need of an institution to do this, parents so minded can do this at home around the family table, or at the fireside, no need to tack it on to the church. Brethren, let us "be reconciled to God" in these matters; let us not remove our neighbor's (Christ's) landmark, for cursed are we if we do. "Remove not the ancient landmark which thy fathers have set." "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and

ye shall find rest for your souls." Let Mrs. Eddy have her Christian Science, Dr. Eliot his new religion, Gipsy Smith his distracted meetings, but for us and our house, let us serve the Lord. The good old doctrine of election, predestination, yea, even absolute, of salvation by free and unmerited grace, and the good old church composed of sinners born again, is plenty good enough for us. Well, as for me, I must say I am satisfied with the doctrine and with the order of the house of God; I am not caring to improve either, being satisfied they are already perfect. But it is in experimental things that I find it most difficult to be "reconciled to God;" not only difficult, but utterly impossible, unless I am ministered unto of the word of reconciliation. To feel a law in my members warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin and death, not to be able to do the good I would, but to be always doing the evil that I would not, to die daily, to be always delivered unto death, to be from day to day made conscious of my weak and sinful heart, I say it is hard to be reconciled to this way of living. To be cast into prison as John was, and there to doubt whether you ever really knew the real Jesus, is a heart-searching time. To take up the cross daily and follow Him, who is sufficient for this? Not one of us in our own strength. Well, it is in these things I am scarcely ever "reconciled to God." From the Scriptures it appears that this is the way God leads his people and manifests himself in their flesh, but I tell you it is hard. To be crucified to the world and have the world crucified unto you, is it not flesh and self-destroying? Indeed it is. To always have to walk by faith, when all the time we want to see so much; to always be saved by hope, when all the time we want to know for a certainty. Well, if God should grant us the things we selfish creatures crave, we would have the mark of Cain, and not of Abel. The very things God has given us as the marks of our sonship our flesh would erase if it could. The worldling has no such marks as we have; the cross, the dying, the faith, the hope, the searchings of heart, the doubts, the fears, these the nonelect do not have. Then let us prize death rather than life, these very conflicts rather than ease, for therein is the crown of life received. Yes, "be ye reconciled to God" even experimentally, as well as doctrinally.

Yours in hope of reconciliation,

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

WARWICK, N. Y., Dec. 13, 1909.

"QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT."

THE above subject has been on my mind somewhat of late, and I thought, with the help of God, and by the permission of the editors, I would give to the many readers of the SIGNS some of my thoughts concerning it, and my understanding of it, as to whom it applies.

We know that all who preach salvation by works, or, in other words, a conditional salvation, and who tell sinners dead in trespasses and in sins that they must first act and become willing before God will save them, and that it is with them whether they will be saved or not, quote the above text, and apply it to sinners dead in trespasses and in sins, and tell them that the Spirit of God is striving with them, and that God wants them to come and be saved, and many other similar things; but I desire to tell you to whom I think the text applies. The above quotation was written by the apostle Paul, and we learn that he al-

ways in his letters addressed the church of God, and the faithful in Christ Jesus. Then if he was addressing the church of God and the faithful in Christ Jesus, surely he was not writing to dead sinners, for we learn from the Scriptures of eternal truth that God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. We learn also from the holy Scriptures that if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his. Then how can sinners dead in sin quench that which they do not possess? I do not see how they can. But now I will try to tell you who they are that, as I believe, do quench the Spirit: they are the living children of God, who have been born again, who have been killed to the love of sin, and who have been made alive unto holiness. It seems to me now that I will have to come right down to my own case in this matter, and I hope I will be able to tell you something that you know, and not what you do not know.

We know that everybody loves something. Sinners dead in trespasses and in sins love the things of this world; and why? Because they have been born into this world, and it is natural for them to love the things of the world. Did any of you who are fathers and mothers with children around you, born to you, ever command one of your children to do anything until after it was born to you? No, you did not. Then do you believe that God ever commands one of his children to obey his commandments before that child is born of God and made alive from the dead? Let me repeat that God is not the God of the dead, but of the living; then surely they who are commanded to obey him are his living children, and as soon as one is made alive to God he begins to want to do that which is pleasing to God, or to tell some one about the things which he has come to love, and the one he most desires to talk to is some one whom he believes to be a child of God, some member of the church. He desires to tell about how he feels, and about what has happened to him. He feels that there has been a great change in some way or other, but he may be, to some extent, at a loss to know what all this means. He will begin to love some one also, and if he knows of Primitive Baptists it will be almost sure to be one of them that he loves. He feels perhaps, This is so strange that I love them so, when I know that I never had any use for them before; but I do love them, and I want to tell them so; now I desire to be among them. Such an one now feels his unworthiness, unfitness and leanness. These things all begin to loom up before him. But for all this, dear children of God, this love does not cease, but keeps drawing us closer and closer. With loving-kindness He draws us. But now the time has come when the children of God may, and do often, quench the Spirit. Whenever they feel drawn by the sweet cords of this love to go to the church and tell there what great things the Lord has done for them, and the opportunity is extended to them, and they fail or refuse to go and make their desire known to the church, they quench the Spirit. But this is not all the place in which they may quench the Spirit. No, I believe that after we have become members of the church we may, and do often, disobey this exhortation of the apostle. Often we want to speak a little to the brethren, and we fail to do so, or fail to perform any other service in the church which comes before us as a duty laid upon us, and in so doing we quench the Spirit. One will say, I have but one talent, and I

will not use it at all, but will lay it up in a napkin, or hide it in the earth. Certainly we ought not to be like the slothful servant who received one talent, for we find what was the result with him. If we have but one talent, we should use it with the ability that the Lord gives us. If we fail to do this, I believe we are quenching the Spirit.

But now I will talk a little more about love. We all have had fathers and mothers. Did we not love them better than we did any one who was of no relation to us? Why did we love and serve them? Because we were their offspring, and it is the law of nature that we should love them. We have brothers and sisters also, the offspring of our parents after the flesh, and we love them better than we do the children of any other parents. Why is this? Because their father is our father, and so we are closely related to them. This love, of which I have just been speaking, is brought about by the first birth. In this, our natural birth, did we assist at all? No, we did not, but we know that some one loved us before we had any knowledge of our existence in this world, and after we began to have some knowledge in this world, about the first thing we learned was that we had a father and mother, and we loved them. It seems to me that this first birth, and the things connected with it, are figures, or types, of the second birth and the things connected with it. As we do not do anything in order to be born the first time, so we do not do anything to be born the second time. We read that God of his own will begat us with the word of truth. Surely if he has begotten us there will be a manifestation of that birth. It seems to me that all this is right in line with the truth of salvation by grace, and we read, If it be by grace, it is no more of works. As we do not have any part in bringing about our first birth, I cannot see what we could do in bringing about our second birth. All this is a great mystery to the world. It was so in the days of the apostle Paul, and it is so today. Remember how Paul was treated while he was being carried about as a prisoner, for preaching the gospel of the Son of God; he was brought before kings and rulers and governors. Notice that when Paul was permitted to speak for himself, nearly always the first thing he would say was to declare to them his experience. But did they believe him? No, they made light of him, and ridiculed him and what he said, and told him that he was mad, or insane. It is very plain proof that those rulers knew nothing about what Paul was talking concerning the work of the Lord, nor does the world of mankind believe it now. The grace of God makes a great change with any one where it dwells, and it requires this grace to make such a change, and grace has never made a single failure, and never will make one. The apostle said, "By the grace of God I am what I am." Cannot every child of God bear witness to the truth of these words? They know of a surety that it is the truth, and feel glad that they know it.

Now, my dear brother, I will close these rambling thoughts for the present. I feel since I began this letter that my mind has been very much in the dark, and perhaps I have said things I ought not, but I hope you will excuse me, and if you deem it unfit for publication, throw it aside, and all will be right with me.

Your brother in hope,

A. P. HICKS.

PIEDMONT, Ala., Oct. 5, 1909.

WILMINGTON, Delaware.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I herewith hand you a letter brother Tawresey wrote at my request, and having read it with pleasure I send it for publication, thinking it will be beneficial to others. May the Lord be with you and bless you in the things needful, and cause you to remember poor, unworthy

F. SELBY FISHER.

WILMINGTON, Del., Nov. 7, 1909.

F. SELBY FISHER—DEAR BROTHER:—As you have asked me to write some account of the way I have been led, and some of the reasons for my hope, I feel a desire to do so. We are admonished to be always ready to give a reason for the hope that is in us. I have been asked to write before, but when I would think I would do so I was deterred by a fear of my unfitness and inability to write anything that would be of use to any of God's dear children; I saw myself so vile and sinful that I was made to fear I knew nothing of the grace of God, yet I must confess that I have a hope in the mercy of God, though so small at many times that I can only hope it is that hope which is like "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail." But the Lord has promised his people that he will never leave nor forsake them, and he has assured them that he can save to the uttermost, and now the great question with me is, Am I one of his, or am I not? When I see my inward corruption I am not, and when I would relinquish my hope I cannot let it go. We are told that "we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," and I do think that I love the brethren for the truth's sake, and I love that kind of preaching that gives all the glory to God and abases poor, sinful man, and declares that He is God, and there is none like him, who says, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." I love that kind of preaching, because it is the only kind that will reach my case, for if I had to depend upon my own merits or good deeds for salvation I would be without hope.

Now, having given the reason for the hope within me, I will try to give you a short account of my travel from darkness into that condition where I trust I am allowed to see a little of the light, though I often fear I am still blind. I was born of Old Baptist parents, who always endeavored, by both precept and example, to inculcate in me a love for the truth and morality. They would often take me, and their other children, to their meetings, which were usually held at the home of some of the brethren, and though but a child I was often much interested in their conversation, and listened attentively, though understanding but little, and I had great respect for the Old Baptists. I cannot remember a time when I had not a conviction that they were the church of the living God, and I have often since felt a fear that I have been influenced by their training and know nothing of the work of grace in the heart; but if a good work was ever begun in me, I must go back to my childhood to find the beginning. At an early age I was impressed with serious thoughts of death and eternity; I thought if I were to die in the state in which I was I would be lost, and I would try to do better and be better, but it was no use, for do the best I could I got no better. I continued in this way until I had grown up, still being sorely burdened with a sense of my sinful and lost condition. During all these years I attended meetings at

London Tract, of which dear old Elder Barton was the pastor. I was also a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, being especially interested in the letters of experience; I wished to see if there were any like me. The years passed by and I felt little change, except that my burden which oppressed me at first seemed to gradually pass away; I cannot tell how or when I lost it. I have never ceased to feel that I am a sinner, in and of myself wholly undeserving of the least of God's mercies. But the sense of condemnation seemed to pass and give place to a hope that Christ had borne the sins of even one so vile as I, and yet I am often made to fear; O can it be possible? I am still so prone to sin, so cold and dead, so unthankful, so forgetful of his goodness and mercy which have followed me all the days of my life, I can only hope. I have said I cannot tell when I lost my burden, but I do remember well that morning when everything seemed so changed, when I thought that the sun had never shone so brightly, the grass and trees never looked so green, or the flowers so fair, nor had the birds ever sung so sweetly, when all nature seemed to be praising God, but I cannot say that was the time I lost my burden; I think it was gone before, and I had just come to realize that it was gone; I have never been oppressed since that time as I was before. I have often thought that if I could get that burden back I would watch and see when and how I lost it. I thought then I could go to the church and tell them what I hoped the Lord had done for me, but soon the tempter came, doubts crept in and made me fear that it was all a delusion. I thought if this was the work of grace I would not still be so prone to wander into the old paths of sin; no, I was deceived, and if I went to the church I would deceive them, and so I still continued to live the same way for several years, all the time hoping and looking for a more satisfactory evidence, until in July, 1890, I was enabled to go to the church at Welsh Tract and tell them in great weakness what I hoped the Lord had done for me, and though I could say but little I was received, and the next day, in company with two others, was baptized by that dear brother, the late Elder Joseph L. Staton. The other two who were baptized that day were a dear old sister Watson, who was at that time over seventy-five years of age, and R. T. Tawresey, my brother in the flesh; they both have been called from earth, we believe to that better world. I was the youngest of the three, though I was then in my fifty-seventh year, and I know that I must soon be called to follow them, but God by his grace is able to sustain me in all that he shall call me to pass through, and I feel to thank him that I do not have to rely on my own faithfulness; if I did I surely would despair, but his faithfulness will never fail, and if I am his, all will be well, and, thanks to his holy name, I can sometimes adopt the language of the psalmist: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want."

Brother Fisher, I have tried to tell you in my poor way something of the way I have traveled; I sometimes hope it is the way in which the Lord leads his people, but I often fear it is not; I leave it to the better judgment of those who I am sure have a good evidence of the work of grace in their heart. I know that I once loved the world and its vanities, but now I desire above all things the fellowship and communion of the saints, though I feel that I am not worthy of such a great favor.

Your unworthy brother, if indeed a brother at all,

WM. B. TAWRESEY.

SANFORD, Maine, Dec. 3, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I recently found the inclosed letter among some hidden treasures. As you will see, it was written several years ago, by our sister, Attie Curtis. I remember that it was a blessing to me then, and now since it has been buried so long, I find it has not lost its sweetness or its power to cheer and comfort. If you think it would interest others it is at your disposal.

Yours in christian fellowship,

ADA A. CHADBOURNE.

BATH, Maine, Dec. 1, 1891.

MY DEAR SISTER:—Your letter has just come with the money all safe, and I thank you very much for assisting me this much, in sending to me for the books. I wish I could make it all plain to you that I know where you are, and that you are just as safe there as when in the felt presence of Jesus; we cannot get out of his sight. I can speak this now with much confidence, but, dear sister, while the fiery trial lasted I could not help feeling as if some strange thing had happened unto me. I tried every way to find out wherein it could work for my good. I could not find Him whom my soul loveth either on the right hand or left, and I did often have the question come, How do you know there is a God? and I could not answer it. I could not recall any of my experience, and not one passage of Scripture that had been so full and precious to me when the candle of the Lord shone around me. I have searched the Bible many times to find a promise, and wept because it was a sealed book to me. We cannot make another understand the sorrow of soul when darkness is upon the face of the deep, a darkness that is not like that which comes over the earth, bringing rest and peace, but a darkness that can be felt, a night when the wild beasts creep forth to terrify us. How weak and helpless we find ourselves as they rush upon us from all sides! I know what it is to be where there is no standing in the deep mire, and to feel that the waters have come in unto my soul, and although I did not know it then, I surely cried unto God to save me, and you, dear sister, never will cry for help only "unto the Lord;" he will surely appear and say, "Peace, be still," and there will be a calm. It may last only a short time before another storm will overtake you, but the Lord is the one who will never leave nor forsake you nor any of his people. I do rejoice that the Lord led me into darkness, revealed to me the terrible beasts in my heart, made me know what it is to be brought into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members, so I could not sing the Lord's song in that strange land, where my harp was on the willows. I sat down there and truly thought I had to remain there as long as this life lasted; yea, I wept when I remembered Zion. If the Lord had never led me in this way I could not have known the joy that cometh in the morning, when the glorious Sun of Righteousness arises with healing in his wings. If I had not gone forth with weeping, bearing precious seed, I could not have returned with rejoicing, bringing my sheaves with me, and, dear sister, I believe my "sheaves" have been all that is embraced in the finished work of Jesus in saving his people from their sins. My rejoicing has been in the power, wisdom, love, mercy and goodness of God, not a particle of my works in it. I have rejoiced in Christ Jesus, and had no confidence in the flesh. I am sure that in me, that is, in my flesh, there will never be found any good thing.

"To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." "When I would do good, evil is present with me." I can rejoice in this just now, because I can see, while the Sun shines, that the more I realize this in my own experience, the greater the growth in grace is, because confidence in the flesh is taken away. But when I am in darkness, and mine enemies attack me, I shall even forget I have seen the glorious Sun of Righteousness, and shall fear I have grasped the shadow and missed the substance. I have imagined many things, even that my brethren are mistaken. I feel now I love them with the love God has shed abroad in my heart, but then I shall doubt if I ever have felt the love of God at all. I am glad I know these things by experience, for I can sympathize with those I love very much, and can tell them of the comfort wherewith I have been comforted, even of God. Surely this season of refreshing from his presence has been "the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." It has not been my work, but simply because it has been the Lord's will; not because I have done something better than any of the rest of the brethren, O no, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. We all stand exactly alike in his sight, no great or small sinners there, and it is the same when we can see the church in Christ Jesus one with him. We can only see as through a glass darkly while we travel the journey of life, but the time will surely come when we shall be free from sin and shall see Jesus as he is and be like him. The faith which was once delivered unto the saints we do not have to go into the world and contend for there, but, dear sister, we see enough in our own carnal mind, which is enmity against God. We have to contend for it in our daily experience. It is by this faith that we overcome the world and all the enemies in our heart. There is not a single weapon in the flesh given to us to fight with, but we have to find that God "giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." I cannot express the song of praise that has been in my heart since the Lord made me rejoice in what great things he has done for me; I have felt much as I did in my first experience in being brought from nature's darkness into his marvelous light, when the love of God was shed abroad in my heart, only I know better what is in my heart, and how soon it will burst forth when it is the Lord's will to hide his face for a moment. Not one of mine enemies can disturb my peace now while they are kept in subjection by the power of God. O, dear sister, I did find it hard to walk by faith and not by sight, to feel that all His waves and billows had gone over me, to fear that my brethren could not have love and fellowship for one so sinful, so far out of the way. I thought I was one alone, and when I have wished to write to the saints I have had to lay aside my pen, and could not help weeping, because all I could think of to write was about the darkness and sin of my heart. I could not reach out and bring to my mind the joy I had felt. I was tempted to lay aside my pen and never attempt to write to any one again, but a cheering word would come from one of the saints that I had expressed their feelings, and it would encourage me to hope that "He knoweth the way that I take." It has been more joyful than I can tell to be made to rejoice in salvation by grace.

Dear sister, I enjoyed your letter very much, and you will see how it stirred my heart by way of remembrance, but I must

not weary you, for I shall want to write to you again. I think dear Mary's book is excellent. I tried to tell sister Bessie Durand some of my feelings as I read it, and it has been a long time since I wrote with such a feeling that I could not express what I wished to, but she seemed to think it was good, and Elder Durand has sent it to the SIGNS. If brethren Beebe publish it you may see it. I hope dear sister Abbie is not sick; she was not well the last time she wrote; I sent her my likeness awhile ago. Give my love to all the saints when you see them. My parents are members of the Bowdoinham Church, and have been many years. They enjoyed your letter, and send love and fellowship to you, and hope you will write again. I do not want to stop writing, but my work is waiting, and you may be thinking what a long letter and nothing said. May God make you realize that his eye is ever upon you, and he will give you grace to help in time of need.

Your sister in love and fellowship,
ATTIE A. CURTIS.

FARMINGTON, Ill., Dec. 7, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel it my duty to send you my yearly dues for the SIGNS, so inclosed find two dollars. I did not think one year ago that I would be spared to send you another year's dues, as I had a partial stroke, but through the mercy of God my unprofitable life has been spared, and while I have seen the end of many things, I have not seen the end of the goodness and mercy of God. I have been a subscriber over fifty-two years, and a reader some years longer, and during that time my name has appeared at different times in its columns, and I feel now that I would like to say something to all the dear writers, did I feel in the spirit, but I feel to be a perfect blank. It seems to me that if I ever did know anything of the Spirit it is all gone, but I want to say that I am as much interested, or more so, in reading the SIGNS as ever I have been. I want to say to all the dear writers, with the editors, I do love you all for the truth's sake, and this is the strongest evidence I have that I have passed from death in sin to life and hope in Christ. I receive much comfort from the writers telling their trials, their doubts and fears, telling of their sinfulness, their great desire for holiness, realizing that the law is spiritual, but I, with them, am carnal, sold under sin. I feel that there is no soundness in me, nothing but wounds and putrefying sores from the soles of my feet to the crown of my head. Did they tell of their goodness, and that they did not feel to be poor, hell-deserving sinners, I could not love them. It would seem that misery loves company, but it seems to me that they have been quickened into divine life; they have been given eyes to see, and they behold the corruptness of their heart, so that they loathe their wretchedness, and, with me, have to cry out daily to the Lord to have mercy, for we have nowhere else to go. This is not a form of prayer, but with me it seems that I cannot help it. There is no good in me. I take comfort from Paul when he said, "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) there dwelleth no good thing." He could not do the things he would; so I, with him, cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" That law he found in his members, we find there warring, the flesh against the Spirit. We hope the Lord has given us eyes, so we see the evils of our wretched heart, and we cry out, Lord, cleanse, wash us in thy

precious blood. We read that "they that feared the Lord spake often one to another," so, dear ones, write on, and tell us of your sore trials, for we are to be tried as gold is tried, in the fire. Is it to refine me that I am sorely tried? It will not be long until I pass into eternity. This, I have no doubt, will be my last, if the editors see fit to publish it in the dear old SIGNS. I feel that my life has been spent to but little profit.

Elder Ker, I have read your writings with much comfort, and feel the Lord has placed you as an editor, with dear Elder Chick, whom I esteem very highly for the truth's sake. I was well pleased with his editorial on "Experience," in regard to the dear deceased sister, in the last SIGNS. I saw in the last SIGNS an article from dear sister Belle Frazee, whom I met at the Spoon River Association; she is a sound Baptist. She speaks truthfully of Elder Frazee; he is a loving, able minister, surely one whom God has called. We had a good association, able preaching to all those who love the truth; that is the last preaching I have heard.

Do as you see fit with this, and all will be well. I just wanted to express my love to you and tell you how much I enjoy your labors of love. Pray for this poor, sinful worm of the dust. May the Lord stand by you.

E. D. VARNES.

DRAIN, Oregon, Nov. 8, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is with fear and trembling that I undertake to write a few lines to the dear ones of the household of faith, for I am such a poor, ignorant worm of the dust, but I do feel like telling what great things the Lord has done for us. We have a dear, poor, weak son in the flesh who was ordained to the full work of the ministry two years ago. As long as he had dear old Elder Mathews to lean on he rested easy, for he said if he could not preach he knew that Elder Mathews could, but the time had to come and our dear old father was called home. I do not think I ever saw any one mourn the loss of a friend as our son did; he said to me, "Mother, I am alone now; how can I go ahead without Elder Mathews?" I told him I thought every earthly prop had to be removed before he could depend alone on the blessed Lord's strong arm, yet in my heart I feared for him. Surely Jesus has heard our prayers; son Charlie has been blessed beyond all our expectations; he has baptized fifteen in a little over one year, eleven in our church, and last Saturday and Sunday he preached at the Oak Creek Church, and four dear ones came forward for baptism. I will mention their names, as so many in Oregon know them: Ike Thornton, his wife, daughter and her husband; they had to go two miles to the river. It was a rainy day, so they set up a tent to dress in, and built a fire. I speak of this to show what faith they had. Charlie said brother Thornton came out of the water shouting praises to God, and when son went to take the women into the water brother Thornton went in with them and helped baptize them both. O how our hearts do rejoice when we hear of such glorious meetings; I felt I had to tell all our loved ones about it. There is great rejoicing in heaven over one sinner that repenteth. Surely the Lord is everywhere. O if we could only praise him as we ought, and not doubt him so much; but it is needful to be in the valley a great deal of the time to bring forth fruit. O if all brethren could dwell together in peace. What joy it is when love reigns supreme; if we could always be kept humble at the feet of Jesus. I hope there is where I am kept. I have nothing to boast of, except in the Lord; he has blessed me far more than I deserve.

I will close, for I cannot tell what I want to. Love to all the household of faith.

Your little sister, if one at all,

S. MORNINGSTAR.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1910.

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Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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THE MERCIES OF GOD.

It is but natural for us all at the close of one year and the beginning of a new year to look back and consider the past, and then to look forward with many thoughts as to the future. While brethren in the Lord will at all times wish well to each other, at such times as the beginning of a new year there will be special expressions of these good wishes expected and bestowed upon each other. At the close of one of his epistles to the church at Corinth Paul said, "Finally, brethren, farewell." It must have been true that Paul, all through his letter to them, had this same wish in mind, but the close of the epistle was by him thought to be an appropriate time to give expression to this desire. More than this, we must remember that this word was also the mind of the Holy Spirit, for Paul wrote as he was moved by the Holy Ghost. This word "farewell," then, is a word blessed and sanctified by the Spirit, and the place in which it was given by the Spirit is also blessed and sanctified. There is a heavenly appropriateness in this word in the place where it occurs, as there is in all the Scriptures of truth. We have called attention to this in order to set forth and emphasize the truth that there is a proper time to all expressions of good will and fellowship and good wishes in our intercourse among ourselves as the children of God, and this, the beginning of another year, seems to us an appropriate time to speak of the things which believers must desire for the future, while also they remember with thanksgiving the mercies of the past.

All who are born of God will recognize and confess that the one supreme desire of their hearts ought to be to worship God, and the one thing which should cause our greatest sorrow is when there is in us a lack of the spirit of worship. Remembering the past seasons, when our affections toward God seemed to be at a low ebb, and also remembering how often such seasons have been ours, we can but be sorrowful, but there will be an earnestness of desire that the future may be better than the past. At this time we feel a great anxiety for us all, that during this new year, if it be the will of God, we might be found often enjoying the spirit of praise, mingled with humble confession of sin. There can be no disjoining these two things. Praise to God arises out of the knowledge of our own sins and our just condemnation, and then of the power that has saved us. No one can truly worship God unless he feels his own insufficiency and has come to know the all-sufficiency of God. Those who in the days of the Savior's flesh came bowing down and worshiping him confessed their need and his power. "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," was the burden of the cry of them all. Great faith in them went hand in hand with great humility. "I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed." This is the substance of all that any one who came to Christ

ever said: "I am not worthy;" thou art able to save. Thus the hearts of all these were attuned to worship. Abased in self, exalted in Christ, was the burden of their testimony. This is the burden of the testimony of all who worship God now.

"This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Thus the dear Savior testified concerning the work of salvation. Out of this salvation springs the fountain of worship. We cannot worship him whom we do not know. There can be no confession of sin in ourselves unless we know our sins. There can be no confession of the holiness of God unless we have come to know that holiness. This knowledge we have not attained to by searching. No man by searching can find out God; if any man knows God and the Lord Jesus Christ it is by revelation. Blessed are all they who confess the Lord, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto them, but the Father in heaven, according to the testimony of the Lord to Peter. What then do the Scriptures declare of that God whom we are to worship? This we must know if we are to worship him acceptably. It is indeed true that this worship must be in spirit and in truth, but still there can be no worship acceptable to God unless there be such a knowledge of him as shall lead us to confess him to be just what he is. Every child of God will feel altogether anxious lest he withhold from him that which is his in their confession of him. What then do the Scriptures testify of him? First, they testify that he only is eternal; he only inhabits eternity. He is not eternity itself, but he is eternal in duration; he inhabits eternity. This means, of course, that with him there is neither beginning nor ending. All things else, from angels down to the smallest mote that floats in the sunbeam, began to be. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." In the beginning he chose his people unto salvation, when as yet there was none of them. Who shall measure back to the beginning, when he thus chose his people? There could be no being before him; if so, then he began to be, and so is not eternal in duration. That which has beginning is not of eternal duration. This needs no argument. We cannot grasp eternity; we cannot comprehend it. We may apprehend the thought, but that is all. Before the highest part of the dust of the earth was formed he reigned in supreme happiness alone. He needed nothing to add to his pleasure or joy. Angels began to be; men, all men, began to be; His church, composed of redeemed sinners, is spoken of in the word as a creation, it therefore cannot be said to be eternal in duration. Creation means beginning. The uncreated God had no beginning. Creation and eternity are not to be predicated of the same thing. Self-existence is also his. This must be so, because there could not be any power existing before eternity to give him being. Whatever is eternal must be self-existent; that is, owe its being to no prior cause. Eternity and self-existence cannot be disjoined. It is ascribing the attributes of Jehovah to any being to say of that being that it has self-existence. We are seeking to divide the glory of God with a creature when we ascribe either of the above named attributes to angels or men. Self-existence means that he who possesses it exists without any dependence upon another being, but finds every fountain of life and being in himself. To such a being nothing can be given.

He can give all, but he can receive nothing. If we render him praise we are not adding anything to him, but are simply confessing before him what we have found him to be. It is seeking to place another being upon the throne of heaven, to sit there in rivalry with God, to ascribe eternity, and, by consequence, self-existence, to that being. These things are his and his alone. This would forever dispose of the vain thought of men that there are eternal spirits, or eternal men, or eternal beings of any other kind. Poor sinners are said to seek for glory and immortality, and God gives to them eternal life, but Jehovah alone inhabits eternity.

He is also omnipotent, and this means that all power is his. The whole universe is filled with his power; there is no place or state where his power is not present. He upholds all things by the word of his power. In him we live, move and have our being. The stars are in his hand; the feeblest insect and the smallest are alike in his hand. All things, feeble or strong, hang upon him. In this omnipotence of Jehovah is our providential well-being, and in the same omnipotence is our safety as the people and church of God. Against his power all the powers of darkness cannot once prevail. The blessed Jesus said to his disciples, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." In power, therefore, as well as in righteousness, was God manifest in the person of the man Christ Jesus. Thus in divine power and in divine sympathy he comes near to his poor and needy ones, and in him we rest and are at peace, sure that none can set upon us to harm us.

He is also omniscient; that is, he sees all things. Every thought, every word in our hearts, every move of mind, heart or hand, every hair of our heads, every sorrow and every joy, every need and every supply of our need, and every bird, beast or fish, in earth, air or sea, every atom of the dust of the earth, and all things, more than we can name, though we continue to multiply the names of things to all the measure of time, are alike with him always. The comfort of it all is, that he thus knows our need and does not need that we shall tell him, and this omniscient God is our God, manifest in Jesus Christ our Savior and friend. If he sees our sins, and we tremble as we remember it, he also sees the finished work of Christ, and Jesus is our merciful High Priest, and so we are filled with rejoicing. Thus we are sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.

He is also omnipresent, and this means that there is no spot in all the universe where he is not. Whither can any of us go from his presence? As (by faith) we see this omnipresent God in Christ we do not call upon the rocks to fall upon us to hide us from his presence and his wrath, but are glad with exceeding gladness, for in the omnipresence of our God is the safety of all who love him, and in His presence is all fullness of joy. As he is everywhere present, so in all places is he equally near to his loved ones, and in all places he can and does hear when his children cry to him. This can be true of no other being. How vain it is then to teach that prayer can be offered to glorified saints, as, for instance, to Mary, the mother of the dear Savior. To say that she in glory can hear the cry of men upon earth, and from every part of the earth, is to ascribe to her omniscience and omnipresence; it is to deify her, and place her in the temple of God, sitting there as God. The same truth holds good with regard to any other glorified saint.

Thus the name of blasphemy is written upon the Romish Church, in that they do teach that Mary hears and intercedes for those whom she hears among the children of men. She cannot hear unless she be omniscient and omnipresent, and to say this is to say that she is divine. To all eternity she is but a sinner saved by grace. She was favored indeed to be the mother of the Lord Jesus, but she was and is no more worthy of being so than any other believer, and now she bows with all the redeemed, as one of them, ascribing all praise and glory to the dear Redeemer. This she did while she lived on earth, and this she does in eternity; the attributes of Jehovah can never belong to any creature.

But we must hasten and strive to be more concise. To worship God, then, is to ascribe to him, in spirit and in truth, all these attributes, and beside these, to acknowledge that to him holiness, justice, mercy and love also belong, so that they originate in him and belong to him innately, and not by gift, as they do to sinners saved. From the fullness of his holiness, righteousness, truth, love and mercy, we receive, as the springs of earth receive out of the unending fullness of the great ocean, and in returning love, praise and adoration to him we but render to him that which we have already received from him. "Of his fulness have all we received." But this does not apply to his eternity, self-existence, omnipotence, omniscience or omnipresence, but only to the holiness of God. He says, Be ye holy, for I am holy; but he never says, Be ye omnipotent, for I am omnipotent. It never shall be ours to become omniscient or omnipresent, but it shall be ours who are redeemed to be holy as he is holy. Redemption unto God means redemption from sin to holiness. To all eternity we shall be but sinners saved by grace. This has been our faith for these fifty years, as we hope from the teaching of the Bible, and from being brought by the Spirit to receive these truths in love and hope. We see these things but dimly, but the truth is in them, and we have desired that they might be continually unfolded to us more and more. We believe that in some small measure they have been unfolded, so that we are more fully persuaded of them than we were at the first. How glorious is our God. We have felt, as did the psalmist, "My heart is inditing a good matter: I will speak of the things which I have made touching the King." The word in the text translated "inditing," literally would read, "bubbling up." His heart was full, so full that its fullness bubbled up to the surface by the power of the love that dwelt within him. O that for us all this might, during the coming year, be true at all times. There is no employ so sweet to a child of God, when led by the Spirit, as to engage in secret, or in the public assemblies of the saints, in the praises of God. It is sure that if in spirit we worship him our feet will not be slow to go to the house of God. It is vain to say that we can present our spirits before God, when we do not present our bodies in his courts. All who love God and worship him in spirit will feel to say, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord," and it will be a real deprivation to such ones when aught occurs to hinder such assembling of themselves together. The spirit of worship is also the spirit of service, and all who do worship him will be found inquiring, What shall I do that I may honor him? We feel well convinced of these things from an experience of more than fifty years.

Now, at the beginning of another year's labor in the conduct of the SIGNS, all of us who have to do with its publication feel the need of continued grace, that we may continue to maintain the form of sound words which was maintained by Elder Gilbert Beebe, and afterwards by those who followed him in the conducting of the paper. For our ownself we can but say that we desire the prayers of all who love God, that we may not depart in any way from the truth. We daily feel the need of great grace that we may be kept humble and lowly, and yet steadfast to the truth. The things that have been dear to us for more than fifty years are still dear to us. We have no doubt of the truth of the doctrine (all of it) that began to be advocated in the SIGNS at the first, but we do often question our ownself. What is our motive? What is our hope? Are we contending for the truth because it has been made precious in our own soul, and has become our support and joy, or are we contending for it as one would contend for a mere theory? These are heart-searching questions indeed.

We wish in conclusion to express our sense of gratitude to all who read the SIGNS for their kind forbearance toward us. If they have seen many failures they have not been impatient toward them. We have these fifty years received nothing but good from our brethren, and what poor returns we have made. No one can feel this more than we do. May God's blessing rest upon all our readers, and upon all the Israel of God, is our desire and prayer. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

2 THESSALONIANS II. 3, 7, 8.

BROTHER BEEBE:—A number of the brethren desire that you give your views on 2 Thessalonians ii., especially on the third, seventh and eighth verses. What is meant by the words, "Only he who now letteth, will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed," &c.? If it will not crowd out more important matter, we would like to have your views as soon as you can give them.

JAMES MILLER.

HALCOTT CENTRE, N. Y., March 16, 1863.

Such views as we have on any part of divine revelation we regard as the property of our brethren, or, rather, that while sustained by their liberality and fellowship in publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, we regard it as our duty, no less than our privilege, to lay before them such views as we have upon the Scriptures, not, however, in the vain presumption that we have more light on the Scriptures than our brethren, or that our views are any more reliable than their own, only so far as, on prayerful examination, they shall be established in their judgment by higher authority than our or any other person's views. The truth is, if our views are from the Lord, communicated to us by his unerring Spirit, they will be sustained by the Scriptures, and also by the spiritual experience of all who are born of God; for the word and the Spirit of God always teach and establish the same truth, and nothing is reliable, however plausible or reasonable it may seem, if it be not established by the word and the Spirit of our God. Being so frequently called on by the brethren and friends to express our understanding of portions of the Scriptures, it is our desire that all who read our views should be careful to indorse them only so far as they themselves become satisfied that they are according to the standard

of our faith and the inspired rule for our practice.

The chapter proposed for our consideration, and indeed the two epistles in which the subject is embraced, contains a record of things most awfully grand and sublime, and, like all other inspired testimony, vitally important to all who hope for immortality through our Savior Jesus Christ. The first verse proposed for consideration begins with an admonition against deception and imposition, which implies our liability to be misled: "Let no man deceive you by any means." We are faithfully forewarned that deceivers should come, and that they should wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived, and that these deceivers should be means-users, whose prolific minds should conceive of a great variety of means and instrumentalities, but all of a deceptive character. Hence the saints are exhorted to be vigilant, to watch and pray, lest they fall into temptation. The solemn instructions and warnings which Christ gave to his disciples in the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of Matthew were prefaced by the same admonition: "Take heed that no man deceive you."—Matt. xxiv. 4. A heedless course is attended with danger, for Christ says, Many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many; and if possible, they shall deceive the very elect. (Matt. xxiv. 5, 24.) These deceivers are to come in Christ's name, professing to be commissioned by him, and authorized by his high authority to teach their deceptive doctrines, and some should even claim that they are Christ, or that they have power to save sinners by the use of their means, or otherwise, and Paul tells us that these deceivers exalt themselves above all that is called God, or that is worshiped, so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. It is a prominent mark of modern antichrist that many claim that they are Christ, which name signifies Anointed, and that they are anointed to save sinners by the use of means. Christ our Lord declares that he is the Way, and that no man cometh to the Father but by him. These deceivers, in direct contradiction of his words, proclaim that they can conduct sinners to God the Father, who would, but for their labors and means, be forever lost, notwithstanding all that Christ has done in the salvation of sinners. How often are they heard to say, Sinners, I offer you salvation. Come to the altar, or to the mourners' bench, kneel down and do as I tell you, and my soul for yours if you do not get religion, and getting religion, you have a safe passport to heaven—to the Father. Thus they say that they are themselves saviors, the means of saving thousands who otherwise would not be saved. Is not this in effect saying, "I am Christ"? Jesus says, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." But do not modern deceivers profess to teach men and children to know the true God, and Jesus Christ? And in this they say they are Christ—they can save. But they go even farther in their blasphemies: they exalt themselves above all that is called God, for they not only profess to be able to procure the salvation of ordinary sinners, but they pretend that they have succeeded in scaring many to repentance, and secured their salvation after Christ had tried and failed. They say that God has done all he can to secure the salvation of all men, but has failed in many cases; his Spirit has been grieved away and given them up to be lost, but by the vig-

orous application of their system of means, many such reprobates have been reclaimed and finally delivered from wrath. Is not this exalting himself above all that is called God? Deceivers of this kind we are told shall come, with all the machinery of means and appliances, and shall deceive many, and, if possible, shall deceive the very elect. But "let no man deceive you." No man, if an apostle, or an angel from heaven, a man of good repute or of evil repute, a learned or an unlearned man, let the man be who he may, let him profess what he may, there is no distinction to be made: "Let no man deceive you by any means." But the saints to whom this admonition is given are already saints, and therefore saved in Christ Jesus with an everlasting salvation, and it is not possible they should be deceived on that ground, yet there are other things, not involving their final inheritance in glory, in which they are liable to be grossly and shamefully deceived. These liabilities are clearly pointed out by our Lord in Matthew xxiv. and in the chapter under consideration; things which involve their peace and tranquillity while here in the flesh, and things which have, and do, and will, involve the saints in trouble, by shaking their minds or confidence in the truth. Hence the impressive and pathetic appeal at the commencement of this chapter: "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of the Lord is at hand." Such deception would, if allowed to, shake the mind of the saints, and that shaking of the mind would produce trouble, and some of the means which deceivers would use to produce such shaking and trouble are pointed out by the faithful apostle, as by the Spirit. The very Spirit by which the apostles were inspired would be counterfeited. But, as John admonishes, "Try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."—1 John iv. 1. How shall we try them? Here is the true and infallible standard by which to try the spirits: "We are of God: [that is, the apostles are of God] he that knoweth God [or has eternal life, which is the same thing], heareth us [the apostles who spake as inspired by the Holy Ghost]; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error."—1 John iv. 6. These deceivers usually pretend to have a wonderfully pious spirit, so loving, so insinuating and so benevolently inclined for your welfare. This hypocritical pretension of love, piety and benevolence is exemplified by the wily serpent, when displaying his brilliant colors to the unwary bird, bewildered by his artful and deceptive charms, until completely overpowered he flutters and falls into the devouring jaws of the cunning adversary. How often have the children of God been enamored by the assumed spirit of deceivers. O the lovely man! how musical his voice, how charmingly he preaches, how eloquently he prays, how pathetically he appeals, how lovingly he grasps my hand, how affectionately he takes me by the beard to kiss me, how his dear soul overflows with benevolence, and how fondly he loves all who will repose confidence in him; he is so charitable, &c. But how does his doctrine accord with that of Paul, of Peter, of James and John? These apostles we know are of God; does he hear them? Why no, not exactly,

for he received his graceful qualifications in the college, and at the theological schools. He speaks in complimentary terms of the old apostles, but he does not think it necessary in our refined age to be quite as hard-mouthed as Paul, who was forever getting into trouble with the people wherever he went, and he thinks the doctrine which the apostles insisted most upon is many centuries behind the present enlightened age. Well, we detect the arrant hypocrite, who counterfeits the spirit of the apostles, while he repudiates their doctrine and discards their instructions as adapted only to a barbarous age.

"Or word." These deceivers often garble even the words of the apostles, and like the seven sons of one Sceva, (Acts xix. 13–16,) will talk about that Jesus whom Paul preached, while they know nothing experimentally either of Paul or of Jesus. They will pretend to bring us word from the apostles that they have discovered by their researches the meaning of the apostles' words, and define them as meaning very different from what the apostles ever taught, handling the word of God deceitfully and turning the truth of God into a lie. We all know how common it is at this day for false teachers to quote the words of Christ and his apostles to prove the very opposite of what they taught, and that which they have forbidden us to believe.

"Or by letter." Among the means used by antichrist to deceive the saints, and to involve them in trouble, letters from the apostles, or purporting to be from them, have been brought forward. Jo Smith, a few years ago, pretended to have dug up out of the earth a batch of this kind of letters, and we have read of several discoveries of the kind said to have been made in distant nations: manuscript letters purporting to be from the apostles, and modern spiritualists pretend to have opened a regular mail route through their mediums, by which they get just such intelligence as they desire as often as they please. But what does all this amount to? Paul says, If I, or an angel from heaven, preach any other doctrine than what I have preached to you, let him be accursed. Even if such word or letter came direct from Paul it would not be valid. Away then with all such means of deception. And, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped."

The next point to be considered is what we are to understand by "that day." In the immediate context it is called the day of Christ. The gospel dispensation is undoubtedly referred to in many parts of the Scriptures as the day of Christ, in distinction from the legal dispensation, and we have no doubt the psalmist referred to it as such when he sang, "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." And John also, when he said, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." But as the gospel day and dispensation had already been fully ushered in by the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, the apostle could not have referred to it in this subject as a day far distant in the future, that could not come until certain other important events should have transpired. Throughout these two epistles to the Thessalonians Paul speaks of a day in which "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead

in Christ shall rise first." This day, he says, "Yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." The awful grandeur of that coming is expressed in the words written above: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God," and in that day the dead in Christ shall rise. This seems clearly to identify the day intended as the day in which Christ shall personally descend from heaven to raise the dead and judge the world in righteousness. It will be a day of perfect and complete triumph; the shout shall announce his triumph over the last enemy, the subjugation of all things under his feet, death itself vanquished, and all his boasted trophies of all ages redeemed and recovered, the mediatorial triumph of the Son of God shall be most magnificently celebrated, the trump of God, that shakes the heavens and penetrates the deepest tomb, shall announce the perfect image of the Son of God forever fixed upon the resurrected bodies of all the redeemed of the Lord. That day is further described in the second epistle, i. 7–10, "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with all his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day."

(To be continued.)

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Silas H. Durand, Sept. 15th, 1909, in the meetinghouse of the Old School Baptist Church at Southampton, Pa., George H. Yerkes, of Washington, D. C., and Mary S. Reeves, of Southampton, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Thompson Simmons was born near Greenbush, Warren Co., Ill., March 2nd, 1851, and died August 22nd, 1909, aged 58 years, 5 months and 20 days, having spent almost his entire life near the place of his birth. He was the son of Andrew and Aseneth Simmons, of Warren County. He was married to Miss Emily Hahn, April 3rd, 1873, and they were the parents of four children, two sons and two daughters, one daughter dying in infancy and the other after reaching womanhood. Brother Simmons joined the Old School Baptist Church called New Hope, near his home, and he and his wife were baptized in October, 1884, by Elder I. N. Vanmeter, since which time he was a consistent and devoted member, ever filling his seat, unless providentially hindered. For years he served the church as assistant clerk, to the satisfaction of all. Living near the church, his house was truly a Baptist home, where for many years it was the pleasure of himself and family to care for and entertain the brethren, sisters and friends who stopped with them. He was often heard to say that nothing afforded him greater satisfaction than to have the Baptists visit him and hear them converse on the things of the kingdom of God. Two years previous to his death he had a severe spell of pneumonia, when for a time his life was despaired of. He rallied from that, but was never strong afterward, though he was able to attend his meetings. He was again prostrated about two months before his death with paralysis of the bowels, and this, with complications, weakened him by degrees until the last. His sufferings were great, but he bore them all with great patience and submission, never murmuring against Providence, saying that if it were God's will for him to thus suffer it was all right. His mind dwelt much of the time on spiritual things, often quoting and commenting on portions of Scripture and repeating lines of hymns. He greatly enjoyed the singing of the brethren and sisters when visiting him, especially the hymn, "But what must it be to be there?" At the last church meeting before his death he requested the members to come in and shake hands with him. Elders Carnell, Downey and others bade him farewell. He had a word for each one, and said all his trust was in the Lord. He directed his son in regard to his business, talking of his departure calmly and without fear, and seemed only waiting for the Lord's time. Thus he fell asleep in Jesus, leaving his wife, two sons, an aged mother, four

brothers and one sister, besides many friends and the church, to mourn the loss of a loving husband, father and worthy member of the church, but they mourn not as those without hope, for our brother left precious evidence that when he was done with his sufferings here he entered into that rest prepared for the people of God.

He was buried in Greenbush Cemetery, near the church, there to await the resurrection morn, when he and all the redeemed shall come forth with the likeness of Christ, and shall ever dwell in that clime where sickness, sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more. May our dear sister be comforted with this blessed hope, and be enabled to bear this heavy stroke, knowing that God doeth all things well. All who know our dear sister, and her devotion and faithfulness to the cause of truth, deeply sympathize with her in her grief and loneliness, and pray that she may have sustaining grace to say, "Not my will, but thine, be done."

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

T. G. Harris, Nebr., $1.00; Lavinia Morgan, Mo., $1.00; Elder T. R. Pittman, Kans., $1.00; Mrs. H. E. Scarborough, Md., $1.00; T. Knight, Mo., $1.00; R. Waller, Mo., $1.00; Attie A. Curtis, Maine, $1.00; Sarah Hawk, Ind., $1.00; N. E. Askew, Ark., $2.00; Mrs. Wm. J. Clark, Conn., $3.00; Hubbell Bros., N. Y., $5.00.—Total, $18.00.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER H. B. Jones has changed his address from Mt. Vernon, Texas, to Winnsboro, Texas.

MEETINGS.

THE churches of the Roxbury Association will hold their fifth Sunday or quarterly meeting, the Lord willing, in Halcottsville, N. Y., Saturday and Sunday, January 29th and 30th, 1910. Meeting will commence at 11 a. m. on Saturday. We hope to see a large gathering of those who love the truth at this meeting.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

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"SONGS IN THE NIGHT."

PRICE REDUCED.

This little book has been published for some time, and orders for it have been received from near and far, even to the most distant States. All from whom I have heard have spoken to me very highly of the book. For forty years it has been upon my mind to publish these poems and the experience of my brother, together with the account of his last hours, and have wondered why I did not do it. I felt sure it would be for the comfort of many, and the many expressions I have already received assure me that it is so. Elder P. D. Gold writes: "I have read the poems and experience of your brother with much pleasure. How wonderful was the view of divine things given to him. Surely to be absent from the body and present with the Lord is far better." Elder S. Hassell says: "I shall have a commendatory editorial notice in April. I hope you may dispose of several thousands for the comfort of the Lord's scattered people." Elder H. C. Ker writes me: "Your little book, 'Songs in the night,' was duly received, and has given me more comfort than any reading I have done for months. Surely every lover of truth should have it." The price of the second edition has been reduced to thirty-five cents.

All orders sent to me.

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Southampton, Pa.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 78. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1910. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

SAMUEL L. DOUGLAS—DEAR COUSIN:—For some time past I have been feeling very much ashamed of myself for not yet having answered your good letter, but I am a delinquent in letter-writing, as I am in many other things. Your account of the laying of the corner-stone in the new church building was very interesting. I have never witnessed one. It is strange that your name will probably be read hundreds of years hence. But as you say, it were better far that your name be written in the Lamb's book of life than in that corner-stone, and if in your new church Jesus Christ be preached as the chief Corner-stone, elect and precious, then all will be well, and those who believe on him shall not be confounded. You speak of being "sorry that one so lovable and gifted as my husband should be shackled by the narrow rules of church discipline." Well, I certainly cannot blame you, for I myself once thought the same regarding the church, and I know it is the general opinion of all other denominations. I shall not try to answer for him, for I have not the ability to do so, but he himself is "ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh," and when you make your long promised visit to our home I know he will be willing to do so. But I thought it might perhaps be interesting to you to know why I am a Baptist. Well, as you doubtless know, my parents attended the church of England, to which of course we children went; also to the Sunday School, where I was taught that "in my baptism I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." This, of course, like many other things in my childhood, was learned as a parrot might learn, neither understanding nor caring what I was repeating. But somehow as I grew older I began to think that this could not be exactly true. I had often seen little babies christened in the church, and I wondered how that the minister sprinkling a little water on the child's face could make it a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. Also my mother used to tell me if I would be a good girl, and obey my parents, and not do any bad things, I would go to heaven when I died, but if I was a naughty girl and did not do as I was told

I would go to the bad place. Now I thought it was strange that I might possibly go to the "bad place" if "in my baptism I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." But it said so in the prayer-book, which book I had always thought akin to the Bible, so I did not know what to think. However, these things did not lie very heavily upon me. Well, as time went on I was told I was "getting old enough to be confirmed," and the next time it was given out in the church that there was to be a "confirmation" at such a time, and that those who wished to be confirmed would meet in the vestry for instruction on certain afternoons, my mother told me I had better go, as I might not have another chance for some time, and I was "quite old enough." Even then I had my own ideas about confirmation, but as some of my companions were going, and as there was a prospect of a nice new dress for the occasion, I did not object, but went to the classes. After the confirmation was over we were told it was now our "privilege" to partake of the communion, but as I felt that too sacred a thing to be partaken of lightly I would not do so. I had yielded to confirmation, and thought that was bad enough, because I looked upon that ceremony as joining the church, which I felt should not be done by any except those who had been "converted." Now what that meant was to me very vague; I knew the signification of the word was "changed," but changed in what way I did not know. I had heard people of other denominations speaking of some who had been converted and joined the church, so I felt it was something about which I knew nothing. I was a gay girl, and, like most young people, fond of fun and all sorts of amusements, going to parties and dances, of which I was particularly fond, though always taking care to keep in strictly respectable society. There came a time when all these things were vanity of vanities to me. One day one of my companions said to me: "O Nellie, do you know that there is an Evangelist preaching in the city? and they say there are such crowds going there is often not standing room. I would like to hear what difference there can be in his preaching to draw such crowds, would not you?" I said, "Yes, indeed I would." So we went that evening. After the preliminary exercises were over he took his text from Romans v. 7, 8: "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." It seemed as though one of the Lord's arrows pierced my soul there and then. Before that time I knew I was a sinner, then I felt it. I was entranced, spellbound, conscious of nothing but the sermon, until it was over, feeling almost every word condemned me. I went home with a heavy heart, the burden of all my sins resting upon my shoulders. I was like Christian in the Pilgrim's Progress: my burden was too heavy to bear. I felt that if I did not get rid of it it would sink me to the ground (to hell), but how to get rid of it I could not tell. I went to every meeting, hoping that in some way or other relief would come. At almost every meeting there were those who professed to be converted and would go on their way rejoicing, but not I. I felt that I must be more wicked than they, too wicked for the Lord to hear my prayers and sighs and groans, and the thought was continually with

me, "What must I do to be saved?" I knew that the answer was, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." I thought I did believe. I had always believed there was a God, and a heaven, and a hell, and a Jesus who lived on this earth, and that everything in the Bible was true, but I knew that that "believe" must mean something different. I prayed to God to show me what it meant to "believe," prayed earnestly, and I even made bold to ask him to show me before the year was out (it was in December). When I first felt the burden of my sins I tried hard to be good, thinking if I were only good God would hear me and speak forgiveness to my soul, and each morning as I awoke I would resolve to not break one of the ten commandments that day, all of which I knew well by heart. But alas, there never passed a day that I did not break them in some way or other, and I often felt that I was more guilty of so doing than when I had no care about it. But I had to learn by experience what Paul tells us in Galatians, that "the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ." Also, as we are told in Romans, that "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin," and also that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." As I have before mentioned, I had asked God to show me what it was to "believe," before the year was out. It was on the 29th of December, as I retired to rest, feeling heartsick, weary, discouraged and well-nigh in despair, thinking that God had turned a deaf ear to my prayers, and that there was no forgiveness for me; I lay down and began thinking of our meetings and the preaching, &c., then I repeated some of the hymns we used to sing. There were many that I loved, but it seemed to me there were two that I loved best, one of which seemed to be an answer to my soul's longing to know, "What must I do to be saved?" I did not know it then, but I have since learned that nothing or no one can give that answer to the weary, longing soul but God himself. Let me quote the hymn:

"Nothing either great or small,
Nothing, sinner, no;
Jesus did it, did it all,
Long, long ago.
When he from his lofty throne
Stooped to do and die,
Everything was fully done;
Hearken to his cry:
It is finished, yes, indeed,
Finished every jot;
Sinner, this is all you need,
Tell me, is it not?

Weary, working, plodding one,
Wherefore toil ye so?
Everything was fully done
Long, long ago.

Till to Jesus' work you cling,
By a simple faith,
Doing is a deadly thing;
Doing ends in death.

Cast your deadly doing down,
Down at Jesus' feet;
Stand in him, in him alone,
Gloriously complete.
It is finished, yes, indeed,
Finished every jot;
Sinner, this is all you need,
Tell me, is it not?"

When I had finished repeating that hymn I was amazed. I suppose I had sung it hundreds of times, but I had never before seen in it what I saw then: a complete salvation through the finished work of Christ, and Christ alone. I seemed to see him, with the eyes of my soul, hanging on the cross, bleeding and dying, and I felt that he was my Savior, and that he was dying for my sins, and I said, O Lord, is this what it is to believe on thee? Thou hast said, "It is finished," I do, I do believe it, my trust is in thee, in thee;

and I felt like Esther when she went in unto the king: If I perish, I will perish trusting in thy word. A calm, restful frame of mind came over me; I seemed to forget about my sins, and repeated that other beautiful hymn of which I have spoken; it is just as dear to me today:

"Just as I am, without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bid'st me come to thee;
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot;
To thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings within and fears without,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind,
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need in thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,
For in thy promise I believe;
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down;
Now to be thine, yea, thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come."

I said to myself, Yes, I have learned by bitter experience that it must be just as I am or not at all. While thinking of those things I fell asleep. In the morning when I awoke the blessed sunshine was flooding my room and everything seemed different; I had had a beautiful, sweet sleep, such as I had not had for a long time, and I felt refreshed and happy. My mind instantly went back to the night before, and I thought, Can it be possible that God has answered my prayer, and that this is conversion, and that my sins are forgiven? I hoped so, but was afraid to dare say it was. I then looked for the burden of sin that I had with me when I lay down, but could not find it, it was gone, gone I hope into the wilderness, a land not inhabited, where no human eyes can find it, carried there by our Scapegoat, our precious Jesus. O then what a delightful time I had praising, loving and trusting my dear Savior. I looked forward to those meetings as I had never done to my worldly pleasures.

"'Twas a heaven below,
The Redeemer to know,
And the angels could do nothing more
Than to fall at his feet,
And the story repeat,
And the Savior of sinners adore.

On the wings of his love,
I was carried above
All sin and temptation and pain,
And I could not believe
That I ever should grieve,
That I ever should suffer again."

I supposed that this state of mind was to be always mine, but I was soon disillusioned, I found sin and sorrow, doubts and fears, temptations and persecutions were mine instead. I had had a Sunday School class for some time in the English Church, which I faithfully attended, although I did not attend any of the other services since I had begun to go to those meetings. When they learned I was attending the latter instead of the church, several of the officials called on me at different times and remonstrated with me, but when they saw they could not deter me I soon found I was given the "cold shoulder." If I met any of them on the street they were generally very busily engaged looking in at a shop window or over at the other side of the street, &c., and it was not until scarcely a teacher in the school would speak to or look at me that I gave up my class. After those meetings were all over I felt like a sheep having no fold and no shepherd. I longed to cast in my lot with

the people of God, but my trouble was to know who they were. I went about from one denomination to another, one Sunday to one place and the next Sunday to another. I read the Bible and studied to try and find which was the nearest to the church of Christ in the days of the apostles, and the more I read the more I felt that the one above all others which I did not want to join was the nearest, and that one was the Baptist Church. I had heard many strange things about them, and when they were spoken of in my presence it was always in a slighting, sneering manner, therefore from my childhood I had been prejudiced against them, and even after I had been to their meetings very many times, and saw nothing either strange or wrong, I thought, Surely there must be something which they are keeping back. I liked the Congregational minister very much, and went there quite often, and sometimes almost made up my mind to join them, but when I did there would be a misgiving of conscience. On one occasion I was there on communion Sunday, and when the minister invited "all who loved the Lord Jesus Christ to remain and partake with them of the emblems of his death," I kept my seat, intending to accept the invitation, but by the time most all the congregation had gone out I felt I could not stay, and went out, too; they were not my people. After that I attended a Bible class in the Baptist Sunday School, and occasionally went to their meetings, but not regularly by any means, for I had not yet been "fully persuaded," and did not wish them to have any suspicion of my thoughts. But the time came when I felt I could stay away no longer, and I told the Bible class teacher, who was a deacon, and I believe a truly gracious man, that I wanted to have a home with the people whom I believed were the people of God. He said, "My dear child, I have been looking for this a long time; I knew it would come sooner or later, and I sincerely welcome you among us." I went before the church and was cordially received and baptized, and felt happy in obeying my Savior's commands.

"O how happy are they
Who their Savior obey,
And whose treasures are laid up above!
Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

Some time after this I became acquainted with him who is now my husband, then a very young man, seventeen years of age. I had known but few religious young people, young men espepecially, and I was struck with wonder and amazement at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. I felt that I knew nothing, that I was a babe, and he a man in Christ Jesus, mighty in the Scriptures, and I felt in my inmost soul that he was as truly called to preach the gospel as was Timothy of old, although at that time such a thing seemed almost impossible; but since then I have learned that the God who called Isaiah, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, Paul, Timothy and an innumerable host of others from the womb to be his servants, can also open up the way for his servants to preach the unspeakable riches of Christ, which I believe my husband has done, in season and out of season, through evil report and through good report, for almost thirty-five years.

Now, dear cousin, I have tried to relate the way in which I trust God has led me; of the many trials and changes through which we have passed since our marriage, and of the circumstances which led to our joining the Old School Baptist Church, I cannot here speak, as this let-

ter is already much longer than I intended it to be.

With much love to yourself and cousin May, I remain your affectionate cousin,

(MRS.) FREDERICK W. KEENE.

[THE above excellent letter from sister Keene has been read by us with unusual interest, and we are sure it will be read with equal interest by the readers of the SIGNS. We hope she may very soon be impressed to give us an account of her coming to the Old School Baptists.—ED.]

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 14, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have been intending for a long time to write a few lines to you, but have neglected it, as I have many other things. I ought to do better, but seem dilatory and let my desires go by as though I never had them. How often I wish I were different, but I must be constituted as I was intended to be, yet I grow careless. I feel ever willing to do that which the Father above and the brethren would have me do, but the flesh grows weary and seems to desire rest, and shrinks from many duties. I look over my life of fifty-three years and think that I have been in the warfare of man's sojourn here below all this time and seldom have been able to sit down with folded hands, and what good have I done? I cannot see what I have done in all these years, and this makes me feel my weakness and infirmity, and that in my flesh dwells no good thing, so what can I count up in my journey? There seems to be nothing to count.

I sat down desiring to write a few lines for your perusal, and I find myself unable to think a good thought, much less write a good thing. I asked myself, What shall I write? and the only thing that came to me was, "Thou knowest that I love thee." At once I asked myself, Where are the marks? And I have had to look over my life and see the marks all the way that I have come. How gracious is that great and Holy One who has kept me, as the apple of his eye, from forgetting that he is God, and that there is none beside him. I know from bitter experience that I must have no idols, and that all my strength is in him, and in him alone. I have learned that the spirit is willing, but that the flesh is weak; that man cannot live by bread alone; that we must not trust in the puny arm of man, but in the everlasting arms which are ever underneath us; that we cannot hoard up strength, or trust, or faith, as one hoards up gold, but that as our day so shall our strength be, and that trust in our Elder Brother is given us, and is, as is our faith, a gift from God, and it cannot be taken from us. Both faith and trust are as are our love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, all from the one source, an inheritance from God, which he wrote in his will. Often I look and see the protection of the great Defender and Protector in so many dangers, and from this I feel a surety that he will be my Guide and my Guard all the way. O how many are the marks of his love. Surely he has led me about and instructed me, and placed his banner of love over me, and kept me from many dangers and snares, and I feel to say with the poet,

"Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

All these marks are so vivid to me. Why was I made to hear the Shepherd's voice, when I was, like Saul, boasting in my own strength, and breathing out terrible things against those whom I now feel are the children of the heavenly Father? How I was brought down,

never more to rise as I had been before. He brought me down, and he spoke this promise to me: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." I know that he will be my front guard and my rearward, and that I will never have such terrible breathings again, but instead will feel to praise him for his wonderful works to the children of men. How many times he has given me to feast "in the presence of mine enemies," and his rod and his staff have comforted me. What great things he has done for me. How often joy has come in the morning, and how have I arisen and shined forth when the light has come. He has taken the beggar from the dunghill, and set him among princes. He shuts, and no man can open, he opens, and no man can shut. He strengthens the lame to take up their bed and walk, and it is always in the right way, for he says, "This is the way, walk ye in it." O that I might always be in a frame of mind to own his goodness and mercy to me all the days of my life, for they all seem so vivid to me now as I write. Even in deep trials he has given me strength to bow to his will, which at the time seemed sad to me, and has enabled me to say, "Thy will be done."

You, my dear brother, know of the calm that often follows such raging storms, when he speaks peace and the storm is stilled. The storm that almost seemed would tear us asunder now looks as a small thing, yea, as less than nothing.

I have made this letter much longer than I thought of doing, yet it has been pleasant to me to write of these marks of his love to me, who am so unworthy of his notice. I have been passing through a strange season. I have not had a desire to read, or to search his word, yet the words of that Book of all books seem near to me, and I seem to have been given an understanding of many of them, and they are precious to me. I do desire to be ever ready to do my Father's will, and the will of my brethren, when it is in accord with his will. May the presence of the Father be near you. I know you have many very trying perplexities, and I desire that you may be given grace to bear with them all, as has been the case thus far. How gracious God has been to you, sustaining and giving you good cheer to speak to all alike, so that none could judge that you were oppressed or downcast. May God bless and keep you in all your journey.

Inclosed find a letter from sister Martha Howarth, also one from brother Scates, which seem to me especially good.

With love and all good wishes, your sister,

MARY HILL TERRY.

NYACK, N. Y., Aug. 22, 1909.

DEAR SISTER TERRY:—I am thinking of you and the very pleasant days I spent with you and brother Terry and sister Elvie Perrine, also Miss Maggie and your nephew. I hope you are enjoying the preaching at Philadelphia this morning. Dear Elder Coulter had liberty upon the subject of Jonah, and the preserving mercy of God toward him in his trying to flee from the presence of the Lord, whose watchful eye is over all the great universe. His eye beholds every creature. David said, "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there thy hand shall lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." Truly we all are but as grasshoppers, yet we are enabled to have a hope in the unspeakable mercy of the

great incomprehensible Jehovah, who has made us to know our helpless state as fallen creatures, as guilty sinners, without one good thought or act, justly condemned in the fall, yet, through the quickening of the Holy Spirit, born of God, without which there is no hope, for what is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Without the power of God I know that I am without strength to do anything good. The dear Redeemer said, "Without me ye can do nothing." I hope that I am made to be sensible of it, yet at times I have been enabled to rejoice in the finished work of the dear Savior. He said, "It is finished." Yes, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." These words were given to me many years ago, and they remained with me then for some time with comfort. I dare not despise the day of small things. I have to look back to my many blessings, both in providence and in grace, and though many trials have beset my path, yet mercies and consolations have been given me, so I can say, As my day, so my strength has been. Sometimes I question why this and that wretched thought and unbelief, and the carnality of my own mind, so often annoy me, but thus I prove the warfare within. To be carnally-minded is death, or separation from God. I need line upon line and precept upon precept. Jesus sent word to John, when John's disciples had come to him, being sent of John, saying, "Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" "Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached unto them." How wonderful to send such a message. John needed to be told these things, but how strange that he needed it when he was the forerunner of Christ. When left in the darkness of unbelief John, even, seemed to doubt the very things which he had declared, viz., that Jesus was the true Messiah, the Lamb of God. Truly "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." John was as a reed shaken with the wind. Yet the bruised reed God will not break, he will not quench the smoking flax.

"Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." That was the text the last Sunday I heard Elder Coulter. How wonderful for us to be reminded of this blessing over and over again. We often fear that our hope is not the right kind of hope. This causes much questioning which cannot be satisfied with anything short of a "Thus saith the Lord." I often fear that my love for the brethren is not right, yet the poet spoke as I feel:

"Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?
If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse
Who have never heard his name."

What expressive language the hymns contain. The same experience is told by the authors of them. What a wonder of wonders to know the same truths. Surely the teacher of all is Jesus.

Last Sunday we had Elder Ker in New York; he preached from the text, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." In the afternoon, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden," &c. He had liberty and was gladly received. Elder McConnell exchanged appointments with him. Elder Chick was in New York while I was absent. If all is well we expect to have services in the new meetinghouse in

October. It will be further for me to go there, but will be nearer for some of the friends. I cannot expect to go so far in extreme weather, as I am not equal to it. I desire to be remembered to all the dear friends in Philadelphia and at Hopewell with whom I am acquainted and with whom I spent such pleasant days. I desire to remain in love and fellowship with gratitude to you also.

Yours, as I trust, in hope of eternal life alone through the merits and righteousness of our dear Redeemer,

MARTHA A. HOWARTH.

WOODSTOCK, Ontario, Aug. 22, 1909.

DEAR SISTER TERRY:—I have read your letter in the SIGNS for July 1st with much interest, and I would like to also say, if I could, with profit, but I am afraid I am so hard-hearted that nothing profits me, but I can say it stirred up my mind, and made me think how prone I am to the things which you say are not according to the precepts and exhortations of the gospel. I have thought much of these same things, both before and since you wrote, and after reading your communication I felt a strong impression to write you, commending your letter, as I felt it was good and timely in these times when so many, I fear, are walking after the flesh, and, sad to say, among the number how often I find the poor, unworthy writer. How much of my time I spend reading things that belong alone to the world, and how neglectful I am of the things that belong to the spiritual kingdom, which is life, light, joy and peace; and O how neglectful I am of the command of the dear Savior to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. So much of my time it seems that this is the last thing I seek, and O why should it be so? I read the newspapers and magazines and neglect my Bible, and then wonder why I am in darkness, doubt and unbelief. One of my worst enemies is doubting the truth of revelation, and everything concerning religion, and O, I think, what am I, and where am I? I am just like one of those wandering stars of whom Jude writes, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever, and yet as my mind turns to scriptural characters I find my name apparently written there, and then I know that I fully believe in salvation by grace, and I know that I can say with one of old, "Yet I will look again toward thy holy tabernacle." I do hope that I long for the presence of Jesus, and that I have had some tastes of that salvation which lifts the poor from the dunghill and sets them among the princes of the earth, but I am so proud in spirit, so prone to sin, so slow to anything good, and, as I look over a long life, not a single good thing have I ever done. There is nothing but sin, therefore I may well claim that salvation is by grace, else there is none, for me at least.

I will not tire you with a long letter, but wanted you to know that I thought your letter was good and timely. We, as a church, are feeling sad and lonesome without a pastor, but I hope that the Lord is keeping us in unity, and causing us to look only to him to supply our needs out of his unwasting fullness, and may we not look to any other source for supplies. We expect Elders Chick and Ker at our meeting next October, and hope that they may come in the fullness of the gospel of Christ. Mrs. Scates and myself send kind regards to you and brother Terry, and would be pleased to hear from you again, if you feel disposed to write.

Unworthily your brother in the tribulations of the gospel, R. SCATES.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Jan. 14, 1909.

DEAR SISTER LAURA:—Your letter in the last number of the SIGNS was the first one I read, and it touched me greatly. Not only did it remind me that I was still owing you a letter, but I felt a strong sympathy for you in your dark travel of mind. I hope ere this God has seen fit to reveal himself to you as your Comforter. If he permits but one ray of light to enter into the dark dungeon of the soul, it is enough to scatter all doubts and fears for the time, and we are given joy for mourning and the spirit of praise for that of heaviness. But until he does open the prison door, how weary and oppressed we are! It seems that during the ten years since I first professed a hope in God's mercy, most of my travel has been dark and gloomy. Like you, many times I have felt that I have played the part of a hypocrite. I have felt that the dear brethren who so sweetly extend the hand of fellowship to me whenever I meet them, would be shocked if they knew the evils in my heart. But I truly do not want to deceive them; I long to do good, but evil is ever present with me. Of late Elder Ker's sermons have seemed to come with power to me. I have felt that what I was listening to was the truth indeed, and must surely come from God, for Elder Ker as a man could not expound the Scriptures so clearly and wonderfully. I have had some little comfort in this, for many Sundays I have been to meeting and returned without having (apparently) received anything, and what was worse, my heart oftentimes seemed so dull and cold that I could not even feel interested in the meetings. Do you wonder that I afterwards would suffer serious doubts and questionings as to whether I ever knew anything concerning spiritual things? In my experience I never have had any wonderful revelation like many tell about. At times a sweet peace has filled my soul, and love toward the church has been uppermost in my being, but for the most part the flesh seems to have the upper hand, and this causes me much suffering and sorrow of spirit.

Forgive me for not replying to your good letter sooner, and write again when you have time.

Your sister in sweet christian fellowship, I hope,

FLORENCE S. BEEBE.

RENSSELAERVILLE, N. Y., Jan. 17, 1909.

MISS LAURA BAILEY:—May I say sister Laura? You will no doubt be surprised to receive a letter from a stranger, but although I would not know your face if I should meet you, yet here I am with pen in hand to write to you. I do not know what I shall write, but I have just read your letter to Elder Vail, as published in the SIGNS of January 15th, and it seems almost every word brings to mind my own experience (if I have any), and as you ask the question, "Is there any one like me?" I can assure you there is one at least like you in that query, as well as many other things you write. You say others tell such beautiful experiences, and know just when they felt they were guilty before God, and lost, and then know just when they were delivered, and felt such joy and praise to God. Now that very thing has troubled me these many years, yet still I have a hope that my sins are forgiven, and that I am one for whom Christ shed his precious blood, but not for any worth or worthiness of my own, for,

> "Nothing in my hand I bring,
> Simply to thy cross I cling."

It is all of mercy, and all the reason I

can give is, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." I have no great or beautiful experience to tell; I cannot tell when the burden of my sins came upon me, nor when it left me, and have ever wondered what I could have said to the church (Middleburg Church) that they received me thirty-one years ago, and have ever since been very kind and forbearing toward me. I, like you, was young in years, and I cannot remember when I was not interested in hearing people talk on religious subjects, and had many thoughts about it, and felt there must be a great change before I could be a christian. I think I was about seventeen years old when an aunt wanted me to go with her to visit her sister (and my aunt) in Otsego County, and then attend the yearly meeting at Otego, which I did, and it was at that time the burden of my sins was upon me more than ever before. Every one was good and kind to me, and I felt if they could see me as I saw myself they would turn from me. I thought they were all christians, and O how I longed to be like them. On our way home my aunt wanted to stop and attend the meeting on Schoharie Hill, on Saturday and Sunday, and there I saw more of those lovely people, and I remember as they came in the house one by one I thought I could plainly see the mark in each face that they were the children of God, and O what would I have given to be like them, to feel my sins forgiven and have an evidence that I was a child of God. I came home, bringing my burden with me, but I was young and went with other young people to places of amusement, but could not enjoy myself as they seemed to, and many times promised myself never to go again, but when invited I seemed to have no excuse, and so would go. I had tried to keep my trouble to myself. I cannot tell how or when my burden left me, and thoughts of uniting with the church were in my mind. I did not think I had any experience to tell, or any reason for a hope, but hoped I might have some time, and so for some time I was hoping I might have a hope in the mercy of God. I knew if I was ever saved it would be by grace alone, and not by anything I could do. But, as I trust, God in his own time and in his own way made me willing to accept the evidence he had given me, and to own and trust him as my Savior, and gave me strength to go to the church for a home in November, 1877. I then knew I was young, weak and ignorant, but thought I would grow wise and strong as I grew older; but here I must confess, fifty-one years old to-day, and just as weak and helpless as then, and as dependent upon God for everything, both temporal and spiritual, as I ever have been. I can say with you:

> "I am a stranger here below,
> And what I am 'tis hard to know."

I have never felt such great joy at any time as many can tell of, but, if I am not altogether deceived, I have felt some of the sweet peace that the world knows not of, and there is comfort in believing and trusting in God, who has all power; he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast; he declared the end from the beginning; his arm is not shortened, he is able to do all his pleasure. Many things seem strange to us, and we feel it ought to be different, but I desire to leave all things in his hand, knowing he doeth all things well, and he knows his little ones wherever they are, and will never leave nor forsake them. Sometimes he hides his face, and the enemy is always around to make them afraid, and though we cannot see our Deliverer, yet

his eye is ever upon his little ones, and no enemy is able to pluck them from him. Do not think it strange that you have doubts, fears and trials, for God has promised that in this world we shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, he has overcome the world, and when we have done with earth and time things and awake with the likeness of our blessed Redeemer, then, and not till then, will we be perfectly satisfied.

I have not written as I thought I would, and do not know why I have written; it was a sudden impulse to write as I read your letter, and I have written just as the thoughts have come to me, and am surprised at the length of this, but hope if there is no comfort in it for you that there will be no harm done, and that you will excuse the writer. Now that I have written it seems like presumption in me, and many times after writing I feel that it is all from the head, and not from the heart, and that I know nothing of spiritual things. God knows me just as I am, I do not.

I have been to Schoharie Church many times. It is always a sacred place to me, as it always brings back my first visit there, together with many remembrances.

I will close, hoping God may lead, guide, guard and protect you all your journey through, and I desire the same protecting care for myself. I am sure he will take care of his own. I would be very glad to hear from you if you ever feel like writing me.

Yours sincerely,

(MRS.) ADDIE COOK.

BRADENTOWN, Fla., Dec. 19, 1909.

DEAR SISTER LAURA:—It always causes my poor soul to rejoice and leap for joy when I am given a little view of this poor and afflicted people having a standing in our spiritual Head ere time began. O glorious thought—one in him before time began, one when manifested in the flesh, one in his suffering crucifixion, one in the tomb and one in his resurrection and entering into his glory. O wonder of wonders, can it be? Yes, dear sister, this is God's holy and righteous law, that his people shall be one, not only with but in him. This you and I (this is our hope) have been taught in our experience. There is a feeling sense at times in us that we know these things are true, and that there is nothing that can separate us; no, not even death. It is a great joy to be carried away on the wings of his love to the third heaven. Our God is in the heavens; he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him; none can stay his hand, "for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever."

Dear Laura, your precious missive of love and fellowship was most gladly and thankfully received, and I would could I give a crumb in return, but I feel barren and unfruitful.

I hear you all have had a great feast with brother G. D. K. for some ten days. Surely the Lord remembers the poor of the flock. You have great reason as a church to rejoice. We continue in good health, having very fine weather, much like your July, yet it is cool nights.

Love to all.

D. M. LEONARD.

[THE above good letters were forwarded for publication by sister Laura Bailey. —ED.]

BALTIMORE, Md., Nov. 23, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have received two requests of late from readers of the SIGNS that I should write something for its columns. Neither of them suggested any subject, so I have decided to quote the words found in 2 Timothy ii. 15,

which read as follows: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." This is an exhortation from an older and more experienced minister of the gospel to one of younger years and less experience in the things of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Paul is pleased to address Timothy as his dearly beloved son. He, no doubt, felt a great interest in him, and desired that he should prove faithful to the Lord and profitable to the church. He did not expect to give him a talent, but wished that by proper application of himself he should improve upon that talent which he had, and therefore the charge, "Study to shew thyself approved," &c. Study what? Why the Scriptures of course, which are the word of God, and which were able to make him wise unto salvation. They teach the truth which is according to the experience of the children, who are to be fed by the preaching of the word. It is not enough that Timothy, or any other minister, shall simply read the Scriptures, but that they study them in all their connection, in order that they may teach the Lord's people aright, so that each may receive his portion in due season, as taught by our Lord and Master. (Luke xii. 42.) If we shall wrest the Scripture from its proper connection we shall make it appear to mean what the writer did not intend, and in this way take away from him to whom the word belongs, and give to him to whom it does not belong. I shall never forget having this called to my attention by a very able and fatherly old minister in my early exercises in the ministry. I had spoken in his presence from Daniel x. 18, 19, and in my short experience and ignorance I had seen nothing but the first deliverance from the burden of sin, and so talked about the text. Elder Brinson said to me: "Brother Joshua, the things you said to-day are good and true, but one thing I want to call to your attention, which is this: Daniel was just as much a prophet of the Lord before this experience as he was afterward." From that time I have tried to note in reading the Bible who is being addressed, and under what circumstances. I saw I had taken that which belonged to the older children of God and had given it to the younger, and that in so doing I was not giving to each his portion of meat in due season. The child of God falls into darkness and finds over and over again that he is weak, and that he still needs the strong hand of Jesus to support him, and, blessed be his holy name, Jesus is not unmindful of him, and fulfills his promises in coming to his relief. Then, brethren, let us who minister in holy things, be careful not to wrest the Scriptures from their proper connection. In doing so we shall lead the Lord's dear people into error, poisoning their minds with false doctrine, and fail to give them that which is for their spiritual health. With honest and prayerful hearts let us then seek the true meaning of the word of God, and always be willing and ready to forsake any way or any view when we find that the word does not sustain the same. Should I wrest Scriptures from their proper connection to make them prove things that I have said, I should be handling the word of God deceitfully and would be inexcusable. If we always speak so that the plain word of God, without any effort on our part, will sustain what we say, we shall have no cause to be ashamed. The main point of our study should be the proper application of the Scriptures. When this is done, they mean exactly what they say, nothing more, nothing

less. In this way we shall never have to strain them to make them mean what we say or prove what we say. When we find who is speaking, who is spoken to, and what is the subject being discussed, we know what the writer means by what he says. So, dear brethren, and especially to the younger would I speak here, let us always endeavor to speak in such a way that those who hear shall know what we mean by what we say. The word of God is one, and is always truth, but it must be rightly divided. Let us not give the people two words, for we shall only confuse them. Paul said in second Corinthians: Our word toward you was not yea and nay, but yea and amen, to the glory of God by us. But it must be properly divided, that each may receive his portion in due season. Then shall the little ones grow and thrive, and they will bless God, the Giver of all good, and esteem the ministry highly in love for their work's sake. The doctrine of God our Savior is in the Scriptures; it is also as truly in all christian experience. The experience of the children of God is recorded in the Scriptures, and it is as truly in the doctrine of God our Savior. If I tell to others some experience that is not recorded in the Bible, it is not christian experience. If I preach doctrine that is not according to christian experience, I shall preach false doctrine. If I can show you that your experience is the doctrine of the Bible, and that the doctrine of the Bible is your experience, I shall comfort your hearts, according to the commandment of God and the exhortation of the apostles of Jesus Christ, and you will be benefited. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Then shall we have no cause to be ashamed, since in obedience to our Master we shall hear the blessed words, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord. "And your joy no man taketh from you." It is good for you all, dear brethren and sisters, that you read and study the word of God. Take no man's word for anything further than the blessed word sustains them. May the God of all grace lead us all in the right way.

Your brother in hope of life,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

[WE feel like adding a commendatory word or two to the above excellent letter. Its advice is good for us all. It presents just what the blessed Savior enjoined, and what the Bereans were much commended for. It is good to search the Scriptures to see if these things are so. We ought to come to them as little children to hear words from their father. Elder Wm. J. Purington once said to us: "See that you read no portion of the word as a text unless you know the connection, or have had opportunity to look over the connection." We have never forgotten this advice. We may have been mistaken as to the meaning of portions of the Scripture we have used as texts many times, but still Elder Purington's advice was good. We commend the above letter to all our brethren for their earnest approval.—C.]

FOX CHASE, Pa., Oct. 30, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—PRECIOUS BROTHER:—I am about to ask a favor of you, and how to start it I scarcely know, but will venture. Some time last winter, when I was at my isolated flag-box, sister Keziah Hogeland happened by, and I had a precious talk with her, and after she had gone I was so impressed with the meeting that I opened a correspondence with her, not knowing if it were right.

Some time afterward I received a letter from her, and felt it was good to get such letters, and I read and reread it with tears. I gave it to Elder Coulter to read; he claimed for it a good letter. Brother J. M. Fenton sent it back to me, asking that I call for a place in the good old SIGNS for it, and if it is not asking too much I would be glad to have it appear in the SIGNS. I take especial pains, or care, in perusing that good old paper. I have been favored in reading it for nearly forty years. I do not see that I grow any better as I grow older. You and I can look back a great many years. I would like very much to see you and have a good talk with you. This letter of our dear sister's I will send without any apology, just as it reads. I think it is but seldom that we read such good letters. You, dear brother, know who this sister is: brother John Hogeland's widow, an estimable christian woman.

Yours in hope,

C. S. STOUT.

CORNELL, Pa., March 28, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER:—I think it was about Jan. 9th or 10th I received a very touching letter from you. I was at Newtown and it was remailed to me, and when I say I enjoyed every word in it, that comes far short of expressing my feelings. All the time I was at Newtown I had it in my mind to write you, and if you had received all that I have pondered in my mind you might have gotten a much better letter than I will be able to write to-night. Much of my time I am groping along in the wilderness, and in solitary places; I feel much alone, and wonder if there is any other one like me.

"So far from God I seem to lie,
Which makes me often weep and cry;
I fear at last that I shall fall,
For if a saint, the least of all."

For some days after receiving your letter my mind seemed to live over the past; I was carried back over forty years, and in going back I had many struggles to encounter, and stopping-places where I could not rest; only by the help and strength given me by my dear heavenly Father could I come through what at times seemed like sailing through bloody seas of grief and sorrow, until I reached the place where I first found a home in the dear church; then for a time I lived in the realms of joy, in my first love in the church; then much of my early experience came to my mind. I hoped then I should be free from sin and doubts, and, as I now remember, I was for a season. I had a great desire to grow in grace and knowledge of heavenly things, and be spiritually-minded, but to my sorrow how far short I have come as I grew older to grow better. I, like you, had dear old Deacon Vanartsdalen as my guide, and hoped some day I would be like him, and many other dear old brethren and sisters in the church. Now, as I look back to those meetings, every Sunday seemed like a family reunion around the dear Father's throne, with Christ in our midst, our Elder Brother. At that time with me the whole day long Jesus seemed to be my song, my Lord, my life, my hope, my all; but not so with me now. Then our meetinghouse was well filled; now they are nearly all gone. All the dear old deacons we had then, your loved father among the dear saints, and my loved companion, are gone, and how we miss them all. I well remember when you and your loved wife came to the church; they were days of rejoicing, love was the prevailing spirit. I remember, too, the hymn we sang at the water (Beebe's collection, 1127). It all comes back very dear to me yet. As

I look back to those times I seemed to have been in a very happy frame of mind. I have had to travel in the low grounds since then, but not more than I deserve. I desire to be kept near and at Jesus' feet. My blessings are much more than I deserve. I have had to pass through sore trials and afflictions, and they have not been to my hurt, but for my good. His promises are sure; he will not leave nor forsake us, or leave us comfortless. Ah, how well he knows our every weakness; it is he who will be our strength; he gave you the love you bear the dear Old Baptists. No, absence cannot conquer love. It was he who lead dear Deacon Vanartsdalen to ask you to read Psalms cii., he gave you the sweet comfort in all your travels. "Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand." When we feel the dear Lord is for us, who need we fear?

I have read your letter over many times, and the chain of fellowship is drawn more and more securely, because I do fellowship all you have written. I hope you and all your household are in good health. Thank your dear daughter for sending me your letter. I remember those dear little girls very well. Give my love to your dear wife Lucy. If I get to Olney this spring, which I am planning, I surely will call on you; we would enjoy a visit with you and your family.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

KEZIAH D. HOGELAND.

TOUCHET, Wash., Sept. 28, 1909.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—It has been a custom of mine for several years to send greetings to the household of faith, the saints scattered over the land wherever the SIGNS OF THE TIMES circulates. Many far distant from me are yet near and dear to my heart; some have lived with me in the old Hillsborough Church, in Oregon, but we are now scattered many miles apart, and our heads are blossoming for the grave. O what a blessed thought to me, for since September 10th, 1909, I have breathed the air of my eighty-first year. Many sorrows have pierced my heart during my long life, and it sometimes seems as though I must doubt the evidence of being born again. We read, The Lord taketh the righteous from the evil to come. O who that has lived to see my age can say other than did Jacob to Pharaoh? Although to us the days seem many, yet with the "Alpha and Omega" one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. Dear saints, think of this, will it indeed be so that we shall be numbered among those who sing the song that no man can sing on earth? Then shall this vile body be changed, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality, then will all that pertains to death be swallowed up in victory. What a glorious victory! Mortal mind cannot comprehend, nor mortal heart conceive of, that which awaits the saints. The apostle said, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." Surely here we do realize that the creature is made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope. Glorious hope! It is as "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast." Of all men surely would we be the most miserable without that hope.

The Arminians of the world are daily energetic; they are stimulated to do the best they can, peradventure they may attain unto salvation. If perchance they step aside one day, they strive to make amends by repenting and laboring in prayer, in almsgiving and in missionary efforts, giving money to societies to save the heathen, and so by their works they strive to make their calling and election sure. Is this the case with the saints of God? God forbid. To them the Lord has said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." He has also said, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." The Arminian world will say, Why be sorrowful and in the dark? The answer of the believer is, Because I see a "law in my members, warring against the law of my mind." Yea, the tempter is continually going about seeking whom he may devour. He tempted our dear Lord and Savior, will he not also tempt the children? Nevertheless, when Jesus turns and looks upon us, we, like Peter, go out and weep bitterly that we have so grievously denied our Lord. The flesh is weak, we are not able to watch one hour without His divine presence. We are as clay in the hand of the potter, who hath power to make one vessel to honor, and another to dishonor, and if he send my soul to hell, his righteous law approves it well. But, dear household of faith, what more can he say than to you he hath said?

If you see fit to publish this, please correct all mistakes, and oblige a little one.

As ever yours,

(MRS.) S. J. CUMMINS.

RICHBORO, Pa., Oct. 26, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—How dare one so unworthy and ignorant as I make the attempt to address one who stands so high in the ministry? I think of the many times I have read your editorials and the many letters of the brethren with sweet satisfaction to my troubled and weary soul. God's chosen all know what he is to them, and how he leads them through deep waters, yet by the right way; no one can evade his righteous law. He will bring us through the fire; not one shall be lost, all shall be saved. How wonderful is his grace!

It is time for my remittance for the SIGNS, and words fail to express what the paper has been to me, who have been kept so long in the prison of sin; I had never seen the least ray of light in which I might have hope until I began to read the SIGNS, twenty-five years ago. Some of Elder Durand's writings first arrested my thoughts, and how startled I was to find that in that secret, quiet way I should be led to know that my experience corresponded with that of the Lord's people. The first sermon that struck me with awe and wonder was in 1884, when I heard Elder Durand at Southampton. How my hungry soul feasted upon the word of God; every bitter thing was sweet; Jesus was shown to me in his word as all and all to his people; my soul leaped for joy at his name. The way in which I have been led these many years I read in the dear SIGNS. Please find the remittance for another year, and believe me to be one who loves it, notwithstanding my wicked, depraved nature. I am fully convinced that in me (my flesh) is no good thing, and that of myself I cannot comprehend the least of God's goodness, and what has been shown

me, I humbly trust by the Spirit, has seemed too wonderful for me, therefore I cannot express it. I will just add an expression, or rather sentiment, of brother Fenton's in a letter that I had the privilege of reading: "Devils believed and trembled, but they did not have faith, which is the gift of God to his elect." He went on to say that in all our travel here below there will be a continual looking to the time when our journey is completed, when we shall enter into that within the veil, whither our forerunner, even Jesus, is entered. I had wondered how I was to know the difference, but it is faith that makes all the difference, and as that is the gift of God, devils cannot get hold of it.

Dear brother, I cannot see how any one can understand such disconnected sentences, but if I were to say it is the best I have, you could not expect more, yet I humbly trust I have known what it is to take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. Again, I would not like to say I have not known or felt, in a small measure at least, what it is to fall into the hands of the living God; how awful! Dear brother, I ask your forbearance if this looks like presumption.

I do not think I could ever have had courage to make the attempt to write if it had not been for the word you dropped as we said good-by at our association at Southampton. I said, "How much the SIGNS has been to me." Your answer was, "You have never told me so," with a gentle reproving look.

Inclosed please find one dollar to aid in sending the SIGNS to the poor of the flock.

Very unworthily, yet in hope of a better life,

LIZZIE SCHIEFER.

ELGIN, Oregon, Nov. 5, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —Having been requested to write an account of a little trip among the brethren and friends, I will try to comply with their request, and leave it to you to do with as seemeth good.

I left home Friday before the fourth Sunday in October, and went to Mizpah Church, located at Touchet, Wash. We had two services Saturday and one Sunday. There is comfort in going to a church where all the members come out, and I think they were all out but brother and sister Alexander; this sister had been in bed the past eleven weeks with typhoid fever, but was improving some at the time I was there. Elder Jesse Thornton met me at this church, and after meeting Sunday Elder Thornton, his wife and I went to friend Baker's and spent a pleasant evening and morning there; I think it was about 1 a. m. when we retired. The next day (Monday) friend Baker took me to Walla Walla, and brother Thornton went home. At Walla Walla there are a few Baptists, and they got together Monday night and I tried to talk to them of the "sure mercies of David," at brother Sheff's house. I enjoyed my stay there. Tuesday I stayed with my wife's cousin, W. E. Waggoner, who is also a Baptist. Tuesday evening I went to Dayton, Wash. There is a church at that place, but as it was not their meeting time there were a few gathered in at a private residence and we had a little meeting. I stayed while there at Elder J. T. Barnes' home. Wednesday I started to Charity Church, in Idaho, to be with them Saturday and fifth Sunday. Friday night it snowed some and rained a little at times, and Saturday there were but few out. The roads were bad, and I was not feeling that I was sent, but we

had a very good meeting. Sunday the weather was worse than the day before, but they came out even if it did rain, the house was full, and I thought the best wine was kept till the last. I was to talk at a schoolhouse Sunday night, but it rained so they phoned from place to place and called in the appointment. I left Monday morning for home, and reached there Thursday evening, Nov. 4th, and found all reasonably well, and hope I was thankful. I visited three churches while gone. The round trip was six hundred and eighty miles. This will give the eastern Baptists an idea of what one has to do to visit among the churches out here. I was made to see how little, weak and unworthy I am. Who am I that the brethren should do and care for me so kindly as they did? and they comforted and strengthened me, not only by their presence at meeting, but by words of approval and encouragement. This I think is their duty to one truly called, but O, am I one? I am so weak and little, and ought to be taught instead of trying to teach; every one it seems treated me the best. They all so acted that I am glad to call them my friends, and may the good Lord so lead us that we may ever be united in this sweet love and dwell in peace, is my prayer.

Yours in hope,

T. E. ATTEBERY.

TIOGA, Pa., Dec. 1, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We are saved by grace, and not by works, lest any man should boast. What have we to boast of? We brought nothing with us into this world, and can take nothing out; all we have here God has given us, therefore we have nothing to boast of in our natural life. God gave us that life, and by that life we come into possession of the things of life. We are taught natural things because we have natural life and we desire the things of the earth. By that life we become exalted, or puffed up, thinking we are something when really we are nothing. When God in his own time gives us spiritual life, then we are made to love the things we once hated, and hate the things we once loved; we are humiliated and brought down; we cannot even look up to the throne of God, but smite our breast and say, Father, be merciful to me, a sinner. Of what then can we boast? Boasting is excluded. We cannot claim any merit on our part. We then know that God has all power in heaven and in earth; there is no power but what is ordained of God. No man or school can teach that dividing line between the natural and the spiritual life; God's word only can divide. His word is sharper than any two-edged sword; when he speaks it stands fast. When he said, "Let there be light," light was. There is no power that can resist God; we are as clay in the potter's hand; He can make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor. We cannot add one cubit to our stature, or make one hair black or white. There are only two classes of people in this world: the believer and the unbeliever. The believer, by the revelation of God, knows that he is a sinner, and knows his heart is deceitful and desperately wicked, and that of himself he can do nothing; his works are as filthy rags. There is no boasting in him now, he knows that God must direct his steps and must guide him, and that He does lead him in ways he knew not of, and in that path which the vulture's eye has never seen, nor the lion's whelp trodden. The unbeliever thinks he must work out his own salvation, and that it depends upon him, and is trying to climb

up some other way. He is trying to steal the inheritance by his false testimony. God, by his Son Jesus, has willed to his children that which they will receive at the appointed time of the Father. Thanks be unto God, these things are kept safe and sure for his people.

If you desire to throw this in the waste-basket, all will be well with me.

Your unworthy brother,

C. S. BOND.

WARWICK, N. Y., Dec. 28, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed please find four dollars to pay for the past year, 1909, also to pay for the coming year, 1910. I thank you for sending the paper to me last year. I was thinking all along I would give it up at the end of the year, but find it is very dear to me. Each paper is laden with many good letters from wanderers in the wilderness, reaching a poor, hungry traveler. How the cry pierces the heart of one it reaches! They are like a flock of sheep when they feed, all are in a huddle, but let one get out of the fold, how quickly it lifts up its head and bleats. So it is with poor, lone ones when we are shut off from church privileges and among strangers, we seek our own; but O how near together all are in Christ, our Elder Brother. Who of us is more alone than he when he was upon this earth and suffered for our sake?

Sister McKinney's letter in the last paper is very dear to me. I wish I could write as some do, but I cannot, I am a poor writer, but of this I do feel sure, if I know anything: they all tell the same story of Jesus and his love; they come from the east, west, north and south, some old and crippled with age, some on sick beds; each child is filling his or her place, each has his or her gift as it is given them, and ought to use it, for it is only loaned to us, it is nothing we have wrought. I want to say right here that I am not fit, nor do I feel fit, to be called a child, for I come so far short of any good act or deed. If I am anything it is through the precious blood of Jesus.

We have good preaching here; Elder Lefferts is a great gift to us, and we are blessed. May we all be blessed in the coming year, as we have in the past, and may He who is the giver of every good and perfect gift be with you all and enable you with health and strength to fill your places while in this life, for the good of the SIGNS and its readers.

Please excuse my many mistakes and blunders, and forgive me for writing so much. With love and fellowship I am, I hope, your little sister,

NETTIE DOLSON.

CATSKILL, N. Y., Dec. 19, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—I inclose check for renewal of my subscription for our family paper, which belongs to the whole household of faith, and feel to say a word to you of how I appreciate your labor of love in the care and faithfulness of the truth contained in its columns, and also to those who contribute to the same. Brethren, please write on (and often) for the SIGNS; you are not aware how much it strengthens the weak ones and builds them up on the most holy faith of the gospel. We are commanded to speak often one to another, and as we are a scattered and peculiar people it seems to me to be a blessed means of fulfilling that command. While all, perhaps, cannot write to their own satisfaction, often it satisfies one of the little ones we know not of. You brethren who have tarried at Jerusalem and been endued with power from on high, received the heavenly

gift, put not your light under a bushel, but let it shine. The Savior said by the mouth of Isaiah, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God," so I conclude this command is as much to those who minister to-day as in the olden times. Let us as the children of God have all things common; when you see the beauty of divine and heavenly things opened to your understanding, share it with your brethren with humility and love, and so fulfill the law of Christ. It is a rare thing for me to read a communication in the SIGNS in which I am not comforted at one time or another. In our experience we nearly all travel the same paths and look for the landmarks by the way.

"The good old way that leads to God,
Which saints in every age have trod."

Paul wrote many bitter things against himself, such as modern theologians would blush to confess, yet it has been manna to every hungry soul since, and will be in the ages to come; so, brethren, never mind how it looks to you, the message will be food to some of the sheep, which you are commanded to feed. When His word goeth forth out of his mouth it shall not return unto him void, but shall prosper in the thing whereunto he sends it.

With love to all the household of faith, I am your brother in hope,

JAMES E. MOORE.

TEMPLE, Okla., Dec. 21, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription expired the 15th of this month you will find inclosed draft for three dollars, for which please set my figures forward for another year, and place one dollar to the credit of some one who is not able to pay for the SIGNS. I wish I could send you one or more new subscribers, but I do not know of a single SIGNS OF THE TIMES Baptist near here. There are quite a number here who claim to be Primitive Baptists, but they cannot stand absolute predestination. They have a church near here of twenty or thirty members, I think, and wife and I have gone to hear them preach several times, and as far as we are able to judge they preach sound doctrine, but take pains never to use the word "absolute."

Before I go any farther I will say that I am not a Primitive Baptist, but if I know myself I truly believe in the doctrine of absolute predestination. My wife and I have been readers of the SIGNS for more than thirty years, and we hope to be able to read it thirty years more, if we should live that long.

Wishing the editors, managers and readers of the SIGNS a happy Christmas and a prosperous new year, I will close.

Yours respectfully,

T. A. TANDY.

ORLANDO, Fla., Nov. 13, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—Once more I inclose one dollar for your good paper. I have not been paying for it in a long time, but it has been because I am one of the poorest of the poor, and not able to keep it paid up. I thank you and the dear readers, and thank the Lord for your kindness in sending me the paper, although I am not worthy of your favors; I was not expecting the paper when I could not pay for it. I see in the SIGNS the dear readers are sending in contributions to aid in sending the paper to the poor of the flock; the Lord will reward them for their good deeds. I am a poor wanderer in this low ground of sin and sorrow, and if it were not for the sweet hope I have in Jesus I would be miserable indeed.

I just wanted to tell you I enjoy reading your paper very much, and thank you for your kindness.

SARAH J. BRANSON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1910.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

HEBREWS IV. 15.

"BUT was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

There is no more wonderful mystery than that the holy Son of God should be tempted as we who are unholy are tempted. But though it seems impossible that one who did no sin, and in whose mouth was no guile, and who was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, could feel temptation, yet the divine testimony is that he did feel all the temptations to which his people are subject. We recall having heard or read in former years long discussions as to how the blessed Jesus could feel temptation. It seemed to the writers easy to see how sinners by nature could be tempted, but how the sinless One could be tempted at all seemed to them to demand much explanation. We recall also that as a general thing these attempts to show how the Master could feel temptation, though there was nothing in him that could or did respond to the temptation, seemed to us very unsatisfactory. What we have seen from the pen of others has not encouraged us to try to make the matter clear. It was said by the blessed Master, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." The prince of evil comes to us and finds much in us that belongs to him. The traitor in the camp is ever ready to open the gates to the foe. Satan and the world could have little power over us were it not for the flesh which dwells with us and is in league with these outward foes. We are not holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. A spirit of evil called the flesh, the old man, the law in our members, rises up ever to meet every evil suggestion from without; yea, more, were we to be shut out of reach of the temptations of the devil and the allurements of the world we should still find our hearts lusting after evil and our imaginations running abroad after it. Not only are we tempted by evil from without, but with evil that is within. Our nature is a wilderness since the fall, in which grows every noxious weed and every evil and foul-smelling thing. "Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." Satan comes to us, and finds all manner of noxious and savage and unclean beasts dwelling in our nature, and all that is needful for him to do is to present enticing things, and straightway every vile passion arouses itself and runs to do as he suggests. But we must not think for a moment that the nature of the blessed Lord was such a wilderness as this; it was in his human nature that he was holy, undefiled and separate from sinners. It was of his human nature it was said that he "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." It was of his human nature that he said, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." In his divine nature there could be no thought of sin, and it did not need it should be said of that, that he was holy, but it was needful we should be assured that as a man he was free from all sin

and guile. Because of this, Jesus overcame in the conflict. Had there been (and we would speak with reverence here) one taint of evil in the blessed Jesus, one thought or emotion that was or could be pleased with evil, then had Satan won a victory over him, and all our hopes would have perished. Could there have been one moment's yielding in the secret thought of the Son of man to the allurements of the devil, that moment there would have been sin upon his garments, and from that time he could not have been pronounced holy or undefiled. In such a case Satan would have the victory, and Jesus would have been defeated. But there was no yielding in the blessed Savior. Not for one moment was there any pleasure felt in this holy Man at the approach of sin. That which entices our poor, weak hearts, was met with, "Get thee behind me, Satan," from the heart of the man Christ Jesus. Thus he overcame in the conflict, and thus he remains our faithful Friend and Savior, and our strong tower in time of temptations; and also because as a man he was free from all sin and guile he could be our sacrifice. Nothing can be clearer from the Scriptures than that the great Sacrifice for our sins must himself be perfect. An imperfect sacrifice could not be accepted of God, nor could the law and justice of God be pleased with such a sacrifice. Had one taint of evil been found in the Master the death upon Calvary would have been wholly in vain. Had Jesus been weighted with sins of his own he could not have carried our sins, nor have made atonement for them. Every sinner must die for his own sins, how then could a sinner die for the sins of others? This truth every bloody type under the legal covenant bears witness to. Every sacrifice before God in the tabernacle, and afterwards in the temple, must be without blemish if it were to be accepted of God. It is very striking to notice the care with which it is repeated again and again that such sacrifices must be without blemish. These blemishes are types of sin. The people were full of blemishes, and so could not be accepted in themselves, but because of this, sin-offerings and trespass-offerings must be faultless. It is not to be questioned that all these sacrifices pointed to the one great sacrifice yet to come, Jesus the Lamb of God. Thus old testament types and new testament declarations concerning Jesus agree altogether: a sacrifice for sin must be sinless. Such an expression as, "His own self bare our sins," and others similar, as, for instance, He was made sin for us, do not mean that sin became infused into his nature, so that his nature was sinful as is ours, at all. It is manifest that this cannot be so, if Jesus be indeed and in truth our sin-bearer, our sacrifice. He bare not his own sins, but ours. The scapegoat must be without blemish, but upon his head the high priest confessed the sins of the people, and then he bore away, not blemishes of his own, but the sins of the people, into the wilderness. We must never think of understanding the expressions referred to just now, or any others similar, to mean that the blessed Master possessed one taint of sin in and of himself. But because of this very truth he did bear our sins in his own body on the tree. Our hope is in this then, that Jesus was indeed holy from the first to the last of his pilgrimage on earth.

All the temptations of the dear Savior came from without, and never from within. We naturally at once in our minds turn to the time after the Savior's baptism, when he was "led," as one evangel-

ist says, or "driven," as another says, into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. But while this is so, let us remember that his whole life was one of temptation and trial. There was no rest for him in this warfare until he arose a conqueror over all. At the first the assault of the enemy was hurled directly at him. Afterward the enemy did not desist from assaulting him, but it was in ways more indirect, through the opposition of men, the unbelief, weakness and ignorance of his disciples, and the sufferings of his whole life below. In whatever way temptation comes to us, according to the text, it came to him also, and whatever temptation comes to us came also to him. He was tempted in all points. But as so full a narrative is given by inspiration of the temptation in the wilderness, it seems proper and right to speak especially of that scene as the time of the Savior's temptation. He "was led by the Spirit," he was driven of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted. That this was some place not far from Jordan is evident from the narrative. The wilderness was some place, just as literally as were the forty days of his fasting literal. It it said that he was with the wild beasts. He was alone, so far as all human companionship was concerned. Afterward he came to Galilee from the wilderness and preached his gospel, and it is said that he returned from Jordan before being driven into the wilderness. If Galilee and Jordan are places to which or from which he came, then the wilderness was also a place. There can, of course, be no objection to saying that the people of God are in the wilderness of this world during all the time of our temptations, and Jesus was in the wilderness of this world with his people. But this was true of all his earthly ministry, and not only of this one part of his life, but in him there never was anything like the wilderness that is in us. Though living his life in the flesh with us, yet he was always without sin; in him no noxious weeds were found; in him no evil beasts crept forth.

It is never said of any other man that he was "led by the Spirit" into the place of temptation, or driven of the Spirit into that place, but of the Master this is said. The meaning, as it seems to us, is this, that he must know our temptations. For this purpose he came into the world. Stress was laid upon him, causing him to endure all that his people ever can endure. For this cause he was born and came into the world. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" That he was led or driven of the Spirit into the wilderness, to the end that he should be tempted of the devil, was in fulfillment of the purpose of God that he should be one with his people in all things. He was made like unto us. Such a High Priest became us, or was suitable for us. Such a sacrifice must be ours, if we are to be saved. Such a companion must be ours if we are to find help and strength for our times of temptation, and this was the purpose of God in his thoughts of mercy toward us. Out of his everlasting love he purposed our salvation. A needful part of that salvation was that Jesus should be tempted of the devil, therefore he was led of the Spirit to the place of temptation, and he was tempted of the devil. In the narrative it is said that the devil came to him and that the devil left him. Whatever these expressions may be understood to mean, this much at least is clear, viz., that Satan had no lodging-place within him, and that the temptation was from without. The preposition "to," where it is

said in Matthew that the devil came "to" him, signifies "toward," in that place. This is a truth to which we cannot attach too much importance, for the reason given before, viz., that otherwise he could be no real sacrifice for sinners. If he must be separate from sinners surely he must also be separate from Satan, and so, as the temptation came from the devil, it did not come from within. Yet he knew what sore temptations mean, and in the connection of the text we read, "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities," and in the last verses of the second chapter of Hebrews we read, "Therefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren." "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." Of this first expression just quoted it might be said, if considered by itself, that he was made like us in our sins, as well as in all other things, were it not that Paul in the text shows that he does not mean this, when he says, "yet without sin."

In the temptation in the wilderness one thing stands our very prominently, viz., that the force of all the temptations was hinged upon the question, "If thou be the Son of God." Satan urged upon the Savior these truths in this clause, "If thou be the Son of God," viz., that if he were so the Father must love him supremely, that all power was his, that there was therefore no need that he should suffer hunger, that it was his to rule in all the universe, and that all the world belonged to him as its ruler and judge. Why then be hungry? Why then be without friends, or a place to lay his head? Why then remain in such lowly guise, when presently he might subdue all things to his sway? The temptations themselves, as it has appeared to us, cover all that any man ever felt any desire for, and was ever tempted to secure at the expense of disobedience to the word of God. It is not our purpose here to point out more than this general truth. But every one of the three temptations gathered their greatest force from the first sentence, "If thou be the Son of God." In this Jesus becomes our companion, our brother. If our assurance of our sonship be clear, temptation becomes weak indeed. But here is our sorest trial, Am I his, or am I not? In the full assurance that God is our Father, we can endure and conquer in all the warfare, but when oppressed with doubt as regards this one vital truth we are weak in every direction. Our Jesus has felt this also, and so knows how to save us. What infinite consolations abound then in this truth, that he was tempted as we are, and in all points, and still more, what strength there is for us in that other sublime truth expressed in the words, "yet without sin."

Our mind has been led much of late to this, and we have written with the hope that to some who may read this there may be a blessing in these thoughts. But we have labored all through the writing of this under the feeling that the theme is too sublime for any words we can find to use. At the best we but stammer and falter when we would speak or write of such wonderful mysteries. C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

CHURCH AND ORDINANCES.

I WOULD like to see the editor's views on the subject of the organized church, and also the supper and baptism as ordinances. There is a doctrine taught in this country that all ordinances were done away in Christ's sacrifice. Please reply if you have time.

As ever, S. S. TAYLOR.

MITCHELL, Ark., Oct. 20, 1909.

The subject suggested by brother Taylor is one of the most important that can occupy the mind of man, and were we equal to it it would be a pleasure to grant our brother's request. It is true that we have had pleasant meditations upon the church and her ordinances, and have tried to speak of her beauty and perfection, but never to our own satisfaction, always feeling, as did the queen of Sheba when she had seen all of Solomon's wisdom and the house that he had built: "The half was not told."

Brother Taylor asks about "the organized church." We would say, the church of God is the most perfectly organized body on earth; no man can find a flaw in her organization, but just when the organization took place has been to us a question many years. The expression, "The church set up on the day of Pentecost," is, and has been, common among our people since we have known anything of them, and no doubt long before. For some years after we united with the church we accepted the term without question or investigation. One day the question, What is the church? came into our mind with such force that we could not throw it off. Over and over again it came until we were really troubled. We could not answer except in the following way: A body of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Then this question came: When, since the days of Abel, Enoch and Noah, was there a time when the earth was without believers, by faith, in Christ, the Son of God, the sacrifice for sin? In searching the Scriptures we could not find a time, nor have we since. When He came he found faith in the earth, demonstrated in Simeon, Anna and others. After the baptism of the Savior he chose, called and ordained twelve men to be his disciples; they believed in him and confessed him as "the Christ, the Son of God." They were sent out to preach the kingdom of God, and through faith in Christ cast out devils and healed the sick. (Matt. x. 8.) They also baptized believers in Christ. (John iii. 22; iv. 1, 2.) Their preaching and their baptizing was by the authority of Jesus, who also gave them the law of the new covenant, as recorded in the fifth and eighteenth chapters of Matthew, and the thirteenth chapter of John. He also instituted the ordinance of the supper, commanding his disciples to observe it in remembrance of him. After his death and resurrection he commanded the apostles to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature (Jew and Gentile), but he also commanded them to tarry in Jerusalem until endued with power, unction and revelation to preach salvation to all nations through the blood of Christ. There were in Jerusalem with the eleven apostles (Judas having fallen by transgression) about one hundred and twenty. Were they idle spectators, or believers in Jesus Christ waiting for the fulfillment of the promise? If the latter, were they not the church of God? Paul in 1 Corinthians xv. 6, assures us that Jesus after his resurrection appeared to "above five hundred brethren at once." He called them "brethren," and if brethren, were not they a part of the church of God, though not present with the hundred and twenty on the day of Pentecost? In Acts ii. 41, we find that about three thousand souls were added unto them on

that day, and verse forty-seven says: "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Had there been no church, could there have been any addition to it? and were the three thousand added any more the church than the one hundred and twenty who were, no doubt, the witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus? Again, what ordinance has the church to-day that Jesus did not institute and command while yet in the flesh? All the above questions were in our mind when exercised upon this important subject, and are more or less with us now, hence we wonder if the church was organized, "set up on the day of Pentecost," or did Jesus organize it by choosing and ordaining ministers, sending them out to preach, giving them the gospel law, or law of the new covenant, and instituting every ordinance of the church while in the flesh? But since we all know the church is organized, it makes but little difference when it was done, yet we, and others we are sure, would like to know. The church is the body of Christ, and if we are members of that body all is well now and shall be hereafter.

With regard to "all ordinances passing away in Christ's sacrifice," it is true, but such a statement needs to be qualified. Every ordinance of the old covenant did pass away in the crucifixion of Christ, because he nailed the handwriting of ordinances to his cross, taking it out of the way. He was the end of the law in every sense of the word, yet not its destruction, but fulfillment as our Daysman as well as in all shadows and types. John the Baptist baptized with water unto repentance or the turning away from every ordinance and ceremony of the old covenant, yes, even from the thought that they who had that covenant should be justified and saved because they were the children of Abraham. The priesthood of that covenant only pointed to the priesthood of Christ; all the blood of beasts offered for sin only pointed to the blood of the Son of God, which cleanseth us from all sin; the temple and all its service only pointed to the spiritual sanctuary.

The ordinance of baptism belongs only to believers in Christ Jesus, and in it is presented death, burial and resurrection. The expression, "putting on Christ in baptism," means an open confession of him as our crucified, buried and risen Lord. In such confession one's faith in him as the Redeemer of sinners, and the only way to God, is made manifest. Not only is baptism an ordinance of the gospel church, but all believers are commanded to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, thus denying all deeds or ordinances of the law in salvation from sin, for "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight."

The institution of the ordinance of the Lord's supper ended the passover feast, as was observed at certain times at the command of God from the day the Israelites were delivered from Egyptian bondage until the gospel. The blood of the paschal lamb in Egypt meant salvation to every Israelite in that land when the destroying angel passed over; every house of the seed of Abraham was marked with that blood, hence it was called "the paschal lamb." This scarlet line from the offering of Abel to the sacrifice of Christ is seen in all the Scriptures. The flesh of the paschal lamb was roasted with fire, and the Israelites were commanded to eat it with bitter herbs, showing the suffering of Christ and the experience of his people. They were also

prepared for the journey before them; their loins were girded, shoes were upon their feet and a staff was in their hands. That supper signified everlasting deliverance from the dominion of Pharaoh, and because of that deliverance, through the mercy and faithfulness of God, they were to observe that supper in remembrance of the great victory. Jesus was the antitypical paschal Lamb, and at the supper he said to spiritual Israel, "This is my body, which is given for you," and of the wine he said, "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you." "This do in remembrance of me." Thus we "eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood." "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us," and through his blood every child of God is delivered from bondage and the dominion of Satan, for "the promise is sure to all the seed." Now, instead of remembering the victory of Israel in the land of Egypt and commemorating that passover supper, we eat and drink in the house of God in remembrance of Jesus and the victory over death, hell and the grave through his body and blood.

The redeemed are pilgrims, traveling to the land of rest; they are also equipped for the journey, having on the whole armor of God. Salvation they have for a helmet, righteousness for a breastplate, truth for a girdle, faith for a shield, the word of God for a sword, and their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. We hope no Old School Baptist would deny the ordinances above mentioned as being of God, and therefore belonging to his church. These things are embraced in "the order of his house."

Brother Taylor, this is the best we can do in complying with your request, and hope you will pardon our inability to do better. K.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder P. N. Moyers, at his residence, Goin, Tenn., Dec. 18th, 1909, Caney Head, of Goin, Tenn., and Miss Hattie McGuire, of the same place.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at the residence of the bride's mother, Wednesday evening, Dec. 1st, 1909, David S. Blackwell, of Montgomery, Somerset Co., N. J., and Miss Helen Servis, of Hopewell, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

It becomes my painful duty to have to record the departure of my beloved wife, **Priscilla Spindle,** who fell asleep in Jesus Nov. 26th, 1909. Her maiden name was Bradshaw, the fourth daughter of Walter N. and Lydia Bradshaw. She was born Sept. 21st, 1840, in Loudoun County, Va., where she lived until Sept. 12th, 1903, when she was united in marriage to the writer, by Elder E. V. White; the rest of her days were spent in Fairfax County, where she adorned her home. She was a true wife, affectionate, kind and thoughtful. As a stepmother she was devoted to her children, and their love for her was truly manifest. In this she made my life most happy. As a christian she was devoted to the cause, and was seldom absent from the meetings of the Frying Pan Church, I think not more than three times in six years. It was her chief delight to meet with the brethren and talk of the things of the kingdom. She was charitable in her views, and always ready to assist her brethren, not only in word, but in deed. She will be remembered by many who have attended the Virginia Corresponding Meeting. She received a hope in Christ many years ago, but always spoke of her unworthiness. She was received by the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church, and baptized by Elder E. V. White, Nov. 9th, 1884, where she remained a consistent member until death. Her health had always been good, though she complained some the last few months, but never ceased her usual duties until the 12th of the month, when she had a hemorrhage of the brain, which affected her mind for a few hours, after which her mind was clear. She talked freely of her hope, often saying, "I know the Lord is good to me; he is my only hope." She was sitting up in bed talking with me, and said she felt much better, but in a moment received another stroke and passed away in less than ten minutes, without a struggle or apparent pain, and while I know she is better off to be with Christ, where there is no parting, yet there are none except those who have passed through like affliction can know the loss I feel. My prayer is that the Lord may reconcile me to his will in all things. Besides the writer and the church, there are left to mourn one sister and one brother: Mrs. Lydia J. Thrift and George W. Bradshaw, and many other relatives and friends. May the Lord

sanctify this dispensation of his providence to each one according to his purpose, is my humble prayer.

The funeral service was held in the New School Baptist meetinghouse, in Leesburg, conducted by Elder Horace H. Lefferts, who used as a text Philippians i. 21. A large number of the brethren and friends gathered to pay their last respects, after which the body was laid to rest in the Leesburg Cemetery, to await the summons from on high, when she will arise with the likeness of Christ, to dwell with him and go out no more forever. While we mourn, it is not without hope. R. L. SPINDLE.

CENTREVILLE, Va.

Sarah A. Redish, formerly Staton, departed this life on the morning of Dec. 20th, 1909, after a painful illness of eight days, first with pleurisy, then pneumonia. The subject of this notice was the last daughter and child of Elder Warner Staton and Mary his wife. She was married to John Redish, April 21st, 1863, born Jan. 8th, 1828, baptized August 11th, 1858. Five children were born as the fruit of that union, all of whom are living and were present at her funeral, one a member of the Nassaongo Old School Baptist Church with her. Many who see this notice will have their minds refreshed with the memory of the wonderfully attractive traits of character shown forth in the life of this dear sister, as she was widely known by Old School Baptists. She was as a shining light, wherever she went she left an impression with old and young, colored and white. She was a living example in her home, in the community and in the church. I cannot see how any one could be missed more than she will be. She possessed clear views of the Scriptures, and could express them forcibly. We all loved the name and company of "Sally Ann Redish," as she was called. She was never absent from her meetings unless providentially hindered. All who are interested should feel to give thanks for the gift of such a mother and such a neighbor, and the church most especially for such a precious sister and sweet companion in the Spirit. We had been closely endeared to each other ever since I became pastor of the Nassaongo Church, in the year 1869. She seemed to think that she could hardly live without this poor, old, imperfect servant, but alas, he has to live a little while without her. O how sad! but that blessed hope of immortality beyond the grave lives, for Jesus said, "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." Her husband preceded her to the grave about eleven years. She died where she had lived since she was married, at the old homestead with her son. The family and the church feel the loss sustained very keenly, but may the good Lord enable us all to feel and say as Job did: "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away."

Her funeral took place from the home where she lived and died. I was called upon to officiate, assisted by Elder A. B. Francis. The text used was 1 Corinthians xv. 49: "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." Elder A. B. Francis took part in all the service. All that was mortal was then laid to rest beside her companion, to sleep in undisturbed repose until the trump of God shall sound and the archangel's voice be heard, then shall she come forth in the likeness of her glorified Head.

T. M. POULSON.

MASSEY, Va.

Ann McCammant Butler was born in Muskingum County, Ohio, July 5th, 1817, died at Seiling, Oklahoma, Oct. 5th, 1909, aged 92 years and 3 months. She was the eldest of six children born to her parents, Samuel and Rebekah McCammant. She was married to Elder John Butler in August, 1838, to which union eight children were born, six sons and two daughters, two sons deceased. Her husband died in Osborn County, Kans., May 26th, 1886. She with her husband moved from Ohio to Green County, Wis., in October, 1845. She united with the Honey Creek Church of Old School or Predestinarian Baptists in 1852, and was baptized by Elder Robert Jeffers. She and her husband moved from Green Co., Wis., to Fayette Co., Iowa, in 1880, and from there to Hampton, Franklin Co., Iowa, in 1882; from Hampton to Osborn Co., Kans., in 1883. Mother was the last of her family; she died in the faith she so long contended for, as firm as a rock. Her remains were brought to Gaylord, Kansas, and interred by the side of her husband.

Written by her son, SAMUEL BUTLER.

BROTHER **Jehiel Campbell,** of Cammal, Lycoming Co., Pa., died Dec. 30th, 1909, aged 75 years. He had lived all his life near where he died. His companion died several years ago. He leaves to mourn, a number of relatives, two or three brothers and half-brothers among them, also many friends, beside the church. He had been afflicted with paralysis for several years, but could get about some until two or three years ago, when he became almost helpless; he could hear and understand, but could not talk much. He enjoyed hearing the gospel preached as long as he lived. He lived with Matthew Stradley for some time before he died, who, with his wife, sister Stradley, did all that could be done to make him comfortable. He was baptized by Elder S. H. Durand about forty years ago, and was sound in the faith of the gospel. He has gone to his eternal home, from whence none ever return; the end of the world and time has come with him.

The writer attended the funeral Monday, Jan. 3rd, 1910, at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse; burial near the churchhouse. D. M. VAIL.

Sarah Elizabeth Cooper Pate was born in Platte County, Mo., April 2nd, 1843, and at the age of sixteen she, with her mother, brothers and sisters, moved to Atchison County, Kansas. April 16th, 1865, she was united in marriage to B. S. Pate, and to that union were born seven children: William, Laura and Lillian, deceased; Mrs. Esther Embree, Maud, Robert and Della, all of Dayton, Wash. Sister Pate united with the Old School Baptist Church called Union, in Atchison County, Kansas, and was baptized by Elder Jones. Her husband, Elder B. S. Pate, was ordained to the ministry while living here, and from some cause trouble sprang up in said church, which was so grievous that sister Pate withdrew, and she never attached herself to the church again, and about twenty years ago she, with her husband and children, moved to eastern Washington, settling in Dayton, where she lived and made to herself many friends by her kindness and christian charity to those in need. While she never again united with the church, yet her love was ever shown to her brethren, always making her home their home, and on the 25th of November the summons came which bereft Elder Pate of a faithful companion, the children of a loving mother and her neighbors and friends of a faithful, affectionate friend.

I was called to attend her funeral, which I did, and tried to lift the minds of the children and friends to a living Friend whose promises are vouchsafed in every time of trouble. Brother Pate was very sick at the time with the same disease that took sister Pate: pneumonia, and was not able to attend the funeral. After short services we laid her body in the city cemetery, there to rest in sweet sleep until God calls for the graves to give up their dead, and then we hope to meet in immortality to praise the Lord forever. J. T. BARNES.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

John Walker, D. C., $4.00; C. Stevens, Ark., $1.00; A Friend, Ill., $3.00; T. A. Ardies, Ont., $1.00; J. A. Tandy, Okla., $1.00; Mrs. M. M. Rounsavel, N. Y., $2.00; C. H. Vandike, Ill., $1.00; Dr. B. P. Earl, Ky., $1.00; Mrs. Benj. D. Bradner, N. Y., $1.00; Isaac Larowe, N. J., $2.00; Mrs. Jennie O. Cross, Ohio, $1.00; Mrs. Allie Gooch, N. C., $1.00.—Total, $19.00.

NOTICE.

We expect, Providence permitting, preaching in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., by the pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, the fourth Sunday in January, 1910, morning and afternoon at the usual hours. All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

Melrose Highlands, Mass.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Wm. J. Casey has changed his address from Lead Hill, Ark., to Dodd City, Ark., where his correspondents will hereafter address him.

MEETINGS.

The churches of the Roxbury Association will hold their fifth Sunday or quarterly meeting, the Lord willing, in Halcottsville, N. Y., Saturday and Sunday, January 29th and 30th, 1910. Meeting will commence at 11 a. m. on Saturday. We hope to see a large gathering of those who love the truth at this meeting. J. B. SLAUSON.

The Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

Claremont, Cal.

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BOOK NOTICE.

"CHRISTIAN SCIENCE AND THE LAW."

Because of the distressing information contained in orders for my Christian Science pamphlet respecting the great injury being done by this shameful fraud even among our dear Baptist people, I have tried in this second little work to expose it from a new point of view. Those not aware of recent developments at the headquarters of these people will be astonished almost to the point of doubting well-proven facts. I will mail two copies of this last sketch for ten cents (silver), or one copy and a copy of Christian Science and the Bible for ten cents. The price is not for profit, but to cover the bare expense. Hundreds of the first pamphlets were given away, and others placed where many could read them. If any good results from this effort to shield our brethren from this new delusion, the credit will be due our kind periodicals for calling attention to it.

S. B. LUCKETT.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Indiana.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 78. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1910. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

REVELATION XIX. 6.

"ALLELUIA; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

The word "alleluia" signifies, we are told, the praise of the Lord. John, the servant of the Lord, and our "brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ," "heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings," giving expression to this praise. In this voice the saints of the present, as well as in all the ages past, join as one. The thought conveyed in the language is that the Lord God rules supreme over all things everywhere in all ages, and that according to his own determinate counsel. How comforting this thought when received in faith by the child of grace individually, or the church of Christ collectively. It enables the believer to rejoice in tribulation; it comforts him in affliction, temptation, persecution, distress and threatening calamities; it enables him to rest securely in the gracious promises, knowing that He who has promised, being faithful, is able also to bring to pass all he has promised, and to say confidently with Paul, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Having the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto him, he is again persuaded with Paul "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." When resting in "the faith of God's elect," and exercised by it, though this body be racked by sickness and pain, though poverty and want stare him in the face, and all things seem to be against him, though he be ignored and ostracized by society for principle's sake, he can sweetly sing with Toplady:

> "Sweet in his faithfulness to rest,
> Whose love can never end;
> Sweet on his covenant of grace
> For all things to depend.
>
> Sweet in the confidence of faith
> To trust his firm decrees;
> Sweet to lie passive in his hands,
> And know no will but his."

But to him who has once enjoyed the exercise of this blessed faith in his own

heart, when it is denied him all becomes dark and uncertain, doubt prevails. If the Lord God omnipotent does not reign, and all things—anything, left to blind chance, who can but fear and quake at the thought of what may come next? but believing,

"Though plagues and death around me fly,
Till he bids I cannot die;
Not a single shaft can hit,
Till the God of love sees fit,"

we can, as a confiding child, wait, wait God's time for each successive thing, knowing not whether it will bring joy or grief, peace or trouble, pain or happiness, knowing in the end he will save us from our fears and cause that all things shall work together for our good. How blessed is this faith to the true believer, and the church, the collective body of true believers in God, in this dark and gloomy day, when it seems that the combined powers of Satan are turned loose to destroy this faith in the hearts of God's people. To those who love the ancient doctrine and order of God's house there has perhaps never been a more trying and threatening period of time, and were it not a fact that "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth," many would be tempted to give up in despair; this thought often gives comfort when all else fails. When we look out on the world we see the working of "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," in centralizing all forces; it seems intent to take from us as citizens of what purports to be a free country what is yet in part left to us, the liberties secured to us by the privations, struggles, hardships and blood of our revolutionary sires. The very watchword of the age is centralization, the centralization of everything, religious, social and political, and woe be to the man who dares lift his voice against things so popular. If in business, he must fall in line; if he enjoys the benefits of society, he must do its biddings; if he is a preacher, he must preach according to the popular demand or he is ignored and ostracized; if he has political aspirations, and sees and would talk and act against popular prevailing theories and practices, he had better keep quiet. It may be clearly seen that no power but the unseen ruling hand of Providence can check the rapid tendency toward the amalgamation of church and state. When we read of church federations, state and national, Missionary unions, Sabbath School unions, national and international, and various inter-church societies, such as the Young Men's Christian (?) Association and Women's Christian Temperance (?) Union, &c., the great preacher combine, styled "Anti-saloon League," it all means this: priestcraft, clergy rule, preacher domination. No one who pays any attention to current news in the secular papers to-day can fail to notice the pressure brought to bear upon all candidates for office, whether state or national, and the desperate efforts to dictate the policies of our government, whether state or national, by a combined preacher organization called the "Anti-saloon League." Like their predecessors in every age, they seize upon every plausible pretext to establish the habit or custom with the people of submitting to preacher rule. This habit they now have well under way, having possession of almost every avenue to the public mind from infancy, even every channel of education. With all the facilities now in hand and in use, how long will it be before they will have the reins of government full in hand and be collecting in taxes from a gulled public what they now beg? Who can tell? How terrible has been the reign of priest-

craft in the ages that are past! With governments under the domination of the clergy millions have suffered martyrdom with every indignity that could be conceived in the mind of the devil himself. If I am not greatly deceived in the signs of the times, we as a nation are rapidly approaching just such a condition of things. But all this in my humble judgment is but a fulfillment of things "written aforetime." There must be a development of all the great beasts mentioned in the book of Revelation, and this great centralizing movement is forming one (and I feel the last one) of them. How good it is, and ever will be, for God's children to trust him, believe in him, depend upon him. "Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." If I am not deceived, the grand purpose and sequel of all this is the separation of the dross from the pure metal and to make manifest the true servants of Israel's God. Every oath-bound secret organization goes to make up its quoto of this great beast of centralization, so it behooves us in this dark and cloudy day to heed the admonition of the apostle to the Corinthian Church: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." Dear fellow-soldiers of the cross, may God enable us to be valiant for the truth, and to endure hardness as good soldiers, to be patient, for evidently "God hath put it in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled." Then will God, who is not slack concerning his promises, manifestly bring his chosen off more than conquerors through him that loved them and gave himself for them. We, here in Texas, who fully believe all that is involved in the words at the head of this article: "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth," and that according to his own eternal purpose, have not only the things above mentioned to harrass and to grieve us, but even an element once identified with us and still bearing our own name, declare that we are heretical in doctrine because we contend for the doctrine above named, and though several years ago they set up nonfellowship bars against us, some of them continue to misrepresent us abroad. The latest came to me in a paper about one month ago, wherein a writer from Texas says in substance: The "absoluters" in Texas say the unfinished predestinarian theory makes God the author of sin. The truth of the matter is this: we have said, and so say yet, that if, as some in Texas have argued, God is the author of all he has predestinated, then it follows as a logical deduction that God is the author of sin, and they are the teachers of this theory, instead of us, as they have charged, for the very wicked things done by Pontius Pilate and Herod, the people of Israel and the Gentiles, were the very things God's hand and counsel determined before to be done. While God's hand and counsel determined beforehand what Pontius Pilate, Herod, the people of Israel and the Gentiles did, yet they themselves were the authors of the things done; so far as those people were concerned, God's predestination had no influence over them—was not the cause. I hope I love peace, and always desire to have and exercise the spirit of christian forbearance; I have no desire, however, to obtain it by a sacrifice of principle.

I could refer to other thrusts and misrepresentations of Texas Predestinarian

Grace Baptists, and I hope and feel with no spirit of revenge or resentment, but with a desire only to say to the readers of the dear old SIGNS, that no matter what you may have heard and read, a few of us here in Texas are, and have been, contending for the doctrine of predestination as the Scriptures set it forth, and as it has been contended for so long through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and after the manner which they (those who have gone out from us because they were not of us) call heresy, so worship we the God of our fathers, believing all things that are written in the law and in the prophets. It is, as some have said, wrong for God's people to divide and be contentious, but we should not forget that the Scriptures tell us of some who crept in unawares to spy out our liberties, and Paul said, "Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them;" and John said, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not of us." Now I think the trouble with the old order of Baptists to-day is, in many places, they have opened their doors too wide—have been over anxious to gain members, and therefore have adopted Arminian methods—have not been satisfied with the Lord's way of adding to the church daily such as should be saved, and in some instances the sons of God have gone in unto the daughters of men and giants have been born, and the giants were always among the enemies of Israel; not one of them was ever found with Israel in all her wars, but all against her. No foreign element was ever found long in sympathy with Israel; such elements could not long abide her laws and customs, but often they led Israel into idolatry. So it is with such worldly elements as may by the efforts of men be brought into the church nominally to-day; they will not abide by the primitive doctrine and order of the church, but will go out, often with much strife and contention, carrying for a time many of the children of Israel with them, thus leaving trouble and grief in their wake. From the Scriptures we learn there is a "must needs be" for these things, for it "must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" And "there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest." One Power alone—the Power over all powers, who himself ordained the powers that be, is able to bring order out of confusion, and bring all things to the one grand final sequel, viz., his own glory and the good of his people; that he will, according to his own eternal purpose, do.

May all his dear children with reverence and godly fear join in the grand anthem of praise, "Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

H. B. JONES.

WINNSBORO, Texas, Dec. 24, 1909.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Dec., 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I am sending with this, for publication, two excellent letters, one from our beloved brother, Elder C. W. Bond, and the other from our afflicted sister, Florence Pultz, of Wheeling, W. Va. My heart goes out in love and fellowship to them both. Brother Bond was a beloved brother and Elder among the churches here, and how we have missed him in his labors and companionship can never be told. How strange to us are the ways of Providence. Brother Bond

and the late Dudley G. Johnson were ordained in one of our sister churches just a few years ago. They were much needed, and they were truly good and precious gifts, which had made room for themselves in the hearts of all the people who believe in Jesus. Brother Johnson some three years ago was called from his labors of love here below, to dwell in the church triumphant, and this to me was a trial inexpressible. I loved him for his orderly walk in the truth; he ever walked humbly in the fear of God, and truly adorned the profession which he had made. Both these young gifts were patterns in their walk, and there was no ground of criticism concerning either of them. With what shame have I covered my face as I have observed them and remembered my former days. How important it is that the servants of God walk each day in the fear of the Lord, and honor Him who called them to this high vocation. How important to abstain from all appearance of evil, and to be of good report of them that are without, and this should be true of every member as well as of ministers.

Nearly a year after brother Johnson's death brother Bond removed to the far west. For a time I felt almost irreconcilable; it seemed desolate to me, and to all. I am often yet wondering why it is this way. I have had grave fears as to the result of brother Bond's western venture, being mindful of my own deeply tried experience of the west, which I experienced in the terrible grasshopper siege of three years, when there was famine, both of bread and of the word of the Lord, and so, after five long years, I returned to my home and the church. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, yet our God will ever deal wisely and justly with us. I have desired, as our dear brother is in the west, that there might be an open door set before him, for the Lord can make a way in the desert, and our brother's own preaching will commend him to the brethren wherever he goes. May the Lord bless him and his, and graciously remember the desolation here, and direct or send his true and faithful servants this way. This must be of Him who is able to supply all our needs.

Of our sister Pultz's letter I want to say that I much enjoyed it, feeling that it was written out of a pure heart, and in real childlike simplicity, which finds a response in our hearts. I think that I know something of those heart-yearnings and heart-burnings of which she speaks. How blessed it is that we can hear from each other through the SIGNS. I am often tempted as I read the precious letters in the SIGNS with such sweet comfort to take my pen and drop a line to the authors; then I think, What can I say that would benefit them? May these two letters be blessed to the comfort of others as they have been to me, and all shall be to the glory of God.

Another year is now closing, and how great has been the goodness, or mercy, of our covenant-keeping God. Have we not great reason to raise an Ebenezer of praise? I send new year's greetings to the household of faith, and pray for all needful blessings upon the editors and publishers of the SIGNS. I submit these letters to you without the consent of the writers, but I am sure that out of the goodness of their hearts they will bear with me. Do with this letter of mine as you see fit.

With love, I trust, unfeigned,

P. W. SAWIN.

BAKER CITY, Oregon, Oct. 10, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER SAWIN:—We received your welcome letter a few days ago, and were glad to hear from you. We are always glad to hear from the poor and afflicted, the chosen of the Father. There is a thrill of joy and encouragement imparted by the communications of those who feel themselves wholly dependent upon the divine Arm for every earthly as well as every heavenly blessing. As I know that you are wholly committed to that kind of faith which is of divine planting, it is a comfort to receive your letters, although they often speak of trials and tribulations hard to be borne, yet He who sends them in wisdom so metes them out that they prove a blessing to you spiritually, and also to those whom you are called to comfort. We are assured that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Sometimes it is hard to see the good coming to us in many of our tribulations, but still we believe that some time it will be made manifest that there never was an uncalled for event in life, or one act, trial or tribulation that was not necessary for the full growth and development of the child of God. The children of God are such peculiar characters that they cannot know many of their own peculiarities themselves, but the Father who has begotten them unto this lively hope knows all things, and in his wisdom and providence provides just what is needful to fully develop in the children obedience, thankfulness and faith, which will be to the praise and glory of his name.

I was sorry to hear of your sickness, but glad to learn that the divine presence was with you during your affliction. Doubtless the joy thus afforded you, thus confirming to that extent your relation to God and acceptance in the divine favor, was much more to you than the affliction which you felt. The presence of God at such times also assures us that our standing before him is not because of our own strength, and tells us of a time which must sooner or later approach, when heart and flesh and all physical strength shall fail, and earthly surroundings avail us no more. To that critical period we look at times with much anxiety, and we wonder whether the presence of God will be with us then. If he has been with us in our lesser trials and afflictions, may we not be fully assured that he will be with us in the last and greatest of all, and make it to be the entrance into that blissful life, in the hope of which we are living during all the time of our bodily afflictions? Our God is not the god I once heard described by an Arminian preacher at the funeral of a young man. He said that he told the young man a few days before, to look for Jesus when he should approach the dark river, and that if he looked he would be sure to see the Lord. Our God is one who takes us when we cannot look; and when all things else fail he is there with the everlasting arms underneath us. What a blessed assurance! What a blessed hope! Our Jesus has his abode in our hearts, and as we approach the dark river he lights all the way, and it is in his strength that we pass over to that blissful eternity which he has prepared for all the redeemed, from the foundation of the world. With such a Father and such a Savior we cannot fail in our journey; we cannot fail to reach the desired haven of rest. This shall be so, although the way is full of snares and dangers, and trials beset us on every hand. He who has called us is faithful,

and he will provide every blessing at the right time. His wisdom and predestination comprehend all things to the end. He declares that he will do all this, and that we shall conquer through him. But all these things are known to you better than I can tell you, for our God has taught and will teach them to all his children, and we can testify only of those things that we know and have learned of him, and our fellowship is in such testimony.

I am glad to hear of the good meetings during the Licking Association, and would have much enjoyed being there myself, but my steps were directed otherwise and I must not complain. Now write when you can. My family joins in love to all.

Yours in tribulation,

C. W. BOND.

WHEELING, W. Va., Dec. 11, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I have taken my pen in hand hoping and praying that the great Physician will come to my help and fill my poor, weak mind with matter fit for your perusal.

I was very pleasantly surprised when I received your precious letter, and read it over many times, and every word in it is good and true. But at the first my poor, foolish mind was too much elated and puffed up to receive the spiritual consolation with which it abounded, and this was the more so because I received a letter in the same mail from another strange brother in the flesh, who spoke of having read my letter in the SIGNS. If you good brethren could have known how my foolish head was turned by your kind letters I am sure you would have despised me in your hearts. I hated myself for it when I saw what a poor, weak, silly thing I was. I had often wondered of late why my mind was so shut up to all spiritual things. When I would try to write to any of the dear saints I would sit as one dumb, and could not think of anything, either spiritual or natural. I felt that it was good for me to be thus left in the darkness, knowing how prone I was to seek praise, and how I looked for it in every letter I received. I often wonder if there ever was another poor creature so beset with the spirit of pride as I am; I see it mixed with all my words and actions. It is hideous to me, and I loathe it every time I see it. Often I cry out with tears to the dear Lord to make me altogether forgetful of self. Surely I have seen afflictions by the rod of his wrath, but not enough yet to subdue this sinful self. Self is my great enemy and tormentor.

I started to say that I had wondered at the barrenness of my mind, but when your letter came, then I began to understand. I am too weak and foolish to be trusted with any distinguishing marks of the grace of God. Dear brother, I feel altogether unworthy to call you so, but our God has chosen the vile things so that no flesh can glory in his presence, and I can only presume on his mercy upon this ground. As often as I have wondered why I was chosen to hope in his mercy, this has been the answer: I am one of the "vile things." How true it is, as you say, he brought me by a way that I knew not. As to why he chose me, is altogether strange to me. I look back over my past life and I see nothing worthy in myself. I feel a certain degree of self-pity, and my eyes become dim with tears. Sometimes I think that I can mark out places where I received undeserved mercies from the Lord, and my tears start afresh as I think that even in my early days he was mindful of me. My dear

father and mother were God-fearing and God-loving people, and we children were brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. In my earliest recollection I had a great fear of God. I was fearful of going to the place of torment. I was very zealous for the honor of God, and if I heard his name taken in vain I became so enraged that I could have struck down the guilty one; but as I grew up into womanhood I became less concerned. Truly youth is a time of folly, and surely I wrought my share of folly, but all through it there would come an alarming voice to me, often when in the gayest of moods, and the words would be spoken, You must die. I would suddenly stop my gay laughter and idle conversation, and sit with heart and nerves quaking. I have felt my flesh turn cold, and would often wonder whether any one noticed the change in me.

But I had not intended to speak of myself, I wanted to speak of your good letter. You speak of your pathway having been so different from what you had thought. I believe that all the Lord's little ones have the same line of bitter disappointments. Newton describes this condition in one of his sweet hymns. Many years ago I found much comfort and encouragement in this hymn:

"I asked the Lord that I might grow
In faith, and love, and every grace;
Might more of his salvation know,
And seek more earnestly his face."

The third verse expressed my own feelings so well:

"I hoped that in some favored hour,
At once he'd answer my request;
And by his love's constraining power
Subdue my sins, and give me rest."

This was what I hoped for and expected, but in the fourth verse I read my own experience:

"Instead of this, he made me feel
The hidden evils of my heart,
And let the angry powers of hell
Assault my soul in every part."

I always look forward to Sunday, thinking that I may have a little time to read my Bible or hymn-book, or some of the Baptist papers, or to write to some of the dear saints, but often I find my mind more inclined to earthly things on that day than on any other. It was so with me yesterday, I tried to finish this poor letter, but found that I was entirely shut up. I read your good letter many times, hoping that its kind contents would stir me up and set my mind in motion, but I seemed to be without feeling of any kind. Now, as I scan the pages again, I am made to feel what a precious privilege it is to be called "sister." This is such a favor bestowed upon us by our dear Savior. We are actually one in him. This, too, is far above any earthly tie. I used to think it a hard thing, and could not well receive it, when our blessed Lord said, "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me," but now I trust that by his grace I have experienced the meaning of these words; I can in a measure understand the difference between the love of God and the love of a creature. I often think of the time when our Lord was told that his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak to him, or that they were seeking him; "and he answered them, saying, Who is my mother? or my brethren? And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother." "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." I think that I know what Paul meant when he said, "We know no man after

the flesh." Still this spiritual love will cause us to be very careful for the comfort of our kindred in the Lord; yea, this kind of love will make us kind even to our enemies. If we have the love of God in our hearts we cannot render evil for evil. It makes new creatures of us; where sin abounded, grace does now much more abound. We still feel the plague of sin in our members, and are daily made to mourn because of it, yet, my dear brother, am I, or are you, still pursuing the same course that we did before the Lord shined in our hearts? Do we still love sin, and roll it as a sweet morsel under our tongue? Are we still led captive by the prince of the power of the air? Who is it that rules in our hearts? I well know that in my flesh dwells no good thing. I know this, and yet the Scripture comes to my mind, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." In verse four Paul says, "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

But I will forbear. I remember that I am writing to one of the Lord's undershepherds, and feel as though I ought to keep silent in your presence. It is your kindness that has emboldened me to speak freely to you. I am thankful for your kind interest in my health. I must have spoken of being dropsical in my letter to you. I have been physically weak all my life, and have always had a weak heart. I am very short of breath, and suffer great pain if I sit in one position for any length of time. A few years ago I had a slight stroke of paralysis, and the physician said that I was liable to have another at any time. For a time I felt that my time on earth was short. I was surprised that I was not more willing to die. Finally the feeling that I was near death wore off, and I felt I had a new lease of life. My health was no better, but somehow I felt that my time to go had not come. From that time I have felt a great longing to commit my case into the great Physician's hands, and have felt to pray earnestly that I might not fall into the hands of any earthly physician. I know that God has all power in heaven and in earth, and how I do long to look to him alone for all my help, both spiritual and temporal. I feel that these afflictions are from his hand, and that they are sent for good. He has afflicted, and he can heal if he will. Without a great portion of his restraining grace I would be afraid to be healed of my infirmities in the flesh. Cowper says in one of his hymns,

"God in Israel sows the seeds
Of affliction, pain and toil;
These spring up and choke the weeds
That would else o'erspread the soil."

The following hymn has been made very precious to me:

"'Tis my happiness below,
Not to live without the cross,
But the Savior's power to know,
Sanctifying every loss.

Trials must and will befall,
But with humble faith to see
Love inscribed upon them all,
This is happiness to me."

I seem to see more of the dear Savior's love in the afflictions which he has sent upon me than in any other way; they seem to melt my heart into such tenderness and love that the dear, pierced hand that wields the rod is unspeakably precious to me. In spirit I have covered that hand with kisses. Once, some years ago, I was in great trouble, and often wept because I felt that I had received evil instead of good, and one night as I lay weeping over my wrongs all at once these words dropped into my mind, Be-

hold my hands and my side. At the same time I saw his dear hand thrust out toward me, and a great flood of love and adoration surged in my heart, and by faith I was kissing that dear hand; my grief was turned to joy. In all our afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saves us.

I hope that you will be as ready to pardon this long letter as I was to pardon what you termed your liberty in writing to me. Surely it is a sweet liberty that we, as one body, can take without any fear of giving offence. We are commanded to love one another with a pure heart fervently. I think that those born of God love with such a love as the Lord gives them.

But I must bring this long letter to a close. I feel as if I had not really answered your good letter. It contained much Scripture that seemed good and suitable to convey your thoughts. It made me feel that I wanted to read my Bible more than I had of late. I have had many good Baptist books to read, and while I do love to read them, I know that they take my time from the Bible. I feel lonely and restless for the company of the saints. How I long for the time when we shall all be together forever. I feel to say, Lord, come quickly.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

(MRS.) FLORENCE PULTZ.

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio.

DEAR EDITORS CHICK AND KER:—Having to send my subscription, I wish to say a few things about the precious letters and articles I read in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have often felt a special impression to write upon some subject, and, by delaying awhile, I found the very line of thought I had purposed to present, in much more acceptable form than I had in mind, so my delay proved a blessing to both the brother or sister who wrote and to myself. My feeble thoughts found better expression than I could have given them, and it afforded the other writers more room to express their joys, sorrows, experiences, conflicts and deliverances. There is no joy so great to me as a free flow of brotherly fellowship in the sacred realities of our precious faith. I am glad to welcome even the letters of those who have not in times past cooperated with the SIGNS in full fellowship, but in bitterness spoke of our precious faith in words of censure, even to the denunciation of them as dangerous to peace, and heretical in sentiment; but when I see their names attached to words of confession, and efforts to restore the union (their former zeal seemed to me to lead into confusion and distress,) I rejoice at the power of our God, who is able to restore peace to Zion. Indeed, I have not an enemy so bitter but that I can forgive all personal trespasses, if I can only see the evidences of full contrition for missteps against the order and peace of the church of God. I also feel that there is much allowance to be made for sectional use of words, phrases and ideas in which there are no essential differences of meaning. The past year has just begun a new turn in the tide of my life, in which I have felt renewed seasons of enjoyment not heretofore felt for fifteen years, and I have spent some time in the circle of Baptists before unknown to me, and I find that there are some, and I hope many, whose ideas of doctrine have been seriously disturbed either by mistaken understanding or by sad misrepresentation of ambitious aspirants after fame. A word like "absolute" is often objected to on the ground that it is not a Bible word, yet I doubt

not that there are many other words that might be objected to for the same reason. A sister in the south seemed to be of that mind until I had tried in my weak way to tell her how comforting the doctrine of the "absolute predestination of all things" is to me, and to her, if she could only see God's work of grace in it; if she could only get good out of everything that works together, as even the most terrible deeds that she could hear of in the doings of the world, if she loved God, would inspire a spirit of gratitude that he had been her keeper in such a wicked and perverse generation—had delivered her from the evil; and after I had treated the subject in all its most horrid features, in which it had been distorted, she seemed to rejoice that it was not so objectionable a doctrine as she had been led to suppose it was. It is God who alone can work all things together, not separately and in no unity of purpose over all, for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. I cannot limit the good to only one thing, nor to any class of things, but I do limit the good to them that love God.

Another class of people, led astray after the time salvation, lose sight of the fact that all salvation is only the work of Christ through the Spirit, and are led to think that God's people, after the new birth, are endowed with a kind of free agency, which, of course, is a very serious mistake, since the only claim that we can have of power is "through Christ which strengtheneth me," as Paul taught. I take it that it is only the strength of Christ with which we can begin or keep up our true spiritual action, and the whole line of spiritual life and gifts begin, are carried on and end in the full impulse of "Christ in you" (in us), and I sympathize with many who are misled to suppose that there is now a need of aiding the Spirit of Christ. I love to see zeal for the Lord's work, I long to see it myself, but I desire to "wait upon the Lord," to "be still," to "trust in the Lord," until he brings again the captives of Zion.

This thought reminds me of brother Peters' excellent thought concerning the outcast of Israel, and, I feel, a great prayer that God would turn their feet to Zion's hill, for I am well aware that there are many who will return, and even they who have been so seriously frightened away from the simplicity of the truth by unstable and emotional leaders, who either mistook the spirit of the faithful, or cared not for the unity of the flock.

I had hoped to write of some pleasing things and prospects for Israel, and I think I have a few; may God increase the number. I did want to tell a few of my impressions regarding the Old School Baptist ministry I have met during the past year; how God has taken them from all the walks of life, just as in days of old; one here and one there from the illiterate toilers, or farmers, some from the busy offices of clerks, railroad offices, bankers and merchants, some from professions, as doctors, lawyers and various stations of honor; but the greatest wonder of all is that I could find no great, no small, no rich, no poor, no high, no low, all sought, as I beheld them, the humble service of the saints and aspired to sound the richest praise to that sweet grace that each felt to be his need. With this coequaling gift of God may we hope to see our faithful ministry forever favored.

I cannot reach every one with a private letter, whose sweet counsel and brotherly exchange of experience endears their memory to me, and I often wonder at the sacred tie of fellowship I felt

while mutual, yet unimpassioned, tears told the silent story of fellow-feeling while rehearsing to each other the evidences of our mutual hope and faith in Christ. O that the Lord would bless the people of his pastures with fresh tokens of divine grace.

A. B. BREES.

ALVINSTON, Ontario, Dec. 20, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As I am sending you my remittance for the SIGNS, I will endeavor to add a few lines, though at times I am tempted to think it is the pride and vanity of my sinful heart that prompts me to write; at other times I feel it is a wonderful, mysterious working of the Holy Spirit within which begets a desire. I would like to have the esteem of all my brethren (which is natural I know), but of how much greater importance it is to have a "thus saith the Lord" for all we do or say, so I must leave it with you to judge whether it is a labor of love. I realize deeply my weakness and insufficiency, but Christ's strength is made perfect in weakness, as Paul has said, and we are fools for Christ's sake; we are weak, but he is strong.

Words fail to express the pleasure and comfort I receive from the dear SIGNS. No earthly friend is more anxiously looked for, and strange as it seems (to the natural mind) the writers, the greater part of whom I have never seen face to face, seem to know and understand me better than those of my daily acquaintance; their language expresses much of what I have understood from these words of holy writ: "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man."

I had thought to write of what a sweet season of exaltation I was favored to enjoy after the last October meeting at Lobo, which you dear editors both attended. The Dayspring from on high surely visited me, and I felt I would gladly tell it to the world around, but how can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land where there are lords many and gods many? The secret of the Lord is surely with them that fear him. I went to that meeting with earthly hopes and purposes scattered as with a whirlwind, and I felt bereft and silent to hear what words of comfort might be given me, for in my soul I was yet bearing the word of truth with a firmness that is hard to be understood. The heavy trials and sore conflicts which seemed mine alone were brought upon me I believe for the purpose of showing me my helplessness, and that man has nothing whereof to boast, but praise and honor belongeth unto God, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. I think I understand poor old David where he says, "When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth." How trying and humbling it is to our proud and foolish flesh to be made to feel that we are nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity, and our nature rebels against being crossed in everything, but experience teaches us that this is necessary to make us true disciples of the meek and lowly One. The words of the poet have seemed often to fit my peculiar case:

> "Crossed all the fair designs I schemed,
> Blasted my gourds, and laid me low."

Also,

> "These inward trials I employ,
> From self and pride to set thee free,
> And break thy schemes of earthly joy,
> That thou mayest seek thy all in me."

But you, dear brethren, came to that meeting not in your own strength, but in the strength of Israel's God, laden with good things from God's storehouse, and

there you bountifully fed poor, famishing souls. Though I felt unworthy of the privilege to mingle with the dear saints of God, it is my greatest comfort in this world to hear them talk of the glory of his kingdom and speak of his power. At the end of the following week Elder Vail visited with us in our home over night, and preached the following Sunday at Brooke. I felt it was good to be there, and was highly favored with sweet manifestations of God's love and tender mercy. I came home and felt it my duty to again take up the cares of this life, at the same time believing God to be a God of providence as well as of grace. But my heart was not heavy as it mostly is, but full of love (if not deceived). Faith seemed to triumph over all foes, and I had a kindly feeling given me towards those who opposed. When about my daily duties at times I was given such sweet access to his throne, and the dear Lord so broke in upon my soul, giving me such spiritual comfort and assurances from portions of Scripture that I verily felt to know what the fruits of the Spirit are. He surely gave me beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, and though now the real savor of it has partly left me, it strengthened my confidence and confirmed my hope. He will never leave nor forsake any of his little ones, but will keep them alive even in famine. While having that sweet, restful feeling, there would arise a fear that trials must come (and that I justly deserved), and I felt a shrinking from them, too, but we are commanded to endure hardness as good soldiers, so I pray the dear Lord to be with me and give me grace to bear with patience all the trials by the way, and reconcile me to every dispensation of his providence, for he doeth all things well and is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, while I am but a blind, ignorant, erring creature. I would ask an interest in your prayers; pray for me that my faith fail not.

I have written this as opportunity afforded, and it seems rather disconnected. Have I claimed too much? If you find anything in it not in accord with christian experience cast it aside. I would like to have either of your views through the SIGNS, if you feel to give them, on the fifth verse of the second chapter of Solomon's Song, particularly on, "I am sick of love."

From your sister in hope of eternal life,

(MRS.) W. C. YOUNG.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Jan. 11, 1910.

DEAR ELDER KER—MUCH BELOVED BROTHER:—Your card of the 7th inst. just received, inquiring after my spiritual and temporal welfare. I will say as to my spiritual welfare, I feel very poor in spirit indeed, especially when I read in my Bible that which condemns me; I come far short of its precepts and commandments all along my warfare of doubts and trials. I fear I am not what I profess to be, and feel a stranger here below, "what I am 'tis hard to know." There is one thing I do know: the things I once hated I certainly now love. It is a great consolation to the dear, faithful brethren when they meet and talk of the goodness of our great Benefactor, of his great mercy and of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We hope also that we have the right understanding of poor sinners saved by grace. I feel to know that without his love and mercy I am forever lost. I have often felt to praise his holy name, and feel to hope I am one of the poor in spirit, dependent all the time upon God to direct my steps, knowing that he is

my everlasting Prince of Peace, who is rich in mercy for his great love. I trust he hath loved me with an everlasting love, and hath quickened us together with Christ, and saved us by grace through our Lord Jesus Christ. Man has no part in the plan of redemption, for God's people were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; so, dear brother, we are living in a state of doubts and fears, seeking to know the truth, knowing our imperfections while in the flesh. God knows our mind better than we do, and we must try to be content in whatever state we may be in, knowing it is not in man to direct his steps. We are dependent upon Him for food and raiment and every breath we draw, and why should poor, mortal man claim to be an instrument in God's hand in saving souls? God is the potter, we are the clay, and he will fashion us as it seemeth good unto himself; none shall ask, What doest thou? God made all things for himself, yea, the wicked for the day of evil. All things were purposed and decreed, and shall come to pass in his appointed time and way. All the redeemed shall come with singing unto Zion, with everlasting joy; sorrow and mourning shall pass away. Who shall be afraid of man that shall die, or the son of man which shall be made as grass? O how careful we should be in this our natural life, and not attempt to put self in the paths of spiritual life; they cannot walk together, as one is contrary to the other; fleshly worship is only seen and heard by man; spiritual worship is with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, all the time depending on our heavenly Father to keep us unto himself, as we were bought with the precious blood of his only begotten Son. This is my only hope of immortal life.

I ask you, dear brother, when it is well with you to remember me at the throne of grace. My general health has been very good down to the present time. I am now bordering on my seventy-seventh year, which will be July 13th. I feel that I am drawing to the close of this present life, but I trust, if it is God's will, I may find my name written in the blessed Lamb's book of life, where there will be no sighing or sorrow, but praise to one God in a world that shall never end.

Dear brother, your card was somewhat of a surprise, and I could not imagine why you had written it, but after reading its contents I was thankful to know that you were interested in my spiritual and temporal welfare. Believe me, dear brother, I do appreciate your brotherly kindness toward me, though unworthy I feel myself to be. We are strangers in the flesh, but I trust not in the Spirit. I have always enjoyed reading your editorials, which are good, and written with an eye single to the glory of God, and trusting in God to direct your mind in the spirit of meekness and love for the cause you espouse in defending God's truth. It is a great comfort and consolation to read from the pen of God's servants who contend for the truth which was once delivered unto the saints, and when reading such articles I feel to write and indorse the doctrine I believe; not that I want to see my name in the SIGNS, but for the love and fellowship which I trust the good Lord has given me for those who contribute to its columns; but if I did not indorse the paper I would certainly hold my peace. Very likely I have written some views and thoughts that would not be expedient to publish, as they might not be agreeable to the household of faith, but the editors are at liberty to examine carefully anything I

may write, and see that it contains nothing that would hurt the feelings of some dear brother.

I have written my thoughts upon the important subject that ought to interest all who claim to love God. Try the spirits whether they are of God or of man. We are living in perilous times for the poor of the flock, through the inventions of man; God will not accept any man's person, for it is of the world.

I truly thank you, dear brother, for your kind interest in the welfare of a poor sinner saved by the grace of God, and I hope what I have written is in keeping with the teachings of the Bible. You can use it at your pleasure and all will be right with me.

Your brother, I hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—The inclosed letter is for your perusal, if the Lord will. May the writer glean with us and say, It is the Lord. To the natural mind it is all a mystery. "Great is the mystery of godliness." He related to me what I feel is a mystery. In June he was sick in bed; Elder Lester preached many hundred miles away, yet he felt he was hearing him preach, and saw the faces of those who were drinking it in as "living waters." Elder Sawin said he felt like Paul said: suffering in body, yet rejoicing in spirit. The theme of the preaching was the presenting of the bride to the Father. May the Lord hear the groaning of his prisoner (for it is the slave bound in chains that knows the worth of liberty), and guide us by his grace for his name's sake.

Cast this aside if you think best.

A PRISONER OF HOPE.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., June, 1909.

DEAR SISTER:—Your good letter was received, and I cannot tell you how much good your kind words did me. I am such a poor, little, insignificant creature that I am often wondering if a single thought, word or act is to the honor and glory of our God, therefore your assuring words gave comfort and hope in the Lord that my labor was not in vain, yet I was humbled in the dust to feel that I, who am a worm and no man, should be enabled by divine favor to both speak to your comfort and the glory of God. I think I can truly say that my one desire above all others is, if a servant of the Lord Jesus at all, that I may feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood, and to present the truth in a God-honoring way, and to daily walk in his fear. But, dear sister, my heart is so often far from him, and I fear greatly that I am one of those characters who draw nigh with lip-service, but their hearts are far from him. I fear when weighed in the balance I shall be found wanting, but somehow I have a humble hope that though so much is lacking in me, God for Christ's sake has pardoned my sins, and therefore made me acceptable in the Beloved. Therefore, viewed in the merits of Jesus' blood and righteousness, I shall be whiter than snow. Truly of myself I can do nothing; no worth, no merit, no righteousness, but, blessed hope, all, and a thousand times more, that is lacking in me is mine in Jesus. So day by day with mine infirmities I come to God, through Christ, pleading what he has done for me. Not a day do I live and walk as I should, not a day but I must need confess before him my sins and shortcomings. O if we had not a merciful Father in heaven what would the end be? I often feel could you look

into my heart and thoughts I would be cut off from your fellowship at once; but I do try to pray God to search my heart and know my way, and I am often comforted in the thought that there is nothing hid from the Lord. "He knoweth the way that I take." I cannot think, dear sister, you feel daily the prodding of that thorn in the flesh as I do. I feel that you must be sitting at the feet of the blessed Master in quietness and assurance, while I am daily tossed with tempests against the craggs and rocks and reefs, ready to perish.

This is a poor return for your kind remembrance, but it is the best I can do. Kindly accept with love and good intentions. I had thought to write you on my return home, but many cares prevented. Remember me in love to the household of faith among you. A kind remembrance to your husband.

Sincerely, P. W. SAWIN.

MASSEY, Va., Jan. 15, 1910.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:—As I have just emerged upon the first day of the eightieth year of my earthly pilgrimage, I thought I would make a little note of a few things of the past.

According to the record in my father's old Bible I was born Jan. 14th, 1831; received a hope, if not mistaken, in August, 1851; found a people whose language I could understand, acknowledged my fellowship for them, was received and baptized in March, 1852, and have found that the rich provision of the Lord's house has been ample to supply my every spiritual need. In the year 1865 I began to be burdened with the things concerning the kingdom of God; I was impressed to speak of the glory of God's kingdom and to talk of his power. This brought me into the minds and before the faces of the church, and they began to encourage me to speak once a month, and from that my name went out from home, so in May, 1868, I received a letter from one of the deacons of the Indiantown Church to make them a visit, as they were without a pastor. This almost wrenched the very life out of me; two voices seemed to be speaking at once. The voice of home and its attendant affairs said, You cannot go, coupled by my wife's voice with tears running down her face, saying, You cannot go, but the tone of that letter, like the sound of a trumpet from a far country, said, You must go. My wife said, "We will surely go to the almshouse." I said, "I know, my dear, as well as you do, but I must go." So the third Sunday in May I went thirty miles, had meeting morning and afternoon, and there were messengers there from Nassaongo with their petition, which I must hear. Strange, it never occurred to my mind once that my little gift to minister the precious word to the spiritual appetite of the Lord's people would demand of them every remuneration to meet my temporal needs; I viewed it all as complete sacrifice. The next July I was ordained and took up my regular appointments once a month, and by the help of the Lord and the encouragement of the brethren and sisters I have continued these forty years, having lived to see all who constituted the five churches pass away but thirteen. All who compose the five churches now, it has been my privilege to hear the testimony of their lips and to give them my hand of welcome in behalf of the church, and after all these things I am struck with wonder; I am now called to look back over a life of seventy-nine years and to see it so awfully spotted with imperfections.

Yesterday was a memorable day to me.

The first part was spent in receiving letters and cards and looking over their contents, they extended from Philadelphia, Pa., to Lukens, Fla., and the testimony they bore brought me into such a close examination that I spent the afternoon and until bedtime reading the Bible to settle the question with me, Am I the man who has the confidence and fellowship expressed in those letters and cards? and now with my sight blinded with tears I repeat again, Can it be so? can it be so? It makes me feel so small and humble that my life seems almost gone out of me, and yet my heart is gladdened to think that if so the good Lord has not only kept me, but has used me for the lifting of Jesus on high and for the searching out of his glorious work in the hearts and lives of his scattered, elect people. I try to accept it as being so, for I want to accept as truth all that is conveyed to me through those twenty-four letters and fourteen cards. I have tried to apply the language of the apostle John to myself; he says, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." This I try to hope is what has brought me, insignificant as I feel, and the dear people that I have labored among so long, so close together, seeing that our God is one, our experience is one, our hope is one and our feelings and affections have become inseparable. After looking over all the letters and presents, with my heart full of emotions of thankfulness, I sang two hymns, on page forty and forty-eight, then retired, but not to sleep; the examination that I had of myself was so scrutinizing I would be nearly ruled out, and then the confidence that I had in all those witnesses would lift me up, so I would feel like rejoicing aloud. I want to give thanks unto God for all blessings, although they may be sent by the tongues or hands of my dear kindred in Christ, and to all who felt interested in my seventy-ninth birthday, please accept my most humble appreciation of your loving-kindness. Although it brought many tears, they were sweet ones.

Now, in closing, I ask an interest in your prayers, that I may remain firm and steadfast the remaining part of my pilgrimage here on earth. Fare ye well.

T. M. POULSON.

HAYDEN, Colo., Dec. 5, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—Are there any taking the SIGNS in Denver, Colorado? I sometimes go there, and I would like to hunt them up if there are any Baptists there. We are still alone in this part of the country; there are no Baptists nearer than seventy miles of us that we know of. Elder Howard, of Keller, Texas, brother and sister W. S. Bourland, of Vernon, Texas, Elder and sister D. B. Nowels, of Lamar, Colo., visited us last summer, and it truly made our hearts glad to have them with us, and I thought, Truly the Lord does not forget, but sends the undershepherds to the borders, where there are a few of the flock scattered about who hunger and thirst for righteousness. I read many good things in our papers, and we are truly blessed to have them, but it is a great blessing and a very feast when we can sit under the sound of the gospel and hear the true watchmen proclaim the mighty truths which give God the power, glory and honor. "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

Marvelous to me indeed are the ways of the Lord, and they are all just and true.

Why I have written this I do not know, but after making the inquiry I just went on, and if it is of the Lord all is right, but if it is of the flesh, the blame be upon my head, for I must confess that it seems to me there is so much darkness in me that the light cannot shine through the density.

I have read the thirty-first Psalm with much comfort. I would indeed trust the Lord at all times, but so many things come in my way, and my strength fails me. My times are in the hand of the Lord, and he can lead through darkness as well as through light, for there is no darkness in him, but all is love and joy.

Yours in hope,

LAVINIA J. DAWSON.

THORNTON, Ark., Dec. 3, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I, a poor, hungry, thirsty sinner, filled with a desire to ever seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, that I might have the joy that is felt in communion with saints, the children of the living God, understand when we enjoy such communion it composes a heavenly place, and separates us from worldly minds for awhile, and we are spiritually-minded, which is life and peace, and makes the spiritual mind want to follow Jesus in the way. He told them he was the way, also told them to follow him, and what it was to obey him; that none had ever forsaken the things of the world and followed him but would be supplied with everything needful here, and the end eternal life. I understand these promises are only to those who have the Spirit. I notice in all his teachings he used figures that could not explain eternal life, such as babes, and when his time to leave his disciples was near he told Peter to feed his lambs, also his sheep, but the lambs were first; so we learn if we neglect the lambs a flock will soon be a failure. The old sheep get very impatient sometimes, and waste the food under their feet, so the lambs cannot eat of it. In the flock I used to feed the lambs were mostly born in the winter months, when it was bad weather, so they had to have special care or they would starve or freeze; so it is with the flocks or churches now. He told his disciples the good Shepherd careth for the sheep, but the hireling fleeth when he sees the wolf coming, and the sheep scatter, some after one man, some after another, not heeding the command of God. Take the sayings of no man for your counsel.

May peace and brotherly love abound, is my prayer. A. HOLLOWAY.

ROBERSONVILLE, N. C., Dec. 14, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It seems as if I am made up of neglect, or at least to some extent, for I am now behind in paying for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Not wanting you to suffer any loss by me, I inclose my check for $2.50 and ask you to stop the paper, not because I do not like it, by no means, for I do, but mainly because I am to such an expense because of my poor and afflicted wife, who has been paralyzed in her right side two years last March, and does not get any better that I can see. She is in such a condition now that I am afraid to leave her long at a time. If any of the Lord's little ones should at any time find it in their hearts to pray for us, and I could know it, I feel that it would be a great help to unworthy me. The thought often occurs, Why is it thus? I am at times in a great strait, and know not what to do, feeling it my duty to serve in proclaiming the glorious gospel of our God,

and at the same time under obligations, according to our King's command, to love and cherish my wife. Of course I am trying to do both, but am at a loss to know how to divide the time.

Brother Ker, I would be glad to see you. How are you getting along?

Yours in hope of a better life,

G. D. ROBERSON.

[WE sympathize with brother and sister Roberson in their affliction. We are glad to be remembered so kindly by him, and in answer to his inquiry will say, we are blessed in many ways, and desire to be thankful.—K.]

PARIS, Ill., Dec. 27, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Please find money order for four dollars to renew the subscription of my sister, Mrs. Daniel Shields, R. R. 5, Paris, Ill., and my own subscription. The SIGNS has been coming regularly since 1832, first to my grandfather, then to my father, until they were called away, and I have been taking it a number of years, and hope to do so as long as I live and am able to pay for it. I think one copy is worth more (to me) than the price of a year's subscription.

Wishing you all a prosperous new year, I remain, I hope, your brother,

M. C. REEVES.

JAMAICA, N. Y., Dec. 27, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I first subscribed for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in 1887, and am just as well satisfied with it now as I was then. I feel that it has been a great help to me; not that it has taught me any new doctrine, but the same doctrine that I was taught in my earliest experience, more than thirty-nine years ago, and all my subsequent experience up to this day only confirms me more and more in the truth: no salvation for such a ruined, undone, vile sinner as I am made to see myself to be but Jesus Christ; he is the only Savior of sinners, either for time or eternity. If I really know any Savior at all, it is only one, both here and hereafter. Vain is the help of man, whose breath is in his nostrils. I feel sometimes that I am made to rejoice to see all of my own goodness fade as a leaf. The process by which the fading is brought about is painful, but at times there seems to be an inward rejoicing.

Your little brother,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

PALO ALTO, Cal., Dec. 19, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—You will find inclosed a post-office order for another year's subscription for the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which is the only preaching I get out here, and it is the only paper I know of that advocates the doctrine I believe. It makes me very sad sometimes when I realize that there is no place to go where I can hear the word of God proclaimed, and only for our messenger, the SIGNS, I really do not know what I would do. I wish I knew even one to subscribe for our valuable paper, but all of my acquaintances out here are busy trying to save souls; their god is unable to do that without their aid. How thankful we should be to have a God who can save, and does save, without any help. May the Lord enable you to continue in this grand work in love and humility. A happy and prosperous new year.

Your sister in hope,

FLORENCE SCHROEDER.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER W. S. Alexander has changed his address from 704 Monroe St., Wilmington, Del., to Elsmere, Del.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1910.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

GENESIS VI. 6; NUMBERS XXIII. 19.

DEAR BROTHER:—If not asking too much, will you please give your views upon Genesis vi. 6, which reads, "And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart." I also find in Numbers xxiii. 19, this language, "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent; hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" In hope of knowledge I ask your views upon these Scriptures.

From the least of all saints, if one at all,
N. C. PENNINGTON.

LANHAM, W. Va., Dec. 21, 1909.

Upon the former subject we have written more than once before, and the last time was not, as we remember, very long ago, but still there can be nothing out of place in saying a few things again about it. We do not for a moment suppose that brother Pennington thinks that the holy Scriptures in any way contradict themselves. This could not be so, and leave us any confidence in the word of God as being infallibly true. For many years it has been our mind that if we found portions of the word which to us seemed contradictory, we must at once believe that the fault was in our finite understanding, and not in the statements of the Bible. It is the part of any humble-minded believer to rather choose to deny his own reasoning than the Scriptures. The testimony of our own ears, eyes or hearts may be a lie, but not the testimony of the word of God. In the Bible we have a sure word of prophecy, whereunto we do well that we take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place. This word of God is more sure than any experiences or thoughts that we may have. Let us remember the power of the words, "Let God be true, but every man a liar." Christians themselves can be sure their travel is a christian travel only as they find it in agreement with what they read in the Bible. We are fallible in all things, the church is fallible also, but the word of God, who cannot lie, must be true. It is well if we start out upon the investigation of the Scriptures with the conviction in our heart, first, that it is all true, and that if anything in it seems to us to contradict even our senses, then our senses lie, and not the word of God. We doubt not that our brother believes this, and that he feels sure there is no real contradiction in the two Scriptures which he has quoted. How can, then, the statement, "It repented the Lord that he had made man," be reconciled with the Bible doctrine of the unchangeable purpose of God? To us repentance is always accompanied with sorrow, and so also we read in the text that the Lord was grieved, as well as that he repented. But it will not do for us to think for a moment that our God feels human passions, such as grief, hate, sorrow, regret, &c. It is declared too often that he is unchangeable. His hatred of sin is an unchangeable thing; his love of holiness is also equally unchangeable. His love to his people, whom he has chosen, cannot be lessened or quenched at any time or because of any circumstances. When he pronounces judgment upon the disobedient, these judgments shall surely befall them; they have

no way to escape them. It is concerning this especially that the text in Numbers, referred to by our brother, treats; that is, we mean that the text in Numbers expressly declares that the favor of God to his people shall never change. Even Balaam had come to see this, and so he could not curse Israel. God had blessed them, and they should be blessed. He will not turn away from his people and cease to do them good. On the other hand, his judgments against that which is evil will surely fall. He can never love that which is evil; he can never hate that which is good. More than this, he is of one mind, and none can turn him; his will is one, forever and ever. His knowledge can never increase, and it can never decrease; there can be no change here. He is perfect, and perfect at all times, and to all eternity. He is at all times perfect in holiness, in wisdom, in knowledge and in purpose. Change in anything implies imperfection in that thing; imperfection either before or after the change. If perfect before, then change must bring imperfection. But God was and is perfect, and therefore not the subject of change in anything. This one truth compels us to believe that all things, all events, must be fixed. Predestination no more fixes all things beyond the possibility of a failure to come to pass than does this unchangeable knowledge of God. There is then no change in our God, and it follows, therefore, that all the changes must be in creatures, and change is written upon all animate and inanimate things that we know anything about. There was change in our first parents when they listened to the tempter and fell. Man was made upright, but man sought out many inventions, and they were all evil. Man became the enemy of God. In the work of redemption through Christ it is not God that is reconciled to man, but man to God; the change is in man, wrought there by the Holy Spirit. So, on the other hand, transgression changed the attitude of man before God; he was no longer upright. God was upright and holy still, but men became alienated by their wicked works. Our God always loved Jacob and hated Esau. He always loved his people chosen in eternity, and all others were like Esau. God has not changed in his love or hate, but remember that his hatred is not a human passion, and neither is his love after the manner of men's love. But as man became a fallen and sinful being he was by his very state of sin shut out from the Holy One, his own sins forever hinder his access to God, without a sacrifice and a mediator. To a man who has come to know his sin the very heavens frown instead of smile upon him. The trees never clap their hands when a sinner feels his condemnation, rather all looks gloomy to him. But when peace and pardon through Christ are spoken to his heart, then indeed even the trees rejoice in his view, and the very hills run and leap for joy; to him the face of God is full of smiles. Our God, then, does not repent in the sense that there has been change wrought in his mind or will, but in the sense that our sins cause us to see a frown upon him, while in the obedience of Christ we see a smiling face. To us it looks as though the natural sun revolves around the earth, but yet, after all, we know that this is not so, the sun does not change in the heavens, but only seems to do so; it is the earth that changes, not the sun. So our God does not change, but we change, yet as we say the sun rises and sets, so the word of the text under consideration says, "It repented the Lord that he had made man." This has long

seemed to us to be what we must understand by the repentance and grief of the Lord in the text in Genesis, and in other places where repentance is attributed to our God.

We trust that this may prove of some satisfaction to our brother, and to others.

C.

EZEKIEL XVI. 53, 55.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Please pardon me for troubling you again, but will you please give your views upon the Scripture found in Ezekiel xvi. 53, and also verse 55? Has this prophecy been fulfilled, or is it yet to be fulfilled? What is meant by "their captivity," and "their former estate"? I do not ask these questions through a spirit of controversy.

Yours in hope of the resurrection,

FANNIE CLANTON.

ESPERANZA, Texas, Oct. 18, 1909.

The Scriptures to which our sister refers read as follows: "When I shall bring again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then will I bring again the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them." "When thy sisters, Sodom and her daughters, shall return to their former estate, and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former estate, then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate."

The general theme of this chapter is summed up in this way: national Israel is, first of all, compared to a newborn infant without any to care for it, but who is cared for by some compassionate one, who finds it forsaken and alone in a field. So the Lord had cared for this people when no one else cared for them. The Lord had done all for them that needed to be done, though they had no claim upon him. He had proved to be their unfailing Friend, and had made them to be exalted and honorable among men. But, for all this, they had turned away from him, and had taken his own gifts to them and poured them out, as a lewd woman upon her lovers, before false gods. This, their worship of the idols of Egypt and of other nations, is called whoredom. Thus they had proven altogether false to their heavenly Husband, as a married wife would do if she bestowed her love and favors upon others than her husband. For all this the Lord declares that he will judge them and punish them. As they had joined with other nations in their worship, the Lord declares that he will give them up to those other nations as a prey, and these nations to whom they had joined themselves in their idolatry should throw down their high places, and take away their clothing and their jewels, and leave them naked and despised by all who should behold them, and the Lord declares that he would not make his fury toward them to rest until they should cease playing the harlot. He declares that they were the children (as respects their wickedness) of the Hittites and the Amorites. Of course, as regards their nationality literally, they were not descended from Hittites and Amorites, but they had become idolatrous as though they were the children of these vile nations. They claimed great superiority over these nations, but the Lord declares that they were the children of these nations; whatever was vile among them, also flourished among this people. Israel had pronounced judgment against these two nations, but in so doing they had judged themselves also. Though they boasted over these nations, they were really sunk as low as they in evil. The Lord had judged these two nations as Israel herself knew. Israel was inclined to exult over them, counting herself the favored of God, but now they are to be taught that the fact that they were

Israelites could not safeguard them from the results of their wickedness. Just as the Hittites and the Amorites had perished without remedy, so should they also feel the weight of his judgments. Sodom and Samaria were the daughters of Hittites and Amorites, daughters in the sense that they walked in evil, as did the mothers before them, and Sodom and Samaria were, in the sense of their wickedness, the sisters of Israel. Israel had judged her sisters while yet she was more wicked than they, and not until the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and of Samaria and her daughters, should be broken, should the captivity of Israel be broken. The thought in this fifty-third verse is not as to whether the captivity which had befallen Sodom, Samaria or Israel should ever be broken, but simply that Israel had no more right to expect deliverance from her judgments than these other two nations had. The Lord does indeed speak of mercy to Israel, but it is mercy, and not that sufficient punishment has been inflicted upon Israel, which shall lead to a restoration to His favor and to the blessing which had once been theirs. The thought in the two verses named by our sister is not that either Sodom or Samaria shall ever be restored, but, rather, that they shall never be brought back to their former state; as nations they had perished in their sins forever; but the thought is, that Israel's wickedness, being even greater than theirs, they had no right to expect a restoration upon any ground that would be to their praise above these two peoples. What then? Will the Lord never have mercy upon his people any more? Yes indeed, but not because their wickedness is any less than the nations upon whom he will not have mercy. Sodom and Samaria have perished as nations forever, and so shall Israel, if their own merit is to decide the matter; but they shall be restored, and the ground upon which this shall be is declared in verse sixty and the verses following. Let us quote from the sixtieth verse: "Nevertheless, I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish with thee an everlasting covenant. Then thou shalt remember thy ways and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thine younger: and I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy covenant. And I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord. That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God." Thus we come here to see the summing up of all this dealing with Israel by their Lord. It is that they may learn that in them is no merit, but rather, all manner of evil, and that all that comes to them in the way of blessing is from sovereign mercy. There never can be but one way in which a redeemed sinner can open his mouth, and that is to praise God in the highest for saving a sinner like him. Redeemed sinners are always ashamed in themselves and of themselves, but their glory is that sovereign mercy has found them and saved them. Self-boasters never know the grace of God, but those who do know his grace are shut out from boasting, save in the cross of Christ. By this one thing the state of each heart is known. It is either all self, or all Christ, and this holds good for this time warfare as well as for eternity. The least joy that a believer ever knows here is as entirely of grace as is the gift of heaven itself.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

2 THESSALONIANS II. 3, 7, 8.

(Continued from page 29.)

THIS day of the Lord is the principal theme of both these two epistles, and must certainly be the day which is spoken of in our text. But solemn, grand and glorious as this day of the Lord shall be, according to the divine testimony of the word, it is nevertheless a matter of vain speculation with all antichristian deceivers; they profanely attempt to make capital of it to serve their wicked purposes, by their frantic appeals to the carnal passions of unregenerated men, by painting to their imagination the terrors herein described, with a view thereby to alarm and frighten them into submission to their humanly devised schemes and plans for preparing themselves for a participation with the saints in the glory that shall be revealed in them, thereby setting aside God's method of salvation by grace alone, and leading men to believe that their acceptance with God can result from their own works. Hence the resurrection of the dead, and final judgment, are favorite themes with all will-worshipers. But instead of presenting the subject as the apostle has here presented it for the comfort of the saints, they talk of "uncapping hell," to use their own words, in order thereby to scare people into religion, or religion into the people, and so instead of relying on the redemption which is in Christ Jesus for justification before God, they pervert even the solemnities of the last great day to delude, deceive and mislead those who relish their delusions. But this is not all, they even attempt to terrify the saints by their startling announcements from time to time, as that the day of the Lord is at hand. At an early day these exciting predictions began to be made, and from time to time they have continued to be made ever since, and even christians have been troubled to some extent, for they that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercies. In our early childhood, about the year 1810, we attended a Methodist watch meeting, to see the old year out, as it was then called, on which occasions the principal deceivers labored to impress the audience that it was very doubtful whether the new year would come in at all. The assembly was in a panic, and some became almost frantic. The preachers represented Christ as pleading with the Father to spare the world one year longer, and he would make some further effort to induce sinners to get religion, and if he failed, he would consent to have the end deferred no longer; and when the midnight hour approached, the minister held his watch and called off the minutes which remained of man's probation, as it was called. Those who were disposed to meet the Judge in peace had but ten minutes, —nine—eight—seven, &c. It seemed to be impressed on many minds that in so many minutes all who failed to get religion would surely be in hell. Most of our readers remember the excitement of the Millerite prophecy, which made a great alarm throughout the whole country. But the apostle assures the saints that they are not in darkness, that that day should come on them as a thief, and in our subject he gives them to understand that that day shall not come until certain other things shall be accomplished. God is the God of order, his arrangements cannot be confused. He has declared the end from the beginning, "saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Two very import-

ant events were determined to be accomplished in the fullness of the dispensation of time; the one the revelation of the man of God, the other the man of sin. The world must continue until both are fully developed. Of the man of God there is one body and one spirit, and Christ is the Head of the body, the church, and the church is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all, and when all the members of this body shall come in the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God, this body shall then become a perfect man, having all its members gathered in, and it shall then in revelation attain its full proportions and reach the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. This man of God must be fully developed before the end can come, and when this is accomplished, "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom of God, even the Father."—1 Cor. xv. 24.

"Thus shall this moving engine last,
Till all the saints are gathered in;
Then for the trumpet's dreadful blast,
To shake it all to dust again."

Nor is it less important that the man of sin should be revealed. The wheels of time must linger until the cup of iniquity, on the part of antichrist, is full, for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first. As this declaration is made by the word of the Lord, it is to be regarded as the decree of the immutable God, therefore it is impossible that the coming of that day should anticipate those events which God has ordained shall precede it. As the man of God is the church in its full stature and measurement of Head, body, members, &c., according to the election of grace, so the man of sin is the opposite body in its full proportions and developments as the son of perdition. The revelation of the latter involves still another important prediction: to reveal this man of sin there must come a falling away; that is, an apostasy from the faith and order of the church of God of many who have been identified with the church in the profession of that faith and order. Hence we are told, 1 Tim. iv. 1. 2: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron." And in 2 Tim. iii. 1–7: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof," &c. All this apostasy and falling away from the true standard of truth and righteousness is required to reveal, or expose fully to view, that monster of iniquity which is in our text and its connection called the man of sin, that Wicked, the son of perdition, &c., which in the apocalypse is denominated "Mystery, Babylon the Great, The Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth." A further description of his characteristics, and the manner of his coming, is given by our apostle in this connection: He "opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God." That is, he opposeth God and exalteth himself above God. The church, as the man of God, is in submission to the divine government, is reconciled to God, and rejoices that the Lord God omnipotent doth reign. But the man of sin, in his revelation, shall be

seen in opposition to the government, to the truth, the righteousness, and to the people of God, exalting himself, by daring to improve upon God's plan, attempting to annul his laws, set aside his institutions, and changing his ordinances, by assuming power and authority which belong only to God himself, and although he knows not God (for to know him is eternal life), yet he admits that there is a being who is called God, but for that being he has no reverence, and there is no fear of God before his eyes; his feet are swift to shed blood, and misery and destruction are in all his ways; he regards him whom he calls God as subordinate to himself; he claims that He can do nothing only through his free will agency; that he can save nobody only through his instrumentality; that he can move the power that moves the world, &c. Thus the man of sin plants or seats himself in the temple of God, by assuming the right to hold spiritual or ecclesiastical dominion over the consciences of men in all matters of religion, to enjoin what they call orthodoxy and punish what they call heresy; thus claiming the sovereign prerogatives of Jehovah, they show or exhibit themselves as God, and disallow the existence of any higher God. That the coming and revelation of this child of perdition is under the sovereign controlling power and providence of Jehovah, is certain, from the fact that the Spirit has said expressly, ages beforehand, that it shall be, and that the day of the Lord is ordained to be subsequently to the coming of this man of sin. Still his coming is not by the spirit of holiness, it depends on no display of the Spirit's work in regenerating the members of its body. No grace is required to qualify the members of antichrist for fellowship or communion in Babylon; all that is required they can do for themselves, aided only in their progress by the working of Satan. The development and full manifestation of antichrist is effected by the working of Satan, and the works of Satan are such as to call into requisition all his power, which, although very great and astounding, is nevertheless limited by the decree of God, and with his power all his signs and all lying wonders are ostensibly displayed, for with them he deceives the children of men who have the mark of the beast and the number of his name, which includes, as we are informed, all who dwell upon the earth whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. His coming is with all signs and lying wonders and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish. There is nothing deceptive in righteousness, but all unrighteousness is deceitful and shall deceive them that perish, because they receive not the love of the truth. None of all those who bear the mark of the beast have any love for the truth as it is in Jesus, but they love darkness more than light, because their deeds are evil. Nothing exasperates them more than the truth, because it exposes their wickedness, hence the persecution of the saints by all who perish, in all ages, from the days of Cain. If they loved the truth they might be saved, that is, that they might be saved from the deception, the signs and lying wonders of the man of sin, but as they have not received the love of the truth, and no man ever possessed the love of the truth in a spiritual sense unless he received it from God by regeneration, all those who have not received it are destined to perish and to be the dupes of the deceivableness of unrighteousness. "And for this cause, God shall send them strong delusion;" for

God has reserved to himself the right to choose the delusions of them that perish. (See Isaiah lxvi. 4.) Delusions so strong that they have neither the power nor disposition to resist, for they love not the truth, they have pleasure in unrighteousness, they are delighted with the signs and lying wonders which rivet their chains and which hold them in chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day. These delusions are fatal, these heresies are damnable, and those who drink them in are condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on them. "That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." This must be the inevitable destiny of all who love not the truth, of all who take pleasure in unrighteousness.

All these things must precede the coming of the day of the Lord and the revelation of his supreme glory. "And now [says the apostle] ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time." This is the "let" concerning which our brethren have inquired. A "let" is a barrier, a hindrance, or a withholding, an effectual restraint; and after receiving this instruction from the apostle the matter of the "let" was known to the saints. It is simply this: "That day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." And that man of sin cannot be revealed until his time, and this "let" is what withholdeth that he, the man of sin, might be revealed in his time; that is, in the time which God has assigned for his revelation. "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work." Godliness is a mystery, and so is ungodliness. This Wicked is called Mystery, as well as Babylon, or confusion; it existed and worked in the days of the apostles, but its working was after the working of Satan, and held back by the restraint of almighty power, that it should be revealed in, but not before, his time. "Only he who now letteth, will let, until he be taken out of the way." The revelation of that Wicked is a "let" to the coming of the day of the Lord, and shall continue to let, until it be taken out of the way, by its revelation in his time; but when God shall fully expose antichrist he will thereby take the "let" out of the way, that it shall no longer obstruct or prevent the subsequent appearing of the great day of the Lord, when he shall be revealed from heaven, taking vengeance on them that know not God, who have not received the love of the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness. Until the clusters of the vine of the earth are fully ripe there is a let, or restraint, which holds back the angel with the sharp sickle. The abominations of the son of perdition must be filled up, the limit set by the God of heaven for the wickedness of the son of man must be attained, and the end cannot come before. But the final exposer of that Wicked shall be the removal of the "let," for as soon as the full revelation is made, he shall be consumed by the spirit of the mouth of the Lord and be destroyed by the brightness of his coming.

As the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, shall be as well for vengeance on the man of sin as for being admired in all them that believe, the unripened state of antichrist, no less than the unfinished gathering together unto Christ all his redeemed, must be a "let," or insuperable barrier, to the end of the world. But these two important events will be simultaneously accomplished, and the "let" being removed, the thunder-

bolts of divine wrath and almighty vengeance will be launched, which shall sweep the wicked into hell, with all the nations that forget God, and Babylon shall sink like the millstone and trouble the saints of God no more forever.

"But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work."

We have made this article very lengthy, but still we have omitted much which might be said upon the subject involved, and we have given such views as we entertain on the subject, so far as we have dwelt on the subject. What we have written we now submit to the consideration of brother Miller and the brethren who, with him, desired our views, and to all others who may read this article, and it is, if we know our heart, our desire that it may afford some light and comfort to the humble followers of the Lamb, and redound to the glory of God.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 1, 1863.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elisha Sampson Truitt departed this life August 18th, 1909, at his home in Salisbury, Md., in his 68th year, after an illness of about two months. He was operated upon June 13th for stone in the bladder, and seemed to get along nicely for awhile, and was up for about a week, but on August 4th he was taken with a chill and never left his bed again. He was married Dec. 23rd, 1872, to Miss Della Powell, who, with three children: E. Wilmer Truitt, M. Maud Truitt, of Salisbury, and Mrs. J. H. Perdue, of Snow Hill, Md., survives him. They lived near Wango, Md., until about 1887, when they moved to Dendron, Va., and lived there about nine months, after which they moved to Salisbury, where they lived at the time of his death. He was baptized at Indiantown, Md., March 12th, 1876, by Elder T. M. Poulson. He was a consistent member of the Old School Baptist Church, and loved to talk of spiritual things, which was a great comfort to his family. During his illness he never complained or murmured, but was submissive to the Lord's will in all things.

The funeral services were held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Salisbury, conducted by Elders Francis and Poulson. Interment in the family plot in Parsons Cemetery.

We mourn not as those who have no hope.

His daughter, MAUD TRUITT.

I WILL just add my testimony to the above. It was my privilege to welcome brother Truitt to all the privileges of the church and baptize him. He was a consistent and lovely brother, very spiritually-minded, and delighted in conversing on experimental things, but the Lord has taken him.

T. M. POULSON.

MASSEY, Va.

Isabella Lionberger Kendall was born in Page County, Va., Jan. 11th, 1824, and died at the home of her daughter and granddaughters, in Plymouth, Ill., on the morning of Dec. 8th, 1909, aged 85 years, 10 months and 27 days. She was the daughter of Abram and Anna Lionberger, and came to Illinois with her parents in 1837. She was married to Henry Kendall, Dec. 19th, 1839; her husband died May 9th, 1845. To this union three children were born: Lycurgus, who died many years ago, Henry, and Mrs. Susan Brumback, who resides with her daughter, Mrs. W. L. Irwin, of Plymouth, Ill. On June 3rd, 1909, she suffered a stroke of paralysis, and had been a helpless invalid ever since. During her declining years and long illness she received the kindest care and attention from her daughter, and granddaughter, Mrs. Dr. Irwin, at whose home she died. She joined the Predestinarian Baptist Church of Jesus Christ at Providence, Hancock Co., Ill., in May, 1849, and re-

mained a worthy and faithful member until she died. She was unwavering in the doctrine of God our Savior, strong in the faith, firm in practice, upright in her walk, and earnestly contended for the faith once delivered unto the saints. She was uncompromising with error, but easy to be entreated, always having the prosperity of Zion at heart. She had been a constant sufferer for forty years, until her form was stooped and bent by the continued afflictions, but death ended it all. She was one of the oldest members of our dear old church, and she will be missed by all the members, as well as the relatives. Although she was not able to attend meetings for some time, her name was with us, and we feel sad that she is gone, but our loss is her gain. She was willing to go, and passed peacefully away at the appointed time, without a struggle—just fell asleep. Jesus can make a dying bed feel soft as downy pillows are, which was manifested in this case.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder L. E. Frazee, pastor of the dear old church where her membership was, and she was laid to rest beside her husband, in Providence Cemetery. She requested me to write her obituary, which I feel very unworthy to do. We had long been of the same faith and order, and I had visited her often in the last year, and talked much about our hope and fears.

May the Lord comfort the children and grandchildren, is the prayer of the unworthy writer,

BELLE FRAZEE.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., Dec., 1909.

Our sister, **Mrs. Jennie M. Hallenbeck,** died Jan. 5th, 1910, at West Davenport, N. Y., from exhaustion, caused by a cancer, from which she had suffered for several years. Mrs. Hallenbeck was the fifth child of the family of eleven children of Jehiel W. and Sarah Sweet Hunt, who were members of the Old School Baptist Church, and formerly lived at Jefferson, Schoharie Co., N. Y., where sister Jennie was married to John William Hallenbeck, Oct. 25th, 1862. They moved to Wisconsin in the year 1874, and lived in the west until 1886, when they returned to West Davenport. Mr. Hallenbeck died Jan. 20th, 1894, after which time sister Hallenbeck lived with her sister, Mrs. Mary Battershall, who died six years ago. They were kindly taken care of by their nephew and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Byington, until the death of Mr. Byington, who was instantly killed last April, since which sad event Mrs. Byington has labored unceasingly to care for "Aunt Jennie." Sister E. A. Stilwell was with them the last two weeks, much to the comfort of both the sad widows. Sister Hallenbeck was born Jan. 24th, 1835, at Lexington, N. Y. She attended meetings with her parents, and had a deep regard for their religion, and felt there was no other true religion. She and sister Battershall came to Otego occasionally, and in September, 1896, they asked to be received into the church, and were heartily welcomed, and the following morning were baptized by the pastor, Elder Balas Bundy. They were two meek and lowly children of God, and very true and sincere in their walk and lives as members of the church. These two sisters are buried in the cemetery (by the side of their dear husbands, who each preceded them a great many years) in sight of their former home, and are missed by many friends and neighbors, and a few relatives, with the church, who remain to mourn their absence.

SUSIE C. F. GUERNSEY.

OTEGO, N. Y., Jan. 22, 1910.

Jenett Campbell, widow of Duncan Campbell, of Caradoc, and daughter of the late Deacon John and Margaret McIntyre, of Ekfrid, and granddaughter of the late Elder Campbell, of Alboro, died at the home of her daughter, 322 York St., London, Ontario, Oct. 11th, 1909, after an illness of about three weeks. All was done for her that kind hands could do, but she passed away to that home she so much longed for. She became concerned, and experienced a hope when quite young, and joined the Covenanted Baptist Church when Elder Campbell was the pastor. She lived a humble and consistent life in the church until death. She dearly loved the truth, and, if possible, would be at the church meetings always, for she loved the company of the saints. She is survived by one daughter, two brothers and four sisters. We miss her very much.

HER BROTHER-IN-LAW.

Belvia A. Melton, the little daughter of Walter and Lucy Melton, was born Dec. 7th, 1906, and died Jan. 5th, 1910, making her stay upon earth 3 years and 29 days. She was a bright, intelligent child for her age, but her time on earth had ended and she must suffer the sting of death, for she must come to her grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in its season, for there is a time to be born and a time to die, and her days were numbered and she lived them out to the moment. Your loss is her eternal gain, so, father, mother and grandparents, weep no more, for with little Belvia life's struggle is over, and she is at rest.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

James H. Wilson, Maine, $1.00; J. K. Yerkes, D. C., $1.00; First Independent Baptist Church, Mass., $4.00.—Total, $6.00.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

PURSUANT to a previous call by a few precious brethren and sisters, the following named churches responded, viz., Union Church, of the Big Creek Association, Elder I. W. Bowers and brother Jones (a licentiate). Denton Creek Church, of Trinity River Association, Elder Asa Howard. Met at Freestone, in Freestone Co., Texas, on Saturday before the third Sunday in January, 1910.

After divine service, the presbytery was organized by electing Elder I. W. Bowers moderator and brother W. O. Beene clerk. Whereupon the council proceeded to examine the order and standing of the charter members to be constituted into a church, and finding them sound in faith and practice pronounced them a regularly constituted Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to be known by the name of Zion Church, and adopting the articles of faith and constitution of the Big Creek Association, calling Elder I. W. Bowers to serve them as pastor.

This church fully indorses the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and is established in the doctrine of the predestination of all things, and will hereafter (D. V.) meet regularly on Saturday before the third Sunday in each month. All lovers of the truth who stand in line with the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES are cordially invited to meet with them. Freestone is a station on the Trinity and Brazos Valley Railroad. By request of this church, the Big Creek Association will hold its session this year with said church, beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1910.

ASA HOWARD.

KELLER, Texas.

MEETINGS.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

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"CHRISTIAN SCIENCE AND THE LAW."

Because of the distressing information contained in orders for my Christian Science pamphlet respecting the great injury being done by this shameful fraud even among our dear Baptist people, I have tried in this second little work to expose it from a new point of view. Those not aware of recent developments at the headquarters of these people will be astonished almost to the point of doubting well-proven facts. I will mail two copies of this last sketch for ten cents (silver), or one copy and a copy of Christian Science and the Bible for ten cents. The price is not for profit, but to cover the bare expense. Hundreds of the first pamphlets were given away, and others placed where many could read them. If any good results from this effort to shield our brethren from this new delusion, the credit will be due our kind periodicals for calling attention to it.

S. B. LUCKETT.

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All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Southampton, Pa.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 78. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1910. NO. 4.

POETRY.

THE ROCK OF SALVATION.

CHRIST, the Rock of our salvation,
He who died and rose again,
He, our only sure foundation,
Suffered all our grief and pain.

Had he not died to redeem us,
We on him could never stand,
And the law would sure condemn us,
We could not meet its just demand.

Satan, who is ever crafty,
Would have us build upon the sand,
And says the rock of our salvation
Is obeying the command.

And we are so vile and doubting,
How could we believe in him?
If our praises we went shouting,
Could we then his praises sing?

But when we are sick and helpless,
And he comes to our relief,
And when he in mercy heals us,
We can then his name receive.

O, dear Rock of our salvation,
How abounding is thy love!
Were it not for free salvation,
Who then could be raised above?

When he suffered to redeem us,
He our surety then became;
What can move this Rock of Ages?
What can mar his holy name?

Satan, then, with all his angels,
Cannot change this holy plan,
For the Rock of our salvation
Is the ever great I AM.

DEPARTURE NEAR.

DEAREST loved ones, I must leave you,
And the parting gives me pain,
But I hope that what seems sadness
Will at last be to our gain.

Parents, brother, husband, children,
Standing round me in your grief,
Feeling that my sojourn with you
At the longest will be brief,

As I look on you in sorrow,
What is death, my dearest friends?
It to me looks dark and dreary,
For I cannot see the end.

But a whisper, soft and gentle,
Comes in silence to my ear,
And I know it is my Savior:
I am with you, do not fear.

And I lay beside the waters
Of his pastures fresh and green,
Seeing but my tender Shepherd,
Viewing things that are unseen.

As I see beyond the shadow
Death but opens endless day,
Patiently I bear the sorrow,
For I on His bosom lie.

And now, dear friends, a last farewell,
Husband, children, parents, all;
The hour is come that I must leave you
To await the trumpet's call.

And I hope at resurrection
That we one and all may view
Christ, Redeemer of poor sinners.
And now, dear ones, a last adieu.

(Composed by the late sister Allison, Muirkirk, Ont.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

WAVERLY, Pa., Jan. 21, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—By request of brethren far and near I take my pen to perform a task which I fear will be a failure: that of giving an account of my experience on the subject of preaching. I have all these thirty-three years of my efforts in that line had grave doubts concerning my gift, if I have any whatever, of its being a gift to expound the Scriptures, but by the urgent request of the churches I have tried to serve I continue to this time. After uniting with the church I enjoyed hearing preaching and christian experiences very much, and really thought I would always live in that spiritual atmosphere or mind. I also thought that ministers were always happy, and often wished I could talk like them. I did not have any thought of preaching, but thought it would be so nice to be able to tell what I felt, like they did, but I knew I could not, and I know it now better than I did then, for I have proved it for myself. The first impression I had concerning preaching came to me one night in the year 1872, about nine or ten o'clock. I was working for the corporation in Waverly, N. Y., in a building all alone, when these words came suddenly to my mind: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people." I thought at first some one had spoken to me, and I went to the door, looked all around, but saw no one. I returned to my work and again, like the voice of thunder, the words came, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." I burst into a flood of tears, and trembled from head to foot, and said, Lord, how can I, a poor, ignorant, sinful worm of the dust, comfort thy people? The answer came, With the comfort wherewith you yourself have been comforted of God. It would be useless for me to attempt to tell what I passed through for nearly four years following; I pleaded with the Lord in groans and tears to let me go, excuse me, take some one else; I told him to call brother James Beard, he was a good christian man, and he was better qualified every way to fill that place; I was nothing but a fool for even harboring such a thought that I ever could stand upon the walls of Zion to comfort God's dear people. I would say things to the Lord, and then I would feel ashamed of myself to think that I would say such ugly things, and would be all crushed to pieces. I was just determined that I would not let such a thing trouble my mind, but the more I fought against the impression the stronger the impression and the greater the trouble. Day after day when at my work I would in my mind be talking to the Lord, but his answers only increased my trouble until I felt it would be better to die than live; I felt, I cannot live this way. I could not hear preaching any longer with comfort, the Bible was a sealed book; what evidence did I have that I knew anything about religion? The idea that such an one should be called of God to preach was preposterous. Why could I not discard the thought entirely? But no, Go preach my word, was continually in my mind, and many portions of Scripture, such as, "Feed the flock of God," "Follow me," "Take no thought beforehand what you shall speak," and when I would think of the needs of my family, the words, The Lord will provide, would come with power. Twice in those years of torment I would have ended it all, but God had ordered it otherwise. Finally the church voted that I should exercise my gift by way of speaking wherever in the providence of God a door was opened,

the church making an appointment for me the second Sunday of the month following, which was October, 1876. I strongly protested against the action, but was told by the pastor, Elder S. H. Durand, that the church was my mother and I must submit to her judgment, which I did unwillingly. God only knows what I suffered in trying to speak to the church at Waverly, N. Y., the following eighteen or twenty months, not one drop of comfort in my own mind, but had a little comfort occasionally at several other places, yet not for a moment did I harbor the thought or feeling that I did or could preach. In October, 1878, the church called for my ordination. I could see no more reason for this action than the other; I positively could see no qualification for the ministry in any way, shape or manner. I felt sorry to think the church would act on so little, if any, evidence of a gift, and I felt sorry for myself, but what could I do? I was a prisoner. I was soon called to serve several churches as pastor, a position I have never wanted, and have never seen any gift in that line in myself. I have never been anxious to baptize any one, but would always prefer some one else to do such work. I have never wanted to marry couples, never cared to attend funerals, but as a servant I do these things. I read the Bible through when about eighteen years old, but have never read it in that way since; I have read it a great deal, but not as much as many others. I have never studied to show myself approved unto God by reading the Bible, but there has been a constant study in my heart and mind how I should deport myself in the house of God; a desire to walk as becomes a follower of the meek and lowly Master; a desire in my heart to know nothing among God's people save Jesus Christ and him crucified. I have never but twice in my life looked up my subject and the references before speaking, and both times, as far as any spirituality was concerned, were failures, and I was informed by several of the brethren each time that my preaching was very dry, and I told them what I had done, and that it was by the advice of a so-called preacher of our order of Baptists. I have never tried it since. Many times I have gone into the stand not knowing what my text would be, and many times I have gone into the stand with a portion of Scripture in my mind, thinking I would speak from it, but another came in its place, and I have been forced to use the last one. Several times I have had Scripture come in my mind, and I would think, I will not take it for a text, and would read some other text, but my mind would drift to the first text, and I would preach from it. Three old ministers told me that it was all foolishness to hunt up a text beforehand; they were Elders Gilbert Beebe, Wm. L. Beebe and Balas Bundy, and I say, Amen, but each one must act and speak as his mind is led, that we know. I have heard two old ministers say at associations that God's ministers are one minute men; you could give them a text as they were going into the stand and they would preach just as well as though they had pondered it over a week; they were showing the difference between men called of God and men that call themselves. My greatest failures in preaching have not been when I have talked a short time and sat down, but when I have talked an hour or more without saying anything or making a point; this has grieved and tormented me more than short talks, or no talks at all. If I cannot see more than the letter of the Scripture presents, I do not feel

authorized to use them as texts, for much of the Scripture is figurative language, and I beg leave to differ from those who say the Scripture always says just what it means, and means just what it says; for instance, "The trees of the field shall clap their hands;" "The voice of many waters;" "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water;" "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell," and a great many others of a similar nature. Letter preaching is a dry breast to the church. My mind has been changed in regard to the application of many texts in the past thirty-three years, but not in regard to the salvation of God's people. After I had been preaching several years I found that in some things I was advocating the same doctrine that I had believed before I was born of God, as I hope, and that the whole Arminian world was advocating the same almost identically. The things, or subjects, were what are called the general judgment day and general resurrection of the dead in that day, which is called the last day, of twenty-four hours I suppose is meant. The other was the meaning of the word "hell," and where it often should be applied. Since then I have felt free to preach what was given me to see and feel at that time, and there has been a continual confirmation of it in my heart and mind from that day to this, and I desire to praise and adore my heavenly Father for the soul-comforting truth that I feel he has revealed to me, and the mighty power by which the elect of God are raised from the lowest hell to eternal joy and happiness in the Lord Jesus Christ.

A few things more and I am through with this. I have known several excellent ministers who never fought against preaching, but were willing to be what God would have them, but were greatly tried after they were ordained. I have known of some who have passed through deep trials of mind for years on the subject of preaching who have not been ordained, as there did not appear to be the gift; most excellent brethren, too; I do not understand why it should be so. I have known of many who have passed through hell itself, and were able ministers of the gospel, but the real substantial evidence that any man is called to preach is that he does preach and the church is instructed and fed by his ministry, not with head knowledge, or with the mere letter of the word, but by spiritual interpretation of the word. Every gift of any benefit to the church is a God-sent and God-prepared gift, and he alone will have all of the praise.

I want to say that the church has never been in debt to me one cent, as there never was any bargain made, and they have always been very liberal, so that, with what I could earn with my hands, I have had all I have needed for myself and family, thank the good Lord.

Brethren, please pardon me for spinning out such a lengthy letter with so little in it that is interesting; however, what I have written is a little of what has been taught me by some spirit, I leave it with the saints to judge.

Yours as ever, trying to preach and trying to quit, saved by grace if saved at all, D. M. VAIL.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., Jan. 16, 1910.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—The inclosed good letter is at your disposal. What I enjoy about this letter is that when Elder Hardy differs with me he does it in such a good inoffensive spirit that it is more consolation than to be agreed with in ill humor.

Sincerely, in hope,

E. R. KINNEY.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., Jan. 5, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER KINNEY:—I am from home, but your good letter has been forwarded to me, and I was glad to get it.

I feel that the fifth chapter of John contains almost the entire gospel. All of it goes to fully prove the fullness of God and the great insufficiency of man. I look upon the pool to be about what the ordinary protracted meeting is, and to have had about the same power to heal those who were really infirm as the protracted meeting has to give relief to one who has been brought down before the Lord in true repentance. As you said, the man who had been in that evil case thirty-eight years still felt that he had a little power, for he could start to go into the pool, but he could never get there, nor did he have a friend to help him along. Those who were there were like the so-called charitable secret orders of to-day: they were ready to do for themselves, or to help the more able; but this poor man was helpless and friendless, so far as getting into the pool was concerned. When the Lord came and spoke to him he did not expect the healing blessing from him, for he saw the pool only as the fountain of help; nor did he have any reason to believe that the man who was speaking to him had interest enough in him to wait until the season of the moving of the waters and then put him in before some other person could come in, therefore as long as he was expecting any virtue from the waters of the pool he was left without hope. When Jesus commanded him, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk," it was a new way to him, for it cut off every effort of his and sent the stream of sovereign mercy through every afflicted part, and the man was whole. This was the Sabbath day. I suppose that the angel who visited the pool and disturbed the waters never came on the Sabbath day, for it was a hurtful sight for the Pharisees to see a man made whole on the Sabbath day. They said in another place, "There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed." But, strange as it may appear, there is no case where the day is specified in which our Lord healed other than the Sabbath day. This fully proves that those who are represented by those healed by stepping into the waters of the pool never know anything of the real Sabbath of our Lord. It further proves that those who are healed by the word of the Lord are always in this real Sabbath day, and that they are ever the objects on whom the mercy of our God centers. The carrying of the bed also proves that those healed have to go on in this world carrying the same old nature that gave them so much trouble and in which they have wallowed in all their wretched misery. The Pharisees of to-day will make sport of the children of God when they hear them complain of their heaviness of soul, and they will declare that christians should not be thus, or should not carry their bed on the Sabbath day. But all that the child of God can say is, "He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk." Therefore, they are only obeying the word of the Lord in carrying the bed. However, so far as to ever look again at that pool as a source of healing, he is completely delivered, for they that believe do enter into rest, as God finished his work and rested. Thus by faith in God's word they rest from their own works and live praising the Lord. Thus our Lord preached the gospel; he preached both by precept and example in all his ministry. It was no harder for him to raise the dead than it

was to cure the infirm man. Any one who would murmur at the healing of that man would murmur at anything the Lord should do. When this murmuring began then the Lord began to tell them of their unbelief, not only in him, but in the Father also. He told them that the Father worketh hitherto, and I work; that I can do nothing of myself, therefore all that he did was of the Father. At once they were offended, and began to accuse him because he made himself equal with God. The Lord is not a witness against any, but the gospel is his witness, and when they turned a deaf ear to his works and teachings they became witnesses against themselves, and showed that they knew not the Father, and therefore that they could not know the Son whom he had sent. Then he began to preach the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead, which had been so fully represented in the healing of the impotent man. He first shows in verse twenty-five that it is the work of the Spirit that the dead are quickened: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." While the natural healing of the impotent man does not tell us that he knew anything of God from a spiritual standpoint, yet those who are taught of the Lord are led to see that it took only the same power to raise the dead that it took to cure that man's impotency. Here the failure of the virtue of the pool is seen. The pool could not raise the dead, but it could do that as well as it could heal the infirm. Not only is it taught that it could not raise the literal dead, but that it could not quicken those who were dead in sin, and to bring them to the Father they must be quickened from the dead; they must come by Jesus Christ. Therefore power over death is given to the Son, and he quickeneth whom he will. The false idea that the Son cannot save any only by their willing consent, here falls to the ground. "The hour is coming, and now is," shows a continuous work in the church of God, which is the body of Christ. Here is the quickening by the Spirit from the dead in trespasses and sins, the making alive to a knowledge of one's self and the necessity of a Savior. In this is revealed so much of our sin that our impotency appears in every part, and we see that we are altogether leprous. In this one loses his power to get into the pool or to receive any benefit therefrom. It is here that repentance is given by Jesus Christ, and where repentance is given the forgiveness of sins is also given, for for this purpose was Jesus exalted at God's right hand. Hearing is a sure sign of life. "The dead shall hear;" "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." The Lord speaks, and the dead hear, and they that hear live in God and unto God. God does not wait until some certain season, as the angel, but his hour is ever present: "The hour is coming, and now is." It is not an oral voice, as the voice of man, but the voice from heaven that speaks in the inward parts, the voice of life, the voice of the Son of God. Then the waiting at the pool is ended, they live. "They that hear shall live." Every child of God in this world has experienced this, and is yet experiencing it, for it is this same voice that is now quickening us from every dead word and work and keeping us humble, loving, trusting and waiting in patience for the day of our deliverance from the flesh, the rending of the veil, the taking away of darkened glass. This is that in which we live by faith, looking forward in hope as the glorious doctrine of the resurrection works in us, raising us up from the things

of earth and drawing us nearer to our final rest in glory. At this glorious truth the bystanders appeared to marvel, even as some yet marvel, and say, like Nicodemus, "How can these things be?" for the Lord said (verses twenty-eight and twenty-nine): "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Paul says that we are waiting for the adoption: the redemption of our body. Somehow it will not leave me, nor can I be persuaded from that point, that God hath appointed a day, an hour, when all that are in the graves (literal places of their literal burials) shall hear the voice of God, and shall come forth just as the Lord has said. It shall not be another body, but this one, for this mortal shall put on immortality, and death (which has preyed on this body) shall be swallowed up of life. I do not believe that the saints shall dwell in a material body of nature, but in the body like unto the glorious body of our glorified Lord. Then shall we be satisfied, and not until then; then death will have been swallowed up of life, the victory gained over the grave, and the saints, as angels of God, shall join in one united voice in praising him who hath redeemed them out of all kindreds and nations and tongues, and redeemed them as kings and priests unto God.

This, my brother, is my hope, and the end to which I am to-day looking forward as the earnest of these things is poured out in my heart. The Lord bless you.

Yours in this hope,

L. H. HARDY.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 58.

"THEREFORE, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

The power and force which scriptural words carry with them is due to the Spirit, which takes of the things of Jesus and revealeth them to him who readeth, and in whom grace aboundeth, and it is only by the exercise of the Spirit in us that we are enabled to eat and be comforted by the revealed word. Again, in order to attain unto that which is in the mind of the inspired writer, we dare not detach a sentence or a verse from that which goes before or which follows after, but search the written word, for we have the precious instruction which fell from the lips of Jesus: "He that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.

"Therefore." This word is used by the writer, referring to the things of which he has been speaking, as a reason for the admonition which follows, and which brings to our faith's view the weighty and precious things which the gospel sets forth to our gladdened hearts, namely, "How that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." We must know the one, to follow the other. The word "therefore" is important, for if the things of the gospel "be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." Therefore to follow Jesus we must know Jesus.

"My beloved brethren." This expression of the blessed relationship of the saints of God is not a mere salutation, as men of the world use the word "brother,"

carrying with it simply a meaningless expression, but these words came out of the apostle's heart, and not merely from his lips. The words, filled with their proper meaning, would say, Because you are in my heart to live and die with you, because with me you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope is the same hope, our hearts are joined together with the cords of that love which God the Father bestowed upon his Son, and upon all who fear his name and look for his appearing, therefore you are my brethren beloved. Now the things which are in my heart I say unto you: "Be ye steadfast," firmly fixed and established in the belief of the truth that Christ died for your redemption and arose again for your justification, and that he ever liveth and sitteth at the right hand of the Father, continually making intercession for you. He who is steadfast listeneth not to the voice of a stranger, to enticing words nor evil devices, but contendeth strenuously and firmly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. He looks well to the anchor which steadfastly holds his frail vessel which rideth the waves in safety because of the anchor (Christ Jesus). To be steadfast the eye must be single to the glory of God, knowing none other gods, save the God of salvation, pressing forward, turning neither to the right nor to the left.

"Unmovable." This is a strong word and implies strength. The winds of false doctrine may blow with all their power and force against an unmovable child of grace, but cannot turn him from the way his mind and heart are set. He standeth upon the foundation of all truth (the rock Christ Jesus). He knoweth the security of the place of his feet. How refreshing to meet a brother or sister who is not ashamed of the gospel of Christ under any circumstances, and who is proud to be numbered with the sect everywhere spoken against, and who is weaned from the milk, drawn from the breasts of mother Eve. When we remember that God is faithful in performing all his promises, that his faithfulness faileth not, that he remembereth us in mercy, that his love is an everlasting love, that he doeth his pleasure in heaven and in earth, that all his ways are goodness and his paths are paths of peace, that he is the Potter and we are the clay, that he maketh us vessels of his own pleasing, and what he does is right, that the righteousness which is in his Son he has imputed unto us, remembering, I say, all these things we become strong in the Lord, recognizing the power of his might. Thus are we "unmovable," firmly fixed and built up on our most holy faith. "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter," walking in all the beauty and order of the house of God, walking no more by sight, but by the faith of God's elect in the secret of his love.

"Always abounding in the work of the Lord." To abound is in every case to manifest life, therefore in order to abound one must necessarily be alive; in the life of the children of the kingdom sin abounds, and also grace, the one in conflict with the other. Now you will ask, What is the work of the Lord, to which we are admonished of the apostle? Belief in the Lord Jesus Christ is the work of the Lord in us, and causes us to suffer because of the abounding of sin in our mortal bodies, and these are the sufferings of Christ, for it is the work of the Holy Ghost which causeth the conflict and bringeth about the suffering. So the apostle says, "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." The belief

in the Lord Jesus Christ that a man once lived who was called Jesus Christ, does not make a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, but your belief must be wrought out and made manifest in your mortal bodies, which work is by the Spirit of Christ in you. It is not sufficient to abound once in a while in the work; a Sunday christian and a weekday sinner is more of a hypocrite than a seven day sinner, for the one knoweth the way and walketh not in it, while the other knoweth not the way, so walketh in ignorance. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him," and our peaceful reign in his kingdom with him is the consolation which aboundeth by Christ. This is a continuous work in the life of faith.

"Forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." The knowledge of the truth of God in you makes you that you are "steadfast," that you are "unmovable," and that you do abound in the work of the Lord. The apostle is attesting to that which already exists in you: love for the brethren, a desire for holiness, a conviction of sin, a fear and trembling in coming before the throne of grace, a knowledge of our poverty, wretchedness, blindness and weakness; all these build us up in the faith which is set before us, showing us that it is the work of the Lord in us, and that it is not in vain, because it leadeth us to his mercy-seat and to the house of our Master's brethren. We also know that our labor is not in vain, because the power and sweetness of the gospel lead us into an earnest desire for heavenly things, and turn us away from the things we once loved. It shows us, too, that it is truly the work of the Lord in us, for we know that we could not do this work of ourselves, it is in opposition to every desire of the carnal mind, for it humbles our pride and makes us to be despised in the face of a vain world, for our garments are humility, and our ornaments "a meek and quiet spirit." These things fulfill the law of God, and not the law of the flesh. May the love of God and the knowledge of his truth so occupy our hearts that all our labor in the Lord may be to the glory of God, and to the lifting of Jesus on high.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

NORTH YAKIMA, Wash., Jan. 16, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I am asked to give an account of a recent journey I made among the Baptists on Puget Sound, and while I do not feel able to write an interesting letter, yet for the sake of giving some information concerning them to brethren in the east who contemplate migrating to that part of the State of Washington I make the attempt, hoping I will write nothing to the detriment of the cause of the blessed Master or to the injury of any of his children. I believe that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," and that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." While I have had, and still have, doubts as to whether that includes me, yet I hope it does, and so, while I had said journey in mind or contemplation it furnished the substance of many an errand to the throne of grace, as, Lord, let me find favor with thy people, that I may be a comfort and benefit to them, or, Lord, if thy presence go not with me, suffer me not to go.

Elder W. T. Eaton, of Spokane, and I left my home on the evening of Dec. 19th, going to brother W. R. Stephens', in North Yakima, where we had preaching that evening, going on early Monday morning to Seattle, falling in by the way

with sister Parker and her husband, W. D. Parker, who came recently from Woodstock, Minn., to Wash.; they were going to Lynden, Wash., having been away from Baptists for twenty-five years, until their stay of a few weeks in Yakima; you may be sure she was glad to see them again; I hope that brethren and sisters will call on her at Lynden and cheer her after a godly sort. We arrived in Seattle Monday evening, having crossed the Cascade Mountains via the Stampede Pass and tunnel, going to the home of sister Minnie Hess for the night, intending to go on to Mt. Vernon the next morning, but failing to get definite information as to the roads, we went to Sedro Woolley instead, thereby being a day early at the latter place, and preached four sermons in Sedro Woolley, where we did not expect to preach at all. Seeing the beaming faces of some of the hearers was sufficient to convince me that the change in our program was of the Lord, and seeing the moist eyes and feeling the hearty handclasp of father and mother Birch, whom I had not seen for over forty years, made me glad that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Then on to brother Davis Burch's house, with more preaching in their schoolhouse. Supper was provided for us by Mr. and Mrs. Perry, friends of Primitive Baptists, and, I trust, acquainted with the truth as it is in Jesus. The Lord bless them, and enable them to take up their cross and follow Him. After partaking of the hospitality of brother and sister Burch for the night, we, in company with brother Burch, started for Mt. Vernon. Having to change cars at Burlington, brother Burch attempted to board the cars when they were moving, and missed the step, but hung on, being grasped by brother Eaton; colliding with a wheelbarrow, his feet were knocked from under him, he was being dragged, and so compelled to release his hold and drop. I trembled all the way to Mt. Vernon, thinking how near it came being a tragedy. We were met by brother R. E. Beaty and conducted to his home, where we met his wife (also a Baptist) and their four children. We had been there but a few minutes when a message came from brother Burch, saying he was not much hurt and would come on the next train. We were glad of the message, and it was not long until he joined us. We had preaching that night at brother Beaty's house. Next day we went on to Bellingham, where brother and sister Yeoman live, and where brother and sister Wood had moved temporarily to help entertain the Baptists coming from a distance to attend the meeting, and, if thought expedient, to go into the organization of a church. We had preaching that night (Friday) and Saturday forenoon; then agreed to meet in the afternoon for the purpose of organizing. The presbytery was formed by choosing the writer moderator, and Elder W. T. Eaton clerk. The credentials, or letters of the proposed members, were then examined and found satisfactory. The articles of faith of the Siloam Association were adopted, and rules of decorum were adopted, after which a clerk (a young brother Rodgers, whose initials I do not remember,) was chosen. There is a deacon among them. Elder Eaton was chosen pastor. The church was then pronounced a church in order, taking the name Bethel, the writer delivering the charge the next day. That night we had more preaching, also Sunday morning and evening, when one by letter and one by experience and baptism were received, making nine in all, with a good

prospect of several more in the near future. Monday morning early a little band of brethren and sisters boarded a street car for Silver Beach, on the shore of Lake Whatcom, to attend to the ordinance of baptism. It is a beautiful beach, with water clear as crystal and the bottom covered with small white and many colored pebbles. The morning was shrouded with the gloom of fog, which obscured the distant prospect, but as we began to sing the fog separated into clouds and let the glorious sunlight shine through along the water, gilding and making it appear as a lake of molten silver, and enveloping our party in its brightness as to almost appear as a message of approval from the glory-world sent by the King of kings. The glow of love in my heart for the little band and the drawing of that "bond of perfectness," made me think we had been marching together under His glorious banner in His banqueting-house, sitting together in "heavenly places." Brother Eaton administered the ordinance of baptism with solemn reverence and order becoming the administration of God's holy ordinance. We were soon again speeding towards the depot, where we were to take the cars for Everett. On the way we bade farewell to several of our brethren who dropped off as their homes were reached, while some went to see us off. After parting with them we proceeded on our homeward journey, dropping brother D. Burch at Burlington, to go to his home. We were soon at Everett, seated in the comfortable home of brother and sister S. K. Painter, where we had preaching at night, several of the neighbors coming in to hear the "Hardshell Baptists." The next morning we separated, brother Geo. Wine, of Wenatche, going with Elder Eaton, while I went on alone to Seattle, where, after a short stay, I took the 11:30 p. m. train for home, where I arrived the next morning in time for breakfast.

Your brother, W. J. HESS.

CENTERBURG, Ohio, Dec. 29, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS, AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—Weak and unworthy as I feel myself to be, I feel that duty is calling upon me to send the dear editors the money for their much loved paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I always pay in advance, as it has always been a custom in our family. It comes in my mind that I may not live to read it, but I have some dear friends who love to read it, so it will not be without a home. I will send you the money as usual, and if it be the dear Lord's will that I live to read it, all right, but it may be his will is to take me out of this world of sin and sorrow, and let me be accepted through dear Jesus in that blessed world to dwell where there is pleasure forevermore; no parting there, no weak nerves to keep under control, but all will be like dear Jesus. The flesh dreads the chilling tide, but we believe that "Jesus can make a dying bed as soft as downy pillows are," and I do know that God can give rest to a weak body. This I have learned by experience in the last year. You remember (some of you will) I fell and dislocated my right shoulder; well, I soon had the use of my arm, but there was a numbness came in my hands and feet. I suffered a very little with my heart, and went to the magnetic springs, took osteopathy treatments, drank the water freely, but was too weak to take the baths. I came home, and had strength given me to look after my home affairs. Then I went back to Delaware and took battery treatments. I made my home with my daughter while at the springs and taking

the battery treatments. I was blessed to get to every one of our meetings from May to the October meeting; that was my chief enjoyment. I took more battery treatments in November and December, but now am shut in by much cold and snow. In all this I have not suffered, and have been blessed with good rest; all I have lacked is perfect patience so I can be more like Christ. Our yearly meeting was one of those sittings together in Christ Jesus in heavenly places, all of one mind and peace. Elder Peters, of Indiana, Elder Hutchison, of Findlay, Ohio, our two home brethren, Elders George Weaver and C. E. Jackson, of Galion, Ohio, were there.

I am blessed with many comforting letters; I will send you one, and if you have space and think best use it. He is young, both in years and in the ministry.

I will close my imperfect letter by saying that sudden deaths are numerous all around us, but there is comfort in knowing that God, who rules the inhabitants of earth and the army of heaven, makes no mistakes. I take some pleasure in being numbered with that class called "peculiar."

I wish all a happy and prosperous new year, with a request to remember unworthy me. I feel there is no paper like the SIGNS. I have other papers as gifts, but none like the dear SIGNS to me. With love to all, farewell.

Your unworthy, weak sister,

SARAH C. BOYD.

GALION, Ohio, Dec. 5, 1909.

DEAR SISTER BOYD:—I just finished a few lines to brother Bookwalter, and will try and write to you. I hate to write to any of God's children, for I am so barren of anything to comfort them, but O how I do love to get letters from them; it is like a refreshing shower to dry ground. You know the old prophet said, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem," and then tells us what comfort is to Jerusalem: "cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." I have thought this way: What comfort would it be to tell the Lord's poor ones, who feel themselves to be at the ends of the earth, and have nothing to present to the Lord, that their sins were not forgiven, and that there was something they must do; the Lord started the work, but it rests with them to finish it; that the Lord was not the author and finisher of their faith? No, dear sister, there is no comfort in this kind of talk to the child of God, but tell him the Father sent his Son into the world to save his people from their sins, and that he finished the work, satisfied divine justice, paid the debt the law demanded and set his people free, saved them with an everlasting salvation, and that it is not of works, but by his mercy he saved us, &c., this will be to their comfort. To tell them they are the recipients of eternal life, not going to be when they do something to earn it, but now, and the work was finished from the foundation of the world; that they are "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation," &c., this will, if given by the Spirit, comfort the poor one who is bowed down on account of his many sins and his inability to do the things that he would, and made to see if the least thing depends upon him he is entirely lost. When I look at my own case and see how impossible it is for me to do one good act, or even think one good thought, then I am made to thank God that it is not by works, but

all by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. O how glad I am that it is just that way; the Lord has seen fit in his infinite wisdom and mercy to hide these things from the wise and prudent and reveal them unto babes, and give us the earnest of the inheritance in our hearts, which enables us by the eye of faith to look beyond this veil of sorrow and tears, to where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, making intercession for those whose sins he bore, and cause us to rejoice in the hope that some day we shall see him as he is and be like him, and be satisfied when we awake with his likeness.

Mary joins in sending love to all. Write soon.

Your unworthy brother; if one at all, the least of all.

C. E. JACKSON.

HAMPSTEAD, Md., May, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Since I last wrote you another very dear brother and father in Israel has left us. O how much his dear family will miss him, and how much we all feel our loss. As David said, He cannot come to us, but we shall go to him. Is it not a glorious thought that when we put off this mortality our prayer, as well as his, of which he spoke in his last letter, will be turned to praise? Though the veil yet remained he seemed to dwell upon that which he was soon to realize. I have referred to his last spiritual letter. He wrote me afterward telling me of their sickness. I wrote him the week before his death, and just as I was finishing it I received the letter which I inclosed to you. I was glad you wrote as you did. No doubt the Lord led you, although you thought it a poor letter. Sister Emma Kelley said that it, with the SIGNS, was the last reading he did. Not only was his physical strength superior to mine, but his mind was also. He was still useful in both family and church. This you know. The thought arises, Why was he taken, and my useless (seemingly) life still spared? But I hear you say, The Lord Jehovah reigns, and he moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform, and each feeble one must remain to fill the place designed for him. Although brother Kelley's lips and pen will be silent, it can well be said of him, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." He is no longer a looker on, as he was in his "dream," but enjoys the full fruition of his hope, and joins in that endless praise of which he spoke. But, as you said in your last, of the friends that you loved and had lost for a time, I am glad that I knew and loved him. Yet to think of him brings sadness that I cannot overcome. Sister Emma took me home with her on Saturday before the first Sunday, and on Sunday we went to the meeting. Sister Kelley thought her son ought not to be left alone, for he has been suffering a great deal since his father's death. Thus you see that his dear ones are still thoughtful of me. When I thanked brother Kelley last fall for taking me to the meeting, he said, "It gives me pleasure to take any one to meeting." Our esteemed pastor was there that time, and we had a very comforting sermon on the words, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserble." We believe these things, but it is well to have the pure mind stirred up by way of remembrance.

My mind at times is unstable regarding eternity, and you know that the enemy always knows where the weak

spot is, and there lays siege. I did not get to the all day meeting, but it was not my fault this time. There will be a time when not only a part, but the whole church will assemble; all the ransomed of the Lord will be there, and all be in his likeness, all to his praise and glory. Will I be of the number? I rejoice at times in believing that I will. I sometimes wonder how I endured the trials of life before I understood the omnipotence of God, and that he rules on earth and in the army of heaven. But I am still an imperfect mortal, which causes me many hours of sadness, but I think of dear old Peter, and then take courage. O how I desire to be more thankful that I have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. When we look back and see that he has led us and helped us over all the hard places, and often has turned the bitter into sweet, we must say, Surely he will not leave us at the last to sink. Christ said that he would not leave us comfortless. He said, "I can of mine own self do nothing." "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." By suffering he learned obedience, as we are told. If, then, the sinless Christ learned obedience by suffering, what can we frail mortals expect? It is God that works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. O for more faith, more trust in that sustaining power.

I have received and read the SIGNS since I began to write this letter, and I think this number especially good. When that dear old mother in Israel spoke of enjoying your new year's greeting it brought to my mind how I entered into your feelings as I read and reread it. What a long pilgrimage she has had. I love to read the testimony of such ones. Then she spoke of my mother's hymn: "'Tis a point I long to know," &c. As brother Kelley once said, It is a pleasant and thankful thought when we are brought to remember the days when we were cared for by a loving and God-honoring mother. Yes, I feel to say, God-loving, God-honoring and God-fearing, for her walk was peaceful, though her trials were many. I think I told you that the ice had to be cut when she was baptized, at the age of eighteen.

I often had a desire to write to sister Ruth Adamson, but put it off too long. Elder Joseph Jones baptized her mother also. I saw a reference to a sister Dardy; I wonder if the name was not Darby, who would be a niece by marriage to my grandmother Myerly. Mrs. Stansbury, while on a visit to Montgomery County, was asked by a sister Darby if she knew me. She had read my letters in the SIGNS. Do you know her?

How scattered we are, and how few in comparison to other denominations; we are as one among a thousand. I thank you all for sister Bonnie's letters, and hope we shall hear from her again. I received a good letter from sister Faulkner a short time ago. I can never get my thoughts as I would like to do, but I always think that you will understand. I know that you are well entertained now, attending the spring associations, but I could not get the desire off my mind to write you. I know that you are always charitable to the outcasts.

With love to all, I remain your sister,

GEORGIA D. ENGLAND.

[IT was our privilege to baptize this sister Darby many years ago in Washington city. She is a granddaughter of the late Elder Samuel Trott.—C.]

BRUNSWICK, Me., Dec. 21, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —You have been in my mind all day, with a desire to write to you. I do feel glad to have that desire, and want to express some of the precious things which have been in my thoughts. The clouds have been scattered, so that the darkness is not felt as it has been. When it was so easy for me to write of the way that the Lord had led me, I did think it was strange to hear older ones say, "I would write if I could, but I cannot." It has been necessary for me to travel the path that I have, to be able to enter into their experience; I know now the barrenness and desolation they felt in spiritual things. All of God's children are taught of him, and we cannot teach one another. They shall all know him, from the least of them unto the greatest. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." And there is more than this: "And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." The more we are made to feel the evil dwelling within us, the more plainly we see that we are saved by grace, if saved at all. It cannot be by any works of righteousness which we have done or can do. When the evidence is given us that Jesus bore our sins in his own body on the tree, and is formed in our hearts the hope of glory, and we follow him in the ordinance of baptism, we do name the name of Christ, and depart from all iniquity. We depart from all trust in the works of the flesh, and we boast no more of what we can do. But what a sweet song it is when we can sing unto the Lord. Many times David said, Let us sing unto the Lord; O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good. The ninety-eight Psalm is most beautiful to me just now; "O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvelous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory." "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth; make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise." This does not mean that I should shout aloud on the street or in the house in order to make this loud noise; it is in my heart, and is so loud that nothing else can be heard except praise unto God. "The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen." What beautiful fullness there is in this Psalm. If I could only express what I feel, you would enjoy reading this letter. It is a great blessing to feel the joy of his salvation restored to me again. I can say now, It is a great blessing to be led into darkness, and to go down into the depths, and to be hedged about with hewn stone, and to thus learn more fully my own weakness and dependence. I think it means just this travel of the child of God where it is written, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." How wonderful it is that I can claim all this as my experience and find that it agrees with that of David. I have not perhaps quoted it just right, but have expressed it as it was felt in my heart. It came to me with power and assurance, and there is a joyful noise before the Lord. David said, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." And, "The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart." I hope that I, too, have learned his statutes, in being led as I have been.

Perhaps you may feel to write and enlarge upon what I have been here writing about, and many will be comforted and strengthened. I have been thinking of my experience when I was made to know the truth and brought home to the

people of God; the peace that I felt was surely past all understanding. I never could express the change when I was brought from nature's darkness into his marvelous light. The words Jesus spake are the same to-day: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." We cannot tell it; each one must know it for himself by experience. It has been a privilege and a comfort to speak of these things to those of like precious faith. I have mourned greatly because I could not feel these things with power in my heart. I have known that it was all right, and for some wise purpose, but I could not help longing for the light, yea, more than they that watch for the morning.

I have enjoyed much in past years writing to you of the precious things of the kingdom of our God, and have desired many times, since I have been in darkness, to be able to tell you where I was, but I could not. It may not be long before I shall be led into darkness again, but I do feel glad of this one more sweet season of making melody in my heart to God. It must be always to our God that all praise, honor, power and glory shall be given. But I do not want to weary you. If I can write again soon you may feel that it is worthy of a place in the SIGNS. I love those who write, and would be glad to attend the associations again and meet many face to face. My love to all your family, and to all the dear ones whom you meet. May we all be led into the truth, is the desire of your sister in hope,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Nov. 29, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—With much fear and trembling I make the attempt to write a few lines, and I trust that God will guide me, for without him I know that I can do nothing. My mind of late has been dwelling upon the first two verses of the first Psalm, which read as follows: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful: but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." Who are those that are thus blessed? I take it for granted that they are the ones whom Christ came to save, who are the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and are called the bride, the Lamb's wife, who were given to him before the foundation of the world; this was before man was created. This is one of the strongest proofs of the wonderful foreknowledge of God. In the fourth verse of the same Psalm we read, "The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away." What a vast difference we see between them so blessed, and them not blessed. What a wonderful thing it is that we poor, worthless worms of the dust, who have never done anything to merit the favor of God, should be so blessed. I often wonder, Can it be for me? Sometimes when I go to meetings I feel so unworthy, and I question, Am I deceived in my hope? At such times I think if the brethren and sisters could see me as I see myself they would have no fellowship for me. But we read, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." If I am not deceived, I do love all those in whom I see the love of God manifested, but I think they are all better than I am.

I certainly did enjoy the association at Mt. Zion last month, the preaching was all sound doctrine; this is my judgment of it. To meet with the friends was a feast to me. I want to thank them for their kindness, especially sister Caruthers and her family, for I did enjoy their great kindness. If I should never meet them again in these low grounds of sin and sorrow, may God's richest blessing abide with them, both now and forever, is my prayer.

Some say that Christ came to give every one a chance to be saved, but how does that compare with his language: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me"? Again, "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." These he will not cast out, but says he will raise them up again at the last day. The people of the world do not think this; they do not believe that God rules supremely and will do his pleasure, both in heaven and in earth; they do not realize that it is in him that we live, move and have our being.

I enjoy the editorials in the SIGNS, also the different letters. I would be glad to write like others do, but I am so ignorant in spiritual things that I cannot write to the comfort of any one. The Bible tells us God has a people in every kindred, tongue and nation. Peter says that they are a peculiar people, a despised people. They always have been despised by the world, and will be as long as the world stands. We are told that it is through great tribulation we must enter the kingdom of heaven. Were it not for the blessed hope which we have in Christ we would be of all men most miserable. The people who are born of the Spirit are the only ones who realize their lost condition before the just and holy God. But when we feel that Jesus is with us we can sing, "Prisons would palaces prove, if Jesus would dwell with me there."

The SIGNS still comes to me with the sound doctrine of the word of God. It declares sovereign grace, and gives to God all the praise. All praise belongs to him; we poor, helpless mortals deserve no praise.

Pardon me for writing this poor letter, but these things have been upon my mind, and I felt like writing, and if you can see anything worthy in this you are at liberty to publish it, but I do not wish to crowd out better matter.

I remain your unworthy brother, with much love in the Spirit,

THOMAS ALDEN.

CHESTER, Nebr., Jan. 11, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—I inclose money order for two dollars to settle my account with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for I notice I am in arrears, and am indebted to you for your forbearance in this matter. I have had the privilege of reading the SIGNS practically all my life; my father, I think, was one of the original subscribers, and took and read it during the remaining years of his life, and I have been a subscriber for fully forty years, and at this time I see no good reason for discontinuing. I cannot say, like some of the correspondents, that it is the only sound paper published in the interest of the cause of gospel truth; I cannot say, with some of my dearly beloved and highly esteemed brethren, that I believe in the absolute predestination of all things, neither can I say I do not believe in the absolute predestination of all things. There are so many things I fail utterly to comprehend; my own (to me) utterly insignificant movements I fail even to understand, why I am located at

this place, and why I do as I do. We left our comfortable and pleasant home and warm-hearted brethren and sisters and relatives in Illinois and came here, where we supposed we would be near some of our sons, but now we find ourselves living alone, with none of our family closer than one hundred and fifty miles, and up to four hundred miles from us, and sixty miles from our church, when, as a matter of fact, we had no expectations of putting ourselves in any such situation, so we are brought to the conclusion that "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps;" and now, after almost forty years' experience in trying to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, I have never yet come to the place or time when I could say or feel that I was sufficient for these things. I heard a minister of our order say he was sure that every word that came out of his mouth while in the pulpit came from the Lord, but I must say that if that feeling or sentiment is one of the necessary qualifications of a gospel minister, I am lacking in that particular. However, I can say, I do believe that every word spoken by Jesus Christ, or spoken or written by his apostles by inspiration of God, contains some spiritual truth not visible to the natural eye or open to the natural or unquickened understanding, and when, like the barley loaves and the small fishes, God sees fit to bless and break to the quickened mind, the spiritual significance of the spoken or written word is revealed and the hungering soul is fed, their thirst is quenched and they are raised up who were bowed down under a sense of their utter dependence before God, and a great gladness fills their souls, and an unspeakable joy possesses them. Many of God's little poor ones travel much of their road in darkness, because their experience is not such an experience as they have read of or heard related by some brother or sister in whom they feel the utmost confidence; to such doubting and halting ones I would say, What difference would there be in the effect of a violent thunder-shower, accompanied by wind and threatening, angry clouds, sharp lightning and peal after peal of reverberating thunder, until the earth is made to tremble and the heavens are veiled in darkness, and the rain descends in torrents, and a gentle, quiet shower, so gentle, in fact, that you are not disturbed, or even awakened from sleep? Do you not think the gentle shower would revive drooping vegetation and cause all nature to rejoice and the birds to sing just as sweetly as the shower accompanied by such great physical demonstrations? Sometimes I am in doubt as to the propriety of relating my experience before a congregation, lest it cause doubts to arise in the minds of some who never felt the deep anguish of soul that has deprived them of rest, until they felt to call upon the rocks to fall upon them and hide them from the presence and the justice of an angry God.

It has been a long time since I began this letter, and I am not sure that I am doing right in sending it, but do not know that I could do better if I should try again, but I will send it to let our friends know that we are still living and enjoying a reasonable amount of health. We are shut in this winter by the severity of the weather, and are longing for spring and the privilege of meeting with kindred spirits in the worship of God.

Your unworthy brother in Christ,

S. KETCHUM.

WILLOWGROVE, Del., December, 1909.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—If one so unworthy dare to address you in such endearing words. After reading your editorial in the December 1st, 1909, issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, on the "Great Supper," I have felt an impression to write you and express my heartfelt appreciation of the way you expressed your views on it, and especially the way you applied it to the people of God of to-day, and set forth the qualifications it requires to make a true disciple of God. It seems to accord with what I have thought, but is expressed in much clearer language than I could command, and it seems to awaken a feeling of fellowship in me toward you that I would like to express if I could, and I hope it is not of the flesh, for if it is, it is not the kind of fellowship to commend me to you. To see some of the children of God clinging to the things of the world has been, and is, a great trouble to me; like those bidden to the supper, they are making excuses. When we look around and see those who are called to holiness putting themselves before the world in public places to gain public favor and the good will of worldly people, attending camp meetings and other places of public amusements, to me there is something lacking; they have not become crucified to the world and its vanities. As the Savior said of the Pharisees, "They have their reward," and of others making excuses; as clerks, their employer will not let them off; and lawyers, their business is too pressing; and physicians, their practice will not let them off; and farmers, their crops need attention; and carpenters, they cannot leave their work; with other men, such as club members, grange members and other societies, need our presence at this time, and, in fact, all avocations of life are prone to find excuses, and are not worthy to come to the supper; they have not become halt, lame or blind in the proper way, and when they are so brought they will abandon some of their church meetings that interfere with their work, disregarding the old prophet, to "stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." We are admonished to not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, and when a church gets in this condition there is to my mind and understanding something wrong. It seems to me that here comes in the being a christian without being a disciple. We have not learned to hate father, mother, brother, sister, husband, wife and friend, yea, and our own life also, as is enjoined upon us to become a disciple of Christ, but are rather clinging to the world and its vanities. When such a condition gets in a church (and she is to live) the sooner gotten rid of the better, before the whole lump is leavened. There are numerous Scriptures that could be given to bear out this testimony, but it is useless for me to try to quote to you. Christ in his sermon on the mount, to his disciples said, "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" Then described what taking thought amounts to, and then compared Solomon's array with the lilies of the field, then said, "After all these things do the Gentiles seek." Then said (this is what I mean to convey), "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall

be added unto you." Here is one of his "shalls," which never fail.

I will stop writing before I tire you, for you know all these things; but when one's mind gets to running in this channel there seems to be no end. What I wished to express to you was, I am glad to know that I am not alone in these things, and am glad to say to you that you expressed it much better than I could myself. I can fully indorse all you said on the subject. O for more preaching or writing of that kind to awaken those who make excuses for not being at the supper. Knowing that you have that pure charity from above, you will overlook anything I have said that is not in accord with the word, and lay it to the flesh. Having looked over this, after some time, I will send it to you, but will say, I have come far short of expressing myself as I would.

Asking you to excuse me for trespassing upon your time, and again for a share of your charity for my shortcomings, I remain, unworthily,

JAMES F. CUBBAGE.

BLUE SPRINGS, MO., Dec. 16, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—As requested by Mr. Knight, I send draft for six dollars, as noted on subscription blank. Mr. Knight is now in his ninety-first year, and rather feeble in body, but, I think, strong in the Spirit of Christ. His old colored friend, Richard Waller, who was once a slave and worked for Mr. Knight, sent the money with the request to have his subscription renewed, and as Mr. Knight is too feeble to write, asked me to remit for them both. From what Mr. Knight says, R. Waller must be considerably over eighty years of age, but former servitude and old age is no barrier to the grace of God, and I think from the tone of his letter he knows more of the grace of God than does the wisdom and science of this world, and without his consent I will send you his letter, feeling sure he will not object to any disposition you make of it.

The SIGNS is an ever welcome visitor to me, and I expect to take it as long as I live. I am sorry I cannot send you a long list of subscribers.

Wishing you much success, I am your friend,

THOMAS W. RECORDS.

LIBERTY, MO., Dec. 5, 1909.

MY DEAR BROTHER KNIGHT:—It is through the tender mercy of our great covenant-keeping God I am yet spared to see the close of another year's subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and, as I have for a long time sent with you, if it is not asking too much of you I will ask you to renew for me again, so I herewith send you a post-office order for three dollars and ten cents, two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, one dollar to help the SIGNS, for I hear of many who would take the SIGNS if they were able to pay for it, and yet, worse than all, are situated where they cannot hear anything but man's head religion, and such stuff as that is no food for the new man, the inward man. The natural man cannot understand the things of the Spirit, for they are foolishness unto him, because he has not been born of God, for "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." To have the Spirit of Christ we must be born of God, born of that incorruptible seed by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. I cannot see, nor give any account of, how a dead man can have any will or power to do, think or act in any way. It is said that God made man and breathed

into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. God needed no help of Adam in any way, for he was without life or action, therefore was helpless, powerless; so is every one of Adam's race dead in trespasses and sins until God by his almighty power quickens into everlasting life. This quickening is done without the aid or help of men or angels, for we have his word for it: "Mine own arm brought salvation." I cannot see how any who have been led out of darkness into light, and made to see the lost and helpless condition they were in, can bring in any works, or anything man can do, to justify themselves in the sight of God. If man could have worked his own salvation, then verily Christ would have died in vain, but thanks be to God, we hear him saying, "All [not a part] that the Father giveth me shall come to me." O, my dear brother, the sad, sad question often arises in my mind, Am I included in that "all"? If so, all is well with me, but if not, woe unto me, for I would be without hope; but thanks be to God, he has given me a hope which, if I know my own heart, I would not give for ten thousand worlds like this, for what will it profit a man if he should gain the whole world and lose his own soul?

I must stop, for I can hardly see a line.

> "Though in distant lands we sigh,
> Parched beneath a burning sky,
> Though the deep between us rolls,
> Friendship shall unite our souls."

May God bless you in lonely hours, and may you still be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. Please excuse the liberty I have taken in addressing you. My wife joins in love and christian fellowship to you. Farewell.

As ever, yours,

RICHARD WALLER.

TILBURY, Ont., Jan. 4, 1910.

MY DEAR ONES:—I would like to write a little of what I have passed through for the last three weeks; the agony of body I am not able to tell, nor yet the anguish of soul. After suffering for weeks, but able to be around, I was taken severely with inflammatory rheumatism in my right knee. What I suffered unceasingly for three days and nights I can never tell; then it eased a little by spells. I feared I was losing my mind; I was a companion to Job, only that Job was a perfect man, one who feared God and eschewed evil, and I was the chief of sinners, not one good thing remained. O how I abhorred my very life because of sin in every thought, word and deed. I longed for death to relieve me of my suffering, both of body and mind. Strange to say, I was more afraid of living than of dying; even in the most trying moments I could plead his promises, which I had hoped he had given me in days and years that are past, but O why was I so vile in my own sight? Was it the light of God's truth that was shining in my poor heart that caused me to see the awfulness of my depraved nature? I cannot picture it as dreadful as I was made to see it. I would think of Jesus in the garden in his great agony, when he sweat, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground; not even his disciples could keep awake; he must tread the wine-press alone, of the people there was none with him, and he cried out, If it be possible, let this cup pass, yet not my will, but thine, be done. Does it not say that we must fill up the suffering that remains? I am unable to quote it satisfactorily, and unable to get the Book to find it. O how wonderful! He finished the work the Father gave him to do; he suffered, bled and died the

shameful death of the cross; he laid in the grave three days, then burst the bands of death, hell and the grave, and arose triumphant, and the church arose with him, engraven on the palms of his hands. How glorious was his ascension after the work of redemption was completed.

In taking up the SIGNS I find Elder Durand has penned my thoughts more plainly than I can, which encourages me to hope that I am in the way of truth and holiness. He says, This truth that the mournful knowledge of our sins can only come from Jesus, finally overcomes the devil and brings us out from under the power of his lies and temptations. I was glad when I read it; it is encouraging to read from the pen of those we believe to be the children of God that they have similar trials to endure.

Jan. 9th.—I have been unable to write, having suffered so much pain, but am feeling easier to-day, so will try and write a little more, but do not feel in the same mind to write. It is trials that bring us to the throne of grace; trials give new life to prayer; when at ease we are not apt to cry for help. When Peter was sinking he cried out for help lest he should sink in deep waters. The Lord was a present help in time of trouble. O how often we feel our need of his gracious aid. I often wonder if there is any one like me, any one who gets so cold and lifeless. I think I would not pray unless I were driven to it by a feeling sense of need. There is a woe against them that are at ease in Zion. How quickly we fear that woe is against us if we come to a smooth place in our pathway; then is our time to fear, for we are not watching unto prayer.

Dear Elder Ker, I have written this in much weakness and suffering, but am feeling some stronger. If you see anything in this worth publishing it is at your disposal. I trust you will be at the Duart meeting. My desire is that the God of all grace will be with you and all the Israel of God. Cast the mantle of charity over all my imperfections. Love to sister Ker and yourself, and to all the household of faith.

Your unworthy little sister, I hope,

SARAH A. McCOLL.

LOVELAND, Colo., Jan. 19, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Recently I wrote an article, which I intended for publication in the SIGNS, but have misplaced it. I feel ashamed of myself, for I have appeared so indifferent to comply with the request of some of my dear brethren and sisters to write for the SIGNS oftener, but if they only knew what conflicts and trials of an earthly nature I am called to endure, as well as the great barrenness of my mind concerning spiritual things, I feel they would pity and forgive rather than blame me for not writing oftener. We are all, more or less, creatures of circumstances, and much of our time in this life our actions are governed by our surroundings.

I have just received the January 15th number of the SIGNS, and must say I have received much comfort in reading it, particularly the editorial. I have thought much on that text of Scripture. Brother Chick was enabled to show much beauty and truth upon the text I had never seen in it, yet there is a deep mystery to me in it, which I cannot solve by natural reason.

I am yours in hope,

J. H. YEOMAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1910.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PREDESTINATION.

BROTHER Lafayette Wallace, of Eckert, Colo., a few weeks ago wrote us asking that we reply to some statement upon the doctrine of predestination made in another paper. It is our desire at all times to respond to the requests of brethren if we can do so, and we now feel like replying to the request of our brother. It is not our mind however to here enter into any controversy upon this subject. It never has been our desire to use any of the principles of the doctrine of our Lord as a bone of contention, or simply as a matter of debate; the truths of the word of God are too important and too needful to the comfort of the children of God to be used as a football between opposing parties. We love to read or to hear this doctrine, as well as all other principles of doctrine belonging to the faith of God's elect, set forth when men are moved to either write or preach the word, and in setting forth this doctrine of predestination, as well as any other principle of doctrine, we love to hear the arguments that may be drawn from the Scriptures urged in its defense. We are persuaded that all who are taught by grace will delight to hear and to meditate upon all that is taught in the word concerning the God of our salvation, the Creator and Maker of all things, and our Savior. If the Bible teaches anything relating to the character and attributes of God, it teaches that all who love him will also love to contemplate all that belongs to him. It is not here our purpose to enter into a debate concerning the assertions in the article to which brother Wallace has called attention, but to suggest some thoughts that have long been in our mind concerning the doctrine of the unlimited predestination of God.

First, it is impossible to think of Jehovah at all without associating predestination with him; just as we cannot think of him without ascribing to him eternity, self-existence, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, holiness, justice and goodness, together with foreknowledge and unchangeability, so we cannot think of God without also ascribing to him the predestination of all things. If we believe that he created all things, that he governs all things, that there is nothing in all the universe that is beyond his grasp, that nothing can by any means occur or exist that will overthrow his purpose, that there is not a mote in the sunbeam, an insect so minute that hundreds of them can stand upon the point of a needle, a thought in the mind of man, from the thoughts of a child to those of the most profound scholar, not an event however small or however remote that is not within his grasp, it is impossible to escape believing that all are in his purpose and all fulfilling his decrees. This is predestination, and it is an infinite joy to all who are cut off from vainglorying, and who feel their weakness and ignorance, that God does thus reign, for because he reigns they dwell in safety and shall never finally perish. Were but one small particle of dust in

all the universe to be beyond his control, or outside of his infinite grasp, either in knowledge or in purpose or in power, then an element of uncertainty would enter the believer's faith and hope, and there could not be any positive assurance that somewhere, in some way, they should not meet that one thing, and meet it to their harm. Beside, to say that one atom anywhere in the universe escapes the all-seeing eye of God, is to limit him, and that is to deny his infinity, and to deny his infinity is to deny his Godhead. Whether we call it predestination, or by some other name, infinity, in relation to Jehovah, means that there is no limit within which he can be circumscribed, either in knowledge, in purpose or in power. His knowledge from all eternity must embrace every atom of his universe; he must have known just where every atom of his universe would be each and every moment of time and to all eternity. He must have known in like manner every thought that any and all men would ever think, every purpose that would ever take form in their minds, every sorrow that they would ever feel and every emotion of joy that would ever cause their faces to shine. There cannot be, there never can have been, one act of men, beasts, birds, fishes or reptiles that is not embraced in his all-seeing vision, and that was not always embraced there. Such knowledge is too high for us, we cannot attain to it, but it is not too high for the God whom we worship. He who denies the infinity of the wisdom of God shows that he neither knows God nor the teachings of the Scriptures regarding him. It is sure that all he foreknew must come to pass; nothing can come to pass that he foreknew would not come to pass, and nothing can fail to come to pass that he foreknew would come to pass. To say otherwise is to deny foreknowledge. There is a necessity, then, arising from somewhere, that all things that have ever been, are now or shall ever be, must be as they are. From whence does this necessity arise? Does it arise from some infinite power outside of Deity? To say this is to deny the Godhead, for it is saying that there is another power which has predestinated whatsoever shall be, before God could foreknow it, and then, this other power would be infinite, and God would be less than infinite, seeing that he could not know things in the future until they were made certain by the will of another power. We are writing these thoughts because they have for many years seemed to us just and right, but we cannot even think of these things without a solemn awe filling our heart. How deeply ought we to reverence such a God, and certainly it becomes us to think or to say nothing lightly concerning his infinite wisdom and his infinite decrees.

The one truth that we are aiming here to call attention to, is that the foreknowledge of God of necessity compels that the things foreknown of him should come to pass, as much as does the doctrine of predestination itself. Let the necessity arise from what or whom it may, still foreknowledge does establish the necessity of them. Certainly predestination can claim no more. Every objection to the doctrine of predestination lies with equal weight against the foreknowledge of God. If objections that have been urged against predestination do in fact destroy that doctrine, then they also destroy the doctrine of the foreknowledge of God. They would also press with equal weight against the doctrine of his unchangeability, since his attributes are all joined together in such a manner that were one to be marred all would share in

that marring. It has been admitted by some of the ablest writers we have ever known that every objection that lies against the doctrine of predestination lies with equal weight against the doctrine of his foreknowledge. It is an old and recognized principle in debating anything, that what proves too much proves nothing. Are we ready to give up the doctrine of predestination upon the ground that it involves the doctrine of necessity, and that that would involve a denial of the accountability of man for his sins, then also we must give up the doctrine of foreknowledge, seeing that it also involves the doctrine of necessity, just as certainly as does his predestination.

A minister of the Freewill Baptists, in Maine, once said to Elder Wm. Quint, "I do not believe in the predestination of all things at all." Elder Quint said to him, "Do you believe that the Lord foreknew all things from the beginning that shall ever come to pass?" He replied that he did. Then, said Elder Quint, "You believe that the Lord knew that we should be talking together just now?" "Yes, I believe that." "Then could we avoid meeting and conversing together at this time?" "Why yes," said the minister. "Well, if God foreknew that we should meet and talk together now, and yet we did not meet and talk, what would take place instead?" The minister said, "I see that I have admitted too much," and then he proceeded to deny the unlimited foreknowledge of God, as indeed he was compelled to do if he would maintain his objection to predestination. Men speak with horror of predestination of all things, saying that it makes our God responsible for all the vile crimes that occur in the world; but foreknowledge involves all this, just as much as does predestination; that is, if predestination involves the thought that men are not guilty for doing wrong, so does foreknowledge. The fact is, that neither involves this conclusion. Our reasoning may say so, but the word of God does not say so. Though it was the decree of God that Joseph should be sold by his brethren into bondage, yet they meant wickedly, while God intended good in it. We can see no reason why the same principles should not apply to every other wicked act of men. Our God predestinated them, but men have done them wickedly, meaning evil, while God means good in them. If any one asks, How can these two things be reconciled? we can only reply, Instead of asking us this question, ask Joseph, who said the words to which we have called attention, or ask Peter, who said the same things concerning the crucifixion of the blessed Lord; or ask Paul, who said still more than did Peter, as recorded in the ninth chapter of Romans. Shall mortal man be more just than God? Shall man be purer than his Maker?

We have seen but little use in seeking to divide the predestination of God, saying of part of it that it is permissive, while the rest is absolutely the will of God. This word "permissive" was coined when treating of the predestination of God, to avoid the thought of making the Holy One responsible for the sins of men, but we have not been able to see that the use of this word helps the argument any. Let it be understood that we do not for a moment believe that predestination does involve this conclusion, which must always be horrible to every humble follower of God; but if it does involve this conclusion, so also does the doctrine of permissive decrees. What would be the difference in the guilt of

two men, one of whom deliberately should push a little child over a precipice to its sure destruction, and one who indeed would not do this, but would stand by and see another little child running toward that precipice and should not put out his hand to save it from destruction when it was in his power to do so and he knew that that child would certainly go down to destruction unless withheld? This seems to us to be just the difference between predestination, or absolute decrees, and permissive decrees. We do not believe that either involves the conclusion that our God is the author of sin; but certainly if one involves it, so does the other. It is all a wonderful mystery when we come to reason about the matter. The same thing is true of every other principle of doctrine taught in the word of God. But shall we reject the teaching of the Bible because mysteries are involved? Then should we reject, or refuse to believe, that the grass grows in the spring.

The wills and shalls of the Bible prove the doctrine of predestination. There are some sixteen thousand of these words in the Bible, and about thirteen hundred of them in the one prophecy of Isaiah. While they all mean future things; that is, future regarded from the time when they were spoken, they also express positive certainty. Not one of them could ever fail. When our God says, "Thou shalt" or "I will," we may know that it is fixed and settled in heaven, and the shalls and wills of the Bible are spoken of things that we call evil as often as of things we call good. Hundreds of special things come under this head in the Scriptures; we mean it is said of them that they shall come to pass, and these things are declared not only as things known beforehand, but as things determined. Every prophecy of every kind proves the predestination of God, or at least his foreknowledge, and the fact that the things prophesied of must come to pass. When the blessed Lord said to Peter, "Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice," from that moment it could not have been avoided that Peter should deny him, and yet Peter sinned grievously in doing so, and this sin of his was made to work out for him great good, in that from that time he could not feel like boasting of his strength any more. His sin showed him how weak he was, and so took away the spirit of exaltation which had been manifest in him, and so likewise all things do work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. These things are all solemn mysteries, but they are Bible truths.

In conclusion we will repeat that to deny the unlimited predestination of God, as we have been trying to set forth, is to deny the attributes of unchangeability and of infinite wisdom. It denies the foreknowledge of God, and it destroys all the force that there is in the wills and shalls of Jehovah, and robs all prophecy of any certainty of fulfillment, and "permissive decrees" do not avoid any conclusions that belong to direct decrees.

We leave these thoughts with brother Wallace and with our readers; may they prove of satisfaction, and be to the glory of God. C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

SONG OF SOLOMON II. 5.

"STAY me with flagons, comfort me with apples; for I am sick of love."

Sister W. C. Young, of Alvinston, Ontario, asked in the last SIGNS that something be said on the above text. We would gladly comply with her request were we sure of light and liberty. We have felt more discouraged of late perhaps than ever before, and have had but little impression to write. The declension generally among the people of God has caused us no little concern. In most every part of the world where the truth is known there seems to be "a falling away." There are in most every section of country divisions and strife among Old School Baptists; scarcely is there a point of doctrine that is not controverted; hence when one writes or preaches he may know that whatever he may say, whether it be this or that, will meet opposition, and, worst of all, it is not always in a kind and brotherly way. This state of affairs has a tendency to depress and discourage those who are in a sense compelled to write and preach. There is much more misunderstanding among the Lord's people in this day than was the case years ago; whether it is due to lack of clear expression or acute comprehension seems hard to decide; at any rate such is the case. Some brethren are more harsh and unkind in their criticisms than ever before, often striving to devour rather than to "save a soul from death," if indeed a brother really has erred from the truth. Such a condition of things causes one to feel that but little good, if any, can be derived either from preaching or writing, yet there seems no discharge in this war.

Whatever we may say of the subject suggested by our sister will only be by way of suggestion, and such is the case concerning all our writings. We claim no infallibility nor superiority to the feeblest of the flock. What we write is always for the judgment of the household of faith, and we hope all the brethren may remember this statement.

Solomon's Song has long been of much comfort, encouragement and instruction to the church; the figures used therein are perfect and wonderfully beautiful. The bridegroom and the bride are perfectly charmed with each other; not the slightest fault or "spot" is seen in either. The whole Song seems a dialogue between them, each expressing the love and admiration for the other in terms sublime and altogether out of the ordinary line of expression. Prophecy is also clearly seen in many of the sayings; for instance, "What will ye see in the Shulamite? as it were the company of two armies," and, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away, for, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." These sayings refer to the gospel church delivered from the curse of the law. The name "Shulamite" is feminine to Solomon, and signifies "peaceful." If the bridegroom in the Song represented Christ, the Shulamite must have represented the church. That which should be seen in her did not at that time appear, viz., "the company of two [peaceful] armies;" the church composed of Jews and Gentiles. After the winter was past and the rain over and gone, and the flowers appeared, and the singing of birds and the voice of the turtle were heard in the land, the church was called to rise up and come away; "raised us up together, and made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ." This spiringtime condition of the church

was wrought through Christ in the work of redemption and justification.

In the first verse of chapter two the bride speaks, saying, "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys." In verse two the bridegroom says, "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters." She is indeed the lily of all lilies, the church of all churches, the woman of all women, the daughter of all daughters. In verse three the bride speaks, saying, "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." A very striking picture and wonderful contrast: an apple tree loaded with fruit and with abundant shade to be found in the woods or wilderness by one hungry, faint and discouraged would cause peculiar delight in that soul. Not another tree in all the woods could give food and refreshing shade; not another to be compared with the apple tree. So is Christ, my beloved, among the sons, not one like him. He is "an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." He is the tree of life, which bears twelve manner of fruits, and yields his fruit every month, and the leaves of that tree are for the healing of the nations. Wonderful, wonderful Tree. It is indeed with great delight the poor, weary and discouraged child of God sits down under his shadow, and the sweetness of that fruit is known only by those who have eaten it, or "tasted that the Lord is gracious." The bride continues by saying, "He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." Think for a moment of the church, once as black as the tents of Kedar, because of sin and iniquity, being made whiter than snow through the righteousness of her heavenly Husband, being brought to the banqueting house and having over her unfurled his banner, love. That banner embraces everything in the eternal purpose of God, and with that banner over her the church is presented to the Father holy and without blame. In this condition, separated from all other "sons," to the Bridegroom the bride says: "Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples; for I am sick of love." These fruits are named in a figurative way, intended to represent all the fruits of the Spirit, which alone can stay and comfort the church. The expression, "I am sick of love," does not mean that the bride, or church, is weary of love or disgusted with love and would gladly cease to love. The word "of" as used in the text is sometimes confusing. The common expression regarding illness of body or mind is, Such an one is sick with this or that disease. The word "with" is not the word to use in this sentence, but the word "of" should always be used; therefore instead of saying one is sick with pneumonia, we should say, sick "of" pneumonia. Hence the bride expresses herself as being "sick of love," overcome, prostrated by love. Love fills her very being, and stay and comfort can be ministered only by the great Physician: the heavenly Bridegroom. This love passeth understanding; it is stronger than death. Love caused God to send his only begotten Son into the world to die for the elect. The children of God love God as he loves them; we mean that it is the same love. "Love one another, as I have loved you." If we love in the same manner it must be with the same love.

"Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above,
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

The subject is too vast, too wonderful, too sublime for our poor, weak powers to grasp or in any way comprehend, therefore we shall not tax your patience longer.

K.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Grant Davis Heard was born in Newton County, Ga., Nov. 4th, 1841, and died Jan. 9th, 1910. These dates mark the boundaries of a life replete with kindly and noble deeds, a life that came to a peaceful and triumphant close through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He was married to Mary Elizabeth Starr on Sept. 7th, 1865. Of this marriage two children are living: Mrs. Cora L. Radford and Mrs. Annie L. Harwell. His wife died Jan. 29th, 1879, and on Dec. 2nd of that year he was married to Martha Susan Mobley, who survives him. Of this marriage there are three children living: Mrs. Mattie S. Weaver, Robert H. Heard and Miss Bessie D. Heard. He joined Holly Spring Primitive Baptist Church Oct. 8th, 1864, and continued in its membership a humble, useful, pious child of God until he was called to the church of the redeemed above. For more than thirty years prior to his death he had been a deacon in this church, into which he had been received, and baptized by Elder Joseph L. Purington, who was at that time pastor of the church. From 1904 to 1908 he served his county as Judge of the Court of Ordinary, and here, as elsewhere, his course was marked by that same high order of integrity and fidelity that characterized his entire life. Captain Heard, as he was familiarly called, was a gallant soldier in the Southern Confederacy; he entered service first in the State Troops, where he continued for six months, and then enlisted as Second Lieutenant in the Fifty-third Ga. Regiment, being promoted from that station to that of Captain of his regiment before the surrender. In all the relations of life, whether as citizen, soldier or public official, Captain Heard manifested those traits that won for him the affection of friends and the esteem of all. There were qualities in his character that impressed themselves upon all who knew him. His humility was marked and beautiful, because so genuine. So sincere was he in his attitude toward all questions, moral or civil, that no one was ever in doubt as to the position he would take. In his fidelity to principle he never counted the cost, but stood ever for his honest convictions. But more than all this, he was a humble, trustful child of God. He believed thoroughly in the doctrine of his church, and though considerate of the views and feelings of others, loved the Primitive Baptist Church with all his heart. Never so long as he was able to attend the services did he suffer any small thing to keep him from the house of God and the fellowship of his brethren; indeed, when hardly physically able to ride so far, he would drive from his home in Covington to the church, a distance of more than seven miles.

He was buried in the family graveyard, by the side of his first wife, at his father's old homestead. Besides wife and children he leaves two sisters and three brothers. His widow, sisters and brothers are all members of the Primitive Baptist Church at Holly Spring.

J. McD. RADFORD.

Mrs. Margaret Ellen Taylor Alexander was born near Owasco, Sullivan Co., Mo., May 10th, 1846, and was raised to womanhood in that county. August 18th, 1870, she was married to R. V. Alexander, and in 1878 she, with her husband, crossed the plains by team and settled in Union County, Oregon. Nine children were born to them, six of whom still live to mourn their loss of a faithful mother. Sister Alexander united with the Old School Baptist Church called Big Springs, and was baptized by Elder G. E. Mayfield, July 4th, 1880. Her parents were of the same faith, uniting with the church in Indiana. Brother Alexander united with the same church (Big Springs) in 1886, and later they moved to the west side of the mountains, finally settling here at Touchet, and finding a little body of the same faith they, by letter, cast their lot with them, and the writer, being pastor at the time, can truly say that sister Alexander lived the faith which she professed. She was always at her meetings unless providentially hindered, and gave all the evidences that it was her home, and that her brethren and sisters were her best friends. After five months lingering sickness, on Dec. 31st, 1909, she was called to leave her faithful husband, children, brethren and sisters, who mourn the loss of a faithful companion, loving mother and faithful sister in Christ Jesus, but we mourn not as those who have no hope, for we believe when Jesus comes those who have fallen asleep in him he will bring with him. I tried to comfort the brethren and friends with this hope on Sunday, Jan. 2nd, 1910, after which we laid the body in the Touchet Cemetery to await the glorious call of Him who has declared that the graves shall give up their dead.

May grace, mercy and peace rest upon us all for Jesus' sake.

J. T. BARNES.

Miss Jane A. Florance died at her home, the residence of her sister, sister Adeline Florance, near New Baltimore, Va., Jan. 23rd, 1910, aged 87 years and 3 days. It is satisfying to recall to memory and trace the tokens of such a life as that of sister Jane, commencing and pursuing its gentle course and ending within a few miles of the place of her birth, with no startling changes beyond what is inevitable in the long term of this mortal pilgrimage which she ac-

complished. Her parents' house was her home until their death, since then her home has been with her sister and niece and a brother, Robert Florance, who shares their home. Sister Jane was one who felt the work of grace in her heart in early life, if my memory serves me right, leading a quiet life in her mother's home, accompanying that mother to meeting at Upper Broad Run and doing her duty at home, showing her interest in her mother's brethren by gentle, thoughtful service. When the time came for her to become identified with the people she loved, her life and manners had already obtained their fellowship for her, which subsequent years have abundantly proved was not misplaced. It was my privilege to baptize her in the fellowship of Broad Run Church soon after I moved to Virginia, more than thirty years ago. It is a great comfort to be able to say that sister Jane was true to her profession and faithful to her obligations, both in word and deed. She adorned her profession with a meek and quiet spirit, a godly conversation and a humble christian deportment, loving the truth and those who love it. Her religion was not so much upon the lips and tongue as in the heart, where its living power was shown by her self-denying life and christian conversation. Such, I believe, is a truthful glimpse of the characteristics of sister Jane Florance. She never married. She leaves a sister, brother and niece, above named, besides nephews, nieces and other kindred, together with her brethren and many friends, to mourn their loss. J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., Jan. 28, 1910.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

T. J. Ratliff has changed his address from Mt. Sterling, Ky., to Winchester, Ky.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. A. H. Drew, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. M. J. Miller, Ill., $1.00; Mrs. T. V. Richardson, Md., $3.00.—Total, $5.00.

MEETINGS.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

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BOOK NOTICE.

"CHRISTIAN SCIENCE AND THE LAW."

Because of the distressing information contained in orders for my Christian Science pamphlet respecting the great injury being done by this shameful fraud even among our dear Baptist people, I have tried in this second little work to expose it from a new point of view. Those not aware of recent developments at the headquarters of these people will be astonished almost to the point of doubting well-proven facts. I will mail two copies of this last sketch for ten cents (silver), or one copy and a copy of Christian Science and the Bible for ten cents. The price is not for profit, but to cover the bare expense. Hundreds of the first pamphlets were given away, and others placed where many could read them. If any good results from this effort to shield our brethren from this new delusion, the credit will be due our kind periodicals for calling attention to it.

S. B. LUCKETT.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Indiana.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 78. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1910. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ROMANS VIII. 26.

"WE know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

The subject of prayer is of vast importance to the poor, miserable sinner. What shall he pray for? How often shall he pray? Shall he pray at all? What is prayer? As I have been exercised from time to time as to the subject of prayer, I feel to write somewhat upon it. I am persuaded that prayer is not in a form of words only, but in groanings which cannot be uttered, and Paul says in the following verse, "And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." Sometimes we are ready to fall into the error of believing that if we have any need of praying it will be given us according to the will of God, and it need not concern us whether we pray or do not pray; we will not be concerned. I lived along in this frame of mind for some time, until Elder Durand, in conversation, said that Jesus believed he was the Son of God, but nevertheless he prayed upon one occasion all night unto God, and his prayer in Gethsemane, when he sweat as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground, tells in a measure to us the great agony of soul the Son of man was passing through, and also the prayer unto the Father, recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, is the Redeemer's petition unto God, not only for the saints, but for himself as well. So we see how easy to fall into error and be taken captive of the devil.

But, "We know not what we should pray for as we ought." Prayer I understand to be the desires, longings and petitions unto God for something we do not possess, or feel we are yet lacking in, in the measure we would desire. But the great trouble is to know if it is "according to the will of God." God's will is known only to himself, and Jesus was not praying for his own will when praying to God in Gethsemane, for he said, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." So we see that we are upon sacred and holy ground when we are praying to God, and cannot bring our own will, but the will of God, in our petitions.

Along this line I wish to say that

every one who is brought into the presence of God by the Spirit is washed by the "washing of water by the word," and is cleansed and sanctified, as was Aaron the high priest under the legal dispensation, and who was ceremonially washed with water, and cleansed in order that he might offer acceptable sacrifices and prayers unto God, whereas in the gospel dispensation the children of God are made kings and priests unto God, washed and cleansed by the Spirit, and do offer prayers as indited by the Spirit. Every one who enters into the presence of God must be cleansed, for nothing unclean shall enter into the city.

There are several things we may consider along this line, and it would be well to mention some of them. None but living subjects pray, none but hungry, poor, weak, lame and halt subjects feel the burden of prayer, so there is a comfort and consolation to our mind if we can see in our earthly pilgrimage, our Bethel, as did Jacob, when he took the stones and put them for his pillow, and God appeared unto him.

I know of one who saw his little boy kneel at the bedside to pray God to bless papa, mamma and sisters, and he felt he wished he were a child again that he might pray unto God in childlike simplicity; but no, the heavens were brass and no petition from him could ever reach the place where God dwells; but in time that same person was as that little child, and brought into the church, so there was an evidence that the groaning which could not be uttered was heard and answered of God. James says, If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, but let him ask in faith. So it is living subjects that pray, being made alive from the dead, quickened by the Spirit, and their affections set upon things above, not on things of the earth, for where the treasure is there the heart will be also.

Subjects of grace are given to believe by faith, and faith is the fruit of the Spirit. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." —Heb. xi. 6. So it is impossible for nonbelievers to pray, for they have nothing to pray for; they are not troubled like other men, they have all that heart can wish; David was envious of them, until he went into the house of God (the church). God's people are hungry, poor, weak, lame and halt, not naturally, but spiritually, hungry for righteousness; poor, and all their righteousness is as filthy rags; so weak they have exhausted all their strength to attain the favor of God; lame and halt, that their walk is imperfect, cannot do as they would. These are the subjects God has prepared for a habitation with himself, and Jesus named them as "blessed" in the fifth chapter of Matthew.

As these various infirmities are presented to us by the Spirit, then, and then only, do our prayers go up unto God as a sweet-smelling savor, and being asked according to the will of God, they shall be answered. John says, "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."—1 John v. 14, 15. What child of God can but say that his petitions have been heard, and also answered, not in the way he supposed, but by terrible things in righteousness? We are not heard for our much speaking, but for that which is in accordance with His will, but we are not to suppose that we know God's will in any matter. I have felt that the

Spirit of God would give us petitions individually for what we need, and also give us prayer for the welfare of Zion.

The Lord has given gifts to the church, and they are not all the same gifts; to some the gift of healing, to some exhortation, discerning of spirits, the word of wisdom, teaching and that of prophecy, and each one is to profit withal in whatever gift or gifts the Lord has bestowed.

As we are directed and shown wherein Zion is languishing and becoming desolate, therein are we led to pray and petition the throne of grace. When Jesus was in the flesh and dwelt among men he said, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers unto his harvest." So Zion is to pray to the Lord of the harvest for laborers. If one is exercised to labor in the harvest and the church recognizes a gift, she is to pray to the Lord to develop that gift and to hold up his hands. When Moses held up his hands Israel prevailed, and when he was not able to longer hold up his hands Aaron and Hur held them up. We are given the privilege and blessing to pray for each other, and thereby hold up each other's hands. I believe that the true laborers are brought forth in this manner. As Zion is the habitation of God, we feel that every branch shall prosper in the graces of our God, and be partakers of his benefits, and be fruitful unto good works. Each branch, as well as each member, shall dwell in the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace, not railing for railing or evil for evil, but return good for evil.

"We know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us." How glorious are all the ways of God! While we lack wisdom, the Spirit gives us wisdom, the wisdom which is from above, the wisdom of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, for he is made unto us wisdom. I have in mind one who felt the prayer, "Angels to beckon me," and shortly afterward the Lord took her only son; also another who felt the words, Lord, guide me, and she was bereft of her son; so the Spirit had made intercession before the subjects knew the meaning of their prayer. Peter went upon the housetop to pray, and I have no doubt his prayer was in accord with his further work. The subject is endless, so I leave it.

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan. 19, 1910.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 9, 1909.

MRS. LUCINDA B. BREWSTER—DEAR SISTER:—I was very glad to receive your letter written December 1st; it was indeed very welcome. As you write of your exercises of mind upon spiritual things my mind goes back about forty years, to the time when we used to say, "Good times at Otego," and I think of the sweet and pleasant meetings we had, when we were surprised and made to rejoice from time to time by seeing the Lord's dear people come flocking "as the doves to their windows," telling of the wonderful works of God, confessing a hope of salvation by rich and reigning grace, and asking a place in the church of the living God. It was two and a half years that I served that church, visiting them once a month, and in that time it was my privilege to baptize thirty-five there, while during the same time I baptized the same number in all of the other churches I was trying to serve. What good meetings we had, for the brethren and sisters were not backward about assembling themselves together,

and yours was one of the faces I always saw in the dear company, unless you were providentially kept away; faces that clearly expressed the desire of the hearts to hear some precious word of comfort from the dear Comforter of his people. During that time I had such soul troubles and afflictions as I can never express, but I am sure they were all needed, and the chastisements were far less than I deserved. How I love to recall to mind those dear aged brethren and sisters who used to talk in our conference meetings, such as old brother Smith, Uncle Gilbert Bundy, Aunt Polly, brother and sister French, and all of them, both old and young. In memory I see them rise up and hear them tell of their joys and sorrows, of their trials and deliverances. How wonderfully our dear brother Balas Bundy used to talk. He had not yet been made willing to preach, though he had been exercised about it for about nine years. The church knew that he must preach, and, indeed, he was preaching to them at every meeting. It was not very long after my first visit, within a year, I think, that he was made willing, and was licensed. On my first visit I felt that he must preach, and spoke to him about it. He was ordained as soon as he would consent to be, and very soon he was fully engaged in the work. What a wonderfully deep, clear and spiritual preacher he was. Wherever he went among the brethren his ministry of the word was received with warmest fellowship. Soon after his ordination I resigned the care of that church, against his protests, and he was called as its pastor. On the occasion of my first visit to Otego after he was called to serve the church, I saw him baptize four, and on the occasion of another visit I saw him baptize an old lady, about eighty years of age, who made the number of members one hundred; and now of that number how few are left. Most of them have been called home, but there are still a faithful few of those left, who, with those since added, still love to meet together in the order of the gospel.

I did not intend, when I began this letter, to write so much about "old times," but the church at Otego is much upon my mind; my interest in it has never failed. I love to hear of their meetings, and am thankful that the Lord has given them the ministry of the gospel by brother Marvin Vail. He certainly has many places of meeting, and widely separated, and when he names to me the appointments he attends I am almost bewildered; but I know that all of our ministering brethren are busy workers,—not many idle ones.

I am glad to know that you are comfortable in health, and that your mind is much upon spiritual things. It is a blessing invaluable to feel the soul drawn out in the contemplation of heavenly things. I want to send your letter to the SIGNS, so the brethren can read it. I hope you will not object. I will copy this letter and send with it. We all send love to you.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

DOVER, N. J., Dec. 1, 1909.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER:—I have been a long time thinking of writing you, but have been waiting, hoping for a better frame of mind, and feeling so incompetent to express myself, but I know that is all of the flesh. O the pride of my poor, sinful heart, how much I loathe it and desire to be freed from it, but I find myself no better as I grow older, as I fondly hoped

I should in my early pilgrimage; I have come so far short of what I hoped and desired, and what a true follower should be, yet there is always a longing desire and trembling hope that I have experienced these things which to know is eternal life. I had been for some time past feeling a comfortable hope, calmly trusting and feeling underneath were the everlasting arms, and felt my feet were on the rock; my meditations were sweet in the silent watches of the night, and I felt the dear Lord was leading and teaching me; Scripture after Scripture would be brought to my mind, and I felt the Lord was near, all earthly fears and sorrows were hid from my sight, and I felt to rejoice in spirit and have no confidence in the flesh, and the love that passes all understanding filled my soul. Happy moments!

"If such the sweetness of the streams,
What must the Fountain be?"

My heart goes out in love to all the dear ones everywhere, and I long to sit down at their feet. I feel to be the poorest and smallest, and if a member of the body, one of the unsightly ones. I have thought much of the sheet that was let down from heaven, showing what vile creatures we are by nature, yet the Lord said they were cleansed. How true there is nothing impossible with God, the author and finisher of our faith, and hope, which is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and enters into that within the veil, whither the Forerunner has entered. But I am so often cast down and filled with unbelief and questioning whether I truly love the Lord or no, am I his, or am I not? Sometimes with a little comfort it has come to me: lay hold of the hope set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. I feel to be in a desert land, often hungering and crying for bread or a crumb from my Master's table, and, like the prodigal, I know there is bread enough and to spare in my Father's house, but I must wait, for I am weak and lame, and cannot walk until strength is given me, and then I shall receive all and more than I can ask. The dear Savior says he knows our sorrows and pities us as a father pities his children. He has said he would send the Comforter and would not leave us comfortless; then we can sing,

"One day within the place where my dear Lord hath been,
Is better than ten thousand days of pleasurable sin."

How many great and precious promises he left in his will to his chosen bride, even of "an inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." When it is given us to lay hold of them as ours, then we feel our spiritual strength renewed, and for a little time go on our way rejoicing. But I am mostly down in the depths, and cannot see my way, and fear I was never in the way that was cast up for the redeemed of the Lord to walk in, which no vulture's eye hath seen. The poet says, Wisdom shows a narrow way, with here and there a traveler. Happy art thou, O people saved by the Lord. Is this my portion, or am I deceived? But why this love for those who have the mark in their foreheads, showing they have been with Jesus and learned of him? They count this world dross and vanity, and are looking and waiting for a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. If I know my own heart I love that poor, despised company, and feel to say with Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee,"

&c., and like one of old, follow at a distance. I am quite isolated here from the people I love for the truth's sake, and seldom hear one who speaks the language of Canaan or hear any preaching. My hearing is quite impaired, and I cannot hear every one. I would be glad for all in the providence of God to call on me when convenient. The SIGNS is a welcome visitor. I have many blessings I wish to be thankful for. The Lord knows all about me, all my wanderings, faithlessness and sinfulness, but the angel said his name should be called Jesus, for he should save his people from their sins.

Please pardon this poor, disconnected and imperfect letter, and believe me your unworthy sister in hope,

LUCINDA B. BREWSTER.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 16, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I send this extract from a private letter from Elder P. D. Gold, asking you to publish it in the SIGNS. Of course Elder Gold has no thought of such a disposition being made of his letter, and I have not asked his consent, but I am sure he would not refuse to grant my most earnest request. His name does not appear in the SIGNS as a correspondent, but he is well known by most of its readers, and is held in the highest esteem and love.

I want to say here that the writing in the editorial department of the SIGNS has of late fully kept up to its standard of former years, being especially noticeable for point and clearness, definitely asserting and clearly proving from the Scriptures of truth the doctrine of God our Savior, and distinctly pointing out the departures from the doctrine and order of the gospel which have disturbed the peace of the churches in some parts of our land. I have often, after having read an editorial, felt like writing at once to acknowledge the gratification and comfort I received from it. I wish also to speak of the suitable dignity and solemnity which characterize all the writing, both by the editors and correspondents, and the absence of lightness and levity and of personal ill-feeling in all that is controversial. I am thankful that this is so.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

WILSON, N. C. Dec. 13, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—One day, about a month ago, I lay in bed all day from sickness, feeling that if I got up I would fall, and was afraid to try to rise, but was in little pain when lying on the bed. This is the first and only time in my life that I remained in bed an entire day. This was a new thing to me, and I did not know how it would end. In a day or two the Lord turned his goodness and mercy toward me, and there appeared no terror, no dread, nor wrath, and nothing but goodness and mercy. I thought of the appearance of the God of Israel, and not a sign of cloud or wrath appeared as is recorded in Moses' writings, but the body of heaven in his clearness, and the elders of Israel saw Him and ate bread, or still lived. I felt at once that I would get well, and have been improving since, and feel as well as usual.

I am not equal to such nice comments as you made in your expressive letter to me. Love to you.

P. D. GOLD.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 28, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you for publication in the SIGNS a letter of the late Elder George W. Staton. His father was a minister of the gospel. While he

lived, George, who was his oldest son, was bitterly opposed to the Old School Baptist Church. It was some years after his father's death that he received a hope, and was called to the work of the ministry, and was an able minister of the new testament. He served churches in the Salisbury Association for some years, where his name is held in loving remembrance by all the older brethren. He was called to the church at Welsh Tract, where he labored faithfully until his death, July 14th, 1872. His youngest brother, Joseph L. Staton, was baptized July 3rd, 1873, in the fellowship of the church at Salisbury, Md., and in 1879 he was called to the work of the ministry, and became a true and faithful preacher, serving churches in the Salisbury Association for some time, and afterward accepting a call from the Welsh Tract and other churches, where he labored faithfully and with power until he, too, was called home. It was my privilege to be on terms of intimacy and sweet fellowship with both of these dear brethren, and to correspond with them. Out of a package of forty letters written by brother George, I have selected this one to be published, if you think best. I have several from both of them which I have marked for publication, and will some time submit them to you to do with as you choose. Portions of two of his letters were published in the SIGNS in the number of November 1st, 1873. The last of this family of brothers and sisters, sister Sallie Redish, passed away within the past two weeks, at her home near Salisbury. She was very dear to all the churches and brethren of that association, and to all who knew her. On my last appointment there, the fifth Saturday and Sunday in November, she was present, and at that time she walked considerably, making several calls. I met her there first in the spring of 1865, and have met her at almost all of my visits there since, where I have served as pastor since 1867. At my last visit with her she said, "I hope you may continue to come here as long as I live," and I could not but say, "I wish I might see you in the congregation whenever I shall come." She was one of those the expression of whose face is a help to a preacher. She always, so far as I could say, had a cheerful countenance, and wore a smile of contentedness, as she loved above all things to meet in the assembly of the saints, and to sing the praises of the dear Redeemer, and hear the gospel preached. How I shall miss her animated, loving face if I should be enabled to attend my next regular appointment there on the fifth Saturday and Sunday in January. The son and daughters have my deep sympathy.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

BERLIN, Md., Jan. 8, 1865.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—Your very welcome letter, dated December 27th, came to hand last Sunday, and I was indeed very glad to hear from you, and have several times since I saw you had it in my mind to write to you and solicit a correspondence; I have, however, delayed doing so until you have been beforehand with me. I cheerfully accede to your request, and hope this may be the commencement of a friendly and christian correspondence that may last so long as we both may live. I will try not to remain long in your debt, but answer promptly. You greet me as a fellow-laborer in the great field of preaching the gospel. It is indeed the highest and most honorable position that God has ever called mortal man to, and the great

mystery to me is, and I think ever will be, that I am in that position. An acquaintance of mine, whom I had not seen for a number of years, called on me a few days ago, and immediately after his first salutation remarked to me he was very much surprised to hear I had become a minister of the gospel. I told him I thought no one could be more surprised than I was myself; and, my dear brother, when I look back on my past life the surprise grows more surprising; over forty years of my life spent in wickedly fighting against God, carelessly, sinfully, throwing away the life he had given me, in raising my puny arm in rebellion against his holy government, suddenly stopped by an almighty, resistless power and brought to cry for mercy, permitted finally to entertain a hope of pardon through the efficacy of the blood of the crucified Jesus, and now numbered among his chosen ministry, to proclaim this salvation to others, and all this has taken place in a little over three years. I think I feel my unworthiness, my insufficiency, but sometimes I think I do not feel it enough. Surely if he who has most forgiven loves most, I ought to love my dear Savior more than all of you, yet my love is so faint, so cold, the service I desire to give to my Master so mixed with sin, even my preaching and my prayers come so far short of what they should be, or of what I desire them to be, I am often led to doubt my own election and calling either to be a child of grace or a minister of the gospel; all the evidence I can find in myself is the desire. If I know anything of my own heart, I do desire that I may be swallowed up in the love of Christ, that I may be conformed in all things to his will, and transformed entirely into his likeness. I shrink with horror from a return to the fleshpots of Egypt, and my prayer to the Lord is that I may by sovereign grace be kept from sin, lead a life of holiness, do in all things the will of my Master on earth, and finally be brought to eternal glory. My preaching is very poor indeed, but all of one piece; I must preach salvation to poor, perishing sinners by sovereign grace. If I am saved at all, that is the way I am saved. I know no other doctrine, no other mode of salvation has been revealed to me, and I must preach this or hold my peace, and when the Spirit is pleased to give me utterance I love to preach this gospel; it is my meat and drink to hold up to poor sinners this glorious plan of salvation. I am glad, my brother, you have devoted yourself entirely to the work. I sometimes myself feel a strong desire to do so, but my way seems to be so hedged up. I have an expensive family, all daughters, to support entirely by my own exertions, and see no opening for me to do so only to labor six days in the week. I am, however, engaged three Sundays in the month regularly in preaching to congregations who are destitute of any other preaching, and through the toilsome labors of the week I often long for Sunday to come, so I may meet the brethren and talk to them of the things of the kingdom, but if I were free, as you are, to go from place to place and preach all the while, I think I should be much happier; however, I desire to wait the Lord's time. I, at present, cannot see how I am to preach more than I do; if He has more work for me to do he will in his own time open the way and show me the field.

You can hardly call this an answer to your letter, as I have written as my mind has led me, without regard to system, which I believe is about the only way I can write. I was much pleased with

your letter and the view you take of your calling, &c., and hope you will accept this as an apology for an answer, and write me again soon, and I will try to do better. I am far removed from the society of all the brethren in the ministry, and prize their letters very highly when I have the pleasure of receiving them. I hope soon to meet you again, and should like very much for you to come and visit us. Remember me to sister Bessie, and to all your family, and all who love our Lord Jesus Christ, many of whom I shall perhaps never see in the flesh.

Your brother in the joys and afflictions of the gospel,

G. W. STATON.

ST. ALBANS, W. Va., Jan. 28, 1910.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I am sending a copy of two letters from Miss Pearl Thornton, which you may publish in the SIGNS if you see proper. These letters have been of so much comfort to me that I desire to share them with others of my Father's family. Miss Thornton is very young, not quite sixteen years old, but truly she has been taught of the Lord, as is evident from her letters. Since reading these letters my heart has been melted within me, and I have had a season of rejoicing, for while our churches seem so cold and so much at ease, which has troubled me much, yet God has not forgotten to be gracious, and has visited one of his little ones with his love, and has taught her to know God, whom to know is life eternal. Such seasons of rejoicing are indeed refreshing to my poor soul, for I, too, have been passing through a long, cold winter, experimentally, for many months past, and this has been to me as the gentle shower to the parched grass. I have been afflicted about ten months, and have not been permitted to meet with my people very often, but now I much desire to see the weather open up, so I can again meet with them. My health is some better now, but I am still suffering with that aggravating malady, indigestion.

May the Lord bless you in all your labor.

I am yours in hope,

G. B. BIRD.

HURRICANE, W. Va., Jan. 19, 1910.

ELDER G. B. BIRD:—For some cause best known to God, I am trying to write to you this evening. I do not know what I am writing for, but God knows. For some time it has been my desire to write to you, but I have felt too unworthy to do so, and I know that unless I am guided by a higher power I cannot write one word to profit, but it seems as though I cannot live without writing to you. For a long time I have been in darkness and alone, as it seems to me, without one friend since my dear mother died. It seems as though I cannot live without her, and that all my comfort is gone, and I remain in darkness. So often I think of her pale face and weak voice, when she would say, "God, have mercy on my children." It sometimes seems that if I could only be with her and like her I would never want more. One night, not so very long ago, I had a very sore throat; the left side was at one time swollen shut, and I was alone, no one with me but the three little children, papa was lodging over in the oil field; I thought I would not live, and that that would be the last night of my life. I went to bed, but never expected to rise again; my face swelled, and turned black at times, and I could scarcely breathe; I thought, If I could only die. I did not want to live, but was afraid to die. My

desire was that the Lord would stretch forth his hand and take me to reign with him in heaven, with my mother. I fell into a dismal sleep. It did not seem to me that I was asleep, but I suppose I was, and I saw a ladder, white as snow, and on it was my mother clothed in a white robe, and my two sisters and little brother who are dead, and with them was my Savior and his angels. My darkness was gone, and I was not afraid to die. I began to beg them to take me, but my time had not yet come to die. When I awoke in the morning my throat was nearly well, all my fear was gone, and I could sing:

"How lost was my condition
Till Jesus made me whole;
There is but one Physician
Can cure a sin-sick soul.

Next door to death he found me,
And snatched me from the grave,
To tell to all around me
His wondrous power to save.

First gave me sight to view him,
For sin my eyes had sealed,
Then bade me look unto him;
I looked, and I was healed."

This entire hymn was a great comfort to me. The next day grandma came over to see us. She said I was not very sick, and she did not think I had ever been very bad; and papa came home also, and was afraid I would not live. Another verse of the hymn comforted me:

"Some said that nothing ailed me,
Some gave me up for lost;
Thus every refuge failed me,
And all my hopes were crossed."

For some time I did not feel so sad and lonesome, but soon I began to fear it was all a dream, and that I had never found my Savior. But at times I am filled with the blessed word that says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." So I leave my doubtful case to your consideration, for I know that in my flesh dwelleth no good thing. So by experience do I know there is nothing good that I can do; I cannot satisfy the law, nor hope nor comfort from it draw. Words can never express what a comfort it is for me to read what you wrote in my mother's obituary, and which was published in the SIGNS. I have read it over many times, and every time I read it it seems dearer to me. I have not heard much preaching since you preached at our house. Often the words come to my mind:

"'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought,)
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

I have written far more than I expected, but some way I could not keep from writing to you, for I feel to know that you are one of the elect of grace. I know there is but one true church, and that is the Old Baptist, yet I fear I will never be worthy of their fellowship.

I am a poor sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all.

PEARL THORNTON.

HURRICANE, W. Va., Jan. 24, 1910.

DEAR ELDER G. B. BIRD:—Your highly appreciated letter was received and read with much pleasure. I was indeed glad to hear from you, and was more than glad to know that you could fellowship one so poor and sinful as I, for I feel to be one of the most sinful mortals on earth, yet I hope I am not alone, for when I read the dear old SIGNS I find that there are many others who are traveling the same road, and all seem to be taught by the same good and gracious Power, yet my question is, Am I one of those people? I often find myself interested in worldlings' pleasure, and singing their songs, or reading a newspaper or magazine, when I ought to be reading my Bible.

Yes, if you think that letter worthy a place in such a good paper as the SIGNS, you may send it. Your letter was so much pleasure to me that I could not rest until I wrote to you again.

You say, Go to the church. That is the only place I want to go, but I do not see how they could receive one so sinful as I am, and I am so young, too. Yes, I can say with you that I believe Mina is being taught by the good and all-wise God that rules heaven, earth and sea. She is much better than I, and I, too, believe she will sooner or later join the true church of God, and trust in his goodness and mercy alone.

I will close, as I am such a poor writer, hoping you are all well. I remain a poor sinner, in hope of a better world,

PEARL THORNTON.

BOW, Wash., Jan. 17, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I feel a desire to write to you once more through our medium of correspondence, which I feel sure has been kept by the power of God, to the great comfort of his children, wherever they are, for surely if it were kept and controlled by man's power, and to satisfy man's own pleasure, it never would have stood the crucial tests that have been waged against it, for it surely gives God all the glory. We know by repeated experience that in vain we meet, and in vain we attempt to worship him, unless crowned by his divine presence, and vain is the help of man, therefore we are made to say, Surely the Lord's hand has upheld them, to his glory. We who live so far away from our dear kindred in Christ that about all the preaching we get is through the SIGNS, and the letters and editorials come to us laden with such precious messages of love that we are made to weep for joy, that we say, Surely the Lord knoweth our hearts' desire, and has put it into their hearts to write for our special comfort; at least that is the way it seems to me, for when I am puzzled over some portion of Scripture (and it seems I am a good part of the time), then some one will write in the SIGNS on that very subject, and explain it to my great comfort; then I think I will surely write to the editors and tell them how I appreciate their labor of love and patience of hope, but O my leanness. I know their hearts and patience are sorely tried at times when we get cold and careless, thinking more of the things of this world than we do of the welfare of Zion in comforting one another, even feeding the flock, which in the sight of God is of great price. Some seem to think that it was all left for the preacher to do, but was there not other gifts spoken of? some preachers, some teachers, some evangelists, nursing mothers, and they should be zealous, not even slothful in business, pray with and for each other, speak often one to another, confessing our faults one to another, with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs making melody in our hearts unto the Lord. Now this is for the whole church to do, and not the preacher alone, and be not afraid to spend and be spent for the welfare and comfort of each other, for what have we but that God gave us? and if we use it as though we never expected to get any more, know ye not that God is ever with us, and is a silent witness to every conversation and every transaction, knowing our every thought, and it is by his will that our business prospers or fails? True, it is our duty to give all diligence to our work, as long as we do not neglect our duty to each other and the church. Then if the Lord blesses our labors bountifully, do not do as some I have seen, some who

were Primitive or Old School Baptists, and I have no doubt of their having a good hope through grace, but they just seemingly shut their eyes to all around save their own comfort, even letting those dear servants who go faithfully month after month, year after year, often many miles through rain and snow, as well as through sunshine, never complaining, but counting it a joy to be able to meet with those they love, paying their own way, and often thinly clad, leaving their families at home in an almost needy condition. Now this is not the case with all Old Baptists, but it is too often the case, and while I am not in favor of having salaried preachers, I do feel that either through fear of imitating the Arminians, or carelessness, or something else, we allow our ministers and their families to suffer unnecessarily. Now let us show our faith by our works, as we find in chapters one and two of James. I think these two chapters give us the whole sum and substance of christianity, and a safe rule to follow. This has been on my mind for some time, and I felt impressed to write it, but if in your judgment it is not best to publish it, do not do so, but should we not stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance, and provoke them unto love and to good works? There is none who needs this provocation more than I do, to be faithful and watch unto prayer. When I tell you that I have had the company of the Old Baptists only about five years of my life, and then only one, you will not be surprised when I tell that when I replied to Elder Chick's reply to brother Allison, on, He that is born of God cannot sin, &c., I did not know it was a controverted point, so did not go into details as I would have done had I known it, but brother Beeman's article in October 1st SIGNS told my views exactly on that portion of Scripture, and I do not doubt if Elder Chick and I could talk to each other we would see alike, for I have read his writings for nearly twenty years with much comfort and profit, and he has carried me through many hard places in the Scripture by his seeming special gift in interpretation. Do not think that I am trying to flatter, for I am only endeavoring to show a just appreciation of the gifts which God has given, which is our duty, but unto God and his dear Son be all the praise, both now and forever, ours is the joy.

Your little brother in hope,

DAVIS BURCH.

MATTHEW XXV. 35.

"I WAS a stranger, and ye took me in."

Early in the history of the world God talked about the stranger, and through the days of the years of time he keeps up talking about the stranger. Here he tells us that the stranger shall not be forgotten in the last day. He mentions him along with the widow, the fatherless and the poor. "For the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward: he doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment. Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt." In Deuteronomy xiv. 29, occurs the language: "The stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow," and again in chapter sixteen, verse eleven, the same words occur. Again, we read in Deuteronomy xxiv. 19–21: "When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgotten a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the

stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. * * * When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean of it afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow." Also the stranger had a place in the cities of refuge. David, when preparing for the building of the Lord's house, commanded that the strangers in Israel should be gathered, and Solomon set ten thousand of them to be bearers, and eighty thousand of them to be hewers in the mountains, and thirty-six hundred overseers to set the people a work. In Psalms cxlvi. it is written, "The Lord preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow." And so on down to the advent of "the Stranger" this was spoken of by all the holy prophets. From whence they came and where they were going was no concern of theirs, it was enough to know that they were strangers to insure them lodging. The Jews were forbidden to allow a stranger to lodge in the street; accordingly we see Lot urging the two men, he knew not who they were, but they knew him; they came to take him out of the city to a place of safety. In doing this they were a lively type of "the Stranger" who took the church out. Job said that in the days of his prosperity the stranger did not lodge in the street. He said, "I opened my doors to the traveler." After Jesus arose from the dead, when he joined the two travelers he hid himself from them and made himself a stranger to them; they said, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem? But sad as were their hearts they did not forget to take him in because he was a stranger. The money paid for the body of Jesus was used to buy the potter's field in which to bury strangers. In first Timothy, fifth chapter, the apostle, as it would seem, makes one of the qualifications of widows who were to be cared for by the church, to be, "If she have lodged strangers." Then we have that great text in Hebrews: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." It is then, good to have friendship for strangers. They were forbidden to charge him for his lodging, and were to lend him money, and must not charge him interest, or distress him for the principal. They were to give to him. He was not allowed to hunt a place; all it was necessary for him to do was to advertise his presence in the city; they knew his needs and supplied them, and the beauty of it all was that this whole thing could only be seen and enjoyed by the traveler. A stranger is one who is away from home and needs the comforts of home, which some can and do bestow upon each other. In this also let good measure pressed down be given, not hoping for gain. Abraham said, "I am a stranger and a sojourner with you." David said the same. The apostle in Hebrews said that all the fathers who died in faith, seeing the promises afar off, being persuaded of them, confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. The saints to-day are made strangers to the world by the grace of God, and are away from home in a strange country; they are travelers singing as they go: "I am a stranger here below." For this there is a cause. "I was a stranger, and ye took me in." "When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in?" "As ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Your brother,

FRANK McGLADE.

HEBRON, Ohio, Jan. 27, 1910.

HAVILAND, Kans., Jan. 20, 1910.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF A BETTER LIFE:—Yes, I can say in hope of a better life than this, since I am much, very much, dissatified with my conduct in this world. Not to give advice to editors or readers will this appear. The SIGNS has been well conducted for seventy-seven years, and, I believe, without my name being found in its pages, nevertheless the desire to speak to the company that seems to be traveling near me, or near the same road at least, often is so strongly felt as to almost force me to write. I would be very glad to encourage, and not discourage, any true pilgrim. I have had some acquaintance with this paper for about thirty years. My father was a minister and read it. Some of my earliest mental conflicts as to a christian experience and hope were fought while reading the SIGNS, nearly thirty years ago, and since then I have had a good wish and a love for its editors and readers, but must remain in silence lest my best friends find me out and shun me, as it sometimes occurs in my mind that they have done already. I surely do believe the doctrine of this people, if there is any comfort in the Bible for me. Not being a great Bible searcher, I have often gone to Jesus by night to ask the way of life, and he has always told me that he is the way, the only way; that we must be born again, born of the Spirit, born of God; that he is our life, and without him we can do nothing, also that he will never leave us nor forsake us; that he has all power in heaven and in earth; that he has conquered every foe, even death, so I can see no work for his people to do in the way of their salvation, except to work according to their salvation wrought by Christ. When we work in harmony with that salvation we are saved indeed and in truth; when not, we fail to receive the joy of our salvation, but go on as the nine who were healed, they never turned back to give God glory. I often notice your readers in their efforts to give God the glory of their salvation, and at the same time to tell their friends how unworthy they are themselves, and I never feel that they have told the half of God's goodness; neither can any one tell me how unfit I feel to receive of his goodness. No man has ever gotten down fully in reach of my thoughts, except Christ, and there are fears at times that he never came my way at all. His word is power when spoken to saint or sinner, but did he ever as the Friend of sinners speak to me? this is my inquiry.

I have been reading to-day, and really did wish for a way to more fully converse with the people of God, a more perfect language of speech, that I might truly tell them my love, or in some way express my real feelings to them; but if so, would I not frighten them rather than console? God is not mocked, but his people may be. We have passed from death unto life if we love the brethren; but that is a spiritual love, and this love must be above the natural; we must love the spiritual brethren stronger than the brother in the flesh. Can I do that? We are commanded to know no man after the flesh; that was addressed to the church, not to the world. Paul was determined to know nothing among his brethren save Christ and him crucified. The Spirit is to be the ruling power in the church of Christ. If the Spirit of Christ is manifest in the company of saints they can bear with all fleshly comeliness, but if one comes in his own name he is to be rejected, no matter how near in the flesh; natural kindness and good

offers have nothing in themselves to recommend one to the church.

We have a small family of Baptists here near Wellsford, who are watched over by two good ministers, and would love to invite our friends to visit us at any convenient season. Our meeting days are the second Sunday, and Saturday before, in each month.

Brother Chick, I hope you will still rule out all wars and strife among the brethren, and labor for peace in Zion.

E. G. WEBB.

EAGLE, Ontario, Dec. 27, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I hope you can pardon me for being so slow in answering your kind letter. My dark mind is all that I can give as an excuse, but you have been on my mind with a good feeling of fellowship in the Lord. O the rapture of that fellowship which those who believe feel for the dear esteemed ministers of our God, who never run before they are sent. The last time you were in Canada and I heard you preach my heart was filled to overflowing. Your text was, If it had pleased the Lord to kill us he would not have shown us these things, &c. When you quoted, "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips," and spoke all through the sermon about our cold feelings, I saw a light in your face, but did not hear the voice of Him who spoke to you. How wonderful the power and might and majesty of our dear, blessed Jesus. "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." Dear sister McPhail said to me after the Lobo meeting, "O you missed a good meeting." Another dear sister said that she was blessed in Duart, when you preached about the glorious resurrection. I would have been glad to have been there also when Elder Lester preached in Duart last summer. I do love that glorious doctrine, and I want to know that the preacher believes it as well as all the other principles of doctrine. As another dear old saint said, "It is not necessary for them to preach this all the time, so long as I know that they believe it." But I must say, my dear brother, for this I am waiting, and I know that the Lord will fulfill his promise. I know that he will come for me when he chooses to take me home unto himself, to go out from him no more. We do miss our regular meetings, and feel a sadness on account of this. We are told to resist the devil and he will flee from us, and to draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to us. We are not to give place to Satan. How sad it is to see the work of God apparently decline. But the word comes to me, Dismiss your fears, the ark is mine. One day, not long ago, the words came very plainly to me: O who is he that will lead me to the city that is fortified? O who is he that to the land of Sodom will me guide? The words came not long ago, Happy art thou, O Israel, redeemed of the Lord. Sister Stevenson said that the words came to her also, "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities; thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation." To my mind many times these words have come with power: "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake will I not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation as a lamp that burneth." This is the righteousness of Zion, and the salvation of Jerusalem, the church. Again, we read that disciples are not to do as the scribes and Pharisees, who bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, but they themselves will not

lift them with one of their fingers. They shut the kingdom of heaven up against men; they will not go in themselves, and they that were entering in they hinder. In this chapter all the things we are not to do are told, and the dear Lord turned to Jerusalem and told them the things they had done, and then said that they should not see him until they should say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Was it not verily so? Again the Scriptures say, "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned."

Now, dear brother, when you come to Canada again stop at West Lorne, one station west of Dutton, and come out to see us. I will take you wherever you may want to go from here. I hope that you will write me again.

I remain your unworthy sister,

ANNA MURRAY.

ROMULUS, Okla., Dec. 8, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have had an impression to write to you, but whether it is of the Spirit I cannot tell. If it be the prompting of the Spirit, I feel assured that it will be of interest, but if of the flesh, it will prove of no interest at all. I have experienced that my road is not strewn with flowers, and neither have I had flowery beds of ease. In my past experience I thought many times that my troubles were all over, never to return; I thought that I would never again doubt or fear at all, "Jesus all the day long, was my joy and my song;" but O how different it has been from what I had pictured. I find that the older I grow, I need all the more the dear Savior whom my soul loveth.

"What peaceful hours I then enjoyed,
How sweet their memory still;
But now I find an aching void
The world can never fill.

Return, O holy dove, return,
Sweet messenger of rest,
I hate the sins that make me mourn,
And so disturb my breast."

As you know, dear brother, my health was very bad for a long time, and I have a large family, and times are very hard, so that it looks almost impossible for me to keep even a part of a living. The health of both myself and my husband has been better since we came to Oklahoma. I will try to send a little more money ere long. I thank you very much for your loving-kindness toward me; I feel my unworthiness of such kindness. Many times I have thought I would tell you to stop sending the beloved paper, but again, when I think of giving it up it almost breaks my heart, for I do not see how I could do without the editorials and letters from the dear brethren and sisters; they all speak of Jesus, our only hope of salvation. "For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." When I see, or hear from a dear one who believes in Him, I find fellowship for that one, a love that is as a threefold cord, which is stronger than death and which cannot be broken. Yet, dear brother, my hope seems so little, but I call to mind the testimony of John, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." There was a time when I did not know anything about loving christians; but in my very first thoughts concerning religion I desired always to be with old christians, and to hear them speak together. I was then about sixteen years of age. I thought in those times that christians were certainly the happiest people on earth. As to why I had such thoughts I cannot say.

Forgive this imperfect letter; it is like the unworthy writer. May the Lord be with you in the future, as in the past.

When it is well with you remember me at the throne of grace. Do not lay other letters by to publish this.

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all, ELLA DAVIS.

JANUARY 1, 1885.

DEAR SISTER:—I thought I would write you a few lines in regard to my feelings. I do not know why I was so melted down this afternoon. It seemed after the first hymn was read that I could not control my feelings; there was something in that hymn that touched my heart; I tried to sing, but could not. Time after time my experience has been told, and my heart would almost break with the load upon it, but I could always hide my feelings and weep where no one could see me except the all-seeing eye of God, but this afternoon I could not hide my feelings. It was a precious meeting to me; I could not tell you half of my feelings. I felt like telling what I trust the Lord has done for me. I felt that he had taken me up out the horrible pit and miry clay and put my feet upon a rock and established my goings, and put a new song in my mouth. I felt like telling them the story of Jesus and his love. I love to tell the story, because I know it is true; it satisfies my longing when nothing else can do. I have often thought of writing to tell you my experience, but it seemed when I would get ready to write that I could not. It has been many years since I first felt myself a poor sinner, and how I did hope that in that precious book my name was written. You remember the hymn that father used to like so much:

"When thou, my righteous Judge, shalt come
To fetch thy ransomed people home,
Shall I among them stand?
Shall such a worthless worm as I,
Who sometimes am afraid to die,
Be found at thy right hand?"

During the years of this warfare I have had many dark and gloomy seasons, and many sweet promises, I most humbly trust, such as, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." O sister, I feel now like singing:

"Rest for my soul I long to find;
Savior of all, if mine thou art,
Give me a meek and lowly mind,
And stamp thine image on my heart."

When the minister used to call on Aunt Phebe, and she would tell them the promises, I thought to myself that I knew something about those precious promises, and often felt like telling them, but it seemed, like some said this afternoon, that my tongue would cleave to the roof of my mouth and I could not. You remember the sermon at Miss Miles': "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." It seemed they told my experience better than I could tell it, and it was a feast to my hungry soul. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." And another: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." O how sweet! I never felt before as I did that afternoon; I cannot express to you how precious it seemed to me.

O sister, do you ever think of our dear father, how happy he passed away from this world, and how patient he was in his terrible suffering? There was not a murmur, and only a short time before he died he clasped his hands, looked up and said, "O mother, do you see the angels?" O who could doubt the sovereignty of God? "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." When I first received a hope in his mercy we were living at

Mercy Warner's. I was in great distress of mind and tried to pray and beg for pardon. I went to bed, but could not sleep; my pillow was wet with tears. In the morning it seemed that the burden was gone, and I felt happy. It seemed that everything in nature was praising the Lord, and the words came to my mind: "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." It seemed that for a little while I had a taste of the heavenly manna and a glimpse of that beautiful city, but I was soon in the dark again. I remember well when Deacon Willard was baptized; it looked beautiful to me. The water was so clear that you could see the stones on the bottom. I felt then like telling them that I would like to go into the water, and ever since it has looked beautiful to me. The words often come with force: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." I feel so unworthy, so afraid that I might bring a wound upon the cause, so afraid that I might go astray. The words come to me now, "My grace is sufficient for thee;" and, "The Lord can clear the darkest skies, can give us day for night."

Dear sister, this is New Year's day, and a happy day to me, a day never to be forgotten, I most humbly trust.

I will close, with love to you all. Read this if you can, for I could scarcely see for tears, and then cast it aside. I felt as if I must tell you something about that precious hope I have in Jesus; it seems I could almost write a book full. Pray for me, and remember me.

Your loving sister, MOLLIE.

(See obituary on page 158.)

GREENWAY, Ark., Dec. 26, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel like writing you because I love you, for when I read in the SIGNS of your trials and experiences, they are so much like my experience it gives me comfort to read them. You can tell my experience better than I can write it, for I know I am a poor sinner, and that in me is nothing good, and if it were not for the grace of God I would be forever lost. I have been made to sorrow for my sins, and I sometimes have doubts and fears, for my heart and mind are very evil. I do not get to meeting, for the church here in the south is not strong in the doctrine as you are; they have left out absolute predestination of all things, and they are debating with other churches, and I do not go to hear them preach. I love the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things, and dislike for Old Baptists to debate with other denominations. I believe that God predestinated all things, and that he predestinated the evil as well as the good; that he has a purpose in all things. God has power over all things, and there is nothing hid from him, and there is nothing new to him, for he has declared the end from the beginning, and if he has not predestinated all things, how could he declare the end from the beginning? It seems to me that predestination is engraved upon every page of the Bible. With God there is nothing impossible, and he cannot be the author of sin, as some claim, if he has predestinated all things, for his Spirit is not our spirit, for our spirit is natural; but when God quickens our spirit we are made alive manifestly in Jesus Christ our Lord; so then it is by grace that we are saved, not of works, for if it is by works, then it is no more of grace; but we are saved by grace, not of works.

I have written more than I thought I would. I am not a member of your church, but I am one in faith. You can do as you wish with this letter; it is poorly written and is like the author of it.

Your friend, in hope of everlasting life,

L. E. GRAY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1910.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JEREMIAH VII. 10.

SOME time since, our attention was called to the words found in the prophecy of Jeremiah, chapter seven, verse ten, with the request that we present some thoughts regarding them. This we feel like doing now. The language of the text is this: "And come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations."

Negatively we would say first, that we are not to understand by this language that the people came into the temple of the Lord actually saying such words as these, but that as they practiced the abominations named in the connection openly and unblushingly, and yet came up to the temple, outwardly joining in all the forms of worship rendered there, just as though they had not been guilty of such grievous sins against God, they thereby said that their sin mattered not before God, but that they were just as acceptable to God as though they had not sinned. By so coming to the temple in their defilement they denied the truth of the declaration of the Lord that they who bare his vessels must be clean. They in practice said that sin and transgression were to Him just the same as righteousness and obedience. They said, We are suffered to do these abominations, and God accepts us still. In other words, their whole course of life said, We are the chosen people of God, and whether we sin or do not sin we are accepted of him in his sanctuary. What an utter perversion of the word and mind of God is seen in this language. How completely stupefied must they have been not to remember what their God had said and done against sin and sinners in all their past history. They did not say all this in so many words, but they did say it by coming to worship before God, while yet following every wicked way.

Negatively, again we would say, that this language does not mean that they said the Lord had actually purposed they should do these abominations. The language does not seem to us to have any reference to the decrees or predestination of God at all as it was used by this people. There have not been wanting in all ages those who have sought to soothe their consciences and to excuse their sins by the claim that all they did had been predestinated, and that therefore they could not help it, and hence they were not at all to be blamed or condemned because of what they had done. These have gone much further into blasphemous thoughts and words concerning our holy God than did these Israelites. These Israelites by their practice said that it made no difference about coming into the sanctuary because they had sinned, God had accepted them as his people, and their worship was acceptable to him because of this, even though they had sinned, but they did not say that their God had compelled them to sin, and therefore they were not blameworthy. The word "delivered" in the text, simply means that they said by what they did that their sins did not for-

bid them to come into the sanctuary, nor cause that their worship there should not be pleasing to God. In substance their whole course of life said, We are the Lord's people, and shall continue to be so, no matter what we do. This is utterly condemned in the context, and the judgments of God are uttered against them. But how much sorer rebuke awaits those who not only say this, but go further and say, We shall not be condemned, because the predestination of God compels us to do the evil thing. There have been some, as said before, in all ages who have taken shelter under the predestination of God as a cloak, or a justification for their sins. But because evil-minded men, who love their sins so much that they seek an excuse for them in order that they may not be rebuked for sin, thus turn the gracious doctrine of the predestination of God into lasciviousness, it does not follow that the doctrine is any the less true. Men have turned every other principle of the doctrine of God into evil as well as this. This is not the fault of the doctrine, but it does make manifest the utter alienation of the heart from God, as we are told in the word that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. If the fear of God be in the heart, it will cause that we shall bow in solemn reverence to every word of God, and that we shall ascribe to him all praise, honor and glory; while we shall, on the other hand, confess our littleness, feebleness, ignorance and finiteness, together with our rebellion, and guilt, and just condemnation before God. One who really fears God will never be found justifying his sins upon any ground whatever; he will feel and say, I have sinned, while thou, O God, art holy. But men have not only perverted the doctrine of God's predestination, they have, and do still, pervert the doctrine of salvation by grace alone. They did so in Paul's day, as we learn from his own pen. They said then, and they say now, If we are saved alone by grace, it does not matter whether we strive to live righteously or not, if we are to be saved, we shall be saved anyhow. If our good works have nothing to do with our justification, then there is no need of good works, or of striving to do them. Every child of grace knows from the feeling of his own heart just how great a perversion of the doctrine of grace all this is, but because men thus pervert this doctrine shall we therefore hesitate to proclaim it? So also when we read, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," the evil-minded say, If this be so, let us do evil therefore, that grace may abound. But with what horror does Paul express himself regarding this perversion of the doctrine: "God forbid," he says, "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" And, "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Shall we not continue to believe and to teach that it is most blessedly true that where sin abounded grace does much more abound, though men do thus grievously pervert what we say? This fleshly conclusion does not belong to the doctrine, but it springs out of the evil heart of man; it is, if anything is, a turning of the grace of God into lasciviousness. But because men do this shall we therefore give up the Bible doctrine of grace? What is more than this, we must not hope by any yielding of the argument, by any smoothing over the sharp points (as we say), to make this doctrine palatable to such carnal minds. We do not mean that sharp words must be used, or that they ought to be used at all times, but

that by all means we must keep the doctrine prominent, with all that it scripturally involves. Carnal men have also perverted the doctrine of election in the same way. We ourself have heard men say, If election be true, then God is unjust and partial. Paul met this when he wrote regarding Jacob and Esau, by simply declaring the truth, and leaving it to justify itself; and when, as is seen in the ninth chapter of Romans, men argued that if God had raised up Pharaoh for the purpose of doing what he did do, that the power of God might be made manifest in him, then he had no right to find fault with Pharaoh, saying, "Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" Paul only replies, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" &c. Did Paul any the less teach the truth that Pharaoh was raised up to the throne, as well as that he was raised up in the world, in order that he might do just what he did do, to the manifestation of the glory of God, because men said then Pharaoh ought not to be blamed or condemned? In like manner let us keep on declaring the predestination of God, even though men will draw all manner of God-dishonoring conclusions from it. We are not responsible for that, we are only responsible to God to declare what he has revealed in his word.

But to return to the text and its connection, after so long a digression. The general truth taught in the text and the connection is, that forms of worship, though ever so strictly adhered to, and though ever so constantly performed, can be pleasing to God when the heart is not right, nor the hands clean in his sight. The people of God cannot live in outward sin, nor in the indulgence of inward lusts, and their worship be pleasant to God. There is a vast difference between the attitude of mind set forth against these Israelites in the text and its connection, and the attitude of heart and mind which confesses before God, "I have sinned," and cries, as did the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner." These Israelites had sinned grievously in murder, in adultery, in false swearing, in burning incense or offering worship before Baal, and in walking after other gods. All these abominations they were doing all through the land, and yet when they came to the temple there was no penitence in their hearts, and no confession of sin in their lips, and no sorrow and shame, but boldness and self-confidence, because they were God's chosen people, and they thought he would on no account cast them off. There was no sweet savor unto God in all their multiplied forms of worship, seeing the hands that brought their offerings were unclean. Rituals cannot take the place of righteous living. What matters it though men believe every principle of the doctrine of God our Savior, and are filled with zeal in arguing upon all occasions in its defense, what matters it though men fill up their time with the performance of religious rites and ceremonies, what matters it though men are even bitter against all forms of erroneous doctrine, if there be not that love of God in the heart which produces abhorrence of all that is evil, and which will call men away from murder, theft, adultery and idolatry? Every man who is not thus separated from his sins, no matter how loud his profession, is but as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. To bring the matter home to ourselves, for there is where it belongs, because ancient Israel was but a type of the true church of God, it is of little avail, nay, more, it is of less than any avail, for us to claim to be the church

of God if in works we deny him. In the connection of the text, fourth verse, we read these words, "Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, are these." By this thrice repeated confession is meant that they laid the greatest stress upon the fact that they believed that theirs was the true worship, and that they were the true people of God. And so they were, so far as the choice of God of them over all other people was concerned, and so far as it was true that God had commanded the observance of these forms of worship, but in their mouths there were only lying words; they had become but the dead shell, with no life within. In the eyes of God the temple had become but a den of robbers. It was no longer in reality his house, since he could not dwell with iniquity. And this was Israel, not Babylon, or Sidon, or Tyre, but Israel, that had been chosen of God. These lessons belong to us as Old School Baptists, who profess to be the church of God on earth. God has indeed chosen us, and redeemed us, and delivered us out of bondage, and placed us in a goodly land flowing with milk and honey, and has given us a temple, and a service in that temple, and ordinances to be observed to the end of the world, but is there in any of our hearts a spirit which is saying what Israel in the chapter under consideration is charged with saying; are we, any of us, saying we may do all manner of evil and still we are the temple of the Lord and our bodies are the members of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Ghost?

Once Jesus came to the temple at Jerusalem and looked round about upon all things there. What did he see? First, he saw the temple of the Lord, but in that temple what a mixture was before him! Here were indeed the things which God had appointed to always abide in the temple, the inner and outer sanctuary, the altar of burnt offerings, the tables of shewbread, the incense and the sprinkled blood, but beside, what did he see? The greed of men striving for gain, even to the tables of the money-changers, and of those that sold doves. He said, "It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." This was not a temple at Babylon, or Ephesus, but the temple at Jerusalem. It was not a temple to Baal, or to Ashtaroth, but of the living God. Heathens had not made it a den of thieves, but his own chosen people. The warnings and lessons then are not for the world that lieth in wickedness, but for his own redeemed people. This is clearly shown by the words, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning." That is, for the instruction of the people who love and serve God. The very things written in the verse and chapter under consideration were not written to or of the heathen round about, but for the instruction and warning of Israel. God had not so dealt with any nation as he dealt with that people, because they were his people, his peculiar treasure under that former dispensation. In like manner, warnings, reproofs, counsel, admonition and instruction are given to the church of God in all the New Testament, and to it alone. To believers chastisements come as they have need. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth," is the testimony. These things are written that we sin not. How solemn is this word. But to him who feels that he has sinned, and that his sins come in between him and God as mountains, and who asks, Wherewith shall I approach

unto God again? John goes on to say, "And if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." God's people know that they are redeemed, and that they have an advocate with God, but yet they all the more abhor their sins. Grace never leads a man to say, Let me sin, since I am redeemed and safe for heaven at last; but rather, it teaches that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE HELP OF THE LORD AGAINST THE MIGHTY.

In our last number our brother and sister, William and Mary White, present their request for our views on Judges v. 23, which reads: "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord; curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

These words occur in the song of Deborah and Barak, in which they praise God for the glorious victories which he had given them over Sisera, the commander of the army of Jabin, king of Canaan. The circumstances of the case are thus stated: The children of Israel had sinned, and done evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord sold them into the hand of Jabin, for a chastisement for their transgressions. Being unable to withstand the superior forces of Jabin and his mighty army, his skillful general and his nine hundred chariots of iron, they, after twenty years of severe suffering, cried unto the Lord for help, and the Lord directed Deborah, who at that time judged Israel and was also a prophetess, to call Barak, and with him ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun, and with this comparatively small force to "go and draw toward Mount Tabor." And the Lord promised that he would draw unto her Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army, to the river Kishon, with his chariots and his multitudes, and deliver them into her hand. Of Meroz, which seems to have been a village near the brook Kishon, we have but very little account, but from the anathema pronounced in the text it appears that the inhabitants of that place did not listen to the word of the Lord as spoken by Deborah, and came not to the help of the Lord against the mighty. The Arminians have frequently referred to this passage with an air of exultation, to prove that the Lord God of Israel is sometimes in want of help, that his purposes require for their execution the use of means, the help of man, and that when men fail to lend a helping hand to the Lord they deserve the bitter curses which are in this case pronounced against Meroz and its inhabitants. This text has been relied on by the advocates of all the modern religious institutions for evangelizing the world. They would have us believe the Lord is endeavoring to convert the heathen and bring on the millennium; that he is wooing and beseeching sinners to consent to be saved on certain terms and conditions, and that the success of his gracious designs depends very much on the amount of aid afforded him by the sons of men; that those generous souls who put forth their hands to help him secure the ark will not be subject to the curse of Meroz. Help is, in their estimation, needed in the formation of benevolent societies, such as Mission, Tract, Sabbath School, Temperance, Abolition, Penny and Mite societies; that with sufficient help of this kind the heathen may

be converted to God and the world speedily evangelized; that those who are engaged in these are really coming to the help of the Lord, and will be blessed for their seasonable help and generous contributions, but those who stand aloof from them will share the anathema of Meroz and the inhabitants thereof. But does this text favor that idea? Let us carefully examine. In the case of Meroz, who was to be helped, God or Meroz? Were the inhabitants to be cursed for failing to help the Lord? Was the Lord of Israel in trouble requiring help? Did the Lord call on Israel to help him subdue the army of Jabin, or was it not the children of Israel who were oppressed by Jabin, and being unable to deliver themselves, after being sorely oppressed twenty years, called on the Lord to help them? Did the Lord come down from heaven to receive help from Deborah, Barak, or their ten thousand men? How absurd, not to say blasphemous, to talk of helping the omnipotent God, who weighs the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance, who taketh up the islands as a very little thing. If it were possible for him to need any help, what could puny mortals do to assist him? Behold, he "sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers, that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in; that bringeth the princes to nothing: he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity." Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with a span. All nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity. How much can these wonderful grasshoppers do to assist the almighty God? What aid could these minute particles of less than nothing and vanity render to him who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy? How very natural it is for poor, vain man to forget that he is but dust and ashes, and fancy that he can do exploits.

The subject before us must be plain to the candid reader. It was the children of Israel who needed help and cried to the Lord for help, and the Lord signified to Deborah that he would render them the help they desired at a special time and place, and commanded Deborah to come with Barak and ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun and receive the help of the Lord at or near Mount Tabor. They went to the place as the Lord commanded, and found the Help of Israel and the Savior thereof in the time of trouble was there; they received the help of the Lord, and were delivered from their enemies, and their oppressors were slain. But Meroz, we suppose, like our modern Arminians, despised the help of the Lord, and still had confidence in their own ability to take care of themselves. At all events they came not to the help of the Lord. Why they came not, we are not informed, but it is natural to suppose they were all Arminians, and could easier entertain the idea of helping the Lord than of being helped and saved by him.

As the inhabitants of Meroz despised the help of the Lord in the days of Deborah the prophetess, so the will-worshipers of our day, and all the workmongrel tribes of the earth in all ages, have vainly imagined themselves able to help themselves, and it is very apparent from their activity and zeal in multiplying what they call benevolent institutions for saving the heathen and converting the world, that they believe the Lord needs their help to sustain his cause and execute his

work much more than they feel themselves in want of help from him. Indeed we have never known them to apply this text in any other way than to represent the Lord as suffering for the want of help, and bitterly cursing those who come not up to help him. We pity those deluded souls who are so infatuated as to imagine that the adorable God who sustains the universe, who does his pleasure in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, can need to be himself sustained by any of the creatures that he has made.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., January 15, 1864.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at 1503 Dickenson St., Philadelphia, Pa., Wednesday evening, Feb. 9th, 1910, Charles H. Timmons, of Rehobeth, Del., and Miss May G. Jarman, of Philadelphia, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Enoch Drake, son of Peter and Rachel Drake, who were members of the church at Hopewell, N. J., died Nov. 17th, 1909, of acute indigestion, aged 75 years and 7 months. He had lived all his days in this vicinity. He was baptized in the fellowship of the First Hopewell Church by Elder P. H. Hartwell, about fifty years ago. For the past thirteen years he had been our faithful sexton. He was married to Mary E. Titus in November, 1857, who died about two years later. In 1861 he was married to Ellen M. Titus, a sister of his first wife, who survives him. He left three sons and two daughters, beside his companion of many years, to mourn the loss of a kind husband and father.

The above states the outline of his life among his fellow-men, but it is only right that more should be said of him as a meek and humble follower of the lowly Lamb of God. Since living in Hopewell we have spent many hours with him, and always with a sense of rest and comfort. As a general thing he said but little, yet he was a pleasant man to be with for those of spiritual mind. We recall very many times when he would briefly speak of the things of God; his views of truth were clear, and he gave all the praise to God for the hope of salvation that abided in him. Often in the midst of ordinary conversation about the affairs around us he would give expression to some reflection of his concerning the gospel and the hope of salvation, showing that his thoughts and meditations were there. Brethren who knew him well knew that there had been a deep work of the law of God in conviction wrought in his heart, and that then there had been given him a clear view of Jesus as the only and blessed Savior. In that Savior he trusted to the last. We had no more faithful attendant for those many years at our meetings for worship than he had been. Whatever pleasure he found in other associations, they all were counted small to him compared to the privileges of the house of God. He had not been at all well for some time. Just a few days before the end came we met him at the grave of a friend, and he spoke of feeling far from well. We were absent for a few days, and upon our return learned of his departure. He died in peace, and with trust in the God of his salvation. A day or two before the end he told his family that he should not recover, and bade them all good-by. His loved ones are sorrowful, but not as those who have no hope. He had filled out his days, and departed full of years, and with the love of all his kindred and of the church.

The funeral service was held on Friday, Nov. 19th, 1909, at the place of meeting, where he had loved to be. The subject used was 1 John iii. 2. His mortal remains were interred in the cemetery adjoining.

ALSO,

Johnson T. Drake, youngest son of the above, died of pneumonia Dec. 30th, 1909, at his residence, near Hopewell, N. J., aged 40 years and 3 months. Thus in six weeks father and son were both taken from us. Mr. Drake had not been very well for several months, having suffered an injury from a fall, from which he had never fully recovered. He was married to Elizabeth Wyckoff in December, 1893, who, with one child, a daughter, survives him. He had always lived in this section, and against him no one had ever said or had occasion to think evil during all his life. His mother feels doubly bereaved, husband and son being taken away within so short a time. No affliction has ever called out more sympathy from neighbors and friends than is felt here for the whole family. What is most for the comfort of the bereaved ones is that they have good hope that he had been graciously taught of the Lord for some years past. We as a church had confidently looked forward to the time when he should ask a home among us, but it was not so to be. But while his name will not appear upon our church record, we feel assured that his name is written in the Lamb's book of life. To one or two of the members of the church he had during the past few years spoken several times of his interest in the church and in the doctrine of God our Savior; beside, he walked with humility and lowliness in the sight of those who knew him. The hymns, "Amazing grace," and "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds," were precious to him. During his

last sickness he feebly sung the hymn, "Jesus, lover of my soul." A day or two before the end came he called his wife and child and bade them good-by, with others who were in the room. He desired to see his mother, but she was unable to go to his bedside then.

The funeral service was held in the meetinghouse on Jan. 3rd, and the subject used was Psalms ix. 10. After the service the interment took place in the cemetery adjoining.

We trust that the God of grace will minister comfort and hope to the bereaved wife, daughter and mother, and all his loved ones. C.

Elder D. G. McCowen was born May 2nd, 1831, died Jan. 21st, 1910, making his stay on earth 78 years, 7 months and 19 days. He was born in Morgan Co., Ga., and moved with his parents in his seventeenth year to Monroe Co., Ga., where he lived the balance of his life. He married Miss I. E. Fletcher, of Sumpter Co., Ga., in 1858, and to them were born eight children: Mrs. M. E. Shi, J. D., W. T., R. G., A. F., J. H. and E. L. McCowen, and Mrs. J. M. Evans. A. F., W. T., E. L. and Mrs. J. M. Evans are all deceased; the other children, with their mother, one brother, J. A. McCowen, two sisters, Mrs. M. E. Tramwell and Mrs. J. W. J. Taylor, are left to mourn the loss of a kind and affectionate husband, father and brother. He was not a strong man physically, but a very prudent man. He was attacked with a severe cold about the 24th of last December, which confined him to his bed, when a complication of troubles set in, and all that skilled physicians and the best nursing could do could not stay the hand of death. He was aware he was nearing the end, and told his family that he would not get well, and gave directions about all his temporal affairs, how he should like to be put away, who he wanted to preach his funeral, and where, all of which was carried out, except Elder S. T. Bently, whom he wanted to preach his funeral, failed to come, owing to the inclemency of the weather; Elders W. W. West and J. T. Glover conducted the services. Although the weather was bad, there was a large gathering of friends as well as relatives to pay their last tribute to him. He, together with his wife, united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Smyrna, Nov. 23rd, 1864, and was baptized by Elder James Stewart. He was chosen as their clerk in 1867, and was ordained deacon June 24th, 1871. In 1875 he was by act of the church licensed to exercise his gift, then on Dec. 24th, 1879, he was set apart to the full functions of the gospel ministry by a presbytery composed of Elders W. C. Cleveland, R. E. Story and J. H. Gresham; was chosen pastor of his church, and was its only pastor for thirty years. He was also clerk of his (the Ocmulgee) association from 1871 as long as he lived. It would be a hard task for any one to portray all the virtues in such a well finished life. Much more might be said of this good man's life, but suffice it to say that as citizen, soldier of his country and of his Lord and Master Jesus Christ, few if any ever excelled him. His morals before he united with the church were almost perfect, keeping the moral law as near as it is possible for a human being to do, never having uttered a profane word, never borne false witness nor defrauded any one in his life; a wonderful record, but this was his as a soldier in the service of his country, and the records are perfect as a servant in his Master's kingdom, and with all this perfect keeping of the law he took no credit for it, but always trusted in the merits of the crucified and risen Savior, mourning his inability to live a better life. To say that he was without a fault I would not, but he had as few as any man I ever knew. We can only point you who were near and dear to him, relatives and friends, to the same God that he trusted and served so long. We see that this God is one who can be trusted, carrying him safely through this vale of tears and sorrow, and blessing him with a good hope through the portals of death, leaving us with the assurance that all would be well with him when he passed over the river, saying his only dread was leaving his loved ones, that he would be done with the troubles of this life. The church, sister McCowen, his children and other relatives mourn the loss of this upright man, and how are they to be comforted? Time will to some extent heal the wound, but to trust and serve God brings abiding comfort. Let us all try to do this, that our light may shine as did his, is the prayer of the unworthy writer, J. W. NEWTON.

FORSYTH, Ga.

Elder Roland M. Simmons departed this life Oct. 16th, 1909, aged 89 years, 10 months and 11 days, at his home in Hopkins, Mo. He was born in Madison County, Ill., Nov. 7th, 1819, and moved from there with his parents to Warren County, Ill.; he moved from there to Hopkins, Mo., Oct. 10th, 1875, where he resided until his death. He was married Oct. 5th, 1845, to Miss Diana W. Stice, and to that union were born twelve children, seven of whom are still living: Julius, Charles and Mrs. Dinsmore, of Parnell, Mo., Mrs. Cox and Mrs. Long, of St. Joseph, Mo., Mrs. Reed and Miss Mary E. Simmons, of Hopkins, Mo. He was baptized in the fellowship of the New Hope Church, Greenbush, Ill., by Elder Charles Vandeveer, on the third Sunday in May, 1846, and was ordained to the work of the ministry the third Sunday in October, 1861. He was dismissed by letter from the home church in Illinois, and united with the Three Forks of Nodaway Church, in Page County, Iowa, in 1876, and remained in the sweet and perfect fellowship of that church until called to his eternal home. He was a great sufferer for more than five years, but

never gave up, and filled his appointments in different places until about one year before his death. He was a reader of the SIGNS as long as he was able to read. His sufferings were great at times, but he never murmured, and would often say, "When the good Lord sees fit to call I will go." While we are left sad and lonely, I hope our loss is his eternal gain.

The funeral services were held in the Christian churchhouse, in Hopkins, on the 17th, conducted by Elder R. M. Thomas, of St. Joseph, Mo., assisted by Elder Edmonds, after which the remains were taken to the Hopkins cemetery and laid by the side of his wife, who preceded him sixteen years.

His daughter, MARY E. SIMMONS.
HOPKINS, Mo.

As the dear sister requested that I should say a few words in memory of our dear, departed Elder and pastor, who was our pastor for thirty-three years, and who recently passed away from our midst, called home to his reward, it is not possible for me by any words that I may use to tell what by the grace of God he has been to us all these many years as a brother beloved, as a minister of the word, as pastor of the Three Forks of Nodaway Church; besides he visited in past years many other churches, and always in love. He never wavered from the faith that has been dear to the hearts of the children of God in all ages. The principles of doctrine that were dear to him, and that were set forth in his public ministry and in his private conversation, embraced predestination, election, special atonement, effectual calling, the resurrection at the last day, the change of this vile body and the final glory of the redeemed in heaven, and never was drawn aside from the plain, simple testimony of the word of God. He was of a mild and peaceable disposition; no man was ever more firm and unwavering in testifying to the truth; the weapons of his warfare were not carnal, but mighty through God. He lived every day before the people in godly sincerity and truth; even those without were compelled to bear testimony to him as a sincere, upright, humble-hearted man. How can we sufficiently set forth the power there is in such a life to magnify the grace of God, to which alone such a life is due? But I need not multiply words here, though my heart prompts me to do so. We are sorrowful that we shall see his face no more. It was the good pleasure of the writer to visit him in his last sickness, when he was so weak that he could hardly sit up in bed. He would preach Christ the way, the truth and the life, and exhort the church that he loved so well not to neglect the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is.

May God bless the bereaved ones, is my prayer.

ALSO,

Charles T. A. Burch was born in Greene County, Ind., May 31st, 1841, and departed this life Nov. 23rd, 1909, at his home in Bloomington, Ind., at the age of 68 years, 5 months and 22 days. He was united in marriage to Miss Mary Buzzard, April 28th, 1859. He was not a member of any church, but was a firm believer in the doctrine of election and predestination. He took no interest in the fashionable churches of the day, and with his wife would occasionally drive forty miles to where he could hear the doctrine preached that he believed, but always feeling his unworthiness. His trust was altogether in the arm of his Savior, entertaining the doctrine so plainly taught in the word of God that it is not by works of righteousness done by us, but according to his mercy we are saved. He will be greatly missed in the community. He leaves three brothers, two in Missouri and one in Nebraska, three sisters in Missouri and one in Wenatchee, Wash., besides a host of friends, but none miss him as his devoted wife. He was a cripple, and had been for forty-three years, having lost his right foot in a threshing machine. He followed farming for a living until the last few years. He was elected Recorder of Monroe County, which office he filled with respect. Though he never made a public profession of religion, yet we have for a long time had assurance that he thought upon the name of the Lord, and for such a book of remembrance was written.

His funeral was preached in the Baptist meetinghouse at Stanford, by Elder John R. Daily, of Indianapolis, Ind.; the text used was 1 Corinthians xv. 12–24. The remains were taken to the Burch Cemetery, near Stanford, and laid away to await the resurrection. May God comfort those who mourn.

ALSO,

Nancy Ball died at her home in Hopkins, Mo., after an illness of five months of a complication of diseases and old age, June 21st, 1909. She was born April 1st, 1829. She was a member of the Three Forks of Nodaway Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church for many years, always filling her seat when convenient, and was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. Her sufferings were great, but she bore them without a murmur. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." We feel assured that she has entered the city where there is no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God and the Lamb is the light thereof. She leaves the church and one stepdaughter, with a host of friends, to mourn their loss.

Funeral services were held at her home in Hopkins, conducted by Elder Calvin C. Moore, of Clarksdale, Mo., after which the remains were taken to the White Oak Cemetery, near Pickering, and laid by the side of her husband, to sleep in undisturbed repose until the trump of God shall sound and the archangel's voice be heard, then shall she come forth with the likeness of her glorified Head.

SAMUEL HOSTETTER.
HOPKINS, Mo.

Harrison Jay Fisher was born near Lightsville, Darke Co., Ohio, Oct. 14th, 1851, died Nov. 2nd, 1909, being 58 years and 19 days old at the time of his death. He was married to Miss Amanda Rhinehart, who lived in Orange township, near Sidney, Shelby Co., Ohio, Feb. 3rd, 1876. To that union were born eight children, seven of whom, together with their mother, survive, the eldest having died in infancy. Clyde and Otto are located in DeFuniak Springs, Fla., Clifton in New York city, while Ora, Jessie, Leota and Howard are at home. Besides his own family, his aged mother, Mrs. Sarah Fisher, his sister, Miss Libbie O., and his brother, George W., of Ansonia, Ohio, his sister, Mrs. T. E. Marsh, of Dayton, Mrs. Oscar Staight, of Hillgrove, Ohio, and Mrs. Rachel Brooks, of Lightsville, Ohio, and his brother, Dr. E. A. Fisher, of Yorkshire, Ohio, still survive to mourn their loss. His immediate ancestors were of the Predestinarian Baptist faith, and he always held to the same belief. In conscientious loyalty to his family, Mr. Fisher always worked hard and continuously, not taking recreation, which he so well earned and deserved, yet in spite of this he enjoyed a fairly good measure of health and strength until New Year's day, 1909; it was then that the break came, and for some time his life was despaired of. Although he rallied, he never fully recovered from this attack, and last Tuesday morning at 7 o'clock the final summons came. Mr. Fisher was honest, always regarding his word as good as his note; to this all who had dealing with him will attest. Respected and loved by all who knew him, he was an obedient son, a loving father and a devoted husband.

The funeral services were held from the late home of the deceased on Friday, Nov. 5th, 1909, and interment was made in Graceland Cemetery, Sidney, Ohio.

AT the request of his sister, Effa Staight, I will add to the above obituary that the deceased was a son of Baptist parents, a grandson of Elder Mahlon Peters, and a nephew of Elder John Peters and Elder Gersham Peters; he firmly believed in the doctrine of God our Savior, that he felt was taught in the Scriptures of eternal truth, and this doctrine he firmly believed is preached by the Primitive Baptists. His wife and children joined the Presbyterians, but he told me he could not enjoy going to their meetings, because everything, their walk and conversation and preaching, savored of a worldly spirit; pride, vanity and earthly knowledge were plainly seen by him, yet he freely allowed others to hold such opinions as suited them. He was a model husband, father and neighbor, a man of few words, but active in good deeds, proving his faith by his works. His one aim in life was to aid and comfort his family and educate his children to be useful men and women. His demise is most keenly felt by his devoted family. I visited his mother, one brother and three sisters this week, and I see the grief is still with them. His mother is over eighty years old, and has been blind for several years. We have felt the model life he lived from a child was such that parents, and brothers and sisters, and his family, certainly have reason to believe that he was guided by some power that was more than the work of man. I feel free to say this, because I knew him from infancy, he being my cousin; he was also my playmate in youth and faithful friend through life. I have often wished I were possessed with his quiet, peaceful and upright manner. His character all his life was without spot; I never knew any one who possessed a more gentle spirit, always esteeming others better than himself. A few years ago when I visited him he told me something of his hope. His mother, old sister Rhinehart, repeatedly told me she felt Jay was a christian in every sense of the word; in experience and in his life she felt he showed his faith by his works, and while it is true he never united with the church, giving as a reason his unworthiness, yet this was one of the very marks of the work of God in the heart, for who ever tasted that the Lord is gracious and did not feel unworthy of it all? But we bow to the Lord's will, knowing we are moving on to join him as fast as time can take us; the goal is almost reached, we are soon to go as he did.

NEWTON PETERS.

PORTLAND, Ind., Feb. 16, 1910.

Jacob Morrison, of North Berwick, Maine, departed this life at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Laura Grover, Sanford, Maine, Feb. 2nd, 1910, aged 84 years, 10 months and 7 days. Our friend was not a member of the church, but he was one who loved and lived upon the doctrine of God our Savior. While he was able he was constant in assembling with the people of God to hear the truth preached. He had no relish religiously for anything but the gospel of Christ. About fifteen years ago he first related to me his experience of the grace of God, and from that time he was dear indeed to my heart, and I loved to have a few words of conversation with him upon eternal things. He was eager to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and other sound writings. Though he had a clear, unmistakable experience of having been called by God's grace, yet such was his felt unworthiness, he felt himself such a poor sinner, so insignificant, that he could not, he felt, offer himself to put on Christ in baptism. He was a good man, his life and conversation declared that he knew the grace of God that bringeth salvation, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ. For some time his health had been failing, and on several occasions he told me he thought the time of his departure

was near at hand, and he expressed himself that he had no hope for eternity except in the Redeemer. The last interview I had with him was but a few days before his last short illness. That day he was in his usual health of body, and I spent the afternoon with him and his daughter. The whole time was spent conversing upon the things of Christ. Just before leaving he said he should like to have me speak in prayer. I sang the hymn, "How firm a foundation," and prayed to our God. As I left the house I felt, How sacred and blessed this afternoon has been, how spiritual and profitable, how gracious the Lord has been to us poor sinners. About twelve days after this his soul departed to be with Christ, which is far better.

At his funeral I preached from the words, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." His body was taken to the family burial lot in North Berwick, and there buried, to await the resurrection at the last day. "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

Newton C. Ratliff died Jan. 16th, 1910, at his home, four miles southeast of Sharpsburg, Ky. Mr. Ratliff had been a sufferer from asthma for many years, and for several years from Bright's disease, which during the last three months or more became deep seated and claimed its victim. He was a son of Caleb and Nancy (Stone) Ratliff. He was born March 12th, 1837, therefore was in his 73rd year. He was of a family of nine children, of whom but one remains: sister Susan Lane, of Mt. Sterling. He was united in marriage to Miss Ann Eliza Jones, daughter of the late Elder Samuel Jones, Feb. 4th, 1862. To them four sons were born, who, together with their mother, sister Ratliff, survive. Mr. Ratliff was a kind, devoted husband and father, an humble, upright citizen, and so regarded in the community in which he lived and spent the greater part of his life. This was evidenced by the large concourse of people in attendance at the funeral. Our friend never united with the church, but was a firm believer, and evidenced a good hope through grace. He was to the church all that one could be, except the ordinances and a voice in her business. Many brethren can attest to his hospitality and liberality. His last days were peaceful and tranquil. His son writes me: "I never saw any one die happier than our dear father, calling us all one by one, bidding us farewell, saying he could almost see his loving Savior." Truly it is not death to die. What a blessed comfort to the dear bereaved ones to know beyond doubt that with him all is well. May the same grace that brought salvation to and sustained our friend to the end prepare and sustain each member of the family, and bring them to that peaceful end, and all will be to the glory of our God. May they feel in their hearts to say with David, "This God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death."

I attended the funeral at the old home Monday, the 17th, after which the remains were laid to rest in the cemetery at Sharpsburg. May the Lord comfort the hearts of the dear, sorrowing family, giving unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. May we all bow to Him who doeth all things well.

In deep sympathy, P. W. SAWIN.

Peter Martin was born in Lincoln County, Mo., Jan. 23rd, 1859, was married to Jerusha Holford Sept. 19th, 1884; to that union were born three children: Fannie, Alta and Oliver. Brother Martin united with the Primitive Baptist Church called Spring Creek, in Pike Co., Ill., March 18th, 1893. He died of pneumonia Jan. 16th, 1910, aged 50 years, 11 months and 23 days. Brother Martin came to Pike County, Ill., when but a youth, and began clerking in a general store in Nebo, and by honesty, integrity and strict attention to business became one of the leading merchants of the town. His sincerity and truthfulness in all the relations of life won the confidence of all those with whom he came in contact. To the world his moral life was an open book that commanded their respect and esteem; but there was an inner life which the world knew not and could not understand, and there his virtues shone preeminent with that new man created after God in righteousness and true holiness. I felt to have as intimate an acquaintance with him as is possible to have with one who is a partaker of the divine nature. His position on the doctrine of free, sovereign and reigning grace was clear as the sun in a cloudless sky. Of a quiet, unassuming disposition, meek and lowly in heart in the assembly of the saints, rarely speaking, he was always ready to maintain the doctrine and order of the cross, indifferent alike to the allurements of reward or the terrors of reproach. His death is a loss to a devoted family, to the community, to the church and to myself. I feel that the loss is almost irreparable. It was so natural for me to go to him when weary and perplexed for a word of encouragement. But our loss is his eternal gain, God laid his hand upon him and he is not, for God took him. Brother Martin was a lover and constant reader of the SIGNS; had been a subscriber for

years, and always forwarded subscriptions for the three or four copies coming to this office. His widow, who is a precious sister, tells me that she expects to renew with us.

The writer tried to preach the gospel of Christ to a large and attentive audience on the occasion of his funeral, from John xi. 25, after which his remains were laid to rest on the hill in sight of his late home and our house of worship, there to await the resurrection. C. C. MELTON.

NEBO, Illinois.

BY request I send you a notice of the death of **Mrs. Mary E. Baum,** who passed away on Feb. 4th, 1910, aged 62 years. Her maiden name was Search. It was my privilege to baptize her in the fellowship of this, "Southampton Baptist Church," on Feb. 8th, 1885, and to-day, the twenty-fifth anniversary of that day, her body was brought to our meetinghouse for the funeral exercises, and from there carried to its burial. I send with this an account of her early experience, written by herself to her sister, Mrs. Rebecca E. Duffield, who is a member of this church. It was written Jan. 1st, 1885, a little more than a month before her baptism. I will only say that sister Baum was a spiritually-minded woman, a faithful member of the church, and held in high and warm esteem and love by her brethren, sisters and friends. Her sufferings were great, but she bore them patiently. Toward the last, I am told, she feared she was going to recover again, as she had before, and she longed to go home to be with Jesus. When very weak she sang hymn 1265 (Beebe's collection): "When thou, my righteous Judge, shalt come," with her daughter's help; also hymn No. 948: "O thou in whose presence my soul takes delight." I read both of those hymns at the funeral, also the twenty-seventh Psalm. Her husband, two daughters, a sister, and and many other relatives and many friends, are left to mourn. SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 8, 1910.

(See communication on page 146.)

Noah Stout was born Dec. 14th, 1822, near Mount Rose, N. J., died Jan. 27th, 1910, aged 87 years, 1 month and 13 days. He had never been confined with any sickness during his long life until a few weeks before his death. His sufferings were not very great, and he was able to sit up part of the time, and he talked with the family until a few hours before his death, when he sank into a state of unconsciousness and quietly passed away. He was married Dec. 22nd, 1855, to Miss Susannah C. Stout, daughter of William Stout, of Mount Rose, N. J. Eight children were born of that union, five daughters and three sons, four of whom are still living. He leaves his widow, two sons and two daughters to mourn the loss of a kind husband, father and friend, but they sorrow not as those who have no hope, believing their loss is his eternal gain. He always lived in the neighborhood in which he was born, and was known as an honest and respected citizen in every relation of life. He united with the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, N. J., more than fifty years ago, and was baptized by the late Elder Hartwell; he remained a firm and consistent member, and until a few years before his death his seat in the church was seldom vacant. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace through the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the last few years he did not go from home, but took great pleasure in reading the SIGNS, and enjoyed the able editorials and communications. He spoke to me of the comfort Elder Ker's editorial on, "How shall we keep ourselves unspotted from the world?" gave him.

The funeral was held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse at Hopewell, Elder F. A. Chick conducting the service. He was buried in the cemetery adjoining. M. J. STOUT.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Feb. 12, 1910.

Lemach Gorsuch, son of Benjamin and Margaret Hill Gorsuch, was born in Delaware County, Ohio, March 5th, 1841, and died at his home near Marengo, Morrow Co., Ohio, Jan. 11th, 1910, aged 68 years, 10 months and 6 days. He was the eighth child of a family of six brothers and six sisters, of whom only one brother and three sisters survive him. He was married to Amanda West, March 27th, 1870, and to that union were born three children: Lizzie Belle, Frances Caroline and Clay West, Frances Caroline having preceded her father in death, dying Oct. 3rd, 1874. He was a man of few words concerning spiritual things, but had given us full assurance that he had been blessed with a good hope through grace; his quiet, humble and unassuming way exemplified a righteous life, honest, faithful, loving and true in all things, loved and esteemed by all who knew him. He loved the church, and had great love and respect for our brethren, and they were always welcome in our home. O, we are so sad to know he is gone from us forever, yet we sorrow not as those without hope, for he told us he was not afraid to die. "No, no, dear child," he said, with that lovely look of heaven's glory on his dear face, which we shall never forget. O how glorious death must be to the believer when Jesus comes to light the way; how precious his grace to sustain us in life and forsake us not in death.

Funeral services were conducted at our home by our pastor, Elder G. A. Bretz, after which the remains were laid to rest in the silent city of the dead, to await the Lord's will. He cannot return to us, but we hope to go to him.

Written in loving remembrance of my dear father.

BELLE GORSUCH.

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All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Southampton, Pa.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 78. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1910. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MALACHI I. 2, 3.

"WAS not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord; yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau."

There ought to be no mistake about the meaning of this text, because it seems so simple and plain. The Lord says that Esau was Jacob's brother; how easy to comprehend these words; they are so simple that a little child can understand them. The next thought is, God loved Jacob. Our minds are enabled to grasp a thought about a special favor going out to Jacob. This is a positive declaration, but no less positive than the one following: "I hated Esau." If we are ready and willing to take the word of the Lord without any reserve when he said, "I loved Jacob," we should be ready and willing to take the same word without any allowance when he said, "I hated Esau." The apostle Paul in commenting upon this subject declares: "That the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." We are not prepared to say as some have said, that God loved Esau, but less than he loved Jacob. I fail to find anything in all Scripture testimony to support a thought of that kind. However, I do not for a moment entertain the idea that God hated Esau as man would hate, but that he was rejected from the covenant of promise. To Jacob, or Israel, "pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises."—Romans ix. 4. In all these Esau was rejected. The blessing of Isaac which he conferred upon the younger brother prefigured all that followed in after years in respect to these two sons of Isaac. This blessing of Isaac on his part was not intentional, for he most surely intended to give Esau, his firstborn, his blessing, but being blind he was deceived by Rebecca and Jacob, so that Jacob obtained the blessing that Isaac intended for Esau. This was all purposed by the Lord, because God had made choice of Jacob before he was born, and Rebecca's deceit and Jacob's falsehoods worked for good to the developing of the Lord's people. "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" God is as independent in his choice, or election, as he is in everything else. He does not choose as men would choose, but to the reverse. Men would make choice because of apparent intrinsic

value, or for seeming good in that which is chosen; men would make choice of great things, just as the children of Israel did for a king—Saul, from the shoulders and upward above his brethren. God hath chosen the weak things of this world to confound the wise and mighty. In the case of these two children, which the Lord caused to be born to show in them his power of decree, he said of them before they were born, neither having done any good or evil, "The elder shall serve the younger." Election is here set forth by this declaration. Man would make choice, just as Isaac did, of the elder child, but God completely reversed the judgment of Isaac and caused the iniquity of Jacob and his mother to accomplish his holy decree. God did not cause Rebecca nor Jacob to do as they did, for they planned and carried out the whole scheme to defraud Esau of his father's blessing. This was evidently very wrong and sinful on the part of Jacob and Rebecca, but the Lord turned their deceit and intrigue to His praise and for the glory of his cause in the ages to come. Because of the fact that Jacob was the lot of God's inheritance and became an illustrious patriarch, does not signify that he was perfect in the flesh. We can find many things recorded of him that were evil, as we view it, but as pertaining to his confidence in God, no lie was with him. "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him."—Deut. xxxii. 9–12. How wonderful is the work of the Lord in leading the poor and helpless! He judges not as man judges; he takes wicked men and purifies them, not as man would count purity, but the purification which he accomplishes is to cement them to himself in that there is no "strange god" with them. The poor soul who is a subject of God's grace may do, and does, many vile things in the flesh contrary to the law, yet by the power of God's grace in his conscience he fulfills the first and great commandment, which reads as it was first inscribed on tables of stone by the finger of God: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."—Exodus xx. 3; Deut. v. 7. In keeping this, the greatest commandment ever given to the children of men, there is not a shadow of idolatry. Idolatry is the greatest sin chargeable to the human family. I doubt that there has ever been a single instance since the fall of man, where man was not an idolater when left to his own choice. The Lord alone can quicken and cause man to worship at his feet. Those who are kept by the power of God are kept from idolatry, for there is no strange god with them. It is upon this ground of reasoning that I have ever been able to understand the language of the prophet in this sentence: Children that will not lie. His people may lie, and do lie in regard to many things, but when the test is applied to their quickened consciences in regard to whom honor and majesty are due, praise of itself goes out to the Lord of hosts, who rides in his excellency on the sky, and who rides on the wings of the wind. The God of Jeshurun is the God that they worship, who is independent of and above all things. Who dare question the right of Jehovah to choose and reject? Does not every sane man and woman exercise the right of election

every day of their lives over the things that they control? Why should men refuse to concede that God in justice has the same or greater right over the things of his creation? Paul would say to such men who try to rob God of his right and power: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" Shall we receive or reject the testimony that God gave to Moses? "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."—Romans ix. 17, 18. We are nearing a tender point in doctrine for the consideration of some who claim to be holding to the primitive faith. The last verse quoted, which the apostle has used in connection with the subject of God's love for Jacob and his hatred for Esau, is one of the "hard sayings" which many are ready to reject, or dodge in some manner, by making an apology for God. It must stand to be just as true that whom God wills he hardens, as that he has mercy on whom he will have mercy. I cannot from this connection of Scripture in Romans think otherwise, as well as from the account given in Genesis. "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turneth it whithersoever he will."—Prov. xxi. 1. So is the heart of every man. To evade this Bible truth is to reject the teaching of Scripture. This does not make God the author of sin, nor involve the idea that God infuses into man a disposition that causes him to sin. God has never been disappointed in anything that man has ever done, or ever will do; he had perfect knowledge of what man would do before the world began. It is so that no evil can possibly come any time, anywhere, but that it shall turn to the praise of Jehovah in the end. To take any other position would dethrone the eternal God. In this ninth chapter of Romans the apostle in speaking of this subject says: "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." "He that believeth not is condemned already." It is evident that these vessels of wrath are still under the curse of the law, being unredeemed, which fitted them to destruction. The vessels of mercy are on the other side, "afore prepared unto glory." These were chosen in Christ before the world began. The nonelect are never spoken of as being a chosen people. There are a few places in Scripture where it seems that they are appointed to condemnation. The elect were blessed in Christ Jesus before the world began. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." "According to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." "Ye are a chosen generation." "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate." "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." We have no account in history that the names of the nonelect were eternally written, but we have ample proof that every name of the elect has been eternally written in heaven. "But rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven."—Luke x. 20. "He that is left in Zion * * * shall be called holy, even every one

that is written among the living in Jerusalem." "Whose names are in the book of life."—Phil. iv. 3. "To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven."—Heb. xii. 23. "And I will not blot out his name out of the book of life."—Rev. iii. 5. "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life."—Rev. xiii. 8. "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."—Rev. xx. 15. "And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."—Rev. xxi. 27. Not only has the Lord written the names of his people in heaven and in the Lamb's book of life, whom he foreknew, but their names are engraven upon the palms of his hands. "Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me."—Isaiah xlix. 16. The Scriptures do not speak of a forewriting for the nonelect. The only writing that affects them is the writing in the law, which is against them. The "little ones" who make up the kingdom of Jesus are highly favored, in that they have the most tender care taken of them, that none but a great and good Shepherd can do. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."—Psalms xxxiv. 7. "Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones."—Zech. xiii. 7. "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."—Matt. xviii. 10. "Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire." "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" There are no promises like these for the nonelect, who were represented by Esau and Ishmael. It is written, "For in Isaac shall thy seed be called." This was said as barring Ishmael from the inheritance. But we do not find that all the seed of Isaac were heirs, only Jacob, who was afterwards named Israel. Even Jacob's children were pruned to a very small remnant which obtained the literal inheritance. So in the antitype a very small remnant shall be saved, as also prefigured by the seven thousand reserved unto the Lord in Elijah's day; that was a very small remnant as compared with the millions of Israelites of that day. "They are not all Israel, which are of Israel; * * * that is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." To understand the above we must view the subject in a spiritual sense. The securing of that "holy seed" is confined to whom the promises were made. "He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Some vainly think that God's promise in some way embraces the whole family of man. God's election embraces all that the promises do—the chosen generation. "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." God loved Jacob with that love with which he loves all his people; it was an everlasting love. "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."—Jer. xxxi. 3. The children of the promise, as touching the election, "are beloved for the fathers' sakes." John says, "We know that we

have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Again, "We love him, because he first loved us." No mortal in a state of nature can know anything about this love. "The love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding." Paul speaks of this love as being great: "For his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins." Much might be said in regard to Esau's hatred of his brother, so that he was a murderer at heart, and of Jacob's journey and trials by the way, but I shall desist for the present.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

HELENA, Okla., Feb. 7, 1910.

ELSMERE, Del., Feb. 7, 1910.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—Having come in contact with one of the great evangelists of our day, who set forth Samson as a type of the ungodly, my mind has been impressed to take up the matter, and I have written some things as they have been suggested to my mind. I desire you to look over what I have written, and if you think there is anything in it that would be of comfort to the Lord's people you may use it.

"And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left. And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein: so the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life."—Judges xvi. 29, 30. This was the conclusion of the things which were done by Samson, concerning whom the angel said unto the barren wife of Manoah, "For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; * * * for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines."—Judges xiii. 5. We find that Samson himself knew he was a Nazarite to God, for he told the Philistines so on one occasion. A Nazarite is one who is set apart unto the Lord. Then I believe that Samson knew just what work was set out for him, and all the things that he should suffer, and that it was the purpose of God to begin to deliver Israel through him, and that the final stroke of his life would lead to the death that was his. He sought a wife among them, that he might seek occasion against them, moving among them for the space of twenty years. He slew them when he would, and told them with his own lips wherein lay his great strength, to the end that they should take him and put out his eyes. I do not believe that naturally he gloried in these things, but that the mighty power that worked in him to do the things he did was from the Lord. The sleep into which he fell shows the hand of the Lord in making him a perfect type of the Lord Jesus Christ. The word of the Lord, declaring that he should begin to deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines, pointed to Jesus Christ, who came according to prophecy to deliver the true Israel from the bondage of the flesh. Of this flesh the Philistines were a true type. Israel was always pointed to as a true type of the church, the spiritual body of Christ. As in the Philistines, so in the flesh we behold all the glory of the flesh and all its enmity against God. If something of this was not known to Samson I cannot conceive how he, being blind, could know about the temple and people where he was.

But he asked the lad to lead him so that he could feel the pillars upon which the house rested, that he might lean against them, and he sought out the two middle pillars upon which the house rested that he might break them, and so overthrow the house. Did he not know that he would be given strength to pull them down? If not, he would not have sought them out. Thus Samson did not represent one who was traveling through the inclination of the carnal mind, but one moved by the Spirit of the living God; he was indeed a Nazarite unto God. In those days there was no king in Israel, and every one did that which seemed right in his own eyes. This time, as it appears to me, was identical with the time between the close of the prophecies and the coming of Jesus Christ, when every man did that which was right in his own eyes. Samson was treading in the mills in the prison of the Philistines, as the blessed Master trod the wine-press of the wrath of God alone, as it was declared of him in prophecy. This does not mean that the wrath of God was upon him as his Son, but as the executor of the Father's will he trod the wine-press, and came to know the wrath of God, and why it was kindled upon him. Samson was brought to the temple of the Philistines, a place that was filled with idolatry, where they were wont to gather to satisfy the lusts of the flesh, and to worship heathen gods, and to eat and drink their fill of the things of the world, to show that their god had triumphed over the God of Israel, for Samson was an Israelite and served Israel's God. Their temple contained all things that flesh is heir to, including self-righteousness, and the belief that all things are of the will of the flesh, and that men are able to set up a god of their own, and that their god is able to deliver them. It is an idol of the flesh when men claim to be able to deliver themselves, or to refuse salvation, as is best suited to their will. Men desire to make their own idols, because they are subject to their creators, and not that men are subject to their gods. The Philistines brought Samson forth to make sport for them, that they might mock him and show their derision for his God. Then "Samson called unto the Lord, and said, O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes." So from the Lord Samson received the strength with which he destroyed the temple and all that were in it. This typically represented the delivering of the true Israel from the Philistines (the flesh), which should forever be destroyed by Jesus Christ our Lord when he wrought the final destruction of this temple of the flesh by offering himself upon the cross, thus making the deliverance of Israel complete. The sun refusing to shine, the earth quaking, the rocks rending and the veil of the temple being rent in twain, were all a seal of the approval of the eternal God of this work of redemption, wrought by the only begotten of the Father in overthrowing the fleshly temple, giving his life in the midst of the ruin, thus revealing himself unto the people as the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

Samson ruled Israel twenty years. He met the Philistines and they were unable to answer him in anything, and when they desired to take him they could not, for the Spirit of the Lord came upon him mightily, and he broke the bonds which they had placed upon him and went his way, and whether he defeated the wisdom

of the Philistines or destroyed them individually, it was all typical of one and the same thing, viz., the work of Jesus which was yet to be revealed. All the wisdom they possessed was but natural, and they could not therefore comprehend wherein was hidden the secret of his great strength. Neither did his own countrymen understand, but yet they believed it was of the Lord. The Philistines did not know even this, hence they were types of this one thing: sin and the flesh, and so it was said, "The dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life." They were dead in trespasses and in sin, and they had shorn off his locks and bound him, and believed that they had the mastery over him. They wist not that his locks had grown, and when they brought him forth, though blind naturally, he was guided to the pillars of the temple. He had been as one buried with the dead, but he came forth in all of his strength, as one risen from the dead. He cried unto the Lord, "Let me die with the Philistines." Thus Jesus went forth unto the fulfillment of the word of the Lord. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. Every word that he spoke was as a two-edged sword, it destroyed every one who opposed it. His word set aside the wisdom of this world. They could not receive it, and they were offended at it, and killed him, yet the dead which he slew at his death were more than all that he slew in his life. The world and the flesh thought they had triumphed over Jesus, but he had only permitted them to remove his locks for a season, and when he came forth he came in all his glory, and revealed himself only to his own. The world, like the Philistines, could not see that his locks had grown again. The world, the natural eye, could not behold our Savior after he was risen from the dead, for both himself and his Father were glorified, and the natural eye cannot behold the glory of the face of Jesus Christ.

Samson went down to Timnath and saw a daughter of the Philistines. This daughter of the Philistines was a type of the church, the bride, which Christ came into the world to redeem. This was in the beginning of the deliverance of Israel, and pointed to the time when Christ should come to receive his bride, the church. We read that it came to pass within a little while after, in the time of wheat harvest, that Samson visited his wife with a kid, and said, I will go in unto my wife in the chamber. But her father would not suffer him to go in unto her. This was in the wheat harvest, typical of the time that the husbandman should come to gather in his harvest, and to thresh out the grain, and to gather it into his garner. This was the ripe grain setting forth the things belonging to the spiritual life which Jesus gives unto his people. They are the garner into which he gathers the things of the Spirit, for "we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." The Lord knew where and in what condition Zion was when he came to redeem her. His plan was a perfect plan; so all the types were perfect types. Jesus did not come that he might become acquainted with the condition of needy Zion, but that through much suffering, even the death of the cross, he might reveal to her her lost and ruined condition. He must be the first-fruits of the harvest among many brethren, and so it is said that he tasted death for every man. This does not mean that he died to save every man indiscriminately, all nations were repre-

sented in his death. It was in the time of wheat harvest, the appointed time of the Lord to finish the delivering of Israel. Jesus came unto his bride, the church, and he found her, as Samson found the daughter of the Philistine, given unto another. They were given over to idolatry, seeking after the inventions of men, honoring God with their lips, while their hearts were far from him, reveling in the wisdom of this world, worshiping upon high places, and received him not, and saying, Is not the younger sister fairer than the true wife? therefore go unto her, if indeed thou art the Messiah. If thou art he indeed, then reign over us as other kings, and then will we receive you. Now when Samson was hindered by the father of his wife he caught foxes, and put firebrands between their tails, two and two, and set them loose in pairs among the wheat, which was the wealth of that people, and so he destroyed all their wealth. This was the treasure of the Philistines. As I have said before, the wheat, the full grain, represents the spiritual life in which is the perfect righteousness of God. Then we remember that this was just what Zion in her captivity believed that she possessed; that is, she thought she possessed all the righteousness that was needed, and that she was perfect, and therefore she sought to destroy him. Jesus went up to Jerusalem with Joseph, and Mary his mother, who were to be taxed according to the custom. When they returned they found that Jesus was not with them, and they went to search for him, and found him among the doctors of the law, now termed doctors of divinity, asking questions, which they could not answer, and answering questions to their astonishment. There he revealed the truth that he had seen the bride, the church. Samson's parents were opposed to his going in to the daughter of the Philistines, and so the mother of Jesus rebuked him for going in to the doctors of the law, but he said, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Jesus, who wrought the final deliverance of Israel, began to confound the rules of this world when about twelve years of age, and they wondered that he knew all these things, seeing that he never learned letters. When he was crucified he was thirty-three years of age, making his life, after being in the temple, about twenty-one years.

Now when the harvest was full Jesus went forth to meet his bride. He went forth three years, preaching the truth as the true bread, and sending forth his disciples two by two, placing between them as firebrands the message of God's eternal truth, which destroyed their sheaves of wheat, their riches and their glory. Therefore they sought out a way by which they might destroy him. And Samson laid hold of the pillars and bowed himself with all his might, because the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him. Samson died between the pillars, both of which represented the works of man's hands, and Jesus expired between two malefactors. Here was where they brought him forth to make sport, that they might hold him in derision. One of the malefactors which were put to death with him "railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." But the other rebuked the first, saying, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing that thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." To the natural mind the death of Jesus and of the two malefactors was on the same level, so far as death itself was concerned, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ are all things made manifest as being subject unto him, even death itself. To his people it is revealed that he died upon the cross for them, to redeem them from their sins. The natural man is carnal, sold under sin, and cannot enter into this knowledge.

Now there was one malefactor upon either side of the Savior. It is not recorded, I believe, which one railed upon him, but I believe that he represents the world, the flesh, or the goats, as in the parable of the sheep and the goats, and they were upon the left hand. This man had but one thought, and that was self: "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." This is ever the thought that is in the world: If thou be the Christ, add something to our honor or greatness; and if he be not that kind of a messiah they have no use for him, and they are upon the left hand, and seek a sign from him. But no sign should be given them save the sign of the prophet Jonas. Upon the other hand, the right, was that one who, according to the law, was a malefactor, but who was possessed of another spirit, and rebuked the other, saying, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss." This man spoke forth as the first living witness for Christ and his kingdom as he hung beside the precious Savior, for he saw him as the Lamb of God slain for his people, yet he himself having done nothing amiss. This man saw the Savior in all his glory in his kingdom, and his eyes were made glad. Hence he cried, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Then Jesus said, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Here is the evidence of a precious hope; here is the subject of the love and mercy of God, at his right hand. This man sees the great barrier of sin and guilt which prevents him from entering, and then the perfection of the kingdom of Christ, and when his polluted soul stands up before the law, how utterly the way is closed against him. But here Jesus bowed himself, and said, "It is finished." The two pillars were broken, and the whole structure was destroyed, and the deliverance shown in figure by the Lord through Samson is here finished through Christ. All concerning Samson shows that he was not a type of the ungodly sinner, but of the spotless Lamb of God, who was to come that he might save his people from their sins forever and forever.

Your little brother, if one at all,

W. S. ALEXANDER.

St. Albans, W. Va., Jan. 20, 1910.

Dear Editors:—You remember a few months ago I sent you manuscript for a book which I had written; it was my intention to have this little book printed, but owing to my failing health, and financial embarrassment by reason of same, I am unable to have the work done, so I thought inasmuch as some of my brethren seem so anxious to see it in print I would send it to you again, so you might publish it in the Signs from time to time if you should deem proper. This work, as well as all my other work, I feel to belong to my Father's children, and if even one of them should be comforted by it I

would feel amply rewarded; in fact this is all the profit I desire out of it.

In affliction, G. B. BIRD.

INTRODUCTORY.

"THE heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard."—Psalms xix. 1-3.

For many days past I have had a mind to write upon the foregoing passage of Scripture, at the same time viewing the vast amount of truth embraced in it, and feeling my own nothingness, knowing that I am altogether unqualified to write naturally in a way that would meet the approbation of the learned of this world, and I know not that I am qualified spiritually; however, I venture to write upon the mysteries of this text, hoping that I may be blessed with the presence of the Spirit of Israel's God to direct my mind, which will be all the qualification I shall need; but should I be thus blessed (which the faithful in Christ Jesus are to decide), I shall not hope nor expect to write in a way that will please the natural mind and fancies of man, but shall direct my little book to those of the Father's family, who are represented as a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people." I shall not expect to write with enticing words of men's wisdom, who teach for doctrine the commandments of men, but I do hope to write as the apostle Paul spoke, "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." I shall expect only the redeemed of the Lord to understand what I write, for unto them it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but unto the world it is not given; these sacred truths are hid from the world and revealed unto babes (new creatures in Christ), consequently are understood only by revelation; it is with "the mind of Christ" (a spiritual mind) that God's people understand the truth of the heavenly kingdom. It should be remembered that the children of God are possessed of two opposite powers or spirits: the Spirit of God and the spirit of man. There is a continual warfare between these two opposing powers; this warfare is as much manifest in the understanding of spiritual things as it is in performing any duty God has enjoined upon us. Paul tells us that by reason of this warfare we cannot do the things we would. "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Then what is there left for us to do, except to wait upon the Lord; "to lie passive in his hands, and know no will but his;" to lean upon the bosom of his perfect love as little, helpless babes, waiting for the appearing of him who is the fairest among ten thousand and the One altogether lovely; wait for the Sun of Righteousness to arise with healing in his wings, to reveal himself to us again? When God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shines in our hearts, he will give us a knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; he is then made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. When we are blessed to wait upon the Lord, and when he is thus revealed unto us, it is then we see him the Head over all things to the church, and then we see that the church is his body, holy and without blame before God in love. It is then we learn that he is all and in all to us, who "are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ him-

self being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." While I do not expect to please the natural man, I do not wish to offend any, and shall not say more of the wicked than did Christ when he said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do," and should any one become offended at the sacred truth (I ever wish to be found earnestly contending for), I hope such an one will remember I have said that these things are hid from the wise and prudent of this world; and should you cast this aside, saying, It is a dangerous doctrine, these are hard sayings, who can hear them? then please let it be remembered that these very words were spoken to Christ Jesus concerning his own words, and should any after having read what I have to say decide that they hate the author for the truth's sake, please remember that Christ has said, "The world hateth you," I shall expect nothing else. Perhaps they will say, You are too old-fashioned, so far behind the times, so few, and will all soon be gone, &c. This, however, only gives me better scriptural proof that the Old School or Primitive Baptists are the sect everywhere spoken against, the remnant at this present time according to the election of grace, and counted the off-scouring of all things, the "speckled bird," &c. Dear children of God, it is my choice to suffer all these afflictions with you, rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, and I can say no more than Paul: "By the grace of God I am what I am;" and, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." The circumstances under which I proceed to write are very trying indeed, and in endeavoring to express my feelings language seems to fail me, it seems to be too weak to express the exercises of my mind, and I will use the language of one of old: "My leanness, my leanness;" "I am a man of unclean lips," and when I look around me in the faces of poor dying men and women, and into my own heart, I feel to exclaim with the prophet, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever." I feel too weak, frail; O that I may be enabled to see more of the weakness of the flesh, and kept from assuming an exalted position, but rather let me be abased, let me lie at the feet of Jesus, and there be clothed and in my right mind (spiritual mind), let me lie at his feet experimentally all the days of my life, for while there, though in the flesh we feel weak, we yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness and are strong in the inner man; while there we will see nothing but love, peace and fellowship reigning among the children of God. When I turn my eyes upon this aching body of mine, knowing that my days are all numbered, and are as the days of a hireling, and I soon, ah soon, shall pass away as a shadow, and shall be seen no more, shall no more speak or write of His goodness and mercy, the words of Watts come to my mind as expressive of my feelings:

"Teach me the measure of my days,
Thou Maker of my frame;
I would survey life's narrow space,
And learn how frail I am.

A span is all that we can boast,
An inch or two of time;
Man is but vanity and dust
In all his flower and prime.

See the vain race of mortals move
Like shadows o'er the plain;
They rage and strive, desire and love,
But all their noise is vain.

Some walk in honor's gaudy show,
Some dig for golden ore;
They toil for heirs, they know not who,
And straight are seen no more.

What should I wish or wait for, then,
From creatures, earth and dust?
They make our expectations vain,
And disappoint our trust.

Now I forbid my carnal hope,
My fond desires recall;
I give my mortal interest up,
And make my God my all."

Dear brethren, it was not willingly that I began to try to preach; no, no, and no mortal tongue could describe how I suffered while fighting against the impression to preach; indeed it was as fire shut up in my bones, and I became weary of forbearing, and could not stay. No, if I had had my way in the matter I would have been "digging for golden ore," would stay at home with my family, but I have been made to hate all earthly things, that is, esteem them less, much less, than the kingdom of God and his righteousness, but many times the future of this world looks dreary and I can see no way for us to make it, being badly in debt, but the Lord has been merciful and kind to us in the past, and may I not trust him to care for me and mine so long as we live in this world?

Now, dear reader, I will ask you in conclusion to compare this with the words of inspiration, and I pray God that he may give all his little ones understanding in all things.

(To be continued.)

WAVERLY, Pa., Jan. 28, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find the experience of brother James Tapner, who is in his eighty-second year; you are at liberty to publish it when you have space. He is clear in all of the principles of the doctrine of Christ. I have known him for twenty-five or thirty years.

Yours as ever, a sinner,

D. M. VAIL.

DELPHI, N. Y., Jan. 26, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—I write to you in love and fellowship of the truth in our Lord Jesus Christ. Knowing your great love for the same, made manifest in the past in labor, faithfulness to the churches and to the sorrowing and lonely, I thought to write (God willing) something of my experience in being called to confess him before men, which I very much desire to do (if at all) to his honor and praise.

I was born in England, May 11th, 1828, and my parents came to this country when I was two years of age. They were Old School Baptists, as were my grandparents, and it has given me some trouble to know whether I am one because they were. I have had great love and respect for the Old Baptists since I was eight years of age, and felt a desire to be like them and of their number, but felt so unworthy that I did not dare to utter the first word to any one, but many times it was very hard to keep still. I always loved to attend all their meetings, whether preaching or conference. I enjoyed conference meetings as much, if not more, for I loved to hear the brethren and sisters tell of their joys and sorrows, and sing the blessed hymns, in which I joined with much pleasure. In 1848 Elder J. P. Smith, our pastor, moved to Delphi, N. Y., to serve the Old School Baptist Church

at that place, and our meetings went down, so I had no Old School meetings to attend, which I missed very much. In February, 1855, I moved to Delphi, and again had the blessed privilege of hearing the true gospel of salvation by the grace of God alone, and I cannot describe the comfort I had in hearing it. I kept my thoughts to myself, not daring to let any one know that I loved the truth or had a hope, for I felt so unworthy I dared not so much as hint my feelings to any one. I was called to help in singing, and my feelings were so exercised I many times feared others would notice it. My whole force was necessary to keep my feelings to myself, having no right to talk on the subject of religion, for I was not worthy to mention the blessed name of God. In the fall of 1867 the church had a two days meeting, and a number of ministers were invited to attend, but only Elder James Bicknell, of Westmoreland, N. Y., came. I had heard him preach many times before, but not so well as at that time; my heart was filled with love and praise to God. Elder Smith announced at that time that there would be a conference meeting on the next Wednesday evening, and if the Lord willed he would be there. A number of the brethren with myself attended, and after two or three had spoken I could not contain myself any longer. I tried to say a few words, but cannot now tell what I said, but confessed I had a hope in the mercies of the Lord. They were much surprised, as I had not dared speak a word of how I felt before. On May 24th, 1868, I was baptized by Elder James Bicknell, and received in the fellowship of the church. In relating my experience I could say but little, and was surprised that they should receive me at all. I enjoyed their love and fellowship for a time, but trouble arose in sickness, and the brethren did not show that love to me as before, but said some pretty hard words to me, as I thought without a cause. I cannot express how sad it made me feel, and it was a great trial of my faith. I think it was good for me, and taught me to look to the Lord for help in my distress and time of need. Yes, blessed be his dear name, he enabled me to love them still, and triumph with his never-failing grace, and I can truly say, Although they have passed away I love their memory, and would like to be as good a follower of Jesus as they were. I have had very much trouble with myself, more than all others put together; I have been brought so low that I said I would not have things the way they were, and said in my heart, Is there a God? and if so, is he a God of justice? I was for over a year in gross darkness; I said I would no more call on his name, for it did no good, but he brought me to his blessed feet, and I begged of him to be merciful to me, a sinner, and he heard and answered my cry; all praise be to his holy name. I love the Old School Baptists, for I believe they love the truth as it is in Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh, but trust him for his grace. I am very lonely and sad much of the time. We have a good meetinghouse, but no meetings. I am the only surviving member who can attend, so I desire to commune in spirit with my blessed Redeemer, who sends me the Comforter at times, to my great joy and gladness of heart. All praise be to his blessed name forever. Amen.

I submit this to you, for you know my infirmities better than any other of the brethren.

With my full fellowship, and love to you and all the household of faith, I am, as ever, J. E. TAPNER.

HERNDON, Va., Nov. 20, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am now inclosing check to you for three dollars, two of it for my subscription to the SIGNS another year, and one dollar to be applied to the aid of sending the SIGNS to the poor of the flock. I am still very much comforted in the coming of the SIGNS, but oftentimes, between the time of its coming, I get very low down, and think perhaps there are none so cold and barren as I feel myself to be, but in reading the many letters in our family paper I most always find some one telling my condition better than I can tell it myself, and I am then made to hope again that I am one of that number who came up out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. O what a precious medium of correspondence we have in the SIGNS, and I often wonder how any Old School Baptist hearing of its worth can get along without it. It enables us to hear from God's dear children all over our land, for we find them writing and speaking often one to another, telling what great things the Lord has done for them. In reading the many letters I am often reminded of the language in Malachi: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." And it is said, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." O how thankful should we be for that wisdom which cometh from the Lord, for it is hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. "He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the Lord is gracious, and full of compassion." "The works of his hands are verity and judgment: all his commandments are sure." "He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever; holy and reverend is his name."—Psalms cxi. 9. It is a name above every other name, and it is God alone who must claim it (reverend), yet the whole Arminian world of preachers claim this wonderful title, "reverend," to themselves, and yet if they could stop for a moment and feel and see by the eye of faith the sacredness of the name they would bow their heads and close their mouths and feel deep down in the recesses of their hearts, We are vile, too unworthy to take thy holy name in our sin-polluted lips; unholy, unholy, O Lord, if it be possible, forgive us now for claiming thy holy and righteous name, Reverend, for thy name is above every name given to the children of men. The Lord is high and lifted up, and his train fills the temple; he fills all space in time and in eternity; he is from everlasting to everlasting; the glory belongs to him and not to another. "His name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." How then can poor, fallen man, whose breath is in his nostrils, claim the name Reverend? Poor worms of the dust, compared to grasshoppers, nothing, and less than nothing and vanity. The word or name "reverend" is found only once in the Bible (Psalms cxi. 9), and Old School Baptists know the name belongs to God himself, and they believe God's people can only worship one God, who gives one faith and one baptism.

Dear editors, I did not intend to drift into such deep water, so will stop lest I mortify your feelings, if I have not already done it.

Your brother, I hope,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

LONDON, Ont., Jan. 18, 1910.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I write you a few lines to say that my wife and I are well, and we hope you and yours are well also.

In reading the SIGNS for January 15th, 1910, I was interested in your editorial reply to brother Taylor's questions, and I fully agree with you in your conclusions. It is now nearly thirty years since the statement was made to me that there never was a church until after Jesus came into the world, and my answer to them was to read Acts vii. 38, and they would find that there was a church in the wilderness, and that Moses was in that church, and during the last two or three years I think I have been given to see that not only was the church of God upon earth in the days of Abel, but continues to the end of time; yes, down through the fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the law and the prophets, to the coming of the Son of God, and, as you ask, Can we point out a period of time in which God had not a people, a kingdom, a church, in the earth? Jesus said, Abraham saw my day and was glad; and from Abraham down, yes, and before Abraham, what displays of faith, love and triumph have we seen in reading the Old Testament, and when you and I by faith behold the day of the Lord, do we not see and rejoice in an everlasting day, everlasting life, an everlasting kingdom? Therefore the dear Savior of sinners is an everlasting Savior. But unto the Son he saith, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." Then can we point out from the Scriptures a time when there was not a throne, and a King on that throne, and a people and kingdom subject to that King? I cannot find it. Behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, and they had that wisdom that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? and they worshiped him. (Matt. ii. 2–11.) John said, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." John did not say that that kingdom is going to come; no, it is here, it is at hand, and you nor I have ever beheld that King or his kingdom as coming, it is always at hand, even in our hearts. As I do not want to tire you, I will say that I do believe the above mentioned kingdom of heaven extends from righteous Abel to Christ, and to the end of time is that kingdom that is likened unto a man that is an householder; like unto a certain king who made a marriage for his son, and like unto ten virgins, and I do hope that I know what it is to fall at his feet in humble adoration and praise, being assured in my soul that he is the Rock; his work is perfect. O that I could feel it more and more, that I could mount up on wings as eagles, run and not be weary, walk and not faint, for I do now often feel weary and faint.

I hope that it is not presumption in me to write thus to you. My wife joins me in sending love and best wishes to all.

I am, I hope, you brother in Christ,

R. CASE.

PAYNES MILLS, Ont., Feb. 21, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Please find inclosed two dollars, for one year's subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. A dear sister, Mrs. S. A. McColl, has been sending me some of her papers, and they have been such a comfort to me I feel I must subscribe for it myself.

I would like to say something to each and all of the writers: I want them to know how they comfort a poor, weak, sinful creature such as I feel myself to be; when I look within I see everything

dark and full of sin. When I read the letters of the dear brethren and sisters I feel that I would like to write and tell what great things the Lord has done for me, but I feel too unworthy, and it seems when I read their letters they all tell my feelings much better than I can, though I may never have heard or seen their names before. I feel too unworthy to call them such, yet I love them as brethren and sisters in the Lord, and would like to correspond with some or any of them. I have always loved the Old School Baptists, but thought it was because my dear father and mother were Baptists, and always believed in salvation by grace, and grace alone, but I could not believe I would ever be one of that loved band. I remember one night an Old School Baptist was in our neighborhood, and I asked him to stay the night with us. While we were at breakfast he told me his experience; it was the first time I had ever heard any one tell their experience, and I felt as if we were one in feeling, until he came to where he had been delivered from his sins, then I told him of my condition, and said, There is no hope for me, I am beyond pardon. He tried to speak comfortingly to me, but it was no use, I thought it could not be that the dear Savior died for such as I. How beautiful it was to hear him tell his experience; his name was David Stam. He is no more on earth, but has gone to be with his Redeemer. I never saw him to tell him the glad news that I, too, had been delivered from that load of sin. That was fifteen years ago, and I felt that I was getting deeper and deeper into sin, until I felt I must sink under the load, when one night (can I ever describe it?) I did not seem to be asleep, but was just lying there with my eyes closed, when all at once I opened them and the room was filled with the most beautiful silvery light, and at the foot of my bed there was something like a rainbow and my Redeemer in the circle, and as I looked the sweetest voice that ever was heard said, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." I cannot tell you of the joy and peace that filled my heart to overflowing, and then my desire was to be buried with Christ in baptism, but when I went to meeting all looked so good and pure I thought they never would accept me, but they did, and all bade me welcome, and you, my brother, baptized me October 2nd, 1909. I can never forget those three days in Lobo; how I did enjoy the preaching by yourself and brother Chick; it was indeed a feast of fat things to me.

But I am writing too much. Please excuse all imperfections.

Yours in christian love,

(MRS.) J. A. MALCOLM.

HERMLEIGH, Texas, Jan. 20, 1910.

DEAR KINDRED IN THE LORD:—The dear Lord has blessed me with means to pay for our dear SIGNS, and I hope I am thankful. I thank you for sending it to me, as I do not want to do without it. If I know anything about the teaching of the Scriptures, the SIGNS advocates what is taught in the Bible, and of which I hope the dear Lord has given me a little understanding; unless he gives us understanding we can know nothing. Dear brethren, when I read so many good letters by our dear editors and brethren and sisters it makes me want to see every one of you. O if I could be at some of those good associations and hear the dear brethren preach the unsearchable riches of our Lord and Master, as I once did, it would give me more pleasure than any earthly thing I could do. I love the doc-

trine of predestination and election and salvation by grace, and grace alone, for if not free grace then I am lost. But the dear Lord says we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, to be holy and without blame before him in love, and we are kept by his power unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, and our names are written in the Lamb's book of life. He says he will be unto us a God, and that we shall be unto him a people, and that his people shall be a willing people in the day of his power, and that they shall all be taught of the Lord. Dear brethren, that is why we love one another. We are all taught to love one another by his Spirit, and there is no love like this love. With his loving-kindness he has drawn us. Love caused our dear Savior to suffer and die for his people, but my great trouble is, Am I one of them? I feel so little, and find in me dwells no good thing; that is, in my flesh. If I have ever done one thing to cause Him to love me, I do not know it, but my whole trust is in his salvation.

I will inclose two dollars, which you may place to my credit for the SIGNS. I hope I will be able to pay the rest this fall. I want to thank you for sending the paper to me. May the Lord bless you all. I trust you may long live to publish our paper.

As my dear old mother is still blessed with the privilege of this life, she desires me to write a little for her. She is eighty-four years old, and has been a Primitive Baptist over sixty years, and is still strong in the faith. She has two motherless granddaughters living in Senton, Texas; their mother was a Primitive Baptist, and they are where they never hear anything preached but false doctrine, so she wants them to read the dear old SIGNS, and sends one dollar to pay for same.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,
(MRS.) M. E. WILLIAMS.

WESTON, Mich., Jan. 16, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please excuse my tardiness in renewing my subscription to the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which brings sweet and heavenly messages to the hearts of those who love the doctrine of God their Savior; it is as apples of gold in pictures of silver. If I could only write to the comfort and edification of the household of faith as you and many others do O how glad I would be, but this I cannot do, for it appears to me that all who communicate through the SIGNS write in the spirit and with understanding; they speak of the things they have seen and heard, and when I read the letters it does my poor soul good; it softens my heart and sends forth sweet fellowship and love to those dear messengers of the truth, for when they speak of the trials they encounter by the way, darkness and distress of soul, doubts and fears, truly of these things I know something, for the most of my time is spent in fear that I am a poor, mistaken mortal, but the Lord has been very merciful, therefore I feel to adopt the language of David: Bless the Lord, O my soul, bless his holy name. Truly I have received comfort and consolation from his protecting care in dreams and visions of the night, when deep sleep falls upon man; to me these visions are and have been wonderful, and very instructive. I will relate an instance that occurred last March, if my memory serves me right: I dreamed that I would soon be called to Canada. I awoke the next morning, and my dream came so vividly before me that I could not get rid of it, and it became

so real that I began making arrangements for the journey. In my dream I was to get off the cars at Duart. The next day, soon after noon, I received a telegram, as I had seen it in the vision. When I arrived at Duart Mr. Gillis informed me of the death of dear sister Sarah Turner, daughter of John B. McMillan, aged fifty-one years. Her funeral was held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse at Duart, and was largely attended by her many relatives and friends. I did feel to speak words of comfort to the dear relatives and friends of the departed sister. The Lord said by the mouth of the prophet, Comfort ye my people; cry unto Jerusalem that her warfare is accomplished, and that she hath received double for all her sins.

I might go on and relate many other instances that have been revealed to me in dreams and visions of the night many years ago, and to me they are just as plain as they were then.

In conclusion I can bid Godspeed to the dear, old SIGNS. May God remember Zion in her low estate; may he lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes. Brethren editors, may the Lord remember you in your labor of love to the brethren. This letter is at your disposal.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

T. J. WYMAN.

LEBANON, Maine, Dec. 12, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—As it is time for me to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, I feel like writing a few lines. Let one poor sinner say, God be praised in the highest for his great love and mercy to me. O that my tongue might be loosed and praises flow to ocean's end and soar to the mountain's top. I just feel that I want to tell all the kindred in Christ what a merciful God is ours, and what great blessings we enjoy. All praise to Jesus. As I watched the last rays of the setting sun this evening I saw in vision my Savior in his agony on the cross. O I was there, it seemed, and I wanted to say to all, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. He bore our sins in his body on the cross, the iniquity of us all was laid upon him; O what wondrous love! The Lord has graciously blessed us all, and to me it seems much more than I deserve. My path has been rough, at times I have been almost ready to give up, but in it all I have been made to see the wonderful works of our God, and, like the poet, can truthfully say:

> "But though I have Him oft forgot,
> His loving-kindness changes not."

To all his dear ones who are weary I would say, Take courage, Jesus is your friend, he will be with you. I have been in the very depths of hell, but feel to say, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." He will be with us to the end. O may we be faithful. I am yet a little babe, but do love the brethren and the truth; not man's work, but Christ Jesus crucified.

Do with this as you see fit. Give God all praise for his mercy, and pray for a sinner who hopes for a better day.

From one who feels himself to be less than the least of all saints.

A. H. CHICK.

MONROE, Ga., Feb. 10, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—The time has come for me to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, and I do not feel that I can do without it, because of the truth presented in it by the people whom I feel to know and fellowship, and for its long standing against the doctrine of wise men of the world. The memory of the late Elders

Joseph L. Purington and Wm. L. Beebe, and the knowledge of you, and of Elders S. H. Durand, John McConnell, F. A. Chick, B. F. Coulter, D. M. Vail, J. G. Eubanks, H. H. Lefferts, and others whom I have met who contribute to its pages, make it doubly interesting to me.

I want to tell you that I, together with my wife, daughter, sister, and brother N. C. Adams' wife, expect to visit three of your associations: at Welsh Tract, Hopewell and your city, if the Lord will. It is a great pleasure for us to think and talk about it, looking forward to the time. Your kind invitation, together with others, to visit you, gives me much pleasure indeed. That love that binds us together so closely must be from above, our hope being as an anchor of the soul, and our faith being an evidence of things not seen, make us contend for salvation by grace, unconditional upon our part, causing us to declare that the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin, and that "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his," so we need not be uneasy about any of them.

We have just built a new house for worship here in our city, and organized a church of eighteen members on Saturday before the fifth Sunday in January, and we are very proud of it. We will go into the Oconee Association, I think.

Your brother in hope,

J. M. ADAMS.

[WE shall all be glad to welcome brother Adams and those mentioned by him, together with any others who may accompany him.—K.]

MOUNDS, Okla., Feb. 7, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending you two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES another year. I surely do love to read the dear old paper; it and my Bible are all the preaching I have had for over a year, as there are no Primitive Baptists near here. There is other so-called preaching out here at Mounds, but I have not been to hear it for nearly two years; I have no desire to hear it. I love to read the experiences of so many dear ones, and they all tell about the same thing; it does my poor soul good to read them and know that there are others like me. I have often wondered if there were any like me, and when I read in this dear paper I can but rejoice to know we are all alike. O how sweet to trust in Jesus; he will never forsake us, but will be with us in all our troubles. May he guide and direct our steps all along this life, and then when he calls us home to that beautiful mansion above may we sing praises to his holy name forever and forever.

A poor worm of the dust,

(MRS.) E. M. LOWE.

MT. VERNON, Wash., Feb. 28, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—I inclose notice of the death of V. S. Northcutt, which I would like to have printed in the dear old SIGNS, if you can spare space. Since the death of friend Northcutt we feel quite lonely, as he was the only one at Mt. Vernon, outside of my family, who fully indorsed the truth as it is in Jesus. I wish to say I have been a reader of the SIGNS for about fourteen years, and I like it better than any Old School Baptist paper I have read. If you see anything in this fit to publish you may do so, and it may be some brother traveling this way will stop off to see me. We are about one-half mile from the depot.

Yours in hope of a better world,

R. E. BEATY.

(See obituary on page 189.)

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1910.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 SAMUEL XIV. 26, 27.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Will you please give your views through the SIGNS, our dear old family paper, which we love so well for the truth's sake, upon 1 Samuel xiv. 26, 27? which reads as follows: "And when the people were come into the wood, behold, the honey dropped; but no man put his hand to his mouth: for the people feared the oath. But Jonathan heard not when his father charged the people with the oath: wherefore he put forth the end of the rod that was in his hand, and dipped it in an honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth; and his eyes were enlightened."

Your brother, J. D. LAKE.

HURRICANE, W. Va., Jan. 11, 1910.

The narrative in this chapter gives an account of a conflict between Israel under King Saul and the Philistines, the constant foes of Israel, after they entered the promised land. Upon the dawn of a great battle Saul rashly and unwisely gave command that no soldier of Israel should put forth his hand to take food until evening. No doubt his thought was that the army should not scatter themselves to take any spoil until the enemies were destroyed utterly, but he had not this command from the Lord, and it showed that he had little regard for the welfare of the soldiers under him. Moreover, it was an unwise command, because soldiers would grow faint as the day waned, and would be unable to follow the enemy with rapidity and strength. On the other hand, had they been allowed to take needful food as they came to it their strength would have been renewed and they could have done all the greater execution against their foes. But this was in keeping with the ungodly nature of Saul, who, like many other ungodly men, never sought the Lord for guidance until he was in such straits as he could see no escape from. Jonathan, his son, had not heard of this command of the king, as he and his armor-bearer were already engaged against the Philistines. The enemies were routed before the hosts of Israel began to pursue after them, by the valor of Jonathan. God had wrought a fulfillment of his word in this case also, that one should chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight. Now in the pursuit of the enemies the people came to a wood, and under the wood there was honey upon the ground. The bees, multitudes of them, had hung their honeycombs in the wood, and the honey had dripped upon the ground. The people, though distressed, were mindful of the commandment of the king, and passed on without taking the honey. But Jonathan put forth the end of the rod that was in his hand and dipped it in the honey and did eat of it. From the narrative it does not appear that he delayed at all in the pursuit of the enemy, but did eat as he went on; thus he was strengthened for further and better service. The expression, "And his eyes were enlightened," simply means, as it appears to us, that he was invigorated in all his powers, and his faintness was relieved. In the narrative it is said that the people were faint from hunger. Men faint with hunger can neither see, hear, think nor move as quickly as when in full strength. Having eaten of the honey he was in far better condition to see

where his foes were, and to follow them in their flight; his eyes, which had become dim with the faintness that was upon him, were now enlightened. Directly afterward, in the narrative, we are told of the evil effects of this unadvised commandment of the king. When the slaughter of their enemies had ceased, the people having taken oxen, sheep and calves, slew them upon the ground, and did eat them with their blood. This was strictly forbidden by the law which God had in the beginning given that people. The blood under no circumstances was allowed to be eaten. God had not forbidden them to eat of the honey as they pursued the enemy, but Saul had forbidden it, and through this command of the king, which was not authorized by the commandment of the Lord, they were led into a violation of one of the most strict of the ordinances of the Lord, and Saul rebuked this sin, and commanded them to bring each man his ox, sheep or calf to a stone, which he had caused to be set up, and slay these beasts there, that it might be seen that the blood had escaped from their bodies before the flesh was eaten. But Saul thought far more of the failure to obey his unwarranted command than he did of this failure to obey the commandment of the Lord, for when it became known to him that Jonathan had taken of the honey, even though he did it not knowing the will of Saul, he commanded that he should die. Was not this doing just what the blessed Master charged upon the carnal worldly religionists of his day: "strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel"? Only the stern objection of the people, who said that Jonathan had won this great victory for them, prevented the king from carrying out this decree.

One lesson from all this narrative is, that it is a rash thing to command what the Lord has not commanded in his word. Jephthah had long before made a rash vow, and it resulted in the sacrifice of his own daughter. When Saul said that he that should pause to eat during the pursuit of the enemy should be accursed, he did not know that this would fall upon his own head, in the person of his son. Such rash words and deeds most often come back upon the heads of those who have rashly said or done them. It is right to wait for the will of God to be revealed, and it is wrong to act until that will is known. Saul brought sorrow upon his own head when it became known to him that Jonathan had transgressed his command, though innocently, and he brought shame to himself when the people so strongly protested that he dared not carry out his decree. To speak or act before the will of God is known, generally results in sorrow or shame, or both, to him who is guilty. Saul was an evil-minded man from the beginning, and was given to Israel by the Lord in his anger. They chose to be as the nations round about them, having a king, and thus putting God away from them, and their king proved a curse rather than a blessing to them. How much better it is to look to the Lord for guidance and protection than to some earthly visible power. Saul possessed a disposition that was carnal and earthly, and this spirit is always opposed to God. At last he set himself in open rebellion against God, and at the end perished miserably from the earth. Thus all that is of the flesh shall at last perish. It shall be as the wood, hay and stubble, of which Paul speaks in Corinthians. Seeing then, how entirely the flesh is opposed to God, and how prone we all are to give heed to it, and how deceitful it is, often taking on the appear-

ance of zeal for the cause of God, as now in the case of King Saul, it behooves all who really love and serve God to wait upon his word always, and to ask the guidance of his Spirit in all they say or do. If we know these things we shall desire to walk softly and carefully, and that the Lord shall search us and try our thoughts, and lead us in the way everlasting. C.

TYPES OF SPIRITUAL THINGS.

OUR mind has been led of late to some consideration of the types of spiritual things set forth in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. We do not mean by this that any one particular type or figure has been so much in our mind, but some things connected with what we call types in general. We have used this word "type" here because it is a common word among us, and because it has been so in the church of God, so far at least as we have been able to read after the writing of those of former generations, but it is a fact that the word "type" does not occur anywhere in the Bible. We find the words "ensample," "example," "shadow" and "figures," in the New Testament several times. The first two words are translated generally from the same one word in the Greek, and we do not know why that word was not translated by the one word "example" all the time. There is no difference of meaning between "ensample" and "example," therefore the Greek word translated by these words is *tupos*. This word has been transferred, not translated, into our English word "type." We have here called attention to this because it is well to know that the word "type" does not occur in the Bible, lest some of us should become strenuous for the use of this word, thinking it to be in the Scriptures. For the places where the words "example" and "ensample" are used in the New Testament, and where the original word is *tupos*, see 1 Cor. x. 11; Phil. iii. 17; 1 Thess. i. 7; 2 Thess. iii. 9; 1 Peter v. 3; 1 Cor. x. 6; 1 Tim. iv. 12. The words "example" and "ensample" occur in other places in the New Testament, but not when translated from the word *tupos*. Five times these words refer to old testament examples, and nine times they refer to things which were present at the time when the apostles wrote. This last takes in the use of these words when translated from other Greek words beside *tupos*. The word "shadow" is used four times in the New Testament, referring to things under the old covenant. It is used many times, both in the Old Testament and in the New, expressing trouble or sorrow, and sometimes protection. Sometimes the word is used as we commonly use it when we speak of the shadow of a tree, or of a man, upon the ground. There is a distinct difference between the meaning of the word "shadow" and the word "image," or likeness, which is also used with various applications, both in the Old and New Testaments. Paul in Hebrews x. 1, makes this distinction very evident, saying that the law had the "shadow" of things to come, but not the very "image;" that is, as we would know by a mere shadow upon the ground that the object that cast it was a man, yet we should not by this shadow be able to tell whether the man was black or white, of good or bad complexion, light or dark, kindly or unkindly in appearance; his shadow would not be his very image. So the things under the law covenant, and commanded to be observed by the law, were not able to set before the people anything more than that there should be a Savior; they could

not make the people who simply saw the shadow know the beauty and excellency of that Savior. When this Savior came, things were revealed that the shadows could not reveal; yet now, seeing the substance, Jesus, we know that the shadows were correct, and that they did not distort his glorious appearance.

While we have thus called attention to the words that are used in the Bible, we must not be understood as finding fault with the use of the words "types" and "shadows." We could not mean this, for we have at all times made frequent use of these words, and expect to continue to use them, but let us remember that these words mean "examples," and the forms of things, as a shadow reveals the form of him who casts it.

We have also been thinking much of the difference between the words which are commonly used among us, "figurative" and "spiritual;" they are not the same words, and they do not mean the same things. The teachings of the Bible are all spiritual, but they are not all figurative by any means. The blessed Lord has seen fit to teach his people in various ways in the word, sometimes by plain declarations, in which there are no figures of speech, but simply plain statements in the plainest language, and sometimes he has seen fit to speak in parables and dark sayings. The Bible is full of similitudes, tropes, personification, metonymy, and all other figures of speech, by which truth can be presented in a striking way, but it is not all so written. We could not find time nor space to call attention to instances of these various manners of presenting the truth in the word, but whether plain statements without figures of speech are used, or figures of speech occur, it is all spiritual, the plain statements as much as the figurative language. We have called attention to this because we have heard it said sometimes of this or that plain text, We must understand that spiritually. But when the speaker went on to tell what he meant, it was only in his mind to claim that it was figurative language. The truth that is presented in any Scripture concerning God and Christ and salvation and the experience of grace is all spiritual, whether presented in some figure of speech or not. When it is said, for instance, that Jesus died and rose again, and that by this his people are justified, the language is not figurative at all, but still it is spiritual, because it presents spiritual truth. When believers are bidden to be baptized the command is literal, and yet it is spiritual. It is not figurative language when we read that the waters of the Red Sea were divided and Israel went through dry-shod, but yet it presents an event that in itself was intended as a figure of some things connected with redemption. The language there is not figurative, beause that very thing literally took place, but the event was an example, or a type, or figurative. So the command to be baptized is literal and not figurative, but the act of baptism is a figure, in that it presents to view other things. The name of the Lord is set forth in all the word of God, and his glory is magnified often by figures of speech, and often by direct simple statements. It is a figure of speech when it is said, He inhabiteth eternity, but it is not a figure of speech when it is said that he is eternal; both alike are spiritual truths however. Many similar instances might here be given, but this is not our object now; we have designed simply to call attention to this one thing, viz., that all that is in the Bible is the setting forth of spiritual truth, but it is not all figurative. There should be a careful discrimi-

nation used in reading the Scriptures, as to whether what we are reading is figurative or not. One thing is sure, viz., that we cannot know what spiritual thing is set forth in any text unless we first know the exact meaning of the words literally. Spiritual truth may indeed be presented by us when the text itself applies to something altogether different, and it is altogether unsafe to use a text without knowing its connection. We well recall that when we first began to speak publicly in the name of the Lord, the late Elder Wm. J. Purington once said to us in his earnest way, "Never allow yourself to take a text unless you have become familiar with the connection, otherwise you may misrepresent the mind of the Holy Ghost in that Scripture." No words ever spoken to us, or in our hearing, made a more solemn impression upon us. By study alone no one of us can find out the things of God from the Scriptures, but it is equally sure that the Holy Spirit will not show the things of God to a servant who has no mind to search the Scriptures, and it is sure that our God reveals nothing to any man beyond that which the Scriptures do themselves testify. A man cannot be a spiritual man if he has no mind toward God; but if the mind be by grace turned toward God, then it is sure that one will delight in the word of God, and desire to know what the Lord has said to him there. C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

JOSHUA XXIV. 19.

Elder H. C. Ker—Dear Brother in Hope of a Better Life:—I take the liberty of troubling you with a few lines, hoping you are well and doing well. Can you give me some light on the Scripture found in Joshua xxiv. 19? "Ye cannot serve the Lord: for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins."

Your unworthy sister, M. M. MILNER.

Vaiden, Miss., Feb. 9, 1910.

When the Lord called Abraham he blessed him, and made promise to him and confirmed it by an oath, swearing by himself because he could swear by no greater, saying, "That in blessing I will bless thee, multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore." The land of Canaan was also promised to him and to his seed. To Abraham was born Isaac, and to Isaac Jacob, and to Jacob the twelve patriarchs, and to the patriarchs the twelve tribes. The Lord also promised that the seed of Abraham should be strangers in a strange land four hundred years; there must therefore of necessity be something to take them into that country. Through envy and hatred Joseph was sold by his brethren into Egypt, the "strange land." Joseph was given favor in the eyes of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and was made ruler of the land. After which a famine of seven years came, but Joseph had provided against it during the seven years of plenty. When the famine was sore in the land of Canaan Jacob, then called Israel, heard of the food supply in Egypt, and through dire necessity sent his sons down to buy corn. The corn was procured and the sons started homeward and found, much to their surprise, at the first resting-place the money in the mouth of their sacks which they had paid for the corn. Supposing that a mistake had been made, they on their next trip took a double portion of money, and that, too,

was returned. They could not buy corn in Egypt, because the Lord sent Joseph their brother before them "to save much people alive." The revelation of Joseph to his brethren followed, after which Jacob, his sons and his sons' wives and their children went down to live in the "strange land." They were given the land of Goshen, the best portion of Egypt, where they abided and multiplied, much to the displeasure of the king, who knew not Joseph. About that time Moses was born and taken by Pharaoh's daughter to be her son. He was taught in all the learning and art of Egypt, and would have ascended the throne, but when forty years of age it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the Hebrews, thinking they understood that the Lord would deliver them from their bondage and affliction by his hand, but it seems that up to that time the Lord had spoken to Moses only of the matter. During his visit he saw an Egyptian striving against one of his brethren, and when he thought no one saw him he slew the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. When he went out to visit them again the next day he found that the killing of the Egyptian was known, he therefore fled from Egypt into the land of Midian, where he was given the daughter of Jethro, the priest of Midian, to be his wife, and he became the herdsman of his father-in-law. He remained in that land forty years, when the Lord revealed himself to him in the bush that burned with fire but was not consumed. That bush represented the Israelites in their sore affliction in the "strange land" and God in their midst, hence they could not be consumed. The four hundred years as strangers in a strange land were at an end, therefore the Lord spoke to Moses out of the bush, saying, "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. * * * I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the land of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey. * * * Come now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt." And Moses said, "When I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." In this name, I AM, is clearly presented the immutability of God; the same God who called Abraham and blessed him manifested himself to Isaac and Jacob as their God. The same God who said, Thy seed shall be strangers in a strange land four hundred years, appeared to deliver them by the hand of Moses. Moses and Aaron wrought miracles before Pharaoh in Egypt, and at last through the destroying angel, death visited every house of the Egyptians, and the firstborn of both man and beast was taken. This made the way of escape, and the Israelites were delivered from their bondage and cruel taskmasters, the Lord opening the Red Sea that they might go through dry-shod. To that people the Lord gave bread, water and meat in the wilderness. They all drank from that spiritual Rock which followed them, and that Rock was Christ. To that people he gave the law, the oracles, the

priesthood and the tabernacle, and to them he spoke with an audible voice from Mt. Horeb. He was to them a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, thus guiding them by day and shielding them by night during the forty years in the wilderness.

The land of Canaan was still their land, or the land of promise; not only did the Lord promise the land to them, but he promised to bring them into that land. During the journey in the wilderness, when rebellious and stiff-necked the Lord dealt gently with them, often forgiving their offences through the mediatorship of Moses and Aaron.

When the promised land was sighted and the river Jordan reached, Joshua was appointed of the Lord to the leadership of Israel, and Moses died. Jordan was rolled back, and while the Levites bore up the ark of the covenant the Israelites passed through into the land that flowed with milk and honey. Then all men and male children born in the wilderness were circumcised, that they, the children of promise, might have the sign of faith that was in Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, their fathers. Then the manna of the wilderness ceased, and they ate it no more, but they ate of the old corn and fruit of the land. In Canaan the Lord did great things for that people; he gave them cities for which they did not labor, he gave them vineyards which they did not plant, he gave into their hands the nations of that land; in all of which he manifested that he was their God, and his law commanded that they should have no other gods before him. Yet, notwithstanding all his loving-kindnesses and tender mercies, and the commandments of his law, they were soon bowing down to the gods of the Amorites, having forgotten the God of their fathers, who had blessed them in the time of famine, delivered them out of their bondage and affliction in Egypt, gave them water and bread in the wilderness, brought them into the land of Canaan and there subdued their enemies. Joshua, fully aware of the situation, called all the people, their elders, judges and officers together, and they all presented themselves before the Lord. Then Joshua called to their remembrance all of the Lord's goodness and faithfulness to them, beginning with his dealings to Abraham. Then he exhorted them, saying, "Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord." In this saying he presented the vast difference between the living and true God and idols made of gold, silver, stone and wood by men, and also declared that because of the mercies of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob they should fear and serve him, putting away forever all false gods. But he said, "If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." If they had no respect or honor for the Lord, they could serve any false god, or idol, they might choose, as it made no difference who or what they worshiped among false gods, since all were alike dead, dumb, deaf, blind, helpless and of no avail. But as for Joshua and his house, they would serve the Lord; having in remembrance his manifold mercies they would not bow down to graven images. Then the people answered and said, "God forbid that we should forsake

the Lord, to serve other gods; for the Lord our God, he it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed." The preaching of Joshua seemed to arouse the Israelites out of a deep sleep into which they had fallen, and they remembered and acknowledged the Lord, and made promises and resolutions concerning the worship of God. Joshua, however, having perfect knowledge of them and of their forgetfulness and unfaithfulness, seemed afraid to credit their promises and declarations, knowing up to that very time they had been idolaters, hence in that condition could not worship the Lord. "No man can serve two masters," nor can any man serve the Lord and an idol at the same time. Therefore he said, "Ye cannot serve the Lord: for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. If ye forsake the Lord, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good. And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve the Lord. * * * Now therefore put away, said he, the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the Lord God of Israel. And the people said unto Joshua, The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey." These last sayings seemed to convince Joshua that the people were sincere, and that they had really in their heart turned away from idolatry. "So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance." Thus showing that the Israelites had been forgiven in the eyes of the law, but that forgiveness simply restored them to the rights and privileges of that nation as prescribed by the law.

We have herein covered much of the history of Israel, and our idea in so doing is to call special attention to the relation of the people addressed by Joshua to the Lord. They were the Lord's children in a legal sense, hence Joshua was not wooing and beseeching dead sinners, so to speak, to repent and give their hearts to God, but rather because they were the Lord's people and had received unbounded mercies at his hand, they should serve him and obey his law. They were the only nation that could depart from the Lord and his commandments, because he dealt with no other people as he dealt with Israel his chosen. So it is with spiritual Israel, no other nation has the God of salvation, other nations are not the people of God manifestly and joint-heirs with Christ; and as in the days of old, many, many of the Lord's children in this gospel day have departed from him, forsaking "the old ways" in removing the ancient landmarks of our fathers. In so doing they have made and set up gods of their own, or have borrowed the gods of the nations round about them, and are worshiping and serving them, and as Joshua said, if they find it evil to serve the Lord who called, blessed and redeemed them, let them choose their own gods, as all are alike vain and of no profit or help. It is as well now, however, to remind the children of God of his goodness and mercy in delivering us from bondage and death as it was in the days of Joshua, and to exhort them to return to the commandments and

statutes of the Lord. Predestination does not in any sense do away with exhortation, since the Lord predestinated exhortation to bring about his purposes in some directions, as much as he predestinated the preaching of the gospel to bring about his purposes in other directions. While a man continues in idolatry or sin of any kind he cannot serve the Lord, but when the goodness of God, which leadeth to repentance, is brought to his remembrance, whether through preaching, exhortation or otherwise, there will be a turning away from sin unto God. That man will then say, Let all serve idols who wish, but as for me, I will serve the Lord. Repentance does not mean weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth, but a turning away from sin, and the one thus turned will find communion with God. Christ is exalted a Prince and a Savior to give repentance to Israel and the forgiveness of sins. There is therefore no sin among the children of God from which there is no repentance and for which there is no forgiveness, but let it be remembered that repentance and forgiveness always came through the same channel, not from man, nor by man, but from Christ our blessed Redeemer. The man who feels that the Lord will not, cannot forgive his sins, because they are so vile and black, is a conscious sinner, hence a spiritual Israelite, and has forgotten that the blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God cleanseth us from all sin. If the Lord would forgive Saul of Tarsus, the thief on the cross and the woman of Samaria, may we not all, though no better by nature, hope for repentance and the forgiveness of sins?

Hoping that what we have written may prove in some measure at least a blessing to our sister, we leave the subject. K.

ORDINATIONS.

BROTHER Preston Staggs was ordained deacon at Fort Worth Primitive Baptist Church, Saturday before the third Sunday in February, 1910, the following named ministers and deacons composing the presbytery: Elders Asa Howard and W. V. S. Allen, deacons C. Y. Osteen and D. F. West, from Denton Creek Church, deacons T. Blevins and J. B. Honeycutt, from Liberty Church, and Elder J. M. Smelser and deacon Sam Selvidge, of the Fort Worth Church.

Elder J. M. Smelser was chosen to preside over the council as moderator, and brother E. Holt served as clerk.

The moderator announced the presbytery organized and ready for business. The candidate was presented, and in consideration of the propriety and full qualifications of our dear brother being satisfactory, the presbytery proceeded as follows: ordination prayer by Elder Asa Howard, followed by laying on of hands of presbytery, charge given by Elder W. V. S. Allen, the presbytery extending the right hand of fellowship with all the church, amidst a warm feeling of great joy. How good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace. Brother Preston Staggs is well known among the Old School Baptists of this country, and highly esteemed as a faithful, exemplary member, whose praise is in all the churches of our correspondence, an efficient Bible scholar and well versed in ecclesiastical history, a subscriber of the SIGNS for many years and a defender of the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, the unlimited sovereignty of God and the absolute predestination of all things. Our brother is a close kinsman of the late Elder Wilson Thompson. Elder J. M. Smelser, late from Greenfield, Ind., is the pastor of Fort Worth Church, and is a sound and gifted expounder of the holy Scriptures. The church and minister are in line with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, grounded in the love of the truth steadfastly.

By request I send this notice for publication.

ASA HOWARD.

KELLER, Texas, Feb. 21, 1910.

NOTICE.

IF the Lord will, we expect preaching by the pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., at 10:45 a. m. and 2:30 p. m. the third Sunday in March (20th), 1910. We shall be glad to welcome any who can meet with us.

L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Sarah Elizabeth Kidwell, my dear companion, passed away Dec. 9th, 1909. She was the daughter of the late Thomas Thomas, of the city of Washington, and was born in the State of Virginia about seventy-three years ago. She lost her mother when but a little child, and was reared by her oldest sister, who died several years ago. She was next to the youngest of quite a large family, and now the youngest is the sole survivor of that once happy family, and next to myself she feels that inexpressible loneliness known to poor, broken-hearted relatives, and that sister is now left the only one to represent a family who once was so well known and loved. Dear brethren, how can I speak of these memories without a tear with so much crowding the mind and heart? We were married by Elder W. M. Smoot, in South Washington, Dec. 21st, 1880, and for all that time we lived in each other's confidence with that tie that is stronger than death. How much might be said here of such a relationship, but space will not allow. She united with the church in Washington about thirty years ago, and was baptized by Elder F. A. Chick, and after we were married united by letter with the church at Bethlehem, near Manassas, in Prince William County, Va., where she finished her course, to receive the crown that her God giveth at that day. We talked much of that day for several months just before her departure, as we felt our departure was near at hand. She was sound in the faith of God's elect, and although she was not much of a talker, I could see she was trying to keep me from being alarmed, yet I was, for she seemed to be failing fast. The day she fell she went upstairs and arranged all her clothing, in which she wished to be laid away, in a conspicuous manner in every detail, then called me to dinner, of which we partook in our usual manner, and I was out of the house not above three minutes, I suppose, when I heard, as I thought, a groan, and I ran in and found her lying prone in a middle door. I carried her to a couch and asked her if she were hurt. She answered no. I asked her if she could lie there until I called a neighbor's wife. She answered yes, and did so. We saw that the whole of the right side was completely paralyzed. Soon she became aware of the fact, and as we laid her on the bed she said, "Done." I asked her, "Done what?" She replied, "Done toiling." God help me, brethren, I cannot say more; I feel I am nearly done myself. I am left now in my old days broken up and crippled, feeling it would be far bettter to depart, where sorrow can never reach me more, but I do not wish to murmur, and desire above all things to be enabled to wait patiently till my change comes. Her lonely sister and myself are now left to mourn our loss, together with our little band at Bethlehem. Elder Badger was very kind to me, and preached the unsearchable riches of Christ in a meetinghouse known historically as Paynes Church, after which we laid her in our little plot there, and after a solemn prayer at the grave we turned away, to see her face no more.

Dear ones, pray for me, that my strength fail not.

ELI T. KIDWELL.

SWEETNAM, Va.

Lucy A. Beene, wife of W. O. Beene, was born Dec. 9th, 1877, and departed this life Feb. 4th, 1906. Her maiden name was Welch. She was married to W. O. Beene August 10th, 1893, and united with the Salem Old School Baptist Church Saturday before the first Sunday in May, 1897. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and the predestination of all things. All her trust was in God, and she had no confidence in the flesh. She was almost an invalid for ten years, but she bore her afflictions with the patience that none but God can give. She said to me in her last moments, "Do the best you can with the children; I am not afraid to leave them with you, for I believe that God will be with you." O brethren, it was a time of joy and sorrow; the ties of nature bound us so closely that after nature I could weep tears of sorrow, but in spirit I could weep tears of joy for the gracious presence of our God with her as she crossed the chilly Jordan of death; he soothed all her sorrows, healed all her wounds, made her happy in her dying moments, and if I could pass away as she did, I feel I am ready at any time. She left a husband, four children and a host of relatives and friends to mourn their loss, but our loss is her eternal gain. A few moments before she expired she said to me, "Farewell till we meet again; it will not be long." Brethren, remember me when all is well with you. W. O. BEENE.

FREESTONE, Texas, Feb. 4, 1910.

Vincent Samuel Northcutt was born Jan. 4th, 1847, in Delaware County, Ind., and departed this life Feb. 3rd, 1910, aged 63 years and 29 days. His father moved with his family to Carroll County, Ind., his mother having died before. He was again united in marriage, to Miss Angeline Sines, and to that union was born one son. They moved near Falls City, Nebr., lived there about three years, then moved from there to near Colby, Kans., and lived there two years. In the autumn of 1888 he moved to Mt. Vernon, Wash., where he lived until his death. His illness was stomach and liver trouble, with which he was afflicted for several months, but was only confined to the house about two months; he bore it all with christian fortitude. He left to mourn, a devoted wife, one son, one granddaughter and many friends. All was done for him that loving hands and kind friends could do, but the cold hand of death could not be stayed. He never joined any church,

but believed in the doctrine of salvation by grace as the Scriptures teach, and dearly loved the preaching and writings of the Old Baptists. He had a hope in Christ, and while on his deathbed regretted he had not been baptized like all the true followers of Jesus, but said he always felt unworthy and unfit to be a member of the church. He left every evidence that all was well with him, and was perfectly submissive to the Master's will. I had been acquainted with Mr. Northcutt for six years, and I never knew a better man; there was nothing boastful or overbearing about him, but he had a quiet and loving disposition. During the past year I had from some cause felt drawn nearer and nearer to him, and I regret that I did not visit him oftener. His honest and upright walk through life won for him the love and esteem of all who knew him. After he was confined to his bed he delighted to talk of the faith of God's children, and after he was quite weak he spoke about the old hymns, how beautiful they are, and said it seemed we could not get new ones to equal them. He requested that the old hymns be sung at his funeral, and they sang a few of them, such as, "How tedious and tiresome the hours," "Nearer, my God, to thee," and others. Elder J. P. Rogers, of Bellingham, Wash., spoke comforting words, taking for his text 2 Corinthians v., after which his body was laid to rest in Pleasant Ridge Cemetery to await the resurrection. R. E. BEATY.

Marion S. Allen was born in Putnam County, Ind., July 8th, 1846, died at Oneca, Fla., Nov. 28th, 1909. The cause of his death was sad indeed; he was helping his two sons grubbing out some trees when a tree fell on him. He lived two days, suffering great pain, but was willing to go, said it was the Lord's will. He united with the Little Cedar Church of Old School Baptists, in Floyd County, Iowa, in 1866, and was baptized by Elder J. B. Burch. Brother Allen was twice married, his first wife dying many years ago, leaving no children. He married his second wife, a Mrs. Johnson, and by that union three sons were born, she dying in Dakota several years ago. He was a faithful member, dying strong in the faith. He left to mourn, three sons, two stepsons, two brothers and two sisters. He was here on a visit to his relatives last September. The writer had been acquainted with him for more than thirty years. May God comfort those he left behind, is the humble prayer of the writer. E. A. NORTON.

HAMPTON, Iowa.

Mrs. Charlotte Hill was born Dec. 9th, 1825, at Bloomingrove, Morrow Co., Ohio, died at her son's home, in Kalkaska County, Mich., Feb. 10th, 1910, aged 84 years, 2 months and 1 day. She was a daughter of Salmen and Anna Harding, and was the last of eleven children. She leaves one son and two daughters. She was married to Jacob Hill in July, 1858; they moved to Kalkaska County, Mich., in 1872. Her husband died in 1889. She had been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for a great many years.

S. E. HILL.

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Because of the distressing information contained in orders for my Christian Science pamphlet respecting the great injury being done by this shameful fraud even among our dear Baptist people, I have tried in this second little work to expose it from a new point of view. Those not aware of recent developments at the headquarters of these people will be astonished almost to the point of doubting well-proven facts. I will mail two copies of this last sketch for ten cents (silver), or one copy and a copy of Christian Science and the Bible for ten cents. The price is not for profit, but to cover the bare expense. Hundreds of the first pamphlets were given away, and others placed where many could read them. If any good results from this effort to shield our brethren from this new delusion, the credit will be due our kind periodicals for calling attention to it.

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SILAS H. DURAND.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 78. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1910. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE VIRTUOUS WOMAN.

(Proverbs xxxi. 10-31.)

(No. 1.)

"WHO can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies." This wonderful question, with its wonderful answer, giving a description of the wonderful woman, closes the Proverbs of Solomon, which are the words of Wisdom to her children. This virtuous woman is the church of God presented under the figure of a housewife, whose Husband is Christ, and who is the mother of all the children of God. (Gal. iv. 26.) All true wisdom and instruction and all the words of understanding are with her, to give to her household, causing them to "receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity." These proverbs, in which the true and perfect gospel church is presented under the figure of a virtuous woman, a faithful wife and a wise and loving mother, are most appropriately placed at the close of all these proverbs of Solomon, as the fullness and crowning glory of them all. In various parts of the Bible the church is spoken of under the figure of a woman in some of her relations in life, as mother, sister, wife, friend, queen, daughter, but here she is represented as a housewife, having the care of children and the charge over all the household.

This sweet and solemn and sublime subject is introduced by a question, in which there is a partial description of the woman sought, while she is thus set apart in the mind as most rare and precious, and of infinite value: "Who can find a virtuous woman?" No one who is looking for merely natural excellence. Absolute perfection cannot be found among the daughters of Eve. But it is acknowledged that "many daughters have done virtuously," and we are not left to question the existence of natural goodness and virtue among those who are dear to us in all the sweet relations of life; but we are told that this one excelleth them all; not as one woman may excel another in natural qualities, but as the reality excels the type. The question, "Who can find?" does not intimate that this virtuous woman cannot be found, but calls attention at once to her rare and superior qualities and her inestimable value. But throughout this wonderful description it is clearly indicated

that this woman does exist, and shall be found by every one who desires to find her. The word "virtuous" has here its highest, broadest, deepest meaning, expressing absolute excellence, purity, chastity and loveliness in every relation in life, and thus by the use of this one word the sacred truth is declared that the church of God is all fair, without fault, or spot, or blemish, in the sight of God; "the perfection of beauty." He who finds this virtuous woman, and he only, will know her infinite value, and he will forever praise the Lord that his feet were turned toward her house, and that he was ever brought to experience the blessedness of her love and fellowship, and to feel himself under her sacred care. Truly will he find that her price is far above rubies. Nothing so important, so worthy to engage the attention, can be found in all the world. One who has found the church of God well knows that she is above all price. When engaged in the contemplation of her excellence and beauty, and in the enjoyment of her blessings, he can think of no gold or jewels or worldly honors that can bear comparison with them. He is constrained to say out of a full heart, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple."

"There would I find a settled rest,
While others go and come;
No more a stranger or a guest,
But like a child at home."

This excellence and beauty is not found in any man, nor in any number of men who compose the church of God, but is entirely in the dear Redeemer. In him, and in all the order and ordinances which he has commanded and established, are all the perfections of the church, and to him belongs all the praise.

"The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil." Three times in the course of this description of the virtuous woman her husband is referred to. The husband provides what is necessary for the family, and it is the province of the wife and the mother to arrange and dispense the provisions thus supplied and brought to her hand. If the housewife should use these supplies carelessly and extravagantly the husband would be obliged to obtain others which would not have been needed if she had used them wisely. According to the customs of that age he would be under the necessity of taking spoil from his enemies to supply the lack in his own household. But this shall never be so in the church of the dear Redeemer, the Jerusalem which is from above, "which is the mother of us all." This heavenly Husband will never be obliged to take spoil from his enemies in order to supply a deficiency in his church caused by her inattention or lack of wisdom. I speak of the church as shown in the scriptural pattern, absolutely perfect, and not as seen in the world, often imperfect and faulty. His heart doth safely trust in this perfect church, confident that she will carefully and wisely use all of his gospel provisions given abundantly to her. Neither the husband nor the wife, neither Christ nor the church, will ever have to call upon the world for help, nor will they ever receive help of any kind from any man. Everything that will ever be needed for salvation, for the gathering of the scattered sheep, for healing the sick and for the soothing of the weak and crying children, with every other need, will be found in the abundant supplies provided by the Husband and applied by the housewife. Well may his heart safely trust in her, for they are one,

and his wisdom is always ready to her hand.

Thus "she will do him good, and not evil, all the days of her life." His name will never be dishonored through her lack of prudence and discretion. How dishonoring it would be to the husband if the wife should proclaim that there was lack of provisions and power in their house for time of need, and that there were things which they desire to accomplish which could not be done without help from men in the world. There are many professing to speak for both Christ and the church, who declare that the salvation of souls depends upon worldly conditions and circumstances. How dishonoring to the name of Jesus! But the true church, all who are taught of the Lord, will not do this infinitely wise, powerful and loving Husband that evil. How honoring to the name of the dear Savior is a church that stands firmly in the doctrine of God and walks faithfully in the order of the gospel. The doctrine of salvation by grace, of election and predestination, of the absolute sovereignty of God, how honoring to the name of Jesus are these sweet truths thus held in the heart and lived in the daily life. This virtuous woman bears the name of her husband, and could she do anything that would bring evil upon her own name, it would attach equally to his. But that is impossible in the true church, as she appears in her perfection in the New Testament. She is under the immediate control and direction of the Holy Spirit, and therefore she will do her husband good, and not evil, all the days of her life. We can see no church in the world, perhaps, which is absolutely perfect; that perfection is only seen in Christ, and it is only in Christ that the apostles can present any man perfect. In the church, as set forth in the commands and doctrine of Jesus, and in the order and ordinances established by the apostles, true perfection is seen by the faith of God's people, and all quickened souls desire and strive to attain unto it in their walk. So the apostle says of Christ, "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."—Col. i. 28.

"She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands." Wool and flax were at that time the principal articles from which cloth was made. When the tabernacle was to be made every one whom his Spirit made willing brought blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen; "and all the women that were wise hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, both of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine linen." This was for use in the tabernacle, and also for garments for the priests when ministering in the holy place. As all these things pertaining to the worldly sanctuary, with all its work and ordinances of divine service, were patterns of things in the gospel heavens, we may see the church presented in these figures, as the mother of a household, working willingly with her hands to provide what is necessary for the clothing of her family and for the proper service of her house. The church of God does not hold the doctrine that works are necessary to salvation, for nothing that a sinner can do can possibly take away his sins. But though good works can never effect the salvation of the sinner, yet salvation, when experienced through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, will surely cause good works. When one has been raised up together with Christ from under the condemnation of the law, he

will "walk in newness of life." From the time of that experience of divine life he will desire to do good works. This woman is the church as a whole, including every member, and yet she is presented under this lovely figure as having the care of every one, and authority over all. By one spirit all are baptized into one body; one spirit moves all, and in this sweet work there can be no unwilling workers. She "worketh willingly with her hands," and maintains good works throughout her household, yet her work seems to be principally in making and putting on clothing. This really covers all the ground, for to walk worthily in the order of the gospel is all that can be done. This is to put on her beautiful garments, which Jerusalem is graciously commanded to do. To walk in Christ is to put on Christ; to walk in love is to put on love; and so by this beautiful figure this virtuous woman, the church, is showing forth in her life and conversation the praises of her Husband. In obedience to his loving commands she is working willingly in wool and flax, preparing suitable garments for her household, in which they appear as "the perfection of beauty."

"She is like the merchants' ships, she bringeth her food from afar." A very important truth is presented by the use of this peculiar figure. The merchants' ships bring from distant lands such delicious fruits and other products as cannot be obtained at home. This faithful and thoughtful wife and mother is well aware that nothing which grows on earthly soil can answer the needs of her household; they are ever hungering after righteousness, and no righteousness can be found in all this world which they can feed upon. This woman, whose whole care is for the well-being of her family, is ever on the watch to see that no food is placed before them which grows in this world, for she knows that, although it may present great attractions to the flesh, it will be injurious to them. They would often, like little children, put forth their hands to take the doctrine of salvation by the works of the creature, and would try to eat it, but she sees to it that the good and wholesome food, which she brings from far away in Immanuel's land, is placed before them. The doctrine of salvation by grace is always good for them, and is always pleasant after it is eaten, and it is only when there seems to be a famine of hearing the word of the Lord that they are liable to try to eat that which is not good. Their true and proper food comes from afar, even from heaven, and no place nearer than that will furnish one particle of food which is good for the soul. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life;" "This is the bread which cometh down from heaven;" "She bringeth her food from afar."

"She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens." The mother has the care of the whole family on her mind, and feels the responsibility of all the work which is to be done, and she will see that they are up in time. It is yet night, and darkness still covers the earth, and some of the household would be glad to lie longer in bed; but the faithful, virtuous woman is up in time, notwithstanding the darkness, and has the meat ready to give to each one, and a portion to the maidens, who are those servants who wait continually upon her. The church has night seasons, when the activities of the day have in a manner ceased, and there seems to be but little manifestation of spiritual life, although the meetings and work continue. World-

ly occupations and interests engross the minds of many, so that it seems, with regard to spiritual things, that most of the members are asleep. But the mother-feeling of care and anxiety for the welfare of the household is still alive, and is made known in sweet authority, and the church hears and feels the mother call: "Let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." "Let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation." "Awake thou that sleepest." "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness." "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." Be diligent in business; "fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." Thus the mother call is heard, and by the same words by which she calls them to arise she gives them meat. The gospel food she gives them in the word of God, and by that heavenly food the poor, hungry souls are helped and nourished and strengthened, and prepared unto every good word and work.

"She considereth a field, and buyeth it; with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard." Whatever belongs to her rightfully, and all that is needed by her, this careful and faithful woman is represented as obtaining and securing for her household. She is now, in this figure, under the legal dispensation, and all the gospel perfections we are considering are shown only in type, and appear only to the eye of faith. In the Song of Solomon the church is complaining that she has been made the keeper of the vineyards, but her own vineyard she has not kept. Again she is saying to her Beloved: "Let us get up early to the vineyards: let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grapes appear." The field which was needed for a gospel vineyard must be a gospel field, for this kind of vine will not grow in earthly soil, could not flourish under the legal dispensation. It must be "a field which the Lord hath blessed," like that which the faith of Isaac recognized when he smelled the garment that Jacob wore. The church while under the law felt all this need, and she considered well the field that would answer the purpose, and then she bought it, giving in exchange all her legal riches, all the earthly fields she possessed while under the law. In this gospel field she planteth a vineyard with the fruit of her hands. Moses in his prayer (Psalms xc.) expressed the desire of all the people of God under the law when he said, "Establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it." All of the legal work they had been engaged in had a sweet spiritual meaning, and under the gospel the fruit of this virtuous woman's hands now appears in the vineyard she has planted. Here in the tender grapes, and in the new wine of the kingdom of our God, is seen the gospel fruit of all the legal works. This vineyard is necessary to the gospel church. It is the fruit of her hands while working under the law which is now established upon her in this new gospel dispensation. This field is altogether a spiritual field, and has been carefully considered during all the legal dispensation. It is not a field in the world, outside of the church, but is entirely within her sacred limits, inclosed by the walls of salvation. The delight of this dear mother is to cause all of her household to enjoy the precious fruit of this vineyard she has planted with the

fruit of her hands, and this fruit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance and every grace of the Spirit.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March, 1910.

CHAPTER I.

"THE heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard."—Psalms xix. 1-3.

(Continued from page 172.)

The Lord said by the prophet Isaiah: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isaiah xlvi. 9, 10. Since he has told us to remember these things, and that because God is God, and there is none else, I shall try to speak briefly of them in this and the few succeeding chapters of this book, and indeed it will be briefly told, for time would fail me had I a mind to speak of all there is in my text, for to me this Scripture embraces everything that one could think of; but I shall try to speak of some of the types and shadows as they appear to me, and of the experiences of God's children in connection therewith. We are told that "all Scripture is given by inspiration," that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," and, dear reader, let us ever have this in view when reading or meditating upon it. We are also informed that, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope;" but I wish to state that these things are remembered in two ways, by two classes of people, and there are but the two classes considered in the Scriptures: the natural man and the spiritual man, and one of these has only a natural, or historical, understanding of all the incidents narrated in the Scriptures, while the other has a spiritual, or experimental, understanding of them. The prophet Isaiah says, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" None but those who are born of the Spirit have ever understood these things. The word of inspiration belongs only to the kingdom of heaven; it is Zion's book, and none but the subjects of this better and higher kingdom have any use for this sacred truth; it applies to none other, and none other love it, and in order to know the truth one must first know God, whom to know is eternal life, for God is truth itself.

Now let us turn to the book called "Hebrews," eleventh chapter, and read: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." For fear some one might not understand how man can come into possession of this faith, let us turn to Ephesians ii. 8, and see what Paul says about it: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." So we see that faith is the gift of God; then, vain man, no longer boast of your ability, for even if you had ability (which you have not) you could not attain unto faith, for it is "not of works."

Now let us turn back to Hebrews, and to our subject: "For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. By faith Abel offered unto

God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he, being dead, yet speaketh. By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house," &c. Then Paul mentions a great many other things of which we have a record in the Old Testament, such as the going forth of Abraham, and his sojourn in a strange land, and Moses' choice to suffer affliction with the people of God, the deliverance of the children of Israel through the Red Sea as by dry land, the falling of the walls of Jericho, the saving of the harlot Rahab, all of which was by faith, that faith which is the gift of God, all of which declare the glory of God. Then Paul adds: "And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets; who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens," &c. O how evident does this faith appear, how powerful is faith in God, how necessary it is for God's little, helpless ones to have it, for without faith it is impossible to please God. Then faith is the substance of things hoped for, it is that gift of believing that he is God, and that beside him there is none else, and that he will do all his pleasure; that he will fulfill every purpose which he purposed in himself before the world began, and when he has put it in one's heart to believe that he will do a certain thing, that belief or faith is the very substance of the thing hoped for, for the preparation of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is of the Lord, but it is not everything we look for or expect that is by faith, it may be at times of the flesh, and comes to naught.

After Paul remembered all of these former things of old he speaks these beautiful words: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set [yes, it is a set or fixed race] before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." Then Christ, the second person in the triune God, is the author of this faith and the finisher as well; then with Paul and the prophet Isaiah we can remember all these former things of old, how His love and fatherly protection have been manifested in his care for his chosen people in every age of the world, how that he has been with them in the day of their prosperity and in the night of their trouble. What a wonderful cloud of witnesses, all being dead, yet speaketh, declare his glory and shew his handywork.

All of the following is scriptural proof why we should remember the former things of old, both as typical and antitypical, and I will add here that I verily believe all these miraculous things recorded in both the Old and New Testaments did actually occur as therein described, such as the creation, the flood,

the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt and all the plagues connected therewith, the fiery furnace, the den of lions into which Daniel was cast, &c., and are not mere metaphors, as some would have us believe, and when we can see the antitype of these things in our own experience they declare the glory of God indeed to us. Note the following Scriptures: "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations."—Deut. xxxii. 7. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not."—Eccl. xii. 1. "Remember Lot's wife."—Luke xvii. 32. "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down; yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion."—Psalms cxxxvii. 1. "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."—John xiv. 26.

(To be continued.)

WOODSTOCK, Ont., Dec. 18, 1909.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I feel a great hesitation in calling you brother, as I often fear I am not a brother truly, but only by profession, which amounts to nothing. To be a real brother I must have the same Father, and be born of God, and O, is such the case with me, or am I one only in name and not in reality? How hard I have tried to find this out, but all my searching is vain; it is beyond my reach, and can only be revealed to me by the Spirit of God, and that knowledge or revelation seems most of the time far away from me, I cannot attain to or reach it by any effort I can employ. If I read the inspired word, the Bible, it is a sealed book, though I must say many of the doubts, fears, complainings and cries of the children of God there expressed seem to meet my case, and that gives me a little comfort. I was reading yesterday about some who worshiped the Savior, and a new light seemed to come upon me, for I found that true worship consisted in a knowledge of our own helpless state, and also a knowledge of where our help lies, as it is said of the leper that he worshiped Jesus by acknowledging that He had power to cure him, and so also the Syrophenician woman, of whom it is said she worshiped him, saying, Lord, help me. How different from worldly ideas of worship, yes, and from my own, too, as I have felt that worship consisted in praising his name, &c., but as I read the inspired record I find it just consists in knowing our helpless condition and crying to God for mercy; here is the true worship, the worship in spirit and truth, and this does away with all boasting and all conceit of men, and brings one down to be a little child.

Dear brother Ker, I would like to hear what you think of the words, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." How can any mortal's prayer avail anything, only as it is in accord with the will of God? and then it is the will of God that avails, though I acknowledge that will may be manifested by the prayer that is in accordance with it.

I hope I love to see brethren dwelling together in love and unity, but I feel that unity must be founded on a unity of faith. I have met many that I believe are subjects of God's grace whom I would not like to see members of our church. I love the order of God's house, and to know that each one is established in the doctrine of God our Savior, and not driven to and fro by every wind of doctrine. We should be kind to each other, but we

should be faithful, too. The Savior says if one neglects to hear the church let him be as an heathen; that is, accursed, or laid aside from the church. My mind has been led to dwell a little on the broad and narrow ways. The Savior says, Broad is the way and wide the gate that leadeth to destruction, and many go in thereat, but strait the gate and narrow the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. To my mind this applies especially to this age of the world. How many of God's people seem to be taken up with the world and worldly things, to the exclusion of spiritual things, and I include myself in the number building on sandy foundation, for I believe it applies to a worldly walk and conversation as well as to building on false doctrines and principles. We do not seek first the kingdom of God, O no, but our own comfort and ease; and if in doing so, though we may gain all our heart's desire in the world, what are we profited? we lose our own soul, the enjoyment of God's presence and love, and the love and esteem of the truly spiritual in the church. We may think we are gaining very much, but we are not, for the joys and comforts of the gospel are to be prized more than all worldly wealth. O how eagerly many of us have striven after wealth and worldly pleasure, but the words of the apostle come up before me as a warning: "They that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition," yet I think he says to be diligent in business, or, perhaps, not slothful in business. What for? That ye may have to give to him that needeth. Do we work and be diligent in business with that object in view? Dear brother, I know that has not been my object, but rather my own ease and comfort, and yet was not the apostle right? Did he not know what was the right object for a christian to have in view? I am now getting well on in years, being in my sixty-fifth year, and as I look over the past I think I can see that even from a natural standpoint one can get much more real comfort out of this world by giving than receiving, and by being generous and charitable than in being miserly or grasping, and how much more when we look at it from a higher standpoint, even from the word of inspiration; but unless we are given a heart to do these things from the love of God, and a love to our fellow-beings, it is of no avail. I quite agreed with you that one may be a subject of grace and not be a disciple of Jesus. O how few there are who are followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. I know I have not been one, though a professed follower for nearly thirty-five years, but O how barren and unfruitful I have been.

Jan. 9, 1910.—I wrote the foregoing some weeks ago, but did not feel at liberty to send it to you, as it seemed so worthless, but this morning I have some meditations on faith, which I feel constrained to put on paper, if the Lord will keep my mind in the same feeling, so that I can feel in words the thoughts that have been running in my mind, and the subject has been faith, which is, the apostle says, the gift of God. A gift, we know, is not a reward for work done, or a recompense in any manner for anything performed, and so when faith is given us it makes us feel we are very unworthy of it, and yet it creates a feeling of love and gratitude to God, and love to the brethren. The apostle says, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," so when faith is given us to believe in God, we

have something in our hearts more than mere imagination, it is a divine reality, an evidence that we cannot and do not want to throw away, of things not seen, of those things we have been hoping and longing for, but which we knew we were not in possession of, and then we realize as the apostle says, how the world was framed even by the word of God, so that the things we see were not made "of things which do appear;" that is, were created, made, out of nothing. The natural mind cannot understand this, and O how much questioning there has been in my own mind on this wonderful question, and how many infidel thoughts arise in my mind, and how gladly would I get rid of them, but cannot until faith comes, and then all doubts and fears flee away and I find myself in the enjoyment of the promises of the gospel, but O how few are these seasons and how far apart. I think I can say in truth that I long to understand and enjoy the Scriptures, and to feel that God reigns and is the Creator and Sovereign of the universe, but when I am in doubt and in the dark will some one tell me how I can get into the light and into belief of the truth? If there is a way only by faith, "which is the gift of God," then I must confess my ignorance, and O how I have prayed and begged that the Lord would lead me out of the land of darkness and doubt into the clear light of the gospel, He who sees the secrets of all hearts knows. I have thought of Noah, who it seems at that day was all alone in the whole world as a true worshiper of God, and during all the years he was building the ark how he must have suffered persecution and trial, being taunted and ridiculed by a vain and wicked world, but the faith God gave him never faltered, and he went on working and toiling until his work was finished, and then God caused them all to go into the ark, with all he purposed to save, and then the wonderful thing happened which made him safe from all the storm of wrath that was about to burst upon the world: "the Lord shut him in." If we are shut in the ark of God's covenant of grace all the storms of wrath will beat in vain; yes, and all the storms of time and the temptations of the devil, and it seems to me worse than all, the allurements of the world, will assail us in vain, for though we may go down into the deep, and all the waves of temptation, the depravity of our nature, which is as deep as hell, and the billows of infidelity, doubt and fear seem as if they would overwhelm us, yet the ark rises to the top of the waves, and there is a window in the top of the ark, which I think may be likened to hope, that always points upward, and is never shut. Abraham had faith given him, so that he went out from his kindred and his father's house, not knowing whither he went. O how often I feel that I know not whither I am drifting, a stranger in a strange land, nothing that I can call my own, knowing we only hold all we have at God's command. It is said of Moses, "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." O the power of faith to make such a choice! He had all the pleasures the world could supply, but he turned his back on them all to join the poor, afflicted children of God; rather suffer affliction and be persecuted, than enjoy the worldly pleasures that were offered him. Why could he not have said, I will serve God in secret, and do what I can to alleviate the bondage of these poor slaves, and probably I can do more for

them if I stay where I am? How plausible such reasoning, and yet faith said, No, you cannot do that, you must give up all these worldly pleasures and prospects and join yourself to the poor, afflicted, persecuted people of God; no halfway course, you must be bold and faithful. Faith never takes a halfway course, but if it guides and directs us we will never consider what the world will say, or what our friends will say, but, like dear sister McKinney said, it will be the words of the Savior that will stand: "What is that to thee? Follow thou me." If we could always follow the Savior what a different walk we would have, what different actions, for we would always be willing and glad to go to the house of God; would leave our worldly affairs, and everything else that hindered us, and not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, and may I not say now as the manner of many is? How little it takes to keep us away. We must not lose any worldly advantage for the sake of the cause, and then if there are any other worldly pleasures, may I not go to them? and then the children must have some amusement, and why cannot I provide it for them, and not let them go from home? Ah, I am afraid you do not let faith have her say, but rather your carnal reasoning. Faith says, "Touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." I believe we should not walk after the world, but in all things show that we are followers of Jesus, and not of the world; but alas, how little do I do so, and therefore fear I ought not to write on these things, but I have only written because I felt constrained to do so.

Unworthily your brother,

R. SOATES.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Dec. 16, 1909.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—Once more I feel a desire to address you, and I feel that if the Lord sees fit to guide my pen as he has my mind for a few short hours back, it will prove of enjoyment to you, but I am made to feel more sensibly than ever that if my pen is guided by this selfish and self-filled life, no comfort or pleasure can come to you from it. I do not know that I could tell you the period of time my mind has been in a turmoil over some things. At times it would seem settled, and then would take another start, if not along the same chain, on another, and I would try to break some of the links, but I do feel once more that the Lord has brought me out on his side. O that I could always be at his feet, and not roam so far astray. I do not know that I can tell you all of these, my distresses, and I do not know that they would be profitable if I could, but of some of them I must speak, to let you know where I have been. I fear that possibly at times I have questioned, Is religion real and sincere, or is it only a myth handed down from some ancient time, that now has come to be a belief? Who knows that there ever was a Savior? And if others know it, how do I know it? Is not the man who believes there is a God, and that he rules the universe, leaving out all religion, after all right? Then I would try to smother the fire, and feel ashamed of such thoughts in one who had been favored with such great certainty that there is an overruling Hand. Then up would come this thought, Do I really know these proofs as I have felt them to be? Were they any more than any other sect of people might have had? How do I know that Christ died for an elect people? I would read in the word for some proof of it, and sometimes I

would close the book with a feeling that I did not know one thing about it; then again I would read the Bible and it all would seem plain to me. Why could I not tell it as I saw it?

But I must leave out so many, many things, or this letter will be entirely too long. I have felt that I had no jealousy lurking in me as some had, and then have had such a shaking up that I have found it in me in many terrible forms, and beside this, so much self-will and envy, finding fault with others, strife and confusion. I have been striving to overcome for the past few days, and all the time failing. On Sunday Elder Coulter took his text in the thirty-eighth chapter of Isaiah, I think the sixteenth verse, and read other parts of the chapter. I sat there, as I have much of the time for so long, without seeming to have a hearing ear, but rather with a spirit to find something to overthrow what I was hearing, yet I felt that I knew the things he said were true. While he was speaking I had a view of a prisoner of hope, and I thought of a natural figure in this way: Now suppose a man had been put into a vault, or some other dark place, where it was impossible to ever see one ray of sunlight when it was closed up, and the keeper of that place, for some reason, for an instant should open the door, and into it should shine the full daylight, or rather the real sunshine, and before the prisoner could collect his thoughts the door was again closed; he could, I am sure, only think: If I ever get out of here I will be in that great light; and he will feel as though he must beseech the keeper to give him light, even though he must be shut in. And with these thoughts I could see how in this tenement of clay, in which we groan, being burdened, we do at times see the rays of light from above, if only for a second, which are more than the sunshine, and we know it is the light from heaven. Then how we do desire and long for another glimpse, and think, Could we but leave this earthly tabernacle, we would forever be in such realms of light, (how glorious!) and we can but ask for more of the light to cheer us on our lonely way.

Well, from Sunday on, my way has been one of sadness and gloom; I have been trying to overcome obstacles that were in my way, not feeling that I could talk to any one, and almost fearing that visitors might come in and I should be compelled to talk. This I have all the time been trying to overcome. When I retired last night I was very tired, and it seemed that my strength was almost gone, but there was a strong desire to overcome my indwelling sins; but when I awoke they were still there. I sighed, because I did not know what to do; I seemed so very helpless. Then it seemed as though it was spoken to me in a low voice, I will undertake for you; and with this came a lightening of the burden, and comfort, yet all was not clear to me. All the time I was being led to see that I must set my house in order, and I thought of this thirty-eighth chapter of Isaiah, and I went and read it, or a portion of it, and it seemed that I could see how confused was all my house. There dwelt in it hatred, envy, jealousy, contempt, backbiting, criticism, self-will, stroungheadedness, all, all in wild confusion. Now in order to set the house in order, all these must be purged out, and I had no control of them. Then again came these words, I will undertake for you, and somehow they seemed to fit into their place in my heart, if indeed they have place in me. I expect that these evils will appear again at another time, but for the present there is rest.

After dinner, I thought I would read the thirty-eighth chapter, and I had such rejoicing that I could not stop until the close of the forty-fourth chapter, and in it all I found more and more comfort. The twenty-second verse of the forty-fourth chapter was the last that I read, and it was much to me: "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." My sorrow has flown, and I wish I could tell all the joy that I have seen in the last few hours. After I closed the book, the words came to me: "To him that overcometh." I could not think of the rest of it, so I took the concordance, and I found wonderful promises connected with those words. But again came the thought, Your strength failed, but Christ undertook for you. And so all these promises are in Christ, for in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. But special comfort comes to me in the words, He is the vine, we are the branches. So through him do I rejoice, and through him I overcome. And, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna." So through him do I rejoice, and once more feel to say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." That I may never question or doubt these great matters again, is my earnest desire, but ere the going down of the sun this day such doubts may come again, for I am prone to wander. Now I am singing, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee."

I thought that I might be able to tell you something about this season, but have failed to tell the half of it, but I have written so much that I fear you will be wearied in the reading. Surely the Lord has been gracious to me all my life. O that I could praise him more for his great care and protection over me. I can say with Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am." There is no merit in one of my own deeds.

Accept this from one who would love to know you all. I am wonderfully blessed in knowing as many of you as I do.

Unworthily,

MARY HILL TERRY.

BALTIMORE, Maryland.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I send inclosed what seems to me a very excellent letter from Elder Keene, and I have his consent to forward it to you for publication, if you deem it best.

Your brother in hope,

J. T. ROWE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, Dec. 7, 1909.

ELDER JOSHUA T. ROWE—MY DEAR BROTHER:—It was gratifying to my heart to hear from you. I have been for some months very much exercised before the Lord over many things. The conflicts of my soul have been sharp and heavy and prolonged, and I find at times that I am weary, cast down; I am wishing for a cessation of hostilities with the world, the flesh and the devil; I should like to see them driven off the field, or I should like a furlough, that I might be for a little season in some quiet place to attend to my wounds and bruises and recuperate my health and strength, and then? O, then I should return and fight the enemy again. I never can make peace with my enemies, the world, the flesh and the devil. Your letter cheered me, I felt you were one of "like precious faith," and thus a companion with me "in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ."

The other day I was letter-writing, be-

cause I felt I had to answer letters; I was much depressed in spirit, but I labored along at my writing. As I was writing to one dear child of God I thought, This one is passing through sharp trials, I must write some encouraging things, so mentally I turned to the Scriptures, bringing forth here and there things new and old, food and wine and cordials, clothing and armor and weapons of war, and I told of the wisdom and valor and of the achievements of the Captain of our salvation, and of his eternal friendship, and that he was determined to bring forth all his chosen army in everlasting triumph over sin, the curse, death, hell and the grave, and to have them with him at last in glory, their whole spirit and soul and body blameless, without a spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, immortal and incorruptible, conformed to his own image, and thus they should be with him in eternal bliss in heaven. Well, as I was writing of such things what do you think I was doing? I hardly realized it myself at first: I began eating some of the Bread of life; I drank some of the wine of the kingdom; I began to forget my poverty and miseries; I arose from the dust, and put on my beautiful garments, and then I remembered the foe, and I put on the whole armor of God, and with weapons mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds I engaged the enemy and beat him down small as the dust of the earth, in the name of the Lamb that was slain and who liveth again, and my spirit gave a shout, and I said, "In all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us." Then, as it were, I was one that awakened from a dream, (I was still writing to this dear child of God,) but it was no dream, for the Holy Spirit had, while I had been seeking to edify another, brought up my soul from the deeps, and I was upon the mount with the Lamb of God, and all my foes, sin, temptations, trials and all the powers of darkness were beneath my feet, scattered to the four winds, put to flight, and these words came into my mind: "The virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee."—Isaiah xxxvii. 22. I felt, Thus it is now with me, and my heart breathed forth its gratitude to our merciful, pitiful, covenant God. "Through God we shall do valiantly, for he it is that shall tread down our enemies." I have a "little faith;" I believe this, but just now I find surmisings, questionings, unbelief buffeting my soul; I am in the midst of the bitter conflict again, and I feel I shall have to cry unto God in the battle, (1 Chron. v. 20,) for I cannot, with my little strength, stand against the foe. Lord, increase my faith. The trials and conflicts of the household of faith are many, especially so is this with the ministers of Jesus Christ, as you, my brother, know. For myself, I find I am such a poor soldier that I need to have our Captain near all the time, or I am thrust back, cast down, and I feel I am getting the worse in the fight. See how David cried out in the battle; he must have felt the foe was more than his strength could equal, for he cried like one in desperation, nearly overwhelmed: "Plead my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me. Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help. Draw out also the spear, and stop the way against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I am thy salvation."—Psalms xxxv. 1–3. O David, I have been in such battles, and my cries unto the Lord of hosts have been almost as fervent and as bold as yours. Yes,

and he has come to my relief and covered my head in the day of battle. (Psalms cxl. 7.

"My conflicts are oft so severe,
I cannot tell where they will end,
Till Jesus, my Captain, draws near,
To act the kind part of a friend.
He shows me that all shall end well,
His blood is my prevalent plea,
And this to his glory I tell,
He saved a sinner like me."

There is another verse in my thoughts that pleases me, and I will pen it:

"My conquest is sure through his blood,
Though now there's a warfare within,
And Satan comes in like a flood,
To draw my poor heart after sin.
Fresh succor from Christ I receive,
Who did all my conflicts foresee,
And through his rich grace I believe
He saved a sinner like me."

Yes, your letter was comforting to my tired soul, and I felt grateful to the Lord that he caused you to write those few brotherly lines.

I am your brother, I hope, in the gospel of the grace of God,

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Jan., 1910.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—If the Lord wills, I will try in my weak way, after reading so many good letters from the dear brethren and sisters, to also write a little for them. In giving their reasons for a precious hope in God I have been much drawn to them in love. I have felt to praise God for such wonderful works of love, which also, I trust, the dear Lord has bestowed upon me, so that I feel to fellowship the household of faith. I trust that we see alike and speak the same things. This love is stronger than death. It was not invented by man, neither was it wrought by the works of man. It is a great secret, which it has pleased God to reveal to poor sinners, who are dependent upon him to bestow this wondrous gift, and who are needy. It is a great source of comfort to hope that we have passed from death unto life, having been made alive by his Spirit which abideth forever, and not by works of righteousness which we have done, for of these we have none to offer. I feel to thank God that when days and years have passed away we shall be where there will be no more doubts and fears such as we pass through now. There is one thing I feel that I do know, viz., that I love to meet with the brethren, the dear children of God, in singing and praising his holy name. I find great comfort and consolation in reading his gracious word and His promises, but I feel my unworthiness very much, and often am much condemned. As Paul describes it, I groan, "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." I desire to be at home with Him. I feel my weakness, and have nothing of my own to offer. I desire to thank God for his protecting love and mercy toward me in my old age. I am dependent upon him for food and raiment, and for the breath that I draw. Paul said, "We hope for that we see not." The things that are seen are temporal. No man can love God unless he knows him, and when we know him there is union and fellowship one with another. Here there can be no holiness, for it cannot be obtained by the natural man. Such holiness is given in the Lord Jesus Christ, and is partaken of by union and fellowship with him. God works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. But I fall so far short in my meditations of him, while I fail in examining myself. I feel sure at times that I am a stranger to grace, but God knows my heart. It is eternal life to know him, even if I have not attained unto it. My mind is so much depressed at times that I ask,

"Am I his, or am I not?" I hope that I have been made to love the truth of God and to understand it. I hope that I have had a heart opened to receive it for about fifty years, and hope still holds me, through the power of God. I know that had it not been for his loving arm to bear me up I should have been most miserable; I should have felt that I was without God and without hope in the world, and far from his presence. O for the eye of faith to always feel assured that God, for Christ's sake, forgave my sins manifestly about fifty years ago. I trust that he gave me an assurance of love, by shedding it abroad in my heart, and he gave me a heart to rejoice to give him all the praise. I felt that I loved all the people of God, and all who truly follow him, the meek and lowly Lamb of God. There is rest and peace in praising his adorable name, nothing can give such rest to the weary, longing soul; to this I long to come.

I have written this hoping that God would direct my mind as to what to write, and give me understanding. It is my desire to be submissive to him in all things. He is the bright and morning Star. May what I have written be food to some hungry soul, and cheer some of God's little ones. May God bless the wandering strangers who are seeking to know and love him, and who put no confidence in the flesh, is my prayer. Now remember me, dear brother, at the throne of grace.

Your brother, I hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

LANHAM, W. Va., Dec. 28, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am thankful for the precious gifts God has given to the church, who write for the comfort of the household of faith, such comforting words in honor to God the Father; they ably set forth the doctrine of the Bible, to the edification of the dear saints of God, who are scattered in all parts of the earth, or wherever the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is received into the family circle. It has been, and is yet, a welcome messenger to all who love the truth as it is in Jesus. We are all aware of the fact that the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS is not, nor ever will be, popular; it is too distasteful to the modern Pharisees for them to love it; it seems evil to them; to them it is a dangerous doctrine; to them it is death; so "if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost." "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."—John v. 39. This is the language of Jesus, and was addressed to the Pharisees nearly two thousand years ago, but is just as applicable to the Pharisees of the present generation, who believe there is eternal life in the Scriptures, as it was to the Pharisees whom Jesus addressed. He told them at the same time that "the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not."—John v. 37, 38. They were not of his sheep, for had they been they would have heard his voice and would have had his word (Christ) abiding in them. Is it not evident that if the Pharisees, who believed they had eternal life in the Scriptures, had not heard his voice at any time, and had not his word abiding in them, that the Pharisees of the present day, who believe and teach others to believe the same thing, are in the same deplorable condition? Of course the Pharisee does not know anything but

the letter; he is blind, and as a leader of the blind all shall fall into the ditch together. They are trusting in an arm of flesh; they are trying to tip the scale in their favor by doing enough good to overbalance all the bad they do while here. Yet these carnal Pharisees have, or pretend to have, wonderful zeal for God, but it is not according to knowledge, for they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, are going about to establish their own righteousness. Jesus said unto them, "Ye hypocrites! well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouths, and honoreth me with their lips: but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines, the commandments of men." Jesus called them a wicked and adulterous generation, and warned his disciples to beware of them. They loved the chief seats in the synagogue, and made long prayers, all for the purpose of being seen of men. How different is the faith of the ransomed of the Lord, who believe in God, whose omniscient eye beholds the end from the beginning, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and will do all his pleasure, who bringeth the counsel of the heathen to naught, and maketh the devices of the people of none effect. "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations," before whom all nations "are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity."

Yours in affliction,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

DUTTON, Ont., Jan. 12, 1910.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—You have been in my thoughts much since you were here in October, and I have written you many letters in my mind, and if I could only put some of my thoughts on paper I would be glad, but whenever I would think of writing something seemed to say, You are not fit to write to Elder Ker, and, dear brother, surely I did feel to be so ignorant and stupid, I just felt there was no use for me to make the attempt, but still it was in my mind to write, feeling there was love enough in your heart to overlook all the blunders I might make. When brother Fenton was here he said you were not very well, and we were all very sorry to hear it, but I have heard since that you are better, for which I am glad.

We were all glad brother Fenton came up here; he is a monument of God's grace, and was well received. I went to Duart on Saturday to hear him, and indeed I was well paid for going; it was as it was when you preached there after Mr. Graham's funeral, a feast of fat things, of wine on the lees well refined. He is a young man, not yet ordained, and I was not looking for great things, and, as he said himself before starting to the meeting, while at brother Gillis', "I am only a boy," but there was a desire in my heart that the dear Lord would be with him through the services, and surely I felt my desire was answered, for his preaching was good, and he felt to be at home among us, and we were no more strangers, but one in Spirit. In the afternoon he took his text in Exodus xxvi., from the beginning, and read to the tenth verse, I think. While he was reading I was wondering what he was going to say about the things he read. O how little we know until it is interpreted. I can hear that dear brother yet; surely it was the Spirit of the Lord in him, for it was with power he preached. My poor heart was comforted and rejoiced. Sister Gillis said, "You would not have missed that."

Indeed I would not. I had his company on Tuesday, which I enjoyed much. He seems to be a live man (if I may use the term), filled with the love of God, and to me there is nothing like love.

"Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above,
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

Dear brother, I have not forgotten the sweetness of the meeting in Lobo; I can hear you as you spoke on Monday morning of the many temptations we have to endure and fight against; it is a continual fight, so I find it. How many times I have looked back to the time when the candle of the Lord shone round about me and all was love, joy and peace, and I felt it would be that way to the end of my days, but O how very little I knew of the way. I had to learn that it is through great tribulation we must enter the kingdom. No man can teach these things, they must be known by experience in the furnace of affliction. I hope I know what I am talking about. I feel unable to express myself as I would like, I feel so ignorant in spiritual things, but when you, or others of the tried servants of God, preach Christ and him crucified, you can tell it all better than I can, and, dear brother, when I can witness to the precious things of the gospel of the Son of God it is strength and comfort to my poor soul. I am looking forward with longing heart to our February meeting, when again I hope to hear you and dear brother Lefferts, another one of the Lord's jewels. May the dear Lord send a message, that we may receive a crumb from the Master's table.

I have a sick friend whom I hope you will be here in time to visit, as I hear you are going to remain over after the meeting. I wish you could come home with me after the meeting, if you have no other arrangements made. Mrs. McIntyre is my sick friend, she takes the SIGNS, and is a precious soul. I fear she is not going to get better. I miss her company very much, for she was a true companion, one whom afflictions weaned from the world. David said it was good to be afflicted; before he was afflicted he went astray; I feel it is true. The dear Lord knows just how to humble our proud hearts. It takes a great deal of pruning to keep us right.

Brother Ker, I was reading your editorial in the SIGNS on "A Great Supper," and O how very many good things I found. It does my poor soul good to hear one speak out their mind without fear or favor of men. I am glad you speak as you do about the church and its members. I feel it is needful to be reminded again and again of our duty as those professing to be followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God. In the last of your article you spoke of what a sad thing it would be to bury a man alive, not being dead to the world. How many baptisms I have witnessed since I came into the church, and how many times the same thoughts were in my mind; I think it a very solemn ordinance. I feel I have nothing to boast of in any way. I am thankful that I am kept so far, for I realize I cannot take one step in the right way except as the dear Lord leads me, and it is my grief by day and by night that I cannot walk more to the honor and glory of God. I feel sometimes that my hands and feet talk louder than my tongue, but O when I think of the goodness and mercy of God all the days of my life, in watching over and caring for me while in nature's darkness and having no light, and rolling sin as a sweet morsel under my tongue, that he did not cut me off and send me where mercy could never

come, is a wonder. O the longsuffering of God toward us! How good to be made willing to forsake all and follow him. You spoke also of forsaking father and mother, husbands and wives, and all, or we cannot be His disciples.

Now I will close, as I have written far more than I intended. Pardon all you see amiss, realizing that I am a poor, helpless sinner, saved by grace if saved at all. We join in love to you and sister Ker, and hope this may find you all well.

May the dear Lord be with you and yours to bless and comfort, is the desire of your little sister, in hope of eternal life,

(MRS.) THOS. E. LILLY.

WILMINGTON, Del., March 7, 1910.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I herewith hand you an experimental letter I received from my father; it seems to be according to things I have experienced, and feel that if you think well I would like to see it in print. If I know anything about a christian experience it is a rugged, winding road, a strange path that no one in nature knows, completely hid from natural view. "The vulture's eye hath not seen" it, &c. I have had but little pleasure in hearing preaching for some time. Miss Pearl Thornton's letter to Elder Bird, published in the last SIGNS, did me more good than anything lately.

Yours in tribulation,

F. SELBY FISHER.

JAMAICA, N. Y., March 3, 1910.

DEAR SELBY AND FAMILY:—We have just read your card of yesterday, and are truly glad to hear that you were some better, and now I want to write a little of my experience for the last few days, which caused me to say, God has forsaken me; and I do believe I tell the truth when I say so. If I am not a child of God, and never have enjoyed his favor, and made to acknowledge his loving care, which I know I have, I could not say in truth that he has forsaken me, but now for the last few days I can say that he has forsaken me, and I feel just what I say, notwithstanding we believe that God is faithful, and that he will never leave nor forsake his people. Yes, we believe this, and the Scriptures declare it, according to my understanding, yet I believe God does forsake his people, for if I am one of his I have been made to experience it and say so in the last few days, and the Scriptures declare the same: "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer."—Isaiah liv. 7, 8. So we see that God said he had forsaken the church, his people, and we have Christ's language recorded in Matthew, where he himself cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Then should it be thought of as strange that one, or many, of his little ones should be made to see, feel and realize, and declare, the same truth? I must contend that God's people are the only ones who are forsaken, or are made to see themselves forsaken, for surely they are the only ones who are in union with and married to the Lord, and no one can be forsaken by another unless there is an existing union, and that union must first be felt in the soul before they in truth can realize a felt sense of being forsaken. Yet God rules, and that is my only hope. If the God that I have been made to adore and worship does not control all things, then I know not the true and living God, whom to know is life eternal. But, as I have said, I feel that my hope

is gone; I have had hope, but it is now gone; God has forsaken me. But to-day a little comfort came to me again, when I was enabled to see who of all the people of the whole earth are the people that were forsâken; it never came to me this way before, but "remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall, my soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope." Yet I said, My hope is perished. These things seem so paradoxical, so contradictory, yet they are true, for it is recorded that way in the Scriptures, and it is so in our experience, and the two witnesses agree; although I have not been as clear in trying to give you my idea as I would liked to have been, maybe you can understand me. I have been made to realize very plainly that we know not how to pray as we ought, and often it is the case we are brought to the place where there seems to be no prayer in us; at other times we feel to come boldly to the throne of grace and find grace to help in time of need. But I have not perished yet, and a little hope springs up; whether it is to be followed in a short time by being plunged into the dark again I do not know, but in every conflict there must be a final victory, and the Stronger will overcome. I shall either lie down in shame and confusion and utter contempt, or the victory will be mine, and if mine it is mine through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; he alone conquers for all those for whom he undertakes; whether he has undertaken for me I know not. We know this to be true, that we have no strength of our own, and hope it is for us that he has undertaken; if so, hope will be realized.

Your father,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

ARENA, N. Y., Jan. 26, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN:—While writing to renew my subscription to our family paper, I want to say that I wish the editors, publishers and contributors all a prosperous and happy new year. Further, I would say, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been very dear to me for more than forty years, and I should hate to be deprived of it now. I trust you will be enabled to maintain sound principles, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, in the future as in the past. Your writings are very interesting and instructive. I would not wish to particularize where all are so good. One brother or sister has light on one passage of Scripture and another on some other portion, thus the different gifts are useful for the whole family. I have not written often for publication of late, for our medium of correspondence is so well filled that it is very satisfactory to me, but I will here say the promises of the gospel are more precious to me as the years go by. It is more than forty years since I made a profession of religion, and the cause is dearer every year. When the dear Savior arrested me (in the dancing hall) with these words, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life," that truth was so deeply impressed upon my mind that the experience remains with me to this day; I have never lost sight of it. He taught me over and over again that "salvation is of the Lord," and there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. When I (like the young sister who recently wrote on the subject) desired more evidence, in the silent hours of the night two contrasting cases were presented; one was Nathanael, who, when his Master said to him, "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree,

I saw thee," was constrained to say, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God;" the other was doubting Thomas, who said, "Except I see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand in his side, I will not believe." But the Savior convinced him also. I think it is like this: If we know whereas we were blind now we see, it is enough. The eunuch's experience was very brief, but it was sufficient.

In conclusion I will say that my prayer is, Dear Lord, be with us all our journey through, and bring us off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him who loved us and gave himself for us.

With love and fellowship to the household of faith, I remain your unworthy sister,

JULANA H. DICKSON.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., Jan. 24, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As my subscription expired the 15th of last month, I feel it is time I send on my remittance, as I feel I cannot do without our family paper. I say family paper, for I cannot remember the time that it was not in our family.

I shall soon be seventy-three years old, and have had a name and home with the Old School Baptists for fifty years this month, and as I am writing my mind goes back all those years, and how I did enjoy reading the letters written by the dear saints, as also the editorials of dear Elder Gilbert Beebe; and, coming all the way down to the present time, I feel to say they are as dear to me now as then; yes, if anything, I prize them more and more as I grow older, for I feel now I enjoy the strong meat as well as the milk; yes, we need both as we go on in years. Another thought comes to me as I write: how little I have lived all those years as I then thought I would, for I then thought as I grew older I should grow better, but alas, how different, for I see more and more of my unlikeness to Him who said, "I am meek and lowly," but I think I am made to rejoice that I have been given the light to see the difference between the natural and spiritual, for it gives me hope that my name is written in the Lamb's book of life, for when I was made to hope in his mercy these words came to me as though spoken: Thy name is written in the Lamb's book of life; and they have always been a comfort. I know I did not receive them of man, for they were given me in the silent watches of the night; still how often I have been made to doubt and fear, for I see so little of the fruit of the Spirit in myself how can I deem myself a child? If a child, then an heir. Heir to what? To all that belongs to the Head; not only the joys, but the sufferings of Christ. But O how quickly we draw back from the sufferings, and even in this we are with him, for hear him saying in that prayer, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." Again, hear him say, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." O that I might always feel to say the same. I often think of a prayer of a dear old saint that I heard when but a child and was at meeting. He would say, "O Lord, may our will be swallowed up in thine."

I see I am making too long a letter of this, so will stop, hoping you will overlook all mistakes. I feel to say in closing, that as I loved to read the editorials written by Elder Beebe, so I enjoy those written by you as much, and feel to rejoice that we are blessed in having others raised up to fill the places of those who have gone home.

Now, dear editors, do with this as you think best; it is like the writer, very imperfect.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

(MRS.) P. S. KINNEY.

SENECA FALLS, N. Y., Dec. 7, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—You will please find inclosed with my mother's order one dollar from me, to aid the poor of the flock. I have tried to send before, but family sickness has detained me until now. I am sorry to send so little, for I do love to read the dear old SIGNS and to see the old familiar names of those who have proclaimed His precious name so long, and it seems as if I want every one who loves it to have it. As I live next to my mother, Mrs. E. Chandler, who takes it, I do not have to subscribe for it, therefore I send a little to aid others in having the paper. I feel to rejoice that you both are spared to carry on this good work for the aid and comfort of others, especially for mother, myself and a sister Brown, in Clyde, for it is all the preaching we have. May the Lord spare you and prosper you in the cause for years to come, is the prayer of a poor, weak sister, if one at all.

Yours in love,

(MRS.) W. J. PECK.

SENECA FALLS, N. Y.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—It is time for me to send on my remittance for another year, so I will inclose two dollars for the SIGNS and one for the poor of the flock. The SIGNS brings much comfort to me, as I cannot get out, and have no preaching here that I care to hear. I would much like to hear a good gospel sermon, for I love salvation by grace, Jesus from first to last; I want to crown him Lord of all. I would like to see some of the dear brethren and sisters I used to mingle with. Dear brother May was such a dear, good christian, I would like to hear from him. Brother Hamilton, would you send me a few lines? for I am so low down in the valley, and as I grow older I feel a greater sinner. How the poor workers think they can help save themselves I do not know, for every day I feel more helpless, dependent entirely on Christ's power to save. I would like to write for the SIGNS, but you see I am a poor writer.

With much love to you and brother Ker, and hoping the dear Lord will give you strength to rightly divide the word of truth, I am your little sister, saved, I hope, by grace,

(MRS.) E. CHANDLER.

PENNINGTON, N. J., Jan. 9, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER AND PASTOR:—As it is so that we cannot get to meeting this evening, I feel as though I would like to write you a few lines. Since the storm, I begin to think that we are too far from Hopewell. I would like to be there this evening, but shall not be able. I hope you had a good meeting at Harbourton this morning, and that it proved a feast for many of the hearers. I feel that I am making a poor start for the new year, missing, as I have, the first two Sundays. I certainly hope this will not rule the year. I feel very thankful for the blessings of the past; I was not compelled to miss a Sunday for more than nine months, until the blizzard, and I feel very thankful for the privilege of hearing so many good sermons. We shall miss our dear friend, Johnson Drake, at our meetings. I am glad to have had the little talks with him that I have had concerning the different sermons; how highly he spoke about them, and it gave me to feel sure

that he was very much interested in these glorious truths. I hope that it is well with him. I have written a few lines to our dear sister Drake, his mother; she has had many heavy trials of late. May the dear Lord comfort her, and family. The Lord will give strength.

The holidays are past; they have been very pleasant for some, and very sad for others. Some have had very serious sickness, and some have had death; in either case it is sad. How thankful we ought to be that it has been as well with us as it has. We so often complain with blessings in our hands. I often feel what a poor sinner I am, and how little I walk like a child of God. I often ask myself the questions, Did the dear Savior die for me? Have I any right to claim his love, which has been so precious to me? Should I be a wolf in sheep's clothing, what a great hypocrite I should be. What evidence have I to give me a hope? If I had such a bright experience as some are given, my hope would be brighter, I think, yet I still cling to the hope that the dear Savior has made me to love the things for which I once did not care. I know that our meetings are very dear to me. How often we feel sorry that some do not get out to the meetings. I believe that it is good for us to meet together as often as we can, and to speak one to another about these great and glorious things of the Lord; but I, a poor worm of the dust, can never speak at the right time, yet I do love to hear the brethren talk about the blessed name of Jesus.

I must bring this letter to a close. We have colds at present. I hope that your family and self are well. We hope to get out to the next meeting on Sunday. With love to you all, I remain your unworthy brother,

PAUL LEIGH.

ALICEL, Oregon, Dec. 26, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—It seems a long time since I have written to the ever dear SIGNS; my duty demands all my time and also imposes great tasks upon my strength. I sometimes feel impressed with a desire to write for the SIGNS, then time is lacking and I seem to be as nothing to any one who reads the SIGNS, until it has become a habit for me to think of all my dear brethren and sisters so far removed in spiritual things, and I find myself cold, distant and unforgiving. Yesterday morning I was made to say, Let not your heart be troubled, is not God greater than your heart? The day before yesterday I was walking blindly along when I was made to exclaim aloud, Greater love than this hath no man, that he lay down his life for his brother, and to-day I feel like singing,

"Be the living God my friend,
Then my joy shall never end."

There seems to be the one thing lacking in all this, however, and that is the humility or patience which, if from above, would enable me to face great trials with an "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." Then could I taste the sweetness of that prayer which our Savior uttered when he said, "Glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was," and in that fullness of blessing I could rejoice in hope that all things work together for my good and His glory.

(MRS.) M. J. LEE.

WARWICK, N. Y., Jan. 26, 1910.

DEAR ELDER KER:—Inclosed you will find one dollar to aid in sending the SIGNS to some poor of the flock. I often think what a privilege it must be for those who cannot hear the gospel preached to read the SIGNS. I know that I enjoy reading it, and I am blessed with church

privileges. I was particularly impressed with sister Florence Beebe's letter, in the January 15th SIGNS, as I could not have told my travel of mind better than she did; so very different from what I thought when I first came to the church. I thought then that I would try and walk in Christ's footsteps, but I find I come far short of it every day, and sometimes wonder if I am a child of God, or if I am deceiving the people; I feel my unworthiness more and more every day. I often think of Christ when he was here on earth, and how lovely it must have been for those who could walk and talk with him. My prayer is that he will direct my steps aright, and have mercy on me, a poor, miserable sinner.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

(MRS.) A. H. DREW.

VAIDEN, Miss., Jan. 23, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will drop you a few lines this beautiful Sunday morning to tell you how much I have enjoyed the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the past year, but I cannot begin to tell how much comfort and pleasure it has been, and still is. I hope I am thankful to the Giver of all good gifts, and to the editors and writers also. I want to thank brother Durand for the little book, "Songs in the Night," and for his kindness in writing on that passage of Scripture. I was very much pleased with the editorial brother Ker wrote for me last spring; many thanks to him. I dearly love to read his writings, and also to read all the letters of the brethren and sisters in the SIGNS, and I hope the good Lord may bless them all, and be with you all, to keep and comfort you. I hope they will write on, for it is about all the preaching I get.

Please excuse me for troubling you, but I do love you all. Farewell.

As ever, your unworthy sister in the Lord, M. M. MILNER.

BURDETT, N. Y., Dec. 12, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—As the time is up when I should renew my subscription for the SIGNS, I herewith inclose money order for two dollars. To express my gratitude for its semi-monthly visits to me is beyond my ability to do as I feel I would like to. I feel unworthy to receive such blessings of divine grace; and then I think of those who hunger and thirst, that they shall be filled with the riches that come from God only. What has been in my mind was expressed in the last number of the SIGNS better than I can tell it, so I will close, hoping that God may still give you the ability to continue to send the good tidings of great joy, and that I will still pray for the peace of Zion.

Your brother, I hope,

NORMAN BROWN.

ELGIN, Oregon, Jan. 14, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I should have sent on my subscription to the SIGNS some time ago, but have had quite a serious spell of sickness, and as I promised several brethren while on a tour down on the Sound country, Wash., that I would write an account of my visit among them and send it to the editors of the SIGNS to dispose of as they saw fit, I want to say to the brethren I have not felt able to do so, but I want to thank them all for their kindness toward me while with them.

Brother Chick, I would be glad if you would give us your views on Hebrews ii. 14. How is it that the children are partakers? Does this imply they existed before they partook? and how is it that Christ took part of the same?

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1910.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ENMITY.

A FRIEND has asked us, by letter, the following question: What shall we say of two members of the church who have fallen out with each other, and have become bitter enemies, and who lived and died without any reconciliation, in view of the Scripture in Mark xi. 25, 26? This Scripture reads as follows: "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses." Similar language is found also in Matt. vi. 14, 15, and in Matt. xviii. 35. We suppose that our friend is perplexed in mind in this way: The two brethren to whom he refers had no doubt made a good confession before others, of faith in Christ, and had been received into the fellowship of the church, and had been regarded as sons of God, and heirs of eternal life, and enjoyed apparently the privileges of the sanctuary, as well as others, yet after a time they for some cause became enemies, and retained the bitterness of their enmity until death. How could they be the children of God at all and yet retain bitter hatred in their hearts to the end? We cannot wonder at the perplexity in the mind of our friend. Some such things have aroused great questioning in our own mind many times in the past. It is not ours to read the hearts of men, or to judge men, except that we must judge their doings, whether they are in harmony with the Spirit of Christ which dwells in his children, or not. God alone can judge the secrets of all hearts; he alone knew whether these two men were really his children, born of him, or not. From the word of God we do know that the state of feeling between these two men was of the flesh, and that they were behaving in such a way as dishonored the holy name that had been called upon them. If they were really children of God, we also know that by such a course they were warring against their own souls, and cutting themselves off from all the joy of salvation, and that they could have no gladness in their association with the house of God. They were feeding upon husks, while their enmity of heart would not allow that they should eat the children's bread; they were robbing their own souls, bringing distress and perplexity into the hearts of their brethren, disturbing the peace of the church and bringing reproach upon the blessed Savior. Just how far heirs of glory can go in the way of wandering we do not know, but we do know that unless restrained by divine grace there is no limit to their wandering; there is no excess of riot into which they will not go if left to themselves. We do not need to go outside of our own self to be convinced of this. But how far will the God of grace and salvation suffer his chosen ones to depart from his ways? We know how far Jacob wandered in his youth from the right; we read of the double sin of David, in the case of Uriah and Bath-sheba; we

are told of the denial of Peter, and of his dissimulation afterwards, for which he was to be blamed. It has seemed to us that there is no sin into which the children of God may not stumble, no fault which may not overtake them, but will the Lord long leave his own without repentance? These two men of whom our friend speaks were left to the end of their lives, and died at enmity with each other. So far as appeared, they never forgave each other; could the Lord's dear children be left in this gall of bitterness to the end? It has not seemed to us possible that it could be so. If the spirit of forgiveness never appears toward one who may have grievously injured another, how can such an one know the forgiveness of God? And if the consciousness of our own sins against God be with us, and there be an assurance in the heart that he has for Christ's sake forgiven our sins, will not this melt us down so completely that we cannot retain hardness against our enemy, and especially our brother? If we love our brother we shall bear much and forgive much, and if we love not our brother, whom we have seen, how can we love God, whom we have not seen? Jacob suffered for his duplicity, and desired the blessing of God greatly, and David confessed his sin before God, and Peter went out and wept bitterly at one look of the blessed Lord. It seems as though, somewhere and some time, just such sorrow would fill the hearts of all men who had been at enmity, if indeed they were heirs of the inheritance of God, and that then there would be again the upspringing of love in their hearts and the enmity would be slain and forgiveness would reign in them. It is most certain that while thus dwelling apart from each other in feeling, even though still dwelling together as to the form of membership in the church, there could be no secret communion with God at the mercy-seat in either heart. If branches at all of the living vine, they would be fruitless, and be cast forth and withered and trampled under foot of men. There could be no acceptable worship in their hearts, nor any pleasure in their association with the people of God, and their brethren, who were truly spiritual, could not come near to them, nor find any pleasure in them; their sin would separate between them and every privilege in the house of God. They might indeed never fail to be present at the meeting of the church, though that is hardly possible we believe; they might contribute of their substance for all good purposes, and yet it would all be as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal, seeing that charity did not reign in them. Without love no manner of outward exactness of life can be a fulfilling of the law. Love is the fulfilling of the law, and where love reigns forgiveness is near at hand.

The Scriptures to which our friend refers declare that if we do not forgive, neither will our heavenly Father forgive us, and he desires to know how these Scriptures can be understood in view of the case of which he speaks. It is sure that the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints is true; this we cannot question. It is sure also that we do not know how far the dear Lord may suffer his children to depart from him before he searches them out and brings them home. The Scriptures under consideration, therefore, cannot be understood as a denial of either of these truths. They do not mean that any for whom Christ died can ever get so far away as to be beyond the reach of the grace and mercy of God. But what do they mean? We note first, in reply to this, that the blessed Master used

the words, "Your Father," in the places to which we have called attention. Jesus never used that term of any but his own disciples. These had been forgiven through the finished work of the dear Redeemer, and by the revelation of that finished work to their hearts through the Spirit they had received assurance of the forgiveness of all their sins, but it is sure that day by day and hour by hour disciples need renewed assurances of forgiveness. So Jesus taught his disciples though they had been the recipients of his forgiving love once and for all, to still pray day by day, "Forgive us our trespasses;" "Forgive us our debts." Now it seems to us that it is this daily forgiveness, of which we all always stand in need for our peace of heart and mind, of which the Master said, Neither will your heavenly Father forgive you. So David prayed, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." Note it is the joy, not the salvation itself, for which David felt the need of restoration, and for this he prayed. In this joy would be included the word of forgiveness from the Father in heaven. So the prodigal son in the parable prays for restoration, and this also would include the forgiveness of his transgressions as a son. In view of these considerations, would it not be in full harmony with the teaching of the word of God to say that the forgiveness which our heavenly Father will withhold from us if we forgive not from our hearts every one his trespasses, refers to this daily experience of the favor of God? The teaching of the texts referred to, then, would be that if there be no forgiveness in our hearts for our brother, or even our enemy for that matter, there can be for us no experience of the love, favor and forgiveness of God toward ourselves. While holding hardness in our hearts toward another there may be indeed a false peace, a false assurance, wrought in us by the devil, and we may even talk glibly of the blessedness of communion with God, but this will be, all of it, a snare of the wicked one to beguile us into false security, while yet we remain strangers to the true peace which is in our blessed Lord. God's word is true, and whether Satan perverts it, or we ourselves make light of the wrong in our hearts, and imagine that we are enjoying communion with God, it still remains true that if the spirit of forgiveness be not in our heart toward our brother who has wronged us, neither have we any assurance of the forgiveness of our heavenly Father. Our sin will shut out prayer, and every other heavenly exercise. It is sin that rises up between the soul and God. Our sins have separated us from him. They did so in the first place so that a Daysman must be found, and an atonement provided to bring us near to God. Sin in the heart and life of believers erects a barrier between us and the joy of the Lord, according to the testimony of David, and as every child of God of any length of experience sorrowfully knows, and there is no greater evidence of the evil of our fallen nature than unwillingness to forgive another his trespasses against us. This, many of us have found out for ourselves, and having found it out we can but be troubled at finding so little of the spirit of forgiveness dwelling within us.

We have suggested these thoughts concerning the Scriptures named by our friend, and in all that we have written we must not be understood as undertaking to judge any man. The two men of whom our friend spoke must be left to the great Judge of all. If they were chosen vessels of mercy, it is sure that at

last the Lord sought them out, though that they should have been left to stray so long and so far seems a great mystery. If they had not been made heirs of glory, then it is sure that their brethren had been deceived in them, as we doubt not has been the case many times in the reception of members, and we can testify for ourself that in view of these awful realities we have many times had, and still have, great searchings of heart. How many times even the brightest hope seems to tremble in the balance. May the Lord keep us walking softly and humbly before him in view of these teachings of his word. C.

ROMANS VII. 14.

ELDER H. B. Jones, of Winnsboro, Texas, calls our attention to Romans vii. 14, which reads as follows: "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin." It must certainly be true that this one verse must be understood in full harmony with the general teaching of the whole chapter. Paul, as it appears to us, does not mean by the expression, "I am carnal, sold under sin," that now, as a believer and an apostle of Jesus Christ, at the time when he was writing this letter, he was yet in his former dead state, that state in which all men are by nature. He does not mean that he does not now love the law which is spiritual, neither does he mean to deny that he has been redeemed unto God and made a partaker of the divine nature; but he in this verse, as in the whole connection, declares that his fleshly nature, the old man in distinction from the new man, still stands in opposition to the holy law. It is himself, and all other believers with him, as possessing what he elsewhere calls the law in his members, which wars against the law of his mind, that he means when he says, "I am carnal, sold under sin." As a natural, unregenerate man he had been carnal altogether, and sold under sin. That former nature remained with him still, and is what he denominates in this connection, "The body of this death," from which he desires to be delivered. As he feels the workings of this law he cries out, "I am carnal," while the law of God is spiritual. He does that which he would not, and in this manner consents to the law that it is good. There is no fault in the law of God. The word "spiritual" expresses the holiness of the law. He would say, All the fault is mine. Read carefully the four or five preceding verses. By the law sin had revived, and though ordained to life, was found to be unto death. Sin, which had entered, took occasion by the holy law to slay him. But though this was so, it did not follow that the good law was made death to him, but sin wrought death in him by the law, to the end that sin might by the commandment become exceeding sinful. Thus the holiness of the law of God is set over against the sinfulness of man. Death has been wrought in man through the working of the law, yet as sin has been the cause of all this, though it were so through the law, it still remains that the law is good, and that all the evil is in the sinner. The fifteenth verse shows more clearly still that Paul is not speaking of himself directly, either as a believer or an unbeliever, but of the unclean nature which had belonged to him while yet dead in sin, and which still belonged to him now as a child of God. Paul had been redeemed, and given a new nature, the new man of grace, and thus had come to know how vile the flesh was, and of this flesh, as it appears to us, he is speaking when he writes the words of the text, "But I am carnal, sold under sin."

We will leave these reflections to the consideration of our brother, and all who may read them. C.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Thomas M. Poulson, Feb. 23rd, 1910, at the home of the bride's parents, John W. Morrie and Miss F. May Shockley, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

By Elder P. N. Moyers, at his store, Goin, Tenn., March 11th, 1910, Elder Henry T. Williams and Mrs. M. M. Dunnett, of Goin, Tenn.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Martha E. Robey, wife of our dear brother, F. E. Robey, of the Ebenezer Church, Loudoun Co., Va., died at their home near Bluemont, Loudoun Co., March 15th, aged about 66 years. Her death was the result of a severe stroke of apoplexy on Wednesday night. The only warning the family received of the fearful event was a severe headache, which lasted several hours, growing in intensity and resisting every effort to alleviate, until she suddenly collapsed into complete unconsciousness and paralysis of the entire system, except the lungs and heart; breathing and heart action were the only signs of life. Physicians were promptly summoned, together with a specialist, a skillful surgeon from Washington, D. C., who, after consultation, decided upon an operation. The skill of the surgeon located the part of the brain involved, and a removal of a small piece of the skull revealed the blood clot and the ruptured blood vessel or artery. After the operation some little hope was felt from some slight symptoms following it. The sufferer lingered from Thursday night until the following Tuesday eve, when she quietly and painlessly breathed her last. At no moment did she show any sign of returning consciousness. So gently, so quietly did her life go out that a glass was held to her mouth to determine whether she breathed at all. Death in her case seemed like falling into a sweet sleep, and so I believe it was. She and her husband, brother Robey, had lived in close and harmonious union forty-five years. Nine children were born to them, seven sons and two daughters; five sons and one daughter survive. The mother lived to see them grow to noble manhood and womanhood, an honor to their parents and ornaments to the society in which they move. Mrs. Robey was not identified with any church, never having made a public profession of religion, but I am confident, after more than thirty years of quite intimate acquaintance, that her heart was with the Old School Baptists in love and sympathy, and that she believed the doctrine they hold. Indeed, her life spoke more convincingly of a work of grace in her than mere lip profession can do. She showed her love for God's people in her deeds up to her final summons. Such a character or life as Mrs. Robey's stirs my mind to speak or write of the secret, still, hidden ways of the Lord as he carries on his mighty work of grace in the heart of his people. Those works testify of him; love of his truth manifest by the desire to hear it preached, and the gladness with which it is received; love for his people, shown in gladness to serve them in any and every way which presents itself; a sweet, humble and quiet spirit, a kind heart, leading to acts of kindness and unselfish service, gladly giving a cup of cold water to a disciple of Jesus, because he is a disciple, and not doing it for some selfish reward, and more than all, a willingness and readiness to sacrifice self, its comfort and desires, to help the needy, to minister to the wants and comfort of God's needy poor, especially those who are in trouble and affliction, all this was abundantly shown in the daily life of Mrs. Robey. A token of the estimation in which she was held was the large and sympathetic gathering of people from different parts of the county attending her funeral, and their testimony to her worth, who had known her nearly all her life. I hope I will be pardoned if I add in my own behalf that I have lost a dear and faithful friend by her death. May God comfort brother Robey, who in mature years has lost the companionship of a faithful wife, and the children, who mourn a devoted mother. Mrs. Robey's maiden name was Gaines. If I am not mistaken, she was the last of her father's immediate family. J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., March 19, 1910.

Catherine C. Thompson, wife of Harrison Thompson, died at her home at Pompton Plains, N. J., Feb 14th, 1910, aged 71 years, 1 month and 16 days. Deceased was born at Hopewell, Orange Co., N. Y., the daughter of Horace and Mahala Horton Thompson, and is survived by her husband and the following children: Ella Eugenia, wife of Wm. Ashton, and Horace B. Thompson, both of Salt Lake City, Martha, Hortense, Catherine, Elizabeth, Mary Brink and Marie Teressa, at home; also by one sister, Frank M. Thompson, of this city. The following children are deceased: Adeline P. and Albert. Mrs. Thompson was a devoted and loving wife and mother, and will be greatly missed in her home and by a large circle of friends and acquaintances. She united with the Old School Baptist Church at the age of twenty years, and had been a consistent and devoted attendant at its services.

Her funeral will be conducted by her pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, at the home of her sister, on Sproat St., this city, Wednesday, Feb. 16th, at 2 p. m. Burial in family plot in Hillside Cemetery.

[THE above appeared in one of our daily papers at the time of sister Thompson's death, and while it gives a full account of our dear sister's departure, we feel that we would like to add a few words with regard to her life in the church. She was baptized in 1860, by Elder Gilbert Beebe, making her membership fifty years. During all those years she lived

her religion; in every walk of life she manifested that she had been with Jesus and was taught of him. Her life was not one of sunshine, but of affliction and care, yet her faith failed not, and she met every cross with christian fortitude. Devotion and self-sacrifice marked her whole life and manifested her noble character. We as a church shall miss her, but in her home and by her sister she will be missed more. Brother Thompson, the children and the sister have our sympathy, and we hope the Lord may comfort their hearts.—K.]

Eliza Jane Grove, the subject of this sketch, was born May 23rd, 1837, near Plymouth, Ill., died Feb. 1st, 1910, aged 72 years, 8 months and 8 days. She was the daughter of David and Rebecca Grove; was married to S. H. Grove, May 20th, 1855, and was the mother of eight children, six sons and two daughters. Her husband, two sons and two daughters preceded her to final rest. She had been a widow for nearly twenty years. Four of her sons: James Harvey, William Douglas, Homer Lawrence and Eldah Junius, survive her and were present at her funeral to lay her body in the grave to await the resurrection morning. She resided in the home in which she died, near Baring, Mo., for the past thirty-five years. She united with the Predestinarian Baptists at Providence Church, near the place of her birth, at an early age, and for nearly half a century never wavered in her fidelity to her church, nor in her faith in a merciful God.

I HAVE been asked to write an obituary of my dear and much beloved sister, Mrs. E. J. Grove, of Baring, Mo., but a sense of my unworthiness and inability to do so makes me hesitate. Praying that the Lord will guide my pen, I have resolved to try. The above brief notice was written by her son and read at her funeral. Two of her sons, Homer and Eldah, were with her during her sickness and death. Her brother and sister from Illinois, and her two sons, Harvey, from Texas, and William, from St. Louis, all came in response to telegrams, but arrived too late to see her alive. They had hoped to smoothe her dying pillow and say a word of comfort as she passed through the valley of the shadow of death, but her hour had come and she passed peacefully away. In one of her last letters to me she said, "I am my Lord's and he is mine. I feel that he is holding me in his right hand, that he is leading me beside the still waters. How secure I am." And her peaceful countenance in death showed that she had passed through, fearing no evil. Words are weak in describing a heaven-born, heaven-taught soul in the triumphs of living faith. She was blessed with the graces of a follower of the meek and lowly Nazarene. Few possess a deeper sense of humility than did she. She was always ready to put herself at the feet of her brethren and sisters in Christ, and her faith grew stronger every day. As she neared the sunset of her day the golden glow of the evening was to her the dawning of the future. All was done for her that human hands could do. She would have felt better while living if she could have known how kind and good would be the ministering hands of relatives, neighbors and friends. But the time of her departure was at hand, and we feel that she could say with Paul that she had fought the good fight, she had kept the faith, and was now ready to depart.

Brother Louis Frazee, whom she loved dearly, preached her funeral. He gave an account of her life and faith in a once crucified but now risen and exalted Savior, to a large and sorrowing congregation. Her four sons and only brother and one neighbor acted as pall-bearers, and gently laid her in her grave beside her husband and two daughters. May her dear children learn by divine grace to bow in humble submission to the will of God, knowing that the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be his name. It will be doubly hard for those two sons who had spent the whole of the forty years of their existence with her to give her up. How they will miss her! The life or light of that once happy home has gone out. We all will miss her. No more of those good, strong, inspiring letters, no more of the singing of those sweet hymns she used to sing so beautifully, no more of her joyous welcome, no more of her tears of sympathy and grief, no more of her words of encouragement and love; but our loss is her eternal gain. How we all sympathize with the boys left so lonely in the home. May the Lord reconcile them to every dispensation of his holy will, is the prayer of their loving and affectionate aunt,

BELLE FRAZEE.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., Feb. 25, 1910.

SISTER **E. Theobald,** widow of Elder John Theobald, died at her home in Sadieville, Scott Co., Ky., Jan. 29th, 1910, in her 83rd year. Our dear sister was well known to many of our brethren at home and abroad, and had entertained many at her little home. She was a woman of great zeal and energy in the church, and was seldom absent from the meetings while they kept them up. In the five or six years I attended them I do not think she was ever absent. I am informed our sister experienced a hope in Christ in early life, and united with a church in Owen County, and after her marriage to Elder Theobald, about the year 1880, moved her membership to Elk Lick Church, near her home. About eighteen months prior to her death she had a partial stroke of paralysis, which enfeebled her very much. About a week before her death she had another stroke, from which she rapidly sank until the end came, which was peaceful. Her religion was true and vital; she lived it, it was her stay and comfort in life, her all

in death. She had anticipated the end, and had perfected every arrangement in detail that was possible. I had met with them many times in life in her dear home, but this time it was death, yet we felt though she be dead she yet speaketh. As I looked upon her peaceful countenance in that blessed sleep in Jesus I could but feel that I would gladly exchange and be freed from the sorrows of this life. She leaves one sister, Miss Aggie Vallandingham, who had been her companion since Elder Theobald's death in 1883, one stepson, T. D. Theobald, of Grayson, Ky., by whom Miss Aggie will be cared for, and many friends and brethren. We shall all miss her, but none as our friend, Miss Aggie, and I am sure all join in deep sympathy for her in her sad bereavement. May the Lord Jesus dwell richly in her heart to reconcile.

I attended the funeral the 30th, after which her remains were laid to rest in the family burying-ground, near Sadieville. One by one the old and faithful are passing away. P. W. SAWIN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky.

APPOINTMENTS.

IF nothing in providence prevents, Elder B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., will fill the following appointments in Canada: Wednesday, March 30th, London; Thursday, March 31st, Lobo; Friday, April 1st, Ekfrid; Sunday, April 3rd, Dunwich; Monday, April 4th, Duart; Tuesday, April 5th, St. Thomas.

DUNCAN McALPINE, Church Clerk.

IONA, Ontario.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

THE VIRTUOUS WOMAN.

(Proverbs xxxi. 10–31.)

(No. 2.)

"SHE girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms." Nowhere is strength more needed, and nowhere is it more fully and blessedly provided for every need, than in the church of the living God. Within the walls of the new Jerusalem this song is sung: "We have a strong city." "God is known in her palaces for a refuge." Those who have the blessed privilege of entering in through the gates into the city can most sweetly sing: "The Lord is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation." This woman, then, must have strength enough for every case of need. She bears the burden and fights the battle of every one of her children, for they are cast upon her, therefore her loins must be girded with strength. She must carry every one of her family through the waters and through the fire, even to hoar hairs. How strong then must be her arms! This wonderful woman has never found her equal for strength, and never will. Her children in their trouble and pain sometimes struggle and exert a fearful strength, like the man among the tombs, who could not be bound with chains; but when this woman takes them up in her firm but loving arms they become as little infants and nestle in her bosom. If all the saints could realize how strong a church of our Lord Jesus Christ is, when walking in love and in gospel order, how trustful they would be when permitted to dwell within her sacred courts, and how careful they would be to "maintain good works." How blessed are they who "walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness."—Col. i. 10, 11. All power in heaven and in earth is given into the hand of Jesus, the heavenly Husband, and he is in the midst of Zion, therefore she shall not be moved. He sitteth in the gates, the place of the wise men, and is known among the elders of the land. A poor soul may feel solitary, deserted, sick and weak, unable to stand; let him, in his soul's experience, be given an entrance into this city, and come under the

guardian care of this strong, wise, tender woman, and in a moment he feels strengthened with heavenly might.

"She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night." Great care must be used to examine well the character of the merchandise which is received for use in a home, when it is known that many are trying to introduce articles that are not fit to be used. In the various kinds of food needed for Zion's children, which are all brought from afar, great efforts are made to deceive this woman and her household by offering that which is not good, but positively injurious. All doctrine that is not sound must be cast out. Not the least mixture of conditional salvation can be allowed. The food must all be of the one kind: salvation by grace. It is given by Him who said, "I am the bread of life." If any clothing is among the merchandise each garment must be of one kind of cloth. There can be no mixture of linen and woolen. There will be nothing allowed as food or clothing which would signify a mixture of grace and works; each must be by itself, either all woolen or all linen, either all of grace or all of works.

If there is any peculiarly favorable time for the bringing in of food which is not good, it is at night, so the candle is kept burning through all the dark hours. "Her candle goeth not out by night." This also may refer to the constant watchfulness of the mother when any of the household are sick. How many remember the long, tedious days and nights of sickness during childhood, and can remember, when awakened by pain in the darkness of the nights, the comfort of seeing the mother with her lighted candle standing by the bedside. This peculiar mother-feeling and mother-ministration on the part of the church, and the child-like feeling of each member toward the church as a mother, is shown to us in both the Old and New Testaments, and is very pleasant to contemplate. The church is presented as having the mother instincts of love and care toward each of her members, and each child, when actuated by the true gospel spirit, looks upon the church as a mother, though he himself, with all of the other members, make up that mother church.

There is an unspeakably sweet rest experienced by the poor, sick child of God, troubled by doubts and fears and heart sickness on account of sin, when he can feel the love and fellowship of the church like mother arms about him, and hear her singing in sweet accord with the melody in his own heart the songs of redeeming grace and dying love. This world presents no such resting-place as an orderly gospel church for a tired child. When one is sitting at home among his brethren, acting in his lot and feeling a desire to be submissive to the will of the Father, then the promise is fulfilled: "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

"She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff." She is here seen spinning the wool and flax which she was gathering. This manner of spinning is not often seen to-day, but the older people can remember the pleasant home scenes in their childhood, when the mother sat contentedly at the work, her right hand holding the distaff, while her left hand deftly drew out and guided the thread until it came in perfect form upon the spindle. It is a pleasant family picture to recall to mind, where each member was employed in some way for the benefit and enjoyment of the whole

family, under the care and direction of the mother. Her especial work is to make clothing, and procure and prepare food for her household, as still further appears in the continuation of this wonderful description. But this is not a narrow field, in which the needs of the body only are considered. This field is as wide as the dear Savior's kingdom, and embraces all his perfections, and every spiritual faculty and grace is engaged in the work, for Jesus is the clothing of his people, who are told to put on Christ and walk in him; and he is their necessary food, for he said, "He that eateth me, even he shall live by me."

"She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth out her hands to the needy." The church of God is not engaged in the work of making converts, nor in trying to induce people to join her ranks and become members of her household; but she is ever on the watch for the poor and needy, who are to be seen here and there among all crowds of men. These are the poor in spirit, who have no righteousness to answer the demands of the law, but are hungering for it. To their surprise the church is willing to receive them and ready to help. Instead of looking coldly and with contempt upon them because of their poverty and rags, as they feared she would, she stretches out her hand to give them warm and clean clothing and bread, and to welcome them to her pleasant home. She is never so busy about her work, nor so occupied by those in the house, but that she can see one of these poor and needy, even afar off, and will reach out her hand to him and draw him into the sacred circle of her home; and none to whom she thus reaches out her helping and welcoming hand will ever find one of the family preferred before him or occupying a more honorable place. How sweet it is to see one of these especially poor and needy ones sitting with the members of this dear family in the church, timid but at home, rejoicing in the love and fellowship of the saints.

"She is not afraid of the snow for her household; for all her household are clothed with scarlet" (double garments). The psalmist says, "He giveth snow like wool." Wool is for warmth, either on the sheep or made into garments for men. Snow causes the body to feel a painful cold, yet when it covers the ground to a good depth it will prevent freezing and keep the earth warm. Snow may therefore well represent the afflictions which the Lord sends upon his people to keep the warmth of spiritual life in the soul, and prevent it from being frozen by the wintry atmosphere of this world. In the text, snow is used to represent something that must be provided against by suitable clothing, so that it shall not work injury. The church has ample provision for every need of her household, and in this verse attention is directed to one of these especial provisions, brought into use to prevent excessive and dangerous cold from the snow. She has prepared suitable garments for the inclement atmosphere of this world, so that any of her household can go out in the stormy seasons for any necessary work for the poor and needy, without fear of harm by the severe cold of the falling snow. They all have on double garments. These double garments are quite a necessity for winter, to thoroughly protect the body. In the text it is said they are all clothed with scarlet, and this presents the real reason why the church is not afraid of snow for her household. The blood of Jesus Christ has washed away their filthy rags of self-righteousness, and has pro-

vided for them a royal robe of true righteousness, which renders them secure from the falling rain and snow of God's judgments against sin, and against every danger and affliction. Scarlet was one of the colors which denoted royalty, and the household of this virtuous woman is a royal household; they are all kings and priests unto God, all children of the King.

"She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple." Wealth and royalty are again manifested in her clothing of silk and purple, and in the tapestry she is making for her coverings. Nothing in the world can be too rich and noble and queenly to appropriately set forth the honorable and exalted character of those who are called by grace unto glory and virtue, and who are recognized as children of that Jerusalem which is from above, whose Husband is the God of the whole earth. Royal clothing and coverings fitly represent the beauty and glory of this virtuous woman, who is mother and keeper of a royal household, and who yet worketh willingly with her hands.

"Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land." The wise men of the city came together in the gates, and there the councils were held by the elders and rulers of the land. The gate was most important in its significance, it represented the strength of the city. Enemies assailed the city at the gates, and there her forces were congregated for its defence. It is said to Zion, referring to the time of her gospel glory, "Thou shalt call thy walls salvation, and thy gates praise." Jesus is the gate of this gospel city, the church. "This gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter."—Psalms cxviii. 20. Through Jesus alone can any one enter into the city of the great King. "I am the door," he said. The city which John saw coming down from God out of heaven had twelve gates, and at each gate was an angel, which was one of the apostles of the Lamb; also the name of one of the twelve apostles was in each of the twelve foundations. Each gate is Jesus, for he is the Way, and there is no other. As these apostles, who are elders, sit in the gates, manifesting the authority he gave them by directing all things in the doctrine, ordinances and order of the gospel church, Jesus, the Husband of this virtuous woman, is known in the gates, as he sits among the elders of the land, as they rule and judge only by his authority. From him is received all the knowledge, wisdom, authority and strength, and every gift and grace by which this woman works, and rules, and exercises all needed care in all her household, using with infinite prudence and discretion all the abundant provisions which he supplies. Without him she and her family would be helpless. His name is known in all that spiritual land as the Fountain of all power, goodness and grace, and in all this woman's household it is a most sweet and blessed name.

"She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant." We are now told why she gathered flax, and why she put her hand to the spindle. She is making fine linen to sell, as well as for the clothing of her household. Fine linen is frequently spoken of in the Old Testament. It was a principal part of the clothing of those who were distinguished. Pharaoh arrayed Joseph in vestures of fine linen. The priests' garments were principally of linen, and the various portions of their clothing are mentioned as to be made of linen, or of fine twined linen, as the coat, the mitre, the breeches, the girdle and other things.

This seems to indicate purity. Angels, seen in vision by Ezekiel, Daniel and others, are said to be clothed in linen. In Revelation it is said of the wife of the Lamb that, "To her it was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."—Rev. xix. 8. This truth was indicated in the Old Testament Scriptures, and now it is plainly declared. To the church at Laodicea the faithful and true Witness said, I counsel thee to buy of me white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed. In all this world there are none who care for or desire the fine linen which this woman is making and selling except those thus admonished to buy, when they come to know that they are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked. To the world there is no value in this linen, and they do not want to buy it. But these who are members of the church, and who have transgressed and become thus wretched and naked, now long for the righteousness they neglected and despised. But how can they become possessed of it again? The rich of this world have nothing which they could give in exchange for this linen if they wanted it, for its price is above rubies. But how can these poor and miserable people buy it? for they have nothing. It is with these as with those who are told to buy wine and milk without money and without price. (Isa. lv. 1.) In their extremity they are told, "Thy Maker is thine Husband." So they buy in his name, "without money and without price." All who have wandered from this household, and have become naked before God, return in the Lord's time from all their sinful wanderings, humbly acknowledge their transgressions, and buy this linen in the blessed name of him who pays all the debts of his people.

She who sells this fine linen also delivers girdles to the merchant. The girdle is important to those who need strength in their work; it enables one to bring all his strength into use. It was said of Jesus, in the work of salvation, that "righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins." So the girdle is delivered to the merchant for those who have need of it, and who have bought it in the name of Jesus. This girdle is also of linen; it is righteousness and faithfulness, and without it no one can possess any spiritual strength, and cannot stand before his enemies, but with this girdle on he can bear whatever trials and burdens are in store for him, and experience victory over all his enemies. Thus all the gifts, and helps, and graces, and all the spiritual clothing furnished by the heavenly Husband, are dispensed by the virtuous woman among all her household faithfully, as they are needed and called for. All the blessings of Jesus, all his restoring mercies, with all the Fatherly, loving chastisements, come to all who receive them, through the church. These things, this Husband says, I have spoken unto you in the churches. And again he says, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 10, 1910.

MANASSAS, Va., March, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It has been in my mind at times, since my severe sickness of last summer, to write to the readers of the SIGNS some of the reasons for the faith that is in me concerning the doctrine which is most surely believed among us, and which I have never heard questioned by any claiming to be Old School or Primitive Baptists, until com-

paratively recent years. While upon a bed of intense physical suffering it pleased God, I trust, to give me anew the anointing of his Spirit, and to fill my soul with his love, joy and peace to an extent I had not felt before in many years. His great and abounding grace towards his people, and to me, the most wretched and sinful of them all, and the most unworthy and unprofitable of all his servants, if indeed I am his servant, was felt with a comfort and peace indescribable. I could pray with all my heart and soul for any enemy I ever had, for those who hated me and cast my name out as evil, for had not God for Christ's sake forgiven me? My Savior seemed very near me, and filled my soul with great longing to do his people good, if that were possible, especially those who were "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." I prayed that he might bring them back to the shelter of the fold, from which they had so strangely wandered "upon the mountains, wild and bare, away from the tender Shepherd's care." This sentiment was constantly in my mind: Well hast thou known what sore temptations mean; such was thy love, and now, enthroned on high, the same compassion in thy bosom reigns. In these varied exercises of mind the sovereignty of God in its height, depth and beauty was shown to me as it seemed I had never seen or felt before. After many weary years, years of darkness of mind, of severe trials and conflicts, of infidel doubts and gloomy, distressing fears, my God came graciously near me again as my Comforter; he came in the word or doctrine of his own divine sovereignty over all worlds, beings and things, and my soul was at rest. That doctrine has been the "bread of life" to me ever since I had any life. What I mean by the "bread of life" to me is, it is something my soul craved or hungered for, loved, even when a child, and was satisfied with. If I was ever born of God, it was so early in life that I do not remember when the love of God was first shed abroad in my heart. It was my delight, even in childhood, to contemplate his attributes as I read of them in the Bible, for I loved to read that book, and as I heard my father and others talk of them. I loved to hear of God's perfections, and longed to be perfect as he is perfect. As I grew in stature and understanding the more forcibly I felt, If there is a God at all, he must be absolute in sovereignty, infinite, without limit, in all his perfections, his knowledge, his power, his justice, mercy, goodness, purity, truth; foreknowledge and predestination must be fundamental principles with him, so it always seemed to me. I never could worship a god other than the God of the Bible, who has all power in heaven, earth and hell, the God of the whole universe, who, when he had finished his work in creation, declared it all good. The fowls of the air, the fishes of the seas, the insect of a summer's day, the gentle lamb, the venomous reptile, the crooked serpent, and man, the crowning work of all, God pronounced good; that is, all, and each, perfectly adapted to the purpose for which they were created and made. In all the record God has given of his work there is no hint of any failure of any of his work to accomplish the purpose for which it was created, to impeach his wisdom in devising it, or his power in framing it. We read that all his works praise him. Concerning his people he says, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." Paul in his letter to the Colossians says, "For by

him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." We cannot conceive language more comprehensive; nor is there anything the mind can conceive as existing outside of this category, be it angel or devil, good spirits or evil spirits, physical or spiritual. To my mind this is a fundamental truth clearly laid down in God's word. I am sometimes impressed with the thought that these words of the apostle are not given the heed and importance belonging to them by many of our writers when discussing the subject of predestination. Another important thought to me is, that with God, in his relation to his works, there is no such thing as evil. It seems to my weak understanding that the God of the Bible, in surveying his universe from his high imperial throne, the work of his own hand, sees nothing otherwise than he would have it. "What his soul desireth, even that he doeth." Evil cannot dwell in eternity, God's habitation. We have no record of the existence of evil, or sin, until man appeared upon earth, formed of the dust of the earth. Of course I realize I am dealing with great mysteries, but I hope I seek to go no further than the plain declaration of God's word justifies. If there is anything my soul reverences it is God's word; I never could have felt such joy in these glorious truths did I not find them recorded in the Bible, that precious book. Another very comforting declaration to me is, He hath made us, and not we ourselves. Very many times I have found myself at variance with my Maker; I am prone to ask, "Why hast thou made me thus?" It is a great thing for me that at such times I am not finding fault with him, but with myself, and feel condemnation for what I see in myself, a seeming paradox, which I hope may appear less so as I proceed. I find the same lust working in me that our mother Eve exhibited when looking upon the forbidden fruit; to her it was pleasant to the eyes, good for food, and desirable to make one wise. Her sin or transgression was in working out what was in her nature, and also in that of her husband, Adam, for she was "flesh of his flesh." It seems plain to me that Adam, Eve being one with him and of him, being God's own work, soul, body and spirit, must have been in all respects just as he would have them, for he pronounced them good; not as he himself is good, for in that sense our Savior said, There is none good save God. But Adam was a good man and Eve was a good woman, a helpmeet for the man; they were good in that they were perfectly adapted to the purpose for which they were created and made. To my weak mind the proposition that man was made "able to stand, but liable to fall," contains an absurdity put forward to give the man a power and independence which I do not believe he possessed of himself. When the lusts of the flesh conceived they brought forth sin, is the record of inspiration. My firm conviction is that the lusts, the desires of the flesh and of the mind, are one and the same thing as the beguilings of the serpent, or Satan. The forbidden fruit was the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Reasoning after the dictates of the lusts, the desires of their flesh and mind, they say, By eating this fruit, which is so desirable, we not only satisfy our appetites, our desires, but we shall

become as gods, knowing good and evil. How can knowledge cause us to die as the Lord had said? They ate. What wonderful things are veiled in this peculiar language and figures of inspiration; God grant us his power to read them aright. What was the effect of eating? Their eyes were opened, and they perceived that they were naked. They were no more naked than they were before, but now they know it. A strange effect has the fruit of knowledge, and strange that knowledge must come through sin and transgression, and that in their innocency and guiltlessness they did not know good and evil, and that that knowledge must come through their disobedience and alienation from their God. Now we, the offspring of this earthly pair, partakers of their nature, know by experience something of the power of their temptation, and as Paul writes to the Ephesians, "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, * * * fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Can we believe for one moment that man, fulfilling the desires of his flesh and mind, disappointed his Maker and showed a disposition, a will, contrary to His purpose and expectations or will? No believer in God can think it. God's infinite wisdom is shown in the immutable law stamped upon all his works. Every tree must yield fruit after its kind. This is the law in the vegetable kingdom, there is no exception. In the animal kingdom every living creature shows its nature, the disposition given it, or stamped upon it in its creation. When the tiger leaps upon its prey, kills and devours it, be it the gentle doe or the inoffensive lamb, he merely shows the law of his being, the way his Maker ordained that he should support his life and satisfy his needs. When the deadly serpent darts his venomous fangs into the flesh of his victim, he obeys the same law to procure his food and defend himself from danger. Even so man, when he transgressed, worked out the desires, the cravings of his nature, but God distinguished him above any of his other creatures in giving him a commandment to practice self-denial, to refrain from the gratification of any of his desires or appetites. "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat." It would seem that for man and his predetermined destiny, as the language of Paul already quoted indicates, was the world created, and all therein contained. We read that Adam was made in the image of God, "the figure of him that was to come;" that is, the second Adam. The first Adam did not love the Lord with all his heart, all his mind and all his strength; that law was not stamped upon his being, nor written in his heart; but he loved the gratifications of his own fleshly desires, rather than the favor of his God, to be retained by obedience to the commandments, by denying his own lusts. When the "perfect man" appeared we hear him saying, "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." The love of God was the law of his life. I drop these hints in passing, for to me they are very instructive. We are told it was God's counsel that the "earthy" should first appear, afterwards the "heavenly." The earthy man showed his nature in disobedience to the commandment of his God and contempt for his law, so sin and its dire train of evil came into the world, for "sin

is the transgression of the law." Our comfort or joy is, as stated by the apostle, that "as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." Some one may say, If the above reasoning is correct, wherein does blame or responsibility rest upon the sinner? A great and continuing lesson that the Lord is teaching his people is contained in Joseph's words to his brethren when they stood before him trembling, self-condemned criminals: "Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it for good." I must quote further, for there is such depth of meaning and instruction for those who love the word of God: "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. * * * And God sent me before you, to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance." Joseph, like Job, attributes all the evil that came upon him to the handiwork of God in working out his own sovereign purpose of love and mercy to his beloved children. This is the law of the universe, that "all things work together for good to them that love God," in the final analysis. As I have already intimated, when I realize something of what I am, I am disposed to ask my Maker, "Why hast thou made me thus?" As driven back step by step from viewing the fruit to the tree, from the streams of sin and corruption to the fountain; in a word, from what I do, or say, or feel, to what I really am, and under the condemnation I feel for what I am, if there is any rest for me it is in the fact, He hath made me, and he knew what I would be and what I would do, "the steps that I take, and the station I fill," before I had a manifest being. Does this thought make me a bit better satisfied with myself? Not a whit. But I have a hope that when God's purposes concerning me are fulfilled, when I can believe in God, even for a moment, then I believe in the God of infinite love, and if I can feel for that moment his love shed abroad in my heart, then I can rest, and can say and feel that he doeth all things well. Strange and paradoxical as it seems, though I am all evil, and know it, yet no evil can come nigh my dwelling. Is it not wonderful that the "fires of hell" are burnings of God's love? "God is love," in heaven, in earth and in hell. The devouring flames, the everlasting burnings of the infinitely pure and holy love of God, consumes all evil and impurity. That is why hell is so terrible. That love burns to the lowest hell. There can be no fear of God where there is no love of God. Man in a state of nature is his own god, for there is no being in heaven or earth he loves above himself. If a man hates himself it is because the love of God in his Son Jesus Christ is revealed in him. God is manifest in the flesh by the mighty power of the love of God. Here are the two men manifested, the one "earthly, sensual, devilish," the other "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." The one a corruptible seed, hence a harvest of corruption springs from it, the other an incorruptible Seed, "the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever," whose harvest is "children of the resurrection," gathered out of the earth. Can a lover of God quarrel with these sublime truths? I think not.

It may be asked if I have not departed from my subject of predestination. I think not, but I have given some of the reasons for the faith that is in me. Jesus

says, "A garden inclosed" is my beloved. In the division of the earth by its owner God's portion was peculiarly set apart as his garden, we are told according to the numbers of the children of Israel. "The Lord's portion is his people." Now we know that the part of a man's farm set apart for the garden in no essential particular differs from the balance of the farm; the soil, its nature and products, are much the same. The purpose, wisdom and ability of the husbandman determines whatever difference there is between the appearance and fruit of the two portions. Whatever "fruit of the Spirit," whatever "fruit unto holiness" may appear in God's garden, his church, his people, and abound, it is of his own planting, the product of his husbandry. "I am the true vine, [says Jesus] and my Father is the husbandman." Of all his planting the love of God is the life. The apostle enumerates many of the fruits (works) of the flesh, which he says are manifest, and there is not one good one among them, not one well pleasing to God nor satisfying to his people, but rather hateful, poisonous, deadly. How terrible at times is the lesson I hope he teaches me, that "in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." Years ago my hopes were blasted by that teaching, and I was in despair; now I hope I can say with Paul, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." This is all my salvation and my hope. Now I wish to ask in all seriousness and humility, Is there anything inconsistent in the declaration, "The wicked shall do wickedly," inconsistent even to finite reason? Certainly we do not look for grapes from thorns, nor figs from thistles. Is it not absolutely determined, predestinated, that thorns shall bear thorns and fig trees shall bear figs? Infinite wisdom teaches that none of God's works are in vain, and that nothing exists or can exist independent of God and his purpose. Both the Bible and profane history are full of the record of the works of sinful men and evil spirits, all used by the mighty hand of him who, with unlimited sway in heaven, earth and hell, doeth all his pleasure and accomplishes his vast designs. The wrath of man shall praise him, the remainder of wrath he will restrain. "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther; and there shall thy proud waves be stayed." So has he set the bounds of iniquity. It would be necessary to transcribe a large part of the Bible, both the Old and the New Testaments, to enumerate the occasions and the manner of the use of evil spirits and sinful men, by the mighty hand of God, in working out his purposes of love and grace concerning his people. I would call attention briefly to the crowning work of the powers of darkness, the extreme limit to which wicked men and devils could go in fulfilling the purpose of God. I mean the persecution, the murder, the shameful murder of the dear Son of God, "the perfect man," the Savior of the world; all the wickedness that can be conceived dwelling in the heart of men and devils seemed concentrated in the work of persecuting, dishonoring, humiliating and casting out as evil and unfit to live the Holy One of God, the brightness of the Father's glory, the express image of his person, rejecting him who was sent unto them, and desiring a murderer in his stead. All this while, and at all times, we see him doing his Father's will, fulfilling the work he gave him to do, drinking the cup prepared for him. He addressed his murderers in that declaration so awful to my mind, and so significant of things I am

calling attention to, viz., "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." Add to this the travail of soul, the conflict with the very spirit of all evil in the belly (or midst) of hell, the tempter who overthrew the first Adam so easily, but who now is conquered and his kingdom destroyed. Now add to this the terrible scene upon the cross; I ask in all humility, Is not every link in the chain of manifest evil and wickedness, from the cause of the flight into Egypt of Joseph and the infant Jesus, all down through the thirty-three years of his life on earth, until death claimed him as its lawful victim, I ask with the deepest reverence, Is not all this the handiwork of God, devised by "his determinate counsel and foreknowledge," yet executed by evil men with wicked hands, which his omnipotence used as instruments of his work? I use this crowning example, for it sets forth clearly and unmistakably the doctrine we love. In it we can see only a part, of course, of the great handiwork of God in the redemption of his people. Before Jesus yielded up the ghost we hear him praying, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Here we get a glimpse of another power, far mightier than the power of darkness, the power of the love of God, "the power of an endless life," which brought our Lord again from the dead. But notice, as soon as God's purpose was fulfilled and the wicked hands of sinful men had crucified the Lord of glory, Joseph could go in boldly to Pilate and beg the body of Jesus, place it in his own new tomb, and there was not a dog to move his tongue, nor any one to ask, Why or what doest thou? An awful spell seemed upon that mad throng of bigotry and murder, but not a moment before their work was accomplished. A terrible day of evil, for which the wicked were created, we are told by inspiration.

I am making this article altogether too long to go into the details of the important points to which I can merely call attention. Coming to our individual experience, I wish to ask my tried brother or sister, Is there anything more effectual to bring you to the feet of Jesus, a humble suppliant for mercy, than the conscious knowledge of your sins and transgressions? Does not your God make your sins his rod and your transgressions correct you? How do you grow in grace and in the knowledge of your Savior, but by an increasing knowledge of your sin? and hence your greater need of that grace which abounds even to the chief of sinners. Study well, my brother, in this connection the example of Peter for instruction, and comfort, too, when under temptation. See Satan's inability to touch a hair of his head until he had received power of Jesus. See also how God used Satan in Peter's conversion. "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift thee as wheat." Satan seemed a very effective sieve in God's hand for that purpose. "And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren," were Jesus' words to the self-confident Peter. Remembering how Satan prevailed with him to the very point of fulfilling the words of Jesus to the very letter, and that beyond that point he could not go, we have an illustration of how God by his infinite wisdom and almighty power uses the sins, the depravity of his servants, for their own good, the good of his people, and his declarative glory. What depth of knowledge did Peter gain by his weak manifestation of the evil of his nature, and of the abounding grace and mercy of his Savior! His words burn like fire as the Spirit of God rests upon

him like cloven tongues. How many times has my soul been thrilled as I have read his words of divine eloquence on the day of Pentecost. The rod I speak of descends in love, everlasting love, so the apostle can say, The goodness of God leadeth you to repentance. Two great mysteries develop side by side, if I may so speak: "the mystery of godliness" and the "mystery of iniquity." I hope my brethren, if this article ever comes to their eyes, will not think I am so foolish and presuming in my old age that I undertake to solve either mystery. It is my utmost hope to point out some of my God's works in both mysteries, and wherein I have thought I have seen his glory revealed. God makes his glory known to his people by and in his works. "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handywork." His wonders are revealed in the depths, to those who do business in the deep waters, and go down to the sea in ships, like Jonah, as well as those who are caught up into paradise, and see things unlawful to utter, like the apostle Paul. It is in my little measure that the truth has been shown me, I trust, and I have tried in this writing to give a glimpse of how it has come to me, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, as I have been able in my great weakness and ignorance to bear it. I have not written in a spirit of controversy, but to help, if possible, some poor, perplexed souls to understand some of the perplexities of their experience, and justify the ways of God to men. If you see fit to give this a place in the SIGNS, I pray its readers to receive it in the spirit in which it is written.

Affectionately your brother in hope,

J. N. BADGER.

CHAPTER II.

"IN the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."—Gen. i. 1.

(Continued from page 200.)

The beginning here spoken of is the beginning of time, and before this beginning there was eternity, just as will be when this time world shall cease to be. Almighty God is eternal, and was the same before time began that he is now, and will be the same after time shall be no more; he is not affected by time and change as we are, since we are but creatures of time in the flesh, and while in nature we know but little of eternal things. When man is born into this world he is ignorant indeed of the things of this world, knowing nothing of the natural kingdom only as he is taught by nature and otherwise. Truly "vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt."—Job xi. 12. While with us time is flying fast, and we are hastening to the dust, yet with God there is no yesterday, no to-morrow, no past, no future, but one eternal now; with him one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. With God everything is present before him. Then, vain man, hide your face for shame for becoming so conceited as to believe for one moment that you can be of the least assistance in the salvation of souls, when that great work is eternal and was perfect in the purpose of God before this earth was created by him. Since we know so little, even of the mysteries of this (in God's sight) little world on which we live, after we have learned all we can of these natural or earthly things, we are no higher or nearer the kingdom of God than we were when we were delivered into this world. By our natural birth we were only the sons of our earthy head, Adam, and could not of ourselves rise above our head, for

God has enacted certain fixed laws, both natural and spiritual, to govern all things which he has created, and not one of these fixed laws can be altered or changed by us, such as the course of the sun, moon and stars, with the regular variation north and south, causing the change of seasons, spring, summer, autumn and winter, also day and night, and the mysterious attraction called gravitation, and that law that governs man and beast, the fowls of the air, the fishes of the sea and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, together with every plant and tree of the vegetable kingdom which God in his wisdom hath created, that everything shall bring forth after its kind, and all other things are equally fixed and we cannot alter one of his purposes. He is God, and changes not, and his work, like himself, is unchangeable, unalterable and infinitely perfect; nothing therefore can be added thereto or taken therefrom. "I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it that men should fear before him," that all these things should declare his glory and shew forth his handywork. All the divine Scriptures, together with all the redeemed of the Lord, and even the world and all therein, form one vast witness to the glory of God; even "the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain;" all things whatsoever come to pass are fulfilling his righteous purposes, from the perfume of the little flower, the song of the beautiful bird, to the wrath of man; from the voice of the tiny insect to the roar of the mighty thunder, the disaster of the awful cyclone, even the rushing of the waves of the troubled ocean, all obey his command and all declare his glory and shew his handywork. This doctrine, which every heaven-born soul loves, is in harmony with the following Scriptures: "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places. He causeth the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth: he maketh lightnings for the rain: he bringeth the wind out of his treasuries."—Psalms cxxxv. 6, 7. "The Lord shall rejoice in his works. He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth: he toucheth the hills, and they smoke."—Psalms civ. 31, 32. Also see Jeremiah x. 13; li. 16. "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things."—Isaiah xlv. 7. There are many other Scriptures just as clear to which I could refer, but do not deem it necessary. This may be called by some absolutism. Well, that is what I call it, and that is what I believe, for the Scriptures teach nothing else. But "thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? [why doth he condemn any one?] for who hath resisted his will? Nay [no one has ever resisted his will] but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"—Romans ix. 19, 20. All these things declare his glory and shew his handywork.

According to the law of gravitation, mentioned above, a fountain cannot rise above its head in and of itself; so we, being of the first man Adam, who is of the earth earthy, cannot rise above earthy things of ourselves, and in order to attain unto higher things we must be born of the second man Adam, who is the Lord of glory; we must be born in the kingdom of heaven, the new Jerusalem, which is not in bondage. The following poem expresses some of my thoughts, and is in

accord with my understanding of the Scriptures:

"Jehovah in council resolved to fulfill
The scheme from eternity laid in his will;
A scheme too profound for seraphs to pry,
And all for the lifting of Jesus on high.

'Twas not from the creature salvation took place,
The whole was of God, to the praise of his grace,
And all to his glory shall attend by and by,
To accomplish the lifting of Jesus on high.

His wisdom contrived the adorable plan,
Grace, mercy and peace, and good will toward man;
The great Three-in-one did the same ratify,
And all for the lifting of Jesus on high.

Here all the perfections of Deity shine:
Love, wisdom and power, and goodness divine;
His justice and grace were honored thereby;
'Twas all for the lifting of Jesus on high.

When first the great project to angels was known,
They hailed him in songs as the Lamb on the throne;
The concave of heaven resounds with their cry;
God-man, Mediator, they lift him on high.

Creation proclaims the great work of thy hand,
All beings and things in the order they stand;
Productions by chance we are led to deny—
'Twas made for the lifting of Jesus on high.

All things for his sake did Jehovah prepare,
For of him and to him and through him they are;
All systems and worlds that revolve in the sky,
Were made for the lifting of Jesus on high.

Set up as the head of his mystical frame,
He honored the records of fate with his name,
And nothing was wanting which God could supply
To aid the uplifting of Jesus on high.

When man was created what wisdom we see,
The whole he possessed was the image of thee;
But O, in his fall we are led to espy
'Twas all for the lifting of Jesus on high.

When Adam to eat of the fruit was inclined,
It answered the end which Jehovah designed;
No purpose of wisdom was altered thereby,
'Twas all for the lifting of Jesus on high.

Here Satan was nonplussed in what he had done;
The fall wrought the channel where mercy should run
In streams of salvation, which never run dry,
And all for the lifting of Jesus on high.

From hence it appears he made nothing in vain,
For Adam thus formed was a link in the chain;
In him 'twas decreed that his members should die,
And all for the lifting of Jesus on high.

The man that betrayed him prediction foretold
The pieces of silver for which he was sold;
To prove his salvation the world we defy,
He fell for the lifting of Jesus on high.

The law that was given on Sinai of old,
Was still the great mercy and love to unfold,
Which did in the womb of eternity lie,
And all for the lifting of Jesus on high.

In fullness of time he came under the law,
Its jots and its tittles he answered we know,
And stretching his arms, did on Calvary die,
To accomplish his lifting to glory on high.

He slept in the tomb till the morning arose
That signed his release and confounded his foes,
Then bursting its bars he ascended the sky,
To reign in his glory eternal on high."

"And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep."—Gen. i. 2. Imagine the condition of the earth at this time; there was no sun, moon or stars, but the whole world was enshrouded in darkness and covered with dark waters; it was void of man, beast or bird, neither was there any green thing there. "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." O how desolate the earth would be to-day in the absence of all things which God created and placed here, which shew his handywork. But he began the work, and there is none to hinder him, for he worketh alone with his own mighty power. We hear him saying, "Let there be light: and there was light."—Gen. i. 3. However desolate and dreary this might appear to us, this is the very condition of the hearts of all natural men and women before God quickens them into divine life by shining in their hearts. The prophet says, "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." It is only to the chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world that this divine life and light shall come. When it is with their hearts as it was with this world before God commanded, saying, "Let there be light," Paul calls it "dead in sins," and indeed it is; no form or

comeliness in that heart of stone, no grace, no love, no fruit of the Spirit, no Sun of Righteousness, but all is one dark mass of sin and folly; there is no living thing there, no binding faith, all is death. This was our condition before God began the good work in us, for we were by nature the children of wrath, even as others; but hear the voice saying unto you, "Let there be light: and there was light." Paul tells us that "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts." This hard and stony heart is softened, broken up, and is no longer void, for we are now given a heart of flesh, which will bring forth fruits meet for repentance. We now bear the fruits of holiness, and in our hearts is the voice of melody, the singing of birds in our land, the Sun of Righteousness has arisen in our hearts, and we enjoy the great sabbath of the Lord, that rest which remaineth to the people of God, where we for ever rest from the labor of the law, for we are no more under law, but under grace; the Son hath made us free, and we are free indeed; the law dispensation is now ended with us, and a new day hath taken its place. Perhaps you, dear child of God, may have imagined that all your nights of trouble and sorrow were passed and gone, that all your days would be happy days of peace; but this was not so, for in the world ye shall have tribulation, you shall be hated of men, you shall be buffeted by that awful thorn in the flesh, but the grace of God is sufficient for you. You must follow wherever you are led, whether it be by the side of still waters and in the pastures of his love and to his banqueting-house, or through fiery trials, through deep and stormy paths, into the den of lions; but fear not, for you are led by the Spirit of God, and are therefore sons of God, hence are not bastards, and he that leadeth you is all-powerful, and is able and will care for you, for "if God be for us, who can be against us?" He will lead you in paths of righteousness for his name's sake, and will never let you perish, but will lead you as seemeth good in his sight, through every trial to perfect victory, only trust in him who doeth all things well. When he found Jacob in this condition he led him about and instructed him, and he is leading you all, dear children of God, about and instructing you with the rod of his love, teaching you in this way to declare his glory, teaching you to praise his holy name, weaning you from this vain world and all its allurements, bringing you to his banqueting-house, where his banner over you will be love. O what a wonderful banner is over God's little ones, the banner of his everlasting love, and because he has loved you with an everlasting love, with loving-kindness he hath drawn you, called you out of darkness into his marvelous light, that you should shew forth his praises: declare his glory.

(To be continued.)

WALKER, Ore., Feb. 23, 1910.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—Your editorial in February 15th number of our dear old family paper appeals very forcibly to me, and many things are made fresh in my mind. First, I must say, I have been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, more or less regularly, for about twenty-four years, and have found but very little, if anything, in it with which I could not heartily agree. I have very much enjoyed reading after the several editors who have been called to the work, and also the long list of correspondents whose names appear in each

December 15th number. I have written very seldom, for fear of crowding out better matter, and each time have been surprised to see my article published. I have found your writing very much to my comfort, and have often felt sorry when I failed to see "K" at the finish of the editorials. Elder Chick's writings also have much comforted me, and many others in our far distant corner of the United States. Perhaps your preface to February 15th editorial partly explains why we have not seen more from your pen. We know it were better for us that a millstone were tied about our neck, and that we were cast into the midst of the sea, than that we should offend one of God's little ones. This is part of the fear that both David and Solomon had in mind when they said, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." When my mind is exercised on these things I am not surprised that our dear Elder Morningstar is often reminded to say, Tread softly, for the place whereon thou walkest is holy ground. This fear that is the beginning of wisdom is not only felt by His little ones when their eyes are first opened to a faint knowledge of his mighty power, but it goes with them, and increases the more as we learn of his wonders. Thus we hear the silvery haired fathers and mothers in Israel say, I thought I would grow better, but the longer I live the more I realize my shortcomings. And the dear inspired writer says, "I cannot attain unto it." God's little ones who have this fear in their hearts, and thus are given a measure of repentance and humility, have love and fellowship for all who are likewise led.

I am not surprised at your complaint that the spirit of division and strife is abroad in the land; it is not only abroad, but it is in yourself and every heaven-born child. Indeed we are, and must be, thankful that we are in a warfare in which there is no discharge as long as we are the battleground of the flesh and the Spirit; so much so that the children of Israel, who had suffered the terrible bondage of Egypt, had a desire to return to it for the sake of the fleshpots, but God had enlisted them in the march to Canaan. Paul, who perhaps was our greatest example of gospel ministry, met often with strife and contentions, as evidenced by his many admonitions against these things, and it was with him as I said of you and all who are born of the Spirit, a hard striving, a mighty battle, to do the things he would, and not do the things he would not, until we, with him, are made to cry out in deep anguish of spirit, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" My dear brother, this is the only discharge from this warfare. God's ways are as high above our ways as the heavens are above the earth. Many of his servants have great depression of spirit, and cause for grief, but when the warfare in each lump of clay is so great, should we wonder that it is distressingly great in many earthen vessels? The good Shepherd faithfully warned us of these things. We are not equal to these things, but our great Mediator tells us the hairs of our head are all numbered, and we are glad he has fought our battles for us.

Again, when you say, "There seems to be a falling away in every part of the earth where the truth is known," it reminds me of the great prophet Elijah. Should we not take courage when in tribulation to find God's dear servants of old endured the same? In 1 Kings xix. 10–13, Elijah

expressed your feelings, and more, when he said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thine prophets with the sword: and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount [Horeb], before the Lord. And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave." Have not the adversaries of the truth ever hissed great torrents of wind, shaken the earth, produced fire, compassed land and sea to make many proselytes, and made them worse than themselves, who have been turned into angels of light, deceiving, and if it were possible would deceive even the very elect? But the Lord is not in all this rushing, mighty wind, this shaking of the earth, this imaginary fire. It is the still small voice that denotes the presence of the Lord, and causes those who have his fear in their hearts to cover their eyes and cry, Unclean, unclean; he quietly speaks, and it stands fast, commands, and it is done. He said to Elijah, and to you, in the eighteenth verse of the same chapter, "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him."

The dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES has often reminded me of the Lord's still small voice, the patient, humble and unwavering spirit with which he has endowed its writers, the calm with which it has stood in many a raging, mighty wind of false doctrine, the shaking of all earthly religion, the fire of persecution and poverty, ever the still, small, unshaken advocate of God's wonderful grace. Yes, from its first issue it has been in the storm center of, and attacked by many high aspiring brethren and enemies, boasting of greater numbers, financial support and many other marks of the "beast." It has thus been God's small voice to many of his Zion, to whom it has spoken comfortably, and cried to Jerusalem that her warfare is accomplished. This may not be food to those who only have an ear to hear the great earthly commotion of wind, earthquakes and fire, but the poor man who cries, "God be merciful to me a sinner," is often reminded of good news from a far country, as of cool water to a thirsty soul, even as Isaiah: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price." "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people," preach the gospel, Christ and him crucified, unto every creature. Let him that lacketh wisdom ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not. Then we poor weaklings of the flock are constrained to say, All his ways are ways of peace. Can we not of a truth see all his works praise him? Isaiah lv. 12: "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace:" and see the mountains and the hills break forth before us into singing, and all the trees of the field clap their hands. And again with the same dear old servant: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of

him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"—Isaiah lii. 7. Also when we are crushed with many doubts and fears for the welfare of Zion let us read Isaiah liii. 3–6: "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and [O shame] we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. * * * The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." A picture that reminds us that we are not our own, but mercifully bought with a price no mortal can comprehend. Can we not feel assured that the wrath of man shall praise God, and the remainder of the wrath will he restrain? So far as I know, the Lord has thus far spared the Baptists in these parts from very much strife at present, and no doubt will, if we are prompted to the more than worthy task of singing God's praise.

Dear brother, you are several years my senior, both naturally and spiritually, and I have not the desire, neither the ability, to instruct you in the school of the Lord. I only had these things in my mind, and felt perhaps God would bless them to your comfort, by way of stirring up your pure mind to the memory that many of his servants have been tried in the same furnace of affliction; also knowing you have the spirit of charity, to kindly consign this to the wastebasket if it is not profitable.

Your unworthy brother, I hope,

G. O. WALKER.

[WE very much appreciate the foregoing kind letter from brother Walker, and thank him for his encouraging words reminding us of the discouragements, conflicts and persecutions of those in olden times, and of the faithfulness to the Lord of his servants then and since.—K.]

PRINCETON, Ky., Jan. 10, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—If one such as I am dare thus address you. If the Lord will, and you can spare the space in your valuable paper, I wish to reply to many requests for me to write my experience. I must say I am much in doubt if I have an experience of grace at all, as it seems to me at times that surely the Lord's wrath is poured out upon me, and I am only laboring under a strong and wretched delusion, but God is just in all he doeth. Dear and faithful in the Lord, I have said I would not write my experience until I found one who had walked the road I had walked, but alas for me, I have asked many brethren and sisters, and read and searched many papers to find some one who had an experience like mine, if mine can be called an experience of grace, but for the past fourteen years I have failed. I have always felt ashamed to tell the dealings of the Lord with me, or else I was afraid I would be laughed at. O that I knew it is of the Lord, then I could feel more confident; but the Lord willing, I will tell what I hope he showed me, and then you can judge for yourself whether I am deluded or not. I used to be very wicked, and thought nothing of it. I cared nothing for church or church people. I was made to see myself a wretched sinner when I had an oath on my tongue, and for three years and a half I know I was the most wretched man that ever lived. I would try to stop cursing,

but I could not; I would get so angry, then I would cry about it. I would make resolutions and break them; and so I continued on for three and a half years in this wretched state of mind, until the fall of 1896, when I felt if I did not get relief I must go to torment. O children of God, if I could have died, but no, I could not die. I often thought of destroying myself. About this time there was a meeting going on at the Presbyterian meetinghouse in town, and one of my friends asked me to attend. I was like a drowning man, grasping a straw; I thought, If I could only hear some good man preach I might get relief. I felt impressed to go, so I told my wife, and asked her to go, too. She seemed surprised, and made excuses, but I insisted, so we went. As the preacher seemed to have no mind to preach, he put in his time telling the members they were in the way of sinners, and then he called on an old man to pray. This man was of a stammering tongue, and had a whining voice, so when he began to pray I thought his feelings were hurt because of what the preacher had said, and that he was crying. As he prayed he said, "Lord, if we are in the way of any sinner in this house, take us out." Dear child of God, you can imagine my feelings at that moment; to think I was the worst sinner in the world, and here was a poor old man asking God to cast him out if he was in the way of sinners, so I determined in myself that as soon as he stopped praying I would get out, for I did not want to be in the way of good christian people, and as soon as he stopped praying I picked up my hat and started to leave the house. At this point I lost control of myself, for instead of leaving the house as I desired and intended to do, I found myself up at the pulpit shaking hands with the preacher, and asking him to pray for me. He told me he would, and told me to sit down on the mourners' bench. I looked at the bench and felt lost in despair, for I felt there could be no relief there for me; so I sat down at the end of the front bench that several old ladies were sitting on, and there I beheld a sight I shall never forget. I lost all knowledge of myself and surroundings, my eyes were fixed on a horrible pit, and in this pit of fire I saw men and women alive and burning in the flames, and I felt myself slowly slipping into that pit. I resolved to make one more effort to get away. At this point the preacher put his hand on my shoulder and asked me if I felt Jesus was my friend. I told him no, that I had no friend on earth or in heaven. O children of God, that was my feeling about myself. The preacher turned from me and said, "You will come around all right." I said, "Yes, in hell," for that was my feeling, that I had sinned away my day of grace, and now I must be lost forever, and I felt sure I must go into that horrible pit of fire alive and burn forever. I thought, If I could but die first, it would be some relief, but no, I felt sure I must go to hell alive; so while I looked into that horrible fire my sins came up before me like a great mountain of smoke, black as tar, and I was made to feel that God was just in condemning me and casting me into that pit; but I made an attempt to rise to my feet, and as I did so a great weight seemed to fall on me, and I was crushed down again. Then I gave up, to go into the pit of fire alive, and I saw myself go down; but at this point I felt something take hold of me and lift me upon my feet, and I looked, and there seemed to be a screen stretched across the house from one side to the other, and

through that screen I could see sparks like diamonds glittering here and there about over the congregation, and a voice said, All who see this are saved. I at once threw up my hand and cried out, Come up here everybody, for I wanted every one to see it; I thought they would be saved. But at this point I seemed to awake out of a trance, and people were crowding around me, shaking my hand and crying, even to the preacher. Words are inadequate to express my feelings, I felt so happy, and I went right to work to save sinners, and did all I could do to get them to come up and be saved, but I found only a few who would come, and I worked so hard. I thought if they would only come up to the altar and see what I saw they would be saved, so I worked that night, and the second night, and the third night, but at the close of the meeting the third night I was in doubt about the Lord being in the matter, as everybody seemed so cold and unconcerned about their salvation, so I blamed our failure to the lack of prayer, and on my way home I decided to have every christian in the congregation all pray at once, and we would drive sin out of every sinner in the house. At this point it seemed something said to me, You think there is power in prayer, why do you not get it and cast sin out of people yourself? Then and there I accepted the proposition, and commenced praying to God to give me the power that I might cast sin out of the people. I know you will say I was very ignorant, and so I was, but I did not know it then, for I truly believed it could be done, so I went home and continued praying, and after my wife had gone to bed and was asleep I kept praying in my heart for power to cast sin out of the people. Near midnight I laid down on my bed, still trying to pray; I do not know how long I had been lying there, but my eyes were directed to the east wall of my house; the room was so dark that nothing could be seen, yet there appeared a very black round spot, and in the center a small bright light shone through it, and the light kept expanding until it became as perfect a circle as the moon, and of the brightest gold color; I cannot describe its beauty to me. Suddenly it stopped expanding, and there appeared Christ's face in the circle. I thought, O my joy is full. He seemed very calm, and as I looked I saw his face had never been shaved; the beard was very light in color, and on his chin it seemed to be about an inch in length; the hair on his head was light in color, and on his head was a wreath of plaited thorns, and one thorn had pierced the top of his face. O how I wanted to speak to him; I felt if I could I would give the world, but I could not open my mouth. At this point his lips parted, and I heard these words: The power is in me, and not in man, and suddenly all vanished. I cast my eyes toward the window, and it seemed to be all aflame. I was frightened, for I thought my barn was on fire; I jumped up, and as I did so I realized that all was dark and still. I then laid down again, and as I did so there appeared a vile looking man standing at the foot of my bed with a broad grin on his face, making fun of me; he seemed to me the image of Satan. When I awoke the next morning I was at peace with all the world. I awakened my wife, and asked her to tell me her experience. I felt ashamed to ask her, for I had many times made fun of her experience before I became concerned myself, but now I desired to have her tell it to me, after which we both rejoiced. All the morning it was joy and gladness with me;

everything seemed to be praising God, and I could not keep my mouth shut, and was talking with every one I met about the wonderful works of God; but I would take no more part in the work of trying to save sinners, for I had lost all desire to do so. About this time I met one of the Presbyterian preachers on the street, and he asked me to join with them, and, after some talk on the subject, he said to me, "That is Hardshell doctrine you are advocating." I did not know what he meant by the term "Hardshell," for I had never heard it before. He told me the Hardshells were very ignorant people, and preached pernicious doctrines, so I did not want to get in with them. All with whom I talked called me a Hardshell, until one day I met a Predestinarian Baptist and talked with him, and we agreed in our conversation, so I felt that he was my brother, and I loved to be with him. I asked him where I would find a church of that kind of belief, and he told me to go to Cerulean Springs, there I would find a people who believed as I did; so I became very anxious to go, but as it was seventeen miles from my town my wife and I decided we would go on the train. When we arrived at the place it was about meeting time, and several had gathered for service. At this point I almost lost hope, for I had been raised in the city, and never was used to being in country churches, so imagine my feelings when I saw my first Old Baptist churchhouse and people. I could hardly believe it was a churchhouse, and when we entered it O how my poor little hope fell to the lowest ebb. I felt I had thrown away carfare to come to such a place. I sat down in a back seat and took a look at the people up in front, who I supposed were the members of the church, the brethren on one side and the sisters on the other. O what feelings I had about them; I thought I never saw such ugly people in my life, they had no pride or style, and all seemed to be so common; no organ, no choir, no fine pulpit, no nice seats; in fact I felt sure I had made a big mistake in coming to such a place to find the truth preached as I believed it; but at this point one of the men arose and said, "We are expecting brother Carnell with us to-day, and we will wait awhile," and he sat down. They then began to sing; at first I thought they did not know how to sing, but they sang, "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound! that saved a wretch like me." You cannot imagine my feelings, it was as if heaven had opened and angels were singing, and I was made to weep. At this point the door opened, and in came a young man with a smooth face, about my own age, and up to the front he went and spoke to some of the members, and then into the pulpit. My hopes fell again as I looked at him, for I thought he was too young to preach, and I preferred to hear an old man preach. He picked up the Bible and, it appeared to me, just let it fall open, and read this verse: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." This preacher's name is W. I. Carnell, and my eyes were fixed on him at once, as I was greatly interested to know what he could do with such a text. He began to speak, and his preaching was so different from what I was used to hearing that I was astonished, and more so because he stood there and preached just what I believed; he preached the doctrine of predestination of all things, just what I had been called a "Hardshell" for believing, and for talking it in my town. I had never before heard it preached, and yet I had been talking it

to my friends for a month, or at least from the night I saw Christ's face, and my friends said I was crazy, and called me a "Hardshell," and I thought that perhaps I had gone crazy, but here was a man telling it with boldness and great power just as I believed it. O how I wanted to jump up and go to him and tell him how I loved him, but I was afraid to do so. What a mystery it was to me, to see a perfect stranger stand there and tell me just what I believed; I thought surely some one had told him what I believed. When he stopped preaching I turned my eyes on the members, and what a change had taken place; it seemed to me all the ugly looking people had disappeared, and their places were occupied by a different looking people. That to me was a mystery; their faces seemed to shine with joy, gladness and brotherly love, and I thought they were the best people I ever set eyes on, and I found myself wanting to join them, but did not know how to do so, for I had never seen any one join the church, and I had been told by my Arminian friends that it was easier to get into heaven than it was to get into the Old Baptist Church, so I did not know what to do, for such a strong impression took hold of me to join them that I felt if I did not I would surely see the wrath of God again poured out upon me. O how I feared God; what should I do? At this point I rose to my feet and said, I have been for some time searching for the people who believe and preach the truth, and I believe I have found them. I could say no more, all was dark, and my mind a blank, and I felt I was lost. I sank back in my seat, but at this point dear Elder D. R. Turner came and spoke to me, and my hope revived, and the next thing I realized I was up in front, full of joy and praising God for his wonderful mercy to poor me; I felt I was in a heavenly place, and God was in the midst. I have ever since loved to talk and write of the mercy, power and wonderful works of God to the children of men. My dear wife came forward at the same time and was also received, and dear brother Turner baptized us, and so we became members of the Muddy Fork Church. I often feel to be in the way of others, and for the past fourteen years I have gone through many hard trials and afflictions. I have had the finger of scorn pointed at me, and many hard things said about me, but I hope for the truth's sake, yet out of it all the Lord has delivered me, and I trust he will deliver me, but, dear children of God, I so often get down in the valley of despair I am made to fear that this is all a delusion, God only knows; but, after all, if God at last casts me off, and I fall into that pit of fire, I feel to say, God is just and holy, and what he does is right, so if I am saved it must be alone by the mercy of the all-wise and all-powerful God, who doeth all things well. May God guide, direct and keep all his jewels in faith and love. When he comes to make up his jewels shall I see him? shall I be like him? Then shall I be satisfied.

Dear household of faith, remember poor me when you pray, as a servant in bonds and afflictions.

C. K. HAINES.

CENTERBURG, Ohio, Jan. 24, 1910.

DEARLY BELOVED EDITORS:—I am receiving a number of what are to me excellent letters, and will send you one I received from a dear sister who moved to this State from Nebraska. She learned of me through the SIGNS, our dear family paper. There are no Baptists near her, and she is very lonely. We can visit

each other when the weather is pleasant. She has lived in this State two years or more, and just learned of me last fall. I feel very unworthy of the love and loving words of my many dear friends asking me to write, but I am not able to write much. Wherein I have ever been able to say a comforting word to any dear one it has been given me of dear Jesus, for I am not able of myself to even think a good thought, but by the help of Jesus I have been telling what I hope he has done for me for over forty years. I am now weak and feeble in my earthly body, but I do not get tired talking of Christ. It is a great comfort to me to read the good letters of all the dear saints.

With love to all the dear ones, I will bid you adieu, hoping you will remember unworthy me in my weakness.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

(MRS.) SARAH C. BOYD.

CROTON, Ohio, Nov. 27, 1908.

MRS. S. C. BOYD—DEAR SISTER:—Something seems to make me want to write to you of myself. I think of you much, and wish I lived nearer you, for I want to see you. It seemed to me when I first saw you coming down the steps to meet me that my heart went out in love to you, and I wanted to throw my arms around you and tell you of my troubles. It seems that I have many dark days of doubt and fear; I go mourning and groping in darkness most of my time, and asking myself, What hope have I in Christ Jesus? I do so long to hear the gospel preached. I enjoyed my visit much with you; your talk of Jesus was like manna to my hungry soul.

In Stanton County, Nebr., when about sixteen years of age, I was troubled about my condition. I felt wretched and lost, and wanted to join the Baptist Church, to which my father, mother, some aunts and uncles belonged. I cannot explain how I felt, only that I was made to weep and cry. I could not tell the church much, but was received, and baptized by Elder McKnight in the fellowship of Pleasant Run Church, at Stanton. I felt so great a sinner I did not think they could receive me into the church, but they did, and I was very happy when I came up out of the water. I have always tried to live right, but often it seems to me that I have strayed from the right path. I used to go to meeting and would want to get up and ask the dear brethren and sisters to pray for me, but I never could get to my feet to ask them; not that I was ashamed of my Lord, for I am not, I wish I could tell the whole world of my Savior. I often try to pray when alone. It seems that I cannot speak when I would like, the tears come unbidden, and my tongue refuses to speak. When I met Elder Beadle at Mr. Perfect's I began to say to him that it had been a long while since I had been to a Baptist meeting, but I had only begun speaking when I broke down and had to stop talking or cry. I wonder why it is; is it because I am such a sinner? I know I love the dear Old Baptist people; wherever I meet them they seem very dear to me.

"Sometimes my hope's so little,
I almost lay it by;
Sometimes it seems sufficient
If I were called to die;
Sometimes I am in doubting,
And think I have no grace;
Sometimes I am a shouting,
And Bethel is the place."

I think these words express my feelings. I love the Baptists and want to be with them, to hear their preaching and hear them talk of Jesus.

I wonder how my letter sounds to you; I have wanted to write to you, I do not

know why. I felt that I ought to try to tell what I think the Lord has done for me, or tell what is my experience of the Lord's dealings with me. We are poor in this world's goods, and have no home of our own, but I would not give my little hope of life eternal for everything money can buy, for I think it is not with joy and happiness we enter heaven, but through much tribulation.

I feel you will understand this letter; I could not tell you as well as I can write. I ask an interest in your prayers. I want you to come and see me, if the ride will not be too much for you.

Yours with love,

(MRS.) HAYES MITCHELL.

OAKFORD, Ill., Nov. 25, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —I have done without the dear old SIGNS a long time, feeling I was not able to pay for it, but I have had the pleasure of reading dear sister Bone's SIGNS, but being away from her now I will send one dollar to pay for the paper six months. I miss the good editorials and letters, as I have not read the SIGNS for six months, and I miss it much. Often when I felt that I was the worst of all who claim to be the followers of the meek and lowly Lamb, I would read a letter from some dear one feeling just as I felt, and I would feel that I was not alone in my awful feeling of unworthiness. I try to live as Paul says, that I may not be a castaway. The love for my Lord and Savior, and desire to honor, praise and adore him for what he has done for me, prompt me to try to serve him, and to beg for grace to enable me to walk lowly before him. We are commanded in the Bible to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, and we are commanded, or exhorted, to go to the throne of grace to find help in time of need, and O, I feel that every hour is a time of need, and when I feel his blessed grace in my heart I cannot murmur, even when sore trials weigh me down. When grace is in my heart it dispels the dark clouds that hover over me; when they gather around me I can see nothing but my own unworthiness, and, like Paul, I cry, O wretched one that I am! But when I feel his blessed grace in my soul I can sing:

"And lest the shadow of a spot
Should on my soul be found,
He took the robe the Savior wrought,
And cast it all around."

I cannot see how any claiming to be Baptists can feel that they merit anything by their good works, when it is grace that produces good works. Can we claim any merit for what grace does for us? Jesus says that after we have done all, we are to say we are unprofitable servants, we have only done that which was our duty to do. It is our duty to go to him for grace to enable us to humble ourselves before him.

Brother Chick, I did not think I would write much, but my mind has run on. When I begin to write of God's grace I can hardly stop, but I must, for I do not want to weary you with my poor writing, for I know you have an arduous task; but you have been faithful, and have conducted the SIGNS as ably as the editors before you. Two or three years ago I read some SIGNS printed fifty years ago, and I saw no difference between them and now. The Lord will uphold you and continue to give you the good judgment you have manifested, and the presence of his Holy Spirit to comfort his people with the same comfort wherewith you are comforted. I feel that I would love to talk to the dear saints of our dark seasons, and of our hope of heaven, and the joy that our hope gives us while it is our dear Lord's will to leave us here in this world of sorrow.

SOPHRONIA B. THOMPSON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1910.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—If not asking too much, will you or brother Ker give your views upon the blood of Christ through the SIGNS? Is there any more efficacy in the blood of Christ than there was in the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer, which were slain upon Jewish altars? If not, what was this blood shed for, seeing that God never does anything in vain? If there be no more efficacy in the blood of Christ than there was in the blood of bulls and goats, what does Peter mean when he says, "Forasmuch as we know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot"? Also this language in Revelation, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood"? Also the following language: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace"?

Your brother, D. S. KOONTZ.

ASHLAND, Ill., Jan. 16, 1910.

We can know no more concerning the efficacy of the blood of Christ, as compared with the Jewish offerings under the old covenant, than what inspiration itself testifies, and the testimony of Paul is, "If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"—Heb. ix. 13, 14. This one Scripture covers all the ground of our brother's first inquiry, Wherein does the blood of Christ exceed in efficacy the blood of bulls and goats? The one is the Son of God, the others were brute beasts. The one sanctified only to the purifying of the flesh, the other to the purging of the conscience. The one could not purge from dead works, nor could it atone for sin, neither could it cleanse the conscience so that there should be peace there; the other did purge from sin, and give the guilty conscience ease. The one was purely a ceremony, and wrought out only a ceremonial cleansing; that is, it wrought no cleansing of the heart or of the mind, and no reconciliation to God in the soul of the offender. The sacrifices of the old covenant were never intended to put away sin, but they were representations of that one Sacrifice which could and did put away sin. When a Jew had sinned against the law of Moses, either in breaking any one of the ten commandments or in violating any of the ceremonies and rituals enjoined upon him by the same law, until the prescribed form of cleansing had been gone through with he was shut out from the privileges of that worldly sanctuary. He could be permitted to enjoy them again only when, by the prescribed sacrifices and washings of the body, he had become symbolically or ceremonially clean. But that cleansing did not involve any change of heart or feeling; if he had loved his sin before, he loved it just the same afterward. All the ceremonials did not bring the slightest spiritual good to him, but the blood of Christ did actually put away sin in the sight of God, and when by faith that sinner was enabled to see Jesus as the atoning Sacrifice for him then he would feel at peace with God. Through a view

of Christ by faith he would see that his sins were actually put away, and that nothing stood between him and that God against whom he had sinned. The one was a mere form in and of itself, yet it pointed to the great sacrifice of the Lamb of God, which was not a mere form, but a solemn reality. As our brother has said, if there be no more efficacy in the one than in the other, there was no need of the blood of Christ being shed, as the blood of bulls and of goats would have answered just as well; but surely our God does not do anything in vain. It is sure that if the blood of bulls and goats possessed the same efficacy that the blood of Christ possessed, then Christ died in vain. If forms could reconcile men to God, what need was there of the paying of so great a price? But because these forms could not purge the conscience there must be a Sacrifice found that could purge the conscience. It is true that if forms could do this the Scriptures to which our brother refers could have no meaning at all. It may seem, and it is, a great mystery how one could make atonement for others. It is a great mystery that the blessed Lord should come in human flesh at all, that the Holy One should be born of the virgin Mary, that he should tabernacle with men, that he should finally die and then rise again from the dead, and that his death should be a full atonement for our sins, and that his resurrection should be for our justification. But these things the Scriptures declare, and they are true whether we believe them or not. Convicted sinners come to know that these things are true, and that in them alone is salvation, as the word of God declares.

But there are a few thoughts and questions concerning the atonement of which we will here speak. Men of the world, who never knew what it was to feel themselves to be what all men by nature are, sinners against God, with no good thing to plead in all their lives, or in their whole being, have laughed at the doctrine of atonement; that is, that Christ died, and by his death wrought out atonement for the sins of men. They mock at the doctrine of imputed sin and imputed righteousness alike. They seek to stigmatize the Bible doctrine of the atonement, as putting it upon the low ground of a mere commercial transaction; that is, that for so much sin so much payment was demanded. It is asserted by such unbelievers that the death of Christ was not an atonement in the proper sense of the word, but that our God only made an exhibition of his holiness and his indignation against sin through the death of Christ. But it is sure, whether the atonement taught in the Scriptures be commercial in its nature or not, that Christ did die for our sins according to the Scriptures, and it is sure that his death did satisfy the righteous judgment of God, and that by it men who were condemned to death now live forever. Let men call this by whatsoever name of reproach they may, let them urge that it is impossible, that it is contrary to right reason, all that they will, and that there is no such thing as the payment of a debt in the death of Christ, nevertheless this is the teaching of the word of God, and it is, and has been, the hope of millions of living and dying saints in all ages of the world.

It has been also asked, Was the efficacy of the blood of Christ sufficient for all men? Concerning this it need only be said that had it been the will of our sovereign God that all men should reap the benefits of his blood, that blood would have saved all men; but this was not the

will of God. Here election comes in. The election obtains the blessing; that is, in the atonement. Of this we are sure, because the Bible so declares. Why then ask whether that blood could have been a sufficient atonement for all, seeing that it was not intended for all? It is sufficient for all for whom Christ died. Is not that enough for us to know? Multitudes of sinners are saved through his blood, but were but one sinner to be chosen to salvation, still Christ must have died just the same. Without the shedding of blood (that is, without death) there is no remission of sins, either of one man or of a multitude of men. If the sin of one man only had been laid upon him, that would have brought death. The sins of all his people being laid upon him could bring no more than death. That blood has availed for me, each poor sinner must say, if he has faith and hope at all, and that which some one poor sinner must say, all the redeemed of God do testify as with one heart and voice.

One other thought is in our mind to present for a little space: It is the death of Christ that atones. Jesus suffered all his life in the flesh, very much in very many ways, but all he suffered in the temptation in the wilderness, and from then on to Gethsemane, and in the garden, when he sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, and then in the judgment-hall, through the scorn and smiting of men, did not constitute the atonement. All these things make manifest how close our Savior came to men in all their sorrows, trials and temptations, and in these things he came into fellowship with us, and we thus come into the fellowship of his sufferings, but all this did not make atonement. Nothing can be an atonement, nothing can remit sins or put them away except death. In the daily sufferings of the dear Redeemer we can share, but into that which wrought out the atonement we cannot share. In that great and awful work it is true, and must ever be true, that of the people there was none with him. We could not, and we did not, help atone for ourselves. Suffering, even the sufferings of Christ, as said before, did not atone for sin, but his death did atone. The law of God demanded that the sinner should die: "Death hath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." In all the daily sufferings of our blessed Redeemer up to the moment of atonement, the presence of the Father was with him, but at that moment we hear him cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" When the lamb was chosen and set apart for the paschal sacrifice its liberty was taken away, and there must have been some degree of suffering while it was thus detained, but that did not help put away the sins of the people; that was not accomplished until the knife let flow the lifeblood of the lamb. In the type the atonement was in the yielding up of the life of the lamb. The same is true of the Lamb of God also, and so all our temptations and sufferings as believers do not add to the atonement. Salvation to any poor sinner is alone through the death of Christ. Hence none can lay anything to the charge of God's elect, because Christ died and rose again for them. There are glorious results flowing to us in the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ, but infinitely greater are the benefits of the death of Christ, by which we are redeemed from the curse of the law. It is by the atonement of Christ that any one ever comes into the experience of this fellowship with his sufferings, and into the knowledge of that peace which is secured through our Lord Jesus Christ. C.

LITERAL MEANING OF WORDS.

A DEAR brother has called attention to words found in our editorial of March 15th number of the SIGNS, near the top of page 184, in which we say, "One thing is sure, viz., that we cannot know what spiritual thing is set forth in any text, unless we first know the exact meaning of the words literally." We think it well to say a few words in addition to the above, as our brother says that some understand us to mean more than we did mean, and more than the words in themselves signify. First, this language was not intended by us to imply that men could not know the grace of God without being able to comprehend the exact meaning of every word of the Bible. This would indeed not only cut off many, of whom our brother speaks, from hope, but would cut ourself off, yea, would cut off that man who may have the clearest and best understanding of the meaning of the Scriptures, for no man ought to claim that he understands them all. We did not mean, either, that our God has not called and qualified men to preach his gospel who are unlearned as to the signification of words, to a very great extent at least. We have known some sweet preachers who at times mistook the meaning of the words of which they were speaking. In the third place, we did not mean that men could not present spiritual truth, even though that particular spiritual truth was very far from being the meaning of the text of which they were speaking. But still we feel sure that no man, learned or unlearned, can be sure that he is presenting the mind of the Holy Ghost concerning any text unless he knows the meaning of the words which the Holy Ghost has used in that text, and it seems to us most important that we all be careful to know the meaning of the chosen words of God; we would give that much respect to the words of a friend. We should carefully endeavor to know the meaning of the words that he used. With the utmost care to examine the word of God to see what it does indeed teach we all shall make more mistakes than we desire. That our meaning may be understood, we will name one or two texts of Scripture: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God." How can any one preach the doctrine of that text unless he knows what "elect," "according" and "foreknowledge" mean? These are great spiritual truths, but they are presented by words that are definite in meaning. Our God is without variableness, or the shadow of turning. This is a deeply spiritual truth. How can any one preach the truth that is in that text unless he knows what the words of the text signify? The most important thing in preaching is to expound the Scriptures and hold forth what they teach. One indeed, as said before, may preach truth from a text, when that text does not at all signify that particular truth, but can we be willing to hold forth that truth while at the same time perverting the meaning of the text used? We are glad our brother called our attention to this, and hope that here we have said nothing amiss in reply. C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Sarah Strong, who passed away Dec. 5th, 1908, was the first white child born in Austin's colony, which was in 1825. Her maiden name was Cummins. Her first husband was seriously afflicted in mind, was adjudged insane and sent to the asylum at Austin about the beginning of the war between the States, and because of her desire to go with him and nurse him, hoping that a cure could be effected, she secured a position as seamstress, and soon afterward was given a position as matron of the asylum, and remained there until the death of her husband, three years later. Left almost alone in the world, she was a poor widow indeed. About ten years later she was again married, to Chauncey Strong, an excellent man, and they emigrated from south Texas to Hood County, Texas, in 1873, bought land and settled near F. M. Ryburn, who passed away a few months later. While attending our meetings at Mr. Ryburn's house she became interested in the preaching, came to Friendship Church and was baptized by the writer in 1885. Dear sister Strong had the great and sore trouble of losing her last husband in the eighties. She was greatly bereaved, but her loss was his eternal gain, for we believe he had received a good hope through grace. Sister Strong sold out some years before she died, and moved about thirty miles away from her old home and friends, but her dear Savior was with her in her last trouble. The day she died, also the day before, she was blessed with strength to sing and pray to the praise of her precious Savior.

The writer received a message to conduct the funeral service. The weather was so inclement it was not prudent to go, but on the fourth Sunday in last March I spoke in memory of our dear departed sister, at Salem Church of Old School Baptists, near Cresson, where she sleeps in her dear Savior. May God comfort all who mourn their great loss.

ALSO,

F. M. Ryburn, of Cresson, Texas, was born near St. Louis, Mo., November, 1832, and died April 7th, 1909, in the farm home he settled on in 1871. After he grew to manhood he served as mate on a steamboat on the Mississippi River until the war between the States, then he joined the Confederate army at New Orleans, and was a member of Capt. Austin's company of the eleventh Louisiana regiment. At the battle of Shiloh he was so badly wounded that it disabled him for service on the field the balance of the war. He served, however, in the commissary department for some time, but as he could not be received back into the army, he, with other wounded soldiers, was sent back to Mississippi, where he remained a few years after the war. Mr. Ryburn was married to Miss S. E. Armstrong, of Mississippi, in 1871. She was the youngest daughter of the late Deacon James Armstrong. To that union were born seven children; three sons and three daughters grew to manhood and womanhood, one child dying in infancy. Their eldest daughter, Mrs. Cassie Stewart, died some years ago. Mr. Ryburn was one among the noble citizens of Hood County, and it can be truly said that he was a good neighbor, good to the poor and strictly honest in all his dealing. Our friend was not a member of the church, but was one who loved and lived on the doctrine of God our Savior. He was a constant reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for perhaps thirty-five years, but was never able, it seems, to take up the cross and follow his dear Savior down into the baptismal waters and rise to walk in newness of life. Their house for many years was the home of all Old School Baptists. During the last illness of Mr. Ryburn, his three sons were with him. Dr. Bob Ryburn came from Montana to see and wait upon his father, as his daughters, on account of sickness in their families, could not be with him in his last illness, but were spared to attend his funeral.

The writer received a message to conduct his funeral service, but the train was gone before the message came. Several of his old friends paid loving tributes of respect to his memory. Our dear friend left to mourn, a sorrowing widow, five children, a number of grandchildren and many good friends, but we sorrow not as those without hope, for we are assured by the evidence he left us that our loss is his eternal gain. May God comfort all who mourn.

W. L. ROGERS.

BLUM, Texas, March 19, 1910.

Reuben Ratliff, our beloved brother, was born July 18th, 1834, in Scott County, Va., died March 8th, 1910, in Carter County, Ky., of pneumonia, after an illness of seven days. He was married to Huldah Plott, Feb. 3rd, 1853. To them were born eleven children, four of whom survive, seven having preceded him in death. He moved to Kentucky in 1855, and settled in Carter County, near where he died. He professed a hope in Christ, and joined the Sulphur Spring Church of Regular Baptists in 1869. That church was not sound in doctrine, a majority being of the Freewill faith, and some of them brought a charge against brother Ratliff, which he always said was unjust, and rather than be in trouble he asked them to drop his name, which they did, and in a short time the church dissolved, and most of them went into the United Baptist Association. In 1879 Union Church of Old School Baptists invited him to take membership with them, which he did. He was ordained deacon in said church in a short time, which office he filled faithfully until May, 1909, when he, with seven others, asked for letters of dismission, to

be constituted into a church near where he lived, which was done on the third Saturday in June, 1909. He was made deacon of that church when organized, which office he held until his death. Brother Ratliff was one of the most firm and unwavering of Baptists; he was a firm believer in the doctrine of predestination of all things, saying all hope of salvation rested on it. He held the doctrine of unconditional election, special atonement and salvation by grace through the merits of Jesus only. The writer had been personally acquainted with him for twenty-five years, and has served the church of his membership as pastor for the last fifteen years, and our relation as pastor and deacon brought us very close together. He filled the office of deacon well, and was as humble as a little child, saying he was not worthy of fellowship with the brethren, although he prized their company above all others. He delighted in hearing the perfections of God, the boundlessness of his love, the unmeasurableness of his grace and finished work of Jesus preached. He loved to talk on the Scriptures; to be with him going to and from the place of worship was like being at meeting all day. He believed in the resurrection of the body, and said if the body was not raised from the dead he could see no place for any benefit to be received from the suffering of Christ. We feel that in the death of our dear brother our loss is irreparable. He was widely known among the Old School Baptists, and for any one who was an Old School Baptist to know him was to love him; even those who opposed him (and truly they were many) respected him as a christian. His house was a home for any and all his brethren; it seemed to be his delight to make them comfortable. He was a great strength to the church, and a favorite with his brethren. As for the attachment between him and the writer, it was like that of David and Jonathan. I feel that one of the best earthly friends I ever had or ever shall have is gone; I feel that I can never get used to doing without him; he often gave me good counsel and words of encouragement, which I always felt in great need of. Beside our church relation, he was my wife's grandfather, and came often to see us. Our prayer is that our blessed Lord may give grace to support us in this our great and sore trial. His last hours were tranquil, and he passed peacefully away. May the same grace that brought salvation and sustained our dear brother to the end prepare and sustain each member of his family, and bring them to the same peaceful end, and all will be to the glory of God. May they feel in their hearts to say with David, "This God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death." May the Lord give beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. May we all bow to him who doeth all things well. J. E. THORNBURY.

RATCLIFF, Ky., March 20, 1910.

MEMORIALS.

IN loving memory of our dear departed brother, **Deacon Reuben Ratliff,** who departed this life March 8th, 1910, the Lost Church of Old School Baptists, in session March 19th, 1910, adopted the following:

Whereas, it has pleased our all-wise and covenant-keeping God to remove from our fellowship in his visible church our beloved brother Ratliff, be it

Resolved, that while we feel our great loss is irreparable, and his place in the little church of which he was a beloved, faithful and devoted member is vacant, yet we as a church feel to be reconciled to the will of our blessed Lord, knowing he doeth all things well, and to his own glory. We as a church desire to express our love for our dear brother, and offer our sympathies to his bereaved widow, sister Ratliff, who is left lonely and desolate. May God give grace to support her and her children in this their great loss and bereavement. In his death the church has lost a faithful and dear brother, his wife a true and devoted husband, his children a kind and loving father, yet we sorrow not as those who have no hope, for we have the assurance that he is at rest with God, in whom he had the most implicit trust, and that when Christ shall appear, he shall also appear with him in glory.

Done and signed by order of the church.

J. E. THORNBURY, Moderator.

CURTIS E. ROGERS, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

THERE will be a May meeting held with the Sidling Hill Church, in Fulton County, Pa., on first Sunday in May and Saturday before. Elder B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, will be there, if the Lord will. Any of the brethren desiring to attend this meeting, and who have to come by train, will please write to Jonas T. Mellott or Jefferson C. Mellott, both of Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa., in order that arrangements may be made to have the same met, as the station is a long distance from the place of meeting.

J. C. MELLOTT.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Black Rock Church, Baltimore Co., Md., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the fourth Sunday in May, (18th, 19th and 20th,) 1910.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Welsh Tract Church, near Newark, Del., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the fifth Sunday in May, (25th, 26th and 27th,) 1910.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the first Sunday in June, (1st, 2nd and 3rd,) 1910.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Middletown and Wallkill Church, Middletown, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June, (8th, 9th and 10th,) 1910.

A union or three days meeting will be held with Bethel Church, at Tallman, Linn Co., Oregon, commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1910, at 2 o'clock p. m. We cordially invite all lovers of truth, and hope to meet as many as possible of our brethren and ministers. Those who contemplate visiting us at that time will please remember Tallman is situated on the Lebanon branch of the Southern Pacific R. R., forming a junction with trunk at Albany. There are two trains daily, one train leaving Albany about 12:30 p. m., the other about 8 p. m. Be sure to board Lebanon train, stopping off at Tallman. Church is near depot.

SILAS WILLIAMS, Pastor, Tallman, Oregon.
A. HORNER, Church Clerk, Waterloo, Oregon.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.
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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 78. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1910. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE VIRTUOUS WOMAN.

(Proverbs xxxi. 10-31.)

(No. 3.)

"STRENGTH and honor are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come." Every grace, and all perfections that one may possess, can well be represented as her clothing. When Zion came into her gospel inheritance of grace and glory she put on her beautiful garments, which were strength and salvation and honor, as she was gloriously commanded to do, (Isa. lii. 1,) and to-day strength and honor are her clothing. She has satisfied every demand of the law, and has paid every debt, and her honor is untarnished. The inhabitants of this gospel land of Judah sing, "We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." Walls are built for the salvation of a city. Here the city is saved, so that salvation is the wall. Here is infinite strength, and no power can prevail over Zion, for she is already saved. This infinite strength of the Lord is henceforth her clothing; she wears it, and walks in it, and is seen in those beautiful garments of salvation as "the perfection of beauty."

Under the old dispensation the church knew that the time for her to rejoice was not yet. The prophets, who told by the Spirit of "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow," did not know what or what manner of time was referred to, but they knew they were ministering gospel things, not to themselves, but to a people that should be in the future. They were in darkness and sorrow, but they looked forward to a time of rejoicing. Weeping was to endure for a night, but joy would come in the morning. They knew the church would rejoice in time to come. That time has come; but to us under this gospel dispensation there is still the need of the sweet promise to the church, "She shall rejoice in time to come." Bitter herbs are still tasted with the paschal Lamb. The dying of the Lord Jesus is borne about in the body of the true worshiper, that the life of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh. We are still looking much, necessarily, upon things that are seen, which causes our afflictions to appear great and long continued, and we cannot look as much as we wish to upon things that are not seen; we feel the outer man perishing day by

day, and the dissolving of "our earthly house of this tabernacle." But we rejoice now in measure in the daily renewing of the inner man, and in the sweet views we have of our other building, "an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," and we feel a holy assurance that we, with all the children and household of this virtuous woman, will rejoice in time to come, when we shall never feel sorrow or wait for unfulfilled expectations any more.

"She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness." Two kinds of wisdom are spoken of in the Scriptures of truth: one is the wisdom of this world, which James says "is earthly, sensual, devilish." God hath made foolish this wisdom. (1 Cor. i. 20.) By this wisdom God cannot be known, it is not from above. "In the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God." The other kind of wisdom is from above, it "is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."—James iii. 17. This wisdom is spoken in a mystery by them that are perfect (in Christ). It is the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory. This wisdom is now made known unto the saints, and is known only in the gospel church. We hear it only from this woman, who opens her mouth with wisdom. All the expressions of this wisdom recorded throughout the Bible, as testified by the Spirit of Christ in the prophets, (1 Peter i. 11,) and by Jesus and his apostles in the New Testament, are given to us only by this woman. Christ is heard and known only in the church. He was seen by John in the midst of the golden candlesticks, and through the church only does his voice reach us. These things have I spoken unto you in the churches. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Thus we understand that every one who has ever heard this wisdom of God has heard it as one of the dear children of this Jerusalem which is from above, to all of whom she opens her mouth with this heavenly wisdom, teaching and reproving and comforting them. "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom." "She is more precious than rubies; and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."—Prov. iii. 13–17.

"And in her tongue is the law of kindness." There are those who will speak and act kindly while malice is in their hearts, ready to manifest itself at an opportune occasion. Others may show kindness sincerely, feeling kindly at the time, but can be easily swayed by prejudice, and use angry and bitter words, and act most unkindly, because there is no abiding principle of kindness in their heart. The words of kindness may be upon the tongue, but the law of kindness is not in the heart. But this woman does not need to see in one something meritorious or attractive in order to make her speak and act kindly to him. There is the law of kindness in her heart, which is always faithfully manifesting itself in word and act. She cannot speak or act unkindly, for the disposition to do so is not in her nature. The true church will be just in dealing with her children, and may reprove sternly, but she will never be unkind. Nowhere in all this world, among all the relationships of men, can there be found such tender loving-kindness as in a gospel church when in a

spiritual condition. Each living member has felt in his own soul the mercy of the Lord, and to each one has come in measure the sense of God's forgiving love, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding, keeping their hearts and minds through Christ Jesus; and each has known "the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge;" and so the law of kindness is in the tongue which gives expression to the kind and tender heart of the church. One or more members of the church may be harsh and unkind, and troubles and disorder may appear among them at times, to their great sorrow, but when even two or three are gathered together in the name of Jesus, there he is in the midst of them, and then all fleshly, evil propensities sink out of sight as his sweet command is felt in their hearts, "The Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him." The law of kindness has not been broken or removed, though it has not been attended to for awhile because of the tumult; but now it is clearly manifest again, and no earthly mother can ever sing as sweetly and soothingly to her tired children as this woman sings and makes melody in the hearts of her children when the law of kindness is again in manifest exercise, and she tenderly and gently hushes them to rest. "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem."

"She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness." In all this very peculiar parabolic teaching of spiritual truth a woman is presented to our minds who is at the head of a large and most important household, composed of her children and servants, who are all under her care and rule as mother and housewife. The various members of this household may be very varied in disposition and character, but they all compose one family, and are all subject to the one will. So the church of Christ is composed of those who by nature differ so greatly from each other that it would seem impossible for them to dwell together, yet they are brought by the mighty power of God working in them to come not only under the control of one will, but to be of one mind and one soul. As these proverbial descriptions of this virtuous woman proceed, we see in them that which will be seen in a perfectly wise and obedient household naturally, under the care of a perfectly wise and able housewife. Such perfection cannot be seen in nature, but through these various habits and characteristics described to us, our faith beholds what is true of a perfect gospel church. While we may question whether any organized church on earth has ever been absolutely perfect, even those at Smyrna and Philadelphia, yet we have the perfect church shown to our faith in various figures and patterns in the Scriptures of truth, as in the city that John saw coming down out of heaven from God, and in the woman clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, and a crown of twelve stars on her head; and in the psalms and prophecies, where glorious things are spoken of Zion, which is the "perfection of beauty;" also in the commands and precepts of Jesus and the apostles.

In the portion now considered the church is seen looking well to the ways of her household, and giving them all needed instruction, admonitions and encouragements. It is by the hand of the apostles and inspired writers of Scriptures that these instructions and corrections come. In what they have written we behold this mother looking carefully to the ways of her household, while they

are receiving her teaching to profit. Those who are in the spirit in this household may be at rest, but they cannot be idle. The more of that spirit they experience the more they desire to work, laboring in the gospel field and "abounding in the work of the Lord." They desire to work out, or manifest, their salvation in their lives and conversation, and "to maintain good works," the more as they feel that the Lord is working in them to will and to do of his good pleasure. Their desire is to show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. The work of the saints is to speak of the glory of God's kingdom and talk of his power. (Psalms cxlv. 11.)

How tenderly and faithfully the apostles admonished and instructed and corrected the household of God, and how gentle they were among the saints, "even as a nurse cherisheth her children."—1 Thess. ii. 7. All this is the virtuous woman, the church, looking well to the ways of her household, and seeing that they be continually engaged in the things of the kingdom, or church of God. The church is never in so low a state but that the mother call is heard and felt by one or more of the members, bidding them to awake and arise from the dead, and seek those things which are above. A soul that feels the life of Jesus moving him will never be as one who is seeking carnal ease. The dear Savior "went about doing good," and in this, as well as in suffering without complaint, he set us an example, that we should follow in his steps. (Acts x. 38; 1 Peter ii. 21.) He never ate the bread of idleness, and this virtuous woman is always finding sweet work to do, though it may often be painful work to the flesh, so that the bread which she and her children now eat to satisfy their true, spiritual hunger will taste inexpressibly sweet, as the bread of idleness never can taste to a spiritual man. When a child of God has been resting in carnal security, and living after the flesh, and carried away with the world, and now hears the voice of wisdom in his soul, saying, "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God," how startled he will be, like one who awakes to find himself on the top of a mast. How he longs then to be given the blessed privilege of walking in the good works unto which the Lord's people are created in Christ. Then he longs to be about the children's work, then he desires to be saying, Come, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul. His desire is to exalt the name of Jesus, telling of all his wondrous works. Now the bread of idleness is something very distasteful and loathsome to him, but the Bread of life grows sweeter and more precious every day.

SILAS H. DURAND.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—It is pleasant to receive a few lines from you bearing tidings of your welfare. The perusal of your editorial upon Heb. iv. 15, was very satisfying. I have read it several times, and with no diminution of sacred pleasure. The sorrows of the Man of sorrows were so many; he was acquainted with grief; he suffered being tempted, and the temptations he endured from the devil were but a small part of his sorrows. Though he was tempted in all points as his people are, and though in all their afflictions he was afflicted, (Isaiah lxiii. 9,) and in the deepest and all-extensive sense he could say, "I know their sorrows," nevertheless there were

afflictions and sorrows and sufferings that Christ endured that none of the church ever experience. They are not eligible or capable of sustaining such sufferings; I mean the atonement sufferings of Christ. In all these unutterable sufferings he trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him; there was none to help. (Isaiah lxiii. 3–5.) All the afflictions, temptations, chastenings and griefs that the Lord may lay upon his chosen ones are apart from, distinct from, those sufferings our Emmanuel endured to atone for and put away their sins.

"Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone,
Thou must save, and thou alone."

All the temptations, sufferings and griefs of all the elect could never atone for one sin of one of the chosen. Only the blood of Christ, the blood of the everlasting covenant, can make atonement for sin. Through him we receive the atonement; (Romans v. 11;) not an atom of it is derived from any other source. The saints of God in no measure whatever, by all that they do or suffer, contribute to the atonement with God. To our Lord Jesus Christ therefore all the praise and glory and everlasting gratitude belong. Under the types and shadows it was written, "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."—Lev. xvii. 11. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission, no atonement for sin. (Heb. ix. 22; Matt. xxv. 28.) Ah, my dear brother,

"Much we talk of Jesus' blood,
But how little's understood!
Of his sufferings, so intense,
Angels have no perfect sense.

Who can rightly comprehend
Their beginning and their end?
'Tis to God, and God alone,
That their weight is fully known."

There are temptations, trials, sufferings in measure common to all the human family, and then there are trials and sorrows peculiar to Christ and the church. Those who are without God, dead in trespasses and sins, are so hardened, so lacking that divine sensibility, that they are not capable of tasting those peculiar sorrows that those who are born of God experience in fellowship with Christ. We must have the Spirit of Christ to suffer with Christ, for only thus are we vitally joined to him (1 Cor. vi. 17,) and capable of experiencing the afflictions of Christ. (Col. i. 24.) It was Christ's pure human heart that was so grieved and wounded by Satan's temptations, and by what he beheld and endured from the wickedness of the human race, and it is because those who are Christ's have his Spirit, have a new covenant heart, (Ezek. xi. 19,) a pure heart, (Matt. v. 8; 2 Tim. ii. 22; 1 Peter i. 22,) that they are partakers of Jesus' sufferings. "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations."—Luke xxii. 28. One thing that you have very clearly taught, dear brother, my soul holds fast with all affection, that is, the immutable spotlessness of Jesus Christ, the man of sorrows. Though found in fashion as a man, he was ever without blemish and without spot. (1 Peter i. 19.) He mingled with mankind, he ate with publicans and sinners, yet he was separate from sinners. Though Satan tempted him, and he suffered being tempted, yet not a thought, no unholy emotions could be excited and drawn forth by the gates of hell. He touched the leper, but he was not polluted; his flesh was incorruptible; sickness, disease, the pestilence, could not make him their prey. Jehovah laid on him our iniquities, for our atonement he was made sin, but he was not made sinful, and all the while he bare our iniquities he still was

holy; yes, beneath his unutterable woes, when he was made a curse for us, though he bore the pangs of hell, and the sorrows of death compassed him, he came through it all contracting no stain, with no taint of sin and mortality, and when Jesus' sacred body lay in the tomb it could not be said, "By this time he stinketh."—John xi. 39. He saw no corruption. (Acts ii. 31.) At the decreed moment he arose from the dead, and thus he was declared to be the Son of God with power, by the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. (Romans i. 4.) From the moment of his conception by the Holy Ghost in the womb of the virgin Mary, until the day that he ascended to glory, Jesus was immutably holy; he was pure, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. As by faith we see Jesus crowned with glory and honor, yet he was once, in the days of his flesh upon the earth, the man of sorrows. The Scriptures very fully set forth the afflictions of Christ, in which his people are one with him. He endured the contradiction of sinners against himself. (Heb. xii. 3.) Many times he was tempted by men. (Matt. xvi. 1; xix. 3; xxii. 35; Mark x. 2; Luke x. 25; John viii. 6.) They lay in wait for him, seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him. (Luke xi. 54.) They falsely accused him; they laid to his charge things that he knew not; they called him Beelzebub's servant; they said he had a devil, and was mad; they declared him to be a glutton and a winebibber; they mocked him, spit in his face, plucked the hair from his face; they crowned him with thorns; they did shoot out the lip at him, and wagged their heads at him in scornful derision. O my brother, how dark is the picture! He was reviled, but he reviled not again. "For my love, [saith he] they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer," and thus he prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."—Luke xxiii. 34. Lot was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked. (2 Peter ii. 7, 8.) How much more was the holy Jesus grieved at the sight and knowledge of the degradation and impiety of the human race. "He knew what was in man."—John ii. 25. He did not misname some of them when he said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do."—John viii. 44. He called them hypocrites, a generation of vipers. There they were before him unmasked, naked, their secret sins all bare to his gaze; their envy, their malice, their murderous hatred, the filth, the dense, deep depravities of the hearts of men all naked and opened unto his eyes. O dreadful, shocking, appalling! Had his holy human nature not been sustained by his eternal Godhead, Jesus could never have endured the horrors of that knowledge. O brother, to think that our Christ, the Holy One, should have seen the lust, the hatred, the meannesses, the hypocrisies, the deep, foul villainies in the hearts of the multitude! Was it for such he gave himself a ransom? He was "grieved for the hardness of their hearts."—Mark iii. 5. But Jesus never had a hard heart, a heart of stone, O no; he never was hardened through the deceitfulness of sin as we are liable to be. (Heb. iii. 13.) "The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me." "Reproach hath broken my heart."—Psalms lxix. 9, 20. A few times I have thought that I have had just a little glimpse into Jesus' tender, broken heart. "He sighed deeply in his spirit."—Mark viii. 12. "He groaned in spirit and was troubled." "Jesus wept."—John xi. 33,

35. "He beheld the city, and wept over it."—Luke xix. 41. How these Scriptures reveal to us the loving, suffering heart of the Man of sorrows. He enters into the sorrows of his loved ones. Christ's human heart took their troubles and sorrows unto himself. Though Jesus was never personally sick (it was impossible that diseases should prey upon his incorruptible flesh), yet it is written, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."—Matt. viii. 17. He was "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." "My bowels are troubled for him." —Jer. xxxi. 20. Yet these sufferings of the holy, undefiled Savior were not penal sufferings, they were not his atonement sufferings, but in them all it was that it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, and that the incarnate Son of God in his human nature should come into all nearness to the elect, that he should know how to succor them that are tempted. "In all their affliction he was afflicted."—Isaiah lxiii. 9. As you have so blessedly stated in your editorial, our High Priest was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. His trials, sufferings, ignomy, reproach, the temptations of Satan, the temptations from men, all brought sorrow to his holy soul. He suffered being tempted. He was indeed the tried Stone, (Isaiah xxviii. 16,) subjected to every test, but no flaw was found in him.

"I feel at my heart all thy sighs and thy groans,
For thou art most near me, my flesh and my bones;
In all thy distresses thy Head feels the pain,
Yet all are most needful, not one is in vain."

"Touched."—Heb. iv. 15. "He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye."—Zech. ii. 8. "Why persecutest thou me?"—Acts ix. 4. Shall I call this fellow-feeling? We are called his fellows, (Psalms xlv. 7,) and he is "the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts."—Zech. xiii. 7. The temptations of the people of God are "divers" (James i. 2,) and "manifold." (1 Peter i. 6.) In all these things (Romans viii. 37,) his compassions flow out to us, his all-sufficient succor is at hand. O they never shall separate us from the love of Christ, but rather they are the decreed opportunities to pour forth his soothing, supporting endearments, and by his words and deeds of love in all these things we are more than conquerors. Poor, sinful, unworthy his people are, but "he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted."—Psalms xxii. 24. Our miseries can never exceed his pitifulness and tender mercy. I love to think upon this, for I am so often sorely vexed with trials, without and within, that I am sometimes weary and faint in my mind, (Heb. xii. 3,) ready to halt, (Psalms xxxviii. 17,) and my sorrows from sin, the world and the fiery temptations of Satan are continually before me. But O, it becomes me to acknowledge that Christ is able to succor them that are in sore trials, and if any one has reason to know this I feel I have, and with Jeremiah I will say, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." I am persuaded that the trials, buffetings, sorrows, afflictions, chastenings, from whatever source they may come upon believers in Christ Jesus, are never too heavy, or too many, and all will ultimately work for their good.

I have sketched some of the sufferings that are common to Christ and his called ones, but O, dear brother, how shall any

one portray those sufferings of Christ Jesus the Head for the redemption, the atonement of the members of his body, the church? Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. The sword of eternal justice awoke against the Shepherd. (Zech. xiii. 7.) O for a heart to ponder the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. Let me quote a few verses. "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: and the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. * * * It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." Upon our Ransomer was poured forth the wrath of God in his law, "for the transgressions of my people was he stricken." In his travail for our salvation "he poured out his soul unto death." Look into Gethsemane.

"'Twas there the Lord of life appeared,
And sighed and groaned, and prayed and feared,
Bore all incarnate God could bare,
With strength enough, and none to spare."

He entered that garden "and began to be sore amazed, and very heavy; and saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death."—Mark xiv. 34. "And being in agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."—Luke xxii. 44. O that anguish of the incarnate Word no heart can conceive, no tongue of mortals tell. He "delivered us from the wrath to come."—1 Thess. i. 10.

"That wrath would have kindled a hell
Of never abating despair,
In millions of creatures, which fell
On Jesus, and spent itself there.

'Twas justice that burst in a blaze
Of vengeance on Jesus, our Head;
Divinity's indwelling rays
Sustained him till nature was dead."

The spotless, unblemished Lamb of God gave himself a sacrifice for our sins, pouring forth his precious blood. His sufferings were law sufferings for his people, whom he came to redeem from under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. The atonement was his life obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, (Phil. ii. 8,) "and you, that were some time alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblamable and unreprovable in his sight."—Col. i. 21, 22. Only because Christ was the Lord from heaven, (1 Cor. xv. 47,) only because he was the holy child Jesus, (Acts iv. 27,) was he eligible and capable of accomplishing our salvation; no other sufferings, no other blood than Jesus' blood, could make atonement for sin. And why is this that the precious Jesus' blood has power to cleanse from all sin? Jesus our Savior is Christ the Lord, (Luke ii. 11,) and therefore in an incomprehensible mystery his blood and righteousness are the blood and righteousness of God. (Acts xx. 28; 2 Cor. v. 21.)

"So guilty, so helpless am I,
I durst not confide in his blood,
Nor on his protection rely,
Unless I were sure he is God."

He is the Man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts, and this only fitted

him, sustained him and gave efficacy to his suffering, obedience and blood to reconcile us unto God and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. O what a destiny! O the blessedness of reconciliation, of eternal friendship with God, to be before him in justification of life. All the angels in heaven could never have made atonement for sin, and the sufferings of the condemned in hell will never atone for their transgressions. The atonement is the work of the Lord God omnipotent, who reigneth, and was wrought by "the exceeding greatness of his power." He who is the Word made flesh, the Son of God, being the brightness of the Father's glory, the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power for the atonement of the sins of the church,

"Bore all incarnate God could bear,
With strength enough, and none to spare."

He by himself purged our sins and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. (Heb. i. 3.)

But, my brother, to write upon this deep and soul-satisfying theme would take many pages, and already my letter is lengthy; and now with love to you in Christ's precious gospel, and wishing you and your dear family all mercies, I am your brother in hope of eternal life,

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

[THESE are wonderful things of which brother Keene has here been writing; we cannot add to their fullness, and yet in reading these things our heart has been melted and filled. Of one thing we feel especially glad, viz., that the suffering and work of the atonement belong to Christ alone. In this no sinner can take part. All the glory of redemption belongs to our blessed Lord.—C.]

CHAPTER III.

(Continued from page 239.)

NOAH AND HIS FAMILY; THE ARK AND THE FLOOD.

By reading the book of Genesis we learn something of the lives and habits of the human family before the flood, covering a space of about two thousand years, and we are led to believe that iniquity abounded even as it does to-day, and when we look around us and see so much wickédness, so much blasphemy under the head of religion, can we wonder at it when we remember that we are just Adam multiplied, as were those of our fathers before the flood? But after God had seen all their wickedness it was his good pleasure to destroy almost all of the human family from off the face of the earth; indeed there was a very small remnant saved, (elected, or chosen,) while the great majority were lost, drowned in the flood, yet God was just in what he did, indeed he would have been just in destroying all the living things on the earth, but it did not so please him. He had purposed to save a remnant that should praise his holy name, declare his glory and shew his handywork, and while it was the good pleasure of his holy will to choose the small remnant, and while they were blessed indeed, yet the condition of the others was made no worse after the choice was made manifest than it was before, and while God was pleased to save a few, a very small remnant of the animal kingdom, yet the remainder of the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air left to perish in the flood had no right to reply against God, for all these things are but the work of his hands, his creatures, with which he had a perfect right to do as seemed good in his sight to the declaration of his glory and the praise of his holy name, and I wish before I close

this chapter to show that this choice is like that choice which God made before the beginning of time. We read that Noah was "a preacher of righteousness." Was it self-righteousness? No, no, but it was the imputed righteousness of Christ, for our righteousness is as filthy rags. God had chosen him to prepare an ark, and how did he go about it? Was he left to himself, to build it according to the plans of man? Let us read. Paul tells us that, "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house."—Heb. xi. 7. "Make thee an ark of goper wood: rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof: with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it."—Gen. vi. 14–16. So we see clearly that God gave Noah the plan by which to build the ark; it was not guesswork, had it been it might have failed to have held all that God wanted in it, or it might have failed to float, and sunk, to the utter disappointment of God; but not so, it was all the perfect work of God according to his purpose. He is never disappointed, and when the ark was thus prepared all the animals that God had chosen, together with the eight souls, were brought into the ark, "and the Lord shut him in," after which the windows of heaven were opened and the flood came. Now let us see how this typifies spiritual things. Paul says, "According as he hath chosen us in him [Christ] before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love," &c.—Eph. i. 4. And we are told that Christ is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. He is the ark of the new covenant, and all of the elect of God were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, in a mystical sense, safely housed in the Ark before the floodgates of sin and folly were opened into the world, yea, even before the world itself was made, and, we might safely say, the Lord shut him in, which represents his power to save always, both in time and eternity, and it was said of him that none of his bones should be broken. The salvation of Noah and his family, and also that of the animals and fowls of the air with him, begun before the windows of heaven were opened and the rains descended, so in like manner did the salvation of the redeemed of the Lord begin before the flood of sin entered into the world by Adam's transgression, and it was not only begun, but it was perfected in the infinite mind of God; every arrangement necessary was made by the hands of the perfect Workman in eternity. So their salvation is eternal, and there is but one, and it being eternal extends through time, and is all of the Lord, hence could not be in any sense conditional. Notwithstanding the raging of the destructive waters of the mighty deluge, the ark was safely kept through it all, God remembered Noah. So in the Ark of the new covenant all of God's children are safely kept; though the great deluge of Satanic power may rage and surge without, all is safe within throughout the entire flood, from the entrance of sin into the world until time shall end. Therefore, dear children of God, fear not, for it is God who called you out of dark-

ness into his marvelous light and made it manifest unto you that you are heirs of God and joint-heirs with the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He bade you hope in his blood and live by that hope. "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord," for "in all these things [and truly everything is embraced in the Scripture above quoted] we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." (Romans viii. 38, 39; viii. 37.) If we are more than conquerors through our Lord, both in things present and things to come, in life and in death, what is left for us to do? How can these things be conditional? How can they be through our obedience, and at the same time through him that loved us? Let all God's little ones deny this man-exalting and God-dishonoring Arminian doctrine of conditional salvation, either for time or eternity, and let us be found in harmony with Paul the apostle, saying, "By grace are ye saved." "By the grace of God I am what I am," &c., and thus declare God's glory, to him all glory belongs.

Now to the subject. In the ark were Noah and his wife, and his three sons and their wives, eight souls in all, a very small remnant of the human population on earth at that time, but that remnant represented the remnant of the children of Israel that should be saved, though their number was as the sand of the sea, and the remnant of beasts and birds represented God's people that he redeemed out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people, that they should declare his glory. God cleansed them with his own blood, so there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus (the ark), and "what God hath cleansed, that call thou not common" or unclean, for he had a people beside national Israel. Think not to say, We have Abraham to our Father, (that is, we are of the national Israelites,) for that avails nothing, for even if you were a Jew outwardly, and could keep all the law given by Moses unto the Jews, it would not avail anything now, and I wish to say positively that none but Christ was ever able to keep that law, and he did keep it, and thereby fulfilled it in every jot and tittle. "For he is not a Jew [spiritual Jew], which is one outwardly. * * * But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly." "For the law, having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect." "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." —Hebrews x. 1, 4. "For if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."—Gal. ii. 21. All the family of Christ in him (the ark) will be gathered home without the loss of one, where in a better world and with tongues of angels they will sing his glory forever and ever. Amen.

(To be continued.)

TEHUACANA, Texas, Nov. 24, 1909.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —The time has arrived for me to send my remittance for our dear family paper, the SIGNS. I cannot do without it, and be satisfied, for it brings good news from a far country to a wayworn traveler in a desert land. I have not heard any preaching for two years. My Testament, and the two volumes of editorials of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, contain about all the

preaching I get. I also have "The Christman in Type," by Elder D. Bartley, which is good preaching; also the little book "Songs in the Night," published by Elder Durand, which is also good and sweet. Just a few days before the last number of the SIGNS arrived I was meditating upon the Scriptures which had once been precious to me, but had lost their sweetness, and I was made to cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Is there any one else to whom the Scriptures were once sweet, and now their sweetness is lost to them? But I had not read very far in that number of the SIGNS until I came to sister Young's letter. Then I could rejoice, for God had answered my question through her letter. I do rejoice when I hear or read of any one speaking of troubles, trials and difficulties; not that I am glad or rejoice because others are troubled, but because it is an evidence to me that they and I have been through the same experiences, and have been taught in the same school; I hope and trust that it is the school of Christ, and that we have both been taught by the Spirit of God.

I am living in the midst of the Methodist Protestant denomination, and within a stone's cast of three places of worship and their college. Naturally speaking, I never lived among better people in my life, nor had better friends anywhere I ever lived. There are also a few Presbyterians and Missionaries here, so you can see what little enjoyment there is for me from a spiritual point of view. I have not met with any of our brethren in a long time, but I do believe there are some who are called Primitive Baptists who pervert the truth the worst of any that I have ever heard. They speak of the law of God and his will as being equal, or the same, but I cannot see the matter that way. I understand that his will is older than his law. It was his will to speak this world into existence, it was his will to create all things and give life to all. We find that after he had executed his will in creating and forming all things after the counsel of his will, he also gave to man a law according to his will. Our God is above all law, and amenable to none, therefore he could and did speak from a law standpoint, saying to our first parents, Thou shalt not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He did not say this from the standpoint of his sovereign will, for had this been so, Adam could never have transgressed, for when He speaks (from his sovereign will), it is done, when he commands, it stands fast. I understand that the all-wise, sovereign, independent, eternal God predestinated, decreed or purposed, all things, times and events, and I also understand that all this pertains to the salvation of those who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and that it all finally works to the glory of that God who worketh according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

There was a time, if we may call it time, when nothing existed, save the eternal God, and this God had one great, grand and glorious object in view, viz., his own glory, and from the teaching of the Scriptures we know that he will be glorified in all his works. He made all things, as we are told, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. He was as much glorified in the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea as by the salvation of the children of Israel. He was as much glorified in the destruction of the enemies of the three Hebrew children as he was in their salvation from the

flames. The same is true of all other circumstances of the same nature.

But I will bring this poor letter to a close. I am so shaken that I have to use both hands to hold my pencil. If you can read this, pass your better judgment upon it, and if you consign it to the flames it will be all right with me. I am so lonely that I just wanted to have a little chat with you. Now may the grace of God guide, guard and protect you, is the prayer of a sinner saved by grace alone.

I remain your brother in hope of eternal life, which God promised before the world began,

JOSEPH H. BOZEMAN.

[WE desire to express our sympathy with our brother in his affliction, and trust that while the weakness of the flesh makes itself manifest he may be renewed continually in the faith and hope of the gospel.—C.]

FARMINGTON, Ill., Feb. 27, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have been impressed for some time to write you a little private letter, or rather, a love letter. It has been a long time since I have written you. I do not ask or expect you to answer it, for I realize that you have many letters to write, together with your labor on the SIGNS. I only ask you to read my little epistle and then cast it into the flames. I am writing to relieve my mind of the impression, hoping that you will pardon me for the time taken to read what I may write. I do not know that I have anything special to write, except to tell you of the comfort I have found these many years in reading your writings in the SIGNS, and to express my love for you. Nearly ever since the SIGNS has been in pamphlet form, at the end of the year I have put them together, and then I begin and read them all over again; I am over half through with the last volume. I am unable to tell you the blessed comfort I have in reading them; it is food to me; it is manna that seems to come down from heaven, from the Father of all spiritual life and light; it is my daily bread; it brings me near the dear writers in love and fellowship. I feel sometimes like embracing each one in love and sweet fellowship, and like giving them a holy kiss. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Very many of the dear writers I have never seen, yet I dearly love them, let them be black or white. This surely, dear brother, is not natural love, and this assurance gives me comfort; it is a great comfort to know that it is the love of God. God is love, and his love is shed abroad in the heart where Christ dwells the hope of glory. "Blessed be the tie that binds our hearts in christian love."

Dear brother, it is now almost four years since I met you at the Baltimore Association; if you remember, you preached at my sister's (Mrs. Grafton) one evening. There have been many changes since then; our dear brother, Elder Grafton, has gone to his blessed home. What a good man he was! O that I were as good a man. He fought a good fight and kept the faith. Were we all as good as he was, there would be more love and fellowship among our people. You, my brother, are highly favored of the Lord; you have assurance that many dearly love you for the truth's sake, and this should encourage and hold you up; it should give you strength and consolation, and the good Lord is with you. These assurances do not make the

Lord's servants feel vain, but rather they are humbled by them.

I will add a little more with regard to reading the SIGNS. I get to hear no preaching in the winter, and in rereading the SIGNS I get much more out of them than I do when they first come to hand, for then I read them often mechanically and put them aside. I often have felt that they are as sweet-smelling flowers, and I would rather have them strewed on, or in, my coffin than any natural flowers, which fade away. I feel that my time in this world is not long. My health is rather poor since I had the stroke of paralysis nearly two years ago. I would like to meet you all once more in this land of sorrow, at your spring associations, but I am afraid of making the trip, as I still have kinsfolk, who would not be satisfied if I did not visit them, and I think that as my health is I could not undertake so much. I have a greatly afflicted daughter, who has been quite a care to us.

Now, dear brother, please pardon me for taxing your patience to read this letter. Pray for me, that I may be kept by the power of God. My love to your family, and all the loved ones.

Your brother,

E. D. VARNES.

[WHILE our dear brother intended this as a personal letter, yet we have taken the liberty to publish it, feeling sure he will not be hurt by our so doing. Many of his kindred in the flesh, and in the Spirit, will be glad to hear in this way from him. The brethren in Christ who have known brother Varnes, have these many years been drawn to him in hearty fellowship in the truth, and now, in his old age, the remembrance of these mercies must greatly comfort him. Should the Lord strengthen him, many would be glad indeed to see him at the spring associations. How greatly we miss in these later years the old soldiers with whom we were so glad to meet forty years ago. Brother Varnes is one of that number. May the blessing of our covenant God in Christ be his until the end shall come to this life with him.—C.]

ASTORIA, Ore., Jan. 23, 1910.

DEAR FRIENDS:—You must be that at least, or you would not have continued to send me the dear old SIGNS so long without pay. Will you please accept my thanks, and an apology for my delay? I obtained a money order for you by my son some time ago, but after being away from home for some time I find the order still here. Many years ago I wept bitterly because of what I felt I owed you and those who contribute to your paper. I had been seriously hurt, and thought I should die very soon. My parents were then alive, and I came home to them, as I supposed, to die, but God ordered otherwise. My parents have had your paper with them ever since I can remember, and I often heard them read it with pleasure and delight. After being hurt I could not lie down for many weeks, and used to sit by the fireplace many nights alone with my conscience and my God. On one side was the pure and perfect light that so blinded poor, miserable Saul of Tarsus, and on the other the prayer, Merciful Father, deliver me from that awful sight. The darkness seemed to be a protection, or surely I should have lost my very reasoning powers. O that flaming sword! How true it is that man cannot get by it or around it.

But I started to tell you something else, and what I have written is to show you why I so eagerly read the Bible and the SIGNS, searching for the way and the

truth. Once while reading in the SIGNS the thoughts and experiences of others, my heart gave a mighty leap, and it seemed that I almost fell dead. What had I been doing? I had been looking at God's little children, and how the Lord did lift them up out of the miry clay and put their feet upon the solid rock, and I was crying with joy, because of the victory which he had given them. I had been alarmed because the thought had come, Who are you that would steal the bread that belongs to the children of God? Why, you have not even paid for the setting of the type, and the person who sets it needs the pay for his daily bread. The thought continued in this way: You have not only robbed people of their just dues for labor, but you have tried to establish your own comings and goings; yes, you have even tried to establish your own standard of righteousness. You would even try to build yourself a throne before the Lord. Yet the thought came, You mourn, you cry and lament, because you are not acceptable to God; now know this: it is not because you do or do not things that you are acceptable to him, but simply because you are his own workmanship. Our God does not recognize another in this matter, for beside him there is no Savior.

Dear friends, I had not intended to write so much of myself, but to simply pay you what I owe you, so far as I can. There is much which I owe to you and to others that I never can pay. My hope and faith are summed up in this, that there is an all-wise, almighty God, who rules in heaven and in earth, and over all therein, that he created all things according to his own plan and for his own purpose, and that nothing can change or thwart that plan or purpose. In other words, I believe in his foreordination, or predestination of all things, and that the Bible is the word of God, declared through and by his Son Jesus Christ, who is the Savior, and upon his finished work hangs all my hope. I wish I could tell you all I desire to without wearying you, then you would know at least that I feel grateful to you all for much kindness. May God be with you always, is my prayer.

I remain yours,

J. N. HECKARD.

SWETNAM, Va., March 3, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel that I must try to talk to some one, but what to say and how to say it is not so clear, for I am under a dark cloud; it seems the waters of affliction have about shut out forever all the joys of youth, and my great sorrow has nearly crushed me to the brink of death. I was, when I last wrote to you, in deep waters, and the Lord seemed clean gone forever, while I lay with a broken ankle away from home for nearly four months, and in the midst of it all Satan seemed to be let loose, and tormented me day and night with doubts as to the reality of God, with such questionings as, How did I know there was a God? and if there was, how did I know that I was his? and if there was redemption from sin and death, was it for me? Dear brethren, these questionings were dreadful to a poor sinner like me, and I fear even to-day that, after all, I am but a castaway, and that sorrow and trouble are my meat and drink continually. To add to it all, but one short year passed away, and ere I had recovered from my mishap my dear wife was taken suddenly from me. My poor, old, broken heart seemed to stop in its pulsation, and I felt, Surely this is all I can stand. My home

is broken up, and I in my seventieth year out in the world a cast down cripple, not able any longer to work, and no place to call home, and in sorrow and sadness now seated at a table in a friend's house trying to keep my true condition to myself, but how I fail to do so is partially seen in this letter, if indeed it can be read. My hand is so tremulous I make a poor attempt at writing. I wish I could write a cheerful letter to the dear, tried saints, and if all I am now suffering is but sifting as wheat, it may be that after I am converted I may be able to comfort the brethren, but not until then; yet I must tell them now, that in the midst of all my suffering (which is all on account of the seeming withdrawing of the presence of Jesus from my sight) I do see them afar off, living and walking in the Lord, upheld by his grace, and how I long to be where they are, but I feel so far away, cast off, not fit to be remembered, but still there is no company I desire as much as theirs, yet as I now am I cannot tell why this is so. I long to know, and I wish to ask them, if ever this was their lot, to be so clouded with fear, and their sorrow ever so deep, and if their sorrow was akin to mine, in thus being cut off, as it were, snuffed out like a candle, all things in heaven and earth blotted out with the sad remembrance of a past whose brightness casts out all fear, and Jesus was a present comfort and joy all the day long, and their songs were ever of praise and to the honor of His name, and they beheld him as their Lamp and Light to their feet? Such is the company I love. I read in the SIGNS of so many I would gladly embrace and hold them close to my heart, were it mine to behold them face to face, and I read on and find some speaking hard things against themselves, even then I love them still. Again I read, and there is one telling all things that ever I did, and I say, Now this is wonderful; who is this that knows me so far away? Then something says they have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb and made them white; but how wonderful that they should be made white in blood. Then the power of God seems to come to light, and I see wonderful things coming forth from the throne of God: blood that cleanses from sin and all uncleanness, a taking away of the filthy garments, a giving of clean raiment, a fair mitre for the head. O brethren, what a friend we have in Jesus! But as I look again a cloud receives him out of my sight, but the thought that he will come again helps me. There is no cloud too dark for Jesus to come in; that is just where he does appear. He is there to receive, and not to destroy. It matters not whether he can be seen in the cloud, he is there; he comes in that manner, in the darkest gloom, when hope is nearly gone, when the darkness of death seems to settle down on all fond anticipations, it is but his voice to call us away from self, to see the cloud as a witness that so comes your Deliverer and Redeemer to take you out of self to himself, and shew you your dwelling-place in all generations, as the children of his choice pass through sea and under the cloud at one and the same time, proving that oneness or unity with him that cannot be broken. All their sorrows were borne by him, and our suffering is only to make us partakers with him, not without him, that we may have this cloud also as a true witness that we are with him and are seeing his footprints. Temptation itself cannot destroy the support of that everlasting Arm that is underlying our poor, undeserving selves. He makes a way of escape in becoming our strength, that we

may be able to bear it to the glory and honor of his grace. Thus we learn there has no temptation overtaken the children but that which is common to man. We are saved from sin, inasmuch as the Lord saves us from self. O brethren, if the poor sinner who pens these imperfect lines could only be saved from self, he might then be able to tell you of his love to God and the glorious high places in Jesus our Lord, but I am in the low grounds, wherein is no standing, yet I still know I am a stranger.

I have just read Elder McGlade's communication in the SIGNS for March 1st, current volume. I feel the full force of being a stranger; the dear ones took me in many years ago, and they have borne with me all these years, and I fear now that all their care for me has been in vain, for I am still a stranger, not only to myself, but to them also, and while they place confidence in me, I have none in myself; I feel to be still a poor old sinner, not willingly, but by reason of the flesh; to will I sometimes feel is present, but how to perform that which is good I find not. In this I can call Paul brother, but do not dare go further, the cloud is so dark. Dear brethren, for you to wait is a good thing, for your hope is bright, but for me, now, as it were, on the very brink, and can see no farther than the nearest edge, there is no brightness, but in all this dark cloud that now hangs over me there is a hand that I feel, but cannot see; I must give glory to God. I still believe, and am sure, he does exist, and does appear in the clouds of his glory, and that he is the Savior of his people, and according to his purpose and grace he saved them and called them in Christ Jesus, and in him they all have, and had, their dwelling-place, and to manifest his power, and make known his purpose and grace, he spoke this world into existence, and in due time sent his Son a propitiation for their sins, and not only this in an abstract sense, but the sins of all that come under the curse of that law that says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." That is the sin of the whole world, if there is any other I do not know it, for sin is the transgression of the law, therefore a transgressor is a sinner, and a sinner needs salvation, and Jesus is that salvation. Now please understand me in this, the word does not say salvation for everybody, but to save them that were lost. Of the whole world we can sometimes see that world in our own individual case while we see our own hearts, for is there a sin in the whole world that does not find a lodgment there? and do we wish to find more by going out to search for others? Often it turns out that others come to us and tell us all things that ever we did; is not this the Christ, the Prince and Savior of the world referred to? I think I hear a poor sinner saying, If that is so, I may yet praise God. Such an one does praise him.

I had no thought when I took my pen I would ramble on in this way; I thought I must open my heart to some one. I am a stranger, and night has overtaken me, can any of you take me in? The Lord knows I do not feel I have a claim on any of you, and if you cannot do it I must love you still. But I will not distress you with my state.

A dear brother wrote me some time ago from West Virginia, but did not give his address; I wish all who write me would give name and address; it would be a comfort at times to talk with them by the way. As I am now broken up, and cannot keep house any more, I wish all mail matter directed until further notice to Swetnam, Va.

Your brother,

ELI T. KIDWELL.

ODEN, Ark., Feb. 18, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I picked up the SIGNS this cold morning, to read some in volume 78, number 3, and I opened to page eighty-six, and began to read your views upon Ezekiel xvi. 53–60. This was a sweet feast to me, if not deceived, as I believe it sets forth the true doctrine of sovereign grace, that saves poor, hungry, fainting, thirsty, tempest-tossed, tried and wounded sinners, who are made to feel and realize that of themselves they can do nothing, and are less than nothing, and vanity, and that the very best works they do, or can perform, unless directed by the Holy Spirit, are as filthy rags, and become as goads in their sides, so to speak. The good Lord removes all confidence in the flesh and in self, and we are brought low in the dust of humiliation, and come to feel so unworthy that at times we are ashamed to look up to his holy habitation, but smite upon our breast, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." But again, at times we are made to ride upon the high places of the earth in love and praise to God and good will toward man. Dear editors and readers of the SIGNS, I have been tossed to and fro, and have been sorely tried about the blessed doctrine of God our Savior, but I wish to complain as little as possible. I have an evil name among many Baptists, because I believe in the decrees of God regarding all things that come to pass, as I understand this doctrine is set forth and explained by our London brethren in the London Confession of Faith. Our God is the author of all spiritual good, and the giver of every good gift, both natural and spiritual. He is the fountain-head of all good, in every sense of the word. In Satan and in men we see the fountain of all evil. Our God suffers or permits sin, yet not by bare permission, and overrules, controls and limits its boundary, so that sin and wickedness cannot go beyond his determination. But our God is not, and cannot be, the author of sin or its cause, yet he, being God in every sense of the word, can and does overrule it to his glory and honor. He hates and has punished, and will punish sin in every way. He visited the sins of his people upon his Son, and has and will punish it in the nonelect according to his holy law of infinite justice. I believe in salvation by grace, first, last and all the way through.

Dear editors, I am making only a short statement of my faith, that the readers of the SIGNS may know where I stand on the above principles. I would be glad if you will answer the following questions. Does any true, sound, Predestinarian Baptist hold to, believe in and advocate the doctrine that God causes and compels men to sin? I have said that I did not believe that there were any in the United States who did so contend. Am I right? Second, Has any friend or brother paid for the SIGNS for me? as I have received three numbers for 1910. Please answer and oblige yours in love,

H. ELLISON.

[WE do not know what all who claim to be Primitive Baptists teach, but we do know that no man with the fear of God, and a knowledge of the sinfulness of sin, and of the teaching of the Bible as to how sin appears to the most holy God, in his heart, can ever accuse him of being the author of sin, or of compelling men to sin. Elder H. Ellison is paid for by some one to December, 1910.—C.]

BLUEMONT, Va., March 23, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Inclosed you will find a letter written by sister Thomas to me, which has been a great comfort in this the darkest hour of my life. While

I have not asked her consent to its being published, I feel sure she will not object, as it may comfort others as it has me.

Yours in hope,

F. E. ROBEY.

ALDIE, Va., March 20, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER ROBEY:—My mind is so impressed in consequence of your sad affliction that I feel I must write to tell you how my heart goes out to you and yours in this your sad bereavement; not that it is in me to say anything that is comforting to your grief-stricken heart, for this, the weakest of mortal bodies, is powerless to do the smallest act towards assuaging your grief. All we can do is to shed the sympathizing tear, and try to pray that the Healer of broken hearts may again visit you and speak comforting words of peace, joy and satisfaction to your troubled heart, remembering his promise: "My grace is sufficient for thee." No greater evidence could you wish of how greatly you both are esteemed than was shown at the burial of your dear one, and the manner in which you and yours paid the last sad rites to your wife and mother is evidence enough of how you all appreciated her while here among you, and while deprived of what life held most dear to you, you do not feel to mourn as one without hope, for as brother Badger so beautifully and comfortingly talked of her, as one with a bright hope of eternity, think of her as not dead, but gone before, and what is your loss is her gain. I thought while witnessing the sad funeral services, how the brightness of your fondest hopes had been obscured by the dark clouds of sorrow, and you felt to sorrow as one without hope, and in the very midst of the darkening clouds could be seen the "silvery linings" spared to you: your children to comfort you in your declining years. The same gracious God who has stricken your heart has also made a way of escape. What precious promises he has made to his children! Those he loveth he chasteneth, and is an ever-present help in time of need, and while our pilgrimage on earth is rough, and our paths strewn with thorns and thistles, we have the assurance that His strong arms are about us, and he will never leave nor forsake us. What an unconditional promise, what an anchor for our hope to rest upon; and when our pilgrimage is over and we are called to lay our burdens down and pass to the great beyond, where night never comes, and sorrow is no more, to that house not made with hands, "eternal in the heavens," precious promises these are.

Brother Robey, pardon me for writing so much. It is at times hard to stop talking about these things, and I wish I could talk as I think about them, but as I told you, it is not given to every one to express what they sometimes feel, but rest assured no one feels the heartfelt sympathy for you more greatly than Dr. and myself, and I wanted you to have this evidence of it; but the greatest and grandest evidence of love is God, who gave and hath taken away, and his grace is sufficient even unto the end.

With much love for yourself and family from us both, and hoping you may get down Sunday to dear old Mount Zion, I will bring this feeble effort at condolence to a close, for it is entirely too lengthy. With christian love and fellowship, I say farewell, dear brother Robey.

Your least of sisters in hope,

S. K. THOMAS.

EUGENE, Ore., Feb. 25, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I am writing this principally to thank you for your good, and, I may say, unanswerable editorial in the SIGNS of February 15th, upon the subject of predestination. I have been numbered with the Old School Baptists for only a little over a year, and predestination has occupied my mind much of that time. I have been questioning as to whether God's predestination is absolute, or limited simply to the salvation and redemption of his people. I came from the Missionary Baptists, and, as you know, they are a kind of Arminian people anyway, and I of course leaned toward the limited side of the question, but when I read your editorial I was forced to come to the side of absolute predestination of all things. You made it very clear to me that His foreknowledge must carry with it his absolute predestination of all things, for if all things do not come to pass just as God sees they will, then his foreknowledge must fail. You also made it very clear indeed that all of his attributes are absolute.

It is believed and asserted by some of our brethren that in choosing and saving his people God's will is absolute, or decretive, but that after regeneration his will becomes permissive. It hardly seems possible that any of his children can believe that he is such a changeable God. There is one brother who is a splendid writer, and otherwise, so far as I know, a good sound Baptist, who said in an article, "Regeneration cannot therefore be suspended upon obedience to the gospel, but much of the time the happiness of those who are regenerated depends upon their obedience to the gospel." But we are told that "absolute" is a word not found in the Scriptures. Well, what of that? Webster defines the word predestination thus: "The purpose of God from eternity, respecting all events." So then, if our God predestinates one event, he predestinates all events, according to the definition of the word. We should be very careful about limiting God. The psalmist says, "They [the children of Israel] turned back, and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel."—Psalms lxxviii. 41.

Dear brother, if you think this short epistle is worth the least to the brethren, you may publish it, if not, the unworthy writer will remain your brother, as I hope, in the bonds of christian fellowship.

W. H NOSLER.

[WE are thankful that we were enabled to so write upon the subject of predestination as to satisfy the mind our young brother. We desire to add that so far as the word absolute is concerned, when attached to the word predestination, or when used to modify any other word, it simply means "fixed or settled," and when used with relation to God it simply signifies that he is uncontrolled, and that he takes counsel with none. The predestination of all things that come to pass is his prerogative alone; it is absolutely his work, and his predestination of anything must be a settled, fixed or absolute predestination, else his decrees are like those of men, subject to change. We think that in reality the objection in the minds of some brethren is not so much to the word "absolute" as to the expression "all things." For ourself we have seldom used the word "absolute," because it has been clear to our mind that the word predestination, when referring to God's will, contains in itself the thought of fixedness, or absoluteness. This thought of fixedness, or absoluteness, is involved in the words "will" and "shall."

These words not only mean future things, but that these things are fixed, or appointed, or decreed, so that they must come to pass.—C.]

ECHO, N. Y., Jan. 30, 1910.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I was pleased indeed to receive a letter from you; it was a comfort to me in my loneliness. I thank you, and wish I were capable of answering it. This morning the hymn, "O thou in whose presence my soul takes delight," came to my mind, and also that Uncle John Hait had told me it was my grandmother's favorite. I think that my grandmother must have possessed unfeigned faith, that faith which is spoken of in Timothy. I also hope that it dwells in me; but I would speak of myself tremblingly, for I do indeed feel weak. Before I proceed further I will say that some time ago my husband wanted me to say to you when I wrote, that he now thinks you were right in your answer to me when I asked you concerning Hebrews x. 26, 27: "If we sin wilfully," &c. Perhaps you will remember the evening at sister Carrie's when that was spoken about. He has looked into it more carefully, and thinks that he was then wrong with regard to its meaning. How true it is that the Lord must prepare the heart to understand. It is little that I understand, but I can say, I was blind once, but now I see God's way of salvation, yet I cannot fathom the love that Christ had toward us to give his life for us. The gospel is precious to me. A few years ago the tenth verse of the fourth chapter of 2 Corinthians: "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus," seemed quite precious to me. If I ever see you again I would like to hear you talk about those words and their connection. I know well that the life of Jesus is not manifested in me, but that you sympathize with us all as you do, seems to me Christlike.

My sister Carrie went to Oyster Bay some time in December, and is still there. It was too lonely for her husband, alone in a large house. I received a letter from her last week, and she was feeling sad. I also received a card from cousin Jane Smith, of Patchogue, N. Y., saying that Aunt Caroline Hait, of Middletown, N. Y., was fast failing, so I think I may never see her again. She also said Uncle John Hait was very feeble. They have lived to a good old age.

I was reading this afternoon the last letter you wrote in June to my mother, and in it you mentioned attending the four associations, and also of being in Middletown, and hearing uncle speak in the meeting. A feeling of sadness came over me, because I do not suppose I shall ever hear his voice again. I do not think I shall ever forget him. I wish I could live as good a life as he has done. The loss of my dear mother has made me feel sad indeed, but to know of her faith in Christ, and the word of God, that was so precious to her, is a great comfort. What a book that testifies of so great a Savior. He came to seek and save the lost. This is wonderful. I would that I thought more upon his name. My desire is to live humbly, and to trust God for all I need. Surely we all are dependent. He is gracious, full of grace and truth. I hope some time to see you again. I do not know when sister Carrie will return. This is indeed a poor reply to your excellent letter. Kindly remember me to all I have met at Hopewell, especially to your wife.

A sinner saved by grace,

SARAH NORTON.

LA GRANGE, Ill., March 9, 1910.

DEAR ELDER KER:—It is time for me to renew my subscription for the SIGNS, and with it I should like to send a message to all the dear brethren and sisters in the east, but it is not for me to do so. When I view myself, and see nothing but imperfections, I wonder I have a name among the people who show marks of grace and knowledge of the truth. I know I love them, and that there is nothing in the way of belief that has any foundation save the one of foreordination and predestination. Here in La Grange are many denominations, and one who is not identified with one of them is left pretty much alone. But God is greater than man, and can and does supply all my needs, and gives peace that the world knows not of.

I had a letter from sister Macfarlane, of Chicago, last week; she writes that of late she has come to know of several Old School Baptists living in Chicago, some of them she has called upon. They have moved there from Paris, Ill., Mattoon, Ill., and then Elder Fred. Keene's daughter, (Ruth Keene), who is now Mrs. Spitler, is living in the city. Mrs. Macfarlane adds: "If they keep coming here we may have a church." I know nothing is impossible with the Lord, and it may be his will. I hope to go in soon to see Mrs. Macfarlane. She has poor health, and cannot go about as I can. I have cares, and stay at home on that account. We moved the first of February; have bought a small place and feel well satisfied with it.

I am wondering if I will get to hear some gospel preaching ere long. I have heard none since I went up to Colchester to the Spoon River Association.

With love to all my kindred in Christ, I am, unworthily,

LUCY BROME.

ASHVILLE, Ohio, Dec. 6, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed please find six dollars, two for Mrs. J. R. Solt, two for Mrs. C. M. May, and two for myself. I feel I cannot do without the SIGNS, as that is all the sound preaching I get. We have meeting here once a month, but it does not suit me as well as the reading in the SIGNS. I surely believe that God has all power, and for him to permit something to be done that he does not want done I cannot believe. I feel like staying at home and reading the SIGNS, it is good enough for me. I do not want to be contentious or selfish, but I cannot feel like fellowshiping something I do not believe; but I want to be resigned to His will, for I know that will be right. I know I do not do as I would like to, but I will just fill my place, and am helpless to do otherwise, and I hope that the dear Lord will guide and direct me through this life, that I may not go astray, for I know of myself I can do nothing, not even think a good thought.

I will now close, hoping that you will defend the cause in the future as in the past.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

EDWIN NEWTON.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

BROTHER Eli T. Kidwell has changed his address from Swetnam, Va., to Fairfax, Va., R. F. D. No. 3, Box 26.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Nancy Stathers, W. Va., $3.00.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1910.

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EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ROMANS IX. 7.

DEAR BROTHER:—If you have time I would like to see your views through the SIGNS upon Romans ix. 7.

L. E.

GREENWAY, Ark., Jan. 17, 1910.

This Scripture reads, "Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called." This last clause is a quotation from Genesis xxi. 12. In Hebrews xi. 18, the same words are also quoted, in connection with the reference to the offering of Isaac at the commandment of the Lord, in which the faith of Abraham was proved, he accounting that God was able to fulfill his promise: that in Isaac should his seed be called, by raising Isaac from the dead. The theme in this ninth chapter of Romans is, however, the doctrine of election, and then the decrees of God in all things, as well as in election, and the apostle uses this quotation in this seventh verse to prove this precious doctrine of election, by showing that the choice of God was limited to Isaac, and that Ishmael was rejected. Turning to the narrative in the twenty-first chapter of Genesis, we read that it was grievous to Abraham that Ishmael and his mother should be cast out, because Ishmael was his son, and the Lord admonished Abraham to give heed to the words of Sarah, because his seed should be called through the child of the free woman, Sarah. Thus Ishmael, although the natural child of Abraham, as well as Isaac, was rejected from the blessings of that covenant by the will of God, and not by reason of greater wickedness in him than was in Isaac, nor of greater righteousness upon the part of Isaac, but by reason of the sovereign choice of God. Thus the Lord established a figure, setting forth also that not the law, which was bondage to all who were under it, but the gospel covenant, which is freedom to all who are embraced in it, is that by which salvation is secured to all the heirs of promise. All men by nature are legalists; that is, they seek for salvation by the deeds of the law, but those called by grace come to see and enter into the relation of children of promise, and are free, serving God henceforth, not in the oldness of the letter (or the legal covenant) but in newness of spirit, having spiritual oneness with the Father and the Son, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and are sons and not slaves. Here is election, the election of grace, set forth clearly.

But still further, in verses ten and eleven Paul sets forth this gracious doctrine again, by pointing out the same principle, in the case of the children of Isaac, "Jacob and Esau," and in these verses, and the two following, Paul declares that Jacob, the younger, was chosen rather than Esau, the elder, and that before they were born, and without any reference to either the good or evil that was in them, or that they had done or should do, and that Esau was appointed to serve Jacob, and that God loved Jacob and hated Esau, and that without any reference to any good that was in the one or evil that was in the other. Here Paul

expressly declares that the principle upon which this choice and rejection was made was the purpose of God according to election. It must not be forgotten that this election of the one and rejection of the other had no reference to the final destiny of these two men, or of the individual descendants of these two men, but Paul declares that the same principle of election to salvation, and that eternal, is set forth by these typical instances. While we may question as to how or why all this can be, we must not seek to lessen the force of the words, "love" and "hate." We read in Malachi: "Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness." All this was not because Esau was more wicked than Jacob, either by nature or by practice. In fact, as we read the narrative of the lives and practices of these two men, we think that most men would give to Esau the credit of possessing a nobler disposition than Jacob possessed, and nothing could more clearly set forth the doctrine stated by Paul, and stated by almost all the writers of the Old and New Testaments, that election is not because of good in men, or good works done by them, but unto good works.

In verses fourteen, fifteen and sixteen, the inspired writer states that all this is so, just because God so wills it. Our willing or running does not affect the matter at all, but all is of God, who purposes to show mercy, or not to show mercy, when and where and to whom he will. Paul's language in these verses is unmistakable, and it is not the language nor the reasoning of Paul, but the words of God that we are reading and considering. If, therefore, any feel to take issue with this doctrine, their strife is with God and not with Paul, nor with any other believer. Our God will justify himself; it is not ours to take up weapons in his defence. Salvation, according to these three verses, is solely according to the sovereign will of God, and his will to save is not based upon good in one and evil in another. All are alike evil by nature, and evil by practice also.

In verse seventeen, and the verses following, Paul proceeds to declare that all the above is in harmony with other language found in the inspired record concerning Pharaoh, the Egyptian king. He declares that not only will God have mercy and compassion upon whom he will, but that it is a truth of the Scriptures just as plainly recorded as is the other, that our God raised up Pharaoh, to the end that in him His power and name might be declared, and it is manifest that this cannot refer to His power and the glory of His name in salvation, because in this language mercy and compassion are not involved. This also will clearly appear if we carefully consider again verse thirteen and then verse eighteen. "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated;" and, "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." The manner of this hardening we do not here consider, neither do we here consider the manner of his showing mercy. It is sufficient to call attention to the fact of the mercy, and of the hardening, and that both are presented as being of God. Pharaoh was raised up, both to live on earth and to the throne of Egypt, for the doing of the evil that he did, even as others are raised up to be vessels of mercy, on the other hand. We are not seeking to either modify or add to the force of the language of inspiration recorded here through Paul.

Thus three things are stated with increasing force by the apostle. First,

that Isaac was received and Ishmael rejected; second, that Jacob was loved and Esau hated, and his heritage laid waste; third, that Pharaoh was raised up as a wicked king, to accomplish the purpose of God. In the one case we have election and rejection, pure and simple, set forth; in the second case we have the cause of election and of rejection set forth, as being love on the one hand and hatred on the other; both the love and the hatred being active, the one in blessing, and the other in impoverishment; and in the third case, we have the declaration that our God has a use for wicked men, who know him not, and that even their wicked acts but subserve His purpose. In like manner Peter declared that our God decreed the death of the dear Redeemer by wicked hands, and yet the hands that did his will were wicked, and that the rulers gathered together against the Lord, and yet did just what he had purposed to be done. How natural the words that follow: "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" Does any one say this now, when the purposes of God, which embrace all men, both the good and the evil, are set forth? Then it is ours only to respond in the language of the Holy Ghost through Paul, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" We need not quote here all the four verses that follow, we are sure all Old School Baptists must be familiar with them. It is true that we ought always carefully consider the exact meaning of the words used by the Holy Ghost to set forth the divine will and ways, and it is also imperative that we compare one Scripture with all other Scriptures, as far as we are able, but when the definite meaning of the language of the Scripture is ascertained there must be no taking away nor any adding to that meaning. To do so is to incur the judgments of God recorded in Revelation xxii. 18, 19.

We have felt surprised at times, when it has been contended that the purposes of God did not embrace what is evil as well as what is good, at the assertion that this was a new doctrine among the people of God. Surely Paul states this doctrine in this wonderful chapter. Peter stated it upon the day of Pentecost, and also as recorded in the fourth chapter of the Acts, and Joseph stated it to his brethren when he said, God meant it for good, to save much people alive. Still further, it is stated in the old London Confession of Faith, and in the Philadelphia Confession, the first ever adopted among Baptists in America. It was adopted at Black Rock, at the convention in 1832, and it was one of the principles stated in the prospectus of the SIGNS when it began to be published. As we go back over the past centuries we find it stated again and again in the writings of those who are recognized as among the true followers of God in all ages. We are not here entering into any argument as regards this doctrine, but simply expressing our surprise that any one should seek to cast discredit upon the doctrine by saying it is new. It is not new in any sense of the word whatever.

We have not here used the word "absolute" in connection with the purposes of God, because it is not needful to use it. We can see how we, or any one who loves the doctrine of God's eternal purpose, would come to use the word "absolute" under certain circumstances. Men contend that the purposes of God are no more certain of fulfillment than the purposes of men, upon the ground that his will and purpose may be changed by some unforseen event, and that there-

fore they are not fixed and unalterable purposes. To meet this it would be but natural to strive to find a word which would express the truth that God's purposes are not alterable, and what better word could be used, in such a case, than "absolute?" So far as we know, no one has ever objected to saying that our God is an absolute sovereign, meaning that he is not limited by any other power or circumstance. Certainly it is not needful that we say he is absolutely just, absolutely holy, absolutely unchangeable, yet who would find fault with the use of the word "absolute," in such connection, unless it were some one who questioned his holiness, justice and unchangeability? We have seldom used the word "absolute," in connection with his predestination or eternal purpose, both because it has not seemed needful and because some have thought they saw in the word "absolute" more than what it does really mean, viz., fixedness, certainty.

One other thing is in our mind of which we will write a few words. The words "allow," "permit," "suffer," are Bible words, just as surely as is the word "purpose" or the word "predestinate," and we ought to be careful to ascertain their meaning, and to always give to them the meaning that properly belongs to them. In the Scriptures these words many times refer to the will of men; that is, that men suffer, permit or allow some things in their fellow-men, or concerning their fellow-men. These three words are used something more than thirty times as relating to the will of God. He is said to suffer, allow, permit, or not to suffer, allow or permit certain things, that many times in the Bible. The word "allow," as relates to the will of God, is used once only, in 1 Thess. ii. 4, and there it refers to that which is good alone. The word "permit" is used three times with reference to the will of God. In 1 Cor. xiv. 34, it is written that women are not permitted to speak, &c. In 1 Cor. xvi. 7, and in Heb. vi. 3, the word is used in a good sense, that is, relating to good things. The word "suffer" is used in Luke xviii. 16, with reference to that which is good. In all other places, so far as we have been able to examine the word, it is used negatively; that is, it is said that God would not suffer certain things to be done. We have not been able to find any place where it is said that our God suffers sin or transgression, but it is often written that he did not suffer it. The word "permit" is never used in the Bible, so far as we have found, to express the thought that our God permits sin. The same is true of the word "allow." He suffers, permits and allows good things, but does not suffer certain evil things to take place. It is well, we have thought, to call attention to these facts, and to give them due consideration. If it is well not to use the word "absolute" in connection with God's purpose or predestination of evil, it is certainly true that these three words are not to be insisted upon with regard to the predestination of that which is evil, only, as said before, in declaring that he does not suffer or permit certain things to take place.

In conclusion, we will add that the Scriptures abundantly show that our God hates sin and all unrighteousness; the greatest proof of which is that he gave his Son to redeem his people from sin. He loves righteousness, as is testified again and again. His predestination of either good or evil is a great mystery. It is just as pertinent to ask, How can our God commend the predestinated good things of his people? as, How can he condemn the predestinated evil deeds of men? C.

THE GARDEN OF EDEN.

DEAR ELDER KER:—Will you please write your views on the garden of Eden? Did Adam and Eve represent the whole human family or only the elect of God (the Lord's people)? It is said, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." We believe the two "alls" mean the Lord's people. We have been taught by false tradition to believe many errors. I have thought much of this subject, and how much was literal, and especially the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and the serpent, also the three last verses of the third chapter of Genesis. It seems there are none but the Lord's people felt sinners. If none but the elect fell in Adam, then are the nonelect under the curse?

Please pardon me for troubling you; I am a poor, ignorant creature, yet I feel a strong desire to know the truth. I am entirely isolated from the dear saints, and not able to get to meeting. The SIGNS is all the preaching I have; I enjoy reading it, but often conclude I am taking the children's bread.

"I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

If I know my own heart I can truly say I love these poor and afflicted people; they tell my feelings and desires, yet I always feel too unworthy to be with them, but I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

These are my choice, who worship God in spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

From a sinner saved by grace, if not deceived. Unworthily your sister in hope,

LUCINDA B. BREWSTER.

DOVER, N. J., Feb. 16, 1910.

In attempting to grant sister Brewster's request we realize in a measure at least the great deep we are entering upon, and remember the many views so often expressed upon some of the texts she suggests. We do not wish to differ with our brethren in these important matters, and none must think we mean to attack their views in what we may write. The field before us is a broad one, and at best we shall be able only to touch upon it here and there.

The garden of Eden might well be considered to represent the church. There man had communion with his Creator, and there was every needful fruit for food and that was pleasant to the eye; it was there that man had dominion over all things. The river, too, was there that watered the garden. It is in the church, "garden inclosed," that man communes with God; there only pleasant fruits are found, and in the midst of the garden is the Tree of life; there only is the river, the streams whereof make glad (water) the garden of God, and in this gospel garden man has dominion over "all things," through Christ the Lord. The garden of Eden was made and furnished with all things needful before man was placed in it to dress and keep it; so the church is adorned like a bride for her husband; man therefore is simply to enjoy the work of the Lord. The garden of Eden seems to have been a select or chosen spot where God communed with man and gave him his law. So is the church select, chosen, set apart for the revelation of God and his holy law. The earth did not, could not bring forth thorns and thistles until after the ground was cursed because of sin, nor was there iniquity in the "garden inclosed" until man disobeyed his Maker. Since that time the earth (flesh) has brought forth thorns and thistles and every noxious weed. But notwithstanding our vile nature there is a vineyard walled about, and God the Father is the Husbandman. Every branch therefore shall be watched over and purged by him. Every plant in the garden of God shall be watered every moment by him, and shall flourish and bear fruit to the honor and glory of its Dresser and Keeper. It was because of disobedience that man was driven out from the garden of Eden and the flaming sword placed that turned every way to

keep the way of the tree of life. In that condition man found that a Mediator between him and God was necessary, and through the mercy of our offended God the sinner received promise of salvation before being driven from the garden: The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. The flaming sword represented the wrath of God because of the transgression of his law, and must needs be removed before man could have access to the tree of life. Jesus, the seed of the woman, satisfied the demands of justice and fulfilled (obeyed) the law, through which work the wrath of God was removed, and man now has right to the Tree of life and enters in through the gates into the city or garden of God.

Our sister asks, "Did Adam and Eve represent the whole human family, or the elect only?" We would say, they were the father and mother of the whole Adamic race, both elect and nonelect. When the law was given to Adam, Eve was in him and their whole posterity in them, hence the law, in the giving of it, extended to every son and daughter; consequently in the transgression of Adam his sin embraced every man, woman and child born in the earth, beginning with Cain to the end of the world. If this were not the case there could be no such thing as election, for by nature all must be alike, and that all are alike is clearly shown by Paul in his letter to the Ephesians when he said, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins, * * * and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." This proves conclusively that "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." The law was not given to Adam in part, that is, to the elect, but to the whole man, elect and nonelect. Death is because of sin, and had not the nonelect sinned in Adam and thereby have fallen under the curse of the law, death could not touch them, but in that all men die we have positive evidence that "all sinned" and by nature were the children of wrath. When the Scripture declares that "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law," it does not signify that none but the children (elect) of God were under the law, but that Jesus came at the appointed time and in the appointed way, the Redeemer, that we might receive the adoption of sons; yes, that the very sons of Adam who transgressed God's law in him might be adopted into the family of God and be joint-heirs with his only begotten Son, while all of the nonelect were passed by. A redeemer must have something to redeem, else he could not be a redeemer. Jesus had a flock of sheep that had trespassed and were held by the law until the trespass price was paid. These sheep, or people, were in the same condition that all others were who are to be forever held because they have no Redeemer. A redeemer can redeem his own property only; Jesus therefore could redeem none but those given him of the Father. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." When Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," the language was not applicable to any except those who knew the burden of the law and the fatigue because of that burden. When the Lord said by Isaiah, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," no one was embraced but the poor soul who did thirst for living waters. From the standpoint of sin all men are in need of rest and

living waters, but none except the sheep of God know experimentally their need. Again, when Jesus said, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance," he did not mean that "the righteous" were not under the law, but rather that they in their own blind zeal and self-righteousness did not, could not know their condition in nature because of sin. The sheep were and are made conscious of their lost and ruined condition, hence are called to repentance.

When a man appears to redeem his sheep some evidence must be given that the sheep are his, therefore the holder of the flock asks, How am I to know that the sheep are yours? The owner answers, My sheep know my voice and will follow me. Then, as proof of his ownership, he calls his sheep and they hear his voice and immediately follow him. This is the proof Jesus gives of his ownership; he said, "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine." The voice of the good Shepherd separates his sheep from all other nations, and causes them to follow in the footprints of the flock.

With regard to the word "all" in the text, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," having reference to the children of God only, we would say the general view among our people is that headships are presented in that Scripture: Adam the earthy head of all the human race, and because "all" are by nature his children, "all die." Even so in Christ, the spiritual or living Head of the elect of God, "all" in him, chosen in him before the foundation of the world, are made alive. You hath he quickened, who were dead in sins. Whether or not this is the true interpretation of the text, it is truth that no man can deny. While we admit the truth in the above view, we are sure that the following truth is also embraced. Paul was continually showing that there was no difference, by nature, between the Jew and the Gentile. It seemed necessary, inasmuch as the Jews boasted of their goodness and standing with God as being far above that of the Gentile, but the apostle taught them that, notwithstanding their relation to Abraham and the promises in him, according to their relation to Adam they were sinners, hence die in him as do all other nations; and as God has a people in every nation, kindred and tongue, in Christ shall "all" be made alive. This same truth is presented in the following Scriptures: "If one died for all, then were all dead."—2 Cor. v. 14. "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the sufferings of death, crowned with glory and honor: that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."—Heb. ii. 9. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."—1 John ii. 1, 2.

We have now briefly called attention to a few things embraced in the inquiry of our dear sister, and leave the suggestions for her consideration and for that also of others who may read what we have written. We would be glad were we able to answer all such questions in a comprehensive way, but often more darkness than light is with us and in us when trying to write of the wonders of God in the salvation of his people. We are glad to assure our sister, however, and all others who "desire to know the truth," that there is One who can tell you all your questions in the revelation of himself and the house he has builded. K.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at his home, 1910 North Twenty-second St., Philadelphia, Pa., Saturday evening, April 9th, 1910, Davis Baker, of Baltimore, Md., and Miss M. Katie Purnell, of Snow Hill, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon Milton Dance, the subject of this notice, was born March 3rd, 1828. October 16th, 1855, he was married to Miss Elizabeth A. Ferguson, who died March 7th, 1893. Two children were born, one son and one daughter; the son died in 1876, the daughter, Mrs. Henry W. Patterson, survives him. October 10th, 1894, he was married to Miss Jennie Sherwood, of Wilmington, Del., who survives him. Sister Dance has no children, and is therefore left alone. Brother Dance was baptized by Elder Wm. Grafton, July 3rd, 1870, in the fellowship of the Harford Church, in Harford County, Md., and was later chosen by that church to the office of deacon, which office he faithfully and lovingly filled as long as his strength allowed. The writer first met brother Dance in May, 1897, and after moving to Baltimore, in December, 1898, was intimately associated with him as a member of the Baltimore Association, and was very fond of him, and I rejoice this day in the pleasing thought that I had his confidence and fellowship. The Lord led him into an understanding of much of his precious truth, and he was firm and uncompromising, yet kind and loving. He would speak his mind freely, but meant no harm to his brethren, but good to the cause he loved. Brother Dance and I had talked much together, and I feel that I understood him, and know that he believed in the old-fashioned, simple gospel as taught by Jesus and his apostles, without the speculations of men. He had been much afflicted for three or four years, so that he did not get around as formerly. It was my privilege and pleasure to visit him at different times, and to have sweet and profitable intercourse with him, and since the death of his much beloved pastor, Elder Grafton, he seemed to turn to me, and this confidence I did and do still appreciate very much. In his great afflictions he was greatly blessed. He had been in the home of his brother, E. Scott Dance, for the last three years, and had every comfort that loving hands could give him. He was blessed with a most faithful and loving wife, who never tired of doing everything that she could to make him comfortable. May God's mercies rest upon her. He continued to grow weaker in body, and it was a wonder to all who knew him that he continued so long. He grew weary of waiting and wanted to go home. His faith and hope in his dear Savior were strong, and death was no terror to him. He waited all the days of his appointed time, and on the night of March 12th, 1910, he quietly fell asleep in Jesus, his body to return to dust and remain until the last day, when Jesus (as he said) will raise him up. This I know was his faith, not only the last twenty-four hours, but he believed what Jesus taught, that the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and come forth, &c.

According to his request several months ago, I was called to attend his funeral, which I did with mingled joy and sorrow; joy for the gift of so firm and true a brother, and sorrow for the thought that I shall see his face no more on earth. We met at the home of his brother at 10 o'clock on Wednesday, the 16th, and after a word of prayer his remains were taken to the meetinghouse where he so loved to go, and the writer spoke to a large congregation of friends from 1 Cor. xv. 17, also 2 Tim. iv. 7, and felt that the Lord blessed him to preach the eternal truth which brother Dance loved so well. We shall miss him much. He was clerk of the Baltimore Association for a number of years. May the Lord resign us to his will. For him it is far better to be with Jesus.

One who loved him.

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

[It is in accord with our feelings, and also, as brother Rowe informs us, the desire of sister Dance, that we add a few words to the above. We will, however, add but a few, because all that seems needful has already been said. Brother Dance always has been in our heart as a brother beloved since we first knew him, before he became a member of the church. We can but express our sorrow that we shall see his face no more. If one thing drew us to him more than another it was this: we knew that he would honestly speak his mind. A few times some things that we thought best to do did not command his approval, and he openly said so. But he could speak in love, and we feel glad to remember that our fellowship was never marred in the least, and that it is ours to recall the cordial greetings which he always extended to us, both in our meeting and in our correspondence. We shall sorely miss him. The family do not need to be told that our sympathy goes out to them, one and all.—C.]

James Allder was born in Loudoun County, Va., March 30th, 1845, and died in Providence Hospital, Washington, D. C., March 28th, 1910, aged about 65 years. Brother Allder came to this county (Fairfax) about fifteen years ago, and soon afterward united with the church at Frying Pan, where he and his wife, sister Rose Allder, were both baptized the same day, by the late Elder E. V. White. Brother Allder remained a member of that church to the day of his death. One by one of our little band here is being called home, and we fully realize that the

place which knows us now will soon know us no more forever. Shall we then hope for anything substantial in this life? No, for hope reaches beyond this vale of sin and tears. "Hope thou in God." The psalmist has said, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." If it then be precious in the sight of the Lord to call his subjects home by death to the body, why should we mourn for our loved ones? Brother Allder was twice married, and leaves one son, Isom Allder, by his first wife, who now resides in New Jersey.

The remains of brother Allder were laid to rest in Ebenezer Cemetery, March 30th, 1910. Funeral services were conducted by brother F. E. Robey, of Ebenezer Church, Loudoun Co., Va.

May the good Lord comfort his widow (dear sister Rose) with the comfort of the gospel, is my desire for Jesus' sake. JOHN F. OLIVER.

HERNDON, Va., April 18, 1910.

SISTER **Laura M. Florance** passed away March 30th, 1910. She was born Sept. 8th, 1839, therefore was in her 71st year. She was the daughter of the late Daniel and Caroline French, and widow of our late brother George N. Florance, who preceded her but a few short months. Space forbids that we say what we feel in the passing away from our midst of the faces of those whose places are thus made vacant; we miss them most sensibly in our little number, and especially those who, like sister Laura, made every effort to be at our little meetings whenever she could. She was very frail at best, but the writer has known her to walk out to the meetinghouse when she looked as if her bed was the place for her, and while she talked but little she told a most wonderful truth in her actions, which are now a comfort to all who mourn. She was married to brother Florance the first Sunday in November, 1884; baptized by Elder J. N. Badger Sept. 2nd, 1900, in the fellowship of the Bethlehem Church, and had her home there until called to that home everlasting. She leaves three sisters and one stepdaughter (Miss Helen Florance), together with the church, to mourn, but we know the mourning of the saints of God is not without hope, and for all such we have the assurance, "They shall be comforted." May this thought console us all, and especially her sister Lucy, who is a member with us. ELI T. KIDWELL.

MEETINGS.

THERE will be a May meeting held with the Sidling Hill Church, in Fulton County, Pa., on first Sunday in May and Saturday before. Elder B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, will be there, if the Lord will. Any of the brethren desiring to attend this meeting, and who have to come by train, will please write to Jonas T. Mellott or Jefferson C. Mellott, both of Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa., in order that arrangements may be made to have the same met, as the station is a long distance from the place of meeting.

J. C. MELLOTT.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Black Rock Church, Baltimore Co., Md., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the fourth Sunday in May, (18th, 19th and 20th,) 1910.

Visitors coming via Baltimore will take train from Union station, on Northern Central Railroad, at 3:30 p. m. on Tuesday, the 17th, for Cockeysville, where they will be met by friends and cared for. Those coming south, on Northern Central Railroad, will be met at the same time and place. All who are in accord with us are invited to attend.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Welsh Tract Church, near Newark, Del., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the fifth Sunday in May, (25th, 26th and 27th,) 1910.

Those coming from Philadelphia and Baltimore, and other points north and south, will come via B. & O. R. R. on Wednesday morning. Train leaves Philadelphia, Twenty-fourth and Chestnut Sts., at 8:15 a. m., and Baltimore, Mt. Royal station, at 8 a. m. Get Tickets to Newark, Del. Those coming via Delaware Division will take train leaving Delmar, Del., Wednesday at 7:05 a. m. and change at Porter for Newark, Del., where all will be met and conveyed to the place of meeting. Ministering brethren and all who love the assembly of the saints are cordially invited to meet with us.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

THE churches of the Roxbury Association have appointed their next fifth Sunday or quarterly meeting to be held with the Second Church of Roxbury, Roxbury, N. Y., on Saturday and Sunday, May 28th and 29th, 1910, meeting to commence on Saturday at 11 o'clock a. m. Trains will be met at Roxbury Saturday a. m. Train leaving Kingston at 8 a. m. arrives at Roxbury 10:14 a. m. Train leaving Oneonta at 7:35 a. m. arrives at Roxbury 9:27 a. m. We shall be glad to welcome all who have a desire to meet with us. J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the first Sunday in June, (1st, 2nd and 3rd,) 1910.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Middletown and Wallkill Church, Middletown, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June, (8th, 9th and 10th,) 1910.

THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 78. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1910. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE VIRTUOUS WOMAN.

(Proverbs xxxi. 10-31.)

(No. 4.)

"HER children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her." To a poor sinner who has been made alive unto God, and has been given to look upon Zion, and to see and admire the beauty of her order and ordinances, there is nothing appears so beautiful and so much to be desired in all the world. He has to say as the queen of Sheba said after she had seen all of Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built, and the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his ascent by which he went up into the house of the Lord, "The half was not told me." There is no earthly organization of men that can bear comparison in the mind of a christian with the gospel church. There is no relationship in the world, and no position among men, that can for a moment equal in value, importance or desirableness the relation of brother in Christ, and a place as such in the fellowship of the church of God. This is still true, notwithstanding all the great imperfections we feel in ourselves and see in others, which cause us to fall so very, very far short of the pattern shown us in the Bible. A church may consist of but few members, and they poor and unlearned, and each one feeling himself to be vile and sinful, yet to each one, when they have all come together in meeting, and are singing the songs of Zion, and joining in prayer to the Lord, and hearing the preaching of the gospel, and speaking with one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, there can be no place in the world so sweet, nor one which will be remembered with such peace and joy while this mortal life shall last. Each one of that little company will have to say with the psalmist, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!"

This is the virtuous woman, the true gospel church, whose children arise up and call her blessed. This blessedness does not consist in any worldly advantage or beauty, but in the felt relationship of children to the church, the mother whom they love and revere, whose sweet and holy ministrations have ever been, and still are, the source of unspeakable

consolation and comfort. Poor each child may be, but all are rich in faith. Unlearned in worldly knowledge each may be, but the tongue of the truly learned is given in measure to each, so that from each at times there is heard such language, telling of heavenly glories, as cannot be heard in all the world beside. Jesus is in the midst of these little companies saying, "Peace be unto you." The comfort of the mother is not lacking to the children; she does not forget them. Can any language describe the feeling of home comfort in the hearts of these children as they remember in after years, or from afar, their spiritual home, the church where this sweet, spiritual fellowship was enjoyed? There are those in my mind now who are left nearly alone, almost all of their brethren having been called to their heavenly home, who recall to mind with holy comfort the blessed seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, which they with their brethren enjoyed in days that are past and gone. The church is almost as clearly present in their minds and their hearts to-day as when all were together in person. Very tenderly each face is seen and each name remembered, and as the dear Savior's felt presence is recalled, and the sacred character and power and love of the church as a mother is felt again, these lonely ones, lonely no longer, arise up and call her blessed.

How many places where once a gospel church was seen in a flourishing condition, many coming to her meetings, are now desolate in this respect, no members remaining. If any in any distant place remember those meetings, and the comfort they enjoyed in them, they are favored in that remembrance, for in it the church of God is again looked upon by them. We who have church privileges to-day ought to prize them highly, and to be thankful for the place we have in any church of the saints, and that we are favored to walk with them and dwell together with them in the sweet love and fellowship of the gospel.

The gospel church is risen together with Christ. In this risen state, risen from under the law and from under the dominion of death, she is seen as blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ. Those only can see her as thus blessed who are themselves partakers of this same resurrection power and glory. These children of the church must rise up in order to call her blessed. Her blessedness cannot be seen nor declared from the common level of the earth, nor by those who dwell there, for she is now established in the mountain of God's holiness, exalted far above all earthly hills, and thus her children, feeling in their souls the power of her holy exaltation, rise up and call her blessed.

"Her husband also, and he praiseth her." Jesus calls the church blessed. It is the place where God's honor dwelleth. (Psalms xxvi. 9.) He rejoices in her, and desires to dwell there; he praises her, for his own perfect work is seen in her; he expresses his admiration of her in the language of infinite love, saying, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." How the church delights to hear his voice declaring his love for her by all endearing names, and praising her. The Scriptures abound with the terms of mutual heavenly endearments in which their mutual love is expressed.

This is the third time in this peculiar and wonderful description of this virtuous woman that her husband is mentioned, but in the spiritual meaning of the subject we may regard him as all the time present. Husband and wife, mother and

children and maidens, are all here together; no one can be contemplated by our faith without the others; all are one household, one family, separate from the world, and needing nothing that this world can give to add to their safety or blessedness. All the true expressions of love and praise, whether addressed to husband or wife, come from the Husband. It is he who sings praise unto the Father in the midst of the church; it is he who perfects praise out of the mouths of babes and sucklings. In praising the church he is praising his own perfect workmanship and his own glorious power, and in expressions of love and admiration addressed by the bride to her Husband he is still giving her the language which interprets her own wonderful experience of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, in her own soul, filling her with all the fullness of God. (Eph. iii. 19.)

"Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all." This, it appears to me, may refer to natural daughters, who have done so virtuously that no fault could be found with them. We all know such women, daughters, sisters, wives, mothers, friends, who seem to us without fault. They are recognized by the Spirit, and acknowledged by the pen of inspiration, to be good and virtuous in all these sweet natural relationships, and they are presented as types to represent this perfectly virtuous woman, the church, whom the dear Savior has presented unto himself a glorious church, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, that she should be holy and without blemish. She excels all natural women who have ever lived, as the reality excels the pattern. All other women are mortal, she is immortal; all other women have faults which they themselves can see, if we who love them cannot, this woman is without fault before the throne of God.

"Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised." And still the increasing wonder and power of the words which go on describing this wonderful woman, and showing the great contrast between her and all that is mortal, reach down into our hearts, and go abroad through the fields of memory, and bring again to our view all the dear ones who have been with us during our lives, and whose companionship and help have been for us the source of the purest, sweetest, holiest joy of which we are capable in this mortal state. This passage, which declares the deceitfulness of favor and the vanity of beauty, is not referring to the vile women concerning whom the sons of wisdom are admonished in other portions of these proverbs, but is referring to the good and pure women, of whom we have just been speaking, who have been the brightness and solace of our lives, and who have been our equal companions, standing by our side, contending with us against the evils of mortality and bearing with us the burdens of life. Death ends these natural relationships, and the joys that belong to them, therefore, so far as we trust to this natural favor, and build upon it, we shall find it deceitful, in the sense that it will fail us in the trying hour, and will afford us no help in the last conflict. Then we must have favor of another kind, the favor of our heavenly Father. It is in this sense also that beauty is vain; it will not satisfy our soul's desires even while in our mortal state, and will not continue beyond the bounds of mortality. Even here that beauty which is merely in face and form is not to be compared with that which consists in the light of love and goodness

and faithfulness shining out of the soul and resting upon the countenance. Natural beauty and earthly favor cannot be relied upon to continue. The psalmist says, "When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth."—Psalms xxxix. 11. But when all this natural favor and beauty are gone, there is in the soul of the redeemed sinner, quickened by divine life, a beauty and a felt favor of the Lord which mortality cannot reach with its destructive power, and which will most blessedly show itself to those who have eyes of faith and love to discern it. In that spiritual favor and beauty is this woman seen who feareth the Lord, and who shall be praised. This is still the church of God in her gospel beauty. The fear of the Lord dwells there. The Lord has put it in the heart of every saint. (Jer. xxxii. 40.) This fear of the Lord is to hate evil, therefore it is "the beginning of wisdom," and becomes in the soul that has it as "a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death." Everything in the true gospel church is according to this holy, reverential fear of the Lord, and is pure and holy, and when this fear is exercising the hearts of Zion's children in this mortal state, then they desire to do all things according to his will, and to seek his guidance always.

This woman shall be praised. The praise of God is within her, and praise waiteth there for him. Where the church appears as two or three gathered together in Jesus' name, she is praised, Jesus is there in their midst, and beauty and favor are there, which are neither deceitful nor vain, but which are beyond expression for sweetness. If a hundred or a thousand are together in Jesus' name, it is the same, no more beautiful and precious, and no less so, for all are of one spirit and one soul, and however many or few, we see the one woman who feareth the Lord, the church of God, the perfection of beauty, out of which God hath shined. (Psalms l. 2.) The praise given to any visible church must be according to the measure of the fear of the Lord which is manifest in her walk and conversation.

"Give her of the fruit of her hands: and let her own works praise her in the gates." The church under the legal dispensation said in prayer by the mouth of Moses, the man of God, "Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it." This prayer was fulfilled when the church was brought out from under the law and established in gospel order. All the work done under the legal dispensation had reference to the things which are now fulfilled in the gospel. The beauty of the Lord is now upon the gospel church, and the power and beauty of men's works do not appear. But the work of their hands, in the rites and ceremonies of that dispensation, do appear in their spiritual meaning, and as now fulfilled and established upon the church in our Lord Jesus Christ. So this woman, the gospel church, has now the fruit of her hands given unto her. All spiritual things are hers; all the fruit, or spiritual result, of her legal works are now given to her. The old testament saints, from Abel to the last of the prophets, are all speaking to her. She has come unto the spirits of these just men made perfect, and they are talking to her of the sufferings of Christ, which he accomplished at Jerusalem, and of the glory which has followed. And not only the work done and the testimony given while under the

law, but the work done by this woman now, in this gospel dispensation. There are things here in this gospel work which are seen, as the literal work, the attendance upon order and ordinances, the use of hands and feet, the bodily and mental exercise; and there are things that are not seen, except by faith. When attending upon the things that are seen we desire that the fruit of our hands may be given us; that we may experience the inward power of these works.

"We break the bread, we pour the wine,
But O my soul wants more than sign."

While we are looking to the things that are seen the way often appears dark and long, and the afflictions heavy and long continued, but when we are enabled to look at the things which are not seen, which are eternal, the afflictions appear light and but for a moment, and we are assured they work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. It is blessed when the fruit of our hands is given to us in some measure.

In this gospel tabernacle we have two houses; one is "our earthly house of this tabernacle," including our body and all visible things in the worship of God. These are to be dissolved. The other is "a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." In the first house we groan, being burdened; but while we have groaning and trouble in this house we want to attend faithfully to all this visible work. We would not ask to be unclothed of mortality, but desire earnestly that we may be clothed upon more and more with our house which is from heaven, and thus be made to rejoice, in our labor and afflictions of the gospel, and feel the spiritual work of our hands established upon us. It is in a manner unspeakably good to be able to say, "My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God."

"Let her own works praise her in the gates." There is the King, the Husband, known in the gates, as he sits among the elders of the land. There the apostles are, and there all the holy men of old, who spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The wisdom and the doctrine and all the fruit of the Spirit are displayed in the gates. The gates of Zion may be spoken of as the churches of the saints. These gates are called praise. There, above all worldly works, above all earthly wisdom, power and grandeur, appear the works of this virtuous woman, the gospel church. Who can speak of them in suitable terms? Who is able to tell of their beauty and greatness? They are the work of the Lord wrought in her by glorious and abounding grace, and thus made her own, to be worked out in the life and conversation of living souls, day by day, year by year, and from age to age, while this world shall last.

Only by one's own works can any one be praised. If the work upon close examination shows one fault, the workman is not praised by his work. But of the dear Redeemer it was said, "His work is perfect." And his work in the church is perfect, and therefore no shadow of fault or imperfection will ever be seen in the works of this virtuous woman as they appear gloriously displayed to a company that no man can number, praising her in the gates. Jesus said of Mary, who poured upon his head an alabaster box of most precious ointment, Wherever in all the world this gospel is preached, this that this woman hath done shall be told as a memorial of her; and so may it be said of this virtuous woman throughout all time. While poor souls are longing for heavenly favor which will not deceive, and beauty that will not prove vain, thousands upon thousands shall be made

to rejoice and sing aloud for joy as they behold this woman's own works praising her in the gates. "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 14, 1910.

(*Concluded.*)

CHAPTER IV.

(*Continued from page 267.*)

ABRAHAM CALLED. A GREAT NATION PROMISED.

And after the waters of the flood had abated and the dry land appeared, then "God spake unto Noah, saying, Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee. Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee," &c. "And the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth: neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." "And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you," &c. "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth," &c. I wish to impress upon your mind that all the reason we can discern why God said he would not curse the ground any more, and set his bow in the cloud as a token of the covenant which he made, is for thus it seemeth good in his sight, not only of this, but all other things that come to pass, "for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth," after the flood the same as before; so then it is according to the goodness and mercy of God that he is thus pleased to no more curse the earth, and not that man is better now than before the flood. Likewise it was of his goodness and mercy, "according to the good pleasure of his will," and for thus it seemeth good in his sight, that he chose Abram when he was in Haran (a place which to my mind represented the condition of God's people to-day while in nature's darkness); he there visited Abram and blessed him with hope of a promised land, and showered his precious promises upon him, that he should possess the promised land, and his seed after him forever, and that he would make of him a great nation, and that in his seed should all nations of the earth be blessed, and after he had brought him out of his native land into Canaan he made him strong in battle, and changed his name from Abram to that of Abraham, which represents the adoption spoken of by Paul to the Ephesians. All of these things represent the experience of the entire bride, the Lamb's wife, for the experience of one is the experience of all; the experience of the least little lamb is the experience of the aged saint, all are traveling the same highway, all are led by the same little child (Jesus), who will lead them in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

God promised Abraham a son, but Sarah was barren, and no doubt possessed a little Arminianism, hence she concluded that the Lord needed a little help to carry out his great purpose, so she at once set about to supply the seeming deficiency, and brought her handmaid unto Abraham, and Hagar bare Abraham a son, but it was not the promised seed, as was manifested afterwards, but was only the work of the hands of man, the work of the flesh, and the son of the bond-

woman, which represented the nonelect. Paul says, "But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above [spiritual] is free, which is the mother of us all."—Gal. iv. 23–26. This work of Sarah very much reminds me of the popular religious theory so prominent among the human family to-day, and some of God's people are sometimes fascinated with this plausible idea and bewitched with speeches and carnal reasoning. I feel that I must sound an alarm in the holy mountain (church) and blow the trumpet in Zion. Dear children, be not carried about with every wind of doctrine, be not bewitched with carnal reasoning, "for to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." It is no uncommon thing to hear promulgated from the pulpit or through the press the glaring falsehood that God has done all that he can do to save a lost world, and is needing the help of all the fine educated preachers, and all the money that can be begged or had otherwise, to aid him in this mighty plan of salvation, and that thousands of souls are going down to hell yearly because men are too selfish or too poor to help the Lord. O how foolish; truly the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. Who was present to help God when he "created the heaven and the earth," when he said, "Let there be light: and there was light"? Not man, for he was not yet formed. When he created the heaven and the earth he created the fullness of each, and he took of the earth and formed (not created) man. Who was with him when he trod the wine-press alone, and of all the people there was none to help him? Who was with him when the door of his prison, the sepulchre, was opened by the angel of the Lord and the Son of God came forth from the grave? Surely man had no part in the work, all is of the Lord. Why is it that men, who otherwise seem to have rational minds, will insist on telling their great congregations who flock to the popular, stylish church (the world will love its own) that the Lord needs the help of man, when his help is vain, and that he needs more money? I do not believe that the Lord loves or needs a cent of their money, "for the love of money is the root of all evil;" it is the great incentive that moves men to preach such blasphemy. They will fall down on their knees and pray thus with themselves: "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican: I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess."—Luke xviii. 11, 12. The only reason I can assign is that they are but natural, and cannot therefore understand spiritual things; they are "dead in sin," as they are of their father the devil, and the lust of him they will do, and he was a liar from the beginning, and the father of it, (John viii. 44), and we need not be surprised to hear them "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men," perverting the Scriptures, for this same doctrine of antichrist was preached in the beginning to Eve by the serpent, the devil, and this same preacher has his servants on earth to-day, and would deceive the very elect if it were possible. But when the devil preached to Christ he was able to withstand the

temptation, and thereby was not deceived; so all of God's people are enabled in their Head to withstand all these temptations of the flesh, and it is only in their head (Christ) that a way is prepared for their escape. The prophet Jeremiah says, "Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills [men], and from the multitude of mountains [mission societies or churches]; truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel."—Jer. iii. 23. "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."—Jer. x. 23. Paul declares that salvation is not of works, but by grace, and is the gift of God, and that "by the grace of God I am what I am," that boasting is excluded, &c., yet men teach the very opposite, which proves clearly that "thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions."—Psalms cvi. 39. Such inventions as the Sunday School, mission societies, tract societies, theological seminaries, fashionable churches, instrumental music, box suppers, picnics, and various other money-getting devices, secret societies of various kinds, all of which are but idols made by wicked man, and are in reality but the daughters of that old woman spoken of in Revelation xvii. 5, whose name is "Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." Should one of the sons or daughters of Zion fall into their snares for awhile they will learn that they are not at home, and will testify with the prophet Jeremiah, viii. 11: "For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace." "Miserable comforters are ye." Such ones, when they have thus proved these wicked things by their experience of grace, are willing to "come out of her," and that testifying with Jonah, "Salvation is of the Lord," and will say with David, "Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man."—Psalms cviii. 12. "For I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me."—Psalms cix. 22. "My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth." "Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep."—Psalms cxxi. 2, 4. O what sacred confidence does the faith of the Son of God instil in our bosom, what peace, what joy unspeakable and full of glory to us who feel to be poor, needy sinners; our Jesus is to us a rock in a weary land, and our manna in the wilderness, and our prayer is like that of the poor publican; we dare not look even towards the throne of God, who is infinitely perfect and holy, but feel to be afar off in very deed, hence we cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

But to the subject of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. "And the Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as he had spoken. For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac."—Gen. xxi. 1–3. "And Abraham was old, and well stricken in age: and the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things."—Gen. xxiv. 1. Now Abraham put his eldest servant under oath, and sent him forth to seek a wife for his son Isaac, and the servant was sworn that he should not take a wife unto this son of the daughters of the Canaanites, but that he should go to Abraham's own land and people, and there from among his kindred should take a wife for his son Isaac, and Abraham assured his servant that God, who

had taken him from his father's house, would send his angel before the servant, and he was sent to the appointed place and was blessed to bring Rebekah; Isaac took Rebekah and she became his wife, and Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife; and Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren, and the Lord heard him, and Rebekah conceived. "And the children struggled together within her: and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the Lord. And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger." Thus was Jacob and Esau born, and God confirmed his choice, and his promise with Jacob, and it was upon this wise that the choice was made: ("For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." How different is this from the idea the natural man has of these things, but these sacred truths are revealed unto babes in Christ, and they will declare his glory, and not the glory of man. National Israel was chosen in Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when they were but one, and the promises were given to the chosen of the Lord in their father Abraham. Abraham was the father of the two children, one by the bondwoman and the other by the freewoman. So is God the Father, in a creative sense, of all the human family, yet as Abraham was the father of Isaac in a particular sense, he being by promise the choice of God, so is God the Father of spiritual Israel, and Isaac, like the Son of God, should not take a wife of any but of his Father's family, and so Abraham swore his servant that he should not take a wife for his son of the Canaanites among whom he then dwelt. So I think that all of God's servants (ministers) are under solemn oath to go among no other people except the chosen of the Lord, the redeemed of the Lord, to seek a wife for the Lamb of God. The ministers of the gospel of the Son of God go forth with woe upon them if they preach not the gospel; it is a labor of love, too, but they go forth bowed down beneath their burden, often leaving their families with an aching heart, and often without proper food and clothing, but it is as fire shut up in their bones, the fire of God's love, and they become weary of forbearing and cannot stay. Thus they are sent to seek a wife for their Master, Jesus, and they go praying to God that he may direct them to the elect or chosen lady, knowing that "except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchmen waketh but in vain," praying that there may be some token or sign given them whereby they may know that the woman who comes to the well, even to the well of the waters of life, living waters, with her pitcher (a heart prepared of the Lord, hungering and thirsting after righteousness) is the one that God has appointed to be the bride of our Master Jesus. When they are enabled by grace divine to preach unto her concerning Jesus, and of the grandeur of the house of the Lord, the new Jerusalem, Zion, the city of our God, in demonstration of the Spirit and with power, they sometimes can see the wonderful sign which the prophet saw when he

prophesied (preached) to the valley of dry bones, a shaking (leaping for joy), and coming together bone to his bone (strength in the Lord) and a standing up upon their feet an exceeding great army, declaring the glory of God. Yes, when God's ministers go bearing glad tidings of great joy, declaring unto the "elect lady" that her warfare is accomplished, that she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sin (pardon for all her sins, both the inherited and the practiced sins), saying unto her as the Spirit gives them utterance, "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away," come out of Babylon (worldly institutions, religious or otherwise,) unto the city of our God, she is made willing in the day of his power to follow him through trials and troubles, through deep waters, through the waste howling wilderness, to the promised land, and wherever they may be he is with them and is their meat and their drink.

It was said to Rebekah that in her were two nations; this to my mind represents the condition of God's people after they are born again; when Christ is in them the hope of glory in them are two powers, two spirits or nations; the one is the Spirit of God, which is the one people or inner man, or new man, of which Jacob was the type in this instance, and the other is the old man, the flesh, of which Esau was a figure. O the strugglings within us on account of these things! How often are we made to inquire of the Lord, often feeling if it be so, Why am I thus? "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. * * * I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." Hence this earnest inquiry, If it be so, why am I thus? Why this dull and lifeless frame? Why am I so prone to sin? Indeed it is a point we all long to know, oft it causes anxious thought. When we are able to examine our sinful selves in the light of God's glory we are made to say, "I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing," &c., and are made to exclaim, "O wretched man that I am!" But all these exercises of our minds are but the best evidence of life eternal, and it is because we are born again that we cry unto God, that we mourn, that we loathe and hate ourselves, and this is why we declare the glory of God, for in our bosom is this faith which is the substance of things hoped for; that is, it is heaven begun below; and the heavens declare the glory of God, because they are born of God, and therefore love him with his love, which is shed abroad in all our hearts.

I must conclude, yet I know I have merely hinted at the truth of my subject, but a hint to the wise is sufficient.

G. B. BIRD.

St. Albans, W. Va.

(Concluded.)

Warren, Ark., March 6, 1910.

Dear Brother Chick:—I am a stranger to you in the flesh, and many, many miles lie between us, but I feel to hope that I have fellowship for you. I have surely feasted while reading some of your writings. I have just read your editorial in the Signs for December 1st, and it was a sweet morsel to my poor soul. I am young in the cause, and am very weak, as it seems to me, but in reading your words I have been encouraged,

and I was made to be ashamed, for I have wished that my experience had been different from what it was. O how thankful I ought to be that the change ever came to me at all, and if the dear Lord had anything to do with it I know that it was well done. But I know that you cannot understand me unless I state some of my travels, which seem to me to have very little in them after all. I was raised under the influence of Missionary Baptists, and you know what they teach; it is "do good and be good," and it seems to me that I tried as hard as ever any one did to do right, but, after all, it seemed that I was the worst person on earth. I have had sad and downcast feelings since I was quite small, and why they came to me I do not know. When I was about fourteen years of age I decided to unite with the church and live a christian life, but when I united with them I was much worse off than before, and was in agony of mind. When on the way to the water, my cousin, who was baptized also, said to me, You look as though you were sorry you joined the church; she did not know what I was suffering. When we came up out of the water I gave vent to my feelings. She told me that had she been in my place she would not have done that way; but I could not help it. I went on in this state of mind for a few days, when all at once it seemed to me that all my burden was gone, and I felt like praising God. I thought I would go into the house and tell the folks about it, but when I got there I told nothing, the feeling was gone, and I did not know how it came nor how it went. I went on trying to be a christian, but it was only trying, for it seemed to me that I was very far from what a christian should be. When I read the Scriptures they would condemn me rather than give me hope. I went on, thinking that perhaps when I should do better I would feel better. Sometimes I would get good and try to help the Lord, and then again was made to feel very badly. I married a Missionary Baptist, and the second year after we were married we attended a part of a protracted meeting, which we thought we enjoyed very much; but some time afterward he became dissatisfied, and said that it was all hypocritical. Soon after, he began going to hear the Old School Baptists preach, but I thought it would never do for me to leave my people; no one had asked me to do so. I wanted to be a christian, and live with christian people, but it seemed to me that their doctrine cut me off entirely, and I became deeply distressed about my condition. I felt that I was without God and without hope in the world, all alone, but blessed be the name of the Lord, he made me see and understand that it was nothing that I could do, and that salvation was all of him. He gave me the power to believe in Jesus, that he did all that the Father commanded, and had left nothing for the poor sinner to do. I was made submissive to the Father's will, and to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." I felt that whatever he did was just and right. I had never heard a Primitive Baptist preach, and they were all strangers to me. The first time I went to hear one, I did not hear spiritually, yet it seemed to me that I had a strong love for all the dear old brethren and sisters who were interested in the worship of the true and living God. It was communion day, and they all seemed humble and Christlike. From then on I have loved all who believe in salvation by grace through faith, and in the foreknowledge and predestination of God in

all things, not just in some things. I know that the very hairs of our head are numbered, and if he knows the very secrets of our hearts, and each and every step we take, it must be he directs all our steps.

The incident just mentioned above was in 1901. In the year 1905 my husband united with the church. It seemed that I was careless and unconcerned about myself, though I still loved the brethren and sisters and their doctrine and conversation. I loved to hear them talk about the Scriptures, and tell of the goodness of God to them, poor sinners, as they called themselves; to me they looked like good people. I thought that if I could be as good as they were I would be all right. In the spring of 1907 I was overtaken with a desire to read the Bible, such as I never had before. I had tried to interest myself many times in it, and could not, but now the desire came upon me, I knew not the reason why. I searched for a reason, but could not find any. I wanted to read in Genesis, which had always seemed like foolishness to me, but now the third chapter was the sweetest reading I ever did, it was so plain to me; it was just like a new book had been opened before me. The twenty-fourth verse was good to me, and I did not tire in reading and in thinking about it. Even now at this moment I can see much beauty in it. It seems to me that I was then, and still am, glad that He drove out the man, and placed at the east of the garden cherubim, and a flaming sword, which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life. This seemed beautiful. I understand that tree to be Christ, and did then. It seemed to me that I was glad that he was protected by the cherubim. He is the way, and the truth, and the life, and none can approach except the Father draw them. It was then that I began to love the name of Jesus. O how I loved that name. We were then taking the dear old SIGNS, and I did enjoy reading it very much, and do yet when I can get it. Right here I want to beg your pardon for the way we have treated you, and thank you for your kindness. We have been unable to send our remittance, and have not notified you, thinking we would get the money to settle with you.

I feel that you would do right to cast this letter from you unnoticed, but if you can bear with me just a little, I would like to speak a little more about the SIGNS. I much enjoy reading all the good letters and editorials. I would love to see sister Bonnie Chick's name in the paper again; I did enjoy her letters very much. If you have not already stopped the paper addressed to J. B. Lawson, please do so until we can pay up, and then I will subscribe for it again. I do hope that it is the will of the Lord for me to again take the paper. We are living near a very dear brother, who is a subscriber, and he allows us to have it to read.

I will return now to my travel of mind. I went before the church the fourth Sunday in September, 1907, but there not being an ordained minister, and on account of sickness, I was not baptized that fall. For some purpose unknown to me, but known to the all-wise God, I was not baptized until the first Sunday in June, 1909. This has caused me to have some very sad doubts and fears as to whether I should have gone to the church or not. It has appeared to me that this delay was plain evidence that I did not really belong to them. But they are the only people I can witness with, and the only people I love or know in

the truth. But I left it all with the brethren, and it seemed that they received me as warmly as any one could be received. It may be that they know why they received me, I cannot tell. Now I will bring this letter to a close. Throw the mantle of charity over it. I hope the dear Lord will bless you and strengthen you in the work to which he has set you apart. I believe that if I am saved it is through the grace of God.

Your sister,

PATTIE LAWSON.

PROVERBS IV. 23.

"KEEP thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."

Wisdom speaketh alone to her children, and in no sense, or on no occasion, does she speak to the unbelieving world. She speaks of the world, to present the contrast between that which is precious and that which is vile, showing that all that is sinful emanates from the carnal mind, while all that is righteous is manifest in the work of the Spirit. It is therefore only those in whom the Spirit of Christ dwelleth to whom the Holy Ghost speaketh. In the first place, wisdom instructs her children as to the amount of indebtedness we owe to the heart which the Lord has given us, for he said, "I will give them an heart to know me." And, "I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh." This is the heart to which we owe allegiance, and which we must keep with all diligence. The sentinel who is on duty, and who performs all his duty, relaxes not his watchfulness for one moment, giving all his time to him whom he serves. How much more then, if we be good soldiers of Jesus Christ, should we give "all diligence," for He is worthy of our continual service, our constant watchfulness. Some of us get to thinking that if we give one day out of seven to our spiritual interest, and devote the other six to satisfying our fleshly desires, we are doing pretty well. Are we free to do as it pleaseth us with things which are not our own? The Holy Ghost (by the apostle Paul) saith, "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." It is therefore our plain duty, as well as our sweet privilege, to keep our heart with *all* diligence. I emphasize the "all," that we may each one call to remembrance who we are, what we are, and to whom we belong. It is a solemn profession that we have made, and publicly, too, that we have become followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. Shall we disregard our profession? If so, do we not lay claim to be bastards, and not sons? The enemy of our heart is ever watchful, he sleepeth not, he taketh advantage of every weakness that we are capable of, that he may deceive us and draw us away from the path of rectitude; and O how weak we are, and so prone to follow the wicked devices of our evil nature. We do not realize that all our sorrows, sore trials and deep afflictions come upon us because of our very weakness. "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." Why do we doubt and fear, and groan in sorrow for sin? Is it not because the light of grace has shined in our heart, to show us how weak we are, and how insufficient we are of ourselves? I think I hear you

say, Well then, if these things are true, how can I (of myself) keep my heart with all diligence? But, my precious soul, have you not already confessed that "Jesus Christ is come in the flesh"? and every one who so confesseth is declared to be of God. Then Christ is in you, and is your sufficiency, therefore, "Ask, and ye shall receive." If ye are of God you have the broken heart and the contrite spirit, and when such a heart and such a spirit asketh the appeal is not in vain. This is the heart which wisdom instructs you to keep with all diligence. Watchfulness (diligence) and prayer go hand in hand, for the one begets the other. When the enemy appears, and you are watchful, you will immediately pray for strength, that you may not be led into temptation. Let us remember always that our body is the temple of the living God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in us, which if we do remember, our constant diligence is assured. The teaching of the world tells us that we must do, that we may obtain, while the teaching of the Scriptures brings us the glad and glorious tidings that Christ has undertaken for us, and has already obtained. Now, the Spirit (which is the voice of wisdom) has not simply given us the injunction, "Keep thy heart with all diligence," but gives us solemn and serious reasons why we should do so, saying, "For out of it are the issues of life." Having Jesus we have the precious gift of God, which is life eternal, and this is the life whose issues emanate from thy heart, O child of wisdom and of truth. Occasionally in our journey through the wilderness of this world the door of the temple stands ajar and we obtain a glimpse of the glory and beauty and riches of life eternal. The little glimpse is sufficient to cause us to desire above all things to attain unto the wondrous and excellent glory. The patriarch Job, in his deep distress and darkness of mind, was keeping his heart with all diligence, as he prayed, "O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness; as I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle." So also with the psalmist David when he said, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." The prophet Isaiah said, "O Lord, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name: for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth." The issues of life can alone come forth out of a broken heart and from a contrite spirit. The first manifestation of life in the new-born natural child is the cry, accompanied by motion, and the second is hunger. We recognize life by the action (in nations) which it stimulates. We recognize the issues of spiritual life, as the work of grace in its subject, by its unmistakable motions, first the cry of anguish and fear, issuing from the knowledge of sin and its dire results, which are just condemnation and sentence of death. This is the work of salvation; the psalmist saith, "He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death." In the work of grace death precedes life. There is no manifestation of life in the corn of wheat until it falls into the ground and dies, after which it springeth forth into the beauty and power of life. The Lord said, "I kill, and I make alive." The issues of death are in his hand. We desire

not to die, and it is his gracious work that killeth us, and giveth us a new heart, a heart of flesh, out of which cometh forth the issues of life. Then can we say, "Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me." How wondrous is the grace of God to usward; he giveth us the heart, and strength of grace for diligence, and the spirit of prayer to ask for sufficient grace, and comforts us with the manifestations of the issues of life eternal. These are parts of his ways, and his goodness is from everlasting to everlasting. B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

DENVER, Colo., Feb. 19, 1910.

DEAR KINDRED IN THE BONDS OF AFFLICTION:—It has been my custom in times past to ask your kind forbearance while I have attempted in my weak way to make mention through the columns of the SIGNS that it is the privilege of God to work all things after the counsel of his own will, and I would not at this time willingly be found wavering from this truth, though it be through much affliction. Through the all-wise decree of God one of our number has been called to pass over the cold and silent stream to try the realities of another, and, we trust, better world, where there is no more death, neither sighing nor sorrow, and we are left here yet for awhile to suffer and struggle ere the mystic chain be broken that binds our wandering hearts to this vain, delusive earth. But, O my heart, despond no more, the storm of life will soon be over, when we shall reach the peaceful shore, whither our patient, weary one has preceded us for a short time. My husband, Charles Coddington, passed away from earth on Thursday night, Feb. 10th, aged seventy-four years. His passing away came to us in an unexpected manner and time, and stole in upon us so silently that seemingly we were not prepared to meet it. We had expected to see a still greater change in his condition, and we had thought that the hand of death, which strikes terror to the soul, come in whatever form it may, would be stayed yet for a time at least, and we had thought that we were prepared to meet it with courage and fortitude. But who ever feels prepared to meet the sadness and heartache when we are brought to realize that another tie has been severed, and a loved form has been borne hence, no more to mingle with us in this common life? God's way is not our way, his is the better way, though we are so slow to confess it, yet each one must confess that His is the perfect way. This is a lesson to be learned over and over again, for we are such forgetful creatures and so rebellious. We had been led to believe and to look for a hard struggle when the time would come for him to lay aside his armor of faith, even the faith that overcometh the world, which faith was swallowed up of victory, and we had feared that the end of the complication of diseases from which he suffered, and which caused his death, would be intense suffering for himself, and consequently to all concerned; but God, who works all things after the counsel of his will, had better things in store for us, whereof we have great reason to bless and praise his holy name; for he is a God that doeth wonders; his way is in the deep, and he has shown unto us great mercy, and has granted unto us his salvation and never-failing power to save; who when he says, Let there be light, there is light; Peace, be still, and there is a calm; and without his power we can do nothing.

I will now try and inform the readers of the SIGNS, many of whom were personally acquainted with him, of the last days of him whose remains now lie in the cold embrace of death, temporally in Crown Hill Cemetery, here in Denver. He had been failing gradually for the last five years, but until the last two years had been in a comfortable condition; since then he had failed quite rapidly. The winter before the present one he was confined to the house the greater part of the time, and this winter had not been able to go outside the door, or even allow the cold wind to blow upon him, neither had he for the last four years been able to lie down to rest day or night, but would rest bolstered up in bed with great heavy pillows at night, and during the day would sit in a cushioned rocker with his feet upon a rest. He ate sparingly, and that not of a substantial nature. I would bring in water from the bathroom, set it by him, and he was then able to wash himself. I would then comb his hair, and sometimes he was able to eat with me, and again he was not. This was about the routine of his life during the past winter, until about a month ago, when in some manner unknown to me he took a severe cold, and since that time had failed rapidly. I, who was his constant companion during the past winter, both day and night, and watched and admired, almost to envy, his patient suffering, without a murmur from his lips that I can recall, need have no painful apprehension or doubt but that it was the Spirit of God that had wrought in him that peaceful resignation to the divine will. As time advanced he failed in body, but thanks be to God, this cannot be said of the inner man, for as the outer man perished the inner man was renewed day by day, and it was through the mysterious working in him to will and to do that he was so wonderfully sustained in the hour of need lest he fail and seem to come short of the glory of God and of entering into rest. Often in the last few months I was favored to listen to the words of consolation as they fell from his lips as his condition became less encouraging. It is all right, he would say; I feel that my time on earth is fast coming to a close, but it is all right, it cannot come too soon to suit me; and as I looked upon his wasting energy, his bowed form and faltering step, combined with patient endurance, I could but say, How true are these silent witnesses, they speak greater things than words can express. During the last few days of his stay, at times his mind would wander and he seemingly could not be reconciled to the thought, neither be convinced that we were in the same house that had been our home since we first came to Denver, more than two years ago. I would try to explain to him, but it was of no avail, he was sure we would never be content to stay in this place. It was the morning before he passed away at night that he awakened quite early and made a move to get from the bed. I asked him what was wanted, and he replied that he wanted his clothes, as he was not going to stay here any longer, and wondered why I should stay in such a place. I quieted him and prevailed on him to remain in bed until the usual time to get up. He appeared stupid and quiet during the day, but still kept about the house and came to the table for his meals, though he ate very little. At the usual time I prepared, and assisted him in bed. I noticed that he seemed less helpful, yet I did not feel any need for immediate alarm, and only gave it a passing thought that he was growing

weaker. He seemed to realize this, and we talked of it, I saying to him that the time was fast drawing to a close, to which he assented. O, could I then have known the real condition, that the reaper was then at the door waiting the appointed time, that he might come in and gather the ripened grain ready for the harvest. At the usual time I also retired, but O the mighty way of Providence, who can fathom its depth, or is able to grapple with its strength? Being kept by the power of God is beyond the power of finite minds to comprehend. O the depth of its riches! How unsearchable are thy judgments, and thy ways past finding out. I had mantled the electric light, to protect his eyes from the glare, which seemed to strengthen the gloom through which I seemed to be passing, which appeared to envelop my whole frame, yet through all this I fell asleep. O wonderful mystery, was I heartless? No, but I was mortal, was weary, I needed rest, the rest that came to me in a manner not of my own choosing, as I will tell you. He did not sleep well, was restless, and the cough troubled him, and he complained of his bed not being easy, that he was slipping away from his pillows. I said I would get up and fix them, which I did the best I could. I noticed his inability to help himself, and he continued to cough and moan, and his speech was much affected and he seemed pressed for breath, but I had become so accustomed to all this that I did not give it the heed perhaps I should have done, and thought it unnecessary to disturb our son's family sleeping in the same house. He finally grew quiet again, repeated a prayer, as I learned by a few words that I was able to catch, as his speech was so incoherent, yet I am assured it was a prayer of faith. I had noticed his giving two gasps for breath, but looked upon them as sighs of relief. He clasped his hands in perfect composure across his breast and fell asleep. I stood watching him intently, for I began to have fearful apprehensions of approaching dissolution. I glanced at the clock, it was between the hours of midnight and one o'clock, and something mysteriously strange passed through my mind that gave me a restless and disturbed feeling that was not easily overcome. I was still keeping a very close watch upon the silent sleeper, feeling that as he was resting so easily he would be much benefited by it, and as I was already dressed I thought I would stay up for a time and busy myself with some little duties that still remained undone that I was anxious to finish, that I might be able to devote my whole time to his care in the future, for I had a feeling that the time was near at hand when he would need all my attention. How true it is that man proposes but God disposes. Thus did I busy myself until three o'clock, when I again looked very closely to be sure that he was resting. Not a feature in his countenance had changed, none of the death pallor overspread his peaceful countenance, the eyes and mouth had none of the expression that usually attends death, for there was no death, what seemed so was transition, an entering into rest and peace divine. He closed his own mouth and eyes to the painful scenes of this life, crossed his hands on his weary breast and fell asleep, no more to wake beneath the sun. But as I was not aware that all this had really taken place while my eyes had been holden, I thought I would softly return to bed for awhile, which I did, and O the awfulness of the thought, to quietly lie down beside his inanimate form and fall asleep, without a tremor of fear, alone

with my dead. I slept until six o'clock in the morning. God had provided the sacrifice, I had gotten my rest. As I was already dressed I paused to see if he was still asleep. There had been no change from the position in which I had left him, and my suspicions were aroused. It was the same calm, serene look resting on his brow. I felt his hands, they were cold in death; I felt his face, it was not so cold, but it was sufficient. I rushed downstairs to our son's apartments and told them of my fears. They returned with me, and found it all too true, that another mortal had put on immortality. O, I said, that my eyes were a fountain of tears, that I might weep, but this was denied me. What relief it would have been. To myself I appeared so heartless, so unfeeling, so dead, and so silently had the message, Child, come home, fallen on his waiting soul, that the silent watcher at his bedside did not know when time ended with him and eternity began. What more could God do for his vineyard than had been done? The measure of his days were full and running over, and we do feel to say, as the departed one often expressed, It is all right. The man of God sent his servant to inquire of the Shunammite woman, "Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well." We, too, are passing through the valley, where the evening shadows are, and the wintry winds are moaning around our heads.

It is needless for me to say more at this time, as I have already occupied so much space. May God continue to give grace equal to our day, strengthen and keep us unto the crowning day, and may our end be as peaceful as was his who has gone before.

With love to all,

ABBIE CODDINGTON.

MUSINGS.

O PRECIOUS remembrance of the past night! I lay awake, after a short sleep before ten o'clock, and my mind ran on and on, having been for some time in a dark and wretched state. Many scenes passed before me; the beauties of creation, the verdure, the beasts, the birds, the fowls of the air, the fishes of the waters, all, all passed before me in their beauty. Then I saw the forked lightning, and heard the bursting peals of thunder, all passing before my vision. How it brought me back to my youthful days, when I first realized the power and might of the omnipotent Jehovah, with a reverential awe. I felt sure that I was nearer my God, or he was near to me, when I would hear the mighty thundering. We learn that the lightning burns away the impurities of the air, and the bursting thunder reveals to us the power that commands and directs the fiery tongues which purify the air. O with what reverence have I watched the fiery lightnings as they streaked the black clouds, feeling sure that our God would not let one fiery tongue touch, uncontrolled, even the smallest creature in all his creation. I brought these great wonders home to myself, and could see that the same power had kept me through all the fiery darts of the evil one, and I could have shouted, lifting up my hands and praising God for all his kindness toward me. Then with David I could say, "My heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue, Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is: that I may know how frail I am." And again, "Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my

fathers were. O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more." This last sentence has often occurred to me. It did not seem that I wished bodily strength, but saving strength, and more assurance of my acceptance with Him whom my soul loveth, and a desire to be calm should he call me home, so that I could rejoice and praise him. In all these trials I have desired to say, "Not my will, but thine, be done."

(MRS.) S. J. CUMMINS.

TOUCHET, Wash., March 28, 1910.

PENNINGTON, N. J., February, 1910.

MY DEAR PASTOR:—I feel like writing you a few lines. I have for a long time felt as though I would like to be a christian. Ever since I was sixteen years of age I used to come to the meetings, and when the aged Elder Hartwell preached of the dear Lord and his love, and of how he suffered and died upon the cross, the tears would roll down his cheeks. I could not then seem to understand why he should stand there and cry, but I have been brought to see since, and I feel happy in the Lord. For many years I had a great many sad seasons, wondering if I ever could be received into the church, but at last I was brought to try. I found out through brother David Voorhees when there would be Saturday meeting, and I thought that I would go. I went, and sat there waiting until the moment came when you said, "If there is any one who wishes to come forward asking for membership, now is the time." My heart commenced to throb, and I thought, What is coming over me? Is this the Lord's work? I never had felt such a shaking up before. I waited until this feeling subsided somewhat, and then I went forward, as you know, and to my astonishment was received into the church. Since then I often feel like singing.

I am a poor writer, so please excuse me for this poor effort. I have not been to the meeting because I have had a bad cold, and I cannot stand much exposure to the cold weather. This will let you know that I think of you all.

Your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) CATHERINE DRAKE.

PORT ROYAL, Pa., Dec. 14, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—I did not expect when I last sent that I would be here to renew my subscription again, but the good Lord has seen fit to spare my unprofitable life, and I am in the enjoyment of my usual health, for which I desire to be thankful. The SIGNS comes regularly, always laden with good reading; I would not know how to do without it, even if it cost twice what it does. We seldom have preaching, and the SIGNS contains many good sermons. We hear much about church and revival meetings going on all around us; some even walk two miles through wind and cold to those meetings, and yet when there is a gospel sermon to be heard, as was the case the other Saturday and Sunday, when our dear pastor was with us, those people do not come or have the desire to come that they might hear the truth preached. May the good Lord spare you long to publish the SIGNS, which is and has been of so much comfort to the poor and afflicted people of God scattered up and down in this world, is the prayer of one of the least of all God's children, if one at all, and if ever saved it will be by the grace of God to the chief of sinners.

CATHARINE LONGACRE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1910.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

2 CORINTHIANS III. 9.

DEAR BROTHER:—Will you please give your views upon the Scripture found in second Corinthians, third chapter, ninth verse? By so doing you will oblige an old subscriber,

LUCINDA RILEY.

BOWEN, Ill., Dec. 13, 1909.

Our delay in replying to the above request has not arisen out of any indifference toward the request, but because of press of other things. The text named reads as follows: "For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory." The one truth presented here, and in the whole chapter, by the apostle, is the contrast between the law covenant and the gospel covenant. Several contrasts are presented in the connection, all of which declare the superior glory of the new covenant. First, the subjects of the new covenant stand upon higher ground than those under the old. One was written with ink upon tables of stone for the people, and not in their hearts by the Spirit of God; the other is written not with ink, but by the Spirit, and not upon tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart. From this we learn that the former covenant gave commandments to the people, but could go no further; the other declares the fulfillment of every command in the hearts of the people. The law covenant was powerless to fulfill itself. The new covenant rests upon a fulfilled law, fulfilled first by the dear Mediator, and second fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Second, the ministers of the new covenant are not ministers of the letter, or of the commandment written upon tables of stone and not in the hearts of men, but of the Spirit; that is, they are ministers declaring the fulfilled law, fulfilled in that love which is the summing up of every commandment, and which is shed abroad in the heart of every new covenant subject. The letter means the form of outward service rendered to the outward command. The spirit means that perfect obedience of love, first, upon the part of the blessed Savior, and second, as fulfilled in the hearts of his people, as said before.

Third, the one kills, the other gives life. Life is more glorious than death; surely, therefore, that which declares and brings life must be more glorious than that which declares and brings death, and which can bring nothing else. The former covenant could add nothing to any man, even the most obedient, it could only say, He that doeth these things shall live by them; that is, he shall not die. But because no one ever did that which the law demanded, no one lived on, but all died as transgressors; but the glory of the new covenant is, that One has obeyed for all, and because all this is true, life is given to the dead, and he lives forever.

Now this ministration of death, written upon stones, did have a glory of its own, it was a righteous dispensation, a holy covenant, and it made known the will of God, which is holy, but the glory it lacked was it could save no one; it could only con-

demn the transgressor. The new covenant not only saves men, but it saves sinners, it redeems men. How much less glorious must that be which could not even keep men alive than that which quickens the dead and saves them. The law could save no man from sin, but the gospel declares that there is life for the dead. So the ministration of righteousness exceeds in glory, and that which was made glorious, or, in other words, was holy, just and good, but which could not make men like itself, is excelled in glory by that covenant which provides righteousness and salvation and life everlasting because of the obedience of One. The old covenant demanded righteousness, but did not confer it; the new covenant provided righteousness first of all, and so "what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Fourth, another contrast is this, that the one covenant was done away, while the other remaineth. The Lord has fulfilled his promise, "Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven," and Paul testifies that this signifies the removing of the things that may be shaken, that the things that cannot be shaken might remain. Thus all the old covenant forms and ceremonies were shaken out from their place, while all that belongs to the new kingdom cannot be shaken. Surely the latter must be more glorious than the former in this one thing at least, viz., it endures. These are some of the things which apply, as it seems to us, to the text, and which show wherein the latter covenant is more glorious than the former. Let us not forget that the former covenant was glorious also, in that it declared the righteousness of the glorious Lord. The new is the more glorious in that it not only declares the righteousness of God, but shows that that righteousness has been fulfilled, and is being fulfilled. C.

HEBREWS II. 14, 15.

ELDER G. E. Mayfield some time since desired that we give our thoughts regarding the text in Heb. ii. 14, 15: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Brother Mayfield asks, How is it that the children are partakers of flesh and blood? Does this imply that they existed before they partook of flesh and blood? How is it that Christ took part of the same?

The one great theme of the apostle in this connection is the complete oneness between Christ and his chosen ones, as relates to them as men and women. He was "Immanuel," "God with us," with all that name implies. Not only are they to be raised up to be one with him in his glory, but first he became one with them in their flesh, and in their shame and sufferings. He must be "Immanuel," or "God with us," that we might become one with him in the Spirit. This is the general theme of this chapter. Such expressions as the following witness to this: "Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death." Christ tasted death. He was made "perfect through sufferings." He that sanctified was one with the sanctified. He called them his brethren. "He took not

on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." He was made in all things like unto his brethren. He suffered being tempted. He was called a man many times. All these things are found in the chapter in which the text occurs, and prove that the theme of the apostle is, as said before, the oneness of Christ in his human nature with those whom he came to redeem. It seems a wonderful mystery that poor, fallen man should ever be one with incarnate Deity, but it is no less wonderful that incarnate Deity should be one with fallen man. The humanity of Christ, and the participation in the divine nature of his children, are equal mysteries, but both these truths are plainly stated in the word of God. If we do not comprehend them we can and do most blessedly believe them, and in these two things are our hope, faith, joy and salvation found. Paul expresses the same truth in other words when he says to the church at Corinth, "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, for our sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." One of the first things that must suggest themselves to every thoughtful mind is the infinite disparity between our glorious Lord and those whom he came to save; he, the Lord of heaven and earth, who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, and we, only men, mere worms of the dust, who owe our very being to his bounty, and who yet were enemies to God by wicked works. How infinite must be that love that could cover this vast distance and remove our sins as far from us as the east is from the west. "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Language and thought fail when this is the theme. The teaching of the text is that our blessed Lord was made flesh and came and dwelt among us, as was testified by the apostle John, and the reason was that the chosen people of God were themselves flesh and blood. In this nature they had sinned, and in this nature the work of redemption must be wrought out. Jesus, the eternal Son of God, could not be under any law and could not suffer death, but we were under the law of God and could suffer death, and death had passed upon us all, for that we all had sinned. It must needs be, if Jesus the Son of God is to be our Savior, that he should die, and that he might die he must become the Son of man, as all his children are sons of men; therefore, he was born of the virgin Mary, and grew in wisdom and stature as all his chosen ones do. He became one in all things with us, that we might become one in glory with him. This is the substance of the teaching of all the Scriptures. We surely need not do more than call attention to these blessed truths; no child of God will dispute them.

But brother Mayfield asks, How is it that the children are partakers? We suppose that the word "partakers" was especially in the mind of our brother, but surely the language is not difficult to understand. The word is one in common use, and in the text it has the same meaning that is commonly given to it; a child partakes of the nature of his father, he partakes of the good qualities of his mother. We mean, when we say this, that he is like his father or mother. The thought is that of something which they have in common. So all the people of God alike share in flesh and blood, they

all are men and women. In the Bible, the words "children," or "child of God," always relate to redeemed sinners, to men and women born of God. "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." In all the Scriptures no others are called children of God than those who have been born of him. The children are men and women, and men and women are partakers of flesh and blood, therefore He became a man, and, like his people, partook of flesh and blood.

Does this imply that they existed before they partook? By no means, as it appears to us, and this for the reason that God only inhabits eternity; he only is eternal, all things else were created for and by him; all beings beside began to be. Eternal Deity did not begin to be. Eternal creation would be the greatest contradiction of terms. All that we know about creation is to be found in the first chapter of Genesis. Until, in the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth, he dwelt alone in his own eternity. So far as the authority of holy writ goes, there was no creation before the world was created, and we must not seek to be wise above or beyond what is written.

How is it that Christ took part of the same? All that any of us can know about this wonderful truth is what the Scriptures say about it. They simply declare, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." They declare that the Holy One was born of the virgin Mary; they declare him to be the Son of man, even as they also declare him to be the Son of God. He was the man Christ Jesus, and yet thought it not robbery to be equal with God. Who can comprehend the incarnation? Who can comprehend, on the other hand, the truth that a sinful man becomes a partaker of the divine nature? The Bible language is plain, and the truth stated in it must be received without questioning. The simple language of inspiration conveys things that are heavenly, and which are too deep for finite minds to grasp, and yet our faith and hope rest upon the testimony of the word, and to the word we must go for proof to sustain our faith. The testimony of the word seems plain, that Christ partook of flesh and blood, in the sense that he became a man, and he became a man that he might live on earth in sympathy with his people, and by sharing their sorrows, griefs and trials come to know how to save them in their afflictions, and that he might die in the flesh for them, that they might live forever.

We leave these reflections with our brother, and with all who may read them. They are the poorly expressed convictions of our heart. C.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

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EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ISAIAH XLV. 23.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Please give your views on Isaiah xlv. 23, and oblige yours,

BENJAMIN LUELLEN.

HOWARD Co., Iowa, Jan. 25, 1864.

The text proposed for consideration and comment reads thus: "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return. That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." How amazing the thought that the great and terrible God, who created all beings and all worlds, and who holds the destiny of all things in his sovereign hand, whose every word demands our most profound attention and implicit belief, should condescend to confirm any of his declarations by a solemn oath. To even doubt his veracity in anything he has ever said involves the sin of blasphemy. He commands, and it stands fast; he speaks, and it is done. He is the God who cannot lie, for it is incompatible with his very nature; he is the God of truth. "Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth," but "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker." If to discredit what God has spoken be a crime of such fearful magnitude, how terrible must be the doom of those who will virtually charge him with perjury, by contradicting what he has confirmed by his oath. Men verily swear by the greater, and to them an oath for confirmation is an end of all strife, but our God, because he could swear by no greater, has sworn by himself. There cannot possibly be anything so high, so sacred or so holy as himself, and his holiness is pledged by his oath.

"The words his sacred lips declare,
Of his own mind the image bear;
What should him tempt, from frailty free,
Blest in his self-sufficiency?

He will not his great self deny,
A God all truth can never lie;
As well might he his being quit,
As break his oath, or word forget.

Let frightened rivers change their course,
Or backward hasten to their source;
Swift through the air let rocks be hurled,
And mountains like the chaff be whirled.

Let suns and stars forget to rise,
Or quit their stations in the skies;
Let heaven and earth both pass away,
Eternal truth shall ne'er decay."

"The word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return." What the immutable God has said cannot be recalled, unsaid or countermanded, nor is there any need to recall what he has said, for it has gone forth from his mouth in righteousness. If right that it should be spoken, it would be wrong to recall it. Princes and potentates of the earth may send forth decrees which they would gladly recall, as when Darius made a decree that any man that should for thirty days ask a petition of any god or man, save of him, he should be cast into the den of lions. When he saw that his decree had not gone forth in righteousness, that he had been imposed upon by his nobility, how gladly would he have recalled the decree, if he had possessed power to cause it to return, come back or be unmade. What has gone forth from the mouth of God can be liable to no unforseen consequences, it must prosper in the thing whereunto he has sent it, therefore there can be no necessity for revoking, calling back or causing his word to return unto him. "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow, from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and

it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."—Isaiah lv. 10, 11. Was ever a shower of rain intercepted in its course when descending from the heavens, and sent back by any human or creature agency? When God unstops the bottles of heaven can earth forbid or prevent the rain or snow from falling to the earth? Who then can resist the execution of the strong decrees of the almighty God? The power, the omnipotence, of his word has been tested. His word went forth in the creation of the universe.

> "He called the world from emptiness;
> The world obeyed, and came."

"God said, Let there be light: and there was light." He said, "Let us make man," and man was made. "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."—2 Peter iii. 5–7.

Having briefly considered the awful and sacred import of the oath of the immutable God, and the omnipotence of his word, as securing beyond the possibility of any failure the accomplishment of its mission, we will now call the attention of the readers to the declaration of God thus solemnly attested in our text: "That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." The irrevocable word and oath of God has gone forth from his mouth in righteousness, pledging the truth and holiness of Jehovah in solemn confirmation of the declarations immediately connected with and embraced in the text.

1. That none but God can save a sinner; that he is God, and beside him there is no Savior; that he, the Lord, is God, and there is none else; a just God and a Savior, there is none beside him. All other beings, works or things relied on for salvation are idols, and all who depend on anything but God alone for justification and salvation are makers of idols, and, as God is true, they shall all go to confusion together.

2. This only true, almighty and unchangeable God, who is the just God and Savior, and there is none else, has called all the seed of Jacob to seek his face, saying to that seed, in all the omnipotence of his word which created the world and sustains all things, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." And this order from his eternal throne has not been given in vain; his word has gone out of his mouth in righteousness, and shall not be recalled, or suffered to return void of the work whereunto he has sent it. He said not to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye my face, in vain. Though his omniscient eye could see that seed intermingled with all the tribes of mankind like sheep going astray, and wandering to the utmost extremities of the earth, yet (Isaiah lii. 10), "The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." The words, "All the ends of the earth," are applied to the scattered seed of Israel whom our Lord has redeemed out of every kindred, language and tribe under heaven, and to none else, for if those declarations embraced all the inhabitants of the world, they would secure the salvation of all the human family, whereas God has sworn that some of them shall go to confusion together, but Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting

salvation. "Ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end."—See verses 16 and 17 of this same chapter. The words, "all the ends of the earth," no more necessarily include others of the human family beside the Israel saved in the Lord, than they do all the beasts, fowls and fishes contained in the world. The whole provision of mercy and salvation proclaimed in this chapter is clearly applied exclusively to the seed of Jacob, for God has said, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." Israel shall be saved in the Lord, but they shall all be confounded and all go to confusion together who depend for salvation on anything short of God himself, whether it be on their own works or the works of others, for it is the essence of idolatry to depend for salvation on anything but on God alone, or to attribute to any other being or thing that which belongs alone to God, for he will not give his glory to another, nor his praise unto graven images.

3. The irresistible power of that word which has gone forth in righteousness from the mouth of God, commanding efficaciously all the seed of Jacob to seek his face for salvation, and to look to him as the only just God and Savior, shall, according to the oath of God, secure the submission and allegiance of every one of them. Every knee shall bow in humble submission to God their Savior. God will himself secure this, for he will make his people willing in the day of his power, and they shall come who were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in his holy mount at Jerusalem. Unto him then, according to the word of his oath, shall every knee of all the seed of Jacob bow, for he "will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him." The arrows of the Lord are sharp in the hearts of the king's enemies, whereby the people fall under him. However distant, they shall be brought nigh; however stubborn, they shall be humbled; however rebellious, they shall bow the knee to him when he shall call them by his grace; every one that is called by his name shall hear his voice, and they that hear shall live. He will take away their stony heart and give them a heart of flesh; he will fill them with contrition, and give them that repentance which is unto life, which needeth not to be repented of. The failure of one single knee of all who are now embraced in the word of his oath would involve his truth. But why should we argue this point, has not the mouth of God spoken it? Has not the sacred oath of the immutable Jehovah confirmed the irrevocable decree? What then if infidels dispute? they cannot change the thing that has gone out of his mouth in righteousness. While every bending knee of all the seed of God's spiritual or antitypical Israel shall signify their hearts subdued by sovereign grace, and their unreserved submission to God as the only Savior, their oath shall signify their full allegiance to him as their rightful sovereign.

This perfect subjugation of all the redeemed family to their God and Savior is referred to by Paul, Romans xiv. 11, and Phil. ii. 10, 11, in both of which the inspired apostle establishes the final, perfect and everlasting subjugation and submission of all the seed of Jacob, and the fulfillment of the word of the oath and

promise of God that all Israel shall be saved with an everlasting salvation, that he shall not be ashamed nor confounded in a world without end, while all who are the makers of idols shall with equal certainty go to confusion together. "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." Thus abundantly demonstrating that in the holy calling of his chosen people he said not to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye my face, in vain. It cannot be that Jehovah shall speak in vain. The word of his power shakes the heavens and the earth, and makes the mountains leap from their beds of ages, and skip like rams, and the hills like lambs.

"He said, Let the wide heavens be spread,
And heaven was stretched abroad;
Abraham, I'll be thy God, he said,
And he was Abraham's God."

Instead of sinners bringing God to their terms, in the matter of salvation according to the delusions of the Arminians, God's word shall prevail, its power and glory shall be felt, known and confessed by all who are the called according to his purpose and grace, and on his own head shall the crown of Immanuel flourish. With what supreme delight may all the humbled saints contemplate the awful power and majesty of the word of God. We felt its omnipotence when we were by it called to repentance, when we were by it called to stand in judgment at his august bar, when clouds and darkness were round about him, and he kept back the face of his throne, and when sinking down to the deeps below under the sense of our guilt, we witnessed the omnipotence of the word which from his sacred lips said unto us, "Live." So shall the power of his word be witnessed when he shall bid the nations of the dead arise and meet the destiny already spoken by his mouth and made unavoidable by the power and immutability of his irrevocable word.

But now, how stands the case with us? Are we setting to our seal that God is true in all these declarations? Have our stiff knees been made to bend in reverential submission to our God? Have we sworn allegiance to the King of saints, or are we disputing and still blaspheming? Awful thought! are we trying to make God a liar, or charging him with perjury? We either believe what God has said and sworn, or we are infidels.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., February 1, 1864.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder W. J. Hess, April 6th, 1910, Geneva May, youngest daughter of N. J. and S. J. Shanks, and Henry Hecox, both of Natchez, Wash.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Abigail E. Robertson, widow of Stephen W. Robertson, and daughter of Jacob V. and Catharine Ann Elston Rundle, died April 9th, 1910, at the home of her niece, Mrs. Abram Wyckoff, in Roseville, N. J., aged 59 years. Sister Abbie, as she was generally called, had been in failing health for a year, and while she steadily failed, fading as a leaf, she did not give up, continuing to be around until a few hours before her death. She complained but little, and tried to be of comfort and assistance to others to the last. She was born in 1851, in the town of Greenville, Orange Co., N. Y., where she resided until 1883, when she was married to Mr. Robertson and came to Middletown to live. After the death of her husband, in 1902, she made her home in the family of her nephew, Albert Manning, in Guymard, N. Y. Our dear sister was baptized in 1870, by Elder Gilbert Beebe, and was ever faithful to the profession she made before many witnesses. The church was first of all things with her, and her seat was never vacant when possible for her to be present in the assembly of the saints. Through storm and sunshine she made her faith manifest by her works. Her home, while living in Middletown, was ever open to her friends and kindred in Christ; no doubt many remember the kind and untiring hospitality of the Robertson home. She was a true and faithful friend, not in word only, but in deed and in truth. The New Vernon Church, of which she was so long a member, and which she so dearly loved, has sustained a great loss in her death, but must bow to the will of Him who rules and reigns. She is survived by one sister, one brother, one nephew and one niece, together with numer-

ous other relatives, all of whom have the sympathy of their many friends.

Funeral services were held in the New Vernon meetinghouse Tuesday, April 12th, at 2:30 p. m., and were largely attended. The writer tried to preach the gospel, using as a text Rev. xiv. 13, after which her body was laid to rest beside that of her husband in the New Vernon Cemetery.

May He who is able to bind up the broken-hearted comfort the bereaved family, especially our dear sister Manning, who has not only lost a dear sister in the flesh, but a sister and companion in the kingdom of God. K.

Dr. Joel G. Williams was born August 5th, 1834, died March 17th, 1910, aged 75 years, 7 months and 12 days. He was married to Miss M. J. Clarkston, Jan. 28th, 1868. Dr. Williams was a son of the late Elder Joel G. Williams, of Adams County, Ill. He graduated from the Missouri Medical College in 1859. He was assistant surgeon in the Second Illinois Volunteer Cavalry during the Civil War, and after his discharge practiced his profession in Quincy and in Adams County until October, 1909, when he and sister Williams went to the Soldiers' Home at Quincy for the winter. Together they united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Coatsburg, Ill., in 1877, afterwards changing their membership, by letter, to New Providence Church, at Ursa, Ill., of which church he was ordained a deacon, and served as such to the satisfaction of the church. Dr. Williams was a sound, gospel christian, and was ever ready to give a reason of his hope in Christ Jesus, and was unswerving in the doctrine of God's sovereignty, unconditional election and salvation. His theme of conversation usually was the perfect work of Jesus in the salvation of ransomed sinners, and his mind was a rich storehouse, filled with the good things of the Master's kingdom. It was a privilege indeed to be intimately acquainted with the dear brother, and those who knew him best loved him most. In an acquaintance of thirty years I always found him cheerful, genial, agreeable, lovable in character, the soul of honor and a most humble man, with a tenderness of heart akin to that of woman. His last sickness dated back about one year, but the final attack was of but a few minutes' duration, and his last expression was, "The Lord's will, not mine, be done." Dear sister Williams is left with two sons: Lee, of Quincy, and Julius, of California, and the granddaughter, Leola, who has made her home with them, but they are assured that their dear one had a good hope through grace, and can but remember with thankfulness his honest, humble, earnest life.

Funeral services were held at the Christian churchhouse in Quincy, March 19th, conducted by the writer, and the remains were laid to rest in Woodland Cemetery. D. W. OWENS.

Esther Elizabeth Hall, widow of Thomas Hall, died March 29th, 1910, at the homestead, near Temperanceville, Accomac Co., Va., of inward cancer. She only lived a few days after it was discovered. She was born Nov. 10th, 1838, and was married to Thomas Hall Dec. 25th, 1853. Sixteen children were the fruit of that union, four preceded her to the grave, six sons and six daughters are left. I think I can say in truth that no couple ever left a more honorable and prosperous family of children. Her husband was a member of the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church at Messongoes, and three of the sons are members of the same church, and we think others of the family ought to be for their own comfort. The deceased was not a professor, but her sympathies were with the Primitive Baptists, and she seldom went to hear any other preaching. We have hope that she knew the gospel's joyful sound. She now sleeps where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. Many Baptists will remember her hospitable home.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral services, which he did, using as a text 1 Thessalonians iv. 14: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him," after which all that was mortal was laid away in the public cemetery near Temperanceville, to sleep undisturbed until the trump of God shall sound, and the archangel's voice shall be heard, then she shall come forth, if so be that her name is written in the Lamb's book of life, in the very image of her risen and glorified Lord, and bask in the glory of his presence forever and ever. Amen.

T. M. POULSON.

MASSEY, Va.

SISTER **Amy Shaddock,** of Shunk, Sullivan Co., Pa., died March 26th, 1910, aged 96 years, 11 months and 25 days. The cause of her death was pneumonia. She was the daughter of William and Hannah Porter. Her husband, Everett Shaddock, died in 1876. She had lived with her children since his death. She was born in Schoharie County, N. Y., April 1st, 1813, and was the mother of thirteen children, five sons and eight daughters. Two sons, four daughters, many grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and twenty-eight great-great-grandchildren, with many other dear friends, are left to mourn the loss of dear old Grandmother Shaddock, but she is forever with her Savior, never to return to earth. She united with the Schoharie Hill Church, I am told, about eighty years ago, and was baptized by one of the Elders Mead, of the Lexington Association. She moved from there to Shunk, or near there, nearly seventy years ago, and united with the church called Canton and Columbia, now called Grover, remaining in the sweet fellowship of the church until death. She was an excellent, kind, noble christian, mother,

neighbor and friend to all who knew her. She was sound in the faith of God's elect, and loved plain, clear, discriminating preaching; her Bible and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES were her library, and all the reading she cared for. The writer of this notice visited her two or three times a year for eleven or twelve years, at her daughter's home, as she was not able to get to the meeting at Grover, ten miles by wagon, and poor roads. I also attended her funeral at the meetinghouse in Shunk, where a large company met to take the last look at the earthly house of dear old Grandma Shaddock. God bless all of the mourning ones with grace sufficient to support them, is my desire. D. M. VAIL.

Isaac Tucker died April 10th, 1910, in the house where he was born October 27th, 1829. He was dearly loved by his people and respected by all; his word was as good as his bond. In early life he grew dissatisfied with the preaching common in all places, and when he heard of some one believing differently he would visit that person. He made the acquaintance of an Englishman, who loaned him books, and one day he gave him a torn paper, and said perhaps he could get something out of that. It was the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and he had taken it ever since. In the paper he saw a meeting advertised at Schoharie, and he went there and united with the church. He was a man of peace, and had little trouble with his tenants or workmen, and could not see any cause for or be reconciled to trouble in the church. He believed that love and peace should rule, and that Christ finished the work of salvation when he died upon the cross. When the disciples asked the Savior what they should do to work the works of God, he told them to believe on him whom he had sent. Mr. Tucker was a very great sufferer, but he patiently bore it. He was sick a long time, and the last week was unconscious. I hope he is where sorrow and suffering are no more.

(MRS.) ISAAC TUCKER.

SLOANSVILLE, N. Y.

William W. Hastings died at his late residence, near Delmar, Sussex Co., Del., Dec. 22nd, 1909, at the age of 54 years, 5 months and 17 days. His disease was pneumonia and jaundice, from which he suffered intensely for over six weeks. All that loving care and medical skill could do was done, in the hope of successfully combating the disease, but was of no avail, God's purpose must be fulfilled. He was the son of the late Winder Hastings (who was a prominent member of the Little Creek Church, serving many years as deacon and clerk), and while not a member of the visible church himself, was a good friend, ever ready to render assistance, entertaining freely and heartily, and enjoying the society of Old School Baptists. He was married about thirty-one years ago to Miss Mary A. Lecates, who is a faithful member of the Little Creek Church. He leaves, beside his bereaved companion, two daughters: Mrs. John H. Gordy, of Delmar, and Mrs. R. L. Francis, of Laurel, Del. I feel a sense of personal loss in the death of Mr. Hastings, who was a good friend and neighbor. Our hope for him is that he found grace in the eyes of the Lord, as he expressed himself as having a hope in the mercy of God. May the consolations of the gospel abound to the sorrowing widow and daughters.

One who held him in high esteem.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., April, 1910.

Mary Huestis died at Middletown, N. Y., April 11th, 1910, aged 76 years. Sister Mary joined the church at Middletown in June, 1869, and was baptized by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. She loved the doctrine of salvation by grace, and loved the Lord's people.

Elder H. C. Ker spoke most comfortingly at the funeral from the words, "Thou sowest not that body that shall be." How precious is the hope of immortality! M. A. HUESTIS.

APPOINTMENTS.

ELDER H. C. Ker is expected to preach in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse the fourth Sunday in May (22nd) at the usual hours. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass.

BROTHER J. M. Fenton, of Philadelphia, Pa., is expected to preach at Cammal, Pa., the fourth Sunday in June, at 10:30 a. m., 2 and 6:30 p. m.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

R. L. Scroggin, Illinois, $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Black Rock Church, Baltimore Co., Md., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the fourth Sunday in May, (18th, 19th and 20th,) 1910.

Visitors coming via Baltimore will take train from Union station, on Northern Central Railroad, at 3:30 p. m. on Tuesday, the 17th, for Cockeysville, where they will be met by friends and cared for. Those coming south, on Northern Central Railroad, will be met at the same time and place. All who are in accord with us are invited to attend.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor,
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Welsh Tract Church, near Newark, Del., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the fifth Sunday in May, (25th, 26th and 27th,) 1910.

Those coming from Philadelphia and Baltimore, and other points north and south, will come via B. & O. R. R. on Wednesday morning. Train leaves Philadelphia, Twenty-fourth and Chestnut Sts., at 8:15 a. m., and Baltimore, Mt. Royal station, at 8 a. m. Get Tickets to Newark, Del. Those coming via Delaware Division will take train leaving Delmar, Del., Wednesday at 7:05 a. m. and change at Porter for Newark, Del., where all will be met and conveyed to the place of meeting. Ministering brethren and all who love the assembly of the saints are cordially invited to meet with us.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

THE churches of the Roxbury Association have appointed their next fifth Sunday or quarterly meeting to be held with the Second Church of Roxbury, Roxbury, N. Y., on Saturday and Sunday, May 28th and 29th, 1910, meeting to commence on Saturday at 11 o'clock a. m. Trains will be met at Roxbury Saturday a. m. Train leaving Kingston at 8 a. m. arrives at Roxbury 10:14 a. m. Train leaving Oneonta at 7:35 a. m. arrives at Roxbury 9:27 a. m. We shall be glad to welcome all who have a desire to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the first Sunday in June, (1st, 2nd and 3rd,) 1910.

Those coming from Philadelphia, Baltimore and all points south will leave Philadelphia Terminal station. Those coming from the east will leave New York from the Jersey Central depot in Jersey City. All afternoon trains on Tuesday before the association will be met from either direction. Trains leave Reading Terminal station in Philadelphia for Hopewell at 1:30 and 5:30 p. m. Trains leave New York from Twenty-third St. ferry at 1:20 and 5:20 p. m. All who come on Wednesday morning will come at once to the meeting-house, about ten minutes walk from the depot. We shall be glad to welcome all who have a mind to meet with us at that time.

D. W. VOORHEES, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Middleburg, Schoharie Co., N. Y., have appointed their yearly meeting to be held the first Saturday and Sunday in June (4th and 5th), 1910. A cordial invitation is extended to ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

A. COOK, Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Middletown and Wallkill Church, Middletown, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June, (8th, 9th and 10th,) 1910.

Those coming by way of New York will take train leaving West Twenty-third St. (Erie R. R.) at 2:55 p. m. Tuesday before the meeting. This train will be met and friends cared for. Any leaving New York Wednesday morning will take train leaving Chambers St. at 7:08 or at 9:10, and come to the meeting-house on arrival in Middletown. Those coming east on Erie R. R. will drop Dr. G. A. Emory a card saying what train to meet. Those coming on O. & W. R. R. will go to 21 Broad St. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend.

G. A. EMORY, Clerk.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

A union or three days meeting will be held with Bethel Church, at Tallman, Linn Co., Oregon, commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1910, at 2 o'clock p. m. We cordially invite all lovers of truth, and hope to meet as many as possible of our brethren and ministers. Those who contemplate visiting us at that time will please remember Tallman is situated on the Lebanon branch of the Southern Pacific R. R., forming a junction with trunk at Albany. There are two trains daily, one train leaving Albany about 12:30 p. m., the other about 8 p. m. Be sure to board Lebanon train, stopping off at Tallman. Church is near depot.

SILAS WILLIAMS, Pastor, Tallman, Oregon.
A. HORNER, Church Clerk, Waterloo, Oregon.

THERE will be a two days meeting held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse on Schoharie Hill, June 15th and 16th, 1910. Those coming to Schoharie will be met and cared for at Mrs. Helen Kinney's. Those coming to Howes Cave will be met if a card is sent to Geo. A. Miers, R. F. D. No. 3, Schoharie, N. Y. We shall be glad to welcome all who have a desire to meet with us.

GEO. A. MIERS.

THE Siloam Association will, God willing, meet with the Sulphur Creek Church, at Nesika, Lewis Co., Wash., June 17th, 18th and 19th, 1910. Those coming by rail will leave Tacoma, Wash., on the Tacoma and Eastern R. R., about 8 o'clock a. m. Thursday, June 16th, and arrive at Glenanon, Wash., at 1 o'clock p. m., where they will be met and conveyed to place of meeting. Nesika is seventeen miles from the station. All who plan to go will please write to Elder F. L. Riffe, Nesika, Wash., so he will know how many conveyances to send. A cordial invitation is extended and a large attendance desired.

SONORA A. HESS, Clerk.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

A SMALL band of Primitive Baptists is meeting every Sunday at 10:30 a. m. at 2919 Polk St., Chicago, Ill. All persons interested are welcome to meet with us. Any one knowing of members living in or near Chicago will please notify W. N. Spitler at the above address.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 78. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1910. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

1 THESSALONIANS V. 25.

"BRETHREN, pray for us."

Paul, Silvanus and Timotheus requested the church of the Thessalonians to pray for them. A request like this is often found in the writings of Paul. I have thought much in regard to prayer. At one period of my life, since I was made to know the power of His grace, I had thought that it seemed like a sin to ask the Lord for temporal blessings, because it seemed to be a selfish desire, and my thought then, of what ought to be a standard rule in regard to prayer, was that all selfishness should be excluded; but what I desire to do, I do not, so if I pray for myself, there must be a desire for mercy, relief from burden or blessing upon myself individually, and this would be selfish. I do not know that I can instruct God's people on this subject; it is a wonderfully great subject, one that was of interest to the early patriarchs. Kings as well as subjects bowed their heads and supplicated for mercy, and humbly asked for blessings of Him who is able to give mercy and blessings. From ancient times men in humble positions have petitioned, or prayed, to those above them in authority for favors, and it was for the obtaining of these favors that they prayed. Really, prayer means a supplication to God, who is above all things. The position of the body in the exercise of prayer is not always significant. I have thought much in regard to kneeling, or standing while praying. While it remains true that the position of the body may be formality, yet the Scriptures give more evidence in favor of kneeling than in standing, and that in olden time men generally knelt while praying to God. If we have the spirit of prayer and of supplication, and a feeling sense of need, we may be able to pray acceptably unto God, regardless of the position of the body. I feel safe in saying this while viewing the words of Paul: "Pray without ceasing." It seems to my mind from this exhortation that God's people ought to pray all the time; that their very breathing ought to be a thought of prayer to God. By the mouth of Malachi it is said the Lord wrote "a book of remembrance" for them that feared him and that thought upon his name. Surely they that fear the Lord think upon his name. Secret prayer may be sincere

thoughts directed to the Lord through the holy name of Jesus, the Savior of sinners. How different is a prayer of this kind from that learned from a prayer-book or committed to memory without a feeling sense of need from the very bottom of the heart. We may get very pious at times, and think that just then it is our duty to pray, but may not feel very humble or much dependent upon God's mercy, but to keep up appearances, or to follow an established custom, so that we think the regular time for prayer must not pass, though we cannot feel the spirit of prayer or of supplication; this cannot be prayer to the supreme Ruler of all things. If our prayers are bounded by certain words and phrases, without realizing the meaning of the words we utter, how can this be prayer to God? If our hearts are prepared by the Lord through trials, or afflictions, or reverses of some kind, to cry unto him for relief or mercy, surely there will be an answer to our appeals. The answer may not be as we desire, but just as God designed it to be answered. Paul said that a thorn in the flesh was given to him: the messenger of Satan to buffet him, lest he be exalted above measure. "For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me." I suppose that the thorn did not depart from him, judging from the answer that the Lord gave Paul: "My grace is sufficient for thee."—2 Cor. xii. 9. Every petition addressed to God from the throne of grace, to be answered, must be in accord with God's holy will. From this position it would seem that the dear Lord prays for us and we know it not. How wonderful! "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."—Romans viii. 26. There are the best of reasons why poor, needy sinners ought to pray. The Lord Jesus said, "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily."—Luke xviii. 1, 7, 8. "Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer."—Romans xii. 12. The grandest reason of all why the saints ought to pray, is that the Elder Brother set the example for all that follow to know him, for to know him is life eternal. What better sermon-prayer is found in the Scriptures than the seventeenth chapter of John? This sets forth the power of the Father and of the Son, the unity of the Father and the Son, the Son's full jurisdiction over all flesh, so that he has power to give life to every one of the elect, his power to manifest himself unto the foreknown of the Father. He prays for them, and not for the world. He prays for them that oneness may be extended to them even as it exists with the Father and the Son. Not only does he pray for these alone, but for them yet unborn who shall believe on Jesus through their word, and "that they also may be one in us." And that they should have the same glory as their Elder Brother, "That they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." Not only does Jesus in this chapter speak to the Father of the power given unto the Son, but his humility and submission are clearly manifested in his words. The Lord's humility and his submission to the holy will of the Father in his prayer in the garden of Gethsemane, are testified to by Matthew, Mark and Luke, all agreeing in the main, and of his prostrate form upon the earth in the time of prayer.

May all who read and think upon the accounts given of the wonderful condescension and willing humility of the dear Lord and Master be constrained to be submissive to the Lord's will, and may his Spirit lead them in humility to worship at the feet of King Immanuel, ever looking unto him, the author and finisher of their faith. I have for many years thought of the beautiful lines of the poet:

"Humility, how bright it shined
In every act he wrought;
What lowliness of heart and mind
Appeared in all he taught.

His love to men of sinful race,
Glowed in his tender breast;
For man he yielded to disgrace,
Forsaken and distressed.

Led as a lamb to meet the sword,
He bowed beneath the stroke;
Not one revengeful, angry word,
The dear Redeemer spoke.

O may his meekness be my guide,
The pattern I pursue;
How can I bear revenge or pride
With Jesus in my view?"

The prophets spoke of the meekness of the Lamb of God, the apostles testified to the same. It is right to pray for our brethren, and it is according to the teaching of Jesus and his apostles. "Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly. But I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner."—Heb. xiii. 18, 19. "Making mention of you in our prayers."—1 Thess. i. 2. "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel."—Eph. vi. 18, 19. We are to watch as well as to pray. "Watch, and pray, that ye enter not into temptation."—Matt. xxvi. 41. "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is." "Watch ye therefore; for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning."—Mark xiii. 33, 35. "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."—Luke xxi. 36. "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds."—Col. iv. 2, 3. "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting."—1 Tim. ii. 8. "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men."—2 Thess. iii. 1, 2. The children of the heavenly King are expected to be better, in the sense of having a forgiving spirit, than unbelievers, or false teachers of religion, who love their friends. They are expected to do more than to love and pray for one another, and are commanded to love their enemies, which is contrary to the promptings of nature, and to bless those who curse them, "and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." Though the Lord's people do not boast of good deeds, for boasting is excluded, nor have any good works to recommend them before God, yet they must exceed and do exceed, in good works, the very best efforts of false professors and unbelievers. The most prominent of all to their credit through their Head is that they are not idolaters, because the Lord alone does lead them, and there is "no strange god" with them. Their Lord in

the painful agony of death could say in behalf of his enemies: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Self-sacrifice is an inheritance for the obedient and humble followers of the Lamb. The warfare within makes them sacrifice worldly lusts that war against the soul. In a sense they deny self (abhor self, and say, "O wretched man that I am!") and glory in tribulation also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience worketh experience, and experience worketh hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them. They are surely not ashamed to hope, feeling assured that the apostle understood what he said in the expression, "We are saved by hope." There is now scarcely a worldly religious order that has any use for hope; they make light of it, and say it is too weak for them. They cannot have fellowship with the inspired apostle in his experience, nor are they crucified with Christ and yet live, for "they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." They glory in nothing save in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto them, and they unto the world. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."—Romans xii. 1. Self-denial is one of the characteristics of the circumcised in heart. These are the words of Jesus: "He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me;" and, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me;" and, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me;" and, "Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." We must have tribulation if we are the called of the Lord, for "we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." "That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto."—1 Thess. iii. 3. Chastisements within and without are the sure inheritance in this world to all who live godly in Christ Jesus. These shall suffer persecution; these are chastised and scourged. All are partakers of chastisement, and if without chastisements, "then are ye bastards, and not sons." Have these afflicted and poor people any need for prayer, they, who of all men are most miserable, if in this life only they have hope in God? Of all men upon the face of the earth, the elect of God, they only, have need for prayer, because they are the only ones that can and do pray, and their prayers are worship "in spirit and in truth." There are people who honor God with their lips, while their hearts are far from him. They are not the "elect." Their sacrifices and their ways are abomination to the Lord. "Even his prayer shall be abomination." But the real prayer is prepared by the Lord himself, for, "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." Preparations, or disposings—margin. Man may have many devices in his heart, but the counsel of the Lord will stand, for, "Man's goings are of the Lord; how can a man then understand his own way?"—Prov. xx. 24.

Much more might be said on this subject, and of the wonderful power and influence that God has over mortal man, but I leave the subject.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

HELENA, Okla., April 24, 1910.

YALE, Ill., Feb., 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN:—While I am compelled to remain at home on account of the cold and poor health, and as it is the time for the meeting of the old North Fork churches, and I am thinking how much enjoyment I have had with the precious brethren and sisters who meet there, my mind goes back in love to them forty-five years, when I first began to meet with them, after having just received a hope in the precious Savior. I have from time to time met very many brethren and sisters who have received their reward and are at rest. Many precious servants of God who were about my age have gone to their reward. This causes a deep solemnity to fall upon my mind, and the question arises, Why has God spared my life, poor and unworthy servant as I am, that is, if a servant at all? I can look back over my life and see very many missteps and failures in the service of my blessed Master and the church. I often feel like placing my hand over my mouth, and crying, Guilty, guilty, before God. I again look back and see the love and kindness of my precious brethren toward me, and a thankfulness of heart arises as I realize that my heavenly Father has so ordered my life that I have caused no trouble, and that I have desired to work for peace among my brethren. I believe that this has all been through the kind direction of our heavenly Father. I have tried to preach Christ and him crucified as the only hope of poor sinners, and to avoid words to no profit, which gender strife. I am opposed to all inventions of men, and to all secret orders, and instrumental music in our churches, believing that the Old Baptist Church has no use for them. I am sure that the Predestinarian Church is the kingdom of which the prophet spoke, which the God of heaven should set up. Jesus is the God of heaven, and he said that he would build his church, and the gates of hell should not prevail against it, so I believe that the militant, or organized, church was set up by our Savior, and it is not to be left to any other people, and shall stand forever, and of that kingdom there shall be no end. Therefore, dear brethren, we need not fear, for the church shall stand while time lasts, and then will be ushered in the church triumphant. The Master said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." There is but one true church, while there are said to be many concubines, or daughters of Babylon, the mother of harlots; but the dear Lord has declared that his love, his undefiled, is but one, and she is the only one of her mother, and the choice one of her that bare her. Here Solomon presents the true church, and she is but one. It looks so plain to me that it seems any child of God who has received a precious hope in Jesus cannot be mistaken, and to such I can say in the language of Jesus, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins." Come home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you. Tell them how he has led you along by the still waters, and made you to lie down in green pastures. I know what it is to be in Babylon, for I was there five years, but the food was not suited to my taste. I thank God that at last he led me to his banqueting-house, and his banner over me has been love. When the Lord leads his children he always leads them to their home.

Dear brethren, I feel that you could do without me, but O how could I do without you? My life would be miserable;

but after a few more risings and settings of the sun I hope to hear the welcoming words, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." I hope to realize the language of the apostle, and to feel that I have fought a good fight and have kept the faith, and that there is a crown of righteousness laid up for me, which the Lord shall give me at that day.

In order to comfort his disciples, when he was about to go to his Father (and I believe that this takes in all true churches on earth, and that they constitute the house) he said, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you." I believe, for myself, that these mansions are the organized churches, as we call them, which are scattered all over the earth wherever God has chosen to gather his people together for his worship. I think that Jesus here changes the subject, saying, I am going to my Father to prepare a place for you, that where I am there ye may be also. We do not find any divisions in heaven, but we believe that heaven will be one eternal world of glory, and that the children of God will all be like Jesus, and enjoy that eternal rest, where we shall no more take the parting hand, nor shall there be any more sorrow, sin, tears, pain or dying. We follow our dear ones to the grave with a sad, aching heart, as your poor, unworthy servant has had to do, leaving them there until Jesus shall say to the grave, Give up the dead.

When we turn to Solomon's Song we find this language: "There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number." I believe that these represent the whole religious world. Then Solomon describes the true church in beautiful language: "My dove, my undefiled is but one: she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her: the daughters saw her and blessed her." "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed."

I have written some of my thoughts upon these things which pertain to the kingdom, but there are many things left out, and as I look it over it seems imperfect, and I feel as though it is not worthy of a place in your paper. Since I began writing this, I have concluded to subscribe for the SIGNS, so will send it to you with the subscription price. If the paper is as good as it was when Elder Gilbert Beebe was living I will continue to take it.

Yours to serve,

J. C. BIGGS.

LIGHT, LAW, GOSPEL.

"AND God said, Let there be light: and there was light." "And the evening and the morning were the first day."—Genesis i. 3, 5.

Out of the infinite realms of eternity, which ever was and is with God, who inhabiteth eternity, we read, "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." The gospel, as recorded by John, speaks of Jesus as the "Word," and also as "the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." We read in Genesis i. 16, "And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also." These were for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years. We understand the two great lights to be the sun and moon; the sun is the sole source of natural light, the moon and stars are reflecting the light emanating from and existing in the sun,

the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. The sun appears to rise in the east and set in the west, but we understand that it is the earth that revolves, which brings about the appearing and disappearing of the sun. The sun has never ceased to shine, and wherever it appears in the earth it is fighting and conquering the darkness. The darkness exists, but is not comprehended, because of the excellency of the greater power of the sun. To illustrate it more fully: to make a light in a dark room, the light overcomes the darkness; the darkness is in the room, but not comprehended; remove the light and the darkness is realized; likewise also the revelation of whatever is in the room is made manifest by the light; the light did not put anything in the room, but made manifest what was there. Just so the "Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," has the effect of revealing to that one what is in him; it did not put anything there, but made manifest what was already there. The sun in its appearing is preceded by rays emanating from it, and the rays are making manifest, first in a small degree and then more fully. The apostle speaks of his being up in the mount of transfiguration with Jesus, and Moses and Elias appearing (here the law and prophets are represented in your experience), and a cloud overshadowed them, and when the Lord said, "Arise," they saw no man save Jesus only. The apostle in his epistle calls attention to the fact that "we have also a more sure word of prophecy [resurrection of Jesus], whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the daystar arise in your hearts." This daystar is your hope; the daystar reflects the light emanating from the sun, and precedes the sun in its coming forth, and the star is finally swallowed up by the brightness of the sun; just so is the hope which is as an anchor of the soul by the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shining in your heart, and is there only by the Sun of Righteousness arising with healing in his wings, and when Jesus appears the hope is not taken away, but swallowed up in the reality.

The moon and stars to rule the night season, representing the law and prophets; the moon represents the law, and the stars the prophets. The prophets spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, it was Christ in them, his light shining in them, and they testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.

I will now consider the law; first, that it was given of God, its power and force of execution are regarded by us in the measure we comprehend the majesty, authority and power from and by whom it was given. God gave the law to Adam in these words recorded in Genesis ii. 17: "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: [now the penalty for disobedience] for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The giving of the law did not make sinners, but the transgression of the law made the transgressors sinners. The apostle asks the question, "Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." So covetousness is embraced in things forbidden by the law. To covet is to transgress the law, and transgression of the law is sin, and sin when it is finished brings forth the penalty: death. It is folly to in anywise charge God with being the author

of sin, for the apostle has clearly stated in Romans v. 12–14, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: for until the law [given to Moses], sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." Death reigned from Adam to Moses, because the law was transgressed by Adam, and death was the penalty. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." "In Adam all die." The source and fountain was corrupted by sin, and every issue proceeding from the Adamic head is the same as its source. David said, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Here is presented the total depravity of man by nature, dead in trespasses and in sins. God gave Adam the law, and upon Mt. Sinai he gave the law to Moses written upon tables of stone. The first two tables of stone with the law written thereon were broken by Moses in anger, when he knew the children of Israel had worshiped the golden calf, showing the law was broken before the children of Israel had received it. (Exodus xxxii.) "And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first; and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest."—Exodus xxxiv. 1. Moses did as commanded, and the last two stones with the law written thereon were placed in the side of the ark of the covenant, and were there until the destruction of Jerusalem, showing that the law is only kept in Christ, the Ark of the new covenant. I do not understand that God ever set aside or revoked his law; the law given to Moses was but specifying minutely the one full, complete law given to Adam: "Thou shalt not eat of it." True, the law given to Moses only embraced the Jews, whereas the law given to Adam embraces all the race of Adam, whether Jew or Gentile. And when Jesus died, he died to redeem them that were under the law, both Jew and Gentile, chosen in him before the foundation of the world; he died for them given to him in covenant love and mercy of the Father before they were created in Adam, for they "are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people," and have the law written in their minds and in their hearts. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, * * * I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people."—Jer. xxxi. 31–33. This law written in our hearts reveals our vileness. Jesus said to the Jews, "Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust."—John v. 45. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." Jesus came not to destroy the law, or the prophets, but to fulfill; he is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, and when he appears it is the gospel, the power of God unto salvation; the gospel is glad tidings of great joy, declaring unto the ends of the earth, "I am thy salvation." You are not under the law, but under grace, and if ye love me, keep my commandments; not the commandments of Moses, but my commandments; follow me; tell the church what great things your hope lays hold upon, which the Lord hath done for your soul; rest your case with them, they will deal honestly, and if they have

fellowship for you then follow him in the ordinance of baptism. Buried by baptism into death with him, and raised again to newness of life, gathered into the fold, with believers enrolled, with believers to live and to die, and pray the Lord to lead, guide and instruct you.

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March 25, 1910.

REST.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—My mind has been somewhat exercised on the rest that we have in our Lord Jesus Christ, and I will give you what may appear in my mind. We all know that there cannot be any rest for us in that which we do not believe. This was fully proven in our minds before we were given a hope in Christ Jesus. The burden of our minds made us hunger for rest, but to find the place was another question. Then our life was a life of labor and sorrow, and our meat was eaten with tears and under the lash of the taskmasters. The children of Israel had no rest in Egypt after the Lord spake to them, nor could they ever again do a full day's work. Every night when they had ended the rigorous service of the day and the bricks were counted there was a shortage, and instead of the task being made lighter they were required to do the full day's work the next day, and make up the shortage for that and former days. Thus their task soon became doubled for the want of ability to perform it as they went. They had no rest, but were heavily burdened day by day. Doubtless they would have rejoiced to have been able to have done one day's work to the full, but this they could not do. Thus each day put them just that much further in debt. Even so, after our God speaks to a poor sinner, and awakens him from the dead, he is never again able to do any more work that he esteems as good, and he becomes alive to the fact that when he would do good, evil is present with him. Thus he is made to grieve over his inability to serve God, and as he fails day after day he finds the indebtedness piling up upon him until he knows that there is no hope of his ever paying up. Thus he becomes one who labors and is in pain to be delivered. Like the Israelites, he does not know that that is the path to deliverance, but rest is only for the weary, and only the laboring can hunger for deliverance. Zion is travailing, and there never was an abortion. The Lord said, I have heard the cry of my people, Israel, and I have come down to deliver them. Again, he shows that that deliverance must be the work of his own everlasting arm. Moses could not boast that he and Aaron had brought Israel out of bondage; they were just as much in need of deliverance, being Israelites, as any other of their brethren; they had no more promise for themselves than they had for all Israel. Not a hoof should be left behind, therefore the salvation of God was sure to every Israelite in Egypt. How comforting for us to be given to see that all the people of God shall surely be brought out of bondage and be saved by Jesus Christ. In all the troubles of the Israelites Moses was their teacher and Joshua was his minister. Even so all the time we are under the tutorship of the law Christ is the Minister of the law to us and in us, therefore our conviction and repentance are by him. We are not working for him, helping him, but he is ministering unto us and showing us the great work he did for us and is now making manifest in us. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give himself a ransom

for many. We may believe that he is a wonderful Savior to his people, but we can never enter into that sweet rest until we are given faith to believe that he is our own Savior and God; then rest fills our souls and we truly believe in him. There our works cease, and the day is one of hallowed peace. This is the first true rest and peace we ever knew. We became fully convinced of the sufficiency of our Lord to save, for he has saved me. This each one is given to feel for himself, therefore the joy and rest are personal and dwell in the heart. But how soon that rest may become disturbed! By what? Ah, the temptation comes that makes us feel we are deceived, and that this is not true deliverance that we have received. Thus unbelief, that besetting sin, has disturbed us. We are not convinced that no change has taken place, but we question if it is really the change which is given to the children of God, and we further question that the Lord will keep us in the way. We did not question these things before, therefore we have the evidence of a change. Inasmuch as Satan is not careful to have us believe in the Lord Jesus and have him dwell in us, it must be that our unbelief is of him. He first taught our mother Eve to believe his word and bring in the great sin of infidelity in all her children, and it is by him that our peace is now disturbed. It is a blessed thought just here that Satan can eat only dust, for that is his meat, therefore he can go only so far as this old natural, carnal mind. Our Lord is nigh unto us, even within us, in all these troubles and questionings, and at the appointed time he will reveal himself and put Satan and all his evil teachings to flight, and show to us his merciful hand and that glorious rest for which we have become so hungry. This rest is ever in our Lord Jesus Christ, and never to be found in Adam. This is why it is by no means conditional. It is by faith, and faith is of God. Without faith we cannot believe, for belief is the fruit of faith, and it is rooted and grounded there and receives all of its substance there. It was Abraham's faith that was counted to him for righteousness, and that faith gave him evidence to believe the word of God, and that belief moved him to do that which God had said, and in this rest was given to him. Under unbelief Abraham got into trouble in Gerar, and Isaac in Egypt, but the Lord gave them rest in faith by bringing them back to the land full of promises. Here in the gospel land the children have rest by the hand of Him who first saved and delivered them. All their rest is dependent on him; if they receive the answer of a good conscience towards God in the discharge of any christian duty it is because he has strengthened them and given them to believe in him. If they have comfort in any point of the doctrine of his grace it is of him. He gives them strength to believe, and immediately they enter into rest. The glorious and comforting doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty would never be questioned by one of God's people if it were not for the doctrine of infidelity. Just as soon as one is given to believe that blessed truth he enters into rest. The blessed doctrine of the resurrection, which is the very essence of the gospel, cannot be of comfort to any unless God has given them to believe in his power to raise the dead, but when such faith is theirs they rejoice in the lively hope the Lord has given them, and rest in the thought that they shall one day awake with his likeness and be satisfied. In these glorious blessings the doctrines of the relig-

ious world fall to the ground, for theirs are the doctrines of works and human efforts. When God finished his work in the creation he rested in one eternal sabbath; even so when we are given to believe in him we are at the end of our works, and therefore we rest in faith. We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. There are no good works but those which are of the Lord. He ordained them that we should walk in them, and has created us in Christ Jesus unto these very good works. Jesus Christ could do nothing of himself, but as he saw the Father work so did he. Even so we can do no good works of ourselves, but as the Father works in us so may we work and rest in these labors of love. The christian receives rest from the Father in doing His holy will, and becomes a witness that his yoke is easy and his burden light. Here is where he learns of the Lord, and finds that he is meek and lowly in heart. To learn of him we must be brought down in meekness and lowliness of heart. We must suffer with him if we reign with him. The honey and the honeycomb must be eaten together. There can be no deliverance where there is no conflict. The promised land was a land of hills and valleys; the gospel land is a land of ups and downs, of sorrows and temptations, but it is here the Lord gives us rest in faith in him. The world can know nothing of this rest, because it can know nothing of the conflicts which always precede it. The Lord promised such peace as the world could not give. The world cannot know it nor give it, but the children have it as an inheritance in Jesus Christ.

Yours in this blessed hope of the resurrection life,

L. H. HARDY.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., Jan. 24, 1910.

GALATIANS VI. 1.

"BRETHREN, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."

The above Scripture and the things contained in it are of vital importance to the brotherhood. If a brother be overtaken in a fault, would imply that the apostle had well weighed his words and put them in as mild a form as possible, and we know he was moved or prompted to express these exhortations by a meek, forbearing and forgiving spirit. Paul had positive knowledge of man's weakness from actual experience, and knew that such faults were likely to occur. He dwells more on the manner or how such errors are to be dealt with than he does on the faults, saying, "Ye which are spiritual restore such an one." I want to say right here that I do not profess to be better qualified to deal with an erring brother than other brethren, for I have always felt to be lacking in the long-suffering and gentleness that such conditions demand, and feel I am as much unqualified to deal with such conditions as any brother I know, but, notwithstanding my unfitness, the apostle Paul says, "Ye which are spiritual," meaning those who have the spiritual qualifications, or, in other words, those who are born of the Spirit. It would seem that the apostle did not expect these qualifications to deal with a brother were to be found except in those who are spiritual, and that this should in every way qualify them, and that in such a spirit they should restore such an one in the spirit of meekness. But why should it be done in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted? The apostle would seem to imply the liability of all of us being tempted, and that we are liable to err and might soon need to be dealt with,

and would desire that the brethren who should deal with us be spiritual, or actuated by the Spirit of God. An erring brother should be willing to rest his case in the hands of those thus qualified to judge. First, they should be spiritual; second, they should possess the spirit of meekness. On the other hand, what did the apostle tell those so spiritually equipped to do? He did not say, Exclude such a brother, but, "Restore such an one." I came into the assembly of the saints when quite young, and witnessed brethren dealing with what they termed a brother, or brethren, overtaken in a fault, and while I may be in no way able to judge rightly, (I am as void of virtue as any one, except when actuated by the Spirit and love of God, and perhaps have judged brethren wrongfully, and may be poorly fitted to judge the conduct of any, when brethren have taken a course that seemed quite wrong to me,) yet I have been slow to break fellowship with them, fearing my judgment might be wrong. It has seemed to me that to restore a brother was hardly what brethren thought to do; it has many times seemed to me that to exclude was the desire; it seemed to me from their talk and conversation that they had in their minds to get rid of the brother, or brethren, to exclude, or cut off, instead of restoring, and instead of moving in the spirit of meekness, I could see under it all a fleshly spirit, and many times, yes, at most all times, this fleshly spirit was visible in both the accuser and the accused.

Many years ago a difference arose between two ministers; one was in one association and one in another. It shocked me to see the spirit manifested on both sides; restoring was the last thing thought of. I do not know who was most to blame. The result was fellowship broken, and brethren lost confidence and became discouraged. A few on either side are still living, and there never has seemed to be much life manifested among them; some of the churches declined rapidly. I shall not condemn one more than the other, but it was all exclude and not "restore." The word "restore" means much, and when good, sound brethren differ they should forbear and keep the brotherhood together.

I remember years ago an old minister got in debt. He was an able minister, but a poor financier. Some brethren wanted him silenced after he had become old and feeble and seemingly ready to die, but other brethren felt to forbear, feeling he had done as well as he could, but some who wanted him silenced absented themselves from meeting. The minister died and the church buried him, and considered his weakness as one that many are afflicted with, and felt it should be no bar of fellowship. Again, I remember another minister who had gotten in debt among the brethren, and, being a poor business man, it was not long until some thought he had misrepresented things, and they did not like his preaching any more, and thought he lacked the Spirit of God in his preaching. Brethren differed on this, some liked his preaching, others wanted him silenced. Just at that time two visiting ministers came among the brethren, who did not have much following at home; they heard him preach, and decided he had no call, and urged the brethren to silence him, and to do it at once. No one said anything about restoring him, I do not think it was thought of; I never heard of a committee visiting him to labor with him. He was silenced while absent from meeting; then the two visiting ministers commenced laboring

hard to have him excluded, and did not stop until it was done. No one tried to restore, it was never mentioned. This minister had a wife who was a good member, but could not stand such treatment of her husband, and never came back to the church. Two churches, and some members in other churches, felt this minister was hastily dealt with, as he had been silenced and excluded when absent from the church, so the association simply ceased holding its meetings, and all the churches grew cold, confidence was broken and all were discouraged and felt like giving up, and all have about died; no one seems to think of restoring, they have given up and expect to die, and many have died without any hint at restoration, and all were in agreement in doctrine and order. Ought not brethren try to restore in the spirit of meekness, considering ourselves lest we also be tempted? I have felt that the restoration of brethren should be the first effort, and no hasty movement in any other direction should be resorted to. If a brother is in error, and some of the leading brethren see it, and some of the brethren do not see it, I have felt that if we forbear long enough all the brethren will see the error, and if then he cannot be restored, all will be willing to an exclusion, and none of the other brethren be lost. To hastily exclude and divide the brethren is to do it before it is time, then sympathy will naturally turn to the one excluded. I am flesh, and might have been wrong in my judgment after the brethren had been divided by the trouble. These two visiting ministers absented themselves and left the brethren divided; they had accomplished what they wanted without seeming to count the cost. These brethren never all met again. Let none of us forget the exhortation of Paul, "restore." When I see a minister going among the brethren with an excluding spirit in him, instead of a restoring spirit, I feel afraid for the peace of Zion, I tremble. I may be wrong in all my views of this, but to restore is the first motto, and exclude the last. Brethren, preach restoration before exclusion.

Brethren editors, I submit this, as it has long seemed proper, and I ask you to kindly consider it. I do not want to speak or write against any one, but am desirous of more consideration by brethren. There are enough brethren scattered among these old brethren that might get together once in awhile, and some of them do. I have been going among these scattered ones for years, and try to comfort them all I can, and am always glad to see any of them coming in to these meetings, and I find these meetings seem to have a healing influence. I never withdraw fellowship from any, and I love all, and would be glad if all would meet together.

NEWTON PETERS.

PORTLAND, Indiana.

TOUCHET, Wash., Feb., 1910.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—It has been some time since I wrote you, but I assure you however that it has not been because my mind has not been with you, but for lack of ability to properly express my thoughts on paper, and now at this time I feel a great lack in this direction, but my desire is to make the attempt, and this has overpowered my hesitancy to the extent that I find myself trying to make known to you the riches of God's grace. Here I am made to wonder how and why any who can truly say as Paul did: "By the grace of God I am what I am," can come to trust themselves or their obedience

for the things so necessary to the success of this warfare, or this race. I have now had a knowledge of my poverty of spirit for upwards of thirty years, and have been trying to tell my brethren of the abundance of grace in the storehouse of God for over twenty years, and this morning, when it fell to my lot to again try to stir up the pure minds of the saints concerning that glorious grace, I felt there was none who needed a felt sense of that grace more than I. It is said that practice makes perfect, and if such be the case, does it not seem as though one who had been trying for twenty years ought at least to have made some improvement, if he could not become perfect? God's ways are not man's ways, nor is God's work like man's work; God's work is perfect, and therefore needs no practice. Therefore I believe that if God has worked repentance in the heart it needs no repentance, and if God has worked a call in the heart to tell of the wonders of his grace, it is a perfect and holy call, and the heart must always be emptied of all confidence in man and his works to be filled with grace, for these are two distinct principles. Work, when done by the creature, always claims the glory, and so for this reason God has called the foolish to confound the wise, in order that no flesh should glory in his presence. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness. No man can hunger while full, the hunger is evidence of poverty. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." They shall be filled with knowledge of this fact, and this knowledge is that which feeds the soul and makes it strong in the Lord and in the power of his grace, and all that we need in order to show forth his power is grace, for to will is present with us, but how to perform that which is good we find not. This was the great trouble with the inspired writer, and so it is with us to-day. Some would say to the stricken in heart, To-day God has given you exhortation after exhortation to work, and God will not do what he has commanded you to do. They would say, He has quickened you into divine life, and given you knowledge of these blessings, and now it is left to your work; if you go to meeting, fill your appointments and fill your places, you will be blessed. It seems to me that this kind of doctrine is as destitute of grace as were Job's comforters. I can see no grace in it, it is law, and has no mercy in it; but he who feels the blessing of grace so strongly in his soul that the old man, the flesh, is brought into subjection, can go to meet his brethren, and can stand before them in the name of his Master and exhort and encourage his brethren to look to the Lamb of God. He can say, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Rejoice, O Israel, for thy God reigneth. Such an one, like the Savior, can say, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." As you have received a kingdom which cannot be moved, come with godly reverence and partake of the water of life freely. Yes, dear ones, you who fear the Lord and tremble at his word, let me exhort you by the grace of God to lift up the drooping head, for you are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God ordained that you should walk in them. Again, he says, "This is the way, walk ye in it." When the heart is oppressed with doubts and fears on account of the many mistakes,

and the many expectations blasted, so much so that the heart is bleeding and panting for God, the living God, we are then being crucified with Jesus. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." We are blessed if we suffer for his sake. It is not that we are going to be blessed, but we are now: "Blessed are they that mourn." Paul said at last, "I have fought a good fight." Is it not good to consider Paul while he was in the heat of the battle? for we are in the same warfare, for he said, "O wretched man that I am!" What is the matter, Paul, I see no foe, I see no sword? He answers, It is a secret foe warring in my members against my mind, and bringing me into captivity, and we hear the Captain of this heavenly host say, Be of good cheer, I have overcome even that secret foe. There is nothing able to move you. Paul said again, "I have kept the faith." Peter explains how and why he had kept it. Jesus said, "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Thus, dear ones, you see that the salvation of God's children is sure, from first to last, for Jesus is the author of our salvation and our faith. He is all and in all, and we have his promise in all our afflictions and in all our disappointments, and the final consummation is the crown of righteousness which is laid up for us and which the righteous Judge shall give us at that day. He bore our sins in his own body on the tree, and God made him unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

Now, dearly beloved in the Lord, may grace be with you through the valley and shadow of death, for Jesus' sake.

Yours in the bonds of love,

J. T. BARNES.

AVONDALE, Ala., Feb. 10, 1910.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—There is no one whose writings I would rather read than yours, and I often receive much strength from them. I also generally accept your views on the Scriptures; occasionally, however, I do not see things just in the light that you present them. I am now thinking of your reply to some brother or sister, in the SIGNS of February 1st, it is with regard to the expression recorded in Genesis, where it is said, "And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart." I am not going to say that your views are incorrect, but I have held some views upon that subject for years, which I wish to submit to you, and which the reading of your editorial has stirred up afresh in my mind. I hold to the idea that there are in the Godhead three persons, component parts, or elements, which constitute the one God. These three persons (or whatever it is proper to call them) consist of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and even so man is composed of three parts, body, soul and spirit. I think that this is the image in which God made man. "In the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." I have noticed for a long time in the reading of the first chapter of Genesis, and perhaps a part of the second, that the name "God" is used altogether, and all creation is attributed to God. I regard creation as one thing, and formation as another. This is, I think, plainly shown in the first part of Genesis. Now when we come to the formation of Adam the term "Lord God" is used altogether. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground." After a time Cain and Abel brought their offerings to the "Lord." Now here we have all three titles, "God," "The Lord God" and

the "Lord." It was the "Lord God," or Jesus Christ, as it appears to me, he who was the Son of God, that formed man and put him into the garden, and made Eve the helpmeet for him, and gave him all the instructions, and who finally drove him out of the garden to till the ground from whence he was taken. So it is said, "Let us make man," showing to my mind that there were more than one in this great transaction. It is said that God created all things by Jesus Christ, that all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made, and that he was before all things, and by him all things consist. In my view all this refers to formation. With regard to creation, Christ is said to be the beginning of the creation of God, that for his pleasure all things are and were created. I know that I am in deep water here; but we have glimpses of these things, mysterious though they are, in the Scriptures. It will not do to say that there was a time when Christ did not exist, or that he did not exist in the beginning, for it is written, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." I have thought that here "the beginning" refers to the beginning of time. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." He was God manifest in the flesh. "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." He was in the Father and the Father in him. He said, "I and my Father are one." But he was verily God and verily man. Jesus frequently referred to himself as the Son of man. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He groaned in spirit. He wept at the grave of Lazarus. He sighed over Jerusalem and bewailed her sins. He hungered and thirsted, ate and slept, as other men do. He was a man, he was also the mighty God, the everlasting Father the Prince of peace. He was also the man who should be a hiding-place from the wind, &c. Now my thought has been, Was it not this man Christ Jesus the Lord of whom it was said, "And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart"? Was it not he who was grieved with the children of Israel forty years in the wilderness? "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

Dear brother, I could write much more upon this mysterious and sublime subject, but I will desist. I do not want you to think that I am taking issue with you upon this subject, for I am not, neither do I fell capable of imparting instruction to you, but I felt that I would like to say a few things in regard to this subject for my own satisfaction, at least, and for the benefit of others who may read this. If you think proper you may publish what I have written.

Yours, in hope of awaking with the blessed likeness of Jesus in the resurrection, at the last day,

H. J. REDD.

[CERTAINLY the tone and spirit of the above letter are most excellent. Our brother has written with reverence of this sacred theme, and has also written with words of kindness. How greatly such manner of writing is to be commended. It is not to be expected that all shall see all things just alike; that is reserved until that hour when we shall

see as we are seen, and know as we are known. This, of course, does not apply to any of these things which are essential to the doctrine of salvation by grace; here there must and will be unity among all who are taught of the Lord. We desire to thank our brother for his kind words concerning ourself. It is much to be able to write or to speak to the strengthening of any of the flock of God. There is no greater joy to one who is called of God to the ministry than to know that the Lord has blessed his words to any. We feel as though we would like to call attention to one thing which seems to us to be one of the most important things to be known and believed; that is, that Jesus as a man could not have existed from all eternity, for the word "man" refers to that which was "created" and "formed." Our brother has made a very clear distinction, and one in which we have felt to fully agree, between "creation" and "formation." Man was created when all things else were created. Then out of that creation, man, as well as all other things, was formed. Man could not therefore have existed before creation. That God, who was manifest in the flesh, is eternal, but the flesh, in which he was manifested, was not eternal. The three that bear record in heaven, and which are one, are divine and eternal. The Godhead belongs to the one as well as to the other, and in that Godhead all three, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, are alike unchangeable. Christ had not as yet been made flesh when "it repented the Lord that he had made man," &c. This wonderful work was not wrought until four thousand years afterwards. It is only right that we should say we do not think for a moment that brother Redd intended anything different.—C.]

THE SCHOOL OF CHRIST.

My services as an educator for several years have caused me to meditate much upon systems of teaching, their objects and results, as obtained in the common branches of learning. In addition to this I trust that I have also had some training in the higher or spiritual knowledge, where the Teacher is the embodiment of wisdom and his pupils are of a peculiar and select number, made wise to the course of instruction marked out for them by this great Teacher, and sure to learn in all things chosen for them to know. Such is the school of Christ, founded in ancient times and richly endowed by unlimited grace and maintained to dispense love and mercy. This school stands alone and apart from all the schools, colleges and universities of men. In its peculiar character and working it needs no assistance from any of those man-made institutions to prepare for the great development it is designed to work in its select pupils. They may be ignorant in worldly science, or the possessor of university degrees, yet when they enter the Christ school they come as babes, knowing nothing. The wise and learned Saul of Tarsus, learned in all the wisdom of the Jews, must enter in the same way and be instructed in the same things as the poor publican. The great peculiarity of this school is the selection of the pupils, chosen before time, without consideration of any fitness or merit, or consultation of their wishes. In fact, they are all destitute of all qualifications or merit, and when chosen are wholly unable to pursue the least division of the learning designed for them, or to understand its first principles. The Scriptures say they were without strength and without understanding, wholly depraved and with all their natural faculties opposed to the work to

be accomplished by the great and wonderful Teacher. Was there ever a school of man made up of pupils of such a character? Their pupils already possess the faculties for learning designed to teach them, and also a desire for that class of knowledge, and a willingness to receive the instruction. Without these conditions in the pupils of man's schools the pupils would be rejected as wholly unsuitable to receive instruction, and it would appear foolish to admit them. But to secure praise and adoration above all other teachers, and to establish his greatness and wisdom, and the love and admiration of his pupils, our great Teacher does a work which no other being can do. In addition to the chosen pupils of the Christ school being wholly destitute of all the faculties for learning, they are enemies to the whole institution, and exert their utmost strength to defeat the work of the great Teacher. The disobedience of such pupils might readily be known to be measured by the limit of their strength. The world, the flesh and the devil are ever present to assist in the disobedience, but the Teacher says, Fear not, I have overcome all these. The words of this Teacher are so different from all others that the Jewish officers truthfully said, "Never man spake like this man." With his word goes the power to act, to hear, see and understand things impossible to be imparted by the words of any other. This word imparts life to dead sinners, and makes a wonderful change in the one to receive instruction. The haughty and zealous Saul of Tarsus when on his murderous mission to Damascus heard this wonderful voice and at once asked, What must I do? From that time forward he was a different man, and the remainder of his life was devoted to the service of the Master, the work he had before hated. In all his after life he labored earnestly in the things pertaining to the Master's kingdom, yet he said, "Not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Meekness and humility, and a desire to give the praise for all goodness which may be manifest in the life of the pupils to this wonderful Master and Teacher, are unmistakable fruits or characteristics of all who learn of him. The work of this Teacher is sure to accomplish his purpose, and there is never a pupil of his who fails to reach the degree for which he is chosen in this wonderful school. The ultimate result and crowning glory of all their trials, tribulations and varied experiences is eternal life. This is given in the beginning by the power of the word calling the chosen ones to their first knowledge of their wonderful Master, but in its operation and manifestation in the worldly-minded person thus called, its first working is more of a manifestation of death than of life. Paul says, "I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." Through this death he entered a new sphere of existence, which all his previous learning had never revealed to him, and his nature and affections were wrought upon in such a manner that he was made to hate the things he once loved and to love the things he once hated. These were some of the effects of that eternal life in him, and the results of the wonderful teaching necessary to reveal its presence to him. If it were not for the fact that eternal life is present in every manifest child of God there would be no warfare, no hungering and thirsting for righteousness, no love for the brotherhood of faith, no mourning on account of sin, no hope as an anchor of the soul, keeping the tried and tossed ones in the strait and narrow

way of life and salvation. All of these varied experiences are but the effective teaching of our Master, and his work is so perfect and thorough that his pupils are made to speak the things they do know and to testify the things they have seen. In the depth of their infirmities and the brightness of their faith they can often say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." This wonderful school is not known or understood by the world, and is not approved by mankind for some inherent peculiarities they possess, which make them enemies to the divine plan. As has already been stated, they are not capable of understanding the first principle of it, because it is spiritual and they are natural. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." But the worldly religionists try to counterfeit the true religion, and have their schools of learning where religion is taught in all its parts, and the finish and polish of their institutions are stamped on their willing pupils, and they go forth making manifest the source of their instruction, showing it to be but the labor of man, and praising and exalting his works above the works of God. The ability of mankind to accept or reject eternal life is the underlying principle of their institutions, while in the Christ school He says, I give eternal life. The wise and learned advocates of worldly religion go forth inviting sinners to Christ, and proclaiming the conditions on which they may be received. Christ says, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Why should some preacher be inviting any one for him? He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. He is Lord of heaven and earth. His glory will he not give to graven images, nor his praises to another. With him "the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance." He compares the inhabitants of the earth to grasshoppers and worms of the dust. Where is thy glory, O man, when compared to the majesty of God? Where are thy works found to compare with his achievements? Many have seen their best works to be as filthy rags, but all such are taught in the Christ school, and such a confession is made to the praise and glory of their Teacher. Little children, be not deceived, by their works ye shall know them, whether they be of the school of Christ or of the world. The two classes are in nowise alike to those made wise unto salvation. One is of Babylon, the other of Mount Zion; one is the carnal mind with all its deceit, the other is the babe in Christ, desiring the sincere milk of the word; one manifests the spirit of boasting, covetousness and hypocrisy, the other faith, hope and charity. They may be known by their praises; one praises the work and ability of man, the other the gifts and grace of God.

C. W. BOND.

BAKER CITY, Ore., Jan. 30, 1910.

PINSONFORK, Ky., Dec. 31, 1909.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your excellent letter of October 9th came to hand long since, and was gladly received and highly appreciated. It relieved my mind greatly, as I was somewhat confused regarding the subject. I should have written you long before this, but my ignorance of spiritual things has kept looming up in such a way that I could not overcome it. I have put off writing you from time to time until almost three months have passed, and this morning my mind is en-

shrouded in gross darkness, and it is a hard struggle with me as to writing you, but I have decided that I cannot write anything that could rightly be called a letter, yet notwithstanding this settled conclusion I deem it my duty to acknowledge the receipt of your letter that did me so much good, and while doing this I want to say to you that none but God knows how much I want to see you again and hear you proclaim that wonderful Name which is above every name, the Savior of sinners.

Brother Durand, I have thought much this week of the war in which there is no discharge; the battle will go on and on between the strong man and the stronger Man until the strong man ceases to be. The hostility that exists between the two antagonistic principles, or powers, is over the child of God. The apostle Paul says, "But I see another law [power] in my members, warring against the law [power] of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."—Romans vii. 23. Paul as an individual seemed to have been a part of the inheritance which the struggle or contention is over. Neither of these powers is the "me." Paul, who was brought into captivity, was caused, as is every subject of sovereign grace, to cry out in agony of soul, "O wretched man that I am!" So this state of warfare is inevitable. I have thought of it much of late, being involved in it so much that I sometimes conclude that God's mercies are clean gone forever. But when our mind and thoughts are carried back to the morning of time, and we glance through the Scriptures to the present time, it seems, when strictly viewed, there are but two in the race, two in the fight: the strong man and the Stronger; two in the field, one shall be taken and the other left: Christ, the day, or light, and Adam, the night, or darkness; the good Tree and the corrupt tree; the incorruptible Seed and a corruptible seed, the seed of evil doers, the corrupt and unclean fountain from whence there never can be so much as one clean issue; the whole head sick and the whole heart faint, full of wounds, bruises and putrefying sores, no soundness in it; two natures in one person: human and divine. Two men went up into the temple to pray. Brother Durand, it has occurred to my mind of late that there are two men now who go into the temple to pray: the strong man and the stronger Man, and that the strong man would do all the praying if the stronger Man would let him, but when it is the will and purpose of the stronger Man to pray, he bids the strong man to get behind him, and it is a question in my mind this morning while writing you, Which of the two is in control of the matter? I have but little doubt that the strong man has something to do in it, for I have felt lo these many years that sin, or the flesh, creeps into my best performances.

I was called yesterday to the burial of a lady, a friend's wife, and to hold services, some remarks and prayer, at the grave, and it seemed that my mind was very much in darkness, and as I rode home on horseback through the extreme cold, ice and snow, I was burdened in mind, which caused many groans, and this Scripture came forcibly into my mind, "Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican."—Luke xviii. 10. So you may know that I am daily, and almost hourly, realizing to some degree the effects of this inevitable struggle, which must go on and on to the end of my sojourn and pilgrimage, which at most can-

not be many years, for I only lack ten days of being seventy-four, and yet for some purpose that none but God knows I am strong and vigorous, able to do manual labor and to travel over high and rugged hills on horseback, and I am often caused to wonder why these things are so.

I fear this long, dull and lifeless letter will burden you, but I hope you will bear with and pray for me when the strong man is put behind.

Having a faint hope that some day I shall meet you before we go hence and are no more, I remains yours unworthily,

W. J. MAY.

CEMENT CITY, Mich., 1910.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—After reading your editorial upon predestination, in the number of the SIGNS for February 15th, I felt like sending you a few words of encouragement with regard to that matter. It is fearfully manifest that numbers are departing from the faith in many places, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, thus fulfilling the Scriptures, and God is fulfilling his word in sending them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness. A spirit is manifest that would dictate to the great "I AM" as to what he must do, or not do, in order to make clean his throne according to the depraved judgment of man. It all comes to this, Are his will and predestination absolute, or are they bounded by circumstances, or by some other power? This is the whole question. I say this with reverence, I hope; and I believe this, that the will, purpose or predestination of God is absolute. With whom does he take counsel? Is it with puny man, who is less than nothing and vanity? Those who deny his absolute predestination soon begin to cover up election, or some other fundamental truth which stands inseparably connected with this one principle of doctrine, but the foundation shall never fail, God will not suffer it, for if the foundations be removed what shall the righteous do?

When any of the saints or ministers of the truth come to the defense of the doctrine that is being assailed, those who are trying to undermine the foundations say, O you must not be contentious. But the word says, Contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. This beast comes up out of the earth and looks very lamblike, presenting lords many and gods many, which are all limited gods. Hatred of the truth is the foundation of all sects of antichrist. Christian Science is one of the latest of them, and it has drawn away some Primitive Baptists already. But the church of Christ can never be overthrown. And why? Because Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," and the church is built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. All these different sects of antichrist are but a manifestation of the gates of hell, whether primitive or modern. Their mother, "Rome," is very ancient, and so is the crooked serpent, and his children are like him. The ways of antichrist are movable, but the doctrine which is after godliness is immutable and absolute, and is held in the hand of him who by his Spirit garnished the heavens, and by his hand formed the crooked serpent. But those who deny his eternal power and Godhead also deny that he formed the crooked serpent, or that he sent lying spirits to fulfill his will, that haters

of truth might be punished, saying, If these things be so, God is the author of sin. But all these things he predestinated to be so, for the lifting of Jesus on high, and he formed the crooked serpent to fulfill his will, and he will have in derision all those who blasphemously charge him with being the author of sin. Whatsoever the supreme Ruler of the universe does is right. Sin is defined to be the transgression of the law. No man can transgress a law which he is not under, and God is under no law to angels, devils or men, but works all things after the counsel of his own will. There can be no fellowship in the truth with those who deny this. The adorable Son of God chose a devil to do his will, in the person of Judas, one of the twelve. Now, dear brethren, hear what the apostle Jude said about those who reply against God: "Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all; and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." This doctrine is too hard for this lamblike beast. The Lord preserve us from him. Let us put on the whole armor of God, and fight the good fight of faith, and quit us like men, and not tone down the solid doctrine of God our Savior to suit men.

Your brother,

DAVID TITMUS.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May 5, 1910.

DEAR KINDRED IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—Again I am sharing with you a portion of a late letter from our dear invalid sister, Mrs. G. M. Edwards, of Georgia. I have asked her permission, thinking it would be of interest to the readers of the SIGNS, that dear paper which contains so many rich testimonials to the truth as it is in Jesus. What a blessing is such a periodical, especially to those who are not able to meet in the assembly of the saints. It is such a comfort to have messages coming to us from those of "like precious faith," so, though we cannot speak with them "face to face," we can commune with them in spirit. It is many years since I began reading the SIGNS with pleasure, and it is still enjoyed in our home as much as ever.

With love to the scattered flock, who are among that people "chosen in the furnace of affliction," I remain unworthily your sister,

BESSIE DURAND.

LAGRANGE, Ga., Jan. 11, 1910.

MY DEAR SISTER:—Your letter containing Christmas present has been received, and Vera and I thank you for your kind thought of us. We cannot tell you how much we appreciate it, but trust that our dear Lord will enable you to realize that it was like bread cast upon the waters.

"Like bread upon the waters cast,
Your every deed has been,
And after many days are past,
You'll find it all again."

When your letter came I was very ill in bed. My father and other loved ones spent Christmas day with me, and I tried to keep up most of the day, but from that day until last Friday I was not able to leave my bed. We are having a very cold winter, and I feel greatly shut in. There was preaching in our little chapel last Saturday and Sunday. Elder A. B. Whatley has been chosen for this year; he came home with Vera Sunday, and we had a most pleasant afternoon. He was the first Old School Baptist preacher I

ever heard, and I was the youngest person he had ever baptized. While in conversation on Sunday he spoke of the refreshing season we had from the Lord at the time I united with the church; he said he often thought that meeting might perhaps be compared to some during the apostolic age. O those precious days, how sweet their memory still. Well do I remember what a lovely Sunday it was when I was baptized, and how placid the dear old Chattahoochee River appeared as we came in sight of it; its very ripples seemed to join in the chorus of those sweet, precious hymns, which since then have been so dear to memory. What an ideal day it was, and what an ideal place for such an occasion. O how sweet, and yet how sad, to think of many precious saints who were with me on that lovely Sunday morning, but O, my dear sister, where are they to-day? Where are those who greeted me with outstretched arms of love and fellowship, causing my poor heart to rejoice with joy unspeakable? I cannot dwell upon this longer, for out of all that number who were with me then but few remain, and with a heart full of emotion I turn from the scene and leaning upon the Rock of ages cry, "Let me hide myself in thee." O blessed Rock, O Fountain filled with blood, in which poor sinners lose all their guilty stains. But the fullness of its efficacy can only be realized when death is swallowed up in victory.

I could talk with you longer, but am not able to write more. I do hope your arm is better than when you wrote last, and that dear sister Clarice is stronger. I am often with you in thought, and in my weak way try to pray for you all. When your last letter came I had just told Vera how glad I would be to get a good letter, and in a few minutes the postman handed her yours. I had a card from sister Pittman on Christmas. I love her very much. Vera and her father join me in love to you and yours.

In love and suffering,

NANNIE B. EDWARDS.

GLENWOOD, Texas, Oct. 22, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If you will permit one so unworthy to call you by the dear name of brother. I cannot see any truth in a religion that denies the power of God, and the "Hardshells" are the only denomination I know of that does not. I say "Hardshells" because I love the name. I did not know they had any other name until after I joined them, and I still love the name. I am an absolute predestinarian, and understand the gospel to mean the power of God, who created all things and knew the beginning and ending of his creation. I wish I could tell all I think and feel, but you can see by my letter that I am not good at explaining His great power. I am glad to know that I am dependent on the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for I know I can do nothing of myself, yet I try to explain the gospel as I understand it to my Methodist neighbors, and I think every time I will cease doing so, but cannot, for it seems that when they preach the power of self I must tell the power of God, and it is my delight to proclaim his power, yet after I have done so fear I have done wrong, and think I will not do so any more, but it is the same thing over the next opportunity, so I do not know what to think of myself. I do know I love the brethren, and love the doctrine set forth in the SIGNS, and my heart goes out to each contributor I have read after.

I did not mean to write anything, except to thank you for sending the SIGNS so long without pay.

ANNIE ROBERTSON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1910.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

"THE DEEP THINGS OF GOD."

(1 Cor. ii. 10.)

WE recall that in our youth very often we heard "the deep things of God" spoken of by some as things to be avoided in our conversation and in our preaching. It would often be said by some, when certain principles of doctrine were named, O these are deep things, and we ought to avoid them and hold forth simpler, plainer things. This would be said especially of the doctrine of predestination, of election, of the atonement, the new birth, and of some other principles of truth as well. One thing we often noted, viz., that this was never said by any who believed these principles of doctrine and whose hope of salvation was based upon them, but always by those who did not believe them, and who were seeking to oppose and overthrow them, and we further noticed that this would be said of the very things which lie at the foundation of a believer's hope. Still further, the principles of doctrine of which this was said were those which, if anything, were more clearly stated in the Bible than were some others to which not so much opposition was manifested. We have come to the conclusion in later years that all this language arose not so much out of reverence for the word of God and the things which are called deep, or such as would cause one to speak softly and carefully of them, but out of that opposition to God and his truth which dwells and rules in all natural hearts. We also noticed that those who believed in and who sought to defend these deep things were more reverential in their words and manner toward these things than those who questioned them, or who said let them alone. From our childhood it was our privilege to dwell among some who loved to speak of predestination, election, the new birth, the infinite attributes of God and of the work of the Holy Spirit in redemption. They solemnly felt that these were all deep things indeed, but they were the things revealed by the Spirit to them. We can recall such ministers as Elders John A. Badger, Wm. Quint, Wm. J. Purington, Hiram Campbell, P. H. Hartwell and Joseph L. Purington, who sometimes visited our father's house in Maine, and who loved to converse of these solemn realities. They all confessed them to be deep things indeed, but yet believed them to be revealed things, revealed in the word of God, and these things they all rejoiced in as the foundation of all good hope. There was no lightness in the conversation of these men; they believed in solemn things, and they spoke of them solemnly, whether at the fireside or in the pulpit. It has been our observation all our life that they who know the Lord in these deep things have been more reverential in manner, and in their words when speaking of heavenly things, than have those who counted these things among those which ought to be avoided and as being beyond all our understanding.

In these later years we have some-

times heard the same things said in substance. Of some principles of doctrine we have heard it said, "I do not understand that." "We cannot understand this." "We have not experienced this, and cannot therefore know anything about it." Such things as these have been said of various principles of doctrine which are plainly stated in the Scriptures. Some have seemed to desire to avoid saying much about the attributes of Jehovah, such as his omnipotence, his omniscience, his omnipresence, his wisdom, his eternal purpose, personal election, the three that bear record in heaven, which three are one, the hope of future heaven and glory, the everlasting punishment of the lost, and the resurrection at the last day, and this upon the ground that we cannot know anything about these things, because they are too deep. With relation to these things we have also noticed much the same things that we did in our youth, viz., that they who say such things, do so because they do not fully believe the principles of doctrine named. On the other hand, we have noticed that those who often speak of these things and believe them, do so because they love them, and because their hope is hinged upon them. It is sure that when any truth has been made precious to man, he will delight to hear and to speak of that truth. It is also sure that if one says of any principle of doctrine, We had better let that alone, it is because he does not love it or hope in it. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak. The truth is, that everything concerning God, sin, holiness and salvation is deep; all belong among the deep things of God; one is no deeper than another. It is a truth that finite minds cannot comprehend infinity; it would be an absurdity to say that the finite could comprehend that which is infinite. Things which our minds grasp are necessarily finite. It is also true that there is not a man of normal mind on earth who does not as a matter of fact believe and know hundreds of things which he cannot in the slightest degree comprehend or understand; hundreds of examples could be given were there room to do so. We know that in the springtime the earth is covered with a carpet of green, but who can understand it? We believe that the human heart sends out to all parts of the body the lifeblood for years, and scores of years, but who understands it? We know that two people in an instant come to love each other, so that from that time there are none else in all the world for them save their two selves, but who can understand it? If we do not believe or say anything about all that we cannot understand, there will be nothing left for us to believe or speak about. This is true both of the natural universe and of the spiritual world. It is true of both earthly and heavenly things. If it may be said of some one Bible truth, O that is deep, let us speak of other things that we do understand, what other things do we understand? If one says, I mean, Let us talk of experience, of the love of God, of his mercy to sinners, of the ups and downs of our daily life, of practical duties, of the promises of daily grace and of future glory, then it may be well answered that all these things are bound up in one bundle with all the strong doctrine of the Bible. If it be said, Let us avoid the deep things, and testify of Christ alone, and of his sufferings, death, resurrection and ascension to glory, are not these among the deepest of the deep things of God? But one may say, We mean, let us speak of the revealed things

and let unrevealed things alone. To this we would respond, "Amen," with all our heart. But the revealed things are all of them deep things, all of them are too deep for reason's line to sound. But faith finds them not too deep. The revealed things are all that God has testified of in the Scriptures. All that the Scriptures contain belongs to us and to our children forever. Secret things are the things that our God has not been pleased to make known in the word. All things were secret and would continue to be so were it not that he has been pleased to reveal them to the children of men. His very existence no human reason could ever be sure of. That he exercises a providential care over the earth and all that it contains no searching of man could find out. No man by searching can find out God, and so in the connection of the text it is written, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." According to this testimony, then, all that our God hath revealed to us belongs to the deep things, and if any of us are anxious to be sure that the things which we have personally seen and felt are the things of God (and what true believer does not often question this?) we can only be sure by comparing what we have seen and felt with the testimony of the Scriptures. It is written, and rightly written, upon almost all church books among Baptists, that we believe the Scriptures are the only rule of faith and practice. They are the rule by which our faith, our feelings, our thoughts and our actions, either personally or in church capacity, must and ought to be tested. According to the connection of the text, then, it is the "deep things" of which we ought to speak. These things we should by no means let alone. We cannot let them alone if we be children of God at all; they have been revealed in the word, and have been made precious to our hearts by a personal experience of our need of these very things, and then by having them at times sweetly applied to our consciences, purging them from dead works to serve the living God. How can the weak cease to think and speak of the power of God? How can a sinner cease to think and speak of that which has put away his sin? How can such finite, changeable beings as we are cease to think of and rejoice in an unchangeable God? How can that soul who has realized his just condemnation cease to think of and testify to that atonement which released him forever from that condemnation? How can a frail, dying man cease to think of the promise of the resurrection to life and immortal glory and to rejoice in it? There are thousands of promises in the word suited to his need, most of them yet unfulfilled in him, but to him is given a foretaste of them, and, drinking of the stream, he must long for that period to come when he shall drink at the fountain-head. The future things, as well as present things and past things, are deep things, but in such measure as we have come to know past things and present things we can also know what future promises imply. Again let us say that we must and do believe things in the future of which we comprehend very little. Holy men of old wrote of the first coming of Christ, and believed in it, and looked for it even to the day that he came, yet how little they comprehended of it. They believed in his first coming,

because the Father in heaven had revealed this to them, but many things connected with that coming they did not understand, and it is said that they searched diligently what and what manner of time the Spirit that was in them did signify when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. Even so we are told in the New Testament of many future things, and it can but be true of us also that we shall search what and what manner of time the Spirit which has testified of these future things does signify. If we are not to speak of future things because we do not understand them, why did apostles and servants of God of old speak of them? As believers they did not understand or comprehend future things any more than we of to-day, and yet they testified of them; why should not we do the same? If failure to comprehend a matter forbids our thinking and speaking of it, there is absolutely nothing of which we can speak. The greatest mystery of all to every heaven-born soul is his own redemption and quickening into divine life. Does this stop our mouths from speaking of it? Ought it to stop them? And so also ought we to cease testifying of the hope of future glory, though we do not comprehend what that glory may be? At least, we do know that there we shall be free from sorrow, toil, pain and sin. We do know that we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. We do know that we shall be satisfied when we awake with his likeness. We know all this, not because we have as yet attained to this perfect state, but because the word of God, who cannot lie, has declared these things. Who can, here and now, know what perfection means? But yet perfection is promised us. Shall we not encourage each other with this promise? These are also among the deep things of God.

In conclusion we would say, if any who bear the name of Old School Baptists are ever tempted to lightly lay aside some principle of doctrine revealed in holy writ because it is deep, let them remember that the same reason would at last lead them to lay aside all the doctrine of God our Savior. Let us all be careful not to go beyond the testimony of the Bible, and let us desire and strive not to cast aside anything there revealed, as being of no present use to the church of God. There have always been many portions of the Bible with regard to which we have felt that we had no light; that is, we did not even understand the language or the figures of speech used. Concerning these portions of the word we have not been able to say anything at all. But, on the other hand, some portions of the word have seemed plain to us, while yet the truth couched in them was far too deep for us to sound; still we have found delight in that which has appeared, and sometimes after a time still greater understanding has been given us, as we hope and firmly believe. Many times we have been compelled to speak and to write without any feeling sense of the things of which we spoke or wrote, yet have believed at such times that we were giving the true meaning of the text, and have hoped that some of the preciousness of it might be afforded us, if not then, at some other time, and sometimes some little word, of which we had thought many times, has been filled with sweetness, and some doctrine that we have always believed has at times been made like honey and the honeycomb to us. We are glad when such experiences are given us. C.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Tillie Scott Beebe, widow of Elder Wm. L. Beebe, died at her home in Middletown, N. Y., April 14th, 1910, aged 65 years. She was born in Oswego, N. Y., in 1845, and married to Elder Beebe in April, 1883, to which union was born one daughter, Florence, who survives them. Sister Beebe united with the Warwick Old School Baptist Church, Orange Co., N. Y., in 1882, being baptized by her husband. She remained in the love and fellowship of that church until she, with her daughter, sister Florence, came to Middletown to live, about five years ago, she then united with the Middletown and Wallkill Church by letter, and continued faithful to the last. She had been in failing health several years, and was a patient sufferer. She leaves the daughter sad and lonely indeed, but the promises of Him in whom she trusts are yea and amen, he therefore will comfort and sustain her. Sister Beebe is also survived by several sisters and, we think, one brother.

Funeral services were held at the home, conducted by the writer and Elder H. H. Lefferts, of Warwick, N. Y. Interment followed in the family plot in the New Vernon Cemetery.

ALSO,

Duncan Carmichael, of Lobo, Ont., died April 29th, 1910, at the home of his nephew, Archie R. Campbell, of Caradoc, Ont., aged 81 years. He was the second child of a family of fourteen children. His parents were Old School Baptists, and brother Carmichael loved and followed after that people for many, many years, and was baptized in 1906, by Elder Silas H. Durand, in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, and continued faithful and consistent to the end of his sojourn here. A year ago he lost his wife, which was a great shock to him, and he was sad and lonely ever afterward. His health was better the last few weeks of his life, and his daughter, May, who was his only single child and lived at home with him, thought she might have him yet several years, notwithstanding his advanced age. On Tuesday before he died, Friday, he went to the home of his nephew, Archie R. Campbell, on business, and shortly after entering the house was stricken with paralysis and never fully regained consciousness, and passed peacefully away as above stated. His son Archie and daughter May were with him, and they, together with Mr. and Mrs. Campbell, who were as kind as though they had been his own children, ministered to him to the last. His body was removed to his own home, where a prayer service was conducted by another nephew, Duncan Campbell, after which the remains were laid to rest in the Ivan Cemetery. The writer was sent for to conduct the funeral service, but on account of a severe electrical storm was delayed between St. Thomas and London, Ont., on the trolley, and missed the train from London to Komoka, hence could not reach the house in time, but tried to preach the truth to the family and friends the next morning in the meeting-house at Poplar Hill. Why the disappointment had to be perhaps will never be known by any of us. Brother Carmichael was a man of noble character, kind and faithful in every duty of life. He is survived by four children, two sons and two daughters, together with two sisters and one brother; all of the children were present at the funeral. May they be comforted and kept by the grace of God.

ALSO,

Deacon John L. Hait died at his home in Middletown, N. Y., May 9th, 1910, in his 93rd year. He had been physically remarkable for one of his years, performing many duties daily until about three months ago, when he began to be affected by dropsy, which weakened his heart action; he continued to be up and dressed, however, until the last morning of his life. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Middletown and Wallkill Church more than forty years ago, by Elder Gilbert Beebe, and was a faithful and active member all those years. He served at our last communion season, which was Sunday after the last Saturday in February; that was the last time he was able to meet with the church. His home had been a pleasant resting-place many years; it was his delight to have his friends and brethren visit him. He loved the doctrine of God our Savior, and hoped in salvation by grace only. He is survived by his widow, sister Hait, who is well stricken in years and very feeble, but is wonderfully sustained. One nephew and several nieces also survive him. We shall all miss him much, but are fully assured that for him to die was gain.

In the absence of the writer in Canada, Elder H. H. Lefferts conducted the funeral service, and was blessed with ability to preach to the comfort of many from the text, "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" The interment was in the New Vernon Cemetery.

May the dear Lord deal graciously with our dear, aged sister the few remaining years of her stay here below. K.

Aaron Rollins Squire died at his home in Otego, N. Y., April 21st, 1910, aged 78 years and 2 days. Our dear brother and his wife were received into the Otego Church March 3rd, 1872, and were baptized by the pastor, Elder S. H. Durand, with two other candidates, and rarely were brother and sister Squire absent from the meetings of the church. Brother Squire was in deep trouble of mind, when the words came, Thy sins and thy iniquities are all forgiven thee, and joy and gladness took the place of gloom and sorrow. He said in meeting that hymn No. 558 expressed his feelings much of the time, and he felt himself to be a helpless sinner, wholly undeserving the mercy and blessing of God. In early manhood

brother Squire was married to Miss Louisa Nesbitt, who died in 1861, of diphtheria, leaving one son, William I., who resides in Binghamton. Nov. 9th, 1865, occurred the marriage of A. R. and Sarah G. Squire, and two sons, Fred A. and D. Ward, were born of that union; two grandsons, with the three daughters-in-law, also survive, and several cousins and other distant relatives, together with many friends and the church, mourn their loss. He won many friends and retained them, and it was said he had no enemy. He was especially liked by children and young people, always agreeable and interested in the welfare of others.

Elder D. M. Vail expected to attend the funeral services, which were held at the family home on Monday, April 25th, at 2 o'clock, but a flood and washout on two railroads detained him at Ansonia, Pa. Elder J. B. Slauson was called by telephone and succeeded in reaching Otego at 1 o'clock, and spoke to the comfort and satisfaction of sister Squire and her family, and to many others, from the beginning of the fourteenth chapter of John. He read hymns 378 and 541 by request, as they were favorites of brother Squire. A large number of relatives, friends and neighbors attended the funeral, and a long procession followed to the cemetery, where the body of our brother was returned to the earth. Sister Squire and the three sons and their families do not mourn alone, for a good man has gone from earth, one who was active and ready to assist in any good work. The Otego Church has lost three of its members in a short time, and we feel lonely and sorrowful.

Written by request of sister Squire.

S. C. F. GUERNSEY.

SISTER **Prudence W. Yarbrough** was born June 22nd, 1851, and departed this life Feb. 23rd, 1910. She was married Oct. 27th, 1859, to which union were born five children, two boys and three girls, of whom only two survive: sister Annie E. Church and Ida V. Hays, who now reside in Camden, Ark. Sister Yarbrough was, during the latter part of her life, a widow, having to meet the battles of life alone, with her widowed daughter, Annie, and her three orphan children, to whom she was very much devoted, she being an invalid, kind, frugal and patient in labors and afflictions, loved by her children, honored and respected by all who knew her, ever ready and willing to do all she could for the poor and suffering of her community. Early in life our sister united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Bethesda, Ouachita County, to which she was greatly devoted, and lived an orderly and beautiful life in the confidence and esteem of her people, therefore we believe that another one of God's redeemed children has been removed from this world of sorrow, sin and suffering, to that blessed realm of endless life, ineffable joy and divine perfection.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort at the residence of the deceased to the bereaved children, relatives and sorrowing friends, after which the remains were carried to Bethesda churchyard and deposited by the side of her beloved husband and children to await the final hour, when the trump of God shall sound and the dead in Christ shall be raised incorruptible. May the Lord by his grace enable her children to walk in her footsteps, imitate her virtuous and exemplary life in word and deed, and finally enter that haven of eternal rest.

Written by request. A. R. YARBROUGH.

John F. Harlan, son of Stephen and Sarah Harlan, was born July 8th, 1852, in Cecil County, Md., and died April 11th, 1910, in Juniata County, Pa., where he moved with his parents when ten years old. He leaves to mourn their loss, his widow and four children, two sons and two daughters, beside four brothers and two sisters. He was a kind husband and father. He was a great sufferer the last four months he lived, and told us he longed to be at rest with Jesus. He never made a profession of religion, but loved to hear our dear brother, Elder A. B. Francis, preach as he did for many years at our home while our parents lived. May our loss be his gain.

HIS SISTER.

Sarah Brady departed this life April 7th, 1910, aged 83 years. She was born in Ireland, and emigrated to this country when she was about a year old, with her father and mother, James and Margaret Brady. She lived in southern Pennsylvania and northern Delaware all the balance of her life. She was received by the Welsh Tract Church, Newcastle County, Del., on Saturday, July 31st, 1880, and was baptized by Elder A. B. Francis on Sunday, August 1st, 1880, and remained a faithful and consistent member until her death. She was very childish the last few years of her life, and bedridden during the past winter. She passed quietly away, as a child falling asleep. She was buried Saturday, April 9th, 1910, in the cemetery close to her late home, near Middletown, Del. The writer conducted the funeral services and spoke from Psalms xlix. 14.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

SISTER **Sally Birdsall Miller** died at New Kingston, N. Y., April 8th, 1910. She was born April 17th, 1852, and was the second daughter of the late Jeremiah and Olive Hewitt Birdsall, and was of a family of ten children. She was united in marriage to John Miller, Jan. 23rd, 1873, and united with the Primitive Baptist Church of Otego, N. Y., thirty years ago last August, being baptized by the late Elder Balas Bundy. She seemed to enjoy the preaching of her choice, which was salvation by grace, and always at-

tended when circumstances permitted. Four years ago this coming summer her health failed, and there seemed to be a general decline of human powers, and finally heart trouble developed, and she passed away as one going to sleep. It was her desire that her last sickness would be short, and it was about an hour. I feel that I have lost a dear sister in the flesh and a true one to the church.

(MRS.) URSULA SANFORD.

OTEGO, N. Y.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

A. F. Jones, Ga., $1.00; Mrs. Elizabeth Hull, Ind., $2.00.

APPOINTMENTS.

BROTHER J. M. Fenton, of Philadelphia, Pa., is expected to preach at Cammal, Pa., the fourth Sunday in June, at 10:30 a. m., 2 and 6:30 p. m.

MEETINGS.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Welsh Tract Church, near Newark, Del., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the fifth Sunday in May, (25th, 26th and 27th,) 1910.

Those coming from Philadelphia and Baltimore, and other points north and south, will come via B. & O. R. R. on Wednesday morning. Train leaves Philadelphia, Twenty-fourth and Chestnut Sts., at 8:15 a. m., and Baltimore, Mt. Royal station, at 8 a. m. Get Tickets to Newark, Del. Those coming via Delaware Division will take train leaving Delmar, Del., Wednesday at 7:05 a. m. and change at Porter for Newark, Del., where all will be met and conveyed to the place of meeting. Ministering brethren and all who love the assembly of the saints are cordially invited to meet with us.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

THE churches of the Roxbury Association have appointed their next fifth Sunday or quarterly meeting to be held with the Second Church of Roxbury, Roxbury, N. Y., on Saturday and Sunday, May 28th and 29th, 1910, meeting to commence on Saturday at 11 o'clock a. m. Trains will be met at Roxbury Saturday a. m. Train leaving Kingston at 8 a. m. arrives at Roxbury 10:14 a. m. Train leaving Oneonta at 7:35 a. m. arrives at Roxbury 9:27 a. m. We shall be glad to welcome all who have a desire to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the first Sunday in June, (1st, 2nd and 3rd,) 1910.

Those coming from Philadelphia, Baltimore and all points south will leave Philadelphia Terminal station. Those coming from the east will leave New York from the Jersey Central depot in Jersey City. All afternoon trains on Tuesday before the association will be met from either direction. Trains leave Reading Terminal station in Philadelphia for Hopewell at 1:30 and 5:30 p. m. Trains leave New York from Twenty-third St. ferry at 1:20 and 5:20 p. m. All who come on Wednesday morning will come at once to the meeting-house, about ten minutes walk from the depot. We shall be glad to welcome all who have a mind to meet with us at that time.

D. W. VOORHEES, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Middleburg, Schoharie Co., N. Y., have appointed their yearly meeting to be held the first Saturday and Sunday in June (4th and 5th), 1910. A cordial invitation is extended to ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

A. COOK, Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Middletown and Wallkill Church, Middletown, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June, (8th, 9th and 10th,) 1910.

Those coming by way of New York will take train leaving West Twenty-third St. (Erie R. R.) at 2:55 p. m. Tuesday before the meeting. This train will be met and friends cared for. Any leaving New York Wednesday morning will take train leaving Chambers St. at 7:08 or at 9:10, and come to the meeting-house on arrival in Middletown. Those coming east on Erie R. R. will drop Dr. G. A. Emory a card saying what train to meet. Those coming on O. & W. R. R. will go to 21 Broad St. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend.

G. A. EMORY, Clerk.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

A union or three days meeting will be held with Bethel Church, at Tallman, Linn Co., Oregon, commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1910, at 2 o'clock p. m. We cordially invite all lovers of truth, and hope to meet as many as possible of our brethren and ministers. Those who contemplate visiting us at that time will please remember Tallman is situated on the Lebanon branch of the Southern Pacific R. R., forming a junction with trunk at Albany. There are two trains daily, one train leaving Albany about 12:30 p. m., the other about 8 p. m.

Be sure to board Lebanon train, stopping off at Tallman. Church is near depot.

SILAS WILLIAMS, Pastor, Tallman, Oregon.
A. HORNER, Church Clerk, Waterloo, Oregon.

THERE will be a two days meeting held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse on Schoharie Hill, June 15th and 16th, 1910. Those coming to Schoharie will be met and cared for at Mrs. Helen Kinney's. Those coming to Howes Cave will be met if a card is sent to Geo. A. Miers, R. F. D. No. 3, Schoharie, N. Y. We shall be glad to welcome all who have a desire to meet with us. GEO. A. MIERS.

THE Siloam Association will, God willing, meet with the Sulphur Creek Church, at Nesika, Lewis Co., Wash., June 17th, 18th and 19th, 1910. Those coming by rail will leave Tacoma, Wash., on the Tacoma and Eastern R. R., about 8 o'clock a. m. Thursday, June 16th, and arrive at Glenanon, Wash., at 1 o'clock p. m., where they will be met and conveyed to place of meeting. Nesika is seventeen miles from the station. All who plan to go will please write to Elder F. L. Riffe, Nesika, Wash., so he will know how many conveyances to send. A cordial invitation is extended and a large attendance desired.

SONORA A. HESS, Clerk.

THE church at Otego, N. Y., has appointed a meeting to be held Saturday afternoon, August 6th, and Sunday, August 7th, to which meeting we invite distant friends to meet with us. Trains will be met Saturday morning and at 1 o'clock p. m. Meetinghouse is near the station.

Done in behalf of the church.

S. C. F. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

A SMALL band of Primitive Baptists is meeting every Sunday at 10:30 a. m. at 2919 Polk St., Chicago, Ill. All persons interested are welcome to meet with us. Any one knowing of members living in or near Chicago will please notify W. N. Spitler at the above address.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

"Thoughts on Regeneration, the Spiritual Birth, the Christian Warfare and the Resurrection," is the title of a pamphlet of 58 pages, written by Elder H. B. Jones, of Winnsboro, Texas, and can be had of him for 25 cents per copy, five copies for $1.00 or $2.00 per dozen. Address, H. B. JONES.

WINNSBORO, Texas, R. F. D. 6.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK, compiled by Elders Silas H. Durand and P. G. Lester, $6.00 per dozen, sent at expense of purchaser; 70 cents for single book, sent by mail postpaid. Send all orders to Elder Silas H. Durand, Southampton, Pa., stating which kind of note is desired—round or shape.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

BY J. E. BEEBE & COMPANY,

MIDDLETOWN, ORANGE CO., NEW YORK,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 78. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1910. NO. 12.

POETRY.

OUR LORD.

JEHOVAH is almighty King,
His power is over everything;
In heaven and earth he hath his way,
And there is none can say him nay.

The Lord, our Savior, only can
Redeem from death sin-stricken man.
Our works cannot for sin atone;
Salvation's of the Lord alone.

Christ Jesus gave his sinless life
For members of the slain Lamb's wife.
Against his church the gates of hell
Cannot prevail, and all is well.

Our Shepherd's faithful, and will keep,
Without the loss of one, his sheep.
He leadeth them in pastures green,
And where the waters are serene.

The Lord doth our backsliding heal,
And worketh all things for our weal.
Though clouds and darkness hide the way,
He guideth to unending day.

The Lord, our God, his love displays
Unto his saints in divers ways;
E'en when he sends the chastening rod,
'Tis none the less the love of God.

We know there is no God but one,
One Holy Ghost, one Christ the Son;
These witness bear and do agree;
Great Three in One, and One in Three.

Come, all ye saints, in joy proclaim
The praises due his matchless name,
For all his gifts unto his own,
For the great love that he hath shown.

J. C. NELSON.

SHARPSBURG, Ky.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TAFT, Tenn., March 7, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—After silence for a time, my mind not being at rest, I feel like writing to you, and to the beloved of the Lord, and the faithful in Christ Jesus, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness, and in hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie promised before the world began. Our God is infinite and all-wise, and possessed of all power in heaven and in earth, and his love and mercy know no bound. These being eternal attributes of God, therefore he gave the promise of eternal life before the foundation of this present world. He must have seen in his infinite wisdom all things that would come to pass in the progress of time, which his counsel saw fit to measure out to man, although man had not yet natural being, nor was the highest part of the dust of the earth laid, yet God in his infinite purpose saw fit to give the hope and promise of that eternal life which was in his beloved Son Jesus Christ, for he was ever in the bosom of his Father, the almighty God, and God foresaw the reign

of sin unto death in the first man Adam. The great question with all idolatrous worshipers of the world has been, and is, Why should God make the promise of eternal life? Yet God in his eternal wisdom looked from the ancients of eternity through all time and saw everything that was to come to pass. When I say all things, I mean to embrace all that ever have been, that now are, or that ever will be unto the end of this world. But the opposer of truth will say, Surely this could not have embraced the entrance of sin into the world, and death by sin. They cry that Adam could have kept the law of God, and so have escaped the fall and the death that followed. But where then would be the sure promise of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began? and where would have been the glorious power manifested in the resurrection from the dead, which the reign of sin unto death has given occasion to display? We are told, "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." Unless our God gave the law to Adam, He had nothing to do either with the entrance of sin into the world or with the reign of grace unto eternal life. It was in this hope that the apostle addressed Titus. Let us not lose sight of the fact that what God, the eternal Father, saw before time began he also predestinated to come to pass, both in time and in eternity. For this very reason he so ordered, ordained or purposed in his eternal counsel and foreknowledge all the precious promises. False teachers say that our God would far rather not have sent his Son into the world to be rejected of the Jews and crucified and killed. This they say could have been avoided had Adam kept the law of which God was the eternal author. But we are told that the law entered that the offense might abound, and "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," and grace reigns unto eternal life through Jesus Christ. Can we not in this way see the shining forth of the counsel of God, both in the reign of sin unto death, and in the redemption through grace? But according to the teaching of these opposers it was a pity that Jesus had to come into this world and suffer and die in order to fulfill the eternal will of God. They say that he would rather this had not been. But our God has had "his rather" in all things in heaven and in earth, and yet his creatures are sinners, and their sins proceed from themselves alone, and not from the almighty God. We see Jesus holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens, and yet his delights were with the sons of men. Our God appointed him to be the sacrifice for sin, and to be born when and where he was. He could not be born at any other time or any other place, and of no other line than that of David, and of no other mother than the blessed virgin Mary. Our God decreed all this from eternity, and all was required to make his eternal counsel shine forth.

Now a word concerning Adam keeping the law of God. He kept it just as God saw that he would, and just as long; then when the word of the glorious God came to him Adam saw that he was naked. He never saw this until his eyes were opened. And who opened his eyes that he might see? Listen to words from the prophet Isaiah. Jesus declared by the prophet that he was sent to open the blind eyes, and to set at liberty them that are bound. Adam was not deceived, but some being was deceived, and was in

the transgression. Who gave to Adam the woman to be with him? Adam was a type of Christ, and the woman of the church. How well did Adam love his bride? Being not deceived, he loved her well enough to come under the law with her. Now comes another representative character, the blessed virgin, who was said to be highly favored among women, and then comes the blessed Jesus under the law for his bride, the church. Almighty God absolutely predestinated these things, according to the teaching of the Scriptures. Until the law sin was in the world, and therefore the law was added because of sin. But let us not lose sight of the fact that God purposed the whole divine arrangement before the foundation of the world. Had not our God given a law, and created man as he did, all things would have been different. But the Scripture describes some at this time, even among Old School Baptists, "Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." "And many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Now if all these things must come to pass, I ask, How are they to be brought about? Is it by accident, or in what way? This is the language of the blessed Jesus himself in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew. Did the almighty God foresee all these things in vast eternity, or are they caused by Satan alone? Our God possesses all power in heaven and in earth, and in all created bounds. Jesus said, For this cause came I into the world, and to this end was I born. Now we see the glorious beauty in the eternal counsel of God, for the apostle declared to the church, "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ." Here we are told that the rulers of ancient Israel were gathered together to do what the hand and counsel of God had determined before to be done. Was it the will of God for his dear Son to be taken and crucified, or would the Lord have chosen rather that his Son should not have died for his beloved bride, to the end that the promise of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began, might not fail? We see as clearly as the noonday sun that our God did absolutely predestinate all these things that the apostle declared to his praise, and if he purposed the death of Jesus Christ, and gave in him the promise of eternal life before the world was, he must assuredly have prepared all things needful to that end. Paul declares to the church at Rome, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." This purpose is an eternal purpose, and this is his purpose, too, that we should endure afflictions, sorrows and trials, and that we should live godly in this present world. This is, all of it, embraced in the "all things." Yea, and we are the ends of the earth, and the offscouring of all things, to the end that the hope of eternal life, which God promised, should be made precious to us. Isaiah said, "For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him." This was the purpose of God, unchangeable and settled. Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. Can it be possible that all

these things were foreseen and prepared in vain? or was it according to the divine, unchangeable counsel of God?

So now, dear companions in the tribulation, sorrow and patience of the kingdom of God, you who know the Lord indeed, you who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and who are known of God, and are embraced in the precious promise, and who have been saved and called, not according to your works, but according to his own purpose and grace, I desire to remind you that all our sufferings here in the flesh are embraced in the purpose of God. Let us not lose sight of the truth that in all our trials Jesus went before us, and was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; yea, he passed by the nature of angels and took upon himself our nature, without sin, because of that promise before the world was. I desire that you should know where I stand as to the glorious doctrine of absolute predestination of all things. Paul charged Timothy not to shun to declare the whole counsel of God, and I understand that his counsel embraces all things that ever have been, now are, or ever shall be (as said before), as touching the eternal salvation of the people whom he saw in the great covenant made with his Son in eternity. His counsel embraced all the punishment for sin, for he said, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." He works all things after the counsel of his own will. The determinate counsel and purpose of God was to be glorified in the saints. Man was created in this world in time, according to the good pleasure of God, and according to His unchangeable purpose, and for this reason Jesus, in the person of humanity, came also into the world to purge away the sins of his elect, hence he was made like unto his brethren. He came right down to men and women in that day, in his person, and walked and talked with them. His humanity was possessed of divinity, according to the will of God. This was because he loved his bride with an everlasting love, and for this reason he came into this world, to prepare her for the final consummation, and as his people were under condemnation Jesus also came under the law, right where his children were. Says the blessed Lord, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend." "But God commended his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Dear brethren, I hope you will read what I have said with all due allowance, for I have written hurriedly. I hope you all will forgive the wanderings of a poor, finite worm of the dust, for I am unworthy of such fellowship as I believe exists with the saints. I have a request to make of all the readers of the SIGNS, viz., that you will write to me, for I want an expression from you regarding the doctrine presented here, and if I have erred from the truth, correct me. May God be with you by his rich and reigning grace to the end.

In fellowship, and in hope of eternal life,

D. H. CORDELL.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April 14, 1910.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—This letter to Elder White was sent to me the other day, and I thought the best thing to do would be to send it to you. I shall also inclose the letter she wrote to me, since that explains why I send the other.

I remember with much comfort the sermon you preached when I was in Hopewell. It is not often that I can remember a sermon, but I have gone over

yours many times since. It seems such a comfort to realize that ministers of the gospel have the same trials and temptations that I do. I often feel that ministers cannot have such great trouble and distress of mind, but I believe that they have more than any one else, or they could not be a comfort to all the children. I have thought many times of what you said about prayer, and I feel that I can see now that when I asked things of the Lord and did not receive, it was because I asked amiss, and asked to satisfy my own selfish desires. I am in the dark almost all the time, but when a ray of light is sent me I am enabled to see that the path in which I have been led is the best one for me, and to feel that the Lord knows better than I do whether I need darkness or light; but when the darkness comes I am always ready to give up right away, forgetting to wait with patience until the Lord reveals his face again. I turn to the world, and it becomes all-important to me. Just now it seems I can see that the world and all in it is nothing, and less than nothing, but I fear I will soon be swallowed up in it again, and I dread the time to come.

I hope you will overlook anything I may have said amiss, or tell me about it. I feel to know very little of spiritual things. I hope you are all well at home.

With love to all the household, I am unworthily your sister,

MILDRED P. DURAND.

STERLING, Va., March 23, 1910.

MY DEAR SISTER:—I should have answered your good letter long ago, but have kept putting it off until now. I enjoyed it very much, and would like to reply as it deserves, but am utterly unable. Sister Hutchison said to tell you it did her more good than anything she had read in a long while. I let her have it to read. She lives nearer us than any of the rest of the Frying Pan members. I am glad your mother's health is improved; hope sister Bessie's has also.

I will send you with this a copy of my experience as I wrote it to Elder White, and after you have read it you may send it to the SIGNS, for if there is anything in it that belongs to the Lord's people I should not withhold it. If I should try to write it again I could not do better.

I will close, hoping to hear from you again before long. Kindly remember me to your father, and tell him that I would like to hear him preach.

Lovingly your sister,

MATILDA T. MIDDLETON.

WILLARD, Va., Dec. 9, 1905.

ELDER E. V. WHITE—DEAR FRIEND:—I hardly know what to write that would interest you most, your letter was so good and comforting. I do feel so little and unworthy of the love you and the rest of the Baptists have for me. You spoke beautifully of the flocking of kindred spirits. O, can you, whom God has given such good evidence of his love and mercy to poor, lost sinners, feel that there is any hope for such a vile wretch as I am? You all say that you (each) are the chief of sinners, and I verily believe you feel to be such. I do feel, and have felt for a long time back, that I am the chief of sinners. Paul said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." Surely Paul was not a greater sinner than I am. You say surely the Lord has given me good evidence. I have no better evidence than that Christ came to seek and save that which was lost.

I will endeavor to tell you what I have felt in regard to religion, or, in other words, my experience (if indeed I have an experience). The first I remember was when I was very young, when one night I was sitting in my little rocking-chair listening to father, mother and a gentleman, who was there at the time, talking, when I seemed to go off in a trance, or probably I was asleep, but all seems so clear it does not seem that I was asleep. I could see a great black vail hanging between me and a great light, which I could only see at great intervals as it would come to the thin places in the vail, and these words became fastened upon my mind: All flesh is corruption, and corruption can never enter the kingdom of God, and this flesh hangs as a great vail between you and God. O such words! I did not know what they meant, and was afraid to ask mother, for fear she would want to know why I asked such a question. From that on until I was ten or eleven years old I would often think of that time, and wonder why I could not understand it. Then about this time I went to several revival meetings, and found that the Baptists were very unpopular, and I resolved to hate them (which I did not succeed very well in doing). I repeated the prayer (?) which they said every one should do to be saved. I had by this time gotten to be a very self-righteous person; I thought I was better than my friends. In the year 1899 Elder Rowe came to Frying Pan to preach, and in his discourse he said that the Israelites crossed the Red Sea and murmured because they could find no water, and at last they were made to suck water out of a hard rock. I thought, What a hard doctrine, I will never believe it. Well, the next year you took for your text Rev. xix. 4–6. I believe I understood part of that sermon, and O what a vile, condemned sinner I felt myself to be in the sight of the just and holy God. This was in the summer, and in September I was taken very sick with typhoid fever, so do not remember until the next year, when I remember how sinful I felt, and how I would read the Testament, even though it did condemn me, and my righteousness was gone, the very breathing of my heart was, "God be merciful to me a sinner." It seemed that there was no mercy for me, and I felt that I must be forever banished to dwell in the very depths of hell. O the misery of those two years, I felt that surely I was lost forever.

"Like one alone I seem to be;
O is there any one like me?"

On Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1902, I was so miserable that I felt I must go to Frying Pan on Sunday, but mother said she did not expect I could go, as father and the horses would be too tired. I felt so miserable I ran upstairs and just screamed and cried. I thought I would be in the depths of hell in another minute. I had thrown myself on the bed, and my sins seemed to crush me down so I could not rise, then in one second, in the twinkling of an eye, a still small voice said, I am God. I felt as though I had been bound and the chains were broken, I was free, and a great calmness filled my soul, but not a great rejoicing, as I have heard others tell of. I went to Frying Pan on Sunday and heard you preach a glorious sermon on the resurrection, the occasion being Mrs. O'Bannon's funeral. The calmness of my soul, which I could not understand, lasted until Monday, and my feelings from then until the association I could not find words to express; my prayers were in moanings and groanings

that could not be uttered. At the association Mrs. Galleher gave my sister and me an introduction to Elder Chick, and told him that we always went to hear the Baptists preach, and he said, "May God bless them with his free grace and everlasting love." That melted my heart, and I could hardly keep the tears back, and the next morning when I told mother what he said tears would flow, but why I could not tell. At this association I first noticed this wonderful love for the Baptists. I loved the very people I had said I would hate. In November Grandmother Middleton was taken very sick, and I went to help take care of her, and after I had been there two or three days, being tired, I retired early, and as I passed through the upper hall to my room some beautiful verses began to run through my mind, and I repeated them aloud, and after I had gone in the room and set the lamp down I had a view of my dear Savior in his robe of righteousness. O such a beautiful sight to behold, and he died to save sinners. Yes, I hope vile as I am that he has forgiven my cruel sins which made him groan on the tree. I do not remember how I got in bed, but the next morning I awoke very happy and remained so until noon, when doubts and fears came and nearly overwhelmed me. In February, 1903, I first had a desire to be baptized. One night I dreamed that I was standing by a beautiful stream and you came along and baptized me. I was sorry to awake and find that it was a dream. Ever since that I have had a continual warfare to contend with in my body; at times I seem lifeless, so far as spiritual things are concerned. Please read the hymn commencing, "'Tis a point I long to know." I cannot explain my feelings better than it does, also the one number 1091. I am afraid I am deceiving you, but I love you all, and cannot help it, and where else can I go? the Baptist Church is the only place I could call home. You ask if I do not feel to be one with you all. I fear I am claiming too much, but I do; you preach the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things, and election, and I love that. It was with much suffering that I was made to believe those precious truths, and now I would not take worlds in exchange for them, they are much comfort, and without them I would despair. I do feel in my heart to say with Ruth of old, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee." I hate sin, yet sin is mixed with all I do; you who love the Lord indeed, tell me, Is it thus with you? It seemed that your prayer to-day was for me, and your sermon also, and when you gave the invitation for those who felt like it to come to the church, I could hardly keep my seat, but I am too unworthy. Christ says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Do I love him? I am so unworthy of the way in which you closed your letter; you said, "Your friend, and brother, I do believe." Dear Elder, I do feel unworthy of this, I am so little and weak, when I would do good, evil is present with me; I am carnal, sold under sin.

Please forgive me for this imperfect and uninteresting letter. I appreciate your letter and kindness very much. May God spare you many years yet to comfort his little ones.

Let me say a few more words before closing. Meeting before last at Mt. Zion (the fourth Sunday in October) we went up and heard Elder Badger preach a good sermon; his text was the same one you took to-day. I love to hear him preach.

I will now stop, hoping that you will be kind enough to tell me whether you believe me to be a subject of grace or not.

With much love, your unworthy little friend,

MATILDA T. MIDDLETON.

MATTOON, Ill., April 29, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN CHICK AND KER:—The principal part of the following, as you will see, was written some three years ago, but I have hesitated about sending it for publication on account of its length, yet on looking it over to-day I concluded to send it to you to make any disposition of you may deem proper, and for the good of the cause of the blessed Master. There are many of your readers who will remember the subject of this narrative who can bear witness to what I have said.

March 10, 1907.—In a recent number of the current volume of the SIGNS a brother wrote an article in which he mentioned the names of several prominent, well known and much loved servants of Jesus who have long since received the crown of righteousness from the righteous Judge, entered into eternal rest and are now with Christ, which is far better. Among those mention was made of the life and labors of the late Elder Wilson Thompson, of Indiana, which brought vividly to my mind some, to myself at least, very interesting reminiscences of the last few years of the life and labors of that noble and gifted laborer in the Lord's vineyard. I trust mention of some few recollections as appear to be photographed on my memory may prove of interest to others also. He was a veteran in the service of his Master long before the writer had reached his majority. I remember no time, even when I was a mere lad, that I did not love and revere the man whose conversation was always full of interest and equally full of religion. It was a pleasure, and one never tired of hearing him talk, and whether in private conversation, or preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ from the pulpit, his auditors would never tire. My personal recollections of the man, however, are but a mere tithe of what he truly was. His was a remarkable life, full of heavenly zeal, strong and invincible in the christian faith; he labored and toiled for the good of the church. He rounded out the fourscore years or more of his life almost to a day in the gospel harness. His intense and unswerving interest in the cause of truth and righteousness suffered no abatement as the years, one by one, left their lines upon his venerable brow. In every sense he was an exemplary man. It was my privilege to be often in his company after I united with the church, and for several years after I began exercising in public. It was a rare privilege when I could travel with the old soldier and father in Israel and care for his horse, being richly compensated in hearing him talk of Christ and of his own personal experiences and incidents of his long and useful life. The theme of religion was the chief subject of his conversation; his whole soul seemed to be filled with the Spirit of Christ, and there was a constant reaching out after heavenly and divine things. The listener, if one of the Lord's anointed, would become almost entranced at his wonderful sayings as he depicted the perfidy of man and the exaltation of Christ. One of the most pleasing and attractive characteristics of his life, and one worthy of our most solemn consideration, was the entire absence of vain and foolish jesting, unbecoming hilarity and dis-

tasteful and graceless recitals, either in private conversation or public address. This lovely and Christlike feature of his daily life left an impress on my mind that has never been erased. As Peter exhorted his brethren, he was "holy in all manner of conversation," which was always as "becometh the gospel of Christ." With him it was not by mere restraint, or for simple effect, but in loving consideration of the blessed cause which by sovereign grace he had been led to espouse. He believed, and exemplified that belief, that a true minister of Jesus should be a devout man, one whose walk, order and general conversation should be an unfailing index of the earnest sincerity of his profession and high calling of God, and an exemplary christian, of which he himself in the entire absence of ostentation, and in very childish simplicity, furnished a beautiful example; and though he was loved, honored and esteemed by his brethren, and admired by thousands who heard his voice from the rostrum, yet he was always the same humble, God-fearing man, feeling himself at all times to be "less than the least of all saints." Flattery found no lodgment in his breast. He well knew the truth of what Solomon said: "A man that flattereth his neighbor spreadeth a net for his feet." He had the mind of Christ, and his greatness abounded not unto himself, but unto the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made him overseer. He went in and out before them with all lowliness and meekness, longsuffering and patience, and when the interests of his brethren were at stake there was a complete forgetfulness of self, while laboring in love to advance the blessed cause of truth. His preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. His manner of speaking was deliberate, and his gestures easy but impressive. His language was clear and simple, but forcible and convincing. To preach Christ and him crucified with the ability (talent) the Lord gave was his chief delight. Afflictions awaited him and persecutions ofttimes gathered in his pathway, yet, like Paul, he could truthfully say, "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." Often I heard him quote from the prophet these words: "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation," &c., and as he illustrated and set forth the solemn meaning of the comforting words it would call forth from every interested hearer emotions of tenderness, gratitude, as well as the most solemn reverence for the church, the new Jerusalem, the bride, the Lamb's wife. Then he would quote from Psalms cxxxvii. 5, 6: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." His love for gospel order was deep and profound, yet he never assumed to lord it over God's heritage. He was firm in his convictions of right and wrong, but tenderly charitable toward those who might differ with him. One incident out of a number that came under my personal observation as illustrative of this phase of his character I will relate; it occurred at a session of the Conn's Creek Association in the early sixties. At that time there was quite an agitation of the subject of the new birth in the association men-

tioned, as well as in most all the corresponding associations, and in the discussions of the pros and cons some of our brethren allowed the flesh entirely too much latitude. On the occasion mentioned Elder Thompson preached a powerful discourse on the subject of Daniel's vision of the four beasts, which was, as usual, listened to with profound attention. It was Sunday morning, and thousands of people were present. The controverted doctrine of the new birth was not even hinted at as the writer remembers. He was followed by a brother in the ministry also held in high esteem, and loved by the writer as an able minister of the new testament as long as he lived, but who, unfortunately, took opposite grounds to Elder T. on the new birth, and in the course of his remarks made some very caustic criticisms of the old Elder's position on that important subject (which from a lucid standpoint could not be interpreted as a difference). The brethren generally felt that the criticisms were untimely, and well knew that Elder T. was stung to the quick. He for a few moments felt that he must then and there answer the charges, but his love for the cause reconciled him to suffer in silence rather than bring any reproach, publicly, on Zion. But the brethren generally did not know of the righteous decision until later; they still felt the incident was not closed by any means. An appointment was made for Elder Thompson in a village, a railway station, where many of the brethren were to take a late train for their homes in different States. All were sad at the expectation of a climax to the day's incident; Elder T. would reply to his critic, and it was with great heaviness and sorrow of heart that we all went to the evening meeting. The dear old father in Israel himself was much cast down; the warfare was on, the flesh and Spirit were in open strife. The result could not be anticipated by his loving but sad-hearted brethren. "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." With anxious hearts we wended our way to the meetinghouse on that eventful Sunday evening. It was a large house and was nearly filled. Elder T. arose after the opening service, amid the breathless silence of the brethren, and in his usual solemn manner read the twenty-third Psalm, and before the end of the short chapter was reached all anxiety from the faces of the brethren had fled, while tears of contrition for their unbelief and lack of trust in the infinite and holy God freely flowed, while, with a face now radiant with a divine halo, and a soul animated by heavenly wisdom, the old father in Israel set forth the comforting sweetness of this soul-strengthening Psalm. Never, perhaps, since the psalmist uttered the words has there been more beauty and sweetness set forth in one brief discourse than on this occasion.

Your brother and yokefellow, I trust, in the gospel of Christ,

J. G. SAWIN.

ABERFELDY, Ont., April 18, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I forward a letter from brother Case, having his consent. I feel it is written in the Spirit of Christ, and full of exhortation. I hope it will stir up the minds of the brethren here and elsewhere to not forsake the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is, and to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called. As for myself, I am a weak, helpless mortal; in my flesh dwelleth no good thing.

Your unworthy brother,

ARCHIE McALPINE.

LONDON, Ont., Jan. 14, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER MCALPINE, YOUR WIFE, AND ALL WHO LOVE OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST IN TRUTH:—I say in truth, dear brother, for we are living in a day of great profession of love to God and his truth, and I fear there may be many, even among Old Baptists, who are guilty of great professions of love, but show very little of that love of God, of his people or of his truth in their lives, walk and conversation, that is, if we are to judge them and ourselves by the standard: the word of God, which says, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Then, dear brother, we may ask ourselves, What are these fruits by which the true child of God is to be known? First, I will state some of the fruits that do not prove us to be children of God: profession does not; believing the doctrine of grace does not; ability to talk of and preach of election, predestination, justification and glorification of the children of God does not prove that we are the children of God. The great apostle of the Gentiles said, Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Therefore charity, that love of God in the soul, is the fruit which alone proves what we are and where we are. Charity in the soul proves that God has been good to us in forgiving our sins, putting his love in our hearts, love to God, love to his children; and that love of God in the soul leads the possessor of it to love the children of God, both in prosperity and adversity, in honor and dishonor, in their sorrows as well as in their joys. Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the children of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. The love of God led that One whose name is above every name to come into this world of sin, not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and give his life a ransom for many. It was the love of God that led that great cloud of witnesses to do and endure all that they did (Hebrews, chapters eleven and twelve, read them), of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. Dear brother, it is in sadness I ask the question, Where in the church of God is that love manifested to-day? How small a thing or matter will keep us from the church meetings; how sad to think that of the many places where there is a goodly number of Old Baptist members there seems to be no desire to meet with one another in the worship of God, in telling of his love and his wonderful works to the children of men. Not one place in the church of God in Canada that we know of do they meet except an Elder is present to preach to them. This, to my mind, ought not to be. Now, dear brother, as regards your getting a house to meet in, I would say that if it is in your heart and in your power to get a meeting-house, do so at once, for whatsoever your hand findeth to do, do it with all your might, that might which God alone gives, and my heart's desire for you brethren, and for us all, is that God may bless us with grace to show our faith by our works, remembering that faith without works is dead, and may you all in your meetings have the presence of that One who spake as one having authority, and not as the scribes, that you may bear all the marks of those blessed when he said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," &c.

I am sitting up with my sick aunt, my mother's last living sister, who has lived with us since last August; it is 1:40 a. m. I had to leave work at 12 o'clock to help my wife wait upon her. There is little, if

any, hope of her lasting long. We both are well. I hope you all are well. Read this letter to the brethren. My wife joins me in love to you all.

Your brother in hope,

R. CASE.

HAMPTON, Iowa, April 24, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have been thinking for several days to write some of my experience, since I hope it pleased the Lord to call me by his grace (which I often fear and have many doubts).

I was born in Crawford County, Ill., Oct. 8th, 1840, the eldest of four children born to my parents, Elder A. J. and Mary Ann (Jeffers) Norton. Like all of Adam's posterity, "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." My parents were Old School Baptists, my father a minister. Neither of them ever tried to teach me religion, but taught me good morals and obedience. I never was allowed to use profane or vulgar language; so I lived, or tried to, but often did use profane language, but never in their presence. I always attended meetings with them, but never cared anything about religion, except I thought when I got old enough I would get religion, and verily believed I could; had set the time when I got settled in life. Time rolled on until I was in my sixteenth year, when one Sunday evening in July, 1856, I was driving along the road with some young company, and one of the party was a professor, and I made a remark about some pious young people, that I intended to get pious when I got settled down in life, and some of these young people did not have the right kind of religion, or they would not lose it so soon. The young lady spoke and said I was wrong, all did not fall away, and if I waited it would be too late. Before we arrived home something happened to me, as I thought some one spoke to me, You are a sinner. Now right there was the first time I ever felt I was a sinner. I cried, Lord, have mercy, but kept it all to myself; I did not want any living person to know how I felt. If ever I tried to pray it was then, not verbally, but secretly from my heart. I fled to the law; I began to read the Bible, and by reading I found there was no righteousness in me, so I gave up all hope and felt that it would be just to send me to eternal woe, yet the breathings of my poor, sinful heart were, Lord, have mercy. All at once my burden was gone, all nature seemed changed, I was made to cry aloud, everything in nature looked beautiful; I thought I would never have any more trouble, all was gone forever. I wanted to tell all what a dear Savior had found me, but I never did at that time. I got into "doubting castle," and then was glad I never mentioned it. O how I tried to get my burden back again, how I prayed for it to return, but it never returned. For several days sleep left my eyes; my dear old mother (now gone home) asked me what was the matter with me. All I could say to her was, Mother, pray for me. She replied, I have always prayed for my children. Suffice it to say my dear Savior showed his shining face, and I was made to rejoice again. From that time until the present I have had many rejoicing seasons, but more sorrows than joys. I then went to the church called Mt. Pleasant, in Lafayette County, Wis., and was received, and baptized on the first Sunday in October, 1856, by my grandfather, Elder Robert Jeffers. Now, brethren, this is all I have, all my hope for nearly fifty-four years.

Soon after I united with the church a

worse trouble came; for thirteen years I tried to get rid of it, determined I would not. My brethren knew what the trouble was, but I never knew how they found it out. I suffered myself to be cut off from the church, was in the Union army, and came home almost an invalid, but during all those years I could not get rid of the impression, still I tried as hard as ever. I settled down and married. I had accumulated some property, but I lost it all, and health gone, and a family to support. I went before the church in 1872, made an acknowledgment and was received, and then I was given liberty to exercise the gift wherever my lot was cast. I was ordained in December, 1895, and long before that I was called to attend many churches. I never had a desire to be ordained, but had to submit to my brethren. I am now in my seventieth year, and not in the best of health. I have passed through many hard trials, and realize my pilgrimage here will soon end, but while I live I expect to contend for the old paths and faith and practice of the Old School Baptists. I believe the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS, and have been a subscriber many years. I see no difference, or any change, since I became a reader.

Do with this as you think best; if thrown in the wastebasket no harm will be done. I feel this may be the last I will ever write.

Yours to serve in gospel bonds,

E. A. NORTON.

RICHMOND, Maine, May 4, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER:—For a long time I have thought to write to you, and somehow whenever I thought of doing so my mind has been directed into the line of thought of which I inclose a copy. I have thought that I would not set down my thoughts on paper again. You are too lenient toward me, you see in me more of goodness than I possess. I may deceive you and others, but there is One who knoweth all things, and who knoweth me altogether. He knows how frail I am, and I am glad of that. Nothing in all my wanderings in by and forbidden paths surprises him; he knoweth the end from the beginning.

You will be glad to know that we had a little meeting last Sunday, the first since autumn. Elder Beal was not able to be there. Brother Wilson read a chapter and offered prayer. Sister Attie Curtis spoke first, I followed, after that sisters Raymond, Minot and Wilson added a few words. It was felt by all that it was good to be there. Sometimes as I look around over our little handful of believers, I feel that our love is greater one to another than if there were a hundred. We seem to need each other so much, and to miss and recall the faces of the other members, who have fallen asleep since I was brought to the church. Sister Minot spoke of always thinking of father whenever she heard me, or any one, repeat the words, "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," because she had in former years heard him repeat them frequently in conference meetings, and I know that when I read or hear the words, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn," a picture of four on a stormy Saturday afternoon rises before me. I see the room, and the face of father lighted up by the emotion of his heart, as he repeated the passage above. Just two or three gathered together, and Jesus in the midst.

But I will just add the reflections, of

which I have spoken above, upon the word "desire." "What his soul desireth, even that he doeth," is declared of the omnipotent One. It gives me a feeling of gladness as I read these words; there is not a hint of failure in them. Power is expressed, not only in "what," but also in the words, "that he doeth." Not one thing has his soul ever desired, be it majesty, glory, power or praise, but that it was brought to pass. The scoffer at God's word has been changed in a moment into a humble penitent seeking for pardon, with a heart so tender, and so burdened with a sense of his guilt, that he scarcely dares to lift his eyes toward heaven or to pray to God to be merciful to him a sinner. Ah yes, God has but to speak and it is done, to command and it stands fast. But it is not thus with you and me, my brother; in our lives we have desired many things; some of them may have been granted; it may have been wealth, or influence over those around us, or the wisdom of the world that we desired, but many, many more are among the things we have tried to grasp, only to find that we have grasped the shadow. But there is in the heart of a child of God a desire that is of God, and whether it is fulfilled in our minds or not, the end is peace. This desire does not have our worldly prospects in view, but it does have our advancement in the pathway that leads to the habitation that we seek, that is, the heavenly. A brother once said in a sermon, that at one time a sickness that kept him for some days in his room, and yet not severe enough to prevent his reading and meditating, came upon him; his first thought was, Now I shall have time to read my Bible undisturbed, and time in which to meditate upon His word, and his desire was, May my meditations of Him be sweet. Days passed, and once again he was able to take up his daily duties. How had it been with him in his sickness? The Bible he had hoped to find so full of precious things had been, as it were, a closed book to him, but as he dwelt upon his disappointment, and thought how his hope had failed of fulfillment, the thought came to him, But you had the desire. Yes, surely he had had that, and he was comforted, even though his desire had not been fulfilled.

A member who lives some distance from the place of meeting is nearly always present; a sister who lives near the meetinghouse once said to that one, "You have so far to ride, I feel glad that you have the courage to come." "O," said the other, "I want to come." "Well then, I am glad that you have the desire," was the reply. Ah yes, that is it, the desire to meet with the brethren, the desire not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together. How good it is to have these desires. The desire to walk humbly before Him all the days of our lives, the desire that we may so walk that others, seeing us, shall say, Behold the upright man; the desire that God's name may be exalted; how well it is with us when such desires are ours.

A letter came to me to-day in which the dear sister mourned that she could not do the things she would; could not speak or write as she would, and then at the close she said, "I have so much desired to be faithful; I have so longed for some evidence that I was one for whom Christ died." At once the thought came to me, The desire to be faithful has kept you so. The desire for evidence that you have been accepted with God, is the best evidence of all. Such desires are pure, and that one in whose heart they dwell shall see God.

Your sister,

ANGIE J. THOMAS.

LIBERTY, Mo., Feb. 16, 1910.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I take my pen in hand to write a few lines to you. As I see so many precious letters in the SIGNS my mind has been led out, and I hope and trust that it has been of the Lord, and not of my own imagination. I am one who believes in the doctrine of predestination and election, and that God chose his people in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. Paul said, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that [faith] not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." This is to the end that we should show forth his praise, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. Now, brother Chick, I have looked with all the sight that I have, and all the understanding that the Lord has given me, and I have failed to find one place where man or men can find room to boast themselves against God, and I do not believe that any child of God who has been brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus would boast himself in opposition to God and against his holy child Jesus. I live in a country of so-called christian people, and if all the untruth that I hear them preach is the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ I could have no more confidence of gaining salvation than I should have of reaching up and pulling down the sun. Paul says, The gospel "is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth." I believe that I know the gospel when I hear it. It is a little more than twenty years since I was brought to the knowledge of this truth, and I did not bring myself to that knowledge either, I was drawn by the love of God, and I have never yet seen anything outside of that love that I could fix my faith upon. I have had a desire to be a christian ever since I can recollect, and always wanted the old time religion that I heard people talk about. I want to tell you some of this way, though it may seem very strange to you. When I was a small boy, and the Civil war was going on, one Sunday my father and mother went to see a neighbor and took me with them. A schoolhouse was near, and after dinner there was preaching in it. I may have been told who the preacher was, but if so, have forgotten because I was so small; but there was one thing I never did forget: they sang the song, "I want to go where Jesus is." That song seemed to charm my heart. That was the first time I heard of Jesus that I have any recollection of, and after all these years I still want to go where Jesus is. Well, I grew to manhood, and am now past fifty-two years, but that stayed with me in all my worldly pleasures; I never forgot it, although oftentimes I was down in the valley and then on the mountain. Now I feel like one alone, for I am a stranger to those round about me, I mean as regards the gospel. People treat me well, and I do the same by them, but I do not recognize their societies, and cannot do so, because I do not believe in their religious institutions. I very seldom go to their meetings, and when I do go do not expect to hear the gospel. A man talked to me a while ago, and said that Jesus was a Mason. I told him that if Jesus had been a Mason he could not have been the Holy Child. I tried to explain to him that Jesus did not come to set up a worldly institution. The poor, ignorant man said that Jesus came here and did the best that he could,

I told him that was not true, for Jesus did what he knew, and knew what he did, for he declared that he came not to do his own will, but the will of his Father. How many ignorant people there are in this world claiming to be servants of God.

I had better close this letter; if you deem it right you may publish it. I saw a precious letter in the SIGNS from brother D. M. Vail, also one from Richard Waller.

From one who is saved by the grace of God, if saved at all,

CHARLES BIRD.

WILMER, Ark., Dec., 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel to recall my experience, and it may be a direful, doleful remembrance, so sad and so sorrowful as to be quite unpleasant to read, except for those, perhaps a few, and only a few, who have traveled along the same dark, dreary, shadowy way that leads through a howling wilderness of sin, who have traveled the same rugged road that leads round about the horrible pit of miry clay, and have heard the doleful cry of owls and bats, and other beings that frequent such places. I go back over my past life some forty years, many years in northern Missouri, as well as in Nebraska, where I hope the Lord in his divine goodness revealed himself to me as the chiefest among ten thousand and the One altogether lovely. A light shone round about me; not a glaring, dazzling light, but a soft, luminous light of love, which seemed to illuminate my whole mind, heart and being, and with that light a voice which seemed to say, Thy sins are all forgiven thee. Since then I have traveled from northern Missouri, the land of my nativity, to this country, and that little hope which I received there has been as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. It has followed me all along the way, and while at times it seems to be so little as to be almost entirely gone, yet I would not, if I could, give it up or exchange it. As my brother George said upon his dying bed, I would not exchange it for ten thousand worlds like this. I call to remembrance now the death of my four babes, in Wilmer, a few years ago, who died in less than a week's time. Before I lost the first one, in the dark, dead hours of the night, just before day I went after the doctor to see if he could help my suffering children. I had had something like a vision in my experience long years before, revealing a light, and with that light a voice which seemed to say, Your children will soon be taken from you. Jesus, your Savior, will take them out of this troublesome world. When I remember their fluttering lips in the throes and agonies of death, and then the sweet smile left upon them after death, I feel to realize in these declining years of my life that it will not be long until I shall drink the water of everlasting love, and breathe the pure atmosphere of heaven, and bask in the sunshine of God's eternal glory, far beyond this vale of tears, and enjoy that rest that remains to the people of God.

Ofttimes in the dark hours of the night I awake with tears in my eyes, mingled with joy, at the recollection of the wonderful truth that I was made to know, and to bow my head with submission and satisfaction to the will of Him that doeth all things well. This is a part of my past life, but there are bright spots in my life's history, which I love to recall sometimes and muse upon. I feel to say with the poet,

> "This world's a wilderness of woe,
> This world is not my home."

I feel also to say in my lonely, isolated

condition, that I long to be where there are no trials, tribulations or tears, and no tombs, where the parting hand is never given, where all is love, glory and everlasting rest.

The good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES contains about all the preaching I have lately, and it is surely rich and full of comfort and consolation. How often my mind is elated, and my soul filled, as I read of the trials and travels of God's dear people in the north, south, east and west. All tell the same things, and present the same theme: Jesus and his love.

Your brother,

C. G. IRWIN.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., Feb. 4, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER BADGER:—Just a few lines to-night to let you know that I am home again. I think it was the second day after writing to you in December that I started to a sanitarium more than a hundred miles distant, but I was not going among strangers, for the surgeon who was to operate had married my niece, and my oldest daughter was stopping at their home. While the trouble was not of a very serious nature, any mistake or an incompetent nurse would have placed my life in jeopardy. But no one ever entered such an institution with less dread; I felt as sure of coming back home as I did that I was there. A great peace came over me, for I knew I was in the hands of the great Physician, and that whatever he did would be right. During the solitary hours of the night I would pray that God would make me better, and that he would save me with an everlasting salvation, but never once that he would raise me from my bed of sickness. He knew my desires, and he knew his will concerning me. I prayed for you, that you might be given a fluent tongue with boldness of speech, and a comforting message on all occasions, also that you might be spared a long time yet to go in and out before his people. I prayed for all of His dear children, and to-night wonder why. They have been bought with a price, are his, and no one can pluck them out of his hand. He has promised, too, everything that I asked for them, but I love them and always include them, especially our preachers, and right now my prayer is that God may bless them very abundantly. I always look upon them as favored ones, yet I know, because they say so, that they have seasons of doubt and darkness, feelings of unworthiness and uncertainty, a hesitancy and a halting at times, amounting almost to unbelief, but God always helps them to overcome, helps them to stand in his strength, to speak in his name and to feed his sheep thereby, all of which I consider great, glorious and beautiful. How I would love to hear the sound once more. What a blessed privilege to live among his people.

I saw in the SIGNS to-day a letter from a lady in Palo Alto, this State, and was much pleased, though that town is sixty or more miles from here, but they are coming nearer all the time, and it does me good to know that they are in existence. I wish there were a few here who knew the joyful sound, for I am very lonely. I was confined to the house for nearly three months before going away, and only Job's comforters to come in to me. But if my faith wavers, if I seem willing to forsake the old paths, it is only for a short time and through the weakness of the flesh, for I see again the stream that flowed from Calvary, I hear the words, "It is finished," and I recall the time when I felt that God for Christ's sake had pardoned my sins, and my be-

lief becomes a fixed thing once more, and I would not change places with kings or princes, for am I not a child of the heavenly King and of the Prince of peace? I read the SIGNS with increasing faith that the Old School Baptists are God's people, that they have been taught by him as no others have, and that there is no other name and no other way under heaven by which one can be saved. I can say yea and amen to every experience it contains, and when something is explained that I never heard or thought of I am lost in wonder, knowing that no one taught them but Him who spake as never man spake. Sometimes I am afraid you will think that I write with a feeling that savors too much of security, but it is not because of myself. Jesus sought me when a stranger, and caused me to see myself as he saw me; he gave me godly sorrow for my sins and afterward the hope of pardon. He filled my heart with love for him and his people, he showed me the highway of holiness and gave me the desire to walk therein; he led me by his Spirit to believe that his was a chosen people, heirs of promise, and though I hesitate to write it, the hope that I am numbered among them, and all this means something; I was not the instigator of it, and it increases my belief to know that I cannot get away from it; it is the way, the truth and the life, and I could not fellowship with any other people if I tried. Sometimes I listen to others, again I read after them, and am always more confirmed in the faith once delivered to the saints, and better satisfied who the saints are, the only ones who are willing and desirous of separating themselves from the world, and who acknowledge that Jesus paid it all, and that what they are they owe to him. I believe with them that he is the author and finisher, and that if he commences a good work in us it is because he loves us, and nothing can separate us from it, so you see where my security lies. I am sinful and unworthy, but his promises are sure.

I do not really know why I have written so much, and when I remembered that I had said I would write again when I returned, I felt sorry that I had not let you answer the few lines sent in December. It was on my mind, though, to keep my word, and I have done so. The only excuse I can give is that I love you for the truth's sake and want to hear from you. I have been home but a few days, and am far from well, but hope to be better soon. Mr. Wright came to see me once, and a brother and sister visited me; they lived twenty-five and fifty miles distant. I was in the sanitarium three weeks, and rested one week at my niece's home before attempting the return trip.

I have been interrupted several times and am tired, so ask you to excuse this; in fact had to lay it aside last evening, but more callers to-day. I want you to send this to brother Chick. I thank God for having met and known you; I prize the memory of that baptism of eight years ago, also of your sermons, which I thought so beautiful, although you were feeling your unworthiness very keenly. Do I think there is any merit in this? No, I just wanted to stir up your mind by way of remembrance, to let you know I had been thinking of you, and that the Lord is still my Shepherd. If all waited until they could write as you two do there would not be much done. If you see Mrs. Weir you can tell her that I am much better.

With love unfeigned to you and to your family, and praying that you may receive many rich blessings this new year, I am your sister in a blessed hope,

(MRS.) B. E. WRIGHT.

GENESIS III. 11.

"WHO told thee that thou wast naked?"

These words came to my mind during the night, and when I awoke this morning they seemed to be repeating themselves over and over again in my mind, why I do not know. I am now nearing the seventy-sixth year of my life, and when I look back over the past my whole life seems to be an entire failure. I look around me and see many of my fellow-creatures whose lives of usefulness in the world are far better than my own, being called away from time to eternity, while I am left behind to battle along with the trials, troubles and temptations of life. I am made often to wonder why it is so; I know that my times are not hidden from the Almighty, but are treasured up in the hands of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will and good pleasure. When the law of the Lord is written in the hearts of any of the Lord's little ones, according to the new covenant made with the house of Israel, it is indelibly written there, for it is put in their inward parts by the finger of Almighty God. It is by this law that we see and know our poor, penniless condition before God; all our righteousness is as filthy rags in his sight, and we feel his mercy must be meted out in our behalf. Woe is me, for I am undone, world without end.

"Who told thee that thou wast naked?" It was that God who commanded light to shine out of darkness that hath shined in our hearts that gives us this knowledge of our nakedness before him, of our inability to do anything in and of ourselves to justify ourselves in his sight. This same law in our hearts teaches us that we are the most dependent creatures upon the footstool of God; even the very air we breathe is but one of the innumerable blessings of God to usward, and yet how unthankful we often seem to be, not realizing at all times that it is "in him we live, move, and have our being," so that without him we can do nothing. He who does not feel and know that his dependence for all he has and is is upon God, and God alone, knows nothing of his nakedness before the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

This is submitted to your better judgment, brother Ker.

I am yours in hope of a better life beyond, where pain, sin, sorrow and death can never enter.

J. H. YEOMAN.

LOVELAND, Colo.

CENTERBURG, Ohio, Jan. 24, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—While I am confined to the house this cold weather, not being in very good health, I will attempt to write a few lines to tell you I appreciate the SIGNS OF THE TIMES very much. I thought I would not take it another year, as my time is out; I thought I would read my old ones over, for they seem new to me when I read them. I think your paper is good, if I am a judge of the truth of the revealed word of God in the beloved record, and contends for the pure, unadulterated doctrine held by the prophets and apostles, and taught by the Father and the Son by direct revelation in the ages past. I will not attempt to commend the many writers who so ably set forth the truth of God, both in doctrine and experience, if I know anything about the truth. I have abundant reason to thank God that it is as well with me as it is. O is there any one like me? Thank God he is the one who is the Judge.

I crave an interest in your prayers, kind editors and readers, that he may be

with me through the valley and shadow of death, which is not far away, for I am in my seventy-sixth year; the young may die, but the old must. I will live my allotted time.

God continue to bless the SIGNS, is the prayer of your unworthy sister,

JULIA BOYD.

MT. VERNON, Ohio, Dec. 15, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:—The time has come for us to send in our subscription for another year to the SIGNS. We feel that we cannot do without it, as it is about all the preaching we get.

Dear ones, another year is now about to come to a close, with all its joys and sorrows. We, through the mercy of our all-wise, heavenly Father, are still spared; although called to pass through many sorrows and afflictions, we feel that we have great reason of all creatures to be the most thankful for the many blessings we have received from his bountiful hand. The SIGNS is always a welcome messenger; it is a great comfort to us to hear from the dear, scattered children of God. O how much we would love to have some of the traveling ministers come this way and stop with us and preach, if it could be the will of the Lord. Our love and best wishes to all for the coming new year.

E. C. AND A. J. WRIGHT.

FORT ROBINSON, Nebr., Dec. 8, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As it is time for me to remit, I would like to tell the readers of the SIGNS of a meeting we attended at Loveland, Iowa, last fall, as I have not seen any account of it. It was the Missouri Valley Association, held Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 3rd, 4th and 5th. We had sixteen preachers there, all taught in the same school and by the same Teacher, who teaches his children that it is by free grace we are saved, and not of ourselves, for we do believe that God is all-powerful, and what he chooses no hand can hinder. Such love and fellowship as was shown there can be found only among God's own children.

Love to all the readers of the SIGNS.

Yours in hope,

T. G. HARRIS.

INFORMATION WANTED.

WILL the person at Watervalley, Ky., who wrote me some time ago giving a remedy for indigestion, and who did not sign their name, please write again, giving their name? as I wish to write to them for further information.

G. B. BIRD.

ST. ALBANS, W. Va.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER J. F. Beeman has changed his address from Helena, Okla., to Tiawah, Rogers Co., Okla.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906; 07 means 1907; 08 means 1908; 09 means 1909; 10 means 1910; 11 means 1911, &c.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1910.

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EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ISAIAH LXIV. 8.

"BUT now, O Lord, thou art our father: we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand."

How wonderful is the agreement of the testimony of all who know the Lord in truth. With the above words of the prophet, speaking for his brethren of Israel, agree the following testimonies of other inspired men. See Jeremiah xviii. first six verses. "Thou hast wrought all our works in us."—Isaiah xxvi. 12. "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. ii. 10. "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."—Phil. ii. 13. And to this day all who know the Lord in truth testify that every holy affection or desire, every good work and word, are wrought in them by divine power and goodness, and disclaim all merit, no matter how high or exalted may be their attainments. All the children of God confess in the words of the text, "Thou art our father: we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand." These words take on special force when we consider the connection of them. First, there is a prayer that the blessed Lord would rend the heavens and come down for their help, even as he had done in the ages past for them. Then there is a confession of the wonderful things which God had treasured up for them, which human eye had not seen and human ear had not heard, and that God did meet with all that rejoiced in his ways and wrought righteousness. Then comes an humble confession of their sin and uncleanness, so that even their righteousnesses were but as filthy rags, and that they were all fading as a leaf, and that their iniquities had taken them away. The meaning of all this seems to us to be that they confess that in them is no help, and that left to themselves iniquity is too strong for them, and that the just judgments of God are upon them because of their sin. They confess their sin and the justice of God in their distressed condition. Through their transgressions they had come to such a state of alienation from God that he had left them to feel no spiritual emotion, and to have in themselves no spirit of prayer, so that there was none that stirred himself up to take hold on God, because the Lord had hidden his face from them, and had consumed them because of their iniquities. Isaiah, in behalf of the people, confesses all this. Here is indeed sin in the people, and the judgments of God upon them, and a shutting out from God's presence and from the joy of salvation, but here is not death, else there would have been no sorrow, no confession and no feeling sense of their deplorable condition. Now, because there was life and not death here, faith once more speaks in the words of the text, "But now, O Lord, thou art our father." It is one of the blessed peculiarities of the divine life where it once dwells in any soul, that notwithstanding many transgressions and de-

partures in heart and life, and notwithstanding many judgments have fallen upon the transgressors, still faith never quite fails, and still it leads to an acknowledgment that God is our Father after all. We see this exemplified in Peter after his denial of his Lord, and after the resurrection from the dead. When the Master probed him with questions, "Lovest thou me more than these?" and when the question had been three times repeated Peter could but reply, "Thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." The denying disciple knew that he had grievously sinned, and he knew that the Lord knew it, and that which he would not have said before men he could and did say unto the Master: After all my base denial of thee, thou knowest that I love thee. As Jesus had prayed for him, so it was fulfilled that his faith did not fail, even in the face of his sin. That which most sorely tries our faith is our own sin. Afflictions and temptations of various kinds wage fierce warfare against our faith, but sin is the most grievous and deadly foe. How can one believe that he is a child of God when he has sinned so grievously? Faith produces works of righteousness, but I see no works of that kind in me, he says, and the soul is almost ready to give up. But, after all, faith shall not wholly fail, and again the heart turns to the Lord, and again it testifies before God, I love thee; thou knowest that I love thee. So in the text the confession is made, "But now, O Lord, thou art our father." This means, as it seems to us, that from his hand had come to them all that a father could bestow upon his child, either of love or of outward blessings. It means, Thou hast given us being as a nation and people; thou hast cared for us and helped us against our foes and to overcome all obstacles in our pathway; thou hast established us in this good land; thou hast made a nation of us, who were but a small remnant, and thou hast given us this abundance of fruits and springs. We remember all these things, and confess that thou hast given them all, even though we have so grievously requited thee, and our sins have not broken that relationship. We are still thy children and thou our Father. Though thou dost visit us with the rod as we are now visited, yet thy loving-kindness thou wilt not utterly take from us. Thy loving-kindness, even under the greatest provocation, will not fail us. Now, now, thou art, as thou hast ever been, our Father. We have indeed sinned, but in the things which thou hast prepared for us is continuance, and so we shall be saved. What a victory of faith is in all this. Faith that overcomes the world, faith that is stronger than our sins, faith that defeats all the assaults of the enemy, faith that enables us to answer every charge with, Jesus died; and in this faith is no shadow of presumption. It is not the confession of pharisaical pride, of boastful self-sufficiency, but the confession of deepest humility and self-abasement. Just before this language is the confession of deepest guilt, and before faith can have room in any heart there must be self-loathing and humility. Pride and faith cannot travel together; humility and faith always go hand in hand. Humility sees no good in self, and faith also sees no good in self, but sees all good in Jesus our Lord, and man must come away from self if he is ever to know the grace of God in Christ. In the full consciousness of sin the sinner by blessed faith confesses Christ, and so confesses the Father as well as the Son: I am a sinner, but thou art my

Father still. In the parable the prodigal who had sinned against heaven and in the sight of his father said just this, I will arise and go unto my father. And so in the text Israel through Isaiah said, "But now, O Lord, thou art our father." Still another confession is made: "We are the clay, and thou our potter." Notice first the clay. It cannot mold itself into any sort of a vessel. We are clay, Israel says, and the potter must mold us, and thou art our Potter that molds us. Notice also the word of appropriating faith, "Thou art our potter." Ours especially. We are not delivered into any hand but thine. Our parents, our teachers, our own wills, cannot mold us to righteousness or to be vessels of righteousness. Thou alone art our Potter. What a blessed assurance to them, what a blessed assurance to us, what a blessed assurance to every poor, weak, sinful soul who would, but cannot, do good. How completely in fellowship with this testimony is the testimony of Paul when he cried out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Here is the answer, "Through Jesus Christ our Lord." "Thou art our potter." Let us notice also that the prophet did not say, Thou hast been our potter, but "thou art." The blessed God had not only formed this people for himself, so that they should show forth his praise when he brought them out of Egypt, but he was all the way along experimentally molding them to his will. He has not only made us his in the new birth, in which he granted to us faith, hope, love and all other graces of the Spirit, but daily, hourly and every moment he continues this fashioning work by judgments and mercies in a thousand ways. Thus he makes his own to be vessels meet for the Master's use. "Thou art our potter" is still true, and shall be true while we live below, but how slow we are to learn that the blessed work goes on in our hearts and lives all the time. Israel had come very near to the Lord when they could from the heart say this. When we can say, All that we are, all that we have and all that we hope to be comes from the molding hand of God, and that he is our Potter in all this work, we are not far from the kingdom of heaven. Israel had come to the end of perfection in self, and there had found the blessed Lord to be all in all. How good it is to learn this. There can be no better lesson learned. This is faith that overcomes indeed. The Lord said, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." And here the prophet testifies, "And we all are the work of thy hand." Thus the blessed Lord declares that truth, which his people are brought to confess and love. Let us notice the word "all" in this last clause of the text. "We all;" this seems to us to mean that not only was that people, as a people or nation, formed as the potter forms the clay into a vessel for his use, but that each one individually must regard himself as a vessel, also molded by the hand of the Lord into a vessel of mercy, fitted for service in the house of the Lord, and it is the divine testimony that the Lord does fit all his vessels as it pleases him. Paul said, In a large house there are vessels unto honor and unto dishonor. But all are vessels fashioned unto the use designed for each of them. And Isaiah was inspired of God to say that upon the nail fastened in a sure place the Lord would hang all his vessels, from vessels of large quantity to vessels of small quantity, &c. Paul said again, "We

have this treasure in earthen vessels." From all these Scriptures it appears clearly that each vessel of mercy has been, or will be, fashioned by the hand of the Lord into just that form and size as will best glorify Himself and edify the whole body. The work of the Potter is still going on; his vessels are being formed still, to show forth his praise.

There are some reflections that occur to us as we write these things. First, it is good to remember that we all are clay, as are all other men. We are all by nature the children of wrath, even as others who are not chosen unto salvation, and who never shall know the Potter's work upon them. We are not vessels of the house of the Lord because we were in anywise better clay than other clay, but the Lord chooses out of the mass this lump and that lump, and begins his glorious work of grace and mercy in the heart and then in the life, so that that one shall by and by bear his image. There is here no room for boasting then. The chosen lump of clay cannot find room to say to that which is not chosen, I am better than thou. On the contrary, that chosen one must ever say, I was in nowise better than others; I was a child of wrath, even as others. Second, there is no room left here for envy or for pride among the vessels themselves. One vessel cannot find room for vainglory, or another for envy; each is of that form and size that is given it by the Potter; each has been formed for certain service and a certain place; one in its place is as needful and as useful as another. Why should brethren then strive one against another? Could the vessels in some one's kitchen have life, consciousness and a voice, and the owner should hear them begin to dispute as to which was the most honorable or useful, how absurd would that strife appear to the owner of them. Would he not rebuke them, and declare that all were needful, and that one could not do without the other? How pitiful it is to find such strife among the vessels of mercy. How contrary to the truth is vainglory on the one hand and envy on the other. One vessel cannot fill the place of another. While it is true that a cup cannot serve as a flagon, it is also true that the flagon cannot serve in the place of the cup; both are necessary, and both are equally honorable in their places, and if either one glorifies its maker, that is the most glorious service of all, and to desire to glorify God is a spirit to be coveted more than all things else.

We leave these reflections, and trust that they may prove of benefit to us all.

C.

"HE THAT HATH EARS TO HEAR, LET HIM HEAR."

THE above sentence seems a suitable heading for a subject that has been in our mind much of late, and perhaps we can do no better at this time than call attention to it. Our desire is to stir up the pure minds of the brethren by way of remembrance, to the end that they may be established and not fall into error nor be overtaken with traditional ideas and notions. It seems altogether too easy to lay hold upon things that have no foundation, and become so carried away with them that we really believe them to be true and well founded. It is well that all be established with grace, and not with meats. Often much comfort in the gospel is lost because of some idea or notion imbibed from another, who is as sincere in that idea as was Saul of Tarsus in the Jews' religion. It, no doubt, would be impossible to trace some of these

things to an authentic origin, since the Bible does not allude to them in any way, and whatever the Bible does not warrant we may know beyond doubt had its origin with man, hence is of no real value, but rather often robs the children of God of comfort and instruction. The gospel, which is the power of God, proclaims liberty; never does it bring its subjects into bondage, though sometimes received that way because of some false idea. "Take heed therefore how you hear."

When the Savior addressed multitudes in parables he most always, at the conclusion, said, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." This saying simply meant that the man whose deaf ears to the truth had been unstopped should receive instruction in righteousness, and through that instruction become rooted, settled and fixed in the gospel of grace. When the messages were sent to the different churches of Asia the words were added, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." We therefore conclude that the gospel is sent to the churches, and that through the gospel the children of God, both young and old, are to be instructed in the doctrine of God our Savior. The condition of the church to-day, however, is different in some respects from what it was in earlier ages; then men, women and children heard the word of the Lord with unbiased minds and tender hearts, recognizing the ministers as instructed, qualified and sent of God to teach them concerning the Scriptures. Many felt as did the eunuch when asked by Philip if he understood what he was reading in the book of Isaiah; he replied, "How can I, except some man should guide me?" But now almost all, even boys and girls in the church, have some favorite idea of this or that text, and unless the man sent of God preaches according to their view of the matter he is altogether wrong and must be instructed. Instead therefore of the minister teaching the children, he must be taught of them. Perhaps some will say that notwithstanding the eloquence and power of Apollos in the Scriptures, Aquila and Priscilla took him aside and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. It should be remembered also that they taught him something of which he had never heard: gospel baptism in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Was not that instruction different from criticism regarding his views of the prophecies in which he was "mighty"? Where has this idea its origin that the ministers of the gospel must be taught of the church, rather than the church instructed by them? One of the important qualifications of a minister is, "apt to teach."

Sometimes brethren go to meeting, it may be an association of two or three days, and if asked how they enjoyed the preaching will say, "I never heard one word." In all sincerity we ask, Where did the idea originate that a quickened sinner can sit under the sound of the gospel, either for an hour or three days, and then say, I did not hear one word? The notion is that unless natural emotions are aroused and we are brought to tears or made to forget where we are and who we are, that we did not hear. Some years ago while attending an association of Old Baptists, on the second day of the meeting one of our able ministers was preaching and another equally as able sat behind him in the stand, and although the one who preached had liberty, the other did not seem specially interested; but during the discourse the speaker

related a deathbed scene, and while he was telling the story the other minister wept like a child, and after the speaker sat down the other said, "I never heard you preach such a sermon as that." Beyond all doubt "worldly sorrow" or sympathetic emotions were mistaken for godly sorrow. Surely there was no spiritual comfort to be derived from the relation of the deathbed story, nor was there spiritual instruction in it. How often, yes, how very often, worldly sorrow, which always works death, is mistaken for spiritual comfort. Godly sorrow worketh repentance not to be repented of, and when the gospel produces that kind of sorrow the one who thus hears is greatly benefited, though no emotion may be felt. Preaching that brings tears, whether along experimental lines or the relation of some sad occurrence, is not the kind that builds the saints up on their most holy faith and establishes them in the gospel. What is it to hear the gospel? Is it not to understand it and become settled in it? If so, when one hears the subject of election, predestination, atonement or justification explained does he not hear the word of the Lord? And ought not all who believe these and all other points of doctrine be able to tell why when asked? and what is the duty of the gospel ministry if not to teach these things? Have we not all seen some who had but little knowledge of the doctrine of God? They give full evidence that they are the children of God, and we all love them as such, but if asked questions regarding the different points of doctrine, upon which the church should be built, they are unable to answer. If our children at school did not progress in wisdom and knowledge we would at once attach blame to their teacher; can it be so with us, the teachers in the kingdom of God?

Some years ago an able minister, who in former years was almost altogether doctrinal in his preaching, but had rather left off doctrine and preached along experimental lines, of the ups and downs in the journey, of the dark and lifeless seasons, of disappointments and crosses, was asked why he had done so, and he replied, "Because it pleases the people." Shall we seek in this way to please the people? If they are not pleased with the doctrine of Christ and him crucified, which should please and comfort every conscious sinner, shall we leave off that glorious doctrine, or bury our talent, for something else in order to please the people? And instead of trying to preach in such a way as to bring them to tears, that they may THINK they have heard, should not every gospel minister disabuse as far as is possible the minds of those thus laboring under such a false and groundless idea? We hope we shall not be understood as wanting to regulate the gifts in the church; we have no such thought or desire. Every gift fills its own place; hence if a man has a doctrinal gift is it not more profitable to use it than try to please the people by using the gift of some other man? The experimental gift is of great value in the church, but belongs to the man who has it. If all preach experience where is the doctrine? "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound." If one knows the truth when it is preached is it not because he hears it? If all who feel that they do not hear when attending meetings would use the word "understand" instead of "hear," we feel sure the notion of not hearing would soon pass away. No one would be willing to say

after listening to a gospel sermon, I did not understand one word, yet the meaning is the same when they say, "I did not hear one word." To hear is to understand, and to understand is to hear. "My sheep hear my voice." Let every child of God flee groundless traditions as we would antichrist, for surely much wholesome food is missed because of some of them, and for the lack of proper nourishment the children often become sickly, and many die. When men and women are brought into the church through a sound and faithful ministry they come to stay, and do not want in a few weeks or years to add all sorts of modern inventions of men and use Moody and Sankey hymn-books and offer prizes for best attendance and perfect lessons. They are established in the doctrine of "absolute predestination of all things," and will not therefore tolerate for one moment the idea of "permissive decrees." They are also rooted in the truth of salvation by grace alone, hence when some Ishmaelite comes along preaching "conditional time salvation" they refuse to receive him into their houses or bid him Godspeed.

These things we have written with a sincere desire for the welfare and spiritual growth of the church of God. We do not need to be told that faithfulness makes one unpopular, this we learned long ago, and let it be remembered that we are not seeking popularity, but rather the good of Zion, and we hope such will be our course while in the ministry of Christ. K.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

T. W. Records, Mo., $1.00; W. H. Wicks, Pa., $1.00.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Douglas L. Topping.)

The Baltimore Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the church at Black Rock, Baltimore County, Maryland, May 18th, 19th and 20th, 1910, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, and all who love the truth everywhere, sends christian salutation and love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We call your attention to the words of our Lord, Matthew xvi. 18: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

All Bible readers know that these are the words of Jesus, spoken to his disciples after he had asked the question, "Whom say ye that I am?" "Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."—Matt. xvi. 16. Jesus said, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven," and this, brethren, is the only way that Jesus is known to-day; it is through revelation that poor sinners know anything of the love of God; it is through the teaching of the Holy Spirit that they know him, whom to know is life eternal. All that have heard of the Father come unto me, said Jesus, for they shall all be taught of the Lord, and great shall be their peace.

The strength and durability of a building depends upon the firmness of its foundation. Jesus is the firm foundation stone, upon which his church is built, and therefore it shall stand forever, for in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall break into pieces all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. (Daniel ii. 44.) The church of Jesus Christ is built of lively

stones, chosen, fitted and prepared to fill the very place the Father ordained that each one should fill in this glorious building. This church is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. The members of his body were chosen in him before the world began, and through the quickening power of the Holy Spirit in time, they are brought to know that they are sinners doomed to death by the holy law of God. They cannot yet see Christ formed in their hearts the hope of glory, but, praise be to his holy name, by and by he reveals himself to them as their Savior, and O what joy is theirs the hour they first believe. This is the highway, the way of holiness that the vulture's eye hath not seen, but the redeemed shall walk there, for Jesus has power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him, and as he has never lost a battle, we look to our ever victorious Captain, who has brought salvation nigh, to give us the final victory over the last enemy, which is death. Then his people are saved with an everlasting salvation. He said, "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all: and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Then, dear child of God, do not grow discouraged because you are numbered with a people who are few. The world may hate you because of your steadfastness in Christ, but he who declared the end from the beginning will never leave nor forsake you, for he has been formed in your hearts the hope of glory, and he cannot deny himself. If Christ has made us free, then are we free indeed. May he guide and guard his dear people, that they may walk together in peace and love, taking heed to themselves and to the doctrine of God their Savior, holding fast the profession of their faith without wavering. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible; and we that are alive and remain shall be changed and caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air, and so the saints shall ever be with the Lord. Wherefore, brethren, comfort one another with these words.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.
F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the church at Black Rock, Maryland, May, 1910, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We are having a pleasant meeting; our Lord has seen fit to give us good weather and kind friends, who are caring tenderly for us at their homes; also dear and precious brethren with whom we are associating in our meetings, able ministers of the new testament, who are preaching to us the glorious gospel of the Son of God, whose presence we feel is with us. We have had no new things preached to us, but the same old doctrine of salvation by grace, and the resurrection of the dead by the Spirit of him who dwelleth in us.

Our next session is appointed to be held with our sister church, Harford, Harford Co., Md., at the usual time next year, when and where we hope to meet you again. Stand fast, brethren, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free; see that no man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, and may the God of peace be with you and us, is our prayer for Jesus' sake.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.
F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

BROTHER **Emery Sanford** died at his home near Denver, N. Y., Dec. 26th, 1907, in the 59th year of his age, after a brief illness of pneumonia. Brother Sanford for some time previous to his death had been in poor health, although he was able to be around until he was stricken with pneumonia. He experienced a hope in the Savior during the winter of 1874, and united with the Andes Church, at Union Grove, April 20th, 1874, and was baptized by the late Elder J. D. Hubbell. His wife, who was Eunice Jenkins, was baptized the same day. Their travel through life was very pleasant; the joys of one were the joys of the other, likewise the sorrows of one were the sorrows of the other. He is survived by his widow, one daughter and three sons.

His funeral was held from his late residence, burial in the Hubbell Cemetery, at Kelly Corners, N. Y. The writer tried to speak to the comfort of the friends. May the Lord comfort all that mourn, is my desire.

ALSO,

BROTHER **Henry Bronson** departed this life Jan. 17th, 1910, aged about 70 years. Brother Bronson was born March 1st, 1840, in the State of New Jersey, was married to Sarah Habbie Oct. 12th, 1871. To them were born two children, one son and one daughter. Brother Bronson united with the Second Church of Roxbury nearly forty years ago, being baptized by Elder J. S. Hewitt, and for nearly twenty years had served that church as deacon. For nearly twenty years he had been in poor health, gradually failing; his last sickness was short, only confining him to his bed a few days. He had lived a faithful and consistent church member, was of a meek and humble spirit, having no desire to offend any one, always desiring to live in the bond of love and fellowship with his brethren. He leaves one daughter and many friends, beside the church, to mourn their loss, but for him to die was gain.

His funeral was held from the "Gould Memorial Church" in Roxbury village, burial in the village cemetery. The writer tried to speak to the comfort of the friends, using as a text Joshua ii. 18.

ALSO,

SISTER **Mary Vermilyea** died at her home in Dunraven, N. Y., April 19th, 1910, aged 73 years. Sister Vermilyea united with the Middletown Church some forty years ago. She was married to Edward Vermilyea June 18th, 1854, who died seventeen years ago. He also was a member of the Middletown Church. Since the death of sister Vermilyea's husband she had lived a lonely life, living alone at her home in Dunraven. She was deprived of attending meeting many times by having no way to go; whenever she could get to meeting she esteemed it a blessed privilege, and always seemed to enjoy the preaching of the gospel. Her home was always open to her kindred in Christ, whom she loved to entertain. She had lost all desire to live, life had become a burden, and she longed for the time to come when she should enter into rest, to be seen as she is seen and know as she is known. At my last visit with sister Vermilyea, a few days before her death, she requested that I should preach the funeral sermon; she also selected the text to be used, which was Romans viii. 38, 39; also requested that hymns 807 and 1228 be read. Her funeral was held at Margaretville, N. Y., interment in the Hubbell Cemetery, Kelly Corners, N. Y. She leaves one brother, one sister, many friends and relatives, besides the church, to mourn their loss. May the God of grace comfort all who mourn.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Ann Frances Bateman was born in Albion, York Co., Ont., Aug. 26th, 1828. When a child she moved with her parents to Caradoc, Middlesex County, and was married March 12th, 1849, to John C. Bateman, and settled on a farm, where she lived until after the death of her husband, which occurred Sept. 24th, 1882. Leaving the farm she moved to St. Thomas, Ont., April 8th, 1886, and lived there until October, 1902, when she broke up housekeeping and went to live with her children. She was baptized in June, 1871, in Ekfrid, Ont. She died May 9th, 1910, at the home of her son-in-law, Neil G. Blue, after an illness lasting about ten weeks. She was the mother of ten children, seven of whom survive her, two daughters and one son preceding her to the grave. Elisha died Nov. 21st, 1894; Kate died May 17th, 1902; Bessie died Dec. 11th, 1906. Those living are Mrs. Phil. P. Corneil, of Ekfrid, Mrs. E. L. Crouch, of Bothwell, Mrs. Thomas Durdle, of Winchelsea, Mrs. G. C. Smith, of Ekfrid, Mrs. Neil G. Blue, of Dunwich, Mrs. J. L. Young, of New York, and Miss Jennie Bateman, of New York. Father was baptized in October, 1857, in Alborough, and was deacon for a number of years.

(MRS.) GEORGE C. SMITH.

EKFRID, Ontario.

[THE above was forwarded us by sister Smith, a daughter of sister Bateman, and we feel to add a few lines. Sister Bateman was one of the noblest of women, kind, faithful and true. She was deeply experienced and well instructed in the doctrine of grace, and dearly loved the truth in all its fullness. It was our privilege to visit her a few days before her death, and though unable to speak at that time she could hear, and seemed to enjoy the reading of the Scriptures and remarks regarding the blessed promises of God. She passed peacefully away as above stated, surrounded by most all of her daughters and sons-in-law. We conducted the funeral services in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Neil Blue, son-in-law and daughter, and tried to present the hope

of the incorruptible inheritance through Christ our Lord. The services were largely attended; the interment followed in the family plot in the cemetery at Melbourne, Ont. May comfort be ministered to the family.—K.]

Absalom Butler was born in Muskingum County, Ohio, in the year 1825, and died at his home in Oelwein, Iowa, April 27th, 1910, at the age of 84 years, 10 months and 13 days. He moved with his parents to Wisconsin at the age of eighteen years, and settled on a farm in Greene County, where he lived until he was twenty-three years of age, when he was married to Miss Sarah Kennedy. The following April he came to Iowa and settled on a farm near West Union, where he lived until his wife died, some twenty years later. In the year 1869 he was again married, to Miss Louisa Ross, settling on what is known as the Bailey farm. For the past ten years they had lived in Oelwein, he having been janitor of the Parkside school. His health failed him about three years ago, and since that time he has suffered with heart trouble, being confined to his home most of the time. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church in his younger days, in which he lived a devoted christian life, and his one desire was to be at rest with his Savior, in whom he trusted so many years. He leaves to mourn their loss a sorrowing widow, several relatives and a host of friends.

The funeral services were held at the Christian meetinghouse at 2 o'clock Friday, Mr. Tatum officiating. The body was laid to rest in the Oakdale Cemetery to await the resurrection morn.

S. BUTLER.

HAMPTON, Iowa.

Newton Osteen died at the home of his nephew, C. Y. Osteen, aged 76 years, 2 months and 9 days. He was born in Weakley County, Tenn., in 1834, and made that his home until he was twenty-seven years old. He joined the Confederate army in 1861, and served four years, then after the war he came to Texas and made his home until April 28th, 1910, when he passed away. He was a strong believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone. He never united with the church, but when we would come home from our meetings he would always make inquiry about the meeting and who preached. He never talked on the Scriptures without saying something about old Elder G. Beebe. He loved the doctrine set forth in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We did all we could to make him comfortable in his last days.

Funeral services were held at the Medlin Cemetery, conducted by Elder Asa Howard, who preached a very comforting discourse to a large concourse of people.

His nephew, C. Y. OSTEEN.

ROANOKE, Texas.

APPOINTMENTS.

BROTHER J. M. Fenton, of Philadelphia, Pa., is expected to preach at Cammal, Pa., the fourth Sunday in June, at 10:30 a. m., 2 and 6:30 p. m.

MEETINGS.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Middletown and Wallkill Church, Middletown, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June, (8th, 9th and 10th,) 1910.

Those coming by way of New York will take train leaving West Twenty-third St. (Erie R. R.) at 2:55 p. m. Tuesday before the meeting. This train will be met and friends cared for. Any leaving New York Wednesday morning will take train leaving Chambers St. at 7:08 or at 9:10, and come to the meetinghouse on arrival in Middletown. Those coming east on Erie R. R. will drop Dr. G. A. Emory a card saying what train to meet. Those coming on O. & W. R. R. will go to 21 Broad St. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend.

G. A. EMORY, Clerk.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

A union or three days meeting will be held with Bethel Church, at Tallman, Linn Co., Oregon, commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1910, at 2 o'clock p. m. We cordially invite all lovers of truth, and hope to meet as many as possible of our brethren and ministers. Those who contemplate visiting us at that time will please remember Tallman is situated on the Lebanon branch of the Southern Pacific R. R., forming a junction with trunk at Albany. There are two trains daily, one train leaving Albany about 12:30 p. m., the other about 8 p. m. Be sure to board Lebanon train, stopping off at Tallman. Church is near depot.

SILAS WILLIAMS, Pastor, Tallman, Oregon.
A. HORNER, Church Clerk, Waterloo, Oregon.

THE yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held, the Lord willing, in their meetinghouse at Aberfeldy, Lambton County, Ontario, seven miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

THERE will be a two days meeting held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse on Schoharie Hill, June 15th and 16th, 1910. Those coming to Schoharie will be met and cared for at Mrs. Helen Kinney's. Those coming to Howes Cave will be met if a card is sent

to Geo. A. Miers, R. F. D. No. 3, Schoharie, N. Y. We shall be glad to welcome all who have a desire to meet with us. GEO. A. MIERS.

THE Siloam Association will, God willing, meet with the Sulphur Creek Church, at Nesika, Lewis Co., Wash., June 17th, 18th and 19th, 1910. Those coming by rail will leave Tacoma, Wash., on the Tacoma and Eastern R. R., about 8 o'clock a. m. Thursday, June 16th, and arrive at Glenanon, Wash., at 1 o'clock p. m., where they will be met and conveyed to place of meeting. Nesika is seventeen miles from the station. All who plan to go will please write to Elder F. L. Riffe, Nesika, Wash., so he will know how many conveyances to send. A cordial invitation is extended and a large attendance desired.

SONORA A. HESS, Clerk.

THE church at Otego, N. Y., has appointed a meeting to be held Saturday afternoon, August 6th, and Sunday, August 7th, to which meeting we invite distant friends to meet with us. Trains will be met Saturday morning and at 1 o'clock p. m. Meeting-house is near the station.

Done in behalf of the church.

S. C. F. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

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LURAY, Va.

"Thoughts on Regeneration, the Spiritual Birth, the Christian Warfare and the Resurrection," is the title of a pamphlet of 58 pages, written by Elder H. B. Jones, of Winnsboro, Texas, and can be had of him for 25 cents per copy, five copies for $1.00 or $2.00 per dozen. Address, H. B. JONES,

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 78. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1910. NO. 13.

CORRESPONDENCE.

1 THESSALONIANS IV. 14.

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

Dear Brethren in Christ:—I desire to present some thoughts for your consideration on the above Scripture, and also the connections. These words were written for the instruction and comfort of God's people, for those whose hope is in Christ. It is most sorrowful to behold the divided opinions that exist even among God's redeemed people who profess hope in Christ. I hope not to be the cause of making it worse than it is. One thing we should all labor to do, and that is, study to rightly divide the word of truth. Let us all be careful about making quotations to prove some idea we may entertain without first studying the connections carefully and prayerfully to see that the Scripture quoted by us is not being perverted to make it mean something entirely foreign to what the Scriptures teach. I have caught myself doing such things; I may do so in this article, but I hope not. It is a very solemn thing to handle the word of God at all, but to handle it in a careless manner is more sorrowful. O that we all could realize the need of wisdom from God in all our deliberations. The more I study the Scriptures the more conscious I am of needed grace every day of my life to rightly divide the word of truth. My mind of late has been greatly exercised over existing conditions of the church, and also the world.

Now let us proceed with the subject of our text. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." If this is a truth that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. If we believe this, we then have a well-founded reason for sorrowing not, even as others which have no hope. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, said, "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." Now do we believe this? We are duty bound to believe this first before we can justly claim a hope in Christ. It is surprising how many professed followers of Christ deny this; es-

pecially do they deny that Jesus rose again. If all we have to present to you to-day is a dead Christ, there could be no comfort in that. Paul predicated his arguments on the fact that Christ died and rose again. First, that the Scriptures taught this; second, that there were many living at that time who were eye-witnesses of that fact. "He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all, he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time," said Paul. Read 1 Cor. xv. 3–8. In the twenty-seventh chapter of Matthew we read how the chief priests and Pharisees first went to Pilate, and said, "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day." Their object for so doing was lest his disciples come by night and steal him away and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead. Pilate granted their request; they made everything secure, sealing the stone and setting a watch, but "the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it." O what a victory! Here "his countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men." Now listen to the proclamation of the angel: "And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." These Scriptures are so clearly stated that it is most sorrowful to see any one trying to pervert them so as to actually deny that Jesus rose from the tomb. "Come, see the place where the Lord lay." These chief priests and Pharisees admitted that this man died and was buried, but they tried to conceal the fact that he rose again. "Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept. And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day."—Matt. xxviii. 11–15. Evidently there are only two positions for us to take: first, the angel of the Lord told the truth, or else the soldiers received large money for saying, "His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept." I ask again, Is it not strange that professed followers of Christ do deny that he rose again? Yet such was the case at that time, and it is yet true, at least of some. Again, there are some who tell us they do believe that Christ died and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, but that it was not the same body that was buried that did rise the third day according to the Scriptures. Now, my dear brethren, my firm belief is that it was the very same body that was buried that rose again. The words of our text convey that idea: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again." Paul does not say, For if we believe that Jesus died and another Jesus rose, neither did he say that Jesus died and there was given to him another body. Luke xxiv. 39,

reads thus: "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." These words are Jesus' own words concerning himself after he had risen. The eleven saw and heard for themselves. The fortieth verse reads thus: "And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet." "They gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them." Also read Acts x. 41. Here Peter refers to this time. These were "witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead." John xx. 27, reads thus: "Then said he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing." Eight days previous to this Thomas had declared that he would not believe unless he could see in his hands the print of the nails, and thrust his hand into his side. O how different he felt when Jesus spoke to him as he did; he then could say unto him, "My Lord and my God." "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." Now all these witnesses are not enough in this our day for some, who say they do not know what became of the body of Jesus, but they do not believe that he rose again. In Acts, first chapter, we read the account of the ascension of Christ. "And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus [not another Jesus] which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Many years after the ascension of Jesus he appeared to John in the isle that is called Patmos. Revelation i. 17, 18, reads thus: "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." This is the Jesus that was dead. Notice his words: "I am he that liveth, and was dead." "His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass." Read the fourteenth and fifteenth verses, also second chapter, eighteenth verse: "Write; These things, saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass." It was this one who said, "I am he that liveth, and was dead." He was the same Jesus that died and rose again and ascended into heaven that was there talking to John. O what blessed words, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." Remember the words of our text: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." One is just as sure as the other. It was this same Jesus that taketh Peter, James and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart and was transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun, &c. This took place before the death of Christ. He was transfigured before them, yet it was the same Jesus all the time. Webster defines the word transfiguration, first, a change of form, especially the supernatural change in the personal appearance of our Savior on the mount. Transfigure

means, first, to change the outward form or appearance of, to transform, especially to change to something very elevated and glorious, to give an ideal form to. "And was transfigured before them."—Matt. xvii. 2. If we observe these definitions it may help us to reconcile some seeming difficulties; for instance, Mark xvi. 12, reads: "After that he appeared in another form unto two of them," &c. This does not say that Jesus appeared in another body, but in another form. This was after his resurrection, so we see his form was changed at the transfiguration. It was changed after his resurrection, yet evidently it was the same body all the time. He never changed that body that was nailed to the cross for another body. It is a glorious fact that he is reigning, and will reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. Read 1 Cor. xv. 25. If this is our hope, we sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. We may sorrow for those who die in the Lord, but it will be a different sorrow from those who have no hope. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." O, is that our hope? Well, it was Paul's hope. Paul said, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Paul has in this fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians predicated his whole arguments on this one essential thing, that Christ died and rose again. That was his foundation to build upon concerning those who were asleep in Christ, and also those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." As sure as Jesus died and rose again, just that sure (even so) them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

I still desire to notice more fully the above words and their connections. I have devoted most of my time trying to show by the Scriptures that Jesus actually died and rose again. Paul believed that Christ died and rose again. His argument here is that it is just as true that they also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. There evidently is no getting around this one fact, that is, if Jesus did actually die, and rose again, just that sure all who die in the Lord will rise again. I verily believe the Scriptures teach this glorious and comforting doctrine; while there is great mystery in godliness, God was manifest in the flesh. Read 1 Tim. iii. 16. Paul acknowledged this to be a great mystery, yet he believed it just the same as though he could explain it. Just so there are great mysteries concerning the resurrection of the dead, yet not more so than how God could see and love his people, and even choose them in Christ before the foundation of the world, while as yet there was none of them, yet we are bound to believe this, if we believe the Scriptures. With man all these things would be impossible, but not so with God. Paul said: "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." O what a mystery this is, yet we are bound to believe it or reject the Scriptures. Paul did not attempt to explain this wonderful mystery; he could not do that, he just accepted it as a glorious truth. Notice Paul's authority. Let us read the fifteenth verse of 1 Thessalonians, fourth chapter, in connection with our text. It reads thus: "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord [the word of the Lord was Paul's authority for saying], that we which are alive, and remain unto

the coming of the Lord, shall not prévent them which are asleep." The connections here evidently show that Paul refers to death when he says sleep. He also used these two words interchangeably in the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians. Jesus did the same regarding Lazarus. The martyr Stephen when being stoned to death "kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he said this, he fell asleep." And Saul (Paul) was consenting to his death. Now if we keep these things in view it does seem that we would not attempt to so change their meaning as to pervert the idea of death entirely, and also the glorious doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. Stephen died; he said: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." If the nonresurrectionists are right, Stephen that died will never be resurrected. Many of the nonresurrectionists claim to believe in the resurrection, but they claim that it takes place at death, therefore they leave the dead out entirely; and, as far as I know, they all claim the spirit does not die, hence when they are talking about the resurrection they are talking about that which never dies being resurrected. Paul was talking about the dead: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." Evidently the dead spoken of here are the same as those referred to in our text as being asleep in Jesus. Notice these words, "And the dead in Christ shall rise first." The connections here show that Paul refers to some future event. He continues: "Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." O what comforting words they are. There is yet hope for all who sleep in Jesus.

"The dead in Christ shall rise first." It is because of this glorious fact Paul said, "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." Paul's arguments are founded upon the glorious truth that that is the reason we "sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Notice Paul's reason for all this is, that as sure as Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. If this is our hope and belief concerning all who sleep in Jesus, Paul would comfort all such believers by saying, "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." What a comfortless doctrine it would be if the dead rise not. "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Paul was showing the vanity of a hope that only reached to death, and there left all who had fallen asleep in Christ to eternally perish. There could be no comfort in such a doctrine as that, yet this is bound to be true unless there is a resurrection of the dead. Paul here leaves the miserable side and again presenting the hopeful side, he says: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." Evidently it would not be a perversion to say Paul meant Christ was the first that arose from the dead, as he did say, (Acts xxvi. 23,) that

Christ should suffer and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead. Notice these words: "But now is Christ risen from the dead [that is an established fact], and become the first-fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." How sorrowful it is to see man trying to explain away these positive statements concerning the resurrection of the dead, and in their stead present a doctrine that leaves the dead out entirely; no hope for the dead, if the dead rise not. In Hebrews xi. Paul dwells at length concerning a great multitude: "So many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the seashore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promises." If the nonresurrection doctrine is true they will never receive the promises; their dying in faith will not avail anything unless the dead rise again. Notice this great multitude died in faith; they did not die in hopeless despair, but in faith. "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off." These all died seeing something that they yet had not received; they saw them "afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." These evidently were embracing something not to be found on this earth. Shall we say that they will be disappointed? They evidently will be disappointed if there be no resurrection of the dead, for these all died in faith, not having received the promises. If they saw them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and yet never will receive them, they died in a vain faith; they saw and embraced something that never will be a reality. Paul had a brighter side to present: "For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country." My dear brethren, where is that country? Is it on earth, or is it in heaven? They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. That did not satisfy their longing desire, they were seeking a country. Paul continues: "And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city." Shall we say that they never will reach that city that God hath prepared for them? One of two things evidently must be true: they either will actually inherit the city prepared for them, or else they just saw these things afar off and embraced them, but will never realize the reality of inheriting the city that God hath prepared for them. Now let us reason together. If this great multitude fails finally in reaching that they were seeking, who would be to blame? Certainly not those who died in faith; they could do nothing more. Nothing more is required of those who die in faith; if they fail to finally realize that sought and hoped for, the blame cannot be charged to them. How utterly helpless is their condition if anything is yet to be performed by those which died in faith, not having received the promises. Listen to our text: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." No, dear brethren, no one will be to blame, God will do as he has promised. This was Paul's hope: this great multitude died in this faith. They will not be disappointed, for God is not ashamed to be

called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city. Abraham "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."—Verse 10. Paul also evidently was seeking the same city that Abraham sought or looked for. Read Hebrews xiii. 14: "For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come." That is, we seek a continuing city. That city we have not in this life, but we do seek one to come. Peter also had hope that reached beyond this life; his hope embraced "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God," &c. Read Philippians iii. 20, 21. This language is right to the point as to what yet shall be done. "From whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." Paul does not say this vile body shall be exchanged for some other body, but that it may be fashioned like unto his (Jesus) glorious body. John had the same hope. He said, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." John cuts off all occasion for controversy as to how we shall appear. He says, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." It is enough to have a well-founded hope that when he (the Lord Jesus Christ) shall appear we shall be like him, and see him as he is. When this is done then our vile body will in truth be fashioned like unto his glorious body. David also had this hope. He said: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." This great cloud of witnesses all testify to the one grand conclusion, and that is, there is a better day yet in the future for all those who died in faith. "Christ the firstfruits, afterward they that are Christ's, at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."—1 Cor. xv. 23–26. I can conceive of only one way in which death shall be destroyed, and that is when we awake with his likeness. This evidently was the hope of all them which died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, were persuaded of them and embraced them. Their faith was in God. There is none else to hope in. O how dark would death and the grave be in the absence of a mighty God. The fiftieth verse reads thus: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." I do not believe that after this glorious change takes place with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord we will still have a fleshly body as before, but that it will be changed or made spiritual. The forty-fourth verse reads: "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." Paul does not say, It is raised a spirit, but it is raised a spiritual body; it yet remains a body; it is our vile body changed and fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, and as for the blood that is declared to be the life of the flesh, read Leviticus xvii. 10–14. It evidently will not be the life of our glorious body; our glorious body will not need blood, neither will it need the things of nature to sustain it in that re-

spect; it will be far above mortality. The living at that time will be made just like the dead that have been raised. All shall be changed, whether dead or alive at that time, "for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."—1 Cor. xv. 53. O what a glorious change this will be! Think of it; our vile body changed and made immortal. Paul continues: "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" What a victory the grave would have in the absence of our Lord Jesus Christ. On the other hand Paul said, "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." This is enough, dear brethren, it will do to live by, it will do to die by. Therefore Paul could say, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

Yours in a blessed hope in Christ,

JOSEPH FORD.

SENECA, Kans., Jan. 14, 1910.

MACOMB, Ill., October, 1909.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I have been reading the SIGNS for October 1st, and every letter was good, but especially so was your editorial upon the words, "But was in all points tempted like as we are." This was a sweet, comforting message to me. To know and believe that Christ, our Savior, our dear Redeemer, was tempted and tried as we are, and, "In that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted," and, "In all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren," is comfort and joy to poor, doubting, halting ones like myself. The comfort and peace I felt in realizing all this I cannot express. How sweetly and clearly you explained and set forth this precious truth. With tears I read how Christ, who was without sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, was made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He was rich, but for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. How Jesus could be tempted like as we poor, weak mortals are, we cannot by our natural minds conceive, and we ask, How can this be? But, dear brother, as you say, let us not doubt the text, for it is so recorded, and to have faith to believe this truth is to me great consolation. During the forty days and forty nights that Christ was tempted in the wilderness who can conceive of the conflicts that surged over his soul, or the manifold and varied trials and temptations that beset him? O how we are filled with wonder and amazement when we behold him yielding up his life for his chosen, his elect. When we know he had all power in heaven and in earth, who can realize the depth of his temptation? By using his power his enemies would have become as dead men, and he could have escaped their hands. Even on the cross he was tempted to come down, and would have thus escaped the cruel suffering if it were possible; but no, it was not possible, for the Scripture must be fulfilled. He came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him, and this was the Father's will, that of all he had given him he should lose nothing,

but should raise it up again at the last day. So, had he yielded to temptation, where now would be our hope? He must die that we might live; he must suffer temptation that he might succor his tried and tempest-tossed children. He is touched with the feeling of their infirmities, and remembers they are but dust. They have no power of themselves, but weak, helpless and imperfect, often listen to the flatteries and blandishments of Satan, who is sometimes transformed into an angel of light; they yield to his wiles and temptations and fall into his net, and are entangled in the snares set for them; their way is hedged about, and they see no way of escape. Beset on every hand with darkness, trials and tribulation, they know not which way to take, feeling there is no one like them, so cast down, so sinful, so unworthy, when Christ their dear Redeemer comes to them and says, There is no temptation overtaken you but what is common to all. "My grace is sufficient for thee." How blessed to know he knows all our weaknesses, all our temptations, and has compassion upon us, even having mercy upon our unrighteousness, and at last he will overrule all things for his own glory and to the good of his people, to the called according to his purpose.

Feb. 15th.—Dear brother Chick, you see by the date of this that it has been on hand a long time. I felt like writing a little to you and sending with my remittance, and had written this far when pressing duties claimed my time and I laid it aside, thinking not to send it, but on receiving the SIGNS for January 15th I found you had written again on the same subject, which brought back all the former desire to write and tell you how I enjoyed your article. Now as the old year is numbered with the past, and the new year with all its untold mysteries is being ushered in upon us, we are reminded that we are fast hastening on to that bourne from which no traveler ever returns. We are also made to remember the loving-kindness of our heavenly Father, the many and great favors bestowed upon us. Among the favors I enjoy is the precious privilege of reading the dear SIGNS. I do appreciate this much, for it is such a comfort to read from those I love for the truth's sake. I have been a continuous subscriber for twenty-five years, and feel I could not get along without it. Dear, precious brethren and sisters are scattered all over our country, of whom we would never hear but for this medium of correspondence. New names appear in almost every issue, but they all speak the same thing, testify to the same sweet, glorious truth, that "salvation is of the Lord," that we are saved by grace, free, unmerited, sovereign grace. Dear kindred in Christ, I love you all, for you tell my feelings and experience better than I can myself. I love you because you tell of the same darkness, doubts, trials, weaknesses and unworthiness that this poor one has experienced. I love you because you feel to have no merit or goodness of your own to bring as an offering, but weak, helpless, without strength, you look alone to God for all things. I have a hope that your God is my God, and I fain would join with you in ascribing all honor, all glory to him; I would be your companion in tribulation, and follow along after you, though far behind you all. We are pilgrims and strangers in this wilderness world, seeking a city whose builder and maker is God. O if I were only worthy to be one with you. When I was baptized I felt resigned to all God's ways; I thought it easy to follow my Savior; I

could endure all things, and felt I would always go on my way rejoicing; I would ever go softly before him all the days of my life, and grow in grace and get better as I grew older, but alas, how different it is with me. What a crooked path I have made; how far different I have lived to the way I had thought I would; how ungrateful, how unworthy I have been, and how compassionate, how forgiving has the Lord been to me. May all the praise be unto him forever and ever.

I have a copy of Elder Pittman's biographical sketch of Old Baptist ministers, and wish that every reader of the SIGNS had one. I prize it very highly; it is such a pleasure to look upon the faces of all those ministers of our Lord Jesus Christ. Many have laid their armor by and are resting from their labors, while many true and faithful ones are still upon the walls of Zion preaching Christ and him crucified. When I read an article from any one of them I look at their picture and almost imagine I can hear them preach. I hope Elder Pittman may be amply reimbursed for all his time and labor. May God's blessings rest upon all his faithful servants who preach that God has all power in heaven and in earth; that he is a God of purpose, and has a wise design in all events, and works all things after the counsel of his own will; that salvation is by grace alone; that God made choice of his people and wrote their names in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world, and that there is a glorious day coming, when the bodies of the saints who sleep in Jesus shall all arise, fashioned like unto his glorious body, and shall dwell with him forever where all is joy and peace and love. My dear kindred, may this be the happy lot of all who love our Lord and his appearing, is my desire.

Dear Elder Chick, I feel ashamed to send this long letter to you. Will you forgive me? I know I should not have written so much, but read it and leave any or all out of the SIGNS unless you feel there would be comfort in it, and unless it is in accord with truth do not publish it. I send it with many misgivings, as it is not at all as I would have it, but I have written on and on as my mind led me. I trust you will remember the weakness and incompetency of the writer. There is no paper to me like the SIGNS, so I have kept this a long time, feeling I could not make up my mind to send it to you, knowing it is not worthy.

With much love to you, I remain your unworthy sister,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

DONIE, Texas, April 3, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—In his work of creation the great, the all-wise and omnipotent God must have had a great, grand and noble object in view, which object was the motive prompting or moving him to engage in the great, sublime and stupendous work of the creation of the universe. We believe that object to be his glory, and his glory he will not give to another, neither his praise to graven images. "All thy works shall praise thee." "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." In making known the glory due unto his name, and in order to effect the end designed, he has so beautifully and suitably arranged everything and related it to its fellow thing in such manner as that everything is dependent upon the performance of its fellow thing in the all-glorious accomplishment of the design for which they were created. "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God

Almighty," in wisdom hast thou made them all, not only in the regular progress of creation, but in perfect adaptation to the end for which they were made. Every object of creation, being assigned its proper place, takes up its line of march in perfect harmony with the design of its almighty Maker; every vegetable process going on in season, every animal in its structure and instincts suited to its peculiar mode of life and its special use in the economy of the world, and here at a glance He sees everything that he had made fulfilling his purpose and answering the great and wonderful end for which he had made it. Then can we not say indeed and in truth, "His work is perfect"? He has so perfectly united, linked and coupled everything together with such exact precision as there is the most absolute certainty of perfect harmony and concert of action throughout the whole entire superstructure from first to last, from center to circumference. He works all things after the counsel of his own will, and will do all his pleasure, and, it being his good pleasure to make his power and glory known throughout all the earth, he will do it, as in the case of Pharaoh, and as it is a fact that God created all things, is it not also a fact that he meant something by their creation? and if he meant anything, whether this or that, will he not accomplish it? He will, or his meaning, his intention, his design, his aim, his will, his purpose, is lost; yes, he would fail, notwithstanding the prophet hath said, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged." So as God had a use for everything that he created, then to that end is everything predestinated, and everything created was very good. The glory of God is the end to which all things were predestinated. He hath declared the end, or, in other words, he hath determined the end, or yet still in other words, he hath predestinated "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." If God will do all his pleasure, and if it is his pleasure that all his works shall praise him, and all things shall redound to his glory, will it not be so? David said the will of the Lord must be done, that is, compelled, or obliged to be done. None of this involves the idea that God is the author or approver of sin, a position that I have never occupied, no, not for a moment; his predestination relative to the crucifixion of his Son laid with no weight of compulsion upon the minds of those who committed the crime, therefore was not causative. The case of the conduct of Joseph's brethren toward him we regard in the same light, and so in like manner every other sinful act perpretrated by all the human beings of all the universe. God predestinated to do some things himself, he predestinated to have some things done by others. All things are predestinated as above stated, but not in any sense whatever that the least stain of sin attaches to his just, righteous and holy character. He is superlatively good, just, holy, loving, kind and righteous in all his ways, as well as perfect in all works; he is good, immensely good and kind in all his ways, is an expression that often recurs to my mind, and, like one of old, I hope I love the Lord. Predestination was not the cause of our adoption as children; it is plainly expressed that the adoption was by Jesus Christ; so then in this you see that predestination was not causative. Our sins are our own, and we suffer the just penalty of God's righteous law, yet we hope they were atoned for by our blessed Lord Jesus Christ.

You may publish this article if it will not crowd out better matter.

Yours in the love of the truth,

W. M. LITTLE.

WHEELING, W. Va., Feb. 23, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I inclose a letter from Elder P. W. Sawin, which has been very comforting to me. I have his consent to send it to you for publication, pending your judgment.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) FLORENCE PULTZ.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Dec. 2, 1909.

MRS. FLORENCE PULTZ—DEAR SISTER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I have just read your letter in December 1st number of the SIGNS, and feel comforted and instructed, and that I know some of the way you have been led. The Lord by the prophet said, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not." If I know anything at all about the matter, it is that I am a poor, blind, ignorant creature, helpless and dependent, and can never see or know one single step of the way; this I know, and therefore sometimes hope I have some of the blessed evidences that I am a child of God. I know my pathway is, or has been, far from what I had thought when I was first made to rejoice in Christ my Savior. I had thought to live and walk daily in the light and sunshine of the blessed presence of Jesus, but O how different. How true, as told by Jeremiah, He has brought me into darkness, and not into light. So every step has been a way I knew not. I had thought to be separated from this body of sin, but no, I am yet clogged with it, and must daily cry out, "O wretched man that I am!" "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known." How mysterious the working of his divine providence; surely his way is not our way, nor his thoughts our thoughts. If left to our will or volition, would we not choose and appoint differently? David says, He maketh me to drink of the river of his pleasure, and to suck oil out of the flinty rock. Herein is the power of God made manifest, in breaking and subduing our stubborn will, making us to submissively in meekness drink of the cup (by measure) of affliction with the dear Redeemer, thus bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus, and if ye suffer with him, ye shall also be glorified together with him. I am persuaded, dear sister, these things are all needful, yet my carnal, depraved heart cries out against them. I am comforted in the thought: "I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." O blessed thought, "not forsake them." Though he will come near to judgment, yet in mercy he will remember thee. "I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me." It must be that in all the way the dear Lord is instructing, teaching his children to know him and the power of his resurrection. It seems in this way we learn how frail, corrupt, vile and sinful we are, and how great, holy, good and merciful the Lord is to us. "Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth." It must be in these earthen vessels of his mercy. If these things are not evidences of heirship, I know nothing of them. As I read and hear the experiences and travels of others I am reminded of many places I have traveled, and then feel that is the way, and am encouraged to hope I, too, am

following along that strait and narrow path, the "path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen." Jonah said, Out of mine afflictions cried I mightily unto the Lord. It is in this way the Lord teaches his children to pray, but they can never learn how, neither can it be taught by mortals. "Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope." "I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath."

My dear sister, you will pardon my liberty in burdening you with this letter from a stranger to you, and to himself, but somehow I felt to write you after reading your letter. I felt that I could sympathize with your suffering in body, as I for many years was but a walking skeleton, but am stronger now, and trust I know how cheering it is to meet with the dear saints and forget ourselves; but surely it is of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed. May the Son of peace abide with you and all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity.

The least of all,

P. W. SAWIN.

FARMINGTON, Ill., April 30, 1910.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—My private letter to you, which appeared in the SIGNS, has called out a private letter from dear sister Frazee, and I will send it to you to give it a place in the SIGNS if you see fit. It speaks for itself. The only fault I find with it is the high esteem in which she speaks of holding me. Did she feel about me as I honestly feel about myself she would tell a sad tale. I have not the least doubt about the dear sister's good hope, of which I read not long since, and the true work of the Lord in his children which appears in her. But whether I am a child of God or not, I love the humble spirit which she manifests, and that causes me to feel she is a fellow-traveler through this vale of sorrow. I read her letter over twice, and thought it was good for all the dear ones to read. As she, like myself, is near the end of her journey, I think that her voice in this dear letter may speak when we lie silent in the grave. I know she will not find fault with me for sending it to you for publication.

Yours in love, E. D. VARNES.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., April 26, 1910.

E. D. VARNES—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—The reading of your good and instructive article in the dear old SIGNS reminded me that I owe you a letter, but, dear brother, if you only knew how little and insignificant I feel in trying to write to one so much my superior in all things relative to the kingdom of God you would not want to read anything that such a poor, sinful creature as I feel myself to be could write. When I received your good, comforting and edifying letter to me and read the one in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I felt under renewed obligations to write to you and tell you that you and I are agreed, and that we can walk together. Yes, dear brother, I do not see how any one who believes in an all-wise God, and that he is the Sovereign who made the earth and the fullness thereof, and without him there was nothing made that was made, and that he is the great I AM, who commands and it stands fast, who speaks and it is done, who has declared "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My

counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," I do not see, I say, how such an one can reply against God, or say, "What doest thou?" We are only clay in the Potter's hand. Has he not the right to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? If he has not this right when he owns and controls all things, who has the right? He trod the wine-press of his Father's wrath alone, and of the people there was none with him. No hand but his almighty hand could bring salvation or save to the uttermost. He says in Isaiah xliii., "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Savior. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God. Yea, before the day was, I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?" Dear brother, much more might be said of the mighty power of the just and holy God; I am willing for him to rule who doeth all things well; no other power can do all things well. The government rests upon his shoulder, and we are kept as the apple of his eye and in the hollow of his hand; how secure we are with his kind, protecting hand leading us. If he leads there must be some one for him to lead. He calls them by name and leads them out; there is no failure with him.

Well, my dear, aged brother, if one so unworthy may call you by that endearing name, I feel sure that He has called you, but I sometimes doubt that he has called me, therefore I fear to call you brother. I feel that you can say with one of old, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." I felt that way that bright and glorious morn when I was permitted to see his face, but soon doubts and fears began to arise, and I thought that I might be deceived, and have been that way most of the time from that day until this, although my little hope is revived in reading the travels of my dear brethren and sisters through their journey here below. I find they are all in that "doubting castle" most of the time, and I am sometimes, yea, many times, relieved to find that I have company.

Well, brother Varnes, I have let my pen run on and on until I fear you will tire reading this poor, imperfect letter, but hope you will excuse all mistakes. Do not think for a moment that I did not appreciate your good letter, for I am always glad to hear from any of the dear saints of God. That glorious doctrine of salvation by grace is my meat and drink, and in the going down of my sun I am more and more anxious to hear and read the glorious gospel of the Son of God, which my dear brethren are so well able to expound in the good old SIGNS.

Now may the God of all grace be with you through your life, is the prayer of your unworthy sister, if one at all,

BELLE FRAZEE.

EAST FALLS CHURCH, Va., March 17, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—In sending my remittance for the SIGNS I feel that I would like to write you a few lines, but feel my weakness so much at present I fear I have nothing to write, and know without God sees fit to give me something to profit I will not be able to write anything that will be of comfort to any one, for we all know that without him we can do nothing.

The SIGNS is a welcome visitor in my home; I would be lost without it; do not think I could get along without it, but the Lord knows best, and if he should see fit to deprive me of its comforting words he would comfort me otherwise I feel sure; that is, if I am as I hope, a child of grace, for he is "the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort." But why, my dear brethren, should I have hope that I am a child of grace? Sometimes when I view the past and present I can see many things to strengthen my hope, then again my mind is so dark I can see nothing, unless I am favored to go back to my first experience and see the great change that came in my heart at that time; not that I became better naturally, ah no, if anything I grow worse every day, but have great love for spiritual things, love for the church, love to the brethren. "He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love." This great love shed abroad in the heart, causes us to hate the follies of our youth, to love the things we once hated, and hate the things we once loved. O how marvelous, how glorious, how beautiful to a child of grace are the wonderful works of God. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." I stop and wonder with tears in my eyes, How can I, a poor, weak, sinful creature, claim one of the least of God's promises? for they are all great, and sweet to the taste of his dear children, and I, the vilest of the vile, to think of claiming any part in the great redemption through grace; but I can say with Paul, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."

"Whither, ah whither shall I go?
A wretched wanderer from my Lord;
Can this dark world of sin and woe
One glimpse of happiness afford?

Eternal life thy words impart,
On these my fainting spirit lives,
Here sweeter comforts cheer my heart
Than all the round of nature gives.

Let earth's alluring joys combine,
While thou art near, in vain they call;
One smile, one blissful smile of thine,
My dearest Lord, outweighs them all."

It is springtime now, and we are having some beautiful weather in Virginia after our cold winter, and how like is our natural springtime and the springtime of the spirit; everything is rejoicing, the birds are singing and all nature seems to take on new life; it is the most beautiful time of the year to me, but how much more beautiful is our spiritual springtime after a long, dark, cold winter of the soul, when the sunshine appears and everything is beautiful. How true, my dear brethren, when Jesus shows his smiling face there is sunshine in the soul, everything is bright and beautiful, all worldly cares are forgotten, and we are made to rejoice in the redeeming blood of our crucified Savior, who hath said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." What a precious assurance if we can feel, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want," and say with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Jesus says, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Can that be for such a poor, sinful creature as I? Have I ever lived in Christ?

"'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought,)
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

Before I close I would like to say to the dear editors and writers of the SIGNS, Write on, your words are very comforting to our poor, lonely hearts; and I feel sometimes when I read your letters that I would like to write to each of you personally, but of course it is like everything else I would like to do, it is never done. "The good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do." Not that I would do any good by writing you, for there is no good in me, but I would like to tell you how close I am drawn to you by your writings, and if I could write as you do I would write oftener.

Please pardon this long letter.

With best love and fellowship for all the dear household of faith, I remain, your sister in weakness,

LENA HUNTT.

DELAWARE, Ohio, March 27, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter written by sister Rachel Schultz for publication, if you feel to do so. She is the oldest member of Pleasant Hill Church, situated in Delaware County, Ohio, and is past eighty-three years of age. She has been a member for more than seventy years. As you will see, it was written in Frankton, Ind., where she was staying at her brother's, but her home is in Prospect, Ohio. She is now at home, and was at our last meeting. She lives quite a distance from the meetings, but comes here on the car, and is a regular attendant. Elder George L. Weaver, of Galion, Ohio, is our pastor, and is sound and able. Sometimes Elder C. E. Jackson, of Galion, is with us. Both are young and sound men. One thing I have thought of since I have been here is how pleasant it is to go to the meetings and see such evidence as I do that the church and pastor are satisfied with each other, and that so kind and brotherly a feeling exists. In the past three years in which I have been here, several visiting ministers have preached for us. It has seemed good to me to be where I could hear the truth preached every month. I enjoy the SIGNS very much. I had the privilege of reading it long before I was a subscriber, as it came regularly to my father's home ever since I can remember. I feel myself too unworthy and sinful to be among Old School Baptists, for I believe they are the children of the heavenly King. It "is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," and he is all my hope. If I have a right to hope in his mercy, it is enough; this is more than I could ask if left to myself.

Yours in hope,

L. E. STEPHENS.

FRANKTON, Ind., Feb. 20, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE:—I have taken my pen in hand to express my feelings, if I can. I have been reading the SIGNS for about sixty years, but have not been taking it since my husband's death, still I have had the privilege of reading it, and have just received two copies from a brother in the church, one June, 1909, and the other Jan. 1st, and they tell much that has passed through my mind since I have been so far from my home. I feel that I am among strange people of a strange language; they do not speak the language of Canaan; to receive from your hand the pure tongue, if I am not deceived, causes me to rejoice. I rejoice that there are a few here and there who tell the old story: By grace are ye saved through faith, and not of works, lest any man

should boast, and that faith is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. I have been numbered with the Old School Baptists for over seventy years. I am now in my eighty-third year, and do not expect to stay here much longer, but I will wait all my appointed time, till my change come.

I will answer your kind letter, which was welcome. I read and reread it with pleasure, and the two copies of the SIGNS that you sent me, and the reading of your letter gave me strength to go on. It was like bread cast upon the waters, to be gathered up after many days. The sister of whom I spoke is so much pleased with the SIGNS I think that she and her cousin will subscribe for it. Sister Campbell wants to keep them to show to her niece. Her niece is an Old School Baptist, and her husband and all the family belong to the New School. She united with the Old School Baptists last summer. It is written, "One shall be taken, and the other left." Do we not see the wonderful works of God?

Now, brother Stephens, if you write to the editors, and can get enough of my letter together to let the editors and the writers know how much I enjoy the SIGNS, you may forward it to them. Tell the brethren and sisters that I long to meet them once more. My brother and his wife have not been well since I came here, but she is better now. May these few lines find you well.

Your sister,

RACHEL SCHULTZ.

SWEET SPRINGS, Mo., Jan. 7, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS, AND ALL WHO WRITE FOR THE SIGNS:—More than all, I thank God for putting it into the hearts of poor, sinful men and women to hold, believe and proclaim the faith that was once delivered unto the saints. This faith is the fruit of the Spirit, and Jesus is the author and finisher of it.

As this is my first effort to write, I had better not write much, for I feel too little and unworthy to even make this effort; I am ashamed of myself. I have lived long enough to find out that self is the worst foe with which I have to contend, and if I am what I hope I am self cannot bother me much longer. I am sure that if God the Father gave me to Jesus in the covenant of grace and redemption, and if Christ suffered for me on the cross, my sins are all atoned for. I have never felt to know whether I am a christian or not. That which gives me hope of being a child of God is, I, many years ago, saw myself lost, and I believed that it was just. For twenty years I was in that condition, until finally I was led to see hell itself opened, and thought that was my doom, but my prayer, and the last as I thought, was, Jesus, save me. I have never known where my trouble and my fear of hell went. I have had much trouble since then, but not that trouble.

I do not want the SIGNS to stop publication as long as the world stands. I am satisfied it gets the truth from the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the word of God. There may be a conflict in us, but there is none in the Spirit and the word.

But I must close. This letter is yours to do with as you please. There is no use in my trying to tell you of the good letters and editorials that I read in the SIGNS.

Your brother,

J. S. KILLION.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1910.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ACTS XVII. 28, 29.

A DEAR brother has called our attention to the language of Paul at Mars' Hill, recorded in Acts xvii. 28, 29. He seems to think that there is proof in these words of the preexistence of the chosen family of God; that is, that they existed before the creation of man, as recorded in the first of Genesis. The words are, "For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device." We desire always to treat with respect the judgment of all our brethren in the things of God. It is sure that if any man have the spirit of truth in him he will desire to rightly understand the word of truth in the Scriptures. No child of God will be willingly ignorant of the truth; no child of God will desire to misinterpret the Scriptures, which are the true revelation of the mind and will of God and which contain the truth without any mixture of error. Because our understanding of the Scripture is at least, as we trust, sincere, we desire to accord the same sincerity and the same desire to know the truth indeed to all the children of God, yet whether in preaching, writing or conversation, we must present what we understand the Scriptures to teach, and so with regard to this matter we desire to call attention to a few things which seem to us to show that it is impossible that the people of God, or any other being save Jehovah, should have existed eternally. In a former article we called attention to this matter, but here will enlarge a little more. The first thing which we will repeat from the former editorial is that eternity belongs alone to God. He inhabits eternity; he is the eternal God, who is our refuge; he is not eternity itself, but he is eternal in duration; he had no beginning, and will have no end, and this is true of him alone. All things else began to be; all things else were created by the uncreated God. Still further, it is written, "In the beginning [the beginning] God created the heaven and the earth." Nothing was created before the heaven and the earth. Man was formed afterward, out of the dust of the earth. Man therefore could not have existed before the creation of the heaven and the earth. The creation is said to have been in the beginning; eternity had no beginning, therefore creation was not from eternity. We cannot speak, with any understanding of the meaning of words, of the beginning of that which is eternal, any more than we can speak of the ending of eternity. But surely we need not dwell upon this. We feel persuaded that no one will undertake to deny all this.

Still further, that which is eternal must of necessity be self-existent. Of necessity, we say, because there could have been no previously existing being; nothing could be before eternity. If any being then is created, that being is not from

eternity. Self-existence belongs to God alone. To attribute either eternity or self-existence to any being is to enthrone that being as God. To attribute these two attributes to any creature is to set up a rival before Jehovah and dispute the Godhead with him. To speak of man as having in any sense eternal duration, is to attribute to man that which belongs to Deity alone. But the people of God are men and women, they are the creatures of God, first, and then his children by birth of his Spirit. They are said to be the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. To these chosen vessels of mercy Jesus declared, "I give unto them eternal life." Christ is the life, as well as the way and the truth. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." "He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life." This life is eternal life, but this life is a given life, given to those who possessed it not before. It is given to creatures, and, being given to creatures, they are by it the sons of God, and shall never perish. How wonderful that creatures, and especially sinful creatures, should have the promise and the gift of eternal life, of endless duration; but eternal life means more than endless duration. The wicked who die in their sins shall endure endlessly, but they have not eternal life. Eternal life means another kind of life; it means a life which has in it immortality, holy, and without susceptibility of the taint of sin or unholiness; possessing it dying sinners live, and living they shall never die. It would not be eternal life could they die.

The people of God are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. This people God formed for himself, to show forth his praise. How wonderful that fallen, sinful men and women should experience this new creation, this new formation, that they should not any longer live unto sin, but unto holiness, unto good works, unto the praise of God. In the Scriptures this work of regeneration is called by the names of creation, the new birth, a raising up, &c. All these expressions present only different phases of the same truth, the truth that eternal life is given to the dead in sin. Mark, it is given, which also implies of necessity that they did not possess it before, and this life which was manifested first in our blessed Lord, and which now is manifested in those who believe, did not begin to be, because it is eternal life, but men and women who receive it began to be; they are the children of Adam. Eternal life was not redeemed. How often in former years have we heard the late Elder Wm. J. Purington use this expression, "Eternal life needed no redemption, but vessels of mercy were redeemed." This saying of his expresses the whole substance of this matter; the life is eternal, but the vessels of mercy were created, first in Adam, and second, in Christ Jesus unto good works in Christ Jesus. This text in Acts, to which attention has been called, does not in any manner contradict this testimony. The truth concerning this Scripture is, that it does not relate to the new birth at all; it does not refer to those who are the children, who cry, "Abba, Father." These Athenians to whom Paul spoke were idolaters, worshiping a multitude of gods, and so eager were they to miss none in their worship that they erected an altar to the "Unknown God," lest they might miss some one of the thousands of deities in whose existence they believed. Paul rebukes their idolatry, and taking advantage of the altar to the "Unknown God" he discourses to

them of Him whom they did not know. Other gods, who were not God, might indeed be worshiped with images, the work of man's hands, but this "Unknown God" could not be thus worshiped, seeing that he had made all things, and needed nothing from the hand of his creatures. One of their own poets had called men the offspring of this "Unknown God." This poet they did not dispute, therefore Paul takes advantage of this to press upon them the utter folly of their worship of all these thousands of idols, by indirectly reminding them that they were themselves superior to these dumb idols of silver, gold and stone. How much more then must He who created men be superior to these graven images; therefore it was unreasonable in them to think of this God as like unto stone, wood, silver or gold. Paul said, Ye ought not to think this. But we do not need to pursue this line of thought now. Our brother will see by careful reading that Paul does not here make any claim that men by nature are the children of God, but he, as it seems to us, is using what among modern writers is called the "*argumentum ad hominem;*" that is, he meets them upon their own ground, and shows that their position is untenable. If indeed we, as men and women, be what one of the poets has said, the offspring of God, we certainly ought to know better than to worship the work of our own hands; if being the creation of God, we ought not to worship our own selves, how much less ought we to bow down to the images which our frail hands have made. We have life, thought, feeling, reason, from the hand of God, and yet must not worship ourselves; how much less ought we to worship that which possesses none of these things. But even should we still believe that Paul was here declaring that we are by nature the offspring of God, in the sense of being his children, there would be no proof here of a preexistence of men and women, as shown before. Men are creatures of time and not of eternity, as regards their origin. But the truth is that no one is called a child of God in the word until that one has been born of God. In that birth he receives the Spirit of the Son of God, crying in him, "Abba, Father," and by that Spirit thus dwelling in him he also cries, "Abba, Father." The Spirit does not cry thus, except as it dwells in man, and the man does not cry thus, except as the Spirit dwells in him. It is the Spirit of God's dear Son that is sent forth; it is the spirit of sonship, and there is no such relation between men and God without this Spirit dwelling in them.

Our brother also calls attention to the children of Israel, and the land of Canaan, and asks whether, if the Israelites represent the children of God, and Canaan heaven, does it not look as though the people of God were once in heaven? We do not know that we see just what our brother means here; that is, just how he sees that the children of Israel dwelling once in Canaan, would imply that the people of God were once in heaven. But perhaps it is not needful right here to trace this out, as it is not our mind, and has not been for many years, that Canaan represents heaven; that is, the heaven of future glory. The name itself would not fit the heaven of future glory, for it means "depressed, low." Its former inhabitants certainly could not be called types of the inhabitants of heaven, and all through the centuries that Israel occupied that land it remained the scene of warfare, largely from foes within, and often with foes from without. This is all foreign to what we are told in the word,

of that glory which awaits the redeemed, and which Jesus now is glorified with. Still further, in that land Israel sinned again and again, and suffered chastisement from the displeasure of God, and he often turned his face away from them. Still further, that Jordan over which the most of them crossed (but not all their tribes) does not mean death, but "river of judgment," and when the tribes under Joshua crossed over the dry bed of Jordan, walled cities of the foul inhabitants of the land straightway must be conquered. Surely there can be no type of heaven here. Then centuries afterward they were finally banished from the land, and it is given up to the dominion of the infidel Mohammedans. It would be hard to see in all this an emblem of heaven above, where enters no sorrows and no bitter contention, either among the inhabitants themselves, or between them and any outward foes.

Certainly we do not feel to call attention to all this without remembering that not only in the present, but in the past centuries, devout men have thought that they saw in this Canaan a type of heaven itself, and there is no thought in our mind as we write these things that we are possessed of more of the mind of Christ then they were, and we do feel when we compare ourself and our small attainments with many of those gone before, as a little child who ought to sit at their feet, and to say that we cannot see as they saw a type of heaven in Canaan, is not any proof that we feel like setting up our judgment against theirs in the deep things of God. We never read the writings of many of those who have passed on before without wondering at the profound heights and depths of the real heartfelt, spiritual experience into which the Lord had led them, and the wonderful knowledge which had been given them in the things of God. We also remember that gracious and beautiful hymn beginning with the words, "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand," and while we do think that the writer of that hymn was mistaken in the type of Jordan and Canaan, yet the hope of future blessedness set forth in that hymn has often comforted our own heart as we have thought of it, but still it does not seem to us that there is any thought of the future heaven in what is said of the land of Canaan. The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews also seems to us to have no such thought, since he there makes the land of Canaan a type of that rest into which they who believe do enter. We here have space to no more than call attention to this. Read the third and fourth chapters of Hebrews, and this will appear clearly, as we think, to our brother. In those chapters the writer speaks of the Sabbath day and of the land of Canaan both as types of gospel rest, where men cease from their own works and rest in those works that were finished from the foundation of the earth. Jesus wrought out for his people what they could not work out for themselves, and entered into his rest, and into that rest by faith his chosen enter with him when they have ceased from their work, and the Sabbath and the land of Canaan both point out some things that are true of that rest. These things, however, we will not now enlarge upon. We have freely written of these things as they seem to us, and trust that we have not seemed to disregard the feelings or thoughts of others as we have done so, for we do not wish to do so at any time. C.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder Benj. E. Cubbage.)

The Delaware Association of Old School Baptists convened with the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Newcastle Co., Del., May 25th, 26th and 27th, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In the providence of God we are permitted to meet again the several churches composing the Delaware Association, to worship the name of our dear Redeemer, and while there are those of the membership of the churches who cannot be present at this meeting, yet presumably each church has its messengers present, and we desire to submit to the better judgment of the brethren this so-called Circular Letter, wherein we declare our belief in the doctrine of God our Savior, salvation by grace, and the ordinances and practices of the church as set up by the great Head of the church, in accordance with the faith once delivered unto the saints. Time and seasons change, the mode and manner of life change, and man's mind is changeable, but the word of the Lord endureth forever, and this is the Word, which by the gospel is preached unto you. "Even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, and God made or formed all of the creation that inhabits the earth, and all signs and types in the heavens. "God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." He therefore had a purpose in all his works of creation, and that purpose was good. "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee." The works of God in the creation of the legal or literal world praise his great and holy name. He gave the law to Israel by Moses, the first covenant. The law condemns Israel, and delivers her to the righteous Judge, therefore the law, and all that it works in the hearts and experiences of God's people, is a medium between the sinner and Christ, the righteous Judge, the Mediator of a better covenant. Therefore Paul says, "The law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin," and all that the first covenant embraces, which God made with the fathers when he took them by the hand and led them up out of Egypt, was good, and it was an effectual covenant as far as it went, but a better covenant was promised, wherein the old covenant should vanish. Hence whether we look to the law and legal dispensation, which foreshadowed and pointed to the power of God and the wisdom of God, and the glory which should be revealed in the Son, or to the new covenant, the Word of God that endureth forever, manifest in the flesh in the person of Jesus Christ the Lord, it is seen that both covenants present the truth that salvation is of the Lord. The first covenant reflected the sovereignty of God; the second covenant presents the grace and divine goodness and mercy of God in the sacrifice of the Son to fulfill the work purposed in him by God the Father before the worlds were made. Our being, our life here in time, our hope of life eternal, our faith in Christ and our eternal salvation, are all in the hands of this covenant-keeping God, through Christ, who is full of truth and grace. Salvation by grace or divine favor presupposes that the author or giver of such salvation is not only favorable to the gift of life, but is possessed with the power and ability as well to give whatsoever his will shall direct. Surely God, being the origin of life and the giver of the law, or legal dispensation, is amply able to preserve and honor his law, and

also to save and preserve the life of the transgressor of the law in so doing, in the holy sacrifice of a life for a life in the death and resurrection of the Lord of glory. The gospel of Christ is God's power to save to the uttermost. The faith once delivered to the saints, wherein ye now abide, centers and rests in Christ, the Head of the church, and by faith the body (the church) has liberty and access by Christ to the love of the Father. The ordinances and practices of the church (the body), in accordance with the teaching of the Scripture, magnify and honor the Head by calling to our remembrance the things which Christ hath done for us. As often as ye do these things do it in remembrance of me. Therefore how very important it is that we look well into all these things, that the Head of the house (Christ) shall be honored. Let us beware of the whisperings of antichrist in faultfinding, that there is something wrong here, and something wrong there; that good and dear brethren, not being established, are not holding to the old and established belief, doctrine and practice of the church; that the press of modern life and modern living is crowding out the good old ways and practices of the church. Let us rather, brethren, if we have enough covering to cover our own nakedness and shame, and to spare, cover the faults in each other, that the luscious fruits of charity may ripen in our hearts. The covenant, grace and purpose of God in Jesus Christ led and counseled his people Israel in the days of our fathers, and he "is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." Then why entertain the thought that the great rush and press of the world is swaying the true worshipers of the doctrine of God our Savior, according to the primitive ordinances and practices of the church, from their steadfastness in the faith, simply because their walk and position is found in the midst of the rush and press of this life? Our fathers were surrounded by and in the midst of all manner of temptation in various forms in their day, yet by faith their faces were turned Zionward; and so his people today, even though they are surrounded by and in the midst of the great increase of the rush and press of the world, by that same God-given faith are coming to Zion with their faces thitherward, looking to Christ, the author and finisher of their faith. Then may we say, Peace, be still, for by grace are ye saved from all these things, and kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

J. G. EUBANKS, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

(Written by Elder Silas H. Durand.)

The Elders and messengers composing the Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with our sister church at Hopewell, N. J., June 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1910, to the churches whose messengers we are, send greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We write to you according to our custom at this annual meeting, and at this time we will address you on the most important and deeply interesting subject of prayer.

After a son had been born to Seth, "then," we read, "began men to call upon the name of the Lord." Was this the beginning of prayer in the world as a religious exercise, an ordinance of the Lord? It appears so. Adam and Eve were yet childless when by his transgression "sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men." Therefore no man of all the human race was ever born righteous, except the one man, Jesus Christ. Adam

talked with the Lord, but we do not read that he called upon his name in supplication until after Enos was born. Cain also talked with God. Abel was a righteous man, not because of any merit in him before God, as a child of Adam, nor because of any righteous work done by him, but because of the revelation to him of Jesus as his righteousness. The Lord gave him faith to make unto God an acceptable offering of a lamb slain, thus setting forth in a figure the blood of Jesus Christ, who was to come, and whose precious blood was to cleanse his elect people from all sin. By the same faith which directed him to make this offering Abel also obtained witness that he was righteous, the Lord testifying of his gifts, righteousness before God consisting not in any work done by the sinner, but being entirely the gift of God.

So far as we have evidence in the Scriptures, Abel and his father and mother were the only ones in the world who knew the Lord as a Savior of sinners, and we do not read that either of them called upon the name of the Lord in prayer and supplication.

When righteous Abel was killed by his wicked brother there was left to Eve no one who could be to her a righteous seed, which the Lord had promised her. We do not wish to let our imaginations go abroad on this subject, but we may be assured there were many people then living when Cain and Abel were of an age to be about their business, the one a tiller of the soil and the other a keeper of sheep. But there was no one to be counted as the seed of the woman. Eve again bare a son, and called his name Seth (appointed), "For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew." But the time to call upon the name of the Lord had not yet come. Seth must be grown to manhood and have a son. "And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos [man]: then began men to call upon the name of the Lord."

Abel, the righteous man, the only one among the descendants of Adam at that time, had been slain by his brother, but he now appears again in the person of Seth. Eve, who "was the mother of all living," declares and owns him to be her seed instead of Abel. So Christ, the holy Seed, the sinless One, was slain by his brethren according to the flesh, with wicked hands; but lo, he appears again by the appointment and power of God, risen from the dead, to be forever, through all time, the holy Seed, the righteous One, the Head of the church, while the earth remains. Eve, representing the holy Jerusalem, "the mother of us all," recognizes him as the child born unto her, in whom the promise was that she should triumph over the enemy.

Abel and Seth, as natural men, were sinners, but we suggest the thought that neither of them had committed transgression personally, but had walked with God and had done only that which was right while in the world, that they might fully represent Jesus, who was holy, harmless and undefiled in his life upon the earth. This is the risen and exalted Son of God, and Son of man, who is now seen by the faith of his redeemed people as given and appointed to be Head over all things to the church. Eve saw Seth as representing in a figure the promised Seed when she thus named him. In his appearing thus to her, and in his appearing to his people in various ways in the patriarchal and legal and gospel dispensations, he is, and was, and always shall be, the Desire of all the nations of the redeemed.

When a son was born to Seth, and was named Enos, then there were a number of righteous persons on the earth, a community of them, "two or three," and then by faith the Lord, the Savior, was with them in Spirit, and then began true worship. "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." The name of the Lord embraces every divine perfection. Everything that one needs and longs for who has seen himself a justly condemned sinner, is in that blessed name. This poor sinner hates sin, yet sees this hateful thing in himself. Then it appears impossible that he should ever be free from its terrible power and dominion, and much more impossible that he should ever become righteous. This is the character who calls upon the name of the Lord, whether in the days of Seth and Enos, or in the days of Abraham and of the prophets, or now in the gospel dispensation. In every age and in every dispensation the essential principle and experience are the same. The cry of the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner," is the cry of every poor, sinsick soul in all ages. The cry of Jacob is the same: "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." In darkness and sorrow and disease it is the same call upon the name of the Lord, with a knowledge above the wisdom of the world which the poor soul does not know he possesses. The leper says much truth when he cries at Jesus' feet, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." The Syrophenician woman worshiped him in saying, "Lord, help me." Jonah, out of the belly of hell, cried, "I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple." Hezekiah cried, "O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me." Whether under the ministration of condemnation or under the ministration of righteousness, the call of quickened souls is still upon the name of the Lord. It is the power and blessedness of that glorious name felt in the soul which causes the desire for the things of God, and brings forth that call upon his name, and which, in the Lord's own time, gives us to feel the precious answers of peace. And when we are made to rejoice in hope of the glory of God, then, more than before, if possible, do we feel the strong and sweet and prevailing desire to call upon the name of the Lord, telling him in sacred whispers of love, with thanksgiving, all the blessed things he has done for us, and magnifying his name together with all his people.

The Lord has ordained prayer and praise for his people's comfort and for his own glory. Even out of the mouths of babes and sucklings he has perfected praise. They do not pray in order to let him know what they want, for he knows every thought and need and emotion of their hearts before they pray, as well as after. But for their own comfort and peace they are given the blessed privilege of prayer, and are told to let their requests be made known unto God by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving. They pray as a child cries, or as a lamb bleats, because they cannot help it. They cannot pray according to their own natural will. It is only when the Lord is pleased to pour upon them the spirit of grace and of supplication that they can pray, or, indeed, that they care to pray. Often when they do cry mightily unto the Lord there is an unspeakable comfort in the very force and anguish of the cry. Jesus taught his disciples after what manner to pray, and in all the sacred words of that wonderful prayer which he set before them as an example of true prayer, there is all the truth of

their own salvation which is in their own hearts. They are, in that prayer, asking for the very things which had long been promised, and which are now fulfilled in the coming of Jesus. They are expressing in supplication their daily longings for the presence of Jesus as the bread of life to satisfy their hunger after righteousness each day, and are telling of their desire to be forgiven all their trespasses, and of the sweet feeling of love and of forgiveness toward every heaven-born soul, which is in the heart of every child of God when the spirit of love and peace prevails within.

It is the privilege of the Lord's people to pray, to unburden their souls of their grief on account of sin, and of their self-loathing, and of the true contrition which they feel; to cast their burden on the Lord, who will sustain them. It is a privilege rather than a duty. It can only be truly done by the constraining power of the love of Christ. As the Lord's people are of one heart and one soul, and all have the same desires and temptations and sorrows, it is their precious privilege to pray for each other, for there is no selfishness in true prayer. This means much, for when we have a feeling of prayer for any brother, or any number of saints, we cannot hold any feeling of ill will toward them, nor harbor a feeling of suspicion concerning them. We at such a time truly desire their welfare, and would make sacrifices for them. We cannot then look "every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." Then if we have had thoughts of evil toward them we shall humbly confess to them, and seek their forgiveness; and if they have wronged us, or have committed a fault known to us alone, we shall seek lovingly and faithfully their restoration, and shall seek to do what will be for their good, and shall, whether we know it or not, obey the apostle's lovely exhortation to be tender-hearted, forbearing one another in love, "forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

True prayer is prophetic. The prayers of Elijah concerning rain were fulfilled. The Lord had caused the prophet to feel a strong desire for the very thing which God had purposed to do, and to pray earnestly for it. What wonderful prayers are recorded in the Old Testament and in the New. We would like to refer to them, but it is not expedient. The prayers of Moses, Exodus xxxiii. 16, and Psalms xc., the prayer of Jabez, 1 Chron. iv. 10, and of David, 2 Samuel vii. 27, and of Solomon, and Ezra, and Asa, and Daniel, and many others, how wonderful they all are. The prayer of David tells by what power one prays: "For thou, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house: therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee." He prayed for the very thing the Lord had told him he would do for him.

It is a wonderful and blessed thing to find in one's heart to pray a prayer unto the Lord, for that will surely be granted, as were the prayers of David and Jabez, and all the prayers of holy men of old recorded in the Bible. The prayers which are in our hearts to pray, though we feel too vile to utter them, are easy and sweet to pray. Sometimes we wonder at our boldness in asking of the Lord things we greatly need and long for, as grace and mercy and forgiveness of our daily transgressions, and for the prosperity of churches and brethren, and for the help of dear ones by the ties of nature; but at times we are assured that it was truly by the Spirit that we were given to pray.

Jesus said, "Ask, and ye shall receive." But how to ask, and on what ground is our claim to ask? It must not be for a selfish, fleshly reason, but for the glory of God, and it must be in Jesus' name. "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint." How strengthening that is to the weak and trembling child, if only it is spoken to our own souls. The apostle said, "Pray without ceasing." Not as though he would count the days and hours and moments, and tell us to keep busy in the natural forms of prayer, but when one is completely disheartened, and says to himself, What right have I to be pressing forward with my cries and tears, with my chatterings and clamorings? The Lord will surely despise the weak cries of such a poor, unworthy creature as I, and I have no right to keep on. Then the apostle's words come in place, "Pray without ceasing;" and the dear Savior says, "Every one that asketh receiveth;" and the psalmist says, "He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer;" and again, He "is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth." The apostle says, "We know not what we should pray for as we ought," but he tells us that the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, making intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. While we feel those things which we can often only express in unutterable groanings, there are times when the Spirit's further work in making us know that the dear Lord understands all those groanings, and that the intercession of the Spirit felt in our hearts is according to the will of God, makes us ready to shout aloud for joy. Then we renew our strength, and in our souls we mount up with wings as eagles; we run and are not weary, we walk and are not faint.

From the time when men began to call upon the name of the Lord, every true prayer of faith has been by the Spirit of Christ which was in the one who prayed, and it will be so to the end of time. The Spirit of Christ tells us all our needs, and causes us to feel them, for Jesus has experienced them all, and though we have no power to express them, "He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit," and the intercession goes on in his name in our poor hearts. The Spirit alone can cause us to ask in Jesus' name. May we be able to pray the prayer of faith more and more. Not only in the garden did the dear Savior pray in agony, and on the cross did he pray for his enemies, but the prayers of all his suffering people through all ages have been but the telling, by his Spirit, of his own sufferings, and the glory that should follow. He has always been praying for his people, and in his prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John he declared in language most glorious and sublime the final consummation of the eternal purpose of the eternal Father, when all the redeemed of the Lord should behold his glory and experience the fullness of that eternal love with which the Father loved him and them before the foundation of the world. Whoever feels his own heart's sincere desires and sacred longings told in these recorded prayers of the dear Savior and his people, is, by that token, himself an heir of that eternal love and glory.

F. A. CHICK, Moderator.
D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

WE are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at his residence, 1910 N. Twenty-second St., Philadelphia, Pa., Saturday evening, May 28th, 1910, Ross O. Godfrey, of Palmerton, Pa., and Louise J. Mellotte, of Philadelphia, Pa.

By the same, June 15th, 1910, at their own home, 6119 Musgrave St., Philadelphia, Pa., Horace A. Jenks and Esther J. Gilkyson, both of Philadelphia, Pa.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, at Snow Hill, Md., June 11th, 1910, John W. Tull and Miss Jennie E. Bailey, both of Worcester County, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Miss Ada H. Quint was called away from this life Monday, March 28th, 1910, in the 75th year of her age, at her home in Hopewell, N. J. She was the youngest child of William and Anner Quint, who were members of the church that once existed in the town of North Anson, Maine. She was a sister of Elder Wm. Quint, who passed away from earth about eighteen years ago, at North Berwick, Maine, having been pastor of that church for more than forty years. She was also a sister of Mrs. Mary Q. Purington, wife of Elder William J. Purington, who was pastor of the First Hopewell Church the last fifteen years of his life. The last fifty years of her life was spent mostly in the family of Elder Purington, in Washington, D. C., then at Southampton, Pa., and last at Hopewell, N. J. Through her connection with Elder Purington's family very many Old School Baptists were well acquainted with her, and none knew her but to love and admire her for the many excellent qualities that were hers. All knew her kindliness and generosity of heart, her forgiving disposition, that could not treasure hardness against any one, and her unbounded hospitality to all who came to their home. She was naturally of a very cheerful disposition, and this cheerfulness remained with her to the last. Under severe trials and anxieties at different times in her life she still remained the same helpful, cheerful friend to all her friends. All who knew her well can testify to this, and because of this all whose friendship was worth having remained her steadfast friends. She had never made a public profession of faith in Christ, but many members of the church often expressed themselves to us at different times as having come to feel full fellowship for her as a child of God. No one loved the truth of the gospel more than she did, and nothing was more abhorrent to her than those theories of men that would ascribe salvation to the worthiness of men, and not to the grace of God. She had an humble view of herself, which perhaps was the one great cause that hindered her from seeking a home in the church on earth; it is certain that she loved the presence and companionship of those who love God and his cause. We believe that she has fallen asleep in the Lord. She was ill about six weeks before the end came, with a complication of disorders, ending in meningitis, causing unconsciousness for several hours before the last. For some ten days we all thought she was improving, and that ere long she would be well again, but it was not the will of God that it should be so. On Sunday night she grew worse, and sank steadily until the end came.

The funeral service was held on Friday, March 31st, at the meetinghouse in Hopewell. A very large congregation came together. Elder Silas H. Durand preached the gospel of the grace of God very comfortingly to all the friends, and many were blessed and consoled in the service. Afterwards the mortal body was laid to rest in the cemetery adjoining, beside her sister and her husband with whom her home had been. The whole community has sustained a great loss. All who knew her feel this to be so. She was the last of her father's family. For ourself, we can but feel sad and lonely. We shall miss her greatly, for she had been a steadfast friend to us and a well loved aunt, being our mother's sister.

C.

Mrs. Margaret M. Staton died at her home in Snow Hill, Md., June 6th, 1910. The date of her birth was Nov. 15th, 1843. She was married to John W. Staton June 14th, 1865. It was my privilege to baptize her in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Salisbury, Md., June 4th, 1871, where she remained a consistent, faithful and dearly beloved member until a few years ago, when she took her letter to the church in Snow Hill, where she was held in the same sweet fellowship until she passed to her heavenly home. She had been a member of the Presbyterian denomination, by all of the members of which, as by all of the community where she lived, she continued to be held in high and affectionate esteem. Her experience of grace, and her exercises of mind in regard to the church of our Lord Jesus Christ, were very clear and marked. Her husband, who was a firm believer in the truth and an experienced man, passed away many years ago, leaving her with three daughters and one son, who survive her, and who mourn the loss of one very dear, and deservedly so, to them. She was devoted and faithful in all the relations of life. The little band of brethren in the church at Snow Hill have sustained a great loss, which they and their beloved pastor feel deeply. Elder Poulson called to see her some days before the last, and though company was not allowed, she desired to see him, and had a short interview. She could not talk much, but seemed gratified to see him.

The funeral services at the house were very brief.

A portion of Scripture was read, brother Poulson spoke in prayer and the writer made a few remarks and read hymn 1256 (Beebe's collection). Hymn No. 1052 was sung by friends. The body was taken by train to Berlin, followed by the bereaved family and many friends, where it was laid to rest, in hope of the resurrection of the dead. The 1290th hymn was read at the grave.

How sweet and sacred is the deep mystery of the resurrection of the dead, and the blessed hope that rests upon it, while faith sees the fulfillment of the ancient declaration, "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." The dear mother and sister and friend is at rest in untold felicity. The dear ones who remain, and who are blessed to have a hope in Jesus, are waiting. May the comfort and consolation of the Holy Spirit abide upon them.

Written by request of the bereaved children.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

John L. Morris died March 19th, 1910, at the home of his oldest daughter, Mrs. J. E. Freeny, eight miles from Salisbury, Md. He was born Feb. 12th, 1822, and was married to Hannah Shockley August 26th, 1847; to them were born five sons and five daughters. The first son died in infancy, one daughter died in 1874. He, with his wife, was baptized in the fellowship of Nassaongo Church over fifty-four years ago, and continued faithful and consistent to the end. He was deacon for several years, until failing eyesight caused him to wish some other to take his place. He always enjoyed having the brethren visit him, and loved to talk of the grace and mercy of God to poor sinners. He was always at the meetings unless providentially hindered. He was taken seriously ill Feb. 19th, with kidney and bladder trouble. Sister sent for me, and I remained with him until he died. I never saw any one suffer such agony as father did; it was surprising what suffering he endured for four weeks. When in great agony he never once murmured at the hand of God, but would say, "He does not send one pain too much; just think what my Savior suffered in the garden when he sweat, as it were, great drops of blood for me, a great sinner, and he without sin."

Elders T. M. Poulson and A. B. Francis were sent for. Elder Poulson started, but was taken sick and had to stop at Salisbury. Elder Francis preached an able sermon to the comfort of the bereaved ones; he read the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians, and talked sweetly of our hope of the resurrection, after which all that was mortal of dear father was laid by the side of mother, it being just thirty years and six months since she was buried. They both died in hope of the resurrection. For them to die was gain. We sorrow most that we shall see them no more.

(MRS.) NAOMI A. DRYDEN.

I WISH to say that I indorse the sketch written by his daughter, sister Dryden. It was my privilege to associate with brother Morris for about fifty years. He delighted to tell of his experience and hope. He was a firm believer in all the grand principles of truth that distinguish the Old School Baptists from all others. I had been his pastor about forty-two years, he being one of the number at Nassaongo when I was called there. We miss him much, but wish to bow to the will of our God.

ALSO,

Emeline McKee departed this life Feb. 19th, 1910. She was taken with a slight chill on Wednesday, the 16th. Her illness was short, and did not seem very painful, she just failed and drooped like a leaf. She sat up and ate her supper, and passed away about 9 o'clock. Sister McKee was baptized, I think, some thirty years ago, and lived with the church at Nassaongo several years, then took a letter and united with the church at Snow Hill. She lived consistent with her profession to the end. She was not much of a talker, but a good listener; we all miss her very much. She was a widow, and spent the last years of her life with her son-in-law, Willard Beauchamp. Her age was 82 years, 3 months and 24 days. Thus the Lord is removing from our midst whom he will. Her daughter, Jennie, with whom she made her home, is a member at Snow Hill, Md.

The writer was called upon to officiate at her funeral, and tried to comfort the sorrowing ones, after which all that was mortal was laid away in the Old Baptist Cemetery in Snow Hill to sleep until the morning of the resurrection, then shall she come forth and be glorified. T. M. POULSON.

MASSEY, Va.

SISTER **Lydia Priscilla Bruce** was born in Gibson County, Ind., August 15th, 1869, died in Oregon City April 11th, 1910, aged 40 years, 7 months and 26 days. She moved with her parents to Lancaster County, Nebr., in 1880, and from there to Oregon City in 1901, where she died as above stated. She experienced a hope in Christ about the year 1890, and joined the Primitive Baptist Church in July, 1907, and was baptized by the writer in the fellowship of the Cedar Creek Church, at Oregon City, where she lived a worthy member until death called her up higher. She was the daughter of Deacon Joseph and Barbara Bruce, and will be greatly missed by both the family and church, as well as by her brother Walter's little orphan boy and girl, to whom she had been a mother since their mother's death, three years ago. She was never married, but lived with her parents, and was the mainstay and staff of the family in their declining years. May the God of mercies ever be with them and comfort them. This is the fifth time the angel of death has visited their home from time to time and taken from them of their

loved family. She leaves father, mother, three brothers and two sisters, beside the church, to mourn, but we mourn not as others who have no hope, for we believe our loss is her eternal gain.

The writer was called to attend the funeral services, using as a text 1 Corinthians xv. 19: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable;" assisted by Elder A. Wilson, of Oakville, Wash. She was interred in the Edyville Cemetery, there to await the resurrection morning, when we believe her mortal body will be made like unto His glorified body. May we all be prepared, by his grace, for that great day, is my prayer for Christ's sake. Amen.

Written by one who feels less than the least of all saints, if one at all. S. B. MOFFITT.

NEWBERG, Oregon.

Deacon W. J. Goyns departed this life April 24th, 1910. He was born in Georgia, Feb. 1st, 1819, was married to Miss Julia Ann Loupo in 1840. To that union were born sons and daughters, of whom I knew four, to wit, Deacon John Goyns, Hyram Goyns, sister G. W. Coldwell (wife of Elder Geo. Coldwell), and Mrs. Ben Jackson. Sister Goyns died some twelve years before brother Goyns. He was baptized by Elder John Evers in 1843. He and sister Goyns were good and faithful Baptists. It was my privilege to know and to associate with them since 1883. Brother Goyns was sound in the faith, and was a lover of the SIGNS, and it was his request that his obituary be published in it. Brother Goyns was nearly blind for several years before his death, and was so crippled he could scarcely walk; his general way to get around in the house was to push a chair before him. He took to his bed Feb. 10th, and slept most of the time. For several years he expressed his willingness to go, being perfectly reconciled whenever it was the Lord's will. He was anxious to depart, and often said, "Why can I not go?"

He was laid beside his dear companion. We feel that he has gone to rest, there to await the coming of our Lord to gather his redeemed from the earth. It was in this hope that he lived, ever trusting in the sure mercies of David. We have no greater desire than that his God may ever be ours, to shield us from dangers both seen and unseen, until his time shall come to take us to himself.

J. H. BLYTHE.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

A Friend, N. Y., $2.00; Charles Schade, N. Y., $1.00.

MEMORIALS.

(Baltimore Association.)

WHEREAS, It has pleased our all-wise heavenly Father to take from us our dearly beloved brother and former clerk, **Deacon Milton Dance,** of the Harford Church, therefore be it

Resolved, That the Baltimore Association express their felt sense of loss in the absence of his kindly face, helpful words and service, and that we yet desire to bow in becoming reverence to Him who doeth all things well, thanking him for the gift of such a lovely and useful brother as brother Dance for so many years. We desire also to extend an expression of sympathy to the church of which he had been so long time a member. May the Lord, who is the great Shepherd, remember them, and supply them out of his unwasting fullness with every spiritual comfort and grace. We trust that his family will also accept an expression of our sympathy for them.

NOTICE.

BETHEL CHURCH desires to change the time of holding the Licking Association from Friday before the first Saturday in September, to Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, August 31st and Sept. 1st and 2nd. We have heard from nearly all the churches, which have consented to the change, but some of them we could not reach as well as through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Should there be no objections, we will soon give further notice of the change.

P. W. SAWIN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., June 13, 1910.

MEETINGS.

THE church at Otego, N. Y., has appointed a meeting to be held Saturday afternoon, August 6th, and Sunday, August 7th, to which meeting we invite distant friends to meet with us. Trains will be met Saturday morning and at 1 o'clock p. m. Meeting-house is near the station.

Done in behalf of the church.

S. C. F. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

A SMALL band of Primitive Baptists is meeting every Sunday at 10:30 a. m. at 2919 Polk St., Chicago, Ill. All persons interested are welcome to meet with us. Any one knowing of members living in or near Chicago will please notify W. N. Spitler at the above address.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.
JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

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In order to make some quick sales of my book, Biographical History of Baptist Ministers, and at the same time help circulate the following good reading matter, I will, for a limited time, give as premiums with every $2.00 order Hon. Thomas E. Watson's 150 page book, entitled, Foreign Missions Exposed (new edition), and brother S. B. Luckett's two pamphlets on Christian Science. Order early before the supply is exhausted and say that you want the three premiums. Send orders to R. H. PITTMAN.

LURAY, Va.

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This little book has been published for some time, and orders for it have been received from near and far, even to the most distant States. All from whom I have heard have spoken to me very highly of the book. For forty years it has been upon my mind to publish these poems and the experience of my brother, together with the account of his last hours, and have wondered why I did not do it. I felt sure it would be for the comfort of many, and the many expressions I have already received assure me that it is so. Elder P. D. Gold writes: "I have read the poems and experience of your brother with much pleasure. How wonderful was the view of divine things given to him. Surely to be absent from the body and present with the Lord is far better." Elder S. Hassell says: "I shall have a commendatory editorial notice in April. I hope you may dispose of several thousands for the comfort of the Lord's scattered people." Elder H. C. Ker writes me: "Your little book, 'Songs in the night,' was duly received, and has given me more comfort than any reading I have done for months. Surely every lover of truth should have it." The price of the second edition has been reduced to thirty-five cents.

I have also on hand a few copies of "Reminiscences and Letters of Mary Parker." Price 75 cents.

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SILAS H. DURAND.

Southampton, Pa.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 78. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1910. NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE REDEEMED ASS.

"EVERY firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck."—Exodus xiii. 13.

The redemption of the firstborn of the children of Israel was designed of God for their instruction. It was a memorial unto them of the sovereign and gracious dealings of the Lord. "And it shall be [saith the Lord] when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What is this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage: and it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the Lord slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my children I redeem."—Exodus xiii. 14, 15. This custom of the redemption of the firstborn was afterwards changed, and the memorial was set up in another form, as will be seen by reading the following: "And I, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of all the firstborn that openeth the matrix among the children of Israel; therefore the Levites shall be mine."—Numbers iii. 12, 13. The Levites were the Lord's to serve him in the tabernacle; the clean animals also were used in the service of the temple, but the firstling of an ass, an unclean thing, (Isaiah lxiv. 6,) this is not meet for use in the worship of the Holy One of Israel, it is unclean. The ass was an animal useful for service in the domestic life of the people, but it was not to be used as food, neither was it fit for sacrifice, for it chewed not the cud and did not divide the hoof, therefore the Lord taught Israel to account it unclean. (Deut. xiv. 4–8.) What are we? Fit to live in the presence of God, are we meet for the holy service of the Lord? Ah no, we are all as an unclean thing. The ass was unclean. Some perhaps may say, Will you debase us to the level of the stupid ass? No, indeed; are we not in many particulars already there? "Vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt."—Job xi. 12. "A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this."—Psalms xcii. 6; (xciv. 8.) "Every man is brutish in his knowledge."—Jer. x. 14. Agur confessed, "Surely I am more

brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man."—Prov. xxx. 2. Job exclaimed, "I have said to corruption, Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister."—Job xvii. 14. And the Lord saith to his people, "Fear not, thou worm Jacob."—Isaiah xli. 14. Did God misname Jacob? Was Jacob offended by being called a worm? No, but Jacob feels, The Lord knows me altogether, and to me he says, I will help thee, I am thy Redeemer. O what loving-kindness to a worm! The redeemed were represented to the apostle Peter as all manner of cleansed "four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air."—Acts x. 12. If the Holy Spirit has given us eyes to see ourselves we shall not be offended by being likened to the ass. Indeed, for some time I have been looking at this ass in Exodus xiii. 13, and as I have looked and looked at the picture a number of times my eyes have been flooded with tears, and my bosom has heaved with emotion. I have seen myself pictured in this ass. You perhaps say, You must be a foolish ass. Well, I suppose that is what I am, and though you may not understand it, as I journey with my Master and Redeemer my heart is saying, "Nevertheless, I am continually with thee; thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." What, a beast, an ass saying this? Yes. "So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee."—Psalms lxxiii. 22. Let us look at our picture. There is the firstling of an ass, the offspring of the unclean. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one."—Job xiv. 4. David confesses, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."—Psalms li. 5. Sin is our leprosy, and we are defiled throughout, and we are unfit for the presence and holy service of the Holy One that inhabiteth eternity. The ass as soon as it was born, and all that first day from its birth, was nothing but an ass, an unclean animal. Then consider this dreadful truth: "The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies. Their poison is like the poison of a serpent; they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear; which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely."—Psalms lviii. 3–5. "There is none righteous, no, not one." (Romans iii. 10–18.) O have we any experimental apprehension of the pollution, the degradation of our condition as sinful creatures before God? Let your eyes look upon this: "Thou wast cast out in the open field, to the loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born."—Ezek. xvi. 5. Can your heart enter into its signification? The colt of an ass was pronounced by the Lord to be unclean in its birth, and we in our natural birth are born in the sinfulness of Adam, the children of wrath. (Eph. ii. 3.) But it is not in our natural birth, in our degeneration, that we know this before the Lord. We are therein described as dead in trespasses and sins, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in us because of the blindness of the heart. (Eph. iv. 18.) But of the called of God it is written, "You hath he quickened." Then we have eyes to see and a heart to feel, and we begin to understand that as the offspring of Adam we are poor, vile sinners; then also we are humbled, we are ashamed

and sigh over our uncleanness. If you can now look with me upon this firstling of an ass representing a quickened sinner, then as soon as divine life is experienced we feel, I am a sinner, and to use the language of our picture, I am an ass, ignorant, unclean. I have known men to talk of being sinners, that they were vile, wicked, the chief of sinners, but not a symptom of a humble and contrite heart was manifest, not a sigh escaped them; their heart was not bowed down and ashamed before God, neither could they blush. (Jer. vi. 15.) But it is far otherwise with the called of God; their sins and alienation from the life of God, their unholiness is a burden and grief of heart. Their conscious vileness is not a subject for flippant discussion, for their souls are sad and weary, and ashamed before the Lord, and also in apprehension of his righteous displeasure their heart cries out, "Woe is me! for I am undone." As "the leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, Unclean, unclean."—Lev. xiii. 45. The Lord pronounced the firstling of the ass to be unclean, and the quickened sinner knows in his heart that it is the holy God, the almighty Judge, who pronounces him to be a guilty, vile transgressor. That foal of the ass was the firstling of an unclean animal all that first day, and at the close of the day it was nothing but an ass; it neither chewed the cud nor divided the hoof, it was unclean; and we from the womb are sinful, estranged from God, we are ever going astray, speaking lies. But when we are born of the Spirit, from the first motions of this heavenly birth, with the first breath of divine life we are awakened, alive and conscious of our dreadful state, we feel we are guilty sinners, like this firstling of an ass we are unclean; God's power tells us so, we feel we are before him, and now with him we have to do. You see this colt of an ass, dark and shaggy; with sluggish instinct it is born under a law, and this is what the law saith, O firstling of an ass, thou art unclean, break his neck. O sinner, thou art unclean, a vile transgressor from the womb, (Isaiah xlviii. 8,) and the voice in the law saith, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."—Gal. iii. 10. "The wages of sin is death."—Romans vi. 23. To them that "obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil."—Romans ii. 8, 9. "He that believeth not, shall be damned."—Mark xvi. 16. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."—Psalms ix. 17.

Should the neck of the ass be broken that would end the matter, no more would be done, there is no hereafter future consciousness to the ass; but the quickened sinner feels himself by sin polluted, guilty, base, a foolish, degraded beast before the Almighty. What if I should thus die? He trembles, for he feels, agreeably to the teachings of the Scripture, that after he dies, after the death of the body, that there is hell. Christ Jesus saith, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."—Matt. x. 28.

"Should sudden vengeance seize my breath,
I must pronounce thee just in death,
And if my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well."

When the wicked, the unredeemed, are raised from their graves to the resurrection of damnation, as the words of Christ

say they shall be, (John v. 29,) then shall these go away into everlasting punishment. (Matt. xxv. 46.) They "shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."—2 Thess. i. 9. Read with sacred awe the following: "The devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever. And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."—Rev. xx. 10–15. This firstling of the ass, or rather the sin-stricken, law-condemned sinner, sighs and trembles in apprehension that such a portion is justly his. How shall I escape? (Matt. xxiii. 33,) who shall deliver a vile sinner from the wrath to come? (1 Thess. i. 10.) When the ass was born it was unclean; all that first day there was no other voice than this, Unclean, unclean, thou shalt break his neck. The first day is past, the sentence has not been executed, and in the morning of the second day the ass could say, I am yet alive, I am yet spared, but I am still an ass, I am unclean, what will this day bring forth to me? The commandment is still in force, "Thou shalt break his neck," and so day by day. There stands the owner of this ass, and in our spiritual view of this picture the ass trembles before him. A word from his lips will decide the matter. What will it be, life or death, redemption or damnation? Does the owner look upon the ass? Is he determining what he will do? How eagerly would the ass catch the least word of kindness from his lips. O, a glance of pity from the eyes of the Lord would revive the heart of the contrite sinner. Most eagerly would the sin-stricken, mourning, law-condemned sinner catch (1 Kings xx. 33,) anything from the lips of God that would give hope. But I am a worm, (Psalms xxii. 6,) a creeping thing, (Acts x. 12,) a poor, base, guilty beast before the Lord. So foolish am I, and ignorant, I am as a beast before thee. (Psalms lxxiii. 22.) While consciously under the ministration of condemnation (2 Cor. iii. 9,) no kind voice is heard, no look of compassion penetrates and scatters the dark cloud. (Isaiah xliv. 22.) The veil of sin and the law's condemnation enshrouds in the sickening, burdening gloom the life of the sinner; he knows he is a base transgressor, unholy, ignorant, base before God, and over all this the heart sighs, we are ashamed of all that we have done, (Ezek. xliii. 11,) we blush (Ezra ix. 6,) and loathe ourselves in our own sight. (Ezek. xx. 43.)

> "Since I can therefore hardly bear
> What in myself I see,
> How vile and black must I appear,
> Most holy God, to thee."

And then the thoughts of the guilty sinner reach beyond this present earthly life, beyond time, beyond the death of the body, beyond the grave into eternity. What hope is there for me? How will it be with me in that great day when I

shall stand before God's throne? Shall I hear the voice say, "Come, ye blessed"? or will it be, "Depart from me, ye cursed"? Zion's holy gates forever bar pollution, sin and shame; without are dogs, the vile, the base, the unclean. (Rev. xxi. 27; xxii. 15.) Woe is me! for I am undone, I am unclean. (Isaiah vi. 5.) Who can fully tell the anxieties, the inquiries of the sin-stricken, contrite soul? He prays for mercy, but how shall remission of sins be granted to a base thing? (1 Cor. i. 28.) See that ignorant, foolish beast, this unclean firstling of an ass; he looks to me dejected, stupid, with his head hanging down. He may well have this aspect, for the Lord has pronounced him unclean, and has said, "Thou shalt break his neck." Now look at another picture: it is a man. Would he be offended were I to put these words in his mouth, "So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee"? "The publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner."—Luke xviii. 13. Day after day for seven days the execution of the sentence is suspended, and during those days this foal of an ass lives with its unclean mother. Thus it was with clean animals, and the eighth day and thenceforth they were eligible for an offering made by fire unto the Lord. (Lev. xxii. 27.) The eighth day has come, and what will be done with the ass? Can this ass avert its doom? Has it been able to give a ransom for itself? On the eighth day it is still what it was as soon as it was born. Say you, It has grown some? Yes, it has grown bigger, a bigger ass. Are you any less a sinner than when you first felt you were such? Have you become better, less and less a sinner? Ah, no; by the law sin is felt to abound, to become exceeding sinful. (Romans v. 20; vii. 13.) On the morning of the eighth day that firstling was still unclean, still an ass, a bigger ass. Now the owner had the right to redeem the firstling of the ass. This eighth day is a notable day, the day of redemption or destruction, of favor or wrath for the poor ass. Which shall it be? Look with me at our picture, and you shall know. On the morning of the eighth day the owner of the ass comes forth. To break the neck of the ass? No, he gives a kindly glance at the ass, but the poor, stupid beast with its drooping head sees not, and so feels not the look of compassion. It is the time of love, (Ezek. xvi. 8,) for love's deeds to be shewn, but the ass is so dull, so ignorant. The contrite sinner is so swallowed up with the knowledge of his guilt and just condemnation, so beclouded with fears and unbelief, that he cannot as yet understand there is favor in store for himself, such a sinner. The owner passes by the ass and goes and takes from the flock a lamb without a blemish, without a spot; then he leads the lamb and drives the ass, and they take their journey to the door of the tabernacle. Contemplate the picture, it was a sight that the eyes of the tribes of Jacob often beheld. O for spiritual eyes to see and a heart to understand. In the owner of the ass taking the lamb you can see what he is purposed to do. It is his good pleasure to redeem the ass. When we meditate upon the story of redemption, the determination of Jehovah to redeem his people is a revelation to afford us sacred musings and strong consolation. When did the Lord determine to ransom his church from their iniquities unto himself? The day, the month, the year, cannot be mentioned, it was before time. The apostle Peter tells us when

the Lord thus determined and provided for our redemption: Ye are redeemed "with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."—1 Peter i. 19, 20. It was all embraced, in all things ordered well by Jehovah, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. What kindness and love were in the bosom of Him who inhabiteth eternity that he provided, (Gen. xxii. 8,) verily foreordained Christ the Lamb of God to be our Redeemer. My heart often sings:

"A monument of grace, a sinner saved by blood;
The streams of love I trace up to their fountain, God,
And in his sacred bosom see eternal thoughts of love to me."

There they journey, the ass and his master and the lamb. Look upon the picture, and I will tell you some of the things I see and hear as they wend their way to come before the Lord in his temple. It is a trying journey for the firstling of the ass, his master driveth him, but he leadeth the lamb. God's divine power moves the poor sinner unto himself, he is both attracted and driven. This eighth day to the ass is a notable one, like that notable day in Queen Esther's life. She was driven and drawn to go in unto King Ahasuerus to plead for her life and the lives of her people. "So will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish."—Esther iv. 16. This journey is a momentous one to the poor, ignorant, unclean ass; his master is bringing him to appear before the judgment throne of the Lord, before the mercy-seat. "There I will meet thee."—Exodus xxv. 22. O how much better is this place than to meet with God at Sinai. (Exodus xix. 17.) Little does the ass know what grace is to be shewn, what kindness is in his master's heart toward him. To the ass it all seems hard to be thus made to go before the face of his master. So with the called of God when under the law, when feeling to be vile transgressors they are moved to appear before God. Sin-burdened, it is with sighs and tears and with many fears they approach the Lord with whom they have to do. (Heb. iv. 13.) Though in the heart there arises the thought, "Who can tell?" (Jonah iii. 9,) the Lord may shew me mercy, though I cannot see how it can be. As the ass is being driven along he casts his eyes aside and sees the lamb, and as he looks upon the lamb this is his soliloquy: O lamb, so meek, so gentle, thou art spotless, pure, without a blemish; thou art pleasing to look upon, thou art acceptable in the eyes of the Lord, but on me he hath frowned, and he hath said, "Thou shalt break his neck." Ah, I am an ass, unclean. The convicted sinner thinks of Jesus as that one who is good and kind; that he was holy, undefiled, separate from sinners. Ah, separate from me, I fear we never can dwell together, we shall ever be separate, for I am a sinner, and he is separate from sinners and made higher than the heavens, and I am base, sunken low, low down in sin, in shame, in condemnation. O if I could only be good and pure, like Jesus, without sin, then he could look upon me, and I might hope he would love me, and then I should be acceptable in God's sight. But woe is me, for I am undone, I am vile, I am as a beast before thee, a hell-deserving sinner. O that he would forgive me, and ease me of sin's heavy load. O that he would shew me pity, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

(*Concluded next number.*)

WAVERLY, Pa., March 31, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed is an excellent letter from sister Attie Curtis. I think it would be enjoyed very much by the readers of the SIGNS, and I would like to see it in print.

Your very sinful brother,

D. M. VAIL.

BRUNSWICK, Maine, Feb. 15, 1910.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER:—I cannot tell you how glad I am to have a letter from you once more, expressing love and fellowship for me. I have been in a strange land for a long time, and saw so much that was evil and vile in me, that is, in my flesh, I was ready to believe the children of God could not love me or have fellowship for me. It has been the Lord's will to make the darkness flee away, and to give me the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, and the oil of joy for mourning, so I rejoice in the assurance that the path I have been in is where God's people travel, for the world does not walk there, it is a solitary way. We cannot walk side by side with a brother or sister very far in this path, for they are soon so far ahead of us we are left behind. We feel and know they cannot be as wicked and vile as ourselves, and yet we want to be with them, and want them to have fellowship for us. We know we cannot walk with the religious world, for if we try to tell one of them how sinful and vile we are, they look at us with astonishment, and will ask, What have you done that is so very wicked? It often comes to me that I should ask the same question if I had not been made to see Jesus the Savior of sinners. I was led so differently from what I thought I should be; I imagined I could give my heart to the Lord when I got ready, and let him save me. What a change there was when I was made to see the plan of salvation by grace, his people saved in him with an everlasting salvation, chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and nothing can separate them from him. Who can understand and explain that oneness of Christ and his people? It hath not "entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." Is not this experience what Paul means when he says, "Behold, I shew you a mystery"? Could we see it if we had not been brought into the light? Does the world, or natural man, see that "death is swallowed up in victory"? It seems to me this saying is brought to pass in our experience. I know some of our brethren claim it is when these bodies are raised from the grave that this saying is brought to pass, but when my mind is led over the way I have traveled, and have seen that oneness of Christ and his people, and how he conquered every enemy, even death, hell and the grave, it seems to me I am not wrong in saying, "But thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Death is swallowed up in the victory of our Lord Jesus Christ, and cannot hold one of his chosen vessels. Nothing can be brought to the charge of God's elect; they are clothed with the righteousness of Christ. Does it not read that Jesus took on him the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him? Can you see anything outside of Jesus for his people? It pleased the Father

that all fullness should dwell in Jesus. It is in him we live, move and have our being. "Without me ye can do nothing." How true you find this in your attempts to declare the unsearchable riches of Christ, and how true we find it in our every day experience. The ways of our God are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts. His ways are mysterious and past finding out. Man by searching cannot find out God. Our God is great and wonderful, having all power in heaven and earth, doing all things after the counsel of his own will, too wise to err, too good to be unkind. We certainly do know that his knowledge and wisdom enable him to carry on his own affairs undisturbed, and in his own way he will change our vile body and fashion it like unto his glorious body. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." I have not the least fear that I shall not know who I am if I am one of God's children and awake with the likeness of Christ and see him as he is. It is all known to him, for "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." My dear brother, love, peace and joy have been felt so sweetly in my heart in years past, and made my brethren and sisters look so lovely to me I could see no faults in them. It was a wonderful thing to me how they could love me as they did. The works of the flesh cause different feelings. I know this by sad experience. Once in a great trial, when I felt sure I had the right spirit, it was the Lord's will to fill my heart with the fruit of the Spirit, and I was made to see clearly the different feelings, and have felt afraid ever since of any anger, or strife, or hatred found in my heart. I am more afraid of myself than I am of my brethren and sisters. Jesus says, "I am the resurrection, and the life." This is just as sweet to me as where he says, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." "I am the vine, ye are the branches." "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." "I am the door." All of these, and many more, are most precious to me. Everything I need is found in Jesus, and I am content to have it so. To those who cannot agree with me in this I have no desire to say that I am right and they are wrong; I want to find that love in my heart for them which was shed abroad by the Holy Ghost, and I am sure if I do not find it that the flesh is ruling. By the time we have forgiven a brother or sister seventy times seven we shall fully realize how much we need to be forgiven, and shall see nothing to offend in those we love. We shall esteem them all better than self, and if we do not understand a portion of Scripture as they do, we shall love them the same, and have no desire to accuse them of denying the truth. The works of the flesh never can draw the children of God together, it always causes trouble and division. It is the fruit of the Spirit that knits our hearts together, and causes us to strive for the things that make for peace. How often it is said, "Love one another." It seems to me that it teaches us that our brethren are not perfect, but like ourselves, liable to err, and we are often admonished to see that we love one another. If we find anything in our hearts that causes us to find fault with those whom we love for the truth's sake, it is time to examine ourselves and see what manner of spirit we are of.

I feel I am writing things that you understand, and it is pleasant to write so easily and fully. I enjoyed your letter

in the SIGNS, and was thinking of writing to you when your letter came. I hope as you read this you will not be sorry you wrote to me, or sorry that I have written to you. I wish you could come to Maine again, and bring sister Vail with you. I should be very glad to see you and hear you speak once more of the most precious things of the gospel. I am in my old home, and would be glad to have a visit from you, and many would be glad to see you both. Brother and sister Beal often speak of your last visit, and I know they would be glad to see you. Brother Beal's health is poor, but when he is able to speak to us he does not shun to declare the whole counsel of God. He knows nothing among us save Jesus Christ and him crucified. We love to hear him declare the unsearchable riches of Christ. The gospel "is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth." "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." All boasting is excluded, all praise, honor, glory, power, might and wisdom must be given to our God, who knows not even a shadow of turning.

Please write again, if not too wearied of this. Love and fellowship for you both.

Your sister,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

OTTAWA, Kansas, Dec. 21, 1909.

ROBERT SCATES—DEAR BROTHER:—Your letter to-day was indeed a pleasant and welcome surprise. You say, "How strange it seems to me that I, a stranger in a foreign land, and hundreds of miles away, should feel a desire to write to you." Is it not stranger still that the desire should be in my heart about the same time to write to you? I was only kept from doing so by my own unworthiness and the shame and humiliation I feared I would probably have to endure after the letter was sent. I have long felt a deep love for you; your letters have always touched a responsive chord in my heart. In the early part of the winter or spring, in a letter in the SIGNS you told of Elder Gadsby's trial of debt, and that he preached three times in one day from the words, "Lord, help me." You said, I do not know why I have written this, but I suppose it is because I could not help it. To me it seemed a direct message, and I even dared to claim it. How many times I have said, "Lord, help me." I felt then that he would help me in his own time and way, and that hope is still with me. It is no comfort to me to feel that anything comes by chance, or that man is in any way independent or has any power in and of himself, for if that be true all my little hope is gone; sink I must without delay. I want to feel that all blessings flow from his faithful care, and all our trials are for our good and his glory. What causes us to look to him? Is it not our own helplessness? When we feel strong and able to help ourselves we have no need of him. They that are well have no need of a physician, but they that are sick, and helpless, and ready to die, and knowing they can never hope for cure from any hand but his, go tremblingly to him, hoping and fearing. O, dear brother, I do sorely need his help in all things; of myself I can do nothing. I look to him to be supplied with life, with will, with power, with all. Jesus was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and if we follow him we must necessarily know something of these things. The question with me is, Do I know him whom to know is life eternal? I feel to say to-night, "Save me, O God; for the

waters are come in unto my soul." Is it not well to confess our sins? In so doing do we not help bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ?

When your letter came to-day I said, Surely this is of the Lord. I wanted to write to you at once, and tell you of the goodness of God to a poor sinner like me. Now that I am trying to write I find myself stumbling along, not able to retain my thoughts long enough to write them. I do indeed appreciate your letter more than I can express. I feel it is more than I deserve that you could be comforted by anything I should write.

I was baptized in November, 1882, so you see I have been a professor a long time, too. I cannot look back and see one good thing that I have ever done; all looks dark and sinful. I do not feel that I have whereof to boast.

"When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark, and vain, and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?"

I can only hope in his mercy and his judgments; for whom the Lord loves he chastens. I have trials within and without, and sometimes the burden laid upon me seems greater than I can bear. I have felt to say with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." I trust in him because I can do nothing else; I have nowhere else to go.

I have read your letter several times, and each time I have found greater comfort and more encouragement to hope. I feel that it is a blessing to have the witness within that all you have said is true, but you have told it all so much better than I can, that it makes me feel ashamed of my poor effort; it serves to show me how dependent I am upon God; I cannot even tell the things I hope I do know.

I have not written at all as I intended. Whenever you feel it in your heart to write to me, I can assure you it will meet a welcome reception.

Your sister, I hope,

ANNA McKINNEY.

OTTAWA, Kansas, Jan. 3, 1910.

VERY DEAR BROTHER:—I wish I could make you understand how good and comforting your letters are to me; they are like cold water to a thirsty soul. I will not try to tell you how often I read the first one, and I found that it did not grow old or less interesting. I do not believe any one can feel more unworthy than I do; I feel that I have all the faults flesh is heir to. I have been trying to keep my heart with all diligence, but seem to be getting worse instead of better; things come into my mind at times that I had thought I was above. I did not bring myself into the condition of mind that I have been in for the past fifteen months, neither have I power to make any change. I am clay in the hands of the Potter, and I believe he molds me according to his own will and pleasure. One day I am making melody in my heart to the Lord, the next day, or perhaps hour, I fear that I have no part or lot with him. I thought I had been made to feel as small, insignificant and unworthy of notice as it was possible for one to feel, but I was destined to be disillusioned. One night last week I awoke at eleven o'clock and my eyes were held waking until between two and three. My past life from my earliest recollection passed before me, and I felt then that I could not say to the meanest of his creatures, "I am holier than thou." I do not believe my former friends or associates would bring a single charge against me. In the words of the poet,

"Here on my heart the burden lies,
And past offenses pain my eyes."

I have often wished I could do as Mary did, wash His feet with my tears and cover them with kisses. The thought was presented that I had not considered how unworthy I was of such a privilege, or to have the love and fellowship of the brethren, which I prize more than anything else in the world. I felt much distressed and alone a few days afterward; I opened the Bible at the narrative, and how happy I was made. I had not remembered that she was a sinner, and that the Pharisee found fault with Him because he allowed her to touch him. How kind was his answer, "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." I felt then that was why I loved so much, I have more reason to be thankful than any one else. I believe I love the children of God fervently and unfeignedly. I am sure it is from no personal attraction, for many of them I have never seen, and I am unknown to them. Several years ago I tried to write to Elder Chick to tell him how dear he was to me for the truth's sake, and once I wrote to brother Ker, but the letters came so far short of expressing what I wanted to that they were committed to the flames. I have felt ever since your letter came that the Lord put it in your heart to write me, and it has been a great consolation. Your name has been familiar to me since childhood, but of course you knew nothing of me. God's ways are not our ways. O for faith to trust him in all things.

"How can a heart that doubts like mine,
Dismayed at every breath,
Pretend to live the life divine,
Or fight the fight of faith?"

My mind is continually on these things, and I neglect my work to read at times. I looked to the Lord for help, and this was the answer I got, How shall you escape if you neglect so great salvation? A few days ago the burden seemed heavy, the way looked very dark and dreary, when these words came forcibly to my mind: Take up your cross and follow me; and so I believe it will be, dear brother, to the end of the journey. If I am of the ransomed number it will not matter then. I cannot say "we," because I do not doubt that you are a child of God.

These words have been much in my mind of late,

"Can the Lord his wrath forbear,
Me, the chief of sinners, spare?"

I do believe I have been made to know just how Paul felt when he said he was the chief of sinners. I have been reading to-day in Acts, and have been many times melted to tears. What terrible suffering they endured in testifying of Jesus, yet Paul said, "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto me." If I were to tell you I did not dread death, I should not tell the truth; there is an almost constant fear that I may be banished from his presence at last; it would be to me now like taking a leap in the dark, yet there is a hope that at evening time it will be light.

The letter is yours to do with as you think best; no praise is due me that you found comfort in it. I could not write at all as I wished; thoughts came so fast I was confused. I was afraid you could not understand such disconnected sentences and would be sorry you had written to me. I feel that your letters to me would be of much more interest and comfort to the readers of the SIGNS. If you think this worth a reply, do not shorten your letter, for I assure you I will not tire, no matter how much you write.

This is a poor return for your good

letter. I believe God rules and controls all things, even to the writing of this letter, and I hope you may feel to say, "She hath done what she could." Pray for me if you can feel like doing so.

With love unfeigned,

ANNA McKINNEY.

OZARK, Ala., Jan. 18, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Having been an interested reader of your writings for more than fifteen years, and feeling impressed to do so, I have decided to write you a letter, and while you do not know me, and perhaps may think I am presumptuous to even think of addressing you a letter, yet at the same time, as above stated, I feel impressed to write you, and hope that I may not weary you with my writing. I have been following your able pen for a great many years, and while you are in the far away State of New Jersey, and I am in southern Alabama, yet I feel that we worship the same God, the same Christ, who came to live in our image, bled and died on the cross for our redemption. I very often get to meditating about the many able preachers of the Primitive Baptist faith and order, and wish that I could meet with them, hear them talk and tell of the loving-kindness, goodness and mercy of our blessed Savior. Ever since I was a young boy I have had serious thoughts about my future, and what would become of me in the event I was called by death, and at times would become very much worked up concerning the matter. I could get but very little, if any, good out of going to meetings, but would go occasionally, as my parents were Primitive Baptists. I went on in this manner, and with these serious thoughts, until when I was twenty-seven years old, in the year 1907, it became a very serious matter, and I began to cry, What must I do to be saved? I remember well one night in April, 1908, my mind was in such a state of inquiry regarding my future that I went to bed begging the Lord to save me from an everlasting hell and punishment; to have mercy and save me from destruction. Finally, after a long time I went to sleep in this frame of mind, and dreamed that I was in the very presence of Jesus, and was begging him as no child in this world ever begged a parent for anything. I could see him clearly, and I was at his feet begging him to have mercy, and save me from hell and an everlasting punishment beyond the grave, and thought he replied, Join the church and be baptized. I awoke and was much comforted in the thought and belief that that dream was an answer to my prayers, and my mind became exercised in regard to joining the church, and as to which was the church. I was much concerned, and realized that it was my duty to be baptized in the true church, the church of God, established by the One who had died to save me, the apostolic church. I greatly realized my weakness and many imperfections, and especially the necessity of a Savior to be my wisdom and to guide me to that church, the church of Christ; and I again took the matter to the Lord for guidance. I was during this time living in Montgomery, Ala., and dreamed one night that I was at the church I desired to join, and it was the most harmonious gathering I had ever seen; Elder Henderson was the preacher, and my father, mother and brothers, and even the very members of Pleasant Grove Church, Ozark, Alabama, were there, and I thought I knew it was the true church of God, the old apostolic church, the one I had asked the Lord to show me, and the one that I must join. This was in the

same month of my other dream, in April, 1908. In July following I moved back to Ozark, Alabama, my old home, and on the second Saturday offered myself to Pleasant Grove Church, (the one I had seen in my dream), was accepted, and baptized by Elder Henderson the next morning.

Some may say that these are only dreams, and I had better not put any faith in them, but they are a source of great comfort to me, and I firmly believe that they were the course adopted by the dear Lord to show me my duty, and the church of God; I believe that no man, or alien sinner, can bring himself out of the fallen state he is in by nature; that he cannot be saved because of any good thing he might accomplish here in this sinful world, but must be one of the chosen, and realize his sinful condition, be convicted of sin, and regenerated by the holy Spirit of God before he can be saved. Salvation is by the grace of God alone, therefore give God the entire glory, for poor, sinful man can do nothing without the grace of God in his heart. O what a great Christ is our Christ, and what are the riches of his precious promises, and the teaching of his holy Spirit, that turns men from the ways of this sinful world to take up the cross and follow him, and see in him righteousness, glory and eternal life. When dark clouds and evil temptations fall upon us, God alone can cast them off. What a great God is our God, the God we worship here in south Alabama, and the same God I know from your writings that you worship in New Jersey, the God who has power to guide poor sinners and show them the throne of grace, an omnipresent, eternal, loving God. "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord." My dear brother, I feel that I can depend upon the firm foundation of his gospel, and hope that I have been made to feel the necessity of leaning upon him, the most wise God, to be my wisdom and my guide.

Excuse me if I am troubling you, but I wanted to write, from what reason I know not, but trust the Lord has been my guide. If you have any spare time, I would appreciate a letter from you. I hope you will not think hard of me, a stranger, for writing you, for I felt impressed to do so. If you ever come through Alabama, do not forget to include Ozark in your tour, as I would certainly be glad to meet you and hear you tell of Jesus, the blessed Son of God, and our salvation by the grace of God alone, and when you are sending your petitions to him I ask that you remember me.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,
DAVID F. BYRD.

HOPEWELL, N. J., June 17, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The thought came to me to-day, What is it to be a christian? Is it to profess that we have any power in that direction? Is it to find fault with our brethren or our pastor? Is it to be backbiting continually? Who has made us to differ? Some make great professions and indulge in long prayers, but if not from the heart all is utterly useless. The Pharisee was shown this, but the publican did not so much as raise his eyes, but cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and "this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." Jesus said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein."

But have I lived a christian life in the nearly forty-one years that I have been mingling with the brethren? I know I have come far short of doing this. Evil thoughts are with me continually, and I am as prone to err as the sparks to fly upward; when I would do good, evil is present with me. "The good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." We are told that there are none good, no, not one. The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. God alone can change the stony heart and give a heart of flesh; he alone can soften the heart and make it to praise him; he alone can do such things as these. What can we do, or whither can we flee without him? We do well to give him all the praise, honor, glory, dominion and power. The psalmist said, "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness." "What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord." One said, "I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: and I will sing praises unto thee among the nations." Paul said, "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness." We believe that salvation is of the Lord, and that it is a finished salvation, complete in every particular. He is without spot or blemish and cannot be divided or changed in any way. There is no other way of salvation. He declared that his work was to save his people from their sins, and we have this promise, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." Paul said, "I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus." Paul in this work suffered great hardships, being thrice beaten with rods, once stoned, and thrice suffering shipwreck, being a night and a day in the deep, in journeyings often, in perils by water, in perils on land, in perils by robbers, in perils from his own countrymen, in perils among false brethren, and all this he suffered for the people of God, his brethren. It is a blessed truth that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. The natural mind is enmity against God, but the spiritual mind is joy and peace in the Lord. Believers have a foundation above this world. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." It is not for man to say aught against the decrees of God. Our Lord increases, but man decreases. God rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. He is a just God and Savior; he is too wise to err, too good to be unkind, and he has loved us with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness has he drawn us. As a father pitieth his children, so does he pity them that fear him, for he knoweth that we are dust. "He is the Rock, his work is perfect; * * * a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." On this rock the Master said, "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." How mysterious his work. "The wind bloweth where is listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Our thoughts are not his thoughts, neither are our ways his ways; for as the heavens are high above the

earth, so high are his thoughts above our thoughts and his ways above our ways. The rain and the snow come down from heaven, and return not thither, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud; so shall his word be that goeth forth out of his mouth, it shall prosper in the thing whereto he sends it.

Your brother,

DAVID L. BLACKWELL.

MACON, Ga., Dec. 19, 1909.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—The time is approaching for me to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, and in thinking of that, and of the many blessings I have felt to have enjoyed from the different letters and articles in the paper during the past year, and remembering, too, that I wrote you once when much troubled concerning a certain thing, and your reply was of much comfort to me, all this has given me a desire to write you again.

I have been much confused of late, and am so cast down in feelings that my hope seems almost gone, my faith is so weak, and I am made to cry, Surely the hand of the Lord is not in it all, and I am deceived in the whole matter, and am a deceiver; the Lord has cast me off forever. Truly I feel that I deserve nothing more than that at his hands, but there is a principle about me which causes me to continue to beg for mercy. When confusion seems to reign supreme without and within, I am made to cry unto the Lord to lead me in the way everlasting. If I know my heart, I most humbly desire to walk in that way, to ever be found diligently seeking the true and living God, but it seems to me that the farther I go and the harder I strive to keep in the way the farther I am from it. I feel sure that all the precious promises in God's holy word are true, in which he declares by the mouth of prophets and apostles that his strong hand will keep and lead his people always, but I cannot feel that they reach me. I do know that in the past I have felt to have received mercies that surely must have been of him, but fear is always present with me that perhaps what I felt was for good was not of him. O Lord, pity me, and have compassion upon one not worthy the least of thy mercies. David said, "Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart." I know that is true, but I also know my own unclean heart. I can continue with David when he said, "But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well-nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. * * * They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men." When I read the good letters in the SIGNS, in which the brethren show so plainly the evil of divisions, strife and confusion, I know that is true, and I am made to beg for mercy upon my own vile, sinful life, that I may not cause these things, and try to pray for Zion. Yet when I go and hear the teachings of some among the Baptists that seem to me to be so erroneous, and realize their determination to rule or ruin, I am made to ask, Can the church stand in such confusion? Then the question comes, Where is the church? I have felt perhaps you northern Baptists, who have so mercifully been blessed with a sound ministry, and have been in peace, do not quite realize the extent of the confusion here in the south. Now tell me where one who is truly and earnestly seeking truth and the lovers of truth should go to find them. To which division could he feel like going, and, forgetting all of the others, say with Ruth, "Entreat me not

to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God"? O, Elder Chick, this has been the burden, the cry of my poor heart for years. I am but a worm of the dust, not worthy to be with God's true and humble followers wherever they may be, yet my heart deeply, humbly desires that communion and fellowship, and while this is my earnest desire, still I have never felt to compromise truth or to accept error to be with a people who seem to me to be denying the sovereignty of God, and robbing the name of Jesus of its power. I feel that I earnestly desire that peace which is from above, but I do not feel to live in a compromising element for the sake of ease, when the Scripture says, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion."

Elder Chick, I should appreciate very much a few lines from you, but I know of your limited time, and my unworthiness, so if I am asking too much, pardon all errors. Pray for me.

In love,

ELLA BARFIELD.

TOUCHET, Wash., June 12, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—After some time of silence with my pen, but not in mind, I find myself once more trying to express to you the course or travel of my mind during this long silence. After a busy week's work for the necessaries of this life I was permitted to meet a few of the saints at this place, and to spend a few moments in trying to praise God, from whom all blessings flow. I am now at home, and all quiet, and I picked up the SIGNS for June 15th, and read your editorial, and I felt to thank our Father for such food, and then came the desire to tell you some of the wonders of grace, so you might know that while you live in the eastern part of these United States, and I live in the extreme west, and while we natural creatures are limited, as the bounds of our habitations are set so that we cannot go beyond them, still the word of God is not bound, and neither can it be. This is the Word which by the gospel is preached unto you, as said the apostle. I have felt to be one with the apostle when he said, O the depth of the wisdom of God; how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out.

It seemed, dear brother, as you so beautifully applied those types of the potter and the clay, that the antitype answered as face to face. How sweet and comforting it is to the poor, broken heart of one who realizes that he can do nothing of himself, and who has had to do with self, as did Peter when he denied his Lord, for faith to make manifest to him the dear Father above, who pities his children, the clay of his own molding. This faith shows a fullness in Jesus; it shows that grace was treasured up in him for all our necessities, for all our denials and all our disappointments, and many of these things have been in my life. For thirty years my life has been one of disappointments. The first of note was that I had my mind set for heaven from the first of my recollection, but there came a time when a knowledge of my sins blighted all these prospects and hopes, and then my mind was thoroughly set to believe banishment forever from God was my lot, though much against my desire, and then at an unexpected time and in an unexpected way my mind was made to feel that I would no more be beset with disappointments. But how soon again was I made to drink the cup with Peter

and John when in prison. Then I felt, Woe is me, and then the Lord looked with mercy upon the clay in his own hands, and I was made to weep with sorrow that I had denied my Lord, and to weep for joy that he was faithful and had not denied me. Then my mind was fixed to always be ready to give a reason of the hope that was given me, but in this, too, I have been disappointed.

But my mind has led me away from my intent. I merely wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed this editorial, and in fact all the SIGNS. I do so love to hear or read after one who can take the prophecies and apply them experimentally, and show the faithfulness of God to his rebellious people, but when they are taken up under the law, and it is declared that the blessings depend upon the obedience of the creature, then I am left out, for I surely am the clay and God the Potter, and all blessings must come from him for time and eternity. And I long to see the day when he will loose me from the things of this life and allow me to spend the few days of my allotted time with his dear saints. May he grant this for Jesus' sake. May God bless you, with all his saints, is my prayer.

Yours in love,

J. T. BARNES.

BENNINGS, D. C.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—My mind has been for some time on Matthew xi. 25, 26, which reads as follows: "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." Now who are the babes? Those dead in trespasses and sins, whom Christ came to redeem, or, in other words, those whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world. Christ said he came to save them that were lost—the lost sheep of the house of Israel. To my mind the above Scripture is strong evidence that God rules supreme both in heaven and earth; that he had a people chosen in Christ Jesus before time began, and he was the only one who could redeem them. Brother Chick, in his editorial of April 15th, 1908, on human means, says, All the uncommanded societies declare that in the view of those who organize them our God was not sufficiently wise to perfect all that was needful for his church. Dear brother, my experience is that you are right. I believe that Bible teaching is all we need for our instruction; nothing added to or taken from it. I believe that the Bible from first to last teaches the predestination of all things before the foundation of the world; that before man was created God knew just what he would do when left to himself, and he proved in the Old Testament how they rebelled and served idols, and it is the same to this day. Christ said, "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep. * * * My sheep hear my voice and they follow me." "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Those he will not cast out, but raise up at the last day. What comfort this is for the poor, afflicted child of God. I sometimes think it cannot be for this poor worm of the dust. How absurd it is for puny man to stand up and say he can help the great Jehovah in his work, or resist the great Power that rules all things in heaven and upon earth.

"This world is poor from shore to shore,
'Tis like a baseless vision;
Its lofty domes and brilliant ore,
Its gems and crowns are vain and poor;
There's nothing rich but heaven."

I am so ignorant in spiritual knowledge, I would like to have some one explain the text I have tried to talk about, but have hardly touched the subject. I have been led of late to think upon the love of God and the gospel. Paul tells us what the gospel is in Romans i. 16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Now I am not ashamed of the gospel, but am ashamed of myself when I see myself as I am. God is no respecter of persons, for he says he has a people in every kindred, tongue and nation. His people are a scattered people, and few in number; he says he will bring them from the ends of the earth. What a blessing it is that we can put our trust in God, who has all power in heaven and earth. Our proud nature would sometimes like to do something for ourselves, and verily thinks it can, and like Peter we get to boasting. Then again we are humbled in the dust, which is a safer place. Jesus said, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Nothing but the power of God can humble this proud nature of ours, to make us like a little child. The love of God is not like our love; his is an everlasting love, that sent his only begotten Son to suffer and die on the cross for his chosen people, his church. Of such love the world knows nothing. The Bible from beginning to end, directly or indirectly, points to the great High Priest, Christ, the Head of the church, the One altogether lovely. There is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.

I am sitting alone and thinking of the blessed privilege I had of meeting with the dear people of God at the association in Baltimore, and hearing the ministering brethren proclaim the good old doctrine of salvation by grace, and the love of God to poor sinners like me. It was hard when we had to separate; but we cannot expect to be together always in these low grounds of sin and sorrow. If it were not for the blessed hope of meeting again we should be most miserable. Our dear Savior said, "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." How pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity. Paul said, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." If we are followers of the dear Lamb of God we should bear one another's burdens. I often wonder why some are so indifferent about attending their meetings, and let trifles stop them, and I feel sorry for those who live so far away that they cannot attend, or sick or afflicted in some way, to keep them from hearing the blessed truth proclaimed, which is manna to the hungry soul. I was well pleased with brother Chick's sermon on charity. If you have not the love of God in your heart it is not charity, no matter how much you give.

Dear brethren, I hope you will pardon me for writing these rambling thoughts. May God bless both editors and readers of our dear family paper.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

THOMAS ALDEN.

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1910.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

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SPRINKLING UNSCRIPTURAL.

OUR dear brother, Elder J. F. Farmer, of Wilson, N. C., has sent us a little pamphlet, written by a Presbyterian minister, in defense of the order and doctrine of that denomination, asking us to notice some things in it editorially in the SIGNS, and saying that he thought it might do good to do so. We have carefully read the pamphlet, and feel like trying to comply with the request of our brother. Some things in it we must approve; for instance, it clearly presents and defends the doctrine of election and predestination with very strong scriptural arguments, but there are two things in it (and these are what we suppose brother Farmer had specially in view) to which we will call attention, and endeavor to show the unscripturalness of them. First, the writer claims that the church, and its order, under the gospel is only a continuance of the order established through Moses under the old covenant, and that baptism, or sprinkling, is only a continuation of the sprinklings ordained in that covenant. These contentions upon the part of this writer are but what is claimed by all who reject Baptist church order for other forms of church government, and who practice sprinkling, claiming that it is baptism. Also infant baptism can be defended upon no other ground. We do not wonder that all those who contend for infant baptism, and for sprinkling, and for any form of church government other than that which prevails among Baptist churches, insist upon the above named contentions, seeing that in the New Testament there is not the first shadow of authority for any of the three. In the New Testament there is not the slightest proof of sprinkling, or of infant baptism, or of any other than the simple form of government adhered to in all Baptist churches.

But is the church of Christ on earth merely a continuation of the former Jewish theocracy? Is it true that the order of the church is but a continuance of the forms of that former covenant? Is the church of God essentially the same thing as was that Jewish nation? Are the ordinances of the church now simply the same that prevailed in that former covenant? Is this gospel covenant not a new covenant, but only the former covenant enlarged so as to take in the Gentiles? As that Jewish people, all of them, old and young, moral and immoral, upright and vile, fearing God and not fearing him, were alike participants in the obligations and privileges of that covenant, is it now true that all nations of men, old and young, pure and vile, infant and adult, fearing God or not fearing him, are rightfully participants in the obligations and privileges of the church? That is what this writer seems to say. Under that former covenant no grace was required in the heart of any man to prepare him to comply with its requirements, or to entitle him to its privileges. It was all ceremonial, and the vile man who observed its commandments was entitled to all its privileges as well as the

upright, God-fearing man. Is there then no difference between the church of God now, and that typical people? That is what this writer seems to say. A man did not have to be a believer to entitle him to a share in all the outward forms of that covenant. Is it true that the church of God now takes in all nations upon the same grounds? That these claims are not scriptural is our full conviction. It is sufficient to call attention to the testimony of the Scriptures themselves, without much comment upon our part. First, it is expressly said by the prophet, and quoted by Paul in the New Testament, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers," &c. Notice the last clause: Not according to that former covenant. The difference is said to be this: "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts," &c. The former was written upon parchment only, and not in the heart. Now, his law is to be written in the heart of man. Paul, in Hebrews, shows that this means the new covenant, in which the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile has been broken down forever. We have called attention to this here, lest some should say that this covenant was with the same house of Israel and Judah only as was the former covenant. Israel and Judah were but types of that spiritual people, gathered out from every people, and made to be believers and to partake of the grace of God in truth. As every Gentile does not become a believer, so also every Jew is not included in this new covenant. Under the old covenant every Jew was included, and no Gentiles, but under this new covenant some Gentiles and only some Jews have place. The Jewish people under that covenant were regarded as a nation, and dealt with as a nation, but under the new covenant neither Jew nor Gentile is dealt with as a nation, but all are dealt with as individuals. Neither does the new covenant deal with families, so that because the father is a believer in God, his children are entitled to the same privileges that belong to him. Under this new covenant each one stands or falls for himself before God. Here God deals with the souls of men personally. If one of a family is called of God, and made to be a partaker of his grace, and a member of his church, there comes no blessing because of this to other members of the family so far as the privileges of the church of God are concerned. This is in substance what is set forth in the text to which we have been referring.

There are vast differences between the church of God and that Jewish people. First, as said before, no one needed to be a believer to belong to that Jewish people. No others save believers in Christ are entitled to membership in the church. Second, no sanctification or circumcision of heart was required to entitle one to the privileges of that sanctuary, but circumcision of the heart is indispensable to membership in the church. Under the former covenant one tribe only was known as the priestly tribe, and that tribe only could minister in the sanctuary. In the church of God now all are alike priests unto God. Under that covenant only men could serve at the altar and offer sacrifices. In the church there is no such distinction made; in the true worship of God there is neither male nor female. The priests, under the covenant, must be of a certain age before they could serve in the sanctuary. In

the church a little child is as much a priest unto God as a man of fourscore years, if that child be possessed indeed and in truth of the grace of God. The ministers of Christ to-day are not priests, any more than the feeblest believer in their flocks is a priest unto God. It was never intimated under that former covenant that any were priests, no matter how spiritual they might be, not even the prophets themselves, save those who were of the tribe of Levi. The elders or bishops ordained in the churches were not the successors of the Jewish priesthood. It was true, as the word of God has said, that he took away the first, that he might establish the second. When Christ came, the great antitype of all the types, then the types were all fulfilled, and had no place any more. Now an entirely new order, such as the world had never seen, was established, and established upon better promises. The gospel covenant is not the same as was the legal covenant. The church of Christ is not the same as was that Jewish nation. Nothing that belonged to that former covenant had any place in the new. Nothing that belonged to that Jewish people has any place in the order of the church of God; the first is all taken away.

But we leave these reflections to speak for a little of the claim made by the writer that the sprinkling, or what he calls baptism, is but a continuance of the sprinklings ordained under the former covenant. Of course the writer is consistent with himself in this, for if the church is but a continuation of the Jewish nation, enlarged to take in all other nations, then it would follow very readily that the sprinklings of that covenant must have place in the new order of things. But, instead, as the church is a new thing in the earth, beginning less than two thousand years ago, so her baptism is a new thing, having no relation to the sprinklings of that former time. Turning to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and reading carefully all that is said concerning the sprinkling of water upon the people, one will probably be surprised to learn how little is said about it. The people in general were never sprinkled with water. At the consecration of the priests they were commanded to be sprinkled with water, but there could be no reference to baptism here. First, they were not sprinkled as children of Israel, but solely as priests. In this sprinkling no female ever had a share. If indeed in this case we have presented a perpetual ordinance belonging now to the church, it is manifest that all females are excluded from the ordinance. Still further, all infants and youths are excluded from it, because it was expressly provided that all who were thus sprinkled must be twenty-five years of age, and then at the age of fifty must cease being priests in the service of the sanctuary, therefore children and old men could have no place in the church if this be the pattern. One other place in which sprinkling with water was ordained was when the blood of the birds was to be sprinkled upon one who had sinned; that blood was to be caught in water as it flowed from the slain bird, and this mingled blood and water was then to be sprinkled upon him. But this was manifestly the sprinkling of blood rather than water. In any event, we have yet to learn that any denomination mingles blood of birds with the water of sprinkling, and, still further, this was to be repeated as often as was needful, rather than once to be observed. We do not remember that we have ever heard that any sect practices frequent

sprinklings upon either infants or adults. In one more case was water to be used in sprinkling: the ashes of the red heifer were to be mingled with water after she had been burned, and when an Israelite contracted ceremonial defilement, and needed cleansing, a fit man was to sprinkle those ashes thus mingled with water upon him who was defiled, and he was to be pronounced clean; but this was to be done not once only, but as often as defilement was contracted by any one who was an Israelite, and the cleansing was in the ashes rather than in the water. Reference is frequently made to Ezekiel xxxvi. by those who would argue for sprinkling as baptism. We read there that the Lord said to Israel, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you." But this cannot manifestly refer to any outward ordinance, because, first, it is the Lord that sprinkles, and not any priest or minister, and second, because the effect is to be that they are to be cleansed from all their filthiness and all their idols. Were this filthiness such as adheres to the flesh, literally, through contact with filthy things, sprinkling would not wash that away, for we all know that for a good washing of the body we need more than a few drops of water. The water in this text is an emblem of the word and Spirit of God. Now these places are all that can be found in the Old Testament by which to justify sprinkling for baptism, and, as already seen, there is not the slightest similarity between these sprinklings and pedobaptist sprinkling. But there is no need to dwell longer upon these portions of the word. Sprinklings of blood and of oil are also often referred to in the law of Moses, but we do not suppose that even the writer of this pamphlet would claim justification for sprinkling as an ordinance of the church from these places. These sprinklings, we know, present the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin, and the sprinklings of water referred to in the Old Testament also refer to and present the same great truth. For proof of this see Hebrews ix. 13, 14. Baptism is then a new thing under the gospel; it did not belong to the old covenant at all. But it is said that washing was often enjoined under that covenant. That is true, but washing was one thing and sprinkling was another. Turning to Leviticus vi. 27, it is seen that they are two things, and, beside, washing is never done by sprinkling water upon the thing needing to be cleansed, it is always done by dipping the thing washed under the water. Garments are so washed. We wash our hands by dipping them, we bathe our bodies generally by plunging them under water. When we speak of taking a bath, the thought of putting ourselves under water is the first to occur to our minds. If the washings of that old covenant, therefore, are to be considered as being continued in the church and her ordinances, they would enforce the thought of dipping the person under water, rather than of sprinkling.

From all the above it is manifest that we cannot go to the Old Testament, or to the forms of that Jewish covenant, for the ordinances of the church, nor for the manner of her government; the plain testimony of the New Testament must be our rule. That those who seek to sustain other forms of government and practice, and infant baptism, and who claim that sprinkling is baptism, always appeal to the Old Testament rather than to the New for support, makes manifest

at once that they feel that these things cannot be sustained by proof drawn from the New Testament. It is in our mind to continue this theme in our next, if the Lord will, and consider what the New Testament does teach regarding baptism and church order. C.

2 CORINTHIANS XIII. 12.

"GREET one another with an holy kiss."

Having been requested to write upon the above text, we shall offer a few thoughts for the consideration of our readers.

The longing desire of the apostles for the peace and unity of the church seems to have been unbounded. To that end they prayed, preached, exhorted and wrote, and willingly spent and were spent in the cause of Christ, deeming it of more importance and worth than all the world beside. After the brethren were instructed in the word of God, nothing preceded the desire of the apostles that they might live in peace and unity as brethren should. All fleshly ambition and pride should be sacrificed to that end. This same desire, and delight in it, was in David when he said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

It seems to us that the apostle had several things in mind when he penned the words of our text. Likely he remembered some things of the Old Testament, when kissing was indulged in by some, and not always in a godly way. He may have also remembered the kiss of Judas, and would not have those of his love and care follow such examples, therefore said, "Greet one another with an holy kiss."

In ancient times a kiss was a sign of reverence and submission to a superior, also of love and affection. Traitors, however, practiced deception with kisses, as was the case when Joab kissed Amosa and slew him, and when Judas kissed Christ and betrayed him. These kisses were anything but "holy," hence could have no place in the kingdom of God. Kissing was not an ordinance in the apostolic age of the church, nor will it ever be, as no such commandment was given by the Builder and Maker of the house; therefore we do not understand this exhortation of the apostle to mean that the children of God, male and female, young and old, should kiss each other every time they meet, regardless of occasion or circumstances, but that when they do so greet one another to let it be "an holy kiss," and not such as that of Joab and Judas. Neither did he mean that brethren should kiss the sisters and the sisters kiss one another, but that neither male nor female should be known in this sacred relationship. The word "holy" means sacred, pure, guiltless, and well did the apostle use the word "holy" in this connection, and all will do well to consider this when greeting with kisses.

To convey the thought in our mind with regard to an holy kiss we shall call attention to the father and his prodigal son, not to prove them brethren in the Spirit, but to show as near as we can what "an holy kiss" is. The son had sinned against his father and in the sight of heaven; had wasted all his living and become, as it were, a vagabond, but notwithstanding all his faults and shortcomings his father loved him still, and when he returned home filled with shame and self-loathing his father, full of pity, compassion and forgiveness, and his very being aglow with love, ran to meet him, and fell on his neck and kissed him. That kiss was as near "holy" as anything in this life can be that is not altogether, entirely and absolutely of the

Spirit of God. In that kiss was no hypocrisy, no guile, no deceit, no evil surmisings, no selfishness, no pride, no thought of vice, no thought of sex. Not another man in all the world could have kissed that boy as his father did. No kiss of men or angels could have meant the same to that son as did the kiss of his father. That kiss spoke louder and said more than all the voices of men combined could have done, and the chief thing it said to the wayward boy was, My son, I love you. That love covered all the boy's faults, and he knew it. The father loved his son because he was bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. The children of God are members one of another, and because of this union should love one another with pure hearts fervently, and their kisses should be "holy," embracing everything as above illustrated by the father and his prodigal son. There can be no such thing as "an holy kiss" when malice, envy, hatred or pride find place in the feelings of God's children toward one another. Backbiting and faultfinding never suggest to those to whom we thus speak that we love the one in whom we see so many faults.

When an old lady kisses a young man who is her brother in Christ, it should be an holy kiss of a mother to a son, in it telling him of her love for him in the Lord and her interest in his spiritual welfare. The kiss of a young man upon the lips or cheek of an old woman should be an holy kiss of a son to a mother, recognizing her age, faithfulness and steadfastness in the gospel. We have wondered that if a kiss is a sign of reverence and affection, is the grasp of the hand or the falling of a tear less so? We feel sure that the same good feeling of love one toward another is made known in the hearty handshake that is demonstrated by a kiss, and can there be stronger evidence or greater manifestation of affection and good will one toward another in the kingdom of God than when in trouble or distress to see "the sympathizing tear" steal across the cheek of a brother or sister? Sometimes kissing is indulged in perhaps without the slightest thought of brotherly love; some are naturally more affectionate than others, but those who kiss less do not love less, nor is their desire for the peace and spiritual prosperity of others less. A kind word often means much to a poor, discouraged soul who feels like giving up the race. Is not this, in a sense, greeting one another with an holy kiss? If the widow and fatherless are poor and needy, and we visit them with the necessaries of life, watching over them to see that they do not suffer, is not such service greeting them with an holy kiss? If a brother be destitute of food and clothing, and makes his needs known to us, and we kiss him, saying, Depart in peace, be warmed and filled, notwithstanding we give him not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit? Was it "an holy kiss"? We do not mean to "spiritualize away" the exhortation of the apostle, because there is no doubt but that he meant just what he said, but we make these few suggestions as they occur to our mind in connection with brotherly kindness.

May the Lord help us to take heed unto ourselves that we endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. K.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder John McConnell.)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Middletown and Wallkill Church, at Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1910, to the several churches composing this association, sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—It is the custom of most associations to adopt and print with their Minutes a letter addressed to the churches composing the association. The letter also circulates among the associations and churches in their correspondence, and is presumed to express mutual fellowship in the matter under consideration. It is becoming in such a letter to use words easy to be understood, and to avoid foolish and unlearned questions, for if any man consent to other than wholesome words, "the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings." The word of Jesus is that "it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh," and he commands his disciples, saying, Take heed that no man deceive you; take ye heed, watch and pray; and what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch. This he taught them as being a living way of acceptance with God, and when they were endued with that Spirit "they went forth and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following." It was the gospel, the power of God unto salvation to every one that believed on Jesus through their word. In eating their bread with carefulness, pondering their path, considering their way, examining themselves and proving what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God, they obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto them, and became servants of righteousness. The words of our Lord Jesus Christ are spirit, and are life, and "not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth." To know how frail we are is the teaching of the Lord; such "understanding is a wellspring of life unto him that hath it." Such knowledge will make a man shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom; the wisdom that is from above, which "is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." The fruit of such righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace. These good works God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Such a workman will not make a man an offender for a word, but will follow after charity; he will prove his own work, prove he is spiritual, by considering and taking heed unto himself, and thus save himself and them that hear him. This is a living way of holding fast the profession of our faith; this approves us unto God, for without faith it is impossible to please him. That one is taking heed unto himself, and unto the doctrine of godliness, who passes the time of his sojourning here in fear. The fear and obedience of Noah were effectual "to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith," and to-day the faithful in Christ Jesus do save some, and condemn others, for they are saviors prophesied of who "shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the Lord's."

In that day shall they "discern between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not." No service is spiritual that is not vital, and it cannot be vital without the exercise of a vital principle. All spiritual life is hid in Christ, and by faith we live the confession that Christ is come in the flesh, and it is his Spirit that quickens us in newness of life to worship God acceptably. When the heart is fixed on God there is panting after him, a following after righteousness, and "when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life," it transforms us into hunger and thirst, and the more a sense of vileness oppresses us the more vehement desire for the beauty of holiness is wrought in us. It is according to this spirit that Jesus Christ is declared to be the Son of God with power, and no man can say he is the Lord but by that Spirit. This is calling upon the name of the Lord. In this spirit we worship God acceptably, and by this Spirit is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts.

The commandments and doctrines of men teach that the approval of God may be attained unto by works which we can do, notably, studying the Scriptures. Surely this is a vain imagination. The Scriptures contain an account of the revelation of God's will to man in different ages of the world, and of the operations of his power relative to the salvation of his people; they contain an account of the Spirit by which the writers were inspired, but they do not contain that Spirit itself. They record the promise of eternal life, but that life is not in the Scriptures, but in the Son of God. Jesus said to the Pharisees, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." They contain an account of the law of God, but Scripture is not that law. "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." They contain an account of the gospel of Christ, but they are not the gospel itself. They contain a true account of the word in all ages, according as it was delivered at sundry times and in divers manners, but the Scriptures are not that word. When the word of God came to any of the prophets, it was not the Bible that came to them, but the word of God which is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. This cannot be said of the Scriptures. The word of God is incorruptible, and liveth and abideth forever; the Bible is not so, and if the latter were put out of existence forever, the word of God would still be the same quickening Spirit. According to the Scriptures, the word of God always dwelt in a man of God as a quickening spirit, by which he was moved to utter or write such things as it pleased God to reveal. What was thus uttered or written might be perverted, destroyed, and the man put to death, but the quickening Spirit, the word which liveth and abideth forever, could never be altered or destroyed. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable to the man of God alone, who has the word of God living and abiding in him, by which he is made perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. Surely there is a distinction between the word of God and the Scriptures, and notwithstanding the latter relates the travel of the man of God, it must be admitted that the Spirit which inspired the writing is greater than the writings, and is therefore the only living

and true guide into all truth. The Scriptures testify of Jesus, but all he said and did are not written. God never was dependent upon letters to reveal his will, or teach his people to know him. Certain it is, that the Scriptures are misunderstood, perverted and forced out of their true sense whenever the comments and precepts of man prevail. It is the Spirit that quickens our understanding, "casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringeth into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." Notwithstanding the confidence of the apostles that God would perform the good work begun in their brethren, until the day of Jesus Christ, they continued faithfully to exhort them to diligence in taking heed unto themselves, for, said Paul, "Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Peter did likewise, assuring them that "many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you." These things they preached by commandment of the Lord. They were not ignorant that the evil which befell many of our fathers in the wilderness "happened unto them for ensamples: and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." And "the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils:" and, "He limiteth a certain day, saying in David, * * * To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." He that hath an ear to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches, is poor and trembleth at his word, but such are the blessed characters who have the gospel preached unto them. "Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works." Let us take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of us an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called "to-day," lest any be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

H. C. KER, Moderator.

JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the First Hopewell Church, at Hopewell, Mercer Co., N. J., to the several associations with whom she corresponds sends greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We feel to render praise and thanksgiving to the Lord God of Israel that we have once more been enabled to spend a season together to talk of his goodness and to speak of his power. Your messengers have come to us heavily laden in the fullness of gospel truth; the waters of that river the streams whereof make glad the city of our God have flowed over and through them, reaching even to us poor sinners, watering our souls, causing our spirits to be revived by the way. May the ever blessed God cause us to continue in sweet communion and fellowship.

Our next session is appointed to meet with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1911, where we again hope to meet your messengers.

F. A. CHICK, Moderator.

D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

The Delaware Association of Old School Baptists, in session with our sister church, Welsh Tract, Newcastle Co., Del., sendeth love and fellowship in the Lord to the churches with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—The divine favor of God is surely manifest to the comfort of our minds, beloved, in the fullness of love and fellowship in this meeting. Through the gospel of the Son of God, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, the only name given under heaven or among men, has been named and honored, and your messengers, ministers and servants have come in that name, declaring that gospel to our comfort and the glory of God forever. We desire a continuance of your love and fellowship through your correspondence with us.

Our next session has been appointed to meet with the Rock Springs Church, in May, 1911.

J. G. EUBANKS, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

The churches composing the Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Middletown and Wallkill Church, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1910, to the churches and associations with which we correspond sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—God, who is rich in mercy, has favored us with another opportunity of meeting together for his worship, and for communion with our kindred in Christ, which has proved both pleasant and refreshing to us. The business of the association has been transacted in harmony, and the ministering brethren have borne a faithful testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus. Truly we have witnessed how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that bring good tidings, that publish peace and salvation, and say unto Zion, Thy God reigneth. The letters from the churches indicate but little ingathering, but they are at peace among themselves.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, in the city of New York, beginning Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1911, when and where we hope to again meet your messengers and receive your letters of correspondence and messages of love and fellowship.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

ORDINATIONS.

AT the regular Saturday meeting in April, 1910, the Southampton Church decided to call a council to meet on Tuesday, May 31st, to take into consideration the gift of brother J. Monroe Fenton, and, if thought best, to ordain him to the work of the ministry. It was decided to call on each church of this association, viz., First Hopewell, Second Hopewell and Kingwood churches, to send their ministers and chosen brethren, and to invite also the ministering brethren of the Baltimore, Delaware and Warwick associations.

May 31st, 1910, the council met and was organized by choosing Elder Silas H. Durand moderator and Wm. Hobensack clerk.

The council consisted of members as follows:

Southampton Church—Elder Silas H. Durand, J. M. Willard, C. B. Reeves, Casper G. Fetter, Wm. Hobensack, Jacob S. Leedom, Elias Hogeland.

First Hopewell—I. Vannoy, Wm. Bond, E. P. Drake, Wm. Sheppard, D. M. Voorhees.

Second Hopewell—E. H. Drake.

Kingwood—Elder D. M. Vail, Cyrus Risler.

Delaware Association—Elders B. F. Coulter and A. B. Francis, P. M. Sherwood, John S. Yerkes, Howard Durham.

Warwick Association—Elder H. C. Ker, George D. Conklin.

Elders J. N. Badger and P. G. Lester, of Virginia, Elders A. B. Brees and W. S. Alexander, of Ohio, Elders G. D. Roberson and J. F. Farmer, of North Carolina, were also present.

Elder P. G. Lester spoke in prayer. Brother J. M. Fenton related his experience of grace and his call to the ministry. Elder D. M. Vail made motion, seconded by Elder H. C. Ker, that we now proceed with the ordination. Hymn 233 was sung. Elder

H. C. Ker preached the ordination sermon, text, 1 Tim. iv. 16. Elder A. B. Francis spoke in prayer, at which time the presbytery, consisting of Elders Silas H. Durand, A. B. Francis, P. G. Lester, B. F. Coulter, H. C. Ker, J. N. Badger, D. M. Vail, A. B. Brees, G. D. Roberson, W. S. Alexander and J. F. Farmer, laid hands upon brother Fenton. Elder Silas H. Durand delivered the charge. Elder B. F. Coulter gave the right hand of fellowship. After singing a hymn the benediction was pronounced by brother Fenton.

SILAS H. DURAND, Moderator.

WM. HOBENSACK, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **Sarah Edith Lee** passed away from earth Dec. 22nd, 1909, and was buried near Fairfax Court House, Va., on the 24th. She was the widow of Franklin Lee, who passed away several years ago, strong in the faith of God's elect, although not brought to the visible church of God, as our dear sister was. Sister Lee was an own cousin to my husband, and our dear sister in the church. O the love we had for her, and we knew that she loved the church. Years ago we used to meet at dear old Frying Pan. She enjoyed the preaching which gave to God all the glory and power. She had seen the King in his beauty, and that he ruled in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. She found herself as helpless as a little child, and saw that there was no good in herself. It was then the will of God that she should come and tell to the Frying Pan Church what a dear Savior she had found, and she was gladly received, and buried beneath the wave by Elder White, to arise to newness of life, and her life adorned the doctrine of God her Savior. By her godly walk and conversation we feel assured that she had passed from death unto life. The church will miss her much, for they regarded her as a lovely sister. She was always in her place in the meetings, coming through heat and cold. It was her delight to meet her brethren. We all shall remember our pleasant visits at her son's (Robert Lee) home, where she and her husband had lived for some years. Our sister had looked forward to the association in 1909 at Frying Pan with much pleasure. She came each day; it seemed that her face beamed with the love of God in her soul. In a few weeks from that time, three I think, she was paralyzed. I sorrowed that it was so, but felt sure that all was well with her if the summons had come. She lingered for more than a year, and often wanted to go to the meetings at Frying Pan, but they thought she was too weak. Elder Lefferts went to her home and preached for her, and she told me it did her much good. The funeral sermon was preached at Frying Pan the fourth Sunday in May, by Elder J. G. Eubanks. When the summons came at last, suddenly, she said to her son's wife, "Lizzie, I believe that I am dying," and before her children could get there she had passed away into that sweet sleep that knows no waking. Her children watched over her with loving care as they saw her fading day by day, and when the summons came it was a sorrowful blow to them, yet we believe that it was a happy release to their mother. Sister Lee was the mother of eleven children; five daughters and two sons survive her. Her maiden name was Jones; her parents' names were Thomas and Lucinda Jones; they passed away years ago. She leaves her children and five sisters, together with the church, to mourn, but our loss is her gain. May God bless us all to bow with sweet submission to his will. FANNIE BALDWIN.

LEESBURG, Va., June 3, 1910.

Mrs. Elizabeth B. Core, widow of B. F. Core, died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Samuel B. Fryer, Mt. Pulaski, Ill., Monday evening, May 9th, 1910, aged 83 years, 8 months and 28 days. Elizabeth Ann Beatty was born in Fayette County, Ohio, August 11th, 1826. In 1842 she was married to William Jefferson, and to that union one child was born: John Franklin Jefferson. Her husband died soon after, and the son passed away Dec. 16th, 1901. On Oct. 5th, 1850, she was united in marriage to B. F. Core, and after a residence of six years in Ohio, Mr. and Mrs. Core came to Illinois, locating in Atlanta, Logan County. In the year 1859 they moved to Lincoln, where they resided until the death of Mr. Core, Oct. 25th, 1892, since which time she had made her home with her daughter in Mt. Pulaski. Deceased is survived by three children, one daughter, Mrs. Samuel B. Fryer, of Mt. Pulaski, and two sons, E. B. Core, of New York city, and W. F. Core, of Cincinnati, Ohio. The two sons came to Mt. Pulaski to attend the funeral. They were here to see their mother a short time before she died. She is also survived by thirteen grandchildren and fifteen great-grandchildren. Mrs. Core was a member of the Baptist Church, and was a woman who enjoyed the respect and esteem of many true friends. Her recent illness dated back several months, and notwithstanding her advanced age, her mind was clear to the end. She was interesting, and enjoyed discussing reminiscences with those whom she engaged in conversation. Her death had been expected for many weeks, and throughout her illness she bore her suffering with a marked degree of fortitude, the end coming peacefully.

The funeral services were held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Fryer, May 12th, conducted by J. A. Conlee, pastor of the Baptist Church of Waverly, assisted by G. W. McConkey, of Mt. Pulaski. At the close of the services at the house the body was removed to the Illinois Central depot, where a special

car was attached to the Peoria division passenger train, which conveyed it and sorrowing relatives and friends to Lincoln, where the remains were laid to rest beside those of her husband.

Her granddaughter, COSTELLA FRYER.

MT. PULASKI, Ill.

Mary Josephine Stancil Fulmer was born near Centerville, Ohio, May 26th, 1850, died at the residence of her daughter, Mrs. Travis, in Tonica, Ill., June 14th, 1910, aged 60 years and 19 days. Sister Fulmer came to Illinois with her parents in 1855, where she grew to womanhood. She was married to Robert Fulmer Jan. 16th, 1872, he preceding her in death three years. Sister Mary, as she was known, joined the Regular Baptist Church at Oxboro in 1866, from which time she was ever known as a consistent member of Sandy Creek Church, always retaining the highest esteem of every member, as well as of those outside the church. She leaves seven children, four girls and three boys, twelve grandchildren, two brothers and four sisters to mourn.

The funeral was held at the Missionary Baptist meetinghouse, near the village where she lived, conducted by the writer, who spoke to a very large concourse of people, using as a text Isaiah xxvi. 19, 20.

S. H. HUMPHREY.

Lloyd O. Kauffman, the subject of this memoir, was born Dec. 22nd, 1883, near Luray, Va., and was raised to manhood by Old School Baptist parents. He came to Baltimore a few years ago and obtained a clerical position with the Pennsylvania Railroad, which position he filled with credit to himself and satisfaction to the company until his health would not allow him to go to the office any longer. He had attended the meetings of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in Baltimore for some years, and on Nov. 10th, 1907, he was baptized in her fellowship by the writer of this notice, and on the 20th of the same month was married to Miss Ella J. Brown. Brother Kauffman was a consistent member of the church, a true Baptist, and true to his meetings. He was a lovable man, and had the full confidence and fellowship of all his brethren and sisters. About January 1st, 1910, brother Kauffman had a fall, striking his head on the railroad track, from which he complained more or less from the time he fell. About Feb. 8th he was no longer able to continue work. Doctors were called, some of whom said the fall was the cause of his trouble, but gave his dear wife hope that he would recover. From this time he could not remember the current events, and continued to grow worse. The writer visited him several times. He grew worse until June 21st, 1910, when he very quietly passed away to be with his gracious Redeemer, we have no doubt. He leaves a father, one sister and four brothers, with his bereaved companion, together with the church, to mourn their loss. In the full strength of his manhood and in his youth in the church he was cut down, and we wish to bow with becoming reverence to Him who doeth all things well, yet we sadly miss dear brother Lloyd, none of course so much as his dear wife.

On the 23rd I spoke on the funeral occasion by request of the widow, from 1 Corinthians xv. 53–57. Mrs. Kauffman's pastor made a few remarks, after which his body was consigned to the dust to await the second bodily coming of Jesus, when he will bid it rise and come forth a spiritual body. May God's sustaining grace be with the dear wife he left behind, and comfort her as no other can.

Written by his loving pastor,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

NOTICE.

THE usual services in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., are expected to be held the fourth Sunday in July (24th), 1910. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

W. R. Lawshe, N. J., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE church at Otego, N. Y., has appointed a meeting to be held Saturday afternoon, August 6th, and Sunday, August 7th, to which meeting we invite distant friends to meet with us. Trains will be met Saturday morning and at 1 o'clock p. m. Meetinghouse is near the station.

Done in behalf of the church.

S. C. F. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

THE Cammal Old School Baptist Church has appointed a two days meeting at Cammal, Pa., the fourth Sunday, and Saturday previous, in August, 1910. A general invitation is extended to all who desire to meet and worship with us, and we will see to your needs while with us. Those coming from the south come to Williamsport, Pa., and take New York Central train to Cammal. From the north to Corning, and take the same road to Cammal. Inquire for Samuel Maffat, living near the depot, only a few rods to meetinghouse.

D. M. VAIL, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue, PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

A SMALL band of Primitive Baptists is meeting every Sunday at 10:30 a. m. at 2919 Polk St., Chicago, Ill. All persons interested are welcome to meet with us. Any one knowing of members living in or near Chicago will please notify W. N. Spitler at the above address.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

"SONGS IN THE NIGHT."

PRICE REDUCED.

This little book has been published for some time, and orders for it have been received from near and far, even to the most distant States. All from whom I have heard have spoken to me very highly of the book. For forty years it has been upon my mind to publish these poems and the experience of my brother, together with the account of his last hours, and have wondered why I did not do it. I felt sure it would be for the comfort of many, and the many expressions I have already received assure me that it is so. Elder P. D. Gold writes: "I have read the poems and experience of your brother with much pleasure. How wonderful was the view of divine things given to him. Surely to be absent from the body and present with the Lord is far better." Elder S. Hassell says: "I shall have a commendatory editorial notice in April. I hope you may dispose of several thousands for the comfort of the Lord's scattered people." Elder H. C. Ker writes me: "Your little book, 'Songs in the night,' was duly received, and has given me more comfort than any reading I have done for months. Surely every lover of truth should have it." The price of the second edition has been reduced to thirty-five cents.

I have also on hand a few copies of "Reminiscences and Letters of Mary Parker." Price 75 cents.

All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Southampton, Pa.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 78. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1910. NO. 15.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE REDEEMED ASS.

"EVERY firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck."—Exodus xiii. 13.

(Continued from page 422.)

As the lamb is led to the slaughter he goes freely, unresistingly, not a word of complaint. "As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." Jesus, the Lamb, when the time was come that he should be received up, steadfastly set his face to go up to Jerusalem. (Luke ix. 51.) He was not looking for some way to escape his covenant suretyship; he was not rebellious, neither turned away back; he gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; he hid not his face from shame and spitting. (Isaiah l. 5, 6.) Knowing all things that should come upon him he went forth (John xviii. 4,) to die, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God. The lamb journeys with the ass to the door of the tabernacle. The lamb is not blind, his eyes are good, his vision is clear; neither is he broken, or maimed, he has not a wen, neither is he scurvy nor scabbed. Dear Lamb of God, thou art all lovely, without blemish, without spot. (Lev. xxii. 22.) Jesus knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. I see that the lamb loves and looks with fervent pity upon the ass. What, the innocent, spotless lamb love that dark, uncouth, unclean thing? How they differ! Can they be friends, and dwell together? Yes. O that wonderful story of the lamb's love for the ass, and then the love of the ass for the lamb. As the story is told me by the Holy Spirit my heart has sighed and mourned, yes, and I have rejoiced with gratitude, in love worshiping the Lamb. And the ass? O, I am the ass. He "loved me, and gave himself for me."—Gal. ii. 20. There, see, they are now at the door of the tabernacle, the owner, the ass and the lamb. The priest attending to the things pertaining to God is there. (Heb. ii. 17.) The man brings forward the ass, saying, This firstling of an ass is mine, and this is the eighth day since it was foaled, and the priest saith, (for his lips keep knowledge, and the law is to be sought from his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts, Mal. ii. 7,) Yes, the time is due, (Romans v. 6,) and this is the word of the Lord: "Every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with

a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck." Wilt thou redeem it, or shall I break his neck? There stands the trembling, unclean ass; he cannot run away, he is held there before the Lord. (Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel of Jehovah, Zech. iii. 3.) There stands the ass, the trembling, sighing, longing sinner. The unclean, downcast, trembling ass doth exceedingly fear and quake (Heb. xii. 21,) lest the dreadful word from the master's lips should be, "Break his neck." O the heavy laden, sin-sad heart is saying, "Shew pity, Lord, O Lord, forgive." O that my Master will say, I will redeem thee, thou art mine. (Isaiah xliii. 1.) The owner looks at the ass. Does the ass see this look? It is love's look, (Ezek. xvi. 5–8,) and then the owner looks at the lamb. He looked upon the unclean ass, he looked upon the spotless lamb, and saith unto the priest, Behold, the lamb to be sacrificed for the ass; I will redeem the ass, it is mine. Can you not see the Savior and the sinner? Are there not glimpses given us here of the love of God, who gave his only begotten Son? (John iii. 16.) The owner of the ass spared not the lamb, and God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. (Romans viii. 32.) The priest looks upon the lamb, but he sees no flaw, it has no imperfections, and he speaks his approval: Thou art acceptable for sacrifice, for thou art clean, thou hast no blemish; I am well pleased in thee, O spotless Lamb. (Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5.) Looking upon the picture superficially there appears such incongruity that a lamb should be sacrificed to redeem an ass; and what shall we think that the Holy One, the unblemished, spotless Jesus, should be put to grief, crucified and slain for foul transgressors, whose sins have made them more black than the Ethiopian, and who are more indelibly spotted with putrefying sores, (Isaiah i. 6,) with cankerous spots than the leopard? (Jer. xiii. 23.) But when our eyes are enlightened (Eph. i. 18,) to penetrate the transactions of Calvary, the more and deeper we look upon Christ crucified, there will be divine unfoldings to our souls of the depths of the riches of Jehovah's grace. You are looking with me at the scene at the door of the tabernacle, the ass and his master, the priest and the lamb. All is now in readiness for the tragic deed, the slaughter of the lamb to redeem the ass. I am almost saying, Far be it that such a thing should be; if the neck of the unclean ass ought to be broken, break his neck, and spare that harmless, spotless, lovely lamb. But I must be still lest I hear a voice saying, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."—Matt. xvi. 23. Is the spotless lamb willing to take all the uncleanness of the ass upon himself and die for the ass? I hear the Lamb say, "I delight to do thy will, O my God."—Psalms xl. 8. Does the lamb in this momentous moment attempt to get away from the door of the tabernacle? If he got away this would disappoint the purposes of the owner of the ass, and this would leave the ass to his doom, to perish. No, the lamb will not forsake the ass. How is it that all is harmony between the owner of the ass, the priest and the lamb? Look at these three, look with gospel eyes upon them, let your eyes of faith and love be riveted upon the scene, and this divine mystery will beam forth to your captivated sight: the priest, the lamb and the owner of the ass are one. Our Lord Jesus Christ is

the owner of the ass, he is our merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, and he is the Lamb for the atonement of our sins, and soon that poor, base, trembling ass, the sinner with the sin-aching heart, who with sighs and tears and supplications has been brought before God, will see Jesus to be his Owner, his Sacrifice and loving High Priest.

The Lamb looks upon the ass, and in love and pity gives himself a ransom. (1 Tim. ii. 6; Hosea xiii. 14.) So all the uncleanness of the ass, all the curse, is imputed to the Lamb. The ass shall be redeemed by the blood of the lamb. This is love's determination, this is the owner's love for the ass, this is love's purpose also in the lamb, the lamb will willingly die for the ass. The heart of the master is seen in the lamb, the heart of the master and the heart of the lamb throb in unison of affection for the ass; yes, rather, they are one heart of love for the ass, and the priest is willing to bruise the lamb, to put the spotless lamb to grief, to make him a redemption-offering for the unclean ass. (Isaiah liii. 10.) These three, the priest and the lamb and the master of the ass, are one, loving the ass. "Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor."—Eph. v. 2. This mystery of Christ and the church, the mystery of godliness, (Eph. v. 32; 1 Tim. iii. 16,) is deeper and higher than all pictures, types and shadows. They all fall short and are "not the very image of the things" they so beautifully, comfortingly and yet but imperfectly set forth. So in our picture all the transactions in the redemption of the ass by the lamb only darkly present to us Christ Jesus the Lamb declaring his redemption to the soul of the quickened, contrite sinner, before whose eyes, in the revelation of the gospel, the crucified Lord Jesus Christ is evidently set forth. (Gal. iii. 1.) That Jehovah laid all the sins of all his people upon the Lamb is a sacred mystery. (Isaiah liii. 6.) He "bare our sins in his own body on the tree."—1 Peter ii. 24. The entrance into this glorious mystery is found in this: "Christ is the head of the church: and he is the Savior of the body."—Eph. v. 23. There is such a union and relationship between the Redeemer and the redeemed; yes, and though it does not appear upon the surface of our picture, there is a union, a relationship between the lamb and the ass; and as the owner, the priest and the lamb are one, so this ass, a figure of the loved and ransomed sinner, is accounted by Jehovah, in the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, one with the Lamb. There is to be a marriage of the lamb and the ass. Such dissimilarity! such an incongruity! impossible! There, you need not revolt from this statement. In nature, in our mere picture it cannot be declared, but the gospel speaks of the marriage of the Lamb, and of his wife being in all readiness for her husband, (Rev. xix. 7,) and the bride, the Lamb's wife, is presented to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish. (Eph. v. 27.) But in her former estate, in her earthy, Adamic nature and life, she was more debased and vile than any fourfooted beasts, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air; (Acts x. 12,) yes, more abominable than the firstling of an ass. O, the disparity between vile sinners and Jesus, the Lord of glory, is greater than this between the ass and the lamb. "Thy Maker is thine husband; The Lord of

hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called." And this is spoken to her in the Lord's betrothal of her unto himself (Hosea ii. 19,) when she was in her shame, when no eye pitied her, when no one loved her, when all utterly refused her. (Isaiah liv. 5, 6.)

But I have gone far ahead of the scene we were looking upon at the door of the tabernacle. The lamb is about to die, in agonies and blood to pour out his life to redeem the ass, and I am saying in my heart, I will creep beside him like a worm, and see him die for me. The priest with his knife sheds the blood of the lamb; the lamb unmurmuring, unresisting, yields himself up to the stroke. For the transgression of my people the stroke was upon him. (Isaiah liii. 8.) And there flows out the life of the lamb in that crimson flood. There stands the weeping ass, there lies the bleeding lamb. The lamb looks upon the ass, and the eyes of the ass are riveted upon the dying lamb.

"In evil long I took delight,
Unawed by shame or fear,
Till a new object struck my sight,
And stopped my mad career.

I saw one hanging on a tree
In agonies, in blood;
He fixed his languid eyes on me,
As near his cross I stood.

Sure never till my latest breath
Can I forget that look;
He seemed to charge me with his death,
Though not a word he spoke.

A second look he gave, and said,
'I freely all forgive;
This blood is for thy ransom paid,
I die that thou may'st live.'"

O the severity and goodness of God! Severity to the lamb and goodness to the ass. The eyes of the Lamb are saying to the ass, In my love and pity I am dying to redeem thee, my blood is shed because of thy uncleanness. And the ass, the broken-hearted sinner, looks unto the Lamb, (Isaiah xlv. 22,) looks upon the stream his flowing wounds supply. He looks to the Lamb, Christ crucified, with all entreaty, with all affection, views mercy's streams in streams of blood. O can it be the spotless Lamb pours forth his life to ransom me? "He hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."—Isaiah liii. 12. The lamb dies for the ass. The priest takes the blood and sprinkles it round about upon the altar (Lev. i. 11,) and offers the body of the lamb a burnt sacrifice unto the Lord, and all the while as the ass, the poor sinner, is looking upon these transactions his sin-bruised heart is crying, "God be merciful to me a sinner;" "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." O Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make a vile sinner clean. Now, while the fire is consuming its victim, the lamb, how fragrant is the air; yes, the sacrifice of the lamb is a sweet-smelling sacrifice unto God. (Eph. v. 2; Gen. viii. 21.) The air we breathe now at the door of the tabernacle is perfumed with the burning sweet incense, (Exodus xxx. 8,) a perpetual incense before the Lord. The ass breathes these sweet odors with every breath, they make sweet, so fragrant unto the Lord his cries; it is the spirit of grace and supplications poured forth in his heart. (Zech. xii. 10.) O the prayers of the ass are perfumed with the merits of the lamb; (Rev. v. 8; viii. 3, 4,) they are perfumed with frankincense and myrrh, with Jesus the Lamb's strong crying and tears, (Heb. v. 7,) with the blood that speaketh unto God in behalf of the church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven. (Heb. xii. 24.) Christ

made intercession for transgressors. The ass cometh unto God by the lamb, and Christ ever liveth to make intercession for those who come unto God by him. (Heb. vii. 25.) The ass, the sinner, looks upon the blood of the sacrifice, and his prayer enters into the holiest, comes before the blood-sprinkled mercy-seat: God, be merciful, be propitiated to me, a sinner, by the sacrifice of the Lamb. The blood of the lamb has been shed for the ass, the blood has been sprinkled upon the altar, and the burnt sacrifice has been made, and the priest sprinkles the blood upon the ass. Ye are come unto the blood of sprinkling, (Heb. xii. 24,) the "sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."—1 Peter i. 2. It is done; the priest smiles upon the ass. The countenance of the Lord in the face of Jesus Christ shines pardon and justification upon the redeemed sinner, (Num. vi. 27,) and the master saith, Come, follow me, and this firstling of an ass follows his kind master home. That publican went down to his house justified, (Luke xviii. 14,) and this ass goes back to the home of his owner redeemed by the blood of the lamb. That journey to the door of the tabernacle was on a dark and cloudy day, with only now and then a rift in the cloud for a moment's sunlight, but it is a pleasant journey home. The dark cloud has been blotted out, (Isaiah xliv. 22,) the sun has chased the clouds from the heavens, and pours down his animating smiles upon the ass. (Mal. iv. 2.) Do the dogs bark at the ass journeying back with his master? Not a dog moves his tongue against this redeemed beast or his master. (Exodus xi. 7.) The blood of the lamb silences them. Who dares lift up his voice against the ass now, and say, "Break his neck"? O the pardoned sinner is justified from all offences and redeemed from the curse of the law. The Lamb is our propitiation through faith in his blood, and we are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. (Romans iii. 24.) "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."—Romans viii. 33, 34. Should any adversary with mocking voice dare disturb the peace of the ass, crying out against it, Thou art an ass, break his neck, the owner of the ass will arise to his defence and say, This ass is mine, I have redeemed it with the blood of the lamb. This will cast down and put to flight all the accusers and foes of the ass. The ass shall overcome all his tormentors by the blood of the lamb. (Rev. xii. 11.) That ass is happy following his master home. With sweet tokens of pardon and redemption a poor sinner is happy, making grateful melody in his heart to the Lord. (Eph. v. 19.) Can the redeemed ass ever forget the lamb? O the ransomed, pardoned sinner often meditates upon the Lamb that was slain and who liveth again. "My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord."—Psalms civ. 34. There they are, the ass and his master at home, and the master tells his heart to the ass, saying, Thou art mine, thou art doubly mine. "Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." Now the master will surely well care for the ass that is precious in his sight, for he gave the lamb to redeem it. (Isaiah xliii. 1–4.) Yes, he will see that it is well fed that it may grow up to his praise. "The young asses [redeemed by the blood of the lamb] that ear ['plow

and till,' very good employment in the service of such a master,] the ground, shall eat clean provender, which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan."—Isaiah xxx. 24. The master will provide, and he himself will see that all unwholesomeness shall be cleansed away from his food, and the ass will learn to know his master's crib, where he is fed day by day, (Isaiah i. 3,) and well will it be for the redeemed ass to be satisfied with the pure, nourishing food his master provides, and not think that food out of some other crib would be just as good. O, dear child of God, there is no doctrine so good as the doctrine of God our Savior; there is no crib like our Lord and Master's crib. He abundantly blesses Zion's provisions; every morsel of the gospel is a blessing to hungry souls who eat such food. God will satisfy the poor with bread. Only our Jesus, our Redeemer, has the words of eternal life; therefore "as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious."—1 Peter ii. 2, 3. How wicked would be that act should one put even one dark drop of poison, one word of heresy into the milk of newborn babes! The master will lead his ass to the watering. (Luke xiii. 15.) Yes, Christ, our Master, who is the Lamb of God, will lead us (Rev. vii. 17,) and cause us to drink of the river of his pleasures. (Psalms xxxvi. 8; Rev. xxii. 1.) Now if any dog, any one, any power, should attempt to annoy this ass, and prevent his drinking of the water of the river, the Lamb that was slain and now liveth again, who redeemed the ass, will defend the ass from all his adversaries and in his wrath destroy them. Does this look strange to you that the Lamb should lead, protect and fight for the ass? Look with me into this precious gospel mystery, and let us be comforted and happy in soul while we worship the Lamb that was slain for us. The apostle John tells us that "one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth."—Rev. v. 5, 6. Surely if the Lamb that was slain is the Lion, then the foes of the ass had better be careful not to harm, not to make a prey of, not to bark at the ass whom the Lamb has redeemed by his blood. But redeemed asses, sinners called by grace, have many enemies. There, I wish you would not use that word ass so much, it does not sound polite to be called asses. Well, complaining friend, if the Holy Spirit should discover to you what you are, and bring down your soul in abasement at the feet of Jesus, and your humbled heart were saying, So foolish am I, and ignorant, I am as a beast before thee, this would cure your squeamishness over the use of the designation ass. See what a miracle of grace can do, as represented in Isaiah xi. 1–9. The foes of the companions of the Lamb are many, but he is the Captain of their salvation. "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful."—Rev. xvii. 14. Jesus the Lamb is Christ the Lord, he is God and man, Emmanuel. Are we with the Lamb? Then in all things we are more than conquerors through him that

loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood. Suppose this redeemed ass should fall into a pit, could he get out? No, indeed, but his owner who redeemed him would seek for him, and find him, too, and then would he stand at the mouth of the pit in a towering rage and call the ass all manner of hard names because he had fallen into the pit? Would he thus aggravate the woes of the ass and tell him that he was a careless, stupid thing, and now that he was bruised and broken that he was of no use to him, and threaten to leave him to perish in the pit? No; this owner of whom I am writing would with his mighty, loving, outstretched arm pull him out of the pit, and that day would be a day of rest indeed, a sabbath day to the saved, bruised ass. (Luke xiv. 5.) Some asses have unkind, cruel masters, with no affection. Balaam was such. (Num. xxii. 21–33.) Satan, the prince of darkness, rides upon many asses, he is cruel, and beats them and drives them to perdition. There is the bridle of their own lusts in their jaws, causing them to err, (Isaiah xxx. 28,) and the prince of the power of the air is their rider. (Eph. ii. 2.) This redeemed ass has a good Master, "he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass."—Zech. ix. 9. And the bridle in the ass's mouth is God's light and truth of Christ's gospel, (Psalms xliii. 3,) and guided by this bridle the Master and the ass enter the city of peace. Does the loving Master ever chastise the redeemed ass? Yes, but it is ever in faithfulness, (Psalms cxix. 75,) for his profit, (Heb. xii. 10,) ever in love, (Rev. iii. 19,) to keep him from going astray. (Psalms cxix. 67.) Ah, have you not known that in going astray, in listening to an evil heart of unbelief, and thus departing from the living God, (Heb. iii. 12,) that we find pitfalls everywhere? Pitfalls of unbelief, pitfalls of heresy, pitfalls the lusts of our flesh. Horrible pits and miry clay. O we need our Master and Redeemer to be ever with us, for we know that we are still, in ourselves, foolish and ignorant. The psalmist says, "Thou hast holden me by my right hand."—Psalms lxxiii. 23. If my hand is clasped in thine, O Lord, thou wilt not let me go. Who shall unclasp the hand of Omnipotence and pluck his loved ones from his almighty, redeeming hand? (John x. 28.) "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

PSALMS LXXXIX. 15.

"BLESSED is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance."

The above language has been on my mind for several days, and I think I can look back to some bright spots in my past life where I could joyfully accept the above saying of David. He did not say to hear the joyful sound, but to know the joyful sound, still he does not mean that we shall not hear as well as know it. We hear many sounds throughout the whole earth, but they are not all joyful sounds. We hear many bells all around us that are called by some gospel bells, but they are not joyful sounds to the people of God, but to the contrary they are but sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. Paul said, "For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" A good soldier must know the sound of the trumpet in time of war, for when he

hears it sound for action in battle he knows it means for him to go forth to the fight. When I lived on a farm some years ago I had a horse that would stop still in the field when he heard my farm bell ring at noon for dinner. Sometimes we would be at the far side of the field when the bell rang, and we often had trouble to get him over to the near side of the field so we could unharness him for dinner. Our neighbors all around us would often ring their bells before mine, but the old horse would never take any notice of the sound of them, but just as soon as my bell rang he would stop and lift up his head and neigh. Instinct taught him to know the sound of his master's bell, and he knew full well what was laid up in store for him by his master. Thus it is with the people of God, they know the joyful sound, and they are blessed who hear it, for it gives them beauty for ashes and the oil of joy for mourning. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."—Isaiah xl. 1, 2. Salvation by grace, and grace only, is the joyful sound.

"Amazing grace (how sweet the sound),
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."

O how I do long for such sweet seasons as I had in my first love, in hearing the joyful sound, but instead I grope in darkness the most of my time, and I often wonder if those bright seasons were mine to enjoy in knowing the joyful sound as David sets forth in his beautiful Psalm. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound." I am often troubled with sin and Satan, so much so that I think I will stop trying to write on spiritual things, for most every time I sit down to write I find him at my side ready to contradict everything I write, but always willing to dictate for me if I will just let him. O sometimes I fear that I am a captive of the devil at his will; I often feel like those dear souls who were led away captives: "By the river of Babylon, there we sat down [yes, they felt too weak to stand]; yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion." They had to hang their harps upon the willows; they had no use for them then, but they that carried them away required of them mirth while in their distress of mind. Satan will always appear to us at the weakest point and ask us to do things just to grieve us. But all that those dear captives could say in reply was, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" O no, they could not sing, neither could they hear the singing of birds nor the voice of the turtle in that land, but they remembered Zion and it made them weep. Yes, they wept when they remembered Zion. Bright spots in their past lives, where they sat down under God's shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to their taste. O the joyful sound! I can remember it in the days of my youth. My memory carries me back to a very bright spot in my life more than twenty years ago, when I attended a May meeting at New Valley, Va. Dear Elder White was there, and to me his face did shine as the noonday sun. Brother Eubanks preached in the forenoon, followed by brother Wm. L. Beebe, and I will say right here if I have ever known the joyful sound as set forth by David in this eighty-ninth Psalm, I believe I knew it that day, for I was made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Brother Lester came in the afternoon; it was my first time of

meeting him, and when he went up into the stand to preach I wondered in my mind if such a fine looking man as he could preach comfort to a poor, plain sinner like me, and before he got half through with his discourse I felt like clapping my hands, for joy filled my whole being, and I wept for joy. Dear reader, did you ever weep for joy? If so, then you know what I mean. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance."

"Blow ye the trumpet, blow
The gladly solemn sound;
Let all the nations know,
To earth's remotest bound,
The year of jubilee is come;
Return, ye ransomed sinners, home."

But I am making this letter too long. I fear I have only seen the passing shadow and missed the substance altogether, and if I should write on and try to tell something of walking "in the light of thy countenance" I might fall by the wayside, and not be able to mount up with wings as eagles, run and not be weary, walk and not faint. I thought the last letter I wrote and sent to the dear old SIGNS would be my last one, and I told one of my esteemed sisters so at Frying Pan, at our meeting in February, and she turned to me and said, "I am sorry to hear you say that, for I know of an afflicted woman who said she had been comforted in reading your letters in the SIGNS." I then said to her, "O, I reckon I will have to take my vow back; if I have ever given any one comfort in my poor way of expressing myself, I am willing to keep on trying to write for the dear old SIGNS, should the editors see fit to publish my efforts."

Yours, with a desire of fellowship,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

HERNDON, Va., March 28, 1910.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., May 29, 1910.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed you will find a letter I received on my birthday and enjoyed it so much that I thought to share it with the household of faith, if you think it worthy a place in our family paper.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) HELEN KINNEY.

DEAR SISTER KINNEY:—For a few days past I have desired to remember you on your birthday, May 1st, 1910, by writing you a letter, if the Lord wills. He only knows if it is of the flesh or not; but my desire is that God will be pleased to give me a few thoughts that may comfort you. When I think of the dear fathers and mothers in Israel who have spoken and written words of comfort to me, and who are nearing the end of their pilgrimage journey, it makes me feel sad, still I feel I ought not to mourn for them, being assured that when they leave this world they will be free from sin, from sorrow free, there to spend eternity, no more to strive with flesh and blood, but cease from sin and rest in God.

"O glorious day, O blessed hope,
My heart leaps forward at the thought
When in that happy, happy land,
We'll no more take the parting hand."

I have not a doubt about any Old School Baptist except myself, but it ever has been a mystery to me how any of the dear children of God could love and fellowship one so worthless as I.

"For sure of all the plants that share
The notice of thy Father's eye,
None proves less grateful to his care,
Or yields him meaner fruit than I."

I know I am not worthy of this love and fellowship, still I feel I should be heartbroken if I knew they did not have fellowship for me. I feel to say,

"O, could I hear thine heavenly tongue
But whisper, Thou art mine,
Those gentle words should raise my song
To notes almost divine."

But thus far I have never been blessed with an assurance, but I believe I can say, I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me. I have ever wanted an assurance, and when I first became a member I tried to pray for it, and sometimes I hope my prayer was answered, but it was "in such a way as almost drove me to despair." How true that God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. I fear if any of God's people knew how worldly and sinful I have been of late they would not think me worthy to write them. Is it not wonderful to think that we are no better by nature than the most wicked of the human family, and to be given a love for the doctrine hated by the world and also given to see the kingdom of God (the church), and love the members who are hated by the world? for this is evidence that we are of the favored number for whom Christ died, and we shall be holy and without blame before God in love, for we are told, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." If we are so unspeakably favored as to be one of the redeemed, it makes no difference how many trials we have to pass through we will have grace and strength sufficient to endure. I feel there would be no hope for me if God had not promised to be merciful to the unrighteousness of his children, for I am all unrighteousness; vile and full of sin I am, God is full of grace and truth. What a blessing to feel that God has a purpose in our trials and crosses as well as our joys; but in our trials it seems much harder to trust God and say, "Thy will be done," than when things go as we would have them. I feel to say,

"Thus far my God has led me on,
And made his truth and mercy known;
My hopes and fears alternate rise,
And comforts mingle with my sighs."

I feel I need my mind stirred up, if indeed I have a pure mind, for surely I am barren of spiritual fruits, my soul lies cleaving to the dust. Lord, give me life divine.

"When I experience call to mind,
My understanding is so blind,
All feeling sense seems to be gone,
Which makes me fear that I am wrong."

Surely the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and never will bring forth anything but corrupt fruit, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. No two of God's children act out their nature the same, but in spirit they are one, and as soon as we see one led by the Spirit of Christ we love that one, for we cannot help it. It seems so easy for me to love them that it does not seem that can be an evidence that I am a child of Jehovah, a subject of grace, still we are told, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Again, we are told, "We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen, is not hope." I have thought that if I had an experience like others, surely I would know I am a child of God; but if I knew, where would be my hope? for hope that is seen, is not hope, so I have taken some comfort that this may be God's way of keeping me at the feet of my Savior. If I know my own heart, I would desire to be at the feet of the Savior, and at the feet of my brethren, esteeming all better than myself, and altogether forget self, but this seems to be impossible for me, I am so filled with pride that I fear if God's people knew

me they would have no fellowship for me.

I have written far more than I intended to, so will close, desiring that God will lead you the remainder of your journey the way that will be best for your good and his glory, that he will reconcile you to his will in each trial that lies before you, so that you may feel to say, Thy will, O God, and not mine, be done, and when you have lived your appointed days may he take you to his bosom to rest eternally and sing praises unto his name.

From one who desires to walk soberly, righteously and godly, but I feel thus far I have utterly failed.

LAURA BAILEY.

BALTIMORE, Md., May 5, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I inclose a letter from sister Ida G. Jarmon that I would like to see in the SIGNS, if you think proper to give it a place. She came to Baltimore, as she writes it was in her mind to do, and she was blessed to state clearly to the church the substance of what she had written and was very heartily received, and although it rained almost continuously, we went to the Patapsco River, at the foot of Charles Street, and in the presence of a goodly number of the church and friends I baptized her in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Church. We all have known sister Ida for a long time, she having been here in the city as a teacher for some years, attending our meetings regularly, and we have had fellowship for her some years. It was therefore a great pleasure to have her come and confess her faith in Christ, and her love for us as a church. May the dear Lord in mercy be with our dear sister and and give her to feel at home with his church and people. This makes five that have come in our fellowship by baptism in twelve months, and yet there are others lingering on the outside whom we would welcome any day. We feel that we have great reason to thank and praise the God of our salvation for his mercies here, and also for the hope of the resurrection of the dead.

Your brother in this blessed hope,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

CLAIBORNE, Md.

DEAR ELDER ROWE:—I will attempt to write you this evening, in appreciation of the kind and comforting letter of some months ago. When I last saw you I thought I would have gone to meeting ere this, but circumstances have prevented, and the flesh was too weak to surmount the obstacles. I have it in mind to come up for meeting next Sunday, and I hope I may be strengthened to ask a place with the church. I fully realize my own weakness and depravity, and could they know me as I see and know myself I fear they could never receive me. I know I will do the church no good, but I hope it will do me good. I am not satisfied outside, and long to be with those whom I think are God's people. If they are not, I know not where to find them. As a child I always felt that the Old Baptists were good people, and hoped that I might some day be one of them; but it was my desire that I might be troubled deeply on account of my lost condition, like some of the experiences I read, then I thought I would have sufficient evidence that I had been born again, but if I know anything about it, it has pleased the good Lord to lead me very differently. I do not recall that I was ever deeply troubled over my sins, but had a terrible fear of death. I realized I was not ready to die, and felt

myself powerless to do anything to prepare myself, as many term it. I have had people of other denominations ask me why I did not join, but joining the church could not satisfy me, I would have felt worse than before. If it could have been, I would gladly have done so years ago. Until 1906 it was only once in awhile that the thought of having to die troubled me, but during that year I was more or less troubled all the time, and when I was taken seriously ill, on August 10th, 1906, and felt I had to die in my helpless condition and distress, I cried, "Lord, show me the way," and I hope and trust he did, for the Savior on the cross was shown to me, and I was made to rest in green pastures beside still waters, and across the stream I could see the congregation of the Baltimore Church as plainly as I had ever seen it in my life. All was peace with me, and that terrible fear gone, and has never returned, but a new one came, a fear that I cannot live rightly in the sight of my God, who has done so much for me. For a time after my recovery I had a season of peace and happiness, nothing of an earthly nature seemed to worry me, but it was short lived, and soon I found myself worse than ever. It has been nearly four years now since I first received a hope, and much of that time it has been a question with me, Am I a child of God? Have I a right to offer myself to the church? I have hoped I might see myself better, or have some stronger evidence, but have waited in vain, and now I feel I cannot stay away any longer. If I have been disobedient in staying away I hope for forgiveness, for it was not done in the spirit of neglecting my duty. I have missed going to meeting and mingling with members more than I can tell, but have been blessed in many ways, and the SIGNS has been a great pleasure to me this year.

I will take no more of your time now, but hope to see you next Sunday, and, if I can, may go out to see you Saturday evening.

With love to you and your family, your unworthy friend,

IDA G. JARMON.

PLANT CITY, Florida, May 13, 1910.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—My subscription to the SIGNS is due, and I remember it every day, I think, but have neglected sending it from time to time, hoping that I would get into a better frame of mind to write you. I have desired to write something for our family paper, that is, if I am worthy to be called one of the family, but my unworthiness seems so great that that is about all I can see. I can very easily esteem my brethren better than myself. I have but little time at home, my time is about all taken up serving churches in much weakness, fear and trembling; still the seven little churches are in peace and love one with another; I am serving five of the seven. The field appears to be white, ready for the harvest. O that the Lord would send laborers into the vineyard, is my prayer. I feel lonely and desolate, and often cast down, yet I am not destroyed. Often I feel to use the expression of David, Is the Lord clean gone forever? Hath he forgotten to be gracious? What did Jesus come down from heaven to do? He said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." He does not leave us to guess at any-

thing, he tells us plainly what he came for. Now the question with the religious world is, Did he do what he came to do? They say, no, that he only came to give every one a chance to be saved. But the Bible teaches that he finished the work which the Father gave him to do, and on the cross he said, "It is finished." He bore our sins in his own body on the tree, and with his stripes we are healed. All of the elect family were healed in Christ; all their sins were put away, and there is nothing against them any more. There is therefore no condition to be performed by them in order to their salvation; all is done for them, and the elect only are the happy recipients of the grace and mercy of God. They were sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Hence it is all of grace, and not one particle of condition remains to be performed by man. Adam is of the earth earthy, and can do nothing that pertains to godliness; the second Adam is the Lord from heaven, a quickening Spirit, and he can do all things. Hence Peter said, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from the fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God." Not in your own works, but in God alone. He is the only hope of salvation for any poor sinner, and, beside, the sinner must be brought to see and know that he himself has no power. God has all power in heaven and in earth, and works all things after the counsel of his own will, and will be glorified in all his works, and all his works shall praise him. The mouth of man shall praise him, for our God is an absolute sovereign, he rules over all worlds, things and events, and he rules in righteousness, and what he does is right. I can but say, If my soul were sent to hell, his righteous law approves it well. He hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. It was his right to make all things as it pleased him, for he is the Potter and we are the clay. Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? By man came sin, and death by sin. What a merciful High Priest we have. Man had sold himself for naught, and our God bowed the heavens and came down, and took upon himself our nature, yet without sin, and so redeemed us from the curse. Hence it is all of grace, both for time and eternity. He was both God and man; he bore our sins in his own body; he hungered and thirsted, was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Now his elect are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. If God hath ordained their works, are they not as sure as their creation in Christ? There is nothing doubtful on God's part, but our doubt or fear is this, Am I one of the chosen ones who are embraced in that covenant ordered in all things and sure? which is all our salvation and desire, although he

maketh it not to grow. This family is not like that of Adam, for that was made to increase and multiply and replenish and subdue the earth. But there has never been any increase in the chosen family of God, for in that family is neither male nor female, but all are one in Christ. Hence this is a spiritual house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, and we therefore are pilgrims and strangers in the earth, and are living in hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie promised before the world began. This is a good hope; it is as an anchor of the soul. We are waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body, when it shall be raised incorruptible. What a blessed hope it is that our vile body shall be changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body. This was enough to assure David and all of the household of faith.

Brother Chick, I have written as my mind has been led, and after reading it over I at first did not feel as though I could send it, but I know we are all imperfect beings, so I will send it for you to do with as you think best. My health is declining very fast, and without a change it does not appear likely that I shall trouble you any more, but God knows.

Your unworthy servant in trials and affliction,

J. W. FUTCH.

[WE desire to express a word of sympathy for our brother in his declining health, and we feel to also express our gladness for the faith that is in him. When earthly things fade away, these things shall endure. How good it is to find our blessed Lord all and in all. How good to recognize his divine sovereignty, as our brother has done in the above letter.—C.]

ISAIAH LV. 1.

"BUY wine and milk without money, and without price."

By using natural things as figures the Savior and the prophets showed spiritual things, and the great Creator, the God of heaven and earth, reveals them to men, ("Interpretations belong to God."—Gen. xl. 8.) and the beauty of these passages of Scripture as they are unfolded causes men to write and speak of them, write hymns, &c. The milk and wine refer to spiritual things, to God's love and mercy, when his hungry poor are being blessed with spiritual food without money or price. It cannot be purchased, but belongs to all who have hope in God's love and mercy. The prophet would call the attention of all the doubting ones, those who dare not enjoy these things for fear they were not intended for them, but were intended only for good people, while they are standing outside, hungry and thirsty. They dare not deny this to themselves, although they do not admit it to others; but God searches the heart. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." This takes in all these doubting little ones. "Come ye to the waters" (the preached word and promises of the gospel), and drink of the good word of God and the powers of the world to come. And more than this, you shall be filled with better things than you expected, as you only hoped to quench the perpetual thirst which has come upon you; you shall have food with your drink, even the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby. There never was a cedar of Lebanon so straight or so tall but that it was once a little, tender plant, and all God's little ones need the sincere milk of the word that they may grow thereby; they need instruction in doctrine, too, but if they

have no hungering for the Bread of life the preaching of doctrine will be very dry talk to them. When John was cast into prison and sent his disciples to the Savior to be assured that he was indeed the Christ, the answer was, "Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." As for the doctrines of predestination, election, repentance and remission of sin, Christ himself was a living proof of them all, and the preaching of John had been to the poor, to those outside of Jerusalem, to those who had no money to buy doves with, and who did not know all the Jewish law. John himself had been poor, and he knew the love and mercy of God for sinners, and if the blessings of the gospel are not for the poor, having no goodness, or fine prayers, or doves to offer, yet are thirsty and weary, will some one tell me who they are for? James says, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction," &c. Then this sincere milk of the word must be for the poor, the sick and the afflicted, and without money it is yours, that Word that liveth and abideth forever, the Word whereof if a man eat he shall never die. As milk is the natural food for the child, so is the milk of the word used here as the best food for the child of grace, that it may grow thereby. I used to listen to every word when a minister would tell of his experience as a conscious sinner before his deliverance from bondage, to see if there was any hope for me by comparison, but they could not seem to think that there might be some one waiting on their words, and would not tell of their deliverance from that state. I remember of hearing but two preachers tell of how and when their deliverance came; I suppose they are afraid of telling it too often. I would get a crumb of comfort now and then, generally when I least expected it, without money or price.

"Buy wine." Wine was used to strengthen the weak and injured, also at feasts, as at weddings, and this wine of the kingdom comes to strengthen the doubting ones; they cannot come to God or his people in their own name, but must come in the name of Jesus Christ. His blood that was shed for many is compared to wine. He trod the winepress alone. This then is the wine that the prophet is calling them to drink: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." This wine gives strength to those who are without strength, and doubting, unto eternal life. It is also the wine of the wedding feast of the marriage of Christ and his bride. Ho, you who are doubting, you who are waiting, have you a hope in his mercy? have you a hope that his blood was shed for you? have you any other hope? The church cannot receive any one in their own name, all must come professing hope in God's mercy through the blood of Christ, then they are gladly received as children coming home to their father's house, but all have to be saved from their own works, not in them or by them. Come then, every one that thirsteth, buy this wine without money, that the Savior told his disciples of when he spoke of drinking it anew with them in the kingdom, for none outside of the kingdom can know what that joy is, nor the peace that passeth understanding. "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

A. E. RITTENHOUSE.

CLINTON, N. J., Dec. 2, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As the time is here for me to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, I feel like telling you how much I have enjoyed reading it. It is filled with the truth of the Bible, and I am made to rejoice that others have traveled the same path that I have done, and have the same doubts and fears. I am not situated so I can get to the meeting very often, and I cannot do without the SIGNS, because there are so many comforting letters in each number. The dear ones can tell my feelings better than I can. I feel that I am a poor, sinful creature, and my prayer is to be kept humble. I am now in my sixty-sixth year, and as far back as I can remember I loved to read the SIGNS. My father, Mahlon Hulsizer, took it, and his home was a home for Old School Baptists whenever they came that way, and he often had meetings in his home. I am not well any of the time, and I often pray God, if it be his holy will, to take me where I shall rest forever, yet I must wait his call. There are times when it seems to me that I feel the presence of my Lord with me. O blessed hope! what would my life be without it, the hope of eternal life? We know that we shall be satisfied when we see him as he is. I feel too unworthy to claim the dear name of Jesus, and I am so ignorant, yet I know that I love the dear people of God. Elder Vail is our pastor, he preaches for us every third Sunday, and he comes to our home and visits us at times. Also brother Fenton comes, and we enjoy their conversation upon heavenly things. Some time ago there were a few words of Scripture given me: "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." He has promised never to leave nor forsake us. It is said, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Will all the dear ones pray for poor, unworthy me? Pray that the darkness of my mind be removed, and that my life, the few days allotted me, may be made clear and pleasant and that I be kept humble.

You will wonder why I have written all this. When I began I only wanted to tell you that I could not get along without the SIGNS. I am formed of feeble dust, and the almighty arm of God is my trust, and I rest upon the finished work of the Redeemer, but I ask often, "Am I his, or am I not?" I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he sticketh closer that a brother, and he loveth at all times. I do once more rejoice in God my Savior. He knows our frame, he remembers that we are dust. No matter what my feelings may be, I know that the dear Jesus is the same now and forevermore. Our dear pastor is at Locktown to-day, but I do not feel well enough to go. I would love to join the dear ones. I hope that in spirit I am with them. But this I cannot tell, as you know it is unspeakable.

As far back as I can remember I loved to read the letters written by sister Bessie Durand, they told my feelings better than I could tell them. From my childhood, little by little were these blessed things unfolded to me. There is much sweetness that cannot be told. My mind goes out to those whom I have known; there is such a nearness to them. As I read their letters it seems that I can hear them talking. Excuse this imperfect letter. I am the least of all.

(MRS.) E. J. DEMOTT.

WILMOT, Ark., April 11, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As I survey the situation around us, the surging, pressing wars of humanity, and see the great forces that are against Zion, it would seem indeed and in truth, looking at the matter from a human standpoint, that the little church of God was well-nigh ready to sink, never to rise again from beneath the rolling, dashing waves of Arminianism, so very pregnant with false religion and idolatry; yea, it would seem indeed that she was well-nigh desolation and destruction, yea, complete annihilation from the face of the earth. But do you believe this? I believe that same Hand that garnished the heavens with his glory, that same almighty power that created sun, moon and the innumerable stars, and that placed them in yonder deep blue vault above us, also controls the whole machinery of his providence. Yea, the same hand that gave loveliness to the lily, and sweetness, color and beauty to the rose, said unto the proud waves of the sea, the sea of falsehood, Thus far shalt thou come, and no farther. The same almighty power said unto the church, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." That the church might perish would greatly please every Sunday School teacher, class leader or Christian Endeavor Society organizer. How does the word read? "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Is this all that we find between the lids of the Bible that is edifying, strengthening and comforting to the sinner? O no, surely not. Turn to Proverbs xvi. 33, and you will find this language: "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." Let us examine this carefully. Is it said that the disposing thereof is of some Missionary society or board, or of some Sunday School, or of some Bible or Tract society? Do you believe this? Do you not know that such teaching as this, false as it would be, would give delight to every missionary in the land? It is for just such falsehood as this that the Arminian world pours in her thousands of dollars every year in support of what they call the gospel. But let us get the matter as it reads. "The lot," which I understand to be the little flock, the bride, the Lamb's wife, the new Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all, the church of the living God, is cast into the lap of providence, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord. How comforting is this testimony of divine truth to each and every child of God who can feelingly say with the psalmist, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." Then let me ask, Is not all this Sunday School work, this missionary and Christian Endeavor work, yea, all the religious work that is in the world, folly and fashion and show? It all belongs to the world, and the world loves its own. No wonder they can spread themselves like the green bay tree, or like the peacock, and my belief is that they all have just about as much pure and undefiled religion as that bird has. And what is the fruit of all their labor? According to divine testimony, after they have compassed sea and land and have made proselytes, they are, after all, but the children of hell. O wonderful thought, and still more wonderful assumption indeed, that poor, feeble man should say, If you will give to missionaries means enough, we can convert the world to Christ. How preposterous for men to give God the lie, and deny the efficacy or merits of the blood of Christ. But the

Scriptures must be fulfilled. The missionary and false teacher having itching ears shall (not may be so) wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

C. G. IRWIN.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., May 10, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I feel to rejoice in the Lord, because he has given me so much food recently in reading my papers and hearing from the brethren in various parts of our land. Your editorials on Predestination and Enmity, Elder Ker's on the Garden of Eden, Elder Durand's communication on The Virtuous Woman and Elder Keene's communication in the last SIGNS, on the Atonement, all have been of great interest and benefit to me. These are not all, but I speak of them because I got much more out of them than I usually do out of things I read. They made me feel so much of my ignorance that it brought about a questioning as to whether I had ever preached the blessed gospel. How good it is to "know the joyful sound." Even those who cannot tell it at all, if they only know it when it is told, they have the blessing. Then to think that even those who think on His name have the blessing.

I have thought much of the perfection of the way of the Lord. That which is perfect cannot be improved upon, nor can it progress. Whenever any improvements can be made, or the thing can progress, it is sure that there is a deficiency in the thing. This is a sure evidence that none of the religions of the world are of God, for they are continually being improved to be more suitable to the times and ways of men. The true religion of our Lord knows no more change that does the Lord himself, for it is the spiritual work of his hand. Adam was good, but Jesus the Christ is perfect. Adam could sin and die, but the perfect Man could not sin, he was perfect. All the works of man are deficient and can be improved upon, but the work of the Lord is like himself and cannot be otherwise, therefore the religion which he set in the world is of the foundation of revealed faith in him, and it must endure and remain in that perfect way.

It is somewhat surprising to see so many of our brethren making war against the absolute sovereignty of our eternal God. I do not see how one who has been made to see and feel his helplessness can hope for salvation in any other way than to feel that his God has absolute control over all his enemies, whether they are within himself or from the outside. We know by experience that if we are left to ourselves a grasshopper is a burden, and we are ready to flee at the least noise, unless we can feel that our great Captain has gone on before, and that his almighty arm has carried all our burdens.

Another thing I cannot understand is, how one who has been made to know his own weakness can feel that since he has been born again he is now a living, active being, more independent of God and the need of him than he was when he was dead in sins. I do not know that I have ever been taught of the Spirit, but if I have, it is not that way. I feel just as dependent to-day as I did the morning before my burden was taken away. The older I grow the more I feel the need of the hand of God to guide me and to lead me. When the prophet said, God is the Potter, and we are the clay, he spoke in no uncertain words. As the clay is passive in the hands of the potter, so am I in the hand of God. Without him we can do nothing, but with him we can do

all things. Then it is Christ who performs, and I am the beneficiary, therefore the praise is his as the actor, and the benefit is mine as the receiver. In ourselves we can do nothing except to do like Jonah did, until we are all swallowed up, and we (or our will) are all destroyed, then we can do nothing else but obey the word of the Lord; therefore it is no more I that do it, but Christ that dwells in me. Hence I am yet just as passive as ever, and Christ is as active in my flesh in the fulfilling of his word as he was in himself in the days of his flesh, so I can take no praise to myself for anything, but must give all honor and praise to our Lord.

Your editorial in the last SIGNS is most excellent. Your remarks on "permit," "allow," &c., are just as I have seen and felt in my own heart. Then I cannot understand how it would change the certainty of a thing coming to pass as to whether God simply foreknew it, or whether he declared it, or predestinated it. If God foreknew it, it must be just that way; to say anything else would be flatly denying the knowledge and wisdom of God. If God knew it, there is no other power to bring it to pass except God himself. The work of God is not so great that he is compelled to employ a host of agents to work in the various departments of his dominion in order to get his work done; he filleth all, and is everywhere at the same time and every second of time. In this his people have great consolation, for if they are in darkness or the light God is there with them. "Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne." The Lord bless us all in his word and way.

Yours in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

2 TIMOTHY I. 13.

"HOLD fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."

May I submit a few thoughts on the first clause of this verse? hoping not to lose sight of the last clause by any means, but rather, if the Lord will, to hold the "faith and love which is in Christ Jesus," first in contemplating "the form of sound words," for it is preferable to enjoy the fellowship of a brother who pays little regard to sound words than to be separated from his company by being more nice than wise. It is the little things in life that count, and it is wonderful to consider the importance of holding to the form of words to the very letter, exactly as their writers have indicated, for without doing this we fail to follow the mind of the writer, or receive the evidence which his words, if properly held fast to, would submit. Holding these small words in their proper form, never leaving them out where they belong, and never putting them in where they do not occur, will, in my opinion, clear up many differences among good, sincere, truth-loving brethren. The words "of," "us," "in," "at," &c., are among the "small leaks that sink great ships," losing us on the great ocean of tradition, and beguiling us of our rest in the truth as it is in Jesus, in a true, straight, sailor-like course in our travel of christian experience. To read, Ready to be revealed "at" the last time, when the sound word is "in" the last time, throws the sailor out of his course, and beguiles him of his reward. In the verse reading, "Suffer little children to come unto me," &c., to omit the word "of" leaves out all which is taught here on the election of God of his people.

The word "clerk" occurs but once in the Bible, Acts xix. 35, regarding the

town clerk of Ephesus, and not as an officer in the church; why then should we attach a worldly title in church service? If modesty forbids a pastor or deacon from signing the title bestowed on them by the church, which is theirs to use in church work, surely the admonition of Paul to Timothy, to hold fast the form of sound words, should forbid others to accept or assume titles not warranted, or to indulge in forms of unsound words.

Sincerely in love of truth,

EVERETT R. KINNEY.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., June 23, 1910.

PINSONFORK, Ky., May 13, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I herewith send you a good letter written me by Elder J. E. Thornbury, of Ratcliff, Ky. It has been, and yet is, of much comfort and interest to me, and I desire that all the readers and contributors of the dear old SIGNS may have the privilege of reading it, and thereby enjoy, to some degree at least, the sweet comfort and consoling thought of the God-blessed truth of the eternal vital unity or oneness of Christ and his people, the church, which is his body, which is so clearly set forth in his short letter; therefore if you deem it worthy I hope you will publish it in the SIGNS. I have not obtained his consent, but being personally acquainted with the dear brother I am sure it will be all right with him.

Yours in sore trials,

W. J. MAY.

RATCLIFF, Ky., May 1, 1910.

ELDER W. J. MAY—DEAR BROTHER:—I feel an impression to write you again this morning; as to what is prompting me you may be the judge; never in all my life did I feel more keenly my own weakness and need of God's sovereign and immutable grace. I know of a truth "that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." I am brought to know that in Jesus alone is merit, and by his righteousness alone can any poor and needy sinner stand justified before God. Without the leading of his Holy Spirit none can approach unto him, but must walk in the sparks of their own kindling, and after the vanity of their own carnal minds; but ah, my dear brother, when God, who commandeth the light to shine out of darkness, shines in the heart to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, then joy springs forth and hope is bright, and we are able to once more rejoice in the blessed comforts of his promise of eternal life, and of entering into the blessed enjoyments of the eternal inheritance unto which the whole election of grace are begotten and predestinated, even those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. We have this assurance, in that God hath given to us of his Spirit, even we who are so often ready to give up in despair, but for the sufficiency of our blessed Jesus as our all in all, as our Mediator, Sacrifice, Intercessor, Passover and High Priest, even he who gives us hope, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, and entereth into that within the veil, it is also both sure and steadfast. In this wonderful work of salvation there can be no condition, for it is all of God's free gift by grace; if it were left, any part of it, to man, then salvation would come to none, for the Scriptures most emphatically teach that it is not by works. If it were of works it could not be to God's glory. My dear brother, I feel that I must be plain in my statements. I cannot believe that any but those who

were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world (not a part, but all of them,) are holy and without blame before him in love. This sets forth more clearly my view of the unity or life-oneness of Christ, the Vine, and the branches, the members of his body, than any words I can use, for he has been their dwelling-place in all generations, before the mountains were brought forth, or ever he had formed the earth and the world. How can it be otherwise than that they existed, or had life in him, their spiritual Head? for he is their life, they live in him, and as their bread of life they live by him. Because they are justified freely by his grace they have peace with God, and because of their life in him, their Surety, before the fall, it was in perfect harmony with God's holy purpose that he should be delivered for their offences and raised for their justification, (that is, because of,) hence they are in Christ, and there is no condemnation to them. As Paul says, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus." They shall enter the portals of eternal glory and be glorified with the glory Christ had with the Father before the world was. In this they are more than conquerors through him that loved them. Such a blessed hope! is it not enough to cause every poor sinner saved by grace to give God all the glory in their salvation?

Much more could be written on this sublime subject of salvation, but I fear I might weary you. I would like to hear from you; this is the third time I have written since I had a letter from you. The churches of my care are all in peace, and manifest much interest, for which I hope I feel thankful to God.

With love to the brotherhood, I am, I hope, your brother in tribulation,

J. E. THORNBURY.

BALLINGER, Texas, March 19, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER HARRIS:—To-day is a very busy day with us, and I do not know why I am trying to take up your time again, when you never reply to my letters; however, when I sat down at the table, having nothing to write nor any one in view, you came to my mind. One Scripture has been on my mind for a short while: Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, for I never knew you. And another: "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Because God is one unchangeable Creator, all of his dear children will some day rest beyond this veil of sorrows, and because God before the world began did not know the alien sinners they are forever ruined, and according to my feeble understanding they are helpless, for the powers that be are ordained of God. "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." He is the all-wise Creator, the King of kings and Lord of lords. As Job says, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Most of my days are darkness, and I am like Jacob, I am in a wilderness of sin and ruin. One time I thought I was through sinning, but I soon feared that my hope was lost. Often I think that I have the experience of both apostles and prophets, but when I see myself as I am, the chief of sinners, I think I am mistaken in the whole matter, and want to take the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost parts of the sea, but even the Lord is there, and the

old psalmist said, Though I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. When Jonah was in the belly of hell he prayed, and the Lord heard his prayer, and there is no place too far away for God to fail to protect his children and be with them in time of trouble. Many times you felt that you were ruined, that you were forsaken, yea, that God was not your Savior, and then you were made to bow down as did the publican, and say, Lord, have mercy on me, a poor sinner.

Write to me if you can. Sincerely,

ABEL R. BURKS.

DELPHI FALLS, N. Y., Dec. 9, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I feel thankful to my dear Lord for his blessed gift, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I do not merely appreciate it, but feel to rejoice with thanksgiving of heart for the communications of the dear children of God, and for the great comfort it gives me. I say in my heart, My brother, my sister in the Lord, and feel a warm glow of fellowship for them, though vilest of them all. I am past eighty-one years of age, and O the wonder that I should have a blessed hope in the forgiveness and mercy of God in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, which hope I would not give for the world and all contained in it. It seems at times I must surely give up all hope, but still I hope on. It gives me comfort when I remember that Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, and that the Lord has taught me I am a great sinner. I cry to him to be merciful to me, a poor, helpless sinner. The Lord be praised for his mercies, both temporal and spiritual; this is what I desire to do. May God bless you with his kind care and keeping grace, is my desire.

In fellowship of the truth,

JAMES TAPNER.

ROANOKE, Va., April 26, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The SIGNS comes to me regularly, laden with good things, and after reading the good letters therein I feel that I would be glad to write to every one of them and tell them what precious things I see and how much good their letters have done this poor old soul, but old age and my limited education forbid. We have over one hundred members in the Roanoke Church, and I have tried hard to get them to take your paper, but so far I have failed to get them interested. I feel that every one ought to take the SIGNS, and I hope to send you some subscribers soon.

Yours in hope,

C. N. TURNER.

DECKERVILLE, Mich., Jan. 16, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please send the SIGNS to me as before. I also send you two dollars to send the paper to some dear brother or sister for one year who is not in a financial condition to readily pay for it. I hope I highly esteem the SIGNS for the truth's sake, and for the rich experiences of grace written by the dear children of God. I sometimes feel and realize that they describe my experience better in many ways than I could write about it myself.

Yours in love for the truth,

JOHN LEITCH.

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

WE are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1910.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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SPRINKLING UNSCRIPTURAL.

(Continued from page 439.)

In the last issue of the Signs, at the close of the editorial written by request of brother J. F. Farmer, of North Carolina, we said that it was in our mind to present in the next number some reflections upon what is the New Testament teaching concerning the order of the church of Christ, and upon the ordinance of baptism as well. It was our aim in the former number to show that neither the order of the church as an organization, nor the baptism which is to be observed in her, is to be derived from the Old Testament types. The Jewish people were not, in any sense of the word, the new testament church, and the ordinances of that former house were not in any way the ordinances of the church under the gospel. The new covenant is not the old covenant enlarged to take in the Gentiles, and the ordinances of that covenant were typical of things fulfilled in Christ, and not of the ordinances of the church. The first was taken away, that the second might be established. The church of Christ, built upon the rock, had no existence as an organization in the world until the blessed Master entered upon his public ministry. Men were saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation from the beginning of time it is true, but such a body as the church of God had no being until the gospel day was ushered in. For this very reason we must not look for the order or ordinances of that church in the Old Testament Scriptures. The ordinances of the church are themselves emblems, and the types or emblems of the former covenant cannot be types or emblems of other types or emblems, but are types of Jesus Christ and his work of redemption. But what can we learn from the New Testament of the order of the church? First, we learn that the church is to be made up of believers who profess their faith in Christ and are baptized. There is nothing said anywhere in the New Testament about the church being composed of believing parents and their children. As regards membership in this church there is nothing said about either infant or adult church membership. It is simply membership of believers who have confessed their faith and have been baptized. This membership may be of persons of any and all ages, if only they have confessed Christ and followed him in believers' baptism. We have emphasized this because the little book which brother Farmer sent us defines the church as being made up of believing parents and their children. The exact language is, "The visible church consists of all those throughout the world who profess the true religion, together with their children." The New Testament knows nothing of any one being a member of the true church, save as they not only believe the true faith, but also have confessed it in baptism. No one can be a member of the church of Christ, no matter how confidingly he believes in Christ, without following him in baptism.

And, still further, the New Testament knows nothing about any one being a member of the church of Christ unless he has believed and has been baptized. Baptism alone will not do, and belief alone will not do. Baptism must not precede belief, but belief must always precede baptism. Except a person has confessed Christ in the church, no ordinance or privilege of the church belongs to him. If a person, no matter of what age, from a child of few years to old age, does confess Christ, to that one belongs all the ordinances of the church, and all the privileges as well.

Let us now refer to New Testament practices as we have them stated there. When Jesus, first of all, broke bread, all who were present had confessed him. Upon the day of Pentecost only those who were pricked in the heart, and cried out under that pricking, were baptized and continued in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and when in his discourse Peter said, "The promise is unto you, and to your children," he was quick to limit his assertion by the words, "Even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Neither a Jew nor the child of a Jew, as such, had any right in this promise. Also it is equally true that neither a Gentile nor the child of a Gentile, as such, had any right in these things. It is the called of God alone, whether Jew or Gentile, whether parent or child, who shall receive the promise, and these called ones alone continued in the privileges that were conferred upon the church in the gospel. Now let us consider that this church formed at Jerusalem was the first to be organized after the Savior's resurrection. Here, if anywhere, surely the Lord would set a pattern for his church in all coming ages. It is sure that it is safe to follow this pattern, and in all the world there is no organization to-day calling itself the church of Christ that perfectly fits this pattern, save the Baptist Church, or churches, scattered in all parts of the earth. Notice the exactness of the likeness between what is said of this church at Jerusalem, and Baptist churches now. First, the preaching of the word of the gospel. Second, the pricking in the heart, or conviction of guilt, and sore grief following it. Third, the cry for knowledge, What shall we do? Fourth, the presentation of Jesus as the Savior of sinners. Fifth, the glad receiving of the word. Sixth, the baptism of those who gladly received the word. Seventh, the continuing in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in public worship. This was the order then, it is the order now, owned and blessed of God; and this church was independent of all other churches, so far as her order and walk were concerned. We never hear of other churches, or of any body of ministers, seeking to control her course in any way. Neither did this church ever seek, so far as we are told, to assume direction of other churches, or authority over them. The same is true with regard to all that we are told of the church at Rome, at Corinth, at Philippi, at Colosse, at Thessalonica, and of the churches scattered throughout Galatia. There is no hint of any claim by any professed followers of Christ to seek the rule over any of these churches. Each one attended to the affairs of the kingdom of God where she was located. There was indeed brotherly union, but all alike acknowledged but one Head, and that was Christ. The apostles in their letters recognize this independence; each church is addressed just as though that one was the only church on earth. Advice,

counsel, reproof, rebuke, admonition, praise or blame, was ministered to each, without reference to any other church or any body of superior clergy. It was so in the address to the seven churches of Asia; each one was addressed as though that one were alone in the world and had no organic union with any other church. The same things may be said of the ministry. There was no recognition of any difference in office among all who were pastors among them. There were, no doubt, great differences in their several ability, but there was no priority of office in the ministry; all were brethren on an equal footing, so far as their office was concerned. All this is true of the Baptist Church to-day, but is not true of other denominations. In the New Testament bishops or elders do not govern the church; the churches as churches attended to all that came before them. The apostles were the inspired judges; they have had no successors in that office. This the church of Christ must and will recognize; this we as Baptists do recognize and contend for still. Even the apostles were not lords over the heritage of God, they were examples to the flock. It was theirs to interpret to the churches what was the mind of God, both as to their faith and practice. This they claimed to do as those who spoke the oracles of God. If these divinely inspired men could claim no lordship over their brethren, but on the contrary could only say, We "are helpers of your joy," certainly it is bold and proud presumption for any one, ministers or what not, to seek the rule over the church now. In harmony with the whole spirit and teaching and practice of the New Testament there cannot be any central authority to which all are to appeal; each church must stand or fall to her own Master, each church must attend to her own affairs. Even those appointed to offices in the churches are not any other than servants of the churches, so far as their offices are concerned; as fellow-members they are equals, and only equals, with their brethren. All this is set at naught by other denominations in their forms of government.

We leave ourself a little space to speak of baptism especially. All that we can learn about the form, the subjects and the meaning of baptism must be gained from the New Testament. Believers would not know that the Lord of glory required that his disciples should be baptized did not his revealed word so declare; but it does so declare, as all who profess to be christians will admit. Also we must learn from the New Testament what it is that the Lord requires of us for baptism. First, it is utterly silent as regards the baptism of any, save one who believes in Christ. We cannot take up any New Testament Scriptures which seem to teach otherwise, for there are none such. It has seemed a wonderful thing to us that infant sprinkling or pouring could have made any headway among professed followers of the teaching of the Bible, since the Bible is so utterly silent about either. The one great reason, as we said in the former number of the SIGNS, why so much stress is laid upon connecting the church with the Jewish theocracy, and baptism with the sprinklings of that old covenant, is because there can be found no shadow of support of either in the New Testament. If not sustained in the Old Testament there is no foundation for any of these things anywhere in the Bible. In every case in which baptism is spoken of in the gospels, or in the Acts, or in the epistles, the subjects of it were believers. There

is not one instance in which the baptism of an infant is even alluded to. There is good reason for this, for to baptize an infant is to compel that infant to unconsciously act a lie. It is compelling that infant to confess to faith in Christ, when manifestly he has no faith in anything, and can have none. If any one thinks he knows of some one or more New Testament Scriptures that teach the baptism of infants, we shall be glad to consider them with him when he shall call our attention to them. Jesus took little children in his arms and blessed them, but we do not read that he commanded that they should be baptized. Households were baptized, as recorded in the Acts, but we ourself once baptized a whole household and there were no infants in it. Can any one prove that there were infants in the household of Lydia, of the jailer, or of Stephanas?

The word "baptism" is an English form of the Greek word *bapto.* There are words in the Greek for sprinkling and pouring and washing. Those words are just as distinct from each other and from *bapto* as they are from each other in the English tongue, and from dipping. The Greek word for "to sprinkle" is *rantizo*, for pouring it is *cheo*, for washing it is *louo*, and for dipping it is *bapto.* If *bapto* does not signify dipping in the Greek, there is no word that does signify that act in that language. Sometimes the word *baptizo*, or *bapto*, is translated to wash, but still the thought of dipping is always retained. For instance, we wash our hands by dipping; we wash bedding and other things by dipping. No one would ever think of washing any of these things without dipping them in water. It is bad use of language to say one has been baptized by dipping. One might as well say that one has been *rantized* by sprinkling. Translated these sentences would read, One has been dipped by dipping, or, One has been sprinkled by sprinkling, which would be absurd, of course. But here we will pause until some one brings forth one place in the New Testament where they think persons were sprinkled for the ordinance of baptism. As shown in the former editorial, nothing can of right be argued in favor of sprinkling out of the Old Testament.

But lastly, when we remember what baptism means to us, it will appear that nothing but plunging one under the water and raising him up out of the water will set forth that meaning. We will just allude to this. First, baptism sets before us the death and resurrection of Jesus for the redemption of his people. As he died, and was buried, and rose again for our salvation and justification, so we declare our faith in this work by burial and resurrection from the watery grave. Sprinkling and pouring will not set forth this great work of Jesus' baptism into death. Second, we who believe have become ourselves dead unto sin, unto our former life, and have through the operation of the Spirit risen to walk in newness of life. This also we set forth by the burial, and resurrection out of the water. Third, we have the assurance that when we have gone down into death and the grave we shall at the last day be raised up again to endless life. This also we set forth in our baptism. This also could not be set forth by sprinkling or pouring water upon the head.

But we now leave these reflections for our readers, hoping that they may prove of some satisfaction to brother Farmer and to all who may read them. Manifestly we could not do more than give in as condensed a form as possible what the Scriptures do say regarding all these things. C.

LUKE XX. 37, 38.

ELDER KER—DEAR BROTHER:—Will you kindly write your views on Luke xx. 37, 38? which reads as follows: "Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him." This has been on my mind some time, and I am anxious to know its deep meaning.

A LOVER OF THE TRUTH.

TRENTON, N. J.

We shall do the best we can in complying with the request of our unknown inquirer. The "meaning" of all Scripture is "deep," and only reached as one is led by the Spirit of God, and the promise of Jesus is that the Holy Ghost shall take of his sayings and show them unto us. This we now desire, to the end that we may give the true import of the text before us, and do it in such a way as to be understood.

In Matthew xxii. this same subject is given, though not exactly in the same language, yet the import is not changed. Many did not believe Jesus was the Son of God, but merely the son of Joseph, hence thought he could be entangled in his talk, and to confuse and confound him was the design of the devised question which led up to the text under consideration. As little as one may think of it, those questions were in the divine plan to bring forth such comforting and instructive answers as are recorded. The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection of either angel or spirit, hence denied the resurrection of men and women, or husbands and wives, therefore with all the wisdom they could command prepared the hardest question imaginable to put to Jesus concerning the resurrection of the dead. They called his attention to what Moses said, that if a man who had a wife and no children should die, the brother of that man should take the widow and raise up children unto his brother. They then stated that a certain woman had seven brothers, one after another, for husbands, and that all died, and last of all the woman died also. Then the question which they thought would confound Jesus was asked: "In the resurrection, whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her." Jesus at once began to disabuse their minds of the idea that the Scriptures taught any such resurrection as that of husband and wife, or male and female, by saying, "Ye do err, not knowing [understanding] the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in [not after] the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." Instead of their question confounding Jesus, his answer confounded them, and no doubt they began to say within themselves, Can it be possible that we are wrong in all we have read and heard of the resurrection? He said, "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God." If we err, surely we are mistaken. Our understanding of what we have read and heard was that at the resurrection that woman and her seven husbands would be raised up, and of course some question would be raised as to who of the seven should have her, but this man Jesus says that in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, hence no husband, no wife. How clearly to be seen that their idea of the resurrection was altogether natural, and therefore they in their imaginations carried natural relationship into the world of glory. Their carnal notion of the resurrection was error, because they did not understand the Scriptures, or in other words they lacked spiritual knowledge. "In" the resurrection there is no such thing as

male or female, no such thing as natural relationship, such as husband and wife, father and son, uncle and aunt. If "comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Cor. ii. 13,) is right, is it not lawful to compare Scripture with Scripture? Most assuredly it is, and just here we shall endeavor to write for a little while of a resurrection that every manifest child of God knows and understands, and try to show its relation to the subject under consideration.

When Mary and Martha were sorrowing because of their brother's death, and the absence of Jesus at the time he died, Jesus said to Martha, "Thy brother shall rise again." She replied, "I know he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord; I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." Jesus is most positively declared here to be the resurrection and the life, and Martha said she believed it. Paul says, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus," "the resurrection and the life." Associating these Scriptures with our text it will clearly appear that in Christ there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage, because there is neither male nor female, but in him, the resurrection, all are as the angels of God in heaven, or in his kingdom. The prophets were angels, or ministering spirits, which the term "angels" signifies, (Heb. i. 14,) and unto them "it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you." The manifest children of God are in this age of the world "angels," ministering spirits, in that they minister one to another; sometimes in visiting those "in prison," sometimes in feeding the "hungry," sometimes in clothing the "naked," and often in giving a cup of cold water to the "thirsty." In such service all minister unto Jesus, for the children are the members of his body.

Let us now consider more fully the dialogue between Jesus and Martha. When he said, "Thy brother shall rise again," he had no reference to "the resurrection at the last day;" this is clearly shown by his answer, and that which followed at the grave of her brother Lazarus. No doubt he said to her, "Thy brother shall rise again," to bring just the answer she gave: "I know he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day," and that answer was to the end that he might say for her comfort and for ours of this present day, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead [in sin and under the law], yet shall he live [be delivered from that condition and dominion]: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me [raised and justified] shall never die," or come again into condemnation. This shows the condition of the patriarchs, prophets and all old testament saints. They were under the curse of the law, yet believed in God and trusted in his promise of salvation through his Son, "the seed of the woman," and they, as well as new testament saints, must live unto God through the one Mediator and Savior. And inasmuch as all His works were finished, in purpose and plan, from the foundation of the world, Abel lived unto God by faith while in

the body, and lives unto him in the spirit since the moment Cain slew him. Enoch, by faith, walked with God, and was translated that he should not see death, but he now no more lives unto God than does Abel. Moses and Elias lived and believed in God in this world, and were seen by Peter, James and John upon the mount of transfiguration. This is conclusive evidence that they now "live unto God." It was in this way that Moses, at the bush, showed that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. If the eternal God and Savior is the God of the patriarchs and prophets, they were and are living subjects in Christ, who is "the resurrection and the life." He is not the God of the dead (nonelect); not one of that class lives unto God, because they have no standing, or life in Christ, but the elect of all ages of the world live unto God, whether in the body or out of the body. The saints of this gospel age know that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are living characters, inasmuch as they (the saints) have come "to the spirits of just men made perfect." This is experienced in the sitting down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God. The condemnation of man because of sin did not prevent "just men," through Christ, beginning with Abel to the crucifixion of Jesus, from living unto God by faith while in the body, nor did it prevent them from entering heaven to live forever unto God in the spirit. Because the Lord found a Ransom, a Surety, and that Surety said, Because I live, ye shall live also, hence "all live unto God."

We have now as briefly as possible tried to give our understanding of the text, and in so doing have not meant in any sense whatever to deny the future resurrection of the dead, which is the christian's hope. This mortal must put on immortality; this corruptible must put on incorruption; mortality must be swallowed up of life, and this glorious change we have not yet attained unto.

Hoping that our effort may be satisfactory to our unknown inquirer, as well as to others, we leave the subject. K.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at the home of the bride's parents, 2347 Emerald St., Philadelphia, Pa., Joseph F. Lynch and Emma L. Andres, both of Philadelphia, Pa.

By Elder P. W. Sawin, June 28th, 1910, at the home of the bride's parents, near Lawrenceburg, Ky., John Herndon and Miss Pattie Martin, both of Anderson County, Ky.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Miss Martha Worthington Morehead died in the insane asylum at Staunton, Va., June 1st, 1910, aged about 72 years. I copy from a note sent me by her sister, Mary Murphy, the following particulars:

"Sister Martha was baptized at Broad Run Church in August, 1862, by Elder R. C. Leachman. Before she lost her mind she was lovely in every relation of life. In disposition she was quiet and unobtrusive, and truly possessed a meek and lovely christian spirit. She was firm and well established in the gospel of her Lord and Savior, and trusted alone in the merit of Jesus for her salvation."

I can add but little to the testimony of sister Murphy, except to indorse it most heartily as far as my knowledge extends. It seems to us a strange and mysterious providence that disease should compel the isolation of such a bright, lovable christian in an asylum for the insane the larger part of her mature life. Her mind was not so impaired that she became an imbecile, or a maniac, as it is called. Strong hopes were entertained for a number of years that she might recover from her malady. She would talk intelligently upon the subject of her experience and show a clear understanding of the truth. Of course it is not expedient for me to enter into a detailed account of her life in the asylum in this brief obituary. It has seemed strange, as I have intimated, that one of the Lord's dear people should be thus confined for one-half of a long life, shut in by disease from life and its activities, and away from those she loved, even from her brethren and the church privileges. We may well thank God for the strong assurance

that so it is, because it seemed good in His sight. "God is good." He is good in everything he does, and all things work together for good to them that love him. May he give us grace to rest in his infinite love, and to remember always it is through great tribulation that we enter the kingdom.

J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., July 6, 1910.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE following appointments in Canada are made for Elder F. A. Chick, of Hopewell, N. J.: Friday night, July 29th, at St. Thomas; Sunday, 31st, at Duart; Monday, August 1st, at Aldboro; Tuesday night, 2nd, at London; Wednesday and Thursday, 3rd and 4th, at Lobo, as may be arranged; Friday, 5th, at Ekfrid; Sunday, 7th, at Dunwich.

DUNCAN McALPINE, Church Clerk.

IONA, Ont.

MEETINGS.

THE church at Otego, N. Y., has appointed a meeting to be held Saturday afternoon, August 6th, and Sunday, August 7th, to which meeting we invite distant friends to meet with us. Trains will be met Saturday morning and at 1 o'clock p. m. Meetinghouse is near the station.

Done in behalf of the church.

S. C. F. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

THE Cammal Old School Baptist Church has appointed a two days meeting at Cammal, Pa., the fourth Sunday, and Saturday previous, in August, 1910. A general invitation is extended to all who desire to meet and worship with us, and we will see to your needs while with us. Those coming from the south come to Williamsport, Pa., and take New York Central train to Cammal. From the north to Corning, and take the same road to Cammal. Inquire for Samuel Maffat, living near the depot, only a few rods to meetinghouse.

D. M. VAIL, Pastor.

THE Licking Association of Old School Baptists will convene at Shelbyville, Ky., Wednesday, August 31st, 1910, and the two following days. In behalf of Bethel Church we extend a cordial invitation to our brethren and friends to meet with us. We hope for a pleasant and enjoyable season, a refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Those coming via Cincinnati will buy tickets to Shelbyville, leaving Cincinnati about 11 a. m., arriving at Shelbyville 4:20 p. m., via Lagrange and Christianburg. All coming via Louisville or Lexington will come direct over the C. & O., Southern or L. & N. Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. trains will be met. Come and let us worship together in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody in the heart. May the Lord grant us this desire.

P. W. SAWIN.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing on Friday, September 2nd, 1910, and continuing three days. We shall gladly welcome all who feel it in their hearts to visit us.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

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THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

A SMALL band of Primitive Baptists is meeting every Sunday at 10:30 a. m. at 2919 Polk St., Chicago, Ill. All persons interested are welcome to meet with us. Any one knowing of members living in or near Chicago will please notify W. N. Spitler at the above address.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

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This little book has been published for some time, and orders for it have been received from near and far, even to the most distant States. All from whom I have heard have spoken to me very highly of the book. For forty years it has been upon my mind to publish these poems and the experience of my brother, together with the account of his last hours, and have wondered why I did not do it. I felt sure it would be for the comfort of many, and the many expressions I have already received assure me that it is so. Elder P. D. Gold writes: "I have read the poems and experience of your brother with much pleasure. How wonderful was the view of divine things given to him. Surely to be absent from the body and present with the Lord is far better." Elder S. Hassell says: "I shall have a commendatory editorial notice in April. I hope you may dispose of several thousands for the comfort of the Lord's scattered people." Elder H. C. Ker writes me: "Your little book, 'Songs in the night,' was duly received, and has given me more comfort than any reading I have done for months. Surely every lover of truth should have it." The price of the second edition has been reduced to thirty-five cents.

I have also on hand a few copies of "Reminiscences and Letters of Mary Parker." Price 75 cents.

All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Southampton, Pa.

"CHRISTIAN SCIENCE AND THE LAW."

Because of the distressing information contained in orders for my Christian Science pamphlet respecting the great injury being done by this shameful fraud even among our dear Baptist people, I have tried in this second little work to expose it from a new point of view. Those not aware of recent developments at the headquarters of these people will be astonished almost to the point of doubting well-proven facts. I will mail two copies of this last sketch for ten cents (silver), or one copy and a copy of Christian Science and the Bible for ten cents. The price is not for profit, but to cover the bare expense. Hundreds of the first pamphlets were given away, and others placed where many could read them. If any good results from this effort to shield our brethren from this new delusion, the credit will be due our kind periodicals for calling attention to it.

S. B. LUCKETT.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Indiana.

"Thoughts on Regeneration, the Spiritual Birth, the Christian Warfare and the Resurrection," is the title of a pamphlet of 58 pages, written by Elder H. B. Jones, of Winnsboro, Texas, and can be had of him for 25 cents per copy, five copies for $1.00 or $2.00 per dozen. Address, H. B. JONES.

WINNSBORO, Texas, R. F. D. 6.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 78. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1910. NO. 16.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SIN.

WHAT a volume is involved in the word "sin!" We find it was brought about by one man's disobedience, (Romans v. 19,) and by that disobedience many were made sinners. The fountain-head of the Adamic race was polluted, sown in corruption, sown in dishonor, sown in weakness, a natural body. Neither can we lay all blame on the first Adam, for all the generations following are children of wrath; "their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongue they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes." Such is the account of all the children of Adam, given by the apostle Paul in the third chapter of Romans. If we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption, sin in our mortal body, the lust of the flesh. "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." David could say, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight; that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest." David did not blame Adam, for it was sin dwelling in his members, and when he had sown to the flesh, he did of the flesh reap corruption. He realized that he had transgressed God's holy law, for he says, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned." The plain definition of sin is, transgression of the law; then there must of necessity be a law, or there could have been no transgression, and there must be a man to whom it must be given. The penalty for the transgression of it was death; no greater penalty is meted out in the laws of any nation for transgression. The law was given by God to Adam; the law went forth from the highest tribunal existing, or that ever will exist; it emanated from the sovereign throne of God Almighty. The law was couched in these words: "Thou shalt not eat of it" (the tree of the knowledge of good and evil); and the penalty: "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

There is no repealing, revoking or setting aside that law or its penalty. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." These words testify clearly the love of God and the manner of love bestowed upon us. The subject of sin has been dealt with under rites and ceremonies in all ages. Abel brought a lamb and offered it unto God by faith, looking to the Lamb of God, who should take away the sin of the world, and God accepted Abel's offering; it was by faith, and without faith it is impossible to please God. The lamb slain by Abel did not remove his sin, but his faith was acceptable unto God. All the blood of bulls and goats did not take away sin. "Wherefore, when he [Jesus] cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure: then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God." Jesus came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him. That body prepared was the holy child Jesus, so named by the angel when he appeared unto the virgin Mary. "And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus," "for he shall save his people from their sins." Isaiah prophesied long ages before, saying, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel," "which being interpreted is, God with us." This body of our Lord Jesus Christ is that body prepared, holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, made higher than the heavens, made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He did not exist in nor proceed from the loins of Adam, but was made flesh, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. He was made flesh for the sufferings of death, for death was the penalty or debt that his people owed to the law. Jesus did not come as a substitute, for the law recognizes no substitute upon whom to inflict its penalty. We might offer to die as a substitute for our dearest friend who might be condemned to death, but the law would only recognize the transgressor. So Jesus is nearer related than a substitute, he is our Surety, our Husband, and just as the husband is responsible for his wife's debts, so Jesus, as the Husband of the church, his bride, came to pay her debt, and this debt could only be paid as the law demanded, and that was death. The first Adam could go into death with his bride, but he was sown in weakness, in dishonor, in corruption, a natural body, he could not therefore come from under the power of death and the grave. The glory of God is made manifest in the second Adam, our Lord Jesus Christ, for he gave him power to lay down his life, and power to take it again. This commandment he received of the Father. Jesus went into death by obedience, to do the will of God, and by that obedience he brought in eternal re-

demption for us. He came as a mighty conqueror, clothed with majesty and strength from the eternal throne of the Majesty on high, and went forth conquering and to conquer; he knows no failure, nor was he discouraged. Holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, we see him as the spotless Son of God, standing as a mighty conqueror, clothed with power to lay down his life and power to take it again. What a tremendous victory was to be accomplished in this! He appeared "as a root out of a dry ground, * * * a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not." "He was wounded for our transgressions" (sins). "All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Jesus not only went into death by obedience, but as a man upon the earth he by obedience healed on the Sabbath, which was disobedience in others. He said he was the Son of God, which was charged against him as blasphemy. His truth was considered as lies by the carnal mind in that day, and is to this day.

Let us consider briefly the priesthood of Aaron as the type of our Lord and Savior, and the breastplate, being double, and the ephod upon Aaron's shoulders. The breastplate had twelve stones, and upon each stone the name of one of the twelve tribes of Israel. "And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually."—Exodus xxviii. 29. The breastplate of judgment and the ephod were bound by rings of gold with a lace of blue. The ephod also contained two onyx stones, and engraved on each stone, six names on one stone and six names on the other stone, according to their birth. Both the breastplate and the ephod were to be made of gold, of blue and of purple, of scarlet and of fine twined linen, with cunning work. The gold sets forth faith (all was established by faith); the blue sets forth God's truth, just as the blue sky encircles this earth, declaring God's covenant with Noah, saying, "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." "I do set my bow in the cloud." Sometimes clouds come between us and the blue sky, but the sky of blue is ever about the earth as a signet ring of God's eternal truth. It is necessary that clouds intervene, that we may be reminded of God's truth, and it is necessary that there be a cloud in order for the bow, and necessary for the sun to shine upon the cloud to produce the bow. Just so clouds of distress, tribulations, crosses and losses come, but when Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, arises with healing in his wings, then the bow appears in the cloud, and the darker the cloud the brighter the bow. The bow sets forth the promises, for

"What more can he say than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

The purple denotes royalty, and God's truth is that we are made kings and priests unto God. The scarlet is the way of all things being brought about, and this is by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. The breastplate worn upon the heart of Aaron sets forth the elect of God, chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began, written in the Lamb's book of life, which is the heart of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and they are secure in him, for their life is hid with

Christ in God. The ephod upon the shoulders of Aaron sets forth a position of power, and also they are being borne upward toward God. So the elect of God are borne in two places by the Savior: upon his heart and upon his shoulder. "The government shall be upon his shoulder." Thus clothed the mighty Conqueror came forth to battle. All sacrifices offered in types and shadows were dead sacrifices, there was not eternal life in them; the lamb presented life, suffering and death, and was to be without spot or blemish. So Jesus as the Lamb of God was without spot or blemish before God, and being made sin for us he felt the awful weight of our sin laid upon his spotless soul, and it caused him agony, so he sweat, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground. "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed" (all his chosen, elect vessels of mercy). "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." Jesus clothed with power to lay down his life and power to take it again, was nailed to the cross, and expired; his body was wrapped in linen and laid in Joseph's new tomb. Thus he entered into death, and destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. On the third day he burst the bars of death asunder and arose victorious over hell, death and the grave, and as bearing his children upon his heart he could exclaim, "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me." They are redeemed from under the law, their sins and iniquities are blotted out as a thick cloud, they are washed and their robes made white in the blood of the Lamb, their sins and their iniquities are remembered against them no more forever. It was the same Jesus that was born of a woman, made under the law, expired upon the cross, destroyed the power of hell, death and the grave, that arose victorious, and afterward showed himself to witnesses chosen beforehand. He was received up into glory, and now sitteth upon the right hand of God, our great High Priest, for he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. Thus we understand that Jesus as our High Priest is touched with a feeling of our infirmities, he and all his members being vitally united. "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's, at his coming." We are waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. We have the earnest of the Spirit, and "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together;" and "if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Paul in his letter to the Ephesian brethren writes them that after ye "heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise

of his glory." The purchased possession is the sinner, purchased by the blood of Christ. It is the sinner that needed redemption from under the law, and it is the sinner in this vale of sorrow and tears that is waiting for the redemption of his vile body. Only as in relation to time can it be said we are waiting. In eternity there is no past or future, it is one eternal now. The disciple whom Jesus loved said, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Jesus said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., June 27, 1910.

HEBRON, Ohio, June, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The eighth chapter of Romans is surely the saints' delight, a fortress into which they can run and be safe, where their enemies dare not follow, where they are not molested nor made afraid. As holy men used to write as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, so the apostle was moved to write this eighth chapter, and it serves the purpose designed, viz., the comfort of God's people. It is the first bright chapter in the letter; the preceding chapters deal mostly with things pertaining to the fall of man, and some of the evil consequences resulting from that act, beginning with the first chapter and going on to include the third; these chapters declare the doctrine of total depravity. Then in the seventh chapter he tells of the struggle of the saints in their own hearts. Not only is this depravity total, and extending to all men, but its effects appear in a lively manner in a heart that is touched by God's renewing Spirit, a heart awakened to a sense of death and sin, which brought Paul to see that the good he would he did not, and the evil that he would not that he did, and so in the darkness and gloom comes the helpless cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" How can I be delivered? This is the cry that the ear of God is ever open to. All these things which lead up to this state God does in them, to cause them to cry. But when the following page he turns, what a change is seen. Here he lays out, as it were, the treasures and gems of salvation, even as the merchant displays his goods which he has for sale, so that they may, if possible, be held up in such a way as to show their worth. Or as the tired traveler who gains the hill can see on ahead the beauty of his home, so in this chapter we are given to see the good places along the way. These are hills in Zion, delectable mountains where the wicked cannot come. There are some five or six all connected, the high places of the earth. The first is the atonement made upon the cross, vital and lively, extending to all in Christ, and through this atonement his people are just as free from the condemnation of the law as though they never had been under it. This is clearly the mind of the Spirit as expressed in the first four verses of this chapter. What Christ did on the cross affected all that were in him, and no more. Paul is not here telling them how they came to be in Christ, and neither is it as the world has it, that is, that they are in Christ by what the sinner does, with all the train of falsehoods which follow. The words, "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," in the first verse, are not in the Greek text, but are always found in the fourth verse. They were put in the first verse to cover the real meaning of

the writer. Freedom from condemnation is just as unconditional as ever election is. Some think that it is necessary for the sinner to be born again to be made free from condemnation, but the word, "now," in the first verse, is emphatic. Now, at that time, all in Christ were free. The kind of freedom spoken of here is not the kind that can be procured by ourselves in any sense, but is that freedom that can come only through Jesus. It does come by him, and is effectual to all for whom it was ordained. What I want to say is, that when Christ died on the cross he atoned for all the sins of all his people, and put their sins away, so that they were as though they had not been. If this freedom had not been secured to them before they were born again, they never would have been born again. Jesus Christ makes the sinner free, and he only. Read the first verse as a declarative statement, set it off by itself, just these words, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Say them over and over in your mind until you have them by heart, then the question will come over and over again, Why is there no condemnation? How does this come? Why is the sinner free? The answer is in the second verse: Because "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." That is why any sinner is saved. It is for what Christ did for him, and which must be done for all for whom he died. What I want to say is this: Christ did that for them which he only could do. The law of the Spirit of life in him arose in its might and conquered the other law. He put this law away from us. He was made under the law, to redeem us who were under the law of sin and death. We had our life in him, as the life in a grain of corn is a figure.

I could go on with this thought, but we want to know now when this was done. The third verse tells us plainly that it was when God sent his Son to do that which we could not do because of the weakness or sinfulness of men. The world says that the law is ordained to life, and always has and always will say so, but the word says it was ordained to death. God sent his Son to do that which could be done only by him, and it was done by him. The expression is, "Made me free." Actually and literally free. Sin is condemned in the flesh for all the elect in Christ Jesus.

Now we go on to the fourth verse, and there we come to the results or the benefits of all this, or the object of it. It was done that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled, not by us, but in us. It is not fulfilled by us, not even when we join the church and are baptized, all of which is in itself a good work. I know of no better. But all this should not be applied here, because this was not what was in the mind of the Spirit in these words. The apostle is here speaking of the work of God and its effect upon the creature. The word "righteousness" used here is often used to mean the things done by the creature which are good and holy, and with which God is well pleased. In this Scripture the word "righteousness" is from the same original Greek word, and has the same meaning as it had when used by the Savior when he came to John to be baptized, and so to fulfill all righteousness. This means all that was required of us by the law of God. These things Jesus did, and we did them in him. Thus we learn from this fourth verse that all the things done by him were to the

end that the requirements of the law should be done in us. Good works are necessary and abound, and when in their proper place are to the glory of God, but they can never make the doers of them perfect, but the works of Jesus, referred to here, are glorious, smooth, harmonious and effectual. Depravity is worse than can be told, but redemption is better, and much more glorious. The glory which Israel saw in the wilderness was a figure of this true glory. They looked and saw that glory. Thus we rejoice to hear and to know of our freedom from under the law. The harmony of this work, its times and results, blend together like the blue and purple and scarlet in the curtains of the tabernacle in the wilderness, all of which was a figure of that which was to come. As Israel admired the tabernacle then, so spiritual Israel to-day rejoices in God her Savior, and joys in God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Your brother,

FRANK McGLADE.

SALISBURY, Md., May 8, 1910.

ELDER DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—I received your letter, and it really was a comfort to me, and I enjoyed reading it very much. I was very sorry to hear that Mrs. Durand was sick, but hope she is better now. I am very glad to say that my health has improved considerably since you were here, and I am feeling much better. I am looking forward to the fifth Sunday, when I hope to see you and hear you preach; you always come with such good news.

You asked me when you were here to write my experience and send to you. I have thought for a long time that I would like to write and tell you what I hope have been the Lord's dealings with me, but feel too unworthy; do not feel that I have anything worth writing. I had serious thoughts about religion when quite young; do not remember a time when I did not feel that I was a sinner, but thought when I grew older I would go to work and get religion, thinking I had a work to do, and the Lord was waiting for me to do it. If I was sick I would make many promises what I would do if the Lord would spare my life, but made them only to break them. You preached at Nassaongo one Sunday and I was there; you said while preaching that we had no power, we could do nothing within ourselves. I said then, I do not believe any such doctrine, nor will I believe such. I promised myself then, When I get home I will go to work and get religion; all I have to do is to pray, and the Lord will hear my prayers. The words you spoke on Sunday kept bearing on my mind. I was in trouble about something, I did not know what. I had a dream that I was a lost and helpless sinner, and was in great trouble, and you came, but I would not go where you were, for fear you would know what a great sinner I was, but you came out where I was and said, Ida, you shake hands like an Old School Baptist. I thought then you knew all my troubles; I did not want any one to know them. When I awoke the next morning I thought of my dream the first thing; it was true I did not want any one to know my troubles. I think it was the darkest hour of my life, and, thinking of the promise I had made on Sunday before, I went off in a room by myself to try to pray, and all I could say was, "God be merciful to me a sinner." It seemed I could not pray, it was nothing but words, and they would not reach higher than my head. I found then I had no power, I

could do nothing, if I were ever saved it must be through and by the grace of God. I did not see how the Lord could be just and save a sinner like me. I knew that he was just, and thought I must be lost. My trouble lasted some time, and I was out in the yard one morning, trying to pray, when all at once my trouble left me; everything seemed to be praising the Lord. It seemed to me it was the brightest day I had ever seen. I thought then I would never have any more trouble, and I had to sing, "O how happy are they who their Savior obey, and whose treasures are laid up above." Tongue cannot express my feelings just at that time, but it was not long before I was doubting myself, fearing I knew nothing of a Savior's love. I loved the Old School Baptists with all my heart, and wanted a home with them, but did not feel worthy of a place among them. I dreamed of going to meeting to ask for a home with them, but I could not; when I started to go out it was written on a table of stone:

"When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow."

I was afraid some one would see it and know it was written for me, and the Lord said, The world can never read this. This was not long before I was baptized. The day I went before the church old sister Lowe came up and spoke to me, and said, "I do not know what is going to happen to-day, I dreamed last night that we had such a confusion." Something seemed to say, If you go before the church you will cause that confusion. I tried to say that I would never go to meeting again, but could not say it. I said I would never offer myself to the church, for I had no right. When you asked me if I would like to talk to the church, I went, and to my surprise was received; I do not know why, for I could not say anything. Next morning when I awoke and found it snowing hard I thought if it were one you had any confidence in you would not mind going, but as it was me you would not go. When I got there I found you were as willing to go as I. That was a glorious day to me. I have had many dark hours since then. I often fear that I have deceived the church.

This letter is so much like myself I am ashamed to send it. I have only written to relieve my mind. Remember me to your family.

From one of the very least, if one at all, IDA MORRIS.

MUIRKIRK, Ontario.

DEAR EDITORS:—I think that the following letter by our now deceased sister was written to Elder Durand.

D. M. GILLIS.

MUIRKIRK, Ontario.

DEAR BROTHER:—I feel to answer your good letter, and the promise (of which you remarked) to the people of God, that they shall be fed. Bread shall be given them, and their water shall be sure. Nothing shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. No, not even famine in the church of the word spoken. Here in my own home, when I have, as it were, been ready to die, I have been fed, and made to lie down by the still waters, and it has been down here, when I have been subject to His will, that I have seen his righteousness and the sword of the flesh and the sword of the Spirit cut asunder, or in opposition the one to the other, and greatly fear the carnal sword much of my time. When I would do good, evil is present with me. Two years ago at this

time, I went through a serious surgical operation in London. After I decided to go, there were great questionings in my mind as to whether I was willing to die, and a great fear came upon me lest I was mistaken in my hope. I saw that I was a great debtor, and had not one farthing to pay with. The only prayer I had was, "God be merciful to me a sinner." I went to the meeting the Sunday before going, and not one word did I receive. I went to Deacon Campbell's for dinner with some of the brethren, and everything was dark. I bade them good-bye, as though it might be the last time; darkness prevailed. As I was going home these words came before me, The Lord is everywhere present. Yes, I felt that he could take away my life just where I was as well as on the operating table, and with it came sweet resignation to his will, which never left me until I was safely over that trial. I felt a returning home to my Father's house. The next day was a day of rejoicing; I saw the corn and the wine, more especially the corn. I thought much of my return home, and the thought of the prodigal son came before me. He went to a far country; yes, as far as the east is from the west. So is the gospel church higher than the churches of the world. The prodigal was sent out to feed the swine, but even the husks the swine did eat were not for him. He was perishing with hunger, and said, "I will arise and go to my father."

I want to tell you how I saw the corn. I saw it in the ear, covered with husks, and when the husk was pulled back the corn was revealed. The corn is concealed by the husk, just as the spirit of the word is concealed by the letter. The swine, having life of their own kind, were fed by the husks. So then I saw that it was needful that the flesh should be fed by the letter, and that the preachers, or teachers, of worldly religion are really swinefeeders, and with this I felt to let them alone. It was not my calling, neither was it the prodigal's calling. I felt that it was in the all-wise providence of God that it was so, and all I had to do was to let them alone, and to speak the everlasting gospel, as far as I knew it. I saw that all that the servants of God had to do was to stand upon the walls of Zion and preach the gospel. There is enough in that to cut asunder truth from error. After seeing these things there was truth to me in the expression Elder Vail made at Duart two weeks ago. He spoke of the wife of a young preacher in your country, who said to her husband after he had preached at one time, Would it not be better for you to feed the sheep than to be barking at the dogs? The truth is enough: "Feed my sheep."

Now it seems wonderful, as willing as I am to let worldly religionists alone, that to-day, as I have read Revelation xvii., I felt as if I saw the judgment of the great whore, and the woman upon the scarlet colored beast, the false church, riding as it were upon the works of her own hands. Her golden cup was full of the abominations of her own hands, and she was drunken with the blood of saints, and at enmity with the martyrs of Jesus. This beast shalt ascend out of the bottomless pit. She has no foundation, and shall go to perdition. She shall go where she came from. The horns are kings; in themselves they have power only with the beast. They have one mind, and they give all their strength to the beast. They make war upon and would like to overthrow the church of Christ. These horns look very clean and

religious in their own sight, therefore they condemn evil things and pour out threatenings and fire, for God hath put it in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and to give their kingdoms to the beast until the word of God shall be fulfilled. This verse seems to me to speak the same feeling that I had in the same thing, being fed with the husks, or the flesh being fed with the letter of the word. I believe it is needful, and in fulfillment of the word of the Lord. I am not trying to tell you something, only giving you some of the exercises of my mind this afternoon. I hope if I have written anything amiss that you will bring it before me. I do hope to see you at the Duart meeting. I heard that Elder Chick was expected also. I trust that the way may be made clear for you both. Elder Sawin had a small attendance in Duart, his appointment having been changed from Thursday evening to Friday afternoon. Many did not hear of the change, which was made on account of sister Bessie Bateman's funeral. Elder Vail had a good attendance. We had good, sound preaching, if I am able to judge.

Your sister,

(MRS.) PETER ALLISON.

LAURELVILLE, Ohio, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is through the mercy of God that my life has been spared to see another year dawn upon us, and I feel the need of the grace of God as much as ever, for weakness and unworthiness are with me daily. I have never seen the time when I could boast of my goodness, but feel the need of the presence of God, from whom all goodness flows. It is through his mercy that we live and are given strength to raise our drooping heads to look for a home beyond the grave, where all is praise to his great name. I would like to tell the writers of the SIGNS how much good their writings have done me, but such joy as I have had cannot be told. I will say to one and all, Write on, you do not know how many of the Lord's people are fed by your writing.

I am sending a letter written by brother George W. Hartsough, a few years ago, which I think is far too good to lay away. It has been of much comfort to me, and I feel sure that it will be to others. But I will leave this for you to decide.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

AMANDA SCHAAL.

PSALMS XC. 12.

"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

MY DEAR SISTER:—You will remember that one time you asked me to read this text, and give my views upon it. This is a prayer of Moses. In the first part he is discoursing upon the great majesty of Jehovah, in that he turneth man to destruction, and that a thousand years in his sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. Elsewhere we are spoken of as the small dust of the balance. "But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God." All nations are before him as nothing, and all the inhabitants are as grasshoppers in his sight. Again, he says, As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are my ways above your ways, and my thoughts above your thoughts. He is unlimited in power and foreknowl-

edge, and is the only perfect One. On the other hand, man is but for a moment, his days are as a watch in the night. Job says he dieth and his power is gone; he passeth away and where is he? He is dependent upon God for every breath, yea, for the strength to draw the breath that is required to keep this body alive. Jehovah controls all, and in him is righteousness to an infinite degree. Man, in his natural state, is sinful, and every imagination of the thoughts of the heart in him is only evil, and that continually. All the goodness of man is but the righteousness of Jehovah bestowed upon him. Man possesses in himself no more of righteousness than the earth or the moon in themselves do of light, therefore Moses said, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." This does not mean what this world calls wisdom, but it is the wisdom which is from above, which "is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." Read all the third chapter of James. The apostle Paul describes this in the first chapter to the Colossians, beginning with the ninth verse; or rather he there describes the results of this wisdom. Moses saw the need of being taught, that he might apply his heart unto wisdom. Do we not also need that teaching? I do every day, every hour, every moment of my life. I am entirely unqualified to teach others.

This short letter, dear sister, is just like the writer, very imperfect and unworthy, but I trust that the sentiment is in keeping with divine truth, and I believe that you will witness that Jehovah is our wisdom entirely.

Your brother, in hope of eternal life,

GEORGE W. HARTSOUGH.

WILLARD, Va., July 23, 1906.

ELDER E. V. WHITE—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I feel too little and unworthy to address the Lord's dear people as "my brethren," yet I hope and trust they are "my people." I have tried many times since I last saw you to reply to your very welcome and much appreciated letter of the 2nd inst., but have been very busy when I felt that I could write, and have thus neglected it until now, for which I hope you will pardon me. I have had many seasons of rejoicing, but more of doubts and fears, for I fear that I have deceived the church at Frying Pan and elsewhere. I was very glad that I could be baptized last meeting. I was very happy, every doubt and fear left me when you said, "Unanimously received." I felt that the dear Savior had at last given me a home among his dear people. A home! O what a happy thought, a home among the redeemed. When you asked me when I would be baptized I did not even think that you might not be strong enough; no such thought entered my mind until the next morning when I got to the stream a sister said that she was afraid you was not able, but she said you said that the Lord was able. I was glad that she told it. As you buried me beneath the water I thought, "Being buried with Christ." O, I was happy in Him who died that I might live eternally with him in his glory, I do believe. When I got back to the meetinghouse sister Murphy was talking to me, telling me that when she joined the church my great-grandmother was the first one to take her by the hand and call her sister, and she said several other things that I was glad to have her say to me; then when I sat down it came to me very suddenly that I told her I was as good as any of the rest. O what sor-

row filled my mind and heart to think that I had told the dear sister a falsehood, and probably she could never fellowship me. O the anguish of my poor soul. I felt sad indeed until Monday evening, I was getting supper when it came to me that it was temptation, that the devil was trying to deceive me, and these words came to me with great comfort: "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." I hunted up the word "tempted" in the Concordance, and found the Scripture in Hebrews iv. 15. I did feel comforted, but, my dear brother, (if such a vile sinner as I may address you thus) I am afraid you all have been deceived in me, that I am not fit for a place in the church. If I have deceived you, I know I cannot deceive my God. I have had sweet meditations to-day; His holiness is too sublime for poor, unworthy me to talk about. I have had the pleasure of hearing my dear mother talk about these things which my heart and soul love. I know she would not want me to write this, but it is so; she has a deep experience I believe. We went to Mt. Zion yesterday. Elder Badger preached a good sermon from Revelation xxii. 14. It was their communion day, and O what a solemn, sweet meeting it was to me. On Wednesday after I was baptized I received a nice letter from brother Frazier. Sometimes when I am reading and come to the word "brethren" my eyes will fill with tears of joy to think what dear brethren I have. O that God would make me grateful, that I might praise his holy name without ceasing. I do hope I will never bring reproach upon the church of the living God.

With love, I am your little sister in Christ, I trust,

MATILDA MIDDLETON.

JUNE 27, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I leave the above to your better judgment as to whether it is fit to publish or not. I thought it would make the other more complete. Several have asked for my experience, and I did not feel that I could write it separately, so told sister Mildred Durand to send the other letter to the SIGNS. The reason why I still have these copies is because mother copied them for herself when I wrote them. I was baptized July 8th, 1906, and I feel that I am a very unworthy member. May God bless your labors.

Your sister, I hope,

MATILDA T. MIDDLETON.

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio, June 26, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—Much of my worry, fear and anxiety is because of the apparent lack of a proper spirit in the discussion of the resurrection. I do not wish to weary you with much of a letter, but would like to suggest a few reconciling thoughts. First, I wish to avoid a wrong understanding of a brother's meaning, so I have made free to ask brethren concerning reports that have been circulated. One man from the west reported in a sarcastic way that Elder So and So believed the resurrection was "past as to the dead, but future as to the living." This brother very readily replied, "I never said so." So I only wish to suggest (if you think this suggestion is not amiss) that we ought not to misconstrue a brother. Second, there is no brother's writing completely covering all points, so I never try to read between the lines to get him in an awk-

ward position by inferring something not said. One may trace the true christian's hope through all phases of his experience and dismiss the subject immediately after death, where Jesus left the dying thief, assuring him, saying, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."—Luke xxiii. 43. So also Jesus taught that "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."—Matt. xxii. 32. (Mark xii. 27.) But Luke more definitely records it thus (see xx. 37, 38): "Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him." But when a brother so leaves the subject I dare not even infer that he believes that is all the resurrection there is, for while I believe the above, I believe in the resurrection of the body also. Third, a brother may pass over this assurance of a living state of spiritual bliss to the final resurrection, but I dare not conclude that he is a believer in the "soul-sleeping" theory of death, not even though he uses the scriptural and proper words, "asleep in Jesus." Our bodies do rest in the grave until the resurrection, but the spirit returns to God who gave it. Fourth, I said a great many years ago I was not much in love with this old body, and was willing God should do as he wished with it, but I did not think to doubt the reality of the resurrection of this body. Just so I read no denial of the resurrection of the body when I see an article in which it is stated that there is no knowing what form we shall be, nor in what body we shall arise. I do not know what I shall be. It is enough for me to say I believe fully in the resurrection of this body just as God sees it, and I do know that his sight is better than mine. He knoweth all my frame. But with all my effort to so definitely express myself, I cannot hope to express the truth so clearly but that some critically inclined reader will strive to show that I deny the resurrection of the body. But there is some consolation in the effort to speak of my hope in the resurrection, and the joy that both precedes and follows it. All I aim at is to call attention to the blessed spirit of love which should direct all our feeble endeavors to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. There is much I have omitted, but my effort has been sincere.

Most unworthily your little brother, I hope, A. B. BREES.

JEFFERSON, Texas, Feb. 21, 1910.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR SIR:—This may seem a strange way of addressing you, but it is all that I can do. I was raised by Old School Baptist parents, and must confess that I love those people. When I go to hear the truth I could sit for half a day without getting tired. I read my Bible, and when the good old SIGNS comes I just sit down and read until I read it through before I lay it down. I must confess that your thoughts and mine on predestination are just the same. Your explanation upon that subject gives me a great deal of comfort. I am glad that I, a poor sinner, can see some things in the same light that you do. If I were with you I could ask you some questions, but I cannot write them, as I have no education. But may I be allowed to ask you one question? and if it will please you to answer it for me I will be glad. Many things which I would like to have explained occur to me, but I will not ask them all at once. What I want especially to ask you is this: In the tenth chap-

ter of Joshua we read of the five kings making war with Gibeon, and that Joshua went to the help of Gibeon. Why did Joshua call upon the moon in the valley of Ajalon, and the sun to stand still? Was the sun moving then, or was the earth moving? I am not asking this for controversy, I simply desire you to explain it for my satisfaction, and it may be for the satisfaction of others also. If I could write like Elder Durand, and several others that I can think of, I think I would have a long letter in the SIGNS often. These letters to me are a world of comfort. May I ask an interest in your supplications? May the God of Paul continue to bless you in your labor, is my wish for you.

Yours in hope,

J. W. HUGGHINS.

[WE desire first to apologize to brother Hugghins for the delay in replying to his request. The above letter was in some manner laid aside, and it was not long since that it came again to the light of day. We would not desire to be accounted thoughtless or indifferent to the request of any one. All we can know of the matter to which our brother refers is just that which is recorded in holy writ. It will be noticed in the thirteenth verse of this chapter it is said that all this was written in the book of Jasher. We know nothing about that book save that it is here mentioned, and once in the prophecy of Jeremiah. There have been a thousand vain speculations by learned men as to what that book contained, but they all are but the opinions of men. Inspiration in this narrative makes allusion to that book, and declares that the narrative recorded here was also written in that book. We should not be any better off if we had that book, because it would only record just what we have recorded in the book of Joshua, and if any one fails to believe what is here written they would also fail to be convinced by the reading of the other book. But our brother asks, Did the sun and the moon really stand still, or did the earth stand still? We can only suggest this one thing: that the three verses which narrate this miracle are written in poetic form, and poetry always deals, almost altogether, in figures of speech. The miracle is recorded as it appeared to the eyes of men. It is our mind that the day was miraculously lengthened by that God who has all power over all his creation, and over its laws which he has himself appointed. As the day was lengthened in answer to prayer to God by Joshua, it appeared as though the sun and moon stood still. In verse fourteen we are told that "there was no day like that day before it, or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the Lord fought for Israel." It does not seem necessary to us to understand the language to mean that the whole course of nature was stopped, but in some miraculous way the day was lengthened, and the light of sun and moon fell upon that place until the enemies were wholly destroyed. In any event it was an exhibition of the power of God.—C.]

ELDRIDGE, Mo., June 12, 1910.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR FRIEND:—I am a stranger to you, but if it be the will of God I will try in my weak way to tell you some of my troubles, to see if you can fellowship such an one. I would like to call you brother, but thought it might be saying too much. I was not more than sixteen years of age when I thought that I would get religion; I was told that all I had to do was to give up, and I tried to do so. I went on trying

to pray for awhile, and for a time I thought I was getting better, but that feeling soon wore off, and I thought no more of it until I was about twenty-three years of age, then, as it seems to me, I tried to pray again. One night, as no one was at home but myself, I knelt down and tried to pray, but found no relief, so I thought there was no use for me to pray, and went to bed and said to myself, I will do all the mean things I please. I had hardly closed my eyes when a light shined through the house; it seemed to come down through the roof, and from that light a voice said, Run, you are in danger. It frightened me, and I sprang under the covers. At that time there was a big Missionary meeting going on, and I attended every night. Once while at the meeting these words came to me: "Let not your heart be troubled." Then the words, "Feed my sheep." This did not last until I could get to the house. That night I went back to the meeting and went to the mourners' bench, and the same words came to me again. I sprang to my feet, and it looked as though everything was praising God. I continued in that state all the next day, and then united with them. But I never told them just what I hoped the Lord had done for me, because they said that a man must have good learning, and I knew that I did not have that, and I thought that I did not have the time; but I could not get it off my mind. One night I dreamed of a portion of Scripture where it reads, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord," and I thought that I would tell the church, but something said to me, That is all put on, so I told none but my mother and sister, and thought that if I were to carry on a prayer-meeting I would find rest; but I have felt no better, still these words come to me: "Feed my sheep." The way that I look at the Scriptures they all have a special meaning, and declare that Christ is the beginning and the end of all. The Missionary Baptists do not preach that, but preach, "Be good and do good." How can mortal man do good when the Bible tells us that he is conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity? Therefore if there is any good in man it comes to him through and by the will of God. Again, we read in the Bible, "Come out from among them." Again, I dreamed one night of another Scripture: He that cometh in by any other way is a thief and a robber. When I was a small boy I always heard people make fun of Old School Baptists. My parents both belonged to that church, but I thought it was too old-fashioned for me. I remember hearing them talk of a young man who had united with the Missionary Baptists, but God saw fit to show him the right path, and then he united with the Old School Baptists. I always thought, when I would hear them talk of that young man, that if it had been me I would have stayed where I was, not then knowing that God works all things after the counsel of his own will, and who is able to fight against the Lord? Of course I now can see that this young man came to the Old School Baptists because he could find no pasture elsewhere; the Lord showed him that the pasture in which he had been was a dry place. We read in the Bible that we cannot serve two masters. Is not claiming to serve God and following the teachings of men serving two masters? I have read some of your sermons in the SIGNS. My mother takes that paper, and so I come to you, as Paul was sent, as I hope, by the will of God. I remember reading (I think it was a portion of

the prophecy of Elijah) where one said that he was a prophet, and that he prophesied in the name of the Lord, and I think he prophesied right, but Elijah told him that he was not a prophet, and that he must die. I think this would be my state; it might just be of the flesh.

When you read this poor letter burn it, for I feel that I am imposing upon you, but I cannot seem to help it. There are no Old School Baptists but my mother here. There were a few in my father's life about thirty miles from here. If you have any time I would be glad of a reply to this.

Yours, W. W. DENALLY.

[WE have taken the liberty of publishing this letter, and desire to express our fellowship for the experience contained in it. How wonderful to be taught of the Lord, and to be given discernment so that we escape the path of error. It is all of the mercy of God, as our brother has said. It is good also to remember that the Lord will always guide his children, and if any special work is set before them in his purpose, he will bring it to pass. We need not be uneasy about the opening of the way, the blessed Lord will attend to that in the right time and way.—C.]

ST. ALBANS, W. Va., April 12, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I feel this morning unworthy to call you brethren, or to claim a hope through the blood of Christ Jesus, but I am impressed to write a few lines for the SIGNS; I think the paper should be highly appreciated by all lovers of the truth, because as far back as I can obtain copies of it the writers have advocated the true doctrine, Jesus the way, and the truth, and the life. I hope this morning that it has been the will of God for me to see that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. I feel to "know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." As it is written, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." This seems enough to prove that the way is Christ Jesus, and it is not in man.

It is now raining, after a continued spell of dry weather, and the plants of the earth and the grass look refreshed and nourished by the rain. It brings to my mind this Scripture: "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." Thinking about the dry weather, now broken by rain, I thought also of what a dry time there has been with me for several months, as concerning spiritual showers, if indeed these showers have ever rained into this heart of mine. I have felt so dry when I met the brethren that it would make me feel sick to think of opening my mouth in praise to God for all his wonderful works to the children of men. But the Lord says, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain." After dry weather comes the rain upon the tender herbs, and the showers upon the grass, and they are refreshed; so likewise this must be the case with the children of God; they must have their dry seasons, then comes the doctrine, which drops as the rain, and they are refreshed in spirit, and all must come at the appointed time of the Father. We have not the power to cause it to rain on the earth, neither have we power to cause the doctrine to drop as the rain. I do not think that the children of God will try to cause it to rain before the appointed time of the Father. This they will not do,

because they know that they have no power, but that God the Father has all power in heaven and in earth. He will send the rain at the right time, and his doctrine shall drop without any effort of the creature; it shall comfort his poor and afflicted people. They are poor in this world, yet rich in faith through Christ Jesus. It is written, "I can do all things through Christ." Some think that they are rich and have power to obtain blessings from God and to lose them again, but the poor people of God do not think so, they know that the dear Lord gives them all things whatsoever they receive. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."

I have written this to relieve my mind, and must now close. I feel unworthy to write letters to go before the Lord's people.

From a little brother, if one at all,

N. G. PENNINGTON.

TRENTON, N. J., July 16, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—It seems a long time since I was at meeting. I have been away ever since the first of the month, but I am always with you in mind and in spirit. I hope that the Lord will keep me in the right way. My friends here want me to go with them to their meetings, but I feel as though I had no right there, and certainly I have no interest. I like to go where the love of God is proclaimed, and hear of the way he saves poor sinners like me, who can do nothing good, not even having power to think one good thought. I often wonder how it is that so many can stay away and not fill their seats in the house of God if the love of God be in their hearts. It is the greatest cross to me when I am where I cannot meet with the dear children of God. But can I be one of them, I go so far astray? But if a child I trust that I can say, It is by the grace of God I am what I am. I had a name with the worldly religionists for six years, and thought all was right if I would do as they said. But how vain are all their works! I could not see this, even though reading and studying the Bible, until the Lord's good time, when he unstopped my deaf ears and opened my blind eyes. It was twenty-nine years ago the twenty-third day of last April that I have had a name with you, and what crooked paths I have made all those years, but I trust the Lord will keep me to the end in the strait and narrow way, and that will not be long. Many of the dear ones have gone to rest, and how we miss them, and many of the dear ministers of the gospel have departed also. We cannot hear their voices or comforting words any more, but they are at rest from their labors.

Well, dear brother, I always take some of the SIGNS with me to read while away, and they contain good sermons. I have been reading the number for June 15th to-day. Both editorials were good, and all the other letters from the dear ones who are so gifted to write of the love of God to them. But I am not able to write nor talk of spiritual things, although they are the joy of my heart. How precious the words of the dear Savior to a sinsick soul. I do not feel worthy to address you by the name of brother, but I felt as though I would like to talk to you, and hope that you will excuse this letter. I hope to be with you on Saturday and next Sunday, if it is the Lord's will.

With love to you all,

(MRS.) GEORGE GOLDEN.

JOB XXXVIII. 35.

"CANST thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are?"

Behold the wisdom and greatness of God, and the ignorance and weakness of man. How beyond width the contrast, how humiliating to the pride of man. With our limited wisdom and our finite understanding where are we to look for the lightning? Whence cometh it, and to what secret place doth it hie away? Who gaveth it its quick, bright flash, with its unlimited power and resource? Study the achievements of man from the beginning of time, count up the result of deepest study, and they are no more than the crude searchings after wisdom. Great minds have lived and died in the hunt for perpetual motion of their own creation, while perpetual motion is round about us, yet beyond the grasp of mind or learning. Electricity, the secret power that now moves the world's machinery, where is the place of its force-gathering? yet we breathe its secret vitalism. Do we not stand aghast as afar off we look in vain for the solution of the mysteries far beyond our puny researches?

"Canst thou send lightnings"? What is the direction of thy voice of command, shouldst thou presume to say, Go thou, lightnings, to the place of my choosing, even through the vaporous realms of the firmament? And should they come at thy command they could swallow thy life and all thy boastings in an instant. It required the voice of God "out of the whirlwind" to convince his servant Job how frail and weak and ignorant he was. The same whirlwind of God's power is illustrated by the Holy Ghost in the words of the prophet, "Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof." Such was the effect of the whirlwind in the heart of the servant of God who bitterly complained of the afflictions of his flesh. How great was his love for his flesh until the whirlwind came, through which he was made to abhor himself and repent in dust and ashes, and now by faith, he in wisdom obtains the knowledge that secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but things revealed belong to us and to our children forever. The inhabitants of the earth which dwell in our flesh are many and powerful, but the same voice which sends the lightnings, and they go, saying, "Here we are," scatters the "legion" from their erstwhile secure abiding. Turn now for a moment from puny but proud man, to Him whose every command is the word of power, and returns not unto him void, but as in the beginning, when he said, "Let there be light," and light was. The wisdom to which there can be nothing added, power beyond limit, sovereign of all worlds and every heart, ruling and reigning as it pleaseth him. "There is no power but of God: the powers that be [even the powers of darkness] are ordained of God." The lightnings may be said to liken in a feeble way the power of the word of God. The lightnings are quick and powerful, piercing and dividing asunder the air through which they pass, and bringing destruction in their touch to all things perishable; also the word of God is declared to be "quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." He, however, who calleth the lightnings from their secret depths, that they may go, and say unto him, Here we are, is greater than they, "as he who hath

builded the house [is greater and] hath more honor than the house." Our incomparable God is the God of greatness, "His greatness is unsearchable." So high and mighty are his ways, they cannot be found out. "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." If God sendeth peace and righteousness into our heart, then peace and righteousness goeth, and saith unto him, "Here we are," and our heart rejoiceth with joy unspeakable and full of glory. When He saith to the sleeper, and to the dead, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light," their whole being is filled with light in quick and powerful obedience to the Spirit of Christ, sleep fleeth away, and death is shorn of his power. Faith leads us to the top of the mountain of God's holiness, there to behold all worlds beneath, in the hollow of God's hand, with which he doeth that which is good in his sight. May we ever walk by faith, and not by sight. B. F. COULTER.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have my sister's consent to have this good letter published. I thought as it comforted me it might comfort others. The Lord has led her through deep waters, and she has learned much. May he continue to bless her in all things, is the prayer of her devoted sister,

OLIVIA W. HELLINGS.

EASTON, Pa., May 19, 1910.

MY DEAR SISTER, AND MOTHER:—Yours received, and I was glad to hear from you, and so thankful, dear sister, that you are in good health. I know that you are tired and almost given out sometimes, but the Lord has blessed you in giving you strength to go on and attend to the duties that are placed upon you. He has given you grace to be faithful to the charge laid upon you as a wife, daughter and mother. You have been faithful toward our dear, aged mother, now that she is feeble and not able to help herself. How thankful she should feel toward you for your constant care and kindness toward her. I often think of our dear father, who died as he had lived, so peaceful and true. How patient, good and kind. O may we, dear sister, be like him, and when we also come to lay all cares and duties aside and this vile body dies, may we have that blessed peace that passes all understanding, and dwell with the Lord, forever free from all sorrow and the cares of this world. As long as we stay in this body we shall be burdened with doubts and fears from within and from without. Sometimes they overcome us and we are made to cry out like a newborn babe. This is the first signal poor sinners have, and is designed to give us a heart of praise to God for all his wonderful works. How lovely everything seems now. We can see his hand in all nature, in the trees and the sunshine and in the blue sky; the little birds all join in praising their Maker, so let us sing praises to our God, from whom all blessings flow. I want very much to come to the meeting, but am afraid to undertake it, as my health is so poor. I feel unworthy to meet with the dear ones, but it is my meat and my drink. May we have the hearing ear and the understanding heart.

Your unworthy sister,

LOUISA E. SHARP.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1910.

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MARK XVI. 1–7.

"AND when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had brought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun. And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great. And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted. And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him. But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you."

A dear sister from Maryland, who wishes her name withheld, has written us of her enjoyment of this spring's associations, and of a desire which has arisen in her heart, more than was ever the case before, for our views upon the first seven verses of the last chapter of Mark. This sister spoke especially of great enjoyment in the remarks of brother Adams at the association in Hopewell, N. J. Many of his remarks, as those present will remember, were concerning the things named in this Scripture, and for this reason her mind has been, she says, led to desire a more complete presentation of what it contains. This we cannot promise, but at the same time we are willing to respond as best we can. The subject has been in some ways a very precious one to us for a long time. It records the coming of the women who loved the Master, very early in the morning of the first day of the week, to anoint the body of the Savior. They found, as it is recorded, that he had risen from the tomb, and one, who is here called a young man, but by other evangelists an angel, said to them, "He is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him." Still further, this heavenly messenger declared that He was gone before them into Galilee, and that, as he had said, they should see him there. There is so much involved in these words that it seems very hard to condense it all within the compass of an ordinary editorial. The narrative tells us that "when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had brought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him." This was the last Sabbath that was ever binding upon the people of God. Jesus had performed all the work which the Father had given him to do, and he had rested over the Sabbath in the tomb. This was fitting, for thus he fulfilled the whole law. Now Jewish ordinances were all completed, the Sabbath among them, and henceforth his people were to have not the shadow, but the substance of them all. Christ arose from his rest into endless life and endless power and activity. Thus rising, he brought forth all his chosen ones, and to them now there is no longer a shadowy Sabbath, but the true Sabbath, wherein they who have ceased from their own works do enter into rest. But this Sabbath being past, Jesus arises upon the first day of the week. Between the typical meaning of the last day of the week and

the first day there is all the difference that there is between the law of ceremonies and the gospel. As Jesus comes up from under the law and all its rituals, so all his people have risen with him, and henceforth are to seek, not the things that are on earth, but the things above; they are no longer to walk in bondage, but at liberty. In their service under the gospel, and by reason of the newness of life given them in Christ, there can be no need of Sabbaths of rest. Men grew weary of the observances of that former covenant, physically weary, as well as wearied in spirit, but in this new day, and in its service, there can be no weariness. It is in the power of an endless life that his people now live and serve. What believer ever became weary in loving God and the neighbor, which is all that the law of God demands? Did any child of God ever feel that he needed a rest day in this service? There is no provision under the law of the new covenant for one day in seven when the people who love God shall rest from that love. Jesus has brought up his people from all such service as makes them weary, and, on the other hand, has so wrought in them that the more of service there is the less weary are they, and the more they desire to go on in that service. The Sabbath, the last day of the week of toil, brought the need of rest and supplied that need, but the first day of the week brought active service. There is nothing set forth in the first day but service, and with it there is no thought of weariness or of need of rest. Jesus arose upon the first day, and now with his resurrection from the dead there came the stirring of renewed life and love in the hearts of these his disciples. They did not know that he had risen; they did not know why there was such a stirring up in their own hearts of reverence, love and devotion; they did not know why they were so moved to come and anoint his body, but they knew afterward, and we know why. Jesus had arisen, and with his resurrection there came the moving within them of his new life from the dead, and so, very early in the morning, at the rising of the sun, they came to the sepulchre. It was the dawn of a day literally, such a day as had never been before. It was the day when the Lord arose. In the history of this world it was the day of days. This was indeed and in truth the day which the Lord had made. It was to this day that all days pointed either forward or backward, and while all this is true, we know that it was also the dawning of a new day in their faith, hope and love. As they came toward the sepulchre they did not know that the day had indeed risen upon their souls, but they were soon to understand it. Love in their hearts was active and stirring them up to renewed testimonies of devotion to their blessed Lord. They did not yet understand what had taken place. They did not yet know that Jesus must die to fulfill the Scriptures, and that he might conquer death and the grave forever for them. But still, love was animating them, and this love compelled them to go forward in the face of questionings within and obstacles without. This was an experience which every disciple knows something about. In the pathway of us all there lie many apparent difficulties, and in our hearts arise many questionings. At the time we cannot see over or through the obstacles, or how they may be removed, and we cannot answer our questionings, but still we love him, and love is the power that urges all the children of God onward when our reason would say, It is of no

use to go forward; the stone is heavy, who will remove it for us? But behold, when they had come to the sepulchre the stone was already rolled away. Matthew tells us that the angel, here called a young man, had rolled away the stone. They did not know it, but the stone had been rolled away before they started upon their journey to the tomb. The stone was rolled away, not by the hands of mortal men, not by their own puny hand, but the blessed Lord had sent his own heavenly messenger and the work was done. The same divine power that had stirred up their own hearts to come had also removed all obstacles. Is it not true that here we learn what is God's method of working with his children in all their questionings and difficulties? We need not fear that our pathway shall be hindered when our heart's desire is to honor the blessed Master. We do indeed find ourselves troubled about the apparent difficulties, but, after all, we need not be. Our God is mighty though we are weak. The stone was very heavy, but what was it to the power of that God whom they worshiped? Our hindrances are also many and great, but what are they to the power that loves us? It was but natural that these feeble women should question, but how much better was the Lord to them than their fears. The Lord honored and blessed the faith and love which his Spirit had already planted in their hearts. He will honor always his own work in the hearts of men. He will always be before them, and when they come to the stone they shall always find it rolled away, and all his disciples, like these women, shall find that all this work is not theirs, but the Lord's. They had no influence with Pilate to cause that he should give orders that the seal should be broken, or the great stone rolled away, and the Roman guard was in the way, but they did not need any influence with the governor, neither did they need any mere physical strength, the Lord did for them. Entering into the sepulchre they saw the angel sitting on one side, clothed in a long white garment, and seeing this heavenly messenger they were affrighted. We are told that this angel descended from heaven, by one of the evangelists, and another tells us that his countenance was like lightning. Luke tells us that Peter beheld the linen clothes lying by themselves, and John tells us that the napkin was not lying with the other clothes. No doubt all these things were intended to be symbols of other things, but, first of all, it is well to remember all these details of the narrative, for they show by accumulated testimony that Jesus was indeed risen from the dead, which is the one all-important truth of the Bible. So we have the combined testimony of many witnesses that Jesus, who was crucified, and laid in Joseph's new tomb, did arise therefrom, and left an empty grave, triumphing over death and the grave. This is all-important to be received, for without this there is no redemption from sin, death and hell for any one, and no justification for a sinner. But Jesus did rise again and sinners are justified. But the angel said to them, Be not affrighted. We cannot wonder that these women were afraid, and that though given assurance by the angel that they need not fear, they still trembled and were amazed, as we are told in the eighth verse. The angel reminded them of the errand which had brought them there: "Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified." One thing which it seems these words teach us is, that there is nothing that need affright one who seeks Jesus. They who

love the Son have a witness in themselves that God loves them, and those upon whom his love is set cannot suffer harm. Still further, it was Jesus, who had been crucified, whom they sought. They had not, and could not, forsake him, even though they thought him to have died not to live again. But now, coming to manifest their love toward Jesus crucified, they are met with the message, This Jesus is risen again. This word in this place simply means that the place where his dear body lay held him no more. The body that had suffered such humiliation, sorrow, suffering and death could not be holden of death. By the power of God that body was raised up, and was so raised up that the angel could say, He is not here. Some in past ages have contended that the body of Jesus did not really rise, but that it was only an appearance, an image, and not the real body of the Master, but the angel, and the women, and Peter, and other disciples, knew that the tomb was empty, that it was true that the body was not there, that he had risen indeed and was not there, but was going before them into Galilee. Further, the angel said, "Behold the place where they laid him." All this contains full proof that Jesus did arise from the dead and so brought life and immortality to light. "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore," and the disciples went away with the assurance that they should see him in Galilee, and he appeared again and again for the space of forty days to his disciples. Let us carefully mark the time named: forty days, not forty-one, or thirty-nine, but just forty days before he ascended. If his appearings to his disciples were only as by faith all his people in all ages have seen and rested in him, why say forty days? But Jesus said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The evangelist says that some thought he spoke of the temple at Jerusalem, but he spake of the temple of his body. His disciples, not all of them, but a portion of them, witnesses chosen before of God, did eat with him, and saw him eat; they saw the wounds in his hands, feet and side, they talked with him, as they had done before he was crucified, he breathed on them, and finally they saw him ascend, and a cloud received him out of their sight. In all this there is no intimation that they were deceived and only saw a vision, an appearance. Once they thought they had only seen a spirit, but the risen Lord said, "A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." Now all this is most important to be understood and believed. To deny all this is to deny redemption, justification, our sonship and the hope of resurrection for ourselves. There is not one word in all the narrative of the gospels which would give the shadow of proof that all this was not real, or only an appearance. If Jesus did not in his crucified body really rise from the dead, then we are not saved, we are yet in our sins, our hope is vain and all our preaching is vain. These women came, expecting to find their friend dead, but they found full proof that he had risen from the dead, and afterward, very shortly, they saw him living, and conversed with him. How blessed the presence of the living Savior was to them. They were begotten again unto a lively hope by his resurrection from the dead, and this hope shall never fail any who once possess it. Their former hope of some earthly kingdom had perished in his death, but this is a living hope, and shall not die. It is the hope of salvation

from sin, death and hell; it is the assurance of immortality beyond the grave.

We feel to leave these thoughts with our sister, and hope that they may be a blessing to others who may read them.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

1 JOHN II. 2.

BROTHER BEEBE:—I will once more ask you for your views on 1 John ii. 2, especially on the words, "But also for the sins of the whole world." I have asked for your views on this text twice before, and if it is not asking too much, your compliance with my request would oblige me very much.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

WM. HAWKINS.

SULLIVAN, Co., Iowa, March 7, 1864.

So far as we are able, it is our desire to meet the wishes of all our readers, especially such as are anxiously searching after the truth. The great object of our publication is to edify the lovers of truth and afford a convenient medium of general correspondence. We have two reasons to offer by way of apology to brother Hawkins for our seeming neglect of his repeated requests. The one is that we have been crowded with requests for our views on many subjects, and yet many remain on hand which we have not yet been able to attend to. The other reason is that, if we mistake not, we have several times within the last thirty-two years published our views on this text.

Without pretending to any special light on this text, we will briefly state our understanding of the subject. The text is, "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." The great propensity of men to cavil with the sacred Scriptures has often embarrassed the honest inquirer after truth, by their cunning craftiness in perverting what is written for our instruction. The advocates of a universal atonement have attempted to press into their service this text, either to disprove the doctrine of discriminating grace in the special salvation of God's elect, or to pacify their own consciences in resting upon the fallacious and anti-scriptural doctrine of universal salvation. Where words occur in the Bible which plainly declare that Christ has loved his church and given himself for it; that Christ laid down his life for his sheep; that Jacob God hath loved, and Esau he hath hated; that these were of old ordained to this condemnation, &c., they object to a literal construction of the words; but when the words "all," "all men," "world," "the whole world," occur, they become zealous sticklers for literal construction. But it is only necessary in arriving at the scriptural use of words to observe in what sense they are used by the inspired writers. In ascertaining the precise sense in which John has used the words "all men" in our text, we have only to turn to the fifth chapter of this same epistle, nineteenth verse, to find that he has there applied them to all ungodly men, the same as in our text he has applied them to all redeemed and justified men. In the one text Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, that is, he has made a satisfactory and sin-cleansing atonement for all who are intended in our text, and by his one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified, or set apart, as, "Sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus, and called;" while the whole world, in the other text, is left in wickedness, with no propitiation, or atonement for, or to remove their sins. The propitiation of Christ for his people is that himself bare their sins in his own body on the tree; that he put away their

sins by the sacrifice of himself, and thereby saved his people from their sins. A very opposite idea from that of leaving them with the whole world lying in wickedness. If it be admitted that the word "propitiation" means anything, it must, according to our most approved lexicons, mean that he is the sin-removing and wrath-appeasing, reconciling sacrifice for all those whose sins it pleased the Father to lay on him, be the same more or less; therefore it is clearly apparent that the whole world lying in wickedness is not the same whole world which does not lie in wickedness, because he has taken away their sins, and his blood has cleansed from all guilt. They who by the blood of Christ are cleansed from all guilt are not they who still lie in wickedness. But John clearly discriminates between the two whole worlds. "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." Very different this from lying down in wickedness. "That wicked one toucheth him not." "And we [farther] know that we [what we?] are of God," begotten and born of God, the same we who have an Advocate with the Father. We know that we are of God, and we also know that the whole world, in the sense in which the words are here used, lieth in wickedness. And yet even this is not all we know, for, "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us [for whom he is the propitiation] an understanding, that we may know him that is true: and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ." This Jesus Christ is the propitiation, and we know that we are in him, consequently we know that we are in the propitiation, or atonement, and that in distinction from the whole world that lieth in wickedness. Why then does the apostle use the term, "whole world"? For the same reason we presume that we generally use the same words to express the same, or a similar idea. In our common use of language, when we say the whole world is convulsed with war, or the whole world is in a state of peace, would any intelligent being understand us to mean any more than the nations and tribes of mankind? None would be apt to understand us to include the beasts of the field, fowls of the air, fishes of the deep, although literally all are included with the heavens and earth, as embraced in the whole world. Whatever criticisms cavilers may feel disposed to make, we know that the sense in which these words are used is to be determined by the general sense of the subject with which they stand connected. When men in a general sense are spoken of, it does not mean sheep or horses. When the election of grace for whom a guilt-removing, propitiatory sacrifice has been made, are spoken of, it does not mean the whole world lying still in wickedness. When there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be taxed, it bore no decree from that emperor to tax the citizens of North America; it only related to the empire of Rome, and her provinces, including the land of Judah, consequently all Jews and Gentiles over which the imperial power of Cæsar Augustus extended.

It was common for Hebrew writers when designing to include the Gentiles with the Jews, to call them the whole world, or all the world. Thus John, in writing his general epistles to the primitive saints of his day, which were mostly Jews according to the flesh, gave them to understand that the adorable Advocate of the church was the sole Advocate,

the only Propitiation; that among Jews and Gentiles there was no other propitiator, no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. There is no propitiation for any part of the world; never would or could there be but Jesus Christ, for he is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life, and no man, whether Jew or Gentile, then or at any other time, could come unto God but by him; by his redemption they are redeemed to God; by his propitiation they are reconciled to God and saved with an everlasting salvation. If skeptics insist on giving to the words "the whole world" their broadest sense in all cases, let them not then except serpents, swine, dogs and alligators, for there would be no greater inconsistency involved than in extending the application of what God has said of his people redeemed out of all the kindreds, tongues and nations of the earth to all mankind indiscriminately.

In conclusion, permit us to say this subject is too grand and sublime to be trifled with or speculated upon; it is addressed to "little children" walking in the truth, who while in the flesh are subject to many conflicts with the world, the flesh and the devil, and who because of the corruptions of their fleshly nature are betrayed from time to time unto transgressions of the law of Christ, and who are conscious that if they had to depend on themselves for deliverance must forever perish. While they feel the power of indwelling depravity in their carnal nature, mourn, lament and grieve, because they see a law in their flesh which warreth against the law of their mind, and which brings them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members, how cheering, how humbling, how heart-melting to learn from the pen of an inspired apostle that they have an Advocate with the Father, one who is the "Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace," Jesus Christ the righteous. In his, but not in their own righteousness, they are freely justified, and that he who is their Righteousness and their Advocate is he who also has put away their sins, who has borne their griefs, carried their sorrows, and that on him was the chastisement of their peace, and with his stripes they are healed. He is truly the propitiation for their sins, and also for the sins of their children, and of all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

"O for such love let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break,
And all harmonious christian tongues
Their Savior's praises speak."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., October 1, 1864.

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MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, July 20th, 1910, at the Old School Baptist parsonage, Warwick, N. Y., John Stevens and Miss Goldie A. Jones, both of Harriman, N. Y.

By Elder Benj. E. Cubbage, at the residence of Mr. Arlan Wilson, near Harrington, Del., July 26th, 1910, Willard S. Cubbage and Miss Sarah Meredith, both of Viola, Kent Co., Del.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon Mathew Harden Kuykendall, son of James and Dorcas Kuykendall, was born in Shelby County, Tenn., Sept. 28th, 1832, and departed this life at his own home, near Cherokee, Texas, June 6th, 1910, in the 78th year of his age. He was married to Miss Elizabeth Dollahite Nov. 13th, 1851, and in a few years moved to and settled near Cherokee Creek, San Saba County, and remained there as long as he lived. He was the father of four sons and five daughters, all living except one daughter. Thirty-nine grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren also survive. Two sons and two daughters are worthy members of the Primitive Baptist Church. Feb. 27th, 1903, his dear wife, who was also a faithful Primitive Baptist, was called from earth. She had long been a faithful follower of her dear Lord. When a boy of tender years, the Lord revealed to our dear brother his lost and ruined condition, and some years later spoke peace to his troubled soul. As there was no church of his faith near him he hesitated for some years, hoping to feel more worthy. October 7th, 1893, he was received into Cherokee Primitive Baptist Church, and baptized by Elder Charles Holcomb. From the time he received a good hope in his dear Savior his conduct was Christlike. Soon after he was received into the church he was ordained deacon, and filled that office to the full satisfaction of all his brethren and sisters. When he first settled in San Saba County, and for several years after, the wild Indians were troublesome, stealing and killing his stock and murdering some people; he was in many battles with them. He was known far and near, and so kind and gentle were his ways he was loved by all who knew him, and I am sure he had not an enemy on earth. He seemed so happy in waiting on his brethren, sisters and friends at all times, especially during the fifth Sunday meeting at Cherokee Church, just passed. He was taken sick the next day, and only lived one week. His God was with him in his last sickness. He did not seem to suffer much, and never complained. June 7th, 1910, all that was mortal of our dear brother was gently laid away in the tomb by the side of his departed companion, after a brief service by the writer, the tomb being covered with beautiful wreaths of flowers and surrounded by a large gathering of sorrowing relatives and friends. All his children were present excepting a daughter living in Tennessee, who was on the way, but did not reach there in time to see her dear father again. To his sorrowing daughters and granddaughters, who could not be comforted, may the loving hand of God gently lead you, and at last bring you to that house above, and as one of your dear brothers said, "Rejoice rather than grieve." How happy we will be when sweetly welcomed home by our blessed Elder Brother. To his name be all the praise. J. W. SHOOK.

Calvin C. Thompson died at his home in Cherryvale, Kansas, June 19th, 1910. He was the son of Elder Wm. A. Thompson, of Wichita, Kansas, for fifty years a minister of the Old School Baptist Church. He was born at Anderson, Ind., Jan. 19th, 1855, came to Kansas in 1870 and settled in Cherryvale, engaging in the real estate business, which he followed until his death. July 21st, 1881, he was united in marriage to Sarah R. Hill, who was a member of the Baptist Church. He brought his young wife from her home in Indiana to share with him the vicissitudes of their lives until death called him away. Two daughters were born to them; Miss Bessie, the firstborn, resides at home, Mrs. Georgia Koemier resides in St. Louis, Mo. Besides his widow and daughters left to mourn his death, are his aged father and mother, three brothers, Will, of Illinois, Frank, of Idaho, and George, of Oklahoma; four sisters, Mrs. Mary Elder, of Oklahoma, Mrs. Hartenbower, of Illinois, and Misses Viola and Anna, who live with their parents. That dread disease, tuberculosis, fastened itself upon him several years ago, and although he tried hard, and often hopefully, to resist its encroachment, it slowly and surely did its work until death ended the struggle. Although Mr. Thompson never united with the church, he was a lover and believer in the doctrine and practice of the old church of which his father, mother and wife had so long been members. Those who knew him best feel that he possessed a precious hope of immortal life in that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. I quote an extract from a paper of his town, which shows an index of his character:

"Calvin C. Thompson was a great reader and a devout student of the Bible. His favorite passage was the 'sermon on the mount,' which he read daily. In disposition he was always cheerful and kindly. He was a real companion to his wife and daughters, a true christian gentleman, and will be greatly missed."

Wednesday afternoon, June 22nd, the funeral was held in his home, where a large number of friends and neighbors met in respect to their departed friend. The room in which he lay was profusely decorated with flowers in beautiful designs. Their

near neighbor and friend, of the Presbyterian denomination, read from the Scriptures and offered prayer, followed by the writer, a friend of nearly thirty years, with a short address, using as a text 1 Cor. xv. 19, 20. He was laid to rest in the Cherryvale Cemetery, where he shall sleep, but not forever.

T. R. PITTMAN.

Roy S. Pyle was born Nov. 28th, 1888, and departed this life June 6th, 1910, in the twenty-second year of his age. Disease had been preying upon him for a year or more, terminating in tuberculosis, and for the last five months he failed rapidly, until death ended the scenes of this life. Roy had never made a public profession of religion, but realized that he was a sinner, and that none but Jesus could save sinners, therefore his only hope was in Him who is able to save to the uttermost all those who come unto God by him. His loving mother writes me that he spoke of his past life, and felt as though if he should get well he would live a better life. This to them is blessed evidence that he had been brought to see the vanities of time and of the flesh, and to desire a better state. In a written note left by him he says, "I have been thinking, 'If a man die, shall he live again?'" Then he reasoned upon Job's three friends and their counsel to Job, and said that his faith was in God, that though he should die, yet he would live again, making confession to himself, Though a sinner, yet, if a child of God, I shall live again. O what a comfort to know Jesus as the only Savior, and to feel the power of that life as we near the eternal skies at the end of this mortal life. He leaves father, mother and five brothers, who deeply mourn their loss, but they have a blessed assurance that for him to die was gain. May the Lord grant to them the consolations of the gospel.

P. W. SAWIN.

Levi S. Spitler was born in Fairfield County, Ohio, Sept. 6th, 1828, where he grew to manhood, and was married to Elizabeth J. Still, Oct. 14th, 1852. In 1855 they came to Iowa, settling in Birmingham, where they lived almost continuously until six years ago, when old age compelled them to leave their home, since which time they have lived with a niece whom they had reared. They were the parents of ten children, all of whom died in infancy. They reared three orphan children, namely, Mrs. Jennie Foss, Mrs. Jennie Droz and Edward Kunce. Mr. Spitler died at the home of Eugene Droz, two and one-half miles southwest of Fairfield, June 15th, 1910. He and his wife joined the Primitive Baptist Church near Eldon, May 26th, 1866, living as faithful members until 1874, when they changed their membership to Round Prairie Church, Jefferson County, where Mr. Spitler served as deacon for a number of years, and was always at his post, a faithful servant to the church. He has finished his work, and we can truly say with Paul, He has fought a good fight and finished his work, and there is a crown of righteousness laid up for him in heaven. The aged widow survives him, also a brother and sister, the three foster children and many relatives and friends, who mourn the loss of a loving husband and true friend, but feel that their loss is his eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted at his home by Elder B. L. Nay, of Mediapolis, Iowa, after which the remains were laid to rest in the silent city of the dead, known as Birmingham Cemetery.

A RELATIVE.

Elder T. J. Wyman, my beloved husband, was born in Fairfield, Mich., June 26th, 1837. His parents were Sheldon and Lydia Wyman. He was one of a family of nine children. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church in 1865, and in 1875 was ordained to the work of the ministry, and was pastor of the church many years.

The funeral was held June 9th, at the New School Baptist meetinghouse in Weston. Elder Dove, of Van Buren, Ohio, spoke from 1 Peter i. 24, 25. The pastor of the church here, at my request, read hymn 1252 (Beebe's collection). The hymns "Rock of Ages" and "Asleep in Jesus" were sung. A very large congregation listened attentively to the remarks of brother Dove, and all that was mortal of our loved one was consigned to the tomb to await the resurrection. The beautiful hymn 1252 came to my mind soon after he passed away, and has been of much comfort to me since. I have one son and three daughters: Charles, Mrs. Lydia Morris, Mrs. E. T. Crowe and Mrs. Lena Green.

ALSO,

Sister **Katharine Livesay** died June 14th, 1910. She was visiting a niece, and was stricken with apoplexy. Her home was in Fairfield, Mich. Her husband, Chas. Livesay, was clerk of the Old School Baptist Church many years. They were both baptized the same day, by Elder Joseph Johnson, of Indiana. She leaves one son, Frank Livesay.

(MRS.) J. M. WYMAN.

Thurston Knight died at his home in Blue Springs, Mo., July 10th, 1910, aged 91 years and 20 days. For several months before his departure he had been prostrated in body, yet his mind remained active and bright to the last, and he was permitted to enjoy the reading of the Scriptures and conversation of his brethren to the end. Brother Knight was born in Kentucky in 1819, and moved to Clay County, Mo., with his family in 1851, and there united with the Old School Baptist Church called Big Shoal in 1855. Later moving to Kansas City, Mo., and entering into business, he established the first stockyards there, from which the present wonderful business emanated. The last years of his life were spent in Blue Springs,

and his home was ever ready to welcome his brethren and friends. With his wife he united with the Little Blue Church, situated a few miles from his home. He had a profound reverence for the doctrine of the Bible, and was well established in the truth and beauty of the gospel, and was truly a father in Israel. He lived to see the fifth generation of his descendants, and many of these ministered to him in his sickness and comforted him in his declining years, and as we quietly laid him away to rest we felt that for him to die was gain.

Short services were conducted at his home by Elder W. L. Hall, who spoke comfortingly of our hope in the crucified and risen Redeemer.

NELIA M. STARTZMAN.

BLUE SPRINGS, Mo., July 20, 1910.

ORDINATIONS.

IN compliance with a request of Union Church, of the Big Creek Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist faith and order, by authority of my church at Keller, Texas, I met the Union Church at their regular time of meeting, on Saturday before the second Sunday in July, 1910, for the purpose of ordaining brother J. F. Jones to the full work of the ministry.

After preaching by the writer, the church went into conference.

Called up the reference relative to the ordination of brother Jones.

The presbytery organized by choosing Elder I. W. Bowers moderator, and Deacon W. O. Beene clerk.

The candidate was presented to the presbytery, with Elder Bowers spokesman for the church.

The writer propounded the questions touching the qualifications of brother Jones' gift to preach the gospel. The answers being satisfactory, with the unanimous consent of the church the presbytery proceeded as follows:

Prayer by Elder I. W. Bowers.

With great solemnity, meekness and appropriateness for the occasion, the presbytery laid their hands upon our dear brother, bidding him Godspeed in the work whereunto he was called.

The charge was delivered by Elder Asa Howard reading the apostle Paul's charge to Timothy (2 Tim. iv. 1, 2,) admonishing the dear brother to a faithful performance of the solemn duty now imposed upon him, and a close adherence to the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ, after which one of the songs of Zion was sung. The church and presbytery extended the right hand of fellowship and welcome with joy and much assurance.

Thus closed our meeting, with demonstrations of peace and a felt presence of the holy Lamb of God.

The presbytery consisted of Elders I. W. Bowers, Asa Howard, deacons W. O. Beene and T. Cannon.

ASA HOWARD,

FAIRFIELD, Texas.

MEETINGS.

THE Bryn Zion Church, Kent Co., Del., will hold their yearly meeting on the third Sunday in August and Saturday afternoon before, beginning at 2 o'clock p. m. A general invitation is given to brethren and friends to meet with us. Trains will be met at Clayton Saturday morning. B. E. CUBBAGE.

A THREE days meeting will be held with the Sulphur Fork Church, near Campbellsburg, Ky., to begin on Friday before the fourth Saturday in August, 1910. We extend a cordial invitation to brethren and friends to meet with us. Elders Lester and Eubanks are expected, and perhaps others will be there. This meeting comes just before the Licking Association. P. W. SAWIN, Pastor.

THE Cammal Old School Baptist Church has appointed a two days meeting at Cammal, Pa., the fourth Sunday, and Saturday previous, in August, 1910. A general invitation is extended to all who desire to meet and worship with us, and we will see to your needs while with us. Those coming from the south come to Williamsport, Pa., and take New York Central train to Cammal. From the north to Corning, and take the same road to Cammal. Inquire for Samuel Maffat, living near the depot, only a few rods to meetinghouse.

D. M. VAIL, Pastor.

THE Licking Association of Old School Baptists will convene at Shelbyville, Ky., Wednesday, August 31st, 1910, and the two following days. In behalf of Bethel Church we extend a cordial invitation to our brethren and friends to meet with us. We hope for a pleasant and enjoyable season, a refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Those coming via Cincinnati will buy tickets to Shelbyville, leaving Cincinnati about 11 a. m., arriving at Shelbyville 4:20 p. m., via Lagrange and Christianburg. All coming via Louisville or Lexington will come direct over the C. & O., Southern or L. & N. Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. trains will be met. Come and let us worship together in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody in the heart. May the Lord grant us this desire. P. W. SAWIN.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing on Friday, September 2nd, 1910, and continuing three days. We shall gladly welcome all who feel it in their hearts to visit us.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster Co., Pa., commencing on Saturday before the first Sunday in Septem-

ber (3rd and 4th), 1910, at 10 o'clock a. m., to continue two days. Those coming from Philadelphia will leave there Friday, on the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore R. R. at 2 p. m. for Perryville. Those coming from Baltimore will leave Union depot at 2:57 p. m. on the same road for Perryville, change cars for Conowingo, where all will be met and conveyed to places of entertainment. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

C. J. ROWLAND, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Association of Maine will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church in Bowdoinham, Maine, commencing on Friday, Sept. 9th, 1910, and continuing the two following days. We extend a cordial invitation to our brethren and friends to meet with us.

GEO. R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

THERE will be a two days meeting held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse at Jefferson, Schoharie Co., N. Y., on the third Saturday and Sunday in September (17th and 18th), 1910. There will be teams at Stamford on Friday to meet all who can come. We will gladly welcome all who have a mind to meet with us.

D. C. HICKS, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Olive, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 21st and 22nd, 1910, commencing on Wednesday at 10:30 a. m. Trains will be met at Shokan Tuesday p. m. No trains will be met on Wednesday. All who love the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Schoharie Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., Oct. 5th and 6th, 1910. All those coming by train on D. & H. from Albany to Binghamton will get off at Cobleskill on Tuesday before the meeting and inquire for J. E. Livingston, who will care for them. If any cannot get here on Tuesday, and can reach Howes Cave on either day of the meeting, if they will drop me a card I will see that they are met and conveyed to the meetinghouse. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren of like precious faith to meet with us, especially ministering brethren.

J. E. LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

A SMALL band of Primitive Baptists is meeting every Sunday at 10:30 a. m. at 2919 Polk St., Chicago, Ill. All persons interested are welcome to meet with us. Any one knowing of members living in or near Chicago will please notify W. N. Spitler at the above address.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.
JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

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LURAY, Va.

"SONGS IN THE NIGHT."

PRICE REDUCED.

This little book has been published for some time, and orders for it have been received from near and far, even to the most distant States. All from whom I have heard have spoken to me very highly of the book. For forty years it has been upon my mind to publish these poems and the experience of my brother, together with the account of his last hours, and have wondered why I did not do it. I felt sure it would be for the comfort of many, and the many expressions I have already received assure me that it is so. Elder P. D. Gold writes: "I have read the poems and experience of your brother with much pleasure. How wonderful was the view of divine things given to him. Surely to be absent from the body and present with the Lord is far better." Elder S. Hassell says: "I shall have a commendatory editorial notice in April. I hope you may dispose of several thousands for the comfort of the Lord's scattered people." Elder H. C. Ker writes me: "Your little book, 'Songs in the night,' was duly received, and has given me more comfort than any reading I have done for months. Surely every lover of truth should have it." The price of the second edition has been reduced to thirty-five cents.

I have also on hand a few copies of "Reminiscences and Letters of Mary Parker." Price 75 cents.

All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Southampton, Pa.

"CHRISTIAN SCIENCE AND THE LAW."

Because of the distressing information contained in orders for my Christian Science pamphlet respecting the great injury being done by this shameful fraud even among our dear Baptist people, I have tried in this second little work to expose it from a new point of view. Those not aware of recent developments at the headquarters of these people will be astonished almost to the point of doubting well-proven facts. I will mail two copies of this last sketch for ten cents (silver), or one copy and a copy of Christian Science and the Bible for ten cents. The price is not for profit, but to cover the bare expense. Hundreds of the first pamphlets were given away, and others placed where many could read them. If any good results from this effort to shield our brethren from this new delusion, the credit will be due our kind periodicals for calling attention to it.

S. B. LUCKETT.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Indiana.

"Thoughts on Regeneration, the Spiritual Birth, the Christian Warfare and the Resurrection," is the title of a pamphlet of 58 pages, written by Elder H. B. Jones, of Winnsboro, Texas, and can be had of him for 25 cents per copy, five copies for $1.00 or $2.00 per dozen. Address, H. B. JONES.

WINNSBORO, Texas, R. F. D. 6.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 78. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1910. NO. 17.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WINNSBORO, Texas, July, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN:—"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

"How hard and rugged is the way
To some poor pilgrims' feet;
In all they do, or think, or say,
They opposition meet."

"How vain are all things here below,
How false, and yet how fair;
Each pleasure hath its poison, too,
And every sweet a snare.

The brightest things below the sky
Give but a flattering light;
We should suspect some danger nigh
Where we possess delight."

Such is a partial representation of the condition of the mind of this poor old sinner this morning, as is also the case ofttimes as various portions of Scripture and poetry pass through his mind, and as he feels some desire to add his small quoto of testimony to that of other writers for our beloved papers of the power of saving, preserving, guiding, restraining and constraining grace. Nearly thirty-five years of hope in Christ, or rather of lingering between hope and despair, in this vale of sorrow and disappointment, with what I read in the holy Scriptures and have observed of the perplexities midst trials and temptations, fears and doubts of those whom I regard as the saints of the most high God, in my own short life, is convincing and conclusive evidence to my mind that the passage from Hebrews x. 31, quoted at the head of this article, applies to the manifest children of God here in the world in their personal experience of the dealings of the Lord with them. They from the beginning, as it were, are cast into "a fiery furnace." With the "old man" begins a process of crucifixion. "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." —Isaiah xlviii. 10. "I am crucified with Christ," says Paul. Both these figures of speech represent the most excruciating pain and torture conceivable to the human mind, and yet figures chosen by the Holy Ghost (and therefore are not exaggerating) to represent the condition of the chosen people of God in this wilderness maze we know as the world. Our "old man" seeks the possession and enjoyment of the things of this world, things gratifying to the Adam nature. At the same time we "delight in the law of God after the inward man." Hence a continuous conflict from the very begin-

ning of our pilgrimage. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." We sometimes sing with a relish, "Is this vile world a friend to grace, to help me on to God?" And yet the world is set in the heart, (Eccl. iii. 11,) and our "vile affections" are set thereon. We read, (James iv. 4,) "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God." There are times in our lives (at least it is so with this poor scribe) when we cannot see such reproofs as applicable entirely to the other fellow, but they come right home to ourselves, and the terms do not seem too severe, but we have to confess with shame that we deserve it all. We can realize what solemn obligations we are under to Christ, to what a holy walk and godly conversation we are called. We are enabled sometimes to see a lovely beauty in the walk and order that the church, or the children of God, are called and separated unto, as laid down in the Scriptures and written in the hearts and printed in the minds (Heb. viii. 10,) of the heaven-born, and we are possessed with an earnest desire to conform our walk and conversation to this rule, but the light shining as it were in darkness makes manifest the fact that the law of God is holy, "but I am carnal, sold under sin;" so then the "will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not," for when I would do good, evil is present with me, and the good I would I do not, and the evil I would not that do I. When I attempt to comply with the christian's obligations, and to do those things that I am impressed with as a duty I am called unto, it is with fear and trembling, for I am seldom, if ever, sure as to the motive that prompts the action, and with the poet I have mournfully to sing, "Sin is mixed with all I do." Yet at times I am possessed with a zeal for the truth as taught in holy writ, and the experiences of the Lord's chosen, that I am constrained to "use great plainness of speech," and to speak in all boldness of these things which afterwards I am made to feel bring down upon my head the anathemas of the world of those devoted to traffic in "religion." Those outward foes have abiding within each manifest subject of redeeming grace congenial allies, so to speak; hence we would naturally prefer their friendship to their hatred. It is not therefore the natural choice of God's children to walk in a way of opposition to the world, but it is like Moses' choice, "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." It is of faith; "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible," they are possessed in a little measure of that zeal of the Master, of whom it was said, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." They have fallen into the hands of the living God, and this is "a fearful thing." They have not fallen by chance, or, as it were, accidentally, but "according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," whose purpose is that the "old man" shall be crucified, the dross be purged away, &c. "And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin."—Isaiah i. 25. If we could only realize in our temptations, trials, doubts, fears and various perplexities that all these things are the result

of his hand being turned upon us, and designed to purge away all those things that would disqualify us for eternal felicity with our blessed Redeemer and all his redeemed people, we could bear up more patiently; but the Lord graciously affords us from time to time sufficient assurance that we are kept from despair. None of these things we suffer here can go beyond the grave nor affect our inheritance in Christ, which is "incorruptible, and undefiled, and fadeth not away," but is "reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." When Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were seen by the king walking in the midst of the burning, fiery furnace, he saw one "like the Son of God" walking with them. I have thought we have shadowed forth in this the church, the redeemed family of our God, walking through this vale of sorrow and affliction, which constitutes the fiery furnace in which the Lord has chosen them, with Jesus identified with them under the law and under its curse. "A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," enduring with them temptation, trial and suffering even unto death. As those Hebrew children came out of the burning fiery furnace without so much as the smell of fire upon them, and to whom the fire had done no harm, but being thrown in bound they came out loose, so the final sequel will be with all the redeemed of the Lord; there cannot be one more temptation, trial, grief, pain or sorrow than the Lord intended connected with this "burning fiery furnace."

"Though plagues and deaths around me fly,
Till he bids I cannot die;
Not a single shaft can hit,
Till the God of love sees fit."

Then let us take courage, poor, tried, tempest-tossed, weary ones. None but the living know the things we know and suffer the things we suffer, and none but the living can know the full fruition of the joy of the redeemed in the blessed world to come, whence all the chosen shall emerge from the "burning fiery furnace," forever to reign with Christ, by virtue of what he is to them and has done for them, forever and forever.

A trembling prisoner of hope,

H. B. JONES.

OTTAWA, Kans., June 14, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am sending you two letters which have been of great comfort to me. If in your judgment they will be of interest to the readers of the SIGNS you are at liberty to publish them. ANNA McKINNEY.

WOODSTOCK, Ont., Dec. 16, 1909.

MRS. ANNA McKINNEY—DEAR SISTER:—Dear sister in sorrow, tribulation and sin, and O, may I hope, too, in the faith of the Son of God? for if I am not a brother in that sense I know there is no hope for me. I have just read your letter in the last SIGNS, and O how glad I was that Elder Durand sent it, for it was a great comfort and satisfaction to me; I am so poor, so sinful and so much out of the way that I often fear there is no hope for me. I am an old man, having made a profession and was baptized nearly thirty-five years ago, and I thought then that I would get better and grow in knowledge and grace, but alas, I grow worse and worse, and learn more every day of my need of the grace of God to sustain and keep me, and sometimes I hope that is growing in the knowledge of grace; if not, then I do not know anything about it, and am a stranger to the knowledge of God, and O how often I fear such is the case with me. How

strange it seems to me that I, a stranger in a foreign land and hundreds of miles away from you, should feel a desire to write and tell you how much good your letter did me. What can be the reason? Is it because we are born of the Spirit of God, which makes us brother and sister in the most sacred relationship in heaven or earth? How happy would I be if I only knew this were the case with me, but alas, I go mourning and sighing, or else careless, unfeeling and indifferent, so that I feel I bear none of the fruits of the Spirit, and yet what makes me want to tell you my troubles, and confess that like you I cry and mourn over my condition, and say, Can God ever dwell in such a heart as mine? Nothing good about me, never has been, and as I look over my past life it looks to me like one scene of desolation, without a single good act that I can look upon with satisfaction, and yet sometimes I hope I love the truth, and love the people of God, and feel it pleasant to be with them, and they seem to love me; but O, if they knew me, and if they could only read my heart, how they would despise me, and yet it seems strange to me; I know God sees and knows my inmost thoughts, and I think I can say I am glad he does, for that makes me willing to pour out my heart and tell him all, as I could to no mortal, and sometimes I hope it has been a relief to my burdened heart to do so, but most of my time is spent in vanity and worldliness, instead of seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. I seem to think more of the world, and seek after the things of the world, and, like Martha, am cumbered with much serving. I may be making a wrong application, but anyway I know that much of my time the world and its vanities and thoughts are uppermost in my mind, and what can I do? Sometimes I think that all this is to teach me by a painful experience that I am totally helpless to deliver my own soul, and to teach me how utterly false is the doctrine of time salvation, as it is called, and to know that all our help and strength, both for time and eternity, or eternal things, must come from him. I am not troubled about these things, for I am perfectly satisfied that if there is a God at all he is God over all, blessed forevermore, and has the keys of death and hell, and that there is no power outside of him, but I am troubled about my own walk and conversation, and if they were right, and my heart right, I think I would be happy. But am I not forgetting what the dear Savior said to his disciples: "In the world ye shall have tribulation," and that it is through much tribulation we are to enter the kingdom? which I once thought meant heaven, but am now satisfied it is the kingdom here, and if one is not tried and tempted, and buffeted about with doubts, fears and Satanic insinuations, how can he sympathize with poor, tried souls that are? Then I think, If I knew I were a child of God I would willingly bear every trouble, but if we had that assurance all the time troubles would vanish, and we would be happy all the day, for we could laugh at all the troubles that would assail us, and, as the poet says, December would be as pleasant as May. You say the more you have seen of your own vileness, the more righteous you have tried to live, and have made a sad failure of it. Ah, yes, that is always the case. If we could live righteously in our own estimation we would be no company for the children of God, for I believe their whole life is made up of failures, as far as they are personally concerned, but their brethren look upon

them as being examples to the flock. A dear sister once said to me before coming to the church, "I am so unworthy." "Well," I said to her, "just as soon as you feel worthy we do not want you to come." She came the same day, and has been a very worthy member for many years. You also spoke of your tongue, that unruly member, giving you so much trouble. Ah, there you touched my heart, for I, too, know from painful experience how unruly it is, and as the apostle says, "The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity." Yes, I believe I know such to be the case with me, and many, many times have I vowed that I would curb it, but I fail time and again, and then I pray, at least I hope so, though in the secret of the heart, and yet I seem to pray in vain, and why do I not give it all up and lie down and die? I cannot do that, much as I may try, for ever come up in my heart the words of poor old Job: "O that I knew where I might find him." But he dwells in the high and lofty place, and I cannot ascend to where he is; he must come to me and quicken me by his word, which means life from the dead. I hope I have known what that quickening is in days that are gone, but as I grow older it seems I become almost a stranger to the blessed visits, but I am glad that there is so much encouragement in the Scriptures to the poor, mourning, sinful, helpless ones. It is said, you know, "He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer." How can any one be in a worse condition than to be destitute, without a single thing to commend him to God? I am glad that is in the Scripture for my encouragement, for if there had been ever so little good or worthiness mentioned, and it had said, almost destitute, it would not do for poor me.

But I must forbear, or I will tire your patience. I only intended to write and tell you how encouraging your letter had been to me. But I must mention what you said about going to the fair. How many would say, There is no harm in that, why go of course; do not deprive your children of a little pleasure. Ah, how often do parents make this plea: It is just a little pleasure for the children; but the only authority is the word of God, and the answer that came to you seemed so appropriate: "Never mind the children; never mind father, mother, brother or sister, houses or lands, but follow thou me." O that the Lord would give me the mind and will to follow him in all my walk and conversation, but alas, how I fail. Forgive me if I seem forward in writing you or you think it out of place.

Unworthily your brother, if one at all,

R. SCATES.

WHEELING, W. Va., March 4, 1910.

MRS. ANNA MCKINNEY—DEAR SISTER:—I have just finished reading your good letter to Elder Durand, published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of December 15th, 1909. I had read it over twice before, making three times in all, and every time I read it my heart was made tender in sympathy for you, and I felt a desire to write to you; then again I felt that I would be making myself too important, and to-day as I sat down to try to write to you I hoped that our blessed Lord, the high and Holy One who stooped to claim us poor, weak sinners for his brethren, would confound and confuse my mind so that I could not write if it were not according to his will. I have felt very poorly both in mind and body to-day, from the effects of a severe cold, and before I read your good letter

I was telling myself that I need not try to do any writing, as I was entirely unfit. I felt lonely and restless, but since reading your letter my mind became somewhat stirred up by it, and also the thought of Elder Durand. Dear sister, do you understand why your thoughts went out to this dear man of God, and you felt drawn to speak to him of what was in your heart, and the Spirit said to you, Keep not back part of the price? O how soul-cheering it is to be counseled and instructed by the Holy Spirit. If you had kept back part, your letter would not have filled its mission. I like these heart to heart talks, they usually find response in some other kindred soul. Your letter from first to last is as are my own thoughts. The few lines you quoted from Elder Rowe's letter, where he says, "God hates sin, but loves the sinner," I remember of receiving comfort from those same words. Then some months ago it came to me that there were wicked sinners and weak sinners, and I got much comfort out of this thought, for I had a hope that I was the weak kind. Dear sister, your letter contained many good things, but what you said about going to the fair struck me with greater force than anything else. I feel to rejoice that the Holy Spirit showed you your duty. How suitable those words were to the place and occasion: "What is that to thee? Follow thou me." I am glad it was settled for you for all time. God grant that you may ever find his loving-kindness and his tender mercy your meat and your drink. His flesh is meat indeed and his blood is drink indeed. He or she that is a friend to the world is an enemy to God. We are commanded to love not the world. It always makes me feel sad to see any of our brethren or sisters caring for the things of this world. A sister once said to me that she wanted to go to the opera-house to see a play; she thought she and her husband would go. I told her I thought it would look as bad to see them in such a place as a worldly advertisement would look in the Bible. We are commanded to set our affection on things above, and not on earthly things. Where our treasure is, there will our heart be also. Our blessed Elder Brother said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." You or I might say we cannot do anything of ourselves, and we have proven this true many times. Our Savior said, "Without me ye can do nothing," but he has graciously promised to give his Holy Spirit to them that ask it. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" And how often he said, "Watch ye, and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." Dear sister, I do earnestly believe that God does require even our sanctification, that is, turning from all worldliness. He will work this spirit of grace in us, and he will admonish us to work it out with fear and trembling, as he by the Spirit told you to "follow thou me." You speak of understanding Elder Durand's writings; this shows that the Spirit of grace and of truth is being poured out upon you, you are receiving grace for grace. God bless his servants everywhere. I love Elder Durand's writings; the Lord has blessed him above measure. I have never met him. I read some of his "Fragments" in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; it was an old number that I was looking over, and he described my own condition so much better than I could have done that I was stirred in spirit to write to him. He deigned to notice this poor weakling, and wrote me

kindly. Our Savior says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." I do feel, and I surely know, that I am the least of all, if it were inquired into, and yet how often I forget this fact and begin to hunt about for praise, but this is sin that dwells in us. We hate and loathe this spirit, but we cannot cast it out of ourselves. We have been given the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry to our heavenly Father to deliver us from sin. You say if you were as good as you desire to be you would not be fit company for the Old School Baptists. No, I fear you would not need our great Physician, and we know that seeking him whom our soul loveth is our greatest comfort. He goes before his sheep; they know the voice of this wonderful Shepherd and they follow him, but the sheep will flee from the voice of a stranger.

Sunday night, March 6th.—Dear sister, I have put in a dreary time since I left off writing to you. It has pleased our loving Lord and Master to show me the depravity of my poor, old, sinful nature. I was telling you of the sister who had a desire to go to the opera-house and see some of the plays. While writing you about it I felt to be far removed from any such temptations; I do not think I ever felt more immune from sin in my life, and yet at the same time I was conscious of some little fear of being too confident. My son brought a worldly magazine home with him last night. I must say that books have a powerful attraction for me, especially when they are beautifully illustrated. There are many times I yield to the temptation of reading matter that I am quite sure cannot be of any profit to me. Strange to say, that while all the proud and fashionable portion of people seem disgusting to me, yet I like to read of their doings. This morning I arose, feeling perfectly dead to all spiritual comforts; I tried to seek Him whom my soul loveth, but I found myself entirely shut out; I tried to find some desire to read my Bible, but there was none. In moping around I spied the magazine, and, sad to tell, I began to leaf through it, and ere I was aware I was deeply interested in an opera play. The pictures of the different characters and their parts were finely photographed; they looked so natural, even the veins in their hands showing. I leafed on and on until I came to a picture that reminded me of a dream I had about a week ago. This dream had left a deep impression on my mind, and I felt that it might be that I was being instructed in the nighttime. In the dream I seemed to be on my way to a Baptist meeting. I had walked a short distance with another sister, when all at once I discovered that I had lost my necktie, and what was worse, a borrowed one. I thought I turned back to hunt for it, but as I stooped to look on the ground I kept dropping my wrap, which I was carrying on my arm. Then I decided to give up the search, and when I turned to go on in the direction of the meeting place it grew dark and I was alone, the sister having walked on when I turned back, but it seemed that I knew the road well enough to pursue it, and there was just a little light. The ground seemed wet and frozen, and there were some clear little streams of running water which I walked through. I reached the house and saw several sisters sitting outside the door, whose dresses were of a dingy white color, and had the appearance of being wet. One came and met me, and showed me where to go in. I started to go in, but chanced to look down at my feet and

saw that my shoes were clogged with mud. I said to the girl, "I cannot go in until I clean my shoes," and then I awoke. Somehow I could not get this dream out of my mind; I thought there must be some instruction in the dream for me, so when I came to the picture that recalled the dream to my mind, that moment I thought of what I had written you about the opera; I said, Here I have been condemning others for the very thing I am doing myself. I thought the mud I had on my feet in the dream showed me that I was of the earth earthy. I laid the book away and began to try to ask God to forgive me, when I was quickly reminded that I had forfeited my right to seek forgiveness, for I had committed this sin with the full knowledge that I was doing wrong, my iniquity had separated between me and my God, his dear arm was not shortened that it could not reach me. The weather was lovely, but there was nothing that could please me. O what a doleful existence it is without our Light, and how can we rest without our resting-place? Along toward sundown I began to think of this dear hymn:

> "Early, my God, without delay,
> I haste to seek thy face;
> My thirsty spirit faints away
> Without thy cheering grace."

I then hurried along with the supper work, feeling that I wanted to confess my sin to you. In your letter to Elder Durand I felt that you had described my feelings so well; I think you can sympathize with me. Dear sister, often after I had written a letter to a brother or sister I would become dumfounded, and feel as if I had been guilty of some crime. I often lay the letters by when I feel to be accused of so many bad things in regard to what I have ventured to do. Usually this feeling leaves me, and I will then look over what I have written, and venture to send it on. I have several correspondents among our people. Elder Durand sent two of my letters to the SIGNS, and through them I have gained two or three new acquaintances among the Old School Baptists. We have no church in this city; I do not know of any of our doctrine in the place; there are many other denominations here, and years ago I went hunting among them, hoping and longing for gospel food. I recall a time when my burden grew so heavy that I set out to go to some preacher's house and lay my case before him. Somehow I can picture myself walking the streets with my youngest child, leading him by the hand. I stopped at a house and inquired where the Baptist preacher lived. They told me, and I started in that direction, but I hope there were two children being led by the hand that day, for the first thing I knew I lost all inclination to find the preacher. I trudged back home, and never made another such attempt. I meant to tell you that I have no one to talk to about such things, so I write; very many hours I spend in this way, but seldom write for publication; I write to those who say that they are lonely and desire the company of Old School Baptists. I have no desire to visit among my neighbors. If there is bad sickness or death, and I am able, I go, but usually greatly prefer to stay at home, and if I have any spare time I devote it to reading or writing. I will be fifty-nine my next birthday. Surely the Lord has been merciful to me above what I could think or ask.

Now I will close, for I am shut up and can go no farther. Please forgive me for taking this liberty. May the Lord bless you and yours.

I trust I am your near kin in the Spirit,

(MRS.) FLORENCE PULTZ.

TOUCHET, Washington.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I feel inclined this evening to pen you, and the readers of the SIGNS, some of my thoughts, if you deem them worthy. I received the SIGNS this morning and have read some of its contents, and that with much pleasure and comfort. Among the articles was one from brother Biggs, in which I found much comfort of mind, but there is a Scripture which he quotes, and offers a few thoughts upon, which I also would like to give my views upon, not as a standard, or with the thought of making it appear that I am right and brother Biggs wrong, for the difference is not vital at all. When it comes to the work of the Spirit in regeneration, and in teaching the subjects of grace, brother Biggs has surely been with and taught of Jesus, but in his application of the language of Jesus to the disciples, recorded in the fourteenth chapter of John: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also," I have had a somewhat different view from him. I understand this house to be the church, the fold, the kingdom, or whatever appellation Jesus used in setting forth the kingdom of God. It is God's house, and this house is different from all other kingdoms or houses. It is in this sense that we will find the many mansions. The house of God is the home of his children, and they are commanded to follow Jesus, their teacher, and there is not a department or mansion in this house that Jesus, as an example, did not go through, and we must follow him, and we find in these disciples a wonderful change, which seems to appear to their minds. Paul said, It is "with the mind I myself serve the law of God." The law was written in his mind. These disciples had been in the mansion of this house that we call assurance, where the mind was so assured that they could say, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." It is so lovely to dwell in this mansion that we, like the disciples, would like to erect three tabernacles and dwell there. Jesus said, "If it were not so, I would have told you." I am going to leave you. And this, dear ones, changes our abode in the house to another mansion. We thought that Jesus would abide here, and now we cannot understand what all this means. He said, Depart, go away, and also, Where I go ye cannot come now. Can you not remember well when you passed from the mansion of assurance, where you had joined in sweet anthems with Moses and Elias, singing, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and, "If our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens"? O how sweet it is to sing this song of redemption with the heavenly host. But now, to our surprise, we pass through the door of this lovely place into the mansion of doubt and gloom. It is called in the Scriptures, the garden of Gethsemane. It is a place where the prince of this world lays hold upon our hope, and we are made to quake and fear. O what a change. We soon begin to search and feel our way, for the darkness in this mansion is so dense that we cannot see. Our minds are so overpowered that all we can say in this mansion is a petition, and we pray,

"Come, Holy Spirit, with all thy quickening powers,
And kindle a flame of sacred love in these cold hearts of ours."

We say, "Where is the blessedness I knew?" And we fear that we are not born again. Can one who has tasted that the Lord is gracious be thus tossed about? Can it be possible that any one so cold as I am has ever felt the warmth of God's love? If so, why am I thus? Why have I such a dull and lifeless frame? But here is one of the mansions where God leads his little ones; this is one of the departments, or mansions, where he teaches them his supremacy. Here is where we pass by the cross; here is where the flesh is crucified with him, and when in this mansion, like the disciples we say we trusted that it had been he that should have redeemed Israel. We had hoped that our sins were blotted out, but now in this mansion they rise up like mountains, and we fear we know nothing of grace, and that all the past has been nothing but deception. Even after it would seem that we have had time to learn all these mansions, which we have to some extent, still we desire to dwell in the mansion of assurance, where we can say from the depth of our hearts, "The Lord is my shepherd," and that even though we are in the valley and shadow of death we will fear no evil. But as for myself, dear brethren, before I know it I am in the mansion of doubt. How often do we feel that if we were really born again we should not have to go into those cold and dark places. But if you or I had never felt the plague of adversity we could have no fellowship with the suffering Jesus or with his people. By being experimentally led into the fiery furnace of affliction, and seeing the hand of God in measuring out to us his grace and mercy in all our trials, we can glory in the cross, and rejoice in tribulation; in these straits we are made to know and feel the power of his grace. It is then that we can enter through the gates into the mansion of the confirmation of faith, and say that these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to his purpose. He works all things after the counsel of his own will, and we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, and are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

In conclusion, I want to say that Jesus went before his people to prepare the way for them, and if our hope could not see beyond the grave we should be of all men most miserable; but as Jesus has gone into this mansion also, he has perfumed it, until our hope often draws our desire to that place. Sometimes we say, O if I could only fall asleep and rest in the bosom of the walls of the palace of death, and rest in sweet peace from all the trials of earth, until the blessed Lord shall call, Come up higher. How sweet to enter the palace with the assurance that Jesus will call us up higher, in the same glory that he is himself glorified with, for we shall see him as he is, and be like him.

Now, dear brother Chick, these are in brief my views upon the house of God, and its many mansions; they are only my views to you, and to all who may read them, if published.

Your brother,

J. T. BARNES.

HERNDON, Va., July 10, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER EUBANKS:—I am about to try to write you a short letter, although I seem to be barren of spiritual knowledge. I am, as I told you, as one dead, and the Scriptures testify, "Ye are dead, and you life is hid with

Christ in God." My mind seems to be led out now to the two deaths spoken of in Romans, eighth chapter, sixth verse, and also in the thirty-sixth verse. The sixth verse reads, "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." The death spoken of here does not mean the death of the body, but living after the flesh, for he says, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." That is, die to all spiritual enjoyments, being carried away by the lusts of the flesh, and being led captive by the devil at his will. My brother, I think that I know something about this death, and it is a dreadful death for a child of God to die. None but the children of God can possibly know anything about it, for it is bringing them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members. It also causes them often to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But there comes another death spoken of by the apostle in the same chapter, thirty-sixth verse. This reads, "For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." In Psalms xliv. 22, we find the same language as that just quoted from Romans, showing that Paul made no mistake in saying, "As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long," &c. Paul in another place said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live," and he lived by the faith of the Son of God, as he also said, and he also adds, "Who loved me, and gave himself for me." I have quoted this to show that Paul means the same same thing as when he speaks of being killed all the day long. What a broad field now opens up to my view, and it seems that I can only stand afar off and view it. I cannot paint a picture of this field, I can only look upon it. It is a large field, with many valleys and hills, and the valleys are dark. All the travelers that I see there are down in the valley of the shadow of death, and I think I hear one saying, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me," and I can see Jesus there in that dark valley of the shadow of death, as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He is leading the way, and the subjects of his love are following after him; every way he goes they follow after him. One said of old, Whither shall I flee from thy presence? Though I take the wings of the morning, and fly to the uttermost parts of the earth, thou art there, and though I make my bed in hell, thou art there. He is there to hold us up with his everlasting arms. You will remember you said, when here last, that sister Mary Parker in almost all her letters would quote, "His everlasting arm is underneath." Dear, tried soul, she suffered for Jesus' sake, in order that she might say such comforting things. Jesus is this everlasting arm, and he is always underneath his followers, though they walk in dark places, and through deep waters. One said, "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth," &c. Yes, a song of praise must be given to Jesus, the everlasting arm who is ever underneath his people, and this song is praise unto God. Dear brother, I am thinking that just so sure as we suffer here in this body of flesh, and feel that for Jesus' sake we are killed all the day long, and are accounted as sheep for the slaughter, so sure will his love continue, even to the end of our journey, and for-

ever and ever after this journey is ended. Paul said, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors," meaning tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril and sword; yes, we are conquerors through him that loved us. And he said, "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

But I must stop right here. I have not written just the way I thought I would when I began. I cannot seem to store up anything before I commence to write, but just have to write in childlike simplicity. I sometimes feel that I do not know any more than a natural child, and am far from knowing the things of the spiritual child of grace. But sometimes I have to say, "By the grace of God I am what I am." I will say again, that I am ashamed of this letter, and would write it over if I thought I could do any better, but I will send it, believing that you will throw the mantle of charity over it. I will look for you at our meeting this month.

Your poor, weak brother,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., July 17, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I inclose the accompanying letters at the request of sister Robertson and others. Sister Robertson was at our home not long since, and we were talking of things felt, and she remembered my remarks with regard to prayer. I have for many years felt it to be a very solemn and responsible position to fill, to be pastor of churches. Who is sufficient for these things? In my earlier life I thought far more lightly of them, and churches often do not solemnly and prayerfully consider the matter. I think of it as comparable to the sacred rites and pledges of marriage. Many have made shipwreck of their lives because of hasty marriages, formed without due and solemn consideration; many churches have done the same. What a happy life when two are really joined in heart, mutually comforted and blessed one with another, whether in joy or sorrow, in poverty or wealth. So with a church and her pastor, when joined in one heart and spirit, or in the mind of Christ, then they have but one common interest, and live for each other's mutual good, and are bound together in the strongest ties. I think that this was abundantly manifested in the years that I served this church. Were it not so, I could not serve any church. I served them until our two precious young brethren, Bond and Johnson, were ordained. Soon after, I resigned the care of this church, believing as I did then, and do yet, that it was right and for the good of the church, yet it was like breaking my own heart strings to tear myself away from them, for I felt that our hearts were knit together in love, and I feel that this blessed tie has remained, for I still cherish the thought of going home when I can make an occasional visit there. How blessed to feel that we have such friends in the church, bound to us by the most sacred ties of love and fellowship. May the Lord bless his church everywhere, that peace may abound among them through our Lord Jesus Christ. May he keep the way of his servants, that they walk orderly and uprightly, and bring no reproach or discord, that we may look upon Jerusalem a quiet habitation. "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the ef-

fect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever."

I submit all this to your disposal. The peace of God be upon you.

P. W. SAWIN.

FARMDALE, Ky., Sept. 22, 1901.

ELDER P. W. SAWIN—DEAR BROTHER:—The church at Little Flock yesterday, by an unanimous vote, called you to serve them for one year, and appointed me to notify you at once. I beg to assure you that it affords me very great pleasure to do so, and as I am deeply impressed that it is of the Lord, I also humbly hope that the Lord has been with you, as he has been leading each member of our church so that they were a unit in their action, and if so, you also will be one with us, showing that it is all the work of the Lord, so that you will at once be able to know what you must do. The church will expect you to be with them at our October meeting, on the fourth Saturday and Sunday, if not before that time. I trust that at that time you can give them assurance of your acceptance of this call, made in such blessed and hearty unanimity. I hope that I may hear from you soon, as to the leading of your mind regarding this matter, and that I may be able at least to hold out a hope of your being able to supply us at the time mentioned in our call. I, for one, feel that we need prudent, patient leading for the good of all of us, and for the good of the church. Then may we be kept humble, and all be built up and established in the truth as it is in Jesus, and if a greater work and a broader field is opened up for our young brethren, and they are put into the full work of the ministry, or either of them, then will we not all have reason to be thankful to the Lord?

I will not say any more at this time, and will close, hoping that at least you can visit us at our October meeting, and that sister Sawin may be able to come with you, and should it suit you, all of you come.

Affectionately your brother,

J. T. McCOUN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Sept. 26, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER McCOUN:—Yours of the 22nd received, and it somewhat surprised me. I only heard Saturday that the matter of calling me to serve you would be brought before the church at that meeting. That was a surprise to me, and brought before me many solemn thoughts and reflections, and, I trust, humble prayer for guidance, for I could not decide as to what I ought to do, and I was burdened. Receiving your touching expressions as to the full, hearty mind of the church humbled me in the dust, and I must confess that in reading your letter, before I was aware, every barrier and hindrance that seemed to forbid vanished, and I found my heart assenting to the so fully expressed wish of the church at Little Flock. My soul found sweet, solemn peace and rest. I can now better understand the exercise of my mind for two months or more, and especially for the past weak. I made mention of it at Beech Creek Saturday, as a week of prayer. I am satisfied, my dear brother, that God's ways meet. If the church had the mind of Christ, that same mind or Spirit will guide me in the way. I am, and can only be, comforted in the thought that it is of the Lord. If of him, all will be well. But O, when I take a view of myself, and what I am, everything forbids. These words have come to me with sweetness and comfort: God is able to supply all thy needs; he

sends by whom he will. Remembering that Jesus has all power, will it be presuming in me to say that he can fill the poor earthen vessel, and that he can cause even this poor, sinful worm of the dust to declare his blessed name to your comfort and to his glory? Yes, he is able to do his will. My manner of life and preaching thou knowest; I cannot promise you more in the future. "By the grace of God I am what I am." I would live better and preach better if I could, but I am helpless and dependent. My only sufficiency is of God, to him I pray for wisdom and guidance in every step. I think that I know what a pastor ought to be, and that weighed in the balance I am found wanting, but with such gift as the blessed Lord has given me I have been made willing to spend and be spent for you, and in behalf of our beloved Zion. "There my best friends, my kindred, dwell, there God my Savior reigns." Your appeal to me, and your tender, loving words, and your expression of humble hope that it is of the Lord, have touched me. Yea, it has ravished my heart, and I am in thy power to serve the church. I will state that it is doubtful if I can be with you at the October meeting. I gave a promise at the association to visit Elk Lick this fall, and have written them that if it suited I would be there the fourth Saturday and Sunday in October. I have had no word from them as yet, and should I not go there, I will be with you at Little Flock, the Lord willing. Sensible, I trust, of the solemn responsibilities that come upon me in the new field of labor for the ensuing year, and in the fear of God, and in his most holy name, and with, as I hope, humble prayer for guidance and for wisdom and grace, I accept the call of the Little Flock Church, in Anderson Co., Ky. I crave and beg the prayers of the church, that we may be mutually blessed and comforted one with another.

Sincerely, P. W. SAWIN.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., April 26, 1910.

DEAR ELDERS CHICK AND KER:—It has pleased God to spare you both to wield "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon." The SIGNS has stood firm in proclaiming the commands of God. In tearing down the works of the enemy of truth the command was to do as Gideon had done: to blow the trumpet on every side of the camp, to proclaim salvation is of the Lord. Such command is given to his true servants as it was to Gideon, also to Moses, to "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." He has promised to deliver and fight our battles and to bring us into his habitation, and he will not be left without a witness. The poor of the flock receiveth rain from heaven, which gives us fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness. "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified." The Lord hath not sent false prophets, yet they prophesied lies in his name; they are prophets of the deceit of their own hearts, and think to cause God's people to forget his mercy. "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully." The food needed for Zion's children is brought from afar. Great efforts are made to deceive the household of faith, by offering that which is not food. All doctrine that is not sound should be cast aside, no mixture of works or conditions should be allowed. The true food is given from above, to wit, salvation by grace, and of him who said, "I am the bread of life." There can be no mixture, each work must be by itself, all woolen or all linen.

Jesus is the clothing of his people, who are told to put on Christ and walk in him. The true followers of God are not engaged in the work of making converts, like the popular churches of to-day are doing; the true shepherds, or preachers, are on the watch for the poor and needy; poor in spirit, claiming no righteousness of their own, but hungering for the righteousness of God, as we all feel to be poor and afflicted little ones, dependent upon our God for the crumbs which fall from his bountiful table.

The SIGNS is a rich legacy, which comes laden with good things for the household of faith, and we feel thankful that he has given us hearing ears and understanding hearts. One thing I know, I love to read his word, and I receive much comfort in it. I also love to hear and read from able writers in the SIGNS. The editorials are very consoling to those who desire to know the truth. In the April 15th number I greatly enjoyed reading the communications from Elders Durand and Badger; they were both choice letters, if I understand them right. The great question which is causing so much trouble with those claiming to be Primitive Baptists is the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things. God made all things for himself, yea, the wicked for the day of evil. He has the preeminence over all things; no power above him, is not to be limited in any of his works, as he declared "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Man has no right to limit God, as man was placed upon this earth by his Maker to do with as it seemeth good unto him. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

Dear brethren, in my weak way, through the help of God, I have tried to explain myself as I understand the Scriptures, and I trust God has given me understanding. If this is worthy of space you can use it, if not, cast it aside and all will be right.

Your brother, I hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

ANSLEY, Nebr., Feb. 2, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I wish to send in my remittance for the SIGNS, I would like to add a few words for the paper, which has been a great blessing to me. When trouble overtook me, almost more than I could bear, the SIGNS was a salve to my overburdened mind, although they were then borrowed ones, and I feel I cannot get along without it, and wish to subscribe for it. There is a little band of Old Baptists about eight miles from here. Our pastor, Elder Waggoner, is quite old and feeble, and is not able to be with us often, and I feel he is quite discouraged. I am not a member here, as I have only been at this place one year, and do not know as I will remain long. My membership is still at Battle Creek, Nebr., but my prayer is that this little church may be built up and get in a more prosperous condition. O how I do wish some of our ministers who are visiting other churches would come this way. There are many hungry sheep outside the fold, straying farther and farther away because there is no shepherd to show them the way home, some I fear are entering strange folds, for they are called, and must go somewhere to hunt for food. O how sad to think they cannot find it.

May the Lord put it into the heart of some of his servants to come and visit us.

I have a little adopted daughter, eleven years of age, whom I believe the Lord has called. She has pleaded with me to allow her to join the M. E. denomination during the "revivals," saying she wanted to be a christian and go to heaven, and she seems heart-broken about it. I studied for some time about it, and tried to explain to her that that could not save her, and that God would save her just the same if she did not belong to any church, but I could not satisfy her; she says she wants to be baptized. I finally forbade her joining, and then was troubled over the Scripture, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not." Was I right in forbidding it? I would then argue, But was she coming unto him? It troubled me so much one night in my sleep a voice said to me, Do you think you are good enough to judge, Mary? And then voices sang, More love, O Christ, to thee. I would love for some one to tell me whether I did right or wrong; but I feel sure you will all say I did right, for in spite of all, I feel that I did. But she is not the only one, there are other true mourners hunting the way; true Old Baptists in belief have been almost persuaded, but are still hanging back. I know the Lord is able to take care of them, but still I have shed many tears to think there is no chance for them to find the true way. There is no church or minister here, and they know not what else to do. I have tried to tell them in my poor, weak way of the Old Baptists, as they have said they believed as they do, but I find I am no preacher, and that is what they need.

I will not say I did not write this for the SIGNS, for I really did, as I have been requested by some of the brethren to write, and thought perhaps I could, but I realize it is not fit for publication. I cannot write or express myself as I wish. When I am alone I am continually talking to the church, or writing for the SIGNS in my mind, and have a great desire to talk and encourage others to talk, as I believe we ought, but when at meeting my mind is all confusion and I am dumb, afraid of my own voice, and if I do say anything, feel it is foolishly said, just as this letter is foolishly written. I have often thought when reading the SIGNS, when some brother or sister would say their letter was unfit for publication, Surely they do not mean it; but now I am made to realize they do mean it.

But remember I am almost alone here, there being but one of our faith in the town, and I get so hungry for some one to talk with. This is my excuse for my ignorance in ever attempting to write, and I do wish for some of our ministers to visit us.

If, dear editors, you have patience to read this letter and you ever should find time hanging heavily on your hands, please answer, and I will be grateful, but if not, all will be well.

Your unworthy sister, I hope,

(MRS.) MARY KERN.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, July 17, 1910.

ELDER H. C. KER—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I am indeed glad that you felt to write me, for I have felt since sending my letter that I could hardly expect an answer; you have so much more profitable use of your time than wasting it on such a rebellious and uncharitable creature as I know myself to be. But with all my frailty and sinfulness, I do so long for the fellowship of those who stand so high

above me in all those graces which adorn the life and walk of a christian. My way has been dark and troubled now for some time back; I am made to behold with much distress my own uncleanness. All manner of evil beasts disturb my peace, and would, if it were in their power, destroy my very hope, but still, however weak, I have a faint hope that even all these trials are serving some wise purpose, for I know if I am one of God's children his chastening will be to my profit, and in his good time and way will yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness. "Every man shall bear his own burden," yet I am ever trying to place mine, or some part of it, on others. Worst of all, that I should presumptuously take it upon myself to instruct others in a way that I am so far from following myself. These words of the fiftieth Psalm have been on my mind a great deal for some time: "What hast thou to do, to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and casteth my words behind thee." O if I could see my way more clearly, could know what is good, and be given the strength to walk in it; but it is not so with me. How can all the wicked thoughts and desires that are continually in my heart be to His glory, if I am indeed a vessel of mercy? If I could feel that it were so, that these sore trials are to prepare my heart that I might be of the least service to any of his precious little ones, then I think I could bear it more patiently. It is not that I do not know that I am deserving of all that may fall upon me, it is of the Lord's mercy that I am not consumed, but I feel that he does not visit his children according to their iniquities, but for their profit and instruction.

It is certainly a blessing to me that sister Florence Beebe has been able to be with us for a little while. She has been of great comfort to me, but in return, instead of being a help to her, I have only tried to burden her mind with my troubles. The short reference you made to your own trials gives me more of a feeling of fellowship for you than anything you could write, yet how unworthy I am of such fellowship. It is only when I can forget myself entirely, and look on high to Jesus and meditate on his great goodness and mercy, remembering all the way (I hope) the Lord hath led me, that I can feel any comfort or peace. The apostle said, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth," and I feel the same is true of our feeling toward our brethren. It gives me no joy to have others speak well of me, though I would have it farthest from my mind to grieve them by my walk, but it does give me joy to see in my brethren that spirit manifested which I cannot find in myself. The prayer of my heart is, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." If you can fellowship such a wretched worm of the dust, remember me when you are given strength.

Your unworthy brother, in hope,

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

1047 LINCOLN AVE., LOVELAND, Colo.

DEAR BRETHREN:—"But it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light." It seems to me I have seen the fulfillment of this declaration of the prophet, although it may not be that it is applicable, or has any direct reference to that which I take my pen to write about, yet the words seem suited to my mind. No doubt some of the readers of the SIGNS will remember how I lamented in some of my letters a few years ago

about my lonely and isolated condition here, being cut off, as it were, from church privileges, with no hope of finding even one who knew and loved the truth. Brother A. G. Johnson, of Fort Lupton, Colo., found and visited me; then old sister Thorne (of whom I shall more particularly speak) hunted me up and visited me. Sister McCollum, who lived but twenty miles from me, found me through that valuable medium of correspondence, the SIGNS, and wrote to me. Next came a letter from brother J. H. Rector, and Elder J. B. Adams rapped at my door one Sunday morning. Soon afterward we arranged our first meeting together, which we held at brother Rector's house, in Greeley, Colo. We continued to meet together, changing from place to place, as we are but few in number and live scattered from each other. Elder B. F. Butler was with us at one of our meetings. Our last meeting was here in Loveland, of which I will now more fully speak. I wrote to Elder D. B. Nowels, of Lamar, Colo., a distant relative of mine in the flesh, and got a promise from him to visit us, which he did on Saturday and Sunday, April 23rd and 24th. He came laden with the eternal truth of our God; he was enabled to preach unto us Jesus "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." We felt that the Master verified unto us his promise that where two or three are gathered together in his name he will be in their midst. We had the witness with us, for after preaching Sunday night, sister Trephonia Thorne related her experience, dating her hope back to a time and place forty years ago, she not being so situated that she could unite with the church she believed the true church of God, or, as she expressed it, she had not found the right man to baptize her. When she met Elder Nowels on Saturday at my house the thought was impressed upon her mind: That is the man to baptize me. Upon motion and second, sister Thorne's experience was declared by us all to be satisfactory, and at her request that brother Nowels baptize her, on Monday we repaired to the Big Thompson River, at the edge of our city, where at noon Elder Nowels administered the ordinance of baptism. Sister Thorne is in the eightieth year of her age. It was plainly in evidence that Elder Nowels was enabled to sow good seed while here among us, which, like bread cast upon the waters, will bear fruit not many days hence. Our next meeting was arranged to be held on the fourth Sunday in this month, here again in Loveland. We hope to have Elder Butler with us then. We may also consider the advisibility of constituting ourselves into a church in the near future.

In conclusion, let me ask, Does it not appear that the prophet's words I have quoted are true to my wife and self? Where but a short time ago all looked dark and gloomy before us, as to our ever meeting and mingling with any of the faithful ones in Christ Jesus, as was our blessed privilege in days past and gone, there are now twelve of us living within a radius of thirty-five miles. Who knows but that the good Lord may open the way so that we may yet in our declining years be permitted to meet with the true worshipers of God in the house of the Lord, there to join in praising his holy name? God grant it may be so.

Brother Chick, I ask that if you think the foregoing is worthy of space in the dear old SIGNS you will publish it. In so doing it will let others know where we

are, and may lead them to come and live among us.

J. H. YEOMAN.

LOVELAND, Colo., August 1, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—I wrote as brief an item as I could in June, giving account of the meeting together of a few of the Lord's people in this part of Colorado, and the intended meeting to be held here the first Sunday in this month (August), for the purpose of perfecting the establishing of an arm of Bethel Church in this place, Loveland, Colo., and as my letter has not yet been published in the SIGNS, I write again to say that the meeting for the first Sunday in August was changed to the fifth Sunday in July, and Saturday before. According to this arrangement the meeting was held at my house (residence) on Saturday, July 30th, of which I will give a brief account, which I wish you would publish in the SIGNS, so that any of the Baptists, readers of the SIGNS, who may be coming to Colorado to locate, or passing through the State, may know where to find us. A few years ago I did not know of one of our faith nearer me than one hundred miles, but through my writings which have appeared in the SIGNS we have been gathered together, and have entered into a covenant as a little band of true worshipers of God, under the arm or protection of Bethel Church, located at Lamar, Colo. According to our request, Elder D. B. Nowels, pastor,———Thompson, moderator, and J. H. Hardy, church clerk, also sister Thorne, of Bethel Church, met with us as delegates or messengers from Bethel Church, last Saturday, July 30th. After singing praise, and prayer unto God, and preaching by Elder Nowels, the moderator in the name and behalf of the church gave invitation for reception of members, whereupon Elder J. B. Adams and sister Adams, his wife, brother A. G. Johnson (a licentiate), and sister Carrie Johnson, brother J. H. Rector and sister Rector, and J. H. Yeoman, presented their letters of dismission from other churches. Upon motion and second, they were unanimously received. Sister Laura B. Yeoman came forward, and after stating the circumstances as to why she had no letter, she was received by relation by unanimous vote. It was covenanted or agreed that we meet once a month, to wit, on Saturday before the first Sunday in each month, for the transaction of church business and the worship of God, worship to be continued on Sunday. The matter of choosing some one to take the oversight or pastoral care of our meetings was continued indefinitely. There was also present at our meeting Elder B. F. Butler, of Brush, Colo., also our aged sister in Christ, V. McCollum, of Evans, Colo., who having not yet received her church letter from her home church, deferred uniting with us at this time.

Our meeting was one of much joy and rejoicing, and one long to be remembered by us; all felt it was good for us to be there, for surely the blessed Master verified his promise unto us, that "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Surely all felt that Jesus was with us. The preaching of the gospel of our God was as the voice of one man, and was of that joyful sound which all the Lord's poor, hungering, needy children know when they hear it proclaimed.

Brethren, pray for us, that peace and unity of spirit may abound and abide with us, that our love to God and for each other may prevail above all else.

J. H. YEOMAN.

COLUMBUS JUNCTION, Iowa, June 6, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have neglected to send in my subscription, and ask your pardon. I do not want to be without the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as it advocates the doctrine I love; it is indeed meat and drink to me. I love the doctrine of election and predestination, for therein is my only hope, and therein is His grace made manifest to lost and helpless sinners. I think I have enjoyed the SIGNS more in the last year than usual, not that I think it is so much better, but it is in such marked contrast to so much that we read in this modern age. I do not find strife or contention in its columns, but the spirit of love and fellowship, without sacrificing the principles of the doctrine. I hope you may long be spared to wield "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon." I hope those who have contributed to the SIGNS will continue to cry aloud and spare not, for it is comfort to the little ones, and a feast to the hungry. What joy it gives us when our High Priest enters into the holy of holies, and we hear the sound of the golden bells, telling us that our High Priest lives and has made intercession for our sins, and that God for Christ's sake has pardoned our iniquities. Then does he appear to us as a shelter in a time of storm, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, and we are made to drink deeply at the wells of salvation. O that men might praise God for his goodness and mercy, and for his wonderful works toward the children of men.

I did not think to write as I have. Please do not use this to crowd out good matter. I am only a poor sinner in hope of a better life beyond this vale of tears. When it is well with you, please remember me at the throne of grace.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

J. L. THURSTON.

CEMENT CITY, Mich., June 15, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed two dollars to pay for the SIGNS another year. I am well pleased with the workmanship of the SIGNS, both in a natural sense and in a spiritual sense. I was well pleased with the editorial upon "The deep things of God." Those who have the Spirit cannot help being drawn to contemplate some of the deep things of God, for that is what the Spirit searches, even the deep things of God. These things are in all his ways and works, every one of which praises him, even to the great leviathan (Satan), who is pronounced by God himself king over all the children of pride. All the objection against searching out the deep things of God as revealed in the holy Scriptures amounts to nothing. All these things are in the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him. If one should claim to know the time of the end of the world, the day or the hour, he would be an impostor and deceiver. Jesus declared that no man knew this, not even himself as a man. This is one of the things not revealed in the Scriptures of truth. All the revelation that we can ever have of him who is a Spirit must be by the Spirit, and this will always be according to holy writ in every particular. This is the standard by which to try them all. There are many false prophets gone out into the world, and very religious, too. The children of God who have his Spirit, have more than a religion, they have the faith of God's elect, which is worth more than all the religion of the whole world, and is the faith of Jesus, the Son of God with all power, (not with signs and lying wonders). I submit this to the SIGNS.

Your brother,

DAVID TITMUS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1910.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

BRIEF REPLIES.

ONE whose name is signed to the request as "A Subscriber" has asked that we write upon the words found in Malachi i. 2, 3, and Romans ix. 11–15. Another dear friend has also written, asking that we have something to say upon the words found in Romans ix. 22–24.

Quite recently we have written upon portions of the ninth chapter of Romans, but not especially upon the verses named by either of these correspondents. It is sure that there can be no more important portion of the word of God than this chapter. It deals with the deep things of God, as do all other Scriptures; it is given by inspiration, just as all other portions of the Bible are; its words are plain and simple, though the truths presented in it are profound; it was given to the honor of God and the abasement of men, as is true of all the other Scriptures. No other portion of the word has been quite so bitterly assailed by men as has this portion. It has been sneeringly said, "O that was Paul's writing." But we recall that the late Elder Wm. J. Purington used to say in reply to this, "Thank God we have Paul." In replying to these two requests we do not desire to repeat what we have lately written. We will come directly to the texts named. The one in Malachi is repeated in the ninth of Romans; Paul quotes it there. "I have loved you, saith the Lord: yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness." And Paul says, "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." It seems to us that the words used in Malachi refer to these two men in their descendants, rather than to the men as individuals. The two peoples are named by the names of their fathers. The mountains of Esau, or the mountains occupied by his descendants, and their heritage, were laid waste, while Jacob flourished. This was true of the two peoples, and God, through Malachi, urges this as full proof that he loved them, against those who had said, "Wherein hast thou loved us?" Yet Jacob was the younger brother, and not entitled to the blessing, according to customs of those times. We also read in the beginning that it was said to their mother that the elder should serve the younger. This must also have referred to their descendants, for we do not read that personally Esau was the servant of Jacob. But there was no reason in the two men themselves why the elder should serve the younger, or why Jacob should be blessed above Esau. Leaving out the one thing which Jacob possessed, and possessed through the gift of God, viz., faith, Esau seems to have been the nobler man in disposition. God did not advance Jacob and abase Esau because Jacob was the better man. We are expressly told this in the word of inspiration. But while, as it appears to us, the words in Malachi refer rather to the two peoples

of which they were the heads, yet in Romans Paul was inspired to state that in the dealings of God with these two men was set forth the blessed doctrine of election, the election of grace. It was in order that the purpose of God according to election might stand that it was said to their mother, "The elder shall serve the younger," and it was also according to the language of the Lord in Malachi where it is said, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." This was so, not according to any (either good or evil) works upon the part of either of them, because this was declared before they were born, and before they had done either good or evil, and so we are taught that the blessed doctrine of personal election to heaven and salvation does not depend upon foreseen good works or evil works, but is according to the supreme will of God; it is his choice, and not ours. Elsewhere we are told of other things connected with this doctrine, such as it was "before the foundation of the world," that its subjects should be holy and without blame before the Lord in love, and that it was "according to the foreknowledge of God." Other things are also declared of this doctrine in holy writ, but all of them are in harmony with what has already been said.

But "Subscriber" asks, In what way did the Lord love the one and hate the other? and was it to everlasting salvation and condemnation? So far as these two men are concerned we can say no more than we have already said. We only know that Jacob was a man of faith, with all his infirmities, failures, stumblings and unbelief, while we have no evidence from the Scriptures that Esau possessed faith at all, and faith is the one broad distinction between him that is saved and him that is not saved. Without faith it is impossible to please God. We do not know what gracious work might have been wrought in the heart of Esau before the Lord called him hence, but we have no evidence that he ever was called by grace. We know that Jacob was. (See Heb. xi. 9.) As to how our God hates and loves, no man can fathom the deep mystery, and each humble believer considers it the greatest mystery of all that God should love him, but it is sure that God does love, and that he does hate, and it is enough to know this. How blessed to know and to feel his love, but how awful the mystery of his hate.

But let us understand as we may what is said in Malachi about these two men. It is sure that Paul uses these two men, and God's dealings with them, to set forth the doctrine of election, and election means the choice of persons to salvation out from the rest of mankind. And God loves one and chooses him to salvation, and is said to hate the other and not to choose him to salvation, and this is to all eternity. He never will cease to love and bless his chosen, and he never will cease to hate and condemn those whom he has not chosen. We do not dare to try to lessen the force of the words of Paul, for they are the words of God. Language could not be more plain or simple than the words to which our attention has been called; they are the words which the Holy Spirit has chosen to set forth his truth. Why should those who believe in God shrink from them any more than from any other declarations of holy writ? All opposition must come out of hearts unreconciled to God, and what a mercy it is to find in our hearts a spirit to submissively say, "Thus saith the Lord," and, Shall not the Judge of the whole earth do right? How solemnly Paul, in this very chapter, reproves all those

who would question the decrees or the election of God. Let us also not be found replying against God. It is sure that we shall never in this life fathom either the love or the hate of God.

We now turn to the twenty-second and twenty-third verses: "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." The word "shew" means "to make manifest" and the word "wrath" means his holy displeasure against sin, while the word "power" refers to his power to punish sin, and "the vessels of wrath" means vessels destined to wrath, just as "vessels of mercy" means vessels destined to mercy. In Ephesians these same characters are called children of wrath. If there be any difficulties in such statements, they are not gotten rid of by softening the language at all, since there are so many other similar statements in the word of God. So long as we acknowledge an omnipotent and omniscient God, even though we should seek to make light of the statements of the Bible, we cannot lessen the difficulties which such texts seem to have. The omnipotence and omniscience of our God in themselves involve every difficulty that perplexes the minds of men with regard to His dealings with men. But if we deny his omnipotence or omniscience we seek to rob him of his Godhead, and are guilty of high treason against him. If God, as the apostle states, expressly designed to make his power known in the way of wrath, it could only be by punishing some while he pardoned others, and if the choice between the two was not to be founded, as the apostle also teaches, upon any difference in the doings of one from the other, but alone upon his own pleasure, the decision must ultimately rest with God alone. Yet the text declares that even upon the vessels of wrath God has shown much long-suffering, and upon the vessels of mercy he bestows riches of glory, that is, in choosing and eternally arranging for their salvation.

We suppose one special thing in the mind of the writer of this request was the expression, "Fitted to destruction." This, of course, means prepared, suited, to the end here called destruction. God prepares his chosen ones for final salvation and glory. This preparation includes the atonement, the new birth, the possession of divine life in the soul, and, in short, all that blessed work by which any man can be made ready for the inheritance of the saints in light. It means such a preparation as fits one for blessed communion with God through the Holy Spirit; this no one can ever know without such heartfelt preparation. By nature no one is fitted for anything save destruction, and all men by nature are fitted for that. This has been so ever since the fall of our first father. Since the fall man has needed nothing more to fit him for destruction from the glory of the Lord and his power. Men are declared to be "dead in sins," according to the decree, "Thou shalt surely die." All men by nature are children of wrath, as we are told by the apostle. If any become fitted to glory it is a special grace from God, taking them out from the great mass of mankind and giving them to live in the Lord. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." It is not needful to suppose that there is any need of further work to fit vessels of wrath for this destruction,

and the text does not say, Whom he hath fitted to destruction, as it does say on the other hand, concerning the vessels of mercy, whom he hath before prepared unto glory. "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life." It was said of Judas that he went to his own place, having fallen by transgression from the apostleship. "His own place" must mean the place to which he was fitted as an unrenewed man, and it must refer to his final destiny. Unrenewed men are not fitted for the kingdom of heaven here on earth, and surely are not fitted for the heaven that is above, the heaven of final glory. The redeemed fitted to glory are fitted by the grace of God reigning in them and over them, but sin and sinful natures fit men for the abode of the lost. Most surely such as these are not fitted for the fellowship that is in Christ through the Spirit, nor for the companionship of those who love and worship God, either here or hereafter. It is eternally right that sin should be punished, and sin fits men for that punishment, and so the apostle says of these vessels of wrath, that they are fitted to destruction. It is in this sense, as it appears to us, that they are said to be fitted to destruction. C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

We are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

HEBREWS XII. 22–24.

"But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

The Hebrews, as such, were brought up under the ritual and ceremonies of the Levitical law, and seemed very strongly inclined to cling to the observance of legal traditions, works and customs, from which the inspired writer labored to convert them. The whole epistle is devoted to that end. The two covenants are compared and contrasted, the priesthood of Christ shown to be of a far superior order to that of Aaron and his sons; the one by the law of a carnal commandment, the other by the power of an endless life. But in the changing of the priesthood there was of necessity a changing of the law. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Thus "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me [the saints] free from the law of sin and death." Being therefore redeemed from the dominion of the law and brought under law to Christ, the saints are required to obey the precepts of Christ from higher and nobler motives, and they are qualified for their new allegiance to Christ, not by fleshly or carnal ability, but by being made partakers of the same power of an endless life. Instead of being licensed

to sin because grace abounds, and because abounding grace has made them free from the law, the apostle urges their obedience to Christ from that very consideration. "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and to the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard, entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (for they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: and so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake)."

"Not to the terrors of the Lord,
The tempest, fire and smoke;
Not to the thunder of that word
That God, on Sinai, spoke."

"But ye are come unto mount Sion" (or Zion), which place literally was the highest eminence in Jerusalem, and the place of power, where stood the royal palace of the king of Israel, inclosed by invincible towers and walls of strength, a place of safety, &c., in all respects the type of the church of our Lord Jesus Christ, in her highest elevation, the palace of the great King, the center and throne of the spiritual Israel of our God. Hither, by grace, the saints of the gospel dispensation have come to worship the Lord their God in his holy hill. Not to be terrified by blackness and darkness, which even Moses could not endure without fear and quaking, but a peaceful habitation, a quiet dwelling-place, where those who come are seated with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to go out no more forever. Zion, the perfection of beauty, out of which God hath shined, for God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early.

"And unto the city of the living God." Jerusalem in the type was the consecrated city of God, and Mount Zion was embraced and inclosed within her sacred precincts, the very name of the city signifying the vision of peace, beautifully illustrative of the church of God in her gospel splendor; beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, upon the sides of the north; the city of the great King. The glory of this city is more perfectly delineated in the vision of John, as he saw her descending from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride prepared for her husband. (See Rev. twenty-first and twenty-second chapters.) The city of the living God, not of some imaginary or idol god; the God of life, who lives independently, being self-existent and eternal; the source and fountain of life, especially so of all spiritual, eternal life; the true God and eternal life, in whom the life of all the saints with Christ is hid. All other gods are dead; without vitality themselves, they can impart no quickening power to their worshipers. The God of our salvation lives, and blessed be our Rock. The city which the living God himself hath built, and in which he has set his throne, in which he will dwell forever, because he hath desired it, is truly the city of the living God, and to this city the saints are come. This city of the living God is the heavenly Jerusalem. Contrasted with the earthly or typical Jerusalem, which like Hagar, the bondwoman, gendering to bondage, being herself a slave, she cannot be the mother of a free posterity; she is in bondage with her children; they shall not be heirs with the children of the freewoman. But Jerusalem, which is above, is free, and it is just as impossible for her to be the mother of a slave as for Hagar to be the mother of a free child. Those who

are born of Jerusalem, which is above and is free, are as Isaac was, they have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the Spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father.

"And to an innumerable company of angels." The term "angels" is variously applied in the Scriptures, sometimes, and perhaps generally, to an order of beings superior to men, as the angels of glory, such as announced the birth of our Savior; and frequently the name is applied to the messengers or ministers of the gospel, as in 1 Tim. v. 21, and also the angels of the seven churches in Asia. But in this text we understand the term as applied to the spirits of just men made perfect, the disembodied spirits of the saints in glory. Although there is a definite number of these, perfectly known to God, yet the multitude of them cannot be counted by men, and therefore they are an innumerable company, and in the same kingdom or city into which the saints in the gospel church have come. They have come from the east and the west, the north and the south, and are seated with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of our God; not with the fleshly bodies of the patriarchs, for they have long ago returned to dust, and in their graves await the voice of the archangel and the trump of God to raise them up spiritual bodies in the last time. The kingdom of Christ being a spiritual kingdom, cannot be inherited by flesh and blood, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. (1 Cor. xv. 50.) Thus the apostle could speak of being absent in body, but present in spirit with the saints. This is blessed, spiritual society to those who are born of the Spirit, and whose angels do always behold the face of their Father in heaven. (Matt. xviii. 10.)

"To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven." This general assembly is the church of the firstborn, the church of Christ, for he is the firstborn. He was not the firstborn in his flesh, for millions were born in the flesh before his incarnation, but he is the first begotten of the dead, (Rev. i. 5,) and he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, (Col. i. 17,) the firstborn of every creature. (Col. i. 15.) And God has predestinated whom he did foreknow to be conformed to his image, that he may be the firstborn among many brethren. (Romans viii. 29.) His church, called out from all the tribes of the earth, come in the unity of the faith and knowledge of God to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. All the members of his body, the church, shall come to him in general assembly, called out from the world and brought with singing to Zion, gathered with his arm and carried in his bosom. His church is the general assembly, for all the saints are assembled within her sacred precincts, and their names are written in heaven. "In thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."—Psalms cxxxix. 16. They are written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (Rev. xiii. 8; see also Rev. xx. 12, 15.) The record of the saints in heaven implies not only their personal election in Christ before the world began, but also their recognition in his gospel church, registered in and fellowshiped by the whole general assembly as the living in Jerusalem, as citizens with the saints and of the household of God.

"And to God the Judge of all." All the saints were arraigned before God, in

his judicial character, when they stood before the bar of justice, and before the mountain that burned with fire, and there they were stoned to death and thrust through with cruel arrows, but their Surety appeared on their behalf and paid for them the ransom price. He was delivered up to die for their iniquities, and he arose again for their justification. Now being freely justified through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, they are redeemed unto God, brought nigh to God, and find him, in Christ, not only their Judge, whose decisions are final and irrevocable, but also their Advocate. "It is God that justifieth."—Romans viii. 33. Now they rejoice in him as their Judge, and appeal to him as such, for they know that it is written, "The Lord shall judge his people." He is the Judge of all, of all beings, of all events and of all worlds; he is the Judge of all their necessities, their supplies, their trials and their deliverances, their conflicts and their victories, and as they have confidence in him, they can freely, unreservedly and cheerfully commit their cause to him, and rest assured that justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne; righteousness and truth go before his face. Once they were in awful dread of appearing before him, but now his terror shall not make them afraid. Their longing spirits ardently cry out from time to time, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?"—Psalms xlii. 1, 2.

"And to the spirits of just men made perfect." These we understand to be the same as are called the innumerable company of angels. They are the spirits of just men, men who are justified freely, fully and everlastingly, through the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ; made perfect by that one offering by which Christ has perfected them that are sanctified; clothed with the garments of salvation and covered with the robe of righteousness. They were made perfect, they did not make themselves so, for "Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."—Isa. liv. 17. These are just men, for God hath justified them; they are made perfect, for Christ has forever perfected them. Their bodies may be moldering in their graves, but we are in communion with their spirits, for all being born of the one Spirit, there is one body and one Spirit, even as we are all called in one hope of our calling; one Lord, one faith and one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. It is in the Spirit we commune with them, the flesh profiteth nothing.

"And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant." In coming to this heavenly Jerusalem, or city of the living God, we come to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant or testament. As Moses was the mediator of the Sinai covenant to the carnal Israelites, for they could not endure the words spoken to them, and prayed that God would speak to Moses, and through him unto them, thus making him a mediator between God and them in the dispensation of the fiery law, so in the new covenant with the spiritual Israel Christ is the Mediator, and all the saints come to him. A mediator is one who mediates between two parties, and is qualified to equally represent both; equally allied, related and interested. So Christ as the Son of God on the one part, and as Head over all things to the church, which is his body, on the other, is the only divinely recognized Mediator or

Daysman between God and man. No man can come unto the Father but by him. As there is but one God, so there is but one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time.

We have not time or space here to treat at large upon the mediatorial glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we will briefly speak of him as the Mediator of the new covenant, as it is through his mediation this covenant of life and peace exists, is made, ratified and ordered in all things and sure. By his mediation for his people the provisions and requisitions of the old covenant are met and canceled, and taken out of the way, for "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second."—Heb. x. 9. His canceling of the old covenant annulled our marriage with Moses, that by the new covenant we might be lawfully married to Christ our risen Savior, who as the head and husband of his church is fully qualified to fulfill all the provisions of the new covenant to the honor of his Father, and perfect safety and salvation of his church. This covenant is in him, through him and by him; he is the Surety of it, and as mediator of it stands responsible for the fulfillment of all its promises. "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more." Indeed, all the promises of God are in Christ Jesus, yea, and in him amen, to the glory of God by us. It is in him, through him and by him, as our Mediator, that Jehovah is our God, and certainly it is only through him that we are redeemed unto God and recognized as his peculiar people. Through no other mediation is it possible that God should be merciful to our unrighteousness; there was no mercy in the law. "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy," and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; but in the provisions of the new covenant under the mediation of the Son of God, "mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."—Psalms lxxxv. 10. His mediatorial fullness covers and embraces all his official relations to his people, as Prophet, Priest and King, Shepherd, Bishop, Elder Brother, Husband, Head, Father, Way, Truth and Life, Leader, Ruler, Savior and Judge. We are not come to Moses to mediate for us, nor to Aaron, nor are we left to the mediation of men, or to attempt the work for ourselves; from all these we are come away, and are come to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant.

"And to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." Answering to the figures of the ceremonial law. "For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament [or covenant, which means the same,] which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without the shedding of blood is no remission."—Heb. ix. 19–22. "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into

the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament," &c.—Heb. ix. 11–15. Thus in coming to Christ as the Mediator of the new covenant we come to the blood of sprinkling, which being the blood of atonement, by which we are purged from dead works and purified from all defilement, it speaketh better things than that of Abel. The voice of Abel's blood, which had been shed by the fratricidal hands of Cain, called from the ground for righteous retribution upon the murderer. But the blood of Christ speaketh better things; it speaks of atonement, of pardon, peace, reconciliation, redemption, cleansing, purification and justification; yea, and of victory through the blood of the Lamb. Thus speaketh the blood of sprinkling to which the saints have come. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; Grace unto you, and peace be multiplied."—1 Peter i. 2. "Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."—Heb. x. 22. The sprinkling of the blood of victims sacrificed under the law, upon the books and the people, was to consecrate them ceremonially to the Lord, and the sprinkling the blood of the paschal lamb upon the lintels and door-posts of the dwellings of the Hebrews was to them a peaceful assurance of their redemption and deliverance from wrath; the destroying angel had no power to smite them. Even so the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all guilt and saves from all wrath. From all these considerations the apostle urges his solemn admonition: "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh." If indeed we are come to Mount Sion, to the city of the living God, to all these gospel privileges, we should endeavor to walk worthy of the high vocation wherewith we are called.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., August 15, 1864.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. G. Eubanks, at his residence in Newark, Del., August 3rd, 1910, William H. Sevier and Mary Louise, daughter of Mrs. S. R. Hance, and granddaughter of the late Elder E. Rittenhouse.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mary J. Ruark was born Dec. 22nd, 1882, in Worcester County, Md., and departed this life July 11th, 1910, aged 27 years, 6 months and 19 days. She was married to Orlando M. Ruark Dec. 25th, 1901. She leaves to mourn their loss, husband, two little children, father, mother, a sister and a brother. She was operated upon May 17th, at General Pennusula Hospital, for an abscess, and seemed to be getting along all right until a few days before she died. She suffered greatly, but never murmured or complained, and was one of the most patient persons I have ever seen. She lacked two days of being at the hospital eight weeks. In her sickness she told her husband that when none of us were there with her the Lord was all the company she had, and she was trusting in him. She told me several different times that the Lord had blessed her in her sickness. Mamie was not a member of any church, but we believe she is better off. It was hard to give her up, but we must bow in submission to His will, and say, He doeth all things well. She leaves an infant nine months old; it is with us, and we are trying to raise it.

She was laid to rest July 13th, in Friendship Cemetery. We tried to get Elder Poulson, but he was sick and could not come.

Her loving father, WM. E. BAILEY,

SALISBURY, Md.

MEETINGS.

THE Bryn Zion Church, Kent Co., Del., will hold their yearly meeting on the third Sunday in August and Saturday afternoon before, beginning at 2 o'clock p. m. A general invitation is given to brethren and friends to meet with us. Trains will be met at Clayton Saturday morning. B. E. CUBBAGE.

A THREE days meeting will be held with the Sulphur Fork Church, near Campbellsburg, Ky., to begin on Friday before the fourth Saturday in August, 1910. We extend a cordial invitation to brethren and friends to meet with us. Elders Lester and Eubanks are expected, and perhaps others will be there. This meeting comes just before the Licking Association. P. W. SAWIN, Pastor.

THE Cammal Old School Baptist Church has appointed a two days meeting at Cammal, Pa., the fourth Sunday, and Saturday previous, in August, 1910. A general invitation is extended to all who desire to meet and worship with us, and we will see to your needs while with us. Those coming from the south come to Williamsport, Pa., and take New York Central train to Cammal. From the north to Corning, and take the same road to Cammal. Inquire for Samuel Maffat, living near the depot, only a few rods to meetinghouse.

D. M. VAIL, Pastor.

THE Licking Association of Old School Baptists will convene at Shelbyville, Ky., Wednesday, August 31st, 1910, and the two following days. In behalf of Bethel Church we extend a cordial invitation to our brethren and friends to meet with us. We hope for a pleasant and enjoyable season, a refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Those coming via Cincinnati will buy tickets to Shelbyville, leaving Cincinnati about 11 a. m., arriving at Shelbyville 4:20 p. m., via Lagrange and Christianburg. All coming via Louisville or Lexington will come direct over the C. & O., Southern or L. & N. Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. trains will be met. Come and let us worship together in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody in the heart. May the Lord grant us this desire. P. W. SAWIN.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing on Friday, September 2nd, 1910, and continuing three days. We shall gladly welcome all who feel it in their hearts to visit us.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster Co., Pa., commencing on Saturday before the first Sunday in September (3rd and 4th), 1910, at 10 o'clock a. m., to continue two days. Those coming from Philadelphia will leave there Friday, on the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore R. R. at 2 p. m. for Perryville. Those coming from Baltimore will leave Union depot at 2:57 p. m. on the same road for Perryville, change cars for Conowingo, where all will be met and conveyed to places of entertainment. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

C. J. ROWLAND, Church Clerk.

THE Clovesville Old School Baptist Church will hold her yearly meeting, the Lord willing, on the second Saturday in September (9th and 10th), 1910. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus, and especially ministering brethren of our faith and order.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Association of Maine will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church in Bowdoinham, Maine, commencing on Friday, Sept. 9th, 1910, and continuing the two following days. We extend a cordial invitation to our brethren and friends to meet with us.

GEO. R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

THERE will be a two days meeting held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse at Jefferson, Schoharie Co., N. Y., on the third Saturday and Sunday in September (17th and 18th), 1910. There will be teams at Stamford on Friday to meet all who can come. We will gladly welcome all who have a mind to meet with us.

D. C. HICKS, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Olive, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 21st and 22nd, 1910, commencing on Wednesday at 10:30 a. m. Trains will be met at Shokan Tuesday p. m. No trains will be met on Wednesday. All who love the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Juniata Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, on Friday before the first Sunday in October, instead of the second, as was announced in our Minutes, with the Sidling Hill Church, in Fulton County, and will continue three days. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth, and hope to be remembered by our ministering brethren. Those coming by rail will take the B. & O. or the Western Maryland to Hancock and cross the river to the Hancock side, where they will be met on Thursday. Better write J. T. Mellott, Needmore, Pa., or Jefferson C. Mellott, same address.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Schoharie Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., Oct. 5th and 6th, 1910. All those coming by train on D. & H. from Albany to Binghamton will get off at Cobleskill on Tuesday before the meeting and inquire for J. E. Livingston, who will care for them. If any cannot get here on Tuesday, and can reach Howes Cave on either day of the meeting, if they will drop me a card I will see that they are met and conveyed to the meetinghouse. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren of like precious faith to meet with us, especially ministering brethren.

J. E. LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in a Hall on Franklin Square, in the Flatiron Building, in Troy N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

A SMALL band of Primitive Baptists is meeting every Sunday at 10:30 a. m. at 2919 Polk St., Chicago, Ill. All persons interested are welcome to meet with us. Any one knowing of members living in or near Chicago will please notify W. N. Spitler at the above address.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 78. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1910. NO. 18.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FRAGMENTS.

SOMETIMES my whole being appears to me like a desert, dry and hard and desolate, so that I seem to have no power even to think, and if I do think, my thoughts are hard and cold and dark, with no life or power in them. How unpleasant a state of mind this is. But there have been other times when this same mind and heart, this desert, is made to be glad, and this wilderness to rejoice and blossom as the rose. Then how easy it is to think, how sweetly the thoughts reach out with tender interest and love over all the earth, and how joyfully they rise up in adoration and praise to the God of all grace. Then how tender and loving the heart feels toward all men, and especially toward all who love the Lord, and who long for his salvation, and who desire his glory. Can this be the same mind that was before so dark, the same heart that was lately so cold and hard, that is now filled with gladness and comfort? Yes, it is the same. The felt presence and power of Jesus has made all the difference. O that he would remain with me, for when he withdraws his sensible presence I am as dark and dreary as before. Yet is there not some selfish spirit in this desire? Am I not forgetting others who are in affliction and gloom in this desire for my own comfort? Would I not quickly forget the wonderful grace and mercy and goodness which the dear Savior has given me, if he should remain with me all the time? He knows how frail and ignorant I am, and I must be at times left in darkness and affliction in order that I may not forget that Jesus is all my light and life, and that without him I am nothing. I must daily feel the dying of the Lord Jesus in my body, in order that the life of Jesus may be made manifest in my mortal flesh. (2 Cor. iv. 10, 11.) Only thus can I be prepared to comfort others who are in affliction, preaching to them out of my own experience Jesus as the Light and Life and Righteousness of his afflicted and poor people.

"IF a man die, shall he live again?" The wisdom of this world tries in vain to find an affirmative answer to this question of Job. To all the searchings of human wisdom and knowledge from the beginning the answer has always been,

and must always be, No. Human philosophy can only see that death is the end, the extinction, of mortal life, and that there is nothing beyond. But by the teaching of the Spirit the faith of the Lord's people receives a knowledge which the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor which hath entered into the heart of man. Faith hears the declaration of this Spirit, saying, "If we be dead with him [Christ], we shall also live with him;" and again, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

I HAVE never heard a professed christian deny that Jesus died and rose again, nor that "them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." But I have heard some good brethren say things which I do not believe, in undertaking to tell how the Lord's people sleep in Jesus, and how he will bring them with him, and in attempting to explain generally the sacred mysteries of the resurrection. These mysteries will never be unfolded and understood except in the experience of them. It is enough that we have a "form of sound words" concerning these great and glorious subjects, which we have heard from the apostles, and which we are told to hold fast in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. We must at times find ourselves meditating upon these blessed spiritual realities, which are within the province of faith, and such meditations, if directed by the Spirit of Christ, will be for our profit and comfort. But we must not presume to set up any standard of belief upon any point of doctrine, except in the form of sound words, which are furnished us in the New Testament. I have meditated much upon the declaration of Jesus recorded in Luke xxi. 37, 38, and the question has often been in my mind as to how Moses showed that the dead are raised up by what he said at the bush.

THE sacred body of the dear Savior was brought up from death and out of the grave without having seen corruption, which can never be the case with any other. All the race of Adam inherit corruption, but Jesus did not. But because he took upon himself the sins of his people, death and the grave had a just claim upon his dear body; but their claim was satisfied by his death and the burial of his body in the grave, and death and the grave could not hold that body, nor could they effect any change upon it; therefore when that body was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, and came forth from the grave without having seen corruption, then was that declaration of prophecy fulfilled which said, "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee," was spoken of Jesus in his resurrection from the dead. In that resurrection he became "the Son of God with power."—Romans i. 4. Death could have no more dominion over him. How could one think that it was not the same body which went into the grave which came forth again? Unless that were so there would be no resurrection, either in the case of Jesus or his people. His body was seen forty days by witnesses chosen before, who could testify that no change had come upon it. Then he was glorified, ascended to glory and sat on the right hand of power. He is known no more after the flesh. (2 Cor. v. 16.) His resurrection secured the resurrection of all his people. He is the

resurrection and the life. Their risen bodies will never be seen by mortal eyes, nor apprehended but by faith. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." It is the same identical, natural body that is sown (in death) that is raised a spiritual body, otherwise it would not be a resurrection. It is not merely a lifting, but a resurrection. If lifted millions of miles it would be unchanged; but this resurrection is from one state and condition to another state and condition, to appear with Jesus in glory. The same poor soul who felt the bondage of corruption here in time, and who cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner," will join in the never-ending song of praise to God in heaven.

It is needless to say that the figure which appeared to John on the isle of Patmos was not the body of Jesus which died and rose again, but was an emblematic presentation of the whole character, work, power, glory and truth concerning Jesus, as he is shown throughout all the Scriptures. He is seen in the midst of the golden candlesticks, the churches, and nowhere else. Jesus speaks to the churches, sings praises to the Father in the midst of the churches, and says, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." The whiteness of his hair signifies that his "goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." He is "the ancient of days." His eyes are as a flame of fire, shining with holy and searching power into the soul. The garment of salvation is upon him, reaching to the foot, covering his whole body, the church, and bound to that body by the girdle of truth. His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, represent the church of God on earth, which is in the furnace of affliction. He is with them in the fire, walking in them, and they are with him in that eternal life in which they are one with him. His voice is as the sound of many waters; it is the sound of gospel truth spoken by all the nations of the redeemed, by all his people among all nations, kindreds, tribes and tongues under heaven. The stars in his right hand are the ministers of churches, whom he moves and sends forth at his will. The sharp two-edged sword which went out of his mouth, is the word of the Lord, which pierces even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; and in his face is seen all the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, as the sun shineth in his strength.

What was the error of Moses? Not that he struck the rock instead of speaking to it, but that he did speak, and "spake unadvisedly with his lips," saying, Hearken, ye rebels, must we bring you water out of this rock? Thus he exalted himself and Aaron instead of the Lord, and because of that it went ill with them for their sakes. (Psalms cvi. 32, 33.) This was the second time that Moses brought water out of the rock. The first time was nearly forty years before. (Num. xx. 10; Exodus xvii. 6.) From the time that he struck the rock, after Miriam's death, and just before the death of Aaron, it was told him that he could not go over into the promised land. The law struck Jesus and could go no further. It could not take the Lord's people over Jordan into the gospel land, but could only look over and show by type and figure all the greatness and beauty of that land. Moses must die, and be buried

by the Lord before Joshua could lead the people. The devil has ever since been disputing with Jesus about the body of Moses, insisting that the law of Moses is still in force; but still no man has seen the body of Moses to this day. (Jude 9.)

"AND the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it." "And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it."—Rev. xxi. 24, 26. The glory and honor of earthly kings and nations thus referred to is that they represent in type and figure the glory and honor of the kingdom or church of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is the holy city, the new Jerusalem. This city is not visible to mortal sight, nor can mortal intelligence comprehend it; its glory and honor and absolute perfection are not seen by the natural man, but are represented to the faith of God's people by natural objects, as a city, a kingdom, mountains and all hills, trees and all cedars, the sun and moon and all the stars of light. In this the kings and nations of the earth bring their glory and honor into this city by setting forth to the understanding of faith some part or feature of that city which is the perfection of beauty. Not that any earthly king or nation is able to add anything to the honor and glory of this church of the Lord Jesus Christ. If the greatest king who ever reigned on earth should come to the gospel church he would come as helpless as a little babe, and as destitute of any personal riches and honor as the most abject beggar in the world. The kings and nations do not know that they are bringing any honor and glory into the church any more than the natural sun, shining in his midday splendor, knows that he is representing the infinite glory of the Sun of Righteousness, who has arisen upon Zion with healing in his wings. It is only the Lord's people who see this glory by faith, and who bring it into the church in this sense, and thus recognize Jesus as the One unto whom all honor and glory belong; and those who have this glorious revelation of Jesus and the church are standing at the time on the great and high mountain of God's holiness.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., August 15, 1910.

TWO ADAMS.

"AND so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit."—1 Corinthians xv. 45.

I desire to notice some things said in the Scriptures concerning the two Adams. Paul evidently had reference to these words: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Remember the words, "The first man Adam was made a living soul." In Genesis it reads, "And man became a living soul," but we observe that man became a living soul after the Lord God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. Hence it was the Lord God that made man a living soul. This is the first Adam, this is the first man made of the earth. Genesis v. 1, 2, reads thus: "This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created." Hence we see Paul was not adding to the word of God when he said, "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul," for in Genesis it says, "And called their name Adam, in the day when they were created." The first man was Adam. He was made a

living soul, but let us also remember that God called their name Adam in the day when they were created. We also read that "Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living." Now if Adam was the first man, and Eve was the mother of all living, evidently the whole human family is Adam multiplied, or descendants of Adam and Eve. Acts xvii. 26, teaches this: "And hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." These are Paul's words, notice he says, "And hath made of one blood all nations of men;" there are no other nations of men of another blood dwelling on earth. Also notice these words, "And hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." Paul evidently had reference to this Scripture. When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel, "for the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." From this we see it is a part of the sons of Adam that make up that portion here designated as the Lord's people. Notice these words: "For the Lord's portion is his people." Read Deuteronomy xxxii. 8, 9, also read Revelation v. 9; here we read of those who sing "a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." I refer to this to show that God's redeemed people are redeemed by the blood of Christ out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. This also proves that the Lord's portion is his people, for the Lord is the one who redeemed them. He bought them with his own blood. Read Acts xx. 28; there Paul says to the elders, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." This shows that the church of God hath been purchased, and the Scriptures referred to show that these purchased people are of the sons of Adam, and that the Lord's portion is his people. These redeemed people include a great multitude which no man can number, said John. Read Revelation vii. 9, there, too, we observe this great multitude that John saw was of all nations, and kindred, and people, and tongues. Hence we feel safe in saying all of God's redeemed people are the descendants of Adam and are of the earth. Isaiah said, "But now, O Lord, thou art our father: we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand." Isaiah was speaking for himself, and for Israel, the Lord's portion, who can in truth call God their Father. I want to impress this thought that Isaiah claimed the Lord to be his Father and confessed himself to be the clay. It is the Adam man, the clay man, the earthy man, that there was claiming the Lord as his Father. Paul said in connection with our text, forty-seventh verse, "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven."

We now will notice these words of our text: "The last Adam was made a quickening spirit." That Paul here referred to Christ, I think is evident. The connections prove it, beside many other

Scriptures. Paul refers to the first man Adam and also the last Adam. The forty-seventh verse does not mention the name Adam, yet evidently both are included when he says, "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven." He there presented a great mystery. He evidently had reference to the same when he said, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of Godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." O what a mystery; we cannot comprehend it, yet we dare not deny it. It is a solemn and glorious truth that God was manifest in the flesh. Hebrews ii. 16, reads thus: "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." This was that Jesus might be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. Read 14–17 verses, also Romans i. 1–4. The third verse reads thus: "Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh." This evidently is what Paul meant in our text when he said, "The last Adam." It was according to the flesh that he did say the last Adam. He was made of the seed of David according to the flesh. "The last Adam was made a quickening spirit." Notice these words: "A quickening spirit," not a quickened spirit, but "a quickening spirit." To quicken is to make alive, to make the dead alive. Evidently this is what Paul meant; that was the subject he was discussing. It was making the dead alive and resurrecting them. The last Adam was given power to give life to the dead. Of his own life Christ said, "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." No such power was given to the first Adam, nor to any of his posterity. The power to quicken the dead has ever been in the Father and his only begotten Son. The same also holds good regarding making alive those who are dead in trespasses and sins. The Father and the Son do the quickening, or the making alive. Read John v. 21: "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." How strange it is that mortal man will charge God with wanting all mankind to be quickened and made alive, and yet will not do it unless the dead comply with certain conditions to be performed by themselves while dead in sins. Notice these words of Jesus just quoted: "Even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." He does not say that the Son will quicken all who will let him, neither does he say that he will quicken them provided that they will first believe on his name, he just simply said, "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." Also read John xvii. 2; there the Son in prayer to his Father said, "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." Jesus did not say that he would like to give eternal life to all of Adam's race if they would only let him, but positively said of himself, "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he [the Son] should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." Notice these words, "That he should." Evidently these words are not to be so construed as to make them mean that it was optional on the part of the Son as to whether he gives eternal life to

as many as his Father hath given him, but that he "should give eternal life." Paul said, "In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began."—Titus i. 2. Now if God made the promise before the world began, then evidently the Son is under obligation to his Father, that he should give eternal life to as many as his Father hath given him. Jesus said of himself, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Now remember the words of our text, "The last Adam was made a quickening spirit." There is an abundance of Scripture to prove that the Son was given power to quicken the dead, and that he does not consult the dead as to whether they want to be made alive. Let us notice more fully the words of Jesus recorded in John v. The twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth verses show they who hear and believe have passed from death unto life. Then notice these words, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." Christ did not say that if they would believe they would be made alive, but he did say, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life." The very fact of any one hearing and believing is evidence that they have everlasting life; they have already passed from death unto life, and there is no failure on the part of any one who hears but what they will live, "They that hear shall live," that is, the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. It is the Son who does the quickening or making alive; it is the dead raised, and quickened. This quickening was then as well as now. "The hour is coming, and now is." It is yet coming and now is; this is a continuous work, the dead are still hearing the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear live. O what comforting words to those who have experienced these things. "They that hear shall live," and there will be no failure here, they will positively live if they hear the voice of the Son of God. Remember the words recorded in the twenty-first verse: "For as the Father raises up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." Hence there are no conditions to be performed by the dead in order to be quickened, or in order to hear, or in order to live, for they that hear shall live. The reason for such certainty in this matter is because Jesus will do exactly what his Father gave him to do: he shall give eternal life to as many as his Father gave him. Jesus continues, "For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man." This evidently is what Paul alluded to when he said the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit. "The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven." O what a mystery! He is both the Lord from heaven, and also the Son of man. Our hope is not in the first Adam, but in the last Adam. "The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."—John i. 14.

I hope that what I have written in accord with God's word may be received in good and honest hearts.

Yours in hope,

JOSEPH FORD.

NEWFOUNDLAND, Ky., Feb. 2, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Though a stranger to you in the flesh, I hope I am not in the Spirit. I inclose two letters, one from my dear father, Elder J. E. Thornbury, and the other from our dear old brother, Elder W. J. May, of Pinsonfork, Ky. These letters have been of great comfort to me, and I want to share them with others.

Your unworthy sister,

KATHLEEN KENDALL.

PINSONFORK, Ky., Dec. 11, 1909.

DEAR SISTER KENDALL:—Your precious letter of the 2nd inst. to hand, and contents considered. It must have been ordered of the Lord, for it came to me when I was in gross darkness, even darkness that could be and was felt, or realized, in this poor heart of mine. I had almost concluded that God's mercies were clean gone forever, that I was, and had always been, a poor, deluded mortal. How familiar I am with such an exclamatory expression as you have used: "O was there ever any one like me!" It seems strange to me, sister Kendall, how you could have such heartfelt sense of unworthiness to write to one so weak, stammering and stumbling as I am, after having seen and heard me in my weak and feeble efforts in preaching. Though be this as it may, or rather, as it is, I never have enjoyed a visit among the Baptists better than I did down there in Elliott, Carter and Lawrence counties, Ky. The Baptists there are sound, interested and unassuming. I hope the Lord will open the way for me to visit his dear children there once more before I go hence.

I will now come to consider in a brief way the text of Scripture which you have asked my views upon, which reads as follows: "And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts."—Malachi. iv. 3.

In the first place I will say that the day here spoken of, that shall burn as an oven, I do not think means the end of this material world, but the end of the law dispensation, which was a dark and shadowy dispensation, and often in the Scriptures called night or darkness. It seems to me that the day here that burneth as an oven, means the gospel day. The apostle Peter speaks of Christ and says, "We [not them] have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts."—2 Peter i. 19. Again, "Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day," &c.—1 Thessalonians v. 5. For the want of time and space, as well as understanding, I shall have to let a few quotations suffice. The preceding chapter is a key to the text under consideration, especially the last verse, for the subject has not changed, although the translators have divided it into chapters, but the subject goes on the same. The last verse in Malachi iii. reads as follows: "Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not." "For [because] behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven." This is a sure word of prophecy that the day cometh. The day is light, therefore when this light day came, then, and not till then, they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; then and there in the sunlight of this glorious and illustrious day did those precious jewels who feared the Lord and thought upon

his name discern between him that served God and him that served him not. In that dark, night dispensation, in the temple worship, performing the legal services, they could not discern between the promised and natural seed, for the natural seed of Abraham had rights in common with the promised seed, and must "both grow together until the harvest."—Matt. xiii. 30. So we see in the text that they who were to be ashes under the soles of the feet of them that feared God and thought upon his name are called stubble (verse one). Now in this we have the glorious God-honoring and soul-cheering doctrine of election set forth, for the harvest is not called stubble until the separation is made, but when the sharp sickle is thrust into the harvest and gathers the precious grain, then the remainder is called stubble. No doubt but this strictly and extensively viewed would include all the nonelect, but in this particular I think it means the unbelieving Jews, called tares, (Matt. xiii.) their state or condition being worse than the first. I do not think that we are to understand this in a literal sense, but in a figurative or spiritual, for the word "ashes" means, in a literal sense, the remains of fuel after it has been burned. But figuratively it is used, I think, to set forth the frailty and extreme vileness of man when compared with Christ and his righteousness. This shows the risen and triumphant state of the church and people of God over the beggarly elements of the world or legal services. "A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet," &c. All the legal services and carnal ordinances, creature goodness, man's sovereignty and law righteousness, &c., which compared with the sovereign grace, righteousness and holiness of the Sun of Righteousness, the great Light wherein is no darkness at all, is no more than dust and ashes; all the righteousness of the creature is as filthy rags. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. * * * For ye are dead," that means, dead with Christ to the rudiments (or principles) of the world, the doctrines of men. Wicked men and seducers are no more than ashes under the feet of the saints; they must all pass away as ashes or chaff before this blessed One coming up out of the wilderness, leaning upon the arm of her Beloved, the only one of her mother.

Sister Kendall, I have in a very brief way suggested a few of my many thoughts on the text submitted, and feel in my heart to ask your kind and christian forbearance, for I am a poor weakling. I hope to hear from you soon, that your health is improving. Our kind regards to you and your family and all around.

Your brother, W. J. MAY.

RATCLIFF, Ky., Jan. 12, 1910.

MY DEAR CHILD:—I will now try to write you in answer to your very precious letter I received to-day. I do not know what could be better evidence of your being a precious jewel in the kingdom of God than for you to feel unworthy a place or name in the church, and realize your need of Jesus, for none but those who have tasted that the Lord is precious can ever long for him who is our light, our guide, our all in all. You spoke of walking in darkness, with no light. Ah, my dear child, if there were no darkness for us to grope in we certainly could not know how to appreciate the glory and beauty of the light when it appears. All our darkness is in ourselves, and is one of the ways which God has provided for

us to pass through, and is one of the "all things" that work together for good to them that love God, as well as the glory of the light which shines in our heart to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; all this is for our good and God's glory. In a measure we bear or suffer what Jesus suffered, that we may be partakers of his glory. After the darkness and gloom have passed away, we then can see the hand of our blessed Lord manifest in it all, and are made to rejoice in him who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, given us in Christ before the world began. When this is brought to our view, and applied to our own soul experimentally, we then are able to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and praise God in all things. It does seem to me, Kathleen, that you have every evidence of a child of God. I know what it is to be in darkness, and trust also that I have a few times been blessed to see a little glimpse of his glorious light, and in it to walk. My heart goes out in love to all who realize their own helplessness and know their need of Jesus; this is my own experience. May the Lord bless and keep you and yours, and bring them all to know his fullness and love. May what I have written be of comfort to you.

From your affectionate father,

J. E. THORNBURY.

WAVERLY, Pa., Jan. 5, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Use your judgment as to publishing the inclosed letters of sisters Dickerson and Bailey. I enjoyed them, but it may be that it was because they were written to me, and perhaps the cause of my desire to have them published is that they have spoken of me as they have. I do not know what spirit is moving me. These thoughts have always troubled me when sending letters of this kind. I tell you, brethren, I am a strange composition; you do not know me nor do I know myself, but I do know that I am full of pride, deceit, self-will, and everything evil, but with all this, I have hope in Christ Jesus the Lord.

Yours as ever,

D. M. VAIL.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., Dec. 11, 1909.

DEAR ELDER VAIL:—As I am alone this afternoon I thought I would write to you, for I do not like to write to God's people except when I am alone. I have felt for a few days that perhaps I am too forward in writing to His children, but many times I seem to have a strong desire to write to certain ones and do not seem to feel satisfied until I have written. God only knows whether this is a desire of the flesh or not. If ever I write anything they cannot fellowship I hope they will tell me and forgive me.

Brother Conklin went home yesterday morning; he staid with us Tuesday and Thursday nights. Wednesday evening brother and sister Miers, brother Conklin and our family were at sister Kinney's. I enjoyed your preaching, and the conference meeting, very much, I also enjoyed brother Conklin's talk; it seemed to strengthen my hope.

I have had some comfort in these words, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The kingdom of God I believe is the church of God, then if we have seen the church, that is evidence that we have been born again and are included in the favored number for whom Christ shed his precious blood, and we are holy and without

blame before God in love. I have not a doubt about the Old School Baptists being the true church, and if I were as sure that I am a true Old School Baptist as I am about the church I would not have another doubt. This much I do know, that I love the doctrine they preach, and I love God's people, although they are despised by the world, and I would rather be with them than anywhere else in the world, and I am always glad to meet them, and feel sad to leave them. When I came home last Saturday I felt like crying,

> "O glorious day! O blessed hope!
> My heart leaps forward at the thought,
> When in that happy, happy land,
> We'll no more take the parting hand."

The world does not know that it is a comfort to be hated by it, but the Bible plainly reads: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." I feel to thank God that I believe he has a purpose in everything, and that not one thing happens contrary to his will, for if one thing could happen contrary to his will, we would have to admit that he did not have power to prevent it, and if he cannot control natural things how can he control spiritual things? What a comfort to feel that God will do no one injustice, that he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind; he makes no mistakes.

I feel that what I have written is like something I have learned, and only in my head, but if I know my own heart I desire that God will feed me with that bread of life, whereof if a man eat he shall never die. I desire, too, to walk humbly before God and at the feet of the brethren. I think when I write I mention many good desires, but come as far from attaining unto them as the east is from the west, and fear the brethren will doubt my sincerity by my walk before them. It seems strange when God's people tell me I have written them a word of comfort, but I know that he has power to comfort whom he will, when he will and in whatever way he will, and if it pleases him to choose me to carry the message it is a comfort to me, for I feel sure he has blessed the crumbs if they comfort his children. May God lead you all your journey through, the way that will be best for your good and his glory, reconcile you to his will in each trial, and when you have completed the work assigned to you below, may he take you to his bosom to rest eternally and sing praises to his name.

> "Free from sin, from sorrow free,
> There to spend eternity."

With love, I remain your sister, I hope,

LAURA BAILEY.

CANTON, Dec. 25, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—As I am here alone I thought I would attempt in my poor way to write a little, and let you know I am still in this sinful world, yet not very well. I have been in Elmira since October, came back Monday. I feel almost homesick, then I think, Who am I, and what am I, that any one should care for such a sinful being? There is not one good thing that I can do, all is sin and wickedness; if I only knew the dear Savior could look upon such a sinful wretch, to whom it seems it will be said, Depart from me. I want to do what is right in his sight, but I cannot; I cannot think one thought but what I sin. I feel that my time on this earth is nearly at an end.

I was young when I first saw myself a

sinner, nothing but a child eight years old. I often think I may be mistaken; then I could rejoice and praise the good Lord with my childish tongue, I was all alone, reading the Testament, and I think if the Lord ever spoke to me it was then. It seemed some one said, You are a great sinner. I did not know what to do, so I began thinking, then I could see the Savior on the cross, and I cried again, to think how cruel they were. It was on my mind until I grew up. I went in young company, and would not think about it any more than I could help. I was very gay, having a good time, when all at once something would say, You are a great sinner; then I would be sad and grieved. When I was twenty-one I married, and had two children. We contracted measles and the good Lord took my babe, then one month old, my dear little boy, and as I was mourning over it something said to me, Trust in your God. I stopped, and said, Where is my God? he has forgotten me. So I went mourning, like one that is forsaken; I did not know what would become of me. People came in to have a meeting and visit in the evening, and they sang some, and my brother, who is now dead, prayed, and all at once it seemed to me the house filled with the most brilliant and beautiful light I ever saw, and everything shone as bright as the noonday sun; it seemed I could see the Savior coming in the clouds and the angels rejoicing, and singing praise to the Lamb of God. Now was it all imagination? I want you to be sincere. I sometimes doubt. Write and tell me what you think it is. My brother was an Old Baptist, he died in the war.

Soon I became uneasy and wanted to be baptized. As there were no Baptists, I thought it just the same, so went and was baptized by a "Free Will" preacher, the one who preached the baby's funeral sermon, but you know I did not hear him, I was thinking of other things. I did not like the way they talked, and I was not satisfied, so went about thinking I had done a dreadful thing, for I did not like their preaching, did not believe a man could save souls, or make christians. I had never heard a Baptist preacher, nor had I seen one, but not long afterward Elder Beeman came to see my mother, and had meeting, and from that time I wanted to follow after them, so I went to hear them as often as I could. They wanted me to relate my experience, but it was so childlike I thought they could not fellowship me, but I was mistaken. By that time I loved them dearly, and felt like Ruth of old, "Entreat me not to leave thee," so I was baptized. That was about fifty years ago, and you know what a poor, sinful being I am. Do you think I ever had a right experience?

I want to see you and your wife and have a good visit with you both; come and see me when you can.

I am a poor, weak, trembling sister,

MARIETTA DICKERSON.

DRAIN, Oregon, May 11, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—I send you two letters written by our precious old brother, S. S. Miller. He never forgets the church where his membership is, and if all our dear brethren and sisters scattered and away from their church would follow the example of this loved one, how much nearer it would bring us together in love and fellowship. We who have the blessed privilege of meeting in church capacity would rejoice and take courage; if our dear ones who cannot meet with us would write to the church we would know that they had not forgotten the house of

the Lord. You all can see by our brother's letters he cannot be here long; it seems to me that as his earthly tabernacle grows weaker the inward man grows stronger. I will leave it to your better judgment to publish his letters or not, but we as a church would like to see them in the SIGNS.

Your little sister, in hope of eternal life, S. MORNINGSTAR.

SAN DIEGO, Cal., April 16, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN OF THE COAST FORK REGULAR PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH:—The time has arrived for my regular monthly report. My natural life is spared, for what cause God only knows; in hope of a better world, I will patiently wait, knowing that the Lord will do all things well for his chosen people.

Now I would like to say a few words in regard to the church, as my mind has been somewhat exercised on that subject. Dear brethren, if I should say anything amiss in regard to the cause of Christ, please pardon me, for it will not be of the heart, but of the head. In the first place, Christ came into the world, according to prophecy, and he established a new covenant, or kingdom, in which old things were done away and new ones brought in, and in order to prepare a home or a place for his people, and a government for them to live under, he said, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." That means that all the combined powers of the wicked one cannot overthrow it. I take it that this one church is the only church that ever Christ built, hence all other churches and faiths are not in accord with the teaching of Christ and his apostles, for he says pointedly that there is one faith, one Lord and one baptism. Now that ought to be enough to convince any one who has been brought from darkness to light, or from death unto life, without searching for any other Scriptures. It seems that faith is not enough to build a home upon for the fashionable world, so the learned of these days are devising means and ways whereby they may save the whole world of mankind if they can get money enough, forgetting that God says there is only a remnant saved. If I did not believe that the Old School Baptist was the true church of God I would not be a member of it. The fashionable world says that little remnant will soon be all done away with, but it has stood for over nineteen hundred years, and yet stands, for God's people's names were written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world. Christ says, Of all that the Father hath given me I will lose none. God says, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." If God has a people there must be an opposite to his people, so the opposite must be mammon. So there are two roads laid out for them to travel; one is the strait and narrow, and the other is the broad road; the narrow road leads to life everlasting, and the broad road leads to destruction. Now this is plain talk, and no lie, so what is the use for poor, fallible man to try to ignore God's word, and try to build up a system whereby he may save the whole world if they will do their part? Whom shall we serve, God or mammon? We cannot serve both. Dear brethren, let us serve God, and try to keep all of his commandments as far as in us lies. I believe in practicing all of the precepts as laid down in his word, even to washing one another's feet. My prayer to the dear Lord is to bless the church, and that the lukewarm brethren may be warmed up to a sense of

their duty. Dear brethren, pray that my seat may be filled with a member better than I am, at least better than I feel myself to be.

I will come to a close and ask you to overlook my weakness and bad writing. I fear my mind is getting as weak as my body, and this may be my last. I am awaiting with patience the summons; do not shed a tear of grief for me; if a tear at all, let it be one of joy. God's will be done, not mine, and everything will be done well. My wife and I are still here; she is a little improved since my last writing, and I am as well as could be expected for one of my age, but I am very weak and feeble in body and mind, as you can see by my writing; also my spiritual strength almost fails me when I look back and see what a sinner I have been, but I cannot forsake my little hope for all the world. Dear brethren, try to write me and brace me up in my weakness. Love to all the brethren and friends.

From your old brother in hope,

S. S. MILLER.

San Diego, Cal., May, 1910.

To the Coast Fork Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church:—It has pleased Almighty God to permit me once more to report to my dear church, hoping this will find the brethren in the bonds of christian love and fellowship, and that our dear pastor may be endowed with strength from on high to lead the fold into green pastures, where they may be filled with the true gospel of Christ, and lie down under the shade of the tree of life to await the coming of Christ. I long to be with you, but God's will be done. Circumstances are such that I cannot, but if God is with me I am all right; if he is not, I am all wrong; but I cannot forsake my little hope, small as it is. Since writing, I look back on my past life and view the magnitude of my sins as piled up mountains high; it looks as if nothing but a merciful God could pardon a sinner like me. Were it not for Jesus interceding in behalf of the sinner he would be lost forever, in spite of all the inventions of men. My last few months have enabled me to see more of the wickedness of the world, and it all goes to strengthen me in the glorious doctrine of Christ our Savior. It almost makes my heart bleed to hear the old and decrepid, tottering as they go, locks as white as snow, cursing the Bible and christians. May God have mercy on whom he will have mercy. Dear brethren, let us hold fast what Christ has given, and pray for all that we are commanded to pray for.

I get letters regularly from the church at Riverside, Cal., and they have the ring of the true gospel. I was much pleased reading a letter from brother G. O. Walker in the Signs of the Times, as well as all the good letters and editorials.

Since writing the above I was taken sick, so you must excuse me for not writing more, and overlook mistakes. My wife is still helpless, and confined to her bed and wheel-chair. If this should be my last report, I will leave you in the firm belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and a rewarder of them that believe in him. Dear brethren, be prompt to attend to the duties of the church, and hold fast the truth wherewith Christ hath made you free, loving one another. Give my regards to my relatives and friends; tell them to live as they would like to die. This (May 7th, 1910,) is the last day of my eighty-ninth year. Pray for me, that my last days may be my best.

Your unworthy brother, in hope of a better world, S. S. MILLER.

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio, April 17, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find a letter from Elder R. T. Davis, of Mayfield, Ky., which I highly prize, and leave it to your discretion as to the propriety of its publication. I have his consent, and think it may interest many readers in his section who take the SIGNS. I highly appreciate the kindness of the brethren and sisters whom I met last winter throughout the western end of Kentucky, though the weather was not favorable to large attendance at all times. But I take it as among the "all things" that work together for good to them that love God. O what comfort there is in that blessed thought; it has been a balm in all my spiritual life.

A. B. BREES.

MAYFIELD, Ky., March 20, 1910.

ELDER A. B. BREES—DEAR BROTHER:—This is what we call the Sabbath day, or a day of rest from labor for our tired and weary bodies. But it is a legal day of rest, and was typical, or a figure, of another day. This other day is the day of Jesus, which is not a legal day; it does not come by law, but is indeed and in truth the promised rest that remains to the people of God, and is as sure and certain to the heirs of promise as Christ is certain and sure. This rest that remains to the people of God is limited to Jesus, or to the day of Christ; it comes only by gift of Jesus to the weary and heavy laden. This gift, or rest, comes only when under the yoke of Christ, not by legal constraint, but by the constraining love of Jesus, that they which live should not live unto themselves from henceforth, but unto him who loved them and gave himself for them. The yoke of Jesus is that which frees from the bondage of law. Christ now, experimentally, takes his people from under the legal yoke and from the curse of the law, and when he does this, making his yoke easy and his burden light, they find rest. Finding this rest, they cease from their own works, as God did from his. This day of Jesus is the day of salvation to every one that Christ by his power says, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." The yoke is the yoke of Christ, and is taken because of Jesus, and under this yoke one finds justification from all things, which could not be found by the law of Moses, and this justification is unto righteousness by the faith of Jesus. This day Abraham by faith saw and rejoiced, and this was promised to Abraham and to his seed, which seed means the Jew inwardly; and to them that are afar off, means the Gentile circumcised in heart, even as many, both of Jew and Gentile, as the Lord God shall call. The law serves as our schoolmaster unto Christ, and coming unto the new covenant one rejoices in the fact that God hears his Son Jesus in the time accepted, and in the day of salvation God has succored him. This day of Jesus is now, and ever has been, the time of God's salvation, and ever shall be. This new covenant shows the relationship that ever existed, and shall ever exist, between God and his people. God's mind, or his purpose, has ever been, and shall remain, the same: to save his people in this new covenant by the blood of Jesus. No law was given that could give life, therefore righteousness is not by the law, but came by Jesus Christ. Thus God's people are held blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus did come to put away the sins of all his people by the death of himself, and by the offering of

himself did forever perfect them set apart to that end. Jesus was a perfect offering for all his people, who are themselves imperfect. Although imperfect and unwilling, yet God by the power of Jesus Christ makes them willing. In the day of the power of Jesus, means when this power is brought to bear.

Brother Brees, I received your card a few days after you left my home, and was glad to get it. I do hope in the providence of God you will be permitted to visit us again. Our brethren who heard you preach were pleased. I hope you will write me a letter. If it is your mind to do so, I would like for you to write on 2 Corinthians v. 10, 11. At the time I received your card I thought then I would promptly write to you, but have not written until now. My wife joins me in sending regards.

Your brother, I hope, trusting, believing and resting in the day of the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,

R. T. DAVIS.

AVONDALE, Ala., March 25, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Moses tells us in Deuteronomy that God hardened King Sihon's spirit, and made his heart obstinate, so that he would not consent for the children of Israel to pass through his country. It is also said in the Scriptures that the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he would not let the children of Israel depart from Egypt, and the apostle Paul says, "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." These declarations set forth in unmistakable terms the absolute sovereignty and prerogative of Jehovah to do as he pleases. But let it be remembered that those men were wicked men, who knew not God before he ever hardened their hearts. I do not think I have ever found in the Bible where God ever hardened the hearts of his people; on the contrary, he takes away the stony heart and gives them a heart of flesh. Moses reminded the Israelites that they did not come into possession of the land of Canaan on account of their own righteousness, for they were a stiff-necked and rebellious people; also says that God drove out these other nations on account of their wickedness. This shows that it is the wickedness and sins of men and nations that destroy them, but it is God's grace that saves them. The Bible says, "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil," and Peter says, "But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption." From these and other portions of the word of God it seems to me that some men are made to be wicked and to be destroyed; if not, then I confess that I am too ignorant to know anything about it. It cannot be denied that some people are more wicked, obstinate and more criminal than others, and remain so as long as they live. The same difference exists among domestic animals. Who made the difference? I am unable to say. There is another Scripture I will quote here: "The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies," and yet the Lord says by the mouth of the prophet, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him: and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." But let it be remembered that the wicked and unrighteous here addressed were the children of Israel, the Lord's chosen peo-

ple, and the words, "Return unto the Lord," show that they had departed from the Lord. The other wicked, spoken of before, had never known the Lord, and therefore could neither depart from nor return to the Lord. I realize that these things are hard to be understood, but it is God's inspired word. May we stand in awe and reverence before him.

I have been thinking some of the expression, "voluntary sin." I know the Bible speaks of sinning "wilfully," but I do not remember having read of "voluntary" sin. Is it really true that men sin voluntarily? Take, for instance, the betrayal and crucifixion of Christ, or did they not do these things ignorantly? Paul says, "Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory;" and Jesus in his dying hours said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." This then was the sin of ignorance; they believed that Jesus was an impostor, and it was the work of the devil in them, and they were controlled by that power and influence, hence not voluntary. My experience and observation are that (aside from the Spirit and grace of God in the heart) men are mostly governed in their actions by their surroundings and environments. Of course the grace of God overcomes and surmounts obstacles, surroundings and environments. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Man is a sinner by nature, sin is his natural element, as prone to sin as the sparks to fly upward. "The thought of foolishness is sin." Are foolish thoughts voluntary? Paul speaks of the law of sin in his members, "bringing me," he says, "into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." But Paul was a child of God and an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, and instead of his teaching "voluntary sin," he says, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Adam and Eve were governed more or less by their surroundings in eating the forbidden fruit; wicked men in all ages of the world have acted according to their surroundings, but the extent of sin and crime into which they have plunged has been limited only by the extent of the power and influence of the devil in and over them, and even in the basest of wickedness and crime there seems to be an influence that pushes them forward in their wicked course; this influence is not the spirit and grace of God, but it is the "prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." Is it not a blessed thought that "the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world," and that grace abounds over and above sin?

These scattering thoughts are submitted, I hope, in humility and the fear of God.

In tribulations and conflicts,

H. J. REDD.

REIDSVILLE, North Carolina.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have been thinking of you all day, and have felt lonely; hope that you are not that way. O if I could just feel the precious Lord Jesus and hear his voice speak, that these clouds might break and the shadows flee

away, but it is so long since I saw the sun, moon or stars.

A few minutes ago I was thinking of Paul, and some of the troubles he had to encounter, and his words in Acts xxiii., latter clause of the sixth verse, came to me: "Of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question." Was it not strange that one should be taken into the court because of the hope he had in Christ Jesus, and for his faith that he by Jesus Christ be raised from the dead? Are not these blessed points of experience in our own hearts? If these be not true, then I am not saved, for they are my meat day and night. No christian can live in this world beyond hope, for in this he is enabled to hold on steadfastly in the Lord. It is the anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and it goes on and enters into that within the veil, and faith looks on and views Jesus as the sure anchorage, therefore our hope is in him. It abides in our life today, therefore we expect to receive all the glories of the kingdom of God, for the Lord has promised it, and he is able to do all he has said, and will make good all of his promises by his own righteousness and for his holy name's sake; not one thing of all that he has said shall fail. If there be no resurrection of the dead this hope is vain, for hope is that which reaches forward into the unseen only as faith can grasp it. The resurrection surely embraces that which once lived and has died. To say that when this body dies another body will be given, and this body shall not live again, is no resurrection. That would not be a changed body, but a body given in exchange; this the Scriptures do not teach. It is this body which is sown a natural that shall be raised a spiritual body. Here it is Adam, but in the resurrection it shall be in the image or likeness of the glorious body of Christ. If this is not true, then our faith is vain and we are yet in our sins. This is the gospel which Christ and the apostles preached, and which we have believed. There is the place where love shall be perfectly manifested in all the church of God, and faith will lead into perfect vision, and hope into glorious reality. This resurrection is a mystery to all of us, for while we are now the sons of God, and heirs of his kingdom, yet it does not appear what we shall be. None can be satisfied until they awake with His likeness, and that will be enough. Enoch and Elijah, though they did not taste death, yet went through the same change and are in glory just what all the saints will be. In the end there will be others who will receive the same glorious change. This was a mystery, and Paul said, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." This is a day that God has appointed in which all the saints, whether they have died or if they be yet living, shall be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ. What a blessed thought! While we live here in the flesh we have the earnest of this resurrection working in us, weaning us from the world and its ways and ends, and making us hunger for those rich blessings which our Father has promised us in that glorious resurrection. Even here we have a foretaste of those things when we can feel Jesus in our hearts, formed in us the hope of glory, and we eat the broken bread of heaven. This is an assurance in our souls that we shall enter into that eternal rest with our dear Lord.

Then there is another resurrection spoken of in our blessed Book which our Father has given unto us. While it is not so pleasant for us to think of, yet it is set forth in God's holy word, and is a part of the teaching of those who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. I believe that we know the truth on that side as well as on the other, for in all of our convictions for sin we are given to feel how just it would be in the holy God to cast us off into everlasting shame and contempt. We are also made to feel that it is our sins that have separated between us and our God. We are not ready to charge any of our corruption to the Lord, but to take it all ourselves, and to try to hide ourselves in our miserable shame. Here we are made to feel the conviction that was felt by our first parents in the garden of the Lord. They saw that they were brought in their filthiness face to face with the holy Lord God. We feel the same in our convictions. As the Lord made coats of skin (which could not be had without the shedding of blood) and clothed them, even so does he put on us the robe that our Lord wrought out on the tree of the cross by the spilling of his blood and the breaking of his body. What we feel there in our conviction is but a faint foretaste of the eternal punishment of those who hate God and his blessed truth. The prophet Daniel says, "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."—Dan. xii. 2. That is, they shall be eternally cast off in their corruption, and held in derision. Speaking of the same two classes our Lord has said, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."—Matt. xxv. 46. The words "everlasting" and "eternal" are the same word. The revised version has "eternal" in each place, and they are from the same original word, and both mean perpetual, without end. Then in John v. 28, 29, he said, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." It does appear to me that here is evidence enough, while there is very much more. Thus it is fully established that there are two distinct and separate classes in the world, and that they shall both die the corporeal death, and that they shall both be raised from the dead, the one to enter into the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world, and the other to depart as workers of iniquity into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. If we deny these things what use have we for the Bible? The Lord bless us to know and preach his truth.

Yours in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., August 12, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—We received a good, comforting letter from sister Nancy A. McCoy, of Dighton, Kansas. The Providence Church, in Hancock County, Ill., is where her membership is, and has been since she made a public confession of faith in her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Her letter shows her steadfastness in the faith, and we would like to see it published in the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the paper she has been and is taking, and she says it is all the preaching she gets that does her poor soul any good. She wishes us to retain her name on our church-book, as she has nowhere else to go, which we are

glad to do; yes, we are glad to have her, and all such, remain with us. Her letter was read at our August meeting, and received with joy and gladness by every member of the church, as well as the visiting brethren and sisters of our faith and order. Brother Bloomfield said that he would like to see the one who wrote that good letter to the church. If all those who, like her, cannot come, would do as she has done, we would know where and how they are. There are several others we would like to hear from in like manner, and hope this good letter will be given heed to, and call a letter from each of them. In many instances we have never heard from them, and do not know whether they are living or dead. Yes, dear sister, we will gladly keep your name with us, and are all glad to do so, and we hope that you will write as often to the church as you have done, and that the good Lord will keep you by divine grace to the end, is the prayer of one and all.

Done by order of the church.

L. E. FRAZEE, Moderator.

S. G. FRAZEE, Clerk.

DIGHTON, Kans., June 4, 1910.

TO THE CHURCH AT PROVIDENCE, ILLINOIS—MY VERY DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—If I may be permitted to call you by the endearing names, for I feel so unworthy, and always have, that I scarcely ever say brother or sister, though I often want to. I cannot tell how much I would like to meet with you all at that old church once more, to hear the servants of the heavenly King preach the gospel in its purity, giving God all praise, honor and glory, for to him it all belongs, every iota, none of it to poor, sinful man. I would love to hear you sing the songs of Zion, and sometimes feel that I would like to mingle my trembling voice with yours in singing praises to God for his goodness and mercy to his people. He knows them, and they hear his voice and follow him, and he gives unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no, never, for he says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." They were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, he will save every one, even to the least. The Lord says "to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth." Bless his holy name, he draws them by his love and saves them by his grace. He will not lose one, but will save his people with an everlasting salvation, and finally take them to himself, where there is peace, joy and rest, sweet rest, to the people of God through all eternity. Precious promises to the children of an all-wise and merciful Father; and what a blessed assurance it would be to know that I am one of that happy number, but I have so many doubts and fears, I feel sinful, little and unworthy so much of the time that I fear I am not one of the little ones that Christ died for. At times all seems dark and dreary; I am so far from the people I love and who preach the doctrine I believe, that I get very hungry for spiritual food, and if I am a child of God why am I shut off so much of my life from his people and the preaching I love so dearly? I am made to wonder, but the love I have for the Predestinarian Baptists strengthens my little hope that I have been redeemed by God's tender mercy and free grace. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." This I know, if I know anything, that I

love the Old School Baptists and the doctrine they teach, wherever they may be, but there is a special nearness to those of my old home church, where I have had many precious seasons of joy, though I left that old church many times with an aching heart, for a deep sense of my unworthiness kept me from asking a place among you for sixteen long years. I felt the Lord chastened me with the rod of affliction, that I was beaten with many stripes, but this comforts me: The Lord loves them he chasteneth, and, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." There are so many precious promises to the dear children of God, and sometimes, sinful as I am, I am enabled through his mercy and grace to claim them; then I have bright seasons, and feel like saying, The Lord is able to save to the uttermost, I will put my trust in him, he has redeemed me, then I rejoice in hope of eternal life.

I write this, dear brethren and sisters, to let you know that I am still living, and the same helpless sinner, not able to do any good to merit salvation or help Jesus in the good work of converting the world. I am wholly dependent on the grace of God, who gave his Son to die that we might live. Jesus paid it all when he said, "It is finished;" in this is my hope for heaven and immortal glory.

Now, dear brethren and sisters, if you feel willing to retain me on your church roll I will be very glad to remain with you, unworthy though I am, but if you think best to drop me as I am so far away, and as you have no way of looking after me, all will be right, but it will be hard for me, as there is nowhere else for me to go; there are no Old School Baptists near me, and I would have to live out in the cold if I could not live in the church with God's people, for I would starve on this "do and live" doctrine. I am made to rejoice in the hope that I will not go so far, but that my name will still be written in the book of life.

Hoping to hear from you soon, I remain your sister in hope of a better life,

NANCY A. McCOY.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., July 28, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have been very deaf for twenty-three years, and you know what the dear SIGNS is to any one who loves the truth, so what must it be to one who loves the truth and is deaf? I have been subject to blind spells (almost total blindness) so that I could not read at all, sometimes for two or three months at a time, and then my eyes would clear and I could read the SIGNS again (with unspeakable joy), but now have been so blind I could not read for the past six months, and have no hope of reading again. I cannot even read what I am now writing, can only see where I write a line, then write another below. This is sad to me; I weep, but have to endure it. I have loved to read, especially the Bible and SIGNS, for the past thirty-five years, or since eighteen years of age; I am now past fifty-three. I have delighted in reading both volumes of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe's editorials. If they who love the truth knew how precious those two volumes are they would possess them if possible, to read themselves and for their children and generations to come, for there can scarcely be more valuable reading for reference as to what was contended for at that time of so much strife and division among professed Baptists. It was marvelous indeed how God's grace reigned in him, that dear soldier of the cross, to hold him steadfast in the apostles' doctrine, so

that he was not turned about by every wind of doctrine, as many poor, feeble-minded ones were. Yes, see how firm he was, yet how kind; strong, but mild, even toward his best friends if they erred. My dear, aged grandfather Arbuckle and I each procured both volumes nearly twenty-seven years ago, and many hours he and I have spent rejoicing while reading the able articles in those volumes. We in our minds (or imaginations) would look at Elder Beebe's picture in the front of our books, then would have him up in the pulpit preaching as we read, and we almost felt as though we had been hearing the gospel preached from his dear lips, and it certainly was a feast of fat things to us. If I could, I would prevail upon all who love truth to get the books, so that the SIGNS would not need to advertise them for sale at less than cost. Grandfather and I would often say after reading an article, "Why just that one is worth ten times what we paid for it." (We paid the regular price when we got them, twenty-seven years ago.) One article, headed "Titus' Dream," I think, was of special delight to us, and we both said, "Why, that alone is far more valuable to lovers of truth than all the gold and silver the world contains." We thought the same of most of the others, but in this special one, the damnable heresies of so-called modern Missionaries are so perfectly and clearly set forth. The filthy dreamer (or dreamers), as Titus' was, is so clearly shown to be false by Elder Beebe, that it makes this article of special interest to us. I wish every lover of truth had those books. We have delighted in reading Elders Durand's, Bartley's, Rowe's and many other books that all lovers of the truth ought to have. Grandfather departed this life many years ago, and I feel the loss of his companionship very much. People used to think it looked very strange to see an aged, grey-haired man and a youth (about twenty-two) rejoicing for hours at a time, when grandfather and I talked on Scripture together. He was called a Beebeite, because he was an absolute predestinarian. One time a limited predestinarian preacher (Old Baptist though) became excited when talking to grandfather and said, "Brother Arbuckle, if I believed as you do I would do a whole lot of bad things." Grandfather was not excitable, he calmly waited, and when this aged preacher got through calmly replied, "Brother———, if you believed as I do you would certainly try to live right." That reply had more real power, and did more real good, than a multitude of words of argument could do, for grandfather's walk plainly testified that his words were appropriate and true. I never knew an "absolute predestinarian" but to know he tried to live right, except myself; I fear that I do not try. The SIGNS has a good, faithful subscriber in Mr. Abel R. Burks, of Greenville, Texas, formerly of Ballinger, Texas; he used to live in Memphis, Tenn., and is the best friend I ever had. I think he is among them for whom Jesus prayed when he said, I pray that thou keep them from the evil of the world. Mr. Burks was a youth, not out of his teens, when he joined the church, and while other boys were engaged in rioting, his walk was strictly moral, and his conversation was principally of things in heaven. He spent many hours with us, devoting the time to spiritual things. He now speaks comfortably to the members of the church, but does not call it preaching; says he just feels like talking to them of the things of Christ.

Elder Chick, forgive me for this long letter. I trust the SIGNS may prosper.

May our God sustain the editors and writers. Remember I cannot see, so excuse all faults.

DAVID L. McNEES.

WHEELING, W. Va., May 3, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose this precious message from sister McKinney; will you please give it a place in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES? Her letters are all good and comforting, and I feel to want to share such savory morsels with the dear brethren and sisters.

I see the publishers advise that all letters should be addressed to them. I have been sending to Elder Chick or Ker, but I would like to be right about it.

Yours in hope,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

OTTAWA, Kansas, April 19, 1910.

VERY DEAR SISTER:—Your good, comforting letter came at a time when I was much in need of encouraging words; just how sweet your sympathy was to me you can never know. Your letter was received about eleven o'clock, and before two I had read it three times. I felt like replying at once, but many things prevented. Ruth was just beginning to rest quietly after one of her severe spells, and I was almost sick myself from anxiety and care. "As thy days, so shall thy strength be," has been verified many times in my case. I could not, as you say, go on at all in my own strength. I trust that my afflictions have made me know that the Lord is God; he kills and he makes alive, and none is able to deliver out of his hands. My prayer is that when I am done with this world he will take me to be forever with him. Dear sister, I am so fearful of being deceived I go mourning most of the time, longing to keep his commandments, yet breaking them continually. I think I should have no hope at all were it not for this desire in my heart, which I hope he has implanted, to know and do his will, and the love I feel for his children, so I go on hoping and fearing from day to day.

I would indeed love to have you near me, not to assist me with my work, but that I might sit at your feet and hear you tell all the way the Lord has led you. You have so much fear of boasting, dear sister; if your letters show that spirit, then I have boasted many times and did not know it. Surely we cannot question God's right to do as he pleases. It is not his will that I should tell many of the deep things that come to me, while you can express yourself clearly and easily. I am glad it is so, for while I cannot comfort you, you can comfort me. You speak of reading my letter to my sister, that was published in the SIGNS; it was the first time my name ever appeared in print, and I felt much ashamed when I saw it. I read your letter in the same paper, and I thought, Now that letter is worth publishing; when something within me said, You know well all that she has written; and I could then see that it was my very own experience, yet if I had written it I would probably have seen it in a different light. You ask me to tell you if your letter seems out of place, and to reprove you so that you may see your faults. Dear sister, the beam is too large in my own eye to see clearly the mote in yours, if there is one; I cannot teach you. Trials do indeed give new life to prayer, and I think I have learned that trials only will lay me low at His feet and keep me there. I have many such cries all to myself as you speak of. We should rejoice that he has caused us to love and fear him, for it is not a slavish fear, but a continued longing for his presence.

April 29th.—I have been trying to write to you for some time. If I could write you while about my work you would have had an answer to your much appreciated letter many days ago, but when I sit down to write, my mind becomes almost blank. I feel that I must write, if only a few lines, to let you know how much I care for the answers. I hope you will write to me soon, and a long letter. I would do better if I could. I feel cast down and forsaken to-night. If He casts me off forever, it is just and right; I am condemned, but he is clear. Not long since, the words came to me forcibly: What shall I render to God for all his benefits? What can one do to bring him under obligations?

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

If I am saved, in time or eternity, I know only too well that there is nothing in me to merit esteem, or give the Creator delight.

I can go no farther, I will send this anyway, hoping it will do nothing worse than humiliate me.

Yours in sorrow and affliction,
ANNA McKINNEY.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, July 25, 1910.

MY DEAR AUNT:—I hope you will not be annoyed with me for trying to write you a few lines to-day, for I have intended to write you ever since I returned home, but did not feel that I had anything to say that would be of interest to you. We had beautiful meetings together when Aunt Florence was with us, but for the greater part of the time my mind was so taken up with natural things that it seemed I did not even desire to meet together in the name of the dear Redeemer. O it does so often appear to me that I have no part in him, for if I had, why would I always strive to follow the ways of sin and death, instead of the ways of truth and life? It seems so easy to say that I love the children of God, but I do not show it in any of my actions. If I loved them in a spiritual way, would I not also try to show my affection for them by natural ways? It does not seem as if I know where to turn from one moment to another. I often feel that it is just a dream, that in reality I serve Satan and not God. If I were indeed one of His children, surely I would at least have a desire always present with me to keep in a peaceful frame of mind and to search the Scriptures for help in time of trouble. The evening that Florence left us I felt very lonely and sad, and it almost seemed that it was the will of God by degrees to take away from me all those that I felt I loved with more than an earthly love, and leave me all alone. I had this same feeling just after the Thursday meeting at Southampton. As long as we were all together talking of spiritual things I had a sense of sweet peace within me, but as soon as the meeting was over, and the different members had left for their homes, I seemed to be all alone. But last Saturday I seemed to doubt the power of God more than I ever did before. Questions like these seemed to fill my mind all the time: What if it is not true, if there is no God to shield me? What if at the day of judgment I find that only those who have done his will and kept his commandments shall be saved? and all other kinds of evil thoughts. But there was one thing that seemed strange to me at the time, and that was, that at the time when I was most doubting his power I should have prayed for him to keep me from being tempted beyond what I could resist; for if there were no

God, why did I ask mercy of him? I often think of that hymn commencing,

"O that the Lord would guide my ways
To help his statues still,
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will."

I often feel that my sincerest prayers (if so they may be called) are in vain, in at least one sense of the word, for I do long to be kept by his Holy Spirit and guided by him in all things. But I know that it is in truth giving God all the glory and praise when he brings us to feel that we are less than nothing and he is all-powerful, and in that sense he has led me to believe this; but I feel that he has not granted me grace to know and do his will.

O, how truly worthless is this letter; I hardly dare send it, for fear I will fill your mind with all the sinful thoughts that seem to dwell within me, but I do want you to know that I love you dearly, even though I am not worthy to be tied together with you in a spiritual way. Please try and forgive me for sending this, and if it is possible write to me just once, at least, if you do not think me unfit to correspond with.

Your unworthy little sister in bonds of love, ANNIE L. McCOLL.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Jan., 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—My heart is warmed by reading the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES January 15th number. Many sisters have written this time, and O how they have cheered me along life's weary way. I have walked, it seems, in the same path with them, and their words give me hope that I belong to that blessed company no man can number, who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. The first sister, Mrs. Frederick W. Keene, I have never known, yet I took her hand and followed along in her writing with my own youthful experience; so many of her thoughts were mine.

I was a very small girl when I was told in a Sunday School that I must guard well my steps or I would go to the bad place; I must not think, speak or act a lie; it would all be recorded against me by the great, all-wise Judge. Then my cruel sins began to weigh me down. Pilgrim's Progress was one of my first books, and I read it through many times, always crying over the fight Christian had with Apollyon, and rejoicing when his burden rolled from his back, and sorry when he lost it. I would read in my Testament, hoping in that way to get better or to atone for my many sins, but I could not understand what I read. I was often in despair, and cried myself to sleep many nights, thinking there was no one as vile as I. There seemed no relief for me. I could not see how God could be just and forgive such mountains of sin. I have been in "Giant Despair's" dungeon, tossed about with many conflicts, many doubts, fightings within and fears without. But at last came a change. One morning on my way to school, still carrying my great burden of sin, it came to me that Jesus died for sinners, and I was a sinner. A quiet peace came into my soul, all nature seemed to be praising God, and I wanted to sing the old hymn, "What wondrous love is this,"&c. That was a day of all days to me. For awhile I felt nothing would grieve me again; my burden was gone, everything else seemed as trifles, but soon I began to examine myself and doubts came thick and fast, and many of the old hymns that I had learned in childhood came to my mind and seemed very sweet, and sometimes, to sum up the whole matter, I hoped I was a sinner saved by grace,

though so undeserving. It will soon be fifty-six years since I went before our loving band of saints at Crawfordsville, Ind., and was received with all my unworthiness into the church where my parents and grandmother belonged. I have passed through many trials and afflictions, and ofttimes am just ready to give up, but thus far the dear Lord has helped me, and I hope when called to die he will be with me and take me to that land of rest for which I sigh.

Mary Hill Terry has often comforted me in the several years I have known her by her writings. Now she says she has been back over her experience, trying to find some good thing in life's journey, but she finds nothing to count. When I read, "By their fruits ye shall know them," I sigh, for my tree is barren. I am wandering in the wilderness, looking forward for my journey to soon end, and my daily prayer is, Lord, lead me in the right way, increase my faith. Yesterday I heard a sermon from the text, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound," &c., and it was sweet to my taste, for I surely did understand the language of the servant who was feeding the sheep. The hymn, "Guide me, O thou great Jehovah," was sung.

If I could look into the faces of all these sisters who have written this time, and speak to Martha Howarth, Florence Beebe, Addie Cook, Keziah Hogeland, S. J. Cummins, Lizzie Schiefer, Nettie Dolson and Sarah Branson, and the two I mentioned, what a heartsome experience meeting we would have. I do not doubt Jesus would be the theme of our song, as he is the sinner's friend; we are all looking to him for comfort.

"O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for days to come;
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home."

I have much more to say, but must not be so tedious.

Your sorrowful sister,

LINA W. BECK.

GALENA, Ohio, May, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find money order for two dollars, for which please send your valuable paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to Elder L. B. Hanover, Blacklick, Ohio, Route 2, for one year from date of expiration of his subscription. Father has taken and has been a constant reader of the SIGNS for over sixty years, and now as he is no longer able to visit his brethren (for he does not leave his home any more), your paper seems doubly dear to him. Father begs to be remembered to all connected with your paper. He still remains firm in the belief of the doctrine the paper has always so ably advocated, and although greatly afflicted, yet the Lord has been with him and given him a clear conception of the Scriptures, and he will repeat chapter after chapter of the New Testament, and all in such good connection. He sends brotherly greeting to all the saints, and admonishes them to be steadfast, unmovable, and always abounding in the work of the Lord.

Written by his loving daughter,

(MRS.) NANNIE H. NEILSON.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1910.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

HEBREWS II. 1-3.

"THEREFORE we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?"

It having been suggested that we write upon the above text, we shall endeavor to do so. The subject therein embraced is one of vast importance to all who love the doctrine of God and the order of his house. It is generally accepted that Paul wrote the letter to the Hebrews, and from its general tenor we would think it his work. He was much better qualified to write of the old covenant and its rites, forms and ceremonies than either of the other apostles, having been taught in a perfect manner concerning the law. His comparisons and contrasts were so striking that they should, naturally speaking, have convinced the Hebrews at once that the law with all that pertained to it had not the very image of things to come. But they had long been schooled in those things, and were very loath to let them, the shadows, go, and lay hold upon the substance or new covenant blessings.

The preceding chapter is full of marrow, and our text cannot be expounded without special reference to it. First the apostle contrasts between the dealings of God with the Israelites under the old covenant, and spiritual Israel under the gospel. It was his pleasure and plan to speak to those of ancient times by the prophets; in so doing he instructed them concerning the law and its precepts; its rewards and punishments and each declaration in that day was as sure and "steadfast" as was the law itself. The law was God's law; the prophets were the messengers, or angels, of God, and spake as moved by the Holy Ghost, hence there was no uncertainty in their word; "every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward," without failure or modification. Whatever the prophets foretold of reward or judgment was as sure to take place as though the Lord himself had spoken it. God also spoke to Israel in that day by the prophets of the coming of the Savior, his sufferings and the glory that should follow, but that people could not fully comprehend those things, because they were "dark sayings." Isaiah declared that a virgin should conceive and bring forth a son, and his name should be called Immanuel, which by interpretation is God with us. That a VIRGIN should conceive and bring forth a son was far beyond their comprehension. Such a thing was never known before, nor will such a thing ever be known again. The great mystery was to the end that Christ should be "the Son of the Highest," not the son of a man. But even though they could not conceive how such a thing could be, they looked for it and by faith hoped in it. No mortal knew who that virgin should be, but God knew, and at the appointed time sent his angel to tell "the virgin Mary" that she should conceive and

bring forth a son, and his name should be called Jesus, because he should save his people from their sins. How such a thing could be possible was as deep a mystery to Mary as it had been to the Israelites, but she was told that the Holy Ghost should overshadow her. When the "holy child Jesus" was born the angels of God, shepherds, wise men of the east, together with all others of faith at that time, worshiped him. At about the age of thirty years he began to declare the wonderful works of God as being fulfilled in him according to the prophets. There is perfect harmony between what God spoke by the prophets to the fathers and what he spoke to the apostles and all other disciples by his Son. This should strengthen the faith of the children of God that the Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are the work and word of God, for the world has never known a mind among men that could have conceived of such a work as it is in every minute detail.

The things which the apostle says "we have heard," are embraced particularly in the first chapter of Hebrews, and surely such a record of the blessed Son of God is worthy of our careful consideration, and all would do well to give more earnest heed to these things, lest we let them slip.

After the record that God in these last days, or gospel age, has spoken to us by his Son, it is declared that the Father hath appointed him heir of all things, the greatest and most glorious of all inheritances, and how comforting to the poor and needy is the word: if we be "children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." The Father made the worlds by the Son; he is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person, and upholds all things by the word of his power. Wonderful things to hear and give heed unto. Job says, "He hangeth the earth upon nothing;" that is, it is not chained above, nor has it pillars beneath to sustain it. What prevents it from sinking into the bottomless abyss beneath? Upheld by the word of his power. Who is the man that does not give heed unto these things? He who says, "God needs the help of man;" he who thinks God is not before all things and that by Him all things consist. Then we have another record: "When he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." If it really be true, and we know it is, that Jesus by himself purged our sins, and as a conqueror over sin, death and the grave sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, how can it be possible for a poor dust man to be instrumental in purging his own sins and those of others? Have we given heed to this special thing: how that sins were purged? Are we who claim to be the children of God established in this doctrine? Jonah in his day seemed to fully understand that "salvation is of the Lord;" is he our brother? To let these things "slip" is to become lukewarm, careless and indifferent to the doctrine of God and the order of his house. It seems an easy matter to be drawn away in this day by the "deceitfulness of riches," and thereby neglect church privileges, and at times some unaware of the cunning devices of the wicked are caught in delusion's net and become carried away with false doctrines, such as Christian Science and conditionalism. "Earnest heed" means to abide steadfastly in the truth as it is in Jesus. In almost everything in the world to-day there is progression, but in the religion of Jesus Christ and his doc-

trine there can be no such thing, because they are perfect, and that which is perfect cannot progress. This is why the true church continues as in the apostolic age, nothing added, nothing omitted. It is a glorious church, not having spot, wrinkle or any such thing, defect or fault.

Following his wonderful testimony of Jesus, the apostle asks, "If the word spoken by angels [ministers of the law] was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?" This seems to be a figure, in a sense, showing that as each act of disobedience in the days of Israel was punished by the law, so shall all transgression among the redeemed children of God be punished, for all are under law to Christ. The saints in this gospel day are not thrust through with the sword, fiery serpents do not molest them, they are not taken captives into some ungodly land for seventy years, but they do often fall into the hands of the living God, which is "a fearful thing." Spiritual death, or separation from the joy of salvation, is sometimes experienced, and it seems worse than being killed with the sword. Captivity, or being shut out in our feelings from the court of God, where the streams are all muddy and our harps out of tune, is a sad condition for a spiritual Israelite, yet there is no escape "if we neglect so great salvation." This does not mean that salvation is offered and if we will accept the requirements we shall be saved from eternal condemnation. The words, "so great salvation," mean all that is embraced in "the things we have heard" in the testimony of Jesus, and to neglect this salvation is to let the things we have heard "slip," get away from us, or in other words, we get away from them. In chapter ten of the letter to the Hebrews we are told, "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation." Wilful sinning is the kind the saints do, for the grace of God teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. Hence before the thought of sin is formed in the mind, much less before the hands or feet act, grace teaches that it is sinful. It is not as it was in the days of the priesthood of Levi, when there was an atonement for sins once every year. Now the last atonement is made forever, no more sacrifice for sins, but there is a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation from the Lord, which is just as sure to be visited upon the spiritual Israelite who transgresses, or neglects the things he has heard, as judgment was visited upon the carnal Jew for disobedience.

The last clause of the text shows the unfailing foundation of the things spoken and written by the apostles; they were first spoken by the Lord himself and confirmed unto Paul and others by them that heard him; and if the word of angels was steadfast, how much more so the word of the Lord. What a favored people we are to have these things handed down to us by those who heard the Lord declare them. May all who love the sanctuary of God take more earnest heed unto the things we have heard, and thereby denounce every false and wicked way.

K.

MEETINGS.

A THREE days meeting will be held with the Sulphur Fork Church, near Campbellsburg, Ky., to begin on Friday before the fourth Saturday in August, 1910. We extend a cordial invitation to brethren and friends to meet with us. Elders Lester and Eubanks are expected, and perhaps others will be there. This meeting comes just before the Licking Association.

P. W. SAWIN, Pastor.

THE Cammal Old School Baptist Church has appointed a two days meeting at Cammal, Pa., the fourth Sunday, and Saturday previous, in August, 1910. A general invitation is extended to all who desire to meet and worship with us, and we will see to your needs while with us. Those coming from the south come to Williamsport, Pa., and take New York Central train to Cammal. From the north to Corning, and take the same road to Cammal. Inquire for Samuel Maffat, living near the depot, only a few rods to meetinghouse.

D. M. VAIL, Pastor.

THE Licking Association of Old School Baptists will convene at Shelbyville, Ky., Wednesday, August 31st, 1910, and the two following days. In behalf of Bethel Church we extend a cordial invitation to our brethren and friends to meet with us. We hope for a pleasant and enjoyable season, a refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Those coming via Cincinnati will buy tickets to Shelbyville, leaving Cincinnati about 11 a. m., arriving at Shelbyville 4:20 p. m., via Lagrange and Christianburg. All coming via Louisville or Lexington will come direct over the C. & O., Southern or L. & N. Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. trains will be met. Come and let us worship together in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody in the heart. May the Lord grant us this desire.

P. W. SAWIN.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing on Friday, September 2nd, 1910, and continuing three days. We shall gladly welcome all who feel it in their hearts to visit us.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster Co., Pa., commencing on Saturday before the first Sunday in September (3rd and 4th), 1910, at 10 o'clock a. m., to continue two days. Those coming from Philadelphia will leave there Friday, on the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore R. R. at 2 p. m. for Perryville. Those coming from Baltimore will leave Union depot at 2:57 p. m. on the same road for Perryville, change cars for Conowingo, where all will be met and conveyed to places of entertainment. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

C. J. ROWLAND, Church Clerk.

THE Clovesville Old School Baptist Church will hold her yearly meeting, the Lord willing, on the second Saturday in September (9th and 10th), 1910. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus, and especially ministering brethren of our faith and order.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Association of Maine will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church in Bowdoinham, Maine, commencing on Friday, Sept. 9th, 1910, and continuing the two following days. We extend a cordial invitation to our brethren and friends to meet with us.

GEO. R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

THERE will be a two days meeting held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse at Jefferson, Schoharie Co., N. Y., on the third Saturday and Sunday in September (17th and 18th), 1910. There will be teams at Stamford on Friday to meet all who can come. We will gladly welcome all who have a mind to meet with us.

D. C. HICKS, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Olive, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 21st and 22nd, 1910, commencing on Wednesday at 10:30 a. m. Trains will be met at Shokan Tuesday p. m. No trains will be met on Wednesday. All who love the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Juniata Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, on Friday before the first Sunday in October, instead of the second, as was announced in our Minutes, with the Sidling Hill Church, in Fulton County, and will continue three days. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth, and hope to be remembered by our ministering brethren. Those coming by rail will take the B. & O. or the Western Maryland to Hancock and cross the river to the Hancock side, where they will be met on Thursday. Better write J. T. Mellott, Needmore, Pa., or Jefferson C. Mellott, same address.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Des Moines River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will be held, the Lord willing, with the Otter Creek Church, at Toddville, Iowa, ten miles north of Cedar Rapids, on the Decorah division of the C. R. I. & P. R. R., beginning on Saturday, October 1st, and continuing three days. Those

coming via Cedar Rapids will leave there for Toddville at 7:50 a. m. and 4:30 p. m., except Sunday. Those coming from the north will reach Toddville at 9 a. m. and 6 p. m., except Sunday. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

C. O. SHARP, Moderator.

J. L. THURSTON, Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Schoharie Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., Oct. 5th and 6th, 1910. All those coming by train on D. & H. from Albany to Binghamton will get off at Cobleskill on Tuesday before the meeting and inquire for J. E. Livingston, who will care for them. If any cannot get here on Tuesday, and can reach Howes Cave on either day of the meeting, if they will drop me a card I will see that they are met and conveyed to the meetinghouse. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren of like precious faith to meet with us, especially ministering brethren.

J. E. LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

THE Corresponding Meeting of Virginia is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, Loudoun Co., Va., to commence on Wednesday, October 11th, 1910, and continue three days. Friends coming to the meeting by railroad will be in Washington, D. C., on Tuesday, Oct. 10th, in time to take train at Union station at 1:30 p. m. for Bluemont, on the Loudoun road, if the present schedule is maintained. Trains are now due at Bluemont at about 4 p. m., where all will be met and cared for. An earnest invitation is extended to all whose hearts are sincerely with us.

J. N. BADGER.

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SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 78. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1910. NO. 19.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CHARITY AND SINCERITY.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—For some days my mind has been absorbed in the above subjects, and therefore so impressed with their beauty and spiritual significance, their perfect adaptation to the church in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, the glory of God and the verification of all his promises, the absolute certainty and predetermination of his divine will, that by your permission, and the special presence of the Holy Spirit of our adorable Savior, I will pen a few thoughts for the dear brotherhood everywhere to consider.

Charity in a general sense, as defined by the standard lexicographer, is love, benevolence, good will; that disposition of heart which inclines men to think favorably of their fellow-men and to do them good; supreme love to God and universal good will to men; whatever is bestowed gratuitously on the poor for their relief; act of kindness or benevolence. Sincerity—honesty of mind or intention; freedom from simulation or hypocrisy. We may question a man's prudence when we cannot question his sincerity. Here we have the plain rendering of the literal meaning, but we are concerned more seriously regarding the scriptural and spiritual import of these most soul-cheering subjects, so sweetly and beautifully interwoven in the christian life and character of the church of God. These two will appropriately and relatively run together in the one grand center of eternal love, eternal truth, twin sisters, inseparably connected. Where love is, there is sincerity, pure and unfeigned. Preachers, poets and philanthropists have written volume after volume upon these most interesting themes, sincerity and charity, in the various ages of the world's history, and yet their fullness has never been exhausted, but will continue on as the abiding assurance of God to all his chosen people, according to his eternal purpose. To be insincere and uncharitable is awful in the extreme; whole nations, as well as individuals, have perished by the baneful effects of an unholy desire after the things of the flesh and the vanities of the world. This insincere principle runs counter to that of true sincerity and charity. Man's aspiration for worldly gain and the accumulation of wealth is the main slogan

which drowns men in utter destruction and perdition; to-day politically and religiously it forms a prominent feature in all the business avocations of the world; therefore the church of Christ is warned against the pernicious consequences of such injustice and unholy desires, by the sleight and cunning craftiness of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, stalking forth in the black and dark night to mislead and stultify the children of men. "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." But turning from this depressing side of the parallel to the bright and glorious picture of sincerity and charity, we see the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife, robed and plumed in the righteousness of Christ, preserved and directed by the Spirit of peace and truth under the blessed influence of sovereign mercy and charity, which covers a multitude of sins. Here we shall adduce a few proof texts to the subject under consideration: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up. * * * Charity never faileth," &c.—1 Cor. xiii. 4–8. "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." In this connection of Paul's argument to the church he concentrates in charity all the christian graces of the Spirit of Christ, the golden chain of eternal love, of fellowship in the doctrine, of salvation by grace, of every good and perfect gift, through the humiliation, suffering and exaltation of Christ the Lord. "With Christ in the vessel we smile in the storm." Peter in admonition said to the church, "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious."—1 Peter ii. 1–3. This exhortation of the apostle warns the church against the vices, temptations and allurements of the world, telling them of the awful consequences of sin, and instructing them in the way of the Lord more perfectly, showing conclusively that true sincerity and charity (or love and faithfulness) are of God through the righteousness of our loving Savior, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens, and the only hope of salvation to any poor sinner for time and eternity. Love is the divine attribute of the eternal God, revealed to all the seed of promise, and prompts his children to obedience, to fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in truth; therefore, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." O then, dear Savior, give us love and charity, which teach in all good things, and lead to the fountain of living waters, where the inhabitant never says, I am sick. In the world of eternal light is no death, no sorrow, no mourning days, no grief, but joy and praise to God and the Lamb throughout the vast amplitudes of never-ending eternity. Yes, dear saints, with the charity of God in the soul the afflicted sons and daughters of Zion are made strong, they have the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit, the quick and powerful influence of the Holy Ghost, to subdue the raging violence of every foe and withstand the fiery darts of the wicked, and press on toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God. Although I be tossed to and fro, and buffeted by the waves of time's ocean, I feel at times to rejoice in tribulation, realizing that Jesus is at the

helm, who died for us that we might have life, and have it more abundantly. Paul, on christian purity and fervent devotion, said to the church at Corinth, "Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven, leaveneth the whole lump?" Doubtless the leaven of malice and wickedness had seduced the Corinthian Church to eat things sacrificed to idols and to be stultified by Jewish tradition, which was not good, and therefore must be purged from all that sort of leaven and "be a new lump," for even Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us. He is Christ, the hope of glory, the bread of sincerity and truth. (1 Cor. v. 6–8.) "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward."—2 Cor. i. 12. Paul says, "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth." And, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."—1 Cor. viii. 1; xiii. 1–3. Worldly religionists make great pretensions, through the lust of the flesh, in donations and methods of men, purporting to be charitable and doing work for the Lord, but it is only vain affectation, seeking the applause of men, and they are ignorant of the eternal wisdom and charity of Christ and his church.

This is a day of much coldness and declension in Zion. Surely there is a cause, and sometimes I fear it may be the spirit of covetousness, because of a lack of more charity or love in our hearts; our affections are too much on the things of earth, we are not deeply interested, faithfully, as we should be in the things that make for the peace and welfare of the churches. However, the Lord applies the chastening rod for our good, yet his loving-kindness changes not.

In conclusion, I commend you, the dear Old School Baptists everywhere, to the word of the Lord, which is able to build you up, to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ and called, to whom be glory, majesty and dominion forever.

Yours in gospel bonds,

ASA HOWARD.

KELLER, Texas, June 10, 1910.

ROMANS X. 2, 3.

"FOR I bear them record, that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."

Perhaps my mind would not have been specially exercised about what this Scripture teaches if it had not been for a sermon I lately heard delivered by a preacher who has a standing among Primitive Baptists, and who claims to be a genuine Bible Baptist. His position on the above Scripture is different from any Old School Baptist that I have any knowledge of for the past fifty years. He claimed that all the Israelites here mentioned by the apostle Paul were children of God, but were not fully instructed in the things of God's kingdom, and that godliness was yet to them "a great mystery," but when they become perfectly instructed by God's ministers they see no mystery in godli-

ness, and discern the righteousness of faith. I seriously thought: Have I been in ignorance about what this Scripture teaches for fifty years? Have I been preaching for more than forty years and taking the above quotation as a proof text that all self-righteous people everywhere in every age of the world are dead in trespasses and in sin, though they do make a showing for the zeal of God? We have a good proof of this from Paul's words when he was relating his work and condition before the Lord met him on the way, and these words were spoken to unbelievers, most of whom were Jews, and in the Hebrew tongue: "I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day."—Acts xxii. 3. All the ground to sustain any argument (Romans x. 2, 3,) that those blind and ignorant Jews possessed life from the dead is in the wording of the expression, "zeal of God," and that this would indicate that they possessed God's zeal, and that this could not be unless they were born of the Spirit of God. I have never considered the preposition "of," in this connection, as being weighty, taking all the connecting Scriptures into account. To my mind the meaning would be just the same if it read, zeal for God. Paul says that his heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved. He admits their unbelief, and he evidently believes the testimony of the prophet Isaiah that the greater portion of national Israel were rejected by God, notwithstanding their great show for a law-righteousness, and "Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved."—Romans ix. 27. Isaiah and Paul while treating upon this subject are showing the independence of the Lord in the great work of salvation; that the way of salvation is altogether in the hand of the Lord; as the dark sayings of old testify: "I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God." This is a most gracious way of God's dealing with the children of men; it accords exactly with plain and positive declarations of Scripture like these: "By grace are ye saved." "I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me." Paul asks the question: "What shall we say then?" This is what we shall say: "That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith." Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, did not attain to the law of righteousness, because they sought it not by faith. All their works, with all their fiery zeal, did not avail anything towards the righteousness of faith. They expected to be justified for their faithfulness in following the exact requirements of a carnal commandment, so to-day the same veil remains untaken away over the hearts of all nominal professors of christianity who go about to establish their own righteousness, and who have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. That there was a great multitude among the Jews in the apostolic age that was rejected by the Lord, seems evident by the testimony of Jesus and his apostles. In Romans xi. 7, the apostle cer-

tainly meant to set forth the discriminating power of God's grace; hear him say: "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." The margin reads: "And the rest were hardened." What portion of Israel, or in what proportion to the whole house of Israel that the Lord is merciful to, can never be known by the children of men, but it does seem to be plainly taught that the smallest portion is the Lord's, and, "The Lord's portion is his people," a remnant only, "according to the election of grace." I think this prophecy holds good throughout the gospel dispensation. Paul, in speaking of Israel, national Israel I think, says that there is a mystery connected with their history: "That blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." How long this blindness shall continue no mortal can know; I think it may embrace a long period of time. "Blindness in part" would seem to imply that in national Israel a few names are constantly kept from idolatry as salt, until the Gentile portion of the kingdom of grace is fully manifested by their being called with a holy calling, for the promise extends to all that "are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Paul has used the word "happened," in speaking of the blindness of Israel, as though it really happened, so to speak, about Israel being rejected and the Gentiles being admitted to the promises through Christ. If I should give a view on this word here I would make an apology for Paul using this word as he did. Israel is blamed for having unbelief, and for being disobedient, opening the way for the Gentiles, yet it must be admitted that this turning-point in the history of the Jews was foreseen by God and spoken of by the prophets hundreds of years before it came to pass. The fall of the Jews is called the "riches of the world," or the gathering of the Gentiles. As certain, however, as this is true, so certain is Paul that the Jews shall have their fullness. Along the line of grace among the Jews and Gentiles we see that election holds good in all ages; it secures the heirs of salvation, it secures the heirs of heaven and all that can ever exist when this present economy is done away. The heathen, or Gentile world, was given to the Son for an inheritance, that he might gather together in one all things in the Anointed, having power over all flesh of every nation, kindred, tongue and people. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, for he reigns from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth. Having this great power over all flesh of every nation does not signify that all men of every nation shall hear his voice to life, nor that he fails to accomplish anything that he desires, but he certainly has the preeminence above the children of men everywhere, so that through election he accomplishes the will of him who sent him. His will is the law by which life comes to the dead; every other avenue or way is cut off, so that no flesh shall glory in his presence. There was no law given to mortals by which they could work their way up to the righteousness of God, thus obtaining an inheritance in Christ; there is no standing room for mortals on their part to consider the expediency of election. As far as election is concerned they are all dead, there is not the slightest sign of life on their part, nor any knowledge whatever of the right things that belong unto God, neither have they power to submit themselves unto God until he gives them that power, neither can any

successfully resist his will. "He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law." There is an unconscious waiting for all that are unborn into the kingdom of grace, or a time set for the manifesting of every heir of glory. This appointed time is the "fullness of time" for each, and to each heir.

Dear brethren, I have consumed some time in writing this, and if published it may be of little or no value to your readers.

As ever, in hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., Sept. 1, 1910.

HEBREWS XII. 5.

"MY Son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him."

It has been said of the Primitive Baptists that we believe the children of God will be saved no matter what manner of life they live, and some have said if they believed such a doctrine they would take their fill of sin, and have charged that such a doctrine would encourage a careless life, as though God's children were not held accountable, but that the Arminian theory would lead to higher and nobler life, being prompted to virtue and holiness through fear of being lost if they did not live the higher and more virtuous life, and it is upon these two different doctrines, and how it follows that one will be more liable to lead men to more upright lives than the other, that I wish to say a few words. Baptists believe that the apostle Paul in the twelfth chapter of his letter to the Hebrews defined their position clearly, and there should be no mistake in understanding their position and their teaching and practice. First, Paul declares that "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth," and if they endure chastening God dealeth with them as sons, "for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby." Hence all Arminians believe and are prompted to good, upright lives, fearing they will be eternally lost unless they do so live, but Baptists believe and are prompted to good, upright lives because of love to God and because God has caused them to hate sin, and also because God chasteneth whomsoever he loveth, and scourgeth every son he receiveth. Thus both are prompted to good, moral lives, the one through fear of being lost, the other through love to God and hatred of sin. The Indian is prompted to bravery and obedience to his leaders by promises of a happy hunting ground in the future. The Hindoo, the Mohammedan, the Mormon, the Catholic, the savage tribes, all have a reward held out to induce obedience. These in one way or another are prompted to obedience because of promised reward—a legal service for a legal reward, as though the heavenly Father hired his children to obey by giving rewards for obedience, and yet if these same followers of this legal reward for legal service should see an earthly father trying to induce his children to obedience by offering them rewards and hiring them in their service they would cry out, An unwise father and spoiled children. The apostle in Hebrews v. 8, says of Christ, that "though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." A God of all power who has to hold out rewards

to induce obedience would be a most pitiable God, but a God of all power who commands and it stands fast, who speaks and it is done, who measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, who meted out heaven with a span and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance, who saith unto the deep, Be dry, who sat bars and doors to the sea and gave to the seas their bounds, who declares he is God and there is none else, that he forms the light and creates darkness, that he makes peace and creates evil, it is too humiliating to such a character to in any way assume that he hires obedience through rewards when he has all power to command and all power to enforce his commands. He has all power to cause love and obedience, and all power to cause hatred to sin. David said in Psalms xciv. 12: "Blessed is the man whom thou chastiseneth, O Lord, and teachest out of thy law." God also said in Revelation iii. 19, "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten." Those who believe in salvation by works say they live good lives for future reward, and those who believe in salvation by grace live good lives because they love God. Those who fear they will be lost for living ungodly lives live no better lives than those who love and fear God. If we have a dozen or more of each faith in the same neighborhood, perhaps we could not tell which were the most upright, but those who believe in salvation by grace will take less interest in worldly affairs than those who fear hell for living ungodly lives. None of the apostles urge upon the saints of God a more upright life and chaste conversation than Paul, but he would not allow for one moment that their salvation depended upon their good works, for he plainly says they are saved by grace without works; also he says that it is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us." "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." He says, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present evil world." "Except a man be born again he cannot see [or enter] the kingdom of heaven," and he that is born of the Spirit should walk after the Spirit. If salvation were obtained by the plan men teach: that we must do certain things, what about ninety-five per cent. of the human family who have never seen a Bible or heard a sermon? The most of the churches that teach salvation by works are aware that such churches have not been in existence much more than two centuries, and do they think God never saved men by his grace during the nearly six thousand years before these churches started up? One thing is certain: if God had not been saving men by his grace for over five thousand years before these churches sprang up, then most of the human family are lost. But O how glorious it is to think that God did not wait for the twelve apostles to come and seek him, but he went to them, and said, "Follow me." We have no history of their past lives, nor what their morals were up to the moment Christ spoke to them. Paul was called unto Christ's kingdom when on his way to persecute the saints, and

after he had put many to death, and God told Ananias that Paul was a chosen vessel to bear His name unto the Gentiles, but how careful the apostles were of their lives after having received the knowledge of their salvation; they no more feared hell, but they feared their Lord and Master. God deals with his children the way an earthly father deals with his children, for he chastens all his children. We would be shocked if all parents should banish their children because they disobeyed them, yet this is the very thing men teach God will do with his disobedient children. We all justify parents for correcting their children and bringing them into submission and making them honorable men and women, and so we justify God for chastening the children he loves, and bringing them into loving service. God said of his Son, If thy children forsake my law, and break my covenant, then will I visit their transgressions with the rod and their iniquities with stripes, nevertheless I will not utterly withdraw my loving-kindness from them, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. No, no, God will not cease to love his children. Cruel indeed would be the natural parents if they withdrew their loving-kindness from their children when disobedient. The apostle found fault with the church at Corinth because they still held one in that church who had married his father's wife; he told them to deliver such an one over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of Christ. Here the great apostle, if I understand what he meant, admonished his brethren to exclude this brother from the church, that the flesh might be destroyed and the spirit be saved in the day of Christ.

N. PETERS.

NORTH BERWICK, Me., Sept., 1910.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I send this letter to you, feeling that it ought to be published in the SIGNS. Use your judgment about it.

Your sister,

ADA A. CHADBOURNE.

LONG GREEN, Md., Oct. 7, 1891.

DEAR SISTER CHADBOURNE:—At last I have taken pen in hand to try to write to you, as I promised. This is not because I feel that I have anything to say, but waiting only seems to find me more barren.

It is just about three years since I first said anything about my feelings to any one, but sometimes I think I can date my experience back to the time when I was a mere child. At times I think I have an experience of grace, but again fear that I have never known anything about it. When I was about thirteen, a school friend once said that my father believed in predestination and election. I did not understand what she meant, and that night I asked him. He tried to explain to me, but the more he said the worse I thought it was, and I could not conceive how my father could believe anything so horrible as that. For some time after that I was afraid to be left alone with him, for fear he would say something more on the subject to me, but as he never did, I soon stopped thinking about it, but I think that from that time I seemed to feel it was right, only the doctrine seemed dreadful to me. The fall that I was fourteen I began to think I would soon die, and I was dreadfully afraid to. My thoughts were ever upon it, and when I was left to myself I would become weighed down by the thoughts of death being so near at hand; I would really find myself running when alone,

trying to rid myself of them. After a time I thought less about it, but the idea would return at times with great force. I felt that if I died I must be banished unto eternal punishment, for I could see clearly that I was all guilty. I would try at times to pray, but never could feel that my prayers ascended to the Father's throne. This went on until I was seventeen; that summer I felt I wanted to read the Bible, I seemed to feel that might help me to heaven if I died. Every night all that summer I would read several chapters, taking care that no one should know I was doing it. I do not think I ever received any comfort from the reading of it, yet I felt that I must keep on if I wanted to be saved. Mamma died in August, and the first of September I went to teaching. Her death was a hard blow to me. She had always been so unselfish and self-sacrificing. Indeed, it seems that her death is harder for me to bear every day. I wonder indeed what sort of a being I am, to be so unreconciled to God's will. When I started teaching, the first day I think that I felt for the first time my real helplessness, and I got down upon my knees and tried to pray for strength from on high. One day, I think that it was three years ago last Sunday, I was writing to papa, not intending to tell him how I felt, but before the letter had been completed I had told him exactly how I felt. His answer came one day while in school, and after starting to read it I found that I could not do so without crying, and so had to leave it until I went home, for I could not bear to have the children see me shed tears. I continued to write to papa, and one day there came a letter from him addressing me as a dear sister. I could not believe my eyes at first. My thought had seemed to be only to get relief, and to feel free from the bondage I was in, and I would not ask for more. I did not see him until about a week after that last letter, and while for a few days I had had peace, yet before I met him in Baltimore that day I had so many doubts and fears that I felt I must be mistaken, and how I wished I had never said anything to him about my feelings. He talked with me, and that evening we took tea at sister Florence Merryman's, who had but a short time before united with the church. She told of the same feelings that I had, and that visit was such a comfort to me. I went before the church at Black Rock, December 1st, 1888, and was received, although, as it seemed to me, I said little or nothing. The next morning I was baptized. It was a lovely, cloudless day. As I came up out of the water I felt very happy.

Dear sister, this is poorly told, but it is my experience up to the time I was baptized. I think that some time when I feel better I will try to write more fully. I have felt so very barren lately, but I know that there is One who gives both the darkness and the light, and he will in his own time make all right. When I went before the church I felt as though I had no right there, and I have never felt since that I had any right, yet at the same time I know that there is where I want to be, and am happy to be there, even in a corner. I feel that indeed I am the least of all. If the brethren and sisters could see me as I am, they would not tolerate me to be with them at all. While I know it is God's grace alone that saves, yet I feel that if his grace were within me my works would be better than they are. It is written, "By their fruits ye shall know them." A child of God should bear good fruit, but I do not.

One thought is ever a comfort to me: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Sister Attie Curtis spoke beautifully upon that at the conference meeting at Bowdoinham. She said, "We do not stop to reason out that we love them, but our heart goes out to them the instant we hear them tell the same sweet story." Then we know that where He has begun a good work in the heart it will be completed. I hope it is his light alone by which I see my vileness. Another very comforting passage is this, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

Dear sister, pardon this poor letter, and write soon, please, to the least, if one at all, of God's dear children,

NELLIE M. CHICK.

Bow, Wash., Sept. 1, 1910.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I feel somewhat impressed to write an article for the dear old SIGNS, which comes to me laden with precious messages of love and sweet fellowship in the Beloved. I have felt a great desire to write many times and tell the editors and writers how their editorials and letters have cheered and encouraged me when I have been discouraged and cast down on account of my waywardness and inability to walk as I know a child of God ought to walk. I make such declarations as these: Now I will be more careful in the future to guard my tongue, so I will show forth a godly conversation, and my lips shall speak nothing but praises to his dear name, whom my soul loves, or, at least, I hope so; but if so, why am I thus? for instead of praising him I doubt him. And such thoughts as, Well, it will be better to throw it all away and give myself over to the world and its idols of gold, &c., for they will satisfy my present needs, and then I will have the praise of the men and women of this world who are rich and held in high esteem by the masses of people, and, having a pretty good education, I could go right along with them in their social functions, and, dear brethren, the infidelity, or whatever it is in my mind, says, Go, and then when I have such thoughts I think, Surely if I were a child of God I would not have such thoughts, and I get about ready to give it up, when a still small voice whispers to me, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Then I pray for him to lead me. He said, "Follow me." I inquire, How can I follow the meek and lowly Jesus through scourgings, through mockings and revilings, through buffetings, and though all men should forsake me and persecute me, go on and be faithful even unto death? Death! what a fearful thing is death, how we shrink and flee from that monster; when anything comes our way that we think is likely to cause our death what an effort we put forth to ward it off; we will give up all we possess of this world's goods even in an attempt to prolong our days; but not so with our meek and lowly Jesus, he was obedient unto death. When Judas and the soldiers came to take him, and he could have prayed unto his Father and he would have given him ten legion of angels to have protected him, but no, his hour had come, and he through his fleshly nature prayed unto his Father, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." Let me say right here that that prayer is a great comfort to me, for if Christ, who was without sin, and having the knowl-

edge that he was ordained for that self-same purpose, had such a dread of death, then we are not stronger than he, and are not to blame if we through the flesh shrink from death or anything that gives us pain, and how often have these comforting words come to me when my strength was just about gone and I could see no way of escape: "My grace is sufficient for thee." I would take fresh courage, and feel built up on that most holy faith, and feel that my strength was made perfect in weakness, knowing that it was through the atoning blood of Christ that I am saved, if I am saved, for he gave his life a ransom for his people, and consequently they are bought with a price and are his, not by any works of righteousness which they have done, but by his grace and mercy he saved them, and since he purchased them with his own precious blood they are his, and he will never leave them to wander out of his reach, although he does leave them to themselves at times, to prove to them that they have no strength in and of themselves, keeping them humbly at the feet of Jesus, having nothing whereof to boast or glory in, save in the cross of Christ. He laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. I do not believe we are required to give our lives as a ransom as Christ did, for that would do no good, seeing Christ made a full and complete payment of that debt, but that we should present our lives a living sacrifice, which is our reasonable service, not counting our lives and earthly treasures dear unto us, but sacrificing our own comforts and earthly treasures in order to meet with and comfort our brethren, not forgetting to bear our part of the burdens, both physically and financially. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." It seems to me that there could not be much added to these words of comfort. Your iniquity is pardoned; yes, you, a guilty wretch, standing before the judgment-bar of God, knowing full well that your guilt was sufficient to send you to hell, also knowing that the law was just, and that God could not look upon sin with the least degree of allowance; there is no way of escape, your own heart condemns you, God's holy law condemns you; then what can you reasonably expect? Nothing less than, Depart from me, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; but mercy of mercies, what do you hear instead? Your iniquities are pardoned, for you have received at the Lord's hand double for all your sins. Not just simply acquitted, as many a guilty criminal is by the crooks in our laws, to go with the curse of his guilt still overshadowing him, but free, guiltless, having that joyous feeling that we are new creatures, having our old sins thoroughly purged from us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. Old things have passed away, and behold, all things have become new; a new hope, a new life, and, in fact, all things are new to us; we see new beauty in the trees, the flowers, the singing of the birds, have new joy in them, for we see God's handiwork in them all, and they are all praising him; even the noble forests show forth his glory. Then "speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished." O dear sin-sick soul, is it not

comforting to know that our warfare is accomplished? for our Captain has gone on before and fought all our battles and conquered the last foe, even death, for we see him rise triumphant over death and the grave, leading captivity captive, and giving gifts unto men, even eternal life, and hath by this offering forever perfected those who are sanctified, and called, and justified, and glorified; then speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, for she has received all this at the Lord's hand, and we have not whereof to glory save in the knowledge that we do hunger and thirst after righteousness, and have the sweet promise that we shall be filled. Yes, dear little ones, ye shall all be filled with the fullness of him that filleth all in all, and let us suffer on a few more years, bearing our trials as patiently as possible, knowing that our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Dear children of our heavenly King, how I would like to meet you all and talk to you face to face, and indeed I do hope to when the last trump shall sound, and the dead in Christ shall rise, and those that remain shall be caught up in the air and ever be with the Lord. This is the full consummation of our hope, for we shall see him as he is and be like him, and that will be enough. "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." This, dear brethren and sisters, is the foundation that my hope is resting on.

Your unworthy brother, in bonds of christian love,

DAVIS BURCH.

RUTH II. 3.

"AND she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers."

In these days we are expected to read much that is striking and new to the mind, and it may be pleasant to read occasionally something that is common, and on a familiar text, especially if the beauty of it comes home to us as belonging to us. We first find Ruth making known a new desire, a longing of the mind that she has no hope of ever satisfying in her own country, when her mother-in-law suggests that they separate and each go to their own kindred: "Entreat me not to leave thee." But if we look back to the time when Jacob gave his dying blessing to his children, we find that he prophesied that Christ should be of Judah's line, and this three hundred and seventy-seven years before Ruth's time. If the Lord knew all the fathers from Judah to Christ, and we have the evidence that he did, since it was shown to Jacob, then he must have known the mothers as well; so we do not know when Ruth's mind was first exercised, nor do we know who are the subjects of God's love until they make some outward sign of it. Next we find her gleaning after the reapers, her former husband was dead. She would not do anything wrong, nor would she dishonor him, but she acted from a principle that was right and honorable, and not because of any law or its punishments. She did not want anything that the lord of the harvest or the reapers wished to keep, but just a few crumbs of the bread of life that fell from their hands. She could not have been hired to have taken any of their property, nor that of the other gleaners. But how rich the figure, she was poor, had nothing to pay, she was hungry for the bread of life, she was no-

ticed by the lord of the reapers and made welcome, even requested to "Go not to glean in another field." Until about this time she must have been entirely in darkness as to any of this being the Lord's hand leading her, but about this time it would seem as if the faint light of a new day must have been breaking upon her mind, which was so soon to be like the sun rising, "even a morning without clouds." We now find the lord of the harvest charging his reapers concerning her, and they slyly drop some grain in her way. She gleans throughout the harvest and rejoices with her mother-in-law at home over the strengthening food she has gathered. Events follow fast, and we next find her at the feet of the lord of the harvest, where he is separating the grain from the chaff, and he goes a long journey to redeem her inheritance, an inheritance she never knew she had. She presents to my mind both a type of the whole church as the bride, the Lamb's wife, and of every one who is called and led by the Lord's hand to his people, the church. Christ came all the way from heaven to earth to redeem his people as a whole, and he came to redeem and make good the inheritance of the least, the poorest and most sinful of them, that the bride shall be complete, without blemish or scar. Ruth, the poor widow, the stranger from another land and people, not only had her inheritance redeemed, but was also to become the bride of the lord of that great harvest. What difference did it make how poor she had been? there was a boundless store already provided, she can never want for bread again. What difference if her clothes were old and worn out? Boaz was able to clothe her in the best the land could afford, and did for his own honor clothe her so he was not ashamed of her when he owned her before his people. The law becomes dead, as far as the fear of its penalties is concerned, to a man when the Lord is leading him; he only wishes to do the Lord's will, would not do a wrong if he could help it, and his continual prayer is for light, and to know his will. When the light begins to break such find they have an inheritance with the people of God, that Christ died to redeem them and has put away all their sins. What matter if they were poor, if their righteousness (old garment) is worn out? the Lord of all the harvest is their Husband, he will clothe them in spotless purity, in which he will not be ashamed of them before his Father and the holy angels. He prepares the wedding dress, Jesus the Lord our righteousness.

A. E. RITTENHOUSE.

STATE ROAD, Del.

PRINCETON, Ky., Feb. 28, 1910.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—BELOVED OF THE LORD:—I just received the SIGNS for February 15th, and I read every article, and am made to rejoice to know that God's people, the salt of the earth, are everywhere praising God and confessing his power in all things. O that men would praise the Lord for his blessings to the children of men, instead of trying to take some of the glory to themselves. I am made to thank God for giving you the mind and ability to set forth the power of God as you did in reply to brother Wallace. I know that if brother Wallace has tasted of the grace of God he will surely say amen to every line and every word, for surely this is our God; this is the God who declared the end from the beginning, and how could God determine the end from the beginning if he did not know everything

that would be, and everything that would take place between the beginning and the end? What are we but as the small dust of the balance? "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." "All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity. To whom then will ye liken God?" This God says, "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." Our dear Savior was poor, he had not where to lay his head, but he said the poor have the gospel preached to them. Dear brother, think of John, he was banished to the isle of Patmos for preaching the truth, and while there he saw a great multitude who had come out of great tribulation, but their robes were made white in the blood of the Lamb; not by their good works or obedience, it was by Christ's obedience, and all was according to God's foreknowledge and determinate counsel. Fear not, dear brethren, to preach the power of God and the purposes of God in all things, for God's poor and afflicted people love his truth, for they have no one else to trust in, and all who are circumcised in heart have no confidence in the flesh. All who believe that their blessings depend on their obedience are walking after the flesh, and not after the Spirit, and they that are in the flesh cannot please God. Many of God's dear children are falling away from the truth, or, I may say, are being led away from the truth by false teachers, who try to scare God's poor and afflicted people by telling them that the predestination of all things makes God the author of sin; but even this is decreed of God, for the apostle told the brethren in his day that after his departure grievous wolves would enter into the flock, and men of our own selves have risen up, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. The Scripture tells us there must first be a falling away before the man of sin shall be revealed, and "he who now letteth, will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed." Dear brethren, it seems to me God has surely brought this prophecy to pass in our day, for there is truly a great falling away from the truth, and many have fallen into the snares and pitfalls of the world, and we see them courting the favor of the "up-to-date" professors of religion; to me this is very distressing, but he that letteth will let. How thankful we should be that a few are kept by the power of God from going into this same darkness and idolatrous worship, but the purpose of God covering all events is plainly seen in this: "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." It is very evident that some are deluded, and believe a lie, but let us hope that God will be merciful to them and show them the error of their way. God forbid that we should glory, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto us, and we unto the world.

I have for the past fourteen years had worse things said about me than I ever had in all my life before (and that by people who claim to be Old Baptists), because I believe and love to talk of God's purpose covering all events; but we know "the preaching of the cross is

to them that perish foolishness," for the natural man cannot comprehend the things of the Spirit of God. Christ said, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Again, the Lord said, "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: for from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three." Was Jesus mistaken about this? I think not; the very doctrine you preach will cause some to rejoice and make others angry. Just as Jesus' preaching made some mad and others glad, so God's truly called ministers to-day have a small remnant, a little flock to preach to, and God will never leave himself without witnesses. Gideon's army was reduced to three hundred, but the battle was the Lord's, so, dear brethren, remember this battle is the Lord's, and no weapon raised against us shall prosper; cry aloud and spare not, for God rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. Christ has prevailed to open the book and to loose the seals thereof, so all is safe and secure; preach the word. May God give us boldness to declare his power and purpose, regardless of men or devils; may God guide and keep us all in love at the feet of Jesus, is my prayer, for Jesus' sake.

If you think this will comfort any of God's poor and afflicted children, publish it.

Your servant, in bonds,

C. K. HAINES.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Aug. 16, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Through the mercies of the covenant-keeping God I still remain, and feel to thank him for his bountiful mercies and blessings poured out from his unwasted fullness upon me, even down to old age. I am now in my seventy-eighth year, and feel to thank God for an humble heart and contrite spirit. I trust that he hath revealed himself to me as the One who is altogether lovely. I am unworthy and full of weakness, and am as nothing before him, so that often in spirit I fear that I have not been born again. I look within myself and see so much corruption and wickedness that I am brought down, and do feel the desire, if it be the will of God, that I may be kept humble before him. I desire to be kept at the feet of Jesus, who is my meditation. Upon the subject of God's grace I do know from experience it is not in the power of mortal man to do the things which are acceptable with God. The Arminian world preaches terms and conditions to be performed by man. Let them read Jeremiah x. 23: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Solomon said, "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." "Man's goings are of the Lord." How then can a man understand his own way? Paul, when a Pharisee, with all of his pharisaical doctrine and great learning, had nothing but the doctrines of men, and was going about to establish an idolatrous worship, pleasing to all fleshly worshipers, if possible to draw away the poor of the flock. But thank God we have the sure mercies of David. Paul, when worshiping in that legal way, and very strict in that worship, asked for letters of authority to go to Damascus to bind the saints to be delivered up at Jerusalem. But the fullness of the time had come, wherein he should see the power of God mani-

fested, then he was filled with the love of God, and then he conferred not with flesh and blood, but went forth to fulfill his calling, to preach Christ the way, the truth and the life. In no other way can one be taught to preach the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. But those who are called fulfill the purpose for which they are called. Upon one occasion Jesus asked his disciples, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" They replied, "Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some Elias." But he said, "Whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Again, he said to Peter, "Thou art Peter; and upon this rock [Christ] will I build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." What a precious truth. Peter was taught and given to know the revealed will of God, and had the evidence that enabled him to declare that this was verily the Son of the living God. This was not a declaration of man alone proclaiming this truth, but it was the Lord speaking through Peter. Man's wisdom could not enter into the knowledge of such truth, nor proclaim it to a poor sinner, but God will lay judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, and no workmonger shall be therein; God's purposes and decrees will be fulfilled in his appointed time. Dear brother Chick, I feel my leanness in spiritual knowledge of the truth, but I have no other refuge save the everlasting Prince of peace, and in him do I trust for my deliverance from sin and death. "O for a closer walk with God," is my prayer.

I hope that what I have here written is in harmony with the teaching of the word. If you feel that it will prove of any comfort to the dear little ones, who have no confidence in the flesh, you are at liberty to publish it.

Your brother, as I hope, seeking for the truth,

O. B. HICKERSON.

DRAIN, Ore., Jan. 4, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I see from the little slip on the back of my paper that my subscription is almost due, and fear this will reach you too late now for the next number. I desire to get every number, as it is such a comfort to me and my companion; we heartily enjoy the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS, and feel to say to the blessed brethren, Write on, you cannot write too plainly for us. I am depending wholly on the mercies of Jesus for my support, and if saved at all it is by grace, and not for any good that I have done. I do not feel worthy of a name among the members of our Father's house, but I do know that I love the brethren, and can say with the poet,

"I love thee, my Savior,
I love thee, my Lord,
I love thy dear people,
Thy ways and thy word."

I rejoice to know that Jesus came to save sinners, and it gives me a little ray of hope, as I feel that I am the chief of them; because of sin I am constantly mourning, but in this valley there is no other pleasure so pleasant as to be with God's people, the Primitive Baptists. There is so much deceit practiced to-day that it makes one shudder at the thought of it; men claiming to be Christ's disciples professing to be saving souls, putting Christ to open shame by taking the power of salvation to themselves, in the face of the solemn words of the apostle Paul,

saying, "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." Paul knew such would be the case, for he told Timothy that the time would come when they would not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts heap to themselves teachers having itching ears, and that they would turn away their ears from the truth, and be turned unto fables. Isaiah made mention of the same, saying, "His watchmen are blind; they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand; they all look to their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter." This may seem hard language, but it is such a true comparison that I cannot forbear using it.

Dear brethren, I have written more than I meant to when I began, and feel what I have written is very unprofitable, but will leave it at your disposal. Hoping you will have a prosperous year, I beg to remain your unworthy brother, if one at all, in hope of eternal life,

C. F. MORNINGSTAR.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

AFTER October 15th my correspondents will please address me at Alvinston, Ontario, Canada.

D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

J. C. Nelson, Kentucky, $1.00.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder Frederick W. Keene.)

The Old School Baptist Conference of Maine, assembled at North Berwick, York County, Maine, September 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1910, to the associations with whom we correspond.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—Once more we send you our annual greeting, wishing you all new covenant mercies. These are so needful to us as pilgrims and strangers in the earth. Is this world a friend to grace to help us on to God? Ah, no. Well may it be written for our admonition: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."—1 John ii. 15-17. Our God is the Rock, our immutable Friend, our sure Foundation and everlasting Consolation. "I will [saith the Lord] make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David."—Isaiah lv. 3. Our way as we journey may at times be rugged and painful, temptations and sorrows may be ours, but on through the desert wastes streams of mercy, never ceasing, shall flow to refresh our souls, to lift up our heads, and so through the unfailing kindnesses of our covenant God we shall hold on our way. When our beloved Redeemer was in the world he said to his disciples, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world."—John xvi. 33. Tribulation,

therefore, in such measure as it pleaseth God, is experienced personally and collectively as the churches of Christ. But this gracious assurance from the Head of the church, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen," endears the Savior unto his people, and is the ground for their expectations that in all things they shall be more than conquerors. "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious."—1 Peter ii. 7. He is our living Stone, our Rock, on which we build, our sure Foundation, chosen of God and precious, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against his church. "He that believeth on him shall not be confounded." The verity of these sacred declarations are the assurance from our God that no matter what may arise to vex the church of Christ, she cannot be overthrown, she shall not be confounded world without end. "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious." The church of Christ is declared to be a "spiritual house." (1 Peter ii. 5.) Never was there such a house as this. Christ is the foundation and chief corner-stone, a living stone, and all the building is composed of lively stones. Christ Jesus is the life of the building. Our life is hid with Christ in God. All the elect are bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord their God; Christ the life flows upward through all the lively stones that are built upon him, a spiritual house. Time and climatic changes cannot affect or deface this building; it lives, and will flourish in eternal life, in immortality and incorruption throughout eternity. It is very precious in our faith to apprehend this, and to be even now experiencing the life of Christ Jesus animating us and holding us fast to him, our foundation, and causing us to rejoice in holy confidence, knowing that built upon him we shall not be confounded. When waves of affliction beat upon the church, when the floods arise we are held in life oneness with Jesus, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against us. Our Rock has said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." In all the characters that our Savior sustains unto his people he is precious; he is our unfailing Friend, our all. The manifold and continual needs of the children of God bring them, under the leadings of the Holy Spirit, into the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell, and of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. He "filleth all in all." His riches in glory are the storehouse to supply all the needs of his body, the church, and it is in our experimental intimacy, by faith, with our beloved Savior, that we learn most blessedly that Christ is precious. He is our precious sacrifice for sin, he is our propitiation, through faith in his blood. We are redeemed by his precious blood. (1 Peter i. 19.) This was our redemption price. The church God hath purchased with his own blood. (Acts xx. 28.) By the shedding of his blood we have the remission of all our sins. We are redeemed from all iniquity, redeemed from the curse of the law out of all nations and kindreds and tongues unto God. Thus speaks our almighty Redeemer: "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes."—Hosea xiii. 14. The hope of this, how glorious and comforting.

"What mighty sum paid all our debt,
When we vile bondmen stood,
And has our souls at freedom set?
'Tis Jesus precious blood."

When amidst the uprising of our internal

corruptions we sigh beneath the pollution of our sinfulness, how gracious it is then to be led by the Comforter to look by faith to Jesus' blood, that cleanseth from all sin. We have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sin, according to the riches of his grace. In Christ Jesus our Lord are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, which are all yea and amen in him, and unto the glory of God by us. Seeing that such a heritage is ours in him, he is indeed precious. He is our Shepherd and King, our High Priest and Husband. Therefore, beloved brethren, amidst the tribulation of our pilgrimage it is our happiness to be found confiding in Him who is our life, our salvation, our all.

We have appointed our next annual conference to be held, the Lord willing, September 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1911.

FREDERICK W. KEENE, Moderator.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, Bowdoinham, Maine, September 9th, 10th and 11th, 1910, to the churches of which she is composed, sends greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—It is our custom to write you a letter concerning the things of the kingdom of God, so that all who read may know we remain settled and grounded in the truth, and are not moved by any wind of doctrine. There is no special text in our mind to write about for your comfort and edification. These words: "Jesus Christ," "the church," "salvation," are the foundation of every text recorded in the Scriptures. The people of God were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. He was the perfect sacrifice that was offered to redeem them from sin and condemnation. On this foundation, which is laid in Zion, the wonderful works of the Lord are built, and nothing can ever overthrow or destroy them. The Lord's work is perfect, nothing can be added to it, nothing can be taken from it. He teaches all of his children, so they know they are sinners justly condemned, and in his own time and way reveals Jesus unto them as their Savior. How precious he is to us, and "of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." Who can express the fullness dwelling in Jesus? No tongue nor pen can do it. The church of God has salvation for walls and bulwarks, God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; no weapon that is formed against her shall prosper, and the gates of hell can do her no harm; every tongue that shall arise against her in judgment shall be condemned. "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion." Here is the city whose builder and maker is God. The inhabitants of this city are a peculiar people, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood; they are trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. He puts the new song into their mouth, so they give all praise, honor and glory unto him. He sheds his love abroad in their hearts and makes them love one another with a pure heart fervently. When Jesus gives them his peace they know by heartfelt experience that the peace of God passeth all understanding. The natural man cannot enter into the things of the kingdom of God; he cannot study and learn them; it is always the Lord's work when one is made to believe on Jesus Christ. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." We do believe that Jesus is revealed to the inhabitants of this city as One mighty to save, and his salvation is a sweet and delightful

theme to them. They have felt the joy of his salvation in their hearts, and it is something the world cannot give or take away. That hope of glory which has been wrought in their souls is a most precious hope, and it can never fail; it holds and supports us every step of our journey, for it is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. "Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." What good news and glad tidings we have to relate to those who know the joyful sound. Love, peace and joy abide with us, and we feel to esteem others better than self. The Spirit of Christ in our hearts makes us kind to each other, excusing and forgiving one another. "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" We cannot bear the fruit of the Spirit unless we abide in the Vine, which is Jesus. The church is so surrounded by the love, care and protection of Jesus that she is all glorious within. The blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin. We are clothed with the righteousness of Christ. He has overcome every enemy, and risen victorious over death, hell and the grave. All of his children were with him, and nothing can be laid to the charge of God's elect. As our mind is led to behold the wonderful works of the Lord in the salvation of his people, and the oneness that exists between Jesus and the chosen people of God, the words of Isaiah come with sweetness and power: "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us."

Z. M. BEAL, Moderator.
GEO. R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September, 1910, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has pleased the Lord to spare our unprofitable lives another year, and bring us together in an associate capacity. The preaching was all of one theme: Jesus Christ and him crucified, and we each and every one enjoyed that peace and love that passeth all understanding.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Whitefield Church, on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1911, where we shall hope to meet your messengers and receive your messages of love and fellowship.

Z. M. BEAL, Moderator.
GEO. R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

WE are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE last two figures of the date next to your name on the little pink slip denote the year to which your subscription is paid. Thus: 02 means 1902; 03 means 1903; 04 means 1904; 05 means 1905; 06 means 1906; 07 means 1907; 08 means 1908; 09 means 1909; 10 means 1910; 11 means 1911, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1910.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

EPHESIANS II. 1-3.

"AND you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."

Probably there is no Scripture more familiar to most Old School Baptists than the above, but because it is so familiar, it may be that many have not thought carefully about some things that are presented in it. The Scriptures everywhere are always being opened to the understanding of those who are prepared by grace to receive the truth. This does not mean that they are being so opened that doctrine contrary to what they received at the first as the doctrine of salvation is shown them, but rather that they are led still further into the same doctrine. It is so with the various principles of doctrine presented in this text. For instance, when the text declares that we were dead, it declares a truth that all believers come to see at the very first of God's revelation to them; and all that is revealed afterwards, concerning this one truth, does not contradict the first knowledge, but increases the depth of it, until it comes to mean more and more to those thus exercised, but still along precisely the same line. Or when the text declares that we have been quickened from this death, the truth thus stated is opened to the heart and mind of all who believe at the very first, but this truth as the years of experience go on comes to mean more and more to them than it did at the first. The same is true of the knowledge of Christ. We shall never see anything in Christ in anywise contrary to what we saw at the first, but rather what we saw of him at the first will only become brighter and brighter, and Christ, the same Christ, will become more and more to such an one. Thus is fulfilled the word of the apostle: "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Thus Paul, who already knew the Lord, desired to know more and more of him, and followed on that it might be so. It is not new truth in the old light, neither is it the old truth in a new light, but it is the old truth in the old light shining brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. This all applies to each individual experience, in some measure at least. But it is not our mind that our God has given any advantage to his people in one age of the church more than to them in any other age of the church; at least we have never seen any intimation of this kind in the Scriptures. Least of all do we believe that we in this present age are any wiser than God's people in the past ages. The Scriptures, so far as they seem to bear upon the matter at all, teach that things shall grow worse and worse, rather than better in the last ages. If a child of God ten centuries ago could be heard to-day, he would testify to the same experience and to the same doctrine of grace that we expect to hear from the

children of God to-day. There is no doubt that the children of God in all past ages have come short of the glory of God, both in understanding of the doctrine of God, and in their practice, but there can be no doubt that the same is true to-day as well. It may be that in some things God has shown his people clearer light than was shown to his people in some former age, but may it not be equally true that to that same people of that former age he showed more light in some other things than he has shown to us? It becomes us all, who speak of the things of God, to remember that that cannot be true which contradicts what we have already come to know of the blessed Lord and his salvation. Thus the principles of truth stated in the text quoted at the beginning of this article, as we examine them more closely, are but increased in meaning, and not changed to any reverse meaning. The first statement is, "And you hath he quickened." The words, "hath he quickened," are supplied here, but lawfully supplied, as will be seen in the fifth verse, where they are not supplied. This declaration is in the past tense. Paul's teaching all through the first chapter, both concerning the purposes of God, the work of Christ for his people and the work of the Holy Spirit in them, bringing them to believe (see verses 11–14), is that all this is in the past with them, and so here he uses the words, "hath he quickened," or as in verse five, "hath quickened us together with Christ," in the past tense, in full agreement with the teaching of the first chapter. Paul was not talking to dead sinners, but to living people of God. They had been dead in sins, but were not then dead, but living in Christ. These were men and women fallen in Adam, but now redeemed from the curse, and become, through the operation of the Spirit of God's dear Son, sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. How wonderful that the sons and daughters of Adam, partakers with him in sin and death, should now have become the children of God through faith in Christ, and heirs of eternal glory, and these, Paul declares, have been thus made alive from the dead. Let us be sure to give full force to the word "dead." It is not a figure of speech, it is a statement of a literal fact. Men are dead to God in their sinful state; they are living men in one sense, but dead in another sense. They live in sin, and so may be said to be alive to it, but when alive to sin they are dead to God. We do not think it a contradiction of terms to say that while dead in sin, yet they are alive to sin; that is, sin reigns in them and over them, and the motions of it are in their members and they rejoice in it, and it seems to them a sweet morsel under their tongues. But now they have become dead to sin and alive unto God. The words "dead in sin" do not mean simply a dormant state, from which one may be awakened by measures sufficiently strong. Were it only thus, then indeed men might arouse other men, but from the dead no man can arise save at the voice of God. And these had risen from the dead by the power of God working his work in their souls. Still further, Paul here is not speaking of the atonement, or the work by which men are justified, but he is speaking of that personal work in the heart, by which sinners pass from death unto life, and these brethren at Ephesus had experienced this coming to life by the power of the Spirit of God, and so the apostle could say to them, "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Thus he reminds them of their former and of their present state.

Can there be a wider difference imagined than is expressed by the word "death" and the word "quickened" or "made alive?" God's chosen and redeemed people, when thus made alive to God, are not indeed what they desire to be, and they are not what they shall be, but it is also blessedly true that they are not what they once were: they were dead both in trespasses and in sins. The difference between these two words is that "trespasses" signify outward transgressions, while "sins" mean the attitude of the heart and mind against God, out of which trespasses grow. They were dead to God in the whole disposition of their minds, being wholly alienated from him, and they were dead also in their whole manner of outward life. If the word "death" means anything here, it signifies that there could be no good work wrought by them, no desire toward that to which they were dead, no holy breathing of soul, and nothing whatever that could be pleasant in God's sight in all they could say or do.

The next two verses declare the results of this state of death to God and life to sin. While in that former state they walked according to the course of this world. The course of this world, then, is that of death to God; it is walking in transgression and iniquity; the whole world lieth in iniquity. Not only was their walk according to the course pursued by this world, but it was according to the prince of the power of the air; that is, the devil, who is a liar, and who sinneth from the beginning, and who now (or even yet) worketh in the children of disobedience. These children of disobedience are not the children of God; they have not been quickened, but are still under the dominion of sin and Satan. To claim that these children of disobedience mean disobedient children of God, would destroy all the force of the apostle's argument as to the present state of the people of God. All the church is addressed as being quickened from the dead. We say, all of them, whether those who walked near or those who walked far off. None of the church was left out; all had been quickened from the dead. Imperfect though they all might be and were, yet they were not now the children of disobedience, but they were God's own children. Once they walked after the course of this world, but now they did not so walk; once they walked after the prince of wickedness, but after being quickened they walked after God; once they fulfilled the desires of the flesh and the mind, but now had been translated into a new kingdom, a kingdom of righteousness and peace. So far as the walk of believers here below is concerned, all come short, and all of them confess that they do not the things they would do. In this respect there is no difference between one child of God and any other. But here the apostle declares that there is a vast difference between his brethren and the children of disobedience. These children of disobedience are characterized in the concluding expression as "others." "And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Here let us notice the apostle does not say, And are by nature, but "were." It simply means that, as regarded in their unquickened state, they were just like all other human beings: "children of wrath." We can well remember once in our youth hearing the late Elder Wm. J. Purington in preaching quote this last expression, and then he paused and said, "This literally reads, Wrath's children." They are not children of God, but are still subject to death, because still dead in trespasses

and sins, and let us carefully notice that the apostle declares of all his brethren that once they were children of wrath. He does not say, Ye are the children of wrath, but, ye were. Once they manifested no difference from other men, because there was no difference in them, but now there is a difference, and it is the difference between death and life. If we now can think of the apostle as though he were addressing us who read this with the good hope that we are the quickened and living children of God, and as we read these last words of the text, "Were by nature the children of wrath, even as others," can take in something of their blessed meaning to us, perhaps we shall be found asking, Lord, why are we so blessedly favored of thy grace while others are not? And what must the answer be to this solemn questioning in our hearts? There can be but one answer, either for us or for any others thus called, viz., the doctrine of eternal, personal, unconditional election. No reason can be given why one sinner is saved while others are not, save that it so seemed good in the sight of God. He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. There is no other answer. So far as justice is concerned, all the fallen sons and daughters of Adam might have been left to perish, and the throne of God would still forever have remained a white throne. Each child of God testifies for himself, If justice were carried out I could have no hope, and must perish forever. Nothing in me (says the child of God) could ever merit esteem. If I am among the saved, it is by the grace of God. It is of his grace in election, in redemption, in the atonement, in the quickening, in preservation and in final victory. These chosen vessels of mercy are quickened or made alive unto God. This is in full harmony with the blessed Savior's own words: "I give unto them eternal life." How wonderful that unto finite sinners should be given eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Yea, it is declared to be Christ in us the hope of glory. Beholding us as chosen in his Son from eternity, eternal life was treasured up in him for us who should one day here on earth be quickened by it, and in this life of Christ and in Christ there is unity. Possessing this one life the people of God become one body. Every member of our natural body possesses the one same life, and so, though they are many members, they are still "one body." Even so the church, the body of Christ, has many members, but as they all possess one life they are one body. Without this one life they could not be one body. The church is made up of chosen men and women, and to each one of that number the apostle could say as he said to those at Ephesus: "And you hath he quickened." And, Ye "were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." The children of wrath needed redemption. No others ever did need redemption. It is the hope and joy of very many whom we know that they, even they, are numbered among these chosen ones, and that they have been called by grace, and that they shall one day be with and like their Lord. For this blessed consummation we are waiting, and our hope shall not be disappointed. C.

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EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MATTHEW XI. 11.

"He that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

These words were not spoken in disparagement of John the Baptist, for of all that had preceded him his superior had not been found, even among the prophets and patriarchs. We are not told that John was greater than any of the Old Testament saints, but that among them that are born of women, none greater than he had appeared. He was a man sent from God, and his name was John, (see John i. 6,) and this name was given him by the angel of God. (Luke i. 13.) He came in the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as the messenger whom God sent before the face of the Messiah, and as the voice of one crying in the wilderness, &c. (Mark i. 1, 2.) He came in the spirit and power of Elias, who was translated, and he was the Elias which was to come. He was a Baptist, and the honored administrator of the holy ordinance of baptism to our Lord Jesus Christ. All the prophets and the law prophesied until John. "Notwithstanding" all this, "He that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." There is, we think, a sense in which this characteristic (the least in the kingdom) belongs to our Redeemer himself. The term "least" we do not understand to imply unimportant, less useful, less honored, or less in any point of real greatness, but the most humble, meek and lowly, and these lovely qualities were certainly possessed and manifested more fully and conspicuously in the person of our Redeemer, in his incarnation, life and deportment on earth, than in any of his members. He whose glory was with the Father before the world was, (John xvii. 5,) whose position was with the Father upon the eternal throne, who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, and who was with God in the beginning, and who was God, who is the mighty God, the everlasting Father and the Prince of peace, by whom and for whom all things are and were created, and by whom all things consist, whether they be principalities or powers, thrones or dominions, things visible or invisible, all are his workmanship, and all are sustained and controlled by him. But see him in his humble birth; see him in the manger; see him in subordination to his parents, serving as an humble apprentice to the carpenter's trade; see him a man of sorrow, familiar with grief, derided, insulted, reproached, persecuted, reviled and set at naught by men; see him in agony in the garden; see him a prisoner at the bar of Pilate and of Herod; see him crowned with thorns, scourged, spit upon and loaded with every indignity that wicked men could invent, and led away to the horrid tortures of the cross, bleeding, groaning, dying, and in all this not one complaining or revengeful word; as a sheep before his shearers, he was dumb, and opened not his mouth. See all this, and then say, Was there ever such humility, meekness and lowliness of soul as he exhibited on earth, before or since? Who, from such infinite height, has humbled himself to such a depth? Who, from such unspeakable glory, has willingly descended to such ignominy and humiliation? Who, that was so rich, has ever volunteered to become so very poor? Who, from the adoration of shining angels and the worship of holy beings, has consented to become the scorn and derision of wicked men and devils? Who, beside the meek and lowly Lamb of God, was

ever willing to be counted of no reputation? It is our impression that our dear Redeemer, in our text, referred to his own unexampled and unparalleled humiliation. He came under the law, he learned obedience, he humbled himself, even unto the death of the cross, he assumed all our infirmities, he took on him all our sins, he bore all our reproaches, he endured the cross and despised the shame, yet beyond all controversy he was and is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. He who washed his disciples' feet justly claimed that he was and is their Lord and Master. But in the kingdom of heaven, among the disciples of Christ, whosoever manifests the greatest conformity to Christ in meekness, lowliness and humility, is esteemed the greatest among the disciples. "When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he died."—Hosea xiii. 1. So our Redeemer taught his disciples that the pathway to greatness was through the valley of humiliation. When his disciples displayed an ambition to be great, having failed to settle the question of preeminence in their discussions among themselves, they appealed to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" The reply of our Lord to this inquiry is the clearest and most explicit commentary on the text proposed that can be given. So far as it relates to the comparative humility and transcendent exaltation of the children of God, showing that he who is the most like Jesus in the grace of humility, is greatest in the kingdom of heaven; not in self-esteem, or self-righteousness, nor in the esteem of the world, but in approaching nearest to the standard of true greatness, as shown by the example and precepts of Jesus; as, for instance, Paul, who claimed to be less than the least of all saints, and yet not a whit inferior to the chiefest of apostles, and in some respects at least greater than John the Baptist. When the disciples asked Jesus, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" how forcibly did he illustrate the doctrine of christian humility and godly eminence. "And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, "Verily, I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."—Matt. xviii. 2–4. And farther he said, "And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." By this divinely authorized standard, the more humble and childlike the disciple becomes, the greater will be his resemblance to the meek and lowly Savior, of whom he learns and whose yoke he is called to bear. This true greatness does not consist in being more prominent in position, as John the Baptist or Paul were, for says Paul, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."—1 Cor. xiii. 1–3. The poor little child of God, who has no gift of tongues, who can only lisp the name of

his adorable Redeemer, if blessed with humility, is childlike, lamblike and Christlike; he is greater in the kingdom of heaven than those who possess the most eloquent and commanding powers of oratory, or shine the brightest in the eyes of men. The vain ambition of the two sons of Zebedee, and their mother, that they might occupy distinguished places of prominence and honor in the kingdom which was about to be organized, excited the other ten disciples with indignation against them. Instead of elevating, it depreciated them in the eyes of their brethren, as that vain ambition always does when betrayed among christians. "But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you." No aristocratic distinctions, no despotic dominion, no lording over God's heritage, should ever be allowed in the church of God. "But whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister." That is, to perform the duties of a waiting servant. "And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant," or (as in the margin) your slave.—Matt. xx. 26, 27. Let such occupy the very lowest places, and let the humble be honored for their childlike and unaspiring disposition, for "Whosoever shall exalt himself, shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted." Scribes, Pharisees and hypocrites loved the chief places in the synagogues, and to be called Rabbi, but Jesus forbids such titles to his children. May we all learn of Jesus to be humble, holy, harmless and undefiled, and suppress within us all desire for any other greatness. When we glory, may it be only in the Lord.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., July 1, 1864.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at Pennington, N. J., Wednesday evening, June 29th, 1910, Robert P. Miller, M. D., of Hopewell, N. J., and Miss Edna Rogers, of Pennington.

By the same, at Woodsville, N. J., Thursday a. m., Sept. 1st, 1910, Paul H. Carter, of Leesburg, Va., and Miss Mary L. Drake, of Woodsville, N. J.

By the same, at Hopewell, N. J., Wednesday noon, Sept. 7th, 1910, Marna S. Poulson and Mrs. Nellie M. Atkinson, of Baltimore County, Md.

By Elder Silas H. Durand, Sept. 10th, 1910, at the home of the bride's father, Otho Ernest Cox Robinson, of Hatboro, Pa., and Miss Florence Gillingham Willard, of Bethayres, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Willis S. Gott was born near Crawfordsville, Ind., July 13th, 1823, and was married to Maria French Dec. 4th, 1845. One year later he moved to Linn County, Iowa, where he had since resided. Two daughters were born to him by his first wife: Mrs. Mary J. Beaman, of Rock Rapids, Iowa, and Mrs. Margaret Stewart, deceased. His first wife died June 26th, 1849. Mr. Gott was again married, to Mrs. Eleanor Carr, Jan. 14th, 1851. To that union five children were born: Mrs. Melvina Newman, deceased; Mrs. Ellen Whitenack, deceased, and Willis M., of New Hampton, Iowa, two dying in infancy. In October, 1860, death again visited his home, and he was bereft a second time of his companion, being left with five motherless children. He was married the third time, to Sarah E. Busenbark, of Crawfordsville, Ind., August 21st, 1861, and to that union eight children were born, of whom six are living: Mrs. Phœbe Napier, of Mt. Vernon, David F., residing at the home place, Mrs. Belle Myers and Mrs. Lura Remington, of Marion, Mrs. Rosa Andrews, of Northwood, and Harvey, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa; two daughters, Mrs. Nancy Remington and Mrs. Lucy Plott, are deceased. Mr. Gott united with the Greens Grove Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists in May, 1879, was soon afterward chosen deacon, and faithfully filled that office until his death, which occurred early Sunday morning, August 7th, 1910. Mr. Gott was well established in the doctrine advocated by his people, and his house was always a home for the Baptists during the regular meetings and associations. He was a good neighbor, a loving companion and father, a good and safe counselor, sociable, but unassuming. During his last sickness, of four weeks' duration, he was a great sufferer, but did not complain at his lot, being reconciled at all times to the divine will of his heavenly Master. Besides his companion and children, he leaves an aged

sister, Mrs. Emily Maddox, of Marion, and one brother, Francis M. Gott, of Woodward, Iowa, a large number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren to mourn their loss.

Brief services were held at his late residence, three miles northwest of Marion, conducted by D. W. Miller, after which the remains were interred in the Oliphant Cemetery. SARAH E. GOTT.

ROBINS, Iowa, August 23, 1910.

Miss Harriet Duncan fell asleep in Jesus June 24th, 1910, at her home, near Marshall, Fauquier Co., Va. "Aunt Harriet," as she was called, was born Jan. 17th, 1815. She was baptized in the fellowship of Upper Broad Run Church the third Sunday in August, 1870, by Elder Joseph L. Purington. She lived to a good old age, like corn fully ripe, and was firm in the faith, resting in the hope of the blessed resurrection of the body and the glorious immortality of the soul. She was an intelligent reader and lover of the Bible and SIGNS, and was a subscriber of the latter. Having no fear of death for many years, it was a pleasant thought to her to know she must soon sleep in Jesus, believing it was only a sleep, to awake with Christ's likeness and see him as he is and be like him. Sister Duncan dearly loved to fill her seat at Broad Run. She was faithful, and earnestly prayed for Zion, and had an answer of peace. She said the Lord had taken away the burden and the blessed Master carried it, and she was at ease and rest, trusting alone in the mighty God of heaven, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Her niece writes: "A more truly humble, better, faithful, loving, constant christian never lived; the needy and afflicted always found a friend and helper in Aunt Harriet; she was generous, and was one who did not let her right hand know what her left hand did; but surely her deeds of kindness are recorded."

She leaves her beloved church, with many friends and relatives, to mourn their loss; a loss to them only, for with her to die was gain.

Written by request of her niece, sister Hattie L. Walker. LAURA HUNTON.

MANASSAS, Va., August 23, 1910.

Mrs. Gertrude Bailey departed this life Thursday, August 25th, 1910, at her son's, Elmer Bailey, after a lingering illness of Bright's disease. Her last attack was brief, and she passed away calmly and peacefully. She leaves one son, two brothers, five grandchildren, with the church, behind for awhile. Her age was about seventy-three years. Sister Bailey was baptized by the writer in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Indiantown about twenty-five years ago. She was the widow of brother Littleton Bailey, whose hospitable home many will remember when they see this notice. She was one of the peaceable, quiet wives, mothers and neighbors. I visited the house, it being one of my headquarters from about 1869 until brother Bailey's death. She always made her home pleasant for me whenever I was there, and in all those years I never heard either one speak the least short or cross word to each other, which was wonderful to me. She was not a great talker on experimental things, but was a good listener, and was quiet and unassuming. She never seemed to think or speak highly of herself, and her life was a good pattern, one to be admired.

The writer was called upon to officiate at her funeral, which he did with such ability as the Lord gave, reading from 1 Corinthians xv. 35–58, then as a foundation for remarks read from Romans viii. 18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." All that was mortal was then laid to rest beside her husband to await the summons from on high, then shall it come forth glorified.

T. M. POULSON.

MASSEY, Va.

Mrs. Phoebe G. Simmons, wife of Deacon Wm. A. Simmons, departed this life at her home in Stoutsburg, N. J., July 2nd, 1910, aged 79 years. There had been no particular disease, but for some time she had been failing with the ordinary infirmities of age, until at last the end came quietly and peacefully. She was born in the State of Ohio, and her maiden name was Wilson. She was married in Ohio to Deacon Simmons, and came with him to live in New Jersey in 1856. They had lived together in marriage for nearly fifty-four years. She was baptized by Elder Wm. J. Purington in 1879, becoming a member of the First Hopewell Church. Six children were born to them, of whom four, three daughters and one son, are living. She also leaves, beside her husband, one brother, one sister and one grandchild.

In addition to this statement of her natural life we feel also to add a few things concerning her life in the things of the kingdom of God. Her life in the church had been to us all a pleasant one. As long as she was able she was a regular attendant upon the services of the sanctuary at Hopewell. She loved the place where her brethren met to worship God. She was a woman of few words, but often we could see the gladness of her face as she met and mingled with her brethren and sisters in the church. She in heart and life abided by the old paths, and desired not to share in the many new things which in these last days have come up in the name of religion. She was a woman of quiet manner and life, and we never heard her narrate the exercises of her mind by which she was at the first led to the church, but we knew her steadfastness for the past fourteen years that we have known her. She will be greatly

missed in her family, in the church and in the neighborhood.

The funeral service was held at her home July 6th. The text used as the subject for the discourse was Psalms xxvii. 4. The interment was in the Old School Baptist Cemetery at Hopewell. All of the family, and especially our aged brother Simmons, have the full sympathy of all who know them. C.

Sarah Gordon Beoddy, daughter of Frederick and Hulda Gordon, was born August 16th, 1864, in Madison County, Ohio, and departed this life August 30th, 1910, at her home in Muncie, Ind. She was married June 5th, 1889, to Mr. Crist Beoddy, to which union were born six children, four sons and two daughters, all of whom, with the husband, and several brothers and sisters, are left to mourn. In the year 1884 she received a hope in her Savior, and was received, and baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Deer Creek, at Waterloo, by Elder Levi Bavis, and all her life was a devoted christian, patient through her long sickness, wanting to live for her children, but ready and willing to abide by the will of God. We all miss her, the husband and children, the brethren and sisters, the neighbors and friends, but we feel that our loss is her gain, and the hope which God gave her as an anchor of the soul is sure and steadfast, and we bow in humble submission to the will of Him who doeth all things well.

The writer was called from Galion, Ohio, and tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved ones from Job: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." The funeral services were conducted from the home of her sister, Mrs. Lewis Brock, near South Solon, Ohio, near the old Frederick Gordon home, and the remains laid to rest in the South Solon Cemetery.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

Mary Emma Davis Boice, wife of Horace Boice, died at Kingston, N. Y., August 10th, 1910. She was born in Roxbury, N. Y., Feb. 11th, 1855, and was the daughter of George and Roxy Davis, who died some years ago. She leaves a husband, eleven children and nine grandchildren, besides many friends, to mourn their loss. Though not a member of any church, she was a faithful attendant at the meetings of the Old School Baptists as long as her health permitted, and seemed to enjoy the truth which is presented by them.

By request of friends,

(MRS.) W. M. GRIFFIN.

HALCOTTVILLE, N. Y.

[MRS. Boice was indeed a noble woman, faithful in all the walks of life and highly respected by all who knew her. She had long been a lover of the truth as it is in Jesus, but never felt herself worthy to ask a place in the church. Her family has sustained a great loss in her death. We conducted the funeral services, which were largely attended, and tried to speak of the eternal glory of immortality. The remains were interred in the "Hurley Cemetery." May grace be ministered to the family, especially to the aged and sorrowful husband.—K.]

Mrs. Parmelia F. Davis, daughter of William B. and Virlinda N. Davis, was born May 21st, 1849, died June 21st, 1910, aged 61 years and 1 month. She died at her brother's, William A. Davis, near Herndon, Va., where she had made her home for a number of years. She was buried in their family lot at Herndon. The deceased had not made a public profession, but gave evidence, both in her walk and conversation, that she had been with Jesus. Her hope was in the merits of Christ's atoning blood. Often she was heard to say, "I know what God appointed is best," and expressed a willingness to leave this world of sin and sorrow. We extend our sympathy to the sorrowing ones, whose loss is her eternal gain. J. G. EUBANKS.

NEWARK, Del., Sept., 1910.

MEETINGS.

THE Juniata Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, on Friday before the first Sunday in October, instead of the second, as was announced in our Minutes, with the Sidling Hill Church, in Fulton County, and will continue three days. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth, and hope to be remembered by our ministering brethren. Those coming by rail will take the B. & O. or the Western Maryland to Hancock and cross the river to the Hancock side, where they will be met on Thursday. Better write J. T. Mellott, Needmore, Pa., or Jefferson C. Mellott, same address.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Lexington, N. Y., has appointed a yearly or two days meeting to be held at our meetinghouse in Lexington the first Saturday and Sunday in October (1st and 2nd), 1910. We will be glad to see as many of our faith and order as can come.

FLETCHER MACKEY, Church Clerk.

THE Des Moines River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will be held, the Lord willing, with the Otter Creek Church, at Toddville, Iowa, ten miles north of Cedar Rapids, on the Decorah division of the C. R. I. & P. R. R., beginning on Saturday, October 1st, and continuing three days. Those coming via Cedar Rapids will leave there for Toddville at 7:50 a. m. and 4:30 p. m., except Sunday. Those coming from the north will reach Toddville at

9 a. m. and 6 p. m., except Sunday. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

C. O. SHARP, Moderator.

J. L. THURSTON, Clerk.

THE Andes Church has appointed a two days meeting to be held at Union Grove, N. Y., October 5th and 6th, 1910, commencing on Wednesday at 11 o'clock a. m. Trains will be met Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. at Union Grove. Those coming via O. & W. R. R. will change at East Branch for Union Grove. Those coming via U. & D. R. R. will change at Arkville for Union Grove.

JAMES A. HUNTLY, Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Schoharie Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., Oct. 5th and 6th, 1910. All those coming by train on D. & H. from Albany to Binghamton will get off at Cobleskill on Tuesday before the meeting and inquire for J. E. Livingston, who will care for them. If any cannot get here on Tuesday, and can reach Howes Cave on either day of the meeting, if they will drop me a card I will see that they are met and conveyed to the meetinghouse. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren of like precious faith to meet with us, especially ministering brethren.

J. E. LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa, N. Y., will hold its yearly meeting the second Sunday, and Saturday previous, in October (Oct. 7th and 8th), 1910, and cordially invites all our brethren and friends, especially ministering brethren, to meet with us.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

THE Corresponding Meeting of Virginia is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, Loudoun Co., Va., to commence on Wednesday, October 11th, 1910, and continue three days. Friends coming to the meeting by railroad will be in Washington, D. C., on Tuesday, Oct. 10th, in time to take train at Union station at 1:30 p. m. for Bluemont, on the Loudoun road, if the present schedule is maintained. Trains are now due at Bluemont at about 4 p. m., where all will be met and cared for. An earnest invitation is extended to all whose hearts are sincerely with us.

J. N. BADGER.

THE Welsh Tract Church has appointed her yearly meeting to be held on Saturday and Sunday, October 15th and 16th, 1910. Those coming from Philadelphia and Baltimore will please come via B. & O. R. R. on Saturday or Sunday. Trains leave Philadelphia at 8:15 a. m., and Baltimore at 8 a. m. (Mt. Royal station.) Get tickets for Newark, Del., where all will be met and conveyed to the place of meeting. Brethren in the ministry and all lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Association is appointed to convene with the church in Broad Creek, Sussex Co., Del., October 19th, 20th and 21st, 1910. Those coming by rail to attend the meeting will take trains arriving at Laurel, southbound, at 1:16 p. m., northbound, 2:11 p. m. Southbound train leaves Philadelphia at 10 o'clock a. m., northbound leaves Cape Charles at 11:05 a. m. Come Tuesday, 18th. All coming by those trains will be met and cared for. It is desirable that all should come by those trains, as it is five miles from Laurel to the meeting, and it will not be convenient to meet other trains. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren. We hope to see a goodly number, and assure you we will do all in our power to make you comfortable, and we assure you a hearty welcome.

By the church.

A. B. FRANCIS, Pastor.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in Kimmy Hall, No. 12 Third St., in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

A SMALL band of Primitive Baptists is meeting every Sunday at 10:30 a. m. at 2919 Polk St., Chicago, Ill. All persons interested are welcome to meet with us. Any one knowing of members living in or near Chicago will please notify W. N. Spitler at the above address.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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I have also on hand a few copies of "Reminiscences and Letters of Mary Parker." Price 75 cents.

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SILAS H. DURAND.

Southampton, Pa.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 78. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1910. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WALKER, Ore., Aug. 10, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am frequently requested to write for our dear paper, the SIGNS, and while it is the strongest desire of my heart that the great Giver of every good and perfect gift might use me, a poor, weak worm, and a sinner, for some purpose that will redound to his praise, it is with much reluctance that I make the attempt. These requests sometimes revive a hope that I have some part in the great feast, even if it be only as the dog that eats the crumbs that fall from the master's table. If I know anything spiritually, I have a strong desire to be of some comfort to those of the poor, scattered ones of the flock of God, but as Mephibosheth was, I am helplessly lame on both feet. Yet while passing, as I sometimes hope, along this pilgrimage road, I am permitted to pick up some crumbs from the Master's table, and a few times I have been made to hope that I may some time eat at the King's table continually. At such times I am made to cry out in amazement, "What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?" and my only hope rests in the knowledge that God in his everlasting mercy and love is able to raise up the poor from the dust of the earth, and the beggar from the dunghill, and make them to sit down with princes and kings.

I have not been requested to write about any particular subject, and so I will begin, hoping that the Giver of every good and perfect gift will guide my mind, and that lame as I am in mind I may be included in the weak things of the world that are to confound the mighty, and the foolish things that are to confound the wise. The dear Savior gave thanks to his Father that he had hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. Sometimes when we are permitted to view the inspired word of God through the all-magnifying glass of faith we are able to look through time, as regards both Jews and christians, to the present day, and sometimes the dark glass seems thin which veils the great beyond, where lies the christian's hope. Milestones are set up in holy writ by the pen of his chosen servants, by which his wayfaring people as they pass each stone have their confidence strengthened, and are made to ascribe to the Majesty in the heavens all power and glory, and to say

that he does all his pleasure in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and that he accomplishes his will in the minutest detail. He has a perfect knowledge of whatsoever comes to pass, and being the great Architect of the universe he planned his building as he did, also the pattern of Solomon's temple, so that all come together, stone fitting stone, without the sound of axe or hammer. It also pleased him as he saw the end from the beginning to give types or shadows of things in the gospel, back under the law dispensation, and they to whom was given that faith which magnifies the word of God, could look forward, as we look backward, to Christ's finished work.

Now if my mind be exercised by God-given faith I will dwell briefly upon the first state of man, and try to note how God made all things for His own glory, for all the powers that be are ordained of God. We can only know things by comparison; that is, were there no darkness we would not know the light, because there would be nothing opposite to or different from light. If there were nothing throughout the universe opposite to God's perfect holiness, there would be no room for praise to him for his wonderful mercy. Thus in contrast to his everlasting goodness and holiness, man is as prone to sin as the sparks are to fly upward. Man was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope. The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. These vessels of clay which are of His own building, contained at the first all those elements, and this was the earthly beginning of the lively stones, who will finally share in the image or likeness of this perfect building; that is, those who were vessels made to honor. For he had power to make vessels to honor, and other vessels to dishonor, and Jesus Christ himself is the chief corner-stone of this building, which being fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple.

I believe that when he made man, saying, "Let us make man in our image," he had under contemplation every particle of the work necessary, and he had perfect foreknowledge of the fall under the curse of the law, else he would not have required of his Son that he should be surety for his bride. Man has been ever prone to trust in himself, and we shall see further on what great efforts he has made to reach past the flaming sword, which represents the law, to the tree of life. They "being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." But vain is the help of man, and cursed is man that trusteth in man. But finally his own shall be like Him, seeing him as he is, and he is in his own image to the everlasting praise of His own glory. The contrast in the beginning was between good and evil, and the holy law was given in perfect harmony with God's righteousness, to manifest the awful difference between God and his created vessels. Thus when Eve partook of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and expected, as Satan had said, that they should become as gods, knowing good and evil, and that they should not die (Adam also partaking with her), the law was applied and they beheld their nakedness. This is exactly as Paul has said: "I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." His separation from God was manifest when the law was applied. Had the blessing come by

the deeds of the law, then Paul must have said, The law came that righteousness might abound, and not as he did say, "That the offence might abound." If a law had been given that could have given life, then righteousness would have been by the law; but the law was given to manifest the offence, that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God. "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified." By this law Paul cried, "O wretched man that I am!" It makes the darkness manifest, it causes the warfare, there being in us a desire to do the things of God, and yet we must say, The things I would, I do not, and the things I would not, those I do. There is a desire for the fruit of the Spirit, a hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Paul died the same death that all die to whom the law is applied. Now, like Adam, they begin to strive to cover their nakedness with the works of their own hands. The fig leaves were a shadow of that self-righteous religion so common to-day. The first two who were born gave us an example and type of things now being fulfilled. Cain had sown the seed in the ground, which brought forth the most pleasant things to the natural eye, and something that would sustain natural life, and as he had no other life, these things would satisfy every desire of his heart. He believed, no doubt, that the labor of his hands had produced something that would sustain an everlasting natural life, as Satan had told Eve at the first. But the best promise under the law was that their days might be long in the land, and that they should enjoy the fruits thereof, and when the law was tried it was fully proven that no law could be given that could give eternal life. But, on the other hand, the sacrifice of Abel entirely ignored the works of his own hands, and pointed directly to the bleeding Lamb, whose blood cleanseth from all sin, and the fat of the lamb pointed to the hope of eternal life which was already promised, and hence is the opposite of the bread which does not give life, but only sustains it, as the true bread sustains eternal life. Then Cain immediately became wroth, and slew his brother. Even to-day when we see our fellow-man groveling in darkness and slavish servitude under the same delusion as was Cain, and, on the other hand, some poor, weak sinner, who has been made to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, and try to point him to the Lamb of God, whose yoke is easy and whose burden is light, and declare to him that this is the perfect way of deliverance of sinners from the galling yoke of bondage, this follower of Cain becomes wroth in heart, and would slay this poor one with great swelling words of vanity.

Now let us try for a moment to find the antitype of this wheat and barley, the fruit of the ground. In the fifth chapter of Revelation we are told of the book that was sealed with seven seals, and no one in heaven or earth, or under the earth, could loose them, but the Lion of the tribe of Judah prevailed, and he will reveal these things to whomsoever he will. Poor and weak as I am, I have hope that some of these seals have been opened to my understanding. In the sixth chapter of Revelation we are told that the first seal refers to the setting up of the church, and then the coming in of wolves in sheep's clothing, in the form of the Romish church, ascending to power, and her slaughter of martyrs for Jesus' name. As Paul said to the Thessalonians, "The mystery of iniquity doth already work."

Then, at the opening of the third seal, John saw a black horse, and he that sat on him had a pair of balances, and he said, "I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine." Does not this clearly refer to the fruit of the earth which Cain offered? This same antitypical wheat and barley is produced in abundance in Sunday Schools and theological seminaries throughout the land and world, and sold for a penny, or for three pennies a measure, and the material is the antitypical brick and mortar for the tower that is intended to reach to heaven. And John saw in Revelation xiii. that they who had not the mark of the beast could not sell this material. So these have not one thing to do in this work. They go on without money and without price; they receive the things to which the lamb of Abel pointed. I will quote again, "See thou hurt not the oil and the wine." This refers to the grace and Spirit of God. In the thirteenth chapter of Revelation is set up a milestone of the rise of the popish religion. They brought in a false, earthly doctrine from the world, viz., that the church was built upon Peter. Christ said, "Thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church." Their interpretation of this came from the dragon, who is a liar, and the father of lies, and this church then claimed that the popes were the descendants of Peter, and that they held the keys of heaven and hell, and that the destiny of men's souls was in their hands. But thanks be to the God of heaven, whose mercy endureth forever, the truth is, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Again returning to Revelation xiii., we learn that they got this power from the dragon, and the beast that John saw was like a leopard, and a leopard cannot change his spots. This leopard represents the most ferocious of beasts, with feet like a bear, and a mouth like a lion, to speak great swelling words of vanity, and he received power from the dragon, and he had power to continue forty and two months. Thus far shalt thou go, and no further. He had power to make war with the saints, and to overcome them as did Cain. "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." When the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel thy brother?" he had already shown his spots of sin, and now with great swelling words of vanity he said, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

The second beast that rose up, as recorded in Revelation xiii., had horns, and thus somewhat more resembled the lamb. This is the coming up of the various Protestant denominations, who seem a little more like the lamb, and to have a little more truth, in that they said the Lamb was slain for the sin of the world, and thus that the work of redemption was built upon Christ the Lamb of God. But he spake, after all, like the dragon, and denied that the atonement was a finished work, and he exercised all the power of the first beast. "And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven." If it were possible, he would deceive the very elect. This second beast deceived them that dwelt on the earth, by means of the miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast. Like Cain, he caused them to be killed which would not worship the image of the beast which came up out of the ground as does wheat and barley.

Now let us examine another type. When the children of Israel were about to be delivered from the bondage in Egypt, the Lord gave instruction that they should borrow from the Egyptian women, as was the custom in those days, jewelry to take with them. These women were subjects of Pharaoh. When they were delivered at the Red Sea and had sung the song of deliverance, and had gone a few days journey into the wilderness, Moses went up into the mount to receive the law of God. But when he had been gone a short time they became weary, and their hearts were turned back toward Egypt, and they said, As for this man Moses, we wot not what is become of him. Make us gods to lead us. So they brake off the jewelry from their ears, and Aaron cast and graved it, and it was a golden calf. It was made from material borrowed from the typical subjects of Satan, and it was to lead them back into bondage, and to-day we see these same man-made golden calves. Forty years ago they were of various colors, so that they were distinguishable from each other; some were noted for foreign mission work, some for various modes of baptism, and some for other things too numerous to mention, but now their calves are growing larger and changing color very fast, until they are scarcely distinguishable one from the other. I saw on a billboard in a neighboring town, "At a tent to-night, the great church federation move." I suppose they want that all colors should be alike, and every worldly-minded man worship at every shrine, and they are leading the people back into bondage so fast that every church, so far as I know, has a base ball club, and some a moving picture show. We see frequently in the daily papers such items as the following, "The Christians and the Methodists played an interesting base ball game," and the score, &c.

Now I will call attention to another type. Some time after Cain slew Abel all the earth was speaking the same language, and no doubt had become expert in masonry, so they set about to build a tower from earth to heaven with brick and slime, and men ever since Cain have tried to climb up in "some other way." This was as perfect an organization from human effort as could well be imagined, but when the Lord came to see this humanly devised scheme, there was nothing in it to point to the sin-atoning blood of the Lamb of God; so God confused their language, and until now they have failed to come together again. In Revelation we find a description of this great antitypical tower: "Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots." She must have children, else she would not be a mother, and, as I said before, Protestant denominations bear the plain marks of the second beast, and their number is as the number of a man, six hundred, threescore and six, and here is wisdom. Let him that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. There are at the present day something more than six hundred religious sects; these are the women who shall, seven of them, lay hold of one man, saying, "We will eat our own bread [wheat and barley], and wear our own apparel." They have no use for the bread of life nor for the robe of righteousness, because they are ignorant of God's righteousness, and are going about to establish their own righteousness, and they say, "Only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." In Revelation xvii. it is recorded that they hated the great whore, as did the Protestants at the time of the reformation, and twenty or less years ago they boldly

denounced them, because God had put it into their mind to fulfill his will, and to agree and give their kingdom to the beast. At Edinboro, Scotland, last year, June 14th, there assembled a great missionary conference, where the world came near speaking as at the tower of Babel, with one language. There were several thousands who were representative delegates from all parts of the world, and my newspapers say that every branch of Protestantism, from the Ritualist party in the Church of England, to the meeting of the Quakers, was represented there. Nothing is to be allowed which is contrary to the Roman Catholic faith. It would seem that this modern tower of Babel is almost built to the limit, and the time of agreeing and giving the kingdom back to the beast is almost here. The eighteenth chapter of Revelation tells how other things will come to pass shortly after.

I am only noticing these things because it is the passing of a large, plain milestone, if I am not greatly deceived. Our Lord gives us these waymarks to strengthen us in time of the great struggles of life. At times when it seemed as though the last ray of hope was gone, I have looked back to the fulfilling of the prophecies, and have been much strengthened in faith and hope by their unerring accuracy. My mind now turns to Malachi iii. 6: "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." There is a people kept as the apple of his eye. When Elijah complained that he was alone, the Lord said, "I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal." God's people can say, If I take the wings of the morning, and fly to the uttermost parts of the earth, behold, thou art there. Solomon said, looking forward to the bride, the Lamb's wife, There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number, but my beloved is one. Here is a perfect marriage. Chastity in contrast with mystery Babylon, the mother of harlots. Now, dearly beloved, if you are in a strange land and trying to sing the Lord's song, that is, praise to him, you had better hang your harps upon the willows, for they will not chord with the self-exalting blasphemies which they sing to their own glory. You want to sing the song of deliverance. "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" and sing, "The Lord is my strength and my song, and he is become my salvation." Again, we read in Rev. xxi., "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Again we read, "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." Such an one must be spiritually alive, else he would not thirst. Again we read, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still." Again, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. * * * And let him that is athirst come: and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." It is not, Let him take of life, but of the water of life to assuage his thirst. This thirst for this spiritual water is a certain evidence there is spiritual life with him. He that is filthy will be filthy still, for he has no will to cease from his filthiness, but is dead. The Spirit says, Come. After the Spirit has quickened one, but never before, the church also says, Come, and the ministry

says, Come, and being alive unto God and having thirst for living water, let him take of it freely. If they have the will to ask, he will give them that water of which, if he drinks, he shall never thirst again, but it shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." When the children were given that water which was a type of this spiritual water of life, they were in the desert of Zin, and in a perishing condition, complaining that they had not been left to die in Egypt. But he was leading them by a way that they knew not, and in paths which they had not known, until in the desert Moses was commanded to speak to the rock, but instead he smote the rock twice. Then they were indeed willing to take the water. His people are willing in the day of his power. They had natural life, and hence natural thirst. As cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country. Christ seems indeed at such a time as this to come from a far country. He says, "I will feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock."—Zech. xi. 7. In the thirteenth chapter he says again, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David." In Rev. vii. 17, it is said God shall wipe all tears from their eyes, and the Lamb shall lead them and feed them. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

Yours, in what is often a faint, but yet an ever-blessed hope of immortality,

G. O. WALKER.

THE WAY HE LED ME.

For many years the truth of Christ's gospel has been precious to my soul, it has been my hope and consolation. To-day I was musing upon the way in which I was led into the truth, and I see the sovereignty and riches of Jehovah's grace gloriously displayed in teaching a poor sinner like me. It was through much tribulation of soul that I learned, here a little and there a little, the doctrine of God our Savior. God had been pleased, in the year 1871, to give me to taste the preciousness of pardon and salvation through Jesus' precious blood, and for some weeks it was little indeed that I knew of points of doctrine. I was a happy boy; Jesus I felt was my Savior, he had died for me, my sins were forgiven and the hope of eternal glory was mine. It was a sweet anticipation to my spirit that I should dwell in eternal happiness in heaven with Christ, who had loved me and washed me from my sins in his own blood. I loved, O yes, I loved him, he was dear to me, and in all the fervor of a sin-pardoned heart I poured forth unto him my grateful praises. I tried to think about him all the day long, and felt ashamed and guilty if he were out of my thoughts. This continued for several weeks, then one Sunday I heard my father talking with a man upon the doctrine of Christ, and some things that my father contended for greatly stirred me up. I thought he gave utterance to strange things, and I myself entered into a discussion with him. (This was the first time I had ever said a word to any one to indicate that I was interested in the things pertaining to God.) I will not now relate the particulars of this conversation with my father, but he repeated one text of Scripture which greatly exercised my soul. The words were,

"He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied."—Isaiah liii. 11. In the evening of that day my father read to me many things out of the Scriptures. They silenced my ignorant speeches, but I understood not what those Scriptures taught. I was as one whose eyes are suddenly opened upon a vast and glorious vision, a world of glories. So the revelation of Christ's glorious gospel burst upon my view. I was amazed; I felt I was as a very babe looking upon creation, the things that are seen, but how little I understood, so immense was Christ's kingdom, so high, so deep, and vast as eternity. I felt I had scarcely entered, and only with the eyes and understanding of a babe could I discern and comprehend. The light, the trees, the mountains and valleys, the rivers, the birds that sang, the flowers that yielded sweet perfume, the objects that I saw and the sounds that I heard, melodious or dreadful, were so mingled I was amazed, I trembled, I wondered and wondered at the wonderful things my father read to me out of the Bible that night. I felt I was a babe, and a poor, weak, sickly babe, that I was ignorant, without understanding. When I retired to my bedroom that night I fell upon my knees before the Lord and poured out in babelike simplicity my wonderment, and with cries and tears I besought the Lord to teach me, and to give me an understanding of what the Scriptures teach. I found relief in thus pouring forth my trouble into the bosom of my God. "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you."—Isaiah lxvi. 13. I tasted again that night the sweet hope that Jesus was mine, and that my sins were all forgiven; this sincere milk of the word was mine, and I felt to hope that God would surely teach me, and my heart reposed in this thought. From this time I began to search the Scriptures with a yearning heart, with prayer continually to the Lord that he would give me the teaching and guidance of his Holy Spirit, that I might know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. All my spare time was now spent in reading and meditation upon the word. I studied and pondered with fervent cries to the Lord for light, that the eyes of my understanding might be enlightened, and I began to take a mouthful or two of strong meat; yes, I feel I can say the Holy Ghost began to teach me doctrine. "Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts."—Isaiah xxviii. 9. It was amidst deep and sore exercises of soul, in the midst of conflicts with internal sinfulness, amidst carnal reasonings, and infidelities, and the cunning, distracting insinuations of Satan, that I came to have an understanding of the glorious doctrine of God our Savior. From the time that I had first tasted the forgiveness of my sins through Emmanuel's blood until this night of which I have been speaking, I had principally been reading the four gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The books of the prophets, the Psalms and the epistles had been thus far unread Scriptures to me, but now a longing was so stirred in me to know what the Scriptures taught that I read and read, and pondered with unceasing prayer to God to give me understanding. I soon found in my reading and deep musings the sovereignty of Jehovah to blaze forth, no matter where I read, and a dreadful awe would sometimes immerse my soul. God's eternal election of his people in Christ Jesus, his

predestination, the mediatorship of the incarnate Son of God, the imputed righteousness of Christ, the deep mysteries in the crucifixion of the Redeemer, and the wonderful works of the Holy Ghost in regeneration, all these divine mysteries began to dawn upon my spirit and to absorb my mind. But I was very sorely tried in my soul, my carnal reasonings, thoughts, imaginations, were all the time seeking to make a hubbub, and were at war with the doctrine of Christ. That Scripture, "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied," was opened up very graciously by the Spirit of truth, and I had glorious and comforting meditations. The travail of Christ's soul for the redemption of his body, the church, to bring forth all the election of grace from under the law, from sin and the curse, from alienation, from the bondage of corruption, from death and the grave into the glorious liberty of the children of God, O this was sacred indeed to me. I contemplated the revelation of the gospel of Christ, I saw that this all shall be consummated when he shall bring forth the blood-ransomed bodies of his saints from death and the grave at the last day. They shall be raised spiritual, incorruptible bodies. O then shall they all in their whole spirit and soul and body be conformed to the image of God's dear Son; we shall be like him, we shall bear the image of the heavenly. O how blessed! Our Lord Jesus Christ shall come from heaven and change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his own glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. Saith the apostle Paul, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"—1 Cor. xv. 51–55. All this was gloriously and comfortingly new to me in those days. After tasting some of the unspeakable blessings of the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, there intruded into my soul a dreadful power that seemed to be challenging, questioning my right to be feasting upon any portion of the benefits of the covenant of grace. I thought, All these benefits belong unto the heirs of promise, to the seed of Christ, to the elect of God; are you one of God's chosen? I trembled, I felt as though I had stolen the blessedness I had begun to taste in the deep things of God; I feared I had perhaps no right to sit at the King's table and eat the children's bread. I argued with myself, If I am not one of God's elect, then I have no right to lay my hands on any of their inheritance, and all I have experienced is not such as God's chosen and redeemed ones experience. I began to examine myself, searching for evidences of regeneration, of my election of God, and I began searching the Scriptures to discover what were the true tokens that distinguish the elect of God, and, most of all, I found myself deeply exercised with sighs and fervent cries before God that he would give me some token that I was one whom he had chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. My

heart in its sore anxieties poured forth its complaints, its fears and longings unto God; I showed before him what I had experienced, and I inquired, Is this the way thy children are taught and led? I told the Lord how I had been stricken and wounded under my sins and the condemnation of the law, and how I had cried for mercy, how Jesus, the crucified one, had absorbed my heart, and that I had at length hoped that he had died for me, and that all my sins were forgiven and washed away by his sacred blood. But am I one of God's elect? Is my experience of the Holy Spirit such as God's people know? I longed and longed to have scriptural testimony, some intimation from God's own mouth that I was one of his children. I was afraid to feel delight in the glorious doctrine of the everlasting gospel, lest I should be delighting in what did not belong to me. But as I mused upon the revelation of Christ I felt my heart going forth more and more to embrace the doctrine of God our Savior. I felt, How glorious, beautiful, precious it is, but I must not touch it, handle it or taste it, for perhaps it is not for me. I would think, Why have I experienced, in the past few months, what I have, and feel so drawn to God, to the dear Savior, if I am not one of the people of God? I felt insinuations entering my mind that I was too insignificant, too mean, sinful, ignorant to be accounted among those whom the everlasting God eternally loved. What presumption it was in me to presume to think that I was an object of his infinite, eternal delight. Under these challenges my soul was much disturbed, but my longings for evidences of my acceptance in the Beloved could not be quenched, and yet with all my reasonings over the matter I could not reason myself into the comfort of the assurance that I was a child of God. At length one day there came into my heart with assuring comfort the sweet, wonderful words, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."—Jer. xxxi. 3. I felt in my heart those words were from God to me, and I rejoiced with trembling. (Psalms ii. 11.) O many times since then those same words, and many other portions of the Scriptures, have comforted my soul, lifting me, a poor, vile sinner, above all my misgivings, strengthening me to still hope in God, who is my Rock and my Salvation. From these early days of my soul's experience in things pertaining to God, I trust I have known very much of the time what it is to sit down at his feet and to receive his words. (Deut. xxxiii. 3.) Christ has the words of eternal life, (John vi. 68,) and only by them are we nourished to live unto our God.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

TOUCHET, Wash.

DEAR BRETHREN:—My mind is much stirred, tried within me, when I hear and read of the "Babel," confused difference of views among the saints of the living God. It does appear to me that the last days are drawing to a close, and that the faith of many is failing, else why this wresting the Scriptures, as Peter saith, to their own destruction? Some would like to leave out the words predestination and foreordination. All who believe in the eternal union of Christ and his children cannot doubt God's power, his prerogative power, his unlimited power, his creative power, and that he had a purpose in all things, yea, even before the highest mountains were visible. "In the beginning God created the

heaven and the earth." Surely there was a purpose in this creation. We see that the earth was without form, and void. "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." Here is the first intimation of the Son of God. When God said, "Let there be light," there surely was a purpose known to God; and we read that he said, I am Alpha and Omega. Surely if he was the beginning he determined the end. We read that on the fifth day God created every living creature, beast, fowl and fishes. There was a purpose in this. Man could not have lived in the water, according to God's purpose in him; God purposed that man should till the earth, and that all these existing things should be subject to his use, and he should be ruler over them. That all was predetermined from the beginning, no one will doubt or dispute. The sixth day we read, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." His dominion is not restricted in the least; this no one can doubt. "Them" signifies more than one, when as yet there was but one: Adam. Who could doubt but God intended to cause this man to sleep, and take a rib, part of man, to make it a woman? No one doubts this, no, no. Then how can any doubt the union of Christ and the church? Had not God the Father, God the Son, God the Spirit, predisposed, predetermined, predestinated all this in the eternal now? No one will doubt it. Now we follow man down the vista of time. The great God sent Noah, a preacher of righteousness, to convince? No, for they were not convinced; nevertheless this left them without an excuse. Noah made manifest his faith by his obedience to God, in building the ark. He ceased not his labors year after year, yet this did not convince the wicked; no, no, Satan led them captive at his will. Righteous Noah manifested his belief in God by steadily adhering to God's command. No one doubts this. If God had predestinated it otherwise, surely it would have been otherwise, none will doubt. Noah and his family, eight souls, entered the ark and were saved from the destruction of the flood, while the balance of mankind were swept off the face of the earth. None can doubt this who believe in the inspired word, yet we see man is sinful and just as depraved as ever. Satan soon set his plans working, and man began to build a tower that might reach unto heaven. When the Lord saw he said, "Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language." So they left off to build the city. "Therefore is the name of it called Babel." The Babel of this day is of a different style. To me sometimes I see the ministry (leaders) as the brick, and the Sabbath Schools and the isms the slime. I also see all are becoming one language; they all speak the same things; yea, the power of the first beast is given unto her daughters. Now we want to see where the children of our God and the Son are in this wilderness of the millions who know not God; this is what our Father's children wish to understand. "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house." He was commanded to leave all his kindred in the flesh. "So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him." Here is the second one the Lord

commanded after Adam. We see the obedience; Noah and Abram conferred not with flesh and blood, but manifested their faith by obedience. We see Abraham's obedience in the offering of Isaac; he by faith went on a three days journey into the mountains. Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off, and took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it upon Isaac his son. See the emblem, so many thousand years prior to the advent of the Babe of Bethlehem. See how great the faith of Abraham: "And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son," the heir of promise. O if the dear saints could only rely on the word spoken to them as did this faithful servant. Yet we do know that it is the sustaining power of God that keeps his little ones, and surely we believe it was ordered in all things and sure ere the world was. It would fail us to tell of all the manifestations of the faith of the servants of our God through all the dispensations of chosen Israel down to the advent of our dear Savior. Praise ye our God, O praise ye him. We see the Babe in the manger, clothed in swaddling bands; we see the star going before, directing the trembling wise men, and when they were come they saw the young child with Mary his mother. It seems that gross darkness prevailed over the earth at that time, and the souls of the saints were troubled. At the appointed time the star arose, pointing to the promise, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed: because thou hast obeyed my voice." Why did he obey? was it of the flesh, or was he kept by the omnipotent power of God for this same purpose? Yea, through him should the glad tidings be sounded, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." What the dear saints earnestly seek to know is the certain sound; there are getting to be so many sounds that it is a Babel, a confusion. Alas, alas, some would not even speak of God's predestined purpose. How could the omnipotent Jehovah have been the Alpha and Omega and not be a God of purpose? If he had not purposed all things he would not have been the Alpha and Omega. Paul said "predestinated." If one reads the eighth chapter of Romans he will see the dear apostle was deeply exercised concerning those who walked not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. "And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. * * * Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." The truth must be that if they had not been predestinated they would not have been called. If God had had no purpose toward his children, and if they were not elect, if they were not his by union before the world was, would he call them? When Job made a feast for his children, did he call all the neighbors? When he sacrificed for his children, fearing they had cursed God in their hearts, did he rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all? Do not all the dear saints realize, read, understand that all mankind are not the children of the kingdom of heaven? Surely they do. Why say if God predestinated

it so to be that he is the author of sin? Notwithstanding the God of Israel saith, "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things." "Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" Who overthrew Pharaoh? And I in very deed, for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power, and that my name may be declared through all the earth. The foregoing is sufficient to prove the predestined power of the Alpha and Omega to the feeblest child, yea, lamb of the flock, that God not only knew, but foreordained all things ere the world was formed or the waters were divided. O children of God, are ye one body, though many members? Are ye jointly fitted together, without schisms? The body cannot have strength if full of schisms; nay, but a wound is created by the schisms, the body is no longer compact. Therefore let us no longer be tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine. "But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." O the beauty of the writings of the apostles; as in doctrine, so in exhortations; the exhortations are as sincere as life and truth. Paul· "to Titus, mine own son after the common faith [the faith all have]: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior." We see why he left him: "That thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting." We see what should be the evidence of this faith that all believe in God; we see what was required of the subjects of this faith; we see an exhortation to other subjects of the same faith, to the same doctrine: "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine." "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works; in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you." What is the next word he says? "Exhort." It appears that there are some who cannot endure to hear a minister preach other than a doctrinal sermon. We will see what the beloved Paul said, Acts xx. 30: "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that for the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." It does appear that there is need of strong exhortations in this day to shun Babel: confusion concerning words. Paul in Phil. ii. 16, says, "Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain." See the zeal of the dear apostle: "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation." Jude is very earnest, and says, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Why should this be called "time salvation"? It is simply an exhortation to shun Babel, and earnestly contend for the faith that all had received and had

been taught, it was common among all the saints. How beautifully does he speak: "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." I do not see one sentence hinting at "time salvation." They are sincere exhortations to shun Babel, or error of the perilous times. See further: "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy," &c. Now, my brethren, why disregard the sincere word of truth, seeing the time draweth near when these temples shall fall to rise no more? We will say there is evidence given us by which to judge: "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."

If I have gathered up any of the fragments they will not be lost. The Savior said, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost." Let us follow the commandments of our dear Savior rather than of those who seem to have too much worldly wisdom; in other words, self-willed, not noticing the feeble ones; so it is that many become maimed, and halt, and almost blind.

S. J. CUMMINS.

WAVERLY, Pa., Aug. 6, 1910.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed you will find a short, good letter from old Elder May, which you are at liberty to publish if you choose.

Yours, D. M. VAIL.

PINSONFORK, Ky., May 15, 1910.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER:—I have not heard from you for a long time, though I have thought of you often, and should have written you ere this, but my weakness and insignificance loom up in such miserable deformity when I think of writing you, or any other of the Lord's dear children, who seem to me to be so spiritually minded, that I just give way and shrink from the undertaking, and yet I am writing now, although it is with fear and trembling, and in much weakness, and do not know even at this moment that the Lord, my only strength, will bear me up and give me an understanding to write you, but I humbly trust it is his will to thus favor me. Notwithstanding I much and often desire to write you, I do not know that my mind would have been more than usually stirred up to write you just now, but I have just been reading the obituary of the dear, aged sister, Amy Shaddock, of Shunk, Sullivan Co., Pa., in the SIGNS for May 15th, and her wonderful age and long standing with the church of God here in its time state, and her clear view and special love for discriminating preaching, which means to me the glorious doctrine of God our Savior. I say such wonderful things as these are worth so much to me, to my poor, cast down feelings, that I am encouraged, even anxious, to write you, for it has brought my mind to meditate on the unspeakable love and mercy of God our Savior, who hath loved us and given himself for us. It seems to me, brother Vail, that every blessing and benefit that the Lord's people are favored with is from his eternal love for and of them, and his tender mercy to them, which is commensurate with his being. When I think of us as poor, weak and sinful creatures, Adamic sinners, mortal

men and women, who in nowise can change or better our condition, I must say, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed," and I sometimes feel to say with the psalmist, "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever." Let Israel now say that the Lord's mercy endureth forever. When it pleases God to send a ray of light from the brightness of his glory into our hearts, it is then that we can see so clearly that the Lord's tender mercies and love fail not. Brother Vail, when I survey myself as best I can I have no hope whatever, except through the sovereign, eternal and unchangeable design of our unchangeable God and the eternal life-oneness of Christ and the church, which is his body and fullness, for it is in him we live and move and have our being. That is our spiritual existence; we cannot live, move nor exist out of Christ, neither can we die or cease to be, if so be we exist in him, for in him we live, not die. Jesus himself said, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

Well, I feel I should stop writing now lest I tax your patience, but I hope you can bear with me, for I am weak indeed, and extremely short-sighted, yet I must say, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want" (lack). If indeed the Lord is my Shepherd, I am not lacking one iota, either naturally or spiritually, although when I view myself in my condition, both natural and spiritual, it seems to me that I lack everything; I mean from a human standpoint, but if indeed I am his, then he is mine; what can I want beside? For this is all my desire and all my salvation.

I have for some few years desired to attend the eastern associations, but never shall, I suppose. My tongue cannot express how I should love to meet you and Elders Chick, Durand, Ker and others whom I cannot name now.

W. J. MAY.

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1 PETER I. 5.

"WHO are kept by the power of God."

To all the dear brethren scattered throughout this world, elect, born again of an incorruptible Seed, who have felt the sinfulness of sin and been given a hope in our dear Savior, the words of my text belong, written by an apostle of Jesus Christ. What a comfort is contained in these words when we can realize it: kept by the power of God is the very foundation that all the mighty structure rests upon. We are not our own, but are bought with a price. Free agency (a contradiction of terms), or those who believe in it, are keeping themselves, and do as they please (as they say), and have no right to use this epistle; but I do not feel like belittling them, for I was of the same opinion myself once. I verily thought there were many things I must do, and had it not been for the love of God I would have been the same yet, and I often look back over my experience and wonder how such a rebellious, stubborn and wicked sinner as I could be allowed a hope, and were it not for the fact, that I am kept by the power of God I would soon be back in the wilderness dancing around the golden calf, worshiping other gods.

Boasting is excluded, and in fear and much trembling the word of God is proclaimed by his servants (not reverends): "Salvation is of the Lord." O poor, despised and afflicted generation, our God has so completely arranged his church that none of the members shall ever perish, as Solomon's temple, which went together without the sound of the hammer, the stone being quarried out and shaped,

the trees felled, lined and squared in the forest. This is a type of the church. So, brethren, "think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy," believing that far above all principalities and powers there is a supreme Ruler by whom ye are kept.

I was quite impressed by reading brother Jones' letter in the February 1st number, speaking about worldly idolatry, the world claiming to be growing better and better, when in fact it is growing worse and worse. The plain statements of the Scriptures are too far behind the times for modern religion; they are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. Everything in this day to be a success must have a stamp of modern religion, from the office of the school board to the president of the United States, and I believe it will not be long until the people who "worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh," will be driven to the sandpits and obliged to worship God in secret, contrary to law. "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." Your inheritance is incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away; reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God. Brethren, may we be kept from the many lo heres and lo theres, and be enabled to give a reason to those who ask for the hope within us; may we be kept honest and upright; may we be found serving the Lord, and at last may we hear the words, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;" then shall we be satisfied.

Dear editors of the SIGNS, and fellow-prisoners, may you be kept by the power of God, and our family paper sustained, that it may carry glad tidings to those who are scattered abroad.

Yours in tribulation,

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

GALION, Ohio, Feb. 3, 1910.

TOUCHET, Wash., Aug. 12, 1910.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—My mind is so drawn out to you after reading your editorial in the last number of the SIGNS, in response to the sister who wished her name withheld, that I feel to write to you. The subject is one in which I have been deeply interested for more than twenty years. My lot was cast with the New School Baptists for five years after I received a hope, and my distress of soul was something similar to those early disciples. It was a dark and dreary time to me. I wanted to anoint the Lord for what I felt he had done for me, yet there was a great stone in the way. I could not find him in their devotions, and I really felt as though he was dead to me. One day while at my work there was a voice spoke to me, and he that spoke had all the distinguishing marks that inspiration gives concerning this angel. The voice said, "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" and here, for the first time, I was made to see that I was among the tombs. Shortly after this, I came into company with an Old School Baptist, and from that day until now there is a peculiar love and reverence for them different from all else. The beauty that I have ever found in experi-

ence was very clearly set forth in your editorial. This is the fulfillment of the words of the prophet: "They shall be all taught of God." "Thy people shall be a willing people in the day of thy power." This is wonderfully set forth in the narrative named in your editorial. As soon as the legal Sabbaths were ended (and they did end in Christ Jesus) the dawn of the gospel day did break in at the resurrection of Jesus, and the voice is heard, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." And the going to the sepulcher of those women is full evidence that they were awake, although the light had not yet come. The promise is, "I will make darkness light before them." So when they came Christ the light came. Why did they start with the spices to anoint the body when they knew that he was in the tomb, and the stone was at the door? Why did I mourn and seek for the Lord's people when I felt that there was none like me? Paul said, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." I believe that when the life of God, or the Spirit of God, entered his dead body and raised him up from the dead, it also entered into those disciples and became the cause of their action. I do not believe that those disciples could be still and remain where they were, any more than Jesus could remain in the tomb. We see the union of Christ and his people in all this. The church could no more move until Jesus moved, than these natural bodies can move until life is given them. Life is the cause of action, and we remember that Jesus said, "Because I live, ye shall live also;" and so, dear brethren, as long as Jesus lives, so long will the church live. While Jesus and the apostles have told us that antichrist should arise, and that false teachers should also arise, which the church has proved in all ages, they did not record such things in order to frighten or excite the church to cause them to walk worthy of their calling, but to strengthen us in his wisdom and power, to bring to pass his purposes. It is, as you have so beautifully set forth in this editorial, the love of God that causes his people to serve him. It was love that moved those disciples to go to the tomb, although there was so great a stone at the door, and it is love that causes us to still press on, although false teachers arise teaching that men can work and bring the blessing of God upon themselves in this way, or that leaving off work they shall miss the blessing. But the disciples proved, and so do we prove, his sovereign love, by still holding to the faith.

Dear brother, it seems that every time I try to write to my brethren to tell them how I enjoy reading after their pens, my mind turns away from my intention so far that I think I will not make the attempt again. This is the reason I love the Old School Baptists, for no others could or would bear with me as they do. Now please receive this as a token of fellowship, and pardon all mistakes.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. T. BARNES.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, June 19, 1910.

DEAR SISTER:—I received your kind letter a few days ago. To-day I am not feeling much like writing, being rather cast down in spirit, yet I will try and write a little while I have opportunity. You say you feel as if christians ought to be happy. "Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them,

and then shall they fast." "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." I do not find myself that it is the contemplation of the greater joys of the kingdom that turns me away from earthly enjoyment, but instead, the pleasures of earth lose their charm and become distasteful to me. I cannot condemn those who are able to enjoy them for a season, and I often am more or less envious of their freedom from care, yet I would not return to them for the world; no, I would rather mourn with the desolate than rejoice with the lighthearted, for "all is vanity and vexation of spirit." While we are in this tabernacle we groan; this is one of the marks of the christian. It is true that the friend of the bridegroom rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice, and so we, when for a little season we can behold the glory of Christ and rest in his praise, are able to rejoice in him. But this joy is not as worldly joy which passes away ("the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life"), it is a joy which no man can take from us. "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing." How can we be sorrowful and yet rejoice? Ask a christian, for his heart can tell it.

Speaking of prayer. All true prayer is from God, and is answered of God. We pray in weakness, but are answered in power; we pray in ignorance, but are answered in wisdom. "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered." We poor worms of the dust do not comprehend the great and holy purposes of God, yet if we pray with a believing heart, a heart single to his glory (a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise), then is our prayer in accordance with his will and is answered. How? exactly as we expect or hope? No; "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform."

> "'Twas he who taught me thus to pray,
> And he, I trust, has answered prayer,
> But it has been in such a way
> As almost drove me to despair."

True prayer is in the heart, not in words, though we make utterance as near as we are able to the desire of our hearts. He who gives the prayer will certainly hear it, but the answer will always be to his glory alone.

My dear sister, I find many things in my heart seeking to destroy my peace: envyings, wrath, hatred, from which I would willingly be free. One mark only is given of the children of God: "That ye love one another." Is a man wise in interpreting the Scriptures? Is his faith strong? Is he benevolent in the extreme? All things, however good and desirable they are, are not the proof. But has he the love of God in his heart, causing him in meekness and forbearance to seek, not his own, but the kingdom of God and his righteousness, then is it manifest that he is a child of God in truth. It is not necessary that a brother should have all knowledge of the doctrine, or be able to explain these mysteries before men, but it is necessary that he should believe on Jesus Christ (God manifest in the flesh) and love his brethren, as He gave commandment. Every gift of God is good to the edifying and establishing of the church in our most holy faith.

With love to yourself, each of your dear family, and all the household of faith, your unworthy brother in hope,

GILBERT McCOLL.

ISAIAH LIV. 9.

"For this is as the waters of Noah unto me."

Allow me to ask you, dear brethren and readers of the SIGNS, what it is that is as the waters of Noah unto that one who is the God of the whole earth? Is it not his oath and promise to save you, a poor, hell-deserving sinner? to make you to sing, who have never sung before; to make you to bear the fruits of the Spirit, the joys of salvation, who have always been barren? "For a small moment have I forsaken thee [O how long has that moment been to me]; but with great mercies will I gather thee." O, say you with me, can it be that God will save me, poor, barren, forsaken, benighted creature that I am, who often feel that I have not a stone, not a word, to cast at the father of lies? Then "sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud." But why shall we sing and cry aloud? Because "more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord." This is said of the church, the Lamb's wife. I feel that it applies to every child of God, for under and through the blessed influence and witness of the Spirit with our spirit that God is our God, that we are his children, what bearing, what breaking forth into singing, what crying aloud, what enlarging the place of our tent, what stretching forth the curtains of our habitation, takes place, and O what a heavenly habitation it is to be loved of God before time began. For he commended "his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Then "spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes." "Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed." O when will that blessed time come when I shall forever cease to be ashamed? Not ashamed of Jesus; no, but ashamed of myself, my sin, ingratitude, coldness and deadness to all that is of God. But that time will come, just as sure as that the waters of Noah shall no more go over the earth, when every poor, weary, heavy laden, sin-sick soul shall know this. Do not forget the shalls and wills of God. "For thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth." "In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment [not for time, nor for eternity, no, just for a moment]; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee." O what love, dear child of God. O that we could love him more and more in return, that we could love one another with a pure heart fervently, praying in the spirit for one another, provoking one another to love and good works. O that each one of us might ponder in our heart the solemn words of the editors of the SIGNS: Elders Gilbert and W. L. Beebe, also Elders Chick and Ker in the SIGNS for February 15th; Elder Chick's editorial, especially page 121, and Elder Ker's, page 123, first column. O how sad, how much to be feared, is such a state. May God look upon us in mercy.

Dear Elder Chick, the words of Scripture at the head of this letter came into my heart one morning about a month ago. They seemed to awake me out of natural sleep, and they have remained with me more or less since, and above are some of my thoughts on them since. If after reading this carefully you deem it to be of any use to the household of faith, and to the praise of God, you may publish it in the SIGNS. I fully agree

with you in all you say on predestination, foreknowledge, &c., and I have for a long time felt that to think or speak of God is to think and speak of that One who is the Rock, whose work is perfect; perfect in his foreknowledge, love, predestination, call by grace, justification and glorification. "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

My wife joins me in love to you and yours.

Yours in hope,

RICHARD CASE.

LONDON, Ontario.

HOPEWELL, N. J., July 17, 1910.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I am very sorry not to be with you at meeting this morning, but I have you all in my mind and think of you in your accustomed places. It has been my misfortune to miss a number of Sundays in the past eighteen months, and now I was getting to feel right well again, and thought it might last, but to-day I am not strong enough to go, and it may be the time is coming when I shall not meet with you any more, so many of our members and friends are crossing to the great beyond. But one thing we know: the Lord makes no mistakes. "His ways are just, his counsels wise." Last Sunday morning I was glad to have been at meeting, and glad when I found it was a comfort to you that so many had it in their hearts to come through the extreme heat to meet for the worship of God and the exaltation of his precious name. Then I was more glad when you spoke of Peter; you said we all felt that we denied our Lord in one way or another. Now it had never occurred to me that any one except myself felt that way. I have always thought I was one alone in that particular. There are three Bible characters who seem to express my case, and who seem nearer to me than any others. First, there is the poor publican, who could not so much as lift his eyes to heaven, and could only cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." It has been a long time since I hoped I felt my sins forgiven, and openly confessed my hope in the crucified and risen Redeemer, and yet to-day, and every day, my cry is just as this publican, and while I hope I am pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, I cannot claim any more righteousness of my own than could the publican, and feel him more endeared to me than when I first began the race. Then the apostle Peter; at times I would feel like giving up all for lost but for the remembrance of his temptation and deliverance. He seems more company for me than any other, and I wish I could take his hand and tell him how his troubles have been blessed to me. As it is, I can only thank God that he caused such a wonderful experience to be left on record for our consolation. I have never, like Peter, openly said with my lips, "I know not the man," but in how many ways have I given both the church and the world reason to believe that I never knew him; in so many ways I offend, and in all come short. It may be that sifting times are as necessary for me as for Peter, but if it is the Lord's will to pray for me, too, that my faith fail not, I know it will all be well.

"'Tis not for good deeds, good tempers, nor frames,
From grace it proceeds, and all is the Lamb's;
No goodness nor fitness expects he from us;
This I can well witness, for none could be worse."

The third character is Ruth. I hope I may never be allowed to stray so far from the fold that the words of Ruth will ever lose their sweetness, or fail to bring me back: "Entreat me not to leave thee."

What could be more touching or love-inspiring than these precious words which she addresses to Naomi? And if it is the Lord's will I hope it may be my happy privilege to live my remaining days among the people I love. I cannot keep up with them, and feel very small and far behind my brethren in the race, but I do not want to return from following after them, I want to be numbered among the same people and worship the same God.

"O happy souls, how fast you go,
And leave me here behind;
Don't stop for me,
For now I see
The Lord is just and kind.

Go on, go on, my soul says go,
And I'll come after you;
Though I'm behind,
Yet I can find,
And sing hosanna too.

May you have strength, that you may run,
And keep your footsteps right;
Though fast you go,
And I so slow,
You are not out of sight."

I am tempted to throw this aside, yet I remember how charitable you are, so will send it, trusting you will kindly pardon all you find amiss. It will at least let you know that I have been thinking of the meeting this morning while absent. Hope to be well enough to go next Saturday.

"My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life or breath remains;
There my best friends, my kindred, dwell,
There God my Savior reigns."

With love to sister Chick and yourself, I remain your unworthy sister,

ANNA J. SUTPHEN.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder C. W. Bond.)

To the churches composing the Licking Association of Particular Baptists, greeting in the Lord.

Dear Brethren:—We again as an association have the privilege of addressing to you our annual letter. Like the apostles of old, after consideration of what message we had best send you, we would not add to your burdens, but would remind you of the liberties the Lord has called you unto. The liberties of the gospel are the most sacred of all liberties known to man, and free him from every kind of bondage, and bring him to acknowledge allegiance only to God as the Father, and Christ as Master and Elder Brother. Every one is equal before God, all called, chosen and accepted in the same way, and having such gifts as the Father has bestowed upon each respectively, some evangelists, some teachers, some pastors, and others with no special gifts except faith, hope and charity, and the works wrought in them by the exercise of these gifts. There is no room for boasting under the gospel dispensation, for we have nothing of worth which we did not receive, and if one has been given more than another the possession of the greater gift makes that one the more a servant of the others, for the gifts are for this purpose, that the one possessing the greater gifts may minister unto those who are needy, and thus strengthen them and edify the body of Christ, which includes every one of his chosen ones. In an individual sense, we thus stand independent of each other, and bow to none except God, who is the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. To him let us at all times be in humble submission, trusting his divine wisdom and power in

the directing of all things for our good and his name's honor and glory. In a related capacity as members of the body of Christ there is a unity and a oneness of feeling, and a love produced by the greater love of God toward us and operating in us, so that those possessing such gifts desire to be together and to commune with one another upon heavenly things. This love for the brethren is so prominent that it is one of the best evidences of the new life in us, for by this we know that we have passed from death unto life. Upon this sacred relation the churches are founded, and by the strength of it they are maintained in peace and unity. The different churches or organizations thus formed are independent of each other, and the highest tribunal on earth for the government of all matters relating to the lives of its members. When actuated by the right spirit it can make no mistake, and its decisions are final, having the Scriptures as its lawbook, and the mind of Christ as its wisdom. The same spirit and desire for the society of those of like precious faith has in a wider sense caused a number of churches to form an association, the purpose of which is somewhat similar to those of the church organizations, viz., to meet for the worship of God, and to consider such matters as are for the good of all, having things done according to the scriptural order and directed by divine wisdom. For a long time it has been the custom to further extend this organization, by a sort of correspondence between different associations, by means of letters and visiting brethren and ministers. Dear brethren, we would remind you that all this extended organization, further than the individual church organization, is good and for the strengthening of the body of the brotherhood so long as the scriptural order is strictly followed, but it is the cause of disturbance to the whole body when something unscriptural enters into the councils. We desire to admonish the brethren of our churches, and those of our correspondence, to always be on your guard against unscriptural proceedings in church methods and associational meetings, doing all things with an eye single to the glory of God, and striving to preserve "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Try all the spirits, whether they make for peace or stir up strife, remembering that Satan often appears as an angel of light, and that the spirit of Satan may sometimes operate even in the elect persons and those high in our councils, as when Peter was rebuked for considering the things pertaining to man rather than those of God. The spirit of Satan thus moving Peter was rebuked by the word of the Master, which is the only effective weapon to apply to such a subtle and powerful enemy. We would remind you also to mark the talebearer, or the visitor or messenger who brings into your midst anything other than gospel truth or words of edification. Your churches are established and strengthened by the power of the gospel, but weakened and destroyed by worldly-wise and meddlesome counselors. Turn a deaf ear to all such, and tell them you are hungering and thirsting for the bread and waters of life, and your little ones are crying for the sincere milk of the word. Let each church be judge of its servants in the ministry, without any suspicion or criticism from other churches, for they are accountable to their own consciences and God alone. They are to be their own judges as to what is for their edification, and it is a breach of fellowship to attempt to dictate to or act as lords over God's

heritage. Let no brother ever so forget himself as to in this way offend any of the little ones whom our God has called unto the liberties and peace of the gospel. Your liberties are sacred liberties, and are measured according to the measure of the Spirit of God in you, all of which is a gift and an assurance of your acceptance with God and your heirship to eternal life. Maintain these with the spirit of watchfulness, which is commanded by the Scriptures, and the prayer for wisdom to direct your walks in acceptable ways. May the blessings of the all-wise God attend you always as churches and individuals, that you may be brought through all tribulations and troubles more than conquerors through him who loves us and gave himself for us.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.
J. T. McCOUN, Clerk.
T. J. RATLIFF, Ass't Clerk.

(Written by Elder J. W. McClanahan.)

The Pocatalico Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Providence Church, September 16th, 17th and 18th, 1910, to the churches composing the same, together with the associations with whom we correspond, sendeth christian salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—We have been blessed to meet again in an associate capacity, and you will expect something in the form of a Circular Letter, that is to come before this body for consideration, and, if approved, then to go abroad among the Baptists in the different parts of the earth. As the subject of order and disorder is upon my mind continually of late, I shall endeavor to write, first of the order of the Lord's house, or church, as being a band of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ who have been called out of the world with an holy calling, and we do most sincerely believe the old order, or Predestinarian Baptist Church, to be the church of Christ, and that her doctrine and practice were delivered to her by Christ, her living head, and we trust we are all satisfied with the goodness of God's house. Let us never look for perfection in one another, but let all our churches execute a strict and wholesome discipline; put out all disorders. If any prefer the world to the church, prefer the institutions of men to the service of God and the fellowship of the saints, let the church, after due labor, withdraw from them. One of the worst mistakes a church can make is to recognize members who are gospelly expelled from orderly churches, for when members are expelled from a church of God they stand to the Baptist family as heathens and publicans, and to recognize them officially is to exclude yourself from the church too. If we officially recognize any excluded faction, right then and there we cease to be Primitive Baptists in order. Excluded members, until they get right, will always find fault with the orderly members, and often abuse and misrepresent them. If a faction follows an expelled preacher, they throw themselves into the same disorder as their leader, and cannot be recognized until they confess their wrongs and set themselves in order. It is safe and right for all orderly Baptists to indorse none but those who are in order. We should never ignore the sovereign right of each church to discipline her own members. Old Baptists are one family, and should labor to preserve that unity by doing nothing that would alienate the family. Suppose a minister were to come to this country and spend his time with excluded members, recognizing them, would we not class him with them?

I am sure we would. Churches should execute strict discipline for the health of the body, and members who will mix with disorderly factions in their formal services should be dealt with, and if they show no expression of sorrow for so doing, should be excluded, for we are commanded to "mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."

J. H. TERRY, Moderator.

G. B. BIRD, Clerk.

(Written by Elder Isaac Capps.)

To the Elders and messengers of the Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, and the churches they represent, and to all the faithful in Christ Jesus with whom we correspond.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—By, in and through the rich mercies and goodness of our covenant-keeping God we are once more permitted to meet in our yearly association, I hope with no other motive in view than the love we have for each other and the supreme love we have for our Redeemer, who has redeemed us from all unrighteousness, and I truly hope our Redeemer will guide and direct all our deliberations, that they may redound to the glory of God and the welfare of Zion. Another year has been numbered with the past, with its joys, its sorrows, its trials and afflictions; several of our number have gone to try the reality of another world, while we are assembled here as the spared monuments of God's amazing goodness and mercy.

According to the appointment of our last association, it becomes my duty to try to write a Circular Letter, and for your consideration I will call your attention to the single word "christian," which occurs but three times in the Bible. In Acts xi. 26, we find the disciples were called christians first at Antioch. We understand the word "christian" to mean Christlike, or a believer in the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, as taught by him and his apostles. We further understand that Christ was in possession of both divinity and humanity. When we speak of him, as in Isaiah ix. 6: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace," we speak of him as divinity; on the other hand, when we speak of him as in Gal. iv. 4, 5: "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons," also in Heb. ii. 14: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil," we believe he was verily God and verily man, and blending, or putting together these two substances in one body, makes or constitutes Christ. Admitting these to be facts, then to be a christian, or Christlike, we must have the same two substances in one body. But Christ having first divinity, and having all power in heaven and in earth, and power to create this earth and all that is on it, for all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made, and Christ's chosen people who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, being flesh and blood, being humanity, he had power to put on humanity. For "it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren." But we, as the offspring of Adam, who trans-

gressed God's holy law and brought death and separation upon himself, and his posterity after him, and being driven from God's presence, and a flaming sword put between him and the tree of life, that man should not henceforth put forth his hand and partake of the tree of life and live forever, view man in his lost, ruined and pitiful condition, without God and without hope in the world; yet notwithstanding this awful condition of fallen man we find that God gave a portion of them to his Son, and gave him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as he had given him. Now we have received this gift of eternal life from Christ, which gift we understand to be a spiritual gift, for Paul says, It "is Christ in you the hope of glory;" and again he says, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." Then in John xvii. 23, as Christ was praying to the Father for all believers, he says, "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." Now from these Scriptures we believe there is a perfect oneness between Christ and his people; that when they receive this gift of eternal life they have received Christ. Then in one body have met the same two substances that were in Christ's body, both humanity and divinity. Then, and not till then, can we truly claim that we are christians, or Christlike. These two principles are antagonistic one to the other. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price." I understand the price Christ paid for these sinners was his life. Then, brethren, what a debt of love and gratitude we owe to that blessed One who has bestowed such wondrous love upon us; how we should strive to walk before him in humbleness, in love, in meekness, striving to fulfill the command that we love one another and help to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Now may the choicest blessings of our God be with you in all your deliberations. Amen.

S. W. GARD, Moderator.

H. C. CATE, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Licking Old School Baptist Association, in session with Bethel Church, at Shelbyville, Shelby Co., Ky., Aug. 31st and Sept. 1st and 2nd, 1910, to the churches and associations with whom we correspond sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE PRECIOUS FAITH:—Through an all-wise God we have again assembled together where we hope to worship in his name, and your ministering brethren have come to us from all parts of the country with the precious truths of God our Savior, bringing glad tidings to us, a poor and afflicted people, and we hope to have a continuance of your correspondence.

We have appointed the next session of our association to be held with the Mount Carmel Church, Clark Co., Ky., commencing on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1911.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.

J. T. MCCOUN, Clerk.

T. J. RATLIFF, Ass't Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1910.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

HOW SINNERS BECOME CHRISTIANS.

DEAR ELDER CHICK :—I inclose a card used by one of the so-called evangelists of the Christian church of the present day. Will you please give your views through the SIGNS upon that portion of the card which I marked, headed, "How sinners may become christians?"

Yours in hope, J. C. NELSON.

SHARPSBURG, Ky., Aug. 20, 1910.

The answer to this question given on the inclosed card of which our brother speaks, is as follows: By hearing the truth; by believing; by repenting; by confessing Christ; by being baptized. It is a fact, undoubtedly, that all these five things distinguish between one who is still lost in sin and dead to God, and one who has come to the knowledge of salvation. The sinner dead in sin has neither heard, believed, repented, confessed Christ, nor lawfully been baptized, even though he may have submitted to the form of the ordinance and become in profession a follower of Christ. On the other hand, one who is a christian indeed, or, as the word means, one who is truly a disciple, has heard the truth, has believed, has repented, and has confessed Christ. With regard to the last expression, "confessed Christ," we desire to say here, that one may be truly a believer in Christ who has not yet confessed him, and that the word christian cannot rightly be applied to one until that one has made this confession, or has followed Christ in his ordinances. By the word "ordinances" we mean not only the rites ordained to be observed in the church, but all that the blessed Lord has commanded of his disciples. We also desire to add that it seems to us that the word teaches that repentance comes before faith or believing, instead of after believing. We notice that the author of the card puts faith or believing before repentance.

The one especial thing which makes all that Arminian evangelists say about believing and repenting, and all that relates to the work of grace within false, is that they invariably enjoin both these things upon men as conditions of salvation to be performed by them. It is a duty faith and a duty repentance, rather than that repentance and faith which are the gifts of God, and which live in men as the real fruit of the Spirit, that they universally teach, so far at least as our hearing and reading have informed us. Sinners are exhorted to repent, and to exercise faith as the conditions of their salvation. It is not declared to men by such teachers that both faith and repentance are the gifts of God. The truth that men by nature are dead to God, dead to all that is of the Spirit, is not taught, but rather denied by such men, and dead men are bidden to do the things which belong to living men. The whole spirit of the teaching of the card sent us is that men are all living to God, only that that life is at a low ebb in sinners, and they are thus exhorted to revive and arise, and cause these fruits, these conditions of salvation, to abound. How false this teaching is the Scriptures show abundantly, and the hopelessness of such teaching is felt and known by all who have come to see their own dead state.

Such ones would, but cannot repent and believe. But to know this, let it be remembered, is the evidence that life from the dead has been given that one, and these feelings and confessions are the result of that given life. The whole vast difference between the religion which is of the flesh and that which is of the Spirit is well summed up in this one sentence; the one teaches that men are not really dead in sin, while the other confesses that they are. This evangelist evidently does not believe that sinners are dead in sin, therefore he in his card implies that sinners can hear, believe, repent, confess Christ, and ought to be baptized. But it is the teaching of the Scriptures that even the living cannot of themselves repent and believe; how much less can the dead do these things? Faith is the gift of God. Jesus is exalted to give repentance unto Israel. These Scriptures settle the origin of faith and repentance, and inform us how any man comes to possess them. They are not a duty performed, but gifts of God bestowed upon men. If under the law men are commanded to love and serve God, it is yet true that fallen man has no power to do what the law requires, but under the gospel covenant that which the law required, and which men could not do, is presented as being done by our Lord Jesus Christ for us, and he, having fulfilled all the law, has ascended on high and received gifts for men, and among these gifts are repentance and faith. Faith and repentance being given, and coming to dwell in our hearts, exercise us rather than we them. They become in us a power which subdues our lusts, and animates us to desire the ways of the Lord, and that we may be obedient to him in all things. Now the soul can really hear the word, and being pricked in the heart can and does really repent and believe; now he from the heart confesses Christ as his Savior, Priest, Sacrifice, Prophet and King; and now he desires to be baptized as the Lord commanded and gave the example, and so publicly confess all that Jesus has become to him. By rich and sovereign grace this poor sinner has become a disciple, a follower of the Lamb, a christian, and for it all he blesses and praises God the giver, and takes not one atom of praise to himself. He does not regard these things as duties done by him, but as the dear gifts of the love and grace of God.

Following along the same line of which we have written above, we desire to call attention to some sayings which we have often heard used. Once, particularly, we recall hearing one who ought to have known the force of language better than to have said the things he did, while commenting upon the language of the jailer at Philippi: "What must I do to be saved?" declared that there were four things which one must do to be saved, and among the four things named by him as conditions of salvation it seemed strange to us that he did not once give the answer of Paul: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." The four things we must do to be saved, according to this learned man and eloquent preacher, were these: first, we must see our need of salvation. Second, we must be willing to be saved. Third, we must be willing to be saved in God's way of saving sinners. Fourth, we must be willing to be saved now. It is undoubtedly true that every saved sinner has come to feel his need of salvation, and every such sinner has come to be willing to be saved, and every such soul will be so humbled, and so cut off from

his own ways, that he rejoices to be saved as God has appointed to save him through the merit of Christ, and not by works of righteousness which he has done; and still further, every such needy, distressed soul wants the evidence of salvation now. All this is true, but the speaker to whom we have referred spoke of all this as something which we must do. We thought as we listened, What is there in all these things that could be called doing? These things belong to the feelings rather than the doings of men. Sinners whom God designs to save do indeed come to feel their need of salvation, but this is not a work of theirs, but a work of God wrought in their very life. God shows them their need, and this need felt within leads to strong crying out to God for this salvation, after they have tried their doings. When men thus begin to feel their need and their weakness, their doing ceases; and to feel their need is not doing, as said before, but simply a feeling, an experience wrought in them, and feeling, or experience, is not doing, though these things once they are felt will lead to doing.

The second thing: being willing to be saved, cannot be called doing anything, but it also is a feeling and experience wrought in the soul. The poor sinner, having learned his need of salvation, is made willing to be saved in the day of God's power. He is made willing, not to save himself, but to be saved, and only soul-crushing and soul-humbling experiences of our poverty and weakness, and of the bondage of sin, can ever bring any one to such a place as this, to be willing to be saved. Here is no human praise, no human merit, but God's power, God's salvation and God's praise, and in this experience of willingness there is no work, no doing of ours; the Lord's work appears here indeed, but not our work. It passes our comprehension how being willing to be saved can be called a work of ours.

The third thing: being willing to be saved in God's way of saving sinners, is also an experience which every one who has good hope through grace will recognize as belonging to the work of the Lord in them. It is emphatically the Lord's work, and not theirs. Indeed, no man left to himself would ever desire to be willing to be saved in such a soul-humbling way. The doing of every man, if his doing can be considered here at all, would all be against such a crucifying experience as this. No man ever wrought in himself a willingness to be saved by the grace and power of God, but on the other hand, every natural desire within him cries out for a salvation that will honor himself rather than the grace of God. Here also, if made willing at all, it is the work of God, and not theirs; and this experience of willingness that God should be glorified in our salvation, and God alone, is not to our praise, seeing that we did not create this willingness in our hearts; these states of heart and mind are not our doing, but God's doing.

The fourth thing named as something that we must do: "being willing to be saved now," could not possibly be placed under the head of something that we must do. Whoever felt himself lost, and did not desire to be saved? Whoever was suffering pain and did not want relief and want it "now"? Whoever in time of distress, of hunger, thirst and weariness, felt to pray, Lord, save me by and by? No, this moment sufferers desire relief. But is this doing something? This desire for relief "now" is the result of something done to us, or for us, but it is not the doing of anything itself. We think still, as we thought while listening to the speaker, that all

these things did indeed enter into the experience of a saved sinner, but they were not things that that sinner must do; they are things which he must and will feel; they are experiences which he will never forget, and for which he will praise God to all eternity. But experience is one thing and doing is another. Experience works out, and leads to doing, and doing things leads to experiences on the other hand, but they are not the same. Sinning against God leads, when felt, to sorrow and shame; and, on the other hand, sorrow and shame for sin lead to putting away the sin. But we must not confound the feelings, the experiences of our hearts, with our doing.

Now with a few words regarding the answer which Paul gave to the jailer we will close our remarks. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." What is this but saying to the jailer, There is nothing great or small remaining for you to do; Jesus has done all for you; he has paid all the debt you owed, and nothing remains for you to do? Does this not say in substance that faith in our Lord Jesus Christ is all? Remember that this faith is declared by Paul in Ephesians to be the gift of God. Paul did not tell the jailer how faith is obtained, but simply stated the fact that salvation is not by works, but by faith in Christ. Elsewhere faith is called the fruit of the Spirit, the gift of God, as said before, but here a simple answer to the question of the convicted keeper of the prison is given. It is by faith in Christ alone, without works, that salvation comes to be known and felt in the soul, and this truth millions of seeking, needy souls, like that jailer, have found at last to be precious. Here the dear children of God find rest.

We leave these remarks, believing that they are according to that truth which makes free indeed. C.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Azubah Laytham was born Nov. 8th, 1824, and departed this life August 28th, 1910. She was married to Elijah Laytham June 5th, 1845, who departed this life May 4th, 1869. To that union there were born eight children, two sons and six daughters, two of whom survive her: Mrs. W. J. Rees and Mrs. P. H. Thomas. Sister Laytham professed a hope in Christ, and joined the Old School Baptist Church at Mt. Gilead, Mason Co., Ky., of the Licking Association, and in the faithfulness of a mother in Israel she magnified the gifts of grace. Sister Laytham lived in widowhood for forty-one years, and for about forty-five years was to a greater or less degree an invalid, much of the time confined to her room, and for years at a time to her bed. Though nearly eighty-six years old, her thoughtfulness embraced the smallest details which go to make up the aggregate consequent upon a well regulated and truly hospitable old Kentucky home. As a neighbor, sister Laytham was widely and favorably known, which was well attested by the large company of them which attended her funeral. Sister Laytham was a woman of remarkable mind; she was sound and clear in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and was well informed in the doctrine, order and discipline of the church and of its extent and progress. She loved the church and doctrine, and was faithful to all her privileges in the house of God.

The writer was called to join the family and friends midst the scenes of sorrow, and preached to them the doctrine he had now and then preached to her in her home during the last twenty-five years, after which, with hope in Him who raiseth the dead, her remains were interred in the cemetery at Mays Lick, Ky. P. G. LESTER.

NOTICE.

We are in receipt of two different notices to change some one's paper to Mortimer, Ohio, but as the party failed in both cases to sign their name, and did not state where the paper is now going, we have no way of knowing who it is that wishes their address changed; but if they will write again and sign their name, and give post-office address to which the paper is now going, we will gladly make the change.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Elder H. H. Lefferts has changed his address from Warwick, N. Y., to Leesburg, Va.

MEETINGS.

THE Corresponding Meeting of Virginia is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, Loudoun Co., Va., to commence on Wednesday, October 11th, 1910, and continue three days. Friends coming to the meeting by railroad will be in Washington, D. C., on Tuesday, Oct. 10th, in time to take train at Union station at 1:30 p. m. for Bluemont, on the Loudoun road, if the present schedule is maintained. Trains are now due at Bluemont at about 4 p. m., where all will be met and cared for. An earnest invitation is extended to all whose hearts are sincerely with us. J. N. BADGER.

THE Welsh Tract Church has appointed her yearly meeting to be held on Saturday and Sunday, October 15th and 16th, 1910. Those coming from Philadelphia and Baltimore will please come via B. & O. R. R. on Saturday or Sunday. Trains leave Philadelphia at 8:15 a. m., and Baltimore at 8 a. m. (Mt. Royal station.) Get tickets for Newark, Del., where all will be met and conveyed to the place of meeting. Brethren in the ministry and all lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Association is appointed to convene with the church in Broad Creek, Sussex Co., Del., October 19th, 20th and 21st, 1910. Those coming by rail to attend the meeting will take trains arriving at Laurel, southbound, at 1:16 p. m., northbound, 2:11 p. m. Southbound train leaves Philadelphia at 10 o'clock a. m., northbound leaves Cape Charles at 11:05 a. m. Come Tuesday, 18th. All coming by those trains will be met and cared for. It is desirable that all should come by those trains, as it is five miles from Laurel to the meeting, and it will not be convenient to meet other trains. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren. We hope to see a goodly number, and assure you we will do all in our power to make you comfortable, and we assure you a hearty welcome.

By the church.

A. B. FRANCIS, Pastor.

THE churches of the Roxbury Association will hold their fifth Sunday meeting with the First Church of Roxbury, at Vega, N. Y., Oct. 29th and 30th, 1910, commencing on Saturday at 11 o'clock a. m. Trains will be met at Roxbury Friday p. m. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON, Pastor.

THE yearly meeting of the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church will be held, nothing in providence preventing, the last Saturday and Sunday in October (29th and 30th), 1910. Ministers, brethren and friends are invited. Those coming via U. & D. R. R. will be met at Olive Branch east, and at Shokan west of the church.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Church Clerk.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in Kimmy Hall, No. 12 Third St., in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

A SMALL band of Primitive Baptists is meeting every Sunday at 10:30 a. m. at 2919 Polk St., Chicago, Ill. All persons interested are welcome to meet with us. Any one knowing of members living in or near Chicago will please notify W. N. Spitler at the above address.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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LURAY, Va.

"SONGS IN THE NIGHT."

PRICE REDUCED.

This little book has been published for some time, and orders for it have been received from near and far, even to the most distant States. All from whom I have heard have spoken to me very highly of the book. For forty years it has been upon my mind to publish these poems and the experience of my brother, together with the account of his last hours, and have wondered why I did not do it. I felt sure it would be for the comfort of many, and the many expressions I have already received assure me that it is so. Elder P. D. Gold writes: "I have read the poems and experience of your brother with much pleasure. How wonderful was the view of divine things given to him. Surely to be absent from the body and present with the Lord is far better." Elder S. Hassell says: "I shall have a commendatory editorial notice in April. I hope you may dispose of several thousands for the comfort of the Lord's scattered people." Elder H. C. Ker writes me: "Your little book, 'Songs in the night,' was duly received, and has given me more comfort than any reading I have done for months. Surely every lover of truth should have it." The price of the second edition has been reduced to thirty-five cents.

I have also on hand a few copies of "Reminiscences and Letters of Mary Parker." Price 75 cents.

All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Southampton, Pa.

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By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition, which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at 5 cents per copy. Address,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 78. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1910. NO. 21.

POETRY.

UNFRUITFULNESS.

OMNISCIENT God, my Savior, Friend,
Behold my dying case;
I need thy pruning, to that end
That I may grow in grace.

Decay is evident to all,
I droop below the cross;
Make haste to hear my piteous call,
And quick consume my dross.

My barrenness I keenly feel,
No heavenly fruit I bear;
Beneath thy rod sure I would kneel,
And welcome suffering there.

Then this vile, careless heart of mine,
Affliction more would know;
I to the world would less incline,
And more in grace would grow.

The vain desires that cumber so,
Are branches touched by blight;
O prune them off, that I may grow
More comely in thy sight.

Let all thy graces from above
Into my soul descend;
Clothe me with meekness, faith and love,
Then fruit will upward tend.

In my distress O hear my call,
In mercy chasten me,
Till aspirations, life and all
Be swallowed up in thee.

And like the bird upon the wing,
That soars above the throng,
With animation I would sing
The great redemption song.

SEMMA E. CORDER.

PHILIPPI, W. Va.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE LAWYER AND THE RULER.

"THEN one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."—Matthew xxii. 35-40.

This same incident is related in Luke x. 25-37, but at greater length, and somewhat differently, as is generally the case where the same incident is told in different books of the gospel. "And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering, said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor?" Replying to this question the dear Savior

relates the wonderful story of the man who fell among thieves, and of the good Samaritan, a parable which shows most clearly and deeply the spiritual meaning of the word "neighbor." In all that is related of this lawyer we see no sorrow, no anxiety about himself, no assertion that he has kept the law, no question, What lack I yet? no desire for Jesus' favor or help, but only a wish to tempt him to say something which his enemies may use against him, and an attempt to justify himself. He does not use the word "good;" does not say, Good Master, nor ask what good thing he shall do to inherit eternal life. He is standing among the Pharisees, and is evidently one of the dear Savior's bitter enemies.

Another incident somewhat similar to this, but of a very different character, is recorded in three of the gospels: Matt. xix. 16; Mark x. 17, and Luke xviii. 18. As recorded by Matthew we read: "And behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness; Honor thy father and thy mother; and, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions." In Mark it is said that the young man came running and kneeled unto him as he asked the question, showing great anxiety of mind, and faith to believe that Jesus was able to relieve his mind of its burden of trouble. Also in this place it is said that Jesus beholding him loved him. This decides the question as to whether this young man was one of the Lord's people, and already a quickened soul. We do not find in the Scriptures that Jesus loves, or ever has loved, any but his own people. If it can be truly said of one, Jesus loved him, that one will surely sing in glory. "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end."

In Luke we find that the young man was a ruler. In each of the three places where this is recorded it is related that Jesus asked of this man, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God." He did not say, I am not good, but here makes clear and prominent the truth that goodness belongs alone to God, and that he is the source of all the true goodness that is ever found in this world. Goodness is in him, not as a man, but as "God manifest in the flesh." No works of man can be called good, only as they are wrought in and through him by the Lord. The mystery of godliness is, Christ in us the hope of glory.

"Why callest thou me good?" The Savior will have us know why any man can be called good: only as being a son of God through Jesus Christ; only as having Christ as our goodness and righteousness. Then the six of the ten commandments are repeated which refer to our conduct towards men. When replying to the lawyer the Savior named the whole of the commandments as two, the first referring to our conduct toward the

Lord: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind;" and the second, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." In replying to this young man he does not refer to the first four at all, but only to the six which refer to our relations and obligations to our fellow-man. The young ruler hears them only in the letter, and answers accordingly: "All these things have I kept from my youth up." So Saul of Tarsus would have answered: Touching the righteousness which is in the law I am blameless. Saul did not at that time know of any other righteousness than that which came through the literal keeping of the law; nor did he know then that there was any need of it. He was satisfied with himself and his righteousness. Nor did the young man know of any other righteousness than that which the literal observance of the law gave him, yet he evidently had been prepared by the quickening power of the Spirit to feel the need of something more than that which this keeping of the commandments gave him, for he said, "What lack I yet?" It is evident that this dissatisfaction with himself weighed heavily and acutely upon his mind, otherwise why should he have come running and kneeled to Jesus? It was then, when he had declared that he had observed these commandments from his youth, and yet felt that he lacked something; had not stolen, had not committed adultery, had not lied, nor done anything to the injury of his neighbor, and yet was not at rest nor satisfied with himself; it was then that this sweet declaration is given us, that "Jesus beholding him, loved him." Jesus did not love him because of any goodness that was his on account of his having kept the law, for those whom he loves now he has loved with an everlasting love. This was the love, I think, with which he loved this young man, to whom he was now going to show that he had never kept the law in its spirituality; had never yet known the real power of that law by which is the knowledge of sin. "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved; for he had great possessions." It has been thought that the cause of his sorrow was that he understood that Jesus required him to sell his great possessions in order that he might have eternal life, and that he did not want to part with them and was very much grieved because he must. My mind upon this subject has been that these great possessions were just then of but little value in the eyes of this young man. It appears to me that he is looking now upon these possessions as evidences that he is not in the kingdom of heaven, and that he can never come there. Why had he not long ago given these riches to the poor? If he had loved his neighbor as himself, which the Savior named to the tempting lawyer as the second commandment, why had he not given them to his neighbors? When one is laboring under a sense of his lack of true righteousness, and heavy laden under a sense of sin, how trifling do all the riches of this world appear. The thought that he has spent his time in gathering them and hoarding them is enough to make him go away sorrowful.

But now a deeper work is going on in the heart of this ruler. He has gone away sad, but he has not gone beyond nor away from the love of Jesus. He is now feeling the vanity and emptiness of

all that righteousness which he had hitherto boasted of so proudly in his own heart and before men, as he had of his literal riches. Now this poor young man is feeling what the dear Savior is saying to his disciples: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God." This is what I think this young man is feeling concerning himself. He sees no way in which such a sinner can enter into that holy kingdom. When the disciples are astonished at his words, Jesus varies the expression, and says, "Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?"

These disciples were poor men, and yet they seemed to include themselves among those rich men who could not be saved. It would seem that they are made to think of another kind of riches than that which appears in silver and gold, and houses and lands. They are thinking of the riches of self-righteousness, which the flesh is always seeking to obtain and hoard up; and it is this, and the vanity of all such riches, and of the hopes built upon them, and the impossibility of obtaining the favor of Jesus by them, which this sad and sorrowful young man is feeling as he wanders alone in his gloom. Impossible! Yes, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. But a camel cannot go through the eye of a needle; then who can be saved? It is impossible, and not only so, but every child of God at some point in his experience has to feel that impossibility concerning himself; and he is alone then, as Jacob was when he lay with a stone for his pillow, and again when he wrestled with the angel; alone with this impossibility, a poor, helpless creature, with no right to heavenly blessings, with no hope of ever entering into the kingdom of God. But what a glorious light is this that now appears shining through the gloom! "With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible." This is indeed a glorious time when we can see the impossibilities with men become possible with God. The thing that appeared to us impossible is done; that which in our view was as impossible as for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, is accomplished; the sinner is saved from his sins and made pure and holy. The last vestige of his legal riches, his self-righteousness, in which he had trusted, is gone, and he is without hope in the world. Then suddenly the sorrow and gloom and loneliness disappear, and he is made to rejoice in a new and glorious hope, a hope of righteousness, not by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ, who is of God made unto us righteousness. O how good it is for the poor sinner who has labored in vain to make himself acceptable unto God by some work of his own, to read concerning this rich young man that "Jesus beholding him loved him."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Oct. 2, 1910.

WAVERLY, Pa., Aug. 30, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find two excellent letters, one from Elder Ketchum, the other from A. B. Ostrander, a near and dear friend of the Old School Baptist Church people; you may publish them if you wish.

Yours as ever, saved by grace if saved,

D. M. VAIL.

CHESTER, Nebr., April 19, 1910.

ELDER MARVIN VAIL—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your letter was received in good time, and I owe you an apology for my long delay in answering. Yes, I very well remember meeting you and Elder Bundy at the Sandy Creek Association, in Illinois, and I have ever held you both in fond and loving remembrance because of the great truths you preached; those truths that have ever been so precious to me, and I think to all of God's little ones, and I have felt that I would be glad to meet you again and talk over those things face to face that are so vital to the peace and fellowship of our Zion. My prayer has ever been, and still is, for peace among the churches. It matters little whether we are at peace with the enemies of the truth; in fact, it would be impossible for one who loved the truth as it is revealed to the sinner, to compromise with errors that are substituted for the precious truth of the glorious gospel of the Son of God, that gospel that brings life and immortality to light, and unless it comes in demonstration of the Spirit and power of God, it must be another gospel, which is not another, but a perversion of the gospel of Christ; it partakes of the form of godliness, but denies the power thereof. There is a very marked difference between the letter and the spirit of the law, for the letter killeth, but the spirit gives life. This idea is more fully illustrated by Job and his three friends. While I would give the devil his dues, yet I suspect these three self-appointed friends who called on Job, and were so valuable and ready with their counsels, were emissaries of Satan. You may ask, Why do you think so? I have two reasons. First, Job was given over to Satan, and it is fair to suppose that he would not fail to use every device at his command, and he is nowhere accused of being short in cunning, so much so that if it were possible he would deceive the very elect. He tried in vain to overcome Jesus by every subterfuge and device known to him, and if he could have succeeded in causing Job to curse God his victory would have been complete. Second, falsehood is never so dangerous as when it is mixed with truth; so the messages of these three false friends were composed of what appears to be a perfectly reasonable and merited rebuke to Job for his presumption toward God. But if you will read the words of God to them, as recorded in Job xlii. 7, 8, you will see their duplicity exposed.

Many changes have been wrought since the time of your visit to Illinois. Many of our ablest ministers have been called home, and but few have come to fill their places; a number of churches have ceased to hold meetings, and associations have dissolved, some through dissensions and evil men's diabolical doings, and others from natural causes, such as deaths and removals, and others because of the removal of the candlestick. Thus it has ever been, and thus it shall ever be, everything is wrapped in profound mystery. But the promise of God standeth sure, The Lord knoweth them that are his, and as many as are ordained to eternal life will believe, even as it was in times past. There are many places in the west where the churches are quite prosperous, and there are a goodly number of able ministers growing up that promise well for the future.

There are many things I would be glad to talk of with you, but cannot commit them to paper. I often think of your extensive field of usefulness, while my lot is cast in a lonely place. I do not sup-

pose there is any one in your country to be remembered to or I would send my love. Please let me hear from you again.

I am unworthily your poor brother,

SMITH KETCHUM.

WAKEMAN, Ohio, June 14, 1910.

D. M. VAIL—MY DEAR FRIEND:—Your kind and welcome letter received, and I was very glad to hear from you, and to receive such good encouragement, but am afraid I am too vile and sinful to be one of God's children. For a long time I have been at the point of writing you a few lines, but really felt that I would be doing wrong, knowing myself to be such a sinner. What a happy life this would be if we could only banish sin. Sometimes I feel for a few moments as though all my sins had left me, and my joy is so great I can hardly contain myself, and I feel that I am standing face to face with my blessed Savior, and the next minute I am away down in the pit battling with Satan, and it seems that he has almost conquered. But there is a sweet hope that never entirely leaves me, and after I have battled and suffered about so long, I imagine I can hear the Savior's voice saying, I will not forsake thee, and what peace and joy it brings to my torn and troubled heart; and, as you say, sometimes that awful suffering will continue for months, and how miserable a person is all that time. I have often wondered how a person could live without any hope at all of eternal peace and rest. I get much comfort and encouragement from His words when he said, Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. I know I suffer enough, or think I do at least, but am I one of his little children? If I am, no suffering is too great, because I know it is his will, and I long to do his will. John says, "He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God." Knowing that I have done so much evil, I feel at times as though God and myself are strangers, and if he does help me it is only through my confessing my sins to him and pleading for mercy.

I am sorry, but I hardly think I will be able to attend the two days meeting in August, as I understand arrangements have been made for my vacation to start about July 22nd, so I will be at Cammal for the July meeting, which I am sure I will enjoy. Mother has spoken so much in her letters about Elder Fenton, I would love to be home for the June meeting, as I hear he is to be there, but that is a month too soon for me.

I hope the Lord has been with me while writing these few lines, and that I am not deceiving you, but you know the flesh is nothing but sin and deception, and will continue so to the end of time, when God will sort out the sheep from the goats and shelter them according to his promise. Hoping we all may be his sheep, and be fed on the heavenly manna, I remain your unworthy friend,

A. B. OSTRANDER.

BALTIMORE, Md.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—We read in Acts xx. 27, that Paul said to those elders of the church whom he said should see his face no more: "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." This is a great deal for a man to say, yet Paul's writings in the New Testament prove his statement to be true. To do this required a great deal of wisdom and courage, both of which his Lord graciously gave him. The counsel of God is his will, or his truth and doctrine concerning the way of salvation.

The doctrine of God's salvation is one, and yet there are many points in themselves distinct, the one proves the other; each and every one of vital importance, and so must not be left out in the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Should any part of the counsel of God be shunned by any man it would make him a liar, and prove that the word is not in him who shunned to declare it, and he had as well have denied it all. First of all Paul tells us that God foreknew his people: "Whom he did foreknow," &c. —Romans viii. Of course God knew everything before anything was, but in a peculiar sense he foreknew his children as the objects of his everlasting love; he does not love to-day any more or any less than he did before the world began. This is a comforting point in the doctrine of God our Savior, and should not be shunned. "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." This point of doctrine, as well as foreknowledge, is one we love and could not do without, God being the only one who can make a poor, guilty, helpless sinner like our Lord Jesus Christ. How sweet the thought then that God appointed it to be so in his time and way, which is through Jesus, "the way, and the truth, and the life." The sinner is dead in trespasses and sins, and does not know of God's predestination concerning him, neither can any man tell him, therefore "whom he did predestinate, them he also called." We certainly could not do without this wonderful and precious doctrine of the call of Jesus Christ, since it is in this way only that we are brought to know him as our blessed Savior. But when we are called to the knowledge of the truth, we not only see Jesus the righteous Son of God, but we see ourselves vile wretches, far separated from him by wicked works, and, like Job, we ask: How can a man be just with God? Why, whom he calls he also justifies, being justified freely by his blood. The children being partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same. "Your bodies are the members of Christ."—1 Cor. vi. 15. And he being put to death in the flesh, satisfied the law, hence the justification of his sons and daughters, chosen of Adam's fallen race. "Whom he justified, them he also glorified." This is the glorious end of the purpose of God the Father, and of the effectual work of God the Son. This is the faith once delivered unto the saints; let us contend earnestly for it, not shunning to declare it all. This glorification is by the resurrection of the dead, which some disputed in Paul's day, and some dispute in our day. Paul said to the disputers that if the dead rise not, our preaching is vain and your faith is vain. Why? Because we have preached and you have believed that Jesus is the Savior of men, which is not true if the dead rise not, for men die, and if men do not rise from the dead, men are not saved, "ye are yet in your sins," and so all that we have said or may say about the foreknowledge of God, the predestination of God, the calling of God, the justification of God, and the final glorification of the sinner through Jesus Christ, all falls to the ground worthless, for men are finally lost in the dust, and are no more. But, beloved, we have better things to declare unto you: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."—1 Thess. iv. 14. It is the grand harvest which Jesus says is the end of the world. (Matt. xiii. 39.) As the one aim of those who gather out the stones and roots, fertilize the soil,

sow the seed and cultivate the plants, is the harvest, so the one purpose of God in Christ is the final eternal salvation of the sinner man, soul and body; and as all the work of the farmer fails if he does not reap, so all the work of Jesus is a failure unless, as Paul says, he shall change our vile body, and fashion it like unto his own glorious body. He who denies this grand, glorious and crowning doctrine of the salvation of men by the grace of God in Jesus Christ, or fails to preach it, had just as well never preach a word in his life, since all is vain without it.

I wish to say that I heartily indorse the article of Joseph Ford in the SIGNS for July 1st.

I am your unworthy brother in this precious, glorious, soul-comforting hope,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

AFTER FIFTY YEARS.

THE days of my years have been "swifter than a weaver's shuttle," and to-day, after the lapse of fifty years, I seem to be a greater sinner than fifty years ago, the day that I was permitted by the grace and providence of God to be baptized in the fellowship of the oldest-fashioned order of Baptists, and most despised and insignificant to be found anywhere within my knowledge. To-day, while looking back just half a century, I cannot take any praise to myself for such an unnatural choice of a people. Now it seems to me a great mystery why I was led to take a place among such a lowly and unpretentious people.

> "Why was I made to hear His voice,
> And enter while there's room?"

I fail to answer, only in one way, and that is, it was not of my own choosing originally; but what had been bitter to me, became exceedingly sweet; yea, sweeter than honey in the honeycomb. What had been sweet to me became bitter, even as bitter as the waters of Marah. It is often a source of consolation for me to refer to that time when I seemed to be simple-minded, and for a few moments, or hours, cast aside all earthly refuge, and was aroused to the fact that I was trying to ascribe praise, grandeur, power and glory to Jesus the Mediator. Just then a reflection in my mind would recall my native instinct and religious training, which was to the reverse of "the new idea" now so prominent before me, that it seemed I could praise the Lord without any effort at all.

> "My soul broke forth in unknown strains,
> And sang surprising grace."

O, the newness that then seemed to hover about me; I, a sinner without hope and without God, declining in health, death staring me in the face, to receive a hope in Jesus, was soul-ravishing and mind-exalting to the highest degree for a poor mortal to reach on this earth, and in this poor earthen vessel. I often think of the many mistakes I have made since that eventful day, as well as the very many disappointments I have found in my pilgrimage journey. When I review the last fifty years of my life I think of the kind mercy of the Lord in not allowing me to see one day of the future before it came. I feel that I am somewhat consoled and comforted by looking backward to the many changing scenes of time that have passed over me, firmly believing that the hand of the Lord has been near me very many times in giving strength and delivering from trouble. When my "old man" is crucified, and I am permitted to view the abundant mercies of my Lord and King, gratitude that is unspeakable wells up within like a swollen stream, and I feel like singing

with the spirit and with the understanding the words:

"O for a thousand tongues to sing
My dear Redeemer's praise,
The glory of my God and King,
The triumphs of his grace."

My life the last fifty years has not been what I expected it to be; I have so miserably failed in many ways to serve and honor my Lord and Master that I sometimes hardly dare to recount the many crooked paths I have walked in. Three weeks after my baptism I remember sitting up in bed preaching Jesus the way of life for poor, helpless sinners, and that without any worthiness on their part. My hearers were neighbors and friends who came to see me die. Much of this I cannot remember, but a neighbor once told me that I spoke for more than two hours. One thought I can well remember: a desire to get well for the purpose of declaring the "unsearchable riches of Christ." But O how vain and fickle is the human mind. I did get well with the greatest rapidity known then among doctors. My case was so out of the line among practitioners that it was reported to the medical journals. The suddenness of returning physical strength seemed to cause my mind to abate its ardor and zeal for the cause of the truth in the Lord Jesus. Had I experienced the testimony of Scripture, that when I was weak, then I was strong in the Lord? Again, on the other hand, when the "old man" was strong I could not do the things that I desired to do. It would seem to some people that it would be possible for a professed christian to accomplish much in fifty years towards the upbuilding of the truth in the earth, and to do much in showing forth the praises of the King of kings, and Lord of lords, but, O my soul, how little I have done to establish his truth and show forth his praise. It seems to me that I have tried to serve the creature more than the Creator; and if I at any time have been found offering prayer and thanksgiving unto the Lord it was as though circumstances had forced me to do it. That being my manner of acting, how can I ever hope to boast in anything save in my infirmities? What a long line of sins in fifty years! Their number is as the hairs of the head. What manifold mercies from the sure mercies of David in fifty years! Though I sin, and am a sinner, yet he is merciful and forgiving, and I am not consumed by his anger.

To look back to my sudden recovery from the jaws of death, and that without any medicine whatever, as I firmly refused to take any, saying that if I got well it would be in the strength of the Lord, is wonderful to me this day, though half a century has passed, bringing its thousands of difficulties and disappointments, and wafting thousands of fellow-beings to that bourne from whence no traveler ever returns. I have never been able to exalt the name of Jesus high enough as it pertains to my poor soul and body, for to-day they stand as monuments of his amazing mercy. I have nothing in the way of my goodness to plead or present to any person, much less at the throne of grace, for all of the past fifty years. If I stand it is purely and solely by and in the rich grace of my Lord Jesus Christ. If there be anything which I have done in all those years that has been comforting or beneficial to the poor of the flock, give praise, honor and glory unto the Lord Jesus. As the years go by I feel that I am too weak and poor to give enough honor, praise and glory due unto the name of the Lord. I feel glad to know that God is a Sovereign,

independent in every sense, and worthy to be worshiped by all his creatures; that he was as wise before the world began as he is to-day, declaring the end from the beginning, so that nothing can possibly occur except that which was before known, decreed or established by his wisdom and power. The spirit of idolatry prevalent in the land to-day will not allow that God is a sovereign, but that man can many times thwart the purposes of God. Idolatry has been on the earth since the fall of man, and no doubt it will be throughout the gospel dispensation. God will never be without witnesses as long as his salt is necessary to preserve the earth from destruction. "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever." After all these years of sorrow and trial there is comfort in having hope in the Redeemer of sinners, and to know that it is a good hope through grace.

If this should be of any consolation to the dear saints who may read it, let the Lord be praised.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., Oct. 2, 1910.

SPRINGFIELD, Mo., June 22, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I feel like writing some thoughts about predestination and election. Predestination is God's purpose from all eternity respecting all events, and election means a choosing, a choice. These two words cover the heavens and the earth, and all that is in them. Thou, God, hast made the heavens and and the earth, and all things therein. The word tells us here what they were made for: For thy pleasure they were created and made. When the earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, there was God. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God. The earth was then without form (or shape), and void, without trees yielding their fruits after their kind, whose seed was in themselves. Such was the condition of the earth, yet here was God, and this God said, As I have purposed, so shall it come to pass. Men do not do things and then predestinate afterwards, but predestinate and then do. If we build a house we see it in our minds first, just as we want it. This is our choice, this is what suits us, and we feel that we have a right to our choice, and for our own pleasure we build this house; it is completed in our minds. We do not look for one piece of the material to fit itself for the house. We should think it foolish to send men into the forest to say to the trees, Get ready for your master's house. The men must build the house. Every house is built by some man. If we think that we have the right to predestinate and elect, poor worms of the dust as we are, has not God the right to predestinate; he who was when the earth was without form, and void? Had he not the right to give his chosen people grace in Christ before the world was? Had he not the right to choose his people in Christ before the world was? Had he not the right to bless them with all spiritual blessings in Christ, according as he had chosen them in him, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love? Could he not give them these blessings just as easy as to give them dominion over the fish of the sea, and the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the air, and over every creeping thing? God purposed to give man power over all these things before he made him. All these blessings were ordained for man

before he was made, and yet man knew nothing about it. So we learn that man had no hand in ordaining for himself any of the things of this life. The Lord brought all these things to Adam to see what he would name them, and whatsoever he called them, that was the name thereof. So we see, brethren, that it was all a gift from God; they were all to be under his dominion. It is in this that man bears the likeness of God, for God has power over the heavens and the earth and over all things therein. So we see that man had no hand in the first place in making himself a natural man, and that everything was fixed for him; his Maker knew just what he needed for his comfort and happiness, and gave it to him without his assistance. All this was the gift of God, but all these things were of the earth. Now if we see that man had no power in making himself an earthly man, should we suppose that he could have any power in making himself heavenly? But none can know these things save those to whom the Father makes them known. "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Without our God there is nothing that can come to pass. He said, "Without me ye can do nothing." Even enemies of God can do nothing except it be given them of God. Jesus said to some who were against the truth, Ye come out to take me with swords and staves, as against a thief. I sat daily with you in the temple, and ye laid no hand upon me, for my hour was not yet come. He said again, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me." This is his reward. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and honor and glory. When I can see the goodness of the Lord toward me, a poor, sinful worm of the dust, and that he loves me, though dead in sin, I feel so little that I cannot tell what to do, except to say, Bless his holy name for ever and for ever. I feel glad that He does as he pleases, and none can hinder. There is no power that can oppose the will of our God. When we can feel that God is for us, we can say with Paul, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" This is the question with every true child of God: "Am I his, or am I not?" If they could settle this one thing in themselves they would cease to seek after it. But God has placed this desire in their hearts, and all the hosts of Satan cannot move it. They desire to please God, and would do his will, and desire also to be submissive to his will in all things, but when they can behold by faith the man Christ, and hear him say, I am meek and lowly, slow to anger, and full of mercy, they are ready to hide themselves, for they feel so unworthy. All these feelings tell us that we want to follow the meek and lowly Child, Jesus. Here is the child's experience.

Excuse me, for I did not think of writing so much when I began. This is yours, dear brethren, to do with as you feel is best. May God bless you all, for his name's sake.

Your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life,

S. H. BURNETT.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., Sept. 8, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I am now in Beaufort, N. C., on my usual visit to my churches. I have just read the request of brother Hugghins, and your answer to him, and a thought occurred to me that I will present to you. Undoubtedly there can be no mistake in either the Bible account of Joshua's battle and the

wonderful miracle worked at that time, or in astronomy as it teaches the workings of the solar system. They verily prove their position in predicting the changes, eclipses, conjunctions, risings and settings, &c., of the sun, moon and stars. Also navigators work on that principle and locate themselves at sea. These things should tell us that they are not in error as to the movings of the different spheres in the solar system. As brother Hugghins says of himself, I, too, am very deficient in education, but have read a little on astronomy, and I have not found it teaching that the sun stands still; it teaches me that all things move in their proper office and orbit. The sun appears to be the center, and controlling power, of a great system in the universe of many systems, and all to the praise of the great God, by whose wonderful power they are all held in control. Let me illustrate: A farmer has a crop of wheat to thrash and clean; he takes his machinery in his field and sets all in readiness, and starts his work; soon he finds some deficiency in one little wheel in some part of his machinery; now what will he do, stop that wheel for repairs, or will his wisdom teach him to stop that part of the machinery which moves all the other parts? To be sure he will stop the great driving power, and that being stopped all the machinery is stopped, and the repairs can safely be made. Joshua spoke by inspiration, and therefore it is the word of God. The sun, being the center and moving power of our system of worlds, he commanded him to stand still. When he stood still the whole system stood still, because there was no power to move them forward. That was indeed a very remarkable day, so much so that there was never another like it since the creation of the world.

Please do not think that I am adding to your article, but I just wanted to express these thoughts to you. We are all well. The Lord bless you.

Yours in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

[WE commend the above thoughts from our beloved brother Hardy to the attention of all. It is most certain, as he has so well said, that it is within the power of our sovereign Lord to stop the whole machinery of the universe at his own pleasure and word. He that set it in motion can cause it to cease its motion, and the day will come, as we understand the word of God, when it all shall cease to be. The only question that can arise among those who reverently receive and believe the testimony of holy writ is, What are we to understand by the language used to describe that most wonderful event? If all brethren reverently receive this as the word of God, there may yet be some differences of understanding of the letter of the text, while, after all, those who may thus differ in understanding meet together upon one common ground of the full belief that this is the word of God, who cannot lie. We feel like just saying that our own judgment as regards this wonderful description of the work of the Lord has rested upon the words, "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon." We have thought that it would not be doing violence to the text to think that this miracle was confined to those places where it was needed for the completion of the destruction of their foes. But as brother Hardy has so well said, our God could just as well stop the whole universe were it his will to do so, and it may be that it was so that day.—C.]

DRAIN, Ore., May 20, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The time is past in which we should have forwarded our subscription to the SIGNS, but the delay was caused by the serious sickness of our two oldest daughters, and as I was away from home I could not conveniently make the remittance.

There seems to be no use in my trying to say anything to the household of faith, as I have been barren and cast down for a long time. The Scripture declares that all things work together for good to them that love God. Now, dear kindred, the question occurs, How can affliction, contention, strife, losses, disappointments, and thousands of other things too numerous to mention, work for our good? When contention and strife arise among nearest and dearest friends, and sometimes among the churches, which hurts more than all beside, I stand in wonder and amazement, and cannot see how these things can work for good for myself, or for the glory of God. These questions are too deep for my poor, weak mind to answer. Jealousy is as cruel as the grave, but the Scriptures say that offences must come, but woe to him by whom they come. We all are prone to wander in by and forbidden paths. I think the reason we are chastised so much is that it is needful to teach us the weakness of the flesh, and our daily need of the grace of God.

"Then why, my soul, art thou dismayed?
Why in these tents of sorrow groan?
On what have thy fond hopes been stayed?
Still seeking rest, but finding none."

Why do we complain at the trials that beset us on every side? Why can we not have power to resist the evil one? We are so weak, and Satan creeps in and takes advantage of our weakness, but here come in the words of our Savior, when he says, All power is given to me in heaven and in earth, and the power that may be in man is ordained of God. How ashamed and humiliated I feel after complaining. I am ashamed of the weakness of the flesh. Since indeed all these things work together for good to them that love God, ought we not to pray that he would give us grace to overcome all these evil thoughts? But, dear ones, we shall have sin to contend with while we remain in this tabernacle of clay; but you all know this better than I can tell you, and for this very reason I like to tell it to you, for I know I am talking to a people who understand each other. Should we mention these things to the Arminian world they would think it strange that we cannot attain to a higher and more popular religion. It is their claim that they can save the whole world, if they can get sufficient money; but we cannot worship a god so weak. May we all be reconciled to the dealings of our God.

From the very least, if one at all, of the people of God,

S. MORNINGSTAR.

[SURELY we need not question as to how this or that shall work together with all other things for the glory of God, and the good of those that love him; it is enough if the word of God so declares; and if it be declared in the word that some things, both good and evil, have wrought out the glory of God, or the good of his people, we may rest content in believing that the same is true of all other things. It is not said that all things work for the good of all men, but only for the good of those who love the Lord. Evidently this is brought about by the overruling wisdom and power of God. So all the evil that befell Joseph from his brethren, and from Potiphar's wife, and from the rulers of Egypt,

worked together with whatever was good in the narrative, to the good of Joseph and of his kindred, and of Egypt as well. So also all the evil that men designed against our blessed Lord only helped on the accomplishment of the purpose of God to redeem sinners from death and hell by the atonement, through the death of Jesus upon the cross. So also the persecution of the disciples at Jerusalem only scattered the word in distant countries. So also the rage of the Jews against Paul only resulted in sending him to Rome, at the expense of his enemies, where it was his lot to bear testimony to the truth of God for the consolation of saints at Rome, and through his letter to that church to minister instruction and help to believers in every age. Is it not enough to know that this is so, without questioning as to how it all can be? The wisdom and power of God are sufficient.—C.]

REESE, Texas, Sept. 25, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—After a delay I send in my remittance for the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I cannot express to you my appreciation of your kindness toward me, and will say if I do not send in my remittance by the time this subscription runs out, and you do not feel disposed to wait for awhile, just discontinue it until I can send the money; I cannot do without it if I can possibly get the money. I am a very poor man, and have to make my living by hard work, but it seems that we cannot do without the SIGNS, for it is all the preaching we have, and it comes so richly laden with good news from a far country; yes, it comes with the testimony of many testifying to the one and selfsame truth, that Jesus is the Savior of sinners, and contends for the doctrine of the unlimited predestination of God, that he predetermined all events before the world was formed or spoken into existence, and that everything takes place just as and when he predestinated it would. Yes, he saw all events from the beginning, and they absolutely take place as he saw them. Yes, the SIGNS comes richly laden with the experiences of the saints, telling the same story, that when it pleased God to open the eyes of their understanding they saw themselves lost and undone; saw themselves vile sinners in his sight. They say that all flesh is as grass. As the apostle said, "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." Without the mercy of God they would be forever banished from the presence of the all-wise God. Yes, they all say that if God sends their souls to hell his righteous law approves it, and all acknowledge that whatever he does is right. It strengthens my little hope (if I am worthy to even claim a hope in so great a salvation) to see so many testifying to the truth that sinners are saved by grace, love and mercy; that Jesus is the chiefest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely. The SIGNS holds forth and contends for the doctrine of the resurrection as I believe, and in this glorious doctrine is where all my hope lies. Yes, my hope is that this vile body will be raised incorruptible, this mortal shall put on immortality, when the last trump shall sound, and the dead in Christ rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be changed and caught up together to meet the Lord in the air, and we will ever be with the Lord. So I say, Write on, dear brethren and sisters, whenever the Lord gives you utterance or a mind, for you never know where and when you will comfort some poor pilgrim journeying through this waste howling wilderness of sin.

Now, my brethren, if you think this will be of any comfort to any of the household of faith you have my consent to publish it; if not, all will be well with me.

Thanking you for your kindness to me, I remain your little brother in tribulation,

M. L. LILES.

PINSONFORK, Ky., July 28, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I herein send you a short but comprehensive letter written me by brother W. B. Ely, of Knoxville, Tenn. I do not remember that brother Ely's name has ever appeared in the SIGNS. His letter is so explicit, and expressive, too, of his soundness and steadfastness in the glorious doctrine of God our Savior, I feel it will be of much comfort and encouragement to the household of faith, therefore, if you judge it expedient, I should like to have it published in the dear old SIGNS.

Yours, as ever, in love,

W. J. MAY.

KNOXVILLE, Tenn., June 19, 1910.

DEAR ELDER MAY:—I will try again to write, and hope you will pardon my long delay. I have intended to write several times before this, but somehow kept putting it off, nevertheless there is a time for all things, and I will try to convey a few thoughts through this medium. I certainly would love to meet and talk with you, and hear you preach the God-honoring doctrine of absolute predestination. I am shut up in Babylon; seldom see one here that it is any pleasure to talk with, for nearly all despise the truth; some admit a part, and deny a part; I would as soon they denied it all. I am glad there is nothing but predestination, as I understand it embraces all that has been, is now, or ever will be, and the great God of heaven and earth is carrying out his designs without any disappointment as time glides by. I believe all his creation fills exactly the places designed by him, and nothing can take place until the appointed time, neither can anything fail that is appointed, and I believe everything certainly is appointed. I know this belief is hated by every fashionable sect, and no wonder, for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Excuse my delay, and write me when you have leisure. I hope we may be permitted to meet in this time world, and if it is the will of Israel's God we certainly shall. Adieu for this time.

Unworthily, W. B. ELY.

IOLA, Kansas, August 27, 1910.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—My subscription to the SIGNS is long past due, and I remember and think of it every day, but so far have neglected sending it for another year. I want to beg your pardon, and thank you, too, for being so lenient with me in sending the SIGNS to me. I enjoy its coming very much, for it is always filled with good letters from the many dear ones scattered abroad throughout our land. They all tell the same sweet story, showing that they are all taught by the same Teacher, else how could they all tell the same thing when they are hundreds of miles apart? I am made to rejoice that others have traveled the same road that I have; they all speak of their doubts and fears. There are times when I seem to feel the sweet presence of our blessed Lord with me, at other times I am low down in the valley.

A few nights ago I had a dream. I

dreamed of being at an association, and Elder Durand (whom I have never had the pleasure of meeting) was preaching on the deep things of God, found in the second chapter of first Corinthians, tenth verse, and it sounded so good to me that I turned to a brother and said, Is not that wonderful? when he got up with tears streaming down his cheeks and shook hands with me. Then I awoke, O so happy, and that dream has been of much comfort to me ever since, for it seemed I was in Otego, N. Y., where I visited some thirteen years ago, and they all seemed dear to me.

I certainly believe the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS, and hope I will be able to read it the rest of my life.

I will stop for this time, hoping you will remember me and mine when at the throne of grace. Do with this as you think best.

From one saved by the grace of God, if saved at all,

(MRS.) ELLEN E. PRESTON.

WESTON, Mich., August 20, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Through the mercy of the covenant-keeping God I am still permitted to cumber the earth, although the past six years I have been a constant sufferer, but my health has very much improved, for which I thank my blessed heavenly Father. Last year I lost a precious brother, Eugene Jackson; in June our brother, Elder T. J. Wyman, passed to his eternal home, after eight weeks of such suffering as few ever witness. He was taken suddenly with pain in the back of his neck and head, and his body was tortured with boils, having over twenty at one time. Two faithful nurses cared for him night and day. He was very patient, often remarking, like Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." His obituary was written by his widow, who is my sister in the flesh, and he was a twin brother of my husband. His mother, who is nearly ninety-three years of age, refuses to be comforted, as she made her home with the Elder and his wife, Mrs. Celinda Wyman, Weston, Mich. Elder A. F. Dove came in response to a telegram, and spoke words of comfort to the sorrowing ones, and the remains were laid beside two little girls who passed away before. This is a world of sorrow and pain. O may God give me grace to suffer all my appointed time without murmuring, is my prayer. May he bless you in your labors of love to the dear ones.

The SIGNS is very precious. I am glad to hear from our dear brother, Frank McGlade; his harp has so long been on the willows. I have heard him preach some precious sermons, and hope to again listen to him. Many of our dear old brethren are passing away, but our precious Savior knows best.

Your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) J. M. WYMAN.

LIVERPOOL, N. Y., March 22, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—Perhaps you will remember that I wrote you some time ago about trying to secure some subscribers for the SIGNS, but that I could get only one; this lady is one of my dear cousins. I had been reading to her many good articles from the SIGNS, and she enjoyed many excellent things so much that she decided to subscribe for it when she could spare the money. I wish I could have gotten a number of my friends to subscribe for such a good paper. My mother used to take the SIGNS when living; I never knew the time when she did not subscribe for it; she considered it as choice as she did her

Bible. She greatly loved the truth, and I remember how careful she was that not one of them should be lost or roughly handled. I can well remember when a cousin of my mother, John Livingstone, would sit and converse with her, and seemed so interested in talking about the good meetings the Old School Baptists used to have at that time. I would wonder what made my mother so interested in talking with him, but now I can understand that is was a blessing for them to talk over these good things; it was food for them, spiritual food. Where two or three are gathered together in his name, there is he in the midst. Looking back, I can think of many things my dear mother would say and do, the meaning of which I did not then realize as I do now. Her name was Mrs. Benjamin Livingstone, she died in 1883. I think that every one loved her. She was devoted to her family, and seldom went to visit, but tried always to get to the meetings that were held at "Schoharie Hill," as it was called. When my father was too busy to take her to the Saturday meetings, she would walk the distance of two miles, after working hard all Saturday forenoon, so you can readily see there was love in her heart and a drawing towards the dear followers of the Lord. Her feeling was, Entreat me not to leave thee, for where thou goest I will go. I think of her often. She has gone before, and I wish I could feel the assurance that I should one day meet her. I lost a dear son in 1886, and I received an assurance that he was saved, for he gave evidence before he left us that our dear, loving Savior was guiding him. We felt that only the dear heavenly Father could instruct him and enable him to give such assurances as to make us feel that all was well with him, and that our great loss was surely his gain. He graduated from the Albany State Normal School in January, and died in December of the same year. I was so sinful as to almost wish him back again, even when I was satisfied that all was well with him. I trust and hope that they both are resting from all the cares and vexations of this life, and hope that this may be also my lot, but I am so weak and sinful, and cannot feel as I wish that I might. We are poor, weak mortals at the best, and who can help us? Only that One who rules over all things. When men boast, and act as though they owned the earth, I can but think, How foolish; for our God can send some terrible thing and cause them some great sorrow, or cut them down in the twinkling of an eye, but it seems that such ones have no fear of God before their eyes; it must be that they are blind to all that is good, or they would not so do. I desire to be thankful for all things, for the food prepared for me, and for all other blessings, but if I offer thanksgiving for it all, will it be acceptable to God? If I feel to offer prayer when I lie down at night, I think, Can it be acceptable to our Redeemer? I feel sure that he knows me better than I know myself, so I try to breathe out my thoughts to him and then to leave all to him, who is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. He will care for me as he sees fit, for he doeth all things well; he is not slack concerning his promise. I desire to do that which is right, but I am prone to wander, and do not as I would.

I was at the meeting in New York in June, 1907, and saw many of God's dear followers. I did not dare to speak to many of the ministers, for I believe they are the servants of God. I felt my unworthiness so much that it seemed to me better that others speak to them. May God give you health and strength to continue feeding the flock with true bread.

Your sister,

(MRS.) R. M. PITCHER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1910.

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EDITORS:
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LUKE VIII. 18.

BROTHER P. L. Dahlstedt, of El Campo, Texas, requests us to give some thoughts through the SIGNS upon Luke viii. 18. The text reads thus, "Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have." We willingly give such understanding as we have of the text. First, we know that the words here spoken by the Savior were true words. There can be no cavil as to their truth, and all those who believe these things to be the sure word of truth will greatly desire to know their meaning. We learn, verse four in this chapter, that not only his disciples were present when he spake these words, together with all in the chapter preceding, but also much people beside. Of these some had understanding and some had not. The things spoken were important. The parable, which follows the fourth verse, sets forth the different ways in which the word of God, which is declared to be represented by the seed, is received among men, and the different results of this different hearing. In verse sixteen the same word is spoken of as a light which is kindled to be set on a candlestick, and not hidden under a bushel or a bed, that it may give light. The seed in the parable is sown upon all kinds of ground. The light is to shine upon all who are in the house. But the different kinds of ground made different use (shall we say ?) of the seed. So while the light shines in all the house, still all do not use the light alike. The word of Jesus, the word of God, was proclaimed wherever the blessed Lord went, and afterwards wherever the disciples were sent. Their one mission was to preach the word, or to sow the seed, or to make manifest, as by the shining of the light, hidden and secret things, and these were the blessed tidings of the gospel which had been kept hid from ages and from generations until the Son of man came. In this preaching of the gospel there was nothing that was to be concealed. Now since the word is preached as the seed is sown, or as the light kindled, it behooves those who hear to take heed how they hear, or, as is said in Mark ix. 24, "Take heed what ye hear." There is no great difference, as it appears to us, between the two words "how" and "what;" that is, he who is careless as to what he hears will also be careless as to how he hears, and, on the other hand, he who is careful, and who desires to hear only that which is good and true, will also be careful as to how he hears that truth; the two things are inseparably joined together. The force of the admonition, "Take heed therefore how ye hear," will clearly appear if we refer to the preceding parable. One heard carelessly, and the word was soon taken away; one heard, indeed with seeming gladness, but the word was soon forgotten; another heard with some earnestness for the time, but the cares and pleasures of this world soon choked the growth of the seed, so that there was no

bringing forth of perfect fruit; but some heard in prepared hearts, called by the Savior honest and good hearts; these kept the word that had been spoken, and they brought forth fruit with patience. These endured, for the word "patience" in the gospel has in it the thought of endurance. Did these who heard him utter these things possess a heart to receive his word, and to treasure it up? Then these would desire not to be as the first three sorts of hearers, but as the last one. "Take heed therefore how ye hear." Let it not be as the wayside, the stony ground, or the thorny ground hearers, but as the good ground hearers. This word of the Master, as did all his words, searched and divided and made manifest what was in men, and true disciples would feel, as they heard these words, a very solemn questioning as to how it was with themselves. How often the humble-hearted children of God now, when they are hearing the word of truth, feel great questionings within themselves as to how they are hearing.

The Master said, "For whosoever hath, to him shall be given." The good ground in the parable possessed goodness and depth of soil, and to it was given a rich harvest. He that had eyes to see, eyes not blinded by the god of this world, should see in the light, and thus grow in knowledge, and rejoice in the sight of his eyes. To him that hath shall be given, but let it be remembered that if a man hath this honest and good heart in the first place this also is the work of the Lord. The Lord maketh the furrows soft, and sendeth down his showers upon them, and then the seed is added, and fruit is seen at the last. If there be real union with the Lamb of God, then every grace will be added to that one. If one have the mind of Christ, to him shall be added understanding of the will of the Lord. If it be in the heart of one to meditate in the law of the Lord day and night, that one shall be as a tree planted by the waters, bringing forth fruit. If one has a heart to hear the word of God with reverence, having an eye single to the glory of God, that one shall have added to him greater and still greater knowledge of God's will. A thousand illustrations of this truth might be given, but we will forbear. On the other hand, if a man possesses not this honest and good heart, even though the seed of the word seems to fall upon him as it does upon the good ground, and though at the first there seems to be a gladness and readiness to abide by the word, yet all this shall not endure, but even that which he seemed to have of good will disappear. At the first men could not know the hearts of other men; all who professed to receive the word might appear alike true and good, but a little time would make manifest those who were prepared to receive the word and those who had no real place in their hearts for it. From the wayside, hard and trodden down by the feet of men and beasts, the devil catches away the word. From the stony ground, there being after all no depth of earth, there will be found no fruit, and from the thorny ground weeds spring up and utterly choke the word. At the last we look, and even that which these classes of hearers seemed to have has been taken away.

In some sense it appears to us that even the disciples of Jesus may hear in all these ways. Were it not so, we cannot see why the Savior should say to them, Take heed how ye hear. What pastor is there who does not see among his flock just such things as we have been speaking of? It seems evident that

some at least do not take heed how they hear. What pastor who is really a pastor does not often feel, as did Paul, great travail in his heart, and great desires toward God, that those committed to his charge may be prepared to hear the word and receive it in honest hearts? What pastor is there who has not at times felt great sorrow that the faithful word which he proclaims so often seems to bring forth no fruit among the people whom he serves? The object of sowing the seed is that there may be fruit. Any faithful pastor must desire that fruit may appear in the people over whom he has been made overseer. How such a pastor will rejoice when fruit does appear, thus giving evidence that the ground of the heart has been prepared by grace, that here is an honest and good heart indeed. The words, "Take heed therefore how ye hear," are very solemn words indeed.

We feel to leave these thoughts for the consideration of all who may read them, and brother Dahlstedt especially. C.

JEREMIAH LI. 7.

OUR aged brother, Z. Ward, of Bear Wallow, Va., some time since requested that we should say something upon the words found in Jeremiah li. 7: "Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad." The Babylon spoken of in the text is undoubtedly that great city of which so much is said in the Old Testament, and which was one of the most oppressive foes that the people of Israel ever had to contend against, and in which they dwelt in captivity for seventy years, until restored to their own land, as described in Ezra and Nehemiah. In the connection of the text named the fall of this great power under the wrath of God is declared. The Medes and Persians were soon to invade this land and city and to overwhelm it. God had used that proud city to chastise his people for their sins against him, but this they did not know, and there was no fear of God before their eyes. They indeed fulfilled the purposes of God when they carried away Israel into the seventy years captivity, but they did not have this in their heart. They meant only evil against Israel, and sought their own wealth and glory, and not the glory of God, but nevertheless the hand of God was in the event, and his purpose was fulfilled; they did in wickedness what God had purposed in righteousness. How often our God uses the wrath of men to his own praise, and to the accomplishment of his purposes toward his own people; thus he purposed the selling of Joseph into Egypt for good, while the brethren of Joseph purposed it for evil; thus he ordained the betrayal of Jesus into the hands of his enemies, and his crucifixion at their hands, to save much people everlastingly. They who sold Joseph knew not that they were fulfilling the purpose of God. And, concerning the condemnation of the dear Redeemer by men, we read in Acts xiii. 27, "For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him." Notice it was because they knew not Jesus, nor the voices of the prophets. So likewise the rulers of Babylon did not know that the will of the God of Israel was being done by them in enslaving Israel, and that this deed was intended of God for chastisement upon Israel for their sins against him. Now the same God makes

use of the Medes and Persians, who were also ungodly peoples, to humble and chastise Babylon, and these in turn did not know that they were doing the will of God; this was indeed the furthest from their thoughts. For a striking statement of a similar thing, made concerning the Assyrians, see Isaiah x. 7. The Lord declared that he would send Assyria against the people of his wrath to tread them down, &c. "Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few." Thus we learn in all these instances that our God uses wicked men, actuated by wickedness, to accomplish his purposes, either in judgment or in grace and mercy. But the nations and the people are no less guilty, for their purposes are not the purpose of God.

In the verse to which our attention has been called, the riches of this proud city are set forth by the words "golden cup." Babylon, rolling and rioting in wealth, might indeed be called a golden cup, and this great Babylon, exalted with pride, was, after all, in the hand of the Lord; with all her vainglorying she could not move without the Lord's hand. In this city was found everything that exalts itself and that is abominable in the sight of God. Her pride, her vainglory, her boastfulness, arrogance, her display of riches and her pomp and show had made all the earth drunken; that is, other nations envied her, and desired and sought to attain to something of the same exaltation, and to walk in her vain show; the nations were drunken with her wine and were "mad." This word here does not mean what the word often signifies as we use it; that is, anger, but madness, or insanity. Literally the word is, foolish. It is the folly of insanity. The nations had, because of this Babylon, been led away from the paths of sober living, and all other things which make for good and true prosperity, into following all manner of folly and wickedness, after the pattern which she had set them. But this great city must fall; the decree had gone forth. See the sixth and eighth verses for the statement of this.

Before closing this subject we will call attention to the fact that Babylon the great, because of her self-exaltation and wickedness, was used by the inspired writers of the New Testament to set forth the boastful claims of the Romish Church, the real synagogue of Satan. There is not an evil denounced against Babylon of old that this modern Babylon has not been guilty of. Babylon stands for all that opposes and exalts itself against God in every age. As Egypt stands for the darkness and ignorance of the whole world before God, so Babylon stands for the false church, which seeks not to glorify God, but herself, claiming for herself that power and those titles which belong alone to the God of the whole earth, even taking it upon herself to set up her decrees against the direct commandments of God, saying that certain men and women shall not marry, and that certain meats at certain times shall not be eaten, and forbidding the wine to the people at the communion. Of the king of literal Babylon it is said in Isaiah, fourteenth chapter: "For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God." Of this spiritual Babylon, and he who sits at her head, it is written that he opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God; sitting in the temple of God, and showing himself that he is God. How complete is the similarity of the two descriptions.

But we will leave these reflections to our readers. May the Lord bless what has been written to our instruction.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ROMANS V. 14.

BROTHER BEEBE:—If you have light upon the subject, please give your views on Romans v. 14, especially who were the "them" there mentioned, and by so doing much oblige yours in great tribulation,

JOHN HARGROVE.

GIBSON Co., Iowa, Feb. 18, 1864.

The whole verse reads, "Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come." The grand theme of the apostle, as we understand him, was to show how sinners are justified and saved by grace through their vital relationship to our Lord Jesus Christ. In his illustration he refers to their being made sinners in the earthly Adam by his transgression of the law of God, under which he was created. All who have, or hereafter shall descend from the earthly Adam, were created in and identified with him. As his descendants they are partakers of his nature, and as their entire development is subsequent to his transgression, his posterity all participate in the sin of his offence, by the which judgment came upon all men unto condemnation. Being in him from his creation we sinned in him before any of us were brought into personal manifestation; hence when death passed upon him, it passed on all that he was as the embodiment of his entire race. In this, as in many other important things, Adam is, as our text affirms, the figure of him that was to come, for as Adam's offence brought judgment unto condemnation and death upon all his seed as such, so the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Lord from heaven, and whose righteousness is the righteousness of God, is, after the same similitude, imputed to all his seed, that to all who are or ever shall be born of God as his chosen generation, unto justification of life. As it was totally impossible for any who were in the loins of the earthly Adam to escape the guilt and consequences of his disobedience, so it is also and equally impossible that any who were created in Christ Jesus, chosen and embodied in him before the foundation of the world, should fail to participate in his righteousness, and the free gift by it, unto justification of life.

Incidentally, in the elucidation of this subject, he shows that although from Adam to Moses the divine law had not been presented fully in its preceptive form, yet the descendants of Adam in him were included in his condemnation. This is proved by the unremitting reign of death. As the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law, and sin is the transgression of the law, and death the consequence of sin, so death has passed on all men, "for that all have sinned." "For until the law [that is, until it was given by Moses], sin was in the world," and it did not require that a law should be given, and again transgressed, in order to involve those of Adam's children who lived from Adam to Moses; sin being during this lapse of about twenty-three hundred years, in the word, as is proved was the case, by the reign of death as the consequence of sin, shows clearly that all the posterity of Adam were sinners and doomed to die, as they had all sinned in him in the first transgression.

By those who "had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," we understand those who had not during that period transgressed any express command in the manner in which Adam had. The word "similitude" simply

means likeness, or manner. The one offence or transgression of Adam consisted in his doing what God had expressly forbidden him to do. Paul says, in verse thirteen, "Sin is not imputed when there is no law." For instance, if man had been created a free agent, or actor, having liberty to do as he pleased, he could not have been convicted of sin in following the inclination of his own mind, but being a restricted agent, and having received an express command from his Creator, his disobedience to that command was sin. If the liberty to eat of all the trees of the garden had not been abridged by the express exception of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Adam's eating of that tree would have been no transgression, hence the strength of sin is the law. It is sin for us to do what God has forbidden us to do, and equally so for us to leave undone what he has commanded us to do. There were many thousands who died in the space of time indicated, from Adam to Moses, and of that number we may reasonably conclude there were at least some who died as soon as they were born, who had not sinned after the manner, likeness or similitude of Adam's sin, having been conscious of no law or commandment to them expressly given and deliberately disobeyed. For Adam was not deceived, although the woman was, but Adam knew that his eating of the tree was a transgression of the command of God. To sin after the similitude of his transgression could not then been possible for unconscious infants, or any others who were unconscious of disobedience to God, yet they died, as well as all others of their race, which proved that they were sinners, although incapable of what we sometimes call actual personal transgression, after the manner of Adam's transgression. Had death only reigned over those who sinned in the manner or similitude of Adam's transgression, Adam would not have been as striking a figure of him that was to come. Adam's transgression landed all his posterity in guilt, judgment, condemnation and death, thus showing in the nature of the figure that the righteousness of Christ should deliver all his seed from condemnation and death. The argument of the apostle, that those who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, demonstrates the position by him assumed, that all have sinned in Adam, and that sin being upon all his race, death, which is by sin, reigns over them all. It does not require that we should in our own individuality be born into the world and in our own persons actually transgress the law as Adam did to make us sinners, for we were involved in sin and death at the very moment that Adam was, for we were there, and to us in him was the command given and transgressed, consequently death, in passing on him, passed on us all. It therefore follows that we were conceived in sin, and go astray from the womb, speaking lies, for, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one."—Job xiv. 4. Hence we see the throne of death set up, and his cruel reign extended to all the seed of Adam, even them who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's sin. It is certain that his unborn posterity had not sinned after the manner or similitude of Adam's transgression; that is, they had not in their individual persons consciously transgressed any law or commandment in the way, manner or similitude of his sinning, but were all held, as involved in the sin which they committed in him, and so death passed upon all, for that all have and had sinned.

"Conceived in sin, O wretched state,
Before we drew our breath;
The first young pulse began to beat
Iniquity and death."

Thus as guilt, condemnation, ruin and death came on all the children of the earthly Adam before the first of them were born, and allowed no exemption to any of his then undeveloped seed, so the free gift of justification to life comes by the second Adam on every one of the seed of Christ, and was extended to them in him before the world began, consequently before any of them were brought into manifestation as the sons of God by the spiritual birth. "That as sin hath reigned unto death [by the earthly Adam], even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." So as our sin by Adam reigned unto death, our righteousness, in Christ, the righteousness of God, given to us in him, has reigned by him unto eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 15, 1864.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

PLEASE give notice through the SIGNS that I have decided to have my mail come to Aberfeldy, Ontario, Canada, for the present, instead of Alvinston.

D. M. VAIL.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder T. M. Poulson.)

The Elders, messengers and churches composing the Salisbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the church at Broad Creek, Sussex Co., Delaware, beginning Wednesday, October 19th, 1910, and to continue three days, to the churches of which she is composed sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—After a careful observance of the customs or order maintained by this association for fifty-eight years we see that she has not departed from her original prospectus in doctrine or order one iota. (The fifty-eight years are the length of the membership of the writer.) One of the features of her order is that the association should make choice out of her body of some brother to prepare a Circular Letter, to be read before a committee, and, if recommended by them, to be read to the association, and if satisfactory to them, to be adopted and printed with their Minutes, and we believe that almost generally some portion of the Scripture has been cited as the foundation upon which to build the said letter. At this time we will name a strong and important declaration of the apostle Paul, written in his second letter to Timothy, third chapter, sixteenth and seventeenth verses, which reads as follows: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." We do not understand that all that may be called Scripture was given by inspiration of God, but that his mind was then resting upon the Old Testament Scriptures, because they had been given to the prophets as holy men

by direct inspiration of God. Both the New Testament Scriptures and the Old were made known by revelation; the power of each emanating from the same source; the Old pointing forward to the fulfillment of certain things, and the other witnessing that they had already been and were being fulfilled. So inspiration and revelation are in perfect harmony, and so it is established by each that the whole is profitable for doctrine.

Now what do we discover in these witnesses to be the doctrine? Evidently we see in them that God is the only Sovereign, for it is declared that all things were made by him and for him, and that he was before all things. Who then should attempt to interfere with his controlling all things, seeing that he has declared the end from the beginning? Is not this synonymous with the predestination of all things? It is incomprehensible to the natural, finite mind of the greatest of men how this can be without making God to be the author of sin. But is it any more wonderful that God should predestinate the act of the wicked to form a link in the chain of events, than that he should predestinate that a righteous man commit a righteous act to form a link in the same chain? For each one does the act willingly and gladly, and there is no oppression upon the part of either. Do we not believe that Joseph's brethren sold him gladly? But God had a meaning in it. Did not the wife of Potiphar deal with Joseph as she did willingly? This was just as much so as it was that Joseph should interpret the king's dream. Now all of this whole chain was predestinated to fulfill the promise of God to Abraham. In order to apologize for the great Sovereign above, some will say that the good links in the chain were predestinated, and that the wicked ones were by permission. That sentiment has always sounded to us like permissive nonsense. The bringing forward of these truths is for the establishing of the people of God on their most holy faith. It is just as unreasonable to the blindness of carnal nature to tell them that our God predestinated his people unto eternal glory, and that he leaves the rest of mankind unto themselves, and that in this he is not unjust, as it is to speak of the fact that he appoints all things in the line of his providence and still is not the author of sin. Brethren, let us examine closely the blessed Scriptures, and see if they do not teach this wholesome doctrine. We find by reading that God chooses his people in the furnace of affliction, and predestinates their redemption, justification and their glorification. Had not Jesus suffered and died, our sins would still have been upon us. Had he not risen from the dead the stain of guilt would have still rested upon us. Had he not ascended to his mediatorial throne in his glorified state his people could have never entered into the glory which their hope embraces. This is the same redeemed and justified sinner, and not some special part of him called the soul or spirit, but the whole man just as complete as was the whole man Jesus when he arose from the tomb and ascended in his glorified state. So shall all his people come forth bearing the image or likeness of their glorified Head. This is the solid hope of the christian, else the resurrection and ascension of Christ was a failure, and if this be a failure, then our hope is a failure and the Scriptures teach nothing clearly. The experience and hope of the believer are swallowed up in this assurance. Like the psalmist he says, I shall behold thy face in righteousness; then

shall I be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness. This is the completion of the work of Christ, and the Scriptures are profitable for the support of this doctrine, and to the circumcised eyes of the man of God they are seasonable. They are also profitable for reproof, because the feet of the man of God are liable to get out of the way. The psalmist has said, Thy word, O God, is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path. The Scriptures are good also for correction, because the man of God is ever in danger of imbibing some false or unscriptural ideas. Then it is needful that something should speak. Then the Scriptures are at hand for correction. We must believe that the man of God desires to give to the Scriptures their full weight and meaning. When this is done they will always administer correction. They are also good for instruction, not into righteousness, but in righteousness; that is, to further the man of God in the knowledge of that righteousness which is of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Scriptures will show him his self-righteousness, which is by the law. They will not hide his nakedness and shame before God; this he has seen and felt before now. The Scriptures confirm him in it, not into it. He was already in possession of this knowledge. Thus by the Scriptures the man of God, not the man of the world, may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, and the man of God is careful to require a thus saith the Lord in the Scriptures for all that he accepts as good. They are ready to accept always what the Lord has said or done as good works, and whatsoever their tongues express, whatsoever steps they take, or are inclined to take, whatsoever their hands find to do, whatsoever they are called upon to take part in, or to associate with, religiously or otherwise, the Scriptures are to them an unyielding witness ready to justify or to condemn, and there will be with them a conscience at rest. But in the eyes of the world it will be as a gentleman said to an Old School Baptist sister once: "O you Old Baptists will never be popular in the world as long as you stick so close to the Bible." True. Amen. Let it be so.

A. B. FRANCIS, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

(Written by Elder J. B. Slauson.)

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, Olive, N. Y., Sept. 21st and 22nd, 1910, to the several churches comprising the Roxbury Association, together with the associations and meetings with whom we correspond, sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—Once more, through the goodness of a covenant-keeping God, we are blessed with the privilege of assembling ourselves together in an associate capacity, and, according to our custom, we shall endeavor to address you by way of a Circular Letter, and in so doing we desire to present a few thoughts for your consideration upon that most wonderful and sublime subject, Love. This subject appeals to the heart of every heaven-born child as that infinite fountain of perfection and excellency emanating from the throne of God and the Lamb as that unseen power that has brought into existence everything that does exist in heaven and in earth. This subject is so exceeding deep, and so far surpasses the comprehension of the finite mind, that we feel we can only speak of it in the slightest degree, and yet it is a subject of vast

importance to every believer in Christ, for herein is embraced every attribute of the christian's hope. The very foundation of salvation and every principle of truth is embodied in the love of God. "He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love."—1 John iv. 8. Therefore the love of God is as infinite as he is infinite and as eternal as he is eternal, and embraced in his eternal and electing love were the objects of his choice, chosen in Jesus Christ before time began, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. He (God) having the sovereign right of choice, and none being his counsellor, embraced in his immutable love the objects of his choice, and that the manifestation of his love to usward should be made known, it pleased God to speak a world into existence, and to create man from the dust of the earth, and breathe into man's nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul, and from the morn of creation the love of God has been made manifest to the subjects of his grace. We behold the manifestation of the love of God in the natural creation; every blade of grass and every flower that blooms, also the trees of the forest speak forth his praise. "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." When it pleased God to create man from the dust of the earth, and breathe into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul, then the head and progenitor of the Adamic race stood before God in the perfection of his creation, not holy or spiritual, but a perfect man according to the perfect workmanship of God; in him, Adam, was the life of every Adamic child, and from him sprang all nations of the earth, both elect and nonelect, and out of every nation, kindred and tongue God has chosen his people to be manifested in due time, according to the riches of his grace. The church of God, which is composed of sinners of Adam's race, created in Adam, but chosen in Jesus Christ before time began, and embraced in the covenant of God's electing love, by nature are children of wrath even as others. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)." So the sinner was the object of God's love, and the sinner is the subject of redemption, not only the life of the sinner, or spirit of the sinner, but the sinner, soul, body and spirit. As it is written, "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." Not the soul or life of his people, but his people. The testimony of Paul in his letter to Timothy is, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." Paul was the sinner that Jesus came to save; not his life, nor his spirit, but himself, Paul, composed of soul, body and spirit. In 1 Thessalonians v. 23, we have the following recorded: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." All sinners were not subjects of redemption, for all sinners were not embraced in the electing love of God. It is written that God loved Jacob, but he hated Esau. We shall not attempt to explain why he loved Jacob and hated Esau, further than to say that it seemed good in his sight. The effectual work of

redemption was wrought by Jesus on the cross when he offered himself without spot unto God a sacrifice for sin, forever setting aside the sins of his people, and bringing a full and complete redemption, both for time and eternity, to every subject of his discriminating grace. In the gift of the Son of God as a sacrifice for sin presents to our minds his infinite love for his people. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." And we are assured by the apostle Paul in Romans viii. 38, 39, that the love of God is stronger than death: "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Finally, brethren, as we have been given undisputable assurance of the immutable love of God to usward, and feeling assured that his love has been shed abroad in our hearts, let us not love only in name, but in deed and in truth, with a pure heart fervently, and may this love of God shed abroad in our hearts enable us to dwell together in peace and fellowship, casting the mantle of charity over our imperfections, enabling us to forbear one another in love, and may the evidence of pure religion shine forth in our daily walk and conversation, which is undefiled before God and the Father, to visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions, and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. Among the many blessed assurances of the work of divine grace in the hearts of God's children, none is more assuring than the words of the apostle John, saying that we may "know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

"Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above,
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

J. B. SLAUSON, Moderator.
H. C. ELMENDORF, Clerk.

(Written by F. E. Robey.)

The Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, in session with the Ebenezer Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, October 12th, 13th and 14th, 1910, to the several churches and associations with which we correspond sendeth christian love.

To the all-wise and ever-merciful God we desire that we as the church of the true and living God may be guided by the Spirit of God to write to those whose heart and mind are led by the same Spirit: those of like precious faith, whose only hope is in God, who has declared "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." The pleasure of the beloved Son is to fulfill his Father's will in every jot and tittle of the law, to redeem his church, his bride, from under the law, and to present the church as a chaste virgin, without spot or blemish, or any such thing, to the Father, holy, blameless and undefiled before God in love. Who can explain such love as the dear Redeemer's love for his children? No tongue can tell the power of God's love for his children, to send his only begotten Son, the One whom God declared, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." I am the way, the truth and the life, says Jesus; my Father loved you, and I love you, and I gave my life for you, I paid the re-

demption price; I was hated, mocked and spit upon, I was betrayed into the hands of sinners, led to the cross, forsaken by friends and foes; by those who said, If all men forsake thee, I will not; by those who said they would go to prison and to death, and yet in the most trying hour said they knew me not. What a trying hour for the dear Redeemer; apparently his Father had forsaken him, when he cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Is there no eye to pity, no arm to save? By his own almighty power he saved his lost and ruined children. "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." It seems at that trying hour that a mother had forgotten and forsaken her child; there hanging upon the cross, nailed by wicked hands, no mother to lay a loving hand upon the aching head, no mother's kiss to soothe his parched lips. No, he tread the winepress alone, and of all the people there was none with him. All the suffering of the dear Son of God was to fulfill his Father's will. Now listen to him pleading with his Father to forgive them, for they know not what they do. Was there ever such love bestowed upon man as God's love to his children? David, the life of Christ, the church in her lost and ruined state, cries out, "I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me." Yes, the dear Savior passed through floods and flames, his Father's will to proclaim. Dear brethren, do we have such love in our hearts for one another as God's love for his children? If we have, we have the precious promise that we have passed from death unto life. O God, help us to examine our hearts to see if we have God's love. Do we prove by our works that God's love dwells in us, by looking after the interest of the church, or churches? Do we prove our love by looking after the sick and needy ones of the flock? Do we say, Be ye warmed and filled, and give not those things they need? Do we as churches look after the welfare of the pastors of the several churches, to see if they are well cared for and have those things needful for the body? If we do not, we fall far short of doing what God has commanded us to do. May our God help us that our pure minds may be stirred up by way of remembrance of these things.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

J. N. BADGER, Moderator.

S. B. PAXSON, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, at the home of the bride's mother, October 3rd, 1910, Victor H. Laws and Miss M. Maud Truitt, both of Wicomico County, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

George H. Ward departed this life May 24th, 1910, at his daughter's home, aged 81 years, 5 months and 6 days. He was sick about five months with paralysis. He was married in 1854, to Mary Jane Truitt. Three children: John W. Ward, Marion Ward and Mrs. E. M. White, survive him. The funeral services were held at the home, conducted by Elder A. B. Francis. We believe he is at rest.

MELICIA WHITE.

Peter A. McIntyre, son of the late Deacon Peter McIntyre, and brother of Deacon McIntyre, died May 25th, 1910, in the 66th year of his age, at his home near Komoka, Ontario, where he had lived all his life. He was of a retiring disposition, honest and sincere, and while he never made an open profession of religion, was a steadfast believer in the Primitive Baptist doctrine. His home was a home for the Old School Baptists for two generations past. He was always ready to accommodate the people who came to the Lobo meeting, running his conveyance to and from the meeting.

His brother-in-law, JOHN McFARLANE.

Mrs. Nancy C. Beauchamp departed this life March 29th, 1910, after a short illness. I am not informed what her disease was. She seemed to depart in peace. Her age was 75 years, 1 month and 2 days. Her husband preceded her to the grave several years. She showed a deep interest in the Old School Baptist doctrine and order, and was as regular an attendant at the meetings as if she were a member, which gives us to hope that she had a heart to understand the truth. She leaves quite a number of children, just how many I do not know.

By reason of sickness on my part Elder Eubanks was called on, and officiated at her funeral in the Indiantown meeting-house. Hymn 1251 was sung, after which all that was mortal was laid beside her companion to await the summons from on high, then she shall come forth. T. M. POULSON.

MASSEY, Va.

Henry D. Muir died at his home near Grover, Pa., Sept. 27th, 1910, of paralysis, aged 62 years and 11 months. Mr. Muir was of Scotch parentage, and was born near the town of Andes, N. Y. He was one of eight children, all but two having preceded him to the grave. He was married to Miss Fannie Scudder in 1874, who, with one daughter, Mrs. Edwin Bennet, of Painted Post, N. Y., survives him, also one sister, Mrs. Margaret Glendenning, of Andes, N. Y., and one brother, John Muir, of Stamford, N. Y. Mr. Muir was a kind husband and father, an honest, upright man, highly respected by all who knew him. He was of a genial disposition, and always had a pleasant word for every one he met, and made many lasting friends. He made a public profession of religion when seventeen years of age, and although in after years some may have thought it not lasting, yet he frequently expressed his belief in the all-wise God, who doeth all things well, and though he may have felt the infirmities of the flesh, he still had a hope in the mercy of God. We can truly say of him, A good man has fallen, one who was ever ready to lend a helping hand in sickness and trouble among neighbors and friends, and one who will be greatly missed.

NANCY M. OWEN.

MY mother, **Mrs. W. E. K. Frazer,** of Jersey City, was born in Willow Grove, Del., in 1850, and reared there. Her parents were the late William and Catherine Cooper Gooden, stanch Old School Baptists. She was married in 1877, to Wm. E. K. Frazer, of Petersburg, Del., whose parents, the late Ezekiel and Mary Frazer, were also faithful members of Cow Marsh Church. She never made an open confession of faith, but was very fond of the church, and attended whenever she could, but for many years we lived in southwest Virginia, where there were none of her faith, but since living here she has attended meeting in New York as often as possible. She was ill for six months, and the writer deeply regrets that she did not think of notifying Elder McConnell, as I am sure it would have pleased and benefited her. The funeral service was conducted by him at her home, Monday evening, Sept. 19th. Interment was at Elkton, Md., Sept. 20th. She is survived by her husband and two daughters: Mrs. Eugene Cone and Dora Frazer, both of Jersey City. Her life was always quiet, but she was a great friend of all who walked through troubled paths, and met her own disappointments and trials with great courage and uncomplainingly. DORA FRAZER.

JERSEY CITY, N. J.

Edward Rouse was born in Scioto County, Ohio, March 18th, 1825, and died April 6th, 1910, at his home northeast of Danville, Ill., having reached the advanced age of 85 years and 18 days. He was the son of Reason and Martha Rouse, and the last surviving member of a family of six children. Mr. Rouse was married to Miss Minerva Martin, October 4th, 1846. To that union were born twelve children, ten of whom survive, one son having passed away in young manhood, while another died in infancy. Besides the children he leaves thirty-seven grandchildren, twenty-one great-grandchildren and a host of friends and neighbors to mourn his death. He was a member of the Hopewell Baptist Church, with which he united twelve years ago, and was baptized by Elder Joel Kemper. He buried his aged companion one year ago the first day of May. Since that time grandpa, as his near friends called him, was apparently a changed man, life seeming to be more of a burden than a pleasure to him, but he had a strong hope, and often said, "My time is appointed, the Lord's will be done." They both died on the same farm that they settled on some sixty years ago, where they reared their family. Their home was a Baptist home, and no stranger was ever turned away. Grandpa was blessed with good eyesight, reading his Bible daily until the last few months without glasses.

The funeral services were held Thursday afternoon in the Hopewell Baptist meetinghouse, Elder J. L. Dobbs, of Springfield, officiating. Burial took place in Springhill Cemetery.

His granddaughter,

(MRS.) W. B. CANINE.

DANVILLE, Ill.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 78. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1910. NO. 22.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE GOSPEL TRUMPET'S CERTAIN SOUND.

AN angel of God appeared unto Joseph, the betrothed husband of Mary, who was chosen of God to be the mother of Jesus, concluding his address to him by saying, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." This gives a clear and certain sound. Two of God's "shalls" are in it. This same God in another place said, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." There is no uncertain sound in this word, which proceeded out of the mouth of the most high God. "Out of the mouth of the Most High proceedeth not evil and good." It is said of him, "He is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." There is in all this the certain sound of the great trumpet of the everlasting gospel of the grace of God, Father, Son and Spirit; there is not one quiver of uncertainty in it. But who are his people? Let God himself answer; he is his own interpreter, and he does not speak in a doubtful tone, hear him, ye chosen and redeemed from among men. "The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." A portion is not the whole. This portion of mankind were, when as yet there was none of them, chosen in Christ, the eternal and only begotten Son of God. As it is written, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." No man can prove that this did not take place in the eternal counsel of our three-one God, who framed the everlasting counsel which standeth sure to all generations. He by Isaiah said, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My

counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." There is no uncertain sound in all this; it is God who speaks, and who can prevent him from doing his will in heaven and in earth? Men of corrupt minds deny it, but their unwise frothing does not overturn it.

> "'Twas he eternal ages past
> Formed his great plan from first to last;
> And what his arm would e'er fulfill
> Stood ever present to his will.
>
> The same with one capacious glance,
> World upon world to life advance,
> And fixed the end e'er time began
> Of seraph, reptile and of man."

Men will and do call these vast settlements of God fatalism; they cannot prove it however. It was a Pagan, who knew not our holy God, who first put forth the vile doctrine of fatalism. There is no such thing as fatalism with God. After creating the heaven and the earth, and the whole host of them, by the word of his power, he did not go out from his creation, for it is absolutely true of him that he fills eternity and time with his invisible presence. He is omnipresent, in every place, be it eternity or time. This is the certain sound uttered by the gospel trumpet; it is truth, and cannot be battered down by all the wisdom of man, which is but foolishness in the holy estimation of our God. Let any of these high and mighty men, who are so wise in their own conceit, name the person who now is in heaven who was not chosen in Christ before the world began, that he should come to be in actual vital union with him by the actual personal presence of the Lord through the Holy Ghost shed abroad in his vile humanity through the intercession of our great High Priest, who is the one and only Mediator between God and man. Let them name such an one, and I will cease trying the sweet and pleasant work of blowing the trumpet of the gospel with a Shibboleth sound. But this they cannot do, so I am bold, whether they will hear or forbear, in trying to preach the everlasting gospel, saying with trumpet tones, Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come; worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. The ever-increasing confusion of tongues and voices that are in the world to-day are all appointed of God, and are the fanning-mill that he uses to separate the precious from the vile, the chaff from the wheat. "What is the chaff to the wheat?" The chaff is the daily portion of mankind; the wheat is, and will ever so remain eternally, the Lord's portion. This dividing of mankind into two portions cannot be successfully controverted. Here is the holy word of God, who did it, and who will make it plain to men and devils when he judges the world in righteousness by that Man whom he has ordained, whereof he hath given assurance to all men in that he hath raised him from the dead. "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." This is clear and certain in the work that he has done, and is even now doing in the world. "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth

thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water." "And they sang a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." "And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." These great unalterable truths of the gospel pluck up by the roots the Fullerite's doctrine of general atonement and special application of the benefits of the atonement. This doctrine it further casts down because it would make a decided difference between the purposes and work of Christ, and the will and work of the Holy Spirit, and this is not the truth, "for there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."

In the above quotation from Revelation we have full, clear, ringing statements of the work of the wonderful Savior in saving his people from their sins, and the work of the Holy Ghost in making the same number of sinners kings and priests unto God. There is no people like God's portion of mankind. They are a peculiar people in many respects. "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." And again, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." This is emphatically a most certain sound, inspiring the sweetest of hopes in our hearts, and strengthening us to run with patience the race set before us, to fight not as those who beat the air, but who win the prize which is beyond the end of the race, reserved in heaven for every sinner for whom Jesus the Godman, in all his wonderful fullness, was crucified, suffered, bled, died, revived, arose from the dead, ascended to heaven, led captivity captive and received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God the Holy Ghost might dwell among them. These are exceedingly great, sweet and precious promises, which cannot be disannulled; they are all yea and amen.

"The work which his goodness began,
The arm of his strength will complete;
His promise is yea and amen,
And never was forfeited yet."

But it remains for a professor in a great college to deny what I am here earnestly contending for, and to land himself in the ranks of worse infidelity than even blinded Ingersoll ever propagated, and that with the free consent of his associates. How true it is that the world by its wisdom knows not God. No man ever yet knew the mind of God in his eternal salvation, save as it pleased God in his own set time to favor Zion and reveal himself to him, and in him, as his all-sufficient, gracious Savior. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again?" "Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things." "I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me

not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name." Here is no uncertain sound, and it plucks up by the roots the foolish, vain and sinful exhortations of the popular preachers of our time, in telling sinners dead in trespasses and in sin that God has done all for them that he will do unless they take the first step to him, repent, and accept the overtures of mercy, thundering at them in a deceitful handling of the holy oracles of God, saying, Whoever will come may come and partake of the water of life freely. There are at least two lies in this so-called Scripture, and as no lie is ever of the truth, the Holy Spirit of truth never inspired it. The word "partake" is not in the text at all, neither a "will come," nor a "may come," associated together, as it is quoted in these mists of Satan. But the wonderful truths which I have quoted from Isaiah, and from Paul's letters, give our precious Lord the preeminence in all things. The dear Son of God is the Creator of all things, and "by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence." And he is the author and finisher of the salvation of his people. "Salvation is of the Lord." "Salvation belongeth unto the Lord." "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." "I am the Lord; that is my name: and my glory I will not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." Think of it! The first great heresy in departing from the foundation laid in Zion being given over to strong delusion, that they might believe a lie, was in the thought that it belongeth to the priest to carry their god elevated upon a pole before their five hundred millions of wondering and worshiping spectators. This is certainly strong delusion, but real believers with all their heart choose that their God should carry them, and this is the good old way. "In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them: and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." O how lovingly and tenderly he carries the trembling lambs in his bosom. All the hosts of darkness and all the logic of men cannot blot out these comforting truths of the gospel, because they are revealed to the hearts of the people of God. His witness is absolutely true. "No man speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed: and no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." If we have not the Spirit of Christ we are none of his. These are clear and certain notes sounded by the trumpet of the gospel of the ever-blessed God and Savior.

But now hear what unregenerate people will say and do. "Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not." But "known unto God are all his works, from the beginning." What beginning? The beginning of creation? No, it is a better beginning than that. Here it is: "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning or ever the earth was. * * * Then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of man." This is our eternal Messiah, the Father's co-eternal and co-equal Son, who delighted to do the will of his Father, and

through him, our Father in heaven also. That will is declared in no uncertain words. "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." "Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." Now, beloved sons of God by adopting grace, hear him, O hear him with his expiring breath, as it were, saying to the Father who sent him, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do; I have glorified thee on the earth; I have manifested thy name unto men which thou gavest me out of the world. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Does this sound like the modern doctrine, that there are souls in hell for whom Christ died who might have been in heaven if the people would only contribute more money to send missionaries to foreign lands? Truly it is the most curious enigma of modern times that men should think that souls possessing eternal life should be sent to hell; but it is not true however. The children of God have a real family resemblance to each other and wear the same family clothing, and they are all named after Christ. "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." There is not, nor will there ever be, a human being in hell for whom Christ died. It is true according to our chronology that eighteen hundred and ninety eight years before the Son of God was crucified and slain the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities of the surrounding plain, were suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, and as justice cannot demand that a debt should be twice paid, Christ manifestly did not suffer for their sins. It is a solemn declaration indeed, "I know you not." He did not know them when he was set up before the morning stars sang together. He never knew them in eternal, electing love, nor in any other act of redeeming grace. He did not know them in making them new creatures in Christ by the personal presence and power of the Holy Ghost, which came out from the bosom of the Father, through the glorified humanity of the eternal Son of God. He did not know them in putting his Spirit into their depraved beings, thus making new creatures of them. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature [a new creation]: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." "There is therefore, no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

"'Twas with an everlasting love
That God his own elect embraced
Before he made the worlds above,
Or earth on her huge columns placed.

Long ere the sun's refulgent ray
Primeval shades of darkness drove,
They on his sacred bosom lay,
Loved with an everlasting love.

Then in his love and his decrees
Christ and his bride appeared as one;
Her sin, by imputation his,
While she in spotless splendor shone."

"Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Wonderful mystery, that the blood which was shed nineteen hundred years ago is as fresh as when it was poured out on the

cross, and when applied by the Holy Ghost purges our consciences from dead works to serve the living God. Our God, by the Holy Spirit, walks and dwells in the hearts of his people who have been cleansed in the blood of Christ. This brings them, even in this sinful world, nearer to God than any angel in heaven that stands in his presence, ready without questioning to do his bidding. "Great is the mystery of godliness," and great is the mystery of God walking and dwelling in sinful worms of the dust, while yet they are not crushed into nonentity, yet it is absolutely true that all christians are the habitation of God, through the Holy Ghost which personally dwells in them. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." But this is not true of all who call themselves christians, there was one exception even among the apostles themselves. Jesus said, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" This he said of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon Iscariot, and not of Simon Peter. This brings me to consider the final truth of the great trumpet of the gospel, which proves conclusively that our Lord Jesus Christ did not die for the sins of all mankind. Of Judas Jesus said, "The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born." Faithfully the Lord Jesus told him that he was the man by whom he should be betrayed. This took place while they were eating the last passover supper, and before the institution of the Lord's supper, in which the Lord used the elements of bread and wine, which custom had provided on the paschal table. There is not a scintilla of evidence that Judas, the betrayer, ever heard the blessed words drop from the gracious lips of Jesus, This is my body, which was broken for you, and this cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. He was in too much haste to obtain the money for which he had contracted for the betrayal of Jesus while he was in Bethany. In this he acted like many who want much money before they go to foreign lands to save sinners and to add to the number of the redeemed. They tell glowing and affecting stories of how the people are begging them to come and save them. Dead sinners calling for mercy! What a sinful contradiction! How loudly they sing Bishop Heber's lie:

"From Greenland's icy mountain,
From India's coral strand,
Where Afric's sunny fountains
Roll down their golden sand,
From many an ancient river,
From many a palmy plain,
They call us to deliver
Their land from error's chain."

Judas was in hot haste to get those thirty pieces of silver, and he got them, but see the consequence: "Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out." Truly it had been good for him had he never been born. "Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus." Here we have two names, Jesus and Judas; these are nouns, in place of which pronouns are used. Go now with this key

to the Psalms of David, and place the nouns Jesus and Judas in the places of the pronouns there. Take first the sixty-ninth Psalm, there place the noun Jesus in the places where the pronoun is used: They gave Jesus gall for Jesus' meat, and in Jesus' thirst they gave Jesus vinegar to drink, and this actually took place when he hung upon the cross. Now turn to the one hundred and ninth Psalm; here is the word which the Holy Ghost spake by the mouth of David concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus; here is pure and absolute truth; the Spirit of God gave it. Carnal reasoning will never prove that it is not pure, holy and true. Men have tried to do this; I have heard them, but they shall perish, while the Psalm remains a vital portion of the faith once delivered unto the saints. This for myself I know personally to be true, for the Holy Ghost has often applied portions of it to my heart, keeping me lowly at the feet of Jesus and causing me to earnestly plead in his name that I may be preserved unto the coming of the Bridegroom to take to her heavenly home his lovely bride. Using this key to this Psalm, it is absolutely shown that there was no salvation for Judas Iscariot, nor for his father, or mother, or wife, or children. It is conclusive evidence that Christ did not die to save them, and that he did not take their sins upon himself, bearing them into the land of eternal oblivion. It proves special atonement so thoroughly that the doctrine is as immovable as the very throne of God. As Sodom and Gomorrah are suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, so must it be with Judas also, and there they remain, with many more of the enemies of God. Amen.

GILLESPIG MAEIAIN.

DETROIT, Mich., Aug., 1910..

BLUE SPRINGS, Mo., Feb. 2, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN CHICK AND KER:—I have just finished reading the SIGNS of February 1st, and find it full of real comfort and enjoyment. It seemed to come as a personal letter to me, for I had been thinking of some of the dear writers whom I had met and loved, and wished that I might be able to write to each one of them, and as I read on and on this wish seemed fulfilled in their blessed messages in the SIGNS. Truly we are one family, wonderfully scattered here and there through the world, yet kept in close communion and love with each other through the tender mercy and ever watchful care of our heavenly Father. While on a visit recently in Enid, Oklahoma, I had the pleasure of meeting several of this dear family, the dear Lord's little ones: brother Walters, whose membership is with the church at York, Nebraska, brother and sister Posey, who belong to the church near Carmen, which is brother Beeman's home church, and of which he is pastor. I had the unspeakable pleasure of meeting brother and sister Beeman in their home, in Helena, where in company with sister Posey I had gone to attend their regular meeting. I had not met brother and sister Beeman since they left this locality and moved to Oklahoma. Our conversation was indeed precious and comforting, beginning at their home and continuing in the afternoon as we drove perhaps nine miles to their place of meeting at the home of sister Francis, which was formerly brother Beeman's home (near Carmen). Services were held twice on Saturday, and on Sunday Elder Thompson, of Kansas, was a visitor at this meeting and assisted in the services. All were strangers in the flesh to me, yet there was that spirit of oneness manifested, which made us all akin.

The dear saints had come from different parts of the State to fill their seats in their home church, and one could read on their countenances the joy that filled their hearts, which seemed lifted in prayer and praise, either in the singing of the hymns or in listening to the message revealed to their pastor for them. Long shall I remember the place of worship and the holy influence of its spirit upon my own heart; I felt for me it was good to be there, though I felt wholly unworthy the privilege and great pleasure of such a meeting. It made me feel humble, and at the same time, I trust, grateful and joyous to have met these dear ones and to have joined them in their worship. On my return to my home here I was again made joyous to find the inclosed letter from brother J. T. Barnes awaiting me, and having read it with much enjoyment myself, and having shared it with members of the dear one family here, it was our mutual desire that the readers of our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, might also enjoy it.

With christian love to you and all the dear household, I am, unworthily, your sister,

(MRS.) NELIA M. STARTZMAN.

DAYTON, Wash., Nov. 5, 1909.

MRS. STARTZMAN—VERY DEAR SISTER:—I feel that it is needful for me to answer your most excellent letter, which came to hand some time back, and should have been answered long before now, but the only excuse I can give is a barren mind. To will is present, but how to perform that will is the great object to me. My mind has been exercised of late on an expression of inspiration recorded in the epistle of Jude. He introduces himself as the servant of Jesus Christ, and addresses them that are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ and called. There can be no mistake in who makes the address, nor to whom it is made. We who hope to be the characters addressed, let us give heed to the things spoken. First, he says, Let mercy and peace and love be multiplied. Dear sister, this is something wonderful to me, when we call to mind the wonders of mercy and peace and love that filled our hearts when this sanctification and preservation were made known to us by that holy call which called us from darkness to light. O how my soul did rejoice in a realization of that love, and now after thirty years of hard battling with the flesh, the world and the devil, to hear the Spirit say, Let all these blessings be multiplied. We know what multiply means; it means what the old prophet stated in the fortieth chapter of his prophecy: that we have received double for all our sins, and as Jesus says, "I am come that they [the sanctified] might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly," (have it multiplied), so he would say,

> "E'en down to old age, all my people shall prove,
> My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love."

So the third verse, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation." It seems to me in this expression some among us fail to get the true essence of Jude's meaning; some seem to think Jude was writing about a salvation inferior to that spoken of by Simeon and Jonah and Peter when he says there is salvation in none other, and for this reason they say Jude called it common salvation. I do not so understand it; I understand Jude to teach that this salvation is common with all, (the sanctified). In Titus it is called common faith, and Paul in his letter to the saints at Rome explains it by a mutual faith, so

it is mutual as our hope is mutual. We all have a common hope; that is, it is mutual hope. I hope for immortality and you hope for immortality, so our hope is identically the same, it is common to us both, as it is to all the faithful, both Jew and Greek, and my hope is based upon the mercy and love of God, and this, Jude says, shall be multiplied, so then we can rejoice in tribulation, for as our days so shall grace be given (multiplied) to suit our necessities. The foundation of this hope shall never weaken, but as we are launched out farther from the shores of time to meet the trials of this life, mercy and peace and love shall be multiplied; this strengthens our faith. So we see Jude does not call it common because it is inferior or different from God's salvation. Some seem to divide it from the faith of God's elect which follows, but it seems to me in this division that they deny the faith of God's elect, for they say God has wrought out eternal redemption and made it manifest to us in the new birth, or quickening, and has told us what to do, and now if we do not work we will be chastised, and if we do work we will be blessed. It seems to me that if this be true the multiplying does not depend upon the mercy of God, but on the act of the creature, and when we take the testimony of the prophets and of Jesus and his apostles concerning the faith of God's elect it has always rested on the sovereignty of God. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob sojourned in the land of promise, but it was as a strange land to them. Why was it strange? Because they had to walk by faith, not by sight. No doubt, dear sister, that Abraham felt and realized the wonder and mystery in having to offer his only son, yet his faith was in God, that he (God) was able to raise him up again; while he knew not God's way, yet he believed God was sovereign, and had power to raise him up, but as the prophet said, All thy children shall be taught of God, so we see this teaching is mutual (common), and Paul says, "Covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way," so in the case of Abraham God showed him a more excellent way. Here mercy and peace and love were multiplied, for God spake and it was done, commanded and it stood fast. So in the trying hour of the faith of God's elect he commands the hand, which, according to many was going to strike the fatal blow, to be stayed, and Abraham was there made to see the wonders of the atoning Lamb of God, when he turned and saw the innocent offering that God had prepared, caught by the horns in the thicket. Christ caught, or made, sin for us, who knew no sin. Hear him say, I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of the Father. And the faith of God's elect which was in him, the Head of the body, enabled him to say, I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again, and whatsoever my Father commands, that I do. He says, As my Father has sent me, even so have I sent you. Now, dear sister, it seems to me that for us to contend for the faith of God's elect is to tell our brethren that God sent his only Son into this sinful world to suffer for us, or for our sins, and he tells us, "Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves," and if they persecute me they will persecute you; you shall be evil spoken of for my name's sake. It is through great tribulation we enter the kingdom, and ten thousand other discouraging and perplexing trials we are to pass through, but in all we have the promise of his presence, and his grace which is sufficient to carry us through.

I must now stop, for I fear you will cease writing to me in order to stop me, but, dear sister, when my poor mind is exercised on the goodness and mercy of God it seems that the multiplying is so great I never find a place to stop. This leaves us all in reasonable health; I hope it may find you and your dear family and all the brethren well. My wife joins me in love to you and all the dear saints.

Yours in the bonds of the gospel,

J. T. BARNES.

PORTLAND, Ind., July, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose to you the following thoughts, and leave them willingly to your judgment as to whether to publish them or not.

Ye are married to another. I have often tried to tell of the change in a sinner at the new birth, and have often talked with others, and have heard others talk about it, and have heard some contention about it; some have claimed that it is the spirit that is born again, and others that it is the sinner. This last has seemed to me to be the only true and tenable position. It has appeared to me that the apostle Paul has said things which have helped me to arrive at some plain evidence as to what this change is. Some say that the flesh, or the sinner, is not changed, and that, simply because after the new birth we still sin, which could not be so they say if the sinner is born again. It has sometimes occurred to me that perhaps we have been looking for this change in the wrong person. The apostle Paul in Romans, sixth and seventh chapters, in summing up some things along the line of this change, says to his brethren, When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. But now being made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. He told them that once they had yielded themselves as the servants of sin unto death, but now that they should yield themselves servants unto righteousness. Then to make his position more clear he adds, Brethren, I speak to them that know the law. For the woman that hath a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he liveth. But if the husband be dead she is free from the law. It occurs to me that right here we might see a point, for it may be asked, What is changed about the woman? The first notable change is that she has now no husband to obey; that is, after his death, and also she is now at liberty to marry another. If she does so, then what is the change in the woman? She would say that she has now another husband, and that she now is serving another husband. There has been no material change in the woman, she is the same person, but she has changed husbands. So when the apostle told his brethren that they had been servants to sin and were free from righteousness, but now had become servants to righteousness, and were freed from sin, he certainly gave them to understand that their servitude had been changed. The woman was in bondage to her first husband until he died. So likewise he said, "Brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead." First they were married to sin and to the law, but now were become dead to the first husband, by the death of Christ, and now have been married unto Christ. The first husband was a hard, cruel husband, always leading them into sin, they were the servants of sin, but their second husband is always leading them into righteousness; now they are serving another and better

husband. You ask, What is changed? The best answer that I know is, Ask the woman who has served a cruel, wicked husband until he died, and then afterward married a good, righteous, loving husband and is serving him; ask her what the change is. She will tell us that she has been delivered from bondage, from a husband who was cruel and always compelling her to sin, and has now come to serve a loving, righteous husband. If you then ask her what is changed about her, she will tell you that the husbands are changed, and the service is changed. Ask her if she is still a sinner, and she will answer yes, but not any longer a servant of sin; she will now tell you that she is a servant of righteousness. Her first husband brought every influence to bear upon her to lead her into sin, but her better husband leads her into righteousness. So, ask a poor sinner who has received pardon for his sins whether the bondage and service which he was rendering to the law and to sin did not become heavier and heavier, and whether this cruel master did not cause him to cry out for deliverance, and he will tell you of days, weeks, months and years, when he was under the bondage of sin and the law, and the burden was increased until death delivered him from under this law. This death was the death of Christ. Ask him about the change, and he will say, I was blind, but I now see; I was lost, but now I am found; I was serving and running after sin, but now I am serving and running after righteousness. Ask him if he is still a sinner, and he will reply, Yes. Ask him then what the change is, and he will tell you that he is serving another master, and he is rendering a different service. He had been under the law, but now he is under grace. Ask him if the flesh is changed, and he will say, No, but the change is in the master, whom he serves. Ask, Is the change a great change? and he will say yes. Ask him if the old man is changed, and he will tell you that he is put off. Paul said, "Seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds." Seeing ye have put off, as concerning your former conversation, the old man, the old deeds, and the old conversation is put off; these are termed "the old man." Paul did not consider that the literal flesh was the old man. He told the brethren that they had put off the old man, while they still retained the flesh. Hence the one great answer to it all is, Ye are married to another, and each sinner thus redeemed will say for himself, I am married to another; I love another; I serve another. I did not choose him, but he chose me. The change is great, and still I am a sinner.

Your brother,

NEWTON PETERS.

[THE above reflections are very interesting, and we have read them with hearty approbation. The question as to whom it is that is saved, finds a full and complete answer in the text, "Is passed from death unto life."—C.]

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., July 10, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER GILLIS:—We were very glad indeed to hear of your safe arrival home, after your lovely visit with us, and you will probably never know how glad we were to have you both with us. Being members of the same household, therefore brethren and sisters, we love each other with pure hearts fervently, although we live far from each other in this world. Time or distance makes no difference in the beautiful city of our God, all are of one faith and one mind, and all bound together in one

bundle of love, the kind of love that does not fade or grow cold. The poet in one of our hymns says, "Love is the fountain whence all true obedience flows." We cannot measure the love of God, it fills our whole being; like a gentle flowing river, it constantly ebbs and flows, bringing to us the blessings, the graces and all the attributes of our God, bringing to us the holy child Jesus, and in him we also become as little children, forgetting the things that are behind, through which we have passed, and looking forward to heavenly things, looking for "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." The Scriptures tell us that we love God because he first loved us; every day our hearts declare this truth, for we could never, with our carnal minds, love the things which our fleshly hearts naturally hate; but when the light of life from the fountain of God's love shines in our heart, and shows us how vile and full of sin we are, at the same time our eyes of faith in rapture beholding Jesus as the One altogether lovely, and the chiefest among ten thousand, we see his wondrous beauty in every manifestation of his matchless grace. We recognize his beauty as it is reflected in our own heart, for he hath clothed us in garments which he has weaved out of the texture of his own precious love, and clothed us with his perfect righteousness and holiness. He has shown us also how he suffered for our sakes: "His visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men." The cruel nails which pierced his hands, and the spear his side, pierce our hearts also, and in anguish of soul we sorrow as none but the broken-hearted can. He shows us also how, for the great love wherewith he loved us, he bowed the heavens and came down from the glory he had with the Father before the worlds were into this sin-cursed world to suffer and to die for us, that we might be made beautiful in his sight and glorious in the sight of the Father. Is it any wonder then that we love him who first loved us, and desire with all our hearts to praise and glorify him in our souls and our bodies which are his? The love of God constraineth us unto all good deeds, while the desires of the flesh create a constant warfare in us, but in Christ we overcome. I could not help thinking while you were here, and as the love of God was manifested, how our gracious Redeemer viewed his church, his bride, to his eyes of love, as he looked upon her without a cloud between; there was in her neither spot nor blemish, therefore he said to her in the Song, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." When we behold him also it is the same, he is altogether glorious and perfect in holiness and wonderful in praises, but at the same time we behold ourselves in our vileness, our pollution and sin, therefore, with dear old Job, we abhor ourselves, and repent in dust and ashes, and as we view the great contrast between him and us, O how we long and desire to be like Him, that we might praise him for his wonderful work which he has wrought out for us in salvation. When we are enabled to discriminate between that which cometh up out of the earth and that which cometh down from heaven, then are we walking by faith, and not by sight, for faith alone can show us these things. Our natural mind cannot go beyond the things of

time and sense, while the eye of faith beholds and points out to us heavenly things and heavenly joys. It points out a sovereign and all-wise God, a God of love, also a complete Savior, who doth save to the uttermost; he is rich in grace and abundant in mercy; it also shows us ourselves as we stand in him, that it is not of ourselves, but of his rich and reigning grace that we are what we are and who we are.

This morning your excellent photograph came at breakfast time, and we thank you for it. It is as natural as life, and good to look upon.

I wish you could have been with us at our fourth of July gathering at brother and sister Yerkes'. It was a beautiful day overhead, and we had a delightful time; there were ninety-one present; Elders Chick, McConnell, Eubanks, Fenton and myself were the ministers present. I think that the church in Canada should feel very much encouraged in having additions at each quarterly meeting. When the spirit of incoming is observed in the churches it is a sign of a healthy condition, and of the presence of the Lord in our midst. Seedtime and harvest, rain and drought, summer and winter, come in their turn to all the churches; an appointed time for all things. The Lord has a set time to favor Zion, a time for prosperity and a time for adversity. But God moves in his own mysterious way, and all is right. May you, dear brother and sister, be given the spirit of blessed peace in the glorious gospel of the Son of God in the beauty of holiness. All the household join me in love and fellowship to you both, and especially give my love to mother Gillis and her faithful daughter.

Affectionately,

B. F. COULTER.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., Aug. 4, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—The inclosed letter from Elder Thornbury was received by me yesterday, and I think it would be of comfort to many of the Lord's children, therefore I take the privilege of sending it to you for the SIGNS.

Your brother in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

RATCLIFF, Ky., July 31, 1910.

ELDER L. H. HARDY—VERY DEAR BROTHER:—I have very often thought of writing you, but my inability to write, and a deep feeling sense of my unworthiness, have caused me to desist.

Your article to dear Elder Chick, published in volume seventy-eight, number fifteen, of the SIGNS of May 15th, 1910, came so close to what I have experienced I can no longer forbear writing to tell you how blessedly comforting it is to know you set forth in such a clear way the glorious truth of God our only Savior. With you, I have been greatly comforted in reading the rich editorials of Elders Chick and Ker, and the articles written by the many correspondents have indeed been a feast of fat things to my poor, thirsty soul; as you say, they made me feel so much of my ignorance and weakness that I have often questioned whether I have ever preached the glorious gospel of God's grace to the comfort of his humble poor, and to the honor of his holy name; yet to know that those who cannot tell it themselves are blessed to know the joyful sound when they hear it, is very comforting; indeed, there is nothing like it, for in it there is nothing uncertain, but it is all to the glory of God's perfection in all his works. As you said, that which is perfect cannot be improved upon. In speaking of the perfect work of God, we can but view it as did Moses when he

said, "He is the Rock, his work is perfect."—Deut. xxxii. 4. What the Lord doeth shall stand for ever; nothing can be taken from it, nor anything added to it; hence the work of sovereign grace, by which the whole election of grace is saved, cannot fail, nor can the true religion of our blessed Lord change or be changed. It is like our blessed Savior, and is the work of the Spirit wrought in the heart by him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. But such cannot be said of man, for man is imperfect and corrupt; he could and did sin, yet in this God was not disappointed. Man had, and yet has, his nature and his life, and in him was no inclination to holiness, lust was in his (Adam's, both male and female,) flesh, and he must live according to the nature he had. In this God's holy purpose was fulfilled, and Christ, our Surety before the fall, came at the appointed time of the Father and redeemed those chosen in him from under the curse of the law, and reconciled them unto God by his death, and they shall be saved by his life, for he gives unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. In this we are the recipients, he is the giver, therefore the praise or glory is his. In ourselves we can do nothing, we must be and are swallowed up of his love, our own will destroyed; then we obey the word of the Lord, yet it is no more I that do it, but Christ who dwells in me. Then, my dear brother, as you say, I am as passive as ever; yes, like the poor man at the pool. Christ is just as active in us now in the fulfillment of his word as he was then in himself in the days of his flesh. So I can take no praise to myself (and there is none due me) for anything I have done, or that has been done in me, but I must give all praise to God. There is no thought more comforting to me than to have the blessed assurance sealed by the testimony of our God that he is a sovereign over all beings, creatures and things, and none can go beyond the bounds he has set, nor exercise any power but that he has given; whether they are righteous or wicked, good or evil, all are under his absolute control. Did he not overthrow the good counsel of Ahithophel to the intent that he might bring evil upon Absalom? Did he not keep Balaam from cursing Israel? Did he not overthrow both the good and evil intentions of Joseph's brethren? Did he not overthrow the wicked design of Haman against his people and turn their sorrow into rejoicing? Did he not overthrow the wicked intentions of Paul's enemies, who had bound themselves under oath that they would neither eat nor sleep until they had killed him, as well as to check him while he was on his way to Damascus? Did he not overthrow the willingness of Pilate to release our dear Savior, as well as the wicked attempts of his enemies in seeking to prevent his resurrection? Ah yes, my brother, he did all this, just as he overthrows all things which are contrary to his purpose. Kingdoms may rise and fall, nations may flourish and decay, yet the will or counsel of God shall not fail, for he hath spoken it, and it must stand fast.

My precious brother, I have not written as I thought to; I only had it in my mind to speak to you of the comfort I received from reading your letter to Elder Chick, but have written thus. I hope you will pardon me for the liberty I have taken. It seems too much to ask a reply. I am so imperfect that I am made to loathe myself, and cry, Vile, vile.

I hope you will throw the mantle of charity over my imperfections, and in

love remember me. May the rich blessings of God's grace be with you, and may you be long spared to comfort his humble poor with the riches of gospel truth.

I am, I hope, your brother in hope of eternal life,

J. E. THORNBURY.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., June 21, 1910.

DEAR ELDER KER:—Inclosed are two letters for your consideration. I have thought often of you since I last saw you, and hope it is well with you and yours.

Yours in hope, J. M. FENTON.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., June 13, 1910.

ELDER J. M. FENTON—DEAR BROTHER:—I have felt for some time to write to you, but I have nothing except the old, old story to tell. I feel much distressed and burdened on account of sin, and cannot pray, for it seems as if the world has more claim upon me, and I am being continually tempted by Satan, and when I turn my eyes within, all is dark and vain and wild, but then there is that comforting passage which is like water to a thirsty soul: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Will I ever forget the rest and peace of mind I experienced when those words first came to me? Everything was then beautiful, but it is not so now, sin is mixed with all I do.

Indeed, words cannot express the pleasure and comfort I received from Elder Ker's sermons, both at the ordination and at Hopewell. That sermon I think appealed not only to you, but to many. I enjoyed our Saturday and Sunday meetings very much. How great a blessing it is that we may meet together, even though there may be only a few, and there is that sympathy and loving-kindness among the Old Baptists that I cannot be made to believe exist among others. They are a small body compared with many others, but as you said Sunday, a host whom no man can number.

I received the inclosed letter from sister Annie McColl, and as I enjoyed it so much I think it would be appreciated by many readers of the SIGNS, therefore I send it to you to do with as you think best. It seems to me that she expresses my feelings better than I myself am able to. I did not ask sister Annie's permission to publish her letter, but do not think she would object.

Write to me when you feel to do so, as I am always glad to hear from you.

With love to all the family, I am your unworthy sister in a precious hope,

MARGUERITE FETTER.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, May 7, 1910.

MY PRECIOUS SISTER:—Just a few minutes ago I received your dear letter, and I cannot let it go unanswered for even an hour. It is impossible for me to let you know what your letter means to me. I have been thinking of writing to you ever since I returned, and I am glad you wrote first, for I was not sure you would want me to write to you. It seems as if I am in the dark most of my time, and I often think that I should not burden others with my trials and temptations. The Lord has hid his face far from me, and I feel myself to be lost in sin. Everything within me is filled with iniquity, and it does seem as if often I do not even try to do what is right. One moment I say, O how I love the children of God, and the next moment I am doing something which shows that I have not the love of God within me. It is said that we cannot serve God and mammon,

and I know that I am certainly following the ways of Satan, and yet O how I do long to be a meek and lowly follower of Jesus. I know that if man and not God was my judge I would certainly be cast down into the depths of hell, but thanks be to the gracious Lord, things which are impossible with men are possible with God, and since he has sent his only begotten Son into the world to bear our sins and to die that we might be saved, surely he will for the Redeemer's sake forgive the sins of a poor worm who can find no sanctuary in heaven or earth but the Lord of lords and King of kings, and even if it be his holy will that I should follow the ways of Satan always, and never dwell among the redeemed of the Lord, nor see the face of the One whom I desire to serve, his will is just and good, and I, a worm, have no right to ask the reason why it should be so decreed. But I do sincerely hope that these are the deep waters through which all of his children have to pass, and that this is the thorny road which leads us to the mount of God. I often wonder, O, will it always be thus with me? Will I never again behold the light?

I cannot tell you what a great question it is in my mind as to whether I ought to send this letter. I feel that I should not try to talk about the things of His kingdom, for my very words seem to be blasphemy, and everything I say seems to be so much like the words of a hypocrite. Please write to me often, if you think I am worthy of your precious letters. I know I am a sinner, and my only plea is that Christ bore my sins, for he died to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

With sincere love to you and your mother, I will close.

Your unworthy sister, in hope,

ANNIE L. McCOLL.

MAYFIELD, Ky., Sept. 7, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Having to ask for a few sample copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I feel to say to you that I appreciate your kindness, admitting my writings as you have, for I realize my weakness and imperfection in all my efforts, and if they had been wholly rejected from its columns I trust the past history of the SIGNS will confirm my assertion that the realities of our hope and doctrine would live without my personal aid. But I am glad to relate that my interest in the SIGNS did not abate while I for nearly ten years did not dare to write for it. There was no other paper that I felt to prefer above it, for there could not be any other so well adapted to continental circulation as the SIGNS. There were but few that I could find at all to be compared with it for the steadfast adherence to God's true and unvarying gospel, while some were emphatically fire-brands in the hands of incendiary mischief-makers. O how my heart has been made to lament because of their terrible assaults! But I cannot deny that some of our local Baptist papers have been of great benefit and comfort to the circle of their readers.

A. B. BREES.

COVINGTON, Ga., Aug. 18, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As it is past the time when I should have renewed for the SIGNS, I do so to-day, and desire to ask God's blessing upon you, and upon his holy work everywhere, and that we may have grace given us according to our daily need. Personally I never felt to need more his compassion and grace than I do to-day. I am longing for the bread of life, and for the comforts of his love, for the light of his glorious truth to shine in my heart "to give

the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." I am ready to cry out with David, Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious? Is his mercy clean gone forever? Yet with Peter I cry, To whom, Lord, shall I go? thou hast the words of eternal life. "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." I have no hope outside of him. May God abundantly sustain the editors and contributors to the SIGNS, and may he lead his little flock into green pastures and by the side of still waters, is the prayer of one who feels to be in the depths.

Yours in humble hope,
(MRS.) MITTIE DAVIS ROBERTS.

SEATTLE, Wash., Sept. 18, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find money order for two dollars to renew my subscription for the dear old SIGNS, which was due August 1st. I am very sorry I did not have the money to send when my subscription expired. I could not do without it, as it is all the preaching I have. I often wonder if there are any Old School Baptists in Seattle; if so, I should like to meet them. I never go to meeting, for if I should could not hear anything about our dear Savior, but instead it would be a flowery story of something some great man had done. I would rather stay at home and read the Bible and SIGNS; they are as good as I want. I have a granddaughter eighteen years old, and this morning a young lady asked her to go to the New School Baptists. She said no, she would not hear anything about the Bible, and chose to stay at home; said she would rather stay at home and read the Bible. She has never made any profession, but loves to read the word. I do wish she lived where she could hear Old School Baptist preaching. She was very young when we had meetings at my dear father's home, and does not remember it. Those days were very precious to me, but a sad thought comes over me when I think that the dear father and mother who were with us then, are now asleep in Jesus, for I can truly say they were both God's dear, chosen ones. My prayer is that my dear heavenly Father will make me worthy to follow in their footsteps; they left a beautiful example and record for their children. I feel very unworthy of a name with the dear Old Baptists, but they are the only people for me; if I cannot go with them I shall go alone, as I cannot mingle with any other.

Wishing you to be spared yet many years to proclaim God's holy word to the praise and honor of his most holy name, I am yours in bonds of love, and if saved, it will be by grace alone.

(MRS.) M. PATCHIN.

SILVERTON, Texas, Oct. 2, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—To-day, while renewing my subscription to our dear family paper, I feel like sending you a few lines of appreciation. I think I appreciate the communications and editorials more than ever before in my life; perhaps it is because I am living so far from my loved ones in the flesh, and among very few who are kindred in the Spirit. Sometimes I feel to be all alone in the world, then I am made to cry out as did David of old, "How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord?" "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" "I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me." When I am brought to realize that he is ever with me (for he has promised never to leave nor forsake us), then I can say with the psalmist, "Bless the Lord, O my

soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." I no longer feel lonely, I can go about my daily work singing the sweet songs of Zion, yea, singing praises and making melody in my heart.

I wish to say to the correspondents of the SIGNS that they weary not in well doing, but write on; their letters are a comfort to many of God's little ones scattered abroad, hungry and thirsty for the word of truth as set forth in their communications.

When I began writing I felt to say a few things concerning my experience of life since last writing to the loved ones, but alas, I find my mind a perfect blank; I am shut up, and cannot come forth. Pray for me, that I may be kept blameless through faith until the last day. May the God of Israel bless one and all, is my prayer in Christ's name.

Your sister in hope of life beyond the grave, LYDIA C. RAY.

WESTON, Michigan.

BRETHREN EDITORS, AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—Once more I will try, God helping me, to tell of some of his blessings. I have been shut-in the most of the year that is past, much of my time in bed, yet the Lord has seen fit to strengthen this poor, weak body and give me strength to trust in his name. After the long, dreary winter comes gentle spring, and the singing of birds is heard, so when Jesus appears, love springs forth and we rejoice with joy unspeakable.

I was glad to hear from Elder J. F. Beeman, and dear sister Attie Curtis, and all the dear ones who call upon our God. His goodness and mercy have been round about, and when I am weak then am I strong. I have had many precious seasons while on my sick bed, and have thought of you all, and eagerly looked for the SIGNS, to hear from you. What a blessing to know we have a dear heavenly Father to confide in, who we know will listen to our sighs, and comfort when no other can, who never sleeps nor slumbers, who is merciful, and who careth for poor, weak mortals unable to care for themselves. He has loved me with an everlasting love. O how can I praise him enough? Dear household of faith, pray for me, that in my affliction my faith fail not.

With love to all the readers of the SIGNS, I am, I hope, one of the number whose names are written in heaven.

SARA WYMAN.

LANGLEY, Ark., May 4, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—Find inclosed two dollars, for which send our much beloved paper to me. It is about all the preaching that I have. I would like to tell all the brethren why I am an Old School Baptist. I was a poor orphan boy, raised here in the mountains, and never had any schooling after I grew up. After I was nearly a man I went three months to school, and learned to read a little. I set my own copy and learned to write. I was taught to do good and to grow better, and the preacher told us young folks that if we would join the church on probation for six months he would insure us to get religion, but that I had to pray and be honest, and after looking back upon my former life I got religion, for as I had tried to pray and was honest, they said that was the same thing. I enjoyed this for about four or five years, and liked the big meetings, for they preached what I believed, and I would rejoice that I was a good man, and was not as bad as some others were. Thus I went on my way rejoicing. I went through the Civil war, and got

home to my wife and babe with my religion, though I did not seem to enjoy it as I had before. I had backslidden and played cards, and did not go to the prayer meetings. About the year 1872 I was going to our meetings, enjoying my religion, and on Friday evening I was riding along when there was a feeling struck me beyond the power of tongue to tell, and it seemed to tell me that I was the meanest man on earth. Brethren, then my troubles began. I begged the Lord for mercy for the first time in my life, for I could see that I was a sinner and a hypocrite. My heart was broken, and it seemed that hell was my portion, although I was still begging the Lord for mercy. I was in that condemned condition for six days. On Thursday evening I was enabled by grace to see the plan of salvation, but how different it appeared to the way in which I had been taught. I saw that if I were damned it would be just, and if saved it was by grace. It was all so different from the former way in which I had been taught that I thought I was the only one under heaven that believed the way I then did. Although I thought that I was the only one, I did not stagger at it, for I knew that I was not taught it by man, nor did I receive it by man, but by revelation of God. I thought this gospel was so plain that I could show it to those I had thought so much of, but to my surprise I drove them from me instead of their coming to me; they called me hard names. It pleased the Lord to allow me to meet the brethren at the South Arkansas Association. I heard an old preacher from Salem Association, and saw plainly that I had one brother in this world who believed as I did, and I went home rejoicing to think that I had one brother in the world, and I still find a few scattered ones nearly everywhere I go. I have gone hundreds of miles hunting for them, not to make them sons of God, but to help them to believe that they are. Thus you will see and know why I am an Old School Baptist.

I will close by asking the editors to look over this and publish it if it will not crowd out something better. May God bless his church and people, is my prayer.

W. V. WHITE.

HARRISON, Ark., Sept. 7, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have thought many times I would like to write you a few lines to let you know I still receive the SIGNS; it is all the preaching I get, and I am so far from the good Old School Baptists I hardly ever see one. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate the SIGNS; it is much comfort to my poor, hungry soul, but I do not feel worthy of such a blessing. I have read it so long that it is almost as dear to me as my Bible. I have just read sister Keene's experience in the last number; it is wonderful how the good Lord leads his children out of Babylon. When he speaks it is done; he can work and none can hinder.

I will close for this time. May God bless you all, is the prayer of your very unworthy sister, if one at all,

LOUISE GLENN.

HEBRON, Ohio, Oct. 28, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Please say through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that Elder McGlade was taken sick August 1st, and is now quite seriously ill, unable to leave his room or bed, is utterly helpless, and suffers much, yet his mind is clear, and he continually rejoices in the wonderful ways of the Lord. This is in answer to the many precious letters we have received which yet remain unanswered. Our home is in sadness, and we need the prayers of you all, that we may be kept by the power of God. Love to your family.

(MRS.) FRANK McGLADE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1910.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

FUTURE RECOGNITION.

If you have leisure I would be very glad if you would give your views upon the question, Shall we know each other in heaven?

(MRS.) R. M. PITCHER.

LIVERPOOL, New York.

All that we can know positively about any spiritual thing is what we find contained in the record of the Scriptures. We know there is a future world of happiness for the righteous and of punishment for the wicked, simply because the word of God so declares, and so it is also true that all we can know about the things which pertain to that world must be gathered from the Scriptures. Men have in all ages believed many things concerning the future world for which there is no shadow of proof in the word of God, and when we come to search the Scriptures it should be with reverence and a desire to carefully consider them, and, like little children, accept what they declare. Thus it becomes us to tread softly when we come to speak of what they declare, especially regarding the future world. There are many questions which may seem to us important concerning which the Scriptures are silent, and they do not say very much regarding the world to come. This is partly, as we have thought, for the reason that they are unspeakable things, which no human thought can grasp, nor human language utter. But there are some intimations in the word of God which it is becoming to consider. In the first place, it is sure, from the words of the blessed Master, that human ties, or ties of kinship and blood, do not have any place in that world. It is impossible to misunderstand the words of the Savior when he said to the Sadducees, In that world they are neither married nor given in marriage. This Jesus said when the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection, and that [illegible] was any angel or spirit, [illegible] to ask what they thought to be an unanswerable question, if the doctrine of the resurrection was true, concerning the woman who had had seven husbands in this life. Whose should she be of the seven in that world? they said. Were human relationships to have place there, their question would indeed have been unanswerable. Marriage is the chief relationship, as it was the first established by our God in the beginning. Out of this relationship among mankind springs up all other relationships. Children and parents, brothers and sisters, together with more remote relationship, grow up out of this, and would not exist without it. Now it is manifest that if this first and closest tie does not exist in that world, the lesser relationships cannot have place there. If there be no husbands and wives, there can be no parents and children, no brothers and sisters there. We can understand and feel a sympathy with that desire that dwells in the hearts of all who love their friends, when death parts them that they might one day meet them again. This is natural, and far be it from us to censure or make light of this feeling, but the word of the Savior seems to settle this in the negative, and all that is earthly must

bow in submission to his word. But this does not touch directly the question as to whether there will be any recognition of each other, as redeemed sinners of Adam's race. Concerning this there appears to us to be some intimations in the Bible that we desire to call attention to. There has been a dogma in the minds of some portions of mankind to the effect that in that world there will be no individuality, no personal life or being, that all will be at last swallowed up in an unthinkable state of absorption in God. This is a pagan notion, and has no place in the word of God. The followers of the heathen god, Buddha, hold to and teach something like this. This sort of heathenism has gained a foothold in our own land, and even where the very name of Buddha is not known the theory has found place in the minds of some men. This mystical reasoning has no place in the simple teachings of the word of God. The Scriptures everywhere speak to men as individuals, and they declare the salvation of men as individuals. They hold out before men, as individuals, the hope of glory, on the one hand, and the declaration of everlasting misery on the other hand. When the church is spoken of as one, it is a church made up of persons, men and women redeemed unto God out of every nation, kindred and tongue, and the redeemed in glory are represented as a great multitude. A multitude means the gathering of many persons, each one being distinct from all the rest. The hope, faith, love, patience, endurance, and all the experience of grace here, and of glory hereafter, are all spoken of in the word of God as personal matters. Paul speaks of "my" hope, faith and love. David speaks of himself as being satisfied when he shall awake with the likeness of God. Paul said, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day." If there be any one thing about the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ that is more prominent than another, it is the personal experience of it, and if one thing concerning the final glory is more positively stated than any other thing, it is the fact that it is the personal hope that is set forth before each and every believer that he shall be with and like the Lord. It seems clear to us that there will be recognition of some kind in that world of glory, but that recognition will not be of husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters. These things are for the benefit and happiness of men and women in this life only, and they are needful in this life, but earthly things are not like heavenly things. This is clear from the teaching of the Savior already referred to in his conversation with the Sadducees. Even here believers have a fellowship and love in their hearts that is not earthly; it is the fellowship of saints, and this union is in Christ Jesus; that is, it is a fellowship that exists solely upon the ground that each recognizes that the Spirit of Jesus dwells in the other. While all earthly ties shall be sundered when men leave this world, that tie, that fellowship, shall not be sundered. On the contrary, all that hindered the full flow of this fellowship here will have then been removed, and it will then swallow up all other things relating to the various relations of the saved. In that world, as the poet has said, perfect love and union reign to all eternity. That, in this relation of saved and glorified sinners, there will be recognition one of another, seems to us clear, from the testimony of the word of God. Paul will not there be John, nor

will Peter be James, any more than they were the same persons here, and Paul will be Paul, and James will be James forever and ever, but they will have attained to that to which they did not attain below, and of which we can have but dim conceptions in this life. Those Scriptures which to us have seemed to show that there is in that world a recognition of one another in Christ, are these: first, in the mount of transfiguration, Moses and Elias appeared talking with Jesus of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. Moses died and the Lord buried him. Elias was translated and did not see death, as was also the case with Enoch, yet these two men appeared in such a manner in that heavenly glory that the disciples knew them, and one said, "Let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." There may be many questions arising in our minds as to how this could be, but unless we can find them answered in the Bible we must continue to ask them. It is sufficient to know that these two men did come to Jesus in the mount, and conversed with him in such a way that the disciples knew them and the theme of their conversation, and understood their words. Furthermore, it is shown in this narrative that these men knew of the reasons why Jesus came into the world, and that he must be crucified. Of these things they had both been given to testify in the days of their flesh, and of these things they still testified in their state of glory. Second, when John would have bowed down and worshiped the messenger who had showed him the wonderful things recorded in Revelation, he said unto John, "See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book." It would be but speculation to ask which one of the prophets this was; but the words are clear both in Revelation xix. and xxii. The late Elder Wm. J. Purington used to say that judging from the style of the writing, it must have been either Ezekiel or Daniel who thus talked with John. To this thought we have had no objection, but still we do not know, because we are not told in the narrative. It is sufficient to know that one of the prophets was sent to John in the isle of Patmos to show him wonderful things, which he has recorded. It is sure that this prophet recognized John, and John also came to know that the messenger was one of his fellow-servants who had passed on into glory.

We leave these reflections to the consideration of our readers; they are such as have commended themselves to our mind for many years. From the Scriptures to which we have just referred we learn this one thing at least, viz., that as the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy, so also the testimony of Jesus is the theme of the redeemed in the world of glory, and as it is sure that this testimony is the ground of fellowship here, so also it must be the ground of fellowship there. "Sinners saved by grace," is the soul-reviving theme of the sorrowful and heavy laden here, "Sinners saved by grace" must be the glorious song in the final abode of those redeemed unto God out of every nation, tribe and tongue under heaven. Our own mind has been for many years about as follows, viz., Let the thoughts named above be correct or incorrect, of one thing we feel sure, that if it be our happy lot to gain that world, and be with and like the blessed Lord, we shall find enough to occupy us to all eternity in admiring and praising the blessed Jesus, and there will be no room left for aught beside. C.

JOHN IX. 41.

"JESUS said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."

We have been asked of late, What did the Savior mean by these words? The Pharisees had said to him, in their anger at his words spoken just before, "Are we blind also?" They claimed to be able to teach and instruct the people, and his words, preceded by the healing of the young man who had been born blind, had been seen by them to condemn them also. This they could not submit to, and so they resentfully asked, "Are we blind also?" Jesus answered them in the words of the text: "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth." It appears to us that the key to all that the Savior here said is found in the words, "Ye say, We see." So long as they claimed to be the depositories of knowledge, and the sole instructors of the people in the way of righteousness, they could have no use for Christ; thinking that light was in them, they could see no light in Christ. Christ claimed to be the true Light. Boasting of their own wisdom and righteousness, and going about to establish it, they had not, and could not, submit themselves unto the righteousness of Christ, and neither would they submit themselves to his wisdom. Had they thought themselves blind, then it would have been true that the true Light was shining in them, for this alone discovers to any man his darkness. Their words showed plainly that the light in them was darkness instead of light. They were yet dead in sins; sin had not been put away from them; sin reigning still in them had blinded them. It was because of this that they still thought they could see. It was their claim that all spiritual understanding was theirs. This could not have been so had the true Light been given them. Had this been so they would have confessed themselves ignorant and blind. This, when confessed, is proof that sin has been put away in its reigning power. The darkness of sin has then fled away before the light of truth. No longer then is the bondage of sin complete in men. When the light begins to shine, there at once arises a warfare against sin. Henceforth there will be strife going on in the heart, but there will no longer be the dominion of sin. These Pharisees said, "We see." This was, in their case, full proof that the bondage of sin had not been broken, and the light of true knowledge had not shined in their hearts. Their sin remained upon them and continued to reign within them. When the light of truth shines in any heart it at once takes away all cause for boasting; it produces humility where pride has before reigned. When, on the other hand, there comes a confession of one's own darkness, blindness and ignorance, there is evidence that Jesus has put away sin, and that the Holy Spirit of truth has broken its power in the heart. The grace of God excludes all boasting. Where the spirit of vainglorying is found, there grace does not reign. Such men are yet in their sins, or, as the text says, their sin remaineth. C.

NOTICE.

WE have in this office a letter for W. T. McQueary, which was sent to us with the request that we supply the address and forward it to him, but as we do not know where he is, will ask that any one knowing his address please send same to us.

GENESIS VI. 5, 6.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR SIR:—If not asking too much, I would like to see your views on Genesis vi. 5, 6, and oblige one of the readers of the SIGNS.

OCTOBER 4, 1910.

The text reads as follows: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart."

Much has been written upon the subject suggested by the above note, and we cannot boast of greater light than others have given, yet feel willing to do the best we can in complying with the request. There seems to be an idea that "when men began to multiply on the face of the earth" that the imaginations of their heart were more evil than when only a few existed, but we cannot understand how the heart in man could be worse, nor the imaginations thereof more evil than were manifest in Cain, the firstborn in the earth. The heart in man has been deceitful above all things and desperately wicked since the transgression of Adam. The only difference was that the multiplication of men in the earth meant more demonstrations of wickedness. Men therefore were no worse by nature when God sent the flood than they had been from the beginning. By the transgression of Adam sin entered into the world, and death by sin, hence the wickedness of men then, and now, was because of the sin of our father Adam. No man since Adam has ever been condemned by the law of God and ETERNALLY lost because of any overt act committed by him; his ungodly deeds demonstrate what he is, for were he not already a sinner he would not do unrighteous things. Hence men are not saved by the good works they do, nor lost because of the evil they do. If saved, it is by the grace and mercy of God; if lost, it is because of the first transgression. Notwithstanding the fact that Jesus said Judas was "a devil," we cannot conceive how he by nature was worse than any other son of Adam. It was from the apostleship only that he fell by transgression, not from any other standing he may be considered to have occupied. Therefore whether saved or lost his betrayal of the Master was simply a proof of his depraved nature, instead of making him a sinner.

The text says, "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth." When reading the Scriptures or meditating upon them we should always remember that the language used is for the convenience of the understanding of the children of God. We can comprehend the things of God only as he comes to us in language, terms and figures adapted to us as creatures of earth. It is recorded that "the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." That is, he spake to Moses as one man speaks unto another, and in that way made his will and purposes known. When it is said, "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth," we are not to conclude that it was something new to him and he was surprised at it, and because men would not repent of their evil deeds he would destroy them. Such would be contrary to the very being of God, who is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. But he sends his servant Moses, the man unto whom he spake face to face and the writer of Genesis, telling us in simple language that God hates sin in every form, whether it be the evil imaginations of the heart in man or the wickedness of his very being, and that every transgression shall be punished according to the divine law.

Since the beginning the Lord has preached his everlasting gospel; yes, at times in the destruction of the lives of men. He declared in the offering of Abel his truth: that without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sins. He preached his righteousness in the condemnation of Cain; he published the power of faith in the walk of Enoch, and when it pleased him to make known his doctrine of personal and unconditional election he brought the flood upon the earth, saving Noah and his family, while all other men were destroyed. Such, therefore, being his purpose, he said, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years," showing that at the end of that time man should be destroyed. The supposition is that Noah was one hundred and twenty years in building the ark, and it is so asserted often, but other than the above quotation we know of no direct mention of it.

Right in the midst of the evil and wickedness of men and the declaration of the destruction of the world, there was found one righteous man (Noah). Had he not been righteous he could not have been "a preacher of righteousness." Some one might ask, What made the difference between Noah and other men, that he should be righteous while all others were wicked? The answer is, The same that made the difference between Cain and Abel: the Spirit and grace of God. The act of offering the Lamb did not make Abel righteous, but because he was righteous he offered it. So the life of Noah demonstrated that he was already a righteous man. His preaching was not traveling from place to place among the wicked trying to convert them, but was in building the ark for the saving of himself and his house. His faith was made perfect by his works, believing that God would do all he had said, and the very fact that there was no room in the ark for any except those who went in, proves conclusively that the Lord did not intend to save any that way, except Noah and his family. Thus He preached the doctrine of election. It was the righteousness of Noah, the head of his house, and not that of his children, that saved them in the ark. So the righteousness of Christ, the Head of the church, saves each member.

The words, "It repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart," are intended to meet the comprehension of the children of men, showing God's character as being altogether separate and apart from sin. He is holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. The Lord did not repent in the sense that he was sorry that he had made man on the earth, nor was he grieved at his heart as men often are because of some serious blunder or mistake they have made. But without such language man could not know the attitude of God toward sin, nor could we have any conception of the perfection of Deity. The great Creator was not deceived in the creature; no, not in the least. Man has and will accomplish the purpose for which he was created as much so as the sun, moon and stars. The Lord repented in the sense that he turned away from the man he made. The repentance, or turning away, was made manifest in the bringing of the flood to destroy him. And the Lord was grieved at his heart in the sense of the pity he felt for man, whom he had made in his own image, and who by disobedience had brought condemnation and death upon all his posterity. In the same sense Christ, God

manifest in the flesh, wept over Jerusalem and then pronounced judgment upon the Jews, saying, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." In this is clearly seen both the repentance and grief of God as to what the terms signify. The Israelites were the descendants of Abraham, whom God called and blessed and multiplied. That nation was his peculiar care for more than two thousand years; many of them nevertheless were wicked and rebellious, often worshiping idols, killing the prophets and stoning all who were sent unto them during the years from the giving of the law to the coming of Christ. The Lord was the same absolute sovereign then that he is now, but he dealt with Israel in a legal way, giving them the law to prove them sinners. In that dispensation the Lord said, Return unto me, and I will return unto you; if you will I will, but in the end of that legal world Christ came and upbraided Jerusalem with their wickedness, including the murder of the prophets and every other vile thing that proceeds from the same evil in man that was so manifest at the time of the flood. That nation was overthrown according to the word of Christ, the kingdom taken from them and given to the Gentiles, a people of altogether another tongue, who had not known God, but whom he had known in the person of his Son as heirs of salvation. These things we have mentioned to show that the wickedness of man continued after the flood the same as before, and that in a sense the Lord dealt with the Jews as he did with men at the time of the flood, by repenting (turning away from that nation, overthrowing them,) and no more recognizing them as his people, and at the same time "being grieved for the hardness of their hearts." —Mark iii. 5.

We have now given such understanding of the text as we have, and leave it for the consideration of our inquiring friend and other "readers of the SIGNS."

K.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. C. Mellott.)

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Sidling Hill Church, Fulton Co., Pa., on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 30th and Oct. 1st and 2nd, 1910, to the several churches of which this association is composed, sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—It is our mind to call your attention to a very familiar and most precious expression, namely: "Mighty to save." This, of course, refers to our dear Savior, who we are taught to believe was God and yet man. As God he was one with him, participating in all the acts of his divine will. By him all things were made, and by him all things consist, and without him was not anything made that was made. As man he was one with us, made sin who knew no sin, tempted in like points as we are, acquainted with us in sorrows, touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was separate from sinners, in that he knew no sin. When he became man he did not cease to be God, but was "God over all" as much when he was "a man of sorrows" as when he was with God and was God. Hence he could say in truth during his incarnation: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," and could demonstrate beyond a doubt that he was "the power of God." This he did demonstrate in the raising of the dead, the hushing of the winds, the rending of the rocks, &c. We believe that he is God now raised from the dead, and

set "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." Having thus, as the Scriptures declare, presented Jesus Christ our Savior as God the Father, God with us and God everlasting, we will say that this was the will of the great I AM that he might make his power known and felt by us. We do not understand the words "mighty to save" to mean that Jesus made the salvation of sinners possible, conditioned upon their wills to accept it, but we believe that he brought to us everlasting salvation and made us know that it was all by his own power from first to last. If salvation were based upon the afore mentioned condition, as most men believe it is, then in every case in which a sinner is lost his power to save is not made manifest as "mighty to save." But we believe that the whole of the great work of salvation, from the first divine desire in the heart after God until we awake in his likeness, is embraced in the words "mighty to save." "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." The work of the destruction of the goods of the first man Adam is begun by the second man Adam, the Lord from heaven, nor does it cease until we are made to know that the excellency of the power is of God and not of us, until we are compelled out of necessity to cry, Lord, save, I perish, "God be merciful to me a sinner," until we out of our hearts are prepared to say, "Salvation is of the Lord," not unto us, but unto thy name be ascribed honor, praise, power and dominion, now and for evermore. Amen. Men do not naturally love the truth as it is in Christ, but he manifests that truth in us and to us, and by his mighty power to save makes us love the things we once hated, and cling to the things we once despised. Our Lord is not only mighty in turning men from their follies and iniquities, in delivering them from the power of darkness, but is mighty to keep them in paths of righteousness and in his fear and love and from the evils of this world, until it is his pleasure to call them from their earthly journey; and thus we believe that God never begins a good work in a man without finishing it, that he never leaves nor forsakes us, but is with us even to the end. The greatest proof that we can have that Jesus is "mighty to save" is that he hath saved us "by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." What! saved us? O what a demonstration of power! The chief of sinners saved by the mighty power of Jesus. Our prayer to God is that he will keep us by that mighty power forever and ever. Amen.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
J. C. MELLOTT, Clerk.

(Written by Elder John Clark.)

To the Elders and messengers of the Lexington Association, convened with the Schoharie Church, October 5th and 6th, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In the providence of God we are suffered again to meet, according to previous appointment, and in this our epistle, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart, we desire to call your attention to the words found in the epistle of Paul the apostle to the Romans, twelfth chapter, ninth verse: "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good." "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart

fervently: being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."—1 Peter i. 22, 23. "For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

Dissimulation, the act of dissembling. Jude 19: "These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit." "Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good." "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

R. W. SANFORD, Moderator.
JAMES AVERY, Clerk.
DOW BORST, Assistant Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Roxbury Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, Olive, N. Y., Sept. 21st and 22nd, 1910, to the several churches with whom we correspond, sends christian salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Another year is past, and we have met, according to previous appointment, to worship the true and living God. Your ministering brethren have come to us laden with the precious gospel of peace. "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." We ask a continuance of correspondence from sister associations, and we desire your friendly visits in the future as in the past.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the First Church of Roxbury, at Vega, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday following the third Sunday in September, 1911, commencing at 10:30 a. m. Wednesday.

J. B. SLAUSON, Moderator.
H. C. ELMENDORF, Clerk.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Sidling Hill Church, Fulton Co., Pa., sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As it is a custom with us to write what is called a Corresponding Letter, we will attempt to do so. It has been our privilege to meet once more in, we trust, a meek and humble spirit before Jesus Christ our Savior. Jesus said, I will leave in the midst of thee a poor and an afflicted people, who shall trust in the Lord. He loved us even before the foundation of the world, and gave his life for us, that we through him might have life and come into fellowship with his sufferings.

Our next meeting is appointed to be held with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1911, where we hope to meet your messengers and hear your messages of love and fellowship in the gospel of the Son of God.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
J. C. MELLOTT, Clerk.

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Schoharie Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., October 5th and 6th, 1910, to the associations with whom we correspond, sends greeting.

BY and through the kindness and mercy of a just and benevolent God we have the great privilege of meeting together at this time and place to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience. It is with a deep sense of love that we are permitted once more to address you, and to thank the Lord of heaven and earth that he has permitted us once more to meet together in an associate capacity. Your Minutes have been received, and we desire a continuance of your correspondence.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Middleburg Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., at the usual time, first Wednesday and Thursday in October, 1911.

R. W. SANFORD, Moderator.
JAMES AVERY, Clerk.
DOW BORST, Assistant Clerk.

The Salisbury Association of Primitive Baptists, in session with the church at Broad Creek, Sussex County, Delaware, October 19th, 20th and 21st, 1910, to the several associations with whom we correspond, sends christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN:—According to appointment, we have been permitted in the providence of our all-wise Father to assemble once more in an associate capacity, and we feel we can truly say the occasion has been one of great pleasure, and, we hope, also of spiritual profit and comfort to those who were permitted to attend. Everything has passed off in the way we anticipated. The letters from the several churches all speak of peace and quietness, harmony and love abounding within their borders. The ministers have come bearing the blessed consolations of the gospel, speaking greatly to our comfort and joy. We hope for a continuance of your valued correspondence. You will see by our Minutes that we received communications from all the associations named therein except one, and would affectionately call the attention of the brethren of that one to the omission, as we have not received their Minutes for several sessions.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Little Creek Church, at Delmar, Del., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1911, when and where we hope to again receive your messengers, bearing your messages of love.

A. B. FRANCIS, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Joshua T. Rowe, Nov. 3rd, 1909, at the residence of the bride's father, Simon Dishong, Kent County, Md., Jesse J. Hurd and Jeannette Dishong.

By the same, at his residence, Sept. 3rd, 1910, George E. Grinder and Bessie W. Woolford.

By the same, at the Relay Presbyterian meeting-house, Sept. 28th, 1910, John Isaac Rowe and Harriet Frances Barker.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Wm. Darby, Maryland, $1.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **Amelia Fuggler,** of Delphi, Onondaga Co., N. Y., died July 22nd, 1910, aged about 80 years. She was sick about three years, and was finally paralyzed. She was a member of the Old School Baptist Church at Delphi, N. Y., a great many years, and was sound in the faith, a lover of good things. I have served that church about twenty-five years. She leaves a family of six children, four girls and two boys, and other friends to mourn her absence. Her last days were spent at the home of her daughter Mary, who lovingly cared for her. The funeral was also at the same place.

ALSO,

Mrs. McIntyre, of Dutton, Canada, died August 13th, 1910, aged about 50 years. She was ill several months. She was not a member of the Old School Baptist Church, but a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and attended the meetings of the Covenanted Baptist Church. She leaves a husband and daughter and many friends to mourn for her, while she is eternally happy with Jesus her Savior. May God comfort her lonely husband and daughter, is my prayer. Funeral at the residence.

ALSO,

Mrs. Henry Tinklerfou, of Greenfield, Pa., died suddenly Sept. 13th, 1910, aged 82 years. She leaves two brothers and one sister. She had a hope in Christ, but was not a professor. Funeral in the New School Baptist meetinghouse at Brown Hollow.

ALSO,

Sister **Ann Kugler,** of Frenchtown, N. J., departed this life Sept. 20th, 1910. She was a member of the Old School Baptist Church at Locktown, N. J., and was the widow of John T. Kugler. A more complete obituary will be written later, I expect, by some member of the church. The funeral was held at her late home.

ALSO,

Matthew Stradley, of Cammal, Lycoming Co., Pa., died October 11th, 1910. He was 71 years old April 27th, 1910. Cancer was the cause of death. He was a great sufferer for a long time, but bore his sufferings with great patience. He married the daughter of old sister Mary Ostrander, August 7th, 1860, and lived in Lycoming Co., Pa., all his life. He leaves his sad, lonely widow, four sons, two daughters, one brother and many friends to mourn their loss, which we believe is gain to him, as he was a believer of the truth as it is in Jesus for many years, although he was not a member of the church. Sister Stradley said he died happy in the faith of God's elect. May the dear Lord comfort all the mourning ones, and especially the widow and children, is my desire.

The writer officiated at each of these funerals.

D. M. VAIL.

ABERFELDY, Ontario.

James Bentley Borthwick died at his home near Middleburg, Schoharie Co., N. Y., Sept. 1st, 1910, after a long illness with that much dreaded disease, cancer. He was born July 20th, 1829, the son of James and Dalinda Borthwick, who were firm Old School Baptists. He was twice married, but had lived a widower many years. He leaves one son, Omer D., who had always lived with him, and was a very devoted son indeed. Mr. Borthwick never united with the church, but left good evidence that for him to die was gain. He was a regular attendant and an attentive listener at the meetings of the Middleburg Old School Baptist Church, and a helper in many ways, and enjoyed reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which had been a welcome visitor at his home for many years. He was honest and upright, and ever ready to help in time of need, therefore his friends were many. He suffered much, but was confined to the house and bed but a short time. I think no one ever bore suffering more patiently, and none was ever cared for more faithfully and lovingly than was he by his son and his wife, together with a niece, who had been in the family many years. Besides his immediate family he leaves one brother, living in Iowa (who with his son came to attend the funeral), and one sister, also many nephews and nieces, and a host of other relatives and friends, who miss him much, but we trust our loss is his eternal gain.

His funeral was largely attended on Sunday, Sept. 4th, Elder John Clark officiating, after which his body was laid to rest by the side of his wives.

His niece, (MRS.) ADDIE COOK.

MIDDLEBURG, N. Y., Oct. 31, 1910.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in Kimmy Hall, No. 12 Third St., in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

A SMALL band of Primitive Baptists is meeting every Sunday at 10:30 a. m. at 2919 Polk St., Chicago, Ill. All persons interested are welcome to meet with us. Any one knowing of members living in or near Chicago will please notify W. N. Spitler at the above address.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.
JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK, compiled by Elders Silas H. Durand and P. G. Lester, $6.00 per dozen, sent at expense of purchaser; 70 cents for single book, sent by mail postpaid. Send all orders to Elder Silas H. Durand, Southampton, Pa., stating which kind of note is desired—round or shape.

"SONGS IN THE NIGHT."

PRICE REDUCED.

This little book has been published for some time, and orders for it have been received from near and far, even to the most distant States. All from whom I have heard have spoken to me very highly of the book. For forty years it has been upon my mind to publish these poems and the experience of my brother, together with the account of his last hours, and have wondered why I did not do it. I felt sure it would be for the comfort of many, and the many expressions I have already received assure me that it is so. Elder P. D. Gold writes: "I have read the poems and experience of your brother with much pleasure. How wonderful was the view of divine things given to him. Surely to be absent from the body and present with the Lord is far better." Elder S. Hassell says: "I shall have a commendatory editorial notice in April. I hope you may dispose of several thousands for the comfort of the Lord's scattered people." Elder H. C. Ker writes me: "Your little book, 'Songs in the night,' was duly received, and has given me more comfort than any reading I have done for months. Surely every lover of truth should have it." The price of the second edition has been reduced to thirty-five cents.

I have also on hand a few copies of "Reminiscences and Letters of Mary Parker." Price 75 cents.

All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Southampton, Pa.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition, which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at 5 cents per copy. Address,

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 78. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1910. NO. 23.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Sept. 27, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you for publication in the SIGNS two letters from Charles P. Buck, which I think will be read with interest and profit. Concerning the question he has asked me, I have merely referred him to the declaration of the dear Savior, John v. 24, and other declarations in the Scriptures of a like import: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." Baptism is not a condition upon which the gift of eternal life depends, but is an ordinance of God, which belongs only to those who have manifested that they already have eternal life. It is the answer of a good conscience, and the good conscience must be possessed before its desires can be answered. Those who are called by grace to stand as witnesses in the world are commanded to receive this ordinance, and to become members of the gospel church. Comparatively few, it appears likely, of the great company of the redeemed are ever baptized in water, though all for whom Jesus died are saved with an everlasting salvation, and shall dwell with him in glory. The church in her gospel order is the pillar and ground of the truth, and those who are called to be members of the true gospel church are thus highly honored, being a part of that organization of baptized believers who are called and chosen to uphold the truth of God in the world before men, and to maintain the order of the gospel. Christ is in the midst of them, and works in them to do his will. He says: "In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."

Your brother affectionately,

SILAS H. DURAND.

BLYTHEVILLE, Ark., July 15, 1910.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—You will doubtless be very much surprised at the reception of a letter from one not only a stranger, but of whose name you have never heard. I hardly know what to urge in extenuation of my boldness in thus trespassing upon your time and patience, unless it be that I am living, religiously speaking, in a waste howling wilderness, a hundred miles from the church of my membership, at Hickman, Ky., with not a single soul

of like faith and order with whom I can commune, to whom I can unbosom myself at those times when I feel so overwhelmed in the "slough of despond" that I feel there can be no hope for such an one as I. Feeling thus to-day, the impulse is irresistible to write to you, as one from whose pen I have received so much comfort and edification in the past twenty years, through the blessed medium of the SIGNS, and after detailing some of the way along which I have come thus far, some of the discouragements which so often beset me, beg that you will drop me a few lines at least, if from the perusal of what I write your heart goes out to me in christian fellowship, and you can offer me anything to strengthen and keep aglow my little hope, which at times seems almost to go out, and yet worth more to me than all the world beside. Often have I read in the experiences of dear brethren and sisters of how our loving Father had afforded them some token of recognition, some consoling evidence of their acceptance with him, and that evidence that their sins had been forgiven them, by the medium of dreams or visions, of which I have never had any, that I feel perhaps I am deceived, and have deceived the church, and the involuntary prayer wells up from my soul, O Father in heaven, give me some token of my acceptance with thee, some grounds for the hope that I am a child of God, though the least of all. Then I think, Ah, poor sinner, you are not willing to walk by faith, you wish to walk by sight. Again, many dear brethren and sisters have related how in coming up from the waters of baptism they felt supremely happy, that all their sins and sorrows were clean gone forever, and they seemed to experience a glad exultation of soul that seemed to lift them far above this sin-cursed earth. Alas, neither did I experience this perfect exultation of joy, but only a sweet and heavenly calm seemed to pervade my spirit and settle over the horizon of my life.

I was born of Old Baptist parents, near Clarksville, Tenn., in August, 1835. My father gave me the advantages of a full course at college, and I studied law, and graduated at the Kentucky Law School, at Louisville, in 1857, and entered upon the practice of my profession at Hickman, Ky. Through contact and intimate association with a very learned man and member of the bar, I drank deeply of the doctrines and teachings of infidelity, through the perusal of Payne, Voltaire and kindred writers. Coming out of the war a physical wreck, I moved to Bates County, in western Missouri, where I lived twelve years. Whilst living in Missouri I became deeply and sincerely interested in my spiritual condition. I was deeply conscious of my lost and sinful state, and although my parents and seven out of eight of my sisters were members of the Primitive Baptist Church, and notwithstanding my sincere devotion as son and brother, the faith and teachings of that church were more hateful and obnoxious to me than even Roman Catholicism. So I joined the Campbellites, and was soon ordained an Elder, and although having no regular pastorate, very frequently preached (as I then thought) during a period of about eighteen years. And here, my dear brother in Christ, I wish to state that I was as honest, as earnest and sincere in my desire to know that truth which alone can make us free as I am at this writing. On account of my health I had abandoned my profession, and was farming, and only tried to preach at the earnest solicitation of friends, and not for the

money there was in it, although I am a poor man. I brought to the study of the word of God all the abilities with which I was endowed, and all the earnestness and fervor of an impetuous nature. Man by wisdom knows not God. The more I read and studied, the more repulsive grew the faith and teachings of the Old Baptists, and the reflection that those nearest and dearest to me on earth by ties of blood were Old Baptists, was a constant source of deep and poignant grief. Many times did I resolve that by reason of my great reverence and affection for my dear old parents and sisters I would desist from any further assault upon that faith so precious to them, and yet on nearly every occasion that faith and doctrine seemed to oppose itself like a lion in my pathway, and I would fight it again.

I moved to Arkansas in 1880, still an earnest Campbellite. A dear old sister, who had been almost a mother to me, deeply concerned in my spiritual welfare and sorely grieved at my spiritual blindness, subscribed for and had the SIGNS OF THE TIMES sent me for twelve months. Through my great natural affection for her, and my great respect for her intellectual accomplishments, I read the paper for a month or so, and then my whole nature so revolted at the doctrines I found inculcated there that I would never break the wrapper on another paper, but through regard for her carefully laid them away in my bureau drawer unopened.

In the spring of 1889, moved by some unseen cause, I found myself seriously pondering my spiritual condition for the second time. Introspection revealed to me the humiliating fact that instead of becoming more circumspect in my daily walk and conversation, I was becoming more irascible. Naturally impulsive and quick tempered, it seemed that I was giving way to ebullitions of temper more than usual in former years. Still boastful of my own strength, I resolved each morning as I went to work on the farm that I would arise in the strength of my manhood and overcome the disposition to give way to my temper, or say ugly, though not profane, things. But alas, in the silent watches of the night (fit time for self-examination) I would be deeply conscious of my failure, and of my utter inability in and of myself to amend my ways. The world seemed dark, a gloom seemed to settle over my spirits like a pall, and I was powerless to throw it off. Where was now my hope of salvation? Upon what foundation could it rest, now that I had been shown my utter helplessness? What could a poor, sin-burdened, helpless, puny creature do towards achieving his own salvation, when he was powerless to do right even in his own sight? O wretched creature that I was! Involuntarily there came to me the language upon which I predicated the first discourse that I ever delivered from the pulpit, the dying words of our dear Savior: "It is finished." O what a different message that language brought to my poor, sinful, sinking soul! At first I only understood, and so contended, that our heavenly Father through his suffering Son had done all that he would ever do towards the salvation of poor, sinful and lost man, that he had opened up the way, that he had bridged the awful gulf with the broken body of our dear Savior and cemented it with his blood, and that now the sinner, of his own volition, must avail himself of that way, as "the way, and the truth, and the life." What was the import of that language the second time, when I humbly trust it was brought

home to me by the Holy Spirit? It was, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." What was that mission? The salvation of sinners. O glory to God, then it is a finished salvation; it is not dependent upon such a weak and worthless worm of the dust as I had been shown myself to be. Here then was the rock of my refuge, upon which I could plant my feet with the full assurance that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Again there was brought vividly to mind my second appearance in the pulpit, when I spoke upon the language of our Savior to Nicodemus: "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." Of course, though earnest and sincere, yet with the natural mind I saw nothing more in this language than the necessity of water baptism. When brought to my mind the second time, remembering that our Savior himself compared the spiritual to the natural birth, I asked myself the questions, What had man to do in the bringing about or superinducing his own birth? Was he not perfectly passive? and if so must not man of necessity be equally passive as relates to the spiritual birth, since Jesus himself compares the one with the other? Here then rests all my hope, that Jesus has saved me with an everlasting salvation. This Old Baptist doctrine, so hateful to me during the better years of my life, and against which I inveighed with all the strength of my life for many long years, has become more precious to me than rubies and fine gold, yea, has become the sheet-anchor of my soul. The Rock, which as a builder I rejected, has become the chief cornerstone of the fabric of my faith and hope.

But I beg you to pardon me, brother Durand, for trespassing upon your patience so long. I do not doubt the finished salvation of all God's children, but, weak and sinful as I am, the momentous question is, "Am I his, or am I not?" If from the perusal of this you find anything that would cause you to fellowship me, would cause you to believe that I have a reason for the hope that is within me, I beg you to write me at least a few lines. If, however, you do not so find, do not write, but looking to Jesus as the author and finisher of my faith, let me hope on to the end.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

CHARLES P. BUCK.

BLYTHEVILLE, Ark., Sept. 21, 1910.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I hope you will not infer from my tardiness in acknowledging receipt of your kind letter of July 20th last that I did not fully appreciate the brotherly love which moved you to write so promptly to one an entire stranger, or that I am, or possibly could be, indifferent or insensible to the kind and comforting expressions of christian fellowship contained in your letter. I am quite sure that you cannot conceive of the comfort and satisfaction afforded me by your letter, for if you should do so, then you are already rewarded for the time spent in writing me. Situated as I am, over one hundred miles from the church of my membership, or any other known Old Baptist Church, denied all companionship with any being who believes and feels as I do, and weighed down with a consciousness of my own sinful heart and grievous imperfections, your letter containing expressions of brotherly love and fellowship for me, is balm indeed to the stricken heart. The fear of wearying you in my first letter forbade my telling you of the great joy with which my only living sister, Re-

bekah, long since passed away (she who had sent me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES), received my letter detailing to her about the same I wrote you. She was living at Hickman, Ky., where I had lived from 1857 until 1866, and her membership was at Mud Creek Church, near Hickman, where also four other sisters had been members, and of which they died members. My dear old sister Rebekah and myself attended the June meeting, 1889, at that church, and presenting myself was received by the church and baptized by my dear kinsman and esteemed brother in Christ, Elder Robert Helm, now deceased. As I wrote you in my first, I did not in coming up from the waters of baptism experience that exultation of joy and peace that seems to have been the happy lot of many of God's dear children, but a sweet feeling of peace, a heavenly calm, seemed to steal over my senses which I shall never forget; neither has it pleased my heavenly Father (if such an one as I am be entitled to use that sacred appellation) to manifest my acceptance with him by dream or vision, and O how often, brother Durand, am I made to doubt that I have ever been enlightened by the Holy Spirit, that I have any solid foundation upon which to ground a hope that I am a child of God saved by grace, even though the weakest, or that I know anything of a christian experience. Then again the dark clouds of doubt that at one time seemed about to overwhelm me are brushed away by the outstretched hand of mercy, my precious Savior seems to shed upon me the light of his countenance, my faith grows so strong that I feel for the time being that I could even glory in affliction and suffering, that I might thereby be made partaker of his sufferings. In my moments of darkness and doubt I find myself asking the question, What could have wrought the wonderful and unsought change in my religious views and sincere convictions as to the great plan of salvation but the power of God? A change so great that the doctrine once hated, contemned and declaimed against should become the only hope of my poor soul, my refuge and my "strong tower."

My dear old father and mother both died during the first of the war, 1861. I am the last of ten children, and am without father, mother, brother, sister, uncle or aunt on the face of the earth, living, it would seem, beyond my day and generation. How often in looking back through the long, dim vista of the years that are gone I am for the moment but a boy again, attending the Old Baptist meeting at Meadow Grove, near Clarksville, Tenn., with my parents and sisters, and, shutting my eyes, can see them again in that old log meetinghouse, my dear old mother's face lit up with almost a divine radiance as she drinks in the precious promises of the gospel. But pardon this ebullition of feeling.

I hope, the Lord willing, to attend the association to which I belong, at Mud Creek, near Hickman, Ky., on Friday before the first Sunday in October, and should I be blessed with that privilege it will be the first preaching I have heard for five years, and apropos of that visit to old Mud Creek Church I wish to ask you a question: I have a very dear kinsman living at Hickman, Ky., at whose house I shall stay while attending the association, who for the past eighteen or twenty years has been a firm and unwavering believer in the faith and doctrines of the Primitive Baptist Church, is now, and has been for many years, a regular attendant upon all the meetings of the church, and whose exemplary walk

and conversation convince us all that he has been taught of God, but who has never gone before the church, never confessed his Savior before men, never yielded obedience to the ordinances of the church. Now should God in his inscrutable providence take him from this life, will you, brother Durand, refer me to any of the promises of God's word toward which I could turn for comfort? Any promise which would give me assurance that the dear departed would enjoy that peace and rest prepared for the elect children of God? I beg that you will not think this question is indicative of any spirit of disputation, or that it is the outcropping of the leaven of Campbellism, which you might think was still latent in my being, for I do assure you that no other motive except an earnest desire to know the truth impels me to ask the question. I would therefore esteem it a great favor if you can reply to this question without neglecting weightier and more important matters, before October 1st, but if not altogether convenient so to do, your earliest convenience will be gratefully received. Remember me fraternally to your wife and sister Bessie. I much fear that amid your manifold duties my letters may prove a trespass upon your time. May the Lord sustain and bless you in his work.

Your brother in hope,

CHARLES P. BUCK.

BRANTFORD, Ontario, Oct. 6, 1910.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your most helpful letter of August 18th to hand; it was indeed good news from a far country, yet how near you seemed to be when you could address the unworthy writer in such endearing words as dear brother in Christ. The whole letter seemed to find a sweet fellowship and response in my own soul. We were glad to know you had such liberty when in Canada, both in speaking and in private conversation. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Unity of feeling, unity of thought, all speaking the same things. We can afford to let the world call us narrow-minded and bigoted when we feel such unity of spirit one for the other and with Christ our righteousness. Like you, I care to spend but very little time in the company of those whose conversation savors only of this world's wisdom and its so-called pleasures. I am forced into their company many times in a business way, but seldom seek it as I once did in my early youth. I find no pleasure in their company, and less in the unholy conversation of, at times, the professing children of God. We could fully enter into your feelings of the traitor in the camp, and have found many years ago that man's greatest enemies are those of his own house, which would, if they could, drag him away from his thoughts of God and the finished work of Christ for his poor soul. There has been upon my mind for months the conviction of my utter inability to do anything toward my own salvation, even for that which some people call "time salvation." My cry is, God, help me, for it is from him from whom all our help cometh, for vain is the help of man, and then that Scripture in 1 Corinthians i. 30, comes to my mind, and I have often felt like expressing some of the thoughts which keep pressing upon my mind, if I should be led to give them: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." The Corinthian Church seems to have been in a

very unsettled state of mind, with much contention among them; one said, "I am of Paul," another, "I am of Apollos," next, "I am of Cephas," and one said, "I [am] of Christ." This last one seems to have grasped the right thought, but for the most part seems to have lost sight of the fact of who it was that made him to differ from the people outside of the church. Paul tells them, The world by wisdom knew not God, and not many wise men after the flesh are called, for the foolishness of God is wiser than men, but that God had chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the mighty, and the things that are not to bring to naught the things that are, and the reason for so doing, "That no flesh should glory in his presence." The old nature in man is ever ready to take glory to itself; the pronoun "I" seems to be the one to get the glory: I do; I helped; I believed; therefore God must do his part; I have done mine, so God is bound to save me, because he said he would. What poor creatures they were, helpless as newborn babes, wholly dependent upon God's sovereign choice of them before all time; and what was true of them must be true of all who are in Christ; it is of him (God), or there could be no salvation for any poor sinner. God is the author and the finisher. "Salvation is of the Lord." Who could give him counsel in such a matter? Who among the children of men could aid in this great work to bring many sons to glory? Who among the fallen race of Adam could give aid in their natural birth? If not in the lesser, how in the spiritual, the greater? God is a sovereign, and worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Who devised the plan of salvation? Who but the Creator could work it out? Who could be found worthy or willing for such a stupendous work, and to take the sinner's place? No one, only God himself in the person of the Son of his love. In a word, our salvation is according as he hath chosen us in him (Christ) from before the foundation of the world; Christ is made unto us wisdom. What poor, ignorant creatures, dead in trespasses and sins, the heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it? But thanks be to God, who hath made him (Christ) to be our wisdom, when we were without God and hope in the world, did he not give us wisdom? "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." In due time Christ died for the ungodly, and gave us wisdom to feel our need of him, when we verily thought we were as good as the best; wisdom to see if grace intervened not we were lost to all eternity, and apart from Christ and his finished work eternal death was ours, and then, mercy of mercies, he gave us wisdom to see the Christ of God on Calvary, and a hope he was there for us, even me, the chief of sinners, our righteousness. Yes, we needed it, for without it no man could see God. From whence then are we to obtain? for our own is as filthy rags. None but those who have oil in their lamps, and the wedding garment, can enter into the marriage supper of the Lamb. One indeed did enter the door, but when the master of the house saw him he said, "Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless." If naked, wherewith shall we be clothed? Can any work out righteousness by the deeds of the law? No, for by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified. The law cannot give life; it can and does give a knowledge of sin, and the wages of sin is death. "For what the law could not do,

in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Note, not in sinful flesh, only the likeness, for in Him was no sin. "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." "For as many [no more and no less] as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." How often we have questioned as to whether we have been led in any measure by the Spirit, and have often found the truthfulness of this in our soul's experience, death to the fellowship of the saints, death to any feeling sense of sins pardoned, death to any fellowship of the Spirit. This body of sin and death would ever drag us down, so that when we would do good, evil is present with us. What a strife if no faith view is given of the Christ of God and his righteousness wrought out for us and in us.

"Sanctification." Yes, if we are in him (Christ) we are set apart for his glory. Was he not separate from sinners? and so are we, if so be we are in him, separated from the world. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. How we do become contaminated with the things of time and sense. We often feel ourselves to be separated from them, yet in them Christ prayed that his own might be kept from its evil; neither prayed he for them only, but for all those who should believe on him through their word. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me," and not one of them shall be lost, were the Master's words. Blessed be his holy name, what comfort for the poor, tried, tempest-tossed child of hope and redemption. The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin; yes, sins past, sins present and sins to come. It seems too good for a poor sinner when weighted down with a sense of sin. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Would to God these thoughts were uppermost, but I find times in my experience when it seems I cannot think of a portion of God's truth, all seems a blank and not for me; at other times my soul seems to overflow with the goodness of God, when my soul goes out to him, and that word, He that loveth God loveth him also that is begotten of him, seems to be true with me; I want to meet with them, and be one with them, as I feel to be in spirit when these times come, which are few and far between; they give me hope that I am among those who love and fear the Lord. May I not hope that this is a sign for our good? "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

I must now close, even though my mind seems to flow on, but to what purpose I cannot tell, yet it seemed I could not stop before, and this is now altogether too long, words to no purpose, but that I must leave to him whose presence I have felt while penning the same. With best wishes for you and yours, and for all those who love our Lord in sincerity and in truth, and may God keep us until he shall enable us to meet again in the flesh, but if not, may we ever be one in spirit.

Yours for the love of truth,

FRED. SIMMONS.

GOD'S WILL.

JESUS came into the world to do the Father's will. He came in the person of that Name which embraced the power and the pleasure to perform all the work which the Father gave him to do. The work was specified and published by "the angel of the Lord" before he was manifest in the world as a literal child, by the declaration, "And thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." From the beginning of time his Spirit (which is the word of God, and the name of Jesus,) was sent into his people, lifting them out from dead works, making them willing in the day of his power. "The Lord sent a word into Jacob, and it hath lighted upon Israel," is the word of inspiration by the same Spirit. No man hath ever received that word, save he to whom it is sent. The children of the first Adam go through the days of their natural life walking by sight, without the knowledge of God; the name of Jesus is unknown to them, neither is the Spirit of God in their hearts. But such as are called of God (and separated unto himself) out of the world, they are the children of God, and walk by faith, not any more by sight. They behold Jesus as the Savior of sinners, whose Spirit worketh mightily in them, filling their hearts with a longing desire to follow Jesus, and to walk in the way of holiness, and to seek righteousness, and bear fruit unto life everlasting. How prone is the mind of Jacob to follow after the evil desires of the flesh, but the word that was sent into Jacob "lighted upon Israel," by which the flesh is subdued, and the branches give honor to the Root by bearing fruit to the glory of God. It was the will of God that the world should be as it has been and now is. It was his will that sin should enter into the world, for it was sinners that Jesus came to save. His matchless love which passeth understanding was manifest in Jesus, whom he sent, "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," and also in the hearts and lives of them to whom his love has been vouchsafed. The will of God is the pleasure; that which he has bestowed upon his people in mercy, in judgment and in equity, causing them to pass under the rod of affliction and adversity, that they might know him and the power of his resurrection. To him who passeth through the terrors and darkness of the night, when the beasts of the forest creep forth, how welcome and gladsome is the light of the morning with the healing rays of the Sun of Righteousness. Then are we made glad for the night, made glad for sin which made our heart to bleed in sorrow; not glad because we have sinned, but because, being sinners, we are by the will and love of God brought into the joys of salvation by the hand of the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. What a wonderful thing it is to behold the work of grace in the heart, and the result of that work; the soft raiment of humility replaces the gaudy attire of pride and arrogance. They who once trusted in an arm of flesh now look to Jesus, whom they have found to be the author and finisher of their faith. They are filled with apprehension, seeing themselves such great sinners, yet when they meet one with the same fear and consciousness of sin they rejoice with him in fellowship and love. Thus faith answereth to faith, and love flows from heart to heart. The Father's will is revealed in the experience of the saints. All that we can know of God, is that much of the great mystery of life eternal which is

laid down in his will concerning us, and opened to our understanding by a gracious revelation of his word by the exercise of grace in our heart. The things which have already come to pass in time we know are by the will of him who made all things for himself. The things which are yet to appear are veiled from our vision, and are secret with God, they cannot stray a hair's breadth from his decree, which decree went forth in the ancients of eternity, before the mountains were brought forth, for all power in heaven and in earth is in God. Because God's will changeth not, therefore the "sons of Jacob are not consumed." Our perverseness is all swallowed up in his wondrous love. God's will decreed the way of salvation, that we should be justified by the imputed righteousness of Christ. Perfect righteousness alone could bring justification to the sinner, which righteousness could be found only in the person of Jesus Christ. He came not to do his own will, but the will of him who sent him. The Lord by the mouth of the psalmist said, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." It was God's love that pitied them (his people), and his righteousness was his skirt that covered them. The way of salvation is a secret, mysterious and wonderful way; there are no means within the intelligence of the natural man by which that way can be discovered. It is hidden from the wise and prudent, but revealed unto babes by the light of that knowledge which cometh down from heaven. Jesus is the life and light of men, and he lighteth all the way, and maketh it sure in and through a finished and complete work, and that work was through suffering and death. If we delight to do the will of God, his will surely we will do. The delight arises from the knowledge that "God is," and that his love and mercy have been extended unto us. This, with a confession that Jesus is come in our flesh, is the will of God in us which has overcome the world, by which things we wear the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. The "tree of life" in us yieldeth fruit unto righteousness.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

TAFT, Tenn., Sept. 20, 1910.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have put off writing as long as I can, therefore if the blessed Lord will be pleased to direct my wandering mind I will drop a few words to the dear readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I do not know where I shall be led before I close.

"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief."—Isaiah liii. 10. O amazing and matchless grace! What infinite and incomprehensible wisdom in the eternal Jehovah, to look from vast eternity and view the state of fallen Adam's apostate race before he was created. It pleased the everlasting Father to bruise his Son Jesus, our Lord, and, "He hath put him to grief." Does it not follow that God foresaw the fall of man, and the reign of sin unto death, according to the foregoing Scripture? "The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand," and "he shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." Hence we see the unchangeable purpose of God in the divine arrangement for the salvation of poor sinners such as are his people. We see the beauty shining through his divine counsel and wisdom.

But to return to the beginning. Some men advocate that Adam was able to stand, but liable to fall, but would our God create such a being in his likeness

or image, able to stand and yet without ability to stand, and with liability to fall? Such a theory charges God with stupendous ignorance. Remember that it is said that he saw of the travail of his soul, and was satisfied. I believe that the pleasure of the Lord shall indeed prosper in his hand. The decree of God from all eternity was that he, Jesus, should be bruised and put to grief, for it is written that he should be stricken and smitten for the transgressions of his people. Had Adam been made able to stand, he would have stood, and what then would the covenant between the Father and the Son in the plan of salvation by grace have amounted to? It all would have been a failure. But our God purposed in his divine counsel to do all his pleasure, in all things visible and invisible. The reign of sin in Judas in betraying his Master was according to the purpose and divine counsel of God the Father.

"It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief." Hence we can see plainly his foreordination in bringing to pass just what was spoken by the prophet hundreds of years before it came to pass, and in this way Jesus became the author of eternal salvation. God purposed him to be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; this was because God had given Adam, our federal head, a command, and it pleased him to do so. Divine inspiration has said, "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand," and the word of God is settled in heaven forever. Our God thought of all things that should ever come to pass; he thought of Jesus being bruised, for we read that it pleased the Lord to bring to pass what he had thought. It was his will and purpose that Jesus should be betrayed. Had not sin by transgression entered into the world, then Jesus had not been born in the world. But it was according to the infinite, unchangeable purpose of God that all things have come to pass relative to redemption. It is moved on by his word, which is forever settled in heaven. So by the reign of sin sinners were appointed to take our blessed Lord and do precisely what they did do, and so they accomplished the pleasure of the Lord. It pleased the Lord to put him to grief, that we might grieve over sin. God thought of all these things. I, for one, as much believe that the will of God was done concerning the death and suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ as it was that men should be redeemed, and it seems as clear that the reign of sin must have been in his arrangement, as it was that the names of the saints should be written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world, and this, too, before sin ever entered into the world by transgression. We see here how it was that he became a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them: and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." Had the reign of sin been prevented, how could he have been bruised for our sins, or how could he have borne our iniquities? Had the law given to Adam been obeyed there could have been no sin in the world. "The law entered, that the offence might abound." I understand this offence to be sin; if not, how shall grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ? Hence we can see clearly how it was that it pleased the Lord to bruise him, and wicked men were needed to carry out the absolute decree and counsel of God, in order that he might

bring many sons unto glory. Their names were already written in the book of life of the Lamb slain, from the foundation of the world, while as yet there was none of them. But God spoke as though they were.

It was no wonder that Adam was not able to stand; he might have prevented the reign of sin, and sinners would not have crucified the Lord of glory, and all the promises to Abraham would have been failures, and there would have been no reign of grace, and the whole arrangement would have been changed. But God, let us remember, thought of all these things, and as he thought of them, so should they be. Yet there has been opposition to the truth always since sin has been in the world, for it is the reign of sin that opposes the truth. It was so in ancient days, and in all the generations of old. Wherever truth is declared, there is sure to be opposition throughout all the earth. For this reason there is only about ten per cent. of those who claim to be believers who believe the truth as it is taught in the Scriptures, that all power is given into the hand of the Son of God, and so there is nothing that can come to pass, only as his unlimited power allows it to be. This is true, whether we speak of the reign of sin unto death, or of the reign of grace unto eternal life. So I conclude that all things in this present world come to pass as our God saw that they would. I feel sure that he thought of all things, both good and evil, else he never would have spoken it in the Scriptures. This thought of all things has no limit, let, or hindrance. There is no compulsion upon him, for it is according to his divine counsel, freely and unchangeably acting. The invisible things of him, from the foundation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, and all things were so prepared that they work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. But this great principle of doctrine is despised by the powers of the second beast, with its false doctrine, taught by the masses of the religious world. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" in this present world. Our God has so said, and I know that he thought of it, and as he thought, so shall it be. He saw all of our sorrows and trials, temptations and persecutions, and all the conflicts that we have ever had, and shall ever have, in this sinful world.

I trust that all who may read this may pray, without wrath or doubting, lifting up holy hands, and in all things give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. So now, dear friends and companions in these sore trials, I live in hope of that immortal crown, and in the hope of seeing some of you on the earth. I trust that you will all pray for me, and above all, stand fast, immovable, earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, for it is true that our blessed Lord delivered it unto us. Our light affliction works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. "Finally, brethren [and sisters], farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you." "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all."

Yours to serve for Jesus' sake,

D. N. CORDELL.

ATHENS, Texas, Sept. 22, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed is a copy of a letter written by my daughter, which I would be glad to have published in the SIGNS if it meets your approval. I am glad to say that she is gradually mending. She now uses an invalid's chair, never gets despondent, but is cheerful, looking forward to the time when she can walk again.

Hoping to see it published, I am your aged sister, M. M. COKER.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I was born June 24th, 1872, and am the ninth of twelve children, and am the daughter of Joseph and Martha Coker. I feel that the mighty God of heaven and earth has been graciously good to me, and carried me through many trials and afflictions that a part of the human family have to undergo, yet for some purpose I am spared. When I was eight years old I began to be troubled on account of sin, and as God's little ones have been trying to tell this part even before my existence, I will not try, for the half has never yet been told. They all claim to be weak, but I am the least and weakest of all, if one at all. Yet after an effort, and trying every scheme and plan that any poor mortal could think of to work myself into God's favor, feeling that I had something to do in the matter, and after finding that I had caught at every little mote and straw trying to work and raise myself out of this condition, I found that humanity had nothing to claim. After six years had expired, and I had given up all hope of relief, feeling that I was the chief of sinners, and that justice would forever cut me off from God's presence, my little, humble petition was, Lord, have mercy on me, a poor, helpless and undone sinner, when at a dark midnight hour my blessed Savior appeared to me in shining beauty. I raised up on my bed and asked, What is this? In loving, soft tones something said to me, It is I, be not afraid; salvation is of the Lord. Then I was made to praise my dear Savior, who is the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely. I felt that I wanted to tell it to all, and that I could tell it, and that I would never have another doubt; all was love with me. "On the wings of his love I was carried above." Then I made my solemn vow that I would go and tell my dear mother about it, but alas, before I reached her the tempter appeared and said, You are going now to deceive your mother; you are acting the hypocrite, and are deceived yourself. I would not have told it then for anything, for I did feel to be deceived in the whole matter, yet that burden was gone. Then I tried to get it all back, that I might see how it went, but I was never troubled with that burden again, and in my darkest time I would be pointed back to the time and place where I was relieved of it. My mind then was led to the church. I was not at any loss to know where the church was, but perplexed to know whether the Primitive Baptists would receive a fourteen year old child or not. I pondered over this, trying to keep it all to myself until I was old enough. To my great surprise, when Elder John W. Owen was about to leave my father's home one day, and bidding us all good-by, he took me by the hand and said, "Daughter, do your duty." Mother said, "I have been thinking there was something on her mind myself." I did not respond, but had it been in my power I would have sunk out of existence. When I got by myself and reflected over these words I wondered how they knew these things; I

knew I had never told them to any one. But now I suppose they both had been along that dark and rugged road, seeing both darkness and light, and knew the old signposts. For several years I struggled with this desire to go to the church and tell them the dealings of the Lord with me, and be baptized. When I was twenty-one I got a fall that crippled me so badly that I was in bed almost a year. Then I had to go on crutches two years, and have never gotten entirely over it. I would set times to offer myself to the church, but my times were not the Lord's time. On the 24th day of June, 1896, I was made willing to go to the church and try to tell of my humble hope in the Lord, and leave it for the brethren to decide, feeling unworthy to even ask for a home among them, but not satisfied without it. I was received, and baptized on my crutches the following day, by Elder W. T. Holliman, in the fellowship of the Macedonia Church. I have been satisfied with the church ever since, but the question often arises with me, Is the church satisfied with me? On June 1st, 1909, I was taken down with diabetes, together with a complication of other things, mostly caused from my old hurt. I had a hard struggle between life and death, no one thought it possible for me to live in that condition, nor did I, for death seemed to be closing in on me. My breath was almost gone, and a heavy pressure was coming over me that I cannot describe. I was in a very excitable frame of mind, but greatly desired to be reconciled to my lot, but to live if it could only be God's will. I lost hope of living much longer, and the dark curtains of death began to wave over me, and to rise up from either side, and almost came together above me. O, they were the blackest curtains of death. I could only see a small ray of light, and felt that my breath, my life, was about gone. I turned my head to keep from seeing the great and dreaded pressure that was on me, the struggle of death that I believed was coming. When I looked another way my brother, Dr. Coker (who died in 1902), appeared to me in a large building far above the earth; he was as white as marble, and looked so innocent. He would walk back and forth in the building, and when I would turn to shun death he would go to the doorway and stoop over and look at me. Then I would turn, and the curtains of death would begin to close in over me, and my breath began to go out, and the struggle for life would begin. I was in this condition for some time, perhaps a day and night, growing worse until late one evening when the doctor came for another operation. I felt so weak and so near gone that I told him I did not think I could stand another, when he cheered me up by saying that I was getting along all right, and that I would get through. I told him to do what he thought was best. When he and my husband lifted me from the bed to get me ready, death disappeared. Had it not been for the kind and brave looks of my untiring and attentive doctor, together with my nurses, who were my very dear sister Alice and my husband, I believe I would have sunk; they did not show to me that they shrank or feared, never showed to me that they had any intention of giving up, which kept me hopeful. But the God of all purposes had them prepared for this same purpose; to them I can never show my appreciation and thankfulness enough. May God bless them, together with my many untiring friends, whom I will not attempt to name, for I might leave some out; I

do feel truly thankful for their kindness and help. I shall never forget the kindness of neighbors, neither can I forget the kind and untiring attention given me by brothers Charlie and Alf. I can now sit on a chair, but am paralyzed from my waist down. I feel hopeful of getting well; if not, may the God of power reconcile me to my lot. I was in bed six months, and suffered agonies that neither tongue nor pen can express; only those who were with me can give a hint. But thanks be to God, I was made able to bear it, and given a reconciled mind in the hour of my sufferings. I am blessed with stepchildren who never hesitate to minister to my necessities when it is in their power to do so, together with a dear husband, who has never shown in the least that my daily and hourly necessities are burdensome to him, for which I feel thankful to the God of power. I do not believe God's power is limited in the least, but believe that he has all power, both in heaven and on earth, and gives us all the power and strength we have. He works in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. May he reconcile us all to his will in the hour of death. My love to all the saints scattered abroad.

Your afflicted sister in hope,

JENNIE COKER RIDDLE.

BRUNSWICK, Maine, Dec. 13, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It is time to renew my subscription for the SIGNS, so I will inclose the amount. I wish I could write something worthy a place in its columns, but I am so destitute of all spiritual exercises I must wait patiently until it is the Lord's will to lead my mind into the truth. When I can write with the sweet assurance that Jesus has been wrought in my soul the hope of glory, there are many wonderful works of the Lord I can declare, my pen moves easily and quickly, and yet I cannot begin to tell half that is seen and felt in my heart. The love and fellowship for his dear people is in exercise, and peace abounds. There is no room for dissensions, discussions, accusations, or even a feeling that the truth must be defended, for I see Jesus is the Truth, and he has conquered every foe, and risen victorious over death, hell and the grave, and every one of his chosen people were with him, and we are given the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, and we are made to give thanks unto God. What a sweet song it is when we are made to praise and thank God for his goodness and mercy which follow us all the days of our lives. Who can express the desolation when this light is withdrawn? How great is the darkness, and how we stumble, fall and cry to be delivered from this distress. We experience what it is to be hedged about with hewn stone; not a place for hands or feet to rest; we are down in the depths, and the waves and billows go over us, and we feel sure we shall perish, and think, His mercy is clean gone forever. We know we are unworthy of his notice and are exceeding sinful, and do the things we hate. What comfort is given us when we are assured that the apostle Paul had this experience, and expressed it so clearly as he has. I often feel a great desire to write to all who love the truth, but when I make the attempt and write a few lines nothing more is given me, and I have to put my pen aside. It is often with a heavy heart I do my daily work, and I find myself wishing for that sweet peace and joy I once had. I cannot tell you how I mourn on account of the sin dwelling in me, and long for the righteousness of Christ to clothe me. There is nothing

outside of Christ that I desire; he is all in all. I know you will see from what I have written how utterly impossible it is for me to say anything that will comfort or edify God's people. I love them, and desire no other company. Salvation by grace must be my theme. Jesus is the Savior of sinners.

Your sister in hope,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

RATCLIFF, Kentucky.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—Inclosed find money order to credit on my subscription. I feel that I must say the editorials are excellent, and I have been edified very much in reading them, and also the many articles written by the dear loved ones who contribute to its columns. I have often thought I would like to write each one separately. I am so often in darkness I fear even to attempt to write at all, but when I am reminded that God dwells in the thick darkness, and in him is no darkness, and that he keeps his children as the apple of his eye and leads them by his blessed Spirit, even in paths that they have not known, that he makes darkness light before them, and crooked things straight, and says, "These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them," I then sometimes am blessed to behold the glorious hand of God in directing all. Yes, my dear kindred in a blessed hope of immortality, the less we can see in ourselves and think of ourselves in the flesh, the more our minds and meditations rest upon the great mercy, grace and love of our blessed and covenant-keeping God, made manifest in the gift of his only begotten Son, who redeemed us from the curse of the law, he being made a curse for us. He bore our sin in his own body on the tree; yes, all his suffering, all his agony, was for the fulfillment of the will of the Father, that the whole election of grace should be glorified in him, and be brought into the blessed enjoyment of the eternal inheritance in Christ, who was delivered for their offences and raised for their justification, and is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high, who also maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Yours in sore affliction,

J. E. THORNBURY.

TOONE, Tenn.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am a stranger personally to most of you, but I love you all. I want to say just here that I have a hope in Jesus, and that hope seems to be sure and steadfast. My trouble for sin began when I was quite young, about ten years old, and I was led along in mourning, weeping and sorrow at seeing my sad condition in sin before the just and holy God. I was trying to pray nearly all the time, but I did not think I could pray, but I could not help trying; my heart seemed to be broken, and my case the worst that ever had been among all of Adam's race, and most of the time I was afraid to take the name of the Lord in my sinful lips. I would often say when trying to beg for mercy, O thou preserver of men, if there is or can be any mercy for me, have mercy on me. I went on in that way for about eleven years, and it seemed to me that my case got worse all the time, and all worldly things looked dark to me; all nature was getting weaker and darker, and I would steal away often in secret places and try to beg the good Lord to have mercy on me, if it could be according to his will. One night, in 1873, I lay down on my bed feeling sure I would never rise again, that the good Lord's wrath was against

me, and that he was going to kill me that night and send me to that awful place of torment, and as far as I know I had no knowledge until about one hour and a half before daybreak, when my mind came back to me, and I shook all over, and at that time I expected every breath to be the last I would be allowed to draw. My wife awoke and asked, "What is the matter?" I told her I did not know. She said, "What makes you shake so? get up, maybe it is the cramps," but I knew it was not. I got off the bed and sat on a chair, still shaking; it seemed that I was in the cold jaws of death, and I thought it was because I was such a sinner. But right there and then by the eye of faith I saw the Lord coming from heaven; he appeared in the northeast, and O how fast he did come. He spoke to me and said, I am he that was dead, and am alive; I hold the keys of death and hell; I open, and no man can shut, and he vanished, and my sins which had me pressed down so low left me just as he disappeared. Right here there was an experience I cannot describe. I rejoiced in my soul, and cried for joy. I felt that I was in the hand of the Lord at that time; everything looked new, all nature was singing for joy. Is this the travel from nature to grace, or am I a poor, deceived soul? All my pleasure, all my glory, is in Jesus, in his righteousness through his shed blood. Brethren and sisters, it would comfort me so much to receive a few lines from you.

Yours in hope of a better world than this, S. M. BUTLER.

TOLEDO, Ohio, October, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I send you a letter written by sister Kate Swartout, of Cement City, Mich., who has been afflicted for a great many years so she could not attend meetings, and she wrote this letter to be read in church at our yearly meeting, the first Saturday in October, and it was requested by the church that I should send it to you to be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I wish many others would do as sister Kate did when they cannot attend meetings of the church: write to the church and tell them how they are getting along, and that they love the church. I think there would not be so much coldness in the churches as there is. This church she speaks of has stood there for a great many years without any ingathering. At that meeting in October a dear sister came forward and related her hope in Christ, and was baptized. There are others also who I wish could see as this dear sister did, and take up their cross, which is easy. In our experience we find a blessing in doing what we hope the Lord has commanded us to do. Elders C. F. Stooky, of Illinois, and Andrew Pittman, of Norville, Mich., were there, and the meeting was enjoyed by all, and one long to be remembered. It looked as though the good Lord was stirring up their minds, which he is able to do.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
MARTIN LINDLEY, Church Clerk.

CEMENT CITY, Michigan.

DEAR LITTLE CHURCH:—It has been so long since I have met with you perhaps you may think I have forgotten you, and maybe you have forgotten me, but I assure you that I still feel to say, Let my right hand forget her cunning, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy. Our low estate is a matter of the deepest concern with me. Often I feel to ask, Has the dear Lord by his Spirit ceased working in the hearts of

the people here? Yet if there is one left who still loves the old paths, and wishes to walk the narrow way, and leave the world with all its orders, amusements and abominations, and his face still set Zionward, that one is my friend and companion. So I am constrained to say for my friends' and companions' sake, "Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces." I often feel to say, Awake, awake, O arm of the Lord. Art thou not he that cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon? Art thou not he that dried up the waters of the Red Sea? Surely his power is the same to-day, and his arm is not shortened; he can work wonders now, as in the days of old, if it be his will.

Bear with me while I try to tell how much there is in the one word "beloved." I am often asking, Can I be loved of the Lord when I am so afflicted and tormented here? Yet a voice of tenderest accent comes to me, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you." It is not a small trial, a little cross, that has come to such as poor dear Brooks and I, but it is a fiery one, yet if it be truly a trial of faith, then we are told it is more precious than gold that perisheth, and we can also remember that it is written, "Behold, we count them happy which endure."

Asking your prayers, that I may be granted patience unto the end, I am your most afflicted sister,

KATE SWARTOUT.

DUNCAN, Okla., Nov. 4, 1910.

DEAR FRIENDS, BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—It is time to renew my subscription for our family paper; it is all the preaching I have, and it seems I cannot do without it. I have not written to our paper this year, because I thought my letters might crowd out some letter I had rather read. O the sweet messages of love and fellowship I receive in our paper. O that I knew I could comfort just one little child that is trusting in the Lord. As I pen these words it seems that something is saying to me, "You are writing to them, and you are a stranger to them, they know nothing about you; but, dear friends, while those words were ringing in my ears the words were spoken to me with power, "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in," and I said instantly, Thank God, I have the witness within, and I know my Redeemer lives; he is my King, my Deliverer; yea, though I walk through the valley of death I will fear no evil. But O how often I am in the valley of despair, yet I hope sometimes I can say with Jacob, Surely the Lord was there, and I did not know it. Dear brethren and sisters, how lonely I feel here; surely I am in a strange land, and my harp is hung on the willows; I try to sing some spiritual song, and I cannot; I go down into the depths of darkness, I wander around and say, Surely I am deceived. Remembering all the way I have come, I go back to my childhood days and say, Surely the Lord has led me, because I can see his love and mercy over me up to the present. I do not want to deny the work of the Lord. Sometimes it cheers me that I love the people of God. Who taught me to love them? God is love. There are none who love the children of God except they be born of God; and this love is a testimony to the heirs of promise that they are the children of God and fellow-citizens of the household of faith, to whom the Lord has given the earnest of the Spirit, that we may walk softly before

him all the days of our sojourn here, looking for a city wherein righteousness dwells: the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, and where our treasure is, there will our heart be also. Dear brethren and sisters, is this not our faith? Are we not seeking a city the Zion of God? Bless the Lord, O my soul, for he keeps that city pure and white, for he has washed her in his own blood; yes, the city of Zion, the church, the Lamb's wife, is saved, and she has not a farthing to pay; there is no spot in her, and her clothing is of fine linen. My kindred, is she not all glorious? O will I be one of that number? My hope is that He has redeemed me.

Now, my dear friends, (I call you friends, for I feel when I read after you all that you are indeed my friends, for I am made to rejoice) I did not intend to write much, for it seems my tongue cleaves to the roof of my mouth, and I am made to feel, My leanness. O that the Lord would think upon me; though he slay me, yet will I praise him.

I want to say the editorials are like the ointment that ran down Aaron's beard; they water the garden which is the city of God, and when the bells that hung on Aaron's skirt began to tingle, they that heard began to rejoice, for they knew their high priest lived; and you, dear servants, when you begin to rattle the gospel bells, O how it feeds and nourishes the little lambs. The Lord said that his doctrine should drop as the rain, and his speech distil as the dew; it is as the dew of heaven, it feeds the church of God and builds her up on her most holy faith. What glorious news the gospel is to me when I read after brethren Keene, Ker, Chick, Beeman and Coulter, yes, I will say all of you brethren and sisters; how they strengthen my feeble knees. It is all the preaching I have, and it is sweet to my taste. I wish I could write like you, then I would know that you were comforted, but let me say with Ruth, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee, for your God is my God.

Now I will close this poor letter; if it finds a place in our paper or the waste-box it will be right with me. I will say to one and all, Write on for our paper, for it is food to the poor and hungry; you who are strong, hold up the weak and trembling ones left like me by the wayside.

"Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

Farewell in the Lord. Your sister in hope, NANCY CREEL.

CINCINNATI, Ohio, Nov. 2, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—When you have space I would be glad for you to publish this letter, written by brother C. M. Bird.

W. C. PENNINGTON.

ST. ALBANS, W. Va., Oct. 20, 1910.

MR. W. C. PENNINGTON—VERY DEAR BROTHER:—I have just received yours of October 17th, and have read it again and again with great comfort, and am glad that the good Lord gave you a mind to write to one who feels to be the least of all saints, yes, less than the least, if one at all. I know that God has a people here on earth. These people have experienced, or have been given to know, that as in Adam they died because of sin, so in Christ they are made alive unto holiness; they have been given a hope of eternal life, and made to taste of heavenly joys. They have known that as sin and death came by Adam's transgression,

so righteousness and life came by the obedience of Jesus Christ. Yes, these people have one mind, which is the mind of Christ. The apostle says, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us," and that though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

Brother Pennington, you say in your letter that it seems as though we have been communing together in mind. My mind has been on you, and many others of the dear saints of God, and I at times now feast on the glorious repast at the association. Truly it must have been of the Lord, for truly it can be said only of God's people, "Ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." Again, "I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: * * * both to be full and to be hungry. * * * I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." "As having nothing, and yet possessing all things."

Well, I shall close. Write again. We are not very well. My wife sends best regards to you.

From a poor sinner,

C. M. BIRD.

BALTIMORE, Md., Sept. 20, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will please find money order for two dollars to renew my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES another year. I hope you will not think hard of me for waiting so long. I would like to write a few lines. I am a deaf mute and cannot hear preaching, but the SIGNS has been of great comfort to me, teaching me of the love of God. Indeed, I cannot do without it, for I do not know what preachers are speaking to my ears. Though there are some preachers preaching to the deaf mutes in their sign language, yet I do not join their denominations. During the past year I enjoyed reading the paper very much, and I want it for another year. I feel to thank the Lord for this. Before I subscribed for the SIGNS I did not know I was a sinner, and did not know much about the love of God, but the SIGNS has been bringing sweet and heavenly messages to me, and I think I understand it. I love to read the experiences of the many dear ones, and am interested in them. I have several brothers and one sister, who live far away from me, and my father lives in Virginia, so I feel like an orphan out in the world. I left the Virginia school for the deaf and the blind, at Staunton, in 1908, and went to Washington, D. C., where I tried to find something to do, but failed. Then I came to Baltimore, and soon got a position in a printing office, where I am now working. I had a good brother, Lloyd, living in this city, but he passed away last June, leaving his dear widow and me here. I miss him very much. I still keep the copy of the SIGNS containing his obituary, which Elder J. T. Rowe, my pastor, wrote. I can never forget how good he was to me. I trust the Lord takes good care of me always.

This is my second attempt to write, and I hope you will excuse all mistakes. I hope it may find you enjoying good health, both physically and spiritually. God be with you and bless you with his loving care.

Your brother in hope,

RAY KAUFFMAN.

GROVER, Pa.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I was reading October 15th number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I came to brother Richard Case's writings on Isaiah liv. 9, and it brought very forcibly to my mind an experience I had several years ago. I may have spoken or written something of it before. At the time, or some time before my baptism, these words were continually before me, Arise, and be baptized, calling on the name of the Lord, and ye shall find rest unto your soul. I will say here, I knew nothing of a warfare, and expected a continual rest and trust in Jesus, but as time ran on and the cares of this life grew more, I found myself greatly burdened on account of my sinfulness. I could find no comfort in the Bible and could not lift my eyes to heaven, and many days mourned an absent God, and I was almost ready to say, I have grasped a shadow and missed the substance, when the words, "Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you," came to me in such a way as to cause me to again take the Bible to try to find some comfort. The first words my eyes rested on were these, "Bring no more vain oblations: incense is an abomination unto me."—Isaiah i. 13. I felt I had been trying to bring something good to appear before God. But how to cease from evil, and learn to do well, was the question always before me, and yet the words, "Seek, and ye shall find," still continued with me, and I was continually reading the Bible whenever I could get a few moments from my cares. One day I opened to the words in Isaiah liv. 7, and the remainder of the chapter was so applied to my soul as to be of great comfort, and I can witness to this day, after thirty years have passed, it has been my consolation through all the storms of life thus far. Pray for me, dear brethren, that it may still be with me all my journey through.

Your unworthy sister,

N. M. OWEN.

GREENWAY, Arkansas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been taking your good paper three years, and do not feel that I could ever do without it again, for it teaches the doctrine I dearly love and believe. I have been a believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine all my life. I am fifty-six years old, and have never joined the church, and have not been to an Old School Baptist meeting since I left my native country, Indiana, twenty years ago, nor have I ever had the good fortune to run across any Old Baptists since I left there. I am living in the town of Greenway, where there are two churches, one a Campbellite and the other a Union, where the Missionary Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians hold their meetings. I can hear them sing, preach and shout from where I live. I seldom ever go to their meetings, for their preaching is no food to the hungry soul. How often I am made to say, O if it were God's will that I could live near an Old Baptist Church, and among what I believe to be God's people, what a comfort it would be to me; but if it is God's will for me to be placed as I am, I will try and be content, for I know he is a just God, and works all things for our good. Forgive me if I am intruding, but I cannot help writing a few lines to tell you how I love to read the SIGNS, and how my heart goes out in love and fellowship to the many good writers, and to the editors; indeed, it is a great comfort for me to read after them, as I can never see any one to talk with about these things.

Yours in christian hope and fellowship,

(MRS.) PAULINA GRAY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1910.

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EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
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MATTHEW XI. 2–6.

"Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, and said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."

What a vast difference there is between the doubting of an unbeliever or a skeptic, and the doubting of the humble, fearful-hearted soul who feels his need of the Savior. John, in prison, doubted, but his doubting was not that of the scoffer, but of one who felt that his eternal interests were involved in the resolving of his doubts. Among the number who are not to enter into the city of God, but who have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, are numbered in Revelation the fearful and the unbelieving. John was evidently fearful and questioning, but what a vast difference between his fearfulness and that of the unbelieving, and all other ungodly characters. He who feels no need of a Savior, and no interest in truth, godliness or heaven, may willingly be a skeptic as to the existence or the truth of all these things, but that man who knows his sins and his need of redemption, and to whom godliness is altogether desirable, and who longs for heaven and what heaven means, is not willingly skeptical, but, on the contrary, filled with anxiety to be assured of the reality of these things. John was fearful in this sense; he greatly desired to be assured that this Jesus was indeed the Christ of God. He had been assured of this when it was given him to see the Spirit descend upon the Savior and abide upon him, as it had before been declared to him that he should. (See John i. 32–34.) But, against his will, questionings now filled his mind and fears had entered into his soul, and out of the sad and dark hours which he was spending in the dungeon he desired a renewal again of the former assurances. John does not here seem to be questioning so much about his interest in the things of God as just this one thing: Is this Jesus the Messiah that should come, as was promised in all the sacred Scriptures? John had not only received the testimony of the Spirit of God that this was he that should come, but he had himself borne witness to others that it was so. The question in his heart would be twofold: Have I been deceived? and then, Have I deceived others? Then out of this doubt would grow up all other questionings, such as this: Has all my ministry been vain? Has my preaching been false? If this be not He who was to come, then all that I have labored to teach, all my ministry, and all my work of every kind, has been in vain. Then my testimony has been false, and my baptism without meaning. It may help us to enter into what such questionings must have meant to John if we shall ask ourselves the question, Is it true that Jesus did come in the flesh and live here with men, and die upon the cross, and

rise again from the dead the third day, and after forty days, in which he showed himself to many of his disciples, ascended again to glory? Suppose a doubt of all this be lodged in our minds, at once all that we have believed and hoped for, and, if we be ministers of the word, all that we have preached, has had no foundation. There is then no salvation, no christianity, no hope of eternal life beyond the grave. Is it any wonder that John should send two of his disciples with just this one question, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" Under similar questionings we must be alike restless, and must seek to have these doubts removed. John could not come to the Master himself, and so he sends two others. But why should John doubt that this was the Messiah? It has seemed to us of late that the key to this mystery is found in the very first words of the Scripture quoted at the head of this article. Let us quote them again: "When John had heard in the prison the works of Christ." It was the hearing of what Jesus was doing that enforced these doubts in the mind of John. Jesus was not doing what even the chosen disciples had expected he would do when he should come. It seems clear to us that John the Baptist did not understand the real spiritual nature of the kingdom of Christ any more than did the twelve. They, in common with all true Jews, looked for the coming of One who should subdue all nations under his feet, and deliver them as a nation from all the bondage that rested upon them, and who should establish his throne in righteousness at Jerusalem, and visibly reign upon earth. This, Jesus had not begun to do. John heard of him as doing works the very reverse of this. Jesus was going about ministering to diseased souls and bodies; he was consorting with the lowly, and the poor, and the afflicted. He sought out not the rich and the great, but the poor and the humble of earth. He was not repelling the reproaches of men, nor was he seeking power or authority over men. He was teaching, and not commanding. He was clothed, not in purple or any other sort of rich array, but went about plainly clad. His countenance did not seem like one who would claim to be King, but as one who bore a burden, and was sad. All this John heard. This he did not understand as yet. Because he heard these things of Jesus he felt the need of renewed assurance. John was disappointed in his hopes and expectations, therefore he sends and asks again, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" It was WHEN he heard these works that he asks this question. Let us note that John did not ask counsel of any man in this extremity. We are not told that he even communicated the doubtings of his heart to his friends. He did not send to the disciples of the Master asking their testimony or their opinions, he sent to the Master himself. Jesus alone could solve this doubt; Jesus alone could give assurance to his soul. John could not be satisfied with the stream, he must go to the fountain. Men could not help in such an hour as this. He, about whom this questioning was going on in the mind of John, could alone silence it. This is most solemnly and blessedly true now, Jesus alone can still the troubled waters in the soul, he alone can speak peace, he alone can reveal himself as he is to his children, and we see that he does once again reveal himself to John's disciples, and bids them tell him what they have seen and heard. The reply of Jesus is noteworthy, not only for what he does say, but for what

he does not say. He does not say, I am he, in words. It is not said that when John in prison had heard the words of Christ, but his works, and so Jesus sends him no words, but the testimony of his works: "Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see." Two things stand out here with special prominence it seems to us: first, in the word "again." John had heard the same testimony before, as the opening words of the text show. Now show him again these things. If doubts arise in our hearts, it is not some new testimony of Jesus that will silence them, but the old testimony again repeated. The second thing is this, that John was not to be told of such works as he had expected to see in the Messiah, but just the same works that had produced this questioning in his heart. Jesus' work did indeed testify of him. If John did not understand this testimony there was no other to be produced. True, these works did not testify to such a Christ as John had expected to appear, but they did testify to the Messiah that he came to be. Any other sort of testimony would misrepresent the Savior. John not only needed confirmation of his faith, but also instruction. If these works did not testify in his heart to Jesus as the expected One, nothing could bring that testimony to him, but John was, after all, a spiritual man, and this testimony would have meaning in his heart. Jesus came to save, and as John felt his need of salvation, not from the Roman yoke, but from a bondage infinitely worse than any human yoke could be, these works of Jesus in breaking the bonds of disease and death, and proclaiming a salvation that was for the poor, would become a living testimony to him, and there would come to his heart an assurance He was indeed the true Messiah, the Savior who saves from sin. Perhaps the mind of John would be thus carried back to the testimony of the angel, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." These works did not indeed set forth his power to save the nation from bondage to the Roman yoke, but they did testify to his power to save from sin, and this was all that the angel promised, when the tidings of his coming birth were heralded by him.

It may well be that each of the special things named by the Master in the text have a special meaning, but it is not in our mind here to speak of them separately, but all together. The different infirmities of men are presented, and over them all Jesus reveals his power. Blindness gives place to sight, he that was deaf was given hearing, those who were lame could once more walk, the lepers were cleansed, and the dead brought to life, and, last of all (and, as it has seemed to us, the one thing which as it were sums up all the rest in one,) the poor have the gospel preached to them. All these characters could be of no benefit to the Master; all of them must receive all from him. Thus Jesus came to give all, and not to receive at the hands of others. This was what seems to have perplexed the mind of John. Why should the King of the Jews associate himself with the blind, deaf, lame and leprous ones and with the dead? Why should he lift up his voice in teaching among the poor? But John must come to see that this was just what salvation means. He must come to know that works like these were greater works than taking a city. He must come to see that in the hearts and lives of redeemed men was to be manifested the kingdom of the Lord. It must be revealed to him, and

to all who ever should believe on him, that the kingdom of God is within men; that it is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; and this gospel of the kingdom was proclaimed to the poor. The kingdoms of earth give no promise to the poor. It is to men who have that much is given in the kingdoms of men. But here the glorious good news of the kingdom of heaven is proclaimed to the poor among men. The poor named here are the same poor of whom James speaks when he says, "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom?" Such works and such promises were never heard of in all the reign of the kings of earth, but this is the peculiar work and preaching of the King of kings. These things must be shown again to John, and if we are found questioning as was he, just these things are to be again our evidence, these and nothing else.

Now the blessed Savior pronounces a sort of benediction in the words, "And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me." Speaking in a general way, it seems to us that these words simply mean that they who are prepared by grace to understand and love and acknowledge such a Savior as he had revealed himself by all these works to be, were blessed indeed of God. To come into this state of mind and heart is to receive the richest and highest of all blessings from God, and this seems to us to involve the thought also that to be poor, and blind, and deaf, and lame, in the spirit of our minds is to be in a state of blessing. The word "offended" simply means that something is a stumbling-block to one; that is, they stumble at what they hear, as one would stumble over some hindrance in the way. If one sees in Jesus nothing to cause him to falter or to stumble in his faith, but, on the contrary, as Jesus' words imply, if he sees that which builds up his faith and hope and love in all these words and works of Jesus, that one makes manifest that he has been blessed of God. He has been blessed to come into communion with the spirits of the followers of God in all ages; he has been blessed with an understanding of Jesus, so that he sees in him more than a prophet, more than any earthly priest and king; he has been blessed to know Jesus as the Savior of sinners. What force these words have when we remember the thought of John concerning the coming kingdom, and indeed the thought of all who looked for his coming, and then remember that this hope was disappointed. To those who thus viewed Jesus and his kingdom the works that he did were indeed a stumbling-block. To all who looked for and desired a literal reign of Jesus upon earth these works would cause offense. These would be offended by all he did and said. But how blessed were they whose hearts were in any manner prepared to receive just such a Redeemer as this. How solemnly would these closing words come to the heart of John. No doubt they did cause great heart-searchings in him, as they have done in the hearts of many others since that day. It is well if it be so with us all. How important the question: Are we offended in this Savior? As this question may be answered with us, is our state before God decided. If not offended in such a Savior, then are we blessed indeed.

C.

ISAIAH XXXIII. 20-22.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Will you please give your views on the Scripture recorded in Isaiah xxxiii. 20-22? What do you understand by the galley with oars and gallant ship? Does the figure represent them that believe they can obtain the favor of God by their good works and their own righteousness, and thereby attain to heaven and everlasting glory?

In hope, WM. F. SLOAN.

LEXINGTON, Ky., Oct. 2, 1910.

The text reads as follows: "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our King; he will save us."

We think brother Sloan has the right interpretation of the text as far as he has gone, and feel sorry that he did not give us an article of more length upon the subject for publication, but as he did not feel to write at length, and has asked that we give our view, we shall do so in a brief way.

Isaiah is called "the gospel prophet," we suppose because of his clear and wonderful declarations concerning Christ and his church. He was indeed blessed, it seems, not only to see "the promises afar off," but to see them by faith fulfilled, and the church, through that great work, in its glory and beauty. In several of the preceding verses he described the condition of things at that time among the Israelites: that the sinners, transgressors, in Zion were afraid, and that fearfulness had surprised the hypocrites. Then as though some special judgment was about to be visited upon them he asked the questions, "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" Then answered by saying, "He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high." Inasmuch as no such mortal was found on the earth in the days of Israel, Christ is unquestionably the character described. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities;" thus he endured all the judgments the law pronounced upon the transgressor, and in so doing dwelt with the devouring fire and with everlasting burnings.

The prophet in looking down through the different ages, and by faith seeing the wonderful work of Christ in establishing the church in the earth, composed of all nations, kindreds and tongues, declared that those brought into the kingdom should not see a fierce people, a people of a deeper speech than they could perceive, nor of a stammering that they could not understand. The reason was that they all speak the same language, that of Canaan, regardless of nationality. After making the above statement he said, "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities," as though there would be found not only all nations speaking one language, but the fulfillment of all things declared by the prophets. Zion, "the new Jerusalem," is the city of God, where all gospel solemnities, ordinances, are everlastingly maintained and administered. Nowhere else in all the earth is there another Zion of God, hence there only are "our solemnities." There the

Lord is our Judge, and blessing of blessings, he does "not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of ears: but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth." There the Lord is our lawgiver; not as Moses gave the law to the Israelites written upon tables of stone, but in the heart he writes it and in the mind he puts it. The inhabitants of Zion are not subject to any other law, because they have but one Lawgiver. The Lord is also King in Zion, having absolute dominion in and over the city. As King he takes counsel with no subject of his kingdom, nor with the angels above, but rules and reigns in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and different from many earthly kings who often condemned their subjects to death, "he will save us."

How true it is that when one is given to see Jerusalem it is seen a quiet habitation. Peace reigns within her gates and prosperity within her borders. Unity of thought, speech, heart and soul is there, and there only. One doctrine, that of God our Savior, salvation by grace, is the delight of every poor sinner; one song, even praise unto our God, is echoed from one end of the city unto the other, and while old men and old women are seen leaning upon their staff for very age, boys and girls are also seen playing in the streets, in verification of the declaration: the Lord will not leave himself without witnesses.

This tabernacle is different from that one made by Moses in the wilderness; it was constructed in such a way that it could be taken down and put up again as necessity demanded, and carried from one place to another, therefore in removing it its cords were often broken and its stakes often removed. Even the substantial temple made by Solomon with all its magnificence was taken down, not one stone was left upon another. The tabernacle and the temple answered the purpose as types, but like all patterns, when the garment is finished the pattern is put away. Hence those things in the legal heavens perished with the using. This "tabernacle" of which God is the builder "shall never be taken down," it can never pass away, but abideth forever. It is not composed of such material as Moses used in building the tabernacle in the wilderness, nor of such stones as Solomon used in building the temple, but is builded of lively stones: men and women of Adam's race, taken from nature's quarry, fitted, garnished and placed in the eternal building by the great Master Builder. This building is an habitation of God through the Spirit; our bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost.

The words, "not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken," imply, more than anything else, we think, the steadfastness and durability of the house of God; the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. This is all presented in contrast with the tabernacle in the wilderness. In this ever-abiding tabernacle "the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby." There are many broad rivers and streams (broad ways) outside of Zion, wherein go galleys with oars; mighty men using the oars are rowing one way and looking another, hence have not the prize before them; their course with all their rowing and toiling can never bring them to the desired haven. Paul said, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," and the

face of every one of the Lord's people is set like a flint toward Jerusalem. No works of the creature are found in Zion; it matters not how gallant the ship, it cannot enter upon the waters of Zion, the city of our God. GLORIOUS things are spoken of her; her walls are salvation and her gates praise, and as the mountains were round about Jerusalem of old, so is the Lord round about his people henceforth and forever. The Lord himself is our place of broad rivers and streams, and when one is given to see and enter into this city he at once joins in the everlasting song: Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be glory and praise and might and dominion forever and forever, amen and amen. K.

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WE are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

NOTICE.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sorry to trouble you with another notice, but people do not seem to understand that Aberfeldy is my post-office address instead of my telegraph station. Please say that Aberfeldy, Ontario, Canada, is my post-office, and Alvinston, Ontario, Canada, is my telegraph station, and oblige

D. M. VAIL.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

GEORGE D. CONKLIN has changed his address from Warwick, N. Y., to Pine Bluff, N. C., Box 102.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Francis McGlade, son of Thomas and Eliza McGlade, was born in Warren County, Ohio, July 6th, 1853, died Nov. 7th, 1910, aged 57 years, 4 months and one day. He was united in marriage to Miss Sarah Allen in the year 1875. That union was dissolved by her death in the year 1883. He was again united in marriage, to Miss Myrtle Palmer, in the year 1894. To that union was born one son, who, together with his mother, survives him to mourn their great loss; three brothers and many other relatives and friends are also left to mourn. Elder McGlade was wonderfully devoted to his family, so much so that wherever he went and under all circumstances they were uppermost in his mind, and all with whom he went preaching learned that he seemingly worshiped his family next to his God, and I learn from his family and neighbors that no greater devotion could well exist in any family than was found in his family. This makes the loss to his little family so much the greater. Brother McGlade united with the Baptist Church in the year 1874, and was ordained to the ministry in the year 1887, and lived a faithful and dutiful member and servant of the brethren until called to his reward. His twenty-three years in the ministry brought him to the acquaintance of many Baptists in the United States and Canada, and they all knew how he stood on the doctrine of God our Savior. He traveled considerably among the sound Baptists, both in the east and south. He told me he was well received by the sound Baptists, and loved to mingle with them, and related to me many of the pleasant times he had with the children of grace where he visited. He suffered some at the hands of those brethren who believe in limited predestination, but God kept him through it all. Elder McGlade manifested a warm feeling for those who could not see the predestination of all things, and seemed to carry in his heart a love for them, and a spirit of forgiveness, believing that even this difference in the understanding of God's decrees was one of the predestinated things for some wise purpose unknown to him. The brethren of the Greenville Association and sound churches in the western part of Ohio called him to visit them, and called him to the pastoral care to some extent, and in assisting the ministers of these churches, and proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ to the comfort and edification of a number of the churches and brethren. These churches and brethren sympathize deeply with the family and mourn his demise, sorrowing that they shall see his face no more forever. His ministry among us was one of peace and love; he seemed to always show forth in his walk and labor among us that he realized his position was a servant of God's people. He never tried in any way to lord it over the brethren; if he saw faults

among them he kept it to himself. I feel my loss keenly, as our several years ministry together was the most peaceful and pleasant of any minister I ever affiliated with. I depended upon him assisting me among the brethren at all our meetings when he could come. His ministry can be looked back to by the brethren with a feeling of love. He loved the doctrine set forth by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and loved and respected its editors and correspondents. He said he liked to go where he found the SIGNS in their homes. I felt when I tried to preach his funeral that I could not speak too highly of him, and felt we had lost a faithful, useful, sound and loving minister. NEWTON PETERS.

Deacon Philemon Stout passed peacefully away from all earthly scenes and conflicts at the home of his son, J. P. Stout, near Cotton Hill, Sangamon Co., Ill., on the evening of October 1st, 1910, after a confinement to his room of less than one week, aged a few months over 88 years. He was the youngest of a family of eleven children, and was born in Fayette County, Ky., April 19th, 1822. With his parents he came to Sangamon County in 1836, locating on the farm where he made his home continuously until called into the full enjoyment of that house and home not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, and to which his longing eyes had been turned and directed by faith sixty-seven years. Brother Stout after reaching his majority was united in marriage with Malissa Shoup. To them four children were born, only one of whom, Samuel J. Stout, now survives, the wife and mother dying Feb. 26th, 1855. The subject of this sketch was in October, 1856, married to Louisa P. Brassfield, to which union there were born three children: James B., Joab Philemon and Malissa J., now Mrs. W. T. Lewis. The first named son died nine years ago, and two years later the faithful companion and loving mother, who had so valiantly fought the good fight and kept the faith, was called up higher to be with Christ, which is far better. After the death of his beloved companion, and for several years previous, "father Stout" made his home with the son on the same place where he had spent nearly three-quarters of a century, and where thousands had been beneficiaries of his unstinted and generous hospitality, Primitive Baptists especially, scattered over a wide range of territory; many of whom still survive will remember the hearty welcome that was always accorded them on entering the Stout home. Though "father Stout" had been gradually failing for several years, yet the spirit that had always prompted hospitable as well as charitable deeds never for a moment left him up to the day of his departure. He was always mindful of his fellow-kinsmen in Christ, and the welfare of the church was at all times uppermost in his mind, and the beautiful part of all was that he, while doing the noblest and best deeds for the advancement of the interests of others, was entirely forgetful of self. His very heart was in the things that make for peace, thus no place was left for self-laudation and praise; nor was it in the man to even desire such a thing. He united with the Salem-Sugar Creek Church in June, 1843, and his membership was continued with that church until called into the church triumphant. In July, after uniting with the church, he was chosen clerk, which office he faithfully filled until 1885, when he was chosen and ordained deacon, filling that office with honor and fidelity to the cause he loved so well during the remainder of his stay on earth, always holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience, and purchased a great degree of boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. He was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES from the commencement of its publication, and was a subscriber for sixty-seven years. Though possessed of a goodly share of this world's goods, yet he was not in the slightest sense greedy of filthy lucre. With him it was a labor of love and true devotion to serve his brethren in church and associational matters, which was always done in meekness and humility. Always quick to discern the call of duty, he was equally quick to respond in the discharge of that duty. In this he never faltered. During the sixty-seven years of his church membership he never suffered secular or pecuniary interests to bar him from the appointments of the church. In all those years he probably never on any account missed his covenant meetings to exceed a half dozen times. The writer had the privilege of an intimate personal acquaintance with him for nearly forty-three years, and was in attendance often at his home church, and during that time he was never known to be absent from the Saturday meetings until the August (last) meeting, when he was too weak and frail to go to the meetinghouse. On Sunday, however, he was in his accustomed seat, and though very feeble, and the physical man greatly reduced, his face was radiant with peace and heavenly hope as his favorite hymn, "There is a fountain filled with blood," &c., was being sung by the congregation. He rejoiced that there was a Fountain opened unto the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness. Of its efficacy he had a sweet foretaste, and was now ready to be offered, and enter into that rest that remains to the people of God. In all the relations of life, in every place of trust and responsibility, public or private, his course and conduct were such as to excite the highest degree of admiration, and as being worthy of exemplification at all times. The family will miss him, the church will feel a great loss, and the community at large will say, A great and good man has fallen.

The funeral was held October 3rd, and was attended by a large concourse of people, perhaps the largest ever seen on a similar occasion in that sec-

tion, and was, in a sense, an evidence of the esteem in which he was held in the community. The funeral services were conducted by Elder J. L. Scott, of Springfield, Ill., and the unworthy writer.

May the Lord God omnipotent reconcile us all to the dispensations of his providence, and make us in spirit and in truth say, "Thy will be done."

JOHN G. SAWIN.

MATTOON, Ill., Nov. 1, 1910.

RESOLUTIONS.

WHEREAS, It has pleased the all-wise Creator in his infinite wisdom to call our dear and beloved sister, **Mrs. Flora Edwards,** through the dark valley of death to the realms of eternal bliss, to which we believe she is heir through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and

Whereas, She being a member in good standing and full and sweet fellowship with us, having proven her possession of a kind and lovely disposition, having brought forth fruits meet for repentance, and ever trusting in the all-wise God to lead, guide and direct her, and

Whereas, She has left behind her to mourn his loss, and to linger his allotted time, a husband who will sorely feel the heavy hand of death, and a child of young and tender years to be deprived of a mother's love and tender care; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, at Riverside, assembled this 18th day of September, 1910, extend to the bereaved ones our sincere sympathy in this their sad hour of affliction, and pray that the ever-living God may support and sustain them, and bring them to fully realize that he is too wise to err, too good to be unkind, and that he may bless them abundantly. Be it also further

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be presented to the bereaved family, and to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication, and also be placed upon our church book.

By order of the church assembled in conference.

W. D. BALL, Moderator.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Eliphalet Ketchum, Ill., $2.00; Mima B. Cummins, Wash., $.50.

MEETINGS.

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Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in Kimmy Hall, No. 12 Third St., in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

A SMALL band of Primitive Baptists is meeting every Sunday at 10:30 a. m. at 2919 Polk St., Chicago, Ill. All persons interested are welcome to meet with us. Any one knowing of members living in or near Chicago will please notify W. N. Spitler at the above address.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor,
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"CHRISTIAN SCIENCE AND THE LAW."

Because of the distressing information contained in orders for my Christian Science pamphlet respecting the great injury being done by this shameful fraud even among our dear Baptist people, I have tried in this second little work to expose it from a new point of view. Those not aware of recent developments at the headquarters of these people will be astonished almost to the point of doubting well-proven facts. I will mail two copies of this last sketch for ten cents (silver), or one copy and a copy of Christian Science and the Bible for ten cents. The price is not for profit, but to cover the bare expense. Hundreds of the first pamphlets were given away, and others placed where many could read them. If any good results from this effort to shield our brethren from this new delusion, the credit will be due our kind periodicals for calling attention to it.

S. B. LUCKETT.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Indiana.

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This little book has been published for some time, and orders for it have been received from near and far, even to the most distant States. All from whom I have heard have spoken to me very highly of the book. For forty years it has been upon my mind to publish these poems and the experience of my brother, together with the account of his last hours, and have wondered why I did not do it. I felt sure it would be for the comfort of many, and the many expressions I have already received assure me that it is so. Elder P. D. Gold writes: "I have read the poems and experience of your brother with much pleasure. How wonderful was the view of divine things given to him. Surely to be absent from the body and present with the Lord is far better." Elder S. Hassell says: "I shall have a commendatory editorial notice in April. I hope you may dispose of several thousands for the comfort of the Lord's scattered people." Elder H. C. Ker writes me: "Your little book, 'Songs in the night,' was duly received, and has given me more comfort than any reading I have done for months. Surely every lover of truth should have it." The price of the second edition has been reduced to thirty-five cents.

I have also on hand a few copies of "Reminiscences and Letters of Mary Parker." Price 75 cents.

All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Southampton, Pa.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 78. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1910. NO. 24.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LUKE XXI. 13.

"And it shall turn to you for a testimony."

I suppose a testimony or evidence in their behalf is what all interested people are after; that is, a testimony that will turn to them that they are subjects of grace, children of the King, heirs of God. It is a thing that has caused me many an anxious thought; has caused me to look and search the old records, yea, has caused me to dive deep into ancient history to try to trace my genealogy. I feel that if I were a subject of grace I would bear some resemblance to the holy tribe whose robes have been washed in the blood of the Lamb, whose sins have been washed away, but if by the eye of faith I see myself in the mirror of His righteousness, that I am his and he is mine, I go straightway and forget what manner of man I am, for when I lose sight of Christ as my righteousness I see nothing but sin and vileness, a polluted body full of corruption, unclean and not worth saving, for I am extremely unprofitable, even though I be a child of God. These are a few of my thoughts regarding myself. This is the view I have of myself, which knowledge is given me because the Light hath shined on me that I may know my weak, sinful condition and the frailty of man; that I may find nothing in myself, but that I may find my all in Him who died that I might live and see the glory the Son had with the Father before the world began. This is solemn, yet glorious, terrible, yet sublime, for the natural mind cannot conceive the grandeur nor imagine the greatness of his power, love and mercy. This turns to me for a testimony, for I know and am sure that He who has power to redeem such a sinner as I, one whose love is so great as to love such a sinner as I, one who is capable of showing mercy to such a sinner, is greater than anything the human mind can conceive. Now we have a testimony that there is a God, that there is none other, for what power can create or form something out of nothing? Who can control the wind that blows where it listeth? We can hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell from whence it cometh nor whither it goeth. Who is there so great and powerful to take a lump of earth and form man? Yes, we can take clay and make the form of a man, but who can breathe the breath

of life into his nostrils and he become a living soul? Some would like to doubt such things, but to come to the every day natural man, who can take a body after life is extinct and restore it to life? Who can dodge the mighty lightnings that shine from the east to the west in an instant? So these things turn to us for a testimony that there is a God of power, that there is a power above all other powers, a power that ordained all other powers, that rules and controls all things and does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can hinder or say, What doest thou? This is the God of power and might, and all nature turns to us for a testimony that there is such a God. Now we want a testimony that there is a God of love and mercy. We remember when Adam sinned, by breaking the only commandment there was, the Lord clothed them, for they found themselves naked in the sight of God. We see the mercy of God to them in slaying an animal of some kind, for "unto Adam also, and to his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them." A very beautiful picture; this is emblematic of a glorious theme, the joy of which fills the hearts of the saints in every age. We see what Adam, or man, was: a transgressor of the law. Do we find such mercy manifest among the inhabitants of the earth, that if one violates the law of a king he is taken and placed better off than before? for I consider Adam better off now than when he wore the fig leaf garment, for the mercy of God, who is love, he clothed him with a more desirable garment than anything Adam could make. We in our weakness can see the great contrast between a coat of skins and a fig leaf apron as to durability, also that of covering the naked body. This is one testimony that this God of power is also the God of mercy. Having the power to form man out of a lump of clay, power to breathe the breath of life into his nostrils and he become a living soul, the power to take a rib from his side and make a woman, so that Adam would not be alone, the power to give a law to them, the power to have slain them for the transgression of his holy and righteous command, yet he had mercy upon them, for they were his workmanship. This turns to us for a testimony, for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. We clearly see that man did not merit such mercy as that he should receive a coat made of skins by the Lord, which required the shedding of blood; without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins or robe of righteousness to cover our naked body in the sight of God. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." This turns to us for a testimony that though we have transgressed God's holy law, by the shedding of Christ's blood we are clothed with the robe of righteousness from the Lord, and not a fig leaf garment of our own make. Again, we remember Noah, we see how he and his were saved from destruction. Some may say it was because Noah was obedient to the command to build an ark that he and his were saved. I tell you no, none but Noah was ever commanded to build an ark, for had the rest received the command they had surely built an ark, too, for what He commands comes to pass, for he is a God of power as well as of love and mercy; but it shows the love he had for Noah that he commanded him to build an ark to the saving of his house. It is unnecessary to take the time and space to tell of the various

times his love was made manifest to the saints of old when we remember Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. How Abraham was called out of an idolatrous nation and shown the only true God. How Jacob was blessed when fleeing from the wrath of his brother Esau, and in the land of his mother's kindred. How the Lord was with Daniel in the lions' den, with the Hebrew children in the fiery furnace. How it was that he loved Nineveh, that wicked city, that he warned them by his prophet Jonah and overthrew them in their career of wickedness, and turned their hearts to Him, also to Jonah, who rebelled against him and refused to do what the Lord commanded of him, and then after he was made do that which he was told, and because it did not turn out according to his natural mind, was mad about it, and told the Lord he did well to be angry. I tell you no man can understand so great a love; all these turn to us for a testimony of his love to wicked man. Have we done anything to merit the love bestowed on us daily and hourly? No. His love is made manifest in us every breath we draw. The joy we see, the things of this life we enjoy, the association of friends, the companionship of our families, truly blest are we, all things turn to us for a testimony of his love and mercy. Take the tribes of Israel, who rebelled against God, were stiff-necked and rebellious, running off after other gods, yet he was merciful to their unrighteousness, leading them through the wilderness, finally bringing them to the land of Canaan, driving out the nations before them. The natural man has always been a violator of the law, for we are conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity, and none are justified by the law, the law condemns; there is no law that will justify the criminal. Satisfy the law, is the demand; this must be done. Though I live according to the law of this land, is any recompense due me? No, the law demands of me that I be a law-abiding citizen, offering no reward for doing so; though I live fourscore years and never disturb the peace in any way, and go out at that late day and slay my fellow-man, I must answer the demands of the law the same as any other criminal; I must give life for life; no mercy can be shown me by the law. God's holy law was, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." While he is the God of power and his commands must be fulfilled, he is also the God of love and mercy. We know and are sure of his power, for we have felt the condemning power of his holy law; we also have felt at times the power of his love, when the angel of peace spoke to us, saying, The law has been satisfied, you are free, free through the righteousness of the only begotten of the Father, the spotless Lamb of God, who came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh. Certain people were given to Jesus Christ. According to the Psalms it is written, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance." We are heathen, given to Christ for an inheritance. All power in heaven and earth was given Christ, power over death and hell; the grave could not hold him, death having no dominion over him. The law demanded his life, which was offered as a sacrifice for his people, the heathen, the sinner; when he was dead he was buried in Joseph's new tomb, but at the appointed time he came forth having all power. He had power to lay down his life; no man took it from him. He had power also to take it again. The life we now live we live in him, for when

he took his life again we were all included. This turns to us for a testimony that he is the God of power, love and mercy. While we were heathen and an idolatrous nation he loved us, and has shown us mercy through Christ. "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." There is no room in heaven for a man-saved soul, for His train fills the temple. Our righteousness is in him, he is the Mediator between God and men. There has been a knowledge given us of our inability to do the things we would; this knowledge is Christ, for he is wisdom. "In due time Christ died for the ungodly," turns to us for a testimony that we were chosen in him. He "came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." His people were the treasure hid in a field, which Christ gave everything he had to possess, even his life. We have this evidence of sonship that we have been dealt strangely with, in a way unlike the natural mind would have done. We are bowed down under a sense of guilt. Why should we feel guilty before God were we not his? Does a child feel his guilt before one who is not his parent? But he does feel his guilt when brought before his father. We know we are guilty and condemned, but Christ died and rose again that we might live in him and unto him forever. Also, we read that Christ was tempted of Satan regarding his sonship. All temptations placed before him by Satan or wicked man began, "If thou be the Son of God," questioning his sonship. In his death hour the thief railed on him and said, If thou be the Son of God, save thyself and us. Is this not the temptation the Lord's children meet with: If you are a child of God, do good and not evil? Why do evil thoughts beset you if you are his? is a question. But because you are a subject of grace evil thoughts do tronble you. This turns to us for a testimony that we are born again and made heirs of glory; being given spiritual knowledge we are able to discern the evil of our own heart. To mourn our condition, our stubborn will, is a blessed state to be in, for only living subjects do these things, and it is not required of us to produce any righteousness in our own selves that we may appear holy and without blame before Him in love, for our righteousness does not consist of what we do, nor what we are of ourselves, but in Christ, who is the Savior of sinners, who died that we might live and not be found naked, but clothed in his righteousness, which is pure. He is the head of the body, therefore it turns to us for a testimony. Christ has wrought for us a perfect robe of righteousness, having no seam, but of one piece, and being found in him we shall not lack anything. Yet we mourn and doubt, but in this we are working out our own salvation, for it is God working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. As he, our Leader, was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, was subjected to temptation, how hardly can we expect to escape some of the sorrows he experienced while in the flesh, even the temptation regarding our sonship? for it is He who is come in our flesh, this is why we are so troubled. "The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." The natural man never knew Christ, nor the working of the Spirit. This turns to us for a testimony that we are born again, that we have knowledge of our condition, for he has visited us and given us this knowledge. He would not have shown us these things had he in-

tended to kill us, but that we may find our all in him. If the nations are but as a drop of a bucket, what is man that he should claim honor? This testimony is given the living, for he is the God of the living, and not of the dead. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Can we not say this with John? We know and are sure that there are people we love above all others, not as we love father and mother, brother and sister, wife and children, but a love not to be told. When we hear or read of some one's troubles, doubts and fears which are like our own, a love springs up for such an one, for he is our brother, we are brothers having the same desires, the same feelings, we are traveling the same road and are one in Christ. These things turn to us for a testimony that this love for each other is not of the flesh, but of the Spirit, an heavenly love, like none other, it cannot be mortgaged nor sold, but is eternally ours. Christ prayed that we might be one. Can we for a moment think that Christ's prayers are unheard and unanswered? No, for he never asked amiss, but asks for things that are in the will of the Father to give. He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. Jesus Christ was the most destitute person that ever was on earth, yet all power was given him in heaven and earth, yet he had not the where to lay his head; the birds have nests, the foxes have holes. First he was rejected by his own people (the Jews), scorned and belittled by men. His own disciples, who were few in number, could not watch one hour with him in the garden, which was a terrible night of suffering for our dear Redeemer. None could help him or go with him the day of his death, and the last thing he heard was the same old temptation: If thou be the Son of God; and in his last breath, being forsaken of God, cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Suspended between heaven and earth, nailed to the tree, forsaken of God and man, can you imagine a more destitute position? Yet the prayer of the destitute is regarded, and not despised. When we find ourselves cast down and forsaken this turns to us for a testimony that we are like him and are those for whom he prayed, and are his, given to him, and of all that thou hast given me I will lose nothing, but will raise it up at the last day. Our dearest friends naturally, nor our spiritual brethren, can watch with us one hour in the night of our suffering and spiritual agony, we must suffer alone; there is none to help. We must see these nights of agony, we must be led into the wilderness to be tempted of Satan, we have not where to lay our head. "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." We can find no resting-place, we are strangers and pilgrims traveling, seeking a city, for when we say we are strangers in a strange land we acknowledge that we are seeking a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Abraham was a stranger, called of God out of his father's house, saying, Get thee up from thy father's house, and from thy kindred, unto a land that I will show thee of; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. This turns to us for a testimony, for we have received the same call, we have had to get us up out of the idolatrous nation that we were born in, and become strangers in a strange land, climbing over hills and often in valleys, in dark and thorny places. This turns to us for a testimony that the same God who loved Abraham

and called him out, loves us and called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, so we realize that there is no good thing in our flesh, but that our righteousness and hope of eternal life are in Christ, the Shepherd of the flock, the Door of the sheep, the Way, the Truth, the Life, our Elder Brother.

F. SELBY FISHER.

SALISBURY, Md.

NORTH BERWICK, Me., Jan. 16, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I am trying to write a few words to you, but my hand is so tremulous that perhaps you will be bothered to read it. I have no good news to tell you of myself, but on the contrary, am worse than ever, and can only join with the publican in the prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

I am writing to send you a letter that I have been selfishly keeping, but think it too good to keep to myself any longer. I have the writer's consent to send it to the SIGNS. Publish it if you think proper. May the blessing of God rest upon you and yours.

Your unworthy sister,

ABBIE G. CLARK.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, March 7, 1899.

ABBIE G. CLARK—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST JESUS:—By faith we know that the ties and relationship that bind together believers in the Lamb are imperishable, eternal. Earthly bonds, though ever so dear and near, may be weakened, they decay, they are sundered; at best they only endure during our present mortal life. But if our names are written in the Lamb's book of life, if with all the chosen in Christ Jesus we are bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord our God, (1 Sam. xxv. 29,) then in this life, in life eternal, in union with all the elect, the redeemed, the regenerate host, with Christ in God, we shall dwell and reign throughout eternity. That the holy God has brought us, through the work of the Spirit in our hearts, into union with his own, is purely of grace. When I feel what a sinner I am and yet have hope in his salvation, I see in the kindness of the Lord to me such magnificence of mercy it surpasses telling. It is no marvel that you continue to know the plague of your own heart, (1 Kings viii. 38,) and that the flesh profiteth nothing, for like Israel of old times, so now, there are times when all who are Jews inwardly, "every one shall know his own sore and his own grief, and shall spread forth his hands in this house."—2 Chron. vi. 29. Ah, without this bitter revelation to us of our inward leprosy would we ever stretch forth our hands unto our gracious, almighty Healer?

"Precious is my dear Physician,
Oft I prove his power to heal,
Curing every sad condition,
When he does his love reveal.
Precious Jesus, much I need thy healing power."

All believers do not know alike the depths of their own sinfulness. They all are taught that they are poor sinners, and are led to confide in the blood of the Lamb as their only hope of the remission of their sins, but the horrible depths of depravity of the human heart to many of God's children is little known. Forty years wandering in the wilderness, and then what is in man will not be fully known. All of the elect do not have appointed to them the same measure and number of afflictions while here below. To some however God shows great and sore troubles, (Psalms lxxi. 20,) and to Paul it was given to suffer great things for the name's sake of the beloved Redeemer. (Acts ix. 16.) So in regard to the knowledge of the vileness of our nature,

some in their wanderings only tread as it were the outer edges of the marsh; ankle deep they wend their way, and sigh in shame and weariness because of the defiled condition of their feet. But to be plunged into the ditch, (Job ix. 30,) and all our fine garments defiled and every inch of us be an abhorrence to our souls, then but for almighty, sovereign grace we should lie down in utter despair. Jeremiah when cast into the low dungeon sank in the mire. It is bitter and humiliating to find oneself in the midst of a horrible marsh into which it seems to us the sewers of all the abominations of mankind have emptied themselves.

"I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing." As we are led into the knowledge of our heart, that is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, where can a spot be found upon which we can place our foot and say, This is a good standing place? All that unregenerate religionists esteem as good, and upon which they can stand, and praise themselves that they are better than sinners around them, afford no standing place for the taught of the Lord; our good resolutions ,our righteousnesses, are all so defiled by sin, and if we attempt to stand upon anything that we have done it sinks, and we sink with it into the mire; all our creature goodness, all our excellencies that others may think we possess are buried in the vanity, pride, sinfulness, vileness of our depraved nature, which as a flood sweep over and immerse us and thus defile all that we do and think.

"I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing." Our feet do not touch the bottom of the marsh. Who can know it? The world can swim, and revel in the vilenesses of their flesh. They can feast upon the very mire, but the heirs of the covenant, who have a new heart given them, the pure in heart, cannot eat the mire. O they cannot, they dare not feast upon sin, they cannot roll it as a sweet morsel under their tongue, a mouthful of sin will make them deathly sick. What struggles we make to get out of and away from the mire of our fleshly heart, but as there is no bottom to its abominations, so deeper and greater abominations (Ezek. viii. 6, 13, 15,) we are made to know when the Lord leaves us to try us, that we may know all that is in our heart. (2 Chron. xxxii. 31.) Neither your heart nor mine says, Let us do evil that good may come; let us continue in sin that grace may abound. God forbid, but our bitter, despairing cry to our God is in the midst of our felt vileness, "Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me." And Jeremiah says, "I called upon thy name, O Lord, out of the low dungeon. Thou hast heard my voice; hide not thine ear at my breathing, at my cry. Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee: thou saidst, Fear not."—Lam. iii. 55–57. "Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me." This is the language of the circumcised in heart. Self-satisfied, carnal religionists may look upon all such language as mere figures of speech, but the experience of the ransomed of the Lord in their knowledge of sin and of the Lord's reigning grace will exhaust all figures of speech. There can be no exaggeration of the enormities of sin against our gracious and holy God. O what a shame to sin against such a God, and all that men may deem extravagance and exagger-

ations of speech can never fully set forth the heights of the glory of that grace of our God that abounds over all the aboundings of sin. One might ask, Could not the human heart be bettered, until it would at length become good? "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." —Jer. xiii. 23. There is no creature help for it. Our old man is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. It is as the miry places and marshes that shall not be healed. (Ezek. xlvii. 11.) Our sinful nature is a bottomless bog, its filthiness no one can fully know. He only knew all the blackness and grievousness of sin, who for his great love for his body, the church, bare her sins in his own body on the tree, and destroyed the body of sin. O it is glorious he made an end of our sins by the sacrifice of himself. He poured out his soul unto death.

"O love divine! that knows no parallel,
That love of thine, O Savior, none can tell;
O it was love that moved thee to die,
To save, and cleanse, and raise thy church on high."

Our experience is not all mire, it is not all sin, but we have in Christ Jesus righteousness and salvation, the Rock, a sure foundation, firm standing ground, a glorious highway, wherein we do not stumble, and wherein our goings are established, and our sighs and tears are turned to songs of praise to the God of our salvation. "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." When our hearts are exercised by faith and love in Christ Jesus, then in truth we realize how precious he is. It was his dear blood that wrought our deliverance from sin, and this revealed in our hearts by the Holy Spirit brings us such sweet relief from the bondage of corruption, we are raised out of the slough of our vileness, and with our feet standing (our heart reposing, trusting) as the merits of our Redeemer we sing, I thank God through Jesus Christ my Lord. O it is good when we are feelingly buried in our own sinfulness to have our eyes turned by the Comforter to behold Jesus.

I suppose I might go on writing, but I feel I have written sufficient for the present. It was kind of you to write to me; do so, dear sister, again, and I think I can promise you I will not write so long a letter in return. We are all very well just now. I hope this will find you enjoying a measure of health.

I am your brother in the hope of salvation, which is wholly in Christ Jesus our Lord,

FRED. W. KEENE.

RISING SUN, Md., Nov. 22, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find two letters, written to me by an aged sister in the State of Washington, sister Martha E. Carter. I felt them too precious to throw aside, and asked her permission to send them to the SIGNS, so I hope they will meet with your approval. Her home church is Rock Springs, a very sacred place to her. Elder Chick remembers her. I met her daughter at Welsh Tract last spring at the association.

Unworthily, SALLIE LOWE.

SUMNER, Wash., August 4, 1910.

MRS. SALLIE LOWE—MY DEAR SISTER:—We received your excellent and welcome letter in due time, full of inter-

esting temporalities, and mention of dear ones that we left behind. I cannot reciprocate in kind, but can aver that we both greatly enjoyed it, and are pleased that enough of you meet in the old stone meetinghouse to receive the promised blessing: "There am I in the midst." It is in His name you meet, and his presence is more than all the earthly treasures upon the footstool of our God. His presence disperses our gloom and makes all within us rejoice; in him we have the promise of the life that now is and that is to come, "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ," and all we possess naturally and spiritually we have received, and are forbidden to glory as though we had not received it. He found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness, in a desert land; and he led him about and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of his eye. We did not feel it a waste howling wilderness and desert land until he found us. It is only when he manifests himself unto poor sinners that they in the light of that manifestation abhor themselves and repent in dust and ashes. I always believed God had all power, and therefore looked to him to save me from every earthly danger. Mother used to send me out in the thunderstorms to milk and do needful things, because I was not afraid, but she did not know the reason I was not. Sarah asked me once why I could go out in the lightning and thunder, while she was shaking in any hiding-place. I answered, If God means to kill me with lightning he can do it in any place. The storms were awe-inspiring to me, but my thoughts were, He can save me. I believed the doctrine I heard at Rock Springs, and was established in its truth, but could not see how I could be saved. God was able, but I could not see the way. I was a sinner, and could not cease in thought from sinning, and God could not look upon sin. In answer to the publican's prayer, he revealed himself to me, and the purity, holiness and loveliness of that character is not possible to be told by tongue or pen. In the light of that revelation I saw myself a loathsome, hateful creature, who had never had a pure thought or done a righteous act; self-benefit, and not the love of God, had been my guide. I loved the Lord my God with all my heart, and with all my soul, and with all my strength, and desired and prayed without ceasing that he would enable me to cease from sin and praise him. I was not fit to go to heaven, but prayed if he sent me to hell he would give me to cease from sin and praise him forever and forever (a strange hell, Elder Wm. Beebe said, that I was willing to go to, where I could cease from sin and praise God forever). Then the command came to me to search the Scriptures, and the desire was so great that I thought all time not thus spent was wasted. This continued a long time, and in my search I read, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled," and the scales fell from my eyes, and I thought, This is what I have been doing ever since he manifested himself unto me. Now I had heard and learned of the Father, and come unto Jesus.

I will not inflict more of my first experience upon you now, but tell you I am glad that you have visits from Elders Eubanks and Fenton, who bring you messages of love from the Father of lights, and speak "comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her

sins." The Lord add unto you of such as he will have to be saved, and may he bid Mr. Dawson, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without?"

You are expecting to have a yearly meeting in September, and the association in the spring, if it be the Lord's will. May he meet with you and make the place of his feet glorious. I remember dear Elder Grafton and the character of his preaching. He once took up a subject that had been troubling me, and I received it as a message from the Lord, for I told no one but the Lord my troubles. He preached out of the pulpit as well as in it, and his walk preached, so that men could take knowledge that he had been with Jesus, and now he is with him who is the Judge of the widow and the Father of the fatherless. Rest on that Rock, my dear sister, God is your husband now, and will deny you no good thing. We are traveling home to God as one family before his throne. We have dear ones gone before, who are with Christ, which is far better. We miss them, but do not desire their return. We a little longer wait; how little none know. Many things in our pilgrimage journey are sore crosses to the flesh, but God is too wise to err, too good to be unkind, and he makes the wrath of man to praise Him, and all things work together for good to them that love God. He says so, and we know he is truth. How quieting it is to be enabled to rest in him, to wait patiently for him, to ever remember the ten thousand talents we were in debt and had nothing to pay, and he forgave us all, and to refrain from noticing motes until we can remove the beam. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." We are to take up our cross, deny self and follow him. He only can enable us to do his commands. He is our life; without him we can do nothing. He of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

We are both in usual health. In love to your dear self and son and daughter, from a worm,

MARTHA E. CARTER.

SUMNER, Wash., Oct. 17, 1910.

MRS. SALLIE LOWE—MY DEAR SISTER AND COUSIN:—We received your welcome letter in due time, and enjoyed it. Sister Annie E. Jenkins had written of the yearly meeting, but you told of some things she had not. Then I received a letter from sister Mary Hanna, who repeated what Charles had written to her concerning the meeting, and Charles wrote to Edith and told her of the meeting, and she forwarded the letter to me to read and return, it traveling over the five hundred miles that separate us now, and will reach there this evening. Surely the tiniest, sinfulest grasshopper that cumbers our Father's footstool has been highly favored to be remembered by so many of His children. How favored you were to have three of the Lord's servants to preach unto you the glad tidings that shall be unto all people. How blessed are your ears to hear, and your eyes to see and to realize a little of its length and breadth and depth and height, and to know the love of God that passeth knowledge, and to be filled with his fullness. You are gathered together in his name, and his blessing on the food fills you all, and the fragments are gathered and not lost. If our natural hearing be impaired, our spiritual Boaz commands to let drop some handfuls of pur-

pose for us, and of all the fullness of one of those exceeding great and precious promises, when the Lord gives them it is not possible to utter; it is a joy that is unspeakable, and we return to him the thankfulness he puts in our hearts. All our blessings were given us in him. Our life is hid with Christ in God, and the united powers of the world, the flesh and the devil can never reach our life. Very subtle is our adversary, but while the Lord lives all his little ones shall live also. To be clean, and pure, and holy, as our Head and life; to see him as he is, and praise him as we ought, is the heaven we hope for and with patience wait for. I hope the dear Lord will keep you all this coming winter, if it seems good in his sight. We had a very dry year until the last of September, and it has rained some nearly every day since, and our springs are running over. The weather is quite warm thus far, though we do not have much of either cold or heat—a spring climate.

I put your precious letter away so carefully that I cannot find it, but will, no doubt, soon. My letters written to you are yours to do with as you see fit, but yours is far more worthy of publication, in my judgment.

Now may the dear Lord bless you three, and grant you every needful blessing that will be for his glory and your good, for Christ's sake. Amen.

With love to yourself, son and daughter, MARTHA E. CARTER.

SANFORD, Maine, Sept. 30, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Your parting words at our yearly meeting are still fresh in my mind. I then remarked that I had recently been blessed with a beautiful dream, and as I had not then time to relate it, you asked me to write it for you. I have decided to try to relate it to you and your dear family, but I must first go back to a promise which I had made a few months before this dream, for I think that my desires were granted at that time. One day I was reviewing my long past sinful life of seventy-eight years, searching for some brighter assurance that I was indeed a child of God. I have always much lamented my poverty in spiritual things, even when I at the first went to the church. Then how few and glimmering seemed the marks of grace in this sinful worm. O, I thought, did ever any one enter there before so destitute of every good thing? As I looked back over my life it seemed as though I had always been in the valley, and had never been raised up to the mountain top as so many saints have been, yet I was sure that I deserved nothing better. Here I made a promise that if ever I did know such joy and gladness as I had known of people having, I could and would surely tell it to any and everybody. This I said at that time, but O how forgetful and ungrateful I have been and am for all the goodness and mercy of the blessed Lord to me, for he has never forsaken me, but has sustained me in every trying hour, and I have felt in my greatest afflictions, calamities and sorrows, that his blessed promises were surely verified to me, and I still dare to hope that he is mine and I am his, yet the tokens of grace in me seem very few at times. The precious words, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled," and also, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," have kept me from despair many times when it seemed that there was naught else to give me hope. I have always, from my early life, been an Old

School Baptist, and cannot remember when I did not believe that doctrine, and that there was an all-wise God who overruled all things, and that as he had predestinated, so should it come to pass. In those days some of my schoolmates were getting very religious. They studied their Bibles in school, giving condemning glances quite often to those who were more unholy and who would not join in their shouting meetings. One said to me, "Why do you not give your heart to God and be saved? He is willing and waiting for you to do your part and be faithful." She said, "It is as easy as turning your hand over to give your heart to God." I said, "I believe that salvation is of the Lord, and that all hearts are in his hand, and that he turns them as the rivers of water are turned, and that where he commences a work he will carry it on, and that whatever he does is done forever." I said, "I have no use for a religion that I can get one day and lose the next." One said, "I suppose that if you saw a tree falling near you, you would stand still, and say, If I am to be killed by it I shall be, but if not, I shall not be." I said that I presumed whatever was foreordained, either standing still or running, I should do.

But now that I have rambled thus far I will tell you my happy dream. I call it a dream, yet it was more than that to me. It was several months ago; I was lying with closed eyes in the darkness, endeavoring to go to sleep; it seemed that I saw, not far away, an opening which expanded and grew until I could see very, very far off, and all was beautiful, more beautiful than my tongue or pen can portray. I tried to see more of that beautiful land, but found that I could see no more and live. My soul was filled with joy inexpressible. I came to death, but there was no pain, no fear, no dread of anything. I said, Can it be that this is death? O I want to go now. But then I heard a voice saying, Are you not willing to wait a while longer? I looked around, and thought I could see that the end of life was not very far off. I said, I will wait; it will not be long. The reply was, No, it will not be long. I was perfectly happy, and was willing to live or die, whatever was His will. I thought I should never fear death again. I was then swallowed up in perfect bliss, fear was taken away, and it has not since returned. It was shown to me the needs be for all pain, affliction and suffering, and for all that transpires here in time. It was designed to make all work together for good to them that love God. Then I heard a voice say, You will never be left alone or forsaken. All this time my soul was filled with joy, and nothing but this old body seemed in the way, and it seemed that if I were separated from it there would be nothing to annoy. I fell asleep while meditating upon this, and when I awoke in the early morning there still remained that sweet peace in my heart. I felt that I could endure everything that might be laid upon me without one murmuring word. My greatest desire was to spend my remaining days in the dear Redeemer's praise, but O how far I am from doing it. After realizing all this happiness and joy, I had not thought of my promise to tell of it until one day these words were dropped into mind, Have you kept your promise to tell of your joys? There they were, and for a long time I could not think what they meant. At last I remembered about that of which I have already written.

I have tried to write you this much of my dream, but it is very poorly done. It

can never all be told as I saw it and felt it at the time. Let it be what it may, it has cheered me and illumined my pathway from that time to the present.

I will now close this imperfect letter, hoping that I have not quite exhausted your patience and strength.

Unworthily, but lovingly, your sister in hope,

ADA A. CHADBOURNE.

WHEELING, W. Va., Oct. 31, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I herewith inclose two dollars for the SIGNS; I feel that I can do without all other Baptist papers better than I can the SIGNS. There are many good papers, but yours excels them all. I also inclose a letter from our dear sister McKinney; it seems good to me, but I leave it to you to judge.

Yours in a precious hope,

(MRS.) FLORENCE PULTZ.

OTTAWA, Kansas, Oct. 6, 1909.

MRS. FLORENCE PULTZ—DEARLY BELOVED SISTER:—Your precious letter received some time ago, and I would like to tell you all that letter was to me, but as you said of the sermon delivered by Elder Carmichael, God is love; it is indescribable. I had in spirit attended such a meeting as you described some time before. I saw it all, even to the farewells, and though it may seem foolish, I wept as though it were a reality. Dear sister, that letter to me was a strange one; you desired for me, and believed it would come to pass, what I have been hoping and waiting for more than two years: I have been trusting that God would yet reveal himself to me as my Savior. I can plainly see his church as the bride adorned for her husband, a people prepared by the Lord, but my trouble now is, Am I a member of that body? If my name is not written in the Lamb's book of life I have no power to put it there. I know I can say with Jonah, "Salvation is of the Lord." I have been led in a peculiar way. God has shown me beyond a doubt that I am not only helpless in procuring that for which I would gladly give all else: eternal life, but that I am just as helpless in everything pertaining to this life. I have been made to feel as I have thought one would who was paralyzed in every part, yet was perfectly rational; I knew my condition, but had no power to change it. What I have suffered no pen can describe, no tongue can tell. When I think I can stand it no longer I will be comforted with the thought that when I have suffered enough he will hasten to show himself kind. I can say with one of old, "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of God in the land of the living." I do so earnestly desire to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith his children are called. I am afraid to include myself. I think it was yesterday, while in deep trouble, the words came into my mind, He would not have shown me all these things if he intended to cast me off. But while I am writing this my mind is filled with fear. Yesterday, while reading Paul's prayer, in the third chapter of Ephesians, O how I did weep, and desire that God would grant the same to me: "According to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God. Now unto him

that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." Dear sister, if the Bible is true, and I believe it is, and God has a people, there is no question in my mind who they are, but I cannot help fearing that I have no right with them, I am bowed down with a sense of my unworthiness so much of the time. Bunyan speaks of closing in with Christ. O, dear sister, I know not how it can be done. I would be only too glad to accept him, yea, to run after him. My hope is in the Lord, and I have no confidence in the flesh. God has cut off all my best laid plans, he has brought them all to naught; but O what a God to trust in, a safe refuge indeed. I was always very independent, and thought I could do much in regard to natural things, but now I know that all things are His, and he gives or withholds as his wisdom directs. I would be submissive, I would be reconciled, then I would not suffer so. If I had power to make myself submissive, to reconcile myself, I might do more; all that I can do is to plead for mercy continually. I have felt that if it were possible to look to Him in hell I would still have to do so. I realize that there is no other name given under heaven whereby we must be saved, and I believe that includes everything in time and eternity. When we are not healed it is because the Spirit of the Lord is not present to heal. I was standing in the yard a few days ago, feeling sad, helpless and sinful, and the words came into my mind, All the fitness he requireth is to feel your need of him. I said aloud, O, I surely feel my need of him; I am looking to Jesus to guide me every step of the way, and to keep me from evil, for I am as prone to do evil as the sparks to fly upward. Yesterday as I sat reading the Bible, praying to God for some token of his love, I received the letter I shall inclose to you. I will be glad to have you return it. I will call on the sister as soon as I can. I am longing for the company of those whose treasure is not of this world. I received the papers you sent me, and read them with great interest and some comfort. I had been lamenting that it would be so long before I received another number of the SIGNS. I rejoiced with you that God led you in such a plain path to that association. I thought I would be glad to be so favored, when the words came:

> "I will be with thee thy troubles to bless,
> And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress."

Then I felt such a shrinking of the flesh, fearing I was to have still greater trials. Almost ten years ago, when Ruth was a tiny babe, I was wondering why I should have so many trials, when the words came as if in answer to my thoughts, It is for the trial of your faith.

I have made so many mistakes I am ashamed to send this letter; I am nervous, or I might do better. I hope you will write me as often as you can; your letters comfort me much.

Affectionately,

ANNA McKINNEY.

DENVER, Colo., Oct. 16, 1910.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE SIGNS, AND TO MY DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—It is in a peculiar state of mind, both mentally and physically, that I sit down to write you this beautiful Sunday morning. All nature appears to be singing praises to its Creator, yet over me, who also am a creature of time, comes a feeling more like that of a funeral dirge than an an-

them of praise, and is there not a cause? It is that a feeling of my own nothingness, and inability to do or to say anything as I would like, almost forbids me to respond to the dictates of another mind that has prevailed over me for a time, and has burned as fire in my bones, yet at times has burned so low as almost to become extinct and forgotten until the breath of the Almighty is again blown upon it, and the heavenly dew refreshes and revives its smouldering embers, then the old time zeal is renewed within, and in the strength of Israel's God I am prompted to say, The will of the Lord be done. For how shall I, so sinful, contend with the Almighty? or how am I to sing the Lord's song in a strange land? But get thee behind me, Satan; what have I to do with thee? I know thee, from whence thou art, thou enemy of all righteousness, thou savorest not of the things of peace.

"When Ephraim spake trembling he exalted himself in Israel," for God looketh not on the countenance or stature of man, but on the heart. So David when but a stripling through faith obeyed the voice of his God and went forth to battle with the great Philistine giant, clad as he was with a helmet of brass and a coat of mail. But David said to Saul, He that delivered me out of the paw of the bear and the paw of the lion is able to deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And he prevailed over him, and slew him, and as he looked down at his slaughtered foe lying at his feet, conquered and subdued, he exclaimed, "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" Surely what had he done, through faith? God's anointed king had won a name that shall be everlasting, for is not the name of King David in the heart of every true believer? He was a man after God's own heart; and he who could strike down a foe in defence of God's chosen people, yet was a man of tenderness of heart and of strong devotion to God. But as he was human, like all others, he sinned; he repented, and God forgave him. He was also a type of the church, therefore was greatly persecuted by his worst enemy, King Saul. The Psalms were written by him, and are left as a heritage to the church, and may be used with safety by the simplest child of God as a guide and a guard through the wearisome way. Who does not desire to follow in his footsteps, and to be more like him? O for a heart to praise my God, a heart from sin set free; a heart that always feels that his blood avails for me. Merciful God, as clay is in the hand of the potter, so, O God, are we in thy hand; fashion us as thou wilt. It is his to command, ours to obey. As I pause here for a moment to renew my strength, and to review the wondrous journey that leads through the wilderness, I am constrained to ask, Am I not a strange creature? who can know me? Do any understand me? Yet there is One who does know me altogether, for he knoweth the way that I take, and did I not feel that our steps were ordered of him I would be despondent indeed, for to me life's seventy-fourth milestone marks but a wondrous way, and the days lie in shadow behind me like a dream of a sorrowful night, so I appear to be closed in on every side, but God's goodness in times past encourages me to think that he will not at last forsake me. As I am carried back in memory over a lapse of many years, when in childish innocence and ignorance I stood at the threshold of my father's door and watched the fleeting clouds, mingled with bright streaks of sunlight as they threw their reflections on the broad, smooth

face of the Shawangunk Mountains as they lay spread out before me, I can hardly realize that I am that same thoughtless creature. Yet how many times in the intervening years have I thought of my own life of sunshine and shadows being reflected there. How varied has been my life in those years; the waters that have been portioned out for me have been both bitter and sweet; at times the heart has been buoyant and light, and again the footsteps became weary and the heart heavy, almost dismayed. What am I to expect from a life so checkered and so varied, so unstable; is there not a mystery involved, an enemy to be dreaded, an unseen worm performing its deadly work at the root of the plant, that needs to be watered, pruned and digged about that it may bring forth fruit? Yes, here is the secret of it all; but who is sufficient for this work? The husbandman of the plant says, Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground? But the dresser of the vineyard says, Let it alone until I dig about it another year, then if it bears no fruit cut it down. O that the everlasting Father, the wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the Prince of Peace, may give strength and wisdom to trust in him who is my sufficiency.

I notice my sheet is full, yet I feel that I have many things I would like to say, and one in particular is, that of late I have felt a strong desire to return to my people, yet I do believe that I am in just the place God designed I should be, or he would have it otherwise, but it is a desert land to me. God placed Moses in the land of Midian for forty years, that he might be disciplined and humbled under the divine training, and better qualified for the great work he had for him to do.

May the God of mercy keep us in humble submission to his will at all times. Love to all.

ABBIE CODDINGTON.

WILMINGTON, Del., Nov. 2, 1910.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY BELOVED PASTOR:—I am again away from home and my home church, yet I am thinking of you all, and of how you have this day assembled yourselves together in the name of the Lord, which to me is one of the greatest enjoyments that I have, and I hope that I do feel thankful to our heavenly Father, who has made me to know there is but one church, and who has brought me to his true church, and made me to know who his children are, and to hate my own life. All the day long I am killed. Now I love those poor sinners who have been washed and made holy and pure in the Redeemer's blood. There is not a doubt in my mind that the Old School Baptists are the Lord's people, but O the question is, Am I one of his chosen ones? Does this great and glorious gospel apply to me? Sometimes I dare not claim it, and then again I am living and feeding upon it. I want the Lord to lead me and direct my steps; not one can I take alone unless I fall. I do not know the way except he leads me and gives me faith to walk. I am unworthy of the vocation wherewith I hope that I am called. Dear brother, what is this calling? Is it to be a disciple of Jesus? To be a disciple is to be a follower of the meek and lowly Savior. It is to endure trials, tribulations and sufferings. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and had nowhere to lay his head. Just think, the glorious King of kings had no place to lay his head, and there was no room for him in the inn. The birds of the air had nests,

and the foxes had dens in the earth, but he had no place. We are called with a holy calling, set apart, and are not to be conformed to this world. He says, "Come out of her [Babylon], my people." He must have a people there, else he would not have said, "Come out of her." Is not this the world and all its allurements? We are called out of darkness into the marvelous light of God. It is dreadful to be in darkness, gross darkness; it is here that all the wild beasts creep forth, but when the Sun of Righteousness shines in the heart, they disappear, and all is beautiful, and brighter than the noonday sun, then all things seem to be praising God. We then forget ourselves and our trials, and are lifted above all these things, and can see Jesus, only Jesus, and we long to stay in that frame of mind, and feel to sing,

"O to lie passive in his hands,
And know no will but his."

We cannot be in this frame long while in the flesh, but one day he will come to his children, when time is no more, and they shall forever be with the Lord. O what a blessed abode to be where Jesus is; that is heaven indeed. How favored to awake with his likeness. The psalmist said, Then shall I be satisfied. Nothing here can satisfy save for a short time. The pleasures of this world amuse us for a little time, and then are gone. All is vanity. We long for substantial joys such as the world cannot give. Like David, we cry, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." We hope that we have known what that joy is, and long for it to be restored.

We have listened to-day to our aged brother, Elder Poulson, who has stood upon the walls of Zion and proclaimed the unsearchable riches of Christ these many years. It is beautiful to see how the Lord has kept these tried and true soldiers of the cross, pressing on, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left, in the path that leads to life eternal. Those who have just entered into the battle need not fear, the blessed Lord shall lead them all their journey through. They shall not have one trial, heartache or pain too many. It is through much tribulation we enter the kingdom. None can lift the hand. The Savior trod the wine-press alone, so does each heaven-born soul in his experience. We come to the end of all self-righteousness, and are made to cry, Lord, save, I perish. "Lord, save me." "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." These were the words of Jesus; but he added at once, Thy will, not mine, be done. When any one is enabled to say this from the heart, there is great submission and great faith in the Father, who is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. How plain that all things work together for good to them who are called according to his purpose. It is God that worketh in them, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. The great Potter has power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor, as he wills.

I would like to tell you my experience while journeying in the wilderness, but have already written too much. My harp has been hung on the willows so long, and my frail barque has been tossed to and fro on troubled waters. Just now there seems a calm.

I do not know that this will be of comfort to any of the little ones, but it is all that I have now. I could not refrain from writing these things as they came to my mind. May God bless you and keep you to go in and out before us many years, is my desire.

Your sister in hope,

MARY D. BREWSTER.

HERNDON, Va., Nov. 21, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing check for two dollars to pay for the SIGNS another year, for I feel that I do not want to be behind in paying my subscription to the good medium of correspondence. I have felt for some years past when sending in my remittance like writing the editors a short letter, telling them how much I enjoy the coming of their paper, but to-day I seem to be destitute of spiritual knowledge, so much so that I feel if I should go on and try in my poor way to write you a letter it would only be to mortify your feelings, still I know in and of myself I can do nothing, either in the sight of God or in the sight of men, and for such reason I find myself all alone, as a sparrow upon the housetop. I sometimes talk to the brethren about my coldness and barrenness of mind, and I often think they are weary of hearing me say so much about my darkness, and then I say within myself, I will stop burdening my brethren with my sad story and keep all the thoughts of my heart to myself, but this only reveals to the subjects of God's grace that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" It is a question, Who can know it? It is a hard thing for the natural man to find out, but God knoweth it altogether. God saw it in his first creation of man in the earth, for it is written, "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."—Gen. vi. 5. Who then can know it? The answer is, God knows it altogether, for the Bible says, "For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."—Heb. iv. 12. Can the carnal mind believe in such a God as this? one who searcheth all hearts and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts? No, God must first reveal it unto man before he can see the kingdom of heaven in this time state. It must be revealed by God only, who shines in the heart to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. One might have plenty of head knowledge, but that comes far short of heart knowledge, for God searches the heart and knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit. Every quickened subject of God's grace knows that his own heart by nature is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. How do they know this? Because God has searched their heart, as he did of the woman of Samaria at the well, which caused her to say, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" Here we find the woman asking the question of her own heart, "Is not this the Christ?" No doubt she felt in her own mind that the most of her sins were hidden from the eyes of the world, but she had come face to face with a Man who told her all things that she had ever done, and dreadful things, too, for a woman to be guilty of: living with five men, and none of them her husband. Poor creature, no wonder she said, "Is not this the Christ?" We are told that God's work is perfect, for it searches out all deep and dark places, even the hidden evils of the heart. How then can we trust in man? for the heart of man (and even the woman, which is a part of man,) is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? No wonder then that it is written, "Cursed be the man that trust-

eth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." But, "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." Notice the word "is;" not that you shall be blessed if you will only trust in the Lord—no "if" in it, but is blessed, and whose hope the Lord is. O what a strange doctrine these "Hardshell" Baptists cling to. It makes the world think they are way behind the times. They say it is too old to be true, it does not give man any chance of the glory; men of this great age, with their wonderful knowledge of so many things, should not be called do-nothings and fools, like the old iron-jackets, Old School Baptists. I should not be surprised to hear some of them say, We will soon invent another airship, to fly up into heaven and drive God down from his throne, so that we can have the matter of saving souls in our own hands. But just so sure as one thinks he is about to stand he is sure to fall, and great will be the fall, as one falling from an airship. All of these things go to show the people of God that there is no safety in man's inventions, and I believe we only know it by God's searching of the heart, so that we receive the mind of the Holy Spirit. David asked the Lord to search his heart, and so does every poor, heavy laden sinner; it must be continually searched. O what wonderful knowledge for one to know the heart, and when it is searched the poor soul will cry out as did the woman, "Is not this the Christ?"

I must now close, lest I weary you. I will say now, as I have said before, I can never lay up anything in my mind before time to write, so just have to write along as a little child learning its first lesson.

Yours in love,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

GREENVILLE, Texas, Nov. 15, 1910.

TO THE READERS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have recently held a discussion with Elder J. M. Thompson, of Greenfield, Ind., on the subject of unlimited predestination, which I am preparing to have published in bookform. The price of the book will be one dollar. Will all who want the book please notify me at once, so I will know about how many to have printed? I am limited in means, and can only get out a limited number. If those who feel able, and are willing to do so, will send the money with their names it will assist me in getting the book out, and will be greatly appreciated. Those who want the book, but are not in a position to send the money now, will please send on their names, and they can send the money when the book is ready. I would be glad to see this book go into the home of every lover of the truth, as it is the first oral discussion on the subject, and I think the Lord gave us a great victory. Elder Thompson ceased debating the third evening.

Address me at Greenville, Texas, R. F. D. No. 2.

Yours in hope, J. C. SIKES.

KELLER, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am truly pleased with the new premium Bible you sent me for the three subscribers, and I appreciate it very much; it is handsome, and convenient in the pulpit. I hope other brethren who need a nice, handy Bible will avail themselves of the benefit of such an offer, it would extend the circulation of the dear, old, reliable SIGNS, and greatly assist the publishers and editors of the same. The Lord bless and prosper you.

Affectionately yours in gospel bonds,

ASA HOWARD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1910.

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EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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JEREMIAH XXXI. 32.

"WHICH my covenant they brake."

This was spoken of the covenant which God made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah when he took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt. This inspired statement in one brief sentence sets forth the part taken by man under that conditional covenant: They brake it. It is never said that they obeyed or kept it. Man has never kept any conditional covenant. Man could never keep such a covenant with God. The first man transgressed; he failed to keep the covenant which God made with him. Israel transgressed the covenant which God made with them, and if there be such a thing as a conditional covenant between God and his redeemed people now, it will be equally true that they will break it. The blessings promised to our first father, upon condition that he should keep the covenant made with him, he failed to obtain. The blessings promised to Israel, if they would be willing and obedient, they utterly failed to obtain, and any blessings that may be supposed to be promised to the people of God now, upon the ground that they keep the righteous conditions upon which the blessings depend, they also will utterly fail to obtain. Man has been proved to be a failure, so far as righteousness is concerned, all along the line. Adam failed, Israel failed and Paul felt that he failed, and so all the people of God feel themselves to be failures all the time and altogether. Out of this truth, as we come to know it, comes to us some knowledge of the glory of the truth that all gospel promises are in Christ, and that they all in him are, not yea and nay, but yea and amen, to the glory of God the Father. What we fail to obtain by our obedience, what we shall always fail to obtain in that way, is secured to us in the covenant of grace through Christ. What we have not done, and what we could not do, Christ has done for us. We could not and did not keep the law of God; Christ did obey it to the smallest jot and tittle. What we could not do in fulfilling covenant conditions (and we could fulfill none of them) Christ did do for us. In us was sin and failure, but in him there was no sin, and in him there could be no failure. This, and this only, is the hope of all who truly know themselves. Heaven beyond, and those measures of heavenly fellowship and blessing which we receive here below, do not come to us because we have kept the conditions, but because Christ for us has kept them all, and because he has kept them all there can be no failure in the bestowment of the blessings. Of us, all along God's dealings with us, the words are true, "which my covenant they brake," but of Christ this never can be said, but rather, which my covenant he kept, and this is the one hope and consolation of poor sinners who feel that they have always broken the covenant.

In the book of Joshua, chapter twenty-four, verse nineteen, it is recorded that "Joshua said unto the people, Ye can-

not serve the Lord," and the reason is given as follows: "For he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins." The word "cannot" simply means, Ye are not able to serve God. He was holy, they were sinful by nature. They might serve idols, but they could not serve God. How can good and holy affections, desires and purposes, proceed out of an evil heart? How can vile flesh work that which will be good in the sight of God? No wonder that Joshua said, "Ye cannot serve the Lord: for he is an holy God," and Moses, before he departed from them, more than once said to them that they had always been rebellious, and disobedient, and stiff-necked, and that he knew them, that after his departure they would do evil; first, in going after false gods, and second, in transgressing against every other commandment of God, yet Moses set before them blessing and cursing, life and death. In obedience should they find the blessings, and in disobedience should they find the curses. Why was this? one may ask. If Moses knew and God knew that they would certainly sin, why set the two ways before them? One thing seems certain, viz., that there never was any power in them to keep the law of God. What then was the law given for? Is this not the one all-sufficient answer, By the law is the knowledge of sin? This covenant was set before them, and blessings and curses were annexed to it, that it might appear to them, and to all who should read this record afterward, that there is no power in man to gain the blessings and to escape the curses when he is left to himself. Man is already sold under sin, he is already under the curse, and abides in death. This one truth must be understood if any other Bible truth is to be understood. The theories which fill the world to-day, and which have ever filled it concerning man's goodness and excellency, concerning the power of man to please God and secure his soul's redemption, all rest upon belief in the falsehood that there is still in man some goodness, some power to fulfill the conditions of salvation, some power to turn to God and to press on to heaven. But the law of that covenant which God made with Israel under Moses never made salvation possible to any man, it found men dead in sin, and it left men dead in sin, and it did not make any man holy. By the law of this covenant was sin in man made manifest, but it wrought no cleansing. The sum and substance of all this law was again and again stated by Moses as being love. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and thy neighbor as thyself, was several times repeated by the lips of Moses. We know that to fulfill these two commandments is to fulfill the whole law; inspiration has so stated more than once. While the words, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," are not recorded as having been spoken to Adam, yet we know that love was the substance of the commandment given to him. Had our first father loved God supremely there could have been no transgression. All outward forms of obedience avail nothing in the sight of God without love to God. Love of self is not love of God, nor of the neighbor. Men have always done some right things, and still do right things, but if the love of self and not the love of God be the spring, all that they do is not obedience to God. If men give alms, that is good in itself, but it is not pure in God's sight if the motive be to serve self in some way. Men give to gain a good name among men, to gain heaven and a higher seat in heaven. If

this be so, then that man is not serving God. God can be served only by loving him and not self, by loving the neighbor and not our own gain. To Israel it was said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God." This was heart work rather than adherence to forms or ceremonies, rather than adherence to good morals in conduct. Let Israel do what they might with regard to a strict adherence to their religious forms, which indeed were required of them by the law of God, let them do what they might with regard to doing justly among themselves or to other men, so long as the love of God was not the ruling motive their service was not pleasing to God. Surely we need not pause to bring proof of this. This principle of love no man can create within himself, nor within any other man. If a man loves God at all, it must be shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto him. Can we not see, upon this ground, why it was that Joshua could say to them, "Ye cannot serve the Lord"? Can we not see why it should never have been said, Which my covenant they kept, and why it was said, "Which my covenant they brake"? How foolish then is the effort to base exhortations under the gospel to the people of God, or to all men, upon the terms of that old or conditional covenant. The exhortations given by the words of Moses, and of Joshua afterward, to that people did not produce conformity to the will of God in them. On the contrary, those exhortations only showed forth more and more clearly how vain is the help of man. Their heart of unbelief was not moved to the service of God by all those exhortations, and that which was shown to be true of that natural people is just as true of all natural people now. "Ye cannot serve the Lord." This sums all the matter up, so far as all unregenerate men are concerned. How needless, on the other hand, are such exhortations to the people who do love God and their neighbor. How needless, we say, are such exhortations as are based upon conditions, and urged upon people in order to gain some reward to themselves. These exhortations cannot produce the love of God where it is not, and where the love of God is, there dwells a power far beyond that of the promise of reward or the threat of punishment. That power in men will lead to obedience, not as the condition of something else yet to come, but as the free expression of a desire already within the heart. Jesus said, It is my meat and my drink to do the will of my Father in heaven. His disciples can also say the same in their measure, and as far as they have come into a realization of the liberty which is in Christ they can say this. No man needs to be hired or threatened to induce him to eat when he is hungry. Men who are hungry to do the will of God are so because they love him; to offer them a reward, or to hold out the threat of punishment, to induce them to obey, is to strive to place them back upon the covenant of conditions, and if once more they return to that covenant the same condemnation will be theirs, "which my covenant they brake." Why look to these weak and beggarly elements again? They have always failed to produce righteousness, they always will fail. Exhortation under the gospel is right; inspired apostles use much of it. Perhaps two-fifths of all the epistles are taken up with exhortation, reproof, warning and admonition; these things were not written by the apostles as matters that commended themselves to their judgment simply, they were written as the Spirit of

God moved them to write, and the people of God are told again and again that blessings accompany obedience, and evil accompanies disobedience, and this the people of God, all of them, learn for themselves; they find it is true that in keeping the commandments there is great reward. If we live after the flesh we shall die, but walking after the Spirit we live. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." These are gospel truths, yet the exhortations under the gospel no more imply power in the mind and will, or in the flesh of men to keep them, than the commandments under the old covenant implied power in men to keep them. The commandments were right; they were the transcript of the divine holiness of the divine will. So exhortations under the gospel point out the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning us, and in his people graciously led and taught these exhortations find what the commandments of God under the former covenant did not find in that natural people, viz., a prepared heart and mind. A child loving and true will be anxious to know and to do the will of his parents. God's children have a prepared heart, and they want to know and to do the will of God. By the exhortations, warnings, reproofs and admonitions of the New Testament they are instructed as to what is the will of God in Christ concerning them. If there be no love to God in a man's heart these exhortations which reveal the will of God will have no power, and he will see no delight in them, but if a man loves God and his neighbor, then all these exhortations will be delightful. A dear brother used to often say, as he would speak at times in the meetings, "I love to hear preaching that tells me my faults." Only that man who loves God can want to know his faults. Because a man loves God, who is holy, he will desire to know his faults, that he may be sorry for them, and seek to depart from them, and this he will do, because loving God he will desire to do the will of God. Israel could fulfill the rituals of the tabernacle service without any grace in their hearts. Yea, more than this, that people could do justly in their dealings with men, they could give alms and pay tithes, and in all things observe the strict commandments of the law given them, without any love to God at all. It is upon this ground that Paul could say of his pharisaical obedience, As touching the righteousness that is in the law, I was blameless. But what did all that blamelessness amount to? it was but loss and dross. But the obedience of the gospel is inward first, then outward, so far as one is not hindered by the weakness of the flesh. The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, and though we go stumblingly and haltingly, slipping backward often, yet not drawing back unto perdition, still the righteousness of the law dwells in us, and we are found walking, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. All salvation is conditional, but the finished salvation of the blessed Lord is fulfilled in every condition of it by the obedience and suffering and death of the blessed Lord alone. He said at the last, "It is finished." If there be, on the other hand, any salvation to be received upon conditions not yet fulfilled, and left to us for their fulfillment, we may be sure that that salvation will never be ours, simply because we have no power to fulfill any righteous condition. Our obedience is the gift of God through Christ, and then all the blessings connected with obedience come in, and are recognized as being the gifts of God also, and the faith and experience of

every believer lead him to say, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow." That believers are exhorted to obedience, and that blessings and evils are recorded as being associated with the obedience or the disobedience, does not weigh against the truth that we cannot serve God if left to ourselves, any more than the commandments under that former covenant proved that Israel could serve God.

C.

CLOSE OF VOLUME SEVENTY-EIGHT.

ANOTHER year the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been sustained, we hope in the purpose and plan of Him who seventy-eight years ago put it in the hearts and minds of able men and faithful brethren to begin its publication in defence of his cause and truth. While many changes have taken place and many have departed from the truth, the SIGNS stands upon the same foundation without deviation as when founded. First of all, praise and thanksgiving are due to Him who rules and reigns for all mercies received; from him every blessing flows. Secondly, we thank our brethren who have so kindly written for publication during the year; their articles have been good in matter and kind in spirit. The private letters sent on have been much appreciated as well as enjoyed. To all our subscribers, and those who have helped the poor of the flock to have the paper, we feel much indebted, and know of many homes that have been made glad by the latter kindness.

There has been a slight increase in the circulation of the SIGNS during the year, which is encouraging. The editors have served with such ability as was given. Some questions remain unanswered, which has been due either to lack of understanding of the subject or time. We hope none of our friends will feel that we have meant to be indifferent to their wishes that we write upon this or that text. Many letters have also gone unanswered; in this we have not meant to be careless or unkind, but when thousands of letters are coming yearly to the SIGNS we find it impossible to reply privately to each one. We therefore hope that our brethren and friends will remember this, and not feel neglected should we fail to acknowledge the receipt of their letters.

Hoping you may all continue kindness and forbearance toward the SIGNS, we will say farewell for 1910.

K.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANKS.

As a majority of our subscribers' time expires with the end of this year, we inclosed in each paper of last issue a subscription blank, as a convenience to them in sending new subscribers, as well as in paying their own subscription. All new subscriptions received now will be credited to the end of the year 1911, and back numbers will be sent from September 15th, 1910. Will you please make a special effort to send one or more new subscribers when you renew your own subscription for next year?

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Asa Howard, Nov. 23rd, 1910, Luther Ludwick and Miss Jewell Bryant, both of Brooklyn Heights Addition, Fort Worth, Texas.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. M. L. Hodgson, D. C., $1.00; J. A. Tandy. Okla., $1.00; Mrs. S. J. Cummins, Wash., $.50; Mrs, J. W. Parker, Ill., $1.00; Elder T. R. Pittman, Kans., $1.00.—Total, $4.50.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Minerva A. Flournoy, whose maiden name was Hornbuckle, was born in Callaway County, Mo., Nov. 8th, 1840, and died Nov. 7th, 1910, aged 70 years. She came with her parents to Jackson Co., Mo., when a girl, and was married to Rowland Flournoy Feb. 9th, 1860. To that union were born nine children, of whom six survive and were in attendance at her funeral; they are: Mrs. Maggie McKeever, of Downs, Kans., Edward, Rowland and Mrs. Anna Conner, of Kansas City, and Charles and Rufus, of Seneca, Kans. When quite young she with her husband joined the Missionary Baptists, at Westport, Mo., but soon were led to see that that doctrine did not harmonize with experience of grace and the teachings of the Bible. She and brother Flournoy joined the Primitive Baptist Church called Pleasant Grove, at Independence, Mo., and were baptized by Elder G. W. Stout. Brother Flournoy was soon ordained a deacon, and afterwards a gospel minister, and was an able defender of the true doctrine of God our Savior. Sister Flournoy was a true and devoted companion. In an early day they moved to Johnson Co., Kans., and were in the organization of Big Blue Church, close to his home, which was always a home to the Baptists. After brother Flournoy's death sister Flournoy led a lonely life indeed, seldom getting to hear preaching or to see any Baptists to converse with, but she bore it all with such christian fortitude that she never was heard to murmur or complain. Faith and love were manifest in her daily walk and life. She was not well all summer, but was only confined to her bed a short time.

I was called, and tried to speak words of comfort, using as a text 2 Samuel xiv. 14, after which we laid her beside her husband to await the resurrection, when we hope that she with all the blood-washed throng will come forth in newness of life and shall see him as he is. WM. L. HALL.

BLUE SPRINGS, Mo., Nov. 28, 1910.

SISTER **Elizabeth B. Turpin** died at the home of her daughter, sister W. J. Eblin, Sunday, Nov. 13th, 1910. For seven weeks she had been a sufferer, but was cheerful and patient, and often expressed her willingness to lay down life's burdens. Services were held at their home on Monday, conducted by L. H. Maples; the body was then taken to the home at Illiopolis, Ill., and interred beside that of her husband, who died in 1884. All of the members of the family accompanied the body on its long journey from Oklahoma to Illinois. They wired the writer to meet them at Kansas City, which he did on Tuesday morning. We left Kansas City for Illiopolis, Ill., Wednesday morning, and several carriages with friends and neighbors met us and went with us to the cemetery, where quite a congregation of old friends and neighbors met at 10 o'clock a. m., and a short sermon was delivered by the writer, then the dear body was tenderly laid by her husband and children.

Elizabeth Swain was born in Indiana, Sept. 17th, 1834, and was married to John W. G. Turpin Feb. 24th, 1854; to them were born seven children, five sons and two daughters, only James H., Anna Eliza Eblin, of Tyrone, Okla., and Bennet N., of Abilene, Kans., survive their mother. She had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church forty-nine years, and was a true and faithful christian, always standing for truth and right, sound in faith and practice. Being blessed with a reasonable portion of this world's goods, her house was a welcome home for all orderly Baptists. How we shall all miss her. Truly a mother in Israel has gone to her home in glory.

W. A. THOMPSON.

WICHITA, Kans., Dec. 2, 1910.

SISTER **Grace D. Larkins** died Oct. 20th, 1910, being 77 years of age. Her maiden name was Williams. She was born in Illinois in 1833. Having received a hope in Christ, she united with the Primitive Baptist Church in 1862. She came to Oregon about the year 1870, and was married to brother Munroe Larkins, to which union was born one daughter. Her disease was cancer of the stomach, which caused her great suffering. She said she was ready and willing to go, trusting in the Master for strength in every trial, repeating in a whisper the entire hymn No. 202. She left behind the daughter, one sister, Mrs. Eunice Snodgrass, several nephews and nieces, with the church, to mourn the loss of a worthy and consistent companion in tribulation.

The funeral services were held at her home, where a number of friends and relatives assembled, when the pastor, Elder Silas Williams, spoke words of comfort, using as a text 1 Corinthians xv. 53. He was assisted by the writer, after which the remains were buried in the cemetery to await the resurrection morn. A. HORNER.

WATERLOO, Oregon.

Mary Burnett Lynch died at her home in this city, Tuesday, Nov. 29th, 1910. The deceased was born in Kentucky, Dec. 2nd, 1822, and moved to Illinois with her parents in 1827, and settled in Sangamon County. She was united in marriage to David Lynch, June 26th, 1840, and to that union eight children were born, five of whom survive her. She united with the Baptist Church when quite young, and lived a devoted christian life ever after. She had been deprived of the privilege of meeting with the church for eight years, on account of a broken limb, but was always glad to hear from the meetings, and was a great lover of the SIGNS; she often said she could not do without it. JENNIE POWER.

ATHENS, Ill., Dec. 1, 1910.

THE

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I have also on hand a few copies of "Reminiscences and Letters of Mary Parker." Price 75 cents. All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Southampton, Pa.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 79. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1911. NO. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THOUGHTS ABOUT PREDESTINATION.

WHEN the Lord made the world and created man upon it he foreknew that this man would sin, and that by this sin death would enter into the world. So far as I know, all of our brethren believe this. Having this foreknowledge that man would sin, and still going on in the work of creation, does it not necessarily follow that the Lord's purpose included the entrance of sin and death into the world? Can any one think that when the infinitely wise and omnipotent God created man it was his wish and purpose that he might not sin? Could he not have so arranged that man should not sin? Why may we not think that the eternal God, in his infinite wisdom, purposed thus to display the principles of his infinite justice and judgment, which are the habitation of his throne, and the glorious riches of his love and mercy? Why may we not think that "it was all for the lifting of Jesus on high"? I cannot see anything in these thoughts that should cause one to be offended at them, or at him who utters them, especially one who loves the blessed doctrine of salvation by grace, and this grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

Of course the Lord does not regard sin in the same way that he regards holiness. Of course his attitude towards it is not the same. How could one have such a thought? He hates and abhors sin; his infinitely holy nature is absolutely and forever opposed to it; it is obnoxious to him and abominable in his sight. The thoughts I have expressed are not contrary to this truth, although they present a deep mystery which human intelligence cannot fathom. The Lord has power and control over sin, instead of being in any sense controlled by it. It could not have entered into the world if it had been his will and purpose that it should not, and after sin came into the world, and ever since, his control over it has been absolute. Men of the world and wicked men are his hand and sword. (Psalms xvii. 13, 14.) The wicked can go no farther in executing their wicked designs than will be for the fulfilling of his decrees concerning them. To them, as to the sea, he says, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." He must have had a purpose concerning all sin and wicked-

ness, and does overrule all the wicked devices of men to the fulfillment of that purpose. Would not any other consideration of this subject force the conclusion that the Lord was in some degree limited in power and wisdom? The devil can do nothing only as the Lord gives him the power; he cannot even drown a herd of swine without the permission of Jesus. "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."—Prov. xvi. 4. Could it possibly be that God was ever disappointed or disconcerted? Could anything ever occur contrary to his purpose?

"I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."—Isaiah xlvi. 9–11. How clearly this Scripture, as also many other portions of the inspired Scriptures of truth, declares the sovereign counsel, purpose and power of God.

In opposing the doctrine of the predestination of all things, some, not many, I hope, constantly repeat a list of the vilest crimes and most disgusting indecencies, and then ask, Did the Lord predestinate these? When Scriptures are quoted to them which declare plainly that God did predestinate some wicked actions of men, and that he did before of old ordain certain men "to this condemnation," and they are asked to explain such Scriptures, they return to the same line of argument, and repeat again the list of horrible crimes, and speak harshly in denunciation of those who can even think that a holy God could predestinate that such things should be done. But few, I think, venture to deny that all the terribly wicked acts of the wicked men who crucified the dear Savior were predestinated by the Lord. Several years ago I asked a dear, good brother in the ministry how it was that he could believe that all of this wickedness manifested in the crucifixion of Christ was predestinated, and that no other wicked actions were. His reply was, "That was different." Jesus was delivered to those wicked men "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God;" they were gathered together to do what God's "hand and counsel determined before to be done." What God had declared by all the prophets "he hath so fulfilled." The Lord is under no law but his own will; whatever he does is right in him. His will is the only criterion by which to judge of what he does. His command is the only criterion by which to judge of what is right for any man to do. One says, If God predestinated any evil thing to be done by a wicked man, then he is responsible, and the man is not to blame. This is the reasoning of the carnal mind with regard to the doctrine of election and predestination. But the Bible does not say so. The nonelect feel the blame of their sinful acts, but do not hate the sin, and perish in their wickedness, having not the love of God in their hearts, as Pharaoh, Ahithophel and Judas. The elect take blame to themselves for all their sins and sinfulness, and abhor themselves. They hunger and thirst after righteousness, but acknowledge God's justice in their condemnation, and love him. In his own time the Lord reveals to them Jesus as their righteousness and salvation.

The Lord put a lying spirit in the mouths of Ahab's prophets for a purpose. Dare we question him as to that act? (1 Kings xxii. 23.) We are not qualified to judge of the Lord's work by our natural reasoning powers, we must simply take his word. He works, and none can hinder, and he causes all things to work together for good to them that love him; to them who are the called according to his purpose. Many dear, timid souls are often silenced by the effrontery of those who arrogantly denounce both the doctrine of predestination and those who believe it to be taught in the Bible, so that they almost fear and hesitate to mention certain portions of Scripture, even without comment, for fear of being sharply denounced. But the Scriptures are there, and there they will ever remain; they read the same to-day as they did in Paul's day, and mean the same, and declare as comfortingly now as they did then the infinite sovereignty of God. The natural man is still saying, as in Paul's day, "Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" And Paul is still replying with apostolic authority and boldness: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."—Romans ix. 19–23. It cannot be denied that our carnal nature is strongly opposed to this doctrine of personal election and of predestination. The carnal mind is felt by quickened souls to be "enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." How keenly and bitterly I have felt at times this opposition in my own natural mind and heart. It has caused me many deep inward trials as to the Lord's ways and thoughts, trying to understand them, though the Lord tells us that they are higher than our ways and thoughts, as the heavens are higher than the earth. I have been tempted sometimes to listen to those who say of certain clearly expressed Scriptures that they do not mean as they read, because the Lord would not do that way; but there has so far been raised up in my soul a power that has delivered me from these temptations, and has told me to "hold fast the form of sound words," whether I understand them or not, and has shown me a beauty and power and sweetness in the words of truth as given us by the Holy Spirit, and has caused me to feel an unspeakable joy in the truth that "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth," and that "he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" He doeth his will in heaven, and in earth, and in all deep places.

When I first wrote upon this subject, more than forty years ago, I was not familiar with the London Confession of Faith. I was then reading the Bible constantly; it was my soul's delight to read it. I was thankful to the Lord then, I truly think, for this desire, and I have been more thankful since for that desire and privilege then, when at times my mind has been to me like a desert and a

wilderness. But I understood at that time that the London Confession of Faith expressed the sentiments of the Old School Baptists in this country and in England. Since then I have become more familiar with the language of that Confession, and I have to say that I do not see how my sentiments upon this subject could be more clearly and fully expressed outside of the Bible than they are in that Confession of Faith. This doctrine has been called a heresy by some. But why call one a heretic for expressing the doctrine that for two hundred years has been distinguished as the doctrine of the Baptist Church? The Scriptures there referred to are unanswerable.

Suppose that Stephen when suffering the agony of that terrible death at the hands of wicked men could have been made to believe that the Lord had not embraced that wickedness of his enemies in his eternal purpose; would there have been any comfort for him? If he had thought that this act of theirs was not the Lord's will and purpose, could he have been submissive and restful, trusting in the Lord? Could he have had the infinite comfort of saying, "Thy will be done"? Could he have said, in the abiding trust and confidence of heavenly love, assured of the wisdom, power and mercy of God, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge"? When sorely tried by affliction, or persecuted by wicked men, could the saints endure it if they did not believe in a God of purpose, "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," in whom they can absolutely trust? Could the poor, tried souls endure one stroke which they believed was not purposed by the God of love and power? How good to feel assured that,

"Not a single shaft can hit,
Till the God of love sees fit."

How can any one approach such a subject as this, concerning the purposes and work of the eternal God, in a light and trifling manner? While in a state of mind suitable to the contemplation and discussion of so awful and sublime a subject as that of the eternal purpose which God purposed in himself before the world began, we can hardly think of one being able to bandy epithets with an opponent in debate, and use harsh terms, and coarse language, and bitter denunciations, such as might be expected from rough men disputing in the streets. I do not see why these deeply mysterious and glorious things may not be the subjects of kind, frank and brotherly conversation, without any rancor or ill-feeling. When we are in intimate conversation with a brother whom we dearly love, if there appears a difference of understanding on any point, how carefully we try to see alike, and to avoid any serious difference, and if we cannot see alike how careful we desire to be that no root of bitterness shall spring up; nothing to cause any disturbance of love and fellowship between us. Upon the subject of predestination I have never considered that there should be a breaking or disturbance of fellowship. If it is to be made a bar of fellowship it must be done by the other party. My fellowship for one whom I esteem and love as a subject of grace cannot be broken or disturbed because he differs with me on that subject, but it may be broken by the manner in which one expresses his difference, and the kind of spirit he manifests in doing so.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 7, 1910.

HAVANA, Kans., Dec. 6, 1910.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I inclose a letter I received from brother M. B. Weedon, of Fort Scott, Kans.; it is full of the meat of the gospel. He is not a minister, but from reading his letter it must be said that he is an instructive teacher "for the edifying of the body of Christ." Brother Weedon is an old subscriber to the SIGNS, and indorses its general course. He is an humble christian, and it is both a pleasure and profit to converse with him upon spiritual subjects. I have not asked his consent to have his letter published, yet I do not apprehend that he would object.

I feel like telling you that I was highly pleased with your editorial in the SIGNS of November 15th, commenting upon Genesis vi. 5, 6. Some of your expressions are strong in truth, but so at variance with the teachings of the world; I realize that you are planted upon that confidence enabling you to feel that you are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. There is one declaration in your explanation I accept with gratification, as it is a truth I contended for in my defence of the Scriptures. To quote you: "No man since Adam has ever been condemned by the law of God and eternally lost because of any overt act committed by him, hence men are not saved by the good works they do, nor lost because of the evil they do." Again, you say, "If lost, it is because of the first transgression." Your language so aptly expressed covers the whole ground of man's transgression and the penalty imposed therefor. From what was Adam lost? is a subject of much difference of opinion. It seems plain that he was lost from the innocence and pleasure and continuous life in his Eden home. He transgressed by disobeying a plain law given him for his government. The penalty was equally as plain as the law. The law was given to one whose origin was from the earth and was wholly earthy. The penalty was that he should lose that natural life and return to the ground from whence he was taken, or in briefer language, he should "surely die." In due time another Adam came into the world; he was not "of the earth earthy," but "the Lord from heaven;" his name was Jesus, and he came to seek and to save that which was lost; not the whole world, but only those who were predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself. These children fell under the transgression, and were by nature children of wrath—death. Jesus was made manifest by his appearing, and hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. This life, immortality, was brought to light unto his predestinated and called children. Jesus said, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." All others of the race of man who are not the recipients of that life remain under the first sentence of the law, and perish.

Have you given the second chapter of 2 Thessalonians much thought? I tried to preach upon it at the Fishing River Association last September. I have not heard it explained by any one. I think it an important subject. The eleventh verse is full of meaning. Is not the great religious world in that condition?

Dear brother, I leave this letter to you because of the confidence I have in you for good judgment in those precious truths pertaining to the kingdom of our dear Lord, the Savior. I esteem the SIGNS far above all other Baptist period-

icals, and am glad that brother Chick and yourself have kept up its high standard. Pardon me for troubling you with this lengthy letter.

Your brother, in hope of immortality,
T. R. PITTMAN.

[YES, brother Pittman, we have had some thought in connection with second Thessalonians, chapter two, and have often wondered if by the term, "son of perdition," Jesus in John xvii. meant Judas, did Paul also refer to Judas when he said, The man of sin, "the son of perdition"? Could it not be possible that Jesus referred to "the man of sin," "mystery of iniquity," made manifest in Judas, and not to Judas as an individual? Inasmuch as Jesus, God manifest in the flesh, used the term, and Paul speaking by the Holy Ghost used identically the same expression, their meaning must have been identical. It is hardly likely, we think, that the apostle had Judas in mind as "the son of perdition," but the same "deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish," manifest in antichrist, which at that day, styled as "the man of sin," was exalted above all that was called God—power. We have also wondered if "that day" spoken of by the Savior in Matthew xxiv., the time of which no man knew, in which such tribulation would be experienced as the world had never known nor should ever know again, and "the day of the Lord" mentioned by Peter, and "the day of Christ" Paul speaks of in second Thessalonians, chapter two, are not one and the same day, and instead of that being the last day of this material world, was it not the destruction of Jerusalem, when and where the Lord achieved the great victory over the enemies of Christ, binding Satan, "that man of sin," "the son of perdition," taking him "out of the way," thereby making it the privilege of believers in Christ to worship under their own vine and fig tree?—K.]

FORT SCOTT, Kans., Nov. 25, 1910.

ELDER T. R. PITTMAN—DEAR BROTHER:—Your very welcome letter of last month came safely to hand, and I enjoyed it very much. Your preaching trip, though tedious, was gratifying. While I am not a preacher, I hope I know something of the pleasure one feels when declaring the truth to see evidences of its hearty reception. I hope you may have many such trips, and that they may continue interesting, both to you and your hearers. May the Lord prepare their hearts to receive his truth. It was nice of them to agree to pay your expenses. This is right; I think we all should see that the expenses anyway, if no more, are made good to a minister when we get him to come and preach for us. My inability to do this has prevented me from having preaching or inviting ministers here. I think Paul claims it is a duty. (See Romans xv. 27; 1 Cor. ix. 11.) I have heard some say that the Scripture, The Lord hath "ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel," meant that the servant who preached this gospel was fed upon it; it was his meat and drink, as well as those who heard it. I do believe that the gospel is "good news," "glad tidings," to the preacher, the same as to those who have ears to hear, but in the Scripture referred to he was talking of another matter, as is to my mind made plain in the fifteenth verse of the same chapter, and immediately following. I never like to hear a preacher call the attention of the brethren to their duty in this respect in his own behalf; his brethren ought not to suffer it to be necessary. Paul I think

showed some sensitiveness about it, yet he told them their duty plainly.

I am glad you enjoyed your visit with me, and yet I do not know why one so void of spiritual life as I feel to be could be any company to the children of God; and as unworthy as I am, I, too, wish it were so we could meet often.

Regarding the subject upon which you wrote in your last letter, Man, his origin and attributes, I will say, I think we agree. You have expressed what I have for a long time believed on that subject, except a few unimportant expressions, as you say, and the Scripture substantiates your position that man came from the Creator's hand just what was required for him to be, an earthy or "first man;" no account is given that he had anything about him that could not die. Some say that a never-dying soul was placed, or breathed, into him, but my authority says it was the breath of life, and as I see it, this caused the man, the soul, to live; no immortality whatever about him. As to what Adam could have done, or what would have been the result of his obedience, I do not know, as the Scriptures are silent as to that, but they do tell us what he did do, and this is what confronts us. Some say the death that Adam died was spiritual, but the authority we desire to be our guide says nothing about his being spiritual, in the sense that the spirit he possessed did not or could not die. I have heard it said that man was the "best" of God's creation, for he declared him not only good, but very good. Again, I fail to find this statement, but I do find this, that "God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." I see and believe that he (man) is the highest order, so to speak, of all his creatures, and he placed him over the others, for he was given dominion "over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." We know that through Adam's disobedience sin entered into the world. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." As much as we may abhor ourselves on account of sin, if we had no sin we would have no Savior. But O how I do desire to know that he is my Savior.

Now the subject of being born again comes to my mind. What is it? How is it? When we read that Nicodemus, a master of Israel, did not understand it, is it any wonder that I, a poor, ignorant worm of the dust, should not understand it? We see what Jesus said to him. There is no difficulty in our minds in regard to that which is born of the flesh being flesh, but when he tells him "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," then comes that which is more difficult to understand. I have thought this truth was intended to be set forth: Same produces same; a birth of the flesh would be flesh, and a birth of the Spirit would be spirit. This we know, that the Scriptures nowhere, by intimation or otherwise, say that a part, or some particular part of a man must be born again, but he was talking to the man Nicodemus when he said, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must [not your soul, or some part of you] be born again" [not born over again]. I believe all those who have been thus born know by a blessed experience something of the effect of this birth, even though it be compared to the blowing of the wind; and while upon this part of our subject I want to say, let what may be said about what or who it is that is born again, I do love to see the evidences of it, and as void of showing such evidences of that birth as I know I am, I continually desire to feel an un-

mistakable evidence that I have been the subject of it. It is said we "Beebe Baptists" do not believe in any change in the Adamic man by being born again. I can only speak for myself, and it may be that I am alone in my belief about it, I do believe that I feel different in regard to these things from what I once did; I have seen the time I had rather have gone to a dance than to an Old Baptist meeting. What would you think of a person who was a member of an Old Baptist Church and did not indicate it by his conduct? We want to see evidences (fruit) that he is a changed man, as we say, yet I do not believe the poet wrote the truth when he said:

"The Spirit, like some heavenly wind,
Blows on the sons of flesh,
New models all the carnal mind,
And forms the man afresh."

"The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." No new modeling here, but the carnal mind serves the flesh. Now we see the two men you alluded to in your letter to me, the first retaining all his natural faculties, the other has a spiritual mind; and while we regard them in the light of two men, in fact there is but one; no warfare until this stronger Man enters. The two that are at war are said to be the flesh and the Spirit. Paul said it was sin that dwelt in him. There was "I" that would not, and "I" that did, yet it was Paul in both cases. In regard to the old and new man of the Bible, are not these terms used to express our lives, our conduct, and not to be applied to individuals or considered as persons? We are told to put off the old man and put on the new; does not this relate to the way we should not walk and the way we should? I hardly think we should consider Adam as being the old man. I find it a difficult matter at times to "put off the old man." I do not seem to be able to live as I would like. I am too nearly all Adam (earthy) when I find I cannot do as I would like. I know it would be an impossibility for us to "put off" Adam, who is the man of dust, just what we are. It is of interest to me to see the identity maintained all through. Some views I have heard expressed seem to take the matter too far away from me; I want it to include me, I want to know that I am one for whom Christ died, that I am the one born again, and that I will be resurrected, then "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." These are my feelings about these things.

Now, brother Pittman, I will close. I very much fear I know nothing at all about God, that what influence I have felt has been and is imaginary. One thing I am sensibly aware of, and that is, I cannot express intelligently what I wish to. I am afraid you will fail to gather my ideas, but mainly I am afraid I have done as the unlearned and unstable do: wrest the Scriptures to my own destruction.

I began this some time ago, but have had many interruptions. Come and see us whenever you can, and when you have time write. Your letters are always gladly received. Please excuse all not sustained by the word of truth in what I have written, and I will be glad to have my attention called to it. I know I am very ignorant.

In hope, I am your brother,

M. B. WEEDON.

DRAIN, Ore., Jan. 19, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—We received the inclosed letter from Elder Beeman, which we think too good to withhold from our dear ones, if in your

judgment you see fit to publish it. We were thankful the Lord put it into his mind to write to us poor, unworthy beings. I do not feel worthy or competent to answer it. I have not asked his consent to send it to the SIGNS, but hope he would not object.

With love, and a deep interest for God's people everywhere,

S. MORNINGSTAR.

HELENA, Okla., Jan. 4, 1910.

MRS. S. MORNINGSTAR—DEAR SISTER: —In reading your most precious letter in the last SIGNS I felt just then like helping you to offer praise and fervent thanksgiving to the Most High for his manifold and manifest blessings to the children of men, and especially so to those in your country, for showing to you and others of the household of faith his power of love in bringing the lambs of his fold to his banqueting-house. Most surely when they get there by the power of his grace they realize that his banner over them is love, and how wonderful it is for them to think of that great love wherewith he loved them before the world began. Yea, he hath loved them with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness he hath drawn them to himself. When the poor soul first realizes God's mercy in this respect, praise and thanksgiving go out to the Lord without any effort on his part whatever. Prayer ascends of itself, without formality on the sinner's part, because the Lord is there, sanctifying the heart by his presence and confirming the testimony of the apostle to him, that he, too, has this treasure in an earthen vessel, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of man. In my earnestness in regard to the Old School Baptists as being the only religious order that has the truth of God within her borders, I have not the least doubt, because the Scriptures point directly to such a poor, afflicted and despised people; in fact Jesus himself prophesied of their legacy in this world: In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace. I do not desire to be positive in regard to all who belong to the church militant, for many deceivers have been found among the saints in all ages, but I feel to be positive that she is the church—"is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her." I agree with an old Elder who while preaching in Virginia many years ago, said, "I do not say that all who belong to the Old School Baptists will be saved, but I do say that they are the only people that preach the truth." So you see, dear sister, that my joy and rejoicing are with the people that "know the joyful sound;" they shall walk in the light of his countenance. How much better it is to walk in the true Light than to walk in the light of man's kindling. What a firm foundation, what solid ground the saints have to stand on. It is because their trust is altogether in the King of kings and Lord of lords, who is above all things and before all things, and by whom all things consist and exist. It is a high and holy calling to be called by such a glorious Potentate, who is the brightness of his Father's glory and the express image of his person. My mind is led to think of Elder Peters' letter in the last SIGNS, in regard to the remnant who are as dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass. It is truly wonderful to think how necessary it is for God's people to be scattered in all countries. Jesus knew all about this subject, for he taught his disciples that they were the salt of the earth, and that it was very important

for them to be steadfast in the truth, for if they lose their steadfastness in the way of truth, wherewith shall the earth be salted? This figure used by our Lord teaches us that his people in the gospel day are to be few, as of old, contrasted with the people of the world, and driven in all countries. I have thought much upon the subject, or answer to this question, Why must so small a remnant be scattered in all countries? I have never expressed my mind to any one that I know of in answer to the above question. As I am now speaking to you on this wonderful subject, permit me to say what has very often occurred to my mind. I cannot fall in with many theories advocated by Arminians, but I certainly think that the Lord has a purpose in driving his people through necessity to new and barren countries literally, not only for the purpose of disseminating the truth and discovering the hidden people of our God, but to be an ever-living testimony for their Lord and Master and against spiritual wickedness in high places. "That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus." I believe the true testimony of all God's saints shall stand against the way of the wicked, who exalt themselves above God and all that is called God. For instance, to illustrate what I am trying to tell, God's people to-day, as in every age, advocate and contend that the Lord God of heaven and earth doeth his will and pleasure, and that he will save his own people with an everlasting salvation, notwithstanding all the opposition of men, devils and all else, while the enemies of Jesus make fun of and reject the testimony of the Lord's servants. They to-day, as I am a personal witness of their sayings, say, You cannot get to heaven by the will of God, but by your own will. This has always been the sentiment of the enemies of the truth. This is idolatry, and all that go on that side are idolaters. Idolatry is the greatest sin charged against the human family. But the testimony of God's people shall be brought in as a witness against those who contemned Jesus and his people on earth in the day of faith. Here is the great victory celebrated by the poor and afflicted of earth. Faith has overcome the world, for in the world of sin and trouble they were cast down, had their names cast out as evil, counted the off-scouring of all things, and some, like their Master, had not where to lay their heads, and all because they ascribed greatness unto the Lord. When, "in the dispensation of the fullness of times," he gathers together all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him, then all shall be overcome, and as the Scriptures say, the world is under their feet, because they are with the Lord, who is exalted above all things. It seems as you say, that I cannot say what I want to. I have been interested in hearing from the brethren of the Pacific States, and have esteemed them highly for the truth's sake, and I have thought that their zeal was according to knowledge.

You speak of your son baptizing fifteen in about a year. I thought while reading this, That is more than I have baptized in ten years. It does seem that here where there are so many people, that very little account or attention is paid to Bible teaching. There are great things done in the name of the Lord, but he is despised and rejected of men as of old. There are a few scattered all over these plains that the Lord has kept, and by his grace has enabled them to keep them-

selves unspotted from the world; these have the faith of God's elect, and are blessed to know what the joyful sound is; they do not walk in the light of men, but in the light of His countenance; they rejoice because their strength is in him, who has everlasting strength.

Now, dear sister, I have written about twice as much as I intended. Probably when you get lonesome or the day long you may have time to read it. I always read these letters to my wife; she is of the faith, and joins me in love to you all. J. F. BEEMAN.

BALTIMORE, Md., Dec. 7, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Inclosed you will find two excellent letters from Elder Joshua T. Rowe, my pastor, which I would be glad for you to publish when you have space.

Your brother in hope,

RAY M. KAUFFMAN.

BALTIMORE, Md., Jan. 18, 1910.

RAY KAUFFMAN—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I promised you some time ago to write you at some time something of my early experience in the things of the kingdom of God. In the spring of 1875 I became much troubled on account of my being a sinner in the sight of God, and I felt so grieved that my boyish pleasures and companions were no longer a joy to me. Sometimes the trouble would pass off for a while, only to return with more force than before. In the fall of the same year I became so distressed that I felt that there was no mercy for me, I thought that I must die and go to the place of eternal punishment, and the awful suffering of my soul I can never describe; I could not help begging for mercy, and yet felt that there was none for me. This continued until February, 1876, when it passed off, but I had no evidence that I could claim that Jesus loved me. I went on in that condition, wondering what my condition really was, until Monday after the second Sunday in May, 1876. In the afternoon, while at work on my father's farm, in Beaufort Co., N. C., I was thinking about my strange condition, when suddenly there came over me the most glorious and peaceful feeling I had ever experienced. I felt so sure that Jesus was my Savior that I stood there in the field and clapped my hands for joy. Then and there I had a peculiar view of the Primitive Baptist Church as the church of Jesus Christ, and I loved her, and felt that I wanted to live with that dear people of God. So on Saturday before the first Sunday in June, 1876, I went before the Sandy Grove Church of Primitive or Old School Baptists, near my father's home, and where my parents were both members, and told them of my desire, and they so kindly received me and tenderly cared for me that I could but feel sure that they loved me. Most all of them are gone now to their eternal home, but I love their memory. How kind they were. For about one month and a half I had sweet and peaceful rest in the things of the blessed kingdom, then one day, very suddenly, as if some one had spoken to me, I heard, as I believe, the voice of my Savior, saying, You have got to preach. The thought pierced my soul to its very depths, and I sank down in sorrow, for I knew my inability to do such a wonderful thing as preach the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ. What I suffered under that impression I cannot tell you; it is beyond expression. I believed that the Lord was able, but O I was so weak and unworthy. But the first Sunday in September, 1876, being persuaded by others,

I made the attempt to speak in the blessed name of Jesus, and have been at it until now, and as I write these things the tender love and sympathy of those dear old saints come into my memory and afford me comfort. They made appointments for me, and called for my services here and there, so I began to circulate among the churches away from home, and through the mercy of God have continued to this time, witnessing both to small and great of the eternal salvation of poor, helpless sinners through Jesus Christ and him crucified. I wonder sometimes at the kind consideration that I receive at the hands of the Lord's dear people. It is the mercy of God to me, and so I feel, as he gives me ability, to continue to publish the holy name of the Lord.

Now, dear brother, I appreciate your standing in the church; I, too, was very young when I was baptized, but the God of our salvation is sufficient for all things. I pray that he will keep you safely to the end. We are in usual health and hope that you are well. Hoping to see you next Sunday I will close. Write me soon.

Your loving brother and pastor,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

BALTIMORE, Md., Dec. 2, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER RAY:—I have intended for some time to write you a few lines. I feel that as you cannot hear what I say from the pulpit I ought to talk some to you with the pen. Myself and all the church very much appreciate your coming to the meetings. We love to see you, for we all love you very much, and we feel that though your natural ears are deaf, the dear Lord has opened the ears of your heart and soul and made you to hear the sweet voice of the loving Savior speaking your sins forgiven, for the great love wherewith he loved you, even when you were dead in sins. I felt glad and rejoiced the day I baptized you, and have always felt proud of you, not, I trust, in the flesh, but in the spirit, and I wish that I could talk with you more. I was glad to read your good letter in the last number of the SIGNS, and then I felt that I must write you a few lines at once, and say to you, Write some more for the paper whenever you feel like doing so, and tell others of the love of Jesus as it has been manifested to you. You spoke nicely of dear brother Lloyd. He was so nice, and such a good and loving and lovable brother. I miss him yet, but we know that our dear Lord does all things well, and we must not murmur at his providences. But such dear ones get into our hearts so deeply that we cannot help missing them and grieving after them, yet let us thank God that we had such a good brother as long as we did. The Lord gave him to us for a while, and then took him to himself, and in the morning of the resurrection that body that went to the grave a natural body shall come forth a spiritual body. O what a glorious thought, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, and that notwithstanding we have gone far astray, he finds us and brings us to the fold. Read the tenth chapter of John and see the tender care of the shepherd for his flock. Jesus is the good Shepherd, and we are the sheep of his pasture. How he does sometimes make our poor souls to rejoice in believing in him, and how our hearts do thank him for remembering us in his mercy and giving us a place in his church, and also in the hearts of his dear people. While you cannot hear the expressions of love from dear ones in the church, I trust that you see from their actions that they love you as a dear brother in the Lord. I often hear them speak of how dearly they

love you, and I hope that you will feel more and more at home with us. I would love to have you visit me when you can. Of course I know that you would not enjoy it as you would if I could talk with you better, but I will do the best I can. When you cannot come write me sometimes, we can speak to each other in this way of the wonderful love of Jesus, our dear Friend and Savior.

If you could come to the meetings a little earlier, some of the brethren would show you the hymns and the text, and knowing these, you might have some idea of what was being said. I spoke last Sunday from Heb. x. 26, 27. I tried to show that Christ is the only sacrifice for sin, whether committed in ignorance or knowingly, yet when we sin we feel ashamed and afraid of the judgment of God, but he in mercy shields us from the terrible things for which we look, but our sorrow for sin makes us careful about such things in the future. In this way our adversaries are devoured. Our adversaries are the evil inclinations of our flesh, which Paul to the Romans calls a law in my members warring against the law of my mind. (Rom. vii. 23.) It is the evil in our flesh that makes us feel wretched sometimes, and fear lest the Lord will cease to be merciful to us. But he said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." How blessed are these promises, and how much we poor sinners should appreciate them. Our God cares for us every moment of our lives, and if we make a success in the world it is due to his mercy.

I trust that I have not wearied you with my long letter. I am your loving brother and pastor,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

HAVILAND, Kansas, Oct. 24, 1910.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—The two armies of the Shulamite seem to be arrayed against each other most continually in my mind of late, so that my walk and talk are both badly at fault, and I cannot do the things that I would. I have wished often, when reading the SIGNS, that I could express my thoughts to others as they come to my mind, but while troubled by the fleshly mind my thoughts are not fit to be expressed. One army stands under the banner of Christ, the faith of the elect, the other army is fighting for Adam, whose hope is only of the dead. I think that in these two armies are found every kind of religion or faith that is in this world. There are only two. One is many times divided, and it shall fall. The christian religion is but one, and it shall stand forever. Christ is not divided. I believe that men have been moved by these two faiths ever since God promised that the Seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. The fruits of the two are represented by the two suits, or coverings, of our first parents in the garden of Eden. One was man-made, the other God-given. Since then man has sought out many inventions, yet they are all but inventions of men. It seems that the worldly religion is first, or is first expressed. Cain was older than Abel, he offered the fruits of the ground, and was rejected. Abel had faith in Christ, and his offering typified the crucifixion of Christ, and was accepted of God. For the sake of the blood of the Lamb Abel and his offering were accepted. In Noah's day these two spirits, as we may call them, were working in the same contrast. Noah was a preacher of righteousness. The world in wickedness was condemned by Noah in the building of the ark, for we are told

that he condemned the world, and when the test was made the world went down under the waters, and the ark of God's covenant went up above the waters, with Noah and his family. So Christ is here seen again by the eye of faith, and has brought salvation. All others were against this one family, and so were against Christ, or were not christian in their worship. Abraham had faith in God, and sojourned in a strange land among idolaters. Abraham was the newcomer. Jacob and Esau were brothers, yet expressed different faiths. While the older was gone to hunt wild meat for his offering, the younger brought a kid from his father's flock, and received the blessing; and later, when the man's family was in Egypt, we still see but two religions. Also in the land of Canaan one people believed in God, and the rest were idolaters, worshiping idols. All through the prophetic times some were of God and some were not. So when Christ came in the flesh to fulfill all types and prophecies, one, John the Baptist, was heard crying in the wilderness, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Repent from the Jews' religion, and turn to God and his Christ. But the Jews did not believe in Jesus, yet some did believe, and were saved from the great destruction of the nation; and do we not see on the cross three persons, representing all the world of mankind, all born of women, of few days and full of trouble? Two were thieves, or sinners, and the other was made to be sin for us; that is, he was made under the law to redeem them that were under the law. So we see the three condemned by the same law, "Thou shalt not covet." Adam and Eve coveted the forbidden fruit. One thief only made a conditional call upon Christ, saying, "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering, rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." And he received the desired promise. No doubt both thieves had done all in their power to work out a salvation from the cross, and had failed, so we all fail to escape death; but one looked to God through faith for salvation, and received the promise, while the other looked to works and a conditional salvation, and died without hope, because this world was all his hope, and when he died his hope died. But hope in Christ is a lively hope, for a man cannot have a living hope in a dead god, nor a dead hope or faith in a living God. These two religions could be followed down to this day, and we should find, as Paul said, another gospel, and yet not another, the one true gospel given by God himself.

Your brother in hope,

E. G. WEBB.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Sept. 21, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I am alone to-day, and feel like writing you a few lines. The words have come to my mind found in the ninetieth Psalm: "Lord, thou hast been our dwellingplace in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." This was a prayer of Moses. It appears to my mind that Moses believed from his heart that God ruled supreme, so do all the children of God now. There is no other god like him. This I believe to be the faith of every

heaven-born child to-day. We feel our unworthiness before the just and holy God. When it is cloudy, and the sun does not shine upon the earth, all things seem dull and dreary, but when the sun shines out how different and how cheerful all things are. Just so when the Sun of Righteousness seems not to shine in our hearts, and we can see nothing but this dark and vile nature of ours, we can exclaim with the poet,

"Am I a soldier of the cross,
A follower of the Lamb?
And shall I fear to own his cause,
Or blush to speak his name?"

But when the light of our dear Savior shines in our hearts we can sing, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear." "We spend our years as a tale that is told. The days of our years are threescore years and ten." Dear brethren and sisters, how short that is compared to a never-ending eternity. How comforting are the words of our dear Lord when he said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." But the great question with me is, Am I one of his? If so, I will have no part in the second death. All such are blessed. This will be when he says to some, Depart from me, for I never knew you.

Nov. 19th.—I am thinking of the love of God, and of his mercy and forgiveness towards poor, sinful man. First, his love is displayed in sending his only begotten Son to suffer and to die on the cross for his chosen ones. Where is there greater love than for a man to lay down his life for his brethren? But Jesus did not do this, as worldly people say, to give men a chance to be saved, but he finished the work that his Father gave him to do; he conquered death, hell and the grave, so there is nothing remaining for man to do save to keep his commandments. He said to his disciples, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." "His loving-kindness, O how free." It was in his great love that he brought the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage, and divided the Red Sea, and caused them to pass through on dry land. What love and what mighty power were manifest when the Hebrew children passed through the fiery furnace unharmed; but God was with them. There is no other love nor power but God, and "cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." When the dear Savior is with his people there is nothing to fear. He says, I will never leave nor forsake my chosen ones. What comforting words these are to his people.

It was love that stopped the mouths of the lions when Daniel was cast into their den; it was the great love that he had for weak, sinful man that caused him to command the building of the ark, to save Noah and his family from the flood which he would bring upon the earth to destroy every living thing except those that were saved in the ark, and his love is an everlasting love; the natural man can know nothing of it. It has not entered into the heart of man to know the things which God has prepared for them that love him. "We love him, because he first loved us," and that love was with him before time began. Can this love be for unworthy me? When the dark clouds of my nature are driven away, then I feel to say, Blessed be the Sun of Righteousness; but none can drive them away save our blessed Savior. We read in Romans ix., "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." This to my mind is all the proof we need of God's electing love. Now who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

I was at the association held with the

Ebenezer Church, in Loudoun Co., Va., and I certainly did enjoy the meeting, and hearing the different brethren proclaim the truth as it is in our dear Lord and Savior; it was manna to the hungry soul. I also greatly enjoyed the company of the dear brethren and sisters, and hearing them talk of Christ and his kingdom. I am grateful to brother Eppa Norman and his family for their kindness to me. May God's blessings rest upon and abide with them now and forever, is my prayer. The love of God and his infinite kindness toward his church has been upon my mind for some time, so I felt to pen you a few thoughts which occurred to me. May God's blessing rest and abide upon you all, and upon the household of faith, is my desire.

From your unworthy brother,

THOMAS ALDEN.

PORT JEFFERSON, N. Y., Aug. 30, 1910.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I had it in my mind to write you on Saturday, the day that I received your good letter, but I almost wonder that I attempt to write, feeling as I do. I had feared after writing that you might think I was advocating works in my last to you. No indeed, I feel to rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. I omitted the important part of the chapter: how they went and heard for themselves. But do I know for myself that He loved me before the foundation of the world? I can remember when I was unconcerned and blind indeed. Now, the doctrine of election is precious to me, but how little I understand. I experience the same coldness and indifference of which you write, still I think there must be life to feel thus, with a desire to know more of him, and to learn of him. We are bidden to search the Scriptures. As we read in the gospel of John, the Word and God are one and inseparable. It is all surely a mystery; God manifest in the flesh.

I feel that he knows my feeble frame, and I desire to praise him, and I love to hear him exalted. Should I have the privilege of again listening to you, I know that it would be to exalt Christ. Surely you are one of the Lord's servants. This I consider a high calling. We would be pleased to again have you visit among us. Thomas Terry comes in quite often, and is company for us. We esteem him as a child of God. In the winter we are not so busy, so that there would be more time to meet together.

Sept. 1st.—I will make another attempt to write you. I thought at one time not to send what I wrote on the thirtieth, for it is so imperfect; I desired to let you know how much your letters to us are appreciated. I was glad to have you point out the importance of hearing for ourselves. I have felt it to be with me as with those spoken of in the parable, as having no depth, and the cares of the world choked the seed. You will understand. It has really seemed thus with me. I do abhor my ways and my doings; the flesh is weak. I also feel to say,

"The steps that I take and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will."

My husband desires to be remembered to you. This morning we are having a lovely rain, which is much needed. Thanks to our heavenly Father for it, and for all the many mercies daily bestowed upon us.

With kind regards, one of the least of the flock,

SARAH A. NORTON.

THE STRONG MAN ARMED.

"WHEN a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils."—Luke xi. 21, 22.

These are the words of Jesus, the blessed Master, who spake as never man spake, and the whole race of Adam is ranged on one side or the other: those in whom the strong man is bound, and those in whom he is not. An apt illustration of one in whom the strong man was not bound was the Pharisee who went up to the temple to pray, and prayed thus: "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this poor publican: I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess." His goods were in peace, and he was well satisfied with his own righteousness. On the other hand, the poor publican was as the broken reed and the smoking flax, his goods were spoiled, he smote on his breast, showing distress, and cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Jesus tells us that the poor publican went down to his house justified, rather than the boasting Pharisee.

Another illustration of the strong man armed was Saul, afterwards the eminent apostle to the Gentiles. When going to Damascus in his mad career, persecuting the humble followers of Jesus, the glory of Jesus shined about him above the brightness of the noonday sun, and Paul heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" The strong man is immediately bound, and we shortly find Paul preaching the faith which before this manifestation of Jesus' power to overcome the stoutest rebel against his grace, he had hated. This faith Paul labored with all his might and main to destroy he afterward preached: Jesus, the only name given under heaven whereby we must be saved. King Nebuchadnezzar is another case where the strong man armed kept his palace until God deprived him of his reason, and he wandered for seven years with the beasts of the field, until he knew that the Most High ruled in the kingdom of men and gave it to whomsoever he would. (Daniel iv. 32.) At the end of seven years the Lord restored to the king his reason, and he broke forth in the following wonderful language: "I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me; and I blessed the Most High; and I praised and honored him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" And the king further said, "I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase."—Daniel iv. 37. So we find that there is no power to-day but Jesus', the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, that is able to bind the strong man in any of the fallen sons and daughters of Adam, for Jesus alone has the words of eternal life, and he gives eternal life to all of his people, even all who are included in the covenant of grace, for the words of the glorious new covenant are, "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be mer-

ciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."—Heb. viii. 10–12. How well suited is this to the needs of every quickened sinner, for Jesus bestows every grace, and they stand justified, clothed in his righteousness. May we ever extol the stem of Jesse's rod, and crown him Lord of all. We may well exclaim with the psalmist, "I will sing praises unto my God while I have my being." Jesus will divide a portion with the strong, and not one of his portion will he lose, for the Lord's portion is his people.

Dear brethren in Christ, do with this as you think best. I would like to get some subscribers for the SIGNS, but this town is full of Babel builders, who have turned their ears to fables, and therefore will not have the truth.

In hope, WM. F. SLOAN.

LEXINGTON, Ky., December, 1910.

ABERFELDY, Ont., Nov. 20, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I have made a practice for several years of giving a short account of the churches I am serving, and will do so again. I have been serving eight churches the past year, up to September. Elder J. M. Fenton is serving one of them now: the Kingwood Church, in New Jersey. I continue to serve six churches in New York and Pennsylvania, and one in Canada. I make a trip among them in New York and Pennsylvania once in three months, and am gone from home two Sundays. My next appointments are in February, first Sunday at Otego, N. Y., Wednesday, Brookdale, Pa., Friday, Shohola, Pa., Saturday and second Sunday, Justus, Pa., Monday, Waverly, N. Y. The fifth Sundays will be at Ingleside, N. Y., beginning with the fifth Sunday in January, 1911, Cammal the fourth Sunday in February and every four months after. These churches are expecting supplies by different ministers until further developments. They are all in peace, and as far as I know are walking in the order of the gospel—no striving or contentions over any point of doctrine. Nine have been baptized in the churches I have served the past year, and three have died.

The question is often asked me, Why did you go to Canada? First, I will say that it was not because of any difficulty between the brethren and myself. Second, it was not because my surroundings were unpleasant. I had a nice, pleasant home, and most excellent brethren to associate with. Neither was I financially embarrassed in the least; myself and family were well cared for by the brethren, together with what we could do ourselves, so that we lacked nothing. I was out of debt, and had a little nest-egg beside. Everything in nature said, Stay where you are; the brethren in all of the churches said stay. There seemed to be two powers working in my heart and mind, and had been for several years, even from the time that I began to serve the little Beulah Church in Canada; God only knows the conflict that was in my mind at times all those years. The brethren of the Beulah Church were not urging me to come to Canada, although they had expressed a desire at different times that I might move into their midst. I would always tell them they need not expect any such thing, and at the same time I was strongly impressed that I would be there living with them before I died. One of the powers moving me has prevailed, and I am living here. I do not say what that power was; I do not know, God knows. I presume many have passed their judgment concerning the

matter already, for or against. It is very evident that it is God's will that I should be here, for he could have kept me there. I do not know his purpose, but I may some day. I feel perfectly willing to serve the little Beulah Church as God gives the ability. If he designs that I shall go elsewhere he can make it known, and will. I do not worry about that matter, for my times are in his hand, the bounds of my habitation are fixed, and cannot be changed one iota by the powers that be, and I desire to be still and know that he is God. It would please me very much if there could be more of God's servants living here in Canada to minister to the comfort of his poor, needy, hungry people. Speaking after the manner of men, I would say there is room for three or four little preachers in Ontario, Canada. We are in hope Elder Lester will come soon, as he has a call from the Covenanted Baptist Church. We have loved him from our first knowledge of him, for the truth's sake. Now I want to say to God's servants in behalf of the little Beulah Church, Come and preach for us, we will not hurt you, at least we hope not to. When you are visiting the brethren of the Covenanted Baptist Church, a little more travel will bring you here. We would love to have you with us a day or two at least, longer if you could spare the time. May God's grace be ministered to the comfort of all his little ones, is my desire for Jesus' sake.

D. M. VAIL.

CENTRAL POINT, Ore., Dec. 8, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Having to write you on business, I also want to say the SIGNS OF THE TIMES contends for the doctrine of the Bible, and the editorials and communications are read with much comfort by me. I love the doctrine that gives God all the glory in the salvation of helpless sinners, as all are, and O the wonders of God's mercy in the gift of his Son, who bare all their sins in his own body on the tree, and put them away by the sacrifice of himself, and the Lord hath said, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Not only hath the Lord put away the sins of his people, and will remember them no more, but he also hath said, "He shall see his seed. * * * He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." I do not believe there could be such a thing as an experience of God's grace were not the things I have just stated true. The atonement made by the Lord Jesus in behalf of his people removed every impediment out of the way. If it did not, how could the helpless sinner remove them, who is dead in sin and possesses but a mind that is enmity against God, not subject to his law, neither indeed can be? Paul tells us that in that state (in the flesh) man cannot please God, and every one taught of God is made to know these things are true, one cannot know it in any other way; man cannot teach this truth to man. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord."

I call attention to the two most excellent letters of brother Buck, published in the last SIGNS. Our brother's experience does not differ from the experience of all the Lord's people, except he may have manifested the works of the flesh more than some do, but not myself, for I hated the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists, and I, too, thought it worse than any other doctrine I knew of; the way I thought was right I now see is indeed the way of death, and had I been left to my choice and way I should be a hater of the truth still. I do not guess at this, I know it is so. But all the hatred and opposi-

tion that dwell in the heart of the Lord's people, yes, and often manifested by their works, do not prevent or in the least hinder the Lord in saving his people from their sins. How blessed it is that the Lord saved first and then calls his people, not according to their works, and if not according to their works, then there can be nothing in the way of their calling, even though they do this or do that. The gift of eternal life is dependent on no condition to be performed, it is God's gift. Jesus says, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." Neither can they forfeit that life, either by doing or not doing, for Christ, who is their life, has said, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

I must bring my letter to a close; I have written more than I expected to when I took up my pencil. I wanted to tell you how I appreciate reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and to also say that I have been in rather poor health for the past year or more, and, thinking a change of climate might be beneficial, my wife and I came here near Central Point, Jackson Co., Oregon, where we now contemplate stopping until spring, and if there are any readers of the SIGNS in Jackson County I would like to hear from them, or from any other brother or sister who would write to us.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

WRIGHTSTOWN, Pa., Sept. 26, 1910.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—As I arose this morning my mind was made to think upon the old testament saints. They were made to know God's commandments, and this was one commandment of God, that they should have no other gods beside him. David said, "I delight to do thy will, O my God." The thought was in my poor soul, What is his command to me? what is his will in me? And the words came sweetly, "That ye believe on him whom he hath sent." I had to say, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." O my dear brother, how like nothing I am, even less than nothing and vanity. I opened the Bible and my eyes fell upon the sixty-second Psalm. How good! How plain! When the light shines upon the word and gives understanding, then the soul is made to rejoice in the God of his salvation. Had not David in this song a view of the New Jerusalem, the church of God? It seemed as though my soul was made to rejoice and join in the song and say, Blessed be God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, if I am not mistaken.

I have been a reader of the SIGNS as long as I can remember, and I cannot speak of one above another, for to me there is something in every article. The older I get the better it is to me, but I myself grow no better. I have to groan, O wretched one that I am.

But I must close. This may be the last I shall write, but he who rules over and in all things will do as seemeth him good for his own glory and his children's good. I was brought or made to believe that Jesus is the Redeemer, the sure and only Savior of his people, and that he is the light and life of his people; in him is no darkness. I have to mourn when I forget him and wander in by and forbidden paths, seeking for something in this old body that is good, and desiring to have the praise for something good that I have done. Then he shows me that I cannot take one step alone, nor have one thought to give in praise without him. He saves his children with an everlasting salvation. But how gracious,

how tender he is, and what care he shows to them. I have prayed that my faith fail not.

But I said that I would close, and I am still writing. Please forgive me.

From a sinner, saved by grace,

HENRIETTA KREWSON.

PINSONFORK, Ky., Dec. 4, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have just returned, this Sunday evening, from our regular church meeting, Little Hope Church, the church of my membership, and near my home, too, and I feel to hope that the Lord was with us, in blessing us and giving us some assurance of his everlasting mercy and remembrance of us, though the congregation was not large, as the weather was cold and disagreeable. On my arrival I found the SIGNS OF THE TIMES had come, in which I soon read the obituary of dear Elder Francis McGlade, who is called from the land of death to that of the blessed, living forever and ever, where he will never know a sorrow or shed a tear; no, never, never. Blessed immortality! It was my privilege to meet dear Elder McGlade at the Pocatalico Association, in September, 1909, a little over twelve months ago, for the first and only time, and I was favored of the Lord to hear him present the glorious things contained in the Scriptures of eternal truth, to the comfort and consolation of the Lord's people. To me it seemed wonderful indeed; it was a feast of fat things, my cup ran over. I have been feasting on that God-blessed sermon occasionally ever since; it is sweet to my taste yet. I have thought of Elder McGlade often since I heard him preach, and with much love and good feeling, and had hoped to meet him again in this world and hear him proclaim the name of our dear Redeemer; but alas, he is gone—gone home to heaven and immortal glory, I do indeed believe, to enjoy heaven with all that heaven means. O blessed thought! My mind is too finite and my tongue too stammering to express words as I desire. I feel to join with dear Elder Peters, who preached his funeral, that we cannot speak too highly of him, for another great man is fallen in Israel.

Love and kind remembrance to all.

W. J. MAY.

BOWDOINHAM, Maine, Dec. 15, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—Just a word to let you know how much I appreciate the two volumes of the editorials of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I can almost claim that we are twins, as there are but a few weeks between our births. I love and fellowship the glorious doctrines they set forth and clearly prove. You will pardon me if I speak of days gone by more than half a century, when Elder Gilbert Beebe was in Maine at the Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Association, and preached in the pulpit of the New School Baptist meetinghouse. His text sounded as if spoken from above: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." The sermon was all love, and in my first love it made a strong impression upon my mind, and when the two volumes came and I looked upon and recognized that face in the first volume that I had seen so long ago, it brought the sermon to my mind. I prize them highly, they are more than they are represented to be; they are Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and I have read and reread them; they are Jesus, the atonement, and works are excluded. How he fought as "with beasts at Ephesus." Not taking your time longer, will just say that every Bible Baptist should have them to read and then inquire, Where is volume three?

Yours very truly,

J. H. WILSON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1911.

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NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS.

It is becoming at all times to give expression to the gratitude that we may feel for mercies past to that God from whose bountiful hand they all come. It is good to remember at all times that every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is neither variableness nor shadow of turning. At this, the beginning of another year, we feel a desire to remember the mercies of the past year, and to be thankful to God for them. Not the least among these mercies is the long-suffering and patience of our covenant-keeping God toward us in our many weaknesses and failures, and toward our unthankfulness. He has been merciful in a thousand ways, and he has been merciful toward our ingratitude for his mercies. This we feel to be an especial mercy, and it calls for humble acknowledgment and great gratitude from us. May the Lord create in us a spirit of gratitude, and make us more mindful of all he has done for us. This we feel to say for ourself personally. Very great also have been the mercies of the Lord toward all of us who are connected with the management of the Signs. Our lives have been spared, a good degree of health has been afforded us, temporal mercies have abounded toward us all. We have been blessed with some degree of willingness to do what we have done in the conduct of the Signs, and have found some measure of comfort and satisfaction in the service. Our brethren have been kind and forbearing toward us, and we all have been blessed with a desire to so write, and, in general, so to do in the conduct of the Signs as shall be for the glory of God and the good of those who read its pages. All these things are blessings indeed. It is a blessing from the Spirit of God to love him, to love his people, to serve in his house and to dwell in the fellowship of the Spirit with his people. If there has been any willing obedience to his commandments, that also calls for praise and thanksgiving, for this also is one of the good gifts of God to us. All things put us under obligation to God; nothing that we do puts him under obligation to us. Obedience true and spiritual to him calls for praise to him, and never gives the least room for us to demand a reward at his hands. There can be no greater blessing than to find it our meat and drink to do his will. These reflections are very forcibly in our mind as we enter upon the new year.

We can but come to the dawn of this year with trembling while we remember the past. In the face of manifold mercies, of reproofs and convictions from the Spirit of God, there has been in our life very much to make us sorrowful and ashamed. How unthankful and self-seeking we have been, how ready to yield to the least temptation to vainglory, pride, ease and a multitude of other things evil and alluring in their nature. As we remember these things, and think of taking up the labor of another year,

and remember that the same temptations will be before us as in the past, we can but fear and hesitate and tremble. One thing is sure, viz., that without great grace there will be utter failure on our part to do that which is pleasing to God. If there shall be any denying of self and any ready service toward God it will be of sovereign mercy, and we do not forget that our God has said to his people, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." Were it not for such promises as this, and for the assurance that our God does not change in his thoughts of peace toward his loved ones, we should feel like giving up the conflict and the service. Still we do feel to go on because he has never yet failed in any of his promises. This much we have written concerning ourself personally, but there are some things that have been in our mind which seem needful to be spoken of. It is needful that we all should have our minds stirred up by way of remembrance often. This is an age when skepticism flourishes, when the Bible is denied to be the inspired word of God, when the love of many waxes cold, and the places of assemblage for the worship of his name possess but little attraction, as it appears, to very many of whom we have a right to expect better things. All this would not disturb our mind were it not that the dear people of God are, almost unavoidably, affected by these things. Our minds, the minds of true believers, need stirring up about these matters. We ourself must confess with sorrow that we from time to time find our own mind giving heed to all these base things of the world and our peace in the Lord too often marred and hindered. The approaches of the enemy are always insidious and in secret. His reasonings are very plausible, and he puts on a great appearance of wisdom. One thing that seems to us to demand especial attention, is the readiness which we have seen to appeal to human reason instead of to the Scriptures in defense of, or in opposition to, the doctrine of the Bible. Our reasonings are as much out of place in defense of the revealed truth of God as when we turn our reasonings against that truth; the things of God are not found out by searching, but by revelation; the Bible is a book of revelation, not of argument or philosophical speculation. It is the word of God, written by inspiration, its statements are witnessed, not argued, nor reasoned out. For instance, it declares that there is a God supreme, who created all things that do appear of nothing, that he rules in heaven and in earth, that he is just, good, holy, omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent, that men have sinned and fallen under the curse of death, that they cannot redeem their own souls, that Jesus Christ came in human flesh, living a life of perfect obedience, and dying a perfect sacrifice, and that by his death he redeemed from death, hell and the grave the election of grace, and that he will keep them unto the end, and bring them to final glory. These things are declared, not reasoned out. They are to be received, even though to us they look unreasonable, and if we have become indeed little children, we shall receive them and believe them against all reasonings and in spite of all the consequences that human reason my allege against them. There is not one principle of the doctrine of the Bible which has not been assailed and pronounced impossible and unreasonable. Miracles have been denied upon the ground that our human experience has never come in contact with one. They have been denied upon the ground that God's laws in nature are fixed, and can-

not be superseded or set one side. It is not needful to argue against these reasonings, it is only necessary to ask, Do the writings of inspired men assert that miracles have taken place? Then they must have taken place, else the book that we call the Bible is a tissue of falsehoods, and we have no true revelation from God at all. Of late we have seen in some discussions concerning the doctrine of the predestination of all things, attempts to disprove this doctrine, not by scriptural proof that it is not true, but by urging results and consequences against it that are made to appear horrible by pictures drawn by skillful men. It has seemed to us for a long time that one plain Scripture which declares that this doctrine is not true would weigh more than whole pages filled with what reason says are consequences of this doctrine. We have not been able to escape the conclusion that the chief reason why men pursue this method of denunciation of the doctrine, is that they have not been able to find any text of Scripture which asserts that the doctrine is not true. It has seemed to us, on the other hand, if any one text does assert that any one evil thing has been predestinated of God, that one text weighs more than all reasonable or unreasonable arguments against the doctrine. We have been glad to notice that as a general thing brethren who defend and contend for this doctrine have simply urged the plain testimony of the word of God. This is as it should be. Those who opposed Paul in his day urged all these terrible consequences against the doctrine when they said, "Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" Paul, inspired of God, answered once and for all time these oppositions based upon what has seemed unreasonable to men, by saying, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?"

But it was not our mind to enter upon a defense of the doctrine here, but to call attention to the folly of urging what may seem reasonable to us against the doctrine, or against any other principle of the doctrine of God. Such drawing out of what men think would be the consequences, logically, of the doctrine of predestination, or of any other truth of the word of God, may, and will no doubt, catch and please the minds of other men, who depend upon their own reasonings more than they do the word of God, and sometimes it may perplex the humble and God-fearing as well. But the only question is, What do the Scriptures teach? When that is settled all is settled with any true believer. We feel glad when the word of God is appealed to for the defense of anything, and not what may seem reasonable to men.

Another thing has been somewhat upon our mind of late: we have always believed in the sovereign right of our God to do as pleases himself with all his creatures; for his glory they are and were created. It was his right to create them or not to create. It is his right to place his creatures each one in that lot that seems good to himself. He has no obligation resting upon him to give any account to his creatures, and no one among them all has any right to say, Why or what doest thou? Let the Creator of all do as it shall please him, let him bestow upon one the richest gifts of his providence or grace, and then withhold all these from another, still there is no injustice, and there can be no room for any censure against him. The vain minds of men unreconciled to God have dared to arraign him at the bar of human judgment, and to say that this or that is right,

or that this or that is wrong, in the dealings of the Lord with men. Thus men have and do condemn his sovereignty, his predestination, his election, his punishment of sinners for sin, because they cannot reconcile all these things with their own finite reason. How different the attitude of the soul that is born of God. Such an one confesses that all that Jehovah does it right; such an one does not claim to understand the ways of the Lord, or to be able to show forth the righteousness of his ways, but that one is still assured that his ways are just and right. Our God commands certain things of his creatures. Among other things he says, "Thou shalt not kill," and his law to Israel enacted that if man shed his brother's blood, by man shall his blood be shed. It is sin in man then to kill, but our God takes away the life of his creatures by a thousand means, and in this he does not commit any wrong. He has appointed the end of each human life, setting a bound to our feet that we cannot pass. He takes away millions of men by the ordinary diseases of mankind, others come to their end through war and bloodshed, others are destroyed by what we call accidents, which are not accidents in the mind of Jehovah; some meet their end by being murdered by some one of their fellow-men; in short, our God takes away the life that he has given in a thousand ways, and it is sure that his will or purpose is no more in the departure of one than it is in another. Not only is this all true of the appointed end of man upon earth, but it is also true of each and every step of the way that he shall tread. Our God has set a bound to our feet that we cannot pass, not only as regards the duration of life, but also as regards turning to the right hand or to the left in that way, and in all this there is no injustice in the ways of our God. It may seem to us that there is injustice in his ways, but that is because of our failure to understand him who is infinite. To one he gives health and to another sickness; to one there is poverty and to another riches; to one is companionship and friendship given, and to another loneliness; to one keen intellect and to another an intellect that is clouded; some have a good parentage, kindly, honest and industrious, and to others is given a parentage vile in every way. We see all this all around us every day, and in all this our God does no wrong, and we dare not question why it is so. It is ours to stand in awe before the Lord, and to say, "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." If we ask, Why these differences? the only reply that can be given is, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." All our questionings but lead us into perplexities and distresses of mind, but when we can rest in the wisdom of God, and feel sure he is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind, we shall fall in spirit at his feet and confess him wise and gracious in all his ways. It is sure then, that God reigns in all and over all. Every spiritual mind will stand in awe before him, and confess himself too ignorant to question any of his ways.

In conclusion we will say that our desire and prayer is that we all may come to feel deeply the importance of these things, and that the spirit of humility and prayer may be ours. We need the help of our brethren, and shall need it during the year before us, if indeed we are spared to continue our labor in connection with the SIGNS. Our comfort is that our God can thresh a mountain with a worm. May the grace of God and the comfort of the Holy Spirit, together with the presence of Jesus our Savior, be with us this coming year. Amen. C.

FELLOW-SHIP.

"THAT which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."—1 John i. 3.

The writer of this profound text, in the book called the gospel by John, speaks of Christ as the "Word," and declares that he was God, and was in the beginning with God, and that all things were made by him. By these sublime declarations the holy and omnipotent character of the only Begotten of the Father is established. Here his eternal existence and his sovereign power over all things in heaven and on earth are forever settled by the testimony of John. In the same gospel Jesus is called "the true Light," and it is also said that in him is life, and the life is the light of men. In this name Jesus is presented as the only life-giving power the earth has ever known. In one of his epistles John makes the statement that "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." How clearly it appears through such testimony that Jesus is the light of the world and the life of men. Yet, notwithstanding this truth, many intelligent men and women contend that light and life are in all the children of Adam, and that exercise of "free will" is all that is necessary to make them the children of God. Christ was not revealed to the apostles as an anxious Savior, a disappointed God, because men would not hearken unto his voice, but as that God who causeth the dead to hear his voice and live.

In this first chapter of first John he declares, in perfect harmony with his gospel, that that eternal life which was with the Father was manifested unto the apostles, and that they saw it and handled it. And because of that wonderful manifestation, and the absolute certainty of the apostles of it, John wrote this epistle to the end that the children of God might have fellowship with them. What they had heard of him from his lips, what their eyes had looked upon and their hands had handled "of the Word of life," qualified them witnesses of the truth that God had sent his only begotten Son into the world to save sinners. How good it is for all witnesses to the truth of God to speak and write of what they have seen and felt of the Word of life, and how important it is not to go beyond that we do know in our own souls and what God's word declares.

We have all written more or less perhaps upon the subject of fellowship; we have read much upon the subject and have talked about it often. But the momentous questions are, What is fellowship? and what power or influence has man over it? We have thought to make the word "fellowship" compound, as at the head of this article, would give a clearer conception of its real import. It will be remembered that the word "with" is used by the apostle, whereas the word "for" is almost universally used among men. How often we hear or read of some church declaring nonfellowship for another, and one brother saying, I have lost fellowship for this or that brother. Fellowship that can be put on to-day and taken off to-morrow is not worth the name. Fellowship is a principle which denotes inseparable union in the family of God, therefore no man or body of men can WITHDRAW fellowship from another. Fellowship means oneness, equality, even in worldly matters; for instance, there is political fellowship, which means union or oneness in principles. There is such a thing as intellectual fellowship, and when one of bright intellect meets another of equal gifts and attainments

he meets his fellow, hence there is between them fellow-ship, union, companionship. There is also social fellowship; the gentleman of high rank with refined manners and tastes finds his fellow only in equal rank. The man of low birth, undignified, illiterate, could never feel at home in the presence of the gentleman described above, but must find his fellow in his own station in life. Could brothers of the same parents, united by ties of blood, equal socially, withdraw fellowship from each other? They might disagree, live apart and have no dealings, but would they not still be fellows in the sense of relationship, equality, rank, being the sons of the same father and mother? In Zechariah xiii. 7, the Lord said, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow." That man was Christ, the Son of God, therefore the Father's equal, one with him. Herein is shown the fellowship of the Father and the Son. Paul said of the saints, "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." Thus we understand what it is to be kings and priests unto God, and why the saints are called the "fellows" of Christ in Psalms xlv. 7. The apostle says in our text, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." The term, "fellowship with us," is much stronger and decidedly more correct than fellowship for us. Able and learned brethren often say, I have fellowship for this or that one, and again, I have lost fellowship for this or that brother. Fellow-ship WITH one cannot be lost, put off, withdrawn, nor destroyed. But so-called fellowship: good feeling toward, confidence in or regard for one, can be withdrawn, but let us all be assured that these things are not fellowship. To have fellow-ship with the apostles is to be the children of the King of kings and the Lord of lords; to be heirs to that glorious inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away; to be one in faith, hope, charity, doctrine and experience. To have fellowship with them is to see Jesus as they saw him: the Word, God, Light, eternal Life, the only Savior of sinners. None but those redeemed by blood, justified freely by grace, called and glorified by the Spirit of God, can have fellow-ship, union, equality with the apostles, and all such have fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." One with the Father and one with his Son; agreed with him in the sense that they believe all that Moses and the prophets did write and all Jesus declared of himself, having hope in the life that now is and in that which is to come, in nothing whatever opposed to him or his truth. This fellowship is made manifest in walking in the light as he is the light; that is, we walk in the truth of the gospel, as John expresses it in saying, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."

On the other hand, all who walk in darkness manifest that they know not God, neither his Son Jesus Christ, hence have no fellowship with the Father and with the Son and with the children of God. We feel if this sublime subject were more fully understood there would be other expressions used than "we withdraw fellowship;" "we put up bars of fellowship;" "we exclude from our fellowship," &c. If the Lord through the blessed Spirit of adoption has made men fellows, brethren in the Spirit, having

fellowship one with another, one might be excluded from the privileges of the church a dozen times a day were it possible, yet that holy fellow-ship, union of spirit, oneness of faith, would never be marred. Praise to his holy name for the inseparable unity; one with the Father, one with the Son and one with each other. K.

CHURCH LETTERS.

NORFOLK, Miss., Dec. 14, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The inclosed letter, written by sister Hadden, of the Mt. Carmel Church, to the Licking Association, of Kentucky, I think well worth perusal by the readers of the SIGNS. It should have been forwarded to you sooner, but I was taken sick the day following the adjournment of the association.

Your brother, J. W. WALLIS.

From the Particular Baptist Church of Mt. Carmel, Clark County, to the dearly beloved brethren of the Licking Association, in session at Shelbyville, Ky.

STILL another year has passed, and God again in his infinite goodness has called us to meet around the little shrine where together we may talk of our perplexities, our sorrows and afflictions, where taking courage again we may say to the troubled waters of our souls, "Peace, be still." We have had few changes since last year, our membership remains the same. God has been good to us, and we are so unworthy we can but sing, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me." We have met but seldom, as we have had no pastor over our little flock, but the Master says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." And we know that "he is the Rock, his work is perfect." We have had sickness and sore distress of mind; many have been our trials and tribulations, until at times, dear brethren, we have come to the very brink of the dark and surging waters of despair, when lo, in anguished spirits, in our deep contrition and unworthiness, we have cried out to Him for sustenance, and he has sustained us. Again and again we are enabled to say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." And again we have sung that sweet old song:

"Jesus, the name that calms our fears,
That bids our troubles cease;
'Tis music in the sinner's ears,
'Tis life, and health, and peace."

If we cannot be with you in the flesh, beloved, we can be with you, by his grace, in the spirit, for are we not all "taught of God to love one another"? That we have this love for one another is but another blessed assurance of our Savior's love, and it is a sore trial that we cannot look into your dear faces and feel your loving handclasps. We send you this poor message by our messengers, because we cannot bear to be left out of your hearts and supplications. Pray for us, brethren, that we, too, may "be filled with all the fullness of God;" that he may let the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in his sight, for he is our Lord, our Strength and our Redeemer. We are very poor in spirit, but "God is love," and does he not say, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven"?

Now with hearts full of love and thankfulness that He has enabled you to meet again in the quietude of peace and sweet humility to enjoy his great spiritual blessings, and with the prayer that we may all at last enter into his everlasting kingdom to go no more out forever, we subscribe ourselves in all humbleness of christian fellowship and hope, your loving brethren and sisters in Christ Jesus.

SEPTEMBER, 1910.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at the bride's residence, Wednesday, October 26th, 1910, Van Buren Leigh and Miss Mary E. Pierson, both of Princeton, N. J.

By the same, at the Old School Baptist meeting-house in Hopewell, N. J., Wednesday, Nov. 30th, 1910, Frederick D. Blackwell and Miss Grace Louetta Conner, both of Hopewell, N. J.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, at the home of the bride's parents, near Wango, Wicomico Co., Md., Theodore Marion Tilghman and Miss Louisa Fowler Laws.

By the same, at the home of the bride's grandparents, near Berlin, Md., Henry Clay Evans and Miss Mary Adeline Warren.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder James McDonald was born in Campbell Co., Tenn., Sept. 21st, 1829, and died in Claiborne Co., Tenn., Nov. 7th, 1910, making his stay on earth 81 years, 1 month and 16 days. Brother Mc (as we always called him) went to Madison Co., Ind., in 1856, and joined the Old School Baptist Church at Little Killbruck, in the above named county, and was baptized on the second Saturday in May, 1856, by Elder William Thompson. He was united in marriage to Lucinda Maynard, Sept. 14th, 1856, and to that union were born ten children, five boys and five girls, of whom six survive him. Brother McDonald preached his first sermon the second Saturday in August, 1860, and was ordained to the full work of the gospel in July, 1862, by Elders Wm. A. Thompson, John F. Johnson, Joseph R. Johnson, John Richardson and others. He traveled a great deal, and preached in many States in this country and also in Canada. He was one of the greatest defenders the Baptists ever had in Tennessee and many other places, and ever contended for the following principles, to wit: first, total depravity of the human heart by reason of sin of the first man Adam. Second, of eternal, unconditional and personal election, and that this election consists of the sons and daughters of Adam. Third, in a full, complete and ample atonement by Jesus Christ for the elect only. Brother McDonald believed in the purpose of God in all things that ever did or ever will come to pass, and he called this absolute predestination of God in all things, but never made a hobby of any one point. He believed that in order for the sinner to ever see or enter the kingdom of God that he or she must be born again, and that it was not some part of the sinner that is born of the Spirit, but the sinner who is delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the spiritual kingdom of God's dear Son. He believed that salvation both for time and eternity was wholly of grace; that all the blessings of God, both for time and eternity, were free gifts of God through Christ to his elect children, and that God knew from all eternity every blessing his children would need, hence were blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ ere time began, according as they were chosen in him. In fact, brother McDonald was a sound Old School Baptist from start to finish, and had a large acquaintance among the Baptists, and was looked upon by all who knew him as a faithful man among the churches. The writer was personally acquainted with him upwards of thirty years, and can testify that he was one of the most inoffensive, orderly walking men I ever saw. His health had been failing several years, but he never was known to complain, and fell asleep in Jesus on the above named date. He leaves a good, loving wife, several children and grandchildren, with many other relatives and friends, to mourn their loss, which is great gain to him.

Written by request of his widow.

P. N. MOYERS.

Mrs. Anna Kugler, widow of Jonathan Kugler, died at her home, near Frenchtown, N. J., in September, 1910. She had been quite helpless from a paralytic stroke for the last four years, not being able to go out of the house, but could with help get around her room, and until the last few months enjoyed reading her Bible and the SIGNS, which were a great comfort to her, but failing sight deprived her of this, and her last days were not her happiest ones, but she trusted that her spiritual life was hid with Christ in God, and could not be destroyed or taken away. She was baptized by Elder Gabriel Conklin in the fellowship of the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church in 1858. Her early experience was one of unusual clearness, being brought step by step from nature to grace, and to see that grace all the work had crowned. While she was able in her younger days she loved to attend the meetings of the church, and was a cheerful giver to its needs, and when she could no longer meet in its public worship she was one of our most liberal helps, manifesting her faith in not withholding that which she had been blessed with in temporal things. She leaves one son and one daughter, who, we trust, will ever cherish the loving counsel of a faithful mother.

Elder D. M. Vail was called to attend her funeral, and spoke words of comfort and love, not only to the church, but to all who are called to mourn by this bereavement.

ELIZA J. KUGLER.

Lydia Ann Tindall, widow of Deacon William C. Tindall, was born Jan. 5th, 1824, died Sept. 7th, 1910, aged 86 years and 8 months. She was born in Mercerville, N. J. Her maiden name was West. One year and a half before she died she had a fall, after which she never walked. She was blessed with her right mind and good eyesight until she was stricken with paralysis, which was the cause of her death. A

good mother has gone. While we miss and think of her much, we do not wish her back, being far better off, we believe, free from her sufferings.

OLIVIA NORRIS HELLINGS.

[SISTER Hellings has asked that we add a few lines to the above notice. We had known the deceased mother for the past fifteen years, and have visited at her home. Her husband, Deacon William Tindall, was for many years a member and deacon of the First Hopewell Church. He was one who filled the office of deacon well, and purchased to himself a good degree and great boldness in the doctrine of God our Savior. As our sister writes, her last days were spent in helplessness, but she had the care of good children, and was made as comfortable as it was in their power to do for her. She lived to a good old age. Her children sorrow not as those who have no hope. The last months of her life were spent at the home of her daughter, sister Hellings. She was buried by the side of her husband, at Hamilton Square, N. J. We were called to conduct the service in the New School Baptist meetinghouse at that place, using as a subject the words found in 2 Timothy ii. 19. In closing we can but say that we feel a deep sympathy for the children in their bereavement. Three daughters and two sons remain.—C.]

Samuel Lucas died at his home August 5th, 1910. He was the son of Calvin and Rebecca Lucas, and was born July 11th, 1839; was married to Julia Ann Adkins, Nov. 18th, 1871, and raised a large family. He worked hard all summer; his last labor was stacking wheat for one of his sons. We have every reason to believe his appointed time had come to be gathered home as a full ripe shock in its season. He often expressed a willingness to die. It can be truthfully said of him that he was a good, humble-minded christian, rich in faith and knowledge of the truth. His family misses him sadly. Much respect was shown him in his short sickness by relatives and friends. Peace to his ashes—love to his memory.

E. JOHNSON.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., Nov. 27, 1910.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Joab P. Stout, Ill., $3.00; Mrs. Sarah Hawk, Ind., $2.00; Mrs. E. Chandler, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. W. J. Peck, N. Y., $1.00; Attie A. Curtis, Maine, $1.00; Mrs. M. M. Rounsavell, N. Y., $2.00; Richard Waller, Mo., $1.00; Mrs. Betsey M. Bouton, N. Y., $1.00; Wm. Allan, Okla., $.75; H. J. O'Bannon, Va., $1.00; Mrs. Sarah E. Harris, Texas, $1.00; N. E. Askew, Ark., $2.00; Mrs. Sarah J. Clark, Conn., $3.00; Thos. A. Ardies, Ont., $2.00; Mrs. Martha Beardsley, Ill., $1.00; Dr. B. P. Earle, Ky., $1.00; Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $5.00.—Total, $28.75.

TRIBUTE OF RESPECT.

WE, the committee appointed to prepare an obituary for our sister Cooper, submit the following:

Dearly beloved, whom it may concern. It is a painful duty to have to announce the death of our much loved sister and friend, **Caroline Cooper,** who departed this life October 9th, 1910, at the home of her son, E. V. Cooper, near Farmville, Ala. Sister Cooper was born in Hall County, Ga., August 11th, 1842. She was the daughter of Harmon Thompson. She was married to James M. Cooper in 1858, who afterwards became an able defender of the Predestinarian faith. Ten children were born to that happy union, six of whom survive her. Sister Cooper realized a desire to trust in the Lord as her Savior during the Civil War, and attached herself to what was then called the Primitive Church, but they were not in order. She then moved to Blount Co., Ala., with her husband, and trusted in the Lord, who orders the steps of all good men and women, to direct her in the right way, so in the year 1884 the Lord directed her to Harmony Church of the Primitive faith and order, located near Garden City, and she was baptized in order, and as a christian her life was exemplary, as a mother there are few if any better, and if she had an enemy we never knew it. She was always kind and ready to help in time of need. She was a great sufferer for many years, but bore it all with patience, looking to the perfect day. If there was any one thing she believed more strongly than any other, it was salvation by grace. She was meek and lowly in all her acts and conversation, and was blessed with the spirit of forgiveness.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder Loney Moon, who was in the spirit and delivered a comforting sermon upon the resurrection of the dead. From a human standpoint, it is hard to part with her, but we have full reason to believe that our loss is her gain, and while her mortal remains lie in the cemetery, her spirit has returned to God who gave it, there to remain until the morn of the resurrection, when Christ shall come again with all his mighty angels, without sin unto salvation, then the body shall be raised immortal and spiritual, and be reunited with her spirit; and we have all reason to believe that she will meet the glorious welcome, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." And we have full reason to believe that she will have part in the first resurrection.

We desire to render our full sympathy to the bereaved family and friends, and pray God that he may give them the spirit of reconciliation, that they may bow to his holy and just ways. We also desire that they note the words of the apostle in Romans viii. 28: "And we know that all things work together for

good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Amen.

This done in conference by order of the church of Harmony.

T. A. BASPORT, } Committee.
T. G. WILLIAMS, }
GEORGE H. FANNIN, Moderator.

A. C. GAMBLE, Clerk.

GARDEN CITY, Ala., Nov. 20, 1910.

MEETINGS.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

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PRICE REDUCED.

This little book has been published for some time, and orders for it have been received from near and far, even to the most distant States. All from whom I have heard have spoken to me very highly of the book. For forty years it has been upon my mind to publish these poems and the experience of my brother, together with the account of his last hours, and have wondered why I did not do it. I felt sure it would be for the comfort of many, and the many expressions I have already received assure me that it is so. Elder P. D. Gold writes: "I have read the poems and experience of your brother with much pleasure. How wonderful was the view of divine things given to him. Surely to be absent from the body and present with the Lord is far better." Elder S. Hassell says: "I shall have a commendatory editorial notice in April. I hope you may dispose of several thousands for the comfort of the Lord's scattered people." Elder H. C. Ker writes me: "Your little book, 'Songs in the night,' was duly received, and has given me more comfort than any reading I have done for months. Surely every lover of truth should have it." The price of the second edition has been reduced to thirty-five cents.

I have also on hand a few copies of "Reminiscences and Letters of Mary Parker." Price 75 cents.

All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Southampton, Pa.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 79. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1911. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FOREKNOWLEDGE AND PREDESTINATION.

ONLY one being in the universe can truly claim these wonderful, blessed and holy attributes, and that being is God. He, before anything was in heaven, earth or hell, foresaw all things that are created. He foresaw their size, shape and weight, he also foresaw that of which he would make all things. He foresaw every act, thought and word of men, and whether they would be good or bad. The foreknowledge of God enabled him to make all things for a purpose. "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." In the old London Confession of Faith one article reads about in this way: God, by the all-wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, hath decreed all things whatsoever come to pass, yet he is not thereby the author of sin, neither is violence offered or done to the will of the creature. This was then, and is now, the Old Baptist faith. More than two hundred and ten years ago it was the Old Baptist faith, it is now, in nineteen hundred and ten, the Old Baptist faith. There is no need for any of us to debate this doctrine. If men and women believe it, they are Old School Baptists, if they do not believe this article in respect to God's decrees, they may be modern or separate or Missionary Baptists, but they are not Old School or Primitive Baptists. That the law of God was given to Adam and his posterity no one can truthfully deny. No law was given to any beast of the field, or to any fowl of the air, so far as the testimony of holy writ goes. No law, so far as we know, was given to the serpent, yet he sinned. He is a liar, and the father of lies. God being sovereign over all worlds and over all beings, had a perfect right to punish the serpent, for he "was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made." "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Everything that is or was evil was made for the day of evil. To my mind this is the most consoling and comforting doctrine to the little and unworthy children of God. He works all

things, both good and evil, after the counsel of his own will. There are those who say that God did not make sin. I reply that sin is a principle of action or thought. Sin is the transgression of the law. A school-teacher makes laws for his disciples or children, but he does not make that law for himself to obey. Our God says to man, "Thou shalt not kill," and if man kills his fellow-man he has broken that law. But God says of himself, "I kill, and I make alive." Has our God broken any law when he kills? The law was made for man. Please do not use that blasphemous expression, "It makes God the author of sin." What is God the author of? I will, from a Bible standpoint, name a few things, and yet those who may read will not be convinced unless they are taught of God. He is the author of foreknowledge, predestination, decrees, purpose, faith, hope, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, kindness, meekness, and if any man on earth has any of these things he has received them from God, and he also receives immortality from God. He "only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto." But what is man the author of? Adultery, fornication, witchcraft, hatred, variance, strife, seditions, heresies, unbelief, for man has broken every commandment that the Lord ever gave him. By man came sin. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." All sinned in the first man Adam. This was God's plan. It was in God's plan also that the woman should be deceived and break the holy law first. Some who claim to be preachers say that our God never gave a law that man could not keep. All the laws given to man, man has broken; he has not been able to keep them. The law is holy, just and good, but man is carnal, sold under sin. Adam was not deceived, but Eve, being deceived, was in the transgression. Neither was Christ deceived, but the church on earth has been and is deceived by sin, or by the serpent. Adam went down under the law because he loved his bride. He knew what would be the result: sin and death. Christ, the second Adam, went down under the law because of the great love which he had for his bride, the church. He was born of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law. The first man Adam had no power to bring his bride or himself up from under the violated law, and so they will lie dead in sin and in their graves forever, if some higher and better power does not come to their relief; they are in themselves absolutely lost, and all their posterity. Now this, to my mind, was all foreknown and predetermined of God, and yet Adam and Eve were just as guilty in disobeying the law of God as though He had had no purpose in it; they were just as guilty as if God had not said that he had declared "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." For God hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardens, and yet he is not the author of sin. Christ came under the law after his bride, and he also suffered, being a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." As Eve was subject to Adam, from whose side she was taken, and her desire was to her husband, and he did rule over her, so the true church of God is subject to Christ,

and Christ rules over her, and she believes all his doctrine. God's people cannot set a limit to the Almighty. This people "believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." They believe that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." In the day of Christ's flesh they were called a little flock: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." They were called a remnant in Paul's day: "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." And these people are called Primitive, Old School, Hardshells, and other names, in this our day. This is because they believe in the absolute predestination of all things that come to pass. They believe what our fathers expressed in the old London Confession of faith, that God, by the all-wise and holy counsel of his own will, hath decreed all things whatsoever come to pass. They believe that the crucifixion of Christ was at the appointed time. Christ said, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." If we will observe closely we shall see that absolute predestination is plainly taught in the crucifixion. God's foreknowledge declared that they should cast lots for his garments, and in his foreknowledge he decreed that not a bone of him should be broken. Foreknowledge declared that he should make his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death. The same foreknowledge declared that he should be numbered with the transgressors, and he was crucified with a thief on either hand. The crucifixion of Christ was the most important event in the annals of time; it is the centre of the christian religion. By the blood of Christ we are cleansed from all sin, past, present and future. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. This doctrine is taught in the crucifixion of Christ. Were God's purposes in the crucifixion limited? Peter is a faithful witness, and he says, "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and with wicked hands have crucified and slain." I think that Peter was an "absoluter," as they are sometimes called in derision. Hear his witness again, "For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." I hope never to hear a man preach who contradicts the doctrine taught in the crucifixion of Christ. I could not believe in the purposes of God being limited to what men call good things should I try to do so. The belief in God's purpose in all things is in me, and I hope it was placed there nearly forty years ago, at the time when I believe I was made to die to myself and all things earthy. I am an old Confederate soldier, being more than sixty-six years of age. I was a prisoner at Camp Morton, Indiana, for fifteen months. I was not a believer at that time, but His holy and absolute decrees were over me then, as I hope they are now. That day of my second birth I saw one hanging on the tree. It was fourteen years after Paul was caught up to the third heaven before he wrote it; it has been nearly forty years since I saw Jesus lifted up. For a few moments previous to this revelation of Jesus to me it seemed that I was dead, so that I did not know or perceive anything, and from that darkness of

death, all alone in the woods, I began to look at a man in great agony of pain; then I began to realize that I had a little consciousness. It was so dark around me that I could see nothing but this suffering man. I felt that my whole vision was drawn to him in his agony. I have felt the force and power, I believe, of the Scripture which teaches that no man can come to the Son except the Father draw him. I do not know how long this vision continued, whether it was one moment or five, God knoweth. I was drawn to this suffering man; my freewill and free-agency were all gone. I looked and looked, and knew not what to do or say. I realized that my great burden of sin and sorrow was all gone. I went to the old Presbyterian house in Wilson County, Tenn., there was a man preaching, and the congregation had all assembled. I sat quietly down to listen to what was being said, but could not listen, I was full of the glories of heaven, and involuntarily laughed aloud. I could not help it; I had no power to help it. I laughed again, I was so happy. I tried with all the power I had to keep from laughing, but I laughed again and again. They that were with me saw me laugh, but they could not realize the power that was in my soul. It was, as the Savior said, a well of water within me springing up into everlasting life, with joy, love, peace and faith. It was all from God through the atonement of Christ. A Methodist minister by the name of Hale, took me to his home in Statesville, Tenn., and just before we reached his home, an ex-slave, named Juda, once the property of my Grandfather Womack, met me in the street, and we both praised the God of Abraham aloud. Two weeks from that day there was an appointment made for me to speak. I had not at that time united with any people. My text was, According to the foreknowledge of God the Father. Brethren, I have suffered many taunts and much abuse because I have from that day to this not shunned to declare all the counsel of God, as far as I could see it. I believe that I love his doctrine, and I believe that I love his people. I united first with the Missionary Baptists, but I could not agree with them in many things. Some time after I united with them I had a vision, as it seemed to me. Shall I tell it? I saw that the Bible could not contradict itself if it came from God. I saw that there was no strife between the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. It came home to me that no man could teach another to know the Lord, that they all should know him. I saw that Christ would save every man far and near for whom he died. I saw that no man could come to him unless the Father which sent the Son should draw him. It had been twenty years since I had heard an Old School Baptist preach. The Lord showed to me a vessel white and pure; other vessels of a darker hue, and muddy in color, were all around this vessel of spotless white. The white vessel was the truth, and embraced the true church of God, and was lifted up to the heavens, and plainly seen by me at that time. I did not think there were over one thousand persons in Tennessee who were in the vessel of spotless white. The election had obtained it, and the rest were blinded. Though the number of the children of Israel should be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant shall be saved. I fear there are a great many in Tennessee who have a name to live and yet are dead to the truth. It is one thing to be a child of God, and quite another and different thing to see the truth. It must come, as it did to Paul,

by revelation. It is given to some to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to others it is not given. My name has been cast out as evil. I try to pray for my enemies. I try to pray for governors, and all that are in authority. Having obtained help of God in mercy and forgiveness I continue to this present, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than Moses and the prophets did say should come to pass.

Now, brethren, pray for me, that I may preach the truth of God to his saints, and feed the church which he has purchased, and over which the Holy Ghost, as I hope, has made me overseer.

Your brother, I hope, in the Lord,

J. K. WOMACK.

EAGLEVILLE, Tenn., Nov., 1910.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., December, 1910.

MY DEAR KINDRED IN HOPE:—A hope that is better than crowns of gold or the choicest gems of earth, and of more value than rubies, for it is the "pearl of great price." It has been in my mind for some time to again share with you some of the rich thoughts selected from letters of Mrs. G. M. Edwards, an invalid sister in Georgia. Much satisfaction has been expressed in the few extracts which have appeared in the SIGNS, and there is a desire to see more from her. She seems to have the highest appreciation for the very smallest favors rendered her, which makes it a sweet satisfaction to do anything we can for her comfort. No doubt there are many among those who will read this who are similarly situated as this dear sister, and as they peruse these lines, written mostly in bed and with pencil, will realize companionship with her. How sweet is companionship, either in joy or in sorrow and affliction. Surely the Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad. The SIGNS for December 1st, which I have just been reading, is full of gospel treasure, written by those who have tasted the wormwood and the gall, and who through great tribulation have been brought into the joys of redeeming love. All are brought by various winding paths, yet come in at the same door, which is the exalted name of Jesus. This is the periodical that reaches back to my earliest remembrance. When I was a child my father used often to read it aloud in the evening, so it seems to have been one of the belongings of our household for many years. I am rejoiced to see again a letter from our beloved sister, Attie Curtis, for of late we have missed her cheering messages that used to brighten the dear pages so often, and since she visited us a few years ago her letters to different members of our family have been very choice and most welcome. Also it is pleasant to see the name of sister Kate Swartout once more. I well remember of reading her very interesting experience, which appeared in the SIGNS many years ago. I have also, in years that are past, been favored with some lovely letters from her ready pen. She has long been an invalid, unable to meet in the assemblies of the saints, yet she meets with them in spirit, and, I trust, has sometimes sweet communion with Him who has promised to be with his people in every trial. As we read these messages in the quiet of our homes, how our minds travel abroad, and we long to converse with each one who has touched a responsive chord in our hearts. There is an unseen power that bridges the distance between us, bringing us together in tender love and sweet fellowship. How wonderful it all is; our natural minds cannot understand it—cannot comprehend the great mys-

tery, yet He who is infinite in wisdom can make it all plain to the spiritual mind. He can make the blind to see, the lame to walk, and heals the broken-hearted, binding up all their wounds, and often fills the heart of the desolate with praises to his most holy name.

"To soft and tearful sadness
He changes dull despair,
And soothes to deep submission
The storm of grief and care;
Where midnight shades are brooding,
He pours the light of noon,
And every grievous wound he heals
Most surely, if not soon.

He will not blame thy sorrows,
While he brings the healing balm;
He does not chide thy longings,
While he soothes them into calm;
And when thy heart is murmuring,
And wildly asking, Why?
He smiling beckons forward,
Points upward to the sky."

Unworthily,

BESSIE DURAND.

LA GRANGE, Ga., June 9, 1910.

MY DEAR SISTER:—On awaking this morning such a depression came over me that I hardly knew what to do. I was almost too feeble to get up, but from some force of feeling I arose, and just as I walked across the room my mind became wholly absorbed in the welfare of Zion, and in thinking of the dissensions and controversies going on in some of the churches. Before I was aware I found myself repeating, "Entreat me not to leave thee," &c., you know how it reads. I repeated it over and over, especially, "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Then these words: I heard a voice in Rama, Rachel weeping for her children, and refused to be comforted, because they were not. The next thing I felt that I would like to talk with some of the Lord's dear people; so through this chain of circumstances I am writing again.

At this hour of the day our town is filled with the noise of vehicles and trains, and the busy throng of people passing to and fro, all so perceptible to the natural eye and ear, but I feel that there is a seclusion in my heart where naught but the still small voice is heard, and that with an internal vision I behold our Lord walking upon the sea.

"In the crimson of the morning,
In the whiteness of the noon,
In the amber glory of the day's retreat,
In the midnight robed in darkness,
Or the gleaming of the morn,
I listen for the coming of his feet;
Blessed coming of his feet."

Yes, blessed coming; he will not come in a lowly manger, nor be scoffed and ridiculed by a sinful world, nor worn with the weight of sorrow, nor ever again climb the slopes of Mount Calvary, but,

"When that illustrious day shall rise,
And all thine armies shine
In robes of victory through the skies,
The glory shall be thine."

Well, I have about exhausted my strength, and yet have not answered your letter, which was very interesting to me, containing so many beautiful events in regard to Elder Beebe's family, and the young brother and sister from Winnipeg, who came to your church and were baptized; also about your nephew and his daughter from Missouri. Many things I would like to say in response, but cannot.

Before closing I must tell you that I thank God for bringing you into my shut in life, and as long as I live I shall have sweet thoughts of you, my beloved sister.

Unworthily, NANNIE.

DEAR SISTER:—Your kind letter, with its helpful contents, has been received, and I hardly know how to express my appreciation. How good you have been to me, and just to think you have never

seen me. Would that I could take your hand this morning, and looking into your face speak what I feel. Your letters have been as an oasis in a dry and thirsty land; your words have strengthened my hope and enabled me to press on, looking ever toward that city whose builder and maker is God; your gifts of sympathy have been as though handed down from heaven, and caused me to say, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" My father enjoys your letters very much. He is much improved, but not at all well. Sister Bessie, when your brother feels like it, I would be glad if he would write something for the SIGNS, explaining this Scripture: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." The different denominations here are advocating a millennium, and claim to be hastening its coming, and that there will be a restitution of all things, and that the earth will be just as it was before the transgression. Our people do not think that way, but that the second coming of Christ will be the ending of all things, with a glorious resurrection. Your brother is such an able writer that I would like to have him write on this subject, that my brother in the flesh and others might read it.

I am sorry about your rheumatism, but glad that your condition is somewhat improved, and I do hope that sister Clarice is feeling better. I often think of you all in your home, and yearn to see you. How comforting to know that there is a home where we hope to meet each other, and those long parted meet again. May the Lord bless you all in your northern home, and cause you to still think of this little, imperfect one and her precious family, which he in mercy gave.

In tender love, N. E.

MY DEAR SISTER:—I have wished so often recently that I could get a letter from you, and at every coming of the postman I would be disappointed, but this morning, while still longing to hear from you, Vera walked into my room and handed me your letter, and you can imagine my surprise upon opening it to find what it contained. My gratitude and appreciation of the gift from this unknown brother in Canada I cannot express. It came so unexpectedly, and at a time when so much needed, that I could only say from the depths of my heart, God bless him, and at the same time I felt sure that his kindness was prompted by Him who has told us to trust in him at all times. N. E.

DEAR SISTER:—This morning finds me in darkness, and I feel almost completely shut in. Why do I feel so gloomy, when the sun is shining with such splendor, and all nature seems glad in its brightness? From the depths of my soul I found myself breathing, Lord, give me more of thy righteousness. I think surely it is because of my imperfections and unworthiness that I so often go mourning all the day, and O how powerless I am to throw it all aside. I often find myself grieving over the terrible suffering of our dear Savior, all on account of the sins of his people, and while I realize that he had to suffer, and without it there could be no redemption, I feel so utterly cast off at times that I am made to exclaim in his own heartbroken language, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

How true it is that as night and day

succeed each other in this natural world, just so it is in the spiritual. One week ago to-day was the time of communion here in our little chapel, and how I did yearn all the week before to be able to attend, yet the thought of such exertion seemed to make me feel weaker physically, but the pastor and the members were so anxious that I should be there that I consented to go, hoping that strength would be given me; so on Sunday morning a dear sister in the church came in her carriage and took me, and among the pleasant days that have passed forever it is numbered among them. Never in my life have I beheld the Savior more vividly with an internal vision than on that occasion. How often during the services did these words well from my heart: Blessed Jesus. A woman who had a hope for seventeen years went forward and told her experience, and was baptized that afternoon; and what do you think? that same sister who carried me to the church came and took me to see the baptism, something that I had not witnessed in twenty-three years. O the joy that filled my poor heart while I sat there by the waterside, listening to the beautiful and soul-stirring words as they fell from the lips of dear brother A. B. Whatley, who baptized me thirty-six years ago. I wish I had the strength to tell you all about it. I was well-nigh exhausted when night came, and the next morning I could scarcely raise my hand, and have been very weak ever since. I have but little vitality, and that is kept up by tonics and nervines. Were it not for loved ones to care for me and cheer me with their kindness, I do not know what I would do.

I wish your brother could know how much I prize his communications in the SIGNS. I love that above all our periodicals. Sister Bessie, do you use organs in your Old School Baptist churches up north? That is one of the troubles here in the south, and there is much discussion over it and other things. How I long to visit the old places I once knew in the happy past, to stand once more where my father's and mother's feet have stood. O those precious old scenes, how they rise up before me to-day. What would we do were it not for that rest beyond this fading scene?

I forgot to tell you that I received a very precious letter from an aged sister who lives near Independence, Mo. She wrote that she lived in a lonely cottage by the wayside. Vera said, "Mamma, keep that letter always." I do love old people; my father grows dearer every day. It grieves me to know that sister Mary Miles is so ill. May the Lord bless her and make all her bed in her sickness. I do not forget her kind remembrance to me. Please give her my love. I am never free from suffering in some way, and often with what the doctors call acute indigestion. But O how thankful I am that it has pleased my dear Lord to give me a measure of relief, so that I can be up some. But let me tell you, dear sister, that the sweetest moments I have ever known were spent on the bed of affliction; the most beautiful lessons I have ever learned were those taught me while lying helpless and shut in. Our lives here are a mystery, sometimes we are crying, "All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me," and the next moment we are exclaiming, Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life.

I am glad that you like "Memories," by sister Spikes; I, too, think it very interesting. A sister, visiting here, after reading sister Mary Parker's book, said

she thought it very superior, and sweetly interesting. How is sister Clarice? I hope she will not suffer so much this winter. I love her without ever having seen her. Vera and her father join me in loving remembrance. May the Lord bless you all, is the prayer of your sister.

Most affectionately,

NANNIE B. EDWARDS.

1 JOHN III. 9.

"WHOSOEVER is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have had a desire for a long time to write upon the above text for the consideration of the brotherhood, but realizing my inability, for lack of education (only having had about ten months schooling in my life) and spiritual light and guidance of the Holy Spirit, I have hesitated whether to make the attempt or not, but should it be the will of the Lord to direct my mind, I will try to write some of my thoughts on the above text.

In the first place I wish to say that I believe there are many good brethren who are unable to reconcile the expressions, "doth not commit sin," and "cannot sin," with their own experience, and other Scriptures, such as, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." And, "If we say that we have not sinned [past tense], we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."—1 John i. 8, 10. I say that being unable to reconcile these texts, or sinless life, with their own experience, as they suppose the above texts teach, they have concluded the word "whosoever" is not a personal pronoun, but is used in reference to some part of the child of God. For instance, the spirit, soul, or the new man that is created in righteousness and true holiness. (Gal. iv. 24.) I will try to notice these things later on, and call your attention to another text of Scripture which I do believe with all my heart, soul, mind and strength teaches it is the man that is born of the Spirit, or of God, whether we can tell where or when it took place, or how it took place, or what the effects of it were when it did take place. See John iii: "There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of Jews: the same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again [once more], he cannot see the kingdom of God." Jesus continued the subject by saying, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." He further said to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again." Now, dear brother or sister, as the case may be, I want to say to you that Jesus dwelt in the bosom of his Father; he was one with Him, and knew exactly the qualification necessary in order to inherit his Father's kingdom. In order that the sons and daughters of Adam enter into the world of bliss beyond the grave they must be born again, born of the Spirit, born of God. When John used the phrase, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin," he had direct reference to the sons and daughters of Adam who had been twice born, once of the flesh and once of the Spirit, and he declares that such cannot commit sin, yet we realize the fact that we have a carnal nature, or mind, remaining in us (the children of God) which is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. This very often causes us to conclude that we do commit sin,

and the word "whosoever" does not have reference to us personally. Dear brethren, let us examine these things in a more careful manner, to see if John did not make some little distinction between those expressions, "doth not commit sin," "he cannot sin," and "If we say that we have [present tense] no sin, we deceive ourselves;" "If we say that we have not sinned [past tense], we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." It seems to me that the word "sin" is used in the Scripture in different senses; sometimes it occurs as a noun, sometimes as a verb. When it is used as a noun it expresses nature or principle, as in John i. 8, and this principle it will not do for us to deny having while we remain here in this world, but in the third chapter, ninth verse, it seems that the word "sin" appears as a verb, and expresses action, consequently such action is not performed, or at least, is not imputed to the character thus born of God. It is said, "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."—Romans iv. 8. This shows us clearly that there are men somewhere to whom the Lord does not impute sin, though the act be performed that the law forbids, and there must be some reason for this. In the first place, we notice John said, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." Would it not be impossible to commit sin without transgressing the law? and as John used the term "the law," does he not mean some definite law? Yes, and I think he referred to the law of sin and death. We want to see whether God's children are amenable or under that law. Paul says, "Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Now, dear brother, you might ask, Why do you contend that the child of God is not amenable to the law of sin and death? I would say, God has not left us to guess at these things, but hath said by the mouth of Paul, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Now you see how we are made free from the law of sin and death, by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, and to the end that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in (not by) us, and this by means of love to God and our neighbor (not our next door neighbor, but he who ministers to our needs); so, dear child of God, it affords me pleasure to tell you, having this love of God shed abroad in your heart, you cannot help but love God and your brother in Christ, your neighbor, because his (Christ's) seed (love or Spirit) remaineth in you, and you cannot sin (fail to love God, &c.,) which is fulfilling the law. But, dear brethren, never conclude that your love to God and your neighbor is a voluntary act upon your part, but that it is an implanted principle within you, or created in you by the Spirit of Christ that dwells in you, and is the fruit of the Spirit of God, and that your voluntary acts are only manifestations of God's love in you, and that you can no more create that love in you or cause it to exist than you could make a world.

Now I want to speak of another idea I have heard and read a great deal about, and then close, and that is in reference to "the old man" and "the new man,"

mentioned in Col. iii. 9, 10. It seems that good brethren have differed as to who those two characters are. Some have said the new man is Christ, while the old man is the Adamic man, and the two make the child of God. If this idéa be true, I fail to see why the Adam man was called the old man, while he is only a time being, and Christ had an eternal existence. Some seem to think they are both the same man, that it is the old man before regeneration and the new man afterward. If this be true, I fail to see how both could exist at the same time. I might go on at greater length, but will stop by telling you what I have understood about those two expressions, "old man" and "new man." I understand the two men, old man and new man, to be two principles which dwell in the child of God, and neither is the child of God, and the reason they are called the "old man" and the "new man" is because the old man is a corrupt principle that we are born into this world with, and is the first principle we possess in this world, and the new man is a new principle, and this new man or new principle is created in the child of God by the Spirit of God that dwells in him, and it is the child of God (the sinner who is born again) who is exhorted to put off the old man, who is corrupt in his deeds, and put on the new man, who is created in righteousness and true holiness after the image of Him who created him.

Now, dear brethren, I have given you my convictions upon these things; I may not have the right understanding of it, but whether I understand anything about it or not, there is some scriptural sense in which "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin," and that "whosoever" is man or woman of Adam's race.

As ever, your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life,

P. N. MOYERS.

GOIN, Tenn.

CONNERSVILLE, N. Y., Nov. 15, 1910.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I feel too unworthy to address you thus, but have concluded to write some of my thoughts, as I am not content to dwell alone, and I wish to talk a little with you, whom I esteem as one of the children of the Most High. But what do I want to talk about? is the question. Is it of the great attainments of the flesh? O no. Like Paul, it must be of my infirmities, for in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing. Nevertheless I am led to exclaim, I live, having Christ within me the hope of glory; this is the crowning point. If we have Christ within us the hope of glory, all is well, but at times I feel to say, as did old Jacob, "All these things are against me." "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." And what was all this for? We might say to glorify the Father. But was this all? No, it was also to declare what the Father had done for his people, and is doing, and will do; to declare his love for his bride, the Lamb's wife, as the children of God are called. By disobedience she had become alienated from God, and was cast out of the garden of Eden, and God placed a flaming sword, which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life; death was also pronounced upon Adam and Eve. But the promise was made that the Seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." The law condemned, but the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." He also said, "Sacrifice and

offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me. * * * Then said I, Lo, I come * * * to do thy will, O God." Now the law is satisfied, and his people are cleansed from all sin. Jesus said, "I lay down my life, that I might take it again." And he said, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me." And again, "Where I am, there ye my be also."

"In heaven my choicest treasure lies,
My hope ascends above the skies."

It is declared by the apostle, "He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." What a wonderful God is our God; he sees us when we see not him, and always hears our cry. Yet we often feel like Jacob, and say when our hope seems blasted, "All these things are against me." We, too, forget that he has hidden his face for a moment, and waits that he may be gracious to us.

"Good when he gives, supremely good,
Nor less when he denies;
E'en crosses from his sovereign hand
Are blessings in disguise."

Sometimes I am on the mount of God's love, but often so low down that I am compelled to ask, Are his mercies clean gone forever? will he be favorable no more? But,

"His love in time past forbids me to think
That he'll leave me at last in sorrow to sink."

So I feel to thank God and take courage. One said,

"Wait on the Lord, with courage wait,
My soul, disdain to fear;
The righteous Judge is at the gate,
And my redemption's near."

Yes, I speak of the loving-kindness of the Lord to me, a poor sinner. I have been so favored of the Lord at times that I feel I ought to ascribe greatness always to him. I have been spared to attend all the meetings in our association, except the one at Olive. I desired to hear Elder Bogardus, and heard him at Vega tell of his travel from nature to grace, and his call to the ministry, which did my soul good, for it cleared away the fog for the time being. The kindness of sister Virtue Ballard to me almost broke my heart, and I felt to praise God, for I was a stranger and she took me in, even walking that I might ride. I enjoyed my visit and could say, "Surely the Lord is in this place." Brethren, I remembered what the dear Lord said: As oft as ye do it unto one of these little ones, ye do it unto me. I feel to rejoice and to say, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Dear brethren, it is very humiliating to my nature that I cannot send something worthy of your time to read; I would do better if I could. I will close, hoping that the richest blessings of God may rest upon you and all his loved ones. May he cause you to feel that he has not forsaken you, nor any of his people. He said, "Be of good cheer: I have overcome the world."

D. S. ELLIOTT.

SYRACUSE, N. Y., Dec. 12, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It is with a feeling of weakness and trembling that I call you brethren, but what shall I do? for I earnestly desire to be numbered with the afflicted and poor people who trust in the name of the Lord, who have no confidence in the flesh, and who feel and know that it is by the grace of God that they are saved, and not according to

their works; it is according to his own purpose and grace, given them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. I feel to rejoice that it was so ordered, and that it is sure, because they have this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." Now, dear brethren, what shall I say as to what I know with regard to these things? I verily believe all that the Lord has revealed to us in the Scriptures, whether I understand it or not, because it testifies of Christ. I am very often in the dark, and have cloudy nights on account of my sins coming upon me like a flood, overwhelming me, and I cry with anguish of soul, O that I knew that my Redeemer liveth. The Lord has been merciful to me, and has been with me in many troubles, and I hope will keep me to the end.

I have been reading the nineteenth chapter of first Kings, where the prophet Elijah was in the cave. I, too, feel to be all alone as did he. They are ready to take away the meeting-house, before or after I am dead, as I am the last of the members of the Old School Baptist Church in Delphi, N. Y. I feel very much as did the prophet, but shall I ever hear that still small voice? If the Lord should speak to me I should then say, Surely the Lord was in this place and I knew it not, as did Jacob. I am in the city of Syracuse, and to me it is a waste howling wilderness, with not one to talk with of the salvation that is by the grace of God alone, and not of men. I can hear plenty of God and man salvation, of man's free-will, and God's will at man's convenience and pleasure. I feel to thank the Lord for his grace imparted to me in so much mercy, and I take no pleasure in the linsey-woolsey mixture of God's work mingled with man's work, but am hoping in the imputed righteousness of Christ, and have no confidence in the flesh in any sense whatever. With all the tumult and rushing to and fro, with churches (so-called) on nearly every corner of the streets, I neither hear nor see the God of Jacob in them, but in the lonely hours of the night I hope that I do at times hear the blessed voice, still and small, saying to me, "It is I; be not afraid," causing me to bow in spirit at the feet of the Savior in humble thanksgiving and praise to his holy name. O that I could praise him as I should, but I am a poor, weak and sinful worm of the dust, and surely am less than the least of all saints, if indeed one at all. Often do I earnestly desire to know whether I am one of the afflicted and poor people who trust in the name of the Lord. Whatever I am, the God of all grace is my only hope; in the name of Christ is the hope of glory.

Please find inclosed a postal order for the blessed SIGNS another year. It is my only preaching and meeting, and I have had great comfort in reading it. It causes my heart to go out to you, the editors, and to all who write for it, in warm love and fellowship in the truth as it is in Jesus.

I feel that this is a very weak letter, just like the writer. You will know best what to do with it.

Your brother,

JAMES TAPNER.

WHEELING, W. Va., Oct. 9, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I inclose two letters which are very comforting to me. If you think best I would like to see them in your good paper, that others may enjoy them. I have never met Elder Durand or sister Young, but I love them dearly and feel so blessed by their kind sympathy. It is through the me-

dium of the good SIGNS OF THE TIMES that I am blessed by their kind notice.

A poor, unworthy one in hope,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

ALVINSTON, Ont., Sept., 1910.

DEAR SISTER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—Your two letters which appeared in last year's SIGNS, as well as those of sister McKinney, interested me much, and contained food and comfort for this poor, dying mortal (dying daily). As I read yours, which appeared in September 1st number, I felt a strong inclination to write to you, and now as I undertake to do so many questions arise in my mind as to the motive. God only knows, for sin is mixed with all I do, think or say, and I am such a poor, blind, ignorant, weak and foolish creature that I can never know one step of the way. While reading your good letters (if not terribly deceived) I felt drawn to you in love and sweet fellowship of the Spirit, and felt to say, We are no more strangers or foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints. Now, my dear sister, under these circumstances I trust you will pardon me for taking the liberty of writing to you, a stranger in the flesh. One night as I lay awake I found I was writing to you in my mind, and next day when about my work I was at it again. You say you write to those who are lonely and desire the company of the Old School Baptists. That touched me; there is not another one living in this town, and I have had such a lonely, restless and uneasy feeling of late, and crave the company of those who understand my speech. How it stirs us up when others in relating their trials seem to a great extent to meet our case. You speak of being beset with pride of self. I know well what that is, and I am daily made to mourn on account of it. You go down deeply into my miserable condition; such self-loathing and abhorrence I feel from indwelling sin. You, too, have been blessed through Elder Durand's writings. Yes, I have heard him preach, with comfort, too, but O, his writings are wonderfully near and dear to me. I read a book last fall which he wrote on the trial of Job, and it was truly a feast to my poor, famished soul. The Lord has surely blessed him above measure. I have a book written by him: "Meditations on Portions of the Word," and it has been very instructive and edifying to me; many times I have been loath to lay it by. Elder P. W. Sawin's letter to you, published in the SIGNS of July 1st, was very comforting to me, too. But O what a season of darkness and gloom I have had the past spring and summer; I have opened the Bible many times, with a desire that I might find Him whom my soul loveth, but I seemed shut out from his presence; and the SIGNS, too, I could not read with the same earnestness and zeal that I usually have, so in my desolate condition I have been made to cry with David, "How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?" And again, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." What a difference when the felt presence and power of Jesus is felt in the soul. But Job says, "Affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground." How comforting when we are made to realize that all things work together for good, &c. Though the way seems dark and dreary, I cannot but hope I am being instructed in the way of righteousness, and thereby learning my utter helplessness and entire dependence upon God for every needful blessing. These words are often presented to my mind: "But he

knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." And again, these words, which were applied to me with power on my way to the water for baptism, as well as many times since: "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you."

I am forty-one years of age; was baptized ten years ago this fall, and feel to realize the truth of these words:

"How rough and rugged is the way
To some poor pilgrims' feet;
In all they do, or think, or say,
They opposition meet."

"I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit," says the preacher. I do feel so very weak and helpless that I must look to the dear Lord for strength to perform my daily duties, and ask him for wisdom to guide me in the strait and narrow way. The flesh shrinks from being reproved, but we are told that reproof in instruction is the way of life.

What you wrote in connection with the theatre and fair interested me much. I have been placed in very trying circumstances along that line, and have tried to look to the Lord to guide me in the way. I know "there is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death." Also, "The wages of sin is death." We are commanded to deny ourselves, and take up our cross and follow Jesus. Did you ever think that what is a cross to one child of God is no cross for another? One may have a longing desire to go to such places of amusement, while another may not, and it would be no cross for that one to stay away who had not the desire. For my part, if I know myself, it is as much a cross for me to go as it is to stay at home; yes, I feel safe in saying it is more. We may stay away and the heart be in it; we may go and the heart not be in it; but what is our motive? "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." I trust you will not conclude that I am trying to justify myself in any wrong act, but I do feel to confess how very weak I am, and with Paul say, "How to perform that which is good I find not;" for "when I would do good, evil is present with me." How beautiful to behold a christian whose walk and conversation are as becometh the gospel. I feel that I am guilty of every sin that has ever been committed. Not that I am what one would call a criminal, but at heart I am no better. I am as weak as the weakest, vile as the vilest, and it pleases the Lord to leave me so at times, that I might know the frailty of my frame, and that I may not forget that Jesus is all my light and life, and without him I am nothing.

But I must hasten to a close. I want to say it is pleasant for me to think Elder Vail is about to move to Canada. He is thinking to move to this town, or near it, to serve a church about six miles from here. He is no stranger to me, for he has been visiting us twice a year for the past twelve or fifteen years, and his preaching has been of sweet comfort to me.

My dear sister, should you find anything in this contrary to your own experience, I know you are charitable and will overlook anything amiss; but should it touch a responsive chord in your heart, I will be delighted to hear from you, if you can find time and feel so inclined, as it is such company to hear from those we love for the truth's sake. Should you feel to do so, you may forward this to sister McKinney, as I have greatly enjoyed her letters as well. She corresponds with an uncle of mine, Mr. R. Scates. Is it

presumption in me to thus write to you? O what fears I have, so do remember me in your prayers as a poor, weak worm of the dust.

Your sister in hope of a better world,
(MRS.) W. C. YOUNG.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Sept. 24, 1910.

MRS. FLORENCE PULTZ—DEAR SISTER:—I want you to know that I received your letter of August 4th (arriving August 6th), and so I write. It was welcome, and read with much interest, as all of your letters are. I can well understand that there are times when you do not feel inclined to read, and cannot at such times read with profit or comfort. I am so often in that condition that it has become a real trial. It is the same in writing. It is much harder for me to write than it was in the days of my youth in the church. At that time it was a real comfort for me to write of the things that I was experiencing, and when I was speaking of them the words would seem to have a sweet taste as they passed my lips. I could say, "Thy words were found and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." Such liberty and comfort in speaking or writing are much more rare with me at present, yet perhaps I feel more of the value and spiritual importance of the things given me to tell the brethren and churches now than I did formerly. I wonder at the grace which has been bestowed on me that I am still trying to preach, after the trials and exercises and struggles and tribulations of forty-six years. How often I have felt that I must surely stop trying, but the hungry look and the bleating of a lamb would make me eager again to preach the word, and the sound of hostile doctrine would make me feel like Job's horse, smelling the battle afar off, and going on to meet the armed men.

I hope you are feeling better than when you last wrote. If I were traveling as much as I was formerly I would soon arrange to call at your house, but I do not travel much now. In August I visited some churches in the northern part of this State and in New York, which I formerly served. At this time of year I have been in the habit of visiting associations in Kentucky and North Carolina, but hay fever, my annual trouble, has kept me home this fall. I expect to attend the Virginia Meeting and Salisbury Association in October, if the Lord will.

My wife is in better health than she was during the spring and summer. I hope to hear from you when you feel like writing.

Your brother in hope,
SILAS H. DURAND.

GREENWAY, Ark., Dec. 11, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—I thought I would write you a little of my experience and let you judge it.

When I was about fourteen years old I thought I was going to die, and asked the Lord to have mercy on me and let me live, for I realized that I was a sinner, and commenced trying to do good, but I got worse. I went on for about six years, and my sins seemed so great that I continued to pray the Lord to have mercy on me, a sinner, but I could find no relief. When I would go to bed at night it seemed to me that I was in hell, and there was no one to deliver me. I was in that condition about two months. I would try to read the Bible, but it seemed to me a sealed book. At times I felt I would have to give up all hope and my end would be death, but I could not help seeking for the truth. My mother, Paul-

ina Gray, wanted to subscribe for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so I gave her the money to send for it. She told me that the Old School Baptists were the true church of God, but I did not know anything about their doctrine. When we received the SIGNS I would read it, but it seemed to me a sealed book, for I could not understand it. About a year after that, one night when I went to bed I was thinking of my welfare, and there came to me a voice, saying, Ye are saved by grace. I trembled at the voice, and it came again, Ye are saved by grace, and all at once my burden was gone, and I was carried away in the spirit, and praised the Lord. When I went to sleep my dreams were sweet, and when I arose the next morning I was full of joy. Then I would read in the SIGNS and understand, and could find comfort in it, and found that those who wrote for the SIGNS had gone through the same. But the question with me now is, Am I one of his chosen ones? I know that I do love the doctrine the SIGNS teaches, and O how I wish I were where I could hear some of the Old School Baptist ministers preach and be near them, but I do not know where the nearest church to me is. If it is the Lord's will, I hope to be with them some day.

Now, dear editors, do as you think best with this letter.

Yours in hope of everlasting life,
L. E. GRAY.

FOX CHASE, Pa., Dec. 8, 1910.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—In another week my subscription for the dear old SIGNS will have expired, so I now send two dollars, which you will credit to my account. I was for twelve years a gatekeeper for the Reading R. R. Co., but three years since I received notice from that company that in December I would be seventy years old, and then my services would cease, as they employed no one after they reached that age, so I had nothing to do but accept their ultimatum, and, owing to my age, I have been unable to gather more than one dollar, and that was for watching one day at the election polls this fall. Now, dear brother, I am not penning this in way of complaint, for I can say of a truth I have things far better than I, in my sinful state, deserve. I have two daughters making a comfortable living for me, my devoted wife and the three daughters which constitute my present family. I am often allowed to return in happy thought to some forty years ago, and since to the many cheering recollections afforded me. I can often, when upon my couch at night, and my pillow moistened with tears of joy, meditate upon some of the joyous seasons of the past, and most especially does my mind revert to you, my dear brother, when thinking of some of the precious minglings with the dear saints at Southampton in their preaching and conference meetings. Many of the true, tried and faithful have long since gone home, and how I would here like to give you a list of their names, but fear I might omit some of the dear and precious ones. In speaking of the SIGNS, allow me to say it is a great comfort to me; without it I hardly know how I would get along. I well remember when it was different with me, and how well I remember, long years ago, when my father longed for it to come to him, but to me it was of no value. I could not see how any one could relish such doctrine as it advocated, but I am made to this day to exclaim, Undone, sinful; the things I would, I do not, and, on the other hand, the things I would not, them I do. I must say there are sometimes silver linings to some of the dark clouds. One day lately I was feeling sad on account of sin in my flesh, and

my mind was directed to passages of Scripture; the first was 1 John iii. 14: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." This seemed to help me some, for I could say, I do love the saints. But the tempter often asks, Do you not love any except the Old School Baptists? Well, yes, but there are two kinds of love, the one spiritual, divine and heavenly, while the other is natural. I was taught in my youth that absence conquered that kind of love. I think there is a wise purpose that this natural love be conquered, or we would be most miserable. In Romans viii. 35, the question is asked, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"

I only intended asking you to credit me with my subscription to the SIGNS. I hardly know about sending all this to take up your valuable time, but knowing your patience in former times, I will send it, asking your pardon.

Your brother in hope,

C. S. STOUT.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

TO THE MIDDLETOWN AND WALLKILL CHURCH—VERY DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I hope to be able to express a few thoughts to you, with the same feeling of love and fellowship that I had for you about forty years ago. I then felt that the great work of salvation had been fully shown to me; since that time I have been satisfied that the great work of saving a soul from death is the work of God. I have not been able to meet with you for many years in church capacity, but I feel that the Lord has been good to me through these times of affliction, and that I have been kept by faith to go on rejoicing in his love and mercy. While I was not able to be with you when our young brother, Edward Thomas, came to the church, yet my heart was there, I trust. I was thinking this morning that his case was like that of the lost sheep, and indeed it was so with us all, that we were called to the fold and were made to rejoice at the sound of the trumpet, while we were great sinners in the sight of God. I think it is said that there was great rejoicing when the one that was lost had been found. Truly the one that has received of the mercies of God must speak of the glorious things spoken to him. I well remember the morning that the truth recorded in the eighth chapter of Romans was made known to me: "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." I hope I have been made to know something of the keeping by the great Shepherd, and I am truly glad that we have as an undershepherd one who is always ready to do for our welfare, in preaching the word, in feeding the sheep, visiting the sick, comforting them that are cast down, cheering them with gracious words, never seeming to neglect his duty, realizing that in so doing he is performing the very duty that God called him to.

There are other things that I feel I would like to say, but let this suffice for the present.

From your unworthy brother,

G. A. EMORY.

[THE above letter was sent to the church by our dear brother, Dr. G. A. Emory, to be read in our church meeting, January 1st, 1911. He has been confined to his home eight years, and to his room for five years, with what is called locomotor ataxia. Notwithstanding his long illness, he has never lost interest in the church, and his chief delight now is to talk and hear of the things of the kingdom of God. We feel altogether unworthy of his opinion of us, but much appreciate his kind feeling toward us. —K.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1911.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PSALMS I. 1-3.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—May one so vile as I call you by that title? I wish that Elder Chick would give his views through the SIGNS upon the first Psalm, first three verses, and oblige one who desires to know the truth as it is in Jesus. I would like to tell all the household of faith, if I could, how the good Lord led me from nature to grace, if indeed I have been so led at all. When I first saw myself a sinner, I thought that I had sinned against the Holy Ghost, and that there was no forgiveness for me, but still my every breath was, Lord, have mercy upon me. I was in this condition one whole week. I cannot begin to tell you how I suffered; I did not sleep, and could eat only enough to keep every one from knowing it. My husband was singing, and in the song was, "Come with all your wants, your every burden bring." O how I longed for a burden, for I felt that I was cut off. I was looking for death, but, behold, life sprang up. It pleased the Lord to reveal his Son in me. He said to me that he was my salvation. I cannot tell you how happy I was. I can tell but a part of my troubles, and also of my joys. I thank the Lord that he has given his children one mind to serve him, and that mind is the mind of Christ.

From a poor sinner,

HESTER KENALLY.

ELDRIDGE, Mo., Dec. 15, 1910.

This Psalm to which sister Kenally calls attention has been much upon our mind during many past years. We have thought of it, that whether the Psalms are placed in the Bible in the order in which they are written or not, it seemed certain that the Holy Spirit guided those who arranged their order, so that the one Psalm which seems most fitting to be, as it were, a gate into the body of them, is placed at the first. The whole Psalm presents a contrast, clearly stated, between those who serve God and those who serve him not. Such a difference as this is seen all through the Bible. There are but two classes of men in the world, according to the teaching of the Scriptures. Thus we see set over against each other Cain and Abel, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, Saul and David. In the scriptural narrative there are some who believe in God, there are many who do not; there are some who delight in his law, there are many who do not. Some are the children of God, but many are not. Some are believers, and many are unbelievers. A remnant shall be saved, but the others are left to perish in their sins. So in this Psalm some are presented as delighting in the law of the Lord and fleeing from the ways of sinners, while others are presented as being ungodly, whose end is to perish. The Psalm does not present two classes among the people of God, but two classes of mankind in general, one of which embraces the children of God, while the other embraces the dead in sin. The Psalm contains a wonderful description, in a few sentences, of these two classes of men. In this Psalm there is no statement of the origin of this difference, but elsewhere in the Bible there are full statements made. Here the two classes are simply described, so that they can be clearly known. The fruits of faith are set forth in the first three verses, and the works of the flesh are as clearly stated in the last three verses. In the four gospels and in the epistles, as well as in the Old Testament Scriptures, the work of God alone is set forth in the way by which men are brought from the life of the second class

into the possession of the life of the first class. This work is always said to be the work of God, and never the work of men. In the Psalm itself there is no exhortation to the ungodly to become godly in feeling or in life, but the psalmist by revelation of God is given to declare of the condition of all men, as regards their diverse characters and the fruits of the different life that is in them. There could be no greater contrast than is drawn here in these six verses. The verses named by sister Kenally read as follows: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful: but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Let us call attention first to the description given of the blessed. Negatively, they do not walk in the counsel of the ungodly, they do not stand in the way of sinners, they do not sit in the seat of the scornful. Affirmatively, they do delight in the law of God, and they meditate in it day and night. These are blessed in being what they are, and they shall be blessed in the fruits of their righteousness. What they sow, that shall they reap, and reap in abundant measure. They shall be as a tree planted by rivers of water, fully supplied with moisture, and therefore putting forth green leaves and bearing seasonable fruit; the leaf of that tree shall not wither, and all that this man doeth shall prosper. But the ungodly are not so; these walk in unholy counsel, they stand in the way of sinners, and at last they sit down in the seat of the scornful. They do not meditate in the law of the Lord, nor delight in it. These shall not stand in the judgment of God, nor shall they be found among the congregation of the righteous. And, lastly, the Lord knows the way of the righteous. This means that they are favored in his sight, and shall be preserved in all their ways, while the ungodly shall perish. Thus we see that in the Psalm there are things said affirmatively and negatively of both the righteous and the ungodly. One loves righteousness and hates iniquity, the other loves iniquity and hates righteousness, and in the Psalm there is no intimation that there is anything tending toward God in the ungodly, nor that there is anything in the righteous that loves ungodliness. There is no denial here that imperfection belongs to the thoughts, words and deeds of the godly, but the love of holiness which dwells in them is presented in its work, both as regards their desires and affections, and also as regards the fruit of those holy things in them.

In the first three verses we see what we feel like calling a three-fold gradation of thought. Each of the three expressions in the first verse contains three special things, and in each of these three expressions the truth presented grows more and more emphatic along each of the three thoughts. First we have the ungodly, the sinner, and the scornful; then we have walking, standing and sitting; then we have the counsel, the way and the seat. Ungodliness goes on to doing that which is evil, and he who does that which is evil soon becomes a scorner of godly things. All this depravity is in the heart or nature of all men, but in some it comes out into more open wickedness than in others. Ungodliness means all forgetfulness of God. God is not in all that man's thoughts, yet he

may be what we call a moral man, kindly, and even generous and honorable. But the sinner is he who is not only ungodly, having no care for nor any thought of God, but he goes on into direct transgression, violating the commandments of God, becoming profane, unjust and a breaker of the laws of God and men. Still this man may not be one who outwardly and deliberately scorns all godliness, turning the solemn things of God into an occasion for mockery, yet such an one has but one step to take to become also a scorner. So also we see a growth into a more and more settled condition of wickedness, in the walking first, and then the standing, and then the sitting down. The godly will not want to walk in the way of evil, still less will they desire to stand where it is, and least of all will they be found sitting down in its presence. But the ungodly go on to more ungodliness, because the fountain of ungodliness is in them, and so the motions of sin work in their members, producing an outward life that comes to be more and more in full harmony with the evil nature within them. So also in the text we see the counsel, the way and the seat. First, there is a listening to evil counsel, or advice, as the word here signifies, then a road traveled in following the advice of the ungodly, and then the settled condition of evil. In calling attention to these things we do not mean that these three lines of thought can be really separated, but it appeared to us that in no better way could we present what has seemed to us to be the general meaning of these three sentences. That man who is the opposite of all this is a blessed man. He is blessed because grace has wrought this aversion to evil within him. It is a blessed condition to be in. How wonderfully blessed is that man who has once walked, or stood, or sat in the way of evil willingly and gladly, but who now abhors all this way and shuns it. He is blessed of God indeed; God has chosen him as a vessel of mercy, and has set his love upon him from eternity, and in this love has given his Son to die that he might be redeemed from condemnation, from death, and from the power of reigning sin, and brought under the power of reigning grace. He is blessed in that he now has communion with God, and delights in all that God delights in. He is blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. He is blessed in the assurance that he is kept by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. He is blessed in that he is brought into fellowship with the Father and with the Son of God, and in that he shall enjoy that communion and fellowship forever and ever. How blessed is that man who is prepared to delight in the best things; such a man knows that he is blessed. Once he did not know the blessedness of this salvation, then no one could have made him know or believe it. The testimony of christians to the blessedness which they had found in this way conveyed no meaning to him; to him their testimony was all as an idle tale. He thought of them, if he thought of them at all, as being cut off from pleasure and as living in a desolate place indeed. There was no beauty in Christ, of whom they testified, that he should desire him. Now, however, being called by grace, and having come to live in the kingdom of God, all this is changed. Now this man knows that he is blessed more than any words can tell, and even though darkness may enshroud his mind, and his eyes be hidden so that he walks in darkness and sees no light,

still the word of God declares that he is blessed. God's dear children are always blessed; but this is one thing, while it is quite another to come to see how much they are blessed, and how great is the multitude of ways in which they are blessed. They are blessed in what they hate and in what they love. It is as much a blessing to be cut off from the former life as to come into the joy of the better life. Indeed, the one must in experience precede the other always. While a man delights in the things of ungodliness he cannot delight in the ways of godliness; while he loves iniquity he cannot delight in the law of God. This man described in the Psalm is blessed then in what he has lost and in what he has gained. He has gained a heart to delight in the law of God; that is, he has come to delight in righteousness and in all the commandments of God, which are holy. O how I love thy law, he can say, and in this love he has great peace. Loving this law, he can but meditate in it day and night. What we love we think of at all times. If we love anything intensely we shall often be held wakeful by our thoughts of it, and if it be absent we shall long for its presence, and be restless and wakeful until it appears and dwells with us; and as this man meditates upon the law of God new beauties will be discovered to him in it. He who has thus meditated most will confess that he has not yet reached the heights and depths of its glory. He has at best seen but in part and known in part. Paul so declared: Now we see in part and know in part. Surely there are thousands to-day who will confess that the apostle described their own case.

Now to this man who is already so signally blessed there are promised still more blessings. The mercies of the past insure to him blessings yet to be bestowed. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, &c. We do not understand that these blessings are such as he must wait for until he reaches the blest abode above. There indeed will be the full satisfaction, the drinking at the fountain, but, as it appears to us, the thought in the Psalm is concerning what we may expect to appear in that man here and now. He shall bear fruit; there will be that in his life which shall bless others, and which shall be to the glory of God, who has made him the good tree that he is, and who has planted him close by the rivers of heavenly water, even the water of life which flows out from the throne of God. He has been made a partaker of the divine nature, and fruits that are heavenly grow upon him. Here will be seen love, faith, hope, peace, truth, humility, patience, long-suffering, forbearance and all the fruits of the Spirit, against which there is no law. This means that all these things are pleasing to God. Here is both beauty and excellence; here are fruit and leaves. How lovely is that man of whom all the above may be said. The beauty of the Lord his God is upon him; he is lovely and excellent in the view of all who know God, and the special beauty which crowns all other beauties is this, that he does not know his own beauty. There is no boasting in such a man; he walks humbly before God; he behaves himself with lowliness before men; but others see and rejoice in him, or rather in the grace which is in him. The smell of a field that the Lord has blessed is upon him. How sweet is this savor to all who love God.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

GENESIS III. 15.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Please give your views on Genesis iii. 15: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

PLEASANT COX.

HANCOCK Co., Ill., Jan. 29, 1864.

Freely confessing our utter inability to comprehend, much less to elucidate the subject proposed, in all its ramifications, we will only attempt to give such views as we have, and in as intelligible a manner as we may be enabled to do, and leave brother Cox, and all others who may feel interested, to examine and compare our views with the Scriptures, which we regard as our only safe and infallible directory and guide, and we feel most sensibly that even the Scriptures can afford no clear light to our dark understanding any farther than it shall please God to open them to us by his Holy Spirit.

The Scriptures present two grand, sublime and, to finite minds, incomprehensible mysteries. The one is called "the mystery of godliness," and, without controversy, it is very great. The other is of an opposite character, and is called "the mystery of iniquity," which now worketh, long has worked, and shall continue to work, until the mystery of God shall be finished, in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, as God hath declared to his servants, the prophets. (Rev. x. 7.) These are both called mysteries, because they are too profound for the limited understanding of the sons of men; they baffle the wisdom of the wise and confound the understanding of the great, the learned and the prudent. These two mysteries were launched upon the world in the beginning, in the morning of the creation, and destined to run their parallel, yet opposite courses, both under the direct supreme power and government of him who reigns God over all, and blessed forevermore. To ask of us to solve these mysteries, to lift the impenetrable veil which God has thrown over them, and so simplify and explain them as to make them clear and plain to the understanding of men, would be to ask of a finite being that which none but God himself has power to do; but this our brother has not asked, he calls only for our views, and, feeble though they are, we attempt to give them.

"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman." These words are preceded by a dreadful and irrevocable curse, pronounced upon the serpent, and may be regarded, so far as the serpent is involved, as a part of the curse: "Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field: upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman," &c. The two characters named (the serpent and the woman) were, literally, present before the Lord, to hear from his mouth their respective judgments. Whatever may be said of the serpent, as a beast of the field, and included among the cattle which God had made, or whatever questions may arise as to his form, motive power, food, &c., we must leave to the speculative mind of the curious, as we have no opinion to offer beyond what is written. It is, however, plainly stated that he was a serpent, having, among the creatures of God, a corporeal body, of material substance, which, being made of the dust of the ground, could be sustained and fed upon the same, even of the dust in its crude or unvegetated state. The sustenance of all earthly creatures is by vegeta-

tion, and animal life from the dust, every green herb and every tree yielding fruit to be his meat or food, but the serpent is doomed to eat dust itself, all of which, to our mind, has an important significance of which we may speak hereafter. The serpent is repeatedly mentioned in the Scriptures, and among the creatures of God, and from this serpent in the garden, we presume, all that species of reptiles which still infest the earth have emanated. But it is not, in our understanding of the subject, as a mere animal that the serpent is here presented, but as possessing more subtility than any of the beasts of the field which the Lord God had made; that subtile, unholy, delusive and beguiling spirit which the serpent possessed to a greater extent than any other of the beasts of the field, is what characterizes him as the father of lies and king over all the children of pride. In his mystical character and career, then, we may consider him as the spirit that works in the children of disobedience, as beguiling unstable souls, as going about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. In this character he is called the devil, and Satan that deceiveth. (Rev. xii. 9.) This certainly is the serpent which deceived Eve, and, through her, the whole world of mankind. And again, he is still more fully identified as "the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan."—Rev. xx. 2. We have no account of any older serpent than that serpent which deceived Eve, and, through her, the whole world, and who still is deceiving the whole world. Many names are applied to him in the Scriptures, as the dragon, leviathan, Apollyon, murderer, father of lies, adversary, &c.

Having thus far identified the serpent on whom the curse was pronounced, we will offer a few thoughts in regard to the woman with whom he is brought into collision by the curse and her seed. The woman is easily identified as the only woman then brought into existence or manifestation, the wife of Adam, bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, and called woman because she was taken out of man. And Adam called her name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. The apostle Paul informs us that the man was not deceived, but the woman, being deceived, was in the transgression, and in Eph. v. 22–33, he transfers the figure to Christ and the church. "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." The woman, literally considered, is a part of Adam, and the mother of all his posterity. Beguiled by the serpent, she is in the transgression, betrayed, ensnared, guilty of disobedience to God, naked, ruined and condemned to die, without the least particle of power or ability to avert the ruin in which she was involved, and all her posterity included in her guilt and shame. But as the emblematic bride of the Lamb of God we find in her person, her names, her circumstances and in all particulars a typical personification of the bride and wife of the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven. We are expressly told (Romans v. 14,) that Adam is the figure of him that was to come. A figure is a type, an emblem, an image, a representation. We are not told that Adam was the figure, but he is, still continues to be, the image of him that was (not is) to come. In 1 Cor. xv. 45–49, the same apostle says, "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the

second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

It is interesting and comforting, as well as instructive to the children of God, to trace the numerous points of analogy between the woman as the type, or figure, and the church of God, to whom those resemblances point, but in this article we must restrict our remarks to only a few of them. The woman was created in the earthy Adam; the church of God is created in the second, or antitypical Adam. The woman was preserved in Adam, and so the election of grace is sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called. Adam said of his wife, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." Christ, by the mouth and pen of his inspired apostle, said to the church, "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." —Eph. v. 30. The life of Adam was the life of Eve, before as well as after she was formed and brought into manifestation, and she never had any vitality independent of him. Even so the church of God existed in Christ, a participant of his immortality, before the world began. Her life was with the Father, and was given to her in the Son, and is hid with Christ in God, and she has not one particle or pulsation of spiritual, immortal and eternal life independent of him. One striking point of analogy appears in the response of Adam to the summons of his Creator, which, to our mind, is full of thrilling interest: "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat."—Gen. iii. 12. This was not, as we conceive, to throw the blame on the woman, nor on God, nor to exculpate himself, but the words were inspired and prophetic; she was identified with him. If God had not given her to him he had no power to possess her, and if she had not been given to be with him the world could not have been peopled, nor could the designs of God to develop his purpose and grace in the salvation of millions of mankind been accomplished. But mark the figurative import of his words, as coming from the lips of Christ: "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day." "She gave me of the tree, and I did eat." "Adam was not deceived; but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression." How stood the case? The woman was in the transgression, and must surely die; she could not come back to Adam. Was it the design that they should be forever separated, that Eve should die and Adam live? How could that be when their life was identical? What then was the alternative? Ah, there was a purpose of God involved that could not be thwarted. She was given to be with him, and although she had no power to return to him, he had power and love and inclination to go to her, to follow her into the transgression, and so she gave to him of the tree, and he did eat. So the church, given to Christ in irrevocable covenant, was designed to be with him, and she shall ultimately reign with him in unfading glory and immortality. But in order to secure this glorious ultimatum, when she, beguiled, betrayed and ensnared by the subtility of the devil, was in the transgression, condemned by the holy law of God, condemned and under wrath, without the power to return,

utterly without strength even then, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, did not forget the object and immutable purpose of the gift, and although he was not, could not be deceived, he received from her of the tree (which was a figure of the law), and he did eat. For in being made of a woman, he was made under the law, and subject to its demands. Thus at her hand he received of the tree and did eat. He was legally numbered with the transgressors, and bare the sins of many. Though he knew no sin, yet he was made sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. The earthy Adam had no power to take his life again, for, lest he should put forth his hand and eat and live forever, he was sent forth, driven out, and cherubims and a flaming sword, which turned every way, met him at every point, and kept the way of the tree of life. These cherubims and this flaming sword Jesus, our second Adam, encountered, and received the dreadful stroke. It smote the Man that was God's fellow, and was bathed in his atoning blood. But having laid down his life he was able to take it again, and, diffusing that resurrection life through all the members of his body, his bride, he bore her with him to the heavenly places, to live and reign with him in immortal glory.

Having devoted as much space as we can afford to the consideration of the serpent, we will offer a few remarks on their respective seed, and first, the seed of the serpent. The serpent, as a mere animal of corporeal form and animal life, is the progenitor of all the reptiles on the earth or in the sea known as serpents, vipers, dragons, leviathans, &c., and in this sense the serpent's seed is as distinct from the human family as any other classification of the beasts of the field, fowls of the air or monsters of the deep waters. When men are spoken of as serpents, vipers and children of their father the devil, it is not that they are so by natural generation, or corporeal substance, but in their being in possession of the spirit, subtility, guile and wickedness of Satan. For example, we are told of Cain that he was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. (1 John iii. 12.) There is a sense in which Cain, and many others of the human family, are of that wicked one, but it is not as creatures, for the devil has no creative power, and we have already proved that God is the sole Creator of all mankind; neither is it by natural generation, for God has made all men of one blood. Now Cain, although he was of that wicked one, yet he was begotten of the same father, and conceived and born of the same mother that Abel and Seth were. We are expressly told that Cain was begotten by Adam and born of Eve, and hence was a brother of Abel, whom he slew, but religiously Cain was of that wicked one, and had no affinity or fellowship with the spirit and faith of Abel. As a religionist Cain was a type of all false and ungodly religionists, of whom an inspired apostle says, "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core."—Jude 11. Those scribes and Pharisees whom John refused to baptize were called a generation of vipers, although they had Abraham to their father, according to the flesh. Others were denounced by our Savior as serpents, vipers, and even children of the devil. "They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man," &c. Jesus said to them, "I know that ye are Abraham's seed: but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. I speak that

which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye can not hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."—John viii. 33–44. Here we have what we regard as a clear illustration of what is meant by their being children of the devil; not in their human organization, or natural generation, but the spirit which was in them was of the devil. As men he knew they were the seed of Abraham, but in their spirit, or religion, they were not Abraham's children, they had not the faith of Abraham, and were not born of the Spirit which distinguished Abraham, or they would do the works of Abraham. The truth is, the children of the devil are those who have and are governed by the spirit of the devil. The devil himself is a wicked spirit, and cannot beget matter or material substance, nor can that spirit beget any quality that it does not itself possess. Such are the laws of generation. Adam begat a son in his own likeness. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh [it is not spirit]; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit [it is not flesh]." As Satan is a wicked spirit, so he is the father of all wicked spirits. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God," and as many as are led by the spirit of the devil, are children of the devil. Neither their being born of God, nor of Satan, changes their relation to the earthy Adam, for all are alike in that relation. The evidence of sonship, on the one hand, is, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God;" that Spirit of which they are born again bears witness with their spirit that they are the sons, or children, of God; they bear his image, not in the flesh, but in the spirit of their mind, wherewith they serve the law of God. While, on the other hand, the evidence of being children of the devil is, that his children have his spirit. He was a murderer from the beginning, and their feet are swift to shed blood. Misery and destruction are in all their ways, and there is no fear of God before their eyes, and their murderous, destructive, heaven-daring, God-defying, truth-hating and grace-despising propensities clearly show who is the father of the spirit and religion they possess. "I know," said Jesus, "that ye are Abraham's seed: but ye seek to kill me." Enemies of Jesus, enemies of his cause, of his truth, of his word, of his people, yea, enemies of God by wicked works. That Satan does beget his spirit in his children, and that his spirit conforms them to his image and makes them like him, and subjects them to his final and everlasting doom, we think will not be disputed by any who are governed by the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. All the

righteous blood of the prophets and saints shall be required of that generation of vipers, who are of their father, the devil, and who do the works of their father. It was this spirit in Cain which moved him to kill Abel, and this same spirit, in the same family, is at this day drenching the earth in human gore and filling our land with widows and orphans, with lamentation, mourning and woe. It is this spirit of devils through which the smoke and venom of hell is belched forth like the flaming vomitings of Vesuvius, in opposing the people of God and the principles of holiness, which devils hate and in which saints delight. O may we try the spirits, whether they be of God, and beware what manner of spirit we are of.

(To be continued.)

NOTICE.

If nothing in providence prevents, we expect preaching in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., the fourth Sunday in January (22nd), 1911, at the usual hours, by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. L. B. FORD.

Melrose Highlands, Mass.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mary A. Barnett, N. B., $1.00; C. H. Vandyke, Ill., $1.00; Mrs. John Pettit, N. Y., $3.00; Mrs. T. V. Richardson, Md., $3.00; Isaac Larowe, N. J., $2.00; H. E. Scarborough, Md., $1.00.—Total, $11.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. T. Rowe, at his residence in Roland Park, Md., Dec. 7th, 1910, James W. Ferguson and S. Louise Woolford, both of Baltimore, Md.

By the same, at the same place, Dec. 17th, 1910, Curley S. Hurley and Ida E. Hammond, both of Baltimore.

By the same, at the same place, Dec. 24th, 1910, George B. Cole and Amma May Fry, both of Baltimore.

By Elder Asa Howard, Dec. 28th, 1910, Charles West and Miss Della Green, both residing in the vicinity of Keller, Texas.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Miss Mary B. Miles departed this life Wednesday morning, Dec. 7th, 1910, aged 96 years, 11 months and 22 days. She had been confined to her bed most of the time for a year, but was able to converse, and could talk to the last. She enjoyed reading in the Bible, using no glasses, and would often speak of portions of the Scriptures which had been comforting to her, and her hymn-book was well filled with marks indicating hymns which had been especially good to her. On occasion of my frequent calls she always desired me to read in the Bible and speak in prayer, and sometimes spoke of being favored to hear well. She was the youngest of the children of Samuel Miles, whose house when she was a child had long been a home for the brethren. Ministers and others who were traveling from far and near were always welcomed and made to feel at home there. This, however, is the case with Old Baptists generally, as traveling brethren well know. When I first visited at this hospitable home, nearly forty-six years ago, the family consisted of two brothers and two sisters, all unmarried. The sisters, Eliza and Mary, had been baptized some years before, by Elder D. L. Harding. The brothers were not members of the church, but were lovers of the truth, and devoted to the interests of the church. There was also an older brother, William Miles, who lived near Washington, whose daughter, Miss A. M. Miles, the last of his children, is the only surviving member of this family. She is a member of this church. Her father, who was not a member of the church, but was undoubtedly a subject of grace, died in 1889, aged nearly ninety-two years. He was the eldest of this family. Sister Eliza passed away thirteen years ago, nearly ninety-six years of age. She and sister Mary, and the brothers, while they lived, were faithful in attendance at all the meetings of the church. They were in good circumstances, and were very liberal toward the church, giving freely of their worldly means in cases of need, and in helping the poor. Sister Mary did not lose her interest in the temporal affairs of the church, nor in the spiritual things. She will be much missed by the brethren, sisters and friends.

At the funeral, on Saturday, Dec. 10th, the following words were used as a text, which words she often referred to as having been given her in confirming her hope, and which she desired should be spoken from on that occasion: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."—Phil. i. 6.

May the Lord comfort our dear sister, Melvina, and all that mourn.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Southampton, Pa.

Archibald J. Black was born June 15th, 1838, died Dec. 17th, 1910, aged 72 years, 6 months and 2 days. He was married first to Kate Ross, who died May 15th, 1880. He was married to Kate L. Rawlinson, Feb. 7th, 1884, who survives him. He leaves eight children: John, William, Archibald and Kate by his first wife, and Duncan R., James W., D. Crawford and Kenneth L. by his second wife. He also leaves three sisters: Mrs. L. Campbell, Miss Christie Black, of St. Thomas, Ont., and Mrs. J. Macfarlane, of Chicago, Ill. He was the son of John and Flora Black, of Yarmouth township, who were also members of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada. He was baptized by Elder Pollard, in 1874. He was firm in the doctrine of salvation by grace. His home was always open to Old School Baptists, and he loved to see and entertain them. He had a long and painful illness, but it was borne with christian fortitude. He longed to depart and be with his Savior. A few hours before he became unconscious he said to me: "My dear Jesus, my precious Savior," then was exhausted. He became unconscious, remaining so for two days, when he passed peacefully away.

Elder Vail preached a most comforting sermon on the subject chosen by deceased: "Saved by grace." Two favorite hymns were sung, after which Elder Alexander made a few touching remarks, referring especially to the incident of having promised to visit our brother again on Monday afternoon; he kept his appointment, but our brother was in better company, even his Savior's. He was laid to rest in the family plot, there to await the resurrection.

(MRS.) A. J. BLACK.

ST. THOMAS, Ont., Dec. 28, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Sister Black sent me the inclosed obituary of brother Black, and in connection I will say I had known brother Black a long time, and loved him for the truth's sake. His home had been a home to me all the years of my acquaintance with him. To his dear, lonely widow, and their children, who all love the precious truth of the gospel of the Son of God, may the dear Lord give grace and strength, and comfort all the heart-broken, mourning ones, is my desire. Elder Ker was wired to officiate, but as he was engaged to attend the funeral of Miss Mary A. Seybolt, near his home in New York State the same day, the writer was called upon, using the words mentioned by sister Black as a subject, and endeavored, though very feebly, to show the power and effects of that grace as it is made manifest in the lives and experiences of the saints, also the faith and hope of the saints, which enable them to look forward, not backward, to the fulfillment of the words of Paul in Philippians iii. 21: "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." This we are hoping and waiting for, and will be to the end of our mortal pilgrimage here below; we hope to awake in the likeness of our Savior and be satisfied, for we shall be like him. Thank God for this blessed hope.

ALSO,

BROTHER **John Maddock** died Dec. 24th, 1910, near Inwood, Ontario. He was a member of the Covenanted Baptist Church. The writer was called upon, and talked to a large company of friends and neighbors assembled at the house Tuesday, the 27th. I presume an obituary will be forwarded by some one of the friends. I have nothing to guide me in the matter.

D. M. VAIL.

ABERFELDY, Ontario.

Mrs. Mary F. Norman died at the home of her son, brother Fielder Norman, near Purcellville, Loudoun Co., Va., Dec. 4, 1910, aged a little over 90 years. She was the daughter of Benson and Mildred Lynn, and was born and reared in Prince William County, Va. She became the mother of five children, four sons and one daughter, all of whom survive her. By the death of her husband, soon after the close of the Civil War, she was left a widow with the family of little ones dependent upon her. She was left comparatively destitute, if not in actual want, but the Lord provided for the widow and the fatherless according to his promise. Sister Norman was a woman of noble character, and filled the place of both father and mother to her children, rearing them to be examples of sterling worth in the several communities where they have lived. Sister Norman was blessed with a sweet, cheerful disposition naturally, and that disposition was sanctified by the grace of her God, whom she came to know in early life. She was baptized in August, 1868, by Elder R. C. Leachman, in the fellowship of the Quantico Old School Baptist Church, Prince William Co., Va. Subsequently she moved to Loudoun County, and put her name with the people at Mt. Zion, where she was held in loving fellowship until the end. It is difficult for me to write as I would wish to, in a brief notice, as an obituary should be, concerning the precious jewels which shine so brightly in the crown of the dear Redeemer. His glory is revealed in them by his own love shed abroad in their heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them. Sister Norman loved the brethren, not merely in word, but also in deed and in truth. She was seen in her place in the meetings of the church, and wherever she could meet with the people she loved, until the infirmities of age came upon her. Those infirmities affected her mind regarding natural things, but things concerning her experience seemed clear to the last, showing indeed that though the outward man may perish, the inward man is renewed. I believe all of sister Norman's children have a real love for the truth, though but two of them have identified themselves with the peo-

ple whom their mother loved. Brother Fielder Norman, whose house had been his mother's home for several years, has the satisfaction of knowing how favored he is in having had the opportunity of returning some of the loving care he received in childhood, by giving a home and every care to his mother in helpless age. All the children were devoted to their mother, and may God assure their hearts that all is well. J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., Dec. 23, 1910.

Mrs. Mary F. Ridgely died at her late residence in Baltimore, Md., Jan. 5th, 1911, in the 75th year of her age. Mrs. Ridgely, before her marriage to Dr. A. T. Ridgely, was Miss Talbott, a member of one of the oldest and best families of Baltimore County, Md. Many of them were believers in the Primitive or Old School Baptist faith, and a great many Old School Baptists have been entertained at their hospitable home. Mrs. Ridgely showed her love for the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES by renewing her subscription to that paper for forty years. She never joined the church, because she did not feel worthy. It was the pleasant privilege of the writer to visit her many times in the last twelve years, and he feels that she had that faith which is the gift of God, and therefore for her to die was gain. I have always been glad to number Mrs. Ridgely among my friends, and now feel that I shall miss her, but of course not as her only son, Joshua T. Ridgely, who had always lived with his mother and was very much devoted to her. After the death of her eldest son, Aquilla, whose funeral I also attended, she and Joshua lived alone for quite a while. He was her earthy idol. The last few years she had lived with her son and his wife, and her sister, Mrs. Bessie Kelly, who in her illness did all they could for her comfort, but the Lord's time had come to take her, and they had to give her up.

The writer attended the funeral services on Sunday a. m., Jan. 8th, 1911, speaking from Romans viii. 1-11, after which she was taken to the family burying-ground at Warren, Baltimore Co., Md., and interred among her loved ones who had gone before her, to await the call of her heavenly Father in the resurrection at the last day. May God bless the bereaved.

By request of her sister and son.

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

BALTIMORE, Md., Jan. 9, 1911.

Wayland Wise was born Nov. 10th, 1881, died Dec. 4th, 1910, aged 29 years and 24 days. In early life the subject of this memoir made a profession of religion, uniting with the Missionary Baptist denomination. His mother states that he gave bright evidence of hope in the Lord Jesus Christ of final rest beyond death. During his sickness he was much of the time unconscious from intense suffering from typhoid fever and other complications. He was a man of small stature, yet had great energy, and manifested a disposition to work and maintain his little family. However, like many of God's humble poor, he had his portion of this world's troubles, which caused him, great hardship but when the end came he passed from the scenes of earth peacefully and calmly to that abode from whence no traveler ever returns, falling into the hands of his Creator, the righteous disposer of all things. We believe from the evidence, through the transporting faith of God's elect, he is anchored in that haven of eternal rest, freed from all vexation and woes of this sin-cursed earth. Temptations and fiery trials, which so often encompass and ensnare the pilgrim's little bark, are no more with him. He leaves a widow, three helpless children, a dear mother and many other relatives, neighbors and friends to mourn his death, but we mourn not as those who have no hope.

C. Y. OSTEEN.

ROANOKE, Texas.

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IN

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To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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1315 Columbia Avenue,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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A SMALL band of Primitive Baptists is meeting every Sunday at 10:30 a. m. at 2919 Polk St., Chicago, Ill. All persons interested are welcome to meet with us. Any one knowing of members living in or near Chicago will please notify W. N. Spitler at the above address.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

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This little book has been published for some time, and orders for it have been received from near and far, even to the most distant States. All from whom I have heard have spoken to me very highly of the book. For forty years it has been upon my mind to publish these poems and the experience of my brother, together with the account of his last hours, and have wondered why I did not do it. I felt sure it would be for the comfort of many, and the many expressions I have already received assure me that it is so. Elder P. D. Gold writes: "I have read the poems and experience of your brother with much pleasure. How wonderful was the view of divine things given to him. Surely to be absent from the body and present with the Lord is far better." Elder S. Hassell says: "I shall have a commendatory editorial notice in April. I hope you may dispose of several thousands for the comfort of the Lord's scattered people." Elder H. C. Ker writes me: "Your little book, 'Songs in the night,' was duly received, and has given me more comfort than any reading I have done for months. Surely every lover of truth should have it." The price of the second edition has been reduced to thirty-five cents.

I have also on hand a few copies of "Reminiscences and Letters of Mary Parker." Price 75 cents.

All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Southampton, Pa.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 79. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1911. NO. 3.

POETRY.

PRAISE.

JESUS, our Lord, is born to-day,
Our Savior and our King;
Come, raise a glad triumphant lay,
And all his glories sing.

Let souls attuned to hymn his praise,
Join in with heart and voice,
And loud our anthems we will raise;
Let every heart rejoice.

For lo, glad tidings of great joy
Are brought to dying men;
Let peace and love without alloy
In every bosom reign.

For Christ is born in Bethlehem,
To us a Son is given;
He came lost sinners to redeem,
And raise them up to heaven.

Low at the dear Redeemer's feet,
Helpless and lost we fall;
He graciously our sins remit,
And freely pardons all.

With hearts uplifted to our God,
We'll praise his sovereign grace;
Alone through his atoning blood
We hope to see his face.

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

WHEN trials are sore and distressing,
And few are the outreaching hands,
Remember, O child, of thy Father,
Remember that he understands.

When hearts are turned from thee in coldness,
When hard are thy thongs and thy bands,
Remember, dear soul, that thy Savior
Is near thee, and he understands.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JEHOVAH-JIREH.

"AND it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of."—Genesis xxii. 1, 2.

"God did tempt Abraham." That is, God proved him, tried him, put him to the test. This is the meaning here, as in other portions of the Scriptures. (Deut. viii. 2–16; 2 Chron. xxxii. 31.) For it must never be thought that the Holy One who inhabiteth eternity entices or incites men to wickedness. "Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked."—1 Samuel xxiv. 13. The apostle James writes: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

Do not err, my beloved brethren."—James i. 12–15. The Lord trieth the righteous, and this trial of Abraham's faith is so illustrious, so rich in manifestations of God's power and grace, that it has innumerable times afforded instruction and consolation to the chosen of God. If we are believers in God we are such according to the working of his mighty power; it is altogether of his grace unto us in Jesus Christ. We are God's workmanship, formed to shew forth his praise, so our faith, which is of the operation of God, he proves, and at times, with some of his people, as in this instance in the life of Abraham, subjects them to such trials that put their faith in the Lord to the utmost test, and it thus is manifest that their faith standeth not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Now, dear child of God, if the Lord has seen there is a needs be, and you are in heaviness through manifold temptations, let this be your consolation and hope, "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

"God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am." It was in the nighttime that the Lord spoke to him. Abraham knew the voice. The sheep of Christ are trained by their Shepherd to know his voice. The majesty, the grace, the awe, the life of his words, take hold of our spirit and hold us fast to him. The spouse of Christ, though in a sleepy state, exclaims, "I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh." Has your heart ever heard the voice of Jesus? Abraham knew the voice of the Lord, he was in intimacy with it. He responds to the voice, saying, "Behold, here I am." The eagerness of his response, his readiness to know the will of the Lord concerning him, is a soul-satisfying picture. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." How blessed are such willing ones. Abraham is in all expectation to know God's good pleasure. "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah." Every word sinks deep, they are engraven upon his heart. Every word is indelibly, immutably written; not a word can be erased or altered, and all that night those words were speaking in Abraham. Have God's words ever spoken in your heart? Words of eternal majesty; you had no doubt whose voice was speaking; words of reproof, searchlight words, illuminating your spirit, bringing to light your iniquities, bringing to sight your hypocrisies and evil imaginings, setting your secret sins before you in the light of God's countenance, and you knew that all things were naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. Words of counsel, heavenly direction; words of promise, quieting the heart, scattering your fears and inspiring you to be of good cheer; words of eternal love, that hush your fretfulness, subdue your rebellion and melt you down at his feet broken and contrite in heart. O Lord, speak to us in every way for our good, be not thou silent to us.

Abraham pondered over God's words to him. I should think that night was a sleepless one; his cogitations were all-embracing, and his ultimate conclusions satisfying and God-glorifying. Look again at the commandment of the Lord to Abraham that night: "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of

Moriah." Every word is animating, calling forth into glowing exercise his parental emotions, and so far, with rapidity of thought, Abraham is all acquiescence, for every word thus far is pleasing. "And offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." Would it be wrong to think that Abraham was amazed, awe-stricken, that his heart, for the moment, sank within him, as the words of the commandment of the Lord fell upon his spirit? I know, from a few words found elsewhere in the Scriptures concerning this night, (Heb. xi. 19,) that his cogitations were deep and extensive. Abraham knew that the commandment to go to the land of Moriah was for the purpose that there he should worship God in the mount, and that it was by the shedding of the blood of the burnt offering that he was to draw nigh to God. He had, in times before this, thus worshiped the Lord, and there is no doubt that the Holy Spirit had revealed to him, as he had to Abel, that the blood of clean beasts was a type of that nobler blood of Christ, the Lamb of God. Jesus saith, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." But the Lord has said, Offer thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, for a burnt offering. "Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" Men under Satanic delusions have sacrificed their children in the worship of demons, (1 Kings xvi. 34; 2 Kings iii. 27,) but this commandment unto Abraham is from the Holy One who inhabiteth eternity. All his ways are judgment, and a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he. Now God had called Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees, and the sovereignty of Jehovah's grace in this act is most manifest. God called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him. He was called the friend of God. God by his gracious power set him apart unto himself. O this is very wonderful. Our precious Jesus saith, "I have called you friends: for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." Christ Jesus, the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, declareth the Father unto us. So in Christ, in sacred intimacy believers live and walk in communion with God. Though there was an infinite disparity between God the Creator and Abraham the creature, yet God had so wrought by his invincible grace upon his soul that Abraham was drawn to the Lord to unbosom himself unto him, and God gave him so many revelations of his heart toward him, and of the eternal counsel of his will, that in his seed, through Isaac, his darling son, the Son of God should become incarnate. Thus by this promise of Christ, by the mediation of this One who was to come of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, God bridged the gulf and brought Abraham into friendship with himself. Jehovah had signally favored Abraham, and had promised to his seed the inheritance of the land of Canaan, and that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. He had given him Isaac by his wife Sarah, and had told him that in Isaac his seed should be called. God entered into a covenant with him, and confirmed it with an oath, and God had said, "Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." But God has said, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." Does God, the Cre-

ator, the almighty Friend, thus speak to his creature, who is but "dust and ashes," to Abraham his friend? O surely this is putting friendship to the utmost test. Abraham's heart ponders over this commandment: I am to take him, my loved and only son Isaac, I am to shed his blood, and in his flowing blood his life on earth, so pleasing to me, shall ebb away, and then I must burn his loved body upon the altar. The Lord reminds me that I love him, for he saith, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest." O yes, I love him, and Sarah loves him dearly, too, and my God hath said, Worship me and sacrifice thy son, offer him a burnt offering unto me. Abraham's faith, which was of the operation of God, wrought wondrously that night; it had mighty wrestlings with the flesh, with Abraham's ardent parental affections, and over all the seeming wreck of all his earthly hopes. Offer up thy son a burnt offering. How can this be? Has the Lord repented, reversed, withdrawn, forfeited, annulled his promises? No. Well, how can the promises, the covenant, stand if Isaac is taken away from the earth? This is quite a problem for Abraham, and his faith is put to the test, and has a trying time. That night he looked at all the stages of the scene to be enacted upon Mount Moriah, and in the consummated burnt offering he beheld the ashes of his dear son. Had he been called to see his darling son stricken down with sickness and thus die, this would have brought down his heart with sorrow, would have blasted his hopes and have wrecked his faith in God's promises. Shall Abraham's own hands shed his blood, the blood of his only son Isaac, whom he loves, and whom Sarah loves? Does God, his Creator, his Friend, require this of him? Can he do it? Abraham ponders over the happy years that he has had his darling Isaac; he remembers that sacred laughter at his birth. ("All that hear will laugh with me."—Gen. xxi. 6.) Isaac had put comfort and gladness into his and Sarah's life; but all is now turned into grief, laughter has fled from their lives, for at the commandment of God Isaac is a burnt sacrifice, brought low in the dust; there lie the ashes of my loved son Isaac. Abraham looked and looked into those ashes, and as he looked he pondered over God's promises, his covenant, his oath, all to be fulfilled through Isaac. Will the promises fail? Will Jehovah break his covenant? Has he cast off Isaac? No, never. Isaac must live, for God's immutable decree is, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." God will raise him up again from the dead. I will go and worship my God in the mount, and at his command offer up my darling son Isaac for a burnt offering; God is able to raise him up even from the dead. What! Isaac to rise up out of those ashes? Yes, Abraham believed he would.

The night is past, the day breaks, Abraham has triumphed, in his faith in God he is victorious, and now for the obedience of faith. "Abraham rose up early in the morning." After the conflicts, the agitations of his soul during the night, O Abraham, why art thou, an old man, up and abroad so early in the morning? It is nothing less than God's gracious power that moves him thus to arise. Abraham is moved to worship God, to go to the appointed place, and in God's revealed, appointed way come before God, his almighty Friend. His faith, in all the freshness and vigor of youth, inspires him to act. He is moved with trust, with hope, with love toward God. He does not act tardily, there is

to be no delay in his obedience, he will offer up his son a burnt offering unto the Almighty. Has Abraham become hardened? Has he withdrawn his affections from Isaac? Is Isaac no longer his darling son? Does he love Isaac less because he loves God more? Abraham's heart is still warm in parental affection, but his faith and love to God are higher and superior to all things. "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me." "Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him." The alacrity with which Abraham takes these steps reveals the sacred fervor of his faith and love and hope in God. The steps of the obedience of faith in all ages have ever been God-glorifying and a heart-moving sight. But who has eyes to discern, and a heart to contemplate this obedience? What some people call gospel obedience is nothing more than bodily exercise, and does not contain in it the smallest grain of the worship of God. If the heart is far from God all the lip service and the acts of the body can never be acceptable in God's sight.

Abraham "clave the wood for the burnt offering." Could he not have commanded one of his many servants to prepare that wood? Ah, no, none of them would understand just what wood he needed, just how much. That wood is to burn the body of his dear son Isaac, their hands must not touch it. All these acts of Abraham are sacred. Enter into Abraham's thoughts as he is cleaving that wood at the dawn of day. How much wood will he need? He estimates, Enough to burn to ashes my darling son. There they journey, from Beersheba to the land of Moriah, Abraham and Isaac, the two young men and the ass. They journey all day, and the second day also. What sacred contemplations must have filled the soul of Abraham; he goes to worship God. Does he eye his son Isaac? Does he talk with him by the way? What is the theme of their conversation? Does the father give any hint to his son of the purpose of this journey? Does Abraham falter, was he at any time ready to halt and turn back? O, no doubt during those two days the steadfastness of his faith was tried. Think not for a moment that his soul was unexercised. It could not be otherwise than that he was much in prayer to the Lord. He knew he was but "dust and ashes," a poor sinner, and his thoughts, no doubt, were deep upon the sacrifice he was to make in worshiping his God. Satan would have stopped him if he could, but his insinuations, his fiery darts, the gates of hell, could not prevail. Having the companionship of Isaac could but keep up in a fervid glow Abraham's love to his dear son; his parental affections were not numbed and seared during those two days travel together. But the Lord so wrought in his soul and nourished his faith that he held on his way resolute in faith, accounting that God was able to raise Isaac up, even from the dead. "Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off." He was on the lookout, yes, he was keen-sighted, he knew the mount, the one, saith the Lord, I will tell thee of. "And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you." The commandment was

not to the two young men to go to this place and worship, but to Abraham. This speech to the young men is the first intimation of the purpose of this journey into the land of Moriah. Isaac hears it: "I and the lad will go yonder and worship." Father and son are both worshipers of God. They go to worship, Abraham to offer Isaac a burnt offering to the Lord, and he goes in full expectation of witnessing the raising of Isaac up even from the dead, out of the ashes of the burnt offering, from whence also he received him in a figure. "And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife: and they went both of them together." Three days ago Abraham prepared that wood for the burnt offering, and now his hands put it upon Isaac; it belongs to Isaac, and he must carry it up the mountain.

Let Isaac now for awhile be in the foreground for our contemplations. He has a heart to worship God; have you? He is of one heart with his father in this matter; this Abraham knows, for he said, "I and the lad will go yonder and worship." Isaac has a knowledge of how sinners are to draw nigh before the almighty God. The wood for the burnt offering is upon his shoulders, his father carries the fire and the knife. My father and I are going yonder to worship the Lord. His mind is absorbed in this sacred business of things pertaining to God. Isaac is a poor sinner, a sinner quickened by divine life, led and taught by the Lord, and being such, in this his journey up the mountain to worship God, all things contribute to give us a very instructive picture of the sinner called by the grace of God. But the things that I would now portray in the ascent and descent of Abraham and Isaac of Mount Moriah cannot be entered into unless we are in heart-union with these worshipers. Isaac contemplates the things that his father has provided for their worship of God, but one thing that is so essential for vile transgressors to have when they would draw nigh to God is not at hand. Isaac is uneasy, he feels the lack of this one thing. "Where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" There must be the shedding of blood, the propitiatory sacrifice between guilty transgressors and the just and holy God. Isaac felt this. There must be the blood of atonement or there can be no friendship, acceptance and happiness for a poor sinner before the Lord. With some of the called of God the knowledge of how essential is the sacrifice of Jesus, the Lamb of God, is only attained to after much painful and humiliating experience; but in due time all the taught of the Lord come to this, and can say:

> "Not the labor of my hands
> Can fulfill thy law's demands;
> Could my zeal no respite know,
> Could my tears forever flow,
> All for sin could not atone;
> Thou must save, and thou alone."

Have you been troubled and burdened with your sins? Isaac was. He bare the wood for the burnt offering. That wood represents his sins, a heavy load; it becomes no lighter as he climbs up the mountain. That wood was to be fuel for the fire to burn the sacrificial victim. This fire Abraham carries, which fire is the holy consuming justice and wrath of God; and Abraham also carries the knife to slay and shed the blood of the lamb. "But where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Isaac feels in his heart that the ascent of the mount by his father and himself to worship God will be a dismal failure without the blood of the lamb, for without the shedding of blood there is no

remission of sins. It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul, and if there is no atonement for our sins, how can we be true and accepted worshipers of God? Has thy sin-burdened heart ever entered into Isaac's cry, "Where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" O does thy sin-wounded spirit yearn after and long to see Jesus the Lamb of God for sinners slain? O the tremendous and eternal importance of reconciliation unto God by the atoning blood of Christ.

(*Concluded next number.*)

RETROSPECT.

DEAR BRETHREN CHICK AND KER:—I realize the constant flood of letters that crowd your attention with all that patience and industry can endure, yet I do feel this morning like making a few comments upon the records of the past as it bears upon the present. I have about forty volumes of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, more or less complete, two part volumes, 1838 and 1845, all containing the same unvarying faith of God's elect. I do not mean that there was nothing else but gospel truth ever published in it, for even the Bible has much in it that is not gospel truth; for instance, the quotations of Satan's words in the garden, the false accusations of the enemies of God's people in every age of Bible record, and the false doctrines of James and Jambres, Nicholas, and the Athenian inscription to the "unknown god," but the pervading spirit of gospel testimony has constantly been borne along the whole line of years, and that whole record shows long-suffering and forbearance to have been the rule of the first editor, who never assumed dictatorial or popish authority, but called the careful attention of the brotherhood to the laws, ordinances and doctrines already established by Christ and the apostles. I love the memory of that old record that I have in the SIGNS, for it has been so mutually recognized among the brethren that, with few exceptions, it has stood next to the Bible in the testimony of truth in its day. I wish to mention a few special harmonies of that gospel unchanged along the whole line of years. As a first principle, underlying all others, the absolute sovereignty of God was uniformly recognized, and lest the Arminian idea of mutability should be mistaken for the absolute immutability of God, the fundamental ground of all faith in God, could not be expressed in too strong or emphatic terms to convey the true and unwavering faith of our "old-fashioned" Baptist brethren. Therefore God was so described as to give no opportunity for man to doubt that faith in him as having absolutely predestinated all things that come to pass. There always was among men a loose recognition of God's sovereignty, much after the sovereignty of earthly kings, but that did not fill the measure of our Old Baptist brethren's faith in any age of the world. Always throughout the ages God has had his witnesses of his own irresistible and immutable sovereignty so demonstrated to and in their experience that they could not use expressions of that faith too emphatic to convey their unquestioning confidence in him. Just so also they felt that grace was needful for them, and in order to discriminate between legal righteousness and the actual righteousness of God and his salvation, they have always expressed themselves in words that would leave no doubt as to their meaning, so we are used to seeing the expression, "free grace," or "unmerited grace," while in fact grace

is full in itself, and means unmerited favor. Now I do not suppose any one objects to saying "unmerited grace" because that word "unmerited" is not needed, but we do hear lately a great deal said against "absolute predestination," because absolute does not mean any more than simply predestination alone does. I am so helpless I need God to help me, but that is just what all Arminians say, yet they make themselves principals in their faith and God secondary, while I wish to express myself as secondary and God first, for I had not known God until he taught me, therefore he is first and I last in the order of experience; so it must have been his will first that overcame mine, therefore my will is mutable, but his immutable; my spiritual will is but the reflex of his will. "Of his own will begat he us." Now let us look back, and we can only look back in time, but looking back through eternity we can see no will but God's, therefore it must have been according to his eternal purpose; and just here is where conditionalists drop in their opposition, so in order to emphasize my faith in God's will I accept of the word long used to express my perfect faith in God's will, which I cannot make too emphatic in opposition to the contingent or conditional will of God, and therefore say his will was an absolute will, his purpose an absolute purpose, his predestination was absolute predestination, whether for time or for eternity. Again, the SIGNS has, as far as I can remember (over fifty years), always carried these distinctive features of God's immutable attributes so consistently that I cannot help accepting them; they were the primary principles of my earliest experience, and have grown and fruited in constant harvests of grace to the present day. When people try to distinguish between foreknowledge and predestination, I wonder how they can get foreknowledge before His "eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Eph. iii. 11. If there can be such a thing as foreknowledge before eternity, I cannot understand it.

But I want to hasten to a few thoughts concerning other distinctive principles relative to the SIGNS. It has never been held as authority, but has always studiously avoided, as much as possible, a spirit of controversy, or of oppression of a weak brother's feeling, so I also have tried to be as charitable as I knew how with such. I never knew of a brother or sister who was dealt with or excluded on account of not accepting all I preached, but we never had one who carried opposition to an offensive extent, therefore had no occasion to deal with any.

The new birth also has always been somewhat differently understood, yet all felt its importance, and looked more for the fruits than for theory; in fact, knowledge is not so much essential as charity, the true sap, or vitality. When and where love reigns, which is charity, then and there the other fruits are found: joy, faith, hope, peace and all other graces are experienced, for love is the fulfilling of the law.

Let me say of the last number of the SIGNS, it was so excellent that it set my heart in reverie, and introduced the new year with old memories. I cannot catch them all, they are too fleet for me, but I have tried to hint at them as they flit by in troops of sacred thoughts.

May God sustain the old paper still in all its original soundness.

A. B. BREES.

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio.

MEDITATIONS.

WHILE in the employ of the Sugar Beet Manufacturing Co. these thoughts, or meditations, are jotted down during the few spare moments I have. It will be no wonder if my thoughts, or meditations, appear disconnected, being disturbed in writing to attend to my duties. I sometimes feel that of all God's created, intelligent creatures I am surely the most peculiar. When I go back in my mind to a time in my life, nearly fifty years ago, when I hope God spoke peace to my troubled mind, and removed the terrible weight of sin and guilt which hung over me like a death pall to my soul, and was pleased to point me to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world; when in my meditations I think of that time I taste again some of the sweets of the comforts and peace I enjoyed in that very hour. But the cares of this life, sore trials and vexation of spirit, together with the temptations of Satan, will come upon me like a tempest, and I soon seem to lose sight of all that joy and comfort I once had. I so easily give way to the besetting sin, unbelief, and say, There is no God, and in the bitterness of my soul I cry out and say, Surely I am without hope and without God in the world; I am of all men most miserable; surely there is no one like me. The joy and rejoicing is all turned into mourning; that hope I once had, though it then seemed bright and strong, has grown dim and weak; I fear and tremble to cling to it longer, but it is all I have, and on the verge of despair I am made to cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" What agony of soul the Savior of sinners endured when he thus cried out on the tree of the cross no mortal can conceive. O my soul, dare I even hope that it was for my sins that the wrath of God was poured out upon his beloved Son? How could justice and mercy be satisfied that the innocent Lamb of God should thus suffer and die to let the guilty sinner go free? God in that covenant between himself and Son, way back yonder in the annals of eternity, gave or bequeathed unto his beloved Son an inheritance (the church). In the beginning of creation I believe is here meant by "the beginning." If we will notice, everything in this creation had a law given by the great and only Creator, and not anything created has ever been able to, or can, change that law. Every plant, tree or fowl of the air brings forth after its kind, but nothing brought forth fruit after its kind (though every plant, herb and tree was in the earth before it grew,) until a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground. When man was formed of the dust of the ground he, too, was inanimate until the Lord God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," then he became a living soul. Man, too, had a law given him: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Death was the penalty of that law. Adam, when formed of the dust of the ground, was but a lump of inanimate clay, and had no life in him, hence he could not give himself life. In his transgression of God's holy law he had no power to redeem himself from under its curse. He was driven out of the garden of Eden, and could not return, for the flaming sword (God's divine justice), which turned every way, prevented him from partaking of the tree of life. He was as helpless then as when a lump of lifeless clay before his Maker. This was the deplorable condition of the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife, the inheritance of Jesus, given him long before time began. We

were ten thousand talents in debt, with not a farthing to pay. Justice demanded full payment of the debt we owed. But the beloved Son of God came forward and said, I will pay the debt of mine inheritance, my bride, and as surety for her I will take upon myself all her sins and iniquities, and will redeem her from under the curse of the law. The church of God being the inheritance of Jesus, he alone had the right of redemption. He being her surety, justice demanded that he pay the debt she owed. In this way only can I see how justice could be satisfied and the Just suffer for the unjust; how the innocent should suffer and the guilty go free. When our dear Redeemer cried upon the cross, "It is finished, and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost," the eternal redemption or salvation of every heir of God and joint-heir with the blessed Lord, our Elder Brother, was as complete and sure as that God is seated upon the throne of his own majesty and power.

J. H. YEOMAN.

LOVELAND, Colo.

WALKER, Ore., Oct. 31, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Trusting for divine guidance, I will try to write of the reflections of my mind regarding the discord that is produced when the people of God try to sing the new song, even praise to our God, in a strange land. Psalm cxxxvii. speaks forth the feelings of David: By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down; yea, we wept. We hanged our harps upon the willows, for they that wasted us required of us a song, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? While this may be personally some of the experience of David, yet he seemed to look forward to the oft repeated experience of the saints in the gospel day. Have not a goodly number of us been urgently invited to come to the mystery —Babylon, and cast in our lot with them, saying to us, We are all worshiping the same God, we all are aiming for the same place? At such times have we not experienced a dismal, soul-sickening discord, when the highest key that our harps are tuned to is, "God be merciful to me a sinner"? But they, with great swelling, worldly rhythm, tune the keys of their man-made instrument up to the sounding of a trumpet before them, saying, I thank thee, O Lord, that I am not as other men; that I am so much better than this downcast publican. Have you not hung your harps upon the willows and loathed to sing the Lord's song in this strange land, where they say that God has done all that he can for you, and now wants you to do your part? If you should take down your harp, it would only chord to the same old tune, Grace, free grace, to the praise of the Majesty on high, who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast, who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. What a contrast to the call to come to that god who is so puny that in his weakness he has done all that he can and has failed. But you must sing with David, 2 Sam. xxii. 2–4, "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer. The God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my savior; thou savest me from violence. I will call on the Lord, who is worthy to be praised." But when, through the mercy of our covenant-keeping God, we have been led from that

Babel to realize the fruition of God's promises to Israel: "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children," then indeed can we sing the Lord's song. David again beautifully expressed the blessed state of the church at such times, saying, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment [the most pleasant thing to the sense of smell,] upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." We have seen the plants drooping and perishing under the burning rays of the sun, and then have seen them in the sparkling morning dew refreshed and standing erect again, to the praise of that God who gave the blessing of the dew to them. At times we have had perhaps long seasons of drought, with absence from the meetings of the brethren, and in drooping spirits go all day with our heads bowed down, but again, a kindly Providence brings us together in unity, and the drooping heart quickens its beat and we are all aglow with love and ready to catch the impress of the Savior's love in each brother's face and voice as they sing the sweet songs of Zion with harps perfectly tuned for every song of praise, from the humble petition of the publican: "God be merciful to me a sinner," to David's ever-blessed Psalm, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want," &c. Then it is indeed good and pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity, for as they are all taught of the Lord they all speak the same things.

"How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
When those who love the Lord
In one another's peace delight,
And thus fulfill his word.

When each can feel his brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part;
When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart.

When free from envy, scorn and pride,
Our wishes all above,
Each can his brother's failings hide,
And show a brother's love.

When love in one delightful stream
Through every bosom flows,
And union sweet, and dear esteem,
In every action glows.

Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above,
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

The great blessing typified by the ointment and the dew is not only to be seen in the meeting of the brethren, but the Master also said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst," and his Spirit will lead them into all truth. Now being in communion with the bride and the heavenly Bridegroom, the great desire in all is to follow in the footsteps of the Elder Brother, and while hirelings are not willing to go into a field to labor without a stipulated promise from men, the Elder Brother, who is head over all things to the church, said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Again, he said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me," and when his children have faith even as a grain of mustard seed, they can go forth without purse or scrip, for he has promised them all that they need, showing his concern for them by the lily which toils not, neither spins, but yet is arrayed more gloriously than Solomon, and telling them that even the hairs of their head are numbered, and so bidding them

to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto them. This is the faith that causes his servants to go forth rejoicing in tribulation, and counting their bonds all joy for Jesus' sake. They knew that the sufferings of this present time were not worthy to be compared with the glory that should be revealed in them. This is the faith by which Stephen, when the earthly house of his tabernacle was being stoned, and was crumbling beneath the blows of his natural enemies, looked beyond the dark valley of death and saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God, as though to welcome him; and in the power of this blessed faith he could say, and so can all who possess it, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

This is that unconquerable faith which strengthened the three Hebrew children to stand fast in the liberty of their God, and to denounce the king's folly. It was the Son of God who stood with them in the fiery furnace and shielded them from even the smell of fire upon their garments when the greatest powers of earth were combined against them, using the most potent means of destruction that could be devised. His grace is sufficient in every time of need. Then may we not sing praise to the name of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away, and which is reserved in heaven for us? This is the glad anthem of grace, free grace. May it be our happy lot to be included among that innumerable throng who with harps in sweet melody sing the new song, saying, Thou art worthy, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us with thy blood. Again, it is written that they sang with a loud voice, saying, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." I sometimes dare to hope for these unspeakable blessings.

Your unworthy brother,

G. O. WALKER.

LAKELAND, Florida, Nov. 10, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—As many of our sisters have requested me to write a narrative of my experience for the SIGNS, I will do so, the Lord willing, and if you deem it worthy you may give it a place in your excellent paper. My father, W. C. Hagan, was a reader of the SIGNS for many years, and now my husband, Elder C. K. Haines, and I read it, and greatly appreciate it for the truth's sake, and I hope to continue reading it as long as I live, or as long as it advocates what it now does.

When I was a child, I thought it was wrong to tell falsehoods or do anything bad; I thought that if I did I would be punished by a higher power. As I grew older I thought that I was a very good girl. My mother was a Missionary Baptist. Once her sister's son came to take her home with him to attend a protracted meeting. I was about fifteen years of age then, and my mother took me along with her to this meeting. I thought that all must have a change of heart in order to be christians. I took my seat way back by the door. I had had little or no thought heretofore about my own salvation, and when the preachers asked for all the christians to come up and shake hands, I glanced around the house to see how many sinners were left. At this

moment it seemed to me as though some one spoke to me and said, You are the worst sinner in the house, and I was made to shed tears, and hide my face; I wanted to hide from all in the house. My aunt, who was a leader in the meetings, saw me, and came to me and led me up to the mourners' bench. I was willing to go anywhere to obtain relief. At the mourners' bench my dear mother stood by me and talked and shouted. They told me to believe and I would be saved; but this I could not do, for I felt to be the worst sinner in the world. I went to the mourners' bench again that night, and when I got up from the bench they all rejoiced over me, but I did not feel like rejoicing, but they persuaded me to join them, and set the next day to baptize me. It seemed to me that every moment I prayed the Lord that if I were deceived I might not be baptized. When we got to the meeting the next day the news came that the preacher was sick, and could not be there, and I thought surely the Lord had decreed it, because I was not prepared or fit to be baptized. I was still in much trouble. We went home, and they sent for me to come again and be baptized, but I did not go. Then I tried to forget my trouble. I would go to parties, and try to enjoy myself as others seemed to do, but I could not; I would go home and be sorry that I went to the parties. I continued in that trouble for about four years. At that time the Presbyterians were holding a meeting near our home. We attended the meeting one dark, rainy night; my sister and brother and myself, with a few others, were there; they called for mourners, and we went forward. One poor old man led in prayer. O how I did feel the need of prayer. I felt as though he was praying for me. He was one of our near neighbors. I remember some of his words yet. He prayed for us all. I believed that he was a child of God. When they dismissed the meeting we went home, but my burden still rested upon me, and I seemed to get no relief. I retired, but cannot tell how long I had been in bed when I felt my burden was gone, and I there viewed my Savior's face in rays of most brilliant and glittering light. Words are inadequate to express my great joy. I thought that if a thousand people were present, I would tell them to get down on their knees and pray. I went to sleep happy, and arose the next morning happy, and told my mother what I had seen. I thought that I would never see any more trouble. I loved every one, and could see no fault in any one or anything that God had made. That evening one of the preachers came to our house, and I overheard my mother telling him what I had told her, and I was sorry I had told her, for I thought that I had been deceived, and had deceived her, and she would tell others, and they would be deceived. I did not remain in that happy state long, but soon found trouble and sorrow. Soon after this my dear mother was called to her heavenly abode, where no sorrow is. I truly believed that she was a child of God. I also thought that she was with the right people. I felt that I ought to unite with some denomination, and joined the Missionary Baptists. One of my sisters united there with me, and I thought that one of my brothers would join with us, but when I got to the water I found that he had decided not to do so. But not long after that he slipped away from us and united with the Primitive Baptists, at Mud Creek, Fulton Co., Ky. I was troubled about it, for I thought he knew what he was doing, and thought

that I had better read the Scriptures to see if I were right. My dear father was a member of the Primitive Baptists also, but he never tried to teach us religion. Religion is to know God. I soon learned why he did not do so, for in reading the Scriptures I found that no man could teach another to know the Lord, but that they must be taught of God. About this time my father was going to an Old School Baptist association, and I went with him. At that meeting, if I am not deceived, I heard the first gospel sermon in spirit that I had ever heard. I had never before been fed on spiritual food, but, if not deceived, I have been fed thus many times since. At that time my father was taking the SIGNS, and other Old School Baptist papers, and I began to read them, and to compare them with the Scriptures, and was soon made to see where the truth was preached. I asked my father why he had not told me before, and I might not have joined the Missionary Baptists. At about that time I was married. My husband was a godless man, and that caused me much trouble and sorrow, but shortly after we were married he was stricken under conviction for his sins, and for some years he was in much trouble. About the year 1896 he was given a hope in the Lord, and he began to talk of the doctrine of the predestination of all things, yet he had never heard an Old School Baptist preach. I felt thankful to God for making him a different man; and he was talking the doctrine that I believed before he knew what it was, or had heard any one preach it. My membership was still with the Missionary Baptists. Soon after my husband professed a hope, he went to Muddy Fork Old School Baptist Church, at Cerulean Springs, Ky., and there presented himself for membership, and was received. I also presented myself, and they received me. I have never regretted the step. My husband soon began to preach for the Baptists. Since then I have gone with him a great many times, and have met many of the saints of God, whom I hope I love as the dear children of God. O how truly it is said that our God loves them with an everlasting love, and with loving-kindness draws them. They are all one great family, and God is their Father. I feel unworthy, but still I would not exchange my little hope for all this world. I am often lonely, and feel almost forsaken when my husband is gone among the churches. I have many lonely hours, but our God knows best, and he doeth all things well, and after the counsel of his own will.

Farewell, dear brethren and sisters. Remember me in your prayers. May God bless you all.

Your sister,

(MRS.) C. K. HAINES.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, Nov. 27, 1910.

MY DEAR SISTER:—Your letter came yesterday, and I was very glad to hear again from you. My correspondence has suffered considerably of late, and I know I am to blame for it. I do not know if I have much of profit to write to-day. Several times lately I have felt cast down and discouraged, but again, I have felt to rejoice in the Lord's goodness and mercy, and have been given strength to hope on and trust in him to help and support me through every trial. I have thought of the way I have been led; first a fear of God in his awful omnipotence, before whom we are but as the dust of the balance; then comes a desire to do good, that we may merit his approval, but the more we strive toward this end

the further we seem to be from attaining it. As we search our hearts sin becomes more apparent ("by the law is the knowledge of sin") a heavy burden is laid upon us: that of obtaining righteousness by the deeds of the law. The hopelessness of our position is borne in on our mind, and yet the awful penalty of death and destruction will not allow us to rest. In despair we are made to cry for mercy, but our prayer seems unanswered. We are made to "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." Then we are made to realize his power and to feel our own nothingness, perhaps even to feel that if he casts us off it is good, so long as it is his will. "Thy will be done." But suddenly the darkness disappears, the Sun arises in all his glory, our heavy burden is lifted, and a sense of peace and security in the love and favor of God takes its place, our iniquities are blotted out, to be remembered no more against us forever, our love goes out toward God, because he first loved us, and toward all his creatures. We then believe that nothing again can trouble us, but soon we find we are not through our journey, but merely at the beginning, yet the burden that was lifted can never return. We are no more under the law. "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ." Still we are ignorant; we know not if we have any vital interest in Christ or his salvation, and we long that he may be revealed to us. Little by little the Scriptures begin to unfold before us the deep mystery of godliness and the mystery of iniquity. We see how the light shone in the darkness and the darkness comprehended it not. Jesus says sweetly to our soul, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me?" We are made to see him God manifest in the flesh, our Daysman, the Mediator between God and men. At times for a little season we are given periods of rejoicing, are lifted above the earth and made to praise God in spirit for his marvelous mercy. But we inquire, Why this strange pathway? Could we not have come into this knowledge without all these trials? Let us go back to the beginning. What was the purpose of God in creation? It was the eternal glory of his name. He formed all things that exist, and highest of all he created a chosen people of the sons of men who should shew forth his praise; to do that they must have the righteousness of God, must be partakers of his glory. But he is a jealous God, and will not give his glory to another, so they must have a righteousness equal with God's, and yet in themselves have no reason to glory; all their glory must be in him. "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." So the mystery of iniquity enters the world, the law is given, man transgresses and suffers the curse. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." We are dead, absolutely devoid of merit, without one thing to boast of or glory in. But God has chosen a people to shew forth his praise; he is made flesh and dwells among them; they are his, he has a perfect right to redeem them. He suffers for them the penalty of the law, and fully redeems them unto himself. But he is God, he has all power, even to lay down his life and take it again. He rises from the dead and brings with him all his people, freed from under the curse of the law. They have now a perfect righteousness imputed to them through him; in themselves they are nothing, but in him they are made kings and priests unto God forever. Now they can praise him in spirit and in truth; they enter

with him within the veil; all their glory, all their righteousness, is of God; they shew forth his praise. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

My dear sister, I hope the Lord may be with you and lead you gently, ever keeping you at his feet, and make you rest in his peace which passeth understanding.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

GILBERT McCOLL.

TEHUACANA, Texas, Nov., 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I feel somewhat impressed to write a short article upon the subject of rightly dividing the word of truth; at the same time I realize my weakness and inability to give such thoughts as are worthy of so grand a subject, still that does not lessen the impression. I know that this is a deep and broad subject for a poor, finite, illiterate worm of the earth like me to attempt to speak of, but if the Lord will give me light and liberty I will write some of my thoughts. For a starting point, I will refer to the first verse of the gospel recorded by Matthew, which reads as follows: "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham."

We read of a generation of vipers, of a generation that curseth its father and mother, of another generation that is pure in its own eyes, and yet is not washed from its filthiness, and of other generations that I could mention, but do not think it needful now. I understand that all these generations are descendants of Adam in a natural sense. Now if the New Testament is the book of the generation of Jesus Christ, it is not the book of all these other generations of which we read in the Bible, and all the exhortations, admonitions and requisitions of the New Testament apply to none save the generation of Jesus Christ. I have often asked the question, Who compose the generation of Jesus Christ? Some will answer one thing and some another, simply guessing at it, just as men did in the days when Christ was on earth. He asked his disciples, "Whom do men say that I am?" Some say that the children of believers by natural lineage are his generation; others say that it is made up of any of Adam's race who will accept Christ and believe the gospel, and close in with the overtures of mercy, and meet God on the half-way ground, and so be saved, but the Scriptures teach, and I believe it, that it is that portion of Adam's race which the all-wise Creator saw fit in his love and mercy to choose in Christ Jesus before the world was, and that choice is made manifest to the chosen here in time by an application of the Spirit of God, they being born again, not of the will of the flesh, nor of blood, nor of the will of man, but of God. I do not believe that I am merely guessing at all this. Those of whom I have spoken before, who say one thing and another, merely guessing at the matter, will quote Scripture that is spoken directly to the generation of Jesus Christ and apply it to the other generations named above. They will sometimes also misquote the Scripture to make it fit their theory. There are in Texas some who claim to be Primitive Baptists who preach what they call a Bible two seed doctrine; they say that the heirs of perdition came from the infernal regions, and will return to Satan, the author of their being, and that in like manner the heirs of promise will return to Christ in heaven, from whence they came, and for proof they refer to

Isaiah xxxv. 10. But it is clear to me that this Scripture does not apply to the joy and gladness of the ransomed of the Lord in immortal glory, but to them that have been ransomed from the captivity of the devil, who had been carried off into Babylon, or into idolatry, and are now delivered. I believe that I know whereof I speak, for I have had some experience of that captivity, and when I returned to Zion it was with songs and with everlasting joy upon my head, and I have obtained joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing have fled away. These people claim that the ransomed of the Lord were in Adam in a spiritual sense, at the time of his transgression, and quote 1 Cor. xv. 22, for proof of this. I understand the Scriptures to teach that all the Adamic family were represented in Adam in every sense of the word, at the time of his transgression, and all merited the very same condemnation pronounced upon Adam in the garden. This Scripture has no allusion to the death received in the garden whatever. The death that fell upon Adam and his whole posterity was a death to the innocent state in which he was created. It is true that corporeal death then followed, and this I believe is the death under consideration when Paul is writing in the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians. It is true that Paul was there addressing none but believers, but as all believers are in Adam in a natural sense, they all die a natural, or corporeal, death, and then are made alive in Christ, in the resurrection. If the word "die" was spelled "died," that is, in the past tense, these of whom I speak might have some ground for their position, but the word "die" refers to and takes in past, present and future. These men claim that there is a progeny of Satan that did not fall in Adam when he transgressed, from the fact, as they claim, that they could not have been up anywhere to fall from. But they claim that these were raised up from their degradation with Satan, their father, to the teachings of the moral law, and, like their fountain, they cannot rise above their level, and must stay with their father, the devil, and they quote John viii. 44, for proof. But the devil is not the father of the heirs of perdition in a progenitive sense; he is their father in the sense that he is their teacher, their ruler, and controller, just as Paul calls Timothy his son; not, of course, in the sense that he was his natural father, but that under Paul's teaching he had come to understand the truth, and to follow it, and proclaim it, and so he called Timothy his son in the faith.

These are a few of my thoughts in this direction; if you think they are worthy of a place in the SIGNS you may give them to your readers. I could write more, but fear to weary you. I will close, hoping that I have written from a pure motive, and with the best of feeling toward all. May the grace of our once crucified, but now risen and ascended and glorified Redeemer, guard and guide us in the way of all truth, is the prayer of an old sinner, saved by grace if saved at all,

JOSEPH H. BOZEMAN.

CAVE CITY, Ky., Jan. 7, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—With a sorrowful heart and troubled mind I will try to write you a few lines to inform you that I cannot subscribe for the SIGNS the present year, and ask you to publish this letter from Elder P. W. Sawin, which was most welcome to us. Our home was consumed by fire the 14th of November, and Elder Sawin visited us on the 3rd, before going to Canada, preaching at our

house, also at Oak Grove on Sunday. We have loved ones who read the SIGNS, and through dear Elder Sawin's letter they will learn of our sad loss. We have neither Bible nor hymn-book. Our bookcase was two-thirds full of the best of books: four bound volumes of the SIGNS, four Bibles and five hymn-books; among them were my grandfather's Bible and hymn-book, both one hundred and twenty-two years old. He was a pioneer Baptist minister, born in 1744, in Gloucester Co., Va., and was one of the earliest settlers of Kentucky, and one of those who framed its first constitution. His name was Alexander Davidson. In all probability this may be the last letter I shall ever be permitted to write you, as I am quite feeble, had a hemorrhage from my lungs the 2nd day of December, and am in the eighty-first year of my age. I have not been able to use pen and ink since the night of the conflagration. Not only was our dwelling consumed, but the smoke and cistern house, pump, woodhouse and wheat granary, all are in ashes. Two large locust trees, more than a century old, were burned to the ground, and the others all injured so they will have to be taken down. We had lived there since 1850, and raised a family of eight children, two sons and six daughters; now have only two sons and two daughters. I had been in such feeble health that many precious letters were unanswered, and I was sitting up writing until after twelve o'clock. Had I retired with the family we would probably have been cremated in the flames, as we barely escaped with our lives. O my heart is filled with thankfulness and gratitude to our heavenly Father for saving us from such a fearful death. I feel that it was his kind providence alone preserved our lives. It was something unusual for me to sit up so late and write letters by lamplight, and not be in the least drowsy. I feel that the goodness and mercy of God have followed me all the days of my life, even to the present moment. O for a heart to love and praise his holy name. I am with my dear daughter and family. The weather has been so inclement nothing could be done, even the debris has not been removed. Our neighbors are going to meet and do what they can for us. Our friends have been more than kind, contributing in many ways to our needs. I have not means of my own to erect a new building, but my son will assist me. One consolation I have, I can read my daughter's SIGNS I have been giving her, as well as the two volumes of editorials. She has preserved every number, as did I.

Your unworthy, afflicted sister,

LAURA M. BAIRD.

[OUR dear sister will not have to do without the paper; we take pleasure in sending it to her as long as she lives.—ED.]

ST. THOMAS, Ontario, Nov. 22, 1910.

MRS. LAURA M. BAIRD—DEAR SISTER:—In a letter from home, received on the 19th, my wife inclosed a clipping from a paper giving me a short account of your sad loss by fire of all your earthly belongings, and my heart saddens at your situation. We know how to sympathize from a personal experience (having passed through the ordeal twice), yet I feel our situation was not as yours, as we were young in years and could the better stand it. These are some of the mysterious things to us, yes, they are incomprehensible, but we know God reigns and will care for you; we can only be still and know that he is God. Job suffered the loss of all things, yet maintained his integrity, in

that he bowed to his God and said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." I trust each of you may be given that spirit of reconciliation to the Father's will; it must be God-given. How much we need his supporting hand each day, and how little we know what a day may bring forth. I think we were talking of this when we were with you. I am comforted in the thought that your precious lives were saved from destruction and spared to us yet a while longer; for this we should feel grateful, and that God is able to supply all your needs. May you both be given grace to help in this time of need, and I want to say here our home and our hearts are open to you to share with you all that we have, and we will be glad to minister to you in any way possible, and hope if your minds will lead you to do so that you will feel a perfect freedom to accept the same.

I left my home Saturday, the 12th; I never left more sad, but word from home informs me all are better, for which I hope I am thankful to the Lord. My meetings here have been pleasant. I feel that I have reason to say the Lord has blessed me with a good degree of liberty of soul to declare the unsearchable riches of Christ to the comfort of poor, tempest-tossed souls like myself. The weather a part of the time has been somewhat unfavorable, a deep snow and sleighing several days in and about London. I just came to this place this morning, and will preach here to-night. I will not get home until the 6th of December. I am glad my wife wrote you. This is the first opportunity I have had since I got her letter, Saturday evening. Sunday I spoke twice, 11 a. m. and 3:30 p. m., and was too tired after that to write. I hope this may find you both reasonably well, and resting in the Lord Jesus, our dear Elder Brother, and believe me our hearts go out in sympathy and loving remembrance to you both.

Most sincerely,

P. W. SAWIN.

1 KINGS VI. 8.

"THE door for the middle chamber was in the right side of the house: and they went up with winding stairs into the middle chamber, and out of the middle into the third."

This house spoken of here is Solomon's temple, which was figurative of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. The door for the middle chamber typified Christ, and the middle chamber typified the middle resting-place for the people of God (church) between the new birth and the third heaven, that glorious city where our Savior is, and they went up with winding stairs. Yes, my brother and sister, our way in this world and wilderness of sin and sorrow is a winding stair, and the children of God have known these stairs ever since they came in by that door that is in the right side of the house. Jesus is always in the right side and on the right side. The blessed Son of God said, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." God said by the prophet, "And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." Yes, my poor brother and sister, it is not very far off until we will be carried out of the middle chamber into the third, which is the heaven of heavens, the holy city of our God and his Son. Paul said he knew a man in Christ caught up to the third heaven, and I believe that man was Paul. (2 Cor. xii. 2.) I believe that Solomon's

temple was a figure of the church of Jesus Christ. Paul said, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?" Again, Paul said, "In whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."—Eph. ii. 21, 22. And again, "For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."—2 Cor. vi. 16. Jesus said when he comes the second time he will set the sheep on his right hand. (Matt. xxv. 33.) "The door for the middle chamber was in the right side of the house," and Jesus told his disciples to "cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find."—John xxi. 6. Again, Peter said, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Yes, Jesus is the door in the right side of the house, as the type shows.

"And they went up with winding stairs into the middle chamber, and out of the middle into the third." These things are most glorious to me, journeying along the winding stairs in this dark wilderness of corruption and sin. O blessed children of Jesus, you who are traveling these winding stairs will understand what I mean, and my object in this. Solomon said it is all plain to him that understandeth.

I have written this to relieve my mind, and, brethren editors, you can consider it, and publish it if there is anything good in it, and if you see no good in it I feel sure you will not publish it. These things are sacred to me, they are my meat and drink. I hope that I am a spiritual brother to the saints. I know I am a poor sinner. S. M. BUTLER.

TOONE, Tenn.

LEESBURG, Va., Jan. 19, 1911.

DEARLY BELOVED EDITORS:—Here is something I would like to see in the SIGNS, if you think so, too. The spirit manifested by brother and sister Baird concerning my leaving Warwick and coming to Virginia does me good, and I hope expresses the attitude of the whole Warwick Church, as I have earnestly desired they might be reconciled to the Lord's will in this matter. I certainly never should have left them had I not felt the Lord was leading me this way. For two years the matter was a burden to me, and no one knows what I passed through but those who have had similar experiences. I am aware that many divers opinions have been expressed by onlookers regarding my coming here, but these are of small moment to me, so long as I feel my conscience clear in the matter. Suffice it to say I at least "conferred not with flesh and blood" as to what I should do.

Yours in gospel bonds,

H. H. LEFFERTS.

WARWICK, N. Y., Jan. 16, 1911.

ELDER H. H. LEFFERTS—DEAR BROTHER:—Some way I feel to write you a few lines to-night, and in the little I shall write I am quite sure I cannot find suitable words to express my thoughts as I would like, for it has never been given me to express my thoughts, either in writing or speaking. It is in my thoughts so often, the great love Christ has for his people, such sinful, vile creatures that we are; is it not a wonderful love? Surely we never could understand the height or depth or breadth of it, it is so far beyond any creature love. I try to picture it to my mind, but I cannot, it is too wonderful. And the love the brethren have for one another, is it not wonderful, too?

It seems so to me. They may be strangers in the flesh, yet how our love goes out to them. When I meet them I feel to take them all in my arms, as it were, not as brothers and sisters in the flesh, but O such a different love. I wish that I could tell you how, I hope, I love them all, but I cannot explain it. It means much to me to be counted as one with them, the church, although so unworthy, so unfit to be in their company, and yet there is where I long to be. Is it not wonderful that the brethren can have fellowship for me? I feel that it is, poor, miserable sinner that I am. I read and hear others tell of their experiences, and they appear wonderful to me, and mine seems such a little experience that I sometimes doubt I have any. I have thought how it was that nearly four years ago I heard that there was to be preaching here in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse the following Sunday, and a sudden strong desire came to me that I must go to that meeting. There had always been meetings there, but never before had I cared or thought to go; but the day came and I went, and from that time on have attended every meeting, with but one or two exceptions. It seemed the preachers were telling me in each sermon all my thoughts and feelings, showing me what a sinner I was. I went to several church meetings, with no thought of going before the church, but I could not stay away, and could never be good enough to stay with them, as I felt; but one day I could keep quiet no longer, and tried to relate a little of the Lord's dealings with me, hoping for a home with the church. As you know, I was accepted and welcomed with them. Two weeks from that day you baptized me, and how happy was I then. I have experienced some very dark days since, and some very bright ones. And my dear husband; to think how good the Lord has been to us, such undeserving creatures that we are, that in a few months he, too, was brought to the fold. Dear brother, I am writing this I scarcely know why, but felt I wanted to, and know that you will understand better what I hoped to express than I can write it, and will tell me all my mistakes; I want you to. Although you are no longer my pastor, you are my brother, and I hope you will write me of all my shortcomings and mistakes. When you were with us, and our dear pastor, I did not think we would be called to part with you so soon; it seemed I could not bear to have you go away, but the Lord knows best. We miss you, and wish it might have been the Lord's will that you remain with us, but it was not, and we feel what is is right, for the Lord rules over all. May your labors be blessed in the church in Virginia, and may you be given health to attend your many duties; and now, dear brother, remember we love you. Good-night.

ISAAC AND ELLA BAIRD.

SAN ANTONIO, Texas, January, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—I hope this may be in time for the January 15th issue, but fear I am too late. Intending to be in this city until about February 10th, perhaps a little longer, I am anxious to learn if there are any Old School Baptists here or near here who would like to meet one of that order. If any meetings are held here I should like to know where and when, through any one who knows, whether living here or elsewhere. Perhaps sister Hattie Ray, whose address I have lost, and with whom I have corresponded, may be able to give me some information immediately, she being well

acquainted with many Baptists in this State. I shall write to a few others, and will answer with my thanks all I hear from. I have not heard any Old School Baptist preaching since June, 1908, when I visited the home of Elder J. F. Beeman, of Oklahoma. I passed through Fort Worth to Brady, Texas, in August, and back to Oklahoma City in October of that year, but was in too much of a hurry each trip to even spend a few hours with friends there, although I felt very much inclined to do so. I had attended several meetings of the South Ft. Worth Church, as well as one at Keller, near there, in the winter of 1908, all of which I remember very pleasantly as seasons of sweet refreshing. I should like to stop off there upon my return to Oklahoma City, but fear I shall not be able to on my return ticket through without change over the Santa Fe R. R. Any one living here and wishing to reach me by phone may do so by calling up (old phone) 3716 at The Portland, 112 W. Pecan St., and call for me with Mrs. Wade (my only sister) at room 8. Love to the household of faith.

I am a weak sister, if one at all, in hope of immortal life,

(MRS.) E. J. BOLTON.

GRIFFINS Corners, N. Y., Jan. 16, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As my subscription has expired for the year 1910, I will inclose money order for two dollars for another year. I have tried to get some new subscribers, but have failed to get even one. I believe the doctrine set forth in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and it must be revealed from heaven by the power of God. We read, "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." I want to take the SIGNS while I live. I used to read it when I was young, and acted as agent a number of years, but I am now getting old; I have seen my eighty-fifth year. I united with the Old School Baptists in 1857, and thought then my trouble was all over, but I was mistaken, for in 1880 I, with another dear brother, was set before a council called the first Saturday and Sunday in July, to relate our experience, call, &c., and the Elders and brethren went out, and soon returned and stated that they were satisfied with us both, and on Sunday we were set apart by the laying on of hands, but I have never felt that I was sufficient in and of myself to feed the sheep and lambs with the sincere milk of the word, that they might grow thereby.

I do not know whether you can make out my writing, for when I sat down to write I only thought to send you the money order, as my hand is in no shape to guide my pen, so I will close for this time, hoping it will find you both well, to still continue in well doing, as you have in the past.

Yours in love and fellowship with the saints and the household of God,

JAMES MILLER.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1911.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE CITY THAT JOHN SAW.

SISTER S. J. Reeves, of Magazine, Ark., asks some thoughts from us regarding the city that John saw, as recorded in Revelation.

Much of this book called Revelation has never seemed clear to us, but we believe that it contains the gospel of the Son of God, as well as all other portions of the word. There have been great differences of interpretation among many writers upon this wonderful book; good, able and wise brethren have not seen all things in it alike. We feel that since this is so, it becomes us to write and speak with humility concerning it. Highly wrought figures of speech are used by the inspired writer in setting forth what he saw. Many of these figures of speech have not seemed clear to our understanding, yet some things seem clear, and of a few of these things we will speak briefly.

First, we are told in the beginning of the book that the things which were to be shown to John "must shortly come to pass." From this it is clear that none of these things had as yet come to pass, and it is also sure that the time was not far in the future when they should take place. The word "shortly," fixes the truth of this last conclusion, and the word "shall," fixes the truth that all that follows was yet in the future. In the third verse we are told that the time was at hand. This, with the word "shortly," fixes, as it appears to us, the time of the fulfillment of this record as being near at hand; that is, it was then near at hand. Then the addresses to the seven churches, which then existed in the cities named, show that they were to be partakers in the things that were about to be written. These churches became extinct, some of them not many generations afterward, therefore if they saw these things it must have been shortly after they were written. Among the things sublime and terrible which were written in this book, John declares that he saw "the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven," and of this city he gives a full description. It seems impossible to us that this can mean that from some unmeasurable distance in the sky above us there was to be a city tangible to our touch, and to be seen as we can see the cities of earth, that should come down into this lower atmosphere of ours, which city is made up of jeweled walls and gates, and of golden streets, with trees and a river, such as we can and now do see in earth; such a city as this has never as yet come down from the regions above us. But whatever the coming of the city may mean, it was then at hand, and must shortly come down, according to the first verses of this book. The word "heaven," in the text referred to above, cannot mean the heaven of eternal glory, because of this heaven it is said in this book that there was war in heaven. Strife or war cannot be thought of as existing around the glorious throne of God, where his children shall all finally dwell. The dragon and his angels cannot be found

in that heaven, for nothing unholy or unclean can be found there at all, and, not being dwellers in that holy abode, there could have been no warfare against them there. It has appeared to us that the city coming down from God out of heaven is the church of God on earth, with her order and ordinances, with her worship, and with walls and bulwarks impregnable against every assault, and with gates standing open night and day for the entrance of all the redeemed of God, and without this city, John saw the unclean and vile of all nations; these could not enter there. The heaven from which this city descends is the gracious love, grace, mercy and purpose of God which have appointed salvation for his people; these are heavenly places indeed. Our God manifests himself to his people in these gracious things, by visibly calling his own out of nature's darkness into his marvelous light. John saw the city coming down. Mark this: it is not said that he saw it among men as a city that had come down, or that he saw that it should at some future day come down, as in a moment, but he saw it coming down, and this city of God, with all her blessings and riches and light and glory, has been coming down, and is still coming down. Every good and every perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights. In every sense of the word God is above us all, and so whatever we receive from him in any way must be spoken of as coming down from above. The rain, the dew, the sunlight and its warmth, literally come down to us from above. These things are used as figures of heavenly things. God is the author and giver of all, and he gives always with unwearied hand to his chosen ones on earth. From heaven, then, the city descends, and in this city his people find every spiritual blessing that they can ever need. The city, as said before, is the church of God on earth, but in that city is also contained every spiritual blessing; they all come down from God, and it is here and now that these things are fulfilled. All this does not in any way belittle the truth that there is infinitely more beyond this present condition than we can conceive or even think of. Here is the foretaste, there will be the full satisfaction. Then shall we be satisfied, when we awake with His likeness. As long as we live here below shall we be following after, that we may apprehend that for which we are apprehended of Christ Jesus. As long as we live here we shall count ourselves as not having attained. Always we shall be seeking and waiting until the full salvation comes. Our blessed Lord Jesus came down into the world that he might raise us up to heaven. The city of God is coming down, that we may be at the end taken up to God in final glory. Jesus is Emmanuel (God with us), that we may at the end be finally with God.

C.

APOSTASY.

BROTHER D. C. Wacaser, of Garden City, Ala., asks that we say something through the SIGNS concerning what is commonly called the doctrine of apostasy. He speaks of hearing a Methodist minister, some little time ago, upon that subject, and speaks of some of the things which that minister said about it. Of course our brother knows that one of the things which as Old School Baptists we most firmly believe is, that it is impossible that one who has known the Lord savingly at all can fall away so as to perish at last, and, on the other hand, it is no new thing for a Methodist minister

to proclaim that even believers may at last perish. We have ourselves known of some who under their teaching have professed conversion to God three or four times during a few years, and it is claimed that had that one died during either of these lapses from religion he would have been lost forever, while had he died just after being converted he would have been saved in heaven. It has long seemed to us that Methodists ought to rejoice when one who has just made profession of religion immediately dies, because they think should he live any length of time he might apostatize and be lost. If anything is clearly stated in the word of God, it is that all the people of God are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last day. A careful study of this Scripture leaves no loophole of escape from the conclusion that all who once know the Lord are safe in Christ forever. Again, the blessed Master said, "I give unto them [my sheep] eternal life; and they shall never perish." All that are given of the Father to the Son shall be raised up again at the last day. It is sure that the atonement of Christ is without force or value if one for whom Christ died may at last perish. In such a case, he would not see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied, and in the text, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," the words "no wise" would have no meaning. They have the force of, under no circumstances, on no account, or for no reason. We might go on multiplying quotations to this end, but will forbear. We wish however to call attention to some things which our brother reports as coming from the lips of this minister. First, he said nothing could separate us from the love of God, but we could separate ourselves, as Adam did, by giving heed to the devil. It would be true that we might, and assuredly should, fall as did Adam, did our redemption mean no more than that we were by it placed back just where Adam was before he transgressed. Adam was a natural man, but the redeemed are spiritual men. The atonement of Christ covers all sins, past, present and to come, else it is without value at all. In other words, if the atonement of Christ did not cover all the sins of all our lives, and of all kinds, then that sin, or those sins, not thus covered, would demand eternal punishment from us still, and none could be saved. But the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses, as we are taught in the word, from all sin. If men sin after they believe, that sin is also covered in the atonement, as well as all other sins, therefore none of the redeemed, no matter how far astray they may go, shall fail to be sought out and brought back. What right had this minister to say that anything could separate us from the love of God, when an inspired apostle has said directly the contrary? The apostle winds up his declaration in the eighth chapter of Romans by saying, "Nor any other creature." If sin, our sins, could have separated us from the love of God, surely our sins when dead to God absolutely would have done so. But God commendeth his love to us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Our hope is this, that God loves sinners, and that not all our sins can separate us from his love.

So far as the doctrine of apostasy is concerned, the cause of the fall of Adam need not be considered; the question is not concerning the fall of our first parents, nor concerning the course of unregenerate men in the world, but concern-

ing the safety of the redeemed: Can the redeemed fall away again? The above Scriptures and considerations abundantly show the contrary. Whatever might have been the state of Adam in the creation, no man now comes into the world sinless; all are slaves to sin from their birth. Men by nature are so completely enslaved by sin that they do not know their own bondage, but when the Holy Spirit begins his gracious redeeming work in the heart, that man or woman begins to know their own slavery, then they begin to cry for relief, then they find that they have not a free will. The will, as well as every other power and faculty in them, is in bondage, and not free, and all men are so in bondage that not one of all the race of Adam has ever chosen righteousness when left to themselves; sin commands their service in soul, body and spirit. If ever any man comes to choose righteousness, it is not because of his free will, but by the grace of God reigning in him. Sin had reigned unto death, but now grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life. In the second place, this minister referred to the children of Israel who fell in the wilderness because of their disobedience, but this can have nothing to do with the question of apostasy from salvation in Christ. Those Israelites were not redeemed by the blood of Christ, nor were they subjects of the new birth; they were natural men and women, but chosen as a people to be typical of the true Israel of God. Literal Egypt was not death in sin, and deliverance from it was not redemption from sin and death, and entering the land of Canaan was not entering heaven. They were dealt with as a nation, or people, and always made manifest that they could not serve God, as Moses told them beforehand. A conditional covenant was given them, but that covenant they brake, it is never said once that they kept it, but eternal life did not belong to that covenant; there was no promise of heavenly blessings contained in it, even had they kept it. They did transgress and fell in the wilderness. All men, just like them, are transgressors, and all who expect the blessings of God upon the ground of their own obedience shall fall just as miserably as did they. But the redemption of Christ covers all our failures, by it sinners are saved. Jesus did not die for sinless men, but for sinners. He did not try to save, but he did save. He did not leave the work incomplete, but finished it, and upon the ground of his finished work, if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, and this Advocate is he that died and rose again for our justification, and, being justified by his grace, we shall be saved from wrath through him. These are scriptural testimonies. Israel fell, because they were not kept by the power of God, but the true Israel shall not perish, because they are kept by that power. It is not true that Christ died for all men, as much for the lost in hell as for the saved in heaven. Some men were in heaven and some men were in the state of the lost when Jesus died upon Calvary; he did not die for those already perishing. The saved in heaven shall never be able to say, Christ died for the lost, as well as for us, but we are here and the lost are yonder, because we did some things that they did not do. Human work or choice is not the difference between heaven and hell, but sovereign grace manifested in election has made all the difference. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

GENESIS III. 15.

(Continued from page 60.)

BUT we pass to consider the seed of the woman. Here seems to be a mystery involved. If the words had been the offspring, or children, of the woman, there would be no difficulty in showing that Jerusalem, which is above and free, is the mother of all new testament saints, and if we say that Christ is himself the seed of the woman, how shall we account for the many declarations which testify that the church is his seed? We are certain that the Scriptures are in harmony with themselves; there can be no discord or contradiction in what they assert on this or any other subject; but we may fail to understand, and therefore fail to see their harmony. Beyond all controversy, Christ is the seminal Head and everlasting Father of his people, his church; as it is written, "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation."—Psalms xxii. 30. And Peter asserts that the "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father," &c., "are a chosen generation," "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." Nevertheless, while it is so clearly established that Christ is the second Adam, the spiritual progenitor of his people, and all that is spiritual, holy and immortal in them is born of God, having been given to the saints in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, still he is the offspring, as well as the root of David, and the bright and morning star. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, * * * and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."—Isaiah ix. 6. According to this testimony he is the child born and son given, and, at the same time, the everlasting Father to his church. While, on the one hand, we are made partakers of the divine nature by virtue of vital union with him, he, on the other hand, is by his incarnation made partaker of our flesh and blood, according to Hebrews ii. 14. As our spiritual and eternal life was hidden with him in God from the ancients of eternity, so his human nature (if so we may call it) was hidden in the people of his election from the creation of the world, and from the earthy Adam, traced through the loins of Abraham, David and others, until his advent, so that the desire of the old testament saints was that the Deliverer should come out of Zion, to turn away ungodliness from Jacob. Setting forth this relationship, it was predicted that a virgin should conceive and bring forth a son, and his name should be called Immanuel, or, God with us. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. God was manifested in the flesh, was made of a woman, and so made under the law that he might redeem them that were under the law. The carnal Jews were ignorant of the mystery, they knew not how, he being David's son, David could, by the spirit, "call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool." But it is sufficient to know that he is recognized in the Scriptures both as the root and offspring, the everlasting Father and the child born unto his church. Admitting, then, that he is the seed of the woman, spoken of in our text, we should bear in mind that all his people are embraced in him as that seed, to be developed in the fullness of time.

Having dwelt perhaps too lengthily on

the parties concerned in the curse pronounced upon the serpent and his seed, the nature of the curse itself, and its effects, remain to be considered: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." The justice of God as a sin avenger appears in the reason assigned: "Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed," &c. The execution of the sentence is not committed to another, for "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

"I will put enmity between thee and the woman." Enmity, malice and hatred are opposite to the attributes and perfections of God, yet they are all under his control. Even the venom of serpents, the malice and rage of devils, as well as the wickedness of men, are restricted, or allowed to take their course, as God, in the infinity of his wisdom, permits or restrains. The terms of intimacy which had thus far been permitted between the serpent and the woman had produced pernicious results; the woman was beguiled, and by the lying tempter induced to transgress the command of God, and thus brought sin, with all its consequences, into the human family. We do not believe that this result was unforseen or unprovided for on the part of God, for long ere this a Savior had been provided to redeem, wash, cleanse, purify and make holy and spiritual a people chosen in him before the foundation of the world. We do believe that God always has a purpose worthy of himself in all he does, but his ways are too deep to fathom with human lines, and past finding out by finite minds. Friendly relations, social, amicable associations were, by the righteous curse of God, abolished. Henceforth they should meet only as implacable enemies.

> "Let everlasting hatred be
> Betwixt the woman's seed and thee."

As it is said, What God hath joined let none put asunder, so we may rest assured that what God has sundered no man can put together. As we see settled, irreconcilable enmity between the human race and the sly, venomous reptiles of the earth, so those who are born and taught of God do see a settled and implacable enmity between the church of God and Satan, and between the children of the devil (those who have the spirit and do the works of their father, the devil, as Cain, and those Jews whom our Lord said were of their father, the devil,) and the seed of the woman, and in the conflict the seed of the woman (Christ) shall bruise the serpent's head, and the serpent shall bruise his heel. The heel is not the seat of vitality; it may be bruised and crushed without fatal effects, but the bruising or crushing of the serpent's head implies destruction; so we are told that Christ was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil, and not only his works, but he shall destroy death and him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and the apostle assures the woman, the church of God, that Christ, who is "the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."—Romans xvi. 20. Christ has already triumphed gloriously over the devil. He has in the conflict, in bearing the sins of his people in his own body on the tree, in his own sacred person, as the seed of the woman, felt the rankling venom of the monster at his heel, and even now, in his members, suffers the bruising of his heel. But as the conflict, when grappling with the powers of darkness personally, was short, and the victory certain, so the consum-

mation of the victory is equally certain to all his members. The conflict of the saints will soon be ended, and they shall be more than conquerors through him that has loved them. While we continue in the flesh we must expect to encounter the wiles of the devil, and we are not now ignorant of his devices. We find him busy in our own flesh, in our earthy nature tempting us in every possible way, and he laughs at our vain attempts to draw him out with a hook, or his tongue with a cord, which we let down. We cannot put a hook into his nose nor bore his jaw through with a thorn. "He esteemeth iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood. The arrows cannot make him flee: slingstones are turned with him into stubble." (See Job xli.) But impotent as are all the saints to encounter him by their own strength, they know that the God of peace shall shortly bruise him under their feet. Until then let us have on the whole armor of God, that we may withstand his wiles, fight the good fight, finish our course and keep the faith.

Lengthy as we have made this article, we have omitted much that has been suggested in the bearings of the subject, and what we have written we submit to the consideration of our inquiring brother and to our readers generally.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., February 15, 1864.

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

WE are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

E. R. Harding, N. Y., $1.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Nathan Harlan died at his residence in Aredale, Butler Co., Iowa, Dec. 28th, 1910, aged 66 years, 1 month and 20 days. He was born in Crawford Co., Ohio, Nov. 8th, 1844, and at the age of eleven years came with his parents to Iowa, locating in Jamison's Grove. March 4th, 1865, he was united in marriage with Miss Jane N. Allen. During the last five years he had been ailing more or less. His disease was diabetes with gangrene, and what he suffered no mortal can tell. He was confined to his bed since September 1st. The writer had been acquainted with him for thirty years. He was not a member of the church, but gave a reason of his hope in Christ, dating it back over six years, and was a firm believer in the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS. Sister Harlan is a member of the church. We held our meetings at Aredale in their home, which was a home to all Old School Baptists.

The writer was called to preach his funeral to a large congregation, in the M. E. meetinghouse, Dec. 30th, and took for a text Job xiv. 14. Elder C. F. Hillman, of the E. A. denomination, took charge of the services at the cemetery, as it was very cold and I was not able to ride to the cemetery, a distance of six miles, where he was laid to rest in the Harlan Cemetery, which was named for his father, who was the first person buried there.

The departed leaves to mourn his death his loving widow and the following children: Walter L., of Aredale, Mrs. Edna M. Mickle, of Linton, N. D., Ralph, of Rockford, Iowa, Jake K., of Grand Meadow, Minn , and Mrs. Minnie Miller, of West Fork Iowa; also two brothers and three sisters: James, of Dumont, Iowa, Jay, of Burwell, Nebr., Mrs. Hettie De Armoun, Mrs. Melissa Allen, of Dumont, Iowa, and Mrs. Clarinda Belt, of Henley, Mo., fourteen grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Two children, Mrs. Mina Comer and Welden, preceded their father in death.

May the God of all grace sustain our sister and family, is the humble prayer of the writer.

E. A. NORTON.

HAMPTON, Iowa, Jan. 18, 1911.

Margaret A. Grissom was born May 11th, 1866, and died Jan. 7th, 1911, aged 44 years, 7 months and 25 days. Deceased was born in Adair County, Ky., and was the youngest of six children born to Barney and Permelia Patterson. April 2nd, 1890, she was united in marriage to T. M. Grissom, who survives her. Immediately after their marriage they removed to the State of Kansas, where their lives have mostly been spent. To that union were born three children: Dessie, Aubrey and Barney, all of whom survive her. More than thirteen years ago she experienced a blessed hope in Christ, and in humble submission to

the command of her Lord was baptized in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church called Bethel, at Lamar, Colo., August 17th, 1902, by Elder W. C. Perdue. Her life since then had been that of a most devoted disciple of her blessed Master. For more than four years she had been almost a constant sufferer from the dread malady which finally sapped away her life. Through all her suffering she was singularly patient, uncomplaining to the end. Though our hearts are deeply saddened, we would not call her back. God has called her, and she has entered into his everlasting rest.

The funeral was held from the Methodist meeting-house Jan. 8th, conducted by Elders W. C. Perdue and D. B. Nowels, of the Primitive Baptist Church of Lamar, Colo., assisted by E. E. Carter, of Syracuse. At the cemetery the hymn, "Nearer, my God, to thee," was sung, after which Elder C. R. Bixler, of Stonington, Colo., concluded the services. A large concourse of relatives and friends followed the remains to the cemetery. D. B. NOWELS.

Deacon Joseph Bruce was born March 22nd, 1839, in Harrison County, Ind., died at the home of his son William, eleven miles east of Oregon City, Oregon, Jan. 9th, 1911, of neuralgia of the heart, aged 71 years, 9 months and 17 days. He, with his family, moved to Lancaster Co., Nebr., in the spring of 1880, remaining until the fall of 1901, when they moved to Oregon City, Oregon, locating there where they had since resided until after the death of their daughter Lydia, last April, when they moved to their son's home. He was married to Miss Barbara Neagley, August 1st, 1858. To them were born ten children, five sons and five daughters. The widow, three sons and two daughters survive him: William, of Redlans, Oregon, Walter, of Oregon City, Oregon, Dosy, of Lancaster Co., Nebr., Rosa Jackson, of Oregon City, Oregon, and Eva LeRay, of Estacada, Oregon; also twenty-four grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Brother Bruce professed a hope in Christ and joined the Primitive Baptist Church called Mt. Gilead, in Perry Co., Ind, about the year 1860, and was chosen clerk soon after, and was elected deacon by the Salem Church, in Lancaster Co., Nebr., in 1888 or 1889, which office he filled to the satisfaction of the entire brotherhood until the day of his death. He, with his wife, joined by letter the church at Oregon City, called Cedar Creek, in the fall of 1902, where his membership was at the time of his death. In the death of brother Bruce the church has lost a humble, faithful and devoted member, the family a loving husband and father, the community an honest, upright and conscientious citizen, but we mourn not as others who have no hope, for we are fully persuaded that while his mortal body has returned to its mother earth from whence it was taken, the spirit of the just man made perfect is basking in the sunlight of God's eternal presence in the paradise of our God. The apostle has said, "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."—Romans viii. 11. So I say to the grief-stricken family and friends, Let us look up, for the time will soon come when the graves shall give up their dead. May He ever be with us all, especially the dear old mother in Israel in her sad affliction; may she fully realize that He is her Husband, Friend, Priest and King, and may we all be enabled to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Brother Bruce had been a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for over fifty years, and was a firm believer in the doctrine it advocates.

The writer was called to attend the funeral, and read for a text 1 Cor. xv. 19. The body was laid to rest in the Mountain View Cemetery, near Oregon City, there to await the resurrection morning. May we all be prepared by His grace for that day.

Written by one who feels less than the least of all saints, if one at all. S. B. MOFFITT.

NEWBERG, Oregon.

John D. Gillis died at his home in Highgate, Ont., Jan. 2nd, 1911, in his 65th year. He was twice married, and leaves a widow, one son, his aged mother, three brothers and three sisters: Daniel T., Duncan D., Angus D., Mrs. D. Scott, Mrs. A. J. Mitchell and Annie Bell, beside many nephews, nieces and cousins to mourn his departure, but they sorrow not as those who have no hope, and they desire to be reconciled to the will of the Lord. Mr. Gillis was a man of sterling qualities, and stood high in his township, where he held many responsible positions of trust, being admired for his honesty and integrity. He was not a professor of religion, but a believer in the doctrine of God our Savior, and a faithful attendant of the meetings of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada. His last hours were joyful in hope of the blessed beyond.

The funeral was largely attended; the interment was in the Duart Cemetery. It was our privilege to know Mr. Gillis, having visited him several times, and we had fellowship with him as a subject of grace.

By request. K.

MEETINGS.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in Kimmy Hall, No. 12 Third St., in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

EBENEZER

OLD SCHOOL

BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

A SMALL band of Primitive Baptists is meeting every Sunday at 10:30 a. m. at 2919 Polk St., Chicago, Ill. All persons interested are welcome to meet with us. Any one knowing of members living in or near Chicago will please notify W. N. Spitler at the above address.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 79. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1911. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JEHOVAH-JIREH.

"AND it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of."—Genesis xxii. 1, 2.

(Continued from page 71.)

Isaac, bowed beneath the wood, is climbing up the mount to worship the Lord, but no lamb for the sacrifice journeys with him, so every step of the ascent becomes harder. O wood-laden Isaac, sin-burdened one, all his steps without the lamb are useless. The wood he feels the weight of, the fire and knife he sees, but one thing is lacking, where is the lamb? He can contain his troubled thoughts no longer, he will unburden his heart to his father and inquire of him about the lamb. Isaac breaks the silence and says, "My father." Abraham knows that voice, he would have recognized it among ten thousand voices, "and he said, Here am I, my son." He has still the heart of a father. Isaac is his darling child, and Isaac said, "Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Surely this question, Isaac's deep solicitude, must have greatly stirred the heart of Abraham. O many and fervent have been the heart-aching yearnings of poor sinners that they might behold for themselves Jesus, the Lamb for sinners slain. They feel sin's heavy load, the wood; they see and fear the holy wrath of God against their sins, the fire, but with Isaac their souls are inquiring, Where is the Lamb? "And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering." Abraham, thou art a noble gospel preacher. His answer was surely God-inspired; it is the gospel's declaration to the sin-burdened soul. One thing stands out with gracious prominence in the gospel of Christ: that Jehovah is our providing God. It never was conceived in the wisdom of this world to teach the existence of such a God. Examine all the heathen religions, and all the counterfeit christianity, and they cannot conceive of such a God. They sport themselves with their imaginary gods, but Jehovah-jireh comes not into their minds, and if Jehovah, the providing God, is declared to them, he is hated, spurned, rejected. Wherefore? Because of their supposed self-sufficiency, their ability, in part at least, to provide

for themselves, to finance their own undertakings in things pertaining to God and to eternity. They do not see themselves without strength, helpless, destitute, needing all things now and for eternity from the bountiful, providing God. Some religious talkers talk very prettily about the providence of God in temporal affairs, yet they cannot attain to the knowledge that in things relating to the eternal salvation and glorification of poor sinners that God is the provider of it all; that not an atom is contributed from any other source. God's "divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." "God will provide." This glad song Christ's gospel is ever singing to the chosen, ransomed host all the days of their pilgrimage unto eternal glory. Christ, the Lamb without blemish and without spot, was provided, verily foreordained before the foundation of the world. What an opening up is here of the counsel of God! What love, mercy and grace God had unto the church, in Christ Jesus, from eternity! "God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering." Those words fell upon the ears of Isaac with sacred wonderfulness; they were revealing, teaching words; they were soothing, words of life, hope-inspiring, words that teach the true worshiper of God to think in his heart, "My expectation is from him."

"So they went both of them together." Isaac carried the wood. Mountain climbing with a load of wood is no easy journey. Isaac sighs, he toils on and upward to worship God. He sees the fire, Abraham carries that, the weight of the wood Isaac knows, the lamb is still unseen. But my father saith, "God will provide himself a lamb." He muses upon this, it is wonderful to him; he ponders over it, and is at times absorbed in thought, and forgets for a moment the wood with which he is laden. "God will provide himself a lamb." How can it be? Will he? What, for me? O Isaac dear, we love thee, we know thy sighs, thy heavy load. O sin, thou cruel, burdening load, heavy so heavy, too heavy for me. (Psalms xxxviii. 4.) Surely our hearts throb with thine to worship God; we know thy soul's solicitude about the lamb for the burnt offering. O Jesus, dear Redeemer, dying Lamb, we love to think of thee. Without hope in thee we cannot go on, we cannot climb the mount, we cannot, we dare not think to worship God unless thou, dear Lamb of God, art nigh. Deep ponderings of heart the sin-burdened has as he presses upward to worship God. The gracious power of divine life moves him, and though bowed down beneath the wood, though the fire and knife are seen, and though no lamb for the sin-atoning sacrifice is in sight, and dark forebodings and Satanic insinuations as stumbling-blocks impede the way, and would cast down and bring the quickened sinner into utter dismay, yet his soul is so wrought with divine power, the good work of the Holy Ghost begun in the heart is so performed, that the quickened soul struggles on and up with sighs and tears and longings to know and worship God.

"And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order." The lad looks on while his father is thus employed. There is the altar well built, and each stick of wood so laid to feed the fire that is to burn the slain victim. Isaac knows all about that wood; it is that which he bare up the mountain, a heavy, wearying load. When the Holy

Ghost sets our iniquities before us, there they are like Isaac's wood, all laid out, a pile built up, fit fuel for the wrath of God, who is a consuming fire. "We are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled. Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance." Such a sinner greatly needs the atoning sacrifice of the Lamb of God. The altar and the wood are in readiness, there also near by are the fire and the knife. Isaac's heart takes all this in. My father said to me, God will provide himself a lamb, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? Abraham has built the altar, laid the wood in order; what next? Three days ago God had said, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." So Abraham "bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood." It can never be told the emotions of the father and son at this moment; Isaac's amazement, and his submission under the hands of his father, who binds him preparatory to the sacrifice. O Abraham, wilt thou not spare thy loved, only son Isaac? His faith is of the operation of God, and thus the power of God moved him in all the steps of the obedience of faith. The battle between the flesh and the Spirit was fought three days ago, on that night that God told him to offer up his son Isaac. Since then all his acts and steps have been in the inspiring power of faith's triumph. Abraham is resolute in faith, he will obey, in love, with reverence and godly fear he will worship God as the Lord his God had told him. Amidst all the billows, all the internal commotions, this buoys up his spirit to obey God's command: he accounted that God was able to raise Isaac up, even from the dead. When Isaac with the wood toiled up the hill it was in hope that there would be at the required moment the God-provided lamb for a burnt offering, but now when all is in readiness for the victim to be offered, no lamb for the sacrifice can be seen. Abraham lays hold of Isaac and binds him. Dreadful! Did Abraham tell Isaac all about God's commands, and of his hope that God would raise him up again from the ashes of the burnt offering? Did Isaac say, O my father, what meaneth this? Didst thou not say to me, "God will provide himself a lamb"? Has God failed to do as thou didst tell me? Hast thou deceived me, O my father? The record is silent, perhaps not a word was said. Abraham bound Isaac his son. What consternation overwhelms the lad! His expectations wither and die. Isaac is bound; the law takes hold with its condemning power, binds and brings into helplessness the guilty transgressor. Isaac is fettered and helpless, holden in the cords of affliction. As his father binds him every inch of those cords wrought in his soul afflictions indeed. Isaac is "without strength." When the ministration of death takes hold of the quickened sinner and binds him with his sins, holds him fast in condemnation, ah, then he learns how helpless and hopeless he is, a poor, vile sinner in the hands of eternal justice. Abraham "bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood." A hard, hard bed—that wood, the wood that burdened Isaac as he climbed up the mountain. Sin is a hard, cruel bed to lie upon. Can you find sin an easy bed? Can you lie down in sin and find repose? O when God binds us, when he prostrates the sinner, lays him upon the wood, there can be no

comfort for him; every stick, every sin, is hard and cruel, and afflicts us sore, and we, like Isaac, are helpless, unable to get off or to arise from that hard, hard bed. Isaac cannot ease himself, he is helpless, bound. Poor sinner, do you understand? Has thy heart entered into this? Know you in any measure Isaac's miseries lying upon that wood? There lies the lad, what can he do? The fire is near by, and the knife he has seen in his father's hand; what hope is there for him? Isaac is planted in the likeness of death; death's pangs and griefs have him in their embrace. Can there be salvation for Isaac? Will he appeal to his father to release him? Will he move his father to repentance with his moans and tears? Will he cry, Dost thou not love me, O my father? Dost not my mother love me? Wilt thou not take pity upon thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest? There he lies upon that hard, cruel bed. He looks up, yes, prostrate, helpless and bound upon the wood, he looks up to heaven, to God. Does his agonized heart cry, Hast thou, O God, no lamb provided for me? Does he cry, God, be merciful to me, a sinner? Isaac about to be slain, about to die, looks up, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering? "Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son." Isaac looks up to God, he sighs and moans and cries for the lamb for the burnt sacrifice, but instead of the lamb he sees the knife in the upraised hand of his father, and Isaac's heart cries, O, I must be slain, there is no lamb for me, and in his anguished soul he cries, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. Another moment and the knife will descend and Isaac's heart's blood will flow out, he dies, Isaac is slain, and the fire shall kindle the wood and his body shall be consumed a burnt offering unto God.

"And the angel of Jehovah called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I." No eyes of mortals have seen these transactions upon Mount Moriah, but the eyes of the Lord have witnessed it all. All the steps of their three days journey, all the emotions of Abraham and Isaac as they ascended the mountain are intimately known by God. Jehovah has watched his friend's (Isaiah xli. 3,) unfaltering obedience to his commands. Jehovah has made known, for his own glory, what a frail mortal creature can do in the obedience of faith upheld by his own omnipotent hand. "And Abraham said, Here am I." What a spectacle! There lies the lad Isaac, his son, prostrate, helpless, bound upon the wood upon the altar. Abraham his father stands beside him, and in his outstretched hand a knife, ready to slay his darling boy. O, if we have not faith's eyes we must turn away with a shudder; how could we look upon such a tragic scene? But Abraham had eyes of faith to look into the future, beyond the smitten, bleeding, dying, slain Isaac, beyond the burning sacrifice. Abraham's faith looked to see the ashes of his dear son Isaac arise, fashioned by the hands of omnipotence to human form, and thus to clasp to his bosom his beloved Isaac again. He accounted that God was able to raise him up even from the dead. This carried him on and brought him to this moment. "Here am I," ready to slay his dear son. And the angel of Jehovah said, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him." That hand holding the knife that would have slain Isaac is arrested. Let not a finger of affliction touch him. Isaac hears the voice from heaven, every word drops into his heart; they are words of life and salvation to

him, and Isaac is loosed, his bands are sundered and he arises from that hard, hard bed, that bed of the sorrows of death. What a transition! Isaac is free, and in his liberty, in joyous astonishment, in adoring gratitude, there he stands, for he knows in his heart that Jehovah has regard for him. The words with consoling, animating significance are resounding in his heart: "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him." There stands Isaac beside his father in sweet amazement, with a throbbing, expectant heart. O what will the Lord do now? Will he not provide a lamb for the burnt offering? And the angel of the Lord said to Abraham, "Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me." The fear of the Lord in his heart has been put to the severest test, and Abraham moved by this fear has triumphed over all things, and God is supreme in his soul. The almighty God, his Friend, has the unquestioned right to command him to do whatsoever seemeth good in his sight. How blessed, God-glorifying, is the fear of the Lord in a sinner's heart! Awe, sacred, affectionate reverence moves us, and the heart's fervent longings say, "Hallowed be thy name." Moved by divine power we contemplate God's attributes, his majesty and might, his holiness, justice and grace, his immutability and faithfulness, his goodness and mercy. O yes, all the beauties of the Lord, as we are led into the knowledge of them, are cherished in our hearts, and we adore and rejoice with trembling, we fall down and worship him. Sometimes we are made to sigh and to blush, to fear and quake, and we are humbled and contrite in heart, we mourn in the dust before him, and in spirit we cry out with Isaiah, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."

"Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me." From any other save the Lord he would have withheld his darling boy, but God was supreme in his heart. Do you withhold any thing from God? There stand Abraham and Isaac, before them is the altar and the wood laid in order upon it, and there is the fire, and Abraham has the knife. What will they do now? Will they return and descend the mountain to the waiting young men, leaving the erected altar, the wood and the fire without offering a burnt offering unto God? or will they proceed to worship God without a lamb for the sacrifice? Ah, this will never do, so Abraham, moved by divine power, with a yearning heart lifted up his eyes to find a victim, a sacrifice for their sins. Surely Abraham now remembers how he was made to give to his inquiring son that wonderful answer, "God will provide himself a lamb." That very power that then moved him to speak, now inspires him to lift up his eyes from the mountain top to look for the lamb. Isaac is absorbed in these transactions. Abraham looks before him, but there is no offering in sight, but his heart saith, It must be there will surely appear the God-provided lamb. This was his faith. Abraham is looking, he lifted up his eyes, there is nothing before him, he turns, "and, behold, behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns." This ram is a type of Christ, it is Isaac's ransom; and we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. There is the ram caught in the thicket, a welcome

sight to Abraham and Isaac. It was Jehovah-jireh who ordered the goings of the ram as he ascended Mount Moriah; all his steps were predestinated. Yes, it was of God that he thrust his head into the thicket and was held fast by his horns, the God-provided lamb for the burnt offering. O the joy of Isaac as he catches sight of the lamb, and might he not say, My father did not deceive me, God hath provided for us? Christ was held fast, and in due time was manifest our Lamb for the sin offering. He verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world. He gave himself for us in the everlasting covenant, and he was held fast by the bonds of the covenant; his suretyship held him fast. O he was willingly holden, and in all his goings forth from everlasting until he consummated the sacrifice of himself for the sins of his people, he could ever say, "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." Such were his relations unto the elect of God as the head of the church, that it "behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day."—Luke xxiv. 46. "It behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." When our beloved Jesus came to the "due time" that he must needs suffer for the atonement of our sins, was he rebellious, did he turn away back, did he extricate himself from the thicket, descend from the mount and flee away from his suretyship and leave the heirs of promise to perish in their transgressions? Ah, never, O no. Thus he speaks: "The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." Christ was made of a woman and made under the law, to redeem his people who were under the law. The law held him fast until he had satisfied all its claims, magnified it and made it honorable. How willing was Jesus to die that we vile sinners might live. Precious Jesus! O how sweet to live on thee.

"And Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son." The soul of Isaac is absorbed, he beholds the ram in Abraham's hands; with the knife he is stricken, he is afflicted, and there flows the blood, and Isaac says, His blood is shed for me. O the comforting mystery of that flowing blood. O Lamb of God, thy blood was shed for the remission of sins. O for faith, for my cleansing to see the blood flow. O there are moments to this day when our hearts with ardent gaze to Jesus look; we muse upon his sufferings so intense, we look with all desire to Jesus' precious, cleansing blood, thus to hope our sins are pardoned, justified from all offences, reconciled, at one with God. Fellow-sinner, is it thus with you? Truly it is wonderful, comforting, thus to hope our sins are all put away by the sacrifice of Christ. In the flowing blood the life of the ram is poured forth unto death, and Abraham takes the body and lays it upon the wood upon the altar. With the fire he kindles the wood, the flames consume the lamb and the smoke and savor of the burnt offering ascend unto heaven. While the burnt offering is being consumed the worshipers look on. There they are, the lad and the old

man. Abraham has his dear son beside him, Isaac lives, through whom the promised seed is to come, even Christ. Who can portray the emotions of these worshipers toward God and toward each other as they look upon the burnt offering of that God-provided sacrifice? O the tears, the humility, the prayers, the praises, the gratitude of two poor sinners called by grace, formed by divine power to worship God. ("The Father seeketh such to worship him."—John iv. 23.) They are in covenant with their God by sacrifice; they worship their Maker, Jehovah-jireh. "Sitting down they watched him there." O in a better sense by faith to sit down and watch Jesus, the crucified Lamb of God.

"Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,
Which before the cross I spend,
Life and health and peace possessing
From the sinner's dying Friend.

Here I'll sit forever viewing
Mercy's streams in streams of blood;
Precious drops my soul bedewing,
Plead and claim my peace with God."

Abraham and Isaac watch the burnt offering until it is finished. The lamb is consumed, the fire is spent, the scene is ended, and they descend from the mount. How different their coming down to their going up. Isaac sighed and was heavy laden as he ascended the mountain, but coming down he is not burdened with the wood, Abraham carries no fire and the knife is sheathed; sin and wrath are no more, they have spent themselves, the lamb was the expiatory victim. Happy worshipers, they have met with Jehovah-jireh and are returning in peace, their faces are not ashamed. O Isaac, happy boy, from the fears and anguish of dying thou art risen, and welling up within thee are praises and adoring gratitude to the God of salvation. A heavy load, tears and sighs, hopes and fears were thine climbing the mountain, but now in newness of life thou art happy in God. There was no laughter going up, but coming down thy mouth may be well filled with laughter, for God hath done great things for thee, whereof thou art glad. Happy lad, thou art well named Isaac (laughter). "So Abraham returned unto his young men; and they rose up, and went together to Beer-sheba." The transactions on Mount Moriah could not easily be forgotten; in this mountain the Lord of hosts had given them a feast of fat things. "And Abraham called the name of the place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." Here King David worshiped God, and here Solomon built the temple. Thus in very truth in the mount of the Lord it was gloriously manifest that our God is Jehovah-jireh.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

OREGON CITY, Ore., Dec. 29, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I herewith inclose a letter from Elder G. E. Mayfield, written to me a few weeks ago, that I wish you would give a place in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. My wife and I have received many good letters from the dear brother, but he has not expected us to send them to you, yet he will not care. We love to read the dear letters in our paper, and feel sure others will love to see this one. Dear brethren and sisters, write on. I am a poor writer, so will stop at once. Farewell.

With love to all, we are, as ever, yours unworthily,

J. W. S. & SARAH OWENS.

CENTRAL POINT, Ore., Dec. 5, 1910.

J. W. S. OWENS—DEAR BROTHER:—Your letter at hand, and read with interest. I am glad to hear of your good

meetings, and that dear brother Wilson and wife were with you. I esteem them as most excellent Baptists, and brother Wilson as a sound, able preacher of the gospel. I would have enjoyed the privilege to have been with you and heard the brethren preach the gospel of our salvation. Is not this a glorious theme to hear proclaimed by the Lord's called and qualified servants, and to have a hope that it is indeed the gospel of our salvation, or the good news of our salvation? Well might Paul say, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: * * * for therein is the righteousness of God revealed." A gospel that does not reveal the righteousness of God in the salvation of poor, helpless sinners is not the gospel of God, nor is it a gospel that will help the helpless, the lost and undone, the gospel that proclaims liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. Here, my dear brother and sister, is a portion of Scripture our blessed Savior read in the Jewish synagogue, and said to those who heard it, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." He was the "anointed one" the prophet had reference to, him that should come "to proclaim liberty to the captives." We must see that to have right to proclaim liberty to the captives he must remove the cause that sent the captives to prison. To open the prison doors without this first being done would be a violation of law, and that is why one of the prophets said, Shall the lawful captive be delivered, or the prey from the terrible one taken away? It would be the same as to say, How can the justly condemned sinner be saved and justified? He has been, as the apostle says, proven guilty, then how can he be justified? Here is a great mystery, my brother; in all common law the guilty one must suffer for his sins; an innocent one cannot take the place of the guilty and suffer for him and thereby release the guilty; no, the offender must suffer, but in the salvation of God's people from the power and dominion of sin the great mystery of godliness revealed God manifest in the flesh. Well may the inspired Paul call this a great mystery, but the only way I believe that it was possible to accomplish the work of salvation, for what God hath done in the salvation of his people I do believe was the only way it could be done. "Made of a woman, made under the law," is the manifestation of this great mystery. He who was equal with God made himself of no reputation, and took on himself the form of a servant, and was found in fashion as a man, and Paul tells us, "It became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings," so we here see to bring the many sons to glory, Christ must assume the nature of his people; to do this it was necessary for him to be made of a woman, made under the law. He did not violate the law in order to be brought under it, as did his brethren, but was made under it by being made of a woman, and this we see was necessary, for he could not suffer in the nature of an angel; so Paul says, "He took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." He was made manifest in the nature of his people, so was one with them under the law. "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren; saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I

and the children which God hath given me." Not only in that life (eternal life, given the elect of God before the world was,) are Christ and they one, but now are they one in the flesh, under the law condemned to death, for "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." O the wonder he is not ashamed to call them brethren, but owns the relationship. We have here the union or oneness of life of Christ and his chosen people, so that he who is their life was one with them under the law, and as their Head and Surety was the one held responsible for the debt of his bride. Paul says, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." This is the way, the only way, in which the Just could suffer for the unjust and satisfy the demands of the law for the guilty; as Daniel says, "Cut off, but not for himself." Yes, led as a lamb to the slaughter, bearing the sins of his own loved people in his own body on the tree, suffering the Just for the unjust, and so bearing all the sins of his people, his bride, in his own body on the tree; not one sin, past, present or to come, was left out; a complete and perfect atonement was made, so that with his expiring breath he cried, "It is finished." All this the Son of God and Son of man did, not as a volunteer, but as one who in covenant with his elect people was their Surety, and "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer." What wonderful things are brought to view in "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer." It brings to view the oneness or unity of Christ and his chosen people, and lets us see why it is that the Just should suffer for the unjust, and how it is that God can justify the ungodly by the death of another, not merely as a volunteer, and yet more than a substitute, for Christ is indeed the Life of his people, the Surety, the Shepherd, the Husband, in whom alone was the right of redemption. Now at last I have come to where I wanted to show Christ Jesus our Lord had the right to "proclaim liberty to the captives," because he had by right redeemed his people, had paid the debt his bride had contracted, and released her from all the obligation of a violated law. The prophet said, "The redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion." Christ paid the debt; he had the right to do so; the union or oneness of him and his bride compelled him to do so; not against his will, but in harmony with it and God's eternal purpose he should do so, for it was written of him that it behoved him to suffer and die. There is something more, if justice required the suffering of the Son of God, the Head and Surety of his bride, then justice equally demands her freedom, her release from prison; so God says, "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water." The ransom price is paid, so the prisoners must go free; and now I would love to show how these prisoners are made to appreciate their deliverance, which enables them to praise their great Deliverer, but I must close this long letter, for it seems to me it cannot be of instruction to you, for you know the truth better than I am able to explain it to you. I thought when I commenced this letter I would try to show the blessed unity or oneness of Christ and his chosen people, but like all my efforts it seems a failure, and, dear old brother, now in looking back over my life I can plainly see how little worth it has been, though I have tried to, and have put the best effort of my life in

serving the church, yet it seems to be of so little worth, so poorly done, that now when nearing the close I feel to be a weak, helpless worm. While I would love to say I have fought a good fight and kept the faith, I do not feel that I have a clear right to say so, so with the poet I will say,

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

G. E. MAYFIELD.

EPHESIANS I. 11.

"IN whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have felt a desire for some time to write for the SIGNS, but it is in much weakness and with a feeling sense of unworthiness that I make the attempt. I am a stranger to you in the flesh, but I have been a subscriber to the SIGNS for a short time. I love the doctrine it advocates, as it gives God all the glory in the salvation of sinners of Adam's fallen posterity. Now if the dear Lord will direct me I will try to write a little upon the above portion of the word of God, but it seems just like one launching out upon the great deep, not knowing where he will land.

"In whom also we have obtained an inheritance." The pronoun "whom" in the text has reference to our Lord Jesus Christ, as is evident from the previous verse, which reads as follows: "That in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him." I understand the all things in heaven and on earth, to be the church, the bride, the spouse of Christ, the elect of God, who have obtained an inheritance in him, and who shall, in the dispensation of the fullness of times, be gathered together in one, being one body, of which Christ is the head, and every member of this body will be present with him to enjoy the inheritance obtained in Christ when the fullness of time shall come. It is God's purpose that it shall be so, he having placed every member of the body as it hath pleased him. The dear Savior said, "It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." Thus it is an uncontrovertible truth, according to the word of the blessed Savior, that it is the will of the Father that each and every one of them shall be (not may be) saved, and the text declares that he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. It is according to God's purpose, or predestination, that we have obtained an inheritance in Christ, and it is according to his immutable purpose that all "the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: and shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Eternal life was promised by God the Father before the world began, and this same immutable, eternal, almighty God has purposed to save all his chosen people in Christ, and so we read, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." From the foregoing Scripture it is as clear to my mind as the noonday sun that God knew just as well before he created man that he would transgress and bring condemnation and death upon all his posterity as it is that he now knows it. His omniscient eye beholds the end from the beginning; it is all one eternal now with him. "All things are naked and opened

[visible] unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do," therefore it was according to the purpose of his grace that he chose us in Christ before the world began.

What I wish to directly speak of is this, that God foresaw and knew that Adam would fall and bring death and condemnation upon all his posterity, so that all, in a state of nature, are under condemnation. Then he, by one act of sovereign grace, according to the purpose of his own will, chose a part of the human family unto eternal life through Christ Jesus before the world began, or ever the glittering orbs above began their march around the earth upon which we dwell. He also must evidently have seen the end of the nonelect before he created the first man Adam. All things are naked and open to his all-seeing eye. This included both the elect and the nonelect through all time, past, present and to come. He saw and knew before he created the first man all men that ever would exist in time, together with all the acts, both good and evil, of each and every one, both of the elect and the nonelect. Since this is so, he must have had a purpose in the nonelect, and in their sinful actions, having purposed all things according to his own great name's glory, else he created them without any purpose. But we understand him to be the God of purpose, and not only of purpose, but also of power, of grace and of glory, and who works all things after the counsel of his own will, to his own glory. "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." This does not signify that he forces or causes any man to sin, for he is not the author of sin. Because he created man who does sin is not ground for saying that he is the author of sin, nor the prime cause of all the wicked acts of condemned, fallen creatures. Men sin willfully and voluntarily, without any compulsion on the part of the Almighty; their sinful acts emanate or proceed from their own depraved hearts. Sin and depravity are inherent in man ever since the fall. Now because God in his wisdom foresaw and foreknew that man would bring himself under condemnation by his disobedience, is no reason for saying that God is the author or prime cause of sin. If our God foreknew all men, and all their actions, and if he be an all-wise God, and all things are naked and open to his view, which is certainly true, it is just as infallibly certain and sure to be as he saw and knew it would be, as it is certain that the sun rises and sets just as he purposed it should do. Why men will cavil about the sovereignty of God in predestinating all things that come to pass, is more than I am able to understand. Webster defines predestination as the purpose of God respecting all things from all eternity. A thing is made just as certain by foreknowledge as by decree or predestination. How any one can believe in the foreknowledge of God, and in the election of grace according to his foreknowledge, and then dispute the unlimited predestination of God, I cannot understand. It does really occur to my limited mind that to say that God foreknew all things that should come to pass, both good and evil, from before creation's dawn, and that he had a purpose only in the good things, or in the actions of the elect only, and that he had no purpose in the actions of the nonelect, is to present him as a God of knowledge, but not of purpose. Is it not more to the glory of God to say that he created all things for a purpose, than to say that he foreknew all things, and yet had no purpose in much that he fore-

knew? He created Judas for the purpose of betraying the blessed Master, which Judas willingly did, and it was according to his determinate counsel and foreknowledge that Jesus was delivered into the hands of men, and was crucified and slain, that thus he might redeem his people, chosen in him before the world was, from their sins. In God's eternal purpose he stood before the world was as a Lamb slain, to redeem his people from condemnation and death. Even before the creation of man the antidote for sin was present with the great Creator, therefore it follows that sin must have been visible to him before he created the world, as well as that which should redeem from sin. Had there been no sin, it follows as a matter of course that there could have been no redemption, and no need of redemption. Were it not in the counsel of God that there should be sin in the world, I cannot understand why the sacrifice for sin should have been in the mind of God, and decreed in his purpose. We are told that he created Pharaoh and raised him up for the same purpose that was performed in him, that he might show forth His power in the king, and that his mighty name might be declared through the earth. It was just as necessary that there should be a Pharaoh to place the children of Israel under bondage, and afflict them, and evil entreat them, to verify God's word and bring to pass his purpose according to his counsel, as it was that there should be a Moses as an undershepherd to deliver and lead them out of this Egyptian bondage and servitude, for had they never been under bondage to the Egyptian king they could not have been led out by the hand of Moses. Our God had told Abraham, hundreds of years before, that it should be so. To verify his word to Abraham, and bring to pass his purpose, it was put into the hearts of Joseph's brethren to sell him to the Midianites, so that he was carried down into Egypt, and made a servant to Potiphar. But God was with him, and gave him favor in the eyes of the Egyptians until Potiphar's wife falsely accused him to his master, for which he was imprisoned. But God had a purpose even in this, although it was very wicked upon the part of the woman, just as it was wicked in his brethren to sell him into Egypt, for so he afterward told them, saying, "As for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good." So likewise was it with the evil accusation of the woman; it was God's way of bringing him before Pharaoh, whom he had caused to dream dreams for the same purpose, viz., that Joseph might be brought before him, and God gave Joseph wisdom to interpret the king's dreams, and so he gained favor in the eyes of the king and became great in the kingdom, that his father and his brethren might obtain lodging in the king's domain. Then the Lord brought a famine in all the land of Canaan, so that Jacob and his family were compelled to go down into Egypt for bread, and finally became settled there. This was through the favor of the king to Joseph, all being the counsel of God according to his purpose or predestination. All this I believe was in the wisdom of Jehovah before time began. Many other incidents might be noticed to show the purpose of God in overruling the evil actions of men to His glory, and to the good of Zion, but I will have to close, as I have already written more lengthily than I expected in the outset. If this poorly written article should be published, I may some time endeavor to write again, but do with it

as may seem best to you, and all will be satisfactory to me.

Your unworthy brother in bonds of the gospel,

J. R. DENNISON.

SUTTON, W. Va., Dec. 23, 1910.

NICKEL, La., Nov. 27, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I have been impressed for a long time to write an account of my experience, but am loath to commence. I am uneducated, and have to get some one to write for me, as I was raised a very poor boy on a farm, and had no schooling. I became troubled about my condition before God, and felt that I was lost, and would go to the woods and try to pray, but found no relief, and thought that I should soon die. I was in that condition of mind for several months, when one day while in the woods trying to pray, it seemed as though some one spoke to me, and told me to go to somebody whom I had confidence in and tell them my condition, and I started to do so immediately. I had not gone far when something else spoke to me, and said, You are deceived, you cannot hold out; do not tell it to any one. Then my trouble became heavier than ever, and I was made in substance to call upon the rocks and mountains to fall on me and hide me from the presence of Him who sits upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. I was in that state of mind for a few days, and would stay all day by myself in the woods and try to pray. The same words came to me again: Go to some one and relate to them your feelings. I then went to a Missionary Baptist preacher, and when I began talking to him he fastened his eyes upon me as one astonished. When I finished telling him of my burden, it was rolled away and my heart was filled with love. I thought that my troubles were gone, but in a few days I was filled with doubts and fears. I united with the Missionary Baptists, but knew nothing about doctrine, and knew nothing about the Bible, only as other people told me about it. I was satisfied for a short time, but it soon appeared to my mind that if I were saved at all it was by grace. Soon I was given some light on predestination and election, and I gave them my views on some of these things, and they were all against me. I thought they were all good people, and that I would say no more about these things. At our next meeting, when I saw them, I thought I saw more than I ever had before in these doctrines, and I broke my vow and talked more than ever. There were no Old School Baptists in that country. My mind all the time continued to lead me to the Bible, but I could not read, and yet could not keep my mind away from it. I could spell a little, and I commenced, and soon learned to read the Bible, and found election and predestination in it. Dear readers, I cannot tell you the joy it gave me to find election and predestination in the Bible. When I read anything it never left my mind, and if I now know anything, I did not get it from the Bible, neither was I taught it by man, for all men were against me. I kept making vows that I would not talk any more, but I always broke them. For ten years I traveled around with them, and all men where I went were against me; none of them preached what I believed; they all preached about God, and I thought about him. There is a vast difference between thinking about God, and talking about him. If the thoughts about God are right, the talk about him will be right also. Thus I traveled about ten

years with them, when one day while talking with some men, one man looked at me very closely, and told me that he knew of a preacher who was preaching just what I was talking about. I asked him what that preacher was, and he told me that he was a "Hardshell Baptist," but he could not tell me just where he lived. I went home, got ready and started. I took no money or clothes with me, only what I had on. I traveled, and inquired for a "Hardshell" preacher. I rode into a little town, and found there a merchant who told me that such a preacher lived about six miles from there. When I came to him, and approached him upon the doctrine of election and predestination, we agreed. The next day he was going to preach to a certain church, and I went with him, and I never saw such love manifested in a church before. He introduced me as a brother searching after truth. The whole church rose up and met me, and I gave them a sketch of my experience. All the church stayed where I stayed the balance of the day, and that night also. They held service that night, and I was received for baptism the next day at nine o'clock. When the time came it was raining very hard. We waited until after service, and it was still raining, but all the church went with me, a mile to the creek. When the minister led me into the creek, the water seemed precious to me. When I arose from the water I believe I received an evidence that they were the people of God, and it did my soul good to try to talk to them; it was heart and hand coming together. I then returned home. Some of the Old School Baptist preachers came into my country and began to preach, and in about a year they constituted a church near by, and, to my surprise, they chose me deacon of the church. I did not feel as though I could fill the place, and felt that I never could be of comfort to the church in any way. I worried over it for some time, knowing that I could not fill the place. But, dear readers, mortal man can never fill the office of deacon, it can only be filled through the operation of the Holy Spirit. O that I were only fit to live at the feet of the church. The good book says, "Love thy neighbor as thyself," but it is only in and through the Holy Spirit that we can do this. You may differ with me, but I think it is that one who lives closest by us in our heart who is our neighbor, and we remember him, both day and night, at the throne of grace. Sometimes my mind seems to flash all over the world and embraces and thinks of the little ones, even in distant lands, and I desire to shake hands with all of them; I then have them in my heart.

Dear brethren, it gives me great comfort when I read the SIGNS. When I go to a place and see the paper I feel that I am with my people, my neighbors. I go about among the Old School Baptists all I can. I am now seventy-five years of age.

I leave this to your judgment; if you publish it, please correct all mistakes. I will close. If ever I have had a good thought, or have ever done a good thing, it was all the work of the Lord.

Your brother,

HARDY HILL.

MASSEY, Va., January, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I wish to give a little sketch of my pilgrimage from 1851 to the present, for the last time, I am sure.

I was born January 14th, 1831, experienced the pardoning love of God, I hope,

after a desperate struggle, in August, 1851, was married to Mary E. Byrd, January 21st, 1852. I soon after was brought to see the church in her beauty under the reign of her King Immanuel, and wanted to be one with them, believing that I was under the reign of her King, so in March of the same year (1852), I, with a melted heart and a stammering tongue, was impressed to go and tell a few old people the reason of my hope and why I asked for a home among them. As I write my sight is blinded with tears while I think of the sweet and kind welcome those dear old saints gave me; my heart is fit to burst with gratitude. After my baptism the first eight years of my life are almost blank to me. I was a sailor at that time, hardly ever at home on Sunday, so heard very little preaching. In 1861 I left the water and turned my attention to other work, so I could attend meeting every month. Some time in the year 1865 I began to see with clearer light the wonderful beauty of God's plan of salvation, and so much to his honor that it demanded such praise and thanksgiving from the poor, redeemed and saved sinner that my whole mind or being was taken up and absorbed in it, and how the dear people found it out I could not tell, so that same fall (1865) it was decided that I should write the church letter. Then those dear old people, now all gone, began to urge me to talk a little in the meetings, and at their urgings I would talk perhaps five minutes, and then a little longer. My father-in-law was a licensed speaker, and he died the same year, and at the November meeting they had me go into the pulpit. I did not call it preaching at all at that time. I read a wonderful text: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given," &c., and I have been trying ever since to declare nothing more or less than what I have seen and felt and tasted and handled of the Word of life. In July, 1869, a presbytery was called, consisting of Elders Rittenhouse, Durand and G. W. Staton, to consider the advisability of my ordination, and after hearing my experience they went on with my ordination, and that same year the churches at Indiantown and Nassaongo, in Wicomico County, Md., extended such a pressing invitation for me to serve them (as Elder Geo. Staton had left and gone to the Tract churches), that after one of the greatest trials of my life I accepted their call, and have been serving to the best of my ability ever since, traveling thirty miles to each place, and when the church was organized in Snow Hill some time later, the same day they called me to serve them, so from that time to the present I have been rendering such service to the four churches as the Lord has given me: Messongoes, in Accomac Co., Va.; Snow Hill, in Worcester Co., Md.; Indiantown and Nassaongo, in Wicomico Co., Md. I have baptized between one hundred and fifty and two hundred persons, attended about one hundred and fifty funerals, and married about three hundred couples. This brings me to the closing part of this history. The 14th of this month I passed my eightieth milepost, and I spent that day in reading the Bible and letters and cards of congratulation. The sentiment of those letters brought many a tear from my eyes; they were tears of solemn gratitude. Wonder of wonders, that such a poor worm of the dust should command such respect, and commend himself to the fellowship and love of the people of God, and I do pray that the Lord will keep me near to him and his dear people to the end. I wish to extend my thanks for all the messages I received and what

they contained. I hope to continue in the remembrance of you all while I live, and hope that I may leave something for you to remember after I am gone that will be pleasant. Fare ye well.

T. M. POULSON.

PORTLAND, Ind., Nov. 26, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed find a letter from brother George L. Weaver, of Galion, Ohio, which I think will be of interest to the readers of the SIGNS. Brother Weaver is one of the few sound ministers in Ohio who contend earnestly for the doctrine of God our Savior. NEWTON PETERS.

GALION, Ohio, Nov. 23, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—Your letter was received to-day, and I was glad to hear from you. I have been thinking about Elder McGlade, and wondering how he was; I had not heard of his death until your letter came. Our mission is being fulfilled, and one by one God is calling his servants home. Brother Peters, I have often thought about that river which we have to cross before we can enter into the home of the blessed, and also I have been thinking about that strait and narrow way which leads to Zion, and were it not for that light which shines at the final end, we would become discouraged. But the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us, nor with the peace, love and perfect happiness which await the weary traveler who here walks by faith, not by sight. The vision of the prophet of the wheel within a wheel is typical of those who travel this narrow way. They turned not as they went; they went straight forward, and when the living creatures went the wheels went by them, and when they were lifted up from the earth the wheels were lifted up, and wherever the Spirit was to go they went, and the prophet said, And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the voice of the Almighty, and when they stood they let down their wings. We who are led by the Spirit of Christ, and are, as we hope, called by him, are living creatures, and have the appearance of a wheel within a wheel, but this is not to the world. The world sees not the inner wheel working, but we see the brethren sometimes as men only, who remain on the earth, and when the wheel runs on the earth it makes a track; we examine this track, and if it be a straight one we say within ourselves, Here is a wheel within a wheel. Then again, we see it lifted up from the earth, and our vision is lifted up with it, and in spirit we sail in the smooth promises of our God, who is immutable, and who never slumbers nor sleeps, and by faith we see at the end of the straight way the beacon light. But when the wheel is lifted up it makes no track upon the earth, we cannot trace it by carnal reason, nor follow it with enticing words of man's wisdom, nor with works of the flesh. It makes no track in the dust, but is lifted above all carnal things. It is then that "we worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." The strait way is Christ; it is by him that we enter the way. It is also stated that when the wheels stood they let down their wings. Then the curtain of vision is dropped, the clouds cover the sun, the thunders roll, darkness covers all and the beasts of prey creep forth. We are back again to earth, and our wheel is again in the dust and is making a track there. We strain our eyes to catch a glimpse of the light, but it is gone. We go to the

Scriptures to find something pleasing, and instead find condemnation. We shut the book and say, O wretched man that I am! What good am I on the earth? Did I ever taste that the Lord is gracious? Did I ever feel the power of his Spirit? Am I his, or am I not? If I am, why am I thus? Why this dull and lifeless frame? The world looks on us and calls us "Hardshells," &c., and they say, Where is your God? Now let him deliver you. They point the finger of scorn at us. But, brother, some of the best and dearest lessons are taught us while we are on earth in the prison, with our feet fast in the stocks. In such case Paul and Silas prayed, and God heard their prayer. In the darkest hour, when all our strength is gone, God hears us, and we once more arise as on eagle's wings. One thing is certain, when we do sail on high we sail higher than other birds, and by the wheel within we sail straight, and make no track on the earth. In the power of the Lord God of Israel we proclaim the wonderful works of God.

I did not intend writing all this when I began, but my mind has run on, and whether it has made a track on earth I know not; if it has, I hope that it is a straight one. I leave you to judge as to this. May God be with you and yours, is my prayer.

I am, as ever, a sinner,

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., July 19, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—I received a very kind and deeply interesting, christian letter from dear sister E. L. Ross, of London Mills, Ill., which I feel sure all would like to read. She seems to have a desire to bear with patience and perfect confidence in God all the heavy burdens and severe trials of her life. She has tasted that the Lord is gracious, and has had many feasts while reading the communications in the dear old SIGNS. This is all the preaching she gets in her loneliness and declining days, so I thought I would send her letter to you for publication if you deem it worthy. She is faithful in all things that pertain to God's kingdom. May the Lord be with her the remainder of her days, is the prayer of an unworthy sister, if one at all,

BELLE FRAZEE.

LONDON MILLS, Ill., June 16, 1910.

DEAR AGED SISTER IN CHRIST:—It is through a train of God's love and mercy that my life is spared to write you again. I am ashamed that I could not answer your good letter sooner. We have had the measles and quite a bit of other sickness in the family, though we are all better now. My health is as good as usual this summer. The extra warm weather goes hard with me. I passed through the winter nicely. I hope you are well and enjoying yourself. I write in my mind to you every day; I sit and sew and think of you, and of our association, in which we took so much comfort. I fear we shall not have another association soon. I think how much you must enjoy it, while hearing brother Frazee preach Christ and him crucified; I always loved to hear him preach. I have visited a great many associations, and have heard much good preaching. I hope that his life may be spared to you a long time to declare the riches of Christ to the church and people of God. O how I would like to be with you at your meeting. It seemed good to me when I heard that you had such a good meeting. I have not heard a sermon since the association, except in the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES; it comes with good sermons

and rich experiences. I wish that I had more time to read and write. It seems to me that if I could only write like my dear brethren and sisters, I would not be fit for anything else. Worldly things are of very little comfort to me. I know that my time here must be short, and sometimes I desire to depart and be with Christ. I often fear and tremble as I think over my past life, how disobedient I have been. Will he forgive me? When his children go to him in prayer and in the spirit he makes his mercies known to them. He says, Be still, and know that I am God; beside me there is no Savior. At such times we fear no evil. It will be a happy change to see him and be like him; there we shall sing the song of Moses and the Lamb; bless his holy name, his mercy endureth forever. Dear sister, why do we doubt when we have such evidences? We know that our Redeemer liveth, and that he gives us grace to strengthen our faith in Christ Jesus our Savior. We trust him for both temporal and spiritual food, and he supplies our wants every day of our lives. We should praise him more, and glorify his holy name for his goodness and mercy to us.

How much I wish that we could be together and talk these things over. Give my love to brother Frazee and his wife. If you are able to write, I would be thankful to get a letter from you; they do me much good.

I remain, your unworthy sister,

ELIZA L. ROSS.

WALKER, Oregon, Dec. 23, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—We desire to know the general practice of the churches in the reception of members, or of candidates for baptism. The Coast Fork Church, in Oregon, has confirmed the action of their pastors, with a quorum of brethren, in receiving for baptism brethren away from the regular church meetings, upon a satisfactory profession of their faith. Is this lawful, provided of course the church is in peace and harmony at home? A question arises as to the order or the disorder of this procedure. We are not acquainted with the general practice of the churches in this matter, but we hold the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit to be the only infallible guide in this and all matters pertaining to the rule and practice of the churches. In searching we find these precepts. In John xiv. 26, we read the following, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things." Again, in John xvi. 13, 14, we read, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth. * * * He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." The eighteenth chapter of Matthew is generally recognized as containing special instruction in church practice. In verse twenty the Savior said, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." In Acts viii. we read, "They that were scattered abroad, went every where preaching the word. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. * * * But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized both men and women." In the same chapter of Acts it is recorded that Philip met the eunuch and preached unto him Christ Jesus, and the man declared his faith in Christ, and was baptized by Philip alone. In Acts ix. it is recorded that Paul, being convicted and believing,

came to the house of Judas, and Ananias met him there by the Spirit, and laid his hands upon him, and he received his sight, and forthwith was baptized. In the tenth chapter of Acts is recorded the believing of Cornelius and his house, and of their baptism, the first record of Gentiles being baptized by the apostles. Here certainly, therefore, was no organized church. When they had received the Holy Ghost, Peter did not say to them, Go to the church, but they were commanded to be baptized, Peter first having consulted the few brethren who came with him: "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" This was a new thing, and the brethren were astonished, but they certainly consented to their baptism, and it was afterwards pronounced proper by the apostles and brethren in Judea. (See Acts xi.) We do not believe that there were organized churches in any of the other places to which we have referred. Then in Acts xvi. we read of Paul, and Silas, and the jailer: "And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway." We also read that on the Sabbath the apostles went out of the city by a river, where prayer was wont to be made, and they spake to the women that resorted thither, and a certain woman whose name was Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshiped God, heard them, whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended to the things that were spoken by Paul, and she was baptized, and her household.

Now, desiring an orderly walk in all things pertaining to the church of God, we would be glad to have the views of the editors, and of other brethren, concerning this matter.

H. F. MORNINGSTAR.
G. O. WALKER.
J. F. WALKER.

(See editorial reply on page 118.)

GREENVILLE, Texas, Dec. 18, 1910.

DEAR CHILDREN OF GOD:—At this time I know no other desire but to comfort God's people, and be comforted. I have thought I would discontinue the SIGNS, but if you feel so disposed, continue to send it, and I will send you the two dollars after I return home, as I am away at this time; however I will not send it until after the first of January. An evidence to me that I have a little hope is that when this vile body of mine is raised, it will be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus. I have traveled several thousand miles looking for a place to lay my head, that I might rest, but I am like the travelers of old; the way of the transgressor is hard; I have sinned against the Holy One of Israel; the things that I would I do not, and that I would not that I do. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I know the great God that spake and it was done, commanded and it stood fast, is able, but could it please him that a poor traveler in a strange land should rest after the toils and cares of life are ended? "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable," but God is good. "O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever." He has loved his children with an everlasting love. "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." So, little children, remember, "Blessed are they

that mourn: for they shall be comforted." Let us remember that when we mourn it is evidence that we are blessed. He is exalted a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins to Israel (not to the world), that they should be preached in his name. We learn from the seventeenth chapter of John that there was an appointed hour for the Savior to be delivered for our offences; not a part, but for all of our unrighteousness, and he said, "I have finished [not tried to, or offered to, but completed] the work which thou gavest me to do," and that was to save poor sinners, and they are the salt of the earth, and they are the light of the world (the spiritual world, I understand). "A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." The Hill is an everlasting one, and it is impossible to destroy it; it is a Rock in a weary land, a shelter in the time of storm, and the poor traveler sucks honey from the rock, and the only one ever found that contained honey for the Lord's people.

Farewell. ABEL R. BURKS.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Dec. 29, 1910.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES —DEAR FRIENDS:—Again a year has passed, so time swiftly glides along, and I inclose two dollars for another year's subscription to the SIGNS. I do not know when the first copy of the SIGNS came into my father's house, as it was coming as far back as I can remember, and I will be sixty-nine years of age next month if I live. It came until my mother's death, which was in 1897, since which time I have been taking it, and I feel as if I must continue it, and while I do not get them all read through, I like to read as much as possible, as it is comforting, consoling and edifying. I find many expressions therein that seem to describe my own feelings and experience far better than I can myself, by which I am comforted very much. While I feel like one alone (a black sheep), as if no one upon earth is like me, no one could be as sinful, I look upon the saints of God as pure and holy. I am so vile, so sinful; yes, unworthy to even come into their presence, much less attempt to converse with them; I feel as if I were so far beneath them that they would be justified in not noticing me. But I know not where else to go to find solid comfort; the pleasures of the world are pleasant to be sure, but they cannot be compared with those received through the saints of the true and living God; that kind of pleasure is durable, lasting; you can feast upon it while alone meditating upon these things. The pleasures of the world are too contaminating, they are mixed with frivolity, vulgarity and profanity. When I am thrown into that kind of company I find I give way too much to the same kind of indulgence, and afterwards, when alone, I think what a foolish, sinful creature I have been; this causes me to grieve. But why is it? can any one tell? I suppose it is because the tongue is a very unruly member; it is not in man to direct his steps nor to control his thoughts. I am reminded that I should be thankful there is a God; that no matter how far I go astray, in his own time and own manner he brings me back and humbles me. But O how soon I forget. When I look back over my past life I see so little good that I have accomplished it makes me ashamed to think of it. I often wonder if any one else goes through so much wickedness as I feel I have indulged in, and yet attempts to acknowledge it. I suppose many would say, If you are as vile and wicked as you acknowledge yourself to

be, you should keep it to yourself, and let no one know it; but it is an old saying that "misery loves company," and I think probably if I give vent to my feelings it will be a little relief, and I may possibly come across some one who has had a little of the same kind of experience.

But I fear I will weary you if I continue longer in this strain. I hope you will pardon me for infringing upon your time and patience.

That you will remember me in your prayers, is the sincere desire of your unworthy friend, C. S. FETTER.

PARIS, Ill., Dec. 26, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Please find four dollars to renew my subscription and that of my sister, Mrs. Daniel R. Shields, Paris, Ill.

I want to again express my appreciation of the SIGNS, and wish that I might take each of the editors, publishers and contributors by the hand and tell them how much good each number has done me. I do not know of a magazine or newspaper in the United States so carefully edited and printed. I have been reading the SIGNS for many years, and do not remember of ever seeing a single typographical error. I sometimes think the Old Baptists do not appreciate the expense and care it takes to get out the SIGNS, not saying anything of its spiritual influence. I read several Baptist papers, and find some good things in each of them. Some I cannot fully agree with, and, at the same time, I am certain that if we could or would use a little charity and look for the beams in our own eyes, and forgive our brethren seventy times seven, instead of being offended the first time, we would not find so much difference between the Old Baptists.

I merely wanted to say a word of encouragement to the editors and publishers, and to renew my subscription.

Yours in hope,

M. C. REEVES

GREENWOOD, Colo., December, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find money to pay my renewal for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as I do not feel willing to be deprived of the privilege of reading such a valuable paper, for very often the reading of one communication from a dear brother or sister richly repays for what the paper costs for one year. It is my desire to know the truth and understand the Scriptures correctly. Dear christian people, I am now a little over sixty-four years of age, and do not often have the privilege of meeting with the Lord's dear people in church capacity, where we can feast our souls upon his divine word, where we can raise our voices and join in songs of praise. I do greatly desire to spend the remainder of my life in the service of my Redeemer; his service is pleasant and beautiful, and he is also crowned with the brightest glories. I read my dear paper, the SIGNS; it comes to me full of sweet messages of love, and I can hear from the dear christian friends from all over the land. I must say that it is sweet comfort, joy and consolation to me to read the dear and able communications from the Lord's people.

I must bring this poor letter to a close, hoping that what you see amiss you will please correct. Brethren, I desire an interest in your prayers, that I may live more unto Jesus, and that he may shield and guide me in my declining years, and that God may bless and comfort the humble poor of the household of faith.

As ever, your little, unworthy sister,

(MRS.) M. J. DUNCAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1911.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

CHURCH ORDER.

(See communication on page 114.)

WE do not see why it is needful to add anything to what our brethren have written in their letter on page 114. To our mind the Scriptures referred to and quoted fully justify the action of the church to which our brethren refer. It is not for us to speak for all the church; at most we can but speak our own judgment in this, or in any other matter. All true believers desire above all things to bow to the will of God in the order, the discipline and the faith of the church of God. The testimony of the Scriptures must settle all questions that may arise. It is still the divine commandment, "See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount." We feel sure that if our hearts are filled with a desire to know and to do the will of God, his Spirit will illumine and instruct and show to us, as we have need, the meaning of his word, but still it behooves us all to carefully examine the word of God, and to, by all means in our power, arrive at what the words of Scripture do signify. To use a simple illustration, we mean just this: we read in the word of the obligation of all believers to be baptized in the name of the Lord. There can arise no question in the mind of one who humbly desires to follow the Lord as to this obligation; but what does the word mean by baptism? Here it is needful to search the words of Scripture to find out what the dear Lord intended by the word baptism. Does baptism mean sprinkling, pouring or immersion? This can be known only as we examine into the meaning of the word, and into the example of Christ and the apostles. How earnestly will one who has come to know what the salvation of God means desire to know what his Lord has commanded in this word. There will be no question in the mind of such an one that he ought to keep the commandment of the Lord, but what does that commandment signify? This such an one will earnestly strive to look into, that he may do his Master's will. These thoughts apply also to the questions proposed by our western brethren, and it seems to us that they, in the above letter, as we said before, have well covered the ground. It seems sure to us that in all the times of the apostles those who were sent forth to preach the word, whether apostles or evangelists, did at all times receive and baptize all who came to them, upon their witnessing a good confession of their faith; in fact, before churches were organized no other course of conduct could have been pursued. It is manifest that no one could be received by the churches before churches were organized. It was said to the disciples, as disciples, that they were to go forth and to baptize those who believed. This rule has never, so far as we have seen, been abrogated. It is our mind that ministers called of God and sent forth to preach his gospel in any place where there are not organized churches, or an organized church, not only have the right to receive

and baptize those who witness a good confession of faith in Christ, but it is their bounden duty to baptize all such ones. "Can any man forbid water?" is still a pertinent question. But ministers of the word will not do such things hastily, or for the gratification of any spirit of pride or selfishness, but in the fear of God; they will feel as though special obligation rests upon them to examine carefully all who seek baptism at their hands to see whether they be in the faith or not, and they will feel under special obligation to carefully instruct those who come to this profession of faith as to the order and faith of the house of God, and, beside, any true minister of God will be most glad when other brethren can be with him and assist him in his work, and advise with him regarding it. The candidate received is not only his brother or sister, but is to be regarded as one with all the household of faith. That minister does not go forth in his own name, but in the name of the Lord, and as one in faith and love with all the church of God. He will desire to be sure that in the candidate he has also found one who is one indeed with all who love and serve God, therefore he will not act hastily or thoughtlessly, but with solemnity and care. It seems to us also sure that unless churches have confidence in men called to preach and baptize, that they will act soberly and with good judgment, and that they are spiritual men, able to judge the experience and the spirit of those who come to them for baptism, professing faith in Christ, they ought not to set them apart by ordination to this work at all. In setting them thus apart to this work they do declare that they have this full confidence in the qualifications of those whom they set apart. If such an one in his ministry finds himself among those who profess to love God and to desire to serve him, and yet far from any church, he must take the responsibility of judging, and the church is bound to accept his judgment, just as much so as one church is bound to accept the judgment of another church in receiving members. The minister may indeed make mistakes, but so have churches as well in such matters; but still all things ought to be done decently and in order. It would be inexpedient altogether for any minister to go on receiving and baptizing members in the bounds of some gospel church without coming into consultation with that church; for any minister to do so, would show that he was lacking in love for his brethren, and respect for them, that would lead him to seek to be their servant for Christ's sake. To pursue such a course would be to his own harm, to the harm of candidates received by him, to the sorrow and disturbance of the church and to the reproach of the cause of Christ on earth. In this, as in all matters pertaining to the order and travel of the church, the one chief requisite, the one thing more excellent than all else, is charity, the love of God, which includes always the love of each other. If the minister loves his brethren as he ought to love them he will not think of disregarding them in his labors. He will desire to consult with them, and that they shall share in all his service; and, on the other hand, if the church loves him as a servant of God and their brother, they will feel confidence in him that he desires to do all things for their good and for the glory of God, and so they will not be captious with him, nor quick to think evil of him, nor ready to attribute wrong at slight notice to him. How good it is when ministers and churches have this mutual confidence;

with it there is blessing, without it there can be no blessing upon them.

In conclusion, we do not think that the church referred to by our brethren did wrong, but right; the ministers did not do wrong, but right. This we say here, simply upon the face of the statements made by the brethren who have written about it. C.

GRACE AND MERCY.

In conversation a little time ago the question was proposed, What is the difference in meaning between the words grace and mercy, or is there any difference? It may be well to say here a few things regarding these two words as used in the Bible. First, we will say that as commonly used among men there is this difference: grace is the word of larger meaning. Mercy is, and must be, all grace, but all grace is not mercy. Grace includes mercy, but it also relates to and includes other things beside. Grace is a free favor indeed, but it does not necessarily signify ill desert. Mercy, on the other hand, is grace bestowed in spite of ill desert. One may show free favor to another who may be a stranger to him, and who has never done him any harm, but yet, on the other hand, has done him no good, but mercy signifies that the receiver of the favor has done the giver an injury. Mercy means that one who has been wronged does not seek satisfaction of the wrongdoer, but, on the other hand, shows him favor in spite of the injury. Grace, then, covers more ground than mercy, but mercy is a word of more intense meaning where it applies than is grace. One shows mercy when he does not exact for the wrong done, but he may also go on to do the evil-doer good, to relieve his distress, to feed his hunger, or to quench his thirst, or to protect him from some other evil thing. In such a case it may be said that mercy goes on to still further acts of grace. Mercy, however, no matter how far it extends, always signifies that there has been a wrong done. This is its simple meaning, as used commonly among men. In the Scriptures there is much the same distinction. Often the two words are joined together, as in this text, Grace, mercy and peace be unto you. As the apostle gave this benediction in his epistles, spiritual minds would be called to think upon the word "grace" as covering all the daily needs of their spiritual life, which needs must be supplied by grace; that is, the free favor of God. It would include all spiritual blessings bestowed upon us here through Christ our Lord. It would remind the brethren that in them was no merit; that they could pay no price for their blessings; that all were without money and without price; they would be reminded that every spiritual thing bestowed upon them was from God's favor alone. By the word "mercy" these brethren would be reminded of sin, but it would be of sin forgiven, blotted out as a thick cloud. They would be reminded of past sins which had been forgiven through the atonement, and they would be reminded that they still had daily need of mercy in the forgiveness of daily sins. We are not only dependent upon the grace of God, but we are dependent as sinners. We are not only beggars, but we are rebels. Not only would our rags forbid our entering into the presence of the King, but our rebellion still more forbids. One clothed in poverty would feel that the palace of the king, and the companionship of those clothed in apparel suited to such a place, were not for him, still more would that one feel himself barred out from such a place and from such company who remembered that he had spoken lightly of the king, and had waged war against him. It would be

great grace upon the part of the king to receive that poor man into his favor and bestow upon him all the privileges of his favorites, but it would be mercy were that king to receive his rebel into such favor. In the gospel, both grace and mercy are presented. "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles." This is wonderful grace indeed. Can anything exceed such grace as this? But again, the Lord has said, "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions." He is a God that pardoneth iniquity. He has devised means whereby his banished may be restored. "Thou hast ascended on high, * * * thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also." For the rebellious! Here is the deepest wonder of grace; mercy, grace intensified to the highest degree, is seen shining forth here.

Out of the experience of these two first things would grow up that other word, "peace." In mercy and grace are seen the thoughts of peace which God has to his chosen, and out of the work of atonement, and of the new birth applied to the conscience, and felt in the heart, comes a personal experience of peace of conscience toward God, and of peace felt toward others. It is the work of the blessed Lord to give peace, for he so declared to his disciples. "Peace I give unto you," he said, and this he does through the work of the atonement, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. As mercy is a grace, so also is this peace. It is the peace of God which passeth all understanding. Only this one man Christ Jesus has ever made peace with God, and this he did through the blood of the cross, and when this great work is applied to the heart, then comes peace. There is no other way into this peace. C.

JAMES V. 14, 15.

"Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins they shall be forgiven him."

Some time ago Elder H. H. Lefferts, of Leesburg, Va., asked that we write on the above text. We felt that he could write more to the satisfaction of our readers on the text than we could, and suggested that he give his views, but as he has not done so we shall try to comply with his request.

The epistle of James is very comprehensive, covering the whole gospel, yet in different terms of speech from all other writers of the New Testament. He presents the doctrine of election in saying, "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" This is spoken in contrast with the rich of the world who have not faith and who oppress the poor. He presents the doctrine of justification before God by calling attention to the works of Abraham in offering his son Isaac upon the altar, and the works of Rahab when she received the messengers and sent them out another way. But he is very careful to say that by their works their faith was made perfect. In this is shown beyond question that those works were the works of faith; faith wrought them in every detail. He presents the righteousness of God through the visits and ministrations of the saints to the widows and the fatherless, and in keeping themselves unspotted from the world. This he calls "pure and undefiled religion." He preaches the doctrine of predestination in saying, "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his

creatures." In proclaiming the same doctrine Paul said, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." After having presented these fundamental principles of doctrine he called the attention of those afflicted and discouraged to the sufferings of old testament saints, saying, "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." The word "example" shows clearly that the afflictions of the saints of old did not spring out of the ground, or come by chance, but according to the will of God. The opening of the earth in the wilderness and the swallowing up of twenty-three thousand Israelites in one day was not a mere happening that might have been avoided, but one of God's purposes, and we are not left to conjecture with regard to that purpose. Paul tells us that it happened unto them for an example, and was written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come. While men, finite creatures, look upon the picture and exclaim, Horror of horrors! God decreed it for the good of his people in the gospel dispensation. This is predestination. Paul, instead of saying, Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, said, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." He presents identically the same truth and same exhortation to steadfastness as does James, though in different language. Again, James said, "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms." This takes us back in mind to the days of David, when these were living commandments in his heart, and one day he said, "Praise ye the Lord. O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever." But another day came, and the merry heart of the former time was sad; the song had ceased; questionings filled his mind; a remembrance of his sin presented a great gulf between him and God, and in his "afflicted" condition he exclaimed, Has the Lord forgotten to be gracious? Are his mercies clean gone for ever? Restore, O restore unto me the joy of thy salvation. Thus we see the experience of David the same as that of the Lord's people in the days of the apostles, and it is the same experience of conflict now in the heart of every one called by grace. It is in this way that the saints of the present day come unto the spirits of just men made perfect.

In coming more directly to the text, we would say that it seems necessary often to consider the time and under what circumstances some Scriptures were written, if we arrive at their real import. Regarding this text, we should remember that it was written in an age when miracles were being wrought according to the promise of Jesus, when he said, "And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." In his plan such signs were necessary to make manifest the power of Jesus of Nazareth, in

whose name all healing was done; hence James said, "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." The word "elders" does not necessarily mean ministers of the gospel, but aged brethren of the church; for instance, when Paul said to Timothy, Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father, he referred to an old man; this the connection shows. The aged brethren were men of faith, in whom was the spirit of prayer and the gift of healing. Such men were to be sent for in cases of sickness, to pray for the recovery of the sick and to anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. We understand by the word "oil" that oil was verily used in many cases of sickness, and while its effect was to soothe and allay pain, it was "the prayer of faith" that healed the sick, and it was the Lord who raised them up and forgave their sins. We wish to call special attention to the fact that those visited by the elders, anointed with oil and raised up were "brethren," hence also men of faith, and their sin inherited from Adam had been atoned for by the blood of the Lamb. We therefore conclude that the "sins" spoken of in the text were transgressions of the laws of the church or transgressions of the laws of nature, through which they had been overtaken by disease, and the healing, or raising up of the sick, was in itself the forgiveness from the Lord. The statement that, "The prayer of faith shall save [heal] the sick," was most positive and absolutely true and repeatedly demonstrated in that age of the world, but the day of miracles, in the true sense of the term, is past. Some years ago, as all well remember, Garfield, the president of the United States, was shot, and for weeks lingered between life and death. During that time special prayer meetings throughout the entire country were appointed, and prayer was offered by the most religious and devout people in the world, so considered, for his recovery, but he died. This does not in any sense prove the statement of James false that the prayer of faith shall save the sick, but it does prove most conclusively that FAITH was not, even as a grain of mustard seed, in any prayer offered. We wonder where the Christian Scientists, faith healers, were about that time, and we also wonder why Mrs. Eddy did not heed the proverb, "Physician heal thyself." It is said of her, however, that she was in error nine days before she died; but if the Scriptures be true she was in error from the first promulgation of her unfounded religion.

As a proof of the power of prayer in olden times, James tells us that Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, yet he prayed that it should not rain, and it rained not for the space of three years and six months. The prophet was subject to like passions as we are, by nature no better, yet his prayer was heard. Did you ever notice carefully the wording of the following sentence: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much"? The word "effectual" precedes the word "fervent." The effectual prayer could not be other than fervent, nor could the effectual fervent prayer be in the heart of any man except he be righteous. It being in the purpose of God, therefore predestinated, that it should not rain on the earth by the space of three years and six months, he created in the heart of Elias a fervent desire that it should not rain, and in that desire was effectual prayer and it rained not. The Lord's predestinated purpose

in the famine was revealed at first to the prophet only in part; all that he knew of it was that the Lord meant to send sore affliction upon King Ahab and all his idolatrous followers; but the Lord's further purpose was to show his power in another direction, and through that mercy preach election. The rain ceased, the famine came, and the supply of meal and oil of a certain widow grew less and less until only a handful of meal was left in the barrel and just a little oil in the cruse. She, faint and discouraged, was gathering sticks to kindle a fire and bake the last cake and then die, when the very man who had prayed that it should not rain appeared upon the scene. The Lord had told him that this woman should sustain him during the famine; he therefore said to her, "Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand. And she said, As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die. And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go, and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth." The prophet, no doubt, began to realize something more of the Lord's purpose in his prayer, and his faith was again made manifest, and he declared that the God of Israel was able of the handful of meal and a little oil to supply the needs of the widow, her family and himself during the famine. His word was true, and there was no lack, always a handful of meal in the barrel and a little oil in the cruse. So it is in the experience of all the Lord's children, no surplus, but just enough grace, strength, bread and water as the day comes. When Jesus came in human flesh, in preaching the doctrine of election he called attention to this very thing, saying, "I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow." This brings to view further purpose in the prayer of Elias that it should not rain. At the end of the three years and six months we find the same man praying again, but how different the prayer, yet from the same source and as effectual fervent as the first. This time he prayed that it might rain, and he sent his servant toward the sea to see if a cloud were visible, and he returned and answered, No. This was repeated six times, making seven times that he went toward the sea, and each time until the seventh he returned with the same word, No. But the seventh time he said, "Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand." Then the prophet knew his prayer had been effectual fervent, and he sent word to Ahab to make ready, for God would send rain again upon the earth. The cloud had the appearance of "a man's hand;" it must have been even in that dark age of the world a view of the incarnation of the Son of God, through whose hand salvation came to Jerusalem, and in whose hand are living waters, refreshing showers and healing streams.

We now feel that perhaps brother Lefferts will be sorry that he did not write on this text himself. It is not too late, however, and we shall be glad to publish his views on this or any other text. We confess that the word of God is too deep for us, have never, either in writing or speaking, been able to more than hint at the profound and mysteries deep. K.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

NOTICE.

Having been providentially prevented from meeting my appointment with the Woburn Church the fourth Sunday in January, I shall be there the third Sunday in February (19th), if the Lord will. Services at the usual hours.

H. C. KER.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Benj. E. Cubbage, at Petersburg, Del., Jan. 18th, 1911, Thomas H. Williams and Miss Iola M. McGinnis, both of Kent County, Del.

By the same, at the home of the bride's parents, near Henderson, Md., Jan. 18th, 1911, Benton W. Raughley and Miss Edith Cooper, both of Kent Co., Del.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

"A Friend," N. J., $2.00; Mrs. M. J. Miller, Ill., $1.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elisabeth Richardson Moulds was born in Ramsay, Huntingtonshire, England, July 8th, 1838, died at her home Jan. 3rd, 1911. She was the daughter of Fryer and Elisabeth Rose Richardson. She came to America in May, 1853, with her parents, brothers John, Thomas and Fryer, sisters Mary and Martha, settling at Evansville, Ind. The family moved to Nebraska township, this county, in 1855. She was united in marriage to Henry Moulds, Feb. 6th, 1862 living on a farm near Flanagan until the spring of 1881, when they moved to Eylar, Ill., where they resided until January, 1892, at which time they moved to Flanagan, Ill., where her husband died June 13th, 1892. Mrs. Moulds came to Pontiac in 1894, where she had resided ever since. She was the mother of eight children, three girls having died in infancy. Those surviving are William Emery Moulds, of Lake City, Iowa; Henry Noble Moulds, of Eylar, Ill.; Mrs. Mary Martha Sands, of Cornell, Ill.; George Thomas Moulds, of Pontiac, Ill., and John Fryer Moulds, of Chicago; also two brothers, John Richardson, of Pontiac, Ill., and Thomas Richardson, of Flanagan, Ill. The children were all present at the bedside of their mother with the exception of William, of Lake City, Iowa, who arrived too late, on account of the severe storms. Mrs. Moulds was a lady highly respected in all of the communities in which she had resided. She was a firm believer in the Old School Baptist faith, a lady of strong christian character and a mother greatly beloved by her children. She had been in poor health for some time, but had been able to be around some until within the last few days, when she contracted a heavy cold, which developed into pneumonia, resulting in her death. She was conscious until the very end, talking with those around her and expressing her willingness to go when her Master called.

The funeral was held Jan. 6th, 1911, first by a short service at the residence, conducted by B. W. Tate, of Pontiac, while the extended services were held following at Flanagan, conducted by Elder S. H. Humphrey, of the Old School Baptist Church, Galesburg, Ill. Interment in Mt. Zion Cemetery.

GEORGE T. MOULDS.

Lewis Robey, our beloved brother in Christ, departed this life Jan. 2nd, 1911, at his home in Herndon, Va. He had but lately passed his 72nd birthday, the date of his birth being October 29th, 1838. For forty-three years he lived an exemplary, christian life with his dear companion, Charlotte Huntt, to whom he was wedded Jan. 1st, 1868. To that union were born six children, three sons and three daughters, five of whom survive their father, together with their widowed mother, who very keenly realizes her loss, and is filled with grief therefor. Brother Robey

was baptized by the late Elder E. V. White the second Sunday in August, 1889, in the fellowship of the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church, of which body he remained a faithful and consistent member to the day of his death. For some weeks prior to his death he felt he was not long for this world, and so expressed himself on more than one occasion. I last saw him a month before his departure, sitting up in a chair. The doctor in attendance then said he saw no reason why brother Robey should not recover, but our brother himself said his final sickness was upon him, and his end could not be far off. A few weeks later proved he was a better judge of his condition than any one else, even the physician. He was a spiritually-minded man, and this grace was with him to the close of his life. Verses from hymns he loved and fragments of prayer escaped his lips those latter days of his, and bore evidence to the sorrowful and waiting ones at his side that his Savior was near and very dear to him. We can truthfully say of him he was a kind and loving husband, a patient and tender father, one who walked humbly with his God and blamelessly with his brethren. His outward life evidenced that the fear of God was in his heart; not that slavish fear which gendereth to bondage, but that godly fear, the hatred of evil and love of righteousness, that frees from sin and death and hell whosesoever soul it enters. Our hearts go out in tenderest sympathy to our beloved sister Robey, and to the sons and daughters in this bereavement, for in addition to this loss, one daughter is at present laid up with a lame foot and one son with an injured leg, the result of a car mishap, so we feel this family is especially tried just at this time.

The funeral services were held in the meetinghouse at Frying Pan, and burial in the yard close at hand. The writer tried to speak to the comfort of all assembled from John xiv. 18. May the consolation in Jesus Christ abide with the widow and all who mourn. H. H. LEFFERTS.

LEESBURG, Va., Jan. 16, 1911.

Joseph Bartley died at his home in Jasper County, Ill., Jan. 16th, 1911, and was laid in the old churchyard near Brockville, there to await the time set apart by his Master to be raised a spiritual body, to ever dwell in that haven of sweet repose. He was born in Shelby County, Ind., Feb. 5th, 1834. A comforting funeral discourse was preached by Elder W. A. Pinkstaf. His early life was spent in his native State. When nearly twenty years of age he emigrated to Illinois with his parents. A little hope being given to him, Saturday, Dec. 6th, 1856, he united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Hickorycreek, this county. May 5th, 1862, he was married to Catherine Jones. Ten children blessed that happy union. His companion, aged seventy-three, and five children, two daughters and three sons, survive him, who will greatly miss him, but they realize that their great loss is his eternal gain. He was a true antinomian; in that faith he lived and died, believing that nothing is based on conditions; God cannot in anything he does be unjust; he is under no law. Brother Bartley was an unselfish, earnest laborer in the Master's vineyard; by his pious and studious life he gained much knowledge of the holy Scriptures. He was a believer in God's foreknowledge and purpose pertaining to all things; to him religion meant service. We can truly say that he faithfully worked while it was day. The writer was bound to him in the bond of fellowship. His age was 76 years, 11 months and 11 days. Honored and loved by all, quietly and gently as the slumber of an infant this good man fell asleep in Jesus. On Wednesday before the summons came he and his wife were talking on the subject of religion, and he said he would not give his little hope for ten thousand worlds like this. Thursday morning he was stricken with paralysis of the left side; five days later the end came, and his spirit took its flight to be with God.

F. STRETCHER.

HUNT, Illinois.

Delilah Jenkins Hitt died at her home in Fleischmanns, N. Y., Jan. 16th, 1911, in the 74th year of her age. Sister Hitt was married to Albert Hitt, Feb. 17th, 1853, and to them were born three children, two sons and one daughter. Sister Hitt was received in the fellowship of the Andes Old School Baptist Church in August, 1866, and baptized by Elder J. S. Hewitt. She lived a faithful and devoted life to the church, and their home for many years was a welcome place to her kindred in Christ; she delighted to welcome them to her hospitality. The larger part of her married life was spent within the bounds of the Andes Church, at Union Grove, N. Y., but about sixteen years ago they moved to Fleischmanns, where she spent the remaining part of her life. Sister Hitt was held in high esteem by all who knew her. Her life had been an exemplary one, abounding in uprightness and integrity from early womanhood until the day of her death. Some four years ago she was stricken with a paralytic stroke, leaving her in a helpless condition, and was confined to her bed the larger part of that time, yet she endured all her afflictions without a murmur; her faith and confidence in her blessed Lord never wavered, feeling assured that he would not leave her in the trying hour. She was blessed with a reconciled mind, which remained clear and calm to the very last. Several times during her last hours she repeated the nineteenth verse of the thirty-fourth Psalm. Sister Hitt leaves her husband, two sons and one daughter, beside other relatives and friends to mourn their loss.

Her funeral was held from her residence; interment in the Clovesville Cemetery.

J. B. SLAUSON.

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I have also on hand a few copies of "Reminiscences and Letters of Mary Parker." Price 75 cents.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 79. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1911. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

1 JOHN IV. 1-3.

"BELOVED, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—The above portion of the holy Scriptures has been on my mind more or less for the past few days, and now I will try, if the Lord will, to pen a few thoughts relative to it for your consideration. False prophets, actuated by the spirit of antichrist, were liable to disturb the peace of the brethren and cause them much trouble, and so the apostle warns them, as did also his beloved Master before him, and so he exhorts them to "believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God," and laid down the rule by which to try them. The spirit that is not of God can be but dangerous to the children of God, dangerous to their spiritual welfare, though those actuated by that spirit, professing to be teachers of good things, may manifest very much interest in the welfare of the church, and even profess to believe in God and his Christ, for Satan, that archenemy and deceiver, has his ministers, and we are told that his ministers are transformed as ministers of righteousness, hence their liability for a time to deceive even the Lord's little ones. It certainly has been needful for the believer all along the line, from the time this was written until now, and is as needful for the church now to "try the spirits" as ever it was. Every believer has a double rule, so to speak, by which to try them. This same writer, John, tells us, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." Jesus said, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." The experience of every true believer, that "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works," is abundantly corroborated by Scripture testimony, so both the Scriptures and his own experience contradict every spirit that seeks to divide the honors of salvation between Jesus and man, or works, means

or instrumentalities. Faith in the believer accepts all the testimony of the Scriptures concerning the salvation of God in Christ Jesus. A man may say, I believe in Jesus Christ (as I think thousands do to-day), and yet deny all that the name signifies. Every such one is possessed with and actuated by the spirit of antichrist. The name Jesus means Savior, one who saves, Christ, the anointed of God. The essence of the teachings of thousands upon thousands of teachers to-day, who claim to believe on Jesus and profess to be his servants, is that all that Jesus did saves no one; he only made it possible for the sinner to save himself, or the salvation of sinners is made possible through means and instrumentalities. This certainly is antichrist, but this antichrist has many forms and ways of presenting himself, and some far more subtle than this. The angel said to Joseph, "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." I conclude that one is just as much antichrist if he disbelieves either one of these three positive "shalls," as if he should disbelieve all of them. Peter declared of this Jesus, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Scripture testimony abundantly proves that there is no partner with Jesus in the matter of salvation; he alone is Savior, as it is written, "And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me." "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." In this the negative is as clearly taught as is the affirmative, i. e., He that is not born of God does not believe that Jesus is the Christ, the only God-appointed, promised and anointed Messiah, Savior and Redeemer, without a partner in the work assigned him by his divine and holy Father. He who teaches that will power in the sinner, money or preacher, or work of the law, or any other creature or thing, is entitled to a division of the honors of salvation with the Christ of God, is not a believer in Jesus Christ as the Scriptures set him forth, and to the extent that he takes from him the honor which is his due, and seeks to give it to another, he is antichrist. Faith in the believer is that through which he accepts as true the things taught in the Scriptures concerning Christ. This faith is said to be born of God, and overcomes the world; it accepts as true and rejoices in the things which carnal reason cannot comprehend, and even says cannot be. It should never be forgotten that the manifest children of God still possess all the principles of corrupt Adamic nature, hence their susceptibility to the suggestions of the spirit of antichrist, both by the tempter within and the false prophet without. But to his children God giveth more grace, grace according to their time and need. Even the children of God here in the world sometimes (and I might say truthfully often) manifest by their conduct the rulings of the spirit of antichrist, but I believe that sooner or later they are every one delivered from it, and before they quit this stage of action have to confess in their hearts, if not outwardly, that Jesus "is all, and in all." "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow * * * and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of

God the Father." It is the truth that Jesus Christ is Lord (God ever), and the only name that figures in salvation from eternity to eternity, so to speak, whether we believe it or not, and when by faith the children of God realize it they rejoice in it "to the glory of God the Father."

"And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God." There seems to be a variety of evil spirits mentioned in the Scriptures, all of the same nature, all coming from the same source and all antichrist; many kinds of devils, but all closely allied to the one devil, the father of lies. There was that "certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination * * * which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying," (flattery, I presume), and Simon the sorcerer, deceiver, and the unclean spirits, &c., the dumb devil that Jesus cast out of the man, the Gadarene that was possessed with a legion of devils. But Jesus had power over all of them, as did also the apostles, and all to whom he gave the power. There was also "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." None possessed of these devils could deliver themselves, nor could any man deliver them, nor any power except that of God in Christ, and his disciples, to whom he gave such power. The persons who besought Jesus and were healed had faith in him. The devils also believed (knew he had power over them) and trembled. I have thought that "the prince of the power of the air," or "that old serpent, called the devil," was the embodiment of the whole family of devils, and was and is that spirit which ever opposed Christ and his people on earth. The works of the devil are ever made manifest in the conduct of men. Under the influence of that evil spirit men are combined together to compass the destruction of God's people on earth, as the rulers of the Jews, the scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees, combined together to compass the destruction of the Lord and Savior. In all this they only fulfill the purpose of God and the prophecies, but of this they are utterly ignorant. Men never could have taken and crucified the Savior had it not been God's determinate counsel and foreknowledge to deliver him into their hands; neither could Satan gather together his forces and persecute the church of Christ, as has been done all along down the line of its history, were it not according to God's will. Satan has the power (when it is God's will) to gather and combine his forces together; he is "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," and, as before stated, he has the power of transformation, that he may appear as an angel of light, and of transforming his ministers to ministers of righteousness, and such they appear to be to men, but when God's dear children remember to apply the rule they are enabled to detect them. They will not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, i. e., that he is a full and complete Savior, and wrought a full and finished salvation. This class (antichristian ministers) have always been by far the most numerous; as it was in the days of Elijah the prophet, so it is now. They bear a close resemblance to their ancient predecessors the Pharisees, and to-day they are as numerous as the frogs that covered Egypt. They love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and to be called of men Rabbi. In our day they are ever scrambling for the fattest positions in the (so-called) churches, and have taught the people to call them "Reverend," "Doctor of Divinity," &c. They

have always made it an important point to manufacture and manipulate public sentiment, and teach the people to ignore the truth and to ostracize the man or body of men who stand for it. Thus for gain the truth is perverted and ignored, and the true ministry of Jesus Christ and his church through misrepresentation are brought into contempt and derision, and thus the spirit of antichrist is made manifest in the world. But amidst all this the poor and afflicted, tempted and tried, despised and rejected people of God, knowing that they are as their Master was in the world, and knowing that he himself came in contact with Satan and all his forces, and gained a complete victory, and in due time the victory will be manifested over all the powers of darkness, to the final deliverance of every heir of promise, rejoice in the truth. The apostle Paul said, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." When the blessed Lamb of God was crucified, antichrist was exulting in the zenith of his power and glory. On that day Pilate and Herod, who had been at enmity, were made friends. It seems at this time that the world was enjoying a universal peace. Worldly wisdom, governmental power and religious zeal were the three grand elements combined, and under the influence and control of "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." The coming together of these elements, dominated by religious fanaticism, has always been a time of persecution of the church of Christ. In all this the word of God to the serpent (Gen. iii. 15,) is being manifested and developed: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." It was the same spirit, "prince of the power of the air," antichrist, that developed the Roman Catholic hierarchy, that ruled the world through the dark ages and sought to exterminate the believing children of God from off the face of the earth, and in its vain efforts to establish and uphold its religion by law put to death its millions, and by its merciless rule of tyranny and oppression reduced the human race to the most abject condition of poverty, ignorance and superstition. But through all this dark period of the world's history, from all we are able to learn and which we believe is in strict harmony with the prophecies of the Scriptures, God and truth were never without witnesses; fast as they were mowed down others were raised up, and when they seemed to be exterminated in one place they would spring up in another. Now for a season, so far as controlling and wielding the sword of civil power is concerned, Satan has been bound; he can no longer forbid the church worshiping as the word of God teaches them and punish them for non-conformity. How long God wills that this shall last no man can tell, but to those who have observed the tactics and maneuverings of antichrist through past history, and who know something of his nature, the signs of the times are ominous, and it seems that Satan is again about to be loosed for a little season. He that observes cannot fail to see the disposition increasing at a rapid rate that has been more or less manifest for several years past on the part of "the clergy" to unite church and state. Of course such a course is not openly avowed, nevertheless preachers of different denominations combine together

and manipulate their churches and auxiliary institutions to compass a certain end, always seizing upon some plausible pretext, something that appeals to the sympathy and moral sentiment of the people. To compass the end designed they must manufacture public sentiment; to accomplish this the pulpit, the press, the religious school, and often the secular press, and the literary school, with all the above named, are brought into requisition. Thus power over the consciences of men and women is gained, and when one point is carried it is much easier to carry the next. The habit of priestly domination once established is hard to shake off. The people are taught in this day that the preacher is as the oracle of God, and instead of judging the preacher by the Bible they judge the Bible by the preacher. In other words, they take what the preacher says the Bible teaches for granted, without investigating for themselves, and thus they are taught. For years before the great civil war of 1860–1865 antichrist was doing his work as above mentioned; some forty years or more the preachers and their agents were engaged in manufacturing public sentiment, in making the government of the United States a tool in their own hands. It cost many thousand lives, and made thousands of widows and orphans, to say nothing of the enmity and hatred between generations that followed, but after all the churches gained their point. So much for church and state united. Elder Beebe said some years before the war that abolitionism was a child of new schoolism. Every one who has read the history knows that the idea originated with the preachers and churches. Whether as a result of the sequel, conditions are better or worse with the slave or his owner, is a question, the race problem is perhaps as far from being solved as ever it was, but the lesson was repeated, that whenever the preachers combine to gain control and dictate the policies of state, or, in other words, whenever church and state are united to accomplish certain ends, no matter how plausible the end designed may be, the sequel is always the worse for the people. Jesus Christ, the great Head of the true church, said, "My kingdom is not of this world." Acting ever in accord with this principle, the true church has never sought the aid or recognition of governments of the world; so to do, no matter how plausible the pretext to men may be, is proof of antichrist, and certainly it is always to the best interests of God's children never to bid Godspeed to such a spirit. All that the church can rightfully ask of the governments of this world concerning religion is to allow us our Bible and the free exercise of our belief of what it teaches. Our revolutionary fathers, the founders of our (United States) government, as it were, were fresh from experience with the bondage of priestcraft, hence the constitution that protects us in the right to worship according to the dictates of our own conscience. Had its principles been strictly observed and adhered to we should ever, in many respects at least, have remained a united and happy people. But that ever-restless and industrious spirit of antichrist can never enjoy peace, especially to see the church of Christ free to enjoy their worship, so are continually creating disturbance, contentions, enmity and strife, ever seeking more power. In these days temperance is the foremost pretext of antichrist to dominate legislative bodies. To promote temperance (pretendedly) legislation is sought to prohibit the manufacture and sale of spiritous liquors. To secure this

the various popular churches are joined hand in hand, and systematic organization is the procedure of the clergy, and everything is brought to bear to influence and intimidate and coerce legislation; but first a sufficiency of public sentiment is manufactured, and thus voting strength is secured. Every man who is opposed to their methods, and especially who has the courage to lift up his voice against the principle, or even cast his vote against it, is branded from the pulpit and the press as being a promoter of intemperance, in sympathy with the liquor interests. All the believing children of God are believers in temperance, not only in the use of spiritous liquors, but in every blessing that the great Creator of all things has conferred upon his creature man. It is any and every man's privilege to abstain entirely from the use of intoxicants if it is his wish so to do, and perhaps for many it is best. It is the duty of all who believe in and love the name of Christ to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, and to this end the grace of God which bringeth salvation teacheth us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live godly and righteously and soberly in this present world, and, walking charitably, we would shun every course that would or might lead our weak brother to offend or stumble. The popular churches of to-day, in harmony with their general course of being "wise above what is written," have thought it best to leave off the use of wine in their communion services. In a recent issue of the Fort Worth (Texas) *Record* I find exception taken to the phraseology of the proposed amendment to the constitution providing for state-wide prohibition, as it has been introduced by the prohibitionists into both houses of the thirty-second legislature. The objection lies in the fact that the proposed amendment provides that the manufacture, sale and barter of intoxicating liquors shall be prohibited in Texas, except for medicinal and "sacramental" purposes. Discussing the matter further it is said, "This phraseology puts the church in an entirely improper attitude, for all the churches of to-day use unfermented wine in administering the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and it is not at all necessary that an exception to state-wide prohibition be made on their account. Long since the majority of the churches have used only unfermented wines, and now all of them follow this course. It is an unjust reflection, though doubtless a perfectly innocent one, upon the churches to have them exempted from the operations of the law on this account, especially in view of the fact that the churches as a rule will support the cause of prohibition more than any other organization of people. For the cause of prohibition, and to redeem the good name of the churches, I believe the prohibitionists of the legislature should correct the language of the amendment which they have introduced." This lengthy quotation substantiates my contention above as to the workings of antichrist, i. e., the clergy and their churches relative to legislation, &c. Either ignorance or willful misrepresentation is clearly manifest in the statement that all the churches now use the "unfermented wine," &c. Unfermented grape juice, or any other juice as to that matter, or even water, might very fitly symbolize the idea of the atoning blood of Christ as held by the various branches of the antichristian connection, but that which fitly symbolizes the atoning blood of Jesus is genuine wine, which is, I understand, the fermented juice of the grape. The fig-

ure chosen to this end by the Holy Ghost can never be substituted by something else with the church of Christ. As the literal wine stimulates and invigorates the natural organism, so when by faith the true believer realizes a personal interest in the blood of Christ he is spiritually stimulated and invigorated. I am aware that this daughter of antichrist was born many years ago and falsely named temperance, and we might say is a twin sister with abolitionism, at least has the same mother and father, and may be one of triplets, "woman suffrage" being the other. But time and space forbid that I pay my respects to the last named miss at this time; suffice it to say that the three remind me of the "three unclean spirits like frogs" that the apostle John saw "come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet."—Rev. xvi. 13. I am not claiming that all the workings of antichrist are confined entirely to the world, for the doctrine of antichrist had made itself manifest among the true believers even before the apostles had passed away, hence they all taught more or less along this line, and rebuked, reproved and warned. Hence the necessity for John to warn and caution his brethren, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God," and then give them the rule as before mentioned. The spirit, whether in the church or out, that refuses to give all the praise and honor and glory for salvation, and every gift we have, to Jesus, is antichrist, whether it is the evil suggestions to the mind, suggesting a possible part something else may have to do in the matter, or by our own brethren that at least some of the benefits in some sense of the atonement are hinged upon some kind of contingencies, or out in the world with whom religion is a science, or with whom Jesus is only a small factor in that which goes to constitute salvation. It is Jesus who hath "delivered from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us." "According as his divine power hath given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."

H. B. JONES.

WINNSBORO, Texas, January, 1911.

CANNON, Del., Jan. 8, 1911.

ELDER H. C. KER:—I am now attempting to do what I once thought I would not do again, that is, to write concerning the things which I now hope have been the dealings of the Lord with one so unworthy as I feel myself to be. I have not heard you preach since you were at the association at Indiantown, in 1900, I believe it was. Now I am considering whether it would be profitable to either of us for me to write you, and it seems that I see so little in myself that I feel as though it would be unprofitable, yet at the same time when I consider how merciful the Lord has been to me, and how I have been disobedient, it seems that I would like to talk to some one concerning the mercies of the most high God, who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast. I feel too ignorant to write or speak of these precious things, yet feel the Lord is able to direct my mind if so be that it is his will.

My mind goes back to the years that are past and gone, to the time when, I trust, it was the voice of the Lord that spake and said, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord." I am referring now to the time when I was brought from out the M. P. denom-

ination in Delmar, which you know about, and I remember now how you did seem to encourage me at that time, for if you remember, I would try to get a chance to get to your place of business when no one else was around, to hear you speak of the way in which the Lord had led you; and I remember on a certain afternoon you came into the store where I was then employed, and told me Elder Rittenhouse would preach in Hastings Hall at night, and asked me to go if I could get off. I did go, and remember well the hymn he announced (No. 116): "Lord, how secure my conscience was, and felt no inward dread," &c., and I remember, too, how those words seemed to be spoken to me, and his sermon which followed, and how, I hope, I was made to love that doctrine. I remember the time when I had almost given up, when these words came into my mind: "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." My burden was gone. O those joyful moments! "On the wings of his love I was carried above." I remember that you were the first one I mentioned this to, and I remember the remark you made; you said those feelings would come and go, and I have found it so. I have found it necessary at times to retire from company to keep from letting any one see me weep.

I have tried to tell you about rejoicing, and now I must tell you some of the dark seasons I have passed through, some severe trials, but will not mention all of them, as it is not in my mind to do so now. You perhaps know of some of them. There seemed to come a time when I was not interested in the things which I first spoke about in this letter; it seemed as though I did not have that strong desire to mingle with the saints that I had at first (I mean when I was first received by the church); something seemed to say that I had been mistaken, that I had not been taught of the Lord and was laboring under a false impression. This was a peculiar experience, and I reckoned there was no one like me, and it seemed that I had been mistaken. I could read the Bible, but could not see anything in it, and I have to say with shame that I did not go to meeting when I might have gone, but would fix up some trivial excuse. I am ashamed of this, but it is the truth, and I feel it a duty to confess it. I continued along in that way until the summer of 1908, when I was taken sick with what the doctor called a low type of typhoid fever, and during that time I had some strange feelings that I will not mention at this time, only I thought how disobedient I had been, and could not expect the Lord to raise me up again, but felt he had a right to do with me as it might please him. I remember how I felt a strong desire to hear a gospel sermon, and how I believe it was made known to me that I should hear the gospel preached again. These words seemed to do me good: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God," &c. I remember how I desired to mingle with God's people. Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, would often come into my mind, and as soon as I was able to ride I hired a team and drove to Broad Creek one Tuesday in October to hear Elder Francis, and if I ever did rejoice at hearing the gospel preached it was at that time. He took for a text these words: "Now know I that the Lord saveth his anointed: he will hear him from his holy heaven with the saving strength of his right hand." This is the sixth verse of the twentieth Psalm. He

preached a wonderful sermon; it seemed that his words remained with me for several days.

I have in mind to tell you of a severe trial which I passed through, yet I am almost afraid to mention it. I seemed to get in a strange condition, and could not understand my feelings. It seemed as though something told me there was no supreme Being, and O the trying days I endured for a time. This feeling seemed to leave me, and then I felt my littleness and nothingness in the presence of the just and holy God, and I thought of this Scripture: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?" I would repeat these words often: "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." It seemed that I had no strength, and often these words seemed to suit my case: My bones are out of joint, I am like unto a man whom wine hath overcome; and many other passages, and then wicked thoughts would creep into my mind. I continued in that condition until I almost gave up in despair. I went out by myself where no one could see me, and I remember the words that were in my mind; whether I said them or not I can hardly remember, they were these: Lord, thou knowest the condition of my mind; thou knowest that I am cast down, and that I have no strength, and that I cannot do anything that would merit thine esteem, and I ask for mercy, for if justice is meted out to me I cannot stand before thee, for I have sinned against thee, and have done the things which I ought not to have done. Amid these feelings I still seemed to have a little hope that he would remember me, or that he was leading me in a way that I could not understand, and I remember saying in my mind, Lord, if thou hast known me, if I am an object of thy love, wilt thou not make it known to me in such a way as it may please thee? A peculiar silence came over me, and this came in my mind: I am not far from thee; when thou wast in thy mother's womb I knew thee; I have called thee with an holy calling, and with an everlasting love have I drawn thee, and other things that I will not mention now. Dear brother, was this the Lord's work? I wanted to tell you this. In my mind I talk to you often. I have written this letter because I had a desire to do so. There are many other things in my mind, but I will stop, for your time is taken up with matter more important than reading these wandering thoughts. I wish to say that I enjoy reading your editorials in the SIGNS, also Elder Chick writes beautifully; in fact, all the letters in the SIGNS are written by those who have been taught of the Lord. I was interested in Elder Durand's letter of January 1st, headed, "Thoughts about predestination."

Yours unworthily,

A. T. BENSON.

CANNON, Del., Jan. 29, 1911.

ELDER KER:—On the 8th of this month I wrote you a letter, but did not send it, because I felt it would be of no interest to you; something seemed to suggest that if I sent it to you it would only be manifesting more of my ignorance. To-day I have read the SIGNS for February 1st nearly through, and have rejoiced in reading the testimonies of the saints. O how it seems to me I can see the hand of the Lord in their downsittings and uprisings; it seems to me if I could only see the evidence in myself that I see in others that they are subjects of his kind

providence and tender care, that I would take great delight in writing, but I am ignorant and unworthy, and therefore try to be content with reading the testimony of others. I cannot tell why I have had a desire to write you, but it seems to me I have a love for you that I cannot explain; in fact, I hope I love all Old School Baptists. Sometimes I am troubled for fear I do not love them as I ought. I often think of those long drives we used to take when you went to Millsboro, Del., and how the Lord directed you then, and how we were all sorry to have you leave us, and yet at the same time felt it was the Lord's work, and were reconciled. I wish to say that it is the hand of God that has led you thus far, and he will continue to lead you.

Now just a word about that experience which I passed through, and I will stop. As I said before, I was in great distress of mind; "burdened with a load of sin, harassed with tormenting doubt," seemed to suit my case at that time, and, as I said, almost gave up in despair, and when I had repeated those words over that I told you about, if I did repeat them, I did feel that the Lord was not far away, and that I was in his presence, and I trembled, but when these words came in my mind, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee," it seemed that all fear left me, and I trust I was made to rejoice with joy unspeakable.

Now I will stop. Dear brother, if you have time to write me a few lines some time I would be glad to hear from you, but do not neglect your other duties for me, for I am unworthy, and do not see how any one can have fellowship for me.

Yours unworthily,

A. T. BENSON.

WOODSTOCK, Ontario, Dec. 2, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—It is a long time since I wrote you, though often thinking of you. If I could write anything of interest I would gladly do so, but my leanness, or barrenness, in spiritual things is such that I often fear I have no part or lot in the matter, and often do I feel that I have no right to meddle with spiritual things. I fear that I am a deceiver, and being deceived, and often do I think that if my brethren knew what a wicked sinner I am they would not only spurn me from them, but despise me for trying to pass myself off as a child of God. Many, many times I have thought that if I could only go away and dwell alone it would be far better for me, for then I would not have the warfare about going to meeting and hearing the gospel preached and meeting with those whom I sometimes hope I love, yet I often fear there is no real love, for I am so easily offended, and fear that I have very little forbearance, while the apostle says that charity, or love, suffereth long, and is kind, and not easily provoked, but beareth all things. But poor me, I seem to be the very opposite, easily provoked, and cannot bear anything. But there is one thing that consoles me a little sometimes, and that is that I know my failings and shortcomings, and hope that I do mourn over them continually, but I find myself falling into the same pitfalls every day of my life. You say that you have fellowship for me and like my company, which I must believe, or you could not have visited my home as you have done. This makes me glad, and sorry, too, for I hope that I enjoy your company, and feel that it is pleasant indeed, yet I cannot help having the feeling that if you really knew me you would not come. I

know I have never tried to make you feel that I am good, neither have I been permitted to show my wickedness openly before you. I hope that I am in some measure always kept from open wickedness, yet I know that in my heart dwells no good thing, and every evil is there by nature, such as envy, and hatred, which is murder, for it is declared in the word that he that hateth his brother is a murderer. There is also malice, and many other evils; God knows them all. I can hide nothing from him, and I am glad that I cannot, for how could he forgive if he did not know? Sometimes I am permitted to pour out my whole heart to him and tell him how vile I am, and to plead with him for mercy and forgiveness, and I hope that sometimes I have had an answer of peace, which has come as a balm to the wounded heart. But O how seldom and how very far apart are these seasons of rejoicing, and how very short they are, but they are not quicker or shorter than the lightning, and the dear Savior said that his coming should be like that. So also the prophet said, "Here a little, and there a little." There are just little tastes by the way. I know that if ever we have been given a knowledge of our lost, sinful condition, it is because we have been quickened into divine life, and this life is eternal life, and the recipient of it can never die. If a sinner is ever quickened, he will surely come to the birth, for there are no stillborn children in the kingdom of God. It seems to me that there is a difference between being quickened and being born, but perhaps I cannot define the difference, but to me it seems that when one has been brought to know that he is a sinner before God, this is the quickening, and when he is made to feel that his sins are forgiven, this is the new birth. Quickening is not birth, but the birth will follow the quickening as surely as there is a God in heaven. There can be no failure, no disappointment, no shortcoming with the Lord in his work. The quickening is not a change of any part or principle in the man, but an implantation or a new principle put within the man. There is no change in the old nature; if so, then I am not a subject of that life, for I find within me the same lusts after the low, depraved things of the world that were in me before, but I hope that there is a life or principle implanted within me that subdues and in some measure controls the old sinful nature and keeps it in subjection, yet the old nature is in nowise different from what it ever was, and is just as prone to evil. Some are constantly saying, What is born again. It is the man? He is the subject of a new development or life. Birth does not change the nature of the thing born, but it does bring forth something. The dear Savior said, "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his good are in peace," and it is so with sinners. The goods of the sinner are in peace; he thinks of nothing but the world and the things of the world; all with him is peace. But if one is a child of God there come times when all is not peace; something stronger than the world, stronger than all the sinful depravities of nature, has come in. What is it? It is life that has entered into his soul, and war is the consequence. The stronger man has entered the lists against all the evils which the man before this did not know were in him, and the issue of the fight is not doubtful. The poor soul often thinks it is doubtful, and often cries out in fear and trembling. Sometimes the stronger man so subdues the strong man, the old man, that the poor

soul cries out with joy, and thinks that he will ever go on his way rejoicing, but, after all, the enemy is not dead, and the warfare will continue until death is swallowed up in victory. When we are left to ourselves, and the old man grows strong from being left alone and allowed to have his way for a time, alas, we find that we are still sinners, the same as ever. Well is it for those who are kept by the power of God. Do they boast? Ah no, they are humbled in the dust, and cry out, or rather sing, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory." I think that if ever I am so happy as to reach eternal glory there will not be one who will have more reason to praise God for his wondrous love and mercy that saved such a dreadful sinner as I.

Now, dear brother, I have wandered round, but I hope not away from the truth; if I have, please correct and forgive. Our fall meeting was very pleasant and enjoyed, as I hope, by all lovers of truth. Elders Ker and Lester preached the gospel, I believe, with power from on high, to the comfort of many. One lonely wanderer found her way home to the flock, or rather, she was led home, and narrated a clear relation of an experience of grace, and was received with joy. All was peace at the meeting, but we were made sad by learning that Elder Ker had decided to decline the call of the church to be our permanent pastor. The church gave Elder P. G. Lester a call, which I suppose he will answer soon. He preached at all the appointments, and was well received and well liked by all. If the Lord sends him to us, I hope that he may be a blessing to us as a church. I think him a very gifted man, and sound in the truth. He is a much better minister I believe than we deserve, but not better than we need.

We both send love to you and all your family.

Your unworthy brother,

R. SCATES.

TRENTON, N. J., Jan. 24, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been meditating upon things of the Scriptures, and thought I would pen a few thoughts. I have been thinking of the promises, which have been of much comfort to me, and the consequences of breaking the law. The laws of our country demand the punishment of the offender according to the offense. If the law demands that the offender go to prison he must go and serve the time allotted to him, and until that sentence is fulfilled he must remain, but after the fulfillment of the sentence, and justice is satisfied, he can again enjoy liberty. Dear brethren, so it is with me. I have been in prison and in darkness, with no light, no liberty, and have been longing for the time of my deliverance, the time that I might enjoy the presence of my Savior, but I must wait his appointed time, then he will appear, but it will be as with the prisoner after he has served his time and is again a free man. When the light is again revealed I can rejoice, and say the Lord is just and good to me, although darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people, as it is with me when I cannot see the hand of the Lord in my travels. I cannot feel that I am one of his, but the promises of God are good. He says, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." Glory be to his holy name, these things were all fixed in eternity, and when he died on the cross, and cried, "*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?*" something not understood, we marvel, but after

light is given we can cry with him, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and when he said, "It is finished," his love for his people was made known, and we rejoice in the finished work that leaves nothing for us to do. O such love the Father has bestowed on us. O that I could praise him more. In thinking of his finished work is joy indeed for me, although I doubt sometimes and wonder if that work was for me, one so vile and sinful, no soundness in me. I am full of wounds and bruises from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet, but still I have a little hope when I call to mind the mercy or goodness of God that has been shown to me, for I do feel at times that he has led me in green pastures and beside the cooling stream, and made me to lie down and rest, trusting all to him who careth for the sparrows, and although I travel in darkness I know that his people are led in ways they know not, in paths they have not seen; he leads them in the waste howling wilderness and instructs them. I do sometimes come to an oasis in the desert, and am made to rest and drink from the cooling streams of God's promises, then do I remember his goodness to me in times past, and it gives me hope that he is still with me and will give me strength enough for one step more. What more can a poor wanderer through darkness need than this? The shalls and wills of our heavenly Leader are stepping-stones for the tired wanderer across the dark waters of the unknown. For the future we know nothing, it is ever an eternal now with the Almighty. I hope the Lord in his mercy will ever be with me, and that I may be made to sing his praises and trust in his power and finished work, and may he keep me, a poor sinner, and at last bring me home to himself.

I have been thinking about the building of the tower of Babel, and have a few thoughts which I will submit to you. Does not this come under the law? When they all taught one another, saying, Do this or do that, and then we will be safe if the floods come; we will have a way of escape from the danger without. I think it is now as it was then: men think that by their own good works they can furnish brick and stone to build a way to the eternal city, and thus they gain favor with the great men of all countries and feel safe from the wrath of Him who is just in all things. Woe unto them when he confounds their language that they cannot understand one another, then all will be confusion until they are taught the language of Canaan, which declares that all things are in God's hand, and that man must flee to him for help and comfort. After this revelation we are unable to think or do aught of ourselves, but must look to him for safety from storms and floods which sweep over all our own works and ways, and when the storm is past we are made to rejoice in the light and smiles of his countenance, like a poor traveler in a foreign land where he does not understand the language, but if he hears one speak in his own tongue he rejoices and longs to speak to that one. Amid all the confusion of the world we know the voice and language of our Friend, our Shepherd, and look to him from whom all our help cometh.

Dear brethren, I hope you will pardon me for taking your time, but a few more thoughts come to my mind. It is recorded in God's word: "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys." I think that the word "Sharon" means a plain. Now this plain, as it seems to me, is God's love for his people; to them he

is the Rose of Sharon, the chief attraction. They bask in the sunshine of his countenance, then we travel along the flowery way on the plain of love. When I have the blessed Rose in view my path seems smooth and easy, but alas, in my poor, sinful nature I often lose sight of the goodness and mercy I enjoyed when I had the Rose in my view. Then it is I go down in the valley and wonder why it is that I have no more sweet communion with my Savior. Then again he shows himself, not as the rose of Sharon, but the Lily of the valleys, pure and white, and I feel humbled; I long to be like him, meek and lowly; thus I travel on. O my sins and backslidings plunge me down to the depths, and I find there are many pitfalls and false guides, so I know not which way to go. The mountains are on either side of me, but I cannot of myself reach the summit; then I am almost in despair until deliverance comes. I must be like Jonah, for I cry, "I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord," and with the poet I sing,

"Out of the depths of woe,
To thee, O Lord, I cry;
Darkness surrounds me, but I know
That thou art ever nigh."

Glory be to his holy name: he is able to deliver us from all our troubles and place our feet upon a rock.

I have written, I hope, as the Lord directed my mind; if I am wrong, then look upon me as a poor, ignorant one, for I feel that I am nothing; I walk in darkness and have no light. I have written more than I thought I could, and if there is nothing in it, cast it aside and all will be well with me. May the Lord ever be with you and all the dear ones, is my prayer. I am a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

GEORGE M. LEEDOM.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan. 1, 1911.

DEAR ONES OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—Once more my desire to write you is so great that I have taken up my pen, and with inward fear and trembling I make the attempt. I desire that the Father will guide my pen, for if guided by myself I fear that I should write bitter, sarcastic things, and in judgment of others. As I think of this undertaking these words come to me: O wretched one that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? O this warring, this worrying of sin, this continued commotion and confusion, surely it is death to all peace and contentment and comfort. But how comforting is the next verse: "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." For myself, I seem much of the time to be sowing to the flesh, and find much reaping of the flesh; it is all corruption and death, and I am made to cry out, "My leanness, my leanness." O what evil thoughts! O that they might have no dominion over me, but they just weigh me down, and I seem helpless to escape their grasp, therefore I cry, O wretched one that I am. If I could only have the strength that was the blessed Lord's when he said to Satan, "Get thee behind me." But I have no strength; I seem as one in the mire, and it would swallow me up, I cannot see my way out. I see others going on, and all seems well with them. They do not seem so rebellious and so stubborn as I am; all seems to be peace with them; they seem to have no petty troubles, no wretched thoughts, all seems joyous. I wonder if they have ever been caused, as I have been this afternoon, to cry out with the apostle, O wretched one that I am. I seem to be

so selfish. I am so unwilling, unreconciled to the ways of others. I am bothered over all things, and on all sides with fashions and manners of others. Why am I so? Why do these trifling things annoy me so much? I see that with the flesh I serve the law of sin, and the fruits of the flesh are of various kinds: hatred, envyings, wrath, strife, and so on. These things surely do distress me almost beyond endurance, and now I feel to say, O that my sins and my iniquities might be remembered no more; and He has said that he will remember them no more forever. But O that the Lord would rebuke them as he did the stormy sea. O then, what a great calm! One time when I was so saddened and distressed about my vile heart I was reading the Scripture in Isaiah, and the twenty-second verse of the forty-fourth chapter came as a great promise to me: "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee," and O what a calm. How my house was set in order then, and how I wish that it might be so again. Somehow as I write I am questioning whether there are any of the dear ones who know anything about this indwelling sin in the flesh, as I have been writing about it. There are so many apparently trifling, petty sins. Does my mind really serve the law of God at all? Does my mind rise any higher than the flesh? I do feel at times comforted with the thought that it does, for with the mind do we not know the things of the kingdom? Do we not know of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith? Are not all these fruits of the Spirit? Do they not come down from the Father of mercies, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning? I do feel at times that I know of this mind that serves the law of God. I do desire to do for the dear ones, and to give a cup of cold water often to the needy, but we can do this only in the pleasure of God. I do desire not to murmur at the will of God; I know that he doeth all things well, and that he knoweth our needs, and that he giveth us according to his infinite wisdom; he is all-wise. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." I have no strength in myself, and cannot trust in the puny arm of man. I do want to be wholly submissive and obedient to his will; I want to serve him better, and give glory only to him. I hear some say how wonderful it is that man has invented, and is inventing, so much all the time, and they seem to be giving all the glory to man, but I cannot help feeling that He made all that is made. What has been or can be made without him? Even what men call inventions are of Him. He alone gave the knowledge and the power; he imparts all from year to year, yea, from moment to moment; he gives us strength as our day, and will never leave nor forsake us.

Now I wish for you all a happy new year. As I write this I can see that true happiness can come only from the great Father above. Some of you may be languishing upon beds of affliction, some may be mourning over the departure of loved ones, some may be in such straitened places that you know not which way to turn, but I am sure that if his Spirit is with you, prison will prove a palace to you. Some of you may be hungering and thirsting after righteousness; if so, it is sure that you shall be filled, for that is his promise to you, and his promise will not fail. Some of you may beinquiring the way, feeling that

you are not in it and that you do not know it, but it is sure that if you will look along the way your feet are treading you will find some of the waymarks, every one of which hath a "thus saith the Lord" for it. The Master said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments;" so let us not remember the commandments of men. He said, Leave all and follow me. Does not that mean all the works of men? He said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." Let us search the Scriptures and learn their testimony of him. He is meek and lowly, and in him we shall find rest.

I desire to say to the editors of our dear paper that I hope you may not grow weary in well doing. May you be blessed with the pen of ready writers, as you formerly have been. How often you have comforted the dear children, oftentimes lining out the path to some poor, weary one, and sometimes deciding the mind of some upon some portion of the Scripture which they could not know unless some man guide them.

But I fear I have written altogether too lengthily. As I read it over I fear there is so much self in it that it will prove tiresome, but I leave it to your judgment, to do with it as you think best.

MARY HILL TERRY.

ROMULUS, Okla., Aug. 28, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Again I have an impression to write you. I have been so impressed before, but have put off writing because of poor health, but the impression comes this morning with such force that I am trying to write. My family is away and I am very lonely. The editorial which you had in the SIGNS for August 1st, upon the Sabbath, did me much good. You told my belief much better than I could myself. Many times I find you dear brethren in the east in my mind, and I seem to be talking to you as though you were near; then could I tell you how the blessed truth shines forth to me I would be relieved indeed, but I am of a stammering tongue, and it seems that when I attempt to write the subject leaves me. The blessed Sabbath is on my mind this morning, that eternal day. Dear Jesus is the trembling child's day of rest; when he speaks to the poor, weary soul, that soul finds rest; it is rest the world knows nothing of, for the natural mind does not discern the things of the Spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned. Christ is in us the hope of glory, and he is the witness that testifies to these things. But, dear brethren, it seems to me that my walk comes far short; I do not live as I wish to live. I fear the attempt to claim relationship with the dear ones of the Father, yet at times I believe my greatest evidence is the love that wells up in my heart for the children of God, and my longing to be with them; if not deceived, it is love that prompts me to write. This love is a three-fold cord, and it is stronger than death; it cannot be broken, for it is written in the word that there is nothing that can separate us from the love of God, and if we love God we also will love him that is begotten of God. This is wonderful love, it conquers death, hell and the grave; there is nothing to compare with it. I often think of the deliverance given poor sinners because of this love. Many times I cry out, O wretched one that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? But when we come to meditate upon these wonderful things, that there is deliverance waiting for us, deliverance from every trial where all is dark and cloudy, and that by and by the clouds shall roll by and the Sun shall

shine upon our poor, benighted hearts, then indeed we shall realize the sweet morning of rest. We sometimes feel that it is good to be chastised and brought low, for if we could see ourselves perfect we could not have the blessed evidence that Jesus is our true Sabbath. He did not come to save self-righteous people, but those who have no righteousness of their own.

Dear brethren, I do not want to weary you with reading this poor letter, and I do not want to crowd out other matter from the SIGNS, but it was my mind to write and let you hear from me. I thought in days past that I would grow in knowledge and in grace, but I find it very different, yet I desire to be reconciled to the will of God. It is enough to have the assurance that Jesus has given me hope in him. I am not ashamed to speak his dear name with the ability that he gives me. "He is the way, and the truth, and the life." He is our rest. He is the Day-star, the bright and Morning-star, our Redeemer, our Priest, our King, our Savior, our Rock of defense, the Water of life, the Lily of the valley, the Chiefest among ten thousand and the One altogether lovely; he is all in all.

My health is very poor now, and this may be the last time I shall write, but that is secret with the Lord. He knows what is best for us, and I hope he may keep me reconciled to his will, and that it will be so even in death. May the Lord be with you in the future, as in the past, and may he spare you many years for the good of his cause, and when we are all done with serving our time on earth may we be prepared to meet him.

I send you with this a letter from brother Vail, which I received a short time ago.

From a little sister, if one at all,

ELLA DAVIS.

WAVERLY, Pa., Aug. 16, 1910.

MRS. ELLA DAVIS—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—Jesus is our Mediator, Advocate, Shepherd, Husband, King, Elder Brother, Salvation, Resurrection and the Life; more than this, he is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. Why do we love God's dear chosen people? Because this wonderful character is seen in them by faith. Yes, it is Christ in them the hope of glory. We could not know them and love them if Christ were not in them and in us the hope of glory. John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Again, "Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him." "For love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." What wonderful things, and how cheering and comforting at times to poor, sinsick, doubting, fearing, self-loathing, ungodly, hell-deserving sinners like we feel ourselves to be. There is not one good thing in the flesh to commend us to God or to our brethren, all is bad, bad, bad, from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet; inside and outside all is defiled and polluted with sin. Dear sister, you would not have a hope in Jesus Christ if you did not know that this is your true condition. Then we should thank God that he has not only made us to know our great need of salvation, but has also revealed unto us the Savior, who is able to save even such great sinners as we are. Only an almighty God can save such mighty sinners, and such we feel to be. May you realize the power of his sustaining grace to the end of your journey, is my prayer, for Jesus' sake.

Your poor, weak, erring brother, I hope, in Christ, D. M. VAIL.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., Nov. 15, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As it is time to send in my remittance, I will try in my weakness to write a little, if the Lord will, to the dear readers of the good old SIGNS. I have read and reread the November 1st number, and find it good reading; all seem to be of one mind. I am always glad to get the SIGNS. I have read many soul-reviving editorials since I have been a reader of this dear paper, and have been much solicited to write for it, as I have many dear friends and brethren and sisters who have no other way of hearing from us except through the good old SIGNS, as it is the only paper they take of its kind, and they, like us, indorse the doctrine it advocates; it is food to their hungry souls; but I feel too sensibly my inability to write anything that would edify or comfort the saints of the Most High, who feed only on the pure word of life, for nothing else will do them any good. I feel sure that this is truth, and feel ready to ask, Am I worthy to touch the hem of the garment of one of God's little ones? There are many of the writers more able and more gifted than I. O how little and insignificant I feel to try to write to such as I feel they are, and I beg all who may read this imperfect letter to pray for me, that my feeble efforts may redound to the glory and honor of God. I have not words adequate to express my feelings as I enter upon this solemn task. Already this simple and imperfect letter is blotted with tears, and I fear that it will not meet the approbation of my dear kindred in Christ, but I want to let them know how we are. My husband and I are still contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, if we know our own hearts, believing that he is the God of purpose and power, whose counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure, without consulting his creatures, and, as the poet says,

"He loved them of old, and he loveth them still;
Before the creation he gave them, by will,
A portion worth more than the Indies of gold,
Which cannot be mortgaged, nor wasted, nor sold."

Eternal life is their inheritance. O what a theme is the love of God; it laid the foundation of the christian's hope in the ancients of eternity. The glory of God was manifest when the morning stars sang together and the sons of God shouted for joy. A babe was born in Bethlehem of Judea; the government shall be upon his shoulder; he shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, the everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace. So then, dear readers, what manner of people ought we to be? Yet we are poor, ignorant worms of the dust, and cannot do one good thing or think one good thought without He abides with us. We are in all things rebellious. In my afflictions I find it hard at all times to say, The will of the Lord be done, yet I believe it is his will or it would not be thus with me, for he doeth all things well. He said by the mouth of Isaiah, "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them: and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." So it seems to me that we ought to be submissive to his will, knowing that our light affliction here "worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Feeling that this is true, and all his ways are just, yet in the face of all this I sometimes call on him to do my will instead of his. As in my deafness, I could not help asking him to open my ears, and can hardly be reconciled that it is not his will to do so, but would rather have my will in the matter. O, dear brethren and sisters, are any of you so in your sad afflictions that you call upon his name for your good and will to be done and not his? How awful I feel about it. But I have some consolation in the thought that he chose his people in the furnace

of affliction; they are to be tried as by fire. It is for the trial of our faith; but I am so disobedient to his will that I sometimes fear I have no faith. I bear little fruit, if any.

But I must close, or you will tire of my letter. Dear brethren Chick and Ker, I submit this to you to do with as you think best. Hoping that the Lord will keep your feet upon the solid rock in the future as he has in the past, and asking an interest in your prayers, I remain your sister in much affliction,

BELLE FRAZEE.

FARMINGTON, Ill., Dec. 31, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—This being the last day of the year 1910, I thought I would write you and send in my remittance for 1911, and wish you a happy new year, and a prosperous one, both in temporal and spiritual things. I have received and read the last number for the year, and enjoyed it very much. I enjoyed brother Fisher's article very much, on the text, "And it shall turn to you for a testimony." Elder Keene's letter to a sister was excellent, and all the rest of the articles were comforting to me. I now have been a reader of the SIGNS for more than sixty years, and it has never changed. It contends for the true faith. About sixty years ago, in my first exercises, I wrote a letter for it that was published, and signed my name as "a helpless worm." Since that time I have written many letters which have appeared in the SIGNS, and I feel now that I would like once more to write something to the dear saints scattered in this wilderness, and it may be, so far as I know, the last time. If the good Lord will enable me to write in the spirit, I will try not to do so much murmuring as I generally do. Yet we find that the people of God in old times murmured in the wilderness, even when the bread was in their mouth; they traveled forty years in that wilderness. I have now been sixty years with a hope in Christ, and am about the oldest, or nearly so, of the readers of the SIGNS, and the Lord has given me much comfort in reading the same, lo, these many years. I ask of every reader, Has it not been so with you? I feel to love every one with that love which I trust the Lord has shed abroad in my heart. This love the Father has bestowed upon me. The Lord has ever been mindful of me; my lot has been cast in pleasant places, in a goodly heritage. While traveling these many years, and passing through many sore trials, the Lord has ever been mindful of me, and I have seen no end to his goodness and mercy. I surely believe in a revealed religion that can be felt. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

Grace has led me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home. I often think of those valiant soldiers that are gone; though dead, they yet speak to our hearts. The world has lost its charms for me. All flesh is grass, and the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withereth and the flower thereof fadeth away, but the word of the Lord endureth forever.

Dear brethren editors, I have written something of what I feel I have tasted, though what I have said does not amount to much. Do as you think best with it, and all will be well in my view. I send a draft for four dollars: two for myself, and two for my son, Bennett, as a New Year's present. I wish him to remain a subscriber after I am gone. I desire the SIGNS to be kept up after my departure, and for the name Varnes to continue on your subscription list. I am now past seventy-six years of age.

Your brother, E. D. VARNES.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1911.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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IMPORTANT QUESTIONS.

A BROTHER has written us, asking some questions regarding the order that ought to be maintained in the churches of Christ, and desires that we reply through the SIGNS. Often when such questions are proposed the first thought with us is as to how little we know, and how little we are prepared to advise or counsel in such matters. It is so with us now, but we feel it is our duty to give to those who ask, such thoughts as we have regarding these matters. We surely do not need to say that our judgment is weak, and that we do not claim in anything that we may say or write more than to express what seems wise and scriptural to us. Moreover, in any such writing we do not seek to enter into the consideration of any local trouble which may have given rise to such questions when they are propounded. Such matters one at a distance cannot be prepared to judge, and were we to assume to do so it would but betray rashness on our part. But, speaking in a general way, it seems to us that there are some things presented in the word of God, and which have been commended to our judgment by our observation of affairs in the churches in past years, that it is right to speak of and urge upon the consideration of our brethren.

The substance of the first question proposed by our correspondent is this: Has a part of any church of believers, when matters of variance have arisen among them, and the sentiment of the church is divided concerning those matters, a right to separate themselves from the church, appointing separate meetings, setting themselves up as the regular church, when the regular pastor is serving the church, as he has been for years, upon the time of their regular appointments? It is not possible to answer this question by a simple yes or no; it seems to us that all would depend upon what the matters of variance were. If the church and their pastor are walking in gospel order, and still holding the faith of the elect of God, no matter what other matters may cause uneasiness or friction among the members of that church, it seems sure to us that no portion of the members have any right to withdraw from the church, in the sense of nonfellowship. In the division between the Baptists, which came at the Black Rock convention in 1832, there were matters of faith and gospel order involved, and there could be nothing done by those who still held to the old order, the scriptural order, and to the old faith, but in the end to withdraw from the others. In so doing they were but obeying the commandment of the Lord to come out from among these scorners of the right way of the Lord, and be separate. There was separation in faith, in practice and in feeling already, and there was but one thing to do then, viz., to make that separation known by public withdrawal, refusing to any longer walk with those who had departed from the old faith and practice. No doubt similar cases have

occurred among some of the churches since then, and in each case it was duty to withdraw, and set up churches of those who had withdrawn. We do not need to add to this what all who fear God feel and know, viz., that even at such times as these there must be due effort to restore those who have departed before withdrawal can be justified. This the Scriptures abundantly enjoin upon all the churches of Christ. But when any church is still holding to the doctrine of the cross, and is still following the old ways, with regard to receiving members, or excluding if needful, and where their pastor is not a heretic, but preaches salvation by grace, with all that that doctrine involves, though there may be some things which give dissatisfaction to some, it is their duty to bear with those things, holding the peace of the church and the communion of saints and the worship of God as being infinitely more important than any personal feelings of their own can be. That one who will sacrifice his privileges in the church, and who has so little regard for the peace of Zion as to allow some personal unpleasantness to cause him to withdraw from the church, shows very little regard for the honor of his Savior, and very little regard for the welfare of his brethren. While we are in the flesh there will constantly be things occurring that may jar upon our feelings and which make the flesh angry, and Satan is such a deceiver that we may mistake the anger of the flesh to be the grieving of the Spirit. But the anger of the flesh drives us away from the house of God, while the grieving of the Spirit brings us to come before God in humble prayer for ourselves, and for the blessing of God to rest upon all the church. In the anger of the flesh we think of our own hurt; in the grief of the Spirit we think not of our own hurt, but of the hurt of Zion, and of the loss which those who do wrong suffer, because they have forsaken their own mercies. If through these little words or little deeds of wrong we are led to withdraw from the church, ours is the loss, first of all, and then through our wrong the church will also suffer. We none of us live to ourselves, nor die to ourselves. In any event, or for any cause, there ought not to be any hasty action. It is a solemn thing to withdraw from those who are walking in the order of the gospel because we are displeased with some things which may be done. No church is perfect in her order; no church ever has been perfect. The churches addressed in the New Testament were none of them without fault, and some of them had great faults among them, yet so long as they were holding up the truth, and striving to maintain the order of the gospel, they were regarded by the apostles as still being gospel churches, and upon them, in spite of their faults, the blessings of God rested. In the case of these churches it is manifest that had any among them said, We cannot bear with these faults, and we must withdraw from the churches because of them, the church would have still remained the church, and they who withdrew would have been as heathen men and publicans to it. The same is true to-day. This does not of course mean that evils ought to be winked at; no, all manner of evil ought to be protested against, because to tolerate it is to the harm of the church and to the reproach of the cause of God. But it is not for every evil that one is justified in withdrawing from the church, nor is it for every wrong step that one is to be excluded from the church; brethren ought to exhort one another, loving each other

and loving the name of the Lord above all things. But perhaps we have already said more than was needful regarding this one question.

Has this withdrawing body a right to set themselves up as a church, or as the church in that place, and hold services as the church? Considered in connection with the things which we have already said, that is, unless they have withdrawn because of unsound doctrine or unscriptural practice, they would have no scriptural right to do so, and they could not be recognized as the church of Christ in that place by other orderly churches. This seems manifest. If they desire to be held in fellowship with those who are regarded as churches of Christ there is but one thing for them to do, viz., to return to the church from which they have departed. In the ordinary difficulties that day by day will arise in all churches there is but one thing that can be followed safely, and that is for the minority to yield their judgment to the mind of the majority, and, on the other hand, the majority must not be harsh in expressing their judgment when some differ in any matter. Let all be done in brotherly love and with brotherly kindness, is the one imperative rule. This we say, let it be again remembered, when there is no charge of unsound doctrine, or that there has been a departure from the established order of the church in her administration of the ordinances, or of the discipline.

The third question is, Has any minister of the gospel a right to serve these withdrawing members as their pastor? We would not dare to say that no minister should go among them and preach the gospel; this each called servant of God must settle in his own conscience before God, but it does seem clear to us that no minister would have a right to recognize them as a church, and administer the ordinances among them as though they were properly organized as a church. We think that those who might come among them ought to advise them to return to the church and to bear with the things which were unpleasant to them, until the Lord should show the church what is right in the matters involved. Certainly that spirit in us which makes us resentful if we cannot have our way in anything, is of the flesh. "Charity suffereth long, and is kind," and if such departing members do return, the church ought to be kind, and receive them lovingly. Any of us may do wrong hastily, but it is a mark of grace when the wrong is repented of, and it is a mark of grace when the one doing wrong is helped to come back, rather than held at arm's length.

We have been thinking while writing these things how much easier it is to break the bond of love than to reunite it when it is once broken, therefore we ought to be slow to act, and to weigh long and well all that would seem to lead to such a break. It is far better for any of us to keep our sore hidden within our breast, if it be possible to do so, than to plunge our brethren into trouble by telling it abroad. Above all things, we ought to be sure that we do not tell these things because we have some spite against another and are seeking to belittle him in the estimation of others. Let us be sure before we speak that our motive is to heal the sore of another, and not to irritate it. Generally sores heal much faster if kept hidden and bandaged than if the cover is being constantly removed. Will what we say be likely to cause anger to arise in the bosom of our brother? then let us not say that thing. It is an awful thing to cause another to offend.

But "behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth," and often our words are the coals of fire that set on fire the very course of nature. How careful then should we be in all matters of difference that may arise in the churches. To withdraw from the church of God is the very last resort, and, on the other hand, to exclude a member from the church ought also to be always the very last resort. The apostles have spoken of many wrongs existing in the churches to which their epistles were addressed, but while they reproved, warned and rebuked the churches for those wrong things, in very few instances do we find any direction given to withdraw fellowship from the one in the wrong, and the apostles never said once to any of the churches, Unless you repent we shall drop you from our fellowship. The rebukes were plain and clear, and there was no concealing the fault, or seeking to make it out to be a small thing, but still the motive in all was to heal, not to destroy; the evil thing was to be put away from them. But in very few instances were they commanded to put away the wrongdoer. The exhortation of the apostle was that those who were spiritual were to restore those who had sinned, considering themselves lest they also be tempted, and we have understood this temptation to be not only temptation to do wrong also in some way as the other had already done, but temptation while endeavoring to restore the erring one, lest spiritual pride should creep in, saying in our hearts, I am better than this brother who has erred; and lest this spirit should make itself manifest in our words and our manner towards him. This would be to his hurt, and still more to our own hurt, and under such a spirit God could not be glorified in us.

Our brother asked some other questions, but we think that we have practically answered them in what we have already written. We hope that we have made our thoughts plain. No doubt we have omitted many pertinent things, and perhaps we have said needless things in what we have written, but it has long appeared to us that the things we have tried to present were right, and such as the word of God commends and commands. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MARK XV. 38.

BROTHER BEEBE:—I wish you would favor me with a short sermon on Mark xv. 38: "And the vail of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom." I requested your views on a passage of Scripture last year, but did not receive them.

Brother Beebe, pray for me, that I may be resigned to the will of God, who doeth all things well.

ELIZABETH BRICE.

JUNIUS, N. Y., March 13, 1864.

We have many more applications made to us for our views on the Scriptures than we are able to comply with, sometimes because we have no satisfactory views to present, and sometimes for want of time to write, or space to insert such views as we have. We feel a pleasure, however, in receiving the applications of those who are searching after the truth, and in doing the best we can to edify and enlighten our readers to the extent of such ability as the Lord may bestow upon us, and truly without him we can do nothing.

The subject proposed by sister Brice for consideration is full of solemn and thrilling interest to all who hope for salvation through the atoning blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. The miracles wrought by our Savior in the days of his flesh gave unquestionable outward demonstration of his Messiahship; as Nicodemus frankly acknowledged, "We know that

thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him."—John iii. 2. So also the amazing display of divine power in the convulsion of nature when Jesus was crucified caused even his murderers to cry out in astonishment, "Truly this was the Son of God." The quaking earth, the rending rocks, the opening graves, the rising dead, the darkened skies, as well as the rending vail, appealed most irresistibly to the intelligence of mankind in vindication of the divine character and commission of the Redeemer. While the faith of the children of God looks not on the things which are seen, but on things which are not seen, the credentials of the Messiahship of the Son of God to the world lying in wickedness were made tangible to the natural intellect of men who are destitute of the vital principle of faith, by outward and visible things. The faith of those who have the faith of the Son of God does not live on the visible things which are seen and comprehended by natural men, but they by that faith endure as seeing him who is invisible. (Heb. xi. 27.) Jews, legalists and Arminians require a sign, or visible evidence, but the faith of the Son of God is to all who possess it the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. As an exposure of the deep depravity of fallen man, the miracles were performed that their true state and condition might be demonstrated. "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father."—John xv. 24. That is, they would have had no exposure or conviction of their sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin.

It is worthy of our serious reflection that Christ frequently, in his contentions with the unbelieving Jews, referred to the demonstration that should be given of his identity as the Son of God when he should be put to death; as, for instance, John viii. 28: "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he," &c. This saying was so fully verified that they were constrained to acknowledge, "This was the Son of God."

But among the fearfully grand and convincing evidences given at his crucifixion, or when he was lifted up, we are called now to consider that of the vail being then and there rent in twain from the top to the bottom. Without any reference to the sacred character or figurative significance of the vail, the remarkable phenomena of the parting, rending or separation of the vail by an unseen power, was of itself astounding, and the mystery was deemed worthy of classification with the rending of the rocks, opening of the graves, rising of the dead and darkening of the midday. But we are persuaded that there is in each of these wonderful displays of divine power a lesson of spiritual instruction to the children of God far, infinitely far beyond what filled the hearts of the carnal Jews and Romans with such consternation and fear.

The temple was itself a divinely recognized emblem of the house, or church, of the living God, and all its parts were designed to represent some corresponding part, place or thing of or in the church and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. While the darkness which prevailed from the sixth to the ninth hour set forth the eclipse of the Sun of Righteousness, when Jesus bowed his head in death and entered the dark dominion of death and the grave, the opened graves and rising dead showed the bringing of life and immor-

tality to light; the rending rocks, the breaking up of the legal dispensation, the abolition of death and destruction of him that had the power of death, so the rending of the vail signified the removal of the wall of partition which had concealed from the view of the temple-worshipers the most holy place. In the epistle to the Hebrews a description of the temple is given, and the signification of the several departments. In the ninth chapter we read: "Then verily the first covenant, [that of the old dispensation] had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shew-bread; which is called the sanctuary. And after the second vail, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; and over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy seat: of which we cannot now speak particularly. Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as yet the first tabernacle was standing: which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation." But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." From what is here presented explanatory of the figurative design of the first and second vails of the temple, we learn that the vails were designed to separate, first, the outer court worshipers from the holy place consecrated within the first vail for the priests of Israel to perform the divine service of the worldly sanctuary. But within the second tabernacle, curtain or vail, was concealed from the gaze of the people the most holy place. None but the high priest, and even he not without sacrificial blood, was allowed on pain of instant death to go within this vail, and that but once a year, in consecrated garments, with hallowed blood, bearing the names of the tribes for whom he officiated engraved on his breastplate, and with golden bells between the pomegranates on his garments, to sound while he appeared before the mercy-seat, and between the cherubims of glory, to signify that he lived to represent and intercede for them within the vail, thus signifying that the way into this holy place was not as yet made manifest. The first vail, or tabernacle, must first be fulfilled in all its jots and tittles before the way into the glories of the gospel could be made manifest. But in Hebrews x. 8–10, we read: "He said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the

second. By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ." By the offering of this one sacrifice, which was accomplished by our Lord Jesus Christ at the time when the vail was rent, the obstacle which concealed the way of life and salvation from our view was effectually removed, and the intervening vail being rent in twain from the top to the bottom, all the glory which it had for ages concealed was at once made manifest. The ark of God appeared, the mercy-seat was clearly seen, the cherubims of glory, with all the consecrated furniture of the holiest of holies, are no longer hidden from our faith. Now in the gospel, the vail of the covering which was over all flesh is taken away, except from those who still read Moses, or look to the law, or to their own legal works for acceptance with God, for to all such the vail still remains to this day untaken away. But all those who have had a view by faith of their crucified Lord, and have felt the sovereign efficacy of his atoning blood, and are clothed in his spotless righteousness, can say with the spouse, "The keepers of the walls took away my vail from me," and they all with open face (having the vail removed), beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. The impending vail removed, life and immortality are brought to light, the heavenly Jerusalem appears, the King of glory mounts his mediatorial throne, death is destroyed, hell is vanquished, Christ is victorious, the church of God is safe. Only through the death of Christ could these triumphs be achieved; it was therefore meet that the vail should be rent and the way into the most holy disclosed, when Jesus put away the sins of his people by the sacrifice of himself. By himself Jesus enters the holy place not made with hands, even into heaven itself, and having obtained eternal redemption for all his members, they with his dead body arise, for he hath raised them up together, and made them to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. The faith that now beholds the sacrifice of Calvary looks also within the vail, and reads the title clear to mansions in the skies.

This mystic vail was not rent from the bottom to the top, for the work did not begin on earth, it was not performed by us, but it was rent from the top to the bottom.

"'Tis thy own work, Almighty God,
And wondrous in our eyes."

(To be continued.)

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OBITUARY NOTICES.

John R. Cubberly departed this life suddenly at his home near Hamilton Square, N. J., Monday morning, Nov. 28th, 1910. The circumstances of his death are as follows: on Sunday preceding, he, with his aged companion, had been at the meeting at Hopewell, where both of them have held their membership for many years. Both seemed in their usual health, especially our brother expressed himself as being glad to be able to meet in the worship of God once more. Their home is more than twenty miles from Hopewell, but they have been faithful attendants upon the meetings of the church whenever it was at all possible. They returned by trolley to their home Sunday afternoon. About two hours after arriving home sister Cubberly was stricken with slight paralysis. From this she has rallied so as to be up and around the house somewhat. The next morning brother Cubberly arose early and started to go downstairs, and in some way that will never be known, fell against the railing upon the upper floor and broke it loose, and fell to the floor below. When found he was unconscious, and remained so until nearly noon, when consciousness returned, so that he recognized his daughter and her husband, who came as soon as possible to his side, but he was unable to speak more than a word at a time, and about 1 p. m. passed away from earth. Our brother's age was 81 years, 3 months and 2 days. He died in the house where his father had lived before him, and where he had lived most of his life. We do not know just how long he had been a member of the First Hopewell Church, but it must have been for more than half a century. In the past fifteen years we knew him well, and can say that we have never known a more faithful member of the church, nor one whose whole heart was more devoted to the service of the sanctuary than he. The Lord had given him great decision of character naturally; in the truth he was firm and unwavering always. He loved to extol and magnify the exceeding riches of the grace of God in election, special atonement and effectual calling. He counted outward forms of but small value when compared with vital godliness. He had spent most of his life among neighbors who did not rejoice in the truth embraced in the preceding sentences, but still he did not waver, and was always outspoken in the expression of his faith. No one needed to be in doubt as to the faith that was in him.

On the following Thursday afternoon it was our sad privilege to attend the funeral service, and to speak of the riches of grace to a large company of friends and neighbors who had gathered for the solemn occasion. The interment was at Hightstown, N. J.

Our brother leaves to mourn, one daughter and her family, beside the dear aged companion of his life. They have the full sympathy of all who knew the husband and father. The church will sadly miss him in every way, for though he lived so far away he was always helpful, and a source of comfort to them. The grace of God which he loved was magnified in him.

ALSO,

Miss Phoebe H. Leigh, fifth child of Albert S. and Mary A. Leigh, who were formerly long time members of the First Hopewell Church, died suddenly at her home in this village Wednesday evening, Dec. 21st, 1910. The cause was apoplexy. She was in the 79th year of her age. She was born at Cedar Grove, near Princeton, N. J. During more than forty years of her life she lived with her sister and husband, Mr. and Mrs. Florence Relyea, in Jersey City, N. J. All the rest of her life was spent in the vicinity of her birthplace. She was baptized in the fellowship of the First Hopewell Church by the late Elder Philander Hartwell, who was for twenty-five years the pastor here. About three years ago she, with her sister, Miss Julia Leigh, and her brother-in-law, Mr. Relyea, moved to Hopewell, so as to be near the church of her membership. This briefly presents the outline of her life here. In her membership with the church for more than fifty years she had walked steadfastly and lovingly with her brethren. The Lord had given her a rich experience of his grace in early years, and kept her steadfast in hope and faith in the blessed Lord. She was one of those who could always say, "I was glad when it was said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." On the Sunday preceding her sudden death Elder John McConnell filled the pulpit at Hopewell, and it was her privilege to be present, and to be favored with special delight in hearing the word. After getting home she read the chapter which he had used as a subject, and spoke of her great joy in what she heard. It was the last time for her to assemble with the people of God on earth, but we believe that she is now assembled with the glorified in heaven, who worship God day and night, and praise him with tongues that never weary. Our sister was kind and lovely in her life. None knew her well but to love her. Her disposition was to show kindness and attention to all to the utmost of her ability, and she was faithful in the obligations resting upon her as a member of the church. On the evening of her death she was assisting her sister in the preparation of supper when she fell, and only breathed two or three moments afterward. We can but feel that ours is the loss, while hers is the gain.

The funeral service was held in the meetinghouse in this village on Saturday afternoon. A very large concourse of people were present, thus testifying to the esteem and affection in which she was held. The interment was in the cemetery adjoining. Brothers and sisters remain to mourn their great loss, yet

they are not overwhelmed, for they believe that all is well with her, and that she has but gone a little before. The church feels bereaved indeed, but still they feel to be submissive to the will of God in calling his children home.

ALSO,

Daniel Stout passed away from this life suddenly at his residence, near Hopewell, N. J., on Friday, Nov. 18th, 1910, in the 75th year of his age. Brother Stout had for some months been feeble in health, through weak heart action, but still was able to be up and to be busy about his work most of the time. That day he had been assisting some workmen who were threshing at his home, and came into the house at about four o'clock in the afternoon and said to his wife that he felt faint, and asked for some stimulant. When brought to him he seemed hardly able to take it, and complained of great oppression in breathing. A physician was at once sent for, but before he could reach the home brother Stout had passed away. Thus ended an unblemished life in the presence of his fellow-men. He had been a member of the First Hopewell Church for more than forty years, and in all those years he was known as a kind, faithful member. For a long time he had been one of the trustees of this church, and his judgment in all business affairs that needed to be considered had great weight with all his associates in that office. Paul exhorted his brethren to study to be quiet, and to do their own business. This exhortation was exemplified in our brother at all times. He was faithful and quiet in every relation in life, as well as in his connection with the church and her affairs. Such members are a blessing to any church; in them the grace of God is magnified.

As evidence of respect, a very large company assembled at his home to attend the funeral. It was our sad privilege to speak for a time to the friends concerning the riches of God's grace and the hope which is set before us in the gospel, by which we are forbidden to sorrow concerning them that are asleep, as those who have no hope. The interment was in the cemetery at Hopewell.

Our brother leaves the companion of many years, also several children, who have the comfort of knowing that it is their privilege to rise up and call their father blessed. They have the full sympathy of all who know them. In our meetings there is a vacant place. As we come together for worship we can but remember that a little while ago he was with us, and that his presence was always a source of pleasure to us all, but we believe that he is at rest. The faith which was his, and which he held so steadfastly for many years, and which sustained him in many trials and conflicts, we may be sure was not a vain faith. He had the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith, while he lived, and we doubt not that he triumphs in the regions of unsullied glory now.

ALSO,

Mrs. Ellen Miranda Drake, daughter of Johnson and Mary Ann Titus, who were for many years members of the First Hopewell Church, died Dec. 14th, 1910, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Morgan D. Blackwell, in Hopewell, N. J., in the 72nd year of her age. For two or three years she had been slowly failing in strength, sometimes rallying a little, until she was compelled to take to her bed, a few days before the end came, which was peaceful and quiet. She was the widow of Enoch Drake, who preceded her to the grave about thirteen months, and who was, with her, a long time member of this church, and it can be truthfully said of them both that they adorned their profession by a godly walk and quiet conversation. They possessed the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of the Lord is of great price. She was married to brother Drake in October, 1861, and was baptized by Elder Hartwell about the year 1861. It had been our privilege to know her for twenty or more years, the last fifteen intimately, and heard her speak many times of the hope she had in the Lord Jesus. She always spoke very humbly of herself, and of how great a wonder it was that such a sinner should be chosen and saved. All who knew her will bear testimony to her steadfast, humble, quiet walk before her brethren, and before all men. Much of affliction in various ways had fallen to her lot, but it was all borne without murmuring and with a confession often from her lips that all was working for good. We could say much of her in this way, but her family and her brethren among whom she lived so many years know it all better than any words can tell it. She would often in our conversations speak of the services at the meetings, and of hymns which had been blessed to her. One special favorite of hers was, "Wait, O my soul, thy Maker's will." Within one year three members of that family were removed by death, first the husband, then shortly afterward a son, and now the dear mother. All these to the family were sore bereavements indeed. Two daughters and two sons are left to still bear the burdens of life, and they feel that the hand of the Lord has been heavy upon them. Sisters and brothers also remain.

The funeral service was held on Friday, Dec. 16th, in the meetinghouse where she had so long and so often worshiped with her brethren. We were called upon to conduct the sad service. The interment was in the cemetery adjoining. The church in her repeated bereavements of late is still comforted, believing as the apostle testified, that all them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

ALSO,

OUR aged sister, **Mrs. Barbara Grafton,** wife of brother Nathan Grafton, passed away from earth at her home, near Forest Hill, Harford Co., Md., Jan. 14th, 1911, aged 82 years, 4 months and 24 days. We

have not learned the cause of death. She was baptized by the late Elder Rittenhouse in September, 1858, and received in the fellowship of the church October 17th following, by the late Elder Wm. J. Purington. She was married Dec. 26th, 1850, to Nathan Grafton. Their married life was sixty years, two weeks and five days. She is survived by one daughter, sister Mary L. Henderson, one son, Wm. O. Grafton, seventeen grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. The funeral service was conducted upon the 17th inst., by Elder John G. Eubanks, who spoke comforting words to the friends from Job vii. 16.

We have been furnished the above particulars by brother Eubanks, who requested that we prepare the obituary notice for the SIGNS. In addition to the above we desire to add a little with regard to our long time acquaintance with the deceased mother, wife and sister. Our acquaintance extended to more than forty years. In former years we were quite often at their pleasant home, and from the first we felt much attached to all the family. Our sister was never a woman of many words when we were at their home, but she was settled in her love for the truth and faithful in her relations to her family and to the church. The dear Lord spared her to her husband and family much longer than is the case with the majority of men and women, but now the tie is broken, and we know that sorrow and loneliness must be the portion of the bereaved husband. We do not need to say that he has the sympathy of all who know him. Much affliction has fallen to the lot of both husband and wife during the past twenty-five years, but the Lord sustained them, and we are well assured that the same gracious goodness will be with our aged brother to the end. How greatly she will be missed by the church at Harford. May the comfort of the Holy Spirit be with all who mourn her departure. There is full assurance that all is well with her. C.

John W. Maddock was born Jan. 6th, 1857, and passed away Dec. 24th, 1910, aged 53 years, 11 months and 18 days. He was the eldest of the late William and Mary Maddock family, and had resided in Brooke township all his life, and his family now resides on the farm he started for himself some thirty-three years ago, just after being married. There was a family of nine children, two dying in infancy, and one daughter was killed by lightning on her twenty-first birthday, four and a half years ago. It seemed greater than our poor, bleeding hearts could stand, but God was merciful and sent us thoughts of comfort and peace. My husband was a member of the New School Baptists for six years before the Lord made him realize his lost condition and know that salvation rests entirely with the Lord. It is nearly twenty-four years ago since he joined the Old School Baptists. To attend the meetings or converse with those of like faith was of the greatest pleasure to him. For over a year his health was not good, though we were hopeful that it might be God's will we should find some means whereby he might be restored to health; instead God took him from this world he did not love. He was only confined to his bed about a month, and did not seem to be getting worse until Dec. 22nd, when he had a stroke, and from that time he kept sinking until he passed away. He spoke very often in his last sickness on religious subjects, and would repeat many passages from the Bible, which we enjoyed for the truth's sake.

Elder D. M. Vail was called to attend the funeral, and spoke words of comfort and love to all the mourning ones. Many neighbors and friends came to pay their last tribute of respect to the departed.

HIS WIDOW.

INWOOD, Ontario, Jan. 20, 1911.

John Currie died at his home in Lloydminster Sask, Canada, April 25th, 1910, aged 79 years. He was married Dec. 28th, 1858, and, with his wife, was baptized by Elder Beebe in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church, in which he continued a faithful member to the end. His widow, three sons and three daughters survive him. His last illness was short, and he passed peacefully away, surrounded by his family. He was born in the district of London, province of Ontario, Dec. 7th, 1830. In 1883 he moved with his family to South Dakota, where he lived on his farm until 1901, when he moved to the Canadian west and there remained until his death. About eight years ago he had a partial stroke of paralysis, from which he never fully recovered, and the last years of his life he was an invalid.

The funeral service was held at his home, where a number of friends and relatives assembled, after which the remains were removed to the cemetery, there to await the resurrection morn.

A. D. CURRIE.

Mrs. Sarah J. Gainer, daughter of Levy and Mary Coberly, was born May 5th, 1868, in Randolph Co., W. Va., was married to Jefferson D. Gainer, October 25th, 1886. In the year 1896 they moved to California, and moved from there to Drain, Oregon, in 1906, and moved to their present residence, Lebanon, Oregon, in 1908. Sister Gainer's illness was pneumonia, with a weak heart, and finally death claimed the victory Feb. 6th, 1911, her age being 42 years, 9 months and 1 day. She was the mother of twelve children, eight boys and four girls, one pair of twin boys and one pair of twin girls; two boys preceded her in death. She leaves ten children, six boys and four girls, also two grandchildren and a loving companion to mourn their loss. Sister Gainer professed a good hope through grace in the crucified and risen

Savior, in Randolph Co., W. Va., and went down into the water with her husband, and were both baptized in the fellowship of Tygarts Valley Church, in October, 1890. They moved their membership to Bethel Church, at Tallman, Oregon, near their home. Before she passed away she requested that the writer preach her funeral, and selected the hymn, "O sing to me of heaven when I am called to die." She tried to sing it, but was too weak. She passed away without a struggle. The writer spoke to a large and attentive congregation of sympathizing friends, using as a text Isaiah xxvi. 19, after which the remains were taken to the Masonic Cemetery. Four of her sons and son-in-law, assisted by the son of a neighbor, acted as pallbearers.

May the Lord in mercy be with and lead and comfort her dear ones, enabling them to realize that he doeth all things well. A. HORNER.

WATERLOO, Oregon, February, 1911.

Hannah Risler Rittenhouse died Jan. 13th, 1911, aged 72 years. She was the daughter of Samuel and Eliza Kugler. She was married in 1859 to Stacy Risler, who died in 1874, leaving her with five small children, all of whom survive her. In 1898 she was married to Richard Rittenhouse, who died in 1904. Since his death she had lived with her youngest daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Core, in Frenchtown, N. J. Sister Rittenhouse was baptized at Kingwood, N. J., in 1858, by Elder Gabriel Conklin, and adorned her profession by a godly walk and conversation, and was beloved by all who knew her. She was stricken with paralysis some four months before she passed away, and was unable to speak. I called several times to visit her, and would read a chapter or speak upon the things of the kingdom, and I knew she realized what I said by the expression she would give us. Surely a hope in Jesus is above all things of this earth.

Elder Coulter conducted the services, using as a text John v. 24, speaking to the comfort of those who mourned, and whose hope the Lord is. Interment was in Rosemont Cemetery.

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

Christian Hartenbower died Jan. 2nd, 1911, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Albert Grant, one mile north of Tonica, Ill., aged 85 years, 10 months and 28 days. Brother Hartenbower was born in Westenburg, Germany, Feb. 4th, 1825. He came with his parents to this country in 1838, and stayed one year in New York city, then to Putnam Co., Ill., where he lived until after his marriage to Miss Jerusha Hiltabrand, in 1848; they then settled in Lasalle Co., where they lived the rest of their lives. To them were born seven children, one dying in infancy; the others are Henry, William F. and Catharine Grant, of Tonica, Ill.; George F., of Bloomington, Ill.; Emily E. Williamson, of Minneapolis, Minn., and John E., of Chicago, Ill., besides three half-sisters, twenty-five grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. Brother Hartenbower joined the Sandy Creek Church of Old School Baptists and was baptized by the writer forty-two years ago, his wife being a member at the time, and in all my travels in the ministry for over fifty years I have never found a better home for Baptists than was theirs. They were great readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, faithful, true, always standing for truth, peace and right. Being blessed with plenty of this world's goods, his hand was always open to the poor. "Uncle Chris," as he was called, was a trustee of the church, and was always ready with his means to help in every way. Surely a good brother has gone to his reward. For some years his health was not good, and a year ago he suffered a stroke of paralysis, from which he only partially recovered. Three weeks before his death he suffered another stroke, and from that time until the end his strong constitution gradually surrendered, and he passed away without a struggle. Thus ended the life of one of the best men in Lasalle Co., Ill.

The funeral services were held in the M. E. meetinghouse, conducted by G. H. McClung, assisted by T. R. Edgerton, of Tonica, Ill. The remains were laid in the Tonica Cemetery.

W. A. THOMPSON.

WICHITA, Kansas.

Elisha Rittenhouse died in the 83rd year of his age. He was the youngest brother of Elder E. Rittenhouse, deceased. As a son, brother, husband and father he was one of the kindest and most affectionate men I ever knew, conscientious and upright in every way, patient in all his sufferings, which were very great, as he died of gangrene in his feet. He was not with us in sentiment, but joined the N. S. Baptists when quite young, and remained with them to the last, a devoted, zealous follower. He could tell a good experience, and was always ready to converse on the Scriptures, so I feel to hope that all is well. He surely was one who "thought upon His name." Of the family, Elder Rittenhouse was the oldest of the six children; all lived to grow up and marry, and three couples of them lived together to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of their wedding day, which is quite unusual; this brother was one of them. He leaves a widow, one son and three daughters.

Written by his sister, the youngest and last of the family. M. R. LAWSHE.

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SILAS H. DURAND.

Southampton, Pa.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 79. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1911. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ALVINSTON, Ont., June, 1910.

DEAR ELDER DURAND:—We expect you, if it be in the providence of God, to attend as usual our June meeting at Ekfrid, and, my brother, I feel like taking this opportunity to tell you how I have been strengthened and encouraged from time to time with the reading of many articles from your pen. I am a poor, weak, helpless sinner, one who feels wholly dependent upon God for everything, and realize deeply my nothingness and inability to perform one good act. I want to trust the Lord with all my heart, and not lean upon my own understanding, but I am so vain I grow faint and weary at times in traveling this toilsome road, but have the desire that grace, mercy and truth may follow me all the days of my life. Last fall sister McPhail, of Dunwich, loaned me the book you wrote on the trial of Job, and, dear brother, words fail to express what good it did me; it just seemed suited to my peculiar need. I received much instruction, as well as comfort and consolation, and ofttimes (if not deceived) my heart went out to you in love and fellowship, and hope has sprung up that the same Spirit that influenced and directed your mind to write had prepared me (as well as many others) to receive it with gladness of heart. Your communication in the SIGNS on the virtuous woman was delightful to me, and now I feel I want to read it all again, though I may not be able to derive the same benefit from it as then. It was rich food for my soul. What a most wonderful theme, the love of God for his bride, the church. Your "Meditations" have also been blessed to my comfort.

Many thoughts have been presented to my mind of late as to a christian's daily life, both in regard to business and duties toward God and man. In some of my past experience I have been given faith to believe that "God will provide," for in a most wonderful manner to me he has thus far provided everything needful and that was for my good, though it was a thorny path my burdened heart had passed through to reach this land of rest. What rebelliousness, what murmurings and humiliation I felt while the dark cloud overshadowed my pathway; but it was all needful to show me from whence cometh my help. What weak

creatures we are, and so prone to follow the evil of our nature, seeking carnal ease, mistaking it for spiritual comfort; but thus we find reproofs in instruction are the ways of life. That communication from Elder Coulter on, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life," was of much satisfaction to me, and I felt built up afterward, and it led my mind to other portions of Scripture, and I feel to ask you to write upon them should your mind seem so inclined. The first is Proverbs xxii. 29: "Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men." I feel to have no heart to be diligent, but I trust I have the desire to be. Second, 1 Thess. iv. 11: "Study to be quiet, and do your own business, and to work with your own hands." Third, Eph. iv. 28: "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." Has any one so worked, or is it manual labor that is meant here? Jesus answered his mother on one occasion, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" It will be difficult perhaps for you to grasp my line of thought, as my expression is not good I know, and the question is in my mind whether it is the right spirit that has thus led me to write, but I am sure you will throw the mantle of charity over my imperfections, knowing I am a poor, weak worm of the dust, but one who wants to know the truth.

From your sister in hope of a better life,
(MRS.) W. C. YOUNG.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 15, 1911.

MRS. W. C. YOUNG—DEAR SISTER:—When I received your good letter last June I replied at once, but do not think I referred to any one of the portions of Scripture upon which you asked me to write, as I did not feel that I had any special light upon them. I have just read your letter over again, and I have an inclination, as I did when I received it, to send it to the editors of the SIGNS for publication, if they think best.

I will try to express some thoughts upon the first text you mention, which is in Proverbs xxii. 29: "Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men." To be diligent is to be interestedly and perseveringly attentive to whatever subject or work one has in hand; to have steady and earnest application to one's business; not careless. A diligent man will succeed in his business, and will become so thoroughly accomplished in it that his advice and services will be required by all who have special interest in that business. Kings require for their ministers and advisers in the different departments of their kingdoms those who are most thoroughly accomplished in the particular department they are engaged in. Those who are thus called into the king's service are said to stand before the king. It is a high honor to be found fully qualified to stand before the king, waiting upon him and counselling him with regard to the things that pertain to his kingdom. There must be no lack of knowledge and skill here, no carelessness or inattention. Only true worth, the result of diligence, can be allowed in one who is to stand before the king. One who has neglected his business, who has been careless and inattentive, and is therefore poorly qualified for his work, would not be called to this high place, but would have to stand before mean men (men less honorable).

These Proverbs, like all the rest of the Scriptures, have a spiritual meaning, and illustrate things in the church of God. It is in the gospel church that we see the true use and need of the word "diligent," and there we find its full and exalted force and meaning. To be diligent is to be devoted and painstaking in attending to any work or pursuit that we are engaged in, as I have already said. If this is necessary in regard to natural things, in order that we may be prepared to stand before kings, as their recognized helpers and advisers, how much more in the church of God. Those who compose the church are called "kings and priests unto God," and those who are brought into the church, though they are beggars raised from the dust, are now made to sit among princes. (1 Sam. ii. 8.) These kings and princes are the great men before whom this man, who is diligent in his business, shall stand.

When one is first given a hope in the Lord he is, in most cases, made to rejoice with joy unspeakable. The spiritual things brought to his view when he can say, "Whereas I was once blind, now I see," are wonderful. His mouth is filled with laughter and his tongue with singing; he wants to be constantly hearing or talking of the glorious works of the Lord and the wonders of his grace; also he is ready to ask, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Though he will be feeling his great unworthiness to do anything in the Lord's house, yet he desires to be doing something, not to help the Lord in the work of salvation, but to serve the Lord's dear people in any way that he can, and to tell of the goodness of the Lord and speak of his wonderful works. But after awhile there will come times of darkness and gloom; trials and afflictions will be experienced; then the world will begin to make claims upon him, and will allure him by its attractions that have much power over the flesh. The lustings of the flesh against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, give him much trouble. Then come the various exhortations and admonitions, which begin to be much needed. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ" is over him, and he finds much to do in attending upon the order of the house of God and the doctrine and ordinances. Now the apostles are frequent and earnest in their exhortations to "maintain good works," to "provoke unto love and good works," to be "fruitful in every good work," to "be rich in good works," and often the prayer is expressed concerning these children of God that the Lord will "make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Christ Jesus." One says to the young preacher, "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them." Those who are saved by grace are "created in Christ Jesus unto good works." Here is their all-absorbing business, to walk in those good works, "which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." How it becomes them to be diligent in this business, not careless, but attentive, devoted; "not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." The dear Savior says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness." What a wide field the Lord's laborers have here to work in, and what a deep interest they have in this work of the Lord when they are spiritually minded. These laborers, having received the victory as a gift through our Lord Jesus Christ, are affectionately urged by the apostle to be "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your

labor is not in vain in the Lord." Those who are thus given to be diligent in this gospel business shall stand before kings and great men; they shall be of value in the church, in the place where God hath set them, as apostles, prophets, teachers, miracles, gifts of healings, helps, governments and the like. As kings depend, in a certain sense, upon those men who by special diligence have become fitted to give counsel and direction in a certain department, so the church may be said to depend, in a certain sense, upon those who have manifested a certain gift, and have proven diligent in the exercise of that gift. The church needs every gift which the Lord has given her in any of her members. There is a variety of these gifts, but all by the same one Spirit. That one whose mind is much upon spiritual subjects will have much upon his mind and in his heart which the brethren need to hear. He will be very likely to feel backward about speaking, feeling himself too unworthy and too ignorant to speak, but the gift belongs to the church, and it will be required of him, and he will be called in that line of business before them. "Seest thou a man diligent in business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men." This appears to me now as a great gospel field, which I have hardly entered upon, but I will not try to write any more upon it at present.

The next Scripture to which you call my attention is in 1 Thessalonians iv. 11, where Paul admonishes the brethren to "study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands." We can more readily see the reason for this peculiar admonition of the apostle when we refer to what he says in his second letter to this church, iii. 11: "We hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies." Also in writing to Timothy (1 Tim. v. 13,) he speaks of some widows whose behavior is unbecoming, who "learn to be idle, wandering from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also, and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not." The apostle Peter also, in his faithful and loving admonitions to the brethren, says, 1 Peter iv. 15, "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters." Here we see the reason for this admonition of the apostle Paul to the brethren to be quiet, and to do their own business; not by the hand of another, upon whom they might be inclined to throw the burden of work which properly belongs to them, but with their own hands, and this will apply not only to the business of this world which is laid upon them to do, working in the field or in the house to earn what is needful for their support in this life and for the support of their families, but it also applies to their calling and work in the church of God. This is a most solemn and important matter. A gospel church is a most sacred place, and the responsibilities resting upon each member of the church, in the place in which he is set in the body by the Holy Spirit, are very great and of the utmost importance, for the Spirit divides "to every man severally as he will," and appoints to each his place and gives the gifts, and no one can do another's work, but each must do his own work. "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; he that giveth, let him

do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness."—Romans xii. 6–8. We all know of some who have tried to intrude upon the sacred obligations which the Spirit has laid upon another in the place and office assigned him by the Spirit, and we know that we ourselves, each of us, have sometimes found ourselves moving toward the work of another, and have been more or less gently reproved by the Spirit for what we thought was zeal, but we found it to be self-confidence, or self-seeking, instead of true zeal. We had been trying, more or less consciously, to do the work which had been given to another to do, and were in danger of being busybodies in other men's matters. What a sacred relationship there is between a church and the one whom the Lord has called and appointed as pastor of that church. Sometimes in visiting a church a ministering brother has forgotten or overlooked this solemn and responsible relationship, and has been in danger of trying to do the pastor's work; sometimes a visiting preacher has thus done harm instead of good. This is one thing in which the Lord has been pleased to make me very careful, not to overstep the true lines of responsibility, but to always insist, at home and among sister churches, that the pastor do the pastor's work. If at any time it becomes necessary for a brother minister to do that work, both the church and their pastor will be made to know it, and both will be so directed by the Spirit that brotherly love and peace will not be disturbed. Always, "Let brotherly love continue." Also those who are placed by the Spirit in the office of a deacon have their work to do, and the benefit and goodness of that relationship to the church to maintain, and "they that have used the office of a deacon well, purchased to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith." But I can only hint at this great and important subject of the church as a body, with all the members in place, and in working order, and all the various members and gifts directed by "that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."—1 Cor. xii. 11.

The third Scripture you write me about is in Eph. iv. 28: "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." It seems that both Peter and Paul knew of some who had been especially addicted to stealing while in their natural state, and it is true that temptations assail one more readily in the evil things to which he was most addicted before he was called by grace. These servants of Jesus Christ, always faithful and diligent in the Master's business, both speak of theft in such a way as indicate that they believe a child of God may be left to do this, and other wicked things, and so bring terrible guilt upon his own soul, and bring reproach upon the cause of truth. The warnings and solemn admonitions reach far beyond the one sinful act of stealing.

What I have written will cover this last Scripture, so far as my weak understanding goes. I only call attention to the peculiar presentation by the apostle of the cause of the poor and needy, and of our obligations to help them, and of the one object assigned, which should induce and urge this man who has in former life stolen to supply his wants, now to work with his hands, "that he may have to give to him that needeth." This has reference to natural work. He is to labor with his hands, not only to supply his own needs, but also that he may have

for this purpose of charity. If this is so peculiarly enjoined upon him, how much more is it incumbent upon those members of the church who have abundance of this world's goods.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

PINSONFORK, Ky., Jan. 24, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I inclose a wonderfully good letter, written by Elder J. E. Thornbury, of Ratcliff, Ky., and it is so God-honoring, strengthening and encouraging to the household of faith, the Lord's humble poor, that I would much like for as many of them to read it as can conveniently do so. It seems too wonderful to me to keep to myself, and I should like to share it with others of like precious faith.

Yours in love,

WM. J. MAY.

RATCLIFF, Ky., Jan. 7, 1911.

ELDER WILLIAM J. MAY—BELOVED BROTHER:—If the Lord will, I will try to write you. My mind is so finite, my tongue so stammering and my understanding so dark that I fear to write to one like you, who seems so deep in spiritual understanding, and who has been given of the Lord to see the depths of the mysteries of the gospel as revealed by the Holy Spirit to the Lord's servants in his own time and way, yet trusting that the Lord will give to you the spirit of forbearance and love, that you may be willing to throw the mantle of charity over the poorest and weakest of the flock of the Beloved, if indeed I am one, and hoping that my only desire is the honor and glory of God, and that I may comfort the household of faith and yourself with the same comfort wherewith I have been comforted of God, and that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of myself, I will try to write. The Scriptures plainly teach that our dear Savior from the beginning saw every need of every one of his chosen, both as individuals and as a church collectively, hence provision was made in Christ their Savior in full sufficiency, both for time and eternity. They were chosen in him before the world began, and grace was given them in him, and this grace was made manifest in time to them as sons of God and joint-heirs with Christ. They are, through his righteousness and life given them by the Father, heirs to all to which his dear Son is heir; that is, they are heirs to all of the glorious inheritance of heaven. This inheritance is not divided, and each heir given his portion to keep for himself. This is well, for they could not keep it. They cannot keep themselves, but must be and are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." God for his own glory has reserved this wonderful inheritance in heaven for them, hence both they and it are in the hand and care of the Lord, so that they cannot fall short of it, and, being brought to realize what they are by nature, they have come to know the total depravity of the heart by reason of the sin of the first man Adam, and that they must be quickened by the Spirit of God and made alive. The man must be born again; not just a part of him, but the whole man. In this birth he is delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son; all this is the work of God. The sinner, though saved by grace, was and still is passive; his faith, love and obedience are all of them the covenant blessings and gifts of God to him, a sinner saved by grace. None are saved any

other way. This sinner can claim none of the honor, glory or praise of this salvation, for he knows that none is due him. What a mercy, yea, what a blessing, is this. A knowledge of these blessings humbles the poor and needy at the feet of the dear Savior, and fills the heart with love and thanksgiving to God, who for his great love, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.

As for my position upon the doctrine of election, I will state it very briefly. Election, all must admit, is taught very clearly in the word of God. It is a choice between individuals, and can be but personal. God's choice was in Christ anterior to time, hence it is eternal, and not according to our works, so is unconditional. Therefore I have and do believe, and in my weak efforts at preaching have contended for, eternal, personal and unconditional election of the whole redeemed family of God, which is the Lord's portion, and the lot of his inheritance, and I have contended that they are an innumerable company of Adam's fallen race, and were by Christ their sacrifice redeemed unto God from under the curse of the law, out of every kindred, tribe, tongue and nation under heaven, and he has made them kings and priests unto God, and they shall in God's own time and way be brought into the blessed enjoyment of the glorious inheritance unto which they are begotten and predestinated. Though through the lusts of the flesh they may wander away in the bogs of sin up to their very necks, yet God by his love shed abroad in their hearts can humble them and bring them back into his banqueting-house, and his banner over them shall be love. Then they love him with the same love wherewith he loved them. This is not their love, my dear brother, but it is the love of God, pure and holy. But poor, wretched man that I am, who am I that God who is holy should love me or take notice of me? Often I am made to loathe myself because of my waywardness, yet I trust that God remembers me in love and mercy. In viewing Christ as the great Shepherd of his sheep, and his care and watchfulness over them, I have used these words: His love and tender care are so great that he never leaves his flock, and while his little, weak and trembling lambs are wandering in a barren desert, or on the rugged mountain, his ever watchful eye is over them, not to see what will befall them, or see them go to destruction, for he knoweth their every step, for he hath purposed them all, and has set their bounds that they cannot pass, but by his Spirit he leads them in their journey, which he has marked out for them in his providence. In his love he keeps them as the apple of his eye; he goes before them, as well as watches over them. There is not a sigh, or a groan, or a cry of anguish or despair, uttered by such weak ones that he does not know the depth of, and when they reach the end of their journey and can go no further because their strength has failed, and they fall helpless and cannot rise again, then in his love, pity and mercy, and for his own glory and honor, he flies to their relief, and gathers them in his arms, and carries them in his bosom, and brings them to the fold, where they are gently and lovingly received and cared for. There we are fed upon the sincere milk of the word until we are of age. He commands his shepherds to feed his sheep and his lambs, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. He says, "Feed the flock of God which is

among you." Ah, my brother, what a solemn command, what a sacred charge, what a holy place to occupy. Preach Jesus the bread of life, the wine of the kingdom, the only food upon which the hungry and thirsty children of God can feast and live. There is no substitute for it, nor can the saints be persuaded to believe that there is, for they have tasted that he is gracious. Brother May, I have not doubted that you are called to feed the flock of God, the evidence is your able defense of the doctrine of God our Savior, but I often doubt myself in this matter, yet I have been comforted in meditating upon the above. This to me is the truth of God our Savior. May you also find some comfort in what I have written. Now may the grace of God be with you, and may you long be spared and blessed to comfort the Lord's poor, hungry and thirsty children with the gospel of his rich grace.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. E. THORNBURY.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 23, 1911.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I am forwarding you a copy of a letter just received from a very dear friend of ours, Mr. E. Littleton, pastor of Forest Fold Primitive Baptist Church, of Crowborough, Sussex, England, which if agreeable to you we would like published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at your convenience. Mr. Littleton was well known to us for a number of years before we left England for America, in 1885, as pastor of the above church, and we have had the pleasure and profit of correspondence with him from that time until now. We have a very vivid recollection of our first meeting you at Ebenezer Church, Baltimore, Md., in 1888, when we heard you for the first time, and your visit to our home, when you gave us such encouragement, we being strangers in a strange land, but you soon made us feel at home among the brethren. We now look back on the time when you served the Washington Church, until you moved to another sphere of labor. In the year 1899 our present pastor, Elder J. T. Rowe, was called as pastor of the Shiloh Church, whose ministry it has been our comfort and privilege to sit under to the present time. It is indeed a great blessing to have the gospel preached to us as we do here in Washington, and find comfort and encouragement, and we are made to feel grateful to the Giver of all good things.

You will note Mr. Littleton thanks us for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; it is loaned to him by our dear sister, Mrs. Hinckley, to whom you have been sending it for some time, and who often expresses her interest in reading it. Mrs. Hinckley has been a member many years, and is a sister-in-law of Mrs. Walker.

JOHN T. WALKER.

CHAPEL HOUSE, CROWBOROUGH, England, Jan. 7, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER IN THE LORD:—I thank you for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and am glad to learn from your letter that you have cause to remember the place of your natural and spiritual nativity, and glad also on account of your continuance and steadfastness in the faith; as it is in nature, so it is in grace, the nature of a thing is known by its endurance.

I like the beginning of Philippians, and I like the end. The apostle says in the beginning, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ," and at the

end he says, "But my God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." "Thou shalt remember all the way." That is not an exhortation, but a divine declaration, meaning that we shall have cause to remember; past experience is helpful, and when the Lord shines upon us it is a present power.

"Should poverty and loss
Of every kind of good,
Conspire to make our weighty cross,
Our helper still is God."

All the way, that includes the beginning; it is well to remember our extraction: Ye who sometimes were enemies, and alienated, now hath he reconciled, and in the end will present you holy and unblamable in his sight if ye continue in the faith, &c. Continuance is a proof of reality. All real saving religion is personal "if ye;" others may have faith, but their faith will not save me; I may have faith, but that will not save them. A saint may pray for a sinner, but a sinner must pray for himself. Abiding in Christ by his abiding in us, is proof of union with him. None can satisfactorily know they have life in Christ but by receiving life from Christ, as cause and effect. "If ye continue." If, on the other hand, there is a departure from profession, a giving up, abandoning the things of God and truth, of one who has professed to love, and returning again as the dog to his vomit, what does this manifest? That saints can fall from grace and perish? No, but that they are not saints, for Peter declares concerning the elect, the foreknown, the begotten to a living hope, the sanctified, that they are kept (sweet word), and that by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. To this agrees the testimony of David: "For thou hast delivered my soul from death; wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?"—Psalms lvi. 13. "Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice."—Psalms lxiii. 7. Thou art my strong refuge whereunto I continually resort. So that experience tallies with the doctrine. Continually resort; this is descriptive of the maintenance of divine life. God will take care of his own life, and of those who have it, "therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice." Then we have an acknowledgment, "Because thou hast been my help." Then divine reasoning, "Therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice;" gracious resolution also is in the "therefore." These acknowledgments, arguments, reasonings and resolutions are much exemplified in Scripture. God has no wings, yet the image helps one to understand the character of our God; but he has perfections, he has wisdom, power, goodness and truth; he has made with us an everlasting covenant, and given us promises and providences, too, and performeth all things for us. The promise is the writing of God that faith pleads; it is a reasonable request, do as thou hast said. David knew how to handle the promise, so did Jacob when he wrestled with the angel, who was the man, the God-man, God in the nature of the church; he said, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." Again, the psalmist said, "Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope." This is prevailing pleading indeed. Here is a double argument. First, it is thy word, wilt thou not keep it? Then thou hast caused me to hope in it; thou canst not disappoint a hope which thou thyself hast begotten. The last letter the late

dear Mr. Hawker wrote in this world was to his daughter, in which he says, "My dear, such have been the goodness of God and his divine interpositions to me, that it is too late to doubt now." You and I at times have been caused in our measure in the same faith to say the same.

"After so much mercy passed
Will he let me sink at last?"

I have been cast on the Lord from birth, and have feared the Lord now seventy years; have preached Christ's gospel nearly sixty years, and am now in my eighty-first year, and, as you know, have been the pastor of the Strict Baptist Chapel, Crowborough, England, nearly forty-five years.

You will be pleased to know we have three chapels; I preach five times a week; and also glad to know that last November I baptized thirteen, and three were added to us from other churches, making a total of sixteen added to the church. "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together."

I have gotten out my autobiography; it is published at one shilling and nine pence. I would send two or more at one and six pence each to any address given me in America. It is nicely bound, gilt edges, and in the opinion of friends would do for presentation to young or old.

Yours sincerely in the gospel,

E. LITTLETON.

BLOOMVILLE, Ohio, April 20, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will try and tell what I hope and trust are the dealings of the Lord with me. In October, 1877, I went to meeting at Honey Creek, and while Elder Sherwood was preaching I felt I was a lost and helpless sinner in the sight of the just and holy God, and I realized for the first time that I was without hope and without God in the world. My sister went forward and told of her hope in Christ, and was received, and baptized the next day. O how I wished I was as good as she. I went home weeping bitterly, and thinking of my awful condition; my trouble was so great I could not sleep, and I arose in the morning with a great burden on my mind. With a heavy heart I went to see my sister baptized; I thought every one could see I was a guilty, condemned sinner. After baptism we went to meeting; I thought the preaching was good, but not a word of comfort for me. I tried to pray, but my prayers did me no good; the words were with me continually, "What must I do to be saved?" My trouble lasted all the week, and I could hardly work, for it was on my mind all the time. I had a desire to read the Bible, but wanted no one to see me read it. I wanted to go to meeting, but when I went I had to weep all the time, and was ashamed of myself. Sometimes my trouble would wear away for awhile, then return worse than ever. I never told any one my trouble except mother; she asked me what was the matter, and I said I was such a great sinner. She said Jesus came to save just such sinners. She always tried to comfort me, but it seemed there was no comfort for me. January 20th, 1881, father died, and I thought if I could be as well prepared by grace when I was called to die as he was I would be satisfied. Mother lived with us until June 2nd, 1888. She was stricken with paralysis in May, and only lived three weeks. I can never tell the trouble I was in the night after she died; I thought we were parted forever; I thought all father's and mother's children could meet them except me, that I was a cast-

away, forever lost. All that summer my trouble was greater than ever; I felt as if I had no friends, and a heavy burden of sin was weighing me down. I thought God was angry with me on account of my sins, and felt there was no hope for me, yet I could not help begging for mercy, it was my daily plea. O how I longed and prayed for the Lord to reveal himself to me as my Savior. My trouble gradually passed away. I expected when my burden left me I would feel happy, or some portion of Scripture would come to my mind, but that was not the way. I cannot tell of any time when my burden left me, which makes me fear my experience is not of grace. I know there was a change, but fear it was not the Lord's work. I would sometimes get a little comfort in listening to his word, in reading the Scriptures or in hearing the brethren talk; I would feel like praising his holy name, I had such a desire for the love of God. The forty-second Psalm expresses my feelings exactly: "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." I thought I would give anything if I could have that love in my heart that I heard others speak of. Sometimes I think it is all well with me, and sometimes I am in the dark, but I never feel like I did when I felt I was lost. Surely if I ever met with a change I was brought in a way I knew not, and led in paths I had not known. Baptism was presented to my mind, but I tried to banish the thought, for I felt I had no evidence and was not fit, but the more I resisted the stronger the desire was; it was on my mind continually, and became a burden. I spent many sleepless nights, and my prayer was, O Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? I told my brother my troubles, and to my surprise he advised me to go to the church, which I did the next meeting; I felt as if I could not stay away longer. I could tell very little, but was received, and baptized the next day by my brother, Elder A. F. Dove (in November, 1900,) uniting with the Honey Creek Church. My burden was gone, and I rejoiced; it was a happy day; but in a few days I felt I had deceived the church, and was myself deceived.

Do with this as you think best.

MARTHA E. DOVE.

BLOOMVILLE, Ohio, Dec. 18, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have often felt like writing what I sometimes hope are the Lord's dealings with poor, unworthy me. I was raised by Old School Baptist parents, and always thought they were good christians, but I thought the Old Baptists were very selfish, and used to tell mother I did not like them. When I was eighteen years old I first saw myself a condemned sinner before the just and holy God. With father and mother I had gone to meeting one Saturday in October, and Elder Vanhorn was there, and preached; he took for his text James i. 2, 3, and while he was preaching I hope I was made to see how vile I was. I thought I was the greatest sinner that ever lived, and that the preacher knew all about me, and all he said was meant for me. O how guilty I felt I was, and thought there was no mercy for me. I did not want any one to see me shed tears. When we arrived home I went into mother's bedroom, got the Bible and read as long as I could see, for it was nearly dark when we got home. I did not want any one to see me reading the Bible. It was too stormy to go to meeting on Sunday, so they all stayed at home. I did not want to go to meeting, I wanted to read the Bible, but could find nothing in

the good book that did me any good. I tried to pray, but it did not seem to go higher than my head. At times the burden would be greater than others. So it went on in that way for about fourteen years, when in the spring of 1891 I was sitting alone in my kitchen one Sunday evening, feeling cast down, when I picked up the hymn-book and opened to the hymn, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord." I thought, What precious promises to all who can claim them, but they are not for poor, sinful me. Then something said, They are for you; your sins are all forgiven. O what sweet peace. I was very happy, and was made to rejoice and sing his praise. Jesus I felt was my Savior; he had died for me, my sins were forgiven, and the hope of eternal glory was mine. But this did not last long; I thought I was deceived, that it was a delusion, and I would not tell any one, for I did not want to deceive any one, but things were changed, what I once loved I then hated, and what I once hated I then loved. I then loved the Old Baptists and wanted to hear them preach, wanted to be with them. I would think, I will go before the church the next opportunity, but when the time came would feel too sinful, too unworthy, and could see no good in myself; the good I would, I did not, but the evil I would not, that I did. So it went on until the latter part of the winter of 1908, when I was in trouble, but did not know what was the matter with me. I wrote to my dear sister, Martha Dove. I do not remember what I wrote, some of my feelings no doubt, for when she answered my letter she told me I ought to go to the church. I thought if she knew me as well as I knew myself she would not think that way. I wrote to my dear brother, Elder A. F. Dove, and he wrote me such a good letter that on the second Sunday in April, 1908, I went before the church and was received, and baptized by him. That was a happy day to me, but I have had many dark, dreary days since, and am in the dark much of the time; I am so ignorant, so cold, that I am often made to cry,

"Dear Lord, if indeed I am thine,
If thou art my sun and my song,
Say, why do I languish and pine,
And why are my winters so long?"

I love to read the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES. My sister, Martha Dove, takes it and lets me read it. May God give you health and strength to continue feeding the flock with true bread. Forgive me if I seem forward in writing you or you think it out of place. Do with this as you think best, and all will be right.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,
(MRS.) SUSAN WATSON.

LANHAM, W. Va., Jan. 14, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been months since I attempted to write anything for the SIGNS, but having been confined to the house for some time on account of ill health, and having no one to talk with save my family, I get very anxious to speak to some of my kindred in Christ, so by request of brother W. C. Pennington, a young brother, whom I had the pleasure of baptizing a few years ago, and who is now living in the city of Cincinnati, Ohio, and who is a reader of the SIGNS, and a member of the church at Hopewell, W. Va., where I also have my membership, I will try to write once more. I am nearing my sixty-second birthday in this world of sin and trouble. It has been my lot through life to be very poor as to this world's goods, but I hope rich in faith, and an heir of the kingdom of heaven. By solicitation of the brethren in Indiana, Ohio and my

own State, I have traveled and tried to preach Jesus the friend, lover and Savior of sinners with such liberty as it has pleased God to give me. The brethren have always been kind to me, seeing that my traveling expenses have been paid. In this way I have been able to go far and near among the brethren; otherwise I could not have gone. I have never felt that I was a big preacher, but have felt to be the least, if one at all. I have met many able preachers, of whose gift I felt glad and thankful to God that he had been so mindful of us poor worms of the dust as to call and qualify such men to preach the gospel of the Son of God to the comfort of those whose hearts he had prepared to receive it. We are told that "the preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." I have often thought how wonderfully the preacher was blessed when he knew how to begin and when to stop. Though the discourse may have been short, yet a short something is preferable to a long nothing. Again, I have seen a few in my time who were very anxious to get into the stand, and also anxious to be in the lead, who would take a great big text, then perhaps compare themselves to Jonah, and their call to the ministry to Jonah's call to preach to Nineveh, and then put in from an hour to an hour and one-half in repetition, and the congregation all worn out, and not a crumb from their lips to feed upon. Churches ought not to call for the ordination of any one unless he can interest a congregation. His preaching should be comforting to them at least. The best evidence that one is called to preach is that he does preach to the comfort of those of like precious faith. How natural it is for us to look upon the outward appearance of a minister, judging perhaps from his deportment that he surely can preach. But sometimes in this we have been deceived, looking for something and finding nothing that would be nourishing to the poor, hungry soul. But, on the other hand, we have been deceived by some whom we have met, of whom from an outward appearance we should never have thought of their being possessed of the gift of the ministry, but who have proved themselves to be called of God afterwards. Such men are always humble, possessing the spirit of meekness, and they trust in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. They are stripped of self-confidence, and their dependence is in him who has said that he will be with them alway, even unto the end of the world. How convincing to the child of grace is the proof that God has called and qualified these humble servants to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, to a people called out from the world, the Lord's chosen and anointed ones. "The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." Such ministers as these are meek and humble; they go in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel. But limited predestinarians are defying this God, saying, Pick you out a man to debate with us on the doctrine of predestination, and as champions we will give you unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field, by declaring nonfellowship for you because of your steadfastness in the doctrine of unlimited predestination, and also because you will not recommend our doctrine of conditionalism, which we think would help the church to grow in numbers, so that the quantity would be considerably greater, if the quality should not be so good. But the humble servant

of God must stand firm and declare the word of truth to be the man of his counsel, "for the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."

This may be the last time I shall ever write for publication, and as I must soon close I will say that I believe all things work together for good to them who love God. Yea, the wicked hands that were gratified in putting Jesus to death did the righteous will of God in behalf of His chosen family, who were to be redeemed by the blood of Christ. Yea, the wicked are a sword in the hand of the Lord, and when the hour and power of darkness had fully come we hear the prophet Zechariah saying, or rather the Lord by the pen of the prophet, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." The purposes of God are never thwarted by man.

Your brother,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

MASSEY, Va.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The inclosed letter from brother Purris, a stranger in the flesh, but not in the Spirit, I have read over and over again, and the oftener I read it the more interesting it becomes. It certainly has a clear ring of the sovereignty of God and his predestinated and unalterable decrees, and so much to my satisfaction and comfort I want to share it with others. It is wonderful when we receive the testimony from one in Ohio whom we have never seen that there should be such oneness of mind and understanding of the Scriptures as to bring two so close together. This proves that the Lord teaches his people the same important lesson everywhere; blessed truth. I have not the consent of brother Purris, but I will take the risk that it will be all right with him if you publish it.

As ever, yours to serve,

T. M. POULSON.

ATTICA, Ohio, Feb. 15, 1911.

ELDER T. M. POULSON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your last letter in the SIGNS has impressed me to write you a few lines to say to you that we have always read your communications with comfort, and to me your letters have for many years added much to the value of that paper. I have always desired, if it were the Lord's will, to meet you and hear you preach Jesus, but thus far the Lord has not so ordered, and considering your age, as stated in your last letter, I have little expectation of ever seeing you in time. I have often felt a desire to write you and let you know that the dear Lord has made your labors with your pen a blessing to me in spiritual comfort, and wrought sweet fellowship for you as one who worships God in spirit, rejoices in Christ, having no confidence in the flesh. In all probability you have about served your generation, and we who are younger in years will perhaps have to meet the conflicts and trials in the kingdom of our Lord after you have fallen asleep, but that eternal God and ruler over all things who has kept and guided your feet will also be the light and strength of his people while time endures, whose praise will continue to be their highest aspiration. Nations will rise and empires decay, but

the kingdom of our Lord shall endure when all things else cease to be. Not a subject of that kingdom will ever be lost, for it is God that justifieth; the blood of Jesus canceled their debt, and "there is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Dear brother, I do not know your impression, but I am apprehensive that Zion is now nearing that time when there shall be a falling away, when men shall turn away from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables, and many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of which the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. There are many now saying that God's decrees make him the author of sin and destroy man's accountability. It seems to me that Luke xxii. 22, would satisfy those who sincerely desire to know the truth upon this matter. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled. I refer to this verse because affirmed by Him who was anointed to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. He is the greatest of all preachers, the infallible expounder of the gospel of salvation, to whom, and to whom only, we must appeal in dividing the word of truth. The apostles preached what Jesus preached; they were inspired, and being filled with the Holy Ghost spake as the Spirit gave them utterance. It is the same to this day, and will continue while man lives upon the earth. The man called of God to preach the gospel is not likely to tell his friends to make room for his gift. If he has a gift, that gift will make room for him and bring him before great men, men who judge angels. This does not mean room in the church-house, or in the pulpit, but room in the hearts of God's dear people, who know the joyful sound. The Lord's people love to worship God; they love to think upon his holy name; they love to think of him as having all power, both in heaven and earth, working all things after the counsel of his own will. Not a sparrow shall fall without him; even the hairs of our head are numbered. He does not count them one by one, but he knows all things, and does not have to find anything out. What he knows now he always knew, and what he determines now he always determined. To deny this is to deny his immutability, impeach his wisdom and reduce him to a level with finite man. As for me, I have never felt to find fault with any part of the Scriptures; when fault appears it is all in me; that is, I am not able to understand unless the Lord enlightens my understanding. If there is a Scripture we do not understand, we must admit it is true; ignorance furnishes no excuse to dispute it or find fault with it and say it is too strong for the church. If the doctrine of God's determinate counsel is too strong for the church, then the fault is with the church, and not in the Scriptures. When the doctrine that God inspired the apostles to write in the New Testament Scriptures is too strong for the church, it is awful, especially when affirmed by those who profess to adore him as all-wise. Some have contended that these are deep things, and should not be mentioned, especially to the young members; they do not know anything about these things. Preaching is teaching, so then, according to their idea, the most successful way to teach the Scriptures is not to say anything about them. Dear brother Poulson, we who are younger than you will have to meet sore trials, and "who is sufficient for these things?" I know I am not, unless sustained by the

power of God. He has promised that he will never leave us nor forsake us. We are to teach them all things, preach the word, "whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." May you realize His dear presence in all the journey.

Your most unworthy brother in the bonds of the gospel,

H. E. PURRIS.

CEMENT CITY, Mich., Jan. 5, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have seen the communication from Elder Pittman to Elder Ker asking about the words used by the apostle Paul, who wrote as moved by the Holy Spirit, and so pointed out the great apostasy, as found in 2 Thessalonians ii. Paul there warned the brethren not to be deceived by the workings of the man of sin, the son of perdition, the mystery of iniquity, which was already working, and was only hindered until pagan Rome, called in Revelation the dragon, should be removed. The apostle told the brethren that this was all that withheld the development of this mystery of iniquity, and when God's time had come the dragon should give his seat and power to the great whore, which was called, and still is called, the christian church by the world, and which was developed when Constantine, an emperor of Rome, passed an edict that the Roman empire should be christian, and set the bishop of Rome up as pope, with power over all the world, to dictate to the consciences of men from Rome, the former seat of the dragon, or pagan power. That power drenched the empire with blood, the blood of saints, and this man of sin, under the name of the christian church, has since then done the same. This great whore is called in Revelation a beast, which rises up out of the sea, having on the head popes, bishops, cardinals, the names of blasphemy. This great whore is also called the mother of harlots.

Now this brings us to the development of the second beast which rises up out of the earth, who is to exercise all the power of the first beast, having two horns like a lamb; that is, he is very lamblike in appearance. This beast has good words and fair speeches; he uses the Scriptures a little as a dead letter, though subverting them. He is grasping for political power, and if, in the purpose of God, he should gain it, he will then speak as the dragon did, by persecuting the true church. He does great wonders, making them that dwell upon the earth believe that he can bring fire (the Holy Ghost) down from heaven, as the men who have his mark do now think. But it is really just the reverse; instead of coming down from heaven, the fire comes up out of the bottomless pit of man's wisdom, backed by the prince of darkness. I believe that we are living in a time in which the number of the second beast is fast developing. This beast, as said before, is to exercise all the power of the first beast. This beast is grasping after the young in every way, trying to gain control of the public schools, not being satisfied with their Sunday Schools, teaching the children their lying wonders. All the religion of the world has a persecuting spirit. The souls under the altar, which had been killed for the word of God and the testimony which they had borne, "cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" They were told that they should rest a little season, until their fellow-servants and their

brethren should be killed as they were. I think this beast now rising up out of the earth is destined to fulfill this, and this is what I understand to be the development of the man of sin, the son of perdition, spoken of by the apostle. This lamblike beast it is said shall compass about the camp of the saints, and the beloved city, the church of the living God, and by good words and fair speeches deceive many. But read the book of Revelation concerning the fire that came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. This I understand to be their end. These Scriptures are given for our learning, and are profitable to us. My mind has been exercised upon this subject for a long time, and I have been led to compare Scripture with Scripture. With John, when I saw this great Babylon I wondered with great wonder, but now I can say at times, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Our God will get to himself renown in the destruction of his foes, and avenge the blood of his servants.

I submit this to the editors of the SIGNS.

Your brother,

DAVID TITMUS.

LEESBURG, Va., Feb. 9, 1911.

MRS. I. S. BAIRD—DEAR SISTER:—Since reading your good letter in the SIGNS, I have felt a desire to write you, but, as you say of yourself, I have never been given the power to write or to express myself as some can; I wish I could. My heart goes out to you, and the whole Warwick Church, for I know it was a trial to give up Elder Lefferts as your pastor, but the Lord can make us willing in the day of his power. I believe we all here in Virginia love him, and would be grieved very much to have him leave. I do hope he and his family will be taken care of, and that they will be satisfied to remain here. I often think of the love we have for the brethren, how it draws us together; it is wonderful. But I think of myself, and doubt I am a child of God, I am so far from what I should be. My father was an Old School Baptist, and it was always a pleasure for me to wait on the Baptists and prepare for the meetings, and I have wondered if that is why I loved them. After my marriage I was thrown with the Missionary Baptists, and many inducements were offered me to join them, but I could not, their preaching was no comfort to me. When a schoolgirl I would see them saying their prayers, and thought, Why should I not say my prayers? While in the act of doing so one night these words came to me with much force: The prayers of the righteous availeth much, but the prayers of the wicked availeth nothing. I was shown how vile and sinful I was before the just and holy God, and my prayer then was, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Father took the SIGNS, and I would take them to my room and read. Often the letters therein would express my feelings better than I could, but I did not want any one to know I was interested in those things. Not until after I was married did I think any one knew what I was enduring. I went to an association with my father, and dear Elder White came to me and began to talk, and I could not help showing my feelings. Then I thought, What made me do that? I have deceived Elder White and all there. It was quite a burden to me. Time passed on and I came to Leesburg to live, and felt a desire to be numbered with those people I loved. A desire to be baptized burdened me all the

time. After dear Elder White passed away I felt I never could talk to any one else, but I trust the time came when I had to go, and was received. It was a relief that no one knows except those called to pass through the same experience. I was baptized one Sunday, and there was a burden lifted and such peace given that I never can forget. Since then I have had many doubts and fears about myself, but I know there is a God who can save without the help of man.

I do not know why I have written this to you, but felt a desire to do so after reading your letter in the SIGNS.

With love, sincerely your sister, I hope,
ROSA C. GARRETT.

LIBERTY, Mo., Dec. 12, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Brethren I hope of one faith, one hope, one relationship and one Lord. If we have been born of God, born of that incorruptible seed, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, then we must surely be of one family, therefore we ought to be of one mind, striving together for the welfare of each other, and keeping the fellowship of the household of faith in the bond of love, thus fulfilling the word of Christ when he said, "Peace be unto thee." If I know my own sinful heart I do thank our covenant-keeping God that he has kept me from falling in with the heresies of the day gotten up by men to draw away others to follow after them instead of following Christ. Christ said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life," and Paul said, There is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." Again, Paul said, "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." I do not feel willing to be espoused to any other man or husband so long as Christ, my husband, lives, for there is no other name given under heaven among men, be it man or angel, by which we must be saved. The help of men or angels joined could never reach my case, neither could I find release in any other thing than his boundless grace.

In sending my subscription to the SIGNS to-day I feel very lonely, as I have heretofore almost always sent with it that of a very dear old brother to me, Mr. T. Knight. It was seldom that I ever saw him, but it was a comfort to know that two of us were still left here to stand in the front of the battle. He has quit the field, and has laid his armor by, and, I trust, gone to a far better world than this vale of tears. Now he is freed from all the fiery darts that men or devils could cast at him, and I sometimes feel, like one of old, "I am left alone, and they seek my life." But thanks to the God of both heaven and earth, we hear him saying, "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal." I do thank God that he has given so many sweet and precious promises to his people here, to comfort and strengthen them, that they may be encouraged while in this vale of tears, surrounded by foes, yet not forsaken, cast down, yet not destroyed. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." O how precious is this God, and what precious promises are these that God's people have to comfort them.

"Ye little flock whom Jesus feeds,
Dismiss your anxious cares;
Look to the Shepherd of your souls,
And smile away thy fears.

Though wolves and lions prowl around,
His staff is your defense;

Midst sands and rocks your Shepherd's voice
Calls streams and pastures hence."

And we hear him saying, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." What soul-comforting words to this little flock whom Jesus feeds. But often the question with me is, Am I one of that number who have come up out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb?

From a lone brother,

RICHARD WALLER.

CINCINNATI, Ohio, Oct. 31, 1910.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I feel unworthy to call you brother, and it is true that a sinner like me should feel unworthy to claim kinship with the children of God. I have to-day received the SIGNS for November 1st, and it has seemed to me like a shower of rain on a dry and parched land. I have also read your reply to brother Z. Ward, of Bear Wallow, Va., and it seemed so good and true that I felt like trying to write you a few lines. In your closing remarks to this aged brother occurs what seems especially to bear upon my mind, as I am in a place where I have to do with a great many Romish people. I see them by the hundreds going into a great building which seems from the looks of it to require at least five hundred thousand dollars for its completion, and I do not doubt that they have buildings in the world that cost much more than this. I have talked with those people, and they say that the priest takes the place of God, and they enter into this great building and confess to the priest, calling him father, and asking him to forgive their sins. How plain it is that their way is false. They call him father who is not their father, either naturally or spiritually. How plain it is to see, as you say, that they are the synagogue of Satan. What a great consolation it should be for those who have hope in Christ that they have been given a mind that is in harmony with the Scriptures, and call no man father upon earth, as they are bidden in the Scriptures. This was spoken to the children of God, and they do obey; they do not pray to any man, nor call him father. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." These sons know their Father, and know that no man on earth is their father in spiritual things.

But I must bring this letter to a close. You have given the brother a clear answer.

From the least of saints, if one at all,

W. C. PENNINGTON.

BRANTFORD, Canada, Feb. 21, 1911.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER:—The few friends here wish me to write the SIGNS to the effect that arrangements have been made with Elder D. M. Vail for him to preach here the second Sunday in each month, unless otherwise arranged, and would like if you put a notice in the SIGNS something like the following: Elder D. M. Vail will preach (God willing) in Brantford, Sunday, March 12th, and the second Sunday in each month following; all welcome. We have rented a hall, where we meet every Sunday evening. There are, I have learned, some readers of the SIGNS within a few miles of Brantford, and we would be pleased to entertain any who may come to the meetings to hear Elder Vail. I had a Mr. P. Galbraith call upon me to-day; he is going to live in Hamil-

ton; the late Mr. Leitch's brother lives there and, I think, two others, and one friend in Drumbo, a few miles away, and brother Scates and wife in Woodstock might like to come; we would give them all a welcome at any time. We should also be glad if you would mention the fact that we in Brantford would be pleased to have any of the Elders coming to Canada give us a visit. We would willingly write and ask them, but have no means of knowing who they may be unless they write us, which sometimes they might feel would be thrusting themselves upon us. We are hungry, though poor folk, for the truth once delivered unto the saints. If you could let this be known through the SIGNS, along with the notice given above, you will confer a favor upon us.

Yours for the truth,

FRED. SIMMONS.

FRANKLIN, Tenn., Dec. 5, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel at times when I look over the turbulent sea of life, and in my mind's eye review my past life and see nothing but an endless round of labor, toil and care, that life is hardly worth battling, now in my seventy-second year, health fairly good, still worrying with life and its conflicts, a poor sinner, too, with no righteousness to plead, yet this is a part of the heritage of God's people. "In the world ye shall have tribulation." It takes tribulation to work patience; patience, experience; experience, hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, for the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost. "For I reckon," says the apostle Paul, (not that he doubted it) "that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man (the natural man) to conceive the good things which God hath prepared for them that love him, but he hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit. I trust that my lot may be cast with this people, though a weak and feeble remnant comparatively, scattered about over the world here and there, a little flock, a poor and afflicted people; it is written of them that they shall trust in the name of the Lord; these he came to save; his eye is over them, and his everlasting arms underneath them. The Lord has promised good to them, and though the earth be removed and the mountains cast into the sea, nothing is to overtake them but what has been provided for in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. O what a glorious heritage have all the saints. May the blessed Master keep us all close to himself, close to his word and close to one another. Apart from him we have nothing, are nothing and can do nothing, but with him we have all things and abound.

I regret to learn of brother McGlade's death. A good man in Israel has fallen.

Your brother, I hope, in the Lord,

J. W. HARVEY.

GREENVILLE, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I wish to say to those who subscribed for the Sikes-Thompson discussion, that the discussion will not be published, and as soon as this has time to reach all the subscribers, so that they will understand the matter without my writing a private letter of explanation to each one, I will send their money back to them.

Yours in hope, J. C. SIKES.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1911.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ISAIAH IX. 6, 7.

ELDER S. B. Moffitt, of Oregon City, Oregon, writes us that he has recently been to visit Elder J. P. Allison, who is confined to his bed and is suffering much, and that Elder Allison requested him to write us asking that we write upon the words recorded in Isaiah ix. 6, 7, which read as follows: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." The opening sentence is especially named. Our dear, aged brother Allison has long been known to our readers as a very interesting, spiritual correspondent. Personally also it has been our privilege to hold some correspondence with him, always to our profit and edification. We feel sorry to learn of his illness, and desire that the comfort of the Spirit be his strength in all his affliction. It is our desire always to respond to such requests from brethren when we can do so, and especially do we feel willing to comply with the request of Elder Allison, yet the theme is vast, and we are limited in ability. The text is lengthy, and so in the limits of an editorial it is manifest that we can at best only glance at the things contained in it.

Our attention is called especially to the first clause, and this is indeed the life and substance of the two verses. It is of a child born and a son given that all the rest of the text was written; all that follows but speaks forth the praise and glory of him who is named in the first clause. There will be no question in the minds of any who are spiritual, and who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, that he, our Savior and Redeemer, is the theme of these two verses. Reading carefully the chapter, or that portion of it preceding the text, it will appear that the prophet blends together the vision of that deliverance, of which he had prophesied, of Israel from their oppressors, with the coming of the redemption which was promised to all who believe through our Lord Jesus Christ. This instance of passing from the prediction of temporal blessings to the declaration of the coming of Him who saves from sin and death is not a solitary one. These temporal deliverances are but emblems of that other and greater deliverance through our Lord Jesus Christ declared in the gospel. This one truth belongs to and explains many other prophecies in which that which is of a temporal nature is blended with the future hope of the redeemed. If inspired prophets were given to see peace, rest, prosperity, deliverance, or any other good thing which God would give to that literal Israel, often they were also given to see and to prophesy at the

same time of the coming of Him who was always the promise and hope of Israel, the Messiah, in whom and by whom all that can be called blessing, both for this life and for the life to come, should be bestowed upon those who believe in him. This will appear to be true of this connection if it be read carefully. In this, as well as in all the Old Testament Scriptures, Jesus is the chief testimony. The testimony of Jesus here, as well as in all prophecy, is the spirit of prophecy, as we are expressly told by the apostle.

We suppose that brother Allison had in mind, when he spoke especially of the opening clause of this text, the question as to what difference there is in a child born and a son given. Of course there can be no difference in the person meant; the child born is the son given, and the son given is the child born. Two names are given to one person. First, Jesus is a child born, and the same Jesus is a son given. The last expression, "a son is given," is the more definite. This we would note in the first place. It was not enough to say, "Unto us a child is born," it must be definitely understood that this child is also a son. Our Jesus was not only a child, born of the virgin Mary, but he was also "the Son of God" and "the Son of man." Second, we must note the difference between the words, "child is born" and "son is given." Mary gave birth to this child, according to the declaration of the angel to her, but it is not said that she gave this child to men, or unto us, but the Lord of heaven and earth, our Creator, Preserver, Lawgiver and King, the Creator of all things, and against whom we had sinned, gave his Son. It appears to us that the word "child" emphasizes his earthly nature, his manhood, while the word "son" emphasizes, on the other hand, the truth that he was divine, that he came down from heaven, and that the Son of God came into union with flesh and blood, or took part of the same, as did his chosen people. How wonderful and mysterious this union. What deep consolations are in the name "Emmanuel," "God with us." All is summed up in this one expression: He was Emmanuel, God with us, that we might be with God at the last forever. He came into living, loving union with us in our flesh, that we might come into living, loving union with him in the Spirit. He "made himself of no reputation," or, literally, he emptied himself of his glory, that we might be filled with the same glory. He who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. "Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." These are but a few of the expressions used by inspiration to set forth this one great truth of his oneness with us in the flesh, that we might be made one with him in the Spirit. The declarations of this truth are plain, but the truth thus declared is far beyond the grasp of any human mind. It is to be received, and to become our hope and our consolation, by faith. It is the height of presumption to seek to know how the human and the divine nature dwelt in the one man, Christ Jesus, but it is the victory of living faith to believe it, and to find in this truth our hope of salvation. The two expressions, "Unto us a child is born," "unto us a son is given," contain just what the apostle declared: "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh," and this declaration means more than any manifestation of that which is Godlike in any redeemed sinner. Our God has never been manifest in any

being in earth or heaven as he was manifest in our blessed Savior. There are sons of God, but he was THE Son of God. No other child has ever been born as Jesus was born; no other man has ever been holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, as was our Savior. In an incomprehensible way God was manifest in Jesus Christ; he was the divine Son of God and he was the child of Mary. It would be arrogating to ourselves equality with the blessed Son of God to say, God is manifest in our flesh. Though Christ dwells in us the hope of glory, yet we are not thereby entitled to say, God is manifest in our flesh. This one solemn declaration in the word is reserved to the use of the blessed Lord Jesus. If we are sons of God it is because of our union with the Son of God; our sonship is in his sonship and is secured to us by virtue of it. Union, by living faith, with the Son of God, entitles us to call God our Father. We are the children of God by faith in Christ. There is no other way of entering into this sonship.

It may be that our dear aged brother had also in mind the expression in the text, "Unto us." The preposition "unto" has the force of coming toward, or, to another. The thought expressed here is that Jesus came for us, or for our benefit. We will say, first, that the simple truth taught here is that Jesus came in the flesh for the redemption of an elect people; it was to redeem sinners from their sins that he was born. The reference is simply to his coming in the flesh in the days of Herod. Precious and full of comfort as is that other truth that there comes a time in the experience of every chosen vessel of mercy when Christ is formed in them and becomes to them the hope of glory, yet this is not the special truth taught in this text. In our preaching or writing, after presenting this first glorious truth that God was manifest in the flesh, and walked and talked with men in Jerusalem and Galilee nineteen centuries ago, there can be no objection (indeed it is well) to speaking of his coming by the Spirit to our hearts, and dwelling there by faith, but yet this is not the meaning of the text at all; the simple reference is to the coming of Jesus in the flesh, to die for sinners and to rise again in glory. Here is the gospel of the Son of God declared. Paul summed up the whole matter of preaching the gospel when he said to the church at Corinth, "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." The doctrine of the atonement, and of justification by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, is the gospel. It was for this that a child was born, a son given, and in this is redemption completed, and the work of Jesus in it is finished. But still, let us remember that it is not until one has been born of God, and has come by faith to believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, that he or she can in truth say this which the prophet said. It becomes a most solemn question to all who are convicted of sin and righteousness and judgment, Did the blessed Savior come for me? Did he die for me? Did he rise again for my justification? The Spirit alone can bring the answer to such a soul, and when that answer is brought and assurance is given that Jesus died for "even me," then these words, "unto us," and all similar declarations of the word of God, become living words, and the soul is permitted to eat of them, so

that they become the joy of his heart. Then he can exultingly say, Unto me was this child born, this son given, and for the atonement of his sins he looks back to Calvary and sees a bleeding, dying Savior, a man like himself dying for him, and then coming to the sepulchre he hears the words spoken to his soul, "He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." Here is an experience of the power of that salvation which was finished for him when Jesus died and rose again.

It is not our mind to undertake here to write of each of the expressions that follow; they all set forth wonderful things concerning the name, office and work of the dear Redeemer. Such names and such works could belong to none save the blessed Redeemer, yet there have always been men who have seen nothing in all this sublime language save a description of some king or ruler, great among men or great in Israel. Surely divine light could have never shined upon minds thus benighted and besotted with their own vain imaginations. Such names as The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace, cannot belong to men, and cannot be ascribed to them without blasphemy against God, and the very fact that these names by inspiration are ascribed to the dear Savior shows that he was indeed God manifest in the flesh. How completely the first name of all, "Wonderful," covers all that follows. Every name of him is wonderful. All that he was and is, all that he did and said while in the flesh, yes, all that he speaks by the Spirit to saved souls now is wonderful. Sometimes that one word "wonderful" is all that the soul can say when given to view anything of the work of Jesus or anything of his character. Not only do these names belong to him, but wonderful things are said of him beside in these two verses. This child, this son, our Prince, our God and our Father, upholds the government of his people; the government is upon his shoulder, therefore it is stable, and shall last forever. It is a righteous government, for he is the King of Righteousness; it is full of peace, for he is the Prince of Peace; it is a loving, paternal government, for he is the Everlasting Father, and wonderful things are shown them that dwell there, for his name is Wonderful. "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." The word "increase" is, rather, abundance. All that is for the welfare of his kingdom, and of those who are its subjects, shall abundantly dwell there. He abundantly blesses her poor with bread. No one dwelling there has ever found any failure. Sufficient to each one has been the grace provided. As their days, so has their strength been. There never has been any lack. There can never be any thought of need. The word "increase" does not signify that at the last there shall be greater abundance than was in this kingdom provided for former saints. All that was needful the saints in the olden time had. The saints to-day have no more than this. There always has been enough. But, as said before, the word rather means abundance. Of the abundance of his government and peace there shall be no end.

"The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." This is the summing up of the whole matter. The word "zeal" simply means earnest desire, intense purpose. Who can measure the zeal of the God of Zion in behalf of his people? One measure is given in the word of God

in the text itself: the son given. All through the Scriptures the giving of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is presented as the measure of the love of God, and an apostle testifies that "he that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all," will not withhold from us any good thing. Having given him to die for us, much more shall we be saved by his life, and it all depends, not upon our zeal, but upon his zeal. Here is our safety and assurance; here may we safely rest. Our aged brother in his sickness finds support here, and this support shall never fail, the Lord has promised it.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MARK XV. 38.

(Continued from page 154.)

In addition to what we have written on the figurative import of the vail of the temple, and its being rent asunder, we will offer a few thoughts in regard to its application directly to the sacred person of our divine Mediator. The most profound and glorious mystery presented in the whole volume of inspired wisdom and truth is that of God manifested in the flesh, and so vitally important and fundamental is this mystery that the apostle John has denounced as antichristian every spirit that denieth that Christ is come in the flesh; while Paul by the same Spirit affirms that, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." The fleshly body of our Redeemer, which was made of a woman and made under the law, is very appropriately called in Scripture a vail, or tabernacle, within which dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. The eternal Father, with all his attributes and perfections, was embodied in him, and in him so completely hidden that no man can come unto the Father but by him. While he is in the Father, the Father is also in him, and so entirely that all who come unto God by him must come by and through the new and living way which God has consecrated for us through the vail, that is to say, his flesh. That flesh in which the Godhead dwelt, like the curtains of a tabernacle, concealed from human perception all the glory of the invisible God, and he was only seen in the fashion of a man and in the form of a servant. His flesh veiled the glory of his eternal Godhead from human scrutiny; neither Jews nor Gentiles could see any beauty in him to admire or to attract. To men he was as a root out of dry ground, and we hid, as it were, our face from him. Men could see his fleshly person as the Israelites could see the external curtains of the tabernacle in the wilderness, or the vail in the temple intervening between them and the ark, the mercy-seat and the cherubims of glory. Men knew him, or supposed that they knew him, as the son of the carpenter, and regarded him as a despised Nazarene, but no man knew him in his true character save those to whom he was revealed by the Father. "Whom do men say that I am?" They entertained a variety of opinions, but none of them were right. "But whom say ye that I am?" was demanded of the disciples, from whom the vail had been removed. Simon Peter declared the faith of the saints correctly, but he had not learned it of flesh and blood, but it was revealed to him by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. As the vail of the temple then

pointed to the flesh of the Son of man, and that vail concealed the glory of the holiest place of all from the outer court worshipers, so the flesh of Christ conceals from the understanding of all natural men the light of immortality which he alone hath, for he is the only and blessed Potentate, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light, whom no man hath seen nor can see, whom no man can approach unto. Indeed, it was not lawful for any one to look within the vail while it remained, only the high priest; even so the law of God forbids a revelation of the unsearchable riches of Christ, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, to any of the sons of man until all the requisitions of the law are fulfilled and the vail lawfully removed. In applying the rending of the vail to the redemption of the children of God, we shall see that as the vail of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, so the letter and the spirituality of the law of God, so far as it related to the family of God, were separated. The righteousness of the law was fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, while as a law of commandments having dominion over God's people it was taken out of the way, and as a separating wall or partition it was no longer to obscure the way of life and salvation from the heirs of immortality. The trembling, guilt-stricken Israelite, conscious of his uncleanness, with his hand upon his mouth, dared not to look within the vail. He knew full well the terror of the law, and when Moses as the bearer of the holy law came down the mountain from the presence of God the carnal tribes could not steadfastly look upon his face, for it shined with insufferable glory, but when God removes the vail of the covering which was upon all flesh, it is by the presentation of a new and living way into the most holy place. It was death to the carnal Israelite to look within the vail, but the way into the holiest of all is in the gospel found to be a new and living way. Not only is Christ the way a living Christ, but those who by and through him approach unto God, instead of death, are delivered from death, quickened and made alive, and come boldly to the throne of grace. They draw nigh unto God with a true heart, in full assurance of faith by this new and living way which God has consecrated for them through the vail, that is, his flesh. The rending of the flesh of the Son of God has opened the way of life and salvation for all who come unto God by him. Neither can any other than those for whom he was pierced be saved in this way, for it is consecrated, set apart and appropriated to them alone who shall be the heirs of salvation. But it is a blessed thought that this consecration of the way to God by Christ includes all who feel their need of just such a Savior, and truly desire to be saved in and through this consecrated way, while all who look for salvation or access to God by any other way will find that the end of their way are the ways of death. This is a new, as well as a living and consecrated way; not new to God, for known unto him are all his works from the beginning, but it is new, first in distinction from the ceremonial law, in which carnal men who were born in Abraham's house, or bought with his money, looked for remission of sins and acceptance with God by the deeds of the law, and through the flesh and blood of victims which were offered continually on Jewish altars, for the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, by the which we draw nigh unto God. The carnal sons of Jacob

who had never known the law, only in its letter, had no idea of any other way to God, or to draw nigh unto God, than through the blood of bulls, goats, heifers and the flesh of such offerings as they were presenting, therefore the way through the vail of his flesh, who was made flesh and dwelt among us, was new, opening the way to God and into the holiest of all, which the law could not present, and that was never made manifest while as yet the old tabernacle remained.

Secondly, in an experimental sense; those who come unto God in this way never had any conception of this way until it was revealed to them. Hence when by the light of the quickening Spirit of God they see the purity of the law, which as a dark and gloomy vail is upon them, they try to approach God by their prayers, tears, reformations and resolutions, and failing to advance they sink in hopeless despair, give up all for lost, and verily think that even God cannot save them without tarnishing his justice; and when this living way is revealed to them it is altogether new. A new light from the eternal throne of God reveals it, and a new life in their hearts perceives it, and a new faith, as the fruit of that new life, lays hold firmly upon it; they find themselves brought to God in this new, living, consecrated way. They are in Christ, and Christ is in God; they are one with Christ, as Christ is one with the Father.

But our sister may ask, How is this to be understood as being through his flesh? As we are identified with Christ by receiving of his fullness, and grace for grace, identified with him in that spiritual, eternal life which was with the Father and was given to us in the Son, so he has fully identified himself with us in taking on him, not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, and if ye be Christ's then are ye the seed of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." The relationship is reciprocal; he takes on him the seed of Abraham and imparts to them that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested. In giving to us this immortal life he bestows on us the righteousness of God, without which we cannot be saved; and in taking on him our flesh he takes on him our infirmities, carries our sorrows, bears our griefs, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. Our flesh is his flesh, and he is not ashamed to call us brethren, and within his flesh is life, and the life is the light of men, the life and immortality of the body, the church. Through this relationship the consecrated way is opened. The high way is here, and the way, and it is the way of holiness; no lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, for it is consecrated through his flesh, and the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein. By this way all the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with joy upon their head, and sorrowing and sighing shall flee away. This immortality, or life of God, which Christ is to the body, his church, shall triumph over and finally swallow up the mortality of the seed of Abraham, and death shall be abolished, and these mortal members shall put on immortality, and these corruptibles shall put on incorruption, and the saying which is written shall be brought to pass, that death is swallowed up of victory. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., October 15, 1864.

CHURCH LETTERS.

In August, 1908, Elder Charles Meads, of Weekville, N. C., and Elder Joshua T. Rowe, of Baltimore, Md., with deacons John T. Walker, of Washington, D. C., and C. C. Aydlett, of Elizabeth City, N. C., organized a Primitive or Old School Baptist Church in the city of Norfolk, Va. Elders Meads and Rowe served them until they secured a pastor, in May, 1909. Said church was received into the Kehukee Association in October, 1908, and soon began plans to build them a house in which to meet for the worship of their Lord and Savior. Their efforts were crowned with success, so that they have a neat, substantial brick house 30x 48 feet, which cost them two thousand dollars. By request of said church the following Elders, to wit: P. D. Gold, Charles Meads, George D. Roberson and Joshua T. Rowe met with their pastor, Elder J. A. Shaw, on Sunday, Jan. 29th, 1911, to hold the first meeting in the new house. There was a good congregation present. Elder Gold opened the services by singing and prayer, then he preached from Hebrews i. 1–3. Elder Rowe followed from Matthew xxviii. 18–20. Gave one hour for lunch, after which Elder Meads preached from 1 Corinthians xiii. 13; followed by Elder Roberson, from Isaiah xxxiii. 20. Elder Shaw closed with a few appropriate remarks.

At the close it was suggested by one of the Elders present that as the church is in debt to about half the amount of the cost of it, that they appoint some one to write an account of this meeting, also making a statement of the indebtedness of the church, and send a copy to each of the following papers: Signs of the Times, *Zion's Landmark* and *The Gospel Messenger*, signed by all the visiting Elders, asking its publication as a means of recommendation of said church to the kind consideration of the brethren and friends everywhere, asking all who feel able and willing to do so to help them. Contributions may be sent to (brethren) A. H. Temple, 220 Thirty-fifth St., Newport News, Va., or W. S. Bodwell, 214 Granville Ave., Norfolk, Va., and we guarantee that it will be applied to the purpose for which it was contributed.

The meeting was indeed a pleasant one; the preaching was, we feel, according to the word of God, and the little church and her friends seemed very much alive, and we do most sincerely hope that they will be generously remembered by all who love the truth of Jesus.

Signed,

P. D. GOLD.
CHARLES MEADS.
G. D. ROBERSON.
JOSHUA T. ROWE.

ORDINATIONS.

A presbytery composed of Elders Baxter Hale, W. R. Dyer, S. A. D. Sanders, W. A. Chastain, C. C. Melton, J. A. Modlin, James L. Dobbs, deacons Calvin Ore and Henry Sutton, having been called by Springfield Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists at her regular meeting, on Saturday night before the first Sunday in July, 1910, do certify that on Saturday night before the first Sunday in August, 1910, in the presence of said church, did examine Stuart Flanigan, member of said church, on his experience and call to the ministry, and after due deliberation set him apart to the full functions of the gospel ministry wherever God in his providence may cast his lot, by prayer and laying on of hands by the presbytery.

WILLIAM DYER, Moderator.
James L. Dobbs, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. N. C. Ratliff, Ky., $1.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Katie Purnell Baker departed this life Nov. 27th, 1910, at her home in Baltimore, Md., after a short but painful illness. She was taken sick the 26th and died the 27th. She was born near Snowhill, Worcester Co., Md., in 1871, but grew up in Snowhill, her mother having moved there when she was a girl. The writer was intimately acquainted with Katie from her childhood, and, as many Baptists can bear witness, she became the very life and light of her mother's home, having such an excellent tact for making every one feel at home and happy that visited her mother. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church of Snowhill by the writer twelve or fifteen years ago, and lived a devoted life to the cause of God and truth, ever ready as a burden-bearer with the church, financially and otherwise. She was lovely in every walk of life. After her mother's death she sold her home in Snowhill and went to Baltimore, Md., and there met Mr. Davis Baker and they were married April 9th, 1910. The last time she was at meeting she seemed bright and happy; she loved to talk about her home and business. The news of her death came to us all like a shock; we miss her much, and are sure that her dear companion feels lonely and heartbroken, realizing that the beautiful light has gone out of the home. We would point him to the God of infinite wisdom, who rules all things according to his will. The Lord gave the jewel, and has taken it to himself. The apostle said that for him to die was gain. May God help us all to apply this truth to Katie, and see that we grieve only for ourselves. Will the family accept our sincere sympathy?

Elder J. T. Rowe, pastor of the church in Baltimore, officiated at the funeral, much to the comfort of the bereaved I am sure, after which all that was mortal of her was laid to rest, undisturbed until the trump of God shall sound and the archangel's voice is heard, then the grave shall give up its dead, and that which was sown in corruption shall be raised in incorruption like unto Christ's glorious body. This is the fullness of the hope of all the people of God. It is enough. Amen. T. M. POULSON.

MASSEY, Va.

Eliza Grafton Watkins, daughter of Martin and Hannah Grafton, and sister of the late Elder William Grafton, was born Oct. 16th, 1821. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Harford Primitive Baptist Church in her seventeenth year, by Elder Eli Scott. She was married to John Watkins Oct. 2nd, 1865, who was for several years a deacon of the Harford Church, and died August 2nd, 1884. Sept. 13th, 1909, sister Watkins had a stroke of paralysis, and was from that time to the day of her death helpless, which occurred Jan. 7th, 1911. Sister Watkins was throughout her long life a very lovable woman, bright and active, a true Old Baptist, and very much in love with her church (Harford). It was the privilege of the writer to visit her once during her long illness, and although her mind was not so bright that day as some other days, she talked about her past comfort in the church, and how she would love to go there again. Her niece, sister St. Clair, says that in all her long illness she never murmured or complained of anything, but seemed to feel that every one did all they could for her, and all they did she felt was right, and she much appreciated it. What a beautiful life from youth to advanced old age, about seventy-three years a member of the church of Jesus Christ, and ever adorning her profession of the name of her Savior with a well ordered life. Sister St. Clair says: "We do miss dear aunt so much, but how sweet the perfect confidence that she enjoys that sweet rest prepared for the children of God. O that my life could be as sweet as hers."

The writer attended her funeral on Jan. 10th, speaking of the blessed hope of the resurrection of the dead. Sister Watkins was buried in Harford cemetery.

Written at the request of her niece, our dear sister, Mrs. David V. St. Clair.

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

Mrs. Walter Reed, of Hammondsport, N. Y., was born May 6th, 1828, and passed away Feb. 15th, 1911. She was married to Walter Reed about sixty-three years ago, and lived about forty-six years in the home in which he now remains. They had six children, five of whom are still living. It was my privilege to baptize them at Burdett, N. Y., July 30th, 1876. The relation of their experience on the Saturday before was heard by the church with deep interest and much spiritual emotion. I can never forget the deep feeling I experienced as sister Reed told of the way the Lord had brought her. On Monday they returned to their home, a distance of about thirty miles, in the rain, and she wrote me that it was a wonderfully pleasant ride, and the falling rain seemed to be making music for them and praising the Lord all the way. Brother Reed's name is somewhat familiar to the readers of the SIGNS, as he has occasionally sent letters and some verses, which have appeared in its pages. May the Lord continue to comfort him in his loneliness. We have had pleasant visits together, both at his home and mine. It is not likely we shall meet again on earth, but I hope we shall meet in glory. Sister Reed was dear to our family, and to the brethren and sisters of the old Chemung Association, and is well remembered by those who remain. She was highly esteemed by all who knew her, and will be greatly missed by her children and friends.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 27, 1911.

Hiram M. Nichols died Friday, Nov. 4th, 1910, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. George T. Wilkin, near Winterton, N. Y., of heart failure. He was born in the town of Wallkill August 15th, 1827, and was therefore 83 years of age. He was the son of Allen Nichols and Matilda Moore. He was married Nov. 17th, 1853, to Jane E. Eggleston, of Dutchess County, N. Y. Three children survive: Mrs. Henrietta G. Finch and Mrs. Wm. M. Wilkin, of Middletown, N. Y., and Mrs. George T. Wilkin, of Winterton, N. Y. There are also nine grandchildren and five great-grandchildren surviving. He spent nearly all his life on his farm near Fair Oaks, N. Y., and three years ago he went to live with his daughter, Mrs. George T. Wilkin. He was a member of the Old School Baptist Church of Middletown.

The funeral services were held Sunday, Nov. 6th, at 11 a. m., at the home of his daughter, conducted by his pastor, Elder H. C. Ker. Burial was in the family plot in New Vernon Cemetery.

[THE above was sent us by Mrs. Wilkin, a daughter, and we will add that brother Nichols was for many years a member of the Middletown and Wallkill Church. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace and the sovereign power of God.—K.]

Stephen P. Cary was born March 30th, 1831, departed this life Feb. 9th, 1911, aged 79 years, 10 months and 10 days. He was married at the age of twenty-four to Ann Eliza Turk, to which union were born four daughters, all living, as are also a number of grandchildren. His aged companion is left to mourn the loss of a faithful husband. Brother Cary united with the Old School Baptist Church about sixteen years ago, and lived a faithful member until called home. The neighborhood has lost a good citizen, but we humbly hope our loss is his gain. Brother Cary was a subscriber to the SIGNS for a number of years, and was ever ready to contend for the doctrine therein contained to the best of his ability, feeling himself to be a poor sinner, and if saved it must be by sovereign grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Peace be unto him until the trump of God shall sound and the dead in Christ shall rise with the glorified body like their Redeemer; therefore let us comfort one another with these words.

Elder Pittman preached the funeral sermon from the words, "All flesh is grass."

DAVID TITMUS.

CEMENT CITY, Mich., Feb. 20, 1911.

Alfred L. Leatherdale died Jan. 13th, 1911, aged 22 years, 9 months and 15 days. He was my baby boy, and I loved him dearly. He suffered for several months with pains across the abdomen. Four doctors called it appendicitis, but we could not think it was. Poor boy, he would often say, "There is something about this that the doctors do not understand." We called the fifth doctor from a distance, and he located the trouble. He said it was a growth of a cancerous nature, and that he could not get well. My heart throbbed, as I had now given him up. The fifth doctor said an operation was the only chance, and my dear boy was willing for the operation. The doctor said he might be able to help him for a time. There was a continual breathing of prayer, O Lord, if it is thy will, do spare him. The day of the operation I kissed my boy several times and said, "My child, I have done all I can do for you, now I am going to leave you with the Lord and the doctors." He said, "I am all right." I went to my son's house and stayed all alone for five hours. My dear boy came through the operation, but only lived sixteen hours, in great suffering. I said to him during his sickness, Well, you are wholly depending upon the Lord, we can do nothing.

(MRS.) THOMAS LEATHERDALE.

DRESDEN, Ontario.

Mrs. Sarah M. Crosby died Feb. 15th, 1911, at the residence of her son, J. A. Crosby, Ackley Ave., Lestershire, N. Y., after an illness of two weeks. She leaves a husband, Alvah F. Crosby, one son and one grandson, all of Lestershire, N. Y.

J. A. CROSBY.

LESTERSHIRE, N. Y., Feb. 24, 1911.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER William L. Rogers, having changed his address from Blum, Texas, to Cleburne, Texas, Route 4, Box 20, desires his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

MEETINGS.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

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I have also on hand a few copies of "Reminiscences and Letters of Mary Parker." Price 75 cents.

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SILAS H. DURAND.

Southampton, Pa.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 79. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1911. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOLOMON'S SONG IV. 16.

"AWAKE, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out."

I have had some thoughts upon this passage that I have not heard expressed by others, although the passage is a familiar text to those who have heard much gospel preaching, and we would suppose that most preachers would make the same general application of it, if the word "general" can be used in regard to a passage that refers to certain and definite things. What I have to say is particularly addressed to brother A. W. Rounds, who has been a very precious brother to me in times past, and I hope others may find something of interest in it.

A garden, the property of the king, securely walled to protect it from storms, winds, wild beasts and men, where the most tender plants may grow in safety, and this garden, his especial pride and delight, would of course contain very choice plants; no care or exertion would be spared in bringing together the rarest specimens. It is especially stated that there were many very choice, spicy or perfume-bearing plants there, as well as plants that bare the most delicious fruits. If we look at the last sentence of the Song of Solomon we see that these plants were found growing upon the mountains; they had to be searched out and taken one by one from among other wild plants and transplanted in the garden by the king's servants. Now if there were any cabbages in King Solomon's garden the Scriptures do not mention it, and we would hardly think a coarse vegetable, destined for the dinner-pot, would seem to be in its proper place among very precious spices, grown for delighting the king's finer senses and filling the air round about the garden with fragrance. If the gardener in charge did allow any such plants to be placed in the part under his care, we know that they did not give out any fragrance to delight King Solomon, the queen of Sheba or any other of the king's guests. Again, there are many plants that give out a disagreeable and some even poisonous odor. All such had to be carefully avoided, because one such plant would have worked ruin. These plants all had their natures when found in the wild, both good and bad; how they came by their nature each

reader may spend as much time in searching out as he or she wishes, I have not found out. In seeking valuable plants by the streams and in the woods I always found them having certain characteristics already in them, "as the apple tree among the trees of the wood." I only have to say of the theory of evolution, the Bible does not teach it, nor does our experience or work of grace teach it. The plants must be diligently sought out and brought into the inclosure, carefully watered and shaded until they become established. The perfume of these plants must have aided very much in finding them in their native wilds, mingled with other wild growth, often surrounded with briars and thorns, for choice plants are not as plentiful in the wild as those having little value, nor are they of as rank growth. But how different is their condition after they become established in the king's carefully cultivated garden, where the fragrance of all the varieties of choice plants are mingling together and rising up in the garden; but this is not enough, the king calls for the north wind and the south wind, probably the prevailing winds in that country, that the spices may flow out. The plants are stirred by the breeze, their cups of nectar moved and the perfume fills all the country round about; it would be likely to reach even to some of these wild places, where some of these plants came from in far greater volume than came from the individual and isolated specimens. These winds, north and south, in another country and a different climate, do not necessarily represent the same that we understand by them at State Road, Del., or Middletown, N. Y., but it did require winds to blow from different directions, that in the vicinity about the garden the air should be charged with the delicious fragrance of the plants in the walled garden. The King is the great Head of the church. The church, the bride, his special delight, is represented in this figure as a garden, wherein are gathered many choice plants. There are many more just as choice in the world, who never yet heard the doctrine of God's love and mercy, but only of his vengeance to be meted out to the ungodly. Others have been transplanted to the garden of grace, but need water and shade until they bud and bloom, for no plant, either in nature or grace, will attain its highest perfection if suffered to wilt and remain half dead, yet when all are thriving, and no bitter roots among them, there is still something required to bring out the fullness of spiritual life, otherwise this text would not have been written. If we talk of fragrant flowers and spicy plants we must talk of sweet perfumes, for that is the object in view, the end to be obtained, and this perfume will not permeate the air around, nor even be noticeable in the church, without something stirs up the spiritual life. The King calls for the wind; even the winds obey his voice. The gospel breezes, from whence do they come? They have no visible source. There is no science that can tell why a passage of Scripture, or thoughts of spiritual things, should come to a person's mind when employed at something that is entirely foreign to such things. It was said of the late Elder Joseph Staton before he became a minister, that he did not live long in any place before he had preaching there; he searched out the precious plants. Forty-nine years ago I was spending the winter with my grandfather, John T. Risler, and attended prayer meetings held at the houses of the members on Sunday afternoons, and last summer I visited the neighborhood and found a little of the

perfume of those meetings there yet. I live about seventy miles away, and for aught I know that perfume may be lingering at still greater distances in some other directions. How different is all this from the gatherings of men about some of our village stores; those gatherings sometimes leave a poisonous stench that takes years to get from our nostrils. A very dear brother, who is a laborer in the garden, told me that at one time in his home church the prayer or conference meetings became so interesting as to attract more attention than the regular meetings. In that case either the south wind was stirring up a very rich perfume, or the north wind very little. In the text there is no preference given to either of the winds, so that the object is accomplished: "that the spices thereof may flow out." If the winds blow so as to bring out all the fragrance that such choice plants are capable of producing, certainly the influence will be felt far outside of the visible church, and who will dare even suggest that there will be less fragrance (or spiritual enjoyment) in the church for what has gone out? Will there not rather be much more, and sweeter? Furthermore, the newly transplanted plants need especial care. What is shade and water to plants of nature is encouragement and instruction in doctrine to the plants of grace, and this does not mean that they should be snubbed and given to understand that their place is near the door and on their knees. The sweetest flowers are often borne on the most tender plants, and a dash of ice-water will destroy their fragrance forever. If the preacher did not have like experience with his people, or was not among them enough to know anything of their trials and burdens, he would not be likely to reach far down into the spicy beds; it requires a penetrating wind to bring out all the sweetness. The capable gardener knows all the plants by name, and the needs of each one, even the least. "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints." The strong need sustenance to keep them up, the weak need encouragement. There are some conditions that should be taken account of with these thoughts. Most of our houses for public worship here in the east were built by people who have passed away; our membership is now much scattered; our ministers often serve three or four churches, so that our meetings are frequently a month apart, and it is a long time between the breezes. In the stifling heat of a tropical climate the king called for the wind. Our members are lamenting like conditions. "Awake, O north wind." I sometimes think we would do well to get nearer to primitive conditions, that meetings be held every Sunday, keeping the one object in mind: "that the spices thereof may flow out." It would not be necessary that a preacher always be present, so that some one capable of bringing out the spices take the lead and keep good order, the object not being the eloquence of the speaker, or to raise money, or whether he represents the north wind or the south, but that the spices may flow out. Sometimes some person who is not a member gets interested in a sermon, gets a full breath from the garden, and thinks he has taken something that did not belong to him, so he slips around on the other side, only to find that the wind has changed, the south wind is blowing, and all the air about him is charged with the presence of the Savior's love. Some fault was found with my father in his early ministry because he corresponded with so many people who were not members but who

came to meeting and seemed to be interested, yet in the mouth of many witnesses his work stood the test of time. We can meet in little companies of two or three families, sing our favorite hymns and have little talks, without any formality, and we can read the beautiful stories of Ruth, Esther, Moses, David, Samuel and Solomon to our children, and explain them to them in a natural way, and all the while we will be unconsciously becoming more familiar with the Scriptures, and enjoying their beauties ourselves, and the spices will flow out. Too many of us know the Bible only as the big book on the parlor table; too many of us know the preacher only as the great and good man that cannot be approached. We would like to enjoy more of the fragrance of God's blessings. Awake, O north wind, that these blessings may be with us, around us and belong to us, and flow out to all who delight to mingle in the company of the people of God.

A. E. RITTENHOUSE.

STATE ROAD, Delaware.

2 CORINTHIANS IV. 18.

"WHILE we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen."

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—If you will bear with me, I desire to offer a few thoughts upon the above Scripture for your consideration; at the same time, however, I acknowledge my own weakness and insufficiency to write upon this or any other portion of Bible truth. This is the language of the apostle Paul. He shows in the context the ministration of the gospel, and speaks of his diligence and faithfulness in the gospel, of the hardships and persecutions he endured in defense of the truth, and of the comforts and benefits of the Holy Spirit to the church in all her tribulations and adversities, which she must endure in her militant state. Quite recently this subject was brought to my attention in a very peculiar manner. I have heard from the pulpit that after the final resurrection of the dead we would know and recognize each other's features in heaven, even recognizing father, mother and children, while still we would not love these relatives any better than other children of God. Such a conclusion, to my mind, is as farfetched and untenable as the theory of James Arminius, or any other theory based upon human supposition and conception. Such an idea is preposterous, and cannot be sustained by Bible testimony. Arminians, in order to get up excitement in their revivals, invariably resort to this sentiment of future recognition of father, mother and other relatives, presenting them as looking over the battlements of heaven, and seeing their kinsfolk coming to the glory world; hence the conversion of sinners by these means, appealing to the passions of depraved humanity. Doubtless many of the Corinthian brethren had imbibed the error that they would know each other in the spirit world as they knew each other on earth, being drawn to this theory by natural attraction, which is so congenial to the carnal mind and to earthly attainments. The resurrection of the dead has always been a great mystery, and will ever be fraught with mystery until the end of the world, when death shall be swallowed up in victory, and hope shall end in fruition, through the Lord Jesus Christ. But the subject is of vital importance to the poor, afflicted children of Zion, because it is the foundation-stone of the temple; it opens the joys of heaven, our refuge, and is the rock of our salvation in Christ. The theme is a vast ocean, and never exhausted or diminished. It is a very

fundament principle of Bible truth, and has been published exhaustively in the SIGNS. I heartily concur in the view of Elders Durand and Ker touching the resurrection of the dead, and say amen to it. The apostle said, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed."—1 Cor. xv. 51. I believe and maintain the doctrine of the resurrection of the bodies of the saints, from a Bible standpoint. The apostle said again, "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you." All that we can know of this sublime subject as pertaining to the kingdom of heaven and the glory of immortality beyond is what is revealed to us by the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, and sealed to us with the Holy Spirit of promise. I think that this is fully designated by the apostle in the language of the text at the head of this article: "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

When Christ came in the flesh he suffered in obedience to the Father's will as the sacrifice for sin, and is the Mediator and Intercessor of all his elect or chosen people, for whom he atoned and whom he represented on the cross in fulfilling all the demands of the law against them. The humanity of Christ endured the fury of the law, while the divinity gave the sacrifice worth, and merited our discharge. The old temple service of divers washings and carnal ordinances was fully met in the antitype. Christ magnified the law and made it honorable, and then with all its rituals it was fulfilled and vanished. In view of the finally triumphant glorification of the justified saints in heaven the inspired John said, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." No other writer of the New Testament conflicts with John. If all Primitive Baptists could see these declarations in the same light of spiritual significance there would not be so many differences of understanding among brethren, but all would be drawn together in love and in the unity of the doctrine of sovereign grace. The Sadducees, who denied that there was any resurrection, thought to ensnare and confuse the Savior with the law of Moses concerning the marriage of seven brothers to one woman, one after the other, all dying and leaving no children. Last of all, they said the woman died also. Wherefore in the resurrection whose wife of them shall she be? For, said they, all seven had her to wife. Jesus answering said unto them, "The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." Here the heathen idea of the Sadducees of a fleshly indulgence and of earthly identification is put to silence, and wisely refuted forever. To know Christ is eternal life, which is all we need to know. Here in the church militant "we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also

I am known." Some resort to this Scripture in 1 Corinthians xiii. 12, to sustain the fallacious idea of recognition in heaven, but I do not understand Paul here to mean that the children of God in the resurrection will know each other's faces, as they have known each other literally on earth, but the apostle's argument conveys the idea, to my mind, that as newborn babes in Christ, by virtue of the change from nature to grace, they know each other as believers in Christ, therefore with the same spiritual knowledge they recognize each other in the higher order of divine life as being perfect and complete in the great Head of the church. What we see in this world is temporal and must pass away, but the things which are not seen are eternal. I hold that those who advocate the theory of knowing each other's relatives in heaven, separate and distinct from the rest of the saints, according to the marks of the flesh, are surely in palpable error, yet he or she who may thus see is welcome to it, but I cannot receive such a notion, because it is without scriptural foundation. The church of the beloved, the chosen heirs of the whole elect family, will be as one in Christ, the great Fountain of peace, of glory and of everlasting felicity. The whole church, in her militant state, lives by faith; all see through the shadowy vail, or a glass darkly, as Paul affirms. He says, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Now I have here given a brief sketch of my views upon the subject. I have tried to condense in as small a compass as possible, notwithstanding the vastness and inconceivable depth of this profound principle of Bible truth. Any communication from the higher order of eternal things to this lower world must be by revelation. I feel that I have written in the spirit of brotherly love, and with a desire toward the good of the cause, the welfare of Zion, the peace and perpetuity of the Old School Baptist cause, even to the end of the world, praying for the special blessing of God toward his people in their preservation and protection from the towering clouds of iniquity and false doctrine flooding the world to-day. I desire also, that, if it please God, he will prosper the SIGNS, and give strength, courage and wisdom to the managers and faithful editors. I wish you all a pleasant season, and that the precious fruit of the Holy Spirit may appear in all your labors, crowning them with success throughout the new year. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Yours in hope of a glorious reality beyond the grave,

ASA HOWARD.

KELLER, Texas, Jan. 25, 1911.

Bow, Wash., Jan. 6, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I feel like writing to the dear children of the heavenly King; yes, all of them, for they are all, under whatever circumstances they may be placed, dear to me. If some of them do not understand all things just as I do, I do not set myself up as a judge of the measure of light which has been given to them. I am not superior to them in spiritual knowledge and righteousness, and have no knowledge that was not given me of the Lord, if so be that I have the right kind of knowledge. Then, dear brethren and sisters in Christ, we are born of the same Spirit, and that Spirit is Love. If we set up a certain standard of knowledge in

the Scriptures in order to be eligible to membership in the house of God as one of his children, are we not lording it over God's heritage, and causing much grief and sorrow to those whom we are commanded to comfort? "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is a accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." This would seem like trying to pick sour grapes from a sweet apple tree, instead of enjoying the sweet, luscious fruit that it bears. The only bar to fellowship, as I understand it, is the absence of the fruits of the Spirit, which an unbeliever cannot possess, because they are the fruits of the Spirit.

It is said in the word of God, "Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water," which is the Spirit of Christ, who cleanseth us from all sin, and let us consider one another to provoke to love and good works. Is this not done by following the precepts and examples given us by our blessed Savior? If we follow him we must be meek and lowly, esteeming others better than ourselves, and praising God that we are even permitted to bow at the feet of the saints and be claimed by them as kindred; we have nothing to boast over our brethren before God. In the church we must be judged of the deeds done in the body, and there is no respect of persons; those born of the Spirit will manifest the fruits of the Spirit, and they who are not thus born cannot manifest those fruits. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." He has been merciful to us indeed in forgiving our sins when we were disobedient, and if the rest are like me they are still very disobedient. I try to obey God, but there is a disposition in me that always gets in my way. Since he has been so merciful to us, ought we not to love every one of the heirs of his kingdom with a pure and holy love? and if one differs from us with regard to the meaning of any portion of the word of God, while we know that there is but one right meaning, let us remember that we are fallible, and liable to be mistaken in our interpretation of it; then we should not say to that one, If you do not believe as I do I cannot fellowship you. Would this be letting brotherly love continue? Would this be esteeming others better than ourselves? Would this be showing forth the fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, &c.?

Now by what I have written I do not want to be understood as saying that we ought to fellowship every kind of doctrine, but when we have reason to believe that one has tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, and has shown by his walk the marks of grace, we ought to be long-suffering, kind and gentle to that one. It is said, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." Again, it is said, Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Again, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Is this not preaching Christ crucified, as the only way of salvation? Let us comfort the children of God with the great and precious promises which he left on record for all who love him, and let us not contend about words to no profit.

What would it profit me, or those who heard me, even were I right, if I contended in such a domineering manner as to destroy that precious feeling of fellowship, that holy love which none but our God and his dear children ever can know or feel, and which is too precious to be marred just for the gratifying of the vanity of our fleshly mind? But it may be said we are commanded to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Jude does not command, but he exhorts us thus in the third verse of his epistle. Note the endearing word with which he begins the exhortation, "Beloved." We ought also to be just as kind and loving in our addresses to those who are born of the same Spirit, then how much joy would be felt, and how much sorrow and grief would be avoided. I was going to give Jude's exhortation, but my anxiety for the peace of Zion has overcome me, and has made me forget everything else; now I will give the exhortation to show that it was not a command, but an exhortation, and I will later call attention to the fact that we are not to contend, but to avoid contention, or strife. Jude says, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation [which as I understand it is that salvation which is of the Lord and is common, or alike, to all who receive it], it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Why? Because, as he shows in the next verse, there were "certain men crept in unawares." This is just as it is now, and as it always will be. But Jude says of them that they were "of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." The rest of this epistle goes on to describe and define this class of men better than any words of mine can do. In the eighteenth and nineteenth verses he says that "there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, not having the Spirit." I do not mean to give the idea that all those who have separated themselves from our churches are included in this description, because I believe that many precious brethren and sisters have been deceived by believing that the doctrine of predestination of all things makes God the author of sin. But if this be so, then he was the author of the greatest of all sins when he sent his beloved Son into the world to be crucified and to die as the ransom for us, even while we were enemies, for our God predestinated his betrayal and death, and there could not well be a blacker crime committed, looking at it from a human standpoint. He, as a man, had done no wrong, but always did good; he had spent his life ministering to others, and in him there was no guile. When men could find no fault in him, in order to justify themselves in the sight of men, they brought false witnesses, trying thus to prove him worthy of death, and then when they could prove nothing against him they took him, and through envy brutally murdered him, the Lord of life and glory. All this was done in just the way or manner in which it was predestinated of God. But, after all this, is it not true that instead of being the author of sin he is the author of unbounded mercy and grace? There was nothing in man to recommend him to God, and therefore he sent his only begotten Son to die, the Just for the unjust, and he "hath made us kings and

priests unto God and his Father," to whom be glory and dominion forever and ever. "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

Your brother in the precious hope of Christ,

DAVIS BURCH.

[BROTHER Burch has presented in the above letter many precious and profitable thoughts, which we all should do well to regard carefully. One thing is especially in our mind to mention, viz., that we ought not to present even truth in a lordly or domineering manner or spirit. Truth is truth in whatsoever way it is preached, or with whatsoever spirit we may at the time be animated. This applies to every principle of the doctrine. It applies to predestination no more than to any other principle. It has been our desire, and we doubt not it is also the desire of all who are truly called of God to preach his word, to do so with meekness and with such words as are commended in the word of God. On the other hand, that which is false must not be allowed for a moment. Untruth presented in the pulpit by able men, among those who for many reasons love the preacher, will have great weight, and as a general thing find rapid reception. How carefully then ought the ministry to weigh well what they teach. There should be indeed kindness and love in the heart in preaching the word. First, love to God, to the Savior, to the truth, and then to all who are called by grace to whom we preach. But the love of the brethren when it reigns will lead those who minister to them to be careful to minister no untruth. There must be no wild gourds of false doctrine, for if once admitted there will be death in all. That minister is truly blessed of God who finds in his heart, first, a desire to hold forth the doctrine of the Scriptures, and then finds that he does so through love and in love. It is but a poor kind of love that will give a child a serpent instead of a fish, even though he looks upon the serpent and desires it. Rather let the servant strive to show that this is a serpent instead of a fish. Let him do this faithfully, and here will he manifest in the best way the love that is in his heart to God, his truth and his people. It is a great gift from God to be able to preach the doctrine that is in the experience, and then preach the experience of the doctrine. That minister is blessed of God who can in meekness instruct them that are captivated by error. Error will always do harm. Truth will make free. The wisdom which is from above is first pure. Let us desire the pure doctrine first, and then let us desire to present it in love.—C.]

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 15, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed is a letter received from sister Lawshe, of Trenton, N. J., not long since, and it seemed so good that I have obtained her consent to send it for insertion in the SIGNS. I am sure it will be read with much interest by others as it has been by me. I will copy a few lines of her reply to my request.

"My dear sister, it was an agreeable surprise receiving a letter so soon in an-

swer to mine, sent a few days ago. I was surprised that you want it published, and that your brother thought it worth printing. You know that charity covers a multitude of sins, and errors, too, sometimes, but if you all think it might give comfort or pleasure to the least of the flock, perhaps it would not be right to withhold it. I was alone, and felt it was just the time I wanted to write to you. I would have written more, but my letter was already lengthy and the hour was late. One thing yet I want to tell you is, that I left the school soon after I was baptized, and commenced teaching. I boarded with an uncle and aunt, who were members with us. I took the SIGNS at that time (and have taken it ever since), and enjoyed very much reading it to my uncle and aunt, who seemed to understand better and enjoy it more than if they read it themselves. How I did enjoy the whole season with them. I read and sang hymns much of the time when home from school. I had quite a good voice then, Elder Conklin said. He was such a singer, I learned many tunes from him and his family. So the time passed happily away, while the dear old people seemed to love me as their own daughter. They had four children grown up, but not one believed with them and did not attend their meeting. I went with my uncle and aunt to Harbourton, and the members were all so nice and pleasant I loved them, though acquainted with but few. Now all are gone; a generation soon passes away."

I feel that nothing is more interesting than to hear or read how the Lord brings his people out of darkness into his marvelous light, causing them to sing praises to his most holy name.

With love to the dear household of faith, I am, I trust, though unworthy, your sister in sweet fellowship,

BESSIE DURAND.

TRENTON, N. J., Feb. 1, 1911.

DEAR SISTER BESSIE:—As you have often spoken about the little experience I told you of one time, perhaps you would enjoy looking over some more of the particulars of my early thoughts and feelings. You know, I think, that my parents were both Old School Baptists; my father was a deacon. I cannot remember him, as he died before I was two years old. Mother was firm in the doctrine, always attended meeting, taking her children with her as long as she lived, but she died when I was but little over ten years old. My oldest brother (Elder E. Rittenhouse) and my two sisters were grown up; they still lived on the farm and went to the same meeting. Brother was a great reader, and liked to read aloud to the family, and would read the SIGNS to my sister, who was a member. I did not understand much, except the experiences, which I thought about considerably sometimes, especially sister Mary Carey's. She told of her great trouble on account of sin, and that her pillow would be wet with her tears. I felt that I wanted to be a christian, but could not repent, as I could not think of any sins to grieve over. I was taught to be truthful and obedient, was always ready and willing to run errands for every one, was careful and conscientious, with a happy disposition, so I had no trouble, which I tried in vain to find; but I felt uneasy, and thought I ought to pray. No one had taught me, but I felt sure it would be right. I slept alone, so no one

would know it, and I made an effort on my knees every night and morning for a long time, and depended upon it very much to help me through my school work, and was becoming very good in my own estimation. I wondered if my brother and other members of the family did as well as I. My sister had married and moved five or six miles from our home church, near the German Baptist church-house. Her husband attended there, so my sister and I went sometimes. I did not notice what they preached (though I was sure the Old School Baptists were right), but sister did not like them at all. I was about thirteen at that time, and we still lived together. My brother taught school and boarded in my sister's family. My two brothers who lived from home joined the New School Baptists, which worried my sister very much; she would argue with them and with her husband, quoting one passage after another of Scripture to them, yet I was so dumb I could not see the difference, except in the outward form, but I felt that our home church was right. My brother, the Elder, joined about that time, also my other sister who was married, and in her own home, but it made little impression upon me. My prayers were of no account any more, and I had no trouble like others. I felt cast down and gloomy when alone, but it was only because I had no trouble. I was lively enough in company, then more cast down when alone. When I was about sixteen they sent me away to boarding-school. My broodings followed me in a measure, although I was kept busy, also had many lively girls for associates, yet I often longed to be with the home people and go to the home church. I felt that I loved them and wanted to be with them. I wanted to be a good christian, not one in name only. Then I read, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." O, did I hunger and thirst? was that for me? No, no, I had never had trouble. Others had great trouble they could not throw off, but I could be cheerful, even lively, with my schoolmates any time; still there was a longing for something better than this world could give. Then I thought again, Do I hunger and thirst? No. I felt condemned to think of it, that promise was not for me; I was too eager to claim promises; I was like the thief and robber, trying to climb up some other way, while a vile sinner, filthy, polluted and condemned. O that I could hide myself from the frown of the great Almighty; I even envied the beasts and insects that could not fear his frown. I dared not try to pray, but the groanings of my heart were for mercy. I was still at the school and had a room to myself, when one night the gloom and darkness of mind weighed me down so it seemed more than I could bear. I could do nothing; then I thought, Why do I worry? God is just; he cannot do wrong. What he does is right. I cannot change anything, and would not if I could; so peace seemed to rest upon me and I went to sleep. I hope I then entered into the great sabbath rest. I had no more toil nor worry. The morning came, my burden was gone, and O the rest, joy, peace and love that were in its place. It seemed the Savior came with the light of the morning. I knew him, I knew him; he made darkness light. I looked back at the darkness I had come through, and could see it was the way I had been led;

then the Scripture came to mind, He brought me by a way I knew not, a path I had not known. Then I could sing:

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."

The teacher always read a chapter in the Testament mornings, and made a prayer; we looked on our books while she read. Now the promises were all for me; I could not keep the happy tears back; so many good tidings for me, and all so unexpected. That joyful morning may I never forget. After that when the teacher made prayers I kept my book open to read; the word was so precious, it seemed as though I had never read or heard it before. If I could get an excuse I would stay home Sundays to read my Bible, but it was the rule for all to go to meeting. They went to the New School Baptist, so we went with them, but some way I did not care for the preaching there, and did not know why either, as I had not yet noticed much difference in preaching from my home church, the Old School Baptist, but I soon did notice a decided difference; instead of giving God all the glory, they were taking the crown from the Savior to put on their own heads, it seemed to me. Sometimes the tears would trickle down my cheeks while I listened. I wrote to my sister of the happy times I had been passing through. She wanted me to come home for a visit, which I did, after telling her of the wonderful change that I felt had come over me. She asked if I would not like to go and tell the church what I had told her, but I had not thought about it, and was sure I could not say anything much, or if I did I might deceive them. She said they would judge about that, just tell them what I told her. Well, I felt drawn toward them, and decided I would go and let them judge for me, as I was anxious to know if it were a christian experience. So we went one Saturday, and many were there. I was young (not eighteen) and bashful, and could say but very little. Elder Conklin, who was the pastor, asked me several questions. I was so glad he did, it was easy to answer. Then I withdrew, and to my surprise they received me. I was baptized the fifth Sunday in February, 1852. There were many members at Kingwood then; many were aged, and all were much older than I, and all have long since gone to rest that were there those days to welcome me into the fold. I felt very dull the day I was baptized, but during the spring and summer following all was joy and peace.

"Gathered into the fold,
With believers enrolled,
With believers to live and to die."

I seemed to feel at all times that I could sing the Savior's love with all my heart. I was married not long after this, and a little family soon gathered about me, and I became more worldly minded, and often since then have had to look to the rock whence I was hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence I was digged. I have not had the doubts and darkness that many speak of, though so worldly minded, unworthy the least of His blessings, yet I cannot throw the assurance away that was given me so long ago. I feel that my Savior is near, though the clouds be heavy between. All through my life I have felt his presence near me in every sorrow and sore affliction, which have been many. How could I have borne up had he not been my Staff, my gracious Redeemer, to lean upon? May he continue with me yet a little longer until I go hence to be here no more.

Yours most unworthily,

M. R. LAWSHE.

HEBREWS XIII. 16.

"BUT to do good, and to communicate, forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

This is one of the exhortations of the apostle, and I feel that there is much sweetness in it, and often have felt that I would be glad were I able to heed the same, but how can one who often fears that he knows nothing as he ought, do these things? They are too sacred for a poor, vile one to presume anything of himself, and is made to tremble at the attempt; yet notwithstanding all this feeling of littleness, vileness and nothingness I find a yearning in my heart to let others know something of my exercises. for I often feel to be alone in mind and feelings, and often think it best to keep myself to myself, but there are times when I cannot do this, but am made to inquire, and seek a kindred spirit. With all my ignorance there are some things I do know, and there are times when I am fixed and established in the knowledge I have, all the powers of men and devils cannot move me from this knowledge of myself, that is, I am a sinner, and I know it, and I know it differently from what I once knew it, for there was a time when all the knowledge I had of this was head knowledge, and while in that state of mind I was not so seriously concerned about the matter; I did not feel that I was such a great sinner but what I could mend my ways and all would be well, and while in that condition a time came unexpectedly to me and I was struck in the heart, and the wound I received killed me. I had been alive without the law, but when the commandment came sin revived and I died; I died to all hope of mending my ways and all things being well; I found that the law kills, but never makes alive. None but those who have passed through the same know anything about my misery. Then the truth was revealed; yes, I say revealed, for man does not teach after this sort. In the first place he does not want to, and in the second he could not if he wanted to. Men teach such things as are pleasing to men, such things as are held in high esteem among men, but such things are abominable in the sight of God; God alone is true, and there is no man in nature loves truth, for he has no knowledge of it. But God is pleased to reveal his Son (the very embodiment of truth) in his chosen ones, and when he makes himself manifest in their flesh they are made to abhor themselves and repent in dust and ashes. It is he that is exalted a Prince and a Savior to grant repentance unto Israel, and that is a repentance not to be repented of, for they are continually made to turn away from their own ways, they are made to turn away from their own works of righteousness, for they find such things vain to trust in. While it is true they have been made to love the law, for the law is good, just and holy, and all these things they are made to love, and to hate evil, yet they have been made to see themselves carnal, sold under sin, and, being carnal, they are made to see that they cannot keep the law, nor hope nor comfort from it draw, but they hate sin and love righteousness. Herein is true repentance, and it is a gift, although men tell us the sinner can repent if he only will, not seeming to know that it is impossible for a man to turn from that which he is in love with (sin) and cleave to that which is good, which his entire nature is averse to, and, being ignorant of these things, while they have a form of godliness, they deny the power of God to give repentance and forgive sins, and they never will know anything about

God's power to do these things as long as they feel to have the power in themselves to remit or put away their own sins. But there is a time appointed of God the Father that all he gave his Son in the covenant of redemption shall be made to see that they cannot put away their guilt or hide their own shame. Then they are made to cry for forgiveness and for mercy, although they cannot yet see how God in his infinite justice could extend mercy to such vile sinners; but mercy could not be extended to any except undeserving sinners; for just such Jesus came and died; the work is already done, and in due time it is made manifest to each one for whom he paid the debt that they could not pay. He redeemed them from under the curse of the law, he being made a curse for them. He who knew no sin was made to be sin for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. He only had the right of redemption; he is their Shepherd and rightful owner; they had all gone astray and had committed trespass, he paid for the wrong they had done, and it was his lawful right to bring them back. He, the Husband, must pay the debt of the bride, the Lamb's wife; then she is free, the law now has no claim upon her, for he satisfied the law and made it honorable. By the one offering he hath forever perfected them that are sanctified (set apart) by God the Father, and they are made to rejoice in Christ Jesus, having lost all confidence in the flesh. God himself is their Savior; this they are made to know in due time. He is their Savior now, henceforth and forever; this they are witnesses to, for in this time state it is he who must deliver them out of their straits and difficulties. Some are often brought to their wits' end, not knowing how or what to do, for after doing all they may they see themselves no nearer their desired haven than at the first. Such is the case with this poor one at present, for I have been in a strait for more than four years, getting farther and farther each day from what I desire, and nearer and nearer to that which I so much dread; all the hope I have is in that God who rules the destinies of all men. If it is his purpose to deliver he will deliver, for I know that he does all his pleasure, or purpose, in heaven and on earth. Of this thing I say I am confident, but as to what his purpose is in the present case I know not, but there are times that I am made to hope in his goodness and mercy, yet there are times when that hope gets to a very low ebb, but if the hope claimed is God-given it will never fail until swallowed up in fruition. Previous to this, in every strait that I have been brought into, when there was no way of escape for me, that is, in myself, I was made to hope in God's goodness, and his goodness and mercy never failed. God "is not slack concerning his promises, as some men count slackness." Often when brought exceedingly low, without any visible prospect of escape, my curious nature would inquire and imagine and speculate how the deliverance could and would come; but I have only found confusion instead of rest in my speculations and imaginings, all the rest I had was when I was enabled to look away from the things which are seen and cease from trying to find out how such things were to be; but after being lifted up in God's own way I was satisfied, I felt that I knew it was God that cast down and God that lifted up; he kills and he makes alive, the one follows the other. There is always death before resurrection, and the same power that brings about the

one brings about the other, and our natural mind is prone to speculate as to how these things are to be, but it is a mystery that mortal man can never solve; when we attempt such a thing confusion is the result. We believe in the resurrection, our faith lays hold of it, we rejoice in the hope of it and are persuaded that we shall be satisfied. Is not this enough?

MARTIN D. FISHER.

JAMAICA, N. Y., March 11, 1911.

A TALK ON PREDESTINATION.

DEAR BRETHREN CHICK AND KER, AND ALL THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—After seeing and reading Elder Durand's talk on predestination it created within me a desire to write a few thoughts upon the same subject. In the first place, I wish to say to brother Durand that I indorse his ideas, and would love to give him my hand on his thoughts, and not only him, but all who teach it. I wish to say to all who may see or read this that thirty-five years ago (before I ever heard of the expression, "predestination of all things,") by a careful reading of the Scriptures I saw, or thought I saw, a principle that was taught therein that involved the necessity of all things. I did not know what to call it, but after I began to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES I saw predestination was the same principle I had found in the Scriptures, consequently I have always cherished the SIGNS, and wish that every Baptist in the United States would take it and let us all move along in peace. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

Now as to what predestination is, Webster defines it as "the purpose of God from eternity respecting all events." He says it is the foreordination of all events, or a doctrine that all events are foreordained of God. Dear brethren, just let me ask a few questions; if it is a fact that I am wrong in my views I would like to get right before I go hence. If predestination is the purpose of God from eternity respecting all events or things which come to pass, how could that purpose make some things certain and some things uncertain? Again, how could a thing be foreknown of God without something to make it certain? If you answer me that God's foreknowledge makes it certain, then I ask, What have you gained? you have taken it from one of God's attributes (the will) and charged it to another (his foreknowledge), consequently, it seems to me, you have gained nothing. I want to call your minds to one declaration of Scripture which seems to unfold the idea of predestination of all things to my mind beyond a doubt; it is Isaiah xiv. 24: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn [decreed], saying, Surely as I have thought, so [in the same manner] shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed [willed, designed or intended], so shall it stand [continue to be]." You might ask me, What did the Lord think of? I say, I do not know all he has thought, but if he is all-wise, and ever has been, I would suppose he thought of all things whatsoever come to pass, both good and evil. Yet God never authorized Adam to transgress his command given to him, neither did he influence him to transgress the law, but I do believe that God thought of the serpent beguiling Eve, and through her influence Adam ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and so I understand (if I am alone in it) that Adam transgressed the law, or command, of God knowingly, God telling him not to do it, and what the result would be when he did it. I

understand that the effect of Adam's transgression is a carnal nature, with all belonging thereto, and is the immediate cause of all other transgression, and inasmuch as it is said, God works all things after the counsel of his own will, I believe God governs all worlds, beings and events in such a mysterious way or manner that nothing ever has or will take place in this time world but what was embraced in the purpose, will, design and eternal counsel of God, and is declared to his children in the Scriptures, and God has decreed they shall work together for good. Dear brethren, I wish to say to all who may see or read this (if published) that I cannot see how God can work all things after the counsel of his own will, and yet many things take place contrary to his will and counsel. Again, if it is a fact that many things take place in this time world contrary to the will and purpose of God, how can God assure us that all things work together for good to them that love him? I wish to suggest one more idea in conclusion. I do not believe that God ever did or ever will suffer or allow anything (from the least to the greatest) to take place in this world but what was purposed, willed, designed or intended of him in eternity. God purposed the entrance of sin into the world through the disobedience of man without influencing him. To say that God allowed or suffered sin, with its destructive nature, to enter this world and to remain here so long as time lasts, and that all this takes place contrary to the will, design, intent or purpose of God, would seem a little bit strange to me. Would it not involve the idea that there was a power somewhere that compels God contrary to his own liking?

I am getting this letter too long, but I want to give the brethren one more thing that I have been made to believe by a careful reading of the Scriptures for the last forty-two years, that God did from all eternity (while as yet there was nothing existing save himself) choose a definite number of Adam's family to an eternal inheritance beyond this world, reserved in heaven for them, and God did decree the way they should travel from nonentity to that home beyond this world, and not only did he decree the way, but he decreed all things that are in the way necessary to their eternal happiness and his glory, such as the fall of Adam, with all its effects, the crucifixion of Christ and all the persecution that Jesus and his people undergo in this world, and God, who has all power in heaven and earth, governs all worlds, beings and events in such a mysterious way or manner that nothing has ever occurred in this world, nor will occur, except that purposed of God before time began.

I will close. Your brother, I hope,

P. N. MOYERS.

GOIN, Tenn., Jan. 10, 1911.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Jan. 31, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER:—Through the mercy of our all-wise God I am spared to see the close of another year. This new year finds me still in these low grounds of sorrow, with doubts and fears. I know that there is nothing good in the body of clay, and at God's appointed time we must return to our mother earth, from which we were taken. In my distressed condition, with so many doubts and fears on account of the plague, sin, which is in my flesh, I am often forced to cry out, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" I know that all affliction, of whatever kind, proceeds from God. Through the prophet he

has said, "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things." These are the appointments of an all-wise God for the good of his creatures, which should be our first reflection and support. It is he who gave us our being, who gave his Son for our redemption, who is boundless in love and who calms all our distresses. Our heavenly Father loves us with an everlasting love; may we bow our heads in submission to him, and acknowledge that he is supreme in the salvation of our souls. He, the Father of our spirits, is wise in his love, and whom he "loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." These afflictions are signs of our adoption. It is through much tribulation that we enter the kingdom of heaven; we must be made like our blessed Redeemer, and he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was the Son of God, and all the elect must travel the same road with him. This is my lot at this time, and the way is rough, but hope that I am in the hand of God, who makes no mistakes and who sees all events to the end. He is the great Physician and the health of our countenance and our God. Afflictions make us long for the happy mansions where all tears are wiped away. Afflictions tend to bring us to Christ with all unspeakable and everlasting blessings. These the world cannot give, and neither can it take them away. When oppressed with the great burden of sin and misery, and a feeling of our nothingness, we are made glad to find rest in Christ; in him there is pardon for sin and deliverance from death. As we come to know our dependence upon him we feel a desire to approach unto God, that he may fulfill in us all the good pleasure of his will. We find that the flesh profiteth nothing, and we desire that his truth may be more and more established in us, that we may fear no evil that may befall us. I feel my leanness very much. All his people feel their unworthiness much, and so desire his precious grace to comfort them; often they feel condemned in his presence, and fear and tremble lest they have been deceived, but knowing their imperfections, and that they are not able to fulfill any part of his laws, they are driven to look to the great Shepherd of their souls. O may it please God to keep us at the feet of Jesus; there we shall experience the power of the word that says, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew." O what precious promises! O for living faith! I feel to express myself here as did the psalmist: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. * * * Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." Looking at myself when in the dark I am left in deep despair, but I hope that I have felt the presence of his countenance in my soul with rapture and delight; I hope that he has revealed himself to my broken heart and contrite spirit. I trust that Jesus has borne my sins in his own body on the tree, that I, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes I trust that I have been healed. My desire is to be kept humble at the feet of Jesus, and to praise him for all his love and mercy. It is good for us to be afflicted. The divine Spirit alone is able to put the fear of God in our hearts; this is the gift of grace. I have the desire that the Spirit of Christ may dwell in my heart. The greatest comfort when I am in heaviness is the prom-

ise of the holy Comforter. I love to think upon God, his unbounded goodness, his unlimited power, and that his ears are ever open to all who cry unto him for mercy in their affliction. When the psalmist was distressed on every side the grace of God was his refuge. I feel that this grace is all the refuge I have in this life, and my hope for the life to come. I am nothing but a poor sinner, saved by grace alone. My prayer is, if it be the will of God, that my name may be found in the book of the blessed Lamb.

My mind being so troubled, and so much in the dark, is the reason I have written this, and I hope that something in it may bring relief to some poor sinner who feels as I do. May we be able to rejoice together in giving God all the praise, and in confessing that he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and that he works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Remember one who feels the need of the prayers of the children of God.

Your brother in hope of his saving grace,

O. B. HICKERSON.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., Jan. 10, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN CHICK AND KER:—Just a line from this far away State to let you know that your labors are not in vain in the Lord, for I read your articles in the SIGNS yesterday, and when I had finished them exclaimed aloud, How beautiful, how wonderful, how convincing, how consoling! How I wish I could make known to you how God helped me to understand and enjoy all of which you wrote, how he gave me to feel true fellowship with you, and how firm I felt in the faith once delivered unto the saints. It was not mine to question anything you said, nor to differ with you, but to worship Him, saying, Of a truth thou art the way and the life; the way is the only one by which sinners must be saved, and the life is eternal. I cannot get over, under or around predestination, and do not want to, but if I could, would of all persons be most miserable, for I am so sinful, so unworthy, so helpless, that there would be no hope for me. One thing that upholds me is, that Jesus came into this world to die to save sinners, and surely there can be no greater one than I, yet with that knowledge before me I cling to the cross, hoping, trusting, believing, and at times have a foretaste of that satisfied condition which is promised us when we shall see him and be like him. It seems a wonderful transformation, too, that we who claim so much unworthiness should or could be made as pure as he is, but the book from which you preach, and in which we believe, says so, and our hearts are tuned to further attest to it by the indwelling of his Holy Spirit. Another cause for rejoicing is the fellowship I have with you all, though absent in body, and, as you say, it is something that I cannot withdraw nor destroy. It draws me nearer and nearer my people, until it does not seem possible that there are thousands of miles between us; but those miles are traveled over and over again by loving thoughts, under holy influences, until I stand in your very presence, until I see your faces and hear your voices, and how little I feel then after all my longings. In imagination I am ready to hide from you, that you may not know me as I know myself. Then the thought arises, How could you stand in the presence of the Redeemer? Only in his strength; then I think, only because I would be clothed in his righteousness. But why should I attempt to write a letter to you? What

can I say when he has said so much? What can I write when others do so beautifully and so instructively? Why try to hold to view my poor little talent, when to you has been given a hundred-fold more? And it fills my heart with joy to know that it is so, for you have been chosen by him to feed his sheep, and your need is greater than mine, even as your joy must be in serving him, in making known to the sons of men the glorious majesty of his kingdom. But I merely wanted to say that I enjoy hearing from you through the SIGNS, that I love you in the Lord, and that I pray he may abundantly bless any and all further efforts. I wanted to encourage you, too, and would if I knew how, even though he has promised never to leave nor forsake you. To say I love you for the truth's sake might seem to those who do not know me like idle words, but brother Chick, who knows that I loved him and his church in the dark days of long ago, can understand something about the fellowship I had with God's dear people at that time, though they could not see their way to accept me as one of their number. It was something strange to me; any other people would have received me willingly, but by the grace of God I did not rebel, and could not withdraw this wonderful fellowship; all those people seemed higher, holier and dearer to me than ever before; they wanted to tread softly before their God, and it meant more to me than I can tell you. It proved to me that he had a chosen people, and that I had found them. It taught me what loving for the truth's sake really meant. It revealed to me that fellowship was a synonym for love, for charity, for forbearance, and that it was something enduring, not to be put off and on like a garment.

Believing though that I am getting tedious, I will close by wishing that the new year may hold in store for you many blessings, both temporal and spiritual, and that you may be spared a long time yet to sing of his righteousness and to declare his greatness.

I wrote to brother Badger during the holidays, and while I had no special message for him, know he has one for me, and there was no other way to get it.

I do not desire that either of you should take one moment of time from your many duties to reply to this, only remember me sometimes when you feel very close to the Giver of all good things, that he may continue to be merciful to me, that he will hedge me about with his loving care in my extreme loneliness. That you may continue preaching and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, is the prayer of your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) B. E. WRIGHT.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., Jan. 29, 1911.

BRETHREN EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—The journey of the wise men from the east to Jerusalem accords with the Scripture that "the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ." That city stood for all the law and the prophets, and from these the wise men found a clue which led them to Jesus. The star did not lead them to Jerusalem, for after they saw it in the east there is no mention of their having seen it again until after they left Jerusalem, or the law, and then "it went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was." This means that with a child of God in the journey from nature to grace the way to the law is more or less dark and full of inquiry, but having once seen the star it is bound to appear

again. The wise men after seeing it are next heard of at Jerusalem, as the result of having seen "his star in the east," but are yet ignorant of his whereabouts, and must remain so until the law gives further direction, but this direction is incomplete, which is to show the weakness of the law. The chief priests and scribes could mention Bethlehem, but this was not definite, for the wise men were in search of a certain young child called Jesus; their interest was in him alone, and their worship was for him alone, regardless of any other young child there; and here we discover the office of the star, that never-failing spirit or guide which lights the way for all sincere seekers of Jesus who honestly inquire after him, with the desire to open their treasures and present their best gifts, and while the gifts of the wise men are never spoken of as being necessary to his comfort, nor accepted, nor rejected, (his Father alone knows of their disposition, or how they may have ministered to those dear to him,) yet those gifts were an evidence of the sincerity of their worship, and all who loved Jesus could rejoice in seeing them bestowed. There is nothing in the narrative to indicate whether the number of wise men was three or three thousand, more or less, for it is not for man to know the number of those who "have seen his star in the east," or who "worship him." There must have been two at least, as "men" is recorded, but no number at all is given. We are told that after they heard the king and departed from Jerusalem that the star (the same star which they had seen before) was their guide. No further inquiry was made of man, for the law had been satisfied and fulfilled, as their guide now there was light from above, and they never returned to the law or Jerusalem again, as commanded by Herod, this to show that the law has no dominion over those who worship Jesus, and that having seen him they are freed from it, and that the mandates of no earthly ruler are above those of King Jesus, even though he were but a babe in a manger. Let us therefore as wise men be "warned of God" that even though we may feel to be departed into our own country from the presence of Jesus, let it be by another way rather than to Jerusalem to confer with the arm of flesh, which, like Herod, is a deadly enemy to Jesus and to all the children who are born with him.

EVERETT R. KINNEY.

LANCASTER, Ohio, Oct. 2, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am tardy in sending on my renewal of subscription, but please have charity for poor, unworthy me. Why the good Lord has spared my life, unprofitable as it is, to this time, is best known to himself. I was taken sick the first of March, and was quite ill until the middle of July, and am able now to sit up only a portion of the time, but I have desired to be submissive to the will of God. I cannot be thankful enough that he has given me a good memory, and sight so that I can read and write, and as long as I can read I shall want the SIGNS continued, for I should feel very lonely without it and the Bible and hymn-book. Good songs of Zion are as sermons, and sometimes are very reviving. It is good to meditate upon God's wisdom, and to know that he rules in heaven and in earth, though many deny it. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof," and he made all things for himself. "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." I

am still looking to him as the author and finisher of my faith. I am nothing but a poor sinner at best, and if saved at all, it is alone of grace. My hope is that I have been born again and made a new creature in Christ Jesus, the precious Redeemer.

As ever, a lover of the writers and editors of the SIGNS,

SARAH B. PEARCE.

LAUREL, Miss., June 4, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I hope it is my right to use this title, if not deceived. It is through the mercy of the all-wise and covenant-keeping God that a few of his children around here, composing the church at Palestine, are in a prosperous condition, and in peace with each other. The Lord is still adding to the church, and surely he has blessed us with a precious gift in our minister, Elder Easley. He is kind and watchful over us. I sometimes think we do not appreciate him as we ought. He certainly advocates the doctrine of election and predestination. I am at a loss to see how any of God's people can see any other way, yet it seems that it is not given to all to see that way. I believe in a perfect and complete Savior, who has covenanted with his Father to save his people, and redeemed every one that his Father gave him, and he will raise them all up at the last day, without the loss of one of them. It is just as impossible that he should lose one of them as it is that one should be saved who was not embraced in the covenant of grace. All that were in the covenant were in it forever, and all who were out of it were out of it forever. It is not with us, but with God who sheweth mercy.

Find check inclosed, for which please continue sending the SIGNS to me. I do not see how I could do without it, for it surely does advocate what I believe. Remember me at the throne of grace.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

THOMAS J. KNIGHT.

TOUCHET, Wash., Dec. 28, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Inclosed you will find money order for four dollars, two dollars to renew the subscription to the SIGNS another year for Elder W. R. Storms, of Seattle, Wash., and two dollars for my own subscription. I have read the SIGNS since 1850, and have been a subscriber since 1852. I was agent for it in this State (Territory then), and also in California. No other one of our publications has been, or is yet, as close to me as the SIGNS. I have taken a number of our other publications, but have dropped them all except the SIGNS, and expect to continue to take it as long as I live and am blessed of the dear Lord with enough to pay for it. While I have not at all times been able to see as I understand the writers to express their views, yet it is seldom I find anything in the SIGNS, either from the pen of the editors or correspondents, that does not appear to me to be in harmony with the Scriptures and my own experience. This may be my last subscription, as I am now half-way through the eighty-first year of my unprofitable life in this world of trials, and while I am still blessed with reasonable health, I am aware that I am not to be here many years longer. In that I am not finding fault, but rather feel to rejoice that the end is near at hand. I have written very little for publication in the SIGNS during the sixty years I have taken it, because I felt the writings of others were so much better to fill the wants of the readers.

Yours in hope,

R. CUMMINS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., ARRIL 1, 1911.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ROMANS X. 13.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Please give us your views upon the thirteenth verse of the tenth chapter of Romans: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Your unworthy brother,

S. B. MOFFITT.

NEWBERG, Ore., Feb. 27, 1911.

First, we will say that the word "Lord" in this Scripture refers especially to our Lord Jesus Christ. This will appear, as it seems to us, if we compare this verse with verses four, six, seven and nine, where it is evident that the apostle is speaking of the blessed Redeemer, and of faith in him. If the theme of the apostle in this connection relates especially to the Jewish believers at Rome, as the first three verses of this chapter would seem to show, it must be remembered that they did believe in and call upon the name of Jehovah. They believed in one God, in contradistinction to the many gods of the Gentiles around them. Jesus, as recorded in the fourteenth chapter of John, said to his disciples, who were Jews, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." This belief in God wrought conviction of sin in them, but did not bring any assurance of forgiveness or redemption, but rather condemnation. In this belief there could be no peace wrought in the soul, in this belief there could be no salvation revealed, but when Jesus, the Son of God, was revealed salvation was revealed, for in him is salvation. This seems to us to be the theme of the apostle in this immediate connection, and, in fact, in the whole epistle. There were those who waited for the consolation of Israel all the way along in their history, those who desired to see this salvation, and died without the sight. Simeon was one who not only looked for this salvation, but to whom was given to see it, and he said, "Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Some among the Gentiles also had come to believe in the one true and living God, and were devout men, as was Cornelius, but they had not come to know and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. When the appointed time had come, however, the Lord sent the word concerning Christ by his servants, and the Lord opened the hearts of men who were devoutly seeking this salvation, as he did the heart of Lydia, that they, like her, attended to the things which were spoken. So the eunuch evidently was a proselyte to the Jewish faith in one God, and he was also a devout man, and a seeker after true knowledge. He desired to know what the prophecies concerning Christ meant, and Philip was sent to preach to him that Jesus was the promised Messiah, and he believed, and became a follower of the Lord, being baptized after his command and example. In these instances we see fulfilled what Paul says in the two following verses: "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed; and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they

preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" Paul's reasoning is clear, and we know that it is correct, because it was inspired of God. We learn from these two verses that the gospel is summed up in Christ, and that to preach Christ is to preach glad tidings, and that none can preach him except they be sent of God; that none can hear without a preacher; that none can believe in him of whom they have not heard, and that none can call upon one in whom they do not believe. Christ first preached his own gospel, and many heard and believed on him, having heard him themselves, and so knew that Jesus was indeed the Christ, the true Savior. Since his ascension none have seen him in the flesh, yet many have believed and loved him and now rejoice in him. Many poor sinners, distressed and confused, have been asking, Is there any way of salvation? and to them, in some way and at some time, the blessed Lord has sent some servant of his to proclaim that there is salvation in Christ, and in none other, and the blessed Lord always accompanies such preaching by his Spirit, and seals it to the hearts of these seeking ones, and their mourning is turned into gladness and their sorrow into rejoicing. It is sure that the dear Lord has set his love upon each and every one who mourns because of sin and desires righteousness. For purposes of wisdom and mercy he is pleased, in some cases, to allow his seeking ones to seek and ask long, before he reveals Jesus as not only the Savior of sinners, but as their own Savior. For ourself we can recall that from childhood we believed, from the teaching of the word as we read it, and as we heard it talked about by our parents and by preachers in the pulpit, that Jesus Christ was the only Savior, and that there was salvation in no other name under heaven; but while we thought that this was glorious, yet we did not have any assurance that this Savior was our Savior. We can remember that we looked upon those whom we believed to be christians, as they would speak of the joy of hope in Christ, with almost envy, and often we wondered if we should ever come to know what they knew. We trust that the time did come when we could say not only, He is a great Savior, but also, He is mine. Paul speaks of his brethren, his kindred after the flesh, declaring that he had great longing for them, and that his prayer was that they might be saved, but he says, "Being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." That is, as we have always understood him, they were ignorant of what He did really require of them in his law, and supposed that mere outward forms of righteousness were sufficient. This being so, they went about to establish themselves in those outward rituals and works, and so when Christ, the true righteousness of God, was proclaimed, they did not receive him, but rejected him, and did not submit themselves to him. Had they known what the real righteousness of God meant they would have ceased from their own works, and they would have despaired of salvation by those works, and would have come to rejoice in the truth that Christ was the end of the law for righteousness to all that believe. But why need we multiply words with regard to this? The whole connection of the text suggested by our brother is plain in the setting forth of

Christ, and so it is Christ whom he means in the text.

"Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." We do not understand this language to be used as though the apostle had set before his brethren a condition of salvation, but only an evidence of it. It is not as if he had said, If you will call upon the name of the Lord you shall be saved; but there is here a description of one who is an heir of salvation. Calling upon the name of Jesus is not an act of the will, or from any decision of the will, as though one should sit down and decide after much deliberation, pro and con, that it was wise to do this or that for his own good. No man ever truly followed God or his Son in that way. The calling on or praying to God is always the voice of need. The soul perishing for thirst does not deliberate about the matter at all. There is but one thing that he can do; he must have water; he must call, and the call is real; not in word, while the heart is far away. The call is in the heart, and from the trouble that dwells there. It may be in some faint, small way expressed in words, but far oftener it is voiceless. It proceeds from the knowledge that all other help has proven vain. There is no other way of salvation. So Peter cried, Lord, save, I perish; and the disciples upon the sea said, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" The dying thief said, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom," and David filled his Psalms with personal supplications from a heart that often was sore broken. Many who may read these words have known what it is to be compelled to call upon the Lord Christ. The calling implies trust and faith. The soul has come not only to know his need, but also the fullness there is in Christ. He has found his own emptiness of righteousness and strength, and he has found the fullness of that wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption in Christ. This calling is then a confession of Christ as being all and in all in the matter of salvation and of daily help. We cannot call upon one in whom we do not believe. If a poor man in his need comes to another for help, it must be because he knows something of that other that encourages him to come; that poor man must have some sort or degree of faith in that man to whom he comes. So the poor soul has heard and learned something of Christ that gives him confidence that he is able to save him. It certainly was so with those who came to the Master for healing in the days of his flesh; they said, If thou wilt, thou canst make us whole. It is faith indeed to believe that he is able. The testimony is, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." We believe this includes all that we need here, and all that salvation means in eternity. In one sense that man who calls upon the name of the Lord is saved. It is a great salvation to come up out of death in sin, and death to God, unto a knowledge of our need, and to have life out of which alone can come pain or pleasure. Is not hunger, thirst, suffering, pain, weariness or desire as much an evidence that one has passed from death unto life, as is the supply of any of these things? There can be no calling upon the name of the Lord unless one is living unto God, and to those to whom eternal life is given, death can never come; none shall pluck them out of the hand of the Lord; we have his own word for it. Living unto God, and having his love shed abroad in their hearts, none shall ever pluck them hence. They shall be kept by the power of God

while they live on earth, yes, shall be kept unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. "They shall be saved" contains the promise of grace and glory. No earthly power shall ever separate them from their Lord, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against them.

"'Tis sovereign grace that wings our prayer,
'Tis Christ who hears our cry,
'Tis he doth each petition bear
Before the throne on high."

C.

GENESIS VI. 2.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I would like for you to say something through the SIGNS upon the words found in Genesis vi. 2, which read as follows: "That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose."

Your brother, Z. WARD.

BEAR WALLOW, Va., Jan. 24, 1911.

Not long since brother Ker wrote along the line of the subject of this Scripture, so we do not feel that it is necessary to say more than a few words with regard to it now. We do not doubt that the "sons of God" here signify the children of Seth, in whose time it is said men began to call upon the name of the Lord, (Gen. iv. 26,) and by "the daughters of men" it has been our mind that the descendants of Cain, who was of the wicked one, are meant. The fifth chapter is occupied with the genealogy of men from Adam to Noah and his sons. It is our mind that the sixth chapter is connected in the narrative with the close of the fourth. Soon after Seth was born men began to multiply upon the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them. Cain was an enemy of righteousness, and so were his descendants. The sons of God, or those who were not of Cain, began to marry among the daughters of men, for it is said "they were fair." Fair in appearance, but not fair in heart, and before God. The result was wickedness spreading and increasing upon the earth. We read that God saw this, and said, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man," and he declared that their days should be one hundred and twenty years. This was the time in which Noah preached righteousness, while he was preparing the ark, in which eight souls were saved. Even those, who were called the sons of God, were drawn away from their faithfulness and steadfastness in the service of God, and their children grew up perverse, becoming still more and more so as generations went on. The result was that God was angry with mankind, and destroyed them by the flood. In all this God was dealing nationally and providentially with mankind; afterwards he dealt in like manner with Israel as a nation. All these things show that our God is a God of providence, and rules over all men, punishing wicked men and nations, or blessing them when they walk uprightly. All this does not relate at all to the hope of salvation through Christ, that has always been through grace alone. The same principles rule in the temporal affairs of men yet. Nations rise and fall, the one through the possession of virtues, and the other because of the possession of vices. Natural men differ in the integrity and general uprightness of their lives, as they have always done, and those who are industrious, frugal and honest, and who forsake rioting and drunkenness, are blessed in temporal things. Those who pursue the opposite course fall into disrepute and poverty, and their names are cast out as evil. But this is not salvation, in the sense of justification before God. These things are in the providence of God, and in them what men sow they also reap.

We have no doubt that in this Scripture is presented in a figure, that which also applies to the church of God, but as brother Ker wrote much along that line we will not say more. C.

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN.

HAVING been requested not long since to write on the above subject, we shall now try to do so, and as a foundation for such thoughts as we may present will name Matthew xii. 33, which reads as follows: "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit."

It will be seen by reading the chapter that two classes of men were manifest when Jesus uttered the words of the text and those preceding in immediate connection. Because of the great miracle of healing the man who was both blind and dumb, so that he both saw and spake, many believed on Jesus and said, "Is not this the son of David?" or the promised Messiah. But the other class believed him to be an impostor under the influence of Satan, therefore said, "This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils." Prior to this Jesus had given his disciples power to heal the sick, raise the dead and cast out devils, and that power had been demonstrated in the very eyes of some of those who said, He casteth out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. Hence Jesus asked them the following question: "If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out?" He then declared, "They shall be your judges." Not only did he mean that the apostles should be the judges of the twelve tribes of Israel, but they, knowing that they had received power of him, and not of the devil, to cast out devils, and therefore were not under the influence of Satan, should judge then and there the Pharisees who accused Jesus of being in league with the devil. To show their ignorance of him and the fallacy of their argument, Jesus said, "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?" The Pharisees knew that Satan was Satan, and that all he did was like himself, evil, and in favor of his kingdom. They also knew, by the law and the prophets, God was God, and that his kingdom was a righteous kingdom, established forever and entirely distinct from the kingdom of darkness. But they did not know that Jesus was "the King of glory" manifest in the flesh, but those who said, This is the son of David, knew him and worshiped him. Before going further into the subject we will state that the Pharisees (unbelievers) were the ones guilty of the unpardonable sin, and that it is impossible for a child of God (a believer) to be guilty of that sin. The Pharisees did not, could not deny that devils were cast out by Jesus, but they ascribed the power and work to the wrong source, saying Satan did it; therefore instead of saying as believers did that Jesus was the son of David or the Lord, they said he was a devil and did the works of Satan. We all know that a house divided against itself cannot stand, it has been proven time and again, and unto all who believe that Jesus by the Spirit of God casts out devils the kingdom of God has come nigh. This we are taught in the very work of breaking down the man of sin within ourselves, spoiling his goods and keeping him

bound. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." In the matter of belief and unbelief, righteousness and sin, the Savior made a clear, definite and final distinction. There is no middle ground to be occupied; it is either God or Satan, righteousness or sin, salvation or condemnation. If men are for him it is absolutely so; if against him it is completely so that way. "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad. Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." It matters not what the character of the sin or blasphemy may be, even the crucifixion of Jesus was included, all shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven. Shall any speak a word against the Son of man it shall be forgiven him; yes, anything said against him as a MAN, was and shall be forgiven; but to speak against the work of the Father in the Son shall not be forgiven, "neither in this world, neither in the world to come." The Father sent the Son because of his eternal purpose which he purposed in himself before the world was. In that purpose were included certain works to be performed by the Son, yet the Father in him did the works. Prophecy declared that when he should come the blind should see, the lame walk, the deaf hear and the tongue of the dumb sing; and when in fulfillment of that prophecy Jesus did those very works, for men to say they were the works of the devil was blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. Remember we have already said the Pharisees only, and not one believer in Jesus as the Son of God, said, He casteth out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils; hence that special sin not forgiven then, in the legal world, nor now in the gospel world (dispensation), belongs entirely to those guilty of it. Prophecy also declared complete and glorious redemption through the Son of God. Salvation for time and eternity was the most important work Jesus came to accomplish. "He shall save his people from their sins." And when he said on the cross, "It is finished," all that Moses and the prophets had declared of him was fulfilled: salvation wrought for all the children of God, and each one of this great and spiritual family believes that God was in Christ reconciling the world (Jews and Gentiles) unto himself, and that by the one offering he perfected forever all them that are sanctified—set apart. Believing this glorious doctrine, each child of God can see for himself and herself how utterly impossible it is for them to commit the unpardonable sin. To deny God, to make him a liar and credit his work to some other source, instrumentalities of men and women for instance, is blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, or the unpardonable sin. Whosoever says the work of Christ was in any sense incomplete, makes God a liar and his word is not in him. He who asserts that God wants men saved but cannot save them without the help of man, denies the power of the "Almighty." Whosoever says that Jesus Christ was not divine, infinitely so, denies "the Godhead," hence is antichrist. All this is blasphemy against the Holy Ghost NOW in the gospel world or dispensation which was to come. Some one may want to know more fully our authority for asserting that "the world to come" referred to the gospel age, and for their benefit will say that preceding forgiveness there must of necessity be transgression, and every

sane man will acknowledge that in the realms of glory there is no such thing as SIN, which "is the transgression of the law." In heaven, where there is no law, there can be no transgression; therefore the term, "world to come," had no reference whatever beyond time and time things. All who reach heaven are pure, holy and undefiled; without holiness no man can see the Lord. Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is to-day broadcast over the land, and how would the children of God know it except for the fact that they, like the apostles, "judge the world"? Try the preaching of men, and it will readily be seen that it does not make the Tree good (give glory to God), but the preaching of the Spirit of God through his servants makes the Tree good, glorious and complete, having all power in heaven and in earth, who died for our offences and was raised for our justification. Do the children need more? No.

Now, in summing up the matter, according to the text the tree must be made (pronounced) either good or bad. Jesus was therefore either a "perfect man" or the worst that ever lived; he was either the Savior of sinners or not their Savior; the works he did were either the works of the Holy Ghost or the works of Satan. How shall we decide? The following is the infallible rule: "The tree is known by his fruit." K.

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

WE are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. M. Fenton, at Schoharie, N. Y., March 14th, 1911, John Dittmar, of Middleburg, N. Y., and Miss Laura M. Bailey, of Schoharie, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

William Sleadd was born in Shelby County, Ky., he departed this life Saturday, Feb. 11th, 1911, in the 88th year of his age. Our aged brother was well known to many brethren and friends who have been entertained at his home. He was given to hospitality; as long as he kept house his door was open to his brethren and friends; few entertained more. It is sad indeed to us as one by one the faithful old soldiers are passing away. Brother Sleadd united with the church at Bethel, March, 1840, and was baptized, I suppose, by Elder John Holland, who was then pastor of the church. In all those (nearly seventy) years he was a faithful, active member, and in all the more than twenty years I have served the church can attest to his liberality in all matters that pertain to the church. He was a Bible reader, having read it through from beginning to end more times by far than any one I know. Some time after the death of his wife (I think in 1900) he gave up housekeeping and made his home with his children. In January he was taken to the hospital at Shelbyville and underwent a slight operation, from which he seemed to rally, but from his advanced age and other infirmities he began to sink, and soon lost consciousness and passed from this stage of mortality into the full fruition of that blessed immortality beyond this vale of suffering. Brother Sleadd leaves two sons and three daughters (one son and three daughters having preceded him to the grave), with grandchildren, neighbors and friends, as well as the church, who feel the loss.

The funeral was largely attended at the Grove Hill Cemetery chapel, Sunday, the 12th. After services the casket was borne by six of the grandsons to its last resting-place beside his devoted wife, who had gone before. May the Lord in his tender mercy remember the living, to bless, guide and keep them.

P. W. SAWIN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky.

Mrs. Elizabeth Leachman died Jan. 28th, 1911, at the home of her nephew, Joseph Johnson, near Manassas, Va., at the ripe age of about 90 years. She was the widow of Elder R. C. Leachman, who died in 1870, I believe. For many years she made her home in the family of her sister, sister Emily Johnson. She was married to Elder Leachman in 1842, and as long as her husband lived she was a

faithful and devoted wife. In old age, having no children, she found a welcome and quiet home in the family of sister Johnson, who bestowed every needed care, and ministered to her necessities and comfort with loving patience to the end. She was baptized by Elder Lanke, in Fauquier County, in early life. After the trouble among the churches, resulting in forming two parties, known as the "Clark" and the "Beebe" Baptists, the two sisters cast their lot with the Bethlehem Church, near Manassas, Va. Sister Leachman remained a faithful and much esteemed member until called home at a ripe old age. She was constant in filling her place in the meetings of the church until prevented by the infirmities of age, although by reason of deafness she could hear but little of what was said. A quiet, unobtrusive and lovable christian, like a shock of corn fully ripe she has been gathered home to her everlasting rest. If the spirit which animates these bodies of ours leaves its impress upon this moldering clay, and I sometimes think it does, I am sure it marked the countenance of sister Leachman, for I never saw a more peaceful nor sweeter expression on any face I ever looked upon as she lay in her coffin ready for burial, beautified and lovely in death.

J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., March 9, 1911.

Caroline Waring Hait, widow of Deacon John L. Hait, died at her home in Middletown, N. Y., Jan. 18th, 1911, aged 85 years and 7 months. Sister Hait had been in failing health for several years, gradually declining until the end came and relieved her of all her sufferings. She and brother Hait, at the time of his death, last May, had lived together nearly fifty-eight years, and she never seemed to rally from the shock of his death, constantly grieving after him. She was a substantial Old Baptist, and while kind and pleasant to all classes, she had no use for any other doctrine than that of salvation by grace through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. She had many friends because of her genial disposition and repeated deeds of kindness. The home had for many years been a pleasant resting-place for their kindred and friends. No children and very few relatives are left to mourn her departure, but the church feels keenly the loss.

The funeral service was held at the home Saturday morning, Jan. 21st, when the writer tried to preach the gospel she so much loved, from the words, "Work out your own salvation."—Phil. ii. 12, showing their application in the life she had lived in the church, ever manifesting by her works that God had wrought "a good work" in her. Her works therefore were not for salvation, but because of her possession of it she worked out with fear and trembling what God worked in her. We shall ever miss her, brother Hait and the pleasant home, but all is gain to them.

K.

Elder Jonathan Gillis Ford was born in Warren County, Ohio, April 28th, 1823. Eleven years later he moved with his parents to Putnam County, Ohio, where he resided until his death, Dec. 28th, 1910. He was married to Marinda Hicks, Feb. 12th, 1846. To that union were born seven children, six sons and one daughter. Mrs. Ford died July 15th, 1862. Elder Ford was married to Sarah Ann Rohrer in September, 1863. To that union were born twelve children. Fifteen children, fifty-two grandchildren and twenty-two great-grandchildren live to mourn their loss. His last sickness was unaccompanied by pain, and when the end for which he had long hoped arrived, it was as passing into peaceful sleep. Five weeks before his death he had a vision, the beauty of which he loved to tell, which was evidently a great comfort. Deceased joined the Old School Baptist (Sugar Creek) Church in June, 1856, was liberated to preach January, 1862, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry in June, 1864. His two faithful companions were also of the same faith and members of the same church. May the same hope sustain the surviving one as it has in the past, as is characterized by her unfaltering love and patient endurance. Their home had always been an Old School Baptist refuge, because they loved the brethren.

The funeral discourse was delivered by Elder Silveus, who spoke very ably on the resurrection, the doctrine which the deceased hoped God's children would earnestly contend for.

PERRY FORD.

COLUMBUS GROVE, Ohio, March 6, 1911.

Henry Watkins was born in Tennessee, Sept. 28th, 1835, came to Iowa with his parents in 1849, departed this life March 9th, 1911, aged 75 years, 5 months and 9 days. He never married, and lived alone the most of his life after reaching his majority. He made several trips to the far west and south, but came back to Marion County, Iowa, where he lived until his death. Henry Watkins united with the Primitive Baptist Church called Little Flock, in Marion County, Iowa, several years ago. He leaves two brothers and two sisters, to wit: Isham, of Knoxville, Denis, of Oregon, Elizabeth Rose and Hannah Smith, both of Pleasantville, together with a large number of nephews and nieces and a host of friends, to mourn his departure, but we mourn not as those who have no hope, for we are satisfied that he is now with our dear Savior.

Funeral services were held at his brother Isham's home March 10th, conducted by Elders J. M. Arlege and W. M. Rose, using the text in Isaiah xxvi. 19, from which Elder Arlege preached to the comfort of the relatives and friends, after which the body was laid in the Watkins cemetery, there to await the resurrection morn. May the God of heaven bless the bereaved ones abundantly, is our prayer.

By request. W. M. ROSE.

Mrs. Elenor G. DeMott departed this life Thursday night, Dec. 22nd, 1910, aged 96 years, 6 months and 8 days. She had been confined to her bed only five days. She was conscious and could talk to the last. She asked me to read to her, and as I opened the Bible the twenty-third Psalm was before me, and as I read she said, "Dear Lord, how good." I said, "Is your Savior near you?" She said, "He is right here; he said he would never leave us nor forsake us." She said she would be better off when she could see Jesus. She passed away like an infant going to sleep, that blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep. She was the mother of seven children, only one of whom is now living. One grandchild and five great-grandchildren also survive. Her husband passed away about fifteen years ago. It can truly be said of her that through much tribulation she entered the kingdom of heaven.

Elder Fenton was called to attend her funeral, and spoke words of comfort and love.

Her daughter-in-law,

(MRS.) E. J. DEMOTT.

NOTICE.

If the Lord will we expect preaching in the Old Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, the third Sunday in April (16th), instead of the fourth, as is usual. Services at the usual hours. All brethren, sisters and friends welcome. L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass.

INFORMATION WANTED.

We are in receipt of a letter from Elder H. H. Lefferts, of Leesburg, Va., asking if there are any of our faith and order in or near Galveston, Texas. He also wishes to know if there is an Old School Baptist Church in Galveston. If any of our readers know of such please advise Elder Lefferts.

I would like to correspond with some Primitive Baptists in Washington and Oregon, as I would like to know something about that climate and the price of land there. (MRS.) M. E. KUNS.

GLENDALE, Arizona, Box 53.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

T. G. Harris, Nebr., $1.00; W. B. Ennist, N. Y., $6.00.

MEETINGS.

The churches of the Roxbury Association will hold their fifth Sunday or quarterly meeting, the Lord willing, with the Second Church of Roxbury, Saturday and Sunday, April 29th and 30th, 1911, commencing at 11 o'clock a. m. Saturday. Trains will be met at Roxbury Saturday morning. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON.

The Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

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To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in Kimmy Hall, No. 12 Third St., in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

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WINNSBORO, Texas, R. F. D. 6.

"SONGS IN THE NIGHT."

PRICE REDUCED.

This little book has been published for some time, and orders for it have been received from near and far, even to the most distant States. All from whom I have heard have spoken to me very highly of the book. For forty years it has been upon my mind to publish these poems and the experience of my brother, together with the account of his last hours, and have wondered why I did not do it. I felt sure it would be for the comfort of many, and the many expressions I have already received assure me that it is so. Elder P. D. Gold writes: "I have read the poems and experience of your brother with much pleasure. How wonderful was the view of divine things given to him. Surely to be absent from the body and present with the Lord is far better." Elder S. Hassell says: "I shall have a commendatory editorial notice in April. I hope you may dispose of several thousands for the comfort of the Lord's scattered people." Elder H. C. Ker writes me: "Your little book, 'Songs in the night,' was duly received, and has given me more comfort than any reading I have done for months. Surely every lover of truth should have it." The price of the second edition has been reduced to thirty-five cents.

I have also on hand a few copies of "Reminiscences and Letters of Mary Parker." Price 75 cents.

All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Southampton, Pa.

"CHRISTIAN SCIENCE AND THE LAW."

Because of the distressing information contained in orders for my Christian Science pamphlet respecting the great injury being done by this shameful fraud even among our dear Baptist people, I have tried in this second little work to expose it from a new point of view. Those not aware of recent developments at the headquarters of these people will be astonished almost to the point of doubting well-proven facts. I will mail two copies of this last sketch for ten cents silver), or one copy and a copy of Christian Science and the Bible for ten cents. The price is not for profit, but to cover the bare expense. Hundreds of the first pamphlets were given away, and others placed where many could read them. If any good results from this effort to shield our brethren from this new delusion, the credit will be due our kind periodicals for calling attention to it.

S. B. LUCKETT.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Indiana.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 79. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1911. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THOUGHTS ON MERCY.

(AROUSED BY READING EXODUS XXV. 17-22.)

TRANSGRESSION is the occasion of mercy, for without the former the grace of the latter cannot prevail, and while man is not justified in doing evil that good may come, God is perfectly honorable in all he does, even in creating the wicked for the day of evil, and in predetermining the death of his Son at the hands of wicked men. Without sin there can be no manifestation of grace; without transgression, no revelation of mercy. Is it not true then that the Almighty's plan of creation as it was conceived in the divine mind in eternity embraced in its purpose the entrance of sin into the world, and death by sin? Evidently so, for He chose his Son and anointed him High Priest and Savior before ever the earth was, and elected unto the salvation and glory the church in him. Why all this exhibition of divine wisdom in securing the welfare of the church against all odds if he did not foreknow the threatening of that welfare by the entrance of sin into the world? And if the foreknowledge of God to this extent is granted, then it must follow that the jeopardizing of the welfare of man by the entrance of sin was beforehand certain, since an uncertainty cannot be absolutely foreknown, and that the foreknowledge of God is absolute we know, because he declared the end from the beginning and from of old things that are not yet done. This certainty of things foreknown carries unavoidably with it the foreordaining of all foreknown things, and since there is only one God, supremely sovereign over all worlds, he it is who ordained as well as foreknew the entrance of sin into the world, and all its consequences. This does not at all make God the author of sin, for sin is the transgression of law, and God, being under no law, cannot therefore disobey it. Whatever God does is right because he does it; he can do no wrong, let him do what he will. His very superlative nature, sovereignty and supremacy make it impossible for him to be the author of wrong. For a human being to take human life is criminal, because he outrages the laws of God and man in doing so, but for God to send a shaft of lightning across a man's path and strike him with death is all right, because in doing so he outrages no law to

which he can be held accountable. The plan of redemption is gloriously wonderful, reaching as it does from eternity, before time, down through all the ages of time and throughout eternity beyond. In this plan are many items hard to be understood in themselves, but when faith views them all as one comprehensive and extensive whole, it becomes a plain path, with no crooks in it. Sin, with all its horrors, is embraced in this wonderful plan to make way for grace and mercy, and the revelation of the fullness of the Son of God. Without a sinner there can be no Savior; without Adam, no Jesus, since without the total depravity of the one there is no occasion for the perfect righteousness of the other. God is equal and coextensive in all his attributes; he is as just as he is merciful, and as merciful as just. Neither will he exert any one of his attributes at the expense or sacrifice of any or all other attributes. Mercy is seen in the election of the church in Christ before the foundation of the world and in the divine anointing of him as the High Priest, Redeemer, Surety and Head of the church. Justice is displayed in the banishment of the man and woman from Eden after the transgression, in the cursing of the ground for their sakes, and in passing the sentence of death upon Adam and all his posterity as the consequence of his transgression. God will not alter the thing that has gone forth out of his mouth; it is never revoked, and no commandment of his is ever annulled. Hence when God placed Adam under law to him, and Adam disobeyed, justice demanded his death, since death was the penalty named in the law for disobedience, and the changing of the penalty to any lighter punishment would not have been just, and would have ill consisted with the nature of the Godhead. In this disobedience are included both elect and non-elect, and since the sentence of death is irrevocable, has justice outwitted mercy? Has the adherence of God to his justice prevented his achieving the covenant of mercy? Perish the thought. But God will not be merciful at the expense of his justice. Rather his mercy will be exhibited so as to magnify and carry out the ends of justice. How? The church being included in disobedience through Adam's transgression was dead in trespasses and sins, and so utterly without ability to make good her breaches of the law and thus bring herself into favor with God. Neither can God extend mercy to her in such a state so long as the breaches of the law are not repaired, without dishonoring himself. Therefore the necessity for Christ to suffer, he being the Surety and Head of the church, and as such responsible for all the obligations of his body, the church, so he takes upon himself the likeness of sinful flesh, and all the sins of the church are imputed unto him. He fulfills the law in every iota and every fine point, so that the law is not revoked to make way for mercy, but is satisfied, exalted and honored, and passes not away only as it is fulfilled, repaired in all its breaches. So great is God in justice that, his people being unable to satisfy it themselves, he condescends to clothe himself in flesh and manhood to carry out every purpose of justice in order to open the way for the coming of mercy to those too destitute to achieve anything for themselves. Herein is mercy seated, and here is the mercy-seat. The Lord Jesus Christ is the seat of God's mercy, its base and resting-place. He is the ark or container of the covenant of grace; in him is the fullness of the Godhead bodily. The ark of the

covenant as prescribed by the Lord to Moses in Exodus, twenty-fifth chapter, held the stones of the law, the pot of manna and Aaron's budded rod, thus signifying that in Jesus Christ, the spiritual ark of the new and better covenant, is kept the law of God, and only in and by him is it kept. In him also is kept the spiritual manna of the church, grace sufficient for every need, for the nourishing of every part of the body. In him, too, are the life and safety of the church, for he is the spiritual Aaron or High Priest, who alone can prevail with God to remit the sins of the church. Upon this ark of the covenant is founded the mercy-seat of God. Mercy flows to the sinner through the mediatorial work of the Redeemer, never through any merit or effort of the creature. Upon each of the two ends of the mercy-seat was a cherub, or angel. The faces of the cherubs looked inward toward the mercy-seat, hence they saw eye to eye, and with their wings they overshadowed the mercy-seat. Now angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister unto them who shall be heirs of redemption. So these cherubs each represent ministry; on the one end, that of the old or legal dispensation, and on the other, that of the new or gospel dispensation. All holy men of old spake as moved by the Holy Ghost, and to testify beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and the ensuing glory. The work of the Holy Ghost in this gospel age is just as much the testimony of Jesus, of his pain and of his glory. Thus these cherubs looked toward the mercy-seat; the law and the gospel both look to Jesus and testify of him. They also see eye to eye, because Moses and the prophets looked to the gospel age, while the apostles and the ministry of to-day round out prophecy, interpreting it and the law so that there is accord between both dispensations, and the messages or wings of both overshadow the seat of mercy. Here is where God meets and communes with his people—from above and from between the cherubim. Between the two dispensations is Christ and his work of propitiation. It is in this man Jesus, his life, death and resurrection, God and his people meet, are reconciled and commune sweetly together. Throughout the experience of the child of God every new sense of the preciousness of Jesus is a renewal of communion with God. The cherubs and the mercy-seat were all of pure gold; so through the fiery furnace of severe trials, persecutions and afflictions was purification wrought, and the seat of mercy reared, and the testimony of the cherubs rises out of the depths of woe, whither were led to descend the saints of God, that they should sound forth the testimony of Jesus, looking toward the mercy-seat. This was all of beaten gold, gold that had been scourged. So we see the mercy-seat is not reared save through sore agony on the part of Him who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace being upon him, with his stripes we are healed. So was the faith of Moses, of the prophets and of the apostles sorely tried; hence even the cherubs were of beaten gold. Now the cherubs were not made of separate pieces of gold and then attached to the mercy-seat, but the seat and the cherubs were all of one piece, beaten out together. The same faith that was in Moses was in the prophets, was in Jesus, was in the apostles and is in the church to-day, and the same Spirit runs through and animates the whole, so they are all one piece of gold; perfect

unity throughout, and vital, too. Again, not only is the work of Jesus the seat of God's mercy to his poor, lost sheep, but the ministry of the law, the spirit of prophecy and the ministry of the gospel are all of mercy. Throughout the darkness of the ministry of condemnation which the church justly deserved, God in his mercy placed the moon (law) and the stars (prophets) in the firmament of the legal heavens to shadow forth the coming of a better day, so the church was not without a glimmering of hope even then. So, too, it is by the mercy of God the church in this age is given the gospel ministry and the comfort ensuing from the liberty of the gospel. The seat and the cherubim are all of mercy, all one piece. It is all of mercy from first to last. Amen.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

LEESBURG, Va., March 21, 1911.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Feb. 17, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Once more I take my pen to say a few words through your valuable paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which contains my meat and my drink. The Savior said, "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me." They that are whole need not a physician, but poor, trembling creatures such as we are need the great Physician to heal all our ills. Job said to his friends, Miserable comforters are ye all, forgers of lies, physicians of no value. He was made to see with us, that there is but One in whom to trust, and that salvation is of the Lord. He can turn the hearts of men as the rivers of water are turned. His ways are not our ways, neither are his thoughts our thoughts. As the heaven is high above the earth, so are his ways and thoughts above our ways and thoughts. He declareth that as the rain and the snow cometh down from heaven and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, making it to bring forth and bud, that the sower may have seed and the eater bread, so shall his word be that goeth forth out of his mouth: it shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish that which he please, and prosper in the thing whereto he sends it.

The blessed Lord warned his disciples to be humble and harmless, to avoid offences and not despise the little ones. He taught them how we are to deal with our brethren when they offend us, and how often we are to forgive them, and when they came asking who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven, he called a little child unto him and set him in the midst of them, and said, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," and we have the promise that he will never leave nor forsake one of these little ones. A mother may forget her child, but he will not forget us. We are bidden to forsake father, mother, brother, sister, husband, wife and child, and take up our cross and follow him, and whosoever shall offend one of these little ones, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he drowned in the depth of the sea. On another occasion a certain scribe came to him saying, "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." But Jesus said to him, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Another said to him, "Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But

Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead." On another occasion he entered into a ship, and his disciples came unto him, and a storm arose, and a great tempest was on the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves; his disciples came to him as he was asleep, and awoke him, saying, "Lord save us, we perish. And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the sea; and there was a great calm. But the men marveled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?" Great and marvelous are his works. At another time the disciples were on the sea, "and in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." Then Peter said unto him, "If it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me! And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" The children of God are poor, but they have eternal riches in him, and he has an everlasting supply for all the weary ones. We are poor, helpless creatures, and we need his help all the days of our lives, and we love to praise him for all his blessings, both temporal and spiritual. How true are the words,

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

We are as prone to err as the sparks are to fly upward, and when we would do good, evil is present with us. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other." The psalmist said, Blessed is the man that putteth his trust in the Lord, and not in man. And, "We love him, because he first loved us." And, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." It is written, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" "It is a faithful saying, For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him." "If we deny him, he also will deny us: if we believe not, he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself." "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." How precious is the assurance that the Lord God will come with a strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him, and he shall feed his flock like a shepherd, and gather the lambs in his bosom and carry them on his arm, that he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. O that I could be submissive to his will. I know his ways are just, but my nature is rebellious. I know that his will must be done in earth as it is in heaven. The psalmist said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word. Thou art good, and doest good." "O Lord, teach me thy statutes." Again, "The proud have forged a lie against me: but I will keep thy precepts with my whole heart." "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart." I feel to say with the psalmist, "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" Jesus said, "No man can come to me,

except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." And, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." He said, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing," and the words that Jesus spake were spirit and life indeed. But he said, "There are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not." The Lord alone buildeth Jerusalem, and gathereth together the outcasts of Israel. He healeth the broken-hearted and bindeth up all their wounds. He telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by name. Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised, and great is his honor.

Your unworthy brother,

DAVID BLACKWELL.

THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES.

In what way do the Old Testament Scriptures profit us? We have the New Testament Scriptures, the substance, of which the Old Testament Scriptures are but a pattern. "We have also a more sure word of prophecy," the living word in our heart, by which we walk in the light of the gospel day. We have the reality, why do we need the pattern? We have Jesus, need we go back to the law and the prophets? Do we not continually go back and search the Old Testament Scriptures for instruction in righteousness to the upbuilding of our most holy faith? Having Jesus we yet realize we are weak and full of infirmities. We are not strong as we were when we lived under the law. Jesus we have realized is our strength, our hope, our salvation, but we are weak. Our hope is that we abide in his strength, not our own. We are not strong, because we have spent our strength in entering into gospel liberty. Having the reality within us, we go back again to the pattern, because of our weakness. We know that the law is and has been a ministration of death. We never did live under the law, it was a time of perishing, a time of dying, but now, as we hope, death having been conquered by our gracious Redeemer, and having entered into the possession of the reality, we do believe the truth as it stands in wondrous contrast to the sinfulness of our flesh, showing us on the one hand life, and on the other death. I employ an architect to draw a plan or pattern of a building which I desire to occupy, and he comes to me, saying, Sir, here is your building all complete (on paper), now go and live in it and enjoy it. Why, I say, it would not be possible to live in that, I would starve to death; that is no abiding place. Now I have the building made of which this is a pattern, and exactly according to the pattern. This is what I want, this is what my heart is desiring and seeking for; I want the reality, I want something in which I may abide, in which I may have enjoyment and pleasure. The reality is brought to me, and has become my abiding place, and I am satisfied with it for a while, but because of my weakness I become dissatisfied, not because of imperfection of the abiding place. The garment of righteousness which Christ has woven for us is perfect in every part, but because of our weakness we become dissatisfied, and want to go back to the leeks and onions of Egypt. The garments of the children of Israel never wore out in their forty years travel in the wilderness, although they were traveling a greater part of the time. With all the blessings on their heads they murmured, and said, This manna has become insipid to our taste. We

are looking back to that time when we had variety. Is not this encouragement to you right away, when you go back and see how weak they were? We are constantly looking back for consolation, looking to the pattern. Suppose I take this building or clothing back to the maker, and say, This does not suit me. He never destroyed that pattern; (every architect and, I suppose, every dressmaker, puts in a safe place every pattern,) he gets the pattern, and says, There it is, just as you ordered it. Immediately we see that it is not in the building where dissatisfaction arises, but in ourselves. It is because of our infirmities that we become dissatisfied with the house in which we live, or with the garment we wear, because we are weak, because we are infirm. We look at our brethren and they appear to us perfect in Christ Jesus, we look at ourselves and see depravity, we see weakness, and ourselves as nothing and less than nothing and vanity. Both the Old and the New Testaments are the testimony of what Jesus accomplished in our salvation, and when we come into the presence of the Judge of all the earth we bring the evidence of our deliverance from death, the evidence of our entrance by a new birth into the light of the liberty of the gospel of Christ. The Scriptures testify to the truth of the word which is written and engraven in our hearts, therefore are they convincing and consoling. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." This is the object and use of both Testament Scriptures. How wonderfully well equipped we are with all the armor of God as we press toward the mark for the prize of our high calling of God in Christ. The Scriptures embrace and cover all our travel from nature to grace. We must first pass under the rod of divine justice in order to learn our helplessness. Under the condemning law of God we continually strive to extricate ourselves from its clutches; we yet retain confidence in the flesh. Like Jacob of old, we wrestle all the night with the angel of God's presence, and at the rising of the Sun of Righteousness we cling to the angel, crying for a blessing from heaven. We set up false gods in our heart, and say, as in real idol worship, These be the gods that brought us up out of Egypt, by these we will accomplish our object, by these will we attain unto salvation. We make great clay promises, as strong as Goliath, but one of the spiritual stones from the sling of our spiritual David is sufficient to break in pieces the great clay structure which we have erected. All this time we are wading deep in Arminian waters, and know not the way that we take; that which worketh in us and moveth us to opposition we do not understand, so we swim against the tide, the waves of the sea press hard upon us as we struggle against them, and finally we sink and are lost to sight, and the seaweeds are wrapped about our heads. As we read the Old Testament Scriptures convincing evidences of these exercises are plainly pictured in our minds, and we exclaim, Yes, that is my experience. If these are the exercises of a child of God, then have I good reason to hope, and the hope is a good hope through grace. Jesus said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." At that time only the Old Testament Scriptures were upon record. Jesus is the Sun of Right-

eousness, and his light is reflected as the light of the moon, throughout all the night dispensation, and this is our hope, because his life is our light, and it is by that light we strive to reach our heavenly home. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Yet we must travel all through the night in order to arrive at the morning light, and when the morning light dawns upon us we find old covenant promises in new covenant fulfillment. Our self-righteousness in creature works having failed us, we enter into that rest which remaineth to the people of God, grace becomes our watchword and the emblem of our hope. Whereas we were blind, now we see that Jesus is our life, and that he is "the end of the law for righteousness."

May it please our dear heavenly Father to continue to guide us in the way of all truth, to establish us upon the Rock Christ Jesus, that we may receive the testimony of the Scriptures with meekness and fear, yet in much assurance.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

BALTIMORE, Md.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose a letter from sister Georgia England, which I feel sure will be of comfort to the readers of the SIGNS, and if you agree with me in this you may publish it. I heard from her a few days ago and she was then in good health for her. The members of the churches I serve are in their usual health, and are looking forward to the coming association. Our meetings are good, and there are plain signs of spiritual interest in some who are outside of the church, as well as in those who are inside.

Your brother in gospel bonds,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

HAMPSTEAD, Md., Nov. 11, 1910.

MY DEAR PASTOR:—I have been thinking of writing you, and seeing you for only so short a time has increased the desire to do so. I forgot to ask that you drop me a line to let me know how your daughter was. I hope that ere this she is enjoying that greatest of earthly blessings, good health. O how pleasant it would have been to have gone home with you and had some conversation concerning the things which, as I hope, we both love to meditate upon, and to have heard you and your family sing the good old songs of praise. Not being so situated as to meet with the people of my choice, and, as I hope, of like precious faith, has been to me quite a cross, and especially so as I am somewhat stronger, and am so near such privileges. I saw in the SIGNS that brother Yeoman's prayer had been answered, and I am more than glad. But I know that all is for my good and God's glory, if indeed I am his and he is mine. I never thought about the last preaching day until a remark was made that brought it to my mind. Now what do you think of such indifference, or whatever else you might call it? Such unkind thoughts come into my mind and seem to annoy me more when I am alone and desire that my meditations may be sweet than when I am mingling more with the family I love; but still it is not an evil heart of unbelief, I believe, for then I cry unto the Rock that is higher than I to save me from this evil, for in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.

This fall, while at my niece's, one morning when I arose the thought occurred to me, What do I live for, when so unfit for the duties of this life? Surprising to me was the answer: You

live for the Lord. Perhaps you know what follows: How can I live for the Lord when I live so far from him? Nevertheless I have found comfort from these words, and I hope that while my natural life is decreasing my spiritual life is increasing in love, trust and faith. Just think of it, what is not of faith is sin. Truly sin is mixed with all we do. Great is the mystery of godliness. "It is high, I cannot attain unto it." "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God." While I cannot understand the deep things of God, I can rejoice in the hope that I possess that which passeth all understanding. The young man at the sepulchre told the sisters to go and tell the disciples and Peter. Why was not Peter's name included in the first word, "disciple?" You know that the evil one is always trying to make us believe that we are castaways, and although he never quite succeeds, I like to speak of these doubting points to those whose spiritual understanding is far above my own, and thereby gain comfort.

Sunday, 13th.—I have thought of you to-day as comforting God's people, and I hope he has blessed his word to pastor and sheep and lambs. Thus you see that just your presence for a few moments has stirred up the pure mind by way of remembrance. I still feel as though I were but a lamb in understanding, although it has been nearly a quarter of a century since I believed Christ to be my special Savior, and that the everlasting arms were round about me. On the night of October 11th I was touched by the finger of God, and by the latter part of November I could say, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." I felt I was blessed that my sorrow was so soon turned into joy. But, as you know, such rejoicing cannot last, into each life some rain must fall, and some days must be dark and dreary, but behind the cloud the sun is still shining. As the things of nature need rain to keep them alive, so it is in our experience, and in my weakness I am made to cry to the all-sufficient Savior, who hears the feeblest cry, and here comes in the thought of prayer. Some will say, If God knows all, why pray? Daniel had his stated times of prayer. Why did our Savior pray himself, and teach his disciples to pray? Because "it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." There is no life in us if we do not desire to go to our Father in prayer. He said to his children, "Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." And when we receive it is just for the present; it is like the manna, nothing is left over. I have thought much upon prayer, and have enjoyed the writings in the SIGNS upon it. It is my habit before retiring for the night to try to thank my heavenly Father for his goodness and mercy, and to ask him to keep me near him. While bowed before him one night in a cold and lifeless state, as is often the case with me, the question came, Why attempt to pray in this state of mind? The answer came, God is just as near you as if his presence were felt by you. Is this not so? As Elder Durand said in one of his fragments, It is the same mind, the same heart, the felt presence and power of Jesus has made all the difference with me. After reading that from Elder Durand I felt that we were brother and sister in that high and holy calling, but I do not feel that I am a vessel unto honor, as he is. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."

I was glad to see your writing again in the SIGNS. Yes, it is true that whom he justifies, them he glorifies, and them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. O what a blessed thought! What a glorious hope! When we awake we shall be like Jesus. I will never forget the comfort I received when you spoke from Heb. vi. 19. The substance is still with me. Dear old brother Kelly was living then. It always seemed to do him good to take me to the meeting. If you remember, he did not feel able to be there that day. I heard from the family last week. They were all as well as usual. I was also glad to know that you had been made to rejoice because of the coming of some of the Lord's people into the fold. What a blessing to be with believers enrolled. "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father."

I recently had a Primitive Baptist paper sent me; the first article was entitled, "The Missionary," and on Sunday morning I handed it to Mr. M. to read, and after he had read it he brought it to my room and gave quite a little talk. I told him I would have to tell you that as I could not hear you, I had a little sermon from him.

I have written you a long letter, but as it has been a year since I wrote last, I believe that you will have charity, and that if you see anything wrong you will tell me. I think that you are always glad to hear from us, as we are always glad to hear from you. I hope that soon you and sister Rowe may get to spend the day with us. May God's choicest blessings rest upon you and yours. Love to all.

GEORGIA D. ENGLAND.

TOUCHET, Wash., March 14, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Inclosed you will find a copy of a letter I received from Elder G. E. Mayfield, of Elgin, Oregon, a short time since. It has been a comfort to me, and to the brethren here who have read it, and being upon a subject not often written upon in the SIGNS, I shall be glad to have you publish it if it meets your approbation. He did not write it for publication, but since receiving it I wrote him I should copy and send it to you, and I am sure it will be all right with him. He was the first minister I met on my arrival in this western country in 1882, and a strong attachment has kept us close to each other since then.

Yours in hope of a better world,

R. CUMMINS.

ELGIN, Oregon, Feb. 24, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER:—Your letter received in due time and read with interest, and now I have in mind the words of the apostle to the Hebrews: "For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins."—Heb. x. 26. There is no text to my mind in the Bible that teaches the apostasy of God's people more than this text, provided God's people, who are "born again," can sin willfully, for if there can be a sin committed that there is no sacrifice for, then I do not believe that sin can be forgiven, for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin, says Paul. So if the apostle here teaches that God's people do "sin willfully," he certainly teaches that such a sinner shall never enter heaven, for none shall enter heaven with the least stain of sin attached to him, for there in that blessed world they must stand before the throne without fault. Now I want to notice some things that

the word of God teaches, and are believed by some people, and then I want to try to show what I believe the apostle here means by his language, and if I am wrong I shall be glad if you will point out to me my mistake; but I will have to be brief in what I may say.

The angel to Joseph said, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins," and you know it is our people's faith that he will do this. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief," and you know it is our belief that He accomplished just what he came to do. "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. * * * By the which will we are sanctified [set apart], through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." "Now," says Paul, "where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin." All this shows the complete and perfect sacrifices made for sin, and that the salvation of those for whom this sacrifice was made is perfect and complete, so much so that God said, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Does it not seem clear by this testimony that there could be no sin committed by this people that was not remembered and covered by the atonement? Let us not forget that Paul says, "For if we sin willfully." You remember I quoted that Jesus Christ came into the world to save his people from their sins; now I am going to take the position that God's people, who are born again, called with an holy calling, do not "sin willfully." While all men are dead in trespasses and in sin, God's people when called from this death in sin by the voice of the Son of God are killed to sin and the love of it. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin [willfully], that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Does not the apostle here show that the idea of willful sinning is abhorrent to him? And is it not equally so to all God's called people now? Do God's people sin now because they love and choose to do so? My own experience says no; I hate sin, and would flee from it if I could. Peter says, being dead to sin we should live unto righteousness. In this I think we are plainly taught that God's called people are dead to sin, and that they cannot now live in sin, though as the apostle says, "The creature was made subject to vanity." This is the christian that is thus subject to vanity, though not willingly; it is not his choice, but it is God's will he should be. For this creature "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Paul shows us in his own experience the evil works of sin in his own nature: "If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law, that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. * * * For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Paul shows here in his own experience that the sinning he did was not willful, nor do I believe Paul's experience differs from the experi-

ence of the Lord's people now; all who are born of God hate sin, just as the apostle did; they are dead to sin and cannot live in it.

Now let us come back to the text: "For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." The apostle here, to my mind, presents a supposition: "For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth." We could and did sin willfully before we received this knowledge, but now, after having been taught the truth by the Spirit of God, and having been made to see and feel our lost and undone condition, made to see and feel the sinfulness of sin and our just deserts, we say, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and then God in mercy gives us grace to see that Jesus was made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, and in the shedding of his love in our hearts we are made to say with the prophet, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness." He has lifted us out of the horrible pit, placed our feet upon a rock and established our goings, and put a new song in our mouth, even praise to his name. After receiving the knowledge of the truth, would it not seem horrible that such a favored one could sin willfully? Well, if such an one could, then let us have the result, as the apostle here gives it. Since all that the Son of God hath done has failed to save such an one from willful sin, there can be no more sacrifice for sin; there can be no other who would accomplish more if Christ hath failed, and now of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall he be worthy who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God (that is what the willful sin would do) and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sacrificed an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace? Here, I say, is a supposed case, and the apostle shows what the result would be, and he teaches us a truth by contrast, as it were. This little word "if" the apostle uses where he says, "If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God." We do not believe the apostle here meant to teach that Abraham was justified by works. Again, "If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." Now here in this we have the same truth taught by contrast: If they shall fall away the result would be to crucify the Son of God and put him to an open shame, and who but an Arminian believes that such a thing is done? Paul here teaches that such would be so did they fall away. So in our text, "For if we sin willfully," we also trample underfoot the Son of God, and we count the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and do despite to the spirit of grace, and I do not believe that Paul means to teach us that they do. We are not of them that draw back into perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul; so those who are born again, dead to sin, are not those who "sin willfully." The nominal professor may, and I do not know but he does. Like the dog and the sow Peter speaks of, and as John says of some, They went out from us, that it might be made manifest that they were not of us. The apostle warns his brethren to examine themselves to see whether they be in the

faith. "Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"

Now, my brother, I must close these hastily written lines, and hope I have done no violence to the truth, and that they may prove of interest to you, at least pay you for the trouble of reading them. I feel I have not expressed myself as I would have liked.

Yours in gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

RUTHERFORD, Ontario, February, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—For some time past I have had a desire to write a few lines to the pilgrims and strangers scattered abroad through the east, west, north and south, many of whom I have met personally, and others through reading the SIGNS. I have had great pleasure in reading their experiences, and the writings of the Elders whom I have heard preach. I have been down in the valley, and their powerful explanations of holy writ have raised me to the top of the mountains and brought me back to my experience, where I once tasted of the divine power of Jesus Christ. In March, 1887, I was brought to know the state and condition in which I stood before my Maker. It was on Sunday; I was reading a storybook or novel, and was very much interested to find out how it ended. A friend who was visiting at my home at the time remarked to me that I was not keeping the Sabbath as it should be kept, and if I did not read the Bible it would be better not to read anything. At the time I made rather light of such an idea. I was brought up morally, as far back as I can remember going to meeting and Sunday School, and very often ministers talked to me about the condition of my soul. However I concluded to put the book away until I could read it some time when alone. The first opportunity I had I went for my book, but as soon as I laid my hand upon it I was quickened; the veil was removed from my eyes, and I could see what a sinner I was. I put the book down, as I could not read one line. I got the Bible, and it happened to open at Luke xiv., so I began there and read to the end of Revelation. I can never forget the pleasure I took in reading those chapters and comparing them with myself. I then read from the first of Matthew to Luke xiv. Then I started to read the first of Genesis and went to the end of Malachi. That was the first time I ever read those chapters that I could see anything in them. I did not seem to care for anything else but reading the Bible and comparing God's word with myself, and the more I read it the more I was condemned. I would read thirty or more chapters at a time, stealing away by myself, for I did not want any one to know that I was reading the Bible. I would then try and pray, but all I could say was, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. There was a hymn I used to know, it read thus:

> "Are you weary, are you heavy laden?
> Tell it to Jesus, tell it to Jesus.
> Have you sins that to man's eye are hidden?
> Tell it to Jesus alone."

I would repeat this hymn over and over, but got no evidence that He heard me. I could see I was sentenced for the judgment, still I felt God was good and just, and I was deserving of all that he showed me. I would not give up works, and would say, Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner, although I felt I was the lump of clay, the vessel that was made unto dishonor. I would think of Romans ix. 18: "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he

hardeneth." After I was married we always attended the Presbyterian meetings, but at that time there was no preaching in the winter months, so thought I would go to hear what others had to say, and perhaps they would give me some comfort. There was a meetinghouse two miles either side of us, so on Sunday I went, but did not find any comfort there. The next Sunday I went to the other, but could get no comfort there, and had no desire to go back again. During that week one of the Presbyterian Elders came to our home and told us there was a minister from Toronto coming to preach for six months. I went out to hear him, and sat in the back seat. I did not want any one to see me, as I felt I had not a friend on earth. When the minister got up to preach I thought he set his eyes on me and knew everything I ever did, by the wonderful things he told me. It made me think of John iv. 29: "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" I was very anxious to hear him again. The next Sunday a friend came to visit us from Duart, who was a follower of the Old School Baptists; I insisted upon his going with us to hear this man, so he went. After the sermon was over the minister asked if there were any who would like to join the church; if so, to remain, as he would like to talk with them before the next Sunday, which was communion. I thought, If I were only one to remain, and yet I knew I was not worthy; I felt to be the least of all there. When we got home my friend from Duart, who was a subject of grace, saw I was deeply exercised, and asked me if I were a sinner. I decidedly told him I was, and that there was no person created like me; that I was like the lump of clay made unto dishonor. He told me Christ had begun a good work in me, and would perform it. He said this with tears dropping from his eyes, and they were the most comforting words I had ever heard. That was the first time I could see my works as filthy rags. For Christ beginning a work in me showed me plainly that our works are as filthy rags. I could see it is not of works, lest any man should boast. The rest of the day my mind was at ease, and thinking of Christ beginning a work in such a sinner as I, could see him in all his beauty. The next day my mind rested on baptism. I thought it the right way, as Christ went down under the water. I thought if I joined the church I would like to be baptized. This troubled me a great deal, as it was not the mode of Presbyterians. In my deepest thoughts these words came to me: Stand still, and know that I am God. At that moment I saw by faith Christ nailed to the cross, and out of his side poured blood and water, and these words were spoken to me, "It is finished." Everything around me was praising God, and I was very happy. I thought I would always remain in that condition, as nothing seemed to mar my happiness, but it was not long until the thorn returned to the flesh. Then I was shown 2 Corinthians xii. 7: "Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure." I have seen the thorn in the flesh many times since, and it brings me down into the valley, and while I am wrestling there the Lord picks me up and shows me the blood of Jesus Christ, which was shed for me. Then I am brought to the top of the mountains,

where I can taste of the divine power; there I can look back to where I saw Christ nailed to the cross, and feel that his blood was spilt for me. I feel I have some part with him, for in his blood, his crucifixion, burial and resurrection I see his finished work, and the last day, which was called the sabbath. How thankful we should be when we can see his work so complete, and that we know we have a supreme God ruling over us, that he can do all things for us. The doctrine of salvation by grace is foolishness to the unbeliever, and what a mercy it is to the believer, to be kept by the power of God, that "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God." If I did not believe this I would be without hope in the world. My trust is in God, not in man, for if it were in man I would be most miserable. It is fourteen years since my brother asked me to go to the February meetings at Duart. He was a member with the Old School Baptists, and said he knew I would understand them. I went and heard the full, complete and finished salvation by grace. I am a member of the Presbyterian denomination, but hold to the faith of predestination according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. A year ago last February, at the Duart meetings, I heard Elder Ker with such comfort I have had a desire to write my experience, and hope I have said some comforting word to some one who feels as weak and unworthy as I.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

SARAH J. CAMPBELL.

EUGENE, Oregon, Dec. 21, 1910.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I just received a letter from my brother in the flesh, and I hold a little hope that he may be in the Spirit, but when I look within something whispers, Do you dare hope spiritual relationship with one of God's shepherds? The letter should belong to the family of our belief, and I submit it to you. A great many of the western Baptists know of my brother's late enlistment in God's cause and long to hear from him, and by sending you this letter (if you see fit to give it space) many will read from his pen who otherwise would not. I especially have in mind such dear old Elders as J. P. Allison (and wife), Silas Williams and many others who have known him from a mere boy, and again as leader in the ballrooms, but now by the help of God a very humble but earnest minister of the Primitive Baptist Church (chosen pastor of Coast Fork and Oak Creek churches). I have seen him many times rise before us as white as mortal man can grow, with tears streaming, voice trembling, entirely robbed of every earthly hope of strength, asking his brethren, "What can I say?" When it seemed to me we could see the glory of his Master pass over his poor scarred face (he was very badly burned while in infancy by the hand of the unworthy writer), but I want to say to his brethren, that face grows more than beautiful as God speeds His words from his lips, even faster than they can be uttered. He at all times asks an interest in our prayers. Now, dear brethren, I in turn ask an interest from all the household of faith, that our church be supported by God's hand, that every one of God's dear chosen children may meet with blessings in this closing and beginning of another year of life. To those

who are afflicted by any kind of illness, may God grant strength to say, "Thy will be done." May God grant the dear editors of our paper, and all the writers, strength to uphold the principles of the Old School Baptist doctrine.

Your very unworthy sister,

(MRS.) J. B. POWRIE.

DRAIN, Oregon, Dec. 16, 1910.

DEAR SISTER:—I have been thinking all the evening that I would write a few words to you, but fear that I cannot write anything of comfort or cheer, as so much of my time is spent in the valley that I do not feel worthy to write any one, whether natural or spiritual kindred. Sometimes I feel that I cannot praise the Lord enough, and forget the old man for a season, but O how soon am I cast down again and grovel with the beasts of the earth, and see myself as the most miserable of all human beings, covered with putrefying sores without, and ten thousand times worse within. Once when I was trying to speak at brother Burges' last summer, I thought I had never seen a purer congregation; they had come long distances to be at that meeting, some coming over eighty miles, when suddenly I viewed myself in a large mirror. O what a horror it brought upon me, and I could not keep from glancing often to view myself and ask myself if it could be possible that any good could come from such a creature, and after all it seemed that they were much comforted, but you know, dear sister, it pleased the Lord to speak through me. O how dumb I seem to be, and unfit to take the name of Jesus upon my sin-polluted lips, or to carry a message of peace to the household of God, but it gives me some courage when I think of the words of the prophet Isaiah, saying, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." Is it possible we have seen the innocent Lamb that gives us the knowledge of our sins, or are we like Herod and Pilate, who were enemies of long standing, until they met the meek and lowly Jesus, when the same day they became friends? or are we like Peter, who denied his Lord and Savior thrice in the hour of affliction? or is it that God has given us the knowledge of sin? Do we hunger after righteousness? and if so, who gives us the appetite? and then if we have the appetite who gives the food? This the world is trying to claim the honor of today; so would have the Egyptians had not God sent his governor before, so the sons of Jacob did not have to go to the Egyptians to secure food, but went to their own kindred, in the person of Joseph, who had full possession of all the fruits of the land. So, dear sister, as God provided for the children of Israel, so does he provide to-day; and as Joseph would not accept their money, neither does God accept it to-day, but gives freely by grace, and not of works. But am I worthy of any of this free gift? No, not any. If I could be like Elijah of old, and hide myself away in a cave, away from the sight of man, I feel it would only be a relief. I know that I am not hid from God, but leave myself in his care, knowing that his will is done in earth as it is in heaven, so I am always in trouble in mind and body. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Must Jesus bear the cross alone, and all the world go free? No, there's a cross for every one, and there's a cross for me.

But now, dear sister, you will tire of

my writing, so I will bring this to a close, hoping that you will pardon me for writing you my feelings. May God bless you all, is the prayer of your unworthy brother,

C. F. MORNINGSTAR.

"HIMSELF HATH DONE IT."

(Isaiah xxxviii. 15.)

KING Hezekiah was brought low, and was sick unto death. In this affliction our gracious God wrought very mercifully with him. He turned his face to the wall and cried unto the Lord, Happy is the man to whom affliction is sanctified, so that he is moved to pour out his soul's perplexities into the bosom of God. Hezekiah turned his face to the wall. He was turned from the world; he turned from all that it could afford him; he turned away from all creature aid; he wept sore, and turned unto his everlasting, almighty Friend. Like a poor, sick, fretful, much indulged child he poured forth his complaints. God heard his cries, saw his tears, recovered him from his sickness and granted him fifteen years more to live upon the earth. God gave him a sign, such as no human power could give, that he should recover of his sickness and go up to the house of the Lord. "Behold," saith the Lord, "I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down, in the sundial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down." "Himself hath done it." God is ever doing marvelous things. His unceasing providences, extending to all the universe, declare his omnipotence, wisdom and goodness, and yet comparitively few of the human race acknowledge his eternal power and Godhead. O to worship him, to fall down and kneel before the Lord our Maker. His counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure; whatever he hath promised he is able also to perform. "Job answered the Lord, and said, I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee." "Is there any thing too hard for the Lord?" If we have been mindful of the dealings of the Lord with us, in how many deliverances, timely helps, in the crooked being made straight and the darkness turned to light, in putting off our sackcloth and clothing us with gladness, we trace the kind hand of the Lord, and in adoring gratitude we say, "Himself hath done it." Many a time in our straits we could not see how it could be done; our way was all hedged in, we were shut up and could not come forth, refuge failed us, and all the arms of flesh that we attempted to lean upon could not sustain us. We found every staff to be a broken reed that failed us in our extremity, and pierced our hand when we leaned upon them for support. Like the dry bones in the open valley we cried, "Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts." But though our ways be inclosed with hewn stone, there never can arise such conditions of conflict, oppression and want but that our God can and will bring his elect relief, bring them out of their graves. (Ezek. xxxvii. 13.) He will in due season pardon their iniquities, deal in all new covenant bountifulness with them, heal all their wounds and bring them into the goodly land, to delight themselves in the sure mercies of David, and they will gratefully acknowledge that, "Himself hath done it." The works of the Lord are great, sought out of them that have pleasure therein, and nowhere are his works so transcendently great and glorious as in his works of redemption,

regeneration and the eternal glorification of his chosen people. When he chose them in Christ before the foundation of the world, and blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, and predestinated them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, truly we must say, "Himself hath done it." It was all according to the counsel of his own will. (Eph. i. 3–5.) Contemplate that wondrous act of God, the most glorious, the most transcendent act of Jehovah. "God was manifest in the flesh." "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." Jesus Christ is in verity Emmanuel, God with us. In this act our nature, our manhood, is exalted to infinite heights, to infinite, eternal glories. Here again we must sing with the multitude of the heavenly host, "Glory to God in the highest."

"Himself hath done it." Let us go to Calvary, there behold the crucifixion of the incarnate Son of God. Here was the culmination of all Christ's sufferings for his body's sake, which is the church. He gave himself for it, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor. Wounded, bruised and stricken, he poured out his soul unto death. O what agonies! O cruel sin! O precious, suffering Lamb of God! In agonies and blood he made atonement for our iniquities, he put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; he made peace for us with God by the blood of his cross. There was none to help him, none to uphold, therefore his own arm brought salvation unto his heritage, for the year of his redeemed was come. "Himself hath done it." Do we name the name of Christ? Are we his? Have we looked upon him whom we have pierced? O, more and more to know Christ and him crucified, to be given sweet moments musing upon the love of our suffering, bleeding, dying Savior.

"Calvary's summit let us trace,
View the heights and depths of grace,
Count the purple drops and say,
Thus my sins were washed away."

O ye who have named the name of Christ, was Jesus crucified for our sin? Can we then think sin to be a trifle? Can sin be no burden, never give us grief and shame? Surely we have not so learned Christ. If Christ is our Foundation, then we are eternally secure. Wicked professors, who hold the truth in unrighteousness, (Romans i. 18,) ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, (Jude 4,) may assume they have license to continue in sin, but thus it is written, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." That work of God in calling us by his grace, and revealing his Son in us, in bringing us with humble, contrite hearts at his feet, in imparting to our sin-bruised souls the consolation that our sins are all forgiven through Emmanuel's blood, and raising up in our hearts the hope of righteousness, of eternal life and immortal glory, of it all we are ever singing, "Himself hath done it." "By the grace of God I am what I am." And when all the work of redemption is consummated, and all the ransomed church of God brought home to glory; when in the resurrection, at the last day, the last trump shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed, ("For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality") then we shall be conformed to the image of Christ, we shall be like him, we shall see him as he is and be with him forever, dwelling in everlasting

bliss, and Hezekiah's words will still be a note in our grateful, immortal song, "Himself hath done it."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

WILMER, Ark., Jan. 29, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have many times in the past few years expressed my sentiments freely as regards the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, our family paper, for I feel that it belongs to us, the children of God. I have my doubts seriously as regards the christianity of any one claiming to be an Old School Baptist who does not indorse it fully. The older I grow the richer it seems; its columns are full to overflowing with the doctrine which I believe: the predestination of all things. Not some things, or a part of some things, but all things in the highest, deepest, broadest sense, along with unconditional election, which goes hand in hand with predestination. Anything less than this I consider an impediment in the way, or a detriment to the cause of truth and to the comfort of God's dear children.

I have just returned home from a little meeting, where a few of us met together at Liberty Church and listened to the preaching of Elder J. P. Baker, and Elder G. W. Meece. It was a treat, a comfort, a feast, for two days. We enjoyed ourselves; just a few gathered from the cold world of business. We mingled together in love and fellowship, and with tears sang songs of praise and gratitude unto our great Redeemer's name, and only a day or two ago I had another feast, an hour or two of pleasure: a sister from Illinois came to my home; she was a stranger indeed in a strange land, but from our first greeting I saw that there was a manifestation of love and fellowship. Such moments the world can never know. These Old Baptists are the only people on earth that I can really love. We sat and talked together of the goodness of God, and of his wonderful power. I soon learned that her heart had been touched and made tender by the grace of God; she possessed a meek and quiet spirit, and would rather suffer affliction with the people of God than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. How pleasant are such meetings! They do not come often, but when they do come my heart leaps with joy and my soul is full to overflowing with the mercy and glory of God; I am lifted up until sometimes I do not know where or what I am. The presence of this dear sister was like a refreshing shower after a long, hot summer's day. I gave her a copy of the SIGNS to take home with her, and hope that we shall soon meet again.

I had a presentation of some things lately that I had not thought about for nearly forty years. We Irwin boys went to Sunday School one day. They had Sunday School teachers then, and they have Sunday School teachers now. I was then quite young, having been born in 1857, and like most boys and girls of certain age, I thought myself very smart. As I said, we went to the Sunday School one day, and I remember as well as if it were yesterday the slick, smirky smile of the teacher as he walked along among the little boys and girls. I also remember what he said: "If you will be good little boys and girls you will go to heaven when you die. If you do not, you will go to Hades." One of us said, "What does that mean?" In a low tone of voice, almost a whisper, he said, "Hell." Now then let us draw the contrast, not for argument's sake but for the truth's sake. Let us call upon Paul for a witness and hear

his testimony. How is it, Paul? "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." It is not, If you will be good little boys and girls you will go to heaven when you die; if not, you will go to hell. Is that the testimony of the learned apostle Paul, or is it not? How great the contrast, how rich the testimony. Which will you believe, the Sunday School teacher or the apostle Paul? The teaching of the Sunday School teacher was no worse forty years ago than it is now; in fact, taking the Bible as our guide, it seems even worse now.

Your brother,

C. G. IRWIN.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, March 8, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—We know that in ourselves, that is, in our flesh, dwells no good thing. We cannot of ourselves, of our own merit, present any acceptable offering to God. We are but earthen vessels, created in weakness. Our flesh is enmity against God, and cannot produce any good or acceptable fruit. A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. But if we are born again of that incorruptible Seed, then we possess, even in this earthen vessel, a treasure without price. We are grafted into the good Tree, and partake of his goodness, so through his righteousness good fruits are manifest. "The tree is known by his fruit." Out of our evil, fleshly nature can proceed only all manner of wickedness, while out of our spiritual nature can proceed only righteousness, and in this we cannot glory, save in the Lord, for, "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" No man can see God and live, but we can see the manifestation of his works in his people, through Jesus Christ. Such works give witness of his people; if these be lacking we have no evidence of that spiritual life. Therefore the apostle James says, "Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." The first is an impossibility, for works are evidences of faith; by spiritual works is living faith made manifest. We who are in Christ Jesus are new creatures, created unto good works. How then shall we live in sin? He who lives in sin is the servant of sin. We cannot serve two masters. Truly one in whose heart God has written his law is of a very tender conscience towards sin, and beholds his own iniquity as a mountain, and it is hateful to him. He cannot abide in sin and say, I have peace. Nay, through his own weakness he is made to cry out daily unto the Lord. He cannot behold another's sinfulness as he beholds his own, nor would he judge any man as worse than himself. He realizes, "By the grace of God I am what I am," a sinner saved by grace. "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." We are blind, and have never seen the light. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid." "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" Can we who have professed faith in Jesus for the remission of sins lightly defile the temple of God? What though the world makes light of sin and sanctions iniquity? "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord."

My dear brethren, I send you these few thoughts to do with as you think best. May God prosper your work of love and bless you with his peace, which passes understanding.

Your unworthy brother, in hope,

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1911.

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WORSHIP.

AMONG the many things spoken concerning God in the Scriptures, this one thing, viz., "worship," is among the most prominent and most frequently mentioned. It is often spoken of as relates to the outward forms of it, especially the forms commanded to be observed by all those who seek to approach into his presence, both in the Old Testament and in the New, but especially is it presented as that which must be felt in the heart of all who come to God. First of all, it signifies a reverential spirit, and then it includes the words and forms of devotion, by which this reverence in the heart may find expression. Connected with this reverence are love, fear, humility, gratitude, adoration, praise, prayer and all other emotions of the soul which may be animated by that knowledge of God which his Spirit imparts to us. In its outward expression it signifies that worshipers ascribe to God all that belongs to him, both as regards his essential attributes and the things which he has done and continues to do. It is worship to declare his mighty acts, to speak of all that he has said, and it is worship to ascribe to him omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience, wisdom, truth, holiness, justice and mercy, and to declare that these things are all his in the highest degree. But that worship which is acceptable to God in the highest sense is, that from our hearts we confess to him that all these things are true of him, with reverence and godly fear. Our words of worship amount to but little unless we speak with awe, and lowliness, and humility, and fear of his name, and if these feelings dwell in the heart this is sweet incense indeed, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

It is not worshiping acceptably, with reverence and fear, to make any or all these attributes of Jehovah the subjects of debate, but it is worship to bear witness to them, both in our own heartfelt devotions, and then before men. It has been our feeling, from the first of our thoughts about these things, that if any deny that these attributes, any or all of them, belong to God, it is not ours to enter into debate about the matter, but simply to declare what the Scriptures say, and leave the result with God. We have never felt we could admit that any of these things were debatable at all; we could not consent to regard them as the subjects of debate, as though they were doubtful, or as though anything could be the subject of question among them all. If any man, for instance, denies that our God is omnipotent, we have no more contention with him; he knows not God, and all we could say would not impart that knowledge; that man's controversy is with God, not with us. He must be left to the dealings of God, who alone can convince any one of the things that belong to himself. We do not mean by this that we would not think it our duty to seek to instruct any one who came, not as an opponent of the truth, but as one who felt the need of instruction in it.

There is certainly a vast difference between the two attitudes of mind; and neither do we mean that any man can comprehend what any one of the infinite attributes of Jehovah embraces. We may, and do indeed in some small measure, apprehend what such words as omnipotence, omnipresence or omniscience signify, but we cannot comprehend them. All of us have an infinity of truth still to learn concerning any of these things, no matter how much may have been shown us already, and it is sure that heaven alone will fully reveal our God, and then we shall worship him, seeing as we are seen and knowing as we are known. It is not worshiping God when we attempt to fix a limit to any of his attributes. It was one of the sins charged against Israel in the former times that they limited the Holy One of Israel. To believe and to contend that there is a limit to the power, or wisdom, or sovereignty of God, is to incur the same reproof that was urged against Israel. It is a solemn thought with any one who knows the plague of his own heart, that wherein any one is guilty before God, his own soul is also guilty. There is not a believer of any length of experience who will not confess in his own heart and before God, that he has been guilty of limiting the God whom he desires to serve and worship, and the fear to do what the Lord has commanded him, or to go where he has commanded, is the proof of unbelief in the perfect wisdom, the absolute power and the unlimited sovereignty of God. In the course which he has pursued, and in the fear of his heart, such an one can but confess that he has limited God. But yet this is not any proof that he is among those who deny and contend against God. Where there is shame and sorrow of heart, because of these evil thoughts within, and because of failure to do the will of God, there is full evidence of the indwelling of the Spirit, which lusts against the flesh. That man is not of the ungodly world, though he does recognize that the ungodliness of the world makes its presence felt in his heart. The world loves its thoughts against God, but he hates them and desires to be rid of them; to him these things are as a body of death against which he cries out. There is a vast difference between weakness of faith and no faith at all; there is a vast difference between unbelief that is complained of and unbelief in which one is satisfied; it is the difference between life and death.

It was in our mind when we began writing to speak especially of one attribute of our God among all the others, and we speak of one, because manifestly it would be impossible in the limits of an editorial to set forth all that is embraced in the worship of God. The one attribute that was in our mind is embraced in the word "omniscience." While this word is not found in the Bible, or at least no Hebrew or Greek word was translated by this word in our King James' version, yet it expresses the substance of hundreds of texts found in every book in the Bible, and it presents what must be necessarily inferred from the whole tenor of the Scriptures. The word simply means, "knowing all things," and the Scriptures certainly abundantly set forth this truth. It scarcely seems needful to quote them, and it would be impossible to find space in one article to quote them all, and we cannot think that it is needful here to do so, because one could not be a believer in God at all without believing this, and we cannot think that any who bear the name of Old School Baptists would for a moment think of denying this truth.

But we will however refer to a few of the many portions of Scripture which directly assert this truth. "Thou God seest me."—Gen. xvi. 13. "The Lord searcheth all hearts."—1 Chron. xxviii. 9. "He knoweth the way that I take."—Job xxiii. 10. "He that is perfect in knowledge."—Job xxxvi. 4. "He beholdeth all the sons of men."—Psalms xxxiii. 13. "His eyes behold the nations."—Psalms lxvi. 7. "His understanding is infinite."—Psalms cxlvii. 5. "There is no searching of his understanding."—Isaiah xl. 28. See also Psalms cxxxix; Isaiah xl.. 26; Matt. x. 29, 30; Acts xv. 18. These are but a few of the portions of the word which declare the omniscience, or the all-knowledge of God. Beside the direct testimony of the word, this truth necessarily follows from a consideration of other truths concerning God which are declared in the word. That he knows all things, follows from the consideration of his immutability or unchangeableness. It is clear if it be true there can be no change in him, it follows that he must always, from all eternity, have known all that is, or ever has been, or that ever shall be, otherwise there would be a change in his knowledge, and if there has been any change in his knowledge he is not immutable. But he is without variableness or the shadow of turning. Still further, it must needs be that if any one thing was known from eternity to him, then all other things must have been known. The only reason one of us cannot know for a certainty that any one event will transpire one moment from the present, is because we do not know the thousands and millions of things which have to do with the producing of any one thing; because we do not know all the future we cannot know anything at all in the future. We say "know," not suppose. Suppose that one should say, This cannon ball, about to be discharged, will come to a dead stop and be exactly balanced upon the top of an iron bar driven into the ground five miles away, and we should be well assured that he knew whereof he affirmed, we should also know that he must know and take into account the multiplied millions of things which would have to do with the exact fulfillment of his word. So when our God declares that any one thing shall take place at a given time and place, we feel assured that he knows whereof he speaks, and we are sure that it will be so. But also we must be well aware that in this one point of knowledge there is involved millions of things and events between the declaration and its fulfillment, which he must also know. In the ordinary course of providence nothing stands by itself; everything is the result of unnumbered causes going before it. These considerations involve the doctrine of the omniscience of Jehovah, as well as the plain testimony of the Scriptures.

But it is in our mind to speak of what this doctrine involves, or rather what it embraces. It means that there is not a succession of knowledge in God; that is, he does not know things as they come to pass, as do we. Men know some things to-day that they did not know yesterday. Men grow in knowledge, but it is not so with God; he not only knows all things that are, or that occur at any one given moment, but he from eternity knew all that ever should be, or that should be done, in every moment that ever should be. No wonder the psalmist said, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." To say less than this of Jehovah is to limit him in

knowledge. Omniscience means that he knows all things with as clear a conception of each and all of them as though his gaze were fastened upon but one thing. Poor mortals can hold in clear understanding but one thing at a time, but our infinite God embraces all, and one is not more dim to him than another. What glorious truths these last two considerations are. How good for that one who feels himself to be less than the least, less than the small dust of the balance, to know from the word of God that he sees even him, and that the king upon the throne is no more in his mind than is such a mote as himself. We have felt to rejoice in this truth again and again in moments when we have most clearly realized our own nothingness. The great things which God created are wonderful indeed, but no less wonderful are the least things. We gaze with awe at the vast worlds, each held in its place by omnipotent power, but there is just as much to fill the soul with awe in a mote that floats in the sunbeam. The wonders of the telescope are no greater than the wonders revealed by the microscope. Think of living creatures, each with limbs, wings, head and every member of their bodies perfect, so small that a hundred thousand of them could stand upon the head of a pin, yet these are the creatures of God, and are in his keeping, and are present before him as entirely as the gigantic worlds above us. Omniscience also means that not only at each moment, but from all eternity, God knew all these creatures, large and small; that he knew just when each would begin to be, and when each should cease to be, and every step of their life between. He knew and knows all about the place occupied by each grain of sand on the seashore, each mote that fills the air that we breathe. He knew each and every thought that should ever fill the mind of each and all mankind. He knew each and every word that ever should be spoken or written in all the world. He knew all things. But our thoughts fail; the field is too vast for finite minds. Where the limits of mortal conception are found is but the smallest step in the wisdom of God; there is no limit to his knowledge or his understanding. Because of this we know that prophecies of men inspired by him are sure of fulfillment. When we read in the word of God that this or that shall be, we may rest secure that there is no mistake; God through prophecy speaks that which he knows. Men at best can but conjecture, or form an opinion as to what shall be, from what already is seen by them to be, but the knowledge of God is not formed from reasoning from what is to what may be. It is "immanency," or "inherent" in himself. Our God does not, in other words, gain knowledge from other sources, as do creatures, but he knows within himself. These are the mysteries of God; let us think and speak of them reverently. Lastly, if there be any meaning in language, it follows that as the knowledge by Jehovah of the future is knowledge, and not supposition or opinion, all things that he foreknew must take place, otherwise his knowledge is not knowledge, but supposition only; and so in the word of God we read of the wills and shalls of the Lord, knowing that they mean not only that which is future, but that which is certain. Let the certainty of future events arise from what source they may, it is sure that the foreknowledge of God shows that they all are fixed and certain.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

REVELATION XIV. 9–11.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Will you be so kind as to give your views on Revelation xiv. 9-11? and oblige yours in hope of eternal life,

S. R. BURGESS.

GIRARD, Ill., Jan. 29, 1864.

Conscious of our inability to do full justice to the subject embraced in the text named, we are nevertheless willing to present for consideration such views as we have and submit them to the consideration of brother Burgess and to our readers generally.

Immediately after the vision which John saw of the beast which rose up out of the sea, and the two horned beast coming up out of the earth, and the image of the beast, and his power, persecution and proscription, as recorded in the thirteenth chapter, he "looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." And he says, "I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God. And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." Then follows the text on which we are requested to give our views: "And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name."

"And the third angel followed them." Namely, the two preceding angels; the first having the everlasting gospel to preach, and the second announcing the fall of Babylon, and this third angel bearing the solemn admonition expressed in the fearful and startling words of our text: "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand." The beast described in the thirteenth chapter, whether in his dragon form, as set forth in Rev. xii. 3, or as seen rising out of the sea or coming up out of the earth, or as presented in the image, the same principle of idolatry is involved in either case, and

the same tremendous consequences must result. In Rev. xiii. 8, it is said, "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." The manner of their worship is stated in verse four of the same chapter: "And they worshiped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshiped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" Their admiration of his power, confidence in his miracles, signs and lying wonders, and submission to his assumed authority, and obedience to his decrees, as also their reliance on his power to save, are all idolatrous, and bestowing upon the antichristian beast that homage and devotion which belongs only to God. This homage, whether offered to the papal beast with seven heads and ten horns, or the protestant beast with two horns like a lamb, or to the image made by those who dwell upon the earth, in obedience to the mandate of the two horned beast, the wickedness is the same, and the consequence equally fearful.

"And receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand." The mark of the beast appears to be that by which they who receive it are to be known as the worshipers of the beast. As those who are redeemed from the earth have their Father's name written in their forehead, so false worshipers are marked with an imprint of character like that of their mother, a copy of which is given in Rev. xvii. 5. The initiatory mark of a Jewish proselyte was that of circumcision, and the initiatory mark of many of the worshipers of the beast is made by what they have substituted in the stead of circumcision—made by the hand of the priest on the forehead of the initiated, as in their wicked perversion of baptism. The mark of the beast on the forehead may also signify that external display of an antichristian spirit which is readily seen as identifying those who bear it as the admirers and worshipers of the beast; and as the hand is the member of the body by which we work, so the hands of all who worship the beast are defiled with blood, with cruelty, with persecution and with oppression. With the forehead they give countenance to the abominations of the beast, and with their hands they perform their works of darkness.

Whether we have a correct view of the mark of the beast or not, it is certainly a mark by which the worshipers are known by their party, for only those who can show the mark are exempt from proscription and bitter persecution, for under the turbulent power of the image of the beast no man shall be allowed to buy or sell save he that hath the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. But their special privileges, in which the worshipers of the beast may revel for a season, are limited, and the day of retribution is hastening on apace, for they "shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation," and they "shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name." These are strong and expressive words, the wrath of an indignant God unmixed and unremitting, for ever and ever. Who can describe the storms of wrath which God has laid up in store against the day of wrath for the ungodly? All nations

have drank of the maddening cup of the fornication of the whore of Babylon. Exhilarated and inflamed from its intoxicating power, infatuated, besotted and raving in the delirium tremens of her accursed cup, the earth has been, and is still being, drenched with human blood. But the avenging hand of God is even now uplifted, and the day of retribution is nigh at hand. The scene will soon be changed, and they who have the seal of God upon them, and not the mark of the beast, shall shout an everlasting deliverance, and all the worshipers of the beast receive their irrevocable doom.

In view of the tremendous import of our subject, does it not become us to inquire most seriously and prayerfully, Whose image or superscription do we bear? Have we the seal of God upon us? Are we sealed with the Holy Spirit of God, with the Spirit of promise? For "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." The Spirit of Christ is holy, harmless, meek, loving, patient, forbearing and forgiving, and as many as are led by it, they are the sons of God and heirs of glory. But the spirit and mark of the beast are unholy, malicious, haughty, hateful, overbearing and revengeful.

"Lord, search my heart, and try my ways,
And make my soul sincere,
That I may stand before thy face,
And find acceptance there."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., August 1, 1864.

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WE are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at his residence, Feb. 27th, 1911, Gordon W. Disharoon and Miss Mary J. Lavelle, both of Philadelphia, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Mary P. Laws Shockley died in Salisbury, Md., Feb. 23rd, 1911. She was born Feb. 19th, 1876, and was married Jan. 1st, 1906, to J. Ernest Shockley She was afflicted with tubercular trouble, and two years ago last Christmas went to a sanitarium, and was much benefited by the treatment. At my last visit to the church in Salisbury, the fifth Sunday in January, she was at meeting, and appeared to be in a comfortable condition. Soon after that she took cold, and that was followed by pleurisy, which was the immediate cause of her death. She suffered a great deal, but was very patient. When breathing with great difficulty she said, "Lord, help me," and looking at her aunt, Mrs. Mezick, she said, "I need it." She had a good hope through grace, and was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, but had never felt at liberty to go to the church. I had some correspondence and conversation with her, and was satisfied that she was an experienced person. On Wednesday she was talking with her sister, Mrs. Florence Disharoon, of Philadelphia, about one who had scoffed at the idea of Divine providence, and said, "I could not get along at all if I were not fully assured that everything is controlled by One who knows what is best for us a great deal better than we do; and we all have a way of saying that if we had done differently, things would have been different. But I do not want any of you to worry because I did not go to the sanitarium last fall, because it is all right. I cannot talk much now, but I have no fears for the future." She had a hard night Wednesday night. When her uncle, brother Mezick, went into her room early Thursday morning she said to him, "It is pretty nearly over." Two had gone out of the room for a few moments. She said to her sister, "I wish they were all here," then turning her head she said, "Rest!" and passed away. The sorrow for their loss will be very heavy upon her devoted husband, her aged father, her brother and sister and the many relatives and friends who are left to mourn. Our dear brother and sister Mezick, whose house had been her home for so many years, will most deeply feel the loneliness because Mollie is not there. May the Lord comfort them all.

The funeral was held Saturday, Feb. 25th, in the meetinghouse in Salisbury. Elder A. B. Francis preached to a large congregation. The burial was at Wango, her old home.

ALSO,

Mrs. Henry Ayres, a member of the church at Burdett, N. Y., departed this life March 17th, after an illness of about five days, of pneumonia, aged 82 years and 9 months. She was baptized by Elder Reed Burrett when she was about sixteen years of age. I first met sister Ayres soon after I was baptized, in 1864, and have had an intimate acquaintance with her from that time. She was a most devoted and faithful member of the church, and was held in the highest and most affectionate esteem by all the brethren and sisters in the old Chemung Association, and by all who knew her. She was truly a lovely christian woman. Her husband, brother Henry Ayres, passed away several years ago. They had two sons, only one of whom survives her, brother Ananias Ayres, who, with his wife and other relatives, are left to mourn. I am told she was perfectly resigned and ready to go. When her doctor said, "I am sorry, Mrs. Ayres, you are suffering a relapse," she said, "It is all right or it would not be so." I feel that I have lost a very dear sister and friend. Since I resigned the care of that church I have visited them about once a year, when I have met her and the other dear brethren and sisters there, and have nearly always found the occasion of those visits a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. We are passing away.

The funeral was held Monday, March 20th. Elder Charles Bogardus, pastor of the church at Burdett, preached on the occasion.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

Joseph Clinton Main, son of James and Anna Main, was born in Delaware County, Ohio, July 8th, 1835, and died March 21st, 1911. Sept. 26th, 1856, he was united in marriage to Miss Deamean Moses, to which union were born two children: Flora, who on June 3rd, 1867, preceded her father to the great beyond, and Cora, who survives. His beloved wife died Sept. 28th, 1899. Brother Main was a man far above the average, noted for his honest and upright dealings; he stood high in the neighborhood, loved by all who knew him. In the summer of 1890 he received a hope in Christ, and was received, and baptized by Elder J. H. Biggs in the fellowship of the Predestinarian Baptist Church called Pleasant Hill, near Delaware, Ohio, and had since lived in the faith a straightforward Baptist, always filling his place at the meetings unless prevented by sickness. Brother Main served his church as clerk the last thirteen years of his life. He was united in marriage the second time, to sister Mary Wood, also of the Pleasant Hill Church, who is left with the brethren and sisters to mourn, but not as those who have no hope, and we bow in humble submission to the will of God, who doeth all things well.

The writer was called to preach the funeral discourse, and tried to speak comforting words to the friends from Revelation xxii. 1, 2, after which Elder C. E. Jackson spoke very beautifully of the wonderful works of the perfect Jehovah, and also spoke in prayer as the remains were laid to rest beside his first wife, in Marlboro Cemetery, to await the summons of the Savior at the resurrection.

ALSO,

Mary Biggs Wood Main was born Feb. 12th, 1854, and died March 28th, 1911. She was married to Asa L. Wood, Feb. 26th, 1874, and to that union were born ten children, five of whom died in infancy; one son, John Wood, and four daughters are still living. Her husband died Sept. 15th, 1897. She was again married, June 13th, 1901, to brother Joseph C. Main, who preceded her to the great beyond just one week. In the year 1886 she received a hope, and was received in the fellowship of the Predestinarian Baptist Church near Montpelier, Ind., where she remained until moving to Ohio, in 1889, where by letter she was received in the Pleasant Hill Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists, near Delaware, Ohio; there she remained a faithful and much esteemed sister until the end. Her home was always a home for the brethren, who will miss her sadly, but we believe that our loss is her gain, and we feel to bow our heads in humble submission to the will of God, who doeth all things well.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder Jackson, of Galion, Ohio, and all that was mortal was laid to rest in the Marlboro Cemetery with her husband, to await the summons of the Master.

GEO. L. WEAVER.

Mrs. Cornelia Laws, the subject of this notice, was one who through a little over forty years acquaintance had endeared herself to my heart and life. I had been a frequent visitor at her home all those years, and it was my happy privilege to baptize her in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called "Indiantown," Wicomico Co., Md., in October, 1872, and it has afforded me great pleasure to look back to that time and trace her life on to her death, having enjoyed many feasts while in her presence of the fruit of the Spirit as it fell from her lips. She was humble and unassuming, but firm and steadfast in all the fundamental truths of the Bible. Her body is removed from our sight, but the fruit of her life still speaks to us; she loved the courts of Zion, and to see the prosperity of the same. We would say to the entire family, and the church, In your sadness and mourning stop and consider what a blessed companion the Lord had made her unto us all; a helpful, bosom companion, a dear exemplary and instructive mother and a helpful burden-bearer in the church. Now He has taken that jewel unto himself, as was his right, where sin and sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more. Sister Laws

was at meeting Saturday and Sunday a week before her death, as cheerful as I ever saw her. On the next Sunday night I was in Snowhill, and when the door-bell rang it came to me like a shock; I could not tell why until the news was brought into the room to me. The deceased was born Oct. 15th, 1841, and was united in marriage to William L. Laws Oct. 15th, 1867, departed this life after about a week's illness of "la grippe," followed by heart failure. Mr. Laws had rented out his farm, near Wango, where he had spent all of his married life, and moved into Salisbury, Md., where they all seemed happy and contented. Many Baptists whose eyes will fall upon this notice will remember the kind hospitality of her home, ministered by her hands and seasoned with her words. She had seen and felt much of the affliction of this life, as well as the enjoyment of a blessed hope of salvation; she had seen the laying away of three of her children, all in the prime of life: Herman, aged twenty-one, Alice, aged twenty-one, and Captain Albert, of U. S. A., aged thirty-nine. Sister Laws leaves to mourn for her, one son, Victor H., one daughter, Mrs. Elmer C. Williams, and her lonely and much bereaved husband, also four stepsons: William, Eddie, James and Lee, to remember the care of a sympathetic mother, and the church at Indiantown a dear and precious member.

Her remains were taken to the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Salisbury, Md., when and where the writer, assisted by Elder A. B. Francis, tried to speak words of comfort to all the bereaved and lovers of the truth, using as a text 2 Timothy iv. 6-8, after which all that was mortal of that precious one was laid away in the old home cemetery, called the Laws burying place, to rest until the great morning of the resurrection, which she firmly believed in, shall come. This is the ninth one of the Laws' direct family whose funeral service the writer has conducted. T. M. POULSON.

MASSEY, Va.

Mary E. Ostrander was born August 24th, 1844, died March 27th, 1911, aged 66 years, 7 months and 3 days. She was married to George W. Ostrander, Oct. 22nd, 1862, who survives her. To that union were born five children: Henry E., Ada S., Charles L., Benjamin and Amos B. Henry and Charles preceded her in death. Sister Ostrander united with the Old School Baptist Church at Cammal, Pa., about thirty-five years ago, being baptized by Elder Silas H. Durand. I visited the sister two weeks before her death, and found her about the house, but not able to attend meeting. She was feeling dark and gloomy in mind, but said her faith and hope were in Jesus.

By her request the writer used the twelfth chapter of Isaiah and hymns 1256 and 1289 (Beebe's collection) at her funeral, which was held in the Cammal Old School Baptist meetinghouse on Thursday, March 30th, 1911, and attended by a large number of sorrowing relatives and friends, but our loss is her eternal gain, and we sorrow not as those without hope. Interment was in Cammal burying-ground.

ALSO,

Alva B. Callahan, of Williamsport, Pa., was born Feb. 14th, 1861, at Okome, Pa., died March 27th, 1911, aged 50 years, 1 month and 13 days. Brother Callahan was a member at Cammal, Pa., having been baptized by Elder D. M. Vail about eight years ago. He was a kind and loving father, and leaves a widow, two daughters and one son, beside a number of friends to mourn his death. The immediate members of the family remaining are brother Wm. Callahan, of Wellsboro, Pa., Mrs. Lee Campbell, of Cogan Station, Pa., and Mrs. J. H. Simpson, of Jersey Shore, Pa.

I attended the funeral on Thursday, March 30th, and spoke from Romans viii. 38, 39, using hymns 603 and 1251 (Beebe's collection), they having been chosen by the departed brother. Interment in the Cammal burying-ground. J. M. FENTON.

Abram Dudley Simmons was born May 16th, 1828, in Ulster County, N. Y., and there grew to manhood; was married Oct. 2nd, 1850, to Miss Ann Eliza Lane, and for more than half a century they were loving companions, until she was called home. To them were born thirteen children, eight of whom survive, as do also two brothers: D. N. Simmons, of Garnett, Kansas, and H. V. Simmons, of Kansas City, Mo. In 1898 he moved from Emporia, Kansas, to Hillsboro, Texas. Since the death of his wife, in February, 1904, he had made his home with his son, Harley H. Simmons. We can say of him that a good man has gone. He professed a hope in Christ many years ago, but never felt worthy to unite with the church, but in 1909 he was baptized in the fellowship of the Martindale Primitive Baptist Church at Martindale, Texas, by Elder J. B. Buntyn. The writer will always remember his glorified face as he came up out of the water, with outstretched hands exclaiming, "Now I can say sister Buntyn; I have wanted to so long." Dear, precious brother in Christ, as dear as an earthly father, how we shall miss him, yet how good to know that he is free from all pain, all earthly care, and how glad and willing he was to go. The writer is glad he had a pleasant home in his old age, and a beloved daughter-in-law to minister to his every want. His son and family made his old age pleasant and happy, as he often told me. We shall miss his visits, his good, wholesome advice, his sympathy and companionship, yet we do not murmur, for we know the Lord doeth all things well. We shall miss him because we loved him. He and his dear wife were two of the firmest Old Baptists we ever knew, and the dearest friends

we ever had. He was an honest gentleman, a humble christian, a devoted husband and father. Children, you will miss him, yet his influence will be felt as long as you live. The last time we talked with him he told us he was ready to go and his time on earth was short. Ah, how little we thought we would see his face in life no more, or hear his cheering voice in greeting. He left his children more than wealth, something money cannot purchase: an honest name. He was loved by all who knew him, and was followed to his last resting-place by people of every denomination in the city. The funeral services were conducted by Jerome Duncan, a Methodist minister, who was a friend of the dear old brother. To the children we would say, Follow his example, live as he lived, and die without reproach.

(MRS.) MARY BUNTYN.

HILLSBORO, Texas, March 28, 1911.

Mrs. Mary Ross, wife of Turner Ross, of Fauquier County, Va., died in Washington, D. C., March 17th, 1911. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Lacey, of near Bloomfield, Loudoun Co., Va., whose home, near Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, will be remembered by many readers of the SIGNS who have in past years partaken of their generous hospitality. Their beloved daughter was taken suddenly ill with an attack of that dread disease, pneumonia, while on a trip to Washington, and went to a hospital for treatment. The disease was not long in doing its work, and she passed away as above stated. I have not learned the particulars of her death. Her body was brought to the Ebenezer meetinghouse on Sunday, and after brief services was consigned to its native dust in the cemetery adjoining. Her husband, two children, father and mother, brother and sister and other relatives are left to deeply feel their loss. Her mother, sister Olivia Lacey, is a beloved member of the Ebenezer Church. She and Mr. Lacey have been sorely afflicted in the loss of several children, and now in old age another heavy loss falls upon them suddenly and without warning. The husband and little ones feel the loss as no others can. But there is another side to the sad picture. Mrs. Ross had a good hope through grace. When quite young she united with the Methodist organization, but realizing she was not with them in heart and faith she left them, and for a number of years attended the services of the Ebenezer Church, with which she was in full accord, and if her life had been spared I have no doubt she would have found her home with them. She had a lovely disposition, was a faithful wife and a devoted mother, and over and above all she was a poor sinner saved by grace.

J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., March 28, 1911.

NOTICE.

The supply of the Mary Parker book is exhausted. We keep on hand the Hymn and Tune book, in both round and shape note, price 70 cents singly, sent by mail, and six dollars per dozen, sent at expense of purchaser; also have "Songs in the Night," price 35 cents.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Southampton, Pa.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

D. S. Elliott, N. Y., $3.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Harford Church, Harford Co., Md., beginning on Wednesday (17th) after the second Sunday in May, 1911, and continuing three days.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Rock Springs Church, Rock Springs, Md., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 24th, 25th and 26th, 1911.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, N. J., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 31st and June 1st and 2nd, 1911.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Ebenezer Church, Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx, New York, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1911.

THE churches of the Roxbury Association will hold their fifth Sunday or quarterly meeting, the Lord willing, with the Second Church of Roxbury, Saturday and Sunday, April 29th and 30th, 1911, commencing at 11 o'clock a. m. Saturday. Trains will be met at Roxbury Saturday morning. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in Kimmy Hall, No. 12 Third St., in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition, which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at 5 cents per copy. Address,

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"CHRISTIAN SCIENCE AND THE LAW."

Because of the distressing information contained in orders for my Christian Science pamphlet respecting the great injury being done by this shameful fraud even among our dear Baptist people, I have tried in this second little work to expose it from a new point of view. Those not aware of recent developments at the headquarters of these people will be astonished almost to the point of doubting well-proven facts. I will mail two copies of this last sketch for ten cents silver), or one copy and a copy of Christian Science and the Bible for ten cents. The price is not for profit, but to cover the bare expense. Hundreds of the first pamphlets were given away, and others placed where many could read them. If any good results from this effort to shield our brethren from this new delusion, the credit will be due our kind periodicals for calling attention to it.

S. B. LUCKETT.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Indiana.

"Thoughts on Regeneration, the Spiritual Birth, the Christian Warfare and the Resurrection," is the title of a pamphlet of 58 pages, written by Elder H. B. Jones, of Winnsboro, Texas, and can be had of him for 25 cents per copy, five copies for $1.00 or $2.00 per dozen. Address, H. B. JONES.

WINNSBORO, Texas, R. F. D. 6.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 79. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1911. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PINE BLUFF, N. C., March 13, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—In order to comply with the wishes of some of my brethren and interested friends to write something for the SIGNS, I will send you the following letter written to my dear brother, Elder Silas H. Durand, and his very comforting letter in reply, which I think will be more interesting for them to read than anything I feel to write now.

Affectionately your brother,

GEORGE D. CONKLIN.

NEWBURGH, N. Y., August 10, 1907.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND—MY BELOVED BROTHER:—After reaching home from the associations, on the 26th of June, after an unusually pleasant trip to the four different associations, and in visiting brethren and friends, I was home a little more than a week and then made a business trip to New Vernon and Middletown, returning by the way of Warwick to be at meeting there on Sunday, and to have the pleasure of meeting Elder Lefferts and his family in the parsonage for the first time since his pleasant removal to Warwick. While there I was handed the "Hymn and Tune Book," "a token of love, from Silas H. Durand." I appreciate the gift much, my dear brother, and I appreciate the love that prompted it more than I am able to express. Many pleasant moments I have spent in singing from your book, and the closing piece, "Father, we'll rest in thy love," is sublime indeed. That a poor mortal, a worm of the dust, should be so highly favored of the Lord as to be able to rest in his love is an unmerited favor that words are too feeble to express.

> "O why was I not left behind,
> With thousand others of mankind,
> Who run the dangerous, sinful race,
> And die, and never taste his grace?
> 'Tis a wonder, wonder, wonder."

As I sit writing these lines many pleasant leaves are silently turned over in fond memory's tablet, and I think of some of the pleasant seasons enjoyed, when comfort flowed into my soul, while listening to the glorious and soul-comforting truths as they fell from your lips so sweetly and so comfortingly upon my tender, listening ears. Among them I think of the evening you were with us while father was living and was with us at the evening meeting at sister Sutton's, when you said you would talk a little to us about

Joseph and his brethren. Brother William Rittenhouse, her brother, remarked to me at the close of the meeting: "Well, if Elder Durand calls that 'talking a little,' I would like to hear him preach once upon that subject." More than one, my dear brother, felt that it was good to be there. I remember well also, but with mingled feelings, the great meeting we had at Kingwood in the fall of 1867, October, I think, when you and Elder Gilbert Beebe were with us, and Elder Beebe preached so grandly, as well as comfortingly, at my request, from Isaiah xl. 1, 2: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." This was only a little more than six months before my dear father was released from earthly suffering. The last eight or ten years of father's life were particularly precious ones to us, his children, and to many others, and they were glorious times, I think, in the history of Kingwood Church. Since I was a particularly interested member of the congregation how many pleasant countenances appear in memory that we used to see and meet with regularly on Sundays and other meeting days, as we were so pleasantly congregated together for the worship of the true and living God. How many, O how many of those we looked upon and felt were the good and excellent of the earth have long since bid adieu to the perplexing things of time, and have given in all their testimony to the truth that they had been made the glad recipients of, and which they held so dear, till the sands of life had all run out and the frail garments of mortality were peacefully removed. My dear brother, I do not think I have ever seen since such a happy church family, with such unusually good, warm feelings pervading the whole church, as well as the interested members of the congregation, too, with such marked evidences of real life feeling in the cause of the dear Redeemer, as I was gladly permitted to see and feel for many years previous to my dear father's death. I can hardly keep back the tears sometimes when I think of that glorious time of thanksgiving and melody in the hearts of that certainly heaven-favored people, when the songs of praise and thanksgiving went up to the God of Sabaoth, I believe, from that devoted body at that well-remembered period. It did not seem at all irksome then to meet obstacles that might be found in the way of going to meeting, and overcome them, and when we had assembled, whether in rain or sunshine, summer or winter, hot or cold weather, what heavenly melody arose from the warm hearts of that royal family, and how pleasant it was, too, to sing anthems of praise to Him who, we hoped, had called us by his grace from darkness into light, and had given us such a sweet taste and relish for heavenly and divine things. Many times since then we have felt the weight of years upon us, bearing us down with its corresponding weight of sorrows, trials, temptations, discouragements and sore bereavements, and the truth of these familiar lines is applicable to us:

> "In vain we tune our formal songs,
> In vain we strive to rise;
> Hosannas languish on our tongues,
> And our devotion dies."

While I believe the experience of the children of God now is not unlike their experience in the past, as we have it recorded for our comfort, and encouragement, too, and that the apostles and

prophets and holy men of old spoke out of the abundance of their hearts as they felt the weight of sorrow or the uplifting hand of joy, and their feelings were just as certain to be correspondingly manifested, either in the sad complaints and lamentations they were heard to make, or the songs of triumph they were heard exultingly to sing, as day is certain to succeed the night, still there was a measure of joy, of comfort and of solid enjoyment at the time I speak of, those many years, that I think has not been experienced since; at least so I feel. The Kingwood Church then, my dear brother, seemed like a happy, healthy family of living children, with the smiles of their heavenly Father graciously pouring in upon them. This period has seemed to me a great while like the "Philadelphia" state of the Kingwood Church. Am I correct? For I am aware that you are somewhat familiar with the state and condition of things there during the peaceful, closing years of my dear father's ministry. The following texts are a few that come into my mind this morning, from which my father spoke so comfortingly and so interestingly during the last year or two of his life: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."—Jer. viii. 20. "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks."—Isaiah xxvi. 1. This was at the yearly meeting at Welsh Tract, Del., in October, 1867. Earnest indeed he was, and very interesting. "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities," &c.—Isaiah xxxiii. 20, 21. "For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us."—Isaiah xxxiii. 22. "For thy maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called."—Isaiah liv. 5. On the second Sunday in September, (I think it was) 1867, he preached a wonderful discourse from these touching words: "And Jesus answering, said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger."—Luke xvii. 17, 18. This was a very interesting as well as touching sermon, and it fell so gently upon my tender feelings as to have a very happy effect. That these ten men who had asked the Lord to have mercy upon them should be cleansed of their foul leprosy and then be so ungrateful and unthankful (all but one) as not to return and give glory to God for such a marvelous as well as merciful display of his power and goodness in their behalf, was certainly very remarkable, and in the interesting explanation and elucidation of the subject, as touching the work of God in cleansing the vile sinner of his sins, which is compared to leprosy, I was completely melted down in my feelings, and my eyes that had so often wept during the last two years under my father's preaching, were now swimming in tears. Is it possible, I thought and felt, that I, a vile sinner, a sinner in thought, word and deed, and unworthy of the least of heaven's unnumbered blessings, should be so highly favored of the Lord as now to hope that God for Christ's sake hath forgiven my sins, and blotted out my iniquities, and enabled me to hope in his mercy, yet could not so much as honor and glorify him for all this by acknowledging him in a public manner as my Savior and my Redeemer, and in walking in obedience to his commands? O no, it

was too much for my poor, sinful heart to reply, No, and I was ready to go. The memory of that sermon, and my feelings under it, has a pleasant and comfortable abiding place with me, and whenever it is recalled I find that I am not destitute of feeling still. The last sermon that father preached, in December, 1867, was from this glorious and solid language: "Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."—Isaiah xxvi. 4. It was a grand and fitting ending of his ministerial life, was it not, my dear brother?

In the January 15th number of this year, 1907, of the SIGNS, there was published a letter of mine to our dearly beloved brother, Elder Grafton, in which I wrote of some interesting things in the life of Elder Gilbert Beebe, and also in the life of Elder Wilson Thompson, and a few days later I received a letter from my very intimate friend, Anderson Bray, of Kingwood, in which he spoke of the comfort afforded him in reading what was said of these two gifted watchmen upon Zion's walls. He then said that he hoped some other person would take up the matter and write some reminiscences of some of the older ministers that we have known and with whom we have had such pleasant times of enjoyment, and whose memories we dearly cherish. My heart instantly replied amen to that, and imagine my pleasant feelings as I read in the next number of the SIGNS an excellent communication of "Fragments," and in the last one of them (but one) were these lines, which made my heart rejoice: "During these years I have traveled much and spoken often, and met many kinds of people and experienced many wonderful things. There are many of these experiences and incidents that would be of interest, I know, to the brethren, and I have sometimes thought I would try to tell some of them, and recount some of the circumstances of my travels, and tell of the ministers I have intimately known. I know of only one now who has been ordained a longer time than I." Dear brother Durand, you cannot commence too soon with that interesting narrative of your travels and experiences, as well as the many very interesting incidents in connection therewith, with what you are also so well qualified to tell of the lives and pleasant incidents of the ministers it has been your good fortune and sweet privilege, I know, to be familiar with. May you soon feel to wield that ready pen of yours, that is so well calculated and does comfort and interest the dear children of God, in this promised narrative of pleasant, interesting and comforting experiences and pleasant incidents of travel that you have been so highly favored with under the gracious smiles of a kind Providence.

I little thought, when first sitting down to write you, of writing but little else than to acknowledge the receipt of your book, and to express as well as I could with words the pleasant feelings it gave me to receive "a token of love" from my dearly loved brother, but, as you see, I have no control over my mind, and I have now, as I have often done before, shown the inherent weakness that I possess, of spinning out the mental thread beyond all fashionable bounds, and thus laying my brethren and friends under renewed obligations to exercise a feeling of charity towards me, and to throw its pleasant mantle over my many imperfections, and over this one in particular. But it is not often, brother Durand, that your valuable time is so much diverted

from its ordinary profitable employment as it will be in reading this very lengthy manuscript. While in days past it has often been in my mind to write you, still a feeling sense of my ignorance in heavenly and divine things has thus far prevented me from writing to one whom I feel and know has been so wonderfully and heavenly taught. May your health and strength continue to be precious in the eyes of your dear Redeemer, and may he spare your very useful and profitable life many years to come, that you may proclaim and write his glorious truth to the comfort of his tried, tempted, tempest-tossed children, if consistent with his all-wise and gracious will, and when the solemn hour of dissolving nature with you has arrived, and you are called to exchange worlds, I believe it will be your crowning joy to know and to feel that the many severe trials and sorrows you have been called to experience here below are about to be exchanged for eternal felicity in a world of unending and unclouded rest; and to his great name would I desire to ascribe all honor, power, might and dominion, not only in this world, but to all eternity. I desire to be kindly remembered to sister Durand, sister Bessie and the girls, the church in your own house; and may the best and choicest of heaven's unnumbered blessings attend each loved member of your dear family circle.

"And while we're passing down the tide
Of time's fast-ebbing river,
Let's pluck the blossoms as they shine,
And bless the gracious Giver.
For life is sometimes bright and fair,
And sometimes dark and lonely;
Then let's forget its toil and care,
And note its bright hours only."

Very truly, sincerely and affectionately your brother, in hope of eternal life,

GEORGE D. CONKLIN.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., August 22, 1907.

GEORGE D. CONKLIN—DEAR BROTHER:—I must acknowledge the receipt of your good letter, though I know I shall not be able to do it justice, nor express my gratification in reading it. It is of peculiar interest to me, because of the many interesting incidents you mention of your father, who was very dear to me, and because of the many things you recall and mention in connection with meetings which we had while he was still living on the earth. It is wonderful to me how you can remember the meetings of many years ago so well, and repeat the texts. As you mention them they come very vividly to my mind, though they had almost gone into the land of forgetfulness; it is a real pleasure to have them brought before me again. How well I remember the visit of some days that I made there with Elder Beebe, which closed with a meeting on Sunday night in the Presbyterian meetinghouse in Frenchtown, where they made me speak first, for the first time during the visit. How well I remember some visits I had with your father. One was at Burdett, N. Y., when he lay on a lounge and I sat by him. I remember him saying, "I know I am a sinner, but I do not know that I am a saint." How wonderful it appeared to me that such a christian as I knew him to be could feel that way. It was really wonderful how everybody who knew the truth loved him. He was a very sweet preacher, and as clear in his presentation of the doctrine of salvation by grace as any preacher I ever heard. Yes, indeed, as you say, how many of those who were with us in those meetings, and were loved by us and esteemed as the excellent of the earth, have been taken away from the perplexing things of time and have gone

home to glory. How strikingly I realize this now when I go to visit the churches; how many dear faces I miss in the congregations. I have been counted as the pastor of the Salisbury Church about forty-one or forty-two years, and now there is but one member left there who was a member when I first visited them, yet the church and congregation are larger than they were then. But the One who made our meetings good and pleasant then has not gone, but is still with us whenever we are privileged to meet in his name. That is sometimes a great comfort to me when I think of those who are gone. Yes, I do remember the condition of the Kingwood Church during the closing years of your father's ministry as pastor there. It was a pleasant church to me, and has always been. I have always enjoyed visiting there, though I have not been there very often of late years, because it has been well supplied. The texts you recall and mention that your father used in the last years of his stay with you are very interesting to me to look over. I have often thought of writing about some of the ministers who are gone, as I mentioned in the SIGNS, but do not know as I shall be able to do so; it is as the Lord wills. In referring to that, you speak very kindly of me. I feel to be very poor in spirit, and the least of all, yet it is a comfort to me to know that any of the dear children of God have been comforted through what I have been enabled to write and preach, for if I am not deceived I have one desire above all others: to do what I can to comfort the poor of the flock with the same comfort wherewith I myself have been comforted of God. I am glad you have written me so fully, and we have all enjoyed reading your good and interesting letter. I wish for you the rich blessings of the gospel. We all join in love to you.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

OTTAWA, Kansas, Jan. 15, 1911.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I am sending you part of a letter I received from sister Pultz. I have read it many times with gladness, and thought it might be of comfort to others.

ANNA McKINNEY.

WHEELING, W. Va., Sept. 1, 1910.

MRS. ANNA McKINNEY—VERY DEAR AND HIGHLY ESTEEMED SISTER:—As I pen these words I am made to feel the blessedness of this sweet and precious relationship; one large family, one here and one there. It only takes a few words from the hidden man of the heart to discover this relationship. We are bound together by the strong tie: "God is love," and if love is shed abroad in our hearts, the apostle says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Dear sister, your letter came yesterday, and I read it with unusual interest. My tears flowed as I read of your sickness and press of work. How well I know what that means; sickness and work make a heavy cross for the flesh to bear. I think we can say with Paul, "I die daily," but I do hope the inner man is renewed day by day. This pruning process is very hard to bear, but it is to make us bring forth more fruit; it wrings expressions from the heart which are comforting to other hearts thus tried.

You speak of those letters, brother Scates' and mine. When I read them in the SIGNS I was struck with the similarity of our expressions; your letter had called forth from us the same sentiments.

In your last letter you say you sometimes think it would be easy to give up cherished hopes and bear all your trials if you could only know it was for the Lord's sake; that your desire to hear one of his servants preach the word is so great you feel as if your heart will break, yet if it is his will that you must stay there alone you want to be submissive; that you longed for one spiritually-minded person to talk to. I read those words, then sat and wept. O how I can enter into your sorrows here, yea, how often I have thought of Mary at the feet of Jesus. My poor, lonely heart has dwelt here in this place, and I have in meditation crept close to his dear side and wished that his hand might rest on my head, and my tears have flowed as I was reminded that I was altogether unworthy of such a place as that; then I have pleaded, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." It is not in accordance with his holy will that we be made whole of our plague of sin. The whole need not a physician. A few weeks ago I was feeling very poorly, yet I had to force myself along with the housework, and finally I thought I would have to succumb to the great weakness; I was overpowered by it. I seldom am suffered to ask for health, but at that time I was trying to request this boon of our great Physician almost before I was aware of it. Then there came a questioning conversation in my heart, as though it were asked me, Which would you prefer, health, or to depend wholly upon the Lord? I was ready to cry out quickly, O Lord, let me depend wholly upon thee. I would a thousand times rather bear my afflictions and be entirely without strength, that I might find my all in him. Your desire to be led where he feeds his flock touches a tender cord in my heart. I desire to try to speak of something I have experienced in having this wish lately gratified. I made efforts to visit my sister in the flesh who lives in Illinois, but was hindered by sickness and work. I attempted to go to Byesville, Ohio, to attend preaching the first of July, but was hindered by the same cause. However, by the middle of July I was strengthened to make this journey; it is about sixty miles. I had a good visit with sister Wheatly; she is such a good woman.

Sept. 4th.—Dear sister, this is Sunday noon. I have rather looked forward to this day, hoping and praying that I might be in the Spirit. I often think of John saying he was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. I would that every day was the Lord's day in my poor heart.

I wanted to tell you about my trip to Newark. After I had been hindered from visiting my sister I began to think that heretofore I had been strengthened to go where the saints meet, but was hindered from going any place else, and I said, Perhaps I will be permitted to attend this association. I had everything ready, and wrote to a brother and sister who live there and told them I hoped to attend. My husband spoke to the agent about a pass for me, and two days afterward he handed me my pass; often we do not get them for a week after asking. I watched to see what our blessed Lord had in store for me. A few days before the time I was feeling very poorly, and said, If I continue in this condition I will be compelled to give it up. While I thought about it these lines came into my mind:

"Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed;
I, I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand."

This settled my doubts and fears. On

Wednesday morning, August 24th, I arose feeling stronger than I had for some time. It was sweet employment I had watching the good hand of our heavenly Father as he led me all the way; he went before and prepared the hearts of strangers to deal kindly with me, and I found dear friends everywhere. When I had gotten on the street car at Newark to go to this brother's home I sat by the side of a sweet faced woman who regarded me with kindly interest. I was emboldened to tell her that I was a stranger there, and had been directed to take that car, that I was going to the association. Well, said she, that is where we are going; you go right along with us, for I am an Old School Baptist. This was good news to me. We went on together, and when we reached the park her daughter, a lovely young woman, insisted upon carrying my grip for me. When we neared the congregation they were singing, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord," I think the very verse that had come to my mind to strengthen my faith. My heart leaped forward, and I forgot everything but this precious hymn, and wanted to sing it with them. I forgot all about my unworthiness, and pushed up to the front. I joined in the singing with my whole heart, and was filled with joy and gladness. I felt that indeed it was the house of God; he had led me to it. This Rigel Park is seemingly a piece of his own handiwork. The grounds are inclosed with embankments all around, with wide spaces left for entrance. Large trees are growing on the banks and all through the park; it is wonderful, from the fact that it is all natural scenery. Dear sister, I wished for your presence, and thought and spoke of you often. Never in my life had I met and greeted so many Old Baptists. The brother and sister to whom I had written had made a great deal out of my letter. They introduced me to many of the members. I would have been entirely overwhelmed with all this notice had not our blessed and holy One upheld me according to his word. I talked with many of the precious ones, and truly the Lord was mouth and wisdom to me. He never left me alone once, but filled my heart with his blessed truths, and gave me liberty to speak them when conversing with his chosen generation. In telling you these things I can truly say, God forbid that I should boast, save in my afflictions and infirmities. I speak this to his praise; I am nothing, he is my all in all. I only want to tell what he has wrought, how he chooses the vile things, and things that are not, in which to show forth his power. I am the clay in his precious hands; he can make me a vessel of honor or of dishonor as he wills. The preaching was all good, the same sweet story of salvation by grace alone. There were twelve or perhaps fifteen preachers present. Thursday night the long continued drought was broken by a good rain, but Friday morning was clear and cool; as we drove to the meeting all nature seemed to be praising God. I was reminded of the Psalm, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof." All nature showed forth the power and majesty of God. Elder Carmichael was called upon to preach the opening sermon Friday morning. I had been looking at him, and felt to beg our Lord to uphold him, for he looked so pale, and it seemed that he was trembling. He arose in his own apologetic manner; he always begs us to bear with his weakness in a way that brings the tears to our eyes. His is the only text I remember; I do not remember hearing it before; it was

this: "God is love." God is love, he repeated, while he stood before us, and it came to me that he was the embodiment of love; it seems to me I have never seen more of the love of God displayed in any human being. It was the grandest and most sublime discourse I ever listened to. One thing I feel sure of, the power was of God, and is therefore indescribable. He told us when he arose that when the text came into his mind it came with a power that caused him to tremble. It was plain to all beholders that he was wonderfully strengthened, for his voice rose powerful and strong; his words rang out far above the roar of the wind as it stirred and rustled among the large trees which overshadowed us. It was wonderful, it was full of the love and power of God as seen in nature and in grace; it was full of eloquence, full of pathos, full of power and might and full of tenderness and love. It was "the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth." His audience sat spellbound, and when he closed they selected the hymn, "God is wisdom, God is love." A few of them tried to sing, but it was with faltering voices. I could not sing, but sat sobbing; the power in that sermon was too much for my poor, weak heart to bear, I was completely swallowed up in it. The meeting broke up Friday evening, many farewells were spoken, and I began to feel as if I could not hold out longer. I got away from the crowd and sat in the good brother's rig. I could hear their good-byes on every side, and the thought came sweetly into my mind, We will never say good-by in heaven. O how precious to have this glorious home of the soul to look forward to. Somehow my faith was so strong I could not doubt; my hope was strong that I was a sinner saved. I returned home on Monday and found all well; my new daughter-in-law had kept house for me, and had everything in good order.

Dear sister, I feel sure that some time our blessed Lord will manifest himself to you with such power and in such love that you can never doubt and say, "Am I his, or am I not?" There will be a feeling that in saying this you will deny him, deny what he has wrought in you, deny his work of grace in your heart. You will feel that you cannot deny him; he is in your heart the hope of glory. You do know this, that he is your only hope. He alone knows whether I will ever be brought to doubt his work of grace in my poor, vile heart; how he released me from the love of sin and made me hate what I once loved. I have sinful thoughts; my tongue is unruly and utters sharp things sometimes, for which I bitterly repent, and feel to cry to God for forgiveness. I see faults, and nothing but faults in myself all the time. Our judgment is now in this life; we are brought before the judgment-bar to answer for every vain and idle thought and every word we say. If (shall I say if?) God is in our hearts he is there to admonish and reprove with all long-suffering and kindness. He rules us in such love that we love his reproofs; all his laws and all his admonitions are sweet to us; he has caused me to love them for a long time. I love to hear his undershepherds admonish his people to crucify the flesh, to set their affections on things above. All the admonitions are precious to my soul.

I would write you oftener, but have felt so unworthy, and such fear of seeming presumptuous. I only desire to be the Lord's servant; that is a great deal to ask, but this I crave above all things. May God ever bless you and yours. Write as soon as you can.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

MARY FLORENCE PULTZ.

LUKE XV. 18, 19.

"I WILL arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants."

Jesus spake as never man spake. The prophets prophesied of his coming, and that he would open his mouth in parables. "I will utter dark sayings of old." The parable of the prodigal son was to set forth the love of a father to his wayward son. This certain man had two sons; the younger was given his portion of the father's inheritance, and took his journey into a far country and there wasted his substance with riotous living, showing the way of the flesh. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. This inheritance given the younger son was of the flesh, and could be wasted and lost. Jesus is setting forth in a parable the enduring, eternal inheritance of the Father of glory, which cannot be wasted, mortgaged nor sold, for their life is hid with Christ in God and is eternal. The eternal inheritance is incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven, and the covenant is ordered in all things and sure, even the sure mercies of David. How many of the sons of God have been given the answer of a good conscience before God and felt they would walk softly and take heed to their ways, that they sin not, and afterwards come to themselves and think that they are no more worthy to be called sons, for they have sinned against heaven and against God; but the remembrance of the Father's house makes their hearts yearn for the provisions there; there is abundance for all, and yet I perish with hunger, and can say that,

"If my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well."

But the hunger prevails, we can endure it no longer. "I will arise and go to my father," although I cannot think for a moment that he will want to see me; I have disgraced him and brought reproach upon myself, yet I may be as one of his hired servants; they eat at his table and have abundance, and I would fain fill my belly with the husks these swine feed on, but which does not satisfy my hunger.

"I will arise and go to my father." When he was a great way off his father saw him, saw the son before the son was aware of the father. The father had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him, and here is manifested the love of a father for a son. It matters not how far away he has strayed, he is "my son." No one ever knows a parent's love until they are a father or a mother; no books can teach this. He is my child, and my bowels yearn for him. Who can fathom the love of God in our Lord and Savior? A mother may forget her sucking child, "yet will I not forget thee." Then the love of Jesus is even more infinite and tender than a mother's, and none but a mother can comprehend a mother's love. "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry." The father saw him afar off. When did the Lord see his children? Afar off, even in eternity, before ever the world was, chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before God in love. We, like sheep, had all gone astray in by and forbidden paths, but the Father of all mercies saw us afar off and had compassion on us. We feel we are unworthy, we have sinned, and yet we still hope; we know not what the Father's will is concerning us, but hope that he

will be merciful to our unrighteousness. The robe is provided, the robe of righteousness that covers all our sins, and what a costly robe it is; not purchased with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ. The robe the Savior wrought is cast around us, the love of God warms our heart, and we are humbled and made as little children. It is the "best robe," the robe eternal, and shall never fade away. To further show the father's love he said, "Put a ring on his hand." This ring sets forth love. No ending, and, might I say, no beginning? for if Jesus loves us it is that he is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever. How often we wonder if any one really loves us, and especially when we are feeding swine; but when we feel the blessed influence of the beams of God's love shed abroad in our heart we can feel the hope in the love of Jesus, and his love is as one touched with a feeling of our infirmities; in all our afflictions he was afflicted, "and the angel of his presence saved them." That ring is a calling to remembrance "the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals," &c. Put "shoes on his feet." He is shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; he wants to tell to sinners round, about the dear Savior that he has found. He delights in walking about the Father's house. There is also the fatted calf killed, and they eat and are merry. Made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus and feast upon the fatness of the house of God. This seems a wonderful change from the way that son had been living, but does it not present wonderfully the way of God to poor, miserable sinners, not only before they know the mercies of God, but after they have been brought to the fold and with believers enrolled? We not only are feeding swine by nature, but are there often in our experience after we have tasted of the bounties of our Father's house. The son who always obeyed the father and found fault with the father's reception of his wayward brother, represents the one under the law, and until we are brought from under the law we will always find fault with the riches of the blessings of the gospel.

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March 21, 1911.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan., 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you the inclosed letter from Edward O. Wiles, of New Zealand, which seems to me excellent, and which I would like to see published, if you deem best, in the SIGNS.

As ever, your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

PONSONBY, Auckland, New Zealand, Jan. 5, 1911.

BELOVED BROTHER DURAND:—Your very kind, but unexpected, letter of Oct. 18th came safely to hand on Nov. 30th, together with a copy of the "Songs in the Night," and I now take this earliest opportunity to reply, in order to thank you for the same. Songs in the Light now occupy the attention (I was about to say the time, but that word would not do) of your late beloved brother. I can only assure you that you have given me a very pleasant surprise, which was very closely followed by two copies of the SIGNS sent me by dear Mr. Chick, which paper under the Spirit so many years ago was the indirect means of such blessed and fruitful results in your dear brother's experience. I said "indirect means," because the direct means or cause was the electing love of God the Father through the conviction of the eternal and ever-blessed Spirit. This

happening to me from distant America I consider to be very wonderful, and among the "all things" that work together for good. Who am I, and what is my house, that I should be thus favored? I am only a poor sinner, unworthy the notice of God's elect if they did but know, and still more unworthy of the notice of God. "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" For truly after more than ten years have passed since the never-to-be-forgotten time when the dear Lord Jesus Christ spoke pardon, peace and liberty to my sin-burdened soul, the question still is asked, What do I find in myself? And I must answer, Nothing but a seething mass of corruption in and of the flesh, in which dwelleth no good thing. I still have to confess to a heart searching from God day by day. Although this is only too true, how thankful I am that the new man keeps up the fight against the old man. The struggle is indeed bitter, but this is better than a false peace, and calls for gratitude and thankfulness to our gracious God and Father, who giveth the victory through our adorable Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. O the blessedness of knowing and feeling by the sweet Spirit of adoption that one is a child, and that the precious Lord Jesus Christ is our Elder Brother indeed.

Now just a few words this time to surprise you. I had very unexpectedly, and since your letter came to me, a copy of a paper for 1907 sent me by a very dear friend, to whom I had sent your letter to be read, and you can imagine my glad astonishment as I saw your own photograph with that of Elder Chick in it; it is now before me as I write. Also I see that upon this very day, Jan. 5th, you reach the advanced age of seventy-eight years. Accept, therefore, my hearty congratulations and greetings upon this anniversary of your lengthened earthly pilgrimage.

A very dear elder brother of mine in England, John Gilbert Wiles, seventy years of age, is a member of Gower St. Strict Baptist Chapel, in London. O how my heart goes out in love and gratitude to that dear old spot, where I attended from 1872 to 1882, and where the truth of sovereign grace has been faithfully proclaimed by Philpot and others for over fifty years.

However, I must bridle my pen, and will now notice the leading points in your long letter, which has cheered me up.

Truly our God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform. His name is "Wonderful," (Isaiah ix.) and how wonderfully he brings his people together here on earth, though they be sundered by the great and wide sea, or by any of the great works of his wonderful hand, and more wonderful still, he has, through the blessed Surety, engaged in the everlasting covenant of grace before all time, to bring them all to himself at last. Not one elect vessel of mercy shall be missing in heaven's secure harbor of rest in that day. (Malachi iii.) If even one could be missing, it would be the writer of this. But truly wisdom is justified of her children; our constant God and Father has said it, and the burning zeal and the omnipotent arm of God will perform it to the very last letter of his truth. To him therefore be the praise and glory forever, and may he ever bless and comfort you, and cause his blessed face to shine upon you, and in your soul, my dear, aged brother, whom though I have never seen I yet love.

I must now however draw this to a close. If you feel to publish this

letter, or any extracts from it, you can do so, but only, if I may suggest it, upon the express wish and hope that some of the dear readers of your papers may have their hearts gladdened by seeing that their words have had a beneficial effect, and have been again owned and blessed of God, even in this far off New Zealand, our adopted home. After ten years of residence in this city of one hundred thousand inhabitants, you will be grieved to hear that so far as I know, there is no church or chapel here, or in any other of the large New Zealand towns, where the discriminating, separating (and binding, thank God) truth of the everlasting gospel is faithfully and consistently preached and contended for, but Arminian, or free will, churches literally swarm together, with a mongrel they call "Fullerism," a sort of half-way house, moderately Calvinistic, but more subtle, holding indeed that God's people will be saved most surely, and that many more may be if they only like. This is based upon a wrong interpretation of John vi. 37. These "many more" are the "whosoever" used in this text. But I will not enlarge beyond saying that the "whosoever wills" are those whom God has already willed to be the "whosoevers," and no others.

I am glad to see by your papers that good old William Gadsby's "Everlasting task for Arminians," is still circulated on your side of the water. It seems strange to me to see him styled Elder by you, as we use the plain Mr. There are no "Reverends" among the Strict or Particular Baptists. There is a little magazine published in Sydney, New South Wales, some twelve hundred miles or more from here, of which you may have seen copies occasionally, for which I sometimes write. I will send you a copy.

Now, beloved brother, farewell. Many thanks to you and the dear brethren in America, whose names are in the Lamb's book of life, for your kind letters and papers.

Yours lovingly,

EDWARD O. WILES.

CHICAGO, Ill., Feb. 3, 1911.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—This morning I sat down at the piano, and, moved by an impulse very seldom felt, played and sang two or three hymns. This hymn struck me as being peculiarly sweet:

"When saint to saint, in days of old,
Their sorrows, sins and sufferings told,
Jesus, the friend of sinners dear,
His saints to bless, was present there.

As members of his mystic frame,
Together met to bless his name,
While humbly at his throne they bow,
As God with us, he's present now.

O blest devotion, thus to meet,
And spread our woes at his dear feet,
Call him our own in ties of blood,
And hold sweet fellowship with God."

I think that I felt as I sang, how sweet it was to humbly bow before his throne of mercy, imploring forgiveness and comfort, how sweet to meet to bless his name.

It is long since we have met here, nearly six months. For one cause or another deadness has come upon us until we (that is, my husband and myself) practically despair of ever having a church here in Chicago, or of even meeting informally. At first Wesley and I hoped against hope, and tried to meet with others, but finally ceased when we found it almost impossible to engage in spiritual conversation. We then tried to hold services ourselves, and in this we still persist, although sometimes it seems mockery. There are two colored sisters in the south side with whom we have spent several pleasant evenings, but the

damp weather has made it practically impossible for us to go and see them with the baby. Thus the matter rests, so far as outward signs of assembling ourselves go. In our daily life we have both felt for a long time such barrenness and destitution as never before. If indeed we are children of God, why this awful state of affairs? Sometimes we think it is because the world has ensnared us, yet never before did we more earnestly desire and seek after God than when we came to Chicago, and never before has the devil been so irresistibly powerful. In my husband, despite his felt barrenness of soul, the fruits of the Spirit are evident in his gentle judging of others, in his patience amidst adversity and in his kindness toward all men. In myself the reverse is true. Never before have I felt myself to be such an outcast, or so vile in the sight of God and in my own eyes. If I can so loathe what in my heart I feel, if I can cry out, O wretched woman that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? if I in my despair faint under the burden of my wretched life, how must I appear before him who is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and who cannot look upon sin? Surely many times in the past few months I have crucified the Lord afresh and put him to an open shame. I cannot pray, there is but a dumb longing that amounts to despair, for life, for Jesus Christ, for God.

You write, "I do not want to live by changing feelings, but I do want to have steadfast faith, whatever my feelings, yet I do not want to be without feeling as regards the things of God." But my feeling seems gone. I am not as one that is asleep, or is sick with a passing infirmity, but I lie mortally sick at the gates of death. O I believe that God can save, can revive, can give me strength, but he does not. Am I his? If so, how can I be as I am? I have found some little straws of comfort in the narrative of Job, yet even his case was different, for was he not upright, and did he not fear God and eschew evil? "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cryeth out for the living God." "For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." We had a good letter from Elder John G. Sawin, dwelling upon the day in His courts. "When shall I come and appear before God?" May I be able, as in times past, to say again, Who shall separate me from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or peril, or sword? Without him my life is as those who inhabit the bottomless pit. It is as a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, yet signifying nothing. Remember me before the throne of grace.

Yours unworthily, in the bonds of Christ,

RUTH KEENE SPITLER.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., March 14, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am impressed to write a few lines to let you know how much I enjoy the editorials, and the articles from the dear correspondents, especially during the past year and a half. The editorials upon predestination have been of much comfort to me; they are just as I was made to believe when I was only fourteen years of age. I had never believed in predestination until then. I was brought up to go to Sunday School,

and thought that I could control these things myself, and be good whenever I wanted to be, or, on the other hand, just as bad as I desired. But how differently I was made to feel, and to cry for mercy on account of my sins, Lord, have mercy upon me, a sinner. I saw my helpless condition, and knew that in and of myself I could do nothing; all was of the Lord from first to last. When this burden was removed I was made to rejoice and praise his holy name, and all nature seemed to be praising God. O how I do love predestination, and all the Old School Baptist doctrine. There is not a minister among them that I do not love to hear preach, for I enjoy hearing the different gifts. There is not a minister, or brother or sister, against whom I have one hard thought. I love the people of God. I have known trouble only with myself, and I feel to be the chief of sinners. O is there any one like me? "When I would do good, evil is present with me." It will be thirty-eight years next May since Elder Bundy baptized me, and five others, and what a happy little girl I was that day, and just as he raised me up out of the water he said, "For, lo, the winter is passed, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; and the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." O how precious those words have always been to me; how fresh in memory. I am made to say at this very moment, "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever." His everlasting arms are underneath. He has carried me through dangers seen and unseen. I have passed through many sore trials, both in body and in mind, and have been low down in the valley, but he has been my present help, and

"His love in times past forbids me to think
He'll leave me at last in sorrow to sink."

As Elder Ker said in his editorial for February 15th, "Always a handful of meal in the barrel, and a little oil in the cruse." That to me was a comforting article. I feel to "lie passive in his hand, and know no will but his." My prayer is to be kept lowly and humble at the feet of Jesus. I desire to walk softly, and that I may always be kept from saying or doing anything to hurt the feelings of one of God's dear children; they are all so much better than I am. One thing I do know, that I am the chief of sinners. I feel like saying,

"Good is the Lord, inexpressibly good,
And we are the sheep of his hand;
His mercy and truth from eternity stood,
And shall to eternity stand."

What a wonderful God is ours; he declared the end from the beginning; he never slumbers nor sleeps; he sits on no precarious throne, nor borrows leave to be. I have felt of late to be still and know that he is God, yet I am apt to murmur and complain. I would always be in a quiet state of mind if I could.

I have written much more than I intended; I just had to tell you how I have enjoyed your writings, and felt so much impressed that way that I could no longer refrain. I love the SIGNS, and I love all the dear, good people who were chosen in Christ before the world was; how my heart goes out to them all. O if I only knew that I were one of his, but "when I turn my eyes within, all is dark, and vain, and wild." I mourn much on account of my sin, and seem to grow worse instead of better, but I am in the hands of God. The fifth chapter of Matthew has been of much comfort to me of late. O if I could be pure in heart, and a peace-maker, and live as becometh a christian, but I am carnal, sold under

sin, yet depending upon an independent God. I hope I have not done wrong in writing you; I know your time could be better occupied than in reading these lines. May God bless you, is the prayer of one who is all unworthy.

(MRS.) SPENCER NETHAWAY.

FLEMINGTON, N. J., Jan., 1911.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—May I call you by that precious name? Yes, it is precious. When I am in the company of those whose faith is not ours, and feel lonely, then in spirit I turn to those of like precious faith, whose cry is, "God be merciful to me a sinner." How comforting it is to hear those words from other lips, then we know that they are our kindred indeed. It is with a feeling of unworthiness that I call them my dear kindred. In taking a retrospective view of the year that is just past I feel that I have very, very much to be thankful for, and the greatest of my blessings is that I have been permitted to meet with you quite often, to gaze on your faces and to feel the clasp of your hands. My natural hearing is so poor that I do not hear preaching any more, but I do love to be in the company of the saints, even though I myself may not be one. It is a delightful company to be with; it is the company of the Lamb, which he purchased with his own blood.

A short time ago I attended a large church supper which was given, as was said, for the benefit of the Lord's cause. Some may ask what I was doing in such a gathering. Well, I went to get a good supper, not to help the Lord, for he is able to take care of his own cause without the help of poor, puny man. I never felt more lonely in my life, being the only one there with such peculiar views, and, not being identified with any church in the community, I was looked upon as a heathen. Compared with worldly religionists I am a heathen, because I cannot say as they do, that because of my good works I am entitled to salvation. No, I am destitute of any righteousness of my own; it is all of my Lord, who covers me with his robe of righteousness. I am poor, blind and naked, and would not have chosen him had he not first chosen me. "We love him, because he first loved us." But do I love him?

> "'Tis a point I long to know,
> Oft it causes anxious thought."

Just four years ago the Lord saw fit to take my dear companion away. I have been hoping that in depriving me of this dear one he would draw nearer to me and fill the aching void himself. I fear that I am drifting away from him, yet he has said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." What a peculiar sweetness there is in these words. When I was young I used to think that there was something peculiarly sweet in the word "christian," and I wished much that I might become one, but being such a sinner I thought it was impossible. Yes, dear ones, even though I longed to be numbered with that saintly band of christians, I was just the opposite, in living a careless life. No one save my Maker knows how I hated the doctrine of election, nor how hard I strove to tear it from my heart, thinking to get rid of it in that way. I joined a band of free salvationists, but that did no good. I still believed it, even though I did and said all the hard things against it I could think of. Think what a hypocrite I was to take part in a service that I did not for one moment believe. But the good and blessed Lord opened my heart to receive this blessed doctrine of salvation by grace, and now it is my only comfort.

I feel like shouting when I can see all the way in which he has led me. I cannot always see the narrow way, and when it is hidden I am discouraged. I do not want you to think for a moment that I doubt the Lord. It is my own evil nature and the fear that I am deceived that trouble me. "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." Between this and spring I hope to meet you again, my life being spared.

I will now close by wishing you all a happy new year. May the blessed Lord keep you as the apple of his eye. To the Hopewell Church I would especially say, If it be his will to take some of our little band this year, may he take us to himself. I am sure that he will. You are precious to him; he bought you with a price.

Lovingly, but unworthily,

MARY E. FISHER.

PENNINGTON, N. J., Jan. 8, 1911.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER AND PASTOR:—I feel a desire this evening to write you a few lines. I feel much disappointed not to be with you and the dear brethren and sisters this evening, and hope you will all have a good meeting; and I hope you had a comforting meeting at Harbourton this morning, and that it was good for you to be there. We have been made sad several times this winter through the death of some of our dear brethren and sisters. Dear brother Stout will be much missed in the church and among the brethren, and brother Cubberly will also be greatly missed. The day before his death I was talking with him at the meeting, and said to him that it was good he could be with us, and he said, "I am so glad to be here." I did not know that those words were the last we should speak together. May the dear brother's family be comforted. Our aged sister Drake will also be much missed in her family and in the church. In this great affliction may they all be able to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." May the dear children, one and all, walk in the path that their mother followed. Our dear sister Phœbe Leigh will also be greatly missed in the church, for she was nearly always at the meetings, and how much she will be missed in her family. It always seemed to me that they had very great love for each other. I trust that her family may be consoled with the assurance that it is well with her. In all these we have lost good brethren and sisters. May we, as a church, be comforted with the assurance that all is well with them. We know that the dear Lord never makes mistakes; he is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. As for myself, how often I am filled with doubts and fears. I wish that I could live as some of my brethren do, and would be glad to be always ready to speak a kind word and lend a helping hand. There is comfort to me in the words, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." I feel that I am a great sinner, always stumbling in some way or another, and often realize that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps; when we would do good, evil is present with us. I trust the dear Lord has given me the great desire to meet with my brethren and to love them; I feel that we should all be thankful for the great privilege of meeting together for worship, and also thankful for the kind pastor we have to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to us. I often feel sorry that more do not meet

with us in the winter, and that they are not able to come; sickness and trouble oftentimes hinder many. May the dear Lord comfort them wherever they may be, and give to them the loving desire to meet in the Lord's house as often as it is possible for them to do so.

Now, dear brother, may these few lines find you and your family well. I hope that sister Chick is now much improved in health.

From your unworthy brother,

PAUL T. LEIGH.

COVINGTON, Ga., Feb. 24, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed I hand you a most excellent letter from Elder J. T. Jordan. I am sure the many readers of the SIGNS will indeed be glad to read it; it was read to the church at Harris Springs last Saturday. Elder Jordan served this church twelve years, from 1896 to 1908, which was a pleasant and prosperous season for the church. My wife and I were the first to unite with the church after he was chosen pastor. He is near and dear to all who know him, and especially to the church.

Your brother, L. D. ADAMS.

LILBURN, Ga., Feb. 13, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER ADAMS:—Your card came to hand in due time, also one from sister Mary Lunsford, and now let me write you all a letter. I was very glad indeed to hear from you, and have thought many times I would answer you, but we have had so much sickness this winter I have put it off from time to time.

Let me write you something about God's holy worship. In the beginning God made man in his own image, male and female created he them, and called their name Adam, and said, Be fruitful and multiply, &c., and unto them were born Cain and Abel, and in these two representative characters were manifested the false and true worship. Cain brought the fruit of the ground, as well as we can do in the flesh, and God did not have respect to his offering, and he, being of the wicked one, slew his brother, because his own works were evil and his brother's righteous. Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock, together with the fat, and God had respect unto his offering, and he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts. (Like it was with us, I trust, dear children, when I baptized you; the water turned so pretty and felt so good I could have walked in it a hundred yards.) This was the true worship, it was done by faith, and without faith it is impossible to please God; whatsoever is not of faith is sin; faith is the gift of God, and is the fruit of the Spirit. This holy principle of worship has come on down to the present time, and God yet testifies to his children when they worship in that spirit of faith in which Abel worshiped him. My idea is, by faith Abel saw the coming of the Lord Jesus, and rejoiced in him as his Savior, which enabled him to make a suitable sacrifice to represent his coming, and so with all the saints who worshiped him in types and shadows. I think when Abraham offered Isaac by faith and it was accounted to him for righteousness, that Jesus and the child of God were both represented. Isaac represented the child, and the ram that was caught in the thicket represented Jesus, for he was made under the law and the sword awoke against him, and not one jot or tittle was to pass until all was fulfilled. When the sinner is brought to the end of life as far as he can see, like Isaac, and God's holy justice, Abraham's drawn knife, Jesus to

us is presented by faith as having been already sacrificed for us, and we, like Isaac, are released and go free. I think the spiritual Jew, when he brought his offerings according to the law, by faith looked beyond the shadow to the substance: Jesus, and God testified of him that his gift was acceptable; but the natural Jew when he brought his offering could not see further than the altar, and expected to be saved by his obedience to the law. The same two principles exist to-day. I think also when the time of reformation came God did not testify to the spiritual Jew when he brought his offerings according to the law, and this brought disconsolation to Israel, but the Lord enabled Simeon to look and wait for the consolation of Israel, and told him he should not see death until he had seen the Lord's Christ, and, like all God's work, he got to the temple at the right time and knew the child when he saw him, and took him in his arms and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." He certainly did receive consolation. During the disconsolate and troubled condition of Israel came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, just at the right time. They needed something, the former evidence of their worship was gone, and here they were in a wilderness of confusion, but when John preached repentance they understood it and did repent or turn from their law worship and present their bodies a living sacrifice instead of a dead ox, and told an experience of grace, or confessed their sins and were baptized, and by faith were able to discern between the righteous and the wicked, and him that worships God and him that serveth him not. In a short time the church was manifestly set up, the war over, the devil and his angels cast out by Michael and his angels, and now a spiritual kingdom made up of spiritual subjects under spiritual law is prepared to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, each one being a lively stone and a priest to make his own sacrifice. Now what must the children do according to that perfect law? See that they abstain from fornication, and from idols, and from blood and things strangled, and keep themselves from idols, and be not conformed to the world. What is the world? The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life.

I will close. Pardon my imperfect letter, old age and childishness, and let me speak my feelings. May God bless you all. You have been so good to me, I have had much comfort and satisfaction with you all. Brother Lee, will you read this letter to the brethren and sisters next Saturday? I do not know when I can come to see you. I have not been to East Atlanta since October; both last meetings I was hindered by sickness.

Farewell. Yours in hope,

J. T. JORDAN.

HARDING, W. Va., March 8, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I wish to let you know how I appreciate your work on the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have enjoyed reading the "New Year's Address," by Elder Chick. It comforts us to read the personal experience of the every day life of those older christians, whom we esteem so highly for the truth's sake; as we read we feel a response in our own hearts to the desires, the longings and obligations to our God, and feel that it is indeed a blessing to have the love of God in our hearts and to serve in his house in fellowship with his people, and when our

path seems dark, and we cannot feel his guiding hand, it is a blessing then to be reconciled to the way he is leading us. It is good to have our minds stirred up by the servants of our God in regard to the things of his kingdom. I am weak and sinful, and my way is sometimes dark, and I try to walk by sight, but my weak vision cannot penetrate the darkness, and I falter and stumble over the obstacles which the enemy places in the way. It is then I am made to realize that only by faith can we follow in his footsteps and walk uprightly before our God. I would desire to walk always in his strength, for he is almighty and in him is no weakness.

I have read with much interest brother Chick's answers to "Important Questions," in March 1st number. How sad it is to see good brethren and sisters divided in church fellowship, yet all holding to "salvation by grace." May God in his own time give to the members of all such divided churches grace to bear and forbear with each other, and enable them to confess their faults, and give them the spirit to forgive even until the seventy times seven, and restore to them confidence in each other and holy faith and trust in God.

Inclosed find two dollars to renew my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I would be very lonely without it, as it is all the preaching I get through the winter season, and I look forward to its coming and enjoy reading the letters from the brethren and sisters, for they tell us things which we have experienced, and we are glad to hear those things confirmed by those we believe to be God's people. I am now past the forty-sixth year of my life, and it was twenty-four years the twenty-second day of February since I first felt that Christ was my Savior. What a glorious thing it is to be given faith to believe that the Son of God is our Redeemer; what joy then fills our souls, and we forget for a time that we are still of the earth earthy. But the flesh is weak, and as soon as our Savior is gone from us for one of those "little whiles" doubts arise and we cry unto him, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." When I look back over that twenty-four years I ask myself, How much of that time have I spent in service to God? or how many times have I, like Peter of old, denied him to the world, while desiring to be near him? Such heart-searchings humble me and make me fear that I have sometimes even failed to give a cup of cold water in his name. I must confess that I have come far short of always walking as humbly before the Lord as I have desired to, but through it all I have sometimes been enabled to look away from self to the perfect life of our dear Savior, and to hope for mercy through his name. Those years have been filled with light and darkness, joy and sorrow, temptation and trial, but I am convinced that they are among the "all things" that work together for good. The Lord is holy, just and righteous, and to him let all honor and glory be given. It is a wonderful blessing to be enabled by his grace to trust him for mercy, righteousness and eternal life.

May grace, mercy and peace abide with God's people everywhere, and may you be blessed more and more in your editorial work, and be comforted with the comfort wherewith you comfort the flock, is the prayer of yours in fellowship,

(MRS.) E. E. WORKMAN.

SENECA FALLS, N. Y., Jan. 25, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have just received this letter from brother Hamilton, and thought it too good to keep. It made me feel so good in reading it I thought it might strengthen those who are of the household of faith. Brother Hamilton is strong in the faith of salvation by grace; he wants no mixed up works; it is all of grace from first to last. I still enjoy the SIGNS very much, and look for its coming. I especially enjoy both your and brother Ker's editorials. I now leave to your judgment to publish this letter.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) E. CANDLER.

EDGE MOOR, Del., Jan. 8, 1911.

DEAR SISTER CANDLER:—I was very glad to get your card and to hear from you again. My wife and I were especially glad that your hope is still founded on the Rock Christ Jesus. I was reminded of this a few days ago when I was reading in Deut. xxxiii. 27: "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." O how safe are all the people of God; all of them are under his care and protection. For many years you have known that the eternal God is your refuge, and you have been supported by his everlasting arms, and the truth and beauty of it is this refuge and support will never leave you. Christ tells us that he will give his children eternal life, and no man shall pluck them out of his hand, and then as a double security he tells us that no man shall pluck them out of the Father's hand. (John x. 28–30.) Some of our enemies claim that our Old School doctrine gives no one a chance to be saved, but surely there is no chance about it; Christ assures us that there is a positive certainty of the salvation of all the elect. No chance salvation will suit us. Christ again said, "Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none."—John xviii. 9. Surely we are glad that our salvation does not depend upon ourselves. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." Philippians iii. 8, 9, seems to suit me now, and give me courage by the way. There are many so-called wise men in this world who have learned (they think) a new and better way of life, but I am glad that there are a few left who believe the good old way of salvation by grace. These other men are ever learning, but never able to come to a knowledge of this truth; it is hidden from them.

With the best of wishes,

B. F. HAMILTON.

DODD CITY, Ark., Dec. 18, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS, PUBLISHERS, CONTRIBUTORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—As it is time for me to renew my subscription for our dear family medium of correspondence, I desire to write you a few lines. First, I regret very much that I can send you no new subscribers, as I do not know of any Old School Baptists nearer than twelve miles, and it is hard to interest those of the world in spiritual things. I will say next that the four little churches in our association, the Little Zion, are all in peace. We have had several good meetings this fall since our association, which was an association indeed and in truth, but not much ingathering in any of the churches. In my weak, feeble way I try to preach to two of them monthly, and one every other month.

But I just thought to write to let you know how I have been comforted and edified in reading the SIGNS this year; it

seems that it gets better all the time; it may be because I get so hungry for spiritual food. All the letters seem very good, but I must mention a few as I now remember them. The editorials, "How Sinners Become Christians," "The Help of the Lord Against the Mighty," "Types and Shadows," "Sprinkling Unscriptural," "Future Recognition" and many others were comforting and consoling. Of the correspondence, the two letters of Charles P. Buck, of Blytheville, Ark., were precious to me. O how wonderfully God reveals his precious truths to his children! No wonder the apostle cried out, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." "What man knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." Man must have the Spirit of God in order to know the things of God, for "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

I have not written this for publication, but it is yours to do with as seemeth good to you. I often desire to write to the kindred in Christ, as they are nearer and dearer to me than fleshly kindred, but when I see the SIGNS filled with such good things, so much better than I can write, I do not write for fear of crowding out some of the good letters of the brethren and sisters. May God bless all the contributors, publishers and editors, and spare you long to comfort his little, scattered sheep and lambs, is the desire of one of the least of all his children, if one at all.

WM. J. CASEY.

ADRIAN, Mich., Jan. 15, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Can one who feels to be such a sinner be allowed to call you by that dear name? I am now almost seventy-five years old, and have had a great desire to belong to the Old School Baptist Church for forty years, but could not think I had a right to a place with that dear people, they so good and I so unworthy, yet when I would feel cast down and sorrowful I would say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and the words would come, "Be baptized." My sister in Cement City wrote me that there would be a meeting there, and I had a great desire to go, and did go. While listening to the sermon Elder Pittman preached to us that Saturday afternoon I was made willing to obey my Savior's command, and when the invitation was given to those who had anything to say, I arose and told in a few words why I hoped the Lord had forgiven my sins, and, to my astonishment, was received, and the Sunday following I was baptized, and it was a happy day to me. When we got to the water how beautiful it looked; it seemed to be singing praises to God. That night while I lay meditating upon all that I had heard, and all that had transpired during the day, a great calm came over me, and I was so filled with love to my Savior that it was almost impossible to keep from praising him aloud. That happiness remained with me for three weeks, then the old tormentor came and told me I was deceived and had deceived the church; but there is One who cannot be deceived, and his all-seeing eye searches the heart and knows us better than we know ourselves. O, it seems impossible that such an unworthy sinner as I know myself to be should have the love and fellowship of those dear ones. I have had a short ac-

quaintance with the people at Cement City, but my heart goes out to them in love, and if I could meet with them at each of their meetings how happy I would be; but that is impossible. May the Lord spare you to sound the gospel trumpet for many years. I have been taking the SIGNS for a long time, and it is most dear, for it contains the doctrine I dearly love.

Your sister, I hope, through the mercy of a forgiving Savior,

LAMIRA CARY.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Feb. 12, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I do not feel worthy to call you brother, but O what a dear name that is. I was with you in mind and spirit to-day, and wished I could be at the meeting and hear the good preaching, and meet with the dear children of God and see their smiling faces, and I hope that in your prayer you thought of me, for you always pray for those who are not there. It is the greatest cross to me when I am away from home so that I cannot get to the meetings in Hopewell; there is where I love to be, but still I am so sinful that I do not feel worthy of a place with you all. The word of God says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," and those we love we desire to meet with; sometimes this seems to be all the hope I have. It is by the grace of God that I am what I am. He had mercy upon my poor soul when I thought I was doing right in keeping the commandments of men. I tried to read the Bible at that time, and could not see where I was wrong; my prayer for a long time as I would sit and listen to Elder Purington, was that the Lord would unstop my deaf ears and open my blind eyes; but we have to wait the Lord's own time for such blessings. Elder Purington, on April 22nd, 1881, took for a text the passage of Scripture, "Take my yoke upon you," &c., reading three or four verses, though I cannot now remember them all. I was enabled to hear as I had not before, and was baptized the next day. It was the brightest day I ever saw. When Elder Purington raised me out of the water all nature seemed beautiful to me, and it seemed as if all trouble was gone, but what a crooked path I have traveled since. This world is full of trouble and sorrow. I think that the editorial in January 15th number of the SIGNS is very good. I am ashamed of this letter, but hope that you will receive it and excuse it. If I could write as good letters as are in the SIGNS I would be glad, but I cannot write or talk upon the Bible as I would like, still it is my joy to hear others. It is my prayer that the Lord will keep me in the right way. I hope to be with you all at the coming Saturday meeting, if it be the will of God.

With love to all, your sister in hope,

(MRS.) GEORGE GOLDEN.

DAYTON, Wash., April 11, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I would like to say through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that after nearly five months visit with the brethren in southern California and western Oregon I returned to my home in Dayton, Wash., much improved in health, and I desire to be thankful to the good Lord for his merciful and watchful care over me, and for the many blessings and favors I received on my trip.

B. S. PATE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1911.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 CORINTHIANS X. 16.

"THE cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"

In general the apostle has been presenting in the immediately preceding portion of this epistle, first, the work of the Spirit of God in the hearts of believers, and second, that course of life which is in harmony with this inward work. He has written of some things which it was especially needful that this church should remember and practice. The sum of all is, that as believers they had been called out from the world and its follies and from the rituals of a carnal and worldly religion to a higher life, even the life of that Spirit which had been manifest in the blessed Master in the days of his flesh. But, in following after that course of conduct which this life demanded, he declares that there were hindrances in the way, and that they were liable to sin. While, therefore, they ought to rejoice in their calling to this heavenly life, on the other hand it was well for them to remember that they were liable to come short and to grievously err through temptation and from the weakness within their own flesh. This is the substance of all that goes before in the connection of the words quoted at the beginning of this writing. To enforce these things upon the minds and hearts of his brethren, in the beginning of this tenth chapter the apostle calls attention to Israel in the wilderness. Referring to the opening verses of this chapter we see that the apostle calls attention to five special blessings which God had conferred upon Israel under Moses. These five things were, that they were under the cloud, that they all passed through the sea, that they were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, that they did all eat the same spiritual meat, and that they drank of the same spiritual drink flowing out of the Rock that followed them. The apostle speaks of these as spiritual blessings, because although they were literal and temporal things in themselves, they did point to the things which were and are spiritual. The cloud represented the presence of God, for he dwelt in the cloud, as the angel of his presence which guided them. The sea represented that great deep in which are the ways of the Lord, and in which is the spiritual travel of all the people of God. The baptism unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea represented the setting apart of the redeemed unto a new life altogether diverse from the old life; henceforth Israel was not to dwell in bondage again, but to walk as the Lord's own people, set apart for his glory. Thus our baptism is unto Christ, both that which we may call the baptism of the Spirit, by which we are indeed and in truth separated unto God, and then the form of baptism by which we confess before the congregation what has been wrought within our hearts. The spiritual meat signifies the true bread of heaven, which Christ, according to his own testimony, is to all his people

day by day. So far as the water mentioned is concerned, we need not say more than the apostle has said: "That Rock was Christ." These five blessings are named by the apostle, and in them are summed up all other spiritual blessings that could be named. These things Israel might well rejoice in, and in these things may the people of God well rejoice and be glad to-day.

But also the apostle at once proceeds to name five things in which Israel, or many of them, had sinned. The five blessings, conferred of God, are set over against five transgressions of their own. But let us take notice for our comfort that it is not said that God was not well pleased with all of them, but with many, and these many were overthrown in the wilderness. Some were guilty of one thing and some others of other things, not all were guilty of all the things named. The five things are, first, lusting, then idolatry, then fornication, then tempting Christ, and last, murmuring. In these five things we think might be summed up all manner of transgression, both in heart and life, of which any one can be guilty. These things the apostle names for the purpose of warning his brethren. Israel was greatly blessed, but this did not secure them from the danger of transgression and the consequent chastisements. It seems to be the apostle's design to urge upon the church that the blessings of God are not to be regarded as causes of boasting, but rather of humility and fear. It will not do to presume upon the mercies of God and become high-minded and self-confident. As Israel sinned, notwithstanding the multiplied favors of God toward them, so may we all sin, though redeemed and born of God. These things are written, as the apostle says, for our admonition, and "let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."

Now, from all this the apostle comes to speak of the one thing that distinguishes the church from all the world beside: Christ is theirs. They are shut up unto Christ by redemption, by preservation and by the continual teaching of the Spirit within, and this they set forth whenever they come to partake of the emblems of the body and blood of Christ in the supper. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" The word "communion" literally means the act of having things in common, or of partaking of things in common. This is borne out in the next verse, where the apostle says, "For we, being many, are one bread, and one body." That is, we all as believers have in spirit partaken of the body and blood of Christ by faith; we have been nourished in our faith, hope and love by the application of these truths, comforting, strengthening and nourishing us in our need. This has been true of all who believe. We all are partakers of that one Bread. (Verse 17.) All have passed through the same experience of the power and grace that are in Christ. All have come to believe in him, and to love him, and to serve him in newness of spirit; all are in these things one indeed in their spiritual life; all are one with Jesus the Savior. It is living bread of which believers have eaten, and because it is living bread they live also; they shall never die. In this experience is true oneness and communion, but in the ordinance, to which we believe the apostle refers here, there is a setting forth of the great truths of which we have been speaking. When we eat the bread at the supper it is one

bread, and when we drink the wine it is one cup, and as we eat the one bread and drink the one cup we declare that we are one, and that we and Christ are one indeed. As bread and wine when eaten and drunken become so incorporated in our bodies that they are a part of us, so as we have eaten and drunken of the body and blood of Christ, through our faith grasping the truth that he is our all, our salvation and our daily help and strength, he has become (shall we say?) a part of ourselves, and as Christ thus experimentally dwells in our heart, our life and our all, so we become one body, bound together in love. There is constant communion between each and every member of the body physically, together with mutual dependence and mutual gladness in each other. So there is oneness in all the members of Christ, and each one communes with all the rest. Is not this partly, at least, what the apostle means when he says, For we are one bread, one body? Not only are we baptized unto Christ, but he lives in us as our life. We have a much closer union then with Christ than the children of Israel had with Moses. They were indeed baptized unto him, but he did not live in them; they were one nation, but they were not one body. Believers are one body. By so much then are we under more solemn obligations unto Christ than Israel was unto Moses. Moses was a servant over the house of another, but Christ is a Son in his own house. While we are servants, in one point of view, yet we occupy the much nearer relation of sons of God, and brethren with the Lord. If, then, servants live to obey their master, how much more should believers remember to obey him who is one with them, their life, their all? All eat the bread and all drink the wine, so all are equal partakers of the benefits of the body and blood of Christ. The Romish antichrist forbids the wine to all save the clergy, but, thanks be to God, our blessed Master did not forbid the wine to any of his disciples when he instituted this ordinance of the supper; and still more ought we to rejoice that he not only gives his body for the comfort of all his people, but also his blood. No one among them all is forbidden the blood, any more than they are forbidden the bread. Certainly all need the blood, and must feel its power before they have right to the bread, and these can and do eat and drink in remembrance of him, and to the glory of God, and every time that a believer comes to partake of the supper he is reminded that he is one with Christ and one with all the members of his body. He is reminded that he is not his own, that he is bought with a price and belongs to the Lord. This is well fitted to stir up his mind to a remembrance of the truth set forth by the apostle here, viz., that it is his to follow Jesus in his commandments, and that being saved means, in part at least, that one has been begotten not only unto a living hope, but also to obedience. How fearful will all who feel these things be, lest they deny the Lord by disobedience.

Now it is our mind to briefly refer to a few things which belong to the ordinance of the supper, as set forth in the word of God. First, it is a church act; that is, it is to be observed by the churches as churches. It is not an individual act, but it expresses communion, and communion means the communion of the body. It is evident from the narrative that disciples only were at the first supper; it was not opened to all men. Disciples only are to be admitted to the supper now; it would be mockery were

any others to come in. If one comes in who knows not the spirit of true oneness with Christ, he is acting a lie. How solemn this question then becomes to all humble-hearted followers of the Lord. Am I his or am I not? will at times sorely try their hearts, and such sore trials and questioning are infallible marks of that soul where the Lord has wrought conviction of sin and the need of salvation. Still further, it is the Lord's table, and it is ours only so far as we are the bidden guests. It is not ours then to bid any one enter there, neither is it ours to say who shall partake; the Lord bids to his own table whom he will. One charge brought against the church of God has been that they are selfish, because they will not bid others to eat and drink with them at the Lord's table, but the word of God settles all this. Whom the Lord has bidden to come in his word (and no others) ought to come to the table, and he has in all the New Testament set forth this ordinance as belonging to his church. It must be confined there, unless we will become rebels against his word. But whom does the Lord bid to come and to eat and drink? Surely we could not suppose that he would bid any one come who does not know the Lord, and we find in the word that all that is said concerning the matter is to the effect that believers only are entitled to partake. One instance to the contrary cannot be found. Still further, baptism is prerequisite to the supper. It is sure that baptism is prerequisite to membership in the church, it is the door of the church visibly, and the door is a part of the house, as we know. It is not something outside of the house, but is in it as a necessary part of it, and all who come in must come by this door of baptism. All the privileges of the church, which belong to all those who dwell there, are reached only as we come in by this door. Baptism is the first ordinance, all the rest follow; and this includes the supper. Not only is this the order laid down in the word, but it is in harmony with all that is fit and orderly. Baptism signifies our death to sin and self, and our resurrection to Christ and to be his followers. The supper represents that by which living men grow and thrive and become strong; life first, and eating and growing afterwards. Baptism first, and the supper afterward seems then to be the suitable order, and the Lord has commanded that which is suitable in this matter. Baptists have been accused of selfishness for their order in this matter, but it is the established order according to the word, by the Lord of the house, and the servants have no discretion in the matter at all. Beside, it is not close communion, but communion open to all who belong to the house. Our families sit down at our tables, and the family belonging to the house of God sits down at his table. Unless it be contended that all men belong to the church of Christ, it cannot be successfully contended that all men have a right to the privileges and obligations of the church. Baptism must precede all else in the life of the church. All, therefore, who have not been baptized have no right to the supper. This of course sets aside all who have only been sprinkled or poured upon for baptism. Not only baptism must precede the supper, but an orderly walk, true faith and true doctrine must precede an entrance into these privileges.

We have not here stopped to enter into an extended argument, but have merely suggested the reasons for our order as the church of Christ regarding this ordinance. C.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Silas H. Durand, April 12th, 1911, at the home of the bride's father, Albert Serviss, New Brunswick, N. J., Melmoth L. R. Wade, of Brooklyn, N. Y., and Miss Mary Blew Serviss.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Peter Staples, of North Berwick, Maine, departed this life March 9th, 1911, aged 80 years, 4 months and 10 days. He was a man well known and highly respected. He made no public profession of religion and attended no meetings of professed churches of Christ. Several months before he died one of his daughters (Mrs. Albert Billings) said to me, "My father is sick and very weak; I want you to go and see him, I think he would like to see you." I had but a very slight acquaintance with him, and had never held any conversation with him. The next day I drove to his house, but I went very reluctantly; it was all as a dreaded task before me. I thought, I am only going to please his daughter; perhaps, knowing who I am, he has no inclination to see me or to hear the first word from my lips concerning God and eternity. As I approached the house my soul was so burdened by the supposed task before me of visiting this sick old man, I prayed to the Lord to carry me through. I found him sitting up in a large rocking-chair wrapped in coverlets before an open fireplace, and he was very feeble. In a few minutes I began talking to him of God's salvation, and his gracious dealings with his people, and I could see he was interested, and with broken utterances and tear-streaming eyes he talked a little himself, and that little so rich, so blessed, it was a soul-gratifying revelation to me, so expressive of his deep experimental knowledge of the doctrine of God our Savior, and that he was well acquainted with the holy Scriptures. O then with what freedom I could discourse to him of "the sure mercies of David." I visited him after this, and found it very satisfying to do so. How sovereign the kindness and love of God our Savior. I preached at his funeral from the words, "Thou wilt shew me the path of life."—Psalms xvi. 11.

ALSO,

Mrs. Jennie Grover, of North Berwick, Maine, died March 11th, 1911, aged 71 years and 8 months. In her early days she made a profession of religion, but had no relish for the doctrine of God our Savior. This I discovered in my first acquaintance with her, nearly eighteen years ago; but at the time of the death of their daughter, in 1903, their only surviving child, amidst her mourning over her loss she became much exercised over her own condition before God, feeling that she was a poor, perishing sinner. This trouble of soul continued about a year, until it pleased the Lord to give some tokens of comfort in his word, and a little hope sprang up that the Lord would be gracious to her, and in due time she would tell that she hoped the Lord had pardoned her sins, and that Christ was, she hoped, her Savior. She became a subscriber of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and often found comfort in what she read from its pages. Many were the conversations we had together concerning the experience of believers in the Lamb of God. But though she often expressed the desire that the time would come when she could unite with the church, yet she did not do so, her own felt unworthiness appeared to prevent her. Her health for several years had been declining, and at the time of her death she was at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Grover, Dover, New Hampshire, with whom she and her husband had spent the most of the winter, and where she had the best of care. On Monday, March 6th, she was stricken with paralysis. During the night following the attack she expressed a desire to have me come and see her. I was notified of this by telephone, and went to see her Tuesday morning. I found her able to speak a little, happy in her mind, looking unto Jesus, expecting soon to depart and to be with him. Her faltering tongue would say, "I love Jesus, he is dear, he has sent this stroke upon me; I wish I could talk more." She listened to my talking of Jehovah's covenant faithfulness, and of Christ and his salvation with evident delight. She wished me to talk and sing to her, and while I was speaking, again and again with her lisping tongue she would say, "I love Jesus, he is dear; I wish I could talk." The next day she could hardly articulate a word, but understood what was spoken to her. Her husband will greatly miss her; they shared their joys and sorrows together many years. May the Lord console and sustain him in his bereavement.

At her funeral I preached from Solomon's Song iv. 6.

ALSO,

Sarah Hanscomb, of North Berwick, Maine, died March 14th, 1911, aged 92 years, 2 months and 20 days. She united with the church and was baptized by Elder William Quint at the same time and place as our brother, Elder F. A. Chick. During her long life she lived in the vicinity of our meetinghouse, and constantly attended the services held there while she was able, but during the last few years her infirmities were such that she could not do so. She failed in body and mind, yet when I visited her, though she sometimes could not be made to understand who I was, she would ask me to pray with her before I left, and appeared to be interested when I spoke to her of the riches of God's mercy, and often she would say, "I am nothing but a poor old sinner." If she said anything of herself in things relating to God it was ever in much self-abasement and with a trembling hope, because, as she expressed it, she was "so unworthy, a poor, ignorant creature." At her funeral I preached from Jeremiah xii. 5.

Thus in the compass of a few days I attended the funerals of these three persons, whose spirits we hope have departed to be with Christ, which is far better, and they are happy now in glory with him, and their bodies we have laid in their graves in hope of the resurrection at the last day, when they shall come forth immortal, incorruptible, spiritual, fashioned like the glorious body of our ascended Lord Jesus Christ.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

Dr. M. James Galloway departed this life (we hope to enter into a better) at his home in the city of Philadelphia, Pa., Feb. 28th, 1911, of heart failure. The subject of this notice was born in Scotland, March 28th, 1838, making his stay on earth 73 years, lacking just one month. He emigrated to the United States when fourteen years of age, and became a resident of Philadelphia, making that city his home until the time of his death. Dr. Galloway was twice married, first to a Philadelphia lady (with whom the writer had no acquaintance), who died many years ago, leaving her husband and three children, two sons and one daughter, who lived to manhood and womanhood. The sons both died a few years ago; the daughter, Mrs. Davis, of Bristol, Va., still survives. Feb. 7th, 1900, Dr. Galloway was married by the writer to Miss Myra B. Nevin, of Chester County, Pa., who survives him, with the daughter referred to. If I am rightly informed, the doctor was an adherent of the Kirk of Scotland, but whether he was ever a communicant of that order, however, I am not informed, but from my first acquaintance with him (about fourteen years) he manifested a decided preference for the Old School Baptists, showing great pleasure in their society and delighting to entertain them in his pleasant home, where they were always made welcome. He was always gentlemanly and kind, and possessed of many noble traits and admirable qualities, a man of culture and refined tastes, a great lover of nature in all its forms, of an enthusiastic and poetic temperament, proud of his native country and its noble history. Our sympathy is extended to dear sister Galloway in her sad bereavement, but her sorrow is not such as the sorrow of those without hope. May the Lord ever support and comfort her, and be unto her a very present help in trouble.

Funeral services were held at his late residence, 1312 Spruce St., Philadelphia, conducted by Elder B. F. Coulter and the writer (Mr. Green, a minister of the P. E. denomination, a close personal friend of the family, also taking part), March 3rd, 1911, after which the mortal body was interred in Ivy Hill Cemetery to await that summons which shall call forth all who sleep the sleep of death out of their graves.

A. B. FRANCIS.

George Tamsett, of Oneonta, N. Y., died from cancer of the throat, Feb. 25th, 1911, aged 61 years and 1 month. Mr. Tamsett was born in England, Jan. 21st, 1850, and came to the United States in the fall of 1870, to his brother James W. Tamsett's home. Mr. Tamsett often attended meetings at Otego Church, and was a firm believer in salvation by grace. He had a great love for reading the Bible and other religious books and writings, and spent most of his leisure time reading and talking about what he read. His experience of divine things was sacred to him, and he lived aloof from worldly amusements almost entirely. His first wife died in January, 1888, leaving him with seven children. In August, 1900, he was united in marriage to sister Lucy Brewster Weidman, by Elder D. M. Vail.

Elder J. B. Slauson attended the funeral Monday, Feb. 28th, and spoke words of truth and comfort, using part of the fourteenth chapter of John and reading hymn 1290.

ALSO,

Mrs. Rosamond C. Price died at her home in Oneonta, N. Y., March 19th, 1911, aged 77 years. Sister Price was the daughter of brother George A. and Gertrude Chamberlin, and all were members of the Otego Church. Sister Price and sister Sallie Miller were received into the church at the meeting held July 5th, 1879, and both were orderly in walk and devoted in their regard for the church, and held in love and esteem by the church during their lives. Sister Price had been a great sufferer from a mental trouble for years; her last illness was short. She leaves her husband, Elisha Price, three daughters and three sons, together with other relatives and many friends to mourn her departure from earthly scenes. Much of interest to their friends could be said of these two who have lately passed away from time things, but neither would have wished it done.

Written by their friend,

SUSIE C. F. GUERNSEY.

Rachel Ann Timmons departed this life Dec. 22nd, 1910, at her home in Snowhill, Md. She had been in poor health for several months, but was not considered in a dangerous condition until two weeks before her death. The last few days her suffering was great, but she bore it patiently. She was of a cheerful disposition, always believing there was a bright side to every picture if it could be seen. She was married to Jenkins Timmons in January, 1868, and six children were the fruit of that union, two dying in infancy, leaving two sons and two daughters to feel the loss of a dear mother, also her aged companion, who have our deepest sympathy. She was born August 24th, 1840. Sister Timmons was baptized by the writer in fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church in Snowhill, Md., about fifteen years ago, and lived a life consistent with her profession

the rest of her days. She showed a meek and humble spirit every day as well as Sunday, and was always at meeting when her health would allow. Acute asthma caused the stroke that took her away.

Elder A. B. Francis preached the funeral sermon in the meetinghouse in Snowhill, after which her mortal remains were laid to rest in the Snowhill Cemetery until called to rise at the last day and to be made like her dear Savior. This makes five taken from this church in twelve months.

ALSO,

Mary E. Cramfield departed this life March 5th, 1911, at her home, near Powellville, Md. Sister Cramfield was born Oct. 30th, 1833, and was married to George Rounds, March 21st, 1855. Nine children were the fruit of that union, all but one (Eddie) living to feel the loss of a mother. It was the privilege of the writer to baptize sister Cramfield in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Indiantown about twenty-five years ago, and ever since she had walked and talked according to her profession. She was again married, to George Cramfield (I have not the date). They lived happily together until death came and demanded their separation. We miss her presence at the meetings of the church very much, but desire to bow in submission to the will of Him who doeth all things well, believing that for her to die is gain. The cause of her death was dropsy.

Her remains were taken to the Forest Grove meetinghouse, where the writer spoke to her memory to a large company of friends, using for a text, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."—John vi. 44. After which all that was mortal was laid to rest until the morning of the resurrection, then shall that mortal come forth immortal and be glorified.

T. M. POULSON.

MASSEY, Va.

Mrs. Lucy Ann Mitcham was born in Newton Co., Ga., Oct. 10th, 1841, and died Oct. 5th, 1908, aged 66 years, 11 months and 25 days. She was the daughter of Green H. and Mary Ann Dodson. In January, 1858, she was married to Milton M. Mitcham, and to that union were born five children, all of whom are living: A. L. Mitcham, Atlanta, Ga.; Mrs. W. J. Nunn, Rutledge, Ga.; Mrs. W. A. Dodson, Bryan, Texas; W. M. Mitcham, Atlanta, Ga., and Mrs. Lafayette Nunn, Bostwick, Ga. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church of Christ at Shoal Creek, Newton Co., Ga., early in life, and was baptized by Elder J. G. Eubanks, living a consistent member until her death. She leaves her husband and children, two sisters and one brother: Mrs. J. W. Lowe, Mrs. G. D. Carter and A. M. Dodson, also a number of friends to mourn her death. Both her sisters were members of the same church she was. She lived with her daughter, Mrs. W. J. Nunn, of Rutledge, who tenderly watched over her as long as life lasted. She had fought a good fight, she has finished her course and kept the faith. This lovely christian sleeps and rests from all her cares, and though loved ones weep she is with her Savior.

She was laid to rest in the Rutledge Cemetery. The funeral service was conducted by Elder R. L. Cook, of Social Circle, Ga. To the children and other beloved relatives I commend her life as an example, and may the good Lord sustain you all in life and save in death, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Her nephew, W. G. CARTER.

RUTLEDGE, Ga., April 13, 1911.

Mrs. Susan Ann Hilton, of Sanitaria Springs, N. Y., died suddenly of valvular heart trouble at Oneonta, N. Y., where she had gone to visit a sister (Mrs. E. M. Hayes), Feb. 26th, 1911, aged 77 years. Mrs. Hilton's maiden name was Reynolds. She was born in New Kingston, Delaware County, and came to Broome County with her parents, C. and Sally Ann Reynolds, when nine years of age, and most of her life had been spent in what was then called Osborne Hollow. She was united in marriage to Willis B. Hilton when twenty-five years of age. He died twelve years ago, leaving no children. She was a member of the Old School Baptist Church, being baptized by Elder Bogardus, at Brookdale, Pa., in the fall of 1897. She was a firm believer in the doctrine.

The remains were brought to Sanitaria Springs, and the funeral was held at her sister's, Mrs. H. M. Strickland, where she had made her home. Elder Slauson read hymn 1246, and spoke to the comfort of the mourning relatives and friends present from 2 Timothy iv. 7, 8. She leaves her beloved church and many relatives and friends to mourn their loss, but for her "to die is gain."

(MRS.) H. M. STRICKLAND.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

E. C. Harsh, Ohio, $.75; C. Owens, Iowa, $1.00; N. Stathers, W. Va., $3.00.

NOTICE.

The supply of the Mary Parker book is exhausted. We keep on hand the Hymn and Tune book, in both round and shape note, price 70 cents singly, sent by mail, and six dollars per dozen, sent at expense of purchaser; also have "Songs in the Night," price 35 cents.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Southampton, Pa.

MEETINGS.

THE churches of the Roxbury Association will hold their fifth Sunday or quarterly meeting, the Lord willing, with the Second Church of Roxbury, Saturday and Sunday, April 29th and 30th, 1911, commencing at 11 o'clock a. m. Saturday. Trains will be met at Roxbury Saturday morning. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON.

A TWO days meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the Fairview Church, Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa., Saturday and Sunday, May 6th and 7th, 1911. Those coming by rail must come on Friday before the meeting to Hancock, Md., and will please notify in advance either Jefferson C. Mellott or Jonas Mellott, both of Needmore, Pa., so as to insure their being met. Place of meeting is a long drive from the railroad. Lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

A TWO days meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va., on Saturday and Sunday, May 13th and 14th, 1911. Trains leaving Union Station, Washington, D. C., at 8:10 a. m., and Bluemont at 7:55 a. m., will be met at Herndon. Lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Harford Church, Harford Co., Md., beginning on Wednesday (17th) after the second Sunday in May, 1911, and continuing three days.

Those coming by way of Baltimore will leave North Ave. Station, on the Maryland and Pennsylvania R. R., Tuesday, May 16th, at 3 o'clock p. m. for Forest Hill. Those coming from the north will leave York, Pa., on the same road at about 1:30 p. m. for Forest Hill. Both trains will be met. A cordial invitation is extended, and especially to the ministering brethren.

NATHAN GRAFTON, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Rock Springs Church, Rock Springs, Md., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 24th, 25th and 26th, 1911.

Those coming by way of Baltimore, take train leaving Union Station at 2:57 p. m. for Conowingo, Md., changing cars at Perryville, on Tuesday before. Those from Philadelphia take train at Broad St. Station at 2 p. m., making the same change at Perryville for Conowingo. Ministers of our faith and order and lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

C. J. ROWLAND, Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, N. J., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 31st and June 1st and 2nd, 1911.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Ebenezer Church, Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx, New York, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1911.

THE Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon and Washington will be held with Big Spring Church, at Elgin, Union Co., Oregon, instead of Oregon City, Oregon, to commence on Friday before the third Sunday in June, 1911, at 10 o'clock a. m.

W. J. HESS, Moderator.

I. F. COLEMAN, Clerk.

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IN

NEW YORK CITY.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 79. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1911. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FRAGMENTS.

WHAT a wonder of wonders is presented in the fortieth Psalm! Here is one who has long been sunken down in a horrible pit and in the miry clay. He has known that help could come only from the Lord, and therefore has not looked to any other source, but has waited patiently (continuously, enduringly) for the Lord, but crying steadily day and night unto him. Now at last the Lord has inclined unto him and heard his cry; he has also delivered him out of the awful depths of sin, has placed his feet upon a rock and established his goings, and put a new song in his mouth, even praise unto his God. Now he is favored to make the Lord his trust, and to rejoice in the wonderful works which he has done, and in his thoughts which are to usward. He also says, "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." Neither has he hid that law and the loving-kindness of the Lord in his heart, but has preached righteousness in the great congregation. Now we can but look with wonder and admiration and longing desire upon such a wonderful man as this, and wish that we might be righteous and holy as he. We can feel something of what he declares concerning his experience; we remember the horrible pit; we remember the deliverance from it; we remember when we could not help singing the praise of God; the song was in our heart and mouth, and sang itself. But surely this man who is talking in this Psalm is pure and holy and obedient, and must be far from ever having sinned since the time of that deliverance, while we, how often we have sinned in heart and lip and life. What can we say, what can we do, when we feel within us such "a vain, deceitful heart, and wretched, wandering mind"? We love to read of this holy man, who wrote so wonderfully of his experience and work, and would love to be near him. But what right have we to be near him? What comfort can he be to us? His purity and holiness stand in strong and striking contrast to our sinfulness and depravity. But now the sweet wonder of this Psalm shines through our gloom and brings us unexpected joy and comfort. After having preached righteousness, and declared the salvation of the Lord, and told of his delight to do the

will of God, we find this same man crying for mercy, saying, "Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord: let thy loving-kindness and thy truth continually preserve me. For innumerable evils have compassed me about." We might think that these evils were losses, crosses and persecutions, and such things of a worldly nature as often come upon good men, so we would get no help or comfort from this. Certainly, we think, there can be no such sinfulness in the heart or life of such a holy man as we feel in ours. But the next expression brings him near to us, causing us to feel a sweet and solemn surprise: "Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of mine head; therefore my heart faileth me." What a wonder is this, and what an unexpected source of help and consolation. The same one who has spoken so confidently of righteousness and salvation is now telling our iniquities in telling of his own. And who can this be? What sacred mystery is here? We are told that the Spirit of Christ was in the prophets when they spoke of his sufferings, and the glory that should follow; and David says, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue." The dear Savior has borne all the iniquities of his people. "In all their afflictions he was afflicted." He is with them both in their sorrows and in their joys. They must know the fellowship of his sufferings. When any sin pains our conscience it is because he bore that sin, died for it and rose for our justification. It was not the iniquities of Jesus, as a man, that he died to atone for, for he had none, but those of his people. The poor publican could not look up, but he went down from that scene of suffering to his house justified. The wonderful works of Jesus, and his thoughts which are to usward, are more than can be numbered. (Verse 5.) Then they are set over against the innumerable evils that compassed him about, and his iniquities which were so many. This is an unspeakable consolation to that one who often fears that his transgressions, which he hates and loathes, had forever shut him out from the love and favor of God. But now Jesus is with us in the valley, in the darkness, in the suffering for sin, in the temptation, to deliver us, and he says for our salvation and for our comfort, "But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God." Jesus was buried by baptism into death for the sins of his people; he was raised up from that horrible pit by the glory of the Father, and he brought up all the church of God. As each one is made to experience the power of this resurrection of Christ his feet are set upon the Rock, his goings are established in the gospel and the new song is put in his mouth, even praise to our God. He is forever freed from the power and dominion of sin, and yet will be in conflict with sin while he remains in this world. He will be poor and needy while in the flesh, but rich in faith, and will be finally "delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

MATTHEW XVI. 13–24.

Peter answered the question of Jesus with the assurance of faith, and said confidently, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." He also had the word of Jesus that such knowledge had been revealed unto him, not by flesh and blood, but by the Father only. So every living soul has received from the Father

the revelation of this truth, and holds it by faith alone, and not by the natural understanding. Upon this truth that Christ is the Son of God is built the church. Upon this truth revealed is built every good hope through grace. This knowledge of Jesus as the Son of God can come from no earthly source, and can never be destroyed. But how little Peter knew at that time of the power and experience of this truth which he was able so confidently to utter. He must now begin to know about this knowledge, and how it comes. "From that time forth Jesus began to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." Now these are the things the knowledge of which must necessarily follow in the disciples the knowledge by faith that Jesus is the Son of God. But Peter, who as yet did not know how this knowledge of Jesus comes into the experience of his disciples as a living reality, took Jesus "and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee." But Jesus turned and said unto Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." This was the appointed and only way in which Jesus must come unto his people in their salvation. There were terrible depths of suffering into which he must go down, but every pain he endured was necessary, every pang was precious. He knew that the power of the Father, whose will he came to do, would make him willing to bear every stroke laid upon him by the hand of eternal justice, to endure every throb of agony in that awful hour of unspeakable anguish. Therefore the expression of the natural sympathy of Peter, and his urgent opposition to the thought of Jesus' suffering, were an offence unto Jesus; hence he said unto Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan." Our natural minds cannot understand the need of these sufferings on the part of Jesus, and cannot be reconciled to them. To know Jesus we must know the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his suffering, being made conformable unto his death. (Phil. iii. 10.) The flesh shrinks from such sufferings, and the natural mind says, "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee." We cannot see it necessary. The wisdom of the world fails utterly here; it cannot see the necessity of suffering and death in order to salvation; it counts such strokes of affliction as an evidence of anger. This earthly wisdom says that one who is righteous and pure, as Jesus was, should have praise and comfort and good treatment, instead of strokes and misery and death. But the dear Savior goes on to show that the path of himself and his people in this world is a path of suffering instead of ease and comfort, and says: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." He shows us, from that time forth, that the path of his followers is a path of self-denial and a constant cross. Our own will must be crossed, we cannot have our own way. We must suffer with Jesus before we can reign with him. Only as the sufferings of Christ abound in us will our consolation abound by Christ. (2 Cor. i. 5.) So it is in tender compassion and infinite loving-kindness that Jesus commands and works this self-denial in the hearts and lives of his people, and appoints their cross. That sympathy which insists upon an effort to evade this

suffering and avoid the cross is an offence unto Jesus and his people. We preach not only Christ, but Christ crucified, and this is, to the believer, the power of God and the wisdom of God.

"ARE not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father." How glad I am that this does not read, without your Father's notice. How much better it is than that, as the true reading of the inspired Scriptures of truth is always better than any attempted change can make it. The writing as it comes to us by the Holy Spirit cannot be improved. No change, no addition or subtraction by any man can be properly thought of or allowed. It is often the case that by tradition we have received a portion with some word added or omitted, and have kept on using it in that form, without paying attention to the incorrectness of it until it is especially brought to our notice. But when the Lord gives it to us in our own experience we find what is wrong, then we want it just as the Lord gave it to us. To say, without your Father's notice, would imply that the Lord was observing things that are passing around him, as we do, and that he notices the events as they transpire, and takes measures according as it then appears to him necessary. But the Lord's people want something nearer and better than that in their heavenly Father, upon whom they depend for every breath they draw, and for every help and comfort they receive, and whom they worship, saying, as the Syrophenician woman and the leper did, "Lord, help me." "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." And they have something better; their Father not only sees and notices the falling of a sparrow, but one of two sparrows which are in the air together cannot fall on the ground without him, and we must say, as a necessary conclusion, that the other cannot stay in the air without him, "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." But shall we say that the Lord directs the movements of such little things as sparrows, which are sold for only half a farthing each? Why not? Look through the Bible and see the numerous circumstances in which it is declared that the Lord directed the movements and works of lions, and bears, and reptiles, and worms, and flies, to the accomplishment of his just and holy purposes, even making a covenant for his people with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground. (Hosea ii. 18.) This is good, to know and to be repeatedly told that our God has the directing and controlling power over all things, all creatures, all events, and that he is infinite in wisdom and in goodness, and that his love passes knowledge. I love to think and know that when a sparrow falls on the ground, the time appointed for it so to fall has come, and that our Father is seen by the faith of his little ones to be there in the fulfillment of his wise purpose concerning it; and in that tender love and care manifested in this sweet illustration we can hear him saying to our trembling, anxious souls, "Fear ye not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows."

"AS the days of a tree are the days of my people."—Isaiah lxv. 22. What a peculiar figure: "The days of a tree." This signifies life, growth, enlargement from within. Very different the signification if we should say, The days of a house, or the days of a city. No life signified by this, just dead days, or years,

just telling how long the house or city has been there. If there has been enlargement it has been by addition from without; no growth here, but a new house or a new city put side by side with the old one. But the tree has been constantly changing, enlarging, and yet it is the same one tree. Every year it has been sending out from itself buds, which have extended and grown into branches, yet it is one tree. Every year the branches have increased and multiplied, like the increasing and multiplying generations of men upon the earth, yet the same days cover and include all this increase. Every last year's branch has sent out this year many branches, yet each of these multiplied offshoots is counted with the tree, and has as many days as the germ which first broke through the soil five hundred years ago. Each branch in a perfect tree is equally a part of the tree with every other branch, nor can one branch be regarded as having any advantage over any other, or as lacking any quality which any additional number of days would give it. The offshoot of to-day bears the same kind of fruit as was borne by every branch a hundred years ago. One part of the tree cannot be enlarged or improved by itself by some extra care given to itself exclusively. Every part of the tree must partake of whatever good is given to the tree. So are the days of the Lord's people in the new gospel heavens and earth. "Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." The elect are branches of the Tree whose Root is Christ. As branches of the Tree they are elect only in him by vital union, and do their work only in him. The work of their hands is not counted as the work of individual branches, but as the work of the whole tree. If one branch should begin to boast of its abundance of gospel fruit, the Tree would softly rebuke it by saying, "From me is thy fruit found." So if one branch should dictate to another, and tell it what to do, it would feel the reproving whisper, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord."

"There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days." The infant of days has all the life and all the power and all the age and all the wisdom of the tree, though the tree be a hundred years old. And so fully is this truth meant, that the child that should die would be in this sense a hundred years old, having all the same advantage of that spiritual life as though it had lived to a hundred years.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 21, 1911.

THE FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

THE above words and their import have been much upon my mind of late, and I have been wondering if men understand them now as they did in years gone by. I would not wish to speak of these words except in an impartial way, and in a way that would agree with the supreme sovereignty of God. I have thought that hasty and perhaps wrong conclusions have been at times inferred by not taking into consideration the full import of these words, viz., "The foreknowledge of God." It is not necessary that we comprehend fully these weighty words, for we know that the wisdom of God is infinite, perfect, cannot be increased nor diminished, and therefore his foreknowledge sees all future events so perfectly that they are as if they had already been. Great errors have resulted in handling the subject of the foreknowledge of God by not keeping before us the perfection and infinite wisdom of God, and that he

is before all things, and that by him all things consist. I have often heard men in speaking of the attributes of Jehovah represent him as being somewhat ignorant of many things that take place in this material world. They say, sometimes, that he did not know that sin would enter into the world. They say if he did know sin would enter into the world, and the awful consequences that would follow, and also had power to keep it out of the world and did not do so, then he alone must be to blame for sin in the world, and as this would not suit their ideas of a holy God, they excuse him by pleading that he was ignorant, and that he did not foreknow that sin would enter the world, nor that Satan would enter the world, and that he did not foresee the fall of Adam, with all the fearful consequences of that fall. Of all who say that God was ignorant of these great events, I say they do not believe the Scriptures, and have but a poor conception indeed of the wisdom of God. On the other hand, I find brethren who seem to have passed from death unto life, and who profess a hope through grace, and belong to Old School Baptist churches, who have surprised me by declaring that while God did indeed foreknow all things, even all future events, with a perfect foreknowledge, and that all things thus foreknown will unalterably come to pass as certainly as though all these things were decreed by the all-wise God, yet at the same time they deny that all things were decreed by him, for they say this would be to make him the author of sin. But in examining this matter I find that if to decree all things would make him the author of sin, then also to foreknow all things would involve the same conclusion, if indeed his foreknowledge be certain, since the arguments urged and leveled against those who believe that our God decreed all things would also overthrow their own idea of the certain foreknowledge of God concerning all things, and their argument is far more inconsistent with itself than if they should adopt the full-fledged Arminian theory that God does not certainly know all future events. For if he foreknew all things, he also foreknew that sin would enter into the world, and also the awful consequences, and he foreknew that if he suffered it to enter into the world it would ruin the whole human family. He also must have foreknown that Satan would be in the world, and had power to keep all of them out of the world had he so desired. There is no power but of God. The powers that be are ordained of God, hence all the blame for sin coming into the world could as well be put upon God for allowing these things when he foreknew them and had power to prevent them, as though it be admitted that his predestination included all these things for wise and holy ends. All that God doeth is holy, and all that he does is for righteous purposes, even though these purposes are hidden from our view. I do not for a moment think that God is the author of sin, either from his foreknowledge or from his predestination of all things; his decrees of evil things no more involve the doctrine that he is the author of sin than does his suffering them to enter the world. Men who are so disposed would blame God equally whether it be admitted that he foreknew and suffered sin to enter the world or decreed it; that is, admitting also that he had power to keep it out. Whether he permitted it or decreed it, the result is the same. But all such arguments fall to the ground when our brethren oppose the decrees of God re-

specting evil, and at the same time admit his foreknowledge of all things. In so doing they merely turn all their arguments against predestination against themselves, and the same arguments that would prove too much for us who believe in predestination of all things would also prove too much for those who believe in his foreknowledge. The Arminian world would pass judgment, and say we could not see in which of these two ways God would be the most to be blamed. The whole force of the evasion in this matter seems to be that inasmuch as certain foreknowledge is not the cause of the things foreknown, as predestination is, therefore foreknowledge does not prove that it is as certain to be as predestination does; but there is no force in this argument as against Arminians, for an Arminian would catch us on the one ground as well as on the other. All such argument is built upon the supposition that nothing can be an evidence of anything being certain except that which has a causal influence to make it so, but this can never be maintained. If indeed God's preknowledge of future events be not the thing which first makes it impossible that they should fail of coming to pass, yet it may, and certainly does demonstate that it is impossible that it should fail, from whatever source this impossibility may arise. If indeed foreknowledge be not the cause, but the effect of this impossibility, it yet proves that there is such an impossibility, as irresistibly as if it were the cause. The argument is as strong from the effect to the cause as from the cause to the effect. It is enough to know that an existence infallibly foreknown cannot fail, whether the impossibility arises from the foreknowledge of it or exists prior to it. It is as evident as anything can be that it is impossible for a thing infallibly known to be true to prove not to be true. Therefore there is certainty connected with foreknowledge, whether the knowledge be the cause of the certainty or the certainty be the cause of the foreknowledge. From what has been observed, it is evident that the absolute decrees of God are no more inconsistent with his holiness and his righteous purposes, on account of any certainty in the event which follows from such decrees, than is the absolute foreknowledge of God, because the connection between the event and certain foreknowledge is as infallible and indissoluble as is the connection between the event and an absolute decree; that is, it is no more possible that the event and foreknowledge should not agree, than that the event and the decree should not agree. The connection between the event and foreknowledge is absolutely perfect by the supposition, because it is supposed that the certainty and infallibility of the knowledge is absolutely perfect, and being so, the certainty cannot be increased, therefore the connection between the knowledge and the thing known cannot be increased. So that if a decree be added to foreknowledge it does not at all increase the connection, or make it more infallible or indissoluble; if so, the certainty of knowledge might be increased by the decree, which would be contrary to the supposition that God's knowledge is perfect to the highest degree. If the foreknowledge of an event be absolutely perfect, it follows that it is impossible that the event should not be, by some means or other; it must be, whether by decree, or in some other way; our God cannot know an uncertainty. I suppose that none who acknowledge the truth of the Bible will assume that God does not have a certain, positive, infall-

ible foreknowledge of all things, and if God has not decreed them, as we fully believe he has, then it will fall on all those who believe in the foreknowledge of God in all things, and at the same time deny his predestination of all things, to tell us by what blind, ignorant fate all things which God foreknows are made certain to be. If not fixed, how could God foretell them centuries before they take place? God foreknew them as being certain to come to pass. A decree cannot do more. What was the power that made these things certain, if not the decree of God? We say that God made them certain, while they say that he did not, for, say they, some of them are evil things. But again I ask, What was that power that made it impossible for them to fail to be? Are these brethren gone from God's decrees into fatalism? It looks like it. If they have found many future events firmly fixed, so that it is impossible that they should fail, what wonderful power has so inevitably fixed them? Thus we see that they have assumed events for which they can give no author, neither can they give cause nor purpose for them, and yet they say that these events are most infallibly certain; they merely say, Do not ask us the cause. They have assumed a position, and yet cannot give any foundation for it, except their own opinion of God's justice and holiness. I will now invite them to follow me in a few passages of Scripture, and by them examine God's foreknowledge without decree, and his foreknowledge with decree. Turn to Exodus iv. 21, where the Lord said of Pharaoh, "I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go." See Exodus vii. 2–4: "Thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of the land. And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt. But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, * * * by great judgment." Again we read, "And he hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them," as the Lord had spoken to Moses. Exodus x. 1, 2, reads as follows, "And the Lord said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh: for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might shew these signs before him: and that thou mayest tell into the ears of thy son, and thy son's son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them; that ye may know that I am the Lord." See Exodus xiv. 4: "And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them: and I will be honored upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host." Thus God gave holy reasons for so doing. Now see Exodus xiv. 8: "And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued after the children of Israel." Here are positive declarations of Scripture concerning God's dealings with Pharaoh in hardening his heart, and the hearts of his servants, that the Lord might get honor by so doing, that his name might be declared throughout all the earth, and that he might lay his hand upon Egypt with great judgments. I have not manufactured this Scripture, and as God foreknew from all eternity that he would thus deal with Pharaoh and Egypt, it could not possibly fail to be so. Let all who assume that if God causes man to sin, and then punishes him for it, he is therefore the author of it, and unjust in the punishment of it; I say, let such brethren look at God's dealings with Pharaoh, and see if they are not in just as much difficulty to reconcile the justice of God with all this as any one

else. Remember that God said to Pharaoh, "Even for this same purpose I have raised thee up." Here we see that God had a decree in all his dealings with Pharaoh, for he declared that he purposed all this. "For this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power." So Paul said that God, "to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." We who believe in the predestination of all things, believe that God decreed the destruction of Pharaoh and of his host. We read that God told Abraham that his seed should be afflicted for a period of four hundred years. He said, "That nation whom they shall serve, will I judge," and four hundred years after, he did raise up Pharaoh for this very purpose, to make his power known. If there be blame attached to our God in decreeing all these evil things before the foundation of the world, is there not just as much room to blame him if he foreknew all these things, and had power to stop them, and to keep all sin out of the world, as they all say he had, but did not do so? But there was a holy purpose of God in this decree, and in all other of his decrees; let us not forget this. If he decrees the destruction of men, and does this with a high and holy purpose, is it not a better thing than to have no good purpose in it, and yet suffer the destruction to come, when he had power to prevent it? If you see that your child is certainly going to fall into a fire if you do not try, at least, to prevent it, are you any better than if you purposed it to be so, unless in some way you had the good of the child in view? Who in such a case would excuse you upon the ground that you did not cause it or purpose it, and yet would not prevent it, but allowed it? Would your neighbors have any better opinion of you than they would if you knew the end from the beginning, and purposed that the child should be burned, having at the same time some secret purpose for the good of the child? No, no. Thus we argue from the effect to the cause, just as they argue from the cause to the effect. We feel that it is well to say all that God does is holy, and is done from a holy purpose, and for gracious ends, and that he has fixed all things, so that he is not surprised nor frustrated. It is most certain that for wise and holy reasons our God ordered or decreed all that is written concerning Joseph being sold into Egypt, for he told his brethren, Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. So, it was not you who sent me hither, but God. Here we see two wills of God, his secret will and his revealed will. His revealed will condemns all such wickedness as was in the brethren of Joseph, but his secret will was that he should be sold into Egypt, and it was meant for good. The Lord meant, purposed and did it for good, and yet it was evil in his brethren. Is it not then sure that God had a righteous and holy purpose in the evil of Joseph's brethren which caused them to sell their brother? They thought they had sent him away into Egypt, but the Lord had sent him really, as Joseph testified, "It was not you that sent me hither, but God." Is it not much better for the Lord to purpose the evil they did, and bring good out of it, than to suppose that he foreknew it, and then left it to blind fate to make it certain, with no holy purpose in it? It is also certain that God, for wise and holy purposes, ordered the sin of Sihon, king of the Amorites, in refusing to let the people of Israel pass by him peaceably. "But Sihon king of Heshbon would not

let us pass by him: for the Lord thy God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into thy hand." Here again the fact that God infallibly foreknew this from eternity and made no effort to change it, leaves our limited brethren in as bad a plight to reconcile the justice of God with the destruction of Sihon, and more so, than those who believe in his righteous purpose. It is certain also that God, for wise and holy purposes and most gracious ends, ordered the sin and folly of the kings of Canaan, as we see in Joshua xi. 20: "For it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly." Here again are more stumbling-blocks for our limited predestinarian brethren to encounter.

As I must soon close, let us look at Jeremiah lii. 3. It was through the anger of the Lord that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. The rebellion of the kings of Canaan was that God might fulfill his promise to Abraham that his seed should inherit the land of Canaan. Although it was over four hundred years in the fulfillment, yet the promise was all the time sure. These nations must fill up the cup of iniquity. Also Zedekiah's rebellion was to the end that the Jews should enter into the seventy years captivity so often foretold. These Scriptures are for our limited brethren to reconcile with blind fate, but we will meet the issue with the holy and righteous purposes of God, even if we are not able to reconcile all of God's dealings with men with our finite reason. We affirm that he is God, and beside him there is no other. All the wickedness of the Jews in crucifying our Lord and Master was decreed, for we are told, "Of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." And, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Hence in all his government he has purposes so much higher than man that we sometimes forget, and miss the secret will of God. It was all wicked of the Jews, but all the purpose of God in it was the most glorious and most gracious of all events. How much better it is to believe in a God who is an eternal Sovereign over all things, and who fixes and orders all things in a glorious plan, to bring to pass great and glorious events, even though he makes use of wicked men in bringing them about. It certainly is more sane and reasonable to take this view of the matter than to say he foreknew all things, but that some unseen power, some unknown purpose fixed all in order so that God could know it. If now we are asked, Who is the author of sin? there is but one answer. Sin entered into the world by one man's transgression. This is all the answer we need. It entered by Adam, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. But,

"Satan was nonplussed in what he had done;
The fall wrought the channel for mercy to run."

Yours, N. PETERS.

PORTLAND, Ind., February, 1911.

HEBRON, Ohio, April 3, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed find an article found among some manuscript of Mr. McGlade's, which I think would make good reading for the SIGNS. The days, weeks and months pass slowly

along, and hard indeed do I find it to take up the chain of life again, for we so miss the dear husband and father; his place is vacant, and our home is sad and lonely; he was ever so good and true. We find it hard indeed to say, Thy will, O Lord, not ours, be done, yet if I know my poor heart aright, I desire to be submissive to his will, and never has his love seemed so near as since he caused this deep sorrow to sweep over my life.

Yours in hope of a better life to come,
(MRS.) FRANK McGLADE.

MARK V. 19.

"Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee."

I like this text for several reasons; I like it because it is so simple and easily understood. Listen: "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee." Seventeen little words, all of one syllable, and so plain that any little schoolboy could tell the meaning of each one; in fact I am surprised at the simplicity of the language used by the Savior in his teaching. There are so many little words that I can but wonder that men of common sense should deem it absolutely necessary to have a classical education in some worldly institution in order to preach the gospel. I like this text because of its address, being particular; it is not addressed to the preacher. There are texts in the Bible that apply to him, but this one does not. I like it because it is not addressed to the church members. Brethren and sisters, there is an abundance of Scripture for you, telling you how you should live and walk, to which we would all do well to give more earnest heed, but the immediate application of this one is not to you. I like it because it is not addressed to the dead sinner. While men cavil, and are undecided as to what part of the Scripture is to you, I feel sure that I would be taking the precious pearls of the kingdom and casting them before swine were I to apply this Scripture to you. Now some one is saying, Who does it apply to? He says it is not to the preacher, nor church member, nor the dead sinner, who in the world does it mean? I will tell you: it is addressed to a very peculiar class of individuals, and as they read this they say in their hearts, That means me, that means me. Those whom God has called by his grace, and taught their sinfulness, and put into their hearts to take up their cross and follow him in the ordinance of baptism, and who are pondering these things in their hearts, I want you to feel that you are the subjects of my address, and while I am writing to you, if the Spirit gives me liberty, I am sure the old brethren and sisters will be interested and fed also.

The first word in the text is a little word composed of only two letters: "Go," but O how powerful it becomes to the child of grace when spoken by the Spirit of God. The way of the Spirit in the heart of a sinner is different from the way of anything else in the world. There are perhaps none who know better the force of the word, when spoken by that still small voice, in tones louder than thunder, when the Spirit said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel," than preachers, yet you, brethren and sisters, are not strangers to its persuasive eloquence, and you yet remember the time when it was the last thing you heard at night and the first thing in the morning: "Go," and you never found rest until you obeyed. The word is both persuasive and imperative. Persuasive as characteristic of the meek and lowly Jesus, and it has in it the tone of assur-

ance and encouragement, as from a father to a child. Imperative as one who has the right to command you to whom you belong, and who, being all-wise, will not direct his children to go wrong. Therefore he says, "Take my yoke upon you." He not only tells you to "Go," but tells you to go to the best place in the world: "home," the sweetest word in all the English language—home. Around it there clusters more joy and pleasure than any other place; indeed, there is no place like home, there is no place that has such a wonderful influence. At home you know you can just take off your hat and coat and rest; rest is sweeter there. Then you can do things there and say things that you would not do out in the world; your best friends are there, they will bear with your failings and hide your imperfections more than all else in the world; they are our loved ones, there father dwells, one of our best friends, the one who protects us, who provides for our living, and who has toiled the best part of his life that we might have bread. When we are young we are prone to mistake the kindness of our parents. I remember when I was a boy my father always taught us to do right, but he was strict, and when I would disobey he would chastise me severely, and as I was not the best boy in the world, and he had good sense enough to know it, I was well acquainted with the "rod." I would complain, and think father was too hard on me, but I have lived to thank him for every stroke he gave me. Young man, listen, has God spared your father to you? If so, let me tell you to be kind to him. He may be old, feeble and childish, and deaf and blind, and you think him an old fogy, and that he needs much waiting on, but with it all remember he is your father. He will not be with you always; the time will come when he will not be in the room when you come down to breakfast in the morning, for death will come and he will be gone from the fireside, gone from the farm, gone from the neighborhood, and cry as loud as you may he will not hear you. I will never forget my feelings the day my father was buried. When we returned to the house I thought, This is the first time in all my life that I ever entered father's house when he was not there to provide for me, and although it has been seven years, yet to-day my poor heart almost bursts when I realize he is gone never more to return. It seems to me if I could have him back I would treat him better than I did. So, my young friends, do not be cross to your father; make his last days pleasant, and see how kind you can be to him.

Home is where mother dwells, the one who cared for us and watched over us in our helplessness, the dearest, sweetest friend in the world. There is no love like a mother's love. Young lady, listen to me a moment. If God has spared your mother to you, thank him for it and love her, too. She may be old, and perhaps childish, but she is your mother and all the one you will ever have in this world. You can never do too much for her. You can hardly know what she has suffered for you, and when you go out from your home on pleasure bent tell her where you are going, she has the right to know; tell her when you will return, and keep your promise faithfully, for it is her heart that will be uneasy and her eyes that will refuse to close, and her ears that will hear the hours tolled off one by one all through the dreary night until she hears you come, hears your step upon the stair and hears you enter your room; only then will she fall asleep to get the

much needed rest to prepare her tired body for the duties of the coming day. In the southern part of this State lives my mother; she is old, wrinkled and grey. I can remember when she was young, but I cannot remember when she was not good to me. She is always glad to see me come home, and when I am there she delights to wait on me and make me comfortable, just as she did years ago when I was a boy. That is one place where I am always sure of a royal welcome when I go. So, girls, be kind to mother while she is with you, for the time may come when those dear lips will quiver for the last time and you will hear that voice no more, and in after years as you stand with nothing but the picture of the dear face upon the wall and gaze upon it with eyes by tears made dim, every unpleasant word, every unkind look and every neglect you gave her will come crowding upon your memory, and you would give the world to have the opportunity to do better.

But I must pass on. When I get to writing about such things I never know when to stop. The church is a home; I found it so. You brethren and sisters found it one, and you, poor, trembling child of grace, will find it not only a home, but your home; yes, "my home;" there your best friends, your kindred dwell. When on my way to your home in company with you we perhaps will pass several fine looking houses, and I will think, Now surely the next one is the place, it is such a fine looking place; but no, you drive right on by, and directly you leave the main road, turn toward the creek, over the rough stones, through a gate or two and stop at a very plain, ordinary looking house, and you say, "This is the place." I say, "Why do you stop here?" You say, "This is my home." I say, "We passed several nicer houses than this." "Yes," you say, "but they were not my home; they may be just as much home to the people who live in them, but they are not my home." A few years ago I, in company with Elder Lines, visited a sister who had just been baptized the meeting before. Her husband was in an ill humor about it, and did not try to conceal his feelings. I remember he said, "If she wanted to join a church so badly there is one just across the road, without her walking three miles in the hot sun to go to that Old Baptist Church." We can understand why she did it; that was her home, the other was not. When I went home I went to the Old Baptist Church; my going there did not make it my home; I went there because it was my home. It has been a home to me ever since, a good home, and I do not want to exchange it for another. My prayer is that I may dwell there all the days of my life. It may not show up well along with other homes, from a worldly view, but it is the dearest spot on earth to me. "Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home."

But I must hasten to the next words: "and tell." How plain this is! He not only tells you where to go, and what you will find, but also what to do when you get there: "tell." Ah, yes, I hear you say, that is the trouble. I believe the Old Baptist Church is the church, and they require when one comes home that they tell something, and I believe that is right, too, but I have nothing to tell. This troubled me for a long time, and the members here have not forgotten the trouble it gave them because they had nothing to tell. Let me tell you it does not take much talk of the right kind to gain a membership in an Old Baptist Church. When I talked to the church I

could not tell what I wanted to in the way I wanted to, and I never have been satisfied about it. It seemed I began in the middle and talked both ways, but they were satisfied. One old brother whom I had been afraid of, because I thought he knew so much, said he could have voted for me if I had not said a word, and I know some to-day I would be willing, and these brethren would be willing to receive into their membership if they could not say a word. I remember a few years ago, at an Old Baptist church meeting in Ireland, when the privileges of the church were extended a little girl eleven years old came forward and told her hope. She talked all right and acted well, but her age! The idea of a girl only eleven years old a member of an Old Baptist Church. It was unusual, so the old deacon felt it his duty to ask her some questions. He asked, "Were you a sinner before this change came that you speak of?" "Yes, sir," she replied. "Well, are you a sinner yet?" "Yes, sir, I feel that I am a greater sinner than ever," she replied. "Well," said he, "how do you account for this change then?" She looked up in her childish innocence and said, "I do not know, sir, if I can quite explain it, or not, but I used to be a sinner running after sin, and now I am a sinner running away from sin," and they received her, and would not you, brethren and sisters, hold up both hands, if it were necessary, to receive into your fellowship one who gave such evidence of grace? The oldest of us can tell no more; the youngest can tell as much. I thought when I heard it that it was a whole sermon, the biggest I had ever heard.

"Tell them." Who? the world? No. Strangers? No. The ungodly? No; tell your friends; they will understand you, the world will not. You may be a stranger to them, but they are not strangers to what you tell. You cannot tell it to the world. I remember hearing an able minister tell his experience in this line. He was deeply convicted, had been in deep trouble for some time, and when God revealed his face to him the change was so great and everything seemed so plain he wanted to tell it, and was sure he could make any one see it. He had about a dozen men employed in an adjoining room, and he rushed into their presence, shouting and telling them what he had just passed through, and they laughed at him. Instantly came reaction, and he thought, Is this a delusion? am I a fool? am I crazy? and he returned to the office cast down in gloom and despair, and remained so for some time, until one day he was passing a place where some horses were hitched, and becoming curious to know what was going on, went in, and found it was an Old Baptist meeting. After preaching, an invitation was given, and before he knew it he had taken a front seat. The preacher asked him to tell his hope. He told some of the same things he told that day in the shop. He had not talked long when he heard sobs in the room, and looking around saw they were all weeping. The thought came to him, They are ashamed of you. But it was not that, he had found his friends and was telling them; they understood him well, and knew all about it. Those tears were tears of joy, and their eloquence has not ceased to ring in his heart. Tell them; they love and long to hear it. Tell them what? How good you are? No. What you have done for the Lord? No. What you are doing for him? No. Well, what? Why, just what they delight to hear: what great things the Lord hath

done for you. Notice the word "great." The Lord is great, and great are all his works. I hear you talk about a little hope; do not do it, the apostle called it a good hope. Also notice the word "things," in the plural, more than one. Time would fail me to tell of all the things the Lord has done for us, and every one of them great, so great that all the world combined could not do the least one. Listen to a few, and then I will close. He redeemed my soul, set my feet upon a rock, put a new song in my mouth, told me I was a sinner. It is a great thing to know you are a sinner. He died for me. But it is more particularly with reference to his dealings with you in experience that the text applies. But give your friends the evidence that you are born again, and they are assured of all the sure mercies of David to you, for the God they worship is the Sovereign who works all things after the counsel of his own will, and he will save his people with an everlasting salvation, world without end.

FRANK McGLADE.

KANSAS CITY, MO., March 4, 1910.

MY DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—Your kind letter found me confined in the house, not able to be out, and it was a great comfort to read a line from your pen. I feel to know you from the spirit of love. I trust the Lord will be with me while I communicate to you some of my past life, and why I wrote of the providence of God to me. I was impressed day by day, and the thought would come, Can I do that? So I put it off. It troubled me in my wakeful hours at night, and seemed to be the first thing on my mind in the morning. O Lord, direct me what to do, seemed to be as natural as my breathing. While meditating upon the goodness of God and his wonderful providence, I saw in my mind a beautiful white bird, and a sweet peace stole over me. I arose early next morning and began to write, and when I had finished my letter and put it in the envelope the thought occurred to me that perhaps I was not directed by the right spirit. I took it out, thinking best not to send it. I found myself fixing it up again. I felt, Woe is me if I speak not of the blessings of God. I have been called to pass through deep affliction, which I feel is all for my good. I believe, dear sister, if we are children of God our lines are written in his will, and these bonds we will have to fill. These words have often comforted me: Jesus was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He knows my feeble frame. O take pity on me, I cannot raise this family without thy help, was my daily breathing. I was often made to cry out, O Father, if thy will, come and sup with me, for I cannot see my way. I was too weak to work, so I kept one of my little girls from school to wait on the rest. As I lay on my couch a niece came and gave me the book about Mary Parker. While reading those beautiful letters my soul was so filled with the flame of God's love I did not need anything. I got up and went to work, and sent my little girl on to school; I felt well, not anything to fear. That was the first I ever saw the book of Mary Parker. I read it now often. God will bless you and your brother for that work.

I have long wanted to write to you. All things work according to the Lord's will; he knows what we need before we ask him; those to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom. No earthly riches can be compared to that; it is both meat and drink.

Dear sister, I must tell you of the visit of your nephew, John B. Durand, at my house, in company with Elder Ketchum and wife and a sister in our church, Mrs. Kraus. We had much pleasure in his company, and he seemed to greatly enjoy being with the Baptist friends here. He reached here about lunch time, and it surely did do me good to have him eat at my table; he spoke of all your names, so familiar to me since I have been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have been greatly comforted by writers of that paper. I have read from the pen of brother and sister Pittman, whom I hold in high esteem. I first met sister Pittman at our association, and felt much drawn to her; she is a most lovely woman. I had her come and spend the day with me. I much enjoy the breaking of bread with my brethren, having fellowship and love for them. The best evidence I have for myself is that I do love the brethren and long for the welfare of Zion.

Dear sister, I must not weary you, for I know my weakness and inability to clearly express my thoughts. My health has been very poor for the past year, and darkness of mind seems to overcome me at times.

Before I close, will ask you to recall the thirty-fifth chapter of Isaiah, which has comforted me much. I will write to Elder Durand for more of James Durand's books. I have given away the one I had, and do not want to be without one. His writings are grand, so full of deep thoughts, workings of the Holy Spirit. Through a dear old sister I read his obituary. She passed away shortly after I met her. She requested her family to give me all of her old SIGNS. After she was gone they brought them to me, two sacks of them, nearly a hundred pounds. In looking them over I saw the obituary of James B. Durand. I never forgot it, such a wonderful departure. Soon as I saw the notice of "Songs in the Night" I sent for it. Those old papers from that dear, aged sister have been a great comfort to me; it is the first Baptist paper I ever read, and some of the letters told my feelings better than I could tell them myself. I never expected to be permitted to meet with that people, for I did not know where any were of that faith, so I had concluded that I was an outcast —no one like me. The voices of most of those writers are silent, yet they still live in my memory. How I loved brother Benton Beebe for the truth's sake. I would often pour out my weakness to him in a personal manner. "Remember me when it goes well with thee." I told him of our pastor, W. T. Brown, and that a few of us were going to have a house built for worship. He said he would help us all that he could, and he surely did. We have it almost paid for, and have a band of devoted brethren and sisters. We want to call for the association in another year.

I fear I have overcome you with words to no profit; will you please cast around it the mantle of charity, and remember me at the throne of grace? Farewell.

Your sister in hope and love of the truth, KATE R. FORBES.

KANSAS CITY, Mo., Feb. 21, 1911.

DEAR SISTER:—Your letter received, which was a feast to me, to think I was remembered when I felt so spiritually dead. The night before your letter came I could not sleep; these thoughts came rushing through my mind: If the Lord would restore my health I would answer all of my correspondents and unburden my mind. You do not know how I enjoyed sister Edwards' letters, and yours,

in the SIGNS. I want to write to your brother how his writings have comforted me during my long silence. I had fever last summer, which left me prostrated all through the season. I was able to attend our association in company with brother and sister Pittman, and your nephew, brother John Durand, and his wife, and I much appreciated their company. I believe the time has come for the Lord to give me strength; to-night I have a sweet peace of mind. It did humble me and brought the tears when I read your letter. Could it be that I said anything in praise of God or gave him glory? If so, you can send it to the SIGNS. I walk so much by night, longing for a closer walk with God. Am I his, or am I not? often gives me anxious thought.

May these lines, dear sister, find you feeding on the green pastures of God's love.

Sincerely and lovingly your sister, I hope, KATE R. FORBES.

SALISBURY, Md., Jan. 30, 1911.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—May I call you by that endearing name? I am afraid to do so many times, because of unworthiness in myself. I wish I could feel as I think you do. You must know that you are doing your Master's will, and that you are at work in his vineyard. It must be a consolation to the one who is thus doing when he is fitted and qualified for such work by our God, the omnipotent Ruler of all things, however large or small, even to the numbering of the hairs of our heads. But I am so forgetful of his goodness and mercies to me that I wonder I am noticed at all. Then there comes to my mind the thought that not a sparrow falls to the ground without him; I love to think of that when I can. I am carried back to the transports crossing the dark and angry waves of the Pacific Ocean at times, and think of the longing and yearning for home and kindred among those on board, but the Lord is there also, and none can fall without his purpose; he knoweth the end from the beginning. It is said to one of the prophets, "Before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee." I am glad these things are written in the word. What can puny men do with all the great works in which they are engaged?

I am now living in Salisbury, Md.; it was a hard struggle for me to leave my home where my pleasures have been, or I thought so, and where I know of a truth my troubles were. I had gotten so that I wanted to stay with them, and watch the cemetery every time I looked out. I thought when I knew I was going to move that the cemetery was the prettiest place I ever saw. I would think, Why cannot I stay here? The thoughts of it all would come to me on my bed at night, and I would ask the Lord to remove it all until the time came to move. It was removed somewhat, and when the time came, I could leave without a tear dimming my eyes, and when I got to the new place I am to call home for awhile, I was satisfied, and I am better satisfied than I was on the farm. It seems to me I have left something behind that I cannot take up again; a burden is removed; I cannot tell you how it is. The Lord was with me all the time, and I knew it not.

Elder Durand was here Saturday and Sunday. Elder Francis was also here on Saturday. We had good preaching both days. Elder Durand Sunday morning spoke from the tenth chapter of Hebrews, remarking upon the whole chapter.

Please have my SIGNS sent now to 400 Newton St., Salisbury, Md. Come without fail to see us when you come to Salisbury. Love to all your family.

Your sister in hope,

CORNELIA LAWS.

PREDESTINATION.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In considering this subject, which has been discussed by many of our able brethren, all showing what predestination is, that it is a previous determining, purposing and arranging of that which must subsequently be accomplished, I will attempt to show that the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things is perfectly consistent with the revealed character of God, who is infinitely wise and omnipotent and sovereign, and that it is inconsistent with any just idea of Deity, and the dictates of common sense, to suppose that God would create the universe, people it and govern it, give his Son to die for sinners and introduce a dispensation of grace, without having a fixed purpose, determined by his will, as to what he would accomplish by so doing. And in the third place will attempt to show that the Scriptures of truth most fully and clearly sustain the doctrine of absolute predestination. They do this first in the prophetical Scriptures. These show that God had fixed and determined purposes to accomplish in the transactions of nations, tribes and individuals, both among the righteous and the unrighteous, and that he made known to his servants his previous determinations, and that they announced them; and the subsequent fulfillment of these predictions shows that the things foretold were fixed and determined with the divine Being who revealed them. The whole train of circumstances (many of which were [most unlikely according to human estimation) which led to their accomplishment shows the infinite wisdom of Him who designed and made them known. Second, the typical Scriptures show a train of types and figures all so admirably arranged that each and every type meets its antitype in the gospel dispensation, which goes to show the existence of a previous plan on the part of Him who instituted those types and figures as patterns of the heavenly things. The very existence of these types and shadows proves the doctrine of predestination to a sensible mind beyond all doubt, and this is so because if the original or true antitype was not arranged and complete in the eternal mind, how could that mind have given a typical representation of it? Thirdly, the express declarations of Scripture which testify that he is of one mind and that none can turn him; that he declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure, and that whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he should be (not might be) the firstborn among many brethren, prove his fixed purposes. Here nothing is left to the choice of man. The Scriptures of truth, as well as the whole scheme of divine providence and grace, and the dictates of common sense, proclaim the God of the universe to be sovereign, and he who denies this attribute of Jehovah is antichrist.

I have here given only a small portion of the Scriptures which show or go to establish the point under discussion, but I have given, as I conceive, a sufficiency of them to establish the doctrine and to satisfy the honest and candid inquirer after truth. It would be useless to multiply either Scripture or argument to convince those who are otherwise.

"Convince a man against his will,
He's of the same opinion still."

I do not expect to convince the unregenerate in heart of the truth of this or any other gospel truth; especially I do not expect to bring such to see the beauty of the doctrine and to love it, that is, the sovereignty of God. Such doctrine is contrary to the wishes and inclinations of human nature. It is the mind that is humbled by divine teaching, and which has been brought to see and to feel the unworthiness and entire dependence of all upon the God of grace, that will rejoice in the suitableness and richness of that grace which saves lost and helpless sinners without any conditions to be performed on their part.

Your brother in hope,

E. A. NORTON.

HAMPTON, Iowa, March 22, 1911.

PAYNES MILLS, Ontario, Feb. 2, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS AND BRETHREN:—Just a year ago I first subscribed for our dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and now I will renew. I have not missed one number in the year. You can imagine how eagerly each paper was looked for when I tell you it is all the preaching I get; I heard just one sermon of the truth this year. I was fortunate enough to be in Lobo when Elder Alexander preached there December 4th, and this I know, he fed one poor, starved sheep. My father and mother live near me and they read my paper, and this year mother insisted on sending half of the subscription. I hope I will be able to take it while I live. I would that I could write like those who write for the SIGNS, but when I look within and can see nothing good I think, How can I write anything good? I do love to read their letters, and though each one feels that he or she is the least of all saints, I feel that they are so much better than I that I am not worthy a home among them, yet I am made to cry, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee." Even though you turned me out I could never believe anything but salvation by grace, and grace alone. There was one time last fall I felt badly, I thought I had deceived the people of God and would have to tell them so, when all at once I found myself singing,

"Arise, my soul, arise,
Cast off thy guilty fears,
The bleeding Sacrifice
In thy behalf appears."

O the joy that was mine for a time. I had often heard father and mother sing that hymn, but I could not, for I thought it was not for me, but I felt as though that song had been put in my mouth, and now I love to sing it.

With love to all the dear saints, I will close.

From a poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

(MRS.) J. A. MALCOLM.

WARWICK, N. Y., Jan. 2, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—At this, the close of another year, as the closing of a book, we can look back to the many changes, and it was a year of great change for us here in Warwick, in the loss of our pastor, Elder Lefferts; it pleased the Lord to place him in a larger field. I wonder what the Lord has in store for us this new year. It is but a bud, each leaf unfolding, the bitter with the sweet, but we are not consumed, the same Hand sends supplies to us, and we are still fed with the bread of life. I know he will keep us in the hollow of his hand, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and will do all his pleasure, and we poor, puny worms must "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord."

I again send you my remittance for the SIGNS, as I love to hear from the dear ones scattered abroad throughout the land, but still of one family, all in the ark, gliding safely through deep waters, and when we land the remnant will be a great multitude that no man can number. I said "we;" will I be there? That is the cry of each child.

I will close, with best wishes for you all. May the Lord bless you in your labors, and all will be peace if accompanied by love.

NETTIE DOLSON.

MARENGO, Ohio, January, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In sending our renewal for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we feel to say we still love the precious things for which it so faithfully contends. In this day of declension we see so few who are true to the faith that often we are grieved, and wonder if the Lord will find faith when he comes again. Yes, he will find some bearing witness to his truth; he will not leave himself without witnesses, and will not forsake his people; but O, we have much desired to see our dear Old Baptist churches revived and made firm and strong, not wavering, but true and loyal to the truth as it is in Jesus; nothing but the truth will do any of us good. I have desired to be kept humble and faithful, but I am so sinful, weak and blind I go stumbling and halting along amidst so many trying conflicts, that thus far in life I am altogether unprofitable, and my life is barren and empty of the fruits of grace, and I often wonder, Will I at last be a castaway? and will I one day hear those awful words, Depart from me, I never knew you? Yet I have often felt, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." He is my only hope, I dare not trust any other; all other ground is sinking sand, and I do pray that he will have mercy and guide and keep me and all his loved ones. Yes,

"Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty,
Hold me with thy powerful hand.
Bread of heaven,
Feed me till I want no more."

With love to all the precious household of faith, I remain, unworthily, yours in hope, BELLE GORSUCH.

BLOOMVILLE, Ohio, Dec. 11, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my time has expired I wish to acknowledge my delay. I sometimes fear the cares of the world have nearly destroyed my spiritual growth, yet at times I have some sweet returns of grace in my poor heart, causing me to love God and his dear children, whom he chose in Christ before the world was formed. O how much we owe him for the precious gift of his dear Son to redeem us from death and turn us from sinful ways. I sometimes fear we as Old Baptists are not as kind, tender and helpful as we ought to be. A new commandment was given that we love one another. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." I am taking three Baptist papers, and love to read after those who speak of God's love in their poor hearts. May they continue to write of those things that unite his children in bonds of love, and may evil speaking cease and truth dwell in the hearts of his dear children, and may we by grace live in sweet harmony with our profession. May God's rich blessings be with the editors and readers of the SIGNS during the coming year. AARON SEITZ.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1911.

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EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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LUKE I. 17.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I would be glad of your views through the SIGNS upon the words found in Luke i. 17. Is not this predestination, or foreordination? There are three of us here in this northwest corner of Nebraska. Pray for us when it is well with you. T. G. HARRIS.

The text suggested reads as follows: "And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

In reply to the special question of our brother we will say that wherever the words "will" and "shall" occur in the Scripture, as being the word of God, it is beyond all question that predestination is there. The Lord declares again and again, "I will," and equally as many times does he say of men, You, or they, shall. The late Elder William J. Purington once told us that there were, by his actual count, some sixteen thousand wills and shalls in the Bible. There are some thirteen hundred in the prophecy of Isaiah, and they all are the "wills" and "shalls" of the sovereign God, who possesses all wisdom and power in heaven and in earth. When he declares that anything whatever shall be, that thing we may rest assured must and will be, and when he says, I will do this or that, there can be no appeal. This text is the word of the angel of God to Zecharias concerning John the Baptist and his appointed work in the world. It was not said to this follower of God, He may do this or that, or it is likely that he will do so, or if he will he shall attain to such things and accomplish such works, but, he shall. This is enough to fix in every reverent mind the certainty of the truth that our God had indeed predestinated all this, and it will also convince every thoughtful mind that the predestination of God is certain to be fulfilled. Jehovah, through the angel, speaks with no uncertain sound, and the same is true of all the wills and shalls in the Bible. There is no comparison between the wills and shalls of men and the wills and shalls of God. We indeed may not be able to do what we have said we will do, neither may we be able to see that what we have said others shall do, will be done. Not even the greatest of the kings of earth can be absolutely sure their decrees shall be fulfilled, although where the word of a king is we are told there is power. But our God speaks not in vain, because there is no limit to his power or understanding. Thus we have sought to respond to the question of our brother.

We desire to add a few thoughts to the above, regarding the text in general. It was a great and glorious work that was assigned to John the Baptist. He was to go before the face of the Lord to prepare the way before him. These words are quoted by the angel from the two last verses of the Old Testament, and the angel declares that the coming of John is their fulfillment. John the Baptist was not indeed Elijah the prophet literally, any more than any other

prophet was John the Baptist, but, as is declared, John came in the spirit and power of Elijah; in their work and in the fervency and earnestness of their spirit they were closely united; both alike testified to the degeneracy of the times in Israel; both alike denounced that which was evil in the land; both declared the judgments of God against the people because of their wickedness. The keynote of their ministry was repentance. A great and terrible day of the Lord's judgments followed the ministry of Elijah in the three years and six months drouth, and Malachi testifies that John the Baptist should be sent before another great and terrible day of the Lord. That great and terrible day has seemed to us to involve two things: first, the drawing of the line of clear separation between him who serves God and him who serves him not, and second, the fearful destruction of all that Jewish polity, and the final scattering of that nation over the earth through the fires which began to be kindled when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman armies under Titus, and which have raged against them in the form of unnumbered persecutions among almost all nations since, until the present time. In the text three things are named as belonging to the purpose of God in sending John. One is to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, the second is to turn the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, and the third, that he should make ready a people prepared for the Lord. While these three things are named, it seems evident to us that they are all said of the same class of persons. It is the people "prepared for the Lord," and no others, of whom the first two things are said, and turning the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, constitutes the "preparation" named in the last clause. We do not understand that turning the hearts of the fathers to the children, means that the hearts of the fathers shall any the more be filled with affection for their children, or with more anxiety for their welfare, but rather that such dispositions and feelings, such love to God and his commandments, and such faith as were in the hearts of the fathers who did love and serve God, should be revived in their children through the ministry of John. The hearts of the fathers should be given to their children. Not all Israel should be thus revived, but some among them; that is, those described in the last clause, who were prepared for the Lord. The ministry of John did not prepare them for the Lord, but being prepared, the ministry of John did make them ready for his coming. He proclaimed the coming Messiah, and urged upon them repentance, and many repented and brought forth fruits meet for repentance, and were baptized confessing their sins, and in the same sense, the disobedient were, through his ministry, turned to the wisdom of the just. The wisdom of the just is seen in their fruits. Out of justification through Christ, when felt in the soul, arises all loving, willing obedience. John's ministry, in his own time and place, wrought under the blessing of God, blessed fruits among many. So also the ministry of any sent servant of God is not in vain, but as God wills is effectual among all those whose hearts have been prepared to receive it. Not only does the wisdom of the just embrace all obedience, but especially it embraces the faith of the gospel. It sees clearly that salvation is of the Lord. Those who had been seeking their own righteousness were now to be turned from it, and to find all their righteousness in Christ. Hitherto they had

been disobedient to the gospel truth that salvation is of the Lord, but now they were to be turned to that wisdom which justified men had been shown, and which is here called the wisdom of the just. There could be no more gracious and glorious work than this. To this every one who has been called to the ministry of the gospel will bear witness. C.

1 THESSALONIANS V. 22.

IF not asking too much, please give your views through the SIGNS upon 1 Thess. v. 22. It bears so much upon my mind that I cannot get rid of it.

From one who would love to know the truth and to do good, but who finds that when she would do good, evil is present with her.

Your sister in Christ,

(MRS.) ERNIE S. NULL.

ROCKY FORK, W. Va., Sept. 5, 1910.

"Abstain from all appearance of evil." There could be no more important matter presented for us to consider than this. While the apostle here, as it seems to us, has reference to the false teaching which had even then begun to creep into the churches, yet the principle presented would as well apply to all forms of evil, whether of false doctrine or an unholy life. The word "abstain," literally signifies, to hold one's self away from, not even coming nigh to the appearance of evil. The word does not so much signify here abstaining from appearing to do evil one's own self, as to hold one's self away from the evil teaching or practice of others. Believers are to remember that they are sanctified by the Father, and redeemed unto God through Christ Jesus, and that therefore they are not their own, but belong to the Lord. They are to be very jealous regarding anything that pertains to the glory and honor of him who is righteous in all his ways and holy in all his works. They are to remember that his word is pure and to be reverenced altogether. If opposed in their testimony to God all men are liars, and are to be regarded as such, while God is true. If, therefore, any teacher shall arise holding forth, no matter with what excellency of speech, aught that is doubtful or that seems to have the shadow of untruth in it, believers are not to run after it, but to hold themselves aloof from it. In the verse preceding it is said, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." Some things do not need so much proving as others, but are openly true or openly false. But because some things have the appearance of that which is good, while yet they are not good, it becomes needful to prove all things, or try all things. This is to be done by the word of God. "If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them," is the word of the Lord. In this epistle, and in the second to the same church, we learn that some had misinterpreted the words of the apostles concerning the second coming of the Lord, as though the day of the Lord was at hand. Some were teaching this. Perhaps none had gone to the same excess that some in our own boyhood days did, because of the teaching of some that the end of the world would be on a certain day in the near future. Some gave away their worldly possessions to any who would have them, saying, They are now of no value, as the end of all things earthly is at hand. Some clad themselves in white robes and ascended high hills to be nearer the Lord when he should come, being led to believe that he would come on some specified day or night, and we ourselves knew of some who were ruined in business, giving it all up for days, and even years, because of this craze. We have used this word because it was a species of enthusiasm near to insanity in some. Paul we believe means this, as well as some other things, in

these words. All this had the appearance of good. There was a great zeal manifested for the word of God and the better life, the life beyond, but when proved it wrought evil in various ways. Seeing the excesses of some, others were driven over into the opposite extreme, and came to say at last that the hope of the second coming of the Lord was all baseless. One extreme almost always begets the opposite, and the appearance of evil is in them. Hold thyself aloof from the appearance of evil, let it appear wherever it may or under whatever form.

But this word "appearance" does not so much relate to the thing that is evil, as it does to the tendency to look after it in those to whom the apostle was writing. It is not good to stand gazing at evil. If one abhors it as it ought to be abhorred he will not stop to look upon it, but at the first appearance will turn from it. Go not after evil when it appears to be evil, is included in the text as one of its meanings, but still more directly the thought is, that when evil is seen, even in the distance, go not after it with your eyes; look not after it. In the pure there will be a natural abhorrence to that which is vile; there will be that in evil which will be loathsome to them. He who reverences God will shrink from profanity as one would shrink from a blow, so he who reverences holiness will be unable to hold his gaze upon it; it will be a hurt to him, and he will feel like shutting his eyes from seeing it. Paul said of fallen man, as one of the things which especially sets forth his deep depravity, that they not only did evil, but had pleasure in others that did evil. Believers cannot have pleasure in that which is evil, no matter where it may appear, and so here Paul exhorts his brethren to hold themselves apart from evil, let it appear wherever it may. If it appears in the doctrine, hold thyself from even looking at it. It may appear fair indeed, but do not allow its fair seeming to deceive thee, for within it is all corrupt. It is good indeed to abstain from doing that which has the slightest resemblance to evil in our eyes, and it is most important that we should do so. But here the apostle declares the importance of turning away from all that is false, wherever it appears in others' teachings. One might say, I know that this or that is untrue, that it is contrary to the word of God, but yet it will do no harm to look upon it, to examine it, or even to admire the beauty that appears in the manner in which it is presented; this certainly can do no harm if I do not run after it, but the danger is that one who looks may soon run; the only safe thing is to turn away from it at once, abhor and denounce it without delay. That to which the apostle especially refers in this connection did not come among the churches from without, but from within. Some among themselves had perverted the teaching of Paul, drawing false conclusions out of it, and leading others away by their plausible reasonings. Denials of God and his truth by professed infidels contain, comparatively speaking, but little danger to the child of God, but when error comes in by the words of some one who is dear for Christ's sake, and in whom we have confidence, there is danger indeed, and Paul here warns his brethren not to come near to this evil sentiment, but to turn away from it, even though it has appeared in the teaching of a fellow-servant whom we have regarded as one with us in Christ Jesus.

We leave these thoughts with our sister, hoping that they may commend themselves to all who love the truth.

C.

MATTHEW XXVIII. 16–20.

"THEN the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshiped him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

This text presents a large field, upon which we can only enter at present here and there. The sayings of Jesus are always full of power, sweetness and glory when applied by the Holy Ghost, but, if possible, his words after his sufferings, death and resurrection carry with them even more power and assurance. The apostles seemed to feel this peculiar and holy reverence more after they were begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead than ever before. The words of our text were spoken by the Lord after he had conquered death in behalf of his people. They were spoken to a select number of men and at an appointed place. Before his crucifixion Jesus told the disciples that after he was risen from the dead they should see him in Galilee, and when the women appeared at the sepulchre early in the morning of the third day they were met by the angel of the Lord, who told them of the promise of Jesus to the apostles, and commanded them to go and tell the disciples that he had risen from the dead, and for them to go into Galilee, where they should see him according to the promise. The mountain where the meeting took place was "appointed" of Jesus. How strange that we so often pass over such declarations without thought or meditation. While this statement may seem unimportant, it presents the doctrine of predestination so clearly that we need not a stronger text upon that subject.

"Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them." Why the eleven only? Because he had "appointed" them to a certain work, and had orders to give them concerning that labor. Why did they not meet in some other mountain? Because that one was appointed of the Lord. Why could not the law of Moses have been given from some other mountain instead of Mount Sinai? Because the Lord had said that was the "appointed" place. No other mountain would answer the Lord's purpose when that law was given by which the Israelites were to be instructed, nor would any other mountain answer except the "appointed" one when Jesus, the same Lord, gave another law by which spiritual Israel must be taught to remember their God and to observe all things of the gospel. We cannot measure time before time began, but we are safe in declaring that God is eternal, and inasmuch as he had an "eternal purpose" it must be as old as himself, and to accomplish that purpose he has, does and will work all things by appointment. This is why only eleven men met together with Jesus in the mountain appointed them. When they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. There was in them real spiritual worship, and at the same time doubt. There can be no such thing as worship of God without fear, nor can hope exist in the absence of doubt. The brighter the evidence the greater the fear, and the greater the fear more manifest the doubt; but it can readily be seen that these things work together for good to them that love God and who are the called according to his appointment.

In the midst of their worship and

doubt Jesus spake unto them, saying, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." How full of meaning these words were to the apostles. All power in heaven and in earth is in the hand of Jesus; yes, no exception whatever, whether it be of God the Father or of Satan, all principalities and powers are subject to him. And what greater demonstration could more perfectly convince men of this truth than his resurrection from the dead? "He could not be holden of death;" no, the grave could not keep him. He who made man redeemed man, and through that perfect redemption Satan is destroyed, sin put away as far as the east is from the west, the sting of death removed so that it has no power, and the grave robbed of its victory. Because the fullness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily, and because of the Father's will regarding the salvation of his chosen having been accomplished through Jesus, he said to the eleven, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." These words must have seemed strange to the apostles, who were all Jews and had never had dealings with other nations, and who remembered God's promise to Abraham and his exclusive dealings with that nation concerning all that pertained to the old covenant. But they had failed, for lack of light, to understand that Christ and not Isaac was the promised seed through whom all nations should be blessed. But very soon were they to have power and revelation from heaven visited upon them, through which they should be taught perfectly the work of Christ in removing the wall of partition between Jew and Gentile, and the secret of God, hid from the foundation of the world, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs of the kingdom. This having been accomplished, they entered upon the great work of preaching Christ and him crucified to both Jews and Gentiles, teaching them the wonderful works of God and baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. If Jesus be Lord, and in him the fullness of the Godhead, why baptize in the name of the Father? and if the Father be all in all, why baptize in the name of the Holy Ghost? In the great work of election, creation, redemption and guidance into all truth each person of the Godhead, or Trinity, has special office, yet working in perfect unison. "These three are one." The children of men received election and creation of God the Father; the redemption and justification of the elect came by the Son, and comfort and guidance into all truth is the work of the Holy Ghost. "Of his fullness have we all received." Hence in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, the three-one God, must all believers be baptized.

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." This part of the commission given the apostles is not less important than any other command in the text, but of equal strength and importance. The apostles had been commanded to love one another, the law being fulfilled in the one word "love." They had been commanded to live in obedience to the law as given by the Savior in Matthew five, six and seven, and in John thirteen. They had also been commanded to observe the ordinance of the Lord's supper in remembrance of him. These things, nothing more, nothing less, were to be taught all

nations to be observed by them. This commandment to the apostles was kept as perfectly as any other, and in all their teaching not one thing was added by them nor by the Lord more than they had been commanded to observe, and to this day nothing has been added by the true church of God. All the faithful in Christ Jesus are satisfied with the simplicity and goodness of his house. This is the only way to abide in the doctrine and fellowship of the apostles of the Lamb. Many things are observed in the world to-day by those who profess to be the followers of Jesus, and who claim to abide in the doctrine of Christ, which are in nowise embraced in the commandments of Jesus, hence are but the notions, ideas and commandments of men, and must all perish, like those who instituted them, except such men be saved by grace.

"And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." How gracious this promise must have seemed to the disciples; they abiding in his doctrine, keeping his commandments, were assured of the presence and approval of the blessed Master to the end of the world. They as men have long since gone to be forever with the Lord, but being dead they yet speak, and as nothing but the commandments of Jesus and the doctrine of God are found in their writing and teaching we have the blessed assurance that all they taught is approved of Jesus, therefore he is still with them in the written word, and will be unto the end of the world. Even so let it be. K.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

A. F. Jones, Georgia, $4.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Joseph Perry Allison died at his home in Oregon City, Oregon, April 1st, 1911, aged 80 years and 28 days. He was the son of Elder Richard S. and Lavinia Allison. He was born in Bradford Co., Ill., March 4th, 1831. His great-grandfather came from Scotland. His grandfather was raised in New Jersey, and lived there until after the Revolutionary war, and then emigrated to Kentucky, where he resided until the year 1808, when he moved to Lawrence Co., Ill., and settled Allison Prairie, which still bears that name, I believe. Here they were compelled to build a fort to protect themselves from Indians. In 1844 his father moved to Champaign Co., Ill., and in 1845 he moved to Wisconsin. He united with the Old School Baptist Church in 1848, and was baptized by his father, who was pastor of the church called Apple River. He was united in marriage to Miss Mary Long, of Lafayette Co., Ill., in 1850. He began to preach in the year 1855, and in 1856 he emigrated with his family to Oregon, making the long trip with ox teams. He settled in Clackamus County, where soon afterward a church was organized, which he served as pastor for a number of years. Here it was that I became acquainted with him in 1868. I have been intimately acquainted with him ever since, and my high esteem for him may cause me to eulogize him more than might be considered right or proper, and more than I know our dear brother would approve. He was a noble man, because a good man, was kind and sympathetic in his nature, and his hand was ever open to help those in need. He was sound in the doctrine of grace, and had no fellowship for any doctrine that ascribed to man any glory. He had great love for the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and for its editors and contributors, and often in years past wrote for its columns. He was well known among the Baptists in Oregon and Washington, as he had lived in several different places and constituted several churches, serving them as pastor. His gift as a minister was such as to gather in and build up the churches. He was always laboring for the things that make for peace, and his walk and conversation were an example to the flock, and yet he had a low opinion of himself. The least of all saints, was his constant language. I visited him twice during his long sickness, and always found him cheerful and ready to talk of spiritual things, and to unite in singing the songs of Zion. His sickness was of long duration and of a painful nature, but he had the tender and loving care of wife, son and daughter. The dear wife, who had been his companion for more than sixty years, was wonderfully sustained to minister to and wait upon him while he much of the time was helpless as a child. His daughter, Tabitha, manifested her love for her father by waiting upon him

night and day for more than a year, and his son, Robert, was also faithful to help him. The warfare is now over with our dear, aged brother; he fought the good fight and kept the faith. May the dear Lord sustain and reconcile the aged mother in Israel to his will, and may the children be given to remember their dear father as an example for their walk in life. He leaves seven children: Mrs. Martha Mayfield, Wamic, Oregon; S. V. Allison, Ventura, Cal.; A. B. Allison, Flat Head, Montana; G. B. Allison, Reno, Nevada; Reuben Allison, whose residence is unknown, and Mrs. Mary T. Singer and Robert L. Allison, Oregon City, Oregon.

I have penned this tribute of love to the memory of my dear, aged brother at his request, made while visiting him at his home three years ago. May the Lord comfort all that mourn.

G. E. MAYFIELD.

ELGIN, Oregon, April 11, 1911.

[WE feel like adding a word of regret to the above. We have, in common with all the readers of the SIGNS, esteemed our aged brother highly because of the good, sound writing which sometimes appeared in our columns from his pen. Our correspondence with him for several years past was profitable to us always. While we never met him personally, yet our fellowship for him was warm, and we believed him to be all that brother Mayfield has claimed for him in the above obituary. May the Lord bless his churches and his family in their bereavement. We doubt not that he will do so abundantly.—C.]

Miss Martha R. Scott, our dear sister, passed from earth at the home of her sister-in-law, Mrs. Edith Scott, and her daughter, near Rock Springs Church, Lancaster Co., Pa., Feb. 24th, 1911, in the 86th year of her age. During the forty-five years of her membership in that church she was seldom absent from the meetings. Age and its infirmities did not lessen her interest in all that pertained to the meetings of the church, either for worship or for business. She was always a cheerful giver, ever mindful of her pastor and of visiting ministers. During the last years of her life her home was with Mrs. Edith Scott and her daughter, to whose kindness and hospitality many Old School Baptists can testify.

We have been furnished the above items by a friend and sister, with the request that we should prepare the obituary. Our aged sister was baptized by the late Elder Thomas Barton, in October, 1866. For many years Elder Barton was pastor of the church at Rock Springs, also of the London Tract and Welsh Tract churches. We can only add to the above what all who knew sister Scott can bear witness to. We came to know her perhaps forty-two or forty-three years ago, and it was always a pleasure to meet her at her home and in the assemblies of the people of God. She loved spiritual conversation and spiritual company, and nothing was more pleasing to her than to meet and mingle with saints in the house of God and at her home. She was of a quiet and unassuming manner, wearing the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. Her trust was in the covenant mercies of God in Christ for life and salvation; she felt that she had nothing to boast of in herself, but did make her boast in the Lord. In the assemblies of the church for the worship of God her presence meant much to the comfort of all her brethren who might be present, and to those who proclaimed the word her presence was always a help, for it was evident that she heard and understood, and appreciated the truth that was proclaimed. She was steadfast in all her faith and in all her walk. What more can be said of any one than these things? In the feebleness of age, both mentally and physically, her faith continued firm, and she would testify of her hope in the Redeemer. This grace sustained her to the end, and she died in this faith, and we believe has ceased from her labors and entered into rest forever. Not only her kindred and the church at Rock Springs will miss her greatly, but all who have been accustomed to visiting that church will also regret to learn that they will see her on earth no more. We feel well assured that some one who was near her in her last sickness could have prepared a more suitable notice, but we have been glad to do the best we could in setting forth these facts concerning our dear sister. We, having known her so long, feel as though we have met with a personal loss. May the Lord comfort all who are bereaved.

Since writing the above, we are informed that Elder J. G. Eubanks attended the funeral service, preaching from the words, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth," &c. He spoke to the comfort of many, and had the marked attention of all present, and the service was marked by a deep solemnity. At the close he sang a touching hymn. The last service which she attended was in December, when she spoke of herself as "a sinner saved by grace." This might be called her dying testimony. C.

Mrs. Sarah Ann Allen departed this life April 17th, 1911, at the home of her son-in-law, Henry P. Wolfe, in Bryn Mawr, Pa. She was born Oct. 21st, 1828, and was married to Elias H. Allen, Feb. 7th, 1853. They had six children, three of whom are still living. June 9th, 1889, it was my privilege to baptize her in the fellowship of the church at Southampton. She had received a hope of salvation by grace many years before. Her exercises were very deep, and her understanding of the Scriptures unusually clear. She had a peculiarly sweet gift to express her thoughts and feelings. Not long after her baptism she lost the sight of one eye; she received and endured the stroke without complaint. After a number of years

she became totally blind, and could no longer attend our conference meetings, but her messages of love were constantly received with comfort, telling of the goodness of the Lord and talking of his power. No complaint was heard from her lips so far as I know. Nine years ago her husband passed away. This great bereavement she received in sorrow, but with solemn resignation to the will of the Father. Although for the past few years she had not been able to get to the meeting at Southampton, Elder Horace Lefferts, and later Elder J. M. Fenton had visited and preached for her occasionally at her home. I have visited her from time to time, and found it pleasant and profitable to converse with her. I always found her quiet and submissive in her spirit, and with Scriptures and hymns to refer to which had been of comfort to her. She had been failing in strength for a year or two, and her three daughters: Mrs. Wolfe, Miss Emily and Mrs. Reeves, who is a member of the church, have been with her during that time, giving her all the attention that loving daughters could. She had insisted that she would soon be called home, where she longed to be. She was wonderfully responsive to the petitions uttered at her bedside, and expressed great comfort in them. In the last weeks she suffered greatly at times, but with great patience. Her daughter, sister Reeves, writes: "Our dear mother was ready and willing to go and be with her Savior. On her birthday in October last she said she had passed her last milestone, and later she said that she was not going to live long, that the Lord had revealed it to her, and she quoted the words in Jeremiah xxxi. 3: 'The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.' On April 7th she had us read the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians, and expressed a desire that it be read at our next Thursday prayer meeting at Southampton. Before she passed away she quoted the fifty-second verse of that chapter. On Easter morning she had us read the twenty-fourth chapter of Luke, and afterward said, 'How few of us realize that it is the resurrection morning.' On the morning of the day of her death she was anxious to go. Before noon she fell into a short sleep, and when she awoke she said she would not worry any more about the time; the Lord had given her a number of tokens, and she would wait quietly for him to call her. She fell asleep as the clock struck six, having spoken twenty minutes before. Once she said, 'When I am gone my eyes will be open in glory.' O how much we miss her, but she suffered so much that we cannot wish her back."

The funeral was on Thursday, April 20th, and at that time I spoke to the company of mourning and sympathizing friends. Brother Fenton spoke in prayer and read a hymn composed by our dear, departed sister. Sister Allen was very dear to all the church, and to her large circle of relatives and friends. May the Lord comfort all who mourn.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April 24, 1911.

Mrs. Ida Rittenhouse departed this life Jan. 29th, 1911, at the home of her only living daughter, Mrs. P. Q. Stryker, East Orange, N. J., aged 78 years, 9 months and 22 days. She was the youngest child of William Brewer and Sarah Moore; was born in Hunterdon Co., N. J., and married to brother William Rittenhouse, May 1st, 1852. She was the mother of eleven children, two dying in infancy and one at the age of six years. Of the remaining eight three have died in recent years: a son, Charles H., and two daughters, Violetta, wife of Martin F. Bellis, and Elizabeth, wife of John W. Bellis. The five surviving children are: Brewer, James Judson, Gabriel C., Oscar and Wilda. There are also eighteen grandchildren, five great-grandchildren and one aged brother. Sister Rittenhouse was baptized by Elder Gabriel Conklin in 1864, in the fellowship of the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, N. J. Her husband, also a member of the same church, died Jan. 1st, 1892. Sister Rittenhouse was beloved by all who knew her, and especially by those of like precious faith. To do good and to communicate she failed not. In her life was manifest "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." In the fear of the Lord she did "adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things." Her family, church and friends have suffered a grievous loss. May the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort reconcile them to his will.

Elder D. M. Vail, her pastor for many years, conducted the funeral service at Frenchtown, N. J., Feb. 1st. Interment at same place.

ALSO,

John William Bellis was born May 15th, 1863, in Hunterdon Co., N. J., died Feb. 1st, 1911. He was married Nov. 16th, 1887, to Elizabeth Rittenhouse, daughter of sister Ida Rittenhouse (see notice above). His wife died Sept. 7th, 1893. The three children by that union survive: Alwilda R., William R. and John Marvin. Four brothers and four sisters also mourn this bereavement. Mr. Bellis was on his way to attend the funeral of his mother-in-law when stricken with heart failure, and expired almost immediately. The news of his decease, coming as it did while his children were sorrowfully engaged in paying their last tribute of respect to their grandmother, was a heartrending blow to them, and a shock to all present. Mr. Bellis made no profession of religion, but his sympathies were with the Old School Baptists, and his respect and esteem for them was marked.

The funeral on Feb. 4th, at Frenchtown, N. J.,

was largely attended, for he was well known in that locality. Interment at the same place. His children and relatives have the sincere sympathy of all who know them.

ALSO,

Miss Phoebe Tiebout was born Dec. 20th, 1830, died Feb. 12th, 1911. The subject of this notice was a lover of the truth and a devoted friend to the Old School Baptist cause all her life. From early youth she was an attendant of meetings of the Ebenezer Church in New York city, and in faith and hope her fellowship was with us, but an abiding sense of unworthiness to a name with the church prevented her from uniting. We loved her dearly, and can therefore sincerely sympathize with the surviving brother and sister in this bereavement. We shall miss her, but remembrance of her life among us will be a comfort, and the assurance that it is well with her will abide. JOHN McCONNELL.

Archie McArthur, son of Donald McArthur, died March 14th, 1911, aged 58 years. He had always lived in Ontario, Canada. The disease that took him away was "la grippe." His home was in St. Thomas. There were ten children, six of whom are living. He also leaves a sad, lonely widow to mourn, with brethren, sisters and friends. He received a hope in the mercy and grace of God when only seven or eight years old, and was a regular attendant of the Old School Baptist meetings for years, but never united.

March 16th, at their home, the writer spoke to a large company, of God's sovereign grace in the salvation of poor sinners. God bless the mourning friends, is my desire. D. M. VAIL.

MEETINGS.

A TWO days meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va., on Saturday and Sunday, May 13th and 14th, 1911. Trains leaving Union Station, Washington, D. C., at 8:10 a. m., and Bluemont at 7:55 a. m., will be met at Herndon. Lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Harford Church, Harford Co., Md., beginning on Wednesday (17th) after the second Sunday in May, 1911, and continuing three days.

Those coming by way of Baltimore will leave North Ave. Station, on the Maryland and Pennsylvania R. R., Tuesday, May 16th, at 3 o'clock p. m. for Forest Hill. Those coming from the north will leave York, Pa., on the same road at about 1:30 p. m. for Forest Hill. Both trains will be met. A cordial invitation is extended, and especially to the ministering brethren.

NATHAN GRAFTON, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Rock Springs Church, Rock Springs, Md., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 24th, 25th and 26th, 1911.

Those coming by way of Baltimore, take train leaving Union Station at 2:57 p. m. for Conowingo, Md., changing cars at Perryville, on Tuesday before. Those from Philadelphia take train at Broad St. Station at 2 p. m., making the same change at Perryville for Conowingo. Ministers of our faith and order and lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

C. J. ROWLAND, Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, N. J., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 31st and June 1st and 2nd, 1911.

Those coming to the meeting by rail will be met on Tuesday, May 30th, at Stockton and Frenchtown, on arrival of the 2 o'clock p. m. train.

C. RISLER, Church Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Ebenezer Church, Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx, New York, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1911.

The Ebenezer Old School Baptist meetinghouse is located on the corner of Intervale Avenue and Home Street, Bronx Borough, within a short walk from the Freeman Avenue station of the Bronx Subway road. All trains and boats arriving in New York are within easy access of the Subway. The Subway trains are plainly marked either "Bronx" or "Broadway." Any Bronx train delivers passengers at Freeman Avenue station. Be sure the train is "Bronx." A committee will be at the meetinghouse Tuesday afternoon preceding, to meet and care for all early comers, as well as for all who come thereafter. We especially desire the presence of all members of churches in this association, and as many as can come of the associations corresponding with us. We want the largest possible representation of our churches, correspondence and friends.

JOHN McCONNELL.

THE Sandusky Association of Primitive Baptists will hold its seventy-eighth annual meeting with the Columbia Church, Cement City, Mich., June 9th, 10th and 11th, 1911. All those wishing to come are invited to attend, especially the ministers of our faith and order.

MARTIN LINDLEY, Church Clerk.

THE Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon and Washington will be held with Big Spring Church, at Elgin, Union Co., Oregon, instead of Oregon City, Oregon, to commence on Friday before the third Sunday in June, 1911, at 10 o'clock a. m. W. J. HESS, Moderator.

I. F. COLEMAN, Clerk.

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SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in Kimmy Hall, No. 12 Third St., in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition, which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at 5 cents per copy. Address,

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"CHRISTIAN SCIENCE AND THE LAW."

Because of the distressing information contained in orders for my Christian Science pamphlet respecting the great injury being done by this shameful fraud even among our dear Baptist people, I have tried in this second little work to expose it from a new point of view. Those not aware of recent developments at the headquarters of these people will be astonished almost to the point of doubting well-proven facts. I will mail two copies of this last sketch for ten cents (silver), or one copy and a copy of Christian Science and the Bible for ten cents. The price is not for profit, but to cover the bare expense. Hundreds of the first pamphlets were given away, and others placed where many could read them. If any good results from this effort to shield our brethren from this new delusion, the credit will be due our kind periodicals for calling attention to it.

S. B. LUCKETT.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Indiana.

"Thoughts on Regeneration, the Spiritual Birth, the Christian Warfare and the Resurrection," is the title of a pamphlet of 58 pages, written by Elder H. B. Jones, of Winnsboro, Texas, and can be had of him for 25 cents per copy, five copies for $1.00 or $2.00 per dozen. Address, H. B. JONES,

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 79. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1911. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WINNSBORO, Texas, March, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I am in receipt of a request from a friend, and reader of the SIGNS, of Bethany, La., to write something for the SIGNS on the subject of the Sabbath. While I love to comply, as best I may, with the requests of any and all who give evidence of interest in the doctrine and order of God's house, there are two or three things which cause me to enter upon the present task with much diffidence. First, in view of the solemnity and importance of all spiritual subjects, and a felt sense of my disqualifiedness. To bring out the spiritual signification to edification and comfort, one must have the revelation of it in his own heart by the Spirit, and the light and guidance of the same in expounding it. Then it must be applied by the same power in the hearer if it proves spiritually profitable. Second, it seems it is almost impossible for me to devote the time necessary to write an intelligible article on any subject. Hoping, however, that the Lord may be pleased to enable me to compile some thoughts I have had from time to time upon the subject proposed in such a way that my ideas may be gathered by the reader, I will make the attempt. My friend sends me some tracts, I suppose issued by what is known as "Seventh Day Adventists," which I have read, and find them the same in substance that I have been reading and hearing occasionally for many years past. The position taken belongs to the "do and live" system of the great religious world, that system that denies that salvation is by grace, and not of works; that denies that the righteous obedience of the blessed Redeemer of sinners in fulfilling the law to a jot and tittle becomes the obedience of his people; that he "is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Jesus said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am come not to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. * * * For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteous-

ness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Those "scribes and Pharisees" evidently belonged to that class of whom the apostle Paul spoke when he said, "For I bear them record, that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." Their "own righteousness" consisted in a compliance with outward performances, including a strict Sabbath day observance. "The righteousness of God" is found in Jesus. The prophet said, He shall be called, "The Lord our righteousness," and the apostle Paul said, "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." This righteousness is the gift of God to his people, (see Romans v. 17,) and this is the righteousness that exceeds "the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees." We are told that, "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law. To redeem them [the heirs under consideration] that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Again, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." To the Colossian brethren the apostle Paul said, "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. * * * Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days."

In conversation with an intelligent lady once, who was a "Seventh Day Adventist," and who was arguing very strenuously for the binding obligation upon all people to observe the seventh day to keep it holy, as the Jews were commanded to do, I quoted this last mentioned verse. She said this did not allude to the Sabbath of the decalogue, or ten commandments, but was another set of days the Jews were commanded to observe, and emphasized the last clause of the verse, "or the sabbath days." I reminded her that the word "days" at the end of the verse was italicized, which showed that it was a supplied word, supplied by the translators. Without it the verse would read, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath." These all must have been then embodied in the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us and which Jesus took out of the way, nailing it to his cross. Paul came to know (a thing which he seems not to know till the "command came") that the law is spiritual, but he was carnal; that the law was holy, just and good, and also that it required the strictest obedience (no partial obedience could satisfy its just and righteous demands), and further, that all the children of the earthy Adam were under its curse, for he says, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." James also said, "But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law,

and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all." Since the law is holy and requires perfect obedience in thought as well as deed, and since without holiness no man shall see the Lord, and since men are "carnal, sold under sin," if Jesus, the husband, head and representative of his church, his bride, had fulfilled every demand of that holy law but one, and had left that one for his people to fulfill, certainly not one of Adam's race could have been saved, because each one must from birth to death have continually kept that one, or it would have been with them as though none of the law had been kept. None could have done that, since all are carnal, and "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." The word "sabbath," we are told, means rest; on it, i. e., the seventh day, "God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."—Gen. ii. 2, 3. At that time, nor from that time on to the days when the "law was given by Moses" to the children of Israel, we do not read where man was commanded to rest, or cease from his labor on this day, or to keep it holy; nor do we read of this command being given to any other nation except the God-chosen nation, Israel. This was that chosen typical nation which God elected alone of all the nations of the earth, to whom it pleased him to commit that peculiar system of worship, or "covenant of works," of which Moses was given a "pattern in the mount," and which according to a special command from God he established with this people Israel. This was a typical people, having a typical service, every part of which found its substance or antitype in Jesus Christ. The priesthood of that old or legal covenant only served unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle, &c. (Heb. viii. 5.) So this Sabbath day I understand was typical of that rest found by the believer when by faith he is enabled to rest in the finished work and righteousness of Jesus Christ, the great High Priest of all the ransomed. "He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."—Heb. iv. 10. He who by faith has entered into this rest that remaineth to the people of God is the only one who remembers the Sabbath day to keep it holy. It is written, "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not of the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."—Romans ii. 28, 29. Such an one having all trust in outward works and forms cut off is one of that number of which the apostle speaks again when he says, "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Such an one does not only feel under obligations to worship (by ceasing from his own works and resting in the finished work of Jesus) one day in seven, but every day, and that not in order to, but because of salvation. Such an one fulfills the law, too, because having the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto him, he loves his neighbor as himself and "all the law is fulfilled in one word."—Gal. v. 14. As in Adam all his posterity disobeyed and fell under

the condemnatory sentence of the law and under its curse, so by Christ, their law-fulfiller, his chosen people, spiritual Israel, are raised above the law, brought from under its curse, and given the Spirit of the divine law-fulfiller, and are thereby enabled to fulfill the law with and in him, by love to him, loving his neighbor as himself. This, even by the heaven-born, is not done by or in the flesh, but in the Spirit; so while in Adam we are sinners, in Christ we are righteous. In Acts xv. we read of certain pharisaical teachers coming from Judea to the church at Antioch, telling them that it was needful for them to be circumcised and to keep the law of Moses in order to salvation; so great was the "dissension and disputation" in that body of Gentile believers over the matter that "they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain others of them, should go up to Jerusalem, unto the apostles and elders, about this question." When these messengers of the church had reached Jerusalem and reported to the church there, "and the apostles and elders came together, for to consider this matter," the sequel of the deliberations of this authoritative body was the letter to the church at Antioch, which is as follows: "Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment: it seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you, with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well." This decision of the apostles ought to be a joy and a comfort to Gentile believers to the end of time. No command, exhortation or admonition in the epistles by the apostles is out of harmony with this decision. Neither in it, nor in any of the commands, exhortations or admonitions of the apostles, is the church required to observe a certain day above another, or to esteem one day above another, as was the case with the Jews under the covenant of works, and if it were so we should be just as unable to live up to it as they were. If the observance of the seventh, or Sabbath day, was required of us in the letter as it was of the Jews, the penalty of its violation should be the same, and that penalty was death. The man who was found gathering sticks on the Sabbath day was stoned to death. (See Num. xv. 32–36.) True, the apostles often entered into the synagogues of the Jews on the Sabbath day and taught the people, but in this they did not teach that the observance of this day as above another day was to be under the gospel binding upon believers. But because they preached the gospel which presented Jesus "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," they were sometimes charged with preaching against Moses and the law. They preached the liberty or freedom of believers from the bondage of the law. To the Galatian brethren the apostle Paul wrote: "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another."

Under the old covenant, as a preparation necessary for its subjects, the law was written upon tables of stone; as a preparation for the subjects of the new covenant the law of that covenant is written on the fleshly tables of the heart. As it is written, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people."—Heb. viii. 10. Every action that springs out of this spiritual law or rule of action that God has put in the heart of the believer is love and obedience; whatever else is manifest in his actions is of the flesh. The believer is thus given to know that murder, idolatry, covetousness, lying, theft, adultery, fornication and the like are all forbidden, and come not from that law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus which has made him free from the law of sin and death, but he is made to loathe these things, and desire to avoid them, and sometimes to loathe himself because of the motions of sin in his flesh. The inclination and tendency in the flesh are so closely associated with believers here in this world of sin and blindness and ignorance that the apostle in his letter to the Colossians speaks of them as "your members which are upon the earth," and commands that they "mortify" them.

In concluding this article, which has been written by piecemeal, so to speak, I will say as to the dispute between those who contend for seventh day observance and those who contend for first day observance, I feel no particular interest. If the seventh day advocates can know that they have the days of the week numbered in the same order as the Jews under the Mosaic dispensation had them, that the seventh day does not fall on some other day than Saturday (a thing which I am extremely doubtful about any man knowing), then they evidently have the advantage of those who contend for first day observance, so far as arguments about the law are concerned, for from all I have been able to gather Sunday observance is a Roman Catholic institution. So far as I am individually concerned, I have for more than a quarter of a century observed both days, as a general thing; that is, so far as religious services are concerned, and this also is true of many Old School Baptists I know. This is not, however, because we regard these days more holy than other days, but it is obligatory on God's people to assemble together from time to time to engage in public worship, and custom and tradition have set apart these days for this purpose, and the law of the land has set apart a certain day, one day out of seven, and perhaps in most States Sunday is named as the special day. We are commanded to be subject to the powers that be, &c., and so long as the laws of the powers that be do not require a violation of the law and order of God's house as left on record in the New Testament, we should obey them. In Romans xiv. 5, Paul says, "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike." I am one who esteems every day alike, so far as requirements pertaining to the worship of God are concerned.

As my unknown friend requests that I answer through the SIGNS, I submit this, brethren editors, for your disposal. I should be glad if some one more gifted to bring out the comfort and instruction in things of the gospel should be stirred up to write on the subject.

As I have been penning these lines brother Frederick W. Keene has been in my mind occasionally, and I have been thinking I would love to read an article from his pen on the application of that

sabbatical rest to and in the experience of the believer and the church under the gospel dispensation. Can you not give us an article through the SIGNS on this subject, brother Keene?

Your little brother in bonds,

H. B. JONES.

TIAWAH, Okla., April 19, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—It has been some time since my name has appeared in our old, reliable paper. It has been well supplied without any help from me, and I have thought many times of the many instructive and comforting writers whose letters have been published for the uplifting of many saints who have been bowed down by worldly cares and anxious watchings and waitings, looking for and expecting the Lord to appear in his bounteous grace and in the plenitude of his providence, a deliverer from trouble. It does certainly appear to be a plain and straightforward truth that the Lord's genuine people have been and are more afflicted than the people of this natural world; but as far as physical sufferings and affliction are concerned, I do not think that there is any difference between believers and unbelievers. The vast difference between the children of God and the children of the flesh lies in the fact that the former have the fear of the Lord imparted to them, while the latter have not the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom. This fear of the Lord continually stirs the old Adamic nature from center to circumference, bringing war, civil war, without any cessation of hostilities. To this war the children of the flesh are strangers. Because of this war the children of God are known as the "afflicted and poor people." Being afflicted and in the depths of poverty they cry to the Lord for mercy and help. They have learned that "vain is the help of man," and that cursed is every one that trusteth in an arm of flesh. It is written that, "They shall trust in the name of the Lord." They do trust in the name of the Lord, but there is no glory to self for trusting in the name of the Lord; their native wisdom has been confounded, and they simply trust in the name of the Lord because they have no other refuge. From this it would seem that they are made to trust in the Lord. This position is repulsive to the natural man, and horrible doctrine for self-righteous religionists. The principal objections that they have to this "horrible doctrine" are, that it takes man's independence from him and robs him of his glory. Notwithstanding the afflictions and poverty to which the "lively stones" are subject, they never sincerely desire to pass backward into the cold state of death from whence they have been quickened; but in awful grandeur they cry, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, * * * for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." And again their cry in anguish is, "O wretched man that I am!" Here is soul trouble, is it affliction? Why should superhuman knowledge afflict a mortal? This knowledge is high. "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." The wisdom of this world is puny, it cannot compare in any way with that from on high. Think of worms being qualified by the Spirit so that it can be said of them: "Who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come." Is not this knowledge far above worldly

wisdom? Can any amount of worldly wisdom procure any one of these gifts of the Spirit? No; if all the worldly wisdom in the world could be combined in "a trust fund," it could not obtain a "shadow" of one of the above qualifications. The wisdom of men by searching cannot find out the Lord; this wisdom is foolishness with the Lord of hosts. "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision." On the other hand, the wisdom of God is foolishness with men. Men have been saying for thousands of years that it would be foolish, unwise and unjust for God to exercise the powers of predestination, election and calling as touching the destiny of the children of men. They will continue charging God with folly until the end of time. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." The children of God being thus equipped by the power of God are enabled to compare spiritual things with spiritual. Being lifted so high above their earthly nature, how wonderfully strange it is that God's people are sorrowful, poor, afflicted, cast down, tossed with tempest and not comforted. This was the experience of the patriarchs, prophets and early disciples of the Lord Jesus. Even the Lord himself was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," bearing self-evident testimony that all who follow him tread the path that "no fowl knoweth," which is hid from the eyes of the vultures of this world. But all is not sad and sorrowful along the path of the saints; "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." The sweet promises of Israel's God often come without warning, like the lightning's flash, and the next moment of the saint's life is filled with "joy unspeakable and full of glory," and it may be the most beautiful words in his language are sweeter than honey to his taste, like these words of the prophet: "Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all of thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children."—Isaiah liv. 11–13. They feel to realize the blessings from the hand of the Lord, and may take home to their understanding and claim the following Scripture as theirs by right of application: "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted. For thou art the glory of their strength; and in thy favor our horn shall be exalted. For the Lord is our defence; and the Holy One of Israel is our King."—Psalms lxxxix. 15–19. "And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb; and the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies."—Isaiah lxvi. 14. Jesus commands his disciples to rejoice: "Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven." "Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." There is no record that Jesus was ever mirthful as men are

merry about earthly things, but there is testimony that he was joyful and rejoiced as pertaining to the things concerning his kingdom. "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."—Luke x. 21. When the lost sheep is found he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. He sayeth unto his friends (he is our Friend), "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost." There is joy in heaven over this bringing back. Even angels rejoice in the work of Jesus, because he is crowned with success, for, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged." Abraham saw the day of deliverance, rejoiced in it and was glad. That day was the day of the Lord Jesus. David rejoiced, too, in viewing the same day, the day of Christ's ascension and power. "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."—Psalms cxviii. 24. "Let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice; let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee."—Psalms v. 11. Let the saints "rejoice in the Lord" and "joy in the God of their salvation." "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep." We "rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also." None but those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious can ever "glory in tribulations." It is contrary to all the thoughts and actions of the flesh to "glory in tribulations." No legal or worldly professors of religion can ever do it. This rejoicing and glorying belongs to the meek and lowly, who look for help in the mountain of the Lord. They even esteem the reproach of Christ greater than "the riches of Egypt." In affliction and poverty may our brethren and sisters be found rejoicing in the Lord Jesus.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

GOIN, Tenn., Jan. 28, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The fourteenth verse of the second chapter of Hebrews reads as follows: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

I feel to suggest a few thoughts regarding this text, together with some other Scriptures. Let us notice the difference between the word "partakers" and the words "took part." Does this word "partakers" mean just to take hold of, or do we understand it to mean sharers in flesh and blood? I desire to suggest this idea to you, (it being my conviction from a careful study of the Scripture) that the above text teaches us, or should teach us, that inasmuch as the children of God are a portion of Adam's race (the elect), Christ also took part of the same, and the word "likewise," instead of referring to the manner of taking it, refers to the amount that he took. Now inasmuch as the seed of Abraham embraces the whole church of God, it is said, "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." If I am not mistaken, I have found the whole church in the person of the one man Christ Jesus, and that in her human nature, and everything that

he went through in this world in the days of his flesh, was in union with the church, so that she went through the same in him. This view of the matter enables me to understand many things recorded in the Bible which I could not understand without it, such as "Crucified with Christ," and, "Quickened together with him," "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance," and, "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?" Again, "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Dear brethren, if the foregoing Scriptures do not teach the oneness of Christ and his church, I am at a loss to know what such Scriptures do teach. I know these are great mysteries, but I speak of Christ and the church. From all the foregoing, I can see how a nation can be born in a day, or at once; I think I can see how it was that as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children, and how it is true that "thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." Again, "After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." Yes, dear brethren, in the third day the dead body of Christ was quickened, and arose, and the church with him, and he said to his Father, Here am I, and the children which thou hast given me. Then we can sing with the poet,

"With him his members on the tree
Fulfilled the law's demands;
'Tis I in them, and they in me,
For thus the union stands.

Since Jesus slept among the dead,
His saints have naught to fear;
For with their gracious, suffering Head,
His members sojourned there.

When from the tomb we see him rise,
Triumphant o'er his foes,
He bore his members to the skies;
With Jesus they arose."

Now, dear brethren, I want to speak of another chain of thought which has arrested my mind. The Lord said to Jeremiah, chapter xviii. 2–4, "Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it." While it is a fact that this was spoken to the prophet concerning God's dealings with the house of Israel, I think that I see a wonderful lesson taught in it for us. It seems to me that this potter represents our God as the Creator and Maker of all things, and as Adam was formed out of the dust of the ground, I understand that he, and the church in him, was represented by this first vessel made by the potter of the clay; and inasmuch as the church sinned and fell in her first head, Adam, and became corrupt, just as the first vessel was marred in the hand of the potter, and as the potter made it another vessel (not the same vessel, but another vessel) so the church was redeemed in Christ, who was made of a woman, made under the law (the same clay), to redeem them that were under the law; and inasmuch as the two vessels were made of the same clay, I can but understand that the clay that existed in the second vessel also existed in the first vessel, only the vessel in the second place was not marred in the hand of the potter. By this second vessel I mean the church in the person of Christ, and Christ fulfilled the law in every jot and tittle, and the church through him obtained an inheritance forever, and when Christ arose from the dead the salvation of the church was complete. All that is necessary is the manifestation

of this complete salvation by the Spirit quickening them into life, giving them repentance, faith and all things pertaining to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called them to glory and virtue.

Lest some should fail to understand that it is man who is born of God, or of the Spirit, I desire to call attention to a few more Scriptures, and then close this letter. John said, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." Dear, doubting brother, can you not believe that it is the believer who is born of God? But one may say, I do not know what character it is that does the believing. Well, let us look at some other Scriptures which will show us who it is that believes. Paul said, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." He said again, Abraham "believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness." The eunuch said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God." Again, we hear the apostles say, "We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." Can we not all believe such plain Scriptures as I have referred to here? May God help us to believe his word, and to let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works, and glorify our Father in heaven.

I remain your poor, sorrowing brother, in hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie promised before the world began, P. N. MOYERS.

WOODSTOCK, Ontario, Canada, April 9, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER TERRY:—I have felt a strong inclination to write you a few lines ever since sister Terry's communication appeared in the SIGNS some time ago, in which article several things came to my mind very forcibly. One in particular, where you said that one portion of Scripture came to you very forcibly and with comfort: "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions," &c. This is the first passage of Scripture that ever came to me with any comfort after I was convicted of sin. It is now more than forty years ago, and yet it is as fresh in my mind as if it were only yesterday that it happened. I was far from home, and cast down nearly unto despair, when like a flash the words came, "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins." They came as a flash of light and hope to my dark, gloomy mind, but this was only for a moment or two, and then everything was as dark as before. I did not know at the time that the words were in the Bible, but found them long afterwards, and I never could forget them, and think I never shall as long as memory lasts. How is it that such a momentary gleam of light and hope is never forgotten? There were other passages of Scripture that came to me with comfort shortly after this, which I remember as plainly as though just spoken to me; I will mention one of them: it was, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." O how I cried for joy as this was revealed to me, for if it were not a revelation I have no hope. I believe these things are by revelation of God by the Spirit to poor, fallen, sinful man, else there is no religion at all, and O how often I am tempted to believe that there is no reality in religion, that it is only a delusion of the mind. Still I keep on hoping against hope, and instead of getting assurance, as I once fondly hoped that I had, and that it would grow stronger as I grew older, it seems to grow weaker and fainter, and how often I wonder if the time will come when all

assurance will die out with me altogether, and I will lie down in despair. I often feel and think that were it not that so many of the Bible saints have expressed similar feelings, I would conclude that I am an outcast, and that all my professions have been vain and false. But I have no power over my hope and belief; it is these that keep me and stay with me, and I cannot put them away or lose them; how strange and mysterious it all is. I think of the language, "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus," who in his dying hour cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Is not this often our cry? Why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far away? Is it not a wonder that we do not give it all up and quit crying and praying? This is what our nature says, but there is another power in the conflict, and that is the power that helps our infirmities and keeps up the warfare.

Dear sister, there are many things in your letter which seem to meet my case. You say that much of the time you seem to be sowing to the flesh. If you had said that you always seem to be sowing to the flesh you would have hit my case exactly, for it does seem to me that I am always worrying about the world and its affairs; the world gets into everything I do. One would think that I would be thinking about heaven and eternity, and be praying all the time for the grace of God to be with me and enable me to live and walk worthy of my profession. I do feel so very unworthy, and yet am proud, rebellious, ungrateful and as prone to sin as sparks to fly upward. I often feel that there cannot be another like me. Often I think that I will do better, but alas, I am helpless and have no power, and if I think that I am getting a little better I am again plunged into the ditch of self-corruption. As I look on some of my brethren I envy them, for they seem to get along so much better than I do. As you say of yourself, such little things annoy, and I am so selfish and unreconciled, and sometimes I have ill will against some of my brethren, perhaps just because they do not see things as I do, or feel as I do. Yes, I am hateful and peevish and fretful, and, as you say, these things distress me almost beyond endurance, but after all, is it not better that these things distress us than to be careless and indifferent about them, and have our conscience seared, as it were, with a hot iron? We feel our distress and pain, yet cannot see that pain and distress are evidences of life, and perhaps better for us than ease and comfort. If we are what we profess to be, there can be no doubt of it, for the apostle said, "For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Ah, yes, this is the point that I want to know: "Am I his, or am I not?" Well, I cannot decide or reason the case, but there must come an answer from God, as he alone can decide the momentous and all-important question. There is no other question which can compare with this in importance, any more than time can be compared with eternity. I know that the apostle says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Ah, yes, but that, too, I cannot decide, though I sometimes hope that I do, but then I think, If I did love them, would I not show it more? Could I not bear more from them? But I know that if I do not love them I do not love anybody or anything, unless it be self and sin, and so can say with the poet:

"Thus filled with doubts, I ask to know,
Come, tell me, is it thus with you?"

Like you, I often think others are not troubled as I am, but that they journey along in peace and comfort, but we only know our own trials and troubles; as the wise man saith, "The heart knoweth his own bitterness," and we, each and every one, must walk alone. The christian's path is a solitary one, and yet it is said, He setteth the solitary in families, and they are like a flock. It is said of Abraham that God called him alone, and all the children of God are called alone, and they are blessed alone. I cannot give my hope to another, and neither can they give to me.

I did not think to write so much when I began, but only thought to tell you how near you came to writing some of my feelings. I was quite surprised when you sent my last letter to the SIGNS. I did not want that, but of course when I write any one the letter is theirs to do with as they think best. Mrs. Scates, with myself, sends love to you both, and would be pleased to hear from you again, for we feel lonely.

Unworthily your brother,

R. SCATES.

HOPEWELL, N. J., April 20, 1911.

DEAR PEOPLE OF THE LIVING GOD:—I have taken my pen to write you, hoping, by the help of God, to tell you of some of the trials of a poor, helpless sinner, saved, as I hope, by grace. As I think of the wonders of the grace of God I am glad. I was born in Hopewell, N. J., in 1866, within a short distance of the Old School Baptist meetinghouse. Father, mother and we children went to that church in those days; Elder Hartwell was pastor then. After a number of years mother, brother and sister became members of the New School Baptists of that place, and brother became a minister of that denomination. Father, as I believe, died an Old School Baptist in heart. I remember his singing when I was a small boy this good old hymn, "When I can read my title clear to mansions in the skies," and I could see tears in his eyes, but I did not understand then how sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear.

Now I will try to speak of myself, and tell of some of my experience. I know that I can do nothing save by the help of the glorious God, who is all and in all to me. I had been married nearly twenty years to a good and loving wife, and was blessed with two children. In July, 1908, my wife went to Trenton to do some shopping, in fairly good health, leaving home about ten o'clock. About four o'clock word came to me that she was very sick in Trenton, and before I could get to the place she had passed away. I walked into the house a poor, weak and miserable man, but when I sat down by that loved one cold in death these words came to me, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." I did not know those words were in the book of Job at that time, as I knew very little of the Bible. Then my trials and warfare commenced, and I knew not which way to turn. I then commenced to go to the meetings regularly. Before that time the seat in the church seemed to be so hard and the sermon so long that I wished to get out before it was over, but now it all is so good and sweet, and I do not know whether there is a cushion on the seat or not; still I am not always that way. I have since then walked ten or twelve miles on Sunday to hear the Old School Baptist doctrine preached.

So many thoughts come up in my mind that I do not know where to commence; I feel that I can say this is my bread and my meat. Sitting in the field one day, husking corn, it seemed that every ear of corn I threw out brought some good thing whispered in my ear. It seemed that mother and father were before me, and I could hear father singing his favorite hymn. My heart was filled with sadness, mingled with joy; perhaps some of the readers of this can tell more about it than I can; it is unspeakable joy.

I commenced to go to the Saturday meetings, and for a long time I thought I would go before the church, but there seemed to be much in the way; I felt to be so weak, and such a great sinner. I went home to my mother's one Sunday, when I had been to hear Elder Chick in the morning, and it was a wonderful sermon to me, the text was in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew, about the sower. I have often thought, Is that seed fallen in me? I followed on to hear him preach again at Cedar Grove in the afternoon, and it was good, good all the time. Then I stopped at home, and this I shall never forget. It is all plain before me as a picture. Mother, brother and sister were in the room, and I began to talk of the goodness of God to me, and to give brother advice, at which he became angry, but I cannot forget the look on mother's and sister's faces when mother said, "Max, you talk like an Old School Baptist." Then leaving the place I started for my home, and came to two roads, one leading home and the other to Hopewell. A conflict began in my mind, which way shall I go? Shall I go to the New School Baptist service to-night? At last I started and arrived at the meetinghouse, and the minister spoke from the sower, as Elder Chick had done in the morning, but it was all of no good to me. I then started for my home, sick at heart. It was about three miles, but a great walk for me, for God was with me, teaching me. I stopped once and gazed up at the stars; they seemed to speak to me, and say, There is a God. There had been a time, several years before, when I had said like the fool, "There is no God." How thankful I feel that I am able to say, and did say, There is a God.

It has been now a year since I went before the church at their Saturday meeting. They sang hymns 1061 and 751 of Beebe's collection, and they seemed to be the sweetest hymns that ever came out of the mouth of mortals. I felt that I must go before the church if I had to crawl all the way. I went, feeling very weak, and that I could not find words to speak to them, but I realized as I stood before them the wonderful power of God, and was strengthened to speak a few words, and was received, and baptized the next day, Sunday morning. I was glad when it was done, for there was a great burden lifted from my mind. I often have a desire to speak a few words in the Saturday meetings, yet I feel to be the least of all the brethren.

I must bring this letter to a close. I feel I have left out a great deal that I would like to say in telling you how God has taken me out of the miry clay and put a new song in my mouth. I leave this to you to do with as you deem best. I hope that seed will fall in some lonely heart. I would be glad to hear from some reader of this, if any one can feel to write to me.

I am a sinner indeed, and a sinner in need.

GEORGE M. CONNER.

LOVELAND, Colo., Jan. 24, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—I have a desire to write to all the faithful in Christ Jesus. John was told of the Spirit to write, and the Spirit told him what to write. Now if I could but know that the things I write are the leadings of the Spirit of truth, I would have no fears in writing. My mind has been dwelling of late upon the creation of Adam, who Paul says in Romans v. 14, "is the figure of him that was to come." It is written, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."—Gen. ii. 7. Every Bible reader will remember that God said it was not good that man should be alone, and that he would make him a helpmeet, so it is not needful for me to use all the Scripture quotations up to the Lord making the woman, to convey my thoughts upon the subject that I have in mind. "And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman."—Gen. ii. 22. Nowhere do I find in the inspired book any testimony that will justify me in saying that the Lord God breathed the breath of life into the nostrils of Adam's helpmeet, hence I must conclude that the life which Eve had when the Lord God brought her to the man was the same life Adam had when he became a living soul. There is no testimony to the contrary but what the rib which the Lord God took from Adam's side had life in it, and that life was Adam's life. To my mind here is a most beautiful "figure of him that was to come:" Christ the Lord. As the life of Eve, Adam's bride, together with all his posterity, was in Adam when he became a living soul, so was the life of the church, which John calls "the bride, the Lamb's wife," in Christ long ere the annals of time began. How beautifully and clearly our Savior illustrated this eternal truth when he said, in speaking of himself, "I am the true vine." "I am the vine, ye are the branches." We know from our own observation of the things in nature that the life germ of the branch of a vine is in the vine before we can perceive the branch shoot forth out of the vine. That all may understand what I mean when I speak of the life of the church, the life of all God's people being in Christ Jesus, the Son of the only true God, I want to quote from 1 John v. 11: "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." Again, "When Christ, who is our life [eternal life], shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."—Col. iii. 4. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear [in our earthly life] what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." That is to say, he will be crowned with all the glory he had with the Father before the world was. I now turn to the prayer of Jesus as recorded by John in chapter seventeen. He not only prays for his disciples, "but for them which thou hast given me." "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." I have shown by the testimony of Paul to the saints and faithful in Christ at Colosse, that Christ is our life. I want to turn to Paul again: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church."—Eph. v. 23. Paul further declares to his brethren in Christ that, "Your life is hid with Christ in God." If the testi-

mony I have been able to gather from the Scriptures does not establish the truth of the unity or oneness of Christ and his church, I am at a loss to know what it does prove or establish. I am very certain Paul believed the truth of the doctrine some call "the eternal union of Christ and his church," for he asks, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." The more I reflect upon the subject I thought to write upon, the deeper it seems to me, so I will not write more. If what I have written will not darken counsel, publish it.

I am yours in hope of eternal life, which none but God can give.

J. H. YEOMAN.

COQUILLE, Oregon, April 2, 1911.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I am going to try, in my weak and imperfect way, to pen a few lines on one of the greatest, to my mind, subjects of the Bible, viz., Justification. Whether I shall succeed in edifying the saints, depends on whether the Holy Spirit is with me, for without him I can do nothing. Away back in the distant past an oriental sage asked this question: "How should man be just with God?"—Job ix. 2. That question has been ringing down the ages from that day to this: "How should man be just with God?" Job knew man needed justification; he knew he was a lost and ruined sinner, and without justification none could see the Lord, hence the question, How is it possible for man to be just with God? In trying to answer this question let us look for a moment at the false answers, for they are many. One says, Keep the Sabbath, obey the law; another says, Be baptized, keep the commandments; another, Work out your own salvation by works. But we hear an eminent apostle say, "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified. And, "For if Abraham were justified by works [of law], he hath whereof to glory; but not before God." Now let us have a definition of law. The great jurist, William Blackstone, says, Law in its most extensive sense means "a rule of action," and in its restricted sense is "a rule of human conduct;" hence it is simply works, and Paul says, "By the deeds [works] of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight."—Romans iii. 20. Says the wise man, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."—Prov. xiv. 12. Now what is that way which seemeth right unto a man? Why, with the great majority of the religious world it is works; work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; help Christ save the world. Does Christ really need our help to do his work? Isaiah says our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil."—Jer. xiii. 23. So we see the works theory will never justify a man. Now listen: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."—Romans viii. 33, 34. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man

should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which he hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. ii. 8–10. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."—Acts iv. 12. Thus we see there is no use for men to try to invent ways and means by which to be justified, for there is none other name under heaven by which to be justified than the name of Jesus Christ. In the fifth chapter of Revelation we read, "And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals." —Rev. v. 1. This has reference, to my mind, to human destiny that was so sealed that without justification no man could be saved. But God so loved his people that he sent his own beloved Son to redeem them from the curse of the law by making a sacrificial atonement that they might be justified by his imputed righteousness. So we see after all there is but one way by which to be just with God, and that is Jesus Christ. He came between the sinner and his God as a mediator or peacemaker, and thus by reconciling (not God to the sinner, but the sinner to his God) brought the offender to atonement with the offended. It is the only way that it can be done.

Yours in hope of a blessed immortality,

W. H. NOSLER.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., April 2, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will send a letter that sister Laura Bailey wrote me while my daughter and I were passing through sickness and sorrow. It truly was a sweet comfort to me, and I feel to pass it on for other loved ones to read and enjoy, if you think it proper. I also feel to let brother O. B. Hickerson know how consoling and comforting his letter in our last SIGNS was to me; it expressed my mind much better than I could have done. I have read it over and over, and it is sweet to my taste. If I know my own heart, I truly want to be kept down at Jesus' feet, and walk softly. I love the dear SIGNS, and may God bless the editors and correspondents.

From a poor worm of the dust,

EFFIE J. NETHAWAY.

FRIDAY EVENING.

DEAR SISTER EFFIE:—We have just heard of your trial, and feel very sorry for you. Our friends and brethren can sympathize with us when trials come, but they cannot remove them. Naturally it seems you have had more than your share, still we know God rules all things, therefore it is well. May God make you and all his children feel to say, Thy will, O God, and not mine, be done. He has promised never to leave nor forsake one of his children. Another promise is, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." So it makes no difference how much we suffer if we have grace and strength sufficient to endure all, and the worst trial a child of God could be called to pass through could do nothing more or nothing less than bring that one to the feet of the dear Savior, and I believe all of God's people long to be there, yet we do not want to pass through suffering; but if we follow the meek and lowly Lamb of God we must suffer, for he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. The poet said:

"Trials make the promise sweet;
Trials give new life to prayer;
Trials bring me to his feet,
Lay me low, and keep me there."

I truly believe God rules all things, and that he has a purpose in each trial, temp-

tation and cross, as well as in our joys. He is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, but at times I think if I truly believed from my heart I would be satisfied with all things as they are, but surely none of the race of Adam can be more impatient and dissatisfied than I.

"I would, but cannot rest,
In God's most holy will;
I know what God appoints is best,
Yet murmur at it still."

We are told, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." Surely the steps that we tread and the station we fill our Father determined and wrote in his will. God's people are an afflicted and poor people, surrounded by trials, temptations, doubts and fears, but I believe these are all necessary to wean us from the world. Truly this world is a wilderness of woe; this world is not our home.

I do not know that I have written one word that will give you any comfort, but I had a desire to write to you, and God only knows whether or not my desire was of the flesh. I often fear my desires are all of the flesh, for it seems that desires which come from God would be manifest in our daily walk and conversation, but this is not my case.

I hope by the time you receive this you and Jennie will both be feeling better, and, if the Lord wills, I hope you may both be well very soon. We are told to trust in the Lord with all our heart, but of ourselves we cannot do that, so all I can say is, Lord, lead me in the way best for my good and thy glory, and have mercy upon me, for I am weak. I feel I can say with the poet,

"Though I have him oft forgot,
His loving-kindness changes not."

What a wonderful God we have, "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." May God grant you grace and strength sufficient for your days, lead you the way through life that will be best for your good and his glory; may he make you feel to say in your distress of body and mind, Thy will, O God, and not mine, be done; may he comfort you at all times as seemeth good in his sight, have mercy on you and your family in this time of sorrow, and when you have lived all your appointed days may he take you to himself to rest eternally with the whole redeemed family, to sing praises to his name, world without end.

From one who desires to walk soberly, righteously and godly, but feels thus far she has failed.

Unworthily, LAURA BAILEY.

RATON, N. M., Jan. 9, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I will drop a few lines to say to you that the dear old SIGNS is as precious to us as it was many years ago. I remember Elder Gilbert Beebe being at my father's some seventy-five or seventy-seven years ago. The SIGNS always came to our home as long as he lived, and for some fifty years it has been a constant visitor at our own house, so you may believe we would be lost without it. You remember Joseph told his brethren, Ye meant it for evil, but the Lord meant it for good. As I look over the SIGNS I see writers from the Atlantic to the Pacific. I am impressed that the severe taxation imposed on the American settlers by the English king he meant for evil, but the Lord ruled it for good. The Lord raised up men to frame a constitution giving religious liberty to all the inhabitants of the country. Nobody can interfere with my religious views; hence that unjust taxation resulted in good.

With kind wishes to all who may read these few lines, I am, I trust, a sister in hope, ELIZABETH H. BOGGS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1911.

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EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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MATTHEW IX. 13.

SISTER Florence Pultz, of Wheeling, W. Va., requests that we write something with regard to the words found in Matthew ix. 13: "But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

All the words of Jesus were full of meaning. In this one thing also, he spake as never man spake. It is much to be able to enter into some little portion of this meaning. It is true however that while we remain on earth we shall see in part and know in part only. There is but one way by which any man can come to know the Savior's words; that is, to know what they signify: it is by being made like him; it is by coming to know him. In the world to come "we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is;" that is, we shall know him as he is. Here and now we are like him only in part, therefore we understand him only in part. Jesus' words are the expression of himself. Only so far as we know and understand him can we understand his words, and yet his words are just such words as men use in common intercourse with each other. Jesus did not use words with a strange meaning in them; they mean just the same when he uses them as when other men use them, but they mean so much more. Sin means just the same thing when we have grown old as when we were young in the knowledge of it, but sin has a far deeper, broader meaning to us than at the first. So grace, at the first glimpse of it, signified just what it now signifies, but the fullness of it as it appears to us now is almost infinitely greater than at the first. We "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," but all the time it is the same grace and the same Christ. Our later experience does not in any manner contradict our earlier experience; it is but an unfolding from the bud to the full blown flower. So in this text the words "mercy," "repentance," and others, always signify the same things, but our knowledge of their meaning grows as we experience more and more of our need of them. The little child in knowledge knows their meaning as well as does the aged man; both can converse together concerning them with perfect understanding of each other, and both experience the same blessed consolation in them.

But, leaving these general remarks, we will speak especially of the text. Jesus said here just what is said again and again elsewhere in the word of God. The words are quoted from the prophecy of Hosea, vi. 6, where we read, "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." In substance the same things are said in the prophecy of Micah, vi. 8: "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" In Hosea xii. 6, the same things are said: "Therefore turn thou to thy God, keep

mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually." And Matt. xii. 7, reads, "But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless." All these Scriptures taken together declare that the Lord has no pleasure in offerings, whether of bullocks, calves, goats, birds or of the fruits of the land, whether of prayers, praises, preaching, singing, or of the ordinances of baptism and the supper, if the offerers are not men of gracious and merciful spirit. They signify that it is more to Him that one act of kindness, one deed of mercy toward others be shown, than that all outward forms of religious service should be performed. A loving, gentle, merciful spirit is of greater price in his sight than are all the forms of religious worship put together. The Savior does not mean that the forms of worship are of no account, but he does mean that they are not the weightier matters of his law. It was not wrong, nay, it was right and the duty of Israelites to tithe mint, rue, anise and cummin, as these were parts of the fruitage of the land, but these things were small matters compared with judgment, justice and mercy. "These," said the Master, "ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." It is a solemn obligation resting upon all who believe to-day to be baptized, to cling close to the worship and the ordinances of the church of God, not to neglect the assembling of themselves together, to engage in singing, prayer and praise in the sanctuary, but, after all, it is of greater moment in the sight of God to do that which is just toward all men, to show mercy to those who have need of mercy, and to walk with humility before God. Of these things it may also be scripturally said, "These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." So also it is good, and greatly for the glory of God and the consolation and strengthening of believers, that they hold fast the sound doctrine of the word. Out of this will grow stability in the faith, reverence toward God and humility of heart. To worship God rightly we must know who he is and what are his attributes, but, after all, it is still more needful that believers are led by the spirit of humility, love and reverence toward God than to be possessed with soundness in the letter. The form of worship and the form of sound doctrine are both intended to stir up those who believe, to the bringing forth of the fruit of the Spirit in their hearts and lives. The fruit is that toward which all the dealings of God with his people tend, and to this end all the ordinances of the house of God are appointed, but, after all, the fruit is the chief thing. It seems to us that this is in substance the meaning of the Savior in all the Scriptures quoted above.

Now, turning more especially to the text and its connection, we think that a careful examination of it will set forth very clearly all these truths. We learn from Luke v. 27, that it was in the house of Matthew that Jesus was gathered with his disciples. In Luke he is called Levi. Matthew had made a feast for him and his disciples. Many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him. There was good reason for this, for Matthew was also a taxgatherer, and the publicans were taxgatherers. Both publicans and sinners were despised by the Pharisees, and these made remarks to the disciples about what their Master was suffering to be done. It was in reply to these words of the Pharisees that Jesus said, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." That

is, his meaning was, If you are really not poor and needy, but rich; if you are possessed of perfect righteousness, as you claim, and these others are not well, but sick, as you assert of them, then indeed, by your own admission, these others need my ministry more than you do, and why then fault me for mingling with the sick? It was as though some man well and strong should find fault with a physician for mingling with the sick, and not with those who were in health. It is the business of the physician to mingle with the sick. Jesus would say, I am the good Physician; it is my business to heal the sick; they need me. You claim to be in full health, why do you expect me to pay attention to you who deny that you need healing at all? But now the Master refers them to the Scriptures in which they boasted, and declares to them that notwithstanding their great claim of reverence for the word of God they did not know the simplest meaning of that word. Go and learn what your own Scriptures say and mean. They declare that the Lord will not have sacrifice or outward forms of worship, but that he seeks heart religion, and the fruits of that which is in the heart. The words do not here mean that the Lord will show mercy himself, but that he will have the fruit of mercy in the hearts and lives of men. These are the things of good report before God and man; these things are lovely in his sight. These very Pharisees were full of the forms of religion; they lived according to the strictest sect of the Jews, so far as all the ceremonies of their law were concerned, and were very careful to attend to every ritual, but, at the same time, Jesus accused them of making long prayers for a pretense; that is, not because they loved communion in this way with God, but because they desired to be thought well of by men. Professing godliness, they still loved the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and in their daily life in business were not even honest, but robbed others. They robbed not others who were, like themselves, capable of looking out for their own interests, but widows' houses. They were not only dishonest, but they oppressed the poor, and so called down upon themselves the righteous wrath of the God of the widow and the fatherless. Placed in the balance with these acts of oppression all their religious forms were lighter than vanity. They had not learned how much dearer to God were acts of mercy than all the forms of worship in which they devoutly engaged. If men love not the neighbor it is certain that the love of God is not in them. Their zeal toward God was an abomination in his sight. It was of just such characters as these that the Lord spoke when in Isaiah he said, "He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol." That is, because of their disregard of the principle of righteous dealing with all men their sacrifices were to the Lord as though they had offered the most abominable things upon his altars. It means simply that God would not receive their offerings, because their heart and their daily lives were not right in his sight.

These Pharisees to whom the Savior was speaking in the text were the true children of their brutish fathers; they imagined that God was well pleased with them because of their zeal in his service, so far as the forms of godliness were concerned, but they took no account of

the weightier matters commanded in his law to them. So long as they maintained the forms of godliness they paid little attention to the substance of it. Indeed as the substance died out in their hearts and lives, forms were all the more multiplied as a salve to their consciences. But what a refuge of lies should all these things prove to them; the hail of God's wrath should sweep them all away, and the people who trusted in them as well. He who builds upon the sand goes down with the house which he builded. The same righteous principles remain in force still. Being self-righteous, and boasting of their own goodness, there was no room in them for understanding what mercy could mean. The Lord had said, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice," but they said, We will have sacrifice, and not mercy. God had spoken out of his heart the one thing, they spoke out of their hearts the other thing. It is easy to perform rituals. Men of corrupt hearts and hands could in the olden times perform every ritual commanded in the law of Moses, as well as could the most humble and devout. It is so still; men who are ungodly and selfish in every thought can pray, sing, preach, attend upon the services of the sanctuary, and be very zealous in and for these things, just as well as can the humblest and most spiritual. Men indeed may see little difference; nay, men may be deceived into thinking the former are the more devout and godly, but God sees the heart, he will have mercy, and not sacrifice. The very attitude of mind possessed by these Pharisees prevented them from feeling or showing mercy; full of righteousness themselves, they could have no mercy upon those who failed. This is one of the principles which govern in our poor, fallen nature. Even a disciple cannot strengthen another weak one until he has come to learn his own weakness. The man who is righteous in his own estimation cannot have compassion upon his fallen brother who is in the miry clay. Having no felt need of forgiveness and mercy himself he cannot show these things toward others. Fancying that he has climbed up from the depths by his strength and zeal, he has no thought of compassion for one who cannot attain; his religion is wholly selfish; it cannot be otherwise so long as he is filled with his own ways. He has not gone and learned that the Lord will have mercy, and not sacrifice; he does not know that a heart of pity, of love and of mercy, leading to kindly and merciful thoughts and deeds toward others, is better than all sacrifices. This fruit of love and mercy in the heart is better than to possess tongues, to have all knowledge, to sell all one's goods to feed the poor, to give the body to be burned; men who do these things, and yet have not charity, are but as sounding brass, giving indeed sound enough, but knowing nothing of what the ear of the living man hears in it of delight. As the human voice is infinitely better than any instrument of brass, be it played upon never so well, so is mercy better than all the forms of service and worship.

We leave these reflections to the consideration of all who may read them, and we trust they may prove of some satisfaction to sister Pultz. C.

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

We are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ISAIAH II. 2–4.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Please give your views on Isaiah ii. 2–4, which reads: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob: and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

BARBARY BRUCE.

PERRY COUNTY, Iowa, August 4, 1861.

We will submit a few remarks for the consideration of sister Bruce and our readers generally on the text proposed, in the order in which it is written.

"And it shall come to pass." All divine prophecy is thus marked in the most positive and emphatic language, declaring from the mouth of God things which shall come to pass. They must and shall be accomplished, because God has so ordained, decreed and declared. In the absence of God's absolute predestination of events the prophecies of the Scriptures could be no more reliable than the prognostications or auguries of heathen magicians. The very fact that God by his holy prophets has declared the end from the beginning is an irrefragable demonstration of the doctrine of his absolute predestination of all things. It is therefore infidelity to dispute that doctrine, for it is a denial of his government. God has at sundry times and in divers manners spoken to the fathers by the prophets, and he is of one mind, and none can turn him. He speaks the word and it stands fast, he commands and it is done.

"In the last days." God in his infinite wisdom has a time for the accomplishment of all the orders of his throne. Nothing can disarrange the order of events. The fullness of the time must come before the fulfillment of the prediction of the Savior's advent could take place, and were it not for the wise and immutable arrangement of the order of events, worlds might jostle against worlds, and all events so clash as to defeat the counsel and purpose of God. The time specified for the fulfillment of the prophecy of our text is "in the last days," by which we understand primarily the last days of the Jewish organization, including the days in which God hath spoken to us by his Son. (See Hebrews i. 2.) The last days of the nationality of the Hebrews, which last days embraced from the coming of John the Baptist to the destruction of the temple and dispersion of the Jews to the four quarters of the globe. It was at this time the things in our text recorded were accomplished, as we shall presently attempt to show. Still as the entire history of Israel was figurative of the church and kingdom of Christ, we look for corresponding events to be fulfilled in the last days of the church of God among the Gentiles, or on the earth.

"That the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills." The church and kingdom of our Lord is called his house, first, because it is his residence. He dwells in Zion. "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved." Here, saith the Lord, will I dwell forever, for I have desired it. Second, because it is the home of his family, the place of their birth, of their abode, comfort and protection. They are of the household of God, and have a

birthright inheritance in the house of the Lord forever. Third, because the term is used in the Scriptures to mean a seed or posterity, as the house of Israel, the house of David, &c. Fourth, because it is the antitype of the temple or house consecrated to the Lord in the old Jerusalem. Fifth, because the materials of which it is composed are brought from the forests and dark quarries of nature, and being quickened are built up a spiritual house, or as timber is framed, so are the saints fitly framed together and built on Christ as their foundation and chief corner-stone. And lastly, because they are God's building, and the place where his honor dwelleth. (See Heb. iii. 2, 4, 6.) But this building is called the mountain of the Lord's house. As Daniel predicted of the stone which was taken from the mountain without hands, which he interprets to mean the kingdom which the God of heaven should set up, should wax great and become a great mountain, breaking in pieces the nations of the earth, so the church of God is called Mount Zion, Jerusalem which is above, &c.; like a mountain firmly established and immovable. Her locality or position is in the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills. Observe the mountains and hills are plural, but the top is in the singular number. Where shall we find such a place? A plurality of mountains and hills, having but one top? The several tribes of Israel were often called mountains, and the principal families of these tribes were called hills, as Levi and the family of Aaron, Judah and the family of David. All these mountains and hills melted at the presence of the Lord at the advent of our Savior Jesus Christ. They were to remain until he came, then the mountains should depart and the hills should be removed. (Isa. liv. 10; Jer. iv. 24.) "I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly." "The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs. What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back? Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams, and ye little hills, like lambs? Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob."—Psalms cxiv. 4–7. The top or highest elevation of all the mountains of Israel is found in the person of the Messiah. He forms the climax, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. In his eternal Godhead he is infinitely above all the mountains and families of the earth, but in his mediatorial character he has taken on him the seed of Abraham and identified himself with his people. As the promised Messiah he was to rise out of Jacob and preside over Israel. The prophets of the Lord in rapturous visions saw him coming upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills, and in holy delight exclaimed, "Let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains."—Isaiah xlii. 11. In him then who is the exalted King of Israel, whose elevation is above the clouds, higher than the heavens, greater than Solomon, higher than Agag, before Abraham, superior to David, and in all things having preeminence, was the mountain of the Lord's house to be established. Not in the flesh of Abraham, nor in the covenant of circumcision, not in the law of a carnal commandment, nor in a worldly sanctuary, but in heavenly places in Christ Jesus the church of God was to be established. Chosen in him before the foundation of the world, all his members were predestinated in the fullness of the dispensations of times to be personally

and experimentally gathered together in him, and come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. (Eph. iv. 13.) This is, be it remembered, an establishment of God himself, not subject to any uncertainty, nor liable to any change of position or elevation. Quickened together with Christ, the church or mountain of the Lord's house is raised up together with him, and shall sit together with and in him in heavenly places, and being risen together with Christ, they are to seek the things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. O what amazing grace is this, that we should be taken up out of the horrible pit and miry clay, and be so exalted as kings and priests, our life hid with Christ in God, and our house and everlasting habitation established in him who is the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity.

"And all nations shall flow unto it." This has reference to the gathering in of the Gentiles. God has a people in all the nations and kindreds of mankind. Christ has redeemed them with his blood, and therefore the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come and worship the Lord their God in his holy mountain at Jerusalem, which holy mountain is established in Christ Jesus our Lord, for he shall gather his sheep with his arm and carry them in his bosom. They shall not be forced coercively, against their inclination. They shall be a willing people in the day of Christ's mediatorial power. He will give them a new heart, a new will, new desires, and in the gospel present irresistible attractions, so that being melted by his love in their heart they shall flow; like the flowing of water to the great ocean, so shall they flow unto the mountain of the Lord's house, to find there a joyful, safe and sure abode in the house of the Lord forever, where they may inquire in his holy temple.

"And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob." Many people, or a multitude which no man can number, redeemed from every people under heaven, quickened by the same Spirit, moved by the same impulse, animated by the same love and qualified by the same preparation of heart to enjoy the same spiritual privileges, shall express the same disposition to return to Zion with singing and everlasting joy. When thus prepared by grace to enter into the mountain of the Lord's house they will not feel selfish, or desire to go alone; they will say, Come, let us go. They desire that all who love the Lord may participate with them. The psalmist was glad when he heard this appeal: "When they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord."—Psalms cxxii. 2–4. Read the whole Psalm. It is not regarded by them who love the Lord as a degradation; they do not go down to the house of the Lord. From the highest pinnacle of earthly greatness or grandeur it is an infinite elevation to go up to the mountain of the house of the Lord, which is established in the top of the mountains, high above the hills. John, when favored with a view of this heavenly Jerusalem, was carried away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, where he saw the church adorned as a bride prepared for her husband. (Rev. xxi. 10.) It cer-

tainly is not natural for streams to flow upwards, nor is there any power of nature that can turn sinners to God. But the water of life which Jesus giveth is of a kind and quality which is ever springing up into everlasting life. (John iv. 14.) When thus inclined to go up to the mountain of the Lord's house, the heaven-born child is filled with wonder and amazement, and he has many inquiries to make, to which he can find no satisfactory answer, only in the school of Christ. He must inquire in the holy temple if he would learn the mysteries of redeeming grace and sovereign love. The God of Jacob will teach us of his ways; not only of the way in which he saves them, but of his ways in which he leads them. Jacob's God found him in a waste howling wilderness, and he led him about and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of his eye. "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him."—Deut. xxxii. 11, 12. So the Lord teaches and leads his people. Jesus says to them, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."—Matt. xi. 29. He is just such a teacher as the trembling children want, for he is meek, his terror will not make them afraid; he is lowly, and will condescend to men of low degree. He knows the feelings of their infirmities, and will succor them when tempted; he will give them wisdom, and will not upbraid them. His ways are past finding out by all the wisdom and study of man, but still his secret is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant, he will teach them his ways.

"And we will walk in his paths." When under his tuition, to his house, we turn our back upon all our former paths. What we before esteemed as gain we count as loss; yea, verily, they count all things as dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus their Lord. They desire not to invent, or mark out, or pursue ways of their own, nor have they any confidence in the ways which men invent and teach, but they desire above all things that they may walk in his ways, in the footsteps of his flock, that they may find where he feedeth and where he causes his flock to rest at noon.

"For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." The way in which all who love God should walk is pointed out by his law. We are not to do as we feel, but as he says. If our own impulse and feelings were a safe and sufficient guide we would need no other, but it is not so. We cannot be his disciples except we do whatsoever he has commanded us. The only rule for our faith and practice is found in his law, which emanates from his throne in Zion, not from the traditions of men, for they make void his law. It is not to be obtained from schools of men, but from Zion, the school of Christ, where his children are taught by his word and by his Spirit. Neither doth his word proceed from men who use their own mouths and say, The Lord saith, when he hath not spoken. From Jerusalem alone goeth forth his word, the proclamation of which by his great commission must begin at Jerusalem.

(To be concluded.)

POETRY.

BIRTHDAY VERSES.

(Written by Betsey M. Bouton on Her Birthday Anniversaries.)

EIGHTY-NINE.

Most ninety years have rolled away
Since I first saw the light of day;
The suffering scenes along the way
No mortal tongue can here portray.

But soon those scenes will all be past,
And what will be my lot at last
Is known to One who has eyes to see
What is his Father's wise decree.

I have a hope all will be well,
And I shall with my Savior dwell
In a world free from pain,
And there with him forever reign.

NINETY.

Full ninety years have rolled around,
And I am yet on this low ground,
With still a hope that I may be
Patient with what's in store for me.

NINETY-ONE.

It seems strange for me to say,
"This is my ninety-first birthday;"
It's something I can never scan,
Only as it is in my Father's plan.

NINETY-TWO.

Ninety-two years has come at last,
While many a weary day is past;
What's in the future none can tell,
But I am hopeful all will be well.

NINETY-THREE.

Unexpected unto me,
I have lived to ninety-three;
The Lord knows whom and when to call;
He is the disposer of us all.

NINETY-FOUR.

My birthday has arrived at ninety-four,
Dear Savior, can I ask thee more?
There is one thing I ask thee still:
I may patient wait my Father's will.

(*See obituary on page* 347.)

(Verses composed by Sarah A. Allen, aged 82 years.)

I AM nearing the heavenly city,
Which, my children, I hope you will see;
There's naught in this world so glorious
As the throne where I hope to be.

Through this city there flows a broad river—
The river of the water of life,
And all that are hungry and thirsty
Do cease from this world of strife.

On either side of this river
Is the Tree of life so fair,
Bearing twelve manner of fruit of the Spirit,
Yielding fruit every month in the year.

Yes, I am nearing the holy city,
Which John in the isle did see,
Coming down from God out of heaven,
Where I shall eternally be.

(*See obituary in last number.*)

OBITUARY NOTICES.

BROTHER **Benjamin B. Hastings,** who was for over forty years a faithful member of the church at Little Creek, Sussex Co., Del., and who served for many years very acceptably as a deacon, was born near where Delmar, Del., now stands, August 7th, 1833, and died May 2nd, 1911, aged 77 years, 8 months and 25 days. Dec. 19th, 1854, he was married to Sarah E. Truitt, who died Sept. 19th, 1900. He was afterward married to Sarah J. Holloway, who survives him. By his first marriage he had eight children to grow up to manhood and womanhood, six of whom survive, together with twenty-five grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Brother Hastings in early life united with the Methodists, together with his wife, and was very much prejudiced against the Old School Baptists, but when the Lord began his work in him he became very much dissatisfied with the people with whom he was associated, and soon found that he was in sympathy and fellowship with the Old School Baptists, and in the year 1869 he and his wife asked a place in the church, and were baptized at Little Creek by Elder George W. Staton, at that time the pastor. Both he and his wife continued faithful and devoted members as long as they lived at that place. He was very fortunate in both his marriages; his second wife was and is a member of the Forest Grove Church, in Wicomico Co., Md., and proved a congenial companion and devoted wife, caring for him with the utmost faithfulness during the last years of his life, when in the feebleness of age he needed just that care so cheerfully given him. He had been feeble for about three years, gradually declining, becoming entirely disabled about three months before the end. Five of his children are faithful members of the Old School Baptists, as also one son-in-law and two daughters-in-law. We feel that one of the "excellent of the earth" has departed from us, and our loss is great indeed, but to him we are assured all is gain.

The funeral service was held at Smith's Mills on the 4th inst., the writer using the last verse of the seventeenth Psalm as a subject, previously reading the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians, after which the mortal body was laid in the cemetery adjoining, to await the trumpet's sound.

ALSO,

John W. Laws was called away from the scenes of earth on the 4th inst., at his home in Parsonsburg, Md., at the extreme age of 82 years, 4 months and 12 days. He had been gradually declining with infirmities incident to old age for the past two or three years, having in that time one or two severe spells of illness. His last illness was of only one week's duration. Mr. Laws as a man was held in high esteem by all who knew him, as a straightforward, honorable, upright man and a good citizen. He was twice married, first in 1861 to Jane Mezick, by whom he had six children, all of whom lived to grow up. Four of his children, two sons and two daughters, preceded him to the grave. Two still survive: Mrs. Lee Disharoon, of Philadelphia, and William, of Ocean City, Md., also eight grandchildren. The first wife died in June, 1884. In 1888 he was married to Miss Sarah Holston, who survives him. He never made a public profession, but gave abundant evidence of an experience of the abundant grace of God that abounds unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. He loved the company of the Lord's people, and as long as able was a regular attendant on the services of the sanctuary of the Lord. Thus has passed away two who leave a fragrant memory and honored names to their families. They lived as near neighbors for some years, holding each other in high esteem, dying within two days of each other, and we hope they are gone to receive that crown of righteousness the Lord has in store for all who love his appearing. May the word of the Lord be fulfilled to the widow and the fatherless, and the sweet consolation of the gospel be measured out to them in full supply.

The funeral was conducted by the writer, at Forest Grove meetinghouse, on the 5th, a large gathering of relatives and friends being in attendance. Text, 1 Peter i. 23-25. Burial in Forest Grove Cemetery.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., May 11, 1911.

Mrs. Mary G. Davenport, wife of brother John J. Davenport, died at her home, 74 Saratoga Ave., Cohoes, N. Y., April 12th, 1911. Mrs. Davenport's death came very suddenly, and was a great shock to the family, as well as to her many friends and relatives. She was seated at the table writing some Easter cards, and the rest of the family had retired for the night. About 2 a. m. her eldest daughter awoke and found the lamp still burning, and seeing that her mother was not in bed went into the dining-room and found her mother lying dead on the floor. Brother Davenport had gone to the country to visit his aged mother, and a telegram was sent bearing the sad news of his wife's death. Mrs. Davenport was a faithful attendant at the meetings in Troy. She was not a member of the church, yet a believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and for a number of years we were assured that she was blessed with a good hope through grace. She leaves four sons and three daughters, beside several brothers and sisters and other relatives to mourn their loss.

Her funeral was held from her late home, and was largely attended. Burial was in Cohoes Cemetery. May the God of grace comfort all who mourn.

ALSO,

Mrs. Betsey M. Bouton, daughter of John and Lucena Crosby Fuller, died at her home in Roxbury, N. Y., March 10th, 1911. Sister Bouton was born in the town of Roxbury, Dec. 28th, 1816, was married to John T. Bouton in October, 1838, and was received in the fellowship of the Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury in June, 1843, and baptized by Elder David Mead. Sister Bouton for sixty-eight years lived a faithful and devoted life in the church which was precious to her. She was a woman of sterling qualities, and her life was marked by integrity. For many years she was a careful and prayerful reader of the written word, and being blessed with a clear understanding of the things of the kingdom of Christ, it was a pleasure to converse with her. She was also gifted in writing, and during her life had composed several pieces of poetry of marked interest. The last of her poetry was written upon her last five birthdays, of which we hope a copy will appear in the SIGNS.

Her funeral was held from the Second Old School Baptist meetinghouse of Roxbury, and burial was in the cemetery near by. Sister Bouton leaves two daughters, seven grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren, beside other relatives and friends to mourn their loss.

(*See poetry on page* 346.)

ALSO,

Cynthia Barlow died at her home near Roxbury, N. Y., Feb. 26th, 1911, in the 78th year of her age. Sister Barlow had been in failing health for several years, yet was able to be about until a few weeks before her death. She was received in the fellowship of the Second Roxbury Church Sept. 10th, 1893, and baptized by the late Elder J. D. Hubbell. She was held in high esteem by all who knew her, and was a faithful and devoted member of the church, and took delight in entertaining her kindred in Christ. She leaves two sisters, the widow of the late Elder J. D. Hubbell and Mrs. G. L. Hewitt, and one brother, George Jaquish, beside the church and many friends and relatives to mourn their loss.

Her funeral was held from the Second Old School Baptist meetinghouse of Roxbury, Elder H. C. Ker officiating. Burial was in the cemetery near the meetinghouse.

J. B. SLAUSON.

HALCOTTSVILLE, N. Y.

John S. Warren departed this life May 6th, 1911, at his home in Berlin, Worcester Co., Md. He was born Sept. 5th, 1827, making his age 83 years, 8 months and 1 day. He was married to Adeline Jarmon, Jan. 30th, 1855, and five children were born to them, four of whom survive him, one dying several years ago. The living were all present with him, and all that loving hands could do was done for his comfort. He was first paralyzed in his left side. He said some time after he was taken that his wife said she hoped he would live as long as she did, but he could not, for he had to go, but it did not seem to alarm him at all. Brother Warren was baptized by the writer in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Indiantown, Wicomico Co., Md., July 4th, 1875, and lived a firm christian life until the end. He showed his faith more by his walk and general deportment than he did with his tongue, but when he did speak it was always to the point. He was a good listener and a good judge of gospel truth. We shall all miss him much, for his name was so familiar and sweet to us all. Many who see this will remember the kind hospitality that had been shown by him and his dear companion, who has been blind for several years. She, too, is a well beloved member of the same church. O how we do sympathize with her and the dear daughter, for they were very devoted to him. We are all cast down, but we hope that the Lord will hold us up yet to praise him.

A large concourse of people gathered Tuesday following to pay their last respects to the deceased and family, when and where the writer conducted the funeral service, by first reading hymn No. 538, also the twenty-fifth Psalm, using as a text Luke xxiv. 26, and closed with reading hymn 520, after which the remains were taken to the cemetery at Berlin to rest undisturbed until the trump of God shall sound, then mortality shall be swallowed up in immortality and he shall be changed.

ALSO,

Mrs. Mary A. Byrd departed this life at her home, in Pocomoke City, Md., March 24th, 1911, after a lingering illness of nearly four months. Her sufferings at times were intense, and then she would rest for awhile. Her disease was supposed to be an internal cancer. The deceased was born Sept. 8th, 1855, and died March 24th, 1911. She was united in marriage to J. F. Byrd, Sept. 4th, 1873, and three children were the fruit of that union, two of whom survive her: Miss Mattie and Clarence. These, with her almost heartbroken companion, together with the church, are left in sadness to mourn, but not as others who have no hope, for she was strong in the faith of God's elect. She was baptized by the writer in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Messongoes, Accomac Co., Va., May 17th, 1874, and lived an unwavering and devoted life until the end. She was never very strong physically, but did a great deal of domestic work. At the first of her affliction she seemed restless, but after a time became composed and quiet, like a little child. I was with her the night she died, and just before I retired she asked me to sit down beside the bed and talk some for her, so I talked awhile and then retired, and after awhile her companion came in and said, "She is gone, dropped off like one going to sleep." Thus ended a life of sadness and pain and consciousness of sin, doubt and fear, for a sweet and peaceful rest, like Jesus was while in the grave, and when the fullness of the resurrection shall take place then shall she come forth bearing the glorified image of Jesus as he is now; then cometh the adoption, according to God's predestination. In closing I will say to the companion and children, Pause and think what the Lord had made her by his grace for himself and for you, and find help in this time of need. Only a little while and we hope to be numbered with her.

Her remains were taken to the Messongoes meetinghouse, where her membership was, and the writer conducted the service, trying to speak words of comfort to all who were called to mourn. Thus the Lord is removing one by one from time as it pleaseth him, and none can stay his hand. We want, if we can, to look to him who has bruised for healing balm.

T. M. POULSON.

MASSEY, Virginia.

Zachariah Gillies died March 24th, 1911, at his home in Detroit, Mich. Brother Gillies was born in 1845, in Alborough township, Ontario, Canada, of a family of fourteen children, but three of whom survive: Angus D., of Cass City, Mich.; Isabel, wife of Duncan McKillop, of Weston, and Miss Jennet, who since the death of his wife, nearly twenty years ago, has made her home with them, caring for the children with a mother's love. The deceased was a member of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, and was baptized by the late Elder Pollard. It was my privilege to meet our brother at the association in Hopewell, N. J., in 1879, since which time I had been intimate with him and the family, always finding him steadfast in the faith and doctrine of God our Savior, and ready to talk of the things of the kingdom and of the welfare of Zion. For some months he had been failing in health, and finally succumbed to the power of disease, often expressing the desire to depart and be at rest.

I was called to attend the funeral at Weston, Ontario, on the 26th, after which all that was mortal was laid in the grave in the cemetery near the home where he was born, some two miles south of Weston. He leaves five children, three sons and two daughters. May the Lord bless and keep the dear ones, and may the dear aunt be spared to them many years. To each one I would again extend my deepest sympathy and humble prayer in their behalf.

ALSO,

Mary J. Duvall, only daughter of Milton (deceased) and Margaret Money, was born May 6th, 1862, and died March 5th, 1911, lacking two months and one day of 49 years of this mortal life. She was married in November, 1881, to William Duvall, settling in their home, not far from where she was born, near Finchville, Shelby Co., Ky. To them were born five children, three daughters and two sons. Mrs. Duvall never made a public profession of faith in Christ, but when in conversation with her upon these matters there was a deep felt sense of her unfitness, which to us is blessed evidence, as it is light that makes manifest, therefore we sorrow not as those without hope, believing our loss is her eternal gain. She leaves a husband, five children, five brothers and an aged mother, who keenly feel their loss.

The funeral was largely attended on the 7th, at the Sure Hill Cemetery chapel, after which the casket with its precious remains was borne by six of her nephews to their last resting-place. May the blessings of our God rest upon all the dear, sorrowing ones. P. W. SAWIN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky.

Walter Reed departed this life April 30th, 1911, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Mary Reed Robbins, in Hammondsport, N. Y. His age was about 82 years. July 30th, 1876, it was my privilege to baptize him and his wife in the fellowship of the church at Burdett, N. Y. Her obituary notice appeared in the SIGNS a few months ago. He lived in the fellowship of the church, but his home was so far away from the place of meeting that he did not often attend the meetings of late years. A local paper says: "Walter Reed was one of the best known vineyardists in this section of the State. He was a pioneer in the vineyard business of the Lake Keuka region, being one of the very first to engage in fruit raising on an extensive scale. He was very successful in this field. For more than fifty years he had resided in the same house where he died."

His daughter, Mrs. Robbins, writes me: "He had been here at my home about a month. While here he got so he could walk outdoors, but began to go down about a week before he died. It was simply old age. He kept his mind until near his death. He was up and dressed on Saturday, and passed away Sunday. He wanted to go with mother, and often made the remark to me, 'Why am I here? Just waiting for the Lord to take me home.' He read the Bible to me often after coming here, trying to make me see as he did. I wish I might become as good a christian as he was, and might understand the Bible as well as he did. Will you see that a notice of his death is put in the SIGNS? We certainly have lost a good father and mother, but our loss is their gain. They were very dear to me, and I feel my loss, but the Lord knows best and does all things well. I would be pleased to hear from you, as I always enjoyed reading the letters you wrote to father; he let me read them, as I seemed to be interested in them."

Our dear brother's health was poor for many years. He is now at rest from suffering. Two sons and two daughters survive him. May the Lord comfort them.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May 15, 1911.

Deacon R. F. Ivey, our much esteemed and greatly loved brother, was born in Georgia July 3rd, 1843, and died July 9th, 1910. He joined the church Nov. 11th, 1882, and the life he lived was one of beautiful submission; he loved the dear Lord and Master, and made it known by his love for the church. Brother Ivey lived the faith he professed, letting his light shine before men, ever ready to give an answer of his hope in Christ, and earnestly contended for the faith and order of God's house. He was good to the poor and needy, always ready to lend a helping hand to those in need. It was my privilege to serve as his pastor for the last six years of his sojourn here, and a consistent, true and tried soldier I always found him to be; to know him was to love him. Just a few days before his death I visited him, and though very weak, yet he talked sweetly of God and his love, giving forth assurances of his faith in God. Brother Ivey served as deacon of his church a number of years, all the while acknowledging his weakness and unworthiness. O how we miss him.

Brother Ivey leaves his dear companion, many relatives and a host of brethren to mourn their loss. May God bless them all. A. A. GARRETT.

CUTHBERT, Ga., April 8, 1911.

MEETINGS.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Rock Springs Church, Rock Springs, Md., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 24th, 25th and 26th, 1911.

Those coming by way of Baltimore, take train leaving Union Station at 2:57 p. m. for Conowingo, Md., changing cars at Perryville, on Tuesday before. Those from Philadelphia take train at Broad St. Station at 2 p. m., making the same change at Perryville for Conowingo. Ministers of our faith and order and lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

C. J. ROWLAND, Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, N. J., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 31st and June 1st and 2nd, 1911.

Those coming to the meeting by rail will be met on Tuesday, May 30th, at Stockton and Frenchtown, on

arrival of the 5 o'clock p. m. train. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

C. RISLER, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Middleburg, Schoharie Co., N. Y., have appointed their yearly meeting to be held the first Saturday and Sunday in June, 1911. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth to meet with us.

A. COOK, Church Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Ebenezer Church, Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx, New York, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1911.

The Ebenezer Old School Baptist meetinghouse is located on the corner of Intervale Avenue and Home Street, Bronx Borough, within a short walk from the Freeman Street station of the Bronx Subway road. All trains and boats arriving in New York are within easy access of the Subway. The Subway trains are plainly marked either "Bronx" or "Broadway." Any Bronx train delivers passengers at Freeman Street station. Be sure the train is "Bronx." A committee will be at the meetinghouse Tuesday afternoon preceding, to meet and care for all early comers, as well as for all who come thereafter. We especially desire the presence of all members of churches in this association, and as many as can come of the associations corresponding with us. We want the largest possible representation of our churches, correspondence and friends.

JOHN McCONNELL.

THE Sandusky Association of Primitive Baptists will hold its seventy-eighth annual meeting with the Columbia Church, Cement City, Mich., June 9th, 10th and 11th, 1911. All those wishing to come are invited to attend, especially the ministers of our faith and order.

MARTIN LINDLEY, Church Clerk.

THERE will be a two days meeting, Providence permitting, held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse on Schoharie Hill, June 14th and 15th, 1911. All interested in the truth are invited. Those coming from the east will be met by brother E. R. Kinney. Those coming by the way of Howes Cave will be met if they send a card to

GEO. A. MIERS.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., R. D. No. 3.

THE Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon and Washington will be held with Big Spring Church, at Elgin, Union Co., Oregon, instead of Oregon City, Oregon, to commence on Friday before the third Sunday in June, 1911, at 10 o'clock a. m. W. J. HESS, Moderator.

I. F. COLEMAN, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held, the Lord willing, in their meetinghouse at Aberfeldy, Lambton Co., Ontario, seven miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in Kimmy Hall, No. 12 Third St., in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

"SONGS IN THE NIGHT."

PRICE REDUCED.

This little book has been published for some time, and orders for it have been received from near and far, even to the most distant States. All from whom I have heard have spoken to me very highly of the book. For forty years it has been upon my mind to publish these poems and the experience of my brother, together with the account of his last hours, and have wondered why I did not do it. I felt sure it would be for the comfort of many, and the many expressions I have already received assure me that it is so. Elder P. D. Gold writes: "I have read the poems and experience of your brother with much pleasure. How wonderful was the view of divine things given to him. Surely to be absent from the body and present with the Lord is far better." Elder S. Hassell says: "I hope you may dispose of several thousands for the comfort of the Lord's scattered people." Elder H. C. Ker writes me: "Your little book, 'Songs in the night,' was duly received, and has given me more comfort than any reading I have done for months. Surely every lover of truth should have it." The price of the second edition has been reduced to thirty-five cents.

All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition, which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at 5 cents per copy. Address,

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"CHRISTIAN SCIENCE AND THE LAW."

Because of the distressing information contained in orders for my Christian Science pamphlet respecting the great injury being done by this shameful fraud even among our dear Baptist people, I have tried in this second little work to expose it from a new point of view. Those not aware of recent developments at the headquarters of these people will be astonished almost to the point of doubting well-proven facts. I will mail two copies of this last sketch for ten cents (silver), or one copy and a copy of Christian Science and the Bible for ten cents. The price is not for profit, but to cover the bare expense. Hundreds of the first pamphlets were given away, and others placed where many could read them. If any good results from this effort to shield our brethren from this new delusion, the credit will be due our kind periodicals for calling attention to it.

S. B. LUCKETT.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Indiana.

"Thoughts on Regeneration, the Spiritual Birth, the Christian Warfare and the Resurrection," is the title of a pamphlet of 58 pages, written by Elder H. B. Jones, of Winnsboro, Texas, and can be had of him for 25 cents per copy, five copies for $1.00 or $2.00 per dozen. Address, H. B. JONES.

WINNSBORO, Texas, R. F. D. 6.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 79. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1911. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOLOMON'S SONG IV. 12.

"A GARDEN inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed."

I have pondered over the last part of this verse occasionally for about ten years, feeling sure all the while there was depth of meaning and beauty in it that I was utterly unable to reach by reading it over or thinking upon it. I had heard the first part of the verse used for a text several times, and had been satisfied with what I had heard spoken of it. Two days after writing my last letter to you I visited a friend's house, where I frequently go when I wish to have a good talk about spiritual things, none of the family being members of the church, although having been church-goers all their lives. We had lately had some talk about the north wind and the south blowing upon the garden of spices, and from that and other talks I had with them in the past I had become satisfied they were being led by the Spirit in paths they had not known, groping their way, getting a little glimpse of light here and there, going to hear all the various, and sometimes "windy doctors," yet doubting their own judgment and seeking the true light. All this I could see, yet I, too, doubted and waited, always enjoying an evening with them. The evening spoken of we had gone pretty well over the ground of the doctrines and the doubts, and I in turn was telling my troubles over the passage I have taken for a heading to these lines, when as suddenly as a flash of light I saw, as it seemed to me, an opening up of the text

"Nor can I willing be
Thy bounty to conceal
From others who, like me,
Their wants and hunger feel.
I'll tell them of thy mercy's store—
Enough to feed a thousand more."

in these people who evidently enjoyed talking of different creeds, of their doubts, their troubles, and I helpless to clear the mysteries from their minds. I could only tell them that light on such subjects must come from the Holy Spirit, and as surely as their desire to know spiritual things was of the Lord, so surely he would show them his light and the right way. These people were the spring shut up, the fountain sealed, that I had been looking everywhere for. I told them at once I had the explanation of my passage of Scripture, and tried to

show it to them; but even the gardener was not given power over the sealed spring, only the King can order the seal broken and let the long pent up waters burst forth into the sunlight, causing the thirsty, wilting plants to bud and bloom to the delight of the King and to his honor and glory, and that the spices may flow out when the wind blows upon the garden. With the meaning of the text, all my doubts in regard to the Lord's work in this case, and why I had visited those people that evening, left me like a mist fleeing before the sun. All the readers of this may have doubts in regard to it; I may doubt again, but if I testify, my testimony shall be faithful, at least in regard to my hope and joy. I do not promise to tell all my darkness, my doubts or my troubles, the Lord knows them all. It will be noticed that the garden and the spring are one. My natural reason could see the need of a fountain in a garden in a dry and thirsty land, but this fountain was sealed, and it was the garden. But these very doubting ones who cannot tell what they are passing through, nor understand these new longings for purity, are the garden of God's grace, they are a spring shut up. A spring has no visible source. In our locality the water falls on the hills in drops; some of it finds its way in small particles through the earth to other water until it is forced to the surface; the hard stratum causes it to break through in springs. So also the lessons in knowledge of ourselves as sinners, and the love of purity set before us from time to time, sink down in this earth until it becomes full and would burst forth, but the lips are sealed and refuse to tell the secret evils, and equally secret hope, until the pressure becomes almost unbearable; yet in all this there is no noise; "silently as the springtime her crown of verdure weaves," the work goes on beneath the best exterior that the individual can put towards the public. They search in vain for the source of their trouble; since no man remembers his first birth, it is doubtful if any know just the time of their second birth. If Christ, as a man, knew and remembered just the time and the circumstances surrounding his advent into the world, it is not recorded. Others recorded the circumstances, and his mother not only knew of the time and circumstances, but she knew of the life before the birth. The first we have recorded that he knew of his divine, as well as his human nature, was when he was about twelve years old. It is also recorded that many others knew of his divine nature before that; so also in regard to all who are born of the Spirit there is a manifestation of life that is already in existence; the waters of the fountain of spiritual desires are pressing more and more to the surface; the very personal nature of their distress has the effect to seal the lips; others who are around them and well acquainted with them and have known the thirst for living water often notice the change, for this fountain from a divine source always works a change. The apostle Peter swore once after his conversion, but he never said he was a worse man than he was before; he went out and wept bitterly. Before his acquaintance with Christ it is not likely that his own swearing, or that of others, would have caused him to weep. One thing noticeable in most cases, is that they like to sit quietly by and listen when others are talking of their early experiences. How many such occasions I remember in my own life. Many times I could not have said at the time that the talk did me good, but I

listened well enough to remember it, and it has been a witness to me since. I tried to enjoy all the frivolities of life just as I used to, but when one comes face to face with realities how trifling all other things, as pretended religion, false show and even earthly joys, become. It is impossible to find again in these things the sole purpose of life; there has been a change that is noticeable to all their acquaintances. If then we see and know these things regarding any one, even though he may feel to be a barren waste, the spring of life sealed, we know that the seal will be broken in due time, the living water will burst forth into the sunshine of gladness, causing to bud and bloom a choice plant, ready to be transplanted into the garden of grace, whose walls are salvation and whose gates are praise; a perfume and fruit-bearing tree, watered by the same spring that was sealed, and still has no visible source, becomes a well of water springing up into everlasting life. If you go every hour in the day to the spring you will never draw the same water that was there before; it is just as refreshing, just as clear and is the same spring, but it is not the same water. You soon come to have faith that it will never cease to flow, even if it should not be flowing for you, although you cannot keep from hoping that it is, yet you firmly believe that it will ever flow for God's elect, and when you find another as thirsty as yourself you know the Fountain of love is for them also, and instead of jealousy and strife, there is love, joy, peace. These evidences given from one to another make the fragrance of the garden a blessing to all.

A. E. RITTENHOUSE.

STATE ROAD, Del.

SAN MARCOS, Texas, March 26, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—If it is the Lord's will, I want to try and pen what I hope and trust have been the Lord's dealings with me.

About fifteen years ago, or when I was seven years old, is the first I remember ever feeling myself a sinner, or the need of a Savior. For two or three years this feeling stayed with me, and often when playing with the children I would stop behind the door, or in some corner, and try to pray to the Lord to have mercy on me, a sinner. I remember one morning at school, sitting at my desk, thinking what a great sinner I was; then I thought if the Lord would only speak to me and say, Thy sins are forgiven, that I would get up and tell the whole school about it. I had heard my mother say that she thought all children under eight years of age that died went to heaven, so one day while drawing water for the horses I thought, Well, now I will just jump down into the well, and then the Lord will save me. The next thought was, I am past eight, so I was afraid I would be lost. Dear brethren and sisters, you know how all try to keep it a secret; well, I fixed me a bed in the attic, bought me a new Bible, carried all the old SIGNS up there, and fixed so the folks could not tell when I went to bed, or rather when I put out the light. There I would search through the SIGNS for experiences to find some comfort, also read my Bible, but it seemed that I forgot just about as fast as I could read, and instead of getting comfort out of it I felt more condemned. I heard of my aunt, Mrs. W. L. Hawk, praying every night and every morning before the Lord forgave her sins, so I tried that over and over again, but would drop off to sleep, or get up and forget to

say my prayers, so finally gave up ever trying to start again. On Sunday I would put a SIGNS into my bosom and go into the woods, or crawl into the feed store, where I thought no one would see me, and try to find some comfort. One Sunday I put the big family Bible in a grass sack and carried it on my back about a block to an old shop that had hay in it, and read Revelation through, but felt worse afterward than before. After I would get back Sunday evenings papa would say, "You have been in swimming, for your eyes are red." I would take my scolding and go on, but it was not the water that made my eyes red. Often when the store was full of people, and all as busy as could be, I would be longing to be by myself, and could hardly keep from weeping, and some tears would trickle down my cheeks in spite of all I could do. My mother had been sick off and on for a long time, and one day we got a new SIGNS, and I carried it over to the house and said to mother, who was in bed, "A new SIGNS has come." She said, "Well, put it away, Eugene, maybe some one in the family will want to read it some day; my eyes are too weak to read now." I went out of the room, and could not help crying, for I was saving them all, and had been for a long time. Mother's health got so bad my father sent two of my sisters and myself (now eighteen years old) to Corpus Christi with mother on a cot, and no tongue can tell how lonesome I was. But my trouble left me, I could not brood over my sins as I did at home, so I said, Well, moving down on the bay among strangers was the cause of it, and that I was just deceived. I went through several narrow escapes from death down there; my overalls caught in a shaft at a planing mill and tore all the clothes off me; an extra pair of pants I had on were torn from the tops of my shoes up to my waist; one more turn would have killed me, but the belt slipped off. The men rushed to me, thinking I was dead; they tried to cut my clothes loose, but I told them to unroll them. One man said, "He is laughing, he is out of his head." But, thanks to the Lord, I was not hurt, and spared once more, for what I know not. My mother got better, and we moved back. I went to the old places where I used to read my Bible and SIGNS, but could not have the same feeling of guilt, and that heavy burden was gone. I had hoped and prayed that if the Lord ever forgave my sins I would have some bright evidence, some sweet dream or sudden change that I could rely on, but alas, it has not been that way. Am I one of his followers, or not? is often the question in my mind.

Let me go back just a little and tell how happy I was when I found one of my cousins, who was staying with us and going to school, in the same trouble that I was. Her name then was Lela Hawk. How we used to enjoy telling each other our troubles and reading the SIGNS. While she was staying there the good Lord forgave her sins, and how glad I was to see her so happy, but O, I was left alone. She is now married, and I am sending her last letter with this. I have not her permission, but feel that if it will be of comfort to any of the Lord's dear family all will be well; it did me much good.

I will now go back to where I left off. Baptism was my next trouble. The Missionaries looked pleasing to me from a natural eye; they had more members, dressed better and were up to date, but their doctrine did not suit me, neither

did I like their boasting nor their revivals; they had music at their meetings, and the other night as we were coming home I heard a brass band, and stopped to hear where it was, when my brother said, "It is at the Baptist revival." The old "Absoluters" were the only people I loved to be with or could get any real enjoyment from their preaching, but their ways were against my nature, so one day while a visiting minister was preaching I could not keep from crying. I would not have let any one know that I was interested for anything, but I did that day. When I got home I told mother what I had done. She said she had known for a long time that I was troubled; how she found it out puzzled me. On the second Saturday in January, 1909, I could stay away no longer. I tried to get my mind on something else, but found myself going forward, and offered myself to the dear people I loved so well. I tried to tell what I have here penned, but could not say much for crying, but was received, and baptized the next day. On Saturday evening, the night before I was to be baptized, I was praying that if I had deceived the church something would take place to prevent my being baptized. How unworthy I felt, the least of them all. Dark seasons and cloudy days have followed me all along, with occasionally a few moments of rejoicing. Our church is eight miles from our home, and we have no regular minister. O how I do long for some preacher to move among us so we can have regular meetings. It seems that some of us have so many worldly things to attend to we have not time to go to meeting, and even forget the date. O may we let the dead bury their dead, or worldly people take care of worldly things, but let us who profess to be spiritual, attend to spiritual things. What do worldly things amount to anyway? All pass away in a few short years. But rather may we be found in our seats at meeting, searching the Scriptures and trying to live up to the teachings of the Bible.

Just a word about the camel and the needle-eye, and I will close, for I have already written much more than I intended. I heard some one say awhile ago that in those days they had gates in the walls that surrounded the cities, and they called them eyes, and that if a camel got through he would have to get down on his knees and work hard. Just see how the natural man will try to reason out things. "And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." To the natural man this would leave all out, as they replied to the Savior. But this day and time they think that a camel could go through those gates, or needles, so they take them in. O no, they could not get along without the rich men these days. But just let the most high God reveal himself to one of his little ones, and no matter how much of this world's goods he may have, he will soon feel that he is small enough to slip through the eye of a needle without touching it. Rich now? No, my brother, he has not one righteous act to plead. Rich? No, ten thousand talents in debt, and not a farthing to pay with. Ah, yes, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. You never did see one of the Lord's little ones rich when under conviction of sin. Worldly riches have nothing to do with it, for we all are poor, unworthy worms of the dust, depending upon the Lord for every breath we breathe, and without him we would

be lost forever. O may we always be found at the feet of our brethren. He that humbles himself as a little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. How contrary it is to our nature.

Now throw the mantle of charity over this. From a poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all, E. B. AULT.

STOCKDALE, Texas, Jan. 2, 1911.

DEAR COUSIN EUGENE:—When I received your letter I said, Now I am going to answer this in two weeks anyway. That shows about how much we know what we are going to do. Last night I had a curious dream: I thought I saw a few good people living up in the air (I cannot remember much about how it was) higher than I was; they seemed to be happy, and I went up to them and they said I must do what they had done, then I could stay with them. Then I looked down below me, and saw others being let down into a stream of water. Then I was let down in the same manner, and when I touched this water I asked, Do I just have to touch it? They said, No, you must be buried in it. Then I went down into the water, and rose to stay with the little band who were apart from the world.

Eugene, I sometimes wonder why I have not joined the church, sometimes I wonder if I ever will. Again, I think of myself, How vile and wicked I am to offer myself to such good people, yet I often long for a home with them, but I think I have learned that there is a time for all things, and we cannot change these times, therefore I feel that this time has not come for me, but that when it does come I could not stay out to save my life. O if I had faith like you. I read your letter and cried, and when you spoke of Katyville how my thoughts went back to those old days, sweet old days. Have I lived a better life since then? No, it seems that I get worse all the time, and that in those days I had more communion with God (if I ever did) than I have had since. Yet after all our doubts and fears how sweet it is to pick up the SIGNS and read letters from those good old soldiers who have been here so long and are nearly ready to lay their armor by, and hear them telling some of our own experience better than we ourselves could express it. O then it is we are made to rejoice and feel that we may be one of that same household; then the tears come into our eyes and we say, "Blessed be the name of the Lord," who hath taught us all, who feeds us and keeps us to will and to do of his good pleasure.

I want to say a few words about the dream of which you wrote me. You said you did not want to go in where the others were and speak, because your beard was so long and your clothes not nice, but that when you looked at yourself you did not look nearly as bad as you thought you did, and went in and began speaking. You are always thinking how sinful you are, and how little you have to say of any benefit to others, but if you could see yourself as others see you, you would not look or talk one-half as badly as you think you do.

How is poor old brother Buntyn getting along? I have only heard from him once or twice since they took him to San Antonio. Old Baptist preachers are so scarce that to us short-sighted creatures it seems strange that he was not spared to preach the gospel as long as he lived; but it was for some wise purpose which we do not understand as yet.

I hope you all are enjoying good health. We are well.

From your cousin,

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER.

TOUCHET, Wash., March, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As I am sending a remittance, thought I would like to reveal to you some of my thoughts upon the great principles which are so plainly contended for in the SIGNS. If I had the gift to express my mind it would be a delight to me to write, but being so deficient in this it is a burden to me. My mind is now, and has been for several days, led out into what are to me deep waters. I am made to meditate upon God's ways. Inspiration says, "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." The ways of the Lord are deep; his ways are not our ways, neither are his thoughts our thoughts. The poet says, He "moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." While all these wonderful declarations are made concerning God and his ways, he has said that all his children shall know him, from the least of them unto the greatest, and he also declares how this knowledge is attained to: "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." Now the question arises, How must they be taught? All this they must be taught, for the Savior said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." This drawing is an evidence of knowledge, for no man can come to God without the knowledge of him. "Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me," said the Savior. He said, "I am the way." Thus we have the assurance, or evidence, that we have been taught of the Father, if we come to Jesus. He also said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." So here we have another evidence of this knowledge in being weary and heavy laden. Weariness is the result of one of the first principles taught in this school of the Lord. The heart and mind which have been dead in sin are quickened, or made alive, to a sense of the deep-rooted sin within, and with that comes the knowledge of the righteousness of God in Christ, but how to attain to that righteousness is the question which causes great uneasiness. Dear ones, well do you remember the awful weight of that burden, so heavy that all your strength melted as wax, and you were made to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." But this is one of the fruits of the Spirit. This is God's way, not our way. This is the work of God, and it is deep. Yes, it is in the heart, and we cannot understand it, but the great Teacher says we shall know. So when sin has thus reigned in us we die to all hope of ever being any better. We come to the judgment-bar of God, and are made to say,

> "If my soul were sent to hell,
> Thy righteous law approves it well."

Thus we come to give up all. Then we pass from the awful agonies of the cross to the resurrection after three days and nights, the appointed time of God. This is God's way, and then the gift of faith is bestowed. We not only see, but we hear his word say, Come unto me, and I will give you rest. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." How sweet and heavenly is that voice. He says, My words are spirit and they are life, and he declares they shall hear his voice. This life that is in his words is the moving power of all action in the deep ways of God. How well adapted are all the promises of God to his dear people, and his ways are proven by his

people to be the chief corner-stone, the foundation, tried and precious. The Savior declared, "Ye shall be brought before governors and kings." This is God's way. Your faith shall be tried as by fire. Thou shalt prove my sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love. All this was done, as we see, in the days of the prophets and apostles, who have long since passed away, but the church has not passed away; she is in the land to-day, and for her benefit and for the glory of her faith she is yet in the furnace. This is God's way, and every member in the church must be tried. Moses, David, Job and all the saints have proven the sovereignty of God, and you and I, dear ones, are in the kingdom by the grace of God, and that grace must be proven in you and in me. Thus we all shall be taught of the Lord. It is personal with each one; I must prove it for myself, and not another. Job said, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee." John the Baptist was placed in such a strait to be taught the ways of the Lord that he was compelled to send two of his disciples to ask, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" Jesus said, "Go and shew John again." He had been convinced of the fact before, but doubt had become his master. I sometimes think the rulers of the world, and governors, and kings, before whom the Lord's people are to be brought, are this very king of doubt. One reason is because I am so often under his reign, shut up so that I cannot come forth. Like poor John, I have to send a messenger back to Galilee, thirty years ago, to try my hope, and to see whether I am in the faith or not, and, dear brethren, this is what makes the promises of God and his ways so sweet. The child thus taught has the facts demonstrated to him. "Go and shew John again." In pondering our own past experiences, we can see again where the blind was made to see and where the dead was raised to life, and, bless his holy name, the poor had the gospel preached unto them; this gospel is the power of God unto salvation unto all that believe.

But I must bring my letter to a close, for I do not want to occupy too much of your time. In conclusion, I want to say a few words upon the power of God. I believe in but one salvation, and the reason is that I have been taught, or have proven it in God's way, and not mine. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation, and the very moment we come into full possession of this salvation we will have no further use for the gospel, but as long as we are here in these tabernacles we will groan and will need the gospel of grace. This our God reveals in the gospel, for its very essence is the power and the promises of God, and we are declared to be the children of promise. All hope of salvation is based upon the immutability and promises of God. If the promises were to fail our hope would be worthless. But the poor have the gospel preached unto them; they have the promises of God demonstrated to them. So while we wait for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body, we have the gospel as a house, a shelter, from the storms of doubt and despair, and all this great strife in the church to-day, and the falling away of some, is only showing again former things. Our fathers, who counted their lives not dear unto them, that they might finish their course and the ministry which was committed to their trust, had also to face the disputers of the grace of God, and so do we, and

may it be the will of God to give to us who are yet on the walls of Zion, such zeal, such godly reverence for the ways of the Lord, as he did to our ancestors. Many of their names I would like to mention, but space will not admit. Now may God bless you, dear editors and publishers, and all who labor for the glorious cause.

Yours in much tribulation,

J. T. BARNES.

WHEELING, W. Va., April 25, 1911.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR, HONORED BROTHER:—I have read and reread sister Wright's good letter, and it is wonderful all the way through, but where she says, "I stand in a reflected light, I walk in the strength of Another, I am clothed with the robe he wrought for me, I am made clean by his blood," in reading these words I, too, was stirred to the depths of my heart, but I feel unable to express my emotions while reading her letter, and I feel deeply the honor you have conferred upon me in the few lines you addressed to me. I have felt to praise and adore our blessed Lord for the rich gift with which he has endowed you and Elder Ker. Surely you have received freely, and you have been gracious and kind in ministering this sweet and precious gift to the waiting and hungering ones. Dear brother, I have often when reading your and Elder Ker's views been filled with joyful amazement; I have often exclaimed with streaming tears of joy, O how good and true and precious. I do not think any one could accuse either of you of being slothful in this business. I know that all who love the truth love you and bless God for you, also dear Elder Durand and many others who contribute to the SIGNS. It is a precious paper to me. Truly I am so partial to it that I feel at times I could dispense with all other Baptist papers. Please forgive me if I seem too outspoken in my praise. I hope it is this "reflected light" which our dear sister talks so sweetly about that we love and admire in you and all who walk in this light.

Dear brother, I have thought I would like to have your views on our Savior's words to the Pharisees: "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice."—Matt. ix. 13. I have been deeply impressed by these words, but have never been able to fathom their meaning. I ask an interest in your prayers.

Your unworthy sister, I hope,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., April 15, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK AND SISTER PULTZ:—I sat down to answer a letter received from sister Florence Pultz, but remembering that my subscription is due for the SIGNS, have concluded to write to both at the same time. She answered my communication that you had published; I was truly surprised to see it in print, but what I write you is yours, and you are at liberty to do as you please with it. I find no fault with the doings or writings of the Baptists whom it is my pleasure to know or to read after. The former seem so much better than I that I desire to sit at their feet and learn from them. The latter ones sometimes write things with which I do not entirely agree, but they are nonessentials, and I love them just the same. Yet I do not feel like criticizing, for I may be the one whose understanding is at fault. I am untaught, so far as expressing myself aright is concerned, and do not comprehend as some do, but I feel deeply, intensely, the goodness of God in giving

me such love, such confidence in him, and such a blessed hope that, as the sunset of life appears, he will be my help, my stronghold, enabling me to say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" I walk alone a great deal of the time though, or seem to, but I do not despair, for I believe that, notwithstanding he has withdrawn his presence, he is not unmindful of me, and that he will not allow me to be tempted beyond what I am able to endure. I believe he is able to save to the uttermost when all is well with me, and when I cannot see the way or the light I must believe still that he who promised is faithful. If he is our God at one time, he is at all times. I mourn and grieve over my ingratitude and disobedience, but never do I lose faith in him; never fear that his death and resurrection will be void of the predestined result; that his promises will miscarry nor that his faithfulness will fail. I have tried hard all my life to be good, and have accomplished nothing. When I just could not do any more, Jesus found me by the wayside, in the miry clay, worn and weary, and ministered unto me. He unfolded the plan of salvation, he gave me the oil of joy for mourning, he made the faces of his people shine with his image, he lifted my burden and was all that my soul desired. I have not forgotten those days, I cannot, and the blessed Lord who began that work will finish it. Am I worthy? O no, I am less than the least, but I am trying to work out my salvation with fear and trembling, to grow in grace and knowledge; still I know that he is in and through it all, and that I can only do as I am guided and strengthened by him. I stand in a reflected light; I walk in the strength of Another; I am clothed with the robe he wrought for me; I am made clean by his blood; I am stirred to the depth of my heart in love and praise and gratitude to him by the indwelling of his Spirit; he is my all in all. Then why should I be cast down or disquieted? If in this world we have sorrows, trials and afflictions, we have the assurance that we are his children, not bastards. The more humble we feel ourselves, the greater his glory seems; the more unworthy, the more sweetly are his words applied to us; the more helpless, the higher our joys rise, the more fervently we can sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, the Lamb that was slain, but liveth again to intercede for us. We ought not to go around with long faces, but should be happy above all others. Some say, If I could only believe that he died for me. That very brother or sister has the assurance by such an expression; such have the testimony within themselves, they have the witness of the Spirit, they have the corroborating statements of those whom they consider are the called according to his purpose, and they have that mysterious love for him and his people. We all believe that there is no other way under heaven whereby we must be saved, and we find comfort in it; then I pray that none of us lose faith as we draw closer to the crossing, or shrink from putting out to sea with Jesus as our pilot. But I am suddenly arrested in great amazement. Who am I, that I dare write with such boldness? The answer comes, Only a sinner saved by grace; only another upon whose stony heart He has shown forth his power; only a wayfarer who has been lifted up and her goings established, when there was no one to pity, no one to save, except He who took our nature upon himself that he might know the heaviness of our burdens, as well as the

joys of our deliverance. We never can praise him enough for his goodness, never can say as we wish what we so deeply feel, never can do any good but evil is mixed with it, never can be satisfied with ourselves until we see him and are like him. But I find myself running along in the same old way, saying the same old things over and over, and while it may prove tiresome to you, am glad that the new way in which so many are traveling has no charms for me. The old way is the only one that answers to Bible teaching, or to the experiences of his people, so we will hold fast to it, and though we clothe it in crude language, even though we cannot express ourselves at all, I hope we may always be found walking in that way, enjoying the truth that makes us free and praising the Light that is the life of men. A longer letter would only be a repetition. I know but one song, and the music of it fills my heart with gladness, yet I cannot impart it to others; they must know it for themselves, must understand the words, and the music thereof must strike the strings of their souls, or they are not in tune with the Author. I could not instruct a member of his household, cannot testify to a thing that they do not know, but will add that I love them, and in my feeble way am praying for their welfare, for help in all their trials, and for an abundant entrance into our Father's house, that house not built with hands, but which will endure throughout eternity.

Brother Chick, I was very glad to receive your letter, it found a warm response in my heart. Sister Pultz's communication was an enjoyable surprise, tears came unbidden, and it was some time before I could finish reading it. I felt unworthy of what she said concerning me, but drawn toward her in an indescribable manner. The time devoted to me was not in vain. I receive a great many letters from those whom I have never met, and try to answer each one, but my children and relatives are scattered nearly over the whole continent, and I am sure that I write more than I work; however, I am willing to do so. Sister Florence, I have seen your writings in the SIGNS, and always found something good in them.

With love in the Lord to both, I am in great weakness your sister,

B. E. WRIGHT.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you the following letter from brother S. A. Jarrell for publication in the SIGNS, if you think best. I have his consent to do with it as I please, and I intended to send it at once, but it was overlooked. I hope he may write his experience for the SIGNS. I also send you an extract from a letter written me by brother G. B. McColl, of Winnipeg, Manitoba, which I think will be read with much interest and comfort.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

LAFAYETTE, Ala., July 2, 1910.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND—MY DEAR BROTHER:—A few months ago I ordered of you your Hymn and Tune Book, also "Songs in the Night," and I wish to say that I have never read anything, the Bible excepted of course, that I have enjoyed more. The poems are sublime, the experience most remarkable, and yet the least and most ignorant of God's humble children can find comfort in the reading of them. Herewith I send you post-office order, for which you will please send me three of the books "Songs in

the Night;" I wish one for my only brother in the flesh, and I will give the other two to friends.

Brother Durand, I have long read with great delight your writings, and have greatly desired that you would visit this section of our beautiful southland, but all who love you and your writings could not hope to see you and hear you preach in this life, but some sweet day I hope we will be permitted to meet around the pure white throne of our God, where we will be permitted to sing his praises through our adorable King and Redeemer. O dear brother, these blessed truths that you have contended for so long, and your dear, sainted and long since departed brother portrayed in verse and prose so beautifully, are more precious to me to-day than ever; the older I get the more I enjoy the meditation and contemplation of these glorious things. I united with the dear Old Baptists in 1887, and many have been the heartaches and mistakes since that time, but I feel that the joys and blessings have so far exceeded them that language would fail me were I to attempt to tell. My membership is at Macedonia, Chambers Co., Ala., where I united. Elder J. T. Satterwhite has served us continuously for thirty years, with the exception of about ten months. Brother Durand, I would love to write you some of my experience, but would weary you.

Please pardon this hastily written letter. I would love to have a copy of "Evening Talks," by your brother, and hope you will publish it in book form. I would much enjoy a few lines from you if you ever have the time.

S. A. JARRELL.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—I can answer in my heart what you have said of others knowing us as we know ourselves. I do not believe, either, that I truly would have others so know me; I think it would be impossible for them to do so. In order to have fellowship one with another we must know a little of the sinfulness which each of us has to contend with, but little is gained in dwelling too much on the utter depravity of human nature, when we already realize and acknowledge that we are dead in trespasses and sin and deserving only of condemnation. "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned." If we dwell too much on this question it is not improbable that even our brethren may misunderstand us, and so attribute to us things that we would be very sorry for them to think of us; but we cannot lay too much importance on the gracious work of Christ in our poor hearts, turning the darkness into light, giving us joy for weeping, and causing us to sing praises unto his name, who is worthy, for he hath redeemed us. One thing I have been thinking of is the distinction between having evil thoughts in our heart, and committing evil deeds. While the Savior spoke particularly of the evil in the heart, I do not think that he made no distinction by any means. He was showing that the heart of man was naturally corrupt, and hence could not bring forth good fruit. All good fruit must have its source in the good Tree, whose virtue was manifested in the branches, but proceeded from the one source. So it is if we are kept from committing those evil designs which are in the heart, it is of God's grace alone, and to him, and not us, is the glory. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above." We are, by nature, of

the earth, corrupt, enmity against God, and so we are led away by our own natural desires into sin, but when the grace of God is manifested in our hearts sin becomes exceeding sinful, we hate our own nature and a warfare ensues between these opposite tendencies. In His all-wise purpose this struggle continues as long as we live in the flesh, but we have a glorious hope in his victory over death and sin that we shall be raised incorruptible, freed from the power of both, and made to rejoice in his perfect righteousness.

Give my love to sister Durand and your household.

Your unworthy brother, I hope,

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., April, 1911.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—I have had a desire to write you once more, but have felt much weakness in thinking of such a great work; I have felt that it was high and I could not attain unto it. I took up my Bible to read, to find out who was the man of understanding that was sent to the building of the Lord's house in Jerusalem the second time. Then my mind was led to Moses, and I read about him, where the Lord spoke to him out of the burning bush, telling him to put off his shoes from off his feet, for the place where he stood was holy ground. Then I read how the Lord gave him a message to deliver, and of how he felt his unworthiness, and that the people would not believe him. He asked some evidence that they would believe him, and the Lord gave him two wonderful tokens, and told him about the signs which they should believe, yet he hesitated, and said to the Lord that he was not eloquent, that he was slow of speech and slow of tongue. Then by what strong questions the Lord revealed himself to Moses, and afterward gave him all the help he needed. I was melted to tears, for I felt that I was denying the power of God, and if I were writing with a feeling sense of my unworthiness and in humility would he not guide my pen? I at once took it up, and if there shall be any comfort at all in this, a crumb for any one, the glory will belong to the Lord, the God of Israel. How very often have I seen that the flesh profiteth nothing; I have read that it does not, and again this morning, in the sermon I was reminded that it does not profit anything. I then thought, I will never forget this again. I will not again, as I have heretofore, try to do something of myself, or to work for the Lord, the Lord needs not the assistance of puny man. I am classing myself with the rest, for a feeling comes to me that I am with you, not indeed in much rejoicing, but in sorrows and griefs of the flesh. If in rejoicing at all, it is because it was the will of the Father to open my eyes, that old things might pass away and all things become new; it was that I might rejoice that the Father hath hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes. Rejoicing has come once more when we have been blessed in the spirit to give thanksgiving and praise to his most holy name.

He sent "a man of understanding." In this I feel that I am in deep water, like Peter I cry out, "Lord save I perish." Christ understands our weaknesses, our unbelief, our infirmities, our doubts and our failings without number, and with them all he tells us that he has loved us with an everlasting love, and that he forgives all our sins. How he pities us in our weakness, and shields us from our enemies, draws us with loving-

kindness, binds up our wounds, heals our sores and makes us to trust in him who is the Captain of our salvation, and to believe that he will be with us and comfort us in all our sojourn here. Where is there such another man of understanding as he is to us? and where in all this does the flesh profit anything? Of the flesh we know not these things, for they are spiritually discerned. Is not Christ the true gospel preacher to us? Even had we the wisdom that would enable us to understand the whole world, would that enable us to understand the things of the Spirit? No, here the flesh profits nothing; to him all the power and the wisdom belong. Could we give even a cup of cold water to the thirsty of ourselves or of the flesh? It is only as Christ in us gives the cup that it can be given. Can we say to our neighbor, Know ye the Lord? No, for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Thus again we see that the flesh profiteth nothing.

Many times I have felt that I might know more about the Scriptures, and have taken up the Bible and tried to search the word and understand it, but what did the flesh profit in that? Nothing, for often after reading a little I would not know one word I had read, and would commence again and know no more, then lay it aside. But if at the same time I should pick up another matter I could remember every line I read. Does not this show that of ourselves we can do nothing? Just now I very much feel my weakness, my understanding is so small in these great things. But I feel I have been shown great mercy from the Lord, and great comfort has been given me from time to time. I would trust him all the way, and feel to say with the poet,

"Thus far the Lord has led me on,
And made his truth and mercy known;
My hopes and fears alternate rise,
And comforts mingle with my sighs.

'Tis even so; thy faithful love
Doth all thy children's graces prove,
'Tis thus our pride and self must fall,
That Jesus may be all in all."

Many things occur to me that I would like to write, but I must forbear, as I fear that I have made this too long now. O that I could love him more and serve him better. I know that I have great need of him every moment of my life, but there are times when I see this more plainly than at other times, and think it is so with me now. O that I may have faith as a grain of mustard seed, and that it would grow into a tree as the mustard seed. Love to you all.

From the least of the flock,

MARY HILL TERRY.

ROBERSONVILLE, N. C., March 3, 1911.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—Since reading your editorials in the SIGNS for March 1st, this year, in answer to important questions, I have felt as though I wanted to express my appreciation of the same. While I admire your writing generally, I have been pleased with this especially. Perhaps one reason is because some of the things mentioned and treated upon by you in that editorial have come under my own observation. When a few set up their judgment against the church and persist in their course it is very hurtful. It does not take long to inflict a wound, but it takes quite a while for it to heal, and this especially, as you say, if it be left uncovered too much; it cannot heal when it is exposed; too many things fret and annoy.

If brethren were more mindful of what the Samaritan did for the wounded man, and would be more careful to keep along with them more linen to bind up wounds (which may represent righteousness), and also keep with them some oil and wine, which is typical of the blood of Christ, which should be on the right thumb of the right hand of the Lord's priest, it would be much better. The hand is that member by which often blessings are and should be bestowed, but when the blood is not visible there, blows instead of blessings are sometimes bestowed, which are hurtful. Oil is, I think, illustrative of grace, which the Lord freely gives to those who love him, whom he first loved. Oil is very cooling and soothing to wounds. Love is that which hides a multitude of sins, but when love is absent nothing is hid, not even one's temper. If Paul's words in Heb. xiii. 1, were more heeded how much better it would be under trying circumstances for the cause unto which we are espoused. The words are, "Let brotherly love continue." Each one of us should so carry ourselves toward others, especially those of the household of faith, as to merit and cause to be strengthened and to grow that love which we hope we have in our hearts. Love can, and as a rule does, bear all things, but self-will or a determined spirit is quite unruly, and causes many heartaches. The good Lord is able to heal all the sorrows of his people; in him is peace, but in the world trouble, but Jesus has overcome the world, so let us rejoice in him.

I only thought to express my appreciation of your editorial, and have written more than I intended, but perhaps it is good that something occurs which causes us to think one of another. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another." And should it not be so now?

I will say that the condition of my wife is unchanged; her general health is very good. She can walk just a little in the house with a crutch and a stick. My health is fairly good, for which I hope to be thankful. I trust that I may be able to attend some of the associations this spring, if the Lord will.

Affectionately your brother,

G. D. ROBERSON.

LANCASTER, Ohio.

DEAR EDITORS:—The good Lord has spared my unprofitable life another year, but I am afflicted, and at my age I cannot expect to be much better. Our church-house is hardly a block from my home, but I have only been able to attend a few times in the last year. There are a few old members of us, but decreasing by death. There is no increase, and it looks as though the church would die out before long. In this town there are plenty of so-called churches, but we are not reckoned among the nations. Some attend our church who have moved in here, and have done so for years, who still belong to other churches of our order, but they do not bring their letters. Some others say that they would like to have a home with us if they were fit. I am made to wonder how it is that they can stay away and not be baptized. I remained away for eleven months, and it was very hard, and when I did go to the church I felt as though I had just got home; to follow the footsteps of my dear Savior was my great desire. O yes, it was the love that God had shed abroad in my heart to the name of Jesus Christ and to his people. I felt most surely they were the people of God, and I wanted to live and die with them. They may call the Baptists "Hardshells," but that makes no difference to me. If any one

asks me to what people I belong, I nearly always tell them the "Hardshell" Baptists. I am a great deal more ashamed of myself than I am of what they call us. I say that there is no difference about the name, so that the heart is right. O that I could be holy, but that is too grand a word for me. I cannot control my foolish thoughts, but do assuredly believe that what the apostles wrote to the churches to practice is for the church for all time, till Jesus Christ shall come. I do not think that any age of the world has needed all these things more than we do. "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" James said, "Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." And, "Faith without works is dead." Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." So the love of God constrains us. The love of Christ constrained me to be baptized. So the work is done by faith. I have sometimes feared that the church was slow to practice what is written for them. This has borne on my mind for a long time.

I send inclosed two dollars for the renewal of my subscription to the SIGNS for another year, I want to read it as long as I live. I have great reason to be thankful to God that I have my reason and sight, so that I can read his word, and the SIGNS, and the songs of Zion. Remember me, a poor old sinner, at the throne of grace.

Yours in hope of life through Christ,
SARAH B. PEARCE.

PETOSKY, Mich., Sept. 5, 1910.

DEAR FRIENDS:—You will find inclosed one dollar, for which please send me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I will remit another in two or three months. I am the son of Mary E. Sills, and have always stayed at home and farmed the place for my father, but now he is gone on before to enter into the glories of the Lord, as I hope, so just mother and I are left. If you will bear with me, and excuse the liberty I take in writing to you, I want to say that I have had a deep desire to write to you concerning myself. I do not belong to the church, but have always liked the Old School Baptists. When a boy from ten to fifteen years old I used to sit and listen to the preachers talking with my father and mother, and O how much I liked to hear them, but as I grew up I was led into the gaieties of the world, and being full of fun was looking after the enjoyments of the world. After my father died things seemed to be changed, and I also seemed to be changed. Time wore on until December, 1909, when I felt that all my enjoyments were floating away from me. I went just the same, but there was no enjoyment for me. I felt that I was a great sinner, and that now the enjoyments of this life were taken away from me, and I had no hope of eternal life beyond, where all is peace, joy and happiness; I felt as though I could not find forgiveness. Then my mind was from some cause turned to the Bible, and in reading I found that sin passed upon all men, and that Christ said he had lost none that the Father had given him, save the son of perdition, and that he was brought forth for that purpose, to betray the Son of man. Also I read, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated," and saw that it was not of man, or of what man could do, but through the tender mercies of the Lord that salvation is found. O how glad I am that it is not left to man to work himself through, if it were I would be

forever lost, but as it is, I hope that I have a hope in Christ. How much I wish that some of the ministers would come this way, for I would like to hear a true witness for Christ. There is no church near here that I know of. I go to the so-called meetings, but come home feeling worse than before I went, for it is all works, and we must make our way to heaven. If they are right, I know I am forever lost; but my Bible tells me that if I am saved it is through the tender mercy of God. When I read the SIGNS what strong evidence it gives me that I am right. I hope you will bear with me, for I know this letter is full of mistakes, but if I am so favored as to enter that great building of God, made not with hands and eternal in the heavens, I shall know, and there will be no mistakes there.

I remain yours,

WILLIAM SILLS.

LANHAM, W. Va., March 30, 1911.

BELOVED EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a short letter from W. C. Pennington, giving his address, as some of the brethren who live near Lebanon, Ohio, would be pleased to correspond with him, and if you think it worthy a place in the SIGNS, please publish it.

Yours in full fellowship,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

2825½ WOODBURN, AVE., CINCINNATI, Ohio, Dec. 12, 1910.

ELDER J. W. McCLANAHAN—DEAR BROTHER:—I will try to answer your letter, which I received to-day. I am sorry to learn of your cast down feeling, for I hope I know something about such a burden, yet it is a comfort to me to know that some one whom I have not the least shadow of doubt being called of God, an heir of grace, a son of new Jerusalem, telling of the same burdens that I am made to bear, for often when I feel downcast, feeling to be under the waves, as it were, of a great ocean, I think I am deceived in myself, and feel that I have deceived others. I sometimes think I am in carnality and unbelief, and this is a great burden to me, but it is said in the Scripture that there shall be cold and heat, winter and summer, seedtime and harvest, as long as time remains. I think while this Scripture has its natural application, it also has its spiritual import, and I believe the children of God have to go through all the changes of the seasons, cold and heat, winter and summer, seedtime and harvest, not judging myself to be a child of God, for

> "When I turn my eyes within,
> All is dark and vain and wild;
> Filled with unbelief and sin,
> Can I deem myself a child?"

Yet hoping in this, that the Lord knoweth them that are his. Now the summer is past and gone, with all its glory and sunshine, and the winter has come; the days are dark and dreary and cold, the trees of the forest seem to be dead, no more beautiful blossoms to be seen along our pathway, no birds to warble their sweet songs, the voice of the turtle dove is heard no more. After a time spring comes again, then the trees of the forest begin to put forth their buds, the sun shines, the flowers begin to bloom, the birds flit from tree to tree, singing their sweet songs, the voice of the dove is heard again, the winter is past and gone. So, dear brother, I feel that I have been down in the depths this winter, burdened with sin and unbelief, thinking the glory of the Lord's salvation gone forever, left to mourn my darkness, not fit to be in the company of those whom I have no doubt are the children of God. But I have no beautiful blossoms of Zion to be-

hold; thirsty, and no water of Zion to drink; hungry, but nothing to eat. Naturally we must be hungry to enjoy eating, thirsty to enjoy drinking, cold to enjoy warmth, winter to enjoy springtime and summer. So spiritually this must be the condition of the children of God. In time past I had hoped that I had seen by faith the glory of the Lord's salvation, the beauties of Zion, but its glory and beauties are gone, and I am left to mourn. Lord, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." We want to see springtime—Zion in her beauty, and when at the appointed time of the Father this springtime spiritually begins, the children of God see its beauty, Zion in all her glory, their hope of eternal life is renewed; yes, they view living waters flowing from the great Fountain-head, which is God, to give unto them that thirst drink.

I must soon close this letter, for I feel it is too much like myself, so I will not write more. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES is a great comfort to me; there are no Old Baptists here.

Your unworthy brother, in hope of eternal life,

W. C. PENNINGTON.

LOS ANGELES, Cal., April 27, 1911.

DEAR ELDER KER:—This morning the SIGNS came to my new address, for I have moved again, this time only a few city blocks, from furnished housekeeping rooms to an apartment at 4612 Moneta Ave. Our furniture arrived from Chicago in Los Angeles about April 15th, and now I am enjoying the use of our own things and the company of both Harrison and Kenneth. I wished to write and have my address changed, and to tell you that I am willing to accept the advice of the New Vernon Church as regards my letter. I am glad indeed that they will still retain my name, and my thoughts turn to them often, and there are memories of the best things of life enjoyed among them in the past. A similar feeling was stirred within me when reading from the pen of brother George Conklin and Elder Durand. From my earliest meeting with the Baptists I have had comfort through them in spiritual things, and was made to say, "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in christian love." While reading this morning sister Ruth Spitler also made me reflect. She tells of the way she is traveling; a way laid out for her to walk in, and the Lord knows all about it. My hope and experience seem small, especially at times, but in the dark valley along the way it has pleased God to teach me useful lessons, and from me, unworthy me, goes forth a prayer that all who mourn may be comforted and kept by him who is without variableness or shadow of turning. I would like to write many letters (I really feel it a duty) to kindred in Christ who dwell far from me, and if I only were able to express clearly what I feel I would do so. I am without matter of profit, and so cannot write. The church here meets nearly every Sunday, and Elder Atkins preaches Christ to us in an acceptable way. I find comfort in going, and do go. I have studied to know how the Baptists here differ from those of the east, and have at last seen some things I believe are different, but I feel they are taught of God, and can fellowship them. I hope to be kept from offending any of God's little ones.

Yours in hope,

LUCY BROME.

CUPP, Tenn., Dec. 5, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—In sending in my renewal I must try to thank you for the many good things you are giving us in the SIGNS. I cannot help but like the SIGNS, because, as pertaining to the way of life, it stands out clearly on every point for what I believe to be the truth. Then there is your kind liberality toward poor, weak and sinful creatures who, like myself, are without. You do not pass even these by on the other side with "see here or see there," but you proclaim, in season and out, to all who hear, that "salvation [all of it] is of the Lord."

I am taking the liberty of sending you a few lines with this, but you will find that they, as well as this poor letter, need much charity, for I know that their unworthy writer, wherever his feet can go or his mind can wander, needs in all things the hope of mercy and forbearance under the free, sovereign, omnipotent hand of that living Fountain of all stainless and eternal purity, of whom it is written, "God is love."

Yours gratefully,

J. A. MURRAY.

THE SONG OF AN OUTCAST.

IN the dark and stormy midnight, as I wait for dawn of day,
My Savior seems to say to me, Rise up and come away;
I have a fruitful vineyard, and my elect bride dwells there,
And she is poor and lowly, but she sees the Morning Star.

She was heir of a promise given when the earth in darkness lay,
And I gave my life to save her and put her sin away;
My grace is her salvation, my promise dwells with her,
And I will not forsake her, for she sees the Morning Star.

I gave my love unto her before the sun gave light,
And I alone redeemed her from sin and death and night;
I rule o'er earth and heaven, and all that in them are,
And she is true and faithful, for she sees the Morning Star.

The true and living Father, with whom there is no change,
Whose word wrought his own glory throughout creation's range,
Unto his grace ordained her, before sin and shame did mar,
And in his goodness leads her to see the Morning Star.

My love, my dove, my undefiled, my called and chosen bride,
In all the nations of the earth has wandered far and wide,
But I myself have called her, my voice she shall hear,
For I am her salvation, her bright and Morning Star.

Awake, awake, O sleeper, from every doubt and fear;
Rise up, I go before thee, and I am very near;
My chosen bride is waiting for my glory to appear,
And I am her salvation, her bright and Morning Star.

What though she dwells an outcast among the sons of men?
The Father giveth her to me, I will raise her up again,
And she within his kingdom a robe of white shall wear,
Shall touch his royal sceptre, her bright and Morning Star.

HERNDON, Va., Jan. 10, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—As my son is sending you a check for my SIGNS, I will add a few lines to thank you all for your great forbearance, and to express my sincere appreciation for your kindness to one of the very least of the flock, if one at all. Dear brother, I thought to have paid you for the dear SIGNS at our last Corresponding Meeting, but did not get there, neither did you. I was sorry, as brother Badger said that it was a grand meeting to him, as well as to others, still it might not have been so with me, other than in meeting with the brethren, for I do not always enjoy preaching as I would wish. I am sure that it would have been a great disappointment not to have seen you there.

Well, another year has passed, and we have great cause to thank God for his

many mercies to us poor sinners, but do I thank him? is a vital question with me. As the years roll by I grow no better, but, it seems to me, worse and worse, and less and less; without free grace I know I am lost, yet my heart's cry is,

"Yet save a trembling sinner, Lord,
Whose hope still hovering round thy word
Would light on some sweet promise there,
Some sure support against despair."

Dear brother, how greatly has our dear Lord blessed us in such a pastor as Elder Lefferts. His gift seems to us wonderful. He is a deep, clear, faithful minister of the gospel, and a kind, loving pastor; he seems to me so like brother White. O may it be the will of God to bless his labor, and to long spare him to these churches.

We buried one of our loved members last Wednesday: brother Robey. We shall miss his face in our assemblies, but we feel to hope that he is gathered home to be with and like his dear Savior, whom he so humbly worshiped. May you, dear editors of the SIGNS, be blessed this new year in your labors of love, and may the riches of God's love abide with you both, giving you strength and courage to stand fast in defense of the gospel, as you ever have done in years gone by. I love the dear paper for the truth which it contains, and the instruction as well. I wish that every Old School Baptist would take it.

I am your sister in hope,

(MRS.) M. A. MURPHY.

WILLIAMSPORT, Pa., Oct. 14, 1910.

MRS. JANE STRADLEY—MY DEAR SISTER AND FRIEND:—I heard this morning of your husband's death, and words cannot express the deep sympathy I have for you in your sad bereavement, but it must be as God wills. I understood he was a great sufferer. These two loved ones being taken from us reminds us that we, too, must pass the portals of death. I am glad to have known your husband. The last talk I had with him upon spiritual things was as we were walking from your home to the meetinghouse last fall, and his knowledge of the truth cannot be questioned. He certainly knew the truth as it is in Jesus, and that he is the God of all truth, and they that worship him must worship in spirit and in truth. I know how lonely you will be; the vacancy can never be filled after so many years of companionship. I would have liked very much to have gone to the funeral, but my work has become so extensive it is very difficult for me to get away on week days. I would come up to meeting often, but you know they are all better than I am; I am a poor sinner. I get desperate sometimes, and very hungry to hear the testimony of salvation by grace, and a gospel hymn sung by those loved ones up there would be music to my ears. My heart is sad and heavy. You have my best wishes for sufficient grace to bear your trials and bereavements.

I am, I hope, your unworthy brother in Christ,

ALVA B. CALLAHAN.

MISSOULA, Montana, March 24, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—Do you know your oldest subscriber? I think I do. Away back before the war of the rebellion, when a small boy, I often visited my aunt, Mrs. K. E. Mills, wife of Mr. J. H. Mills, who lived in Pettis County, Mo., and I distinctly remember seeing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at her home. Her husband died in 1895. Of her nine children five are dead and four living, married and scattered to the four winds. Recently we spent a day and a night

with her, and our reminiscent talk was the most interesting we ever experienced. The SIGNS was on the center table, as it was fifty years ago in Missouri. She was asked how long she had been taking it, and while not being absolutely certain, she said fifty years or more. This is a long time, and it occurred to me that it is worth mentioning. She is a devout christian if there ever was one; not a housetop proclaimer, but rather on the order of, Let not your right hand know what your left is doing. She is the only daughter of a family of seven children, her six brothers and her parents are all dead. It is remarkable that she should outlive all of them, the most of whom died at or near threescore and ten years of age; not one of them reached seventy-one, and she, small and frail, and always a hard worker, will be seventy-four the 16th of August next.

W. B. PARSONS.

UPLAND, Cal., Dec. 7, 1910.

ELDERS CHICK AND KER—BELOVED BRETHREN:—As the time has arrived for me to renew my subscription to the SIGNS for another year, I thought I would drop you a line or two to let you know that we still hold you both in loving remembrance, and, I trust, esteem you highly for the truth's sake. In reading the many good letters which each number contains, from time to time our heart goes out in sweet love and fellowship to the many gifted contributors who are scattered abroad over this vast continent. I often think I would love to address each one of them by name, and tell them how I love them for the dear Redeemer's sake, but as that is impossible I can only do so through the medium of the dear old SIGNS. May you, dear brethren, both be long spared to as ably defend the truth in the future as you have in the past. My wife joins me in love to each of you.

Yours in the fellowship of the truth,

G. A. DUNDAS.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. T. Rowe.)

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Harford Church, Harford Co., Md., May 17th, 18th and 19th, 1911, to the churches composing the same, and to all associations and meetings with which we correspond.

DEAR KINDRED IN THE LORD:—We feel at this time to call your attention to Jude 1-3. Jude, after introducing himself as a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, addresses himself to them that are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ and called. It is a great deal for a sinful man to say that he is a servant of Jesus Christ, and yet we feel that those who serve in the gospel of Jesus Christ must be aware of the desire that is in their hearts, whether it be to serve men, or Jesus, the Savior of men. The love of God shed abroad in the hearts of men begets a desire to serve him, to extol his glorious name above every name, to say with the apostles, "Ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake," and they find both in their hearts and in the Bible that the gospel of Jesus Christ belongs to those born of God, from all eternity set apart by him and appointed to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, and these blessed and wonderful truths are made manifest by the appearing of Jesus personally to each of them. Being begotten of God, they are spiritually related, and therefore love each other with true hearts, and as those who are called to the ministry of the word have this love in their

hearts, in a sweet and peculiar sense they, like their brother Jude, pray for the mercy, peace and love of God to be multiplied to these dear children of God, who are subject to so many trials and temptations in this world of sin and tears. It is evident that at the time Jude wrote this epistle there were some in the church of God who were teaching things not authorized by Jesus and his apostles, which were calculated to lead some of the dear ones astray. These conditions have from time to time existed from the earliest history of the church, and no doubt will continue to exist while the church remains in this world, but in the midst of all her afflictions she has this comfort: that he whose word cannot fail hath said the gates of hell shall not prevail against her. To these beloved ones Jude says, "I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation." That is, that salvation known to all the children of God, whether Jews or Gentiles, by a personal work of the Spirit of God in their hearts. To these he says, "It was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Necessary because there were those who were contending for things that the Spirit had not taught the saints of God. Now, says Jude, I exhort you to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints in the blessed work of salvation as revealed to men by the Spirit. They are given to know their vile and corrupt nature, and to mourn over their sinful hearts, and seeing these things they feel the need of a Savior, one who is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him. Jesus is seen as one thus able, but the poor sinner feels, Surely he will not have mercy on a vile wretch like me; he sees that banishment from God into the lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels is his just desert. This faith delivered unto the saints embraces as well as the glorious truth of a heaven full of joys because of the ever-manifest presence of Jesus, where those saved by him shall be conscious of the blessed truth that they were sinners saved by the blood of Christ, also the awful fact that there is a hell, where God does not show his smiling face, and hence those who by God's justice are turned away from him will to all eternity be conscious of their doomed state, where mercy will never come. It also embraces the constant loving care of the good Shepherd for his flock amidst all the cares of this sin-polluted world, and though they return to dust, as the Lord decreed, when Jesus shall come again the second time, without sin unto salvation, they shall arise from the dust and shout, Death is swallowed up in victory. This is the fruit of that corn of wheat (Jesus) who fell into the ground nineteen hundred years ago. All shall come forth in his glorious image, and he rose with a body of flesh and bones; this is the end or consummation of the coming of Jesus into the world. The Bible teaches these blessed truths as the faith once delivered unto the saints, so, dear brethren, let us earnestly contend for them, rejecting all the vain imaginations and speculations of men; the Spirit of our God is always in earnest, and prompts those moved by it to be in earnest, yet loving and kind, ever remembering that they are weak and liable to err, but the word of God is infallible, therefore let God be true and every man a liar; let us cleave to the old doctrine, the good old way, with love in our hearts, but firm for the things taught in the Bible, against any and all who will presume to deny them, and the God of peace shall be with us to the end.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1911.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

LAZARUS AT THE RICH MAN'S GATE.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been requested to ask for your views upon the dogs that licked the sores of Lazarus as he lay at the rich man's gate. What do they represent?

(MRS.) S. J. CUMMINS.

TOUCHET, Wash., March 19, 1911.

Our brother, Elder Ker, wrote about this parable two or three years ago, and we do not know that we have very much more to say about it than he then wrote; but he has sent this request to us, and perhaps it will not be amiss for us to reply in a brief way to the special question of our sister. Speaking generally of the parable, we will say that it has been our mind, in common, as we believe, with most of the brethren who have written or spoken in our hearing about it, that the Jews and the Gentiles are here set forth, first, as they were under the former legal covenant, and then as they should be under the gospel covenant. The riches of the rich man were all the legal ceremonies, the legal righteousness to which they were called under that covenant, the privileges of worship, and the revelations of God to them through Moses and the prophets, and in the answer by Urim and Thummim, from all of which the Gentiles were excluded. In these things, which constituted the riches of the Jews, the Gentiles were poor, and they were represented as lying at the rich man's gate like a beggar, glad to grasp the crumbs which might be thrown to them from his table. On the other hand, under the gospel covenant all this was reversed. The poor man now has his good things, while the rich man has his evil things. Gentiles now make up the vast body of the church. All through this gospel dispensation Jews have passed through it in blindness, hungering and thirsting. So far as gospel privileges are concerned, the day of the gospel has been to them a day of darkness and affliction, and very few of them have ever come to the light of the truth; very few have found salvation in Christ. We have never thought it needful to try to find an application for every word in this parable. Like all other parables, there is one special thought intended to be set forth in it, and all the rest we may call but the drapery of the figure, and the one special intent of the Savior in the parable, as said before, has seemed to us to be just to set forth in contrast the condition of the Jews and the Gentiles, first, under the law covenant, and then under the new or gospel covenant. This much we have ventured to say in a general way.

One thought more we would present. In all the parables of the Savior he used the things which existed, and were commonly seen or believed among men, to set forth hidden truth. Look over all the parables and this will appear at once. There have been prodigal sons, there have been lost sheep and lost pieces of money, there have been lilies and roses, and leaven placed in meal, there have been sowers going forth to sow, and there have been again and again tares mingled with the wheat; these things which did actually exist were used by the

dear Redeemer to set forth other things which also do actually exist. So in this parable we may say that there have been rich men and there have been beggars (men without help, for so the name Lazarus means), and many times beggars have lain at the gates of rich men, begging for what was thrown away to the dogs. So also there is a heaven and a hell, and there is bliss in the one and misery in the other. This Jesus implies in the parable, and all men among the people to whom he was here speaking believed in future blessedness for the righteous and in future punishment for the wicked. So whatever the parable may be intended to set forth, it is sure that Jesus took what is, to illustrate the other things.

Now as regards the dogs licking the sores of Lazarus, we will say that we do not think it needful to suppose that the Savior meant that this one incident in the narrative of the poverty of Lazarus was to set forth any special thing, save this one, viz., to emphasize the outcast condition of Lazarus. He was so poor and so despised that men paid no regard to him, and least of all this rich man, and even brutish dogs seemed more merciful than men, in that they licked his wounds. The dogs literally, of course, would not intend to do Lazarus any good, but simply to gratify their own appetite, but still there would be something soothing in what they were doing. Neither the rich man nor the dogs cared at all for Lazarus, but even the dogs were doing him more good than the rich man. Brutes ministered more mercifully to him than his fellow-man. So ravens fed Elijah in his distress; unwittingly they were God's messengers to him in his hunger and distress. As it seems to us, the one thought of the Savior is to set forth the entire destitution of the Gentiles under the law covenant, and he does this by the presentation of a man so poor as to be a beggar, and sick and full of sores beside. The figure is certainly a striking one. If the dogs licking the sores of Lazarus has any special meaning beyond this, of setting forth his extreme distress and poverty, the Savior does not say what it is, and we therefore feel that it would be prudent for us not to undertake to do so. If other brethren are convinced that they are intended to mean some special character among men we have no dispute with them, but can only say that this is not our mind.

C.

1 JOHN V. 16, 17.

SISTER Fannie Clanton, of Texas, wishes our views regarding the words found in 1 John v. 16, 17, which read as follows: "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death." What is the sin unto death?

We can but give our judgment regarding this sin. We have thought often of it, and tried to consider the matter carefully in connection with other things written in the New Testament. Also the two verses following the text have seemed to us to involve the view which has been our mind for some time past. Briefly we will state the matter in this way: the sin unto death is such a state of life, such a sin, and so continued in, as proves that the one guilty of it has never possessed life from the dead, notwithstanding that he has been a professor of this life, and has been received as

a living member of the church. Churches may be deceived in the reception of members as well as in other things; only God knows all that is in the heart of any man. We are compelled to look only at the confession, the outward manner of life, and cannot see the heart, but God sees it, and by and by if one is indeed not alive unto God, but still dead in sin, this will also appear to the church. So long as this does not appear, so long as the wrong doing is such as all believers feel that they are liable themselves to fall into through the weakness of the flesh, the allurements of the world and the temptations of the devil, while yet possessing earnest desires toward God and godliness, there is room and encouragement to pray God in their behalf that repentance may be given them to their own good, and the glory of God. But when one not only falls into sin, but manifestly seeks it as the dog his vomit, or the sow the mire, there is no evidence that such an one lives unto God at all, and for such ones the Master himself did not pray. (See the seventeenth chapter of John.) In the next verse John says that all unrighteousness is sin, and believers deceive themselves if they say that they have no sin, or have not sinned. But while every disobedience is sin, yet all disobediences are not evidences of death. One may see his brother giving way to a hasty fit of temper, and beginning to harbor malice or revenge, or some other evil disposition, but yet this is but begun, and arises out of sudden temptation; here there is room for prayer to God that such an one may be saved from this evil; or one may see another brother overcome by desire for some worldly thing, or some evil thing, while he knows that this brother has not been living that kind of life, but has only now been overtaken in this fault; for that one he has encouragement to pray. We have not understood the sin unto death to be any particular sin as distinguished from other sins, but any sin may or may not be unto death, according as it appears that one harbors and settles down in it as his habitual manner of life, or as he does not do this. One under strong and sudden provocation might use profane language, and this would not be a sin unto death in itself, but if that one continues in this, making a habit of it, it would show that the marks of life were lacking in him. In such a case, the apostle would say, "I do not say that he shall pray for it." In the eighteenth verse the apostle emphasizes this truth: "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not." The words, "sinneth not" are not in contradiction to the statement that believers do err from the way of righteousness, perhaps often, but it does confirm the thought that believers do not habitually sin; that is, that they do not continue in a life of sin. "Sinneth not," means not continuing in sin. Sinneth is a word that implies continuance, and all who are born of God do not and cannot continue in sin. If one continues in any sinful course the evidence of his life is all against the conclusion that he has been born of God, and as the blessed Savior prayed for his own, but not for the world of the ungodly, so we are not bidden to pray for the world. One who sins this sin is manifestly of the world. Following the example of the dear Redeemer, we do not pray for or make request for the putting away and forgiveness of such sins.

C.

ANNIHILATION.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—Is it your understanding that the Bible teaches that the non-elect, or those not redeemed, shall cease to exist when this time world shall end?

Your brother, J. I. FOSTER.

RISING STAR, Texas, Nov. 15, 1910.

It is not our understanding that the Bible teaches this. The word "destruction" is used to describe their final state, but the word destruction does not signify annihilation, or cessation of existence. For instance, the world was destroyed by the flood, as it is said, yet the world did not cease to exist in another state. The conditions of its existence were changed, but the world still existed. To destroy means literally to loose away from. Anything destroyed has been cut away from its former state, but it has not ceased to be in a new state. We are here giving the literal force of the word. So also death has been pronounced upon the wicked; eternal death, but there is no place in all the Bible where death signifies annihilation, or cessation of being. One dead to God yet lives in enmity to him. One dead to sin yet lives unto God. One who is dead to this world yet lives in another world. Death simply means separation from the former state of existence to which that one has been alive, but never does it signify putting one out of existence. If not living in one state or world, that person is yet living in another state of existence. The penitent thief was dead to this life, or world, after the crucifixion, yet he was living in paradise with the blessed Savior immediately, or "to-day." So the wicked die, but they yet live in the world of the lost, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, and so the compassionate and merciful Savior declared that the righteous go away into everlasting life, but the wicked into everlasting punishment. It has been said that this word as used in the Bible (that is, the word everlasting or eternal) only means age-lasting. This is true, but how long is that age? Is it what the poet calls eternal ages, or but a thousand or two years of time? It seems sufficient to us to say that the same words, "everlasting" and "eternal," are in the Bible applied to the God of heaven. If the ages of Jehovah are never-ending, then also the ages of both the righteous and the wicked are never-ending. Just as long as the years of Jehovah shall endure, so long shall the happiness of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked endure, according to the meaning of the words everlasting and eternal. These two words are from the same Hebrew and Greek terms, and we do not know why the translators sometimes used one word and sometimes the other in the translation. According to the meaning of these words, if the happiness of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked have an end, then the existence of the God that we worship ends. If one is only age-lasting, so also is the other. Still further, if the wicked cease to exist, then their punishment has ceased. It is impossible by any known laws of language to say that one continues to be punished when that one has ceased to be. This doctrine has been denied and opposed, because it seems like a hard doctrine, but so has the doctrine of election been opposed upon the same ground. It is not ours to consider whether it is hard or not, whether it can be made to seem right to our reason or not. It is ours to ask, Is it taught by the Lord in his word? Certainly no doctrine is more plainly set forth in the Bible than this.

We leave these few reflections to our brother, and to all who may read them.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ISAIAH II. 2–4.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Please give your views on Isaiah ii. 2–4, which reads: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob: and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

BARBARY BRUCE.

PERRY COUNTY, Iowa, August 4, 1864.

(Continued from page 345.)

"And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people." He who is thus to judge the nations and rebuke the people can be none other than the Lord, whose law shall go forth from Zion, and his word from Jerusalem. He is the King who shall reign in righteousness, whose princes shall rule in judgment. His name is "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever." The government shall be upon his shoulder, he shall reign King of kings and Lord of lords. All power in heaven and in earth is given unto him, and he shall rule in the midst of his enemies. The heathen are his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth are his possession, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces as a potter's vessel. (Psalms ii. 8, 9; Rev. ii. 26, 27.) "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all the nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." —Matt. xxv. 31, 32. Not only shall he judge among the nations and decide who are and who are not his people, but he will judge of their standing, state and condition, plucking up, casting down and utterly destroying such as despise and disown his government and oppress his people. He will judge when their cup of wickedness is full, and when to launch the bolts of his wrath for their extinction. He will judge and arbitrate their disputes, and decide all their controversies, and turn the wicked into hell with the nations that forget God; but in a special manner shall he judge his people and avenge them of their adversaries. Vengeance belongs to him, he will repay.

"And shall rebuke many people." And at his rebuke the nations shall melt like wax before the flame. "The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted. * * * Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder: he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth."—Psalms xlvi. 6–10.

"And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." By comparing this text with Micah iv., in which the prophecy is given in almost the same words, and

from the context of the latter, we infer that this part of the prediction relates to the people of God under the peaceful reign of Christ, and when all nations of Jew and Gentiles, endowed by the spirit of his holy religion, should display the meekness and temper of the lamb, and exemplify the spirit of the angel song, Peace on earth, and good will toward men. For notwithstanding the malicious and bloodthirsty spirit of the nations of the earth, when the mountain of the Lord's house was established in the top of the mountains, or when the gospel church was organized, and the continuance and prevalence of that spirit waxing worse and worse, from that period to the present, it is nevertheless true that those who have come into the kingdom and under the government of Christ have ceased to learn carnal war. The spiritual nature of the kingdom, the purity of her laws and the gracious work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all her subjects forbid that christians should fight or shed the blood of their fellow-men. It is demonstrated in the Scriptures that nearly all the blood that has ever stained the earth has been shed by those who have professed to fight by the direction and authority of God, but it is equally true that all the human blood that has ever been shed under a religious pretense has been shed by those who not only are not the subjects of Christ, but by those who are the most violent and deadly enemies to Christ and his people, with perhaps the exception of what was shed by Peter when he cut off the ear of a servant of the high priest, for which he was severely rebuked by his Lord and Master. How is it possible for one possessing the Spirit of him who went about doing good, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, raising the dead, and who even laid down his life for the salvation of his enemies, who when he was reviled, reviled not again, to assault a fellow-man with intent to kill, plunder or injure him, when it is positively declared that if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his? "And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple."—Luke xiv. 27. Can any man follow Jesus by going in an opposite direction from that in which he walked? In short, can we stir up the spirit of discord, strife, malice and revenge; can we stain our hands in the blood of our fellow-men, and in so doing follow him who commands us to love our enemies and do good to those who despitefully use and persecute us? Let all who profess to be the disciples of Jesus think seriously on these inquiries and answer each to his God. However many there may be who profess godliness, while their feet are swift to shed blood, we are compelled to believe "there is no fear of God before their eyes," (Romans iii. 18,) even though so much infatuated as to believe they do God service by the indulgence of their cruel passions. In the change wrought by grace in the hearts of God's people they lay aside all malice, and convert their instruments of war into implements of husbandry, their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks, and apply their physical and mental powers to the legitimate and original purposes for which they were given, to till the earth and procure bread by the sweat of their face. Micah says, "They shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid." How desirable is such a state of things; each under his own vine or fig tree, enjoying a peaceable possession of his own labor, without invading the conceded equal rights of others, or

fearing any aggression of his own rights. But especially in regard to their religious rights and privileges, for the prophet predicts that in the prevalence of this state of things, as dictated by the spirit of the gospel and under the reign of Christ as the Prince of Peace, that, "All people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever." Thus clearly showing that the people of the living God, while enjoying for themselves the inestimable privilege of worshiping their God without molestation, are not at liberty to deny the same liberty of conscience to their fellow-men, who walk every one in the name of his god. The saints having neither the right nor the desire to compel others, are therefore not the keepers of other men's consciences. If they were responsible for the sins of others, and were authorized to dictate the religion of others, in the manner that Cain attempted to force his religion on Abel, or old Nebuchadnezzar his on the Hebrew children, or the papists upon nonconformists in the dark ages, or the New England Puritans upon the rest of mankind in general, then they would require to retain their swords and spears, racks and dungeons. In the third chapter of Micah the heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel, who abhor judgment and pervert all equity, are charged with building up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. In doing these abominations, "The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money; yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us." How fully has this state of things been realized, not only in the last days of national Israel, but also in those of these last days, in which those of the modern antichrist have assumed a supervision of ecclesiastical matters; for Peter predicted that as there were false prophets among the people of Israel, even, or exactly so, there should be false teachers among those who profess to be the church under the gospel dispensation, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. "And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."—2 Peter ii. 2, 3. But God will not leave himself without witnesses. Those of the nations redeemed from this delusion shall cease to build up Zion with blood, with cruelty and lies, and in the mountain of the Lord's house they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks, and under the peaceful government of our Lord they shall learn war no more. "Happy is that people that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord."—Psalms cxliv. 15.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., September 15, 1864.

NOTICE.

IF not providentially hindered, I shall be with the Woburn Church, Woburn, Mass., the second Sunday in July, instead of the fourth Sunday in June.

H. C. KER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

A Well Wisher, Canada, $1.00; James R. Crutcher, Tenn., $1.00; Thos. W. Records, Mo., $1.00; F. Terry, Pa., $1.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, April 15th, 1911, at Mamaroneck, N. Y., William Stewart Ker and Miss Frances Viola New.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **Nancy Mowers** was called home Dec. 2nd, 1910. She was born at Howes Cave, Schoharie Co., N. Y., May 16th, 1832, united with the Old School Baptist Church at Schoharie Hill, and was baptized by Elder Bundy the fourth Sunday in May, 1874. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and it was seldom she was absent at the time of meeting as long as she lived in the bounds of her church, but after the death of her husband she lived with her daughter in Gloversville. She leaves six sons and one daughter. Her husband never made a public profession, but was ever ready to take her to meeting. One by one they are taken from our number, and while we miss them, we would not call them back, for it is only going home to them, which is far better, for there is no sorrow, sickness or pain there. Having known her for many years, I feel to say she is at rest; our loss is her gain.

HELEN W. KINNEY.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., April 30, 1911.

Mearl Lester Wood passed to the great beyond at his home, four miles east of Pleasantville, Iowa, March 27th, 1911. Mearl was born May 23rd, 1896, so his age at the time of departure was 14 years, 10 months and 4 days. He was the son of N. J. Wood, who is a member of Little Flock Church. Mearl was a dutiful boy, and was loved by all who knew him, especially by the household of faith. He gave ample evidence of a peaceful sleep in Jesus. Mearl is missed much by his relatives and friends, but our loss is his gain. He leaves his father, mother, three brothers and one sister to mourn his departure, who do not mourn as those who have no hope, for they hope in the resurrection. His time had come to go, and he obeyed the summons of the divine Father, who hath declared himself to be the resurrection and the life.

The funeral discourse was by Elder J. M. Arlege, from the words found in 1 Cor. xv. 12, and he spoke much to the comfort of the loved ones. The writer tried to speak in prayer. Mearl's body was then taken to the cemetery at St. Charles, Iowa, there to rest until the great resurrection, when it will be raised in the likeness of the glorious body of his Savior.

May the God of love bless the sorrowing ones, and they pattern after the example left by Mearl.

W. M. ROSE.

PLEASANTVILLE, Iowa.

Mrs. Abbie Ford, wife of Stephen Ford, of North Berwick, Maine, departed this life May 16th, 1911. Our sister professed her hope in the Savior and united with the church at North Berwick. She was baptized by Elder William Quint in the month of June, 1878. Her health began to visibly fail about two years before she departed, and as we hope, she has entered into peace, and her soul is now with Christ in paradise, which is far better than to remain in this world of trial. She leaves her husband, daughter, grandchildren and sister to mourn their loss.

At her funeral I preached from the words, "Ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye house of Israel." —Isaiah xxvii. 12. In the presence of a large company of relatives and friends her body was laid to rest in the family burying-ground in hope of the resurrection at the last day to immortality and incorruption.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

Elijah S. Chinn, son of William and Lucy Chinn, was born in Bourbon County, Ky., Sept. 3rd, 1824, died Dec. 18th, 1910, aged 86 years, 3 months and 15 days. He was united in marriage to Miss Elizabeth Murdock, April 26th, 1846. Five children, three daughters in Platte County, Mo., and two sons in California, are left to mourn their loss. Father and mother united with the Baptist Church in the year 1860, and lived true and faithful lives. Mother died in California July 26th, 1893, after which father lived with his daughters; he died at my home. His disease was bronchial pneumonia; he lived but fifteen days after taken.

(MRS.) SARAH WHEAT.

TRACY, Mo., April, 1911.

MEETINGS.

THE Sandusky Association of Primitive Baptists will hold its seventy-eighth annual meeting with the Columbia Church, Cement City, Mich., June 9th, 10th and 11th, 1911. All those wishing to come are invited to attend, especially the ministers of our faith and order.

MARTIN LINDLEY, Church Clerk.

THERE will be a two days meeting, Providence permitting, held in the Old School Baptist meeting-house on Schoharie Hill, June 14th and 15th, 1911. All interested in the truth are invited. Those coming from the east will be met by brother E. R. Kinney. Those coming by the way of Howes Cave will be met if they send a card to

GEO. A. MIERS.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., R. D. No. 3.

THE Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon and Washington will be held

with Big Spring Church, at Elgin, Union Co., Oregon, instead of Oregon City, Oregon, to commence on Friday before the third Sunday in June, 1911, at 10 o'clock a. m. W. J. HESS. Moderator.
I. F. COLEMAN, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held, the Lord willing, in their meetinghouse at Aberfeldy, Lambton Co., Ontario, seven miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

Friends will be met in Alvinston on Friday evening and cared for. Inquire for Wm. Young (merchant). Stay at his store until called for by the brethren.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.
JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in Kimmy Hall, No. 12 Third St., in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL B.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.

VOL. 79. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1911. NO. 13.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BYRNSIDE, W. Va.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find the experience of Elder Frederick W. Keene, which I would be pleased to see published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as I think many of your readers would enjoy it as I have. Brother Keene sent this to me in answer to a request.

Yours in tribulation,

G. B. BIRD.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

DEAR BROTHER:—It is with feelings of adoring gratitude that, reviewing the Lord's dealings with me, I attempt to pen an outline of the loving-kindness of the Lord, who hath saved a poor sinner like me.

I was born March 28th, 1856, in London, England. I was by nature a child of wrath even as others, and from my earliest memory I walked according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Thus I lived and walked in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind. I was trained up with every attention on the part of my parents, who sought continually to direct me in the way I should go, yet from my earliest recollections I was addicted to many open sins, and as I increased in years, so the open manifestations of my corrupt nature increased also. From my infancy to the age of fourteen I attended Sunday Schools, but all the moral teachings I received in them had little or no effect upon me, for I grew in all vileness; so desperate was my enmity to God that, although an eager reader of all kinds of books, I would scan the pages of all before reading, lest they should contain the name of God. In the year 1870 my parents emigrated to Canada, and settled for a short time in Montreal. Here I went to work in a tobacconist's store, and became acquainted with a number of young men, companions of my employer. If there ever was a den of iniquity, it was the association of those young gentlemen (such no doubt many of them were thought to be in the estimation of many) who assembled in a parlor adjoining the store. Being but a lad, and ever ready (when in bad company) to give vent to all manner of vileness, I was most readily admitted to their fellowship, and grew in vice with rapidity, could soon blaspheme as fluently as

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k a picture, but "I'm a miracle of grace." Often have I wondered if any of God's elect were at my age suffered to plunge so deeply into all vileness. O how I longed to be free from all restraint, how I wished the years to fly by, that I might attain to manhood. What revelings and banquetings and abominable vices I promised myself, and attain unto them I would, let the cost be what it would. Often do I shudder at the thought of what I might have become had not almighty and sovereign grace arrested me. I fear I should have come to the gallows, for even at the time I am now writing about I shrank from nothing to gratify my carnal appetite. "I'm a miracle of grace." Thus I continued until my sixteenth year, when the predestined time drew near in which it pleased God to call me by his grace and to reveal his Son Jesus Christ in me.

> "For thus the eternal counsel ran,
> Almighty grace, arrest that man;
> I felt the arrows of distress,
> And found I had no hiding-place."

On the first Sunday in April, 1871, I went to the First Baptist meeting, in Montreal. Being somewhat early, I sat in the pew contemplating all manner of evil which I intended to delight myself in the coming week. While thus occupied the preacher gave out his text: "Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."—Prov. xxvii. 1. In a moment all my schemes were frustrated, all my sinful anticipations blasted, and the terrors of the Almighty made me afraid. What the preacher said in his sermon I have not the slightest remembrance, but in my inmost soul that awful voice I heard again and again saying, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow." How I conducted myself during the service I know not; this I do know, I felt myself to be in the very belly of hell. All the day I was in misery, and when night drew nigh my trouble increased. I dared not sleep lest I should awaken in hell, for those wondrous words were sent repeatedly with crushing power to my poor, guilty soul, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow." Morning at length dawned, and I felt a little relief that I was yet alive upon the earth. I went to my occupation and thought to banish my fears in the companionship of devils, but I could not mingle with them, I could not sit with them, I was afraid the earth would open and swallow us up. The righteous demands of the holy law of God came to me, sin revived, all my sins arose and stared me in the face, while I felt that upon me was poured forth the awful curse of God, and before to-morrow I would be in hell. O what wrath burned within me against the Holy One of Israel. I felt he was an awful tyrant. Why could not God let me alone? O that I could tear him from his throne. O that there were no God. Though in my wicked heart I thought these things, yet no comfort did it give me. Of mercy I scarcely thought, I felt beyond that, I was too vile, my sins too great. God therefore had come to cut me off and damn me forever. All that week de-

spair and wrath possessed me. Truly "the law worketh wrath."

"Law and terrors do but harden,
All the while they work alone."

I could no longer run to the same excess of riot with my associates, and they thought it strange of me, and judged I was sick. Indeed I was, and beyond all creature power to heal. Next Sunday I went again to meeting, expecting to hear some dreadful message, for everything in the Bible I felt to be against me. The preacher announced his text: "God is love." I felt, Can it be so? A little ray of hope shone in, and I wished it might be so, but in a moment all was dashed away, for I felt if it were true, it could not be God loved me, and I sank yet lower in despair, yet again the still small voice said, "God is love," at which my enmity was slain. I felt drawn to the Lord, to seek him, to yearn for his mercy; I could hold out no longer, my heart commenced to break, and my eyes with tears to flow, and all the while I felt my vileness to increase tenfold more. O how loathsome I saw and felt myself to be! I bowed my head to hide my emotions from those sitting by, and poured forth my cries to God, and for the first time in my life I prayed. I spent the remainder of the day in secret, for I was afraid to let others see me. O what sorrow filled my soul! When night came I retired to my room, and in bitter cries and tears poured forth my trouble before the Most High. I felt the Lord must come and save me, or I must quickly perish in my dreadful guilt. "God be merciful to me a sinner," was my fervent cry. Then the thought would come, I have been so wicked, my life has been so corrupt, I am only adding to my guilt in thus presumptuously asking for mercy; but still that sweet declaration, "God is love," buoyed up my soul amidst the rolling billows of distress, and drew forth from my perishing soul the cry, Have mercy upon me, Lord, save me, I perish. While thus crying to the almighty God there came before me a vision of Jesus on the cross. I saw One hanging on a tree in agonies and blood, and a voice seemed to say in me, Salvation is in my dear Son. Then for the first time it dawned upon my soul the way of God's salvation. I did indeed feel my need of his salvation, and fully convinced was I that I could not save myself. I thought he looked so pityingly upon me, saying, "Look unto me." It was revealed to my heart that in some mysterious and wonderful way Jesus bore our sins in his own body on the tree. He was smitten of God and afflicted. "For the transgression of my people was he stricken." O what a sacred and awful sight to view: Christ crucified, while the Holy Ghost opens up to our souls the unfathomable depths of Jehovah's justice and grace declared in the atonement made by Christ's precious blood. While thus at the feet of the crucified One, crying for forgiveness of my sins, longing for some word, some glance to heal my painful wounds and save me from my sin and misery, I thought the dear Redeemer looked down upon me from the cross with such compassion and tender love in his countenance, and said, I suffered for thee. Immediately my burden was gone, and sweet joy and peace flowed into my soul; I wept aloud for joy. This awakened my brother, who was sleeping in the room, who told me to stop my noise. I tried to be quiet, but could not; weep and bless the name of the Lord I must, for he had put the new song in my mouth, and sing it I must. Still the vision of

the suffering Emmanuel was before me; O how I loved him!

"Was it for crimes that I had done,
He groaned upon the tree?"

O how my heart was pained for him, how I pitied and mourned over him, and O what a poor, vile sinner did I see myself to be. Never did I see such blackness, such horribleness in sin, and I felt I was the vilest of the human race; but he had said, I suffered for thee, and I wept for joy, lost in wonder, love and praise. Thus I spent the night. While at breakfast in the morning a cloud came over me, for I dreaded the thought of going to work. My heart went up to God to go with me and sustain me. I avoided all intercourse with my former associates, but they noticed that I was so changed, and were satisfied that I was not sick, and wondered what could have come over me that I did not enter into their filthy conversation and practices. They pressed me so hard to know the reason that I told them, and warned them of the fearful state they were in. At this they mocked, and burst out into roars of laughter, and I became the laughing-stock of them all. Temptations to indulge in my former vile practices came upon me with awful power, so that I shuddered, for I feared lest I should fall. I cried night and day to the Lord to preserve me, for I felt I had no strength to stand against such floods of temptation. I found some very precious moments in reading the New Testament, which I had taken to the store with me, for I often had considerable leisure time. Every precious thing I read I felt to be mine. What comforting and glorious things I found in the Scriptures, and wonderful things that I did not understand, yet I felt, It is all mine, for Jesus is mine.

In the beginning of the month of May I removed with my parents from the city of Montreal to Ingersoll, Ontario. I was very glad to do so, for I dreaded the thought of continuing to live in Montreal. We had been living but a few weeks in Ingersoll when one Sunday evening, while returning from the preaching at the Baptist meetinghouse with my father and mother, a certain member overtook us and entered into conversation with my parents about the sermon we had just listened to. He asked my father how he had enjoyed it. My father replied there were some things that were true in what the preacher had said, but he could not enjoy it, for although there was a little free grace spoken of, it all ended in free will. There and then a contention arose, and I joined in against my father, for my father contended that there is an election of grace, and that Christ Jesus died to redeem the elect only, and that none but the elect were ever born again, and that not of man's supposed free will, but of God, and I well remember how wonderfully startling was that statement to my soul, when as my father was speaking of the atonement of Christ he repeated Isaiah liii. 11: "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." But so foolish and ignorant was I, I felt quite angry at such doctrine, and contended all I knew how against it. But on arriving home my father opened the Bible and read several portions to me. My mouth was stopped, for I could not reply against God. I was astonished, and darkness enshrouded me. I went to the Lord with my trouble, and besought him to guide me into the truth, and not to suffer me to be led astray by my parents. The next morning, as soon as I dressed, I took up the Bible and turned to some of the texts my father had read to me,

for I felt he must have read them wrong, but there was the doctrine, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," and others of like character. I was sorely troubled. This doctrine seemed to change the face of God to me, or rather, I had hard thoughts of my God, yet I could not rest, I must know if this doctrine is the truth or not the truth. So every night on returning home from my work I read the Bible, and in great anxiety cried to the Lord to teach me. My parents, seeing me studying the word, said nothing to me. In a few days I was astonished, but fully convinced that Jehovah hath a people according to his eternal election of them in Christ Jesus, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, and very soon I was led to see some of the beauty and glory therein, and then was I troubled indeed, for I felt, Unless I am one of God's chosen I am lost, and all I have experienced is vain. Temptations set in, and the adversary told me that I was too vile, I had gone too far in sin. O how wretched I became; I felt indeed that I had no claim upon God, and at times I felt that my only hope was in that "election of grace," for I was so unworthy. I thought, Surely what I have so lately known of the mercy of God is an evidence that Jehovah delighteth in me; I should never have known these things had not the Lord chosen me unto salvation, and then the next moment I would sink into the depths again. I went on in this way for some time, with many cries to the Lord to assure me whether I were his or not, and the dear Lord in his own time answered my poor cry, and sent his word and healed me, saying, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee."

"O wondrous grace, and mystery profound,
In God's eternal purpose I was found;
His sovereign love, his grace and deep decree
In some mysterious way included me."

How my heart leaped for joy, and I praised the Lord with joyful lips.

"How happy are we, our election who see,
And venture, O Lord, for salvation on thee!
In Jesus approved, eternally loved,
Upheld by thy power we cannot be moved."

I soon discerned that the doctrines I heard preached at the Baptist chapel were not the doctrine of Christ, so I very seldom entered the place. I was indulged with much sweet enjoyment of the electing love of God, and day by day I took sweet delight in studying the Scriptures, looking unto the Lord continually for guidance into all truth. As I learned doctrine, I thought every one that made a profession was what he professed, a child of God, and was taught of God, but I found upon speaking to them of the doctrine of Christ, and of my experience thereof, that they loathed me and my doctrine. This often gave me many sorrowful seasons, and I wondered if it could be possible that I was deceived, but my precious Lord repeatedly gave me assurances that I had been taught of him, and O what blessed seasons of enjoyment I had in the truth as it is in Jesus. Those were sunny days, but since then I have proved the days of darkness to be many. I had always believed in believers' baptism, and felt it was my privilege to be baptized, but I looked upon baptism simply as a door into the church, and I did not wish to join the Baptists where I was then living, for I felt I could not fellowship such preaching as I heard there, and felt no fellowship for those who could. In the month of June, 1873, I was led to see the spiritual truth which the ordinance sets

forth, and I felt a very great longing to be baptized, but still I knew not what to do, for I thought, If I am baptized by the Baptist minister, and become a member, I shall naturally be expected to attend their meetings, and this I dreaded. But at length, so great was my desire to be baptized that I went to the Baptist preacher and told him my wish. He said he would baptize me. While at the meetinghouse the following Sunday two men drew near me and began to question me relative to my hope in Christ Jesus. I told them I hoped I was born again, that I was first brought to a lively hope while living in Montreal, and to three or four more questions I answered yes or no. I was astonished in a day or two to be told that I had been received by the church upon the report of the committee, and was to be baptized the next Sunday. Next Sunday came (June 29th). I heard a wretched discourse in the morning. In the evening what I heard preached was still worse, so while the preaching was going on I turned to my Bible and read several portions of God's word relative to baptism, and I was indulged with some sweet moments in meditation upon the precious truth. After the usual service the baptistry in the meetinghouse was opened and I went down into the water. I did indeed feel the sweetness of baptism. I was immersed, but all the next week I had much anxiety of heart, for I feared I could not live with that denomination. On Sunday I went to hear the preaching, and was grieved and annoyed with what I heard. After the sermon the Lord's supper was to be administered, but previous thereto I was to receive the right hand of fellowship, and most wretched was I while all this was being done, darkness covered me. At night I went again to meeting, and my feelings were distracted, and I felt, I can never live here.

I will now try to relate some of the dealings of the Lord with my soul as he has led me about, and of my call to the work of the gospel ministry. Some little time previous to my joining the New School Baptists I felt the hand of the Lord laid upon me, and his voice in me calling me to preach the gospel of the grace of God. I was reading the first chapter of Jeremiah, and had read but a few verses, and while meditating thereon these words were spoken with such power in my soul that I trembled before God: "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee; and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." I arose from the table where I was sitting in great agitation, and retired to my bedroom and fell upon my knees, exclaiming within myself, What does this mean? Does it mean that the Lord has purposed that I shall preach the gospel? Again the same words came to my mind. Then I told the Lord amidst my flowing tears that I was too young in years, that I was but a babe in knowledge, and while thus pouring forth my soul's agitations before him God said in my heart, "Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak." I was dumb with amazement at these words, and when my troubled heart found utterance I prayed to the Lord that since it was his will that I should speak in his name, he would open up the way, mould me for his service and make me an able minister of the new covenant. From that day to the present I have been constrained to cry unto the Lord for teaching and for ability which God alone can bestow, that I may preach Christ's gos-

pel. At the time that I joined the New School Baptists I was in rather poor health, and in a little time after I was brought quite low, and continued in a very delicate state of health for nearly three years, so much so that nearly the whole time I was confined within doors. During all that time that word, "Thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak," continued with power to rest upon my spirit, so that day and night this was the burden of my life, yet how mysterious did the ways of the Lord seem to me; feeling his word like a fire in me, and yet was I so low in health oftentimes that I could scarcely move. These years of sickness were very profitable years to me; His word was my constant meditation, and many, many experimental teachings did I receive in the furnace of my affliction at the hands of our gracious God. O how constant was my beloved Christ Jesus to me. Amid all my pain and weariness, my repinings and sinfulness, the dear Savior was with me, sustaining and comforting me. Oftentimes during my sickness I was brought apparently to the gates of death, and nature seemed to say I could not live, but still I felt I must get well, for the Lord had called me to preach the gospel, and not a sermon had I preached yet. At one time I was so low that I thought, Surely I cannot live, and if it was the Lord's will I felt quite willing to die. I went to my dear Lord and cast all my care upon him, and with tears I besought him to give me some assurance of his will concerning me. He heard my cry, yes, he inclined unto me and said in me with much power and assurance, "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord." O what rejoicing I had in my beloved Redeemer, so that my heart exclaimed, "Hope in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." Then I fully believed I should yet have sufficient health to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. A short time after this there was a gradual improvement in my health, and on Feb. 28th, 1875, I was privileged to speak for the first time publicly in the name of the Lord. I had received an invitation from the "British Calvinistic Baptist Church," of London, Ontario, (the city in which I was then residing) to speak to them. This church was composed of colored people. I implored the Lord to open my mouth to speak the truth as it is in Jesus, and for his presence to go with me. O with what trembling and helplessness did I go to that meetinghouse. I felt I should surely be dumb, and have nothing given me to say, but my God came to my help and whispered these words to my soul, "Fear not; for I am with thee." I was strengthened, and was enabled to speak from 1 John ii. 22. In the evening there was a large gathering, and as I looked down from the pulpit at the array of earnest black faces my heart sank within me; I cried to the Lord to appear in my behalf, and to undertake for me. I was a little encouraged by seeing a few white persons present, whom I was acquainted with, who had when in England belonged to the Strict Particular Baptists, for I felt an assurance that their cries were unto God in my behalf. I preached from the words, "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." I was indulged with sweet liberty in speaking, and several of the hearers dropped words of encouragement, testifying that they were edified by the truth I had preached. While walking home what heartfelt praises could I render to the

Lord for his surprising grace in thus enabling me to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. I continued to preach to that colored congregation about five months, at the end of which time the few Strict Particular Baptists proposed that they would rent a building, and that I should preach to them. We rented a hall, and I preached there nearly six months. All went on well for a little time, but the adversary, the devil, got his foot in among us, and all came to naught. I was so discouraged that I thought I should never preach again, but preach I must, for that word was continually ringing in my ears, "Thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak." I continued preaching every Sunday among the New School Baptists (called Regular Baptists in Canada), but met with nothing but reproach. In the month of January, 1877, I became acquainted with a church in Lobo called the Covenanted Baptist Church, and was invited to preach to them, which I did, and although while among them I was greatly tried, yet did I find many a precious season of experimental fellowship, and truly they were the people of God. After preaching to them for about six months I was invited to join them, but as I could not see my way clear to do so I discontinued preaching among them. From church to church among the other Baptists I continued to preach, and among them all I found a few who rejoiced to hear that "salvation is of the Lord," and they loved me also for the truth's sake. But O what discouragements I encountered, they were all, with very few exceptions, against me, and fretted and rebelled against my ministry. So cast down have I been at times, when all faces have been set in array against me, that I have gone to the Lord in the bitterness of my soul, and with many tears have told him all my griefs. Can it be that I am preaching the truth? O what heart-searchings I had, and sore temptations I had from men and from Satan not to be so outspoken on certain points of doctrine, but such preciousness did I in my temptations find in the very doctrine that I was tempted to hold back that I could not but speak the things that I had seen and heard. At other times, in my cowardice I have asked the Lord to remove from me the necessity I felt laid upon me to preach the gospel, and, like Jonah, would have fled from the work, only that I feared I should be swallowed up in the belly of hell. I felt I was alone in America, for I had never found any that preached the gospel. Many of them were waiting for my halting, and had they known the sorrows and anxieties I endured they would have known that I was indeed "ready to halt," and but for the grace of God I should have become "a castaway" long ago. In the purpose of God, on Sept. 21st, 1879, I was preaching in Newbury, Ontario, at which time two of the deacons of the Euphemia Regular Baptist Church were present. At the close of the service one of them inquired of me if I did not find my preaching to meet with opposition. I told him I most certainly did, and that nearly all the Baptists would spew it out of their mouths. He replied, "I know it to be the truth by my own experience." I was invited by him, and the other deacon also, to come and preach to the church in Euphemia, to which I consented, and from that time until the end of the year 1880 I continued to do so. With the deacon who first spoke to me, and a few other members of this church, I spent some of the hap-

piest moments in experimental fellowship in the gospel of God's dear Son. But I had not been long among this assembly before many of the members began to manifest their hatred to Christ's gospel, and what I preached was soon by way of reproach denominated "Old School doctrine." This manifest enmity against my ministry continued the whole time I was among them, and it became the talk of the neighborhood, so that my life was one of bitter reproaches, and sore troubles I underwent. But my God stood by me, and by his grace I was enabled to "contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." While living in Euphemia I found a few members belonging to the Old School Baptists, and with them immediately I was in sweet accord. Elder Wm. L. Beebe came to preach in this neighborhood, and out of curiosity I went to hear him, but filled with the greatest of prejudice against him because of reports that had been sounded in my ears, and although I could not deny that what I heard was the truth, yet such were my suspicions I received no profit. I heard him preach again with the same results, but upon hearing him preach the third time the word came with such sweet power that all my prejudices were slain, and I could but love the man who could thus reach my soul in his ministry, and after the sermon, while in conversation with him, I was the more attached to him for the truth's sake. The members of the Old School Baptists that I became acquainted with invited me repeatedly to come among them, assuring me that I would find a home, but this I felt was impossible, as I found I would have to be baptized, for I did not see just then that my former immersion was nothing but a counterfeit baptism to which in my ignorance I had yielded myself. But the Lord afterward graciously opened my eyes to see the precious gospel order of the churches of the new testament. I had no home among the people to whom I was preaching, and I spent the year 1880 greatly tossed about, and at times so tried was my soul that I wished I could die, and have longed for wings like a dove, that I might fly away and be at rest. All this was my infirmity, nevertheless the Lord stood by me, and in answer to my prayers I felt the Lord leading me to come out from these Babylonish Baptists, and to be separate. On the last Sunday before Christmas, 1880, I preached my last sermon for them from the text, "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein."—Jer. vi. 16. After preaching I read before the congregation my reasons for withdrawing from them, and thus publicly withdrew. O what a relief I felt, and yet I knew not yet where to go; I stood alone. I purposed to continue preaching, being persuaded that God would guide me, for a few weeks before this my dear Lord and Redeemer had very comfortingly spoken to me, saying, "I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go." I preached in the schoolhouses around where I lived for a few weeks, and then learned that the Old School Baptists were to hold a quarterly meeting in Duart, some twenty miles from my home, so I decided to attend, little thinking what would result from my going. But my God had said, I am the Lord thy God, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go. On Saturday morning Elder Pollard preached,

and at once I felt to rejoice in the doctrine that I heard, and I also felt a union to him and to the people who could fellowship such doctrine. In the evening Elder W. L. Beebe preached, and I had quite a feast, and such a love sprang up within me to the assembled church that fed upon such precious doctrine, and I longed to live and to die with them. "The joyful sound" that I had heard preached that day was what I had known for many a day, and had been longing to hear others preach; I felt indeed they were my people, and their God was my God. On returning to the house of the friends who entertained us, I told my wife that I felt I must cast my lot among the people of God that I had found. O what a night I spent, such love I felt to the church of God, and such longings I felt to be in church fellowship with them, and yet I feared that I should take some step that was contrary to the Lord's will. I spent most of the night in prayer to God for his guidance. On Sunday morning I went to the place of assembly, looking up to the Lord for some word of counsel. I was much profited by the preaching, and all through the service I pleaded with the Lord to give me some word, but still no word came; but while the congregation was singing the closing hymn these words were sent to me, Go in this thy might, thou mighty man of valor. I doubted if it could be the Lord that was speaking in me, but again the still small voice spake the same words to me, and O what delight filled my soul; I could have wept aloud for joy. At the close of the service I spoke to Elder Beebe, and expressed to him my desire to unite with the church. He answered me saying, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standeth thou without?" I spent a very happy time during the rest of the meetings, though harassed at times by the devil and self. I thought perhaps it would be better if I returned home first to tell my earthly kindred of what I intended doing, for what, I asked myself, will they think if I unite with the "sect everywhere spoken against," and against which in my ignorance I also had spoken? But in the preaching I heard these words, "I conferred not with flesh and blood," followed up by the words, "What is that to thee? Follow thou me." I felt this word to be a word of counsel and reproof, and I said, I will go in his might. On Monday I related my experience to the church, and was received, and "the same day" was baptized by Elder William L. Beebe. O what a sweet time I experienced. I returned home rejoicing. How I could bless the name of the Lord for leading me to the house of God, and continually from that day to the present I have felt constrained to bless the Lord, the Shepherd of Israel, that he has given me a home among the household of faith. Twenty years I have been preaching among the churches of Christ, a poor, unprofitable servant, but this I can say,

"Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die."

Amen. FRED. W. KEENE.

NASHVILLE, Tennessee.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have been reading the history of ancient times, giving an account of antichrist in its youth. In the early days of Saul of Tarsus it manifested itself in persecuting the church of God, and was filled with falsehood, which was taught in their theological schools. They adorned self with a great show of beauty and piety, which was very unsuitable for the church

of God. The system of iniquity was completed with its ministers great and small, and they were supported by those who were induced to follow them with evil hearts. This was and is that congregation which, taken together, comprises what in the Scriptures is called antichrist, or Babylon, the great whore, the man of sin, the son of perdition, and his ministers are called false prophets, lying teachers, the ministers of darkness, wandering stars, and Balaamites, being disguised under the name of Christ and his church. These oppose that salvation which Christ wrought, and also oppose true believers, who are participators by faith and hope in Christ. Antichrist opposes the truth by the wisdom of this world, by counterfeit holiness, by riches, honors and dignities, sitting in high places. They have also great appellations, such as Rev. and D. D., which should be doctors of the devil rather than doctors of divinity, for these titles are after the works of the devil, and constitute a hypocritical religion, and are filled with falsehood. This must be the religion of the world. These Pharisees and ministers and doctors, with the people of the world, all are mingled together, and all work together for means, or money, calling themselves true ministers of God. They pretend to be able to preach the truth, but instead preach falsehood, insomuch that the true church is, in their estimation, only worthy to be trodden under foot. This religion is the deceivableness of unrighteousness, which while having an outward show of holiness by continuing in prayer and fastings, or, as the apostle said, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof, yet is only that antichrist which covers his lying wickedness with the cloak of affected piety, that they may not be rejected. The word of God in both the Old and the New Testaments admonishes christians by express command to separate themselves from antichrist. See the following Scriptures: Isaiah lii. 12; Jer. l. 8; Num. xvi. 21; Lev. xx. 24; Exodus xxxiv. 12–15; Exodus xx.; Deut. xxii. It is now manifest that Christ is come, according to the New Testament, and hath suffered death, that he might gather together the children of God. (See John xii.) This gathering is on account of the unity of the truth, and this involves separation from others. Christ enjoined this upon his disciples: Except ye forsake father and mother, ye cannot be my disciples. They are also warned to beware of false prophets which should come unto them in sheep's clothing. Also they were to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and to take heed lest any man should seduce them, for he said, "Many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many," and these Scriptures are fulfilled. They raise bars of fellowship and do not obey the Lord's precepts. The true people of God are charged and commanded to go out from among them. It is said, Come out of her, my people, and be not partakers of her sins, that ye receive not of her plagues. The apostle says, Have no fellowship with unbelievers, no agreement with unrighteousness; light hath no agreement with darkness. And, What concord is there between Christ and the devil? True believers are commanded to come out from among them and be separate, and not touch the unclean thing. These the Father says he will be a Father unto, and they shall be his sons and daughters. God has commanded his people to separate from antichrist under the figure of the great whore, as recorded in Revelation. Man has no

part in the work of the salvation of the soul. None will be saved of all mankind save those who have been given to the Son by the Father; these will be testified to in God's appointed time. All who believe in the revealed will of God according to the holy Scriptures will feel to submit all to the hands of our Benefactor, who has, as we hope, given us a name which is more precious than the gold of Ophir. Worldly religionists are followers of antichrist. We hope that we have attached ourselves, by the will of God, to the truth of Christ. Peter said, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life," and this is all our hope. How good it would be if all who have received a hope in Christ would come out, denying all the works of antichrist and come together in fellowship, being drawn like penitent children with all humility of spirit, love and fellowship, letting all past differences be at an end. In this the peace of Zion would prosper, and we should grow up together an holy temple in the Lord. The great cause of present strife and hard sayings seems to be upon the doctrine of predestination of all things. This should not be. Predestination is a truth taught in the holy word, and it is believed by those who are taught of God in his revealed will. In this is the love and fellowship of the household of faith, and it is for the uplifting of Jesus on high. This uplifting is due to him infinitely above all things else. We have hope in God through Jesus Christ and his worthiness. Sufficiency of grace and righteousness, true repentance, final perseverance and everlasting life are all found in him. It is from the great love of the world that spring up all the sin and troubles in the churches. All who thus sin are contaminated with false hopes, which antichrist holds out, and which are called forward movements, to help the Lord save souls; this is antichrist of the darkest dye; it is but man's wisdom in all the so-called churches, which are combining together to revolutionize the world. Antichrist has become very bold in limiting our great Benefactor, even charging him with being the author of sin if his predestination be true. But he declares the end from the beginning, from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. I have spoken, I have purposed, I will also do it. Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness. (Isaiah xlvi. 10–12.) But the prayer of the children of God is that he will forgive all their transgressions and shortcomings while in this body of clay. We know that he has power over all creatures, to dispose of them as seems good unto himself; also we believe that he has limited all his creation, saying, Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther. This includes even the wicked serpent, the devil.

Dear brethren, I trust the Lord has directed my mind and pen to write upon this subject, and also that I have not erred in doing so. Remember me, dear brethren, for I feel poor in spirit.

Your brother in hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

ELGIN, Oregon.

DEAR EDITORS:—I herewith send you a letter received yesterday from brother Beeman; it was read with much interest by me, and I believe it will be by the readers of the SIGNS, and I am going to take the liberty to send it to you for your disposal, without brother Beeman's consent, and risk the consequences. I

feel the letter belonged to me when it left my brother's hands, and if I give it to my brethren and sisters then my brother should be willing to leave it to the judgment of our editors whether or not it will be of benefit to the brotherhood generally; God's people are one family, and what is of interest to one is generally to all. May the dear Lord bless you, dear editors, in your labors.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

TIAWAH, Okla., April 23, 1911.

ELDER G. E. MAYFIELD—DEAR BROTHER:—Your letter, which was published in the last number of the SIGNS, has been of so much strength to me that I thought it right for me to tell you of it. The Scripture which you used was one that has weighed heavily upon my mind for more than forty years. In all my writing and preaching during that time it has seemed that I dare not refer to it, because years ago, after I had joined the church, and felt that the Lord had canceled my sins, that very Scripture: "For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins," stared me in the face, because I felt that I had sinned willfully after I had received evidence that the Lord was gracious towards me in pardoning my sins that were past. It seemed to me that the apostle meant a condition that the saints could get into and thus "sin willfully," sin with their eyes open to the knowledge of the truth; that they could sin, notwithstanding that they had the testimony of Jesus within them, and thus be cut off from any atonement after the willful sin was committed. True, I could see that this position would rob the Lord Jesus of his absolute power over all flesh and make the creature able to set aside the all-cleansing efficacy of the blood of the new covenant. It did seem to me in this tenth chapter of Hebrews that Paul was not dealing in suppositions, but speaking of real things that might and could occur, thus warning the saints to beware how they lived and acted for the future; as if to say: The atonement has been made for all your sins, but see now that ye sin no more, because there is no more sacrifice for your sins. His argument here would seem to be in line with his language in the second chapter of Hebrews: "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" Also in th twelfth chapter: "See that ye refuse no him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on eart much more shall not we escape we turn away from him that spe from heaven." It appears in this called Hebrews that the apostle stantly reminding his Jewish bre their disobedience and i under the law dispensation also illustrating the vast the new covenant above th by drawing suppositions about to compare the (covenant) with the othe trasted one against th places while showing t that their only hope f liverance is through Christ; that though strongly attached t hood and the r they all could not and that the m offerings could the flesh. As p shows how eac lished, viz., on commandment

of an endless life. The Levitical priests were made without oath, but He who is made priest after the order of Melchisedec is made priest by the oath of Him who liveth forever and ever. He sware by himself—he could not swear by any one greater. He is above all. "The Lord sware and will not repent." With God there is no repenting or turning away from his path, or way; he is of one mind, and none can turn him. "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Believing as I have for more than fifty years, that God is unchangeable, I wonder at myself that I should ake his language so seriously and underand him to mean that saints by their wn acts can stumble clear down to the om of hell and eternally stay there se they sinned willfully after they nlightened. The only excuse that attempt to give for looking upon lful sinning" as being horrible plate is, as I have stated, my ling of sin and condemnation, I had sinned with my flesh cuse, when it seemed that otten along just as well But all the way along the black marks of sin; s but that sin is comhe presence of sweet power of Jesus, the as the humblest of whose name is exe, not only in this orld which is to ve been such a a great sinner, 's exhortation: I do feel at re constantly e name of the em to be go- o Jesus for mercy and deliverance. There have been a number of times during sleep that I was sure that I was dropping down to eternity, and every time my soul seemed to cry out for the Lord to deliver me. Sometimes the excitement was so great that I cannot explain it; many times my voice would rise to the awakening of myself and all in the house. Although these were called nightmares, and perhaps caused by physical derangements, yet they always left their impressions upon my mind.

Since I commenced this I have wanted to tell you that I do not remember that any of the brethren have spoken as you have on that Scripture. There is no doubt but that all consistent Old School Baptists agree with you; your position must be correct; it accords with other Scripture, and I am at a loss why I have been so dumb and slow to believe that God's quickened people cannot sin willfully. This is their experience, for: "What I hate, that do I." "Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." A good and lawful excuse for being such creatures as we are is the following: "Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." He has declared that he does things that he did not want to do. Are we in fellowship with Paul in these things? Can we sum up as Paul did about this conflict? "So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." Can we console ourselves from other Scripture teaching, seeing that we do not consent to our own sinning? Yes. Now, while we are considering our inability to have our own way about doing, or not doing, hear the same apostle:

"There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." No condemnation! Then they are justified, then no charge stands against them. Why is this so? Because they are in Christ Jesus. How do they walk? After the Spirit. Is this walk outward show, actions of the flesh that men can see, or the holy desire of the mind? It cannot be the outward show, but an eye single to the glory of the Lord, pressing on "towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

In hope of immortality, your brother,

J. F. BEEMAN.

REESE, Texas, Jan. 15, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—After somewhat of a delay I will send you the money due on my subscription for the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It seems that we cannot do without it. Sometimes I say to my companion that it looks as though we were too cramped financially to continue it, and that we will just send what is due and have you stop it, but she will say, "We just could not get along without it," and I feel that way, too. Ah, yes, dear brethren, how comforting it is to us when we read its columns and find so much testimony to the one and selfsame glorious doctrine of salvation by grace, to the exaltation of God and the abasement of man. Glory and honor belong to and are given to God for life and salvation. How sweet is the doctrine that Jesus is the way, and the truth, and the life; he is the all-sufficient Savior of sinners. He blotted out all their sins when he was nailed to the tree, and said, "It is finished." I will say with the psalmist, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day." How blessed are we when we hear or read the joyful news that Jesus is our Husband, Priest and King, our all. He is through all, and in all, and over all. It is our blessed faith and hope that we shall be clothed with immortality when time and time things shall be no more.

But I will have to close lest I make this letter too long. I trust you will pardon me for not sending my remittance before. Should you deem this worthy of a place in the SIGNS, you are at liberty to publish it, but if not, all will be right with me. May God's blessing rest upo[illegible] both editors and readers of the SIGNS, [illegible] the sincere desire of a sinner saved [illegible] grace.

WM. L. LILES

BALTIMORE, Md., June 12 [illegible]

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—It i[illegible] sorrow that I send you the foll[illegible] formation: I just received a[illegible] dated Robersonville, N. C., Ju[illegible] saying that Elder G. D. R[illegible] paralyzed on June 8th. He [illegible] pain, and was conscious [illegible] seven o'clock last night, [illegible] gently at half-past nine [illegible] the notice in the next [illegible] SIGNS, as many who r[illegible] loved him. He was [illegible] me, and one of my [illegible] and the notice of h[illegible] quite a shock to me [illegible] full of joy and com[illegible] poet said, "Mixtur[illegible] daily do pass thr[illegible] Roberson was with [illegible] 2nd, on his way h[illegible] tion.

Yesterday I baptized my son Alvis' wife, Miss Ella Merryman and Mr. Littleton Godwin. I desire to thank God for the glorious presence of his Son, and to bow low at his feet in every sorrow, knowing that he doeth all things well.

Your brother in sorrow,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

[WE have just received the above letter from brother Rowe, which tells of what will bring sadness to the hearts of many in this section who knew and loved him who has departed. The news of Elder Roberson's sudden death comes as a great shock to us. We can but grieve that we shall see his face no more.—C.]

THE WILL OF GOD.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—There two phases or realities relative to 's will which I wish some brother ld explain, for there are so many things that seem to lack harmony we properly consider them in relaeir true harmony with that will. hew vii. 21; xii. 50, seems to ea that all who do the will of (Christ's) brother, sister and hall enter into the kingdom s this will the universal will hings, or is it the active which he works in them of his good pleasure? ond, Peter in his first "It is better, if the hat ye suffer for well doing." Does God e who "speak evil same manner that o will and to do"? the original and ng to which he army of heaven ve cannot make pose) with the other; but my inquiry is as to the difference between these two classes of men relative to the two phases of God's will; that is, does he will in them both alike? While I think not, yet I do not feel qualified to suitably illustrate the difference in words. Brethren have beautifully written on God's will, his purposes and his works, yet there is room for profitable and experimental application of these two lines of thought. Some brethren seem to speak of God's will and all his works alike, and therefore it leads them into a denial of God's willing that anything evil shall come, as though that will actively brought the evil to pass. Of course none of us believe that, but I cannot hope to bring out that point as I would wish to, so I ask the brethren to help me out of this mystery. Please write on it.

In humble hope, A. B. BREES.

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio, March 12, 1911.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., May 21, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—I send you for publication an obituary handed me recently. Although the mother has been dead some years, she is held in fond remembrance, not only by her own family, but she had many warm friends, as she was particularly gifted. She and my dear mother were youthful friends. When both married and raised families they taught them to respect each other. I for one miss Aunt Julia (as she was known far and near). She was of a cheerful disposition, and loved to raise the downcast head. She was gifted with a discerning mind, which enabled her to be of great benefit to many in her day and time. Now while I sit lonely and sad, and think of the dear, good company I used to have and pleasant meetings I used to enjoy, O, I feel I am just waiting on the shores

of time to be called over, I hope soon. I hope it is not wrong to crave to lay down dull mortality. I wish to say to the dear, bereaved sister who sent the article written by her husband, which appeared in the May 15th SIGNS, page 299, I think it made good reading for the paper. O, if my poor, stammering tongue and slow pen could only express what I feel, I could be a comfort to some one.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

(See obituary on page 414.)

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by A. E. Rittenhouse.)

The Delaware Association of Old School Baptists convened with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster Co., Pa., May 24th, 25th and 26th, 1911.

IT is a peculiar pleasure to address those who have come together here as dearly beloved brethren. Being witnesses of the same truths and travelers in the same paths we therefore have love for one another. It would seem well in a letter of this kind to mention some points of doctrine held by those who are gathered here, but let it be distinctly understood that we are not acting in any sense as rulers of the several churches that compose this association; that under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and the rules laid down in the New Testament, each church is an independent body, so far as its own government is concerned; that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom in the hearts of sinners, and through the revelations of the Holy Spirit they come to know God's holiness and their own unworthiness of his love and mercy, but as their eyes become opened more and more to their own condition, they earnestly desire the love of God, and a place in the company and love of his people. Having these desires, when Christ is made manifest to them as their Savior it is with great rejoicings on their part, not as a burden to keep the law that they have taken up of their own accord and purpose to carry through their lives, but they rejoice in Christ as their Redeemer, the good Shepherd who laid down his life for his sheep, who gathers the lambs with his arms and carries them in his bosom. We know God has almighty power, because he has put his fear before our eyes. We love him, because he has put his love in our minds. We own him before the world, because he has required of us to make a profession of his name before men, and it is his just due. All honor and praise belong to him; not unto us, but unto thy name be the praise. While we fear the Lord we would not do or think evil if we could help it, but pray that we be ever kept from sinful ways, know more of his loving-kindness, the angel of his presence be a guard round about us and his Spirit always our guide, that as we have put our trust in him we pray that he give us evidences by the way that our faith is not in vain. The testimony of the apostle Peter before the rulers and elders of the nation, when they objected to the doctrine being preached of a full and complete Savior in Jesus Christ, was, "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."—Acts iv. 20. Also in the tenth verse he says, "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole." No human beings ever made themselves to live or to be hungry for the things that sustain their natural life; they came to know themselves as beings, hav-

ing life and hungering for the things necessary for the sustenance of life. They who have desires for holy and sinless purity, who believe in a future state of existence higher and nobler than this, "where purity with love appears, and bliss without alloy," first discover in themselves desires to know more of these things. The fact of a person being a sinner would not be likely to trouble one much who had no desire to be free from sin. Desire for purity, holiness, a sense of need, a longing for an answer to the prayer that is continually in the heart, or some evidence from the Spirit to their inmost mind that their hope is not in vain, these are evidences of spiritual birth. We would not underrate the importance of the new birth, but rather prove that there has been a regeneration by the evidences of a new life, with new desires that were not there before, the knowledge of themselves as sinners, trying to get better, trying by months, then by weeks, then by days, keeping lists of their evil deeds in their minds, and trying to live above even the thoughts of evil, measuring themselves by the standard of purity, hoping for a time to get above the sinful nature of a fallen race, finally praying from the depths of their souls (although often without words) for mercy and relief from the never-ceasing sense of guilt that is weighing them down. How they enjoy hearing others talk of similar experiences, their burdens, their hopes, their joys and their faith. There was a time when they neither knew hatred of sin, waiting for deliverance, nor interest in the preaching. God has so ordained that some, like the apostle Peter, shall be witnesses to these hungry and thirsty little ones of the flock. They do not make anything new, or bring dead sinners to life, but are faithful witnesses of what they have seen and heard, testifying to the evidences of spiritual life: that great mystery, God manifest in the flesh. These men then cannot help speaking of the Savior of sinners, for he is a well of water springing up into everlasting life. This is our testimony before all people, that what we speak we have seen and heard, that by the name of Jesus of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised up from the dead, is this man made whole, or is each and every sinner saved who is given a knowledge of himself as a sinner, and a hope in God's mercy and everlasting love.

J. G. EUBANKS, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

(Written by Elder F. A. Chick.)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, convened with the church at Kingwood, Hunterdon County, N. J., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 31st and June 1st and 2nd, 1911, to the churches of which she is composed sends affectionate greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more being assembled together, as we trust, in the fear of the Lord, and as appointed by you, for the purpose of engaging in his worship and of mingling together, that we may confer together concerning the things that are of mutual interest to us and to the churches, we desire to comply with the long standing custom of addressing you by a Circular Letter, thus reporting to you what has been our mind in our meeting, and calling attention to some of the things that are of mutual interest to all who love God and his cause, that we all may be edified together. Many things are of importance to be kept in mind by us all. At this time, however, we are led to think especially of the need

of the churches, not only those composing this association, but everywhere, to be reminded of two things, viz., that the doctrine and order of the house of God be always kept in mind, and steadily maintained against all opposition, whether within or without, and that this be done in love; love to God first of all, and then love to the household of faith, and love for the principles of the doctrine of God, who is our Savior. Of these two things one should not be emphasized more than the other. Preaching, or declaring the truth in love, sums the whole matter up. We feel to call attention to this at this time, because there is always danger that we shall either fail to declare the full truth and contend for it, out of a fear that some one will be hurt by it, or else we shall be led to contend for the principles of truth without love, but with anger or malice, or in a spirit of contention and strife. The way is narrow between these two errors, and it is sure that great grace is needed to contend for the truth and yet have perfect love to all who may need instruction in it, or who may be ensnared by some error against which we ought to bear earnest testimony. We think that we have seen contention without love, and, on the other hand, we have seen, as we think, a mistaken love, which has led to a concealing of the truth. Neither of these are to be desired, but rather to be deplored. It seems sure to us that if any one loves the truth, and has been made free by it, that one will want to declare it for the purpose of bringing freedom to the minds of others, and not for contention and strife. Because that one loves those to whom he speaks he will desire to hold out to them that which has so signally blessed his own soul. To him the doctrine will not be regarded as a football over which to contend for the mastery, but it will be as the sunlight in which he has found warmth, and in which he desires that others shall also rejoice. Having tasted of the joys of freedom through the truth he will desire to see all the children of God also walking at liberty in it, and he will be stirred up in his heart when he sees those whom he loves as brethren ensnared by untruth, which always enslaves, for as the truth makes free, so, on the other hand, untruth enslaves. If any one really holds the truth at all, it must be in love. Hatred and truth, the truth of God, can never be joined together. One cannot strive to unbind the shackles that bind another unless he loves him who is bound. In this love he will not regard that other as an opponent to be put down, but as a dear friend to be released. On the other hand, love to another will lead to all the greater earnestness in presenting the truth. How full of examples of this are the Scriptures. In the records of the Old Testament how earnestly did the prophets, from Moses to Malachi, entreat, rebuke, warn and faithfully expose the sins of the people, because they must do so out of loyalty to the truth, and to the God of truth, and yet how plainly is it to be seen that their hearts were filled with love to the people to whom they spoke. They used stern, strong words often, just as one would strive to arouse a child or a friend to the danger into which they were entering by the use of the strongest words possible, and yet, though the manner and the words of such an one might seem harsh, they would be dictated by the warmest love, and would be spoken out of anguish of heart, and the words of the blessed Master to his disciples were sometimes full of heart-searching rebuke. He did not seek to hold back portions of the truth because they did not under-

stand it, or that he might not cause questionings in their minds. Once he rebuked them with the words, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of," and then in all the epistles we find faithful words setting forth and insisting upon the very things which were questioned among the churches. Surely we do not need to multiply instances of this from the epistles; all know the truth of this. If, then, a truth is questioned among the Lord's people there will be all the more need that it be presented, and love itself will dictate that it continues to be faithfully held forth. Perhaps nothing in all the word of God more clearly sets forth in what manner divine wisdom makes itself manifest than the words found in the last two verses of the third chapter of the epistle of James: "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." We desire to call attention especially that in this Scripture the first thing declared is, that this heavenly wisdom is pure: "First pure, then peaceable." There can be no peace until there is purity, and where purity is, there will be peace. But peace cannot precede purity, purity must always go before true peace. There is indeed a false peace which may accompany (and often does) impurity, but those who cry, "Peace, peace; when there is no peace," are condemned. This heavenly wisdom must make itself manifest, if it is to appear at all, in the life of those where it dwells. The apostle refers to the fruits of both kinds of wisdom. These fruits are not hidden, but belong to our words or deeds. There may be the appearance of peaceableness, gentleness, of ready yielding, of mercy toward men, with all the other fruits named here, when one is possessed with only that wisdom which is from beneath, and which is earthly, sensual, devilish, but this is only an appearance; there is nothing real in it. If we find any one who cries out for peace, gentleness, mercy and all other of these lovely graces, it is well to ask whether that one loves purity of faith, of doctrine and a faithful adherence to the word of God first of all. Unless this be first and uppermost it is to be believed that such an one is seeking, not the peace of God, but that which is of the flesh, and for the flesh, at the expense of truth itself. What may be called peace, based upon such a foundation, is but a mockery, and will not endure the test of that fire which consumes all that is dross. If, on the other hand, one is filled with the love of the truth of God, that truth which glorifies God and exalts the dear Redeemer, and which is the stay and strength of all who believe, he will also have, as one of the things which are inseparable from this pureness, peace. This peace will be, first of all, in his own heart, and then will appear in all his relations with his brethren, and to all men. The first requisite of peace with regard to others is that we have peace with God in our own hearts, and there can be no felt peace with God so long as we are in opposition to the teachings of God in his word. If we find in our hearts the single desire to receive all that the word of God declares, submitting our minds, our reason and our affections to his word, we shall know what the peace of God means, but not otherwise. How can one have peaceable thoughts toward others when he is being tossed to and fro upon the waves of doubt and unbelief? When one is standing upon the

sand he cannot minister strength to others. Impurity, in the sense of untruth, can bring no good thing to one's own soul, and if we are to be of any use to others it must always be through what we have tasted ourselves; we can only comfort others with the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. Is not this one of the reasons why we are told to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints? This contention is not that we may win a victory in argument over another, but that we may set forth that foundation which is sure, for the upholding of the weak and weary. If we desire to save our brethren from bondage and sorrow of heart we shall earnestly hold out that truth that makes free. We shall do so as one who would warn others of the dangers before them, lest they suffer loss, and in proportion as we love them we shall wax more and more earnest in our contention for that which will do them good. We shall in meekness seek to instruct those who oppose themselves; not those who oppose us, but those who oppose themselves. We do not think we are doing violence to the last words quoted if we say that all who oppose truth also oppose themselves; they are seeking their own harm. As a father or elder brother earnestly seeks to warn the unruly for their own good, urging upon them that in so doing they are wronging themselves, so Paul felt to warn and reprove his brethren, not only as regards departures into wrongdoing, but also as regards departures into false doctrine, and though they might hug this false doctrine to themselves as something very dear and precious to them, still he did not forbear; and though they might become his enemies because he told them the truth, still he did not forbear, for he sought their good rather than his own. He pitied their want of understanding of the truth, and so sought to stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance. When his brethren were departing from the truth, rebuke, in his estimation, was better than commendation. Where there are differences of judgment concerning the meaning of any portion of the word, or where some one or more are led away from the doctrine, as were the brethren of Galatia, or where some even oppose the doctrine, as was the case with some at Corinth, it is not best to be still about the matter, so letting the canker eat until the faith of some is overthrown. It is not well to cry, "Peace, peace," or, Let there be no contention, or, Let us compromise upon some form of words between the two opposites, at such times. It is well to urge patience, forbearance and kindness, but never well to say, We will let this one thing alone, and not preach about it. In this manner every principle of the doctrine or of the order of the church of God might be eliminated from our conversation and preaching, and we should be silenced from all our ministry. Compromise is but asking all, on both sides, to subscribe to what neither one believes. This, even common honesty would forbid. And where there are differences, saying that there are none will not make it to be so. Rather it will produce a still deeper wound to the conscience. We may well at times feel that we ought to bear and forbear with those who oppose themselves, and often we must still hold each other in fellowship, but let us not say we are agreed when we are not. We do not

speak here concerning seeming differences, but of real differences. It is indeed true that often we may fail to understand each other, and we ought in all cases to seek, first of all, to know just what we each may mean, and often it has been the case that differences have been found to be only seeming. This we are glad to believe, but it is well indeed to always remember that purity of doctrine ought to come first. This is the chief thing to be sought after, but it is not the only thing. To follow the things which make for peace is also good for us. But the one thing which most of all makes for peace is the acknowledging of the truth, and all true fellowship must be in the truth. In the house of God there are vessels of large quantity and vessels of small quantity; there are those who are clear in doctrine, who have been weaned from the breast and have become strong men, and there are babes in Christ, but there is one bond of fellowship among them all, and that is the truth as it is in Jesus.

Finally, brethren, let us exhort one another to abide in the form of doctrine which has been revealed to us, and which we have stood upon from the first organization of this association, and in which has been our fellowship. We may be sure that our God has not left his church during all these ages past in ignorance of any important principle of the doctrine of God our Savior, and so our fellowship is not only with one another, but we also in the truth sit down with all the fathers in the kingdom of God. May this fellowship continue among us.

J. M. FENTON, Moderator.
O. R. KUGLER, Clerk.

(Written by Elder H. C. Ker.)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Ebenezer Church, in New York city, June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1911, to the churches composing the same sends love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Having no desire to depart from our old established custom in addressing you in our annual Circular Letter, we call your attention to Romans xii. 1, 2: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

In the preceding chapter the apostle had been declaring the wisdom and knowledge of God in his dealings with the Jews and Gentiles; the breaking off of the natural branches (Jews), that the Gentiles, contrary to nature, might be grafted in and become partakers of the fatness of the tame olive Tree, which tree is Christ. The tame olive tree in nature is the only tree in existence that gives its own fruit to the graft; how striking therefore the figure! After fully setting forth the truth of the mercy of God through Christ in the salvation of the Gentiles, that it was all of free grace, and not because of anything good in them who were the children of wrath by nature, without hope and without God in the world, he began to exhort them to righteous living before God and men. The words, "I beseech you therefore, brethren," present brotherhood in Christ, and the sincere desire of the apostle, as a father of children, that they should live as one family, the children of God in honor of him and his cause. The words,

"by the mercies of God," give the reason why the children should live unto God, that service being the presentation of their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God. Such service was not, is not, more than should be expected or demanded for such great mercies of Him who loved us and gave himself for us. To present our bodies a living sacrifice means a living death, ever crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts. This is the way the life of Christ is made manifest in our mortal flesh. He, our forerunner, lived this life in the flesh, a life of sacrifice, a crucifixion of the flesh, never gratifying its desires once, that God might be glorified thereby. Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things he suffered. In this he was our example, nor does he demand of the saints of God more than he himself endured in living unto God the Father. Beginning with Abel, all the children of God have suffered in the flesh living unto God, some more than others, but Christ more than all. We should not think that the blessed Redeemer was made obedient by the things he suffered; his was willing obedience to the will of God; he delighted to do his will; it was his meat and his drink to do the will of God and to finish his work. It was by the living death, the constant crucifixion of the flesh, that he learned what the law of God given to Adam demanded. This, Adam never knew; he put forth his hand and satisfied the lusts of the flesh, therefore knew nothing of obedience, but Christ keeping that law, fulfilling it, made it honorable; hence he by the things he suffered in that living death learned obedience. The only way the followers of Jesus learn what God's law demands is in presenting their bodies a living sacrifice. Through the sufferings of Jesus he was made a perfect and merciful High Priest in things pertaining to God, and in that he was the Son of God, made perfect as a sacrifice for sin, he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him; in obeying him we obey the law of God which he himself obeyed.

The expression, "Be not conformed to this world," simply continues the exhortation to godliness. Being called out from the world, separated unto the gospel of Christ, we should not conform to the world in any sense, particularly to the religion thereof with its doctrines and commandments of men. To keep the faith and fight a good fight is what Paul means in this text. This he himself did, and he would have the brethren follow him as he followed Christ, saying to them, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." This life of crucifixion in Jesus, in Paul and in all saints, is approved of God, and it is in this approval that all obedient subjects of his kingdom prove that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. But they that be unruly, highminded, disobedient, bring upon themselves the vengeance of God and reap what they sow, for if they sow to their flesh they shall of the flesh reap corruption.

Brethren, "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." "As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." Amen.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1911.

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1 CORINTHIANS I. 18.

"FOR the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."

Perhaps in no one thing does the truth of the first clause of this text appear more clearly than in the modern statements made again and again in the press and in the pulpit that the coming of Christ into the world, and the preaching of the gospel, and the design of the church, are for the lifting up of the world at large, and the advancement of it in all that is beautiful and desirable to the taste of men, until there shall some day be a glorified humanity, exalted far above all that the world has ever seen or known heretofore. We see expressions of this kind in reported sermons, and in articles written especially for publication in papers and magazines, both secular and religious; in fact, we have seen nothing but this presented as the design of the coming of the blessed Lord and as the hope that is set before us in the gospel. There is an entire ignoring of all that the Scriptures declare concerning the design of the coming and death of the blessed Lord, and of the one hope set before us in the gospel, of salvation from sin and death and hell. The one truth declared by the angel, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins," is entirely ignored and laid one side, as of little importance. These articles and these sermons are from the pen of men who profess to be ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ. Were these things from the pen of the Jew or the Greek, and not from professed christians, it has seemed to us that we should not regard them with such surprise and sorrow as we cannot help feeling when we read them. We expect nothing better from the open enemies of the cross, but here are professed friends of the Savior crucifying him and seeking to put him to an open shame. To such minds the simple story of the cross of Jesus, or of his dying to save sinners from final woe, seems foolishness indeed. Such men deny that Jesus died for men, or that if he did, his death can avail anything toward salvation for them. It is denied that men are the purchase of his blood, that his death can wash away the sins of others, and it is openly said that it is the height of superstition to believe that men are to be saved and justified by the work of another. This view of the death of Christ as an atonement is by these men stigmatized as a commercial view. To them the death of Christ, the atonement, and all that is said in the Scriptures about it, are all merely figures of speech, well understood indeed by those to whom the Scriptures were first written, but not to be taken as statements of literal facts. In their view the coming and death of Christ is but one of many things occurring in all ages of the world, which tend to make the world a better place to live in. This world and the things of this world are the thought, the care, the end and aim of all their thoughts and labors. If they hold out

morality, kindness and charity as the desirable things, rather than immorality, unkindness and selfishness, still all are for this present evil world. So far as their teaching is concerned there might as well be no future world, either of happiness and holiness or of punishment. This these men call the gospel of the Son of God, but it is the gospel with all that goes to make up the gospel of God taken away from it. One who is seeking salvation, or one who has found Christ precious to him as his Savior, coming to this teaching could well say, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him."

In reading and thinking about such statements as we have here noted, the thought was forced upon us, Suppose that these things are to be expected in some future age, of what avail will that be to us of this generation, or to the men of past generations? Men who died a thousand years ago are not concerned with the present life of men. If the life of men to-day be a hundredfold better than was theirs, they know it not; it has brought to them no benefit. If it could be true that in some future age men could be so lifted up in all that is called good, that peace shall reign, and vice and crime and sin be unknown, what is there in this prospect that can do us of this generation any good? The righteousness that might reign in future generations does not, and cannot, concern us of to-day. Suppose it could be proved from the Scriptures that at the end the nations of the whole world shall be converted to God and righteousness, so that none shall be found who does not believe in God to the saving of the soul, of what benefit is that to those of this and former generations who have perished in their sins? Some might indeed be glad to think that their children and their children's children shall be better off than they themselves are, but, after all, this does not help those who are of the former generation. Still further, even were this theory, this hope of the future, sustained by the infallible testimony of the word of God, still it would not be the gospel. The gospel is to them that perish foolishness, but this theory does not seem to be foolishness to the class of men of whom we speak. The teaching of the Scripture is not that Christ came and taught and died and rose again that the world might be elevated and become a better place to live in. To the world which perishes (or that is perishing, as the expression really is,) the doctrine of the cross still is foolishness. It has always been so and it will always be so. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit." All who reject the doctrine of the cross, calling it foolishness, are but natural men, their religion is but a natural religion. The testimony of the angel of God who announced to Mary the coming of the Savior defines the work which he came to do as being this alone, "He shall save his people from their sins," and Paul confirms this testimony when he declares that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Salvation, as it relates to us individually, does indeed begin while we live in this world, but it is personal salvation, and not the salvation of families, tribes or nations. It is not salvation to more refinement, more easy ways of living, more leisure and ease, and more knowledge of the mysteries of this natural universe, no matter how good and helpful these things may be to men in passing smoothly through this world, but it is salvation from sin, from death and from hell.

In the connection of the text quoted at the beginning of this article Paul sets forth very clearly and strongly the contrast between the wisdom of the world, which is foolishness with God, and the wisdom of God, which is foolishness with men. In the doctrine of the cross is the wisdom of God displayed, but the thoughts and the wisdom of God are not the thoughts and wisdom of them that perish. There is not, and there never has been, any offence in the preaching of the kindly life, the gracious deeds of mercy, the results of faith and grace in the hearts of men who believe in Christ, but the doctrine of the cross, which chiefly means the atonement made for sinners who are altogether sinners, and who cannot redeem by any means themselves, is foolishness indeed to the wise and the self-righteous. There never would have been any persecution of the name of Christ had there been nothing save the righteous life of the Son of God proclaimed, but it is when salvation is proclaimed as coming to all men, even the best, only because Christ died and rose again, that offence is given. But there are some to whom this preaching is not foolishness; there are some to whom it is the power of God. These find their only hope of salvation in it. These are separated by the need of redemption felt in their souls from all others, and then the work of a finished salvation wrought out for sinners, revealed to them, constitutes another barrier between these two classes of mankind. There are some of whom Jude says that "separate themselves." These are enemies of the cross of Christ. But there are others whom the Lord separates unto himself, and these are they who say, like Paul, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." The difference is not in the cross, nor in the preaching of the cross, but it is in the state of men who hear. In a community where all were rich, to talk of an almshouse would be foolishness, but in a community where all were beggars there would be life and hope and salvation indeed if such a place of refuge were to be provided. The rich in self-good and self-righteousness find nothing but folly in that preaching which sets forth salvation as the gift of God through the merit of another, but when men have come to know how poor in righteousness, and how filled with sin, and how utterly condemned they are before God, to proclaim salvation in the blessed Lord finished and complete, is life and health and strength indeed; it is the power of God set forth for their salvation, and to such ones there is no word so sweet as the power of God; even as that power must have seemed full of all wonders to those who were healed from their diseases in the days of the dear Redeemer's flesh. Is it any wonder that the people of God love to think and to speak of his power? Would it not be a wonder were they not to think and testify of this power in their salvation?

C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

MATTHEW XXV. 12.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Will you please give your views on the twelfth verse of the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew? I have the SIGNS of Nov. 15th, 1904, in which is an article upon the parable of the ten virgins. I am satisfied with it as far as it goes, but of late I have become confused with regard to the twelfth verse. I do not see how the God of heaven and earth could say, "I never knew you." I know there is harmony in the Scripture, whether I can see it or not.

Your brother, as I hope, G. E. LEE.

ROANOKE, Ala., May 23, 1911.

The words in the parable of the ten virgins, to which our attention is called by our brother, are, "I know you not." In the seventh chapter of Matthew the Lord represents himself as saying to some who claimed to have done many good works in his name, "I never knew you." The Lord said once of Israel, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." In a special sense the Lord is said to know his people: "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." All these expressions, as well as others in different parts of the word, present his special knowledge toward the objects of his love, and it is manifest to a careful student of the word of God that such language is used in a special sense; by it is not intended any denial of the universal knowledge of God. There is most abundant proof in the word that his knowledge is infinite. Surely we do not need to repeat the many texts which set this forth. It is manifest to all who read the Bible at all carefully that we are taught there that the knowledge of God embraces all things, without any exception, in all the universe, and there has been no increase in his knowledge from all eternity. In the infinite mind of Jehovah lay from eternity everything and every event that ever should be. He who would deny this, limits Jehovah and pays little regard to the word of God. Our brother evidently believes all this from what he has written above. In this general sense it is true that our God knows all the wicked as well as all the righteous; there is no creature hidden from his all-seeing eye. How good it would be did all feel as did the servant of Sarah in her desolation: "Thou God seest me." All this must be so, else all prophecy is but supposition, or the conclusions of men's reasonings, which may or may not be mistaken. If when we read the Bible we are to feel sure that all it declares is true, and every prediction must come to pass, we must believe that the knowledge of God takes in all things, past, present and to come, so that when he speaks concerning anything we are as sure that it will be so as though it had already taken place.

The language to which brother Lee has called attention, and the other portions of the word to which we have alluded, must not be at all understood as denying the above doctrine of God, and indeed there is no contradiction at all. Take the expression to which we have before alluded: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth;" we think it is plain that our Lord here intended to announce to the people his favor to them above all other nations. It is the knowledge of favor, or of good will, which he has to them. When it is intimated in this text that he knew no other nation, the meaning is that he had not regarded other nations with favor, making them his peculiar people, as he had this people. So in Matthew seventh chapter the Lord is declared by the Savior not to know these false worshipers, in the sense of having regard to them, or favor toward their worship of him. All that they had done, or claimed to do, had not brought

them into favor with him; he had never known them as the objects of his love and choice. So in the parable of the virgins the same truth in substance is taught; the foolish virgins were not in the favor of the master of the feast. A false profession or a false zeal does not count in the balances of the sanctuary. He did not know them as guests who had been bidden to the wedding. Regarding the parable by itself, as a narrative of what might often have taken place among men, it might well be that the lord of the feast did not know them even personally; this however could not be true of the blessed Lord. But the foolish virgins must be treated as strangers, which they were indeed according to the customs of such feasts in those days; they could not be known as guests. It is in this sense that the Lord did not know them. C.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Association of Old School Baptists convened with the church at Harford, Harford Co., Md., May 17th, 18th and 19th, 1911, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends christian greeting.

THESE many years past it has been our custom to address you at our annual gatherings by a Corresponding Letter. This has been, as we trust, to you as well as to us a pleasant and profitable custom, and we feel like maintaining this course still, and hope that you will be glad to hear from us in this way yet this once more. We are glad to be able to say to you that through the continued mercies of our covenant-keeping God we still feel to be steadfast in the faith which was our fathers when they organized this association. This faith has been our support and consolation through many trying hours. We believe that it is the doctrine of God our Savior. We feel to thank God also for our fellowship in the gospel with you until this hour. Our desire is that through great grace it may be continued until we realize the full fruition of our hope in the world of eternal glory. Our correspondence with you has, we believe, resulted in increasing our steadfastness in the gospel, and our love towards the people of God. We earnestly desire a continuance of our correspondence with you.

This session of the association has been a pleasant one. Our churches report general peace and unity of feeling. The preaching has been to our edification, and we have rejoiced in the presence and testimony of your ministers.

Our next session is to be held with the Ebenezer Church, in the city of Baltimore, beginning on Wednesday, May 18th, 1912, where we hope to meet and greet your messengers again.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa., May 24th, 25th and 26th, 1911, to the several associations with which she corresponds sends greeting.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—In the providence of our all-wise heavenly Father we have been permitted to assemble in association with the church here at Rock Springs, under very favorable circumstances, and have had a season of sweet spiritual enjoyment, feeling that we have been permitted to sit together in an heavenly place. The shadow of our Apple Tree has been delightful to our souls, and his fruit sweet to our taste. Your Minutes

have not yet come to hand, but your messengers have brought us glad tidings of salvation, which have given us great joy and caused us to rejoice and say, Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who satisfieth thee with good things, and who crowneth thee with loving-kindness.

The next session of our association is appointed to be held with the church in Wilmington, Delaware, to begin on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, 1912, when and where we cordially invite you to meet with us by your messengers with Minutes.

J. G. EUBANKS, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

The churches composing the Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Ebenezer Baptist Church, New York city, June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1911, to the churches and associations with which we correspond sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—Your messengers have come to us with assurances of your unabated love and fellowship, and our three days association has been of mutual joy and comfort. The preaching has all been of certain sound, ascribing salvation unto no other name than that of Jesus, and confirming us in the confidence that now abideth faith, hope and charity.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., beginning Wednesday after the first Sunday in June, 1912, when we hope to again be favored with the attendance of your messengers and letters of correspondence.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

NOTICE.

IF not providentially hindered, I shall be with the Woburn Church, Woburn, Mass., the second Sunday in July, instead of the fourth Sunday in June.

H. C. KER.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Sarah C. Boyd was born March 14th, 1841, departed this life May 8th, 1911, aged 70 years, 1 month and 24 days. May 10th, 1868, she was united in marriage to Harvey W. Boyd, to which union were born three children: Eddie J., Charles and Annie Lizzie; they, with the husband and five grandchildren, are left to mourn. Sister Boyd was the daughter of Elder James W. and Susan Biggs, both members of the church, and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been a welcome visitor to the family from its earliest publication, and during her life she contributed quite a number of articles, which still stand as monuments to her memory. Her experience, which dated back to the year 1855, will be found in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, volume 49, number 7, which gives a clear account of the dealings of the Lord with her. In that year she found herself a poor sinner, and she often spoke of the trials and sufferings she passed through for several months, and of the wonderful deliverance when the burden left her. So plain was the manifestation of the forgiveness of her sins, and the comfort she received in reading the eighth chapter of Romans, which seemed to be sent especially to her, that she called me to her bedside shortly before she died and requested me to use for my text at her funeral Romans viii. 1, 2, and I promised if it were the Lord's will I would. In the year 1865 she was received in the fellowship of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church called Hartford, near Hartford, Ohio, and was baptized by her uncle, Elder John H. Biggs, afterward moving her membership to the Pleasant Hill Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists, near Delaware, Ohio, where she remained until called to the place prepared for her, where sorrow and trouble never enter. As a sister none was more able to detect disorder and unscriptural doctrine, and she always urged upon the brethren, especially the ministers, to be not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, nor try to please man; that God was first, last and always, the same yesterday, to-day and forever, the way, the truth and the life, and that all things work together for good to them that love God, and would accept of no compromise in regard to predestination. In the church she will be sadly missed; an example is gone, a place is vacant in her home; at the age of threescore and ten called home to her Savior, in the hands of the just

and perfect God, crowned in glory (as we hope), and we bow in humble submission to his will. May God in his infinite mercy be with the family and the brethren, and enable us to go on in the strength of Israel's God; may he reconcile us to our lot, and enable us to say, "Thy will be done."

The remains were taken from their home in Delaware to their old home, near Centerburg, where the services were held, conducted by the writer, using the text, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death," to a large number of relatives and friends. The remains were then laid to rest in the Trenton Cemetery to await the resurrection. GEO. L. WEAVER.

Mrs. Elizabeth M. Cook, relict of our late brother A. S. Cook, died at her home in Hopewell, N. J., April 9th, 1911, in the 87th year of her age. She was born and raised to womanhood in the vicinity of Cedar Grove, a few miles from Princeton, N. J. She was the eldest of ten children, who lived to manhood and womanhood. She was married to A. S. Cook in 1847. He preceded her to the grave ten years, dying in April, 1901. They were both baptized in the fellowship of the church at Hopewell about fifty-eight years ago, by Elder Philander Hartwell. Since the death of brother Cook our sister had made her home with her younger daughter, Mrs. Charles Blackwell, and her husband. Her married life was spent first at Mt. Rose, then Princeton, then Jersey City, and for many of the last years in the borough of Hopewell. She was a sister of brother Elijah Leigh, who was so well known among the Baptists of the eastern States, and who was for a long time one of the deacons and the clerk of the First Hopewell Church. She leaves two brothers and four sisters, also four children: Albert and Mr. Van Cook, Miss Anna Cook and Mrs. Charles Blackwell, the sons living in Princeton and the daughters in Hopewell. Her sickness was brief and without much suffering. Her eighty-sixth birthday was being celebrated by a gathering of the family, and she was enjoying the day much, illness overtook her at the dinner table, and she went down in strength rapidly until the end came.

The above states the outward facts of her life, and we feel that it is now right we should speak of her as all her acquaintances knew her. In all the years of her membership in the church none ever had occasion to question the profession that she had made. Her walk before her brethren and sisters was sincere, quiet and steadfast, her faith was unwavering and her attendance upon the services of the sanctuary was constant whenever it was possible for her to be present. She was not given to much speech, being reserved in her manner, but all who knew her possessed full confidence in her steadfastness and love for the order and ordinances of the church. Very many will recall their hospitable reception and entertainment in their home and at her hands during many past years. Both she and brother Cook loved nothing better than to welcome their brethren and friends, and to kindly care for them in their home. We feel as though we can but illy spare such members from our number, yet we know that it is well with those whom the Lord has called home. We believe that it is well with her. May each of the family and friends and the church be able to say also, It is well with me.

The funeral service was held at her home April 12th, the one hundred and third Psalm being read and the last clause used as a text. The interment was in the Old School Baptist cemetery, by the side of her husband. C.

Miss Lydia Hutchison, our sister in Christ, died Sept. 21st, 1910, in the 65th year of her age, at the old home place, near Gum Spring, Va., where her parents lived and died, and where she was born and reared. On Nov. 12th, 1895, she was baptized, with six others, by Elder E. V. White, and thereafter lived a faithful and consistent member of the Frying Pan Church to the time of her death. For some time she had been in very poor health, and suffered much from rheumatism, but through it all she was given grace to endure patiently whatever the dear Lord saw fit to put upon her, realizing that God is faithful, and would not suffer her to be tried above her ability, but would with her trials make a way to escape, that enabled her to endure them. Sister Lydia was a firm believer in salvation by grace and the unlimited sovereignty of God; even the hard and rough experiences of her life she firmly believed were appointed her of God, and were among the all things that should work together for the glory of God and her good. Sister Hutchison is missed, not only by her family, but very much by us at Frying Pan. She is survived by one brother, Charles Hutchison, and two sisters, Miss Florida Hutchison and Mrs. Lucy Sanders, and we believe they are by no means strangers to the grace of God.

Written at the request of her sister.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

Julia Ann McComas, daughter of Thomas and Isabelle Swan, died at her home on Longbranch, near Guyand River, W. Va., May 1st, 1900. Her stay on earth was 74 years, 3 months and 13 days. She lived to see all her children grown and married. She was baptized in her faith. She was very industrious, and looked well to the ways of her household, and did not eat the bread of idleness. It can truthfully be said of her, She opened her mouth with wisdom,

and in her tongue was the law of kindness. (Prov. xxxi. 26.) I am confident she has a better home now than this world could afford her. She was conscious until the very last, and passed away like an infant going to sleep. She is greatly missed by her own family, as well as by her neighbors and friends, but none can miss her as I do, for I lived with her all my life, up to the time she was taken. I am glad I have a good hope that when done with life and its sad trials I, too, can go where I hope dear father, mother, sister and husband are.

MARY BELLE ROSS.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., May 24, 1911.

(*See communication on page .*) 400

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 79. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1911. NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MEDITATIONS.

FROM some cause I have read more of late in the book of Psalms than ever before. It seems to me that much of David's writings allude directly to his own individual experience. His prayer was, "Deliver me from mine enemies;" "Let not mine enemies triumph over me," &c. I believe often when he speaks of his enemies, prays for their destruction, &c., that he has more direct reference to his own fleshly nature, the natural man or carnal mind, which is not subject to the law of God, than he has to personal foes or enemies among men. Notwithstanding it was said of David that he was a man after God's own heart, (Acts xiii. 22,) he was possessed of human nature, the same as we are. He often, when God would bestow upon him his blessings, confess unto God his sins and his iniquities, and in bitterness of his soul cry out, "Have mercy upon me, O Lord; for I am weak." His prayer was that of every poor sinner (publican), "God be merciful to me a sinner," and when he could feel that God had heard his cry and healed him of his sins and iniquities, he could say, "I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live." Not only so, but he says, "I will praise the Lord with my whole heart." He then wanted to walk in the law of the Lord, keep his statutes and do his commandments; his heart's desire was to praise the Lord. One thing he desired, and that was, that he might dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of his life, "to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple," and when his cup of joy and rejoicing was running over he said, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." Dear brethren, are not these things some of your experiences? I think so.

"In the world ye shall have tribulation." This is a declaration, or, I might say, promise of the Savior to his disciples. He does not say whether that tribulation shall come to them in the trial of their faith, the temptations of Satan or in bodily afflictions. But be that as it may, it is a promise, not only to his apostles, but unto all the true fol-

lowers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God. Not long ago, when writing to a precious brother, I tried to speak of the promises of God; I failed to notice this promise, which I feel is a promise. I am in correspondence, or I am writing frequently, to two aged and precious sisters in Christ Jesus, who are both afflicted in body, having had a partial stroke of paralysis. While thinking of them when I took up my pen the words of Jesus to his disciples came into my mind. Sometimes our humane feelings, or sympathy for our fellow-creatures, will come into our minds with such force that ere we are aware we try to weigh the designs and purposes of the all-wise God with our own finite wisdom; not that we have any desire to call into question the wisdom and purposes of God; naturally we are inclined to inquire and wonder in our minds why these faithful old mothers in Israel (for such truly they are) should be so afflicted in their declining years that they can no more go up unto the house of the Lord and mingle with their kindred in Christ as in days gone by, there to join with them in singing songs of praise to God and the Lamb. When we, as natural creatures of earth, meditate upon these things we are made to stand in awe, and wonder at the designs and purposes of God. But our God is the God of purpose; he never does aught in vain, and he has declared that what he has purposed he will perform, and will do all his will and pleasure. The Master hath said that not even a sparrow shall fall to the ground without our heavenly Father, and that, "Ye are of more value than many sparrows." Even the hairs of our head are numbered. If God takes so minute notice of us as this, will he not, dear, afflicted ones, take notice of you? I am sure he will. No matter what our trials, temptations and afflictions, whether in body or mind, may be, our God knows them all; his ear is ever open unto the cry of the righteous, and he has promised never to leave nor forsake them. When God calls us to pass through deep waters of affliction it is hard for us poor, dependent creatures of earth to realize that the Lord's hand is in it all. We are apt to lose sight of his goodness and mercy, and often we are found to murmur and complain with blessings in our hand. How hard it is for us, as natural beings, to be reconciled to the providences of God with us. How true it is that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Even as spiritual we cannot discern unless revealed unto us by that Spirit which searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."—Eph. ii. 1. Not long since, when writing to a brother in Oregon, I used this passage of Scripture, and offered a few thoughts upon it; since then this declaration of the apostle Paul has been in my mind almost continually, and I cannot get away from it. I will offer a few more thoughts upon it, but strange as it may seem, the more I think or meditate upon the subject the deeper it gets. I may not be able to write one word that will edify or be of any comfort to one of God's spiritual children; in fact, I know I will not unless I am guided by other than my own natural mind.

In the first chapter of this epistle of Paul to the Ephesian brethren we find the kind of characters he was addressing when he said, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead," &c., (in the past tense.) But to whom is it addressed?

They were the blessed ones of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the chosen in him before the foundation of the world, the predestinated ones unto "the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself." Now let us notice what their condition was before this quickening, regenerating or renewing power of the Holy Ghost. They in times past "walked according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." This was our terrible condition by nature as we stood before God, and ever would have remained so but for God's mercy. Now listen: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." Was there ever love like this? O no. O what a deep and great mystery is this; it is among the unsearchable riches of God, whose ways are past finding out. It is a mystery among the deep mysteries of God, which Paul says "hath been hidden from ages and from generations," which is revealed unto us when God sends forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, whereby we cry, "Abba, Father." Here a thought occurs to my mind; I will speak of it briefly. It appears to me that there is a difference between the quickening and the new birth, or being born again. I understand quickening to mean giving life. As life must precede birth, then the quickening is in no sense the new birth, or being born again. A birth is only a manifestation of life.

Here I will leave this subject, as the more I meditate upon it the wider the field of thought appears. May God bless his truth, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

J. H. YEOMAN.

LOVELAND, Colorado.

CANNON, Del., April 14, 1911.

ELDER KER:—I am making another attempt to write you a letter, and am doing so because I feel it a duty; I do not know now what I am going to say, but I want to say this at the outset, that whatever I may be enabled to write I trust it is my sincere desire to speak in such a manner as will give God the glory, for to him all praise is due. I feel like quoting a few words in the fortieth chapter of Isaiah, eleventh verse: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." These are the words of the prophet Isaiah, and he spake those words because he was moved by the Spirit of God, and by nothing else; that is the reason his chosen are speaking to-day. Now what is meant by these words? Who is it that is going to feed his flock like a shepherd? These are prophetic words. The prophet was given faith to look into the future, because he is speaking here in the future tense; something that had not yet come to pass, but is going to come to pass. Now were these words true? Has that prophecy been fulfilled? I say, Yes. Who is it then that feeds his flock like a shepherd and gathers the lambs with his arm, &c.? It was our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for he is the good Shepherd; he said of himself, "I am the good Shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."—John x. 11. And it was he who did give his life for his sheep, the chosen of God.

"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd." My mind is to speak a few words regarding the shepherd and the sheep. Naturally it is necessary that the sheep have some one to look after them to bring them to the fold. I am now, of course, speaking of the natural sheep, and my mind seems to carry me back to the days of my boyhood, when I used to attend my father's sheep. I want to speak, if I may, a little concerning the nature of sheep. First, that sheep as a rule are very much devoted to one another, and I remember that in my boyhood days I noticed how they would follow each other in the same path, also I remember how they would bleat when they were feeding; it seemed as though one would feel like it was lost from the rest of the flock and would bleat, but when another one would answer, as a sheep will certainly do, then the one who bleated first was content, it had found its fellow. But I must go a little further. I remember in those days when a lamb (I mean the little lamb, the tender lamb) would stray away from its mother how it would bleat, and how the mother sheep would bleat also; the mother was glad to receive the lamb, and the lamb was content because it had found its mother. But what about the shepherd? It is the duty of a faithful shepherd to look after his sheep; he makes provision for them, he protects them from danger, he is ever watchful over his flock, because they are of value to him. My desire now is to say a few words concerning the manner in which the Shepherd that is spoken of in this verse gathers his sheep, the chosen of God. It is said that he gathers them with his arm, and shall carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young. Is not this the good Shepherd indeed? He feeds his flock; he gathers them with his arm, he carries the lambs in his bosom, also lastly he gives his life for his sheep. He gave his life-blood to satisfy the demands of the law, and it was the will of the Father that he should do this, for we have his own words for it. He did not come to do his own will, but the will of the Father which sent him, and we have his own words as to what the will, or purpose, of the Father was: that of all the Father gave him he should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. Hence we see that he came into the world to save all that the Father had given him. The dear Savior said in his prayer to the Father, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." In the gospel by John we have his testimony again; when he was conversing with the Jews he told them they believed not, because they were not of his sheep, but he told them that his sheep heard his voice and they followed him, but they would not follow strangers, and the Father which gave him them is greater than all, and no man shall be able to pluck them out of his hand. Is not this comforting, that no man shall be able to separate God's people from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus their Lord?

I desire to speak a few more words concerning the tender lambs and the mother sheep. It seems to my mind that the lamb which is lost from the mother represents a child of God, and the mother represents the church of God, the most beautiful place in all the universe. Does not the church gladly receive all who come confessing their sins, and telling in a few broken words what they hope the Lord has done for them? Is there not unity and fellowship for such an one? Thus the church receives the lambs, and there is joy and gladness.

I want to speak a few words concern-

ing the adult sheep. When the sheep becomes full grown it has a surplus of wool and must be shorn. How is this accomplished? In the first place the owner of the sheep gathers it with his arm, or lays hold on it, and binds it with a cord so that it cannot get away, and it is laid upon a place provided for its reception, while the shearer completes his work. The shearer takes a pair of shears provided for the purpose and begins to strip the sheep of its fleece; the time has now come for the sheep to be shorn. There is a time for all things under the sun. The sheep is bound and cannot free itself, yet it tries hard, but to no avail, it cannot so much as raise its head, for the head is also held fast. The shearer is doing his perfect work; now the sheep has given up, having exhausted its strength, and is at the mercy of the shearer. While the shearer is using sharp pointed instruments to remove the fleece, for they must be sharp and pointed in order that they may penetrate the wool, yet he is very careful as to how he handles them; he does not touch the flesh with these sharp points, it is only the wool. Because he is stripping the sheep of his wool does it mean that the owner is angry with the sheep? No. It is needful he must be shorn. The shearer completes his work, the fleece is removed, the cords are taken off, the sheep is freed from his bondage and it knows there has a change come over it, a moment ago he was bound, but now he is free, also his fleece is gone, he does not appear to himself as he did before, he is now clean and white. All this has been accomplished and the sheep had nothing at all to do with it, only to yield, and he would not have yielded had he not been compelled to because the owner had the power to cause him to yield. Does not this represent God's elect, when it pleases the dear Savior to call one of his sheep and show him the vileness of his nature? How that one tries to be a better man or better woman; they at once turn to the law and think that by observing the law they will obtain the favor of God, but in this they are mistaken, as they learn afterward: "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified." They have tried to do good, but evil is present with them, and the more they try to do good the worse they seem to get. Thus they struggle until they can struggle no longer, their strength is exhausted, they can do no more, the law with all its weight is upon them; now what are they going to do? they have tried to obtain the favor of the Lord by living in obedience to the law, and they cannot do that. Now the cry is, "God be merciful to me a sinner." There seems to be something else that has come to them, and they are asking for mercy; the Lord is doing his perfect work, they are now helpless and asking for mercy. This is a sad condition (I hope I know something about it), but the Shearer is doing his work, and when they sink exceeding low, just ready to give up, then Jesus, the good Shepherd, comes that way, and says, I have borne your sins and carried your burden; thus they find a Ransom. My dear brother, is it any wonder the poet exclaimed:

"Alas, and did my Savior bleed?
And did my Savior die?
Would he devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?

Was it for crimes that I have done
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity, grace unknown,
And love beyond degree."

What beautiful language this is: "Was it for crimes that I have done?" This is an earnest question, one which I believe

concerns every one of God's chosen. Sometimes we fear that we were not embraced in that atonement, and then again the blessed Savior gives us some assurance that he has borne our burdens, then we say,

"Amazing pity, grace unknown,
And love beyond degree."

Wonderful pity and wonderful love is this. Such things are too high for me, I cannot comprehend them.

"He shall gather the lambs with his arm." I understand that the arm here spoken of represents power. I do not understand the prophet to mean that this Being who was to feed his flock like a shepherd was going to take each of his flock with his arm and bring them to a certain place. It must be remembered that Jesus only has to speak the word and they come, and it must be remembered that when Jesus speaks, that there is power which accompanies the word spoken. It was so in the care of Saul of Tarsus, it was true also in the case of Thomas, and it is true with all to whom he has spoken. He shall carry the lambs in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. Now does he do all this? I answer in the affirmative, he does carry them in his bosom and he does gently lead those that are with young, no yet manifested.

I have not written as I would like to have done. Sometimes when I am alone it seems that I have many pleasant thoughts upon different passages of Scripture, but when I attempt to make those thoughts known I cannot find words sufficient to express my feelings, but as I said in the commencement of this letter, I have written because I had a strong desire to do so, and I do not know whether it will be of interest to you or not, but if there is anything of worth in it the praise belongs to Him who is the fairest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely.

I remain yours unworthily,

A. T. BENSON.

[We have known brother Benson many years, even before he became an Old Baptist, and are glad that his mind is exercised in the Scriptures. We are glad of this and his former letter, published not long since.—K.]

RICHMOND, Maine, April 10, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER:—I am sending you a number of letters from Bonnie. The dear child has told many things beautifully, and yet seems to feel that she has not written like others. I think she has written as a child of God. God's children declare his goodness, and that unto him belongs all the glory; all the power is his; all our strength is perfect weakness; all that we can do is to cry, and we know that the first cry of a quickened sinner is, "God be merciful to me a sinner;" it is a personal cry, it is my case, and O it is so urgent; none but God can do the helpless sinner good. Dear brother, I have just said that the first cry of a poor, helpless sinner is, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and I am not sure that it is not the last cry also, and in my own case it seems to be my constant need. Mercy for me; yes, I need it every day. I find myself often questioning his wisdom, and am often fretted and worried by the things of my daily life; again and again I am impatient because I am not led beside the still waters. Why cannot I remember the many events in their life recorded of His ancient servants; how that many times the clouds were his chariot, and that once the furnace was heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be, and yet there was not the smell of

fire upon the garments of those worthy ones? But I cannot seem to remember these things in my hours of sore distress, and am more liable to be much alarmed, as if some strange thing had happened to me. Well, the thought has just come to me that we are commanded not to be terrified when all manner of evil things come upon us, or are said about us falsely. Why not? I find myself asking, and then comes, as it were, a still small voice saying, "Be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." I do believe since Jesus died for his children and accomplished their salvation, they, too, through his mercy, shall overcome their enemies. Underneath are the everlasting arms; though I falter and stumble in the way, the Father is watching his child; not a sparrow falls without him. To-day from my window I watched a sparrow as it gathered up material for its nest, and the above words came to my mind, but then there came no sweetness with them. However, to-night I have a hope that I am one of those who are of more value than many sparrows, and that in the future, as in the past, he will bestow upon me the things of which I stand in need.

With love to all, your sister,

ANGIE J. THOMAS.

HOPEWELL, N. J., May 20, 1909.

DEAR AUNT ANGIE:—I have thought of you often this week, and have planned that I would write before this, but it has seemed that something would keep me from doing so. We surely are powerless in all things, and at times I am made to stand still and await God's appointments. This is so restful; but, perhaps within the next minute, I am again planning and wondering and desiring that my wishes may be fulfilled, and not thinking that God's ways are always best. I am afraid that his will is not my will, and thinking how miserable I will be if such and such a thing does not come to pass. With all this I cannot help looking back upon the past, and seeing how there has been nothing that I could wish changed, for the trials and joys alike have made the path a perfect one. There is so much of nature about me that many times I think there can surely be no spiritual life at all dwelling in me, there is so much sin. Aunt Angie, such wicked thoughts will come, and I find myself nursing them. I think if some of the brethren and sisters could only look within, they would no longer have fellowship for me. I need to be brought low and sorely chastened, and even then God does not withhold his mercy, but gives me moments of great joy full of sweetness.

Last Sunday night we had meeting, and all through the evening the words, "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform," had been on my mind. Several of the brethren spoke, and brother David Blackwell repeated these words, and I felt as if my heart would burst. You, I know, can understand this. Papa and mamma have been in Maryland since Monday; they expect to come back to-morrow night. This letter is just to tell you that I am thinking of you. Your letters bring me great joy. I find my mind filled with worldly things; there seems to be so much in school to take my mind away from the better things.

Yours lovingly, BONNIE.

DEAR AUNT ANGIE:—The thought has just come to me how impossible it is to write of spiritual things at just any time, while we can always think of something pertaining to the world to write about. This shows how dependent we

are upon the Lord for all good, and how little strength we have to do the things that we would. I am staying with Mrs. McConnell now, and it seems good to be with her again; she was always a good friend to me when I was teaching in Rutherford. We are waiting for Elder McConnell to come home to dinner. I wish you could have heard him talk at brother Beard's on Sunday night; he preached a regular sermon. Yesterday morning Elder Francis spoke from Isaiah xxxii. 18, 19. It was a sweet sermon to me, and Elder Francis said that he felt good in his own mind. In the afternoon he spoke from Rom. v. 19. While I was at Lucy's I was able to get to the meetings all but one Sunday. O how thankful I ought to be. When I went with them I could hardly sit still; all seemed to be form and style and dreadfully cold. Elder Francis expressed my feelings when he said that a witness does not have to be logical, but only to testify to the things he knows. I wonder if I can ever appreciate the fact that I am wonderfully blessed in being among so many Old School Baptists; they are the only company that I desire. I cannot visit my natural friends with the same feeling of interest that I once did.

Forris brought me your letter this morning, and I could but rejoice when I saw it. One night, before Christmas, I began a letter to you, but there seemed to be nothing on my mind and I laid it aside. Many times since I have thought of trying again, but when our God shuts, no man can open, and when he opens, no man can shut. Elder Eubanks came yesterday, and preached last night. While talking with him during the evening, I was telling him how once it seemed easy for me to write, but now I had little to write, and what I did seemed so cold and without feeling; but hope still clings, and sometimes I find it sure and steadfast; an anchor of the soul. How often when I am destitute a ray of light comes, and I cannot help hoping that I do know a little of these things, for I do desire them more than the things of the world. I can find little pleasure in worldly amusements, and feel that God has surely been merciful to me in killing me to them. It is no hardship or denial to see my young friends enter into these pleasures, for they hold no joy for me. We had a good meeting, and Elder Eubanks spoke clearly and forcibly; I love to hear him talk.

Your letter coming this morning has made me think of how many privileges God has bestowed upon me; how much more than I deserve he gives me. As I search the inmost recesses of my heart I find only wickedness. My thoughts seem often so terrible to me that I wonder how God can have mercy upon me. I grow fearful, and feel that I ought to try to help this, but I seem powerless, and cannot change or deviate from the pathway that God has ordered for my feet to tread. If salvation were not a free gift where would I be? All would be hopeless, for I can find nothing in me to merit esteem, or give the Creator delight. Is it not a comfort to hear the words, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound"? If it were as it was once with me I suppose that I should not see the sin, and I can but hope that this faith is not in vain. Then comes the thought, Why should I be chosen to know of mercy so great? It seems wonderful to me. It is no wonder that the world hates such a doctrine, for it surely excludes those things upon which the world bases its religion.

I often think of you all, and of the talks we had; I cannot tell you how much I

enjoyed them. It always seems good to me to be with some one who loves to talk of spiritual things; I need the messages of others to strengthen my faith, for Satan is always alert, and keeps me questioning and wondering. We know that the natural mind cannot discern the things of the kingdom of heaven, and that the hope that is seen is not hope. The christian's life while here in the flesh is all hope. It does seem that we are given foretastes of heaven while yet here, and at such times we are made to cry, "If such the sweetness of the steams, what must the fountain be?"

Your letters are very comforting, and it is good to hear you say that even in these barren moments God is still our God and he will not forsake us. All things, both natural and spiritual, are for some good purpose, but I cannot see this at the time. It is as I look back over the past that I can see how well God has ordered all things in my life; but I too often fear to trust for the future. I cannot help wondering if ever there was such a fearful, doubting one as I am, who is numbered with the flock on earth. So much of the time a warfare is going on in me, and I cannot still it. When he sees fit to calm the storm, I then know that he is God, and that his will must be done, both in heaven and in earth. It would not be well for us to live in a calm frame of mind always; should we not then grow careless, and not feel the need of a Savior? Surely he knows best, and will provide for us always according to what we need.

I have written on and on, and feel that I have not told you anything clearly. It has been a pleasure to me to write you, for you are in my mind a great many times, and I wish that I was near enough to talk with you. Your description of the christian pathway was wonderfully sweet and beautiful to me.

BONNIE.

DEAR AUNT ANGIE:—I am beginning to feel more than anxious to hear from you again. Often during the summer I have wanted to tell you something, when at the moment it seemed that I could not write, and then when I could write I had nothing to say. How dependent we are upon the Lord for everything; his plans must be fulfilled. I was made to see why it was right for me to go to Maryland. I have seen a number of old friends whom I had not seen in years, and a few whom I felt that I would never see again. One aged sister, when I said good-by, told me that she was glad I had come, for she felt as though she would not be here another year. There were times when it seemed as though I had to appear to be in a worldly frame of mind, when my mind was filled with other things, then I would long for some one who could understand me, and I would think of the talks that you and I have had, and would wish that I could slip into the kitchen and have a little talk with you again. It just seems that I cannot find pleasure in the amusements of the world, no matter how simple they are. I went into Baltimore the Sunday before I came home, and it did seem good to be there. The first Sunday after I came home I could hardly keep the tears back, for I felt so forcibly that my greatest joy and comfort were derived from being with the children of God. The meeting seemed sweet to me. Yesterday was our church meeting, and to-day we had communion; both meetings were good to me. My mind has been much upon the things that I passed through last year. It was one year ago

last Sunday that Mr. Holcombe was buried, and one year ago to-day I had some dear talks with Mrs. Holcombe, when naturally her mind was delirious; they were wonderful, and yet sad times to me. I saw her to-night, well and strong again, and my heart was made to rejoice. She spent ten days with me in Maryland. God's time must be abided, and we cannot hasten his work. Why do I get so anxious and impatient when I know that he does all things well, and also that where he begins a good work he will carry it on to the end? At times I feel wholly content to leave all things in his hand, then again, I want to help a little. I feel so wicked for having so little faith and trust in our heavenly Father.

I have been pouring out my feelings to you, and do not feel that I have said anything of any account. It seems as though no one can be so evil in thought and feeling as I am. I crave so many things, and deserve so little; I am made to cry for mercy because of my wayward feelings; at the same time, I am rejoicing because I seem to know that there is a God. What a mixture I am; I cannot understand myself. The words, "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing," come to me, and surely that Scripture describes my case.

With love to all, BONNIE.

LOVELAND, Colo., May 15, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—By request of our aged sister, Abbie Coddington, I inclose a letter written by her, addressed to our little church here in Loveland, which I hope you will publish in the SIGNS. This letter may be the last one that will appear in the SIGNS from her pen, as she is very feeble and afflicted in body. The letter speaks for itself. The letter was presented and read at our last meeting, on Saturday before the first Sunday in this month (May). The church here requested me to reply to her message of love to us, which I have done, and now send her letter to you, as she requested me to do.

I am yours in the precious hope of the Lord's dear children,

J. H. YEOMAN.

TRINIDAD, Colo., April 16, 1911.

TO THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST:—As we have reason to believe you are, by the grace of God. To you who are assembled together at Loveland for the worship of God is this letter dedicated, and may the brooding wings of love, mercy, peace and communion of the Holy Spirit hover above and around you, and may you be made to drink abundantly from that stream that sends forth from its Fountain water that is pure, sweet and refreshing, is the desire of a poor, weak one of the flock.

It has been in my mind for some time past to make an attempt to fulfill this desire, if it be the will of God to give strength equal to that desire. It is impossible for me to be with you at this time, nor is it consistent to think that I shall ever be able to do so, however much I may wish it. Although it has never been my privilege to meet any of you face to face, yet from what I have learned of your manner of worshiping God I conclude that we are not strangers in that respect, that we have been given to hope that we have drank from the same Fountain of life-giving virtue that cleanses from all sin those who have washed their robes therein. I have on several occasions been importuned by brother Yeoman to visit the church at Loveland. I will venture to say he has an abiding

interest in the welfare of all who are partakers of the suffering of Christ, and I want here to extend to him my heartfelt thanks for the kindly interest he has taken in my welfare.

You will notice that this letter is addressed from a different point from which I have been accustomed to send them, but God works all things after the counsel of his own will. It is our wish and we do believe that God has a purpose and design in every event that ever did or ever shall transpire, and that all was eternally fixed in the mind of the great Architect of the universe before time began, or dust was fashioned into man, and according to the foreknowledge and wisdom of the divine mind it was so arranged that from his conclusions there can be no appeal, and it becomes the poor, weak creatures of his care to bow in humble submission to the supreme mandate and say, The will of the Lord be done, for he is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. O so often do we find ourselves filled with base ingratitude, as it is possible for one of God's children to be, and ourselves unwillingly have become subject to vanity. How often we repine with blessings in our hand, seemingly forgetting for the time that all our springs are in God; yes, all, whether temporal or spiritual, come from his bountiful storehouse, and should be received with thanksgiving. We can truly say for ourselves, The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak, when left to ourselves, and the dictates of our own mind, which is contrary to the mind of Christ, which is written in the heart of every true believer. If we find this sustaining Spirit has for a time been withdrawn from us, then how weak, fretful, peevish and restless do we become, not knowing for ourselves what is really for our good, only realizing that we are miserable, poor and forsaken. I have in my weak, blundering way been trying to give some of my own experience, poor, sinful one that I am, who needs the sustaining grace of God every day; yes, I need thee every hour, every moment of time I need thee, most gracious God. True it is that the more we are made to feel our own weakness, the more do we feel the need of God's restraining grace and power to protect, save and shield us from the alluring vanities that are in this life through which we are passing as pilgrims and strangers, seeking a country that is far better, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. May it please the all-wise, loving Father to so manifest his restraining power in us that we may through his abounding goodness be enabled to endure temptation as good soldiers of the cross, enduring all things, hoping all things. For we are saved by hope, through faith, and faith is a fruit of the Spirit, and the Spirit maketh intercession for us, and the Father's ear is ever open to the pleadings of the Son in behalf of his people, Israel. So it is that we view Christ as the propitiation for all the sins of his people, but all are not Israel that are of Israel. It is here we are made to stumble and go softly and cautiously lest we fall by the way. Am I his, or am I not? This is the point to know. If so, where is the fruit? A good tree bringeth forth good fruit, and every tree after its kind. First make the tree good and the fruit will be good, while some on the same ground do not seem to grow at all, but still take up the ground and bear the name of Christ, and serve to mar the beauty and excellence of the good fruit. It is this view we have of ourselves at times. So gnarled, so insipid, so hard and green does it ap-

pear, it would indicate to our mind that the warmth and maturing rays from the Sun of Righteousness had never penetrated through the gloom of so desolate and neglected ground as this in which we dwell.

But I feel that it is best for me to conclude this, as I am not in condition, either mentally or physically, to write interestingly, as I will explain to you. I have mentioned that I have removed from Denver, and am now located at Trinidad, Colo., in the heart of the Rockies, in the San Juan valley I think it is, with mountains on either side. This is a very fertile and prosperous valley, as well as picturesque and romantic, and is a city of fifteen thousand inhabitants. My son had become dissatisfied with business in Denver, as everything there is overdone. He now has a very responsible position in a department and installment house that is doing a business of several thousand dollars a month. I had been in feeble health for some time, owing to infirmities of old age, to which were added many cares and anxieties, and the excitement of our removal and extra work proved too much for me in my enfeebled condition, consequently after our removal here I was completely prostrated for a time, having suffered from a paralytic stroke, so that for a time I was comparatively helpless, and still remain in a partial, though not complete state of paralysis, and in a very enfeebled condition. I do not get out at all, consequently it is impossible for me to go to Loveland, which under other conditions I perhaps would have done, but have now given up all hope. I feel that I have indeed been called to pass through the valley of the shadow of death, and realized my nearness to the gate from which no traveler ever returns who once passes through its portals.

I said I had much on my mind that I felt I would love to give expression to, but when I make the attempt find that I am but a wreck of my former self, mentally as well as physically, so will ask your kind forbearance. You will, no doubt, find many errors in this, as I cannot collect my thoughts as I would like, and concentrate them on a subject I have in mind, and my hands also, when I attempt to use them, fail to respond to the desire of the mind. I am trying, and desire above all things, to be reconciled to the will of God in whatever state I may be found, but find it O so hard to be reconciled to the dispensations of God, other than that in the atonement we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, and of ourselves individually entering in through the same channel, being one with him when he died, one with him when he arose from the confines of the tomb and ascended on high and took his place on the royal throne, far above all principalities and powers of this world, from which he suffered under the sins of his people, according to the Scriptures. We are one with the Father; blessed union, three in one.

But I must close this, however pleasant it is to dwell upon, I am so weary. "Does the gospel word proclaim rest for those who weary be?" "He giveth his beloved sleep."

"When the feet are worn and weary,
When the eyes grow dim with tears,
When the days are lone and dreary,
With the monotone of years,
And the fainting footsteps falter
In the marshes dark and deep,
Then will he give his loved ones sleep."
"Blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep."

I know not the time or manner of your meeting together at present, but suppose it is about the same as when I was in Denver, but however that may be, this is

placed at your disposal, to do with as you think best. There have been waymarks and footprints along the way as I have journeyed that have been pleasant and refreshing to my weary soul, and if you can find anything that will be interesting to any others it is yours to share with whom you think best. Only I would ask that if you receive this you will please inform me, and try to think of me as one among you. I would ask a place among you, if it be at your feet, if only I may be given a hearing ear and an understanding heart of the words as they fall from the lips of the chosen servants of the Master. I almost envy at times the dear old departing saints whose feet are standing on the brink of the river, only waiting for the parting of the waters and the dear, familiar voice, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou in the joys of thy Lord; child, come home.

It has just occurred to my mind, and is only by way of suggestion, if after you have read this, if you see fit and are willing to do so, you may send it to the SIGNS, as I have for some time been thinking of writing again for that paper, but it is getting to be a task for me to write. There is my home church, and it is there my mind often turns. Love to all. Farewell. Grace, mercy and peace be with you.

In hope,

ABBIE CODDINGTON.

HURRICANE, W. Va., June 7, 1911.

EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS —DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I am sending you a copy of a letter I received from sister Pearl Thornton, which to me is wonderful indeed, written as it was by one so young in years, but truly one who is taught of the Lord. This letter has been of special interest and comfort to me, as it came at a time when I was very low in sorrow and despair. I felt that it was a God-sent message, and it did indeed comfort my poor heart.

Yours in deep sorrow,

G. B. BIRD.

HURRICANE, W. Va., May, 1911.

ELDER G. B. BIRD:—May I say, Dear brother, not feeling at all worthy of calling one so gifted and good as you brother? It is according to God's will that I am addressing you this evening, for I feel that I would like to tell you, if I could find words to express my feelings, how much I enjoyed your preaching last third Saturday and Sunday. You spoke of many things which were wonderful to me, who am the least and vilest of all saints, if one at all. I often fear that I am not one of that remnant which he hath chosen out of this world, and that I am deceiving God's dear people. I fear there is more pharisee than publican about me, but truly there is nothing on earth to be compared with the meetings with the redeemed of the Lord, and we have this sweet and precious evidence, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Surely, if not deceived, I do love them far more than my natural relation, if I know anything about the love of God. The church could easily do without me, but I could not do without them, for I love them dearly, even more than tongue can tell. You spoke of so many things which seemed to be my feelings exactly, that at times I would almost feel that the preaching was all for me and to me. I feel sure that no one of God's children is as carnal as I am, so barren of spiritual things and so unlike them in every way. While hearing

so much good preaching at the association last September the words came into my mind:

"Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God;
He, whose word cannot be broken,
Formed thee for his own abode."

Yes, I felt that he had formed me for his own abode, and to fill the very place I am filling here below. Then we have nothing to glory in save the cross of Christ, who came to save that which was lost.

"Why should I hate my empty hands,
My poverty deplore,
When Jesus' blood fills all demands
Against the needy poor?"

We are all poor and helpless mortals, who can only trust in God's high and holy name; just as dependent upon our heavenly Father as a little babe is upon its natural parents, but, blessed thought, he has promised never to leave nor forsake one of his little ones. He has promised to be merciful to our unrighteousness, and I feel that these words mean more to me than any one else, for I am all unrighteousness; vile and full of sin I am, God is full of grace and truth. Though we be afflicted and cast down, yet he is able to raise us up. I often feel that it is good to be afflicted and distressed. As the poet says, "Poor and afflicted, Lord, are thine." But, as you said Sunday, their sufferings are all in this time world, and not in the world to come. The deeper our sorrow the louder we sing. I believe that each and every one of God's people are brought down to the feet of Jesus to make them see and know their weakness, and in his own time and way he will raise them up and put a new song in their mouths, and he will give them strength sufficient to endure every trial that he lays upon them.

Remember me at the throne of grace. May the dear Lord bless you in all your labor, and may you long remain our loving pastor, is the prayer of your unworthy sister, I hope, saved alone by the grace of God, if saved at all. Write to me if you think this worthy of an answer.

Yours in hope,

PEARL THORNTON.

JOHNSTOWN, Ohio, May 31, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed please find two dollars as a renewal for Elder L. B. Hanover, Blacklick, Ohio. He has anxiously and profitably perused its columns now about sixty years, but I fear he will not be able to continue it much longer, for he is quite feeble, but he expressed his desire to continue it as long as he lives, whether he is able to read it or not. Blessed desire, still remembering in love the dear editors and many contributors who have so many times refreshed his thirsty soul with the spiritual waters from the eternal fountain of Jesus' love; that river the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God. He met Elder Gilbert Beebe in early years, and formed a lasting and ever growing love and fellowship for him, frequently telling with much interest his personal visits with the dear old editor; how clearly, humbly and gently Elder Beebe would explain to him the puzzling texts of Scripture with distinct and clear revelation through the Spirit; the like divine and precious wisdom Elder Hanover in after years received in an abundant degree from his blessed Redeemer, when Jesus opened his understanding, that he might understand the Scriptures, revealing to him the beauties of his kingdom, the strengthening power of faith and wonderful liberty of the gospel; but he seems bereft of it now, and his Adamic life is but a vapor indeed, ready to vanish away any moment, so the dear old

brother feels destitute and lonely, and desires an interest in your prayers, that at the appointed time he be filled with divine joy, with the most precious of all summons from the heavenly Master: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Astounding mercy, and love beyond degree, that he would purify his people and call them to such a rich legacy. With the apostle we are made to feel that "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." We often feel the weakness of sinful flesh, and are made to cry out like wicked Cain, "My punishment is greater than I can bear," forgetting the patience, longsuffering and humility of the patriarchs, prophets, apostles and our blessed Redeemer, and so frequently need our pure minds stirred up by way of remembrance, and especially to our blessed Redeemer's suffering, death and glorious resurrection. While this was the most sinful scene in all history, it involves the sweetest thoughts that ever engaged the mind of man, when Jesus breathed into our hearts his immaculate love that caused him to thus be led as a lamb to the slaughter. Could our hearts ever be polished with that scene and burnished with the robe of righteousness thus so dearly wrought out on Calvary, but we know that cannot be, it is too good for us while here in this sinful flesh; we have the battles of sin still to fight, sin is mixed with all we do, all this natural life must be covered by the pardoning blood of Jesus, and when he pours that into our souls in our humble petitions at his mercy-seat we can with good old David exclaim, "Bless the Lord, O my soul," and in heartfelt thankfulness sing his praises in truth and in spirit.

May God bless the dear editors and faithful correspondents of the SIGNS to continue writing of the rich treasures of his kingdom. Many a poor, hungry lamb is thus nourished and fed unknown to you, but no doubt dear to their heavenly Master.

Unworthily your brother in hope,

J. M. RUFFNER.

LEESBURG, Va., June 27, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Last week it was my privilege to spend, in company with my family, a few days with sister Harriet Larue, at her home, near Berryville, Va. Sister Larue, as most of the SIGNS readers know, is a daughter of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and though eighty-six years old, still retains her faculties to a remarkable degree. Last fall, she, in company with Miss Hallie Dorsey, drove nine miles and back to attend the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, and during the same year drove twenty-two miles each way to a meeting. I much enjoyed hearing her talk of the days of her youth, the many trials of her life, and the goodness of the Lord to her. She entertained me also with her memories of Old School Baptist ministers she has known. Among those she talked of was Elder Thomas P. Dudley. In 1866 he wrote her a letter, which all these years has been a treasure to her. She gave it me to read, and I asked her consent to have it published, so I am inclosing it now to you. Elder Dudley was one of the ablest ministers our people ever knew, and I thought this missive from his pen over an interval of forty-five years might interest your readers. The wife of Elder Dudley was formerly Mrs. Harrison, mother of the assassinated Carter Harrison, late Mayor of Chicago, and grandmother of the present Carter Harrison, Mayor of Chicago.

I was greatly shocked last week to learn of the death of our brother, Elder G. D. Roberson. Only a few days ago we were in his company at the association, and already he is no more. How swiftly and suddenly changes come.

Yours in gospel bonds,

H. H. LEFFERTS.

NEAR LEXINGTON, Ky., March 13, 1866.

MY DEAR SISTER:—I find it difficult to realize that more than ten years have passed since I met you at your father's house in Middletown. Your deep affliction then called up the warmest sympathies of my heart, and I felt an ardent desire that the good Lord should bear you up by his sustaining grace in that your hour of severe trial, having unshaken confidence in his faithfulness to his promises. He has said, I will be a Father to the fatherless and the widow's God. I felt that you could adopt the saying of the poet:

"While his left hand my head sustains,
I can the burden bear."

I have frequently thought of you while the desolations resulting from civil war were sweeping over our once happy country, and, as I supposed, in your immediate neighborhood, yet have you realized the truth of the prophetic saying, "The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him." When you retrospect the past I feel that you will join me in singing,

"Let others boast how strong they be,
Nor death nor danger fear,
But we'll confess, O Lord, to thee,
What feeble things we are."

Although you have been called to drink deeply of the cup of affliction, yet have you this consolation: "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them: and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." Though the clouds have been dark and lowering, and destruction seemed nigh, even at the door, yet has He whispered in thy inmost mind, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." I trust you have realized the truth of that saying, "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe."

"There safety dwells, and peace divine;
O cleanse this filthy heart of mine."

The ordeal through which we have passed within the last five years seemed indeed to require all those rich supplies treasured up in the Lord Jesus to keep our heads above the waters. Many times have I thought of the language of the apostle: Lord, save me. What a mercy it is that there is a full treasure in the Lord Jesus from which we may draw supplies, and without money and without price, the free bestowal of your heavenly Father, whose ears are open to your cry. "Fear not, thou worm Jacob."

"Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed;
I, I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand."

Methinks you will respond, Ah, sir, I know that there are many exceeding great and precious promises made to the christian, but am I one of the subjects of those promises? Be assured, my dear sister, had the Lord intended to destroy you he never would have revealed his holy character to you and unveiled the hidden evil of your own heart, which caused you to cry, "I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but

how to perform that which is good I find not." Without that revelation you never would have felt the need of the cleansing blood of the sinner's Friend. Then may you sing,

"O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be;
Let that grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee."

I have well-nigh filled up the seventy-fourth year of my pilgrimage on earth, during forty-six years of which time I have been permitted to indulge hope in the rich, atoning blood of Christ, and about forty-five years telling others how God could be just and save poor sinners. To-day I am constrained to acknowledge that I am as poor, as helpless and as dependent upon the sovereign grace of God for salvation as I was forty-six years ago. I am fully assured that,

"None but Jesus, none but Jesus,
Can do helpless sinners good."

Nor, judging the future by the past, can I indulge the smallest hope of preparing myself better to meet the Bridegroom on his second appearance, without sin unto salvation. Assured I am, that if saved at all, Christ must save me. My poor old heart is sometimes made to leap for joy when I hear it proclaimed from heaven, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

"Ashamed of Jesus! who can say—
Who that has sins to wash away,
Or tears to wipe, or good to crave,
Or fears to quell, or soul to save?
O then, nor is my boasting vain,
O then I boast a Savior slain,
And O, may this my glory be:
That Christ is not ashamed of me."

Darkness, my dear sister, is quite as necessary for the health and growth of the plants of grace as the light; were it not so, your heavenly Father would not have appointed it for his children. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," and yet my poor, unbelieving heart is too often inquiring, How is this or that providence to work for my good, when it seems like overwhelming me? Did you ever consider that affliction would cease to be affliction the moment we can realize the good that our God designs shall come of it?

"All things on earth, and all in heaven,
On thy eternal will depend,
And all for greater good were given,
And all shall in thy glory end."

It is hard for us, while wading through the deep waters and encountering fiery trials, to realize that our spiritual good is to be promoted thereby.

"When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow;
For I will be with thee thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace, all sufficient, shall be thy supply;
The flame shall not hurt thee, I only design
Thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine."

Can you not say, my dear sister, The Lord has been abundantly better to me than all my fears? "Having loved his own that were in the world, he loved them to the end."

"The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to her foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake."

You need not fear that your frequent importunities will weary him; "Ask, and ye shall receive." O then, "Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." Soon will you hear his sweet voice saying, Child, your Father calls, come home. Then indeed will your troubles have reached a close, and heaven afford you sweet repose. Then will you see him and be like him, for you will see him as he is. Then indeed will you realize that

he has clothed you with garments of salvation, and covered you with the robe of righteousness. Then will mortality be swallowed up of life, and you be free from sickness, sorrow, pain and death, and join in the anthem, "Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown him Lord of all." Methinks you say,

"If heaven be thus, O glorious Lord,
Why should I stay from thence?
What folly 'tis that I should dread
To die and go from hence."

Does your heart grow warm and mind impatient to reach your home in heaven?

"But hush, my soul, nor dare repine,
The time my God appoints is best;
While here to do his will be mine,
And his to fix my time of rest.

God bless you and yours, my dear sister, and give you patience to wait until your change comes. My wife desires to be most kindly and affectionately remembered to you.

THOMAS P. DUDLEY.

WHEELING, W. Va., May 14, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending you this letter which I received from Mr. Perry Ford, in answer to my inquiry about his father's vision. It is very interesting and comforting to me, and I think will be to others.

Your sister in hope,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

ADA, Ohio, May 8, 1911.

DEAR MRS. PULTZ:—I have so long delayed writing you that I almost feel ashamed of my negligence. I have been so busy lately completing my school work that I scarcely have had thoughts for much else; however, I hope you will pardon me.

Mother and I are well. It does seem lonely, of course, without father, but we would not have him come back. During the early part of father's sickness, or at the time he was confined to his bed, he was so restless nights he dreaded the darkness; that made it a double duty to wait upon him. The nights seemed very long to him, and very frequently he would ask the time, and when informed would be much disappointed; it seems I can yet hear his groan of regret. It was during one of these nights that the vision appeared, and a great calm came over him. He no longer dreaded the nights, and seemed reconciled to the end, which he hoped and prayed would soon come. He was not strong enough to tell the whole of the vision at one time, and I assure you that I am not able to do it justice; God forbid that I say what I should not. A voice told him that he would no longer worry or dread the nights. A hand with a pencil wrote a comforting inscription upon a black stone. The inscription father never told, but suffice it to say, it was to him, and to him alone, and that it was very comforting. At this juncture in relating his vision he would become so exhausted that he could say no more, but in his weakness he would whisper, "So beautiful, so beautiful." He at no time suffered pain, and when the end finally came, it was as if passing into peaceful slumber. At that time I was engaged in teaching, and would return home as often as I could to see and help wait upon him. I am the only one of his children at home, and very frequently would read to him from the Bible and other books; it seems he placed more confidence in me than I am worthy of; at any rate I shall not forget that upon one occasion when I returned home and to his bedside, (the first after his vision) how eager he was to tell me that he would no longer dread the night.

At present I am engaged in searching for wisdom in the books of men, but for

such a wisdom as father's, the wisdom of inspired writ, I would gladly exchange all. If perchance you see a brother or sister who may be interested in this part of father's life, you may feel free to relate as I have written. Mother would be glad to hear from you, as she has much enjoyed the products of your pen. We join in wishing you health and comfort, and may the Lord be with you.

Unworthily, PERRY FORD.

WOODSTOCK, Ontario.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Unworthy though I am of such a relationship, yet feeling that if I am not such I am forever lost. O how many are my fears that all my profession is vain, and that at death I shall forever be separated from God, but I hope on, though often hoping against hope, and fearing that in the end I shall be proven only a false professor, for I know that I do not adorn the doctrine of God by a consistent walk and conversation, much as I desire that I might, and it is a little source of comfort sometimes that I even desire to be found in the way and to walk in the way, but O the mourning I have because I cannot do the things that I would, and I remember the dear Savior said, "Blessed are they that mourn." I believe I can say truthfully that I spend days and weeks and months mourning over my sad, sinful condition, over my follies, my foolishness and my wickedness, and O how I wonder that I cannot live better, walk better and think better. Some will say, So you can if you only try, but if they were troubled, and carried about with them the evil nature that I do, perhaps they, too, would be crushed under the load. Paul says he was pressed beyond measure, so that he despaired of life, and I believe he was pressed down with doubts and fears, and if he, the great apostle, was so tried, perhaps I, too, may have hope, humble, weak and poor as I am. The Savior said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." How many can say, I am poor in spirit? Well, the blessing is to them. The psalmist says, The Lord "will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer," and he says, "This shall be written for the generations to come." O how often I have felt that destitute that it seemed impossible that anything good could dwell in me, and yet there is a hungering after something that I feel the world can never fill, and why is it so? Why can I not be satisfied with the world and worldly things? Can it be because there is a principle implanted in me that is in opposition to the world and all its charms and allurements? O how I long to know where I stand, and how I stand before God. Truly the apostle says, "Great is the mystery of godliness," and just as great is the mystery of iniquity; who can fathom either of them, or find out their wonderful depths? For more than forty, yes, nearly fifty years, I have been trying to find out these wonderful mysteries, and where I stand in relation to them, and the longer I live the more the mystery seems to deepen, so that I despair of ever being able to fathom either of them, and I shall just have to travel on until death will reveal them, or settle what the future will be. O that I were able to say with the apostle, "O death, where is thy sting?" O grave, where is thy victory?" but it is not so with me; but we do not need dying strength to live by, and when the time comes for me to depart, to lay aside this mortal frame, I can only hope that Jesus will be my support, strength and comfort, and that I shall fall asleep in

Jesus in sure and certain hope of awaking with his likeness and being satisfied; that is all my hope.

My subscription to the SIGNS has expired, and I just wrote these few thoughts, which you are at liberty to dispose of as you think best. I often think I will never write for publication again, but I find I cannot control my thoughts or actions.

Unworthily your brother,

R. SCATES.

MONROE, Ga., June 4, 1911.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Another year has passed since we enjoyed the meetings at Hopewell and your city, and it makes our subscription due for the SIGNS, that we still have time to read and enjoy the doctrine set forth in its columns: salvation by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves, always shown by those who contribute to it. We have other papers that contend for the truth, but the SIGNS somehow feels near to me from its history of long ago, not for its popularity even among our people, because some seem to think that absolute predestination means that God is the author of sin. The foreknowledge of him who knows all things will not be disappointed in anything that transpires; just as he knows it in the future it will come to pass, notwithstanding everything to the contrary. Then our destiny in time and eternity is already known to him, so all that we may or can or must do will not change the destiny of one of his creatures; even if we combine our forces he will not change. It is said that he expects things of us, and leaves many things to our own discretion, but it will not do to say that he expects anything, because he always knows. It appears to be hard, even for the people of God, to think that they are governed by circumstances, and the circumstances come in a way that they have no power over them, for they come in a time that reaches back so far that we cannot find the beginning, and they affect things so far in the future that we cannot even hope to know. A small circumstance will change and has changed, nations, and he who rules all nations has all power, all wisdom, all knowledge, so that all things come to pass at all the times and all the places that he ever knew in all the past, and will ever know in all the future; so man is lost in wonder and amazement because of his nothingness, ignorance, weakness, and in his best state is altogether vanity. May God pity us and save us, and he will all that were chosen in Christ Jesus.

Your brother in hope,

J. M. ADAMS.

VAIDEN, Miss., Jan. 22, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I will in my weakness try to write you a few lines and send in my subscription to the SIGNS. I wish to thank you all for the good letters in our family paper, and most of all I want to thank the Giver of all good and perfect gifts for the pleasure of reading the SIGNS; I do enjoy reading it, and I hope I love you all for the truth's sake. I thank brother Beeman for the good sermon on the resurrection he sent me last summer, I enjoyed reading it very much; I love to read his writings in the SIGNS.

Dear brethren, I will not trouble you any more this time. Love to all the brethren and sisters. Pray for me. May the good Lord bless and prosper you all.

Your unworthy sister in a good hope,

MARANDA MILNER.

EDITORIAL.

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PSALMS III. 8.

"SALVATION belongeth unto the Lord."

If any one word has more importance to a sinner, or to the needy and suffering, than any other word, it is this word, "salvation." This is the one important thing for all who are in danger, in distress, in poverty, in prison, or in the shadow of death. How can I be saved? is the one great question in the minds of all these characters. We suppose that it is true with almost all who are accustomed to hearing the gospel, and who believe it, that when the word "salvation" occurs to them, their thoughts at once rest upon the salvation which the blessed Lord wrought out for them on Calvary, from sin and death and hell. This is indeed the highest use of this word in the Scriptures, and that use of it which means the most to all those who have come to know their lost estate by reason of sin against God, yet the word "salvation" covers much more ground than this. The Scriptures themselves make use of the word under various circumstances and apply it to various things. Men, in the word, are spoken of as being saved from temporal sorrow or destruction, from temptation, from sore trials, from their enemies and from death by sickness or by the hand of some enemy, and men are spoken of as being saved from sin, and from death as the result of sin in word and thought and deed, as well as from everlasting destruction hereafter. Salvation also may mean not only being taken from the jaws of destruction into which they have already fallen, but also being saved from falling into destruction. Men are saved not only from the depths, but also from falling into the depths. David was saved when he was taken out of the pit indeed, but some have been saved from falling into the pit. It is salvation when one is redeemed from vice and folly and forgiven of the Father above, but it is also salvation, and that of God, when one is kept from being overcome by the temptation to this vice or folly. It is as much salvation when men are kept from the sorrows of the way as when they are delivered from sinking under them. Preventive medicine, or preventive measures of any kind, save men naturally just as much as the remedies given after sickness or any other trouble has come.

We are here speaking of these differing salvations, because our desire is to call attention to the truth that all salvation, in the end, is of the Lord. It was of the Lord that David was saved, in the sense of being brought to repentance of his fault and receiving forgiveness for it from the Lord in the case of Uriah and Bathsheba. Here was salvation for David from the sin into which he had entered, and by which he had been overcome. But David was the subject of salvation from God just as gloriously and just as effectually when, after Shimei had cursed him, he did not curse in return, or yield to the desire for vengeance. That salvation which was wrought out upon Calvary and finished for the redemption

forever of lost sinners, was no more entirely of the Lord than is that daily salvation which we all need from the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil. The fact that our blessed Lord employs various means in carrying on this work of salvation does not at all weaken the declaration that "Salvation is of the Lord," for he devises the means, and creates and prepares them, and works through them and in them, so that it is all God working, and not the means, whatever they may be. In our salvation from sin, death and hell the means which he devised were that his only begotten Son should come in human flesh, and in that flesh die, and rise again, and ascend into glory, but in all this it was and is true that God is our salvation. So by various means does the God of salvation keep us from day to day, saving us from temptation, from distress and despair. How many have found safety and help through the ministry of the word, through sore afflictions, through the application of some portion of the word of God, and in a thousand other ways, yet they do not praise these things, or give credit to them, but do in them all see the hand of God working for them, and so they praise him. In the end, after all is summed up, believers must confess that "salvation belongeth unto the Lord." Believers do not say, My will, my choice, my steadfastness have gotten me the victory, but the victory is the Lord's. Praise him. So far from thinking or saying the above are they when led by the Spirit, that they never can think that they have even served the Lord. His salvation is so great, so full and so complete that all their good willings and good doings are put out of sight by it, even as the stars of night are hidden from view when the sun has arisen upon the earth. So when Paul had said, "I labored more abundantly than they all," how quick he was to add, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." It does not sound good in the ear of a poor sinner, who can think of nothing to say of himself save that he is vile, to hear the thoughts or the words or the deeds of men extolled anywhere along the line in this matter of salvation, yet there is nothing, next to assurances that the Lord is his Savior, which he desires so much as to love and serve God. Every such poor sinner is exceedingly jealous over himself, and exceedingly careful as to what he says or does, but he confesses his best work altogether unworthy of any praise, either from God or man. Nothing humbles him and abases him in his own feelings so much as to learn that he has been a cup-bearer to some thirsty soul. This, in his view, is not a good deed upon his part, but rather a mercy from God ministered to him, and something to be wondered at, and for which he feels like praising God with all his powers.

The Psalm, in the last verse of which the words of the text at the beginning of this article occur, does not seem to us to be describing especially the final salvation of the elect, but rather the daily trials and conflicts and victories of David. His foes had increased, and had grown proud and scornful against him; the time was the rebellion of Absalom, his dear son, and for this reason, as well as on account of the danger that his throne should be lost, he was in deep distress, but yet he remembered past mercies, and was comforted under these trials, and so he could lie down and sleep, because the Lord sustained him, and in his heart there was no fear, even though calamities increased. How wonderful was the faith

that could give him such a victory. If any should say, How could David be so confident, and so full of restfulness under these calamities? the answer is found in the words, "Salvation belongeth unto the Lord." This he had learned many times before during his long life of trials. He had proved it when a shepherd lad, against the lion and the bear; he had proved it when he went out to meet the giant of Gath; he had proved it when fleeing from the wrath of Saul day and night as a bird from the snare of the fowler, and all his life upon the throne he had proved it through the daily mercies bestowed upon him at the hand of the Lord. Now, in this time of distress, as Absalom rebelled against him and drew after him multitudes of the people so that David again must flee for a time, it was given him to rise above these calamities by faith, and to still say, "Salvation belongeth unto the Lord." It is easy to say such things in mere words when all is peace and prosperity and friends abound, but at such prosperous times the words do not come with so deep a meaning from the heart as when oppression is felt, and temptation seems altogether too strong for us; here, if we can say, Salvation belongeth unto God, is indeed the victory of faith, that faith that overcometh the world. David was given this victory. This truth, like all other divine truth, must be taught through sore trials; there is no other way to enter into this portion of the kingdom. How bitter is the experience of our weakness, as well as of our sinfulness. The head is bowed down and cannot rise as we come into greater and still greater knowledge of what we are by nature and by practice, but out of these depths our cry is unto God, and it is out of the horrible pit that he delivers his own. The glory of the deliverance is magnified by the darkness and despair that is in the pit. The power of God is magnified through our weakness, the holiness of the blessed Redeemer imputed to us shines forth more clearly as we behold our unholiness. These things in our being brought to God stand out in contrast. Whether we think of our inward corruptions, or of our outward trials, by them is the grace of God made to be more and more apparent, and therefore, "the lower we sink the louder we'll sing" to the glory of that salvation which belongeth unto the Lord. This truth that salvation is of the Lord is a smooth stone which will smite to the death every Goliath of Arminianism, no matter under what guise it may appear. Human merit and conditionalism cannot stand before the smallest David when he wields this truth. David is weak, but this truth is strong, and this truth will surely destroy the foes which rise up within us, from the least to the greatest of them. This truth is the antidote for every disease with which the soul is infested; it is our bulwark against every assault of the tempter. Every charge is answered, and he who brings them is silenced, by this one truth, that salvation is of the Lord. What more do we want than this? Since this is true, what wait we for? This truth is well calculated to both humble and exalt the believer. It is a humbling truth, because it takes away all room for boasting. It places salvation, first, in the election of God, and not upon our choice; second, it presents as the foundation of our hope, not our morality or our religious ceremonies, or even our best works of obedience, but simply and solely the coming of our Lord into the world, and his death upon the cross, and his resurrection from the dead, as the ground

of salvation to a sinner. Third, it declares man to be lost, fallen, depraved altogether, and dead in sin, having therefore no desires heavenward or toward holiness so long as he is left to himself. Fourth, it declares that there is nothing in man that can merit esteem, nothing that tends upward, but that all in him by nature tends downward. Fifth, it declares that man will continue in his state of enmity to God and righteousness so long as he is left to follow his own will. Were there any spiritual good in men by nature at all, even the least, it might be that this spark of life, though ever so small, could be fanned into a blaze, and finally lead him to turn from sin to holiness and heaven; but the conclusion in such an event would be, not that salvation belongs to the Lord, but that it is in the power and will of the sinner. Man would then boast of himself, and not in the Lord, and in such an event the glorified inhabitants of heaven would have room to be pleased with themselves above others who had been less wise than they, and therefore had not cultivated the spark of life and goodness that was in them; boasting then would not be excluded. But salvation by the grace of God, when understood and felt in the heart, causes that heart to confess itself no better than the worst. Such an one says in all his testimony before God, There was nothing in me that could merit thy esteem, and if I am among the saved, it is by thy grace alone, thy free grace to the chief of sinners. But, on the other hand, this truth exalts the sinner in the blessed Lord, and because of his exaltation it is calculated to bring assurance to his heart that since the Lord has loved him when dead in sin, and bestowed his salvation upon him, nothing in his life can ever destroy his hope. He is assured that the Lord will stand by him and give him final victory, since grace abounds more than sin. In the time of temptation, when Satan does much condemn, and suggests to him that his sins must now, if never before, separate him from the love of God, grace brings assurance that he shall rise again. It is humbling to know that all our works fail, but, on the other hand, how consoling to know that the work of the Lord in our behalf does not fail. He who finds that he cannot keep himself will rejoice when he is assured that the Lord keeps him, and He who keepeth Israel never slumbers nor sleeps. We grow less and less, that our Jesus may be exalted more and more. How good it is to begin the eternal song of grace here, and raise some feeble notes to its praise. This will be the song in all the endless ages of eternity. As salvation belongeth unto the Lord, so shall it be said by all the redeemed forever and forever, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be blessing, and honor, and might, and dominion forever. Thou, thou alone, art worthy, for thou alone hast redeemed us. C.

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On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

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HEBREWS X. 26, 27.

"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."

In this book called Hebrews the apostle dwells almost exclusively upon the two covenants, the first legal, with its worldly sanctuary and carnal ordinances imposed at that time upon the Israelites, to whom all shadows pertained. There were commandments governing the worshipers of that sanctuary and describing the different forms of worship and appointing certain times to assemble themselves together for that service. There was a time to read the law, a time to circumcise, a time to feast, a time to fast, a time for divers washings, a time to offer sacrifices, &c. All these things were commanded the children of Israel, and he who transgressed any commandment regulating the service of the temple was punished as prescribed by the law, and that law respected no man's person. Hence the transgressor, whether great or small, suffered for his sin. That covenant, however, notwithstanding all its requirements and ordinances, was faulty, in that it could not make the comers thereunto perfect. "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." Inasmuch as that covenant had not the very image of better things to come, it was necessary that a better, or perfect, covenant be established upon better principles and better promises. This could only be done by taking away the first; this Christ did, that he might establish the second. Now, while that worldly sanctuary, together with its laws and ordinances, had not the very image of heavenly or gospel things, there will be seen, as was intended, a resemblance, and this is couched in our text as well as throughout the letter to the Hebrews. There is now a heavenly sanctuary with its ever-living Priest, who offered himself unto God once for all the sins of his people. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." We desire just here to emphasize this clause: "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." This new and better covenant has laws governing the worshipers of the heavenly or gospel sanctuary. There is a ministration of the spirit by those called of God, as was Aaron, for no man taketh this honor unto himself. The law of the church of God concerning the setting apart of men to this ministry is as powerful as was the law of the old covenant respecting the anointing of the sons of Levi, who ministered in the worldly sanctuary, and when this law of Zion is disregarded, not only does the man set apart suffer, but the whole church suffers also. Has not this often been seen? Surely the way of the transgressor is hard, and there is no escape. There are times appointed for the children of Zion to assemble themselves together for the worship of God in praise, prayer and spiritual songs, and to be ministered unto by men of God, who through his Spirit proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ. There is a time to observe the ordinance of the Lord's supper, and it shall be done in remembrance of him. There is a way to baptize, and only qualified men of God can administer that ordinance. There are certain names in which to bap-

tize: the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and the law of the sanctuary admits believers in Jesus Christ only to that ordinance. To be brief, we will say that the laws of the house of God respecting the worship and ordinances thereof are as full and complete as ever the laws of the former covenant were that governed everything respecting the worldly sanctuary, and every transgression reaps its reward. For instance, if we make a feast of the Lord's supper, some being hungry and others drunken, what is the result? Paul answers, "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." These conditions are experimental, consequently each transgressor must pay the penalty. Suppose the church of God, desiring to be like other nations, resorts to musical instruments, trained choirs, Ishmaelite preachers and gaudy dress, what is the result? Condemnation and death. If through natural affection and sympathy one should be received and baptized who does not give full evidence of the work of grace in the heart, what would follow? Trouble and reproach. If a man of wealth drinks to excess, deals unjustly or lies, and the church does not deal with him according to her law, what results? Shame and disgrace. We mention the rich man because the poor man is generally brought to an account for his evil deeds, but the law is, Have no man's person in admiration; do nothing by partiality. Why is this law so often transgressed? Another commandment is to provoke one another to love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is. The law of Moses demanded that the Israelites assemble themselves together at the appointed times, and whoever failed to comply was in the eyes of that law a sinner. The law of the house of God also demands the attendance of its members, and we have known some who have been excluded from the privilege of the church for non-attendance. This could not be done were it not the law of the heavenly sanctuary to assemble ourselves together. That neglect to do this is wilful sinning is clearly shown by our text which immediately follows, beginning with the words, "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." The apostle is not even suggesting that a law now exists, since the atonement was made by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, that the children of God can transgress and again bring themselves into condemnation and death, and therefore need another sacrifice for sin, but he is dwelling upon the laws of the church, the transgression of which brings upon the offender a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation from God, the rewarder of every man according to his works. The Israelites did not sin wilfully (knowingly) before they received the law from Mt. Sinai; they did not know what sin was, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But after they received the knowledge of the law and its demands they did know, and every act of disobedience was wilful, not ignorant of sin and its consequences. So with the Israel of God, before they receive the law of the new covenant, which must be written of God in their hearts and put in their minds, they know nothing of sin in the strict sense of the term, nor can they know anything of the laws governing the service and ordinances of the Lord's house. But after being born of the Spirit of God, washed with clean water and purged from their

sin inherited from Adam, saved with an eternal salvation, they are new creatures and have the knowledge of the truth; not only that sinners are saved by grace, but they also have knowledge of the house of God and what its laws require of them. Hence to absent ourselves from the assemblies of the spiritual sanctuary is a wilful sin, because we know the law of the church demands our presence. To steal is a wilful sin, because we know the commandment is, "Let him that stole steal no more." To bear false witness is a wilful sin, because the law of Zion says, Thou shalt not lie. To be drunken is a wilful sin, because the commandment is, Be sober. To commit adultery is a wilful sin, for the law of the new covenant says, Thou shalt not look upon a woman to lust after her. Time and space forbid that we mention every transgression possible to the members of the household of faith; we only want to emphasize the fact that the subjects of grace can and do transgress the laws of Zion, and that each sin is wilful and is visited with condemnation in the soul and experience of the transgressor. To prove what we say we will quote here verses 28–31 of this same chapter in which is our text, and which immediately follow it: "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." A sentence or two in the twenty-ninth verse we desire to call special attention to, viz., "who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace." Three things are specially mentioned here, and in each place the word "hath" is used with reference to the guilty party. Inasmuch therefore as this matter is presented in the past tense, it is evident that one or more had verily done the things mentioned, and there can be no question that the transgressor was other than one sanctified by the blood of the covenant. When quoting from Paul that, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me," we should not forget that indwelling sin is made manifest through the flesh, and that the MAN who sins is called, by this same apostle, the sinner. John says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves;" "If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar;" and, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." All these expressions prove conclusively that the children of grace can and do sin, transgressing the laws of the kingdom of God. But praise to the name of our blessed Lord that no law exists now, nor ever can again, that the transgression thereof would separate the redeemed from God and make necessary another atonement for sin. "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." No, no necessity for any to reconcile men unto God; to bring them that were afar off, without hope and without God in the world, into communion and at-one-ment with our once offended, but merciful and gracious God. The expression, "Christ suffered for sins past, present and future," is often used, and we believe it true, but

one asks, If that be so, how do the children of God suffer for sin? as though forgiveness removed forever from the conscience the remembrance of sin against God. To illustrate our thought we will call attention to the boyhood and girlhood days of such inquirers. Our fathers and mothers had laws governing their families and households, and the transgression of those laws brought sometimes the rod upon the back of the disobedient child. In other instances it wrought a sorrowful heart and sad expression for father and mother. But after awhile, by the manifest love, kindness, tender care and pleasant smile of father and mother, the child knew that he was forgiven, and that father and mother remembered no more his transgression against him; but the child remembered it, and his conscience troubled him to think he had been guilty of grieving and offending father and mother, who were devoted, tender, faithful and kind. Just so it is with the children of our heavenly Father. Yes, though the chastisement was great and severe, through his tender love and compassion we know that he forgives all our sins and remembers them against us no more, but we remember our wilful sins against him who loved us and gave himself for us, and our conscience smites us, yes, great and severe is the suffering for our sins. Just how those who know what a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God can say, The children of the new covenant do not, cannot, sin wilfully, or voluntarily, which is the original word, we do not understand. Paul seemed to know how fearful it was in his day, and we feel sure that Peter knew.

Hoping at least that we have done no violence to the subject, we leave it for the consideration of our readers. K.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association convened with the church at Kingwood, Hunterdon Co., N. J., May 31st and June 1st and 2nd, 1911, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond sends greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is our privilege to write you at this another session of our association, as has long been our custom. It is a privilege that ought to be highly prized by all who love God, to hold converse together, whether face to face or by letters. Some of your ministers and members have been with us at this meeting as messengers or visitors. Their preaching and conversation have borne testimony that we are all abiding in the same faith and hope. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and forever, is that hope, and that One in whom our faith rests. In this faith and hope is manifested the fellowship which is with the Father and the Son. By the coming of your messengers and your Minutes we have been glad to learn that you are striving together with us for the faith of the gospel. We trust that the blessed Lord may so keep us all that this fellowship may continue to abide to his glory and praise. Our meeting has been pleasant and the preaching good. Our churches have been well represented by their messengers, and report peace and union among themselves.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the church at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., to commence on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1912, when and where we hope to meet and greet your messengers again.

J. M. FENTON, Moderator.

O. R. KUGLER, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, June 5th, 1911, at the home of the bride's parents, Halcott Centre, N. Y., Blanche M. Slauson and James Peet.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **S. L. H. Owens** was born in the year 1844 (month and day not known), in the State of Ohio, died in Oregon City, Oregon, March 24th, 1911, aged 67 years. When quite young she moved with her parents to the State of Iowa, settling near Waverly, where she grew to womanhood. She was married to John Lucas about the year 1864, and shortly afterwards moved with her family to the State of Oregon, settling near Oregon City, on the Mollala, where she lived for several years. Later she lived in Portland, where she was married the second time, to a man by the name of Stuart. Later she moved to Warrenton, Oregon, where she lived for several years with a cousin, Miss Hess. Removing later back to Portland, she bought property in a suburb called Evemont, living alone for a time, except for a few months when she lived with Elder and Mrs. J. P. Allison, near Sherwood, Oregon. She was later married to J. W. S. Owens, Jan. 24th, 1910, with whom she lived happily for fourteen months, dying as above stated. While at Fremont she had a severe spell of sickness, from which she never fully recovered. She was in a hospital for over two months, and while hovering between life and death was given a glimpse of the glory of the world to come, of which she often spoke with joy. The morning upon which she was stricken with death she was writing a letter to a brother and sister in the flesh of brother Owens', and who are also members of the church, who are living in Iowa, and the latter part of her letter was taken up in telling of her experience while at the hospital. She never finished the letter, but was stricken suddenly, and lived only about eight hours. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church in Iowa when from fifteen to eighteen years of age, and was baptized by Elder James Burch. For a long time after she came to Oregon she was deprived of church privileges, not being permitted to hear the gospel preached but two or three times for over thirty-three years, yet her faith never failed, but with tongue and pen she continued to publish the name of Christ as the only Savior of sinners. Her writings were often seen in the SIGNS. Many of its readers will remember her writings over the name of Mrs. S. L. H. Stuart. She united with the church called Cedar Creek, at Oregon City, by relation of experience, in the spring of 1905, where she lived a worthy and consistent member, ever rejoicing in the word of God. Her doors were ever open to our church and people, and we frequently held meetings in her house for her benefit when she was not able to attend at the regular place of worship. The unworthy writer has spent many hours in her hospitable home with our dear, aged brother and sister, and has had much pleasure in talking with them and in hearing them relate their trials and joys. But she has gone to her reward. While our dear old brother is left alone in the low grounds of sorrow to battle on for a few more years, he has the blessed assurance that while her mortal body lies moldering back to its mother earth, her happy spirit is basking in the light of God's eternal presence. I was visiting the churches in Washington at the time of her death. Brother Owens tried, but could not reach me over the telephone. Elder A. Wilson, of Arkville, Wash., and Elder B. S. Pate, of Dayton, Wash., preached at her funeral on the fourth Sunday in March, that being our regular church meeting time. She had always looked forward to our meeting times with glad anticipation, and had been busy the day of her death preparing for the brethren at her home, but instead she was received into the church above, that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, yet we mourn our loss. She delighted while she lived in singing the sweet songs of Zion, and her theme of rejoicing was grace, free grace; but her days below are over, her life on earth is spent. She was a subscriber of the SIGNS for many years.

Her unworthy pastor, S. B. MOFFITT.

NEWBERG, Oregon.

BROTHER **Jonathan P. Holcombe** departed this life Wednesday, April 12th, 1911, at his residence, near Lambertville, N. J., after a short illness. He had been in failing health for some time. His age was 70 years, 1 month and 1 day. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Second Hopewell Church about thirty years ago, by the late Elder Wm. J. Purington, who was then pastor of that church. Brother Holcombe was born near Lambertville, and always lived in the vicinity of that place. His wife was Sarah E. Bainbridge, who has been a member of the church with him many years. She has written to me concerning his past experience as follows: "I will tell you what he told me of his exercise of mind as far back as he could remember. From early childhood he had thought upon these things. He said, 'As I grew older I could not find any one who thought as I did, for I knew that I could not do anything to save myself, as the rest said they could,' and he never found one who felt as he did until he got among the Old School Baptists. Before he came to the church he prayed one day to the Lord to give him a sign. It was very dry, and he prayed for the Lord to send rain that night. In the morning he asked me if it had rained and if I had heard it. I told him that I had not heard it, and that it was clear, but

that there was water standing on the stones. Then he told me why he had wanted to know so much. I told him that he had to walk by faith, and not by sight, and we often talked of this in our after experience."

We desire to add to the above that we have known brother Holcombe well during the past fifteen years or more. He was a faithful member of the church, and loved to hear and to join in spiritual conversation, though not a man of many words. Severe trials had befallen him in the later years of his life, but he was enabled to be patient and submissive under them, recognizing from whose hand they had come. He will be sorely missed by his family, his friends and the church. A son and daughter have preceded him to the grave, and also grandchildren. The dear companion of his life, one daughter and several grandchildren are left sorrowful and lonely. May the God of grace be with them and comfort them.

The funeral service was held on Saturday, April 15th, at Harbourton, N. J. The text used upon the occasion was Psalms xvii. 16. The mortal remains were interred in the adjoining cemetery, to await the last trumpet, when all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and shall come forth. C.

SISTER **Martha E. Daniels** was born Feb. 27th, 1828, died May 3rd, 1911, aged 83 years, 2 months and 6 days. She had been somewhat paralyzed and crippled for several years, but the cause of her death was a fall, when she broke her hip, about three weeks before her death. She was a faithful and devoted member of the Valley Church for over forty years; even to the last year of her life she attended the meetings of her church faithfully and regularly. Her hospitality to the preachers and other brethren and sisters made them feel at home with her, where her whole talk with them was about the doctrine and experience of God's people, whom she dearly loved. Her last words that any one could understand were, when asked if she wanted anything, she said, "No, I will soon be with my Savior." The death of sister Daniels is a sad loss to the Valley Church, which has stood for over one hundred years, but by reason of death her numbers are few. She also leaves to mourn the loss of a dear mother, six children, four daughters and two sons, all married, and her kind and devoted husband, Job Daniels, with whom she had spent a long and happy married life, besides a number of grandchildren and a host of friends. May the Lord comfort them all.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer, at the house, where there was a large gathering of relatives and friends. She was buried in the family burying-ground on the farm, not far from the old home, there to await the hour which is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life.

J. N. BARTLETT.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., June 19, 1911.

Lydia Jenkins, daughter of Samuel and Abbie Jenkins, was born Oct. 1st, 1824, died April 2nd, 1911, at the home of her sister, Mrs. Deborah M. Coulson, Delta, Pa., with whom she had made her home the last four years, who did all that loving hands could do for her comfort. Our dear sister was baptized by Elder Thomas Barton, May 19th, 1867, in the fellowship of the Rock Springs Primitive Baptist Church, and was a consistent member until her death. She was of a meek and quiet spirit and orderly walk, the Bible and the SIGNS were her daily companions, but the Lord took her to himself, where the inhabitants never say, I am sick. She left to mourn her death one sister, Mrs. Deborah M. Coulson, who is well stricken in years, a number of nieces and nephews, with the church, which feels the loss of a lovely member.

The funeral service was conducted by our pastor, Elder J. G. Eubanks, at Rock Springs, Md., her native home, where her body was laid to rest to await the resurrection.

Written by request of her sister, Mrs. D. M. Coulson. SALLIE E. LOWE.

NOTICE.

As the hall in which the Albany and Troy Church holds its meeting is being repaired, there will be no meeting held until the fourth Sunday in September.

J. B. SLAUSON.

MEETINGS.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

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SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 79. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1911. NO. 15.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Bow, Wash., Jan. 16, 1911.

ELDER G. E. MAYFIELD—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have been thinking of you a great deal lately, and having seen your good letter in the SIGNS, have decided to write to you. I received a letter from Elder Wilson, telling me of your poor health, which I am very sorry to hear. I greatly desire to have you visit us again, and am very sorry that you have to suffer so much, but, dear brother, there is a time coming when all our sorrows and sufferings will be turned to joy: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment [compared to eternity], worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," and I pray that the Holy Spirit may be with you in all your pains and afflictions, giving you grace sufficient for your day. We are all as well as usual. I am able to do my chores, hauling and splitting my own wood, &c., but am getting better slowly. I have not yet sold my place, and do not know what we will do, but I know that the Lord will guide us aright, and I am trusting in him.

I will send you some of the musings which come in the night to me, and after reading them if you think that they will be of any comfort to the readers of the SIGNS you my send them there. If they are of the Lord I think you will know, and if they are not, you know that they will not benefit his children. I received a good letter from sister Yeoman on the sixth inst. I hope and pray that the Lord will restore you to health again, and that you may be spared many years to preach Christ and him crucified, the way, the truth, the life and the light, and may his grace be sufficient for you.

But to my musings by night. "For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." Now it is a fact, according to the recorded word, that the natural man, and consequently the natural mind, was created first, yet the Spirit was from everlasting to everlasting; but in order that his Spirit might be manifested in this world, God, according to his plan which he formed for his own pleasure, made man of the dust of the earth, the very lowest substance of all that he formed, and this he did, although had it been his will he could have formed

man of the most precious substance, as silver and gold, or of what we call precious gems, yet we know that in the sight of God, who judgeth according to truth, these things are no more precious than the dust, for he needs none of these earthly ornaments to cause him to appear grand or beautiful, for in the eyes of those who know him he is more glorious than all the gems of earth. He is to them the one gem without price, and truly blest are those who are adorned with his Spirit. But since it pleased God to choose the most humble substance out of which to form man, we should not find fault, for, like all of God's work, this work was also perfect, not as to righteousness, but in the choice of the substance, for if our bodies were composed of any valuable substance would men allow them to rest in peace in the grave? Nay, verily, they would be sought for with all the greed which is in the heart of men for all things which they count valuable. But as the dust is of no intrinsic value, our bodies after death are left by men to rest in peace, yet they were made perfect in form. This is true, although men have adopted numerous artificial forms to make themselves appear as they think they ought to appear; but God's work was perfect in the formation of man, for he made him in the image of himself for a purpose, and that purpose was the glory of God, and God will just as surely rule and control man, even in his wicked acts, as it is true that he formed him. He will cause that all shall redound to His own honor and glory. Has God not said that the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder he will restrain? While it is a great mystery to us why he should choose some unto salvation, and not all, we still have no right to ask the reason, but as we ought to accept all his works, so also we ought to accept this as a perfect work, for "hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory?" For this reason also he formed our bodies of the dust of the earth for a habitation of God through the Spirit. Here is another and the chief reason why our bodies have no intrinsic value, viz., that none of the honor or the glory or power should be attributed to man, but that all the glory should be given to God, to whom it belongs. Our bodies are truly vessels of mercy, for they were in nowise better by nature than others, but we were by nature children of wrath, even as others, and as Adam was, so are all of them, and as Paul declares of himself, "I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." There was a time in the life of us all when we knew nothing of the law of God, nor of the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, but we were very much alive to the laws of nature, and we had no desire only the satisfying of our fleshly lusts, and we felt then no fear of the Lord before our eyes. We pursued those pleasures which satisfy the flesh, and we feared only those laws and penalties imposed by our parents or guardians for the disobedience of which we were punished; as yet we had no other commandment to keep, for we knew no other law, and consequently felt no condemnation in following the pursuit of pleasure, but when the com-

mandment came, sin revived, and we died. Had we not been sinning before? Yes, but it had not appeared to be sin unto us, but then we were shown that anything that was not honoring to God was sin, our former lives of sin were revived before us, until they seemed like mountains, and we then beheld God as the holy God and Judge, before whom we stood to be judged of every act of sin and disobedience. Then we could not try to plead our ignorance, or to give any other excuse; we saw it all so clearly that it never occurred to us that we were without the law as to the knowledge of it. At that time we did not flee to the righteousness of Christ as our plea, but we fled to the wilderness, there to be tempted and tried of the devil. He is our constant companion, and many and cunning are the ways by which he plans to deceive us; our flesh is in perfect harmony with all his plots, and also with all the allurements of the world, for we are of the earth and are earthy. "When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." All the greatness and the goodness which we imagined we possessed, all the supremacy of thought and mind which we possessed over some others less fortunate than ourselves died, and became as filthy rags in our sight; now instead of boasting of our goodness and greatness, we feel that we are less than nothing and vanity; now we have discovered our nakedness, and seek to hide ourselves, trying to make a cloak of our own to hide our sin, but all this is in vain, and we discover that God's all-seeing eye sees all the fallacy of our works of self-righteousness, and all our labors we find to be but sounding brass, and as an atonement for our sins they avail us nothing. But God has prepared a covering, a coat, for us, but not without the shedding of blood. The beasts from which the coverings of skins were made for our first parents must have been slain in order that their skins could be thus used for them, and the poor, naked, wretched sinner who has been stripped of his robe of self-righteousness and who stands before God beholds the greatness of His majesty and power, and knows that his condemnation is just, and feels that he can expect nothing but banishment. What a change has been wrought in this man; he has been turned from a self-sufficient, pleasure-loving, sin-indulging, proud man, to one who feels the condemnation of God for the very things in which he had found so much pleasure; he now sees himself justly condemned before God, without hope, and pleads for mercy. How well do we remember when we were in that awful condition, that wilderness of woe, what a battle was waged between that feeling of pride and the humility wrought by the Spirit, how greatly we tried to appear as though there was nothing the matter with us while in the presence of others, but as soon as we were alone how sad and forsaken we were and how we tried to pray, but it seemed to us that our prayers were an empty sound, carrying no substance with them and bringing to us no relief, until we felt that it was of no use to pray, yet we could not help praying, for our constant cry was, "God be merciful to me a sinner;" then, in an unexpected moment, our load of guilt which had weighed us down unto death was gone, and then, for the first time, we beheld Christ as the Savior, as our Savior. What joy and relief was there; instead of grief and mourning there was joy and gladness, all that we beheld was praising God for his great and wonderful love,

which he had freely bestowed upon us, even while we were dead in trespasses and in sins. We had been clothed upon with righteousness from heaven, the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, the coat which God made to cover our nakedness. Not only so, but the apostle says, "We also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement." We have been made unto God kings and priests, and we shall reign through the precious blood of Christ which has been so freely shed for us; this is for all whom the Lord our God shall call. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" How comforting and consoling it is for those who have passed through the wilderness to the city of habitation to know that they have entered into that rest which remains to the people of God, and that they are forever safe from all enemies. God has saved them with an everlasting salvation, and none is able to pluck them out of his hand. Now seeing that we have such hope, which is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and enters into that within the veil, whither the forerunner has for us entered, even Jesus, who there makes intercession for us, let us deny ourselves, and take up our cross and follow him, not only in good report, but in evil report, not only in prosperity, but in adversity, not in pleasure, but in sorrow. Let us do this when all men forsake us and speak evil of us falsely, for this they will do if we are true followers of the lowly Jesus. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." But be of good courage, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Your brother in a precious hope,

DAVIS BURCH.

BALTIMORE, Md., June 14, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have been requested by a dear brother, a deacon of one of the churches I serve, to write something of the duties of those who have connected themselves with the church, and I have decided to try to write some things concerning the second epistle of John.

"The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth." John is the Elder, or minister, called of God to feed and instruct the church; the elect lady is the church as an organization, and her children are the individual members of the church. John, like all gospel ministers, loved the church as a whole, and each individual in the truth and for the truth's sake, and all who have known the truth love one another, and love to meet together and mingle together in the worship of Him who has revealed to them his wonderful truth. This truth embraces their felt sense of the need of a Savior, and the wonderful revelation of Jesus as a Savior fully able to save the very chief of sinners, and when men and women learn these blessed truths they are born of God and love one another, and hence their desire to dwell together in church fellowship and membership, that they may praise and bless God, from whom all blessings flow, and be helpful and encouraging one to another. This feeling of love and fellowship is because

of the truth which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us forever, as stated in the second verse. How sweet are the words of the gospel, The truth dwelleth in us. Jesus is truth, and he dwells in his people the hope of glory, and will never leave nor forsake them. In the third verse the Elder says to these called and blessed people, "Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love." How good and how encouraging to those who feel their weakness to know that God's ministers, yea, all of his little ones, are praying for each other, that their God, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift, would continually give them grace, mercy, peace and love, all of which blessings are necessary to their happiness and prosperity as children of the heavenly King. In the fourth verse the Elder expresses his joy at finding these children walking in truth as they had received commandment from the Father. What could be greater joy to a faithful minister than to see those to whom he ministers the things of the kingdom walking orderly, even according to the commandment of God, showing their love for each other by being present at every meeting of the church, ready and willing to do all in their power to keep up their organization, and to help and comfort each other, and this Jesus says they will do if they love him. It is the law of God written in the heart, without which we have no evidence that we are born again; but having this love in us, we know that we have passed from death unto life.

Fifth verse: "And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another." This I feel is an appeal to the church as a body to look to her interests: the welfare of each one over whom she should exercise a careful watch-care, and this she will do if she loves her Husband (Jesus) and his children as she should. See that each one is in health, which is shown by their coming regularly to the place of worship, for as healthy children come regularly to the table, so do members of the church come to their place of feeding, unless something is wrong with their spiritual system. If this condition is found to exist, they should be treated tenderly, and their life saved (church identity), if possible. If they are found to be dead, bury them; this is necessary for the health of the family.

Sixth verse: "And this is love, that we walk after his commandments." Not that we say with our tongues that we love Jesus and his people, but that we show it by being with them and helping them as Jesus has given us ability. Faith cannot be shown without works, but by works, says James. Love is the first emotion of the soul born again, and John exhorts that we continue to walk after this holy principle, which is not only of God, but is God, for God is love, and he that loveth not knoweth not God, and if we love not our brother, whom we have seen, how can we love God, whom we have not seen? If we do not walk after this rule (love), are we not denying that Jesus is come in our flesh? and are we not deceivers, as mentioned in verse seven? It looks that way to me. O, dear ones, let us be careful that we do not deceive others by false professions, and hence the light in us be darkness, and our last state be worse than the first.

Eighth verse: "Look to yourselves that we lose not those things which we

have wrought [gained], but that we receive a full reward." Does not this mean that we should be careful, as Paul said, to maintain good works, see that our faith and profession are not dead, worthless things that prove a stumbling-block to those who look to us for better things? Dear ones, the church and the world look to us for the fulfillment of our profession to serve Jesus by walking faithfully with the church; look to yourselves, and cast away every disposition to lag. If we transgress this holy law of love, and abide not in the doctrine of Christ, we have not God. Abiding in the doctrine of Christ consists not only in proclaiming that we believe in foreknowledge, predestination, election, calling, justification and glorification, but in speaking and doing the things which become sound doctrine, as taught in verse nine, and in this way we prove that we have both the Father and the Son.

Verse ten: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." If this doctrine of Jesus is not found, both in the faith and practice of those who come in the name of disciples of Christ, we must show our love for the doctrine by rejecting them and refusing them our house (church) in which to air their heresies. In doing this we manifest our love to God, his Son and his church, and prove that we love one another for Jesus' sake. If we encourage such we become partakers of their evil deeds, we become parties to their falsehood, and endanger the safety of the tender lambs of the flock.

Closing this epistle, the apostle says, I have "many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full." So you and I know how much more joy there is in being together, that we may not only hear the words of each other, but see the precious effects of the blessed Spirit of Jesus as he sweetly moves the hearts and lips of his dear ones to speak of the wonderful things he has done for us. How sweet to have our souls thrilled with gospel truth when His servants are in the spirit of preaching it, and to hear the voices of his dear ones, full of spiritual melody, singing the songs of Zion. Do not our hearts exclaim with David, and say, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity"? Do we not cry out with the poet, and sing,

> "My soul shall pray for Zion still,
> While life or breath remains;
> There my best friends, my kindred dwell,
> There God my Savior reigns"?

Do we not say, Lord, it is good to be here? Who then would wilfully stay away from the assembly of the saints? Do we not need such precious seasons as these? Have we not sometimes been blessed with them? Then how good, O how wonderfully good and condescending is our God. Can we do without him? Can we live in transgression of his holy law of love? Can we live alone? Do we not need the companionship of the saints? Suppose the church should ask us to go back from whence we came, would we not exclaim with Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee"? Have we any other home where we find rest, food, raiment and shelter? Do any other people speak to us in such endearing terms? Is there such sweetness in the speech of others? I hear you answer, No. Then I ask, How is it that you can and do sometimes stay away from your church meetings without a providential hindrance? O brethren, look to yourselves

and consider your ways, also consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your minds. "And to you who are troubled, rest with us."—2 Thess. i. 7. The church is our home, our resting-place. May God grant each of us holy, godly zeal, then we shall find that in keeping the commandments there is great reward.

Your brother, I trust, in the love of the cause of Jesus,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., May 19, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—Since I despair of being able to read the dear SIGNS (or other print) you may discontinue sending it to me. It is one of the saddest things to be deprived of the "glad tidings" contained in the SIGNS, and I waited months for the return of sufficient sight to read it, and should I ever be able to read will certainly by some means, if possible, have the SIGNS again. I wish I could feel sure that you knew the full meaning of my speech when I say I thank you for indulgence in sending me the SIGNS. We trust that while you are not literally blessed with pay for your kindness in the free list of your subscribers, that you have been abundantly rewarded, or blessed in doing so, simply through love and sympathy, to those who love truth. Dear friends, through infirmity of the flesh and various disparagements I am, "O wretched man," O so wretched. I believe the same precious doctrine (as far as I can understand) contended for by writers of the SIGNS. O how sorrowfully I look at my present state of desolation (spiritually) to what I have enjoyed. I think I ever realized in my flesh what Paul did in his, viz., a thorn, the messenger of Satan, &c., so that when aged ministers and brethren and sisters, also Baptist friends, spoke of my ability to expound the Scriptures, I was by the thorn in the flesh ever kept aware that when the dear ones were joyful and edified when I preached, that it was not I, but the grace of God which was with me, and that I was weakness, nothing, and that "we have this treasure [to comfort] in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us;" and when at least a few declared that through my effort they saw what was truth, and were constrained to obey, I ever felt like replying, "I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed." Feeling thus, I was never accused of being puffed up or self-conceited. It was my grief and sorrow to see the damnable heresy, conditional time salvation, make inroads among a once peaceful and happy people (Baptists), and cause them to be ignorant of God's righteousness, and go about trying to establish their own righteousness, not submitting themselves to the righteousness of God which is in Christ Jesus. O how my poor heart did ache after waiting and searching for more information, to be certain, if possible, regarding doctrine, for was I not only a four year old child in grace, and only twenty-four years of age by nature, and liable to err? But after patient waiting, sorrowing, &c., I could contain my feelings no longer, and in the midst of a congregation of Baptists I stood alone, and, I trust, humbly told the preacher that conditional time salvation is Arminianism, and false. O, dear friends, can you imagine how a poor stripling of a boy, himself realizing his own nothingness and liability to err, could feel when there alone with no one

excepting my dear grandfather (Arbuckle) and a friend (Mr. Frank Cox) in this whole State (Tennessee) that I knew of who believed the truth? But God was with me, and I was not afraid (only afraid of myself), and at God's own time I was glad. My soul rejoiced when I (by faith) saw Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, bring some of them back to the sheepfold. Personal trials would not interest you, and are unpleasant to me to relate, only I will say that after I began trying to preach I met with much opposition, and some encouragement also. But now I feel cast out of God's sight, O so wretched, "friendless and poor." One church I visited and preached to twice were conditional time salvationists, and after I preached twice for them they became divided (I heard it was half and half). Their preacher was quite able, talented and had preached (with soft words) many years, and when he saw that our God, or Jesus, had turned about half of them from darkness (conditionalism) to light (salvation from first to last by grace), he wrote an article which was published in a paper that contended for conditionalism. He quoted as a text, Mark them which cause divisions among you, and avoid them. I could but feel amazed and sad to think an able man like he was would (and did) cut and slash that text and omit an important part of it, and thus by mutilating it ruin it altogether. The text reads, "Mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." He omitted (as did the editor) the words, "contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned." Of course the doctrine they had learned they learned by experience, that salvation is of the Lord, by grace, so I had preached the doctrine of salvation by grace, which they had learned by experience, and therefore for that they could not mark me, nor avoid me, so half of them accepted me as a friend to truth. When I remind you that it was not I, but the grace of God which was with me, then you will not think me boasting of self when I say that I labored. It was my own weak, sinful self that cast me away, and no effort on the part of false teachers.

I am glad to think the time of my departure draweth nigh, unless I could be something. I humbly think, sometimes hope, that by grace I have kept the faith, but O, I have not fought the fight; but when I remember how great God's mercy is to sinners, to save the thief on the cross, who was also a murderer, and also saved Mary Magdalene and other very great sinners, then are these precious words: Fear not, little one; they spoke peace to my soul more than thirty-five years ago. These words, Fear not, little one, gave me hope, and ever since, when I have been tossed high, then sunk low on the stormy billows, and the great waves of trouble overflowed me, and I felt buried forever out of God's sight, O so despondent, those precious words, Fear not, little one, would come again and again, and in the deep, O so deep, sea of trouble, I could again say, Salvation is of the Lord. Those words have ever proved an anchor of my soul, both sure and steadfast, and thus I have realized that, "If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me," and thus I am waiting to see what the end is. I wish that every one who calleth upon the name of the Lord would remember (at every moment) that our God is absolute. The

word "absolute" means free, unlimited and without constraint; therefore our God is absolute, and whatsoever he does he does of his own free will, unlimited and without constraint. The most of our distress (at least my own) is because we at times forget, or do not think, of how absolute our God is, and when our conscience condemns us for some sin we have committed, we think that we have constrained our God to withhold blessings that he otherwise would bestow upon us, and also constrained him to cast us off and curse us. O how dreadful are our feelings when we feel as though we have thus constrained our God, and thus having constrained him have limited him in his purposes to bless us, and thus having constrained and limited him we destroy his freedom. O how sad we are when we thus forget that our God is absolute, i. e., free, unlimited, unconstrained, but when we hear his kind, sweet voice saying, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed," and when we consider that spiritual Israel (God's quickened people) are the sons of Jacob, how glad we are that God is absolute, and that our hateful sins have not destroyed his absoluteness. Job's friends seemed to try to convince him that he had constrained God to afflict him, but Job maintained his integrity, and, knowing that God is absolute, he knew that he had not constrained God, therefore Job replied, The Lord "is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." Thus it was simply according to God's (absolute) one mind, and just what God's soul decreed is all the reason why he afflicted Job. When I became deaf, and could not hear my own voice, so could not preach, an aged preacher said that I brought God's judgment upon me, and God made me deaf because I did not do my duty and preach, and soon after saying this he became so blind he could not recognize his own family. I could but think that in my case it was God's judgment, but in his case, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous," &c. Now I am expressing my weakness in writing so much, or perhaps in writing at all, but I think this is my last offence, if offence it is, and feel you will kindly consider my state and forgive me, for I felt like writing, and wish to say that if consistent you may publish what I have written in the SIGNS.

Thanking you again for your kindness in sending the dear SIGNS to me, I am, as ever, yours,

DAVID L. McNEES.

KELLER, Texas, June 2, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—On the third Sunday in May I met with the old Salem Church of Old Predestinarian Baptists, near Freedom, Texas, which church was formerly for many years a member of the Big Creek Association. About twelve years ago some trouble came into this church, in regard to certain resolutions introduced into the church upon some stated, but imaginary, doctrines, which deceived the church, proving to be a baited hook of strife. These things were misleading, and caused the church to be severed from the union which they had had with Big Creek Association, and to be cut off from correspondence with sound, orderly Baptists of Texas. The church tried to live under these conditions for about twelve years, and during that time the congregations ceased to attend. The church saw that they were gradually dwindling away, and at last they met and held conference, and by a majority vote voted

out the former resolutions. They then went back to Zion Church, over which Elder I. W. Bowers served as pastor, and made acknowledgments, and asked to be received back into the union and fellowship of the old constitution, under the old banner of Big Creek Association. All of this was mutually granted. They also asked that the new church be discontinued, and all be merged together into the old Salem Church, to meet at the same old place, all of which was unanimously adopted. The glad news of this reconciliation spread all over the surrounding country, and it became known that peace was made, and that Elder Bowers, whom the whole people loved, had been chosen pastor of the church. Previous to the trouble he had served the church, and served also as moderator of the association at the same place. They agreed also to hold communion at the stated time, the third Sunday in May. When I arrived on the ground I saw many conveyances full of people coming from all directions. Soon I met Elder Bowers, that faithful and devoted servant of God, whose face shone with joy. The house was packed with people to its utmost capacity. The hour for preaching was now at hand, and the writer of this being ill, the lot fell upon Elder Bowers to preach the first sermon. The dear brother took the stand with a glow of heavenly intelligence shining in his countenance, and the Lord favored him with liberty to preach in demonstration of the Spirit and with power to a great multitude, that seemed spellbound while the message was being delivered; the whole discourse seemed fraught with grace and glory from the Lord. The writer of this followed with a few remarks, after which the church proceeded to the communion service. The writer and Elder Bowers officiated at the table, after which the church washed feet. The occasion was marked by great solemnity. When I saw the old brethren who had been barred from these privileges so long shedding tears of exultant joy, I felt that it would live in my heart's affections as a precious oasis to my soul during the remainder of my life on earth. To see such love manifested in the church exceeds ten thousand worlds like this, because this love is stronger than death, and in the purpose of God will draw together and bring into union the scattered children of God. This returning to the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls to be one in gospel order, I delight to record.

I send this brief sketch for publication in the SIGNS, feeling that the Lord has made peace for those aggrieved, calming the storm and bringing again his own from the land of the enemy. Such reports will be read with interest and gladness by the saints throughout the land. O let us henceforth heed the admonitions of the Lord, and not the resolutions of men. The Lord bless and prosper the SIGNS to publish gospel truth to the comfort and edification of the Lord's chosen people, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Yours to serve in the gospel of the Son of God and in hope of a precious inheritance beyond,

ASA HOWARD.

[WE have declined to publish accounts of difficulties among the churches anywhere, because such matter is distressing to all who may read, but there can be no distress to any who love Zion to read of reconciliations among those who have been in trouble. We rejoice with brother Howard in the restored peace of which he is so glad.—C.]

TWO MANNER OF PEOPLE.

THE Lord said unto her, "Two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels."—Gen. xxv. 23. "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger."—Rom. ix. 11, 12.

This is the arrangement of the God of heaven respecting these two sons of Rebecca. Their standing by nature was the same, but God chose Jacob and rejected Esau. All true believers in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, when clothed and in their right mind, believe without question that it is God's sovereign right to do as it seemeth him good with all of the multiplication of Adam's race, feeling assured as they do that the God of the whole earth will do right. This manner of people of whom Jacob is a type are taught to know that they are bought with a price, and are therefore not their own, they were given to Jesus by the Father in the covenant of grace, and Jesus paid the full price for their redemption when he yielded up his life on Calvary. These are they who are led in a way that they knew not, and in that path which no fowl knoweth. These are they who are taught that none can come to the Savior save those who are quickened by the power of the Holy Ghost and drawn by the Father's love. These are given faith to trust in the Lord of life and salvation with their whole heart; they know that Jesus is the author and finisher of their faith. These believe that where the Lord has begun a good work he will carry it on to perfection; they know that God's promises are sure, and that they will be fulfilled; they know that the arm of the Lord is not shortened, and that he to the utmost saves. They are taught also that God changes not, and therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed. They know that the Father hath delivered all things into the hand of his Son, that they should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father, and they know that they who have the Son have life, and that they who have not the Son have not life. It is written, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and they shall be to me a people, and I will be to them a God. He keeps them as the apple of his eye; they walk softly in the fear of the Lord, for he has put his fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from him, and there is no power on the earth, nor under the earth, no height, nor depth, nor any other creature, that can separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus the Lord. At the bidding of Jesus devils flee. Jesus said, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." At the appearing of Jesus, Satan was cast out of heaven (the church) swift as lightning. His power over the lawful captives was broken, and ere long Jesus will destroy the devil and all his works everlastingly, for Jesus arose upon the third, the appointed morning, victorious over death, hell and the grave, and ascended on high, leading captivity captive, and receiving gifts for men. Thus he has secured the victory for every vessel of mercy, whom he will raise from the dead at the last day, and whom he will fashion unto the likeness of his own glorious body, and so shall we forever be with the Lord. These people also confess their sins. "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been," Jacob said. I am black, but comely, black as the tents of Kedar, comely as the curtains of Solomon. My sins have made me black. These are sick of the vanity of life, and exclaim, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit." They are sick because of the sore travel

of man under the sun, and long to leave the unhallowed ground and dwell with Christ at home, yet they sing with the poet, "Rock of ages, I am secure with thy promise full and free," and they believe the promise, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be."

The other manner of people, of whom Esau is a type, have the best of it in this life, and they have no bands in their death. Their eyes stand out with fatness, and they have more than heart can wish, and they boldly say, This world is as good a place as I want, if I could only stay here always; these go on in the broad road to destruction, and they have no desire to get out of that broad way, because they roll sin under their tongue as a sweet morsel, and are in love with the fleeting things of this life. These claim that when they wish to do so they can become the saviors of their own souls, and secure the favor of God as easily as they can turn over their hand. How great is their folly. They say of the Master, "Let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." "We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel." Their righteousness and their good works they prefer to the beautiful garments of salvation which Jesus gives to his people. These of the type of Esau, come up with a brow of brass, and say before God, Have we not done many wonderful works in thy name? They fancy that they will secure extra high seats in heaven; but the fact is, that they have been working all their life long with the selfish design of advancing their own interest on earth, and to advance their financial and social prestige. All the vast machinery that they have set in motion for the conversion of the world will go down in everlasting ruin, because it is built upon the sandy foundation of man's great works and creature endeavor. But the Lord Almighty disposes the lot that is cast into the lap. He sets those he denominates sheep upon the right hand, and they are sure to inherit the kingdom which He prepared for them, as sure as it is sure that Jesus reigns at the right hand of the Father. The goats will go to the place prepared for them.

Yours in hope,

WM. F. SLOAN.

LEXINGTON, Ky.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., May 29, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—I have been thinking of you all in your associations, and have very much desired to be with you and hear the good preaching, and see the sweet fellowship of the brethren that has always been so dear to me in those meetings; however, God's ways are not our ways, and we must be submissive to his pleasure. If I know my heart, that is what I want to be, but I find myself so often the other way. I am a stubborn rebel, I want my own way about things, and am submissive when I have to be. This is one thing that makes me know that I am a passive creature: I act when I must; I do the things of God when that is the only thing to be done. My old man does not go to sleep at all; he hushes up only when there is a flood of the goodness and mercy of God given to me, and he is drowned out by it; then he waits, and I rest a moment in the love of God, until he can get his breath again, and he then begins his suggestions. He is the most persistent and variable being I ever saw; I wonder sometimes that he does not get discouraged, seeing that he is always wrong and that he has to be corrected so much, but there appears to be no discouragement to him. Then he

deceives me so often; sometimes he is the most humble being one can imagine, and he appears to be a very saint, then if I follow him there is great peace in the house, until he gets me into trouble, and then laughs at me. But if I do not follow him I am made to hear his hideous roaring as a mad lunatic. He is even worse than that, for I could go away from the lunatic, but I have to carry this old man's cell with me, so that there is nothing for me to do but to be humbled by letting him have his own time raving, until the Holy One comes to my rescue. Then, during his divine presence, my old man sinks back in his cell, but even then he begins to whisper easily to me of his submission in the future. He says, You will never have so much trouble any more, you know enough of yourself now to not trust yourself again, and enough of the powerful hand of God to always trust him, and even though you are brought face to face with death, you know that he can save you from death, and therefore you can go with him into death. The first I know I am fully believing just that way, and until I have denied the Lord, and am made to hear the triumphant crow of the cock, and see the loving rebuke of the Savior's face, I am ready for anything else but the humble work of my Lord. Thus you see how I am troubled and tossed. Thus I have to go or halt, as the case may be.

On last Saturday I was so dead, and the effort to preach was such a burden, I was glad when the time passed, but I came home burdened and full of sorrow. That evening I was taken ill and was quite sick all night and Sunday. I met the people on Sunday morning, but had to leave the stand as soon as a short prayer was over. When I returned I had for awhile as sweet liberty in speaking as I ever enjoyed, but got so weak that I saw I must sit down. We were excused from communion service and a friend took me home, and I spent the remainder of the day in bed. This morning I am better, and feel that I shall soon be well again. Wife is not well, but able to be around. The rest are well. Hope you and yours are well. The Lord bless you all.

With much love, I am yours in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

[WHILE attending the Warwick Association, the second week in June, Elder Durand handed us the above good letter for publication in the SIGNS. We are glad of all such.—K.]

ALDBORO, Ont., March 14, 1911.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR FRIEND:—Will you come with me this morning over a portion of the way I have gone? Some years ago I had a dream, in which it seemed to me I was at Grandfather Campbell's; all the friends were there, and we were having a very pleasant time. I was enjoying it thoroughly when some person came in and said to me, Etta, you have just ten minutes to live. There was a feeling of numbness crept over me, and my whole life appeared before me. Such a life, just one blot of sin; it seemed to me I had never had one pure thought. If I had that life to live over again how differently I would do, or if I only had time it seemed to me I could do much towards working out my own salvation. I went out to have a last look around that dear old home, and in coming back I saw some men carrying the casket into the house. I went up and stood beside it; when I awakened it was morning. All the morning that feeling of numbness was over me; my work would drop from my hands, and I would stand waiting for

something to happen me. The day was passing on, and the thought came to me that it was only a dream, and perhaps the time wished for would be given me, why not take advantage of it? I went to my room and tried to read and pray, but my mind and heart were not in the attempt. After this there was a searching going on all the time, and such a longing for something I could not find. The first sermon I heard preached showed me what this hungering and thirsting was for, and the means of quenching that thirst seemingly so near, but I was not given to partake of it. My sins rose before me as mountains; they were so much in evidence that my hand went up as if to cast them aside; I was in such a state of mind that I was a stranger to myself. My cousin, Mr. Duffus, visited us, and I spoke to him about my trouble, and he listened patiently to my stammering, then quoted passages of Scripture where there are words of comfort running out to all who are weary and heavy laden, but I felt too unworthy to claim one of the declarations of the word of promise, for had I not done enough to forfeit all? and was only fit to be with the wicked and nonelect. O how I longed to get away from myself entirely, but I felt to say:

> "Yet, gracious Lord, where shall I flee?
> Thou art my only trust,
> And still my soul would cleave to thee,
> Though prostrate in the dust."

In the fall of 1901 I attended the Pan-American exposition, and the last evening of the exposition, while sitting out on the balcony of the Canada building to watch the illumination, I was thinking of the thousands of electric bulbs throughout the grounds and buildings, when something seemed to tell me they were a type of my own life, for if they had no connection with that great power-house there would be no light nor life in them. Just then there was a faint light appeared in all, and kept lighting up gradually, until the grounds and buildings were outlined with that beautiful light, and to me those lights appeared to be the elect of God shining forth in the brightness and righteousness of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, while I sat in darkness and in rags, such filthy rags. I felt to be the most desolate and forsaken of creatures, and utterly unable to do anything towards a recovery from that condition. All my attempts to recommend myself to God were fruitless, and I felt myself to be lost and undone. I could not pray for mercy, I felt so far from Him. In 1903 I heard preaching about the leaves upon the trees, that there were none so far away but what they were nourished by the trunk. I felt I had no connection with the Tree of Life, and no right to aspire to any such hope, for there was nothing in me to merit God's notice, much less his acts in salvation. What right had I to be present with all those dear people who were able to say, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ"? It seemed to me that by looking at me they could see me as I am, a poor, sin-polluted creature, deserving of nothing but eternal death. O how can I describe those seasons of darkness and despair, every hope completely shattered? But in the face of every gloomy doubt and fear there was some influence bade me trust and wait at mercy's door for the crumbs that might fall to me from His table, and my cry was, Lord, lead me to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and if so, I knew it would be through no merit of mine, but the effects of the love and grace of God.

In December, 1905, I went to Duart,

and while on the way to the station something seemed to say, Why are you going to Duart? Why should you expect to hear to profit? I felt very low spirited, but Deacon Campbell received me so kindly that it lifted me up and gave me some footing. Sunday morning the Elder took his text in Luke xiii. 32-34. O how sweet and powerful the gospel came to me that morning, when I least expected to hear anything. In my heart I sat at the Elder's feet, feasting upon those messages of truth and salvation, words that were manna to my hungry soul. The words of the apostle Peter came to me: "Lord, it is good for us to be here." It seemed a sacred place, a heavenly place, and when they sang the twenty-third Psalm it seemed a new song to me. I thought that if I could only retain the feeling with which I listened to that morning service I would never have another doubt or fear. I walked home with Deacon Campbell, and he must have thought me beside myself; my heart was so full of love and gratitude to God I could not keep quiet.

Dear Elder Chick, how weary you must be, and I know of no sweeter place to rest than right here beside the still waters, and in the green pastures of His love. It seems to me that I have told you nothing after all, but it is what constitutes the little hope I have. I must thank you for your kindness to me. In the darkest season of my life I had to turn to you, a perfect stranger, and I thank the Lord for your patience and kindness. I feel that after reading this you will withdraw your friendship; I have never been worthy of it. I am not worth the time you will spend reading this, but I love you all just the same.

ETTA GRAY.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, May 17, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Jesus said in speaking to the Pharisees, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." Those Pharisees were the strictest sect of the Jews; they fully believed that they kept the law of God, and through their self-centred righteousness they had confidence of their acceptance with him, and of being rewarded with a high place in his heavenly kingdom. They held to the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, both body and spirit, and believed that this doctrine was in accordance with the Scriptures, but they were ignorant of the truth that their acceptance with God was not dependent on their own personal merit, but could only rest upon the finished work of the Savior, who is the resurrection and life of his people. They had the law of Moses; it was read in the synagogues every sabbath day. Was it not sufficient in itself? How could it be defective if it were of God? It was not defective, it was perfectly fitted to perform the work that God had given it to do; that work was not the justification of men, but their condemnation, to shew them how far short they came of the glory and perfection of God. The Pharisees had never learned this truth. When Jesus associated with publicans and sinners they were astounded. They would not so much as let one of these touch them for fear of defilement, but cried, "Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou." Simon marveled that Jesus would permit such an one as Mary to touch him, and naturally thought that he was ignorant of what manner of woman she was, but the Savior's rebuke proved it otherwise. Legal righteousness appeals very strongly to human nature,

to our pride and vanity; to-day, as among the Jews of old, it is preached far and wide throughout the world, and spoken of as the gospel, as the doctrine of Christ. But search the Scriptures, and see if it is not the very doctrine that he condemned, the leaven of the Pharisee, the delusion of antichrist. Now if this error was only to be found in those who have no knowledge of the truth, we would not need to be so much concerned about it, but let us look within our own hearts and heed the warning of our Lord: "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees." We, as well as others, are continually seeking perfection in the flesh, both in others and in ourselves; we are ready to judge according to the law, forgetting that judgment means death. We who trust we have been made free from the law by the body of Christ, seek again to be entangled in its bondage. Why? That we may glory in the flesh. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid." For if we have any part in Christ, sin is hateful to us, because it is sin. We cannot live apart from corruption while we dwell in this earthly tabernacle; we must bear this body of sin with us through life, and cry out continually, "O wretched man that I am!" Yet we are given the blessed assurance, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." This very state in which we condemn and abhor our own vileness is crucifying the flesh, living not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. To live after the flesh is to seek perfection in and through the flesh; to live after the Spirit is to seek perfection in Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of his people. So we cannot judge according to the law, each of us must be governed by his own conscience. We cannot tell what is in the heart of our brother; God is his judge, and he will shew him his error if he is in the wrong. Let us rather forbear, and shew mercy as we ourselves hope for mercy. "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful."

My dear brethren, I doubt if I should send this, I am so far from being worthy to speak of these sacred mysteries. Unless there may be some word of comfort to a poor fellow-traveler who, like myself, has often stumbled among the monuments of the law, do not publish it.

Your brother, I hope, in christian fellowship,

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

ELGIN, Oregon, May 16, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending you herein a short extract from an article written by William Hanna Thompson, and published in *The Designer* for April, 1911.

"Esau and his descendants betook themselves to the land called after them the land of Edom, but by the Romans Idumea, where they lived as robbers until they were subjugated by David's bloody general, Joab, the son of Zeruiah. This land is the natural home of robbers; to this day no one can visit without an armed escort its wonderful capital, Petra, where houses and temples are hewn out of red granite precipices. Every allusion to an Edomite in the Old Testament witnesses to the hatred, both personal and racial, of the sons of Esau, for the descendants of Jacob. One example is that of the words written during the Babylonian captivity. 'Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof.' In Genesis, Esau shows that he shared in the feeling then everywhere prevalent, that the last words

of an old father would permanently influence the destiny of his descendants, for 'Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? * * * and Esau lifted up his voice, and wept.' Isaac's prophetic answer foretold that Esau should live by his sword and serve his brother, but that at the last he should shake the yoke from off his neck. These words were literally fulfilled by Herod, called the great, who was an Idumean. Herod was a cavalry officer who managed to sell his sword at the right time, first to Pompey, then to Julius Cæsar, then to Mark Antony, and finally to Octavus, or Augustus. For this latter service Augustus asked Herod what he chose as his reward. Herod's answer embodied the longings of his race through all the years: I wish to be made king of the Jews; and so he was until he had his fill of proving to the Jews that they had Esau's yoke well on their necks. When he was dying he contrived the most original plan in history for showing pure hatred: foreseeing the rejoicings at his demise, he ordered that a large number of prominent Jews should be confined in one building until he breathed his last, then all should be put to death, so that there should be widespread mourning among his subjects in spite of themselves. The Prince of Peace was born while Herod was king, and the dark, sullen Tiberius was Cæsar."

If the writer is correct in what he has here said, and I see no reason why he is not, we see the perfect fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaac in the blessing he gave Esau: "And it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck," and is it not off to this day? As this was very interesting to me, I thought it might also be to the brethren generally, so leave it in your hands to do with as you think best.

G. E. MAYFIELD.

CINCINNATI, Ohio, April 28, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have just received this evening a few lines written by my father, M. V. Pennington, who lives at Garretts Bend, W. Va. He is growing old; was sixty-seven years old April 25th, and has suffered the most of his life. I wish to copy part of his letter and send to you for publication, if it is your feeling to do so.

"Dear daughter, I am sixty-seven years old to-day. I received your letter yesterday, and was not glad to hear of Willard's awful condition. I pray God's mercy to be directed toward your home, that Willard may be lifted up from that mournful bed of affliction. O what disappointment it is to suffer, realizing as you do that he has not the ability to care for his family. I know all about it, I have been there. I am just an old sick man in great trouble, which death only can remove. I have no faith in the things of this world. The night that Jesus was betrayed he said to his apostles, I am no longer of the world. That text seems to come close to me. I feel to say to-day that I am not far from the door of death; it need not surprise any one if I am taken at any hour, but I have a hope sometimes that God has been merciful to even me, although I have been tempted, and have done many sins since I was born of the Spirit of God. I will say I believe I was born of the Spirit of that holy God, for my heart was full of his glory, full of that glory and love which, as Paul says, passeth all understanding. I have since then committed many sins, and I have

had bitter chastisement, but Paul says we are blessed in heavenly places here in Christ Jesus.

I cannot strike hands against God's people, it is a great pleasure for me to visit them. The Old School Baptists are the only people I can understand, and they understand me. All of his people will be saved, but I believe there are many of God's people who never get the right name while living on this earth. I feel sure he has taught me that the Old School Baptists are the only people who preach the gospel, and that is the reason the world hates them; they have the least friendship shown them in the way of worship of any other people. You know if the world hates you, it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you; every kind of bird loves its mate; that is the reason the Old School Baptists are hated. You notice all those false doctrines, they say very little about each other. Why is this, dear daughter? It is because they do not preach the gospel; it is impossible for any man to preach the gospel who does not believe it. I do not know why any one in my condition wants to live in the world. I am paralyzed, but God has taught me lessons here more than all the college men of the whole world, for all the Lord's people shall be taught of him. Do not lose sight of this text. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but this text will hold good until all of God's children are safely housed in heaven. Why then go anywhere to learn these things? I like the instruction of God's people who have been taught of him."

These are the words of my dear father.

A sinner in hope of eternal life,

W. C. PENNINGTON.

MATTHEW V. 10.

"BLESSED are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

This afternoon I penned three such pages as this on both sides, and in looking it over it appeared so simple to me that I laid it aside. It was all of self, or of what I had passed through, and the thoughts of my mind for the past seventy years, and I felt that it would be better for the wastebasket than to send to you. Let my trials die with me. While on my bed the above text came to me as recorded in the fifth chapter and tenth verse of Matthew. If I cannot add anything to it, it is a sweet consolation to know that the Lord sees us when we see not him, and that he always hears our cry. I had read this morning, "Hope thou in God," in Psalms xlii., and had sung hymn No. 577, and felt well in mind, and thought that I would write you a good long letter, giving a synopsis of my experience and trials, but since it has appeared so foolish to tell you and the brethren so much of self, I forbear, and feel I have made myself a laughingstock in this. I told a brother that I was jealous of him, the first time that I ever felt that way in my life, and then I felt ashamed that I had told him. This was the first taste that I had had of jealousy. It lasted with me but a few days, yet I am glad that it came to me, and wish all the brethren who are troubled with it might be released as soon as I was. I am seventy-nine this day, and know that I am sinful and vile, but,

"If in Jesus my name is found,
In that mystical body to Canaan I'm bound."

Then all indeed is well. Let persecution come, it is all that men can do. Jesus said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." If so, then he will defend it

for himself. "This is the name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness." Dear brethren and sisters, press on in the strength of Israel's God. The kingdom is yours, no matter what your enemies may say. The name of that city is, "The Lord is there." He that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God. With him there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. How delightful to fight under such a King as this, whose right hand and holy arm have gotten him the victory. Although you may be afflicted like Job, or Samson, or Hezekiah, or like the writer, the foundation standeth sure, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." John the Baptist asked, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?"

"Your weakness shall his wonders tell,
And tell them with delight;
The feeblest saint that God shall call
Shall triumph in his sight."

In love, your brother,

D. S. ELLIOTT.

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio, July 9, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN:—On my return from my tour in the eastern associations, now for the third time, with great joy throughout them all, together with my visit in Canada, at Cleveland, and with our aged and failing brother, Elder Jacob Gander, at Lyons, Ohio, I found the inclosed letter from our brother in the common faith, J. H. Yeoman. I now send it to you, hoping it will find a place in the SIGNS. I trust that this will be acceptable to him, as he has now and then been in the habit of writing for it in past years. I would have been glad to have given, had space and time permitted, a full account of my tour, and of the very cordial reception I had at every place. I would also like to speak of the harmonious preaching and the prevailing signs of mutual growth in love, unity and that order that is so desirable among brethren. May the blessed Master cause a still greater growth in these particulars.

In love, A. B. BREES.

LOVELAND, Colo., July 4, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER BREES:—I have read your article in the SIGNS of July 1st upon the subject of the will of God, and from some cause I feel impressed to write some of my reflections upon this same subject, not that I feel I can instruct you, or any other of the Lord's dear children, for I do know that I am a poor, old and ignorant man, having but little education; in other words, I am no scholar, and not having studied grammar a day in my life I have but little if any knowledge of the grammatical construction of words or sentences. I feel that my knowledge of spiritual things is still much less, if I have any at all. Then why should I attempt to write to you upon spiritual things? I know not.

You have asked, Does God actively will in those who "speak evil of" (his people) in the same manner that he wills in the saints "to will and to do"? &c. I feel like answering that question briefly by asking, Was it the active will or Holy Spirit of God that caused Judas to betray Jesus? (See Luke xxii. 3; John xiii. 26.) Luke and John tell us that it was Satan entered into him. I believe our God to be the God of purpose; that he works, or controls, all things according to his own will and good pleasure. He had a purpose in destroying a wicked king. If we turn to 2 Chron. xviii. 19, we find that it was a "lying spirit" that induced King Ahab to go up to Ramoth-gilead, that he might be slain there. I do not believe that there ever did, or ever will, anything enter the heavens of eter-

nal glory that is impure or unholy; then is it too much for me to say I do not believe it possible for anything impure, unholy or unrighteous to emanate from the ever-blessed Spirit of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost? No fountain can send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter, neither yield both salt water and fresh. (James iii. 11, 12.) Make the tree good, and the fruit will be good also. David said, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee." How God can so control the wicked acts of men (or devils for that matter) and yet leave them sinners and accountable to him, is to me one of the hidden mysteries of God. That is not all David said: "The remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." Just think of it, my brother, were it not for the restraining power of our God over men and devils, we would not dare to attempt to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience without having to undergo the same persecutions, sufferings and sore trials, yea, the most horrible tortures, that the saints did in times past. Though this is said to be the enlightened christian age of the world, men by nature are no better to-day than in days gone by. The saints of old underwent scourgings, bonds and imprisonment, were stoned, were sawn asunder, slain with the sword, all in the guise or name of religion. Is the religious world any better now? I think not; all they lack to-day is the power to do the same things. I do rejoice to know that God does overrule all things according to his own will and good pleasure. The will of the natural man is as prone to evil as the sparks are to fly upward; it is changed alone by the grace of God shed abroad in the heart to will any good thing that will be pleasing to God. Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye who are accustomed to do evil, cease, and do good. (Jer. xiii. 23.) "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."—Phil. ii. 13. Jesus declared, "Without me ye can do nothing." God's will is absolute in all his purposes and decrees; he is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever; all other powers combined cannot change it nor resist it. (Romans ix. 19.)

I have not written as I thought to write when I took up my pen; my pen has followed my thoughts as they came to my mind. I do not know that I have written one word that will give you any light upon the subject you desired, but I believe I will send it to you for what it is worth, if it is worth anything at all. Let me give you one word of admonition in conclusion, my brother. If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not. If we get that wisdom which is from above we are sure to get understanding also.

But I must close, as I may weary you. May the Lord, the ever-blessed Spirit, lead us in the way of all truth, is my prayer. J. H. YEOMAN.

[WE understand both brother Brees, by his question, and brother Yeoman, by his reply, to set forth just what Peter declared by inspiration in the Acts concerning the betrayal and crucifixion of Christ. Wicked men there are declared to have done wickedly and against the Lord just what God had before determined to be done. The purpose of God is fulfilled, and yet men do these things wickedly. Both these things are true of every wicked act, word or thought of men. How both these things can be true is not a question for us to answer. The Bible does not answer this. God predestinates the thought, the word and the deed, and yet men who do these

things do them wickedly. In all these things we see God's holy purpose and man's wicked purpose set forth.—C.]

AVONDALE, Ala., June 29, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I noticed in the SIGNS for July 1st a request from Elder A. B. Brees, of Spencerville, Ohio, for some brother or brethren to write upon the different phases of the will of God, and as I have had much meditation upon that subject in the past, I will, with your permission, venture a few thoughts upon the subject. I certainly believe that there should be a distinction made between God's universal will, or purpose, by which he governs the world, and in accordance with which all things and events transpire, and the active will of God, by which he works in his people both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and I believe that a failure to recognize this distinction has involved many of the Lord's people in confusion and perplexity.

I will now refer to some Scripture that seems to me to substantiate my position. When God told Abraham to take his Son Isaac into a certain place and there offer him as a burnt offering, God worked in Abraham the will to obey, but it is evident that God's will or purpose was that Abraham should not slay his son, hence the obedience of Abraham was the result of God's work in Abraham. The Lord's dealings with Moses and the Pharisees, Jeremiah's prophecy to Israel, and other instances, seem to substantiate the same thing. To my mind there is quite a difference in God doing his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and man doing God's will in everything that he does. I cannot accept the idea that everything that occurs in the world is according to God's will. Really I think there ought to be a distinction made between God's will and his purpose. I can accept the idea that God has a purpose in every thing and event that transpires. Christ taught his disciples to pray, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven," not as it is done in the world, and I believe the expression, "in earth," means in this earthy body, and God works in his people both to will and to do, and this prayer is in perfect harmony with God's work in the hearts of his people. Paul said in one place, "For this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." Again, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification." "Doing the will of God from the heart." "It is better, if the will of God be so." Christ said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." Again, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." I remember only one Scripture, in Revelation, where it is intimated that wicked men do the will of God, and that is this: "For God hath put in their hearts [and this is an inward work] to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast," &c.

I will now close by asking this question: Does any child of God when doing wrong feel that he is doing God's will? I may be wrong in all this, as I fear that I am in everything else. My only desire is to know and love the truth in Christ.

H. J. REDD.

WESTON, Michigan.

DEAR EDITORS:—I never expected to write to my dear ones through the SIGNS, as I have lain on my bed nearly eighteen weeks, but the Lord has spared me so far, and as I read in the SIGNS yesterday I felt I must make one more effort. O how sad to be shut in so long, and how I have called upon the Lord to take me away from suffering, but my time has not yet come, my passport not yet sealed. How much I have thought of you. I was very much pained to hear of the death of dear Elder Frank McGlade. When I met him at the Cement City meeting he asked if I took the SIGNS, and said he was always at home where he found it. I never heard such a prayer as he made at the ordinations of deacons; surely the Lord indited it; no mortal ever could without God. It seemed as if his words burned like fire, and I said, Surely that man is born of God, and tears were flowing from nearly every eye. Dear ones, pray for me, I cannot walk a step and cannot stand alone; I need your prayers. When I heard of his death I felt as if my time had come. My sister, since her husband's death, is like a poor dove mourning. O what a world of sin and sorrow. One night while suffering terribly, awake all night, I prayed the Lord to come, and I saw a wide stream, and thought a small boat came to the gates of the city and my blessed Savior was in it and came toward me; the water shone like silver, and as it came it sparkled like diamonds. O will Jesus ever look upon such as I? only a sinner, but he has appeared to me many times, once in the darkest night, and it seemed like a soft twilight pervaded the room. O what a sweet assurance that Christ is mine; no tongue can tell it. Loved ones, how I wish I could see you. Will I ever meet you in glory? Pray for me that we may meet.

Excuse poor writing, as my hand is unsteady. I love the SIGNS.

(MRS.) JAMES WYMAN.

LAUREL, Miss., May 28, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The time has rolled around for me to renew my subscription, and I desire to tell you how much I appreciate your paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I find comforting letters, which I enjoy much, and do not see how I could do without it. May the God of all power still uphold you and enable you to contend for the doctrine of absolute predestination. It fills my heart with joy and happiness to read those letters on the finished and complete work of God. Brethren, if I believe anything, it is in a complete and finished work. We are taught in his word that he made the heaven and earth; all things were made by him, from the very least to the greatest, and without him there was nothing made, and it was all made good for the purpose that it was made, for God made man and said he was good. How good was man? He was good for the purpose that he made him for, so I think everything else was made good for the purpose he made it; he will be glorified in it. So he makes the good and he creates evil. What! God creates evil? That is what the Scripture teaches. Say, you must be particular about that, you will make God the author of sin. I do not think so. Sin is a violation of God's law. Whatsoever he has made or created is for his own purpose, so the people can say what they please, it does not change the purpose of God.

Brethren, about twelve months ago I wrote a short letter, stating the condition of our church at Palestine. We are in

peace yet, and have the same pastor, though he had a hard struggle, but God, as we trust, enabled him to stand firm and unmovable. May God bless us and enable us to continue in the doctrine that the Lord our Savior taught. Pray for us, brethren.

Your very unworthy brother, if one at all, THOMAS J. KNIGHT.

VANLEER, Tenn.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—If you will allow one so sinful as I am to thus address you. I am a reader of your paper, and feel that I want you and your readers to know that I am a strong believer in the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS. If there is anything I do like, it is to read those letters which extol God above all things; not a part, but all things, whether in heaven or in earth, "visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist."—Col. i. 16, 17. I find poor, hungering ones from all parts who are contending for this old truth of so long standing. This language was used A. D. 64, and is still being contended for by a remnant now in the year 1911, so any one denying this language of Paul cannot be considered a witness. But God said he would not leave himself without witnesses, and I find in reading the good old SIGNS that he yet has witnesses here on earth. But one failing to attach "all things" to God is not considered by me a witness, for the true witness, of God testifies that God works all things after the counsel of his will. (Eph. i. 11.) Again, if one fails to know that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord; I say, any one failing to know this, I cannot accept him as a witness.

This letter being my first to your good paper, I had better close by saying that in my poor heart there is a warm place for all who believe the foregoing texts of the book of God, so I say, Long be the life of the dear old SIGNS and all the dear ones I have been reading after. May God in his rich mercy fill your lives with the riches of his grace: unsearchable riches of Christ. Amen.

L. D. SEALS.

JEMISON, Ala., April 9, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have thought for a long time that I would write to you and tell you that I enjoyed your editorial upon predestination, but I have such little light that I have put it off, but now as I have to send two dollars for the SIGNS another year, I feel to add a few words. I cannot see well, as I will be seventy-nine the 14th day of this month. I am the same sinner that I was seventy-nine years ago, but for some time I have hoped that God for Christ's sake has forgiven all. If so I am pure within, but impure without. There is a song that all love to sing except the church, and some who belong to the church; it is this: "The gospel trumpet is sounding, sea to sea, and from land to land." If they had said the money trumpet, it would be according to their preaching, and their faith and works and practice. I have tried to get them to sing, "The church's desolation," but they will not sing that, as they know that it fits them, and they cannot endure the truth.

Now tell me, brother Ker, what you think about people that belong to other so-called churches. Will they be saved? It was grace that saved a wretch like me.

Your brother in hope,

JOS. CHANDLER.

[SOME of us, brother Chandler, who now have hope in God were once identi-

fied with other denominations, and if saved now we were saved then, but not made manifest as the children of God. Such having been our case, we have reason to hope and believe that many others now connected with different religious bodies are also saved by the blood of the Lamb.—K.]

WESTON, Mich., March 8, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I kindly thank you for continuing our paper, and hope you will excuse me for not sending the money sooner. I do not feel that I can get along without the SIGNS; it seems doubly dear to me since the death of my dear husband, Elder T. J. Wyman. I have often felt that I would like to write to the brethren and sisters when reading of their joys and sorrows, it cheers me by the way, but O, I am so weak I often ask, "Am I his, or am I not?" Still I have a hope that I would not exchange for worlds like this. By grace are we saved, it is not of ourselves, but the gift of God. I have received many letters of sympathy since the death of my husband; some are yet unanswered, not because I did not appreciate them, but I am so heartbroken that I can hardly write, though I know my loss is his eternal gain. There is no sorrow there; all tears are wiped from his eyes, while we poor, sinful mortals must wait a little longer. I sometimes think it will not be long with me, as I am nearly seventy. My prayer is that the Lord will keep me in the right way. Mr. Wyman's mother is still living, she is nearly ninety-four years of age, and is quite active.

I have written more than I intended; if it will not crowd out better matter you can publish it. When it is well with you remember me at the throne of grace

Your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) T. J. WYMAN

SMITH CENTER, Kansas, Jan. 12, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—As I have to write on business I will try to add a few words. I much enjoy reading the SIGNS, as I am almost alone here as for Primitive Baptists; I only know of one member in this county. We have preaching most every month nearly fifty miles from here, by Elder Joseph Ford, of Seneca, Kansas, but I cannot go so far every time. We have meeting near us, but it is of no comfort to me. I love to hear the gospel of the power of God proclaimed, which is the only hope for a sinner like me. There are foes without and fears within, so much so that I am often discouraged to see how the wicked flourish and multiply and gather in their hundreds, while with the Primitive Baptists there is one here and another there, and I am made to wonder why it is so, but "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." I would say to the brethren and sisters, Write on. I would be glad to write, but it seems impossible to write to the comfort of God's dear people.

I will close, with love to all.

Your brother, I hope,

W. S. AYDELOTT.

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio, Dec 16, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—I just want to tell you how much I appreciate and love to read the SIGNS; it is about all the preaching I get. I have been taking it for about twenty years, and have two volumes of the paper, 1845 and 1846, which show to me that the Baptists are the same in all ages. This is my Christmas gift to you. Like Peter, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee."

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

ALICE WIEN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1911.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JOHN III. 5.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Will you please give your views upon John iii. 5? "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Your sister, (MRS.) R. E. DAVIS.

There is no more important theme than that of the new birth as we, in general, call it. Whatever differences of opinion there may be as regards some expressions used in the Scriptures concerning it, all who carefully read the Bible will admit that the new birth is a necessity, if any poor sinner is ever to know the grace of God in truth and be prepared to enter the kingdom of heaven, either here or hereafter. It is sure, if the testimony of the Scriptures is to have any weight, that no one ever knew the Lord here, or ever entered the final heaven of the blessed, except that one had been "born from above" or "born of water and of the Spirit." The necessity then of the new birth, and the evidences that follow it and prove it to have been wrought in any one, are the two things that have seemed to us to be the most important to be considered. We recall that the first gospel sermon we ever heard of which we could remember anything, was preached in our hearing in an upper room at Whitefield, Maine, forty-nine years ago this coming September, by Elder Wm. Quint, at the beginning of the Maine Old School Baptist Association. It was the first sermon of the meeting, and the text was, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." We recall that he dwelt almost altogether upon the necessity of the new birth, upon the evidences of it, and lastly, that it was the work of God alone. There were discussions then, as there have been since, as to what it is to be born again, and as to who or what is born again, but we remember that Elder Quint did not enter into any discussion of any of these questions at all, but went on to insist upon its necessity, its evidences, and that it was of God alone. We were but as a child then, and desired above all things to know our interest in this work of the Lord, and we recall that the preaching was blessed to us, and that by it we were encouraged to hope that we knew these things for ourself, and it all seemed wonderful to us. The preaching of the doctrine and the experience all through the meeting was most blessed, and then the fellowship of God's children who were gathered at that place seemed inexpressibly good to us. All were strangers to us at that time, but, child as we were, and feeling altogether unworthy as we did, still it was a time of gladness to us. There was no room for any lightness or levity in our thoughts or feelings. The people we met then have been most dear to us ever since that time. Most of them have passed away from earth, but their memory in Christ still brings a sweet savor to us.

With these general remarks, we will pass on to write about the text proposed by sister Davis. It is not needful that

we should here call up all the circumstances attending the utterance of these words by our blessed Redeemer, for all Bible readers are familiar with them. Nicodemus had come to the Savior to be instructed, saying, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God." Evidently the thought of this man was that all that was needed to prepare any man for participation in the kingdom of God here, and beyond this world, in heaven, was that he should be taught. This conception of man is the highest that natural men can have concerning the way of life and salvation. All Sunday Schools, Theological Seminaries, and all other institutions of the theological training, are founded upon the same ideas that were in the mind of Nicodemus. Simple teaching, such as one man can impart to another, is thought to be all that is needful to prepare men for heaven and immortal glory. But here Jesus replied, and declared to this man that teaching is far from meeting the needs of men. He in substance says, No man can be taught in these divine things except he be born again; or more literally, as the marginal reading seen in our large Bibles is, "Except a man be born from above." Without this birth from above no man can even see the kingdom of heaven. Birth from the earth, that is below, enables one to see things of this earth; so to see the things that are from above a man must be born from above. Jesus in substance said to him, You came to me that you might be taught in heavenly things, but I tell you that something must precede any teaching of this kind; you cannot know, by any means whatever, the things of the kingdom of heaven, except you be born in that kingdom. As no man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him, even so the things of God knoweth no man, save the Spirit of God. If the Spirit of God does not dwell in you ye cannot know the things that are spiritual, the things of the kingdom of heaven. This one truth, if believed fully now, would at once silence all Arminian or legal efforts to bring men or children who have not been born again to the knowledge of salvation. Men unborn of the Spirit cannot know these things, but after this birth has been experienced there is room for teaching in the things of that kingdom. Nicodemus was filled with wonder at this. It is not our mind that he really thought that the Master intended to say that a man must be born again according to the course of nature, but rather, he sought to express his idea of the impossibility of such a change as was implied in the Savior's words, "Ye must be born from above," by calling up the impossibility of one being born again of his mother, after he had become old. As this seemed to him to be impossible, so he uses it to set forth the impossibility to his mind of such a birth as the Savior presented. It does not seem to us that the Savior understood him as really meaning to say, I understand you to mean a second natural birth; because the words that follow do not and could not thus apply. The words of the Savior, recorded in verse six, were intended to meet what was the real thought in the mind of Nicodemus: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Earthly men can grow in the knowledge of earthly things, and to this end they are born of the flesh, but to enter into and grow in the knowledge of spiritual things requires that a man should possess the Spirit of God. All that proceeds from the flesh is fleshly, and all that proceeds from the Spirit is

spiritual, or heavenly. The Spirit does not guide one into natural things and nature, nor does the flesh guide one into the knowledge of spiritual things. Thus we have presented what we understand to be the substance of the Savior's teaching in this whole narrative. He also enforces this thought by various expressions used in the narrative, all of which are intended to set forth more fully the things of which we have spoken. But what is it to be born of water and of the Spirit? We desire first to express our mind negatively: being born of water does not mean baptism. Baptism is the door of entrance into the visible organization called the church. As a door is a portion of the house to which it belongs, so baptism is a part of the order of the house of God, the church. By that portion of the house which we call the door men enter into the house itself; so by that part of the ordinances of the church called baptism do men enter into the privileges within the church. But the Savior is not speaking here of the visible organization of the church, but of the kingdom of heaven, and the kingdom of heaven and the church are two distinct things. One must be in the kingdom by birth before he is entitled to baptism at all. One may be baptized, and become a member of some visible church, while yet he has never been born of the Spirit, and therefore is not in the kingdom of God. Many are born of God who are not members of the church by baptism. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." If the kingdom of heaven did indeed mean the visible organization, or the church, in any place, then there might be force in the claim that being born of the water signified baptism. Thousands are to-day in the kingdom of God who have never been baptized; but no man can be said to be a member of the visible church without baptism. The Savior therefore, as it appears to us, could not mean baptism by the expression, "born of water." We desire especially to insist upon this one truth: that the kingdom of heaven is one thing and the church in her organization and ordinances is another thing. There was no church organization until the day of Pentecost, but the kingdom of heaven was preached and existed from the days of John the Baptist. The kingdom of heaven has never ceased to be since the ministry of John the Baptist began, but churches have risen and gone down, and ceased to exist here and there. We might go on and point out other differences between the kingdom of heaven and the church, but will forbear now. Out of this notion, that being born of water signified baptism, has grown up all the superstition with which the Greek Church, the Romish Church, the Episcopalian Church and other religionists in the world are ensnared, viz., the theory of baptismal regeneration. The Greek Church still practices immersion, while all the others use sprinkling or pouring, but they all regard the ceremony as that which regenerates the subject of it, and the child brought up in these organizations is taught to say that by his baptism he was made a child of God and an heir of glory. Some have also thought that the word "and" in the text ought to be regarded as intensive, and that it has the force of "even." They would understand the text as though it had been written, Except a a man be born of water, even of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. These understand the word "water" in the text to be used as a

figure of the Spirit, and that the Savior added the words, "even of the Spirit," in order to explain his use of the word "water." It has been our mind that there is a measure of truth in this view, yet we do not fully agree with the above. It is not our mind that the word "water" is intended to signify the same thing as the word "Spirit," but rather to set forth the work of the Spirit when it once dwells in the heart, viz., its purifying, cleansing work. By the prophet Ezekiel the Lord declared that when he would gather his people from the nations and bring them into their own land, he would sprinkle clean water upon them, and they should be clean, and that from all their filthiness and their idols he would cleanse them. He also said, "A new spirit will I put within you." Again, "I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them."—Ezekiel xxxvi. 26, 27. Here it is declared that the Lord would put his Spirit within them, and then through the power of that Spirit they should be cleansed from filthiness and idolatry, just as water cleanses the body. In this text, then, we have the same two things of which the blessed Redeemer speaks to Nicodemus, viz., the water and the Spirit. The Spirit dwells first in the heart, and then there is a cleansing (compared to the washing of water) wrought in the heart and life by the Spirit from filthiness of word and deed and from false religion especially. So Paul in Ephesians v. 26, uses the expression, "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." Here also it is our mind that by the word "water" Paul means the work of the Spirit. It is his teaching that the indwelling Spirit works out a cleansing by the word of God, such as may be compared to the cleansing of the body by water. So in Titus we read of the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Here also the Holy Ghost is set forth as that power by which this cleansing work is wrought, and its effect is like that of washing by water. So also in Hebrews, tenth chapter, we read of the heart being sprinkled from an evil conscience, and the bodies being washed with pure water. It is our mind that all these Scriptures set forth the same things in substance that our Savior declared to Nicodemus. The work of the Holy Spirit is pointed out in them all, and that work is said to be by the word of God, and the effect is the cleansing of the filthiness of the flesh. The Spirit takes of the things of Jesus and reveals them unto those who possess the Spirit. By this instruction they are shown that which is evil and false, and, on the other hand, that which is good and true. By the same Spirit they are stirred up to love the one and to hate the other; thus they come to depart from the evil, and from all their former idols, and to cleave to that which is good. Hence it is thus that the children of God, born from above, come afterwards to enter into the kingdom of God; they enter into a knowledge of it, and into communion with the things of that kingdom. They thus grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ.

We now leave these reflections to our readers. May the Lord bless them to all by whom they may be read. C.

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EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

HAGGAI I. 6.

BROTHER BEEBE:—If it will not interfere with other matter, you will oblige me by giving your views on Haggai i. 6: "Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put into a bag with holes."

I. W. BAYLY.

PRINCESS ANNE, Md., Feb. 16, 1864.

This message was sent to Zerubbabel, the governor of Jerusalem, and to Joshua, the priest, and through them to the people of Judea, in the second year of the reign of Darius, king of Persia, admonishing them to proceed with the work of building the temple of the Lord at Jerusalem. The work had been commenced under the patronage of Cyrus, by whose hand God had delivered Judah from her seventy years of captivity in Babylon, but hindered by the adversaries of Judah, who had taken offence because their proffered services to help build had been rejected by Zerubbabel and Joshua, and, in revenge, they charged them with disloyalty to the king and succeeded in procuring an edict, or injunction, from the king, causing the work to stop, but God sent the prophet Haggai with a command to go on with the work. This prophet is urging his divinely authorized admonition, "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house shall be built. Then came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet, saying, Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste? Now, therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider your ways." And of the things which they were to consider, whether it were better for them to obey God or men, mark the dealings of God with them in their disobedience. How had they fared while the work was suspended through fear of the human government claiming the right to dictate in this matter? This suspension lasted from the time of the decree of Artaxerxes until the second year of the reign of Darius, and during that period God had withheld from them the blessings provided in his covenant for their obedience, and had sent upon them the judgments in that covenant provided for disobedience. The scarcity of bread among them was not because they had sown too sparingly, for they had sown much, but brought in little. God in judgment had withheld the rains and dew, and suffered not the earth to yield to them its bounteous harvests. This is one thing they were called upon to consider. Another matter for serious consideration was, that what they did eat was forbidden to satisfy their appetites. "Ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink." Neither in eating nor drinking could they be satisfied. "Ye clothe you, but there is none warm." They could prosper in nothing. Even the hireling who earned wages could not permanently invest them; their money was put into bags with holes, so that it was lost. Now God commands them to consider these his dealings with them, and bear in mind that "the way of the transgressor is hard." God would not allow them, as his peculiar people, to prosper in disobedience. How true the testimony of them as an inconsiderate people is given in the first chapter of Isaiah, more inconsiderate than the very ox, and even the stupid ass reproved them. "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth

not know, my people doth not consider." God had promised them corn and wine and oil if they were obedient to him, and assured them that the willing and obedient should eat the good of the land, but the same covenant provided that if they were disobedient he would send the sword, the famine and the pestilence. Under their then present circumstances it became them soberly to consider whether there was not clear and palpable evidence that God disapproved of their disobedience. How astonishing, that having so recently returned from their seventy years of captivity in Babylon, they should so soon require to be reminded of their duty to obey God by his judgments. They were a carnal, but typical people, and their waywardness as a stiff-necked and rebellious people but too plainly points to the inconsistency, disobedience and backslidings of the spiritual Israel of God under the new covenant in this the gospel dispensation, and the frequent chastisements to which we are subjected for our wanderings. These lessons are written and left on record for our instruction and admonition, and although the new covenant under which we live is a better one, containing better promises, and in it God has promised to be merciful to our unrighteousness, and that he will remember our iniquities no more, yet with equal certainty he has provided that he will, in parental love and covenant faithfulness, visit our iniquities with the rod, and our sins with many stripes.

We learn from this record of God's ancient people, or we should, if we but considered our ways as God commanded them to consider theirs, that our comforts, joys and spiritual prosperity, though not for our good works, yet are inseparably connected with our faithful obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ. Can the child of God be happy in disobedience? Can the christian prosper when indifferent to the honor of his Lord and Master?

Let us look about us and consider. Have we sown much? Alas, perhaps too much have we sown to the flesh, from which we are reaping corruption—food that will not satisfy the cravings of a child of God. Have we drank from broken cisterns, and found that the streams of earth cannot satisfy like the streams of that river which make glad the city of God? Have we wrapped us in a cloak, or garments of Babylonish texture? Can christians feel warm and comfortable in a Babylonish garment? Have we upon the legal principle been working for wages? How have we husbanded our gains? What have we laid up in store against the time of need? Let us consider that it does not become us to live in ceiled houses, while the church of God is neglected and the ways of Zion mourn; that we are not to court the smiles of princes, potentates or monarchs at the expense of our sacred allegiance to the King eternal, the only wise God our Savior, nor to barter away or yield one particle of what he has revealed in his holy word, to save from the rack, the torture, the scaffold or the stake these poor, frail, dying bodies. "He that findeth his life, shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it." —Matt. x. 39. "Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver. Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God."—Psalms l. 22, 23.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., April 1, 1864.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at his residence, Hopewell, N. J., March 1st, 1911, Morris F. Drake, of Plainfield, N. J., and Miss Bertha Updyke, of Pennington, N. J.

By the same, at the bride's residence, April 26th, 1911, George T. Wells, of Glenmore, N. J., and Miss Helen B. Hill, of Hopewell, N. J.

By the same, at the bride's residence, June 25th, 1911, Clarence M. Hixson and Miss Gertrude S. Leiman, both of Hopewell, N. J.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, June 28th, 1911, at the residence of the bride's parents, 110 E. Durham St., Philadelphia, Pa., John S. Mace and Miss Isabel W. Clegg, both of Philadelphia.

POETRY.

WARP AND WOOF.

BEFORE he formed a star,
Our God arranged our lot;
Our little lives were planned afar
When we were yet as not.

Time hath no aimless strands,
God warp and woof combines;
Life's loom is in his holy hands,
His shuttles know their lines.

He loved us when as yet
We had not seen the sun;
God's forethought is man's coronet,
And love by love is won.

He purposed all he sends,
He knows what us awaits;
He marketh now the distant ends
Of paths to hidden gates.

His love has filled our past,
An ocean without shore;
Our purchased souls him first and last
Love, trust, obey, adore.

MEETINGS.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

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As the hall in which the Albany and Troy Church holds its meeting is being repaired, there will be no meeting held until the fourth Sunday in September.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 79. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1911. NO. 16.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THOUGHTS ON MAN.

"I WILL praise thee: for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."—Psalms cxxxix. 14.

I cannot hope to search out the depths of this thought. The mere fact that man is, is beyond the research of the philosopher, the scientist or the theologian, yet the charm of the subject is ever attractive and impressive, so that I am lost in wonder. There is nothing so important to the generality of men as man; God is not in all their thoughts. The Creator is but dimly conceived of, as a far off personage, so little and so feeble that he is only feared as a mysterious and yet a dreadful being, whom some men consider to be so inferior to themselves that they worship themselves instead of him. In the natural conception of the minds of men, God, their Creator, is but the image of man, but if God ever once reveals one quickening ray of his omnipotence and glory to their gaze, their trembling souls will be so transported into reverence that no language of theirs can describe their change of estimation concerning him. Their exclamation is no longer that of the infidel who has said, A good god is the noblest work of man; but their whole thought will be concentrated in the work of their Creator, and they will say, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." The thought of the text is as to the making of man. If the man that is made is so mysteriously constructed that he seems to himself to be the noblest work of God, as has been said by others, how much more mysterious and unsearchable is his Maker, who is the Holy One of Israel.

But I am led to consider more particularly the words, "Marvellous are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well." The psalmist immediately exclaims, "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." What a wonderful thought is in this single phrase, "My substance"! I cannot refrain from a little notice of it; the whole substance of man from birth to death must be included in it. The whole relation of that substance, from the creation of the world to all that goes to compose it throughout space, from the lowest to the highest, was not hid from God. The very curiously wrought substance of every atom of matter in all its

processes of preparation for its assimilation into the body of man through the primitive conditions of soil, air and water, together with every other discovered and undiscovered element, was not hid from God. All these were the very properties which the psalmist claimed as his substance. It was his in the very record of the absolute knowledge of God, so that the destiny of each atom that should ever at any time, or under any condition or duration, be a component part of the body of the psalmist was known of God. "Thine eyes did see my substance." If all this was not included in the faith of the psalmist in the infinite foreknowledge of God, then his language is without meaning. But he continues to more definitely still indicate his faith in God's infinity of design, and in the reality of his sight of all these things he says, "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect." This does not mean that there was any real imperfection in the substance itself, but that the process of development for the physical needs of man had not yet been developed or perfected. How the eyes of God can see the very substance of man's anatomy through all its processes of development before it is completed, and fully comprehends all its personal relations to each individual man, as David has here fully and very preciously stated, is neither to be explained, nor is the truth of it to be doubted. That God, who has universal power over all the atoms of nature, and who has established by his own creative power all the laws of its being, can most surely comprehend the small dust of the balance, as well as weigh the hills, or understand the thoughts of man afar off. But how much more definite, conclusive and absolute does the record stand when we read further on in this inerasable book of God's writing, of the perfect record of every member which he declares was in continuance fashioned when as yet there was none of them. The continuance of their fashioning was to be after they were written there. The psalmist says still further, "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them." I fully realize that no natural law of our being can explain the deep, spiritual mysteries of godliness, but it is certainly a pleasing reality to me that all of God's works praise him, and that the fullness of his spiritual grace and work is superlatively greater and of sweeter and richer comfort and consolation. O that I could find a more sacred nearness to him, and eat at the table of his love, and drink there the stimulating wine of his consolations; yet even here in the midst of the filth of this life, which is in our corrupt nature, where all the nourishing elements of our perishing bodies are so minutely and definitely known to God in their composition, duration and transformations, we never lose our identity, and we look for a better life, a sweeter joy and a holier condition, having faith in the coming fruition at God's right hand. The crowning mystery is that God should think on me, to give me faith to hold fast to an endless life. Another mystery is how God could thus perfectly see, foresee, foreordain and decree that many should be so led by natural courses into all these natural laws of being. It is wonderful that each atom of matter, with its active energy, should enter into man, and act upon his being to produce each and every change essential to the life of man according to the natural laws of his being. This is beyond all my feeble powers of discernment. We may read

natural physics, and study the chemical changes of rock and clay, and the vegetable mold, out of which, with air and water, vegetable life is produced, but we cannot learn the real secret even of vegetable life. We can eat the vegetable matter, and it enters into the very tissues of our being, yet we cannot understand the vital force that produces the change. "I am fearfully and wonderfully made," is still the most perfect exclamation of wonder, admiration and awe that man has ever, or can ever, express in words. It is because God has made us so wonderfully complex, and yet so perfectly harmonious, that we do not need any new creative energy of God to guide us on along the natural lines of our destiny. The demands of our being harmonize with the supplies provided for the full period of our allotted life in nature, and each atom of matter essential to these supplies was predestinated by the creative and law-giving hand of God, at one impulse of his all-wise and omnipotent will and creative word. There is an allotted measure in all these things to us, and all our surroundings, either near or remote, contribute by the same wise provision to the one end. There cannot be one failure in the wisdom, will and power of God, for they are infinitely more perfect than our thoughts and wonderings concerning them. His will in his original wisdom of creation was so comprehensive that all created existences were set in motion so precisely that no new will or decree of God is necessary for any new emergency that can ever arise, for there can be no such event occur in all the realms of nature, and in the spiritual kingdom of God, wherever and in whatever manner that kingdom may be revealed, shall we also find the constant and active will of God in control. Here we find two specific modes of manifesting God's will. First, his creative and predestinating will, and second, his active, executive and fulfilling will, by and in the exercise of which he has present control of every spiritual emotion, will and work among his people, working in them that which is pleasing in his sight, in perfect harmony with his eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ before the world began. Therefore he is the Author and Finisher of our faith. Also this is according to that same eternal purpose. An author is an active, efficient cause or producer or originator of anything, therefore there is no ground of accusing our God of being the author of sin, although he be the first purposer that sin should enter into the world in combination with all his other original purposes. The author of a book is only the writer, the arranger of the contents into definite form of expression of the ideas presented. He may be employed by the publisher, who may specify every detail of facts and give an outline of the topics used, and yet may not be the author of the book, but the writer of it. Many writers confine themselves to writing historical facts, furnished to them from various sources, yet they are not the true authors. Even so God's prophetic facts, based upon his decrees, do not make him the author of anything save the decrees themselves. These decrees are furnished every author for the special work assigned to each of them. God is the author of all his decrees concerning every future act. Man is the author of every act of his own. None but God can decree; none but man can sin. Jesus Christ, being made perfect, became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him, and as man

is incapacitated by sin, God must be not only the author of salvation, but the author of eternal salvation. Therefore God through Christ must be the efficient worker in every possible line, or in all our experience of this salvation. Eternal salvation not only means the beginning and the end, but also the continuance or constant experience of it, and so we are led by his sweet will, work and divine energy that we may prove what is that good, and perfect, and acceptable will of God toward us, who by him do believe in Christ, who was raised from the dead.

Your brother,

A. B. BREES.

TIAWAH, Okla., June 4, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—Sister M. McMilner, of Vaiden, Miss., has requested me to write upon the text, Revelation xxii. 17, and send the letter to you for publication in the SIGNS. I do not feel that I have any special or impressive view of the text. The text reads: "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come: and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." I suppose that there is no book in the Bible that our brethren have differed so much about its meaning as this book called Revelation. While its general teaching is evidently the same as other Scriptures, yet there are many things spoken of in a manner different from all other inspired writings. Brethren will agree with me when I say that our misunderstanding of the Scriptures is mostly from our misapplication of the testimony of the word. True, we cannot control the Spirit so that we can understand all that is written, and thus apply every portion of Scripture where it belongs. The text under consideration is one long ago and still used by all the Arminian fraternity to prove the freedom of the will of man in choosing for himself either heaven or hell. They call the word "come," as used here and some other places, an invitation of the gospel; that God is inviting the children of men to do certain things which they can do, and by doing as they are invited they earn seats in heaven. Not only that they earn seats and crowns by obedience and good works, but that the seats and crowns are in quality according to the amount of good which they are required to do. If they are not permitted to use the word "come" in this text, then to try to prove the ability of man they fall to the emphasizing of the words "whosoever will," thinking that there is no other possible way of understanding the words in this connection only that of man's free will; that it teaches that it is optional with man whether he will embrace opportunities for heaven or sink to hell. This is just like the slick old tongue of the serpent in the early dawn of this world, who turned the truth of God into a lie by misquoting the word of the Lord. Blessed are they that do his commandments, is said of them who have a right to the tree of life. These cannot be any of the non-elect; Jesus does not invite, but commands his people. He does not command as a tyrant, or as one who is puffed up because of his authority over others. His commands are seasoned with love and fellow-sympathy, for, "In all their affliction he was afflicted," and "he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." What a wonderful close friend to Israel is he who commands Israel.

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come." The Spirit and the bride in unison; there is a oneness. The Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things

of God. "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." It is altogether essential and vital, to be reckoned as a subject of the kingdom of grace, to be under the influence or control of the Spirit. There are spirits spoken of in the Scriptures, such, for instance, as 1 John iv. 1, 2: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God." The saints are always wanting a sure test of the Lord's favor for them; they are much in the habit of saying, I hope that the Lord has been merciful to me; I am fearful to say, I know that he has extended the sceptre of righteousness to me. But they, like John, feel to ascribe greatness unto their dear Lord and Master, and say, I confess that I believe Jesus Christ has come in the flesh of his people; and of all things that they have any knowledge of under the sun, to them this important fact seems so sure that they "will not lie," which gives them a good hope through grace, and strengthens them to embrace the testimony of the prophet: So he was their Savior. If any shall come declaring any other doctrine than that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh of his people, let him be accursed, is in full accord with the spirit that is found in the midst of the people of our God. This is in full agreement with the teaching of the Spirit which searches all things, and lovingly commands by saying, "Come." The bride, the Lamb's wife, also commands her children to come. She does not command any to come only her own children, and they ought to obey, for, "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." She never goes after those who are not yet born, for that would be deviating from the teaching of the Spirit, as well as being very inconsistent. She rejoices at the birth of her children, but O how different is the coming to their birth from the birth of natural children. "Who hath heard such a thing? * * * for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children."—Isaiah lxvi. 8. "And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her; and the Highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there. Selah."—Psalms lxxxvii. 5, 6. According to Scripture it appears that the place of birth is important, as well as the manner of it. Naturally the place of birth shows the nationality of every person born, and it indicates his kinship among the children of men. The place of the birth of the children of God is of great importance. Not one child is a bastard, but every one is legitimate, born in Zion; not born of a bondwoman, but born of the freewoman. "Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." Does this include the Lord Jesus? I think in a sense it does. Here is our nearest kinsman, who is our Redeemer by right of birth.

"And let him that heareth say, Come." None can hear only those quickened by the Spirit and who have life. Jesus says, The dead shall hear my voice, and they that hear shall live. He that heareth is alive from the dead, and can in spirit and in truth say, "Come." He that heareth, is not merely a natural man, who can only hear natural sounds, but it is he that knows the joyful sound, and who walks in the light of God's countenance,

This sentence cannot apply to any except those born of the Spirit.

"And let him that is athirst come." He is blessed of God because he thirsts. He could not of himself make himself thirsty or hungry; he, however, realizes that he has become hungry and thirsty. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."—Matt. v. 6. Let such as are thirsty come, for they belong to the kingdom of Jesus, and have the right to pass through the gates into the city.

"And whosoever will." Ah, here, says some people, is the key to the understanding of all the gospel promises; just whosoever is anybody who will, no person in particular, it is left to anybody or everybody; no election about it, no narrow, contracted way, but open, optional to all the human family, gives everybody an even chance to obey and obtain the reward. This is about the logic of vain pharisees who would like to enter heaven by their own efforts. "Whosoever will" is the person who is willing in the beauties of holiness, from the early dawn of morning. Such ones see the awful beauty of holiness from the hand of the Lord, and praise ascends to the Most High because of his wonderful works unto the children of men. No claim is set up of worthiness by the recipient of such grand favors, but unworthiness is felt in all his being, and the fear of the Lord is realized in every point that he would view the work of the Lord. Wisdom is really begun in this humbled soul, and he does not cry for opportunities to rise above his fellows and be a "prize winner," but his cry is to the Father through the Lord Jesus for mercy, pardon and grace, having a hopeful feeling that the blessing of Immanuel is far above all the riches of earth, and that having a friend in the Elder Brother, that with him he has all things. His will is according to the Lord's will, for this is the day of his power, when "thy people shall be willing." Not willing merely to obtain a reward, gift or treasure, but willing because they see the beauties of holiness. Natural men can see no beauty in holiness; they cannot see the holiness of the Lord, hence there is no beauty to them of any way which the Lord is pleased to dispose the children of men; they find fault if it is admitted that God can and does have his own way about everything that he does; they can see no beauty about a God that is independent of mortals. Here is the line that divides between those who have a will and those who are devoid of any will. The "let" in the text certainly applies to him who has the will to come at the command of Jesus. Though he were dead, yet shall he come; though he labors and is heavily laden, the command is sweet to his ears, it sounds forth the beauties of the Lord's house; his will opposes not the command, but is just what his holy desire craves for; then "let him take the water of life freely." None can ever say that he has not the right to the tree of life, or the right of the water of life. "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" There can be no successful charge entered against the elect of the Lord. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." The justness in God justifying his elect does not appear to the reason of mortal man; it is hidden from his sight, therefore he would charge God with folly, and call the God of power, mercy, uprightness and truth an unjust God. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is

even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

These few thoughts I leave for the consideration of the editors and readers of the SIGNS, and especially for sister McMilner.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

GIFTS AND CALLING OF GOD.

THERE can be no failure in the gifts and calling of God; these never fail, cannot fail. Not one word spoken by the Lord shall return unto him void, but it shall prosper in the thing whereunto he sends it, and accomplish that which he pleases. When God bestows a gift it is to a certain end, and this end is certain to be accomplished. To say that God changes, denies the text that says, "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." It is clear to my mind that this text means without repentance on the part of God, and that no reference is made to repentance of the creature. To say that God is unable to carry out his purpose, denies his power; to deny his power is to deny that he is God. If God has not power to do whatsoever he has purposed to do, then he is imperfect. If he is imperfect, every gift and every calling is uncertain, nothing is certain, and there is no comfort in any promise that God has ever made to his people. God is absolutely perfect, his works are perfect, and as he has thought, so it shall come to pass, and as he has purposed, so shall it stand; therefore every gift that God bestows and every call that he makes accomplishes all that he designs. God does not offer to bestow a gift, nor does he offer to make a call, but bestows the gift and makes the call according to his own purpose and grace, which purpose and grace were given in Christ Jesus before the world began. The design was to save and to call with a holy calling, and this is by grace, not of works, lest any man should boast; it is the gift of God. This saving is the saving of sinners; saving them and quickening them who were dead in trespasses and in sins; sinners such as God designed by his grace to save, making it a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Paul claimed to be the chief of such. This is my comfort, my consolation, my hope, my trust, that Christ Jesus came to save a poor sinner like me. It is to the comfort of every child of grace that Jesus did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. God does not repent of this call to repentance, therefore the call is effective; that is, by this call God's design is carried out; it is carried out just as God designed it should be, and this is that Jesus shall make the call. How many are claiming to do this calling. Jesus hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. Instead of Peter and the other apostles claiming to give, they said they were witnesses; so also was the Holy Ghost. Did God design to forgive sins, and yet design that there be no sins? Did God design to call sinners to repentance, and yet design that there be no sinners? Could it be possible that God could purpose to save sinners, and at the same time purpose that there be no sinners? God purposed before the world began to save sinners, and treasured grace in Christ Jesus to that end, and the saving and calling must be accordingly. He did not purpose before the world began to call, and then have to wait to determine whether or not this

call would be to the righteous or to sinners. God is in one mind, and none can turn him. In his mind there is a fixedness of purpose, and this fixedness of purpose is strong consolation to the heirs of promise. It is consoling to every heir of promise that God is immutable; this enables them with confidence to lay hold upon the hope set before them, which hope they have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, there the forerunner is entered, even Jesus. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." This confidence, or this trust, is that which enabled Job to say, "I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food. But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him." It was appointed unto the sons of Jacob that they be not consumed. "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." The sons of Jacob were not consumed, because the Lord was not willing that they should perish, and because he is Lord to the glory of God the Father, to whom every knee shall bow of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and every tongue shall confess that he is Lord, and because the Lord is longsuffering to his people. Repentance of God's people is promised, and God is not slack concerning his promise, and will not turn away from this promise or change his mind. If the Lord has promised repentance, and is not slack concerning that promise, but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, why shall they not come to repentance, and why should they perish? This text is often quoted "promises," but the text does not read "promises." What is under consideration here is the promise of the Lord of repentance to his people. This is in Christ Jesus the Lord, and cannot be promises. Time does not bring any change with the Lord, being longsuffering. One day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. Another call of which God did not repent, and Paul, testifying of the effectiveness of the call, says, "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again into Damascus." This was not a flesh and blood conference, but God revealing his Son in Paul and calling him by his grace, that he might preach Jesus among the heathen. God does not make the call and then let the one called make the choice as to whether or not he will confer with flesh and blood. The faith among all nations brings in all the faith of God's elect. This we find in the beginning of Paul's letter to the Roman brethren, and Paul here declares himself to be "a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, (which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness,

by the resurrection from the dead: by whom [that is, by Jesus] we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ: to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." The obedience to the faith among all nations did not bring the grace, but the grace brought the obedience. Jesus gave the grace and apostleship to accomplish a certain end, and this end was obedience to the faith among all nations. For the name of Jesus means for his sake. All that be in Rome are among those who received this grace of Jesus. The gifts and calling of God without repentance are clearly shown in this text, and in so many expressions that it would be difficult to point them all out. The fact is, often a man in writing and in speaking gets into such a broad field that he is completely overwhelmed. I am so weak and so unfit in every way I do not know that I ought to undertake either; but one thing is certain, God bestows his giffs and makes calling according to his own choice and predestination. His people he has predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself; he has made them accepted in the beloved Jesus, and according to the riches of his grace through his blood they have redemption according as he has chosen them in Christ before the foundation of the world, and he has blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; therefore, blessed be his holy name, he works all things after the counsel of his own will, and "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." These are people that God foreknew in a covenant relation; for whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, and whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified. Then, thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; victory over the sting of death and victory over the strength of the law. God appointed the death, did he have anything to do with the sting? The sting is one of the "all things." Grace reigns over sin and death, that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Here I will close for this time, and I submit these lines to the dear editors of the SIGNS. Dear brethren, do with them as you see fit, and all will be right; they are imperfectly written by one who is imperfect, but I have hope in that God whose gifts and calling are without repentance. R. T. DAVIS

MAYFIELD, Ky., July 12, 1911.

HOPEWELL, N. J., June 15, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I herewith mail you two letters from brethren in Christ. They brought unspeakable joy to me when I received them. Do with them as you think best. They are to me as gold. I am thinking of the fifth Psalm. "Let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice; let them shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee."

"These are the joys which satisfy
And sanctify the mind,
Which make the spirit mount on high,
And leave the world behind."

Yours in hope,

GEORGE M. CONNER.

MARGARETVILLE, N. Y., May 30, 1911.

MR. GEORGE M. CONNER—MY DEAR FRIEND:—I would call you brother if I were worthy; but you call yourself a poor sinner indeed, so in this we are both alike. I have just read your letter in the SIGNS for June 1st, in which you say you would be glad to hear from some reader of it, if any one could feel to write you. Now I am that one, but you must not expect to be benefited by what I may write you, for I am a poor, miserable, old sinner. In July, it will be fifty-nine years since I united by baptism with the people of God, and nearly all that time has been spent by me in sinning and repenting, so that I feel in truth I am the chief of sinners, and loathe myself for the evils which I have committed in all of my abominations. (See Ezekiel vi. 9.) I write this in bitterness of soul, and have written enough about myself.

"Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts."—Ezek. xxxvii. 11. To me natural Israel represents the spiritual church here in time, and these bones represent individual children of God, all of whom are the chosen of God, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. They were not chosen to be put into him, but chosen of the Father in him, but being partakers of flesh and blood, now in the flesh they groan, being burdened, and in the flesh they say, "Our bones are dried." "And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest."—Ezek. xxxvii. 3. When the child of God first sets out on the journey he knows but little of the sore trials which lie before him. Jesus said once to two of his disciples, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able."—Matt. xx. 22. But how soon they realized their weakness, so that, like Israel, they said, "Our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts." "But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me." But what was the answer? "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion upon the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee."—Isaiah xlix. 14, 15.

Well, I think I have written enough, so good-by. This is from a poor old sinner, in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began. Look this over carefully, and forgive what is amiss, and if worthy an answer, please write to your brother, as I hope,

JOHN A. MORSE.

RATON, New Mexico, May 28, 1911.

MR. GEORGE M. CONNER—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I read under date of April 20th, in the SIGNS for June 1st, your letter, and thought that at once I would write to you, when I saw at the close of your letter a desire expressed that some of the readers would do so. If I am not mistaken, this is not the first time I have written your name, or thought of you and your family. Some expressions are striking to me. "The Lord gave." Many may say the Lord hath taken away, but how few remember that the Lord gave. You say, "Then my trials and warfare commenced." You then knew that there is a God, for he is revealed as a Giver and Taker-away. No wonder that you desired to hear him preached, and how much comfort in hear-

ing of him there is. Revelation is a solid rock upon which to stand, and you saw, as it were, God face to face. You know that God can be known without a preacher; and the preaching is true to you, because it tells you what you already know. How thankful you are that you can say there is a God. How can one worship God until he can say there is a God? How can one know a preacher of God, or his brethren, until he hears them say just what he himself has said, There is a God? Some say, Why do you Old Baptists have so much doctrine? You answer, Because it is my bread and meat. If a sermon has no doctrine in it, then it has no bread and meat in it, and if hungry, how can you get something to eat out of a sermon that has no doctrine in it? The crumbs that fall from the Master's table, of which we eat, are just what the Master himself feeds on, and even though you felt as a dog in your experience of dependence, you still could feed, and if it were only a crumb, still it fills the soul with the thought that you have been with the Master and near his table. How little it takes to make a gospel meal when the poor are to be fed. In a gospel sermon does the Lord ever turn his poor and hungry away empty? When the Master fed the multitude in the wilderness he made the disciples to know how many there were to be fed and how little there was upon which to feed them. He made them to sit down, and then he did the feeding, and then said, Gather up the fragments.

You say, "So many thoughts come into my mind that I do not know where to begin." If we could only begin, sometimes we would like to tell it all. An experience is never half told, and I believe it is a sign of gospel travel when we feel that we cannot tell it, and very often it is the sweetest part that we cannot tell, because it is for ourselves, and not to be told. To give a cup of cold water to a disciple shall bring a disciple's reward, and I have thought this reward is that good conscience before God which we have, that we have not desired to deceive the brethren, but are anxious to tell them all the truth. The least among the brethren are to be our judges in a spiritual sense. If ever we speak or write to edification, it is when we are little. You said that you felt to creep to the place, and were prepared to go to the church creeping. My brother, I hope that you will always be creeping in the church, and never get on your feet to walk. I mean that you will never feel that you can show your brethren how to be christians, only by being blessed in humility.

I cannot yet realize that you are forty-five years old. It seems but a short time since I was at Cedar Grove; in fact, I am often there in my dreams, and have sometimes wished that I could have again all the names of my old scholars. If I ever come east again I want to have a reunion at the old schoolhouse. I read the Cedar Grove items each week, but I do not see many of the old names. We are in the northeast of west Mexico in the mountains. Aunt Lizzie Boggs is with me. She is well and sends love to all the church at old Hopewell. If you can do so, write me personally. Tell Jennie that I often think of her. I do not remember that either you or she ever disobeyed me intentionally, and now that you are an Old School Baptist I have a special interest in you. This is a poor excuse for a letter, but I am a poor hand to write.

Your brother in hope,

G. M. FETTER.

MATTHEW IX. 29.

"THEN touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you."

This Scripture was spoken of Jesus, and by him, when two blind men had "followed him, crying, and saying, Thou son of David, have mercy on us." In answer to their cry "Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? and they said unto him, Yea, Lord." We must go back beyond the incidents recorded here to search out the obtaining of their faith, for it was their faith that caused them to follow him and to cry unto him. It enabled them to be well assured that he was able to save them. Their short but realistic experience from blindness to sight might be summed up in three steps of the miracle. In the first step faith caused them to rely upon the saving power and mercy of Jesus, so that each could say, He can heal me. The second step brings them upon a firm foundation of belief, by which each could say, He will heal me. While in the third step faith and belief combine their forces, ushering each of them into a positive experimental knowledge to say, He has healed me.

"Then touched he their eyes." Was it necessary that Jesus should touch their eyes in order that they be opened? Surely it was; all things that Jesus did during his incarnation were necessary to the accomplishment of all the Father gave him to do. It was necessary that he should touch these men, that virtue should go out of him; it was the faith of Jesus that touched their eyes, the same faith which God had given to the men. Faith answered to faith, and the miracle was performed. It was the faith of the woman (who for twelve years had an issue of blood) that touched the hem of his garment, and she was made whole. When she had touched his clothes, "immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes?" The literal touch of Jesus was, as the words of his mouth, accompanied with power from on high. The wisdom of God directed his finger, and the power of God gave sight to the blind. Experimentally also Jesus toucheth our eyes and we see, our ears and we hear, our hearts and we understand; then gladly we sit down at rest and in peace, clothed in the mind of Christ, for he has bestowed upon us his life, his graces and his virtues. We have no record of any other defect in the two blind men except natural blindness, therefore he touched their eyes, that the people might behold and wonder. He had already touched their eyes of understanding when he gave unto them the wondrous gift of faith. As said before, we must go back beyond the incidents of that day to search out the obtaining of their faith, but by searching we cannot find out God and his work in the hearts of his children, yet we can see the evidences of that work. So the men came, pressing forward by faith, "and saying, Thou son of David, have mercy on us." An idle word never escaped the lips of Jesus; his sayings were words fitly spoken, and were like apples of gold in pictures of silver. At one time the chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to take him, but no man laid hands on him, and when they said, "Why have ye not brought him? The officers answered, Never man spake like this man."

In all the miracles which Jesus performed he used no strange language or supernatural movements and gyrations, as has been the custom in all ages by so-called wonder-workers, but he was as a

man among men, quietly doing his Father's will.

"Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you." A young man goes to a merchant for employment; the merchant says to him, According to your ability I will recompense you; if he received more than his fellow-employees it was because he possessed greater ability. Now, according to the faith of the blind men it was done unto them; they received full value for their service of faith; they were given complete sight, or, in the words of the record, "their eyes were opened." Their faith therefore was equal to that which they received. "According to your faith," does not imply the quality or the volume of it, but refers especially to the subject of the faith. Faith is the gift of God, which is Christ in you the hope of glory. There is no true faith outside of Christ, for only in him is the perfection of wisdom. The so-called faith of the world is simply confidence. Faith begins and ends with perfect, absolute knowledge. If I assert that I have faith in a certain man that he will perform the thing he promised, I do violence to the truth, because the man is finite, and my knowledge of him is not complete, yet I have confidence in the man's uprightness and good intentions. By faith Job could say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth," for Job had that faith which was once delivered unto the saints, the gift of God, Christ Jesus the Lord.

In answer to some who asked the Savior, "Why could not we cast him out?" Jesus said, "Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." Then faith cannot be measured, but we are measured. God in his wisdom has given to each one in nature a certain measure of intelligence, through which he will become qualified to perform certain things; now, "according" to that measure, faith exercises the creature unto the performance of all that the Father has designed concerning him. Thus the apostle Paul was possessed of the same simple faith that was in Eutychus, whom Paul raised to life, and each one was given in his natural birth the measure by which he was afterwards qualified to fill his particular place in the church. The two blind men were given faith to believe in the healing power of Jesus. There was no need that they should have the qualification of a prophet or apostle, but "according" to that faith which was in them it was done unto them. The whole man is controlled and exercised by faith, and all that is in him does manifest his faith. The apostle said, "As much as in me is, I am ready to preach," &c. So also salvation cometh unto us by the grace of God, through the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is vouchsafed unto us. As salvation must be a whole salvation, by which the dead are made to live, so also faith must be a whole faith in whatever subject it manifests itself.

After the blind men had received their sight "Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See that no man know it. But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country." Faith has a peculiar way of its own in manifesting its lovely prototype. As the little child of grace and faith endeavors to hide his new life and feelings from even his dearest friends, so, no doubt, these two men tried to obey the command of him who

had healed them, but every movement and every expression sent abroad the joyous news of the result of their beautiful and excellent faith.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., July 19, 1911.

HURRICANE, W. Va., July 12, 1911.

EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS —BELOVED OF THE LORD:—I am sending for publication in the SIGNS an account of the dealings of the Lord with one of his servants. Elder J. H. Terry has been, and is yet, as far as his health will permit, a good soldier and an able defender of the doctrine of God our Savior; he loves the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things. He has been the pastor of the church where my membership is, Providence, for many years, and indeed has been a faithful and diligent pastor, and loved by all who know him. He is also moderator of our (Pocatalico) association, and performs the duties of that position well. I hope to assist him in writing an account of his ministerial labors in the near future.

Yours in hope, G. B. BIRD.

HURRICANE, W. Va., Dec. 7, 1910.

ELDER G. B. BIRD—DEAR BROTHER: —I have been requested to write my experience, or what I hope to be the Lord's dealings with me, and I will now make the attempt, though I feel at present as lifeless as I ever did in my life. I do not now remember that I had much thought regarding eternity, or my future state, until I was in my twenty-first year, when while listening to a funeral sermon suddenly some thoughts arrested my mind regarding eternity, which placed me in such a condition that I could not rest day or night for some time. At length this trouble left me to some extent, and I became more at rest in mind, in which condition I remained about three years. This was the most quiet time of my life, and I felt sure some change had taken place with me, and sometimes decided that I was a fit subject for the church, and felt that it was my duty to live moral and strict, which I tried to do, and thought I was about as good as any one; but in May, 1869, as I was awaking from sleep, there appeared to be some one standing by my bed talking to me in a sweet, still voice, but when I was awake I could not remember anything that was said, except the last words, which were, You must be born again. This caused me great trouble, for I felt sure that this change had never taken place with me, and I greatly feared it never would. I knew that with regard to a birth man was entirely passive, and I knew that I could do nothing in order to be born. I remained in that condition for some time. During the time of my trouble I had several visions, or dreams, and I will relate some of them. About that time I was in great trouble; I dreamed I had committed a great crime and was cast into prison for life, and there was no possible chance for me to be released, but when I had been there a short time a strange man came into my room, or prison, and looked around and went out without saying a word. I supposed that he came in accidentally, or for some speculation, but the second day he came back again into my room and spoke to me; the third day he came again and released me from prison, and told me that I was forever free. This was a great surprise to me. I could not find language to express the great distress and anguish of heart I was in while in the prison, feeling sure that I was there for life, with no possible way of escape, and

that it was just, but now I was released, and knew I was freed by that strange man who never had known me, and I was sure I never had done anything for him. This was a wonder of wonders. I sometimes feel to interpret it in this light: that the man who came to me was Christ, and that it was a beautiful representation of grace. The dead sinner does not know Christ, therefore he does not seek him, but we have this treasure in earthen vessels, and the Lord knows them that are his. After some days I concluded it was only a dream, and that God would not have mercy on such a vile sinner as I was, therefore my troubles increased until I had given up all hope. There was a church of the Old School Baptist order organized in that vicinity, and the time of their meeting was at hand, and Elder James Lily, who is yet living and was then a young minister, came to preach for them. I had decided not to go to meeting, as I was such a vile sinner that God would not even look upon me, and there was no pardon for me, but my wife persuaded me, and I went, and found it as I expected. They were singing when I went in, and it appeared that the hymn, the prayer, the preaching, and everything that was said and done, was to my condemnation, therefore I was greatly distressed, feeling sure that I had gone to hear preaching for the last time. Before that time all I could do was to beg the Lord if it were possible, to save me, a poor sinner, but then I dared not call upon his name. I went to bed feeling that I never would close my eyes again in sleep, and that before another day I would be in eternity, where I was condemned to everlasting punishment. I did not know that I was even asleep, but in the last part of the night I found myself, as it appeared, standing on a large stone, and it was most beautiful, and a beautiful fountain of water was running from the rock. Around me on the rock where I was standing there were sitting some of the members of the church in that neighborhood, and I saw a white object coming toward me, and it came on the rock; it was in the form of a man clothed in a white robe, and he said to me, This is living water springing up into everlasting life, and whosoever drinks of this water shall never die. I lay there thinking over my vision and my past trouble, feeling more calm than before, but expecting my trouble to return again as bad as ever; but when morning light appeared I arose and walked out, and everything seemed more beautiful than ever before. I had no expectation of going to meeting that day, but my wife urged me, and, my mind not being burdened as before, I decided to go, and while on the way my feelings were calm, and I apparently resigned to God's will. All nature appeared to reverence Him, and to my surprise everything was different to what it was the time before. The preaching and all that was done appeared to help me praise God. I did not feel I was a fit subject for the church, nor that I was born again, but felt the Lord had begun the work and that he would perform it. My mouth was filled with praise to God, and I felt content for a little while, and then I felt that it was all a delusion, and I was only deceived. This was in May, 1868, and in February, 1869, I was baptized in the fellowship of the Enon Church, in the Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Association.

J. H. TERRY.

TIOGA, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., June, 1911.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—The folks are all away, and, being alone, I feel like dropping you a few lines. I know I am not worthy to write you, and I ought not to take up your time reading worthless letters from me, but I feel as though there is no one else for me to write to, and no one to whom I can approach. It seems to me that I am as one in jail; the rest are out, and I can see them, but cannot get where they are; I am shut up all alone. I have no desire to read the Bible, and no desire to go to the meetings. This evening Cain and Abel are on my mind. We see Cain taking the fruit of the ground as his sacrifice, which was not acceptable to God, but Abel took the firstlings of the flock. We know that God made the fruit of the ground to grow, as he did the animals, but in the fruit there is no choice; all is the same. All was the same to Cain, but the firstling in the flock was the one that was nearest to the heart of Abel, it was his choice. Then we see that God created the minerals that they should give life to the vegetable kingdom, and they to the animal kingdom. Now all this is natural, all came from God, but it all returns to mother earth. But God sends another life from heaven to men, that does not return to mother earth, but returns to God, the Father. This life and light cause his people to take the things that are near and dear to them for a sacrifice. This life was the life that was in Abel, and was not in Cain. This life is knowledge, something that we cannot handle or leave behind us. A man can leave property, or money, or clothing to his family when he leaves this world, but he cannot leave this knowledge. He cannot leave even natural knowledge. How helpless we all are at this time. This life and light which Jesus is, he is in the hearts of his people to direct them and to lead them in paths which they know not.

The people brought a woman before Jesus, and accused her. See how he said to them in substance, Which of you have not committed sin? Let such an one throw the first stone. But how is it with us now? When one comes to us telling something about a brother or sister, a feeling often arises that we want to say something about them, too. Is it not altogether bad to do this? See how our God looks down into the recesses of our hearts, but man can only look upon the outward appearance. It is just now passing through my mind about Samuel, when he came to the house of Jesse to anoint one of his sons to be king. They all thought that one of the oldest and the largest sons would be the choice, but God directed Samuel to anoint David, a stripling, a lad. How often do I think of what the Lord told Samuel at that time, and of how true it is at all times. Man does look on the outward appearance of man, and is often judged by his outward appearance. Man can deceive man, but God cannot be deceived. If followers of Jesus at all, we should manifest the spirit of love, that love which he gives to all his people. I know that old Adam still lives in us all, but Jesus conquered the world, and he enters into the heart and binds the strong man. Will he ever afterwards let that strong man predominate? Can the two work evenly together? When one is at home, and about the usual duties of home, it seems that the old man Adam is foremost, then in company we may appear to set forth Jesus. I believe that Jesus, when he came into this world, conquered death, hell and the grave. They are

conquered forever, but it is hard for me to feel that Adam is conquered in me. I do know this, however, that if I am saved, it is by grace, and not by works. I know that I am a sinner, and that my sins must be blotted out by the Savior and forgiven; he must find me a lost sinner.

I am sorry that this letter is so long, it may weary you.

I am your unworthy brother,

C. S. BOND.

[WE think that almost all who read this letter will feel they know also what such conflicts mean. All is for the lifting of Jesus on high. It is that we may all come to say, I must decrease, but he must increase. All true christian experience is to this end. At the first it is all of self and none of thee; at the last it is none of self and all of thee.—C.]

TRINIDAD, Colo., July 14, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS AND KINDRED IN CHRIST:—Being unable to control either pen or thought satisfactorily, I beg you to forgive me in my attempt to again address you. I think it is admitted by all who have ever given it thought, that there can be no effect without a cause, so I believe that it is through the effect of an affliction that has fallen upon me of late that has been the cause of many sad and lonely hours for me, through the effect of a partial stroke of paralysis, which has left me in a weak and infirm condition, at the mercy of God and the goodness of those about me, for I am an almost helpless encumbrance. Unfortunately for me, the body being idle has caused the mind to wander the more freely, and, like the weary dove, I seek some resting-place on which to set my weary feet in safety. Here it is billow upon billow, wave upon wave, all hopelessly dark and dreary. O Ark of safety, remember thy covenant with thy chosen, and shelter me from the storm. Pray our God for me, that I may be still and remember that he is God, and that I may be reconciled to his will concerning his dealings with me, and say, The will of the Lord be done. It is hard for me at times to willingly bow to the supreme mandate and say this without fearing that I may be acting the part of a hypocrite. My mind has been burdened with an impression to again make an attempt to review in part, God being my helper, the way he has found it needful to lead me through this unfriendly world, and send it to the SIGNS for publication, if thought prudent to do so. It is through much tribulation we must follow our Lord, so I muse, I halt, I fear to act, lest I heedlessly or unconsciously mar these pages with my crude ideas should I attempt to write of my hopes, my fears and my expectations, and thereby bring upon my defenceless head trouble and sorrow, and repentance to be repented of, and also bring reproach upon a cause of so much importance. But is it not written, "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams"? Here again I am in a strait, but choosing rather to do my duty than to falter and shrink from doing what I believe to be my duty. We ask, What is duty? Wisdom is better than strength here. The wise man concludes that to fear God and keep his commandments is the whole duty of man. May the Lord guard and guide us aright. We know full well that it is only as the God of infinite mercy and compassion guides the pen and opens the understanding of the heart that we are able to discern between truth and error, good and evil, and without his aid all our attempts will be failures. What failures we mor-

tals are when left to ourselves! All our springs are in God, and without him we can do nothing. We hope that his divine presence may attend us in all our undertakings to keep in the right way. It seems quite appropriate to adopt these lines as being expressive of my thoughts:

"Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty,
Hold me by thy powerful hand.
Bread of heaven,
Feed me till I want no more."

Yet there are times with me when I inquire, "O why do I wander an alien from thee and cry in the desert for bread?" O why do we, when there is plenty and to spare? and it is promised to all who feel the need of that bread which cometh down from heaven, which if a man eat he shall hunger nevermore. Lord, give us this bread. I feel that I have great cause for humiliation, and unfeigned love and gratitude toward our heavenly Protector and Preserver, that he has in times past softened the hearts of editors, contributors and readers of the SIGNS, and they have borne with the infirmities of my flesh, that he has been with me in my weakness. It is the sincere desire of my heart that whatever I may be led to say may come from an humble, contrite heart, that bringeth forth fruit that never withers, but O my leanness, my weakness and failures. In and of ourselves we can do nothing; this we know of ourselves. We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can take nothing out of it.

"In my hand no price I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

God only hath immortality dwelling in the light, all else is confusion and darkness.

It has been my custom in times past to submit my writings to the children of God in confidence, so they have passed into the hands of the editors; for are not the saints to judge the world? May their Rock be my Rock, their God my God. He is before all things, and by him all things consist, without beginning of days or end of years. Inspiration teaches that he is the immutable, omnipotent and eternal God, who holds the destinies of all nations in his own hand, and works all things after the counsel of his own will, with none to stay his hand or dispute his right, or say unto him, What doest thou? Through his wisdom and foreknowledge all things work together for good. It is written of him, He shall not fail nor be discouraged, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He makes no efforts, he speaks and it stands fast; he has only to look, and angels and nations bow at his feet. It is the pleasure of his children to give him all the praise and glory, who alone is the way, the truth and the life. They delight to say, He leadeth me, for they know that he leadeth by the right way, and they follow him, for he is the good Shepherd. They know his voice and follow him, but a stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers. They follow on, trusting in the voice of their Shepherd, though it may be in a way they know not and in paths they had not known, and often in a way that they would not have desired, for it is by the wilderness way. They would have chosen the more easy and smooth way: to have been led through green pastures, with never-failing streams of water to quench their thirst, and to lie down at their will. But O, we surely have become confused and lost in this great wilderness, entangled, here to remain and die. But, dear one, remember your Leader has been there before you and knows the way. It is the right way, for if God be for us, who can be against

us? God is carrying on his own designs in his own appointed way, though it may be in a strange way to you. If the leader is acquainted with the way, is it not enough? Trust him, he will supply all your wants. "How strange is the course that a christian must steer." How dark and perplexed is the mind that is not stayed on God. If God afflicts, try to endure it as a good soldier of the cross; it is for your good and his glory he afflicts; in the wilderness he will afterward shower blessings on you at the end of the journey; but we often grow impatient waiting and hoping for the blessing. The predestinating power and mind of God are contrary to the natural understanding, nor can it be reconciled, for the natural man understands not the things of the Spirit of God, nor can he. Yet it is a revealed truth, and inspiration proclaims it from Genesis to Revelation. Though it is hid from the wise and prudent, it is revealed unto babes. Listen to Joseph's experience concerning the cruel treatment he received at the hands of his brethren. When all seemed so hopelessly against him he said, As for you, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it for good, to save much people alive. Again, listen to the prophecies of the old patriarch Jacob, who told of the destinies of his offspring for ages to come, that had been predestinated, fixed and determined in the eternal mind. And again, note how true is the sound the word of God gives when considering the wonders wrought in Egypt by Pharaoh and Moses, that worked so contrary to their expectations, but yet so effectually to the saving of the life of the infant Moses, for God had predestinated and ordained that Moses at a predetermined time should lead the children of Israel out of Egypt into the land of Canaan. Then was there anything that could work contrary to that will? For he does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. God had chosen this way that he would show forth the wonders of his power in leading and protecting Moses through the wilderness when he had fled from before Pharaoh. These events could be extended on could I but have the ability and strength to pursue them, but it is not for such a poor, weak creature as I am. I do hope I have a thankful heart that God has in a measure opened my blind eyes and unstopped my deaf ears against the many vanities and delusions that are abroad in the land. There is one thing sure, had not a stronger than myself taken up arms against the enemy in my defence, I would surely have lost what I am hoping to gain, or rather have gained through the blood of the Lord Jesus.

I feel that it will be best to bring this to a close, as I think I am unfit to continue it. May God strengthen and confirm our heart, mind and soul, and his name have all the glory. I have much yet in my mind that I would like to say if I felt I were prepared to say it. I surely do feel that it is a wise precaution on the part of God that he does exercise his own judgment in his dealings with a poor, weak one, whom it is needful to humble and humiliate, that I may be kept at the foot of the cross. "Blest are the humble souls that see their emptiness and poverty." I pity those who seek no more than this vain world can give.

I feel to ask pardon for troubling you with this badly written and poorly composed letter. If you are able to make any sense out of it you can publish if you think best. I see many errors in it, but it is the best I can do. With love, I will close.

Yours in hope of a better life,

ABBIE CODDINGTON.

COQUILLE, Oregon, July 10, 1911.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have just received a communication from brother George Walker, of Walker, Oregon, which I would like you to publish in our family paper, the SIGNS, as it gives a report of the Siloam Association, of Washington and Oregon, held at Elgin, Oregon. I have brother Walker's consent to send it to you for publication, if you think it worthy. If any of the brethren back there are tired of the hot weather, just send them to Coos County, Oregon, where it is cool in summer and warm in winter, and a desirable place to live.

As ever, your brother in Christ, I hope,
W. H. NOSLER.

WALKER, Oregon, June 28, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER NOSLER:—We were rejoiced to receive your and sister Nosler's good letters, and should have answered much sooner, but were just starting on our first wedding tour, to the association. We were really surprised to find ourselves started that way, considering the many things that seemed to oppose the opportunity. But we have had a continuous feast, finding all in peace and harmony; every breath seemed to be born of love and fellowship. We went to Portland Wednesday evening and stayed with sister Stephens, having visited her daughter, Terzia, and brother and sister Horton and two sisters Ritchie, then took the boat Thursday morning at 7 o'clock, and arrived at The Dalles 3:30, and took train for Elgin, arriving Friday, 11:30 p. m. The association was in a very pleasant place, in a large pavilion with stand in one end and kitchen in the other, and seats between, so the inner and outer man were both served in a most satisfactory way, and there were many times, in fact, much of the time, we all seemed to be enjoying a Benjamin's portion. We surely had the will, and were permitted to partake of the water of life freely as it flowed from the fountain that was opened to the house of David. There were perhaps one hundred and twenty-five, maybe more, brethren, and thirteen ministers, all speaking the same thing, all esteeming others better than themselves, something that contributes to the peculiarity of God's people, for that spirit does not very much pervade the most of worldly meetings. Elders Mayfield and Atterbury, of Elgin, Oregon; Elder Bond, of Baker City, Oregon; Elders Barton, Turnage and Robinson, of Weiser, Idaho; Elder Horner, of Waterloo, Oregon; Elder Moffitt, of Newberg, Oregon; Elder Wilson, of Washington; Elder Pate, of Dayton, Washington; Elder Barnes, of Touchet, Washington; Elder Hess, of North Yakima, Washington, and I, tried to speak a few words to the praise of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. We had the precious fellowship of many brethren, both of old and new acquaintance, and we believe also the communion of the Spirit, which alone brings peace and fellowship, for the flesh profiteth nothing. We met there brethren in nearly every stage of health, from the wasting consumptive to the most robust, rosy-cheeked; from the poverty-stricken to those with plenty of this world's goods; from tender youth to old age, all praising God for his enduring mercy and long-suffering. "In every condition, in sickness, in health, in poverty's vale, or abounding in wealth." Indeed, God is no respecter of persons, for "Prisons would palaces prove, if Jesus would dwell with me there." Words fail to tell the sweet comfort and peace, so I will quote the

sweet singer: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." We left Elgin Sunday, having spent Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 16th, 17th and 18th, with many beloved brethren. Arriving at Lagrande, my wife stayed there while I went east to Baker City, Oregon, to visit my aunt and cousins, returning Tuesday morning. We took the train to Portland, arriving at 8 p. m., and spent two days with the brethren there, and brother John Belcher, of Washington, who was under a doctor's care. Then went by train up the west side of the valley and visited a day with our old neighbor Lambert, then to the home of our dear old brother and sister, Elder V. J. Turnage and wife, of Willamina, Oregon, then to sister Logsden's, in Albany, Oregon, and from there home, and found all as well, or in better health, than when we left, glad indeed to see the children safe once more and thankful to the Giver of every good gift for his long extended mercy to us poor cumberers of the ground. I am reminded to feel thankful that we have each month such a good and peaceful meeting at Drain, only fewer in number, also that it is so nicely arranged that visiting brethren may meet with Oakcreek Church, near Roseburg (J. J. Thornton, Oakcreek, being clerk), on first Sunday, and Coast Fork Church, at Drain or Walker, second Sunday, Bethel Church, at Tallman, third Sunday, and Cedar Creek Church, Oregon City, fourth Sunday, beginning south and traveling north.

Your very little brother,

G. O. WALKER.

RAUM, Ill., June 9, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Please find inclosed one dollar for the SIGNS for six months. I have felt encouraged many times in reading the precious truth contained therein. Surely the Lord has been good, and blessed the editors and writers that they have so earnestly and boldly contended for the truth in such a brotherly way, which makes me feel that although I am poor, and sometimes wonder as to whether or not I should stop taking the paper, when I consider the many times I have felt much cast down, feeling anxious to know the truth as it is taught in the Bible, how my poor soul has rejoiced in the privilege of reading the many good letters in the SIGNS, so I do not want to stop as long as I can pay for it.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

(MRS.) P. A. HOWARD.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1911.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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MATTHEW X. 29; LUKE XII. 6.

"ARE not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father."—Matt. x. 29. "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?"—Luke xii. 6.

In the testimony of the Scriptures how often are things that are small, and of little value according to our finite judgment, linked with the greatest things, either as their cause or their effect. In the connection of these two texts the blessed Master said that the very hairs of our head are all numbered. Nothing could be more trifling or unnoticeable in the view of mortal minds than a solitary hair from the head, yet not a sparrow falls without our Father, and every hair of the head he has numbered. If we pause for a moment to consider what this all signifies we shall be compelled in wonder to say, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." Who among men was ever able to number the hairs of his own head? Who ever thought of undertaking to count the hairs upon the head of another? Such a thing could be accomplished, no doubt, but who would have patience to finish such a task? We should count the time spent in such a thing as being utterly wasted, yet our Father has numbered them all upon the heads of all mankind. So also who among men even notices the fall of a sparrow, either through death or any other cause? But not one of them among all their unnumbered millions falls without Him; not one of them is forgotten before God. The Savior spake these words for the strengthening and encouragement of his disciples, after he had told them plainly that all manner of trials and persecutions awaited them in the coming warfare which was before them. Fear not these things, he would say to them, your Father will care for you, and as evidence full and satisfying he reminds them that their Father cares for the least things of his creation, and that much more will he care for his children. God cares for one sparrow, and ye are of more value than many sparrows. If he has numbered the hairs of your head, much more sure is it that he has numbered you, and not one shall be lost or suffer harm. This is the teaching in brief, as it seems to us, of these Scriptures.

There are some reflections in our mind of which we wish to write. First, let us notice in the words of the two texts two special things, viz., that sparrows were of so little value that when two pennies were spent for them one was (as we say) thrown in. Two sold for one farthing, but five would be given for two farthings, and while Luke records the Savior's language: "And not one of them is forgotten before God," Matthew says that "not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father." Two truths are declared in these two expressions, viz., that God remembers the sparrows, and that he is with them and appoints their very falling. It is good beyond expression to know that our heavenly Father remembers us always. How exceedingly

full of consolation is it that he not only remembers us, but that he is with us, that he is with us when we are low and cast down as well as when we soar above. What is more beautiful to see than the happy birds flitting through the air, full of life and gladness? The God who made them has filled them with this life and gladness; surely he must be mindful of them and be with them. But when they fall, either through weakness or death, is it as sure that he remembers them and is with them? Jesus has silenced this question once and for all. He says that our Father remembers them, and that he is with them so that they cannot fall to the ground without him. Well might he add, "Fear ye not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows." He remembers you when it is well with you, and he has you in just as perfect remembrance when all seems ill to you. He is with you when you in joy and love soar above, when you are prosperous and blessed, and he has not forsaken you when you are cast down and come near to perishing.

Second. This truth sets forth the great things of his omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence. The sparrows flit all around us and we pass them by without notice, but would it be so could we see that in each one of them there is revealed the great things, the deep things, of God? We wonder at the power that holds the worlds in their orbits and causes them to move on their stately march through the heavens, but the same attributes of Jehovah that are made manifest in them also appear in the smallest things. To us finite creatures some things are great and some things are small, but a poet has said with truth, "Great God, with thee there's nothing great, with thee there's nothing small." There are wonders in the sparrow that do not appear in the worlds above or in the earth upon which we tread. Life, thought, feeling, love, fear, with all other emotions of what we call life, belong to even the sparrow. Every one of these things is far more wonderful than any world of dead matter. But in addition to this, God's providence toward the little things implies his omnipresence and omniscience, as well as his omnipotence. It is not his care over one sparrow, but his care for them all, and not only for the sparrows does he care, but for all his animate creation, from minute forms of life, so small that, as the microscope has revealed, thousands of them can stand upon the point of the finest needle, or so large that the deep is made to boil at their presence and sporting. God made the sparrow as well as behemoth; his handiwork is as wonderful in the one as in the other. If, then, we can remember that the little sparrow sets forth the most wonderful attributes of our God, we shall not wonder that it is said that he remembers them and that they cannot fall to the ground without him, and poor, little, weak, insignificant worms of the dust as we are, yet we are the children of God, and in his sight are of more value that many sparrows. If he has care for one sparrow, will he not much more care for us?

Third. The little things enhance the glory of God no less than the great things; they make manifest his kingdom and power and purpose, and the great things can do no more. We recall that once we saw a large and powerful engine, which was able to move machinery that covered acres of ground, and that we stood in admiration of the wisdom that had designed and built it with such power that there was no apparent effort,

either in starting it or in its labor afterward, but resting upon a beam in that engine stood a fac-simile of it, so small that it could be placed in a large thimble, and in this small engine each part of the large one was duplicated. We felt that we did not know which to admire the most, the skill manifested in the little engine, or that which appeared in the large one. Did not the minute engine display the wisdom and skill of hand of the maker just as much as did the larger one? Is it not as much to the praise and glory of the Maker of all, that he has made the minutest things perfect in their kind and that they are all under his constant control, as it is that he ordered the great events, or created the great things of the universe? We gaze upon some one vast world with awe at its greatness and the majesty of its Author, but when we think upon the multiplied millions of little things, and remember that they each and all are alike in the presence of the all-seeing and everywhere-present God, does not this seem just as wonderful, and does it not show forth the glory of God as much as do the worlds above? So when we read that not a sparrow falls to the ground without our heavenly Father, there is involved the wonderful infiniteness of the wisdom and power of God, since not one sparrow only, but all sparrows, are included in this declaration of the blessed Lord.

Fourth. It is not only in the small things seen in nature, from grains of sand to minutest insects, that the glory of God appears, but in his providences also. How many there are who can witness that during the past of their lives there have been times when their whole manner of life has been changed by some little incident that would not have been remembered by them were it not for what followed out of that little incident, and from what has followed that small incident has been seen to be big with meaning, and fraught with the eternal purpose of God, as well as the greater things. The falling of a sparrow is a small thing, if anything is, yet it is not small in the sight of God, for he is with the sparrow when it falls. If what we call great things are in the appointment of God, and are moved on by his unerring wisdom and unfailing power, who shall dare deny that the small things are so, too?

Fifth. Out of this truth springs up great assurance for all who love God. He does not forget the sparrow, not one of them is forgotten of him, so no matter where we rove or rest, no matter whether it be night or day, we are assured that he has not, and that he will not, forget his disciples. "Ye are of more value than many sparrows." Still further, he abides with the sparrows. How full is that truth. He remembers, and he abides. What more could any one ask? What more could God give? Sometimes we hear it said that not one sparrow shall fall to the ground without your heavenly Father's notice; that is most blessedly true; that is said in the words, "And not one of them is forgotten before God." But it is better still than that, he is with them when they fall. They do not fall by chance; the purpose of God is in their fall as much as it is in their flight, and the lesson in part seems to us to be this: that our heavenly Father is never far from us, no matter how dark the night may be, no matter how much distress we encounter. If the dart of the enemy wounds us, there is a purpose in it, and we do not fall without our Father in heaven. How blessed is the consolation of such an assurance, when it is a dark

and cloudy day with us. If we fall by the hand of our enemy, God is with us even there. He has made the fire his chariot to convey his children home. He is always with his children in the furnace, though it is not always that he is seen.

Sixth. Let us notice that the sparrows are not always kept from falling, but that the teaching is, that God is with them in their falling. We may be sure that when they fall to the ground some purpose infinitely wise and loving is in it. It would be dreadful indeed to fall and not find the presence of the Father there. It was a journey full of sorrow and despair that Jacob took when he fled from the anger of his brother, but in the place where he fled God appeared before the dawn, and he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not." Jacob was not hindered from going down into the darkness, but the Lord was there before him. Not one falls to the ground without him. God is with us when it is well with us and when we soar above, but he is with us no less when we fall, either into darkness or into trials. The presence of God attends the falling to the ground as well as the soaring on high into blessing. He said, When thou passest through the floods I will be with thee; and through the fire, it shall not kindle upon thee. God was with Paul and Silas in the dungeon at Philippi, and they were not sorrowful, but rejoicing.

Seventh. We will close these reflections by calling attention to one objection that has often been made to the doctrine of the text. It is said that it is beneath our view of the almighty Sovereign of all to suppose that he takes notice of the little things. It belongs to him to uphold the worlds of the universe, to cause nations to rise and to fall, to bring men to the throne of government, or to bring down those who rule wickedly, to call men of wisdom and might to fill places assigned to them, but it is beneath our thought of the glory and dignity of the God of heaven to suppose that he takes notice of ordinary men or events. But is it so indeed? On the contrary, does it not, beyond all our power to express it, display the infinite wisdom and power of Jehovah to believe that he not only knows the great things but, the little; that he rules not only in worlds and in nations, but in the smallest affairs of men? Suppose that we are told that a certain king is capable, without the need of any advisers, of governing a nation; that he has such a grasp of affairs that his rule is the very best possible for all his people, and that were others to interfere and advise, it would be always to the detriment of his kingdom; would not the world stand in wonder and admiration of such a king? and especially would this be so if we were to learn that this king was possessed of but one supreme desire, and that this was to rule in wisdom and righteousness. But now in addition to all this, we learn that this king is possessed of such wonderful wisdom that he knows individually each and every one of all his millions of subjects, that he knows just what is best for each of them, and that he appoints just such things for each one as will be to his good, and that not only in the great affairs of state, but in the minute affairs of every one of his subjects, he is capable of ruling without any advice or help in any way, would we not all find it impossible to praise this good and wise king enough? Just this is what we are taught in the word, and especially in the text, is true concerning our King and our Father in heaven.

We feel to leave these reflections to our readers, and we trust they may find something good in them. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

LUKE XI. 9, 10.

BROTHER BEEBE:—I am an inquirer after the right way; will you please give me your views on Luke xi. 9, 10? "And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

Yours in hope of eternal life,

J. C. L. MILLER.

The gracious encouragement given in this text to pray, and the assurance of the answer of prayer, is too plainly written to require much labor or argument by way of explanation, yet plainly as the subject is stated to the enlightened child of God, who honestly inquires after and desires to know and walk in the truth as it is in Jesus, it is like all other Scriptures, dark and obscure to the natural man, who receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, and even the saints may be perplexed by the perversions of ignorant or designing men, who handle the sacred word of God deceitfully, and darken counsel by words without knowledge. Those who, in defiance of heaven and contradiction of the express testimony of the Scriptures, preach a conditional and work-mongrel doctrine of offers and proffers of grace, indiscriminately made to all mankind, often repeat the text under consideration as though it had been addressed alike to all, and represent the Savior as saying to carnal, graceless and dead sinners that they may have eternal salvation by asking for it; that the Lord has made the terms so easy as to bring the salvation of sinners within the reach of all men, and so cheap that all may secure by purchase an interest in the kingdom of God. But if such a theory were true, would not salvation be attainable by works? If the sinner must do something to secure his salvation, however little that something may be, or however easily performed, the doing of it would be an indispensable condition, and his salvation or damnation would rest on his compliance with the terms. But such we know is not the case, for God has said of all who are saved, And their salvation is of me, saith the Lord. "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." If salvation be of God, it is not of men, and if by grace, then it is not of works, otherwise grace is no more grace. The apostle informs us that all the promises of God are in Christ Jesus yea, and in him amen, to the glory of God by us. This being the case, to be interested in them we must be in Christ, as the branch is in the vine. There are no gospel promises out of Christ, but unto the members of the body of Christ, who were chosen of God in him before the foundation of the world, are given exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature. (2 Peter i. 4.) "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

In the chapter from which our subject is taken, one of his disciples said unto him, "Lord, teach us to pray," &c. "And he said unto them [that is, to his disciples, one of whom had asked for this instruction], When ye pray, say, Our Father," &c. None but the children of God can in truth call God their Father. If he is indeed our Father, it is because our spiritual, immortal or eternal life was with him from everlasting, and because he hath of his own will begotten us by the word of his power, and we are consequently "born again, not of corruptible

seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." To such, and only to such, gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. These are the children of God, and God is their Father. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."—Romans viii. 14. "Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."—Romans viii. 9. To be a son or child of God, and entitled to the privilege of calling God our Father, is to be begotten and born of God, and to possess the Spirit of Christ, and but by that Spirit, and through that Christ alone, can any man have access to God, for Jesus expressly declares, No man can come unto the Father but by me. All his children are taught of God, and every one that is taught of God cometh to Christ, while no man cometh unto Christ except his Father, which sent him, draw him. It is therefore preposterous to pretend that Jesus was teaching any others to pray but such as were by a spiritual birth qualified to worship God in spirit and in truth, by praying with the spirit and with the understanding also, for God is a Spirit, and can only be approached by the spirit, through Christ Jesus our Lord. We know not how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, and maketh intercession for us according to the will of God. To such as are born of God, led by the Spirit of God, and are followers of Christ, is the distinguishing appellation, disciple of Christ, given in the Scriptures, for except we obey and follow him we cannot be his disciples, but, Then are ye my disciples indeed, if ye do whatsoever I command you. To his disciples Jesus said, "And I say unto you." Are any so dull as to believe that this form of words means that he saith this to all mankind? Can these words without violence be applied to those to whom he had said, Ye shall seek me, and ye shall not find me, and ye shall die in your sins, &c.? "I say." It is Jesus that speaks; it is the voice of him who called the world into being, who speaks the word and it stands fast, who commands and it is done. There is power and majesty, grace and salvation in his word, for he says, The words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life, and when the word goeth forth out of his mouth it shall not return unto him void of the work whereunto he hath sent it. Nor can his word miscarry, what he says to you does not mean somebody else. Well, what does he here say to his disciples? "Ask, and it shall be given you." The disciple in asking, virtually acknowledges his need of that for which he asks, and his dependence upon God to supply his needs. He acknowledges that the name of Father is a hallowed or consecrated name, expressive of vital relationship, and that he has confidence in his Father which is in heaven, that he is able and willing to supply all that he is led by the spirit of prayer to ask for, and the faith of the Son of God in the heart of the disciples lays hold of the blessed assurance that what he is so led to ask for shall be given to him. Not that all that our fleshly lusts may desire or prompt us to ask for is pledged to us in this sacred text, for we sometimes ask amiss, for things to consume upon our lusts, and then we ask and we receive not. God in great mercy to us withholds such things as would be injurious to us. But what we are taught by Christ to ask, in spirit and manner and form as expressed in the prayer in the context, from the

second to the fifth verse of this chapter, in the spirit of that submission which says, Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth, when looking to God day by day for daily supplies of temporal and spiritual support and subsistence, and when cherishing the same spirit of forgiveness to our enemies that we ask God to bestow on us. "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses."—Mark xi. 25, 26. This last quoted Scripture may explain to us why many of our prayers are shut out, especially when we are desiring that God should crush our enemies and lavish his gifts on us and on our friends. "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you. That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven," &c.—Matt. v. 44, 45. If God forgives us only as we forgive those who trespass against us, what will be our fate? Do we mark iniquity against our neighbor, brother or fellow-being, and ask God to blot out our transgressions? How vain are such prayers! Do we ask God to be merciful to our unrighteousness and remember our iniquities no more? then let us not seek revenge on those we deem to be our foes. The word and spirit of our God must teach us what to ask for, how to ask, and in what spirit and in what name to approach our heart-searching and rein-trying God, and thus directed we shall ask, and God will hear, and we shall receive all that we ask for, for the Spirit of truth and holiness will not lead us to pray for anything that God will withhold from them that walk uprightly.

"Seek, and ye shall find." Seeking not only implies a desire to find a cherished treasure, but also such qualifications as blind or dead men do not possess. To seek is to look or to search for something that is hidden, and in order to seek we must have life and sight, but until quickened by the Spirit we are both dead in sins and blind to everything of a spiritual nature. Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God, and that is the very first thing the children of God are commanded to seek for. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things [temporal mercies] shall be added unto you."—Matt. vi. 33. All that we require to seek is embraced in the kingdom of God and the righteousness of God. These we need, for under no other government can we be happy or at home, and in no other righteousness can we be holy and acceptable to God. But as the kingdom of God is spiritual, the natural man cannot see it, or receive it, for it is only spiritually discerned. In that blessed kingdom we should be but aliens and strangers unless qualified for fellow-citizenship with the saints by the righteousness of God. To seek for some popular religious establishment, called a church, and our own righteousness, requires no new birth, no circumcision of heart, of ears or of eyes, for the world will recognize its own, but to seek successfully the kingdom over which the blessed Jesus presides, and the flaming righteousness of God, without which we can in nowise be saved, requires that we shall be of him in Christ, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

"Knock, and it shall be opened unto you." This familiar figure presents the prayers of the saints as knocking at

mercy's door. As the weary traveler would gain admittance in the house for rest, food and comfort, approaches the door and knocks for admittance, and as the child would come into his father's house and mingle with the children, and with them participate in the provisions and comforts of the family, so the heaven-born child of God seeks for the church of God, and approaching the door of the sheepfold (for he would not climb up some other way) he knocks, or gives the signal, saying, perhaps in the language of the psalmist, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." This kind of knocking never fails to receive a happy response: "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord." "Why tarry thou, arise, and be baptized," &c. Or if we apply this figure to our knocking at mercy's door, the result is certain, for God himself has promised to open the door to all such. This is attested by all the inmates of the house of God, for every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. What child of God has ever been turned empty away when asking supplies at the throne of grace, with the spirit and with the understanding, and in the name of Jesus? Not even Jonah when in the belly of hell was unsuccessful in seeking his God with his face turned towards the holy temple at Jerusalem. And when we knock at the door of mercy how consoling is the assurance given in the text: "To him that knocketh it shall be opened."

"Enough, my gracious God,
Let faith triumphant cry,
My heart can on this promise live,
Can on this promise die."

The subject affords great consolation to the humble, tried and trembling children of God, who feel that they have nothing in their hands to bring as an oblation or offering to God to procure his favor, but are unworthy to pronounce his sacred name. Hungry, thirsting, naked, destitute and helpless, Jesus bids them come, approach his mercy-seat, come boldly to the throne of grace to ask for mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need.

"Poor, tempest-tossed soul, be still,
My promised grace receive;
'Tis Jesus speaks, I must, I will,
I can, I do, believe."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., September 15, 1864.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, July 25th, 1911, at the home of the bride's sister, Mrs. Fenton Young, Mt. Gilead, Loudoun Co., Va., Israel G. Powell, of Round Hill, Va., and Miss Sallie Gulick.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Sarah E. Jackson Wyman was born in Orleans County, N. Y., Nov. 19th, 1837, and died at her home in Weston, Mich., July 5th, 1911. She was the eldest of eleven children of David and Caroline Jackson. They moved to Michigan when she was about fifteen years of age. She taught school until 1859, when, on October 6th, she was married to James M. Wyman, of Fairfield, and they began housekeeping on the farm lately sold, two miles south of Weston, and lived there nearly fifty-two years. She had been in poor health for the past ten years, but since last October she had been confined to her bed. She was convicted of sin in her childhood, being only eight years old, and received a hope Jan. 9th, 1858, when she was baptized by Elder James R. Howell, pastor of the First Old School Baptist Church of Fairfield, Mich. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, trusting in God always. She was the mother of eight children one (Clementine) dying when two years old, and Caroline died at Flint Mute School when fourteen years of age. The others are: Mrs. John M. Brees, Mrs. E. C. Crile, of Weston, Andrew, of Webberville, Mich., Sheldon, of Morenci, Mrs. B. Brower, of Morenci, and Mrs. Bernice Hindee, of Jasper, Mich. She leaves four sisters, two brothers, twenty grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren, beside old scholars and a host of other friends to miss her.

Written by a daughter,

(MRS.) JOHN M. BREES.

Eliza Jane Ross was born in Licking County, Ohio, August 10th, 1834, died at her home in London Mills, Ill., July 14th, 1911, aged 76 years, 11 months and 4 days. She moved with her parents to Wisconsin in 1844, from there to Iowa in 1845, then to Illinois in the same year. She was married to Thomas Ross, Feb. 22nd, 1853, who preceded her in death, Nov. 8th, 1896. That union was blessed with five children, three of whom preceded her in death. Sister Ross united with New Hope Church, in Greenbush, Ill., in 1862, and with her husband was baptized by the late Elder R. Simmons, where she retained her membership through her christian life. We can truly say of her, She hath done what she could. Her home was ever open, an oasis in this desert land, to all her brethren and sisters, and it was her chief delight to minister to their wants as a servant of her Lord. Surely we can say, A mother in Israel has fallen. She endured her suffering with patience, often remarking she would like to depart and be at rest if it were the Lord's will. She was always at meeting when not providentially hindered, but owing to ill health she was deprived of meeting with the church for several years, but would always remember the day of meeting. About five years ago the writer visited her, when she spoke about some words that came into her mind. She thought they were Scripture, but could not find them. She gave me her Bible, turning to Psalms xlvi. 10, first clause: "Be still, and know that I am God." She then told me she wanted me to use that Scripture as a text at her funeral, as the words had been a great comfort to her since her husband had died, and she thought it would comfort her children and friends. The writer on Monday, July 17th, at the Methodist meeting-house in London Mills, spoke to a very large concourse of people, who gave the closest attention. In connection with the above text I used 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14, after which her body was conveyed to the cemetery and laid beside that of her husband, there to await that voice to call them forth from their last long sleep to enter the glory world, the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

S. H. HUMPHREY.

Helen Sidney Livingston, wife of J. E. Livingston, was born Oct. 5th, 1848. She was married Jan. 4th, 1877, and to that union two children were born: Mrs. J. H. Herrington, of Arkville, N. Y., and Mrs. C. E. Michel, of Cobleskill, N. Y., the home of the parents. Sister Livingston united with the Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie, N. Y., June, 1897, and her profession was adorned with a meek and quiet spirit, striving for the things that make for peace, whereby one may edify another. Seldom was she absent from the meetings of the church until prevented by sickness, for about a year, when death came, May 21st, 1911, her age being 62 years, 7 months and 16 days.

Her funeral was held May 23rd, at her late home, the writer using for a text Philippians i. 21: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Burial was in Schoharie Cemetery. She leaves three sisters and one brother: Mrs. Geo. Bellinger, of N. Y., Eva Sidney, Margaret Sidney and John Sidney, of Schoharie, N. Y., with the church, who sorrow not as those who have no hope. JOHN CLARK.

HALCOTTSVILLE, N. Y.

MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting of the Bryn Zion Old School Baptist Church will be held the third Sunday in August, and Saturday afternoon before, beginning Saturday afternoon at 2:30 o'clock. Any friends desiring to meet with us will come to Clayton on Saturday, when and where they will be met and conveyed to the place of meeting.

BENJ. E. CUBBAGE, Pastor.

THE Maine Conference will meet, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church at North Berwick, Maine, Sept. 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1911. All who love the truth as it is in Jesus are most welcome to come and attend our meeting.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

THE Licking Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Mt. Carmel Church, at Winchester, Clark Co., Ky., commencing on Friday before the second Saturday and Sunday in September, 8th, 9th and 10th, 1911. Winchester is situated on the C. & O. and L. & N. R. R. All lovers of the truth are invited to attend and be with us, especially ministering brethren. All trains will be met Friday evening and Saturday morning. M. B. HADDEN.

THE Trinity River Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will convene with Liberty Church, in Tarrant Co., Texas, three miles west of Grapevine town, beginning Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1911. Grapevine is on the Cotton Belt R. R. Conveyances will be there on Thursday for all who can attend; all are invited.

ASA HOWARD, Moderator.

THE Clovesville Old School Baptist Church will hold a yearly or two days meeting, the Lord willing, the second Saturday and Sunday in September (9th and 10th), 1911. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Trains will be met at Fleischmanns station on Saturday.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Roxbury Association is appointed to be held with the First Church of Roxbury, on Wednesday and Thursday, September 20th and 21st, 1911, com-

mencing at 10:30 a. m. Wednesday. Trains will be met at Roxbury Tuesday p. m. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE yearly meeting of the Cow Marsh Old School Baptist Church will be held the fourth Sunday in September, and Saturday afternoon before. The meeting will open at 2:30 o'clock Saturday afternoon. Friends meeting with us will come Saturday morning to Felton station, where they will be met and conveyed to the meeting.

BENJ. E. CUBBAGE, Pastor.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

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SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 79. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1911. NO. 17.

POETRY.

MY CHRISTMAS.

I AWOKE with a start from a dreamless sleep,
  And turned to the eastern sky,
Where a lovely star with a steadfast light
  Met the scarcely conscious eye.

And I thought at once of the star in the east,
  That led the wise men on their way
O'er Bethlehem's plain, till it stood o'er the place
  Where the babe and its mother lay.

They worshiped with joy the lovely child,
  Presented him gifts rich and rare,
For they believed in their hearts the promised King
  Was the babe which was lying there.

Glory to God in the highest, the shining ones sang;
  Peace on earth, good will to men;
A Savior is born, who is Christ the Lord;
  He will gather his people again.

Precious gift to a lost and sinful world,
  From the Lord of life, light and glory;
To live for us, to die for us,
  How sweet the wondrous story!

At eventide, with burdened heart,
  I sought the sacred shrine;
My soul longed for words of comfort and cheer,
  Whispered by lips divine.

My lips breathed a plea for strength to bear
  The sorrows and trials of life;
For faith to uphold, for grace to endure
  The world's coldness, unkindness and strife.

Sweet came these words to the waiting soul:
  Put thy trust in, thy burden on me;
For I will uphold thee, my arms shall enfold thee;
  My grace is sufficient for thee.

JENNIE HALLENBECK.

JESUS, ALL, ALL IS KNOWN TO THEE.

"WHEN my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path."—Psalms cxlii. 3.

My God, whose gracious pity I may claim,
Calling thee Father, sweet, endearing name,
The suffering of this weak and weary frame,
  All, all is known to thee.

From human eye 'tis better to conceal
Much that I suffer, much that I hourly feel;
But O the thought does tranquilize and heal:
  All, all is known to thee.

Each secret conflict, each indwelling sin,
Each sickening fear I ne'er the prize shall win,
Each pang from irritation, turmoil, din,
  All, all is known to thee.

When in the morning unrefreshed I wake,
Or in the night but little sleep can take,
This brief appeal submissively I make:
  All, all is known to thee.

Nay, all by thee is ordered, chosen, planned;
Each drop that fills my daily cup thy hand
Prescribes for ills none else can understand.
  All, all is known to thee.

And this continued feebleness, this state
Which seems to unnerve and incapacitate,
Will work the cure my hopes and fears await.
  That I can leave with thee.

Nor will the bitter draught distasteful prove,
When I recall the Son of thy dear love;
The cup thou wouldest not for our sakes remove,
  That cup he drank for me.

He drank it to the dregs, no drop remained
Of wrath for those whose cup of woe he drained;
Man ne'er can know all that that cup contained;
  All, all is known to thee.

[THE above verses were sent by sister Martha Howarth to sister Mary Hill Terry, and by her forwarded to us for publication.—ED.]

CORRESPONDENCE.

EPHESIANS II. 1.

"AND you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—After having considerable conversation with parties who claim to be ministers of the gospel, and who claim that the non-elect are the subjects of gospel address, and that it is necessary they should be preached to in order that God might be justified in their everlasting condemnation and destruction, and that they must be preached to, so that they might be without excuse in the day of judgment, I feel like writing regarding the matter. Now, dear brethren, I want to say to one and all, if the foregoing is the teaching of the Bible, I have not understood it, but to the contrary, I have understood from a close examination of the Scriptures that so far from its being the case that man has a claim upon his Creator, he has none at all; and as to the claim that our God is under obligation to man since the fall, he is under none at all. All he does for man is from sovereign mercy and grace, without any merit, and God would have been perfectly just had he cut man off at any time since the fall, without extending any favor toward him. Man has forfeited all his claim (if indeed he ever had any) by transgression of his Creator's commandment. I want to examine the proof for a little while, to see whether man has any claim upon his Creator, so that lawfully he might demand some favor from his hand. In the first place, we read that God saw everything (man being included) that he had made, and behold, it was very good. So, in the first place, we see that there was nothing short in the making of man which would entitle him to make any claim upon his Creator; and we hear the wise man, Solomon, saying, "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." So again we see there was nothing wanting upon the part of God in making man, that could entitle man to make any claim upon God, to send a preacher of the word to converse with him. Not only so, but we see that God gave man dominion over all else that he had made, save the tree of knowledge of good and evil, to have and to use for food, &c. So there was nothing wanting upon God's part in giving him all the necessaries of life, and man could have no further claim in this direction upon his Creator.

But now I wish to examine the other side of the question for a little time. If it be a fact that man has some claim upon his Creator, I would be the last man to object to it, for I could also claim my interest in it, but I do not understand it in that light. After God had made everything that was made, he began to instruct man, by telling him that he was to have dominion over all other creatures, and that he had a right to the fruit of every tree, save one, and to every herb for food. God also planted the garden, and placed man in it, and gave him perfect right to all that was in it for food, save the tree of knowledge of good and evil, but he said to man, Of this tree thou shalt not eat, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. I would suggest this: If man had ever had any claim upon his Creator, as soon as he transgressed this commandment his claim ceased to exist, and so we must understand that unless man has by an act on his own part brought his Creator under some obligation to him he is yet without any claim upon God. This I will endeavor to notice again further on. We learn that the penalty of that trans-

gression was death, and also that man did transgress this commandment, and that he did enter thus into a state of death in trespasses and sins, and inasmuch as the whole human family is but Adam multiplied, they all stand by nature in the same attitude before God.

Now I will notice the state in which man is while in this attitude of death in trespasses and in sins. Paul, speaking of this state, said, "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Now we see that those characters who are said to be dead (and who really were dead) are yet alive in the flesh and to this world, but we also see that those who are now quickened have been dead, in the sense intended by the death in trespasses and in sins; they have been dead to God and godliness, to holiness, to truthfulness, dead to everything of a spiritual nature. It is a fact that in whatever sense it may be said that one is dead, it signifies that he is destitute of all the faculties belonging to that life to which he is dead, and neither can he be taught in the things of that life to which he is dead until that life is imparted to him. The reason of this is that, being dead, he is not susceptible of being taught.

The next consideration is, How and when did man become dead? It is said, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." It is also said, For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Does not this look as though man had lost all claim against God, granting that he ever had any? Now let us see how God looks upon man in his carnal state. The psalmist said, "Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth. The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies. Their poison is like the poison of a serpent; they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear; which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely." From all this it seems to me that the claim of this character, if he ever had any, is now somewhat weak. Again, it is said, God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did good. This is what he saw: "There is none righteous, no, not one: * * * there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace they have not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes." He further says of them, Every imagination of the thoughts of the heart is only evil, and that continually. They have "eyes full of adultery, and cannot cease from sin." Again, the apostle declares, "The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of

serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: but the tongue can no man tame: it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." Dear brethren, let me ask, What is there among all these things, either separately or jointly considered, that is calculated to merit any claim upon the Creator, that we should brand him with injustice in case he does not send some preacher to us, or that would make it unjust in him to mete out to us according to our deeds, without first sending to us some preacher to warn or to exhort us?

But I must close soon, still, before I do I want to tell you what I understand the purpose of preaching is. It is a medium by which our God means to feed, strengthen and take care of his flock, his children, here in this time state, and it belongs to his people exclusively, and is not intended for anything else but to save the believer in this time world, and inasmuch as the people of God are found in every nation and tongue upon the earth, the Savior told his disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. This did not mean to the ungodly world, but to all who were spiritual in the world. He said, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved [saved from false delusions and snares of the devil, &c.]; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." I understand this to mean that they should be condemned by the preached word, and with many stripes. I do not think that this refers to everlasting punishment from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power. Now one more Scripture to show that God has saved his people from future punishment, and yet that he deals with them here according to their deeds. In Romans he says, "Who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honor and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile. For there is no respect of persons with God." I understand that all this refers to the people of God, the obedient upon the one hand, and the disobedient upon the other hand. In order to prove that the gospel is sent to the people of God, instead of the whole human family indiscriminately, I wish to quote one more Scripture, Acts xiii. 26: "Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham [the children of God among the Jews], and whosoever among you feareth God [quickened Gentiles], to you is the word of this salvation sent." It does seem that this ought to suffice for proof as to whom the gospel is addressed. I feel at this time that if I were only gifted in language I should love to keep on writing upon this subject for a week, and yet the half would not be told. May God enable his dear children to believe truth, and not be deceived by false teachers. May he do this according to his own will. Amen.

Your unworthy brother in tribulation,

P. N. MOYERS.

GOIN, Tenn., July 10, 1911.

PINEVILLE, Ky., July 30, 1911.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—If one as corrupt as I am should claim such a relationship to you, but as I am living by hope, I have this hope that I am thus related to you.

Your editorial in the last number of the SIGNS, on Hebrews x. 26, 27, impressed me so greatly that I have a desire to write you and express my hearty indorsement of the manner and way you handled the text; I believe it is the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Israel has been needing that kind of preaching for years. They have been crying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace; crying, Safety, while destruction has been and is coming upon them. O that you, and other colaborers in the field, could be given a mind to preach and write more extensively along this line, as the prophets and apostles did. Paul, in writing to the church at Corinth, said, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." We do not believe that Paul persuaded unregenerate men to be willing for the Lord to regenerate them, that was not his mission; we believe that he persuaded and exhorted regenerate men to keep the commandments of God and hold forth the testimony of Jesus Christ; not because he believed they would be punished after they had passed over the river of death, but because he knew they would suffer here for every transgression and disobedience. We believe with you that national Israel represented spiritual Israel. If it does not, the old Bible is not worth anything to us. The legal covenant was typifying the spiritual covenant. God's dealings with national Israel were typical of his dealings with spiritual Israel. At the same time we do not believe that all of national Israel were embraced in God's eternal choice and were of the Israel that Christ came to save eternally. This Paul was given to see when he was grieving over the opposition of the Jews to himself and his doctrine, and was given to say, "For they are not all Israel, that are of Israel." All men in their natural state have a fleshly mind and a human nature which are antagonistic to the spiritual mind and the divine nature. While in that state of existence they cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God. All that they do is not, from a spiritual standpoint, pleasing to God, because they have not faith, and without faith it is impossible to please him. In the regeneration man receives a spiritual mind and a divine nature; the earthy is partaker of the heavenly. Now we have in the earthy man two opposing natures, which bring on a warfare in the man of God, and he is always led and influenced by one or the other of these two powers. When God hides his smiling face from us we transgress his law, as Adam and Eve did, and as the Israelites did. I believe that every being for whom Christ died will sing God's praise around his throne in the heaven of heavens, but I do not believe that they all will enter and live in Christ's kingdom here in time. All of Israel were brought out of Egypt (darkness) with a high and mighty hand, all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, all did eat the same spiritual meat, all drank of the same spiritual drink, for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ, and they all sang, "The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him." Now can we believe that men can receive all these glorious things, and at last for disobedience and rebellion be sent to a place of eternal torment? No, for my soul, I cannot believe it. If I did believe it I could not entertain any hope for myself nor the great majority of the people of God. It was said by the psalm-

ist that the Lord rebuked the Red Sea and dried it up, so he led Israel through the depths, as through the wilderness, and he saved them from the hand of him that hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy, and the waters covered their enemies, there was not one of them left. Then they believed his words, they sang his praise. But they soon forgot his works, they waited not for his counsel, but lusted exceedingly in the wilderness and tempted God in the desert; they envied Moses in the camp and Aaron the saint of the Lord. The earth opened and swallowed up three and thirty thousand of the children of Israel, people whom the Lord had saved and redeemed from their enemy. Here is a natural destruction and death (typical of spiritual destruction and death) brought on the children of Israel by their rebellion. They were not permitted to enter the promised land, which was a type of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ here in time. As it was with national Israel, so it is to-day with every one that is created anew; they must pass through the Red Sea, through the wilderness and through the rolling waters of old Jordan before they can enter the promises; and as there were but few of Israel that were saved and redeemed from Egypt that entered the promised land, so it is to-day with spiritual Israel. It is written, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it." These words of our Savior were to encourage his people to mortify the desires and deeds of their fleshly minds, that they might be saved from falling into the many pitfalls by the wayside. Our Savior knew that the majority of national Israel did deny and rebel against the God that had redeemed them, and went into that broad way that leadeth to destruction, and he also knew that human nature is the same to-day as it was in the days of Moses and the prophets. Israel rebelled against Moses, Israel persecuted and killed the prophets, and Israel to-day has the same human nature as they did then. Can we look upon Israel to-day and not feel as the prophet Jeremiah did when he exclaimed, "O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people"? O may the servants of God feel to-day as Ezekiel felt when the Lord said unto him, "O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel, Thus ye speak, saying, If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live?" As it was true that there were wicked Israelites in the days of Moses and the prophets who needed to be warned of their iniquity, so it is true to-day. Paul said, If ye live after the flesh (fleshly mind) ye shall die. Every tree that beareth not good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. I believe that if our people could be made to

see and realize that the punishment and destruction spoken of in the New Testament were for the rebellious and disobedient children of Israel, instead of the nonelect world of mankind, there would not be so many resting at ease and going in that broad way that leadeth to destruction (not an eternal destruction, but a timely one, such as the disobedient children of Israel met with in the days of Moses and the prophets). The preaching of the gospel is to save Israelites in time, for when time is no more there will be no more preaching of the gospel, for then death will be swallowed up of life. There are two generations spoken of in the New Testament: one is the generation of Israel after the flesh, the other is the generation of Israel after the Spirit. All the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, is upon the generation of Israel after the flesh, but the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in Israel after the Spirit. Christ himself was not justified in the flesh (human nature), but in the Spirit. Christ through his death destroyed our natural, or human, nature, and in so doing he destroyed all of our enemies, as we sweetly experience when we receive the comforting influence of his Spirit; then we realize the death, or dissolving, of earthly powers and influences, and we are brought unto Mount Sion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, &c.

Elder Chick brought to light a very important truth that most of us have been blind to, when he showed the contrast between the church and the kingdom of heaven. I believe that all of God's people enter into the kingdom of heaven, but only a remnant enter the church.

I have already written more than you may desire to read, so I shall desist from writing more. I hope you will be given a mind to write more along the same line as your last editorial.

Your unworthy brother, in hope of immortality, L. D. HOSKINS.

[WE much appreciate the kind remarks of our brother, Dr. Hoskins, concerning ourself, and thank him for his excellent letter.—K.]

PINSONFORK, Ky., July 21, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—After many long and wearisome struggles of mind I have decided to write a few lines for publication in our medium of correspondence, the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if you judge them worthy and can spare them a little space. I often have a desire to write, but am in such gross darkness that I cannot, therefore put it off from time to time, thinking perhaps the path will shine brighter in the near future, but so far have found it very different; darkness and gloominess of mind hover over me, so that when I wait for light, behold, darkness; but as the Lord our God dwells in the thick darkness, I have concluded to pen a few of my thoughts to this precious family, the household of faith, and maybe, if I am not blessed to comfort them, the Lord will so order it that I may not confuse any of them. This has been my great fear for many years, therefore I have written but little for publication. It has been on my mind much of late that perhaps there never was a time in the history of the Primitive Baptists, the church of God, that they should more prayerfully strive to make straight paths for their feet than now, lest the lame be turned out of the way, for it looks as though the prophecy of Isaiah is yet being fulfilled, or manifested in these peril-

ous times, which is as follows: "For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people."—Isaiah lx. 2. Doubtless there are thousands of God's dear, loving and humble-hearted children who are lame; in fact, all of them are lame, even lame on both feet; but I mean as in this text, deficient in understanding, so much so that they cannot see the path as clearly as many others do. Hence those who are so highly favored of the Lord as to see those controverted points plainer than some others do, should as much as in them is come to the feet of Jesus and ask him to enable them to let their light so shine before men (lame children of God) that they may see their good works, and glorify their Father which is in heaven. It is an established fact that we can do nothing without the Lord; we cannot even desire to come to his feet, but when he gives us this desire of heart, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."—Heb. iv. 16. There was a stumbling-block in the way of the Lord's people in the prophet's day, and the commandment was to take it up out of the way, (Isaiah lvii. 14,) and it seems clear to my mind that it was right to take the stumbling-block out of the way of the Lord's people in the prophet's day, or the Lord would not have so commanded, and if it were right then, surely it must be right now, for the Lord's people are fully as weak and as liable to stumble now as they were then, therefore when the stumbling-stones are taken out of the way of the little, feeble lambs who falter, and whose knees are very feeble, and who have not strength to surmount these obstacles; I say, when these many stumbling-stones are taken out of the path, it is both plainer and smoother for them; then they go on their way rejoicing, and seem to lose no time. There are many things plainly taught in the Scriptures which are necessary for the servants to strictly observe, both as to doing and not doing, in order that they make plain paths for the humble followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God. Foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes, and where there is strife and envying among the Lord's weak ones some are liable to be turned out of the way. They are not able to overcome these things, but the servant should in meekness instruct these timorous lambs, who through some misgivings have opposed themselves, and are poor, helpless captives, and by chains and fetters (strong persuasions of blind leaders) are kept in the ditch of error. Instead of striving about words to no profit, the servant of the Lord should be "an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity;" in fact, the life that the servant lives should be worthy of imitation. I have often thought that perhaps if I am not favored of the Lord to show myself approved unto God, rightly dividing the word of truth, perhaps on many occasions I should be a blind leader of the blind. In our dividing the word of truth, if we do not do it rightly we are apt also to lead many of the Lord's children into the ditch of error. These things I greatly fear of late, much more so than I did in past years, hence I have been much impressed of late to come to the Lord, if he will enable me so to do, and pray for wisdom and understanding, that I may rightly divide the word of truth, and thereby make straight paths for the humble followers of Christ, and that my conversation may be in heaven (godly). The Lord's redeemed people

are a heavenly family; their home is a heavenly home, therefore our conversation should be as becometh the gospel of Christ, as becometh a heavenly family, even a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people. Indeed, Israel is God's peculiar treasure.

Dear brethren, and readers of the SIGNS, I hope and desire that all who can be so charitable will write to me when convenient. I am writing but few personal letters, but I greatly desire to hear from you, and would enjoy a letter from you at any time.

I must now close this weak effort. I have not written doctrinally, but just briefly penned down a few of my thoughts this morning, but I am to some degree embarrassed whether to send it for publication, for I am sensible of my weakness and nothingness here in this world of trouble and sore trials.

A poor, helpless creature,

W. J. MAY.

HAMPSTEAD, Md., March, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I see from the date of your letter that it has been more than a year since it came to me. My delay in replying has not been because it was not appreciated, nor because I did not enjoy what it contained, for, as do all your writings, it showed forth the power of our covenant-keeping God and the frailty and weakness of man; these are the things that comfort and strengthen the weak ones. You are not alone in growing more dilatory, but when I read that phrase the thought came, What a blessing that we are kept by One who does not grow dilatory, and who never slumbers nor sleeps, and who is always the same; truly this is why we are not consumed. Your saying that you received more from my letter as you read it again just before writing to me than when it first came, shows that we are not always the same. I often have like experiences. I think they teach us our dependence upon the Spirit of God, and the source from whence all fullness comes.

Yes, as you say, you have been greatly blessed in having the companionship of the Lord's people, and I appreciate your sympathy for those situated like myself. But again, as you say, "He never takes away himself; himself he gives us still," and in him all fullness dwells, and although I often murmur even with blessings in my hand, I know that he doeth all things well, and all things are working together for our good and his glory. I was striving to look into the future, with a feeling of dread of what might come to me, when these words were presented:

> "The clouds you so much dread
> Shall break in blessings on your head."

I hope I may behold the silver lining. So, while I am poor and needy, He still comforts me, not only once, but many times that I could speak of; but I must forbear. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." I believe that the love is greater than the fear, and ought not this give sweet comfort? for we read that perfect love casteth out fear. I do not reach the height of rejoicing that I once did, but I do feel that I am kept by the power of God, and that he is just as near me as in times of rejoicing. I hope you are still in your cheerful state. Truly this is a progressive age, and I would fear did I not know that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, and that he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven above and among

the inhabitants of the earth. The Scriptures must be fulfilled. You know that Jesus said before his crucifixion, "But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?"

I was more than glad to again see you at the association, and to hear you speak of the love of Christ, and the goodness of God in giving his Son into wicked hands to be crucified, that we might ever dwell with him in a glorified state, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. What a glorious inheritance! Surely we ought not to murmur at the trials and afflictions of the way, but I very often do. As a sister wrote in the SIGNS, "I desire it to be otherwise." O how good it is that he remembereth that we are dust. All the evidence I can find in myself that I am a child of God is the desire to be. I was so overjoyed and excited that I was able to go to the association that I fear I did not act becomingly. You know it was the first one I ever attended. I hope all had charity for me. That meeting has been the last preaching I have had, except the SIGNS. Sister Emma Kelley took me to their place, with the intention of taking me to the meeting on the first Sunday in June, but we were disappointed, as it rained, so to alleviate the disappointment sister Emma took me to spend the day with sister Ensor, sister Fowble and brother and sister Cole. It is useless for me to tell you I had a pleasant day, but I think you cannot realize how much I did enjoy it. This week, spent at sister Kelley's, is like an oasis in the desert, when compared to my life in general. I know you miss brother Kelley, but you cannot as I do.

My pastor, Elder Rowe, came to see me on his way to the train, and I have had a good letter from him, which I will inclose, as his name so seldom appears in the SIGNS. I want to thank all who are connected with the SIGNS for continuing to send it to me, but, as much as I enjoy it, I do not wish to be a burden to God's people. But this trial must be in some way working for my good. I tried to speak to you about it at the association, but it seemed I could not get the opportunity. I would possess all the books I see advertised in the SIGNS were it in my power. I was glad to see sister Nellie's name in the SIGNS.

I will close. I trust that to you all has been given health, that greatest of earthly blessings, and spiritual blessings without number.

I am, as ever, your weak and erring sister,

GEORGIA D. ENGLAND.

BALTIMORE, Md., Nov. 30, 1910.

DEAR SISTER ENGLAND:—Your letter came to hand in due time, and it surely was a good letter, and I appreciated it, and now I wish I could write you one as good, one that would bring comfort to your soul. I feel that although you are isolated from those of like precious faith, you surely are not isolated from your dear Savior. O what a precious promise is his: I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, but will be with you alway, even unto the end of the world. If he should go away, as men do, and forget, as men do, we would be consumed, but he says, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." What a precious Savior is ours, his love is himself, and no change can turn his course; his love is without beginning or end, and he will in nowise cast out one that the Father hath given him. "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I

should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day," and then three times in the same chapter (following) he says of the believer, "And I will raise him up at the last day." Yes, though sorrow and afflictions be ours here, our God has chosen his in the furnace of affliction, and came into this furnace himself, and suffered to save his own body therefrom, and, blessed be his holy name, nothing can hinder him. He came forth a triumphant conqueror over all the powers of darkness, and then declared that, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Then what have we to fear? Nothing while we are enabled to look upon and receive him in our hearts the hope of glory, but the scene changes sometimes, and instead of the strength, holiness and love of our dear Jesus, we have a look into our own sinful hearts, and are then constrained, as Paul, to say, "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing," and now wonder if it is true that Jesus, the holy Lamb of God, does really love such a sinner as I am, or am I mistaken in the whole matter? But how often, and in how many ways, we have reason to thank and bless him. He says, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you," and so he does, and how glorious his appearing. John said, "And his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength." Paul said, A light shone around me above the brightness of the sun. No mortal tongue or pen can describe his glory, or tell its magnitude or sweetness when he appears as the personal Savior of a poor sinner.

I wish you could be at Black Rock next Sunday, but hardly expect it this time of year. We are all up and around, but wife and I have both been almost sick with colds. I hope you are feeling well, and enjoying the presence of the Lord. Wife joins me in love to you. Write when you feel like it. Our respects to Mrs. Lamott and her father.

Your brother in hope,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

FORT WORTH, Texas, June, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have been asked by a dear brother to write for the SIGNS, and tell something of my experience. I am an aged woman of sixty-five years, and have been desiring to serve the Lord for forty years, but am one of the least, if one of his at all, still I have a hope, which is as an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, which cannot be taken away. When I was a child I once dreamed I was dead, and that I went to the place where the blessed Jesus is. I dreamed that I knocked at the gate where Jesus stood, and I saw his feet, and some one said that I did not belong there. There was a broad road close by, and I took that road, but did not go far until I came to a place with a high wall. I thought that I could see right into the place, and was horrified at what I saw. In that building people were in the midst of flames of fire, and I could not stay there, and in my dream I went back to the place where Jesus was, and knocked at the gate again, and it flew open and I went in, but I did not see the Lord, only the feet of the dear Redeemer. Then I awoke. What could my dream signify? It was long before I found Jesus precious to my soul. Now I will try to tell you what I have passed through. When I was made alive by the power of God I felt as though I ought to unite with the church, but I knew nothing of the true church of God, so I united with the Missionary Baptists, and was baptized, and it seemed for a time that all went

well with me. Of course I had dark times, but once in a while I could see light, but there were more dark days than light ones. I do desire to do right, but I do not, yet, bless his holy name, he has helped me thus far, and I know that if I am one of his chosen ones he will keep me to the time appointed for me to join the saints above. I lived with the Missionary Baptists until I could see that they were not what the Bible declared the church ought to be. I read the Bible and studied it as well as I could, and felt to pray to God, and to trust him to lead me in the right way. It has been about eight or nine years since I became dissatisfied. I no longer loved the people where I was, and did not feel at home there; it was no longer a home for me. I would not go to the meetings very often, and finally did not go at all. I was lonely in those days. One time I remember well, I never can forget it, one of the sisters came to my home and said that she wanted to pray in my house with me, if I did not object. I said, Yes, I do believe in prayer; so she prayed for me, that my eyes might be opened. That was the trouble with me; I could see a light in the valley, but it was far away from me then, but, thanks be to him who doeth all things well, he has made the light to shine all around me, and has led me home at last. I cannot tell you, dear brethren, the strange road in which I have been led; and where, dear brethren, do you think the dear Lord has at last led me? He has led me into the Old School Baptist Church, that church which is built by the Lord upon the Rock. This Rock is himself, and I know it is safe in him. I was baptized on Saturday before the third Sunday; it was a glorious day and a blessed hope. I am all alone now, no one is close to me of our faith. All may forsake me, but our God will not leave nor forsake his own. I trust that I do not really care about the world or its vain things, and hope that my mind is far above this vain world. Pray for me, that I may never dishonor my blessed Lord. Pray that I may honor his holy name all the remnant of my days. I am so weak, only a babe in Christ, if a child at all. O how I love the people of God, and I love to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and the good letters. Although I am a stranger in the flesh, I hope I am not a stranger in the Spirit. All the members of the church I have joined were strangers to me, but I think I shall love them all the same.

Will you forgive me and all my mistakes? for they are many. I know you will understand my feeble mind and body. I believe that God for Christ's sake will take care of me, and I feel ready and waiting for him to call me home. Let it be longer or shorter, it is long for me, for I desire to be free from all sin and to be like Jesus, and when I am called from the earth in the resurrection then I shall be perfect. What glory there will be then, when all sorrow, sickness and death shall flee away, and all will be peace and joy in the presence of the blessed Redeemer.

This is the first I have ever written for publication. I have subscribed for the SIGNS, and hope it will come in due time. May God bless you and your work, is the humble desire of your sister in Christ,

(MRS.) T. C. CLINGMAN.

HERNDON, Va., July 29, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am inclosing with this a letter I received from brother R. Scates, of Woodstock, Ontario. I have his consent to send it to you for publication in the SIGNS, but leave it

entirely to your better judgment. I seem to be past writing now, and seem to be getting worse and worse; all I can say or cry is, "God be merciful to me a sinner." I do not say it with my tongue, but it seems to come from the inward parts of my heart.

Your poor, weak brother, if one at all,
JOHN F. OLIVER.

WOODSTOCK, Ontario, June 4, 1911.

MR. JOHN F. OLIVER—DEAR BROTHER:—I will not say in Christ, for I cannot say in truth that I know such is the case; I hope so, but I can say brother in sin and sorrow, in doubt and fear and in all the tribulations and trials incident to our pilgrimage here below. Your letter of the 28th was received, and read with much satisfaction and comfort, for it seems misery likes company, and strange as it may seem, I love the company and love to hear from those who are sad, downcast, sinful, forlorn creatures, and who mourn over it, and often cry out in secret in anguish of heart over their miserable condition, and yet even as I write these lines there comes a feeling within, which says, You are only a hypocrite, and you better keep these thoughts to yourself and not parade them before others. Often do I think I will never talk or write again about my feelings or thoughts, but keep them all locked up in my own breast, but it seems I never can keep my resolutions, and the first thing I know I am either writing or talking about them, and then when I get a letter like yours I am made glad, and sorry, too; glad to read that there is another like me in experience, and sorry because I feel I am a deceiver. O if you only knew me as I know myself I know you could not love me and could not fellowship me, for I feel I am like the apostle describes the wicked: a child of the devil, an enemy of all righteousness, and yet after all the depths of evil and iniquity that seem to dwell in my nature there is a fight going on all the time, and though always fearing the old man of sin (the devil in me) will bring me into subjection, which he often does, in feeling at least, and sometimes, I am sorry to say, in fact, yet there is always way down in my heart a fighting against it, a warfare, a contention, a continual struggle for the mastery.

Brother Oliver, I cannot see why you feel so much interested in my letter to brother and sister Terry, for I only tell how I am worried and annoyed at the many, many wicked, evil imaginations of my own heart, and more than all when they break out and show openly, which to my shame and disgrace is often the case, so that I feel I never ought to show my face again before God's people. There were many things in your letter that made me feel we were fellow-pilgrims, yet I feel sure that if you knew me as I know myself, and as the all-seeing eye of God knows me, if there be a God at all, and I do not know that there is, only as he reveals himself to me, and I often fear he never has, but that it is all a delusion, yet I cry and try to pray, and why I do not give it all up I never can tell, but always there is the cry and the sigh, mourning because I cannot be better and do better, but instead nothing bettered, but rather a growing worse; O yes, I know I am worse, but as I was going to say, if you really knew me you must despise me as an outcast. I know my brethren and sisters in the church seem to love me, and even like my company, but it is because they do not know my wicked heart, and I am glad of it, yet I am glad God knows the very depths of iniquity within

me, because he can forgive, he can justify. O that is what I want, justification. If I am only pardoned, I am a sinner still, but if I am justified, it is as if I never had sinned. I know I will never have more than an earnest of that in this world, but will have to wait until this mortal shall have put on immortality in that life beyond this present state of existence. By mortal I do not mean my flesh, but my spirit, for you know the wise man said, The flesh, the dust, returns to the earth as it was, but the spirit to God who gave it. I know my nature is vile, wicked, corrupt and full of iniquity.

You write about your being a poor letter writer, and that you can only write in broken sentences and in mortification to the old man. Now I am only an ignorant man, as far as the learning of this world is concerned, and you know it is said of Peter and John that they were ignorant and unlearned men, but they had been with Jesus. O, if we have only been with Jesus and learned of him what is all the learning of the world compared with that? As good preaching as I ever heard was from one who could only just read the Bible, and could not write at all, but O how quickly the poor children of God learned that he had been with Jesus and could talk to them in the language in which they were born. I do not think the language or learning of the world qualifies one a whit more to talk on the things of the kingdom of God. It is true one must have a little knowledge of letters to write correctly, but how often much of that is just for a show in the flesh, and not to tell of what they have known and felt of the realities of that teaching which is not of this world, but which teaches away down in the depths of the heart, where no eye can see except the One who teaches. I think I can say truthfully, I love to hear one tell in broken sentences of how God has been merciful to him, rather than to hear one tell in scientific or educated manner the way God has been revealed to him.

You wonder why you are led to write to those you think tell your feelings, and so do I, and often think I will never write again, but you know the Savior said men do not light a candle to put it under a bushel, and so when God puts light into a man's soul he must show it just as he purposes he should. You wrote that what I said about being afraid religion was all a delusion met your feelings exactly, and I was glad of that, for I do feel so alone in that respect that I can say with the poet, O is there any one like me? but I read that God called Abraham alone. O think of him alone in the world, a wanderer without a home all his life long. Do you not think he must have felt very lonely many times? I do. It is said that he went out, not knowing whither he went, and does not that set forth our travels in this sinful world? We know not where we are going, often thinking and feeling we are surely going to ruin or destruction, and, like Job, that we are only saved with the skin of our teeth, so close, so narrow, seems our escape, but we must remember that the Lord leads his people into darkness. They do not go there of their own accord, or will, but he leads them there. One thing we always forget when in the dark, and that is, that the darkness and the light are both alike to the Lord. I think I know what it means to be brought to the ends of the earth, every atom of human strength gone. The psalmist well describes the case of one at the end of the earth, when he says the Lord will hear the prayer of the destitute, and not

despise their prayer, but it is a terrible condition to be in, to be destitute. I do not know of another word in our language that better describes the state or condition of one who is daily led into, and to see, the vileness of his own heart.

You speak of receiving your letter as trash. Well, I suppose that is what the world would call it, but to me it was food and strength, and I hope I felt it as the experience which I have felt and known for many years, and which I hope is the experience God teaches his children, but it is only hope, and ofttimes faint at that, but though so faint and feeble, the Lord said by the prophet that the smoking flax he would not quench, and so with me it all seems smoke, no fire, but smoke proceeds from fire, and is an evidence that there is fire.

I would like to send your letter to the SIGNS, and maybe will, the only objection is your remarks about myself. I should be glad to have you write your experience in full to me, both before and since you were made to follow the Savior in the ordinance of baptism. I have been a member of the church for about thirty-six years, and had a hope in Christ nine or ten years before that. I am now in my sixty-sixth year, and can say with old Jacob, Few and evil have been the days of my pilgrimage, and as I look over the past there is not one good act that I have done in all my life, all a desert of sin; but the prophet says, The desert shall blossom as the rose, and so I hope my poor, desolate heart will some time be made to rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Now I will conclude by thanking you very much for your kind, loving and comforting letter, and hoping to hear from you again. I know I have written a poor return for your letter, and would write better if I could, but have no power or ability. O if I only had a good hope through grace, if I could only rejoice in hope of the glory of God, if I could only look forward with hope to a life with Jesus beyond the grave, and say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" how glad I would be, but I fear death, and suffer bondage from that fear; O to be delivered from it. My wife thought your letter good, and now I can only say, Please excuse this hastily, poorly written reply, and excuse all you see amiss in it.

From your poor, unworthy brother, if one at all, R. SCATES.

WALKER, Oregon, July 21, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It seems presumptuous for such a weakling to try to write to edify the saints of the most high God, who says, If any man lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not. I have for some weeks tried to resist an impression to write a few thoughts, suggested by brother Brees in July 1st SIGNS, concerning the will of God. If God has two or more conflicting wills, I have not been able to trace them in divine writ, neither do I believe my mind has been directed to see two various wills exercised by Jehovah; he is without variableness. We are taught to pray, "Thy will be done," and I well remember a time in my life that the sweetest words I ever expressed were, "Thy will be done." I had passed through years of anguish of soul and deep mourning for sin, I had been weighed in the balance and found wanting, mountains and years of sin, with vile oaths and bitter cursing, had been brought to mind; I seemed to stand before the judgment-seat of the most

holy God, justly condemned to the worst and longest sentence prescribed in his righteous law, but when the justice was fully made apparent, and I saw by divine light, as I hope, that all of his works shall praise him, that he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, then I could bow my head in joyful submission, and say with the sweetest sensation of my whole life, "Thy will be done," realizing that every star of the great heavenly host, every unfolding flower, every blade of grass, all life, from all the powers that be to the insect so minute that our finite minds have no conception of either its size or number, and that even the hairs of our heads are all in perfect submission to his unbounded will, when I could see him high and lifted up and that his train filled the temple, then I could meet every temptation with the sweet submission, "Thy will be done." For some months I could sing with David, "Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; thou understandeth my thought afar off. * * * For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain to it." "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. * * * The darkness and the light are both alike to thee." Yes, these sweet words, "Thy will be done," quieted every troubled wave, and not a wave of trouble rolled across my peaceful breast. Well might we poor, finite creatures trust implicitly in his immutable will for our salvation, both for time and eternity, in this low land of sorrow, where we are as prone to sin as the sparks are to fly upward, and while we have a heart that is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, where we cannot think a good thought, except by the merciful will of him who doeth all things well.

I have heard something about the decretive and some other kinds of will of God, but not from his revealed word to man. If he has a will that is not accomplished in all its details then I fear for the ultimate accomplishment of any of his pleasures, so I feel sure that being the works of his own hands, even from the depths of hell his creatures were as Pharaoh: "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." Naturally reasoning we would say that evil originated from some will excepting that of the most high and holy God, but he says, "I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel [will] shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." I believe God's will is supreme. Nebuchadnezzar concluded God needed the use of his great will, no doubt, but he learned to stand still and know the Lord is God (See Daniel iv. 35), and acknowledge, "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" "And those who walk in pride he is able to abase." Prov. xvi. 4: "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." "God

moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." "The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." God made his will known to Joseph in a dream, and it was accomplished in the wicked deeds of his brethren in their intended murder, and deceit to their father. This was according to God's will, and accomplished his purpose; not that God sinned, it is the potter's perfect right to make of the same lump one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor, and shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Man's will is as prone to evil as the sparks to fly upward. It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. Joseph's brethren meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." See Jeremiah xlv. 6, 7: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that I am God, and there is none else, that there is no God beside me (that they need not look past him to Satan, or anywhere else, for the cause of darkness or evil). "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things." We could not praise God for the beautiful dawning of the day if he had not created the darkness for the day to dawn from, neither could we praise our Redeemer for salvation and the hope of glory if there were no evil to be saved from; so, as he said of Pharaoh, he has created both darkness and evil that he might make his power known, and that his name might be declared (praised) for the beauty of holiness. The natural man, who receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, at once says, "Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath [can] resisted his will?" and Paul answers, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Paul, and also Isaiah, calls to mind the potter's power to make vessels of the same lump either to honor or dishonor. Again, man reasons, If where sin abounds, grace much more abounds, why not continue in sin, that we may have abundance of grace? But Paul says, "God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" again making it apparent that if there were no sin there would be no occasion for grace, God's free mercy to his sin-cursed creatures. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?" May we ever pray, "Thy will be done," and that he lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for his is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen. May we ever praise his holy name for the unspeakable love that we poor creatures of the dust should be called the sons of God, and that we might have that sweet faith to hope to see him as he is, and that he will grant the great desire that pervades the heart of every heaven-born child, that we should be like him in meekness, humility, love, long-suffering, &c., according to the good pleasure of his will. Finally, let us remember that when Jesus was in deep anguish of soul, pressed down as a cart under many sheaves, for the sins of his people, he

could yet meekly say, "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done."

Your very unworthy brother,

G. O. WALKER.

[WE are not surprised that the suggestions and questions of brother Brees, while all in good feeling and in good faith upon his part, have caused uneasiness in the minds of some of our readers. The will of God, like his predestination, is absolute, entire, full, complete, immutable. Hence neither men nor angels can find a dividing line. He doeth his will, not wills, in the army of heaven (all elect vessels of mercy) and among the inhabitants of the earth (nonelect, ungodly men and devils), and none can stay his hand, or say, What doest thou? Now that several good and kind brethren have written in answer to brother Brees, giving their views on each side of the question, we hope that he will feel satisfied, and lest controversy should occur on the subject we think it wise to close the matter with the above good letter from brother Walker.—K.]

NYACK, N. Y., July 30, 1911.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I want to write you a few lines, just to let you know that your editorial in the SIGNS for July 15th was a comfort to me. The text used was Psalms iii. 8: "Salvation belongeth unto the Lord." I believe that I have enjoyed many of your editorials, but this one has impressed me to write to you now. I am sure that I know by sad experience that men are saved not only out of the depths, but also from falling into the depths. My experience began in early childhood, if not deceived. One text has been brought to my mind many times: "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth." Yes, I think it is as much salvation when men are kept from the sorrows of the way as when they are delivered from sinking under them. Verse ten, in second Corinthians, seventh chapter, was with me many times, causing me many anxious hours: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." You say, "The truth that salvation is of the Lord, is a smooth stone which will smite to death every Goliath of Arminianism, no matter under what guise it may appear." Yes, indeed, but I realize that I cannot wield this truth, for much of the time it seems to be in desire only, yet hope has kept me from sinking into despair. Then I want to be sure that the hope I have is that given me by the Holy Spirit. Unless begotten by divine power, it will not support my soul in the hour of death. I want to be rooted and grounded in the truth, to know more of the witness within, to rejoice more in hope which can never be destroyed and to have a full assurance of the mercy of God to me, who am so often forgetful of the many mercies granted me. Over and over again I have to be reminded that this world is not my resting-place. I need stronger faith to credit all the promises given me, yet I dare not say that I have no hope, for He that hath kept me hitherto will keep me all my journey through. I seem to be a contradiction to myself most of the time.

Elder Coulter preached for us last Sunday. The morning text was Proverbs xvi. 33: "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." Then it must be right altogether. Truly the flesh dislikes the way, but faith approves it well. "As thy days, so shall thy strength be," has just come to my mind, so I will try to trust where I cannot trace.

I had a new experience this spring, which I will try to tell you of. Last winter I was very nervous, as I had bronchitis, and when spring came I had to move to another house, yet could not tell where to go, as rooms were scarce and rents high. These words came to my mind several times for several days: "Go near, and join thyself to his chariot." I did not remember where they were recorded, nor could I see what they had to do with finding rooms to live in, yet the words seemed to be uppermost in my mind. At last there was an upper room to let, and as it was in need of cleaning, a colored woman came to help me. At noontime I had one of the Minutes of the association on the table, which I showed to her. I asked her if she had ever heard of the Old School Baptists. She replied, Yes, in North Carolina, where she had lived with her mother. She said they had lived near Elder Sylvester Hassell's church, where her mother was baptized by his father over fifty years ago. She told of several ministers whom they had heard at several different associations. I gave her some numbers of the SIGNS to read to her mother, who seemed pleased to meet me. She spoke of having heard you and others. I found that she has a christian experience, and has been hoping to meet some of her kindred in the church in the north for more than fifteen years. Some one had told her of an Old School Baptist meetinghouse in New York city, but she could not find it, as the building on Thirty-sixth Street had been torn down while they lived in Brooklyn. When she heard of the association meeting in the Bronx, in June, she was very anxious to go with her daughter, who is over sixty years of age, while she is past seventy-five. They did go on June 9th, and returned home at night. They often speak of their pleasure in meeting so many of the friends. They had hoped to meet Elder Roberson, who has died since. They knew him and Elders Gold, Lester, Rowe, and yourself also. They are very poor, having the care of several grandchildren during the summer when the children have vacation from schools in Brooklyn. I felt that this whole circumstance was providential. It all seemed wonderful to my mind, but I could not see how I could join myself to the chariot. But the Spirit told Philip to join himself to the chariot of the eunuch, whom Philip heard reading in the prophet Esaias. Well, I could not feel that I was in any way equal to Philip, and it has humbled me to feel that I have been made of any comfort to one of the Lord's children. Here two of them know the truth, know the gospel's joyful sound. The mother cannot read or write, but she told me that she believed in a revealed religion. What a great mercy that the truth is revealed to babes, but hidden from the wise and prudent; that is, such as are so in their own eyes. I have had some happy moments visiting them since April. Do you not think that it was providential that I met them under such circumstances? Does it not seem wonderful that they should be living in the north fifteen years, and though anxious to meet some one belonging to the church of Christ, they must wait so long a time?

"Wait, O my soul, thy Maker's will,
Tumultuous passions, all be still,
Nor let a murmuring thought arise,
His ways are just, his counsels wise."

I would be pleased for you to write me a letter, if you feel so disposed. Remember me to your family. I am glad that sister Chick is improved in health.

With love and fellowship,

MARTHA A. HOWARTH.

PLANT CITY, Fla., April 28, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am yet spared through mercy, and remember that my remittance is due. I have been waiting, hoping I would be able to write a few lines, to let all who know me hear how I am getting along. I have been afflicted for eleven months with dropsy, so that I have not been able to visit the churches in all that time, but the Lord sent an able and faithful minister from Princeton, Ky., who has kept up the appointments until now, but he has gone back to his home, so he will not be able to be with us any more until September, when he expects to return and make this his home. His mind appears to be with us. His name is C. K. Haines, and surely he is a God-called minister. The seven little churches appear to be getting along in peace, but with very few additions since we were delivered from conditionalism. O how I love the doctrine of election and absolute predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass, yet so as thereby God is neither the author of sin, nor hath fellowship with any therein. People sin willingly, because sin is their element. David confessed that he was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did his mother conceive him. So we are all sinners, lost sinners, until we are changed by grace, and then we are saved sinners. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, and is made manifest to us in time. In him have we also obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. God works all things for the good of his people, and to his glory and honor.

But I must stop here. I am improving in health, and hope that I will soon be able to meet with some of the little flock again. I love the SIGNS, because it contends for the doctrine of the Bible as I understand it. Please excuse this letter, and do with it as you think best, and all will be right with me.

Your unworthy servant,

J. W. FUTCH.

[WE trust that our brother's health may soon be restored, and he be permitted to again proclaim the gospel among the people he loves.—C.]

BURDETT, N. Y., Dec. 3, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—As it is time I should renew my subscription for the SIGNS, I will write a few lines to confess my unworthiness to receive such a good paper, with such knowledge of the life of the Son of God and the heavenly food it contains to the flock. As we have meeting only once a month, it is the only company and gospel I have three Sundays in each month, and as we do not have regular preaching through the winter months, I enjoy the many sermons in the SIGNS, which are according to the word of God. The servants of God are prepared to write as they do, and to feed the hungry. I believe that God will ever have some one to feed the lambs and strengthen the feeble knees, and lead the blind, and will keep all by his power, and we will all be made willing to submit to his will.

Your brother, I hope,

NORMAN BROWN.

HARRISONVILLE, Pa., Dec. 21, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find post-office order for two dollars, for which send me the SIGNS another year. I do not feel like doing without it, for it contains such good reading. I hope you may be long spared to publish such a medium of correspondence, as it contains such precious food for God's dear children. May it be as profitable the coming year as in years past.

Your unworthy brother in a precious hope, AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1911.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

INCARNATION OF CHRIST.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—Did our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Son of man, ever appear on earth in human form before he was born of the virgin Mary? INQUIRER.

The question proposed by "Inquirer" is certainly worthy of notice. To us there seems to be involved in it the most important and sacred mysteries of our religion. The question has been propounded many times before, and we have for many years thought much about it. It has been contended by some very able writers that all the visits of angels to men under the former dispensation were manifestations of the Lord Jesus Christ in human form. Many of those writers seem to have been spiritual men also, and we have been disposed to give full weight to their thoughts and arguments because of this last fact, yet at the same time there have always been weighty arguments in our mind against this position. It has seemed to us that the Scriptures do not sustain it, therefore in reply to the above question we feel constrained to say that it is not our understanding of the Scriptures that they teach any such conclusion, and it is our mind to present here some reflections which have weight in our own mind against this conclusion.

First. It is nowhere said in the word that any of the appearances of heavenly visitants to the fathers under the old covenant were manifestations of the blessed Savior. It is often said that the angel of the Lord appeared unto men upon various occasions, and for various reasons, with messages of warning or of comfort to them, but these appearances were never said to be the Son of God, or even the Son of man. Sometimes these messengers were called "men," or "a man." We have no doubt that in all such cases they were visitants from heaven, and that they took the form of men that they might appear to human gaze, and talk with men. An agel appeared to Hagar in her distress. (Gen. xvi.) There came two angels to Sodom, whom Lot saw. (Gen. xix.) In numbers xxii. 31, it is recorded that Balaam saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way. An angel of the Lord appeared unto Gideon. (Judges vi. 11.) An angel appeared unto Manoah and his wife. (Judges xiii.) An angel of the Lord appeared unto David, by the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. (2 Sam. xxiv.) In the fifth chapter of Joshua it is recorded that a man stood over against Joshua, who declared that he was the captain of the Lord's hosts. In Genesis xviii. it is recorded that three men stood by Abraham and gave him messages from the Lord. And a man wrestled with Jacob all night to the breaking of the day. (Gen. xxxii. 24.)

Second. Let us notice that in all these records of appearances of heavenly visitants to men it is not once said that this was the Son of God, or even the Son of man, but these are the names given to and belonging to our blessed Savior in his incarnation. It will not do to assume what is not specifically said in the word, unless in some other way we shall be shut

up to this conclusion. Again, we must notice that in one of these recorded narratives there are two men who are said to appear, and in another instance three men. If one of them was the dear Redeemer, who were the others? By what right do we claim that one was an appearance of the Son of man, while the others were not? The records of the Old Testament are full of narratives of the appearances of angels, and, many times, multitudes at once. These all could not have been manifestations of the Lord Jesus Christ in person as the Son of man and the Son of God. But if all these were not such manifestations of the Lord, why claim that the special recorded instances which we have before enumerated were such manifestations?

Third. The Scriptures nowhere speak of the Messiah coming in the likeness of flesh more than once. All prophecy declared his coming at some future time, future we mean as regards the time when the prophecies were written or spoken. Time and space would fail to quote all the Scriptures of the Old Testament which testify of the Savior that he was to come. Not one of them speaks of Jesus as having come in any sense of the word. It seems incredible that we should find no reference in all the Old Testament Scriptures to any coming of the blessed Lord which had taken place before, if indeed these all were appearances of the blessed Redeemer. All the prophecies concerning the Messiah speak of him as the one that should afterward come, and in the New Testament it is declared again and again that his birth of the virgin Mary was the fulfillment of all prophecy concerning his coming in the flesh, and we find in the New Testament no reference to his having come in the flesh before this one coming.

Fourth. Concerning all the appearances of angels, or of men, to different persons in the Old Testament narratives there is no record that they had been born in the world of woman, or that they had grown up from childhood to manhood, or that they remained on earth any longer than their mission was accomplished or their messages delivered. They are not spoken of as enduring suffering, reproach or shame, as having become a sacrifice, or even as having died as men die. They were messengers from God, sent to this world in some way known to God, but not revealed to men, to declare certain things, and then to disappear from the eyes of men as though they had never been seen. But when Jesus should appear it was declared that he should be born of a virgin, that he should grow in wisdom and stature, that he should suffer shame, spitting and contempt, that he should be betrayed into the hands of men, that he should suffer death for the sins of his people, that he should rise again from the dead and ascend on high, and that he should there ever live to make intercession for all his redeemed people. None of these things did any of the angels or men that appeared in the former time to certain men. Still further, it is expressly declared that he once, now in the end of the world, hath appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. The text declares that he has appeared once, and that, in the end of the world, he had not appeared before to men. We also read that it was in the fullness of time that God sent forth his Son (Gal. iv. 4), and it was at this time, and this time only, that God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

Fifth. It is not here denied that by the Holy Spirit Jesus does now come to men, as he said he would, comforting and strengthening them, but who supposes that he now appears to any one as he appeared to his chosen witnesses in the days of his flesh, and after his resurrection from the dead? Some had seen the blessed Lord in the flesh before his crucifixion and after his resurrection, but Peter speaks of some who had not seen him and who yet loved him: "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Many times many who believe have testified that they have seen the blessed Lord, as it were, in a vision, hanging upon the cross and looking upon them in love and pity, and speaking peace to their hearts, but none of them mean by these words that Jesus was then actually hanging upon the cross, or that they saw him really in the flesh. So the blessed Lord has been revealed to men of faith ever since the day of Abel, who saw the day of the Lord, and testified to his faith by his offering. But then, even as now, men did not behold the Lord with natural vision, as the disciples did while they accompanied him in his ministry and his journeyings during the three years before he was crucified. This spiritual vision by faith of the blessed Redeemer does not imply that the blessed Master is now incarnate; in fact, the faith of all who believe embraces a Savior that has come and that is no longer on earth in the flesh. So men under the old covenant believed in a Savior that was yet to come in the flesh, and by faith many, like Abraham, saw his day and were glad.

Sixth. Another difference ought to be noticed between the former appearances of messengers from the Lord to now and then some one man, and the coming of the dear Redeemer once in the flesh. It is this, that these messengers did not appear to all the people of God, but to now and then one. Our blessed Master in the days of his flesh mingled with all classes and conditions of men, being tried in all things as his people are, but none of these things accompanied the appearances of these messengers from God under the old covenant. In short, to sum the whole matter up, there is no similarity in any way between the former appearances of those men or angels and the coming and power of the blessed Redeemer.

We now feel to leave these suggestions with "Inquirer," and with our readers. Let us ever keep in mind that Jesus was manifested once in these last times, and that God was manifest in the flesh only while Jesus dwelt on earth, from his birth of the virgin to his ascension to glory. Here, and here only, is our hope and our salvation. C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

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We are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

ROMANS XIV. 19.

"LET us therefore follow after the things that make for peace."

Peace belongs to the gospel. The Savior said to his disciples, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you," and often are the children of God, to whom this peace is given, charged to be at peace among themselves. There is no other way than this by which to make manifest to others that the peace of God is within us. If God has brought us into peace with himself, it is sure that the spirit of peace, and not of strife, will reign in our hearts toward others. As love to God and love to the neighbor cannot be separated, so peace with God and peace one with another cannot be disjoined. But as the flesh and the Spirit are at warfare with regard to the reign of love in word and deed, so also are they at war one with another as regards this peace. Hence inspired apostles, led by the Spirit of God, found it needful to exhort the children of God to follow the things that make for peace, to follow peace with all men, and to let the peace of God rule in them. There is no need surely that we should here insist upon the reasons for the inward warfare between the flesh and the Spirit; all our brethren know that by reason of this warfare they cannot do the things that they would, therefore, though the Son of Peace be with them, there is still need of warning and exhortation against that which is of the flesh. According to the words of the text with which we have begun these reflections, there is a difference between saying, Follow peace, and, Follow the things which make for peace, still, after all, these two things cannot be disjoined. If one is to attain to peace, there must be a striving for the things which lead to this peace. Many desire peace, who yet do not attain to it in the sense of the text, by reason that they are not following the things which tend toward peace. If we ask, What are the things that make for peace and edification? it is sufficient to say, Read the fourteenth and fifteenth chapters of Romans; loving the neighbor, and working no ill to him, walking honestly and not in rioting or drunkenness, putting on Christ, forbearing one with another in regard to meats and drinks and ceremonies, not living to our ownself, not judging our brother, and other things are named in these two chapters. All these make for peace, according to the apostle. There always has been more or less of strife among the people of God, arising out of the flesh. If there be strife, it does not always follow that there is blame upon both sides, though often it is so. If one arises and wages war against the truth, he who defends that truth is not a maker of strife therefore. He may indeed become fleshly in his defense of the truth, but it is not waging war or failing to follow the things that make for peace when he earnestly contends against the error and for the truth. In fact, to contend for the truth is to follow the things that make for peace. It has been our mind for a long time that one is not following that which leads to peace when he allows all sorts of error to come in, making no protest, in order to avoid contention. In this way, in order to have a temporary quiet, the door is opened to let in all the element of discord, for where error thrives, there dissolution begins its work. There can be no peace when error and truth come face to face. Still further, where there are differences it will not do to say there is no difference, rather, let the difference be fully known. Neither will it do to compromise and say we each

will yield a little of what we believe, and so stand upon common ground. Doing this, each one subscribes to what, after all, he does not believe. God forbid that any of us should do this. Mere exhortations to be at peace with each other will not avail anything; in fact, it has been our observation, often at least, that where one insists upon peace, he means that the rest shall come over to him, and has no thought of yielding anything upon his own part. The things that make for peace are right living and right doctrine, with patience and meekness manifested in what we say and do. C.

JOHN V. 39.

"SEARCH the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."

The narrative in which the above words are found is very interesting and of great importance. Those addressed by the Savior had the Scriptures, and believed in them as God's word and promises, and were very jealous for their honor, and anything that seemed to reflect upon them or in any sense detract from the honor and glory of God excited them to murderous anger; hence the statement of Jesus that he, the lowly Nazarene, the carpenter, the brother of James and others, was verily the Son of God and equal with the Father, excited them to hatred and evil designs against him. Many of us no doubt in years past accused this class of people with inexcusable wickedness in their denial and persecution of Jesus, feeling that because of his holy character and faultless life they should have had no ill-feeling against him, and because of his wonderful power made manifest in miracles they should have believed him to be the Christ. But had any of us who have had such feeling toward the Jews lived in those days would it, without special revelation from God, been different with us from what it was with them? Let us see by putting ourselves in their places, having the old Scriptures and all things of that covenant, including the blessed promise of the coming of the Messiah, and a young man of our own nationality, born and reared in our midst, who had been one in common with us, working at his trade, that of a carpenter, should at the age of thirty years begin a ministry of preaching, healing the sick, even raising the dead, but strangest of all declaring himself to be the Son of God, think you that we would have believed him? We answer, Nay, but on the contrary would have been excited to the same extent of anger and rage against him. Then why criticise the Jews for not believing in Jesus? and why find fault with men now for their denial of him as the Son of God, since neither Jews nor men of to-day can believe without special revelation from God? His own declaration of himself did not make men believe in him; his miracles did not work belief in men, except one now and then to whom it was by faith given. How clearly this demonstrates that, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."

The Jews had for centuries been looking for the coming of Christ, and the Scriptures testified of his works when he should come: "Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing."—Isaiah xxxv. 5, 6. Those very works, which no other man ever did, were being wrought in their very sight, yet men believed not and disputed all Jesus did and said as being the work of the promised Messiah. On this special occasion Jesus told them to

search the Scriptures, for in them they thought they had eternal life; not only that they thought that being the seed of Abraham and keepers of the law they should inherit eternal life, but that the Scriptures being the word of God, were infallible, and their faith in them so complete that they would live and die by them. John bare record of me, said Jesus, but I receive not testimony from man, notwithstanding his testimony is true. What is the testimony of man when compared with the testimony of the Father? "The Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me." Yes, in the Scriptures God, not man, had testified of the coming of Christ and his works. Again at the baptism of Jesus the Father testified of him, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Then again at the transfiguration the Father's testimony was, "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him."

Again, Jesus said, "The works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me." Now, he would say, you believe in God, you believe the Scriptures to be his word; then search the Scriptures, and see if they do not testify of me, describing the works I do. When he said, "And they are they which testify of me," he made no exception whatever, and leaving the Jews and the command to them to search the Scriptures, we shall try to bring the matter nearer home by suggesting the importance of searching the Scriptures ourselves. We now have the New Testament, which as completely testifies of Jesus as does the Old, and the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. The Old Testament testified that he should come and what he should do; the New Testament testifies that he did come and of the works he did. How peculiarly wonderful it is, when our eyes are opened and our hearts prepared to understand, to see that none save Christ, the everlasting Father, the eternal Godhead, is embraced in the testimony of the Scriptures. It is true that thousands of men and women and innumerable things and events are mentioned in the Scriptures, but they only fill their respective places in the testimony of Jesus. The world itself is but a testimony of Christ; the writer of Hebrews tells us that, "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." The world is in very evidence, but some men affirm that evolution brought about all things that now exist. But the testimony of Christ is, "The worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." Hence the idea of the scientist, that one thing has begotten another until now we mortals, together with the world and all things therein exist, is forever blasted, since the worlds were framed by the word of God. Yes, made of nothing, and where no beginning is there can be no such thing as evolution. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork." The garden of Eden, with its trees and fruits, is often referred to with admiration and wonder; there in the midst was the tree of life, and also the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; life in the one and death, in a sense, in the other. It is right to admire the garden and all things that were therein, but it is more infinitely right to admire their Creator and his purpose in them; they testified of Christ. Then coming to the sacrifice of Abel, how

good it seems to poor sinners that Abel should have offered the lamb and have had witness that he was righteous; yet this was not the design of the offering, but a testimony of Jesus, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. After this we sometimes think how blessed Enoch was that he walked with God and was translated that he should not see death. Yes, blessed indeed was he, but his faith and translation were not for the express comfort and benefit of himself, but testified of Jesus, since faith is a fruit of the Spirit, and no man cometh unto the Father except by the Son. Many of the Lord's people often read, write and preach about Noah and the ark—how wonderful it was that he should build an ark that he and his family be saved; wonderful indeed, but God in his eternal purpose designed the testimony of Jesus in it all, showing the judgment of the world because of sin and salvation because of election. Then, on the other hand, many of us think and speak of the wickedness of Joseph's brethren in selling him to be a slave, as they thought, when he had done them no wrong. It was not the wickedness of his brethren that God had in view, only as a link in the chain, but that Joseph, his life, sufferings, love and compassion should testify of Jesus. Then we sometimes look upon the visit of the destroying angel throughout the land of Egypt with almost a feeling of horror that in every house of the Egyptians was a dead body on the one day, but the Lord did not design that his people should be distressed nor horrified at the dreadful spectacle, but looking away from that to behold the testimony of Jesus in the salvation of all his people through the blood of the lamb slain for each house. "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." The law, the ark of the covenant, the priesthood and the offerings all testified of Jesus, showing forth, pointing to the Lamb of God. Then coming to great and notable Bible characters, such as Job, David, Solomon, &c., let us ever remember the words of Jesus regarding the Scriptures: "And they are they which testify of me." Of Job it is said he was a perfect man, feared God and eschewed evil. While it is pleasant to think such a man lived in those days, was not the life of the man a testimony of Jesus? How could he be perfect without the life of Christ? How could he fear God without wisdom? How could he eschew evil except he were righteous? How could he exclaim, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," except by the Spirit of Christ which was in all the prophets? Therefore instead of looking upon Job and preaching Job, let us look upon Jesus and preach him who made Job what he was. In following the Scriptures along this line we have come to the Psalms, and in the very first one there is a blessed man spoken of: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night, and he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." In tracing the different characters of the Old Testament not one is to be found answering this description. Where then shall we find the man? This is another testimony of Jesus, as he is the only man who ever lived answering the description. Every Psalm testifies of him, but there are a few special ones we desire to call atten-

tion to before leaving the subject. In Psalms xxii. the following record is found: "They pierced my hands and my feet. * * * They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." Did David ever experience such treatment and torture at the hands of men? Certainly not. This therefore is a testimony of Jesus. Then, in God's arrangement, the twenty-third Psalm fills its place as further testimony of Jesus when he said, through David, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." The whole Psalm testifies of Jesus and his faith, as a man, in God, and of his deliverance from his enemies and death. In Psalms xxxvii. we find another wonderful character presented: "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace." This, too, testifies of Jesus, who was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, whose end (death) was peace—reconciliation; yes, peace between God and the transgressor. Is not the testimony of Jesus the most comforting and blessed of all testimony? Surely all answer, Yes. Then why not lose sight of the patriarchs, prophets and apostles and preach Christ and him crucified? This Philip did when sent to the eunuch, who did not understand whether the prophet spake of himself or of some other man, but Philip knew, and began at the same Scripture and preached unto him Jesus.

When we read in the one hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm the words: "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made," we should not think of David as though he spoke with reference to himself, but think of Christ made of a woman, and made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. As man he was without father, and as God without mother, curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth; yes, in that degraded and despised country, Nazareth. But his substance was not hid from God, yet being unperfect (undeveloped), and all his members (elect vessels) were written in God's book of life, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. Paul exhorted Timothy to study to show himself approved unto God, "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Such study is necessary to-day for us all, and in such study of the Scriptures we shall find, if we be the children of God, that the words of Jesus are absolutely true: "And they are they which testify of me." K.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder C. C. Purvines was born Oct. 26th, 1833, near Pleasant Plains, in Sangamon Co., Ill., and was married to Martha E. Irwin, Nov. 22nd, 1855. Nine children were born to them, five boys and four girls, seven of whom are still living. Charles R. is married and lives in Crawford Co., Mo.; Lola J. married D. W. Colburn, and lives in Loami, Ill.; Azro A., Lillie J. and Carrie M. have gone to rest; Church G., Lute C., Wm. H. and Lottie A. are still at home with the mother, in Loami, Ill. The Elder passed away June 20th, 1911, at 1 o'clock p. m. A few moments before his death he told the family that he was going on a long journey, and they need not worry about him, as he would be at rest. He joined the Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Church at Richland, in 1867, and was baptized by Elder Charles Alsbury. He was ordained a minister of the gospel at Liberty Church, in Sangamon Co., Ill., in July, 1872. Elder Purvines was a minister of the old type; he believed in the doctrine of the Bible as advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. As a fireside preacher he was far above the ordinary. His whole soul seemed to be in his religion, and it was his chief topic of conversation. He spent much time reading and studying the Scriptures. He never traveled far from home, but rode or drove a great many miles, preaching for churches in central Illinois. Elder Purvines' conversion marked an epoch in his life. His neighbors and friends all said of him that he was truly a changed man; he changed as suddenly from his former practices as did Saul of Tarsus.

His funeral was held in Loami, Elders John L. Scott and John A. Conlee officiating at the services. He was buried in the Sulphur Springs Cemetery, near Loami, Ill.

Mrs. Martha Anderson died at her home, near Markham, Fauquier Co., Va., July 19th, 1911, aged 67 years, after a lingering illness, caused by a complication of serious disorders. Left a widow by the death of her husband in the war between the States, with three little children to provide and care for, her life had been one of trial and suffering. She had two daughters, both of whom were married and with their husbands died in early life, one of them leaving a daughter, the last of her immediate family, who survives her grandmother, and who, left an orphan in infancy, was reared by sister Anderson. The only son lived to be a help and companion to his mother until perhaps middle life, when after many years of weary, wasting disease he was also taken, leaving his mother in her desolate home with her granddaughter as her sole companion. This child writes me in a brief note: "I have indeed lost my best friend on earth. She was such a great sufferer that I was reconciled when all was over. If there ever was a thoroughly good and unselfish woman it was she." It was my privilege to baptize sister Anderson in the fellowship of Ebenezer Church soon after I came to Virginia. I have no record of her early experience, nor the date of her baptism. No one among us was more dearly loved or more highly esteemed for the truth's sake by her brethren and all who knew her. She lived twenty-five miles from the place of meeting of the church, but up to the time of declining health, and even then, when at all practicable, she filled her place in those meetings. She certainly loved the assembly of the saints. With a meek and quiet spirit, that precious adornment, a rich experience in the abounding grace of God, which teaches as man cannot teach, faithful to her privileges and obligations in the church, sanctified and purified in spirit by her afflictions, which caused the pure gold of God's grace to shine more and more as the end drew near, it seems to me, who knew her well and loved her dearly, that she went down to her grave like a shock of corn fully ripe for the harvest. Surely this seal was in her forehead.

I have sketched this character as the brethren see it in those of like precious faith; as she, and all like her, look upon themselves as altogether black and uncomely, black as the tents of Kedar to themselves, but comely as the curtains of Solomon to the brethren. So another of our little band is gathered home. May God bless the lonely child, and may all who mourn find comfort in his love.

ALSO,

Mrs. Mary Thompson, beloved wife of John Thompson, died at her home in Hamilton, Loudoun Co., Va., Jan. 17th, 1911. I do not know her age, but she was in advanced life. She was twice married, first to Mr. L. C. Maffitt, by whom she had four children. Over twenty-five years ago I married her to Mr. Thompson, by whom she became the mother of three girls. It was my privilege to baptize sister Thompson more than thirty years ago in the fellowship of Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church. She was naturally an amiable and lovable character, endearing herself to family and friends by a sweet disposition, and by gentle, quiet manners. Grace sanctified these qualities, so she walked among us an example of christian loveliness, for she possessed a meek and humble spirit, which is so winning in those who manifest the example of the Master. The latter part of sister Thompson's life was spent in sickness and suffering, so she was frequently hindered from attending the meetings of the church, but she bore her afflictions in quiet, uncomplaining resignation to the divine will. She loved the truth and those who loved the truth, and seemed satisfied abundantly with the goodness of God's house. I hope I may be pardoned a personal reflection here. The longer I live the more I bless God for the sweet and powerful influence of the noble, self-sacrificing women he has given his church as mothers in Israel indeed, whose gentle ministrations are like that of the angels, both in the home and in the church. Mr. Thompson is bereft of a faithful companion, and the children of a devoted mother. May God comfort them that mourn. J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va.

Lucy Ann Crawford, daughter of James and Mahala Dollison, was born near Roseville, Muskingum Co., Ohio, March 18th, 1838. Her early life was spent in that vicinity. She was married to William Edwin Davis, in October, 1856. To that union were born three daughters and one son. She was left a widow, and in 1863 was married to John Crawford, of Hocking County. To them were born three children. In 1884 Mr. Crawford died. Over forty years she spent in Logan. In early life she joined the Old School Baptist Church, but there being no church of that denomination near enough to attend, she joined the First Presbyterians about eighteen years ago, and was a member with them at the time of her death. She was a reader of the SIGNS, and could not indorse the means system, although a member with them. She was gifted in speaking and singing, and in writing poetry. Her death was caused by paralysis. Five daughters are still living, the two sons having preceded her beyond. One brother, Dr. G. W. Dollison, of Logan, alone remains of a family of fourteen children. She died June 27th, 1911, aged 73 years, 3 months and 9 days, in Logan, Ohio, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Charles Brehm.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

A Friend, N. J., $5.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Maine Conference will meet, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church at North Berwick, Maine, Sept. 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1911. All who love the truth as it is in Jesus are most welcome to come and attend our meeting.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association, the Lord willing, will meet with the Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, on Friday, Sept. 8th, 1911, and continue three days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.

THE Licking Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Mt. Carmel Church, at Winchester, Clark Co., Ky., commencing on Friday before the second Saturday and Sunday in September, 8th, 9th and 10th, 1911. Winchester is situated on the C. & O. and L. & N. R. R. All lovers of the truth are invited to attend and be with us, especially ministering brethren. All trains will be met Thursday evening and Friday morning. M. B. HADDEN.

THE Trinity River Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will convene with Liberty Church, in Tarrant Co., Texas, three miles west of Grapevine town, beginning Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1911. Grapevine is on the Cotton Belt R. R. Conveyances will be there on Thursday for all who can attend; all are invited.

ASA HOWARD, Moderator.

THE Clovesville Old School Baptist Church will hold a yearly or two days meeting, the Lord willing, the second Saturday and Sunday in September (9th and 10th), 1911. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Trains will be met at Fleischmanns station on Saturday.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Roxbury Association is appointed to be held with the First Church of Roxbury, on Wednesday and Thursday, September 20th and 21st, 1911, commencing at 10:30 a. m. Wednesday. Trains will be met at Roxbury Tuesday p. m. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE yearly meeting of the Cow Marsh Old School Baptist Church will be held the fourth Sunday in September, and Saturday afternoon before. The meeting will open at 2:30 o'clock Saturday afternoon. Friends meeting with us will come Saturday morning to Felton station, where they will be met and conveyed to the meeting.

BENJ. E. CUBBAGE, Pastor.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Middleburg Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, October 4th and 5th, 1911. All coming by rail to Middleburg will be met and cared for, or inquire for Mrs. Addie Cook, living a short distance from depot. Ministers of our faith and order and lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

By order of the church.

ADDIE COOK, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Old School or Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Springfield Church, in Huntingdon Co., Pa., on Friday, October 6th, 1911, and continue over Sunday. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, especially ministers. Those coming by railroad east or west will come on the Pennsylvanion road to Mount Union, and there take the East Broadtop road to Three Springs, where they will be met and cared for. Trains leave Mount Union 10 a. m. and 4 p. m. It is about two miles to place of meeting. Good place for entertainment close to the meetinghouse.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

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IN

NEW YORK CITY.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

As the hall in which the Albany and Troy Church holds its meeting is being repaired, there will be no meeting held until the fourth Sunday in September.

J. B. SLAUSON.

NOTICE.

I find the postage on my book, "Day unto Day," to America is 9 pence (18 cents), and I thought it would be 6 pence, or at most 7 pence. I think on consideration, as the expense of publication has been very heavy, notwithstanding a most encouraging sale, I had better say I will send to any of your readers the half calf gilt edge edition for 5 shillings ($1.20), or the cloth edition for 4 shillings (96 cents) postage free.

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All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE [illegible]HOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 79. MIDDLE[illegible]N, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1911. NO. 18.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE SUFFERING OF JESUS AND HIS PEOPLE.

JESUS suffered for [illegible], but not his own, he suffered for the sins of others. He knew no sin; he is holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. He was made to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Here we find imputation of sins, sins imputed to Christ; not only do we find imputation of sins, but we find the righteousness of Jesus imputed: Jesus Christ taking the sins of others and making his people righteous. His righteousness becomes their righteousness. The Lord our Righteousness, this is his name whereby he shall be called. Jesus of God is made unto his people righteousness. Jesus redeemed his people from all iniquity, and purified unto himself a peculiar people, teaching them that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously and godly in this world. It was Jesus who knew no sin; he knew no sin, that is, he himself had not sinned, did not sin, was not a sinner, but he suffered for sins. The Son of the living God, pure and holy, became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. He suffered on the cross for sins. Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered. Though he were the Son of God, yet he suffered death on the cross for sins; he suffered, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. Jesus was the Just, those for whom he suffered were the unjust. Did that suffering accomplish the will of God? O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done. It was by the will of the Father that Jesus suffered; it is the will of God that those for whom Jesus suffered shall suffer with him, and they that suffer according to the will of God are to commit the keeping of their souls unto him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator. If it is God's will for one to suffer, that one will suffer according to that will. If it is God's will for one to suffer for well doing, that one will suffer, even as God wills, and when one suffers for well doing that one suffers with Jesus, for Jesus suffered for well doing, and not for evil doing; Jesus did no evil. When God wills for one not to suffer, that one will not suffer,

for God is a merciful God; but it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. He will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. This is the goodness and mercy and love of God that enables his people to be all of one mind, and to have compassion one of another, and love as brethren, and be pitiful and courteous, not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing, knowing that they are thereunto called, that they should inherit a blessing. They are to do good, seek peace and ensue it. Who will harm such if they be followers of that which is good? If they suffer for righteousness' sake happy are they; for it is better, if the will of God be so, that one suffer for well doing than for evil doing. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." This put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, brings to God all the redeemed out of every people, kindred, tongue and nation. It is this that accomplishes the salvation of all the redeemed hosts. This is redemption, God's plan by which he redeemed sinners, the plan by which sinners are brought to God, the only plan by which God saves sinners. The man that preaches this preaches good news, which is the gospel. Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to the gospel that Paul preached. Moreover, Paul declared unto the Corinthian brethren the gospel which he preached unto them, which also they received, wherein they stood, by which also they were saved by keeping in memory what he preached unto them, unless they had believed in vain. It is given to believe in Jesus; not only is it given to believe, but it is also given to suffer for his sake. Paul delivered unto those brethren that which he also received. "How that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." Paul was not here declaring that he was doing the saving, but how Jesus saved; neither was he claiming that it was his preaching, but Jesus. Forasmuch then as Christ has suffered for us in the flesh, we are to arm ourselves likewise with the same mind. We are not to think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try us, as though some strange thing happened unto us, but rejoice, inasmuch as we are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, we may be glad also with exceeding joy. If we be dead with Christ we shall also live with him; if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him. "Because I live, ye shall live also." That is why I want to live; I want no other cause. I had rather live because Jesus lives than any other cause that can be named or thought of. I do not want to live selfishly, or because of self; I do not want to live unto myself, but I want to live unto him who died for me and gave himself for me. These words of Jesus himself are full of good cheer and comfort: "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.

By man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. By the man Adam came death, by the man Christ came the resurrection. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; after-

ward they that are Christ's, at his coming." Jesus was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death. We see him crowned with honor and glory, and bringing many sons unto glory, that he by the grace of God should taste death for them and make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering. To be crucified with Christ is to be killed with him. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."—Gal. ii. 20. As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long, means to be killed just as certainly as it is written; there is no escape. This means the suffering of God's people and the certainty of it. But what is the suffering in comparison with the glory? It may be a lifetime of suffering great affliction, but in comparison it is light and momentary, and shall work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen; for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal. "We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter," is what God has spoken concerning his people. This Scripture is just as certain of fulfillment as the words spoken concerning the Savior, where it is said, He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and in all this is embraced God's eternal love for his people, from which nothing shall be able to separate us. That the Scripture is certain of fulfillment is comforting to God's people. It makes no difference whether the thing to be done is to be done lovingly or wickedly, the fulfillment is certain. The Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child, to destroy him. * * * And was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son." This we see Joseph did from a principle of love; he did it lovingly. How different is this from the principle which actuated Herod, who was wroth, and sent forth and slew all the male children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not." This was spoken long before the occurrence, and in words as though it had already occurred. Why are they not? King Herod slew them just as God foretold he would do. Here are the two principles clearly set forth in these two occurrences, Joseph lovingly and Herod wickedly, and yet both are fulfilling the Scriptures, and in this fulfillment the predestination of God is as clearly shown as it is where the crucifixion is referred to, where it is said, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." While we find two principles, it is one predestination. What is comforting to God's people are the words, "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." This rejoices the heart

of every heaven-born child. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" Why ought he to have suffered? Not for any good to us, but for his glory. He said to his disciples, "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me." May the Lord open our understanding, that we may understand the Scriptures, as he did the disciples'. Without this we will not understand. When he does this then are we witnesses of these things. "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." It was Jesus who went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus preached to the spirits in prison. How did Jesus preach at that time, when he had not come into the world? He had not yet been made manifest in the flesh, but he preached by the same Spirit that quickened him when put to death in the flesh. Disobedient from the time they were born into the world until Jesus preached to them. Wherein, means in the ark. Few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. The eight souls were in the ark that was borne upon the water, being thus saved from the old world to the new, a beautiful figure, which is like the other figure, both figures pointing to Jesus.

This writing is for the dear readers of the SIGNS if it should pass. Dear brethren, pray for a poor, suffering sinner.

R. T. DAVIS.

MAYFIELD, Ky., July 14, 1911.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., July 23, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—The SIGNS OF THE TIMES comes to us regularly, laden with the precious truths of the bread of heaven, which are comforting and satisfying to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for while we read those precious messages of love we are filled to overflowing so that our eyes run over with tears and our hearts almost burst with love, while prayers of thanksgiving go up to God from our feeble throats for the gifts of his love manifested through the editors and writers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It is all of one piece: salvation by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves, but the gift of God, leaving us nothing to glory in save the cross of Christ, which I hope I feel manifested in this body of mine sometimes when mourning over my inability to walk as becometh a child of God. I sometimes doubt that I am, for,

> "If I love why am I thus?
> Why this dull and lifeless frame?
> Hardly, sure, can they be worse
> Who have never heard his name."

Yet then there is "a still small voice" that whispers to me sometimes, Why do you loathe your sins? Why do you hate yourself for running after the world and desiring to be like them in the enjoyment of their ease and pleasure, instead of suffering affliction with the children of God as a good soldier of the cross, and a follower of the Lamb of God that taketh

away the sins of the world? Then the thought comes to me:

"Could I joy the saints to meet,
Choose the ways I once abhorred,
Find at times the promise sweet,
If I did not love the Lord?"

Yes, dear brethren, I do find the promise sweet, for it is to a poor and afflicted people that all the great and precious promises are made. He has chosen the poor of this world rich in faith (not of themselves) heirs of his kingdom. O how poor and forsaken we feel when mourning over our sins, cast down because we cannot succeed in this world, sometimes in despair, feeling there is no place for us in the world, and almost forsaken of God we long to lay this burden down, but how little it takes of the oil of joy to lift us up out of the pit of mire and clay and place our feet upon the rock and feed our souls on the bread of life and put a new song in our mouths, even praise to God our Savior, and when we are filled with the sense of his love, how truly full are we; the world with all its wealth is but a toy compared with it, and it is then we feel that we have a good hope through grace. I have many times in the last year felt a strong desire to write for the SIGNS, not that I think my letters are either comforting or instructive, but the editors and brethren and sisters are so dear to me that when I read a communication that is extra sweet to me I think, Now I must write and tell them how I was comforted, but I have been kept back by a feeling of such unworthiness, with doubts and fears, as I never had before. I have sometimes wondered if there is a God, and such a thing as a home where the weary are at rest and the wicked cease from troubling. The enemies which are without are far more easily subdued than the one in my own breast, for my whole nature revolts against the sufferings, trials and afflictions which have befallen me in the last two and a half years. I will relate some of the most severe ones, not that I want to complain at the Lord's dealings with me, for he has sanctified them to me, and I feel they are precious strokes, for the Comforter was near me, and I was O so happy, even while suffering such intense pain, which the most skilled physicians failed to relieve, yet He was with me, and I feared no evil. They told me there was no hope for me, but, dear brethren, none of them knew what ailed me most, and I hate to tell it to you, but somehow I feel I must keep nothing back, though I fear that I am mistaken myself, yet I got no relief until I found myself completely in the Lord's hands to do whatsoever he commands, for the words, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins," kept sounding in my ears, but my cry was, O Lord, send some one else, for of all men I am the most unfit; but I realize it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. When I left Kansas, in October, 1907, and came to the coast and settled in Washington, I thought this burden would leave me, and I had pictured in my mind a comfortable home, where with my family I could spend the remaining days of my life in peace and happiness, and for a time all went well. I bought a piece of land well improved, made a payment, and the rest were to be easy payments, and we were all happy, my wife and I and six children, and all went well until in November, 1908, I was helping build chimneys on some old houses for the Clear Lake Lumber Co.,

getting from three to five dollars per day; but the time had come for me to be made to realize that I was dealing with a God who works all things after the counsel of his own will, for I had begun to feel quite independent, when one day while carrying brick up a ladder to the peak of a two story building, I had about two dozen bricks in a box on my left shoulder, and had just reached the top, when my hand slipped off the support and I started to fall backwards from the ladder, and as there were several small children playing at the foot of the ladder I put forth a great effort to save the box of bricks from falling, for I knew it would kill some of the children; I saved the bricks, but it wrenched my left side, neck and spine so badly that it caused enlargement of the heart, and nearly caused nervous prostration. I was in bed about six months, and under the doctor's care nearly two years and a half, and while I was not sick all the time, was not able to even carry a bucket of water or walk very far during the greater part of the time, and I knew our home would have to go, as I could not even make a living, much less meet the payments on the place, but I felt quite resigned to that, for the precious Savior and my Bible had been my constant companions in all my sufferings, and I was feeling as though I could stand any trial, when on the 21st of last November, 1910, my youngest brother was instantly killed while working in an electric power plant near here. He was buried on Friday, the 25th, and on Saturday, 26th, we received word from Oregon, where our daughter Mabel and husband lived, that she had fallen on the corner of the woodbox while getting breakfast, breaking three ribs and running one of them through her liver, from which she died after suffering five days, and it seemed that this was more than my weakened body and mind could stand, for she had just written us that they were going to move up here so they could attend our meetings, for she had received a hope, and we were rejoicing that we would have her with us to enjoy the meetings, but that joy, too, was swept away just as we felt sure it was ours. While our poor hearts are torn and bleeding, we try to bow to His sovereign will, for I know he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, and we try to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." And now another sorrow awaits me, which is a sorrow indeed: I will have to give up the dear SIGNS, and I hope you will forgive me for not telling you sooner, but I have clung to it like a miser does to his gold, hoping that I could get the money to pay you, but I can see no way now that I can hope to get the money to spare, as I am not strong any more, and I have five in family yet to support, and the only boys we have are the two youngest, five and seven years old, the others are girls, and my wife is not at all strong. Now I am not complaining, for the dear Lord has blessed me above measure; through it all he has been so near me that at times I could almost see him, I could feel his dear presence, and when we have him we have enough.

Elder Ker, your letter in the July 15th number did me much good, for it confirmed me on that text. The very statement of the text, "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth," is clear. Who is it receives the knowledge of the truth, the children of antichrist? No, surely not. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, and this is the

knowledge of the truth, for God is truth, and none receive the knowledge of him but his children. Then let us go on down to the thirtieth verse of the same tenth chapter of Hebrews, and see how it reads: "For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people." Then the thirty-first verse: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." What is it to sin wilfully? Is it not to do that which we know is wrong, let it be great or small? Now if none of God's children do these things wilfully (if I understand what is meant by wilfully), then I have no hope, but he says, If we sin, we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous, who sitteth at the right hand of the Father, to make intercession for us; for being tempted in every way like as we are he knoweth how to succor those who are tempted. There was a time when we could only see naturally, and understand natural things, but when God's time came he gave us eyes to see and hearts to understand spiritual things, by giving us of his Spirit. When we are blessed to feel his most comforting presence we realize how good and kind he was to send his dear Son to redeem us from that awful death because of sin. We have been called from nature's darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of the children of God. He declared that he will visit our transgressions with the rod, and our iniquities with stripes, therefore there is a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, but bless his holy name, he has kept the best for the last, for he says, But my loving-kindness I will not utterly take from them. O what matchless love is this, and at last immortality shall be swallowed up of life.

I hope, dear editors, you will throw the mantle of charity over this, for I see in it many mistakes, but if I should rewrite it there would probably be as many, or more, for I am only a poor, weak worm of the dust, and I cannot do anything as I would like to, there are always mistakes. I hope none will take offence at what I have written, for it has all been written in love, with a desire to comfort the dear children of our heavenly King, and I feel that I have been led of the Spirit, at least I trust I have, for unless it is of Him it is all in vain. I leave these scattering remarks with you to do with as your better judgment sees fit.

Your unworthy brother in a precious hope, DAVIS BURCH.

[WE assure brother Burch that he has our deepest love and sympathy in his sore affliction, and as the SIGNS is of comfort to him it affords us pleasure to continue sending it. We hope our brother's health may improve, and that brighter days are in store for him.—ED.]

ALVINSTON, Ont., August 7, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am sending you a letter I received from sister Pultz, which you are at liberty to publish in the SIGNS if according to your judgment. Her letters have been a source of much comfort to me, and I often feel like sharing them with others.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) W. C. YOUNG.

WHEELING, W. Va., Oct. 2, 1910.

MRS. W. C. YOUNG—DEAR SISTER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—How glad I feel to have found you. I wish that I could more fully realize what blessedness there is in this spiritual relationship. Your dear letter is precious, every word of it, and why should it not be precious, seeing

what a gracious source it comes from, this hidden man of the heart? And now that I have attempted to reply, I shall have to depend altogether on this same hidden man of the heart for instruction; everything that I need must come from Him. As Peter said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." He alone knows the way I take, he alone knows what my desire is, whether to serve myself or serve him; I cannot fathom my own motives. I think I am trying to serve God and do his will, and yet there is a distrust of my motives in my mind. Dear sister, you surely are being led in the same path that I am; when you speak of having such a lonely, restless and uneasy feeling you describe my condition exactly; I have felt this way much of late. Since writing those letters, which you speak of, in the SIGNS, I have been in a dreary and lifeless frame; my mind is so weak that I cannot keep it on any one thing. I used to enjoy seasons of spiritual meditation, the Scripture would often flow into my mind, and O how precious were those seasons. Often I would awake at night with some portion of the word in my mind so clearly, but now I seldom have such feasts. It seems that I just have to stand still; I am empty of everything; even temporal things fail to find lodgment in my mind. Sometimes there is a little springing up of life (so I think), at least I am sometimes constrained to sing a few verses of a hymn. The day your letter came, after I had read it and laid it by, a very old hymn came into my mind, and I felt constrained to sing it:

> "Hark, don't you hear the turtle dove,
> The token of redeeming love?
> From hill to hill we hear the sound,
> The neighboring valleys echo round."

This hymn describes your letter: it is the sound of the Holy Spirit, and is a token of redeeming love. The turtle dove coos, or calls, to her mate. I often think of the virgin Mary, how she arose and went with haste into the hill country to visit Elisabeth, and Elisabeth, being filled with the Holy Ghost, spake with a loud voice, saying, How is this, that the mother of my Lord is come unto me? Somehow I like to think of Mary staying with her three months; it is too much for my weak mind to conceive of the wonder of it.

Some years ago my mind was much concerned about the holy child Jesus, and O how I longed for a knowledge of how he looked. This thought was with me almost continually, so one night in a dream I saw a wonderful child, though it was not given me to know that it was Jesus, but the impression the dream left on my mind when I awoke led me to think it was he. As I saw the child in the dream he was fair, with such sweet and pure blue eyes, and we seemed to be drawn to him in great love and interest. I did not seem to know any of the women who were with me, but we were altogether absorbed in this heavenly babe. I thought we spoke of finding something for it to eat, but felt that there was nothing good enough for it. I hope I shall never forget my feelings when I awoke in the morning, I experienced great joy, and my heart was melted to tenderness. I would stop when trying to attend to the housework and stand still and think of this wonderful child until tears would flow. It seemed impossible for me to work, and I finally took up my pencil and paper and tried to describe it.

Dear sister, I started this letter last Sunday, and this is Tuesday night. I have been writing to you and Elder Durand often in my mind as I am about my work. I just finished writing a letter

to him. I was favored with a good letter from him the next day after yours came; those letters have been the rejoicing of my heart. I was much strengthened in faith, hope and charity. I hope I can claim this heavenly virtue, too, for my heart has been melting in love for our dear Redeemer and for his dear saints, whom he moves in spirit to reach out and extend the hand of sympathy and fellowship to the very least of his flock. I was going to say, if one at all, but something will not suffer me to deny the work of God in or on this poor vessel of clay. Our dear Savior said (when the Jews doubted him as being the Son of God), Believe me for the work's sake, or for the sake of the works he had done. I cannot understand why I am always checked quickly when I start to use the word "if" in connection with this work of grace in my poor heart. I do not deny that God is able to take the Holy Spirit away from me and leave me in nature's darkness; he is able, but, bless and adore his holy name, he is not willing that any of his little ones should perish; he will save them for his own holy name's sake. How forcibly this has come to me of late, when I have lain down in sorrow, with a desire to feel the sweet drawings of his love; I have thought that if I could not feel some spiritual emotion, some drawings of love, then I must have displeased him, and then I begin to beg him to teach me his will and enable me to do it. Then the thought comes that it was not for anything I had done, or ever will do, that I am saved, it is for his holy name's sake. Then I begin to wonder what I am to do about it; am I to do nothing? But something is telling me now that our Lord will work in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. Our work is to believe on him, believe that he is our righteousness, believe that we can do nothing without him. He works this belief in us, makes us experience this, by causing us to die daily. He makes us dead to the world, and alive in him. My dear sister, is this not a precious life to live? Would you exchange or have it any other way than the Lord our righteousness? In this way that he leads us he goes before his sheep, and they follow him; they have no desire to turn aside, and will flee from the voice of a stranger. My sheep know my voice, and they follow me. You would not care to hearken to the voice of a stranger. I could go to hear preaching (so-called) in this place every Sunday if I desired, and O how I would make friends to myself; I might even become a great "church-worker," yea, I have been invited to come out to their meetings and help them save souls. I believe the children of God are able to wink at such ignorance as this, for they of the world do not know that salvation is of the Lord, but at this moment I am thus reminded, Who maketh thee to differ? God forbid that I should boast. There are times that I am so forgetful as to do so, but, as on this occasion, I am usually rebuked. I feel glad that we are ever under the watchful eye of our risen Lord and Master. Our Savior is not dead, and I often try to get this thought clearly outlined in my mind. I think of my friends and relatives who have died and been laid in the graves, then I try to get the thought of our Savior by thinking, Now suppose they, my children, or father, or mother, had left their graves and appeared to us, come back to us in the flesh and talked with us, as our Savior did with his disciples, this would seem wonderful to us. I believe all that is written about the resurrection, but it is

only head knowledge. I do not know or realize the power of it, but I long to understand it more fully.

My dear sister, I have just read your good letter over, and now I will try to finish. I wrote some last night, and thought I would draw to a close, but I felt that I had not answered your letter at all; I want to, but my poor, weak mind will drift off with my own poor thoughts. Every word of your letter is as my own mind; I could not express my feelings and my condition as well as you have expressed them. I do trust that we are one in our adorable Redeemer, for I know our hearts are one in the travels you have described.

I am so absent minded; I meant to speak further about my vision of the wonderful babe. It is as if I were taking time by the forelock in trying to tell you all in this one letter, but, dear sister, do excuse me for anything that looks foolish. If we appear foolish to each other, how must we appear to the Fountain of all wisdom? But James tells us that God upbraideth not. If we have the Spirit of God dwelling in us we love what he loves and hate what he hates.

You speak of me sending your letter to sister McKinney, but I think I would like to send it to the SIGNS for publication. She takes the SIGNS and reads every word. She is very dear to me, and I often find my tears flowing for her. The last letter I had from her was July 15th, 1910, and I answered it soon after receiving it. I feel very uneasy about her, for in her last letter she stated that she had been sick, hardly able to get around the house, and her two daughters had been sick also. She was very low down in the valley of despair, and I was greatly stirred in spirit by her sad condition, so I wrote out of a full heart of love and sympathy. I have been so drawn to her that she is ever in my thoughts, and when I find any crumbs of comfort I long for her to share them with me.

You speak of Elder Durand's preaching and his writings, and of how you love them, and this makes you near and dear to me, and I feel that I do not want to loose my hold on you. Yes, I am reading his "Meditations;" he kindly sent it to me to read, and I can never hope to be able to tell the thousandth part of what it is to me. Often when I have a little spare time I get his book and sit down, saying to myself, I will read one or two of Elder Durand's sermons. It seems so wonderful that I am blessed with this opportunity, for it is much more than I could think or ask. His words are every one sweet morsels to me, and O the wonder that I should be able to understand the most of them. It is a miracle of God's grace that he has, for his holy name's sake, lifted up this poor, vile worm and set me among his priests and kings; it is too much for my comprehension. I have never heard Elder Durand preach, and the thought of ever sitting under his voice causes my tears to flow. I have not read the book you mention, "The Trials of Job." There was a long time this summer I could not read, I was, as you describe, not even able to grieve over my leanness, and my mind was so confused that I could not set it on anything. I often tried to pray, but would hardly begin before my mind would be drawn away in another direction. I recall one night that I laid down in an utterly helpless condition, and was thinking, What shall I do, O what shall I do? when a still small voice said, Jesus is thy works, can you not rest in him? Then I was ready to cry out with tears, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."

Dear sister, I am so lonely for the company of the dear saints that I can hardly bear to close, but there is much work awaiting my attention, so I will stop for this time. I hope to hear from you soon.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

(MRS.) FLORENCE PULTZ.

PSALMS LXXXVII. 5.

"AND of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her; and the Highest himself shall establish her."

While reading this portion of holy writ, my mind has been impressed that therein reference is made to the covenant which we speak of as the new, or covenant of grace, when contrasting it with the old, or the covenant of works. The apostle Paul when writing to his Galatian brethren spoke of these two covenants (the old and the new) in the form of an allegory. He called their attention to Abraham's two sons; one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. One son (Ishmael) was born after the flesh, the other son (Isaac) was by promise. He told them that the bondmaid, Agar, represents the old covenant; the freewoman, Sarah, the new covenant. He also told them that Agar represents Mount Sinai, answering to that natural Jerusalem, which they knew to exist and which was in bondage with her children, the Jews as a nation having ceased to exist as such, and Jerusalem itself and the country about it being under the rule of the Romans, formed a portion of that vast territory known as the Roman Empire. In contrast he sets before them the freewoman (Sarah) as representing the spiritual Jerusalem, which is above, free, and the mother of all God's dear people. (Gal. iv. 22–26.) Writing to his Hebrew brethren, he told them most plainly that they were not come to Mount Sinai, but to Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. (Heb. xii. 18–22.) Again, when writing to his Galatian brethren, he impresses the fact that we are not the children of the bondwoman, but of the free, and as Isaac was a child of promise, so we also are the children of promise. (Gal. iv. 28-31.) We know that Isaac typified the Lord Jesus. When under the guidance of the Spirit of truth, and with him as our teacher, we read the language recorded in the one hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm, verses fourteen to sixteen inclusive, and are enabled to realize that while primarily the psalmist has reference to his natural body and the members composing the same, still there is a much deeper thought presented, and the Spirit of Christ in David is brought to view as setting forth the church of God, which is the body of Christ. Here we have a very clear reference to the children of promise, to whom our Lord referred when he spoke through his servant Isaiah, saying, Behold, I, and the children whom the Lord hath given me, for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth in Mount Zion. (Isaiah viii. 18.) The covenant under consideration while spoken of as the new covenant in contradistinction to that covenant given to national Israel, called the old, is in reality the older covenant, for it has existed from eternity. Unlike the old or legal covenant the blessings attending and flowing from it do not in any sense depend upon the works of the creature, but are bestowed as a gift of rich and sovereign grace by the Creator. It is a covenant not made with man (as the old covenant was), but a covenant made for man. This wonderful covenant was made with none but God himself. (Eph. i. 3–9.) It was entered into by him to display the exceeding

riches of his grace to poor and ruined sinners. The purpose of grace embodied in this covenant was towards a people chosen of him in his Son. This chosen people, ruined by the fall in their federal head, Adam, were to be redeemed from that ruined condition by nothing short of the bloodshedding and death of His own beloved Son. Being redeemed from the curse of a broken law they as a chosen generation were to shew forth the praises of him by whom they had been called out of darkness into his marvelous light. To this holy nation, this peculiar people, he was to be the Savior. Then viewing Zion as setting forth the covenant of grace, and God's people the sole recipients of the mercy embodied therein, it would seem that to be born in Zion is to be born of God in accordance with a fulfillment of the purpose purposed in himself from eternity. Such being the case, it will prove profitable to briefly consider some of the distinguishing marks that are found upon those who are born in Zion, whose Father is God, whose mother is the heavenly Jerusalem, the covenant of grace. They have all been quickened and made alive to God by the power of the Holy Ghost; have been given eyes to see and hearts to feel their need of salvation. Christ as the living way has been revealed to them, a way so narrow that all self-righteousness is debarred from entrance. They are made to know by individual experience that so strait is the gate that none but sinners, poor, stripped, sin-sick and ruined in self, can enter, and that such sinners only enter by living faith in the Lord, the Lamb, being drawn by the Father. They are washed in the atoning blood, and clothed in the justifying righteousness of the Son, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, being sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. While perfect and complete in their risen and exalted head and Savior, in themselves, that is, their flesh, dwelleth no good thing. Again and again they are made to experience thick darkness and gross ignorance brooding over their minds, and their utter inability to understand or realize the certainty and power of spiritual things, except by a gracious revelation to their souls. These spiritual things they find to be beyond the sight and far out of the reach of their natural understanding, cultivated though it be to the utmost of its power. They are made to realize that they have not one spark of spiritual life or light but what is derived from vital union with Christ. (John xv. 4–6.) They are made to groan to be delivered from the body of this death. (Rom. vii. 24.) Favored with a sweet lifting up, by faith, they enjoy the drops of dew from heaven which cheer their souls and cause them to praise the Lord. Then it is that their souls are sweetly revived, their hearts softened, their gloomy minds cheered, and life, light, love and liberty spring up. So they pass the days of their pilgrimage, sometimes discouraged and seemingly without hope, sometimes rejoicing in spirit, and favored with the full assurance of living faith they praise the God of their salvation for his wonderful goodness and mercy.

A word with regard to the promise. "And the Highest himself shall establish her." God's promise to Abraham was, "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."—Gen. xxii. 18. The apostle, referring to this, says, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."—Gal. iii. 16. In Genesis xvii. 21, we have the assurance that God gave to Abraham: "But my

covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year." As I have already said, Isaac typified the Lord Jesus, so when we speak of Zion as setting forth the covenant of grace, and link with it the assurance, "And the Highest himself shall establish her," faith views the full and complete establishment of that covenant in the antitype of Isaac, Jesus Christ, such establishment being the act of Jehovah, in eternity.

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[WE think the above good article was written by the late Elder David Bartley, and feeling it will be read with interest by our readers we publish it.—Ed.]

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., July 16, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Inclosed I send a letter from brother G. M. Fetter, which I think will prove of interest to you, and to the readers of the SIGNS, if you think best to publish it.

Your sister,

MARY HILL TERRY.

RATON, New Mexico, July 9, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER TERRY:—I received yours of June 18th, and I certainly did not think it would remain so long unanswered. First, I will say, we are in our usual health, and the weather is comfortable, even rather cool. We read of your excessive warm spell, and hope that you did not greatly suffer from it. We did not have it, but rains have been fine, and the country is green. I do not get away from home any more, as there is no one here to leave with auntie. Her health is good, but she is feeble.

You speak of our spiritual life. It seems indeed very low. There are but three of us left. Sister Vance lives some forty miles away, and we do not see her often. She is a very gifted woman, but in poor health. She does not get over here. We once had a very spiritual band in the little church here, but the Lord has in providence scattered us far apart. We do miss the Dawson family. They are as hard to reach as it would be to go to Philadelphia. I am really stronger than a few years ago, but cannot do the manual labor I once did. It does not seem that we are so much older as the time goes on, but I desire much of the time to be alone. My mind in spiritual things is not stirred up as it once was, and the iron is not sharpened with iron, as once was the case, by the countenance of a friend. The solitary were to be set in families, and when there are many brethren to come together there is generally some one to be a mouth for the rest. The old prophet said, I am left alone and they seek my life. Abraham was left alone with his son to hear the voice of God in the mountains. He knew then what the vision of the burning lamp and the smoking furnace signified. There was a burning lamp in the darkness and a smoking furnace. Is it not true with us that a trial by affliction always divides the parts? Was not Christ the lamb, and was not he the sacrifice consumed, that the covenant of grace might be established? Our journey is always through the flesh, and what we see by faith is surely known.

You speak of not hearing the word as you once did. The hearing ear and the understanding heart are always coupled together. How many things in the world we do not understand, but in the covenant of grace, whatever is revealed is plain and clear, and can be told, not as a dream, but plainly. The discernment of the body, or the church of Christ, is not led about by the uncertainties of the

intellect of man. "Thou art Peter," must have been very great searching of heart, for he was to see the foundation upon which his faith was to stand. Many things are built upon the earth, and seem to endure for a while, but if the earth be shaken then do we see the defects of the building. In all our questioning of ourselves we have never questioned the awakening into life, nor the time, nor the place, nor the great truth which was revealed to us. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." And who is my brother, but the child of my Father? We recognize the lineage, for when he speaks of his inheritance we see that it is our inheritance also, a lawful gift by will, and approved by the record on high. The gift shall never fail to reach one to whom it was bequeathed, for the Father, who cannot lie, promised it before the world began, and so the child must possess it. The righteous are not forsaken, nor is the seed of Christ found begging bread. Christ is their bread, and as he came down from heaven, not to do his own will, so also his children do the will of God, because they are his children, and they are taught his will, and their faith is the faith of God. They live by that faith which maketh not ashamed. Faith can be as a grain of mustard seed and yet have the life of a great tree in it. The elders obtained a good report, for they spoke of the sufferings of Christ, and of the glory that should follow. Faith is not dead, for the Father liveth and abideth forever. The pleasure of the Lord prospered in the hand of his Son, and to this day the pleasure of the Lord is what we earnestly desire to look into. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? They are little but yet sold. Every trial has some value, and shall not fall to the ground without our Father. The school of Christ is a needed school, and all the rudiments of doctrine, order and discipline are taught there; it is with line upon line and precept upon precept, and, as often as we have our minds called to the Scriptures, there is not an idle line or word in them, for they were given by inspiration, and contain a correct knowledge of his will concerning us.

"In the world ye shall have tribulation." I have thought this meant that their faith should be tried, but that he would be with them to the end of the world, and the chastisement of their peace should be upon him. Jesus was as a root out of dry ground. Faith always contrasts the earthly with the heavenly. "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." Justification makes the salvation complete and lawful, and in obedience to God's commands there is a conscience before God void of offense. If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. Free from what? Free from the service of carnal commandments. When the Lord has judged once, who then can judge? When the prince of this world is cast out, no matter how many wicked spirits enter in, they cannot move one from the steadfastness of that faith in God which shall be as an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast. The trial of this faith we have always to endure, and are not these the mountains which must be removed? They are to be removed and cast into the sea, whose proud waves are to be stayed at the coming of the Son of man. The legal curtain of the temple is rent in twain, and the holy of holies is brought to view. What is it that brings holy things to view but the faith of God's elect and

precious people, whose names are cast out as evil? The government shall be upon the shoulder of our Lord Jesus Christ. All the weight of sin could not have been upon him unless he was God. God was manifest in the flesh to sustain the load. Faith alone can conceive the weight of it. The apostle said, "Shew me thy faith without thy works and I will shew thee my faith by my works." Faith must be living. One may say, I am a christian, but Jesus searched the heart in saying, But whom say ye that I the Son of man am? The answer was of faith, Thou art the Son of the living God. His Sonship must be by the living God, and so must faith be by the work of God. He said, Because I live, ye shall live also. Shall faith ever die? Shall we ever regret the day when Christ was revealed to us as the Door by which we enter into eternal life and the joys of the world to come? If such the sweetness of the stream, what must the fountain be? If such the first-fruits, what shall the harvest be? As the new wine is found in the cluster, so this foretaste is found in the kingdom. He said, This do in remembrance of me. Well did he give thanks. David said, "I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord." May this be my chief employ, and may the changing things of this life be as chaff before the wind. May I know that the Lord has thoroughly purged his floor, gathered his wheat into the garner and burned the chaff with fire unquenchable. Why do the things we once trusted in now seem so unstable and insecure? Because the Lord is done with them, and has taken them away. Isaac saw that the Lord would provide himself with a lamb, and can we not return as Isaac did, sin atoned for, and conscience free, and his name (laughter) honored with great rejoicing? Well could Rebecca embrace him and call him Lord. Sarah left mourning in the household, but Rebecca brought great joy with all her ornaments as a bride adorned to meet her husband. One said, He brought me to his banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love. It was not some gilded crown, such as was upon the late queen of England, but it was his radiant glory as husband and Lord whose love had made her all glorious. She was the bride of him whose brightness was above the sun. This is she who looketh forth as the morning. Moon and stars are forgotten, it is the glorious gospel day, it is the world after the flood, with the waters all abated, and the highest mountains uncovered, and the dove of peace returned and taken into the ark. Her Lord said, "It is finished." The night is past and the day is at hand. One star alone of all the train, it is the star of Bethlehem. What shall it be when this bride shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and be forever with him? With what body shall they come? To him who shall try to paint what so glorious a person and so bright an appearance may mean it is said, Thou fool.

I have had not a little pleasure in penning these rambling thoughts. Sister Boggs sends love.

Your brother,

G. M. FETTER.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., July 17, 1911.

BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—What a treasure it is that we feel to hope and trust in a God who cannot err, and who makes no mistakes. Man makes mistakes, and I often fear that I have grasped the shadow and missed the substance. For this we feel to cry out

with a broken heart and full of trouble, "God be merciful to me a sinner." I know that there is no other refuge when we need mercy and pardon. We must come with humility to the feet of Jesus, and with denial of self; there is no other place to go for these blessings. The greatest of all questions with me is, Have I realized that change of heart which gives me right to claim Jesus as my Savior and my righteousness? I am traveling on in these low grounds of sorrow, now in my seventy-ninth year, and I am still in need of the Savior. What I am it is hard to know, but one thing I hope I know, viz., I love the brethren. This is the working of God's grace, and of the Spirit in the inner man. This is great comfort and consolation, for I trust that he hath revealed himself to me, although I feel unworthy of the least of his notice, but I trust that with his loving-kindness he hath revealed himself to me, and that I have thus come to know of his suffering and resurrection. There is no way in which we must be saved except through the blood of the beloved Son of God. While here in the flesh we are subject to many doubts and fears, and this makes us fear that we have been deceived. We are dependent upon our heavenly Father for the forgiveness of our sins and for mercy always. We can only say, "God be merciful to me a sinner." He is all our hope of eternal life. One sister, Mrs. Catherine Francis, of Manassas, Va., and myself are the only living children of the large family of Elder John M. Hickerson. Another sister, Mrs. Harriet Hixson, passed away from earth April 14th of this year. She suffered a stroke of paralysis about three weeks before the second stroke which caused her death. She had not united with the church, but professed a hope in the Savior, as I learned from my sister Catherine. She was much devoted to her children and grandchildren. They all reside in Manassas, where our mother died a number of years ago. Our father was a strong believer in, and advocate of, the doctrine of predestination and the foreknowledge of God, which our beloved Elder Gilbert Beebe so ably contended for in the SIGNS. My father and the late Elder R. C. Leachman were closely associated in their latter days. The thirteenth of this month was my birthday, and my only daughter, two granddaughters who live in Tennessee, and our dear aged sister in Israel, Mariah Garrison, who is eighty-seven years of age, and is still able to walk quite a distance, were with me on that occasion. How thankful I should be that from my earliest recollection down to the present time I have been so wonderfully blessed with reasonable health from our loving and merciful God, for which I try, as much as is within me, to return thanks to him. I am still able to attend our meetings to give praise to our heavenly Father and Benefactor, who enables us to meet together for his worship, as we trust, in spirit and in truth. I have also received much comfort in reading so many able communications from our brethren who are dear in the Lord. They are scattered over different sections of the country, but all see eye to eye and speak the same things. The editorials are excellent.

This letter is written by a poor worm of the dust, who must trust in the Lord to direct his mind and steps in the narrow path which leads to life everlasting. May the God of all grace keep and bless his humble poor under willing subjection to him with fear and trembling, is my prayer.

Your brother, as I hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

FERNDALE, May 7, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will try to write you a few lines. I am a son of Stephen Holman, who was baptized by Elder I. N. Vanmeter, the first candidate he ever baptized. My grandfather was Daniel Holman. I have heard our aged brethren Dark and I. N. Vanmeter preach several times. They were sound in the faith, and so was my father, but I am very weak. I wish I could tell the brethren all my weakness, and of the power of Christ. The first time I ever thought of death was when I saw my little brother die on my mother's knee; that was in 1868, or 1869. This was forgotten by me in a few years, until another brother died, in 1870. He was two years old. This cut me to the heart. Then in 1878 a sister died, aged seventeen. Then I thought, What is death, and am I prepared to meet it? I tried to pray, but could not. What must I do? I must prepare to die, but felt that I could not. I went to a Missionary meeting, and they said, Go to the mourners' bench. I went, but got no better, but rather worse. I thought, Must I be lost? Yes, I thought, this is my just condemnation. Then I went to the Methodist meetings, and they told me the same thing, viz., that I must do something to be saved. But what could I do? Jesus said, "Ye must be born again." This I could not be. The mist that had been on me was now a cloud, and it became larger and darker all the time, and I was trying to get out of it, but felt that I must sink in despair; there was no salvation for me. What must I do? I could not pray. I knew that I must die. I went on in this condition three long years, and then the cloud disappeared, and that was the most beautiful day of my life; it was beautiful indeed. Now if I could only be as good as my father and my uncle, Isaac Holman, were, I would be satisfied, but my weakness was so great.

If some brethren would come this way it would do me much good. Brother Burch gave me his SIGNS to read; they are good and just suit me. I read and reread them. I obtained a lot of them when my father died. If I ever get able, I will take the paper. I have read it all my life. I am now near the end, but the Lord has promised never to leave nor forsake those that trust in him. In my weakness I try to trust him. Praise to his holy name, he loved me when I was nothing, and less than nothing.

Correct all mistakes, and excuse them, for my sight is poor and my hand is weak.

Your brother,

J. E. HOLMAN.

HURRICANE, W. Va., Aug. 3, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—It has been a long time since I attempted to talk to you through our dear old paper, which has been sustained so many years by the grace and favor of God, and is still contending for the same Bible doctrine that it was established upon, nearly eighty years ago, and yet this paper, like all other things whatsoever are, is but the purpose of God; every word that has ever been printed in it was according to God's righteous purpose, and every feeling of joy occasioned by reading all those words by the many thousands of God's dear little children scattered abroad all over our land was because "so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."—Isaiah lv. 11. But all these

things show us the wonderful love of God in caring for his children. Truly we have a good Shepherd, who will feed his sheep. Such a great work as that of publishing the SIGNS would be inclined to cause a man of this world to feel elated and very boastful, but I am sure that the editors, and contributors as well, feel a great degree of solemnity when they are able to see in part the great work of God in all these things, and often feel how unsearchable are his judgments, and ways past finding out. How little we know of the purpose of God in our words which we are enabled to write, and what God may accomplish in them, of how sometimes these words may comfort some faint-hearted one and open up the heart to praise Him to whom all praise is due, and how by them another may be aroused to the discharge of his duty, and how again the sound and able words of counsel from the called of the Lord often set us to examining ourselves, and realizing our wretchedness cry unto God for mercy, and cause us to acknowledge that we are nothing, and less than nothing. I have thought that when we are the poorest in feelings, and when we are blessed to feel that in us, that is, in our flesh, dwelleth no good thing, and when we feel our weakness the most (when I am weak, then am I strong), it is then, and in that state of mind only, that we are worshiping that God, who is a Spirit, in spirit and in truth. I am sure that God cannot be worshiped with men's hands, and the many forms and fashions of this world are foolishness with God, and also to those who are taught of him.

Dearly beloved, I have much to trouble me, many trials in this life, and often I am almost ready to despair, but sometimes I can say, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want," and it is then I can rest in his banqueting-house, where his banner over me is love. O what a serene joy it is to rest in the bosom of his love, where we can be still and know that he is God, and beside him there is none other, whom to know is life eternal.

Dear reader, if you have a mind to write me, do so, as I have much time to read and write, and, the Lord willing, I will try to answer all letters received. May the Lord bless you all as seemeth good in his sight.

Yours in hope,

G. B. BIRD.

FARMINGTON, Ill., July 31, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I feel impressed to write to you one more time, if you will please bear with me, a poor worm of the dust, and you may give it a place in the SIGNS, if you see fit so to do, so that my old friends may know how I am. I have been for a little more than three years lingering between life and death. At that time I had a paralytic stroke, and have suffered day and night. It seems I cannot die, though I am longing for death, for I have no enjoyment in living. In about ten days I will be seventy-nine years of age, and I often wonder why the good Lord has spared me to live so long, while so many younger and more useful are taken away. I suffer much in body and in mind, and in my head and left arm and face, and am getting very deaf, and almost blind. I can still see to read the dear old SIGNS, but it is with much difficulty. I have not heard a gospel sermon since last September, and feel as though I were almost forsaken by all my friends. I realize the affliction of Job, and my life has lost its charm for me. Indeed, if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are

of all men most miserable. It seems to me that my life has been poorly spent. I am a poor, sinful mortal, hoping for things not seen, and patiently waiting the end. This I feel will be the last you will hear from me before I pass on to eternity.

I have felt for more than fifty years that I have a hope in the Lord, yet I have many doubts and fears. I feel that I do love the dear saints of God, and love them above all others, and have had great enjoyment in reading their narratives of experience in the SIGNS. I feel that they are my people, and their God is my God. I have read much that seemed as bread to me cast upon the waters, and upon it I have feasted after many days.

Brother Chick, you seem to me to have been one of the Lord's faithful servants, and to have fought a good fight and to have kept the faith, and have comforted many downcast ones; surely the dear Lord has been with you. Now will you please give your views upon Luke xviii. 7?

Do with this as you think best. I feel hardly fit to write, but felt so impressed. Pardon me for what I have done, and pray for me who am the least of all.

Your brother,

E. D. VARNES.

[WE are very glad to again hear in this way from our dear, aged brother Varnes. While we have not been often, or very much, in his company, yet we have often heard from him by letter, and again and again have we greatly appreciated and enjoyed letters published from his pen. The Lord has been his portion and defense, and now we are sure that he will not be forsaken in his old age. "Even to your old age I am he," the blessed Lord has said. Our brother has passed through many conflicts, and has been, through Christ, the victor. That blessed Helper will not fail at the last. Our aged brother is bearing the fruit of meekness, humbleness and confidence in Christ, even to old age, as the Lord has declared shall be the case with his dear children. In response to the request of our brother we will say that if permitted, ere long we will try to write what seems to our mind to be presented in the text which he names and in its connection.—C.]

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Aug. 2, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Will you kindly allow me space in your columns to say we arrived home safely, after a very enjoyable time with the brethren and friends at their homes and associations and meetings, but I have been suffering with muscular rheumatism in both arms so that it has been impossible to write to the many friends as I desired, or answer the many letters received? I appreciate your letters bearing messages of love and cheer, and will answer as soon as able. I am able to be up, but have no strength in my arms, which are sometimes painful in the extreme. Sometimes the way has seemed dark indeed, and I am wondering what the end will be. The past few days there has been a peaceful, quiet waiting upon the Lord, who is able to supply all our needs. The following hymn has been made precious to my soul:

"Dear Refuge of my weary soul,
On thee, when sorrows rise,
On thee, when waves of trouble roll,
My fainting hope relies."

In loving remembrance to all,

P. W. SAWIN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1911.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE BRAZEN SERPENT.

(Numbers xxi.; John iii. 14, 15.)

THESE familiar Scriptures have been somewhat sweetly, and we hope profitably, dwelling upon our mind of late, and so we feel like presenting to our readers some reflections concerning them.

First. How precious are the words of Jesus concerning the serpent which was lifted up by Moses according to the commandment of God. He declares that the things which were true of that event and of that brazen serpent are true of himself, with this one vast difference, viz., that then healing of the body was provided for, while in him there is deliverance from sin and everlasting death. The brazen serpent is declared by the dear Redeemer to be a figure, a type, of himself and of his gracious work of salvation. One special thing that has occupied our thoughts for some time is the truth that in these words of the Savior, and in the narrative recorded in Numbers, is contained not only the hope of salvation, but also that strong doctrine which is indeed the strength of all poor, needy sinners, but which is foolishness to the wise of this world, and a stumbling-block to all self-righteous Pharisees of every age. Among other things, the hated doctrine of God's election is most clearly set forth in the narrative recorded in Numbers. This is in our mind to especially call attention to further on. Surely we need not say that the one special principle of doctrine which Paul declares to be foolishness to the Greek and a stumbling-block to the Jew, viz., the doctrine of finished atonement and redemption by the blood of Christ and without the deeds of the law, is set forth clearly by this narrative and in the Savior's teaching from it.

Second. Let us consider the narrative recorded in Numbers, first of all. There we are told that the children of Israel had sinned, because that in their discouragement they had spoken against God and against Moses. Often it is said that they sinned after their deliverance from Egypt, all through the forty years journey in the wilderness, and as often as they sinned there was mercy shown them, and they were helped on their journey, until now they had come near to the end of it. There seems to be peculiar enormity in their speaking against God now, since they have experienced so frequent tokens of his kindness and power to help and save during all the forty years past. But by this discouragement of theirs is shown this one truth, viz., that neither judgments nor mercies, however great or numerous they may be, will ever avail anything towards turning the hearts of unregenerate men to repentance toward God, or to living faith in him. All the forty years of temporal judgments and mercies, beginning with the display of God's power in Egypt and on to this time, had wrought in their hearts no true faith, nor any other spiritual grace. We need not be surprised at this, for these things can never bring about any such

result. There is but one thing that can, and that is the work of the Spirit in the hearts of men, making the dead to live, and producing love to God and faith in him as the living fruit of the living Spirit. Still further, this discouragement and speaking against God and his servant Moses is declared to be true of the people as a whole. It is not said, A portion of the people, or some of the people, but the people. It seems to have been a general sin of which they all partook.

Third. We are told that the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and from their bites much people of Israel died. Notice, first, that the people had sinned before this, therefore the serpents do not represent sin, neither did their biting the people represent actual sinning upon their part; but it seems clear, as we read the narrative, that these fiery serpents were the appointed judgments of God upon those who had sinned, to convince them of sin, of righteousness and of judgment, and unless a remedy could be found the coming of these judgments signified death, for we are told that from the bites of those serpents much people of Israel died. Now, as had been the case often before, and as continued to be the case with this people often afterward, and as has been and will be the case with people to the end of the world when affliction and death seem imminent, the people of Israel came to Moses and said, We have sinned, pray unto the Lord that he take away the serpents from us. We are not to suppose that this was true gospel repentance, but such as often had a few years before moved Pharaoh to grant the request of the people made through Moses and Aaron to go forth and worship their God; a repentance which had no depth, and which was forgotten as soon as the judgment had passed by. In all ages men have been terrified into confessions of sin and into pleading for mercy by terrors and calamities, when in the sight of God no true sorrow for sin was felt in the heart. It seems plain that it was after this fashion that the people then said, We have sinned. So Saul, the king, confessed to Samuel, I have sinned. Judas made the same confession, but there was no real godly sorrow in either case; but when David said, I have sinned, there was another spirit in him. One possessed that sorrow of the world which worketh death, while the other was actuated by that godly sorrow which works repentance to salvation that is not to be repented of. One kind of repentance needs to be repented of, while the other is a holy thing, and pleasant in the sight of God.

Fourth. But now we come to a deeper work. Moses commanded that a brazen serpent should be made according to the will of God, and after its erection upon a pole if any Israelite was bitten and should look upon that brazen serpent he should live. Many have called attention to the similarity between the cause of the hurt and of the death that came to the people, and that which was to be their healing. A serpent caused suffering and death, and a serpent brought life and healing. Do not these thoughts bring to our minds the words of the apostle, He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him? Our sin and our judgment are in the flesh, and it must be that our redemption should be wrought out by One who should also come in our flesh and be one with us in all things, save that he was without sin. The judgments of God against Israel came in the form of fiery serpents, and so deliverance

must come to those who were convinced of their sin by One who should in his own person fulfill all the requirements of divine justice and righteousness. In the brazen serpent was a representation to the people that all their sins were met and judged, and that they were forever delivered from them. We say that there was a representation of this truth; it was only a representation, for in itself the brazen serpent was only "Nehushtan" a piece of brass, as King Hezekiah declared centuries afterward of it. Here was indeed a visible sign, but in the sign there was no virtue, the power that healed was the same that had visited them with judgments. He who has a right to condemn, alone has the right to pardon and save. Only One in heaven or earth has power to forgive sins, even as only One in heaven or earth has right to condemn those who sin against him.

Fifth. We call attention here to another truth: all the people were involved in this sin against God, but not all of them were bitten. We see in the people in general that sort of repentance which unregenerate men can know and often do feel, but we see in some a deeper work wrought, a personal work, a work which wrought in them pain and real conviction of their sins and of their need of redemption from death. Those who were bitten were not worse sinners than the others; all were alike guilty, so far as we can learn from the narrative. The people as a whole had sinned, and it was fully proven that the judgments of God wrought death, for many had died among the people. Without the brazen serpent not one who was bitten could live. When the judgments of God come to a sinner, as the Spirit convinces him of sin, he sees nothing but death before him. If he flees to remedies which may be recommended to him they all prove vain. If he, like a drowning man, clutches at the straws of good resolutions, good promises, good deeds, and all manner of religious observances, they avail him nothing, he only grows rather the worse; nothing can save or heal the conscience where the judgments of God have taken hold. There is in that man a pain that cannot be relieved, a burning of conscience that will not cease. We have no doubt that the word "fiery" used to describe these serpents simply sets forth the burning pain resulting from their poison in the veins, and those who were bitten knew that they had sinned; they knew moreover how deep the sin lay within them; they knew how terrible was the judgment of God against their sin.

Sixth. Only those who were bitten had any use for the serpent of brass. All had sinned, but not all had use for the brazen serpent. Only those bitten had any benefit to hope for from looking toward that serpent; only they would have any desire to look, save as a matter of wonder or of curiosity. In later years, as we have referred to before, the people did look to that serpent as possessing in itself divine power, and so they came to worship and reverence it. They made an idol of it, then the king commanded it to be destroyed; it was only a piece of brass. It is claimed to-day that the pieces of wood upon which Jesus was hung upon Calvary are in existence, and great reverence and homage are rendered to them by those who believe the claim. Thus the folly and idolatry of Israel are enacted over again. It is, of course, utter folly to suppose that any one now possesses a piece of the cross upon which Jesus was hung; but suppose it be so, what of that?

It is of no more value than any other piece of wood, and it is our mind that were it known that some piece of wood did indeed exist that belonged to that cross upon which Jesus expired, it would be better by far to do as King Hezekiah did: destroy it and scatter the ashes upon the waters, so that men might have no excuse to make an idol of it. But this is perhaps a digression. Returning to the beginning of this paragraph, do we not see two things clearly set forth? First, that some of the Israelites only were bitten, though all had sinned, and second, that only those who were bitten were told to look to the brazen serpent and find life. In order to bring out the thought of personal election which is here, let us ask, Why were not all Israelites bitten? All had sinned alike, why were not all bitten alike? And why was it so that only those who were bitten, but not all who had sinned, should find anything desirable to them in the brazen serpent? Perhaps the men who were not bitten counted themselves happy above the others, but who among them were really blessed? Is that man blessed who goes on still in his sins unchecked, or, at most, with only that sorrow for his wrong which leads to death rather than that repentance that needs not to be repented of, or is he blessed who becomes convinced of his sins, and so looks to the one remedy provided for sin, and the one antidote for death? Surely among the Israelites the truly blessed ones were they who were bitten. These were convinced of their sin, and of God's anger against sin, and these alone found salvation from the judgment of God against sin. It is the work of God to convince of sin. This is the beginning of salvation, personal and experimental, in the soul; it is the evidence that God has thoughts of mercy toward that one, and so prepares him to look to the Savior whom he has caused to be lifted up. If men do not thus come to feel what sin and its condemnation mean the Lord has not wrought in their hearts, and if he has not wrought this great work there it is not because he could not, but because he would not. Here is election. There was election then; the chosen ones were bitten, and afterwards looked and lived. Election does the same now. To the elect ones come real knowledge and conviction of sin, and then real healing through the blessed Lord.

Seventh. All this sets forth in some measure, we believe, just what the dear Redeemer declared in the Scriptures referred to in the third chapter of John: "Even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." Now, as then, all men have sinned, but not all men come to know their sin, and now, as then, those who know not their sins can have no felt need of a Redeemer, and having no realization of their need of such a Savior, he is of no interest to them. These can see no beauty in him that they should desire him. His beauty is the beauty of holiness, of redeeming grace. But what is holiness and redemption to him who knows not that he is destitute, or that he is condemned before God? If any man believes in Christ as the Savior has declared in this text, it is as his Savior and his wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. If a man does not regard this Savior as his all and in all, he has not really felt the need of him at all, and he does not believe in him at all. But, thank God, there are some who do believe in him to the saving of the soul, and these are the bitten souls chosen to this redemption.

C.

ACCUSATIONS DENIED.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—Yesterday I was at the home of relatives, and a friend came to see them. We were talking on Scripture, and I told them of the article you wrote for me in the SIGNS for February 1st, 1909: "If a man die, shall he live again?" and I remarked that you said the word "again" was supplied. Is there any difference in the words "added" and "supplied?" He said you were mistaken, that there was not a word in the Bible supplied since it was first written. He wants you to tell when they were supplied and who did it. He says you are mistaken, or you put it there to gain your point. He said you nor any other man and I would agree on any passage of Scripture I might ask you or others to write on. I told him we had never disagreed yet, and were not likely to. Several more questions he told me to ask you, but I cannot remember them. One of them said he was told the Old Baptists did not believe in prayer. I told him we believe in prayer as much as any denomination. Now you can answer this if you feel so inclined; I would like you to.

MARANDA M. MILNER.

VAIDEN, Miss., July 24, 1911.

It is somewhat out of our line to reply to anything said or done by other denominations, yet for the benefit of others we feel willing to comply with the above request. We admit that it is an easy matter to be mistaken, and confess that the mistakes of our life have been many, but in asserting that there are supplied words in the Bible we made no mistake. It is sure, however, that those who say not one word is supplied, are laboring under a mistaken idea. The Old School Baptists, as far as we are acquainted with them, use what is called "The King James Translation," believing it to be the best of all translations. The revisions of the Bible are evidently the work of men not taught of God, since his word is so mutilated that hardly an original truth is left. Some years ago we had occasion to use a Bible at a special service, and turning to the text in our mind to read at that time, found that the book was one of recent revision. The text can be found in 1 Cor. i. 18, and reads as follows: "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." In the book we had that day it read, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are now being saved it is the power of God." It would seem that a child could understand that the very work accomplished, once forever, by the Savior of sinners, is denied in this revised quotation. Hence to say, "now being saved," (except from such delusion and error) is absolutely false. To none but those "which are saved" is the preaching of the cross the power of God. But what is the preaching of the cross? Is it declaring that Jesus died to make a way for sinners to escape the regions of woe, provided they will accept the terms? No, a thousand times no. The preaching of the cross is the promulgation of all Old Testament testimony of Jesus, whether it be plain prophetical declaration or in type and shadow, together with all that the New Testament declares of him. This was the preaching of the apostles, and included the declaration of the angel to Joseph and to Mary; the birth of the babe in Bethlehem; the message of that birth to shepherds and wise men; the knowledge and wisdom of the child Jesus at the age of twelve years; his baptism in Jordan by John; his temptations in the wilderness; his sufferings in the garden, sweating, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground; his crucifixion, burial, resurrection and ascension to the right hand of God. This is the preaching of the cross, the finished work of Jesus. Paul said, "He hath perfected for ever all them that are sanctified." The revisers say, "To us which are now being saved." Whom shall we believe, Paul, the inspired apostle of

God, or the revisers, who evidently knew nothing experimentally or by revelation of the finished work of salvation wrought by the blessed Son of God? It is safer to believe Paul and to follow his example.

Another one of the thousands of places where the truth of God is changed to meet the ideas and convenience of natural men, is found in John xiv. 4, and reads thus: "And whither I go ye know the way." In our Bible it reads: "And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." The first quotation signifies that there was a certain city or country for which Jesus was bound, and that the apostles were fully acquainted with the route he would take. But the truth is they knew the place itself, and also the way. The place was the cross on which the Savior of sinners died, and according to his own words he himself was the Way and the Truth and the Life; "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." It would seem that some men and women have very little knowledge of God's word when they do not detect the mutilation of it when reading the man-made book called by them the Bible.

When writing at the request of sister Milner on Job xiv. 14: "If a man die, shall he live again?" we called attention to the fact that the word "again" was supplied by the translators. Those men were scholars understanding perfectly the original language in which the Scriptures were written by the inspiration of God, and they also fully understood the English language. They were honest men, which cannot be said of revisers of the Bible who have turned the truth of God into a lie by their mutilation of his word. Wherever the translators made use of a word not in the Scriptures they used Italic letters to signify that they had supplied the word to make the meaning clearer, as they thought. Knowing, therefore, all supplied words, we can read the Bible without them, which is often better. If our friend who accuses us of being mistaken in the matter of supplied words will take the trouble to turn to, Job xiv. 14, he will find that the word "again" is formed of different letters from that of any other word in the verse. Everywhere, both in the Old and New Testaments, words formed of the same kind of letters are supplied words.

The question is asked, What is the difference between the words "supplied" and "added"? They may seem very close kin indeed, but when closely examined a vast difference between them will be seen. The word "supply" means "to fill up; to provide," while the word "add" means "to join or unite." Inasmuch as the holy Scriptures are perfect, complete, entire, they have never needed anything to fill them up, and since neither men nor angels can add to them, in the sense of uniting words or thoughts that they become verily a part of the Bible, it will readily be seen that the word of God, the testimony of himself and of his Son Jesus Christ, must forever stand as written by men moved by the Holy Ghost. False bibles and false preaching cannot affect it.

As to the accusation that we added or changed the wording in Job xiv. 14, to make our point, we will say, It is never necessary for Old Baptists to do such things, as they have no points to make. The points of our doctrine are made of the Lord himself, and our business is to assert them and prove them by the Scriptures, which are the infallible man of our counsel. We as a denomination assert that salvation is by grace to the glory of God. We would not dare do such a

thing did not the sacred word make the "point" that, "By grace are ye saved, * * * not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus." We also affirm that man is not "a free agent." This we do because the Bible teaches that his eyes were blinded to both good and evil until after his transgression of the law given him by his Creator; therefore, having no knowledge of either, he could not choose between them. The very term is contradictory, no agent is free, but instead moves and operates under the authority of another or others.

When Old School Baptists read the text in Phil. ii. 12: "Work out your own salvation," there is no need of their avoiding anything in the connection. To show its true import is both the desire and duty of the servants of God, and when this is done and the connection read the imaginary foundation of salvation by creature effort is forever removed and the whole system falls to the earth. We will here quote verses twelve and thirteen: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." First, the apostle addresses "beloved" characters, instead of ungodly men and women. Second, he says they have always been obedient, not only when he was present, but much more in his absence. Third, he exhorts the beloved, obedient children of God to work out (manifest) their own salvation (already in possession of it) with fear and trembling. Fourth, he assures them it is God that works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Now a few questions. If those addressed were obedient christians, why do some men say the text applies to sinners living in unrighteousness? If this power to will and to do is in man of himself, the "free agent," so-called, why does the apostle say, It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do? We have every reason to believe that sister Milner, together with all Old Baptists, will agree with all we say in this article, but we have no thought that our friend, mentioned in the request, will for a moment assent to any assertion made regarding the doctrine of God our Savior. There must be a cause for such objection. Can it be that the Primitive Baptists, believing and preaching the doctrine of Christ and the apostles, are so far behind the times that they of the progressive age cannot recognize them at all? Or is it that they themselves have not as yet been with Jesus and learned of him? All who do learn of him advocate his doctrine, which has not changed since declared by the Father in the garden of Eden: The Seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.

The accusation that Old School Baptists do not believe in prayer, is simply another proof that those who thus accuse us do not know what we believe. They think they fully understand us as a religious body, but in reality they know us not. "The world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." It is utterly impossible for any one to know what Old School Baptists believe without believing the same things, as it is only through the revelation of the Holy Spirit that man can know the things of Jesus. "He shall receive of mine, and shew it unto you." Job told his "miserable comforters" that he was not inferior to them, for he knew all that they knew, but they did not know God and his dealings with his people as Job did. This is wherein the

manifest children of God have the advantage of all their religious accusers. They know all that their enemies know; yes, every thought, every idea of salvation by works they are perfectly acquainted with, and once, like Saul of Tarsus, verily thought they were doing God service in performing such things, even persecuting Old School Baptists. But, like Saul, their eyes were opened to behold Jesus the Way, the Truth and the Life; the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, and at once began to pray and continue to pray. Not like the Pharisee, however, who thanked God that he was better than other men (Old School Baptists for instance), and that he had done and was doing so much for the Lord, but like the poor publican who had nothing to boast over the vilest sinner; no good works to plead; too unworthy to lift his eyes toward heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." This is the kind of prayer Old School Baptists believe in; it exalts the name of Christ and magnifies the grace of God; but as a people we have no use for such praying as the Pharisee did. God did not recognize it, why should we?

Having now covered as best we can the ground suggested by the letter of sister Milner, we leave the subject for the consideration of all concerned.

K.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at his residence, Hopewell, N. J., August 5th, 1911, Fred H. Brady, of East Amwell, and Miss Cora F. Hoagland, of Wertsville, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Silas Durand Gladding, son of brother and sister S. B. Gladding, of Baltimore, Md., was born Dec. 24th, 1893, and departed this life August 15th, 1911, making his stay on earth 17 years, 7 months and 22 days. Durand was a quiet, good boy, obedient and kind to his parents, and his father says he has hope that he is better off. Durand was large for his years, and had been on his father's boat since quite a small boy, when not in school. August 15th, as they were returning from Centreville, Md., they were caught in a windstorm, and in his effort to shorten sail he fell overboard and was drowned in the view of his father and an older brother, who were powerless to help him. The body was lost in the water and not found until Thursday, the 17th, by a stranger, so brother Gladding did not get it until Friday, the 18th. All this time brother and sister Gladding were of course comfortless. Their brethren, sisters and many friends offered every means of help and comfort possible to them, for which they wish to thank them. Arrangements were made Friday night for the funeral and interment, and on Saturday, the 19th, at 3 p. m. the writer read the fourteenth chapter of John, and referring especially to the eighteenth verse tried to assure the bereaved parents that Jesus would in his time and way comfort their hearts. After this service in the home the remains were taken to Loudoun Park Cemetery. Several brethren, sisters and friends accompanied the bereaved, and the body was laid in the family plot to await the call of the blessed Redeemer, when he shall come again the second time without sin unto salvation. On Tuesday evening, the 22nd, the writer, together with others of the church, met at brother and sister Gladding's home to show our fellowship and be of whatever comfort we could. We feel that the dear Lord is sustaining them in this their great trial. The loss is great, but the finding of the body was a great relief, as they knew there was a probability of never finding it. May God's richest blessings be with them continually, for he alone can heal the deeply wounded hearts.

ALSO,

Mrs. Mary Ellen Pearce, daughter of Abraham and Susan Durham, was born Sept. 27th, 1853, and was married to F. G. Pearce, Nov. 25th, 1875. She had been for many years an attendant at the meetings of the Harford Church, Harford Co., Md., and on May 29th, 1910, was with three others baptized by the writer in the fellowship of that church, of which she

was a member only a little over one year. Sister Pearce was a good woman, a good wife and neighbor, and a beloved member of the church, which will miss her doubtless next to her dear and bereaved husband. Elder J. G. Eubanks attended the funeral, and the body was laid in the cemetery at the Harford meetinghouse, where, according to God's command, it shall return to dust, but in the morning of the resurrection will be raised a spiritual body, according to and by the word and power of her blessed Redeemer.

Written at the request of brother Pearce, for whose comfort we pray. JOSHUA T. ROWE.

Deacon A. B. Russell, of Justus, Pa., was born in Batavia, N. Y., Feb. 27th, 1823, died June 26th, 1911. He was the second husband of sister Chloe Britton, who had a son and daughter by her first husband, and two daughters by brother Russell, one deceased. The three children, with his dear companion, who is in her ninety-fourth year, are left, with many other relatives and friends, to mourn the loss of one they loved. He was highly esteemed by all who knew him as an honorable, honest, upright man, and by his brethren as a loving christian brother. He was a deacon not only in name, but in the scriptural sense of the word, in deed and in truth, having the qualifications. He was gifted in prayer, and could talk much to the comfort of the church in their conference meetings each month, clear and sound in the truth as it is in Jesus. The welfare of the church was first with him, and other things secondary; but he has gone to his eternal home, never to return. Dear sister Russell will feel sad and lonely, but she has a good hope through grace, therefore will not sorrow as those who have no hope. May the dear Lord comfort her and all the dear family and friends with his presence, is my desire.

The writer officiated at the funeral, which was held in the meetinghouse the 29th. Burial near Mt. Bethel.

ALSO,

John W. Clark died August 17th, 1911, at Muirkirk, Ontario. He was born in Aberdeenshire, Scotland, in 1863, and baptized by Elder W. L. Beebe in June, 1899, in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Brooke, Ontario. He was married to sister Larue Beebe in 1896. The widow and one daughter are the only surviving members of the family to mourn his departure. He suffered with asthma from childhood, and from consumption sixteen years, with which he died. Brother Clark was sound in the faith, and loved to talk upon the subject of the sovereign grace, mercy and love of God our Savior for poor, helpless, unworthy sinners as he often expressed as feeling himself to be. May the dear Lord comfort the lonely widow and little daughter Kate, is my desire.

A large congregation assembled in the Covenanted Baptist meetinghouse at Duart, Sunday, August 20th, where the writer spoke from John xv. 9-12, by request. D. M. VAIL.

Mrs. Francis L. Cooksey died at the home of her brother, Mr. Burke, near Clifton, Fairfax Co., Va., July 8th, 1911, aged 62 years, 8 months and 7 days. In recalling obituaries I have recently sent to the SIGNS for publication, I am struck with the fact that very many of their subjects have been called to pass through months, and in some cases years, of painful suffering, even down to old age, so that the grave must appear before them a harbor of refuge and peace, rather than a place of terror. These reflections occur to my mind as I take my pen to write a brief notice of the death of sister Cooksey. It appears she never enjoyed robust health, but she married a good man and became the mother of sons and daughters, several of whom survive her. She was left a widow a number of years ago. One son, a promising youth, was killed on the railroad two or three years ago near their home. These afflictions she bore, though in declining health, with the fortitude which only the Spirit of her Master can give. But her greatest suffering came toward the last. Several months before the end came she sought relief in a hospital in Washington, D. C., where it was discovered that a cancer had developed. A surgical operation was resorted to, but without satisfactory results. I do not know how long she was at the hospital, but she was brought to her brother's, not far from her home, in a pitiable condition of pain and suffering. A merciful God soon took her to himself, or, as we say, "she died." The body returned to the earth as it was, and the spirit to God who gave it. Sister Cooksey was baptized by Elder Joseph L. Purington, during his ministry in Virginia, in the fellowship of the Bethlehem Church, near Manassas. She in every way adorned her profession, was a shining example of a humble christian, and possessed in a marked degree the esteem, confidence and love of her brethren. In writing or speaking of the life of our brethren in the church, much the same things must be said of the manifestations of the almighty grace which takes the beggar from the dunghill and sets him among princes, even the princes of his people. During her severe sufferings grace restrained all complaints, hushed all murmurings. That grace enabled her to be faithful to her obligations in the church, in the family and in the world, so we saw her go down to her grave sustained by unfaltering trust, which grace alone can give, and in full assurance of that faith in which she had lived.

May God comfort the mourning family, the numerous relatives and friends, and the church in her low estate in every sorrow. J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., August 21, 1911.

Mrs. Angus M. Campbell was born in the town of Laurel, Del., Dec. 11th, 1886, and died in the house where she was born, March 12th, 1911, aged 24 years, 3 months and 1 day. Her disease was tuberculosis of the lungs. She was the daughter of our beloved brother, Caldwell J. Morris, a devoted member of the church at Little Creek, Del., by his first marriage. She was married to Angus M. Campbell, of New York, Sept. 14th, 1909. She leaves her husband, one daughter, an infant, one own sister, Mrs. Sallie Spicer, of Laurel, father, stepmother, two half-brothers and two half-sisters, besides numerous other relatives and friends to mourn the loss of one who was truly lovely in life, but their sorrow is not without hope. I will just add what brother Morris writes me of her:

"Ida was a sweet, devoted child from infancy, always loving, obedient and truthful; she was a dear daughter to me. The question with me is why so interesting and devoted a daughter was given me, to be taken away so early in life. I mourn as one of old, and refuse to be comforted; but I know it was God's will. He has a purpose; what that purpose is I hardly expect ever to know. She did not suffer pain during her entire illness, and was conscious to the end, and passed away quietly. She said she had no fear of death, but desired to live for the sake of her loved ones. This is a comfort to me."

The writer tried to speak a word of comfort to the bereaved family and friends at the funeral, on the 14th. I knew Ida from an infant, and can truly say that she was a very lovely character, one for whose early death her friends may well mourn, but in hope. May the Lord comfort them.

A. B. FRANCIS.

Elizabeth C. Wright was born Nov. 10th, 1838, in Rockingham, Va., and departed this life August 7th, 1911. She moved with her parents to Ohio when one year and a half old, and was married to Andrew J. Wright August 19th, 1858, to which union were born six children, four of whom survive her: Charles L., Pearly A., Percy E. and Stella W. Bockoven. Thirteen grandchildren, besides a host of brethren and sisters in the church and friends are also left to mourn. She united with the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church called Hartford, near Hartford, Ohio, being baptized by Elder J. H. Biggs, and during her life was a consistent and firm believer in the faith she professed. Sister Wright was of a quiet and loving disposition, beloved by all who knew her, and her home was always a home for her Baptist brethren, who will miss her sadly. Surely a mother in Israel is called home, one whose counsel stood among the best; but her time came, her mission fulfilled, and peacefully the spirit left the body which for some time had been filled with pain, a sheaf of wheat fully ripe, aged threescore and ten. We bow in humble submission to the will of God, who doeth all things well.

The writer was called to Mt. Vernon, the home, to officiate at the funeral, which was held on Wednesday, the 9th, and the next day the body was taken to the cemetery in Delaware County, where it was laid to rest to await the summons of the Master at the resurrection.

GEO. L. WEAVER.

MEETINGS.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association, the Lord willing, will meet with the Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, on Friday, Sept. 8th, 1911, and continue three days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.

THE Licking Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Mt. Carmel Church, at Winchester, Clark Co., Ky., commencing on Friday before the second Saturday and Sunday in September, 8th, 9th and 10th, 1911. Winchester is situated on the C. & O. and L. & N. R. R. All lovers of the truth are invited to attend and be with us, especially ministering brethren. All trains will be met Thursday evening and Friday morning.

M. B. HADDEN.

THE Trinity River Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will convene with Liberty Church, in Tarrant Co., Texas, three miles west of Grapevine town, beginning Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1911. Grapevine is on the Cotton Belt R. R. Conveyances will be there on Thursday for all who can attend; all are invited.

ASA HOWARD, Moderator.

THE Clovesville Old School Baptist Church will hold a yearly or two days meeting, the Lord willing, the second Saturday and Sunday in September (9th and 10th), 1911. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Trains will be met at Fleischmanns station on Saturday.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Roxbury Association is appointed to be held with the First Church of Roxbury, on Wednesday and Thursday, September 20th and 21st, 1911, commencing at 10:30 a. m. Wednesday. Trains will be met at Roxbury Tuesday p. m. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE yearly meeting of the Cow Marsh Old School Baptist Church will be held the fourth Sunday in September, and Saturday afternoon before. The meeting will open at 2:30 o'clock Saturday afternoon. Friends meeting with us will come Saturday morn-

ing to Felton station, where they will be met and conveyed to the meeting.

BENJ. E. CUBBAGE, Pastor.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Middleburg Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, October 4th and 5th, 1911. All coming by rail to Middleburg will be met and cared for, or inquire for Mrs. Addie Cook, living a short distance from depot. Ministers of our faith and order and lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

By order of the church.

ADDIE COOK, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Old School or Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Springfield Church, in Huntingdon Co., Pa., on Friday, October 6th, 1911, and continue over Sunday. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, especially ministers. Those coming by railroad east or west will come on the Pennsylvania road to Mount Union, and there take the East Broadtop road to Three Springs, where they will be met and cared for. Trains leave Mount Union 10 a. m. and 4 p. m. It is about two miles to place of meeting. Good place for entertainment close to the meetinghouse.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Corresponding Meeting of Virginia is appointed to be held with the Bethlehem Church, near Manassas, Va., commencing Wednesday, October 11th, 1911, and continuing three days. Friends coming by railroad from the north or east will be in Washington Tuesday evening in time to take trains on Southern road at 3:35 p. m., 4:30 p. m. or 4:55 p. m., or Wednesday morning at 8:30, for Manassas, one mile from place of meeting. Several trains a day will accommodate those from the south or west. Brethren and friends are earnestly invited, and assured of a hearty welcome. J. N. BADGER.

THE Salisbury Association of Old School Baptists is appointed to be held with the Little Creek Church, in the town of Delmar, Sussex Co., Del., on Wednesday, October 18th, 1911, and the two following days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited. All trains, both north and south, stop at Delmar. Those coming from the north, take the train leaving Broad St., Philadelphia, Tuesday at 3 p. m. Those from the south take train same day leaving Cape Charles at 11:35 a. m. There are trains arriving at Delmar in time for the meeting both north and south every day. Come; our hearts and homes will be open to all who come in the name of the Lord. We hope to see a goodly number present at our meeting.

A. B. FRANCIS, Pastor.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

As the hall in which the Albany and Troy Church holds its meeting is being repaired, there will be no meeting held until the fourth Sunday in September.

J. B. SLAUSON.

NOTICE.

I find the postage on my book, "Day unto Day," to America is 9 pence (18 cents), and I thought it would be 6 pence, or at most 7 pence. I think on consideration, as the expense of publication has been very heavy, notwithstanding a most encouraging sale, I had better say I will send to any of your readers the half calf gilt edge edition for 5 shillings ($1.20), or the cloth edition for 4 shillings (96 cents) postage free.

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"Thoughts on Regeneration, the Spiritual Birth, the Christian Warfare and the Resurrection," is the title of a pamphlet of 58 pages, written by Elder H. B. Jones, of Winnsboro, Texas, and can be had of him for 25 cents per copy, five copies for $1.00 or $2.00 per dozen. Address, H. B. JONES.

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SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 79. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1911. NO. 19.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FRAGMENTS.

Do we want something new from our preacher every day? Does our minister wish to have some new subject for today, and a new manner of treating it, so that he shall not have to go before the people with the same subject he had last Sunday? And do the Lord's hungry poor want him to bring them every day something which they have not heard before? And if he does not gratify this wish will they complain that he lacks variety?

I take you into my garden, where there is an especially beautiful rosebush filled with the most lovely and fragrant roses. Do you say, I saw that rosebush yesterday, show me some new flower? Would you not rather ask, Let me see again the roses I saw yesterday; I want to see them again, and inhale again their rich perfume? Do you say, I am tired of having the same food every day, give me something new, something I have never tasted before? No; you say, rather, Give me the same bread I have been accustomed to eat. There can be nothing better, nothing half so good. The bread of life is always new, always sweet and good. When we go down into the garden of nuts it is that we may see the same fruits of the valley, to see the same vine flourish and the same pomegranates bud. There we see all manner of pleasant fruits, both new and old, which are always laid up there for our Beloved. The chambers of the house, which is built through wisdom and established by understanding, are filled by knowledge with all precious and pleasant riches. (Prov. xxiv. 3, 4.) We want no other riches. These are as old as the grace and mercy of God, and as new every day as is our felt need of them.

When I consider my poor gifts I am ashamed that I have nothing better; that I have no variety, no excellency; but when I consider the goodness and excellency of the gifts and works of God I am ashamed that I could ever be so selfish as to want something that shall be for my own credit and glory, and not be satisfied with even the least blessing of the new and everlasting covenant. The least morsel of the word of God, the bread of life, is enough for the greatest minister to hand out to the hungry people of God, and surely enough for the least of all the

servants of God. It is always new; the living soul never tires of it; it never loses any part of its goodness to such hungry souls; it has the power to make both him who gives and him who receives of that precious heavenly bread to forget themselves and to be lost in the desire alone for the honor and glory of God.

THE word "weary" is a good word in its proper place, but it is not used in Matt. xi. 28. The words of the dear Savior in that place are: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The word "weary" would not do in that place. A man may be very weary and yet not be either laboring or heavy laden. Both of these words are necessary in order to designate those to whom the Savior addresses this sweet and powerful command. These people are laboring to accomplish a work which cannot possibly be accomplished by them. They are laboring to satisfy a law which they have already broken. Their work under that law cannot satisfy it in any part or degree. All the work they do only manifests more clearly their condemnation by it. It rests with increased weight upon them; they are laboring and heavy laden. A man has a certain work to do each day; he does all the work required in a day, and it takes all his strength to do it; he is very weary, but not laden at all, for the work for that day is done and its burden gone. But suppose he loses an arm, and can only do half a day's work in a day. Each day that unfinished work rests upon him. Then suppose he becomes lame and blind, and can do no work at all, but his obligation to do it continues, and he is heavy laden. He still must struggle on, trying to do something, but the whole burden of the work is upon him, and he sinks helplessly under it. Now is the time when the dear Savior's sweet and powerful command reaches him, and brings him into his gospel rest, which he had never known even the need of before.

I have not regarded these words of Jesus as an invitation, for the word "invitation" is not in the Bible; also, because the Savior's call is always effectual; his word accomplishes that which he pleases. My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me. His voice calls them from death to life, causing them to feel the heavy burden of sin and condemnation; then his voice breaks that bondage, and brings them into rest, and after this they are subjects of gospel command, being under law to Christ, and he bids them take his yoke upon them and learn of him who is meek and lowly in heart, and causes them to know, by a precious experience of rest and peace, that his yoke is easy and his burden is light.

AS to whether we shall know each other in heaven, and how, I am willing to wait until we get there. The Lord knows what will be best for us, and what will be for our most complete and perfect happiness, and we may well trust all that to him. We do not know what we shall want to make us perfectly satisfied in glory, but our dear Savior does, and he has all power to accomplish it in and for us. One thing is certain: we shall know each other in him, and shall be like him, and that will be our unspeakable and endless felicity.

"WHY hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear?"—Isa. lxiii. 17. It is not a natural man who can ask this question, nor can the carnal mind comprehend

what is thus most solemnly and humbly expressed by the prophet for the erring tribes of Israel, who are called "the people of God's holiness." This form of prayer, and confession, and supplication, belongs to the saints alone, and is known only by those who have been made to feel deeply the hardness and deceitfulness of their own hearts, and who have been brought into grievous suffering and affliction by yielding to the wandering desires of their natural hearts and erring from the truth of God. For some wise purpose of his own, and to shew his people how awfully untrustworthy they are, the Lord sometimes leaves them to show to themselves what is in their hearts, by some sinful thought indulged, some sinful word spoken or some sinful act done, which makes it appear to us impossible that we should ever dare to claim any possible righteousness of our own. The name and character of our Lord are always clear. None can ever justly charge him with the least shade of evil or wrong, whatever he may do. He has the right to turn man to destruction the same as he has to say, "Return, ye children of men."—Psalms xc. 3. He has the right to leave his people to act out the sinfulness and corruption that is in their carnal nature, thus making them to err from his ways and hardening their heart from his fear, and he does this at times, that he may be justified when he speaks and clear when he judges. (Psalms li. 4.) The humble desire of the truly penitent soul, when thus made to feel the hidden evils of his heart, is that the Lord would make him know all the evil and give him true repentance. He knows the Lord could easily have kept him from error in that case, as he has in many other cases, and he does not feel to charge him with any injustice or unkindness, but humbly asks, Why hast thou made me to err from thy ways? He takes all the blame to himself, and desires only to ascribe honor and power and goodness to the Lord. The prayer for the Lord's return expresses deep penitence on the part of the prophet, which he expresses for the people of God, "the tribes of thine inheritance."

THE wise and foolish virgins all slumbered and slept while the bridegroom lingered. (Matt. xxv.) During all that time no difference could be seen between them. No mark appeared by which it could be told who were wise and who were foolish. No one could tell whose vessels had oil in them and whose had not. So it was with the nation of Israel during the legal dispensation. The Lord's people could not be distinguished from the others; the legal works could be done as well by one who had no grace in his heart as by one who had; all appeared alike, as do those who sleep. This was the sleeping time, the night dispensation, and no fault is found with them for sleeping. But when, at the end of that legal day, at midnight, the announcement was made, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh," then the difference between the wise and the foolish was made to appear. Those who had oil in their vessels were ready to go in with the bridegroom; those who were without oil could not go in. The difference between the two characters, those who had grace in the heart and those who had not, was as great before the bridegroom came as after, but that difference could not be manifest until he came. The wise were not made wise because they took oil, but they took oil because they were wise. So also with the foolish; they were not foolish because they took no oil, but they took no

oil because they were foolish. The wisdom of the wise was, and always is, a gift to them from the Lord, and so is the oil, or grace, by which they have the light of life, which shineth in the darkness of our nature, but is not perceived by the darkness. The wise went in with the Bridegroom and the door was shut. That door between the legal and the gospel dispensation was never opened but once, and then Jesus entered into his gospel kingdom with all his redeemed. "By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." When the legal character, represented by the foolish virgins, comes, he must necessarily come knocking, for the door was shut as soon as Jesus entered in. One who knocks implies that there is some good reason why the door at which he knocks should be opened to him. Those to whom Jesus says, "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you," are gospel characters who desire gospel blessings, and they knock in the name of Jesus. But these are asking in their own names, because of good things they have done. The oil they have has been purchased by them, for which they have paid in their own good works, and it will not be received; it does not make gospel light. The true oil, the Spirit and grace of God, cannot be bought. So the Bridegroom says to them who come with that oil which they have bought, I know you not. All of the Lord's people, from the beginning to the end of time, went in through that gospel door with Jesus, and none who ever have entered there experimentally, or ever shall, will ever make mention of any other name but Jesus as the way by which he entered in, and because of this there will be on the part of living souls, but no others, a strong and deep exercise of soul from time to time, by the power of this sweet command of Jesus: "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." Every experience of the coming and power of Jesus, and every temptation to doubt and question concerning our knowledge of him, will lead us more carefully to consider how all of our experience of an entrance into divine favor, from the very first, has been an entrance with Jesus, and in his blessed name, and will lead us to watch that we do not ask for or seek for any entrance into his favor because of any fancied merit of our own. How careful and watchful we are, and need to be, lest the light that is in us be darkness, lest the oil we have has been purchased with our own fancied goodness. "For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., August, 1911.

WHEELING, W. Va., July 20, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending Elder J. F. Beeman's letter for publication. I am sure it will commend itself to all who understand the language he so ably and feelingly speaks. I prize his letter highly, as it is so comforting and instructive, but above all I prize the sweet spirit of charity that called it forth. How good to see our able ministers condescending to them of low estate. There can be no blessing equal to the manifestation of this charity, or love, of God in his children; it warms, sustains and comforts our hearts, and turns our afflictions to joy. In second Corinthians Paul speaks of the apostles' spiritual power: "Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God. For the administration of this service not only supplieth

the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God. While by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men; and by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you. Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."

Your poor, unworthy sister in hope,
FLORENCE PULTZ.

TIAWAH, Okla., June 29, 1911.

MRS. FLORENCE PULTZ—DEAR SISTER:—Your letter of the 26th inst. came as a sweet surprise, though I now remember sending you a pamphlet. I have sent them to more than two hundred Old School Baptists and their well-wishers, and have entered their names in a little book, so that I would not be guilty of repeating the offence, or pleasure, without a special request, which request has been made to furnish more copies in two or three instances. I have had many responses from brethren and sisters, and in only one or two instances has there been any difference of opinion. The only solid comfort and satisfaction that I have is in communicating with the saints, either orally or in writing. They are of one family, and they all know the one certain language, whether they have ever met personally or not. How strange this seems to worldly religionists! This tongue is different from all other tongues. To learn the tongue of another nation successfully it is necessary to come in contact with one or more of that nation and be a learner for months, and sometimes years. The tongue or language of the saints is not learned from one another; the most proficient saint cannot teach the language that he knows to another; the best that he can do is to appeal in supplications and cries to the King, who gave to him freely, that He may give to another poor soul the same language. If the language is imperfect it will be of no avail. It may be nearly like the genuine, but if the sound of one letter is eliminated, as in days of old, the whole speech is proven to be fraudulent. How wonderful that Israel must look upward to the King for her speech! She rejoices in this that she has this blessed privilege. No other people would rejoice because of their dependence upon another; no other people have any desire to come under the authority of Israel's great King. Away with him, he shall not reign over us, is their cry. They know him not; they have not the speech that testifies of his power, love, mercy and grace. To know him is life eternal; to know him is to love him. If we know the Lord, then it is impossible not to love him. They have the best reason for loving the Lord that ever could be known or found: "We love him, because he first loved us." How devoid of spiritual sense is the religious theory of the world that, as God is love, anybody that loves at all (and anybody can love) is of God. Their meaning is that anybody can exercise love as they will to do so. They fail to see any difference between the love of God and the love of the world. In this world there are as many kinds of love as there are things. We love our families and friends, we love the fruits of the ground and the fruits of the trees for the enjoyment and comfort they bring to us. Men and women love the pleasures of this world. No person in the world that is sane is without love of some kind. Criminals have love, generally a strong love for money, and as the apostle says,

"The love of money is the root of all evil." In God's kingdom there is one love, and only one: God loved his people with an everlasting love; this kind, and none other kind, and his saints love him with the same love. The Lord has said, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Paul, contemplating the durability of God's love for his people, said, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." He calls God's everlasting love "great love," so do all the saints who know the joyful sound. It is great to them, so great they want to sing of it:

> "O for such love let rocks and hills
> Their lasting silence break,
> And all harmonious human tongues
> The Savior's praises speak."

"Let the inhabitants of the rock sing." Yea, they will sing in spirit and in truth, because of the testifying angel that always beholds the face of our Father which is in heaven. If the saints could keep their peace, that is, keep from thinking about the power, wisdom, mercy and love of God, then the very stones under their feet would cry out to God, the Savior of sinners.

I remember about reading your letter which spoke of your meeting with the people of your choice in Newark, Ohio; also I have appreciated all of your letters published in the SIGNS. I have been a reader of the SIGNS most of the time since 1853, the year my father began taking it. I was a small boy then, and, like many other boys, did not read them understandingly, until the year 1860, when the Scriptures were opened to me, and I realized that I was a sinner. The SIGNS became precious to me, and as it is the pioneer among Old School Baptist papers in the United States, and perhaps in the world, I sometimes speak of it as the "old reliable," and at present I am reading only one other except the SIGNS. Some of my letters have been published in it the last two years.

I have a strong desire to visit generally among all the churches in America and Canada now in my old days, but it seems that as yet the Lord has not opened the way. First of all I desire to visit churches and brethren in Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Missouri, where I have tried in years past to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, yet in this I know that there would be disappointment, because many brethren and sisters whom I have known personally have fallen asleep. However there is much consolation to know that the saints of the present generation are in my fellowship just the same as those I have known personally. Is it not a little of the flesh to desire more earnestly to meet our brethren that we have known face to face than those who have been brought home later? I desire to visit the old Redstone Association in the fall. It meets with the Maple Creek Church, Washington Co., Pa., the first county in Pennsylvania, east of Wheeling. It was organized in the year 1776, and has held yearly meetings since. I was a member of that association at one time for eight years. Brother and sister Carson, who live near that church now, but lived four years in Illinois, visited us in our home in Helena, Okla., in February, 1910. The association is much reduced, and embraces much territory; two churches near Grafton, W. Va., are now members of it.

I have tried to say more than I expected to, and not what I wanted to say. I hope that some things I have hinted at may be of benefit to you, in the absence of better reading matter.

Your brother in hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Sept. 11, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am sending you a letter which I submit to your judgment with reference to its publication in the SIGNS. I think it will be read with interest and profit.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

HANCEVILLE, Ala., Sept. 2, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—Some two or three months ago I ordered a hymn and tune book from you, and received the same promptly, and have intended to acknowledge the receipt of the book ever since, but have neglected to do so. I am pleased with it, as it is sound in faith as far as I can see, but there are some hymn-books in use among the Primitive Baptists that are Arminian in part, according to my poor, feeble judgment. It is said, Sing with the spirit and understanding, and I think all the hymns that God's children use should be sound in doctrine, otherwise I do not see how they can sing as they are commanded. If it will do just as well to use Arminian hymns, it will do just as well to preach Arminian doctrine, and that will not do, we must earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints, speak things that become sound doctrine, preach the Word. O how it makes poor, little, unworthy me quake and tremble to be called upon to stand up as a mouthpiece for that God who works all things after the counsel of his own will, who is so possessed with wisdom that nothing can take place differently from the way he thought it would, and thereby deceive him, for all things are open unto the eye of him with whom we have to do. "The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." No wonder such a poor, weak and undeserving worm as I am quakes and trembles at the thought of standing up to declare the whole counsel of such a Being. I realize his ability and my inability, his greatness and my littleness, his strength and my weakness, his independence and my dependence, his unchangeableness and myself as the most fickle creature. Brother Durand, do you have such thoughts and fears? I suppose you are an old man, and I am young, only twenty-six. I have only been with the Baptists since July, 1909; before June, 1909, I never heard a Primitive Baptist preach. I was a Baptist before, if I am now, but did not know it. I was taught methodism from my early childhood, and was a member of that order, but in May, 1909, a great change took place some way or somehow, I never could tell how, and after I had labored six days, as it were, I rested on the seventh from all my works. When conviction seized on my poor soul I began, as I was accustomed to do, to make vows and pray and try to make trades with the Lord, but it grew darker and I gave it up, and felt I was ruined and forever lost. I was hemmed in on either side with high mountains of sin; behind was the enemy, in front I knew not what, but at last relief came after I found out that the best I could do was but as filthy rags. I was dissatisfied with the doctrine of the Methodists, and thought of the Missionaries, but was not satisfied with their doctrine, and was at a loss where to go, yet I felt that I must go somewhere. I then began to read, and study and pray day and night for the Lord to direct me, for I had read concerning the church where Christ said, "The gates of hell shall not

prevail against it." One night I had been reading, and had gone to bed praying the Lord to direct me, and while I lay there (I cannot tell how it was) I saw a man coming down out of heaven, and he held in his hand a banner as red as scarlet, and he lighted upon the earth in a pulpit, or stand, and looked heavenward and waved his banner and disappeared, and it came into my mind with mighty force, Those you find doing whatsoever I have commanded them, there go. In a few days, as I was going to my work (hoeing cotton), I met a Methodist preacher, and he told me that my brother-in-law had joined the "Hardshells," and was going to be baptized the next third Sunday (third Sunday in June, 1909). I went to see him baptized just through respect to him, not having any idea of ever joining them, and when we got to the river (Mulberry) the preacher (Elder W. W. York) gave out a hymn and they sang it, and then after prayer brother Barfoot went into the water, together with Elder Geo. H. Fannin, and was baptized. I thought that was proper baptism. We then returned to the house, and Elder York preached a wonderful sermon from, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me," and then the church went into communion, and I thought that was the most beautiful sight I had ever seen, old, gray and bald heads bowing down and washing each other's feet, manifesting much humility and love. I loved them, and could not help it. I came home and told my wife that I had found the church, and one month from then I went to meeting, and, after preaching by Elder Fannin, I offered myself for membership, and tried to tell the brethren some of my experience, and in my stammering talk there were tears shed. They received me, and I was baptized one month afterward. I had not been in the church long before the brethren liberated me to speak in public, and I kept going and trying to talk in my weakness and ignorance (there was no satisfaction only in going and trying to talk), and on the 20th of August of this year I was ordained.

Brother Durand, the reason I ask you if you ever quake and tremble at the thought of preaching is because I do; it seems to me that if the brethren had waited another year it might have been better, nevertheless the counsel of the Lord shall stand.

I have made this poor letter too long already, and hope you will cast the mantle of love over my weakness and ignorance, and remember me when at the throne of grace.

Your brother, the least of all, if a brother at all,

A. C. GAMBLE.

DUNCAN, Okla., June 24, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will pen you a few lines, as I must pay the balance due on my paper for this year; many thanks to you for your kindness in carrying me over. Dear brethren, I should have sent it in sooner, but did not have it, so I feel thankful that you have had patience with me. Paul said to his brethren, Feed the flock over whom the Lord hath made you overseers, and it seems to me that the writers for our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, are doing that, for every number is full to the brim and running over. All eat of the same spiritual food, and it is the food that the Lord gives them, nor can the servants of Christ hand out anything else that will keep the flock alive. So, my brethren and sisters, it is a feast to me when I receive my paper,

which comes twice a month, and it is all the preaching I have, and it is a welcome visitor to my home. You know one of the writers said, Take heed unto thyself to see if you be in the faith of our Lord. Well, my dear kindred, if I am not deceived I am surely in fellowship with all that I read in the SIGNS, for it is my belief and experience. This testifies to my travels for forty-one years, and I find that I am not yet my own keeper, and except the Lord keep the city it will be kept in vain. I have found in my long wilderness travel that the blessed Lord is my keeper, my bread, my life and my stay. Yes, the Lord confirmeth the words of his servants and performeth the counsel of his messengers. "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." O dear brethren and sisters, are we not safe in the arms of our Savior? Can we trust in the arm of man for eternal life? Can he teach us to know the way except the Lord gives us light? No, I think not, for I create the fruits of the lips, saith the Lord. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." His foundation is in the holy mountains; the Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of our God. "The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there," and my hope is in the eternal will of God for eternal salvation; for the God of all the earth created the heavens and the earth, and things therein, chose his people in his Son, predestinated them unto the adoption of children, and if I am chosen in him will I not be secure? My trust is in him, and they that trust in the Lord shall be saved; for, dear brethren, there is none other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved, only Christ Jesus our Lord; cursed be every one that trusteth in an arm of flesh. I do not see in myself anything to merit his esteem, but salvation is of the Lord, and he knoweth them that are his, and none can pluck them out of the Father's hand, for his work is perfect; for by one offering he hath forever perfected them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus. He came to do the will of the Father, and when he cried, "It is finished," then he brought forth a nation in one day, and the whole house of Israel was complete; in the wisdom of God nothing was left undone for poor, puny man to do. "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table." Yes, the Lord's table is furnished for all of his children; he found them in a strange land, he led them about and instructed them, he gave them grace to feed them, and they can say, Praise the Lord for all his benefits to me, for I have tasted of the good word of God and it was sweet to my taste. The Lord is the hope of his people and all our salvation. My lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places, yea, I have a goodly heritage, therefore my heart is glad. In thy presence is fullness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Well, dear brethren, I will bring this poor letter to a close; do as you please with it. I only wanted to send my greetings to all of the household of faith, whose letters comfort me, and will you all remember one in your prayers who

feels to be the least in our Father's house? May the Lord give grace to all his servants, that they may comfort Zion and keep his house in order. Farewell.

Your sister in the Lord, I hope, saved only by the blood of Christ.

NANCY CREEL.

MUIRKIRK, Ontario, Aug. 13, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed you will find a letter from Elder Sawin, which is good, and which I much enjoyed, and which I think will be also by all those who have passed through deep waters in the journey through this world of sorrow and affliction. I am now here at my sister's home visiting.

From your sister in hope,

FLORA J. SINCLAIR.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., July 24, 1911.

MRS. FLORA SINCLAIR—DEAR SISTER:—Your good letter of the 15th inst. came duly to hand, and I am sure that I was glad to receive it, as it came in a time of great dearth. It was as a cup of cold water to a famishing, thirsty soul. For some days I had been in "Doubting Castle," or was in the "Slough of Despond." O how sad, dark and dismal are the days as they go by when our Beloved is gone, and we question, Am I his, and is he mine? Or, Are his mercies clean gone forever? My dear sister, I know that you know of these things, therefore I write of them. You have drank deep of the wormwood and the gall, but have been brought by these things into the fellowship of the sufferings of the dear Redeemer. But while passing through these dark, turbulent waters it is hard to see and feel that we are with the dear Son of God in his sufferings on earth, and that he is with us. So, like poor old Jacob, we say, All these things are against me, in sorrow and shame I shall be brought down. Yes, this will be the end. How many times I said last week, Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me whole. But the heavens seemed brass and my cry was but a chattering noise. Like a crane did I chatter. My suffering in body has been great, but the suffering in the flesh I could endure. But it was midnight in my soul. The blessed Provider of all things temporal and spiritual was gone from me, and I seemed about to sink in despair.

For the past three weeks or more I could neither dress nor undress myself, and often could get but little sleep, as both arms became affected. It became a question with us all whether I should go to my meeting on Saturday, about fifty miles away, and involving a change of cars on the way. Nearly every one said stay, but somehow, dark as I was, I could not give up going. I left on the early train, more dead than alive, wondering what the end would be. As I went along these words came to me, the last verse of the eighty-sixth Psalm, "Shew me a token for good." I got to the place of meeting, took up my Bible and read the chapter through. I thought that if I preached at all I would use those words, but I could only speak mechanically, as I felt no unction of the Spirit; I was still dead and without feeling. The friends gathered in, and, as is our custom, began to sing before meeting. I took up a book (Elder Durand's and Lester's tune book) and it just seemed to open at page 169. The first that caught my eye was, "Dear refuge of my weary soul." Not, however, remembering the sentiment of the hymn, I said, We will sing this. I sang the two first lines, when I broke down so completely that I could not, and did not, sing another line. My soul was filled

and I cried like a child. Every word was so full, so sweet, and so replete. Yes, He was my refuge; he was my hiding-place from the wind; he cared for me, yes, for even me. I felt as I leaned my head on the table weeping, Here is a token for good. I now feel that I had some unction of the Spirit in talking of the things of the text. I was rich now, and satisfied, my God would supply all my needs, and guide me all the way, even down to death. The meeting was pleasant, and seemed rich and satisfying to all. I arrived home yesterday, none the worse for my trip. I feel that I am better. The medicine seems to be taking effect in driving the rheumatism out of the system. I slept better last night than for several weeks. It may be that the burdened heart had something to do with preventing sleep; I am sure that it had something to do with the wakeful moments.

I have written you far more than I thought to do. You will pardon me. It is difficult to write, for my arms ache and it is easier to use a pencil. I thank you all for your great kindness to me. I wish every choice blessing from the Lord upon you all. May he who appoints the sparrow's fall, remember you in his pity, love and tender mercy.

With love and best wishes to all, most sincerely your brother,

P. W. SAWIN.

LOVELAND, Colorado.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—At the solicitation of brethren and sisters, whom I hope I can claim as kindred in Christ, some of whom are strangers to me in the flesh, to write more for publication in the SIGNS, I will try to do so more frequently than I have in the past, and now, brethren editors, I want you to judge whether what I write is worth publishing or not. I have no desire to write anything that will lead to or bring about controversy. When I receive letters written in what appears to me to be a speculative manner, I seldom answer them, for I feel that the word of truth is too sacred to be handled in a light manner or trifling way. Perhaps I am the most peculiar creature that you ever knew. I am even a mystery to myself, then how strange I must appear to others. Sometimes a text of Scripture or some subject fixes itself upon my mind, and I am unable to throw it off until I sit down and write out such thoughts as come to my mind. Often after I have penned my thoughts on paper and look over them I cannot see one word of comfort or instruction in them to any one, so commit what I have written to the flames. At other times I have sent letters perhaps equally as dull and lifeless (to me) to the SIGNS, and have received in response some most comforting letters, which made me rejoice to know that I, though downcast in spirit, had been enabled to comfort at least one of God's dear children, and this would encourage me to write again. I have received several just such good and comforting letters recently. Elder Durand's letter to me, not long since, gave me much encouragement to write more frequently. May God enable you to contend earnestly for the faith and truth as it is in Jesus, is my prayer.

This morning while reflecting over the past, my mind was led to a time in my life, fifty-five years ago, when I hope that God gave me an evidence of his great love to me, in the pardon of all my sins for his beloved Son's sake. For a time all was joy and rejoicing with me, but when duty called me to arise and be baptized, then fear and trembling took

hold on me, and for eight years I neglected the duty, until the smartings of the chastening rod drove me home to my friends, there to tell them what great things I hoped the Lord had done for me. With the poet I then could sing, "O how happy are they who their Savior obey." I learned that in deed and truth, "Tongue cannot express the sweet comfort and peace of a soul in its earliest love." That sweet comfort was mine, and for a season O what sweet communion I felt I had with God, but when the tempter came how changed my condition was. That sweetest of all privileges, or blessings (prayer), was taken from me. From my first serious meditations of my condition as a sinner standing before the just and holy God I had a desire to read his word, the Scriptures, and as the beauties of the word of truth seemed from time to time to be unfolded to my mind I did rejoice in God for his blessings to me, but now in my old age even that blessing seems to be taken away, and my mind has become dull as to spiritual understanding. Is this the experience of a christian? It is my own experience, be it an experience of a child of grace or not. Sometimes I am asked, Do you not know that you are a christian? They are amazed at me when I answer, I do not, but sometimes I hope I am a child of grace, but do not know that I am. I dare not say I know I am; I dare not say that I know that I ever offered an acceptable prayer unto God in all my life, but I sometimes hope that God has heard my cry when on bended knees trying to ask him for the pardon of all my sins, that he would remember me in mercy. He who says that he knows he is a saint of God and knows when he dies that he will enter the heaven of immortal glory, can have no hope of heaven, because Paul says, "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen, is not hope." No man can hope for that which he already possesses. If we hope for that we see (possess) then our hope is vain, "but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." The christian's hope is the expectation of the fulfillment of God's promise to usward, and is founded upon the belief of God's almighty power and the immutability of his word, the precious blood of the Lamb of God, and his intercession for us at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Is not this a precious hope indeed? How different was our condition when we felt that we were without hope and without God in the world. With the christian's hope we can with the sweet singer in Israel say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name."

J. H. YEOMAN.

KINGSTON, N. J., June 24, 1911.

MY DEAR PASTOR:—I feel sad and lonely, because I am so far away that I cannot meet with you and the dear brethren and sisters this afternoon to hear the sweet words of Jesus to poor sinners, such as I feel myself to be. I cannot express the joy and comfort there is in the gospel, but I hope that the dear Lord has called me by his grace.

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me."

When I told some of my friends that I had been to New York to the association, after attending ours, some of them said that they thought I had heard preaching enough for awhile, but that is not the way I feel about it. I hope the good Lord will keep me in remembrance of him, and that I may not forget the assembling of myself together with them,

as the manner of some is. If we have felt his love in our hearts how can we forget his commandments?

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in christian love."

This is Sunday morning, and my heart and mind are with you in your assembling this morning, and I hope you are having a good meeting. I hope you will remember me in your prayer, as you often do those who are not present and who cannot attend, for I need the prayers of the brethren.

"When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark and vain and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?"

O is there any one like me, so prone to err and so far from what a child of God should be? But the Lord is merciful to our unrighteousness. Were it not so I would be forever lost. It is not in my power to do one good thing, but I hope that Jesus died for me and took away all my sins, and hope is as far as I can get. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." O what joy it is to meet with them and to hear them tell of the love of God. I thought at the association at Locktown that I never had heard such good preaching before in all the years in which I had attended associations. It has been the will of God that I should attend all our associations for thirty years, but my age will not permit me to go to them many more years. I often think that if I, a sinner, may be so happy as to meet the dear ones above, how blessed it will be. It is my greatest pleasure in this world to meet with the dear brethren and sisters and to hear them tell of the love of God to his little children. I always take some copies of the SIGNS with me when I go to visit my children and friends, and they think it strange that I cannot go with them to their meetings, but I feel as though I had no right to go, and I have no desire to do so. All I hear is the Sunday School and good works, but I have to confess to them that I can do nothing good, not even to have a good thought of myself. The SIGNS for June 1st and 15th have such good letters and editorials in them; they are good for the hungry soul who can do nothing to merit esteem.

Hoping that you will excuse all mistakes and receive this letter with love, I am your sister in Christ,

(MRS.) GEORGE GOLDEN.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., August 28, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The inclosed letter, written by sister Mary Hill Terry to the Salem Church, Philadelphia, was read at our last church meeting, and a request was made that it be published in the SIGNS, if in your judgment it would be proper. Brethren who are absent from their regular church meetings for any length of time should be encouraged to communicate with the church at such times. It is comforting to us to be informed that the absent ones have us in their minds and hearts.

B. F. COULTER.

TO THE SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH—DEAR ONES ALL:—As I will be away from you at this regular church meeting, I feel to write you a few lines. I do desire the blessings of the Lord to be with you and keep you in this sad day, this day when there are so many lo heres and lo theres on every side, some telling of one belief, and some of another, and so disturbing and confusing the mind. When we can in all truth and sincerity look at the truth as it is written, not only in the Book of all books, but in our minds and hearts, by our experience and the teachings we have had,

sometimes in deep and troubled waters and sometimes by the mountain side and yet still further on the mountain, then do we know that there is only one truth, only one way, one path, and when once more we have been brought back from roaming we feel we never will again enter the by and forbidden paths, but how very prone we are to wander (of myself I can say), as the sparks are to fly upward. I cannot look on the rest of you as myself, for I am so much of the time in one turmoil or another, sometimes on account of myself and my doings, and sometimes on the account of others. Brother Breese when he was here gave me comfort in some of it by saying, I am very thankful I do not have to do as some do, and I try to never forget that the body is more than raiment, and with his little sermon came comfort to me, and I do feel that it is tiding me over some rough places. O that it may be the Father's will to keep us with the same love one to another. May he give us understanding of the truth that we look not to see what we can find in this and that new theory, but be strong and firm, as one man, yes, the man Christ Jesus. Whenever we are called on for our views on these new things may we one and all be enabled to enter our closet and shut the door (not in our own strength), ask of the Father to guide us and keep us in the true faith, which can only be known by revelation; ask him to harden our hearing to all speculation, and to know the truth only. Right now comes a close question to myself, Do you often go to that closet of prayer? and with much sadness must I answer, No. I do so desire to pray, but it seems I am so far from prayer; sins, foolishness, confusion and weakness seem to bar me from that sweet and humble place. I cannot seem to get in the closet; you know it is such a small place, only large enough for a poor, contrite heart, and when we go and take loftiness, envy, strife, confusion, untruthfulness, evil lurkings, there is not room and the door will not shut; but when we can bow with the Father's will be done, and desire the absence of all things that separate us from love, joy, peace, &c., then are we small and the Father's compassion is on us, and the door he shuts, and there he gives us the blessing. O thou most Holy One, who am I that I could say aught against thy will? O keep me near thee, and with desire that thy will, not mine, be done. O that I could love thee more and serve thee better, and ever be ready to do thy will, that I could be a comfort to the dear ones, and that it may be thy will to give me a clear knowledge and true understanding, that in my conversation I deceive no one. I do desire to do thy testimonies and keep thy statutes, and ever have of thy strength, and not be afraid of man in doing thy will. I desire this to be a season of rejoicing for you, one and all, in the truth as you hear it proclaimed, but always give all thanks and praise of rejoicing unto him to whom belongeth all the glory. Our dear pastor, may to you be given knowledge to divide the word of truth to your hearers. May you always be a stay and comfort to them, esteeming no one above another, for God is no respecter of persons. May you receive comfort from your heavenly Father for yourself and for your brethren. I would ask of you one and all, when it is well with you, remember this poor, unworthy one in your prayers, that I may be kept, and not suffered to fall. My love to you all.

Your very unworthy sister,

MARY HILL TERRY.

VANLEER, Tenn., Aug. 5, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a letter written to me by L. T. Heath, which I would be pleased to see in your good paper. If all knew dear brother Heath as I do they would enjoy any expression from him, as he adorns the doctrine of God with a well ordered walk and a godly conversation. He is a true witness of God if I am any judge, as he is a firm believer in God working all things after the counsel of his own will and for the good of his people. I feel that his letter will be of interest to your many readers, for I know that I love to hear from any of God's little ones at any time, so I will let your readers share his much comforting letter to me. It reached me in much affliction, as I have been under the treatment of the doctors since May, and am not yet able to work, but thank God I am improving, and it does me good to read letters that give God the preeminence in all things.

Yours to serve in bonds,

L. D. SEALS.

HICKMAN, Ky., July 29, 1911.

ELDER L. D. SEALS—DEAR BROTHER:—I hope it is God's good pleasure to guide me by his Spirit, and lead me, as I have a desire to address you in a humble manner, as one who loves you and all of the faithful in Christ. I was reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to-day, while the gentle drops of rain were falling, which I esteem as a great blessing to us poor creatures in this part of the country, and found a short but precious letter from you. As I finished reading the last editorial I was made to cry out, O what wondrous love is this, O my soul! Yes, dear brother, it is wonderful indeed to think of that great love to us poor sinners. As the apostle Paul said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief;" and if I am not mistaken, I often feel that I am the chief of sinners, for I find myself murmuring and complaining, and am "so vile and prone to sin, I fear that I'm not born again." If I am a child of God I surely am the least of all. "I am a stranger here below, and what I am 'tis hard to know." O what wonderful love, that the Lord of glory should lay aside his crown and die upon the cross for poor sinners who were sinking with their guilt. No wonder John was moved by the Spirit to say, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Yes, it is wonderful to me, a poor sinner, that the Father had such great love for us poor creatures that he would send his only Son to these low grounds of sorrow and lay upon him the sins of us all. He bare them all, and hath put them away by the sacrifice of himself, and will not remember them against us any more forever. He is the Way, the Truth and the Life; yes, he is our life, if our names are written in the book of life, and we can say with Paul, "But by the grace of God I am what I am." Now, dear brother, if I am not what I am by grace, I am of all men most miserable, for it would be only in this life I have hope. The great love is unspeakable and full of tender mercy and loving-kindness to poor sinners saved by grace alone, the gift of God.

Dear brother, I hope you will pardon me for trespassing upon your time in trying to read this poor attempt, and throw the mantle of charity around a poor, ignorant sinner. I hope love has prompted me to write.

Yours in Christ, I hope,

L. T. HEATH.

ELGIN, Oregon, August 21, 1911.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—You see I am bothering you again, and I will tell you why. Elder Mayfield gave me the July 15th, 1911, SIGNS. Your article on page 441 is just full of good meat, yes, and milk, too, and I believe I can say you are the first man that ever advocated (to me) my views on that Scripture, though there may be many who believe that way. I never could see how one could expect a blessing for obedience, for it is our duty to be obedient, but never our duty or right to be disobedient. We may, and I believe do, merit chastisement, but never a blessing, for it is a blessed state when we are obedient. I do believe that is nearly the best number of the SIGNS I ever read. Brother Yeoman had no idea his article headed "Meditations" would find a poor, weak sinner way out here in Oregon, and one little expression caused me to fold up the paper and say, Just and holy are thy ways, thou King of saints. Now a little explanation. My wife is almost a helpless invalid, and has been for ten years; at this time she has been down four months. Harvest is at hand, I am trying to get us a home, am in debt, different brethren asking me to visit their church (I am glad they want me), and here I am so encumbered with the cares of this life and affliction that at times the way is dark. Now is it any wonder that I felt to say as I read brother Yeoman's writing, Well done? Brother Benson's article was good. Shall I name all the dear ones whose names appear in that number? It is not needful to do so, for each one seems to be exactly right; then when you compare the expressions of Elder Dudley and his dear words of comfort to sister Larue you can say to sister Bonnie, These promises are yours, too. Not only do we need this sustaining grace at all times, but we have the precious promise that, "My grace is sufficient," I will never leave nor forsake, and the dear Comforter will be with us, though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death. There is none like unto our Beloved; he is the fairest and altogether lovely one.

I will tell you of the good meeting we had yesterday, Saturday, the 20th, at 2 p. m., our day of business. We had preaching, after which brother Will Abbott came and asked a home with us, and as brother Yeoman says, he was gladly received. After preaching Sunday he was baptized, then the members present and many of their friends went home with brother Burch and had dinner and some singing, so I for one can say it was a good time long to be remembered.

Well, dear brother, I will bring my letter to a close. Remember me when at the throne of grace as one who, when he would do good, evil is present.

T. E. ATTEBERY.

CLAREMONT, Cal., Sept. 3, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am impressed to write you a few lines, and if they are of any profit you may give them to your readers, though I claim no merit should they be of any worth, for I oft-times wonder that anything which comes through my mind could be purged of its polluteness sufficient that any one having knowledge of the truth could be forbearing enough to give it heed.

"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."—Rev. iv. 11. This is the declaration of the four and twenty Elders that John saw in his vision of God's throne. They have a

significant bearing upon the sovereign will and power of God that I wish to write about. In his vision John saw the four and twenty Elders fall down before him who sat upon the throne and worship him, and cast their crowns before the throne and made this declaration. Without the aid of dictionaries or helps of any kind, only our knowledge of the plain English language, and without entering into any attempt to make the language express anything more than its literal meaning, let us see what we can get out of the words used in the text and the verse preceding it.

Here we find the word "throne." We all have a perception of what a throne is: a seat or chair wherein kings and rulers sit; the highest seat of authority. Now, since the four and twenty Elders worshiped him that liveth forever and ever, and as God is the only character that we can apply such language to, this throne that John saw must be the throne of God; so we have an opportunity through John's vision to behold the highest of all thrones. While we are beholding this great, wonderful, mysterious seat of power, seated upon which is the great Ruler of the universe, beyond all mortal conception, come four and twenty Elders, having crowns upon their heads, which, along with the fact that they were allowed to come before this great and awful throne, makes them as far superior to kings and potentates as the greatest king of earth is above his meanest subject. They cast their crowns at the foot of the throne. Just think of these four and twenty Elders, so superior to earthly kings or potentates, being compelled to cast their crowns at His feet, not daring to wear them in his presence or to even hold them in their hands, but must cast them at his feet; then the declaration couched in the language of the text. We must notice, too, how wonderfully this language is worded. To those who cannot through spiritual knowledge realize that the past, present or future with God is ever the same, the language of the first declaration is not sufficient; and also for those who through ignorance of man's insignificance venture to declare that many of the inventions and discoveries are sought out by man's own ability, or in other words, thought it out himself (not knowing from whence cometh thought), the second clause is used: "And for thy pleasure they are and were created." And yet after all there is no such thing as a compromise in it, for in the first part is the plain declaration, "Thou hast created all things," and in the second clause he does not relinquish the claim; but foolish man grasps at what he thinks is a straw, and leaves behind another declaration, which, coupled with the former, makes a stronger declaration than if the words had not been used. "For thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." Now if God created all things, and for his own pleasure, let us not accuse him of being so unwise as to create something that was not for his pleasure, or which would do differently from what he intended it should. Now then, brethren, let us declare as did the four and twenty Elders. We are told that every eye shall behold him and every knee shall bow to him, and if these great men had to cast the crowns that the Lord had placed on their heads at the foot of the throne, what will be required of the poor worm of the dust who calls himself man? Yes, I say, let us all who have a hope that our sins have been forgiven, make the declaration: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and

power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created," and stick to it, and then there is no room for discussion. I have sympathy and pity for the poor sinner who knows not God, but for the man who declares God to be the supreme ruler of the universe, and then denies his power, I can only pray the Lord to forgive him.

Your brother in Christ, I hope,

OLIVER P. SPEIRS.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder Frederick W. Keene.)

The Maine Conference, assembled with the Old School Baptist Church at North Berwick, Maine, September 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1911, to the churches composing the associations with which we correspond.

BRETHREN BELOVED IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD:—Thus we greet you, wishing you all new covenant blessings in him who is the Husband and Redeemer of his body, the church. Another year has passed with all its vicissitudes since we last wrote to you. The times that have passed over us have been such as our God hath decreed.

"Times of sickness, times of health,
Times of penury and wealth,
Times of trial and of grief,
Times of triumph and relief,
Times the tempter's power to prove,
Times to taste a Savior's love;
All must come, and last, and end,
As shall please our heavenly Friend."

This is most comforting, and bids us be of good cheer, for our heavenly Friend is our Lord Jesus Christ, "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen." The good hope through grace that we have in Christ's gospel is full of peace, and yields unspeakable blessedness to believers. The apostle Paul speaks of "the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."—Col. i. 27. This hope of eternal glory in our souls is truly a divine mystery, and very blessed, filling the soul with adoring gratitude, are those glimpses given to us by the Holy Spirit, of the riches of the glory of this mystery. As from day to day all our pilgrimage we are being taught of the Lord, we are learning what humiliation and dishonor sin has brought us into. Every pain, all discomfiture, all the cares and trials, all the bitters of life, all the sighs, vexations, all the decay of the earthly house of this tabernacle, and at last our mortal bodies being laid low in the dust, in death, all declare that man in his best state is altogether vanity; that the glory of man is a frail, perishing thing, a fading flower. (Isaiah xl. 7.) We are the prey of innumerable evils all the days of our sojourn in the earth. Notwithstanding all the vaunted self-sufficiency of proud man, he is the helpless prey of evils. He may attempt to compass himself with defenses, but evils spring up, they come upon him from all quarters, from things and places little dreamed of. "Man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward." Who of the human race can say, I will not be anxious over this? I will not be annoyed, the heat shall not be too oppressive and the cold shall not blight my endeavors? Who can say, Whatsoever I do shall prosper? Everything shall please me, no burden shall be too heavy, no path too rough; I will not grow old, my powers shall not decay, I will ever be young and vigorous, wrinkles, spots and blemishes shall not appear in my flesh, sickness, pain, diseases shall

not take hold of me; I defy death, it shall not lay me low in the dust to be the prey of corruption? Ah, with all man's boasted abilities, he is without strength. How often he is disturbed by very trifles. A speck of dust, without his permission, gets into his eye and causes him grief. Thoughts arise within him that he would not have, and that he would quell and banish if he could, and the countenance is clouded with oppressions, vexation or anger. How easily the creature man is moved! He is weak, thousands of things assail and dishonor him and mar all his supposed glory. This is true of kings as well as the meanest of slaves. Could we even attain to the heights of Solomon in all his glory, even then we should find all to be vanity and vexation of spirit. Then look at the surges uprising from the dismal deep of our corrupt nature, at times flooding the soul with jealousies, envy, covetousness, suspicions, hatreds, adulteries, murders and "such like." (Gal. v. 21.) Can any mortal say, Such like things shall not proceed out of my heart? They are in the human heart, (Matt. vii. 21–23,) and come forth, discover themselves, exercise us, disturb all our being and bring wretchedness into the human family; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Such is man; he was created in the image of God, but now we see him so marred, so weak, so dishonored. Those who are of God, born of God, are brought by the teaching of the Holy Spirit to know that they are subject to vanity, and often they are ashamed, they sigh and groan before God, they are wearied with indwelling sin, they are heavy-hearted under temptations, they are buffeted with Satan's messengers; trials and afflictions, adversities of various kinds weaken their strength in the way, and show them what poor, helpless worms they are. I have presented all this dark picture to shew in whom the riches of God's glory is made known in the gospel mystery, which is Christ in you the hope of glory. If, dear brethren, we are destined to glory, and to be ever glorious in the eyes of the Lord, then surely it is of the sovereign kindness of the glorious God. That it is such poor sinners that God will exalt to glory, is very evident from the Scriptures, for, "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory." —1 Samuel ii. 8. And they are designated "vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles."—Romans ix. 23, 24. Now the attainment of such bliss is far beyond the powers of vain man. Man is a vile transgressor, and every breath he breathes is only to treasure up dishonor upon dishonor upon himself, and under the law he is under the curse of the holy, almighty One. Where then can there be any ground for hope that such sinners shall inherit the throne of glory? The everlasting gospel tells to our hearts the glorious tidings. It all comes through him who is the Lord of glory, even our precious Jesus Christ, whom the world knoweth not. Had they known him they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. (1 Cor. ii. 8.) The realms of glory are his, and the King of glory came down into this world; he was made of a woman, and made under the law, to redeem his people, that we might receive the adoption of sons. He is the Captain of their salvation, and in bringing the many sons of God unto glory he was made perfect through sufferings. Then it is our dear Savior who will bring us to glory, and it

is in relationship, in oneness with him, in his achievements, in his love and grace toward us, dwelling in our hearts by faith, that he is in us the hope of glory. What foundation have we in him for the hope of eternal glory? When the Son of God, the King of glory, descended and took upon him the seed of Abraham, it was to ransom his people, to remove all the dishonor, all the curse that sin and Satan had plunged them into.

"Plunged in a gulf of dark despair,
We wretched sinners lay,
Without one cheerful beam of hope,
Or spark of glimmering day.

With pitying eyes the Prince of grace
Beheld our helpless grief;
He saw, and (O amazing love!)
He ran to our relief."

In the eternal purpose which Jehovah purposed in Christ all is secured. They shall inherit glory, for the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. The creature shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Then, if this is to be accomplished, and Zion shall be in perfection of beauty unto God throughout eternity, all the pollutions, all the transgressions of the chosen of God must be atoned for and put away, and this Christ has done by the sacrifice of himself. "By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."—Heb. x. 14. When the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, takes of this of Christ and shews it to our sin-troubled hearts, hope springs up, we are refreshed, and we say, Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength, and we thus begin, in faith in the perfect atonement of Christ for our sins, to feed upon and rejoice in "the glory which shall be revealed in us." For "it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." O this is the glory to which we are reaching forth: that we may apprehend that for which also we are apprehended of Christ Jesus. This glory to which the saints are destined is that they shall be forever with the Lord in immortality and incorruption, bearing the image of Jesus Christ, the heavenly One, the Lord from heaven. He shall present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. Though now afflictions, temptations and griefs are in measure our lot in the world, yet we are to be glorified together with our ascended Head of the church, for our life is hid with Christ in God, and when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory. We are predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expecta-

tion of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." The vessels of mercy are afore prepared unto glory by the atoning blood of Christ, the Lamb of God, and by being born of God, of incorruptible seed, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. That mysterious, gracious and transforming work of the Holy Spirit in quickening sinners, in putting the fear of the Lord in their hearts and inspiring them to faith and love and hope in Christ Jesus, is truly the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts, the earnest of the glory that shall be revealed in us when, at Christ's coming, we shall appear with him in glory; then shall mortality be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame things is God, who also hath given us the earnest of the Spirit. O the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you the hope of glory. Glory is tasted here below, it is Jesus Christ in our hearts. It is that in him we have redemption, even the forgiveness of sins. It is peace, sweet friendship and communion with God through our beloved Redeemer and our gracious Mediator, by whom we have access into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. O is it not a wonder of wonders that sinful worms of the dust should be called unto Jehovah's eternal glory in Christ Jesus? Such is the eternal purpose purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord; we are called to the obtaining of the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. Christ has entered into his glory, he was received up into glory, and all his chosen members for whom he gave his life a ransom shall ultimately be with him in glory. God sends forth the Spirit of his Son into the hearts of the chosen heirs of glory, crying, Abba, Father, and they find their quickened souls, animated by divine life, longing for that glory in our Father's house on high. O to be holy and without blame before him in love, to be like him, to see him as he is, to be conformed to the image of God's dear Son, the immortal, incorruptible, eternally glorious, altogether lovely One. Well might the dying Stephen, beholding Jesus standing on the right hand of God, be found calling upon God and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"—Acts vii. 59. And that crucified thief, having glimpses given him by the Holy Ghost of the everlasting, glorious kingdom of Christ, cried out to the King, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."—Luke xxiii. 42, 43. Now it is very manifest that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, and not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. (Rom. viii. 20–23.) In the resurrection, at the last day, this shall be consummated, for saith the apostle Paul: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that

is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. xv. 50-57.

"I shall sleep sound in Jesus,
Filled with his likeness rise,
To love and to adore him,
To see him with mine eyes.
'Tween me and resurrection
But paradise doth stand,
Then, then for glory dwelling
In my Emmanuel's land."

Soon shall the cup of glory wash down earth's bitterest woes;
Soon shall the desert briar break into Eden's rose;
The curse shall change to blessing, the name on earth that's banned,
Be graven on the White Stone in my Emmanuel's land.

We have appointed our next annual conference to assemble with the church at North Berwick, Maine, commencing on Friday before the first Monday in September, 1912, and continuing three days.

FREDERICK W. KEENE, Mod.
JOSEPH F. HALL, Clerk.

(Written by Elder G. B. Bird.)

The Pocatalico Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Hopewell Church, September 14th, 15th and 16th, 1911, to the churches composing her body, and the associations with which she corresponds, sendeth christian salutation.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST, THE REDEEMED OF THE LORD:—Again we have been made to assemble ourselves together at this place in an association; not merely permitted, but made to do this, according as God has purposed in himself before time began. "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations."—Psalms xxxiii. 11. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."—Eph. ii. 4-6. All things that exist (the devil included) are absolutely passive in the hands of God, and fully subject to his almighty power. All power is of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God. O that we may be made to be still and know that he is God, and that he (God) is working all things after the counsel of his own will, and that he will do all his pleasure with all his creation.

"Keep silence, all created things,
And wait your Maker's nod;
My soul stands trembling while she sings
The honors of her God."

As a text for this our Circular Letter we desire to use James i. 27: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." We read in the inspired word of two trees, the good tree and the evil tree, and all the actions or thoughts of man are the fruit of one or the other of these two trees. Man is always and continually ruled and controlled by one or the other of the two powers, or spirits, represented by the two trees. Verily man has neither the power to loose himself nor save himself, but all the Adamic family stand justly condemned before God by reason of the disobedience, or sin, of the evil tree, the first man Adam, who was of the earth earthy, and all the elect of God are holy and without blame before God in love by reason of what Jesus, the good Tree, hath done, which we could not do, in this, that he did fully obey the whole law of God for the elect lady. Adam's

sin and disobedience are imputed to us, his posterity, to-day, and reckoned as our disobedience and our sin, and the perfect obedience of Christ is imputed to all the heirs of promise, and is reckoned as their obedience and their righteousness. Religion is defined by the world to mean the external appearance of men, but Christ speaks of this outward appearance, and condemns it, and likens it unto a whited sepulcher, calling them hypocrites, &c. The great difference between pure religion and the religion of those Pharisees is, one is the work of the flesh, the other the work of Christ through the Spirit. But religion has a much deeper meaning than this to those who have that pure and undefiled kind; it is Christ in you the hope of glory, it is the love of God in your hearts, and when you visit the sick and afflicted, ministering to their needs, you do so from a principle of divine love in your heart, and not for vainglory, nor for hope of reward, either now or hereafter. Verily it is charity that moves or exercises you, and you are made willing because God is working in you both to will and to do, and of his good pleasure preparing your heart within you and giving you the answer of the tongue. There is a great movement among the abominable and hateful Babylonish secret orders of the day towards charity, and yet there is not one particle of the true principle of charity in them, for they must be paid for what they do, and those who join them become their slaves, and how any of God's little ones can join them and fellowship them is more than I can tell; worldly gain, vainglory and hypocrisy are at the foundation of it all. Personally I abhor secret orders of all kinds, for I do think them greatly threatening to our national liberty, combining as they do nearly all religious creeds (excepting, however, the Zion of our God, who shall dwell alone and shall not be reckoned among the nations) in one great dangerous and secret band. Pure religion produces in us a spirit of forgiveness, it shows us our sins, and therefore we cannot throw stones, but rather we would desire to apply the oil of love to the erring ones and help them upon their feet again, and thereby bear one another's burdens, and bear the infirmities of the weak. All the Adamic race are sinners in the sight of God, but those who have this pure religion are penitent sinners. All those who feel the exceeding sinfulness of sin in themselves desire to forgive others for their wrongs, seeing they need the forgiveness of their brethren and of our God every day of their lives.

In closing, dear kindred in Christ, let me request that we all work for the peace and welfare of Zion, as well as to live loyal to our country and each other as much as in us is, knowing that God is not the author of confusion, but of peace. The love of God be with you all. Amen.

J. H. TERRY, Moderator.

G. B. BIRD, Clerk.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1911.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

LUKE XVIII. 7.

OUR aged brother, E. D. Varnes, of Farmington, Ill., has made a special request that we should present such thoughts as we have upon the words found in Luke xviii. 7, which read as follows: "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?"

In compliance with this request we desire to say, first of all, that it has seemed to us there is no portion of all the word of God which contains matter more consoling to the people of God, when they are oppressed and persecuted by enemies of God and truth, than do these words of the dear Redeemer. They are assured by them that the God whom they worship, and in whom they trust, and to whom they cry again and again, does regard them and hear them, and that he will finally deliver them and give them the victory over all their adversaries. This is the general truth taught in the text. In Revelation, sixth chapter, we read of those who had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held, crying and saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" In this last text we have the cry of the persecuted and oppressed saints in their distress, and in the Savior's words we have the assurance that when it is right and most for their good and for the glory of God, though the time seem long, he will appear for their relief and deliverance. In the cry of the souls under the altar, as recorded in Revelation, there is no spirit of revenge, for this indeed our God would neither hear nor answer, since he has forbidden revenge, and by his own example taught us to pray for our persecutors, but God has said, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." So the first martyr, Stephen, prayed in the hour of his death by violent hands, Lord Jesus, lay not this sin to their charge. It is true, and these Scriptures declare this truth, that our God deals justly with all, and that he will in the end overcome all his foes and visit them with his just judgment for all that they have done against his name and his people; but still, as all his people have come to confess their transgressions, and to feel their need of pardon, and to confess that they are in nowise better than others, and have come to hope their sins are forgiven, they can but desire for others that same mercy which has been shown to them. Rightly understood, there is nothing in all these Scriptures contrary to the spirit of forgiveness, nor to the prayer for forgiveness of others who have sinned against God in wronging his dear children. But we desire to call attention to a few reflections that occur to us with regard to this text and its connection.

First. Let it be noticed that the word "avenge" in the text and in the Scripture quoted just before from Revelation, has the meaning of doing justice. It does not convey the thought which we in

our time attach to it, of malice, or even of anger, seeking to inflict suffering upon one who has wronged us for the sake of seeing that one suffer, but rather of even-handed justice, without malice or anger. Those under the altar were not crying for more than deliverance and victory, which seemed to them to be long delayed, and in the text Jesus declares that God will in the end deliver and raise up his afflicted people above all their trials and persecutions. He will deal justly by them as between them and their oppressors. Their oppressors are his enemies, too, and sooner or later they shall rise and their foes shall fall. The dear Savior is here giving to his disciples a glimpse into the sanctuary of God. David, perplexed and oppressed by all he had seen of the prosperity of the wicked and the sorrows and distresses of the righteous, when he was brought into the sanctuary of God saw the end of both. The wicked should be cut off, and the righteous should be delivered. Here and now there is much to perplex our minds, because we cannot look steadfastly to the end, but now and then our Lord takes us into a sacred nearness to himself and shows us his covenant and some of its promises, and then we are strengthened in faith and hope to wait a little longer patiently until the full purpose of God toward his own beloved ones is shown.

Second. Perhaps it will be well to call attention to the expression, "Though he bear long with them." Upon the face of it it would appear that the Savior was speaking of the weaknesses and wanderings and disobediences of his own disciples, but we think that close attention to the text and all that is in its connection will show that this is not his meaning. The connection tells of wrongs against them, and not of wrongs that they had done. The word "bear" in the text, literally could rather be rendered suffer, while the word "with" has the force of on or upon, and it seems clear to our mind that the meaning is, God will deal justly with his elect, he will do them justice, though it be a long time before their deliverance shall come. Is there not a similar thought in the prophecy of Habakkuk: If the vision tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry? In the purpose of God it does not tarry, but comes at the instant appointed, and if to us it seems to delay, still look for it, and believe that it shall come just as God has decreed it shall. To one sick and suffering the night seems long indeed, but yet it is really no longer than any other night, and at the appointed hour the blessed dawn shall come. God shall help his people, and that right early, and "right early" does not mean one moment before the time, any more than it means one moment after the time. "Right early" is just in the right time, yet how long it may seem to the soul filled with pain ere deliverance comes.

Third. In the last portion of the preceding chapter the Master had told them of the coming kingdom, and of many trying things before it should come. Under these things disciples might well become discouraged; it might well seem to them that their prayers were not heard, and that it was as well not to pray at all. We have cried to God long and he has not heard us. Mocking enemies say, "Where is thy God?" and the unbelief within the flesh was crying out also, "Where is thy God?" and it seemed to them that there was no answer. But Jesus meets this condition of temptation because of these trials with the parable

with which chapter eighteen begins. There was, he says, in a certain city a judge, unjust, having no fear of God and no regard for man; that is, he was godless, and possessed not even the ordinary sympathy of one man for another; his whole purpose was to get gain for himself; justice, as between man and man, was furthest from his thoughts; if a dispute was brought before him he who was willing to reward him most gained the decision. He was not even careful to conceal his corruption. He did not regard man. To him a poor widow came, asking justice; she said, Avenge me of my adversary. In some matter another stood opposed to her. She sought only justice, and came to the unjust judge with her plea. This woman was a widow, with none to plead her cause for her; she was poor, and could not bribe the judge, neither could she employ another to conduct her case. All this ought not to have been against her, and would not have been with a judge who regarded justice and right, but as it was, what chance had she to be heard? It would seem there was none at all. But she was persistent, again and again she came, and refused to be put off. Her need was great, for she was poor. No doubt it is the Savior's meaning that her need drove her forward to pursue her case before the judge. She, no doubt, knew that the judge was unjust, that he sought a bribe which she could not give, and could she have given it, did she possess honesty of heart, she would not. The people of God are poor and honest, they do not have any bribe to give, and would not give it if they could. At last the unjust judge was wearied, and he said within himself (that is, it was his thought), I have no regard for justice or right, but she is continually coming and persisting and she wearies me, I am tired of her importunity, therefore I will hear and do her justice. In all this parable the dear Redeemer taught this one lesson: that men ought to always pray and not to faint; that is, not become discouraged. The woman's long continued importunity at length won its victory against all the indifference and self-seeking of the unjust judge. There was in her case no encouragement arising from justice and probity and love of right in the judge, yet she still continued to intercede before him, and gained her case because she wearied even one like him, until, to get rid of her, he granted her request.

Fourth. On the other hand, Jesus reminds his disciples that their case is brought before Him who is just and right, and who loves righteousness and hates iniquity; and not only so, but their cause is presented before him who holds an inheritance in those who come to him. "Shall not God avenge his own elect?" They are his own by election, by purchase with a great redemption price, by regeneration and in the everlasting covenant. He has loved them with an everlasting love. He has so loved them as to give his only begotten Son that they might live. By his justice and by his love they are secure. In every controversy with the adversaries of their way it is sure that they shall be victors. God will hear their cause, for he is their Father, their Redeemer and their God. Have they not every encouragement to continue to cry to him in all their distresses? Let us remember that the blessed Lord is not here speaking so much of inward temptations as of outward distresses from the hatred of their foes, his foes, and theirs for his sake. Wherefore do the wicked prosper?

Wherefore are we distressed so much? These are their questionings, and when God, for wise purposes, seems to delay his coming and his help, in their weakness of faith they often grow full of doubt. Does he regard us after all? Are his mercies clean gone forever? Will he be merciful no more? And with us, as with the psalmist, these are our infirmities. God is not forgetful, neither is his arm shortened, but we are full of infirmities. He is not straitened toward us, but we are straitened in our weakness of faith. The Scriptures are full of narratives of just such conflicts which went on in the hearts of holy men of old. We hear the questionings of Job, of David, of Jeremiah, of Jacob and of others under multiplied trials. How good it is that their conflicts were not hidden from us. They suffered and were full of fearful thoughts under their trials, but at length the day of triumph came to them; their Lord heard them. He had always heard them. Every cry of theirs went up into his ears. At last, in each case, the vision spoke, and then they saw that the vision had not really tarried.

Fifth. The question in verse eight: "Shall he find faith on the earth?" seems to belong right in with these experiences to which we have been calling attention. These conflicts tried the faith of the fathers. At times it must have seemed to one who might have heard their complainings that there was no faith in them. Read some of the things that Job said, some of the things that David gave utterance to, some of the lamentations of Jeremiah, and it would be hard to make it seem that they had any faith at all. Nevertheless faith had not departed from them, in the end the vision spoke, in the end faith was the victor. But even these saints of God themselves must often have felt like saying, Lord, increase our faith. Lord, help thou our unbelief. It was not so much the question with them, as it appears to us, whether they had ever known the Lord, or no, but, How can we understand his apparent disregard of us in our conflicts? Why do the wicked prosper? Why are we so distressed, if indeed we be the favorites of the King? And that which tried them in their distresses would also try the disciples to whom Jesus was speaking, when these times of calamity should come upon them. The same doubts and questionings will also be our portion under similar trials, for we are not in anywise different from the fathers. How pertinent the question then, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" It is this kind of faith (shall we say?) that he means. In the times of distresses which try his people will their faith that he does regard his children, that he never forgets them, that he will at the right time appear for their deliverance, that he never is unmindful of them, that he has not ceased to love them, and that he will answer all their prayer, abide steadfast, or will it be found faltering? We must not for a moment think that the Master was doubtful about this matter. His question, as it seems to us, was intended to stir up our minds to self-searching, and to a remembrance of our weakness, and that there is need always for fear and trembling, and as true children of God must desire that faith which is of God above all other treasure, so by this question of the dear Redeemer would they be stirred up to more earnest prayer, that he would keep their faith alive and active under all the trials that might befall them and give them to confidently expect that the day of deliverance would come surely, even though the night should be long and dreadful. C.

POETRY.

'TIS A POINT I LONG TO KNOW.

'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?

If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull, this lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse,
Who have never heard his name.

Could my heart so hard remain,
Prayer a task and burden prove,
Every trifle give me pain,
If I knew a Savior's love?

When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark, and vain, and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?

If I pray, or hear, or read,
Sin is mixed with all I do;
You that love the Lord indeed,
Tell me, is it thus with you?

Yet I mourn my stubborn will,
Find my sin and grief a thrall;
Should I grieve for what I feel,
If I did not love at all?

Could I joy His saints to meet,
Choose the ways I once abhorred,
Find at times the promise sweet,
If I did not love the Lord?

Lord, decide the doubtful case,
Thou who art thy people's sun;
Shine upon thy work of grace,
If it be indeed begun.

Let me love thee more and more,
If I love at all, I pray;
If I have not loved before,
Help me to begin to-day.

JOHN NEWTON.

WHAT IS THE POINT YOU LONG TO KNOW?

What is this point you long to know?
Methinks I hear you say, 'Tis this:
I want to know I'm born of God,
An heir of everlasting bliss.

Is this the point you long to know?
The point is settled in my view,
For if you want to love your God,
It proves he first has loved you.

I want to know Christ died for me;
I want to feel the seal within;
I want to know Christ's precious blood
Was shed to wash away my sin.

I want to feel more love to Christ,
I want more liberty in prayer,
But when I look within my heart,
It almost drives me to despair.

I want a mind more firmly fixed
On Christ, my everlasting head;
I want to feel my soul alive,
And not so barren or so dead.

I want more faith, a stronger faith;
I want to feel its power within;
I want to feel more love to God;
I want to feel less love to sin.

I want to live above the world,
And count it all but trash and toys;
I want more tokens of God's grace,
Some foretaste of eternal joys.

I want—I know not what I want;
I want that real, special good,
Yet all my wants are summed up here:
I want to love; I want my God.

Is this the point you long to know?
The dead can neither feel nor see;
It is the slave that's bound in chains,
That knows the worth of liberty.

So where a want like this is found,
I think I may be bold to say,
That God has fixed within thy heart
What hell can never take away.

However small thy grace appears,
There's plenty in thy living Head;
These wants you feel, my christian friend,
Were never found among the dead.

DANIEL HERBERT.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Abram H. Smith, formerly Mary E. Dumm, was born in Licking County, Ohio, June 11th, 1842, was married to Abram H. Smith in October, 1861, and died in Ligonier, Ind., June 12th, 1911, aged 69 years and 1 day. Nearly forty years ago she united with the Primitive Baptist Church, being baptized by Elder Z. Thomas. She was an exemplary walking christian, and will be remembered with great love by the many of God's humble poor who found entertainment in the dear home. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and found sweet assurance in God's finished work. She was operated upon for cancer of the breast on the 30th of June, and rallied nicely from the operation, so that she was able to sit up and eat her birthday breakfast with her family, but in the afternoon of that day she had a chill, and failed rapidly for twenty-four hours, when she sweetly and peacefully fell asleep to awake, as we have great hope, in that blest country where all tears are wiped away and where they no more say, "I am sick." She was the mother of eight children, one son, Frank, dying in infancy. Seven survive, and with the devoted husband were with her during her last sickness. Two sons, Charles and Bruce, reside in Toledo, Ohio; Howard and Emma Cole in the country near Ligonier; Mrs. A. J. Hosteller, La Grange, Ind.; Edwin D., in Ligonier, and Edith, the youngest, in the home. Her sons and sons-in-law carried her to that last resting-place, and her pastor, Elder W. L. Lines, spoke words of comfort to the sorrowing friends. She loved the dear old SIGNS, and it was familiar in our home from my early recollection. If we were to try to tell of her as a wife, mother or friend, language would simply fail us; we will leave that to the hearts and memories of her friends. Her children arise up and call her blessed, and the heart of her husband doth safely trust in her.

Her daughter, EMMA SMITH COLE.
LIGONIER, Ind.

Hannah E. Easton was born at New Vernon, N. Y., Jan. 20th, 1832, and died Sept. 4th, 1911, aged 79 years, 7 months and 16 days. Her parents were Horton Corwin and Jane Wheat. Feb. 24th, 1849, she was married to James Easton. To them three children were born. She is survived by her aged husband, one son, T. Horton Easton, of Otisville, N. Y., four grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren, also one sister, Mrs. C. H. Burton, of Pasadena, Cal.

Sister Easton united with the New Vernon Church, Sullivan Co., N. Y., in November, 1853, being baptized by Elder Gilbert Beebe. Her life was one of kindness, faithfulness and devotion. She attended the services of the church until some years ago, when she met with an accident, being run down by a horse and buggy, and was never able to ride afterward. She loved the truth and loved all who know it. Her manner was gentle and kind, and her delight was to minister to the poor and needy. We never knew a more devoted and harmonious couple than Mr. and sister Easton. Mr. Easton is now aged and infirm, his sight gone, but his mind is clear and he feels most keenly the loss of the companion of his youth and old age.

The funeral, which was held from the home, was largely attended. The writer spoke from Proverbs xxxi. 20, by request, after which the remains were interred in Howells Cemetery.

May the Lord remember in much mercy our dear aged friend, Mr. Easton, and the son, together with all the family. K.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I send you for publication the obituary notice of sister Unger, written by Dr. Carlton, of Thornton, Texas. For some years I have many times met brother and sister Unger at the association and other good meetings. They were companions indeed to each other, and true and faithful companions to the church in the house of God. Our dear sister was of a cheerful disposition, and always had a word of cheer for the brethren. She was an ornament in the church, which endeared her to all the Baptists who knew her. Her pious course and godly zeal were commendable, and her conversation was of Christ, her hope of eternal rest beyond this vale of tears. ASA HOWARD.

Sister **Cora Unger** departed this life July 22nd, 1911. She died as she lived, with all evidence of a christian life, pointing to her acceptance with the Father, and we believe that she is now basking in the paradise of God, her natural body to be spiritual and immortal in the resurrection. Sister Unger was born Oct. 15th, 1871, and was received in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church when eighteen years of age, and was baptized by her father, Elder G. W. Meece. Her first marriage was to W. J. Black, Dec. 25th, 1894. Mr. Black died August 5th, 1897, leaving her with two children, a son and a daughter, who are yet with brother J. R. Unger, their stepfather, whom she married August 17th, 1902. Six children were born to this union, four of whom are living; the first one died at the age of one year, one month and seventeen days. Brother Unger had seven children when he married sister Unger. He tells me that he thinks she was the best stepmother he ever knew. Sister Unger's membership was with Pleasant Valley Church, Pilgrim's Rest Association. I feel that I can speak for the entire membership of the association, and can say of a truth that all are in deep sympathy with brother Unger and his dear, bereaved children, and would admonish him, "We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

—2 Cor. v. 20. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."—Job i. 21.

Written by request of brother Unger.

S. M. CARLTON.

MEETINGS.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Middleburg Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, October 4th and 5th, 1911. All coming by rail to Middleburg will be met and cared for, or inquire for Mrs. Addie Cook, living a short distance from depot. Ministers of our faith and order and lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

By order of the church.

ADDIE COOK, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Old School or Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Springfield Church, in Huntingdon Co., Pa., on Friday, October 6th, 1911, and continue over Sunday. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, especially ministers. Those coming by railroad east or west will come on the Pennsylvania road to Mount Union, and there take the East Broadtop road to Three Springs, where they will be met and cared for. Trains leave Mount Union 10 a. m. and 4 p. m. It is about two miles to place of meeting. Good place for entertainment close to the meetinghouse.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa has appointed its yearly meeting to be held the second Sunday, and Saturday previous, in October, 1911, commencing at 10 o'clock a. m. Saturday. Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us, especially ministering brethren. Those on their return from the association can meet with us.

D. S. ELLIOTT.

THE Corresponding Meeting of Virginia is appointed to be held with the Bethlehem Church, near Manassas, Va., commencing Wednesday, October 11th, 1911, and continuing three days. Friends coming by railroad from the north or east will be in Washington Tuesday evening in time to take trains on Southern road at 3:35 p. m., 4:30 p. m. or 4:55 p. m., or Wednesday morning at 8:30, for Manassas, one mile from place of meeting. Several trains a day will accommodate those from the south or west. Brethren and friends are earnestly invited, and assured of a hearty welcome. J. N. BADGER.

THE Salisbury Association of Old School Baptists is appointed to be held with the Little Creek Church, in the town of Delmar, Sussex Co., Del., on Wednesday, October 18th, 1911, and the two following days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited. All trains, both north and south, stop at Delmar. Those coming from the north, take the train leaving Broad St., Philadelphia, Tuesday at 3 p. m. Those from the south take train same day leaving Cape Charles at 11:35 a. m. There are trains arriving at Delmar in time for the meeting both north and south every day. Come; our hearts and homes will be open to all who come in the name of the Lord. We hope to see a goodly number present at our meeting.

A. B. FRANCIS, Pastor.

THE churches of the Roxbury Association will hold their fifth Sunday or quarterly meeting with the Andes Church, at Union Grove, N. Y., on Saturday and Sunday, October 28th and 29th, 1911. Trains will be met at Union Grove on Saturday morning. Those coming on the Ulster and Delaware R. R. from Kingston or Oneonta will change cars at Arkville for Union Grove. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

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Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

As the hall in which the Albany and Troy Church holds its meeting is being repaired, there will be no meeting held until the fourth Sunday in October.

J. B. SLAUSON.

NOTICE.

I find the postage on my book, "Day unto Day," to America is 9 pence (18 cents), and I thought it would be 6 pence, or at most 7 pence. I think on consideration, as the expense of publication has been very heavy, notwithstanding a most encouraging sale, I had better say I will send to any of your readers the half calf gilt edge edition for 5 shillings ($1.20), or the cloth edition for 4 shillings (96 cents) postage free.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 79. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1911. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HURRICANE, W. Va., Sept. 11, 1911.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Inclosed find a brief sketch of what I sometimes think was a call to the work of the ministry. You will see by the date that it was written over two years ago, when my health was almost at its worst. I am better in some ways now, and yet I sometimes wonder how I endure all I suffer; truly it is by the grace of God that I am sustained. I was requested by a friend to send this to you, which you may publish if you think best. I still believe and love and try to publish the precious doctrine of the sovereignty of God and his unalterable but righteous purpose and predestination of all things. I know the time is not far distant when we (I believe) will know all these things, and I sometimes feel glad to realize that I am born to die, for this life is one of suffering and trouble in many ways, but it is as God purposed, and the effect of our trouble is as he has ordained, that it should bring us closer to Jesus and make us cry for mercy, for help from all our trouble, and he doth not despise the afflictions of the righteous. What wonderful love, that he can love us and care for us and be longsuffering toward us amidst all our afflictions and sins. He is the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother; he is our wisdom, our righteousness, our sanctification and our redemption, our all and in all; all to him we owe.

Yours in his love,

G. B. BIRD.

CALL TO THE MINISTRY.

WHEN I think of writing of my call to the sacred and solemn work of the gospel ministry, I am filled with the fear that I know nothing of such things; however, I wish to tell of some of my feelings, and of those peculiar exercises of my mind which caused me to believe the Lord had called me to bear his name to my brethren, and to declare his glory in my feeble and seemingly ignorant and awkward manner.

I became concerned about the condition of my soul by reason of sin in my members at a very early age, and the hope that is within me now was given me while very young, and still that same hope is my anchor, and by the goodness and mercy of God extended to me all the days of my life. This hope is strength-

ened, and is as an anchor of my poor soul to-day, which hope makes me not ashamed to speak of his mercy to me, a poor, sinful mortal.

In the spring of 1895, when I was thirteen years of age, I had a dream that caused me to believe that I would have to preach, about five years before I united with the church. It appeared that I was with Elder J. H. Terry, who was then pastor of the Providence Church, where the membership of my parents was, in a very large, old-fashioned meetinghouse, and in this house was wood cut ready for the fireplace, which was in the back end of the house, but some of the sticks were rotten and others very sound, and we were engaged in assorting the wood. I thought we cast the sound wood on the fire, while the unsound was cast out at the door. This seemed a very solemn work when I awoke, and as soon as I awoke the impression was on my mind that I must preach, but I felt then that I positively knew this was impossible with me, for I was nothing but a boy, and unlearned at that, and I verily believe I was the most bashful, backward and awkward boy that ever attempted such a high and holy work. However hard I tried to get rid of this impression it availed nothing, and one day while in the garden with my mother, planting beans, I told her some of my feelings, and asked her if she thought I could preach. She said she did not know. Now, thought I, she does not have any confidence in me, and she knows more about it than I do; evidently I am mistaken, and I felt sorry I had asked her about the matter. I united with the church Sunday, June 23rd, 1900, and was married to Miss Fida Beckett August 27th, 1900, at the age of eighteen. I was given license to speak in public June 22nd, 1901, by the church called Providence, of the Pocatalico Association, and being thus liberated by the church I felt only the more backward, and I was tenderly urged to go forward many times to open meeting, or talk awhile, when I would most always refuse; but during the fall of 1901 I went with Elder Terry on horseback to the Sarah Church, in Boone County, a distance of nearly thirty miles, and at the Saturday services I was asked to take part in the meeting, but again refused, and after the meeting was dismissed I noticed brother Terry whispering to a brother Dolin, but knew not what was being said until he called the attention of the little congregation, and announced that I would preach at the residence of brother Dolin that night. O the trouble that this brought on me, but I tried to console myself with the decision that I would just refuse, and he could preach to the congregation; so we went home with brother Green Woodrum for supper, after which we all went on to the place of meeting. While on our way brother Terry tenderly talked to me of my duty, and bade me go forward, and not confer with flesh and blood, and a peculiar feeling came over me, and I told him that I was willing to risk his judgment and do as near as I could what he might say; as we walked into the room the brethren were in an adjoining room singing, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord," &c., and I thought I never had heard such beautiful music; it seemed that it was all meant for me, and when they sang,

"Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed;
I, I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand,"

I felt that in the strength of God I could stand and talk of his goodness, if he

would be with me; I felt that the promise was to me at that time, so I went forward, lined the hymn, "I'm not ashamed to own my Lord," &c., and tried to pray, after which, without a text, I talked a short time, but the effort to me seemed to be a failure, and I was very much discouraged, and concluded I would give it up and never try again (as I often concluded afterwards on similar occasions), but I still kept trying, two or three times a year, for about four years, when I was made willing to go, and was given, as I hope, some liberty, and did indeed enjoy my exercises of mind while talking, and enjoyed a peace of mind for quite awhile afterwards, and I think I must have gotten puffed up a little, for I imagined I could preach, and longed for another opportunity, but alas, when it came (the next Saturday) I was left in total darkness, and then of course I decided that I would never try again, but the next day from some cause I made another attempt, and was blessed with some liberty, and thus I continued for several years; but the church thought they could see some growth or improvement in me, and called for my ordination, which occurred on the 25th day of May, 1907. I was called to the pastoral care of the Sycamore Ridge Church July 20th, 1907, and the Bethel Church June 13th, 1908, and am now trying to serve them to the best of my ability, but my services are very poor at best, still I love to meet with them, and would, if I were able, go more than I do, but I am poor in this world's goods, yet I know that God has ordained it so, or else it would have been otherwise with me, yet at the same time my heart often yearns for more of those happy meetings with the Father's children, often desiring very much in my heart to travel and visit other sections of the country where God has brought his people together in that heavenly place, the church, to preach nothing else among them but Christ and him crucified, the way, the truth and the life, thus declaring the glory of God. But, as stated above, I am poor, and have never been an able bodied man, always all my life I have been afflicted with various diseases, and now while writing my health is such that I am not able to do any manual labor, and being in debt for our little home, without a dollar on hand, it would seem reasonable that I be very much discouraged, but I am not, and amidst all the past three weeks of suffering, during which time I have written this, I have enjoyed a great deal of spiritual prosperity, I hope, and that, dear readers, is worth more to me than all the vain pleasure this earth can afford; worth more than even my life here on earth, for our days are few and wretched, too, and I know the time is not far distant when I shall fall in death, and owing to the condition of my health and the nature of the disease that I am suffering with, such may be my lot at any moment, and while I know that all my days are numbered, I know not whether they be many or few. We have three children (boys); their names are Justice, Kingsley and Cecil, and I pray God that he may care for them and their dear mother, and be with them to comfort and bless to every good while I am gone from home, as is pleasing in his holy sight and according to the good pleasure of his righteous will.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

G. B. BIRD.

JUNE, 1909.

HILLSBORO, Texas, Sept. 15, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS, AND HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—Especially those living in Caldwell, Wilson and Karnes counties, Texas. I have felt impressed for a long time to write on the Scripture found in Genesis xxi. 12, for it has been on my mind since the summer of last year. You will remember, dear brother J. W. Culpepper, I asked you what you thought of it, but you did not express your views. The Scripture reads this way: "In all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice." I could not understand why the Lord should command Abraham to obey Sarah, for it appeared to me to the reverse of all the commands of God, but some time last winter, when at San Antonio, while sitting alone in a dark room, meditating on that passage, I hope it was then unfolded to me, and I have been feasting on it ever since. The question is, What was the request that Sarah made of Abraham? It is found in the tenth verse, and reads as follows: "Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac." I feel that it was revealed to me then and there that Sarah's request of Abraham is the desire of every contrite heart, because Hagar and Ishmael were in bondage, and all their attempts to worship were of the flesh. So we are commanded to put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, which is the desire of every christian, for the flesh cannot enter into the service of God, because the carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So the command is to the new creature, which can only worship God in spirit and in truth. So Paul says, I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law, warring against the spirit of my mind, bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members, and he was made to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then it was that he desired with Sarah: "Cast out this bondwoman and her son." I am made to cry out in the language of John in Revelation: "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." David said, Cleanse thou me, O Lord, and I shall be clean. He also said, It is good for me that I was afflicted; before I was afflicted I went astray. The Savior himself learned obedience by the things he suffered; he, the Captain of our salvation, was made perfect through suffering, and when he taught the disciples how to pray, he said, "Lead us not into temptation," which I think was all prefigured by the petition of Sarah to Abraham.

But I must return to myself and my sore afflictions, which I believe were all ordained of the Lord, and were for my good and his glory, even though a great cross to the flesh. It was very grievous to Abraham to part with his son Ishmael, for he loved him as well as Isaac, and he was as near to him as Isaac; and the Lord said unto Abraham, "Let it not be grievous in thy sight, because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman: in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called. And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed," which I believe is explained in the thirty-second chapter of Deuteronomy, beginning with the first verse: "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words

of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness to our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect." I will say that I am, and have been, fully persuaded that all things work together for good to the called according to his purpose, and I feel to say with Job, Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. Also will say, as he said to his wife, Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall not we receive evil? Job did not accuse Satan of being the cause of his trouble, for he said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." I was made to feast upon Moses' command to the children of Israel at the Red Sea, which reads thus: Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, that he will show unto you this day. The Lord will fight your battles for you, and you shall hold your peace. I felt perfectly satisfied that he would deliver me if he saw fit, for he hath said, Who hath delivered me from so great a death, and doth now deliver us, and I am persuaded will yet deliver us.

The field is growing so broad, and I am so feeble, I will have to draw my remarks to a close. I feel that my stay here is not long, and I have a desire to depart and be with the Lord, but I pray for reconciliation to his holy will, for it is written that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, and I can but say, Lord, evermore give us this bread, even so come, Lord Jesus.

I desire to say to the dear brethren and sisters with whom I was last associated, that my health is about the same, but my speech is no better. I have recently had a stroke of paralysis on my left side, differing from the first stroke, which made my whole left side feel as if it were asleep. But I am better now from that last attack. I do not know how I could exist were it not for my Bible (which I was deprived of for about eight months) and also the SIGNS, which comes laden with good news from a far country. I would say, Write on, dear household, as the Lord enables you, for you know not what poor, hungry soul you may feed. The grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ be with you all, is my prayer for Christ's sake. Farewell.

Your little brother, I hope,

J. B. BUNTYN.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Aug. 28, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—After reading so many good messages through the SIGNS, I also feel like trying to say something in that way, but knowing my inability to write of these precious things as others do, makes me hesitate about writing at all, but I know that they are people that I love, and I hope they will overlook my blunders. I have just now in my mind that portion of the Scripture which reads as follows: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst." To-day completes forty-two years since I began to share the joys and sorrows of the people I love so well. I have had many sweet seasons when but two or three of us gathered together, as I trust, in his name. A little more than half of my life have I been meeting as one with the people of God, having now passed into my eightieth year, and I have much to be thankful for. I have had the privilege of meeting with the Lord's dear people often, and have indeed seldom missed a meet-

ing. I often think how greatly I have been blessed, while others better than I have been deprived of this privilege. I believe God rules in all these things, and that he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind.

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

He is the Rock, and his work is perfect; he is the God of judgment and of truth, just and right is he; he is without iniquity. He has said, "Upon this rock will I build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." God is our refuge in this life, and our hope of the world to come. The winds of adversity may howl around us, and the storms of persecution burst upon us, but let us be still and know that he is God. He says, There is none beside me. As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. He knoweth their frame; he remembereth that they are dust. The Lord is plenteous in mercy and gracious, and he will not always chide, neither will he keep his anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

I am thinking now of Paul's language: If our gospel be hid it is hid to them that are lost. But this gospel truth is not hid from them that believe in his name. It is their hope, their joy, their all, and if God be for us, who can be against us? I feel to be the chief of sinners, but believe that Jesus came to save sinners, and, like Paul, I would say, "By the grace of God I am what I am." He said, "I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." The things of this world are not lasting, and they must all pass away, but the things we contend for are lasting; that house not made with hands is eternal in the heavens, and can neither be shaken nor overthrown. The Rock that is higher than I, is the Rock of our salvation, and it is sure and steadfast. I often think of the sweet hymn beginning,

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word."

Another hymn often in my mind is,

"For friends and brethren dear
My prayers shall never cease;
Oft as they meet for worship here
God send his people peace."

We are comforted by God's promises; they are good to meditate upon both day and night, and many of the afflicted are comforted and strengthened and made to rejoice in his wonderful works. I sometimes think that my afflictions are almost more than I can bear, but when I think of Jesus' afflictions mine seem light. He was a man acquainted with grief, a root out of dry ground, having in our view no beauty or comeliness. He was despised and rejected of men, and led to the cross as a lamb to the slaughter. He was crucified and pierced in the side with a spear; great drops of blood fell from his side, mingled with water. He had said, If this cup may not pass from me except I drink it, thy will be done, and not mine. All his children are taught of the Lord, and great is their peace. He said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven," and, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father in heaven, and whosoever denieth me before men, him will I deny before my Father in heaven. We are bidden to leave father, mother and all things else for his sake. Jesus said, He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me. I am the true Vine, and my Father is the Husbandman.

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go forth and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain. The branch cannot bear fruit except it abide in the vine, and no more can we, except we abide in him who is the true Vine. We are told that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, and that those who do not believe are condemned already. Again, it is true that if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But he conquered death and the grave, and led captivity captive. He is indeed our salvation, and we may trust and not be afraid, for the Lord Jehovah is our strength and our song. How wonderful the words when he said, Let there be light, and there was light. No man ever spoke as he spoke. He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. He turns the hearts of men as the rivers of water are turned. We love his promises, for they are sure to be fulfilled. We do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Holy Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered, and he that searcheth the heart knoweth the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for us according to the will of God. We walk by faith and not by sight. By grace are we saved, not by good works, lest any one should boast. Boasting is excluded, for salvation is of the Lord. There was a time when I thought, as many do to-day, that salvation depended upon our own efforts, but I trust that I have been shown the truth. One may be upright, honorable and just in all his ways, and we commend all such, but salvation is not that way, according to the Scriptures. We must be born again, else we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and we hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus doubted these sayings, and said, How can a man be born when he is old? Jesus said, If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how will you believe if I tell you of heavenly things? But it is indeed true that the rain cometh down, and the snow, from heaven, and returneth not thither, but fulfill the purpose of God in giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so also shall his word be which goeth forth out of his mouth: it shall prosper in the thing whereto God sends it, and shall accomplish that which he pleases. There is nothing that can frustrate his plan or decree. We must all decrease, while he must increase. Faith was in the psalmist when he said, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. * * * Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

How much there is to be said in praise of him who holds the waters in the hollow of his hand; there seems to be no stopping place. May the Lord be with you, dear brethren, to guide your footsteps, and protect you and keep you in remembrance of all his thoughts and ways, is my sincere desire.

From an unworthy brother,

DAVID L. BLACKWELL.

MARK XVI. 3, 4.

"AND they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great."

In quotations of Scripture which are impressed upon our minds from time to time, there is often a word in the quotation which presents itself as a key to the interpretation thereof. In the words which at present occupy my mind the single word "who" is given by the Holy Ghost as an entrance to the path of enlightenment, leading to a discernment of the wonderful things in righteousness which were in the mind of the writer. Two opposing objects present themselves in the placing of the stone at the door of the sepulchre, and the precautions used afterward by the enemy. By faith Joseph of Arimathea went boldly before Pilate and craved the body of Jesus, and having secured it he wrapped it in fine linen and laid it in his own new tomb, which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre. His object was to secure the body of Jesus from vandals, who would delight to steal and hide it away, for the fame of Jesus was spread throughout the country. Afterward the chief priests and elders, by consent of Pilate, gave commandment that a watch be set, and the stone sealed. Their object was to prevent the followers of Jesus from coming by night and stealing the body, and saying, He is risen from the dead. On the morning of the third day, as the women went with spices which they had prepared, "they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great." Jesus had not yet fulfilled all the commandment of his Father, for he had not yet made known to his followers that he had risen from the dead. Consequently the women went to the sepulchre to place the customary spices about the dead body, and as they went they spake one with another, not by faith, neither in hope, but in despair and sorrow. They could only reason, We cannot hope, neither can we trust any farther, he is dead, that is the end. They had "trusted [with the others] that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." Their only object was to pay the last sad tribute to him whom they had so dearly loved and trusted, so in their natural zeal and anxiety they reasoned, saying, "Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" The natural mind can only entertain natural achievements to attain to the end desired, and while these women were subjects of God's grace, they had not yet come to the knowledge of the finished work of Christ and the sovereign power of God. It was a great stone, and heavy, beyond their strength to remove it, they must have help; they looked not to an heavenly source, therefore it must be those of their own surroundings. Do you remember, dear little ones, while you were yet under the law that you used every natural means within your power to attain unto liberty from your condemnation, and bondage of sin, and you kept on working until Jesus was revealed to you? Jesus had not yet been revealed to the women, so they sought among the dead for help to remove the stone. Had they known the power of God, and remembered that Jesus had said, "The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again," they would not have said among themselves, "Who shall roll us away the stone?" yet, at the

same time, that hidden faith which was in them caused their feet to take them to the sepulchre with the spices, but, like all who are traveling in the wilderness under the condemnation of the law, they depend upon their own creature efforts to bring about the desired end, and when a greater power than themselves appears in the way they hunt among the tombs of other men's dead works, and say, "Who" will come to our assistance? And indeed, after Jesus is clearly revealed, and we are walking in the light of the gospel, our flesh cries out for the things of the flesh, causing us to think that there is yet something we must and can do of ourselves. We never hear the children who are walking in the full light of faith saying, Who shall help us? To them there is only one source of help, and that is from above, so they say, God will help us, and that right early. Thus do we distinguish between the works of the flesh and the "mind of Christ." So long as we inhabit this tenement of clay, just so long will our flesh serve the law of sin; it will continue to abound, but we have the blessed assurance that grace will much more abound to the glory of the grace of God. Does not that "stone" in some way signify a stone of stumbling to our wayward feet, and because of it we seek for earthly help? The great stone separated between the three women and the body of Jesus, and it was guarded by picked soldiers of the Roman army. Only an angel from God could put a deep sleep upon the otherwise watchful guardians and remove the stone, that an empty tomb should be revealed and a risen, living Jesus. So also only the Spirit of the living God can benumb the powers of Satan, drive out the changers of money and the sellers of doves, and cleanse the temple (the heart of the sinner) and reveal the King in his glory, a gracious Savior, a merciful High Priest.

May our hearts be so attuned to the glory of God's grace that by that grace we may be lifted up above the darkness of death and sin, above the turbulent waves of unbelief, that we may live in the light of faith, and not die by the hands of an antitypical Saul.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

JAMAICA, N. Y., Aug., 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have for some time felt that I would like to write something for the SIGNS, if I could only write that which would be of interest, but the question now with me is, How can I do this? To write anything about myself is not pleasant, for I find that in myself, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing. I am full of unbelief, which must be sin, and it is only when I am enabled to look away from self that I have any comfort, ease or satisfaction. There is One whom I sometimes trust I am given to behold who is altogether lovely; could I only speak of him how glad I would be. But how do we come to know him? Do we have any knowledge of him except as he is revealed in our mortal flesh? If there is any other way of knowing him, whom to know is life eternal, I have never yet found it out. What a solace there is in believing that God is; but my flesh does not believe this, and here is where all my trouble comes in. Here is the conflict, here is the trial, here is the affliction; this we shall have. There is no may be so about it, it is sure, it is certain, for the word of God has declared it, and I am glad that his word is true. The flesh is by no means to be trusted in any instance whatever. Without affliction no one

could be comforted. We do not, in reality, know anything save by contrast; at least to me this seems to be the order. I would never have known sin, save by the law. I have no knowledge of evil, save as I know the good. I have no knowledge of comfort, only as I am afflicted. God is sovereign, and he has ordained all these things, and I am glad it is so. It is a great comfort to me when I am made to realize this truth in my heart. In fact, all the true comfort I have is in the belief of this truth, that there is nothing either great or small, good or evil, that takes place by what is termed chance. Chance can never meet my case, for I am poor, and have been stripped, and feel myself to be half dead, yet I feel to hope at times that the good Samaritan has come to me right where I am, and that he has done great things for me, whereof I am glad. My only hope is in God's sovereign grace and mercy. He is the Sovereign, the only and all-wise Creator and Disposer of all things, upholding all things by the word of his power. All power is his; there is no power but what is ordained of God; there is nothing whatever in the entire universe that is not subject to him, who is before all things and by whom all things consist. He is the immutable, invisible God, who is everywhere present, declaring the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. He speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast. He alone is worthy of all adoration and praise, and he alone enables such finite worms as we are to praise him, and what a precious gift it is for one to know himself: for a man to know that he himself is vile. Man must know, and he does know this when he is made alive from the dead by the only life-giving power, and the same power which reveals unto us our own vile corruptions also makes known unto us something of the holy character of God, that God with whom we have to do; and what a wide contrast! How very far, yea, exceeding far, is the separation, and what an impassible gulf between; there is no possible hope of our coming into his presence. The Levite passes us by on the one side and the priest passes us by on the other side, and we are without any chance of life and salvation; all things have failed us; we are without God and without hope in the world. We are stripped, robbed and half dead, and feel that we are left to perish in this awful condition. We have as yet no knowledge of the good Samaritan who as he journeys comes to all such as we are. What a glad surprise! It is something that we had not expected; it is something that we had never known, for until now we had only known the law, which was holy, just and good, and all our expectation had been in the law; but we now find ourselves carnal, sold under sin, and that the law condemns us and cannot give us life, as we hoped. Then we are made to see our lost condition and we beg for mercy, yet cannot see how mercy can be extended to such poor, vile, wretched, undone, helpless worms as we, who have made ourselves such great sinners, and who are utterly unable to remove our guilt, or to do the very least thing to commend us to divine favor. We do not yet see that mercy is not bought with any price at our hand, or that it is without price on our part. Mercy procured by any effort on our part is not mercy. Mercy can come only to the helpless and undeserving. How difficult it is for us to see this. The veil must be removed from our eyes before we can see that our Surety by the sacrifice of

himself paid the debt in full, and satisfied the just demands of the law and magnified and made it honorable, and has wrought out that most glorious robe of righteousness, which is imputed to the bride of Christ. It is in him alone that she stands complete, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Then we are made to rejoice in Him who is our righteousness, and can speak forth his praise. It is now more than forty-one years since, as I trust, I first heard his voice, and in all that time I have not gotten beyond the state of infancy, for if a child at all, I am yet but a babe, and it seems that I can only faintly lisp his praise. O that I could praise him as I ought!

I began this writing some time ago, but laid it aside, feeling it to be impossible for me to write anything that would be worth any one's time to read, and I still have this fear with me, but I am impressed to mail it to you, and hope you will excuse me if I do wrong.

I have read the August 15th number of the SIGNS, and wish to say that the editorial upon Matthew x. 29; Luke xii. 6, was rich food for one so little as I am. Also the editorial of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, in the same number, upon Luke xi. 9, 10, was plain and clear. What a wonderful gift was his; such thought and such expression; truly our God is a wonderful God to bestow such gifts, all praise is his due.

From your little brother, if one at all,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

FARMDALE, Ky., Sept. 18, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I herewith send you a letter from brother C. W. Bond, of which I spoke to you at the association, and hope you will publish it at your earliest convenience. It is the request of our church to have it published in the SIGNS; also brother Bond says that his brethren in the west have desired him to write more for the SIGNS, and he feels that this will fill, in some measure, their desire to hear from him in that way. I hope you reached home in safety and found all well.

In haste, your brother in hope,

J. T. McCOUN.

BAKER CITY, Oregon, August 20, 1911.

TO THE CHURCH AT LITTLE FLOCK, ANDERSON CO., KY.—DEAR BRETHREN:—I learn from correspondence with some of the brethren that you are often without a pastor at your meetings, and, being still a member with you, I sympathize with you in your loneliness, and shall endeavor to be one with you at your August meeting in the only way that is possible at this time, and try to give you a word of comfort and cheer in the lone and weary pilgrimage as you journey through life, by letter. Though many miles intervene between us during this meeting, and mountains may rise to impassible heights, and broad rivers and plains may reach out to fill this vast space on mother earth, yet we are one people still, with one mind and one purpose in life, with one Lord, one faith and one baptism, one calling, and one Lord over all, who is rich in mercy, because of the great love which he has bestowed upon us. As the sun in its brightness and power shines upon us all at the same time, even while so far separated, so the Sun of Righteousness gives the light of life to his people in all places and in all ages, and it is day when he arises in beauty and glory in the whole earth. Our Lord is not like other gods, limited in power, wisdom, strength and in the extent of his dominion, but he doeth all things after the counsel of his own will,

asking consent or leave of no one. By his strength he creates worlds, and maintains them in their places throughout the ages, and, as to his dominion, he is everywhere at the same time, with equal authority and in the fullness of his glory. Whether east of the mountains or west of them, whether on the mountain top or in the valley, he is in all places the same. His elect children in America are no more favored with his presence than those of his children in darkest Africa, or on the scattered islands of the sea. His power to make himself known and his presence felt is the same in all countries and in all ages, whether in our boasted civilization or in benighted heathenism. How glad we should be to feel that we have such a God for our Father, and that he has manifested his power in us by giving us to know ourselves in some measure as we are, sinners, vile, wretched, yet saved by grace; and all this, too, is made known to us by the direct operation of his Spirit in us. Who of us could point to a certain man or preacher and say, He taught us these things? If we know them we have been taught them, not by flesh and blood, but by the revelation of God. As Paul learned them not of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God, so also do we, and it is no advantage nor hindrance in the operation of this divine work whether we live in one part of this earthly globe or in another part of it. Sometimes we become so narrow and lost in ourselves that we think God's work is most efficient within the limits of the organized church, and we become discouraged when we do not see evidence of these things, but let us remember that all places, times and ages are his, and that he has his witnesses everywhere, just enough, and all he wants. All men are in his power and could be made his worshipers if he desired to have them, but for reasons all his own they exist as we see them, and we see them in this way, with but a few apparently standing for the truth, and often feel so lonely that we are brought to mourn, as did Elijah when he thought himself to be the last worshiper of the true God in Israel, and so desired to die, yet he was not allowed to die as he desired, but was sent to perform other commissions, and was informed at the same time that God had reserved to himself seven thousand men who had not bowed the knee to Baal nor worshiped his image. We are not told that a single one of all these was pointed out to Elijah, but the assurance that God had reserved them was enough, and he was strengthened for further duties. We have the same assurance as to the multitudes of his chosen in Revelation, where there were so many shown that no man could number them, and these were chosen from every kindred and people, nation and tongue, and they worshiped the Lamb because he had redeemed them from all iniquity and had made them kings and priests unto God. When Christ shall come he shall find faith on the earth, and it is impossible for the elect to be deceived by the beast. Now with these assurances from the divine Ruler himself, and also from that assurance which he has implanted within us concerning our own calling and acceptance, that we are heirs to these heavenly things, we should take courage, as did Elijah, and go forward in our daily duties, no matter how humble our place may be in life, doing all to the praise and honor of him who has done so much for us, and knowing this, that whether we die or live we are the Lord's. In the great battle of life it is not ours to say what part of the field

we shall occupy, but our honor depends upon the faithfulness which we show forth in the work assigned to us.

Now in love I salute all the brethren for the truth's sake, and my prayer is that you all shall stand firm and united in the principles of the truth, and that you shall live so as to honor your profession and glorify God. Let us never be discouraged, for

"Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face."

Yours in hope, C. W. BOND.

DADE CITY, Fla., Sept. 19, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—For some eighteen years I have been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and during all those years its teaching in doctrine, order and practice has been the same, as far as I have been able to judge, and if God has ever taught me his holy truth, it advocates what I have been constrained to believe and love. I have just finished reading September 15th number, and do not remember to have ever read an issue when every article and editorial were so good. For many years I have believed that all Primitive Baptists who have been taught of God in heart are one in faith, and if each would let his experience talk there would be no uncertain sound among them, but from the use of language in different sections of the world, expressions are often used which seem to be a difference in the church of God. But who is there among us that should make a brother an offender for a word? The apostles often used different expressions to set forth the same truth, and the superficial thinker might construe their language to be contradictory. I am sure that there is no difference in the faith of Paul and James, though one should say that man is justified by faith, and the other should say he is justified by works. Paul is viewing his justification in the sight of God, and James in the sight of man. All believe as Scriptures and experience teach, that salvation is of the Lord. In keeping the commandments of the Lord there is great reward, and walking in his statutes there is rejoicing of heart. One servant may dwell and stress exclusively the gladness of heart one feels in the obedience of faith and in the work of love; the other servant may dwell altogether upon the cause of right living, the grace of God which brings salvation, but each well knows that without the Lord he can do nothing, and that it is God that worketh in him both to will and to do. If there were as much love, meekness and littleness among all who are denominated Primitive Baptists as the Holy Spirit teaches, would there be so many taunts, reflections and misrepresentations of God's anointed in our ranks? So many are ready to condemn others for using expressions when they are guilty of such like themselves. An editor once wrote me, asking if I was willing to make some appointments in the churches of the Mt. Enon Association for him. He closed his letter by saying that he had heard I was an absolute predestinarian, and said the term was not found in the Bible, and that the servants of God should never express themselves upon doctrinal points in the use of words not found in the oracles of God, as it would always cause confusion among the saints. However, he said, "While I do not believe in the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things, good, bad and indifferent, yet I hold to and believe in the sovereignty of God over all worlds, beings and things." I thought this editor could find the language, "absolute predestination," &c., in the same

chapter in the Bible that he found the sovereignty of God, &c. True, Peter said, If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God. That may not strictly mean to use only Bible language, but I am persuaded that if all our brethren would clothe their ideas with Biblical expressions there would not be so many inferences drawn as to the meaning of the speaker. I have met others who objected to the term, "absolute predestination," from the above reason, and yet use the expression, "conditional time salvation." I would not fall out with a brother for his expression if I believed he knew and loved the truth, but somehow I have been led to believe that the prophets and apostles used the best language to set forth the doctrine of God our Savior.

Yours in gospel bonds,

M. L. GILBERT.

KELLER, Texas, July 26, 1911.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I send you the inclosed letter, written by our dear brother, J. B. Bowden, of Riviera, Texas, for publication, if you think proper. His good letter interested me, though strangers in the flesh, but I hope acquainted in Spirit. Like many others of us, he has felt the smart of conditionalism among our brethren. The Lord bless and prosper the SIGNS.

Affectionately,

ASA HOWARD.

RIVIERA, Texas, June 29, 1911.

ELDER ASA HOWARD—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—To-day in reviewing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of August 1st, 1909, I read an article written by you, and my mind is impressed to write you a few lines. First, I would like to know if you are any relation to Broady Howard, of Texas, I know not his post-office address; he was a lawyer by profession. My reason for this is to know if he still lives, as he was a cousin of mine, but I have no recollection of seeing him, and this is to find out if he is living, and what his post-office address is. The most of my thought in writing you is to let you know that your article was read with pleasure. It carries my mind back to my boyhood days when I would go to meeting with my parents, and those old, gray-haired soldiers of the cross have now left this land of sorrow and sin in answer to the roll call of their Captain, and the last time I was there, in October, 1908, their places were filled with younger brethren. The Lord that reserved seven thousand in Israel that should not bow to Baal reserved to himself a goodly number who do not bow to any god of this world. The lonely band of faithful soldiers that are left in the churches which compose each association that I stand identified with contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and stand firm in the doctrine of God's absolute and unchangeable decrees, believing in salvation by unconditional election of grace. This doctrine of God's absolute sovereign rule over all events and eternal foreknowledge seems to be a bone of contention among the limited Baptists, but, as Paul said to Timothy, The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, and admonishes Timothy to take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine, continue in them, for in (not for) doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee. This is a favorite text for the Arminians, and the limited also, to prove timely blessings to

be conditional, but the trouble with them is they seem to use the word "for" instead of "in" doing. Take heed, be careful, take the oversight, preach the word (Christ and him crucified), be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine, for the time will (has) come when they will (do not) not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. Again, he said, By way of whom the truth shall be evil spoken of. Yes, they now stigmatize us as "can't help its," and as teaching that God is the direct author of sin. But Paul goes on and tells Timothy, But watch thou in all things, endure affliction. Here I believe that God's true and tried servants do suffer affliction, and all know his saints suffer affliction; they are mocked by all the tribes of self-righteous Ishmaelitish Pharisees, and are buffeted and called hard names, yet with all this they are watched with an all-seeing eye, and are given grace to help in such times of need. God's children will not be entreated by them to refrain from following after the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but will follow Jesus, the Shepherd of the flock, for they will not follow a stranger. The still small voice of Jesus, their Shepherd, will they be made to know in God's appointed time, and will come to Zion singing the song, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me."

Well, brother Howard, I guess you are tired of this, and I will ask your forgiveness for intruding. I know we are strangers in the flesh, but I hope not in the Lord. My bodily afflictions are such I cannot be out much, but hope to be remembered by you in your petitions.

J. B. BOWDEN.

NYACK, N. Y., July 9, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—As sister Lucinda Brewster requests her letter sent to the SIGNS office, I hope it will be published, if approved. I know she desires the welfare of Zion, &c. Hoping you are in usual health, and enjoying the privilege of hearing the gospel's joyful sound, with love to all the friends,

MARTHA A. HOWARTH.

ST. CLOUD, WEST ORANGE, N. J.

DEAR SISTER MARTHA:—How are you getting along this very hot weather? You said you were not as well. I am feeling quite miserable, so faint and feeble, but I desire to be thankful it is as well with me as it is, poor, undeserving wretch that I am. It is in my mind so much this morning: If you would be my disciple, take up your cross (daily) and follow me; and, Faith without works is dead. What good and great admonitions and promises to the Lord's humble poor, rich in faith and heirs of eternal glory. I seldom feel they belong to me, but I can see the Savior's image reflected in my brethren. How glad I am if this is from above. What wondrous love is this, O my soul. So much of the time I feel fearful that I am a poor hypocrite, so vile and prone to sin, yet my heart's desire is for the welfare of Zion, that poor and afflicted people, whose only trust is in the Lord. Happy art thou, O Israel, people saved by the Lord. What is all this vain world? Our journey is a thorny maze, but we march upward still, forget the troubles of the ways and reach at Zion's hill. Yes, a few more trials, sorrows and disappointments and we shall bid adieu to time things. If we are what we have professed to be, heaven and Jesus is ours through a never-ending eternity. Here I feel much of the time

my love so faint, so cold, it makes me grieve and mourn over and doubt the reality of my profession. I feel so lonely, no one to talk with about divine things, but they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, to that peculiar people whose praise is to God, and not men. I was so glad the Lord in his providence arranged and permitted me to once more meet in the assembly of his saints, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven in the company of that people I hope to spend a never-ending eternity with. We can only here feel that one day amidst the place where my dear Lord has been, is better than ten thousand days of pleasurable sin. I have not much interest in the things of this world, and feel my journey is nearly ended; I wish I could say with Paul, I have fought a good fight, &c., but like one of old can say, Few and evil have been the days of the years of my pilgrimage.

How good and instructive the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is to poor, footsore travelers. I feel thankful the dear Lord has blessed us with its comforts; it comes like manna to the hungry soul, and is life and health and peace; who can doubt that in it is found the company that John saw? the bride, the Lamb's wife, that came up out of great tribulation, whose robes are made white in the blood of the Lamb, to whom be glory and honor, both now and forever. Amen.

Your sister in affliction and hope,

LUCINDA B. BREWSTER.

ABERFELDY, Ont., Dec. 24, 1910.

ELDER H. C. KER:—Inclosed you will find a good letter from sister Laura Bailey; if you see fit you can publish it.

Yours in the fellowship of the truth, I hope, D. M. VAIL.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., Oct. 3, 1910.

ELDER AND MRS. D. M. VAIL—ESTEEMED BROTHER AND SISTER:—I received your letter to-day, and was very glad to hear from you and know that you like it. I have four other letters from brethren and sisters that are unanswered, but for some reason I want to write to you; God only knows whether or not my desire is of the flesh. I often fear my desires are all of the flesh, for it seems to me that desires which truly come from God should be manifest in our daily walk and conversation, and surely such is not my case. It is indeed a comfort to feel that God knows all things. How thankful we ought to be that we have been given to believe that God foreknew all things before time began; that nothing can happen contrary to his will; that every trial he calls us to pass through is for our good and his glory. We know that what God has purposed shall come to pass, and none can hinder. We can say with the poet:

"Though men and devils aim to kill,
They can't exceed our Father's will."

Sometimes I feel to rejoice that I cannot have things my way, for I know what God does is best, even though I cannot understand. If God should grant my fleshly desires I would undoubtedly be sorry in the end, and now at the close of trials contrary to my wishes I can see that the Lord doeth all things well. I can see plainly that I know not what to pray for as I should; I can only say:

"Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty,
Hold me with thy powerful hand.
Bread of heaven,
Feed me till I want no more."

Of late I seem to have temptations and crosses on every hand. I have many crosses peculiar to the whole race of

Adam; it seems if I have a spiritual mind at all, it is swallowed up in worldly desires and troubles, but one promise has been especially sweet to me for some time, and that is, As thy days, thy strength shall be. Surely it makes no difference how great our trials are if we are given strength sufficient to endure all. We are told, "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever." But do I trust in the Lord? Surely I have no one else to trust in. I think none is as wayward, impatient and unreconciled as I.

"I would, but cannot rest,
In God's most holy will;
I know what he appoints is best,
Yet murmur at it still."

Read hymn No. 733, Beebe's collection.

I do hope Elder Fenton may continue to come here. I can only say, The Lord's will be done; he knows best.

With love to you both, I remain your unworthy sister,

LAURA BAILEY.

TIOGA, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Sept. 2, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have been thinking about you this morning. I have been sick with asthma for three days, and this morning while at breakfast these words came into my mind: "And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." First, we must understand who is saying this, and to whom it is said. It is not said for the world, nor for us to give ourselves the will to do this; the angel of the Lord showed these things to John. John says, eighth verse, "I John saw these things and heard them." No man can hear or see the things of God by man, but he who sees them must have an eye single to the glory of God, and also a hearing ear. John also says, These things are faithful and true. Now when one is given a hearing ear and seeing eye, and reads these things, to him they are true. He sees with the knowledge that God has given him that it is not the will of man, but the will of God, the will that God gives to his people, and with that will they have a desire to eat and drink the things of God. Let him take of the water of life freely. It appears to me that if one has the desire in him for natural things, it is simply because he has natural life, and for no other reason. A man dead cannot have desire for anything. If one is dead in trespasses and in sins how can he have a desire or will for the water of life? Is it not the spiritual life in him that gives him the spiritual desire? How do we get this desire? Is it by being taught of man? No, it is by being born again; it is by dying to all natural things, and being made alive to spiritual things, and being drawn from nature's darkness into the marvelous light of God. This light shows us all things, yea, even the deep things of God. John says, "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book." How can any man hear without a hearing ear? And how can we hear the things of this book unless we have the same life in us that was in the writer? The Spirit of God showed them to him, and the same Spirit must show them to us, or we will never see them. These things are plain to me at this writing. The Spirit says, Come, the bride says, Come, and let him that heareth say, Come. Who does this mean? Does it mean the world? If so, Jesus was wrong, because in his prayer he says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." When the Spirit says, Come, he that hears will say, Come. The Spirit must be in the hearer

or he could not hear. Now let such an one come.

Let us now look at a flock of sheep going down the road. One poor little lamb is feeble, and cannot go with the rest. The flock would trample that poor lamb down, but the good shepherd takes that one up and carries it along upon his arm. How often we hinder some poor little lamb, instead of helping it, that it may drink freely, but it is the old Adam in us, to try to do what we want first, but God will not lose one of these little ones, no, not one. He is the bright and morning Star. How can we see this Star? Can we see it by our own labor? No, we must come to the end of all our labor. Six days do we labor, and to some the days are longer than to others. But when we come to the end of the sixth day, and cease from our labor, the Sun of Righteousness arises with healing in his wings. Then we can see the Sun, and the bright and morning Star, which will guide us all through the Sabbath day, or the day of rest, when we work no more for our salvation. Jesus says, "I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Take notice he says, "according as his work shall be," not according as his work has been in the flesh. The Spirit of God is in such an one, and it is God working in him to do of his good pleasure. Then to this one comes a reward in doing God's will, not man's will. This seems plain to me. I feel to know that this is the truth, and it cannot be denied.

This letter is longer than I intended, but I hope you will forgive me. All join me in love to all.

Your unworthy brother,

C. S. BOND.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Wm. Sloan.)

The Licking Association of Old School Baptists, assembled with our sister church, at Mt. Carmel, Clark Co., Ky., Sept. 8th, 9th and 10th, 1911, to all with whom we correspond, extends greeting and christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—At this time we will call your attention to the words of Jesus, "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."—John xiv. 2. Jesus ever comforts and cares for his people. His disciples were sad when he told them, I go away, but he said to them, I will come again. I will send you a Comforter who will guide you in all truth. Jesus prepared a mansion for his disciples when he set up his kingdom on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost came upon the apostles and cloven tongues of fire, and all those who had a work of grace wrought in their hearts heard in their own tongues, wherein they were born, the wonderful works of God. This kingdom the God of heaven set up, in which a King, even Jesus, reigns in righteousness, and princes rule in judgment, and it shall stand forever. Another palace, or mansion, was prepared for the apostle Peter when our Lord and Savior appeared to him in that wonderful vision on the housetop, when the great sheet was let down from heaven, in which were all manner of four-footed beasts and creeping things, teaching Peter of the other sheep which are not of the Jews. Them also, he said, I must bring, that there be one fold and one Shepherd. So the apostle entered the palace, or mansion (Acts x. 16); when he arrived at the house of Cornelius, and when Peter began to speak to those assembled, the Spirit of Al-

mighty God fell on them as on the Jews at the beginning, as they had been prepared and taught of God, as all his people are all along through the ages to the present time. So Cornelius, speaking for all, was careful to tell the apostle, We are all here to hear all that is commanded thee of God. Jesus prepared a palace for Paul and Silas when they prayed and sang praises to God in prison, when an earthquake shook the walls, and the prison doors were opened, and the keeper sprang in trembling, and would have killed himself, but Paul called to him, "Do thyself no harm; for we are all here," and the quickened jailer asked, "What must I do to be saved?" The apostle said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." There was not one condition hitched on, for the words of Jesus are, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned."—Mark xvi. 16. It is a fact that every organized branch of the church of God, founded on the doctrine of Jesus and his apostles, with the members contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and walking in peace and fellowship, with the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, is a mansion, or haven of rest, for the weary and heavy laden, to whom Jesus says, "Come unto me," even though they be only two or three, and Jesus in the midst. When God makes up his jewels there will not be one missing in that city that hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God, for God's work is perfect, and known unto God are all his works; he hath declared the end from the beginning. His people, who confess that they are naught and that Jesus is all and in all, who as strangers and pilgrims suffer with Jesus without the camp, are tending to the better country and will ere long hear the voice of our blessed Master, saying, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."—Matt. xxv. 34. For this people have I formed for myself, and it is their desire to show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light.

"And when that illustrious day shall rise,
And all thine armies shine
In robes of victory through the skies,
The glory shall be thine."

Unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. (Jude 24, 25.)

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.
J. T. McCOUN, Clerk.
T. J. RATLIFF, Assistant Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Licking Association of Old School Baptists convened with the church at Mt. Carmel, Winchester, Ky., Sept. 8th, 9th and 10th, 1911.

As it has been our custom for many years to address you with a Corresponding Letter, we hope this has been a way to hear from each and every church. We are glad to be able to say that God in his all-wise purpose has permitted us to thus meet again. The grace of the all-wise God is the same to-day as it has been with us, the only way whereby a poor worm of the dust can ever be saved. We earnestly desire a continuance of correspondance with you. The letters of the several churches report peace and unity of feeling. The preaching has been to our edification, and has made us rejoice, as grace alone can save, through the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our next session is to be held at Goshen, Anderson Co., Ky., on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1912, when we hope to meet and greet your messengers again.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.
J. T. McCOUN, Clerk.
T. J. RATLIFF, Assistant Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1911.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PRIVILEGE TO SAY BROTHER.

BROTHER Ivory H. Ford, of Berwick, Maine, writes, speaking of the feeling that has prevented him from using the word "brother" in addressing others, and asks us to write a few thoughts with regard to this matter.

We will, first of all, say that this is not a new or uncommon feeling with the children of God. It arises as a general thing either out of fear that one is not really born of God, and therefore has no right to thus address the people of God, or else out of a deep feeling of unworthiness, which is also one of the marks of all those who know the plague of their own heart, and recall their many failures to walk worthily before God. But this is true, not only (as we do not doubt) of brother Ford, but of all the family of God, and it is a mark which belongs to them alone, for unregenerate religionists have no hesitancy in using this term to others, unless it be because they do not think the other one is worthy to be thus addressed. Into the heart of unregenerate professors the thought never enters that they themselves are unworthy of anything that God can ever give to his favored people. The Pharisee in the parable of the Savior would not have thought of calling the poor publican brother, because that publican was a much greater sinner than he. Perhaps the publican may have looked upon the Pharisee with envy, thinking him to be all that was worthy and excellent, and a favorite of the Lord, and so he, on the other hand, but for a very different reason, would not have ventured to call the Pharisee brother, and indeed they were not brothers, and there could have been no brotherly feeling between them. We recall very clearly that in the early years of our membership in the church we could not bring ourself to use the term "brother" when we would meet with other members of the church; it seemed to involve too much for us to claim, and it seemed to us that if we should at any time use the term as we addressed those whom we loved and esteemed as the excellent of the earth, they would look at us with surprise and disapproval, yet we could not bring ourself, on the other hand, to address our brethren and sisters as Mr. and Mrs., and so for a long time when we met with them and spoke to them we did not call them by any title at all. To speak to them by the same terms that we would use when we addressed those for whom we did not have love and fellowship in the Lord seemed so cold, and was such a contradiction to the feelings within us, that we could not do that, yet how could we make so bold as to call those who were so much better than ourself, brother or sister? This was a source of distress to us for several years, but there came a time when it seemed as though the words brother and sister would come to our lips and we could not help using the terms, though still at times we found ourself looking for a rebuke from the dear aged members of the church, but,

we do not need to say, such a rebuke was never given. Because of this we believe we can enter into the feeling expressed by brother Ford, and of many others who have been and are troubled in the same way.

But now it is in our mind to call attention to some reflections regarding this matter in a general way, and first, it is true that if we are the children of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we are brethren in the Lord. Our blessed Lord is our Elder Brother, and we are all brethren one of another. Children of the same family, born of the same parents, are brethren indeed, and whether they use that title when they address each other or not, yea, whether they feel as they ought toward each other or not, they still are brethren. God has put men and women into his family, and more than this, he has placed in their hearts the spirit of sonship, whereby they cry, Abba, Father, and it is sure that if they have a right to call God their Father, and Jesus Christ their Elder Brother, it must also be their privilege to call their kindred in Christ brethren. The love shed abroad in the heart which impels one to call upon God as his Father with reverence and humility as a son, will also cause that one to feel concerning the children of God, that he loves them and that they are indeed his dear kindred. It is this experience of love and union within that causes the child of God to look upon the family of God with earnest desires to be one with them and to share in all their happy privileges. Such an one will find himself looking upon the assemblies of the saints with reverence, and yet with longing that such blessings might be his also. He beholds their union of feeling, their worship, with its joy, the ordinances of the house of the Lord, such as baptism and the Lord's supper, with every other act of worship, and these all seem beautiful to him. He looks upon their faces and it almost seems to him that there is a visible halo of glory upon their heads. He witnesses their greetings, and it seems to him that their faces shine with love and all that is heavenly. He cannot help drawing near, and still nearer, until at last he comes to tell them of the hope that he has in Christ, and the love that he feels for them, and when received and baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, all these blessed privileges are his to enter into. It is true that he will approach these holy things with reverence; he will feel to put off his shoes from off his feet, for the place is to him holy ground, but still he will be found treading these heavenly courts, while he rejoices, with trembling. Now indeed all that he has desired has become his, and he enters into them, not as a duty, but as a blessed privilege. In the liberty which is found in Christ, and in that love which is shed abroad in the heart, duty becomes a privilege, the commandments of his God become his desire, and are more to him than his bread and water; yea, to do the will of God is his meat and drink. Thus it was with the dear Savior, who by the Spirit now dwells in men. We desire to say that there is not one privilege from which he ought to be debarred, and among these privileges is this of calling the children of God his kindred: this is my brother, my sister. If the feeling of unworthiness ought to prevent us from so addressing the children of God, it ought also to hinder us from claiming any of the privileges of the church. If we are entitled to one privilege, all of them belong to us, and if we are entitled to any of them, it is not because we are

worthy by nature, but are made worthy by grace. The blessedness of the good news of the gospel is that it proclaims salvation to the lost, and promises all heavenly riches to the poor. All men are alike unworthy, but to some is given an imputed righteousness. All men are sinners alike, but some are saved in the Lord, and, being saved, are entitled to all that inheritance which God has reserved in heaven for them. There is no law in the Bible against giving expression to the feelings of our hearts, and if our brother loves and feels like a brother toward the children of God, it is his right to call them brethren.

We leave these reflections for the consideration of our brother, and for all who may read them. C.

JOHN V. 40; 1 CORINTHIANS VII. 14.

SISTER Georgia England, of Hampstead, Md., writes about the expression, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life," and says that she cannot reconcile this with other Scriptures as she understands them. She also calls attention to the Scripture found in 1 Cor. vii. 14. With regard to the first text we will say that the same thing here charged against the Jewish people by the Savior is true of all men by nature. It is not said, Ye cannot come unto me, but, "Ye will not," and yet it would necessarily follow from the "will not" that they could not come to him. All the hindrance there is in the way is the "will not," in the mind of men, and the reason why men will not come to the Savior is that they see no need of him and recognize no beauty in him, and no man seeks after that for which he feels no need and in which he discerns no beauty or desirability. So it was said by the prophet concerning the meek and lowly Savior, When our eyes behold him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. Infinite excellencies were and are in him, but men see not these things, because they are so fallen, sold under sin, that to them evil is good and good is evil, and so long as men are thus blind they will not come to him who to them possesses no beauty. But there are some whose eyes have been opened to see, and to whom has been given that Spirit which can discern spiritual things, and these will come to Christ. What a wondrous change must be wrought in any man to convert him from the "will not" to the "will." Once Paul would not come to Christ, but thought that he ought to persecute him and all who were of that way, but the Lord met him and convinced him of sin, and then of perfect redemption and righteousness in the dear Redeemer, and then Christ became to him all and in all; without this heavenly work by the Spirit in his heart Paul would have continued among those who "will not."

In the Scripture referred to in 1 Cor. vii. 14, we will just say first, that Paul seems to have found among the brethren at Corinth a question as to what ought to be done when either husband or wife became a believer, with regard to the unbelieving husband or wife. Some seemed to think that the believing husband or wife ought to separate from the unbelieving companion, but Paul, in this chapter, opposed this. He declares that if the unbeliever departs because the other has become a believer, that cannot be helped, and the believing husband or wife is not under bondage in such a case; that is, they must not give up the profession that they have made to avoid separation; but if, on the other hand, the unbelieving companion chooses to abide with the believer, that is right. He asks

in substance, verse 16, of both the husband and the wife who may be believers, How do you know what effect your quiet, godly life may have upon your unbelieving companion? Even worldly people can be, and many times have been, impressed with the reality of true religion when made manifest in the quiet, consistent life of some friend. This is not regeneration, or the experience of vital godliness, but it is nevertheless a desirable thing. In verse fourteen he declares that the marriage relation is made sacred by the husband or wife who believes, and that the children born to them are also clean or to be regarded as legitimate. Since this is so, there is no reason for the believer to depart from the unbelieving husband or wife; that one becomes a believer does not at all affect the divine ordinance of marriage between them; they are still lawfully joined together, and their children are born in lawful wedlock. These have long been our reflections upon this portion of the word. We leave them to the consideration of our readers, and especially of sister England. C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

We are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ISAIAH XLV. 7.

"I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things."

Our esteemed brother, Elder George Cottrell, of Ohio, has requested our views on the above text, especially on the creation of evil.

Preceding this text, the prophet by the word of the Lord reproved the people of Israel for their propensity to idolatry, and after showing the vanity and extreme folly of trusting in the works of their own hands, presented a powerful contrast between the gods which are made and worshiped by men, and the true and living God, who created and upholds all things by the omnipotence of his power and wisdom of his counsel. In drawing the contrast, God by his prophet shows first what their idols cannot do: they cannot save their worshipers nor afford them the slightest aid; they cannot see, hear or feel, nor can they move themselves, and one of the most important deficiencies is that they cannot declare beforehand events which shall come to pass; and as there are no predestinating idols, so there are no predestinarian idolaters. After showing the vanity of idols, the peculiar attributes and perfections of the true God are very clearly declared and demonstrated by his wonderful works in the creation of the world, by his providential government of all worlds, all beings and all events. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." In illustration of this he calls their attention especially to the case of Cyrus, whom he had raised up, and whose right hand he had holden,

or strengthened, to subdue nations before him, to loosen the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates of Babylon; to whom also he said, I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight, and break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron. Even this heathen prince was raised up by our God, for Jacob his servant's sake, and Israel, his elect, and called by his name, and surnamed by the Lord of whom he was ignorant. To Cyrus he saith: "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me: * * * I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things." While heathen mythology supposes a god to preside over each of the several elements of nature, one to control whatever is good, and others to direct the evils, the Lord Jehovah declares himself the only wise God, reigning in the heavens alone and swaying the sceptre of universal control over all things. All holy beings are moved by him, and devils and wicked men restrained by the supreme power of his might, making known, as in the case of Cyrus, from the rising of the sun to the far distant west, and from the rivers to earth's remotest bounds, that there is no other God ruling in the army of heaven and over the inhabitants of earth. How grand and magnificent are the evidences and exemplifications of his eternal power and Godhead, as presented in the context, in connection with which the declaration in our text must be considered.

"I form the light." Of the formation of light no finite mind can attain to an adequate conception, nor do we perceive in it any formation. We have been astonished to learn from the sacred record of the creation of this world that God spake the word, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. "God said, Let there be light: and there was light." And God separated the light from the darkness, and the light he called day, and the darkness he called night. Could any other than the true God have performed this? So also in the spiritual application of the word: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." By the formation of light we not only understand that God created it in the natural world, but gave it form, when he embodied the fullness of it in the great light which he suspended in the infinity of space and bade it pour forth its fullest radiance on the earth, to rule the day, and by the shadow of the intervening earth he created the darkness, which he called night, thus separating the one from the other, and claiming both as works of his almighty power. The moon and stars he also made as reflectors of the light of the sun, and for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years. (Genesis i. 14.)

In the new, or spiritual creation, light and immortal life are synonymous terms. This light emanates from God, who dwells in the eternal refulgence of his own supreme glory. The formation of light and immortality of eternal Deity is by revelation brought to the view of our faith only in him who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, who is the brightness of his Father's glory and the express image of his person—the image of the invisible God. For in him was life, and the life

was the light of men. He is the only and blessed Potentate, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light; the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in his wings; the light which came to Zion when the glory of the Lord had arisen upon her. In the infinity of the glorious gospel of the grace of God, in the spiritual firmament of his church hath God set a tabernacle for the Sun which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof. (Psalms xix. 1–6.) This light of immortality shines in the hearts of God's children, because God has taken his abode in them, and has made them the children of the light. Like the moon, the church of Christ, when her light is come, or when out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God is pleased to shine, she reflects this light, as a city set upon a hill, whose light cannot be concealed, so also are the members of Christ and ministers of his word and truth, the children whom God has given to his Son, for signs and for wonders, and they are twinkling reflectors of the light of the Sun of Righteousness, as stars in the right hand of him who holds the keys of death and hell. God forms this spiritual light in all who are born of his Spirit, and in all its variety of forms in which it shines upon his chosen Israel.

"And create darkness." Darkness is simply the absence of light. In the natural creation the earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the great deep until God formed the light; so darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people until God said, Let there be light; then leaping forth from his chambers the Sun of Righteousness sprang into the firmament of his church, scattered the sable cloud, dispelled the horrid gloom and scattered round his kingdom the refulgence of celestial day. This is the day which the Lord hath made, and over which he is the great ruling Light. But how does God create darkness, or absence of light? In nature it is simply by the revolution of the earth, by which earth's shadow falls upon us, and the light is hidden from our eyes; then with us it is night, wherein the psalmist says, "All the beasts of the forest do creep forth." So when earth or earthly things are suffered to separate between us and the Sun of Righteousness, we also walk in darkness and have no light. In the fifteenth verse of this same chapter it is said, "Verily, thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior." It is his beams that form our light, and if he hides them from us we are left in darkness, and it is thus all our darkness is created.

"I make peace, and create evil." By peace and evil we understand his providential judgments in dealing with his people and with the children of men, presiding in power and majesty over all the works of his hands. He makes peace in silencing the raging elements of nature, as when the Redeemer commanded the tempest to be still, in providence when he curbs the angry passions of princes, kings and potentates of the earth. "Come," says the psalmist, "behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder: he burneth the chariot in the fire."—Psalms xlvi. 8, 9. And in the kingdom of the saints he is our peace, the Prince of Peace, who has reconciled us to God and made peace by the blood

of his cross. Experimentally God's children learn that all their spiritual peace and comfort come down from God our Father through our Lord Jesus Christ. There is no peace to the wicked, saith your God. But, "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them." All the peace which christians can enjoy in time or in eternity is made by him. In the world, says Jesus to his disciples, ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace.

But our brother desires us to dwell more particularly upon the creation of evil. We are aware of the difficulty arising in the minds of God's little ones upon this subject. That God is a being of infinite perfection, spotless purity, who cannot look on sin, is as he has revealed himself unto them, but how he at the same time can be the creator of evil, is hard for them to conceive. There is a mystery of godliness and a mystery of iniquity, in both of which God will be glorified. We all readily admit that God is the sole creator of all things that exist in heaven, earth and hell, and in his creation he has presented to our wondering eyes an endless variety. We can hardly conceive of any being or thing now existing that has not its opposite. The serpent and the dove, angels of light and angels of the bottomless pit, light and darkness, heat and cold, good and evil—and is there anything existing that God has not made? He has created all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil. In all the creation God has made nothing that can bear a comparison with himself. His creatures are not gods; none of them possess, as creatures, his peculiar attributes or perfections; yet all things are and were created for his pleasure, and he is above them all, and will bend them all to his government. In the sublime language of Job, "He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing." "He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end. The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproof." "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?"—Job xxvi. 7, 10, 11, 13, 14. But the term "evil," as used in our text, we understand to mean judgments, calamities, afflictions and chastisements which are sent upon the children of men. They come not up out of the ground, nor do they fall upon us by chance. God's careful providence watches over us, and no evil can come nigh our dwelling except meted out in weight and measure, time, duration and result, by the unerring wisdom and power of God himself. As it is written, Is there evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it? Job said, Shall we receive good from the Lord, and not evil? That is, shall we receive prosperity, and not adversity, pleasure, and not pain, joy, and not sorrow? Wars, famine and pestilence are evils which come and go at God's command, and persecution and oppression are under his control. Men are used by him as his sword and his hand; devils and wicked men are restrained or suffered to vent their malice, as God ordains, and under this conviction we are instructed to pray God to "lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," and to shield us in the day of evil. As in our text light is contrasted with darkness, so is evil contrasted with peace. "I make peace, and create evil." By withholding peace and bringing evil upon them, the

Israelites received evil at the hand of the Lord for their rebellion and idolatry when he sent fiery serpents into their camps, and when he caused their enemies to triumph over them; and so in his dealings with his children, sometimes he sends on them fiery trials, deep afflictions, sore temptations which disturb their peace, and bring labor, sorrow and grief upon them for the trial of their faith and as chastisement for their faults.

"I the Lord do all these things." This is consoling to the afflicted saints who have confidence in God. They know what he appoints for them is best, though it may call them to pass through flames or floods, for they know that all things work together for good to them, and they are led to say, It is the Lord, let him do as seemeth him good; for so said Eli when the Lord brought evil on him and upon his sons.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., February 1, 1865.

WE have received word from Elder Newton Peters of the death of Elder A. B. Breese, which occurred October 5th. An obituary notice will appear later.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse, in Woburn, by Elder H. C. Ker, the fourth Sunday in October (22nd), at the usual hours. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER J. B. Bowden has changed his address from Riviera, Texas, to Falls City, Texas, and requests that his correspondents address him at the latter place.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Lucy Ann Weckel departed this life May 4th, 1911, after a few days of suffering from heart disease. Sister Weckel was born March 3rd, 1832, and was the second daughter of Henry and Hulda Leonard. She united with the Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury when about sixteen years of age, and was baptized by Elder I. S. Hewitt. Her life was adorned with a well ordered walk and godly conversation, such as becomes a follower of the meek and lowly Master. She was faithful to the cause, and never failed to discharge her duty as a member of the church. For several years she was afflicted, and not able to meet with the church, yet she had the welfare of the church at heart. She leaves three sons and one daughter, besides other friends and relatives, to mourn their loss.

Her funeral was held from the meetinghouse of the Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, conducted by the writer; burial in the cemetery near the meetinghouse.

ALSO,

Susie Wooden died at her home near Andes, N. Y., July 30th, 1911, in the 56th year of her age. Sister Wooden was received in the fellowship of the Andes Old School Baptist Church, at Union Grove, N. Y., August 21st, 1910, and baptized by the writer. She had not enjoyed good health for several years, and during her affliction she was praying to the Lord to raise her up, that she might confess his name before the world, in taking up her cross and following her blessed Master in the ordinance of baptism. The Lord heard her prayer and granted her desire, but she was soon called home by her heavenly Father to enjoy the fullness of what she had many years hoped for. While we feel that the church has met with a great loss in the death of sister Wooden, yet our loss has been her gain; to depart and be with Christ is far better.

The funeral was held from her late residence, and was largely attended. The writer tried to comfort the mourning friends, speaking from John xi. 25, 26. Burial was in the Andes Cemetery.

Sister Wooden leaves three sisters and one brother, beside other friends and relatives to mourn. May the God of all grace be with the mourning ones to comfort them in their affliction.

ALSO,

Mrs. Sarah Hinkley was born Sept. 4th, 1821, died July 29th, 1911, in the 90th year of her age. Sister Hinkley was received in the fellowship of the Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury nearly sixty years ago, and baptized by Elder James Mead, who was the second pastor of that church, succeeding Elder William Warren, who was chosen pastor of the First Church of Roxbury in 1786. Sister Hinkley was a devoted member of the church, and for more

than half a century her hospitable home was a pleasant resting-place for her kindred in Christ. Sister Hinkley was a woman whose sterling qualities were marked with integrity and kindness, always ready to lend a helping hand to the needy. She was faithful to the church, and never shrank from discharging any duty that fell upon her, until afflictions came upon her, depriving her of her most blessed privilege. Her seat was very seldom vacant in the meetings. Sister Hinkley leaves one daughter and two sisters, beside other friends and relatives, with the church, to mourn the loss of a noble woman.

Her funeral was held from the meetinghouse of the Second Old School Baptist Church, conducted by the writer, who tried to comfort the mourning friends with such as it pleased the Lord to give, speaking from John xvii. 1–3, after which her body was laid to rest in the cemetery near the meetinghouse to await the coming of the Lord from heaven, who will change our vile body and fashion it like unto his own glorious body. May God comfort all who mourn.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Abi Albin Peters, son of Oscar and Lucinda Peters, was born March 25th, 1872, in Darke County, Ohio, died Sept. 5th, 1911, in North Dakota, aged 39 years, 5 months and 11 days.

ALSO,

Mrs. Caroline Magdalena Peters, daughter of Mathias and Mary Grissinger, was born Sept. 17th, 1870, aged 40 years, 11 months and 12 days.

Abi Albin Peters and Caroline Magdalena Grissinger were married Dec. 20th, 1894, and to that union were born five children. These two companions in life had always possessed and maintained the highest standard of morals, which were taught them by their parents, and started out in the beginning of their married life with a bright future before them, full of hope and anticipation that theirs would be a happy union, and that financial success would be theirs to the extent that a home of their own might be their reward for industry and economy, making many personal sacrifices, and saved some competence from their hard earnings after supplying their little, happy family with the necessities of life. Four years ago last March they left their relatives and friends in Darke Co., Ohio, and Jay County, Ind., and moved to North Dakota, where they bought a farm and began life in a new country, where the pioneers or early settlers often suffer hardships and privations such as only those who experience them can know. It seemed success crowned their first year's experience, and they were happy, but the last three seasons had not been so successful, and their crops not up to their expectations, and this year the great drought was so severe that Mr. Peters, though always kind and affectionate, his whole soul being wrapped up in the welfare of his family, began to worry over the crop failure and became melancholy at times, and we think from what has resulted that he was worried more than his family knew. He came back to Ohio and visited his father's family, and also his father-in-law's family, in Jay Co., Ind., returning home only recently, and about a week before the awful tragedy occurred which ended the life of himself and wife he hurt the back of his head in some way while removing a hayrigging from his wagon. He complained of this hurt, which was quite painful, and as to whether this hurt led to the unbalancing of his mind no one but God knows, but about 3 o'clock on the morning of Sept. 5th he arose from his bed, took a hatchet and tried to kill his whole family, the result being that his wife died five hours after the attack and his five children all received wounds, but at the last report they were all recovering, and the hope is all will get well. They are in a hospital in North Dakota, and will be brought back to Ohio when sufficiently recovered. This sad tragedy was a severe shock to their aged parents and brothers and sisters, and has cast a gloom over these families which time alone, with God's help, can remove. The parents felt and hoped to be spared from any calamity during their declining years, and feel this stroke will require God's grace, with renewed supplies from heaven, to enable them to bear up under this horrible tragedy. May it be God's providence that they be spared from more tragic deaths in their families, and that their children and grandchildren be preserved from harm, that their remaining days may be peaceful.

Albie, as we called him, never made a profession of religion, but seemed to incline to the same belief as his parents, who are members of the Old School Baptist Church called Providence, near Lightsville, Darke Co., Ohio. Mrs. Peters' parents were of the Lutheran faith, and she was a member of that order. The relatives have the sympathy of all their friends and neighbors.

The remains of both Mr. and Mrs. Peters were taken to his father's home, in New Weston, Darke Co., Ohio, where the writer tried to speak words of comfort to the largest concourse of people he ever preached to, and felt it was the saddest funeral he ever witnessed. The funeral train bore their remains to Salamonia, Jay Co., Ind., a distance of sixteen miles, in the neighborhood where Mrs. Peters was raised and where her relatives live, and they were laid to rest, after which a second funeral was preached in the Lutheran meetinghouse by a Lutheran minister.

Mr. Peters, after he had tried to exterminate his family, took a shotgun, and placing the muzzle in his mouth pulled the trigger and blew the back part of his head nearly off, thus ending his troubles, his mind being unbalanced and the poor man not realizing his deed.

ALSO,

Samuel S. Loning, son of Joseph and Elizabeth Loning, was born in Perry County, Ohio, Feb. 19th, 1834, died August 10th, 1911, aged 77 years, 5 months and 22 days. He was united in marriage to Mary Skinner, in 1865. The deceased was a subject of epilepsy since he was seven years of age. His life had been one of suffering and his condition one of sorrow, and he had been a constant anxiety to his faithful wife, who never faltered in caring for him. His mind was such that he could look after his own financial affairs for many years. He settled in Jay County, Ind., several years ago, on a new farm in the woods, and worked hard and planned a well arranged farm, but of late years his mind was so affected by his malady that his wife and their adopted daughter and husband looked after his business affairs. He united with the Baptist Church called Salamonia, in Jay Co., Ind., in the year 1890, and lived and rejoiced in the faith of God's people as long as his mind could comprehend the things that belong to the people of God. He leaves to mourn his death his faithful companion and the husband and five children of his adopted daughter, she having preceded him to the spirit land. He also leaves one sister, besides many other distant relatives and friends, to mourn their loss, which we firmly believe is his eternal gain.

The funeral sermon was preached at his old home by the writer. NEWTON PETERS.

Mrs. Rebecca B. Thomas died at her home in Loudoun County, Va., Sept. 15th, 1911, aged nearly 90 years. Since the death of her husband, Griffith Thomas, she had made her home with sister Joel Carruthers, her daughter. Three sons and three daughters survive her, together with twenty-eight grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. Sister Thomas was baptized in 1874, in the fellowship of Mt. Zion Church, by Elder Joseph L. Purington. She was another example of prolonged and cruel suffering in later life. Her sufferings were from the inroads of cancer, not of the malignant type, which does its work speedily, but of the kind which is no less fatal, yet its approach is more prolonged. While sister Thomas was not one who talked very much about her own travel of mind in spiritual things, her life was what the outward walk of a christian should be who seeks to adorn his profession, and whose light so shines that saints seeing his good works glorify the Father in heaven. It was evident she loved the brethren, for she not only said so, but she lived it and showed it by seeking their welfare and their company; their meetings were her delight, and we shall miss her sadly at Mt. Zion, miss her aged, trembling form and her eager listening to the preached word. She filled her place in that quiet, unassuming manner which is so lovely in the Lord's little ones. Grace was something more than a name with her. Her family testifies that no word of complaint or murmuring was ever heard to escape her lips during all the time of her suffering. It must certainly be a great satisfaction to the family to know that nothing which could be done to relieve her sufferings or add in any way to her comfort was neglected during the long, weary years preceding her departure.

A large concourse of friends and neighbors followed her body to the grave, showing the esteem in which she was held by the community in which she had spent a long and exemplary life. May God bless the dear family. J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., Sept. 28, 1911.

Deacon James M. Wilder, of Goin, Tenn., was born April 2nd, 1845, in Bell County, Ky., and died Sept. 13th, 1911, in Claiborne Co., Tenn., making his stay on earth 66 years, 5 months and 11 days. Brother Wilder was united in marriage to widow Nancy Green in 1866, and to that union were born thirteen children, six boys and seven girls, of whom two boys and five girls are living. Brother Wilder professed a hope in Christ and joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Union, Union Co., Tenn., about the year 1888, and was an orderly walking member, always filling his seat when possible, and was sound in the faith of the Old School Baptists. He was ordained a deacon in Little Zion Church by the following named Elders: James McDonald, H. C. Miracle and P. N. Moyers, on Saturday, June 1st, 1900. He was a loving husband, a kind father, a good neighbor and citizen, and had no enemies among men who loved truth; to know him was all that was necessary to love him. He leaves a loving wife, children and grandchildren and a host of friends to mourn his absence, but we mourn not for him as those who have no hope, believing our loss is his great rest and comfort, that while his poor widow and children mourn his absence, he is sleeping in Jesus. May God console and comfort them, and all who mourn, is our prayer for Christ's sake. P. N. MOYERS.

William P. Dove, son of Job and Elizabeth Anna Dove, was born April 6th, 1845, in Shenandoah Co., Va. He came with his parents to Ohio in 1854, and resided in Seneca County until his death. He was convicted of sin at the age of twenty-one years, and after a long and bitter struggle under the law to effect reconciliation with God he was delivered of the burden of sin and given faith to believe in Jesus as his Savior, in whom he trusted, and in whom he entertained a precious hope of heaven, a hope which he told the writer was exceedingly precious to him, especially during the last few months of his life. He talked freely of his departure, declaring that he had no desire to recover his health and live; his only

sorrow was in parting with his brothers and sisters, who are left to battle with the conflicts of life and to mourn his departure. He made all arrangements for his funeral, which were followed as nearly as possible. His sufferings were great, yet not a murmur escaped his lips, but he strove to conceal his sufferings from those who cared for him and watched by his bedside. On the evening of August 29th, 1911, he peacefully passed away from this world to a world where suffering and death are unknown. While we could not stay the hand of death, nor deliver our precious brother from his sufferings, but were compelled to suffer the sad and painful grief of parting, we sorrow not as those who have no hope, and we wish to bow in humble submission to God's will, rejoicing in hope of meeting again in eternal glory and peace.

The funeral services were held at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse southwest of Bloomville, on Thursday, August 31st, conducted by Elder L. T. Ruffner. Interment in Pleasantview Cemetery.

MARTHA E. DOVE.

BLOOMVILLE, Ohio, Sept. 26, 1911.

Eliza M. Hubbell was born Feb. 11th, 1836, in Bragg Hollow, N. Y., and died at her home in Kelly Corners, N. Y., Sept. 24th, 1911, making her stay on earth 75 years, 7 months and 13 days. She was a daughter of Daniel Jaquish and Sarah Hull. She was married to John D. Hubbell, Sept. 22nd, 1857, who afterwards was ordained to the gospel ministry, and was well and favorably known among Old School Baptists. He departed this life Nov. 29th, 1905. Sister Hubbell had long been a most faithful and devoted member of the Old School Baptist Church, her life being full of kindness and good works. It was her delight to have her home filled with those who know and love the truth, and many can testify to the hospitality of the Hubbell home. In disposition she was mild and gentle, always meekly bowing to the will of God concerning her and hers. During our thirteen years acquaintance with her we never heard her utter an unkind word regarding any one. Four years ago she suffered a stroke of paralysis, which rendered her helpless, but during her affliction she remained cheerful, and seldom complained of anything. Her sons and their wives ministered lovingly and tenderly to her, and feel that but little of their debt to her for loving-kindness to them was paid. She is survived by two sons: Will and Burr, four grandchildren, one brother, Geo. L. Jaquish, and one sister, Mrs. G. L. Hewitt, the latter both of Halcottville, N. Y.

The funeral service was held in the old home, now occupied by the sons, and was largely attended. The writer, assisted by Elder J. B. Slauson, conducted the service, and with the ability the Lord gave spoke of the wonders of saving grace in the Son of God, after which the remains were laid to rest in the family plot in the "Hubbell Cemetery."

May peace of mind and comfort of soul be ministered to each member of the family. K.

Mrs. Jennie Power was born Nov. 25th, 1852, and died at St. John's Hospital, in Springfield, Illinois, Thursday, May 4th, 1911, at the age of 58 years, 5 months and 9 days. She leaves to mourn their loss one son, three grandchildren, one sister, five brothers and a host of relatives and friends. She was a devoted member of the Old School Baptist Church, and had managed in many ways to keep alive the church meetings in her locality. Sister Power was kind, generous and sympathetic among her neighbors.

Funeral services were held at the home of her son, Wm. D. Power, Athens, Ill., Sunday morning, May 7th, 1911, Elder John L. Scott, of Springfield, officiating. Interment was in Oak Ridge Cemetery, Springfield.

JOHN L. SCOTT.

SPRINGFIELD, Ill., Sept. 24, 1911.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

G. W. Horner, Oregon, $1.00; Mrs. J. H. Rockafellow, N. Y., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting of the Wilmington Old School Baptist Church is appointed to be held the third Sunday in October, and Saturday preceding, to commence at 2 p. m. Saturday, on King St., between Tenth and Eleventh, directly opposite the courthouse. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Association of Old School Baptists is appointed to be held with the Little Creek Church, in the town of Delmar, Sussex Co., Del., on Wednesday, October 18th, 1911, and the two following days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited. All trains, both north and south, stop at Delmar. Those coming from the north, take the train leaving Broad St., Philadelphia, Tuesday at 3 p. m. Those from the south take train same day leaving Cape Charles at 11:35 a. m. There are trains arriving at Delmar in time for the meeting both north and south every day. Come; our hearts and homes will be open to all who come in the name of the Lord. We hope to see a goodly number present at our meeting.

A. B. FRANCIS, Pastor.

THE Olive and Hurley Church has appointed a two days meeting to be held Wednesday and Thursday, October 25th and 26th, 1911. Trains will be met at

Shokan Tuesday p. m. All who love the truth as it is in Jesus are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie has appointed its yearly meeting to be held on the fourth Sunday, and Saturday previous, in October, 1911, commencing at 10 o'clock a. m. Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us, especially ministers of our faith and order. All coming by rail on the D. & H. from Albany to Binghamton will get off at Cobleskill and inquire for J. E. Livingston, on Friday before the meeting.

J. E. LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

THE churches of the Roxbury Association will hold their fifth Sunday or quarterly meeting with the Andes Church, at Union Grove, N. Y., on Saturday and Sunday, October 28th and 29th, 1911. Trains will be met at Union Grove on Saturday morning. Those coming on the Ulster and Delaware R. R. from Kingston or Oneonta will change cars at Arkville for Union Grove. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Mt. Enon Primitive Baptist Association will convene with the church at Tampa, Fla., on Friday before the second Sunday in November, 1911. All lovers of truth are cordially invited.

M. L. GILBERT.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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As the hall in which the Albany and Troy Church holds its meeting is being repaired, there will be no meeting held until the fourth Sunday in October.

J. B. SLAUSON.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 79. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1911. NO. 21.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PORTLAND, Ind., March 22, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—I inclose you some thoughts penned to me by Elder Brees. I have his consent to send them to you. He said they were somewhat crude and needed rounding up, as he did not write them for publication. I submit them to your judgment.

Yours in hope,

NEWTON PETERS.

STRAY THOUGHTS.

MAKE not a brother an offender for a word.

It is not always that there is so much difference between us as it seems. There are so many words having several definitions that it requires a little patient inquiry as to the specific idea intended by the speaker or writer. It is not uncommon that men wrangle over the most trivial affairs from this very cause, and especially in scriptural quotations one may lose sight of all other ideas couched in a word except that particular definition which first comes into thought, and if any one suggests an opposite thought from that particular phase it is hard to disengage the attention from the first idea formed on the subject. Very often the first thought is best, but mature examination, inquiry and decision are always safe. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." We might profit by inquiring of our best definers, first in order, the Bible, then the most complete dictionary, but it is safest to take all dictionary definitions with due discretion, and not confine one's self to common authorities without diligently examining and comparing their definitions with the whole trend of Bible texts on the subject. For example, the word "baptize" is so vaguely defined that the whole Bible idea must be taken into account. Smith's Bible Dictionary does not pretend to define it as to mode, but only as to the commonly accepted practices, purposes, and the different forms of its administration, as performed by different sects, without discussing their authority for the using of any one of the modes in popular use. It mentions immersion, but when we examine that word we may immerse a body and leave it in its dipped, plunged or immersed state, and the idea is complete; but to baptize, according to all Bible texts referring to it, is not complete until it is raised up again.

I have only time and space in this article to give a suggestion or so that should direct us in our search for proper words and proper definitions of words so as to form correct ideas in reading, hearing or speaking on the most serious and important subject that can claim our attention for life or death. But what is life? No dictionary, encyclopedia or author that I have ever found has pretended to tell us; in fact, the whole group of lexicographers, definers, writers of scientific literature, confess that life is not definable, therefore we can only use the word "life" for its phenomenal effects, not with any hope of ever defining the actual thing itself. We know that God breathed into man the breath of life, but that breath, so far as we know, is the same breath that all animal nature breathes. This seems to be suggested by the grouping of all (animals) in whose nostrils was the breath of life, in the time of the flood, together with man. (See Gen. vi. 17; vii. 22.) Breath may not imply any actual element of divinity from God, for Job said, xxxvii. 10: "By the breath of God frost is given; and the breadth of the waters is straitened." Solomon also said, Eccl. iii. 18, 19: "I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts. For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity." Now, so far as natural observation goes, Solomon's conclusion was correct, and so far as science is concerned, this is the end of man, therefore when we want any further light on this phase of life we must go to Him who is greater than Solomon. (Matt. xii. 42.) I think that whoever confines ideas of life to scientific investigation, therefore, will fail, and when we pass over science into the very realms of life itself, immortal life, we pass into that unapproachable realm where science, law, theology, literature, art, and all branches of human harmonies, human investigations, cease to operate. Life itself is self-demonstrative, needs no logical deductions nor forms and methods of reasoning, nor the establishment of truth by evidence; it is self-evident. A self-evident reality is the hardest thing in the world to define. Life is self-evident in the natural or spiritual. The natural man cannot tell what his life is, but he none the less takes the fact into cognizance in every item of thought, and acts in harmony with his unknown life; he only knows it exists, though he has never seen it; he is actuated by it, though he cannot trace any visible or tangible line of ponderable connection between his life and his actions; he cannot weigh, photograph nor phonographically converse with his own living and controlling energy that we call life. So far as we can know, this natural life is not immortal, for then this life would need no other, or Christ-life. It was not from the natural life that Job deduced the idea of living after worms should consume his flesh. A miraculous faith possessed him beyond all natural probabilities or possibilities; the tangible evidences were all against that faith, but it burst forth as an all-conquering reality; it came from God, the same source of all faith, of all life. The forty odd living witnesses in their day of the wonderful and unexplainable lives and examples of faith spoken of by Paul in Hebrews xi., were illustrations of faith that did not and could not originate from

human probabilities; the prevailing evidences of nature were against them; but I am still writing of the phenomenon of life as evidenced by the phenomena, or appearances that follow; that is all we can do. There are also various ideas concerning life which deal alone of the states of the living, as he is said to be a live man who is active, energetic or forceful, in opposition to a man who is lazy, indolent and only lags through life, as dead to those around him; he has a name to live, and is dead. This brings us to the difference between life and death. I cannot say that Adam was immortal, even though some brethren do not mean by that word any more than I do by using another word in relation to Adam. Of course I accept the idea that when man was created God had a higher, or broader, or some kind of a different destiny from the beasts, yet there were, and I think still are, men who know nothing but what they know naturally, as brute beasts. (Jude 10.) Perhaps the most of men are unactuated by any other principle, have no other hope and possess no actual or spiritual vitality: no immortality. This true immortality is not only imperishable, but incorruptible—sinless. If immortality is eternal life, and that life was merely breathed into man's nostrils, the same as the breath of beasts, then when men die we might conclude there was no more of them; but this theoretical or logical conclusion has no bearing as to the future after death, for the resurrection does not appear, or is not proven from scientific deductions as from the relation of natural law in the spiritual world, but from the immediate evidence of faith in God and his promises to that faith contrary to every known physical force or natural power of theoretical reasoning from purely philosophical data. But this purely philosophical reasoning from purely physical data can only arrive at purely natural conclusions, so that when the learned theologians pursue their mixed theology, or partly natural deductions and partly scripturally recorded revelations from God, they forget even the letter of the apostle's admonition: "Comparing spiritual things with spiritual," and essay to cramp incompatible elements together, or natural things with spiritual things, so that their mass, sum, product and quotient are neither wholly the one nor the other, but a heterogeneous mass of contradictions and inconsistencies. The scriptural record of the resurrection comes to us the same as the record of the first creation of man, and is understood as a natural process by a natural man, but to one who feels the power of a spiritual life it is more harmonious with that soul to look for a spiritual personality, a spiritual harmony and a spiritual glory. This thought need not disturb the faith of any man, for whatever faith one may strive to express, he will find a difficulty in the application of human thought to the mysteries of the gospel of Christ. The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation; he is the resurrection and the life; he only hath immortality dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen nor can see, to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen. And in this same connection Timothy is exhorted to avoid profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science, falsely so called, which some professing have erred concerning the faith. (1 Tim. vi.) Thus we come to Paul's same conclusion that I have spoken of here, that oppositions of science, which is always opposed to christian faith, should not be sought as evidence of spiritual truth, therefore has

no weight in spiritual things. Scientists do not and cannot accept any evidence except natural truth, and the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, therefore science is in place in natural research, but the moment we begin to apply scientific facts as a measure of spiritual truth we cannot harmonize them. The reed that John saw in the hand of the angel on the isle of Patmos gives us no actual measurement in our natural standards of square, superficial or cubic measure. I doubt there being a single man of science who pretends to believe the Bible who would be willing to limit the holy city to the exact capacity of an exact cube of one hundred and fifty miles each way. That revelation was expressed to the mental convenience of John's understanding for specific purposes, and John himself does not seek to so explain that measurement to the pacifying of scientific men's understanding. Scientists who confide wholly in scientific research for their understanding of the Bible cannot reconcile all the language of the apostle Paul with their conclusions, as, to say that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ, therefore while we have both minds (the natural and the spiritual) it behooves us to judge all things relative to each mind, the natural mind relative to natural things, and the spiritual or the Christ mind relative to spiritual things. Our natural mind cannot conceive the idea of a heaven without some idea of meets and bounds, but when we are wholly absorbed in spiritual thought, caught up to the third heaven, as it were, we lose the sensibility of actual scenes around us, so that we can say with Paul, Whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth. O to be with God alone; then, and only then, are we capable of knowing divine things; but such glory would wholly disqualify us for this natural life as effectually as our natural minds were originally disqualified to understand spiritual things. Just how a natural body can be raised a spiritual body no scientific explanation is possible, nor do we need an explanation; the simple assurance of our faith that God is able to give us a body as it pleases him is all we need, therefore it is vain for us to try to carry our speculations farther as to the identity of our body here or hereafter. No definition of the process of that change is possible, either from a natural, scientific or spiritual faith point of view. Our faith in God and his word, brought to us in experiences of his power, is sufficient to silence all our oppositions of science, falsely so called. What definition can we, therefore, give to satisfy the natural man as to any spiritual truth? Our natures can only recognize visible, tangible and ponderable realities, and cannot even retain those realities in constant sensation, therefore we have to repeat our actual experiences of them in order to perpetuate our impressions of them. We behold our natural face in the glass, and straightway forget what manner of person we are. We also lose sight of our temperament, disposition, or even our state of health, until some new test or experience revives our memory; in fact, there are constant changes in them all, yet we cannot lose our identity, we are the same identical persons. Our natural

faculties cannot deny the scientific evidences of a constant change in our body from year to year, or for a period of years, so that anatomists have declared that there is a complete change in our being every seven years, yet, in spite of this fact, we are personally the same identical beings or persons we were in childhood. Judging only from our personal sense of the present, we cannot comprehend this, yet when we review the past we are sometimes surprised as to these changes. Why then should we doubt God's power to preserve our identity in death or the grave? What though we cannot understand that future experience of the resurrection now, any more than we understood or still remember our prenatal identity, nor first counseled the Almighty as to the process of our introduction into this time state? Our faith in the resurrection now comes to us soothingly from the throne of God. O that we might lose all sight of science, all trace of doubts, all murmurings of our childish queries, all intricacies of logic, and calmly wait, or "press forward," or run up with joy the shining way to embrace our dearest Lord.

Thus far I have confined my words to christian thought and aspiration. What words properly apply to the damned? Were they equally immortal? Were they equally endowed with eternal life? Were they the equal participants of everlasting existence from the breath of God when they, in common with their Adamic head, received the breath of life from God? If they were then possessors of eternal life, and that eternal life died, why could not God's eternal life die also? If only the animal life died, and they also had an immortal life that they derived from God's divine life, then they were equally as much heirs of eternal glory as the elect, and therefore I can see no reason, either natural or spiritual, why they should not be called the sons of God, and if sons, then heirs of God through Christ; (Gal. iv. 7,) but if they, in common with God's chosen or elect, were created in one man, and only had one life, and that life, alike in both classes, died alike in Adam and continues to die alike, they must both, elect and nonelect, be raised by the power of God. The judgment of the elect, however, is in this life, and of the nonelect in the resurrection. "For the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."—John v. 28, 29. Thus we see that Jesus definitely distinguished between the two resurrections, as indicated above, and he also instructed John in Revelation xx. 6, that, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

As I do not design to define or establish the chronological order of the first and second resurrections, nor to show any relation of Jesus' instruction, as recorded in John and Revelation, but only to establish the fact of the two resurrections, which correspond with the two judgments, first of the righteous, and then also of the unrighteous, I pass briefly to consider the duration of each. If the one transgression merited eternal death for both the good and the evil alike, then the same power is essential to raise them up to judgment and give each class another state of being, one of which is eternal life and the other eternal death,

without sensations of eternal judgment, (Heb. vi. 2,) eternal fire, (Jude 7,) eternal damnation, (Mark iii. 29,) everlasting punishment, (Luke xxv. 46,) everlasting destruction, (2 Thess. i. 9,) and everlasting chains, (Jude 6,) all passing the limits of time into the regions of eternal judgment, where no cessation of a sense of God's justice is either expressed or indicated, then I can see no reason why the period of punishment and of bliss should not be of equal duration. If the dead pass into nonentity, or into a senseless condition of soul, I see no special terror or sense of God's justice in such an idea of judgment, for it could not be more than a Buddhistic Nirvana, a rest of eternal sleep, a total annihilation, hence would destroy any idea of suffering for sin, a state which many of the poor, weary, sin-burdened creatures of God might welcome if they could but escape the terrors of their sense of sin in their flesh; but no such thought can satisfy a vessel of mercy, whose judgment has already passed upon them, and they could not be satisfied with any such assurance. The idea of annihilation does not complete the sense of 2 Thess. i. 9, for it would not be punishment, but a relief, to be everlastingly destroyed from the presence of God; but that does not finish the sense of the punishment for those "who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." There must be some everlasting sense of this everlasting condition, and that cannot be without some everlasting experience of that separation.

Again, men in this life often are spoken of as destroyed, because their hopes of success are thwarted. They are also said to be dead while yet living, and in Revelation iii. 1, Jesus instructed his servant John to write to the angel of the church in Sardis: "These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name, that thou livest, and art dead," therefore the sense of every word must be shown by its context; and in Philippians iii. 19, there is a like thought to be borne in mind. No doubt the saints had been harassed with "many" who walked among them as professed disciples, yet enemies of the cross of Christ, "whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things." This destruction here spoken of doubtless refers to their destruction from the church; so likewise the same destruction is spoken of by Peter, second letter, second chapter, first verse, and on through the chapter a graphic description of the various grades of false professors, presumptuous profaners and all the wonderful illustrations of God's great longsuffering toward the damned, whether condemned in the church or to the punishment of the ungodly. God walks and dwells in the church, both collectively and individually, therefore he holds his court in Zion, and has so ordained that his holy city shall dwell alone and be so separated from the world that ravenous beasts shall not be in her, nor corrupt idolaters contaminate the sacred place, for he sits as a refiner's fire and a purifier of silver. This cannot be said of the simple natures of his children, only as to the control of that holy, spiritual life which he has bestowed upon them, holding them in restraint. This constitutes them as one person composed of two lives, the one natural, the other spiritual; the one of a carnal, corruptible and depraved nature, the other of the divine nature. This personality is, by

the gift of God, to be continued through time and eternity, whether of the elect or nonelect; the elect as Peter says, second letter, i. 3, 4, "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue. Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." This is doubtless the direct result of the first judgment. This calling of God from the former state of condemnation and guilt before him gives the recipient of that call a new desire, motive and purpose in life. Here is what is called a change of life, a new birth. This change is not a change of the elements of life, but a partaking by the old of a new life, and consequently new power controls the old; a new course of action is pursued, a new life is manifested by it. There is still left, however, the old man, and there is a new man, an actuality of divine life to control, direct and compel obedience to a new and divine law, the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. This change is but a phenomenal one, so far as this world can judge, but the person who experiences it must be sensible of the actual warfare in his being; these two elements are irreconcilably opposed to each other. The natural is in constant strife with the spiritual; they are at as much variance, and more constantly, than the "company of two armies." Two armies may be out of sight, out of reach of each other, may pass flags of truce with each other, but the christian warfare continues until life is extinct. The old man must perish, the new man be renewed day by day. The personality of the man is not destroyed, but is made a partaker of divine nature; not personally made divine, or so changed as to be wholly divine in personal element; hence the hope of every child of God is all that he can enjoy in this life until this mortal shall have put on immortality. Glorious hope! tested by all the sad experiences of this world, but this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. The power of God is manifested through faith. Lord, increase our faith. A. B. BREES.

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio.

(See obituary in this number.)

OTTAWA, Kans., Oct. 3, 1911.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I have wanted to write you of some of the blessings of God to me of late, but have not been enabled to do it.

These letters from sister Pittman will tell you more than I can. I visited this dear family in May, and was with them again at the association, the 1st, 2nd and 3rd of September. Just now I feel like saying, I love the Lord; he heard my cry and pitied every groan, but am almost afraid to write it, for before this letter reaches you I may be in "Doubting Castle," or in "The Valley of Despair." I am hoping alone in the mercy of God, feeling sure there is nothing too hard for him.

ANNA McKINNEY.

HAVANA, Kans., Dec. 25, 1909.

MRS. ANNA McKINNEY—DEAR SISTER:—I have just read your letter to Elder Durand, in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and feel that I want to write and tell you that my husband and I enjoyed it very much, and I also want to tell you about some dear Baptists, not very far from you, who live at Iola; they have preaching the first Sunday in each month,

Elder John Preston's address is 325 West Campbell Street. I hope you can go some time, they will be glad to have you. The Turkey Creek Association met there last year. You speak of the comfort you have in reading the SIGNS; I wish I could tell you how I have been comforted and how I love the writers. Often when I read their communications I have such fellowship for them that I think I must write to them. I did not always love the dear Old Baptists, like you; I was grown when I first heard that there was a people of that kind. My husband was a member before we were married; he is now a minister. I could see nothing in the SIGNS to interest me until God saw fit to open my blind eyes and put a new song in my mouth. I shall never forget the first Baptist sermon I heard after I felt the forgiveness of my sins. I could scarcely keep from weeping aloud. The dear Savior took me by the hand and led me to the Rock that is higher than I. The time for our meeting here in Havana is the second Sunday, and we would indeed be glad to have you come. We have but few members. If you receive this, I would like to hear from you. May heaven's choicest blessings rest upon you and yours.

Your unworthy sister,

MARY E. PITTMAN.

HAVANA, Kans., Jan. 29, 1910.

DEAR SISTER:—I have just been reading your letter again, and I wondered how I could wait so long without responding to it, but many things have claimed my attention since I received it. I am truly glad to know you; what you have written has drawn you very near to me. I am sorry your little daughter is in such delicate health; I am sure you suffer greatly on account of it. It is hard to understand how all things work together for good; sometimes when in deep sorrow it is a comfort to be still and know that he is God.

The last SIGNS is exceptionally good. I was much interested in sister Keene's experience. As you say, I love those I have never seen; there must be an unseen tie that binds our hearts in christian love. I sent your letter to Elder Reeder; he was much interested in it, and said he feels sure you are one with us in travel and mind, and that you lean upon the sure mercies of God. In what sense could we be nearer to God than to be able to trust him for full salvation? It is good to trust in Jesus, and surely the name of Jesus sounds sweet in a believer's ear; it not only sounds sweet, but looks sweet, because this is how I commenced reading the SIGNS. Soon after I rejoiced in the Savior's love, and felt the forgiveness of my many sins, I accidentally, as it seemed, glanced at the paper and saw nothing but the name Jesus. I quickly picked it up to see what was said about this precious Jesus, who had so recently said to me, Thy sins are all forgiven. This very name thrilled my soul, and from that day to this I have been reading the SIGNS, and it still tells the same sweet story of his love and mercy to poor sinners. How many times I have been comforted. He will not leave himself without witnesses. If we could see each other we could tell many things that cannot be written, and do you know I have a feeling that I will see you some time? Thank you for the invitation to visit you; if we ever can we will be pleased to do so. We would be more than glad to have you and your family visit us at any time. My husband joins me in love to you and yours.

In sweet fellowship,

MARY E. PITTMAN.

HAVANA, Kans., Sept. 15, 1910.

MY DEAR SISTER:—I hope you will not think I have forgotten you, nor that I have grown indifferent about writing to you, for I do not think a day has passed this summer that I have not thought of you, and the last three or four days you have been on my mind almost constantly, so much so that I really believed you were coming to make me that promised visit, but as you have not come I am trying to write to you. I have been very much interested in your and sister Pultz's letters in the SIGNS. How mysteriously our Savior brings his people together for our comfort and his glory. If it were not for the SIGNS I probably never would have heard of you and many other dear ones. I have lately received another precious letter from sister Bessie Durand; she says she hopes that you and I will meet, then she wants to hear about it. The same day I had a letter from sister Nannie Edwards, of Lagrange, Ga.; sister Bessie introduced us, and we have been corresponding three or four years. Some say to me they do not see what pleasure there can be in corresponding with any one we have not seen; but you, dear sister, know all about it; we love their letters because they tell of the precious things of Jesus, and we feel that we have been taught in the same school and led by the same Spirit; they tell it by their sorrows and joys. We can all speak of our burden of sin, of our deliverance and of that peace that passeth all understanding. Of late I have been thinking much of that first happy hour which no tongue can tell, when Jesus said to me, Thy sins are forgiven. It seemed he was hovering very near in the form of an angel, and like vapor. It was just after I had retired for the night, and after forgiveness came my husband and I were too happy to sleep until very late. Wonderful indeed are the goodness and mercies of our heavenly Father. Truly Jesus sought me when a stranger; yes, he loved me first. Surely God had great love for us when he gave his only begotten Son for us. O for a closer walk with God.

"Nearer, still nearer, close to thy heart,
Draw me, my Savior, so precious thou art,
Fold me, O fold me, close to thy breast,
Shelter me safe in that haven of rest."

Can you not come to see us this fall? we would be so glad to have you.

Your unworthy sister,

MARY E. PITTMAN.

HAVANA, Kans., Oct. 1, 1911.

DEAR SISTER:—I just sat down to write to some one, and said to my husband, I have so many letters to write I do not know which to answer first; at the same instant the thought came, I will write to sister McKinney. I have thought of you many times a day since I saw you last, and often I have feared you were sick after you returned home, as you ate very little and did not sleep well. I know you had spiritual food enough while at the association. We have not heard from a person who was there since we left there. We could not get away until Monday afternoon. We found all well, and everything all right, for which I hope we thank God. O, was it not lovely to be there? We could be together all the time, and no one missed a single sermon. The name of Jesus was exalted above every name, and all preached salvation by grace, and told the same sweet story of Jesus and his love, mercy and goodness to the children of men. We cannot fathom the depth, nor measure the height of this wonderful love. He will be unto us a God, and we

shall be his people, and he will not leave us comfortless. He has promised to remember our sins and iniquities against us no more forever. Just think of that; could anything be more comforting to such poor, sinful creatures as we are? Jesus loves even me; yes, though I forget him and wander away; I am prone to leave the God I love. Often I am made to say, What makes me do the things I do not want to do? I often wonder if there is any one like me; I know you are not, dear sister. If I am a child of God it is not because of any good I have done, but it is all through his love and mercy. He loved us even when we were dead in trespasses and in sins. He drew me, and I followed on, charmed to confess the power divine. How glad I am that the dear Lord does everything after the counsel of his own will. He, for Christ's sake, has pardoned our sins, and we believe he saved every one he died for.

We hope to have meeting next Sunday; wish you could be with us again.

With loving remembrance to your dear household,

MARY E. PITTMAN.

BALTIMORE, Md., Sept. 21, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a money order to pay my renewal for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I do not want to miss a single copy of the paper, and often think one copy is worth the price of a year's subscription. You may know that I am a deaf mute, and the SIGNS has been a great comfort to me to read. While I cannot hear preaching with my ears, I can describe it in my heart, but I fail to express myself.

I am forwarding you a letter written me by Mrs. Florence Pultz, which I would like published in the SIGNS, if agreeable to you. Her dear letter comforted me, and I have read it over and over again, though we are strangers. I have often tried to answer it, but it has been difficult to reply, for I am so ignorant in my mind, which I truly hope she will pardon. I am hoping to hear from her again. I am made to hope, and feel to love God's people in a peculiar manner, which I think manifests a relationship in the Spirit, though I feel to be one of the weak ones, and I feel to need the help of my brethren and sisters that are so much stronger in the Lord than I am. I would always be glad to receive comforting letters from God's people who hear the sweet gospel sermons. While it has not been my privilege to hear my pastor preach, I enjoy reading in the SIGNS from the various writers.

Dear reader, if you have a mind to write me, do so, as I always love to hear of the good word of Jesus.

May God bless you with his loving care. RAY KAUFFMAN.

WHEELING, W. Va., Jan. 9, 1911.

MR. RAY KAUFFMAN—DEAR BROTHER:—I read your good letter in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of Dec. 1st, 1910, and the thought came then that I would like to write to you. I feel sorry that you are afflicted, and yet I feel that you are wonderfully blessed, in that you can read, and you can meditate. I have often thought that if I were blind and deaf naturally, I would have less to draw my thoughts away from God and heaven. How good it is that it does not require natural faculties to know the things that belong to God. I think often of the man that was born blind; we read of it in the ninth chapter of John: "And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither

hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." Surely, my dear brother, God has made his works manifest in you, having neither speech nor hearing, yet he made you know the truth and love it. It makes me love our good SIGNS, and I have a lively hope that God is pleased with it, when I know that he has directed you to its pages for instruction. I read the two good letters which your pastor wrote to you in the January 1st number, and it caused me to have a warm feeling for him; they show he has a good, kind heart. I never met him. I wish I lived where I could go to preaching every Sunday. There are no Primitive Baptists here. I usually get to attend one association each summer. I attended a two days meeting at Donora, Pa., in November, and enjoyed the preaching and the company of the saints very much.

Dear brother, I started to write you, as you will see, on January 9th, but felt uncertain in my mind as to how you would regard this liberty. I think I do have a desire to comfort the dear children of God, especially if I think they are as hungry for the company of the dear saints as I am.

You speak of your good brother Floyd; I know you miss him; he was good and kind to you. We have our Elder Brother, Jesus our Savior, we know that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. How wonderful to think that he knows our every thought, and that his kingdom is in the hearts of his people; that we are not our own, but are bought with a price; surely it is a wonderful price. Being so dearly bought, how we should strive to please God; we should pray without ceasing for his holy Spirit. He encourages us to pray, and not to faint. Dear brother, I do pray that he may fill your life with the sweetness of his presence, that you will be always in sweet communion with him. God speaks to the heart; often we do not know that it is his voice, but later it will be made known to us.

Feb. 18th.—Dear brother, I have been uncertain in my mind about sending what I have written; I believe it is because I have been so comforted and so cheered by the kindness of some of the dear saints who have taken the trouble to write to me that I feel this inclination to go and do likewise. In your letter you said that there were places where they preached in the sign language, but you did not feel disposed to go. This struck me so pleasantly I said to myself that God had something better in store for you. God chose to teach you himself, and he taught you by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

I hope you will accept this poor, little effort from a poor, old, afflicted sister, who has a desire to do the will of God, and yet is so ignorant and weak, not knowing a step of the way. As we cannot speak to your ears, we can only speak in this way. This morning I arose early, and was thinking about trying to address a few lines to Elder Durand, when I was quickly reminded of this unfinished letter to you. I had often been reminded of it before when starting to write, but I felt as if it could not be of any comfort or interest to you, coming from such a poor source as I feel to be, but if it finds favor in your sight, I know you will write. I would be glad to have you write and tell me about your experience, or about God's mercy to you.

I am, I hope, your sister in this blessed love of God,

(MRS.) FLORENCE PULTZ.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Oct. 2, 1911.

DEAR ELDER KER:—This is a letter handed me by sister Stradley for your judgment for a place in the SIGNS.

Your brother, I hope,

J. M. FENTON.

CAMMAL, Pa., Nov. 20, 1910.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have often thought I would like to write a few lines for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as I take it and enjoy reading the letters of other dear brethren and sisters. I have never written before, and I hope it will escape the wastebasket. I have experienced many lonely days since the death of my dear companion, and miss him more every day. We had been married fifty years, and the mother and father of six living children, all of whom are married and have homes and families of their own, so I am left all alone, and no one can tell the lonely hours I have spent, and will never know that sadness until they pass through it themselves; but the dear Lord is with me day and night; he neither sleeps nor slumbers; he is the watchman over his flock, and all the comfort I desire is to hear the truth preached, for I am a poor, miserable sinner in the eyes of God, but all my trust is in him. The most important subject that ever engaged the attention of men or angels is the worship of the true and living God. It is that in which the saints are not only engaged while here in their pilgrimage, but it is that in which they hope to be employed in the unclouded regions of glory. When God delivered me from that horrible pit and miry clay and established my goings, he also put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto his name. When John saw the Lamb standing upon Mount Zion he also saw with him an innumerable company employed in singing the new song before the throne of God, which no man could learn except those who were redeemed from the earth, and none but the redeemed, regenerated, called and spiritually taught can worship God in spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. The Scriptures teach us that the only acceptable worship of God is in spirit and in truth. He will have no other worship, for he is the God of truth. "Rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you: but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

"Adieu, vain world, the spirit cries,
All tears are wiped away;
My Jesus fills my cup with joy,
And fills it every day.

A taste of love we have below
To cheer a pilgrim's face,
But every saint must die to know
The feast of heavenly grace.

Our days are as the grass,
Or like the morning flower;
If one sharp blast sweeps o'er the field,
It withers in an hour.

But thy compassions, Lord,
To endless years endure,
And children's children ever find
Thy words of promise sure."

I will now write a few words in regard to my mother and sister; they have been dead a number of years, but I shall never forget them. My mother and two other old sisters walked from Cammal to Cherry Flats, a distance of twenty miles, to hear the truth preached. Elder Getchel was the minister at that time. The two old sisters made the trip twice, but my moth-

er could not walk so well, for her weight was two hundred and eleven pounds when she was forty years old. Brother Vail and brother Durand know just how far it is from Cammal to Cherry Flats, also knew those old sisters well; they were kept by the power of God and his mercy during all those years. Brother Vail, our former pastor, had been coming to Cammal for over thirty-eight years. We were always glad to see him, and were sorry when he left us and went to Canada; but now Elder Fenton, of Philadelphia, Pa., has taken his place, so we are not left without a minister. It is a wonderful thing to know the truth, and to know God and be known of him.

I will now speak of my departed sister Charlotte, who left this world of sorrow thirty-seven years ago, and I am the only one left to tell of that dying hour. My father came for me at noon, and said that if I wanted to see my sister alive I should come at once, so I went, and she reached out her hand to shake hands with me, then mother gave her her dinner. She took one bite and said, "Is this death, or is it not? I was warned of this three days before;" but none of us asked what that warning was. She said, "The only true doctrine that is preached under the heavens is the Old School Baptist doctrine; you can live by it and die by it." She had three small boys: Lewis, Wallace and Peter. She gave Lewis to mother, and two sisters took the other two. Then she wanted us to sing "Home, Sweet Home," for she said she was going home, everything was dark and she could see us no more. She died of consumption, and for over a week she had not spoken above a whisper, but at that last hour God gave her strength to talk and tell us what she wanted us to do. Brother Durand knew my sister well, and knew her hope. She had a hope in Christ, and I hope I have one.

Ever your sister, in hope of eternal life,
SARAH JANE STRADLEY.

LEBANON, Ohio, Sept. 16, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—My time has again expired for the SIGNS, so you will find inclosed a post-office order for two dollars for another year's subscription. I cannot do without it, as it is the only preaching I am privileged to have, or nearly so. I love the doctrine so ably set forth by the editors and brethren, who testify that they have been with Jesus and learned of him. I am sure there is nothing worth living for in this vain world except to glorify God, and this poor life has fallen so far short of it that sometimes I must cry out, Is his mercy clean gone forever? All within is vain and wild, yet how I long to be manifestly his child. When I would do good, evil is present with me, and how to perform that which is good I find not. The apostle says, Then it is no more I, but sin which dwelleth in me. Verily it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. He also besought the Lord thrice that this thorn in the flesh should be removed, and the blessed answer came, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake."

The letters of brethren Silas Durand, Frederick Keene and sister Pultz, together with many others, have been of much comfort to me lately. I love the precious doctrine of salvation by grace, and when we are enabled by this precious grace to look away from our own vile,

worthless frames, to behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world, then we are made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. I sometimes have (or seem to) strong faith that I have had this experience, and yet most of the time I am dull and lifeless, and feel sure that no one is worse than I who has never heard the precious name of Jesus, nor felt the power of his wondrous grace. O let me ever praise and adore him who is the Rock of Israel, the precious, lively Stone, to whom the saints will ever cry, Grace, grace unto it. In the language of the last words of David: "And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain. Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." Pray for me when it is well with you.

Unworthily,

(MRS. EVA W. MORRIS.

TIAWAH, Okla., June 27, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I send you a copy of a letter which I wrote to my father forty-seven years ago; I was then a photographer in an adjoining county to which my father lived. Yesterday in looking over some old letters which my father had carefully laid away I came across this letter; I had forgotten writing it, but the handwriting, date, place and signature all proved that I had written it. There is no curiosity about the sentiments expressed in this old letter, but a proof that I believed the same doctrine essentially nearly fifty years ago as I do to-day. I hope I believe that I am a sinner, and that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only Savior of sinners.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

MIDDLETOWN, Ohio, June 15, 1864.

DEAR FATHER:—I am still living in this world of sorrow and disappointment, where many a sore trial awaits us poor mortal worms of the dust, where we are all subject to the inbred corruption of a hard heart and a guilty soul, where many are made to feel the great necessity of an all-wise and protecting God, who rules supreme over all flesh; for no flesh shall glory in his sight, but all shall be subject to his divine will and power, for all things are by the will and power of God. Thanks be unto him who still doeth his pleasure, even if the natural world does seem to be laid in darkness, and not even the light of a star seems to brighten the natural sky, nor a living hope seems to spring up to secure for us a permanent place to rest in while sojourning here below; not even one thing to encourage us, but the firm decree of God standeth, and it is secure. We do not know what the future may bring forth, but one thing is certain, nothing shall come to harm those who trust in God, for the Lord has a chosen people, a peculiar people, which were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. But how does this sound in the ears of the world? As they cannot receive it, of course they will not believe it. It is too hard against their works which they perform with their own hands. But, my soul, have you anything to rest upon, anywhere to go to soothe your aching thirst for true holiness? Stop and think, and remember, did you not hear the sweet voice of One near you who spoke words of comfort and cheer, and did you not listen with an

attentive ear? Did you not promise to obey? Did you not confess that he was all of your hope? Then why do you serve the flesh when you should be serving God? Are you proud again of a little worldly honor, and are you set up because of worldly gain that quickly passes away? But how can these things be otherwise when we remember that we still dwell in the flesh, and have the same carnal nature, with all of its seducing lusts? For every day we see something of the ravages of that destroying power of the man of sin, that inward nature that is corrupt and vile, that is abominable and wicked, which showeth itself in every imaginable way that can be conceived of. But our hope is not like the hope of the world, which is disappointing, it is sure and steadfast, and an anchor of the soul, that brings us nigh unto God.

I have written too much for your patience I am afraid. It is getting late, now after eleven o'clock at night, so I will close.

From your affectionate son,

JEFF BEEMAN.

PINELAND, Texas, July 31, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription to your paper will expire September 1st, thought I would send in my remittance for another year, so inclosed you will find two dollars for same. I also thought I would try to write a few lines to let you know how much I appreciate the SIGNS. I have only been a reader of it about eleven months, but it seems that I could not get along without it. If I ever have known anything in a spiritual sense, and I sometimes hope I have, this dear paper comes to me in the darkest hours, when everything seems to be doubt and gloom; it comes filled with good letters written by the dear ones from all over the country, and when I begin to read them it seems the Holy Spirit takes control of my mind and I am made to rejoice beyond expression. Although I am not connected with the church, I do believe the doctrine of the Old Baptists, the doctrine of salvation by grace, for I am made to feel and believe that if I am ever saved it will be through the mercy of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I would like to tell you how I came to subscribe for the SIGNS, but have not space to do so now, as I have already written more than I expected, and it seems that there is nothing in what I have written, but those things just came into my mind, so have tried to write. Do with it as you please, and when at the throne of grace remember me, a poor, wretched sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all,

G. L. BEAUCHAMP.

MARENGO, Ohio, July 10, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I know I am slow in sending our remittance for the renewal of our much loved SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but we still desire its continuance to our home, for we love the precious truth for which it so faithfully contends, and it is good to know there are a "faithful few" who still maintain and heed the good old way: salvation by grace. How precious is the doctrine that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life, an all-sufficient Savior of poor sinners, and how blessed and highly favored we are if we have thus been taught of the Lord, and given a hope which is more precious than the gold of Ophir. Blessed is the man whose hope the Lord is. How beautiful it would be if all who have this good hope through grace would come together in loving fellowship, all as one precious family in peace, in oneness of faith, doctrine and practice, with love

flowing from heart to heart; truly it would be a home, a resting-place in the weary journey of life; it would be attractive and encouraging to all the little, doubting, hungering ones to take up the cross and come in and follow with us in faith and fellowship of the gospel, and we could say of a truth, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity;" but alas, we live in a time when the love of many waxes cold; some are wrangling and backbiting over things to no profit, until at times we feel so discouraged and wonder what will become of the dear, precious cause here in this vain, contentious world; but the Lord is good, and we feel sure he knoweth them that are his, and we still feel to hope and trust in him to lead, guide and keep his loved ones, that we all may be found walking as children of the light, loyal and faithful to him who is so gracious and full of mercy to us.

"O let us be of one heart and mind,
Courteous, pitiful and kind,
Lowly, meek in thought and word,
Altogether like our Lord.

Let us for each other care,
Each another's burden bear;
To thy church the pattern give,
Show how true believers live."

With love to all the dear household of faith, I remain unworthily, in humble hope,

BELLE GORSUCH.

ORLANDO, Fla., Sept. 7, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have been pondering in my mind for a long time whether or not to write you a few lines, but I want to tell you I thank you for the privilege of reading your good paper, yet it makes me feel sad to think I cannot pay for it, and whenever you see proper you can discontinue sending the paper to me. I am such a poor, ignorant, sinful mortal I do not deserve such favors. I received a letter on the resurrection from dear brother Beeman some time ago; it is good, and I thank him for it, and I thank the Lord for putting it in his heart to send it to me, for it does me good to get a word from the dear ones far away. A great many years ago it was the Lord's will that I should be placed far away from all the Old Baptists; not a member anywhere near me; it seems that the Lord cut me off from them because I was such a sinner. How often I have to say in my mind, O Lord, have mercy on me, a poor sinner. At last the Lord has placed me within half a mile of the Old Baptist church-house. O how glad I was to meet with the people I love, for I was not expecting to ever meet with the church again. I came here the first of May, 1910, and can walk to the meetinghouse. The members all seem loving to each other, and it seemed like old times. Poor sinner as I am, I had to ask a home among them, for I could not stay away. They received me, and seemed to rejoice, and I rejoiced with them to think I had found once more the people I love, and I have been able to walk to the meetinghouse once a month, except three or four times. Our preacher is a good man, and the Lord is with him when he gets up to preach. He is sound in the predestination and foreknowledge of God. At our last meeting, on Saturday, there were four dear sisters who told what they hoped the Lord had done for them, and were received, and baptized the next day. My age is eighty-four years.

This letter is not worthy of notice; I can hardly write, but wanted to thank you for your kindness in sending me your paper. Pray for me, that I may be prepared to depart in peace with my blessed Savior when it is his will to take me from this time world.

(MRS.) S. J. BRANSON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1911.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

DIFFERING BELIEFS.

SEVERAL brethren from different parts of the country have lately written to us with regard to a state of things which they say exists in their sections among the churches. The substance of the questions which they have proposed relates to difficulties growing out of differing beliefs among them with regard to the doctrine of the predestination of all things. The particular questions propounded refer to the manner of conduct which the churches who hold to the doctrine of predestination ought to maintain toward the churches which do not receive this doctrine. It is stated by the writers that churches which deny this doctrine have refused to receive members dismissed from the others upon the letters which were given them, solely because of the faith of the churches giving the letters, in this doctrine. In other words, brethren who hold to this faith are rejected from the fellowship of the brethren who deny this doctrine. In one instance named it is said a brother who received a letter of dismissal from a church holding to this principle of doctrine, and who presented it to a church which rejects the doctrine, was refused admission upon his letter, but was received upon confession of his faith. In other instances it is stated that churches denying this doctrine have put up bars of fellowship, as it is called, against those churches who believe this principle of doctrine to be the teaching of the Bible, refusing to allow ministers who believe this doctrine to preach in their pulpits, and refusing to receive members from the churches which hold this faith. In reply to these statements and questions we will say that some things seem clear to us, and yet we would not desire to write hastily or rashly concerning any matters among churches at a distance from us. In the first place, we will say that it certainly is not needful for us to reiterate our faith in this principle of truth. If anything is stated clearly in the Bible it is that our God is the Creator of all things, and that he is infinite in knowledge, so that his infinite mind takes in all that ever has existed, all that does now exist and all that ever will exist. This means that there is not a grain of sand, nor mote that floats in the sunbeam, but what from all eternity was in his mind and knowledge, and that not one deed, word or thought of men or angels has ever existed that was not embraced in the omniscience of Jehovah. Nothing therefore can ever be that was not always known by him, and nothing that he knew from eternity can fail to be. We should call this predestination of all things. If some other brother chooses to give to this principle of truth some other name, we would have no dispute or quarrel with him, so that he believes the truth of the foregoing statements.

In the second place, we have been glad to learn that, as a general thing at least, all over the country, and among all the churches, those who believe this gracious truth have not felt to cut off others from

their fellowship because they could not enter into a full belief of it. We recall that brother Silas H. Durand some time ago said in writing that he had never felt like withdrawing fellowship from a brother who could not fully receive this truth, though he might feel to do so because of the spirit and manner in which one might oppose this doctrine. This expresses the feeling that has actuated us these many years in the past. But, on the other hand, it has been the case often, as we learn, that those who deny the doctrine have declared entire nonfellowship for those who believe and love it. It has been painful to us to hear of such things. There are many brethren, no doubt, of whom it may be true, as it is with ourself, that they have found much consolation in affliction, and great strengthening in the midst of temptation and weakness, by their faith in this gracious doctrine which so greatly honors the God whom we worship, and which furnishes such a bulwark of security to us in time of temptation and trial. How many have been lifted up under great stress of trial by the remembrance of the truth that all is as God has appointed it for them, and that all these, as well as other things, are only working for their good and the glory of God. Thus Job in his affliction comforted himself: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." And, Shall a man receive good, and shall he not receive evil, at the hand of the Lord? Again, "He performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him." All this was the stay and strength of that afflicted servant of the Lord. In these three expressions from the mouth of Job we have two special truths presented, viz., first, that he believed that all his afflictions, as well as all his blessings, came from the hand of God, and not from the hand of robbers or of Satan; and second, that that which the Lord was doing to him was what He had before appointed. What is this if it be not predestination? In the time of affliction, when men are weaned from the breast, they come to understand this doctrine with all other doctrine. To them it is not a matter to be fought over, but to be received to the lasting consolation of their souls. Such as these do not wish to make this doctrine a matter of strife, but they do wish to bear testimony to its power to heal and strengthen the sick and weak ones of the flock. For this reason they do not feel to enter into contention over it, but to bear long with those who have not attained to the experience of the truth and power of that doctrine to help them in time of need. But we had not purposed to say so much in this direction, but simply to reply to the questions suggested by the brethren.

In the third place, as regards the instances where churches believing this doctrine have given letters of dismission to members, and these letters have been rejected by another church solely because of this doctrine, it seems to us that such an action is a declaration at once of want of fellowship, and that it is saying that they do not regard the church giving the letter as being a church of Christ at all. In such a case the brother or sister presenting the letter ought to decline being received in any manner at all by the church rejecting the letter; to do otherwise is to declare (whether such an one means it so or not) that he is in accord with the action of the church which has thus declared nonfellowship for the other. That brother should have returned the letter to the church which

gave it to him, or else have found some church in order that would receive the letter and welcome him upon its authority. Still further, as long as he has not placed his letter in some other church, and become a member with that church, he is still a member of the church that granted him the letter. It is customary, we believe, in most churches, and we know that it is with some, to say in the letter, "And when we shall receive word from you that our brother (or sister) is received by you we shall regard him (or her) as being dismissed from us." But he is not dismissed from this former church until his letter has been received by another of the same faith and order, therefore those who have been received upon confession of faith, their letter having been rejected, are still members of the church which gave the letter to them. The fact that they have been received upon confession of faith does not make any difference, so far as their true membership is concerned, and it appears to us that the one thing that the church giving the letter ought to do is to write to or visit the brother or sister and show them that they are really members of the church giving the letter, and not members of the church where the letter was rejected, and if they have any fellowship in the spirit with the church which has rejected the letter it would be right to also communicate with them with regard to the matter, and try to win them to a better course, and to manifest brotherly regard for the church granting the letter. We see no other course to pursue in the cases stated by those who have written to us.

Fourth, in other instances brethren have written us that churches and ministers who deny predestination refuse to allow ministers who do believe the doctrine to preach in their pulpits, and yet they will occupy the pulpits of churches which do believe the doctrine, if allowed to do so, and the question is asked us, Should this last be allowed by those who believe the doctrine? We can hardly understand how a minister who would deny to us, for instance, the use of his pulpit, because of our faith in the doctrine of predestination, could expect to be welcomed into the pulpit that we are occupying. We have never taken the ground that a brother must look upon this principle of doctrine just as we do before we can walk in fellowship with him; indeed there have been some of the most precious ministers we have ever known who did not feel prepared to accept this doctrine in its fullness of meaning, and we have had many delightful hours in conversation with them, and in sitting under their ministry, but it seems beyond all question to us that if one who questions the doctrine refuses to admit one who believes the doctrine into his fellowship, either in his ministry or in any other way, it would be utterly inconsistent for him to expect to be received and fellowshiped by the other in any way. We cannot see how there could be anything but embarrassment for all concerned in such a case, and it could not be for the edification of any one, nor for the glory of God. It has long seemed to us that if in any case, and for any reason, one declares nonfellowship for another, there is no remedy until that action is rescinded. The one excluded may be wrongfully treated, as sometimes no doubt has been the case, but still he cannot walk in fellowship with those who will not walk in fellowship with him. It is right, if he feels to be wrongly treated, for him to try to show that it is so, that the bars may be removed, but until they

are removed the act of the one declaring nonfellowship must be in the way and keep them both apart. If the declaration of nonfellowship be because of the doctrine of the word of God, as is stated by those who have written to us to have been the case in the instances to which they have referred, the same principles hold good. The declaration of nonfellowship cannot be overlooked until it be taken out of the way. This is the way the matter appears to us, at least.

In the the fifth place, questions have been asked us with regard to members coming from those churches which have declared nonfellowship for the doctrine, and for those who hold it, to churches who do hold to this truth, asking for membership. We suppose the meaning is, if they come bringing letters from those churches. In reply we can only say that we cannot see how letters could be received from churches which would not acknowledge letters to them in return. If the church at Rome should for any cause refuse to receive letters of dismission from the church at Ephesus, we could not see how the church at Ephesus could receive such letters from the church at Rome; but we can see how both churches ought to treat each other with brotherly kindness, and so try to come to an understanding and to remove the difficulty if possible. We certainly would be glad to know that in those places where these difficulties exist there existed such a state of sorrow over it all that the desires and prayers of all the Lord's people would be coming up before God for healing, and for righteous peace among them. If the Lord makes peace, who can make trouble? How important to remember the admonition to strive for the things which make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another. But let there be no compromise in the doctrine; that is, we mean, let none strive to get together by each one yielding something which he understands the Bible to teach. Each one must cling to the truth as it appears to him, yet there may well be forbearance toward each other, and an endeavor to be patient and kind. This is commanded among all who love God.

We will leave these reflections to the brethren who have written to us and to our readers in general. We have not been striving to give any decision about any particular case anywhere, but simply trying to speak of some of these things in a general way. C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

We are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Brother George D. Conklin having changed his address from Warwick, N. Y., to Pine Bluff, N. C., Box 114, requests that his correspondents address him at the latter place.

Elder C. K. Haines has changed his address from Princeton, Ky., to Lakeland, Fla., where his correspondents will hereafter please address him.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder S. B. Jones.)

The Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, now in session with Spring Creek Church, Adair County, Mo., to the churches composing the same and the faithful in Christ Jesus.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—Another year of time is numbered with the past since we met in an association, with it many changes, some of which have caused sorrow and sadness, and some caused joy and gladness, yet it has pleased the Lord to spare our lives and permit us to meet again in an association, for which blessing we hope we feel thankful to the Giver of all good and perfect blessings. Very dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, according to a long established custom you will look for a Circular Letter to accompany our Minutes, and as the lot has fallen on me to try to write one, I will call your attention to a portion of Scripture which you can find by reference to the epistle of Paul the apostle to the Colossians, second chapter and sixth verse, which reads thus: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." Let us, dear brethren and sisters, remember that those whom the apostle was addressing, or writing to, had received Christ Jesus the Lord, a free gift bestowed upon them, so we understand that the command that the apostle has given is to all them that have received Christ Jesus the Lord, even to the present time. Let us notice why it was that he, Paul, was an apostle of Jesus Christ, or by what authority he acted. We find that it was by the will of God (Colossians i. 1), and we do not believe that God makes any mistakes; his work is a perfect work, even from the redemption of his people down to the smallest event in time or eternity. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."—Acts xv. 18.

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." The apostle was here trying to draw their minds to a steadfastness in the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, and not to be entangled with the false doctrines and systems of that day. Brethren, we have these things to contend with to-day, the great enemies of the truth, therefore we would admonish you to be careful to maintain the doctrine of our Lord and Master, of which the apostle Paul was an able defender, and could point out these doctrines of men that should creep in, teaching for doctrines commandments of men. You have not received Christ Jesus in this way: by anything good that you have done, but by the Spirit teaching you that you were poor, helpless sinners, and teaching you to observe all things I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always. We have been buried with him in baptism, to rise and walk in newness of life; in this we have become dead to the world and alive to Christ. John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." What a wonderful change here by the work of the Spirit; the power of God manifested through the Spirit to the poor, dead sinner; this is God's way of leading his children from darkness to light; we now seek the things that are above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God, to make intercession for his people. Now, dear brethren and sisters, there is much said at this time about how God saves his people; let us hear what God says about it, and not what men say. Paul, who was an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, says, "For by

grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." So we find that Paul says that we are saved by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. The angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph, and said unto him, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." Now, according to the testimony, Jesus is the Savior of his people. Let God be true, and every man a liar. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness; he had faith to believe what the Lord had promised he was able to fulfill, and this faith was counted to him for righteousness. So the apostle says, Ye are the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. So then we walk in him by faith, looking unto him who is the author and finisher of our faith. When we received this faith we felt we were poor, lost sinners, and that we needed a Savior; we were sick of sin, and desired and longed for righteousness; we could see no good in anything that we could do; we could see our weakness and our imperfections; we could look upon every one as being better than ourselves. This is the way the Lord leads his people; they are taught of God to love one another, and when they meet they love to talk and tell of what great things they hope the Lord has done for them; not what great things they have done for the Lord; so the apostle could say to them, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him," and do not get up contentions about the law, for ye have become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even Jesus, who was delivered for our offenses and rose again for our justification, our righteousness, sanctification and redemption, through the blood of Jesus Christ our Lord, that through him we might receive the forgiveness of sins. Now, dear brethren, contend earnestly in the spirit of meekness and love for the doctrine and practice of Christ and his apostles, and so walk ye in him.

ISAAC CAPPS, Moderator.
H. C. CATE, Clerk.

(Written by Elder J. B. Slauson.)

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the First Church of Roxbury, Vega, N. Y., Sept. 20th and 21st, 1911, to the churches composing the same sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Another year is numbered with the past, and we are again gathered together in an associate capacity. We wish to address you with our annual letter of love and fellowship, and in so doing will say that we have many things to be thankful for, and especially that the Lord has kept us through another year, and by his kind providence has privileged us to meet together in this our annual association, where we hope to praise his great and glorious name in body and spirit, which are his, and that this meeting may be an association indeed, where heart shall respond to heart, where love and fellowship shall abound, giving all glory to God, to whom all glory belongs. We would desire in writing this epistle of love and fellowship for the consideration of our brethren to call your attention briefly to the words of our blessed Master as recorded in John xiv. 27: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither

let it be afraid." These words are of endearing comfort, coming from the lips of our adorable Redeemer to his apostles, whose hearts were troubled because of his sayings, as recorded in one of the preceding chapters, where he told them plainly of the things concerning him that should be accomplished at Jerusalem, how that he should be betrayed into the hands of wicked men to be crucified, and on the third day should rise again. These sayings of Jesus greatly astonished the apostles, and caused them to be troubled in heart, for they had looked upon him as the promised Messiah and King of the Jews. The apostles, not understanding the full import of his words, were not able to comprehend the nature of his kingdom which he came to establish, that his kingdom was not of this world, but his kingdom was a spiritual kingdom; therefore he (Jesus) must die in order to return to the Father from whence he came, and to redeem the subjects of his grace and establish his kingdom in their hearts. Now, as the apostles were not able to fully comprehend his words, their hopes were blighted and their hearts saddened in the thought of their blessed Master being taken from them, but he assures them of the coming of another Comforter, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in his name, and he shall teach them all things. Things which the apostles at that present time were not able to understand concerning the death and resurrection of Jesus were to be revealed to them by the Holy Ghost, and, furthermore, he assures them of that blessed peace which he will leave with them.

We now desire to briefly inquire into the saying of the blessed Master, as recorded in his word: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." The Scriptures plainly declare that all were dead in sin, and all had become transgressors before God, for by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Death implies separation, so all were separated from God, or, in other words, were not at peace with God, for by nature we are children of wrath, even as others. Jesus came to do the will of his Father, and this is the will of him that sent him, that of all that he had given him he should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day. Jesus must destroy him that had the power of death, that is to say, the devil, in order to deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Jesus came to do the will of his Father, and his Father had willed that he should blot out our transgressions as a thick cloud, and deliver us spotless before his Father in glory, freed from sin and condemnation, delivered from the power of darkness into the glorious liberty of the Son of God, and to be at peace with God. The peace which Jesus gives is that peace of soul which the world cannot give. He (Jesus) can cause a dead sinner to live and rejoice in that sweet peace and rest that remain for the people of God, which is known only by those who experience it, for where there is no knowledge of sin there can be no knowledge of salvation from sin; if there is no cross there can be no crown; likewise, if one has not experienced his lost condition how can he know the joys of salvation? Jesus gives that sweet peace and rest of soul that the children of God experience here, and fits and prepares them for that sweet peace and rest in the presence of God in its fullness, which can only be felt in part while in this tabernacle of flesh;

so, dear brethren, let us strive for the things that make for peace, not rendering evil for evil, but with longsuffering forbearing one another in love, praying for one another and helping to bear one another's burdens, so fulfilling the law of Christ, and may the God of all grace enable us to dwell together in peace and fellowship in the midst of a wicked and gainsaying world, to the praise of his great name.

J. B. SLAUSON, Moderator.
H. C. ELMENDORF, Clerk.

(Written by Elder R. W. Sanford.)

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, assembled with the Middleburg Church, October 4th and 5th, 1911, to the churches composing the same.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In pursuance of old time custom to address you in what is called a Circular Letter, suffer us to call your minds to the epistles of John, in which we do well to consider that which was from the beginning with us in our experience of the power of the word of life, that eternal life which was with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, manifestly taught to the heirs of the grace of God. In the fullness of time God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we (Gentiles) might receive the adoption of sons. Because ye are sons God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. (See Gal. iv. 5, 6.) Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. If we love him who has begotten us, we shall most assuredly love them that are begotten of him, as children of the elect lady (the church), who is free, who is the mother of us all and never in bondage. All gospel ministers (like John) love the church for the truth's sake; it is their greatest joy to see them walking in the truth and in gospel order, each esteeming others better than themselves, and love to assemble together and let their voices mingle together in praise to him who has called them from darkness into light in the Lord. When men and women have been taught the sacred truths of the gospel it is evidence they have been born of God, and show a desire to dwell together in fellowship, not desiring to withdraw from the church and follow after seducing spirits, for such have gone out in the world; try them, brethren, by the word of truth; to every inquiring son or daughter of the Lord the gospel is full of teaching. If any lack wisdom, go to him who withholds not to them that walk uprightly. Thus it is safe for every quickened son or daughter to go softly and with care, putting no confidence in an arm of flesh, for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God; having been made free, let us not be again entangled with any yoke of bondage. John rejoiced greatly to find the children walking in the truth as they had been commanded by the Father. May we lay aside the common affairs of this life, and every weight, and that sin which doth so easily beset us (unbelief), and in patience run the race set before us, looking unto Jesus. "Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."—Heb. xii. 3. "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house [church], neither bid him God speed."—2 John 9, 10. The union of Christ and his bride (the church) before

time elected in him, sanctified by God the Father and preserved in Christ, and in time called, from such turn away. Brethren, do not leave all the care of the house (the church) to the watchman; you have your station to fill, see that you be watching over one another (not for evil, but for good), bearing one another's burdens, for in so doing you are fulfilling the law of Christ. Experience has taught you the flesh is enmity; you are called upon to crucify the old man, with its affections and lusts, and put on the new, which is created of God in righteousness and true holiness. "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another."—Eph. iv. 25. Be courteous, kindly affectioned one to another, and the God of peace be with you all. Amen. Farewell.

R. W. SANFORD, Moderator.
JAMES AVERY, Clerk.
JAMES E. LIVINGSTON, Ass't Clerk.

(Written by Elder H. H. Lefferts.)

The Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, in session with the Bethlehem Church, Prince William County, Virginia, October 11th, 12th and 13th, 1911, to the several churches and associations with which we correspond, sendeth christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—This Circular Letter, though written by one appointed by this association to this duty, is not a vehicle for the expression of individual opinions, ideas and views, but, being adopted by this association, is the voice of the churches composing the same, and declares what we as a body believe and stand for. Inasmuch as the space allowed us in a letter of this character is not sufficient to cover the whole ground of our faith and practice, we shall endeavor to address you now upon but certain phases of these matters, and as a basis for such remarks as shall be written, call your attention to 1 Corinthians xiv. 40: "Let all things be done decently and in order."

We believe that associational meetings of this character are profitable and beneficial to the churches composing them. Thus is afforded to churches an opportunity of hearing and enjoying ministering gifts that otherwise could not be heard. The custom of each church in an association addressing its sister churches by letter, informing them of its condition, is a good one, for while no church has dominion over the faith of any other church, yet by standing together in an associational bond they become helpers one of another, and have the benefit of one another's interest and counsel. Sometimes the writing of church letters degenerates into a formality, but this can be avoided by using every effort when preparing them, to have them tell the truth as to the condition of the church, and to not say that unity and peace prevail when such is not the case. Addressing sister associations by Circular Letters, when such are written in the spirit of sincerity and truth, is beneficial, for thus we hold up the hands of churches of our faith and order far and near, and keep them advised as to our position in matters of doctrine and order. We think that all who have carefully watched the history and travel of our associations will agree that churches standing together in this relationship have been better able to protect themselves from disorder and heresy from without, and have thereby been enabled to better preserve the integrity of their own churches. To this end, associations should be careful as to who they send out as messengers to repre-

sent them in other associations, and we would suggest also that a too extensive correspondence be guarded against, as it is apt to become unwieldy if carried beyond the point where we can assure ourselves of the soundness in doctrine, faith and practice of those with whom we correspond. Then, too, in opening correspondence with any association we should take pains to satisfy our churches that such body is really with us in doctrine, faith and practice. In all this, churches find that eternal vigilance is the price of safety, and that our natural powers are not sufficient for these things, but that we need to be strengthened by grace in the inner man. Orderly churches make an orderly association. A chain is no stronger than its weakest link, so any church that is weak in doctrine, or slothful in keeping its house clean, may act like unholy leaven to permeate with confusion and strife a whole association. As to what constitutes sound doctrine, this association understands the following to be essential: (1) The absolute sovereignty of God over all affairs in heaven, earth and hell. (2) The perfect foreknowledge of God of all events, men, minds and things, thoughts, imaginations and impulses, from the beginning even unto the end, and for evermore. (3) The total depravity of the whole human race by the disobedience unto the law of God of the first man Adam, so that all mankind are dead in trespasses and in sins, being thereby rendered unable to save themselves from condemnation by their own efforts, or to even desire salvation. (4) God before the world began chose a definite number of Adam's race unto salvation and eternal life in his Son Jesus Christ, and predestinated them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself according to the good pleasure of his will, and not according to any virtue he foreknew would be in the elect, and that his rejection of the wicked was not because of any evil he foreknew would be in them, for in Adam and according to the flesh, both elect and nonelect are alike, so that by nature one is no better than another. (5) That this covenant of election made in Christ before the world began was actually accomplished in the manifestation of the Son of God in the flesh in the person of Jesus, the Son of Mary the virgin, and that by his life obedience, death, burial and resurrection, redemption, justification and sanctification are assured to all the people of God. (6) In this present gospel dispensation the Holy Ghost is at work in the hearts of the elect everywhere, bringing them to an experimental knowledge of these blessings and truths of God before mentioned. (7) Finally, that the culmination of all God's plan and purpose is the resurrection of the dead, the judgment of the wicked unto eternal punishment and of the elect in Christ unto life eternal.

Inasmuch as God has by the operation of his Holy Spirit given to his church here in the world a visible organization among men, what is its purpose and what its order and practice? The divine purpose in visibly instituting the church in the world is to afford a spiritual home for weary pilgrims, where they have communion and fellowship with their kindred spirits. It is a shelter from the cold, unfriendly world of infidelity and antichrist, a place of safety from persecution and from the errors, delusions and traditions of men. Being in the membership of and in fellowship with the church visibly, we are saved from the untoward generation without. One's place in the church in glory is not enhanced by being a member of the church visibly organized here in

the world, but one's peace of mind, comfort of soul and growth in grace and knowledge of spiritual things are certainly increased. The Holy Ghost has delivered to the church certain ordinances, ministering gifts and rules of practice, all designed for the "perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Thus speaking the truth in love, we may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ. The ordinances of the gospel church as practiced in this association are baptism of believers by immersion, the observance of the Lord's supper at stated intervals, the setting apart of the brethren to the deaconship whenever they are manifestly qualified to that office, and the ordination of men to the gospel ministry by the laying on of hands whenever the Holy Ghost has manifestly set them apart to that work. We believe that churches should exercise the watchcare over their members, and should labor to restore such as show a disposition to stray away from the path of order, decency and rectitude. Whenever a brother is overtaken in a fault, they that are spiritual should labor to restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering themselves lest they also be tempted. But nowhere does the New Testament warrant a church in tolerating heresy, fornication, drunkenness, or other evils, beyond the point where they threaten to disease the whole church and become a reproach in the eyes of the world without, a stumbling-block in the way of our friends who are interested in the truth and in the welfare of the church. Any member of any church who persists in living a disorderly life, and to whom the Holy Ghost does not grant repentance in enabling such an one to turn from his evil course, should be excluded from its fellowship, delivered over to "Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." The pastors of the several churches should seek with all the diligence and earnestness in them to maintain a godly walk and conversation, to be ensamples to the flock of right living, should study to shew themselves approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed of their handiwork, rightly dividing the word of truth; and as it is only through self-denial, trials and afflictions that pastors can faithfully discharge their duties to the churches of their care, it behooves the several churches to look after the temporal needs of their pastors, and to assist them financially in the bearing of life's burdens, that they be not unduly weighted with the affairs of this life, and thus be enabled to give themselves wholly and unreservedly to the work of the ministry. All the above expressions regarding the doctrine and order of the house of God are the sentiments of the churches of this association, and may the good Lord in his mercy, love and infinite compassion give us strength equal to our day, minister grace sufficient to our needs, for without him we can do nothing; and if he enables us to do all these things yet are we unprofitable servants, for it is not of ourselves we do it. "Therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory, both now and for ever. Amen."

J. N. BADGER, Moderator.
S. B. PAXSON, Clerk.

(Written by Elder S. H. Durand.)

The ministers and messengers composing the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, to the several churches whose messengers we are, send christian salutation.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—According to our custom we send you this Circular Letter, in which we will call your attention to the words of the psalmist recorded in the one hundred and thirty-third Psalm: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" This is good to meditate upon; it is one of the sweetest and richest of the blessings of the gospel covenant. Where it is not manifest there is need of urgent and loving exhortations; where it does exist and is manifest it is a subject to contemplate with thanksgiving, and to consider in all its goodness, pleasantness, excellence and beauty, with praise to the God of all grace. This association has been always noted for the peace and unity that have prevailed among the churches and brethren; it is, therefore, a comfort to dwell upon this subject. But while we feel and express thankfulness for this blessing, we also have need to heed the many exhortations of the apostles to "let brotherly love continue;" "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," and to remember that it is the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, which alone can keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. We know the deceitfulness of our hearts, and our liability to trust in ourselves and to become self-confident, and so it becomes us to be on our guard against our own carnal minds, and against the wiles of the devil, and try to keep any root of bitterness from springing up to trouble us. There is a natural goodness and pleasantness in natural brethren dwelling together in kindness and harmony, but this that we are contemplating is very different; it is not in harmony, but in unity that these spiritual brethren dwell together. The peculiar illustration used here shows its character very clearly and beautifully. It is like the precious ointment which was poured upon the head, and ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, and ran down to the skirts of his garments. Here is presented the anointing of Aaron to the priesthood, in which the whole garment, and so the whole body, is enveloped. This represents the anointing of Christ by the Spirit of the Lord. This is the anointing which John says teaches his people all things. This anointing is abundant and refreshing, "as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." This life for evermore is that by which we live unto God. In our natural life we are crucified with Christ; nevertheless we live, yet not we, but Christ liveth in us; and the life that we now live in the flesh we live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us. The psalmist looked forward to the gospel dispensation, and saw the children of God dwelling together in this one life, and calls upon the saints to behold the goodness and pleasantness of this gospel living, this dwelling together in this spiritual life. This is the life that was in Jesus from the beginning, and which shineth in darkness, "and the darkness comprehended it not." The darkness of our nature cannot comprehend this spiritual life, but the Lord's people are led and directed by this spiritual anointing, and enabled to walk in its light, and to dwell together in it. They are made to see and know that in this spiritual life they are in unity, and

that wherein they differ from each other they, or part of them, are carnal, and it becomes them to look the matter squarely and carefully over, and see where the error is. This is most important, for they are only able to enjoy the good things of the gospel when they are walking in the Spirit, and dwelling together in the one Spirit. They cannot say, We will dwell alone. They cannot say, It is not important that we should take so much pains to agree together. This is wrong; no man liveth to himself alone, and no one dieth to himself alone.

Who can tell the full meaning of the word "good"? It seems to us now to be indescribable. How often and how variously it is used with reference to the supreme excellencies, and kind and loving characteristics, of the Lord. "O how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" Such expressions are often used in the Bible concerning the Lord. All the goodness that is in the dear Redeemer is in the saints when they are dwelling together in him, and then that goodness is manifest and displayed in their lives and conversation in measure. There can be nothing so good and so pleasant as when a little company of spiritually-minded christians are dwelling together in unity, and are manifesting their love and fellowship for each other, telling of the goodness of the Lord and seeking each other's comfort and welfare. By the power and leading of this one life they put on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, loving-kindness, and all the graces of the Spirit, which beautiful garments suit them well. Their desire, when dwelling together in this life unity, is to be tender-hearted, forbearing one another in love, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven them. Thus living this life in Christ, or trying to, they show something of the glorious things which are spoken of Zion, the city of the living God, which is beautiful for situation, being built upon the mountain of God's holiness, and is the joy of the whole earth.

A. B. FRANCIS, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Middletown Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., Oct. 4th and 5th, 1911, to the associations with whom we correspond sends greetings.

THROUGH the mercy of a covenant-keeping God we have the privilege of meeting once more in an associate capacity to worship the living and true God, and we trust we have by the grace of God been enabled to do so in spirit and in truth, knowing that he seeketh such to worship him. We were rejoiced at the coming of our much esteemed Elder J. G. Eubanks, your messenger, and believe that he has preached the unsearchable riches of Christ, and we have also received your Minutes, and after perusing them we are happy to say we are in accord with the principles therein announced, and in consideration of the union of sentiment we desire a continuance of correspondence. Brethren, pray for us, that notwithstanding we are greatly reduced in numbers by death, that the Lord would cause the Sun of Righteousness to shine in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus

Christ, and that he would make us more fully realize that our losses and crosses and disappointments work together for our good and the glory of God. This session has been noted for harmony in preaching and love manifested by brethren and sisters.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Lexington Church, of Greene County, N. Y., on the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, 1912.

R. W. SANFORD, Moderator.
JAMES AVERY, Clerk.
JAMES E. LIVINGSTON, Ass't Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder A. B. Brees, son of Solomon M. and Kesia Brees, was born Dec. 30th, 1841, near Canandaigua, Lenawee Co., Mich., and died at his home in Spencerville, Ohio, Oct. 5th, 1911, aged 69 years, 9 months and 5 days. He was united in marriage to Harriet Wilson, of Marion, Ohio, and to that union were born two children, a son and a daughter. Early in life he joined the Old School Baptist Church, and when quite a young man was ordained to the ministry and called the boy preacher. His greatest enjoyment was in traveling and preaching among his brethren. He was a Bible student of more than ordinary ability in the true spiritual understanding of the Scriptures, and this he did not boast of over others, but was a humble servant of the Lord and of his brethren. He wrote much on scriptural subjects, and would travel miles in snow and cold to visit his brethren. He was a minister who sought strict obedience to the ordinances of God's house, observing them himself as well as his Lord would enable him so to do, always desiring to be found faithful in his duty as a minister and member. He moved from Michigan about thirty-five years ago, and preached among the churches of the Mud River and Greenville associations, and united with the Refuge Church, of Spencerville, remaining a faithful member until called to his reward. He traveled considerably among the eastern associations during the last three years, also among some of the southern associations in Kentucky. He returned home July 7th from a long trip through the eastern States and Canada, much worn out and afflicted with kidney and bladder trouble, which gradually grew worse until he was much reduced in flesh and strength, but it was not thought by his family that the end was so near, yet on the morning of October 5th he had a paralytic stroke, which rendered him unconscious, and the end came in the afternoon of that day.

The writer was called to preach the funeral sermon on Saturday afternoon of the 7th, after which the remains were laid to rest in the cemetery at Spencerville, Ohio, to await the second coming of our Lord and Master, when he shall descend with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, when the dead in Christ shall be raised. He leaves to mourn his departure his faithful, devoted wife, one son, one daughter and six grandchildren.

ALSO,

Charlotte Mikesell (nee Debolt) was born in Winchester, Preble Co., Ohio, June 18th, 1833, departed this life Sept. 19th, 1911, aged 78 years, 3 months and 1 day. She was united in marriage to Aaron Mikesell, April 22nd, 1852. To that union were born five children, four sons and one daughter; her husband and one son preceded her in death. She leaves to mourn three sons, one daughter, five grandchildren and one brother, besides a host of other relatives and friends. She united with the Old School Baptist Church called Providence, in Darke County, Ohio, many years ago, and lived a faithful member until called to her reward. She was a humble sister, always walking before God and her brethren in that gentle spirit which alone is given of God, always desiring peace and love and good fellowship among the brethren. She loved to hear the gospel of her Lord and Savior proclaimed in its purity, and in early life showed the law of God had been written in her heart, which always gave her a correct view of self, from which time she never had any confidence in the flesh, for when that law was written there it was the knowledge of sin to her, and was always with her to show her that she could do nothing of herself to merit salvation. When she was quickened by his Spirit she then learned that salvation was of the grace of God, and that all of God's people were sinners, and could in no way with these sinful bodies keep God's law, and that it was Christ who kept the law for his people and saved them by his mercy and grace, and all this through his atoning blood. She was an aunt of the writer.

Elder George L. Weaver, of Galion, Ohio, was called to preach the funeral sermon.

NEWTON PETERS.

Mrs. M. Leatherdale died Sept. 7th, 1911, in Ridgetown, Ont., aged 94 years. Sister Leatherdale was a well preserved woman, both in body and mind, although somewhat rheumatic for the last few months. She was sound in the faith, and always ready and anxious to talk about the precious doctrine of Christ. It was her chief delight to visit with her dear kindred in Christ. I do not know how many years she had been a member of the Covenanted Baptist Church, nor who baptized her, but I think for a good many years. She had lived with her two daughters, Mrs. Campbell and Mrs. Smith, in Ridgetown, for many

years, who did all that loving children could for a kind, loving mother. God bless all the mourning friends with sustaining grace. She is at rest in Jesus Christ, who was her heaven here below and is her heaven now.

ALSO,

Mrs. Weir, of Duart, Ontario, died Sept. 13th, 1911, aged about 97 years. She had been sick a long time with weakness consequent to old age. She was a member of the Covenanted Baptist Church for many years, I do not know how long, nor who baptized her. She was sound in the faith and faithful to the cause of Christ, which she dearly loved. She has gone to her eternal home. She lived by faith in Christ while here below, she lives in him above.

ALSO,

Mrs. Kate Allison, of Duart, Ontario, died Sept. 20th, 1911, aged 82 years. She was a member of the Covenanted Baptist Church for many years, sound in the faith and very much interested in the cause of her Redeemer. I am told that Elder Pollard baptized her. One of her sisters cared for her in her sickness, which lasted several months, I learned from a friend, but she, too, is at rest in Jesus. May God bless all who mourn her departure with grace.

The writer officiated at all three of the above funerals. Very large congregations attended each.

D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

A Friend, Cal., $4.00; W. H. Pilchard, Md., $1.00; Wm. Darby, Md., $1.00.—Total, $6.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Mt. Enon Primitive Baptist Association will convene with the church at Tampa, Fla., on Friday before the second Sunday in November, 1911. All lovers of truth are cordially invited.

M. L. GILBERT.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.
JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 79. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1911. NO. 22.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TIAWAH, Okla., Oct. 1, 1911.

EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS —DEAR BRETHREN:—To-day, fifty-one years ago, I had the privilege granted me to be led down into a running stream of water and be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Thinking over the years that have passed since then, and the bright assurance of faith that I had that day in the holy ordinance of baptism, I am led to try to say something in behalf of the benefits received by God's believing children who are enabled to go down into the water in the name of the holy child Jesus. It seems to be a strange argument for any person who believes in salvation by grace to reject the ordinance of water baptism, claiming that the Lord Jesus Christ abolished all ordinances by his death and resurrection. Strange again that they fail to see the difference between the law of Moses and the ordinances connected therewith, and the few and simple ordinances of Christ's kingdom. There is nothing in the orderly walk of a true believer in the Lord so palpably plain as the way down into the water in the likeness of his death, and the coming up in the likeness of his glorious resurrection. Have we proofs that Jesus sanctioned the act of baptism after he was baptized by John in the river Jordan? If we have those proofs are they not sufficient for all time in the gospel dispensation? His approval and commands should be sufficient for every doubting saint, even if the apostles were silent on the subject. No person can read the New Testament without finding it recorded three times that Jesus was baptized in the river Jordan by John the Baptist. Also, John in his testimony admits the same fact. We find it recorded, "After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized." —John iii. 22. "When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) he left Judea, and departed again into Galilee." —John iv. 1-3. It appears from the above quotations that the Lord Jesus in the early days of his ministry gave his disciples authority to baptize in the Lord's name. I once had an argument with an Arminian preacher about the

meaning of the second verse of the fourth chapter of John, which I have quoted, he holding that Jesus baptized only the twelve disciples. I have always understood that this parenthetical sentence which has no supplied words, has words well understood which give meaning to the whole subject. So then, as I understand it, it would read this way: Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples did baptize. This sets at naught the idea promulgated by some that the disciples were not commissioned to baptize until after the resurrection of Christ. I wish it understood in speaking of baptism here that it is very evident that water baptism is the baptism his disciples did administer to believers in the Lord. His disciples never had the power to baptize with the Holy Ghost. After Christ's resurrection he said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."—Matt. xxviii. 18–20. Mark bears testimony essentially to what Matthew has recorded. In his record, baptizing in the name of the Lord was part of the work assigned to his disciples. This surely was water baptism. Luke and John do not mention that the Lord after his resurrection enjoined upon his disciples to baptize, but they do mention that the Lord commanded them to preach and to teach in his name. Certain it is that Peter and the other disciples who were with the Lord made no mistake in regard to the ordinance of baptism, for in several places in the Acts of the apostles we find recorded where believers were baptized in water in the name of the Lord. In the second chapter, thirty-eighth verse, Peter commanded those who were pricked in the heart to be baptized in the name of the Lord; certainly water baptism was meant. Forty-first verse: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized." That day three thousand were added unto the church. We do not know that every one of the three thousand were baptized that day, but it is possible that it could be done, because there were enough ministers present to do the work. In the eighth chapter it is recorded that believers under the preaching of Philip were baptized, "both men and women." Simon the sorcerer believed and was baptized. We find Philip soon after this joining himself to the chariot of the Ethiopian, and for the special purpose of instructing and baptizing him, for "as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him."—Acts viii. 36–38. In the tenth chapter we read about Peter wrestling with the Lord in regard to the Gentiles receiving the word of the Lord. Peter was sent to Cornelius, a Gentile, and after preaching to him and others the Lord sent his Spirit, and they spake with tongues and magnified God. Then Peter said, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord."—Acts x. 47, 48. When Saul of Tarsus entered

Damascus he was being prepared for the ordinance of baptism. The Lord sent his servant Ananias unto him, and Saul arose and was baptized. In the sixteenth chapter we read of Lydia, whose heart the Lord opened, who was baptized, and her household. In the same chapter it is recorded that the jailer was baptized, "he and all his, straitway." "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized."—Acts xviii. 8. With regard to the disciples whom Paul found in Ephesus, recorded in Acts xix., I may differ in my opinion from some of the brethren. In answer to Paul's question: "Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism." But before Paul had seen them they had not heard that there was a Holy Ghost. This is evidence that they had never seen John the Baptist. John testified that he baptized with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after him baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. These disciples no doubt were baptized by disciples of disciples of John the Baptist, and those believing disciples that Paul met, who had never heard of the Holy Ghost, might have been removed four or five degrees, or more, from John's personal work in baptizing, for if John did actually baptize these persons, then his work would have been sanctioned, and their baptism legal, because the Lord's baptism was legal, and he was baptized by John. Now these disciples were baptized (again in water) in the name of the Lord Jesus. Old School Baptists have been censured for hundreds of years, called derisively "rebaptizers," because they would not receive the work done by those not holding to the doctrine and the order of God's house. Immersing the subject in water does not constitute legal baptism, unless attended to by God's qualified sevants, witnessed by the Spirit, and repentance acknowledged by the penitent subject. In the sixth chapter of Romans, where Paul speaks about being baptized into Jesus Christ, and that we were baptized into his death, I think he has reference to christian, or water baptism, for in speaking of the effects of that burial and raising up, he said: "Even so we also should walk in newness of life." Baptism really to the humble believer in the Lord is a time "passed over," a boundary line visible in his experience in the visible kingdom, which speaks to his conscience of the invisible kingdom of grace. The mistaken idea that the Lord Jesus Christ when he was baptized in the river Jordan acted for all his people, so that his water baptism sufficed for all his people for all time, is attempted to be supported by the words of Jesus on the day of his baptism: "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." Again, another argument against the ordinance of baptism is that Christ abolished all ordinances by his death and rising. In the second chapter of Ephesians Paul, in speaking of Jew and Gentile, says: "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby."—Eph. ii. 14-16. What was the enmity between Jew and Gentile in olden time? Paul tells here that it was "the law of commandments contained in ordinances." There can be no doubt but that Paul was speaking of

the law of Moses and the ordinances commanded under that law. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." In Col. ii. the same writer uses strong language in regard to the law, and ordinances under that law: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."—Col. ii. 14. "The handwriting of ordinances" could not have been the ordinances of Christ's kingdom, for how could they be against us, and contrary to us? It was the law and ordinances that were contrary to us, which says, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." —Gal. iii. 10; Deut. xxvii. 26; xxviii. 15; Psalms cxix. 21; Jer. xi. 3. If Paul's reference to baptism in Eph. iv. 5, means water baptism, will it not hold good as the one (legal) baptism? I am rather inclined to believe that he had reference to Christ's baptism into death, since everything else mentioned in verses four, five and six are of the Lord. After Jesus had been baptized in the river Jordan he said that he had a baptism to be baptized with: "But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!"—Luke xii. 50. Matthew and Mark both speak of the same baptism. This was surely "one baptism;" it embraced in its overflow all the sanctified names engraven upon the spiritual breastplate of our High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ. This baptism saved his people, while water baptism points to it as the only way, through death and cleaning from sin. All who are baptized, having faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, discerning his death and resurrection, have the answer of a good conscience toward God. These are blessed, as Peter said they would be, in receiving gifts from above. "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."—Acts ii. 39.

Much upon this subject is untouched, but I submit what I have written.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Oct. 7, 1911.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I call this one of my days; it is a dull and stormy day on the outside, and not being able to work out on the farm I feel like writing to my brethren. I sometimes feel quiet for a season, and now, this morning, sitting around the house, I feel the power of God over me, if not mistaken. There has been a feeling to write, but I have been trying to keep away from it, but at last I feel that I must write a few words, hoping to give God all the praise. I often think of myself as I was a few years ago, then I would not have dared to write to an Elder or brother, but now they are my dearest friends on earth. These words often come to me: "Comfort ye my people, saith your God." I love to sit down and talk to God's dear people; I feel that I want to be of some comfort to them. To look upon their faces and to feed upon the fat things of the kingdom seem to me a foretaste of heavenly joy. I think I can see the mark in their foreheads. I often wonder if I have that mark in my forehead. I think I use the word "we" too much, but I hope that by the grace of God I am what I am. A hymn has been upon my mind a great

deal this week, and I have been singing it over, and it has been a great comfort to me, it is 357 (Beebe's collection): "The good old way that leads to God." I often think of what dear Elder Cole said about singing, he said that some birds could sing most beautifully, but the dove had the simple note, coo, coo. I often think about this when I hear my brethren or sisters sing; there must be in it the coo, coo; if not, where is the sweetness? For myself much of the time there is not the coo, coo. I would be glad for some one to write upon this through the SIGNS, if the Lord wills. In the one hundredth Psalm, second verse, we read, "Serve the Lord with gladness; come before his presence with singing." It seems to me that this is full of good things to the Lord's people.

I am writing more than I intended when I began this letter, but I wish to speak of a few more things before closing. One thing is something that happened some twelve years ago. My oldest child was away from home, and had been for a few weeks; when I was driving into the place she came running out, crying with joy, she was so glad her father had come. She was crying and laughing, both mingled together. It was not because she wanted to go home. She was satisfied then. I hope that this speaks to me spiritually now; yes, I have laughed and cried. I feel glad that my heavenly Father has come to me; I love to mingle with God's people; I love to go back with them in their early experience, to those back fields which I have seen, and which I have heard you speak about. I hope that I have been in those back fields, the spots on earth so dear. It seems to me that I could speak for some time about this, but I do not want to make this letter too long.

I inclose a letter from brother John A. Morse, hoping that there will be a place in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for it. I love his letters, and hope to get more of them. I will say that I can indorse the letter of brother Morse. I often read his letters to me over, and want my brethren and sisters to enjoy them with me. I hope I may be able to follow in the footprints of the flock. I leave this with you, brother Chick; if it be of no good burn it.

Yours in hope,

GEORGE M. CONNER.

MARGARETVILLE, N. Y., June 27, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER CONNER:—I received your letter all right, and was much pleased that you did not forget to answer mine, and you have given me the privilege to write you again. I think that time cannot be better spent in this world by the subjects of the kingdom than in speaking about the kingdom of God. I love to talk and write about that kingdom, although I much fear I am not an heir of it, but I believe that you are, and I leave you to judge me, for "do not ye judge them that are within?"

But I thought to talk about the love of the Father to his children. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."—1 John iii. 1. The first word in this quotation calls our attention to a wonderful subject. The writer was talking to the children about their Father, and of his wonderful love to them. These were not natural children, nor a natural father, but a Spirit Father, and therefore spiritual children. There never was a child born that did not exist in the father before it was developed, so it must take the nature of the father and be a part of

him. This is why the father loves his child; this is the law of nature. You see and know this by observation, if not by experience. These natural things are types of spiritual things. Adam and Eve were the type (not a type, but the type) of Christ and the church, and as Eve with all her unborn posterity existed in Adam before they were developed in life union, so the church existed in Christ; and as Christ is the Head of the church, the church was chosen in him "to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." Now what is an inheritance? It is something descending from a parent to a child, and it comes in no other way. One may, by will, give his property to another, but it is a gift, and not an inheritance. So these sons of God who are spoken of in the first quotation include every one that was given by the Father to the Son before time began. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." And "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." Now this inheritance comes not only by inheritance, but also by will, and it is willed in a way that it cannot be squandered or wasted by the heirs, and as Christ is one of the joint-heirs, you see that it is secure to every one of the children. O the wonderful love of the Father in arranging all this before time began. Neither men nor devils can change one particle of this plan without dethroning the God of heaven. This is my firm belief. These heirs collectively are the bride of Christ, and this bride became involved in sin, and the penalty for sin was death, and the bride being dead the Bridegroom must also die. When Eve transgressed (the type of the church) she could not return to Adam (the type of Christ), therefore he must go to her. There was no alternative. But as she was bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, and he loved her as he did, he willingly sacrificed his life for her. O what love! He was not deceived. He knew the consequences. He knew that he could not bring her back. Such love has never been surpassed by man. But to my mind here the type ceases, for the love of the heavenly Bridegroom for his bride is as much beyond the love of Adam for his bride as Christ is above man. This wonderful love brought the heavenly Bridegroom from the glory which he had with the Father before time began, to take on him the flesh of his sinful bride. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." He was not deceived; he knew just what the debt was which he had to pay. He knew every pang, every groan, every tear. He had told a little of it to his holy prophets long before he came in the flesh. It is said by the prophet, "His reward is with him, and his work before him." This reward that was with him was his bride; she was with him, and she arose with him when he arose from the grave; she was freely justified; there is not the shadow of a stain upon her; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

I will leave this last part of the text for you to write about. There is so much in it, and I have already written more than I intended. Look it over carefully and tell me where it is wrong, if anything is wrong.

From one of the most unworthy of the children of God,

JOHN A. MORSE.

SUTTON, W. Va., October 22, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I have been requested by some whom I hope and verily believe to be of the household of faith, the redeemed of the Lord, the called and chosen and faithful followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, to write more for the SIGNS, with which I desire to comply, but realizing my weakness and inability to speak or write as I would like, and fearing lest what I should write would be of no comfort or satisfaction to the dear children of the heavenly King, I sometimes almost feel like giving up the undertaking, yet I feel it to be my bounden duty in my weak and feeble way to feed the dear children of God, and if I can only be enabled to speak or write to the comfort and edification of some poor, hungering, thirsting soul like myself, one who is willing and desirous to be fed with even the crumbs that fall from the Master's table, I shall have great reason to be thankful to Him who is the giver of every good and perfect gift for enabling me to comfort even the least one of the flock, for I well know that unless the Lord enables me I cannot speak or write comfortingly to any one of Zion's sons or daughters. However, I can only draw the bow at a venture and leave the result with God. If I am not blinded by the deceitfulness of sin so that my heart deceives me, I only desire, and greatly desire, to both speak and write at all times to the glory of the great, immutable and ever-merciful God, and the comfort and welfare of Zion, the church of the true and living God, the pillar and ground of the truth, which the natural man, the unregenerate, the worldly wise, knoweth not. The natura l mind cannot know the true church of God, no, for it is spiritual, and the word tells us that the natural man (one not born of the Spirit) cannot discern the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. The Savior said unto Nicodemus: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Then answered Nicodemus, "How can a man be born when he is old?" Now some might think that the kingdom here spoken of refers to the eternal kingdom of rest in the world of glory beyond, but Christ says, "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" My understanding of it is, that Christ was speaking of his church or kingdom here in this world, which of course is spiritual, but made up or composed of mortal or earthy beings. This spiritual church, or body of believers, which is the bride and spouse of Christ, is obscured from the view of the natural mind, so that he sees no more beauty in it, and perhaps not so much, as he does in some of the many worldly organizations of men. Nicodemus was a master in Israel (national Israel) and knew not these things at that time, because he had not spiritual eyes; not yet having been born of the Spirit, he of course had not spiritual discernment. So it was with Saul of Tarsus, when in his pharisaical zeal for his legal righteousness he went on in his bold, bloody persecutions of the saints of the Most High, and, as he tells us, verily thought he was doing God service. He, not having been born of the Spirit, could not and did not see and know that it was the church, or kingdom of God on earth, that he (Saul) was so bitterly opposing, vehemently persecuting and earnestly seeking to destroy. Like all other natural minded men, he had eyes, but could not see, and

a heart, but could not understand until Jesus met him in the way as he was going from Jerusalem to Damascus, clothed with authority from the chief priest to take all that he might find of that way (in the faith of Christ) to Jerusalem to be punished. Here was Christ revealed to him as the way, the truth and the life, and as the only hope of salvation. There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. This Paul saw after he had been washed, regenerated and renewed by the sweet influence and power of the Holy Ghost. Having been given eyes to see and a heart to understand, he could then see by that faith which is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen, that the very people he had been so ardently persecuting and seeking to destroy were the saints of the Most High, the church or kingdom of God, and instead of further persecuting them he went back to Jerusalem and essayed to join himself unto them, just as all poor sinners do when through the operation of the Holy Spirit they receive hope in the forgiveness of their sins and a blessed assurance by faith that through the righteousness and redemption by Christ they have been made the righteousness of God in him, and that, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." So that it is by grace we are saved, through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; it is of him that we are in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us righteousness and wisdom, sanctification and redemption, that according as it is written, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." So, dear brethren, it is all, from start to finish, of the free, complete and unchanging grace of God, through the redemption of Christ Jesus our Lord.

I will bring this poorly written article to a close, hoping that all the household of faith will overlook and pass by all my imperfections. I have often thought of trying to write of my experience and hope, and my call to the ministry, but from a sense of unworthiness and inability I have put it off from time to time. Dear brethren, if you think proper give this a place in the dear old family paper, if not, cast it aside; in either event all will be well.

Now may the God of all grace bless and comfort his children in all their afflictions, sorrows and trials, strengthen them and keep them as the apple of his eye, and preserve them unto his heavenly kingdom, is the prayer of your brother in hope, J. R. DENNISON.

NORTH FORT WORTH, Texas, October 17, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I am writing again to thank you for your kindness in publishing what I wrote some time ago. I made many mistakes, but you were so kind as to correct them, and I am very thankful to you from my soul. I know that you are kind, and I pray that your days may be many and filled with health and joy, that you may be able to feed the little ones in Christ Jesus. It does me much good to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for I am old and feeble, and cannot go around very much. I am sick the most of my time. I am anxious for every copy of the SIGNS to come; it seems just like hearing the gospel preached. I get so hungry for the bread of life, and I have a glorious feast every time a copy of the

SIGNS comes. No wonder that I want it to come. It seems that I could not do without our family paper; there are many good letters in it. May God's richest blessings rest upon every brother and sister who write for the paper. I will take it as long as I am able to pay for it, and I hope that will be as long as I live. While I stay in this body my desire is to live as I think a child of God should live, and it grieves me because I cannot so live. It seems to me that I am the worst of all God's little ones. I think sometimes that I am lost, but after all I have a faint hope that I would not give up for all this world, and all that is in it, could give. My hope is as an anchor of the soul, it is sure, and cannot be taken away. Yet, dear brethren, I see much trouble in this life. I lost my dear husband last March. He was all the world to me; he was all that I had. Now I am alone. But it was my heavenly Father's will to take him from me, I know not why. The Lord giveth and he taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord. I know that he is better off than I am, for he has already passed through the gates of death. We all must pass that way before we can enter the paradise of God. In that sweet place we shall rest until Jesus comes and awakens us in his likeness. O how I long to be called home. This world has no charms for me. Now I am waiting patiently until my time shall come. I know that nothing can take place until the time appointed of Him. Our God knew all things from eternity, and predestinated all things, and nothing can take place until his time, for he has all power in earth and heaven. I hope that all will be well with me after time. I hope that I am one of God's little ones. I do wish that I could be good like my brethren. I love all my brethren. I should like to be gifted as are those who write for the SIGNS. I hope that they all may live long, and that God will bless them in all their good work.

October 18.—Well, dear brethren, I will try to finish my letter. I was permitted of the good Lord to go to the meeting on the third Sunday of this month, and we surely had a feast of fat things. A dear, aged brother came to us and preached for us. O, I never can forget that dear old man. The Lord surely sent him to feed his sheep; I know that he fed me. I may never meet him again in this world, but I hope that I will meet him in heaven, for he planted his picture in my heart. If this letter happens to fall into his dear hands I want to thank him for his kindness in coming here, and I hope that he may be able to come again. May God bless you, dear brother, in your good work; I do not know your name, but perhaps you will remember me when I tell you that I was one who helped set the table before we ate of the Lord's supper, and that I was dressed in mourning.

Now with much love to you all I will close. I know that this is badly written, and not worth reading, but I felt as though I wanted to write. Please excuse me for doing so. May God bless and keep you near to him always, is my prayer.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) L. C. CLINGMAN.

HERNDON, Va., Oct. 14, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing you a check for two dollars; please place same to the credit of Mrs. Wm. E. Hall, of Vienna, Va., for one year's subscription to the SIGNS. Sister Hall is the only sister I have in the flesh; we are the only two left in this world of my father's family, and we are both members of the

church at Frying Pan, Va. I have just returned home from the Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, and would love to tell you of the joy and sweetness of the meeting, but it seems to me if I ever have one moment of joy in the things of the kingdom it is followed with many days and weeks of sorrow and discomfort. I am often led to believe that the whole thing is a delusion, and if I am what I profess to be I would not be so assailed by Satan and the evil suggestions of his nature. I believe that Satan is the strong man spoken of in the Scriptures, and that he is the fleshly man that wars against the law of our mind, as Paul says, "My mind." The stronger man is Christ in his people the hope of glory. I am sometimes made to rejoice in the thought, Why need I fear this strong man, which is Satan, if Christ be in me the hope of glory? for he is able to bind the strong man and bring me off more than conqueror through him who saved his people with an everlasting salvation, as it is written, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." The word "everlasting" knows no end. O how glad I am that the word says everlasting love; it is for this cause that the sons of Jacob are not consumed, and for this cause we are brought to the feet of Jesus and made to cry out that salvation is of the Lord. Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Shall we then say that every man, woman and child in nature shall say and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father? Surely not, for it is only the subjects of his love that can possibly express this language in spirit and in truth that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father, and that every one shall confess. How can one confess something he is not a witness to? It would not be any confession at all, for one must have that confession in the heart, as the poet has expressed it in the words:

"All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all."

Not one can bow his knee or confess with his tongue this heartfelt confession but those born of God, born of incorruptible Seed, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. Do God's children have to get down on their knees every time they make this wonderful confession? No; neither do they confess it with the natural tongue, but with the spiritual confession of the heart.

But I am making this letter too long; you know I have not written to you for some time, and I had almost come to the conclusion that I would lay my pen by never to take it up again to write to you, dear brethren, but to-day I am made to feel with one of old, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee." The visiting ministers who attended our association all came well shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, preaching Jesus and him crucified. I was made to feel for a little season to rejoice in the salvation of God to the children of men, yes, even to the vilest sinner on God's green earth, which would take me in if I am one that Jesus shed his blood for. I believe when we are all brought to the knowledge of our sins we are made to feel to be the chief of sinners; Paul felt to be such, and each one knows it. Our visiting ministers were Elders Durand, Chick, Eubanks, Coulter and Slauson; all came testifying to the same thing: salvation by grace, from first to last.

I did not intend to write such a long letter as this when I began, and I hope

you will cast the mantle of charity over my imperfect way of writing. Pray for me, dear editors, if it be the will of the Lord, that I may be brought out of this dark state of mind, so that I may be made willing to communicate with the dear children of his choice.

From the weakest of all saints, if one at all,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

WILMINGTON, N. C., May 16, 1911.

MR. JOHN HASTINGS—DEAR BROTHER:—Your good letter came as a surprise. I must say that I did not anticipate enjoying it very much, for I have grown so blind and dull and cankered that if a follower at all, I am a long way behind, so much so that I lose sight of the Leader, the Captain of our salvation, by whom only we can hope to enter into life eternal and into his presence in peace. This is also the only way to enter into the joys of salvation here. But as I proceeded to read I was constrained to say, "Though sundered far by faith, we meet around one blood-bought mercy-seat," and flesh and blood cannot reveal these things to us, but our Father who is in heaven. He only can cause love to flow freely from heart to heart, though we are hundreds of miles apart. O that I had a reason of hope as others do, or could conduct myself as I would wish to ; but all seems to be a failure with me, for sin is mixed with all I do, and without the mercy of the Lord I am lost. Now, brother, it seems to me that these evil things ought not to be. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." But how do we know that we love the brethren? John said that we know that we love the brethren if we love Him and keep his commandments. But do I do this? No, no. Why not? It is lack of faith, without which it is impossible to please God. So I am groping along in the dark all the time. O why do I deliberately sin against the great God, who has blessed me with so many good things, even from my earliest existence until now? Though I have never known that it was my duty to be baptized, yet I wanted to be so much, and I came to fear the judgments of God if I did not leave my case with the church, so I did. I was not surprised, as some have been, that they received me, for I thought that they would through sympathy. But they seemed to be glad, and then I feared that I had deceived them. I was helpless, and yet felt that I must do something. I shall never forget the natural scenery when I was baptized. It became mixed up with the spiritual scenery, for when I arose from the water I had no doubt that brother Jones was a servant of the Lord; he looked like an angel to me. There were perhaps hundreds of people on the shore, and they seemed, all of them, to be praising God. The waves of the river were lapping as God moved them, and praising their God. The clouds in the heavens were flying and turning and praising God, and all was peace and joy and love, and I was made to say, "I charge you, daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, until he please." I was satisfied. Well, I did not seem to understand it, but thought, I will grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth, and will know more, and understand better, and enjoy all things better as I go along. I thought, I will strive to keep my body under subjection; I will try to serve the Lord; I will not do the ugly things that I have known some to do who were called Baptists. Now I think that those resolutions were all good, but

what became of them? They have all melted away like the frost before the morning sun. And what am I? If I knew no better Baptists than myself I do not think I would have much use for them. Well, you will say that I am writing only of myself. I have discovered it. You see that I am more interested in myself than I am in any other, and I hope you will pardon me for all that I have written; destroy it and think no more of it. I know that I cannot be here long, and still I am not ready to go. I crave above all things now that I may have faith to live by, and then dying faith when the time comes that I must go and meet the realities of eternity.

Your very weak brother,

J. D. BROWN.

TOLER, Ky., Oct. 16, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find a good letter from sister Young, which, if you deem proper, please publish in the SIGNS. Sister Young is a stranger in the flesh, but not in the Spirit, and she has comforted me much. Truly God has the right person at the right place and at the right time; his work is perfect in all things; he makes no mistakes. I desire to be resigned to his will in all things, and to feel that I know that all things work together for good to them that love God.

I am visiting churches in Kentucky now, and have had some good meetings. I met Elder W. J. May and many others. I hope, the Lord willing, to meet Elder P. W. Sawin soon.

Yours in hope, G. B. BIRD.

ALVINSTON, Ontario, Sept. 24, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—As I read your letter in the SIGNS two weeks ago my mind was somewhat stirred up with a desire to write you, but as I went on and took up my daily cares of this life it passed away. To-day I had such a longing in my heart that I might be led to read something to arouse me, for I have been passing through a cold, dreary winter season for some months past. In vain have I picked up the Bible in hope of reading something to melt this frozen heart of mine. I picked up the last two numbers of the SIGNS, and as I read your letter again I felt I wanted to write you, and I can say, Truly God alone knows why. It is under trying circumstances I make the attempt. I was reminded how I had feasted upon what you had written in your former communications which appeared in last year's SIGNS, so I yielded to the inclination in my mind of looking them up and rereading them, which I did with much satisfaction. I feel to say you are a companion to me in tribulation, and I hope in the kingdom of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Redeemer. Yes, I feel to be one with you in that glorious doctrine of God our Savior. You speak my feelings exactly when you tell of your weakness, and how you want to lie passive in the Lord's hand and know no will but his. You say, Wait on the Lord. Yes, I want to wait on him, for I can but hope the Sun of Righteousness will arise with healing in his wings. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. I become impatient, and feel I am being harshly dealt with. What strugglings within. Then I am given a view of my miserable condition by nature, and I see I am as vile a wretch as ever lived. What could be worse? Then I cry with the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner." It is alone through his goodness and

mercy we are not consumed. But somehow, as soon as I get along for a short time without thorns and briers piercing my feet I am inclined to think they are all torn up, or at least that I can shun them, so with resolutions I determine to make a better showing, but alas, again and again do I find to my sorrow and confusion the old man is still there, and oft at heart saying, We will not have this Man to reign over us. Dear brother, what conflicts we must endure, but herein lies our hope. I must admit I am a very rebellious child, only submissive when I have to be; I am so unwilling to bear the cross, when I should rejoice that I am counted worthy to suffer for his sake. When I think of what the dear Savior bore of suffering for sin (and that not his own) I feel to hide my face in shame. We are commanded to endure hardness as good soldiers, and again to put on the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. May the dear Lord enable us to do it. O how helpless I feel, how entirely dependent upon God to do anything pleasing in his sight. I know I am a complete mass of sin and corruption, unable to think even one good thought unless indited by the Holy Spirit. This is the reason I feel especially drawn to you in love and fellowship. You understand the frailty of the human frame, and have expressed the longing desire of my heart when you say you want to be kept from assuming an exalted position, and want to lie at the feet of Jesus and be clothed and in your right mind. O, my brother, this touched me tenderly. You say, I expect none but the redeemed to understand what I write. This humbled me, to think one so unworthy should be given the eye of faith, or, I might say, the mind of Christ, to see into the mysteries and glory of his kingdom. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. I said in spirit, This is a shower of blessing through this dear man of God. How it refreshed my fainting heart. What a wonderful God is our God; a God of love and mercy. He never leaves one of his children to destruction, but leads them about through stormy paths and deep, fiery trials, over the desert and through the valleys, and instructs them and keeps them as the apple of his eye. It is in this toilsome way we are weaned from this vain world and brought into sacred nearness and holy union with Christ and his dear followers. Then, my brother, with faith in full exercise can we not kiss the rod of affliction and say in Paul's words, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory"? It was a great satisfaction to my mind the way you represented Christ as the Ark of the new covenant; how all the chosen were safely housed in him (the Ark) even before the world was formed. I love to hear the power of God declared; to him all glory belongs; let us not rob him of it.

Now I must close. I trust you will pardon anything you find amiss, for I am very imperfect. If you deem this worthy a reply I am sure it will be greatly appreciated. May the God of all grace be with you to comfort, bless and strengthen you in the labor whereunto he has called you.

Your sister in hope of a better life,

(MRS.) W. C. YOUNG.

CONNERSVILLE, N. Y., Oct. 1, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel like saying, Be of good cheer. Jesus said, I have overcome the world. While we at times feel disturbed, yet Jesus is always the same, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them to the end.

"The saints to the end shall endure,
As sure as the earnest is given;
More happy, but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven."

I have been feeling quite sad this morning and yesterday, not knowing what the will of God is with regard to many things, but last night the words were given me, Trust in the Lord and do good. "What! could ye not watch with me one hour?" He watched and prayed all night, being pressed with all the sins of his people. He bare all their sins in his own body on the tree. Seeing and knowing all that he should suffer, is it any wonder that he cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" I, too, have been led to feel forsaken of my God, if indeed I have any right to call him mine. No tongue can tell the agony of that soul, but Jesus knows, and to him let us cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." So he was to the Savior, and I trust that he has been merciful also to me. The question in my mind was, Shall I revenge myself or suffer wrong? And this came to me and set me right: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved)." So I feel not to avenge myself, but let God avenge, and be still and know that he is God, and he will be exalted among the heathen, he will be exalted in the earth.

I desire to express my heartfelt sympathy with the editorial in the SIGNS for October 1st, as it has given me much comfort in the perusal of it. I want to say, Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, and good will to men. It is good to hear the truth, and when we can be still and know that he is God, and can feel that the holy oil runs down to the skirts of the garments of our spiritual Aaron and anoints the whole body, we can indeed exclaim, The Lord is good, and his mercy endureth forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so; his mercy endureth forever.

I have been privileged to hear quite a number of his servants preach the certain riches of Christ, and would give thanks to the Giver of all good. I have also been highly favored of God in perusing the SIGNS for the past fifty or fifty-five years, and it has been of great comfort to me. I hope that his word may have free course, and his people be comforted, and his name glorified. May you still trust in the Lord, who will give you the victory through the merits of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. May the Lord guide and protect you and all his loved ones while here below, and when done with this world may he receive you unto himself.

Yours in hope of life eternal,

D. S. ELLIOTT.

MASON CITY, Nebr., Aug. 20, 1911.

ELDER SMITH KETCHUM—DEAR PASTOR:—Replying to your very welcome letter of the 11th inst., I want to write so that my letter may be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES if you and the brethren deem it fit matter for that excellent paper, as I want all the brethren who read the paper to know something of how we are prospering. Since July 5th, when the drought was broken, we have had an ideal season; we never had a better prospect for corn and other crops. We have had no preaching since you

were here last, and I feel as though we have no right to call ourselves a church, but we have no one but ourselves. You have always shown your willingness to serve us, and, as I remember, this is the first time you have ever offered an excuse for staying away when asked to visit us at a stated time.

"Your friendship's sweet, your union dear,
Your words delightful to my ear;
But duty makes me understand
That we must take the parting hand."

Yes, I deem it needful that you go to the association. Would to God that I could accompany you, or send some message of love and good cheer to the beloved brethren to whom you will doubtless talk. Tell them about Peter's mission, and the possession which our blessed Lord purchased. I can almost repeat the substance of all you have said upon these subjects. Your words were sweet to my soul, as the honey which Samson took from the lion's carcass. Tell the beloved brethren of our forlorn condition, and of how, like sheep without a shepherd, we are wandering aimlessly about, hungering and thirsting for the food and drink found in unfailing abundance upon the Shepherd's ground. Perhaps you could find us a suitable pastor, who could come and live with us, for, notwithstanding that the church seems dead, I feel sure that the Lord has much people here, many who will not unite with any other denomination than the Old School Baptists. With an active pastor residing among us I feel sure that a church of fifty or more members could be built up at Mason, and it is my heart's desire and prayer to God that his lambs should be fed. Now go, with God's best blessing upon you, and may he supply your every need, and when you return visit us at your earliest convenience, and bring sister Ketchum with you. We long to see you and hear your words of love, good cheer and devotion.

With love and christian fellowship,

J. M. AMSBERRY.

CLAREMONT, Cal., Oct. 8, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I see you have seen fit to use my article concerning God's throne, and the language of the four and twenty Elders, and as my thoughts are still on the same theme I make bold to again address you, but before I begin I want to again admonish all who read that I am a weak and sinful creature (but I thank my God that he has given me the knowledge of this, for only such can give him all glory and honor and power), and claim no merit of my own for anything that is good or worthy, and know full well that if I do write or say anything that is in accord with the truth, it is through a power exactly opposite to my natural inclination. Yes, I will continue to write on the same theme, but will go to the very farthest point from where I left off, and view the matter from another text that is exactly opposite the one before used as is possible to use, and yet by its being so negative to it makes it closely allied to it, and each makes the language of the other more forceful. The language used previously was found in the last verse of the fourth chapter of Revelation, and is the summing up of the subject matter treated upon, and was pertaining to things that should transpire in the last days. The language I shall try to make use of at this time is also the summing up of a chapter pertaining to the last days, and is language from the prophecy of a person who not only prophesied concerning the very last days, but of events all along through time from the long ago of his lifetime to the last days, and the veri-

fication of his prophecies pertaining to Christ's coming, and many other events, makes him rank high among all the prophets, and as one whose truthfulness, or rather accuracy, makes any language he uses of great strength and power. This writer is none other than Isaiah, and the language I wish to call your attention to is the last verse of the second chapter. After portraying how the nations of the earth shall have been deceived by the establishing of the mountain of the Lord's house in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and how many people should say the many pleasing things, he then tells how they have forsaken their people to please themselves in the children of strangers, and how their land is full of idols of silver and gold, "and the mean man boweth down [to deceive] and the great man humbleth himself [for show]: therefore forgive them not," and then telling how all the lofty and haughty and the proud shall be brought low, and how the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day (notice how strong the language); that even the very hills, and the cedars of Lebanon, and the oaks of Bashan (the Lord's own creation), and how upon every high tower, and every fenced wall, and upon all pleasant pictures (man's creation), "and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day," and how they shall go into the holes of the rocks and into the caves of the earth for fear of the Lord and for the glory of his majesty, and how they shall cast their idols of gold and silver to the moles and bats in order that they may "go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth." Then the language to the Lord's own chosen ones, admonishing them with words that all might well heed (if it were possible for man to do aught for himself): "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?" How entirely opposite are the two texts, and yet how closely allied. Then as a better conception to the meaning of the one dawns upon our weak minds it establishes the truth more positively of the other, and yet with all that the two texts prove, how utterly opposed they both are to the way man would have it, and whenever we see a person teaching anything contrary to the teaching of these other two texts, we find (I say it without hesitancy) a person who has not been brought to the end of the law, and he is in danger of the judgments. Let us think well before we speak one word for man; think well before we take from God one iota of power; think well before we speak ill of one who knows he is a sinner (God hath great pity for all those), and above all, think well before we forsake his people to please ourselves in the children of strangers, for if we do we are of the characters who must sooner or later be brought before the judgment-seat and judged according to our works, for if we have placed any degree of strength or power, or any hope of reward in ourselves, we are not living up to the teachings of either of the texts upon which I have tried in my weakness to write. If I am wrong, I pray God that he may set me right; but every one, if he is interested in anything, and wishes to know the truth, must start from the fundamental principles of that matter, and this is the place for me to begin: man as compared to God.

If this should be of sufficient worth to be used in the dear old periodical of our fathers, I may, if God wills, try to write you again.

Your unworthy brother, in hope that my sins have been forgiven by the One I look to as being supreme in all matters pertaining to earth and heaven,

OLIVER P. SPEIRS.

ST. ALBANS, W. Va., Oct., 1911.

BELOVED EDITORS:—As I am sending a remittance to the SIGNS for a friend, I feel impressed to write a few lines, which I submit for your disposal. I have been almost a constant reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for about thirty-eight years, and have been a subscriber for thirty-four years. I have nine children living, seven married and two single, all read the SIGNS; six are subscribers, and all are interested, or seem to be; two are members of the church (Providence), and are quite well posted in the doctrine and order of God's house, though with some it may only be natural (that I cannot tell), but I have thought that God has wonderfully blessed me in this, as in many other things, far above what I ever deserved, that there has never been any discord in doctrine in the family around the fireside, and when the brethren visit us and stay over night all is pleasant, no discord, of which many of the preaching brethren could testify to. God forbid that I should say these things in a boastful way, but as said, I have been a reader of the SIGNS for about thirty-eight years, and in all this time to my mind the editors and able contributors have not changed in sentiment one hair's breadth, but are still contending for the faith as revealed in olden times to the prophets and apostles. I know in this, our great enlightened day, there is a great cry, even among some of the Old School Baptists, against the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things, or God's eternal decree of all things, both good and bad, who say to admit the above declaration of faith is to charge God with being the author of sin. In this it seems to me they manifest the depth of human depravity, whosoever these persons are who charge unrighteousness to God exalt themselves above the Most High, and would presume to set bounds to the most high God, who is so absolutely holy that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. How is it possible for those who have a true understanding of the character of the true and living God, and the atonement made by his loving and obedient Son, to yet reply against God, charging him with being the responsible author of sin, if indeed he decreed all things? If the decree of sin and wickedness makes God the author and cause thereof, then those who make this charge involve themselves in their own charge, unless they deny that God ordained the death of his innocent Son, and that by wicked hands, and also the selling of Joseph by his murderous brethren; this was all purposed, of which the prophets spake, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. May his children ever be kept from replying against God. "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" May the good Lord prosper the SIGNS in the future, as in the past, to the good of his dear people and to the glory of his high and exalted name.

From your poor, sinful brother, if one at all,

C. M. BIRD.

COLUMBUS JUNCTION, Iowa, Aug. 7, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have neglected to send in my remittance, so inclosed find post-office money order for two dollars, for which please credit me

another year. I do not understand why more Baptists do not read the SIGNS; I find comparatively few who take it; it surely advocates the Old School or Predestinarian Baptist faith, and is not moved by the popular isms of this modern age. I compare the editorials of Elder Gilbert Beebe with those of the present editors, and find that they agree, and the correspondents write of the same tribulations and trials that were written of in the early days; all tell the same story of a blessed hope in Christ Jesus, salvation by grace, no creature merit, no human instrumentalities.

"Jesus paid it all,
All to him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow."

That God may prosper the SIGNS, and cause the correspondents to speak comfortingly to Zion, is the desire and prayer of the most unworthy, if one at all,

J. L. THURSTON.

ROCKFORD, Ill., July 2, 1911.

BELOVED EDITORS AND WRITERS OF THE SIGNS:—I have been a reader of the SIGNS for over sixty years, and never tire or grow weary of reading the precious truths, proclaimed through its columns for all those years, which have ever been the same. I am ever at a loss when I am without the dear old paper, as I am a commercial man, and therefore hear the true gospel preached but seldom; that is, only when in a community where I learn of a church of Old School or Primitive Baptists, then I avail myself of the opportunity to go and hear the true gospel preached as it was once delivered unto the saints. When I cannot go to these meetings I read the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which is full of good, able sermons, proclaiming in no uncertain terms that glorious doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone, not of works, lest any man should boast. This doctrine is all the hope a poor sinner like me has of salvation, as nothing I can do within myself will ever merit this salvation; our best works are as filthy rags before God; it is through Jesus' precious blood we are saved, if saved at all. As I wish the back numbers of the SIGNS, from January 1st, 1911, and one of your new open-flat, flexible binding Bibles, such as described by you in the SIGNS, which is priced at $2.25, and the paper for six months, inclosed please find money order. Remember me in your prayers.

With love for the editors and many writers of the SIGNS, respectfully,

W. T. McQUEARY.

ABERFELDY, Ontario.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Please give notice through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that after November 17th my address will be Waverly, Lackawanna Co., Pa., my old home. I have suffered a general collapse, or breaking down of the nervous system, disqualifying me for any worldly business. I can eat and walk about, and expect to try to fill my appointments, if the Lord will. I will explain more fully when my head and heart get a little stronger. I cannot work even a little farm in my present condition, and may never be capable of working or even planning work for others; a strange condition for a poor mortal to be in. God's will must be done, whether I am pleased or not.

Your brother in sorrow,

D. M. VAIL.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, September 8th, 9th and 10th, 1911, to the several churches with which we correspond sends christian salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—We have met according to previous appointment, to worship God in spirit and in truth. We have enjoyed that peace which passeth all understanding. We ask a continuance of correspondence from sister associations, and we desire your friendly visits in the future as in the past.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the South Gardiner Church, at South Gardiner, Maine, on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1912.

Z. M. BEAL, Moderator.
GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

The Roxbury Association, in session with the First Church of Roxbury, September 20th and 21st, 1911, to the several associations with which she corresponds sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—As it has been our custom, we will address you by way of a Corresponding Letter. We hope it will be a pleasant place to you and to us. Your ministering brethren have come to us laden with the precious gospel, and we can say, "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." We ask a continuance of your correspondence in the future as in the past.

J. B. SLAUSON, Moderator.
H. C. ELMENDORF, Clerk.

The Salisbury Association of Primitive Baptists, in session with the Little Creek Church, at Delmar, Delaware, October 18th, 19th and 20th, 1911, to the several associations with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—According to usual custom, and appointment, we, having been allowed this great privilege of assembling ourselves together in an associate capacity, desire to render thanks to the great I AM for the continued mercies that are present with us at every time of need. We do not have to remind those who have the privilege of meeting with us at this time that we have had a most profitable and enjoyable session. Your ministers have come richly laden with the good things pertaining to the kingdom; surely this meeting will long be remembered by us. The letters from the several churches all speak of peace, love and harmony abounding within their borders. We desire a continuance of your, to us, valued correspondence. We notice with regret that one of the associations has failed to communicate with us for several years.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the church at Snow Hill, Worcester Co., Md., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, before the fourth Sunday in October, 1912, where and when we hope to again receive your messengers bearing your messages of love.

A. B. FRANCIS, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

WE are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1911.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PARABLE OF THE UNJUST STEWARD.

ELDER H. J. Redd, of Avondale, Alabama, has asked that we say something with regard to the parable of the unjust steward, as recorded in Luke, sixteenth chapter, and in reply we desire to say that we feel willing to give such views as we have regarding different portions of the word when so desired by any of our brethren, but we hope to remember, and also that all our brethren will remember, that all we or any one may write concerning any portion of the word ought to be read with a desire by all to compare it with the word, and this each one must do for himself. We sometimes hesitate with regard to writing our mind respecting different portions of Scripture, because brethren of equal ability and experience have differed from each other about them. Where this is the case it has always appeared to us that we ought to tread softly, and if we write at all, to do so humbly and with due regard to our brethren who may differ from us; this we desire to do regarding this parable. But without further preliminary remarks we will try to present such thoughts as we have in reply to brother Redd.

First, we will call attention to the Bible use of the word "mammon." It occurs but four times in the Bible, and all these in the New Testament. It is used three times in this sixteenth chapter of Luke, and once in Matthew, chapter six, verse twenty-four. The word "mammon," like the word "baptism," in our King James' version of the Bible, is not translated, but transferred from the Greek. As the Greek word *bapto*, simply means "dipping," so the word "mammon" simply means "riches." Now in Matthew vi. 24, the word plainly means the riches of this world. This will be evident if we carefully examine the connection, for in verse twenty-five the Savior said, "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body more than raiment?" Also see the few verses following. Here in these words there can be no question that the dear Redeemer is presenting to his disciples their obligation to seek only the kingdom of God, rather than earthly things, and that in following him they shall also be provided for, with regard to temporal things, to the extent of their needs. God, who has given them life, will provide the lesser things, such as food and clothing. Life is more than food and clothing, and if God has given the greater he certainly will not withhold the lesser things. This he enforces upon them by referring to the fowls of the air, and to the lilies of the field, and concludes by saying, Matthew vi. 33, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

In the second place, we see no reason for giving the word "mammon" any different meaning from the above in the

parable recorded in Luke sixteenth chapter. This parable was spoken to his disciples, it was not spoken to the Jews, or to the Pharisees, though in verse fourteen we are told, "The Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him." Other portions of the New Testament also declare that they were covetous. They were covetous to such an extent that they robbed widows' houses. Let us notice at the close of this parable, in verse thirteen, our blessed Lord uses the same words precisely that he had used in Matthew chapter six, verse twenty-four: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other: or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." We cannot worship the riches of this world and God at the same time. If one is seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness he cannot at the same time be making this world's riches his god. The Savior does not say that his disciples ought not serve both God and mammon, but "ye cannot," and we may be sure that this, like all the dear Redeemer said, is true to the utmost, and he who thinks that he can set his affections upon things below and upon things above at the same time is deceived.

In the third place, it appears to us that the words of Paul found in 1 Tim. vi. 17–19, declare precisely what the Savior sets before us in the parable: "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold upon eternal life." See also Luke xii. 13–30. Paul, in the Scripture quoted from first Timothy, urges upon him to warn the brethren who may be rich in this world as to how they ought to regard that which the Lord has committed to them. They are to remember that they and it are alike the Lord's, and bound to his service, and that they are to use what the Lord has loaned to them to his glory and to the good of others who have need. Those who do this will find a reward in the service to which the Lord has called them; and so in the parable, as it seems to us, there is set before the disciples the obligation of using the riches that may be committed to them wisely, and to the glory of God.

In the fourth place, we desire to call more immediate attention to the words of the parable, and show how, as it appears to us, they all are in full harmony with what we have been here writing. In the parable it is stated that there was a certain rich man who had a steward; this steward is one to whom he had given charge of his affairs. Of course this would imply that the rich man had confidence both in the ability and the honesty of the steward. This must be true in any case before any man will commit his goods and his affairs to another as his steward. The steward was accused to his employer that he wasted his goods. Hearing this he called upon the steward to give an account of his stewardship; that is, he required a statement of his affairs, and a settlement from the steward. It is evident that the charge against the steward was justified, for he makes no defense, but begins to reason with himself as to what he shall do in this strait. He could not labor, and to beg he was ashamed. Before this there had been no charge save that of wasting his master's

goods; now, however, he shows that he was not only careless and wasteful, but dishonest at heart. That he may not be altogether without support, and that he may find friends after he has been dismissed from his stewardship, he calls his master's debtors and bids them divide in half what each one owes to the master's estate. If one owed one hundred measures of oil he was told to make it fifty, and so on with all the rest. Of course this was only adding further wrong to that of which he was already guilty, and he did this to secure the friendship of his master's debtors after he had been turned out of his former place. In this he showed worldly wisdom indeed; he was making use of the things of this world according to the best judgment of a worldly mind. His master's losses by his negligence and wastefulness had brought him to the end of that service and its reward, now by open dishonesty he seeks the friendship of those who should profit by his dishonesty. This is the wisdom of this world, which takes no account of any higher or better thing than worldly gain.

In the fifth place, let us notice that the master, or lord, of this steward, commended, not the dishonesty of the steward, but his wisdom. The blessed Redeemer did not himself commend either the wisdom or the dishonesty of the steward, for the word "lord" in the eighth verse refers to the same individual as when it is used in the fourth and fifth verses; that is, the master of the steward. Both the servant and the master in the parable are simply worldly men, acting and judging from purely worldly motives, and so the master, though wronged, could admire the wisdom of the steward, even while he might denounce his dishonesty. But now the Savior (not the master of the steward), beginning at the middle of the eighth verse, says, "For the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." It has seemed clear to us that the Savior intended by this language to teach simply this one thing, viz., that worldly men, acting upon worldly principles solely, conformed themselves in handling this world's goods more closely to what is wise, and most sure to result in gain to themselves, than disciples of the Lord, who are raised up above worldly motives by the work of grace in them, and who have had given to them a life that is above this world, conform their conduct to that which will be to the glory of God, and to their own lasting good in what they have to do with worldly affairs. The children of light know that this world is not their home, that at the longest the things of this life endure but for a little time and then perish, and that those who will be rich pierce themselves through with many sorrows and lose much of the riches of the kingdom of God while on their pilgrimage below, and yet, after all, they do often act foolishly, striving after wealth as though it were the supreme good, and departing from the right use of that which the Lord has committed to them. The children of this world in their generation, or according to that which is to them all and in all, do pursue their end more wisely and consistently than the children of light, who know that earthly riches cannot endure, and that they ought to be used to the glory of God and the good of the needy, and that the misuse of them does end in harm to themselves, as regards their spiritual life and comfort, and yet make money their supreme aim very often. How many have pierced themselves through with many sorrows in this way.

In the sixth place, it appears to us that the words of the Savior recorded in the ninth verse simply reaffirm the same truth. Compare the expression, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations," with the words referred to before in 1 Tim. vi., viz., "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded [but fear], nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold upon eternal life." We have quoted this the second time that we might call special attention to the concluding words. What difference is there between the Savior's words: That "they may receive you into everlasting habitations," and the words of Paul: "Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold upon eternal life"? Surely we do not need to say that neither expression refers at all to that redemption or salvation which is secured through the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ, nor to the heaven of eternal glory, but they do refer to the effects of right doing here and now by the disciples of the Lord. There is a wrong use of this world's goods, and a right use of them. What is bestowed upon disciples of the Lord of the goods of this world is as much from the Father of mercies as is final salvation, and disciples ought to regard what they have as not being their own, or as that upon which they are at liberty to feed their lusts, but as things upon which they are to occupy to the glory of God until he comes, and that believer who has used that which has been committed to him wisely, and as God has commanded, does have honor in the sight of his brethren, and enters into the habitation of their love and regard.

Seventh, it seems to us that the tenth, eleventh and twelfth verses go on to enforce the same things. In the case of deacons especially, as recorded in first Timothy, this thought is again presented. If a man be not wise in ruling his own house, he is not to be regarded as having the qualifications of a deacon. This must refer to all that pertains to managing his affairs, as well as to governing his family. If it be seen that one is unwise, or selfish, or grasping, or a spendthrift in his own affairs, the affairs of the church could not be committed to him with any confidence by his brethren, and it is sure that if one be careless and unfaithful in the least things, he cannot be expected to be in anywise different in managing the weightier things. If a child of God uses the trifling things of this world in a manner which shows that he is foolish, similar foolishness may be expected should he undertake to act in the things that relate to the discipline and order of the church of God. The whole matter seems to us to be presented in the following words of Paul: "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us therewith be content. But they that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through

with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness."—1 Tim. vi. 6–11.

We leave these reflections to all who may read them. We have seldom written with more hesitancy with regard to any subject, because we think that the above has not been the general view of many who have before written upon this parable. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE LAW.

We proposed in our last to notice some remarks of brother Tufts concerning the moral law; not, however, in a spirit of controversy, for we have been pleased and edified in the series of articles which he is now supplying on 1 John i. 6, 7; but in his last article we confess, as did Peter in regard to the writing of Paul, were some things which are hard to be understood, especially by those who, like ourself, are dull of hearing. Those points which are the most obscure to our mind were, first, what is called the moral law, said to be created by the fingers of God, and to constitute a part of the nature of man, begotten of Adam, and transmitted through him to his posterity, and still of binding power over believers who are under law to Christ, &c. The terms "moral" and "moral law," as they are not found in the Scriptures cannot be defined by any scriptural rule of interpretation. We must inquire of Webster, Buck, Paley, or some other recognized lexicographer for the meaning, as used by theologians, but, unhappily for the inquirer, these authors do not fully agree in their definitions, and if they did, their authorty is not quite sufficient for Old School Baptists, who are accustomed to appeal "to the law and to the testimony." That man was created under law to God, and as a creature of God subject to his authority, appears fully demonstrated by the fact that he sinned, and sin is a transgression of the law. But if the law which Adam transgressed was begotten of him, and constituted a part of himself, then his transgression, we would think, was a sin against himself, and not against God. We will not contend that the law under which man was created was born of God, but we must, until otherwise instructed, contend that the law proceeded from God, who alone possessed a law-making power, and so being God's law or rule of government over man as his creature, the transgression of it was a sin against God, and subject to the penalty provided in that law for the transgression of it. If we have correctly understood the apostle, this law by which is the knowledge of sin, and the penalty of which is death, is called "the law of sin and death." All mankind being in Adam, and, as brother Tufts justly remarked, being Adam, were in the transgression, the very first transgression was that of all mankind, hence death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. We do not perceive how this law was begotten of Adam; it proceeded from the legislation of God himself. The Sinai covenant, or the laws of God dispensed to Israel, were not given to add anything to the force of the law which we in Adam had transgressed, for from Adam to Moses death already reigned. "The sting of death is sin." "Sin is the transgression of the law." "And the strength of sin is the law." Hence it is written, "Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Death passed upon all men before the first son or daughter of Adam

was born, even upon them who are not yet born. The law which was given to Israel by Moses was added, or entered, that the offence might abound. "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment [or law], wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law, sin was dead." Although this law of sin and death was not born of God, as was the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, yet the apostle says it was spiritual: "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin."—Romans vii. 14. Therefore if this is the law which our beloved brother calls the moral law, it was not begotten of man, who is carnal, because it is spiritual, and that which is carnal cannot beget that which is spiritual. That God spake to Adam through this law, we will not dispute, but whether so, or otherwise, that God did talk with him in the garden in the cool of the day we must believe, for so it is expressly written. That the spirituality of the law is concealed in its letter from the understanding of the carnal mind of man, we fully believe, but when the sinner is quickened by the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, its spirituality appears. It comes then in its spirit, not merely in its letter. Paul says, "I was alive without the law once [not without the letter of it, for he was brought up under its letter, a Pharisee of the strictest sect]: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful."—Romans vii. 9–13. This law holds dominion over a man as long as he liveth, or until it slays him, as it did Paul, but its dominion can be extended no further. "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband, so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members, to bring forth fruit unto death. But now are we delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held: that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."—Romans vii. 2–6. Christ has redeemed his people as well from the dominion as from the condemnation and wrath of the law, or it would not allow us to be one flesh with the risen Savior. That in which we were held in matrimonial bonds must be dead to us before we can be thus identified with him that is raised from the dead. Christ came under the law to redeem his people from the law. In doing this he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of

Abraham. This seed of Abraham is the body which was prepared for him, as his own body in which he bare the sins of many, in which he put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, abolished death and brought immortality to light, and if ye be Christ's, then are ye the seed of Abraham, and heirs according to promise. Ye are then "buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."—Romans vi. 4. "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh [as under the law], yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." (married to and one flesh with the risen Jesus.) Moses is dead, and Joshua leads. We are raised up together with our risen and living Husband, and made to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Crucified with him, dead with him, buried with him by baptism into death, quickened together with Christ, raised up together, living in his life. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Romans viii. 1–4. This law of the Spirit of life is born of God, it is spiritual, for it is in Christ Jesus. It is a ruling, reigning and governing law, not written on tables of stone, but in the hearts of the saints, who are also in Christ Jesus, and born of God; married to him that is risen from the dead, and they twain are one flesh; no more under the law, but under grace. Can the bride, the married wife of the Lamb, any longer transgress the authority of her old dead and buried husband? Must the living members of the risen Jesus still be circumcised and keep the law of Moses in order that they may be saved? Has she any desire to dig up and submit to the government of that former husband, who never had anything but bondage and curses for her, now that she is one with the living Husband, who never curses, but always blesses? Now can the believer who is cut off from the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, and known no more after the flesh, transgress a law that has no dominion or authority over him? "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"—Gal. iii. 2. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."—Gal. v. 1.

The reader will perceive that the greater portion of this article is in harmony with the views of brother Tufts, but there are some points to which we desire to call his attention, that he may make them clear, if correct, and yield them if they cannot be sustained by the Scriptures of truth, for we are sure he does not wish to contend for anything that will not bear the strictest scrutiny.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., February 15, 1865.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder Z. M. Beal.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, in Whitefield, Maine, Sept. 8th, 9th and 10th, 1911, to the churches, associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

In the gracious providence of our God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, we are once more permitted to write some thoughts in relation to that kingdom which is not of this world, but the kingdom which the God of heaven shall set up, which shall never be destroyed, and as we think of this wonderful kingdom our thoughts go back more than nineteen hundred years, to the time when Joseph went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be taxed with Mary, his espoused wife, and so it was that while they were there the days were accomplished that she should be delivered, and she brought forth her first son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn; and there was in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. "And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Dear and beloved children of God, this is the glory, peace and good will of your God and Savior; this is the song that ever has and ever will be sung by that heavenly host, when Christ the Lord is revealed unto them as their Savior; this song is begotten in their hearts and proceeds from the love of God, and they love to sing it; it makes manifest the love of God shed abroad in their hearts. But there are times when they cannot sing this song, times when they are in a strange land, a land of tribulation and distress, a land of doubts and fears, a land of darkness and mourning, and they almost conclude that they have never known anything about the highway that God has cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in. At such times they are in trouble and distress, they go mourning and weeping, and think that if they have ever known anything of the joys of God's salvation, that now he has forgotten them, and their souls feel like the psalmist when he said, "I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed." "Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore?" Again he says, "Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit." Dear children of the eternal God, God has declared by the mouth of his prophet Isaiah, saying, "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction."—Isaiah xlviii. 10. The apostle Peter, in his epistle to the stran-

gers, said, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." Jesus said to his disciples, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." And now we see that child that was born in the city of David, exalted with God's right hand, and given him a name above every name. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this," and yet men preach that we must help God to save souls and build up his kingdom; they preach all kinds of kingdoms, but the kingdom of God they cannot preach, because they have never seen it, but that heavenly host that sang at the revelation of the Savior who was born unto them, which is Christ the Lord, and sung the song of praise, Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men, yea, and all of God's heavenly host, from the beginning of time even down to this day, know that their God is in the heavens, and that he hath done what he pleased, and his word, that goeth forth out of his mouth, shall not return unto him void, but it shall accomplish that which he please, and prosper in the thing whereto he sent it. Dear children of God, love is the fountain from whence all these glorious things flow, and they are freely bestowed by him upon all his heavenly host. O how often has the writer of this letter felt longing desires to know if he is one of this heavenly host; how often has sorrow and trouble of heart, and how often have tears of anguish flowed from these poor old eyes when such feelings have burdened this poor old heart. O that I could know of a surety that Jesus died and rose again for me. Dear children of God, do you have such feelings as these? But God knows all things, and I should be still. The blessed Son of God said to his disciples, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." If we are included in that heavenly host, we have a great High Priest, who is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God. "We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." We read of him weeping with those who wept at the grave of Lazarus, and again weeping and apparently sorrowful because of the condition of Jerusalem, and again we hear him saying unto Peter, James and John, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. The apostle Paul in his epistle to all that were in Rome, beloved of God, called saints, tells them that "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures

might have hope." As we have made this letter quite lengthy, we will conclude by calling your attention to some things that are written in the book of Isaiah, thirty-third chapter, twenty, twenty-first and twenty-second verses: "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us." How wonderful and glorious are such Scriptures to poor mourners. "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord."

Z. M. BEAL, Moderator.
GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

(Written by Jonas Lake.)

To the churches composing the Juniata Association, convened with the Springfield Church, Oct. 6th, 7th and 8th, 1911, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

WE are glad to have this, another opportunity to greet you, and may our meeting together be one of peace, love and joy. Where there is peace in a family gathered together, who have been separated for a time, love and joy will flow from one to another, and this is one of the fruits of our annual meetings. How many times have we met those of like precious faith at these associations whom we have not seen since a year before, and our hearts have been glad, and we have rejoiced together and given thanks to our heavenly Father, who has brought us together again as one family, yet we are mindful at these times that some are deprived of that joy that once was theirs. The past year has brought its trials and sorrows. Some have had to pass through dark and lonely paths, for it is decreed that most must walk the darkest paths alone; the joys that once they knew seem to have gone forever, then they cry out with the psalmist, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." What a precious state to be in when we are conscious of One who can restore unto us something we have once enjoyed; that One is able, even to the uttermost, to save and restore. How good to be found at a place where the family meet, when each member can hear of the joys and sorrows of each other, and when they can rejoice with those who do rejoice and weep with those who weep. We in a natural sense wish for joy, and are not content until it is attained; how much more are those who have tasted of the joys of God's salvation. How often are we made to cry out in prayer to God for this joy we have lost on account of our sinful natures. We have wandered into the desert of sin, have grown cold in our desires for the things we once loved, we are conscious of the loss of that joy, yet are so cold we do not then desire it. How strange not to feel the need of it, something that has given us joy beyond measure. The consciousness of the fact that we do not now feel interested in these joys teaches us that it is not of ourselves, for we can do nothing, not even desire any good thing. Sometimes we feel the need, but no desire to seek it. Sometimes as a still, small voice, at another, like a mighty rushing wind, but come as it may, we have been prepared to receive it. Just before the dawn, when we are in the deepest distress, we are made to cry out, Where are the

joys which once I felt when first I loved the Lord? When the joys of thy salvation are restored, then all things become new, even earthly things look brighter, all nature seems to be rejoicing, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another." This should be a feature of our meeting together, especially at these associations, for it is said it is easy for self to creep in. The narrow way is too narrow for self; Jesus is the only way, and if we walk in him self will not be there. May each one when in need have restored to them this joy of salvation. Every day this salvation is needed to save us from ourselves and the temptations of the wicked one, and may we be blessed at all times to hear these joys of salvation proclaimed to us as faithfully as in the past. We would say to our sister associations that we are weak and poor, and desire your remembrance of us in your prayers and visits. May the Lord bless you, and his grace rest upon you all.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
JONAS LAKE, Clerk.

NOTICE.

FOR the first time in many years the SIGNS for November 15th will go out of the office late. The cause of the delay was the death of sister Anna Huestis and the death of Harry M. Hayes, aunt and son-in-law of Mrs. J. E. Beebe. All connected with the office, with the exception of one man, were absent several days. We hope that under the circumstances our subscribers will pardon us.—ED.

I am now running off balance of my Biographical History of Prmitive Baptist Ministers of the United States at $1.50 per copy, delivered postpaid. If you want one send order at once, and if you are a Primitive Baptist you can get a copy and pay for it at your convenience, if this is any accommodation to you.

R. H. PITTMAN.
LURAY, Virginia.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Little Flock Church meets at the corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal., on the third Sunday of each month at 1 o'clock p. m., and at Ontario, Cal., on the first Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. All brethren sojourning within suitable distance are welcome to make their home with us, and all visiting brethren are invited to worship with us. For further information write

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds meetings the third Sunday in each month, in Lewis Hall, 1502 Fourteenth St., N. W., at 11 a. m. and 3 p. m.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.
JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in Kimmy Hall, No. 12 Third St., in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

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All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

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By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition, which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at 5 cents per copy. Address,

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 79. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1911. NO. 23.

POETRY.

THE GUIDING PILLAR.

(Exodus xiii. 21, 22.)

THE exodus was only the beginning
Of countless tender mercies by the way;
God went before the people he had chosen,
With fire by night, and with a cloud by day.

He took it not away, that cloudy pillar,
Although they oft provoked him so to do;
Ungrateful though they were for all his kindness,
The pillar led them all their journey through.

It must have looked so cool and so refreshing—
That cloudy pillar in the heat of day,
And then at night, its shadows no more needed,
Became a fire to light them on the way.

Just what they needed! wonderfully fitted
To meet the varying wants of every hour;
But O, how little did they prize the token
Of his unerring wisdom, love and power.

God's leadings often crossed their inclinations—
The pillar went too fast or went too slow;
It stayed too long to suit their restless temper,
Or when they wished to stay it bid them go.

It kept them so uncertain of the future;
It wrote, "If God permit," on every plan;
It seemed to mock the wisdom of the wisest,
And make a child of every full-grown man.

To bear such discipline aright they needed
Far more humility than they possessed;
More self-abandonment and more devotion,
A will surrendered and a heart at rest.

And so they murmured, murmured very often;
Their sullen hearts rebelled against the light,
And had not God been strong and very patient,
They never would have found their way aright.

Now these things happened to them for examples,
We find them written for our learning here;
O Israel, Israel, how can I condemn thee?
Thy condemnation were my own, I fear.

Yet, O my Father, thou wilt not forsake me,
O do not answer any willful prayer;
Subdue my rebel heart and make it willing
To hearken to thy voice whilst tarrying here.

—*Selected.*

SALVATION.

SALVATION, O the name I love,
Which came by Christ the Lord above;
Surprising wisdom, matchless grace,
That reached my low and helpless case.

When I was sinking in despair,
And filled with awful gloomy fear,
My Savior came to my relief,
He eased my pain and bore my grief.

Immediately I was made whole,
I felt the witness in my soul,
My burden went, I knew not where,
And gone was all my guilt and fear.

And now I want my Lord to stay
And be in me from day to day,
And guide me in this world below,
Direct in everything I do.

That when the messenger shall come,
I may be ready to go home,
And lay my head on Jesus' breast,
And with my dear Redeemer rest.

(Selected by J. E. Thornbury, Ratcliff, Ky.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

FRAGMENTS.

"I WAS glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."—Psalms cxxii. 1. I am looking out upon the landscape, admiring its beauty, every feature of which is brought out clearly by the glorious sunlight. My mind is pleased by it. Perhaps I see some work needing to be done on the farm, in the store or in the shop, and I am arranging for that work. It may be I am suffering pain in my body, and groans force themselves from my lips, or I am gratified by the sweet taste of some luscious fruit, or am glad because I have learned that some enterprise of mine has been successful, or I am feeling the comfort of needed rest of body or of mind. During all this time there is something going on down deep in the secret recesses of my soul, out of all natural sight, that seems to have no reference to, or connection with, these various natural circumstances or conditions; all this undercurrent of thought and feeling has reference to my condition as a sinner in the sight of the holy and just God. While the work in the field, or the store, or workshop, is going on, or the necessary food or rest is being taken, the mind is still going on considering the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the impossibility of a sinner ever becoming righteous, the necessity of sin being punished, because God is holy, and justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne, and yet there is felt continually a hungering and thirsting after righteousness; and while the work about us is continued, and we are talking about it, and faithfully doing our duty in it, and appreciating the intervals of rest, and the necessary satisfaction of the appetite, within our souls the cry is still going on: "God be merciful to me a sinner." "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." No hope for a sinner. How shall a man be just with God? No way for a sinner to be holy; no way in which he can enter into the house of the Lord, or ever dwell in the favor of God. How those with whom we are doing business, conversing concerning worldly affairs, counting, arranging, paying and receiving, how they would wonder if they could know what thoughts there are down deep in our hearts, if they could hear the groanings that cannot be uttered, the cries, Who hath sorrow like my sorrow? I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes. The troubles of my heart are enlarged. But they cannot hear or know of these inward workings, these sighs and cries and sinkings down, they cannot hear the whirlwind in the soul by which the Lord prepared Job, and prepares all his people to hear his solemn questions, and to cry out, Behold, I am vile. Job's friends could not hear that, nor can any one, until the Lord speaks to him out of the whirlwind. But now, in his own good time and way, the Lord causes the poor soul to feel a wonderful, unspeakable change. For the first time he feels true gladness. Down in the depths of the soul he feels that all the elements, conditions and circumstances of sorrow are gone, and in solemn and joyful surprise he breaks out in such language as that used by the psalmist: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." This gladness is of a different nature from any ever felt before, as the psalmist says again, "Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased." I said that to myself more than forty-seven years ago, on a Monday morning, when I first felt this spiritual

gladness in the hope just given me that I was one of those for whom Jesus died. The natural circumstances may continue, and the natural work go on, and the men with whom we are engaged in the business of the world can see nothing of that which caused this gladness to be felt; they can only see the glow upon the face caused by the sunshine in the heart, but the change to us seems absolute and radical; all within is light, and a deep, solemn gladness reigns, and every element of sorrow seems to us to be taken from all the scenes and circumstances and work of a worldly kind, so that we may feel an assurance that we are done with sorrow, because, as it seems to us, our sins, which were the cause of all our sorrow, are gone forever. O how much we have yet to learn concerning the sinfulness of our old carnal nature, and concerning the glorious justice and infinite mercy and grace of our God. This "they" who said, "Let us go into the house of the Lord," are all who have known the way of the Lord. They are all the prophets and holy men of old, who spake of this gladness and salvation as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. What the great company of the Lord's servants may be, and who they are, who say unto the Lord's people, one by one, "Let us go into the house of the Lord," who can tell? It would seem like the whole atmosphere was filled with the power and melody of that wonderful call, as it was when the multitude of the heavenly host sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." The house of the Lord is made up of the saints, who "are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."—Eph. ii. 20–22. We cannot go into that house, cannot find fellowship with the church of the living God, until that sweet and precious call comes into our souls. When the word comes directly to us with power, then that door of gospel fellowship and love is at once wide open unto us, and none can shut it. As soon as our souls experience love and fellowship for the saints, they also have love and fellowship for us, which is manifest as soon as ours is manifest to them, and then all the beauty and attraction of gospel doctrine and order are felt by us. We may be as little children, who cannot understand the deep things of the gospel, but we love them at once, and in our very souls we say, "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem." We want to stand in the order of the gospel, and desire that our feet may never be found outside of those lovely gates, but that we may always walk in Christ. We feel such a love and union with those who love the truth that we can feel the truth of the next sweet expression of this Psalm: "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together," and we want to keep going up there, with all the tribes of the Lord, to the testimony of Israel, "to give thanks unto the name of the Lord."

"I was glad." The Lord has made us glad through his works. We may have gladness on account of some natural benefits, but this is different, higher, sweeter, holier. While we are thankful, or want to be, for all temporal blessings, we know they are only for time, but this reaches forward beyond time, and our thanks seem deeper, or we feel they should be. We may have deep, worldly affliction, and be full of pain and an-

guish, but this gladness is not lessened by them, but rather enhanced. We may have anxiety concerning our worldly work, or concerning our temporal condition, as sickness, loss, poverty, but this gladness makes the afflictions and sorrows of this life seem light and but for a moment, while we are looking upon the unseen things that are eternal. We may be left to mourn deeply because of sins and transgressions, and may be brought into great darkness and feel self-reproach and soul trouble, and may fear that the Lord can never be favorable unto us again, but that he has surely forgotten to be gracious, because he has had no reason to remember us in mercy and grace any more. But after the Lord has restored our souls, and shown us again his mercy, which endures forever, as he surely will, then we shall remember, and particularly notice, that in the very darkest hour, and in the deepest afflictions of soul, that gladness with which we first felt the fellowship of the saints, and went into the house of the Lord, was never quite gone. Even when we were most terribly tempted to doubt whether we were sons of God, or had any part or lot in the matter, even then there was in our inmost souls a solemn gladness because we had ever loved the saints and the things of the kingdom of God. When we have once known the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, and have felt bound up with the saints in the bundle of life, the gladness that then comes to us can never be wholly lost or forgotten. Those in whom this heavenly love has once been felt are born of God, and shall dwell with him in glory.

"FORGETTING those things which are behind." There are a great many things that it were better to forget. Not our sorrow and grief on account of our sins. The sins ought to be remembered to be abhorred, and to keep us in mind of the great mercy of our dear Savior. Paul never forgot that he persecuted the church of God. But has any one done us a wrong and an injury? Forget it. Has one spoken to us with unjust sharpness and undeserved indignation? Forget it. Forget the unkind look, the unjust word, the injurious act. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass." I learned long ago that a minister of the gospel need never defend himself, if he is assuredly in the right; all he need do is to go on in his work, and he will find that the Lord is his defense against every foe, against every wrong, against every act of persecution for righteousness' sake. The same is true of every child of God. If he undertakes to fight in his own behalf he will do the poorest kind of work, and will do himself injury, but if he is enabled by grace to stand still, so far as the trouble is concerned, and keep right on in his true work, he will surely see the salvation of the Lord, and will be melted down by the love of Jesus, and the kind and loving remembrance of the Lord. The one who is in the fault has the hardest time, and often the soft answer will result in a humble acknowledgment. Forget many things that men have said and done, but never forget one of the dear Lord's benefits. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." How precious are those benefits, as they are sweetly and solemnly recounted in the following part of this one hundred and third Psalm, and then how precious it is to be told that the Lord is not under any misapprehension as to those who receive these benefits. They can never repay him in any way,

except to thank and praise him as he shall enable them to do. "For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." It seems to us that he could not know how utterly weak and helpless we are, merely dust, as we are learning from day to day; but he assures us that he does know, and yet the benefits continue and increase in value and in preciousness as we continue to increase in the knowledge of our unworthiness of them.

"WHEN Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."—Col. iii. 4. Is Christ my life? That is what my mind dwells much upon at present. My own life seems so vile when the true light shines upon me, my heart so full of evil and my mind so occupied with the vain and transitory things of time, that I can hardly endure the way it seems that the Lord must regard me. He is so pure and holy, and above all praise, and I so polluted. But now it comes to me with new light and power: Christ is my life. That seems enough to satisfy my inmost longing. This appears now to be a most precious truth, a glorious doctrine, but when shall I be enabled to say in the light and experience of this truth, I am satisfied? It must be by a powerful working of faith that my soul can now in any measure lay hold upon this truth. What a holy, pure and devoted life the dear Savior lived while here in the flesh, how sinless he was while bearing the sins of his people, an awful load. He knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. How patiently he bore his terrible afflictions, how careful he was in his devotion to the law to keep all the commandments, how devoted he was in prayer to the Father. He withdrew from the importunities of those who would take him by force to make him king, and went up into the mountain alone to pray. How could he be in need of prayer? He could feed a multitude with a few loaves and fishes, and could command the raging winds and waves to be still, and yet he needed to pray unto the Father. That was because his people throughout the world, and to the end of time, would need to pray. How good he was to the poor and needy; never too weary to help the helpless. When he had fulfilled the time appointed for suffering in the flesh, then, with all the black load of his people's sins upon him, he was baptized into death, thus washing away those sins forever, and justifying all his people by his resurrection from the dead, making them pure and spotless in the sight of God. Thus he fulfilled for them all righteousness. Then he ascended up on high, where he ever lives to make intercession for his people, and to be their righteousness forever. Can it be that this sweet, pure, holy life is mine? That he lives in me? That this vile body will be fashioned like unto his glorious body? That his holy life, which is the light of men, will be forever mine in my experience, during my stay in time, and in that heavenly state? This is enough to make even the hardest and coldest heart rejoice.

"O for such love let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break,
And all harmonious human tongues
Their Savior's praises speak."

Now, when I am feeling deeply the corruption of my body, the impurity of my life, let me remember that I am not to look upon this corrupt body, and this sin-polluted life as mine, but to remember that which by faith I know: that Christ is even now my life, and his glorious body is that whose fashion in glory tells what our vile body shall be when

we appear with him in glory. This is enough to make us wish to watch and pray that we may live purely and righteously, as becometh the gospel of Christ, and that our whole body, soul and spirit be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov., 1911.

SYNOPSIS OF A FUNERAL SERMON.

"THE end is very near, but the last change will be glorious."

These words are not Scripture, but they are born of Scripture truth. Our precious brother uttered them standing on the brink of the dark river. Catching a glimpse of the eternal shore, his fevered brow fanned with the gentle zephyrs from the hills of paradise, no wonder the end seemed near. Standing at the solemn close of a career of over three-quarters of a century, fraught with the perils and privations of earthly pilgrimage, and enraptured with visions of a blessed immortality, he could gladly and triumphantly declare, "The last change will be glorious." When the morn, the fair, sweet morn, awakes to greet the anxious gaze of earth's weary ones this glorious change is welcomed, as an exile to the old roof tree.

It is not my custom to speak at length of either the merits or demerits of the dead. The noble, trusting, God-fearing life of our loved one gone is a far more fitting eulogy than my poor, feeble words could express. We shall leave his preeminent characteristics as a husband, father, brother, neighbor, friend, to the hearts and memories of those left to lament his departure.

"The end is very near." A weight of years, with their successes and sorrows, trials and triumphs, had fallen to bend the weary form ere the end came. But it came, as it must come to us all; we know not how soon it will be.

"Time is winging us away to our eternal home;
Life is but a winter's day, a journey to the tomb;
All that's mortal soon will be
Inclosed in death's cold arms;
Youth and vigor soon will flee,
Blooming beauty lose its charms,
But the christian shall enjoy
Health and beauty soon above,
Far beyond the world's alloy,
Secure in Jesus' love."

Death is the heritage of the children of earth. Mortality must die. "The wages of sin is death." By one man sin entered into the world. By man came death. By death grim and cold the race is victimized. Many dread the gloom of the grave; all must enter there.

"O why should the spirit of mortal be proud?
Like a swift fleeting meteor, a fast flying cloud,
A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,
Man passes from earth, to his home in the grave."

"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Earth's teeming millions have made this melancholy retreat their habitation, and millions more are marching on to join them. "Our hearts like muffled drums are beating funeral marches to the grave." Sometimes the beating ceases ere many battlefields are crossed. Sad tattoos sound solemn requiems all about us, making wild, weird discords in the "psalm of mortal life." Sad messages call us from mirth to mourning, and ofttimes the gray-haired sexton mingles the fresh clay of the grave of the departed with that thrown out to receive to-day's weeping widow or lonely orphan. Princes and paupers, saints and sinners, the learned and the licentious, the feared and the favored, all must succumb. This archenemy cannot be bribed; his icy hand brings chill and long night to all. He is the last enemy. In Adam all die. Death passed upon

all men. The end is near with us all; how near we know not.

The last change will be glorious. What cheering words are these. Whispered back from eternity's golden shore they come laden with perfume rich and rare. The sweet aroma of goodness and grace and happiness and holiness, purity and partnership, beautifying the life beyond, makes the sons of sorrow cry out from dying beds, O glorious change. Not all of earth can reckon thus; whence then this joyful cry? In answering this, the scriptural tenets our brother loved and cherished will serve a reasonable and beautiful explanation. In answering this query the Old School Baptists offer a different explanation from any other religious body on earth. This is the cry of a newborn soul. Men in nature do not know this blessed change. Eyes have not seen, ears have not heard, hearts have not understood. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Here then is the great distinction between the natural man and the spiritual man. This glorious change is foolishness to him. The last change is not known, and the first unreceived. Here is the great impossibility: he (the natural man) cannot know them. Culture, training, moral suasion, intellectual growth, will not span the gulf from natural to spiritual. The best cultivated maple tree in the world is only a maple. The finest attainments of the natural man only make him a polished, accomplished natural man. "The world by wisdom knew not God," and never will. The passage from natural to spiritual is by birth: "Except a man be born again." Once born we bear the image of the earthy, twice born we bear the image of the heavenly; like begets like. The religious world cries, "Culture," we insist on an inward work of grace. The world may allow the necessity of the new birth, but makes the sinner active in it. As the first birth occurs passively, so the second. "The gift of God is eternal life." As all lower orders are hermetically sealed from the higher, the higher reaching down to the lower, so is man helpless in his element, so far as reaching up and partaking of the Divine—God must reach down; He must implant his life; this He does as a sovereign act of mercy. This life is promised to all his covenant heirs, and is bestowed unconditionally upon them according to his own eternal purpose and grace. God, who cannot lie, promised it before the world began. We, brethren, even as Isaac was, are the children of promise. The new birth is impossible with men, either in assisting, or inducing, or obligating Almighty God. All things are possible with God. Three things he does unassisted by mortal man, and which he never delegated to any mortal to perform: creation, regeneration and resurrection. The apostle declares that we are new creatures created in Christ Jesus. This creation is the work of God in the heart. Biblical knowledge neither induces, hastens nor abets in this blessed work, but when once touched by grace a knowledge of the Scriptures makes the individual wise unto salvation, even as Timothy, who knew the Scriptures from his youth up. This is the first change. Our brother experienced this marvelous change in early life. When a young man, just of age, God in his mercy came to him, teaching him his lost and undone condition. Being brought from the kingdom and power of darkness into the glorious light and liberty of the children of God,

he was made to rejoice in the Savior's love. The Scriptures came to him with sweetness and power, and remained his comfort through all the troubled scenes of his long and eventful life. This first change is the beginning of better things; it is the vestibule to scenes sublime, it is the prelude to the grand anthem entered into when the last change transpires. He often sat in heavenly places in Christ. It was a heaven below his Redeemer to know. He often mourned his weakness and unworthiness, but loved the holy service of God. He loved and was comforted by the eternal purposes of God the Supreme, and found delight in new covenant blessings so graciously bestowed upon an unworthy sinner. He believed salvation to be of the Lord; that whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son; that as many as the Father gave the Son in covenant and by choice, would be brought into the fold above by a special, specific, efficacious atonement, and calling of the Holy Spirit. Believing in personal, unconditional election meant to him a holy desire and endeavor to adorn so rich a doctrine with a godly life and conversation; to this end he prayed and lived. Hence taught of God experimentally and scripturally, the goodness and love and mercy of Him who calleth, and the immortal felicities of those made righteous by Jesus' blood, no wonder he cries, "The last change will be glorious," with the homesickness of one long, long absent.

"The last change." When death divides, and loved ones are lost from our gaze, the doctrine of the "last change" seems good. When the heartstrings snap, and cords break which bind us in sympathetic union to those dear to us, when we come to the charnel-house, and dread its gloom, the thought of a glorious resurrection dispels the clouds and drives back the melancholy of the grave. In the prophecy of the "last change" of our text is found the fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians epitomized. This glorious doctrine of Jesus, the apostles and prophets was deep rooted in our brother's soul. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." All who die in Christ shall awake with his likeness, and be satisfied. Just as certain as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. O blessed transformation! O wondrous work divine! Thy way, O God, is in the sea. O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. By one man came death. Sad, sad picture. Let all confess in shame and silence. Is this all? Is death our ultimatum, our finale? Listen! Hark! "By man came also the resurrection of the dead." The first man (Adam) brought death; he was earthy. We are Adam multiplied; we bear his image by nature; but this second Man is the Lord from heaven, a quickening Spirit; he is the resurrection and the life; he was dead, but is alive for evermore; he holds the keys of death and hell. But if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised, and if Christ be not raised then you are yet in your sins, and your faith is vain. But the corn of wheat fell into the ground and died, hence it shall not abide alone. Just as the corn of wheat brings forth after its kind, so shall this quickening Spirit, this heavenly Man, bring forth teeming millions of his kinsmen to be joint-heirs with him forever. The redemption of the purchased possession must materialize. The earnest of our possession is received in the first change. The fullness shall be received in the last change,

which is glorious. Mortality must put on immortality, corruption must put on incorruption. Thus clothed in garments of glory and bodies celestial the redeemed of earth and the resurrected in bliss shall sing, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" The sting is gone, the victory broken. This Jesus we love, and who loved us when we were dead in trespasses and sins, is King of kings and Lord of lords. He has triumphed over all his foes; he led captivity captive; he destroyed him who had the power of death; all enemies are put under his feet. We shall share his victory; we shall rejoice joint-heirs with him, shall reign with him forever. The banqueting-house and banner of love, the fine linen robes and palms of victory, the harps of praise and crowns of righteousness, the presence of Jesus and God the Father make the last change a glorious one. In God's providence our brother entered into that blessed Sabbath above, upon the Sabbath here. He left us on his own regular meeting day, to join the general assembly and church of the First-born above. Many times and oft he bade his brethren farewell on earth, but now he worships with the congregation which never breaks up, and where the sabbath never ends. Many times he realized Christ as the only fountain, the deep well of love.

"The streams on earth he has tasted, more deep he'll drink above,
Where to an ocean fullness His mercy doth expand,
And glory, glory dwelleth in his Immanuel's land.

He will sing, I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved mine,
He brings a poor, vile sinner into his house of wine."

"He will eye not his garments, but his dear Bridegroom's face,
He will not gaze at glory, but on his dear King of grace."

[THE foregoing is a synopsis of a sermon by Elder Burton L. Nay, of Mediapolis, Ia., at the funeral services of Isaac Thurston, an aged and beloved member of Harmony Old School Baptist Church. —ED.]

(See obituary in this number.)

BELLINGHAM, Wash., Nov. 4, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been wanting to write and acknowledge your great kindness in continuing the SIGNS to me, when I cannot pay for it, but I hope I will be able to pay you some time, then I surely will. It is kind of you when I am so unworthy. When I received the November 1st number I read it with much joy and comfort; it was like a refreshing rain in a barren desert. O how sweet it is to read those precious truths through tears of joy. You may think me undignified and childish to weep over those dear ones who tell their (and my) joys, sorrows, hopes and fears, but somehow they come very close to me while I am reading their letters, and I wonder if it can be that I am made nigh by the blood of Christ, and somehow am assured that it is so, for it is through the life-giving power of that precious Lamb who was slain on Calvary that we are made one, one with the Father and one with the Son, for it is all of the same Spirit, and although we may be thousands of miles apart, yet when filled with the spirit of love that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, we are drawn close together. Elder Chick's editorial on "Differing Beliefs" was good, and if I am any judge it is according to the teaching of Christ our Savior while here on earth, also what he teaches by revelation, and the only safe rule to follow, i. e., let brotherly love continue. Do not make a brother an offender for a word, seeing we cannot govern our beliefs, even in natural things, but are established by the evidence given in proof, either for or

against our understanding of the subject in question, and it is the same in spiritual things. We are commanded to try the spirits to see whether they are of God or of antichrist, and we are assured that every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God. Then how does he or it confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh? Is it by biting and devouring one another, or setting ourselves up as patterns for the children of God to follow? Is it not that principle within us which beholds our brethren and sisters with eyes of love, causing us to esteem others better than ourselves? The mark is in the forehead, and no one can see it in his own forehead, but if we are adorned with the hidden man of the heart, that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price, then we are prepared to see the mark in our brother's forehead, and if Christ be in you his Spirit testifies to these things, establishing our hope and our faith, and this constitutes our belief, and when we are given to see the hidden mysteries recorded in the most sacred word, then, and only then, can we rightly divide the word of truth. Since it is so difficult to discern between our proud and lofty spirit, wherein we desire to be considered "learned" in the knowledge of the Scripture, it is not strange that we get the wrong meaning and advance our ideas for the truth. But since our acceptance or rejection with God does not depend upon either our knowledge or ignorance of the Scriptures, we should not judge a brother as being unfit to sit at the Lord's table with us because he cannot see and understand all the Scriptures as we do; we should not be wrangling over our difference of understanding, but strive for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, giving God all the praise, honor and glory for what light and liberty we have. I do not mean that we should fellowship any and all who call themselves christians, nor all who call themselves Old School or Primitive Baptists, but let us take the word of God as the man of our counsel with meekness and fear. "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Use hospitality one to another, without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."—1 Peter iv. 8–11. This, in connection with the first chapter of first Peter, is better than anything I can command. It seems to me that if God only predestinates the good, and the devil the bad, and all redounds to the glory of God, then they must be working in unison, since God has power over all things (the devil included), and has made the wicked for the day of evil, and that also will redound to God's glory. Is it any worse to assert that God predestinated all things, than to say that he knew all things and would not prevent all the wicked acts of men when he had the power to do so? God is not the author of sin, but by one man's disobedience sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death hath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. We are all partakers of Adam's nature, therefore we are sinners, for the fruit cannot be better than the tree; but here is man-

ifested God's abundant mercy, for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. Each one will be made manifest in God's own appointed time, and none can hinder nor hasten that time. If we could only fully understand and appreciate the "light" and "liberty" of the children of God, which light is the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, and without that Light we could not know God, nor could we meet the dear saints with such joy and gladness around the throne. Without it we would be void of love, our hearts would be cold and lifeless, and could not receive the loving messages from God and his dear children. It is by and through this Light that we are given the liberty to enjoy all the sweet communions with God when no one else is near; that sweet grace which sometimes overflows our soul, body and mind, causing us to rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory. By this liberty we are given the right to call each other brother, that most endearing title, which proclaims us children of one Father, even God, and if children, then we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. O can it be possible that we, who are such disobedient, stubborn, unworthy creatures, are heirs to all that Jesus is? Yes, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but when he comes again, without sin unto salvation, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. O what a glorious change that will be; there will be no more aching hearts, no weary minds ever battling with poverty; sickness and death will have ended, for he will wipe away all tears, and we shall always be with him to sing praises to God and the Lamb who died for us, and now sits at God's right hand to intercede for us. The half has never been told, for eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things he has prepared for them that love him. A few more days, a few more tears, a few more losses and crosses; O may his grace be sufficient for us in every trial, so that we walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called. The thought comes to me, Are you so walking that you are worthy? and I am compelled to say with shame, I am not worthy to mingle with the dear children of God. But O, I hate the sins that do so torture me, and I do earnestly pray for a closer walk with God, and I want you all to pray for me, for I am so weak. I would like to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, but I try to say, Thy will be done, and not mine. I feel sure that the God of the whole earth will do right, and bring us off more than conquerors through Jesus Christ our Savior.

In conclusion, I ask your forbearance, for I only meant to write and tell you how much I appreciate your kindness in sending the SIGNS to me, and to tell you that my health is much improved from some cause, and I sometimes think it is because I have given up to the request of my dear, forbearing brethren and sisters, and also to the woe that has followed and impressed me so long, and am trying to comfort the dearest people on earth, but O the blundering; how they can put up with it is more than I can understand, but when I try to talk to them about giving it up, they say, No, you must not think of such a thing. Dear brethren, you who have really had a call to the ministry (for I am in doubt of mine), did you ever pray for liberty, so that by the liberty given you the children of God might be comforted and you given a message to the dearest people on earth, and they waiting eagerly to re-

ceive it, and then when you got to them you could tell it only in a blundering, unintelligible manner, when it came to you in demonstration and power more beautiful than tongue or pen can describe? It seems to me that I always keep back the very best part, but I know that if God has called me to feed his sheep and lambs he will teach me how to feed them, for if it is of my preparation they would surely starve, so I try to go like David, in the strength of Israel's God, and leave the result with him.

I will tell you about our September meeting, and then try to close. I had intended to tell them at that meeting that I would not attempt to preach any more, for I felt that it was a disgrace to the cause, and I had tried to arrange in my mind some suitable words with which to tell them, so they would not be offended at me. I would not offend them, or have them think that I did not want to do any duty that was laid upon me, and I had everything arranged, as I thought, about right, and it went on until about two o'clock Saturday morning, when I awoke with the words, Alleluia, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, and my mind seemed to be set on fire, and when we got up that morning I could scarcely think of anything else but the beauty contained in those few words, and as it was our church meeting day I could hardly wait until the time came to open meeting, and I seemed to be propelled by a power not my own, and forgot all about my resolutions and speech that I had studied up to tell them that I must not attempt to preach, and I think in part I kept my word, for the Lord undertook for me, and I was given sweet liberty both Saturday and Sunday, and then at our October meeting Elder W. T. Eaton was with us and did most of the preaching. Now I am in fear and trembling again, for I wonder how it can be that I, so ignorant and weak, so unfit to stand up before those dear people as their undershepherd to feed them, attempt to do so. I am afraid to turn back, lest a worse thing happen to me, so again I ask you to pray for me, that I may be kept by the power of God in the right way, and that I may not bring reproach upon the cause; that I may know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified, the way of salvation, and give God all the glory, praise and honor. I desire to glory not, save in the cross of Christ, for if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him. May God bless truth and expose error everywhere, is my prayer.

A poor old sinner, saved by grace,
DAVIS BURCH.

MORGANFIELD, Ky., Sept. 26, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—I inclose a copy of a letter written by my father, together with his christian experience, written one year before his death, at the age of seventy-seven, which I desire to have published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the comfort of his many friends yet living.

Yours truly, T. B. EARLE.

HOPKINS COUNTY, Ky., March 1, 1852.

TO THE ELECT LADY AND HER CHILDREN, WHOM I LOVE IN THE TRUTH:—I have thought it good to write unto you and exhort you to examine the things that make for your peace and order, which we would do well to examine, as much as our weakness will permit, the union between the church and Christ her head. We learn from the word of God that Adam was the figure of him that was to come, and that God created them male and female and called their name Adam, and he breathed into his nostrils and man

became a living soul. Now the woman received life in the man, and God gave him a law, and when the woman was formed of the rib Adam said, She is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; and when she violated the law she was as much him as she was before she transgressed, and he, though not deceived, was in the transgression, as she was, for they were not twain, but one flesh. I can only view the woman in the man, for the man is not without the woman. In this figure I view the church in her Head; all the life she has is in him, and in the covenant she received grace in him before the world was, or before she partook of flesh, and when she partook of flesh she was then capable of sinning, and when she sinned she became dead in trespasses and in sins, but her action did not destroy the union; hence because He loved her, in the fullness of time he appeared in flesh and blood to put away her sin by the sacrifice of himself. Now all that he has done was for the church, his bride, for he loved her and gave himself for her. No man ever hated his own flesh, and she, being flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones, he still loves her to the end as his own; and although his people are taken captive by the devil, they are the Redeemer's, and he will deliver all the lawful captives. The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance; he will find them, though they are in the wilderness, and quicken them into life; not to make them his, but because they are sons, the Father will send the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Then they are qualified by the Spirit to render spiritual service, they have their fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. They now love God, because he first loved them, and mourn because they cannot serve him better, for they now find the Spirit warring against the flesh, and the flesh against the Spirit, so that they cannot do the things they would; but being led by the Spirit of God, they are the manifest children of God, as is said in the first epistle of John. In this is manifest the children of God, and children of the devil. There is no concord between Christ and Belial, no fellowship between light and darkness. The Lord said, I will put enmity between thee (that is, the serpent) and the woman, between thy seed and her seed. We see here two seeds spoken of, and they have been manifested from Cain, who was of that wicked one, and Abel, who offered a sacrifice by faith; and that same enmity has been manifest in all ages of the world; the mystery of iniquity has been working, and is still working, by the spirit that works in the children of disobedience; they are a seed of evil doers, a generation of vipers, they are found warring with the children of God; Satan's ministers have transformed themselves into ministers of righteousness, but they are under the influence of the spirit of iniquity, and are teaching the "doctrines of devils." Now let us try the spirits, for every spirit that denies that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is antichrist; that is, they that say that salvation is conditional, or in any way by our will or doing, deny that Jesus Christ is God, or that he can do his pleasure. Now, my dear brethren, I have often told, and now tell you again, even weeping, says an apostle, they are enemies of the cross of Christ. We exhort you therefore to put on the whole armor of God, that ye may stand against the wiles of the devil, and that the church of Christ should be like a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariot, all pulling together, not publishing each other's faults in

Gath, nor in the streets of Askelon, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised rejoice, but the church should closely examine the order of the house, and remove disorder and heresies from among them by a regular course of gospel discipline. But should you see errors in this short epistle, or in any of the household of faith, let that charity that hides a multitude of faults hide them, and let us not say harsh and hard things to our Father's household. "Little children, love one another," and keep yourselves from idols. My desire was to have said something that would have edified the church, but it is so feeble, and I often doubt whether I know Jesus or am called to feed his lambs and sheep, and if I am one at all, I am less than the least of all.

Now may grace, mercy and peace abide upon the Israel of God. Amen.

And when I look at Zion's state,
I constant feel a heavy weight;
I would around about her walk,
And of her bulwarks ever talk.

In the year of our Lord 1800, on the fourth day of February, I was born in Greenville District, South Carolina. My father moved to Kentucky, and I joined the Regular Baptist Church in Caldwell County, Ky. I have been a member of the Regular Baptist Church sixty-one years. Fifty-four years of that time I have been in much weakness trying to preach the gospel of the grace of God. I have preached in eight States, where I have met with many precious brethren whom I hope knew and loved the truth. I have been in the division of two associations. We had hard conflicts with those who taught the doctrine of the Judaizing teachers, that men must do something or they could not be saved; but after the separation we enjoyed union and peace. They said many things against me because of my opposition to their doctrine. I have fought my fight, and the time of my departure is near at hand, and I have a good hope through grace that there is a rest prepared for me, with all the redeemed, and that I shall see Jesus and be like him.

E. W. EARLE.

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2 CORINTHIANS III. 18.

"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

Peter's epistles are of comfort to the household of faith, in that they were written by one who knew the weakness of the flesh and sifting by Satan, and the epistles are written out of his experience. He addressed them with the term "beloved," or to the beloved, and it is with a desire to offer a few thoughts on the above that I shall attempt to write. Language but faintly conveys to us the deep, spiritual meaning therein embraced, and as we can only use language to convey that which is in the mind, we make use of language used to comprehend natural things to guide our mind to things declared to the subjects of grace, so we will notice the word "grow." "Grow in grace." Anything growing implies also a planting in order to grow, for without being planted the subjects under consideration could not grow; therefore Peter is addressing the heavenly plants that are planted of the Father in the garden of his grace, and as heavenly plants they do grow in grace. These plants might be represented by the corn; first the blade, then the stalk, and then the full ear. Corn could not grow unless planted, and would cease to grow if removed from the element in which it is planted; therefore Peter uses the word "grow," signifying a mysterious taking up into itself from that in

which it is planted, as the corn comes forth from the grain planted, first the blade, then the stalk, &c. We understand that the whole life is in the grain, but the fullness of what that life attains unto is not complete until the whole stalk and full ear are matured. So life in Christ in the subjects of God's love and mercy is complete in its first manifestation, so far as life is concerned, but what the life attains unto is only known by growing. The apostle says, "We know in part, and we prophesy in part," &c. The subjects of God's grace are as tender plants (the blade), and have but tender roots at first, but as the growth is manifested they attain to the stalk, and then the brace roots are manifested. While a tender blade the winds and storms did not have much effect upon them, but as the stalk grows there is a putting forth of the brace roots to go down into that in which it is planted; so the heavenly plants go down into the riches of the grace of God. The grace of God is to my mind the fullness of the Godhead bodily in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The word "grace" is used often in Scripture. Jesus said to Paul, My grace is sufficient for thee. Paul said, By grace are ye saved through faith, &c.; and, Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. The grace of God embraces all the attributes of our Lord and Savior in the salvation of his people, whether it be predestination, election, sanctification, redemption, resurrection, justification, or any needed grace necessary to the eternal salvation of his elect, therefore the word "grace" is used as embracing all blessings in our Lord and Savior. Peter says, "Grow in grace," implying the fact that we are planted in grace, and as we grow, these brace roots might be presented as the doctrine that holds and keeps the heavenly plants in every storm and tempest. Sometimes the storm may come from a quarter that the brace roots of election and predestination would sustain us; at another time when the brace roots of sanctification and justification would hold us; but from whatever way the storm comes it has a tendency to loosen up and to cause that which holds us to take deeper root. There is this also to be considered, that with all the storms and trials that the heavenly plants are called to pass through, they never get to the full depths of that in which they are planted, for the apostle exclaimed, "O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" The life is one thing; the growing would seem to be mysteriously taking up from that in which it is planted, and so they learn doctrine. While they grow in grace they also grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Knowledge and wisdom have seemed to me so closely allied to each other that I fail to make any distinction; if we have wisdom we have knowledge. Jesus is made unto us wisdom, &c., and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior is in the fellowship with him, in God being manifest in the flesh, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, set at naught, forsaken and alone, forsaken of God in his experience, nowhere to lay his head; this is knowledge. Holy men of old had this knowledge by a living experience. David said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Even David's own son, Absalom, revolted against him; so the enemies are they of our own household. What are these wounds in thine hands? They are those I received in the house of my

friends. This is growing in knowledge. "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." As they are the subjects of his grace, they grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. J. M. FENTON.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, Nov. 7, 1911.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I am sending you a copy of a letter written me by our dear sister, Mrs. S. H. Durand, and if you think best, will you please give it a place in the SIGNS? I have not her permission to send it, but I do not think she would object. It has been of much comfort to me, and I want to share it with others who may receive like comfort from it.

With christian love, your unworthy sister, I hope,

ANNIE L. McCOLL.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Oct. 25, 1911.

MY DEAR SISTER ANNIE:—I think you know I have been very sick, and so have understood why I have not replied to your very interesting and much valued letter of Sept. 11th. I am still very far from well, but some stronger, and not likely to be quite well for a considerable time, so will try to write enough to show my interest in you and your letters. I was thinking this morning how that about all our trouble in this life consists in our efforts to reconcile the two utterly unreconcilable principles we find within us: the natural and the other, which we almost fear to call spiritual, yet which is certainly opposed to everything about us that is natural. It is hard to admit, even when we think we do it, that we are utterly estranged from God. We cannot realize that we do always and forever serve the law of sin with our natural minds. To be translated by grace into the kingdom of God's dear Son is like being set down in a foreign country, where the language, the customs and climate are completely at variance with anything we have known before, and our only hope is in loving the new and hating the old. Every backward look we must account for, for "God is not mocked." "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." You can see therefore the positive necessity for some one to make our peace for us, because we would never be able to do this impossible thing ourselves. The only hope of comfort for the christian then is in realizing that this has been done for him by the mighty One; everlastingly done, and that there is therefore now no condemnation for him. But how slow are our senses to realize this, and how much of our time is spent among the mists and the shadows, and in raking amid the ruins of this fallen nature in the fond and vain hope of finding there some good thing. If we could only once and for all accept the fact of our utter depravity, looking alone to the Author and Finisher of our faith, how much of our confusion and discomfort would be avoided. But we cannot even do that, except he that raised up Christ from the dead, quicken our mortal bodies by his indwelling Spirit. That he does this from time to time is our greatest joy. There is one thing however that we must not forget while we contemplate the utter sinfulness of our nature: the apostle said, Know ye not your bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost? Despicable as they have become by reason of the ruin wrought by the fall, they have been sanctified by this indwelling, and that is why the saints desire to walk so carefully. Paul said he kept his body under. Grace enabled

him to do so, although he plainly saw that in his flesh there dwelt no good thing. The apostle tells us of things, natural things, which have been given us richly to enjoy. We do not sin in enjoying them; it is no sin to enjoy the food we eat, but we do wrong to eat harmful things. We are called on constantly to consider eternal things, very puzzling decisions have to be made, and my heart goes out in pity to the young who want to walk uprightly, but cannot always see the way, but I can trust them to Him in whom my own hope is, for time and for eternity. I am no more able to walk uprightly in my own strength than I was when a child, but the trials of youth are over for me, and I only dread them for others.

It is several days since I began this letter. I have had another very sick turn for a few days, but am better again. Write me when you can feel inclined. We all care greatly for your letters, and long for a time when you can be with us at our meetings. Write to the church whenever you can, it helps to keep you close to their minds and hearts.

Lovingly your sister,

CLARICE E. DURAND.

CANNON, Del., Oct. 15, 1911.

ELDER DURAND:—Some time ago I ordered one of your little books: "Songs in the Night," and received it promptly, and intended to acknowledge receipt of same, but have just been putting it off. I wish to say that the book has been of much comfort to me, and I would advise all who love the truth to get a copy, as the price is very small. It certainly is interesting to read such experiences as those of your brother. Nothing, it seems to me, can gladden the hearts of the Lord's people any more than to read of the love of Christ manifested toward fallen man; it is a wonderful and beautiful subject; the love of Jesus is wonderful to us, because of the fact that Jesus saved us when we were dead in sins. It is said, This is the way, walk ye in it. We did not know anything about this new and living way until Jesus showed it to us, and we can readily see that the words of Jesus are true when he said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." The love of Jesus is a wonderful subject, because he not only shows us the way, but he makes his people walk in it. Jesus does not half do a thing; he does not merely say, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate," and then leave them to do as they please, but he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. We are told that he who hath begun a good work in his people will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. It does seem to me necessary that Jesus should perform that good work, because man is a weak being, and seeks out many inventions. Sometimes we seem to have a desire to follow Jesus, to walk in his ways, and at other times we are beset on every side; the things of the world sometimes have a fancy for us, and again we are almost ready to give up and say, I have had no christian experience at all, it was all imagination. I go about with a burdened mind, and sometimes have these thoughts; something suggests, If you were what you think you are you would not have such wicked thoughts as you do; a child of God never has such wicked thoughts as you have. It seems that this is true, yet amid all these trying experiences there is another mind which says, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which

is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings." It seems that the Lord's people must be tempted, for it says, "Concerning the fiery trial which is to try you;" no escape; must be tempted, but Jesus was also tempted, and because of this he is able and does succor those who are tempted. Hence we see that Jesus performs that good work; he succors his people who are tempted; he will not allow Satan to have dominion over them; how beautiful the thought. We desire to be like Jesus, and when we read of Jesus and his good works we want to be able to walk in obedience to his commandments; we want to love our neighbor as ourself; we do not want to utter a foolish word; we want to show to the world that we have been with Jesus and learned of him; we want to let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven, yet we realize that there is no good in us, and that we are prone to evil, and because of this the Lord's people are ever asking to be delivered from evil: Lead me in the paths of righteousness.

But I must close. I just wanted to acknowledge receipt of the book.

I am yours in hope,

A. T. BENSON.

[THE above good letter was handed us by Elder Durand while at the Salisbury Association, in October, and we are glad to publish it.—K.]

DELAWARE, Ohio, Jan. 3, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I had hoped to send you another name or two, but it seems I cannot, so I will send on myself for our dear family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; I do not want to do without it while I live and can read. I am quite badly afflicted, but want to be thankful that it is as well with me as it is. I have paralysis, but am able to walk some, and after being helped into the buggy am able to ride to our churchhouse, and do enjoy meeting with those I love in the Lord. I moved here in September, and have been blessed with strength to get to each meeting. My husband makes no profession, but always takes an active part in entertaining the brethren. We have a very pleasant home with my daughter and her husband. The street car comes close to us, and it is very convenient for the brethren and sisters to make our home a place to stop. We have a good horse and buggy, and brother Stephens and my husband take delight in conveying them to the meetings. My dear daughter is willing and does all she can to make all feel welcome and at home. She is never very well, and is quite sick at this time. I only desired to write and send you the two dollars for our paper, and to tell all the dear writers that I do enjoy their words of comfort. I feel it a great blessing to be able to read, and, I trust, to understand the precious truth that I find written in this blessed medium. I feel to ask the prayers of you all, that our dear heavenly Father may permit unworthy me to retain my reason, if it be his will. I feel that I cannot be thankful enough for his many great mercies to unworthy me in blessing me with rest and strength to enjoy in mind and body the things of the blessed Spirit. I trust I received a hope in Christ in my childhood days, over fifty years ago. My dear heavenly Father began to teach me and to lead me in ways I had not known, and after seven long years dear Jesus came to me in the pardon of my sins. I had my experience

published in 1881; dear Elder Beebe's obituary appeared in May, the same year. It came into my mind to write and send it to him, as he was the one I wanted to be the judge of what I might be able to write. I realize more and more the longer I live that I am numbered with the few, but that does not trouble me; I feel glad, and hope I am in the strait and narrow way. Few there be that find it. Our little church here is in love and fellowship; we have a very gifted pastor, with deep discernment and a calm, quiet, firm delivery. He comes forty miles on the steam cars. Brother Jackson comes occasionally, if brother Weaver cannot come. Our yearly meeting last fall was a joyful one; there were four ministers with my dear old uncle, Elder J. C. Biggs, of Yale, Illinois, who was on an extended visit, and dear Elder Newton Peters, of Portland, Ind. He is one of the best speakers I have ever been blest to hear. He dwells much on the prophecies, and has a fine delivery. My dear uncle is past eighty years of age. He and Elder Peters stayed with us the last night of the meeting.

I am trying to write much more than I had expected to. It may be the last, but I want the afflicted ones to know I am able to read their blessed words of comfort, which I trust I am thankful for. May it be our Father's will to continue to support and strengthen our dear editors. I know his will must and shall be done among the inhabitants of earth and the army of heaven.

With love and best wishes to all, I bid you all, in hope of that better and abiding world, farewell.

S. C. BOYD.

ADRIAN, Mich., Oct. 31, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I have the money by me, although my subscription does not expire until January, I will send it now. I know that your time is much taken up at the beginning of the new year, and I do not want to miss one number of the SIGNS; it is most dear to me, and next to my Bible. I have great comfort in reading the dear ones' writings. If I could write as they do, what comfort it would be for me, they tell my experience much better than I can. The paper comes regularly, laden with messages of love. My heart is filled to overflowing, so that my eyes run over with tears, and my heart almost bursts with love and thanksgiving to our Creator for all his mercy to us undeserving sinners. I have been a reader of the SIGNS for more than thirty years, and have been a member of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church for about one year. I have had more enjoyment in that one year than all the world could ever give; it is spiritual happiness which we enjoy after we have been led from darkness to light. My father and mother were members of the Old School Baptist Church; two of my brothers and three of my sisters also belonged to the same church.

Now please excuse me for taking up too much time, for I know that your time is precious. I remain your unworthy sister through a forgiving Savior. May one so sinful be permitted to call you brethren? I am unworthy of myself to claim such a privilege. O that I could see myself as I would wish to be, but sin is mixed with all I do.

(MRS.) LAMIRA CARY.

NOTICE.

IF the Lord will, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Old Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., the third Sunday in December (17th), instead of the fourth, as is usual. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1911.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

INDEPENDENCE OF CHURCHES.

SISTER Nannie B. Edwards, of La Grange, Ga., some time since wrote us, asking that we say something through the SIGNS upon what she called "Independent church sovereignty." She writes also that there are differences of opinion in that section regarding this matter. In replying to her request we cannot, of course, be sure of covering the questions among the churches in that section, because we do not know just what the differences are, but we have no hesitancy in trying to present such things as seem clear in our own mind regarding the subject. In this section, and in those sections where we have traveled and visited churches, and have become somewhat acquainted with the prevailing views of brethren and churches, we have not been accustomed to hearing this peculiar expression, "Independent church sovereignty," and the feeling in our mind is that we do not like the sound of the word "sovereignty" as applied to the church of Christ. Not only is this word not used in the Bible as applied to the church, but, on the contrary, every teaching regarding the order of the church puts the sovereignty upon her Head and Judge and King, the blessed Lord. The word "sovereign," or "sovereignty," does not itself occur in the Scriptures, but the word means "supreme in power and dominion," and the word "supreme" occurs but once in the Bible, viz., in 1 Peter ii. 13, and here it is applied to kings and rulers among and under whom the people of God may be placed, and in this text it means that which is placed above another. It is sure that the word of God does not teach that one church is above another, so as to have any right to rule over that other church. It is also sure that one member has no dominion over another, but, on the contrary, all are to be subject one to another; and even the undershepherds of the flock are not rulers, neither are they to have lordship over the churches where they labor, but are simply to be examples to the flock, and to exercise their ministry in reproving, rebuking and exhorting as need may require, and as their minds are directed by the Spirit. All the churches of Christ are to remember that one is their Lord, even Christ. All of them are to seek to know and abide by his will in all that they do. Each church is to see that she does all things according to the pattern, even as Moses was commanded to do regarding the building of the tabernacle. This, we have no doubt, all the churches in Georgia desire to do. Each and every church is to receive her commandments from the Lord, and not from each other. One brother has no right to command another, and so one church has no such right over another church. But it seems to us true that as one brother has a right to exhort, reprove, rebuke, advise and counsel another, so also one church has a right to do the same things toward another church. If letters of encouragement, fellowship and peace may pass from one church to another, so also may

letters of advice, counsel, rebuke, admonition and exhortation pass from one church to another if it be thought that need requires. In all this there is no thought of lordship or of dictation, and care, of course, should be exercised that such a spirit as this should be entirely excluded from all such communications. If there be brotherly love in exercise, and the glory of the Lord be the one object, there will be no danger of dictatorial words, nor of the spirit of lordship appearing in any such communications. This will be as true of churches as of individual brethren. It is impossible for us to see how there can be dictation, or an attempt to rule over brethren or churches, when the desire is simply to warn, reprove, rebuke with all long-suffering and gentleness, and it seems sure to us that that brother or that church which would resent or despise such words of warning or exhortation would be actuated by a heady, high-minded spirit, and not by the spirit of meekness and gentleness. If it be the supreme desire to walk as Christ has commanded, either as individuals or as churches, it seems sure to us that we shall all welcome advice, or counsel, or warning, because we all must realize how easy it is to err from the right way, and such advice or warning will, at least, demand that we look well to our ways to see whether it be so that we are out of the road. It is sure that as regards such matters as pertain to the affairs of churches in any given section or place, each church is fully authorized by her sovereign Lord to act for herself, and it is sure that no church that realizes her subjection to Christ will want to interfere with another church in these things. Such things as calling a pastor, receiving or excluding members, the times of meetings, the frequency of administering the supper, whether she belong to some association or y meeting, or not, together with many other things, must certainly be left to each church to decide for herself in the fear of God, and even if the action of such church may seem to others unwise, or in the case of excluding members, even unjust, still there is nothing for other churches but to be still in the matter. We must believe that the blessed Lord has fulfilled his promise to be with them, even as we hope that he has been with us, and that his Spirit has directed them, even as we hope that it has directed us. No doubt in some cases churches have been actuated by a fleshly spirit, both in receiving and excluding members, and in the conduct of all other business as well, but all this is between such churches and their Lawgiver and King. She must be left to his judgment, and he has promised to judge his people. No man can rule over another man's spirit, and so also no church can rule over the spirit of another church. What we have said before this last paragraph does not at all differ from what we have here said. While churches are, in the transaction of business, independent of each other, and must be, according to the order of the New Testament, yet, after all, there is a mutual spirit of love, kindness and helpfulness that ought always to be found among all churches of like precious faith. This will not at all interfere with the right of each church to act for herself under God in the matter of which we have just spoken, but it must not be regarded as the right of any church, because of her independence of other churches in these things just named, to depart from the faith or practice of the New Testament. There are things which churches may do or suffer for which there ought not to be

a withdrawing of correspondence or of fellowship, but, rather, long forbearance should be shown. The seven churches in Asia, addressed in the beginning of Revelation, were none of them disfellowshipped by the writer, and neither were they told to depart from each other. In five of them grievous errors, either of faith or practice, were found, and they were reproved and rebuked and warned lest God should remove the candlestick from its place; that is, they should cease to be churches of Christ, owned by him and blessed by him. Paul found in almost all the churches to which his epistles are addressed, matters that were grievous, and which he was bound to condemn, yet he still called them brethren, and owned them as churches of Christ. This all shows that, in many things at least, there ought to be patience long continued before there should be a withdrawal of fellowship. Still there are things which cannot and ought not to be fellowshipped by other churches when any one church has gone into them. Church independence does not mean, therefore, that a church may hold to all manner of false doctrine, or practice all manner of disobedience to Christ, and take shelter against the warnings and protests of other churches by saying, I am independent of you. This would be indeed to turn the very grace of God into lasciviousness. This in itself would be a distinct act of disobedience to the Lord, whether the thing for which she was called in question ought in itself to lead to the withdrawal of fellowship by other churches or not. A church disregarding the protests of other churches against some practice which she may have adopted, and against which she may see no testimony in the Scriptures, but which yet has not been the common practice in the churches, and for which there is no explicit command or example in the New Testament, commits sin against God while she pays no regard to the feelings of her sister churches, if she has not indeed sinned against him at the first by adopting the practice which others object to. In this sense of the word churches are not independent of other churches, but all are, and ought to feel themselves to be, mutually dependent upon each other. A church ought not to be willing to pursue a practice which is not directly commanded in the word, although to her it may seem in harmony with the general teachings of the word, if by so doing she is distressing the tender consciences of other churches and bringing about confusion and division between herself and other churches, and, on the other hand, the other churches ought to be very careful not to make this one church an offender for a trifle. It has seemed to us that the teaching of inspiration through Paul concerning the observance of days, such as Sabbaths and other times, ought to apply to many things beside this one question of observing or not observing days, of which he writes. (See Rom. xiv. 5, 6.) He himself taught that the day, in itself considered, was no more than any other day, and that his brethren were not in bondage to regard the day at all. But still some did regard the day, while some did not, and there seems to have been a disposition to quarrel over this difference. Now this Paul forbid, and in so doing he did not at all yield the truth that no one is under obligation in the churches to observe or regard one day more than another, but he did exhort each and all upon both sides to bear with the other, and he states that both he that regards the day, and he who does not, each of them have the glory of God

in view, and each is actuated by a desire to serve the Lord. "He that regardeth the day, regardeth it to the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it." Because of this, each ought to have patience with the other and hold each other in fellowship. Let the truth be stated clearly, even as Paul presented it, but let there be no dissension or strife among them, and certainly there ought not to be anger or hatred because of these differing judgments in the church. We think that not only as regards days and meats and drinks ought this rule to be observed, but also many other things would come under it in the daily life of the churches; but in anything that affects the doctrine of grace, or the doctrine which God has revealed concerning himself, or concerning the salvation of sinners, there can be allowed no departure, because to do so would be to deny the Father and the Son. Also as regards the order of the churches, and the right and duty of each church to attend to her own affairs for and by herself, so long as she walks in obedience to the teaching of the inspired apostles there can be allowed no question. If any church should deny any attribute belonging to our God, or deny his predestination, his foreknowledge, his providential ruling over all the affairs of men, election, personal and eternal, effectual atonement and calling and the final preservation of all the elect to final glory, and the future resurrection of the dead, and the final glory of the saved, or if she should fall in line with the ponderous organizations of the day, having some one man as an earthly head, or some body of men who should be regarded as the court of final arbitration in all the churches, such as Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, Lutherans, German Reformed, and preeminently the Romish hierarchy have, then that church has so departed from the faith and order of the gospel that she would cease to be a church according to the New Testament pattern, and nothing could remain to be done by orderly churches save to withdraw from that body according to the direction of the apostles. But let all be careful to see before taking such a step that it is demanded by the inspired word of God.

Thus we have presented these general reflections concerning the inquiry of our dear sister. We hope that we have not darkened counsel in what we have written. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

EPHESIANS IV. 8.

ELDER BEEBE:—Please give your views on Eph. iv. 8: "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." Who were the captives? Your reply will oblige an inquirer after truth,

HANNAH MILLER.

PENN YAN, N. Y., Dec. 29, 1864.

The apostle evidently referred to the prophetic declaration in Psalms lxviii. 18, in which the faith of the inspired psalmist anticipated the glorious triumph of our Lord Jesus Christ over sin, death and hell, in the perfect and complete redemption of his people. The Spirit of Christ, which was in the holy prophets, not only signified the sufferings which he should endure, but also the glory that should follow. They not only predicted that he should be put to death in the flesh, but also that he should be quickened by the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory. Bearing the weight of all the iniquities of his people, which it pleased the Father to lay upon

him, he sank down into the embrace of death and the grave, being delivered up for the transgression of his people, but he was raised again from the dead for their justification, and having finished transgression and made an end of sin, it was not possible that he should be longer holden by the pains of death, for he had power as well to take his life as he had to lay it down, for this command, or authority, he received of the Father. The mighty work of redemption which devolved upon him, as the mediatorial Head of his church, is frequently set forth as a conflict and victory. As a mighty warrior he comes forth from his chambers, rejoicing like a strong man to run a race. His way was obstructed by the sins of all his members, which like towering mountains reached up to heaven, calling aloud for retributive vengeance. The holy law of God gave irresistible potency to sin, and demanded that "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," and the eternal, immutable and inflexible justice of God forbid that the sinner should escape his dreadful doom until every jot and tittle of the law should be fulfilled. In entering the field of conflict laden with all the crushing weight of the sins of all his people, he is seen traveling in the greatness of his strength, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save. The day of vengeance was in his heart, for the year of his redeemed had come, and therefore was red in his apparel, and all his garments stained like him that treadeth in the winefat. The sublime majesty of our conquering Hero, in the opening of the campaign, is strikingly portrayed in the prayer of Habakkuk, iii.: "God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand: and there was the hiding of his power. Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet. He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations: the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways are everlasting." His "bow was made quite naked, according to the oaths of the tribes, even thy word. Selah. Thou didst cleave the earth with rivers. The mountains saw thee, and they trembled: the overflowing of the water passed by: the deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high. The sun and moon stood still in their habitations: at the light of thine arrows they went, and at the shining of thy glittering spear. Thou didst march through the land in indignation, thou didst thrash the heathen in anger. Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed; thou woundedst the head out of the house of the wicked, by discovering the foundation unto the neck. Selah." "Thou didst walk through the sea with thy horses, through the heap of great waters. When I heard, my belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice: rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself." The powers of earth and hell were marshaled for the conflict. Hell is enlarged, she stirreth up her dead, and every opposing power is put in battle array, but still the unfaltering Conqueror rides forth in majesty, with his sword upon his thigh, and his arrows go forth as lightning, and the Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south. The terrible conflict rages, the sword of Jehovah gleams in the heavens, it awakes against the man who is the fellow of the God of hosts. Deep waters gather, they come into his

soul, and all their billows pass over him. The dreadful hour draws nigh. "Father, save me from this hour!" Yet for this hour came he forth into the world. The cup is presented to his lips. But O his soul recoils, his agonizing sweat, like drops of blood, falls upon the ground. He prays, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass!" Could that have been, then the great work of salvation must have failed. But hear his words of submission, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief." Death in its most terrible form enters the field, the bloody cross is reared, the fearful cloud darkens in wrath, the pains of hell take hold on him. Death strikes, the heavens darken, the sun, pale and dim, ceases to shine, the presence of the Father is withdrawn, and the gloomy darkness of death involves the quaking earth. The expiring victim writhes in the dreadful struggle. How goes the battle now? Death seems to triumph. Christ as a captive is laid in the chains of captivity, is laid a prisoner in the grave, the pillars of the heavens tremble, the rocks are rent, the graves are opened and the startled dead awake. But is all lost? We verily thought this victim was he that should have redeemed Israel, but now alas, the deep waters of death have gone over his soul. He is baptized (not sprinkled) into death. But, "Rejoice not again over me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise." "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." The triumph of death is short, the victory of the grave is but for a moment; for your victim shall swallow up death in everlasting victory. The resurrection morning dawns, and now, O death, where is thy sting, and, grave, where is thy victory? Death, that had never been despoiled of a victim before, the grave which in all preceding ages guarded well its charge, is now spoiled. Death yields up the mighty dead. The grave, though guarded and secure as men could make it, is spoiled, for it was in this, the Idumean road, the mighty Savior was to travel in the greatness of his strength. It was thus through death he was to destroy death and him that had the power of death. It was thus it behooved him to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Now having abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, as our God, he has gone up with a shout, and with a sound of a trumpet. "Whom the heavens must receive until the restitution of all things spoken by the prophets since the world began." He hath ascended up on high. For, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."—Acts v. 31. "According to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."—Eph. i. 19–23. Thus when he ascended up on high as the divinely recognized head over all things to his church, all spiritual gifts were included in him as God's unspeakable gift to the church. "Now that he as-

cended, what is it that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things." And of the gifts which were given, and which he has as the head of the church received, the apostle says, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." And he also informs us what he gave them for: "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

We have briefly referred to the conflict in which our Lord was engaged, and to his ultimate triumph over his captors, but as sister Miller particularly inquires, Who were the captives? we will offer a few thoughts in reply to that particular inquiry. As the idea of captivity necessarily implies captives taken and held as trophies, we are here to understand a previous and subsequent captivation. Of the previous captivity mentioned in our text, we understand that in which sin, death and hell had captivated and held in chains of darkness all the chosen people of God, for whose deliverance God sent forth his only begotten Son. In their legal standing we are told that they were carnal, sold under sin. God's chosen people, whom Christ came to redeem, were called captives, and were in a state of captivity, and lawful captives, too, for having been captivated by sin, death reigned over them, and they were all their lifetime subject to bondage. But Christ was anointed to proclaim liberty to captives, and to open the prison door to them that were bound. But "shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive be delivered? But thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered."—Isaiah xlix. 24, 25. The legality of our bondage was settled by the strength of the law, which said, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," thus consigning us as sinners to the dominion of death, and death reigned over us, and in bondage also to sin, sin having dominion over us, and sin reigning over us unto death. Such was our captivity to sin and death, confirmed also by the law of God, that we could not possibly be delivered from our captivity until the utmost demands of the law were canceled, and our captors taken captive and led into captivity. By the subsequent captivity, we allude to the personal captivity of our Redeemer. He was made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, and, as we have shown, he, in bearing our sins, was numbered with the transgressors, led as a lamb to the slaughter, consigned to the dominion of death, and imprisoned in the grave until his triumphant resurrection, in which we are in our text and context told that he led captivity captive; that is, he captured the very powers that had captivated his people, and had held him as their Surety in captivity until the time of his resurrection. "Having spoiled principalities and powers [the principalities of sin and death, both of which had held regal dominion], he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it."—Col. ii. 15. The mighty principalities and powers which had reigned unrivaled from the entrance of sin into our world were conquered and led into captivity by the great Captain of our salvation, who said to John, "I am he that liveth, and

was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Completely subjugated and put under him, neither hell nor death can possibly extend their power beyond the limits he has fixed for them. He has destroyed death, and him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. The former captivity of his people is now a captive to our conquering King, sin is vanquished, hell is subdued, Satan is held in a mighty chain, and his works are destroyed.

"Deep in the shades of gloomy death
The mighty captive prisoner lay;
The almighty captive left the tomb,
And rose to everlasting day.

See how the Conqueror mounts aloft,
And to his Father flies;
With scars of honor in his flesh,
And triumph in his eyes."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 1, 1865.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. M. Fenton, at the home of the bride's brother-in-law, in Clinton, N. J., Nov. 15th, 1911, Albert H. Hogeland, of Deerfield, Montana, and Miss Edna R. Hogeland, of Clinton, N. J.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

A Friend, N. Y., $3.00; John F. Oliver, Va., $1.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder L. B. Hanover, son of John and Sarah Hanover, was born October 2nd, 1829, and died Nov. 9th, 1911, in the 83rd year of his age. He was the eleventh child of a family of twelve children, only one beside himself having passed the threescore milestone of life. He was married to Mary Clark, Jan. 20th, 1848, which union was blessed with six children, only two of whom are now living: Elder J. C. Hanover and Bettie E. Hover. June 29th, 1865, he was bereft of his faithful and beloved wife. He was married to Elizabeth Perfect Ashbrook, April 24th, 1866. To them were born two children: Frank, of Fostoria, Ohio, and Nannie E. Neilson, of Center Village, Ohio. This patient and lovable wife was taken from him July 21st, 1897, which was a hard stroke to him, and left him lonely indeed in his old age and affliction, which he could not help lamenting, but felt and expressed the Lord's goodness and mercy in blessing him with two such good and precious wives. In the summer of 1854 he was thrown from a buggy in a runaway, his head striking a tree, fracturing his skull. He was picked up for dead. That accident ever after rendered him incapable of hard manual labor. He was born, raised and spent about all his life in Harlem township, Delaware Co., Ohio, and was held in the highest confidence and esteem, having filled seven different offices at one time, and was Justice of the Peace twenty-two successive years. His advice and counsel were often sought, and proved to be good. He was always generous, ever looking after the welfare of others. He had married over three hundred couples. The second couple he married was Robert and Salina Orndorf, and the last couple was their granddaughter and husband, which made the third successive generation having married their son Howard and wife. He had attended two golden weddings. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Predestinarian Baptist Church in the early sixties, and soon afterward was ordained to the work of the ministry, which act had been sacredly sealed by divine approbation, by giving him a mind to study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. He had a wonderful memory, often repeating whole chapters and hymns from memory; but above all he was blessed with the Spirit of Jesus, opening his understanding of the Scriptures and revealing unto him the beauties of his kingdom, strengthening the powers of faith and wonderful liberties of the gospel. How many aching hearts he has soothed in funeral discourses by smoothing away the terrors of death and beautifully portraying it as only a door ushering us into a bright world of joy and bliss, drawing our minds in reverence to the sacred death on the cross, where Jesus drank the bitter dregs to make death easy to us, to remove

its sting and put instead faith, assurance and a joyful realization of his drawing us to him in his everlasting home on high. How comfortingly he would talk of the resurrection and the blessed hope that rests upon it. Now after an unrelenting illness extending back over twenty-one years he has peacefully fallen asleep in Jesus, which touches our hearts with sadness, though not unexpected, for many times he had been very near death's door, suffering the agonies of death over and over, only too anxious that each time might be the last and he be released from his great bondage. The dear father, brother and friend is now at rest in untold felicity. The dear ones who remain and who are blessed to have a hope in Jesus are waiting. May the comfort and consolation of the Holy Spirit abide upon them. He leaves to mourn their loss four children, one stepdaughter, seventeen grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, the church and a host of friends.

The funeral service was conducted by Elder C. J. Carmichael. The body was tenderly borne to its last resting-place by his six nephews, there to await the resurrection morn, when it shall come forth clothed in immortality.

Written by request of the dear children.

J. M. RUFFNER.

Mrs. Catherine F. VerBryck died July 12th, 1911, in Philadelphia, Pa., aged about 67 years. She was baptized May 19th, 1901, by the writer, in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Church of New York city.

ALSO,

Mrs. Martha A. Giraud died August 20th, 1911, at the home of her daughter, in Brooklyn, N. Y., aged 68 years and 11 months. She was baptized June 5th, 1870, by Elder Thorpe, in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Church of New York city.

ALSO,

Mrs. Hannah E. Hooton died October 20th, 1911, in New York city, aged 78 years, 10 months and 10 days. She was baptized June 15th, 1863, by Elder Goble, in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Church of New York city.

ALSO,

Miss Anna Huestis was born in Ewingsville, N. Y., March 22nd, 1839, and died October 29th, 1911, in Winsted, Conn., aged about 73 years. She was baptized August 11th, 1861, by Elder Goble, in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Church of New York city.

The above named four sisters were members of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in New York city at the time of their decease, and their lives were blessed to the comfort, peace and prosperity of the church. Each one possessed a gift of usefulness especially profitable and to the edifying of the body of Christ in love. Several years ago sister VerBryck was stricken with a form of creeping paralysis, but not until the disease had advanced to the extent of preventing her walking was her place at meeting ever vacant; then she declined rapidly and became almost helpless in body and the power of speech. Mercifully her hearing, sight and mind were preserved to the last few hours, so that she could enjoy the sound and meaning of the voice and utterance of those she loved for Jesus' sake, and could read her Bible and hymn-book almost to the last. The joy of her life was in the love of her brethren, and in mutual faith we were comforted together. She died at the home of her sister in Philadelphia, where she had recently been removed. Elder B. F. Coulter conducted the service at the house, and the writer conducted the last service at Cypress Hills Cemetery, Brooklyn, where interment was made.

Sister Giraud's last illness was due, no doubt, to the effects of the extreme heat in July. From this prostration she never rallied, but gradually weakened and wore out. The testimony of all who knew her during the more than forty-one years of her life in the church is that in her life was always manifest the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. Her diligence in not forsaking the assembling of the saints, in following after peace, in esteeming others better than herself, in studying to shew herself approved unto God, in every way, she was a doer of the work of "pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father." One son, one daughter and three sisters survive her. At her late home services were conducted by the writer. Interment in Evergreen Cemetery, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Sister Hooton was well and widely known throughout the eastern association of churches. The forty-five years of her membership was activity in well doing. Until she broke up housekeeping a few years ago her house was an Old School Baptist home. All who loved the truth found a cordial welcome there. She was a woman of unusually good judgment in things pertaining to the order of the church, a safe counsellor, loving, faithful and true, a mother in Israel indeed. Several years ago her strength began to fail, and she realized the necessity of discontinuing the cares of housekeeping. She disposed of her home in Brooklyn and took up residence with brother and sister Risler, with whom she continued to the end. It was a mutually happy association; mother and children could not have been more devoted to each other, and the remainder of her days were passed in the comfort of all a son and daughter could minister. The peace and prosperity of Jerusalem she preferred above her chief joy, and all who knew her will agree that nothing can be written to even slightly express the blessing her life had been to her brethren, and not to them only, but all with whom she came in contact will say the world was blessed by her life in it. The writer conducted the services at her late home. Interment at Cypress Hills Cemetery.

Sister Huestis was of an humble spirit, retiring and self-depreciating. Circumstances over which she had no control prevented her from frequent attendance at our meeting, but when such opportunity was presented she delighted in embracing it. She was sound in faith and established in the doctrine of God our Savior, and it was a comfort to hear her talk of the goodness and mercy of God in his dealings with her. Separation from her sister (recently deceased) seemed to have taken out of her life the joy of living, and she quickly declined in health. Elder H. C. Ker conducted the funeral service at Middletown, N. Y.; interment at New Vernon, N. Y.

The calling away of these four members is a grievous loss to our church. We cannot say we are reconciled to the will of God in this bereavement, but remembering the goodness of God in blessing us with these gifts, we desire to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." May the Father of mercies and God of all comfort reconcile us unto his will in all things.

JOHN McCONNELL.

Franklin M. Moore died at the residence of his son-in-law, Wm. Humphrey, near Bluemont, Loudoun Co., Va., October 30th, 1911, aged about 87 years. Another of the Lord's aged pilgrims gathered home to his final rest. I believe he was the last of a family of noble men and women, worthy and prosperous citizens of the communities in which their lives were spent. Brother Moore's death was very sudden, strikingly similar to that of his wife, sister Moore, about four years ago, which came without warning. For a number of years he had felt the infirmities of age, and occasionally the effects of a weak heart, though the doctors discovered no organic trouble with that organ. The morning he died he had risen and dressed himself. His daughter came into his room and he complained of feeling badly. She noticed a change in him and immediately telephoned to his doctor, but in a very few moments he breathed his last, quietly, peacefully and without a struggle.

Brother Moore was a prosperous farmer, and as a reward of diligence in business and persevering industry accumulated a comfortable property. He and his wife reared one son and two daughters, one daughter, the eldest child, surviving them, the others dying before middle life. He had made his home with his eldest daughter, Mrs. Rose Humphrey, for a number of years, and she has the satisfaction and comfort of knowing that her dear father had the most devoted care and attention in his old age and declining years that was possible for her and her family to give. Brother Moore was baptized in the fellowship of Ebenezer Church, Loudoun County, in 1870, by Elder Joseph L. Purington. For thirty-six years I can gladly testify to the consistent walk of brother Moore, and to his faithful, loving discharge of the duties devolving upon him as a devoted follower of the meek and lowly Jesus. He had a loving and tender heart, easily touched by the sorrows of those he loved. Brethren who have met him will remember his fine gift in singing, the music of his voice and his keen enjoyment of its exercise in singing the songs of Zion. He possessed a generous spirit, and was liberal with his means in meeting any and every call of the church or of those in need. It is unnecessary to say he was dearly loved and highly esteemed by his brethren and by all who knew him well. He leaves one daughter and ten grandchildren of his own immediate family, with many kindred and his brethren, a little band of Ebenezer Church, who will especially grieve for him and mourn their loss.

May the great Comforter reveal his hand in all the afflictions of his people. J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va.

Harry M. Hayes, of 156 Highland Ave., Middletown, N. Y., was instantly killed October 31st, 1911, when an automobile in which he was riding left the road and went down an embankment forty-five feet, his head striking a stone. Mr. Hayes had been on a hunting trip and was returning home at night, in company with Charles H. Smith, owner and driver of the automobile, and Edward Gunther, when the accident occurred. His death shocked the entire city and community, and cast a gloom that will not be rallied from soon. There is not a better known nor more highly esteemed man in the county than was Mr. Hayes; genial, kind and generous, a friend to every one was Mr. Hayes. He was born August 13th, 1863, at Bloomfield, N. J. His parents were Uzal T. Hayes and Caroline A. Morris. Mr. Hayes is mourned by his widow, who was Lillian J. Beebe, daughter of Benton L. and Josephine E. Beebe, and one son, Uzal T. Hayes, beside the following brother and sisters: T. Edward Hayes, Mrs. H. C. McBrair and Mrs. Charles Adams, all of Middletown.

The funeral was one of the largest ever held in this city; the services were held in the Westminster meetinghouse, conducted by Stanard D. Butler, pastor of the Universalist denomination in this city, assisted by Mr. Wight, pastor of the Westminster congregation. The immense congregation and floral tributes fully demonstrated the esteem in which he was held. The interment was in Hillside Cemetery, this city. Many Old School Baptists have been entertained at his home and will remember him as a most hospitable host.

We feel that in the death of Mr. Hayes we have lost one of our best friends, and feel the loss keenly. May grace and reconciliation be ministered to the widow and son, together with each member of the family.

K.

Jane Esther McAlpine, daughter of John and Esther Campbell, was born in Ontario, Canada, May 12th, 1844, where she spent her youthful days amid the scenes of that beautiful country. Feb. 8th, 1865, she was married to D. D. McAlpine, who also was reared in an adjoining district. To this union were born five children, three of whom died in infancy. This was the beginning of sorrow with them. Possibly during these afflictions her mind became exercised about eternal things, for it was observed that she gave more attention to spiritual things than to the sordid things of earth. She seemed to take much interest in the public worship of God, and delighted to entertain God's people. In 1865 the family moved to Kalamazoo. There she felt the loss of church privileges, and as there was no organization of the people she loved, and being deprived of the ministry of those who had spoken words of comfort to her in her affliction, she went to Cement City and asked for a home with a little band of Primitive Baptists there, again taking up the public walk of a child of God in the order of his house. Her life was a busy one, but amid all she did not fail to minister to the wants of the poor and needy, feeling, no doubt, that in ministering to them she could imitate the life of her Savior. Nearly six years ago a disease of an aggravating nature, which failed to yield to the most vigorous and energetic treatment, seized her, terminating a useful and beautiful life. Her age was 67 years, 5 months and 12 days. Beside her husband and two children she leaves four grandchildren to mourn their loss.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder W. L. Lines, of Indiana, at the home of her daughter. Interment in the cemetery in Kalamazoo.

W. L. LINES.

Isaac Thurston was born April 24th, 1833, in Franklin County, Ind., and died at his home southwest of this city, October 8th, 1911, aged 78 years, 5 months and 14 days. He was married April 15th, 1868, to Rebecca Riner, of Elmwood, Ill., who survives him. To that union four sons were born: John L., of this county, Isaac P., of Los Angeles, Cal., Francis E. and Albert R., of Knobnoster, Mo. In early life that terrible sinsickness and subsequent hunger for righteousness, so characteristic of the children of grace, transformed him. Feeling the duty of publicly professing Him who loved him so freely and without cause, and in obedience to the precious hope received of being called by his grace, he went to his own people of like precious faith and found a home. He was baptized in the Old School Baptist Church at Spoon River Association in 1862, by Elder Chenowith. It can be said of him that he fought a good fight and kept the faith. We believe the crown of righteousness that the apostle saw is his in blessed exchange for the cross so bravely borne. In 1880 he moved to Pickering, Mo., and from there to this place six years ago. He became a member of Harmony Church by letter. Humility, kindness, forbearance and a godly conversation marked his stay with us here. He loved the service of God, and rejoiced in the tenets of the church of his choice in life and death. We will see his familiar form no more among us, but though dead he will yet speak. To her who is left to go the rest of life alone we would say, Weep not, for the parting will not be long. To the sorrowing sons, Look to the Father above for grace and guidance; as you loved him, live to his honor until death claims you. So we will brush away our tears in hope.

Funeral services were held from the home Wednesday, conducted by his pastor, Elder B. L. Nay, of Mediapolis, who used for a text the dying words of the subject of this sketch: "The end is very near, but the last change will be glorious." The remains were then borne to the beautiful cemetery at Columbus City and tenderly laid away until God bids it rise immortal and fair.

B. L. N.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 79. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1911. NO. 24.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MATTHEW XVI. 6.

"THEN Jesus said unto them, Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees."

I desire to present some thoughts on the above words, and also the subject that seems to me to be presented in these words, for the consideration of the editors and readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The connection shows that Jesus meant the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees when he said "leaven." The twelfth verse reads thus: "Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." These two sects of the Jews are nearly always spoken against when mention is made of them. They were very numerous, it seems, when Christ began his ministry, and each faction made great pretense of keeping the law. The Pharisees and Sadducees were rejected when they came to John the Baptist to be baptized. I shall refer to this later. Just how they first got into the church, I do not know. There evidently was some deception used, or else some carelessness on the part of some of those who received them, and no doubt both. They evidently used deception; especially is this true of the Pharisaical teachers, after gaining admittance. But no church would have allowed those teachers admittance into the church if they had heeded the words of Christ in the text.

I will now notice some things said regarding the Pharisees after they got into the church. Acts xv. 1, reads thus: "And certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." This referred to the Gentiles; that is, these Pharisees said it was needful that the Gentiles be circumcised, and keep the law of Moses, or they could not be saved. No wonder that Christ said, "Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." Here these Pharisees were teaching a doctrine that would have made all the Gentiles depend upon the law for their salvation. Notice how the Pharisees worded their requirements: But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees, which believed, saying that it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. The Jews would do

the circumcising and the commanding. The Gentiles would have to keep the law, their salvation depending upon being circumcised and keeping the law according to the Pharisees. Those Pharisees evidently were believers in Christ, yet trusted in the law. Notice these words: "But there arose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees, which believed." Evidently the church did not at that early date receive unbelieving Pharisees into their number. Besides it hardly seems reasonable that unbelieving Pharisees would claim to be preaching Christ, and at the same time claim that Christ was a deceiver or an impostor. The fourth verse shows that the brethren who were sent by the church at Antioch were sent to the church at Jerusalem. This assembly evidently was regarded as the church when the Pharisees rose up, and it does seem the church would not recognize the Pharisees to the extent of allowing them time in discussing this matter, if they had not been members of the church. Evidently the church at Antioch had no thought of sending Paul and Barnabas and certain other of them up to Jerusalem about this question of circumcision, and at the same time expect the church to allow unbelieving Pharisees to take part in the council as to circumcision. The Pharisees did that. Of course they might have been from some other church, but anyway they were granted the privilege to speak in the council.

The sixth verse reads thus: "And the apostles and elders came together, for to consider this matter." Seventh: "And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe." Peter continued to state the real facts, and closed by saying, "But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they." Now here is presented two doctrines, one by the Pharisees, the other by Peter, Barnabas, Paul and James. One presented salvation by grace, the other by the deeds of the law. One is conditional upon keeping the law, the other is of the electing grace of God. Notice James' words: "And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things." James here sets forth the doctrine of election. Notice these words: "And all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things." The Pharisees' doctrine was contrary to these things, their doctrine only reached those who would be circumcised by them and then keep the law of Moses. James, after confirming what Peter had said, and then quoting from the prophet Amos, to prove that Peter was right, said, "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world. Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: but that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and

from things strangled, and from blood." The connection shows that James' suggestions were adopted, and letters were written by them after this manner, "The apostles, and elders, and brethren, send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch, and Syria, and Cilicia. Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment." Notice the words, "Certain which went out from us." These teachers did not go out from the unbelieving Jews, but "went out from us." It was these teachers who were troubling the brethren, "have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment." Evidently the brethren would not have written such a letter concerning unbelieving Jews. Those who had belonged to that church "went out from us" and began to preach that which we gave no such commandment, is the substance of this; that is, a Pharisee out and out. Some years after this Paul wrote thus: "As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh."—Gal. vi. 12, 13. O, what hypocrites, teaching the necessity of keeping the law, or else men could not be saved. Even if their so-called gospel were true, these Pharisaical teachers would all have been lost from the fact they were not keeping the law themselves. No wonder that Christ said, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees." No wonder that John the Baptist refused to baptize them. But, my brethren, evidently some one did baptize some of them; at least we see the leaven at work, and it is remarkable with what rapidity that teaching spread in the churches of Judea, and also in the churches of Galatia. To them Paul said, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ."—Gal. i. 6, 7. The Galatians were in the same sorrowful condition that those brethren were in when letters were sent to them, saying, "Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls." Notice Paul said to these Galatians, But there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. We see that Paul was still after the perverters of the gospel. The fact that these Pharisees had no real love for the welfare of the brethren is manifested in all their works. If they had the good of the brethren at heart they certainly would not still have persisted in keeping on after the decision of the apostles and elders and the church concerning this matter; but instead of stopping they evidently multiplied greatly in numbers and turned out as persecuting a people as ever the unbelieving Jews were. These things evidently were prophesied of by all the prophets, then by Christ, and last witnessed by the apostles. But, my dear brethren, nowhere were they justified for their wicked acts. Evidently the words of Christ in my text were as binding upon the apostles until death as they were when first uttered by him, and evidently they were much better understood when being persecuted by their own

brethren, who became turned from the true gospel by the Pharisees; that is, evidently the disciples that heard Christ say, "Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees," realized the great need of taking heed, after they suffered persecution, as they never did before. Paul evidently took heed from the first to the last, and said of himself, "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."—1 Cor. xv. 10. The connection shows that he meant the apostles when he said, "they all;" that is, Paul labored more than all the apostles, and here, as everywhere, he attributes all to the grace of God. He did not labor in his own strength, but he felt his dependence upon the grace of God. He was also careful to "take heed, and beware;" in so doing he manifested that the grace of God bestowed upon him was not in vain.

Now let our minds go back to some of Peter's works that were condemned by Paul, Gal. ii. 14: he says, "When I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" Here we see Paul is showing that Peter is by his actions compelling the Gentiles to live as do the Jews. That is exactly what the Pharisees were trying to do, they were trying to compel the Gentiles to live as did the Jews, or else they would not fellowship them as brethren. Yet notice Paul says to Peter, "If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" This placed Peter in a very inconsistent position. O how much better it would be if we all were as faithful as Paul was. I venture that Peter regarded Paul as his friend from that day on as he never had before. God had taught him on the housetop that what He had cleansed, not to call it common. Peter, in rehearsing this incident to Cornelius, said, "But God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean." Peter had eaten with the Gentiles at Antioch, but when certain came from James he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision, and the other Jews dissembled likewise, insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. Notice the words, "Certain came from James," twelfth verse. Also notice the words, "But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed."—Acts xv. 5. Evidently this is the same class of Pharisees, only now they are getting more numerous and also more aggressive. Still later than this we read of them in Acts xxi. 20, thus: "And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord; and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law." These are the words of James and the elders to Paul. This and connections show that the believing Jews who were zealous of the law were also persecutors of any one that was even supposed to be guilty of opposing the keeping of the law of Moses. The fact was that Paul never did oppose the Jews keeping the law, but did oppose the doctrine that it was necessary in order to salvation. That was the doctrine of the Pharisees, which Paul was so earnestly contending against. Anything

that made our eternal salvation conditional upon anything to be done by man Paul opposed. He said to the Galatians, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."—Gal. vi. 15, 16. This is the summing up of this wonderful letter of Paul. He showed up Phariseeism from every conceivable point, it seems. He showed that if their salvation depended upon keeping the law, then Christ had died in vain. No Pharisee could consistently claim that salvation was by grace. They were not walking according to the rule that in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision. Circumcision counted so much with them that they said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses ye cannot be saved; and yet, as before stated, Paul showed that these teachers themselves did not keep the law. Hence according to their own doctrine no one would be saved unless others did better than they themselves were doing. James in his epistle shows up the true condition of his brethren at that time. These evidently were those who had been led off by the Pharisees. James said to them, "Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you." The unbelieving Jews evidently were never more cruel one toward another than these brethren were that James here and elsewhere shows up, yet all zealous of the law, and at the same time, no doubt, claimed to believe in salvation by grace. Let us remember the words of our text: "Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." We see that Phariseeism was in full sway in the churches composed of Jews; they already had condemned and killed the just: "Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and have been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter." O how sad to thus do, and yet remember they were taught by the Pharisees that their salvation depended upon keeping the law. James said, "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? But ye have despised the poor." After saying that the beloved brethren had despised the poor, James continues, "Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?" Notice these words, "By the which ye are called." James here is showing these brethren how the world is treating them. Then he shows them that in works they are no better than those of the world. He continues, "If ye fulfill the royal law, according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well." James here is calling their minds to one thing that these brethren in their zeal had lost sight of, and that was the royal law. There is not a law equal to the royal law; it comes from Christ our King; it is above all laws of men. These brethren would have done well if they had kept that, but instead of fulfilling the royal law, which is to love thy neighbor as thyself, they actually had condemned and killed the just. James continues, "But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of

all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law." O that we all, and especially myself, had the patience and charity here manifested by James toward his beloved brethren. With all their faults he still regards them as his beloved brethren, but in faithfulness tells them their true condition; that is what hurts. If we ourselves are carnally minded, and living as the world lives, we do not want to be told of it; we want to hear smooth things, and be let go undisturbed. Again, James says, "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shown no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment." Now after James had in faithfulness told his beloved brethren their true condition as far as their works were concerned, it would seem that any reasonable person would say, If there were nothing but their works to rely upon, that theirs was a hopeless case of reaching heaven and immortal glory. "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." My brethren, here is a great lesson for us all. Evidently all can see that these brethren were not praying the one for the other, they were not confessing their faults the one to the other. James says, Do this, that ye may be healed. Their trouble was that they did not want to pray the one for the other; they loved to war and fight and kill. Now we notice that James' desire was that his brethren might be healed. He could not heal them, all mankind combined could not heal them, the Lord God only could heal them. Their faith was not in God. Their works showed their faith was not in God. James said, "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." Chapter i. 5-7, reads thus: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord." This, my brethren, is James' idea about prayer. If we ourselves know these things in our experiences we have a sure refuge to flee to. Paul said, "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."—Eph. vi. 11. Also read James iv. 7, 8: "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded." Paul said in connection with the armor, "And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." No one could justly claim James was addressing brethren who had on the whole armor of God; in fact it looked as though they had left it all off, and were fighting as the nations of the world fight, when they trust to their great warships and mighty guns, going in their own strength. God's people should not fight that way. These things ought to be great warnings to us, not to trust in ourselves, but in God for everything. To put on the whole armor of God means, trust in him for everything. If we do that we then in faith will ask of him, instead of attempting to fight our battles in our own strength. Paul said to the Galatians, "And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer

persecution? then is the offense of the cross ceased." These Pharisaical teachers referred to in Galatians understood that part as well as Paul, hence they chose to preach the necessity of being circumcised and keeping the law, rather than suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. These teachers may never have claimed to be Pharisees, but they were preaching that doctrine, and that is what Christ said: "Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." One that could tell an experience of grace in the heart evidently could have more influence in bewitching the brethren than one who knew nothing experimentally. John xii. 42, 43, reads thus: "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." This shows what man will do, or rather what he will not do. The rulers would not confess their Lord, lest they should be put out of the synagogue, because they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God; they knew that these proud Pharisees would put them out of the synagogue if they confessed Jesus. Just so these teachers referred to in Galatians knew that to be popular with the Pharisees, and not to suffer persecution at their hands, they must preach the doctrine of the Pharisees. "As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ." Notice these words, "For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh." They did not practice what they preached. Jesus spake thus: "Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not."—Matt. xxiii. 1–3. Jesus continued to show the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees. This is what Paul did. He was showing the Galatians that these teachers were teaching false doctrine, and that they knew it was false. Paul said, Gal. iv. 17, "They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them." This shows that these teachers were wholly under the influence of the flesh, and cared not for these brethren, only to carry out their own selfish purpose. Galatians v. 7–9, read thus: "Ye did run well; who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Christ said, "Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." Paul evidently time and again had warned the brethren of both the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and yet we see the effect of the leaven of the Pharisees. "Ye did run well," said Paul, "who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the truth?" No doubt these teachers claimed to be laborers with God, but Paul says, "This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you." Again he said, "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." No wonder that Christ said, "Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." If either were true, Christ is dead in vain. Notice these words, "I do not frustrate the grace of God." Frustrate means, to bring to naught; to prevent

from attaining a purpose; to disappoint; to defeat; to baffle. No wonder Paul said, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth?" According to the doctrine the Galatians had received, the grace of God was frustrated. Christ died in vain, if righteousness came by the law. The Pharisees' doctrine was, that except ye be circumcised and keep the law, ye cannot be saved. Paul must have felt sad to find it necessary to thus talk to his beloved brethren who once rejoiced in the doctrine of salvation by grace, but now removed from Him that called them into the grace of Christ unto another gospel. Paul says to them, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." We see the position these brethren occupied; if they were right when they received Paul's preaching they are wrong now; there is no way of getting around that; they either were wrong at first, or else they were wrong afterwards. "Where then is the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me. Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" Paul was yet preaching the same gospel that he preached to them when they received it, but they rejected it. He wrote to the Philippians, saying, "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ." Paul had done his part in warning; the brethren had taken heed. They always obeyed in his presence, and also in his absence. (Phil. ii. 12.) The Galatians obeyed in his presence, but in his absence they were soon removed from Him who called them into the grace of Christ; they had failed to take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. The words of Jesus in our text are living words. O may we take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

JOSEPH FORD.

SENECA, Kansas.

NETHERWOOD FARM, N. J., Nov. 19, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I thought of you this morning, and was much disappointed in not being with you all at the meeting, but God's ways are not our ways, and I must not murmur or complain. Of late I seem to have temptations and crosses on every hand; I often fear that my desires are of the flesh, but it is indeed a comfort to believe that our God knows all things, and he knows whether I am one his chosen ones; but I live so far from the way a christian ought to live that I fear I am not one of his children. But,

"Though men and devils aim to kill,
They can't exceed the Father's will."

As thy days, so shall thy strength be. We are told that they who trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever. But do I trust in him as I ought to? I read many good letters in the SIGNS, and wish I could write so as to comfort some poor soul as I am comforted by their writings. God knows our ways, and we cannot hide them from him. Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." "Guide me,

O thou great Jehovah." Jesus is the only one who can guide us. O may I walk in his footprints, and live nearer to him.

I have written more than I intended, and hope you will pardon me. When it is well with you, pray for me. I received a letter from brother Fetter, and was comforted by it. If you think it worthy a place in the SIGNS you may publish it; it may be of comfort to others as well.

I will close now, with love to you and your family.

SARAH BLACKWELL.

RATON, New Mexico, Nov. 11, 1911.

MY DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—Yours of Nov. 5th came a few hours ago, and I will try in my poor way to answer it, as I know (from three letters without any answer) that you desire to hear from me again. I did get the pictures; they came when auntie was very ill, and they were laid by, not that I did not appreciate them, but I was too much worried, as I was at the time alone with her. Then when your next came, I could not lay my hands upon the pictures and was ashamed of my carelessness. Now I will say that I do always enjoy your letters, and letters from all my old friends. We are in our usual health, with nothing to complain of, only that the spiritual fire burns low, and often the question is, Are the Lord's mercies clean gone forever?

"Few moments of praise I enjoy,
And they are succeeded by pain;
If a minute in praising of God I employ,
I have hours again to complain."

I have been thinking of the Scripture, "The way of the transgressor is hard." Transgression does not mean that one is ignorant and in darkness, but that light shines upon the sight of duty, with the work of duty not performed. I look around me for something that I have done acceptably before God, in order to have a witness of my acceptance with him, and find it a puzzling question with me. I feel to say that some things I know. I know that once I had a good conscience before God, as to what was my duty to him and to his people. Jesus said, when he rejoiced in spirit, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." I feel that what I received was good in the sight of God. It was hidden from one that had a claim (a wise man) and was revealed unto another, who was foolish, weak and ignorant. Why should I, if a child, transgress, and feel the burden of transgression in the way? Christ is preached in a mystery. To the Greek it is foolishness, but to the called he is wisdom, the wisdom of God and the power of God. The wisdom and power of God do not teach us to transgress against God, as, for instance, to do evil that good might come. The world does evil, and God overrules it to his own honor and glory. But do I do evil that it may redound to his glory? This is a mystery indeed. Why do I transgress, and in the light do so many things not pleasing to God? Lord, decide the doubtful case. Christ was the Light to lighten the Gentiles. As Gentiles we were afar off, without hope and without God in the world, but in Christ we are made nigh by a good hope through grace. Grace brings nigh that which was afar off. While we were in sin we knew not God, and could not say, Christ is our righteousness, but when made nigh by grace we had hope, and faith was given that it might be hope, and not sight by which we walk. The lame walk, was one of the things reported

John from the Savior, and it is made own now by faith that the lame walk. aith heals, gives strength, and that rength prevails with God. Is not that vely hope, which God gives, simply aith which trusts God? Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. The hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies. The refuge of lies is swept away by the power of God in Christ. If Christ has not put away our sins and iniquity, which were our former refuge, we are yet in our prison-house, with the bars and chains about us, in bondage under sin and death. Christ has burst the bars of death by suffering death, and rose again in newness of life, bringing life and immortality to light through the gospel. The spirit of the gospel was in Christ, it was in darkness when he died, but when he arose it was brought into light. Is not this immortality? It is in the hope of immortality, and not in the hope of this mortal life, that we see as we are seen and know as we are known. Hope looks to the end, and now we are not miserable as we once were when without hope and without God in the world. God is our very present help in trouble. We are promised tribulation in this life, to work in us the patience of the Scriptures, that when tried we should come forth as gold. Gold was there in the rock, and trying it brought it out and separated it from the rock. Christ sits as a refiner and purifier of silver. The silver was there, but election and refining brought it out. Christ brings no dross into a sinner's hope; it is all silver. The price of atonement was in silver, and the dross was all that was left in the grave. "I was alive without the law once," said Paul, "but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." When sin revives we always die experimentally, but we are raised again by that lively hope which is in Christ. Then the trial of our faith is past, and the power of God's deliverance is made known. A hope is worth little to us if the power of God is not strong enough to deliver us from sin and its terrible penalty. Christ hath delivered, Christ doth deliver, and Christ will yet deliver. How can this be if an enemy is not striving to hold us as lawful captives in bondage? And how can this be if one of God's children can ever perish? If I could believe that one child could perish, I should feel that it would be me. It is said that he shall take one of a city and two of a family. A city may yet be preserved by one of God's dear children. Many blessings come to nations and cities and families because God's name is written there. On the other hand, is not Ichabod written over the doors of many a community in these days of seeming prosperity?

Faith is a stable rock. All things are built upon it, and even the church of God is rooted and grounded in the most holy faith of God. It is given by him and upheld by him. No other ground will ever save a sinner, nor give him comfort and consolation. This was the faith of the prophets and apostles. It was spoken unto the fathers, and continued unto the sons. The Heir of all things hath perfected it, and made it shine as a living stone before the world. Its builder and maker is God. It is the pearl of great price to one who is searching for it, and when he finds it he sells all that he has and purchases it, and he is left poor in everything else, save trusting in the power of God and the wisdom of God. Hope is the great anchor when tossed on the sea of trouble; with it one can walk on the waters of this world's stormy sea and ride in triumph above all its waves

and billows. Thanks be unto his name who gives such victory. Sin, death and hell are vanquished foes. With such faith what mountain cannot be moved and cast into the depths of the sea, with Pharaoh's host, horse, rider and all? The floods of adversity may gather, and the clouds of the ungodly may compass us about, but our God will scatter them, and turn their swords against themselves, as in the days of old. Goliath's sword was used to cut off his own head, and so the armies of the world will turn against each other in the days of Armageddon. Jonathan was David's friend, and even though in Saul's army, and knowing Saul's secrets, God turned the battle against Saul. The race was not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. One could then, and does now, chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight. When a man or an army is buoyant, it requires greater force to put them to flight than when doubting and fearing.

All send love. Affectionately your brother,

G. M. FETTER.

FALLS CITY, Texas, October, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—This morning finds me with a desire to write something for your consideration, yet I feel greatly my dependence upon the Lord and his sovereign grace. I fear to write, knowing there are so many good brethren and sisters whose communications in the SIGNS are of comfort to the saints of God, yet to forbear gives no comfort. It seems to me that for some time past I have noticed a spirit of coldness among the dear Old School Baptists, with a forsaking of the assembling of themselves together, and it pains my poor heart to experience such coldness, such a dissatisfied heart, such a roving disposition, such a dissatisfaction with my lot in life; I cannot be content to settle down and be satisfied with bread and raiment. I seem to lose sight of the words of Paul in 1 Tim. vi. 8: "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content." In many localities I find but a small gathering of the dear saints. Some it seems have bought land, and have to go and prove it; that is, speculate on it, and some have bought one thing and some another, and the poor servant of God has to speak to the few that are present. Many times when he arrives at the place of meeting he sees a few in different groups, talking over the topics of the day, and, many times, if the poor, bewildered servant of God gets to speak to them, and shake hands with them, he is compelled to go to them. Well do I remember when I was a boy, and would go with my father to the old Zion Church, all would be there early, both on Saturday and Sunday, so they could speak together and sing the songs of Zion, and on the arrival of the moderator, each one would meet him with a warm and loving handshake. But such manifestations of love seem now to be forgotten in many places. What is the matter? Has the love of many waxed cold? This deplorable condition among our people is heartrending. It is something that I confess I do not understand. I get so low-spirited that I cannot so much as lift up my head, but try to bow in humble submission to the God of all grace. O brethren, let us not forget the exhortation of Paul: Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhort one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching. The time is drawing near when the evening shadows draw nigh, and darkness and the shadow of

unbelief seem to prevail; this is a time when there is much hindrance; it seems that Israel is scattered and the love of many waxes cold. The prophecy of the apostle Paul seems to be fulfilled among many in our own day and in our own household: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine." We have seen the fruit of unsound doctrine made manifest in Israel, and from the floods of unsound doctrine, which is unwholesome also, the love of many has grown cold. O brethren, how hurtful this is. How unpleasant it is when we meet brethren and have a desire to converse upon the wonderful things of the love and work of the Lord, and to feel the words of David when he said, "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," and we find that love to one another has grown cold, and they are distant one to another. How can there be communion when love is cold? Sometimes I feel as though I cannot go again when I see so little love manifested, yet cannot be content to stay away, for, if I know my own heart, my love for the brethren is so great that I cannot be satisfied to remain away. Some churches have no regular meetings; they just seem to meet at odd times, when no worldly interest is at stake. Brethren, this ought not so to be. Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Are there many aged brethren and sisters who have traveled in the path for many years who cannot look back with pleasure as they recall to mind days when the dear saints would meet together often, and talk of the love of Jesus, and enjoy each other's company, and when the time would come for them to separate how painful the parting would be? But how is it now? Some still manifest great love for the brethren, but many have forsaken the assembling of themselves together. Dear brethren, one and all, I hope that each one will consider these things in love and fellowship, for fellowship is the love of God shed abroad in the heart. He that loveth is born of God. This is a precious chapter to me. The same apostle said, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." As love is of God, we know that he that loveth is born of God. In this the child of God is clearly manifested, because he loves his brethren, and the spiritual birth is the basis of this love. The love of God constraineth us, and by the love of God we are constrained to love our brother as ourself.

Now, brethren, I have not written this to condemn any one, but to stir up the pure minds by way of remembrance. The love of the doctrine of the church of God ought to be sufficient to call us to the meetings of the church, for the church is a band of believers in Jesus. The love of Jesus to his church is from everlasting, therefore there never was a time when Jesus did not love his bride. The members may get into a cold state toward each other, but the love which God has to his children is eternal and everlasting. Our God has said by the mouth of his holy prophet, I am God, and beside me there is no Savior, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. His counsel is his eternal purpose, and as our God is without change, and has not even the shadow of turning, nothing can change this eternal love which he has for his children. The undeniable evidence which the apostle Paul gave ought to comfort

each child. Speaking to the Ephesians he said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he had chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." The church of God is blessed with all spiritual blessings, and the church alone. The world is blessed with temporal blessings, but the church with spiritual blessings, and those blessings are in heavenly places. Since all this is true, how can any child of grace be satisfied away from the fold? They are to meet together to talk of the love which Jesus had for them, even when they were dead in trespasses and in sins, and in open rebellion against God's holy and righteous law, and while they trampled his great mercies and his love under their unhallowed feet, yet even while in this state they were embraced in the Father's love, and so Paul said, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he hath loved us, even when we were dead in sins." He did not wait for some good work to begin with us in order to commend us to his favor. In the connection of the same text we find these words also, According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. Not only did our God make a choice, but he predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, and all according to his purpose and grace. There never has been language used in stronger terms than the apostle has here used to bring out truth that should be to the entire satisfaction and comfort of the children of God. In the above, dear brethren, there is comfort; comfort that Jesus loved us even before the foundation of the world. The Lord said, With loving-kindness have I drawn thee, and he said that he will never forsake them nor leave them comfortless, yet in some cases the children forsake the assembling of themselves together.

Dear brethren, if these poorly written and scattering remarks should ever be placed where you can read them, will you remember one of the least of all who claim a hope through grace?

In the afflictions of the gospel, your brother,

J. B. BOWDEN.

[THE above is worthy of the serious consideration of all who love the courts of the Lord's house. No doubt many others lament the coldness of which our brother speaks. We know that it is so with ourself, yet we sometimes wonder whether the coldness which we think we see in others is not, after all, but coldness in our own heart. Being cold in heart, we may come to think that others are also cold. One who reels to and fro with drunkenness imagines that it is not himself, but all others who go reeling. Perhaps in the same way our own coldness makes us think all others cold. If it be so, it is a sorrowful thing for us. We do often feel it to be so indeed, and our most earnest prayer has been for life and warmth in our own heart. Yet it is sorrowful to witness the evidences of indifference among those who profess to be redeemed by grace. How much was involved in the admonition of the apostle to which our brother has referred: Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together. How solemn was his warning to his brethren. This admonition will take on added solemnity if we take notice that this is that which the apostle calls willful sinning, for which there remains a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour

the adversaries. It is this deliberate and continued forsaking of the assemblies of the house of God that constitutes willful sinning, according to the apostle. It is not then a trifling sin when we do not fulfill the command to meet together in worship. We join with our brother in deploring such a state of things when and wherever it exists among the churches of Christ. O that the Lord would appear in mercy and in judgment where this state of things exists and revive his work in the hearts and lives of his own dear heritage. O that all Israel would take heed to their wanderings, and come with repentance and confession before the Lord.—C.]

ROLAND PARK, Md., Nov. 7, 1911.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—The inclosed letter from sister Search to the Baltimore Church was read at our last meeting, and the brethren and sisters voted to send it to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication. We understand you are well acquainted with her, and no doubt will be as glad to hear from her as was the church. We feel this is very commendable in any brother or sister who is absent indefinitely from the church of their membership. Even though they have easy access to other meetings of the same faith and order, an occasional letter to the church will show their love for the cause and act as a stimulus upon other members who attend regularly.

Our little band in Baltimore has been blessed with five baptisms this year, three in June and two in October. This is also very encouraging to the older members, and truly as great a blessing to the individuals as to the church. "O how happy are they who their Savior obey." All who enjoy our meetings, love the brethren and believe the doctrine that we preach should follow their Lord in baptism.

Your brother, I hope,

ALVIS S. ROWE.

SPENCERVILLE, Md., Oct. 5, 1911.

TO THE EBENEZER CHURCH, BALTIMORE CITY—DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I am in receipt of a letter from brother A. S. Rowe (your church clerk), in which he tells me you would like to hear from me, as you feel an interest in my welfare. I have often thought I would write to you, as I have had no opportunity of being with you of late years, but I am such a poor, weak, unworthy vessel I have never dared attempt to write, but as you wish it I will try. It was forty-three years the twenty-fourth of last August since I was baptized, and I can truly say I feel just as weak and poor and helpless as I did that day, yet I love the cause just the same; the little hope that I had when Elder Purington led me into the water that day is with me still, and I am still trusting in the blood of the dear Jesus. I feel that I have many blessings, many more than I deserve. I wish I could tell you all of the many beautiful passages of Scripture which come to me when the cares of life oppress me and I feel ready to sink and give up. When I am so alone I feel that life is not worth the struggle. He gives me then his precious word, and makes me feel that underneath are his everlasting arms, and that through him I am strong, and I rejoice and praise him again and again. Dear brethren, I hope you do not feel that it is from lack of interest in the precious cause that I never come to meeting, for it would be my greatest pleasure in the world. For years I have suffered from extreme nervousness, and ever since I lost my dear

father and only sister (at home), ten years ago, it has been impossible for me to leave home. I live all the time alone, stay alone nights all the time, too, but I am not afraid, the dear Jesus helps me, unworthy and undeserving as I am. I pray that he will give me strength for every duty, and every trial, too, and he does help me in many ways, and I rejoice in him many times when I am all alone. Often I am sick, too, and hardly know what to do, but yet there seems to be some way, and I am able to go around and attend to my business, though often in much pain. For two or three years I was crippled in both knees, first one and then the other, so it was months that I could only go downstairs backward. I suffered much, but after awhile they gradually recovered, and now are very nearly well, for which I desire to be very thankful; I did not think they would ever be well again. I attend Columbia Church whenever there is preaching; I seldom miss a meeting. I love the cause of Zion; I love to sing the dear old hymns and meet with those who love the truth. You may rest assured if it is ever so that I can meet with the dear little church there I will certainly do so, though I would know very few now, as it has been eight years since I attended there.

Hoping this long letter will not weary you, and that you will all believe that I still prefer Zion above my chief joy, I am sincerely, I hope, your unworthy sister, IDA SEARCH.

WASHINGTON, D. C., April 2, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It is with much fear that I make the attempt to write upon so great and glorious a subject as "faith." I am but a poor worm of the dust, but by the help of God I may be able to write a little; I know that without him I can do nothing. My mind of late has been dwelling upon this wonderful subject. We are told that without faith it is impossible to please God. We read of the great faith which Noah had in the building of the ark, to the saving of himself and his family from the waters of the flood. What wonderful faith! Our dear Savior said on one occasion that if we have faith as a grain of mustard seed we should say to this mountain, Be ye removed into yonder sea, and it should obey us. What wonderful power our dear Lord and Savior has; there is nothing impossible with him. Our Savior said to his apostles, with regard to the salvation of men, With men it is impossible, but with God all things are possible. Thus we are taught that man has nothing to do with his salvation. Also we read of the steadfast faith of Abraham. The apostle declares that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Through faith we understand that the worlds were made by the word of God, and Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith. James says, Knowing that the trying of your faith worketh patience. And again, If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, but let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. O for such faith! But God is able to give us faith if we ask in the spirit. For God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. This is not what the world calls worship. Our blessed Lord said, I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man can come unto me, except the Father draw him. It seems to me that we have full evidence that our God rules supreme, and all things that ever did take place, or that ever will take place, were ordained before the world began to take place. This is my experience,

and the Bible teaches that doctrine. There is a right and a wrong way. If I have any experience of the things of God, it is that the Bible teaches the predestination of all things, and it teaches that by grace we are saved, not of works, lest any man should boast.

The SIGNS comes to me regularly, and is full of sound doctrine such as I believe the Bible teaches.

I remain your unworthy brother, saved by grace, if saved at all. May God help you in your work.

Yours, THOMAS ALDEN.

HARDING, W. Va., Nov. 23, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription is due for the next year, I will send you a two dollar money order for which you will send me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the year, as I cannot think of doing without it as long as I am able to read it, because it is nearly all the preaching I get; I am not able to get to my church, as the distance is fifteen miles from where I live, and in less than one month, if I should live that long, I will be eighty years old. It is not likely that I will need the paper much longer. I have been a member of the Primitive Baptists sixty-three years last April, and am a firm believer in the doctrine of the Old School Baptists. I have lived an Old School Baptist, and hope to die one; they are firm in the doctrine of the Bible. The Bible is the book of books, the christian's precious chart in search of truth, therein he looks and binds it to his heart. The doctrine of the Bible is food to my hungry soul. I cannot tell you how I appreciate reading the SIGNS, and I want the dear correspondents to write on; they do not know how they feed the poor, hungry souls of the people of God in this sin-polluted world. Some talk of falling from grace; there is no such thing as falling from grace, they never fall from grace, but fall for want of grace. The Bible says we "are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." O if I only could write like the dear brethren and sisters who write for the SIGNS I would want to write often, but when I attempt to it seems like myself, so little and weak, for if I am a saint, I am the least of all. Dear friends, when it is well with you remember me.

(MRS.) EMELINE FINDLEY.

HERNDON, Va., Oct. 22, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER SCATES:—As I do not want you to think I did not appreciate your last letter, I am going to venture again to write you a few lines, although I feel to be in gross darkness, and cannot come into the light. While at my house some time ago brother Badger said to me, "Brother John, how is it that you always seem to be in the dark?" I had no answer to his question, for darkness in nature can never manifest any light, it can only be felt. One said of old, I am led into darkness, and not into light. I sometimes ask myself the question, Am I led all this time when I am in darkness? No, surely not, or I would not stumble at every step of the way. The way that seems to be my way is the downward way to destruction. My every day life seems to prove that it is true that I am on my way to destruction, which is ruin and eternal death.

My brother, if you can still allow me to call you brother, I want to tell you, as you told me, that if you could just know me as well as I know myself, I feel sure that you could not fellowship me, and neither would you spend one moment of

your time writing to me, so sinful am I. This is very plain talk, and I feel ashamed to say so, nevertheless I feel just what I am writing, and still my old man, or nature, is such that if a brother or sister should tell me face to face just what sort of a creature I am, and feel myself to be, I would try to deny it. I said to Elder Eubanks once that I felt to be very little, even less than the least of all saints, and he answered me with these words, "Take care, brother John, that you do not get puffed up in your feeling of littleness." I looked at him for a moment, and then said, "Brother Eubanks, you are right." Still, if possible, it made me feel smaller than I had ever felt in all my life. You know for one to say, I feel to be less than the least of all saints, reaches beyond all human language. Nevertheless the great apostle was made to use this expression, "less than the least of all saints," and it is a common expression with the Lord's people in this age; it is realized more in feeling than in words. It is a feeling which causes God's little children to esteem others better than themselves. If I could think that one of God's children was worse than I feel to be, then I could not esteem that one better than myself. O what a strange doctrine this is to the carnal mind of man. This mind is not subject to the law of God, and neither indeed can be. Truth is hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes, and the Savior said, Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. I am, I now fear, running into things that I know nothing about, and I suppose that I will have to return to the old man with all of his corrupt deeds. He is a hard man to handle, yet he comes to me many times as a very small fellow, saying to me that he is less than the least of all his fellows, and I am led for a little moment to think so myself, but before I am aware of it I find again that he is the strongest fellow I have ever met with in the flesh. This is my main reason for not wanting to talk or write to the people of the most high God, for they can discern the old man, or the devil, although he may appear in sheep's clothing. O, it seems to me if I only could get rid of him for a little season, so that I could worship the great I AM in spirit and in truth, that I would be most glad, but I cannot rid myself of him. My constant cry is, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I die daily, which makes me say, "God be merciful to me a sinner." If I have ever prayed in all my life it has been in these words, "God be merciful to me a sinner," yet many times I am afraid to utter the words with my lips, but there are groanings within that cannot be uttered. Can you, dear brother, conceive of one more destitute than I picture myself to be? No, not one. I am led daily to fear that I have not been born again. Surely if I had been I would lead a better life. I am doing a little business with the public here at my home, and it has long been as a crushing blow to me. I feel that if I were a child of God, surely my lot would be cast in some other stage in life, where I might worship God in spirit, and be enabled to sit down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit would be sweet to my taste. I do not want to murmur at my lot in life, but it seems to me that my whole life has been a blank, and I am good for nothing but to be cast out. Such is my feeling, and I cannot help it.

But I am making this letter too long, and I am afraid that it will weary you to read it. I have written many things that

I might have left out, but I can never lay up anything to write, and so have to scribble along in the old time way of writing. I wanted to tell you something about the comfort of your letters to me, and of those which have been published in the dear old SIGNS. But I must now close, as it is about my bedtime. I am at home all alone, my wife is visiting her sister at her old home place at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains. She will be gone about a week or ten days, so you know I feel lonely indeed.

Elder H. H. Lefferts is our pastor now at old Frying Pan, and we all love him for the truth's sake. He is a very able minister of the gospel, and able to feed the sheep and lambs of the flock of his Master.

Please cast the mantle of charity over my poor efforts, and believe me to be your friend, and I hope brother in affliction, J. F. OLIVER.

[THE foregoing letter was sent us by brother Robert Scates, of Woodstock, Ontario. We are glad to publish all such letters as this; they are very encouraging to weary pilgrims.—K.]

DUTTON, Ontario, Nov. 26, 1911.

VERY DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I received your excellent letter in due time, and was indeed glad to hear from you. Surely every day we have many things to be thankful for. How great is the goodness and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he bestows upon us. O that we could praise him more and more for all his benefits to us poor, unworthy creatures, who are not deserving of any blessing from his loving hand. As you have been on my mind more or less all day, I read again your letter, and it seemed so good that I could almost think you were in the pulpit preaching. When I read from your pen, and that of dear Elder Ker, in the editorials, I can almost imagine I hear you preaching; every word seems so good. I am often writing you and others in my mind better letters than I can put on paper.

Well, we expect dear Elder Sawin soon, and will be glad to see and hear him. I do hope that his rheumatism is better now. The weather has been very cold and rainy, and not fit for him to be away. He is a very precious brother indeed. He has come to us many times in the past. He preaches the pure gospel of Christ, and there is always a solemn sweetness in what he says, to me, at least. Often his first prayer is a sermon to me, and melts my poor heart, there is such a solemnity in every word. The preaching of the gospel has a very humbling effect upon me, for it is the power of God unto them that believe. To hear of Jesus and his love to poor sinners, such as I am, is wonderful, and to think of the dear Savior shedding his precious blood on Calvary's cross, that guilty sinners like me might live, melts my poor heart. I sometimes think it ought to melt a heart of stone. O such love! Was there ever love like his love? Our religion would not be much without love; now abideth faith, hope and charity, but the greatest of these is charity. What a multitude of faults love covers, where without it nothing is right. How very sorry I feel when I find my heart void of love for any one, especially for those who profess to be born again. But there are some whose actions I cannot love, and they are not in my heart at all, for I hate the garments spotted by the flesh, and yet I cannot boast over any one. But it is a real grief to me when I see evil in the children of God, for in these things there is no glory to the God whom we profess to

love and adore. His glory he will not give to another, nor his praise to graven images. O how I love to hear the dear Savior exalted and the sinner abased; that is why I love to hear you, Elder Ker and many others speak in the name of the Lord, you seem so steadfast and unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. I never get tired of hearing of Jesus, his name is most sweet; he is the bright and morning Star.

"His love in times past forbids us to think
That he'll leave us at last in sorrow to sink."

While looking back over my past life, and to the time when the dear Lord was pleased to show me that I was a guilty sinner in his sight, while I was enjoying the pleasures of the world, and rolling sin as a sweet morsel under my tongue, in nature's darkness, in ignorance of God's salvation, and thinking myself as good as any one, and just a little better, how wonderful it all seems to me now. I often wonder why he did not cast me off, and send my soul to hell, for this I feel would have been just and right. But no, for his great love which he had for his chosen people he preserved my unprofitable life, and led me about and instructed me, and kept me as the apple of his eye, thanks to his most holy name. But I cannot go over all the way in which he has led me, for it would take too much time. The morning of my deliverance, after many nights of weeping and distress, feeling that every night would be the last, and that I would awake in torment, and glad when I would be permitted to see the light of another day, these words were spoken to me, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." O it was a morning never to be forgotten by me, everything was praising God. I had been a lover of dancing, but I can truly say from my heart that the things I once loved I now hate with a perfect hatred.

When I began this I had no intention of writing so lengthily, and I hope you will pardon all that is amiss. I do feel to be the least of all the saints of God, if one at all.

The opening of our new meetinghouse is past. Dear Elder Ker was here, and his preaching was good. He took this text in Proverbs, ninth chapter: "Wisdom hath builded her house," &c. He read from the first to the seventh verses, and it was most appropriate for the occasion. We had a good full house, and the weather was fair.

Now may the blessing of God rest upon you and yours, is the desire of one who loves you for the truth's sake,

(MRS.) THOMAS E. LILLY.

LITTLE FALLS, Wash., Nov. 13, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find money order for two dollars; please give me credit on my subscription to the SIGNS. I was afraid I would have to give up the dear old paper, but the Lord has been good to me, and at last I am able to have my subscription renewed. I hope to receive the paper as long as I can see to read it; it is all the gospel preaching I care to read, and I hope I am thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift that he has so blessed me that I am enabled to peruse and enjoy the columns of our family paper. I thank you for your past forbearance with my tardiness. I would like to send some subscribers, but I have been here five years and met only one Baptist, a brother by the name of Overstreet, and he said he was a reader of the SIGNS.

I subscribe myself a poor old sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all,

J. M. BOYD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1911.

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EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PSALMS XCII. 1.

"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High."

Two things are set before us in this verse: one is the benefits bestowed upon us from the Lord, for which it is good that we give him thanks, and the other is the holy character and the infinite attributes of Jehovah which call for praise. Thanksgiving relates to the benefits received from his hand, while praise relates rather to that which he is in and of himself. But while the text separates these two things, speaking of each one by itself, yet they are not disjoined in reality. The things which call forth praises are the fountains from which benefits flow to us. For instance, if we are led to praise the Lord for his love and power, it is through these things that we receive blessings from him, and for these blessings we render thanksgiving. Thus there are diversities in these two sentences, while yet they are inseparably joined in the great truths taught in them. If it be in the heart to give thanks to God, that thanksgiving will be mingled with the praises of God, and if we have the spirit of praise in the heart, we shall also find the voice of thanksgiving there. The things for which we praise him are the fountains of all blessings to us. In the text the inspired psalmist joins these two things together, and we may be sure that they belong together, while yet they are two things, and thanksgiving and praise unto the Lord are good. This word "good" embraces many things in the Bible and in our common speech; it is applied to many things with different shades of meaning. All those shades of meaning, however, grow out of one original thought. The primary sense of the word is "strong," and from this it comes to signify fit, suitable, valid, wholesome, with other similar meanings. All these significations of the word fully apply to it as used by the psalmist in the text. To give thanks and to sing praise to God are both good in all this variety of shades of meaning. It is suitable or fitting to do both these things. It is suitable, whether we think of ourselves as the recipients of the favor of God or of him as the giver. Our needs have been and are great, greater than we can measure, while his gifts have supplied, and do still supply, all our needs. What could be more suitable than that we should give thanks to him? Then if we speak of praise rendered to him, that also is suitable for us, whether we think of his praise from the standpoint of our finiteness, or from that of his infinite excellencies. It is suitable that a creature should lift up his heart and voice in praise of his Creator. All that the creature lacks is revealed in Jehovah. If we deplore our feebleness, we must admire his infinite power. If we bow with shame at the remembrance of our foolishness, we can but adore his wisdom. If we tremble at the knowledge of our sin, it must be that we shall think with reverence of his holiness. Praise and thanksgiving are fit-

ting or suitable, in the sense that we ought to render to him these acts of devotion.

One meaning of the word "good" is "wholesome," and it is certainly a wholesome thing if we find a spirit in us to render thanks and praise to God. It is wholesome in that it must proceed from a heart made whole through the sovereign and efficacious work of the Spirit. It is wholesome in that it is for the benefit of that heart which is exercised in these two things. It is wholesome, because thus we come to meditate upon the goodness of God, and so grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is wholesome to have our hearts and minds turned toward heavenly things at all times. When the things of this world, with its vanities and follies and sins, occupy our minds, there can be no growth, except in folly and evil, all of which lead to decay and death. But in giving thanks to God and in the praises of his name there is life and peace and health. It is good to give thanks unto God and to praise him in heart, and with our voices, because it is right; these two things are his due. We owe all that we are and all that we have to him. This is true, whether we speak of things temporal or of things spiritual. He is the author of all; for this we ought to praise him, and he is the giver of all; for this we are called upon to give thanks, and happy is that heart that feels the truth of all this. That heart is happy, not only in the sense of being blessed, but happy in the sense of inward gladness and peace. As it is true that nothing is more shameful than ingratitude, whether toward our fellow-men or toward God, so nothing is more delightful to see than gratitude. There is a feeling that is almost instinctive among all men, that unmindfulness of benefits received from others, and ingratitude toward the giver, are exceeding base; how much more so is unmindfulness toward God; how great and how many are his mercies every day. A thousand streams of blessings flow from his throne to all his creatures from the day of birth to the day of death. All this is true as regards temporal things, but infinitely above all these temporal mercies are the rich gifts of his grace in the new and everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, and in the heart of a believer in the Lord nothing causes more sorrow than to realize that he is unmindful of all the blessings given to him through him who is our Mediator and Savior. It is right not only to feel thankful, but it is good to give thanks. It is right not only to have the mind occupied with his praises, but also to sing of them. It is our mind that the psalmist in these words is writing not so directly of inward, heartfelt thanksgiving and praise, but rather of the expression of these things. It is a good thing to give thanks; it is a good thing to sing praises. Surely we do not need to say here that the saying and the singing are of no value if the worship of the heart be not behind them. We are sure that there is not a child of God on earth who does not know that our God is to be, first of all, worshiped in spirit and in truth by the emotions of the heart and mind. We feel sure that we do not need to call any further attention here to this truth, but with all this it is still good to give thanks, to sing praises. Praise waits for the Lord in Zion, and when the blessed Lord appears praise and singing will leap forth. This was so when, after the passing away of the shadowy covenant, the blessed Lord came, bringing in

the day of the full, clear gospel, but it is true personally and experimentally. When by faith Jesus is revealed the heart of the sad will rejoice, and the tongue of the dumb shall give thanks and sing praises. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak; this is right, and it is comely. Thus one said, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." For this end God appointed the ordinances of public worship under the Mosaic dispensation. To this end, under the gospel the children of God are forbidden to forsake the assembling of themselves together, and to this end God has so worked in the hearts of his own that when they are made glad they desire to mingle with others of like precious faith, and with them to give thanks and praise to God. Because of this work of God one said, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul," and how often did spiritual men of old call upon all things to join with them in the praise of God: "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord," and sometimes even the trees are represented as clapping their hands, and the hills and the mountains as leaping like lambs. For many reasons it is a good thing to give thanks to the Lord and to sing forth his praise. How many times have the hearts of us all been stirred and animated by hearing such exercises among those who love God. Many times do we go into the house of God feeling cold, and well-nigh dead, and full of shame, because it is so with us, and as though we shall mingle with the congregation in vain, our hearts seem as cold as ice and as hard as adamant, and we think that perhaps we shall never again be able to give thanks and praise as we have in former times, but as we listen to some hymn sung to the praise of God in some of his attributes and works, and bow our heads as prayer is offered, and then hear some servant of God telling what great things the Lord in covenant love has done for us, ere we are aware our souls are made like the chariots of Amminadib, and we are once more sweetly conscious of some gentle stirrings of heart, of some softening of the hardness, some warming of the coldness, and we begin to feel that it has not been in vain that we have come together in the house of the Lord, and for ourselves we can once more witness that it is a good thing to come where thanksgiving and praise are offered before the Lord. It is good for us that others have been engaged in this solemn and glorious service, and then we have found it good to find ourselves also joining in the solemn exercises.

Now it is our mind to say negatively that the text does not say, neither does it signify, that if we will give thanks, and if we will sing praises to God, the Most High, good shall come to us; there are no conditions, in the sense that if we will do so and so, then God will do so and so. The psalmist intimates no feeling of this kind, his soul was filled with thanksgiving and praise, and, being filled with these emotions, it was a blessed comfort and relief to him to speak and sing. The goodness of which he speaks was in these exercises, so far as the experience of his own soul was concerned. How bitterly mistaken are those who strive to urge upon men the duty of rendering thanks, and of singing praise, upon the ground that by these exercises God will be well pleased with them, and so they shall obtain some favor either here or hereafter at his hands. When men render words of thanksgiving, or engage in singing words

that are to the praise of God, upon the ground that thereby good shall come to them, they are not really rendering these things to him, they are not worshiping in spirit and in truth; words spoken upon this ground are but a solemn mockery. But to him whose soul is filled with praise, as was the soul of the psalmist when he wrote these words, it is indeed a good thing, and that his soul knows, even as he renders thanks and joins in singing the praise of God. Here at the close of this old year, as we look back and recall some portions of all the way in which the Lord has led us, we trust that we have felt some little of this voice of thanksgiving and praise in our own soul. How many mercies there have been scattered all along the year that is past. We doubt not that very many of our readers can join with us in recalling the goodness of God. How much better has he been to us than all our fears. How good he has been to us in spite of all our unbelief. We all have wandered far from God in thought, word and deed, but still his mercies have been nigh us, and he has again and again sought out his wandering sheep. Perhaps most of us feel that our outward life, wayward as it may have been, has, notwithstanding, been nearer to God's word than the life that is within. A fair seeming is not hard to put on, but how impossible it is to create love, adoration and praise in the heart.

> "Here on our heart the burden lies,
> And past offenses pain our eyes."

Even though we have in some measure commanded the approval of men around us, before the Lord, we must always confess, "I am vile," and if we do have some consciousness of this, must we not feel it is demanded that we give thanks and praise to the Most High, who has borne with us so long and so gently? For ourself we can but say that when we consider our own failure in all things, and then remember the great forbearance of the covenant-keeping God, and the unwearying mercy which he has shown to us, we feel that it is an evil thing indeed not to give him thanks, not to praise him in songs and hymns and psalms, and when melody is felt in the heart to the Lord it is a source of rest and gladness to give some expression to it. It is a good thing to give thanks and to sing praise indeed.

Looking over the past year with regard to our connection with publishing the SIGNS, we can but feel that very much calls for praise and thanksgiving. If in anything our labor has not been in vain, it is sure that the Lord alone is to be praised. If we have been of any use, the Lord has enabled us. If we have continued steadfast to the present time, it is because we have obtained help of God, and for the kind words of encouragement, advice, counsel and admonition, which have come to us from the household of faith, are our thanksgivings due to that God who put such things in the hearts and mouths of the brethren to say to us. From all these, and many other considerations, we can but feel that it is a good thing to give thanks unto God, to sing praises to the name of the Most High. C.

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

WE are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

CLOSE OF VOLUME SEVENTY-NINE.

AGAIN it becomes us to record the mercies of the Lord to all connected with the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. This number concludes the seventy-ninth volume, and we feel constrained to say, Goodness and mercy have followed both editors and publishers all these years, and while many who were connected with the SIGNS have long since passed away, and others later, the Word of our God endures forever, and by the gospel, as published through the SIGNS, this Word has been and is now preached unto many. The same glorious doctrine, salvation by grace, advocated by those of years ago, is as precious to us who are left as it was to them. Nothing short of the sovereign power of God, electing love, discriminating grace, predestination of all things, special and complete atonement, effectual calling and the final resurrection of the dead, will do a poor sinner any good. These points of doctrine, composing the gospel of the grace of God, are what have ever been set forth through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES with all the clearness and positiveness given its writers, and many comfortless have been comforted, many weary have found rest, many tried have been encouraged to press on. Particularly has the SIGNS been blessed to those separated from church privileges, either by the infirmities of age or location. This has always stimulated the editors and managers to continue even in the face of difficulties and discouragements, for surely such brethren need and should have special attention. Often an expression from such ones of gladness and comfort received through the SIGNS has more than repaid us for hours of labor and hardship. By this we would not have our brethren and sisters who are blessed with health, strength and church privileges to think we do not appreciate their words of approval and encouragement; surely we do, and have often been much helped through them, and sincerely thank all for every kindness shown. During the year now just ending we have heard very little criticism regarding the conduct of the SIGNS, or of the matter published, for which we feel glad. We have done our best in trying to keep the doctrine clean, and also to avoid controversy, knowing that contention cannot in any sense help the weary and heavy laden.

We appreciate the financial support of our subscribers, through which we have been enabled to meet our obligations during the year. We also thank all who have so kindly written for the SIGNS, and also we thank all who have sent private letters for publication. The SIGNS could not continue without such help. There has been a slight increase in the circulation during the year, which is to us very encouraging.

Hoping that the same interest in and the same kindness toward the SIGNS may be manifest during 1912, we say good-by for 1911. K.

NOTICE.

IF the Lord will, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Old Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., the third Sunday in December (17th), instead of the fourth, as is usual. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

H. J. O'Bannon, Virginia, $1.00; Hubbell Bros., New York, $5.00; Mrs. J. W. Parker, Illinois, $2.00; Elder T. R. Pittman, Kansas, $1.00; Attie A. Curtis, Maine, $1.00.—Total, $10.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence, in Middletown, N. Y., October 9th, 1911, J. Decatur Horton, of Middletown, N. Y., and Mrs. Vienna Vail Hayden, of New Milford, Pa.

By the same, at his residence, Oct. 11th, 1911, Harry Woodruff, of Circleville, N. Y., and Miss Jennette Derby, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. DeWitt Derby, of Howells, N. Y.

By the same, Oct. 26th, 1911, at the home of the bride's parents, in Frenchtown, N. J., George Ward Reading, of Trenton, N. J., and Miss Marion Hoff Kugler, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Oliver R. Kugler.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at Woolfords, Dorchester Co., Md., on Wednesday, Nov. 15th, 1911, Harry H. Howard, of Chesapeake City, Del., and Miss Lillie C. Woolford, of Woolfords, Md.

By the same, at Easton, Pa., on Thursday, Nov. 30th, 1911, William W. Woodring and Miss Lillian C. Sharp, both of Easton, Pa.

By Elder Silas H. Durand, at the home of the bride's parents, Harry M. Carrell and Sarah May Hohensack, both of Ivyland, Pa.

By Elder D. M. Vail, Nov. 13th, 1911, in Brantford, Ontario, Thomas A. Ardies, of Mayfair, Ontario, and Miss Bertha Wells, of Brantford, Ontario.

By the same, Dec. 5th, 1911, in Binghamton, N. Y., William M. Hart, of Brookdale, Pa., and Mrs. Sarah Jane Stradley, of Cammal, Pa.

By Elder W. S. Alexander, at the home of the bride's parents, State Road, Del., Nov. 30th, 1911, Lewis J. Rambo and Miss Rosa Heyd, both of State Road, Del.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Matilda Mann departed this life August 15th, aged about 72 years. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Southampton Old School Baptist Church by Elder Wm. J. Purington, about thirty-two or thirty-three years ago, and was a consistent member until her death. She lost her only two children, a son and daughter, several years ago, each by a lingering sickness. They both received a good hope through grace before they passed from this time state. It was a very afflictive stroke to her and to her husband, but was borne with resignation. For several years she had the care of her brother, George W. Duffield, who was also a member of this church, baptized by Elder Purington. He was a great and constant care to her until her death, but she was very kind and faithful. He died Nov. 27th, aged about 87 years, at the home of sister Lizzie Schiefer, at Richboro, who kindly took the care of him to relieve sister Mann, a little time before she died, and so he remained at her home until he passed away, nearly three months. His mind had been greatly weakened for some years, and at times quite gone, but it was not lost to spiritual things. A day or two before he died he said, "Lord, be merciful to me." And again, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." During the last night he was restless, except as he had hold of sister Lizzie's hand, and he would repeat portions of hymns, and especially the hymn beginning, "Alas, and did my Savior bleed?" which he would repeat with her.

The funeral of sister Mann was on Saturday, Aug. 19th, and that of brother George was on Wednesday, at each of which a large number of relatives and friends came together, and I addressed them briefly.

Sister Mann leaves a husband to mourn his loss; aside from that the mourning relatives are the same. The church esteemed them highly in love.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

Mrs. J. O. Whitmarsh lost her life by drowning October 24th, 1911, near Port Townsend, Washington In 1883, I think, she was united in marriage with Mr. Whitmarsh, by whom she is survived, together with one son and one brother, the writer. Sister Ruth united with the New School Baptist denomination in early life. May we all be enabled by grace to bow in humble submission to this and every stroke of the divine providence of our heavenly Father, and ever say, "Thy will be done." May our faith, in trusting God in all his ways, be steadfast, not wavering when earthly trials come. "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

WM. F. SLOAN.

LEXINGTON, Ky.

INFORMATION WANTED.

BROTHER William Sills, of Petoskey, Mich., Route 3, Box 70, wants to know if there is an Old School Baptist Church within fifty miles of that place.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, to sister associations with whom she corresponds, sendeth christian salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Once more through the goodness of a covenant-keeping God we are blessed with the privilege of assembling ourselves together in an associate capacity. We desire that we, as the church of the true and living God, may be guided by the Spirit of God to meet with those of like precious faith. He has declared, My counsel shall stand; I will do all my pleasure. We do earnestly desire a continuance of your brotherly love and fellowship. Let us not love only in name, but in deed and truth, and may this love of God shed abroad in our hearts enable us to dwell together in peace and fellowship. Among the many blessed assurances of the work of divine grace in the hearts of God's children none is more assuring than the words of the apostle John, saying that we may "know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

Our next association, if God will, is ordered to meet with the Fairview Church, Fulton Co., Pa., on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1912, where we hope to meet in christian love.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
JONAS LAKE, Clerk.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

TOUCHET, Wash., Nov., 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—My mind has been exercised of late upon the loving-kindness of our covenant-keeping God, and upon the wonders of his grace as manifested in the vessels of mercy. To-night my mind seems to have been carried, as was the mind of John upon the isle of Patmos, when he was blessed to behold the wonders of divine grace, and to hear and understand the glories of the Alpha and the Omega. Some of these wonders which come to my mind I would like to tell to the tempest-tossed souls, not because they do not know them, but because they do know them. First, I want to say that we must know the truth before we can tell the truth, and if we have not the discernment between truth and error, one is as good to us as the other. If we have no vision to discern, the night is to us as bright as the day. Jesus in all his teaching ever said, "Watch," "Take heed," and the apostles ever admonished the saints to watchfulness, and to take heed to the doctrine, and to continue in the things which they had been taught. Now my mind has been called to the doctrine of our God and Savior. There are as many doctrines in the world as there are lords and gods, and the apostle tells us that there are many. Moses said that His doctrine should drop as the rain, and his speech distil as the dew upon the tender grass. We look for the fulfillment of all such declarations and promises, and when we see them demonstrated the effect in us is as the rain and dew upon the tender herb. The people of God are described in the word as an afflicted and poor people. The doctrine of God has distilled as the dew in their hearts and minds; this they know, and because of this they are made to cry for mercy and to say, "By the grace of God I am what I am." Now, being helpless people, they are the characters in whom God displays his strength. I could to-night, if time and space would permit, bring an innumerable cloud of witnesses in whom God has shown and is showing his power, but in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established. To Abraham and Sarah the promise was made, and so far as nature was concerned there could be no hope of its fulfillment, but the doctrine of God to them was, It shall be, and so,

barren though Sarah was, when the fullness of time had come the doctrine began to drop as the rain, and the barren became fruitful, and in the extremity of that seed in Egypt we see the doctrine of God led them safely from under the yoke. In the affliction of Job, so that he became a reproach to his wife to the extent that she bade him curse God and die, the doctrine of God was displayed, and Job could say, "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" And Job also said, "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." These expressions were the fruit of the doctrine of God. Jesus said, By their fruit ye shall know them. But let us notice a little further in Job's case. I feel to-night how applicable is this lesson to ourselves. It seems to me that in order to know Job and his afflictions, we must be partakers of the sufferings of Christ. While his friends professed to know more of the suffering of Job and of its cause than did Job himself, their own speech betrayed them. Let us notice what they told Job of the cause of his affliction. Even now when souls are afflicted and clothed wth sackcloth, similar things are said to them. O dear brethren, do you know what the plague of that dread disease is? How true the words of Job, My complaint is bitter; my stroke is heavier than my groaning. To-day, when it seemed that I could not bear my stroke any longer, my mind was called back to this wonderful display of the doctrine of God. Job's friends told him to change his course of life and become acquainted with God, and thereby good should come to him. It seems to me that if our brethren who advocate "conditional time salvation" had felt the stroke as Job did, they could not say any longer that God has given us eternal salvation and then left us to accept or reject here the joys of that salvation. Job said of his friends that they were miserable comforters, and the Lord said that they had not spoken the thing that was right concerning him as his servant Job had. Notice what they promised Job if he would only turn his course. It was silver and gold and prosperity in this life, and many such things. I do not think, more, I know that these things did not distress Job at that time. His soul, his heart, was afflicted. What is all the gold of Ophir, and the cattle upon a thousand hills, to the soul that is afflicted? It is all vanity and vexation of spirit. We are not purchased with such corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ. So Job could say, "O that I knew where I might find him!" and, like Job, how we long for him, and we go forward, and he is not there, and backward, and we fail to find him, and on the left and the right, where he doth work, and we cannot find him.

"Like one alone I seem to be;
O is there any one like me?"

Yes, dear soul, Job was like you. Daniel in the den of lions is your brother. The poor man that fell among thieves is a near kinsman, and upon such the doctrine of God doth drop as the rain and distil as the dew, to the extent that it publishes the name of the Lord; it declares that he is of one mind, and none can turn him. What his soul desires, that he does; he rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. He it is who has created us in Christ Jesus unto good works, which he before ordained that we should walk in them. Bless his holy name for all his promises. While in this life we shall

have tribulation, but in him we shall have peace. He said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." How sweet to rest in the glorious doctrine of God our Savior. He is a very present help in every time of need. I feel that his doctrine is distilling in my soul to-night while I am bound here, as it were, in prison, and cannot meet with his dear saints. I know and feel that the day is close at hand when I will be released and be permitted to meet and dwell with the dear saints, and see Jesus as he is and be like him. This hope is predicated upon the grace of a merciful God. It seems most strange to me to hear one who claims to be an Old School Baptist say, O do not preach so much doctrine, but teach and exhort to practical godliness. But what is practical godliness? It is the fruit of the Spirit. Jesus said, The Spirit shall take of the things of mine, and show them unto you. He shall guide you in the way of all truth. They are led by the Spirit of God. Practical christianity is the result of this leading of the Spirit. This is what Moses called the doctrine which should drop as the rain and distil as the dew, and out of the dropping of the doctrine grows up every virtue of practical godliness. And "without me," said Jesus, "ye can do nothing." So he is the Rock, and his work is perfect.

Let us now notice the publican. Let us see his contrite and helpless spirit, and hear the fervent prayer that fell from his lips. He could not so much as lift his eyes to heaven. Is this your condition? Then you can fellowship him. You can sup with him and he with you, and if so, you can testify to the doctrine of God; for his doctrine is that they who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled, and they that seek shall find. Therefore a word to this character in the way of exhortation is profitable. Such exhortation is fraught with the doctrine of God. To such ones I would say, "Be of good cheer." As the servant of Abraham began to bedeck Rebecca with the jewels of his master, so we, when we find the Rebeccas, draw from the storehouse of doctrine the precious promises of God, and apply them experimentally, and such an one will answer as did Rebecca, I will go. Hence the ability of the will and the strength to go are of the Spirit manifest in the experience of the souls of his chosen ones. Praise him, O my soul. Praise him with all thy powers. This is practical godliness.

Next I will notice the man who went from Jerusalem to Jericho, who fell among thieves, and they stripped him, and wounded him, and left him half dead. Where is there an exhortation aside from the doctrine that would help this poor man? He is no exception to the rest of the children of God; he was only a representative character. The priest and Levite both saw him and passed by. They were as powerless to help or comfort him as were Job's friends to do him good. All they had to offer for relief was obedience to the law. The law could indeed show him how foolish he was for transgressing, but there was no oil in it for his wounds. So the priest and Levite passed by. Hence all our hope for relief through the deeds of the law perished from us in time of need. But when the doctrine of God began to fall as the gentle rain there was refreshing indeed. The good Samaritan in the parable was provided with grace and truth, and he had compassion; he poured in the doctrine (oil) and dressed the wounds in his tender mercy, and placed the poor man upon his own beast, repre-

senting the sovereignty of God, and took him to the inn, which I think represents the church, and bade them care for him, and promised that he would pay all the cost. We all often wonder how the church can bear with us. There is but one cause, and that is, Jesus pays for all the trouble of his people. "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." It is a sad thing to see church members become negligent about attending stated meetings, and we feel sad, yet there is nothing that we can do to help them. I do not condemn my brethren as some do, but my sympathy goes out to such, for I know that they are in a cold and lifeless state, and I know that the doctrine of God is the only thing that can reach such a case. Nothing but a shower of divine grace can revive the withered plants. When I can feel and realize that all things work together for good to them that are called, and who are taught of God, whether at home or abroad, whether on the land or on the sea, or even in the flames, then I know that nothing can harm them. The doctrine is the shield. "I, I am thy God, and will still give thee aid." Even down to old age all his people shall prove his sovereign love. It is not all who are good and obedient, but all his people. They are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which he before ordained that they should walk in them. I believe that all these characters whom I have named were walking in these good works, while clothed in sackcloth and sitting in dust and ashes; while in the den of lions or in the fiery furnace; while so humiliated that they could not look up to heaven, and while falling among thieves. Some of our brethren say that our God predestinated all the good things, but that with the evil things he has had nothing to do. They say that all the good things work together for good to the saints, but that evil things do not, and they claim to be wise enough to tell what is good and what is evil. Paul said, "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yielded the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." I believe that our God never has failed to exercise one of his when he has chosen so to do.

I must close. This is the first I have tried to write for a long time, and this letter must show to you the unsettled condition that my mind has been in for a long time. May peace, mercy and truth rest upon the household of faith for Christ's sake. Pray for me. If a saint I am the least of all.

Your brother,

J. T. BARNES.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 14, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I lately found the inclosed letter, which tells the old, old story so clearly that it seems it ought to be shared with the readers of the SIGNS, who so much enjoy that kind of history. Had it been published years ago it would have met the notice of many who would have had a strong personal interest in it; now many of them have gone from earth, as she has, to their eternal home; but it does not need this to commend it, and I am sure that many who never heard her name will feel a strong union of spirit with hers. That strong desire which she continually expressed, not to deceive, not to presume, can only be felt by one who has seen the

Lord high and lifted up, and the glory of his train filling the temple.

Yours in hope,

CLARICE E. DURAND.

DULANEYS VALLEY, Md., Oct. 24, 1886.

DEAR CLARICE:—Your letter of love and welcome was received, and how kind of you to take so much thought and interest in me. I appreciated it very much, but felt so little and unworthy of it all. I intended answering your letter immediately, and did commence two weeks ago, but was interrupted. I will now try again. As to answering your questions, I feel that it is more than I ought to attempt, yet if there is any one for whom I should try to do this it is you. I have often thought this past summer of writing to you and telling you of some of my feelings, and of what was strongly impressed upon me, but I never could quite get the consent of my mind to do so; I think it was the fear of deceiving you that kept me from it; I had so little assurance that there was any reality about it all, and now when I come to pen down my feelings there seems to be nothing to tell. In regard to how I have felt for the past few years, I hardly know where to commence. If there had been any marked beginning, as so many refer to, I think that I should not have so many doubts about it. It was not very long after mother's death that I found myself often engaged in reading the Bible and perusing the SIGNS with a deeper interest than I had ever felt before. I remember thinking, Why is it that I take so much more interest in this kind of reading? But I attributed it to my lonely condition, and that I was trying to fill her place. It was not long before the desire became so great with me to see the contents of the SIGNS when each copy arrived that I could hardly wait for an opportunity to read it privately, for I did not want any one to see me taking unusual interest in the paper. The first reading in it that I would do would be the experience of some one. I would think sometimes while reading that I had some such feelings, and that would occupy my thoughts very often. When I went to meeting I thought that Elder Grafton was preaching much plainer, and much more on experience, for I could understand him much better, and felt much more interested in what he said, and would think about it afterwards. One night in the early part of the winter of 1881 I experienced some feelings that I had never passed through before. I have never tried to describe them, and do not think that I could do so satisfactorily to any one. After this state of feeling subsided a little I went to bed, but not to sleep, and for the first time the thought came to me, Can this be a spiritual change which has come over me? But I soon felt that could not be, for I felt myself a poor, condemned sinner, and how could I be noticed in this way? I continued reading the Bible and SIGNS, trying to find some comfort for my burdened mind, but not much did I get. But the feelings of that night I never forgot, and sometimes when I have been almost ready to sink in despair my mind goes back to it, and there seems to be some power about it that holds me up. I would not have told any one about it at the time for anything; I felt as though it was the secret of my heart, and that it belonged to me. I began to look for the experience of some one who was led like me; I was grasping at everything of the kind. If I were where there was any conversation upon the subject of religion going on I

was all attention. Of one thing I was sure: I had an inquiring mind after the things that pertain to the kingdom of God, but what caused it was constantly on my mind; was there any sure foundation for it? So now for nearly five years I have been moving along with this subject on my mind nearly all the time. My mind has been so distressed at times that I knew not what to do, and all my prayer has been, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and for some stronger evidence that I had met with a change of heart. There have been times that I have felt encouraged; sometimes in listening to preaching I have felt that it was all for me, that this was just the way I felt; then again I have gone to meeting and have not felt one bit comforted. Sometimes there would be just a word or two that suited my case; I would then feel that I had been well repaid for going. I did enjoy the association at your place, the preaching was so comforting, and my mind seemed to be in a state to receive it; I shall never forget it. One evening at your place Elder Chick made some remark to me, and the manner in which I answered him caused him to ask me a few questions. A week later we accidentally met in Philadelphia, and came on to Baltimore together, and we had some talk on the subject. How I regretted it afterwards, for I felt that I had been talking of something that I knew nothing about, and had deceived him; but the greater part of the time this last fall and winter I have felt in a more comfortable frame of mind. I have never been able to state when that comfortable feeling came upon me; how often I have wished that it had been a sudden awakening, and that I could have felt it more forcibly. It was just a kind of satisfied feeling, and that I could put all my trust in the Lord. I had never felt like putting my case before the church, though my desire was to do so some time. I felt that if I were a subject of grace I would be made willing in the day of his power. In the early part of the spring my mind became very much exercised upon the subject of obedience, but when I looked for the evidence that I should take such a step it was so little that I felt I had been deceived. I felt that I would rather remain where I was all my life than deceive the church, still I could not get that feeling off my mind. The first Sunday in May I attended a baptism at Harford, and when the candidate was being led up out of the water I thought, Will it ever be so with me? It was my sincere desire to be baptized if I could only feel that I was a fit subject. While meditating upon this Elder Grafton passed by, and as he did so he said, "Lydia, your turn next." How he startled me. I replied, "I do not know," which was just the way I felt. But his remark surprised me very much, for I did not know that he knew anything about my feelings. I had never said a word to them, nor they to me. I had often thought there could not be any change in me, or some of them would have noticed it and have said something about it. His few words were of great encouragement to me, for I now felt that I could say something to him about my feelings, but still I did not. Two more months passed away, and the first Saturday in July Milton came over and asked me if I wanted to go to the meeting, and I said I would go with him, for I knew that there were two expected to come before the church, and I did want to go. After preaching, they related their experiences and were received. As much as I desired to be numbered among them, I

did not then feel that I could go forward. I wondered if ever I would have strength given me to do so, for I knew that I had none of myself. As we were riding along after the meeting Milton said to me, "I thought that you would have something to say this evening." I said, "Not this evening, but I may before long." This was the first time he had ever spoken to me upon the subject. The two following weeks my mind was in a very distressed state; I was filled with doubts, and felt that I must have a talk with some one, yet I did not feel that Milton was the one for me to go to, as his natural feelings of anxiety for me might make him overlook the important points. I wanted an impartial judge of my case, and felt that Elder Grafton would know, and would tell me whether he thought there was any reality in my experience, or whether it was all imagination, so I told Milton that I would like to have a talk with Elder Grafton. He came the next Saturday, on his way to Warren, and I told him as well as I could about my feelings. He encouraged me, and said that he had observed a change in me for some time. As much as I had dreaded the interview, I felt encouraged and relieved for a time. Two months more had nearly passed away, and church meeting time was coming again, and I felt that I would go before them and let them decide the case for me. When the day came I went to the meeting, but the nearer I got to the place the darker everything seemed. Elder Grafton preached a very comforting sermon, and when the invitation was given I felt as though I would sink through the floor; how could I go forward? yet something seemed to urge me to go. I knew that I was not satisfied as I was, but O the trial of that evening, I shall never forget it. You ask how at last I was able to give voice to my feelings. I finally went forward, but there was not much voice given me, and what was given was very unsatisfactory to me, and it must have been more so to the church, but I was received, and baptism was arranged for the next morning. How often I thought of you that evening, and of the night which I had passed with you after you came to the church, and how I had sympathized with you as far as my natural feelings could do, but how little I then knew of the trial you were passing through. I stayed at Mr. Varnes' all night. Mrs. Ridgely was with me, and I was very glad that she was, for I could unburden my mind to her. After retiring it was a long time before I fell asleep. I feared that the ordinance of which I was to partake in the morning was only form with me, and it seemed like mockery, but when I awoke in the morning I felt as though I did have some little feeling about it, for which I was very thankful. When I was raised up out of the water I felt like praising the Lord that what I had so long desired had been granted me. When I came to partake of the Lord's supper I felt, This is more solemn still. I questioned, Is it right for me to do so? Altogether it was a solemn day to me. The next day I felt as though it was all a dream, but in the evening as I went to my room, to be by myself for a little, I began to realize it was indeed a reality, and O how wretched I felt. How could I ever go among them again? I had deceived them. But the next day I felt better, still it was a serious subject with me whether I had done right or not, but, as a general thing, I have felt in a more comfortable state of mind since then than for a long time before. I feel through it all that I must give to God all the glory,

for I could do nothing of myself. I was as helpless as a little child, for though I often tried, I got no further on.

I must stop lest I weary you with reading. I have expressed very imperfectly what I had to say, and have gone over a good bit of paper to do it, and I fear that you will be much disappointed when you read it. I hope that only your eyes will see it, and, knowing your kind heart, I feel sure that if the substance is only right you will overlook the manner in which I have put it down.

Oct. 25th.—I have been reading this letter over, and have been deliberating in my mind whether I shall send it or not. There seems to be little in it all, yet I do not know when I shall ever be able to do better. I know my inability to express my feelings as I would like, and have just put them down in the manner they came to my mind. I remember the first time that you and Elder Durand visited us. When Elder Durand bade me good-by he said to me that he was always under the impression that I was a member of the church, but had just learned differently. As much as I then hoped that I might some time be, I did not have the courage to tell him so. I have often felt that if I could have been a little more communicative on the subject I would have felt better, but I always felt so ignorant concerning everything connected with religion that I hesitated to converse on the subject.

Your little sister, if one at all,

LYDIA A. DANCE.

LEESBURG, Va., Nov. 30, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find a letter to me from my cousin and sister in Christ, Mrs. Viola T. Kulp, who was baptized in August of this year by Elder S. H. Durand, at Southampton, Pa. I requested her to write me her experience, and she has done so. It is very interesting to me. I think a letter of this kind is doubly interesting if one is personally acquainted with the writer. Do with it as you deem best, but if you do not publish it kindly return to me.

Desiring the blessing of God upon your labors, I am yours in gospel bonds,

H. H. LEFFERTS.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Oct. 24, 1911.

DEAR COUSIN:—I was glad to hear from you, and will try to do as you requested: tell you a few things the Lord has done for me. I should have answered your letter sooner, but did not seem able to write, and I now hope you will excuse all of my mistakes, for, as you know, I never had much of an education, and may not be able to make plain my feelings, as I do not know just how to express them. In writing to your mother I feel that she never sees mistakes in my writing, for I feel that she loves me, she has always been so good and kind to me. You spoke of my writing you of my experience; I hardly know how, as for day and date I cannot give them. To begin, the first I ever thought of the dear Savior was at the deathbed of my father; while he seemed unconscious of earthly surroundings, he seemed to see and talk of heavenly things, things that were beautiful, and the sight I then witnessed as the breath left his body is something that I can scarcely describe, for I do not know how to make you see it as I saw it. It was as a great light, so brilliant, like no other light I ever saw; it was only for an instant, like the opening and shutting of a door, as going from darkness into a great light; it was so beautiful, the sight I have never forgotten, and often a feeling of longing

for something better in this life would come over me, a feeling of homesickness that I could not describe, a longing for something, I knew not what. I once wrote to my sister of my feelings, and she wrote me, telling where to find rest for the weary soul, but the feeling would pass away, and I would go on the same, only worse if anything; then again I would think, I will try going to meeting, but could not find what I sought; then I would think, I will just have a good time and forget it all, but all the time a feeling of unrest was there. At one time your mother was staying with me, and I kept her up talking to me half of the night. I often wondered what were a christian's feelings; they must be of great happiness and of love, which I knew I did not then have, but which I now hope I feel. One morning as I was driving along the road (a road I had often traveled before) I looked over the hills, and a feeling came over me, How wonderful, how beautiful; I thought I never saw it so before. A feeling of gladness came over me, and I wanted to call out for every one to see all the beautiful things that God had given us, that I must sing aloud; I, who could not sing a note, must sing, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow." I cannot tell how happy I felt. Then time passed on, and I seemed to forget. One day a minister called to see me; he talked to me, and I told him I was not happy nor satisfied with the way I was living. He then prayed for me, but I was not satisfied, I was still wanting something, and my cry was for the Lord to have mercy and direct my steps and give me the rest I desired. Soon after, the great trial came, the dear child whom I so loved was taken away, and I thought I could not bear it, but the dear Savior gave me strength and comforted me. I prayed to the dear Lord that I might know and understand and feel his love within my heart, and I longed to know that the dear child was happy, and prayed that God in his mercy, and if it were his will, might let me know it were so. I felt that God answered my prayer. One day there came to me a feeling as if she was hovering near me, as if I only had to turn, put out my hand and touch her, she was so near. O, she seemed so happy that I could hardly believe she was not there; and again, soon after, she appeared to me in a dream; she came to my bedside, and I cried out to her, O Bessie, how could you leave me? and her words to me were, Mother, God made it easy for me to go. Then I said to her, How could you leave Frank? Again she spoke and said, Poor Frank, I am so happy, I could not come back. Then she vanished, and I awoke with the feeling that the Lord had answered my prayer. I could not grieve for her any more, but I then saw myself a great sinner as I never saw it before. I sought the Bible and tried to read, but I could only cry, Lord, have mercy. One night these words came to me as if spoken: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden." I felt that I was indeed weary and heavy laden, and O how I longed for rest. I wrote to your mother, and she told me to read the third chapter of John, eighth verse. I read, and thought, Can it be? After those words, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," I thought I would like to hear Elder Durand speak from them some day, and to my surprise he read them for a text. I thought your mother must have told him of my desire. Some time afterward these words came to me: "Do I love the Lord or no? Am I his, or am

I not?" I did not know where these were to be found, so I went to mother and asked her. She gave me the hymn, and for days I kept asking myself: "Do I love the Lord or no? Am I his, or am I not?" Then a feeling of happiness came to me with these words: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." It seemed as if I were singing them in my heart night and day; my first thoughts in the morning were those words. One night, while trying to pray, and could not, I heard these words: "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." I went to meeting on the following Sunday, and Elder Durand spoke to me and told me he wanted to come down and see me. All that week I watched and waited for him, but he did not come. I then wrote to your mother, telling her of some of my feelings, and she advised me to go before the church and tell them my story. I thought I could not, but prayed for the Lord to direct me and give me strength, for there was a great weight bearing me down. I went to the Thursday meeting, in August, and Elder Durand asked me if I had anything to tell. I said, No, and the weight seemed heavier than before. On Friday I saw Elder Durand coming, and I said to mother, He need not come, for I will not say anything; but almost before I knew it I was telling him of my hope, and the things the Lord had done for me, and after that I felt much happier than I had for a long time. I went to the church meeting and told my story, and was received by the church. I came home feeling as if a great burden had been lifted from me, still I had doubts and fears that I might be deceived and was deceiving others, but on Sunday morning it seemed as if doubts and fears had left me, and that I truly had found peace and rest after the storm. It was as if a great storm had been raging for days, and after the storm light had broken in and all was peace and sunshine. Sunday morning Elder Durand asked me how I was feeling, but I could not tell him; it was as if I had no more doubts, no more fears; all was peace and rest, rest in the Savior's love; I cannot describe it. Some time after I was again asked how I was feeling, if I had any doubts. I went home thinking to myself, Was the peace I felt not right? and I was worried for days about it. At last I thought, I will search the Bible and see if I can find anything to comfort me. I opened it at random, not knowing of any particular place to look, and the first words I saw were: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." O what comfort I found; what more proof did I need of the Savior's love than that?

Dear cousin, I fear you will find many faults in this, for I do not quite understand how to express myself; if you find it too tiresome throw it in the fire and it will be all right. Remember me to cousin Ella. My love to all. Your unworthy sister, if I dare call myself a sister,

VIOLA T. KULP.

NEW YORK, N. Y., NOV., 1911.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have a desire to write you concerning the joy that was mine while listening to your preaching last Sunday. I believe if the desire is of the Lord that he will so enable me to write that you may be encouraged to press on and on, having this evidence, that at least one poor soul has been comforted by your preaching. Sometimes I am

made to wonder if it can be possible that such gifted ministers as I feel you to be can get as low in spirit and have the doubts and fears that this poor worm of the dust has had to encounter, but when they preach to me as you did Sunday I am made to feel that surely such ones have been down in that pit of miry clay from which God alone can raise them up, else they could not describe so minutely the rough and rocky way, and when one has been built up, strengthened and encouraged by one, and is impressed to tell him of it, I believe he should do so, for, to my mind, this is the way we are to benefit each other, by showing our love one for the other, and speaking often of the glorious things pertaining to the Lord and his kingdom. Indeed, "Glorious things of thee are spoken," and how wonderful to me were many of the things you said. I felt that I would rather be blessed to preach Jesus with such power than to have ten thousand times the honor of wearing the crown of the king of England, or that of being president of the United States, the head of the greatest nation on earth. Verily there is nothing which man can bestow that can begin to compare with the high and sacred calling to preach His everlasting gospel. I told sister Risler that the brethren ought not to let you do anything else. I have been in a desert land a good portion of the time during the past several months, sometimes almost doubting the reality of God, but the Lord's ways are not our ways, and while at times I feel like old Jacob, that all these things are against me, that I have not a friend in heaven or on earth, after the clouds have drifted away I can behold some of the inscrutable wisdom of God in leading me into paths I had not known before, and teaching me that he is Lord, and beside him there is no God. As I journeyed to the meetinghouse Sunday morning I felt light in heart, and hoped the Lord had prepared the soil, and would cause the seed to be sown in good ground, that it might take root downward, spring forth upward and produce a copious fruit, and when you gave out the first hymn: "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!" &c., I was reassured of my feast. It is amazing, and what a glorious thing to be given a hope that we were embraced in that grace covenant between the Father and the Son before the foundation of the world. Jesus has triumphed gloriously, and we are complete in him, lacking nothing, and it is all just as certain as if it had come to pass. I thought you made it very plain regarding the absolute certainty of the salvation of the Lord's people; nor will he cease to love us if we do evil. He is a God of love, and changeth not, and the apostle Paul says nothing can separate us from the love of God; "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Such love, how wonderful it is. We can only belittle it in attempting to describe it. One of the writer's says: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Not that we have done anything worthy of his love, for he loved us before the foundations of the earth were laid, long before we were made manifest in the flesh, and we love him because he first loved us, and has drawn us with loving-kindness to know him, whom to know is life eternal. But does the Lord love such as feel themselves strangers here below, and are made to realize what Christ meant to convey

when he said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head"? To my mind this is the class he came to save, and when one is made to feel this, is it not an evidence that the Lord has begun a good work in him? I think so, else how could we see these ravenous beasts endeavoring to destroy our very souls? Surely if we were put into a cage, naturally, with all manner of destructive beasts, and it was so dark that we could not see them, how would we know they were there? But as soon as the light shone about we would then become terrified. He that sees is not blind, but has been made alive, and when doubts and fears bedim such an one's eyes, and he is for the time being questioning, Is this the Christ, or shall I look for another? then when God's servant comes with a message, and tells of the blind being made to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk, &c., he is satisfied that this is the Christ.

Pardon this long letter; I felt impressed to write you, as I became so much attached to you on such short acquaintance that I wanted to assure you of my love for the truth's sake, I hope. If indeed we are the people of God, then is Jesus our Head, and we are many members composing one body, therefore we are not strangers, nor do we speak in unknown tongues, but are all made to cry, "Salvation is of the Lord," not partly of him and the rest by man, for if it is of works, then it is no more of grace.

I hope you are well, and will come to see us and preach for us often. I came from Virginia about three months ago, but the doctrine is the same here: "By grace are ye saved."

Your unworthy brother,

R. LESTER DODSON.

RICHMOND, Maine, Oct. 29, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER CHICK:—It is quite a long time since I wrote you or have heard directly from you, still you have been often in my thoughts. For days and weeks I have felt so sad that I could not feel or act cheerful. I so longed for and desired the society of one whose mind was exercised upon spiritual things, and who was not burdened with the things of this life. But why should I feel thus, when my own soul was so lifeless and cold, and my heart so wicked and so prone to evil, and almost constantly doubting my right to hope that I am among the redeemed of our God? I cannot doubt his mercy toward and for me, which he has so bountifully bestowed all the days of my life. I am such a mystery to myself, and I am so ignorant in all spiritual things, so restless and disturbed, and not able to do the things that I would, but, on the contrary, I am constantly doing and saying the things I would not.

Last Wednesday I came here to sister Angie's and found her willing and ready to talk about these glorious things of the Father's kingdom. How plainly she shows where she has been taught, and who has been her teacher. She has deep experience and wonderful understanding, and yet how meek and humble her spirit. How glad I am to be with her. I hope to return to my home refreshed, and more submissive to the dealings of an all-wise Providence.

Nov. 26th.—Dear brother, I have returned from Bowdoinham. I had a short visit with sisters Raymond, Minott and Wilson, and they all seemed interested and ready to talk of the things of the Master's kingdom. I do not think I have ever felt the sin of unbelief so keenly as during the past year. O the fearful

doubts which have assailed me. Can one who has been born of the Spirit, and who has felt to rejoice in the Savior's pardoning love, ever question that Jesus, the ever beloved Son of God, was once upon the earth, being born of the virgin Mary, that he grew up to manhood and went about from place to place doing miracles, and a host of mighty works, and that he was crucified and hung upon the cross, that he was taken down therefrom and laid in Joseph's new tomb, and that he arose again the third day, as he had said, and that afterward he ascended to the Father? It seems to me that no one, even in nature, could doubt these sacred truths. How much more inconsistent then it is for one who professes to know, to love and to follow the adorable Savior, to have these doubts. Why I was allowed to have these doubts I do not know. Can it be possible that it was to try my faith? Some time since they were swept away, and, if it be the will of God, I hope that they may never return. A calm, peaceful rest seems to abide with me these last few days. If not mistaken, a joy has been given me in believing in the pardon of my many sins, which were as scarlet, but are now washed away, or made clean; which were as crimson, but now are made white as wool. Not one good thought nor one good deed can I claim, sin is mixed with all I do, say or think, yet the blessings of the Lord have followed me all the days of my life. How glad I would be to see you and hear you talk of those wonderful truths, which seem to get more and more precious to me as the years go on. I so much miss those precious meetings in Woburn. That chapel is to me a sacred place; there, more than fifty-eight years ago, I heard the first gospel sermon with the hearing ear, if not mistaken. The preaching by Elder Ker while I was permitted to be present was indeed full and free, and those truths cannot be overthrown. May the gospel of our Lord have free course, and the name of the Lord be glorified, is the fervent desire of your very unworthy sister,

MARTHA K. HUBBARD.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Nov. 19, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I am inclosing a letter from sister Pultz, which I think will be read with interest and comfort, and, beside, several have expressed a wish to see it in the SIGNS, therefore I submit it to your disposal. I think it is often true that one's mind is led out with peculiar richness of real experience in private correspondence that would not be brought out if written for publication. There are those to whom we may feel especially drawn, and we open our hearts to them, feeling that they can understand our broken language. Often a letter in the SIGNS brings us together, as the letters of Elder Bird, and sister Young, of Alvinston, Canada; but brother Bird did not get all of that good letter, as there was a precious portion of it to me, as well as in the letter of our dear brother and fellow-laborer, Elder Bird; much of his experience was like mine, and I felt to take courage. It is a point I long to know, and often it causes anxious thought, whether I am called to preach or not. The Lord knows that I would stop trying if I could. But I do love to hear good preaching in its fullness. Our brethren yet talk of the good meetings when you and Elder Haines were here, and we were glad to hear that you both arrived safely home. At the meetings we felt that it was as the dew of Hermon. Elder Lester, of Virginia, has just made us a precious visit. He preached to us the

everlasting gospel of the Son of God. Often as I listen to the precious word I think, O why cannot I preach as they do, and so honor the cause? But the Lord has never called me that way, so I must continue as a child in such knowledge, but I am glad to know this, and while I can never preach it that way I want to hear it that way. My best meetings are at home, when our precious brethren are with us to do the preaching. I am now gaining in health, and am getting back to pretty near normal, and hope to soon be my physical self again, if the Lord will. All join in love and fellowship to all.

Most sincerely,

P. W. SAWIN.

WHEELING, W. Va., Sept. 29, 1911.

ELDER P. W. SAWIN—DEAR BROTHER:—I have a desire to write and tell you how tenderly your letter to sister Sinclair fell into my heart. I have read it three times, and have broken down and wept like a child, as you said you did when you tried to sing that hymn, "Dear refuge of my weary soul." I have been living in the same sad state which you describe. My health has been very poor, and I have wondered if this great oppression and unrest were caused by the state of my body and nerves. You say that we have been brought by these things into the fellowship of the sufferings of the dear Redeemer. Like you, I had said many times, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me whole. How often have I pleaded that as he had all power in heaven and in earth, it would be easy for him to speak me into life. I know in my heart that he is all that I need in heaven or on earth to restore my soul. My poor, foolish mind has been darkened with the deceitfulness of sin; I have been in pursuit of the shadow, and have missed the substance. I have pursued the shadow until I find myself far out of the strait and narrow path that leads to life everlasting. How often have I been tempted to question why God suffered me to turn aside from following after him. How often have I wondered about the prayer that he taught his disciples: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." When I remember again that he said that no man is to say that he is tempted of God, I wonder again. I have thought, too, of that portion which says, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations," as it all is for the trial of our faith. My temptation came in a strange way, and, I must say, unexpectedly to myself. It has come, so far as my poor weak judgment is able to trace it, through my love for his dear saints; it seems as though my poor heart is too fondly attached to them. I idolize them in my heart, until I find myself turning to them, instead of to my blessed Lord, who brought us into this spiritual union. The more I see of his blessed image in them, the more my affections go out to them. I have come into this state during this past year. Before this I could have a feast at home, and I found the dear Savior very precious to my soul; truly he was my comfort by day, and my song in the night; he was my hope, my salvation, my all. Then when this change came, I thought it was from him; I thought that he had caused me to see him manifested in his saints, and I rejoiced in this new found happiness, and never was my heart so tender and loving before. When I was permitted to meet with the dear saints, and to sit under the sound of the gospel of God's love and mercy as it was manifested in his dear Son, I would be so dissolved in love and

tender grief that I could hardly bear it. I would long to turn away to some secret place, where I could give vent to my grief and love. I can never tell or describe how my heart went out to the dear ministers, and my prayers were all for them. How I have lain on my bed at night, and prayed for them that they might be kept from temptation. Feeling the warmth and fervor of my own heart toward them, I felt that unless our blessed God did keep them in his constant care they were exposed to danger. But, as I said before, I cannot understand or describe my condition, only that I constantly long for christian companionship. I feel as though I cannot live without it; it is as if God had removed from me, and left me to look to them for comfort, or left me to make an arm of flesh my strength. I try to pray, and beg that he will be the fullness of all things to me. I beg for this one moment, and the next moment I am nursing this creature love in my heart, so that I know not where I am, or what to do. My striving after him seems in vain, and I know that it is wrong for me to worship the creature instead of the Creator, but I cannot come to Him except he draws me.

Thus I have tried to describe my condition to you, and hope that you will bear with me. I have felt a deep interest in you ever since you wrote me so kindly a year or two ago. I am always glad to see something from your pen, and glad that you went to your appointment, even though you felt to be in the dark. Your account of this was very affecting to me, and when you told of laying your head on the table and crying like a child I was quite overcome, for my heart had been much burdened, and I can truly say that I am a woman of sorrows and acquainted with grief. I have not, however, at any time been deprived of my hope of heaven, but I have much feared a spiritual death here. In times past I had often thought of the dear sisters who are blessed with godly husbands, for I often thought that perhaps they lived for their husbands and families, and that they were so richly blessed in this godly love that their hearts did not reach out to the poor and afflicted of the flock, while we who had no such companionship were led out of ourselves and into Christ as our portion, our sweet abiding-place, our all and in all. I often felt that they were just as precious in God's sight, and just as sure of heaven as we are. But now I have come into the felt need of this companionship since our blessed Redeemer has seen fit to leave me alone. One thing still gives me comfort: the zeal that I feel for the truth. Of late my soul has been much stirred up in defence of our blessed doctrine. Truly I have felt to say with David, "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them mine enemies."

Dear brother, I will now close, and ask you to excuse this intrusion. Your touching description of your late affliction of mind and body caused me to desire to communicate my own sorrows to you. I do hope and pray that your comfort may continue, and that you may be strengthened to gladden the churches by your presence, and that the blessed Jesus may continue to be your testimony. I ask an interest in your prayers.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Nov. 24, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have been reading the history of the christian faith in the dark ages, when antichrist prevailed, and hunting up the true followers of God, or, as they were called in their day, heretics. We have heard in this our day the same appellation given to the Old School Baptists. Were it not for the law they would be exterminated from the earth. There was a remnant in the dark ages who stood firm and praised God while being burned at the stake, proclaiming with assurance that there is a God, who is above all power, and, thank God, there is still a remnant according to the election of grace. One of the martyrs said, Let me exhort you to trust in nothing here, but give yourselves entirely up to God. Also, Be warned not to trust in princes, nor in any of the children of men, for there is no help in them. God's promises are steadfast, and what he has promised he will undoubtedly perform. Also, another remarked, For myself, I trust in his gracious promise; having labored as his servant, I am not afraid of being deserted by him. Where I am, says the gracious Redeemer, there shall my servant be. May the God of heaven preserve you. This language was spoken by Jerome, May 20th, 1416; he was standing firm in the strength of Israel's God. Many true and excellent men in the annals of history have been persecuted by false witnesses and condemned by unjust judges. Many such worthies are mentioned in the Old Testament: Moses, Joshua, Daniel, and almost all the prophets; and in the New Testament: John the Baptist, Stephen and others. Jerome, spoken of before, stood firm in the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, whatever else might have been charged against him. He, knowing the great agony of the suffering Son of God, and also knowing that his enemies could destroy his body, but not his soul, did not fear death, but took off his upper garments, made a short prayer at the stake, to which he was bound, cried out, Bring the torch hither, had I feared death I might have avoided it. Thus he died a faithful follower of the meek and lowly Lamb of God.

Antichrist is proclaimed to have the preeminence above all things, but, thank God, there is a power above man, One who is able to subdue all things unto himself, and he made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. What I have here written concerning the dark ages is in part being done even in the present age to the true church, and from all appearances will continue to be done in fulfillment of the Scriptures. The Arminian world is going wild, and especially those who have professed to know God and the suffering of his Son. They have gone into idolatry, worshiping idols of their own make. They are now limiting their Maker, yet knowing at the same time that they were not brought into the world by means of their own. Remember we are but the dust of the earth, to which we must return. I know that the children of God feel their nothingness and inability to do the things which are pleasing to God. I hope that I have felt the power of him who hath led me, and hath made me willing by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, which gave me utterance to proclaim his power and to say, Thy will be done in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

Dear brethren, in looking at self I feel condemned all along the past, and in the present also, and in thinking of my Benefactor, who has given me such wonderful

blessings, even down to old age, I ask myself, What am I but a sinner saved through the suffering of the blessed Son of God? He is holy and perfect, I am imperfect and poor, but I hope that through his sufferings I have become rich in the knowledge of the truth, and that I am numbered among those who have come up out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Jesus said to such ones, In me ye shall have peace. "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." Also it is declared that they which will live godly in this present evil world shall suffer persecution; but let us continue in the things which we have learned, and seen, and heard, and have been assured of, knowing of whom we have learned them. We are also commanded to hold fast the form of sound words, which we have heard of the Lord, in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus. Those who have desired to be wise in man's wisdom have become fools for Christ's sake when called by grace. God's foreknowledge and counsel and decrees will stand when all things else shall fail. Our God had a people centuries ago, and they were persecuted for standing firm in the doctrine of God. He also has a people now, who must suffer reproach and persecution for his name's sake. He has promised never to leave nor forsake them, but he will receive them unto himself at his coming.

The letter written by Elder Beal for the Maine Association, and published in the SIGNS of the 15th inst., was a good letter to me. It was evidently written in a humble spirit, with simple trust in God to direct his mind and pen, with the desire to know of a surety that Christ died and rose again for him. Such expressions touch a tender chord of love and fellowship in me for those whom I would love to see and hear preach God's truth. Elder Beal's whole letter was edifying and instructive to one who is desirous of knowing the truth. It appeared that, like myself, he is old and traveling in the low ground of sorrows, doubts and fears, but I trust that we both have hope of immortal life, which is not seen by the natural eye, but by the spiritual eye, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We cannot fully know this while in the body of clay, but I trust that we have a hope of immortality, and that we shall dwell around the throne and sing the praise of redeeming love. May God bless the dear brother, and all the redeemed family, is my prayer.

I hope that what I have written here, if published, may be read in the spirit of forbearance, as I hope it has been written by one who desires to know the truth.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

O. B. HICKERSON.

ECCLESIASTES VII. 13.

"CONSIDER the work of God: for who can make that straight which he hath made crooked?"

DEAR EDITORS:—The words of the wise man, Solomon, in the above quoted text are upon my mind, and therefore, by your permission, and especially by the help and guidance of the Lord, I have concluded to employ a few moments in writing upon them for the SIGNS. The subject is sublime, and I would write for the benefit of the children of God scattered abroad. I make the attempt with much diffidence, feeling as I do my weakness and incompetency to write upon this, or upon any other subject revealed in the word of our adorable Savior. My littleness, inability and in-

significance, my poverty, destitution and affliction of soul, my blind unbelief and a multitude of worldly things, often baffle and turn me from sacred duty, and cause me to quake and fear exceedingly. Without the wisdom and excellent knowledge of God, all effort and every suggestion upon my part would prove vain and of no consequence; however, when the soul is animated by a sense of eternal truth which is shut up as fire in the bones, one can no longer refrain, but must bow to the great command of high heaven's eternal King with solemn reverence and resignation to his will.

The word "consider" in the text, means to think upon with care, seriousness and precision. It is said that the Preacher sought to find out acceptable words, and that which was written was upright, even words of truth. This word "consider" also appears in many different places, both in the Old and New Testament Scriptures. The circumstances in many instances are given, and there are connected with this word many warnings and reproofs, both to national Israel and to the church or kingdom of God under the new covenant. The work of God in the creation and in its development is fraught with mysteries beyond my finite comprehension. The creation and multiplying of man are equally strange in all their bearings and vast ramifications; all have their origin, order and existence in the mind of God and through his mighty fiat. The text quoted at the head of this article is prominent among all the other Scriptures given by inspiration of God, and is applicable to the church, and worthy of all acceptation, that we through patience and comfort of the same might have hope. "Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight which he hath made crooked?" The supreme, eternal, unchangeable God created and fashioned the universe, with all that it contains, and it is marvelous in our eyes. When we for a moment let our minds run out from mountains high to valleys low, from land to land, from ocean to ocean, from earth to the bright lights of heaven, we are lost in the immeasurable heights and depths of the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty over all things, to make things straight or crooked just as it pleased him. All the religious pretenders in the world can never change one thing to make it other than our God determined and appointed in his will. This is indicated in the text under consideration. It is declared that he hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. "The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproof. He divided the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud. By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?"—Job xxvi. 11–14. Through the vicissitudes of this time state our God has especially cared for and preserved his people, his church, the bride, the Lamb's wife, therefore he declares that one generation shall praise his works to another, and shall declare his mighty acts. He said that all his works should praise him and all his saints shall bless him. They shall speak of the glory of his kingdom, and talk of his power. O what consoling grace, and what precious promises in the great Head of the church. None save those whom the blessed Christ redeemed from the earth will ever know anything about the spiritual significance of Bible doctrine, and they know only

by revelation of Jesus Christ. God is the Rock, his work is perfect. Whatsoever he doeth shall stand forever. In consideration of the majesty and the wonderful works and supremacy of God there are lessons to the profit and wisdom of the poor and afflicted ones of the Master's fold, who are led by the Spirit of God, and who have tasted of the good word of the Lord, and of the powers of the world to come. Even in the midst of fiery trials, or passing through the valley of Baca, they make it a well, the rain filleth the pools; yet our stubborn nature and rebellious hearts bring us low, and by reason of indulgence in the flesh trouble befalls us and we go down fathoms deep under the waves of humiliation and sorrow, feeling that our little barque will be stranded upon the rocks and sands of this sin-cursed world. But when the Lord appears on the shore our darkness is turned to light, and we again rejoice in the fact that our High Priest ever lives to make intercession for us according to the will of God. Moses said in his song concerning Israel, "For they are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding in them. O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end." They forgot that God was the Rock of their salvation, that his work was perfect and that all his ways were judgment. He is a God of truth, without iniquity, just and right, even unto this good day. The song of Moses is of vital interest to the church, or spiritual Israel, in her visible organization. The sin of covetousness and the allurements of the world have produced much confusion and indifference among the churches in various parts of the country. But let us consider the wonderful works of the Lord, and look to the rock from whence we are hewn, to the hole of the pit from which we are digged. Solomon in his wise maxims, observations and comparisons is very instructive to me; he portrays the deplorable condition of the church in the old covenant time, their carnality and waywardness, their impiety and negligence of the statutes and judgments of God. He said, "I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction." O that the Lord may enable us to take heed to these wholesome declarations of his word. His mercy endureth forever, and his counsels to all eternity. How beautiful is the doctrine of predestination; the righteous decrees of God are interwoven through all the Scriptures of truth, yet only those who are born of the Spirit and taught in the school of Christ can ever realize this. These things are by virtue of the blood of the new covenant, which is ordered in all things and sure, implanted in their hearts and written in their minds, so that they see and comprehend the riches of God. The foundation standeth sure. The weight of the importance and utility of this grand theme has grown in my mind as I have written, but I must desist. May God bless this to the comfort, peace and consolation of Old School Baptists, and all lovers of truth. May the dear Lord continue to preserve and prosper the SIGNS, and crown the labors of our dear editors and publishers with success.

Affectionately in gospel bonds,

ASA HOWARD.

KELLER, Texas, Oct. 30, 1911.

ELK, CITY Kansas, Sept. 12, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Many times in the past five years I have had a desire to write and tell you some of the goodness and mercy of the blessed Redeemer to this poor, unworthy sinner. Being disgusted with this live and do theory: the good works of man, I trust it is the Spirit this morning that is bidding me, Go join thyself to the chariot, and they will tell thee the way of life. Five years ago last September, one blessed day the Lord appeared unto me at my home; it seemed that the very air I breathed was filled with the presence of God as I went about my work singing praises unto him. I went out in the yard to feed some little chickens, and seemed to suddenly be carried away from this old earth, as if the sun had burst through on a cloudy day; a wonderful peace seemed to flood my soul and spread over all the earth, and these words came to my mind, How joyful I feel; the Lord seems very near me. I stood thus enraptured for a few moments, and all was gone; then I went into the house, and from that time on there remained One with me that told me all things that ever I did, and I began to see my sinful state before the all-wise and merciful God, and to call on him for mercy. Immediately after this I had a terrible dream: I dreamed my father was dead, and the grief and sorrow of that dream is ever before me, and I experienced it, too, two years later, when my little brother was taken from us. It was the first death in our family, and I think if it had not been the Lord's will to keep me the grief would have been more than I could have borne. Since then I have lost my dear old father, and mother is living alone. It was always my desire to live with her, but I find it is not in me to direct my way. So time has gone on and five years have passed, and I have been baptized by a Freewill Baptist minister, and have gone to this meeting and that meeting, but found nothing to satisfy my hungry soul, and now my brother is a Holiness preacher, and he spent Saturday night and Sunday with me. There is a big Holiness meeting in progress in this town. He said, "Sister, why do you not do something? Why, you will never get any place. Do you not know there is a time coming when you will have to give an account of all this? Pray, testify, help some one else into the kingdom." My husband is also of the same belief, but these words are continually with me: What am I, that God is mindful of me? What can I do to save any one? salvation is of God. The wind bloweth where it listeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit. It is the gift of God. Many dark and cloudy days have I experienced since the Sun of Righteousness spread over my soul, but my thoughts always go back to that memorable day, and these words comfort me: I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Many times as the days of this life are swiftly passing, never to return, I am made to cry, Lord, teach me to pray. Again, in the spring of 1911 I saw that God is God, and that his will must be done. While I cannot say this from the heart in some of the rough paths of life, yet I pray, Lord, teach me thy ways in all things. Thus life glides on, and I have some sweet and many bitter days, and I believe the Lord is the author of them all, and he will bring me through the dark places in life. My hope is in him; in him do I trust, and not in myself. I know not what to pray for as I ought, much less how to guide and direct my life. While my life is far from holy, I hope that I worship God in spirit and

in truth, and that his grace is sufficient for me.

Yours in a precious hope,

EMMA MORRIS.

WORTHINGTON, Minn., Nov. 28, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I fear I do wrong in calling you brethren, for I esteem you as God's chosen people, and I am such a sinner it seems that I cannot be one of them. I am a man of unclean lips, and feel my vileness, and although I try to watch my thoughts, words and actions, I find I am as prone to sin as the sparks to fly upward, and with the apostle Paul can say, "I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." In my heart I would love to walk after the Spirit and be with God's people. I am here alone, and have no one to talk with upon spiritual things. I love to read the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which I had been taking long before Elder Gilbert Beebe died, and shed tears of joy when others tell my experience better than I can myself. My heart goes out to them in fellowship and love, and I count them near and dear. Elder Chick preached the first gospel sermon I ever heard, at Church Creek, Dorchester Co., Md. His text was, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." I have often thought I would like to talk with him and all the dear ones who write for the SIGNS; they speak of the things I love; they tell of the power of God, of his predestination, election and foreordination, and this doctrine is precious to me. When I look back over my afflictions I seem to see God's hand in all, and can say, It is for my good and his glory, and is all right. Jesus said, Without me ye can do nothing. Dear brethren, I mourn because I cannot mourn, and feel that I am the greatest sinner on the earth. I look at men of the world, and they seem better than I see myself. If I am a child of God I must say with Paul, the least of all. I am not worthy to be with you, but earnestly desire an interest in your prayers, and my prayer for Zion is that all may be steadfast to the end. If the Lord spares my life until next August I shall be eighty years old. This may be the last time I shall write you. With love to all the dear children of God, I will close.

Your unworthy brother,

HENRY JAMES.

JAMESTOWN, Ohio, December, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—I wish to have your paper for 1912, but I suppose I will need it no longer, as my eyesight is failing. I have taken your paper ever since it was first published, and as I have not been able to attend my meetings for some time it is to me like preaching. On the 16th of April I will have passed the one hundredth milestone of my life.

Wishing you success in the cause you are contending for, I remain very truly,

VIOLET HATCH.

FARMINGTON, Ill., Dec. 19, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I will write you a few lines and send two dollars for the SIGNS for the year 1912. I have received the last number for the year, have read it through, and was interested in brother Oliver's letter that brother Scates sent you. I am always interested in such letters, and the only reason I can give is that misery loves company. I was also pleased when you said at the close of brother Oliver's letter, "We are glad to publish such letters," for then you must feel to be in company with us. I do feel that such are the Lord's people, and that gives me hope. I was also much interested in brother Ford's letter, and thought it was able and comforting. All the others were also comforting.

I am at present very poorly with lumbago; have had it about one week. I wish you a Happy New Year. Pray for this poor, helpless sinner.

Yours in hope, E. D. VARNES.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1912.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

It has been our custom for a number of years to begin the new year, and the new volume of the Signs, with an address to our readers under the above heading, and perhaps this will be expected of us at this the beginning of another year. As a traveler coming to some height on his journey will sometimes pause and look around him for a little, so it seems but natural at the close of the old year and the beginning of the new that we all should for a little time pause and look over the past and think of the future. This we have been constrained to do at this time, and this, we doubt not, almost all our readers also have done. Each one of us has some personal remembrances and some personal anticipations, no doubt, but beside what is purely personal there are multitudes of things, both in the past and to be anticipated for the future, in which all of us share. There have been common experiences of joy and of sorrow in the past, and we all look forward to the future with similar fears, hopes and desires. It is in this common experience that we find the bonds of mutual sympathy and fellowship, and even in those things which may seem peculiarly the personal heritage of each one by himself there is yet no broad gulf of separation or difference. "There hath no temptation," said the apostle, "taken you but such as is common to man," and we are sure that no deliverance has come to any of us but what is also common to man. Naturally in our human life there are great divergences, but yet in any neighborhood there is enough in the life of each one that is also in the life of all the rest to cause a union of sympathy and of understanding among them all. All alike know what sorrow means, though all may not have had just that special sorrow that some other one has. Affliction may come in different ways, but affliction is, after all, affliction in all. So the joys of life are many and varied, but yet joy is joy, and in both the affliction and the joy men must and do have sympathy with each other. All this is much more the case with those who are citizens of the kingdom of heaven and fellow-citizens with the saints. One said, "I muse on the years that are past." As the number of the years that are behind us increase, such musings also increase. So far as this life is concerned, to some of us there is much more to think upon in the past than can be anticipated in the future. To the aged there is but little of the future to anticipate, and all of us as we grow older come to spend more and more of our time in recalling past joys and sorrows. With natural men, who are of the earth, and whose whole life is in the things of earth, there is little else to think about, but with those who hope in the word of God, and to whom has been given that life which is eternal and spiritual, the past is but as a moment compared with that which is revealed in them that takes hold upon eternity; still they also must think upon

the past, and as they do there must be mingled with their thoughts the comforts of God which delight the soul. Believers as they muse upon the things that are past find their minds much occupied with their own failures, their own unbelief, their own rebellion, their own shameful denials of the dear Lord. These remembrances must often occupy their attention, and produce much sorrow and pain with humble confessions before God. How many must say, There is nothing in all my doings, sayings or thoughts of which I can boast or in which I can find pleasure. The Israelites of old were told to remember all the way in which they had been led, that they might be proved and tried. What was there in all their past for which they would not sorrow, and which did not call for repentance? In this we see the pattern of our own failures. How fretful we have been at God's dealings with us. How often we have murmured, as did they. How often we have been heady and disobedient and rebellious. Musing over these things there can arise in our hearts nothing but shame and sorrow. How many of us, looking over this past year, as we are now at its close, can find anything of which to be glad in our own hearts and lives? We must all confess, as regards this one year just past, that in all things we have come short, and in most things utterly failed. We have done the things we ought not, and have left undone the things which we ought to have done. If we bring all our works, even those which have been done in the service of the Lord, before him, what can we say but, Lord, they are all mixed with sin, and are not worthy of thy acceptance. That which thou hast given us, and which we desire to return to thee, has been so marred in our hands that it is not worthy of thy acceptance at all? But, on the other hand, there are things to make us glad; these are not our things, but the Lord's things. Can we not in some measure understand what the inspired apostle meant when he said, "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing"? We have noted a little of that which produces sorrow in the believer, yet with it all there is rejoicing, and so let us muse at the beginning of this year on the glad things. Always rejoicing, yet always sorrowful. The one is not without the other; the one cannot be without the other; the sorrow is the occasion for the rejoicing. Do we sorrow that we are such sinners against God? the depth of this sorrow marks the corresponding height of the rejoicing which we have in Christ Jesus and his salvation. Vile sins demand and find his perfect righteousness. Where sin abounded, grace, the grace of imputed righteousness, much more abounds. One can say, I am sorrowful that I have sinned, but I am rejoicing that I have a righteousness without flaw, which covers and hides all my sins. There is sorrow that comes through the trials of life, such as afflictions, persecutions, temptations and heavy crosses; all these the brethren to whom Paul was writing knew and felt, and Paul also knew them for himself, yet these things are the occasions for the display of sovereign mercy and power in sustaining and holding us fast on our way, and God does then display his arm in the thick cloud, and by faith seeing his arm of power and love we can and do rejoice, and the inhabitants of the Rock sing, even when the waves dash highest. We must be sorrowful at all our failures then, but there is rejoicing that the sovereign God and Savior does not fail. The sorrows of the way are set over

against the hope that is set before us beyond this life of affliction. We believe in a heaven to come. What rejoicing must have filled the heart of David when he said, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." There is rejoicing then because of present mercies and because of future anticipations, and our loving God and Father has set these things before us that we may have joy as well as sorrow.

As we look back now over the years that are past, with the utter failure that has been at all times in ourself, and think of the future year, which we enter upon as weak and imperfect as ever, there could be no element of gladness at all did we not also remember the help of the Lord, which has been vouchsafed to us, and from it derive hope that he will also be with us in the future. We could but look with hopeless despair upon the days and months of the coming year, with the burdens and duties which they may hold for us, were it not that we are also helped to remember the good hand of God which has dealt out unnumbered mercies to us in all these past years, and also that he knows no change, and that where he once loves he never leaves, but loves unto the end. He has forgiven again and again our sins, he has turned our mistakes into his sure mercies, he has made our very failures and sins to work out his sovereign purposes of grace and mercy, so that while we sorrow over the one, yet we can but rejoice over the other. In ourself there has been nothing that was not worthy of blame and shame, but in him all has been controlled and overruled for good. We have and do feel that in this we have fellowship with Peter, who so shamefully denied his Lord, but whose denial taught him, after all, a needed lesson concerning his own former vainglory and self-sufficiency. Peter could never again say, Though all men deny thee, yet will not I. When Pharisaical pride arises in the heart of God's children, and they become self-sufficient, and are forgetful of their need of his sovereign grace, he sometimes suffers them to fall into the sin that denies him, and, through this fall, they become aware of the former still greater fall within, and, like Peter, go out and weep bitterly, not so much for the denial in word, of which they have been guilty, as for the still greater denial, when they, like Peter, said, Though all men do this or that against thee, I will not. How very little of ourselves do we know after all. How often we have found in our hearts thoughts, desires and purposes that only a little before we would not have believed could be found there; thus we learn from day to day that the seeds of all the ills that grow are sown in our nature; in their season they come up like weeds upon the surface of the earth. Many times have we, for ourself, gone over our whole garden and have cut off or dug out every weed in sight, and felt that surely the garden will continue now free from weeds all the rest of the season, only to find in a few days that just as many weeds as ever were springing up, and that they must be destroyed again; and in like manner, when occasion offers, new weeds spring up in our hearts, and sometimes appear in our lives, and the garden which we may have thought free from them is again unsightly with their presence. We, like Peter, do not know the hidden evils of our heart, and so are prone to vainglorying, but the loving Father will not suffer us to be destroyed in our self-esteem, and so he gives us to see how weak we are, and that without

him we cannot endure for a moment. It is good to be thus humbled and abased before the Lord. It is good to come, at all times, to know that vain is the help of man, and that all our help must come from God. It is profitable to remember the past, for our past experiences prove to us these two things, viz., our sinful weakness and the sovereign and almighty grace of God.

As we now think of our connection with the SIGNS these well-nigh fifty years past, for many years as an occasional correspondent, and for the past seventeen years as one of the editors, we can hardly tell which feeling is the most prominent in our mind, sorrow at our many shortcomings and failures, or rejoicing at the sustaining grace of God, for we do feel sure that his grace has been ministered to us all along the way, else we should have always utterly failed, and given up in despair. But the grace of God ministered to us in many ways, and under many different circumstances, has been sufficient, and so we continue to the present time. We trust that we do desire to magnify the grace that has been ministered to us, and that holy name in which salvation is revealed. The kindness and forbearance of our subscribers have abounded toward us, but this also is one of the ways in which our God ministers grace and mercy. This kindness in the hearts of the brethren was his gift to them, for which they and we have need to give thanks. We do not, and never have, felt equal to the place which has been ours in connection with the SIGNS.

We cannot feel to draw this new year's address to a close without making mention of the dear brethren with whom we have been associated these seventeen years. We recall, and would make mention of the kindness of Elder Benton Jenkins and our brother Benton Beebe, with whom we were associated until the Lord called them away from earth. We have many pleasant memories of many friends and brethren in all these past years, but none more pleasant than the memory of our association with these two brethren. For many years they gave their best thoughts and endeavors for the prosperity of the SIGNS, and in defense of the doctrine of God our Savior. This most of our readers know, and since their departure, and the association of Elder Ker with us in the conduct of the SIGNS, we have been, both of us, helped, and both of us desire to continue to hold forth through the paper the same doctrine that was dear to its founder, Elder Gilbert Beebe. We have never felt to deserve all these mercies from the Lord, and we owe a debt of gratitude to the publishers and to our correspondents which we feel that we can never pay, but it is our consolation that they have their reward.

In conclusion, we desire to entreat our dear Lord and Master that his mercy might continue to us, and to all with whom we are associated in connection with the conduct of the SIGNS. May his richest blessings rest upon all who love his name. May the truth, which we do love, always appear in the columns of the SIGNS so long as it shall please God to continue the paper among his people. All these blessings may our sovereign Lord bestow in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior. C.

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

WE are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

DEUTERONOMY XXXIV. 7.

ELDER BEEBE:—Some time last summer I asked you to give your views on Deut. xxxiv. 7, and you gave notice in the next paper that you would attend to it, but it must have escaped your recollection. You will oblige me by giving your views on that text now. ISAAC C. GARRISON.

CHEVIOT, Ohio, Feb. 28, 1865.

The text reads thus: "And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated." There were many remarkable things connected with the death and burial, as well as the life of this distinguished servant of God. He was born in Egypt, and at a time of violent and cruel persecution; his preservation from the fury of the tyrant when but an unconscious infant was truly wonderful; his home in the royal palace of him who had sent forth the murderous decree to slay him, and his being adopted and succored by Pharaoh's daughter until he came to years, show the perfect control our God has over the wrath of men. But in his death it is remarkable that he died in the land of Moab and was buried there by the Lord, and his sepulchre no man could ever find.

Regarded only as a natural incident, it was remarkable that Moses at the age of a hundred and twenty years should have retained his strength and faculties unimpaired up to the time of his death; but wonders of still greater magnitude were prefigured in all the history of this man of God, and we believe that every incident of the life and death and burial of Moses is full of spiritual instruction for the people of God. We have not time or space, nor is it needful in answering the inquiry of our friend, to dwell upon the figurative import of more than what is set forth in our text. First, that he was a hundred and twenty years old when he died. Second, that at that age he was unimpaired in vigor and perception.

In the figurative import of our subject Moses personates the law, as holding dominion over the people of God until its dominion over them is annulled by their redemption from its power by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, having risen from the dead, succeeds and supersedes the law, as Joshua succeeded and superseded Moses in leading the tribes of Israel into the promised land. Although Moses and Aaron, representing the Jewish law and priesthood, were sent to lead forth the oppressed Hebrews from Egypt, and to conduct them in their meanderings in the wilderness, they could not conduct them into the promised land. Aaron died at Mount Hor, by the coast of the land of Edom, (Num. xx. 23,) and Moses, as we have seen, at or near Mount Nebo, in the land of Moab, thus signifying to us that neither the works of the law nor the sacrifices of the Levitical priesthood can bring the children of God into their promised gospel inheritance of rest.

The age of Moses, to our mind, only expresses the idea of his being full of years, and points to the continuance of the law and the prophets until John, or the introduction of the gospel dispensation. As a prophet, Moses himself said to Israel: "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you." —Acts iii. 22. The hundred and twenty years fulfilled the measure of days which God allotted to Moses, and figuratively signifies the amount of time that God's redeemed children must be held under tutors and governors, differing nothing from servants, though heirs of immortality.

It is a happy consideration to the children of God that Moses was not allowed to pass over Jordan and into the promised land. It is true Moses from Mount Pisgah was allowed to see the land afar off, even as the law anticipated the glory of the kingdom of Christ; but if Moses had followed the ark of God through Jordan into the land of promised rest, it would have signified that the law should still hold dominion over the saints under the gospel dispensation. Jordan was to the Hebrews then what gospel baptism is now to those who believe and have entered into that rest which remains to the people of God. But we will pass to the consideration of the second part of our subject.

"His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated." Taking Moses, in our text, as representing the law, as we feel warranted by the example of Paul, (2 Cor. iii. 13, 17,) in the piercing eye and undiminished force of Moses to the very end of his ministry, we have a striking illustration of the keen perception of the law in taking cognizance of the thoughts and intents of our hearts, and its natural force in holding delinquents until the utmost jot and tittle of its demands are canceled. The eye of the law of God was not dim when from the first transgression in the garden, through the vista of succeeding ages it could see and testify of the coming of the great law-fulfiller, and with sufficient natural force hold him responsible for the transgressions of all his members. In all its types and predictions the undimmed eye of the law was steadfastly fixed on him who should come, as in the volume of the book it was written of him not to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfill them; to do and suffer all that was written of him in the law, and in the prophets, and in the psalms. And when the fullness of time had come, and God sent forth his own Son, who was made under the law to redeem them that were under its dominion and curse, the eye of the law was quick to recognize him, and to testify of him; and when the last great struggle came on, although, to follow the figure, the law had attained its hundred and twentieth year, old as it was, and about to yield its dominion to our spiritual Joshua, yet its eye could distinctly see all the iniquities of the people of God as laid on him, and with infallible accuracy summed up the crushing aggregate and exacted the last jot and tittle at his bleeding hands. Nor was its natural force abated. The nature of the law was inexorable and its force irresistible; stronger than the foundations of the universe were its inflexible demands, for although heaven and earth shall pass away, not a jot or tittle of the law could fail until all was fulfilled. But perhaps the omniscience and the omnipotent force of the law has been more clearly taught and more sensibly understood by the children of God in their own personal experience. "When the commandment [or law] came, sin revived, and I died." Reader, hast thou known the searching scrutiny and almighty power of the divine law in thine own case? When first quickened by the entrance of divine life did you not indulge a hope that the law was blind, or that the eye of the law was at least dim, to the enormity of thy guilt? Did you not flatter yourself that it would be lenient with you, and in pity overlook what you in ignorance had done? Did you not propose in your mind to compromise the matter by doing the best you could, in hope that the law would accept that, and not exact a perfect and perpetual obedience, such as you could never

attain unto? But no good resolutions, no penitential sighs, no ardent prayers, no flowing tears nor overflowing grief could dim the eye of the law. It looked into the deep and hidden recesses of your heart, the secret chambers of your soul, and dragged into the broad glare of light such depravity and guilt as you had never dreamed were lurking in your nature. You found that you could hide nothing from the piercing eye of God's holy law. Guilt-stricken and in despair, you laid your hand upon your mouth and cried in deep conviction, Guilty and unclean! Nor, in your case, was the natural force, the force of that law whose nature was holy, just and good, which is exceeding broad, and invested with the authority of God himself, in the least degree abated; it still possessed all the force which it displayed when its thunder tones made Sinai tremble to her base, the mountains skip like rams and the hills like lambs. You died; all your legal hopes gave up the ghost, for you could not meet its stern demands nor hide from its searching gaze, and never will you be permitted to forget that the eye of the law was not dim, nor its natural force abated.

The reason assigned why Moses and Aaron could not go into the promised land, was because of the smiting of the rock from whence water came forth for the salvation of Israel. Paul said, "And that Rock was Christ."—1 Cor. x. 4. If then the apostle could recognize in the smitten rock a type of Christ, we may reasonably conclude that Moses and Aaron in the same connection represented the law and the Levitical priesthood, and the application of the figure is seen when he who is the Rock of our salvation was smitten by the law, and from him, as the fountain of living water, the river of life gushed forth. But the law could hold dominion over God's redeemed people no longer; it could pursue them no farther. Not because of any inefficiency in the law to execute its legitimate or natural functions, for its eye was not dim, nor its natural force abated. Like Moses in the figure, retaining all his powers and strength of vision until he died, so the law remained in all its force until its demands were fulfilled, and then, in full force and vigor, it died in all its relations to the Israel of God, the same as Moses' power and dominion ceased to the Hebrews when he expired on Mount Nebo and was succeeded by Joshua, whose name and work made him the special type of our spiritual Joshua, or Jesus, as both names signify Savior. Now then, we see that Moses could not bring the chosen tribes to rest—to that promised land which prefigured the gospel kingdom of Christ. But Jesus, our spiritual Joshua, or leader, having received from the rod in Moses' hand the stroke due to our transgressions, having fulfilled all the demands of the law and justice of God, has finished transgression and made an end of sin; has brought in everlasting righteousness. He has redeemed his people from the dominion, as well as from the curse of the law, and they are now dead to the law by the body of Christ, and the old husband to whom they were bound being dead to them, there remained no legal impediment to their marriage unto Him that is risen from the dead, that they should henceforth bring forth fruit unto God. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."—Romans viii. 1, 2.

"Israel, rejoice, now Joshua leads;
He'll bring your tribes to rest;
So far the Savior's name exceeds
The ruler and the priest."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 15, 1865.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Nov. 14th, 1911, at the residence of the bride's parents, near Berlin, Md., Clarence W. Hauley and Bertha E. Barber.

By Elder S. Ketchum, at the home of the bride's parents, York, Nebr., Nov. 28th, 1911, Charles S. McNeill and Miss Minnie L. Stevens, daughter of Deacon and sister Stevens, of the Old School Baptist Church at York, both of York, Nebr.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Asbury Kelley departed this life at his home in Salisbury, Md., Jan. 14th, 1911, after a long illness. He was born Dec. 8th, 1832. Brother Kelley was baptized by the writer in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Indiantown, Wicomico Co., Md., in 1875, and lived a consistent member for a number of years. At last his mind gave way, and he had to be cared for and watched by the family.

The writer conducted his funeral service, and tried to comfort the sorrowing ones, after which his body was laid away in the cemetery in Salisbury to rest until the archangel's voice and the trump of God shall sound.

ALSO,

Mary Kelley departed this life at the home of her daughter, Anna Fooks, in Salisbury, Md., Oct. 29th, 1911, after a short but severe attack of pneumonia. Sister Kelley was the widow of Asbury Kelley; they were united in marriage in 1857, and to them were born ten children, two dying in infancy, leaving three sons and five daughters to mourn for a kind and loving mother. She was baptized at the same time with her husband by the writer. Sister Kelley was a lovely christian; she enjoyed nothing more than to talk of the things of the kingdom. She seemed willing to depart, and tried to express what she saw awaiting her. We all miss these departed ones.

The writer conducted the funeral service with the ability given to comfort the mourning ones. Her body was then laid beside her companion.

ALSO,

Peter C. Pruitt died at his home near Stockton, Worcester Co., Md., Nov. 12th, 1911. He was the youngest son of Elder Lazarus Pruitt. He was born Oct. 13th, 1840, and married to Mary Payne in 1867. To them were born several children; his wife died Feb. 9th, 1887. The deceased never made a public profession of his hope, but bore the fruit of a tree of righteousness. He was a regular attendant at our meetings for forty years, and a subscriber and reader of the SIGNS as long as I can remember, but feared to take the wonderful step by declaring what great things the Lord had done for him.

The writer was called to officiate at his funeral, which he did, and tried to comfort the mourners, after which the body was laid by the side of his wife to rest until the morning of the resurrection.

T. M. POULSON.

Elder William A. Thompson was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, May 26th, 1831, and died at his home in Wichita, Kansas, Sept. 24th, 1911, aged 80 years, 3 months and 28 days. He was a minister of the Primitive Baptist Church for over fifty years, and often traveled many miles to tell of the love of Jesus for poor sinners. His death was due to heart failure, and was instantaneous. He died as he had lived for so many years, with that strong and beautiful faith in Jesus and his righteousness. He leaves to mourn their loss his aged widow and seven children, four daughters and three sons: Mrs. George Hartenbower, of Bloomington, Ill.; Mrs. Harvey Elder, of Wichita, Kansas; William Thompson, of Tonica, Ill.; Frank Thompson, of Rupert, Idaho; George Thompson, of Blackwell, Oklahoma, and the Misses Anna and Viola Thompson, at home. Our home is very lonely, and we know that father's chair is ever vacant here, but we feel that he has gone to that beautiful home beyond and is now with Jesus, whom he preached and loved so well while here on earth. With a hope that we shall some day meet to never part again, I am a daughter in sorrow,

VIOLA THOMPSON.

WICHITA, Kansas.

Adlanty C. Moore Hutchinson was born in Wood County, Ohio, May 24th, 1855, and died at Findlay, Ohio, Nov. 23rd, 1911. She was united in marriage with B. F. Hutchinson, April 23rd, 1871, and to that union were born seven sons, two of whom preceded her in death. She united with the Old School Baptist Church called Sugar Creek, situated in Putnam County, Ohio, in the year 1891, and retained her membership in that church until her death. Sister Hutchinson was peaceful and quiet, always manifesting love and fellowship for the brethren, and loved the peace of Zion. She was a loving, faithful and dutiful wife, a devoted mother, a kind sister and neighbor. She suffered for eighteen months with complete paralysis of the left side. Her husband gave up all other cares to give her all his attention as long as life lasted, and now is old and broken with sorrow. We trust that He who holds our lives in his hand will be the ever-present help in this his time of trouble, as well as the comforter of the children and grandchildren. She leaves to mourn her demise her husband, five sons, ten grandchildren and many brethren and sisters among the churches, also many neighbors and friends, who sorrow not as those who have no hope.

NEWTON PETERS.

George Lee departed this life Dec. 12th, 1911, aged about 63 years. He was baptized July 5th, 1896, in the fellowship of the Burdett Old School Baptist Church, by Elder C. Bogardus, and remained a consistent member until his death. He leaves a widow and five children to mourn the loss of a loving father. Our loss is his gain. I believe he is at rest. May we all live as uncomplainingly as he, to the honor and glory of God. NORMAN BROWN.

NOTICE.

PLEASE give notice in the SIGNS that my telegraph and telephone station is Clarks Summit, Pa., instead of Glenburn, Pa. I have the new phone in my house.

D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Wm. Allen, Okla., $2.75; M. M. Rounsavell, N. Y., $3.00; Martha Beardsley, Ill., $1.00; J. A. Tandy, Okla., $1.00; Catharine Elmendorf, Ill., $1.00; Sarah Hawk, Ind., $1.00; Richard Waller, Mo., $1.00; Mrs. John Pettit, N. Y., $3.00; Mrs. Allie Gooch Reid, N. C., $1.00; Mrs. N. E. Askew, Ark., $2.00.—Total, $16.75.

MEETINGS.

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Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Lord willing, until further notice Elder J. T. Rowe will preach in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., Washington, D. C., on the third Sunday in each month, at 2:30 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor.

THOMAS ALDEN, Deacon.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of southern California meets every third Sunday at 2 p. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in Kimmy Hall, No. 12 Third St., in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., will meet on the fourth Sunday of each month at 3 p. m., second floor Pythian Temple, Ninth St., N. W., near K St. (Take elevator.) We are without a pastor at present, but wish to continue to meet together as a church, and invite all members and friends to meet with us.

JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

"Should Children of Primitive Baptists Attend Sunday Schools?"

The above entitled article was published in narrative form in ten consecutive numbers in the *Messenger of Peace* during 1911. The Sunday School question is fully yet kindly discussed, and its true character, together with the duty and responsibility of Primitive Baptist parents to themselves, their children and their divine Lord, clearly brought out. Since then many brethren have expressed a desire that it be published in book form, and some have urged me to do so. I am not financially able to have the work done unless a sufficient number of advanced subscribers can be obtained to cover the cost. It will make a book of about eighty-five pages, five by seven inches. I can have it published and bound in limp covers for about 25 cents per copy, and in substantial board covers, neatly finished, for about 40 cents per copy, postage prepaid. Those desiring the work will confer a favor by sending a card notifying me of the fact, and the style of binding desired, and if enough such orders are received the work will be published early in 1912, and when ready for distribution (due notice of which will be given) the money may be sent. D. W. OWENS.

HERSMAN, Illinois.

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All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 80. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1912. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"CHRISTIANS."

(Acts xi. 26; 1 Peter iv. 16.)

THIS name is a sacred and blessed one, which only those who are Christ's have any right to. It is true there are many millions in this world who are designated christians, but they are "without Christ." (Eph. ii. 12.) Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his, and in that day Christ will say unto multitudes, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."—Matt. vii. 23. "The disciples were called christians first in Antioch." This verse of the Scriptures will give us a glimpse of one feature of christians: they are disciples of Christ. They have been brought to sit at his feet and hear his word. (Luke x. 39.) It was written of old that this should be so: "Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words."—Deut. xxxiii. 3. Saith the apostle, "Ye have heard him, and have been taught of him, as the truth is in Jesus;" they have learned Christ. The whole congregation of christians derive their name from him who is the Head of the congregation. Unto him they are gathered, and Christ saith, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."—Heb. ii. 12. Indeed, so intimate is the oneness of Christ and his own that he and his people are called Christ, 1 Cor. xii. 12: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ."

Christ. This name ever peculiarly sets forth the relations of the incarnate Word to the elect of mankind. The name Lord Jesus Christ, what a name! Look into the New Testament Scriptures, see how this name is used by the inspired writers. Sometimes our Friend and Redeemer is spoken of by the name Lord, sometimes Christ, sometimes Jesus, sometimes Jesus Christ, or Christ Jesus, sometimes our Lord Jesus Christ, or Christ Jesus the Lord, and if the eyes of our understanding are enlightened by the Holy Ghost we shall find there is a sacred, precious reason why the one name is used, and not the other forms of the name. I have many times in my reading and meditations upon the Scriptures felt it was sa-

credly wonderful how the apostles spoke and wrote the name of the Savior: Lord–Jesus–Christ, but I cannot at present enter fully into this. O believer, let the Scriptures be your meditation day and night; they are written for our learning. The name Christ signifies the Anointed, and "this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ."—Acts xvii. 3. To the apostles and the church of God it was revealed; yes, many infallible proofs were given that Jesus is the Christ, and they confessed this unto God, saying, "Of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."—Acts iv. 27, 28. And the apostle Peter testified in the house of Cornelius "how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power."—Acts x. 38. The eternal Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ was not anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power, for he, the Word, the Son with the Father and the Holy Ghost, are one Jehovah. (Deut. vi. 4; 1 John v. 7.) Our Jesus Christ, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. (Phil. ii. 5, 6.) For Jesus, who is the Word made flesh, in his unity with the Father and the Holy Ghost is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords. (1 Tim. vi. 15.) But it is Jesus of Nazareth, the holy child Jesus, the virgin Mary's firstborn, the seed of Abraham, which the eternal Son of God verily took upon him, that was anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power. That Jesus is both Lord and Christ, the Word made flesh, is an ever-glorious and comforting fact in our faith. Jesus, the Anointed, is the head of the elect, the church, and the head of Christ is God, and of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. O, I love to think, it is so needful for me to think of Jesus, that he is no less than the incarnate Word of God, the only begotten Son of God, the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person, upholding all things by the word of his power; that he is the Christ, the chiefest among ten thousand, the Head of the congregation (the church), which is his body, the fullness of him who filleth all in all. Jesus is Christ, the Anointed, and they that are Christ's, Christ's own people, his body, the church, are christians, anointed ones, belonging to, (Mark ix. 41,) joined to, (1 Cor. vi. 17,) the wife of Christ; (Eph. v. 32,) and as in the anointing of Aaron the precious ointment ran down upon his beard, and even to the skirts of his garments, (Psalms cxxxiii. 2,) so the holy child Jesus is the Christ, and his anointing runs down to all the members of his body; they partake of it, it filleth all in all; they are partakers of his grace. This is the precious ointment, the fresh, living, immortal oil that anoints, that baptizes all the chosen church of God. They are his, his anointing abideth in them; (1 John ii. 27,) they are his anointed ones, they bear his name, in union with him they are called Christ. (1 Cor. xii. 12.) They are christians. Am I a christian? Have I received the anointing of Christ? Is it abiding in me? If not, I am none of his.

I have presented the outline of the subject; let us more fully enter into it. Thus speaks the Holy Ghost of Jesus Christ in Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek: he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty

to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." Jesus, the head of the church, was anointed the Prophet, Priest and King of his chosen. Such, under the typical dispensation, were anointed, (Exodus xxx. 30; 1 Samuel xvi. 3–13; 1 Kings xix. 16,) and in all the graciousness of his anointing Jesus Christ our Lord fulfills these characters unto his people, and when Jesus is revealed in them they know he is the Christ; they know his name, and his name is as ointment poured forth, and therefore do the virgins love thee, O precious Jesus, Christ our Lord. Jehovah is the tower of strength for his king, and sheweth mercy unto his anointed, unto David, and to his seed for evermore. In the anointing of Jesus to the fulfillment of the offices of Prophet, Priest and King the Father "giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him."—John iii. 34. Christ is head of all things unto his church, and in all things he hath the preeminence. (Col. i. 18.) Thus among them he is the chiefest and altogether lovely, he is anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows. O, when Jesus our Christ, the King in his beauty, is seen, then all the general assembly and church of the firstborn may well sing this song of love: "My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the King; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer. Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever," &c.—Psalms xlv. 1, 2. From the very full presentation of Jesus Christ in Isaiah lxi. we see that Jesus of Nazareth was anointed to sustain all the covenant relations that he bears unto his people, and in other portions of the word of God this anointing of Jesus is very blessedly described. Look at this delightful prophecy in Isaiah xi. 1–5: "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins." Read also Isaiah xlii. 1–4; xliv. 3. These Scriptures blessedly show us Jesus Christ, and that he is the head, the fountain that pours forth and anoints with all new covenant blessedness all the members of his body, which is the church (congregation), the fullness of him that filleth all in all. Christians are those that are Christ's, his anointed people, and this anointing that in truth constitutes them christians is a sacred, vital experience. When it pleases God to call any of his elect by his grace and to reveal his Son in them he pours upon them the spirit of grace and of supplications. (Zech. xii. 10.) This anointing from on high is that which all who are

Christ's shall receive, and grace for grace. Our Christ is the fountain of grace. The grace of Christ our Head is the spirit of grace, and in the language of the New Testament is the grace of life. (1 Peter iii. 7.) Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. If we have the Spirit of Christ, without which we are none of his, if he hath quickened us who were dead in trespasses and sins, then the spirit of grace and of supplications will be in us a living power, a well of living water springing up into streams of grace unto everlasting life. The Spirit of Christ in the soul will put forth in experimental exercises all its graces. Let no one imagine that he has the right to profess the name of Christ, and to say, My life is hid with Christ in God, (Col. iii. 3,) and yet that one's soul be destitute of the grace of life. If Christ liveth in me, then this life and its grace are inseparable. "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you." And as Jesus was anointed with all the graciousness of God, so "his fellows" are anointed by pouring upon them the spirit of grace, even the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now the grace of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus in the hearts of his chosen sets them forth as all glorious within, in all the loveliness and adornment of what is described as "the hidden man of the heart."—1 Peter iii. 4. "I delight in the law of God after the inward man."—Romans vii. 22. This delight is the grace of life of the inward man. Let us trace what is the grace of this anointing that abideth in those that are Christ's. The grace of life is discovered in reverence and godly fear. "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."—Jer. xxxii. 40. The quickened sinner, though he feels himself to be guilty and condemned by the law, yet finds his spirit moved with sacred awe toward the holy God. He trembles at God's word, and quakes in apprehension of the wrath to come, for he sees and feels how dreadful is his condition as a vile transgressor under the curse of the law, and yet he is exercised with a lowliness of heart, with a contrite spirit, with reverence and godly fear. How transforming is this grace of life, the pouring of the spirit of grace and of supplications upon a sinner! Formerly he was alienated from the life of God, but now the life of Christ begins the manifestations of its grace, for a heart is found in the quickened sinner "to know me," saith the Lord. This anointing with the spirit of grace is fruitful in causing those who have the unction from the Holy One to become true worshipers, to be suppliants at the feet of God; "my suppliants." (Zeph. iii. 10.) They call upon the name of the Lord; their hearts often cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." They live that life which only christians know of, praying always with all prayer and supplications in the spirit. The spirit of grace and of supplications has descended upon them, so from the hearts of the anointed ones supplications ascend unto the gracious and holy God. What do we know of woe, of sighs and cries unto God? A broken and contrite heart the Lord will not despise. Love is also a blessed portion in this spirit of grace that is poured down into the hearts of the ransomed of the Lord. Though the carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, yet the grace of eternal life much more abounds than all the enmity of the carnal mind. Grace reigns in us, yes, the grace of life; the spirit of grace is love. Love is shed abroad in our hearts, and we love God, we love his law,

Jehovah writes it in the heart, we have all affection for it, we receive the love of the truth, we find springing up in our hearts love to those who are of God, and love to Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. "Every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God." The spirit of grace poured upon the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem is in them the working of God's mighty power, whereby they believe. They who are Christ's believe through grace. (Acts xviii. 27.) Truly it is a great thing to be a believer in Christ. Not as devils, (James ii. 19,) not as Simon Magus, (Acts viii. 13,) not as those who believed in Christ and followed him for the loaves and fishes, and who eventually went back and walked no more with him. (John vi. 66.) Jehovah has said, "I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring."—Isaiah xliv. 3. And it is the Lord's blessing in us that we believe in God and our precious Jesus Christ with all our heart, with that faith which worketh by love and purifies the heart. True believers are loving believers in God and Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. Am I such?

Having traced somewhat the riches of God's grace in believers, I think I have made it scripturally evident that this grace is the grace of life in Christ Jesus, even that grace which was given us in him before the world began. (2 Tim. i. 9.) Thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, is the very One of whom Daniel by the Holy Ghost speaks, saying, "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy."—Daniel ix. 24. This is Messiah (Christ) the Prince, he is both Lord and Christ, our anointed Prophet, Priest and King, and when he had by himself purged our sins he ascended on high, he led captivity captive and received gifts for men, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. Thus on the day of Pentecost the apostle Peter said, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." It was he, the ascended Christ, who shed forth all the wonders of grace on that memorable day. "The kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Savior."—Titus iii. 4–6. O, do we not know that the grace of our Lord Jesus flowing down into the hearts of his own is no dream or idle tale, but a very experience repeated and continued all the days of their pilgrimage? Christ nourishes and cherishes the church. Our Lord says, "I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon." O what a God is our God in the face of Jesus Christ! Yes, since the time that God called us by his grace, and that grace apprehended and wrought so sacredly in us, working in us a broken and contrite heart over our iniquities, causing us to tremble at his word, to worship at his feet with reverence and godly fear, to implore his mercy, to yearn for salvation, to look with all desire to the obedience and blood of the crucified Lamb of God. O what grace was brought unto us, was shed abroad in our hearts by the revela-

tion of Jesus Christ. Since then Christ, the fountain of grace, has still been pouring down upon our needy souls all new covenant blessings. He is in very truth our anointed Prophet, Priest and King. The christian in his pilgrimage is not as one who is stocked up with grace and needs no further supplies, but the inward man must be renewed day by day. The pathway oftentimes is rugged, sin and Satan's temptations, the vexations and the prosperity of our earthly life are in conflict with the soul, and sometimes spread desolation over all our life in things pertaining to God, and our souls become famished and sickly, briars and thorns abound, and so destitute of grace to us is all the land that we feel it is nigh unto cursing. The melody in our hearts unto the Lord is hushed, we are no longer a joyous city, for the enemy treads in our palaces, our forts and towers are become dens for the beasts of the field, and in this desolation we remain "until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high." —Isaiah xxxii. 15. The Holy Spirit testifies, brings to remembrance and glorifies Christ unto us again; we mourn unto our Savior and Friend. So the Comforter takes of the things of Christ and pours them with all graciousness into our desolate hearts, and the wilderness is transformed into a fruitful field, love and fear and contrition of spirit, and then adoring gratitude springs forth, the desert rejoices and blossoms as the rose. I will pour my Spirit and blessing upon thee. O the blessing of Christ is so healing and transforming; his pardoning grace, the efficacy of Jesus' atoning blood, the light of his countenance, that tells our hearts that he loves us and is our abiding Friend, sheds consolation and glory in our souls, and peace, joy and gladness are tasted once more, and we then sing with grace in our hearts to the Lord. (Col. iii. 16.) The Scriptures are for our comfort, patience and learning, and sometimes they are so near that our hearts say, "Thy testimonies also are my delight, and my counsellors." The conflicts of the saints of God will teach them that in the good fight of faith they must expect to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. They know what it is to cry unto God in the battle, and as repeated experiences of the help of the Lord are brought to their remembrance by the Holy Spirit hope abounds, enabling them to say, "But my horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn,: I shall be anointed with fresh oil."—Psalms xcii. 10. Those blessed revelations of Christ, that his blood cleanseth us from all sin, that his righteousness is unto and upon all that believe, and that he reigns on high Messiah the Prince, also a Priest upon his throne, and he ever liveth and maketh intercession unto the Father for us. The gracious communication of such knowledge is fresh oil indeed to us in our times of need. Grace is poured into the lips of our beloved Christ, and he knows as Prophet, Priest and King how to speak a word in season to them that are weary. His mouth is most sweet, his lips like lilies dropping sweet-smelling myrrh, his doctrine drops as the rain and distils as the dew upon his heritage, and, thus refreshing his heritage, he makes his plants to thrive and grow, to put forth leaves and blossoms and fruits to the praise of the glory of his grace. This is not a poetical picture, but realities wrought by the Holy Ghost in the chosen of God. I know there are times, dreadful times, when instead of anointings of fresh oil being poured down from our Beloved we find ourselves the prey of evils, and the oppressors of our souls have en-

tangled us, and have put their yokes upon our necks, and the bondage of corruption, our iniquities, our unbelief, suggestions of the devil and the yoke of false doctrines weigh down and bring us into bondage of spirit. But thus saith the Lord, "Of old time I have broken thy yoke, and burst thy bands."—Jer. ii. 20. Yes, and "I am the Lord your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright." —Lev. xxvi. 13. How blessedly true; and now, though the Assyrian smite with a rod, and shall lift up his staff against us, after the manner of Egypt, Christ our King and the Captain of our salvation shall arise to the deliverance of his people, "and it shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, * * * and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing."—Isaiah x. 27. Our fears, bondage, guilt and shame, the accusations of the enemy, oppressions, heaviness, gloom and sorrow of heart, are all dissolved and scattered when our Lord Jesus Christ shews us his face, pouring down his smiles, his blessing, his pardoning grace upon us. For he only it is that is able to give us beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. And, beloved of God, have we not proved, and can set our seal to the verity of the testimony of the apostles and prophets, that the anointing that we have received of Christ, and that abideth in us, teacheth us all things, and is also fruitful in us, the constraining and enabling power to all gospel obedience to the Lord our God? This is the language of the Lord in the new covenant: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."—Ezekiel xxxvi. 26, 27. "Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God."—Ezekiel xxxix. 29. So from this source we obey from the heart the law of Christ, we are his followers. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving." Yet another text of the Scriptures I will pen which is true in us, and if it is not so with us we are none of his, we are not christians: "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."—Gal. v. 24. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

ST. CLOUD, WEST ORANGE, N. J., Oct. 29, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—Not seeing or hearing much from you at the association in New York, I have felt a desire to write to you, hoping at some leisure moment you might feel to pen me a few lines. I always feel incompetent to write to any of the Lord's people, especially the ministering brethren, but feel you will overlook my deficiencies, knowing me as one of the weakest and feeblest of the flock, if one at all, as I often fear, yet my mind and longing desires are for the company and loving fellowship of this poor and afflicted people

here in these low grounds of sorrow and affliction. I have been thinking much of national Israel. How clearly they were a type of spiritual Israel of to-day in their wanderings and backslidings and sore chastisements, and also how lovingly Paul admonished the churches how to live. I have long felt that it is for us of the present time, and feel a strong desire to be found walking in those paths so clearly marked out for the true followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, yet to my sorrow I daily find a law in my members warring against the law of my mind, bringing me into captivity to the law of sin; yes, sin is mixed with all I do. How I long to be free from it, but never can expect it here in this mortal body, yet it is sometimes given me to hope that when time things are no more I shall see Jesus as he is and be like him. Blessed thought. Hymn 1290 is often in my mind. I feel I can truly say the dear Lord has mercifully blessed me of late in giving me some glimpses and tastes of his love, which is sweeter than honey, and in his felt presence I have felt to say, "This is my Beloved, his form is divine, his vestments shed odors around." I have felt he brought me to his banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love, or ever I was aware my soul was made like the chariots of Amminadib. All is peace when Jesus gives his heart to me and whispers I am his; yes, a sabbath of rest, we cease from our own works as God did from his, and enter into the joy of our Lord. What earthly love can compare with love divine? It causes the lips of those asleep to speak, and for a short time to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

I started to tell you what a warm place you have always had in my heart since you were pastor at Otego so many years ago, when I met the dear saints there, and what feelings I experienced while driving over the hills to go there, so full of cares and trials, and oftentimes cold and almost indifferent; I would ask myself the question, Why do I go? but there seemed an irresistible drawing and love which I could not account for. I hardly ever expressed my mind. I thought no one could be like me; I felt too unworthy to be there; almost despair has been my lot, away down in the dark valley of the shadow of death, the most of my pilgrimage doubting and fearing, with an occasional gleam of hope, but I have felt I loved the Lord's people above all others on this earth, and it has sometimes been a comfort in my trials, for if you love not your brother whom you have seen, how can you love God whom you have not seen? Mixtures of joy and sorrow I daily pass through. I am not well, the infirmities of age are fast crowding upon me, and I feel my time state is nearing the end, and my greatest desire is that the Lord will be with me the few remaining days of my life.

Please tell sister Bessie to some time write me, as I am so lonely, and deprived entirely of the company and companionship of any of the Old School Baptists. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES is all the preaching I have. I have not heard a sermon since June, at the association in New York.

Will you, Elder Durand, please write your mind on Luke xxiii. 34? Were they forgiven? Jesus said his Father always heard him, for he always did those things which pleased his Father.

Your unworthy sister in hope, with much love to you all,

L. B. BREWSTER.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 15, 1911.

MRS. L. B. BREWSTER—DEAR SISTER: —Your very good letter of October 29th was really interesting and comforting to me. As I read your account of the exercises of your mind my mind went back to the "good old times at Otego," when on a Saturday the dear brethren and sisters would meet together to talk of their experiences, of their trials and deliverances, their joys and sorrows, and the comforts given them when Jesus would draw near to them as they journeyed by the way, and cause their hearts to burn within them while he communed with them and opened to them the Scriptures. How plainly those dear faces appear to me as I am thinking of them by name. I am glad you have been given some sweet tastes of the dear Savior's love of late. There is nothing in this world's treasures, comforts or glory to be compared with such experiences as you refer to, when we are privileged to feel and know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge. Truly it is said by an inspired writer, Perfect love casteth out fear. That love causes us to desire that we may walk as becometh the gospel of Christ. We want to see more and feel more of his sweet presence and power; we want to walk more understandingly in those good works unto which we were created in Christ Jesus, and which it was foreordained that we should walk in them.

I want to send your letter for publication in the SIGNS, so that the kindred in Christ may share it with me. If you are willing for me to do so you may send this letter I am writing back to me.

You ask me whether those who crucified Jesus were forgiven, (Luke xxiii. 34,) as Jesus said that the Father always heard him, for he always did those things that pleased the Father. I do not feel ready to answer that question. It is one of the almost numberless things that I do not know. It is one of those subjects that I feel to speak of very carefully. I know that every prayer of Jesus has been and will be answered; but we must know fully about what the prayer is before we can know fully about the answer. Jesus as a suffering man in Gethsemane prayed that the terrible cup of suffering might pass from him, but left it dependent upon the Father's will. He prayed for those who crucified him, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." We know that this cannot mean that any man, or any number of men, receive gospel forgiveness of sins on the ground, or for the reason, that they do not know what they do. This forgiveness is on the ground that Jesus died for those sins and rose again, and was exalted by the right hand of God to give repentance and forgiveness, and we know that all Israel, all for whom he died, will receive that forgiveness. But there was a legal forgiveness known by God's people while under the law and given to them through the atoning sacrifice of the high priest, which exempted them from literal punishment. The Savior was still under the law, and the infinite love that ever filled his heart toward his people under the legal dispensation, as well as now under the gospel dispensation, may have been manifested thus toward those who did not know that they were crucifying the Lord of glory, or, Paul says, they would not have done it. His prayer for them kept them from being destroyed in a moment. All of them who were ordained unto eternal life were most surely forgiven for all their sins by the dear Savior in his own good time, and taken home to glory, not on the ground that they knew

not what they did, but because Jesus died for them. That wonderful prayer of the dear Savior while still doing his necessary work under the law, and suffering for the sins of his people, showed the infinite strength and tenderness of his love for his people, even when they were most fearfully persecuting him. So Moses prayed for the forgiveness of the Lord's people, more than once, that the Lord would not destroy them in a moment, and was heard. But his prayer was not for the forgiveness of all their sins that should remove them all forever and bring his people at once into eternal glory, but for the particular transgressions they had just then committed, that they should not be consumed in a moment by the just anger of God. This, I think, may be true of this prayer of the dear Savior. As a part of the holy nation of Israel, they were committing the most wicked transgression ever committed by that people from the giving of the law by Moses until then, and Jesus prayed that they be forgiven that awful crime, literally, as a literal people, to show how longsuffering he was toward them. So they were not consumed in a moment.

These thoughts I express for your consideration and that of the brethren.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

ELK CITY, Kansas, Dec. 17, 1911.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR EDITOR:—As I am sending in my subscription, and have nothing to write that would be of interest, I will send to you the inclosed good letter I just received from Elder T. R. Pittman, of Havana, Kansas. He is the only one who lives near me, and we have had many good visits, and I have not seen a word from him in our paper this year. I know several who will be glad to hear from him through the paper.

Yours in hope, W. H. THARP.

HAVANA, Kansas.

W. H. THARP—DEAR FRIEND:—I received your very interesting letter of the 11th, and was truly glad to hear from you, and to learn that you had been to K. C. Association, and also pleased to hear that you felt it was good to be there. It carries me back to my boyhood days, when I was deeply impressed to attend a Baptist association for the first time. It was in June, 1862, when I was nineteen years of age. The preaching I heard from those ministers was a revelation to me. They were unlearned in worldly knowledge, but O how spiritually heart-searching was their language. I felt they were preaching to me with power, and unfolding to me my whole life. It caused a heart-throbbing and mind-opening that led me into new fields where grew the precious fruit of the Spirit. I could look upon those people and feel that God was theirs, and Jesus Christ was their Savior. When I read about the small man that preached the best you ever heard I thought I knew how you felt. I think the words of the psalmist applied to your mind then: "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound." —Psalms lxxxix. 15. Read the whole Psalm. The doctrine of the perfect work of Jesus Christ in the salvation of sinners from the power of death is the only hope of a poor sinner. This applies only to the poor, weak, heavy laden, helpless, dependent one who is hungering for the Bread that cometh down from heaven, which alone can satisfy one who is thirsting for the water of life that flows from the city of God. "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city

of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High."—Psalms xlvi. 4. The mission of Jesus into this sinful world was to save, not to try nor to offer to save upon man's acceptance, but to absolutely save all that his Father had given him in his will. He strongly affirms this truth: "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." —John vi. 39. The world does not accept that truth now, nor was it accepted then; the Jews murmured at him. He told them, "Murmur not among yourselves," and laid down to them a decisive reason why they should not murmur: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Some declare that he draws all men, but they will not come, but Jesus plainly refutes that idea by saying, "And I will raise him up at the last day."—Verse 44. Then he makes the gracious promise so dear to all his drawn children for their comfort, hope and consolation: "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of the Lord." He then concludes with the sublime assurance: "Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Then those drawn, those hearing, those learned of the Father, are made to cry out, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name."—Psalms ciii. 1.

You wrote approvingly of Elder A. B. Brees' letter in the SIGNS. I always liked his letters. I wrote him a letter a short time before he died and received a reply from him. I did not know he was ill when I wrote. His reply was tender, seeming to feel that he was nearing the end.

You want my views on James ii. 19. I do not know that I can open your understanding. James wrote upon a different line from any of the writers of the New Testament, yet if rightly understood there is no conflict, but harmony. "Thou believest that there is one God." He did not consider that that belief was complete without evidence: "Thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble." The devils have a faith, or belief, that there is one God, but their faith is predicated upon the laws of nature and reason, and not upon that spiritual faith that is written in the heart by the power of God. James declares that faith without works is dead. He then cites Abraham as being justified by works. He had faith in God so strong that he went forth without hesitation to perform the work God enjoined upon him, even to sacrifice his only son Isaac that God had miraculously given him. His work showed his faith; he had full confidence in the wisdom and judgment of God. James was writing to the scattered twelve tribes; they were, nominally at least, members of the church. He was seeking to find if their actions and manner of life conformed to their faith. Carefully read the third chapter, which depicts what man is capable of doing. He says, "For in many things we offend all." That is just as true now as it was then. "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body." Then he goes on and describes the many temptations man falls into by not having the tongue under control: "Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be." —James iii. 10. The entire epistle of James is a great heart-searcher to the believer, for every one often passes through the fire of temptation, which tries his

faith and tests his integrity and steadfastness in the truth of God in his heart. If the believer who claims a belief in God, and faith in the cleansing blood of Christ, becomes indifferent and unconcerned when he falls into temptation, and yields to the blandishments of sin, he gives no evidence that his faith is sustained. James was very anxious that his brethren should walk worthy of the vocation with which they were called, and strongly reproved them for their evil tendencies. Then again he admonished them, "Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."—James v. 8. How carefully and lovingly he desires his brethren to be patient in affliction, for they lived in a time when afflictions and persecutions fell heavily upon them. The Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy, and he (James) is very anxious that his brethren conform their lives and acts to the pattern set by the blessed Lord. The children of God, when clothed in the Spirit, delight to walk in the highway of the Lord, and desire to turn aside from the weak and beggarly elements of the world. They love to walk also by faith, trusting and hoping that in the end they shall enter into an eternal rest, as Paul so beautifully describes it: "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant," &c.—Heb. xii. 22–24.

I must stop lest I weary you. Do the people, or your neighbors, outside of a few, care for our kind of preaching? I realize what I preach is so different from what is usually heard that it may be very objectionable. We had no meeting the second Sunday, as it was so cold. There will be meeting the second Sunday in December if any come. Hope you will be able to come. Wish you would bring your sister along. Pardon me for writing so much.

With love and best wishes, both temporal and spiritual, I remain yours in hope, T. R. PITTMAN.

LANHAM, W. Va., Nov. 6, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN CHICK AND KER:—This letter, written me by Elder S. L. Thompson, of Maryland, I send to you for publication if you think it worthy a place in the SIGNS.

I shall leave home the 12th of this month to be at the hospital some fifteen days under treatment of an eye specialist at Charleston, W. Va.

Hoping the sight of my eye may be restored, I remain your brother in gospel bonds,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

LAUREL, Md., Oct. 10, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER McCLANAHAN:—Your kind and thoughtful letter to one who is unworthy of the love and esteem of saints was received a few days after my return home, having filled appointments at Philippi, Indian Creek, Meadow Run and Maple Creek after leaving Pocatalico Association. I was kept away from home just one month from the time I started, and I want to say that I feel, though unmeriting the least of God's blessings, I was sustained by him who has promised to be with his poor, trembling servants alway, even unto the end of the world, and as is said in Job, I will be with thee in six troubles, yea, and in the seventh I will not forsake thee.

When faith is in lively exercise I feel that I can appropriate this exceedingly great and precious promise to myself, and exclaim in the language of the psalmist, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name," that in the end he will give me that degree of grace we call dying grace, which he withholds until we are surrounded by the seventh trouble, which is death, the end and completion of all the tribulation through which we are called to pass in this world, furnace of affliction, by which all the works of the flesh are finally consumed, that we may come out at last as gold tried in the fire. And now, my dear brother, as we are passing through the storms of mortality, if we could not by faith divine appropriate the sweet and blessed words of the apostle Paul, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," we would be as a ship upon the mighty deep without anchor, being tossed upon the surging billows with nothing to hold the vessel. Thank God this is not a world of chance; God is the Sovereign of the whole universe, working all things after the counsel of his own will, and for the good of them that love him, who are the called according to his purpose, and for his own glory. Hence the Scriptures declare God doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can hinder. Pontius Pilate, in his pride and ignorance of God's predestination, said to Jesus, Know you not that I have power to release you or to crucify you? But our blessed Lord's reply was, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above," nor could the Roman soldiers have any power at all to arrest Jesus until it was given them, for when they first attempted to make the arrest they fell upon their faces as dead men, thus demonstrating creature weakness and absolute impotency without the purpose and consent of Jehovah.

Now let us examine the words of the apostle Peter in reference to God's unbounded and sovereign predestination in the control and government of the universe, of all creatures, both in heaven and earth: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Hence we conclude that our dear Lord could not have been crucified and slain had not the power been given Pilate to pronounce the sentence of death, and also the power from above been given the Jews and Gentiles to crucify him. Jesus, the eternal Son of God, is the center and soul of the universe. He is that wisdom by which the natural house (the universe), including all creatures, was made, and he is also that same wisdom of which Solomon speaks in the ninth chapter, first verse, of Proverbs, where he declares, "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars." Hence we conclude the house of which Solomon speaks is the spiritual temple, the church of God, and as He is the author of the house, he is also the author of the seven pillars, or essential supports of the house, the seven cardinal principles of the doctrine of God our Savior. Now we find that wisdom is concerned in all matters pertaining both to the natural house and also to the spiritual house, that predestination, the first pillar or support of the church, is founded on the attributes of Deity, infinite wisdom, omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, immutability, love and eternality, and each of these

seven attributes is God essentially and efficiently. God is love, he is also wisdom, then may we not say,

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word:
What more can he say, than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

My dear brother, see the great and good results in the predestination of God concerning Joseph and his brethren. See also the great and good results in the predestination of God in the destruction of Pharaoh and his hosts. The creatures meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. Creatures are under law, but God is above all law. Hence creatures as men and angels could violate law, but the Creator, being above all law and the efficient cause of all law for the government of the universe and of all creatures, cannot therefore violate any law. When man kills he violates law and must suffer the penalty, but when God kills or slays he violates no law, and since he is infinite in all his attributes he cannot do wrong, nor is he answerable to any of his creatures, and as all rational creatures are predestinarians in all that they do, shall we not then ascribe this right and privilege to our Creator?

"Chained to his throne a volume lies,
With all the fates of men,
With every angel's form and size,
Drawn by the eternal pen."

And more, my precious brother, I do believe and feel that predestination is one exceedingly strong and glorious pillar that is supporting you, and will support you to the end of your earthly pilgrimage. I feel by faith that you can adopt the language of the poet and say,

"Death and dangers round me fly,
Till he bids I cannot die;
Not a single shaft shall hit,
Till the God of love sees fit."

Dear brother, God only knows how much I have missed you and your dear family since my return home. I often think of the sweet and pleasant moments I spent at your house in company with you and your family and dear Elder Jones, of Indiana, and other brethren of the household of faith. I became greatly attached to our yoke-fellow and soldier of the cross, Elder J. T. Jones. I consider him an able and fearless defender of the doctrine of God our Savior, and hope to meet him again at Pocatalico Association. And you, my precious brother, God will restore, I hope and believe, to your common health, and bring back to sight your blind and afflicted eye, that it may gaze upon the beautiful hills of West Virginia, the loved faces of wife and daughter, and upon the dear faces and forms of saints whom you love so well. Inclosed find five dollars as a little contribution which wife and I send you to help to defray your expenses at the hospital. I have written to some of our brethren and sisters stating your financial condition, also the greatly afflicted state of your eyes, and requested them to send such contributions as they may feel able to make to Elder J. W. McClanahan, Lanham, West Virginia, and I hope that our people and friends will respond to this call, for I do know that you have labored faithfully in your Master's vineyard and worn yourself out in the cause of the Baptists. Wife and I send love and greetings to you and family. And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

SAMUEL L. THOMPSON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Nov. 4, 1911.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER AND PASTOR:—I am thinking of the beautiful hymn that we were singing at the meeting a few Sundays ago:

"In union with the Lamb,
From condemnation free,
The saints from everlasting were,
And shall forever be."

O how sweet. In union. Oneness. The bride, the Lamb's wife. Does not this present Christ and his chosen people? His people are one in him, and are from condemnation free. He made them free. They were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and Jesus suffered and died for the sins of his people. To think that my vile sins were borne by him upon the cross, where he poured out his blood. Am I one of these little ones of whom he speaks so beautifully? There is no condemnation to his chosen; they are redeemed from sin. They are bought with a price, and that price was Jesus' blood. Not a little of his blood, but every drop in his whole body was shed for us. Can we thank him and praise him enough who has done so much for us? We cannot praise him enough. Often I ask, Why was I made to hear his voice and to hope in his mercy? What a hope is this, an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast. I often used to think, Why were his stripes so heavy at times upon me? But through these bitter trials I have been made to know that he deals with each one as seemeth to him good and as is best for them. I have felt much of the time that I dare not ask the reason why, nor does God the reason give. What sweet and enduring names are these, all of them: "my little children," "my lambs," "my sheep," "my friends." Then the bride speaks, and says, "My beloved is mine, and I am his."

Since I have been shut in these many weeks with typhoid fever I have had some of the sweetest seasons; I have been alone, and yet not alone, God was with me, and at all times very near. "What a friend we have in Jesus." O the love and fellowship I feel for God's dear children, surely I love to be at their feet. I think I was made to feel somewhat of that love of which Paul speaks to Timothy when he said to him, "My own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord." The SIGNS, the Bible and the hymn-book were my companions. It was good for me to be thus afflicted; Jesus was exalted, as he said he would be. How strange is the course that a christian must steer. The most of the time God leads me along smoothly. A little time I am plunged in darkness, and then I am raised up again to sing his praise, and bask in the light of his countenance. Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Can we ever forget when Jesus first spoke peace to our souls, and in that still small voice said, Child, your sins are all forgiven you? "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." He gives us natural life and he gives eternal life. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." The blessed Book is full of comforting messages, and when they are applied to our hearts how sweet they are, then all is rest and peace. Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." This last year it seems that I want to talk, and to sit and listen to the wonderful things of the Spirit all the time. When I hear preaching my cup of joy is full and runneth over, but like the loaves and the fishes, there is none to be lost, we gather up the fragments. Tomorrow will be the day of our meeting, and I am glad. "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." It seems as though down at

the old meetinghouse we all are drawn close together in one bundle of love; there we hear the word of the Lord; it often seems to me like "a garden inclosed." Jesus said, This is my sister, my spouse. All worldly things are going on outside, but we do not know it in there.

"Begone, ye gilded vanities,
I seek substantial good;
To real bliss my wishes rise—
The love and power of God."

I have written along as my mind has been led, and if it has not the sweet savor of Christ please cast it one side. I believe that I do love God's dear children. May God bless you, our pastor, is the prayer of a poor sinner.

MARY D. BREWSTER.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., Dec. 3, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—I received the December number last Friday, and read it with pleasure. I will send in my remittance, which is due the 15th of this month, and also two dollars for my dear niece, Miss Anna Grove, of Plymouth Ill., who has lately enlisted in our little band here at good old Providence. She gave a reason of her hope, and was baptized yesterday by our much beloved pastor, Elder L. E. Frazee, who I am sorry to say has been quite poorly for two months, but is better again, for which we feel truly thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, that he has partially restored him to health, that he may serve the flock of which he is overseer, and hope that he may be able to serve us many more years. We ask an interest in the prayers of all who may read this. My dear husband has been under the doctor's care for a long time, and was very near death's door two weeks ago with hemorrhage, and we all thought the end had come, as he swooned for a few minutes; but his blessed Savior's everlasting arms were underneath holding him up, and sustained and brought him through that trying ordeal in safety, and he is now able to sit up all day, and walk about the house, and is in a fair way to recover. I thought I would write this and tell you how we all are, as we have many warm friends who would like to hear from us through the dear old SIGNS, and I wanted to tell you that we never tire reading the communications from the saints of the Most High, and although I am hardly able to write this beautiful morning, I still have an interest in reading it, and want to take it as long as I am able to read, as I have read it from childhood, and feel that it is part of my being. We were much rejoiced in seeing a letter from our much esteemed friend, W. T. McQueary, and hope that he will find it in his heart to write again. Many of the dear old writers have gone to their long homes, and many more of them are near their journey's end. It makes us feel sad, but the Lord's will be done, and not ours.

Dear brethren, sisters and friends, I have not written as I would like, and I am so nervous I will have to stop, hoping the good Lord will keep your feet upon that solid rock that Elder L. E. Frazee spoke so beautifully about in his sermon yesterday; we all felt that it was good to be there to hear him speak with power and in much assurance. Last week he preached three funerals, married a couple and preached at our regular meeting on Saturday, then preached on Sunday, and baptized one, amid much rejoicing; it was a happy day for us.

I will close by asking an interest in your prayers.

I remain your unworthy sister, if one at all,

(MRS.) S. G. FRAZEE.

MATTHEW XXVIII. 6, 7.

"COME, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead."

This was spoken by an angel, or spirit, to the women who went to make a last visit to the sepulchre where Jesus' body was laid after he was crucified. These women were not expecting any heavenly vision at that time, a time of gloom such as they had never known before. They had known Jesus for a long time, and some of them had been healed of diseases by his word. They had enjoyed his company very often, listened to his cheering words, words of love, yet words of instruction, so that the love of his company had grown to be a part of their very lives. These things often grow quietly upon us, and we get used to listening to the word of the promises of the gospel, unconsciously feeding on it until it is a part of our lives, and we do not notice the change that has taken place with us until we are brought face to face with the question, Is your hope a lively one, or merely an earthly pleasure? These women had lived through all of this in a very real way, and so do the followers of Jesus now; the longing for the presence of the Savior in the manifestation of his love, so that we can claim any of the promises is very real, so much so that we will but rarely mention it, and then only to our closest friends. But the time came with these women when they could see no ray of light; their hope had been slain by wickedness, yet they still spoke of it to one another, but only to mourn it as something forever lost to them, and even in their mourning there was an unsurmountable difficulty in their way: the great stone at the tomb. They did not mention the guards, they may not have known of them; but to those who feel their hope is lost and buried there is always something in the way they cannot understand. How many times I have gone to meeting hoping the preacher would remove this difficulty; I had no thought to do it for myself. I would sometimes try to get them to talk, and was always a quiet listener when others were talking of experience, but none of them would roll away the stone for me. Did they know what my spirit called for? I could not tell. If my hope was only a dead body it would have been some comfort to have mourned over it. When they came to the right place the angel spoke to them: "I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here." You and I thought we knew just where he was, and if we should go to the right place we would find him. But where has all the sorrow gone so suddenly? Now they cannot speak for joy, there is no stone in the way, all they can see is the place where the Lord lay. They can think of their first knowledge of him, of his pleasant company, of his loving words, how he healed their distresses, how he taught them from time to time, and finally was put to death by wicked hands, as the prophets had written of him. Also this can pass through their minds in a moment as they see where the Lord lay, but now triumphant over death and the grave he is and was their Savior. For a little space they surely had no doubts; O happy state; but how little time we are permitted to be without doubts. Doubts seem to be among the sure marks of the christian. Some say that the disciples had no other hope in Jesus than a temporal savior and an earthly king, to deliver national Israel, until after his resurrection, but that view does not satisfy my mind. Although they did not fully understand him, I believe every child in the family of grace

longs for the assurance of the Father's love, while they mourn their own sinfulness. Now the command comes to them, "Go quickly, and tell his disciples." They are broken-hearted; they are scattered abroad in just the same condition you were a little while ago. They did not have a very long story to tell, only, Our Savior, who was crucified, is risen. The simplest language will tell the story. Its beauty lies in it being true, and knowing this truth they did not need that any one teach them how to tell it, yet at the first telling the disciples could not believe; their minds were so dulled by grief and discouragement they could not comprehend so great a joy. But the simple story told in the fullness of the knowledge that it is true is enough to tell, and is fullness of joy to all to whom it comes with assurance.

A. E. RITTENHOUSE.

STATE ROAD, Delaware.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 23, 1911.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I inclose you a letter from sister Laura Dittmar (nee Bailey). She has been confined to the house by sickness. If you think it worthy of a place in the SIGNS I would like it published; if not, return it to me.

Your brother, I hope,

J. M. FENTON.

MIDDLEBURGH, N. Y., Nov. 17, 1911.

DEAR ELDER FENTON, BRETHREN, SISTERS AND INTERESTED FRIENDS AT SCHOHARIE:—As I was unable to meet with you last month, on account of sickness (as you all know), and am not strong enough to leave home this month, I felt I would like to write, if it be according to the Lord's will, and tell you though I am absent in body I hope to be with you in spirit. Last month I was in bed when Elder Fenton preached, also when Elder Vail was there, but I thought of you all. I always say I desire to be patient and reconciled to God's will in whatever he calls me to pass through, but when trials and crosses come it seems that none of the race of Adam could be more impatient than I. It seems sickness and trials always bring God's people nearer him. While sick in bed the words came to me, "Nearer, my God, to thee," but instead of getting nearer I seem to get farther away. I am gaining every day, and desire to thank God. Surely I believe all things are as he wills them, and nothing can possibly take place against his will, and that he has a purpose in whatever he does, even though we cannot understand at the present; many times we can understand later, and feel to thank God that we had the trial we did, and feel it was a blessing in disguise.

Three years ago last May I was baptized, and this is the first time I have ever missed two meetings in succession; in fact, I have missed but few, yet it must be the Lord's will, or it would not be so. I often feel I do not appreciate anything until I am deprived of it. I received letters from several of the brethren, and wish to thank them for remembering the least of the flock. I should love to meet with you in December, if the Lord wills, but our planning does not amount to much, for all things were fixed before time began.

Thanking you all for your prayers and kindness to me in the past, and desiring your prayers in the future, I shall close by saying, I desire that the Lord may bless all who are present at your meeting with the hearing ear and understanding heart, and be very near to each of his children in every kindred, tribe and nation.

From the least, if one at all,

(MRS.) JOHN DITTMAR.

DUTCH NECK, N. Y., Nov. 19, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER:—It is three weeks ago to-day since I was at the meeting, and it seems like a long time not to meet with the dear brethren and sisters, and hear the sweet words of the gospel proclaimed to poor sinners, but I do feel unworthy to address you all by the dear terms brother and sister. Your answer to the brother in the number of the SIGNS for October 15th expresses my feelings better than I could. I often have felt that it was wrong not to call them by those dear names, and it is a comfort to read of those who have passed through the same things that I have gone through, yet I often think there is no one like me, so sinful and with so many failures to walk worthily before God. What I am it is hard to know, and if I love, why am I thus? But the Lord is good, and merciful to all our evil doing. If it were not so I should be forever lost, but I hope that he will continue to give me faith, and to keep me in that strait and narrow path which leads to life eternal; his grace is all that I need.

"Grace, 'tis a charming sound,
Harmonious to the ear;
Heaven with the echo shall resound,
And all the saints shall hear."

This seems to me a poor letter, but I felt as though I would like to talk to you for a little while, yet I feel that it is in a poor way.

I always take some of the SIGNS with me when I come where I know that I will hear nothing but "work for the Lord." I cannot write as those whom I read after in the SIGNS, and neither can I talk, but it is my joy to listen to others as they tell the sweet story of Jesus and his love to poor sinners. I hope to be with you at the Saturday meeting, if it be the Lord's will, and if it is not so, remember me in your prayers. I am sure that all will be right in the sight of God. I often think of those who are not able to come to the meetings, those sick and afflicted. As I read their letters in the SIGNS I often think how hard it must be for them; but the will of the Lord, and not ours, be done; all is well since ruled by him.

I must close this poor letter, and not take more of your time. If you can read it at all, I hope you will excuse mistakes.

With love, your sister,

(MRS.) GEORGE GOLDEN.

HARRISONVILLE, Pa., Dec. 10, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find two dollars to pay for the SIGNS another year, as I do not feel that I can afford to be without it as long as I can see to read; it affords me much comfort in my old and declining days. Many times I feel that if I could write anything that would be of comfort to the poor and afflicted people of God, as others do, how gladly I would do so, but I feel to be, if one of God's children, the least and most unworthy of them all, yet I have a little hope that when I am done with the labors and trials of this sinful life I shall possess within the veil a life of joy and peace. It makes me to rejoice in reading the many comforting letters published from those scattered away from the flock, how they enjoy the coming of the SIGNS, for there is in it the true gospel ring: salvation by grace from first to last. It sets forth the attributes of the only true and living God, who declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. God knows no change, he has set our bounds that we cannot pass; his eternal and unchangeable purposes can never fail, for he is an

absolute sovereign over all the works of his hand. God, according to his eternal purpose, elected and predestinated a portion of the Adamic family unto salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, not because they were any better than others, but it was according to his own will. To them he makes known the riches of his grace, and gives them to see and feel what poor sinners they are, and that it is all of God's mercy that he brought them out of the prison-house of sin in which they once delighted, but are now made to hate those things in which they once delighted, and to love the things they once hated. There is now a daily warfare, the flesh against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other; this will last as long as this life remains. Paul desired to be free from this strife, but the answer was, My grace is sufficient for thee. These trials are for our good, to keep us humble at our Master's feet. God has ordained our way for us, and will fulfill all his purpose concerning us. The station we must fill while here in these bodies of flesh and all our comforts come at his command, and also our sorrows and afflictions. There is no uncertain or chance work with God.

Now may the grace of God be with you the coming year to conduct the SIGNS as in past years, that it may carry the same glad news from sea to sea, that salvation is free to all the blood-bought host.

Your unworthy brother,

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

DELMAR, Del., Oct. 16, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—I came directly here from the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, on Saturday last. We had a fine meeting, one of the most pleasant of my life; five visiting ministers were in attendance: Elders Durand, Chick, Eubanks, Slauson and Coulter, making seven in all with Elders Badger and Lefferts. Elder Slauson preached the introductory sermon, and from the first sermon to the last one inclusive they were all preached in demonstration of the Spirit and with power, to the great comfort and delight of the dear children of God who were favored to assemble there. We were favored with very fine weather, having rain both Tuesday and Wednesday nights, which laid the dust nicely, the clouds breaking away in the morning each day at 8 or 9 o'clock. We were all certainly highly favored by a kind Providence, and the dear servants of God were enabled in a wonderful manner to declare the glorious gospel of the grace of God in obedience to the command of their Lord and Savior, as so beautifully expressed in the soul-comforting language of Isaiah: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Most certainly did each servant "cry unto her" on that pleasant occasion; they seemed to be specially favored in preaching, and I believe it was generally felt to be one of their pleasantest meetings, and it was very much so to me.

Very truly and affectionately your friend and brother,

GEORGE D. CONKLIN.

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

WE are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1912.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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MATTHEW XXIII. 37.

DEAR EDITORS:—I believe this is the first time I have troubled you with a request. I would like you to give your views upon Matt. xxiii. 37, if you can find the time.

Your unworthy brother in hope,
J. H. McDONALD.

PUYALLUP, Wash., Sept. 13, 1911.

The language of the above named text is, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." In reply to the above request we desire, first, to say that several years ago our brother, Elder Ker, wrote very clearly and fully with regard to this language of the dear Redeemer. Beside this, in the past years others have written in our columns about the same text, and often has it been referred to by ministers of our order in preaching, and while we feel at this time like responding to the request of our brother, we cannot expect to say any new thing, we cannot hope to add any further light to what has often been said upon the text.

First, it seems to us well to call attention to some things that the text does not signify. This language of the dear Redeemer has been often used by those who deny sovereign grace in the calling and experimental salvation of men, and who insist that the matter of salvation is, after all, left to the choice of each and all men, to prove that Jesus was then, and that he by his Spirit now is, in the attitude of wooing and beseeching all men to allow him to become their Savior, and that he does not and cannot save all men, because they are stubborn and resist all his appeals; salvation is offered to men, and overtures of mercy are made, only to fall with no effect upon them. The claim is made that our blessed Lord has done just as much for the lost as for the saved, and the only reason why some are in heaven, while others suffer in the world of darkness and misery, is, that the one class have done what the other class have not done, so that the saved can boast that it is because they were wiser and better (certainly wiser at least) than the others. It is claimed that the God of heaven has done just as much for those who are now suffering the vengeance of eternal fire as he has for those now in heaven, but that his work for the lost has proven to be in vain, and his work for the saved has proven efficacious only because they have made it so by some choice or work of their own. This amounts to saying that salvation, after all, is not of the Lord, but at the end it is of the choice of the creature. The sufferings and death and resurrection of the dear Redeemer, all, all, by itself considered, accomplished nothing toward the redemption of a single soul, and the decision of men is what marks the line of difference between the saved and those who perish. We do not think that we have here stated the case too strongly. Now this language of the Savior in the text has no reference whatever to this matter of salvation through the Re-

deemer's death and resurrection. It has not the slightest reference to the work of grace in the soul in effectual calling, nor to the hope of heaven beyond. The Savior was looking upon Jerusalem as that city which embodied all the national life of that chosen people Israel, and Israel, in the first place, was not chosen for the purpose of final salvation in glory, but as a typical nation. God had chosen them as a nation, that he might make known his will, his power and his glory, and that it might also be made known that in man, under the best of circumstances, there is nothing that could merit any divine favor. God made a covenant with them, but of them this one testimony is given: "Which my covenant they brake." It is never said that they kept it. The weakness, sinfulness and depravity of man were most clearly shown forth in them through God's dealings with them. Other nations who were also evil, and who did only evil, might plead, If we had only had a better chance and better teaching; if we had only witnessed miracles, and had had prophets and wise men and scribes sent to us, then we would have done better, then we would have served God indeed. Men in general might have made this plea, but now such pleadings are silenced, for God could reply, See what I have done for this people, Israel, and are they any the better for it? On the contrary, have they not been the most stiff-necked and rebellious of all people? Thus it was made to appear that there is no difference in men, and that it is not true that one is saved and the other lost because of any difference in men by nature; and even here, if there is any difference in men, if one loves and serves God, while others have no fear of God before their eyes, if one is alive unto God, while others are still dead in sins, this difference has not been wrought by any choice or act of men, but by sovereign grace alone. This much we have thought it well to say negatively.

Second. There is another lesson taught in the text which it is all-important to remember. It is this: the eternity and divinity of the dear Redeemer. He does not refer in this text to the several times in which he had visited Jerusalem while upon earth. The narrative of the gospel shows us that he had indeed been in that city several times before this, but this is not what is now referred to. The language of the text itself shows that he is speaking of the dealings of God with them all the time since they had been a nation set apart for himself. He had sent them prophets and teachers, and had wrought through them many wonderful works in all the generations past. Now Jesus declares in the text, I have done this. How often would I have gathered you. Thus he claims here to be God, that God who had chosen them and dealt with them in all the ages past. Men in all ages, and especially to-day, men, we mean, who make great claims to being his followers, deny all that was miraculous about the Redeemer, and insist that he was simply a good man, living more in the spirit and nearer to God than other men indeed, but still only a man. Here Jesus expressly claims that he was the one who had guided them, reproved them and sent them his word of warning all along the years of their national life. This language embraces just what was expressed in that other sublime expression, "Before Abraham was, I am." Were Jesus only a man he could not have said concerning the generations of their national life, How often would I have gathered you, &c.

In the third place, let us consider the simple, homely illustration used by the Savior to set forth his dealings with that nation, and though the illustration is in itself plain and simple, yet how the dear Redeemer here, as well as in all his parables and similes, exalts the figures which he uses, so that no trace of anything light or trivial appears in them. "Never man spake as this man." No other one has ever, or could ever, give such grace and sublimity to language as did the blessed Master. "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings." The language has in it sorrow, pity and rebuke. Similar language was used by the Savior on another occasion regarding this same city and people. In Luke xix. 42, we read, "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." We have always thought concerning both these expressions of sorrow from the dear Redeemer that he spoke out of the feeling which as a man and a Jew he would have in common with all who loved Jerusalem, of desire for her welfare and prosperity, and, beholding her iniquity, and the doom which must follow, he gave expression not only to their condemnation, but to the emotions which as a man were in his heart, and which in any man would be aroused at the consideration of destruction coming upon his land and people. But be this as it may, it is sure that he declares in these words what had been the pity and forbearance and long-suffering of the Lord toward them in all the generations past.

Fourth. The figure used by the Savior is a very striking one. The hen gathers her chickens under her wings for two reasons: one of them is her regard for them, and the other is the need they have to be thus gathered. That love for her chickens will lead her to interpose her body between them and danger, and to fight until she is torn to pieces for their safety and life. From the cold and the rain they need shelter, and under her feathers they find both shelter and protection. At such times of stress and danger they find safety only in being near to the hen; unable to defend themselves from any danger, they have but one refuge. Yet chickens are prone to wander when all seems well, and foolishly they sometimes wander into the very danger from which they most need protection, and how often when danger appears in the sky above, or on the earth, does the peculiar call of the hen bring them running to her wings. Then when food is needed how often are they called by a peculiar note to come and eat of what she has found. Thus it is the work of the hen to provide all that the chickens need; they are utterly dependent upon her, and this they very soon come to know, and when did ever any chickens fail to respond to the call of the hen, whether for food, or for safety, or shelter? But how much less wise had Israel proved herself to be than chickens. "How often would I have gathered thy children." He did not say, How often have I gathered them, but, How often would I have done so, "And ye would not." The whole nation, religiously speaking, are presented in the name Jerusalem, and her children were the individual men and women who made up the nation. We have only to read the history of that people, and of the dealings of God with them, and of their attitude toward his testimonies, to see what

is meant by the words, I would have gathered thy children, and the words, "And ye would not." Under another figure in the eightieth Psalm the Lord set before the people the same general truth that he here presents. There he compared them to a vine which he had planted in a goodly land, and which he had nourished and watered and pruned, and upon which he sought goodly fruit, but which had failed to bring forth fruit. Now the vine was given up to the waster. In the text Jesus said, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate," and that word has never yet been reversed; they are still a people scattered and desolate; they are indeed passing through the time of this gospel day hardly having room and hungry. As they were favored more than any other nation in the days of old, and yet were not in anywise made better or more obedient, but rather proved themselves the most rebellious of all people so now special sorrows, all over the world are theirs. No nation is so desolate, as a nation, as are they.

Fifth, let us again notice that all that former dealing with them under the legal covenant had in it no promise of eternal life and salvation; all the blessings promised and all the curses denounced were temporal. Blessings in basket and store, and curses in basket and store, were all that were involved in their life under that legal covenant. Had the same covenant been made with any other nation, the same failure would have appeared in them also. All this did not touch upon the eternal things then, but, as now, this salvation was all by grace. Then, as now, the Jew and the Gentile were saved, not by the conditions of the law, but by the promise of God. This must be kept in mind if we would understand God's dealings with that people in contrast with his dealings with Gentile nations. Nationally Gentiles did not share in that which Israel possessed, but the election of grace unto eternal life, then as well as now (of both Jew and Gentile), brought some of them both to know and love the Lord. Gentiles were never under that legal covenant; none of its commandments were upon them at any time; its sabbaths, its sacrifices, were never commanded to be observed by the Gentiles, and if any Israelite was embraced in the covenant of grace, it was a relation into which he had not entered by reason of being a Jew. Now it was in this national sense that Jesus regarded them when he used this language, and expressed the sorrow of his heart as he contemplated their departures from his word, and it was in this national sense that he would have given them defense, shelter and full provision for all their wants, as the hen bestows these things upon her chickens. But this they had rejected, looking any and everywhere else rather than to the God who had created them his nation and people, and now that national house was to be left desolate, and desolate they have been ever since, without a sacrifice, without a place for sacrifice. The word is fulfilled that they should be more desolate than any other people.

We here leave these thoughts with our brother, and all our readers. C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

ECCLESIASTES XII. 1.

WILL Elder Ker please give his views upon Ecclesiastes xii., especially the first verse? It reads: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." LUCINDA BREWSTER.

It would be a pleasure to comply with sister Brewster's request could we feel the leading of the Holy Spirit into the subject, but on the contrary, for several months past we have feared lest indeed the Lord has forgotten to be gracious. His mercies seem clean gone forever; no light in the word, no travel of mind in spiritual things, very little desire toward the kingdom, all the earth seems vain and empty. In this condition of mind and soul sister Brewster cannot expect a satisfactory exposition of Scripture from us. It really seems that our work of writing is done.

As we think of the text above quoted, and of the man who wrote it, and of many other things he said in this book called Ecclesiastes, we feel in a measure at least a kindred spirit with him.

Solomon was the promised son of David, but how mysterious were the ways of the Lord in fulfilling that promise to David. Not only was Solomon to build a house unto the Lord, but Bathsheba, Uriah's wife, must be his mother. It does not seem strange to the children of God as they grow older in years that Paul said, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" When Solomon wrote the words of our text he was no longer a young man filled with ambition and aspiration, but old and experienced in the cares and conflicts of life, therefore as a father exhorted and advised those who were, and are, young not to spend all their time and labor in the accumulation of gold and silver and in the making of many books, to which there is no end, and in much study, which after all is but weariness of the flesh. In early life Solomon gloried in riches, living in luxury, having all that heart and eye could wish, but when old could better understand that all such things were but vanity and perished with the using, therefore said, The rich are no better than the poor. Paul also, having learned by sorrowful experiences the vanity of earthly riches and the wisdom of this world, said, "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." Solomon in his youthful days spent hours, days and years seeking knowledge, and doubtless attained unto a higher standard than any man of his day, but in his declining years saw the vanity of such labor and toil, and with more significance than is generally attached to it said, "What hath the wise more than the fool?" Moreover, he most positively asserted that, "A man hath no preeminence above a beast: * * * all go unto one place: all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again."—Eccl. iii. 19, 20. We well remember hearing our dear departed brother, Elder William Grafton, after he had passed the eightieth milestone in his pilgrimage here, say, "In my early life in the church and ministry I thought that I, like many others had done and were doing, must spend much time in reading books written by eminent men upon Bible subjects, but," said he, "I learned long ago that there is nothing in it." Elder E. Rittenhouse, the last time we ever heard him preach, said, "That which I preach to the people I did not get out of books." He, too, no doubt, learned years before, as Elder Grafton did, "there is nothing in it." Solomon, as well as these two dear old fathers in Israel, may

tell the youthful in Zion that "all is vanity," but they cannot understand or know the real import of those words until age creeps upon them and their sensibilities are matured; then for themselves will they know the vanity of all things here below. Strange to say, nevertheless true, that the first gospel declaration was, "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth." Nothing substantial, nothing abiding, all is vanity, fading as the leaf. Yet how comforting the truth on the other hand: "But the word of our God shall stand for ever." Solomon said at the conclusion of this book, and also at about the end of his life in the flesh, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." He seems to say to the youthful in the church, How much better it would have been had I spent more time in my youthful days in the service of God than to have wasted it in the effort of getting knowledge and riches and in the making of books. Now I am old and must soon depart this life, he would say, and what does it all amount to? How much better off am I than the fool and the pauper? Who has been really spiritually benefited by the labor and toil of my youthful days? What do gold, silver, houses and lands amount to? "Nothing in it." While all we who have come to see things as Solomon saw them, and to feel as he felt about them, exhort the children in the church to remember their Creator in the days of their youth, how few heed the advice, but instead are spending their lives in the accumulation of wealth, seeking pleasure, forgetting and forsaking the courts of the Lord. It does seem that youth with its strength and vigor should be spent in praise to him who hath done so much for us through his blessed Son. And all, like Solomon, when they become old and stricken with years, enfeebled from the infirmities incident thereto, sometimes isolated from church privileges, will feel, What a waste of time and how vain were all my youthful days, and if I had them to live over again how differently I would spend them. Solomon says that no evil days come in youth, nor do clouds return after rain. But how different the language of David concerning the latter days of man's sojourn here; they are at best "but labor and sorrow." These two periods are well known to those who have reached, as did Solomon and David, the latter stage. Many, many dear old pilgrims can well remember when Jesus all the day long was their joy and their song; refreshing showers came often, and there were no clouds of temptation, fear and doubt to return; no years came then in which to say, We have no pleasure. But how is it now? Very little if any sunshine, very few heavenly showers; often coldness, barrenness, and sometimes utter indifference; the spiritual ear is dull, the eyes are dried and the heart unmoved, let the surroundings be what they may. Were it not that such tried and heavy laden ones can look back and remember now their Creator in the days of their youth, surely many would be utterly discouraged. But like the old colored man who once went before the church, and when asked if he could tell when the Lord began to show mercy to him, replied, "Yes, and if I were in old Virginia I could take you to the very spot where the light first broke in," we all know that in our lives years ago there came a time when a change was wrought in us, and surely not wrought by man; not only a change in our feelings, desires

and surroundings, but a change in our ideas of salvation—a separation from modern religion, a separation from the world and the delusions thereof. Then, dear pilgrim, is there not some comfort in remembering to-day thy Creator in the days of your youth? Yes, you no doubt answer, and I well remember "the very spot" where the light first broke in. A year or so ago our beloved brother, Elder J. F. Beeman, wrote an article for the SIGNS headed, "Spots." He recalled some special ones in his journey with comfort and encouragement, and that article helped many old and weary pilgrims to remember their Creator in the days of their youth, when it pleased the Lord to send refreshing showers and heavenly dews upon them. His doctrine then dropped as the rain, and his speech distilled as the dew.

While reading this some poor soul may say, Yes, many remember "the very spot" where the light of God's countenance first shone upon them, and deliverance came suddenly and unexpectedly, but as for me, I can recall no "spot," no sudden emotions, no positive assurance that my sins were forgiven through Christ. To such an one we will say, Light is light, whether it comes suddenly or so gradually that one can hardly tell when it came. Hope is hope, whether given in the twinkling of an eye, or whether it has required years to bring one into that condition. Faith is faith, whether given like a flash of lightning, or whether it takes years of sorrow, loss and conflict to manifest that victory which overcometh the world. Love to God and to his children is love indeed, whether it came instantaneously or so gently and gradually that you cannot tell when you began to love, or whether there ever was a time in your life when you did not love God and his people and his truth.

Hoping that what we have here written has not been altogether a waste of time, we leave it for the consideration of sister Brewster and others who may have patience to read it. K.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. B. Bird, at the bride's residence, Dec. 24th, 1911, James B. Johnson and Miss Lucy A. Bird, both of St. Albans, W. Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Emma Tavenner, our beloved sister in Christ, died suddenly Dec. 21st, 1911, at her home in Lincoln, Loudoun Co., Va. She was born Dec. 8th, 1849, near Ottawa, Ill. Her parents were Richard and Mary Tallman. When between thirteen and fourteen years of age she came to Virginia. Here she married Alpheus Tavenner, Jan. 5th, 1875, who survives her and keenly feels his loss, for during the nearly thirty-seven years of married life they were most devoted to each other. To them were born seven children, six of whom are still living. These sons and daughters highly honored and respected their parents, and deeply mourn the loss of their devoted mother. Sister Tavenner, the night before she passed away, seemed in her usual health, but early the next morning complained of difficult breathing, in a few moments lost consciousness, and very soon thereafter breathed her last. She had for some time past suffered from attacks of asthma and bronchitis. It is thought that in this last attack her heart was involved and her throat paralyzed. To her death came suddenly, and she was mercifully spared the pain of a long illness, but it was a severe stroke upon the members of the family, who were not in the least expecting any such sudden departure of their loved one. We cannot put into words our feeling of solicitation for the comfort of the stricken husband, who is himself far from well. It was my blessed privilege to baptize sister Emma Tavenner, July 31st, 1910, in the fellowship of the New Valley Church, at Hughesville. Just the winter before her baptism she laid away her son Calton, who for years had been much afflicted, and had been the object of much tender care and devotion on the part of his mother. It seemed that during her time of waiting upon and caring for this son sister Tavenner was drawn nearer and nearer to her Redeemer, and became more and more exercised upon spiritual things and those matters pertaining to the welfare of her soul and her eternal salvation in Christ. Her experience dated

from her girlhood, when in the midst of the pleasures incident to youth she was earnestly inquiring the way of salvation. Hers was an experience in which the light of revelation came gradually, so that she never could tell the exact beginning of her spiritual exercises; but it seemed that the affliction and death of her son were blessed to her spiritual instruction and enlightenment, so that when the Lord took that care from her she immediately felt a strong drawing toward the church and desire to follow her Lord in baptism. That was a day of days for her. A look of radiant peace and rest possessed her countenance as she came from the water at that time. Truly the Lord did not leave her long with us after bringing her into our midst, but we all loved her and esteemed her a true saint of the most high God. He has taken but his own. We dare not murmur or ask why. So markedly was the grace of God manifested unto her that she was able to maintain a godly walk and conversation before the world and before the church; she was above reproach. She was blessed with a deeply spiritual mind, was a great Bible reader, and dearly loved to hear the gospel of Jesus set forth. Sister Tavenner is survived by one sister in the flesh, Mrs. Cynthia A. White, of Washington, D. C., who is also our sister in Christ, a member of the Frying Pan Church. She leaves four daughters and two sons to mourn their loss: Miss Birdie Tavenner, of Sedalia, Mo.; Mrs. Ethel Rudy, of Lamonte, Mo.; Mrs. Edith Orrison, Clearfield, Pa.; Mrs. Mary Birdsall, Round Hill, Va., and John C. and Cloyd Tavenner, of Lincoln, Va.

At her funeral, held from the Friends' meeting-house in Lincoln, Dec. 25th, 1911, we sang, "How firm a foundation," a great favorite of hers, after which the writer tried to speak to the comfort of the bereaved church and family, using the words of that same hymn as a basis.

It is our sincere desire that the Spirit of God may comfort all our hearts and reconcile us to his divine will.

Written by her pastor, whom she loved.

ALSO,

James Wortman, our beloved brother in Christ, died at his home near Hunter Station, Va., Jan. 2nd, 1912, in the 84th year of his age. Brother Wortman was baptized in the fellowship of the Frying Pan Church a few years ago, by Elder J. G. Eubanks, while he was supplying that church after the death of its former pastor, Elder E. V. White. Previously to uniting with us brother Wortman held his membership among the Missionary Baptists, but was for many years dissatisfied there, until at last he was strengthened by grace to come out from among them. It was revealed to him that they were not as a body the church of God in gospel order, while he believed there were some gracious people among them. He could not fellowship a people that preached law for gospel, who substituted works for grace, and that supported foreign missionaries and Sunday Schools in opposition to God's revealed word. This was not because our brother felt himself better than they, for surely a more humble and God-fearing man is not among us, nor a more truly repentant sinner, but anything that sought to rob God of his glory was abhorrent to him. Brother Wortman was poor as regards this world's goods, but rich in faith. How blessed is that mortal whose treasures are laid up above! Only last month, at our meeting at Frying Pan, our brother rose totteringly on his feet and openly testified to the goodness and mercy of God to him, a poor sinner. He dearly loved meeting with his brethren and the worship of his God. The simplicity of the Spirit of Jesus characterized his walk and conversation among us. Death came suddenly to him. Here, too, God was merciful. He had been out that day performing some little duties, and at the close of the day sat by the fireside feeling tired, and arising to lie down on a sofa fell and soon expired. It was a great shock to our dear sister Wortman, his companion, who deeply mourns her loss. Brother Wortman was twice married. His first wife was a Miss Cornell. To them were born four children, three of whom survive him: Mrs. C. J. Gheen, of Waxpool, Lee, of Round Hill, and George, of Leesburg. His present wife, who is now left behind, was sister Sarah J. Huntt. Beside these there are left three sisters, one brother and many other relatives and friends.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer, from the Mount Hope Missionary Baptist meeting-house at Waxpool, Jan. 5th, 1912.

May the spiritual consolation of Israel's God abide with our dear sister Wortman and our bereaved church, and may the sorrowing family of our brother be reconciled to the work of God.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

LEESBURG, Va.

Mary C. Fetter, my dearly beloved wife, and the daughter of John Simpson and Caroline T. Van Dyke, was born on a farm near Pennington, Mercer Co., N. J., where our second daughter now lives, March 7th, 1842. Henry Sheppard, her sister Aurelia, my wife and I were united in the bonds of matrimony under one ceremony, by Elder Philander Hartwell, Dec. 27th, 1866. My wife was baptized by Elder Wm. J. Purington, at Southampton, June 8th, 1879. She fell asleep in Jesus Dec. 8th, 1911. Our loss is her eternal gain. She left a lonely husband, eight sorrowing children and twenty grandchildren, besides a host of other relatives and friends, to mourn her departure, but we feel to say, The Lord's will be done, not ours. Her breast will no more be distressed by sickness, pain and sorrow, and while I do not wish to hasten the Lord's appointed time for my departure, yet I long to meet her on the yonder side, where all is love, peace, joy and quietness.

The funeral services were held at the house Monday, Dec. 11th, conducted by Elder B. F. Coulter, using the words, at my request, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Also, "She hath done what she could." He also read by request the hymn, "How firm a foundation," which was a favorite hymn of hers. The remains were then taken to Southampton, where short services were conducted by Elder Silas H. Durand, and the hymn, "I would not live alway," was read, then her remains were carried by her six brothers to their last resting-place. The services were concluded at the grave by Elder F. A. Chick.

CHRISTOPHER S. FETTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

John W. Sermon departed this life Sept. 24th, 1911, at his home in Salisbury, Md., at the age of 65 years, 10 months and 22 days. Brother Sermon was baptized by the writer in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Nassaongo, Wicomico Co., Md., about the year 1875. Brother Sermon was for years a zealous, spiritually-minded Baptist; his door was ever open to the Baptists, and he was always ready to talk on spiritual things. He was united in marriage to Sarah Stirgis, Feb. 22nd, 1871. To them were born seven children, five daughters and two sons, who, with the sorrowing and almost heartbroken widow, are left to mourn their loss. Our sympathy goes out to them, and our prayers for the felt presence of the Lord to comfort them. One more pleasant home to the writer is closed. Brother Sermon's mind had become impaired, but his hope in Christ never lost its force, nor did his love abate. He told his companion he was willing and anxious to depart, it being better for her, as he was no help to her. Thus one by one the Lord's little ones are being taken to himself.

Elder A. B. Francis preached a very able and comforting sermon on the occasion, assisted by Elder J. G. Eubanks and the writer, after which all that was mortal was laid away in the cemetery in Salisbury, Md., to rest until God shall call.

T. M. POULSON.

Phebe Ann Gott Napier, eldest daughter of Willis and Sarah E. Gott, was born near Toddville, Linn Co., Iowa, Sept. 15th, 1862, and passed away peacefully at her home near Mt. Vernon, Iowa, Dec. 14th, 1911, aged 49 years, 2 months and 29 days. She was the eldest of eight children, six daughters and two sons, her father and two sisters having preceded her to the better world. When about fifteen years of age she was received into the Predestinarian Baptist Church, and was baptized by Elder True, remaining a faithful member all her life. She was united in marriage to Joseph F. Napier, of Mt. Vernon, Iowa, Jan. 3rd, 1883, by Elder Ping. Six children were born to them: Joseph A., of Marion, Iowa, Mrs. C. F. Root, of Berlin, Wis., and Flora, Hester, Hugh and Callie at home. Our dear one is survived by her husband and children, also her mother, Mrs. Sarah E. Gott, of Marion, Iowa, two brothers: David Gott, of Marion, and Harvey Gott, of Milwaukee, three sisters: Mrs. Lura Remington and Mrs. Belle Meyers, of Marion, Mrs. Rosa Andrews, of Northwood, Iowa, a half brother, Willis M., of New Hampton, Iowa, and a half sister, Mrs. Jane Beaman, of Rock Rapids, Iowa, also one grandchild, who was a source of comfort to her.

Mr. Beatty, of Marion, spoke comforting words to the heartbroken family, relatives and friends on Dec. 17th, after which the body was interred in Mt. Zion Cemetery. A great number were present on the occasion as a last tribute of respect to the deceased. May the blessings of our God rest upon us all. Our daughter was a great but patient sufferer during her illness of several months. She was a loving, devoted wife, a christian mother and sister, a good neighbor, and kind and thoughtful of her parents. It was a consolation to have her say she was ready to go, which she remarked to her family, knowing that she could not recover. We feel that our loss is great indeed, but to her we are assured all is gain.

HER MOTHER.

Frank Orval Andrews, second son of William and Rosa Andrews, of Northwood, Iowa, died Sept. 27th, 1911, aged 16 years, 4 months and 25 days. Frank was a patient sufferer for more than a year; a good-natured, cheerful young boy, and had much love for music. He leaves his father, mother, two brothers and two sisters, besides numerous other relatives and friends. Their dear one has left a vacancy in the home that cannot be filled.

Brief services were held by Mr. Dave Miller at his Uncle David Gott's farm, better known as Willis S. Gott's farm, two and one-half miles north of Marion. The remains were shipped to Marion, Iowa, and interred in the Oliphant Cemetery.

May the dear Lord bless the bereaved family, and cause them to feel that their loss is his eternal gain.

(MRS.) LURA REMINGTON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

C. H. Vandike, Ill., $1.00; Mrs. H. E. Scarborough, Md., $1.00; Mrs. Lavinia Morgan, Mo., $1.00; Dr. B. P. Earle, Ky., $2.00.—Total, $5.00.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

According to previous arrangement, Elder A. Wilson, of Oakville, Wash., and Elder B. S. Pate, of Dayton, Wash., met with a little band of brethren five miles northwest of Forest Grove, and after preaching, proceeded to organize a presbytery composed of Elders B. S. Pate and A. Wilson, deacons J. N. Berry and J. P. Aydelott.

Elder B. S. Pate was elected moderator, and J. P. Aydelott clerk.

Called for letters of those wishing membership, when J. H. Beaman and J. A. Beaman, his wife, Lewis Moore and Maud Moore, his wife, J. P. Aydelott and H. C. Aydelott, his wife, and Clara Aydelott, presented their letters, which were examined and found satisfactory, and in due time were declared a legally constituted church of Jesus Christ, to be known as Mt. Zion, and the right hand of fellowship was extended with much good feeling.

On Sunday evening following Miss Mary Beaman came to the church and was received for baptism.

Days of meeting first Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month. Hour of meeting 11 a. m. each day.

J. P. AYDELOTT.

Forest Grove, Oregon, Dec. 21, 1911.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

The Lord willing, until further notice Elder J. T. Rowe will preach in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., Washington, D. C., on the third Sunday in each month, at 2:30 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor.

THOMAS ALDEN, Deacon.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of southern California meets every third Sunday at 2 p. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

Claremont, Cal.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in Kimmy Hall, No. 12 Third St., in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., will meet on the fourth Sunday of each month at 3 p. m., second floor Pythian Temple, Ninth St., N. W., near K St. (Take elevator.) We are without a pastor at present, but wish to continue to meet together as a church, and invite all members and friends to meet with us.

JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

"Should Children of Primitive Baptists Attend Sunday Schools?"

The above entitled article was published in narrative form in ten consecutive numbers in the *Messenger of Peace* during 1911. The Sunday School question is fully yet kindly discussed, and its true character, together with the duty and responsibility of Primitive Baptist parents to themselves, their children and their divine Lord, clearly brought out. Since then many brethren have expressed a desire that it be published in book form, and some have urged me to do so. I am not financially able to have the work done unless a sufficient number of advanced subscribers can be obtained to cover the cost. It will make a book of about eighty-five pages, five by seven inches. I can have it published and bound in limp covers for about 25 cents per copy, and in substantial board covers, neatly finished, for about 40 cents per copy, postage prepaid. Those desiring the work will confer a favor by sending a card notifying me of the fact, and the style of binding desired, and if enough such orders are received the work will be published early in 1912, and when ready for distribution (due notice of which will be given) the money may be sent.

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SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 80. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1912. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FRAGMENTS.

"CHRIST is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."—Gal. v. 4. So it appears that a child of God may fall from grace, and no one but a child of God, a living soul, can, for no others have ever been the subjects of grace; no others have ever had a standing in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, nor in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made his people free. But what a fall is that! From grace to works, from the glorious liberty of the gospel, into which grace has brought us, to the hard bondage of the law, from which only the mighty power of God can again cause us to experience gracious deliverance. This fall from grace does not change the nature of the one who has fallen, but greatly changes his condition. He was a child before he fell, and he is a child after; but O how different in his condition, how different his feelings. The pride of his heart has caused him to desire some part and some prominence in this work of salvation. Having begun in the Spirit, he now thinks of being made perfect by the flesh. While this boastful pride of his deceitful heart is at work he begins to regard the law as something in the fulfillment of which he had some little part to do in order to his justification; some condition which rests upon him to perform; some work, as circumcision, without which he could not be saved. This doctrine that the sinner has something to do in order to his salvation, suits the carnal mind, and the child of God, when left to himself for a little, is ready to take up with it, but at once he finds himself again "in an iron house of bondage." Now Christ profits him nothing. (Gal. v. 2.) For a living soul a religion without Christ in every part of it is death. Immediately we are in gross darkness, everything to do and no power to work; nothing felt but "the bondage of corruption;" only "a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Having desired to be under the law, we now hear the law, and we find only work, work, and to no avail. By the law we are only condemned; no grace here, no mercy, no love, no compassion. What a terrible fall is this for a living soul. But this poor soul still hungers for righteousness,

and that righteousness he will surely experience again, and will eat of it to his soul's rejoicing, but it will not be found in himself, nor in any works of the flesh, but in the dear Savior; there it is treasured up in its fullness. Now how humbly and rejoicingly he remembers that in his experience of grace at the first he received the Spirit, not by the works of the law, but by the hearing of faith. So in the Lord's own time he who raised up the Lord Jesus will by him raise up every soul who has fallen from grace. It is no new righteousness that this poor soul who has fallen from grace is raised up unto, but the same that was revealed to him at the first; for the dear Redeemer declares, "My salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished." "My righteousness shall be forever, and my salvation from generation to generation."—Isa. li. 6, 8. The grace from which he fell is the same grace to which he shall be restored, even the grace which was given him in Christ before the world began. (2 Tim. i. 9.)

THE gates of the city that John saw. There were three on each side, making twelve. The walls were salvation, (Isa. xxvi. 1; lx. 18,) and the gates were in the walls. The twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was one pearl. Each gate was Jesus, the Pearl of great price. The gate is not the structure which is used to close the gate, but the open way through which we enter into the city. Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. This is the way spoken of by the psalmist: "Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord; this gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter." There is no other way into righteousness but Jesus; therefore the psalmist further says: "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; and it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it."—Psalms cxviii. 19, 20, 22–24. This gate, this stone, this day, is each a figure setting forth Jesus as the way, the salvation, the righteousness of his people. Each one of the twelve pearls shows Jesus as the only way of righteousness, through which the Lord's people enter into the favor and presence of God. The value of this pearl is infinite; its beauty, in the eyes of those who enter in through that gate into the city, is unspeakable. The gates of the city shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there. This was foretold by the prophets. "Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night." The darkness of the legal dispensation is now gone, and the true Light now shineth. In the presence of Jesus there is no darkness, for he is the Sun of Righteousness. In us there is darkness, for we have a carnal nature in which dwelleth no good thing, but when by faith we see Jesus and are privileged to walk in him, then we see how, even here in this time state, there is no night in the presence of Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, no night in the city of God, the holy city which John saw coming down from God out of heaven.

During the legal dispensation the Lord made darkness his pavilion, in which he came to his people in his fearful majesty and power. In those mysterious ways he made himself known to Moses and the prophets and the children of Israel, although the meaning of all those legal rites and prophetic visions they did not know. But now the darkness is passed,

and the gospel light is shining. The Sun of Righteousness arose upon the people of God in the resurrection of Jesus, and the unfailing promise to Zion is: "Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light;" therefore to the faith of the Lord's people Jesus appears now as the only source of true light, which shall never fail, even here in this world of darkness, but shall ever shine in the darkness of this sinful nature of his people, though that darkness comprehendeth it not, and shall be for their salvation and comfort, and for their guidance in the way of peace and righteousness while they are here in time, and for their eternal glory and blessedness in heaven. Wherever, whenever and from whatsoever direction a poor, trembling soul, fleeing from the wrath to come, approaches and comes in view of the city and church of the living God, there he shall ever find an open gate through which he shall joyfully enter into the city. He will not have to turn and go hunting along the wall of salvation for a gate through which to enter, for there are three gates on each of the four sides, and one will always be found open just where the poor, sorrowing soul stops and stands still, for Jesus is there, the Pearl of great price, himself the gate, the open way into the salvation and eternal favor of God. Jesus bore the sins of every one who ever has felt, and ever shall feel, the burden and condemnation of his sins, and has mourned for them, and he will always be present when one of them is laboring and heavy laden, for he calls them to himself, and they find him the Pearl. If the whole world were a perfect pearl, what were its value compared with Jesus? And "every several gate was of one pearl," and the gates of the city shall not be shut at all by day. Christ crucified is always preached wherever a sinsick soul is mourning, and though it be midnight darkness on the earth, and midnight darkness in that mourning soul, light will appear with the appearing of Jesus. While we are looking for him to come down from heaven, or to come from some place where he may be waiting in the world, we are joyfully surprised to find that he is here, even in our hearts. He was there all the time, now he appears. They were talking about him in the upper room, when he appeared, saying, "Peace be unto you." The gate that we felt sure could not be opened for such sinful creatures as we felt ourselves to be is already open; indeed, it has never been shut at all by day, and there is no night in the presence and kingdom of the risen Jesus. O that I might feel and know more fully and clearly by faith the power and blessedness of that light while waiting and watching for it in this world of sin and sorrow.

"For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God."—Romans viii. 19. This creature must be one that knows the sons of God, and that desires and earnestly expects and waits for the manifestation of that sonship in himself. It seems that it must be the same creature that "was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." No one can hope for anything of which he knows nothing; he must both desire and expect that which he hopes for. The natural man does not, and cannot, know the things of the Spirit, and therefore he cannot hope and be waiting for them. If any man be in Christ he is a new creature, and hence-

forth desires and earnestly waits for the manifestation of divine life and spiritual sonship in himself. This new creature, I have thought, is the only creature who was made subject to vanity unwillingly. This new creation is never satisfied while under the law or while in the flesh. The natural man does not feel the flesh to be a "bondage of corruption," but the new creature does, and longs to be delivered from it into the glorious liberty of the children of God. I have regarded it as the new or spiritual creation which groaneth and travaileth in pain together, throughout all the patriarchal and legal dispensations until now, when the gospel dispensation is established, and not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit; that is, the apostles and men of grace now, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. It is not the body that desires and waits for its own redemption, but the new creature, the man who is in Christ, the man who is created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. The body cannot desire its own resurrection, nor feel the vanity of fleshly things unwillingly, but it is the one who is spiritually alive who is looking for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, "who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Through all the Old Testament Scriptures we read our own feelings in the experiences recorded there of those who were subjected to the vanity of the flesh unwillingly, and groaned under the bondage of corruption, longing to be delivered from it, and comforted by the hope in which the Lord hath subjected his people unto this vanity. This hope of deliverance and full redemption is sometimes very faint, but never goes out. We cannot have the things embraced in that precious hope while here, only by faith, and that makes us groan and suffer pain while in this mortal body. We are saved by this hope. "But hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." So we continue to hope for that blessed change, and so do we with patience wait for it.

THE things pertaining to the kingdom of God are hid from the wise and prudent, and are revealed unto babes. This must be a most important and wonderful thing, for the dear Savior rejoiced in Spirit and thanked the Father that it is so. (Matt. xi.) How good it is for the babes. If these things were to be given according to our ability to earn and to understand them, and our worthiness to receive them, then the babes, and the others who are weak and poor and helpless, would come short altogether. So there comes a time in the experience of every child of God when he feels that he has great reason to join with the Savior in thanks to the Father that these are revealed only to babes. "Except a man be born from above he cannot see the kingdom of God." One who is newly born is a babe. The wise and prudent cannot see the kingdom of God by virtue of any powers that they possess in their natural minds, and cannot therefore talk understandingly about anything belonging to that kingdom, for they do not know anything about it. As the apostle says, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are

foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14. It was God's purpose that it should be so. "In the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God," and this is the only reason ever given, or ever to be given, for anything which the Lord does: "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." But the babes can prattle and talk sweetly and understandingly about these things, for they know them, they are born into them. These babes do not know that they are talking most clearly the language of Canaan, any more than the natural babe knows that it is talking the language of its mother.

"BEHOLD, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." David did not say this as though it would lessen the blame of his sin in any degree, but the Holy Spirit caused him to express in this way that which explains the terrible nature and quality of sin. Of course there is no blame for anything to be attached to the unborn child. From a human standpoint the little infant child cannot be regarded as a sinner; neither does the law of God point out the infant as worthy of blame as an infant because of any sinful act. It is a sinner only as a branch of a bad tree, as a stream from a corrupt fountain. It was born into an inheritance which is corruptible, defiled, and that fadeth away. There must be another birth from another head before there can be an entering upon an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. "By one man sin entered into the world." "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." The psalmist acknowledges this sinfulness of his depraved nature, and all the evil thoughts and sinful acts resulting from it, as something for which he is justly condemned in the sight of God, and the blame for which he feels, though the sinfulness reaches back before his birth, back to Adam's transgression. "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight; that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and clear when thou judgest. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb., 1911.

HERNDON, Va., Jan. 1, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—About two weeks ago I was stricken with an attack of la grippe, and one night, while suffering intense pain, the parable of the prodigal son came into my mind with great force, so much so that I tried to banish it from my mind. It is not often that I try to banish Scripture from my mind, but that night I tried to do so, for I was suffering intensely, and did not get to sleep until about two o'clock in the morning. I seemed to wrestle with some power unknown to my natural understanding, and was led to trace the footsteps of the prodigal son. I want you to bear with me while I quote a certain portion of this wonderful parable, so that I can arrive at the place in the parable where the beauty showed itself to me.

The Savior said: "A certain man had two sons: and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when

he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him." O what a deplorable condition for a son to get into. Starvation now stares him in the face, and he is made to remember his father's house. He also remembers his father's hired servants, that they had bread enough and to spare, while he was perishing with hunger in that far off country, with no one for company but swine; they could live on husks, and he fain would, but could not. If the man, the citizen, had sent him to feed sheep instead of swine it might not have been quite so lonely and sad. "I will arise and go to my father." But the question arises in the poor boy's mind, Will he own me as his son if I go to him? No, I fear not, but I will ask him to give me the place of a hired servant; I will say to him, "I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." "And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." Can we imagine for one moment the picture of this ragged, dirt-stained son coming direct from a place where swine were fed, and with no pleasant smelling odors on his garments? Yet the father saw him, and fell on his neck and kissed him. The question might be asked by some, O why did the father on seeing his lost, dirt-stained son have compassion on him? Why was he moved to run, fall on his neck and kiss him? Do you not know, dear child of God, that this is the condition in nature of every son whom the Lord receiveth? This is where he finds them all, in the mire of dirt and sin; nevertheless they are his children, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. Thus we see that when one is brought to see himself, what he is by nature by reason of sin which dwells in his members, he is sure to cry out in the language of the prodigal: Father. O yes, it must be to our Father, and it must be from the son to his Father. Yes, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am not worthy to be called thy son; just make me as one of thy hired servants.

Now we hear the father saying to his servants, "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him." Shall I pause here for a moment in wonderment, with a heart anxious to grasp the meaning of the words, "the best robe"? O is it the vesture of purity, the robe of righteousness? One of old said, "I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem."—Job xxix. 14. O yes, the son is now clothed in the best robe, the garment of everlasting salvation, which will last forever; it is woven without seam, it is the robe of righteousness. Dear child of grace, it is no wonder that the dear Savior said, "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."

"Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet." Shall I pause here for a moment to know what the ring signifies? Shall I call it a signet ring, a seal of God's eternal love to poor, lost sinners? A ring has no end, and the seal of God can never be broken. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."

The poor, wandering boy is now returned to his father's house, and clothed in garments white and clean, clothed in the best robe, and a signet ring on his hand and shoes on his feet. I can almost imagine he has forgotten his hunger, but he hears his father's command, "Bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it." I would like to pause here for a moment and drink in some of the new wine of the kingdom, but must pass on. If I could tell all I saw in my night of suffering I would be glad, but I cannot. I have only hinted at a few things, and would be glad if dear brother Ker would write on this wonderful subject, the parable of the prodigal son. I might go on until I was a hundred years old, and try to analyze this wonderful parable, yet I should be found wanting. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" But the father said, "Bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry." Yes, joy enters into this house, they sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. The kingdom of heaven is now within them; it is heaven below our Redeemer to know. Jesus said, "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." I think the elder son spoken of in the parable shows the spirit of the Arminian, or a just person that has kept the law from his youth up. He was at a loss to know why his father should do so much for this erring son, even kill the fatted calf for him, when he had not so much as killed a kid for him. He said, "Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment; and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends: but as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf." O what a striking figure this elder son is of the just person that needs no repentance. The Arminian world will readily say, If God saves the bad and turns away the good he is unjust.

But I must surely stop now and leave the subject. I will conclude by saying if you can put this in any shape so that it can be read with understanding, you can publish it in the SIGNS, otherwise cast it into the wastebasket, and all will be well with me. I am glad that I found favor in your sight through my letter sent to you by dear brother Scates. I thought it strange that you could enter into the feelings of one who feels as sinful as I know myself to be. Do you not know, dear brother, that the unity of Christ and his people runs together as two drops of water? Well might dear brother Varnes say that the only reason he could give in fellowshiping my letters was that misery loves company. Write to me, dear brother Varnes, for I need the sympathy of God's dear children. I would like to say to brother Scates that I should be glad to answer his last letter to me, but it is so good that I hardly know how to answer such a letter; however, if the Lord should be pleased to give me any light at all I will try to answer it soon.

Wishing you, brother Ker, and all the household of faith, a happy new year, I beg to remain your brother in Christ Jesus. Amen.

JOHN F. OLIVER.

[WE are glad brother Oliver felt im-

pressed to write on the above subject, and heartily indorse his view of the matter. That the obedient and faithful son represents the "Arminian," or legalist, there seems no doubt, and it seems equally sure that the prodigal son represents all gospel subjects "who have come to themselves" only to find their all spent, and while they would eat husks with the swine, cannot, but remembering the Father's house and the bread therein, their only hope is in Him, though unworthy to be called sons. Empty, desolate, broken-hearted and ashamed, they come confessing their sins and asking for the lowest place in the Father's house. But this sad condition and penitent spirit have no effect upon the Pharisee except to create a feeling of hatred and contempt for the poor sinner. Nothing save the emptying of self by the Spirit of God can change the mind, renew the will and turn one's feet to Zion's hill. Brother E. D. Varnes, as well as brother Oliver, seems to think it almost strange that we can fellowship such experiences as brethren Robert Scates and John Oliver write about. We can imagine no reason for their conclusion, except that it is seldom we speak, either in writing or speaking, of ourself. The chief reason is that we feel utterly unprofitable, and unworthy of the consideration of the household of faith. Surely no mortal can get lower in the pit of darkness, despair, doubt, fear and temptation than we are most all the time. It is indeed a consolation to find now and then in this journey through the wilderness "a traveler" who knows the way we have come, are still in and never expect now to get out of it while in the flesh.—K.]

WAVERLY, Pa., Dec. 21, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find two letters which comforted me very much in my suffering condition of mind and body, and you may have space some time to publish them; who knows but what there may be some one else that would be comforted in reading them? I am on the gain, I think, in some ways, and fill all of my appointments so far. God knows where I am and what I am, I do not, only I know that I am a great sinner, and if saved it is all of God's grace.

D. M. VAIL.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Nov. 19, 1911.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I have read your short article in the November 15th number of the SIGNS, and have thought of you much in deep sympathy. I think I know much of the rough, rugged road a servant of the Lord Jesus must travel, if indeed I am one, which I often doubt. Bonds and afflictions have been my abiding-place much of my life, but somehow I feel sometimes, "As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. * * * And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation."—2 Cor. i. 5–7. Paul, writing unto the saints, says, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." We cannot understand the ways of Providence, only as a little here and there is revealed, only parts of His ways; always learning, yet never knowing anything; it is line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. I was, dear brother, once a financial, physical and almost a mental wreck; for four long

years I was not able to turn my hand to do anything for a temporal supply. I could not then understand the way of Providence, but since then I think I have been enabled to read between the heavy, dark lines, and see the hand of God in it all, and while he kept us low, somehow he supplied our needs, sometimes by the ravens, and I must believe he accomplished his purpose with me, and gave me a thankful heart for the little, so that through all these weary years the dear Lord kept, upheld and supported both in providence and grace, oft brought low and ready to perish, yet raised up to walk and live in him, for he kills and makes alive, and whom he wounds he wounds to heal. It was while passing through these fiery ordeals that my faith was confirmed in the predestination of all things, for when I could see the hand of God in it all, all prepared and fixed by him, the great I AM, I found peace and rest. The flesh will cry out against this blessed doctrine, but the spirit of wisdom reconciles, and says it must be so. I find much to condemn in myself; by God's grace I can set my seal that God is true. In me, that is, in my flesh, there dwells no good thing. My only hope of righteousness and peace is in the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom there is redemption and forgiveness of sins. It does seem to me that when one is brought to see his own vileness, and then see the blessed and holy character of God, he must fall with reverence before God, as Isaiah did when he saw the Lord of glory, and Job when he said, "Now mine eye seeth thee." I am glad our God hath fixed and determined everything, so that

"Not a single shaft can hit,
Till the God of love sees fit."

Whatsoever the Lord hath purposed with you and me he will bring to pass, that we may be humbled at his blessed feet and crown him Lord of all. We may wonder why this or why that, but the Lord alone can make it plain. We must wait. "Wait, I say, on the Lord." His mercies endure forever. I must close with:

"Resistless Sovereign of the skies,
Immensely great, immensely wise,
My times are all within thy hand,
And all events at thy command.

His great decree, who formed the earth,
Hath fixed my first and second birth;
My parents, native place, and time,
Were all assigned to me by him.

'Twas God that formed me by his power,
'Tis he sustains me every hour;
And all my times shall ever be
Ordered by his all-wise decree."

My mind has wandered from what I thought to write, just a few lines, but I trust you will receive it kindly as a token of love and fellowship in the sufferings of Christ. May the continued mercies of the Lord abound toward you and yours, and enable you to see his bow in the cloud. The Lord command his blessing upon you, even life forevermore.

I am the least of all, to serve in Christ,
P. W. SAWIN.

CLEVELAND, Ohio, Nov. 22, 1911.

BELOVED BROTHER IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST:—Sister Turrell and her daughter-in-law called here Sunday night and read us your letter to her, and our hearts are filled with sympathy and sorrow for you in your affliction. I, too, have suffered, and now in your affliction I feel to say, as I have felt to say in my own, viz., I was still, I opened not my mouth, because the Lord did it. O truly "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." He has a perfect right to do with his own as seemeth good in his sight, but O this poor, rebellious nature,

how it shrinks from every pain and suffering, and when our fair designs are crossed and every earthly hope is shattered, Satan is sure to tell us these things are all against us, but in the words of the poet and in God-given faith these words can be applied with sweetest comfort to our poor hearts:

"When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow,
For I will be with thee thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress."

I have had it in my mind to write ever since you were with our church; that was indeed a time of feasting for us all. As you arose to speak, my heart went out in prayer that the dear Lord would grant you liberty, and he did. O he did in a most wonderful manner. My poor heart was filled to overflowing; there was not room for anything but love; no room for bickering and fault-finding. What are all the pleasures of this world when compared with one hour of such sweet enjoyment, when God reigns supreme, when our house is swept and garnished and the heavenly Bridegroom comes and sups with us? My dear brother, if it is our dear, kind heavenly Father's will to again restore you to health and strength this will surely take place in his own time, but if he has ordered it otherwise, may he bless us with a submissive spirit. My prayer is that you may be restored, and that you may be permitted to come and preach for us again. May the dear Lord be with you, and may you be given to feel much of his presence to cheer your poor heart.

I will write no more for fear I shall tire you. Will say we just received in this mail word from my brother, Wilson Gass, that his only son is at the point of death. This will be a hard blow for his parents. He is twenty-four years old. He asks for our prayers in their sorrow. May the dear Lord be their strength in this trying hour.

I inclose a poem I have felt some comfort in.

Your sister in tribulation,

JENNIE O. CROSS.

SOME DAY.

"SOME day all doubt and mystery
Will be made clear;
The threatening clouds which now we see
Will disappear.

Some day what seems a punishment,
Will prove to be
God's blessing sent for very gain
To you and me.

Some day our weary feet will rest
In sweet content,
And we will know how we were blessed
By what was sent.

And looking back with clearer eyes
O'er life's short span,
Will see with wondering, glad surprise
God's perfect plan.

And knowing that the path we went
Was God's own way,
Will understand his wise intent,
Some day, some day."

MACOMB, Ill., Dec., 1911.

ELDERS CHICK AND KER—BELOVED BRETHREN:—May grace, mercy and peace be with you. As I am sending my subscription for the SIGNS, I feel like writing a few lines again for its columns, if you feel they are worthy a place. I would like to speak a word of greeting and approbation to you, in sending to the people of God such a precious paper as the SIGNS. I feel it was never more ably edited than now. The editorials, and letters from dear brethren and sisters scattered all over our land, are full of comfort and encouragement to God's children. No harshness or fault-finding or controversy find place in its columns; and this is as it should be, for what food or comfort is found in reading of wrangles or dissensions among breth-

ren? We rejoice to know this, and are not ashamed to hand a copy of the SIGNS, even to our enemies, and say, There you will find the testimony of God's elect. The Spirit of Christ, it seems, shines forth in the writings of all. Speaking the truth in love, each one testifies that, "Salvation is of the Lord," and there is no other name whereby we must be saved. For twenty-six years I have been a continuous subscriber, and have never missed a number, and many times I get out the old numbers, and as I read them I rejoice to see the same doctrine contended for as at the present day. Once a year I have in much weakness penned a little for its columns, and you have given it place, though I never sent a letter that I thought worthy, or was what I would liked it to have been, yet I still have a desire to add my feeble testimony to God's goodness and grace to a poor sinner like me. Dear editors, may God bless you, and enable you to stand in the old paths, earnestly contending for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints, kind and forbearing to your brethren, but giving no quarter to the unfruitful works of darkness, or inventions of men. As Elder Gilbert Beebe in his day waged a continuous warfare against spiritual wickedness in high places, even so now it seems iniquity doth abound, and the love of many has waxed cold, and the man of sin is revealed in these wicked and perilous times. So it becomes our editors, and all true servants of our God, to put on the whole armor of God, and with the sword of the Lord and of Gideon contend against all the adversaries of the truth. If the SIGNS has in all these years deviated from the old paths I am not able to discern it, but has kept straight on its course, sending forth the doctrine that Paul declares was not taught or received of man. Election, predestination, God's absolute sovereignty over all things, his purpose embracing all events, evil as well as good, salvation by grace alone, special atonement, the perseverance of the saints, and the resurrection of the bodies of the saints, are great truths loved by God's children, and, as Elder Ker said in December 15th number of the SIGNS, nothing short of this doctrine will do poor sinners any good. No, dear brother, nothing less than this will do for me. I believe in a God of purpose and power, one able to carry out his wise decrees, one who is able to save to the uttermost. In him our faith and hope are centered, and in the shadow of his wings his children find a secure resting-place. May you, dear editors, rest here from the toils and cares of your arduous labors, and may you long be spared to comfort God's poor trembling ones.

Dear brethren and sisters, correspondents of our dear paper, you have often comforted me by the way, your letters have often brought a sweet message to me, and O how I desire to express my love and sweet fellowship for all of the household of faith, if I could write as I desire, and cheer one of the least, as you have this poor, trembling one, but I feel incapable of writing to edification or comfort. Dear kindred, do you often become footsore and weary as you pursue your pilgrimage journey? Do you sometimes almost lose hope, and fear that you will fall by the way? Does the path seem rough and beset with snares, pitfalls and temptations? Do trials, sorrows and afflictions press sore on every side, while darkness, doubts and fears are your daily companions? Do you often have to grope in thick darkness, and go back many years and search for proof or

evidence that you are a child of God? Does Satan assail you on every side, and tempt you to throw away your hope? Is not the evil of your own heart your worst enemy? If you have this experience, then I feel I can claim you as dear kindred, and I have a love for you that I have not for the world, for the world laughs at an experience like this, and some of them say, I do not want a religion that makes me gloomy and sad, and one said to me that religion ought to make one jolly. O how little such know of revealed religion. How little they know of the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit. These things are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes. But we are not always left in darkness, for once in a while we have a visit from our heavenly Friend and all is light, and doubts and fears and gloom all flee away, and for a moment we forget the toils of the way and rejoice, and we can claim the sweet promises and our hope is revived. Thus "mixtures of joy and sorrow I daily do pass through."

Twenty-six years ago I was baptized and my name added to the little band of believers of old New Hope Church, and now I do not feel any more able of myself to live right or go alone in my own strength than I did then, but am just as helpless, just as dependent as I ever was, and as I grow older I feel the more need of God's grace and help, for of myself I can do nothing, and sin is mixed with all I do; I cannot do the things I would, but continually do the things I would not. I would surely sink in despair, but I find that Paul had the same experience, and you, dear brethren and sisters, tell the same story, and I am drawn to you in bonds of love and affection, and though many miles intervene, we are brought nigh by the blood of Christ. Then, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." No, these trials that come upon us are not by chance, neither do they just "happen" to us, they are appointed unto us; they are dealt out by the hand of our heavenly Father, and all is embraced in his sovereign will. Some say, God does not send affliction and reverses upon his children, but only light and joy and peace, but I cannot believe it this way, but with one of old I would say, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" What comfort is it to the fearful, trembling one to feel that only while rejoicing he is in the hand of God, and when bowed down in trouble and trial he is left to wander alone without the care or protection of his heavenly Father? No, but he loved them when they were dead in sin. His care is upon and round about his children; though they wander from him, yet his love never fails. Although he sends trials, he also gives grace to bear them. He knows our frame, he knows we are but dust, and, dear ones, while in the furnace, feeling that you surely will be consumed, and all his billows go over you, remember this is God's way of weaning you from the vanities of this unfriendly world, of burning away the dross, of refining the gold, and as long as you tabernacle in the flesh you will be in the hand of the Refiner, but when you come forth you will be as gold, to shine brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. So after a few more rolling years at most you will be called to lay your armor by; all these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, worketh for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

"Come joy, or come sorrow, the worst may befall,
One moment in glory will make up for it all."

And on that glad sweet day of the glorious resurrection Christ shall come again and raise the dead; the bodies of the saints shall be changed and made like unto the glorious body of Christ, then shall we be satisfied, for we shall be with him, and see him as he is. May we comfort each other with these glorious truths, and watch and pray, for we know not when the Master cometh.

Now, dear brethren and sisters, I will close by asking you to remember the weakest one of the flock, who if saved is saved by grace alone, and whose daily cry is, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Give me, O Lord, grace and strength to believe in thee, and keep me and all thy dear children faithful unto the end, and to thy name be all the praise.

With a desire that the new year may bring to all both temporal and spiritual blessings, I am, I hope, your little sister in bonds of love,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

DELMAR, Del., Dec. 18, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—I inclose a letter written by brother A. T. Benson, which some of the brethren who have seen it think worthy a place in the SIGNS.

I extend to you the compliments of the coming Christmas season, and wish for the SIGNS a very prosperous year in 1912.

Your brother in hope,

A. B. FRANCIS.

CANNON, Del., Dec. 13, 1911.

ELDER A. B. FRANCIS—MY DEAR PASTOR:—You may think me presumptuous when I tell you that I am impressed with a desire to write upon a passage of Scripture, but such seems to be my desire. I really feel sometimes that I am beside myself, and form resolutions that I will keep my thoughts to myself, but it seems that there are times when I cannot do this. The Scripture upon my mind is in the Song of Solomon, second chapter and seventeenth verse, and reads as follows: "Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved; and be thou like a roe, or a young hart, upon the mountains of Bether." Solomon in his song is telling the experience of all the elect family. It seems to me I have learned the truth of the statement where it is declared that no Scripture is given by private interpretation. We can understand the Scriptures only as the Spirit takes of the things of Jesus and reveals them unto us. It is in my mind to mention the name of whom Solomon is singing in this Song: it is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for he is the great Shepherd; he is the one altogether lovely, and Solomon was given to see his beauty and excellence. The bride also saw so much beauty in him that she wanted to be drawn to him. In the fourth verse of the first chapter she says, "Draw me, we will run after thee. The king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee; we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee." Notice the words "draw me." We inquire, What does she mean? These words, as it seems to me, express the feeling of each individual to whom Jesus has revealed himself. When one has been given a view of this wonderful Being how that one desires to be like him, and longs to be drawn away from the vanities of the world. Such an one realizes that it is not in human nature to follow Jesus, and also realizes that the carnal mind is enmity against God, that it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Because of this the poor soul says, "Draw me, we will run after thee." The bride continues

and says, "The king hath brought me into his chambers." I cannot pass the word "hath" without presenting a thought in reference to it. This word proves beyond doubt that the work of drawing one into the King's chambers is the work of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who is King of kings and Lord of lords. I believe I am safe in saying that if the salvation of man depended upon his coming to this King no one would be saved, for it is man's nature to walk in darkness; that is, he wants to follow his own ways, which are contrary to righteousness. But Jesus draws his people with an everlasting love and calls them with an holy calling. Is not this wonderful love? When we are enabled to think upon this wonderful Being who calls his people, even when they are dead in sins, and quickens them and makes them sit together in heavenly places, putting a new song in their mouths, how we praise his holy name. Perhaps I should not say "we," but I often think of the words,

"Awake, my soul, in joyful lays,
And sing thy great Redeemer's praise;
He justly claims a song from me,
His loving-kindness, O how free."

But I am getting away from the subject. "Until the day break, and the shadows flee away," &c. It seems to me that our experience is told in these words. Before the day breaks it is nighttime, darkness is upon the earth, yet we know that the sun is shining in some other portion of this universe. It is ever shining, whether we see it or not. The bride being in darkness, is addressing the King, who reigns in righteousness, and during that nighttime, when all was dark and vain and wild, she, by faith, plead with her Beloved to turn and be unto her as a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether. By referring to natural history we find that the hart is noted for its grace and beauty, also for its swiftness. It was nighttime in the soul of the bride, and she wanted to hear that "still small voice" say unto her, "Fear not." She wanted to feel the presence of the heavenly Bridegroom within her troubled breast, knowing that the King who reigns in righteousness could make darkness light and crooked things straight. Verse eight reads, "The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills." This has a beautiful significance; he comes leaping upon the mountains; O yes, he comes to his people in their dark seasons, when their sins rise like mountains and they see no way of escape and sink exceeding low. Jesus comes leaping upon the mountains and skipping upon the hills, and by his mighty power the mountains are removed out of their place. My beloved "cometh leaping upon the mountains," not under them, showing that he is above all things; he it is who commands the sea and the winds, "Be still," and they obey. It is Jesus who says to his people, "Fear not, trembling ones, it is I." Hence how forceful are the words of the poet:

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

One more thought and I will close, as I see I am making this letter too lengthy. "The king hath brought me into his chambers." In order to get at what is in my mind let me say, that if an earthly king should bring one of the common people into his palace do you not think that one would feel a great favor had been conferred upon him? Do you not think that one would inquire of the king why he had conferred so great a favor? Why hast thou brought me into thy palace? The bride, the church, says, "The king hath brought me into his

chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee; * * * the upright love thee." When Jesus calls a poor sinner and makes known to him that he has blotted out his transgressions, and says, I have paid thy debt, thou art free, does not that one rejoice in his King for such a wonderful favor? He takes no credit unto himself, but on the contrary says, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." He wants to be found at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind.

My dear pastor, I will close this letter by saying, if I am not deceived my desire is that you may feel the presence of Him who is fair and comely; may you be made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; may you be enabled to speak words of comfort to Jerusalem, as in the past. I believe you will, for Jesus said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

From one who is unworthy, nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity.

A. T. BENSON.

PINSONFORK, Ky., Dec. 8, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I herewith send you a letter written by our highly esteemed brother, Elder J. E. Thornbury, of Ratcliff, Ky., which you can publish in the dear old SIGNS if you think proper. I should have sent it sooner, but was and am yet somewhat embarrassed to forward it for publication, on account of some things said relative to myself, a poor, unworthy creature; but this wonderfully good letter tells my feelings and exercises of mind better than I can tell them myself, and perhaps will tell the feelings of many others.

Yours in gospel bonds,

W. J. MAY.

RATCLIFF, Ky., Oct. 29, 1911.

ELDER W. J. MAY—DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER:—After a long delay I will attempt to write you, humbly hoping the Lord will bless me with light, after so much darkness and doubt through which I have been passing for so long a season. I have been so barren and destitute in spiritual knowledge that I have written no letters for the last six or eight months. I came home this evening from Rock Spring Church, where the dear Savior blessed us with his wonderful love and grace, in meeting his beloved children in peace and fellowship in the truth, and gave us much glorious assurance of his presence, in blessing our coming together to worship him who is the God of our salvation, in the beauty of holiness and in spirit and in truth. It hath pleased the Lord to cause them as brethren to dwell together in unity and love. Sister Ratliff sent me the letter you wrote her. When I read your inquiry about my poor, unworthy and unprofitable self, you spoke in such kind and affectionate terms that it made me tremble, while I was melted to tears to know that one so highly favored as I feel sure you are, in that God has blessed you with such wonderful and deep knowledge of spiritual truths to preach to his honor and glory, and to the comfort of his poor and afflicted people, who hunger and thirst after righteousness, that you should speak of me in words of tenderness and love, as you did in your letter, caused my poor heart to leap within me, and I was filled with wonder and astonishment that you should express a desire to meet me, and much more, to hear me in my weak, feeble efforts preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. My dear brother, how you or any of the dear children of Zion can desire such, or receive any comfort from my

feeble efforts at preaching, is indeed a mystery that I cannot understand, for it is evident to me that any one who can preach to the honor and glory of God at all is better prepared than my weak and unprofitable self to feed the flock which he hath purchased with his own blood. Brother May, I can see in you every evidence of a call to the ministry, while in myself I can see no evidence of it at all. I am a mystery to myself; to think of being the pastor of a church, without the least evidence of qualification, is a fearful thing for me to consider. What a holy place to occupy! What a solemn command to receive: "Feed my sheep;" "Feed my lambs;" "Feed the flock of God which is among you;" "Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." I have no doubt you can do so, but alas, I often fear that my preaching has always been of no profit to any one, and am often so crushed at my failures that I decide in my own mind I will never go to meeting again; then again it is my delight, and I cannot stay away. Are you that way, or am I alone, as I often feel to be? Yet notwithstanding my anxieties, my doubts and fears, I have much consolation in this thought, that the Lord of glory, the God of Israel, cannot change or be changed, and works all things after the counsel of his own will, hence the safety of Zion. He is a wall of fire round about her, and the glory in her midst, and "out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined," and in bringing his loved ones from darkness to light, he shines in their hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. This must be God, the Light, the perfection of beauty, shining out of Zion in the experience of his children. He says of them, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." Nothing can separate them from his love; they dwell in God, and God in them.

I submit this to you for your consideration, do with it as you think best. I would love to see you, and hope to be blessed of the Lord in the near future to do so. Now, my dear brother, may the rich and choice blessings of heaven rest upon you and yours, and may you long be spared of the Lord to preach the riches of his glorious and saving grace to his glory and honor, and to the comfort of his poor and afflicted people. We are well at this writing, for which I hope we are thankful to our dear Savior. I would like for you, if it is not asking too much, to write to me. Remember me as the least of all.

Unworthily your brother,

J. E. THORNBURY.

PENNINGTON, N. J., Jan. 6, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been requested by some of my brethren to write a little of my experience concerning my hope in the blessed Lord, but I hardly know where to begin, as I have felt myself to be a sinner from my earliest recollection, still I did not feel the burden to be so great until I was about thirty-four years of age, and then the weight became so heavy that I knew not which way to turn, and I was made to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," but he did not seem to hear my cry, until one night when I was on the very verge of despair. I retired, but could not rest, because of the awful burden of sin which was on my mind. About this time there appeared a great light in the midnight darkness, which was brighter than the noonday sun, and with it came the words, Where the Lord is, we need no light of

the sun. I also saw a beautiful cross with the colors of the rainbow, and with it came these words, Be thou comforted, thy sins are all forgiven. Then there seemed to come great peace into my troubled soul. The next morning all nature seemed changed, and all things seemed to be praising God, and even my poor heart was made glad. I shall never forget that day; it was a happy day to me. About this time my mind was directed to the church. I thought that I saw her clothed in the spotless righteousness of her dear Redeemer. It was a beautiful sight to behold, and I desired that I might be even the hindmost one following in the footprints of the flock of God; they were singing the sweet songs of Zion, and the high praises of God for his goodness and mercy and wonderful works to the children of men. This was about the time that Elder Chick came to Hopewell as our pastor. I had a great desire to be numbered with that people. On the second Saturday in June, 1896, I went before the church, with three others, and tried to relate to them the reason of my hope. I was received, and on the following Sunday baptized by Elder Chick. It was a very rainy day outside, but to me it was a pleasant day. Since that time the Lord has blessed me with a desire to mingle with his dear children and to hear them speak of their joys and sorrows, and of the way in which poor sinners are led and saved through the precious blood of Jesus, the only name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. The apostle says, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." There are many precious things spoken in the Scriptures concerning those saved by grace. Jesus once said, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." He also declared, I will never leave nor forsake thee. Although the children of God may pass through trials and temptations in this world, he promised grace according to their day. His power was proven in the lions' den, in the fiery furnace and at the Red Sea, and as he was with that national people in the olden times, so now is he with his spiritual Israel, manifesting himself in the hearts of his people by his mighty power to save. I hope I am thankful that I have been made to trust and believe in God, who has all power in heaven and in earth, and who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. He speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast. This is the God that I love and adore. May all the subjects of his grace be kept by his mighty power, is my sincere desire.

Your brother in hope,

I. H. VANNOY.

PORT JEFFERSON, N. Y., Oct. 11, 1911.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I have had it on my mind to write you for some time. Your last letter was very comforting, and I have read it to a few; I would that there were more about here who could hear it. It has always been the few in number, as we read, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Beautiful words! It is very precious to have Christ, and to know him as our Savior. Of late it has seemed as if there were no spiritual life within me; I have been so occupied with care. I enjoy reading your letters, as the name of Christ is exalted. I would that I could testify of him as I ought. It is unspeakable; it is so wonderful that he should reveal his

love to me, so wonderful that he should give his life a ransom, and I so great a sinner; it calls forth praise. I love to sing praises to him who is worthy; I also like to meet with those who have no confidence in the flesh. When I go to the Scriptures I am made to tremble, for they reveal to me how far short I come of their teachings. It is as you say, we need the Spirit to reveal the word; it was expedient for Christ to go away. I remember that you spoke from that at the funeral of Carrie's boy, Hermon. We have the Comforter now, the Spirit of truth. How it lifts our souls above trying things here below. Words fail to express it. I desire to render thanks, though in a feeble way, to him.

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me."

Sister Carrie is away from home most of the time. Both she and I would have been glad to have attended the association last June.

This letter is poorly written, but it will let you know of my state of mind, and that I have not made any growth in the knowledge of spiritual things, but a desire abides to do the things that I ought. The time is short, and we are soon cut off. Daniel Terry passed away quite suddenly March 14th, and he is much missed. I doubt not it is eternal gain for him. The two remaining brothers are well. I hope you are feeling better than when you last wrote, and that your family is well. I think your last two letters would be enjoyed by the readers of the SIGNS. I much enjoyed reading your editorial upon the brazen serpent. My husband joins me in kind regards to you. You wrote of the mercies of God to you; he has indeed been merciful to me.

A sinner saved by grace,
SARAH A. NORTON.

MANSFIELD, Ga., Nov. 28, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am glad that I have the privilege and pleasure to be permitted to tell you that I have been called by our kind, heavenly Father to be one of the sheep of his fold, and to be well cared for by him who is so much stronger than we are. One evening about the latter part of May, while I was reading the Bible it came to me all at once that I wanted to be one to wash the feet of the Lord's people, as did the dear Savior his disciples', and one day about the latter part of July I felt called upon to preach the word of God, yet I do not think that I am worthy. The devil kept tempting me, and I did not unite with the church until the third Saturday in September. This was at Harris Springs, and I was baptized by our pastor, Elder H. S. Cook, of Social Circle, Ga., on the third Sunday in October, and became identified with the flock. O how much I felt relieved after being baptized in what I think is the only mode of baptism. I can but wish that I had united with the church earlier, though I am still unworthy, but by the help of the Lord, who knows all things, I hope to endure. I hope, by grace, to continue to abide in the principles that Christ teaches us. O how my heart reaches out in gratitude to God, and in sympathy to those who are out in the world as I once was. I do not believe that any one enjoys this doctrine, and fellowship with his children better than I do.

Dear brethren, if you see fit you may publish this. Without the help of the Lord I am weak and helpless. I will close by asking God's richest blessings to abide with us all now and forever. I have received the paper you sent, and am well pleased with it. I will take the paper later, and will try to get you two

other subscribers, and get the Bible as a premium.

Your young and unworthy brother in hope, J. C. KENERLEY.

LAKELAND, Fla., Nov. 12, 1911.

EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—I am now in south Florida, at Lakeland, for the winter, and I wish to inform all who are interested that I had the pleasure of attending the Mt. Enon Association once more, and there I met a lovely band of brethren and sisters from seven churches who love the doctrine of predestination of all things, and are standing on the solid foundation of salvation by grace, and have no fellowship with conditionalism in any form. I was made to shed tears of joy to see those dear saints and faithful in Christ stand up in defence of truth and prove to all the world that they are not ashamed to confess they have no confidence in the flesh, and that Jesus alone is the author and finisher of their faith. This year this little band held their fortieth annual session with the church called Paynes Creek, about sixty miles southeast of Tampa, Fla., and I must say I feel sure the good Lord blessed them with an outpouring of his Holy Spirit. O how precious is this oil of gladness. The meeting closed in peace and love. The preaching was grace, salvation by grace, and the unlimited predestination of all things. The ministers present were Elders J. W. Futch, Peter Brown, L. C. Deshong, George Futch and J. T. Hancock, and all declared the power and glory of God. Let us remember that all we have is through the wonderful mercy of God, and it is by God's divine power, therefore let us ever be found submissive to the will of God, and try to be reconciled wherever our lot is cast, for God has the disposing thereof. May he keep, direct and choose all our way, for we are not our own, but bought with a price, and that price was the blood of Christ, which did cleanse us from all our sins. God bless you all.

Your servant, C. K. HAINES.

WINCHESTER, Ill., Dec. 14, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—We are again reminded that our subscription for your valuable paper is due, and we hope to be able to take it as long as our natural life continues, or at least as long as it continues in the advocacy of "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." My wife and I have been constant readers of the SIGNS for about thirty years, and feel glad to say we have been unable to detect any change in the doctrine (which we believe to be the doctrine taught in the holy Scriptures) since our first acquaintance with its pages, but many, very many times have our eyes overflowed with tears, and our hearts with joy, as we have been permitted to peruse its dear pages. It seems in almost every communication from the dear brethren and sisters (though widely scattered) there is something that clearly corresponds with our own experience. Also the editorials have been a source of great comfort and instruction; I cannot now call to mind even one but what we have heartily indorsed. Our membership is with a little band of brethren and sisters composing the church called Friendship, situated in Scott County, Ill. We have preaching every fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, by our faithful brethren, Elders Reeder and Murray.

You will find inclosed money order for two dollars, for which you will please continue our subscription another year. Our prayers are that the editors of the SIGNS, as well as God's Zion everywhere, may be blessed with a comfortable and happy new year.

Yours unworthily,

WM. H. WATSON.

CARMEN, Okla., Oct. 23, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—If I may be allowed to call you brethren. I feel unworthy of a name and place among those who advocate the doctrine set forth in the dear old paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Though I feel so unworthy of a place among them, it is a great comfort to me to read the good letters written by the brethren and sisters, and published in the dear old SIGNS. I am not acquainted with many in the flesh who write, but I have a hope that I know them in the Spirit, for, if I know myself, they express my feelings and experience far better than I can myself, and it does me much good to read the editorials. When I get the paper I am not satisfied until I read it through, and then I go to the old ones and read them over again. It does me much good to read the editorials of old Elder Beebe. I have been a reader of the SIGNS since 1903.

Well, I did not think of writing, except to acknowledge my delinquency in sending the money to pay for the paper. I am writing you this from Carmen, but still send my paper to Lambert, and change the name of the county to Alfalfa County, as Woods County has been divided into three counties, and Lambert is in Alfalfa.

JAMES J. CLARK.

SHEPHERDSTOWN, W. Va., Jan. 6, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am very sorry to inform you of the death of my father, Robert M. Duke, which occurred at his home, "Fairview," at 6 o'clock on the evening of Nov. 3rd, 1911. His death was due to paralysis. He was in his usual good health on retiring, the fatal stroke coming about 10 o'clock. Interment at Charlestown. While not a member of the Old School Baptist Church, he loved the people of that faith, and believed faithfully in the doctrine as proclaimed by its Elders. He found great pleasure in the association meetings when they were near enough for him to attend. The last preaching service he had an opportunity to attend was at the home of Mr. A. S. Miller, in Kearneysville, this county. He enjoyed that meeting very much, and greatly admired the minister who preached there. I wish that I could recall his name, but fail to do so, though he mentioned it many times. I think he is now preaching near Boyds, Montgomery Co., Md. My father was well versed in the Scriptures, and loved to talk of the hope he had in the Savior. Many times previous to his affliction he said, "If I am saved, it will be by the grace of God alone;" and again, "I have hope in my Savior; he is too good to be unkind." He was a constant reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, from which he received great comfort and inspiration. My grandfather, Robert M. Duke, Sr., was also a reader of that paper until his death.

With best wishes, I am respectfully yours,

WALTER M. DUKE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1912.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

DOCTRINE OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—Inclosed find two dollars, which I think will pay our subscription for the SIGNS until March, 1912. When our subscription is out, please do not send it any more. I have enjoyed reading some of the editorials and letters very much, and the Primitive Baptists are a dear people to me, but I feel I would be doing wrong to continue my subscription longer. The SIGNS stands for eternal punishment and partial redemption, and I cannot believe that our heavenly Father could be that cruel. I know that the Bible teaches special election and special high calling to immortality, but is that any reason for us to believe that the ones who have not the high calling could not have had some just and merciful arrangement made for them? If there has not been, why do we find such Scriptures as these in the Bible? John iii. 16, 17: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." 1 John iv. 14: "And we have seen, and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world." John vi. 33: "For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." John xii. 47: "And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." There are many more Scriptures of like teaching. I know you will think I am in error, but if I am, it is an error of the head and not of the heart, for my earnest desire is to do that which is right in the sight of God.

Hoping that you will not think hard of me I will close.

Yours in hope, FANNIE CLANTON.

ESPERANZA, Texas, Oct. 20, 1911.

We feel like writing in reply to the above letter, not only for the consideration of our friend, but for the thoughtful reading of all our subscribers. Our friend has written candidly, and no doubt just as the things of which she writes appear to her. We have no purpose to in any manner write in reply with censoriousness, but rather with a desire, if the Lord so will, to instruct and to clear away the questionings which fill her mind, and we would not for a moment seek to claim that our knowledge in divine things is perfect, or that we may not be mistaken in our understanding of many of the Scriptures. We claim no superiority over our friend, for we, like her, and like all men, can only claim to be a sinner saved by grace, and if taught in divine things at all, it has been by revelation of the Spirit, just as all must be taught who know the Lord at all.

One thing in especial we desire to say first of all, and that is, that there is not a single principle of doctrine taught in the word that can please the carnal mind, and the reason is, that the carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to his law, and indeed cannot be. This is the teaching of inspiration. We, therefore, cannot undertake to decide what is right by what seems right to us. God's ways and thoughts are altogether above our ways and thoughts. We, by nature, put darkness for light and light for darkness; we think evil to be good and good to be evil. All that any man can know of God must be by revelation, and in the Bible we have the revealed word and will of God. It is good indeed if our every thought be brought into submission to his revealed will. The principles of the doctrine of God our Savior, all of them, seem harsh, evil, cruel and unjust to the natural mind of men. Upon this ground, and for this reason, predestination of all things, election, per-

sonal and effectual calling, the sovereign grace of God in that calling, the preservation of the called through God-given faith, the rejection of the rest of mankind, and their eternal destiny in endless punishment, has, and will always be, rejected by natural men, some of these principles upon one ground and some upon another. It will not do therefore to fall back upon what seems good, and right, and kind, and just to us, in order to come to a decision as to what is truth. In their fall our reason and every affection of our heart became perverted. The whole man, including mind, and will, and understanding, is dead and sold under sin. Concerning the things of God, therefore, we cannot think aright, any more than we can do that which is right.

We have said these things because our friend said that she cannot believe eternal punishment, or partial redemption, upon the ground that it all seems cruel upon the part of the God of heaven, to her, but the question ought not to be what seems cruel to us, but what does the Bible teach? Let the teaching of the Bible be what it may concerning this or that principle of doctrine, let us never hold in our thought for an instant the conclusion that our God is cruel, unjust or unkind. It has been our mind from the first of our interest in Christ and in his word, that he is good and kind and full of love, and yet that it is in perfect harmony with all these things when we read in his word that he is just and a God of vengeance against sinners. If the Bible indeed teaches predestination, election and justification solely upon the perfect righteousness of Christ imputed to the elect of God, and everlasting punishment for the nonelect, then all these things are in perfect harmony with his goodness, mercy, truth, kindness and love, and it does not matter that we cannot reason these things out so as to see their harmony; it is enough, and it ought to satisfy us, if the inspired word teaches all these things. Our attitude of mind ought not to be that certain things are cruel, unjust and unkind, and therefore a merciful God could not do this or that, but rather that our God declares such and such things in his word, and therefore they are right and good, whether they appear so to us or not. We hope that our friend will consider these reflections and be led to ask only this, What do the Scriptures teach concerning God and his ways? and then to say, My reason is at fault if in anything it leads to conclusions contrary to the word of God. It has for many years seemed to us that this is the only right attitude of mind when we come to read the Scriptures.

Our friend admits that the Bible teaches a special election and a special high calling, yet she thinks that unless God has some good things in store for those who are not thus elected and called, it is harsh, unjust and unkind. Before considering the texts of Scripture to which she refers we would like to suggest this thought: If all men are alike sinners against God, and equally deserving of wrath, and there is any injustice and unkindness involved in the doctrine of election, and of the eternal punishment of the nonelect at all, there would be also injustice and unkindness, to some extent, involved in the theory of our friend. If it be unjust in our God to take some men to a home in heaven according to his sovereign choice, while others are left to everlasting punishment, then there would also be injustice involved in taking some men to heaven with supreme happiness and leaving others to a lesser degree of bles-

sedness. Our friend's theory would involve cruelty and injustice with God just as really as the Bible doctrine of election and everlasting punishment, which she cannot receive, would involve these things. Considered simply as fallen men, no one has any claim upon God for his mercy and blessing. If there be any claim, all share in it equally, and if one receives his claim, while another must put up with less, there is injustice indeed involved; but no man has any claim by reason of any superiority over others. Our God might have left all men to perish and still have been just, but in his kindness and pity he has chosen some to salvation; this is the teaching of the Scriptures. Let what may become of those not chosen, there is no injustice toward them, but again we say that the theory of our friend would involve injustice just as much as the doctrine which she cannot receive. Injustice is injustice, in little as well as in much. But may we all banish all thought that there is injustice with God in any sense of the word or in any degree.

Our friend seems to admit that there is a kind of election, and a kind of calling, which is given to some above others. In the Scriptures election and calling are said again and again to be unto salvation, and the word salvation is never used regarding those not elected or called; it is never intimated that there are two degrees of salvation. We are not told of a lower heaven, of a lesser holiness, of a fainter degree of happiness which awaits some men beyond, but which yet is not eternal banishment from God. We are not told of high seats in heaven and low seats there. This is a fiction, invented by those who reject sovereign grace in salvation, and place it upon the ground of the good living of the creature. It is but natural for men who believe this to conclude that those who live best must have the highest seats in heaven, but the doctrine of sovereign grace destroys all such vain-glorying here, and certainly forbids it in the world to come. The election of grace, the calling by grace, fills heaven with its glorified inhabitants, and all sing the same song of redeeming grace there, and all confess themselves there the chief of sinners and the least of saints. There cannot be, if we believe this point of view, any difference in salvation, because there is no difference in sinners before God; all are alike sinners in his sight; all alike have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. God judges the heart, the very nature of men, rather than the outward life. The outward life may be full of differences among men, but all alike, by nature, are dead to God, and dead in sin. There is no difference, says the inspired apostle, therefore the theory to which our friend seems to cling is untenable; there cannot be a greater and a lesser salvation in heaven.

We will now devote a few thoughts to the various texts quoted by our friend. We do not mean to take them up one by one, for the explanation of one is the explanation of all the rest. We wish our readers would here turn back and look at the texts again. First, we would say, that if there were no other Scriptures in the Bible beside these texts, then it might indeed be concluded that there was some sort of salvation for all men, but these Scriptures must be compared with all other portions of the word. Let it be noted that even in these texts there is but one salvation presented; nothing is said about two degrees of salvation. If the salvation be that which perfects men in heaven, or if it be some other, it is in them all the same one salvation.

But the question is, What does "the world," "the whole world," "all men," &c., as used in these and other texts, signify? It seems hardly needful that we should call attention to the fact that often in the New Testament these expressions are used to set forth the difference between the recipients of the benefits of the old covenant and those who are embraced in the new covenant. That difference, so far as what is in our mind is concerned, is this, viz., that the old covenant related to and embraced the Jewish nation alone, while the new covenant embraces all who are chosen of God of every nation, tongue and tribe, therefore the terms, "the world," "the whole world," "all men," are used and emphasized to set forth the truth that no longer is the Jewish nation addressed by the admonitions, promises and teachings of the Bible, but the Lord's people among all nations. In Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Greek, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, all are one in Christ Jesus. The reason, or at least one reason, that this is so much emphasized in the New Testament is that Jewish believers were so slow to learn this lesson. We need only to recall how slow Peter, one of the apostles, was to come into the full understanding and reception of this truth. All of them were slow to learn that the Gentiles were to be fellow-heirs of the grace of God. We surely do not need to go on to present the Scriptures which set this forth. Therefore it is not that portion of the world known as Jews, that receives this salvation, but "the world," "the whole world," "all men," and other expressions which mean the same thing. This view of these Scriptures is not a forced one, or one taken hold upon just in order to meet objections drawn from these quoted texts, but it is one in full harmony with the other Scriptures. This is the view of these texts held by most of the brethren of former as well as of the present generation, and unless we are willing to assert that there is contradiction in the word of God, there is no other view of them that can be taken. But the word of God cannot contradict itself. If there appear to be such contradictions, it is the feebleness of our understanding, and not the fault of the revelation of God. God's love then is not limited to the Jew, but goes out to the Gentile nations. Salvation does not come to the Jew alone, but is extended to Gentiles, and so, many come from the east and the west and sit down in the kingdom of heaven with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and share with them in the glory of this salvation.

We leave these thoughts with our friend, and with all who may read them.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

GENESIS III. 22, 23.

ELDER G. BEEBE—DEAR SIR:—If you have light on the subject, and time to write, and space for publication, please give your views on Gen. iii. 22, 23, especially on the latter part: "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken."

Yours faithfully,

EPHRAIM J. PEMBERTON.

RUSHVILLE, Ill., Dec. 21, 1864.

Without claiming any extraordinary light on the true figurative import of the words of this text, we will venture to give such views as we have on the subject, hoping they may serve to enlighten those who are anxiously inquiring after the truth, and, if nothing more, lead them to a close examination of the Scriptures.

We do not understand the account given of the creation of the world, the entrance of sin, the fall of man and the early propagation of his seed, &c., to have been written as a mere history of events to gratify the prying curiosity of men in the subsequent ages of the world. The book of Genesis is not a record of facts noted as they transpired and so transmitted to posterity, like all profane history, but written by Moses more than two thousand years after the creation of the world. As Moses wrote by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, we infer not only the sacred truth of what is written, as the testimony of God himself, but also that the sacred import of the record is, like all other parts of divine revelation, the opening of the mouth of God in parables, and the uttering of dark sayings, and all designed to be made plain in due time to the expanding understanding of the children of God by the same Spirit which inspired Moses to write. Instead then of reading it as a mere literal history of events, we regard every line and every word as the inspiration of God himself, "declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things" which are to be fulfilled in the fullness of the dispensation of times. A clear understanding of these early records will show to the divinely instructed pupil in the school of Christ a perfect and beautiful cluster of types pointing to Christ, and the salvation of his church and people, in which the two parallel mysteries, godliness and iniquity, are strikingly developed. Had we the ability, the time and space, we would review the whole record from Gen. i. 1, to the text on which we are now requested to bestow our attention, but we must let it suffice, for the time, to express some thoughts on the expulsion of man from the garden of Eden, and some things therewith connected, and first, God in his triune relation as Father, Word and Spirit, not as three Gods, but the only true and living God, revealed in creation, providence and grace, created the world by the Word, for, "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God."—Heb. xi. 3. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."—Heb. i. 1, 2, which accounts for the plural form of the pronoun: "Let us make man in our image." And in our text, "Behold, the man is become as one of us." Christ is declared to be the image of the invisible God, and the express image of his person, and the brightness of his glory, (see Col. i. 15; Heb. i. 3,) and Adam is the figure of him that was to come. (Romans v. 14.) Man was not, as we understand, directly the image of the invisible God, but was made after that image, a fac-simile, a figure, a type of Christ; "after our likeness." Not like God in infinity, immortality or deity, but as a figure of the dominion of Christ over all created things, having dominion over the beasts of the field, fowls of the air, fishes of the sea and every creeping thing, &c. Nor do we understand that his created elements or perfections were like the uncreated attributes of his Creator, for then he could not have fallen, but the likeness and image was confined to his being the figure of him that was to come, that is, of Christ. Not only as lord over the animal creation, but also as the head of a posterity which God had created in him, also in his identity with his bride, and finally in all that is recorded of him in the Scriptures; he the first Adam,

Christ the second Adam. But let us not mistake, for that Adam which was first was not spiritual, but natural, but afterward that which is spiritual, as seen in the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven. The first Adam was of the earth earthy, his antitype is heavenly; the first was natural, the last spiritual; the first was made a living soul, the second is a quickening spirit.

Second, the first estate of man. "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil," &c. Here in an earthly paradise, which is also figurative of the church or garden of the Lord, man in his primeval rectitude was placed by his Creator, surrounded with every comfort for the eye and for the taste, all planted by the Lord God himself, and growing luxuriantly without the labor of man, and all perfectly adapted to the condition of man in his original purity, yet man was natural, and the garden natural, and all their surroundings were natural. In this consisted the adaptation, for if the garden and its trees, its plants and fruits, had been spiritual, they could neither have been pleasant to his sight nor good for food. As a natural man he could not see or discern spiritual things, nor could his natural and earthly nature have subsisted on spiritual food, yet Adam, being natural, could and did prefigure Him that is spiritual; and so also did the garden and trees, plants, rivers, &c., being natural, prefigure the church and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. In this garden was found every tree and everything that was pleasant to the sight, or good for food, or that could contribute to the support and comfort of man in his then present condition, but of these we propose to notice two trees which are particularly mentioned, and to show what they particularly represented.

1. The tree of life is mentioned, which was in the midst of the garden. This tree was among those of which man had permission to eat freely, and so long as he continued to eat of it, and obeyed the command of God to touch not, taste not and handle not the tree of knowledge of good and evil, it was to him the tree of life, for without transgression he could not die. The figurative allusion points to the tree of life, of which Christ is the Root and the Offspring, (Rev. xxii. 2, 14, 16,) the type being natural and the antitype spiritual.

2. The tree of knowledge of good and evil, being the only tree or thing in the garden that man was forbidden to touch or taste, is appropriately called the tree of knowledge of good and evil, for man without touching or tasting it could not have known evil, any more than we could have known sin except the law had said, "Thou shalt not covet." But in partaking of it man became a sinner, and with his transgression death entered and passed on all the unborn posterity, which, being in him, were involved in the transgression, and consequently to the knowledge of evil. This tree, we understand, was designed to represent the law of God, the transgression of which brings guilt, condemnation and death to the offenders. In support of this position we assume, and shall endeavor to show, that the law of God answers to this figure, beyond all doubt or controversy.

It is a tree of knowledge of sin: of evil. "The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law."—1 Cor. xv. 56.

Where there is no law there can be no transgression, for sin is the transgression of the law. Hence it is written, By the deeds of the law no flesh living shall be justified in the sight of God. In perfect agreement, as we conceive, with the application of the figure were the circumstances connected with the giving of the law at Sinai. Three days before the descent of the Lord to proclaim his law he commanded Moses to sanctify the people of Israel, and to admonish them to come not up to touch the mountain on pain of death. "And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death: there shall not a hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether it be beast or man, it shall not live."—Exodus xix. 12, 13. And after Moses had faithfully given this charge, and the time appointed had come, the Lord called Moses to him and again sent him down to repeat the solemn warning: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze, and many of them perish. * * * And Moses said unto the Lord, The people cannot come up to mount Sinai: for thou chargedst us, saying, Set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it. And the Lord said unto him, Away, get thee down; and thou shalt come up, thou, and Aaron with thee; but let not the priests and the people break through to come up unto the Lord, lest he break forth upon them."—Exodus xix. 21–24; compared with Hebrews vii. 18–21. How remarkable the coincidence when we compare the charge given to Adam (Gen. ii. 17,) and the charge given as copied above concerning Mount Sinai. The law of God, as given to Adam in this figure, and as reiterated in its covenant and preceptive form by Moses, clearly shows that no man can approach unto God by the law, for it could not give life, or righteousness should have been by it, but it is the ministration of death. An apostle tells us that the law is not made for a righteous man, and again that the law entered that the offence might abound, and that sin might appear exceeding sinful. So we see that man while in innocence could have no knowledge of evil, and consequently could not by comparing know good and evil, or good from evil.

Third. We now propose to show that Adam in partaking of the tree of knowledge, as in every other incident recorded of him, was the figure of him that was to come. Eve, who was created in Adam, and a part of himself, bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, and called woman, because she was taken out of the man, living in his vitality and existing in his flesh and bones, bore the same natural relationship to him that the church of God does of spiritual relation and identity to the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven. For we are his (God's) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. And as Eve was the bride, the wife of Adam in this figure, so the church of God, which was created in the second Adam, was and is the bride, the Lamb's wife, his body, his flesh and his bones. In this presentation of the figure let us trace the analogy in a few particulars. "For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived; but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression."—1 Tim. ii. 13, 14. Was it not even so in the application of these words

to Christ and the church? Might not our apostle here add, as in Eph. v. 32, "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church"? Certainly Christ in identifying himself with the transgression of the church was not deceived. Well did he count the cost, well did he know that in bearing the sins of his people he must die, and for that very purpose came he into the world, and was made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. Well did he know that to redeem his church unto God he must be made sin for her, that he must bear her sins in his own body on the tree. Now hear what Adam said when arraigned in judgment, and imagine his words as uttered prophetically as from the lips of Christ, the second Adam: "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." Some have fancied themselves wise enough to tell us what were the thoughts and design of Adam in using these nineteen words, instead of frankly acknowledging the truth in a single word. Some have concluded that his object was to charge the blame on Eve, or on the Creator himself, for having given him such a wife, but we confess that our line is too short to reach the thoughts and intents of Adam's mind; but whatever they were, we read in them a prophecy of the Husband of the church of God. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." For what purpose were they given him? This is the will of the Father, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing. And, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."—John xvii. 24.

(To be continued.)

MARRIAGES.

By Elder R. L. Cook, at the home of the bride's brother-in-law, Charles Knight, near Mansfield, Ga., Dec. 24th, 1911, J. C. Kenerley and Miss Etta M. Walker, both of Newton County, Ga.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Keziah D. Hogeland departed this life Wednesday, Dec. 6th, 1911, at her home in Southampton, Pa. She was born July 23rd, 1837, was married to John Hogeland Jan. 24th, 1856, and was baptized with her husband in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church in Southampton by Elder Wm. J. Purington, Oct. 28th, 1866. John Hogeland, who was a deacon, and most highly esteemed in the church and in the world for his most excellent qualities, and for his honesty and faithfulness in all the relations in life, died on Tuesday, August 10th, 1886. Sister Hogeland was ill for about three years, and for about a year confined to her room. Her suffering was very great, but she bore it with wonderful patience. Her mind was much of the time deeply exercised upon spiritual things, and when she was strong enough to converse, the Scriptures and the experience of grace were her theme, and she heard with evident interest and enjoyment what was said on those subjects. I was with her often for very brief periods during the last year, and when she was unable to see company she often said that the reading of the Scriptures and conversation and prayer rested instead of wearying her. Of their nine children only three sons survive her, the eldest, Albert, living in St. Paul, the next, Horace B., living in Newtown, Pa., and John, with whom she lived on the home farm. From these sons and their families she received all possible attention and the tenderest care. A nurse also was constantly with her. She often referred to her comfortable situation, and the watchful care of her children and grandchildren, as something for which she felt very thankful to the Father of all mercies. She had been deeply afflicted during her life, in the sickness and death of her children and her husband, but during and under all these sore afflictions and sad bereavements she said she could not complain. She felt that the Lord gave her grace and peace in her trials to a wonderful extent, and when at the funeral of one son she was so weak as to be hardly able to lift a hand, and could not speak aloud, she whispered to me as I talked a little at her bedside, "Peace; the Lord gives me peace." She had good evidence for all the dear ones who went before her that they had gone home to glory. There are many precious incidents, in which sweet tokens for good were given her from the Lord, that I would like to tell, but my memory of the particulars is not sufficiently distinct. She is greatly missed by her sons and their families,

by the large number of relatives and by the very large number of her friends, all to whom she was very dear. The loss is deeply felt by the church, who loved her dearly, and to whom she was a comfort. She was a great help to her pastor, for he would always see her in her place when she could be present, not inattentive, but her face showing deep interest as she listened to his voice. She often spoke of the meetings of the church as most precious to her; they were sacred and sweetly solemn to her. She said she always wanted to be at the meeting in time to hear the reading of the first hymn, and she felt badly if she was too late for that. She was one of a family of thirteen children, ten daughters and three sons. Of the sons brother J. M. Willard is living, and of the daughters five are still with us. The Lord is the Comforter of all that mourn.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

Mrs. Annie Lizzie Myers, of Winchester, Ky., was born Jan. 24th, 1875, and departed this life Oct. 31st, 1911. She was the only daughter of brother and sister James W. Ratliff, of Mt. Sterling, Ky., and granddaughter of the late Elder Samuel and Nancy Jones, of Sharpsburg, Ky. A few years ago she was happily married to Mr. Ben. Myers, of Carlisle, Ky. She is survived by her mother, husband, also by five brothers, Messrs. T. J., N. R. and Newton, of Winchester, and C. S. and Samuel Ratliff, of Owingsville, Ky. While yet a girl, she possessed much of the force of character of one of riper years. She was remarkably dutiful to her parents, and was truly a loving sister, was quick to anticipate the wishes of each of the members of the family and ready and prompt to comply. She sought to know the duties of a keeper at home, and to live up to the determined standard. She cared but little for those things which go to distinguish what is termed society from the more simple and practical ways of life. She preferred to search out the poor and the destitute, that she might minister to their necessities, and among those who mourn her departure were some of these. She loved her husband, and sought with true womanhood to be to him an helpmeet indeed. While but a girl she made a profession of religion, and together with others of like age joined the denomination styling themselves Christians, but after a few years she left off attendance with them, and for a number of years she was a regular reader of the SIGNS, and a firm believer in the doctrine as held and set forth by it. Although she never identified herself with the church, she left no question in the mind of any one with whom she came in contact on the subject of religion as to what she believed and why she thus believed. Truly it could be said of her that the faith that was in her grandmother, and is in her mother, was also in her. Her sufferings were of long duration, and at times very great, but she bore them with great patience, enduring unto the end as seeing Him that is invisible, and died in the full assurance and triumphs of the faith in which she had lived.

According to her request, I spoke in her memory to the large gathering of sorrowing relatives and friends, using the latter paragraph of the last chapter of Proverbs, as portraying the virtues of the faith which make beautiful the life of the saints of God, and their death precious in his sight.

P. G. LESTER.

FLOYD, Va.

Ascenath Simmons died at her home near Greenbush, Ill., Sept. 26th, 1911, at the ripe old age of 86 years, 9 months and 14 days. She was the daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth Lee Brooks, of Virginia. She came to Warren County, Ill., from Kentucky in 1836, settling in Berwick township. She was united in marriage to Andrew W. Simmons in 1848, and to them were born ten children. She leaves to mourn their loss four sons and one daughter. Her husband and five children preceded her to the better world. She, with her husband, united with the Predestinarian Baptists at New Hope over forty years ago, and remained a faithful member to the end. Her house was always a home for the Baptists.

Elder L. E. Frazee preached an able discourse on Thursday to quite a number of relatives and friends, after which we laid her body beside her husband's in the Greenbush Cemetery, with a hope that we shall some day meet to part no more.

Her daughter-in-law,

(MRS.) T. F. SIMMONS.

Richard Case was born in the year 1854, and died at his home, London, Ontario, Canada, Dec. 25th, 1911. Brother Case was united in marriage to Miss Lizzie McIntyre in 1885, by Elder Pollard. Some years ago brother Case received a hope, and was baptized by Elder Pollard in Lobo, and was a member of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada. His wife, sister Case, is a member of the same church, and was also baptized by Elder Pollard. A short time ago brother Case was taken very ill while at his work, and had to be taken home; he suffered much pain, which left him very weak, but had been around the house. The day before his death several of the friends of the church called to see him, and he talked much of the works of God toward the children of men, as he always seemed to be blessed with that gift, but that evening was taken with a severe pain in his head and fell into a state of unconsciousness, from which he never rallied, and death relieved him of his suffering about 8 o'clock the next morning. He longed to go home and be with his Savior, and his last conscious hours were spent in praising God for his goodness and mercy. His wife and sister-in-

law were at his bedside, and he told them to make no outcry about him, for he was going to the arms of Jesus.

Brother Case had asked that Elder H. C. Ker officiate at the funeral, but owing to the message going astray he was unable to get there in time, and as there is no Old School Baptist minister in Canada, and as sister Case had no desire to have any one who does not love the doctrine of the grace of God, and knowing it would be the mind of her husband, the writer was sent for and asked to conduct the service. Sister Case was given grace to bear her sorrow in a remarkable way, and longs to talk of the doctrine of the saints of God. We leave her in the hand of our heavenly Father, who knows what is best. The remains were laid away in Mount Pleasant Cemetery, London, Canada.

Written at the request of sister Case.

REUBEN BENSTEAD.

Mary Louise Sevier, wife of Wm. H. Sevier, and only daughter of Mrs. Sarah R. Hance, died Dec. 28th, 1911, aged 17 years and 2 months. A loving daughter and devoted wife, she was beloved by all who knew her. Her infant daughter, that never drew the breath of life, sleeps in the grave beside her. She leaves a heartbroken husband and one brother to mourn their loss. "It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good."

In deep sorrow, her mother,

SARAH R. HANCE.

WILMINGTON, Del., Dec. 29, 1911.

Samuel Woodall was born in Rockingham County, N. C., June 18th, 1822. He was married to Miss Prudence Wilson, of Stokes County, February, 1846. He moved to Troup Co., Ga., in 1851, and died Dec. 4th, 1911. He was the father of seven children, two of whom, a son and a daughter, died a number of years ago. Those living are Mr. M. F. Woodall, of Alabama, Mr. S. G. Woodall, Mrs. C. E. Griggs, Mrs. J. R. Edwards and Mrs. G. M. Edwards, of this place. His wife preceded him to the grave seventeen years. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church in 1860, and it was the church of his choice down to the day of his death. He loved the simplicity of its teachings, and was never happier than when sitting under the sound of the gospel. He served in the war between the States for two years, and as a soldier, church member, husband, father and friend his life was unexcelled. His devotion to his family was sublimely beautiful, and the story would not be complete without reference to the love and affection between him and his three daughters, who were his constant companions during his long illness.

On Tuesday morning, Dec. 5th, a long procession of sorrowing relatives and friends followed him to his last resting-place. His body was interred in Lebanon cemetery. Appropriate words were there spoken by Elders Rees, Prather and A. B. Whatley, after which all that was mortal of this noble gentleman, whose faith and love were his altar, and whose justice and truth were his shrine, was laid to rest to await the triumphant resurrection morn.

[THE above obituary, which was published in a local paper of La Grange, Ga., was sent to us for publication.—ED.]

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. M. J. Miller, Ill., $2.00; Mrs. Ida F. Stout, Ill., $1.00; Mrs. Benj. D. Bradner, N. Y., $1.00.—Total, $4.00.

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Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in Kimmy Hall, No. 12 Third St., in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

SHILOH Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., will meet on the fourth Sunday of each month at 3 p. m., second floor Pythian Temple, Ninth St., N. W., near K St. (Take elevator.) We are without a pastor at present, but wish to continue to meet together as a church, and invite all members and friends to meet with us.

JOHN T. WALKER, Secretary.

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All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 80. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1912. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ELGIN, Oregon, Dec. 13, 1911.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—Having to write you to send my remittance for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES another year, I have a desire to write again on Hebrews x. 26. When I wrote to my beloved old brother, Dr. R. Cummins, on this text I had no thought of its publication, but when he asked me to have it sent to the editors of the SIGNS I had no objection to its publication, as I hold no private views on the Scriptures, and am willing that my brethren should know what I believe, that if I am wrong they may set me right. I have received several letters since my letter was published, some approving and some dissenting, and I think from what some have written they do not understand me. I read with care also your editorial on this subject. I realize my weakness and unworthiness very much, and know I am liable to be mistaken in my views on the Scriptures. I am indeed ignorant and unlearned, and for this reason I have great hesitancy in writing for publication, but this I know is of the flesh, and that is to be crucified. If I can but express myself so as to be understood I believe my brethren will bear with my ignorance.

"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Now while writing the words of Paul, as just quoted, the words of the apostle Peter come to my mind: "As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." If I know my own heart, I do not wish to "wrest" any of the Scriptures to sustain my views; I want to be right, and in harmony with our people, the Primitive Baptists, and if I do not sustain my views by the Scriptures and the experience of the Lord's people, then of course I am in error, and do not want any one to accept my views. If God's people, who have been born again, sin wilfully or voluntarily, then I do not understand why the apostle uses the words, "If we sin," for certainly God's people do sin, but to my mind the word "if" implies a supposition,

and the apostle goes on and shows what the result would be if they sin wilfully. The apostle says, "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" In Hebrews vi. 6, the apostle brings up another supposed case: "If they shall fall away." That is, "those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come." If such an one can fall away, here is the result: "Seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." The apostle uses the word "if" in another supposed case, Romans iv. 2: "For if Abraham were justified by works, [here is the result] he hath whereof to glory; but not before God." "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." It seems to me evident, from the language, that God's people do sin wilfully before they receive the knowledge of the truth; this we believe proves this is natural for them to do, but Jesus came to save his people from their sins, not only the effect, but from sin itself. But if after they have received the knowledge of the truth they wilfully or voluntarily sin, it would show their state and condition were no better than before they received the knowledge of the truth, and would prove all that Jesus had done to save them from their sins was a failure, and would, as the apostle says, put him to an open shame, and does not the language of the apostle teach us that for such a sin there was no atonement provided? "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." Just as though, it seems to me, if God's people sin wilfully, or voluntarily, after they are born again, or receive the knowledge of the truth, such a sin is outside the covenant of redemption, and so no forgiveness, as the words following show: "But a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Since, as I hope, I was shown the glorious plan of salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord, I have believed without a doubt that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin, and that there is not a sin, past, present or to come, but what was atoned for on the rugged tree of the cross, and without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. This truth stands out prominently in all the Scriptures, from the lamb Abel offered, to the shedding of the blood of "the Lamb of God," and in this same tenth chapter of Hebrews the apostle says, "But this man [Christ Jesus], after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever sat down on the right hand of God; * * * for by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin." It does seem to me that if there is any sin God's people can commit that was not embraced in this new covenant, and put away by the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, it could not be said that by the one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. But the apostle shows that the atonement of Jesus was so perfect and com-

plete that there is no more offering for sin, and upon this very basis the Father says, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." I see but little benefit to be derived from the atonement by the Lord's people if only the Adamic sin, as it is sometimes called, was put away by the atonement, and we left with a depraved nature; truly we might say, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and our teeth are set on edge. The Arminian theory, I believe, is that Christ atoned for original sin, and we are delivered from that sin, but we are held accountable for our own sins. If such an idea is true, then here is a sinner that has no hope, and if there is a sin that I commit in any way that was not atoned for, then, too, I know I shall never come before that great white throne without fault.

"Dear, dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved, to sin no more."

My understanding of the teaching of the Scriptures is, that all forgiveness of sins is through the atonement, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. This certainly would include all the sins of God's people, but in Paul's supposed case of wilful sinning, there remains that fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries, or the wilful sinner; no hope of deliverance or forgiveness. But this supposed case is not true of God's people, for says Paul, "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." Do the Scriptures teach that God's people, who are born again, passed from death unto life, sin wilfully or voluntarily? "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" If wilful sinning would not show we lived in sin, I do not know what words would express it, for what we wilfully and voluntarily do is in harmony with our will and choice. Again, "What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid." "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." These Scriptures to my mind show that those who are dead to sin cannot live in sin, while those who are dead in sin cannot live unto righteousness. What is the experience of God's people in this matter? Brethren and sisters, examine your own experience while I give the experience of one, at least, who spoke as he was moved by the Holy Ghost: "For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law, that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Now, brethren, I ask you, Is this your own experience? The apostle tells us here, "The evil which I would not, that I do,"

but can we say, The evil I do, I do it wilfully and voluntarily? Would that be in harmony with the apostle's experience? Again, the apostle says, "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." This vanity here to which God's people are subjected is the warfare in which every one is engaged who has been born from above, the flesh lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh; these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. The things God's people here are said to want to do, but cannot; is it not to be free from the vanity the apostle speaks of, and is not the sin that dwells in them the evil they would not? But how would it sound to say the things they hate, the things they do not want to do, they wilfully and voluntarily do? Now let me say I have been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES more than thirty years, and I have not to my remembrance yet read the experience of one who said he sinned wilfully and voluntarily; and why not, if he does? No, it is "the evil which I would not, that I do," and "the good that I would, I do not." God's people are sinners; yes, and they sin, but I do not believe they do it willingly and voluntarily, which to me would prove they love sin. The dog may return to his own vomit, and the sow to her wallowing in the mire, but would it not be a strange sight to see a sheep do either? A sheep may get into the mire, but let me say, it is not its choice. Did you ever notice how careful sheep are to shun the mud? They will always jump over or go around if they can; they do this of choice, and do not the sheep of God's pasture desire to do the same?

"O that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still;
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will."

How often to their sorrow do the Lord's people learn, "God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." As a farmer, I have often sown cockle and wild oats with my seed grain, but did I do it in order to reap cockle and wild oats? No, I would much rather not have done so, and I knew, too, when I sowed what I would reap. So I believe it is with God's people, they sow often to the flesh, but had they their choice they would be free from this vanity. This lust in the flesh that wars against the soul I believe is the thorn that was given Paul in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him, and for which he besought the Lord thrice that it might be removed; but the Lord answered, "My grace is sufficient for thee." I do believe those who are "born again" hate sin with a perfect hatred, and yet it dwells in their nature, so much so that they realize the truth of that good old hymn sung so often by our people out here: "I am a stranger here below."

"So by experience do I know
There's nothing good that I can do."

And again,

"If I pray, or hear, or read,
Sin is mixed with all I do;
You that love the Lord indeed,
Tell me, is it thus with you?"

If it had been the Lord's will he could have cast all the Canaanites out of the land, but it was not his will to do so, but he left some in the land. So could he, if it were his will, remove all sin out of the nature of his people, but it is his will there should be a "thorn in the flesh;" but he has given the blessed assurance that his grace is sufficient for his people, and though the Canaanites were in the land, Israel was to make no league with

them. So God's people are not to serve sin, though they were once its servants; but being made free from sin and become servants to God, they have their fruits unto holiness and the end everlasting life. So the apostle says, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Now let me emphasize the fact that the walk after the Spirit is the result of having first been made free by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. This is proven by the language of the apostle: "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh." All men in nature are in the flesh, and so we are told cannot please God, cannot walk after the Spirit; but the apostle adds, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." Does he not dwell in all who are born of the Spirit? I would say again that walking after the Spirit is not the result of "free will" or good works performed by some of God's people that others may have failed to perform, and so escaped condemnation thereby. Well might the question be asked such an one, What maketh thee to differ from another? To my mind, "who walk not after the flesh" is a statement of a condition. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh." They that are after the Spirit do mind the things of the Spirit, and ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit (the only one condition), "If so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you," and they manifest the indwelling of the Spirit of God by walking after the Spirit, as the fruit of having been made free by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. They who are dead to sin cannot "live" in sin, though there should be no law. "What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid." Such a thought of sinning because not under the law was repulsive to Paul, and so it is to all who love God; their desire to live uprightly and honorably does not spring from the fear of punishment; their godly walk is not to escape the rod or the punishment of hell, but because they love holiness; but the motive that prompts most of the professing world to-day is to escape hell. I believe such motive is selfish and of the flesh, and if God's people have no higher motive to keep God's commandments than to escape punishment, then it is selfish and of the flesh. Jesus said to his disciples, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," and the proof that we do love him is, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." "If a man love me, he will keep my words." How these words of the blessed Master cause us to search our own hearts to see whether we be in the faith. To love God and his people is fulfilling the law.

I must close this already too lengthy article soon, but I want to call attention first to the words of our Lord Jesus as recorded in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from the other, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for

you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me." I have called attention to these words of the Master that we might examine our own hearts, so that we may ask ourselves the important question, Do we have these characteristic marks given here? Do we do the things here said the sheep did? It is not, If ye will do them, but do we do them? It is evident that those who did minister did not do it with any selfish motive in view, or for reward, for they did not seem to understand they had done these things to their Lord; and we should also notice that not one that is called his sheep and was set on his right hand but what had done these things; so I ask myself, Do I? And we should notice, on the other hand, that not a goat set on the left hand had done these things, though their answer would seem to indicate they thought they had. "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?" Only sheep have the characteristic marks of a sheep, and this they do because they are sheep.

I fear that what I have here written cuts me off, for I realize I fall far below doing what I ought. Now I am going to leave this, brother Ker, with you, whether to publish or not. I do not want anything that I may write published if it will in any way be detrimental to the interest of truth, and if I am in error I am quite willing to be corrected, and would love to hear from any of my brethren or sisters who may have a mind to write to me.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

[It is evident that our little article in the Signs of July 15th, 1911, on Hebrews x. 26, 27, did not change the mind of brother Mayfield regarding this text, and as our own view has not changed, and as we feel sure we could not make our view clearer by writing again, we shall simply call attention to our article in the Signs mentioned above, that the brethren may read it and compare it with the Scriptures and with brother Mayfield's letter believing that they are able through the Spirit to discern the right interpretation of the text, whether it be his or ours.—K.]

Roland Park, Baltimore, Md., Jan. 3, 1912.

Dear Brethren Editors and Readers of the Signs:—Last night we had one of our old time good times at the home of brother and sister Johnson, 810 N. Fulton Ave., Baltimore, Md. Last year sister Johnson's health was such that she could not entertain the church folks and friends, as she had been in the habit of doing for several years; she was so feeble her doctor sent her to the mountains, and we were all very anxious about her; we tried to ask the Lord for her recovery, and we feel to thank and bless his holy name that she is so much better. Brother and sister Johnson are dear and useful members of our church, and they are much appreciated, and they also appreciate their brethren and sisters. We met at their home last night, and after an address of welcome by brother Johnson (who is one of our deacons) and the singing of one or two hymns, sister Johnson read the paper that I am inclosing. I felt while it was being read that it was fit for publication, and asked her to give it to me, which she did. They then called on the writer for a speech; he responded, and when he mentioned his feelings in

regard to the publication of the paper, several others expressed their approval. The evening was delightfully spent in singing songs of praise to Jesus' name, and in short talks by several of the brethren, telling of the goodness of God, and the sweet and powerful effects of his love in the sinner's soul. Such meetings we feel are good for us, and we trust they glorify our blessed Lord, who, if we are not deceived, has taught us his truth and given us to love him and his dear people. Our church dwells together in peace and love. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is," &c. We have had five additions the past year, by baptism, and still there is a manifest interest in our blessed cause, on the outside as well as inside, and we feel that we should praise him from whom all blessings flow for such manifestations of his love.

If you will publish this, together with sister Johnson's paper, many of us will feel obliged.

Your brother in hope,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I hope that we feel thankful that the dear Lord has granted us the privilege of having you all with us again in our home in the good old way in which we used to meet two years ago, and previous to that. I can assure you that you are welcome to our hearts and home. Words are inadequate to express our thanks to the Giver of all good for my improvement in health, whether it be for a long time or a short time. I have been led to believe, with a sweet assurance, that all will be well, and that I will be blessed with health equal to the occasion. I can never praise or thank our heavenly Father enough for his goodness and kindness to one who is so very unworthy of even the smallest favor. I feel, dear ones, that our God has heard the prayers of our dear pastor and brethren, who informed me when I was away last summer, by the sweet medium of correspondence, that I had been in their minds, and that they had tried to pray for my recovery, if it were our dear Lord's will. I also received some sweet messages of love from some of the dear sisters, which I much appreciated, and all the more so as I was among strangers, and most of the time very poorly. While all were kind, yet I missed the familiar faces of our loved ones, and I was rejoiced beyond measure or expression when my husband and other dear ones came to see me. But love, what is it? Webster says it is to regard with affection, but I feel that it is hard to define it. We know that our love cannot be compared to the love of our merciful and forgiving God. If he were not merciful and forgiving where would poor, helpless sinners be, with no strength of their own? But God's love to us is our resting-place, our sure foundation. It is the prop upon which we rest, the staff which sustains us in our pilgrimage through this valley of tears. It is the source of our joy, the spring of our courage. We cannot number the blessings treasured up for those who know the love of Christ, as was said to Israel: Take thy harp, O Israel; believe and rejoice, for thou art encircled by the arms of everlasting love. Was ever love like that of mortality? No; we offend, even when we think we love. We see often, yea, as a rule, the spirit of rebellion. That feeling is carnal, and no one knows it better than I. I have never lived through a single day, to my knowledge, that I was satisfied with; if satisfied with deeds, not with thoughts. Then this brings sorrow, for fear that I have grieved, most of all, the

Holy Spirit. Yet it is well for our sky to be overcast, that the sun may be more welcome when it shines again with vivifying splendor. It is said, In the darkness there is a blessing, a salutary seed in affliction. But we know that God's grace swallows up all our sins, or those of his people, and all evil like a fathomless sea. He raises his creatures and leads them to repose in the depths of the eternal love of God; he finishes the work begun in them. I trust that that happy land may unite us all together, where sorrow and sighing are no more, and where the mighty song resounds to the Lamb that was slain, with praise, honor and glory to all eternity. The Lord loves his own children too well to allow them to find a final dwelling-place in this world of sin and sorrow. O may he who overrules and guides his people, forbid that I should ever do that which would bring reproach upon his cause, which I believe I love.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) EDWARD JOHNSON.

[WE have known brother and sister Johnson almost from their childhood, and it was our happy lot to live among the people in Baltimore city and county for twenty-eight years, and though we have been absent from them now nearly sixteen years, yet they are as dear to us as they ever were. We are not capable of loving any more than we loved the dear brethren in those churches. Great changes have taken place among them, as well as elsewhere, and many faces are not among them now who were there when we left them, but still we long over them and desire their welfare in all things. We could but wish that we could have been present at the good meeting of which these letters speak. Such meetings are good, and the narrative of them is good to read. May God bless them with many more such seasons, if it be his will.—C.]

SYRACUSE, N. Y., Dec. 19, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Again I have the blessed privilege of sending two dollars for the excellent SIGNS to cheer me on my lonely way. I am the only one left of the church at Delphi, and no one seems to care to talk with me of the good things of the kingdom of God, or of salvation by his never-failing grace; but the God of all mercies has not left me comfortless, for I have great comfort in reading the SIGNS and the Bible and the blessed hymns. In so reading I always have to look to our blessed Lord for comfort and instruction, and blessed be his name, he always gives me comfort such as the world cannot give or take away. In the Scriptures he shows me that he moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform; he plants his footsteps in the sea, and rides upon the storm. In reading his word I wonder, tremble and adore. I read the precious promises, and would be glad indeed to call them mine, but often I dare not, for I am so sinful, and so corrupt in heart, and so prone to sin, that I fear I am not born again. All I can do is to fall in spirit at the throne of grace and cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." I receive much enjoyment in reading the letters from dear brethren and sisters in the SIGNS, as they relate their trials, conflicts and deliverances by the way. Though lonely and dark is my way, I still take courage and struggle on, and the Lord has always been better to me than all my fears; all praise be to his blessed name. O that I could live more to his praise and glory. I find much comfort in reading of the new covenant; there his "I will" and "you shall" are brought to view with force and power, and his love and mercy revealed there are a sure foundation for the poor sinner to rest upon. It is not

like the agreements made among men, where the party of the second part agrees to do so and so, but therein he says, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. I was not present when that covenant was made, but know foreknowledge, predestination, election and free grace were all combined in this wonderful covenant, and I am enabled to look to it, by the grace of God, in hope. He has made the covenant, and he performs it unto the end in the salvation of those characters who were embraced in it; yes, even the little ones are saved by that same love and power. Were it not so, I would have no hope, for I feel to be of no good or value to the cause of Christ or his blessed people. All I can say is that I love the Old School Baptists for the truth's sake, which is made manifest in them. I love the SIGNS for its strict adherence to the true Bible doctrine of the Lord; it turns neither to the right hand nor to the left. I hope I shall be able to take the SIGNS for the few days left me upon earth. I am nearly eighty-four years of age, and expect that this is the last letter I will ever be able to write, and hope the dear brethren will throw the mantle of charity over this imperfect attempt. May the God of all grace guide, uphold and bless you by his all-sufficient grace whatever may betide you, is my heartfelt desire. I think this letter is too poor to be published in the SIGNS, but I want the paper as long as I live, it contains all the preaching I have; elsewhere I never hear a word upon the goodness and mercies of my blessed Lord.

I remain, as ever, yours,

JAMES TAPNER.

[WE have never met personally our aged brother Tapner, but well remember former letters from him, published in our columns. We are glad to publish this letter, and are glad that the blessed Lord is with him in his loneliness, and sustains him in the faith firmly, even to old age. In this is fulfilled the word of God, who cannot lie: "Even to your old age I am he." The testimony of such aged witnesses is good to receive; it is strengthening. May the blessed Lord continue to be with and uphold our dear brother, is our desire and prayer.—C.]

WAVERLY, Pa.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find the last writing of brother James Tapner; he died very soon afterward. He was the last member of the church at Delphi, N. Y., and was a kind brother, sound in the faith. D. M. VAIL.

SYRACUSE, N. Y., Jan. 16, 1912.

MOST DEAR AND PRECIOUS BROTHER VAIL:—I received your welcome letter some time ago, but have been very poorly in health for some time past, but the time has come that if I ever write I must do it now. I have heart trouble, with other things, and feel I have but a short time to stay; at least, am liable to drop away at any time. The letter you sent me is one of the most comforting letters I ever received from any one; it was just what I have prayed for night and day in your behalf, and it gave me great joy. I feel to fellowship your sufferings and rejoicings. I think I have passed through about the same things myself, and it has been good for me, and so it is for you. Blessed be the name of the Lord, he does all things well, and may his blessed Spirit guide and sustain you in all your labors of love to the churches, and may his work prosper with you, and may the Lord be your portion. I send you and yours my best love.

As ever, J. E. TAPNER.

DELMAR, Del., Dec. 26, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose you some thoughts for publication in the SIGNS, if you deem them worthy, upon the following Scripture: "And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid."—Luke ii. 9. I feel my weakness and inability to write upon such a wonderful subject, and hesitate to make the attempt, but I am impressed to write a few lines once more for the consideration of the readers of the SIGNS. I have had some very pleasant thoughts upon this subject, and will present such views as I trust the Lord has given me. There are so many things connected with this subject that time and space would fail me to take them all up, even were my mind led to do so. In the first place, we have the record of the way in which what should come to pass was shown to the virgin Mary. But did she understand what was meant by the mysterious things said unto her by the angel? She no more understood the mysteries of the wonderful things than the child of God now does when the angel of the Lord appears unto him and shows to him for the first time that there is a Savior born into the world. Does the carnal mind to-day understand how it was possible for the virgin Mary to conceive and bring forth a son? Carnal men did not then, and neither do they now, nor can they ever understand these things. We must be brought from nature's darkness into God's marvelous light before we can see that star which guided the wise men of the east, or the shepherds, which I have under consideration, to the place where the young child lay. We are told that Elizabeth conceived when she was past age, and bare a son, and his name was John. We are also told that he should go before the Savior to prepare the way. He was the voice of one crying in the wilderness. These are, all of them, things which we should notice particularly. It is said that John was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb, and that when Mary, the mother of Jesus, came unto her cousin Elizabeth, the child, John, leaped in his mother's womb for joy. Do we not here have the evidence that one can be made to feel the power of that salvation which none save God's elect can know anything about, even before they are born into this world? And is not this evidence that there was power in Christ, or in the Spirit of Christ, even before he was born into the world, in the form of sinful flesh, to cause one to rejoice? We are told that the angel of the Lord appeared unto Mary, and said unto her that she should bear a Son, and that she should call his name Jesus, because he should save his people from their sins. Let us notice here, it was not all men, but "his people." Let us bear in mind at all times that the Lord, through patriarchs, prophets and apostles, was speaking to his people, let them be many or few, great or small, old or young, Jew or Gentile. Let us also bear in mind that they were all sinners, for we are told that they are conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity. He who says that he has no sin is a liar, and the truth in not in him. If we say that we are born into this world without sin, we would surely need no Savior, therefore Christ could have done nothing for us at all, hence could have no claim upon us. But it is said that he came to save his people from their sins. If, then, we have no sin, we have no Savior; but Jesus said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." It would be impossible for one to repent of that of which he was not

guilty. There is no such thing as one being born and living in this world without sin.

We are told in the verse preceding the text that there were in the same country (that is, the country of Joseph and Mary and of Bethlehem in Judea,) shepherds keeping watch over their flock by night. Just here let me say a few words in connection with the word "night." If we notice carefully, the word is used many times in the Scriptures, and while in those types and shadows it no doubt was often night literally, yet it is used often, at least, with a typical meaning, applying to our experience, and is figurative of those dark seasons that we, as well as the people of God in all ages, have been called to pass through. When Christ withdrew his presence from his disciples it was always night to them indeed. So is it with you and with me, and with all whom God has called by his grace. If it has ever pleased the Lord to shine forth upon them, when he withdraws his presence it is like the sun setting in the west. Very many times there is a starless sky, and with the poet we are made to cry, "It is midnight in my soul."

"While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down,
And glory shone around."

"And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them." What a wonderful revelation, dear readers. Do you remember when you were in the dark watches of the night, feeling that you were without hope and without God in the world, having no Savior, and when the angel appeared to you and the glory of the Lord shone round about you, and the star in the east was seen to guide you where the Savior was born, was it not wonderful? Is not this star typical of the faith which is given to the Lord's people, which points or leads them to Christ? "And they were sore afraid." Dear, trembling child of God, do you not well remember how sore afraid you were when you were made to cry, with Saul of Tarsus, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? The angel said, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy. * * * For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Then to you was given that faith which leads to the place where the young child lay, and you were made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Then we are told, "Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." What a wonderful throng! It is a multitude that no man can number; they are chosen out of all nations, kindreds and tongues under heaven. We are accused of being narrow-minded, but we do not limit God's power. We believe that he will save to the uttermost all that come unto him by Christ. We believe that he is able, as said before, to make a child leap for joy even before it is born into the world. We believe that he saved the thief on the cross, even in his last moments. It matters not at what age, or in what part of the earth his people are, they are sure of that glory which was shown to the shepherds at the very moment he appointed before the foundation of the world. We believe in no chance work, but that God works all things after the counsel of his own will; he does all his pleasure. If we ask the question why God does thus and so, the answer must be, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."

I am making this too lengthy, yet I

have barely sketched a few thoughts in connection with the subject, and now will leave them for your consideration. I hope they may stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance, and that you may be able to look more deeply into the subject than I have been able to do.

May the blessing of God rest upon all who love his appearing, is the prayer of your brother in hope of a blessed eternity,

JOHN L. HASTINGS.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Jan. 3, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As we have just passed into the new year, 1912, I feel as though I cannot do better than to try to say a few words through the columns of the SIGNS. It comes to us with messages of one accord, of one mind, telling us of the things which we love and adore.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear;
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." We are all poor creatures, subject to wrath and liable to err, and when we would do good, evil is present with us. "The good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." The psalmist said, I will bless thee at all times; I will praise thee continually with my mouth. "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people, * * * in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem." "Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord." Thy God in the midst of thee is mighty, and he will save. Yes, he saves them from their sins, and they rejoice in his love. It is said, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not." He was the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob; he said, I am God, and beside me there is no other. Great and marvelous indeed are his works, just and true are the ways of the Lord almighty; we love to honor and praise that great and holy name. He has said that he will gather the sorrowful for the solemn assembly, and he will bring back them that were driven out. He is a merciful God. The apostle said, "Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before judgment seats? Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called? If ye fulfill the royal law, according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well." What doth it profit a man though he say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? Even so, faith, if it have not works, is dead, being alone. Was not Abraham, our father, justified by works when he had offered Isaac, his son, upon the altar? This faith, we are told, is the substance of things hoped for, the evi-

dence of things not seen, and hope that is seen is not hope, for if we see it, why do we yet hope for it? This hope is as an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast. This hope is based upon the promises of God, and all his promises are sure and steadfast. He has promised that he will never leave nor forsake his people, not even the least of them. Though the storms of adversity hover around them, and the fires of persecution burst upon them, he has said that he will be a hiding-place from the wind, and a refuge from the storm, and he has said to all the tried ones, Be still, and know that I am God. It is also said, I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. The Lord is merciful and gracious. One of old said, Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. He rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. I will be their God, and they shall be my people. We abide in him, and he abides in us, and he said, If ye be dead with me, ye shall also live with me. He declared that he was the true Vine, and that his Father was the husbandman, and we are the branches. The branches that bear not fruit he takes away, but those that bear fruit he purges, that they may bear more fruit. How solemn to read that a corrupt tree cannot bear good fruit, and a good tree cannot bear evil fruit.

If there is anything that I love, it is to meet with my brethren and to hear the gospel proclaimed in its fullness, giving God all the glory, all the honor, all the praise, and ascribing to him all wisdom. O may we say, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

Even the winds and the seas obey him. He speaks and it is done. He says, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. May we not join with all the redeemed, and say, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honor, and riches, and wisdom, and praise. O that men would praise him for all his goodness unto the children of men. He was manifest in the flesh, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, raised up from the dead and taken up into glory. O how great the mystery of godliness. He said, "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." His flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed. To see this we must be born again. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. The Savior said, Marvel not that I said unto you, Ye must be born again. It is written, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." How wonderful the language of the Redeemer, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." In this redemption there remaineth a rest to the people of God, for he that hath ceased from his own works, hath entered into rest, because he hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his upon the seventh day. Let us labor, therefore, to enter into that rest, lest we fall, after the same example of unbelief as did Israel in the wilderness. Jesus

said, Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. We are bidden to leave father and mother and all things. He said, He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me.

I think of a dear sister in Ohio, who says that she has been a subscriber to the SIGNS since it was first published, and that on April 16th she will have passed the one hundredth milestone of her life. May God bless her; may he bless all those who are of the same faith, is my prayer.

From an unworthy brother,

D. L. BLACKWELL.

RALEIGH, N. C., Dec. 30, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I am inclosing two dollars for subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the year 1912. To me it is one of the most excellent papers published by our denomination. My dear father, Elder Wm. Woodard, whom you knew, took it until the time of his death, and greatly enjoyed reading it. A few weeks since, an aged brother from New York came to Raleigh and stopped with us, whose name was George D. Conklin; I suppose that you know him. After he left he sent me a card containing the pictures of sixteen Baptist ministers, and you were among the number; I was glad to see your face again. While looking at it I thought of the many times that, when a small child, I had heard you preach in Wilson. I loved you then, although I hardly knew why; now if I could have the pleasant privilege of hearing you proclaim the glorious gospel I should know why. I have learned that we are to know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. Do you remember preaching one night in Wilson from this text: "Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy"? I remember the sermon, and through all these years I have realized the truth of it. God has often sent his servants to be helpers of my joy, as well as a comfort in tribulation. I hope that the new year may bring you many of the Lord's richest blessings.

Jan. 9th, 1912.—Dear brother, it would be impossible for me to tell you how much I enjoyed your letter to me, but I must at least express just a little of my gratitude. Not since the death of my dear father, one year ago last September, have I received more comfort, nor has my pure mind been so stirred up to think of the way in which father was led in the early days of his ministry. How zealous he was; how eagerly did he seek for God's people, that he might talk to them of the glorious things of his kingdom; never once did he grow weary in the service. I do indeed remember the night of which you spoke at our home. Many were the happy hours we spent around the fireside, listening to the words that so sweetly fell from his lips. I do not recall a time in my life when I did not love to hear the ministers of God talk. I thought for many years that this religious tendency was but hereditary. I rarely ever forgot a text, and I can remember many sermons that I heard when a child. I think I have now learned that only God seals instruction, and whatever knowledge I may have of things pertaining to the kingdom, I attribute directly to him. I had then heard of him by the hearing of the ear, but when my eyes saw, yes, when I was enabled to look within and behold in my heart but a cage of unclean birds, and every corrupt thing, I went beyond the watchmen. What do we receive by heredity? In Adam, only

sin, but in Christ an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

I am sorry to tell you that my dear uncle, Elder J. S. Woodard, is quite feeble. He has been an invalid for many years, but, like my father was, is steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the works of the Lord; nor has his labor been in vain.

I have sent your letter to my stepmother, who is greatly afflicted. She, too, will have a feast when she is reminded of the joy that my father had in his first love. The last sermon he preached was to her, as they sat alone one night. She told me that she had never seen him look so angelic, nor heard him preach with such fervor and sweetness. When I reached his bedside, two weeks before his death, one of the first things he said to me was, "Daughter, there never has been but one preacher; God is the author of every sermon that has ever been preached." The last words he spoke were in answer to a question asked him by my brother. He said, "Father, do you know me?" "Yes, Lee, I know you all, and love you." How characteristic of his life; no father was ever more devoted to his family. I think how like Christ that expression was. Did not he know all his family, and love them, even to the end? Will not his prayer, that they might all be with him, be answered?

The copy of the SIGNS for Jan. 1st, reached me promptly, and I read it with a great deal of pleasure. Your editorial was worth a great deal more than the price of the subscription for the whole year, if it be possible to estimate such true riches in that way. We have nothing with which to pay such a debt but love, and we cannot pay even that until God bestows it upon us; then it is not a hard task, but a command, the fulfillment of which becomes easy. I hope to enjoy much from the SIGNS. I wish for you many of God's richest blessings.

I remain sincerely yours,
PATTIE WOODARD ANDERSON.

CANADA, Ky., Jan. 1, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—I will try to talk to you this morning through the columns of our dear old family paper. I love the SIGNS, for I am sure it is one of God's blessings to his dear people. O how careful, how mindful he is of us poor, rebellious mortals, and we so undeserving, so unthankful and forgetful; what wonderful, everlasting love. Often are we brought to his banqueting-house, and his banner over us is love.

"'Twas love that spread the gracious feast;
'Twas love that made my soul a guest;
'Twas love that brought him from above;
'Twas love, O matchless, boundless love."

They who are born of God are born of love, for God is love, and his love is shed abroad in their hearts, therefore they love one another. We hear Jesus saying to the sheep of his pasture, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another," and yet when I examine myself I often fear that I have not this love, and often say with the poet,

"If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, could they be worse
Who have never heard his name."

"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Yes, I know I love them far better than anything else on earth; I love to meet with God's dear people, I

love their fellowship, it is good to me, but is it the love of God? I so often am in doubts and fears, saying,

"'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought,)
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

There is no question with me but that God is able and will save all his chosen people, but am I an heir of grace? I know that if I am I am safe, "for I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us." Love is powerful, it moves us; when it commands we obey; it is irresistible, certain, sure. "My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." Jesus, our beloved, calls her his love, his fair one. Indeed, she is fair, she is pure and holy, without blame before God in love as she stands arrayed in the spotless robe of righteousness of her Beloved, "clothed with the sun." "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." The Zion of our God is safe and secure; whatever may be her state or condition here on earth, the gates of hell shall not prevail against her; but let us ever carefully examine ourselves to see if we have the love, the enduring love of God in our poor hearts, for this is love, that we walk after his commandments. (2 John 6.) Love is a fruit of the Spirit of God, who is the fountain of life. "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned." Let brotherly love continue.

Yours in hope, G. B. BIRD.

BALTIMORE, Md., December, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—At the request of my dear pastor, Elder J. T. Rowe, I will try to write some of my experience. My doubts and fears are many, but notwithstanding all this, the following has been impressed upon me so deeply that it seems to me I must write. First, my experience as the most unworthy of all God's creatures, which surely I am, and the thought comes to me, What am I, or who am I, that Jesus was mindful of me? About three years ago, while I was enjoying the services at Grace Methodist meetinghouse, at least I thought it was joy, the Lord showed me that I was a sinner, and I realized my total helplessness, and an awful feeling of distress and fear came over me. I had never thought that I was a sinner until then. Thus I suffered for a week or more, praying with all the earnestness of my soul, but instead of my prayers relieving me I seemed to grow worse, and it seemed to me that the distance grew greater between God and my soul, yet I prayed; so distressed was I that my heart felt as if it would break. But alone in tears one day that I shall never forget, Jesus came, and, strange as it may seem to others, all that feeling of distress and fear was taken away. This was the first time I ever knew real joy. I was made to feel that it was the presence and power of Jesus. It took away from me the love that I once had for the Sunday School and the worship of the Methodists, but not fully realizing the truth, as I trust I now do, I was persuaded to

unite with them. I had been brought up in Sunday School, so I went forward with my sister and girl associates for the purpose of joining, but I was forbidden by a higher power, and with such force, that I refused to join, and since that time I have had no desire for the Sunday School or the worship of that people. I say this with all due respect to my friends of the Sunday School, but I feel that the Lord delivered me from those things, and on the fourth Sunday in October, 1911, the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church received me, and I was baptized on Sunday following. That was a day of joy to me; I felt that I had obeyed Jesus in baptism, but I soon had doubts and fears, and feel that I am not worthy of any of the blessings the Lord bestows upon his people. It may be that I ought not to have written in an effort to express my feelings, as I am but a little past sixteen years of age, yet these things have been so heavily impressed upon my mind it seems to me that it is the hand of the Lord; I hope so at least. Now I must say that the sweetest place on earth to me is our beloved church; it is a place I love to go every Sunday, and it is the place where I heard the first gospel sermon that was satisfying to my soul, and each time when I hear our pastor, Elder Rowe, preach, I see Jesus as the only salvation for poor sinners, and I hope I am one of the number saved by his precious blood. But the thought comes to me now, What am I that Jesus should seek me with his love, or purchase me with his blood? There is a love I have for our church that I cannot express; truly to me it is a heavenly place, all of the members are dear to me, and I am glad when Sunday morning comes, so that I can meet with them. O what a great blessing it is to me that God cast my lot among such dear people.

Dear pastor, I have about finished the things that have been impressed upon my mind for several weeks. I hope the hand of the Lord has guided me in this matter.

Your unworthy sister in Christ, I hope,
REBA COLLINS.

HARRISON, Ark., Dec. 28, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—Another year has passed, and the good Lord has spared my unprofitable life these seventy long years for some wise purpose known unto himself. I often think of writing for the SIGNS, to let you know how thankful I am to have the paper to read; it is all the preaching I get. I know I am not worthy of it, but O how could I do without it? I have been a reader of the SIGNS so long that to give it up would be like tearing a dear friend from my bosom. When I read the good letters from the dear brethren and sisters I want to write to them and tell them how they have fed me; it is like the bread of heaven, it feeds the people of God; they cannot feast on anything save the truth that is in Christ Jesus. "To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." Now, brethren and sisters, do you know the nature of sheep and goats? A goat will eat a little of anything, but sheep will not, they are very particular what they eat; so if I am a child of God I want the pure food from heaven. I know the brethren and sisters have been taught of God, or they could not write the way they do. Why is it that they can tell my feelings

better than I could myself if I were to try to write them? O what am I, that I should try to write about such wonderful things? Such knowledge is too great for such as I. If I am God's sheep I am one of the little, puny ones, always lagging behind, never much benefit, but if I can only be able to touch the hem of his garment, and get a few of the crumbs that fall from the Lord's table, I shall be whole.

If this letter appears as imperfect to you as it does to me, you will not publish it. I hope you will forgive me for writing, and throw it aside. Pray for me, a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all. I wish I could send you some new subscribers, but there are no Baptists living near me; I am all alone.

LOUISE GLENN.

ALVINSTON, Ont., Jan. 4, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find money order for eight dollars, for four subscriptions for the SIGNS. I have much desired for years that I might aid in the circulation of this dear family paper, but failed to see an opening until now, and I am pleased indeed to forward you these three new subscriptions. It came about in a very unexpected way to me. Why is it that I feel each year of late as I send my remittance that I want to write a few words of commendation? Is it because I dearly love the doctrine it advocates and so faithfully contends for? Each copy seems to favor me with a morsel, while many others fill me to overflowing. I look for them as a dear friend, a faithful companion. How often I have been quite in dismay, with my head bowed down in grief and sorrow, and feeling at heart to be that widow indeed, and desolate, that Paul speaks of, and then while reading some communication I have experienced much joy at the appearing of my dear Savior and Redeemer, the Husband of my soul. For nearly two weeks previous to my receiving the last SIGNS, of January 1st, my surroundings were such that it seemed called for that my time be almost entirely taken up with earthly affairs, but the inner man was longing for an opportunity to even meditate on better things, for I grew so weary of the turmoil and confusion; then as the SIGNS came, Monday evening, my desire was granted. I was left alone for some little time, and read most of it with unusual interest. How good the Lord is, and greatly to be praised, in causing his face to shine upon us.

Do with this as you think best, but do not crowd out better matter. May the dear Lord bless you in your labors.

I would like to read your views on Proverbs ix. 17, especially on "stolen waters are sweet," if your mind is exercised upon that Scripture.

Your sister, I hope,

(MRS.) W. C. YOUNG.

[WE do not know that we have any special thought upon the text referred to by our sister, except that it sets forth the natural depravity of mankind. Stolen waters would be forbidden waters, and it is true of all mankind by nature that they love to go in the way that is forbidden of God. It is said that men by nature put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. The things which God forbids cannot be sweet to those who love him; they are sweet to the carnal heart, but not to the spiritual, and it is true that even those who love God and his ways find in themselves that which covets evil and finds pleasure in forbidden things. This we need not enlarge upon certainly, for we are persuaded that our dear sister, and all others who love the ways of truth,

know it for themselves. But chiefly we think that the inspired writer sets forth here the state of all unregenerate men. They love sin, and roll it as a sweet morsel under their tongue. What a blessing to know the plague of our hearts, and to be brought to hate evil, rather than to love it. Sin is that which brings gladness to the unregenerate mind, but it brings shame and sorrow to the quickened soul.—C.]

WARWICK, N. Y., Dec. 14, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As the little slip reminds me my renewal is due, I will try and be prompt in sending same, for there was a time when you were very lenient with me, but I have been having my way made a little easier to meet these things of a worldly nature, and hope I appreciate it. I do enjoy reading the SIGNS, and am glad there is a way opened for the Lord's people to talk one with another, for they are no more strangers or foreigners, but one family, and God the Father of us all. I am glad their minds are so directed, for there are many who would otherwise be left very lonely in this life; but the Lord takes care of all who are his, he never leaves or forsakes them for one moment.

Reading brother Oliver's letter reminds me of a little visit we had with the people in the south. There were five in the party: sister Lefferts, brother and sister Baird, Mr. Charles Benedict and myself, and it was a surprise to me indeed, as I had no intention of going until the day before; the Lord was with me there, even in little things. Well, we visited Elder Lefferts and family, of Virginia, and brother Oliver. Reading his letter in the SIGNS brought this all before me, and the meetings we attended while there. The Manassas association was a lovely meeting to us all. I surely did enjoy myself among the people of the south; they are very loving and sociable, and we were well entertained at their several homes. Above all, the preaching was good, Christ and him crucified. I was glad to meet brother Oliver and talk with him face to face, for I always liked his writings, and always had a desire to meet the people our pastor was called to serve. I hope the Lord will prosper him and them spiritually and temporally. We still miss him here in Warwick; surely the Lord's ways are not our ways, or we would have him yet. Still the Lord has not forsaken us, and we have visiting ministers, who come to us laden with the gospel, and we are fed with the bread of life. I hope we will be kept knit together in one bundle of love. We have good meetings sometimes just among ourselves. Brother Daniel Dolson opens the meetings, and he shows he is taught of the power of the most high God and not of man. God is still our protector, and we can sing with the poet,

> "His love in time past forbids me to think
> He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink."

May God bless us all, is my prayer.

NETTIE DOLSON.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan. 1, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—A happy new year to you, and to all the household of faith, wherever you rove or rest, and to all who have no interest in new doctrines, but who love the good old way. Another year is here, and our editors are still with us, and many of the subscribers of the SIGNS, but many, too, have been taken away, and we know not what a moment may bring to any of us. One by one are we called away all the time, as the different timbers are needed in that great building above. Each one is fitted for

the place he is to fill, and all are marked by the great and holy One, who will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy. If there be sad ones among our number who may read these lines, sad on account of bereavement, may you be given strength to put your trust in the Father of all mercies, for in him is comfort, and he is merciful and full of pity. Should you be sad on account of your sins and your iniquities, remember that he has declared, Your sins and your iniquities I will remember no more forever. Should you feel your lost condition, and fear that you shall eternally perish, may it be the will of the Father to give you light and understanding that the world knows not of. May the dear Lord bring you into his banqueting-house, and place his banner over you, and establish your goings, and keep you to your journey's end. Let those whose means are limited trust him, and remember and know that he is mindful of them, and that not a sparrow falls to the ground without him. Fear ye not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows. He will be with you all the way. Some may be languishing upon beds of sickness, and suffering great distress; the Father will not forget you, but will be with you all the way along, even though you do not see him; he is ever nigh, and will give you strength as your day, and will not leave you alone, or to perish. If death be in your midst, the Father will be there to give strength to endure all his will. He will not leave you in death, but will be with you, and underneath will be the everlasting arms. The flesh shrinks at death's alarm, but the spirit returns to Him who gave it. There may be some who are rejoicing in the Lord, and great is that joy, all the glory for it belongs to the Father; it is all of him, and from him, and to him, from first to last. To him be glory, and praise, and adoration, now and evermore, and may this new year bring stronger faith, deeper love, less coldness and more trust, and may another new year see the grand old SIGNS as it is now, and as it has been, contending for pure doctrine in love, and with no arguments for vainglory, but still giving all glory to him to whom it belongs; that is, to the Father of us all. Now may we all be submissive, and wait for the oases in the desert of life.

With love to all,

MARY HILL TERRY.

DUNCAN, Okla., Nov. 28, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I will now send my mite to renew my subscription another year to the SIGNS, for it seems I cannot do without it, as it contains nearly all the preaching I have. There is plenty of work preaching here by man, but Jesus is not in the preaching they do. I had the pleasure of hearing brother E. M. Kenney the third Sunday in this month, and what a joy it was to me to hear one of the Lord's servants preach Christ, and him crucified for the redemption of his people. He is an able minister of the Lord, for he brought forth things new and old out of God's storehouse. O how my soul did feast, and has ever since. O that I could be in the company of the saints, at their feet to learn of Jesus, that I might follow after them, and that I could walk in their footsteps. O how beautiful they look to me, and I wish I were worthy to be one with them. We have a little band of believers at Cement, Okla., all in peace, and they were so good as to let me have a home with them. O that they may watch over me. Dear Lord, keep us by thy power, that we may walk before thee in love and

humility. If the Lord keep not the city it will be kept in vain, for it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. May the Lord keep his children as the apple of his eye.

Dear brethren, I have one new subscriber for our family paper, and will send the money and his address with my own subscription.

I will say no more. May the Lord bless you in the editorial work as he has. Pray for me, a sinner saved by grace if saved. NANCY CREEL.

LIBERTY, Mo., Dec. 12, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—It is through the tender mercy of our great and covenant-keeping God that I, a poor sinner, in my eighty-fourth year, am still spared among the living and the dying to see near the close of another year. I am reminded that the time to renew for the SIGNS is at hand, I therefore herewith send you a post-office order for three dollars, two for my subscription and one to help support the publication of the SIGNS. It may be, though I cannot tell, that before this comes to your hand I may be called away from this vale of tears. Let that call come whenever it may, I hope by the grace of God to die at my post. I think it would take the pen of a ready writer to tell of all the sore conflicts and lonesome hours, all the fiery darts of the powers of darkness that rage against me. The dark clouds arise in every direction, and there is no friend here anywhere to speak a word of comfort to me. If my hope depended upon such friends, I would sink in despair, but thanks be to God, when the last ray of hope seems to be gone, and the last breath is drawn, I then hear the sweet voice of the great Captain of salvation, who went down into the grave to break asunder the bands of death and hell, and who arose again a mighty conqueror in spite of all that men and devils could do, and who came forth in the fullness of his strength, and who had all (not a part, but all) power both in heaven and in earth, speaking peace to me. This the lonely pilgrim is sometimes blessed with. Sometimes we hear the sweet words of this great Captain, saying, Fear not, I am with thee. Yes, dear pilgrim traveler, that mighty word can put to flight the powers of darkness. Yes, a word from Jesus calms the sea and controls the raging winds, and gives repose and liberty to tempest-tossed souls; that word scatters all the dark clouds and clears the sky for a time.

But I must now close. My eyesight is dim.

From a lone traveler,

RICHARD WALLER.

INDEPENDENCE, Mo., Jan. 8, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars, for which please send the dear old SIGNS one year, as directed below. This precious sister in Christ (Caroline Wiley) joined the Christian Church (so-called) several years ago, but says she is dissatisfied, and does not feel at home with them, and that she loves the Baptists and the doctrine they preach and craves a home with them, where her dear mother lived until called to that home beyond the silent river, and her sisters in the flesh are still members loved by all. If one of the editors or some of the many able correspondents would write on the subject of Baptists requiring those coming from other denominations to be baptized by a Baptist minister, I think it would be a great comfort to this dear friend who is searching for the footprints of the flock.

As ever, LAVINIA MORGAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1912.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

CHURCHES AND ASSOCIATIONS.

BROTHER J. P. Baker, of Moody, Ark., some little time ago wrote us, asking some questions which he desired answered through the SIGNS concerning the relations between churches and associations. His letter was dated Nov. 18th, 1911. Our brother does not speak of any trouble over this matter in his section, but asks for information, and because he desires our views upon the questions which he proposes. We are aware that in some sections of the country there have been differences with regard to the questions which our brother has propounded, and in what we may write now we do not desire to attempt taking part in controvesy in any particular section of the country which may exist between churches or brethren. We ought in any such case not to attempt resolving their difficulties, but still it seems right to speak in a general way, and to strive to present some general principles with regard to this matter.

First, we will say that churches, as we know from the Scriptures, were commanded to be organized, for the glory of God and the advantage of the children of God, in the localities where they may live. The apostles of the Lamb who went forth at his command and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, everywhere that they found believers, established churches, and, in the order established among those churches, we find pastors and deacons and elders named, each of them having certain duties assigned to them, and we read in all the epistles, except those addressed to individuals, that they were written to the church in such and such a place, or to the churches in a certain portion of the country. The epistles were not addressed to individuals, but to the church, as, for instance, at Rome, or Corinth, or Ephesus, or the churches in Galatia, Asia, &c. But we do not need to argue for the establishment of churches from the Scriptures, no one among our people will dispute this truth.

Second, it seems manifest that there could not have been such bodies of the people of God as associations until after the organization of churches. It is further true that in all the New Testament we do not find any example of or any command for churches to organize themselves into associations, or in any other general body. Associations are not commanded of the Lord, as churches are commanded of him, in the Scriptures. This certainly must be admitted by all, yet this is not saying that general assemblies of the brethren from different parts of the country, whether they are called associations or by some other name, are wrong or displeasing to God. There are many things which are not specially commanded which yet are not contrary to the spirit or the letter of the word. There is nothing said, for instance, whether the Lord's supper shall be observed once a year or every day in the year, this is left to the convenience of the churches. Whether the churches shall meet for worship from day to day,

or once a week, or once a month, must be left to the judgment of each church. No rule is laid down in the Bible concerning this, save the exhortation of the apostle: "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is." It is manifest that there must be some places appointed for meeting for the worship of God, or for attending to the affairs of the churches, but that also is left to the wisdom and convenience of the different churches.

Third, there are many references in the New Testament to correspondence among brethren and churches. The epistles themselves, all of them, show that letters were written by the ministers of the Lord to the different churches, and in those letters messages were sent from different families, individuals and churches to other individuals and churches. Letters of commendation were given to some as they went among other churches, and there were conferences among brethren over disputed questions, which are named at least once in the New Testament. It would seem to be only that which ought to be expected, that brethren in one section of the land should desire to hear of the welfare of those in other places. The time was one of sore trials, persecutions and distresses. Those who loved God and their brethren in Christ would greatly long after all others of like precious faith. It would be only reasonable to suppose that means would be taken by which they should hear from each other as often as possible, for the edification, comfort and encouragement of all. This would not only not be wrong, but it would command the blessing of God; his own Spirit in their hearts would lead them to this desire for mutual helpfulness among all who love God. This correspondence was both by letter and by messengers. Sometimes messengers carried letters from one place to another. The subject matter of these letters is named at least once by the apostle. It was that there might be a general contribution among all the churches to the poor saints which were at Jerusalem, and in all such communications mutual love would call forth expressions of good will and of desire for the mercies of God to be upon those to whom they wrote. There would also be a stirring up of the pure mind of the writer to speak of the glorious salvation of the Lord, with all the principles of doctrine involved in that salvation. That this was so, a careful reading of the New Testament will at once show.

Fourth, it is easy to see how, after a time, it would seem good to all those who had been profited and edified by this correspondence that they should establish means of keeping up this correspondence statedly or regularly, and first churches in some one section of country would make this arrangement among themselves, and then these clusters of churches would desire and establish a similar correspondence with other clusters of churches, and to the name "association" there can be no objection. The word simply means that there is an associating together of those of like precious faith. The brethren in any one church who walk in love are associated together. It is conceivable that this associating of brethren in churches might be perverted to wrong ends, so the association of churches may be perverted from its proper design to evil, but this is to be guarded against, whether in churches or in associations. We are not to throw church organizations aside because evil may spring up among them. So it is not needful that associations be rejected be-

cause some one makes them a medium of wrong. It is only needful to be watchful unto prayer lest evil should creep into either churches or associations.

Fifth, the example of the apostles and early churches justifies correspondence among brethren and churches distant from each other, but this is all that is justified by the example of the early churches, or by any teaching of the apostles. Churches are not subordinate to associations, but associations are the creatures of the churches. Associations are not made up of gatherings of the churches, as churches, even though all members of the churches be present in their gatherings, but the churches send messages and messengers to meet other messages and messengers from other churches at an appointed time and place, and all that these messengers have any right to do is to report what they have been bidden to report by the church that sent them, and to receive the reports from other churches, sent also by their messengers. They cannot transact any business outside of this that can be binding upon their churches. Some question may arise while these brethren are together for discussion, and some messenger may have a decided view concerning it, and may so express himself, but it may be that not one among the church where he belongs thinks about this matter as he does, and so his words and actions cannot bind his church at home. His home church may have expressed their mind, and may have required him to lay their judgment before the rest, but this is as far as he can go. The only reason why messengers of the churches when met together have any right to appoint another such meeting next year, or next month, or at any future time, is that they have the mind of their churches that this is advisable to be done. The agreement to meet next year is not the agreement of the special messengers met together, but the expression by them of the mind of the churches of which they are messengers. So justly fearful have our brethren been of seeming to bestow any authority upon associational gatherings to act for the churches, or in any way to bind the churches, that one of such meetings here in the east refused to call her annual meeting an association, but gave it the name of "The Corresponding Meeting of Virginia."

Sixth, with these somewhat lengthy general reflections, we will proceed to notice the special questions of our brother. His first question is, "Can a church exist separate from associations, unions, conferences, advisory councils, &c.?" We reply that churches must have been in existence before they could appoint any such meetings, and there is no law in Zion to compel the appointment of such bodies as named by our brother. Churches are not under any rightful compulsion to enter an association in the first place, neither are they under compulsion to remain members of such bodies if they deem it unadvisable to continue there. Of course we need not say that if any church anywhere desires to withdraw from any association, she should be very careful lest her withdrawal be misunderstood to imply a want of fellowship for the rest of the churches.

His second question is, "If so, is there anywhere in the United States any churches who are thus made free by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ, and who by his order keep house for him, each church being free and independent?" There are churches of which we have knowledge that are not members of any association, or which are not in corre-

spondence with such meetings. We will name one instance within our personal knowledge. The body of churches formerly known as the Chemung Association, located mainly in the State of New York, by mutual consent many years ago dissolved their associational union. These churches are in full fellowship with each other, and with the churches making up other associations, to the present day. We are informed that in the south there are quite a number of churches in different places who are not united with any association, and who yet are in full union and fellowship with churches which do belong to such bodies.

His third question is, "Can a church be organized free from all others on apostolic truth alone, or must it be the work of men?" It seems that the churches spoken of in the New Testament were set in order by the apostles, each one in its own locality. We do not read that members of the first church, that at Jerusalem, were called upon to help organize other churches. It seems clear to us that if in some part of the world, hundreds of miles away from any organized church, a body of men and women become believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, they have a right to unite together in one body, to appoint their pastor and deacons, and to set up their keeping of the house of the Lord in that place without any consultation with any church. As we have understood the custom of calling for messengers from other churches to sit with them in council, when such a body desires to be found walking in the order of the gospel as a church, did not arise out of the idea that it was essential to their right standing as a church, but rather that they might show to other churches that they were in fellowship with the truth, and so have the loving countenance of the other churches. But no messengers may be called from other churches, and still this body of people would be a church of Jesus Christ. But if the right feeling exists among them they will want the confidence and regard of their fellow churches.

Our brother next asks, "Is the church at Jerusalem to be regarded as the pattern of all gospel churches?" This is the substance of his question. There is not the slightest doubt in our mind that the first gospel church ever organized on earth is the exact pattern by which all the churches of Christ are to be measured. Surely our heavenly Father would not have left this first church unguided by his Spirit when they were organized as a church, and we can follow no safer guide. No other church helped to establish this first church evidently, and it is nowhere said that this church claimed a right to superintend the formation of other churches.

In conclusion, the suggestion with which our brother closes his letter is most certainly true, viz., that there is no warrant for presbyteries, associations, synods, advisory councils, or organic unions of any kind among churches, to claim authority over the churches, either in insisting that they cannot be organized as gospel churches without their help, or that afterwards such bodies have any dominion over them. These have long been our views with regard to these questions, and we will leave them for the consideration of all who may read them.

C

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

We are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

AGE OF ACCOUNTABILITY.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I have been a reader of the SIGNS for some time, and have never thought that anything I could write would be of comfort to you, but I want to make an inquiry, and I trust you will pardon me. I want to ask the question in the terms commonly used so often here by speakers calling themselves preachers. I cannot understand the Bible to teach such doctrine, and want to see if I am alone or not. Here is the question: When and where is it taught in the Bible that there is a set time when a child will reach the age of accountability, and be responsible to his Creator from that time, and not until he or she reaches that age will they be responsible? The above is used here almost daily as the idea of salvation for young people. One of the most able of their preachers quoted the fifth verse of the third chapter of Genesis, but I cannot see anything in it to convey this idea or doctrine. Am I wrong? I do not ask this to take your time from more important matter, but if in your spare moments you could write your views I would be glad. It seems to me to grant this idea would be to do away with the words of Jesus in John xvii. 12. Predestination and salvation by grace I cannot give up. I will tell you some time how I came to believe in predestination before I knew any one else did, or that there was a people of that doctrine.

Wishing you a happy new year, a subscriber in hope, W. H. THARP.

ELK CITY, Kansas, Dec. 28, 1911.

In attempting to answer the question of our friend, Mr. Tharp, we can only go over the same ground so often covered in the matter of salvation. The fifth verse of the third chapter of Genesis has, as he says, no reference whatever to the age or accountability of children. It is the statement of the devil regarding the effect of the fruit of the forbidden tree: "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." God had said to Adam, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," but the devil said to Eve, What God told Adam is not true, and he knows it, "ye shall not surely die." God's word is still denied by the devil and his messengers, who are transformed into angels of light.

There is no record anywhere in the Scriptures that children before a certain age, twelve years, as is said by antichrist, are saved because of their innocence, and that after that age they are saved or lost according to their works. Should one see a tree loaded with fruit, and be told by the owner of the tree that it is poison, what would that one think of the fruit, that it is good and pure? Any reasonable man or woman would acknowledge that the fruit is poison, for the simple reason the tree is poison. The life of the tree being in all the fruit makes it all poison. Why is it that men will not believe God when he says the man he formed of the dust of the ground is a sinner by transgression, and that all his children (fruit) are sinners because of their union with him? O no, say the wise and prudent, it cannot be that way, but all children are innocent and pure until a certain age, but after that the children can become poison, or sinners, by bad living. The impudence of the devil in denying God's word has been beyond bounds since the world began. Now, while beholding the poison tree mentioned above, loaded with fruit, we notice a little tree, probably six or ten inches high, under the large one; it is from the seed of the old tree, and likely six or twelve months old. It is a very pretty little tree, nicely shaped, with graceful branches, and one says, I will take that tree up and carry it home and plant it in my yard and cultivate it, and I am sure the fruit of it will be good; if taken out and kept out of the atmosphere of the old poison tree it will be a good tree. It is taken up, carried a thousand miles away and planted and watered and digged about and fertilized; it grows nicely, the shape is beautiful and the branches become more graceful with age. But it begins to look more like the old

tree, buds and blossoms become manifest, fruit appears and, behold, it is poison. In great disappointment the planter and caretaker says, All my labor has been in vain. Why did not the beautiful tree bring forth good fruit? Because it was a poison tree when taken from under the old one; the life in the seed was poison, hence it could not bear good fruit. The little child has not yet committed sin, or borne fruit; it appears innocent and beautiful, and the nursery teacher says, With proper care and training it will never be a bad tree, and all care possible is bestowed upon it. It is taught that "a good man" is up above the skies in heaven, and that the good man will love it if it is good and kind and minds mamma and papa. It is taught to say prayers to the good man, and really it seems to be a good little tree. In appearance it grows more beautiful with age, and is admired by all who see it, and directly fruit is manifest, but to the sorrow and disappointment of the caretaker, or cultivator, the fruit is poison, and in anguish the cultivator cries out, How was it possible for such a beautiful and well cared for tree to bring forth poison fruit? The answer is, the old tree (Adam) was poison, and the child, being of the seed and life of that tree, was also poison, and could not bear good fruit. The fruit only manifests what kind the tree is; it was poison all the time, though in appearance beautiful. "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." These are two of hundreds of kindred declarations of the Scriptures regarding the total depravity of the children of men, and are true, though men and devils deny them. It requires the same grace to save a child that it does to save an adult; the same blood to redeem a child that it requires to redeem a man or woman; the resurrection of Christ is as necessary to justify a child as to justify an old sinner. "Salvation is of the Lord," regardless of age, standing or circumstances, and in this doctrine there is not the slightest suggestion of the condemnation of children, but rather salvation through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. If children are saved it must be this way, since, as we have shown, all are "by nature the children of wrath." If salvation depended upon the works of the creature the child would be left out, because of its inability to perform those works. How readily therefore it can be seen that the doctrine of grace includes children, while the doctrine of works excludes them. Who then shall be stamped as preaching "child condemnation," the preacher of grace or the preacher of works?

The doctrine our friend speaks of as being almost daily taught in Kansas is also taught here, and, in fact, in all civilized countries, and doubtless will continue to be preached, but, "As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." The doctrine preached by the Old School Baptists is not of man, neither were they taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Continue, therefore, dear friend, in the doctrine of predestination and salvation by grace; be not weary in well doing. We are glad to assure you that you are not alone in your views and hope of salvation. When you have leisure, and feel impressed, we would be

glad to know how you were led to believe predestination.

We now leave these suggestions with you, hoping that the Lord may seal instruction to us all. K.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, Dec. 23rd, 1911, at his residence, Walter Kentnor Cook, of Philadelphia, Pa., and Miss Etta Elizabeth Savidge, of Mt. Rose, N. J.

By the same, at the bride's residence, Jan. 20th, 1912, Arthur Howard Leyland, of Atlantic City, N. J., and Miss Elizabeth Lawshe, of Trenton, N. J.

By the same, Feb. 4th, 1912, at the bride's residence, Harry Alvah Leigh, of New Brunswick, N. J., and Miss Ann Savidge Pierson, of Princeton, N. J.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, Jan. 24th, 1912, at the home of the bride's parents, Lucketts, Loudoun Co., Va., James A. Miller, of Brunswick, Md., and Miss Sarah Ellen Howser.

By Elder Joshua T. Rowe, at Roland Park, Md., Jan. 29th, 1912, William Harrison Rowe and Minnie R. Steeb.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Reuben C. Chadbourn, of North Berwick, Maine, departed this life to be with Christ Jan. 22nd, 1912, aged 81 years, 11 months and 4 days. He was married to Ada Ann Clark, Feb. 11th, 1854, by which union there were born to them two daughters, Marcia Maria, born March 27th, 1858, and Lizzie Ardell, born Dec. 6th, 1866, who died Sept. 7th, 1869. Our brother received a hope in Christ Jesus the Savior and united with the church, being baptized by Elder William Quint, Nov. 5th, 1871, and was ever a beloved brother to the household of faith, and his removal from our midst is indeed a loss to us who were favored to know him in the faith of God's elect. He was not a great talker, but no one took more pleasure in hearing Christ's gospel preached, and listening to conversation of the household of God concerning the doctrine of God our Savior, and what he did say himself was always good and sincere, with the abasement of himself and the exaltation of Christ, of whom he would speak with affection and trust in his merits. Of all the persons I have ever known I never knew one who, in my estimation, so well sustained his relations, not only to his own family, but to all mankind, as our dear, departed brother. He was in my eyes preeminently gracious, sweet dispositioned, unselfish in his walk and conversation in the world, and I could but love him in Christ Jesus, and in his gentleness, kindliness, and in his love of the truth as it is in Jesus, I felt he glorified our Father who is in heaven. But though it is our comfort to think and speak of him so highly and lovingly, yet no one could have more self-abasing thoughts than he had of himself. He felt he had no righteousness in himself, that he was unworthy, and saw himself the least in the church of God, with all his hopes of acceptance in the sight of God to be in the Beloved. Our brother in passing through this world was called to endure much suffering and sickness, for he was seriously hurt a number of times. On town meeting day, March 10th, 1879, the floor of Town Hall collapsed, and he and many others were precipitated into the abyss of broken planks and timbers; no lives were lost, but our brother was the most badly injured; he had both legs broken, and was also internally injured. He gradually recovered a degree of health and strength, but suffered from the effects of those injuries the rest of his days. He broke his collar bone, and his ribs were broken a number of times. But our brother by the grace of God was able to bear these injuries and sickness that he passed through with meekness and resignation to the providences of God. How good the Lord was to him, sustaining him through all the afflictions, trials and vexations of his pilgrimage. In all these things he was more than conqueror through Christ who loved him. Our brother was a true husband, a dear, good father, grandfather and great-grandfather. He leaves to mourn their loss his widow, our sister, Ada Ann Chadbourn, their daughter, sister Marcia Allen, and grandchildren, sister Rosie Butler and Roscoe Allen, and the three great-grandchildren will not forget their sweet dispositioned grandpa. May the Lord comfort them all, and sweeten this bereavement to them. His last illness was of but few days duration, and he has departed to be with Christ, which is far better.

At his funeral the writer preached from Isaiah lvii. 1, 2. His body was laid to rest in the cemetery, there to await its resurrection, at the last day, to immortality and incorruption, when the Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ, shall come from heaven and change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. So shall we ever be with the Lord.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

Mrs. Martha E. Carter, daughter of James and Esther Hanna, was born April 2nd, 1828, in Lancaster County, Pa., and died at the home of her son, in King County, Wash., Jan. 5th, 1912, aged 88 years, 9 months and 3 days. She was united in marriage to Daniel Carter, of Cecil County, Md., in 1849. To them were born seven children; three sons and one daughter survive her: Ben., with whom she made her home, at Sumner, Wash., Robert, of Baker County,

Oregon, Marion and Mrs. Edith Gekler, of Union County, Oregon. Her husband died in 1865. She united with the Old School Baptist Church called Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa., then under the care of Elder Thomas Barton. Sister Carter and family came to Union County, Oregon, in the fall of 1878. She united with Big Spring Church, in that county, at their regular meeting in June, 1880, and was a faithful attendant of their meetings while she resided in that county. But this faithfulness in attending her meeting was characteristic of sister Carter always. The first time that I ever met her she came twenty miles on horseback to be at the meeting. On another occasion she started on foot to the place of meeting, some ten miles from her home. She told me that she felt there would be a way provided for her to get there, and it was so; a man with a wagon overtook her, and so she rode the greater part of the way. Her daughter told me that in the east, where she formerly lived, it was a common saying among the members, "Sister Carter will be there." It made no difference what the weather might be. She was well versed in the Scriptures indeed, and she had in this few equals. Her meat and drink was to converse upon spiritual things. She had no use for nor patience with unsound doctrine. Her faith in the promises of God was strong. Like Abraham, she believed what God had promised he was able to perform. She was a tower of strength to the weak, and it was always a pleasure to me to hear her talk on the Scriptures, and she was able with her pen in setting forth the truth. But notwithstanding her great gifts she was little in her own estimation, of sinners the chief and of saints the least. How often have I heard her quote the words of David: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory." Her son Ben. took up a homestead down on the sound in Washington, near Seattle, in the year 1893, where they lived until her death; thus she was much deprived of church privileges. I visited them several times when we had meeting in their home, or somewhere near by. Other ministers visited them in recent years and preached for them. She was a great sufferer in her last sickness, it being of a dropsical nature, so that she was not able to lie down for several months before her death. Her daughter told me that she heard her mother say to sister Loufborough when she was visiting her while she was sick: "I am sitting here thinking, If I am saved, how great thy mercy, Lord, if I am lost, how just."

By her request she was brought here for burial by the side of her sister Edith. The funeral services were conducted by the writer. We sang, "How firm a foundation," it being a favorite hymn of our sister, also, "Asleep in Jesus." The text was 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26.

I feel that what I have written falls far short of setting forth the noble character and worth of this dear saint of God, but those who knew her will understand. There are many still in the east who knew her. May the Lord reconcile to his will all who are bereaved. G. E. MAYFIELD.

ELGIN, Oregon, Jan. 14, 1912.

Mrs. Dicy Dunlap, daughter of William and Mary Runkle, was born in Champaign County, Ohio, Feb. 10th, 1811, and died at her home in Morgan County, Ill., of old age, Jan. 25th, 1912; her age was 100 years, 11 months and 14 days. She was united in marriage to Stephen Dunlap, May 29th, 1834. Her husband was born in Lexington, Ky., on the same day that she was, and died Feb. 9th, 1877. Four children, eleven grandchildren, sixteen great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren survive her. The following are the children: James M., William R., Steven and Samuel W. Dunlap. Two children, Irvin Dunlap and Mrs. Mary Farrell, preceded her in death. Mrs. Dunlap received a hope in Christ and united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Yatesville, Ill., in 1850, of which she lived a true and faithful member until death removed her from our midst. Sister Dunlap had spent sixty-five years at the home where she died, and her whole life presents a record wonderful to think upon. Despite the weaknesses which came with years, to the very end she had an intimate knowledge of the affairs of her many relatives, even to the third and fourth generations; she knew their names, their characteristics, their comings and goings, and all the little things which go to make up the average daily life, retaining a most remarkable and accurate memory of recent events, as well as the happenings of many years ago. Notwithstanding the fact that she lived nine miles from her church, she seldom missed a meeting as long as she was able to go, and to the end she always remembered the meetings of the church, and anxiously inquired about each meeting, and was greatly pleased to have her brethren and sisters visit her. Since the death of her husband her youngest son, Samuel Dunlap, has been her constant companion, giving to her the kindest attention and tenderest care, and while sister Dunlap will be greatly missed by all her relatives, the church and her numerous friends, the loss will be most keenly felt by this son, who has given the best of his life to her care.

The writer was called from his home, two hundred miles away, to attend the last sad rites in memory of this aged and beloved mother in Israel, which were held at her home on Sunday, Jan. 18th, and spoke to a large concourse of sorrowing relatives and friends from 1 Cor. xv. 19, 20: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." Her cold and

lifeless form was then gently laid to rest in the silent city of the dead to await the coming of the Lord in that day when he will raise the dead and fashion our vile body like unto his own glorious body. "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

W. I. CARNELL.

ELDORADO, Ill.

Lila A. McKean, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Hugh McKean, of Greeley, Pa., died at the home of her parents Friday, Jan. 26th, 1912, aged 20 years, 6 months and 4 days. Ten days before her death, while visiting a sick neighbor, she contracted a severe cold, which developed into pneumonia. Her sufferings were intense, but she bore them patiently, and in her last hours repeated the hymn, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me." For several years she had entertained a hope in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ.

The funeral was largely attended, and the writer tried to comfort the heartbroken family by calling attention to "the sure mercies of David." The interment took place in the McKean Cemetery. Lila is survived by her parents and several brothers and sisters, who have the sympathy of all who know them.

K.

Mrs. Elizabeth Ann Carpenter was born Nov. 1st, 1822, and departed this life Friday, Dec. 8th, 1911, at her home near St. Joseph, Mo., where she had resided since 1854, aged 89 years, 1 month and 8 days. She was the only daughter of Mary and Daniel Varner, of Luray, Page Co., Va. Sept. 5th, 1843, she was married to Louis F. Carpenter, of Loudoun Co., Va. To that union twelve children were born, ten of whom grew to maturity, but only seven survive her, six sons and one daughter: Wm. H. and Dr. S. F., of St. Joseph, D. E., of Union Star, Mo., B. E., of Helena, Mo., T. J., of King City, Mo., R. S., of Clarksdale, Mo., and Mrs. W. S. Hamilton, who resided with her mother at the old Carpenter estate. She had enjoyed the best of health most of the time until Nov. 21st, when she was stricken with pleurisy, which later developed into pneumonia. Her suffering was great, especially during the last week, but she bore it all with wonderful patience. She had been a devoted member of the Old School Baptist Church for more than forty years. She seldom missed a meeting, except during the winter months. There never was a more devoted mother and grandmother. Her friends and neighbors esteemed her for the kindness she had shown them. Her whole life beautifully illustrated her high ideals. She had been a reader of the SIGNS for many years, and was probably one of its oldest subscribers. Many of her Sundays were spent reading the articles in that paper, written by brethren and sisters of her own faith.

The funeral was held at the family home Dec. 9th. Elder C. C. Moore, her pastor, whose father had baptized her in her young womanhood, spoke appropriate words to the many relatives and the large number of friends who had assembled to pay their last tribute of respect, after which her six grandsons bore her remains to the final resting-place beside her husband, who preceded her twenty-three years. After surrendering the beloved one from our home we have the cherished thought that she lives with Christ our Savior.

Her granddaughter, ELLA C. HAMILTON.

CLARKSDALE, Mo.

Moses A. Welborn departed this life Jan. 9th, 1912, in the 87th year of his age. He was born near Guilfords Courthouse, N. C., and joined the Regular Baptist Church over a half century ago, and was a subscriber of the SIGNS perhaps that length of time. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace, a reader of the Scriptures, a good disciplinarian and defender of the truth in Christ Jesus, as he understood it.

His son, J. D. WELBORN.

OWENSVILLE, Ind., Feb. 5, 1912.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Joseph F. Hall, Maine, $1.00; Mrs. T. V. Richardson, Md., $5.75.

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SILAS H. DURAND.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 80. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1912. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

1 JOHN III. 1.

"BEHOLD, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."

BELOVED BRETHREN:—It is in my mind at this time to pen some thoughts relative to the above passage of Scripture for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if in your judgment they shall prove worthy of space in that esteemed medium of correspondence, though often I fear that I know nothing really of the spiritual substance of the text. I suppose there is no better time or condition for the subject of God's saving love to contemplate the wonderful mystery of this love than when a measure of its effects is felt in the heart, and at the same time a felt sense of creature unworthiness. Herein lies a great mystery; realizing such vileness and corruption in nature, one can but wonder how pure and heavenly love could consider such a case. If the solution of this wonderful mystery be not found in the revelation in the heart of the spiritual import of certain expressions of inspired testimony found in the Scriptures of truth, then we can never comprehend the mystery. We are told that "God is love," and again, "We love him, because he first loved us;" and further, "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." Thus it is clearly shown that the love of him who loves God is the effect of the love of God, which is the cause. The evidence to the believer that he is a subject of and embraced in this love is that he loves the children of God. For "every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him." Again, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." The Arminian theory that the sinner may ingratiate himself into the favor of God and secure his love, stands out in open contradiction to such passages as the following: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved.)"—Eph. ii. 4, 5. "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned."—Solomon's Song viii. 7. There was never so great

an expression of love in this world, nor ever will be, as when the Redeemer suffered and bled and gave his life a ransom for his people. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."—John xv. 13. Here is the object of his love, and for which he gave his life: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."—Eph. v. 25-27. Again, "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."—Titus ii. 14. Evidently the bride was betrothed in covenant to the Son (Jesus), and was accepted of him as the gift of his Father in the annals of eternity before the world was, and so was ever his bride in this covenant relation, and was ever loved by him, and so all his glorious work in bringing her into a saved relation with himself without "spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing," may be properly called redemption. Without previous ownership there could be no such thing as redemption. Of Adam it is said, "Who is the figure of him that was to come."—Rom. v. 14. That is, Adam is the figure of Christ. Of this Adam it is recorded in Gen. i. 27: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." In Gen. ii. 21-24 we read: "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." The mind can conceive of no closer relationship than existed between this first man Adam and his wife. She was in him, one with him, and received the law in him, and after development was only bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. The woman, beguiled by the serpent, was first in the transgression, but from the moment she had eaten of the fruit the man was also involved, because bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh had transgressed. If it be surmised that for the love the man had for his wife he partook of the fruit also, that he might be with her, (for Adam was not deceived in the transgression, 1 Tim. ii. 14), we should remember also that there was a cause for that love, and that cause was a relationship that existed even before the woman was deceived. Although the life that was in Adam (the figure) was that according to the Creator-founded law of nature, which was to and has developed his posterity along down the line of time (and the human family is only Adam multiplied), yet the formation of our mother Eve was a miracle that is not according to any established law of nature, as is the case with the development of their posterity by birth. So the life that was designed by the "God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" to develop "the elect lady and her children" (2 John i. 1,) was ever in Christ, hence it is called "eternal life." If I read the Scripture aright, a definite number of the sons and daughters of the earthy Adam were in covenant given by the Father to

the Son. As the apostle Paul puts it: "Hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. * * * Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."—Eph. i. 3–5. The little word "us" I have designed to emphasize I understand to be men and women of Adam's race, whom God predestinated "to be conformed to the image of his Son."—Romans viii. 29. These were accepted by the Redeemer as his bride, and thus she, the bride, was betrothed to the Husband in the annals of eternity before time was, and in the Son was the life designed to bring about this conformation, which will be fully consummated in the final resurrection, when mortality is swallowed up of life, when those who have their conversation in heaven, "from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." The psalmist David, representing Christ, in Psalms cxxxix. says, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." Omniscience beheld the body of Christ complete in him ere time began, also the development of each member of that body in time. When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem his people. It was love for his covenant people, and that love based on relationship, that brought his willing feet from that blessed world on high. His bride had transgressed and gone astray, she had become all defiled and polluted. Looking at her in her defilement she was fit only to be spurned from his presence; but she was his, though offended justice stood between them, so that she could not come to him if she would, but wisdom had previously arranged a covenant, in which was provided a remedy that was amply sufficient to remove every obstacle. The right of redemption lay in Christ, he was the Husband, his people the bride; her debt was his debt; justice looked to him for satisfaction. He came clothed with both power and authority to satisfy the debt and redeem his bride unto himself, and that he did. He came down from heaven, not to do his own will, but the will of his Father who had sent him, and this was the will of his Father which had sent him, that of all he had given him he should lose nothing, but should raise it up again the last day. In coming he took not on himself the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham. Thus he identified himself with his people under the law, and though tempted, never sinned. He was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not." Think for a moment of the contrast between that life of the Son of man on earth, as described in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and the glory he had with the Father before the world began. What a wonderful mystery; what great love and condescension. As I think of this wonderful love of God in Christ for

such poor, vile sinners my mind reverts to the lines:

"Great mystery, that God should place
His love on any of Adam's race;
That I should also share a part,
And find a mansion in his heart.

Great mystery, I can't tell why
That Christ for sinful worms should die;
Should leave the boundless realms of bliss,
And die for sinners on the cross."

What a great and grand expression of love was the Father's gift of his Son for poor rebel sinners, and what a wonderful expression of love do we see in the Son's life and death as a man for both his holy Father and his people. Well might the apostle comfortingly say, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" And again, "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Then let us take courage. Dear child of God, if this peculiar, sweet love of God has ever been felt in your heart, and you have felt your heart bound with love for God, his truth, his people, it is clearly evident that God loved you first, and he who loves you now loved you before time was, and being unchangeable, he will love through all the vicissitudes of time, and on when time is no more. O how good it is to think though I prove forgetful, ungrateful and even rebellious, He remains ever the same. No matter what my poverty, my afflictions, my distresses, let friends forsake, let the world deride or pity, if I am one who loves God and called according to his purpose, all will be well in the end. Soon we all shall lay our armor by, soon strife shall cease, soon the battle will be ended and the victory won; then we shall rest forever in the sweet sunshine of eternal love.

I will now close in the language of a dear, aged sister, in a letter written me several years ago: "I believe all these things are true of God's people, whether I am one of them or not."

Farewell in the Lord.

H. B. JONES.

WINNSBORO, Texas, Jan. 1, 1912.

THE PART OF THE HAND THAT WROTE.

"AND the king saw the part of the hand that wrote."—Daniel v. 5.

This was a wonderful and miraculous revelation, and seems to have come both at an unexpected time and in a peculiar way, as all such demonstrations come, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, or "as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day." While the king, his lords, his wives and his concubines were feasting so merrily, and praising the gods of gold and silver, of brass and iron, of wood and of stone, "in the same hour came forth the fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote." While there were more than a thousand people, probably thousands, feasting so joyously in the king's palace, when this hand wrote upon the wall, the inference is clear and demonstrative that none saw it, neither was affected by it or wrought upon, except the king. I am aware of the fact that there are many rich and wonderful things in this text that I am too weak and short-sighted to see, and also some that I hope I see that I shall not mention, from the fact that my mind seems only at this

writing to be exercised upon a few things in an experimental way. It has seemed to me that this miraculous revelation, together with the change it wrought in and with the king, is the experience of all of the Lord's children who have passed from death unto life, or realized their just condemnation as revealed to them by God's holy law. This definite manifestation of God's righteous and holy law was similar in the apostle Paul's experience, for when he was apprehended, after his miraculous conversion, and in telling his experience, he said, "They that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me."—Acts xxii. 9. So there was such a wonderful change with Saul that those who were with him could and did readily see it, which was the light they saw. "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light to all that are in the house," or all the family, or all that have the same experience, for it seems to me that this is what the Savior would have us understand from this text; that when our dear Redeemer illuminates a poor sinner's heart or mind it giveth light to all who have the same experience, for there is such a wonderful change wrought in them that all those of like precious faith and experience will at once see the light, as it was with the king Belshazzar when he saw the part of the hand that wrote. "Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another." It was this wonderful and miraculous work which was wrought that changed the king's countenance, and caused his thoughts to trouble him and his strength to fail him. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." Due time is the appointed time. The plaistering of the house, or wall, is on the inside, therefore this was an inward work, and was the beginning of sorrow with the king, who saw the part of the hand that wrote; but for all such troubled souls there is a rest remaining, and peace and tranquillity of mind, as the prophet hath said, "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us."—Isaiah xxvi. 12. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house [family] of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Here is the handwriting upon the plaister of the wall, or the inward part, that no one knows of or experiences save those who receive it, and when God at his appointed time puts his law in the heart of a poor sinner and writes it in his mind, then his countenance changes, his thoughts trouble him and his strength is gone. It is not that his thoughts are any worse whatever, but light hath shined in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not; that is, does not know or understand this miraculous change, or work, within, or this strange handwriting on the plaister of the wall, which when read and interpreted to him says, Thou art weighed in the balance and art found wanting, or lacking. Hence from a burdened and sore distressed heart the cry goes up as one of old said, O Lord, I am

oppressed, undertake for me; my strength is gone, I can do nothing. "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."—Isaiah vi. 5. When the prophet related this wonderful experience and exercise of mind he was no more of unclean lips than he was before he saw the King, the Lord of hosts, but light makes manifest, and when God, who commands the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, it so magnifies our thoughts that they loom up before us like black and horrible mountains, from which we see no escape, yet the cry goes up out of a distressed heart and soul, O Lord, remember me in mercy; O save, I perish. This seems to me to be the experience of each and every one of the Lord's quickened children; their countenances are changed, and their thoughts trouble them, and their strength faileth, but not until they realize the part of the hand that writes upon the wall of the palace, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. It seems clear to my mind this evening, and has lo these many years, that no poor sinner ever did or could come or be brought into this state of mind, except by the revelation of divine grace, the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, the glorious gospel world of light and liberty, where the Sun always shines. The king never realized these things until he saw the part of the hand that wrote; the prophet never realized his undone state until he had seen the King, the Lord of hosts; neither did Job abhor himself, and repent in dust and ashes, until his eyes saw the Lord; nor did Adam and Eve know that they were naked until their eyes were opened; therefore, dear brethren, I am fully persuaded that no one ever did, no one ever can, abhor himself, only in the light of sovereign grace, and also every one of the promised seed, the election of grace, will in God's own time and way realize in their own personal experience that heavenly life which is the Light of men, and as an inevitable result thereof abhor themselves and repent in dust and ashes.

Dear brother Chick, if you give this a place in the SIGNS please make all necessary corrections. I am a poor sinner, but I hope saved by grace. W. J. MAY.

PINSONFORK, Ky., Dec. 18, 1911.

ISAIAH LII. 3.

"YE have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money."

While at leisure to-day I picked up the Bible and let the book fall open where it would to read a little; this chapter was what my eyes fell upon, and I began to read, coming to the text above quoted, and I saw so much in it to sinners I at once had a desire to write something about it. I believe all Scripture to be true, and things written by the prophets of old were given them to write, for holy men of old spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and their writings are very different from what men write to-day. We may be to-day moved to write, and if the Lord directs our minds we will surely write or speak the truth; but we might not be impressed of the Lord to do these things, then our sayings are very likely to be as ourselves, worthless, for of ourselves we can do nothing. But the prophets who wrote what we call the Bible were directed what to write by God himself. These words are preceded by the sentence, "For thus

saith the Lord." It is something the Lord speaks to some one, and always when he speaks it has an effect. When he arrested Saul of Tarsus in his career of persecution of the church it had an effect upon him, and at once Saul was Paul, crying, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Man may reason with man always, and it is many times useless, but when God speaks it is done, when he commands it stands fast. I was in conversation with a gentleman to-day who professes to be a church member, but is also a very professional swearer, or uses profane language; I mentioned the fact to him, and his reply was that swearing had nothing to do with religion, that it was no harm, and doubtless he has heard many exhorting sermons as to how one should live to gain favor with God. But when we know the Lord has spoken anything we have confidence in it, and we find the same spirit in the prophets that we find in the apostles, both speaking of the same things. Isaiah seems more than the rest to place his prophecy in the present; well, nothing strange, with us there is past, present and future, but with God it is one eternal now. So God gave the word to Isaiah that he might make mention of these things, speaking many times in the present tense, but of things a long way in the future to those who lived in that day. This Scripture mentioned was the word of God to the church: "Ye have sold yourselves for nought." The Lord speaks to the bride; she received nothing for the transaction. Eve sold her right to the garden of Eden for the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which resulted in death, or the separation from paradise. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. If one indulges in the vain things of this life he has nothing. Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. The enjoyment in sin to a sinner or unregenerate is only for a season; the things of this life are perishable, and perish with the using. So the church sold herself for nought, "and ye shall be redeemed without money." There comes, I think, to every subject of grace these same things or words; that is, they realize the vain pleasures of this life are nothing, they see their condition, they find themselves slaves to sin, and all the wages they can ever receive for their services to sin is death. They are by nature in a horrible pit, and they come to know it, too; they are sold for nought. If I were to go out and sell myself for nothing, I could never expect to be free, for I would have nothing to free myself with, helpless, absolutely so; furthermore, being a slave, I must devote my whole time to my master. O what drudgery when sin has become exceeding sinful, and you see the breach between you and salvation. The lonesome, dark hours I spent for many years in this condition, seeing the wages of my labor was death. I had chosen in my nature the road to death, the vain things looked pleasing to me at one time, and I signed the agreement before I read the contract price, and one night in the ballroom I saw my wages waiting for me: death, not corporeal death, as nature sees it, but death and all its torture as revealed by the light of the knowledge of truth and justice. I saw I had sold myself for nought; what was to be done? I had nothing to redeem myself from my master. He is a hard master, for he laughs at tears of repentance and joys in the grief of his slaves. After years of this suffering this came: "Ye shall be redeemed without money." Money is not the price of re-

demption. Ye are bought with a price; it is not a money valuation. There is no way for us to compute the price that was paid for our redemption. The Father carefully counted the cost, but we have no way to estimate it. Can we measure the love that caused One who is holy, undefiled and separate from sinners, One who knew no sin, to give himself to be slain for the redemption of sinners? We can place no price on this. Money cannot satisfy the demands of the law. The law pronounces death upon all, for all have sinned, and death is the penalty; the demands of the law can only be satisfied by death, and He who has all power gave up his life that he might conquer death and the grave. It has always been that if one nation desired to conquer another they went to the land of them whom they meant to subdue and conquer. So did Christ; when the time came he gave himself up, no man took his life from him, that he might conquer death through death. Death held the bride captive, for she had sold herself and was bound in death, therefore she being the bride of Christ, he went down into the grave and overcame death, dethroned the king of death, and conquered. Christ gained an eternal victory, bringing his bride up with him, presenting her to the Father spotless and pure, for he has clothed her in his own righteousness. She says she is black as the tents of Kedar; He says, Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee.

I have failed to present the things that are in this Scripture. There is much in it, in fact all is in it, but I am so dumb I cannot express myself as I desire. I have been in a peculiar state for a long time, much of the time for more than a year unable to feed on the things that a short time ago were my delight. Such barren, desolate places have I been in; but further on in this chapter the Lord continues to speak to Jerusalem, saying, "Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem." He builds up the waste places, he also makes the desert to bloom as the rose. "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear." It is in these desert and barren places we see the Lord, for he is there. Strange is the course a christian must steer, yet we cannot sing the Lord's song in a strange land. When we sit down by the rivers of Babylon, with our harps on the willows, we weep when we remember Zion, when we remember the joy we experienced when the Lord spoke to us, telling us we were redeemed from under the law, that the debt was all paid; we think of the golden days when all was quietness about us, we were enjoying his felt presence, we were in Jerusalem, but now we find ourselves captives in a strange land, and cannot enjoy ourselves as we once did. For a long time after I went to the church every sermon was preached to me, everything in the SIGNS was written to me, but since then many are the times that the preaching did not reach me, the SIGNS was not for me, and O, wretched thought, the Bible was empty. Many times with an aching heart have I searched the Bible for one crumb, but it was all Greek and I could not understand; then again when I took it up its pages shined as gold, and there was liberty to the captive in every line, and redeeming love between each line. Then I could say, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that

saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth." Of this we have no control, but God, who reigns, has control over it and all other things.

If this is of the Lord, may he bless it to those who may read it.

F. SELBY FISHER.

CHICAGO, Ill.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—It has been quite a while since either of us have written to you, but this does not signify that we have not thought of writing long ago. God has so blessed us that we have felt like telling dear ones in Christ about him and his goodness, yet we have allowed worldly things to creep in and take up our minds. This or that has absorbed our attention when we ought to have been considering the things of a better world than this. We are glad to have others speak of Christ, but how slow we are to speak of him even to one another. How nice it would be to do so and so. Would it not be a good thing to go to such and such a place? O why do such thoughts fill our minds? Even when asleep and dreaming how often our minds are filled with trivial things. Do we not know better? Yes, we do. We know by our own experience how much more profitable and edifying is the reading of the Bible, the relation of personal experiences of the mercies of God, and the assembling of believers in the name of Jesus to hear the gospel proclaimed, but I find it easier to pick up some newspaper and read of wars, and rumors of wars, of criminals brought to justice, or of political filth, than to take up the Bible to read of the simple but marvelous story of Jesus, and yet the sweetness, the peace and the comfort, in short, all that can be desirable to one who knows Christ, all this can come from the latter, and none of it from the former. Why do I choose the paper? Is it because I love sin? I love to believe that though there is that in me which wars against the law of my mind, yet there is that which wars against sin, and that sin does not have complete dominion over me. I love to believe that God has written his law in me, and has declared that he will be my God, and that I shall be among or one of his chosen people. At times I seem to know, and at other times I seem to doubt the reality of all such things. Surely when I shall be raised up in the likeness of Christ, in spite of my iniquities I shall be more than willing to give Christ all the glory. Then shall I realize perfectly how great are the gifts of free grace which I have received. Much as I now delight in the joy of Christ's presence, what will it be when we are freed from the chains of sin and of the devil, free forever to worship, praise and adore throughout all eternity?

I am inclosing some excellent letters which we have received lately. If you see fit, we would be glad for you to publish them, one at a time, or all, for the benefit of others. You may be pleased to learn that brother Bradford Shelbourne, of this city, has felt impressed with the duty of the ministry. We have heard him twice, and have been greatly blessed through what he has said, and it seems probable that we can have our little meeting every other Sunday. Elder John Sawin, of Mattoon, Ill., was with us October 29th, and spoke with power. I believe that all who heard him were made to feel the divine presence.

With highest regard,

WESLEY N. SPITLER.

CHICAGO, Ill.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—It has been a long time since we received your last letter. In that time we have passed through many vicissitudes in our spiritual life; we have known more of sorrow and of trial, and in them have been greatly blessed after all. Our meetings at the first apparently attended with interest by the Old School Baptists in and near Chicago, gradually ceased entirely, and so many moved away that we despaired of ever having a church here at all. Then it seemed for a time as though some others not in the church itself were becoming interested. At this we were again much encouraged, and looked forward still to the formation of a church here. After a little this interest, too, seemed to die, and we were again left bereft of comfort, and helpless, and then a young man of whom we had heard much indeed from father, and from a visit which Wesley had, but with whom we had not been able to come into close acquaintance, came to our house, and we had a sweet meeting by ourselves. Since then he has come quite frequently lately, accompanied by his sister or brother, and our conversation has been much blessed to us. Elder John Sawin was with us October 29th, and preached to us, to our great comfort. The meeting was peculiarly pleasant to us all. It was so sweet after the thirteen months and more of dearth; it was so refreshing in its spirit of love and union. Since then our young brother has spoken to us as the Lord has been with him, often in much trembling and fear, but that very weakness and modesty has warmed our hearts and endeared him all the more to us. I remember that he spoke once of a letter in a recent number of the SIGNS, where the writer spoke of the single note of the dove, and likened her "Coo, coo," to the songs of the humble believers in Christ. That, he said, just suited him.

> "Weak is the effort of my heart,
> And cold my warmest thought,
> But when I see him as he is,
> I'll praise him as I ought."

Our hearts are much comforted by this renewal of God's mercy to us. How wonderful it is. Our Ebenezers are not all in the dim past; still we are given to exclaim, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

My mother has been with us since the first of October. Her visit has been very pleasant to us. I get very lonely oftentimes. Although I am surrounded by multitudes, I know very few people in this city, but when I can feel the presence of Jesus I am not conscious of any loneliness; but very often that sweet feeling is not mine, and in spite of the presence of my darling little boy, I do long for companionship. Mamma's company has therefore been more grateful to me than ever before. I can but dread her return to Maine, although I know that they at home must be longing for it. We hope that you and your wife are feeling better than when you last wrote.

Your little sister,

RUTH SPITLER.

MATTOON, Ill., Nov. 1, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER SPITLER:—I am inclined to drop you a few lines this evening, which is, I trust, the prompting of the blessed Spirit of peace and hope. Our little interview at your home was a very pleasant and soul-comforting one, and I trust that we were drawn together in the Lord, and that he communed with us by the way. To worship the dear Lord in spirit and in

truth, his dear presence is necessary; without him we can do nothing, absolutely nothing, in the way of acceptable worship, and when we in our weakness and poverty feel our need of him his promise of support is sure to be verified. "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." The great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and in sins, follows us through the changing vicissitudes of mortality and sheds its heavenly light when and where we most need it, according as the Lord in his wisdom sees fit to bestow it, and in our little meetings we sometimes have a very sweet and comforting foretaste of the blessed fruit of the Spirit, as well as a glimpse of what it will be to be there, and in full possession of the reality, where mortality puts on immortality, and all death, sorrow and sin are swallowed up of life. I might go on, but could never tell of the matchless wonders of grace. Neither will we ever know them fully in this life.

Sister Ruth's letter, telling me about young brother Shelbourne, made him a subject of great interest to me, and when he did not reach your house in the forenoon I felt quite disappointed, but my heart was made glad when he and his sister came in the afternoon. Do you know from what little I saw and talked with him I think him an excellent young man and brother? There appears to be no foolishness about him, and that he is spiritually-minded I cannot for a moment doubt. Our conversation when together on the elevated train was so interesting I forgot that the time was passing, and an hour had gone before I knew it. He and his sister both were loath to part with me at Twelfth Street, where I only had about eighteen minutes to make the station, get my ticket and board the train. I want to write to him soon, if the Lord will, for he has been on my mind often since my return home. I have felt that I wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed my visit, and the meeting with your mother and others at your home. Mrs. Sawin's cough was a little better when I reached home, but she is considerably indisposed now. I am wanted to attend the funeral of brother Waggoner, and expect to do so. I received a card from my brother, F. M. Sawin, who was at his son's, and he said they had heard of my being in Chicago, and if they had known where to find you they would have run up there Sunday morning and surprised us by their presence.

But I must close and get ready to go to the funeral. Very much love to you all, and very kindly remembrance to your mother, in which my wife joins me.

Your brother in hope,

JOHN G. SAWIN.

MATTOON, Ill., Nov. 19, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER SPITLER:—We have your letters, written under one cover early in the week, and should have answered sooner, but hindrances came in the way to prevent me. We appreciate your letters very much, and I would be glad if it were possible for me to write something in return equally worthy of your consideration and comfort, but I am not always in the spirit, and have learned long since how very hard it is to talk or write in the absence of that Spirit which takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto his children. All my efforts under such conditions are weak, unprofitable and meaningless, except to indicate my dark and helpless state; however, even this may sometimes prove beneficial in a way. I used to

think that certain of our able brethren in the ministry never had such experiences, and this caused me much anxiety, for I was so much of the time in the wilderness, and groping in darkness, that I would conclude that mine was an outside case, and that I had run in advance of the Lord's calling, and hence had no message to deliver, no tidings to proclaim. During one of my most uncomfortable seasons of this kind, some years ago, I was present at a meeting where one of our oldest brethren in the ministry was to preach, and one of those whom I had believed to be immune from all such deplorable experiences, and of course I anticipated one of his usual God-honoring and soul-satisfying discourses, the very thing I was hungry for, and which I hoped would lift me out of the slough of despond, but instead the brother was completely shut up. It seemed impossible for him to speak forth the wonderful plan of salvation as he had often in the past so beautifully done, yet there was something in all this which caused my obdurate heart to melt like snow under a tropical sun. Others, too, in the congregation were similarly affected, and I was amply reminded that God's servants are as clay in the hands of the potter; that without him indeed they are helpless and can do nothing. I saw the helplessness of the brother, and the sight was helpful to me, for if this able brother had such experiences it was no marvel that a poor, ignorant, weak, faithless mortal like me should be tossed and swept by such discomforting waves. I have passed through many lamentable occasions of this kind, and my flesh has been greatly mortified at times, but I am persuaded that the hand of God has been in it all. I have been taught to put no confidence in horses and chariots, nor in the flesh with its lust, its vanity and its carnal hatred and enmity to God. This carnal enmity is so thoroughly entrenched in my general makeup and confronts me so often that I am made to cry out like David, and say, I shall fall some day at the hand of my enemy, the flesh. The warfare is constantly going on, and will go on until mortality is swallowed up of life. But how good it is to know that God rules, and that we are in his hands, and that he will do all things well. His sovereign power and grace, how wonderful. He is our King, Lawgiver and Judge; justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne. Here is no chance for an erroneous judgment, as may be the case in the courts constituted by men. Righteousness and truth go before his face, and the heritage of the saints is amply guarded by him. For their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. Sinful, erring mortal that I am, this God-given righteousness is my hope, my only hope for life and immortality, and if the glory of the Lord be not risen upon me, then I am lost. Though he slay me, his justice, righteousness and truth will stand as loving remembrances of his infinite perfections.

I have written along in a very different line from what I expected when I began this letter, but will send it to you. In all probability were I to rewrite it it would still be imperfect, like the writer. Much love to you both, and also to sister Keene.

Your brother in hope,

JOHN G. SAWIN.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, Dec. 5, 1911.

DEAR RUTH AND WESLEY:—Your letter came this morning as I sent mine to you, and is a beautiful letter. I, too, have been thinking of Keene's birthday,

and of two years ago, when the wee boy came into this world to his mother and father and auntie, and to every one who loves him. Somehow I feel that he is one of God's little ones, and will grow to be a man after God's own heart. I love him, and pray that he may live and learn to love and fear our heavenly Father. O dear sister and brother, how wonderful is that figure of God's love. What a sacred relationship, and how near. To think that the holy and most high God should allow us, not only allow, but command us, to say, "Our Father." When I think of such love and pity to us poor creatures I am lost in wonder and praise.

That was a beautiful letter from brother Bradford. I am glad you sent it, and glad that he is so much exercised with regard to spiritual things and is not ashamed nor afraid to speak of them. I cannot tell you how my heart went out to him, and to you all, as I read of the little meeting you held by yourselves. Many times blessings come down to us when we are least expecting them. How wonderful it is that God should take one poor creature out of the world and teach him in such a wonderful way, love and care for him, rebuke and chasten him and make him to know the right way. I think we are often inclined to take it as a matter of course. We hear and know from childhood the story of Christ and of salvation through his blood, and so it is to us an old story, and we forget to wonder and to praise him who is our Lord for his goodness toward us, but when we are given to see in the true light it is all new, and we thank God that he has seen fit to reveal these glorious truths to us. So little of the time do I think of God, or of anything that pertains to him, I wonder that he has not long ago given me up. How is it that one who has professed to be a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus can be so hard and indifferent as I am? I do not understand it. It is of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed, because his compassion fails not. I wish I could be better, and do those things that are pleasing in God's sight, I think I would then feel his presence more, and not be so full of doubts and fears.

"O how happy are they,
Who their Savior obey,
And whose treasures are laid up above;
Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

Never since have I been able to realize how precious this hope is with that sweet intensity which I experienced in my first love. O then I was willing to go forth to him without the camp bearing his reproach, now it seems that I am often afraid to even give a reason for the hope that is within me. Ah, sinful, ignorant and helpless I am; I have to fall before him and plead for his name's sake, because my iniquities are great. He careth for us. He has compassion upon the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way. He knows we are imperfect beings of the earth, sinful from birth, and he rewards us according to the multitude of his mercies. His beloved Son, given as our ransom, ever intercedes for us, and his intercession is effectual, for he is able to save to the uttermost.

It is strange that having experienced so much of God's mercy, having had such abundant proof that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him, I should be tempted often to believe

the Bible a mere fable, as the books of other religions are, or that I should even doubt the historical reality of Jesus Christ, and the reality of any religion, yet these things often come to me, and only God can keep me from unbelief. I have to cry, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." O if all the things which Jesus Christ has done for me should be written, every one, I suppose the world itself could not contain the books that would be written, so many have been his kindnesses to poor, unworthy me. What is there in me to commend me to him? Absolutely nothing. It is of his matchless grace that I trust in his name, that looking to him as the author and finisher of my faith I can say, "My Father." Is there then any room for boasting on my part? No, except in Jesus my Redeemer. O, dear ones, my precious sister and brother, let us tell more of Jesus' love in our letters one to the other. Let us cheer each other with the hope of heaven. Let us bear each other's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

It is late and I must close. The Lord watch between you and me while we are absent from each other. Tell Keene how much I love him, and want to see him again.

Your loving sister,

IRENE H. KEENE.

[THE foregoing excellent letters have been forwarded to us by brother and sister Spitler, and we take pleasure in presenting them to our readers. It is often the case that in personal correspondence we write more simply and freely than when we write for publication; at least we know that it is so with ourself, and such writing often comes more closely to the daily personal ups and downs of our life than the more formal writing for many readers.—C.]

LOVELAND, Colo., Nov. 17, 1911.

J. E. MOORE—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I am now going to try to answer, in part at least, your most welcome and comforting letter, written and mailed to me just one month ago to-day. A few days after receiving your letter I sent you a postal card, stating that I would write you as soon as time and opportunity offered. I feel that I ought to give you a brief sketch or history of myself, that you may know what a poor, ignorant and dependent creature you have written to. I was left a poor orphan boy at the tender age of ten years, there being but seventeen days intervening between the death of father and mother. I, with one brother and two sisters, was cast upon the cold and sinful world, with no home, parental care or love to guide me on the journey of this earthly life. I now alone am left of my father's family, and for some purpose best known unto God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, my life is spared to enter the seventy-eighth year of my age in this world of sin and sorrow. But this may be of no interest to you, so I will change the subject. I feel inadequate to answer your letter as it deserves. I feel, yea, I trust we have been led by the same Spirit, as our experience is so similar in many respects, and if that Spirit is the blessed Spirit of promise, we are assured that He will guide us in the way of all truth. It is said that every spirit begetteth its own likeness; then if it be the Spirit of truth within us it is no marvel that we can see eye to eye and speak the same things. By the teachings of this same Spirit of truth we learn that our sorrows and fears in this life, yea, our joys and hopes of that beyond, are all of one. If we have entered the school of Christ our blessed Lord and Master is our Teacher, and you

know it is said of the pupils of that school, They all shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be their peace. Is not this a blessed promise indeed? Ah yes, too precious a promise for me at times to claim, who am the least of all saints, if one at all. I feel and know that I am but a poor old man, a sinful creature, in and of myself not deserving the least of God's blessings, yet the Lord has ever been mindful of me, from the earliest period of my life up to the present moment, and has blessed me in ways and times past numbering, and yet O how unthankful I seem to be, so forgetful of Him, of his goodness and mercy to me, the poor, sinful old man that I know myself to be. When I reflect upon what poor, frail, helpless creatures we are, how dependent upon God we are even for the very air we breathe, I am made to wonder why the Lord permits me to live.

I have written as my mind has led me, without noting the contents of your letter. Not desiring to make this, my first letter to you, too lengthy, I will notice the latter part of your letter. No indeed, I do not believe any creature of God can bestow a blessing upon him. Bless signifies a bestowal, to add to, give power to, increase, &c., so I conclude it is but to render praise due to His holy name, and so I intended when I quoted the psalmist's exclamation, "Bless the Lord, O my soul," &c. Lastly, your expression led me to think that you believe me to be a minister of the gospel, a preacher. I want you to know that I am not. I never tried to preach but once in my life, and a more miserable failure no mortal ever made. It may seem strange to you when I tell you that I have been twice liberated by the church where I held my membership, once in Kansas, nearly forty years ago, the second time here in Colorado, some sixteen years ago; but each time I set a seal upon my lips, for I do feel my brethren erred, misjudged my gift, if any I have. When I receive such letters as yours (and I have received a great many) in response to my imperfect writings which have appeared in the SIGNS, I have thought that if I had any gift at all, it was that of writing to the scattered of the flock.

A word or so now about myself, then I will close. I have a little home here in Loveland. I do not owe a dollar to any one, save the taxes on my home, due in January, 1912, and I have enough money to pay that. Had I been able in body to stay with the work at the sugar factory I would have been in good shape to get through the summer, but I had to stop, as I could not stand the work. Had I been able to stay with it, this would have been the eleventh winter I have worked at it. My wife and I are the only family I have at home. I have no income save what I earn with my hands by days labor, and that ere long I will have to give up, in consequence of ailments of old age coming on. I have to curtail expenses as far as I can. I have never been prosperous in the world financially; twice I have been stripped of all my earthly possessions, once by fire, the last time by the money panic, yet I never have suffered for want of food or raiment. David says, No good thing will the Lord withhold from them that walk uprightly. But do I walk uprightly? Often I fear I do not. I know that he has been mindful of me all along the journey of life, both in blessings and chastisements, and I believe he will be with me to the end, be it what it may. Then, my brother, why should I not say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his

holy name," for his goodness and mercy endureth forever?

In reviewing what I have here written I am minded to not send it, but were I to attempt to write differently it might be still less profitable, so I will send it, hoping you will cast the mantle of charity over my weakness and imperfections. Believe me to ever be yours in love and fellowship of the truth. If you feel to write me again I will be pleased to hear from you. May God bless and sustain you by his grace, I pray.

Unworthily, J. H. YEOMAN.

TOUCHET, Wash., July, 1911.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—Once more this side of eternity I will write a few lines for publication to those of the same precious faith who may remember me in days past, when all were young together. A few of these I met at our association, but many have been called to their reward, but I, with a few others, am left to meet my daily crosses, which are no doubt for my good. I am daily getting weaker, and sensibly feel that I am nearing the other shore. I feel the need of daily supplies of grace to support me, and my constant prayer is, Lord, be merciful to me, a feeble child, if indeed one at all. I am often in sight of "Doubting Castle" or in "The Slough of Despond," yet with all this I would not look back, nor give my little hope in exchange for worlds like this. In all my thoughts of remembrance this world has been cold and lifeless to me, yet I have met all the ups and downs as patiently as the weakness of the flesh could do, praying for strength to endure this life to the appointed time, when my change shall come. O, little ones, take courage on the way, pray for one another, pray for the ministry, that they spare not to declare the truth, the whole truth as it is in Christ Jesus. There are many false doctrines being proclaimed, yea, even among us are strange doctrines held by those who should realize by reading the word of truth, given us as the standard of faith and practice, how false those strange sentiments are. Jesus said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." Let us try the spirits by the word of truth; surely we can tell an uncertain sound in the doctrine.

Seven years did I listen to hear the truth proclaimed. Alas, I would go home and search my Bible, and none agreed with the word therein contained. At last I heard an old man, an Elder Simpson, in the Willamette Valley, in 1849, preach the word. I surely understood the certain sound then. There I found a home with the people that I love. Why? Because they taught the pure word of everlasting life, as coming from Christ our Lord, who first loved us and redeemed us by dying the ignominious death of the cross. Was ever there such love as this? How can we manifest our love in return? Only by keeping his commandments we make manifest our love, that all men may see that we have left the world to follow our meek and lowly Savior. Let us not hide some Babylonish garment or golden wedge to our destruction. Our blessed Lord had not where to lay his head, yet he was the Creator of all worlds, and he was born in a stable and of poor parentage. Can we not then meet life's struggles patiently, and look for the weight of glory which awaits those who are called to follow the Lord of all?

I did not think of saying more when I began than to tell the friends that I am still living and trying to hold fast to the

faith once delivered unto the saints. I am nearing my eighty-third year, and am failing fast. I send what is due on the SIGNS in the past.

As ever, a little one,

(MRS.) S. J. CUMMINS.

DRAIN, Oregon, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—My subscription is past due. Please forgive my neglect. I feel that I never want to be without the SIGNS. I have taken it ever since 1875, and have never lost one number. If I know my own heart, I love the dear children of God, and I love to read the editorials and correspondence in the dear old paper, and prize it next to my Bible. Nearly every one of the writers speaks of being the chief of sinners, but these are light words compared to the feeling of these words. It is a sorrowful state to be in when we feel to be the chief of sinners. I sometimes feel as though I am the greatest hypocrite on earth; my own will is obnoxious to me. It is only once in a great while that a little spark shines into my heart. As a general thing, the younger brethren and sisters look upon the older ones, the fathers and mothers in Israel, as pillars in the church, and this has given me much trouble, for I feel that I can see much more of the fruits of the Spirit in even the very youngest member in our church than I ever possessed. Dear ones, we can never get better while we live in this tabernacle of clay. There is but one thing I can say as I grow older, and that is, the less I enjoy of this life, and I long to depart and be at rest, as I hope, with Christ, but as poor old Job said, I will wait my appointed time. There is a constant prayer in my heart that the Lord will give me patience to run the race that is set before me.

I will say no more, as it would not be worth perusal. I hope that the loved ones who can write will continue to do so; they feed the dear lambs of God.

S. MORNINGSTAR.

DODD CITY, Ark., Sept. 17, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have a desire to write a few lines for the SIGNS, to let you know how much I enjoy reading the communications from the pens of God's gifted but humble servants, his little children, for if your writings were of human product, they would not comfort me, but when I think of them all as messages from Jesus our Lord, given through his children, I am comforted. You remember the prophet said, "Cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Here is forgiveness of sin and a hope of an inheritance in heaven. It is a good hope through grace of an inheritance reserved in heaven for all who are kept by the power of God. Here is a safe abiding indeed and in truth.

But I just intended to tell of some good meetings which I have had the pleasure of attending of late. I attended the first Oklahoma Baptist Association, embracing the fourth Sunday in August, and heard some very able preaching, and enjoyed it. As I returned I came by Little Hope Church, of which I am the unworthy pastor. We had three visiting ministers, and here also we had some as able preaching as I ever heard. Then Little Zion Association convened on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, and a more lovely and harmonious meeting I never attended. The preaching was all harmonious and lovely, it was Jesus Christ and him crucified, the way, the truth and

the life, the resurrection, redemption and sanctification, the wisdom and righteousness, in short, the all and in all of his people. Two sisters came to the church and told what great things the Lord had done for them, and they are to be baptized the second Sunday in October. I had the pleasure of baptizing two sisters in the fellowship of this same church, Enon, one in June and one in July. I do hope that the time is not far distant when the Lord will be pleased to favor Zion, and cause some of his little ones to come home to their friends and tell what great things the Lord has done for them. Just here let me say that the article written by brother Frank McGlade upon this same text was rich and full of fatness; it was wine on the lees well refined. I thought this one article was worth the price of the paper. But these spiritual blessings cannot be valued in dollars and cents, neither can they be bought with money, and they were all treasured up in Jesus before the foundation of the world, and were to be given or manifested here in time. May God bless the editors, publishers and writers, together with the readers of the SIGNS, is the desire of one of the least, if a child at all.

Yours in gospel bonds,

WM. J. CASEY.

WAVERLY, Pa., Feb. 10, 1912.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—According to promise, I write these lines to say that we are in our old home in Waverly, Pa., and all appear to be glad. Canada is a beautiful, rich, farming country, and nice people live there, but it was not home to us. I am still regarded as pastor of the Brooke Church, at Aberfeldy, but think they will soon be supplied. I also have an appointment in Brantford. I am still serving eight churches, three in New York State, four in Pennsylvania and one in Canada. There have been a few additions this past year. Four of these churches I have served nearly thirty-six years, but they have been poorly served. It seems strange to me that God does not send servants to comfort and instruct them in the things of grace more. A few have come to visit them the past year, three I believe, for which we hope we feel thankful.

In regard to my health: I think in some ways I am better, in others I do not know that I am, but hope to be able to work some on the little place in the spring, but do not know how it will be. God's will is and will be done, as it has been in ages past.

Yours, as ever, D. M. VAIL.

APPEAL FOR AID.

THE construction of a Primitive Baptist meetinghouse for Richmond, Va., has been begun, and it is hoped that it will be completed during the early spring, and contributions to assist in building the same will be thankfully received. Mr. George W. Gay, of No. 2720 East Broad St., Richmond, Va., has exerted himself in the construction of this meetinghouse, and his efforts have been of material assistance, therefore he has been duly appointed and authorized to collect funds for the benefit of this church, and those who may in their kindness contribute to him for this purpose can rest assured that it will be gratefully appreciated by each and every member. The members of this church are delighted to know that the completion of this church-building is nearing, and they wish it to be understood that the public is cordially invited to attend its services, announcement of which will be given out from time to time. W. R. MOORE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1912.

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EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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REVELATION III. 20; XXII. 1, 2.

SISTER Margaret Stevens, of Daisy, Ark., some time since requested that we should give through the SIGNS some thoughts upon the words found in Revelation iii. 20, and upon Revelation xxii. first two verses. Our delay in responding has not been because of any indifference toward the request of our sister, for it is our sincere desire to respond to any request of our kindred in Christ when we can do so, but it has always been our feeling with regard to the book called Revelation that we understand but little of it. We have not doubted, and do not now doubt, that this book contains, in every portion of it, the plain, simple truth of the gospel, as well as do all other portions of the Bible, but much of this book is written in highly wrought figurative language, and many of the figures of speech used we have not understood. Many sincere and God-fearing men in the past have written their thoughts concerning the teaching of this book, and men whose spirituality we could not doubt, and who were much more wise than we ever have been, have differed widely in their views regarding many things in this book. If we ever, therefore, do undertake to write or speak of many things recorded here we feel to do so with care, and to tread softly along the paths of this wonderful book. Writers of a hundred or more years ago, nearly or quite all of them, regarded much of this book as revealing things concerning the future world of glory. Some have regarded it as containing a narrative of the history of the church, in the former prophecy down through all coming ages of time, winding up with a description of the heaven to come. Some have thought that the addresses to the seven churches of Asia, with which this book begins, are to be regarded as setting forth seven successive ages of the condition of the church until the end shall come. There have been objections to all these different views in our own mind, so that we have not been able to rest fully in any of them. But, on the other hand, we have no satisfactory understanding of many of these things, and cannot undertake to set forth or maintain any views opposite to those which we have named. But there are here and there in this book expressions which have seemed clear to us and of which we have at times felt glad to speak. We do not doubt that this book is full of simple gospel teaching. We do not doubt that it sets forth just that truth concerning the need of sinners, and the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and the hope of the world to come, that is set forth in all the sacred volume, so we feel like responding to the above request, and will endeavor to say a few words with regard to the Scriptures to which our attention is called. The first Scripture reads as follows: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Any one who will read this text and the connection will at once see

that it is addressed to the church at Laodicea; it is limited to the church. That church, like all other apostolic churches, was made up of those who had professed godliness and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. But this church had become worldly and self-satisfied through their prosperity in worldly gain. Worldly gain had not been accompanied with spiritual riches among them. Love, the best evidence of true spirituality, had grown cold, the cares of this world and its riches had choked the word among them, and the worst thing of all, they were blind to all this. With the worldly prosperity that had been theirs had come to them an inability to discern their poverty in that which belonged to Christ; they knew not that they were wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. They were in the state of which the apostle spake when he said to his brethren, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Now for all this the Lord sends them a message of rebuke, of exhortation and of warning. As our God did not forsake Israel, but sent them messages by the prophets, of warning and reproof, unto the end of their national life, so he does not forsake even his sleeping, slothful, lukewarm people, but stands at the door all the time and knocks. He knocks at the door of his churches in their wandering in many ways, sometimes it is by applications of his word to their hearts, sometimes by the administration of the ordinances of his house, sometimes by special judgments, sometimes by special mercies, sometimes by preaching and sometimes by the solemn warnings of his written word. In like manner the Lord sent to Israel prophets, wise men and scribes, continually warning them of their departures. Our God deals with the souls of his chosen, first effectually, in bringing them to know and to follow him, but he also deals with his churches in the order and doctrine of his house, which are needful to be maintained for his glory and the good of the churches. For want of a better term we will here speak of this as his outward dealing with them. It is not the door of the hearts of individual men at which he stands knocking, but at the door of the house, the church, where these living souls dwell. Thus he stood at the door of the church at Rome, at Corinth, at Ephesus and at Colosse, and thus he stands at the door of the churches all over the world wherever it may be that they are established. When Paul wrote to these above named churches with teaching, reproof, with warning and with solemn exhortation in all this writing, God was standing at the door of these churches, and knocking, and thus, in all faithful preaching now, if any church be cold and worldly, or if any other evils exist among them, and they are warned against these evils, in the sense of the text, our God is standing at the door and is knocking.

It is said, If any man hear my voice. If a guest comes to our door and knocks, and if we are asleep, it may well be that we shall not hear the knocking; if so, his knocking will pass unheeded and unanswered by us. If, however, we are like the servants in the parable, watching until the Master shall come, with our loins girded and our lights burning, then we shall hear his voice, and how gladly shall we welcome his coming. In this church there was a general indifference; it would seem that they were not actively loving and doing evil, but neither were they actively loving and doing the will of God. Our Lord represents himself as standing at the door and knocking to at-

tract attention, that the door may be opened to him, but would any man hear the knocking? Were any there listening and full of desire for his coming and his presence? If there were, these would hear his knocking. These also would know that it was not the knocking of a stranger. How often when a knock has been heard at the door some one has at once said, That is so and so; I know his knock. The living and wakeful among the Lord's people know the peculiar knocking of their blessed Lord. But this church had fallen, as it were, asleep, or were so engrossed with their riches and their boastfulness in their riches that they had no ear turned toward the door, and no sorrow at the absence of the Lord their Savior. Deplorable indeed was their state, yet even there, and in such a condition of the church there were some who mourned over the evils that existed, and longed for the coming of the blessed Lord again. Perhaps these might be feeling as did Elijah when he said, Lord, they have digged down thine altars, and stoned thy prophets, and I am left alone and they seek my life. Yet the Lord encouraged him by showing him that there were some others like himself, even seven thousand, who had not bowed the knee to Baal nor worshiped his image. So there might be, and no doubt there were, in this church some sorrowful souls who were distressed at the reproach of Zion, and these would be listening for the coming of the Lord and longing for his presence, and these would hear him when he knocked, and these would, O how gladly and eagerly, open the door that the Master might come in to them. In spite of the lukewarm state of the great body of the church, the blessed Lord still thought upon the sorrowing ones among them, and to them he would come and with them he would sit down at his table, and with them he would eat and drink as with his equals in perfect fellowship. Let us note that it is not said, I will eat with this lukewarm church, but with him who hears my knocking and opens to me. Perhaps there are to-day churches which have become rich and lukewarm. As a body they may be in just such a state as this church was, yet among them there may be one, two or three, or more, who sorrow over it all, and long for one of the days of the Son of man again. These are ready to hear when the Lord shall knock, and these welcome his coming, and with these still does the blessed Lord and Savior sit down and eat and drink, and they are indeed blessed. But the church as a body does not share this blessing with them.

Now as regards the second portion of this book, to which our attention is called, we desire to speak briefly, and set forth in as compact a manner as possible the substance of what appears to us to be its meaning.

The apostle was shown the river of the water of life. First, it was a river, not a stream or a rill, but a river. This sets forth its rich abundance. It is sufficient for all the needs, all the time and to all eternity, of all the inhabitants of the city, both for cleansing and for quenching thirst. It is pure, unlike the very best of earthly streams; some impurity is found in them all, and these impurities sometimes produce disease and death among those who drink the waters. This is true of all human theories and all Satanic teachings. The ways that seem right unto men are the ways of death, and the temptation of Satan against our first parents involved falsehoods and then death. But the water of life eternal is and must be sure; it would not be

eternal life otherwise. There is no death in this pure river; unlike all earthly waters it contains the pure doctrine of Christ, and one declares that a young man must cleanse his way by taking heed thereto according to the word of God, and we read elsewhere of the washing of water by the word. It is the water of life; it is not only pure, but it is clear as crystal. The thought is that of perfect clearness. A crystal is translucent and can reflect light. It has no light in itself any more than any other earthly substance, but it can and does reflect the light of the sun. So the light of the great Sun of Righteousness is reflected in this river of the water of life. The purpose, the power, the love, the mercy, the grace of God, are all shining forth, reflected in this river of the pure word of God, the water of life. Beside this, it proceeds out of the throne of God and the Lamb; its source, therefore, cannot fail, and so the river cannot fail. Omnipotent power is behind it, and mercy and love are among its sources. It is not only the throne of God, but also of the Lamb. The power and sweetness of all that belongs to our sovereign God and our blessed Redeemer enter into this river of the water of life.

Then the figure changes, and the tree of life appears. The river is the river of life, and the tree is the tree of life. The one is for cleansing and quenching of thirst, and the other is for nourishment, and reviving of life and strength. John had been given, as recorded in the last of the preceding chapter, to see the city of God. In that city were the throne and the river, and now the street. One street is seen, it is in the midst of the city, and in the midst of the street, and on either side of this river of life, is this tree. It is not "trees," but "tree." Jesus, who is the bread of life, is pointed out here, and here also is perfect fullness seen. The tree bears twelve manner of fruits. There can be no need befalling the inhabitants of that city that is not met by the fruit of this tree. The thought is that of perfection, completeness perhaps rather we ought to say, and as the fruit is suited to every need, so also do we find it at all times; it yields its fruit every month. Was there ever such a tree upon any earthly ground? As the river is unfailing, so also is the tree always ready to supply our wants. Is there ever any failure in our blessed Jesus? All that nourishes life always is to be found in him; twelve manner of fruits, and bearing fruit every month. Nothing is wasted upon this wonderful tree of life. "The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Not only is bread and water needed by the children of God, but sometimes healing of diseases. And what a disease is sin. The foul leprosy is but a faint picture of it. But even this foul disease has been healed. Sin has never been healed by any human medicament. Good works, good resolutions, prayers, penances, rituals, nothing, nothing of all these can heal the poor soul of his sin, but upon this tree is healing virtue. In Jesus is salvation from sin, and in him is the bread of heaven and the water of life. C.

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EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

GENESIS III. 22, 23.

(Continued from page 92.)

Now let us consider the circumstances of Adam's complicity with his wife in the transgression. How stood the case? Did not Adam tell the truth in saying that God gave him the woman to be with him as a companion and helpmeet for him? God had said, It is not good for man to be alone, I will make him a helpmeet for him. And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man made he a woman, and brought her unto the man; and Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." The design of God that she should be with him, as a helpmeet for him, and that through them to people this world, is too apparent to admit of contradiction, and the type with equal clearness applies to the spiritual Adam, and Jerusalem, which is above, and is free, and the mother of all the promised seed, designed to people the new heaven and new earth, wherein dwells righteousness. Shall we now indulge in vain speculation, and suppose Adam, being not deceived, had refused to follow Eve into the transgression? What then? Eve is involved in sin, she must be driven out of the garden alone and forbidden to eat of the tree of life; a separation final and everlasting must have followed. Adam in innocence could not go with her, Eve in transgression could not return to Adam. Suppose again, when the bride elect of Christ, beguiled by the old serpent, had fallen under the curse of the righteous law of God, the heavenly Bridegroom had resolved to let her go. An indissoluble union must then have been broken, a purpose of the immutable God must have failed, and the Bridegroom and the bride irrecoverably put asunder. Did Adam love his guilty bride? Did Jesus love his fallen and law-condemned people? Though Eve could not return to Adam, Adam could go to her, and such was the strength of his love, stronger than death, it was the only alternative. Rather than part he plunges with her into death, that the union may be perpetuated. And hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth. God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he hath loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Thus far, then, the figure bears in its application to Christ and his church. Truly, "He hates putting away." Once more. How was Adam involved in the transgression of Eve? Simply by receiving at the hand of his erring wife the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which we have taken to represent the law, and eating thereof, and by doing this came legally under the penalty of that law, and irrevocably doomed to die on that selfsame day, and do we not see the application of the figure to our divine Redeemer? He lived and reigned above the law that his people had transgressed, but to carry out the eternal purpose that, Where he is, there his church shall be also, he bowed his heavens and came down. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. He was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. At the hand of his church he receives the fruits of the tree, or law;

he who knew no sin is made sin for us, that we may be made the righteousness of God in him. His children being partakers of flesh and blood, he also likewise takes part of the same. His people are transgressors, he is voluntarily numbered with the transgressors, and the iniquities of all his people are laid on him. It pleased the Lord to bruise him. Partaking of the fruit of the law, he dies, but being in this so far superior to his type, he had power to lay down his life, and power to take it again. Adam the first could go no further than to involve himself in the condemnation under which his beguiled and deceived wife had fallen; he could share with her her fate, but had no power to redeem or to deliver her.

Fourth. We come now to that part of the subject on which our correspondent desired us to write: as stated in Genesis iii. 22, which we propose to consider in connection with the two succeeding verses of the same chapter.

1. We will offer a few thoughts on the import of the declaration of the Lord God in relation to the changed condition of man in consequence of having eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." The figure was now complete. Adam, who, according to the express purpose of his creation, was to be a type, likeness, figure or image of his Maker, of Christ, of him that was to come, of "one of us," had now attained to the perfection of that imagery, not only as the first Adam, the head and embodiment of his natural posterity, a perfect figure of the second Adam, who is the head and embodiment of the spiritual seed, in whom also was the life and substance of his bride, but now, in eating of the tree which prefigured the law, Adam, who knew no sin or evil before, is made sin for her. While in a state of innocency what evil could Adam know? But now, in receiving at the hand of his wife the fruit of the tree, the law, by which is the knowledge of sin, or of evil, the law being the ministration of death, he came to a knowledge of evil, and thus more perfectly the figure of Him that was to come; the figure of him who is holy, harmless, separate from sinners; of him who knew no sin, yet for the sake of his church became sin, by being made under the law, and by the assumption of all his people, who thus by following his bride in the transgression secured the purpose for which she was given to him, namely, to be with him. Thus the man became as one of us in that particular, that is, by his knowledge of good and evil, the type of him who should bear his people's sins in his own body on the tree. We cannot perceive that Adam's knowledge of good and evil made him like his Maker in any other sense than that of being the figure of him that was to come, in actually coming under the curse and penalty of the law, for even of good and evil his knowledge could not approach the infinite knowledge of the supreme God. The "One of us" we understand was and is the man who is the fellow of the Lord of hosts. (Zech. xiii. 7.)

2. Man's expulsion from the garden was a consequence resulting from his connection with the tree of knowledge of good and evil. "And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever." The evil which Adam knew, in consequence of eating of the tree of knowledge, was a pollution of his nature, and the sentence of mortality—death. "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt

surely die." This sentence placed Adam and his posterity beyond the reach of the tree of life, as Christ's coming under the law and bearing the sins of his people involved the necessity of his death in the same day, or dispensation, in which he was made of a woman, made under the law, and in fulfillment of this figure, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate, that is, without the gate of Jerusalem, which figuratively signifies the same as did the garden of Eden; and here perhaps the figure ends, for Adam could not redeem himself or bride. He had no power to rise from the dead or deliver himself, his bride or his posterity from the sentence of the law which consigned him to death. The tree of life in the midst of Eden, which was accessible to man as long as he remained in the garden, to agree with this whole cluster of figures, was natural life, for as long as he remained in innocence and abstained from the forbidden fruit of the law, the tree of life secured to him that life which he had, and all the comforts adapted to his condition as an innocent man, so that he required no other, and indeed was not capacitated for the appreciation of spiritual life; that capacity he could not have without being born again, for the Scripture declares that that Adam which was first was not spiritual, but natural. And again, "The natural man receiveth not of the things of the Spirit," &c. And, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Now the sentence of death being upon Adam, and all his race in him, demanded his expulsion from the garden in which was the tree of life. The reader will observe that though the tree of life in the garden represented the natural life which man then possessed, yet it was figurative of the tree of spiritual, immortal or eternal life, which is found only in the midst of the paradise of God.

3. Prohibited now from the tree of life, and condemned to die, we see man totally divested of all power to put forth his hand to take of the tree of life to shield himself from the execution of the sentence which had passed on him, and on all mankind in him, and from the hour in which he was driven out of the garden neither he nor any of his race have had power to perpetuate their natural lives one moment beyond the bounds which God has set. The days of man are as the days of an hireling, so that he cannot pass the bounds.

4. But viewing the tree of life, as figurative of that tree of spiritual life of which our Lord Jesus Christ is the root and offspring, we have one of the most clear and positive presentations of the total inability of man to raise himself from a state of condemnation and death, either by the law or the gospel. Not by the law, for he is condemned already by the law, and the wrath of God abides upon him; nor by the gospel, for he is driven out from the garden in which that tree is planted, and the way to it is kept by cherubim and a flaming sword, which turneth every way, meeting him at every possible point. How utterly hopeless are all the efforts of men to put forth their hand. The cherubim, or spirit of the holy law, watches every movement with untiring vigilence, and the flaming sword meets them at every turn. Nothing that the hand of man can perform, no offering that in their hand the sons of men can bring, can gain for them access to the tree of life. Nothing short of the way of holiness, the new and living way which God has consecrated for his people through the flesh of our Redeemer, can

open to any man the gates of salvation. Christ is the only and blessed Potentate, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light which no man hath seen, or can see, whom no man can approach unto. He is the Way, and the Truth, and Life; no man cometh unto the Father but by him. Nor is there any possible evasion of this truth. He that hath the Son of God hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life. The way of the tree of life is securely kept; no fowl knoweth it, the vulture's eye hath not seen it, nor hath the lion's whelp trodden it.

In connection with the foregoing it may be well to consider the destination of fallen man, as long as he shall remain on earth. "Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man," &c. "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life: thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field: in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." How changed is the condition of man! Expelled from the garden which God had planted and blessed, where every comfort grew spontaneously that he could possibly need or desire while in a state of innocence, but now having become a sinner, and fallen under the curse of the law which he had violated, the productions of this garden were no longer suited to his condition, and even the outer world or earth into which he was cast, was unsuited to his condition, until God for his sake had pronounced a curse upon it. "Cursed is the ground for thy sake." Now doomed to encounter the thorns and thistles, and in sweat and labor, in toil and sorrow was he doomed to seek his subsistence from the earth out of which he was taken, until his wearisome days of labor and sorrow should be accomplished, and then his earthly body should sink back into the bosom of the earth still groaning under the curse which for his sake was laid upon it. How strikingly in all this is the present condition of his fallen progeny portrayed! Fallen men doomed, as a righteous judgment of God, to seek and labor and sweat and toil to procure support and happiness from the earth, and forbidden and prohibited from putting forth his hands to take of the tree of life. Is it then surprising that the propensities of man are all drawn to the earth? Not only toiling for the support of his earthly body, but also for the comfort of his earthly mind. All his conceptions of a religious nature are also worldly, earthly, sensual and devilish, and as such they are always work-mongrel, and in his alienation from the tree of life he can conceive of no higher order of religion than that which he can attain to by his works, and works, too, which must perish and finally be consumed, when the earth and all the works thereof shall be burned up.

Lastly. As Eve and all the kindreds of the earth are embraced in the earthly Adam, and all die in him, so all the church and seed of Christ are quickened in the second Adam, who is the Lord from heaven. In Romans v. 14, we read that after the similitude of Adam's transgression he (Adam) is the figure of him that was to come, that he is in the similitude the figure of Christ, who has now

come. "But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence [not offences, but a single offence] of one many may be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded to many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence [or as in the margin, by one offence] death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. Therefore, as by the offence of one [or by one offence] judgment came upon all men to condemnation [that is, upon all the posterity of the one man]; even so by the righteousness of one, [or as rendered in the margin, by one righteousness] the free gift came upon all men [that is, all whom he represented] unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Thus in the transgression of the first Adam, whereby he involved all his natural posterity in sin, guilt, condemnation and death, the inspired apostle could see a similitude of redemption and justification to life of all the seed of Christ by his righteousness.

We have extended our reply to our correspondent to a great length, but venture to hope that we have not darkened counsel by words without knowledge. We have felt unwilling to give such views as we have on the single verse proposed, believing that we could make ourselves better understood by taking the general range of the whole subject. If our prolixity shall render what we have written dull and uninteresting to some, we hope that some at least may read it with profit and edification.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., April 1, 1865.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Cora J. Fallis Ransdell died at her home in Henry County, Ky., Nov. 29th, 1911. Sister Cora was born Sept. 11th, 1861, and was therefore in the 51st year of her age. She was married March 31st, 1881, and to that happy union were born four sons and three daughters. Our sister united with the Sulphur Fork Church, near Campbellsburg, Ky., in October, 1894, being baptized by Elder J. G. Eubanks, then pastor of the church. It is difficult for us to find language to express the blessed tie that bound her to the church, and the church to her. It has been truly said since her death, She was a pillar in the church, rather quiet and unassuming, yet faithful and active in all that pertains to the interest and welfare of the church. If she was not present to fill her place at the meetings the hindrance was beyond her control. She loved the blessed cause; she loved to meet and mingle with the dear saints and minister to them. Her life is a written book, to be read of all who knew her; its title page would be, Truth, Honor and Uprightness. I speak this to the glory and power of the grace of God that ruled in her heart. She was a devoted wife and mother. What a sad bereavement to all the dear family. She had been a sufferer for the past year, yet with a cheerful countenance bore all with wonderful patience, resigned to the will of God, committing all into God's care. She left a dear, devoted husband, our brother, Wm. Ransdell, four sons and two daughters, together with the church and many friends, who deeply mourn the loss of one so dear to all. One daughter preceded her to the grave.

I was absent in Canada at the time of her death, so the funeral services were deferred until my return.

ALSO,

Carrie Bell Liter, daughter of brother William F. and Cora Ransdell, was born March 10th, 1887, and died Dec. 16th, 1911. Sister Carrie united with the Sulphur Fork Church in September, 1909, and was united in marriage to Dora Liter, Oct. 5th, 1910. It was my precious privilege to baptize this dear one; I also officiated at her marriage. Like her dear mother, she found the church a home to her, where she loved to meet with her kindred in Christ and sing the songs of Zion. Sister Carrie in her quiet way had seemed to contest every inch of the ground she occupied, and there came a time when she was fully satisfied the Old School Baptists were the true Church, and came tremblingly asking a home with us, and in the short time spared to the church lived a faithful, devoted member. She was happily married, but O how short those happy months. Patient in suffering, with the bright and heavenly joys before her, she felt to commit her dear and last earthly friend into the care and keeping of her God who had done so much for her. She, like her mother, talked

of the beauties of heaven that were just beyond. Many were the blessed words that fell from their lips as loving testimony of living faith and dying grace. She also leaves a devoted husband, father, brother and one sister, with the church and many friends.

Short services were conducted at the grave, announcing that memorial services for both her and her mother would be held at Sulphur Fork on the regular meeting day, fourth Sunday in December. Elder Eubanks being present, preached the funeral sermon from Rev. xx. 6, much to the comfort of all lovers of truth and mourning ones, showing that such as have hope are partakers of this life in Christ, and have hope of a better resurrection.

ALSO,

Death again entered the home of this dear family and snatched another bright jewel, the last remaining daughter, **Mattie L. Ransdell,** who was born Oct. 15th, 1890, and died Jan. 27th, 1912. Thus in the space of a little less than two months three loved ones were taken from them. How hard it is amidst such sad bereavements to say, Lord, thy will be done. God alone can cause the spirit of reconciliation to rest upon them. Dear Mattie, as the rest, died in the full triumph of that faith that overcometh, that looks beyond the river of death and the grave. Since I have been serving Sulphur Fork Church I have been a frequent visitor at this dear home, and for some months past had observed fruits of God's gracious work manifest in her, and had full fellowship in her experience of grace. Some years ago she united with the Missionary Baptists, but later found it was not a home, that their faith and doctrine were not as hers. She kindly expressed her feelings to those she met, and let them know she loved the Old School Baptists and was of their faith. In December I went to see her, and she seemed very desirous of talking, but circumstances forbade. At our last meeting, fourth Sunday in January, she sent for me, and in her weakened state she tried to tell me all was well and she was going home. I left at 3 p. m., and in forty minutes she sweetly fell asleep in Jesus. She bore her sufferings patiently, and often spoke of God's goodness and mercy. O what a precious God-given faith to live and die by. Each of these dear ones died of tuberculosis. In all my ministry I have never witnessed a scene more sad. The father and two sons are left at the home, with two married brothers absent.

The neighbors and friends gathered at the home Jan. 28th. At her request the writer tried to speak words of comfort according to her faith, using as a text the words found in Malachi iii. 17: "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in the day that I make up my jewels." The body was then borne by loved ones to its last earthly resting-place, beside the mother and sisters who had gone before, in the cemetery near Campbellsburg. My heart goes out in deepest sympathy to each of the dear sorrowing ones.

P. W. SAWIN.

James E. Tapner died Jan. 19th, 1912, in Syracuse, N. Y., at the home of his son, B. F. Tapner. He was born in Chatham, county of Kent, England, in 1828, and was brought with the family to New York city when two years old. He was married to Miss Elizabeth Burgess, by Elder J. Smith, of Delphi, N. Y., in 1847, and was baptized by him over forty years ago, uniting with the Old School Baptist Church at that place. He was the last member of that church. He was a resident of Delphi Falls fifty-four years. His wife died Jan. 29th, 1907. Six sons and one daughter survive him. May the dear Lord be with and comfort all the dear mourning children, is my desire for Jesus' sake. Brother Tapner was clearly experienced in the things of God's grace, and a lover of sound doctrine. In brother Tapner I had a kind, loving brother in Christ, but God has called him hence.

Funeral and burial took place at Delphi Falls.

ALSO,

William Jenkins, son of Horace and Ann Jenkins, died Jan. 31st, 1912, in his 79th year. He was born in Roxbury, N. Y., and lived most of his life at or near Trout Creek, Delaware Co., N. Y. He was married to Miss Sarahetta Southard in 1851, and to them were born a son and a daughter. The son died several years ago, the daughter, sister McLaughlin, lives at Sidney Center, N. Y. Mr. Jenkins had been living with his son-in-law, Mr. McLaughlin, at Trout Creek and Sidney Center, since the death of sister Jenkins, his wife, which occurred several years ago. One sister is all of his father's family now living. He was a great sufferer at times for several months with bladder trouble, which was the cause of his death. His daughter and son-in-law kindly ministered to his needs as best they could while with them, and said that he was very patient and submissive to his lot. He received a hope in the salvation of God in 1855, but never united with the church, feeling his unworthiness was so great he was not given strength to manifest his sonship. He loved sound, clear Bible doctrine, no mixture would do for him. He leaves to mourn his absence one daughter, a son-in-law, two granddaughters, five great-grandchildren and a host of friends. God took him to his eternal home, and may he comfort all the mourning ones.

The writer was called to speak on the occasion of the funeral, Feb. 3rd, which was held in the New School Baptist meetinghouse at Trout Creek, which was nearly filled, after which his body was carried to the cemetery near the village and buried.

D. M. VAIL.

Mrs. Sarah Crook Calkins Pearce, daughter of George and Margaret Crook, was born in Fairfield County, Ohio, April 28th, 1829. While a child she, with her parents, moved to Hocking County, Ohio, near Logan, on a farm, where she grew to womanhood. At the age of nineteen years she was united in marriage to Benjamin Calkins. They soon afterward moved to Indiana, where they lived until the death of her husband, in 1858, leaving her with four children. She returned to Lancaster, and in 1863 was married to William B. Pearce, which union was blessed with three children. In 1890 she was again left a widow. She remained in Lancaster until death. In 1852 she united with the Predestinarian Baptist Church called Scotts Creek, afterward joining the Lancaster Church by letter, of which she was a worthy, faithful member at death. Few were better informed in the Scriptures, strong in the faith, uncompromising with error. None more than she enjoyed the company of the saints, nor the sweet and precious service of her Lord and Master. She died in the full triumph of living faith in her glorified Redeemer.

The funeral was conducted by the writer, who knew her to esteem and love her for the truth's sake. Her remains were laid away to await the coming of the Lord. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." LEWIS T. RUFFNER.

MILLERSPORT, Ohio.

Mrs. Eliza Etcher, our friend and neighbor, passed from this life Feb. 6th, 1912, at the home of her son-in-law, Matthew Ball, here in Leesburg, Va., aged 74 years. She had been in feeble health for a long time, and a few days before her death developed pneumonia. Several years ago she united with the New School Baptists, but her heart was not with them, so that she never attended their meetings, always attending the meetings of the Old School Baptists whenever it was possible to do so. She loved to hear their Elders preach, and thoroughly believed the doctrine advocated by them. Of late, not being situated so as to hear the preaching she loved, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES was a great comfort to her, and she had been a constant reader of that paper for many years. Right here I want to say that the editors of the SIGNS are at present very far from realizing how many souls they are comforting everywhere, and I truly desire that grace be given them to continue their work for a long time to come. For several hours before death came Mrs. Etcher was entirely unconscious, but before this, and while yet able to speak, the evidence she was enabled to give of her acceptance in the Beloved was truly wonderful. Space forbids me to go very much into detail, but among the things she said was: "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." She repeated the prayer taught by Jesus to his disciples, every word clear and distinct: "Our Father, which art in heaven," &c. Then she said: "O my God, have mercy on me, a poor sinner." Not long before consciousness left her she whispered: "Under the shadow of his wing;" and about the last she uttered was: "Now I lay me down to sleep; I pray the Lord my soul to keep." We feel to hope she is at rest, and that our loss is her eternal gain. Mrs. Etcher leaves to mourn her departure, two daughters and one son, with their families, beside one brother and one sister, and a host of other relatives and friends.

It was the request of Mrs. Etcher, made known before her death, that the writer of this notice be called upon to officiate at her funeral. I endeavored to follow out her request, using as a text 1 Cor. xv. 20–23. The last services were held from the home of her son-in-law Feb. 8th, 1912.

It is God's hand has wrought this in our midst, and may it please him to give resignation to his divine will to those who now are filled with mourning.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

LEESBURG, Va., Feb. 8, 1912.

John B. Jordan died Jan. 29th, 1912, at his home in Middletown, N. Y., aged 55 years. He was a son of Samuel M. and Ruth Ann (Comfort) Jordan. He was born and reared near Winterton, Sullivan Co., N. Y., and came to Middletown to reside twenty or more years ago. He was first married to Miss Ella H. Duryea, who died in May, 1886. He afterward was united in marriage with Miss Eva Butcher, who survives him, together with two sisters: Mrs. Oliver Corwin, of Middletown, N. Y., and Mrs. Henry Wollenhaupt, of Winterton, N. Y., and five nieces, daughters of Mrs. Corwin and Mrs. Moses Jordan. Mr. Jordan in faith and hope was an Old Baptist, though he never united with the church. He was a good, kind-hearted man, a friend to every one and every one was his friend, and the church loved him as one born of God.

The funeral services were largely attended, and the writer tried to speak to the glory of God in the salvation of sinners, with desire that the bereaved family be comforted. The interment was in Hillside Cemetery, Middletown, N. Y.

May comfort be ministered to the widow and all the family by Him who loved us and gave himself for us.

K.

William Thornton Myers was born in Walker Co., Ala., Feb. 15th, 1851, and came to Anderson Co., Texas, with his parents in 1853. He was married to Nancy Cook in 1872, who proved to be a helpmeet in every sense of the word. He joined Bethel Old School Baptist Church in October, 1873, and was ordained to the office of deacon in March, 1878, the presbytery consisting of Elders James Majors and

Ben Parker, together with deacons of Bethel Church of the regular predestinarian faith and order. He departed this life at his late residence, in Taylor Co., Texas, Dec. 11th, 1911. Brother Myers was a man of strong convictions, with the courage to assert and the ability to defend them, and a firm believer in the doctrine of election and predestination, which he loved so well. His house was a home for the Old School Baptists whenever they could visit him. His private life was blameless, every one called him a good man. He had taken and read the SIGNS for nearly forty years. He was a conscientious man, a loyal citizen, a devoted husband, an affectionate father and a kind friend. He often told the writer he had no righteousness to plead, but trusted alone in God's free, unmerited grace for time and eternity.

The writer, by request of his sorrowing family, tried to speak words of comfort to a large congregation of friends and neighbors, after which the body was laid to rest in the Merkel Cemetery to await the resurrection morn. Now, dear sister, sorrow not as others who have no hope, knowing that your loss is his eternal gain. J. D. HOPKINS.

ROSCOE, Texas.

Moses A. Welborn, our dear father, was called home Jan. 8th, 1912, to be with his Savior, whom he loved and trusted many years. He became a member of the Regular Baptist Church in 1865, and had been a subscriber of the SIGNS for over fifty years. He was born in Guilford County, N. C., June 18th, 1825. He leaves a widow and six children to mourn their loss: Mrs. States Miller and B. T. Welborn, of Dyersburg, Tenn., J. D., J. M. and Mrs. Mary Martin, of Owensville, Ind., and Mrs. James T. Harris, of Newbern, Tenn., with whom he lived.

INFORMATION WANTED.

If there are any Baptists of our faith and order here, or in Los Angeles, will they please drop me a card or come and see us? We can be found at The Cooper Apartment House, at the foot of Ashland Street, Room 11. If there are meetings in Los Angeles I hope some one will let me know, giving directions how to get there.

(MRS.) J. B. DAWSON.

OCEAN PARK, Cal., Feb. 11, 1912.

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Deborah Baker, Md., $1.00; Mrs. B. A. Downs, Ill., $5.00.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, will preach in our meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., the fourth Sunday in March (24th), 1912, at the usual hours. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us. L. B. FORD.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of southern California meets every third Sunday at 2 p. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

I find the postage on my book, "Day unto Day," to America is 9 pence (18 cents), and I thought it would be 6 pence, or at most 7 pence. I think on consideration, as the expense of publication has been very heavy, notwithstanding a most encouraging sale, I had better say I will send to any of your readers the half calf gilt edge edition for 5 shillings ($1.20), or the cloth edition for 4 shillings (96 cents) postage free.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 80. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1912. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE SONG OF DEBORAH AND BARAK.

(Judges v.)

THE history of the children of Israel while under the rule of Judges is of peculiar interest, and more especially so when we are favored to have some understanding of the spiritual meaning of the various incidents which make up that history, for there is no doubt that all the incidents related in the Old Testament, with all the songs that were sung, the prayers that are recorded and the prophetic declarations that were made, have some typical reference to gospel things. Among these judges was one woman, Deborah, a prophetess. "She dwelt under the palm tree of Deborah, between Ramah and Bethel in mount Ephraim; and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment." As was the case with most, if not all of the judges, she had a battle to fight. In every battle which the Lord commanded to be fought the enemies of the Lord would be overcome, and the land would have rest until the death of that judge; then invariably the children of Israel would do evil in the sight of the Lord, and he would strengthen their enemies against them and sell them into their enemies' hands. After the battle under Ehud the land had rest fourscore years, then they again did evil in the sight of the Lord, and he sold them into the hand of Jabin, king of Canaan, the captain of whose host was Sisera, and who had nine hundred chariots of iron. He mightily oppressed the children of Israel twenty years. Here was a battle to be fought of great spiritual significance, to the particulars of which I will merely allude. It cannot be that a woman should command an army in battle against the enemies of Israel, so Deborah "sent and called Barak, the son of Abinoam, and said unto him, Hath not the Lord God of Israel commanded, saying, Go and draw toward mount Tabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun? And I will draw unto thee, to the river Kishon, Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude; and I will deliver him into thine hand. And Barak said unto her, If thou wilt go with me, then I will go; but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go." So they went together and fought the battle, and "God subdued on

that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel. And the hand of the children of Israel prospered, and prevailed against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan."

It is the Lord who fights the battles. No matter how wise and courageous the judge may be under whose command Israel is fighting, it is not for his honor as a man, but we are made to see that it is the Lord who fights the battle, and to him alone is the honor. He may raise up Samson and make him prominent for physical strength and valor, or Gideon to show that numbers are nothing; the battle is always the Lord's. We hear nothing of Shamgar as a captain until he suddenly appears as a man of miraculous power and courage, killing six hundred men with an ox goad; we hear nothing of Barak as a captain of Israel until Deborah calls for him. We may see in Deborah some representation of the church. She calls herself "a mother in Israel." The church can do nothing only as Jesus leads and commands, and Jesus comes into observation only at the call of the church, and to supply her need, and to be a Leader and a Commander of the people.

"Then sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam, on that day, saying, Praise ye the Lord for the avenging of Israel, when the people willingly offered themselves." The desolate and oppressed condition of the people is well described by Deborah: "In the days of Shamgar the Son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were unoccupied, and the travelers walked through byways. The inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel, until that I, Deborah arose, that I arose a mother in Israel." The mother in Israel is looking to the villages, the churches, the little companies that love the name of the Lord. It was a time of sorrow and affliction, when the enemy surrounded them, and they had to go hiding themselves; not a weapon of defence within sight. "Was there a shield or spear seen among forty thousand in Israel?" When the call to war came the heart of Deborah warmed toward the governors of Israel that offered themselves willingly among the people. David thanked the Lord that he and all Israel gave willingly. In the places of drawing water, in the places where the Lord has appointed for his people to come together, where the archers cannot reach them, there they that sit in judgment and walk by the way, they who have been delivered from the noise and tumult of their enemies, are delighted and refreshed as they rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord toward the inhabitants of his villages in Israel. Then shall all the people of the Lord go down to the gates, signifying that they are delivered from fear, and are devoted to the praise of the Lord, for the gates of Zion are praise. In all this battle the Lord only appears as doing the work. "The Lord discomfited Sisera, and all his chariots, and all his host, with the edge of the sword, before Barak." It is the Lord who fought; it is the Lord who brought his help to Israel; it is the Lord who won the victory. And the angel of the Lord pronounced a bitter curse upon the inhabitants of Meroz, because they came not up to the help of the Lord against the mighty. It was, and is yet, the Lord's people who need help, and it was, and is yet, the Lord alone who brings the help; and Meroz was one of the villages whose inhabitants cared not for the Lord's help, which he had declared he would bring to his people, but despised his help, and were cursed, because they trusted in

themselves, and not in the Lord. "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man."

Now the Lord calls unto Deborah and Barak, saying, "Awake, awake, Deborah; awake, awake, utter a song: arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam." So the Lord says to the church under the law, "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion," and it is only by the hand of the Captain of the Lord's hosts that Zion can awake and sing. So it appears that in this battle and song of Deborah and Barak are presented in a figurative way some of the glorious things that are spoken of Zion, the church of the living God. The name Deborah signifies order, as the orderly working of a bee. In the church as presented in the Scriptures is seen perfect order. Barak means lightning, brightness, and Abinoam, the father of Barak, signifies father of graciousness, or pleasantness. I merely suggest this. I will also call attention to what is said of Barak, that the Lord made him to have dominion over the nobles among the people: "The Lord made me have dominion over the mighty."

In this song eight of the tribes of Israel are mentioned, and also Machis, the son of Manasseh, with some favorable mention of each, and of all Israel, as having offered themselves willingly. It seems that the care of the mother in Israel is thus manifested toward all the branches of the church under the gospel dispensation. We will now attend more particularly to what is said of Reuben, Judges v. 15, 16: "And the princes of Issachar were with Deborah; even Issachar, and also Barak: he was sent on foot into the valley. For the divisions of Reuben there were great thoughts of heart. Why abodest thou among the sheepfolds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks? For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart." What literal thing is referred to in the declaration that Barak was sent on foot into the valley in fighting that battle, we are not told, but its spiritual significance, I think, points to Jesus, who was sent into the valley of death to fight the battle in which death was destroyed and his people delivered from the bondage of sin and death. Now from the time of this battle of the Lord against Jabin, and this absolute destruction of Jabin, king of Canaan, we are looking at all things in a gospel light, and this gives place for the statement about the effect of the divisions of Reuben: great thoughts of heart. Then a question is asked why Reuben abode among the sheepfolds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks? and this cannot be answered without going back to the time of crossing over Jordan. Then the peculiar statement is again made, with the change of one word: "For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart." Here we may find the spiritual meaning of this expression, "the divisions of Reuben," which occurs twice in this song. When the children of Israel had come to Jordan and were about to cross over, the children of Reuben, the children of God, and the half tribe of Manasseh, asked of Moses that they might have their inheritance on this side of Jordan eastward, and not with the other tribes in the land of Canaan, for they saw that the land of Jazer and the land of Gilead was a place for cattle, and they had much cattle. They said to Moses, "We will build sheepfolds here for our cattle, and cities for our little ones; but we ourselves will go ready armed before the children of Israel, until we have brought them unto their place: and our little ones shall dwell in the fenced cities, because of the in-

habitants of the land. We will not return unto our houses, until the children of Israel have inherited every man his inheritance: for we will not inherit with them on yonder side Jordan, or forward; because our inheritance is fallen to us on this side Jordan eastward." And Moses granted their request. (Numbers xxxii.) Here we may find the deep spiritual meaning of this sentence twice repeated in this song: "The divisions of Reuben." Reuben stands for all who inherit on this side of Jordan. When they are fighting with their brethren on the other side of Jordan, against the common enemy, they are divided from their little ones and their cattle, and when they are home again with their little ones and cattle they are divided from their brethren on the other side. Even looking at it naturally we can see how this condition of the children of Reuben would give cause for great thoughts and questionings of heart. When fighting in the lead of the tribes, as they had promised to do, they would be anxious about those they had left at home, and would be having great thoughts about them, and as to their duty to be separated from them, and there would be great searchings of heart concerning their own sincerity and devotion in the cause; and when at home they would be restless, and questioning their right to be enjoying a peaceful life at home while there might be work they ought to do for their brethren in the field. But the especial force of this most striking figure is found in the experience of gospel characters. The children of God under the gospel dispensation experience what is meant by the divisions of Reuben. Not that some of the Lord's people are as those who stayed on this side of Jordan, while others are as those who lived on the other side, but that all partake at different times of the character and experience of both. It is after this gospel song is sung, in which the victory of the Captain of the Lord's people is celebrated, that the spiritual meaning of all these things in this song, and throughout the Old Testament, is brought to view. Now we see the divisions of Reuben manifested while we are in the flesh. Our earthly homes are here in the world, with all our worldly possessions; our cares and responsibilities are here, and all our earthly interests. But now there is an experience within us that draws our minds in a measure away from these worldly interests, and awakens our thoughts and desires to other interests apart from this world. We have now thoughts and yearnings toward another home and other possessions beyond mortal sight. Enemies now appear that we had never known of before. We now also learn that a great battle has been fought for us by the great Captain, in which we had some mystical part that we cannot fully understand. He who thus fought for us went forth to that battle and victory out of Seir, out of the enemy's land. Then the earth trembled, the heavens dropped, the mountains melted before him, and the stars in their courses fought against these enemies. The tribes of the Lord fought under this great Captain, and rejoiced to see the Lord come forth victorious, leading captivity captive. "So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord: but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might. And the land had rest forty years." The word "forty" may represent the gospel dispensation. Now the Lord's people are manifested by a spiritual birth, in which another life is given to them, and all spiritual things are theirs. Now their other home, on the other side of the river,

is brought to their view, not to their natural sight, nor to the sight or knowledge of any natural man, but to the view of faith. Now all the things brought to the view of this faith are attacked, denied, disputed and reviled by the enemies of the Lord, and by all natural understanding. By the Spirit of God those who have been given this faith are led to contend earnestly for the things thus revealed to them, and so to fight the good fight of faith. We have now this earthly home, and all our worldly interests and possessions and relationships, and these are sometimes so strong in their hold upon us that we can hardly see or apprehend anything beyond our mortal sight. But we have, even while in this earthly house, another home, "an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." This is only in our view when we are looking upon the things which are not seen; then we can understand that our conversation is in heaven, and our real and important interests and possessions and labor are in that home, and that the true life which we now live in the flesh, we live by this faith of the Son of God, which is given to us. Here we see and understand something of the divisions of Reuben. We have a sinful nature, and its tendency is to draw us earthward. If left unrestrained it would lead us toward worldly and sinful things. Because of this double existence, as it were, this living a life on the one side of Jordan and doing business of a spiritual kind on the other side, this fighting with and for our brethren over there and caring for our worldly interests and possessions here, we have great thoughts of heart. We think much about our condition, as having, in a sense, two homes, and wonder at times whether we are really honest and sincere in appearing to have our conversation in heaven, while we are so full of the world and worldly things. Then the question comes with searching power, Why are we abiding among the sheepfolds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks? This causes great searchings of heart. We search the depths of our being to see what our motives are; we wonder if the Shulamite, the queen of peace, presents in herself the experience of all of the Lord's people, when we see in her, as it were, the company of two armies. Yes, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other." Sometimes we have great thoughts of heart concerning this earthly home, on this side of Jordan, which our flesh does choose, and feel assured that we can cleanse it from all evil, so that we may live in it purely and contentedly, but we ever fail, and can only have real comfort in it when our victorious Captain appears again and makes us feel again by faith his cleansing power and grace. Then again we are among the saints and holy men of old, and are greatly rejoicing in their sweet and delightful company, and wonder, as we feel our hearts respond to the searching power of the Spirit, whether we can ever live contentedly again among our worldly possessions and with our flocks, and be thus at home in the body, while at the same time we are absent from the Lord. What a solemn time it is with us when these great thoughts and searchings of heart are moving and surging within us. One thing is sweet to know: that only the living children of God can have these two homes, these two kinds of business, and feel within themselves the contending of these two armies which are seen in the Shulamite, the queen of peace. How good it is that our spiritual Barak has led captivity captive,

so that never again can the battle be raised up successfully against us. From time to time we shall hear the threatenings of the enemy, and shall fear because of the tumult and the shoutings, but at the name of Jesus the enemy disappears and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, is felt again, and quiet is restored. The great thoughts and searchings of heart will continue, and will be, as they have heretofore always been, of great spiritual value, opening the way into the experience of the richest gospel blessings.

The above is written at the request of sister Florence Pultz, of Wheeling, West Virginia. It is submitted to her, and to the brethren, with a deep sense of the vastness of the subject and the feebleness of this effort to present it.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 9, 1912.

GALATIANS III. 23.

"BUT before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed."

The apostle here seems to be speaking of the time in the lives of the Jews when they were under the law of Moses and knew nothing of revealed faith in Jesus Christ, neither had they any knowledge of Christ; they, as the apostle says, were shut up unto the faith which should be revealed when Christ should come. Being shut up means that they were ignorant of that faith, for it had not yet been revealed, because Christ had not yet come. Paul in this chapter declares that unto Abraham and his seed were the promises made. And what were those promises thus made to Abraham? We would understand from the whole tenor of Paul's teaching in all his writings that the promises made to Abraham were that all of his seed should in the future, four hundred years, possess the land of Canaan. This was a promise to the seed of Abraham, hence they were called the children of promise, and the land of Canaan the land of promise, and as the natural descendants of Abraham were a typical people, and the land of Canaan a typical land, these things were set forth for our learning. First, the literal people or children of Abraham typified the children of God, the seed of Christ. Christ is our spiritual Abraham, and the family of Abraham, in Canaan, pointed to the family of Jesus Christ. These children of Abraham were promised Canaan for a home or country, and it was a gift to them. The apostle tells us that God gave this country to Abraham by promise, and then four hundred and thirty years afterward he gave them the law by Moses. But the promise was before the law, and the children of promise were before the law. They were six hundred thousand men when they came out of Egypt, and as yet had no law. Now here the apostle says, "The law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." Could that long promised inheritance in Canaan be disannulled by the law and made of no effect? Paul says, "God forbid," for, says he, "if the inheritance [Canaan] be of the law, it is no more of promise." But that inheritance was given by promise to Abraham, and not by the law. Now the apostle says to his brethren that they should quit serving the law since this faith has come. Before faith came they were under the law, kept under it, shut up unto the faith; in fact they had nothing but the law before Christ came. Paul declares it to have been our schoolmaster; it was all they had unto Christ.

But now since faith is come we are no longer under a schoolmaster, but are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. There are some comparisons to which I wish to call the minds of my readers, in this typical people. First and foremost, they were promised the land of Canaan, and the law of Moses could not disannul that promise. When Moses had led that typical people to the river Jordan, in his last address to them he told them that he had led them forty years in the wilderness, and that they had seen all the miracles that the Lord had wrought all the way from Egypt to Canaan, that they had been fed from heaven upon angels' food, and that their clothing had not worn out in all that time, nor their shoes from their feet. From this I understand that they still wore the same clothes in which they had left Egypt, which had lasted them unto Canaan, and yet with all these miracles before them Moses declared to them that the Lord had not given them eyes to see, nor hearts to understand. He declared that they were a highly favored people, that they had a rich inheritance promised them, yet that they were the most wicked of all people. One would think that such a people would not be permitted to receive this promised land, and if the law of Moses could have had any effect against the promise, they certainly would not have reached this country, but God gave it to Abraham by promise. In Deuteronomy, ninth chapter, Moses said that he took them to record that it was not because of any righteousness of their own, or the righteousness of their hearts, that they should inherit the land, but simply because of God's promise to them. This was all Moses could give as a reason for gaining this land of Canaan; it was the promise of God alone. Here we see a striking type of the wonderful truth concerning the children of God, the true Israel, as regards their eternal inheritance. The Israelites typified the children of God, and their inheritance, unmerited, typified the eternal inheritance of the children of grace. The unfitness of Abraham's children to inherit the land of Canaan is typical of the unfitness of the children of God in every way for their eternal inheritance. Moses told them that it was not because of any righteousness of their own that they should inherit the land, and Paul tells the children of grace that it is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but solely because of the mercy of God, that he hath saved us. The poor sinner says, I know that I have not done anything to entitle me to eternal life. Neither did the children of Israel do anything to inherit Canaan, but they received it just the same. But, says the poor soul, I have done everything to unfit me for eternal life. So did Israel do everything except that which was right. Then what did procure this blessing to Israel? The answer is, that the Lord promised all this to Abraham before he had a child, and four hundred years after those who were to inherit Canaan obtained it. Then, of course, it was all a settled fact before any of them had their being. Even so now is it with the children of grace; they were chosen in Christ unto their inheritance before the world began, as said Paul. It was not because of Israel's good works that they enjoyed the land of Canaan, for all their works were evil. Paul said to the children of grace, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," therefore,

the poor sin-sick soul may find some relief when he finds that neither under the first nor the second covenant is any inheritance obtained by works, but in both cases great sinners were made the recipients of these blessings. The apostle assures us that this is so, for he declares that when we were without strength Christ died for the ungodly, and that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us, and that while we were enemies to the cross he reconciled us to God by the death of his Son. It is true that the first manifestation of God's work in the heart is to show us what great sinners we are; he writes his law in our heart, and by the law is the knowledge of sin. Paul said he had not known sin but by the law, therefore when we are cast down with the weight of our sins it is an evidence that God has blessed us with a true knowledge of self. This knowledge is very beneficial, it shows a poor sinner the truth that there is nothing about him but sin, and that sin is all he has to offer, and puts him in condition to realize what he has perhaps been told or has read before, but which he could not apply to himself, and that is, the truth that Christ came to save sinners. One would think from the way believers are troubled by their sins that they thought Christ came to save the righteous, and we seem at times to think so, from the way we cry for mercy. But giving us a knowledge of our sins is preparing us to realize that Christ came to call sinners to repentance. If then we are repenting, it is because we have been called thereto. But after faith is come we are no longer under the law. Yet how natural it is for us to flee to the law and to try in some way to justify ourselves by it, and in some way fit ourselves, or make ourselves presentable before God. We think because we see so much sin about ourselves that we must get rid of some of it, or possess some righteousness, in order to present ourselves before God. I say this seems natural, and it is natural for us to do so. We are continually forgetting, day by day, that it is not by works of righteousness which we have done. We think that surely we ought to have some fruit that is presentable. Well, all the fruit that is presentable is the desire for righteousness and hatred of self. The only one who has this fruit is the sin-sick soul. One may ask, Why does this qualify? The answer is, that Christ said, The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But, says one, does this daily grieving about our sins furnish the fruits of righteousness? It certainly does. We can know the children of God only when we see them abhorring themselves and declaring that they feel unfit to mingle with the people of God. This is the greatest evidence that I know of. If one who is thus cast down were to hear another boasting of his good works, that one would doubt much that the other was a child of God. While they cannot see any evidence in their own sinful feelings of being a child, yet at the same time, if they should hear another pleading his sinfulness and unworthiness, would be drawn toward that one, and feel sure that such a person certainly had some knowledge of the way in which the Lord brings his children. Such as these are no longer under the former schoolmaster. I am glad it is written that Israel, though so wicked, received the promised inheritance, for had none obtained that land of Canaan save such as had kept the commandments then not one would have entered there, for none had kept the commandments; and if none inherit eternal life save such as keep the commandments

of God, then none would ever inherit that life. If we could always keep before us when troubled by sin that none are troubled by their sins save God's humble children, and if we could keep before us the fact that none but God's saved children ever grieve because of sin, and none save them ever desire righteousness, we should not be troubled so much. Sin will always be found within us, and this causes us to hunger more and more after righteousness. We might get along more cheerfully if we could keep before us that all the sins of God's children were laid upon Christ, and that Christ's righteousness is put upon his children. Then, when we are trying to work out some righteousness of our own let us remember that the righteousness of Christ which is put upon his people, is all the righteousness that our Father will accept. Because of this Paul said that he did not want to be found having his own righteousness, which was of the law, but he wanted to be found in the righteousness of Christ. Abraham believed God, and that was counted to him for righteousness, and this was written not for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him, but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus from the dead. I suppose that as long as we are in the flesh we shall be sorrowing because of our sins, and trying to live better. Well, when one is sorrowing for sin this is a good work; it is the effect of the Spirit, and causes us to love all of God's people.

NEWTON PETERS.

LAKELAND, Florida, Feb. 4, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I will write you a few lines to say that I have often thought of you since we were together at the Licking Association in east Kentucky. O the many pleasant hours I had with you and dear brother P. W. Sawin, and others. Words are inadequate to express my joy. I had thought to write to you many times since, but a deep sense of my unworthiness has kept me from doing so, but, dear brother, since reading your reply to Fannie Clanton, of Texas, I feel bound to address you, and say to you, God bless you for contending for that most holy faith which was once delivered unto the saints. O that men would praise the Lord for his wonderful works to the children of men.

Dear brother, the poor child says she hopes you will not think hard of her. All would say, The Lord have mercy and pity upon all inquiring ones. She, like some others in this world, has overlooked the most important fact surely, viz., that she was brought into this sin-cursed world without her will having been previously consulted, delivered unto the bondage of corruption and an heir of all that belonged to her earthly father, hence subject to the law of sin and death, while no previous arrangement was made by earthly power to get her out of this condition. Now, poor child, what can you do for yourself, or for those with whom you appear to sympathize? It is plain to be seen that if our standing had been in the first Adam only, all would have been lost, but God was wise and merciful, and chose his people in Christ; and as we are heirs of our earthly father by birth, so are we heirs of our heavenly Father by spiritual birth. We inherited sin by our earthly father (Adam) and we inherit righteousness by our heavenly Father. It is true that the word "world" is often mentioned in the Scriptures. In Revelation xiii. 3, it is said, "All the world wondered after the beast," and if "all" there means all men

in the world, then our friend is one of the number. But let us rightly divide the word of truth. God did not make any provision for the heirs of the first Adam, but he did make provision for every one of his own heirs, but their inheritance is not of this world, it is reserved in heaven for all who are kept by his power through faith unto salvation. Dearly beloved saints, if we were not kept by the power of God we would use all the powers that we possess in working out our own destruction, for there is not a just man on the earth that does good and sins not, and if our God did suffer us to have our own way, where would we all land? No, our God is too wise for that; he leads us about and instructs us and keeps us as the apple of his eye. O that all people could see that God is just and right in all he does. I well remember that I at one time believed just as does our friend, Fannie Clanton, but, God be thanked, I have been made to see and understand that God's work is perfect, and that the essential preparations were all made before we poor, worthless mortals came into this world, and in the mind and purpose of God they were all chosen in Christ while as yet there was none of them. Dear child, remember that our God has said, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise," and remember that God's people are a poor and afflicted people, and that they are made to trust in the Lord; they are strangers in a strange land, waiting and groaning within themselves, "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Then let us not judge our God, and say, What doest thou? But let us say, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." How can we say, Why hast thou made me thus? Remember Christ is the head over all things to the church, which is his body, and we are members of that body, bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. Dear children, you are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. I would say to all who seem to question God's authority and immutability, Remember that it is God who makes his children his heirs, and remember that it is Christ who separates them from the world. Our dear Lord said, They are not of the world, therefore the world hates them. Remember it is Christ who separates one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. A sheep is not a goat, and never can be, and never was. Jesus said, I lay down my life for the sheep.

Yes, election is taught in the Bible. Peter says, "According to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit," and belief of the truth, and they are preserved in Jesus Christ and called. Yes, they are called to be saints, and that call is an holy calling. "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." May God bless all the household of faith.

Your unworthy servant,

C. K. HAINES.

MASSEY, Va., Jan. 23, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—Will you give a little space in the SIGNS, our good, old well fraught messenger, for a few lines from the pen of this poor old soldier of the cross, that he may inform his many friends, brethren and acquaintances, which he made many years ago, when he used

to attend the Baltimore, Delaware, Delaware River, Warwick and Chemung Associations, that he still lives, and is still performing the labors of forty-three years continuance, and serving the same churches, four in number, no one of them having been dropped out, having traveled by private conveyance about ninety-three thousand miles direct to and from appointments, having worn out four fine horses, now traveling by rail and steamboat and keeping up my appointments promptly, unless storm or something else of the kind prevents? I have just passed my eighty-first milepost, feeling only a little of the infirmities of age. When I arrived at the eighty-first stage, the little church and congregation at Snowhill surprised me with a present of sixty dollars in gold, which I do prize very highly, at the same time feeling to wonder, yet I know that there is a cause for this; that cause I would like to fully realize. The churches are all kind and thoughtful for my needs, for which I feel very thankful. It looks like a miracle with the little ability and the shallow gift that I have, if indeed a gift has been committed to me at all, that it could be used for more than forty-three years in the same places and before the same people, and still retain its gathering, comforting and establishing power. This gives me some hope that he who is the Fountainhead of all gospel truth supplies this poor vessel with just such a travel of mind and soul as he also brings his people through. As in water face answers to face, so does the heart of man to man. It must be that the good Lord supplies his servants with an experience which embraces such variety that it will reach his little children in every variety of condition in life, and so it is both old and new, and yet always fresh, for it all comes out of the heart, and not merely out of the brains or books. The message never stays in the heart until it grows stale, as would be the case if it were on paper. In the heart it is constantly on the flow, bringing forth the doctrine of salvation by grace from various scriptural standpoints. This encourages this poor, weak vessel, who is nothing in and of himself, to hope that the dear Lord has been his supply for forty-seven years. Now at this time he feels that the little flocks before whom he has been going in and out all this time have a greater feeling of nearness and are dearer to-day than even years ago. How it does cheer my heart and enliven my whole being to see and feel that it is so. If I only could say in truth, as Paul did when he came to this stage, I have shunned not to declare unto you all the counsel of God. I sometimes feel that I have rambled about all over the Bible, and have talked about it as best I could, and now what shall I do about it? Sometimes while on my bed at night, or when walking the street, a new line of thought will spring up in my mind from some Scripture I had thought was exhausted. In this way I have been supplied and kept going all these years. I sometimes think I do not speak with the same youthful vim that I used to, but I have to leave that with the brethren. O I cannot be thankful enough to him who keepeth Zion, and who never slumbers nor sleeps, to think that the churches composing the Salisbury Association, and the association as a body, have enjoyed such undisturbed peace and sweet fellowship for more than threescore years; that is as far back as I have knowledge. The apostle said to the brethren where he had labored, that after his departure grievous wolves would

creep in, not sparing the flock. I do not want to think this of the churches here; it would be more than I could bear. One dear little sister at the December meeting, when she shook my hand, looked into my face and said, "I was looking to see whether I could see that you had failed any." She knew that failure must come, and feared to see it.

But I will not bother you to publish any more of this. I would be glad to have a word from any of my friends and acquaintances from a distance.

Your brother,

T. M. POULSON.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Jan. 25, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I will endeavor to pen a few thoughts to-night in order to express my hearty approval of the manner in which the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is conducted. It reflects much credit upon its editors and publishers, and shows that much care and pains are exercised in preparing it for distribution among those to whom the cause is so dear. Through the kindness of brother McConnell and sister Beard I have read quite a number of the SIGNS, and am very glad to see so many of God's dear children using its columns as a medium through which to speak to each other. Many of them write such good letters, and I have been comforted, strengthened and encouraged more than once while following their pens. Sometimes I think it is wonderful that from all parts of the world should come this blessed truth: "Salvation is of the Lord." They may not know each other naturally, but when one comes declaring God's power, making mention of his righteousness, and his alone, and ascribing all honor and praise to him, then those who have been shown that by nature they were aliens to God and strangers to his saving grace, that their own heart was as a cage of unclean birds and their so-called righteousness as filthy rags in the sight of the just and holy God, and were made to beg for mercy, realizing that if dealt with according to the law they would be forever separated from his presence, all such I say, it matters not that seas may lie between them, can but feel drawn to each other, and their hearts go out in fellowship one for the other. So then it is not a wonder that they should all write the same thing, for in this school of grace all are taught by that one great Teacher that he is the Lord who has lead them out of the wilderness of sin; he it is who has made rough ways smooth and crooked things straight. The Lord, who hath declared, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people," is his name. He hath loved them with an everlasting love, and it is by his loving-kindness that he draws and brings them to know him, the giver of every good and perfect gift. He says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." Again, Christ said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." What a glorious plan is the Lord's plan, and how secure his people are. None is able to pluck them out of his hand, for he is greater than all.

Dear brother, before I close this permit me to say something in connection with our meetings here. I will mention the one last Sunday in particular, for I was given to feel that heaven had come down my soul to greet, and glory crowned the mercy-seat. I had been traveling in the low grounds of sorrow, in many doubts and fears, feeling surely there could be no one like me, but our beloved pastor

came to me in his preaching and described the way so clearly that I was made to feel he is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. I could not refrain from shedding tears of joy while speaking to him about it after preaching. I was made to know that he had traveled the same road and had seen and felt the same things. I was reminded of the certain man that went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves, feeling as I did to be stripped of everything, and knowing that God's all-piercing eye knew me every whit, and I felt to be in a dying condition, but when he (the good Samaritan) came along and poured in the oil of gladness, dressing my wounds with the balm of Gilead, and declaring that Jesus had won the victory, I was enabled to rejoice with unspeakable joy and exclaim, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." It was communion day, and it seemed to me that each and every one was given to realize the solemnity with which this ordinance especially should be partaken of; all of His ordinances should be kept sacred and performed in a solemn way. Our dear Elder's face was a key to his heart, and spoke words that could not be uttered. This is a lovely church, and the members all seem to esteem very highly the gift the Lord has graciously given to go in and out before them and declare to them that their warfare is accomplished, the debt has been paid, and that our Lord has risen as he said, and ever liveth to make intercession for his people. What a lovely sight to see Old Baptists esteeming each other better than themselves. Dear brethren and sisters, let this continue among you. Encourage your pastor by filling your seats whenever possible, thereby proving that we were glad when they said unto us, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Talk and write about things that make for peace. I admire this very much in the writers of the SIGNS. Surely there are many mansions of joy and peace in the Lord's house, the church. These are all the fruits of the Spirit, and God forbid that we should attempt to take any of the praise to ourselves. Verily the heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?

Brother Ker, I have written more than I expected. My desire is to bring no new doctrine, but I hope my desire is to encourage God's dear children, and praise him for the different gifts manifested in the flesh. I am an unworthy and unprofitable member, but as our venerable Elder and brother Durand said while here a short while ago, when a witness tells what we have seen and felt we know he is a true witness, and sometimes I like to write about such things. Do as you deem best with this.

Your brother in a precious hope,

R. LESTER DODSON.

DETROIT, Mich., Feb. 21, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—I herewith inclose bits of letters written me over a period of nearly fifteen years, by my dear, departed sister in the flesh, Mrs. Katie Black McLarty. They have been reread many times, and have always given me comfort. Lately a desire has been with me to have them published in our much beloved SIGNS, if agreeable to your judgment in the matter. I believe numbers in the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada who knew and loved her well will enjoy her thoughts penned years ago. She passed to her eternal rest March, 1906.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) FLO BLACK MACFARLANE.

St. Thomas, Ontario, July 30, 1897.

Dear Sister Flo:—I am thinking of you and the way the Lord has led you, but it is with fear and trembling that I speak or write on spiritual things; I am afraid I shall say something wrong, that will bring reproach upon the cause I hope I love. I have been very comfortable in my mind since you left. O how I rejoice with you that the blessed Lord gave you strength to follow him in his commandments. How lovely they are to all his poor, weak children. For years I thought them too sacred for such a sinner as I. I do hope you find the rest you found nowhere else. We are told in the blessed word to present soul and body, our reasonable service. I feel very unworthy of a place among such good people. I thought while resting (have been busy all the morning), O that I were a widow indeed, and trusting in the Lord with a thankful heart for all his kindness to me. I will inclose a nice letter from R. Scates; you will see it explains itself. He speaks about the Elders, and how he enjoyed hearing them. Well, I must say I have been with them, too, in my mind most of the time since, but O we must go past the watchman to find Him whom our soul loveth.

With much love, KATIE.

St. Thomas, Ontario.

Dear Flo:—Your letter received and read with pleasure some time ago; it should have been answered before this, but I have been busy since returning from the meeting. I was sorry you were not there, we had such lovely sermons; one by Elder Vail, from Job, where he sat in the ashes, and was covered with boils from the crown of his head, and took the potsherd to scrape himself withal, but still the corruption would come out again; just like our trying to make ourselves better. It was grand to sit and hear such beautiful truths proclaimed by God's servants. Elder Eubanks' sermon was just as good, on Ruth, Naomi and Orpah; such encouragement to us poor sinners to hear those good, dear men of God complain of their shortcomings, and give us the marks of the children of promise. We never appreciate our blessings as we should. We are poor, sinful creatures, and no one can feel it more than myself; at times I fear I will be lost after all I have professed, but if I perish, it will be at the foot of the cross. I often go back to our lovely meeting in June, and think what a time of rejoicing we had, and how thankful, my doubly dear sister, I am that the good Lord gave you strength to follow in the footsteps of your and my Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, who never slumbers nor sleeps.

Your sister in hope, KATIE.

St. Thomas, Ontario, Feb. 20, 1902.

Dear Sister Flo:—I was thinking of you this morning, and of some precious things I heard at our good meeting. How frail, weak and sinful we are, and cannot do the things we would. I have been blessed with a firmer hope in my crucified Redeemer's finished work for a poor, unworthy worm of the dust, and the good Lord has given me the spirit of prayer in humble contrition and lowliness of heart, giving God all the praise, honor, power and glory. Dear sister, we had a lovely meeting, and how I did wish you were there to hear those dear Elders tell of our precious Savior and his finished work for his own peculiar people. Elder Chick I never saw before; to meet him is to love him, and he preached very plainly. I thought I was all right, but doubts and fears are my portion. I am the worst of

sinners, but am thankful for the Lord's mercy to me. The last sermon on Monday, the last day of the feast (for it was a feast to me, if I am not mistaken), Elder Chick took his text in John's gospel, where John the Baptist said of Christ, He must increase, but I must decrease. I think I can feel how little and humble we should be. I cannot see for tears running down my face, but cannot tell how long this frame of mind will last. Three came before the church to tell what great things the Lord had done for them, and said very little, but were received, and the church was in tears.

With love, KATIE.

ST. THOMAS, Ontario.

MY DEAR SISTER:—This Sunday morning I will try and write something to you, and am ashamed that I have not written before, but one thing or another came up, so do not think I have forgotten you. More than once a day I have been talking to you, and asking the dear Lord to be very near you, and if it were his will, to grant you more bodily strength and feed your soul with the bread of eternal life. We are told in his word that it is through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom. I know for myself that nothing but trouble will keep me where I ought to be. I have been awfully tried the last two months; I did not hear from Angus (a son who had gone to work on the M. C. R. R.) and one day last week got a letter stating he was well and working. O my dear sister in the flesh, and I hope in the Spirit, how unworthy I felt, and said in my mind, It is enough. The dear Lord is so good to me, a poor, miserable sinner, forgetting all his favors to me these many years of my widowhood. I am sorry to hear you are so poorly, and so far away, but ask the dear Lord for patience to persevere to the end, for he has promised a crown of life. I have felt much of the presence of Jesus this while back, if not deceived, but I tremble for fear I am deceived. I am much the same; my head is better then worse every few days.

With love, KATIE.

ST. THOMAS, Ontario, Nov. 1, 1902.

MY DEAR FLO:—I feel ashamed not to have written before this, but have been writing to you ever since the meeting. O if I could only talk of spiritual things, instead of the foolishness of this vain world. We had a lovely meeting, everything so peaceful; I enjoyed the preaching, and how I did wish you were there. Elder Chick is lovely, but any of them are good enough for me, a poor, miserable sinner, who cannot do one good thing. I have felt better in my mind since the last meeting; I have had the spirit of prayer, if not deceived, and every now and then I have seen Jesus, and have been favored to look back over twenty years, when, if not deceived, I saw Jesus with outstretched arms, saying, I paid the debt for you, and cried, It is finished. O that the dear Lord would remember us with the love that he bears to his own children, poor and unworthy as we feel ourselves; but take courage, Jesus came not to call the righteous, but sinners such as we feel to be. We are not left alone, it is God who works in us. The thought struck me the other day, O how I love Elder Durand, he seems almost perfect in my mind, and if I could only be like him; then I thought, He is in the flesh, too, and likely has trouble. The Lord has promised never to leave nor forsake us.

Now, my dear sister, my heart is full, my eyes are streaming. I hope the dear

Lord will look in pity on my dear children in his own time and way. Pray for me. All join in love to both.

KATIE.

WEST LONDON, Ont., Jan. 9, 1912.

ELDER KER—BELOVED PASTOR:—Inclosed find a letter from brother Kerr, of Iona. I have much enjoyed reading it, and would like to see it in the dear SIGNS for the comfort of other brethren and sisters. I did not get brother Kerr's consent, but the letter is mine.

Wishing you and sister Ker a happy and prosperous new year, your sister, I hope,

(MRS.) FLORA J. SINCLAIR.

IONA STATION, Ont., Jan. 3, 1912.

MRS. JOHN SINCLAIR—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—If such an unworthy one as I may thus address you. I desire to reply to your kind and welcome letter, which came duly to hand, and which should have been answered sooner. The time has gone by so quickly that I was not aware until I looked at your letter this morning that it had been written so long. It is almost needless to say that I was not looking for a letter from you, but I am very glad indeed to know that you have been thinking about me, especially during my sickness, and I sincerely appreciate your kind references to my wife, as well as to myself, and while I do not wonder at you for expressing regard for my wife, I fail to see why you should feel drawn toward me, for, if I am not greatly deceived, I have ever since I became a member of the church felt that if I really am one of the favored number who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world I am surely the weakest and least of them all. If I could feel as satisfied with myself as I am that you are one of those chosen in Christ, I would, it seems to me, have rest. It seems easy to recognize in your letter the cries of a living child, but for myself I have to say that I feel so dead I cannot cry. Your speaking about love to the brethren seemed to bring to my mind the question put by the dear Savior to Peter: "Lovest thou me?" Peter answered, "Thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." I was made to wonder what I would do or say were the same question put to me. I am so harassed with the temptation to believe I am not what I have professed to be, so that I often feel to say with the poet:

> "'Tis seldom I can ever see
> Myself as I would wish to be;
> What I desire, I can't attain,
> From what I hate I can't refrain.
> So far from God I seem to lie,
> Which makes me often weep and cry;
> I fear at last that I shall fall,
> For if a saint, the least of all."

The dear Savior said he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. I am glad he did not say he came to call the good people, those who believe they can do good or become good whenever they feel so disposed, as then I would surely be left, for I feel there is nothing in me to merit esteem, or give the Creator delight." Although our lives seem to be made up of shortcomings and failures, yet our hope is in One who never fails, but who doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? Although I travel much in the dark, spiritually, yet in my sickness I felt no particular realization of a desire to get better, but, seemingly at least, a feeling of resignation to the will of Him who rules all things after the counsel of his own will, and hope that if it should be his will to

restore me to health that it might be to his honor and glory. After I was able to sit up some I felt a desire to read the book of Job, and while reading it I remembered having in the house a book entitled, "The Trials of Job," written by Elder Durand, in the perusal of which I found much pleasure and comfort to my poor soul, and I feel sure, dear sister, if you have never read it you would find comforting things, for I feel you are one of the Lord's dear and tried ones, and I hope you may at all times be enabled to look to him who is the author and finisher of your faith, and that you may be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

With regard to my health, about which you so kindly inquired, I have to say that I have been improving quite satisfactorily for a couple of weeks. The condition of my heart, as well as my cough, both of which were bad, has improved so much that I am able to take a walk outside occasionally, for which I have much reason to be thankful to a kind Providence. My wife is in her usual health, for which I am, if possible, more than thankful, for I need her care and attention. How suddenly dear brother Case was called to his eternal rest. Sister Case will feel her loss sorely, but I hope she may realize that He who has promised to be a husband to the widow still watches and cares for her.

I was much pleased with Elder Chick's New Year's Greeting in the SIGNS of January 1st, this year. How well he knows the road the christian travels; the waymarks are familiar to him. I did not get out to hear Elder Slauson when he was in Dunwich. Your brother-in-law, Duncan McGillies, came to see me on Saturday evening last, and stayed over night and went to the meeting with our folks on Sunday. He had been to see Peter Campbell, in St. Thomas, and stopped off here on his way back. We were all glad to see him and have him with us over night. Peter Campbell is some better, they think. Angus Elliott spent Christmas and New Year's with us, but left yesterday for the west again.

I hope you will forgive me for trespassing upon your patience with such a long, rambling letter, which I fear will appear like child's talk to you. I feel to be so ignorant in spiritual things that I am fearful about attempting to speak or write about them. May the dear Lord grant us all sustaining grace for all our times of need, and bring us off more than conquerors for his own name's sake, is the desire of the weakest of the flock, if one at all. My wife joins in kind regards and best wishes for the welfare of yourself and family.

Hoping to hear from you again some time, I am, I hope, your brother in the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ,

J. T. KERR.

JOHN XI. 27.

"SHE saith unto him, Yea, Lord; I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world."

What a blessing to be a believer in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. There is a great deal said about Mary, and justly, too, but Martha seems also to have been as firm a believer, and as strong in the faith as Mary. Whether it was the same Mary who sat at Jesus' feet and heard his gracious words, that washed his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head, and who brought the alabaster box of ointment, very precious, and poured it upon the Savior's head, anointing his body for its burial, and of whom it was said that

wherever this gospel was preached this should be told of her for a memorial, I will not say, but all these acts were commendable, and proved that the grace of God and his love dwelt in her heart. But Martha was fully persuaded that this was the Christ; her belief in this was wrought in her heart by the Spirit of God, for it is the work of God that any one of the sons and daughters of Adam believes in Jesus. "They shall all be taught of God." "Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Surely it is worth more than anything else in this world, worth more than the Indies of gold, to have a good hope through grace that we have an interest in the perfect and finished work of salvation, which Jesus wrought for his people when he forever put away their sins by the sacrifice of himself, offering himself without spot unto God upon Calvary's cross. Thus he forever sealed the pardon and the salvation of all whom the Father had given him in the covenant of grace, ordered in all things and sure to every heir of immortal glory when they shall be called to leave this mortal existence. Although tribulation is the lot of God's elect, there is, as the poet says, something secret that sweetens all. Our saddest hours we prize more than all the worldlings' days of mirth; their joys are fleeting, but ours shall never end. "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Our light affliction will soon be over, and our toils and trials will seem as nothing when we get to the end of the way. Jesus preached his own everlasting gospel. Now Jesus loved Mary and Martha and Lazarus, and so he said to Martha, "I am the resurrection, and the life," and although she may not have understood all the deep mysteries of the kingdom of the Lord, she confessed, "I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world," and as Jesus was manifested to destroy the works of the devil, he manifested his power over death, by calling Lazarus from the dead and proclaiming the glorious truth, "I am the resurrection, and the life." For "the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." As the word of God is true, and his promise sure, the people of God are assured that all is well, since willed by their blessed Lord. The psalmist David said, Thou understandest my thought afar off, and there is not a word in my tongue but thou knowest it. "Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising," and with all this varied experience he exclaims, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." So we are blessed when with childlike faith we can say, All is well, since willed by thee. As we therefore see in part and know in part, and see as through a glass darkly, we are to receive those who are weak in the faith, but not to doubtful disputations. If we do not understand alike all the deep points of doctrine, we are to be patient with each other until the Lord opens our understanding, then there will be fellowship and mutual comfort. Martha said, "I believe that thou art the Christ." The Ethiopian eunuch said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and immediately desired to be baptized. So it is said, By their fruits ye shall know them. "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" Men of ordinary common sense will go to the vine for grapes. Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." So all good from him proceeds, and we have no life in us except we abide in the Vine.

Yours in hope,

WM. F. SLOAN.

LEXINGTON, Ky., Dec. 12, 1911.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1912.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

2 KINGS XIII. 21.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Will you please give your views through the SIGNS upon the Scripture found in 2 Kings xiii. 21? It reads as follows: "And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band of men; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet."

Your sister, J. D. LAKE.

HURRICANE, W. Va., Jan. 2, 1912.

In reply to this request we will say that it appears to us that the chief thing presented here is this, viz., that the power of God was made wonderfully manifest in the raising up of this dead man to life again, even as that power was made manifest upon other occasions recorded in the Scriptures, both of the Old and of the New Testaments, and that here the Lord honored his servant Elisha, who had died but a little before, giving testimony that he was indeed a true servant of God, chosen and appointed to a special place in the kingdom of Israel at that time, by giving life again to this dead man through contact with his bones. It would by this clearly appear to all Israel that Elisha was a man chosen of the Lord, and blessed in a signal manner, and that his testimony to Israel was the word of God indeed. Elisha had once in his life been used of the Lord in raising up to life again the child of the Shunammite, as recorded in the fourth chapter of this same book, but neither then, nor in this instance, was it true that Elisha had in himself any more power over death and the grave than any other man. The truth in both cases simply is this, that God was pleased to thus honor his servant, and to show forth his own power through him. This was certainly true of all the instances recorded in the Scriptures where the dead were raised up to life again. In the seventeenth chapter of first Kings occurs the narrative of the raising up of another child by the hand of the prophet Elijah. In the New Testament it is recorded that our blessed Redeemer raised up three to life again, viz., the ruler's daughter, the widow's son, and Lazarus; and in the Acts it is recorded of Tabitha and of Eutychus that they were raised up to life again when they were dead. All these instances proclaim the power of God, and declare that he who gave life at the first has power not only to take it away, but also to restore it again, and all these instances are fitted to give confidence to all who believe in God, and who hope for the resurrection at the last day, that his word shall be fulfilled toward them also at the appointed time. These recorded instances are so many proofs that nothing is too hard for the Lord, and surely it is a just conclusion that if our God can give life to the dead naturally, he can also give life to the dead spiritually, and so there is full proof that the words of the dear Savior are true indeed: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." Also those other words in the same chapter, the fifth of the gospel by John: "Marvel not at this; for the hour is com-

ing, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." From these two verses it is plainly to be seen that he who has power to quicken now the dead in sin, has also the power in the future to raise up the dead from the graves, and the declaration of the dear Redeemer is that he will do both.

Another reflection also occurs to us in connection with this text to which our attention is called, viz., that from this instance, and from the others named above, it is clear that the resurrection does not take place at the instant of death. In the text named this man had died, and some little time had elapsed, so that they were carrying him to his grave, and after this little time he was raised from the dead by contact with the bones of Elisha. The resurrection could not have come to him before, else it could not have come to him now. So also with all the instances recorded in the New Testament. Jesus said to Martha, "Thy brother shall rise again." It is well to note that he did not say to her, Thy brother has risen, but, He shall rise again. C.

THE APOCRYPHA.

DEAR BRETHREN:—When convenient please tell me what the design is of having the Apocrypha in the Bible. I have never been able to find out.

Yours respectfully, JOHN BARGER.

BLOOMVILLE, Ohio, Dec. 16, 1911.

This word is applied to the books called first and second Esdras, Tobit, Judith, some chapters of the book of Esther, The wisdom of Solomon, The wisdom of Jesus, the son of Sirach or Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, The Song of the three Holy Children, The History of Susannah, The History of the destruction of Bel and the Dragon, The Prayer of Manasses, king of Judah, and first and second Maccabees. The word Apocrypha signifies, literally, to conceal from, or that which is concealed. As used regarding these above named books it signifies their authenticity as inspired books is not established, and that they are therefore not admitted as a portion of the sacred canon of the Scriptures. When the Jews published their sacred books they called them canonical and divine, while such as they did not publish were called Apocryphal. The Jewish Apocryphal books are received by the Romish Church as canonical, but not by Protestants. The authors of these above named books are not known, and beside, many things in them are not based upon any certain evidence of their truth, and even though many historical events recorded in them be true, it does not follow that they are inspired books, any more than the history of the United States, written by any man now, can be regarded as being inspired. It is not needful here that we should speak of the reasons why the Romish Church accepts these books as inspired, nor why they are rejected by Protestants, and regarded as Apocryphal. The historical portion of these books relates events which were claimed to have taken place between the time of Malachi, the last prophet of Israel inspired of God, and the coming of Christ as the fulfiller of all prophecy. No doubt many of the statements contained in the narratives of the books of Esdras and the Maccabees are true history, and many good things are said in the other books, but they bear no mark of divine inspiration. All these books are found in our large Bibles, placed between the Old and the New Testaments, in small print, because they contain much of interest to careful

and thoughtful readers, and are marked Apocryphal to show that they are not to be regarded as the word of God, or as having been written by inspiration. They are worthy of reading just as any other uninspired writing may be worthy of our attention. C.

HEBREWS II. 1–3.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Please give your views upon the words found in Hebrews ii. 1–3, especially the third verse. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation." May the new year bring to you many blessings, and not so many disappointments as the old year has done.

BYRON NEAL.

BENTON, Ill.

As the Scriptures of the Old Testament were given to Israel as a nation, and not to any other people, and their commandments belonged to that people only, and as they were held to a strict observance of all that was required of them by the law which had been given them, so now to the spiritual people of God have solemn commandments and ordinances been given. To Israel these commandments and ordinances were given by the ministry of Moses, and afterward they were confirmed by the chosen prophets of God, who are here called angels, or God's messengers to the people. They all were but men, yet that covenant, with all that it required or promised, was a solemn covenant, and had the divine sanction in all its requirements, and those among the people who disregarded this law were sorely chastised at various times and in various ways. This new covenant has a greater sanctity, in that it began to be spoken by the blessed Lord himself, and was afterward confirmed by those who heard him. If, then, those who disobeyed the requirements of the former covenant were chastised, and received a just recompense of reward, though they heard but the words of men, how much more surely must it be that those who disregard or neglect the words of this new covenant, spoken by the Son of God, shall be still more sorely chastised for their disobedience. Let it be remembered that everything contained in the old covenant belonged solely to the people to whom it was given; it could not be otherwise; our God never made any covenant with Gentile nations in the former times. No other people save the Jews were ever commanded to observe days, new moons or sabbaths, or to offer sacrifice in the tabernacle or temple. In not doing these things, no Gentile nation was disobedient to God, but whenever the Jews failed to observe these commandments they were disobedient, and, likewise, under the new covenant no people, save God's spiritual and chosen people, are under the law of Zion. No other people can by any possibility neglect the ordinances of this covenant, because no other people are under it. God has given his ordinances and commandments to his chosen spiritual people alone; they, and they alone, can ever be disobedient to this law which is in Zion. In the sense of the text, no one can neglect this great salvation, save those who have received it. Let this much be first of all clearly understood. These words are solemn words to every child of God; they teach just what is said in the eighty-ninth Psalm: "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes." From this we can see why the apostle should say, "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip."

That is, because of the glory which God had given to his Son above all angels and men, and because the Son of God had come in human flesh and had spoken the things of the gospel to them, it was but reasonable that they should give the more earnest heed to the things spoken. The thought is, that the people of God should listen with careful attention, so as to hold these things in their minds and not forget them, and, forgetting them, fail to do them. We may give little heed to the words of some irresponsible man and not be greatly censured, but when the King shall speak, his words are to be regarded, and all those who revere the King will strive to keep his words in their hearts, and to do them. In the whole connection the writer of this epistle sets forth the contrast between the blessed Jesus and all who ever bore the word of God to the people before him. Moses and the patriarchs, and David and the prophets, were indeed men of God, but they were only men, but Jesus was divine; him were all the angels of God to worship. To no other being had he ever said, "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Jesus was exalted, and a name given him that was above every name, that at his name might all things in heaven and earth bow the knee. Since, then, God has so highly exalted him, how fearful a thing it is if we fail to regard his words. It is neglecting to pay honor to one whom the Father above has most highly honored. We are disregarding the word of the Majesty in the heavens when we neglect the words of the Son of God. It is sowing to the flesh, and not to the Spirit, and what we sow that shall we reap.

The word "salvation" used in the text, does not, as we understand it, relate here to that redemption which our blessed Lord secured by his death and resurrection, but rather to all his teaching, and to the solemn commandments of the gospel. The meaning of the apostle is not that his brethren might neglect an offer of this salvation and so perish forever, but that they might by their carelessness and disobedience bring upon themselves the chastisements of the Almighty. The truth presented here is the same as is taught in every exhortation and warning given us by the apostles in all the epistles. "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." The chastisements of the old covenant were largely temporal and outward, and sometimes those who transgressed seemed to escape the chastisement, but under this new covenant it is sure that the sin of all the Lord's people will find them out. The corrections of the Lord are of the Spirit, and in the heart, and no one can flee from them. This is as true of churches in their order as of individuals. Evil will produce its results; how careful then, both for the glory of God and for the good of his people, ought we to be lest we do let these commandments slip, both from our memory of them, and from the doing of them.

We leave these thoughts with our brother, and with all who may read them. C.

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EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

JOHN XIV. 1–3.

"LET not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

The last solemn passover supper that was ever to be eaten by divine authority had just been celebrated by our Lord with his disciples; the last lingering moments of the legal dispensation were ebbing away, Judas had received the sop, and Satan had entered his heart and taken the helm of his covetous, traitorous, perfidious mind, and he was at this moment negotiating with the priests and rulers of the people to betray the Son of man. The hour beyond which divine justice could defer his claim for vengeance no longer had arrived, the lowering clouds had gathered thick and darkly around the dear Redeemer, his soul oppressed with sorrow was bowed within him as the sin-bearing sacrifice now about to be offered; yet painful as was the bitter anguish of his holy soul, his thoughts were turned to his disciples, and amidst his stifled groans for what was now crushing his own soul, he said to his disciples, "Little children, yet a little while I am with you." And that little while the golden moments were closely occupied in fortifying their minds for the dreadful scene which they were about to witness. Every moment was fully occupied, from the eating the passover and institution of the supper, to the time of his arrest, in instructions to the disciples, and in communion, prayer and intercession to the Father. The substance of all these instructions and prayers is recorded in the thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth chapters. Let them be often read and solemnly considered by all who love the Lord and hope in his salvation. On such an occasion how deeply interesting and vitally important are the words which we are about to consider. Never was there such an occasion before, never can there be again, to try the faith and confidence of the saints of God. How suitable and how consoling the words: "Let not your heart be troubled." Although these words were addressed to the eleven, and through them to all the church of God, but one heart is recognized; he does not say hearts, but heart, for the primitive disciples were of one heart and one mind. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Not the heart of stone on which the Sinai covenant with Moses and the whole commonwealth of Israel was written, which was the centre of their national vitality, by which they were embodied in distinction from all other nations, but that heart of flesh which was given to the mystical body of Christ, for Christ in his church is the centre of spiritual vitality, of love, of unity and identity. He is the life and immortality of the church, which is his body. This Spirit of Christ in the members of his church is but one spirit, or heart, sending its vitality to every member. This heart was to be assailed by a dreadful trial, which was now about to fall with such crushing weight upon them. But, as though at once to let them know that he was fully aware of the approaching trial, and to give them a comforting assurance that it should result in their good and his glory, the kind, sympathetic words of encouragement are graciously

spoken, Yield not to despair; let not your heart be troubled. "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." The trial now approaching was peculiarly calculated to test their faith in him as the true Messiah that was to come. Although it might not shake their confidence in God, or lead them to fear that there is no God, was it not calculated to make them fear that Jesus was not the Son of God and Savior of his people, as they had understood him to be? It certainly did have that effect. They said despairingly, We verily thought it was he that should redeem Israel. But alas, that confidence was shaken when they saw him crucified and his lifeless body laid in the grave. Still, though fearing that they had been mistaken in regarding him as the Son of God, they betrayed no lack of faith in God. Now these words of assurance seem to imply that there was in all they should witness, if properly understood, nothing that ought any sooner to be allowed to shake their confidence in him as the mediatorial Head of the church than to shake their faith in the eternal Father. Again, the same faith which recognized the Father, also must necessarily recognize the Son of God as one with the Father, for none can know the Father but by revelation of Christ, and none can come unto the Father but by him. Our faith cannot be so divided as to believe in God and disbelieve in Christ, for there is but one faith, as we have proven, and he that has by that one faith seen the Son, hath seen the Father also, for the Father is in him, and he is in the Father; he and the Father are one.

"In my Father's house are many mansions." This is the affirmation of an existing truth, and a most glorious truth, and his ability to describe his Father's house was in evidence that he was the Son of God. A stranger could not describe that house which is made without hands, and which is eternal in the heavens, but Jesus is the faithful and true witness. No man hath ascended up into heaven, but the Son of God has come down from heaven, and reveals all that is necessary for us to know of the house of God, and if there were anything more concerning his Father's house which his children ought to know, he would have told them. The house of God is his dwelling-place, his place of permanent abode, where he makes his home. His house is figuratively set forth in types and shadows of the Old Testament as the tabernacle in the wilderness, as the temples in Jerusalem, and in a more spiritual manifestation made to the patriarch Jacob, when in rapture he exclaimed, Verily, God was in this place, and I knew it not; this is none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven. The gospel church and kingdom of Christ is called the house of God. Ye are God's building. (1 Cor. iii. 9.) "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."—1 Peter ii. 5. The house of God is frequently mentioned in the Old Testament Scriptures, as Gen. xxviii. 17; Joshua ix. 23; Judges xviii. 31; xx. 18; Psalms xlii. 4; lv. 14; lii. 8; lxxxiv. 10; Isaiah ii. 3; Micah iv. 2, and in very many other passages, and yet we are informed that the Lord dwelleth not in houses made with hands. Figuratively he was said to dwell in the tabernacle in the wilderness, in the temples at Jerusalem, but all these were types, pointing to Christ and his church, or body, as the true spiritual dwelling-place of our God. "For the Lord hath chosen Zion: he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my

rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread."—Psalms cxxxii. 13–15. "His foundation is in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God." —Psalms lxxxvii. 1–3. Therefore the holy psalmist could say, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."—Psalms cxxii. 1. "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee."—Psalms lxxxiv. 1, 4. The psalmist exulted in the certainty of dwelling in the house of the Lord forever, because the Lord was his Shepherd. (Psalms xxiii. 6.) This was the fullness of his aspiration. "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple."—Psalms xxvii. 4. This is the house which our Redeemer calls "my Father's house," in which he says "are many mansions." Many opinions have been expressed in regard to the figurative import of the many mansions here spoken of, and to our mind the precise meaning is not as clear as we could desire. The true meaning, whatever it be, must be important, as we infer from the words of our Lord: "If it were not so, I would have told you." A mansion, in the modern application of the word, is a dwelling-place, sometimes applied to a house, and sometimes to apartments or rooms of a house. In our text a distinction is implied between the house and the mansions. "In my Father's house are many mansions." The mansions are many, but the house of God is but one. So when other figures are used to express the same idea, one body and many members, or one city and many inhabitants, "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High."—Psalms xlvi. 4. In the text last named, the city of God, which is but one, contains many tabernacles of the Most High. The same idea is expressed in 1 Cor. xii. 12–14: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many." "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body."—1 Cor. xii. 18–20. In changing the figures which represent the same kingdom, or church, from a house to a city, what in the former would be appropriately called mansions, in the latter would be more clearly expressed as houses, or tabernacles, and when a body is the figure, members of that body convey the same meaning. This to every citizen of the city of God is an appropriate dwelling, for "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together: whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord. For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David."—Psalms cxxii. 3–5. There is in the house of God a place or mansion for every member of the household of God; thrones of judgment to be occupied by the apostles to sit upon, judging the

twelve tribes of Israel. The sons of Zebedee could not change their allotted mansions or positions so as to sit one on the right and the other on the left hand of the king, when he should come into his kingdom, and as members of Christ, God has set each one in its appropriate place in the body of Christ as it hath pleased him. In the types of the ceremonial law the inheritance of each tribe was distinctly marked out and secured to each by an inalienable title, and so also in the positions assigned officially to patriarchs, prophets, priests, levites, captains, kings and subjects. These types all pointed to the order of the house of God under the gospel dispensation, for in them were exhibited the patterns of the things of the heavenly kingdom, and although they were all confined to the worldly sanctuary and carnal ordinances of a fleshly or carnal Israel under the law, undoubtedly prefigured the heavenly places in Christ Jesus under the gospel dispensation in the true tabernacle which God has pitched, and not man.

The question may very naturally arise, If this be the sense in which our Lord spake of the many mansions of his Father's house, why this special mention should be made of them on this most solemn occasion? All the words of our divine Lord were fitly spoken, well timed and full of vital interest to the saints. The organization of the gospel kingdom was now very soon to be manifested. The law and the prophets were until John; from the coming of John the kingdom of Christ was preached, that it was at hand, but the places in the gospel kingdom could not be attained until the last jot and tittle of the law should be fulfilled, until Christ should do and suffer all that was written of him in the law and in the prophets and in the psalms, for he must suffer and then enter into his glory, in coming into which he would ascend his mediatorial throne, and when the Son of man should sit on the throne of his glory, the apostles who had followed him in the regeneration should also sit upon their twelve thrones. The deliverance of all his people should then be effected, and each should receive the mansion which was prepared for him in the house of God. Fully with Christ in his death all his members were quickened together with him, and they were raised up together and made to sit together in Christ Jesus. But in all this, as in all things, Christ must have the pre-eminence; he must go before them in sufferings and death, must be the first-fruits of them that slept in his resurrection, yet by vital union and identity of spirit bearing his sheaves with him. Hence the suitableness of this solemn occasion to speak to them of the mansions, or heavenly places so soon to be occupied by them, when he should remove the bars of death, by abolishing death, and bring immortality to light in his resurrection, when at his command the everlasting doors should be opened, and the everlasting gates should lift up their heads, and the King of glory should come in with all the trophies of his deathless victory, and by his triumph prove that to believe in God is to believe also in him, and that the throne of his kingdom should be as firmly established and forever continue as unshaken as the throne of his eternal Father.

"If it were not so, I would have told you." They had been led to expect this, and he would certainly have undeceived them if it were not so. Notwithstanding the terrible scenes immediately before them, which should so much try their confidence in him, the gloomy night of trial would soon be terminated, and the

sable shades of darkness should be driven from their skies by the bursting light of his resurrection and the establishment of his kingdom and government as the Prince of Peace.

"I go to prepare a place for you." From the explanation which he gave the disciples in this connection we learn that he was going to his Father, for he said to them, "And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." And in reply to the inquiry of Thomas he said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." This agrees with what he said unto Mary after his resurrection, and commanded her to tell the same to his brethren: "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God."—John xx. 17. He had also informed them that he was going to receive a kingdom, and to return again unto them. "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."—Luke xxii. 29, 30. This kingdom, which was appointed unto him of his Father, is the place which, according to our understanding, he was going to prepare for his disciples. Although as an inheritance of the heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, the kingdom of heaven was prepared for them from the foundation of the world, according to Matt. xxv. 34, yet its manifest redemption and gospel organization awaited the resurrection and ascension of Christ. The God of heaven was to set it up in the days of those kings of whom Daniel had prophesied. "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."—Psalms ii. 8. "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?" "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."—Heb. i. 5, 8, 9. Thus it was written, and thus it behooved him to suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and then to enter into his mediatorial glory as the King eternal, immortal and invisible, the only wise God our Savior.

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." The "if" in this case is not to express doubt or uncertainty, for he had told the disciples that it was expedient for them, and that he would soon go away, and that his object in going away was to prepare a place for them where he would dwell with them uninterruptedly forever. Yet a little while and ye shall see me no more, and again a little while and ye shall see me. Whither I go thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me hereafter. It was necessary that he should first suffer, and be the first to rise from the dead, but he assures them that he will come again and receive them unto himself, that where he is, there should they also be. True and faithful to his words of promise, he came again unto them after his resurrection, and abode with them a sufficient length of time to demonstrate his resurrection, and after his ascension he came unto them by his Spirit on the day of Pentecost, organized his kingdom in its gospel order, and into it received his disciples to go no more out forever. And again will he come to them in the clouds

of heaven with power and great glory, and in their final resurrection in his image will he receive them to himself, that where he is, there they may be also. It is the will of the Father that of all he has given to Christ he should lose nothing, but that he should raise it up again at the last day. And this is also the will of the Son, who in his intercession has said, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory," &c.—John xvii. 24.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 1, 1865.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Jan. 30th, 1912, at the home of the bride's father, Mr. W. J. Staton, in Salisbury, Md., G. Virgil Adkins and Miss Mary J. Staton, granddaughter of the late Elder Joseph L. Staton.

By the same, Feb. 28th, 1912, at his residence, Delmar, Del., Henry C. Hastings and Miss Clara B. Truitt, both of Sussex County, Delaware.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

A SEVERE affliction has come upon the family of our dear friends, Mr. Joel Carruthers and his wife, sister Sallie Carruthers, of Loudoun County, Va., in the sudden death of their son, **Milton Carruthers,** in Baltimore, Md., Jan. 20th, 1912, aged 31 years. The subject of this notice was in business, which kept him from home much of the time of late years, but in the gracious providence of God he was visiting home and friends in Loudoun County in the latter part of December, and with some of them attended the Old School Baptist meeting at Hughesville on the fifth Sunday in December. Elder Lefferts' sermon on that day seemed to have a wonderful effect upon him. His mother writes me: "I believe he was fully converted under Elder Lefferts' preaching; he told me he never heard such preaching; it seemed to be upon his mind all the time." Evidently he received the truth, and felt the power of it in his own soul. I think that was his last visit home. The night he died he was in Baltimore visiting at the house of a friend, expecting to go to Washington that night. At a rather late hour he started for the railroad station, and in hurrying to catch a street car fell unconscious to the pavement. An ambulance was summoned, but before reaching the hospital he died. So suddenly was he taken to his "long home." His family was notified, and the body taken to Mt. Zion churchyard, and on the coldest day of this cold winter was deposited in the ground where a few short weeks ago his aged grandmother, dear sister Thomas, of Mt. Zion Church, was buried. The subject of this notice was a comparatively young man, of sterling worth, highly esteemed, and deservedly so, in the community where he was reared, and among the people with whom he came in contact in his business travels over the country. Sincerely honest, possessing a cheerful disposition, with free and engaging manners, he made friends wherever he went. It seems no accident to me when I recall the providence that led him to Hughesville on that day to hear the sermon of dear brother Lefferts, and the stirring up of his mind and heart to receive the truth it contained, and the manifest token of the Spirit's work, up to the time of his unexpected departure. He seemed to be in the vigor of manhood, with the prospect of years before him, but his race was run. How much more satisfying to the stricken family is the evident work of the gentle Spirit of the living God in the heart of the loved one, than would be merely the profession of the lips. A father, mother, one brother and four sisters are the immediate family of Milton Carruthers who are left, with a large connection of relatives and friends, to whom his death is a sudden and sad bereavement. May God comfort the mourners. J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., Feb. 27, 1912.

Mrs. Susan D. Blair, my dear sister, an aged and well known resident of Crawfordsville, Ind., died at her home in this city Tuesday morning, Jan. 30th, 1912. Susan D. Johnson was born in Trenton, Butler Co., Ohio, Nov. 23rd, 1825, and was the daughter of Chilion and Ann Johnson. She came to this place (then a small village) when six years old, and was married to Cornelius Blair in 1849; he died in 1889. She is survived by one daughter, Miss Mellie Blair, one sister, Mrs. Lina W. Beck, of Crawfordsville, Ind., and two brothers, Mahlon Vail Johnson, of Denver, Colo., and Dr. Walter L. Johnson, of Santa Cruz, Cal. Sister Blair was a member of the Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church in this city for many years, and will be greatly missed in our church assemblies. Her funeral sermon was preached by our pastor, Elder J. H. Oliphant, to a large circle of friends, who will miss her from our midst, but none will feel the loss like her loving, bereaved daughter and her sister, the writer. My sister was my lifelong companion; she was six years older, and taught me many useful lessons. Our homes were near together, and we enjoyed reading the SIGNS and Bible and going to our dear old church together. For many years we traveled the same road and shared each other's joys and sorrows. She was unassuming and quiet, a woman of few words. One day we were in

her garden picking strawberries and she asked me, "Is next Saturday church meeting day?" I said, "Yes; come go?" She said, "I would love to, but fear the good people would think I wanted to join, and I do not want to deceive them." Mother then spoke to her, saying, "There are people at our Saturday meeting often who do not belong to our church; you can come and not be out of place." So she went that time, and continued to go to several church meetings, and one day she arose to her feet and in a calm, serious voice asked if she could talk to the church. Elder M. M. Vancleave, our old pastor, said, "Yes, dear child." She said, "If I am changed it is in this way: I have a greater love for this people, and cannot stay away from their meetings, and understand the preaching better than I once did, and believe they are the church of God. I would be glad if I could be a christian. I cannot see any fruits of the Spirit in my life; I want you to judge me." So the old members asked her many questions about her sins and the need of a Savior. She answered satisfactorily, and was received and welcomed by the church, and baptized the next day. At that time my dear old grandmother, my father and mother and this dear sister and I were enrolled in this old church where I have been a member fifty-eight years. The last night of sister's life she kept saying, "Come, come, come," as if talking to some one near by. "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." I held her hand until she fell asleep in Jesus. It was morning, a morning without clouds for her, I hope, when, I tremble with my sorrow and loss, and sympathy for my dear lonely niece, these words soothed me: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Sweet thought, to be with Jesus.

LINA W. BECK.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind.

Mrs. Hannah A. Hough, our sister in Christ, died Feb. 22nd, 1912, at her home near Waterford, Va., in the 82nd year of her age. She was the daughter of Benjamin and Sydna Williams, and the widow of Wm. H. Hough, to whom she was married Feb. 26th, 1850. To them were born eight children, two sons and six daughters. Sister Hough was baptized by Elder E. V. White, July 20th, 1895, and to the day of her death lived a consistent member of the New Valley Old School Baptist Church. Her experience of grace dated back several years prior to her baptism, and it was many years before she was enabled to unite with the church, but in the Lord's appointed time he strengthened her to confess him before men by being buried with him in baptism. It was her lot while here upon earth to endure much affliction and suffering, but her faith and trust in the omnipotence and wisdom of Jehovah, and in the salvation of his people through the atoning blood of Jesus, never wavered. For the past few years, owing to the feebleness and infirmities of age, she could not be with the brethren at all their meetings, but was present whenever possible. We shall miss her from her place in our midst, but have the blessed assurance she is with the church in glory. She leaves to mourn their loss, one son, Irwin, and two daughters, Mrs. Carrie Rodrick and Miss Phœbe, who is also a member of the New Valley Church, besides many relatives and friends.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer, from sister Hough's late home, Sunday, Feb. 25th, 1912. Interment at Waterford.

May God comfort the bereaved ones.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

LEESBURG, Va., Feb. 26, 1912.

Mary Jane Pryor Smith was born Nov. 23rd, 1844, in what is now Wilbertown township, Fayette Co., Ill. She died at her home in Bluff City, Jan. 27th, 1912, aged 67 years, 2 months and 4 days, after a most painful illness of cancer of the stomach, which was patiently endured to the last. She was fully conscious of her condition, and was sustained by her perfect faith in Christ our Savior. She was married to F. F. Smith, April 8th, 1869, and to that union were born three children: Charles, Ella and George; Ella, wife of M. L. Staff, only survives her, Charles and George being taken from her in the beauty of their youth, which was the cause of much sorrow to her. During the fifty-four days of her last illness she was cared for by the loving hands of her husband, daughter, son-in-law and many relatives and friends, who mourn their loss, which is her gain. She also leaves four precious grandchildren, which were her pride and joy. Of her father's family one brother only is living: Thomas A. Pryor, of Bluff City. She took loving care of her mother, whose death occurred six years ago. Her father, George A. Pryor, was the eldest of sixteen children who moved with his and his father's family from Virginia in 1843, to Fayette Co., Ill., only three of whom are now living.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder D. E. Baker, at her home, Tuesday, Jan. 30th, 1912, after which many friends followed her remains to its last resting-place in South Hill Cemetery, Vandalia, Ill.

F. F. SMITH.

Mrs. Mary F. Hart, our aged sister in Christ, fell asleep in Jesus at her residence in Hopewell, N. J., Sunday night, Feb. 18th, 1912, aged 86 years, 6 months and 16 days. She was born in West Amwell township, Hunterdon Co., and had always lived

within a few miles of her birthplace. Her maiden name was Holcombe. She was married to Lot Phillips in December, 1844, and after his death was married to Andrew Hart in 1864. She was the mother of two children, one of whom, the first wife of Elisha Drake, passed away from earth some years ago; the other, Mrs. Mary Lewis, with whom in her later years she made her home, still survives. She had always been a woman of unusual strength of mind and body, and had endured but little sickness until the infirmities of age came upon her. One day about two months before her death she fell on the floor and injured herself so that she was never able to walk again, and most of the time was confined to her bed, suffering much at times. At the last she lapsed into unconsciousness, and in two or three days quietly passed away. She was baptized in January, 1846, in the fellowship of Second Hopewell Church, at Harbourton, N. J., and continued a faithful and steadfast member more than sixty-six years. How wonderful is that mercy, and how great the blessing vouchsafed to poor, sinful mortals, that they should be redeemed and given a home with his loved ones, but it seems an especially great mercy that one should be called by grace in youth and given an abiding-place in the fold of Christ, to share all its privileges for so many years on earth, and it is a cause for wonder and praise when it is given to any one to maintain such steadfastness in the faith and in humble walking before the Lord as characterized her long life. Our heart would prompt us to say much of her patience, endurance, faith and love to the cause of God, and to speak of the high esteem in which all her life she was held by all who knew her, but this would not be her wish. It was her request when living that at her funeral service but little should be said concerning her. She desired that if anything should be said, it should be in praise of her Redeemer and Master.

The funeral service was held at her home on Wednesday morning, Feb. 21st. Although the day was very stormy, many friends gathered, and it was our solemn privilege to be present and conduct the service. The subject specially used was the last six verses of the fourth chapter of first Thessalonians. The interment was at Harbourton.

She leaves one daughter, one brother and two sisters, beside other more distant relatives. C.

Elder Joseph C. Biggs was born April 16th, 1829, in Fauquier County, Va., and died at the home of his son, Levi M. Biggs, Feb. 16, 1912, aged 82 years and 10 months. In 1834 he came with his mother to Alexander, Licking County, Ohio. He was married to Lavina Calvert, August 12th, 1848, and to that union were born three children: William H., of Willow Hill, John G., of Palestine, and Levi M., of Oblong, Ill. He and his wife joined the Primitive or Old School Baptist Church in October, 1865. He was loyal and devoted to the cause of his Master until called to his great reward. All the days of his appointed time he waited until his change came. He came to his grave in full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in its season. His wife preceded him in death, May 30th, 1877. He was again married, to Mary Jones, Jan. 1st, 1878. She died July 30th, 1906. He was taken with a severe chill about noon Wednesday, and passed peacefully and quietly away about 7 o'clock Friday evening. He leaves to mourn their loss three sons and their wives, twenty-seven grandchildren and forty-seven great-grandchildren, besides a host of other relatives and friends. He was a good father, an obliging neighbor, kind and pleasant to all, and greatly respected by those who knew him.

Funeral services were held in the M. E. meeting-house Monday, conducted by Elder Jasper Dolby, of Greencastle, Ind., who used for a text, He fought a good fight and kept the faith. The remains were then borne to the Wilkins Cemetery, in Crawford County, and tenderly laid away until God bids them rise immortal and fair.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

W. M. Little has changed his address from Donie, Freestone County, Texas, to Pottsville, Hamilton County, Texas.

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NOTICE.

Providence permitting, our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, will preach in our meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., the fourth Sunday in March (24th), 1912, at the usual hours. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us. L. B. FORD.

Melrose Highlands, Mass.

MEETINGS.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 80. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1912. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DELMAR, Del., March 1, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—Being confined to the house for the past four weeks with a severe attack of rheumatism, I have had the opportunity of reading more than ordinarily, and have particularly enjoyed reading the SIGNS. In No. 4, current volume, February 15th, is an article from that highly esteemed brother away off in Oregon, Elder G. E. Mayfield, which I read with an especial interest, partly, no doubt, because I have been much exercised on that text for many years, and because it has entered very largely into my own experience, and, I think, partly because I have read so many different expositions of the text used by brother Mayfield. I have compared the different views of brethren, especially that some hold the view that a child of God cannot sin wilfully, and some that he can. It occurs to me that if there is no exercise of the will in the act, that it would be a misnomer to call it sin. Sin is a transgression of law, and one must be under or subject to a law before he can be a transgressor of that particular law. For instance, an act committed in England is a transgression of English law, but the offender could not be arraigned and tried in the United States, the offender not having transgressed the laws of the United States. Paul says, Rom. vi. 14–18: "For sin shall not have dominion [authority or power] over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." Every child of God as manifest in this world is the subject of a new, spiritual birth, "being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever,"—1 Peter i. 23, hence are by translation removed from the dominion (authority or power) of one to another. "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into

the kingdom of his dear Son."—Col. i. 13. Now then, being no more under the law (of Moses) they are no more subject to that law or under its condemnation, cannot sin against that law either wilfully or otherwise. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."—Romans viii. 1, 2. The law from Sinai was a law of "sin and death," a law of condemnation, but now ye are not under that law, though in the flesh there dwells no good thing, and in the child of God this is continually manifest, and he is doing things that he does not wish to do, as Paul said, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me."—Romans vii. 17. When Israel was brought forth from Egypt they were no longer subject to the power of Pharaoh, and could not be held accountable to Pharaoh, no more be punished or oppressed by that terrible tyrant. No more is the child of God now, being delivered from the power of darkness, subject to its tyranny and oppression. But is he under no obligation whatever? Surely he is under obligation now to a new Master, even as God, having redeemed and delivered Israel from the hand of Pharaoh, required of them that they should serve (obey) him, and gave them a law from Sinai, instructing them in all things required of them, and exacting obedience of them, so Christ, having redeemed his chosen people (his Israel) from the curse of the law, and delivered them from the power of darkness (the antitypical Pharaoh), and brought them into his kingdom, has placed them under everlasting obligation to him, and writes in their hearts to say, "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever."—Psalms cvii. 1. Here is now a people whom he hath formed for himself, and says, "They shall shew forth my praise."—Isaiah xliii. 21; also see Jeremiah xiii. 11; xxxiii. 9. In view of these things we now will consider directly the text, Hebrews x. 26, 27: "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." We first note that this letter, supposed to have been written by Paul while he was a prisoner in Rome, and sent by the hand of Timothy to the saints at Jerusalem, calls the attention of those brethren to the all-important fact that one having greater power and authority than the prophets, by whom God at sundry times and in divers manners spake unto the fathers in time past, has now spoken to them (us), who is greater even than the angels, and by inheritance hath a more excellent name than they, and to whose word they, having heard him, should give the more earnest heed. "For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord [Jesus], and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God alone bearing them witness?" &c.—Hebrews ii. 2–4. The angels by whom the former word was spoken were the prophets; those by whom the word of Jesus was borne witness to were the apostles, who "heard him," being witnesses to his entire ministry from Jordan to Calvary, attending to every word spoken by him, beholding every demonstration of his power as shown in the miracles he

wrought, and bore witness after his crucifixion, resurrection and ascension to glory, speaking things they knew, &c. If the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience of that word by the carnal Israelites was punished, they receiving a just recompense of reward for every act of transgression or disobedience, shall the spiritual Israelite, the manifest child of God, be left free to disobey and transgress the mandates of his King with impunity? Shall he be permitted to neglect to show forth that great salvation that has been revealed unto him, and escape without a just recompense of reward? Nay. "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"—Heb. x. 28, 29. These two verses immediately follow the text. In this chapter the inspired writer shows the striking contrast between the sacrifices offered by the priests under the law and that of Jesus. Those offerings could not make those perfect (cleanse from all sin) in whose behalf they were offered, and needed to be constantly repeated; but the one offering of Jesus Christ was amply sufficient. See verses one to fourteen. Now by this offering those who come unto God thereby (brought nigh by the blood of Christ) do not enter only into the most holy place once a year with the high priest, but enter into the very presence of God, into the holiest of all, which is now made manifest, the first begotten having taken away the first tabernacle and established the second. (See verse 9.)

Now to the immediate consideration of the text. "For if we sin wilfully," &c. The word "for" refers to something before declared, and of which the statement in the text is a reason. What is that? "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) and let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching."—Verses 19–25. It occurs to me that the sin consists in the neglect of the obligations that the King has laid on us, which is disobedience to him that speaks from heaven, and in which consists the transgression of a child of God, and as that in which the mind and will are not involved cannot with propriety be called sin, if one fails in those things through carelessness, or neglect, or indifference, letting those important things slip (pass from his mind), he can certainly be said to sin "wilfully." Now, if we sin wilfully is there not a result? Surely there is, as sure as that the Lord hath said, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay." What is it? to take away his part in the eternal inheritance? Surely not.

"The Lord will scourge us if we stray,
And wound us with distress,
But he will never take away
His covenant of peace."

"If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth

[after, not before we have been endowed with that knowledge, only those can possibly sin or rebel against the King in a careless, disorderly walk], there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." To the Israelite under Moses' law there were continual sacrifices, and by an offering he could make propitiation, but with the child of God (spiritual Israel) an end is made of sacrifices and offerings, and he cannot atone for his sin by such things. What then? "A certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." "A certain fearful looking for" upon the part of that one who sins in these things; that judgment will be meted out to him, and God will appear as a consuming fire, for such is our God; but that "fiery indignation" "shall devour the adversaries;" every adversary, every enemy the child of God has ever encountered, all those by whom he has been tempted and led astray, shall be devoured. He shall sit as a refiner's fire, and as a purifier of silver. I will burn up all thy dross and tin. But the poor, distressed child of God does not, cannot, comprehend what the end is until God is pleased to make it manifest. "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." God will visit our transgressions with a rod, and our iniquities with stripes, but his loving-kindness he will not take away, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. (Psalms lxxxix. 32, 33.)

What I have here written is not in opposition to, or criticism of, the views of any who may have published expositions of this subject, but simply like Elihu, to shew my opinion. Submitted to the discretion of the editors of the SIGNS, and if they think best to consign it to the waste-basket it will be all right, and I will subscribe myself the least of all.

In humble hope,

A. B. FRANCIS.

PINEVILLE, Ky., Feb. 6, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have had a desire to write you for some time, but postponed doing so on account of darkness of mind, and I make the attempt to-day with much fear and trembling. My heart's desire is that I write nothing but the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. I have a little hope that five years ago last July I was made a new creature in Christ Jesus, that being the thirty-third year of my natural existence, and the beginning of my manifest spiritual existence. At that time I was given a love for the people of God I never had before, and a mind to ask for a home among the Primitive Baptists, which I did on the fourth Saturday in March, 1907, and on Sunday following was baptized by Elder J. C. Walton, of Tennessee. On the fourth Sunday in April of the same year I was made willing to try to tell the church a few things Jesus Christ had done for his people. From that time to this my pathway has led me up and down steep and rugged mountains infested with wild beasts of the forest, which creep forth seeking their prey, but in all this anxiety of soul I can see the justice and righteous judgment of our just and holy King. As soon as we are left to ourselves we go in forbidden ways, but the way we are led is to try our faith and to reward us according to deeds done in the body.

You will please pardon my reference to personal feelings, but if any people are guilty of speaking or writing of personal feelings and anxiety of soul, the people of God have been and are the most guilty. My mind now leaves personal matters and turns to things too vast, deep and mysterious for finite minds to attempt to speak of, nevertheless I shall follow the leadings of my mind. I now behold as through a glass dimly

time and eternity, nature and divinity, the inhabitants of time and the inhabitants of eternity, the ultimate end of all natural things and the final destiny of all spiritual things. I know that I can only hint at these things, and shall not attempt to do more, for I do not want to be found trying to comprehend the secret things of God. To speak of all these points fully would fill hundreds of volumes. I mention time first, for it is with time and timely things we are first concerned. Time is the general idea of successive existence, or that in which events take place, space being that in which things are contained; so, then, before we can conceive of time we must have a place for things to exist, and Moses called this place the heaven and the earth. So, then, before God created the heaven and the earth there was no place for things to exist, no thing to exist, consequently no events taking place, therefore no time; but God, in order to make known his power and wisdom, made time and timely things to exist. In the beginning God created the whole mass of nature; every element that has been found or ever will be found during time was created then; every object or creature of time that has ever been formed or ever will be formed will be formed of the elements of nature. The earth, with its inhabitants, and the ethereal heaven, with its sun, moon and all the satellites, are composed of the elements of nature, and all exist and move in obedience to certain fixed laws; nothing comes to pass by chance; everything must bring forth after his kind. This law embraces the microscopical bacteria, man who was created in the image of God, and all between. Not only this, but it embraces the fruits or the actions of mind or nature. The human mind and nature must bring forth human or fleshly fruit; no stream can flow or rise above its fountain. The first man Adam is of the earth earthy, and as is the earthy, such are they also that are of the earth. It was spoken by him who could not lie, "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit, neither can a good tree bring forth evil fruit. Every man at his best state is altogether vanity. There is no creature that can elevate itself above the sphere in which it was purposed to exist and die by and through power belonging to that sphere. God has so fixed the law of nature that no creature formed of the dust of the earth can live, move and have its being without the elements of the literal heavens and earth. All creatures of the earth live a natural, mortal or timely life by receiving the elements of the literal heaven. But when the time comes when they fail to receive said elements they cease to live longer; death then ensues, and all nature must bow in obedience to that last and final law, which is death. We have no evidence in holy writ that natural man can exist indefinitely without being nourished with the elements of mother nature, but we have the promise of God that as long as the earth remains mortal man shall continue to receive said nourishment, for God covenanted with Noah that "while the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." All these things are necessary for the sustenance of mortal man, but when the time comes when the earth remaineth no longer, seedtime and harvest, &c., will cease, consequently mortal man will fail to be nourished from mother nature, then will he fall into dissolution with mother nature, obeying the decree,

"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." There is no immortality or divine life existing in the natural man; he is altogether composed of the elements of nature. "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass, the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away." "I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts. For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity. All go unto one place: all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again." So all evidence shows that there was no immortality combined with nature when it was created and fashioned; no inherent principle of life to preserve it eternally. No life in all matter and in the realm of nature is found to preserve man eternally, or cause him to live again. Now, knowing that all must die a corporeal death, the paramount question with us should be, Shall we live again, and by what life? This question agitated Job's mind during his affliction, and especially when he said, O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, &c. If a man die, shall he live again? Job was given a hope, an assurance, that after death he would live, for we hear him say: "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." Jesus through the psalmist said, My flesh also shall rest in hope, for thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer thine holy one to see corruption. Paul said, I have hope toward God, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. He had just as much hope that the unjust would be resurrected as he had that the just would be, but he had under consideration none but the Israel of God, as it seems to me, when he said just and unjust, just as the writer had under consideration the Israel of God when he wrote: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." Again, the Israel of God alone was embraced when it was said, As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. Also when it was said, He tasted death for every man. The apostle John had Israel alone in view when he wrote, "He is the propitiation for our [kingdom class of Israel] sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world [unjust class of Israel]." Many of Israel are unjust.

I have digressed from the point under consideration (If we die shall we live again?), but shall continue to write concerning the timely existence of Israel, and then return to the said point. The Israel of God must measure up to a certain standard in doctrine and practice before they can enter and reign with Christ in his kingdom. A great many of Israel manage to get into Christ's visible kingdom without having the requisite qualifications, and they invariably stir up trouble in Zion until they are delivered unto Satan, or cast out into outer darkness, or as Christ said unto Peter when he delivered to him the keys of the kingdom, If such a brother do so and so and

will not confess, let him be unto the church as a heathen or a publican. From a spiritual standpoint that brother's transgression was not forgiven. Christ had told Peter, Whatsoever thou bindest on earth shall be bound in heaven; whatsoever thou loosest on earth shall be loosed in heaven. As there was a remnant of national Israel (a type of spiritual Israel) preserved by grace from bowing the knee to the image of Baal, so there is to-day of spiritual Israel a remnant according to the election of grace saved from false doctrine and an ungodly walk and conversation. "The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." One great trouble with some of our good brethren is, that they put time salvation for an eternal salvation, a timely destruction for an eternal destruction, just as the whole religious world does. O that we could be saved from the error of our ways. The prophets sacrificed their lives for the salvation of national Israel; the apostles labored and died for the salvation of spiritual Israel, but this does not mean eternal salvation. Now, If a man die, shall he live again? I have mentioned a few that lived before the days of Christ who had hope that after death they should live again. The apostles had hope that the Israel of God would be resurrected and live again. Paul often spoke of his hope in the resurrection; he said: "Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Again, he said, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." All hope is anchored, not in time or timely life and power, but in eternal life and power. This brings us to consider eternity and its inhabitants. Before time there was eternity, during time there is eternity, and when time is no more there still will be eternity. Eternity has no opposite; there is nothing to compare with eternity. We know there is a place of habitation, for the prophet writes thus, for thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy. This eternity is heaven, for when Stephen was preaching his last sermon he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. So God Jehovah is eternal, and eternity is his habitation. Time and timely things are a manifestation of his power and wisdom. He is the fountain of all life and power; there is no immortality existing in any other being. This eternal Spirit, or life, is the only eternal preservative of man; nothing aside from it can cause man to live again, or eternally. This eternal Spirit was united with the elements of mother nature in the womb of the virgin Mary, and there by the power of God in that virgin a body was formed like unto ours, and in the course of time this spiritual child was born. We call him a spiritual child, because an eternal Spirit was united with a body of material flesh, and this eternal Spirit was never disunited from that body until it was suspended between the heavens and the earth for the sins of his people, and then we hear him say, Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit. His body was enveloped by mother earth in Joseph's new tomb, there to await the appointed time of the Father to send his

Holy Spirit again to cause lifeless Jesus to live again, therefore enabling him to rise a conqueror over death and the grave; and at the expiration of forty days after this time we behold that same Spirit in the presence of hundreds of witnesses carry that body that was formed of the elements of nature, from time to eternity, from the sphere of nature to the celestial heaven. This is the only way recorded in holy writ by which man can live again, the only way he can be freed from the sphere of nature. No wonder then that the hope of all of living again is centered in God Jehovah.

Dear brethren, time and space forbid me writing more at this time, although I have only hinted at the subject. If I am in the dark on anything I have tried to write of, I hope some dear brother will be given a mind to lead me into the true light.

Yours in hope of living again,

L. D. HOSKINS.

BELOVED BROTHER CHICK:—In the likeness of Him whom you by your daily walk profess to serve. I am thinking of the words, The people that sat in darkness saw a great light. While I feel to write, being deprived of the privilege of meeting with the brethren to-day, yet I cannot speak of such sudden deliverance as some can, but I have a good evidence that I was allured into the wilderness, and made to feel myself utterly lost, and as helpless as a babe. I seemed to hang on the words, Yet save a trembling sinner, Lord, whose hope still hovers round thy word. For months this seemed to be my only comfort. I cannot describe the burden. At length it went away so gradually that I could not tell the time, but I did enjoy a peace that passeth all understanding. Although a poor, lost sinner, His kind care has been over me in all my long life of nearly eighty-five years. I have had no desire, I think, to be with the mixed multitude, neither have I hankered after the garlic and the cucumbers of this world. I have often felt as helpless as a lump of clay in the hands of the potter.

This has been a busy week for you; three funerals, all buried in one yard. I was glad you could go to Virginia. I feel sometimes that the ways of Zion mourn, and that they are neglected and forlorn; but the sheep will all be brought into the fold, if not into the visible church; the sheep will follow Him. There are many lambs bleating around the fold; the Lord is able to perform his own work. How dares mortal man think that he can begin and the Lord will finish? When you went from cousin Joseph's to the grave you passed by the place where I was baptized sixty-five years ago. The ice did me no harm. Never have I had a doubt that the doctrine preached is Bible truth. According to age, I shall soon go hence to that place from which no traveler ever returns. May I hear the joyful sound, Child, your Father calls, come home. The promise is that where he is, there shall his children be also. My brother, continue to preach the word. Farewell.

JANUARY 22, 1910.

ESTEEMED PASTOR:—This is the fourth Saturday, and I suppose the brethren and sisters are met together for worship, a privilege which I have enjoyed for many years, but now I am not fit to go out when it is icy. I have the SIGNS to read, and it helps me to pass many lonely hours. I have often heard it said that old people live more in the past, and now I know this for myself. I can remember

parts of sermons which I heard years ago better than those heard now, but I enjoy a rest while listening to the doctrine of salvation by grace more than I did years ago. The Master said, If the light which is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness. But can the darkness be felt if the light is not within? Often when sitting alone I think of many things in the word of which I would like to ask the meaning, but when the opportunity comes they are not in my mind. The last time I was at the meeting you spoke of the wrath of the Lamb. I do not think that I ever heard it mentioned before. In reading that chapter I hope we understand the character against whom that wrath burned. It was not against them to whom had been given white robes. I once thought when I read the words, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth," it meant the youth of our natural life, but now I look back to my youth in spiritual things. There is much in the word that I do not understand, and my memory seems to fail me very much. I am very nervous. I hope to be at meeting next Saturday, and hope that some may come home to their friends and tell what great things the Lord has done for them, in owning them as his peculiar people. May the good Shepherd lead us, one and all who profess his name, to show by our works and conversation that we have been with Jesus. I hope sometimes that we are led by "a little child."

JULY 10, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER:—Beloved for the evidence you show in daily life and conversation that you are taught by Him who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. I have just been reading a letter from a Mrs. Wright, in which she says that she is afraid she speaks of too much security. That is one thing that I have thought of for myself, although I feel as unworthy as a poor mortal can feel. I was made to know that I was lost, but I never had the fear of hell that some had; my trouble was the thought of being banished from One so lovely, the hem of whose garment I was not fit to touch. Elder Purington once said that next to being born again, to be established in the doctrine was all-important. I love the order of God's house, but my sympathy is for those who are in trouble, as I was for five years. Under a sermon preached by Elder Gabriel Conklin to the poor of the flock I was made to hear the words, This is the way, walk ye in it. I firmly believe that the Old School Baptists are the church of the living God, and believe that they will be raised in his image to be with him in glory. The promise is, Where I am, there ye shall be also. And, They shall be mine when I come to make up my jewels. It does not seem that the religious world has any trouble about these things, but, dear brother, is not this a thorny road? I have learned to dread a calm more than a storm; in a storm we seem to have some evidence that we are living. Have you ever opened your Bible and not felt at all interested? I often think of the words, Could ye not watch with me one hour? Then he said, Sleep on now, and take your rest. I do not think this is natural sleep. The doctrine is that poor sinners rest. Where would our hope be were one good thought to be required of us as the price? Helpless I come, O Lord, to thee.

Your sister in Christ,

MARY F. HART.

[THE foregoing letters, written by sister Hart, and addressed to us, but never sent, were found after her death, and we now give them to our readers.—C.]

(See obituary on page 189, No. 6.)

RICHMOND, Maine, Jan. 13, 1912.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—Nearly a year ago I had an attack of a wearying, troublesome disease, and for the greater part of the winter and spring there was but small comfort or rest for me. During that time my mind was often upon the Scriptures, and if I did not find at all times consolation in them I was again and again made to cry unto the living God. A short time before the inclosed letters from sister Ella Raymond came I had felt that all his waves and his billows had gone over my head, as David said, but my prayer was also, as was his, a cry for deliverance and for a lifting of God's countenance once more upon me. A desire to see and to talk with those who knew the pathway of the afflicted came over me, and I wrote a few words to sister Ella, hardly dreaming that she would think of answering me, much less that she would write the very things I needed to comfort me. I think I knew to some extent how John felt when his brethren returned with the Savior's message to him. He must have felt that the power of God alone could cause the deaf to hear and the blind to see. If this power can cure one soul it can cure me.

I do not know that I have made my meaning plain, but it was as if he had said to me, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Now use your own judgment as to publishing the inclosed letters. You will enjoy reading them I know.

As ever, your sister,

ANGIE THOMAS.

BOWDOINHAM, Maine, April 17, 1911.

DEAR SISTER ANGIE:—If you will excuse pencil writing, I will tell you that I received your card, and was glad to hear from you, but very sorry that you were not feeling well. When I was sick and spent days of sorrow, I would have this Scripture come to me: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." I have seen the years and days when I could say, "I have no pleasure in them." I realize that it does not say, If you remember thy Creator you will not have those days and years. Here is our trust and stay. It is written that when we are in darkness, and have no light, let us trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon our God.

I wrote to Elder Beal, and received from him this good sermon, which I am sending to you. I received a letter from sister Attie, saying that she had written to Elder Beal to have the boy bring him down to the meeting. I hope he will feel able to come. I hope we shall be gathered together, and made to rejoice in His great name. I think that at one time the Lord said to Moses, What have you in your hand? We read that Moses had a rod, and struck the rock, and water came forth for the thirsty ones; but God caused the water to flow. Moses put forth the rod over the Red Sea, but God caused the east wind to blow which divided the sea, so that the children of Israel passed over safely. So I feel that we should use what we have in our hand, as God commands us, and the Lord will cause it to come to pass.

I have written these thoughts as they have come to my mind, but do not know as I have quoted correctly, or whether I have the right interpretation of the Scriptures that I have used, but, dear sister, that fellowship which we feel for each other covers all our failings; that fellowship is not of nature's production,

although some say it is all the product of nature, and other things of the same sort. At sister Attie's I heard one speak in this way, and almost shed tears. I could not help thinking how wonderfully she has been kept by the power of God, when she has had so much opposition.

I must close now. I hope to see you on the second Sunday in May. With much love to you and all yours, I remain your sister,

ELLA RAYMOND.

BOWDOIN, Maine, March 28, 1911.

DEAR SISTER RAYMOND:—I received your letter last week and was very much pleased to get it, and was rejoiced to know that you remembered this poor, feeble, old sinner. Yours is the second letter I have received from any of the members of the church during the time since I was taken sick last September. I have had many times of longing to see or hear from them, and have been tempted to think that perhaps they had no fellowship for me, and surely I do not feel that I am worthy of their esteem or fellowship. This fellowship is one of the things that I have coveted, and I do not think that this is sinful, because one of the apostles of our Lord said, "Covet earnestly the best gifts," and I believe that love and fellowship among the people of God are among the best gifts of God. This love dwells only in the pure heart, the heart that is purged by faith, and only those who are born again have a pure heart. Hear what the apostle Peter says concerning this in the first chapter of his first letter, written to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia. He calls them elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. This is the work of God through the Holy Spirit. These are the strangers whose hope is in God. In verse twenty-two he writes, saying, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren," and we are to love one another with a pure heart fervently. Again, he said that they are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. Please read the whole chapter. Sister Raymond, who is sufficient for these things? We know that we are not sufficient of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.

In your letter you asked me to write you something good. Of myself I cannot write anything good, for in my flesh there is no good thing. But it is written that a good man out of the good treasure his heart bringeth forth good things, but an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth evil things. Have I this good treasure in my heart? Does Jesus dwell in my heart by faith, that faith which works by love and purifies the heart and overcomes the world? Can I say in truth, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever"? This is the language of the church of Christ, the bride, the Lamb's wife. If I could write something that would glorify him I feel that it would be good indeed, but the fearful question is often in my mind, Do I know anything in truth about these things, or am I entirely presumptuous? Dear sister, these thoughts cause me to fear and tremble. Sometimes I think I feel as David did

when he said, O that I had wings like a dove, then would I fly away and be at rest. Then again these words come into my troubled soul, Lord, thou hast searched me and known me. (See Psalms cxxxix., and read the first twelve verses.)

Now, lest I make this letter too long, I will write a little about our temporal things. I have not seen you nor any of the brethren since the last day of our association. I did not expect it would be so when I left the brethren that Sunday afternoon, but the Lord knew. I was taken sick the next day, and was in bed several days, and was in the house and not able to do anything for a number of weeks, but the Lord had mercy, and after quite a time I began to get better, but I do not yet feel as well as I did on the first day of the association. I realize that the grass is withering, and the flower is fading away, but the Word of the Lord endureth forever. When I was sick we thought we would go to Topsham during the winter, but we could not have done that without selling many things, and at quite a loss, and after I got somewhat better we thought it best to try to stay at home. There is no place like home, especially when we get old. We knew that we would be taken good care of if we were not able to take care of ourselves. Our children are good to us, and we feel to thank the Lord that we have them. We have gotten along fairly well so far through the winter, but we have not been far from home. I hope I shall be well enough to go to the meeting when warm weather comes, but I do not know what is in the future. We do not know what a day shall bring forth.

With love to you and Amy, from a poor old brother,

Z. M. BEAL.

[WE have read these letters from dear kindred in our old home in Maine with deep feeling and interest. We have known brother Beal almost since we began attending the Maine Association, and we recall many times when our heart has been filled with gladness as we have heard him in the conference meetings in past years. His brethren among whom he has lived have loved him and do love him. Now in his old age he writes of the same conflicts of mind that have been ours much of the time in all our membership in the church. But we are sure that no one has any such conflicts save the souls that are born of God. We are sure also that brother Beal believes this. Then are not his conflicts certain proof that he is one born of God? What a cheering assurance this is. The two sisters, whose letters are published above, came into the church after it was our privilege to become a member there, and the Lord has been pleased to give to them both a settled faith, and has enabled them to pursue a steadfast walk among his people. We have felt drawn nearer to all three of these writers as we have read their letters.—C.]

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 29, 1912.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I inclose a letter from brother David Zeh. If you think it worthy a place in the SIGNS I would like to see it published, if not, please return to me, and all will be satisfactory.

Your brother, I hope,

J. M. FENTON.

SEWARD, N. Y., Jan. 21, 1912.

ELDER J. M. FENTON—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I was very glad to receive a letter from you, and would like to comply with your request to write my experience of mind and travel from

the first I began to think about God and heaven and hell. I will say that I cannot do that in the way you ask it. Most people can tell of a wonderful change that took place, and the very time, but I am deprived of that privilege in a measure, for I know no date or time. I can only say that once I was blind, but now I see. How do I know I was blind, and that now I see? The Lord said to Adam, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Something came over me that made me see and feel as I did not see and feel before. When I read the Scriptures now I see wonderful promises for me, not for anything I have done, but through what Jesus Christ has done (and I sometimes hope for me). When I look at myself I feel very unworthy, and think how rebellious I have been. Little did I think of the agony He suffered for my sins. I feel as the publican, I dare not raise my head. When I asked for a home in the church I had nothing to say but, Unworthy, unworthy, but for some cause I wanted to be there. I had heard good preaching for many years, but when I heard you declare the wonderful truths, O then was the time that Jesus brought me to his house, and his banner over me was love, and that love has remained with me. I do not feel as though I had deceived the church, for I told them nothing but the truth: that I was very unworthy, but when the Savior drops a crumb in some good sermon or in reading the Scriptures I am like the hungry dog, I must eat it. My father and mother were christian people, I believe; they used to take me, with the rest of my brothers and sisters, to meeting, but I had no heart in the sermon. There were seven of us children, and I think they all believe that if they are saved it is by grace, and grace alone, but none of them has asked a home in the church, yet they cannot mix in with the Arminian doctrine. I was about ten or twelve years old when I remember my parents taking me to meeting; they belonged to the Dutch Reformed people. My father died when I was thirteen years old; I felt awfully bad when he died. Some years after his death I was in the field all alone picking berries for my mother, when the queerest feeling came over me, and I had to cry; I could no more stop crying than I could stop breathing; it was very impressive, and is now over forty years ago, and I still remember it. I never thought that I then was born again, but in the last two or three years, when I trace the way back and see how the Lord led me all those years, I sometimes think that was the beginning with me. I never was in grief over my sins at that time, but now O what grief, I do not do anything but sin. If I am made to see some hope in the Scriptures it is but a little while before some terrible thoughts come into my mind. I have traveled quite a bit, and have heard much good preaching. I was in Middletown sixteen or seventeen years ago, and heard Elders F. A. Chick, Wm. L. Beebe, E. V. White, S. H. Durand, D. M. Vail, J. D. Hubbell and others. O what a feast for me. After that I was married, and two years ago, January 15th, 1910, my wife was taken home to her Savior. O what a trial to pass through, but the Lord has sustained me, and I can say with Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord;" but it is awfully hard at such times when you lose your bosom friend to say, Thy will be done, but when our Savior says, My peace I give unto you, then there is a calm in the raging storm. How soon we would perish if he did not calm the storm.

My dear brother, I hope to hear you preach the third Sunday in February. I am very hungry, have not heard any preaching since the Sunday I was baptized. I hope we will have another feast, if it is the Lord's will.

Your unworthy brother,

DAVID ZEH.

FALLS CITY, Texas, January, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—I have had a mind for a long time to write some account of my experience and call to the ministry, if indeed I have any. My doubts and fears and my deep feeling sense of unworthiness often cause me to fear and tremble lest I am mistaken. I had some thoughts of death in my early life, but they gave me no alarm, but in the summer of 1889 I became very deeply interested about the future, as concerning my condition, as to whether or no I would ever enter the portals of eternal glory. I tried to pray the Lord to have mercy upon me and cause me to know whether I was ever to be saved. These thoughts gave me much trouble, and the more I tried to pray the more I felt the weight of condemnation. My trouble grew worse. When I was in the field at work at times I would hardly know how the time was passing by, the days seemed to be very short. In July, the Missionary Baptists built an arbor near our house and I wanted to attend their meetings. Several young boys and girls went to the altar to be prayed for, and would go to the mourner's bench, and would cry and weep, and seemed to mourn. I thought that no one would ever know I had any trouble, for I could not weep as they did. One night they had been singing for some time and seemed to have a great deal to say to those who were at the mourner's bench, and there I was, I thought, in more trouble than they all, and near the end of these exercises the light began to grow brighter, and all at once the weight that had been on me so long was lifted, and before I knew anything I was up and going around where my father was. He was not in the arbor, but was sitting on a stump near by, and to me it seemed that his face did shine like that of an angel. Now, I thought, my troubles are all gone, and I will never have trouble any more. I thought that I was delivered from the bondage of sin, and that I never would sin again. But in a few days I began to feel as though I had deceived every one there, and, worst of all, I had deceived my father and mother, for I believed that if ever there were two christians on earth they surely were. Then, in a few days, the Missionaries began trying to get me to unite with them, but I refused, for I thought I wanted to be satisfied as to which was the true church, and also I wanted to be sure that I was not deceived. At that time I had begun to teach music, and my work was mostly confined to young people. In 1890 my father sold his home, and moved into another section, near a Missionary people, where I was doing some teaching, and I united with them. In 1893 I began to be dissastisfied with them, and the more I heard them preach the more I became dissatisfied. In 1894 I was married and settled near an Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, where the membership of my father and mother was, yet, although reared by Baptist parents, I had not known what the truth was all that time. I worried along in this way for a year, and went every meeting day to hear the Primitive Baptists, and ceased going to the Missionaries. I called for a

letter from them, and it was granted me. In 1897 I united with the Primitive Baptist Church in Gaines County, Ky. At that time I felt well satisfied. In the winter of the same year I had a dream that caused me some trouble. I thought I went to a neighbor's house and read the text, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." I did not know that such a Scripture was in the Bible, and it was months before I found it. I seemed to be favored with light and liberty, and began to read the Bible at once, and could not be satisfied unless I was reading it. My mind was not at ease at all, for it seemed that something was lacking, but what it was I could not tell. In a short time I had another dream, that gave me more trouble than the former one. I thought I was traveling in Texas by private conveyance, and that on Saturday I came to a church-house near the road. There being some people around the house, I drove up and stopped, and some old man came to me, and said, "I believe that you are a preacher. We have no preacher to-day, so come in and preach for us." I accepted the invitation, and went up into the stand, and had good liberty in preaching. When I concluded that sermon, some of the aged sisters said, That sounds like old times. Afterward I told some one about my curious dreams, but this gave more trouble than ever, for if I had not said anything about it no one save myself would have known anything of my feelings. This was told to the brethren of the church, and the next time I went to the meeting of the church the pastor was not there and the brethren called upon me to speak to them. I told them that I could not talk, but they insisted, so I made the attempt, and thought I would never try it again. But I kept wondering what the dream could mean. Surely it was not meant for me, weak and ignorant as I was; I could never try to do such a thing. I thought then that I had done wrong in telling my dreams. Then I moved from that locality, and said in myself, I think I will not go to the church any more, especially that one, for I will move far enough to keep away. So I moved to a little town, and went into the grocery business, in 1901, but these troubles would come upon me often, and I would think, I have done wrong, I ought to go to the church and tell them about the wonderful work of God. But I acted as did Jonah for a year. My health gave way, and I had to give up the grocery business and move out on a farm near a church of our faith and order. I did not think they knew anything about my trouble. The first meeting day I went, and united with this church by letter, and, to my surprise, the pastor called me to take part in the service. I tried to excuse myself, but he insisted, so I made the attempt. On the second Saturday in 1909 the church called for my ordination. I asked them not to do it, as I was not worthy, but they insisted that I should agree, and I told them that if they thought me worthy I would submit. This was done on the second Saturday in January, 1909. Since then many restless nights have I spent meditating upon these things, not knowing that I have been truly called to this sacred place to try to speak words of comfort to the people of the most high God. Soon after the ordination I was called to the care of the church of my membership. I served them only a short time when my health again gave way. I then sold out my little holdings and came to Texas for the benefit of my health.

So, brethren, as you see, I have not been in the ministry long, and, unprofitable as I am, I feel that if it is the will of God I will do what I can in comforting the poor and afflicted in Zion.

With love to all the household of faith, I remain your unworthy brother in much tribulation,

J. B. BOWDEN.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 22, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I received a letter from Gertrude Shockley a little time ago, and forward it to you for the SIGNS. It seemed good to me, and I think will also be to others.

Your sister in Christ,

MARY HILL TERRY.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 6, 1912.

DEAR MRS. TERRY:—Your letter was kind and good, and we all enjoyed it; it gave me new thoughts and strengthened me. I see much beauty in you, and in Mr. Terry; you seem so far above me that when I receive a line from you, or get to shake hands with you, I feel you have stooped through pity to comfort me. I give God all the glory for your kindness to me, a little, unworthy worm of the dust. Yes, I have had a desire of late, and it daily grows stronger, to have a closer walk with God, and to be more careful of what I say, do and think. I would serve God, and have all I do fit for his all-seeing eye, but O how far short I come of my duty, and how hateful my past life seems to me. O that my future might be a life of praise to his holy name, let it be long or short. I love you people; my heart goes out in love to you. I wish I could be as I see you to be. The older I grow the more I realize that God is all-wise, almighty and full of mercy and love. His grace is saving grace, which none can hinder, no matter how hard the world tries to rob him of his glory; the more they try the plainer it seems to the people of God that there is no truth in the do and live doctrine that men try so hard to set forth. God's people know that there is no other name whereby they must be saved, and that life must always precede action. But, Mrs. Terry, this is an inexhaustible subject, and too deep and too precious for a sinner like me to attempt to write or to speak about to the Lord's dear children, who know him to be their Savior, who have been with Jesus and have learned of him. I am ignorant, and unworthy to claim the promises which are to his little ones. I only know that I love his children dearly, and would be more like them and more Christlike. I desire to grow daily out of self and into Christ. I have fully decided of late, as I have often done in past years, but more fully now, that there is no one like me. Had I been only a beast I would not have been such a rebel, such a vile, undone sinner, and could not have brought reproach upon or have offended his dear, precious children. Dear friends, you who love the Lord indeed, can see how vain, how ignorant and how unfruitful I am of all things pertaining to God's dear children and kingdom, and still, after knowing all this, I will try to speak of the things of the kingdom which belong to his dear children, and not to dogs. The more I love God and his children the more hateful I seem, and the more hatred I have of self. I see much beauty in others, and then turn my eyes within, and I almost sink in despair, yet my little hope has never failed me, else surely I could not stand. I feel to say, Hinder me not, ye much loved saints, for I must go with you. I must follow as near you as possible, hoping to catch a

crumb, which I seem more and more to crave the older I grow. There is no other people for me than the dear people of God, and these are the Old School or Primitive Baptists, a remnant, a people not reckoned among the nations of the earth.

You spoke of the sermon on Sunday. Elder Mellott was over in the afternoon, and talked as fast as he could to us, as it seemed, while he stayed. Mother and Howard enjoyed his visit very much. I knew it was truth, but dared not think it was for me, I felt so unworthy. Howard said your letter was good, and that he would like to say a word to both of you, but cannot. He is so afraid to speak, knowing it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. He says he is nothing, and cannot do anything to change his condition, and is waiting for the Lord, trusting his promises. The Lord has promised to visit him, and when he does Howard believes he will show to him what he is to do. He said, Why should a holy Being choose such an awkward, ignorant, sinful creature as I am, in whom to make known his love and mercy? He cannot understand it, and is afraid to claim that such is the case. He only knows that he has a little hope, and that he loves to meet with those who have been through such trials as he is passing through. He feels that he cannot express himself; he can only say that he is alone, and there is no one like him; no one so ignorant of what he so much desires to know. He says that he loves to read the Bible, but does not understand it as he would like, but you people tell how he feels better than he can tell you, yet you all are so much better, and have something worthy of being told, while he is full of sin and self. He believes that God is just, and has a set time for all things, and although he is trying to wait that time of the Lord, there is a dreadful warfare within. He says that self is his worst enemy, and he has no power to get rid of self. He has found that God alone can help him.

Well, I must close. I hope you can read this. I do not want you to go out any more until the weather is better, although we love you and miss you, as you well know. If you can only drop us a line of such as the dear Lord has given you, we will be fed by that, and greatly comforted. May God ever be praised by all you dear people, who are his elect through mercy and forgiveness, is the prayer of a little unworthy friend,

GERTRUDE SHOCKLEY.

FRANKLIN, Ind., Jan. 11, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find two dollars to pay my subscription to the SIGNS for one year. I have done without it, feeling that I was not able to pay for it. I have not seen a copy since June, 1910, but have read and reread my old ones. I have wanted to take it very much, but felt, being all alone, that I needed all the money I could lay up as I grew older. Last night as I mused, the sweet thought came to me that the Lord would provide. Blessed be his holy name, he has provided, and I have seen the hand of Providence working for me in many special ways, and my faith is that he will ever provide a way for me while it is his will that I stay in this world of sorrow and affliction. I have read many good letters of comfort and consolation from the dear brethren and sisters, which often have been blessed to me. I would love to write to them again, telling them that they express my feelings so well that it strengthens my hope, for often I feel that I cannot be a

child of God, I feel so unworthy of all the love and joy that my dear Lord has given me. Would he send his Spirit into our hearts crying, Abba, Father, if we were not his children? As I said, I would love to write, but when I read over one of my poor letters I always feel that it crowds out something better. I desire to tell brother Chick how precious his editorials have been to me in the dear old SIGNS. I have been reading in June 15th, 1910, upon, O Lord, thou art the potter, and we are the clay. This has been so precious; I read it often, and tears of joy roll down my cheeks. I have thought, Such a poor, sinful being as I going to him so often with my cries and groans for mercy; it seems as though he must get wearied with my continual pleading, yet my faith looks up with all the dear saints, and cries, Thou art our Father. This, dear brother, has been your experience, and therefore you were enabled by it to comfort us with the same comfort wherewith you were comforted of God. I enjoyed reading your editorial in April, 1910. When I came to where you said, "What does it mean?" I said, Surely it means that his not forgiving is in the sense that he will withhold his joy, and the evidences of his forgiving love from them, and as I read on, you presented the same idea. My letter is too lengthy now, but there is one more editorial which seems to me to be the best of all, in June, 1910, upon "The deep things of God." O how it extols our God, who is omnipotent, high and lifted up, and who rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. Where is there any place for man to rule independent of God's purposes? I once was not reconciled to believe thus, but O how I love to read what is written upon these hard points of doctrine, as they are termed sometimes. It fills my heart with a reverential awe when I meditate upon the attributes of Deity; he is omnipotent in power, the sovereign Ruler of the universe, having all power in heaven and in earth. He works all things after the counsel of his own will. He speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast. All these attributes are plainly ascribed to him in the Scriptures; predestination and election are also plainly taught in the Scriptures. How can any child of God desire to avoid them? It is written, "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." They are elect according to the foreknowledge of God. How blessed that our future destiny was fixed in eternity, and not left, as the world says, to depend upon our works in obeying the Lord in order to get to heaven. If they are like me they have no good works to base such hope upon. O then let us look away from our unprofitable lives to that supreme Being who, as we hope, chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ. The hardest points, as they call them, seem so plain to me; predestinated unto adoption, according to the eternal purpose of God, which he purposed in Christ Jesus. O what a solid foundation for a poor sinner's hope, and yet how many want to avoid it, and some dear, humble saints also feel this way. I hope that more will write upon the doctrine called "the deep things of God." As you have said, all are deep things. Why he chose his people to be heirs of heaven, is one of the deep things, too deep for human comprehension. O it is my greatest joy when my heart is permitted to look

away from self and to meditate upon these strong Bible truths.

I did not think of writing so much. I fear that you cannot read what I have written to-night, as my eyes are poor; but my mind seems taken away from my poor, sinful self, and placed upon these blessed Bible truths, and I wanted to write about them. O dear watchmen, one and all, upon the walls of Zion, proclaim them for the profit of the poor.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

SOPHRONIA B. THOMPSON.

WALKER, Oregon, Jan. 26, 1912.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I have a feeling to write you, and yet a hesitancy to occupy your time, that I know is very busily used in your great labor of love. I have very little idea of the strain of such a responsible position as an editor of such a paper as the dear old SIGNS, which God has surely included in his gifts for the edifying of the body, that ye be no longer children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine. It is not infallible, as are the Scriptures given by inspiration, yet the oneness of doctrine from its initial number, and its accord with the Scriptures in the doctrine of divine sovereignty which the Scriptures make plain, is the supreme object of time and timely things. He says, Isaiah xlv., that they may know from the west, and from the rising of the sun, I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me. I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I the Lord do all these things. And the four and twenty elders (Rev. iv. 11,) said, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." There is some complaint that too much is said about God's sovereignty (predestination), but to those who have been in the horrible pit and in the miry clay of human effort every time we raise one foot to place it on a supposed condition the other only sinks deeper, until our utter helplessness is plainly seen; then if our feet are taken out and placed upon a rock, to such, who know the need of a sure foundation, the rock cannot be pictured too solid. He is the Rock, his work is perfect, for his ways are judgment; a God of truth, and without iniquity; just and right is he. We every one have a thousand times more burden than our poor, finite selves could ever bear except for his tender care and longsuffering toward us, if he were not a very present help in every time of need. There is so much of common interest along this rugged pathway that there is at once a bond of sympathy awakened from our inward man, an immediate feeling of acquaintance whenever we hear a poor wayfaring man relate even a few incidents of the journey, and it does us good to go through the blessed old Book of books, and follow the blessed old servants, not only beside the still waters, in green pastures, &c., but also as men of unclean lips, dwelling among a people of unclean lips, and beholding the King, the Lord of hosts, who was afflicted in all their afflictions, "and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them: and he bare them and carried them all the days of old." He said, In six troubles I will be with thee, and in the seventh (the full number) I will not forsake thee. Yes, he has traveled the thorny path, and his infinite wisdom has marked every obstacle, passed through the depth of every dark valley, even to the cold, dark tomb, conquering

the last foe, triumphantly ascending to his Father, as he said to one, My God and your God, and he left the blessed promise: "Because I live, ye shall live also." Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things he suffered, and why not we poor, sin-cursed mortals? Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. We are ever prone to forget God and look upon man, but cursed be man that trusteth in man, or that maketh flesh his arm. Do you not believe one who is so vain needs to be cursed with chastening to burn up the dross, sift out the wheat? Paul suffered many things from nearly every earthly foe, shipwreck, stripes, beasts, robbers, false brethren, bonds, &c., and he said, I die daily; and thus he was purged of dross, hay, wood, stubble, sifted from the chaff, and his faith in God, who alone is able to sustain us, only grew brighter, and he declared, "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." We are often forewarned of the certainty of afflictions. Peter said, Brethren, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you. Jeremiah said, "Ah! Lord! God! Behold, I cannot speak; for I am a child." But the Lord said unto him, "Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak."

Brother Ker, I know your task on the editorial staff of our dear old family paper is like all of the rest of our tasks, much more than we can accomplish, only that it has many complications the rest of us do not have to contend with, and if I could I would be very glad to speak a word of comfort and encouragement, but I know of nothing better than to lean heavily on the strong arm of your Elder Brother, who will never leave nor forsake you. If God be for us, who can be against us? Even our own sinful inclinations cannot separate us from the love of God, who loved us and gave himself for us. When we are in the dark valley and cast down in spirit our vision cannot rise to the next mountain top, but he leads us by a way we knew not and in paths we had not known. God has ever blessed his people, who are fortunate enough to read the SIGNS, with an able ministry to direct it to their comfort and upbuilding. I have very much enjoyed reading after every one of you. Elder Chick has again and again written to my full comfort on various subjects that were puzzling my mind, and yet I am always sorry when I fail to see "K" in the paper, for your writings have been of particular interest to me, next to Elder Gilbert Beebe's, because some way I seem to have traveled more of the same road, or rather noted the same waymarks. I have often thought of asking your views on various subjects, but have generally found my desires gratified without making the request, and have felt it better not to thus distract your attention from the things that occupy your mind.

I realize this letter, like myself, is far from what I would desire, but I always find my feeble mind and stammering tongue entirely lacking in words to ascribe power and glory to His holy name. But when the dark glass is removed, if it be our happy lot, when a thousand years are passed and gone there will be no less days to sing God's worthy praise than when we first begun.

Your very unworthy brother, I hope,

G. O. WALKER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1912.

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JOHN XIX. 10, 11.

"THEN saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin."

Our dear aged brother, E. D. Varnes, of Farmington, Ill., asks that we give such thoughts as we have concerning the words embraced in these two verses. "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." In replying to this request it seems to us impossible to separate the words that were in our brother's mind from the other expressions contained in these two verses, and therefore we have quoted them all. Jesus had been betrayed and arraigned before the high priest Caiaphas, and by him sent to Pilate. The Jews who brought him to Pilate had not entered into the judgment-hall, as the passover was at hand, and they feared lest they should have been defiled, and so be cut off from eating the passover. How quick they were to see the danger of ceremonial defilement, and how zealous they were to avoid it, while yet they thought little of their inward defilement of heart and conscience. Their righteousness was that of forms and ceremonies, but not that of justice, judgment, truth and mercy, and all other good fruits. They were careful to avoid ritual defilement, while at the same time plunging their very thoughts and passions into the vilest of injustice and rebellion against God. So they would not come into the Gentile judgment-hall, while at the same time they were paying court to the author of all lies and blasphemy. Their cry before Pilate was, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate said, I find no fault in him, take him and crucify him. They said, By our law he ought to die, for he made himself the Son of God. Then, we are told, Pilate was sore afraid, and went into the judgment-hall, and said to Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. We need not stop here to ask what was involved in this question of Pilate, nor the reason why Jesus gave him no reply. It is sure that Pilate was not sincere in his inquiry, and it is sure that had the blessed Jesus told him the truth, there was no understanding in him which could have taken hold of the reply.

Second. Pilate said unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? The question means, as it seems to us, Dost thou disregard me, your ruler? Hast thou no respect to me as the ruler of this country, and as thy judge? Then follows an appeal both to hope and fear. It is clear that he did not comprehend that this was the Son of God indeed. Had he done so he would have known that neither the hope of saving his life nor the fear of losing it could have any weight with Jesus, and Pilate did not, as it appears to us, speak here simply as a man, but as a ruler and judge, in whose hands life and death had been placed, as it was in the hands of all rulers in olden times.

He would say this, Knowest thou not that I am the appointed ruler here? If I shall speak the word thou mayest be free, and if I speak the word thou shalt be crucified. Had Jesus been only a man there would have been great weight in this appeal. Had his mission been simply one of time and of the earth, he might well have taken counsel of prudence and have sought the favor of his judge. Pilate saw no higher than this, but the Son of God was raised up above all selfish, earthly considerations. His mission was not to secure the dominion over nations and tribes, such as Rome held at that time, he came to redeem men from sin and from everlasting death; he came to deliver men from a worse than human slavery. All this Pilate could not understand, nor did the people of the Jews understand, because they did not know they fulfilled the will of God in crucifying the Son of man. For we are told that had they known that he was the Son of God indeed, they would not have crucified him. We see here the wisdom of God in keeping this knowledge from them, that His purpose might be fulfilled by them.

Third. Jesus replied, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." Surely these words are plain. They mean, evidently, first, that whatever of personal power or influence he had to wield in the matter was from God. Second, that whatever authority he had, as the appointed ruler, this was also given him of God; whatever his decree might be, whether for or against the dear Redeemer, it was not of himself, but of God. The word "power" here cannot be confined to either his personal influence or to his standing as the ruler and judge in that nation. True, these were his, as much as they belonged to any man, but the words evidently mean that in this particular case of his dealing with Jesus, whether for loosing him and letting him go free, or condemning him to death, the supreme power was not his, and he could not have sentenced Jesus, either to life or death, except this power had been specially conferred upon him from above. Jesus spoke calmly, without railing, he knew the mind of the Father from whom he had come forth, he had come to earth for this very end. Thus it was written, and thus it behooved him to suffer, and to rise again from the dead the third day. This was the appointment of God from eternity. Had this not been so, no man could have laid hold upon him, and as this was so, not all the entreaties nor remonstrances of his loving disciples could turn him from the way that was set before him, and so when Peter would have said, "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee," the blessed Lord said, "Get thee behind me, Satan; * * * thou savorest not of the things that be of God, but those that be of men." No human power could hasten this decree, and no human hand could retard it. The multitude could demand his death, and the disciples could seek to hinder this dreadful end, but neither the one nor the other could affect the purpose of God in the matter one hair's breadth. Jesus, therefore, did not fear men, he did not need to fear what men could do unto him; all, all was in the hand of his Father in heaven; all, all was from above; all, all was the fulfillment of the divine decree, and so, very calmly, Jesus replied, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." Was the crucifixion then of heaven, or of men? It was of both. Pilate gave consent that he should be

crucified, but high heaven had decided that this should be from the countless ages of eternity. Pilate yielded through weakness to the demands of the Jews. The Jewish rabble indeed demanded his death, threatening Pilate with an appeal to Rome against himself as a traitor, and so in sin did they proceed to the destined end, but, after all, neither of them could have had any power at all in the matter except it had been given them of God. Men decreed his death indeed, but Jehovah had decreed it endless ages before. It is not supposable that men who loved him and possessed the Spirit that was in him would ever have crucified the dear Savior. If men were to be concerned in this matter at all, it must be they who were enemies and haters of his words and works, and so the infinite love of God to sinners met here the well-nigh infinite evil that is in the hearts of men, and wrought through that evil the fulfillment of the purpose to save sinners. Here is indeed a mystery; the mystery of godliness and the mystery of iniquity, both fulfilled in the betrayal and crucifixion of the Redeemer of men. Sin in the hearts of men, manifesting itself in hatred, envy, jealousy and rage against the Holy One, is made to fulfill the holy decrees of a just God, and yet holiness is no less holiness and sin is no less sin.

Fourth. Let us consider the closing sentence for a little: "Therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." There can be, as it seems to us, no question that he who had the greater sin was the high priest, Caiaphas, for it was he who delivered Jesus unto Pilate. (See chapter xviii., verse 28.) Some things seem apparent in these words. The first that occurs to us is, that as Caiaphas is said to have had the greater sin, it is manifest that in Pilate was some sin. Jesus does not here refer to that natural depravity of heart which is the same in all men, seeing that all men are sold under sin, and all men are filled with enmity against God by nature, according to the testimony of the word, but he does refer to the special actions of these two men upon this occasion. While we all, as Old School Baptists, believe and teach the total depravity of all men, from the testimony of the Scriptures, yet we all also speak of certain words or deeds of men as being worse than the words or deeds of other men. We say that murder is worse than theft; ingratitude to parents, or to those from whom we have received great benefit, is worse than indifference to strangers. Jesus himself recognized this difference when he taught that those who knew their master's will, and did it not, should be beaten with many stripes, while they who did not know their master's will, and did it not, should be beaten with few stripes. This is all in the way of God's dealings with men in their relation to the things commanded of them in their outward life. All this says nothing about the natural state of the heart, which elsewhere is declared to be deceitful and desperately wicked. Pilate and Caiaphas were both unregenerate men, having neither of them any love to God nor faith in his Son, but Pilate was of the nonprofessing world, while Caiaphas was a religionist, full of the pride and vainglory of the self-righteous. Pilate cared not whether the religion of Jesus lived or died; like another ruler, he cared for none of these things, he had no hatred against the person or the faith of Jesus Christ; but Caiaphas was filled with malice and hatred, because this man had denounced the religion of which he was the outward head. Right here is one difference to be

seen between true and false religion. He who is filled with a vainglorious religion becomes angered when his religion is assailed, while he who possesses true religion pities and prays for that one who opposes and denounces his religion. The Pilates of this world despise this true religion, counting it as worthy of no notice, either of praise or blame, while the high priests and the rabble of a false religion are filled with hatred against those who profess it. Thus we are taught that both Caiaphas and Pilate had sin in this matter, but the high priest had the greater sin; his sin was mingled with the venom of hatred and anger against the Son of men, but Pilate felt no hatred or malice; he would have gladly saved the Redeemer from death, but feared the rage of the people. Pilate indeed had the sin of condoning an injustice, of yielding one to death in whom he had found no fault, but there was no hatred or malice in his heart, but rather pity for this great sufferer. He was weak rather than malicious, but he that delivered Jesus to him was filled with maliciousness. It is in this, as it seems to us, that Caiaphas had the greater sin. But now we come to consider for a moment the fact that there was sin in them both. How wonderful is the language of Peter in the second chapter of the Acts: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Also see Acts iii. 17, 18: "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." Also that other language in Acts iv. 27, 28: "For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." We have heard it claimed, ever since we could remember anything, that when men did what God had predestinated or determined before to be done, in that thing sin could not be laid to their charge. On the other hand, we have all our life heard it claimed that the predestination of God could not be in any sin which is laid to the charge of men. In the days when we used to feel more like entering into argument with men upon these things than we have of late years we have referred to these Scriptures as proving that here, at least, was one sin laid to the charge of men, in the words of an inspired apostle, which yet our God had determined before, or had predestinated, and we have ever felt that it was not ours to seek to bring down to our own reason or to the reason of other men the harmony with each other of the two things declared in these texts, viz., the sin of man on the one hand, and the purpose, the determinate counsel of God, on the other hand. We do not desire to attempt to do this now, but we do insist that we all ought to receive both these statements at their full value, and leave all the rest with God.

We now leave these thoughts with our dear brother and with all who may read them. C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

FAITH.

DEAR SIR:—Not having been a reader of your paper, I may in the following question repeat one which during your editorial labors you have often had propounded. It is on the subject of faith. Will you, or some of your correspondents, be so kind as to give your views on the proposition whether the creature can or does have anything to do with the creation or operation of his faith, or whether it be the exclusive gift of God? If your time and space will permit, your answer in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be very welcome.

Very truly yours,

R. W. MONROE.

EVANSVILLE, W. Va., Jan. 25, 1865.

By faith, we presume our correspondent means evangelical or gospel faith, that faith without which it is impossible to please God. According to Webster, and other standard lexicographers, the term may be variously applied, and the Scriptures speak of the faith of God, the faith of Christ, the faith of God's elect, and also of the faith of men, of devils, of living faith, and of dead faith. The Spirit of inspiration has through the apostles particularly described the origin, nature, power and vitality of the faith of the gospel, as faith that works by love and purifies the heart, which subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness made strong, waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens, &c. From all that is said in the Scriptures of true, living and triumphing faith, we may infer that there is in the world a spurious, false, lifeless and deceptive faith, or what is called faith, and so received and regarded by the religious world. In the creation and operation of the faith of men and of devils, men and devils have much to do, and we need only to sum up their own testimony to show that it is a creature of their own; indeed, it bears their image and their superscription. So indeed they seem to understand it, and to speak of it as something which is required of and to be produced by ungodly sinners, as a price or condition of salvation. As in their appeals to the unregenerate, they represent that however destitute sinners may be of faith, they can originate it if they will, and that, too, without much cost or labor. It has often been asserted by their preachers that it is as easily produced as for a man to turn his hand over. The very presentation of the appeal of our correspondent for our views affords evidence that the power of the creature to create faith, and when created to put it in motion and control its operation, is contended for by many, and it is well known to be a cardinal doctrine in every Arminian workmongrel creed. Of that kind of faith it would be folly for us to deny the power of creatures to create and manage. The machinery of antichrist is apparent to every intelligent observer. History points us to ecclesiastical councils, in solemn convocation from time to time, under the protection of human powers organized expressly for the purpose of making creeds, to be enforced by pains and penalties, flames and faggots, racks and tortures, upon the children of this world, and their humanly devised creeds are received by millions as saving faith. In modern times, and in our own country, the machinery for the manufacturing of faith and piety embrace infant schools, Sabbath Schools, Bible classes, catechisms, scientific lectures, Theological Seminaries, and even our public district schools are almost universally used for the same deceptive purposes. All these, beside the drilling, forging

and blowing, so common at excitement meetings, anxious benches and other means-using appliances, are in requisition. The kind of faith engendered by the power and ingenuity of men, by whatever means, mode or machinery, like the idols of the ancients of which we read, is destitute of vitality. There is no breath in the midst of it, unless it be the inspiration of delusion, fanaticism and will-worship, breathing slaughter against the cause and people of the living God. According to the solemn predictions of inspired wisdom, the faith of antichrist in the last days should be greatly facilitated by signs and lying wonders, and by all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."—2 Thess. ii. 11, 12. (See also Rev. xiii. 12–14.) But the faith of which we understand our friend to inquire is as distinct and opposite to the faith of men and devils as holiness is opposite to and distinct from sin, as heaven is from hell. No creature can have anything to do, or in other words, can do anything in its creation or its operation.

First. No creature can have anything to do in creating it, because we are expressly told in the sacred record that Christ is the author and the finisher of it. (Heb. xii. 2.) This declaration leaves no room for creatures to operate in its creation. He who is the author is also the finisher. As in the creation of the world, God began and God finished the work, leaving no other beings room to claim that they had participated in its creation, so creatures are equally excluded from participation in the creation or production of the faith of the Son of God. He did not merely begin, and leave creatures to finish the work, for all his works are perfect, and that which is perfect cannot be improved. 1. Creatures, or created beings, are natural, all their powers and perceptions are natural, and must fail to comprehend or perform spiritual things; and faith is a spiritual and vital principle; it is therefore beyond the sphere of creature agency. All the faith that men can create is like themselves, natural. As a spider cannot spin a web from any material that it does not possess in its own filthy bowels, so the faith produced by creatures is not in whole nor in part the faith of the Son of God. 2. The faith of the gospel is spiritual, for it is the fruit of the Spirit. (Gal. v. 22.) All fruits of the Spirit must be spiritual. That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit. (John iii. 6,) and the faith of the saints is born of God, (1 John v. 4,) and it must therefore be spiritual, for being born of God, it must possess the life, power and immortality of God, and therefore is able to, and does overcome the world. 3. Creatures can have no part in the creation of the faith of Christ, nor can they even bring themselves into possession of it, or under its power, for the apostle positively declares that it is not of themselves, but it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. (Eph. ii. 8, 9.) 4. If it were the creature or production of men it would be the property of men, whereas the Scriptures declare that it is the faith of the Son of God. Gal. ii. 20: "And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Paul had not therefore had anything to do in its creation. Again, it is called the faith of God, (Rom. iii. 3,) as it

could not be called if it were of the creature. The second inquiry submitted is, whether the creature can or does have anything to do with the operation of his faith? The answer to this, as well as the other inquiry, must depend on what is intended by "his faith." If the creature is a member of Christ, and, like Paul, living by the faith of the Son of God, then, as a member of the body of Christ, the faith of the Son of God is his faith, for of Christ's fullness has he received, and grace for grace, because Christ in all his fullness is given to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. In this relation the faith of the Son of God, as the life, righteousness, sanctification and redemption of Christ, is his, and he is the author and finisher of his faith. As there is but one Lord, so to the head and body of the church there is but one faith and one baptism, and the redeemed of the Lord shall all come in the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. (Eph. iv. 5, 13.) Having already shown that the faith of human origin must be operated by the power which gave it being, we shall now consider the inquiry to be concerning the operation of the faith of the Son of God, as existing in the children of God. To answer the question then requires that we consider, What is faith? And what are its operations? And by what power are they controlled? 1. The faith of which we now speak is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. (Heb. xi. 1.) It is that living principle in the quickened family of God which realizes and actualizes to them those spiritual things which no human power or discernment can comprehend, by which the saints "look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."—2 Cor. iv. 18. Even as Moses by faith endured as seeing him who is invisible. (Heb. xi. 27.) It is to the child of God what the eye is to the natural body. As our natural eye beholds natural objects which we could not see without the eye, so faith looks within the veil, beholds the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and makes real to us that which without vital faith would only be at the best a vain speculation. It is through faith that the Spirit reveals all spiritual things to the saints; while here we live by faith, we walk by faith and are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation; hence it is evidence of things not seen, things which the eye hath not seen, things which the vulture's eye hath not seen, which God hath hidden from the wise and prudent, but hath revealed to the faith of his children. 2. The operations of faith are confidence in God, reliance on his counsel, wisdom, goodness and grace, perceptions of his power and glory, confident trust in his gracious promises, discoveries of his dealings, the revelation of Christ in all his Mediatorial fullness and glory, a clear apprehension of his truth, and of all things pertaining to his purpose and grace in the salvation of his people. Faith also in its operation suppresses fear, triumphs over doubts and infidelity, strengthens and confirms the christian's hope, overcomes the world and all worldly powers and influences which war against the soul. It glories in the cross of Christ, it discovers and points out the pathway of holiness, directs to the throne of grace,

inclines those who possess it to follow Christ in his ordinances, to obey him in all his precepts and makes them dearly love his service. It inspires courage to face the enemy, to endure hardness as good soldiers, to suffer the loss of all things and to count not their own lives dear unto themselves, so that they may finish their course with joy. The operations of faith are most gloriously exemplified in the cloud of witnesses presented in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, in the patriarchs, prophets and men of God, from the days of Abel until the apostolic age, and from that period the subjects of this holy faith have known and testified of the power and triumphs of faith over all the opposing powers of darkness in their lives and in their deaths. How often have some of us witnessed the powerful operation of faith making the dying bed of the saints feel softer than the downy pillow, in disarming death of all terror and the grave of victory, lighting up the otherwise dark, dreary and gloomy passage with immortal radiance and refulgent glory. These are what we understand to be some of the operations of the faith of the Son of God, as it operates in and upon the saints until they shall need to walk by faith no longer; until

> "They shall see and hear and know,
> All they desired or wish'd below,
> And every power find sweet employ
> In the eternal world of joy."

3. The power which conducts the operations of faith must be at least as great as the faith and its operations are. As we have seen that this faith of the Son of God, which is born of God, overcomes the world, if we believe the testimony we cannot admit that the world has any power to control its operations. As there is a divine power in faith, as it is the faith of the Son of God, the faith of God, as well as the faith of God's elect, it cannot be governed or controlled by any power out of itself. Even the christian who has often felt its power, labors in vain to control its operations. God, its author, has ordained that it shall be tried, for the trial of it is precious, and shall result in its final victory and his declarative glory. The christian would naturally desire to be always exulting in its victories, or rejoicing in its discoveries, dreads, but cannot prevent, the fiery ordeal by which it is to be tried. The christian to whom God has given the precious faith of his dear Son, although he has no power to create or control it, yet has much to do with its operations; but let us understand, although he cannot govern its operations, he can and must be governed by it. He cannot exercise faith, but faith can exercise him. This much he has to do with the operation of faith: he has to feel it, to love it, to cherish it, to testify of it, to be led by it, to walk by it and to live by it. Yea, the children of God are called to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, and labor to suppress all their carnal corruptions of the flesh which are at war with it, by crucifying the old man with its affections and lusts, and when the powers of the flesh seem to prevail, and doubts, and fears, and darkness, and temptations make them tremble and faint, they then have something to do; they are constrained to cry out, in the full conviction of their own weakness and inability to exercise faith, Lord, increase my faith. Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief. Thus acknowledging that God's power in keeping them is through faith unto salvation.

In conclusion, we will give some discriminating marks by which the honest inquirer after truth, if God has given

him an ear to hear, and a heart to understand the truth, may distinguish between the faith of the Son of God and that which can be produced by men. The true is born of God, and lives and abides with hope and charity in the hearts of God's quickened children; the false is a bastard, and shall dwell in Ashdod. (Zec. ix. 6.) The true is a living or vital faith; the false is dead, or totally destitute of spiritual life. The true conquers the sinner, and prostrates him as a willing and joyful captive at the feet of Jesus; the false is conquered by the sinner, and wholly under his control and management. The true humbles its possessor before the majesty of the Lord; the false inflates with pride and self-importance. The true is immediately from God; the false is from the devil. The true leads the child of God through great tribulations up to the paradise of God; the false leads down to the chambers of death. The true makes the penitent publican stand smiting on his breast; the false inclines the Pharisee to boast of his own works. True faith inclines the heart to listen to what God the Lord has said, to believe what God has said and to rely alone on what God has done for life and immortality. False faith leads men to reject the testimony of God, to trust to their own vain imaginations and rely upon their own works for acceptance with God. True faith works by love, and purifies the heart; false faith works by the carnal, depraved impulses of the mind, which is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. True faith stands not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God; false faith stands in the wisdom of men and in the power of darkness, of free-will and human agency. True faith relies on what God has done; false faith on what men intend to do. True faith looks for redemption, justification and acceptance with God, through the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, while false faith confides in human merit, self-righteousness and will-worship. True faith feeds on every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God, while false faith thrives upon false doctrine, false philanthropy, false worship and feeds and fattens on its own flesh. The faith of the Son of God leads those to whom it is given to his church, his people, his ordinances, his precepts and his examples, but false faith leads men to seek the society which is more suited to their depraved taste, and which they find in the various branches or departments of Babylon. True faith purifies the heart, but false faith vitiates the heart, and fills it with envy, wrath, hatred, malice, revenge, murder, seditions, heresies and all that is vile and abominable.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 15, 1865.

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

WE are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Silas H. Durand, March 2nd, 1912, at the home of the bride's parents, in Ivyland, Pa., Walter Carrell and Bertha Wells Hobensack, both of Ivyland, Pa.

By the same, at the home of the bride's father, Southampton, Pa., March 20th, 1912, Gilbert Beebe McColl, of Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Edith Pusey Durand.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, March 3rd, 1912, at the home of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Lemuel Brittingham, John H. Powell and Miss Mary W. Brittingham, both of Wicomico County, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder William Morphew had been a member of the Old School Baptist Church since 1846. He first united with the Bethel Church, in Fulton County, Ill., in 1846, by experience, and was a member of that church until 1867; he then moved to Warren County, Iowa, and united with the Otter Creek Church by letter, and was ordained to the ministry in 1868. He was pastor of that church until 1885. He stood firm for the cause of the Old Baptists. In 1897 he moved to Laclede County, Mo., and joined Pisgah Church. In November, 1899, he came to Minnesota, locating in Garden City. He and Elder Garrett Murphy and others organized a church called Lime Creek, in which he held his membership until he was called home, March 5th, 1912. As he had requested that none but an Old Baptist should preach the funeral sermon, there was no sermon, but a reading from 2 Corinthians v.; also hymns 406 and 404 (Thompson's hymn-book) were read (there being no one present who could sing them). He was a sufferer from heart trouble and Bright's disease for a great many years, and was blind twenty-three years. The last two days of his life were mostly spent in untold pain. When a few minutes before death his pain ceased, he offered an earnest prayer to Almighty God for deliverance from earth and earthly things, passing away without a struggle and wearing a smile of contentment, which was a relief to the bereaved ones.

M. MORPHEW.

GARDEN CITY, Minn., March 8, 1912.

Green Woodrum, our dear father, was taken from us by death March 4th, 1912. While it filled our hearts with profound sorrow, we rejoice in the Lord for the bright hope he left us of a life beyond this vale of tears. He was born Dec. 20th, 1839. In 1860 he was married to Letha Griffith; to that union were born three children. In 1866 this loving wife was taken from him. In 1867 he was married to Mary F. Estep; to that union were born six children (of which the writer is one). In 1878 this dear wife was also taken from him. Late in the year 1878 he was married to Louisa H. Dolin; to that union were born eight children. He was a soldier in the Confederate arm in the war of 1861-1865. He had been all his life, up to the last ten years, a physically strong man, but about ten years ago he became afflicted with rheumatism, which gradually grew more and more annoying until his death. His early life was, as he said, spent in wickedness and sin. In 1872 he, together with his second wife, professed a hope, and united with the Primitive Baptist Church, in which they both lived and died. The last ten years, as he said, although afflicted, were the happiest of his life. The writer thinks he never saw stronger faith; nearly all his talk was of the goodness of God. He would praise the Lord in the highest. "I know my Redeemer liveth. Tongue cannot express my happiness in the Lord. I am ready when he shall call me. I would not give my hope for all the riches in the world. Farewell, dear wife and children, do not grieve for me, for I am at peace with my God and Savior." These are some of the many cheering sentences of his last days. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of forcordination, election and predestination, as set forth by the Primitive Baptist Church. He would say, "I know my name was written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world." As a proof of his belief he would relate time and again visions or dreams. When a boy he saw a vision of the end of time and the judgment (which was published in the SIGNS July, 1909,) and he was one to stay with the Lord. He told us a vision he had a little over three years ago, as follows: "I saw a level plain fair and bright that shone with a dazzling brilliancy. I saw a path which led up the hill; I entered it, and traveled until I came to an old tree, and on this tree were three black knots." He told us that to his mind the tree represented himself, and the three black knots represented three years of his remaining life in pain. He told us he would only stay with us three years. The three years were up in September, and he died March 4th following. He is survived by his third wife, Louisa, who is a devoted christian. He said, "Tell the brethren what a good christian wife I have; how good she is to me in my afflictions." She is a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, and has a very bright experience.

J. C. WOODRUM.

SOD, W. Va., March 19, 1912.

Mrs. Susan C. Utterback died at the residence of her son-in-law, Mr. J. F. Cockrill, near Warrenton, Fauquier Co., Va., March 3rd, 1912, aged 83 years, 3 months and 9 days. Another aged pilgrim from the little afflicted band at Broad Run, Va., has been gathered home, whose departure makes the world seem more lonely and desolate. The subject of this notice was the widow of brother Wm. Utterback, who died several years ago. Her maiden name was Burgess. She was married in 1850, and became the mother of eight children, six of whom survive her. Sister Utterback was baptized by Elder Joseph L. Purington, in April, 1875, in the fellowship of Upper Broad Run Church, Va. It is sweet to testify to her faithfulness to the vows she made in baptism. Surely the law of the Lord was in her heart and abundantly manifest in a lowly and humble spirit, leading her to esteem others better than herself. While she was firm and uncompromising in the faith, established in the truth, in the principles of the doctrine of grace, the words of the hymn, "When I turn my eyes within," &c., were peculiarly applicable to her; they characterized her in a marked degree. While

clear in the doctrine of grace, and contending earnestly for the faith as it is in Jesus, she showed the reality of the work in her own soul by a meek and humble spirit, fearing greatly she had no part or lot in the great salvation which seemed so precious to her; denying herself continually, she showed she was a true follower of the lowly Jesus. Such precious souls, while they make no display of great knowledge, or zeal for the truth, when affliction comes upon the church are true as steel, and manifest that they are the pillars of the church.

May God comfort her mourning children and build up the stricken and afflicted church, of which she was a beloved and worthy member.

J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., March 22, 1912.

Caroline Elizabeth Schaal, daughter of Adam and Susan Schaal, was born March 17th, 1880, and died Jan. 18th, 1912, aged 31 years, 10 months and 1 day. She leaves to mourn, a kind and tender father and mother, two sisters and three brothers, who were ever thoughtful of her welfare. Caroline was an invalid from infancy, and although her bodily suffering was very great, she never murmured or complained, but often said, "The Lord will take me home some day." And, "The Lord knows me." She surely was taught of Him who said, "I know my sheep, and am known of mine." "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."

Funeral services were conducted by Elder C. P. Beadle at the home, Saturday, Jan. 20th, at 1 o'clock, attended by a large number of neighbors and friends.

G. W. HARTSOUGH.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Geo. W. Jackson, Ga., $.50.

MEETINGS.

THE Sidling Hill Church, Fulton Co., Pa., will hold, the Lord willing, a three days meeting Friday, Saturday and Sunday, May 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1912. Those coming by rail will come to Hancock, Md., and notify J. C. Mellott or Jonas Mellott, Needmore, Pa., to meet them there. All who wish to meet with us are cordially invited to come.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

THE Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va., has appointed her May meeting to be held, the Lord willing, Saturday and Sunday, May 11th and 12th, 1912, and we invite all to come who wish to be with us. Trains will be met at Herndon, Va., on Friday evening and Saturday morning.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will, the Lord willing, be held in Baltimore city, Md., beginning on Wednesday, May 15th, 1912, and continuing three days. Those coming to the city on Tuesday, 14th, will go to the meetinghouse, Calvert and Madison Sts., which will be open from 1 to 5 o'clock p. m. Those coming via Pennsylvania Railroad will arrive at Union station. Take any car going south on Charles St., get off at Calvert and Madison Sts. Those coming via B. & O. Railroad will arrive at Camden station. Take car marked St. Paul St. and get off at same place. The friends will meet there to look after the guests, and hope to see a goodly number. All those arriving Wednesday a. m. go to the meetinghouse.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 80. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1912. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TEMPTATIONS.

WHEN I was in my seventeenth year I was taught some very profitable lessons by our gracious God. I learned these things through humiliating experiences. I had been given a good hope through grace when just past my fifteenth birthday, and Jesus Christ, who is our hope, has been the everlasting consolation of my soul in every time of trouble, even unto this day. My eyes were opened to see, and my heart to receive the doctrine of Christ, and so did I yearn to know more and more of him that the Scriptures were my companions. I think it would not be exaggeration to say they were my meditation day and night. I trust I was taught of the Lord, and made to understand doctrine. (Isaiah xxviii. 9.) I attained to at least a somewhat comprehensive scriptural view of the doctrine of God's grace declared in the doctrine of election, predestination to glory and unto the adoption of children of the redeemed, and their ultimate glorification in their resurrection to immortality and incorruption at the last day. I saw these things recorded in the Bible, and I had a vital, experimental understanding of some parts of the doctrine of God our Savior, but in the midst of what looked to me as a growth in understanding, there came unto me, rather there arose up from within me, terrible temptations, and but for the mercy of God I should have gone far astray from the truth and from Jesus Christ. I should have become a veritable antinomian, not one in bare theory, but a veritable vile, practical antinomian. Now these vile heretical imaginations that well-nigh carried me away did not arise from any human suggestions or teachings of men, but they arose from within my own vile nature, inciting me to live after the flesh; that the liberty, or license, was mine to do with all greediness, to sin that grace might abound, to turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. Before saying more I will say the Lord hedged in my ways with mercy, and very graciously kept me from all outward iniquity, and never was my outward life more circumspect than in these early years of my life as a believer in the Lamb of God, but the affections and lusts of my flesh I was beginning to feel in a way that I had not known before, such depravities within me were being shown me, and all around me

in the world I saw the allurements to all that is abominable in the sight of God, and then arose those carnal reasonings upon the doctrine of God our Savior, so that I became for awhile in my theories an antinomian. O, with what gratitude to the Lord I record it again, I was kept from all outward sinful acts. How clearly I was shown in after days that my theories would have changed the truth of God into a lie, have turned the grace of God into lasciviousness. My feet were well-nigh gone, but Jehovah's sovereign mercy held me up and delivered me from the snare. I saw from the testimony of the word of God that he had predestinated his elect unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, and that they were predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, and moreover, whom he did predestinate them he also called, and whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified, and I saw that the atonement of Christ had forever put away their sins, and reconciled them unto God; that all the sins of all the elect, past, present and future, to the end of their days upon the earth, were laid upon Christ, the Lamb of God, and his sacrifice had made an end of them. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Now my fleshly mind began to reason upon the doctrine, and leagued with the affections and lusts of my flesh the fruit was, (though I hope the Lord had begun a good work in me and that I was a child of God by the Spirit of Christ enabling me to cry, Abba, Father,) that sin as much, and as often as possible for me to do, I could not exceed in measure, in number and heinousness my iniquities that were laid upon Jesus Christ, the Surety of the new covenant, which he had atoned for by his precious, efficacious blood, and therefore now I could sin as much as I was capable of, for though my sins should ever so much abound, God's grace would much more abound, and all would end well, for did I not believe that I was a vessel of mercy afore prepared unto glory? I am ashamed to think that I ever indulged such thoughts, but I did; the affections and lusts of my flesh were lively, abounding. O what a horrible shame it all is to me! My feet were almost gone: my steps had well-nigh slipped. One bad step prepares us to take other evil steps, so I went on into other abominable antinomian tenets. I said to myself, When Christ died for our sins, God there pardoned, justified and declared his people to be holy, unblamable and unreprovable in his sight, and since God hath declared in my heart that he hath for Christ's sake forgiven all my iniquities, and that I am justified by Christ's blood, and shall be saved from wrath through him, what need is there now for me daily, and oftentimes hourly, to be praying to our heavenly Father for the pardon of my sins? But I will not relate any farther these wicked theories that took captive my soul for a time, and exercised me until I was in a dreadful state, and but for the delivering mercy of God I should have become as hardened, vile a reprobate as ever lived. But I would speak how the Holy Spirit with gracious, humbling, melting discipline brought me out of these cursed snares and led me into the ways of truth. O how often since then have I cried unto the Lord my God, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know

my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." One of the pernicious fruits of these speculators was that sin in all its hideousness became less vile in my sight, but it was in this very thing that my fleshly, pleasing heresies received their first blow that began to crush down and to quell all such damnable theories. What was the blow that gave this deadly thrust to these God-dishonoring delusions? It was this (surely it was the Holy Spirit in sovereign mercy to me, a poor sinner, straying away from the gospel of Christ):

"I saw One hanging on a tree
In agonies and blood;
He fixed his languid eyes on me,
As near the cross I stood."

I mused upon the scene, I went in my faith and fervent love to Gethsemane. O the sufferings and blood of the Lamb of God in Gethsemane's garden and on Calvary's mount! They were brought with gracious power anew into my contemplations, and I saw how terrible, how vile, how cursed, was sin to the dear almighty Redeemer. O what pains, what agonies were his when he made atonement for our guilt, and put away sin by the sacrifice of himself! Did it cost thee, dear Jesus, all this to redeem me from my sins and from everlasting woe? I felt to blush, to sigh, to loathe myself; I felt my heart throbbing with affection, with pity, with grief over him. O how can I sin against thy wounds, thy blood, thine agonies, thy strong crying and tears? I mourned over my felt depravity, and felt, I cannot, I must not, I will not sin; O God, keep me; O have mercy upon me; hold me up; let me not sin; O that I could never, never sin. I had, during this time of temptation, become so bewildered by these wild speculations, (O I had no idea at the time that I was in confusion, far from it; I thought I was wiser, could see things plainer than ever, that I was getting new light on the doctrine of Christ,) I used to sing,

"The terrors of law and of God
With me can have nothing to do,
My Savior's obedience and blood
Hide all my transgressions from view."

And I read, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us."—Gal. iii. 13; and, "Ye are not under the law, but under grace."—Rom. vi. 14; and I reasoned that I could not come into condemnation, since Christ had died for me, and that God loved me, and would at length bring me to everlasting bliss even though I lived ever so lawless; I concluded that there was no law over the elect, ransomed, the called of God. O it is horrible the snare in which I was held a captive. But it pleased God to show me the folly and wickedness of such carnal imaginations. The Holy Spirit showed me in what new relations believers in Christ are unto God in the new covenant. Therein the Lord says, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people," and that instead of the redemption of the elect from sin, and death, and hell, and the grave, being a license for them to live lawlessly, to sin that grace may abound, that the death and resurrection of Christ bring them into such gracious nearness to God, it has brought them under such God-glorifying ties. O so amiable are these new covenant relations that the elect, the loved and blood-washed, the called of God, are under everlasting obligations to live in unceasing service and undying gratitude to God. How blessedly the apostle declares it, "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are

not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." —1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. And do not our hearts respond to this: "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid."—Rom. vi. 8–15. Yes, I have been taught that if we are truly born of God, believers in Jesus, that they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. (Gal. v. 24.) Then again, If God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, whereby we cry, Abba, Father, then are we put among the children, we are the household of God, and under the government of our Father in heaven. Jehovah speaks of Christ and they that are his in Psalms lxxxix. 26–34: "He shall cry unto me, Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation. Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips." (See Heb. xii. 5–11.) I have heard it affirmed that Christ, having made his loved and blood-washed people kings and priest unto God and his Father, that these kings were above law. This is an error, for there is but one being, the one only true and everlasting God, the everlasting King, who is not under law. He, the eternal God, the blessed and only Potentate, is the Holy One inhabiting eternity, and his will, his own counsel, his purpose, his wisdom so infinite and immutable, declare his eternity. He is King of kings and Lord of lords, and all these little, these finite kings and their thrones, and crowns and reigning, are in his power; they are, every one of them, subject to the great King, and are, and throughout eternity ever will be, under law to Jehovah, Jesus Christ, the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto: whom no man hath seen nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen. The Lord God omnipotent reigneth! O these other little kings, the loved and blood-washed, the called of Jesus Christ, do very blessedly reign sometimes even now while they are in this world, but sometimes they are naughty, they do foolishly, they are fretful, rebellious, they would reign, O yes,

but according to some other will and wisdom than Christ's. Then there is trouble, they experimentally come down from their thrones, the crown is taken off their heads, God is the Judge, he putteth down one and setteth up another. They are troubled, and brought low, and have to put on sackcloth and ashes. The great King puts them in prison for a season, and there they languish, shut up and they cannot come forth, and instead of wearing their royal robes they are in prison garments (Jeremiah lii. 33), and they come under severe discipline, and only the King of kings can lift up their heads again and place them on the throne, and thus these little kings shall learn, and very willingly cast their crowns at the feet of the King of kings and Lord of lords. How blessed also was my release from that delusion that there was no need to pray for the forgiveness of my sins any more. I know some professors of the name of Christ who never pray. They were never brought with weeping and supplications at the feet of the Almighty. They give their assent to points of doctrine, but they are without God, and without Christ in the world; they are strangers to communion with God. During this time, when I ceased from praying for pardon, I was often sorely burdened with my sinfulness; I loathed myself at times, because of my iniquities, my guiltiness before God made me sigh, but one day I read how Jesus taught his disciples to pray, and then I saw he taught them to pray every day after this manner: "When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil." "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." The snare was broken, and my sin-distressed heart poured out its sorrow and burden, in confessing my sins and asking him to comfort my soul with that blessedness of the man whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered. We have redemption through Christ's blood, even the forgiveness of sins, and if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. "For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him."—Psalms xxxii. 6. Many other sore temptations I have known, but O the constant love and mercy of God in Christ Jesus has been wonderful to me, a poor sinner.

May the Lord bless what I have written to some tempest-tossed, buffeted child of God.

Your brother in Jesus,

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

CASEY, Iowa, Dec. 4, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—By request I send you this letter. I am now nearly eighty-one years of age, and have been a subscriber of the SIGNS for more than thirty years, and have written articles for the same. I desire to send you a few thoughts upon the second coming of Christ, and the end of the world. I believe the number seven to be a key to the subject, and the end of the world. See Exodus xx. 9–11: "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any

work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." Exodus xxiii. 10, 11: "And six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt gather in the fruits thereof: but the seventh year thou shalt let it rest." See also Joshua vi. concerning the seven trumpets. See also Rev. x. 1–6: "And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: and he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth [this is the lion of the tribe of Judah]: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not. And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer." This angel, let it be noted, was clothed with a cloud. So Christ went up to heaven in a cloud, and shall come again in like manner. I will also quote Matt. xiii. 37–43: "He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man: the field is the world: the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one: the enemy that sowed them is the devil: the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." See also Revelation, sixteenth and seventeeth chapters, about the seven angels and seven plagues. In second Peter, third chapter, we read as follows: "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts [was there ever a time when there were so many scoffers as at the present time?], and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water, and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." Before the first day of God was out, the one thousand years, Adam died in the evening of that day as the Lord had said. This is in accord with

the language of Peter. Also see Psalms xc., verse 4. Taking this language, we are now living in the evening of the six thousandth year of the world. I think that the end is near, even at our door. Then the eternal Sabbath begins. Now let us see Matthew xxiv. 3–15: "And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. [This has already come to pass.] And ye shall hear of wars, and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many: and because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come." Also see Matt. xxiv. 37–40: "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be," &c. Was there ever a time since Christ ascended to heaven when there were more wars than have been during the last fifty years? Witness the awful war between England and the Boers, that between Japan and Russia, between Italy and Turkey, and the wars in Mexico and China. The famines and pestilences are too numerous to mention. There is a great famine in China just now, and many earthquakes have taken place, one of which was in San Francisco a few years ago. "And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds, with great power and glory. And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth, to the uttermost part of heaven. Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth her leaves, ye know that the summer is near: so ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors."—Mark xiii. 26–29. When Christ shall come again, the saints will rise from the graves, and those who are alive will be caught up in the air, as was Enoch and Elijah. See 1 Thess. iv. 13; Job. xiv. 14, 15. Job. xix. 23–27: "O that my words were now written! O that they were printed in a book! * * * For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." Also see Psalms xvii. 15: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." The Lord declared by Isaiah, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the

dead." See also Hosea vi. 2: "After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." In Acts i. 9–11, we read as follows: "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." The whole fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians treats also upon this subject. In the gospel of John we read that Jesus said, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." But he spake of the temple of his body. When the eternal Godhead left that body it was dead, as dead as any body ever was, but the third day that body was possessed again by the Godhead, and arose, never to die again. Not one of the apostles, not one of the Marys, not one of the disciples, knew him after the resurrection, except as he revealed himself unto them. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." —Rev. xx. 6. "That as sin had reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." See now Rev. xx. 12–15: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." But Christ gives his sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish. Had he not given them eternal life, they would have perished. Jesus said, "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed."

I remain yours for the truth's sake,

R. S. BANKS.

WILMINGTON, N. C., Jan., 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I inclose you a letter which I have just received from brother John L. Hastings, thinking perhaps that it would interest the readers of the SIGNS. I have enjoyed it very much. I remember with much pleasure my two visits among your people and at

your homes. I humbly pray that God's blessings may rest upon you all.

Affectionately your brother in hope,
E. E. LUNDY.

DELMAR, Del., Jan. 17, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER LUNDY:—Your good and most comforting letter has been received, and I was more than glad to hear from you. I have thought many times of you and sister Lundy, and of the pleasant visit I had at your home with you. Because of the many changes we have had in the weather here for the past two weeks, while to-day the ground is shrouded in about five inches of snow, I am reminded of the language of God to Noah just after the flood, recorded in Genesis viii. 22: "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." This Scripture has been of great comfort to me at times, thinking of the mighty working of God's hand in fulfilling his word and promise. In the first place, we see day by day, and year by year, these declarations fulfilled in nature. It is just as essential for the cold and the snow and heat and rain to come upon the earth as it is for the air to enter our lungs, that we may live this natural life. Let us have cold, dreary weather in summer and it blights the crops, while if it be warm in winter we see the effects of it by the greater number of insects when summer comes. We are told in the word of God that as the rain cometh down, and the snow, from heaven, and watereth the earth, making it to bring forth and bud, so shall my word be that goeth out of my mouth, it shall accomplish that which I please, and prosper in the thing whereto I send it. This shows that both the snow and the rain fulfill the place designed for them of God. Man, through the weakness of the flesh, is made to complain of the different changes with which he meets day by day; it is either too hot or too cold, too wet or too dry, and man by nature is never satisfied, and neither would it do for him to be, for if man were satisfied, he would never have any anxiety to do anything in this world. If a man had the power to do as he wills, as some say is the case with him in spiritual things, what calamities there would be. We are told somewhere in holy writ that all things praise the Lord. But one might say, How do the things that lie dormant in the earth praise him, they cannot talk, being dormant? But, my dear brother, can we not see that they do praise him? The rain, the snow, the summer, the winter, the cold, the heat, the plants that grow, the fowls of the air, the beasts of the forest, even the solid mountains of rock and the little rills praise him, and always have. The children of God, who have come up out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, see the mighty hand of God in creation, causing all these things to exist, and to fulfill in every place just what he ordained they should, therefore they praise God, and give to him all the glory. All these things are true, and we see them day by day, yet there is something that comes nearer home to us still. While all these things are written in prophecy they point to the gospel day, and are typical of things which should come to pass in the gospel dispensation. To my mind this Scripture which I have under consideration presents a lively type of our spiritual experience. The earth is typical of the earthy tabernacle, the body, and do we not see there all things of which I have been writing? When is

the seedtime? Is it not when the Lord is pleased to stir up this earthy body, and engraft in our hearts the good word of God, which stirs up this earthy, carnal mind as we stir up and prepare our garden before sowing the seed? And after we prepare the soil and sow the seed should we then stop what would be the result? The weeds and thorns would come up and choke the good seed, and there would be no harvest. So, when we have prepared the ground, and sowed the seed, and properly cared for it, and the rains come upon it, in due time the harvest comes. So when the good word of God is implanted in our hearts it is then needful that this earthy body should be stirred up from time to time, that we may grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Then comes the warm sunlight of God's presence, causing this spiritual seed to bring forth and bud, and the dew comes upon it, and the little, tiny bud is seen glittering in the sunlight. We cannot see it in ourselves, but we see it in others. Then little by little it continues to grow. This is not just a summer plant, it is an evergreen. The storms come upon it, the snow and the rain, the heat and the cold, but it lives on and on. So when the poor, trembling child of God is blessed with the light and sunshine of the Sun of Righteousness he is like the tender plant which the blessed summer sunshine made to flourish and grow, but when the blessed Lord withdraws his presence from him, and the snow and the frost come upon him, he is like the evergreens wrapped in snow naturally. To the children of God whom the Lord has shined upon with heavenly light, is there any light of the sun, moon or stars, or any artificial light, that can compare with the light of the Sun of Righteousness which has shined upon them in the past? I answer, no. Words cannot describe the glorious brilliancy of this light, neither can we describe the dense darkness that one is plunged into from time to time; there is no night so dark that it can be compared with this darkness. One may say, I have seen it as dark as it is possible for it to be. Well, this may be true, there are nights so dark, naturally, that one cannot see his hand before his face, but he rests assured that in a few hours the sun will rise again and disperse the darkness; but there are times in the experience of the Lord's people that not only is the darkness so dense that they cannot see the hand before their face, but also they lose all hope that they will ever see the light again. O what an awful state for one to be in. Neither is there any weather so cold, so stormy, that we can compare it with these frozen, stony hearts of ours. While the weather has been very cold here for two weeks or more, with the temperature down near the zero mark, it is nothing compared with that which I have experienced in my own soul. The warm and pleasant days which come in summer, and cause everything in nature to rejoice, do not bring the comfort to the poor, weary pilgrim that the glorious warmth of God's presence does. Thinking of the many things which could be said here, I will quote a few lines.

"How tedious and tiresome the hours,
When Jesus no longer I see;
Sweet prospects, sweet birds and sweet flowers
Have all lost their sweetness to me;
The midsummer sun shines but dim,
The fields strive in vain to look gay,
But when I am happy in him
December's as pleasant as May."

We are called to pass through these things; but when is the harvest? I will give it as I see it, and if I am wrong in my conclusion, I do not wish you or any

one else to receive it. I believe that the Scriptures were written for our comfort and instruction while in this life, and that the harvest also is ours here. It seems to me that we reap the many blessings which are bestowed upon us while here, and we do not only reap once, but are continually reaping.

Now may the blessings of God's grace be with you, to help you through the weary, many changes that meet you by the way, is the sincere prayer of your unworthy brother in hope,

JOHN L. HASTINGS.

COLUMBUS JUNCTION, Iowa.

BELOVED EDITORS:—I am writing my experience for your disposal. I have read the SIGNS from my earliest recollections. When father would read it to my mother I would listen with rapt attention, though but a child; there seemed a halo in its very name. My experience began in early childhood. When seven years of age I lost a precious little sister. She was dear to me, for she was entrusted to my care most of the time. I would rock and sing to her very tenderly, and when she was taken sick I was more tender than ever, and when she was gone I became irreconcilable. Mother told me she would rise immortal and fair, that God would love her better than we. How healing are the soothing words of mother! These were my first impressions. Time passed on in an uneventful way until I was fourteen years of age. Elder J. C. Beeman then attended our church monthly, and I liked him from the first. Wednesdays were meeting days. One sermon impressed me especially; the text is gone, but his tender words of experience soothed and comforted me, but I was young, and the world looked fair; I thought I could live righteously outside of the church and enjoy the world also, for it held much to offer. I entered society eagerly; dancing was a social pastime, and at dancing school one night we were to have a supper after the dance. I could scarcely wait, and as we entered the hall one of the girls said to me, "Is not this splendid?" I made no reply, my thoughts were elsewhere and I sat alone for awhile, but being afraid of attracting attention I joined the happy throng. What a mask I wore; my heart was bleeding while my eyes were smiling. I resolved never to dance again, and kept the vow; all desire for such amusement was gone. My friend asked me to go the next time, but I refused; my mind was centered on better things. The next spring I was married. I would have told my dear companion of my state of mind, but feared it a delusion. One evening, to my surprise, he told me he would tell me his experience if I would tell him mine, but I had nothing to say. When he had finished I could only wish for such words as his. About this time my mother gave us the SIGNS to read. I would go alone and peruse the experiences found. I could travel with the writers through all their trials and distresses, but when they told of hope and promise they seemed to leave me alone; there was no hope for me, mine was an outside case. Three years passed away, no comfort in the Book could I find. Sometimes I would think back to the time I thought I knew of things divine, but now all was dark. I would try to pray, but could say little. One night I thought I would try once more to pray, so I kneeled beside the bed, but all I could say was, Lord, save, or I perish. I arose feeling better, and retired with a peaceful mind and awoke with a happy heart. I wanted to tell some one of my new found joy.

Looking out at the door all nature seemed praising God, the trees were clapping their hands, the song-birds were making melody. While solemn praises were falling from my own lips these words came: "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven." Also, I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am there ye may be also. If it were not so I would have told you. I thought I would tell my husband when he came to breakfast, but said nothing, hoping for a brighter experience. The next Sunday father and mother came, and after talking to my husband she asked me a few questions. I could not understand why God would save some and leave others to their fate. She quoted, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" I told her that was hard to understand. She said it would be made plain some time. I promised, health permitting, to attend the next association. We went, and it was largely attended, and as I entered the house I said, This is the house of God. All seemed happy; I was a stranger, and yet at home. I drank every word as a sweet beverage. After preaching on Saturday the church door was opened for the reception of members. I began to tremble, for I knew my husband would go forward. He was the first; my brother and wife and a Mrs. Dunham followed. My eyes were bathed in tears, and my mind became a blank. I remember yet how beautifully my husband talked. He said he was "not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth." Elder Chineweth said there was another who ought to come forward, but I thought I could not. Then a dear old sister came to my relief; she took me by the hand and led me to where they were sitting. I said but little, I was so overcome, but they received me. By the time we reached the place of entertainment I decided I had made a fearful mistake, and I was so sorry at deceiving so good a people I could not sleep. Next morning these words came: "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." I went to sleep again, and awoke with a calm and peaceful mind. When Elder Chineweth led me into the water I had no fear, and O how happy I was as I came out of the water. This exceeding joy was mine for four years, and it grieved me to hear any one speak of doubts and fears. Elder W. A. Thompson constituted a church in our neighborhood with fourteen members, and others joined during those happy days. During each week we met at some brother's home; Jesus was our theme, and we were happy in him. I seemed to myself but a child spiritually, and was only twenty-three in years of age; but time speeds away, I will be seventy-four May 16th next. It seems so short a time since we were baptized, yet many trials and afflictions have overtaken me. My heaviest trial was the loss of my dear companion, October 8th last. It seemed more than I could bear, but the Lord who gives and takes away is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Dear sister Clingman, how I can sympathize with you in your similar loss. The "good-by" will not be long, God will soon call us home to enjoy the full fruition of His love. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." When we were dead he died that we might live; the only begotten Son was given to save us by his grace. Where

is boasting? It is excluded. We cannot draw one breath of ourselves. What poor, helpless mortals we are. O that men would praise the Lord, for his goodness and mercy endureth forever.

I cannot close without telling brother Durand how comforting to me was his published experience just after I was delivered. His words were so soothing I looked for them in each copy. However, many good writers contribute, such as Elders Keene and Coulter. I would say to all, Write on, you know not how much good your words do the halting ones; they are as apples of gold in pictures of silver. The editorials are precious. You can say, with Paul, not with excellency of speech or wisdom, but in demonstration of Spirit and power, We declare Jesus and him crucified. May you be spared many years to declare the gospel of Christ to sinners. I anticipate the day my soul shall fly away and be at rest. I am living near my son, J. L.

Now, dear editors, whether you publish this or not, all will be right with me.

Your sister in hope of eternal life,

(MRS.) REBECCA R. THURSTON.

LANHAM, W. Va., Jan. 1, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:— It seems permissible for me to take my pen in hand to write a few lines to the household of faith, who are in all parts of the earth, scattered among all nations. While many are called and saved with an everlasting salvation, world without end, few are called and qualified to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to his poor and afflicted people, who trust in the name of the Lord. This people the Lord has formed for himself, and they shall show forth his praise. His calling them is always effectual. Draw us, O Lord, and we will run after thee. Yes, his people will run with patience the race set before them, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith. He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up on wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint. These are they who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and the cause that produced this effect is that Jesus first loved them. For unto God the Lord belong the issues from death. In our nature we are carnal, and hence carnally minded. To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. It is to be born of the Spirit, born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. Jesus said, That which is born of the flesh is flesh, while that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto you, Ye must be born again. That is first which is natural, afterward that which is spiritual. Hence our first birth is of Adam, after the order of ordinary generation. The psalmist said, Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. This portion of the Scripture ought to satisfy all with regard to the dogma of infant purity. The first man is of the earth earthy, and is representative of the whole human family. Christ, the second Adam, is the Lord from heaven, and he was made a quickening spirit, and all who are saved were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Paul said (past tense), Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling. So the elect, whether infants or adults, are saved by choice and by grace given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. We believe that

infants are sinners by nature, and that they are saved by grace, just as is the adult. By the washing of regeneration are we made new creatures in Christ Jesus. We are born again by the incorruptible Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. We are redeemed by the blood of Christ. The Primitive Baptists are accused by the bondwoman and her entire brood of preaching infant damnation, but the error lays at their own door, for it "is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom [Paul said] I am chief." Then if infants are not sinners they are without a Savior. Jesus declared that he came to seek and to save that which was lost. The covenant family was lost in the first Adam, and by nature the children of wrath, and fitted to destruction, even as others. The covenant family was lost in the first Adam, and by nature the children of wrath, and fitted to destruction, even as others. The covenant children are subjects for redemption through Christ their Redeemer. He only has the right of redemption, for they are his by gift. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, said the Savior, and those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. Hence we conclude from the authority of these Scriptures that when Christ expired upon the cross, the covenant children were completely saved, without the loss of one; their sins were there atoned for, and Christ was satisfied with seeing his seed. We read in Isaiah, "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities," and in his own time Jesus reveals himself to the objects of his love and with loving-kindness draws them. He said, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." When the beauty of holiness, through the wounds of a once crucified but now risen Lord and Savior, is revealed to one of this covenant family, old things (legalism) are passed away, and, behold, all things are become new. Then surely these are blessed, for flesh and blood have not revealed it unto them, but the Father which is in heaven. Then as newborn babes we desire the sincere milk of the word; and the called servant of the Lord preaches Jesus the word, and himself the servant of his brethren for Jesus' sake. God sends his servants to comfort these newborn babes. His word to them is, Comfort ye my people, saith your God. He calls them with an holy calling and they follow him, for they know his voice, but a stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of a stranger. They are blessed with understanding to know the joyful sound of the truth in distinction from that false voice, which is to them the voice of a stranger.

But I must now close this imperfect letter by calling attention to the truth that "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." This poor and afflicted people are the Lord's portion,

redeemed out of every kindred, nation, tongue and people. Dear, trembling saints, you who may read this poor letter from the pen of one whose hope is in the finished work of the Son of God upon Calvary's cross, rejoice with me.

"'Tis finished, so the Savior cried,
And meekly bowed his head and died;
'Tis finished; yes, the race is run,
The battle fought, the victory won.

'Tis finished; all that heaven decreed,
And all the ancient prophets said,
Is now fulfilled, as was designed
In me, the Savior of mankind."

Your brother,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 8, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I send you a letter from Elder John G. Sawin for publication in the SIGNS. In a letter just received from him he says: "I mail you under separate cover a letter I wrote you on Dec. 31st, thinking if you thought it of merit enough to be of general interest to the household of faith you would have my permission to send it to the SIGNS, as I am often asked to contribute to its columns; but on reading it over I laid it aside, as not being worthy the purpose for which written. After I received your letter, a few days ago, what you said about our meeting in southern Indiana, I was reminded that I had mentioned this to you in that letter, so on reading it again I concluded to send it to you, fully realizing that you would cast the mantle of charity over all its faults. Exercise your judgment as to sending it to the SIGNS."

I met brother Sawin first at the Conns Creek Association (I think) in 1866, also his father and mother and three brothers, two of whom, with himself, were ministers of the gospel. Elder Isaac Sawin has been called home, and Elders John and Peter are still doing good work in the gospel field.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

MATTOON, Ill., Dec. 31, 1911.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have just found and reread your good letter of Nov. 21st, 1905, with interest and comfort; the letter was certainly deserving of a more speedy answer than it is getting. My interest in it is probably intensified by my surroundings, and causes me to take up my pen and write you. Think of it, six years have gone by in rapid succession since you wrote me, and all that time your comforting epistle of love has remained unanswered. Why was it thus? The only excuse that I in my weakness can frame is that I did not then, as I do not now, feel able to write anything worthy of your time and consideration. Of one thing I am positively sure: my silence was not because of any distrust or lack of love or fellowship for you as one of the Lord's noblest gifts to his church, for that brotherly confidence has never been shaken since I met you the first time, nearly a half century ago, down in the hills of southern Indiana; neither could it have been because of any unbelief or lack of faith in the blessed gospel of Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation when revealed by the Spirit, which takes of the things of God and shows them unto us, for all the real comfort and joy I have is in the contemplation of the wonderful foundation, other than which no man can lay, which is Christ. This is my only hope, my only plea. The Lord knoweth them that are his; and, Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord, so that antichrist with her legions will never be able to shake or en-

danger the building of God, the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. What I have been, what I am now, or what I may be in the future, God is true, and all his works and ways are perfect, and well we may say, Let God be true, and every man a liar. God is true, and his matchless government and kingdom will go on until all his pleasure is accomplished.

But I was going to say that all the faults, failures and shortcomings, with the sin of omission and commission, are the product of my own wicked and perverse nature. The carnal mind is enmity against God. This enmity is in me, in my flesh, so that I seem never to be doing the things that I would. The things that I love and want to do, I do not, but the things that I despise and would leave undone, them do I. There was a time when I did not have this warfare, did not know anything about the company of two great armies or opposing forces (flesh and Spirit), as seen in the Shulamite, neither did I have any desire for things heavenly and divine, for I knew nothing about the gracious power of God in bringing many sons to glory. I was simply alive to the law, and fully expected by the observance of it to obtain heaven and heavenly things, but I was not ready, yet the time would come when I would set about the work and secure the joys of eternal life by the deeds of the law. To make peace with God would be no difficult thing, for I had an ample store of my own self-wrought righteousness to draw from. How vain the thoughts of foolish man! "What is man, that thou [Lord] art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?" I look back now over fifty years, when, I trust, the commandment came; then there was a great revival of sin, the unerring searchlight of God's Spirit entered the heart; dark, forbidding and hopeless was the sight when my eyes were turned within, and I beheld the depravity of a desperately wicked heart, a heart compared to a cage of unclean and filthy birds. My condition was deplorable. The law which was my refuge became the ministration of death, and heralded the sentence: The soul that sins shall die. The righteousness I had laid up failed to bring relief, became as filthy rags, and would not cover a single deformity or hide the smallest stain; sin appeared exceeding sinful; I was a stranger to the covenant of promise and without hope of redemption from the law's curse. In the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ I saw the inflexible justice of God and the righteousness of my condemnation. Seek where I would, among all the records of my life I could find no offering to satisfy a violated law. I was ten thousand talents in debt, and did not possess a single farthing to apply thereon. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." This withering sentence lay heavily upon me, and, dear brother, over a half century of varied and trying experiences has not sufficed to wrest from my memory the awful blackness of the night when I felt to be hopelessly lost, and could only cry out in the bitter anguish of my soul, "God be merciful to me a sinner;" I am sinful, thou art just and holy, and if my soul were sent to hell, thy righteous law approves it well, and though he slay me, his justice and mercy remain untarnished. Even though I cried unto the Lord for mercy, I could not fully understand how he could be just and save one as wicked and sinful as I felt to be. The

law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus had not yet appeared to make me free from the law of sin and death. The condemnation of sin in the flesh seemed very plain to me, for by the law came the knowledge of sin, and to me it had become the ministration of condemnation. I was deeply involved, and my sorrow was very great, I was alone and helpless, every self-contrived refuge was gone, there was no hope. In my deep distress and helplessness I heard a voice saying, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." And yet again, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, * * * the singing of birds is come." And, "He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." How wonderful and glorious the song he put in my mouth, even praise to his great and holy name. The refrain seemed to be taken up by the birds of the air, the beasts of the field, and, in fact, every animate and inanimate thing appeared to praise God for his unspeakable goodness to men. It was a time of rejoicing, a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. I hope I was alive to Christ and his righteousness, for surely I had no confidence in the flesh. This wonderful view of the fountain filled with blood, drawn from Immanuel's veins, together with the justifying righteousness of Christ, my brother, I cannot forget. The joy I then had may be at times obscured, so that, like David, I cry unto the Lord in my distress, Restore now unto me the joy of thy salvation. I have passed through many very bitter trials, and drank deeply of the cup of sorrow and adversity, but hitherto the Lord hath helped me, and I still look to him as my strength and shield. The loving Savior also drank deeply of the wormwood and gall, and he knoweth my infirmities, and I pray to be counted worthy to suffer with him. I am sad, very sad, when I think of the little use I made of the talent committed to me by the Master of the vineyard. Over fifty years have I, in a way, been trying to tell of the goodness and mercy of God to helpless sinners. When I turn about to look for the seals, where, O where are they? When and where have I planted? Where has there been any watering? And where the increase that the Lord giveth? I see so little fruit of my labor that my soul is distressed and exceeding sorrowful at the thought.

In going back over the years of my life-memory I called to mind my first personal acquaintance with you. This I referred to in the commencement of this letter. You preached at the association, where we met, on Sunday following a discourse by dear old Elder Beebe, who also I saw and heard for the first time. Your text and comments thereon have always remained with me. Your text was in Isaiah: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem." Your explanation of "that day," and those who were "ready to perish in the land of Assyria," and the "outcasts in the land of Egypt," I shall never forget, and even now it all comes to me in tenfold sweetness, until my eyes are so suffused with tears that I can scarcely write. Here is some of the fruit of your preaching. I have, I trust, known what it is to be ready to perish in the bondage of Assyria, and when deliverance came I

was an outcast indeed, and did I not hear the great trumpet that was blown, the sweet commanding voice of the Redeemer as he calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out? Was it not in the light and joy of heart and soul that follows the calling of God in Christ Jesus that led me over the hills of southern Indiana, when I met you and scores of others who were assembled to worship in the holy mount? "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." Wonderful changes have taken place since then, but the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. No weapon that is formed against them shall prosper; the heritage of the servants of the Lord is in this vital truth, "Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Amidst all the confusion, strife and war in the political, religious and social world, and the multitudinous changes that have taken place in fifty years, what a comfort to know that there are no changes or failures in the promises of God to his suffering and persecuted children. Another thought comes to me. The second time I met you was at Middletown, N. Y., in 1872. At that association, as I now recall, there were present: Elders Beebe, Hartwell, Quint, J. L. and W. J. Purington, P. D. Gold, Wm. M. Mitchell, Jos. Badger, Sr., J. R. Respess, yourself and the writer. Of this number you, Elder Gold and myself are the only survivors, and we, too, according to the course of nature, must follow soon. If we can only say as the old soldiers that have gone before must have said, I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, &c., it will be to enter in and receive the crown which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give, now laid up and reserved for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. I am nearly seventy-four years of age, but, physically speaking, I am remarkably well. My wife, however, does not fare quite so well, yet she is about most of the time, and sends love to you and family.

Wishing you and family, including sister Bessie, a happy new year, crowned with great spiritual blessings from the hand of Him who giveth liberally, I am, I trust, your brother in hope,

JOHN G. SAWIN.

STERLING, Va., March 4, 1912.

MY DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—If I may presume to address you thus. There is with me now a desire to write, but what to write I know not, and surely if the Spirit says write, it will also tell me what to write. This is what makes me fearful, for I do not know whether this desire is of the Spirit or the flesh, and I know, my dear kindred in Christ, that if it be of the flesh it will be of no use to you; and when we do write, converse or commune in any way we desire that it may be of some comfort or edification to some one of like precious faith, otherwise we feel that our labors are in vain. Some of our people attend their church meeting sometimes when they feel it to be a duty, so some have told me, but, brethren, that time has never yet come to me; no, I feel that I am lost if I am deprived of this, my greatest pleasure, going to meeting and hearing the gospel preached and mingling with those whom I hope for Christ's sake God has washed in the blood of the Lamb and made purer than any earthly thing can ever be. Whether I am included in that blessed number God alone knows, but I know that he is too

wise to err and too good to be unkind, and I want to be able to say truly, Thy will, O God, be done. I do feel that I have much to be thankful for, as I was once at the very door of death (as my friends thought) and He raised me up. I sometimes now murmur and complain, and say that I cannot see what I was ever spared for; my life seems to me to be very unprofitable. I feel that if I have the least place in the kingdom it is more than I deserve. I try to be what I think a follower of Christ should be, but O how far short I come. I feel that none but the all-seeing eye of God can know what a poor, vile, miserable sinner I am; the good that I would I do not.

Now, brother Chick, a word for you. I often think of the very pleasant visit we all had at Mr. Johnson's home, at Manassas, last autumn during our Corresponding Meeting. One morning on the porch you talked with me before we started to meeting, and how much good that talk did me I can never tell. To think, brother Chick, that you have the very same ups and downs that one of the very least has was almost more than I could comprehend. I thought of it a great deal, and I know, my brother, we are taught by the same Spirit. Sometimes I am plunged into the darkest depths of despair, and then again I am dwelling on the very mountain tops, but O how much harder to come down to earth again, and when we have been so highly exalted the earth seems such a hard, cold dwelling-place, and the rays of the blessed Sun of Righteousness seem to grow dim, but then we know that it is only that the flesh has come like a great veil between us and that glorious light. O, I have indeed so much to be thankful for, yet what a poor, rebellious creature of the earth I am. I do want to praise him for his great salvation to poor worms of the dust like me.

Dear kindred, I will send this to relieve my mind, and as likely as not it will cause me more worry than relief. O may He lead us beside the still waters, and make us to lie down in green pastures, with his banner of love over us.

March 5th.—Well, I have not sent the poor letter that I wrote yesterday, so would like to add a little more. I want to say that the SIGNS has been a great blessing to me this winter; I have enjoyed reading it more than usual, for which I feel thankful. Some of the letters, as well as the editorials, have just been grand; very often I find things in them that are answers to inquiries in my mind. I was glad to see sister Ruth Spitler's letter in the last issue. I read the first letter that she had in the SIGNS, which Elder Vail sent to be published, and somehow I have felt near to her ever since, although I have never had the pleasure of meeting her. I was passing through the same trials that she was, but she was enabled to come to the church before I was. When we get the SIGNS with her letters in them I always read them first; I do not know why though, for there are others just as good. I thought sister Cummins' letter especially good, too.

We feel that we are indeed blessed in having Elder Lefferts for our pastor, and feel sorry for those who are not so blessed. Since I came into the church many have gone to the better home from whence there is no returning. First our pastor, Elder White, then sister Long, brother Springman, sister Spindle, two sisters in Christ by the same name, Mary Palmer, sister Lydia Hutchison, brother Lewis Robey and brother Wortman. It is very hard to go and miss their faces, but we

know that they have only gone before, and that the time will come when we, too, must press the dying pillow, and O may we be given grace to wait all our appointed time until Christ shall call us home. I do want to live and walk as becometh a child of grace, but unless He holds me up I cannot, for without him we can do nothing. May we say of a truth, as did Job, Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him; and, Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, yet will I fear no evil, for thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

God bless you, dear editors.

MATILDA MIDDLETON.

HOADLY, Va., March 22, 1912.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I am all run down in mind and body, and would much love to write to the dear ones scattered abroad, as in days gone by, but the Lord in his wise providence has seen fit to afflict me in a very grievous manner, and I am scarcely able to wield the pen any more. I am very nervous, and it takes me so long to write a line that I become nearly exhausted in the attempt. Perhaps you know I have been a cripple for upwards of three years, by reason of a fall, breaking my ankle; then followed the loss of my wife, which deprived me of my peaceful home, and I have been cast about from place to place until I am weary of life, and at this hour I am seated at a table in Prince William County, Va., where all are strangers to me, religiously, and not a soul to talk to who knows the pure language of Israel; instead thereof it is all cold earth from start to finish, and while this is the case on the outside, it seems it is an index to the inside of all my former hopes and desires, and it makes me tremble and greatly fear and quake lest after all these years I have professed a hope in the Lord as the way of life to poor, lost sinners in salvation through his blood, that now, at the close of my journey, I am without hope and without God at all, in the world or out of it. Dear brother, I cannot think that you know what I am trying to say. I feel confident the Lord is with you, but as for me I know not what to think; the Scriptures are sealed up, and my mind seems a blank. I think of John the Baptist being cast into prison and sending his disciples to Jesus, asking him if he were the long looked for Redeemer, and he received an answer that has been a comfort to the saints in all ages, and especially so since that day and hour; but does that message come to me in this dark prison-house of mine? I fear not. Yesterday I parted with my aged sister, and felt I should see her face no more; this I do not know, but the lonely, desolate feeling was there, and I could not shake it off. Worse than all, I am now where I cannot meet regularly with the dear ones at my home church; this, dear brother, I do not know how I can endure. Pray for me, that living faith may be given me to fill out the remaining hours of my unprofitable existence. O that I would not murmur. O to be able to stand still and see the salvation of God.

"When shall I be delivered
From this cold world of sin,
And with my blessed Jesus
Drink endless pleasures in?"

I would write more if I could, but I know it cannot comfort any one, and it would be purely selfish just to do so to unburden my own mind. I am behind with my subscription to the SIGNS, as you know, but please pardon me; I cannot pay just now, but you shall have it as soon as I get it. I have failed to send it by reason of my affliction and the unset-

tled way in which I live, but please accept my thanks for your faithfulness in sending it to me notwithstanding your own loss. If you can continue it I shall be glad to receive it still, but please do not do so to the detriment of the paper.

Please be charitable with all my errors; I am full of them in all I see of myself. My love to you and to all the household of faith.

I remain still the same old sinner, who needs the salvation of the Lord,

ELI T. KIDWELL.

KLAMATH FALLS, Oregon, Oct. 11, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—You will find inclosed herewith two dollars, and you will please send me the SIGNS until I shall ask the discontinuance of same. My lot is cast for the present far from any meeting place of the church, and, as far as I can discover, equally as far from any one who claims relationship with those who are despised of all the multitudes; with those who believe in a god that needs money and men to save sinners, consequently the visits of the SIGNS will be very welcome. I have (though most unworthy of the distinction) a name among the Old School Baptists, and to any lover of home and home friends banishment from the home circle is an awful experience. The outward show, the well filled swine's trough and kindred traits, so conspicuous in the house of the strange woman, is no compensation for the absence of those who believe in and preach Jesus Christ, who hath saved his people from their sins. True, the Lord is ever near, and it is a priceless comfort to know this, but I am so liable to be mistaken, and often ask myself whether I am not deceived and guilty of deception. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," and I apprehend this love is of God, who is love. It is not this old body of death, but the new man, the heaven-born man with his experience of grace, this joy that the worldly professor knoweth nothing of. Those poor fellows talk most eloquently concerning their works, what they do and would do for Christ if they had the money. Yes, they must needs call themselves by His name, but in their works they deny him. He needs no money, and without money or price, save his own blood and righteousness, he hath saved, called, justified and sanctified all whom the Father hath given him in the new covenant. I am glad of this, and even if I never again see one of those very dear though despised Old School Baptists, if indeed not terribly deceived, washed in the blood of the Lamb, I shall come off conqueror. I get a paper which teaches truth, but with a big mixture that is not palatable to me. Predestination is God's prerogative, and no man can tell the reason why, but he says, All things work together for good to those who love God and are the called according to his purpose, yet like old brother Job, evil as well as good comes our way, and it is all good ultimately. The peaceable fruits of righteousness result from the discipline which we naturally call evil, and if God does not send us this mixture who does? Deliver us all from the false position of those who say, Let us do evil that good may come. Godly absoluters (so-called by conditionalists) never seek to cloak their faults behind predestination; no shelter except in the atonement which is for the sheep, whoever or wherever they are.

Ample room and great need for a few gospel preachers here, and good opportunity for procuring a cheap home. I shall be happy to furnish particulars to

any brother who feels called to the business of farming and preaching. Will any brother or sister who may be a resident in this section of the country be good enough to write or call upon us?

Yours in fellowship,

ALEX. CHEYNE.

ATLANTA, Ga., Nov. 14, 1911.

DEAR ELDER KER:—As my subscription for the SIGNS has expired, I want to renew the same, for it seems I cannot do without it, as it contains much good news from a far country. Do you not think all the children of God love to hear and read it?

I want to ask you one question: Do you think it right for the church members to visit theatres or moving picture shows, or any other worldly amusement? I can only speak for myself; I have no desire to visit them, though I hear of some brethren and sisters doing so, but not all of them. I think if we are what we profess to be we ought to prove our faith by our works, for if we have been killed to the love of sin how can we live any longer therein? I know we are sinners all the time, but we should try to walk before the world so as to let our light shine before men, and glorify our Father which is in heaven. Now I do not write this because I think I am better than others, for I am far from being perfect; when I would do good, evil is present with me, and the things I would do I do not, and the things I would not I do. I just mention these things, and want to know what all true Baptists think of them. If you feel that I am right about this you can publish it if you wish. I do not want to hurt any one, but with all love in spirit toward our brethren and sisters, I wish they would all look and behold the wickedness that is going on around them. Please excuse me, for you can readily see I am no writer, but I hope I mean well. I have a new subscriber and will send on with mine.

(MRS.) M. E. BENTLEY.

[IN answer to sister Bentley's question we will use her own language: "As for myself, I have no desire to visit them." From the day we were given a hope in the abounding mercy of God we have not had the slightest desire to attend anything of the kind. Having this separation from such things in our own feelings, we of course cannot understand how any one with desire toward God can visit such places.—K.]

THORNTON, Ark., March 2, 1912.

VERY DEAR BROTHER KER:—Another year has passed, and my unprofitable life is spared to enjoy a little of what light, life and brotherly love there is to be seen in the world among men. I am glad to know brotherly love to-day is the same as it was when Jesus was here teaching the people. It is the Spirit of Christ formed in the soul, giving understanding to the heart, seeing eyes and hearing ears which makes them children of the heavenly kingdom and heirs of the promises of God to his people. Jesus told his disciples the world hated him because he was not of the world, and the world would hate them also, which brings us tribulation, but I am made to rejoice that he said, In me peace. When we love each other for Jesus' sake that alone is brotherly love that makes us want to do his will and obey his commands, work for the things that make for life and peace, desiring the unity of the Spirit in Zion, willing the death of none. If we will the death of a brother, it proves we have not the Spirit of Christ; it also proves we are not working for the things that make for

joy and peace. I am glad my love for the faith once delivered unto the saints is the same as it was in the beginning. It makes me rejoice to think of the old hymns, such as, "O for a closer walk with God," &c.

I visited three associations last fall, and all the life manifest was the scattered flock tossed to and fro by the sayings and acts of men mourning for Zion. I am glad I feel in my heart a desire to run with patience the race set before me, ever looking to Jesus for grace and mercy to guide me my journey through. I see by your writing that you have some sorrow and grief. It is written that Jesus was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, though he was void of sin and error, both of which I find we are full. All praise to Jesus' name.

A. HOLLOWAY.

CONNERSVILLE, N. Y., Oct. 10, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I feel to address you at this time as servants of the most high God. I will quote the twenty-sixth verse of the twenty-third chapter of Proverbs: "My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways." This is a command addressed to the child of God, that he should give to the Lord his heart. Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. Now we see what the Father exacts from his son; being filled with spiritual understanding and with the knowledge of sins forgiven, and being shown the path of life, he is commanded to give his heart to God, to be reconciled to God. He is exhorted to keep his heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life. He renders unto God that which he has received that he may rejoice. Great peace have they that love thy law, and nothing shall offend them. This is given to him, and his heart eschews that which is evil, and desires to follow after peace. He is strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, and such an one feels that the grace of God is sufficient for him, and he looks to the Lord all the way in which the Lord leads him, delivering him out of the paw of the lion and bear, and enabling him to exclaim, "By thee I have run through a troop; and by my God I have leaped over a wall." And, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. His faith is not of himself, and he feels that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. The Lord said, Let his eyes behold my ways. This is not the way that seemeth right unto a man, the end of which is death, but this is the way that no lion's whelp has trodden, neither has the vulture's eye seen it, but it is a highway cast up for the redeemed of the Lord to walk in. Let his eyes behold my ways. Not being overcome with evil, but overcoming evil with good. It is said, To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Concerning such it is said, Receive them not into your house, neither bid them God speed. It is said, A harlot is a deep ditch. How many are deceived thereby. They say, Come, and cast in your lot with us, and let us all have one purse. This is as Sanballat was with Nehemiah; so it is to-day. But let thine eyes observe my ways, saith the Lord. Read the fourteenth chapter, from the sixth to the tenth verse, and see that the Lord is not slow

to avenge his own elect which cry unto him day and night. He delighteth not in the death of the wicked, but rather that they should turn from their ways and live.

"May union sweet and dear esteem
Through every bosom flow."

These are some of the thoughts which have occupied my mind. I send them to you to do with as you think best.

Your brother,

D. S. ELLIOTT.

BETHEL, N. C., Feb. 27, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—How it gladdens my poor heart to be thus remembered by you, who seem to me to be so richly gifted in the knowledge of the goodness of God. How good it is to be remembered, and that I can pen you a few lines, though many miles apart. Your papers, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, reached me with the precious truth of the Savior, and how cheering I found them to my soul, though in a far distant land; they all tell the same old story of Jesus. We are strangers in the flesh, but not in the Spirit. All see eye to eye, and all speak one and the same thing. All have been taught in the school of our heavenly Father, and all have learned the same lessons. What a grand and glorious thought it is, that our heavenly Father is our teacher, guide and instructor. O that I could love him more and serve him better. I feel that he has done much for me, whereof I am glad. He is precious to my soul; he has brought me out of the horrible pit, and out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and put a new song in my mouth, and established my goings. Praise ye the Lord, sing praises unto his blessed name, for he is worthy to be praised by me, and by all mankind. Whether many or few, I want my remnant of days to be spent in his praise, for all my years are his due. O may they all be devoted to him.

My dear brother, I would be glad to have the blessed privilege of meeting you once more on earth, and of sitting under the droppings of the sanctuary while hearing you speak forth the glorious gospel of our Lord and Savior. How good to show forth its divine beauty and power. Can you not come again to our association some time? May the Lord richly bless you.

From your sister, as I hope, in Christ,

MAGGIE A. STATON.

PARIS, Ill., Dec. 24, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed money order for four dollars, to renew the SIGNS another year for ~~my brother,~~ M. C. Reeves, of Paris, Ill., and also for myself. I will just say a word of encouragement to the editors and publishers of the SIGNS. We have been taking it for many years, and feel that we cannot do without it, as there are many good letters so comforting to those who feel to be poor and undone sinners, and feel and know that in themselves there dwells no good thing; that when they would do good, evil is present with them. In our country there seems to be a tendency among the Old Baptists to neglect their meetings, and although we have a good and able minister, Elder Levi Biggs, who comes every month a distance of thirty-five miles, yet the members seem to be very slow to come out, only a few, fifteen or twenty, who are faithful in getting out.

If I could write as some can I would like to write something for your paper, but I am not fit or competent to do so.

Hoping you will be given strength to continue your good work, I will close.

The least of all,

ELLA SHIELDS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1912.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PROVERBS XXI. 9, 19.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Will you give your views upon Proverbs xxi. verse nine, and also verse nineteen? I am now past my seventy-ninth year.

Your brother in hope, Z. WARD.

BEAR WALLOW, Va., Jan. 26, 1912.

These two texts read as follows: "It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house." "It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman." In Proverbs xxix. 24, we read again the same language in substance. Similar things are said or implied in Proverbs xix. 13; xviii. 6, and other places. This spirit of contention is also condemned in Proverbs xxii. 10; xvii. 14; xviii. 6; Phil. i. 16; 1 Cor. i. 11; Titus iii. 9; 1 Cor. xi. 16; Romans ii. 8. There is also a contention which is not wrong, but is commanded in the word, hence it is the duty of all those who know and love the truth to always contend earnestly for it. The word "brawling," in verse nine, to which our special attention is called, is the same word in the original Hebrew as the word "contentious," in the nineteenth verse. The word "strive," so often used in the Scriptures, also signifies the same thing as the words "contention" and "brawling." The apostle said, And the servant of God must not strive, &c. Thus strife, contention and brawling are everywhere condemned in the word. There are many reasons why these things are to be condemned given in different parts of the word of God. In this portion of the word the comfort of peace is set over against the annoyance of contention. It is not only sure that the word of God condemns the spirit of contention, but it is also sure that no man can find quiet, rest or peace where strife and contention are. The meaning of the two texts under consideration is, that to live alone and in narrow places is better than to dwell where angry brawling is continually going on. This is true as relates to the things of this world, it is also true when we speak of the church of God. Other things may be as contrary to the Spirit of Christ, who did not strive, nor cry, nor lift up his voice in the street, as contention or brawling, but few things more plainly make manifest that his Spirit does not dwell in men. If the Lord's servants are to contend for the faith earnestly, that does not mean loud talking, nor a contentious spirit, nor debate, nor striving for the mastery, rather it will be accompanied, if the Spirit of Christ be in one, by quietness of demeanor, with gentleness of speech, with calm statement of the truth. In that warfare which is from fleshly motives there will be a confused noise and excitement, with angry words and angry faces and gestures; there will be a spirit of seeking to wound others, or to put them to confusion, and to exult over them if the victory be ours; but in the contention for the truth, which is required of believers, the example of the Master shows that there must not be worldly passion stirred up, but simply a clear, earnest, solemn presentation of the truth, having in view not our own glory, but

the glory of God and his cause. We stand as witnesses for the truth before God. We have never thought that the old prophet Elijah, when he stood before King Ahab and testified against him, spoke with any anger against him, or with excited tones of voice, but rather that he quietly, but with deepest and most solemn earnestness, spoke the word of God before him. Paul did not wrangle or brawl with the opposers of truth anywhere, but quietly and steadfastly testified of the truth, and solemnly presented the word of God. The truth of God is not a subject for debate, or for the exercise of one's wits against another, each striving for the mastery, but it is a thing to which those who know it are to bear witness, no matter who may oppose nor what difficulties may be in the way. God's servants, like Israel under King Jehoshaphat, do not need to fight in this warfare; their place is to go out as the Lord has commanded them, and to sing and praise the Lord. This Israel was to do in the presence of their enemies; God was on their side, and so there was no need that they should fight; it was only needful that they should make manifest their faith in God. Thus the contention for the truth which is commanded in the word is to be by steadfast adherence to it, and plain testimony for it, in love to God and the truth and to all who love the truth. Angry passions are all out of place in this bearing of testimony to the word of God and to his work of salvation; to contend earnestly does not mean to contend angrily. We are to speak as those who stand before the Lord and convey to men the words which he has spoken. We stand before him, and we testify of him, and he will justify himself, no matter what men may do. There is no reason therefore why servants of God should strive or contend, in the sense of possessing a contentious spirit. We wrestle not against flesh and blood. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal. Vain reasonings or philosophies have no place in testifying to the truth. We must not seek our own exaltation. If the kingdom of Christ was of this world, then indeed there would be room for all selfishness and for the wars and fightings which grow out of self. But how easy it is for the flesh to make even grace a snare; how easy to be deceived into thinking that human, fleshly anger is the earnestness commended and commanded in the word of God. What great need we all have to be watchful unto prayer.

The wise man said it is better to dwell alone in the corner of a housetop, than in a wide house with a brawling woman. The word "wide" here has the meaning of companionship. In a wide house many would be supposed to dwell together; in the corner of a housetop there would be no room for many to dwell; such a place would be lonely. Most men dread loneliness, and find no happiness in it, but, notwithstanding this, to dwell alone and in a narrow place is better than much room and much society, with the presence of a brawling woman, and so in verse nineteen a home in a wilderness is to be preferred to such companionship as this. In loneliness we may not be alone after all, because of the felt presence of the dear Redeemer through the Spirit, but the meek and lowly and humble Savior does not dwell in the company of brawlers, or with those who are filled with anger. If we dwell with such we shall surely miss his dear presence; our own peace and contentment will be sorely disturbed also. There can be no happiness or rest in such company. There may be peace and rest and even

joy and gladness in the corner of a housetop alone or in the wilderness, but these things cannot be found in the companionship of angry and contentious women. If the spirit of strife comes into the house of the Lord, as it sometimes does, humble-hearted believers, who possess something of the Spirit of the Master, will feel that it is better to dwell alone, even out in the wilderness, where nothing pleasant can be expected to be found, than in the midst of fleshly contentions. How easy it is for such brawling to arise when differences occur concerning any matter whatever. How good it would be when such differences of judgment arise if all could feel that the matter belonged to the Lord, and that calm testimony will weigh far more than all angry contentions. A soft answer turneth away wrath. God's people are still in the flesh, and subject to vanity still, hence these warnings and admonitions in the word of God. We do not know that the words of the texts of which we have been writing have any special relation to the daughters of antichrist, but from the fact that the people of God, and the churches, are so often warned against strife and contention, it is our mind that these texts relate to them, rather than to those without. It is pleasant to see the borders of Zion enlarged, but if to make the house wide is to furnish room for the contentious and angry women, it is better that we dwell still in the corner of a housetop. In all ages evil and contentious men have crept into the church of God, and they have always brought strife with them. When such as these have come in and made contention the humble-hearted of the flock have always found distress and sorrow, and how many of them have felt it is better to dwell alone than in the midst of such contention. All such contentions are against the truth and against the peace of the family of God.

In connection with the above thoughts, our mind has been led to the words in Philippians ii. 3: "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory." It seems to us that if language means anything at all, it is plain from this text that strife and vainglory are inseparable companions. Vainglory leads to strife, and in turn strife excites and increases vainglory, and the admonition is that believers should see to it that all they do, no matter what, should be without these two things, and the apostle straightway presents the opposite: "But in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." Especially is this admonition needed when differences occur among brethren, and when one may feel that another has ill-treated and abused him. The impulse in all men is at once to resent such treatment by all means in their power, yet this is contrary to every principle of the gospel of Christ. We feel that we cannot do better here than to quote some things that we recall reading some time ago. It was concerning one who was beset with much evil speaking. He felt that enemies were seeking his harm, and that his friends were but cold, and in telling of it afterwards, he said that at one time he was in danger of losing his temper and at other times he was despondent; at another time he thought of going to law about the slanders that were being uttered, but this he shrank from, feeling that it was wrong, and at last he concluded that to keep silence was the best. He thought, If these rumors are true, I ought not to deny them, but be sorrowful for my wrong and repent; if they be false, my noticing them will not make them more

so. He said that he thought of one of whom it was once said that he never forgot anything except injuries. The early christians when reviled did bless; Jesus when reviled, reviled not again. Patient continuance in well doing will, if anything will, put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. It is the glory of a man to pass over a transgression. He who utters, or without good reason believes, a false rumor is hurt more than any one else. "Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience." The Lord will keep that which I have committed to him. Let me leave off contention before I begin, or my conscience is defiled by it. It may be that the Lord will look upon my affliction, and requite me good for this anger against me. I need forgiveness for ten thousand sins. Shall I not then forgive others? If I have lived rightly no rumors can destroy my good name. I hope that my enemies will soon have a better spirit; they have not always shown such a disposition toward me. My experience has shown me that nothing is so tormenting as malignant feelings. If I am called to these trials, so was Job, Moses, David, Paul and, most of all, Christ. It is enough that I fare no worse then they. Perhaps the Lord means by these trials to show forth in me the meekness and patience of Christ. Let me look to the Lord in prayer, rather than to vindications and recriminations. How little will these annoyances appear in the eternity that will soon be entered into by us all. Let me therefore possess my soul in patience and maintain silence. It need not be said that the end was that his enemies were silenced, and his end was peace, and the friendship of many who had shared in his abuse.

As we read the above, we recall that our mind was deeply stirred up, and we could but feel that these things were the best of all. There are no battles in which any christian needs to fight for himself. Ye shall not need to fight, was said to Israel when the Edomites, Moabites and the inhabitants of Mount Seir came against them. Israel's business then was simply to sing and praise the Lord, yet how great was the victory that the Lord gave them. Fighting for ourselves, we shall always be defeated; yea, we are already defeated when we are stirred up to fight. Though we should crush our foe under our feet, Satan has won a far greater victory over us when he has induced us to enter the fight. It is all summed up in the words: "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory." O that we all in times of disagreements and disputations and differences might examine our own selves and prove our own selves, whether we are filled with the spirit of strife and of vainglory. It is contrary to the spirit of the gospel to seek to put down another, and to exalt ourselves. In strife we are seeking another's overthrow, and in vainglory we are seeking to justify ourselves alone. C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder John McConnell, March 20th, 1912, at the residence of the bride's parents, Clifford B. Shafer and Edna M. Seals, both of Brooklyn, N. Y.

By Elder A. B. Francis, March 28th, 1912, at the residence of the bride's parents, in Delmar, Del., George N. Ross and Nora Francis Figgs.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Margaret Craven died at her residence, 1735 North Seventh St., Philadelphia, Pa., Sunday evening, March 10th, 1912, in her 86th year, after a long and lingering illness. She was born in Bucks County, Pa., July 7th, 1826, the daughter of Isaac and Emily Hobensack, and in her girlhood connected herself with the Old School Baptists, and was baptized Feb. 16th, 1845, in the fellowship of the Southampton Baptist Church, and had ever since been a devoted and beloved member of the church, and a strong supporter of the faith of the Old School Baptist cause.

The funeral services were held at her home on Tuesday evening, March 12th, conducted by Elders B. F. Coulter, John McConnell and J. C. Mellott. A further service was held in the Southampton meeting-house Wednesday afternoon, conducted by Elders Silas H. Durand and B. F. Coulter. Interment was in the grounds adjoining, beside her husband, William L. Craven, who died June 2nd, 1887. Surely she was a loving and devoted mother, whose life, happiness and thought were of her home, her family and friends and her beloved church. She leaves sorrowing one daughter and two sons.

JOHN H. CRAVEN.

By request I will add a few words to the above obituary notice. On April 7th, 1887, sister Craven received (with her husband) a letter of dismissal from the church at Southampton, and transfered her membership to the Salem Church in Philadelphia, where she remained a devoted, consistent and beloved member until her death. She was indeed a mother in Israel, watchful and careful of every interest of the church and each one of its members. Her home was a veritable home for all who loved the truth as it is in Jesus. Her strong faith, unswerving devotion and love for the brethren were commented upon and attested to by a host of brethren from many parts of the country, whom she had entertained and with whom she had held sweet communion. The Salem Church sustains a severe loss in her removal from this life. She longed to be delivered from this earthly tabernacle, that she might be at rest in the clear light of a glorious eternity, yet during her long days and nights of bodily affliction she was strengthened to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done; I am willing to await thy appointed time. Several years before her death she requested that the first four verses of the fifth chapter of second Corinthians should be used as a foundation for her funeral sermon, which were used on that occasion by the writer. Elder John McConnell spoke comfortingly and consolingly along the same line. She also gave me the last verse of hymn 553 of the Watts and Rippon collection to read on that occasion, which was done. Many pleasant memories of evenings spent in her company are fresh and precious in our minds and hearts. In addition to her two sons, Frank and John H. Craven, and her daughter, Mrs. Mary Reeder, their wives and husband and grandchildren, are one brother, who lives in the west, and one sister, Mrs. Mary E. Mabery, and other relatives. She has finished her course and fought the good fight, which it is well that we take earnest heed.

Her pastor, B. F. COULTER.

Mrs. Margaret Gillis passed peacefully away of no particular disease, just the infirmities of old age, Sunday morning, March 10th, 1912, at her home in Muirkirk, Ontario, in her 89th year. She was born in Aldboro township, June 1st, 1823, and was married to Duncan Gillis, Oxford township, March 20th, 1845. To them were born eleven children, six sons and five daughters; two daughters died in infancy and three sons passed away in manhood, and three are living: Daniel T., Duncan M. and Angus D., all of Muirkirk. Three daughters are also living: Mrs. Jessie Scott, Kintyre, Mrs. A. J. Mitchell, Rodney, and Annie B. at home, who tenderly cared for her mother in her declining years and sickness. They celebrated their golden wedding March 20th, 1895, with their family and grandchildren and a few intimate friends, about fifty in all, and it was a very pleasant and solemn day, long to be remembered by us all. Her husband died Dec. 21st, 1897, in his 81st year, leaving her very sad and lonely indeed. Although she was not a member of the visible church, she always manifested a deep interest in the welfare of the church, and seldom missed attending any of our meetings until the infirmities of age hindered. Their home was always open to any of the Baptist friends, especially the visiting Elders, many of whom called to see her the last few years, and she was much comforted by their conversation. The Bible and SIGNS were her daily companions for years, and she would quote different Scriptures which comforted her in her girlhood days. About a year ago she told us what a wonderful sight she had seen, and could hardly tell it for tears of joy, and said she could not get it out of her mind for weeks; she could see Jesus standing on that last great day of the feast and saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. We all rejoiced together, and told her that was the richest blessing she could leave us, so we do

not sorrow as those who have no hope. She was a dear mother in every sense, kind and affectionate to her family and all with whom she became acquainted.

Elder J. M. Fenton conducted the funeral services Tuesday, March 12th, and spoke many words of comfort from the text so dear to the departed: John vii. 37. Her remains were laid away in the Duart Cemetery by loving nephews, to await the resurrection morn.

Written by her son, DUNCAN M. GILLIS.

MUIRKIRK, Ontario.

[MRS. Gillis was in deed and in truth a monument of grace, giving glory to God in her life and works of faith and love. It was our privilege to call upon her frequently during the last four years, and always found her kind, gentle and meek, manifesting the life of Christ in her mortal flesh. We loved her for Jesus' sake, and feel confident that she is at rest in the presence of Him who loved her and gave himself for her. May the children be given to bow in humble submission to the will of him who giveth and taketh away.—K.]

George E. Loyd was born in Washington, Va., Jan. 6th, 1838, and died at his home in Redlands, Cal., Jan. 18th, 1912, aged 74 years and 12 days. He was married to Elizabeth Stapleton, Sept. 30th, 1860, in the State of Iowa. They observed their golden wedding in Los Angeles, Cal., Sept. 30th, 1910. To that union were born thirteen children; twelve children and the mother survive him. Other relatives are seventeen grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, three brothers and two sisters. The deceased united with the Primitive Baptist Church in early life, and remained a faithful member to the last. In the early days he and his family moved from Appanoose Co., Iowa, and located on a farm in Monona Co., Iowa, where his children grew to manhood and womanhood. He helped build a church-house called Union Chapel, just a short distance from his home, and for a long time it was the only church-house in the township. Many readers of the SIGNS will remember the large meetings and associations held in that house, and at times he had taken nearly all the people home with him, always manifesting love and fellowship for the brethren, and he loved the peace of Zion. He was a devoted husband, a loving father and a kind brother. We submit to the Lord, and say, Thy will be done. He went to California for his health eleven years ago. The SIGNS was a great comfort to him, and he had taken it for years. He was a great sufferer for many months with internal cancer, and said many times he was ready to go.

Funeral services were held in Redlands, Cal., and the remains laid to rest in Redlands Cemetery.

(MRS.) D. E. NORRIS.

James N. Cunningham, son of T. B. and C. E. Cunningham, departed this life at his home near Sonwilpa, Ala., March 15th, 1910, aged 18 years, 1 month and 9 days. He died of typhoid pneumonia. He was born in Choctaw Co., Ala., Feb. 6th, 1892. He left to mourn their loss, father and mother, five brothers, four sisters, many relatives and a host of friends. He was a quiet and peaceable boy, and loved by all of his playmates. He was laid to rest beside his little brother in the Advent graveyard, near Sonwilpa, Ala. It was hard for us to give him up, but we hope our loss is his eternal gain. He was not a member of the church, but I believe he is at rest. On Friday morning before he died, Monday, he sang the first and second verses of, "Alas, and did my Savior bleed?"

The funeral services were conducted by J. E. Stokley, who tried to speak comfortingly to the bereaved family. It comforts us to know that it was the Lord's will to take him away, and we desire to submit to his will.

Written by his sister and mother,

VERSIE MAE AND CLARA CUNNINGHAM.

Mrs. Mary Johnson, relict of Elder J. F. Johnson, died Jan. 28th, 1912, near Springport, Ind., in the 79th year of her age. Sister Johnson was afflicted with that dread disease, cancer of the stomach, from which she suffered intensely the last month of her life. She was confined to the bed two months, but through it all I am told she was upheld by a living faith in her risen Lord, and ever ready to say, Thy will, dear Lord, not mine, be done. She was tenderly cared for by an adopted daughter, Mrs. A. J. Evens, whose home had always been with her. She united with the Old School Baptists many years ago, and remained unwavering in that (to the children of God) glorious belief until the end. She was a reader of the SIGNS, and read them all day the last day she was able to sit up. We trust the afflicted family may feel that their loss is her eternal gain, and may the same faith that sustained their dear one be theirs also.

A FRIEND.

MEETINGS.

THE Sidling Hill Church, Fulton Co., Pa., will hold, the Lord willing, a three days meeting Friday, Saturday and Sunday, May 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1912. Those coming by rail will come to Hancock, Md., and notify J. C. Mellott or Jonas Mellott, Needmore, Pa., to meet them there. All who wish to meet with us are cordially invited to come.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

THE Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va., has appointed her May meeting to be held, the Lord willing, Saturday and Sunday, May 11th and 12th, 1912,

and we invite all to come who wish to be with us. Trains will be met at Herndon, Va., on Friday evening and Saturday morning.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will, the Lord willing, be held in Baltimore city, Md., beginning on Wednesday, May 15th, 1912, and continuing three days. Those coming to the city on Tuesday, 14th, will go to the meetinghouse, Calvert and Madison Sts., which will be open from 1 to 5 o'clock p. m. Those coming via Pennsylvania Railroad will arrive at Union station. Take any car going south on Charles St., get off at Calvert and Madison Sts. Those coming via B. & O. Railroad will arrive at Camden station. Take car marked St. Paul St. and get off at same place. The friends will meet there to look after the guests, and hope to see a goodly number. All those arriving Wednesday a. m. go to the meetinghouse.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Wilmington Church, Wilmington, Del., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1912.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Pa., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 29th, 30th and 31st, 1912.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 5th, 6th and 7th, 1912.

A THREE days meeting will be held with the Bethel Church, Tallman, Linn Co., Oregon, commencing on Friday at 2 o'clock p. m., and continuing over Sunday, June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1912, where we hope to meet as many of the brethren and sisters as possible. All those coming by rail will stop at Albany, take cars for Lebanon, stopping off at Tallman. The church-house is close to the depot.

A. HORNER.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of southern California meets every third Sunday at 2 p. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 80. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1912. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FRAGMENTS.

"I CAME not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Who are the righteous and the sinners here spoken of? Simon was righteous in his own estimation. A centurion, a prominent man, said to Jesus, "I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof." But Simon did not hesitate on account of any feeling of unworthiness to ask Jesus to come into his house and dine with him. He evidently thought that whatever honor there might be in having Jesus dine with him was properly his due. He was doubtful of Jesus, and watched him, and criticised him in his own mind, having no question as to his own high character and just deserts. He could readily thank the Lord that he was better than other men, that he was worthy of any special distinction which the Lord might bestow upon any man, and especially that he was not a sinner, like the publican. This is the righteous man whom Jesus did not come to call to repentance. He felt no more need of repentance or forgiveness than a well man feels the need of a physician.

Just then a woman came in and stood behind the Savior weeping, and began washing his feet with her tears and wiping them with the hairs of her head. The Pharisee felt no emotion of pity or sympathy as he heard the sobs of this woman, but began reasoning within himself concerning the character of Jesus, and arrived at the conclusion that he was not what he professed to be. He said to himself, If this man were a prophet he would know who and what manner of woman this is, for she is a sinner. Jesus then presented a case to Simon which forced from him the reluctant confession that one to whom most was forgiven, the same would love most. Thus his own questioning thoughts concerning Jesus were rebuked, for love, perfect love, was the first and great commandment in the law, and he was compelled to recognize by his mental powers, though he could not feel in his hard heart the difference in this respect between this woman and himself. The Savior then said to him, "Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me

no kiss: but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much." There is no doubt that this woman was a sinner. Simon said so to himself; Jesus said so, and she by her tears and acts said most plainly that she regarded herself as a very great sinner. Simon was a sinner, but he did not know it; he was righteous in his own esteem. This woman was a sinner, and knew it, and was broken-hearted because of it. She represents all those sorrowful, broken-hearted sinners in all the world, and throughout all time, whom Jesus came to call to repentance. Every such sinner, sorrowful and broken-hearted on account of sin, will surely sing in glory.

"He shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee."—Job v. 19.

I have not regarded this saying of Eliphaz to Job as a part of the inspired Scriptures of truth, and I have not felt at liberty to quote this, or any other of the sayings of these friends of Job, as of scriptural force and authority, for the Lord said to Eliphaz, "My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath." It does not appear to me right to use as the word of God that upon which he has put the seal of his displeasure, as he has upon the sayings of these men; although many of their expressions have the appearance of truth, they will not bear inspection as gospel truth. This saying of Eliphaz is far short of truth. The promise of God is far better than this; he gives in no limited measure, not six times, nor seven, but he says, I will never leave you nor forsake you. He will deliver them from all their troubles. His faithfulness reaches unto the clouds, and his mercy endures forever. These men charge Job with wickedness, and declare that his afflictions and losses and bereavements are sent upon him because of his sins. One sentence of Eliphaz will suffice to show the general tenor of their views concerning his case, and their lack of understanding concerning his condition, and his experience, and concerning the ways of the Lord: "Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee." "If thou return unto the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles. Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks. Yea, the Almighty shall be thy defence, and thou shalt have plenty of silver."—Job xxii. 21, 23–25. Here it is clearly seen that the doctrine of these men is wrong. They were harsh and unsympathetic in their words and manner toward Job, but it was not their manner that the Lord reproved them for, but their doctrine; they were not reproved for speaking harshly to Job, but for speaking falsely of God. Job had spoken the thing that was right of the Lord, and they had not. They told him to acquaint himself with God, which no man can do. For no man knoweth the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Besides, Job had already been pronounced perfect by the Lord. If these men had known the Lord by revelation they would have recognized the same knowledge in Job, and would not have told him to acquaint himself with God, but would have known something of the trial he was under, as gold is tried in the fire. In that

case, also, they would not have talked as though Job might be persuaded to return unto the Lord by the prospect of thereby having worldly good come unto him, and the assurance that he would then be able to lay up gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks, and have plenty of silver. Loss of property, loss of children, worldly adversity or bodily and mental suffering, are not, as Job's friends charged, and as the Lord's people often fear, evidences of God's displeasure, nor are worldly prosperity and circumstances of personal comfort evidences of the favor of the Lord. The Lord's favor was with Lazarus lying in rags and suffering and wretchedness at the rich man's gate, and was not with the rich man, though the difference was not manifested until after death. Worldly wealth and comfort may come as blessings, to be received with thanks, but what jealous care must be felt by the child of God as to the spirit in which he asks for them. The Lord gave the children of Israel their request, but sent leanness into their soul. (Psalms cvi. 15.)

He is a very good speaker, you say, a very good writer, but he fails to cover the whole subject which he is considering. He does not reach out in every direction in which he might go, and does not go exhaustively in any one direction. Whenever I read what he has written I can at once see many things which he did not seem to notice, and many thoughts are suggested to my mind which he did not express, though they are very clear and prominent. Yes, but if he had not written as he did you would not have seen those things which you say he did not reach; if he had not spoken what he did those thoughts which he did not express would not have occurred to your mind. His writing and speaking are not exhaustive, but suggestive and comprehensive. Some good writers and speakers exhaust not only the subject, but the reader or hearer also. They go so thoroughly into the subject in hand that they leave nothing for the reader to think out by himself. They give him plenty of things to remember, but nothing to stir up his mind into activity. It is good when you are sent off by the writer or speaker into new fields of thought, which he has not entered himself, but only pointed out to you. It is good to be set to thinking on your own account while you read or hear, so that more thoughts are coming into your mind than are seen on the printed page or heard in the sermon that is preached. Elder Gilbert Beebe was one who had such a rare gift as this, and I have known many such among our preachers in the last forty-seven years. When I had to preach at associations I loved to follow Elder Beebe. His preaching stirred up my mind in such a way into activity, and brought so clearly and powerfully to my mind my own experience, touching my heart and filling it with a sense of God's love, and suggesting so many more things than he said, and opening up the depths and heights and power of the word of God's salvation, that when he was done speaking it seemed to me an easy thing to preach. The very atmosphere seemed to me to be full of the power and comfort of the gospel. The relation of an experience of grace is not preaching the gospel, but every gospel sermon does relate more or less of an experience of grace. The word preached by a sent servant of God touches the experience of the same word in the soul of the hearer. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to him who has felt that power in his own soul. There must be at least one be-

liever present, one who has felt the power of God unto salvation, before there can be a gospel sermon. One may point through a window to a glorious scene in the distance, but if there is no one to follow the direction of his hand and see the prospect the pointing will mean nothing; but when there is one present with eyes and a desire to see what the hand points to, it means much to him as he looks upon the prospect to which his sight is directed. There must be both a preacher and a hearer in order that there shall be gospel preaching. The believer may see much more in the prospect than the one who directs his sight, but he will see in it nothing conflicting, nothing that is not there. He will hear only the words spoken by the preacher, but they may mean much more to him than was in the mind of the one who preached them, as they may have touched a wider and deeper experience of the power of God in his soul. To the believer the gospel is always the power of God unto salvation in such measure as he has experienced that power. (Romans i. 16.)

WHAT a hard time it is with one when he is trying to make himself worthy of the favor and blessing of the Lord. His sins are ever before him, and his unworthiness seems to increase in magnitude, so that he has to say, The troubles of my heart are enlarged. He cannot think of the possibility of coming into the favor of God while his iniquities are so in the way; and whether in his first experience on account of sin, or in his after life, when the vileness of his nature is brought to his mind, and sin sits heavy on his soul, the first thing that it seems necessary for him to do is to cleanse his soul from sin and get free from his transgressions. So this is all the work he tries to accomplish whenever his sins are felt as a new burden, and many a day is made dark with night while he is about this work, which is impossible with men. It seems almost impossible for a poor soul, burdened with a sense of sinfulness, to remember that relief and comfort can only come through a revelation of Jesus Christ as having borne our sins and made atonement for them by one offering, and as having thus perfected forever them that are sanctified. It seems so impossible to remember that we cannot cleanse ourselves from any sin. We can only suffer, and sorrow, and become broken-hearted, and confess our sins, which we do because we can no more help it than a man wounded and half dead can help groaning. But what a sweet surprise awaits us then, always a surprise, when we find that the broken heart and the humble confession are all that was needed, and that it is now made known to us, and felt in our souls, that Jesus has forgiven our sins in justice and faithfulness, and has cleansed us from all unrighteousness, and that it is not as having become good and meritorious that we come again into the felt favor of God, but as poor, vile, humble, repenting sinners, who are brought to see again the infinite depths and breadths of the mercy and grace and love of God, which are in Christ. Then to us the word comes with new power, and we can join with the psalmist in saying, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile."—Psalms xxxii. 1, 2. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."—1 John i. 9. Jesus is always brought to our view as the faithful and just one, in whom are all spiritual blessings, and in whom there is no guile.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March, 1912.

ROMANS VIII. 31.

"WHAT shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have been impressed to try to write a little for your most valuable paper, the SIGNS, on the above portion of the word, but being sensible of my great weakness, and the barren and unfruitful state of my mind, I well know that without the guidance of the Holy Spirit I shall not be able to write to his glory and the comfort of his poor, afflicted and tempest-tossed people here in this sin-cursed earth, where there are so many things to trouble and distress the children of the heavenly King. As I am situated about eighty miles away from any church of our faith and order, and have a poor way to get away from home to try in my weakness to preach the glorious gospel of the blessed Son of God, and being, as was Lot, situated in the very midst of Sodom, with no one to converse upon the things concerning the kingdom, I feel it to be my bounden duty to try, as the Lord may be pleased to enable me, to speak a word for the comfort and edification of the dear children of God by writing.

First, I wish to say the above portion of God's word was written by the apostle Paul to the church at Rome, and is profitable for doctrine and instruction to every believer in Christ Jesus, the elect of God, the household of faith. He asks, "What shall we then say to these things?" He is here asking what shall be said of the things which he had just written to them. He says in verse twenty-eight, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." The very same persons who were called according to his purpose were the identical ones, and the only ones, who did love him. Neither were they called nor caused to love God for anything good in them, or done by them, but alone according to his purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. To these he says all things work together for their good; not some things, nor a part of the things, but all things. He put it in the very broadest sense that language can express. It matters not whether it be losses and crosses, or sicknesses, or distresses, or loss of friends, or thick darkness we are called to pass through, whatever it may be it is all by the appointment of the great immutabe God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will, and all work for his glory and the good of his poor, needy Zion. Further, he says, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." In a sense God foreknew every one, and all things, both good and evil, but the elect (the church of God) were foreknown by him as objects of his special love and care, and were given to Christ in the eternal covenant of grace before the world began, and were predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son. It is God's purpose that our vile body shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body. Though it be sown in corruption, it will be raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body, in the image or likeness of the dear Son of God. This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. All this blessedness comes unto and upon all the elect of God according to his eternal purpose and predestination, that they should be conformed to the im-

age of his dear Son, so that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. "Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called." These are called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. They are called out of darkness by his grace into his kingdom and glory, called unto peace and an inheritance in the glorious kingdom of the great God, through the redemption of Christ Jesus our Lord. God's call is always effectual; he calls his children out of nature's darkness and translates them into the glorious liberty of the children of God. "And whom he called, them he also justified." They are not justified because of an orderly walk or godly conversation of theirs, but alone through his purpose and grace, that they may be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. "And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." "Justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Again, he says, "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." So it is evident that his foreknowledge of his children in loving favor, predestination unto eternal life, calling by his grace and justification from all things, from which the law could not justify them, of grace, according to his purpose, and one for his glory and their good, and whom he justified, them he also glorified. I understand "glorified" to mean honored or exalted, and I think God's children greatly honored and highly exalted to be called the children of God; they are kings and priests unto God through his grace. These are the things which Paul had been writing, and then he asked, "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" Sure enough, who can be against one for whom the Lord has done all these wonderful things? And these, we are told, are kept by his power through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. The enemies of truth may and do speak falsely against the church and doctrine of our Lord and Savior, but all the odium and false accusations of men and devils combined can never take them off that Rock and Foundation upon which by faith they rest. Men say to me, O, if I believed as you do I would just do anything I wished, for if God is going to save me he will do it anyway. What vile presumption to thus speak! But we need not expect anything better of a blind man than that he will stumble and eventually fall. They slanderously reported the apostles, and affirmed that they said, "Let us do evil, that good may come," just as they now speak reproachfully and stigmatically of those who believe in the sovereign and efficacious grace of God, and in the complete and finished redemption and salvation of Christ Jesus. Then "who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other crea-

ture, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." No wonder then that the apostle said, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" seeing that neither death, nor life, nor any power, either in the future or present, can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. It would be just as reasonable to suppose that Satan, with his legions, could ascend to the bright mansions of glory and bring Christ, the Head of the church, down to destruction, as to suppose he can destroy one of the mystical members of Christ's body, for they are bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. Then when we reflect upon and consider all that the Father hath purposed and predestinated and wrought for the salvation of the church, including the sufferings of Christ in bearing her guilt and sin, and the efficacious work of the Holy Ghost in quickening and regenerating all the predestinated of God and redeemed of Christ, I cannot understand how any one can believe that a child of grace can fall away and perish at last. If I were only as sure that I am one of the sanctified and redeemed as I feel sure that God has an elect, chosen people, that he will finally save without the loss of one, I would not have so many fears and so much questioning in my mind. One thing I do know, and that is, if I am one at all, I am one of the least, the feeblest and the most unworthy of all. The language of the poet often rings in my ears with almost thunder peals when he said, "'Tis a point I long to know," &c. I can see so much imperfection in myself that I often fear I have caught at the shadow, and not the substance, and that Satan has deceived me, and I have deceived the church. O what trouble this brings; but in all my fears, doubts, trials and troubles there are at times little rays of hope and rejoicing that I would not exchange for a thousand worlds like this, if I could do so; and so the conflict goes on.

Now, dear brethren editors, if after due inspection you think proper to publish this letter you may do so, but if not, just throw it aside, and all will be well with me; there will not be the least hard thought, for I am well aware that it is a very weak attempt.

Your least brother, in hope of a glorious immortality,

J. R. DENNISON.

SUTTON, W. Va., March 21, 1912.

1 CORINTHIANS VIII. 13.

"WHEREFORE, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."

This was written by the apostle Paul to the church at Corinth, a Gentile church, and the entire chapter is written in the consideration of their former practices, to which they were still exposed (especially the weak members of the church). These practices consisted partly in eating those things that were offered in sacrifice unto idols. It should be our greatest concern to know what the apostle means in the language referred to, and to know that we must understand what he is writing about and who are addressed. Most Gentiles had some form of worship which was idolatrous; the Corinthian form was to eat meat, as unto idols, which were erected in temples for that purpose. Their form of worship was to assemble at stated times and engage in eating meat in the presence of the idol, which was made of wood or stone. The work of serving the meat was the business of their priest or other official appointed for that purpose. It has been supposed by some that they were vegetarians, except at the times of

eating meat in worship of idols. But among this idolatrous people there were those who were chosen of the Father, redeemed by the Son, sanctified and taught of the Spirit, to whom the Lord sent the apostle to preach the gospel of the Son of God, and thus God did visit those Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name, and they were abundantly blessed by the pouring out of his Spirit upon them, and raising them up, and making them sit together in heavenly places in Christ. When we consider the idolatry from which they had been converted, and their environments afterward, and Paul's love, fellowship and concern for them, we hope at least that we understand why he wrote to them about eating meat offered to idols, lest some of the weak of the flock be led astray. Paul could go into those temples and eat meat until his hunger was satisfied, and it would do him no harm, for the idol to him was nothing. To him there was but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. Howbeit there is not in every one that knowledge, and in such a case the conscience of the weak brother would be emboldened to eat as he had before, and through the example set by the stronger brother he would be led back to his idolatry again, thus making him to offend the church, which would result in his exclusion from the organized body of Christ, or, as Paul asked, "Through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?" We should note especially the words used by the apostle: "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." He does not say, if it offends my brother, but, lest he offend the church. We should take heed to what the apostle has under consideration in his writing to this church, that is, meat or flesh offered to idols. Doctrinal points of the gospel of Christ, such as predestination, election, effectual calling and the preservation of the redeemed unto glory are not referred to, but his walk and the walk of others before the weaker ones among those Corinthian brethren who had been converted from the idolatry in which they had been brought up, is the substance of what inspiration has given us in this chapter. Meat offered to idols cannot be made to represent the gospel of Christ. When Christ said, Except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood ye have no life in you, he did not refer to meat offered to idols, but to his own dear body and precious blood, when his spotless life was made an offering and his body a sacrifice, which was the provision made for the church, the blood of the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure.

I have written briefly, but I hope plainly and meekly, and in the fear of God, that his name may be glorified. I hope, if the will of God be so, that I may never hear the Scripture at the head of this article referred to by our brethren as proof that any principle of the glorious gospel of the blessed God should be suppressed or denied to please those who do not believe the truth. I would like to read an editorial from you, dear brother Chick, upon this very important subject, if you feel impressed to write. If I am not deceived, the Holy Spirit has made plain to me what I have said, and much more. I know I am a poor, sinful and erring creature, but if the Holy Spirit guides me, leads me beside the still waters and makes

me lie down in green pastures, I shall be well supplied, for he makes no mistakes.

Yours in fellowship,

H. E. PURRIS.

ATTICA, Ohio, March 25, 1912.

[SOME months ago we wrote editorially upon this same Scripture and its connection, if we mistake not. We will say only this here, that we believe our brother's view is the correct one. Surely no well informed brother or sister could for a moment think that the apostle was in this language referring to the same thing as when elsewhere he speaks of the weak not being able to eat meat, but rather milk. This last text refers to the truth of the gospel, whether we regard the word "meat" or the word "milk." But in the text written of by our brother, the apostle speaks of meat, the flesh of beasts, offered by the heathen in their sacrifices to their idols, as he has well said. If the strong meat of the gospel be presented it cannot cause any brother to offend; rather, it would be found leading him away from offences and into ready obedience to God. The weaker the children of God are in understanding, the more necessity there is to hold forth the truth, the clear doctrine of the Bible, that they may become men and be no longer children. Paul could never have said concerning the doctrine of God, I will eat no meat while the world stands. This meat was his daily bread. In every epistle we have witness that he never allowed the weak understanding of his brethren to hinder the full presentation by him of that truth which had made him free. Rather, we find that where his brethren had least understanding, there he most constantly set forth the strong doctrine, and that for their strengthening and comfort. Who needs strong things but the weak of the flock? Who needs to hear about the final preservation of the saints but he who feels that he cannot keep himself? Who needs to know about the election of grace but he who feels that there is nothing in him that can merit esteem or bring to him salvation? But Paul would say to his brethren that meat offered to idols is neither made better nor worse by such offering. This meat, having been offered to idols, would afterward be sold in the shambles. If some one should say to him when sitting down at the table, This meat has been offered to idols, to him indeed it would make no difference, but some brother weak in understanding, not knowing why Paul did this thing, might suppose that he was eating to the praise of the idol, and so be emboldened to eat to the idol's honor, and thus that weak brother would commit an offence against God and against his law in Zion. Because of this danger Paul said in his large love for the cause and for his brethren, "I will eat no flesh while the world standeth." That is, he said, I would rather never eat any meat again than cause the weakest of the children of God to do wrong and defile his conscience before God. It was Paul's privilege to eat meat, but if by so doing he should cause another to do wrong, he would sacrifice that privilege of his willingly as long as he should live. With what wonderful love had God blessed this beloved apostle! O that such love might be found in all our hearts.—C.]

RIDGETOWN, Ontario, March 9, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed I send a good letter from Gilbert McColl, which I think you will like for the SIGNS.

With sincere love, your sister,

KATE V. BEEBE.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, Jan. 8, 1912.

MY DEAR AUNT KATE:—I was glad to have a letter from you this morning, also the card. The verses on it were very good. I am always interested in all you say about the different ones, and particularly to hear that all are enjoying good health. You ask me to write what I feel to be the meaning of Hebrews iv. 9–16. Once before you made a like request, and I did not feel able to say anything. I do not feel any more competent this time, but rather than leave it over I will try and say a little as it comes to my mind, trusting that He will give me some little message which may be of comfort to you.

The apostle in these chapters is setting forth the types of the Old Testament Scriptures as fulfilled in Christ. There is one point which he seems to emphasize, that which was set forth by the Savior in the parable of the tares and the wheat: "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel." Many profess to believe in Christ who know nothing of the Spirit's work in the heart. These are they to whom the Savior says, Depart from me, I never knew you. In Matthew xiii. 41, we read: "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity." We must not think that there is any possibility of a single grain of the precious wheat being lost; it is only the tares which are reserved for burning. They were never his children, but are of their father the devil, who sowed them by night among the growing wheat. This one point might be enlarged on indefinitely. There are so many applications of one scriptural truth as set forth in these parables, but I am thinking now of His kingdom as representing his church. How many profess his name who have never known the weight of his cross, who have never felt the need of a precious Savior, who have no knowledge of Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, the resurrection and life of his people. All God's people know what it is to fear lest they should seem to come short of the promise. They frequently have to apply to their souls that deep, searching question, "Am I his, or am I not?" These very doubts and fears are the surest marks of God's children. Satan strives to wrest from them the little hope which is an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast. Daily our sins beset us, and make us question if we have any part in God's salvation, but that is only Satan's way of harassing us. Our dear Savior knows all the temptations that we must endure, he knows every weakness in our flesh, he can be touched with our infirmities, for he hath borne them all in his own body. He took not upon him the nature of angels, but was made flesh and dwelt among us, that he might redeem his chosen people. How often we are tempted to cease from prayer, because it seems awful presumption to take His holy name in our lips; yet the apostle admonishes us to come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. I have frequently been so cast down by the felt sense of my own vileness, and the total depravity of my whole nature, that I have not dared to ask forgiveness, but in this low state I have found comfort in confessing my own wickedness and weakness, and the more I see of this side of myself, the more the beauty of the Lord shines forth in its fullness of glory. So even in the depths I praise him, for what is praise but to exalt his glorious name and abase ourselves in the dust before him? How good it is to know that all

things are naked before his sight, even to the secret thoughts of the heart. He knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust. O these dark hours of contrition are grievous to the flesh. Paul cried out in bitterness of soul that the Lord would remove the thorn in his flesh, but he had still to bear it. I have known another state which is far worse, when the flesh is puffed up with pride and ready to exalt itself rather than the Creator. That is the most presumptuous sinning. There are many things which we can speak of among ourselves which would have no meaning to the world. To the true born child of God sin is hateful of itself, because it is sin. We feel we are offending against One who has shown us nothing but love and mercy, and it is hard to bear. It is through the law that we are shown our own weakness and vileness; we are brought low, and have nothing to boast of. So all we are or have we owe to Christ our Savior. We are not our own, we are bought with a price. Sin has a part to play in the wondrous work of God; everything so works together as to show forth his glory alone. Now there are those among us who are not of us, who take occasion to make use of the liberty which is in Christ to subvert the gospel, saying, as Paul quoted, Let us sin the more, that grace may abound. These have from the beginning been a terrible plague to God's poor little ones. They are not his children, but are of their father the devil; they know nothing of the chastisement of a broken and contrite heart; they are puffed up with pride, but will utterly perish in the damnation of the wicked.

Dear sister, I have not written very close to the subject you asked, but hope there may be some word applied to your comfort. Of myself I can do nothing, but in God's grace I would be happy to give even a cup of cold water to the least of his little ones. Remember me to all with love.

Your brother, I hope, in Christ,
GILBERT McCOLL.

THE COMING OF FAITH.

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."—Romans x. 17.

Hearing precedes faith. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." And, "If any man have an ear, let him hear." Hearing is all-important for to know spiritual things. Hearing is equivalent to life from the dead. Hearing comes by the word of God. What is the word of God in this sense? Are the Scriptures the word of God that give the hearing ear? If the Scriptures be the word that give life from the dead, then why does the reading of them by so many people fail to give them life? Are the Scriptures the only power on earth over the children of men to induce them to believe in the Lord? A short time ago after preaching, a Campbellite preacher quoted the above text to me to prove that the Scriptures give hearing to all that read them, or that hear them read, hence they get faith through them. I asked him, "What is the Word of God?" He replied, holding the Bible up in his hands, "This is the Word of God." I answered that he had made a mistake, that the Scriptures were the testimony of the Word. For John says: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, * * * full of grace and truth."—John i. 1, 14. Also repeated Peter's words: "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth,

and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."—1 Peter i. 24, 25. I said to him, "When you go to preach, do you preach Jesus, the Word, or do you preach yourself or some other man?" The gospel cannot be preached unless Jesus is declared, and declared to be the Word of God. Those who are born from above are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible seed, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. (1 Peter i. 23.) The children of God are born again by the Word of God, and this Word lives. Some may conclude that the word spoken of in this connection means the oral or audible voice spoken to the soul, that quickens, or gives life. Admitting this to be true, that powerful voice which quickens emanates from the Word. "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."—1 John v. 7. "And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God."—Rev. xix. 13. There are some places in the Scriptures that they refer to themselves as the word of God, and we may speak of them in these places as the written word, which would be equivalent in calling it the testimony of the Word, for they all "testify" of Jesus, the Anointed of the Father. "The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," spoken of in Eph. vi. 17, I think has reference to the holy Scriptures, for this sword is part of the armor of God which Paul enjoins to be put on, or taken. He says, Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. This sword can be taken in the hand, can be carried from place to place, can be used at pleasure, and it is the sword which the Spirit has given unto the saints for their defence, for their encouragement and for their comfort, and it is called the word of God. But the word of God spoken of in Hebrews iv. 12, I think to be quite different. It "is quick and powerful;" it does not return void unto the Lord, but accomplishes what he pleases; it is "sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession."—Heb. iv. 12–14. This passage explains itself, and it agrees with the testimony of Paul in 1 Cor. xv. 45: "The last Adam was made a quickening spirit." This Adam is the Word of God, he is quick, he is powerful, he is "a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart;" neither is there any creature not manifest in his sight. These qualifications belong to the Holy One of Israel, who "hath power over all flesh," and who is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person, and who upholds all things by the word of his power, and who hath been appointed heir of all things. (Heb. i. 2; Psalms ii. 8; John iii. 35.) All worlds were made by the Word. (John i. 3, 10; Psalms xxxiii. 6; Eph. iii. 9; Col. i. 16; 1 Cor. viii. 6; Heb. i. 2.) Jesus Christ, the Word, is the image of God. (2 Cor. iv. 4; Phil. ii. 6; Col. i. 15; Heb. i. 3.) Here is testimony upon testimony of the greatness and power of the Word of God, Jesus, the lowly Lamb of God, now exalted above the heavens. How shall mortals escape his judgment?

It is most wonderful to sensible, self-abasing mortals to contemplate the vastness of the dominion of the Man, Christ Jesus, the Word of God. The "children" are born by the Word of God. The Word lives and abides forever. Faith comes by the Word. The Word is the author and finisher of the faith of God's elect. The Word of God is declared by the gospel to be full of grace and truth. Mortals, angels, nor any beings, can ever exhaust the words of praise due unto his holy name, not only for the redemption of sinners, but because of his exalted greatness in all worlds. May his grace prepare us for all future troubles, and be with us constantly while we live on earth.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., Dec. 25, 1911.

VERNON, Texas, March 23, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—You will find inclosed a letter from our much beloved brother, C. Y. Osteen, which I think is good, and no doubt would be read with interest and comfort by many of the Lord's humble poor. I have not asked permission to have it published, but feel that it would be all right with him, and if in your judgment it would be profitable, publish it.

Praying the Lord's blessing upon both the editors and correspondents of our dear old paper, that it may long live in defence of the truth and to the comfort and consolation of the poor in spirit, with christian love, I hope, and fellowship through the suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ, I am your brother, though in much unworthiness,

W. S. BOURLAND.

ROANOKE, Texas, March 3, 1912.

W. S. BOURLAND—DEAR BROTHER:—As I am sitting here this dreary morning thinking over the past, without, it seems, a ray of divine light to guide my poor, feeble spirit, you and yours come forcibly into my mind, thinking of the joys, sorrows and conflicts you and I have got to encounter. But my advice would be Paul's instruction: "Lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us," for dark and thorny is the desert which pilgrims pass through, and it seems those called to stand upon the walls of Zion, to sound the trumpet of morning, have more to undergo than others, and I for one have sympathy for them, and do pray the good Lord that it might be his will and pleasure to give his servants grace to be bold in this day of trials and tribulations, where there are many nets and gins set for our wandering feet. But here comes some consolation to one who has hope: Jesus is still able to untangle our feet, and set a poor soul upon his own beast, and take him to the inn and pay all that is against him, and heal every disease; whether leprosy, or being born blind, or withered hand, it matters not, or the poor beggar that is crying daily for God to be merciful to a poor sinner. This brings this down to poor me, not even worthy to raise my eyes to heaven, for these eyes are full of sin, and not allowed to look into purity.

Well, I have company who just came, who have disturbed my mind some, but still the things of the kingdom keep in my mind: "Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, * * * the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me." I am so often shut up in the prison of

flesh, trusting in man. I often make inquiry, Is he the Christ, or shall I look for another? And when those glad tidings come from Jesus with power, opening the prison door of my poor heart, then it is enough: my Lord and my God. It is the light that shines in the heart, giving the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. O that I could have grace at all times to guide me, that I might never sin, walking like Elizabeth and Zechariah of old, in all of His laws and statutes blameless.

Brother Bourland, cast the mantle of charity over the imperfections of this badly written letter. Write me, and visit us as often as you can. This leaves us well, and I hope you and family are enjoying good health. Accept our love and best wishes.

Your very unworthy brother, in hope of eternal life, C. Y. OSTEEN.

PORTLAND, Indiana.

ELDER H. C. KER:—I inclose a letter I received from sister McGlade, that the brethren may know how the Lord has kept her in her bereavement over the loss of her husband, if you think it good for the SIGNS. N. PETERS.

HEBRON, Ohio, Feb. 12, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER PETERS:—I was glad indeed to get your letter, and will write that you may know how it is with us. It has pleased the Lord to keep us still through the darkness of night, and has promised to unto the dawning of the day; many are the mercies which he showers along my pathway. We are still here in our home. Mother came July 1st, and has been with us since. She is old and feeble, being in her eighty-eighth year. She requires much care, and I am glad I have the strength to care for her, for she is all the mother I shall ever have in this world. We go up to Reynoldsburg quite often, our dear one seems so sweetly sleeping there. Death always has seemed different to me since I witnessed Mr. McGlade's peaceful death. I do not know as I can explain it otherwise, but where it always brought a chilling blast into my heart, it now brings a warmth, like the wrapping of the silken folds about and lying down to pleasant dreams; no fear surrounds. It all came so plain to me as I watched over the form so precious to us in this life, and I saw my helplessness and the Lord's strength as I never had before. I surely am unworthy of any blessings whatever at the hand of the Lord God of righteousness, and I desire to be submissive to his will; that, and that only, can bring peace unto the weary traveler in life's pathway. You remember brother Swope, whom you met at Mr. McGlade's funeral. Poor man, he is left alone now in his declining years; Mrs. Swope died of neuralgia of the heart. I went to Reynoldsburg two weeks ago to-day to attend her funeral; since then the home has been broken up, and he has gone to live with his son. They were always like a father and mother to us, and it was Mr. McGlade's home years ago when he was pastor of the church there. How plain it is ever before us that we, each and every one, must go down into the grave; we know not how or when, but we know it will come when the Lord speaks. May he prepare us for that day when we go to be no more in this life. Truly the few short days of sorrow here will then be lost in the beauty which will open up unto us.

I trust you and your dear wife keep well this winter. Are you going among the churches any? The Baptists here are in a dreadfully cold state; we do not

have such meetings as we once had. I am glad to have the SIGNS, it is next to my Bible, but strange, the Baptists here have no use for it, and nowhere can I get any reading which seems so good, and sounds as Mr. McGlade would talk to us. We have had a long, cold winter, with much snow, which has kept me pretty close at home. I was not at all well last summer, but am feeling some better now.

May the Lord keep us all. Remember us at the throne of grace.

MYRTLE McGLADE.

HAMPSTEAD, Md., January, 1912.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—Though I have not received an answer to my last letter to you, I feel it a duty as well as a privilege to write to you again, and thank you for the favors you have bestowed upon me. First, your views upon the portion of Scripture of which I spoke, and secondly, for endeavoring to keep me in memory of the people whom we love for the truth's sake, by sending my letter to the SIGNS. It is encouraging and comforting for such gifted ministers as yourself and my pastor to think that my letters contain the joyful sound. Thirdly, I desire to kindly thank you and all who are connected with the SIGNS for the sweet privilege of reading that which I find within its pages. I cannot speak of particular writers, for although one may come a little nearer to me than another, just so is it with some one else, and so each communication fills the place for which it was designed, each and every one bearing the joyful sound. When I read your new year's editorial I thought, How many with myself will say this is also my desire. I hope that you are still in your cheerful state. As for myself, it has been winter within as well as without. I know that our Father is the same loving God as in former years, but it seems that the loving trust I once possessed has left me. I think of the words of one of old, who said that he went forward and backward, but could not find Him. I at first thought upon how Elijah was fed by the ravens, and other portions of Scripture which I know will come to your mind without my mentioning them here, but no relief they seemed to give. I took up my Bible to read as usual; I opened to Daniel, and it was where it told of the devotion of Daniel to his God placing him in the lions' den. It seemed for a moment that life and light came into my soul. Is it want of devotion to my God? I felt somewhat reproved one day when the hymn was brought to my mind:

"Must I be carried to the skies
On flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize,
And sailed through bloody seas?"

I have been thinking of the time when I desired every idol to resign, and of how happy I was in the Lord when I was brought into the fold. Truly,

"Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

I still remember that my times are in the hand of God, and that all things work together for good to them that love him. Again, I think of the words, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." Are not these promises the same when I am cast down as when I am uplifted? Is not the whole summed up in these words: Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our faith? Do not the clouds sometimes intervene, that I may realize something of the sufferings of Christ when he prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt"? Therefore, though we cannot see it now, I hope that it will be for my good and the glory of

Him who knows the end from the beginning, and I hope that after a time I will be made to sing, without a tune, but still with melody in my heart, the words of Cowper:

"When darkness long has veiled my mind,
And smiling day once more appears,
Then, my Redeemer, then I find
The folly of my doubts and fears.

Thou art as ready to forgive,
As I am ready to repine;
Thou, therefore, all the praise receive,
Be shame and self-abhorrence mine."

Dear brother, this letter has lain many weeks unfinished, and although cast down (yet I hope not forsaken) I feel like saying a little more to you. I often think of the words of our dear Lord to Simon: "Behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat." And just so it seems with myself, but I hope that I, too, have been prayed for. Three times did Jesus pray the same prayer before he was betrayed and crucified. How often in my weakness do I find myself asking to be kept and strengthened, and still I am so often straying from the strait and narrow path. Is this to keep me close to His feet, that I, too, may say, Thy will be done? But I must stop pouring out my sorrow to you. I have a desire that I might praise him for blessings which I enjoy, and trust him for all that are to come. I am occasionally cheered by the presence of the smiling faces of the sisters Kelley. They took me to their home last May, and I again had a pleasant week. They also gave me the pleasure of meeting with the household of faith in worship. I also received a comforting letter from my pastor not long since. Though seemingly lifeless, we still love to hear Jesus exalted. "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear." I also had the pleasure of paying both of the Mrs. Ensor, in Frederick County, a short visit last fall. You know how one of them is afflicted. It made me feel sad, but God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform. I hope that you and sister Chick have gained your normal state of health, and may the richest blessings of God rest upon you all.

I will close by wishing for the SIGNS a prosperous year, and also give many thanks for the charity bestowed upon one of the weakest of the flock. The following expresses my desire:

"Father, whate'er of earthly bliss
Thy sovereign will denies,
Accepted at the throne of grace,
Let this petition rise:

Give me a calm and thankful heart,
From every murmur free;
The blessing of thy grace impart,
And make me live to thee.

Let the sweet hope that thou art mine,
My life and death attend;
Thy presence through my journey shine,
And crown my journey's end.

And if this be not granted I must say, "Thy will be done." His word says that he will withhold no good thing from them he loves, and I feel sure that I love him, because he first loved me and drew me by his loving cords. I feel as though I would like to talk with you face to face. I send love to all.

Your sister,

GEORGIA ENGLAND.

FLEMINGTON, N. J., Dec. 17, 1911.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR PASTOR:—Having just finished reading the last SIGNS, I desire to say a few words in regard to the way a part of it was opened up to me. The first article I read was your editorial, and I know every word is true. It condemns me very much, because I cannot find that thanksgiving and praise in my cold heart which is due our God. Is it not strange that with so

many blessings in my hand I should be so indifferent? I can but say, What kind of creature am I? It is hard to know what I am. Well, after reading your article I turned to the first part of the book and read on until I came to brother Oliver's article, and I never had anything of the kind to quite touch my cold heart as that did. I can indorse every word of it, it is my experience exactly. The tears came, because I was so glad to know that I am not entirely alone in my travels, but that there is another poor sinner like me. I feared I was the only one who was always in darkness; I feel quite cheered up now. I have a faint hope that God put it into the heart of brother Oliver to write that letter for me, although I am very unworthy of His kindness. I do feel praise and thanksgiving stirring in my heart just now, but how soon I will forget it and be as cold as ever. When reading some one's experience who has light on the Scriptures, and who is joyful in the Lord, I am more than ever discouraged because it is not so with me, and I fear that I am not a child of God. I am being pulled two ways; one way is to give it all up and think no more about it, but I cannot do it, even though the thought comes that I am too sinful to be a child; then again I think that He came to save sinners, and so a little hope springs up, because I know I am the chief of sinners, and there is no spiritual pride in my saying so, but I am glad I am a sinner, and that I know it. Strange talk, is it not? It is all a mystery, I am a mystery to myself. I have so often feared that I never had any conviction of the right sort, but that I just imagined it all, because I never felt to be hanging over the bottomless pit and might drop in any moment. No, I never felt that way, but, dear brother, I have felt ashamed and guilty before my God because of my sins, and they rise up before me like mountains. I would indeed be discouraged did I not believe I have an almighty Savior, who is able to save to the uttermost even the chief of sinners.

Now see what brother Oliver's letter is responsible for, even stirring my cold heart to write this letter. You may publish it if it is worthy, but not otherwise.

Sincerely, but unworthily,

MARY E. FISHER.

NORTH YAKIMA, Wash., April 9, 1912.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—Will you kindly give space in the SIGNS for a few words to all who contemplate attending the Siloam Association of Oregon and Washington, at North Yakima, Wash., June 14–18, 1912? The following railroads have agreed to give reduced fare, one and one-third, on the certificate plan, provided there are as many as fifty in attendance whose fare is not less than fifty cents: Northern Pacific in Washington and Idaho; Southern Pacific lines in Oregon; Great Northern; C. M. & P. S., including Tacoma Eastern to Ellensburg, Tekoa and Lind; at these junction points other certificates must be obtained on other lines to North Yakima; Spokane, Portland and Seattle or North Bank from and including Spokane to Goble, Wash.; O. W. R. & N. Co., including all stations on said line in Washington, Idaho and Oregon, and all stations in Washington and Idaho on the Camas Prairie line. Each one coming to the association should ask for certificate on the going trip, and agent will fill out, stamp and hand to passenger ticket, receipt and certificate, which must be signed on the face by passenger in the presence of selling agent. Tickets may be bought June 11th to 16th,

Passenger must hand this certificate to the clerk of the association for his signature. Certificates to be honored for return tickets, dates, inclusive, June 14–18. To those who expect to remain in Yakima until after the 18th I wish to emphasize the importance of their obtaining a certificate as above for the benefit of those returning within the time required by the railroad people, as fifty certificates must be exhibited to the joint agent at North Yakima by the clerk of the association. Those remaining after June 18th will be required to pay full fare, but by getting a certificate may be able to benefit those returning earlier. We hope to have a large attendance, and wish all who come to take advantage of the certificate plan. I know of no way to reach our people so well as through our papers, and thank you for the privilege.

Your sister, I hope,

SONORA A. HESS, Clerk of Association.

FORT SMITH, Ark., Feb. 10, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—Our house number has been changed from 807 to 1117 Beaufort Place, to which address please forward the SIGNS, as I inclose herewith a draft for my subscription. I have been hoping I might write a letter for the SIGNS, but am too much of a failure it seems. Recently I learned of the death of my Aunt Mary Johnson, of Springport, Ind., widow of my father's brother, Joseph A., whose home was always open to Old School Baptists. When on my last visit there I met a lovely sister from Middletown, but do not now recall her name. I feel very anxious about the condition of our beloved Elder J. F. Beeman, who has been very much worried of late concerning his financial affairs, and I learned recently, from a letter from his wife, that he is quite sick. I greatly enjoy his preaching and letters to the SIGNS. His is all the preaching I have heard for several years, and that not very frequently of late, so you can readily understand how very much I enjoy reading the SIGNS. Even the little poem, "Some Day," in the last issue, is full of comfort, and just what I believe. I think I have much sympathy for Elders D. M. Vail and P. W. Sawin, both of whom it was my privilege to hear preach some years ago. I have greatly enjoyed the good editorials recently, and am very thankful for that light, even though I cannot contribute anything in return myself, but am glad there are enough others who can write ably. I am also glad that I firmly believe there always will be that "few," as we are promised there shall be.

May God bless you, and strengthen your every weakness, and supply every need in life and in managing the SIGNS, is the prayer of your sister in hope of immortality,

(MRS.) E. J. BOLTON.

HERMLEIGH, Texas, Dec. 19, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have just received the SIGNS for December 15th, and it contains such good reading that I am made to feel sad indeed to think that I am not able to have it continued, for it is about all the preaching we have or have had in four long years. It is almost like being at meeting to read the good editorials, and the other writings are also good. I think brethren Ford's and Bowden's letters in this last SIGNS are especially good. Elder Gilbert Beebe's editorials are good; he surely was a God-taught man, and his works do follow him. I wish every Old Baptist in the land was able to take this most excellent paper, but it seems that most of them are poor financially, as well as in spirit; we are all

dependent upon the Lord for every good and perfect gift. I desire to be thankful for the many blessings bestowed upon me and little family. I thank you for sending the SIGNS as long as you have. A dear sister whom I love dearly had it sent to me these last six months. I have now been in west Texas four years, and have made three crop failures; we were hailed out this year, and have made scarcely anything at all, but I do not wish to murmur or complain; I desire to be submissive to the Lord's will in all things, but it seems that the old man steps in the way and I find myself complaining about many things. Like Paul of old, the thing I would, I do not, and the thing I would not, that I do. It seems it is a constant warfare here in this life.

I am glad to know the SIGNS is increasing in circulation, and hope the good work will continue, whether I can take it or not, for there are many of the flock comforted through it.

Wishing to be remembered in your prayers, I remain unworthily,

(MRS.) M. E. WILLIAMS.

RIVES, Tenn., Feb. 9, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Find inclosed two dollars to pay for the SIGNS another year, as my subscription has expired and I feel that I cannot do without it. This is my first year, and I have enjoyed the editorials and the good letters from the dear brethren and sisters. They are all strangers to me in the flesh, but as I read I feel to know them. O how I wish I could know that I am one of God's children. It seems impossible when I look back over my past life and see so many things I have done that I ought not to have done, and am still doing them. How can I deem myself a child of God when I am so unworthy to be called one of his children? I wish I could express my feelings, but I am too ignorant, and my mind seems to be wandering at times. When I read my Bible it seems that I cannot understand as I wish I could, and that troubles me, but I have some consolation, as Christ's disciples could not understand all his teachings; I hope to believe right. I cannot see why everybody who reads the Bible are not Old Baptists, but I suppose it was not intended for all to see alike. Let me be what the Lord sees best, but I hope to be one to meet the Lord in the air at his coming. If it were not for that hope to help in time of trouble and tribulation I feel that I could not live.

Please pardon me for writing so much and in such a rambling way; I am afraid I have wearied you. When I began to write I felt that I wanted to say only a few words. I wish some of the brethren and sisters from your country would visit us here in Tennessee, especially the ministering brethren. We had a pleasant visit from brother Brees at our association in 1901, but as I am hard of hearing I cannot enjoy preaching as I would like to. The Bible and the SIGNS are about all the preaching I get.

From a sinner saved by the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, if saved at all; it is nothing I have done; I feel to give God all the praise, glory and honor; my continual prayer is, God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

(MRS.) WILLIE HARRISON.

OILTROUGH, Ark., Nov. 20, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am well pleased with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; may the Lord in his infinite wisdom be pleased to direct the editors to continue to ask for the old paths and walk in them.

We walk through fiery trials, storms, temptations and adverse circumstances, through evil as well as through good report, but we trust there is now at this present time a remnant according to the election of grace, and if by grace it is not of works, otherwise work is no more work. Where is boasting then? It is excluded.

I have written more than I intended, but felt that I wanted to say a few things to you. We are strangers in the flesh, but I hope not strangers to God. I would like to write often, but am so weak and little that I am not worthy of consideration, yet I love, or hope I do, all of God's people, whether they love me or not. I am not worthy of love. I love them because Christ loves them. He is the friend of sinners, and that makes me love him and his dear children, because he first loved me, and his love is everlasting, eternal like himself.

Now, dear brethren, I hope I have not wearied you. May the grace of God, who is able to keep you from falling, be with you all, causing you to trust in him, the giver of every good and perfect gift, whose name is Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty. Love to all.

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,
WILLIAM H. EUBANKS.

CLEVELAND, Ohio.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I wish to say in behalf of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, that Elder George L. Weaver, of Galion, Ohio, is serving us as pastor. He is a faithful and sound Baptist. We are few in number, but are in peace and fellowship, and feel that the Lord blesses us with his presence in our meetings, which are held the fourth Sunday of the month, at the home of the writer, 694 East 125th St. This church was organized ten years ago; since then it has been our privilege to have many of the ministers traveling from the east to the west, and *vice versa*, visit us, and we invite all ministering brethren who believe in the precious faith that our faithful editors and correspondents of the SIGNS adhere to to come and see us. Any communication addressed to me will be cheerfully answered.

If one at all, your unworthy brother,
CYRUS CROSS.

TOLEDO, Ill., Feb. 20, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have been taking the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for nearly seventy years. My father, William Metcalf, took it before I began to take it, and many times as a seeker after the truth I read the little leaflet published by its first editor. Standing on the threshold of my eighty-ninth year, I wonder if I shall live to send you another subscription, or whether I shall quit this vale of tears to soar to worlds on high. My heart has often sighed, "I would not live alway,"—at times I have longed for this weary body to be laid at rest in the sweet, silent tomb while my spirit takes its flight to Him who gave it me in trust these many years. The grand old Bible has been my staff in these last days. The SIGNS has filled my mind with many glorious thoughts and filled my soul with hallowed meditations as I have eagerly read its contents.

Inclosed you will find five dollars, two dollars of which shall go to renew my subscription, and the remaining three dollars to be devoted to the cause of the poor as you see best.

Thanking you many times for multiplied favors, I am your humble sister in the Lord,

(MRS.) B. A. DOWNS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1912.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

LUKE XII. 15.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Will you please give your views upon the words: "For a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth"?

Your brother, J. J. OKES.

PENHOOK, Va., Feb. 8, 1912.

First. We know of no more weighty or solemn words than these, and the narrative, commencing with the thirteenth verse of this chapter and continuing on to the forty-eighth verse, illustrates and makes plain the meaning of them. We are told that there had gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trod one upon another, and that Jesus began to teach his disciples in the midst of them. In the midst of this weighty teaching a man breaks in with a matter utterly trivial when compared with the gracious and solemn words which were falling from the Master's lips, and said to him, "Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me." The Savior had just been speaking of the constant care of that God whom they served over all his disciples, so that none of them need feel any anxiety over the things which belonged to their welfare in this world. He had said that their heavenly Father fed the fowls of the air and cared for them, so that even a sparrow could not fall to the ground without him. But it appears that all this exalted teaching had produced no effect upon this man; it had all passed by him as an idle tale. Had he been able to understand and receive the Savior's teaching certainly he could not at that time have interrupted with such an appeal. How manifest it is in this instance that more is needed than to listen to even the words of the Savior. Evidently the word did not profit this man, not being mixed with faith in him; there was no place in him for the word.

Second. Jesus rebuked this man very earnestly, saying, "Man, who made me a judge and a divider over you?" This man's brother might indeed have been inflicting wrong upon him, or striving to grasp the whole of the estate when but half belonged to him. This the Master did not in these words mean to approve or to condone, but he did mean that it was not his mission in this world to place himself above or to set aside the administration of the laws of men with regard to worldly affairs, and what Jesus did not claim to do it is certainly altogether out of place for his disciples to seek to do. The principles of righteousness taught by the Savior and formed in all their hearts where his salvation dwells will indeed lead all who know these things to seek justice and judgment in all their ways and in all their dealings with men, but it is not the place of the church to seek authority in matters of earthly government. This one thing has been the bane of religion in all ages. The moment the church of Christ seeks to divide the inheritance according to human law, she has laid down her true position, above the world, and falls straightway into the low and groveling things which actuate men of the world. Jesus taught righteousness in general

among all classes of men, and enforced the doing of what was right upon his disciples, such as obedience to authority, and honesty, and all kindness toward all men, but he did not set up a tribunal for the decision of controversies among men; neither did he become a judge and a divider among men, nor did he commit to the church any such commission; yet the things which he taught and lived, when once felt in the hearts of men, would lead to doing that which was right and just and merciful in all the transactions of life. It is sure that a cheat and a liar cannot be his disciple. Evidently neither this man to whom he spoke, nor his brother who was striving to grasp that which was not his by right, possessed aught of the spirit of the things which Jesus had been saying just before, in their hearts. Such teaching could reach the understanding of those only who had been given, first, the spirit which was in the Teacher, and who had become really and truly in heart and in spirit his disciples.

Third. Then he turned to his disciples and said, not unto this man, but unto them, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness." Both this man and his brother were evidently covetous; each one sought more than his just due; each one was selfish altogether; but his disciples, while they had been given a better spirit, were still in the flesh (that flesh which is always covetous), and so were in danger of being carried away by it to seek for worldly gain to the exclusion of the things which were above the world, and as much higher than the world as the heaven is higher than the earth. Therefore he addresses them especially, as those who could hear and heed his teachings. The fallow ground of their hearts had been broken up, so that the seed could take hold there and grow; yet also the seeds of evil still abounded in them, and might grow into ungodliness in a hundred ways, and one of the rankest of these weeds is covetousness, which an apostle pronounced to be idolatry. It is idolatry, because it means the seeking of the creature more than the Creator, and bowing down to mammon rather than to God. Elsewhere the Redeemer warned his disciples that they could not serve God and mammon. Covetousness means inordinate desire for things which may be right things in themselves, as well as things which are not right in themselves. Immoderate desire for wealth, for instance, which is that which is especially referred to in the Scripture which we are considering, is covetousness and idolatry. This the disciples are bidden to beware of. Nothing that we could here write would set this matter forth half so plainly as the words of Paul to Timothy: "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things."—1 Tim. vi. 7–11.

Fourth. Before saying a few things about the words to which our attention is especially called, we feel like calling attention to the discourse of the Savior which follows, the substance of which is that the things of this life are uncertain at best, as illustrated by the rich man, verses sixteen to twenty, and those who serve and fear God are under his provi-

dential care as well as being the subjects of his grace and heirs of heaven. They are assured that their heavenly Father knows all that they need, and that he will supply all things for this life that are needful, as well as an eternal home above; therefore they need not fear to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. They do not need to grasp either with inordinate desire or with all their energies of mind and body this world's wealth, but rather to seek with the most earnest desire the service of God and the joys and riches of his kingdom. These are infinitely better than all worldly gain in the first place, so that they are to be chosen rather than any worldly pleasure or ease, and then God, who knows and loves his people, has promised to provide even these natural things, so far as they are needed by his disciples. A den or cave in the earth, even, is better with the possession of the kingdom of heaven, than a palace without this kingdom; but the disciples are told that even these earthly possessions will be given them, with the kingdom, so far as they shall have need. Disciples are not promised riches, but they are promised such things as are convenient for them, and of this their heavenly Father is a better judge than themselves. Believing this, whatever the Lord provides will bring contentment. Because of this the apostle could say, "But godliness with contentment is great gain."

Fifth. The dear Savior does not here imply that to labor for a home, or for a competence, as we ordinarily use that term, is wrong. In all the Scriptures industry, frugality, carefulness and attention to whatever may be our calling, are commanded and commended. There is nothing more abhorrent to the spirit of the Scriptures than wastefulness, idleness, uncleanness and laziness. A desire for a portion of this world's goods is not condemned. That which may be gained by the virtues above named is to be received as the blessing of God upon these virtues. Naturally, it may be that men may plant and water, and yet God withhold, for his own wise purposes, the harvest, but it is sure that he who does not plant and water will reap no harvest, and he who plows and sows and waters and reaps the result of his labors, does so through the blessing of God. It is not this that is condemned by the Master in the text and context, but rather a grasping, selfish, covetous spirit. Such a spirit was in the man who desired that Jesus would speak to his brother about dividing the inheritance, and most certainly it was in his brother, but disciples are raised up above these things through the Spirit of God dwelling in them. Jesus teaches them here, as did the apostle afterward, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." This is the standing of all who are called by grace; they are not of the world, as Jesus was not of the world. If then we are risen to this new and heavenly life, let us seek the things which belong to that life.

Sixth. Now the words, "For a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth," sum up in what may be called a proverb the whole of what is embraced in all the teaching of the Savior and of the apostles to which we have been calling attention. The life is more than meat, and the body more than raiment. Meat may strengthen and support life, but it is not life, and neither can it give life; and so

the body may be clothed, and indeed must be clothed, but clothing is not the body, and neither can it give life to the body. "All that a man hath," said the enemy of souls, "will he give for his life." That is, man counts nothing so valuable as his life. This is true of man naturally, and naturally it is true that a man's possessions do not make the man. Life, in the text, means more than mere existence; it means what a man is in his affections, desires, hopes, fears and motives. Wealth does not make the man; that which makes up the true life of even natural men is what is within them. Honesty, the spirit of kindness, justice, equity, uprightness, consideration of others, and whatsoever is of good report, are the things which make up the real life, so that he who possesses these, though he have no goods of this world, yet it is he that really lives.

Seventh. All the above is especially true of those who possess the life that is of the Spirit. The words of Jesus thus more particularly bear upon those who have the life of Christ. Jesus himself lived a life that was more abundant than any other man ever lived, yet he had not where to lay his head. So far as we read, he never possessed aught of this world. We do not read that he ever carried money on his person or had any personal wealth. He was supplied through the care of his Father in heaven with all that he needed in the way of temporal mercies day by day. Surely his life did not consist in the abundance of the things that he possessed, yet where in all the world is there now, or has there ever been, any man who lives as he lived? It would have added to him nothing had all the kingdoms of the world been his. If the Spirit of the Master be with any man, no matter how poor or how feeble in strength, or how destitute of all other things counted good by men he may be, yet he lives, and this life of the Spirit manifests itself not in ways counted successful by men of earthly minds, but in meekness, lowliness, trust in God, love to others, and in all sobriety of thought and speech and deed. Thus the blessed Master lived his life, and thus will that same life manifest itself more or less in all the children of men where it abides. In the text under consideration the blessed Lord sets this forth. O that the Spirit of God might impress this more and more upon all our hearts and minds, that we might in this manner live to the praise of the glory of his grace who hath made us accepted in the Beloved. C.

1 CORINTHIANS III. 11–15.

WILL Elder Ker please give his views through the SIGNS on 1 Corinthians iii. 11–15? "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." I feel that I am asking too much, yet I have read Elder Ker's articles with pleasure, as well as many others in the SIGNS, and if he feels so inclined I would be glad to hear from him on these Scriptures.

EDWARD HEARD.

COVINGTON, Ga., Dec. 4, 1911.

The above Scripture presents a large field to one whose mind is led into its heights, depths, lengths and breadths, but as for us, we can only touch upon it here and there in a brief way. The apostle has the work of the gospel ministry under consideration, its importance and benefits. He shows that all the work of Paul as a planter, and all the work of Apollos as a waterer, could avail nothing except God should give the increase,

hence all the glory belongs to the Lord. The thorn in the flesh did wonders for Paul, it kept him humble and of lowly mind, and were it not for the same thing many of the Lord's servants would become exalted above measure, and be of but little use to the household of faith.

Paul declares that "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." This Foundation was laid in Zion by the Father, who knew that "Jesus Christ" was sufficient to uphold the entire structure, therefore "a sure foundation." Upon Him all "workmen" must build, but let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon, whether it be gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, for every man's work shall be made manifest; it shall be revealed by fire. In other words, the sincerity, faithfulness and steadfastness of all who profess Christ shall be put to the test by affliction, persecution and reproach for the cause of Christ. Jesus said in the parable of the sower, "He that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it: yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." All such belong to the wood, hay and stubble class, such as fire consumes.

It seems that the apostle had in mind the grave importance of faithfulness and care in the ministry of the word. No man should want to gather fruit before it is ready for the kingdom of God. If he does gather before the fruit is ripe he will surely suffer loss. All gospel ministers should remember the preaching of John the Baptist when he said, Bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Prove yourselves the subjects of grace by well ordered lives and godly conversation; demonstrate that you are dead to sin by fleeing from it; give full proof that you no longer have hope of salvation by the deeds of the law. Sometimes undue influence is brought to bear upon persons who attend Old Baptist meetings a few times, to unite with the church; especially is this done with the younger class, and some of us have seen the fruit of our premature labor burned up with fire, or reproach and persecution, for the name of Christ. Such a servant is still a servant, and saved (purified), but it is as by fire: distress, affliction and disappointment. What greater distress could a minister of the gospel endure than to see those to whom he had preached the gospel and administered the ordinance of baptism falling away or returning to their wallowing in the mire? This fire does not destroy the man's ministry, nor does it affect the "Foundation," but it does prove to him that the Lord, who is the builder of the house and the keeper of the city, must give the increase or add to the church of such as shall be saved from falling away, as well as eternally at his right hand.

The servant whose work abides, or endures, "shall receive a reward." He, instead of having to pass through the sore trials to which the minister described above is subjected, rejoices in the fruit of his labor, saying with Paul, These are my joy and my crown. K.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

1 JOHN III. 9.

ELDER KER:—If not asking too much of you, I would like for you to give us your understanding of 1 John iii. 9: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

Your brother in hope, M. B. WEEDON.

FORT SCOTT, Kansas, Dec. 26, 1911.

The above requests have been long delayed, not because of indifference to the desire that we should write, but for lack of impression and light. It has been months since we felt the slightest inclination to write, or even try to preach, though the latter we have attempted often, and the famine grows worse each day. Yet we feel that we should at least let the brethren and friends know that we have received their requests and would respond if we could. How utterly impossible for man to keep alive his own soul. The more one exercises in the darkness to bring about the morning, the deeper he sinks in the mire and clay. We hope that those who have requested our views of Scripture will not be too severe in their criticism of us for not responding more promptly, because we would do better if we could.

Now just a few words about the text. John, like all the apostles, in his writings preached the truth by contrasting it with error; he also contrasted righteousness with unrighteousness. In so doing the truth was more fully brought to light and righteousness made manifest. Paul said, "They that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober." "Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness." We do not think the import of Paul's words very different from that of the text under consideration. It seems to us that the key to the subject is found in the two preceding verses, when John said: "He that doeth righteousness is righteous even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning." Here is the contrast, and in it is shown who are the children of God and who are those still under the dominion of Satan. It does not seem to us that the apostle means that the child of God never does wrong, neither does he mean that those of the other class never do any right thing, but that the life of the man, lived in the flesh, proves whether he is under the influence of God or the devil. "He that doeth righteousness is righteous." He that deals justly, loves mercy and walks humbly is the righteous man, even though, like Moses, he may at times speak unadvisedly with his lips, or like David say in his haste, "All men are liars," or, like Peter, when severely tried, say, "I know not the man." On the other hand, the man who sins, or lives a life of evil, though he may at times do and say the things which are right, is the man that is of the devil, because his life proves what influence he is under. This seems to us what the apostle means by the text: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." He does not live as he formerly did; he does not engage in the trifling amusements and entertainments of the world as he once did. In other words, he does not live in sin, because he is dead to it. This is the meaning of the words, "He cannot sin, because he is born of God." John in this statement and Paul in his question, "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" mean the same thing. K.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, March 27th, 1912, at the home of the bride's parents, in Halcott Center, N. Y., Morton Germond, of Bushnellville, N. Y., and Nora L. Mayes, of Halcott Center, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder J. W. Futch fell asleep in Jesus on the morning of March 7th, 1912, in the 70th year of his age. He was born August 26th, 1842, in Columbia County, Fla., and moved with his parents to Hillsboro County while quite young, but his home was mostly in Polk County, Fla. He joined the confederate army in 1862, and proved true and faithful to the cause of his country until the end of the war. He first joined the Missionary Baptists, and lived with them several years, but it pleased God to show him the error of his way, and his lost and ruined condition, after which he received a hope in Christ. His mind directed him to Mt. Enon Primitive Baptist Church, of the Primitive faith and order. He held the doctrine of God's unlimited predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass. On Saturday before the second Sunday in June, 1881, he and his wife, sister Rebecca, offered themselves for membership, and after relating their experiences of grace were received in the fellowship of the church, the moderator and church extending to them the right hand of fellowship, and on the following Sunday they received the ordinance of baptism at the hands of the pastor of the church, Elder E. Z. Hull. Elder Futch preached his first sermon on the second Saturday in October, 1881. On the second Saturday in June, 1884, the church licensed him to exercise his gift at any time or place his lot might fall. He proved sound in the doctrine, and was abundantly blessed of the Lord in the gift of the ministry. The church being satisfied with his gift, and deeming him worthy, ordained him to the full work of the ministry on the second Saturday in May, 1886. He was called to the pastoral care of Mt. Enon Church Saturday, Dec. 7th, 1889, and was her faithful pastor until Dec. 6th, 1901. He was called again to the pastoral care of the church Dec. 11th, 1903, and served the church until Dec. 8th, 1905; then called again May 12th, 1906, and remained pastor of Mt. Enon Church until his death. His time in the work of the ministry was full, serving four, and sometimes five churches, and seldom having a Sunday to rest from his labor in the ministry, and never failed to fill his place at the appointed time of the churches where he was called to serve except when providentially hindered. His labors were confined principally to the churches which compose the Mt. Enon Association, of which he served as moderator for a number of years, and was moderator of same at the time of his death. He was a faithful soldier of the cross, a peacemaker and a good counsellor, and his fatherly care and admonitions were a source of great comfort and consolation, which will be long remembered by the brethren. He suffered many trials and temptations and much persecution for Christ's sake, but the Lord strengthened him to overcome all these things, and he stood firm in the doctrine until the end came. He was afflicted with dropsy several months, not able much of the time to visit the churches. He realized the time of his departure was not far hence, and spoke often of his demise, that he was ready and willing to go at God's appointed time. He was at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Mary Allen, when the end came. He was a loving and affectionate husband, a kind father, a teacher of good things, and to know him was to love him. He died in full triumph of the faith once delivered unto the saints, which he so earnestly contended for. He leaves a dear companion and children and relatives and a large circle of friends, and all the churches he served, to mourn their loss. He will be greatly missed by his family and the churches, but our loss is his eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Peter Brown, assisted by Elder W. M. Webb, after which his body was laid in Mt. Enon burying-ground to rest until the resurrection day.

Done by request of Mt. Enon Church.

W. L. WIGGINS, Clerk.

BROTHER **George R. Yard** died of consumption at his home in Hopewell, N. J., March 19th, 1912, aged 70 years, 9 months and 19 days. He was born in Hamilton township, Mercer County, N. J. He was married to Anna Mary, eldest daughter of Deacon Wm. E. and Lydia A. Tindall, Jan. 13th, 1869. He lived in the vicinity of Hamilton township until about fifty years of age, then moved to Ewing, where he lived several years, and then to Hopewell, where he spent the remaining years of his life. He had been a member of the Old School Baptist Church in Hopewell about twenty years, being the last person baptized by the late Elder Wm. J. Purington. Five children were born to them, two boys (twins) and three girls. A daughter was taken away by death a few years ago. His dear companion writes us as follows regarding her bereavement: "I do miss him much. I feel lonely and sad, but wish to be submissive to the will of our heavenly Father, knowing that he doeth all things well. May he help me to say, Thy will be done. He gave and he hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. He has been with us through all our married life of forty-three years, delivering us in time of trouble and trial and remembering us in tender mercy. I feel that I have very much for which to be thankful. I trust that he will keep me through the remaining years that I have to stay in life. I trust they may be spent to the honor

and glory of God, and that I may never bring reproach upon his cause."

In addition, we desire to say that it had been our privilege to know brother Yard well for about eighteen years, and it is with gladness and gratitude to God that we can speak of the steadfast faith that was his all these years. We have known of no one among all our brethren whose confidence in the doctrine of God our Savior has been more settled and grounded than was his. There never seemed to be a shadow of question on his mind as regards the truth of salvation by grace, with all that this truth involves, and he was always ready to confess his faith whenever it seemed needful, yet he was not given to argument with any one. We have been often in his company during these eighteen years past, and never went away from a visit with him without feeling that it had been good and profitable to us. We do not recall any time spent with him that the chief theme was not concerning the salvation in which he hoped, and which he loved. The whole church has known of him as a faithful member, ready always to do all he could for the interest of his brethren and the cause of God. His place in the house of worship was never vacant unless unavoidably so; he did not set worldly gain over against his duty in the church. We all knew this to be so, and were glad to meet him and see him in our midst. The religion of Christ was with him more than notion. He began to fail about eighteen months ago, and from that time was able to do but little. For the past nine months he was not able to get away from home, but still was up and about the place until some six weeks before his death. At the last he passed quietly and peacefully away. Many times in his sickness he spoke to us of his faith and hope, and that they were his support. His desire was to be fully reconciled to the will of God, whether in life or in death.

The funeral service was held at the meetinghouse on Friday a. m., March 22nd. By request of the family, hymns 807 and 881 (Beebe's collection) were read, and the Scripture in Job first chapter and last clause of verse twenty-one was used as a text. The interment was in the cemetery adjoining. Many friends came together to testify to their regard for him, and their sorrow at their loss. The family feels sorely bereaved, but still bows in submission to the will of God. We feel assured that it is well with our dear brother and well with them.

ALSO,

Abram V. Wykoff, son of the late Jacob Wykoff, and Jane his wife, died at his home in Roseville, N. J., Wednesday, March 27th, 1912, in the 46th year of his age. He was attacked with appendicitis the last of January, and an operation was performed at once, but after four days septic pneumonia set in, from which time he was delirious, with now and then a lucid moment, until death came. The first twenty-five years of his life were spent in Hopewell, N. J., and afterward he lived in Roseville. For about twenty years he had been in business in New York city. In 1890 he was married to Miss Eva Manning, of Guymard, N. Y., who, together with one sister, Mrs. J. E. Cray, survives him. A brief funeral service was held on Friday evening at his home, after which, on Saturday, the body was brought to Hopewell for interment. Services were conducted at the grave in Hillside Cemetery, near this village. It was our privilege to be with the friends at the grave, and to say a few words, and engage in prayer, that they might be sustained and comforted through the mercy of Him who alone can minister comfort to the heart. Our deceased friend was well known in this borough and vicinity from his childhood. In all these years he had commanded the respect and good will of all who knew him, as a kindly, honorable man. Many were sorrowful when the news came that Abram Wykoff was dead. There is no earthly blessing better than a good name; it is to be preferred to great riches, as we are told in the word of God. This is truly a sore affliction to the bereaved companion, and to the one sister who is left. What a consolation to know that our God knows all our affliction, and that he can and does sustain. May this consolation be with the wife and sister, and with all who are sorrowful at the loss of a friend.

C.

Augustus Bourquin, the subject of this notice, was born in Switzerland August 26th, 1842, and came to America with his parents when about twelve years of age, landing at Norfolk, Va., where he grew to manhood. He was a soldier in the confederate army in the war between the States, 1861 to 1865. About two years after the war he came to Maryland, locating in Baltimore County, near the old Black Rock Church, where he spent the remainder of his days. He engaged in farming, which he made the business of his life, and by industry and good judgment was successful, and accumulated a good estate, leaving his widow and two daughters in very comfortable circumstances. Brother Bourquin had for years attended the meetings of the Primitive Baptist Church at Black Rock, and manifested an increasing interest, and on May 5th, 1901, he came before the church and told them in a very connected and deliberate way of what he hoped the Lord had done for him, of his love for the church and how he felt the Lord had commanded him to stand before them and confess his name. He was most gladly received, and on the day following it was the privilege of the writer to baptize him in the fellowship of the church that now mourns her loss of him. From the time of his baptism to the day of his death brother Bourquin lived a consistent and much beloved member of his church. Though a man of few words, he spoke much to the

point, and was much blessed with the assurance of his salvation by the grace of God alone. He was a strong believer in the depravity of human nature, and in the almighty power of God, and his only hope for salvation was in Jesus Christ. He suffered much during the last years of his life, but did not murmur, and was always ready to do what he could for his church and pastor. On March 4th, 1912, he fell asleep in Jesus, as we fully believe, and on Thursday, the 7th, his remains were taken to the Black Rock meetinghouse, where in life he loved so much to go, and the writer spoke to a full house from the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians, after which the body of our dear brother was interred in the cemetery adjoining, to await the call of his Savior at the last day. Brother Bourquin lived an honorable life. I heard different ones say on the day of the funeral that they had never heard any one say an unkind word of him. His church and pastor, next to his bereaved widow and daughters, feel the loss of him the greatest. One daughter, sister Bessye, is a beloved member of the same church, baptized by the writer before her father. May God in mercy be with the dear bereaved ones and comfort their hearts as no other one can. Dear ones, in your sorrow you have much to comfort you; your loved one lived an honorable life among men, was successful in business, was given a good hope in Jesus, honored his profession and died in the triumph of a living, God-given faith. His memory we cherish. May God bless you.

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

Miss Harriet Kugler died in Frenchtown, N. J., Feb. 1st, 1912. She was born May 9th, 1828, and was in her 84th year. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church in 1862 or 1863, by the late Elder Gabriel Conklin. "Aunt Harriet," as she was generally called, lived in early life with her parents, and after their death kept her home until she became too feeble to continue in that capacity, after which she made her home with her sister-in-law, Eliza J. Kugler, widow of Deacon Wilson R. Kugler, where she had been cared for the past nine years, up to the time of her death. Her home was a place of welcome to those of our faith and order, and her chief concern was for the welfare of the church. She was clear in the doctrine, and would speak disapprovingly of anything that did not become sound doctrine. Salvation by grace was the teaching of her experience, without any of the frail accomplishments of the works of the flesh being of any value either to a godly walk in the church or otherwise, knowing full well that all that pertained to the house of God was brought into manifestation by the gospel. As the end drew near the things of this world seemed to lose their charm, and she longed for the evidence that this mortal should be clothed with immortality, and to feel the power of death being swallowed up in victory. The last time I conversed with her she seemed joyed with evidence that had come to her of feeling that underneath were the everlasting arms, and her confident rest was sweet to behold. She knew this as her only hope, and we feel assured that for her the conflict is ended and the fullness of glory is her eternal inheritance.

Elder Fenton preached on the occasion of her funeral from the words that had come to her with much comfort: "Be still, and know that I am God," also reading one of her favorite hymns: "God moves in a mysterious way," after which her remains were borne to the family burying-ground. Six nephews acted as pall-bearers. She leaves many relatives to mourn their loss, together with our little church.

O. R. KUGLER.

J. Oscar Frazier, formerly of Petersburg, Del., son of William and Ann Frazier, died at his residence, 1108 West Seventh St., Wilmington, Del., March 13th, 1912, aged 45 years. He leaves a widow and one son to mourn their loss, also five brothers and two sisters. So passed away a faithful and loving husband, a kind and affectionate father. While he had never expressed a hope, to my knowledge, yet it was the desire that an Old Baptist should speak at the funeral, which the writer tried to do, using Psalms xv. 1, 2. I never met him in life, nor do I know what the secret yearnings of his heart were, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." May the gracious Master strengthen and comfort the sorrowing ones left to tread life's stormy pathway here alone.

Services were held at the house Friday evening, March 15th, and the remains were taken by train Saturday morning to Cow Marsh for interment.

W. S. ALEXANDER.

ELSMERE, Del., March 31, 1912.

Mrs. Mary Ann Smith died in Lexington, Ky., March 14th, 1912, of enlargement of the liver, heart trouble and partial paralysis, in her 63rd year. She was the daughter of the late brother William and sister Ann Barriger, of Shelby County, Ky. Sister Smith was left many years ago with a family of five small children to battle alone with life's problems in the rearing of the children, four sons and one daughter, to manhood and womanhood. In this she was blessed, as I think all are respected and honorable citizens. Sister Smith upon the confession of her faith was heartily received in the fellowship of old Bethel Church, Shelby Co., Ky., September, 1910, and lived a worthy, beloved member, but the distance from her home forbade her attendance ere affliction's heavy stroke prevented. Hers was a life of many trials, but they are all over. Brother and sister Sloan

write me that the end was peaceful, that she was ready to go, and in an undertone was heard to say often, Jesus, Jesus, heaven. How sweet the name of Jesus. Truly, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear." Blessed faith. She leaves three sons and one daughter, who deeply feel the loss of a dear, devoted mother. This is especially true of the dear daughter, Latonia. May she feel the ever-supporting hand of that one so dear—Jesus. Four brothers and one sister, our dear sister, Sallie Sloan, of Lexington, together with the church and many friends, are also left to mourn. May the Lord bless and comfort them all.

Brief services were held in Lexington, after which she was buried in the cemetery there.

P. W. SAWIN.

Mrs. C. J. Jenkins died April 12th, 1912, in her 91st year. She was married to Benjamin Jenkins in 1849, and lived most of her life in Broome Co., N. Y. She was born in Plymouth, Conn. She had no particular disease, just died of old age. She was not a member of the church, but left evidence with her friends that she was a believer in Jesus Christ. She leaves two sons and one daughter, who will miss her, but not to mourn, for they believe that she was caught up to the clouds of God's glory to dwell forever with the Lord, and we who are left behind are to comfort God's people with this precious truth.

The funeral was held at the home April 15th, where the writer spoke to a company of neighbors and friends, after which the body was taken to the Lestershire Cemetery and placed in a vault. God bless the children, who did all that could be done by loving children for a kind, loving mother.

D. M. VAIL.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

W. S. AYDELOTT has changed his address from Smith Center, Kansas, to Lebanon, Kansas, and he and his daughter would be glad to have the brethren and sisters stop and see them when passing through Lebanon.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. J. M. Bocs, Cal., $2.00; Thos. A. Ardies, Ont., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Sidling Hill Church, Fulton Co., Pa., will hold, the Lord willing, a three days meeting Friday, Saturday and Sunday, May 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1912. Those coming by rail will come to Hancock, Md., and notify J. C. Mellott or Jonas Mellott, Needmore, Pa., to meet them there. All who wish to meet with us are cordially invited to come.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

THE Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va., has appointed her May meeting to be held, the Lord willing, Saturday and Sunday, May 11th and 12th, 1912, and we invite all to come who wish to be with us. Trains will be met at Herndon, Va., on Friday evening and Saturday morning.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will, the Lord willing, be held in Baltimore city, Md., beginning on Wednesday, May 15th, 1912, and continuing three days. Those coming to the city on Tuesday, 14th, will go to the meetinghouse, Calvert and Madison Sts., which will be open from 1 to 5 o'clock p. m. Those coming via Pennsylvania Railroad will arrive at Union station. Take any car going south on Charles St., get off at Calvert and Madison Sts. Those coming via B. & O. Railroad will arrive at Camden station. Take car marked St. Paul St. and get off at same place. The friends will meet there to look after the guests. All lovers of gospel truth are cordially invited to attend. All those arriving Wednesday a. m. go to the meetinghouse.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Wilmington Church, Wilmington, Del., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1912.

Those coming Tuesday will please inquire for John W. Brimer, 609 West Seventh St., or Wm. B. Tawresey, 618 Washington St. Those coming on Wednesday will go the meetinghouse, King St., between Tenth and Eleventh Sts. Those coming on the Pennsylvania Railroad will land at French St. station, take either the Delaware Ave. or Washington St. car and get off at Tenth and Market Sts., walk one square east and half a square north to meetinghouse. Those coming on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad will land at Delaware Ave. station, take Delaware Ave. car going east and get off at the same place.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Pa., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 29th, 30th and 31st, 1912.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 5th, 6th and 7th, 1912.

A THREE days meeting will be held with the Bethel Church, Tallman, Linn Co., Oregon, commencing on Friday at 2 o'clock p. m., and continuing over Sunday, June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1912, where we hope to meet as many of the brethren and sisters as possible. All those coming by rail will stop at Albany, take cars for Lebanon, stopping off at Tallman. The church-house is close to the depot.

A. HORNER.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of southern California meets every third Sunday at 2 p. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in Kimmy Hall, No. 12 Third St., in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

"Thoughts on Regeneration, the Spiritual Birth, the Christian Warfare and the Resurrection," is the title of a pamphlet of 58 pages, written by Elder H. B. Jones, of Winnsboro, Texas, and can be had of him for 25 cents per copy, five copies for $1.00 or $2.00 per dozen. Address, H. B. JONES,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 80. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1912. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PINSONFORK, Ky., Dec. 20, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—My mind has been exercised occasionally for some length of time on the subject of the Lord's redeemed family not committing sin, and I have concluded this morning to write a short article on the subject and send to the office of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and you may publish same if you judge it suitable for its columns; if not, cast it aside, and it will be all right with me, for I am aware of the fact that this is a point that I cannot write or speak of without some danger of being misunderstood, and even if I am rightly understood perhaps I may be unable to comfort the brethren, and therefore feel to ask the kind forbearance of the readers of the dear old SIGNS, our medium of correspondence. May the Lord bless us.

When twenty-one more days shall have come (Jan. 10th) I shall be seventy-six years of age, and I have had a name and place among the Predestinarian Baptists for a little over fifty years, and have been trying in the best way and manner I know how to ascribe greatness to the Lord our God, but I have often been made to cry out in anguish of soul, My leanness, my leanness, and have been made to wonder all these many years, and am still wondering this morning, why and how it is that I have been kept blundering along, trying to preach, and sometimes writing, so many years, while yet I am so weak and stammering, and of so little worth. While all these things are dark and mysterious to me, and I cannot solve them, they are all naked and open to the eye of Him with whom we have to do.

I will now quote Romans vi. 22: "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." Not the end of the fruit, but the end of the freedom is everlasting, for whatsoever the Lord doeth, it shall be forever, and this freedom is the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, our dear Redeemer. Jesus said to the Jews who believed on him, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."—John viii. 32, 36. For Christ, the High Priest of our profession, "entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemp-

tion for us."—Heb. ix. 12. We have long since believed that this eternal redemption secured in Christ Jesus for all the election of grace, or heirs of promise, embraced everything pertaining to their salvation. This same Jesus was the only character that ever did or ever could enter into this holy place to obtain eternal redemption for all his Father's family, for whose dreadful debt he was bound in covenant obligations, being their Surety. The Lord spoke of this wonderful family, this chosen generation, and of God's eternal design and predestination of them and for them, when he said, "Their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governor [Christ] shall proceed from the midst of them; and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me: for who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? saith the Lord. And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God."—Jer. xxx. 21, 22. It seems clear to my mind that redemption means salvation, hence God's people are a saved people, sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ and called. The word "preserved" means saved from ruin. This is true in things of nature as well as of the redeemed and saved family of our God. This is the only reason, and a good and glorious reason, too, why none of the chosen and redeemed family of God go to ruin, or perish; they are saved, they never shall perish; their salvation or redemption was prior to their sin and iniquity. Although they were brought into this world wholly contaminated with sin, totally depraved in the earthy Adam, yet their standing in the heavenly Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ, underwent no change whatever, and was not so much as stained with sin. The apostle Paul demonstrates this fact when he says, "According as he hath chosen us in him [Christ] before the foundation of the world, that we should be [exist] holy and without blame before him in love." "For in him we live, and move, and have our being;" that is, our spiritual existence, for the word "be" means to exist. Hence the election of grace has two standings, one in Christ and one in Adam, and in the order of existence their standing in Christ was first; it was from everlasting, or ever the earth was; but in the order of development their standing in Adam was first, was earthy. Forasmuch then as they were children of wrath by nature, exactly or precisely as others, the nonelect, or those who had no standing in Christ, no existence prior to the earthy Adam; I say, forasmuch as they were sinners in the earthy Adam, they must be made free from sin, redeemed from the curse of the law of sin and death, in order to become servants of God here in their time state, and to show forth his praise, for which he formed them. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Therefore they are made free by the law of the Spirit of life from the law of sin and death, and never can be brought under the power or dominion of that law again, for the law hath no more dominion over Christ Jesus, and consequently has no dominion over the members of his body, and what the law says it says to them that are under the law. But they are not under that law from which the Spirit of life has made them free, no, nor ever shall be, but they are under grace; and where there is no law there is no transgression, for sin is the transgression of the law, therefore in order to commit sin they must be under the law of sin and death. But this they cannot be, for they are freed forever from that law by the

law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. I would not be understood to mean that there is no sin about the Lord's redeemed and saved children while they are sojourning here in their time state, but their sins are condemned sins, condemned in the flesh; not put out of it, but condemned there. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Therefore, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin [doth not transgress the law]; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin [transgress the law], because he is born of God," and hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation or judgment, but is passed from death unto life. They are made free from the law of sin and death by the Spirit of life, hence cannot commit sin, for sin is the transgression of the law.

I would not be understood, as I have above said, to believe or mean that there is no sin in or about the Lord's people here, but I do most sincerely believe that all the sins and iniquities of all the election of grace in all their transgressions were laid upon Christ, and he bore them in his own body on the tree, and forever put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and did make ample and complete atonement for them, and I believe that God in his infinite wisdom, love and mercy so minutely keeps them that they never sin beyond the limit of the atonement, and that all the sins of all the promised seed, comprising the church, the body of Christ, are but condemned sins, and are all atoned for. The entire debt is absolutely settled, and the children are forever free.

Dec. 27th.—I again resume the subject which I commenced the 20th of this month, on the sense in which God's redeemed family does not commit sin, and the only reason I have for so doing is that when I sat down to write on this interesting subject the other day this point was uppermost in my mind, being, as I then thought, the plainest feature in the chain of testimony on the subject, and it still seems that way to me. When I began writing the other day I thought I would reach this point, but seeing my letter was growing too lengthy I thought it would be better to stop at what I had then written, and perhaps the subject would leave my mind, but it yet lingers, and I have concluded to suggest a few more brief thoughts touching this point: "Go, and sin no more," and on the context, and send them to you, which you will dispose of as you deem best.

It has seemed clear to my mind for some few years that this narrative recorded in the eighth chapter of John, respecting this woman who was arraigned before Jesus, the just and Holy One, and who was so guilty and justly condemned by the law that she never uttered so much as one word in self-defence, knew within herself that she was absolutely guilty and justly condemned, standing as she was in the presence of One whose eyes were too pure to behold iniquity, and who could not look upon sin, and the thunder tones of the law declared, The soul (person) that sinneth, it shall die, and the witnesses all testifying to her guilt, she having been taken in the very act; I say, it has seemed clear to my mind that this woman represents all the election of grace, or chosen and redeemed family of God, in their just state of condemnation and death under the law, comprising the entire church of God, which

was under condemnation of the law. But the mercy of God, which is in Christ Jesus, is older than sin, condemnation and death, hence this wonderful mercy that intervenes in behalf of all these elect sinners. Being elect vessels of mercy, no law nor accusation can condemn them in Christ Jesus, for there is no condemnation to them in their standing in Christ, for in this standing they are holy and without blame before God in love. Therefore, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."—Isa. liv. 17. So those accusers represent to my mind all the opposing powers that ever have or ever shall arise against the church and people of God, for they all went out one by one beginning at the eldest, even unto the last, and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. What wonderful felicity, what wonderful enjoyment and glorious deliverance were given by the peace-speaking words, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." As those accusers all went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last, we can readily see that these two words, "eldest" and "last" are both in the superlative degree, and that nothing can be older than the elder nor later than the last; so then no matter how far back we go into antiquity, or even anterior to time, no tongue or weapon can be found or raised to condemn the justified in Christ Jesus, for they are free indeed. Again, no matter how far our thoughts soar in futurity, nothing can arise to condemn the Lord's redeemed. No man condemned the Lord's elect people in the type which we have before us, neither can any ever arise to condemn the redeemed of the Lord. Who (none) shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Where is the principality or power that can condemn that which God has justified? None whatever. So when the imperative voice of our dear Redeemer, who loved us with an everlasting love and gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, says, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more," they can never come into condemnation or judgment, but are passed from death unto life, even life everlasting, therefore they cannot commit sin, or transgress that law, for they are under grace, and consequently never can be brought under the law of sin and death any more. Well might we say, What a wonderful deliverance God hath wrought! What great things he hath done for us, whereof we are glad. "Go, and sin no more." Therefore, my dear brethren in the Lord Jesus Christ, whom I hope I love in the truth, if I am not a poor, deceived mortal, I believe with all my heart, mind and soul that when time shall be no longer, in that blessed immortality beyond this life, there will be nothing but this redeemed bride, the Lamb's wife, that will be with him in the midst of heaven, enjoying all that heaven means or is. O happy day, O blessed thought, when shall it once be?

Now, dear readers, I want to say in conclusion that the church of God as an organized body, known as the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, stands alone to-day with Jesus, justified by the Scriptures in doctrine, faith and practice, and that, beginning at the eldest even to the last, they have gone out from us, one by one, and left the Old Baptists standing with Jesus, her Head and Husband, all glorious within, and her clothing of

wrought gold, and the apostles have declared that, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." I would not be understood to believe that all the redeemed of the Lord have a name and place in the visible body, or church, in her time state, but as an organized institution the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church stands alone on the apostolic doctrine, faith and practice, and is built upon the foundation (Christ) of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. I do not think that this is a numerical growth, but a growth in grace and in the knowledge of the truth.

May the Lord remember us all in this, a time of great need.

W. J. MAY.

TALLMAN, Ore., Jan. 15, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—I herewith send you two dollars for the renewal of my subscription to the good old SIGNS. I have been taking it for more than thirty years, and love it better than any Primitive Baptist paper I ever read. It has stood firm from the beginning, and its battle-cry has always been, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." I was born and raised an Arminian. This I did not have to learn from any one; it was already in my nature; I inherited it from my old father, Adam, and it required nothing short of the power of God, independent of means or instrumentalities, to remove it. While in this awful condition I labored hard as a preacher for the Missionary Baptists for many years, and perhaps I was as conscientious as was Saul of Tarsus when he was persecuting the saints. In the spring of 1880 a copy of the SIGNS fell into my hands. I opened it, and the first thing that my eyes turned to was as though the most powerful sermon on the doctrine of predestination and election, and the effectual calling of dead sinners from darkness to light that I ever read, had been declared. This struck me with power, and caused me to tremble with fear that I had been advocating a false system of religion, which I have hated from that day to this. It is no wonder that I love the good old SIGNS, and the doctrine it advocates. Now, brethren, I was, as I believe, quickened by God's grace long before this, but I needed my eyes to be opened, and an instructor to show me the truth. I had life, but needed instruction. Paul was sent to the Gentiles to open their blind eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of sin and Satan unto God. I, though quickened, was in one sense still in darkness. I needed light in regard to the true doctrine of grace as set forth in the holy Scriptures. This is the design of the preaching of the gospel; it is not to be the means of eternal salvation to any one. Philip found the eunuch searching the Scriptures, which was an evidence that he had life from God, and Philip said unto him, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man guide me? And Philip began at that same Scripture and preached unto him Jesus, and God opened his heart to see the truth, and when they came to water he said unto Philip, See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip proposed the important question, saying, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. The

eunuch said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Philip knew that if he believed, he was a fit subject for the ordinance of baptism, for the apostle has said, He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. And, No man can say that Jesus is the Christ but by the Holy Ghost. No wonder that he commanded the chariot to stand still while he led this child of God down into the water and buried him in the liquid grave, an emblem of the burial and resurrection of our blessed Savior. How vain and foolish to argue that baptism has anything to do with the eternal salvation of any one. If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost. No wonder it is hid from such characters, that there is no effort necessary for the Lord's people to make in order to be saved, for they are already saved. The apostle said, Who hath saved us and called us. We observe the saving comes first. When did he save us? He saved us when in the agony of death he cried, "It is finished." And so our salvation was as secure to us before we were called as it is afterward. The calling of us out from darkness only made manifest to us that which already existed in God's power, knowledge and purpose. No wonder the apostle said, Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again. O, my brethren, what a sure foundation is this upon which the poor, helpless sinner builds his hope. I am in my seventy-eighth year, and realize that I shall soon have to meet my righteous Judge, and when I review my past life I find that I have often been out of the way, and can well realize that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. I have been pastor of Bethel Church for nearly thirty-three years, and have often wondered how the brethren have borne with my imperfections so long, and how they have manifested such love and fellowship for me. We have a good meetinghouse in Tallman; the members are all sound in the faith, and all speak the same things.

This letter I feel is not worthy a place in the SIGNS, but I will send it, and ask you to use your own pleasure about publishing it.

I remain your brother in hope,

SILAS WILLIAMS.

ST. ALBANS, W. Va., Feb. 26, 1912.

ELDERS CHICK AND KER—DEAR AND PRECIOUS BRETHREN:—I am sending you a letter which I received a few days ago from my son, G. B. Bird, who is now in Kentucky, in the bounds of the Mates Creek Association, laboring among the churches in word and doctrine as the good Lord gives him utterance. I think it would be good reading matter for our beloved Zion, but use your better judgment, and I will not be hurt with you in the least.

I am, I trust, your brother in a precious hope,

C. M. BIRD.

CANADA, Ky., Feb. 20, 1912.

MR. C. M. BIRD—DEAR FATHER:—I feel impressed to write to you this morning on the security of God's people. David says, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."—Psalms xxxvii. 25. Let us notice the seed. "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation."—Psalms xxii. 30. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He sayeth not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."—Gal. iii. 16. Also see

Genesis xii. 7. Now it would appear to the world a great mystery indeed how the above Scriptures can all be true, but to them to whom it is given (yes, it is a gracious gift) to know the mysteries of the kingdom (see Psalms xxii. 28,) it is very clear that Jesus and his people are one. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. iii. 28, 29. "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint [equal] heirs with Christ." —Rom. viii. 17. "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even [precisely] as many as the Lord our God shall call."—Acts ii. 39. The number that our God shall call is an even number, and our God is a precise and orderly God, there is harmony in all his works, and things which seem to us to be to the contrary are mysteries which have never been revealed to us. We are told that by faith we understand the worlds (plural of world) were framed by the word of God (which word was Christ), and surely there are only two worlds, earthly and heavenly, and by Christ our God has framed the worlds, and they were created by him, and for him, and all those who were one with him, and in him, the Christ, the Son of God, could not be perfect in his glorified body, for they are the body that was glorified.

O wonders of grace. Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty. The body could not exist without the head, for the life is there, the wisdom is there, the seeing, the hearing, the tasting and smelling are there. O how dependent the body is upon the head, and yet one could not be complete or perfect without the other, neither could one exist and never has existed without the other.

"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect [not imperfect]; and in thy book all my members were written." —Psalms cxxxix. 15, 16.

I do indeed love to think upon those things, but I am so poor and weak, so short-sighted, that I often fear to speak of them for fear I might pervert the truth. I feel that it is a fearful thing to handle the word of God deceitfully, and when I write or speak upon these things I do so under a weight of great solemnity, yet I am glad that God has given me a mind to think upon his testimonies, for they are wonderful. Dear father, when I look over the world of humanity and see the great sin and dire distress that hang over a guilty race, guilty of the vilest of sins, I feel that no greater hell could be thought of than this poor world in which humanity lives, which is the one world mentioned above, and the other world is certainly opposite to this world, and is perfect in holy peace and quiet joys.

I will leave the subject for the present, by saying that the safety of God's people is sure in all times and places, even in the den of lions they are safe, yet they are not always so well satisfied.

"What cheering words are these?
Their sweetness who can tell?
In time and in eternity
'Tis with the righteous well.

In every state secure,
Kept by Jehovah's eye,
'Tis well with them while life endures,
And well when called to die."

Yours in hope,

G. B. BIRD.

MATTHEW IV. 2.

"And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered."

This is a declaration of a fact connected with the life of our Lord while he was here on earth, and was one of the necessary things pertaining to his relation to his people, performed in the days of his flesh. Because his beloved people are subject to temptations, and not being able of themselves to bear the temptations, they need succor and help; he with them partook of those things and was tempted in all points as they are, that he might be able to succor them; and it was to the end that he should in his flesh by personal experience know their necessity that he was made to suffer as they suffer, hence the necessity for him to experience the same weakness, so he must fast forty days and forty nights and be an hungered; that is, weakened in body, that it might be demonstrated to his people that in the most extreme weakness to which he was subjected in his flesh he was more than a match for the adversary, the enemy of all righteousness. He came to deliver his people from the power of Satan, under whose power they had fallen by sin. Adam sinned, and in that all became sinners and under the power and dominion of the devil. Jesus took part of the flesh and blood of his children (people, Adam) made in the likeness of sinful flesh, "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Incidentally I here remark that all the lifetime of man until the time of this deliverance he was in fear of death, because God had said, "Thou shalt surely die." Also, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," and all the lifetime of man is spent in anticipation and apprehension of the execution of that sentence. But Jesus partook of the same, to suffer death, thus making atonement for sin, and by his glorious and triumphant resurrection from the dead swallowed up death in victory, and thus delivered his children from that bondage. The result will be a full salvation, a complete deliverance of the sinner, the man that had sinned, body, soul and spirit. It pleased God to give to his people an assurance, a hope of this, by demonstrating his power and making it so manifest to them in the person of Jesus Christ that they should indeed glory in him and put all their trust in him. To this end he partook of all the afflictions (sufferings) of his people, and this was in taking their flesh, for he was fully identified with them, was made under the law, in the same condemnation with them. First of all he was (is) pleased to show them that in extreme weakness he had more power than Satan, not obtaining the mastery as by the use of carnal weapons, nor by causing stones to be made bread, that he might renew his wasted strength, but by the word of God. For "it is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." It was by the word of God that every temptation of Satan was answered by him, proving that his people must live (all their spiritual life) and enjoy their hope of salvation by every word that proceedeth out of his mouth. He (Christ) is that word, and the very author of their spiritual being, for they are born again "by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever;" hence that is eternal, everlasting life.

The fasting of Jesus is not set before his disciples as an example, that they should fast literally. He did not say, As

I have done, so do ye, nor did he ever enjoin upon his disciples a literal fast at any time or for any occasion. The disciples of John asked, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? Jesus said, "Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast." Their time of fasting came when Jesus, the Bridegroom, was taken from them and nailed to the accursed tree. Theirs was not so much a fast of the body as a fast of soul; as the soul of Jesus in Gethsemane was sorrowful unto death, so are his disciples brought low in sorrow, even unto death, by experience learn that they have the sentence of death in themselves, that they should not trust in themselves, &c., are always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, crucified with Christ. This is the time of fasting of the disciples of Christ, and they do not appoint the dates; they come by our heavenly Father's arrangement. The time of the taking away of the Bridegroom (the death of Jesus) was appointed and determined of the Father, which caused the mourning (fasting) of the children of the bridechamber; so it is ever with them, the withdrawal of the light of the Sun of Righteousness from them is a time of fasting, and this fasting will continue until the light again appears. There is no command, or even intimation, in the New Testament to the disciples of Jesus to observe a fast, that is, an abstinence from literal food and drink, but on the contrary, liberty is given to eat of whatsoever may be set before them, with the injunction to receive it with thanksgiving. Fasting, as observed in old testament times, was an expression of grief, sorrow, &c. So to-day when a soul is filled with sorrow and mourning, one turns away from the most dainty meats. The observance of days, either of fasting or feasting, by appointment of those in authority, either political or ecclesiastical, is wholly without divine warrant in any portion of the Scriptures of truth. The so-called Lenten fast, now being observed by many, and regarded by them with great veneration, was never even suggested in the Acts of the Apostles, or in any of their writings, neither did Jesus give any commandment for its observance. There is no doubt that as a physical, remedial agent and corrective, fasting, or to abstain from certain foods at times, is beneficial, but temperance and moderation in eating and drinking, as enjoined by an inspired apostle, are far better. As a spiritual agent, to spiritually lift one up, there is nothing in it, either one way or another. All true spirituality is wrought in the saints from above. It is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do, &c. When burdened and oppressed with a sense of sin, and the poor soul is crying out, "God be merciful to me a sinner," the prayer is accompanied with fasting, but it is of that kind which Jesus pronounced blessed. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness;" and there is also a promise that they shall not always be fasting, "for they shall be filled." Fasting was observed by the Israelites, but always in a time of distress, as they were seeking help from God.

In conclusion, as followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God all true believers are made to experience, not only once, but many times in their pilgrimage, their identity with Christ Jesus, by hungerings and thirstings, by temptations, trials and sufferings, poverty and wretchedness,

feeling indeed poor in spirit, and in these is the true fast. There are times, too, that under stress of those things they fast literally. "In those days I Daniel was mourning. * * * I ate no pleasant bread," &c.

Affectionately submitted.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., March, 1912.

LUKE XIV. 21.

"Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind."

This passage of Scripture had been on my mind for some time when the SIGNS for December 15th came, and in reading brother J. B. Bowden's letter the subject was again impressed upon my mind, where he says, "Some have bought land," &c. I enjoy reading after others whenever they open up a subject so as to throw some light on its meaning, and so I write, not to insist upon my views, but merely to present such views as are given me. I am reminded in the beginning, of Elder Wm. Grafton getting up to preach at an association. He said he had been looking for some time for an easy text. This passage at first reading looks very easy, and often simple words have a deep meaning. The church is frequently compared to a city, as the cities of those times had walls and towers for defence, with gates, &c. If we look at Matthew xxii. 2, we will see that the occasion of the feast was the marriage of the king's son, and would be a great occasion, full of interest to those who had the welfare of the kingdom at heart; but the first one to whom the summons comes has invested in real estate; he feels he has the solid earth in his possession, what interest has he in a visionary kingdom? The second is a man full of business, he will get much work done if his oxen prove true; his five yoke will accomplish much, and since his dependence is on works, the time spent at the wedding feast would be a great waste. Another had a wife, he had no possible interest in this bride of the heavenly Bridegroom, why should he have? The wife he was married to satisfied his natural mind, and he had no higher aspirations; the holy love of that heavenly bride and Bridegroom had never entered his carnal mind. But there are those who are hungry, and they feel poor; they are not clothed as they think one must be to eat with the king's household; that is, as they see themselves, and they keep out of sight. They are in the streets and lanes, and it is necessary that the master call the attention of his servants to them, or they would be entirely overlooked, for it is human nature to give most to those who already have. But this feast is for those who can give nothing in return; this is one thing that makes them so shy, they are undeserving as well as poor, and they are in the byways of the city. It is no new trouble that brother Bowden complains of, and there was still room after the servants had made one round seeking the lame and blind. All the characters here spoken of needed the help of the servants to get to the feast, or to have it made known to them that the feast was for them. The servants are told to go again, and look in still more out of the way places. Do not all these characters fit the little ones in the church? They get so little that they feel to be far behind the rest. They see other members as an advanced class that can understand the preaching, but it is too high for them. The fact is, it does not come into the streets and lanes of the city where they are, or it would find them and bring them to the

feast. Being in the meetinghouse does not always bring one to the feast, the food must reach their case; it must find the weary, the blind and the maimed, that cannot keep pace with the others. But O, they would like to be at the marriage of the great King; all the particulars of his kingdom are of interest to them. The Bridegroom, his apparel, his courtship, his battles, his victories, his bride, her spotless robe, everything of this wonderful and mystical kingdom, which is older than the earth and will endure when earth and sun are no more, is of interest to these little ones, and the servants will have enough to do to find them all and tell them all the points of interest. There is even fruit at the gate of the kingdom, at the entering in, and there is no need of the sun there, nor is there any night, in the presence of the King eternal.

A. E. RITTENHOUSE.

STATE ROAD, Delaware.

LOVELAND, Colo., Feb. 10, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—It has been some time since I have troubled you and the readers of our family paper, the SIGNS, with my poor writings and imperfect thoughts. Having been confined indoors and about the house most of the winter, in consequence of ailments of old age coming on, to-day I feel like trying to write a little for your perusal, and if you deem it worth space in the SIGNS you can publish it.

In my musing over the past of my life I can see nothing in it all but failure, so far as good is concerned. Left without father or mother when but a child, without a home, a poor orphan boy, cast upon a cold and friendless world, without any one to counsel and advise me, I just simply grew up to manhood as thistles and thorns grow up in a deserted field. Few have been my joys, but many, yes, many, have been my sorrows, sore trials, temptations and failures in this life. When I go back in my mind to my youthful days, the time when I hope God gave me faith to believe that all my sins were forgiven for his dear Son's sake, then it was that I experienced some of the joy of which the poet speaks when he says: "Tongue cannot express the sweet comfort and peace of a soul in its earliest love." Then it was I felt:

"I love to steal awhile away
From every cumbering care,
And spend the hours of setting day
In humble, grateful prayer.

I love in solitude to shed
The penitential tear,
And all his promises plead,
Where none but God can hear."

O how sweet to me was the blessing of prayer, when I could feel the nearness of God to me at such times. But how is it with me to-day in my old age? The sunset of my earthly life is near at hand. When I attempt to approach God now by way of prayer and supplication, it seems as if he were off in yonder distance from me. Why is it? has God changed? O no, he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. Of all the writers of the New Testament Scriptures the apostle Paul speaks of faith oftener than any other. James, however, in speaking of faith, tells us that faith without works is dead, being alone, which makes me inquire of myself, Have I, for a number of years past at least, been clinging to a dead faith? I hear brethren sometimes speak of a growth in grace, but it does seem to me that if I have made any growth it has been a backward one. I know that my mind, as to the Scripture teachings of spiritual things, is not as clear as I would wish it to be. The Mas-

ter told his disciples, Whatsoever ye ask the Father, in my name believing, ye shall receive it. But where is the evidence to me that I have asked aright, and have not been asking amiss? Is it because my faith is weak, through unbelief, that I ask and receive not? or is it because I have been clinging to a dead faith, either one of which would destroy the hope of any poor, trembling saint of God? But have I a hope? There is, I trust, a still small voice within my soul that at times whispers, I have a hope that Jesus is mine and I am his, which hope is "as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus," where he is seated upon the right hand of the throne of his Father, the Majesty on high, there to ever make intercession for the saints according to the will of God. Well might the psalmist sing, "Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts," for such a hope as this; though small, it seems at times I would not, if I could, exchange it for all this world calls good and great.

From a poor sinner of Adam's race, who desires your prayers. Farewell.

J. H. YEOMAN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Nov. 19, 1911.

MRS. FLORENCE PULTZ—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—Your welcome letter of September 29th came in due time, and how glad we were to be remembered by you in another message of love. You speak of my letter to sister Sinclair, of Canada, and of your joy of soul in reading it. I cannot understand it, as there seemed so little in it to me in reading it. I had felt to regret when the friends wrote me that it had been sent to the SIGNS. After receiving your letter I took up the SIGNS and read it again, and it still seemed empty of the real feeling of sorrow and joy that was my portion. But is it not true that words always come short of expressing our joys and sorrows? If understood, it is by the corresponding feeling of the heart which witnesses to the things spoken. This gladdens the heart as the Spirit applies it, or takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us. It was the Spirit's application of that blessed hymn that caused this poor heart to be lifted up with joy and gladness, and to mount up on wings as eagles. That will ever remain a memorable spot in my life's journey. If I know anything about it, it seems to me that I received the kingdom. It was righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, and I received it as a little child, and it has been my blessed portion much of the time since. I cannot understand it; it seems sometimes too much for a poor mortal in the flesh. While I have suffered pain in body beyond expression, yet my blessed Lord has been near and dear to me, and it has seemed a heaven below, my Redeemer to know. For some weeks I felt a great love to my brethren, and it seemed also that they loved me. I had such melting of soul, such a tender conscience, I felt surely the Lord would take me away, and I wanted to leave this world that way. It seemed to me I was in the midst of the church, singing praise to God, no matter where I was. I felt keenly disappointed when I felt that I was improving, yet I think I felt to say, Thy will, O Lord, and not mine, be done. I have long since desired that when I shall be called home I may leave my brethren in peace and love, but I fear much that I shall make shipwreck of my faith and bring reproach upon the blessed cause and the church. May I ever be kept of the Lord; may my remnant of days be spent in his praise.

You speak of the tender love you feel for the servants of our God, and for all the saints when they bear the impress or image of Jesus. Here is the secret of it all: the image of Jesus. Therefore arises the necessity of walking as Jesus walked, with all meekness and lowliness of heart. But who is sufficient for these things? The apostle said, But our sufficiency is of God. These things are not made up and manifested by our fleshly powers and wisdom, this is all the work of God, for the things that humble us are the things that we do not want. I am, said Paul, crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. As he lives in us, we bear about in us the dying of the Lord Jesus, so the more we die the more visible is the image of our dear Redeemer. There is no doubt in my mind that it is of God that men do minister in sacred and holy things, and this is the highest calling that mortals can ever attain to, but how becoming when they walk not as kings with pomp and show, but like the Master, who made himself of no reputation, but became a servant. This must characterize the true servant of the Lord Jesus. He made himself of no reputation. O what an example, what a pattern!

"O may his meekness be my guide,
The pattern I pursue;
How can I bear revenge and pride
With Jesus in my view?"

No, our God will not allow creature worship. His servants are to be esteemed for the work's sake; that is, they are to live the truth as well as to preach it. Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

I felt your kind, tender, sympathetic words down deep in my heart. How good that you remember and pray for a poor worm like me. But is it not in these ways that we bear one another's burdens? Are we not thus helpers one of another? Are not these messages of love as cups of cold water? I was as yet very feeble when your letter came, but it strengthened and helped me. I am now much improved, and almost free from pain, and can write with complete ease. I feel that all my sufferings were needful in order that I might learn and know of his boundless goodness and mercy, and feel that he who hath helped me hitherto will help me all my journey through. He gives me daily cause to raise new Ebenezers to his praise.

"Though rough and stormy is the road,
It leads me home apace to God;
Then count thy present trials small,
For heaven will make amends for all."

I have written as a little child in understanding. I will be glad to hear from you at any time.

In gospel bonds, your brother,

P. W. SAWIN.

MUIRKIRK, Ontario, March 25, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—As there has been in my mind for a few days past a promise that I made you a few years ago, that I would try some time to write you something of what I hope have been the dealings of the Lord with me in bringing me out of nature's darkness into his marvelous light, I will now try to do so, hoping the dear Lord will so lead my mind that it may redound to his glory and honor. I was born in 1859, of good parentage, who always loved the Old School Baptist doctrine, and who attended their meetings as far back as I can remember, although not members of the church. I used to go with them, and have attended their meetings many times, but then I did not have any particular interest in their meetings, and thought that when I got old I would try to get religion to die with. I thought I was just as good, if not better, than most of my neighbors, because I did

not use profane language nor do many other wicked things which I thought others had done. But about the year 1888 I hope the dear Lord began to show me what I was by nature, and that I was rolling sin as a sweet morsel under my tongue. I came to feel that my heart was deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. I thought that I would try to do better and merit the Lord's favor by so doing, but what a failure. I sank deeper in the mire, and such Scriptures as these would come to condemn me: Weighed in the balance and found wanting. Ten thousand talents in debt and not a farthing to pay. Then again would come some words that would give me a little hope, such as, The smoking flax he will not quench, and the bruised reed he will not break. Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place where thou standest is holy ground. These and others brought some sweetness to my troubled mind. I felt much cast down in my mind for years, sometimes doubting and fearing and sometimes with a little hope. As the years passed by my burden became heavier, and I could not rest night or day, and many times my pillow was wet with tears of sorrow on account of my many sins. One night I shall never forget, in 1896, I awoke out of my sleep with a terrible sight of the imps of the devil sitting around my room ready to devour me, and the terrible sentence came, I will destroy them with the besom of destruction, all the nations that forget God. I can never forget that night, I felt that if my soul were sent to hell, His righteous law approved it well, and I could not see how the dear Lord could be just in saving me, the vilest of the vile. But shortly after this the words came sweetly to me at night, and I repeated them to my dear companion, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" But in a short time it came to my mind that perhaps I was a vessel unto dishonor as spoken of, when again the words in Romans came: God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew. I felt to rejoice and to praise the Lord for such words of comfort and consolation, and then had a desire to tell the church what great things the Lord had done for me, as I hoped, but when I would go to the meetings doubts and fears would come up, and sometimes I would wonder if it were not all a delusion, or if I had not grasped the shadow and missed the substance. I felt condemned, when this Scripture came: Whosoever will deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father in heaven. I then felt that I could not stay away any longer, and I went to the May meeting in Dunwich, the second Sunday in May, 1899, and told some of my exercises to brother Robert Scates, and he gave me encouragement to go before the church. I was received, and felt a peaceful frame of mind, and rejoiced all the way home. It seemed that there had been a great burden removed from my troubled mind, and I thought I would never have any more trouble, and that I would always feel to praise the Lord for his goodness and mercy to me all the days of my life. I was baptized the fourth Sunday in May, by our lamented pastor, Elder Wm. Pollard, down below Duart, with a dear old brother Ferguson, and I felt the answer of a good conscience toward God. But how little we know of what is before us in the dealings of the Lord; he leads the blind by a way that they know not, and in paths that they have not known; he makes the darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. I remember how cast down I felt about a month after-

wards, in going to our meeting at Ekfrid, and when our dear pastor said in his opening remarks that the older he got the worse he got, and that it seemed he was getting worse and worse every day, it was of more comfort to me than all the rest of the meeting, for I always looked upon him as being pure and good. I have long since realized that in my flesh dwells no good thing, and of myself I cannot think a good thought or do a good deed, sin is mixed with all I do. But thanks be to God, who, as we hope, has given us the victory though our Lord Jesus Christ. To his dear name be all the praise.

From your poor brother, if one at all,

DUNCAN M. GILLIS.

LANETT, Ala., March 12, 1912.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I will write my experience and some of the dealings of the Lord with me, as I hope. When I was a child I often thought seriously of living a christian life, and planned a beautiful, ideal life, but I learned that we cannot live free from sin, as I thought then, nor can we live a christian life without Christ. After the burden of sin left me I heard a still small voice saying, This is the way, walk ye in it. I understood how the many sorrowful things I was called to pass through would work together for my good. I shall never forget the unspeakable joy of that moment, but it was for only a moment. I have suffered long and bitterly, but God has given me a bright, sweet hope in Christ, and he sends the Comforter as promised. I seek to know and do God's will, but the carnal mind rebels sometimes, and I find that we must humble ourselves and crucify the flesh. Many passages of Scripture have come to my mind when in distress, but I know that we cannot understand the Scripture except it be revealed to us. I was a member of the Missionary Baptists several years, but I could not be satisfied with them. After I united with the Primitive Baptist Church I received peace of mind I had not known before, and I learned more and more of these things which I had been hungering for. I find that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him. This peace of mind is part of the "hundredfold" Jesus spoke of in this life. Many have testified that they would not do some things they felt impressed to do, therefore they bring forth less fruit. I have been at times very unhappy on account of carelessness to duty. I see the great sin of omission as well as commission. O how sweet to feel that we have done all the Lord required of us. I see much carelessness about "good works." Did not Paul plead with tears for them? Of course we can do nothing good without Christ, but we can relieve the sick and oppressed, sometimes distribute literature to the invalid, and do many things to help each other. O what joy to me to receive letters from poor, lonely invalids saying my letters are of comfort to them. Once I said in distress, Lord, I will do anything you desire me to do, and after awhile it came to me, My people shall be a willing people. Then again, Show forth his praise. Many passages of Scripture have been applied to my mind with understanding, I hope. I seek constantly to know and do his will. I hope to receive letters from those who are sad from any cause, and those who have spiritual exercises of mind.

Yours in a precious hope,

MINNIE WELDON.

McCLANAHAN, W. Va., Feb. 7, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—My subscription to the SIGNS is long past due, and I remember it very often, but have neglected it thus far. I want to thank you very much for being so kind in sending it. I enjoy its coming very much, as it is about all the preaching I get. I do not belong to the church, but hope I do love the Old Baptist doctrine. I cannot remember when I did not like to hear them preach, and the older I get the better I love to hear them. I can remember when but a small child how I loved to hear my mother and the other members talk of spiritual things. My father and mother both belonged to the Old Baptist Church, and all of the children, with the exception of one, believe that way; she belongs to the Missionaries. There has been a protracted meeting going on here for two or three weeks, about a mile or so from us, but I have no desire to go to such meetings, as I cannot see and believe that way, and you know that the Bible says, Whatsoever is not of faith is sin, so I do believe that it is wrong to go to hear them. I cannot believe that the Lord works with his people in such a way as that, for he says, "He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." I have a great desire to live the way I should, but there are so many trials and troubles through life that I find myself far out of the way, and know that it is not in me to direct my steps.

Well, I must bring this to a close; I only thought I would drop you a few lines to thank you for sending me the SIGNS, but it seemed as if I could not stop without writing more. Inclosed find money to pay for the SIGNS, and remember me when all is well with you.

Yours truly,

LAURA V. MELTON.

INDEPENDENCE, Mo., Dec. 24, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription is due for our family paper, the SIGNS, I will send a few lines along with a money order, and you can publish or cast aside as you think best. I realize how far anything I can write is surpassed by others, then the thought comes in my mind, Do all love the doctrine your paper advocates better than I? As far as I can understand, its teachings compare with the teachings of the Bible. I hope I love the writers for the truth's sake. Sometimes when I read the editorials, and good letters from ocean to ocean, and from the rivers and ends of the earth, it seems I have a precious little meeting in my lonely home, where none but God is near. Then I feel, though old and weak, that underneath are the everlasting arms. For some time I have been made more reconciled to God's dealings with me than for months before, when it seemed that sickness, sorrow and disappointments had cast up a wall on every side mountain high, and when I would try to pray for these things to be removed all I could ask was mercy: Lord, have mercy, and make me willing to wait thine appointed time in all things. I often think of the afflicted ones who write for my comfort, not knowing the good they do. In all our afflictions He was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved us.

I had no idea I would take so much space, and yet I have failed to express anything as I would liked to have done. May God's blessings rest upon editors and correspondents in the future as in the past.

The lone old stranger,

LAVINIA MORGAN.

NORTH FORT WORTH, Texas, Dec. 22, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I want to talk to some one, as I am very lonely, and I feel that you will understand me, yet I do not know what to say, but will write as my mind is led. O that I could comfort some of God's little ones. I feel and know that I am nothing but a bundle of sin, from the crown of my head to the sole of my foot, yet I feel that I am living that life which God, for Christ's sake, planted in my poor heart. It cannot die, for it is the work of the great I AM. O how wonderful, that God in his great mercy watches over us and keeps us ever in his sight. I am so prone to wander away from the God I love, or think I do. I have many things to endure in my journey here below, but our holy Father has helped me, and he will help me for Christ's sake. O may I trust him and cast all my care upon him. O how wonderful is our God! There is nothing beyond his power, either in earth or in heaven. Is it not wonderful that such a holy God cares for such a sinner as I feel myself to be? Were he not a merciful God he would cast me off, but he surely cares for his chosen in Christ Jesus. I wonder why he ever chose poor, sinful men. But God's ways are not our ways. No wonder dear old Paul said, Great is the mystery of godliness. It is too great for me. I am lost in wonder when I go back to the time when I was quickened by his Holy Spirit, and I think of the awful burden that was taken away, and of how happy I felt. I thought I never could sin again, and that all my sins were blotted out of God's book of remembrance forever. But, dear brethren, it was not long until I found to my sorrow that I was still a great sinner, but the life and hope that I had received still lived. I believe that this was the holy seed that God for Christ's sake plants in the heart of every one of his children, and that is why we grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who shed his blood for us, that we might live. All the life we have is in him. I am only a babe in Christ Jesus, if I am not mistaken. I am trying to walk in that strait and narrow way which leads unto life, and I hope that our holy Father is leading me. I have had some very hard, dark days in my christian journey here, and at times have seemed to be forsaken by the Father, but I know that he is just as near me in the thick darkness as he is in the light; but I love the light. How is it that I walk so much in darkness? Unbelief must be the cause of all our sorrows. O that I could live right and think right, and give all honor and glory to him to whom the honor belongs. How wonderful to think that God loves us, so disobedient and unthankful as we are for all his blessings through all our lives. Now, dear brethren, keep on writing, all you who have been in this way, for it surely does my heart good to read your letters; they are good. May God bless you all in your work, is my humble desire.

I will have to close, for I fear that this letter is too long. Dear brethren editors, look this over, and do as you think best with it. May God ever bless you in your labor, for I think it is a great work. May God bless truth and expose error everywhere.

From one who loves the truth, I hope,
(MRS.) Z. CLINGMAN.

RIDDLESBURG, Pa., March 2, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—I feel like writing some of my thoughts on the cause of sin, therefore will call attention to James i.

14, 15: "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Lust is a law of the flesh, the same as hunger and thirst, and a man will not hunger or thirst or lust after that which he has, but that which he has not; so then they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, and they that are after the Spirit do mind the things of the Spirit. The cause of sin is in the flesh, the cause of holiness is in the Spirit, and is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ, which causes the babe in Christ to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and also causes the warfare between the flesh and Spirit, so that we cannot do the things that we would. Sin then is a principle, and lust is a law in the flesh, which I had not known except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. So then the Adamic man, with all his lusts, is a creature of God, and only lusts after vain and foolish things; the spiritual man desires holy, righteous and truthful things.

I do not know that what I have written will be of interest to any one, so do with it as seems right to you, and all will be well.

Your brother in hope,

WM. H. MELLOTT.

PARIS, Ill., April 25, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—It is with sadness I write to tell you of the death of dear Elder Moffett, who, aside from my own immediate family, was my dearest friend. My wife and I had gone to Indianapolis on Sunday, expecting to be gone only a day or two, but concluded to remain until Wednesday night. Brother Moffett died on Monday, and was buried on Wednesday afternoon; they could not reach us, and so we knew nothing of the facts until we returned home. I am sending some clippings from one of our newspapers, which will give the particulars. One is from the editorial page; by this you will know in what esteem he was held in his home town. He was beloved by both old and young, and always had a smile and kind word for all. He surely reflected the light that was within. Our hearts are sad, but we feel that for him it is far better. If you feel like publishing a part of the inclosed in the SIGNS, I am sure that many of your readers will remember the dear Elder, and be sorry for his death. He often spoke of his visit east a few years ago, and of his stay with Elder Rowe in Baltimore, and with you at Hopewell. He often said that he had never been better received.

Your brother,

M. C. REEVES.

(See obituary on page 317.)

PANHANDLE, Texas, April 21, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—Will you be so kind as to send me the names and addresses of several church clerks located in northwest Arkansas or southwest Missouri? We are anticipating moving there for the benefit of my wife's health, and want to be near Baptists of our faith.

Thanking you in advance for this kindness, I am yours unworthily,

A. M. KITTS.

[IF this letter comes to the notice of any who can give the information brother Kitts asks they will please communicate with him.—ED.]

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

WE are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1912.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PHILIPPIANS IV. 5.

"LET your moderation be known to all men."

First. It seems to us that this brief sentence is inseparably connected with the preceding verse, and with the two following verses, and that this was so in the mind of the apostle. The Holy Ghost has placed these admonitions together so that each one could seem to grow out of that which immediately precedes it. The one central thought in all these four verses is, first, trust in the Lord, and then rejoice in him. The following expressions set this forth clearly: "Rejoice in the Lord." "The Lord is at hand." "Let your requests be made known unto God." "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds." The apostle reminds his brethren that theirs is a high and holy calling, that they serve the King of kings, that in him there is safety perfect and entire, and therefore there is for them no need of anxiety, nor care, nor restlessness, but, on the contrary, that they may rest in full assurance that all is well. Men of the world may run to and fro, and here and there, seeking to build for themselves secure hiding-places and settled foundations, but to them no such need existed, since God was himself their refuge and since he is always at hand. These are, as it seems to us, the general thoughts of this Scripture. These things all the people of God have need of, and of all these things it is good to be reminded, that our strife and restless seeking after that which we call good may cease, and that we may come to believe and rest in God. The things presented to the church at Philippi by the apostle are also needful for all who believe.

Second. Let us trace briefly the connection between the six special clauses of these four verses. First, always rejoicing in the Lord is enjoined; this must include all that pertains to him in his holy character and in his redemption. Believers rejoice because their Lord is their King, Lawgiver and Judge; because he is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him; because he so loved them that he gave his only begotten Son to die for them, and to justify them freely by his finished work upon Calvary; because he never leaves them nor forsakes them; because he is a defense round about them, so that no enemy can set upon them to do them harm, and because he supplies all their need through riches of grace in Christ Jesus. They are, all of them, poor, weak and sinful, yet they have room to rejoice in him. Yea, just because they lack all things their rejoicing must be in him. All that can produce sorrow and shame is found in them, but though sorrowful they are always rejoicing in him, for in him are riches for their poverty, strength for their weakness, righteousness for their sinfulness and redemption for their lost estate. They are shut out of all room for rejoicing in self and shut up unto rejoicing in the Lord Jesus Christ. A sinner says, What have I to rejoice in? I am empty, wretched, blind, miserable,

naked and lost. Yes, all this is true, but sinners are not bidden to rejoice in themselves. Is there not enough in the blessed Lord to cause rejoicing in the hearts of all such sinners? Nay, more than this, none save a lost, condemned, perishing sinner ever can see anything in the blessed Lord to cause rejoicing. Jesus is the precious honeycomb. He that is full of self and of his own ways will loathe this precious honeycomb, according to the testimony, A full soul loathes the honeycomb. But if in our weakness we are persuaded of the riches of grace and glory in the blessed Jesus, then indeed must we rejoice in the Lord, and rejoice always.

Third. Among the things connected with rejoicing in the Lord will follow a spirit of moderation, according to the next verse. Rejoicing in the Lord, and moderation before men, abide in the heart together. This word "moderation" has in it all these following shades of meaning: that which is suitable, or fair, or reasonable, or gentle, or mild, or patient, or upright. The word in the original Greek bears all these shades of meaning. In the text substitute either or all these words for the word "moderation" and we shall do no violence to the meaning of the apostle. When the apostle said, "Let your moderation be known," he said all that the above named words convey. Now, is it not apparent that if one has come to trust in God, and to behold such excellence in him as to rejoice his heart, there will follow the beginning and the growing up of all these graces of the Spirit: uprightness, patience, mildness, gentleness, reasonableness, fairness, with all suitableness of life expressed by the word moderation? That which makes men unkind to each other, unfair in their dealings with each other, unreasonable in their judgment and language about each other, impatient either with their fellow-men, or with the circumstances that surround them, harsh and severe in their treatment of each other, and in short that which leads to that which is unsuitable to the profession of the religion of the meek and lowly Master, is want of trust in God, in the absence of which there can be no joy in the Lord. Rejoicing in God, and moderation before men, therefore, spring out of the same fountain, and will be found flowing together in the stream of the believer's life.

Fourth. The apostle enforces all this upon the minds of his brethren by reminding them that their Lord is at hand. He is always at hand. Not only shall he come the second time without sin unto salvation, to which glorious hope the believer looks, and, looking, is encouraged to endure to the end, as seeing him who is invisible, but even to-day, right in the midst of trials, sorrows, weaknesses and temptations, he is at hand with them one and all. Clouds may obscure our vision, thick clouds may be his chariot, but it is sure that he does ride upon the clouds even though our eyes are holden. I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, he has said for our consolation. This is one of the reasons for rejoicing in him. He is not a God afar off, but he is nigh. The Lord is at hand. Though it be winter or summer, night or day, cold or hot, dark or light, with us still, through every changing season, the Lord, our Lord is nigh, nigh to all them that call upon him. In sorrow or gladness, loss or gain, sickness or health, temptation or deliverance, conflict or victory, he is never far off. Always he is a very present help in time of trouble. The apostle has not then

laid upon his brethren an impossible task when he bids them always rejoice in the Lord. What more is needed than the assurance that the Lord is nigh? How true to experience and to all the word of God was the testimony of Habakkuk: "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olives shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places." And how appropriate the words that close this wonderful testimony: "To the chief singer on my stringed instruments." Joy and singing go together.

Fifth. Now, from all this, how natural the admonition that follows: "Be careful for nothing." Could this assurance that the Lord is at hand be with us and reign within us we should indeed be careful for nothing. We should be found then bringing all our affairs to the Lord, and then there would be that peace which passes all understanding, which would keep our hearts and minds from all that disturbs us. Then worry and anxiety would cease, and we should not be troubled about the future of our lives here below. These brethren at Philippi were among all the various trials that any of us ever have had; they were subjected to deprivations, dangers and losses, which we know little of in this day, because of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There was need for them to be reminded, as the apostle does remind them, that, after all, their Lord was at hand. Nothing could then befall them without his presence, and nothing could possibly harm them, and nothing could beset them that he had not appointed for them. "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" This is no less true of the children now than it was of their Elder Brother. It is our mind that the apostle here is speaking of the life of his brethren in this world, rather than of the inward conflicts between the flesh and the Spirit, or of the temptations of the world and the devil, which so often cause doubts and fears as to whether we have come to know the Lord in salvation or not. The blessed Savior said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." That is, all needed worldly provisions. And so here, as it appears to us, the apostle is presenting the truth that believers need not be anxious about temporal things when following the commandments of the Lord. "Be careful for nothing," but bring all your desires before the Lord, and this they may do without delay, for he is at hand always.

Sixth. Returning to the words first quoted, "Let your moderation be known unto all men," it seems clear to us that the apostle does not mean by this that his brethren shall go about publishing their moderation, their kindness, mildness, gentleness, &c., but simply live that way day by day. These things cannot be hid if they be indeed in our hearts and lives. It seems to us sure that if one loves the Lord he will not need to call to men from the street corners, Come behold my zeal for Him. He who has the love of God reigning in him will most probably be the last to feel sure that it is so with him. Perhaps he may not even think that the love of God has been shed abroad in his heart, but, on the contrary, many times feel very

anxious lest it be not so, though he will with great longing desire that love, but there will be a making that love appear to all those who know him, by the quiet, humble, steadfast adherence to the faith that has been revealed to him, and by his quiet walk of obedience to the commandments of his heavenly Father. The more he loves God the less will he feel satisfied with that love. Indeed, this is one of the infallible marks of love, that one bemoans his lack of love. So will it also be with showing forth moderation. In short, the apostle presents to the church the suitableness of all the things which belong to moderation, in all their daily life. Live before all men with equity, with gentleness and kindness, with mildness and patience. These are not loud-voiced virtues, they do not come before men with the sound of the trumpet heralding them, they belong to the humble walking before God of those who fear him and desire to live to his praise, but who yet so far fail that they never can be satisfied with what they have done, and (least of all) satisfied with their state before the all-seeing eye of God. A servant might boast when among his fellow-servants alone, but hardly any servant would be found doing so in the presence of the master of them all. He who feels that he is the servant of the Lord first, and then the servant of his brethren for the Lord's sake, while he remembers this will not find room for boasting, or calling attention to his work. It is sure the inspired apostles never have urged a vainglorious display upon the part of the children of God; it must be, then, that the words, "Let your moderation be known," simply signify that we are to live out that which the Lord has wrought within us. It is a wonderful thing when the spirit of all that this word "moderation" signifies has found a place in the heart, and out of the heart filled with these things it is good that there should flow forth in word and in deed the suitable fruit. This the apostle enjoined upon those to whom he was writing.

Seventh. In conclusion we will say that by these words we are taught that believers are to strive to show forth all godliness, not only in the house of God, but before all men. For instance, we are to show all honesty toward all men. One of the meanings of moderation, as said before, is reasonableness. This also is enjoined upon believers toward all men. We are to deal with them not only justly, but reasonably; that is, not even exacting what the law might give us, but using a justice beyond what any law can provide or demand, save the law of the love of God and the neighbor. The text means, so far as worldly affairs are concerned, that we are not to be exacting or grasping, but to deal with men kindly, mildly and gently. We have hope, and we say that this world is not our home, but that we seek a city above. We say that earthly treasures all perish, but that heavenly treasures endure. The apostle here enjoins that we live as though we possessed the spirit of this truth. As we close these reflections it appears to us that after all the whole matter might as well be summed up and left in the one sentence, In all things let your moderation be known to all men. C.

INFORMATION WANTED.

If any brother, sister or friend knows the address of Elder James L. Lindsey, which was Pauls Valley, Okla., when last heard from, such information will be greatly appreciated.

J. I. FOSTER.

Rising Star, Texas, R. R. 3, Box 37.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

SONG OF SOLOMON IV. 12.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Please give your views through the SIGNS on Song of Solomon iv. 12: "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." All the preaching I have is through the SIGNS; I have not heard a sermon in more than a year. LYDIA BORDON.

FRANKLIN, N. Y., Feb. 28, 1865.

To those who are born of God and led by the Spirit of truth into the understanding of the Song of Solomon, it is well denominated the Song of songs, for in it is embraced the sweetest, noblest and most exalted theme that ever moved the heart or tongue of sinners saved by grace, while to the carnal professor and the graceless hypocrite it presents no beauty or sweetness. Shut out from our understanding the sacred relationship and indissoluble union of Christ and his church, and all the divine beauty and thrilling interest of the song would be hidden, and nothing presented to awaken the heavenly devotion of the sweet singers of Israel. This Song, although divided by the compilers of the Scriptures into chapters and verses, is but one whole song. It is called the Song of songs, because it embraces so rich a cluster and pleasing variety of appropriate and striking figures expressive of the spiritual communion and fellowship of Christ and his church. All these figures are presented in other parts of the Scriptures, and used to elucidate and illustrate the doctrine of the gospel and the experience of the saints, but they are here collected and condensed in one grand anthem, to be sung in exalted strains to the praise of God and edification of his children. Among an extended variety of endearing terms employed by the Spirit of inspiration to set forth the Redeemer's appreciation of and boundless love for his church, as well as the relationship subsisting, we have no less than five in the short passage on which we are requested to write. The church is here called a garden, sister, spouse, a spring and a fountain, in each of which volumes of divine instruction and rivers of sweet consolation may be deduced, well calculated to cause the lips of even them who are asleep to sing. Before we attempt an elucidation of these figures we will give some reasons for applying them to the church of God.

1. Because we can perceive no spiritual beauty in them if in any other way applied. Unto whom or what else can such language be applied as is in this Song used by the Beloved, but to his church? Is she not his spouse, his bride, his wife?

2. Because all these figures are uniformly so applied throughout the Scriptures.

3. Because this application is in perfect agreement and harmony with the teachings of the Spirit in the experience of the saints.

4. Because the same personage in our text called sister, spouse, &c., is in other parts of the same Song called by names and titles which are nowhere in the Scriptures applied to any other than the church. We will now pass to consider the several appellatives used in our text, and what they signify in their application to the church.

1. "My sister." This appellation, as well as that which follows, spouse, expresses relationship of the most vital and endearing kind. Although high in the heavens he reigns as God over all, and blessed forever, yet in his mediatorial relation to his church he calls her his sister, not as a mere figure of speech, but as a blessed reality. He is the Elder Brother to all the children of God. "For both

he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." —Heb. ii. 11. "That he might be the firstborn among many brethren."—Rom. viii. 29. The relation of brother and sister involves identity of parentage, and consequently identity of vitality. Christ is the only begotten of the Father, and in that relation is the Son of God, and he says he proceeded forth and came from God. (John viii. 42.) Hence he could speak truly of God as his Father, for he is in the Father and the Father is in him. And as all his children were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, their relation to God is in him as the Son of God, their sonship is in his Sonship, for they are his body, his flesh and his bones. (Eph. v. 30.) Their life is hid with him in God. (Col. iii. 3.) They are made partakers of the divine nature, in being members of Christ. (2 Peter i. 4.) His family record, as kept by the three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, (1 John v. 7,) reads, "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life."—1 John v. 11, 12. Thus the church identified with Christ, her mediatorial Head, in his immortality is one with him, even as he is one with the Father, and her life is hid with Christ in God. Thus standing in a union of life with the Son of God, he claims her as his sister. In recognition of this vital relation the Holy Ghost, through Paul, addressed the church which is in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thess. i. 1.) In speaking of his chosen people as such, Christ is not ashamed to call them brethren, but as a church, the feminine gender being used, she is called his sister. This title, as we have remarked, is expressive of tender affection and fraternal love. The relation of brother and sister is unchangeable; being once established it can never be annulled.

2. "My spouse." As Sarah was both the sister and the spouse of Abraham, so the church is the spouse as well as sister of him who claims to be both the Brother and Bridegroom of his church. A spouse is one betrothed or married. The church is frequently recognized in the Scriptures as the bride, the Lamb's wife. As such she was presented in vision to John, Rev. xxi. 2, 9, 10: "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." "And there came unto me one of the seven angels," &c. "And talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God," &c. John the Baptist bore witness of Christ as the Bridegroom, saying, "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled."—John iii. 29. Unto the church of God it is spoken, "For thy Maker is thine husband; The Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called."—Isaiah liv. 5. "And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies: I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the

Lord."—Hosea ii. 19, 20. The nature of this espousal, and the marriage vows of the betrothment, leave no room to fear that the union shall ever be dissolved or annulled. "For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away."—Mal. ii. 16. "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."—Jer. xxxii. 40. Well might the apostle say, when dwelling upon this wonderful espousal, this marriage union, "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."—Eph. v. 32. The bride released from all affinity to the law by the body of Christ, being redeemed from its dominion as well as from its power, is now married unto him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. "But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held: that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."—Romans vii. 6. Thus Christ "loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."—Eph. v. 25–27. This bride or spouse is indebted to her heavenly Bridegroom for all the comeliness which he has put upon her. Fully conscious of this, when brought to the King in clothing of wrought gold and raiment of needle work (Psalms xlv. 13, 14,) she is constrained to exclaim in the fullness of her joy and gratitude, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."—Isaiah lxi. 10. Now, in all the perfection of beauty and immaculate purity and comeliness which he has put upon her he claims her as his own fair bride, and calls her his sister, his spouse, and as she is married unto him that is risen from the dead, that she should bring forth fruits unto God, she is also called,

3. "A garden inclosed." As a spouse all her fruits must be the legitimate result of her sacred union to her Husband; so also as a garden no plants are to be cultivated but such as our heavenly Father has planted; all others shall be rooted up. In attempting to trace the analogy of this figure to the church of God we will observe,

1. A garden is a chosen, consecrated spot selected from the plantation or farm for a special and particular purpose, as Dr. Watts has justly paraphrased it, as in the language of the church:

> "We are a garden walled around,
> Chosen and made peculiar ground;
> A little spot inclosed by grace,
> Out of the world's wide wilderness."

Truly the church is a chosen and consecrated inclosure, being "sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called."—Jude 1. To the church it is said, "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."—2 Thess. ii. 13. As the garden is selected and set apart for a more important and noble purpose than any other part of our lands, so the church is chosen, organized and set apart for the cultivation of the choicest plants, and such as are not found

elsewhere. In setting forth the church under this beautiful figure the inspired writer has spoken of some of her productions, as vines which flourish, and which have tender grapes; spices, the fragrance of which flows out when the north wind awakes and the south wind blows. The Rose of Sharon blossoms and blooms in the garden of the Lord, and the Lily of the valleys is among the rich variety of her flowers, arrayed in more beauty and loveliness than Solomon in all his glory could boast of. Bundles of myrrh and clusters of camphire are among her productions. "Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard, spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices." The vine which is found here is one that the Lord brought out of Egypt and planted in a goodly soil. The Father is the Husbandman; he says he will keep it; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day. In tracing the pleasing figures embraced in the description of the Lord's garden, we might extend our article to a volume, but we will only now say all the fruits and productions of the garden, as contemplated in this song, are emblematic of,

First, Christ himself, who is the plant of renown. (Ezek. xxxiv. 29.) "He shall grow up before him as a tender plant."—Isaiah liii. 2.

Second. The people of God, or children of the kingdom of Christ, are called plants, and grow in this garden of the Lord. Christ is anointed to his mediatorial work for this express purpose, "That they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified."—Isaiah lxi. 3. "Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified."—Isaiah lx. 21.

Third. The fruits of the plants in this Eden, or paradise of our God, are unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. (Romans vi. 22.) They shall bring forth fruit in old age, (Psalms xcii. 14,) and as to the abundance of their fruit, it "shall shake like Lebanon."—Psalms lxxii. 16.

Fourth. The fruits of the garden of the Lord are fruits of the tree of life which John saw in the midst of the street of the new Jerusalem, and on either side of the river of life, which were yielded every month, (Rev. xxii. 2,) and they include all the fruits of the Spirit, which are these: "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."—Gal. v. 22, 23.

For the production of these fruits the spiritual elements must be propitious; the doctrine of the Lord must drop as the rain, and his speech distil as the dew; as the small rain upon the herb, and as showers upon the grass. (Deut. xxxii. 2.) The fallow ground must be broken up, (Jer. iv. 3; Hosea x. 12,) the hills must be digged with the mattock, (Isaiah vii. 25,) to subdue the briars and thorns; and when the ground is properly prepared and the seed is sown, and the plants set and the trees made good, then the north and south winds must blow upon this garden, that the spices may flow out. (Song of Solomon iv. 16.) When the Spirit comes, as on the day of Pentecost, like a mighty rushing wind from heaven, its power will be felt in the garden of the Lord. The genial rays and life-inspiring light and warmth of the Sun of Righteousness must shine, the refreshing dews must distil, reviving showers come down, and then the rich perfumes of the spices and fragrance of the flowers will be borne

on the gentle winds of the spirit of pure devotion.

This garden of the Lord is inclosed. A garden without an inclosure is exposed to depredations from without. If her hedges are broken down all they which pass by will pluck her choice vine, the boar out of the wood will waste it and the wild beast of the field will devour it. (Psalms lxxx. 12, 13.) Gardens are inclosed not only for defence, but frequently for ornament. When the wise man went by the field of the slothful and the vineyard of the fool, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then he saw and considered it well, as all wise men should do. (Prov. xxiv. 30–32.) But the garden of the Lord is not kept by one who will neglect it, but by the Lord, whose eye never slumbers nor sleeps. He says, I the Lord do keep it: I will keep it night and day. (Isaiah xxvii. 3.) The inclosure of the church of God is perfectly invincible, for unto her it is said, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."—Deut. xxxiii. 27. "For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her [Jerusalem] a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her."—Zech. ii. 5. "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks."—Isaiah xxvi. 1.

Her walls are strength, and at her gates
A guard of heavenly warriors waits;
Nor can her deep foundations move,
Built on his Godhead and his love.

Her foundations, walls and gates are beautifully described. (Rev. xxi. 12–27.) The election of grace, the purpose, counsel and eternal, immutable love of God encircle and secure the garden of the Lord like walls and bulwarks of eternal brass. "Walk about Zion, and go around about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following."—Psalms xlviii. 12, 13. The landmarks of this garden are unalterably established. Not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of her cords be broken. (Isaiah xxxiii. 20.)

(To be continued.)

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, at the home of the bride, April 10th, 1912, Emory F. McNelia and Daisy E. Lowe, both of Sussex County, Delaware.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, May 1st, 1912, at the home of the bride's parents, in Salisbury, Md., Ira D. Givens and Miss Effa Frances Gordy, of Salisbury, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Rosalie D. Frasher, wife of Franklin O. Frasher, of Dover, Del., died Jan. 23rd, 1912, at the home of her brother, Jasper Frazier, Wilmington, Del., at the age of 37 years. Sister Rosa was the third daughter of Thomas and Mary Frazier, of Kent County, Del. She was married to Franklin O. Frasher, Dec. 23rd, 1894. To that union was born one son, Franklin O., Jr. She was baptized by Elder B. F. Coulter, and united with the Salem Church, in Philadelphia, Pa. With a bright experience and a responsive countenance, she enjoyed the fullest fellowship of the brethren, and many of your readers will remember her cheerful, sunny face in the congregation at the meetings. She was very frail in stature, and at times a great sufferer, but brave and wonderfully persevering, ever ready to cast some word of cheer and comfort into the life of others; forgetful of her own suffering, mindful of others, unmistakable marks of her Lord and Master. About two years ago she took a heavy cold, from which finally developed the dreaded disease, tuberculosis. She was taken to the hospital, and it was found that her condition defied all the help that human hands and modern treatment could afford. She felt to leave herself in the keeping of our guardian Caretaker. Truly she had been given faith to know that he cared for her, and the rest is all too wonderful for us to know yet.

The writer spoke to the congregated family and many friends at the Cow Marsh meetinghouse, and her body was interred in the cemetery near by. Her

husband and fifteen year old son survive her. To them she left a legacy more precious than pearls, that neither time nor circumstances can take away—the sweet memory of her life, her love for them and her faith in Christ.

ALSO,

Peter C. Gruwell, well known in the congregation of the Cow Marsh and Wilmington churches, and in County and State circles, died at his home, 912 West Seventh St., Wilmington, Del., at the age of 79 years, after an illness of several weeks duration. In health he possessed a cheerful, active and genial personality, ever to be held in remembrance by his many friends and relatives, faithful in all matters and kind. He loved the truth, and knew the doctrine of God our Savior, and attended Baptist meetings regularly. His parents and the most of his family were members of the church, but he never united, but gave abundant evidence of an experience of over forty years. He told his wife near the close of life that it was only the pains of death he dreaded, he did not dread what followed death. On Sunday afternoon, Oct. 29th, 1911, while the writer was speaking at the funeral of his nephew, he went to sleep quietly, resting in the faith that it is not death to die. He left a widow, sister Tiny Gruwell, one son, Llewellyn, two daughters, Mrs. Willard S. Meredith and Miss Bertha Gruwell, all of Wilmington, Del.

Funeral services, conducted by the writer, were held at Cow Marsh meetinghouse. Interment in Baptist cemetery.

ALSO,

Deacon John C. Gruwell, of the Cow Marsh Baptist Church, died at his home, Petersburg, Del., Feb. 6th, 1912, at the age of 72 years. He had been very ill for the past three or four months, recovering somewhat a few weeks previous to his death, but never able to leave his room. He was kind, gentle and faithful, both in the church and in the world. He was baptized by our long time pastor, Elder E. Rittenhouse. His faithful attention to the meeting and to his office as deacon won for him the greatest confidence and fellowship of the brethren. His humble walk and life were an inspiration to every lover of the truth who knew him. He was strong in doctrine, and had repeatedly asked the writer to take up points of the doctrine of salvation by grace in the meetings.

I spoke from Psalms xlvi. 10: "Be still, and know that I am God," &c. The language appeared to be reflected in the faith and humble walk of our beloved brother. He knew sorrow, but was a patient sufferer, in the hope of life eternal. He leaves in his home his widow, sister Mary C. Gruwell, and sister Letitia Gruwell, an unmarried sister. Services were held at the home, and interment in the Baptist cemetery.

ALSO,

I. Oliver Gruwell, only son of John C. Gruwell (deceased) and Mary C. Gruwell, died at his home near Petersburg, Del., Oct. 27th, 1911, of typhoid fever, aged 28 years. He was a young farmer, in the old Gruwell homestead, on whom the devoted father and the fond mother leaned in their declining age as a brace and comfort. He held as sacred the profession of his parents, and believed the Old School Baptists to be the people of God, and their faith the truth. He left a widow, Mrs. Minnie Wiley Gruwell.

The funeral was held on Sunday afternoon at the home, conducted by the writer. An unusually large number of friends and relatives followed to the Baptist cemetery, where interment was made.

B. E. CUBBAGE.

WYOMING, Del.

Mrs. Maria L. Hodgson, the subject of this notice, was the daughter of Philip and Susan Langfitt, and was born and raised in Prince William County, Va. In early life she was married to Joseph M. Downing, with whom she lived happily until his death. After a few years she was married to Joseph F. Hodgson, with whom she also lived happily until seven or eight years ago, when he also passed away. The remainder of her life she spent in widowhood, having with her a stepdaughter, Miss Ella Hodgson, and a grandson, Joseph L. Purington, to both of whom she was very much attached. Mrs. Hodgson never joined the church, but was free to express her faith in the doctrine and experience of the Primitive or Old School Baptists, and many of them have found a welcome in her comfortable home. She was also regular in her attendance at the preaching meetings of the people whom she believed to be the church of Jesus Christ, as long as she was able. She suffered a great deal in her last years, and the writer often visited her and always found her strong in the faith once delivered unto the saints, and it was good to hear her tell of her hope in the Savior of sinners, especially as she neared the end, the Lord so graciously gave her his comforting presence. It came in the words of the poet: "While shepherds watched their flocks by night," &c. She said, "It seems to me that I can see the shepherds, and I hear them tell me, We are watching you, and the Lord is with us." This very sweet manifestation of the Lord's loving care stayed with her to the end. She asked the writer a year or more before her death to attend her funeral when she should pass away, and to read hymn 334 (Beebe's collection). A short time before she passed away, as I was bidding her good-by, she said, "When I am gone I want you to come over and say a few words over my poor frame, and get Elder Chick to come with you, he has known me for a long time." She passed away on the night of Feb. 13th, 1912, and on Friday, the 16th, Elder Chick and the writer attended her funeral at her late residence,

1108 Thirteenth St. N. W., Washington, D. C., speaking to a large congregation concerning the revelation of the coming Savior to the shepherds, after which her remains were laid to rest in "Congressional Cemetery" to await the call of her Savior at the last day. May the Lord bless the bereaved ones. She leaves many friends, both in and out of the church, to mourn their loss, while she rests in the love of her Savior. Miss Ella Hodgson adds: "My Father had four children, all of whom were devoted to her. A better stepmother never lived."

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

Virginia Anna Hines Ball was born Sept. 13th, 1860, in the State of Virginia, and at the age of five years moved with her parents to Illinois, where she grew to womanhood. She was married to William D. Ball at the age of nineteen, and shortly afterward moved to southern California, locating at Riverside, which place had been her home most of the time since (having lived in Oklahoma a few years). She died Feb. 16th, 1912, at her home in Riverside. She leaves to mourn their loss her husband, William D. Ball, three sons, R. E., A. A. and C. H. Ball, three daughters, Mrs. Mary E. Darby, Mrs. Viola F. Williams and Virginia Mabel Ball. Sister Ball became a member of the North Fork Predestinarian Baptist Church of Illinois about the year 1877, moving her membership to Shiloh Church, of Oklahoma, during her stay at that place, procuring a letter from same, dated October, 1905, which she placed in the organization of Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California, October 18th, 1908, where she had been a true and faithful member since.

Brother Carter, of Covena, Cal., preached a funeral discourse from 1 Thess. iv. 14, after which her body was laid away to await the summons that shall call her forth to awake in His likeness.

We all miss dear sister Ball, and greatly feel the loss of one we loved so well, and our sympathy goes out to those who are near by family ties, but since by their fruits ye shall know them, we feel that our earthly loss is her eternal gain.

By order of Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California.

G. A. DUNDAS, } Committee
O. P. SPEIRS, }

Drusillia Northam departed this life at her home near Atlantic, Va., Feb. 12, 1912, after long continued suffering, supposed to be from inward cancer, which baffled medical skill. Sister Northam was born Oct. 22nd, 1840, and was married to William E. Northam in the year 1857. Twelve children were born to them, four of whom preceded her to the grave, leaving seven daughters and one son, her husband, twenty-three grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren, with the Old School Baptist Church at Messongoes, Accomac Co., Va., to mourn their loss. She was baptized by the writer June 21st, 1874, in full fellowship with the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church at Messongoes, and in the midst of all her trials she remained firm in the faith and hope of God's elect until the end. She was possessed of a mild and sweet disposition and a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price. She seemed perfectly reconciled to the will of her Lord, who had become her trust and her all for time and eternity. She said to me the last time I went to see her that she told the children not to shed a tear for her when she was gone, but how could they help grieving at the loss of such a precious mother? The church has lost one of the monuments of divine grace; she surely did honor her profession. People could but take knowledge of her that she had been with Jesus and learned of him, because he was meek and lowly, and surely it was true of our dear sister. She now rests in the full assurance of a blessed immortality beyond, where her hope is.

The writer was called upon to officiate at her funeral, which he did with the best of his ability, using as a text Luke xxiv. 26: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" Afterward all that was mortal was laid away in the Old Baptist cemetery at Messongoes until she shall be called to arise and come forth. Amen.

T. M. POULSON.

Elder Michael B. Moffett was born in Edgar County, Ill., May 24th, 1854. The early years of his life were passed on the farm. Sept. 9th, 1874, he was united in marriage with Emily K. Redman, who survives him. The deceased was a member of one of the oldest and best families of Edgar County. He was a son of Elder Silas Moffett, whose death on a railroad crossing near Kansas a few years ago is remembered. The deceased was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, and early in life entered its ministry. For a number of years he ministered to the church at Terre Haute, and for nineteen years had charge of the congregation at Nevins. Possessed of ample means, Mr. Moffett indulged his taste for travel. A year or more ago, in company with his wife, he made two trips to Europe. His last foreign tour was through Palestine. Elder and Mrs. Moffett spent the winter in Florida, and so favorably was he impressed with the climate that he purchased a residence property, proposing in the future to spend the winters in that State. Some time during the last week the family returned from the south and took up again the home life so rudely and unexpectedly broken Monday. It is presumed the cause of death was the sudden rupture of a blood vessel in the brain. It is reported that other members of his family died in the same manner.

The funeral was held at 1:30 Wednesday afternoon,

from the late residence, Elders R. W. Thompson, of Greenfield, and Frank Reed, of Hindsboro, officiating. Aside from his widow, Elder Moffett is survived by one brother and one sister: Pierce Moffett, of Bainbridge, Ind., and Susan Brinkerhoff, of Kansas, Ill. There are also three half-brothers and two half-sisters surviving: N. R. Moffett, of Paris; D. V. Moffett, of Cloverdale, Ind.; John Moffet, of Indianapolis, Ind.; Mrs. Riley Bennett, of Westfield, Ill.; Mrs. W. E. Gill, of Cloverdale, Ind. One half-brother and two half-sisters are deceased.

Dr. D. L. McNees was born in Hardeman County, Tenn., Feb. 12th, 1857. He was married to Miss Edna Earl Bond, near Brunswick, Tenn., Dec. 7th, 1887. To them were born two children: Martha Francis, who died in infancy, and Mrs. R. B. Will Roy. He died April 14th, 1912. His widow, daughter, mother, brother and two sisters remain. We feel that our loss is his gain, however we grieve to give up our dear friends, but God knows best. The family has our tender love and sympathy.

ABEL R. BURKS.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER B. E. CUBBAGE, having changed the location of business and moved his family, desires to publish the change of post-office address to Wyoming, Kent Co., Del.

MEETINGS.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Wilmington Church, Wilmington, Del., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1912.

Those coming Tuesday will please inquire for John W. Brimer, 609 West Seventh St., or Wm. B. Tawresey, 618 Washington St. Those coming on Wednesday will go the meetinghouse, King St., between Tenth and Eleventh Sts. Those coming on the Pennsylvania Railroad will land at French St. station, take either the Delaware Ave. or Washington St. car and get off at Tenth and Market Sts., walk one square east and half a square north to meetinghouse. Those coming on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad will land at Delaware Ave. station, take Delaware Ave. car going east and get off at the same place.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Pa., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 29th, 30th and 31st, 1912.

Those coming to the association from the north, by way of the Belvidere R. R., will leave the train at Lambertville, N. J., Tuesday p. m., cross the Delaware River to New Hope, and come to Ivyland, where they will be met. Inquire for Wm. Hobensack. Those coming from the south will take train at Reading Terminal, Philadelphia, Tuesday at 4:23 p. m. and come to Southampton, where they will be met. The train can also be taken Wednesday morning at 9:15. All are cordially invited.

WM. HOBENSACK, Church Clerk.

THE Middleburg Old School Baptist Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., has appointed her yearly meeting to be held, the Lord willing, the first Saturday and Sunday in June (1st and 2nd), 1912. A cordial invitation is extended to ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

ADDIE COOK, Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 5th, 6th and 7th, 1912.

Those coming by way of New York will take train leaving West Twenty-third St. at 2:35 p. m. Tuesday before the meeting. This train leaves Jersey City at 3 o'clock and arrives at Warwick at 5:10. Those desiring to leave New York Wednesday morning will take train from West Twenty-third St. at 8:50, and from Jersey City at 9:30, ariving at Warwick at 12 o'clock. Those coming from Middletown and points west can use train leaving Middletown Tuesday at 4:11 p. m., or Wednesday morning either at 6:54 or 11:10. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth to meet with us.

ISAAC S. BAIRD, Church Clerk.

A THREE-days meeting will be held with the Bethel Church, Tallman, Linn Co., Oregon, commencing on Friday at 2 o'clock p. m., and continuing over Sunday, June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1912, where we hope to meet as many of the brethren and sisters as possible. All those coming by rail will stop at Albany, take cars for Lebanon, stopping off at Tallman. The church-house is close to the depot.

[illegible] HORNER.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of southern California meets every third Sunday at 2 p. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in Kimmy Hall, No. 12 Third St., in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at 5 cents per copy. Address,

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The ninth (the most important) chapter of my Church History revised and brought down to date. Scripture truth about the church, as stated by the greatest scholars of the world, and by the ablest Primitive Baptist ministers. Sixty closely printed octavo pages. The Church History, now out of print, was written and published to disseminate the truth, and was sold for two thousand dollars less than the cost, but through the kind appeals of Elders J. R. Respess, Wm. L. Beebe and P. D. Gold, in *The Gospel Messenger*, SIGNS OF THE TIMES and *Zion's Landmark*, this debt was paid by members and friends. The present volume, The Apostolic Church, will be sold at cost, or given to those wishing it and not able to buy it. Postpaid, ten cents a copy, or twelve copies for one dollar.

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILLIAMSTON, N. C.

I find the postage on my book, "Day unto Day," to America is 9 pence (18 cents), and I thought it would be 6 pence, or at most 7 pence. I think on consideration, as the expense of publication has been very heavy, notwithstanding a most encouraging sale, I had better say I will send to any of your readers the half calf gilt edge edition for 5 shillings ($1.20), or the cloth edition for 4 shillings (96 cents) postage free.

E. LITTLETON, JR.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 80. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1912. NO. 11.

POETRY.

NO DISCHARGE.

GREAT God, before thy throne
Thy waiting people bow;
O make their cause thine own,
Grant their petitions now.

Consider their sad plight,
With trials overborne;
Bid them no longer fight,
All battle-scarred and worn.

They weary are, and faint,
They long for rest and peace;
Note each afflicted saint,
And grant him quick release.

A voice from heaven sounds:
"Refuse not him who speaks;"
The Word with strength abounds
To him who for it seeks.

Have ye forgotten quite
The chastening of the Lord,
And will ye do despite
To his reproving word?

Consider Jesus, who
Such contradiction bore;
Let that your faith renew,
And strength to you restore.

Your strivings against sin,
And your resistance made,
To blood have not yet been;
Why then so soon dismayed?

Consider those of old,
Who untold suffering bore,
And count, as you are told,
"Them happy which endure."

CLARICE E. DURAND.

CORRESPONDENCE.

STERLING, Va., April 1, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have copied the seven precious letters written to me by our dear departed pastor, Elder E. V. White. They have been wonderfully comforting to me. I read them to brother and sister Oliver, and they said I ought to have them published in the SIGNS, that they might be of comfort to some others. While we miss this dear father in Israel, our stand is filled with a wonderful gift, such as only the Giver of every good and every perfect gift can bestow, and I do hope we are grateful that he has sent Elder Lefferts to this part of his vineyard. As brother Oliver said when I read the letters to them, I had not been anywhere that Elder White had not been also, and I think for this reason more than any other I have found them so comforting. I am always afraid of acting the hypocrite, and I do want so much to be free from hypocrisy. O may we be led in paths of righteousness and truth for His dear name's sake.

Your unworthy sister, I hope,

MATILDA MIDDLETON.

LEESBURG, Va., Nov. 20, 1905.

MY DEAR LITTLE FRIEND:—I was not more surprised than delighted to receive and read your, to me, sweet and precious letter. I feel to thank God and take courage, for he does work, and none can hinder. Believe me, that you have my heart's sympathy and prayer to God in your behalf, that he will minister unto you of his grace, and make you strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Though you are young in years you talk, and in spirit are, as old as old Abraham, Isaac or Jacob. Jesus asked the Pharisees, "What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord?" &c. "If David then called him Lord, how is he his son?"—Matt. xxii. 42, 43, 45. These Pharisees were not able to answer him a word. We do know, and you know, though young as you are, what the Pharisees did not know; they only knew of the natural life. They knew that Christ was the descendant of David after the flesh, but they did not know that Christ was the life of David after the Spirit. So he is your life after the Spirit, yes, the life of us all. We all have the same life after the Spirit. As it is written, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling." You have the same spirit that the old fathers had, and the same spirit that you see in the church to-day, the same spirit that you believe to be in me and in the Frying Pan members. It is in heavenly things as you see in nature, like spirits flock together, nor can they fellowship or associate with those of a contrary spirit; you do not see dogs and sheep flock together. The apostle warns us against dogs. (See Phil. iii. 2, 3.) Why are you drawn to us? Why think you that any should be drawn to the Baptists? There, and there only, they find a congenial spirit; those with whom they can flock they can feel to be one with. My dear child, do you not feel to be one with us? Do you not feel to say in your heart what Ruth said: Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee? Yes, I say to you now what you say I said in preaching, Come to the church, they are your best friends; the Spirit and the bride say, Come. All ye that labor and are heavy laden come, and Jesus says, I will give you rest; yes, you who carry a burden of sin upon your heart, unworthy as you say in your letter, these are the very ones to whom Jesus says, Come, and I will give you rest. My dear child, let me encourage you to take the cross and follow your dear Lord and Master; surely he has given you a good evidence. Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Did he not bear the cross and despise the shame? So must we, if we would be his followers. Satan is always at hand to torment and deceive us; yes, it is written, He would deceive the very elect, if it were possible. I know you are young, but your Lord in whom you trust is old. I know you are unworthy, but your Savior is worthy. I know you are a poor, weak one of the earth, but your Lord is strong, he will uphold you and never forsake you. You have not said a word about yourself that I have not said and known to be true of myself; but for this I could not fellowship you. May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ lead you in paths of righteousness and peace for his name's sake.

Your friend, and brother, I do believe,

E. V. WHITE.

DECEMBER 19, 1905.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND:—I am old and nervous, many nights I do not sleep at all, and feel as if to-night will be one of those. I tried, but could not sleep, so I am up trying to write to my new found companion in tribulation. Even in nature there is nothing that draws people together and causes them to love each other as tribulation. It is written that through much tribulation we enter the kingdom of God. What is the kingdom of God we enter? Righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. How do we enter? By faith. If we believe in the righteousness which is of God, that is, that he made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him (not in ourselves, but in Christ Jesus), and in his righteousness we stand justified, therefore peace with God, and in this we do rejoice, in that the Holy Ghost hath revealed this to us, then have we entered into the kingdom of God. This is not carnal philosophy nor worldly wisdom, but it is the inspiration of God to those who believe. I can but think you believe this, the Lord has taught you, for it is said, They shall all be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace thereof. How pleasant it is to be with those who use your own language and tell the things you know; a foreign tongue you cannot understand. I must believe from what you say that the Baptists speak the language of your heart; you surely speak the language of mine. I do trust and believe that the Lord has taught you and brought you by a way you knew not. There is one peculiarity about those taught of the Lord: they know nothing of themselves, only that which they have been taught; boasting is excluded, self is abased and the poor creature is made a beggar at mercy's door. Thus we are taught that blessed charity that suffereth long and is kind, that is not puffed up, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth. Humility, humbleness of soul and mind are the true instincts of a child of grace. We can boast against no one, believe what they may, but rather pity, and bless God for our deliverance. This spirit is wrought in us alone through those trials, temptations, doubts and fears of which you so beautifully speak. As the apostle says, it is God who hath wrought us for this selfsame thing. I sometimes fear that I do not know what it is to be born again, and how can I judge of others? I feel that I need to be taught, rather than to lead others. You, dear child, must look to the Lord, he will teach you all things, and teach you no lie. I do believe that what you write is a christian experience; that it is not of yourself, but of the Lord; that it is the mighty work of grace wrought in you by God's power. That is what I believe, and, believing it, I would admonish you to do what Jesus says: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." I would not deceive you nor lead you astray; you know I am a poor, weak, sinful creature, and may even be deceived myself in what I profess. I trust not, and even if I am, it would be wrong to live contrary to what I believe. Believing, let us press on toward the mark of our high calling in Christ; let not doubts nor fears prevent. God is good and merciful and kind, he will not deny his own. We will walk through the valley of the shadow of death and fear no evil, for his rod and his staff shall comfort us. To whom shall we go if not to Jesus? Like Job, let us say, Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. He is my God, my refuge, my all. You cannot go to any one else,

nor can you do better than obey, for it is better than sacrifice.

It is past twelve o'clock, so I will go to bed again. Hoping for you a blessed entrance into the kingdom of our God, that you may feast upon the things prepared for them that love him, I am your unworthy brother in the Lord, as I trust,

E. V. WHITE.

FEBRUARY 5, 1906.

MY MUCH APPRECIATED FRIEND FOR THE TRUTH'S SAKE:—I received your letter of the 9th and 10th while in Washington. I have not answered your letters for the reason that you heard. I had thought the latter part of last summer and fall that I was in a manner well, or soon would be, but on the 23rd of December my old trouble returned in some respects worse than ever, and for this reason I have not been able to answer or write you. Your letter was deeply interesting to me, and I appreciated it much. I am going to try to tell you some of the reasons why I appreciated it. First, you find fault with yourself, and say your letter looks so imperfect, and that you cannot write spiritual letters. What is a good and spiritual letter? Is it not writing the true sentiments of your heart in truth and candor? Is it not trying to tell the one you spiritually love some of the things which live and abide in your own heart and mind? If this is it, then you wrote a good and spiritual letter. How could I refuse to believe that you love me? No, I cannot. What for? I am old enough to be your grandfather. No, it is not natural that you should have special love for me or I for you, yet I do love you—love you for that blessed work of grace God by his Holy Spirit has wrought in you. The great peculiarity of this love, and whereby we may know that it is not natural, but spiritual, is that there is no age in it. There shall be time no longer. (Rev. x. 6.) There shall be no more thence an infant of days, for the child shall die an hundred years old. (Isaiah lxv. 20.) When we by the Spirit live by faith the life of Christ, we enter by faith into eternity; hence Jesus says, He that believeth in me shall never die. If we are what we hope we are there is no difference in our age. How leveling this to human pride; none can boast himself superior to another by reason of age. Call no man father but God. You seem to think I am better than you. No, my child, I am not; as to sin and wickedness, I am infinitely worse than you. But Jesus spoke the truth when he said, There is none good but God.

I am much pleased with your definitions and illustrations of faith. As you say, it is not something that man can exercise at will. Try as we may, there are times we cannot exercise faith, at other times contrary, or, rather, without exercise of our will faith exercises us; we find ourselves swallowed up in holy, blessed meditation; at other times listening to the glorious gospel of the grace of God as it flows from the lips of God's chosen ministers, even at times when we were expecting nothing. Surely God works in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform. So mysterious are his works that our very doubts and fears, our downsittings and our uprisings, are made to praise him.

I see that there are many inquiries that come into your mind. So it is with all God's children, if I know anything about it. I know that there are many inquiries that disturb my mind, and this, if I may make a distinction, is the most anxious: "Am I His, or am I not?" I do pray

God to confirm and establish me, I am such a sinner. I often wonder, Will God be merciful to my transgressions? my sins and iniquities remember no more?

I am so nervous and my writing so bad that I know you will have to labor hard to read it, so I had better stop. But you said one thing more I must notice, that is, you expressed such an earnest desire to be baptized and to be numbered with the people of God. O may God enable you to carry out this heavenly, this blessed desire. Do not wait for me to baptize you. From what my doctor says it is hardly probable that I shall get to Frying Pan before warm weather. The command is, Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sin. As I understand, as long as we live in disobedience to the command as written in our hearts we live in sin; nothing could wash it away but obedience: being baptized. All that is necessary for a valid baptism is a proper administrator (one of our faith) and a subject of grace by faith. I do sincerely believe you are a proper subject for baptism, and were it in my power I would be glad to baptize you, but to the will of God let us submit. I trust that whenever you have opportunity you may follow your dear Lord and Savior in baptism. God bless you, dear child.

Your brother, I believe, in the precious faith of the gospel,

E. V. WHITE.

APRIL 5, 1906.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND:—I will try as best I may be able to answer your letter of March 20th. I have just read it again; it is the same condemnation written in the mind of every one taught the truth. Did not God condemn us in our sins? Is not this the truth of God? How are we to know it unless brought by the Spirit into that condemnation? Is not this then the work of the Spirit? Do you know many of your young friends who feel this condemnation, who feel as you do? Perhaps not one. "One of a city, and two of a family." Would you rather go with the multitude or with the few? God has said by the apostle, I will put my laws into their minds and write them in their hearts. What God said he would do he has done, for in, by and through Christ all is fulfilled; it is finished—what he came to do. It is also written, We have the witness in ourselves. No man can give us that witness, we cannot be induced, persuaded or forced to have it; God alone puts it in us, if indeed it is in us. My dear friend, let me ask you this solemn question, Have you the law in your heart? Do you love the law of God after the inward man? Paul said he did. (Romans vii. 22.) If you do are you not in good company? Much better than all your worldly friends. That inward man is Christ. Not that you do, but would you not like to keep his commandments? Neither did Paul, for he said, "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." I said, not that you do; no, you do not, yet you do, as Peter said. Paul said many things hard to be understood, which the unlearned wrest to their destruction. We will not wrest it to our destruction, for we do understand just as Paul did, and can say with him in truth, "With the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." There are evidently two minds in the child of God, one to serve Christ, the other the world or flesh. These are contrary the one to the other, and that we right well know. These you will find your trouble,

and it is the trouble of every heavenly born soul. It is mine, if I know the truth. It is in my mind to serve God, I would love to serve him, but how to do it I find not, and the reason is because he is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. It is evident that if we do not worship him in spirit we do not worship him at all, for we sadly confess that in the flesh we come short in all things. How true this is, how true we know it to be. My dear little friend, if we would be profitable in the church we must be meek and lowly and humble, our pride crucified, our self-esteem taken away and we become poor and ignorant and blind. If we feel we are better than others, know more than others, can tell others what to do, we are not fit for the church, for one fit for the church does not know himself what to do, nor how to do it. If taught by the Spirit we know some of the things the Spirit can do and will do. But we do feel we know so little about that we feel ashamed to try to tell what we hope we know about it. I often think that if I had to preach myself, I would have to sit down. I am such a miserable, sinful creature, I feel that I am one of the worst among God's flock, if indeed I am among them. O, I do hope I am among them; if not, I have no home anywhere. I know I am not with any other people on earth, nor do I want to be, no matter how rich, how powerful, they may be. Give me, O God, a home among the dear old despised Baptists, and I am satisfied. I thank God he has given me my heart's desire.

I am still quite nervous. I hope you may be able to read what I have written. Love to all the family.

Most respectfully,

E. V. WHITE.

MAY 28, 1906.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND:—It has been a long time since I received your letter, and now I do not know how to answer it or what to say, as I feel so destitute of all knowledge that would interest or be profitable to you or any one. You ask me if you had said anything amiss. If you have, I am too ignorant to know it. Indeed, I think your letter good, and, so far as I am capable of judging, is in harmony with the experience of those divinely taught. It is written, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings God will perfect praise. Not many wise, not many prudent are called. Not in such are the wonderful works of God manifest, but in babes and sucklings, or those who are in spirit poor and helpless; there is not one noble or mighty in all God's kingdom. The Lord needs not wisdom or strength for counsel or help; the ignorant, helpless, destitute, compose his army. How strikingly is this brought to view in David's case, the man after God's own heart, therefore a true type of Christ. David, being pursued by Saul, and being afraid of Achish, king of Gath, escaped to the cave Adullam, and when his brethren and his father's house heard it they went down thither to him, and every one who was in distress, and every one who was in debt, and every one who was discontented, gathered themselves unto him, and he became captain over them, and there were with him about four hundred. (1 Samuel xxii. 1, 2.) Notice they were his brethren, his father's house. These represent the brethren of Christ, for he is our Elder Brother; they also represent our brethren and our Father's house. A sorry set they were to constitute an army, but with them David gained signal victories; being such, added that much more glory to David. If you felt that you

were not a companion with these in distress, in debt, discontented, where would be the glory of Jesus in comforting you, paying your debt for you and rendering satisfaction to divine justice? I think you are ready to tell me that one, if not all, "describe me exactly." Well, if so, Jesus is your Captain, and you need fear no danger; wherever he leads you can safely follow.

Yours with best wishes,

E. V. WHITE.

JULY 2, 1906.

MY DEAR MISS MATILDA:—Your very welcome letter of the 24th duly received. Part of the time since I have been under the doctor's care, and part of the time so much engaged I had not time to write. I do hope ere this your good mother is well again, and will be able to meet with us Saturday and Sunday next, if the Lord wills that we should meet. We had a good congregation indeed Saturday and Sunday last. I think Sunday especially the saints did rejoice in God their Savior. What a blessing to have his holy word drop as the rain and distil as the dew. From your letter you have been wonderfully favored by your God. O that we could be grateful as we should and exalt him in psalms and songs. My constant desire is that I could love him more and serve him better, but I come far short of doing and being what I would like. You say you sometimes feel that you are acting the terrible hypocrite; yes, I do not doubt you do, for I have felt the very same, therefore I believe you. I have thought I acted a wrong part when I joined the church, and then to that wrong I added greater, if greater could be, by attempting to preach. But then again I have had all this taken away from me, and made to feel grateful from the bottom of my heart that God ever put me among his people, and by his grace enabled me to preach Christ and him crucified. I believe you again when you say, "I am one of those weak, ignorant sinners who can do nothing." What can any one do? The strength of the strongest man that ever lived (Sampson) brought him to grief, and he lost his eyes; so it would seem we better not have so much strength. Paul said when he was weak then was he strong; so you are in just the condition to be strong. I fully agree with Paul, and am glad you are weak. The weak ones never hurt any one; they cannot even if they would. I agree with you again when you say, "I do hope I can go to the church next meeting." May the Lord prosper it, if it is his will. You ask me to tell you if I think you will find rest in obeying. Whether you will or not God knows, but one thing he has revealed, that is, there is no rest in disobedience. Jesus just after baptism was led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. I hardly think he found any rest in the hands of the devil, but he did learn obedience by the things he suffered; obedience is better than sacrifice. I say, obey the Lord, he will provide.

Yours truly, E. V. WHITE.

AUGUST 22, 1906.

MY PRECIOUS LITTLE SISTER:—For the last few days you have been much on my mind as one whom I have neglected, still not until this morning have I been impressed to hunt your letter and see what the dear little child said about herself. I had read your letter probably more than once, but what you said had gone out of my mind, and it is no wonder, for I have been mixed up in so many things and so many ways since I received

your letter, and part of the time I have not been well. This morning I am very sad; about a week ago, no, longer than that perhaps, I wrote to the Mill Creek Church that, Providence permitting, I would be with them next Saturday and Sunday. It has been nearly a year since I preached for them, and I wanted to see them very much, and, as the apostle said, impart some spiritual gift. There are a very few of them, and for that very reason I am anxious about them, for fear they might think because few they are neglected. I hardly think, however, they will think that, though I may fear, for they do dearly love me I know. One great reason why I know this is because I dearly love them, and now this morning I feel I shall have to write them I cannot come. For several days I have been very sick again, under the doctor's care, feeling weak and badly. For two years and six months I have taken medicine every day, and every day treated by doctors from Leesburg, Washington, Baltimore and Philadelphia, but the trouble still remains, and in some respects but little if any better, but thank God, my heart says, that I was able to baptize you, my dear sister. Long after I am gone may you live to tell to others how God did lead you, and there was no strange god with you.

Now, my sister, I have not answered your letter one bit, and I have written so much I will not try. God bless you, bless your dear mother, father and the children. E. V. WHITE.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., Jan. 8, 1912.

TO THE MEMBERS OF BETHLEHEM CHURCH, and to all with whom I met while attending the association there:—As so many of the brethren requested that I would let them hear from me after having reached my California home, I have concluded to address them collectively, and send it to the SIGNS. If the editors think best to publish it, I will begin by telling you something of my enjoyment during the stay among you, if they see fit to do differently, and you never know of it, I shall still love the great and good Lord who overruled the obstacles which would otherwise have prevented my going; still love the editors of our dear paper, who have written to my comfort and edification for years, and still love the brethren who greeted me with such christian love and fellowship. I had been away from home (the church) for so long a time that I had wondered how it would seem to be there. When I crossed the threshold of that little meetinghouse on the eleventh day of October, there was no longer any wonder, I understood. I felt a solemnity as if I stood in the presence of my Master. When I looked around and saw a few familiar faces, among them the pastor of the church, and my pastor, I felt an inward happiness that is indescribable; and when, a little later, I was told that brother Chick was there, I felt to say, Bless the Lord, O my soul, and let all that is within bless and praise God's holy name. Something higher and holier than the things of this world took possession of me that day, and I cried in my happiness that I had been permitted to be a witness and a partaker of all that was to be done and said. I almost felt, too, that I had no right to be there, but that passed away, for I had the love of God in my heart, a great love for all the brethren, a hungering to be fed from the bountiful storehouse, a thirsting for the fountain from which all blessings flow, and I forgot myself. I just listened to the preached gospel as I had heard and

loved it years ago—just saw the trusting, believing faces of his people—yet better than all, saw the reflected image of the Savior hovering over and around that small company, and I was happy. Happy that there was such a faithful, unchangeable, eternal King of glory, that there was a remnant who delighted in worshiping him in spirit and in truth, and that they used the endearing word "sister," when addressing me. I cannot tell the half of what I heard, nor can I sound the depths of my enjoyment during the three days of that meeting. It seemed that I had been transplanted beyond the shores of time, and that I knew nothing but Him, and saw nothing but his glory. It has been many weeks since then, but the memory of it lingers about me with a sweet fragrance. Just why I have attempted to write more than a fervent greeting in the Lord is more than I know. Just why I should try to tell in my uninteresting and fragmentary way anything that took place there, is a mystery to me, for all present seemed to have grown in grace and knowledge concerning the things of his kingdom, and of which I know so little; all have had an undershepherd to guide, to exhort and to reprove, while I have been roaming in fields brown and bare; all have been fed and instructed to the delight of heart and soul, while I have been wandering in the desert, and fain would eat the husks of your refusal. It is true that at times I saw the bow in the cloud, but as it is not given us to know that for which we long so fervently, I desire companionship with those who understand as I do, and with whom I can hold sweet converse. I know it was good for me to have been with you all. Jesus was exalted, and our needs and our helplessness made known, which knowledge, instead of confusing us, as it does the high and mighty, led us to hope for better things. Brother Chick's preaching filled my soul with the same love that must have stirred others to their depths. He always writes and speaks as if his heart was full of the love of God, and it soothes and constrains us. His whole life seems characteristic of his utterances. You all felt the sweetness of what Elders Eubanks and Coulter said, so why should I enlarge, except to add that it fell as gently as dew from heaven, and I believe it nourished all who heard it. The solemnity of brother Durand's preaching impressed me very much, and his painstaking to say nothing but that which would be approved by the righteous Judge was very apparent. I thought, When the call shall come for me to cross the bar, may I be as worthy as I believe he is. The other ministers preached in great sincerity, and were sound in the doctrine and in the faith once delivered unto the saints. Good and wise men, I thought; good through the merit of the blood of a risen Redeemer, and wise unto salvation, because they have been given hearing ears and understanding minds; because the good seed had been sown in ground prepared to receive it. The brethren, though differing in outward appearance, showed a oneness in spirit, and they seemed nearer and dearer to each other, and to me, than ever before. We were one inwardly, believing in the same Lord, the same faith, the same baptism, and loving one another for the truth's sake. I can never forget the royal welcome they gave me to their midst, and the care they bestowed on me. I owe much to Mr. Joseph Johnson and family, dear, kind people, who never could have done so much in entertaining unless they loved the Lord and his people. Brother George Johnson and wife

will always be thought of as the salt of the earth; their hearts and their home are open to all who come in his name, and they minister even beyond their strength. May the God of all grace remember them abundantly. I owe a great deal to the kindness of brother Badger and wife; they also took me in, dividing their love and their hoard with me. I had the pleasure of hearing him preach the first Saturday and Sunday at Bethlehem, and while he spoke with great humility, considering himself unworthy to oversee the little flock there, I feel better for having heard and having been with him; I esteem him as one who endeavors to walk in the light of His countenance. The second Saturday and Sunday in that month I had the great privilege of listening to Elder Lefferts; young in years, but old in knowledge, and destined to become one of our foremost preachers. I heard him with interest and profit, and thought then that I certainly would go to Leesburg the following Saturday and Sunday, when I would again hear him, but a combination of circumstances prevented. Sister White had considerately invited me to her home, and I much regret not being able to go. The fourth Sunday in October I had the good fortune to meet with the church in Baltimore; Elder Rowe preached a sound, convincing sermon from a good text. I hoped at that time to hear him again in Washington, in November, but was disappointed. I met with so many dear brethren that I cannot name them all, nor is it necessary. I told them how my heart beat in unison with theirs, how lonely I felt in my exile, and how I enjoyed being with them. I listened to them tell of their trials, their doubts and darkness, and I had fellowship with them. I heard them tell of their unworthiness, and their inability to do anything meritorious, and my heart beat faster, my faith grew stronger. It was an answer to, "O is there any one like me?" They told of glimpses of the Sun of Righteousness after they had well-nigh despaired, and it confirmed the promise that he would be with his people to the end of the world, and afterward in glory.

They spoke with faltering lips and contrite hearts, and it convinced me that God had a people, a peculiar people, whom he had chosen to praise him, and that I was looking right into their faces. Among the brethren I met two very dear first cousins. The meeting with brother Chick was especially pleasant; it was to him I went over forty years ago, telling him my hopes and fears, and he understood my case, even as the Master had understood his, and he ministered unto me with Christlike words and actions. After I had folded my tent and gone out into the land of doubt and uncertainty, putting thousands of miles between me and the people I loved, he wrote cheering, comforting letters, bidding me Godspeed, and telling me that He would never suffer his faithfulness to fail. He came in the same kind, gentle manner as of old last October, and the meeting was one of joy, a foretaste of what we shall realize when we see Him, and are like Him. When I met with the brethren at Bethlehem the first Sunday in November, it was the tenth anniversary of my baptism near that place, the ordinance having been administered by Elder Badger, the present pastor. You can imagine how pleased I was to be with them again, but you cannot understand how brotherly and how considerate they were to me until I tell you that they spread the Lord's table, although it was not their regular day for so doing, and permitted

me, out of the love pervading their hearts, to eat and drink with them. A blessed privilege, and I so esteemed it. When I think of that solemn occasion, of the Lord's mercy, and their thoughtfulness, I am lost in wonder, love and praise; I am carrying them around in my heart, and I pray that He may minister to them in their sorrows, and bless them in their labors for his name's sake. I pray that brother Badger may be given a message each meeting day that will savor of the certainty of his calling to the ministry, that will give him more confidence and that he be a comfort to his people. I further pray that his labors may not be in vain in the Lord, and that I might be permitted to assemble with them. Such dear brethren as I met at old Frying Pan! I would like to mention some of them personally, but I have already said too much. My heart seems larger though since I was with you, and I feel the love intensified by my attendance there, surging through it at the remembrance. I desire that all with whom I met there and elsewhere should think kindly of me at times, and at others, when there is a felt need of prayer, and you just have to ask God for mercy, please include poor unworthy me, who of all others needs it most. I visited my sister and daughters near Manassas, and spent a few delightful weeks with them; stopped two weeks or more with a daughter in Washington, and cemented anew the tie existing between us; tarried awhile in Los Angeles, for a similar purpose, and arrived here about the middle of December, without sickness or accident, for which I was, and am, truly thankful. I found all well, and they welcomed me home gladly. Nothing of interest to send from this place; everything is of a worldly nature, and will be as long as the people are left to themselves. The weather is pleasant, with flowers everywhere, and I wish you easterners could come here to see and enjoy them.

But I must close; cannot do so, however, without admonishing you to strive for that which makes for peace, and do not forget to greet each other as you did me. It will help to make a heaven below; it will help to make you strong in Him. Inasmuch as ye do it to the least of the little ones, ye do it unto him. With the most of us there is but a short while in which we will have the privilege. A little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little more folding of the hands to rest, and the places that know us now will know us no more forever. When that time comes may each of us find some sweet promise that will be a sure support against despair, and may we feel his everlasting arms underneath us, enabling us to sing the song of victory over death and the grave. Now, with much love, I commend you to him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory.

Unworthily your sister,

B. E. WRIGHT.

OTTAWA, Kans., Jan. 28, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—The inclosed letter was so comforting to me that I am sending it to you to publish, if you think best. It came at a time when I was weary and heavy laden. The next day, while busy with my household duties, I was going over the letter in my mind, and I thought of the words, "We do trust him, for we feel that we have nowhere else to go," and immediately the words of the disciples to the Savior, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life," came with much power and were full of meaning. I seemed to feel and

see and know as they did, that there it must all end; there is nowhere else to go. All day long I seemed not to be myself, and I thought, If I could only stay in such a frame of mind as this, but when night came on I was at home again with doubts and fears.

Dear brother, what did the Savior mean when he said to the man he had healed, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee?"—John v. 14. I have thought much on these words, and feel I deserve all the afflictions I receive, yet am utterly unable to do better. If you have time I would appreciate an answer through the SIGNS.

Very sincerely,

ANNA McKINNEY.

[WE shall try some time to comply with the above request of our sister.—K.]

WOODSTOCK, Ont., Jan. 1, 1912.

MRS. ANNA MCKINNEY—DEAR SISTER:—Dear sister in affliction and sorrow, and, I hope, in the faith and patience of the gospel, and if so in Jesus Christ, who is our only hope of salvation, but O, what evidence have I that such is the case? None at all, unless trouble, sorrow and mourning are an evidence. I received your letter a few days ago, and I was glad when I saw where it came from, for often had I wondered why you had never written, and often I was tempted to write to try and find out what was the matter, but as I felt barren and cold and full of trouble, I thought I could not write anything that would do you any good, and perhaps you did not care to hear from me any more; but now I find all my imaginings wrong, and feel like beginning the new year by writing you a few lines, at least, hoping it may be a year of blessing to you, and that you may have a good hope through grace, and be led beside the still waters of salvation, and to realize that Jesus died for you, and if we could feel this all earthly blessings are of little real importance when compared with it, though we often feel they are of great importance, and for my own part I often worry more about worldly than spiritual things, so that often I wonder if there is any life in my soul, but I know I groan and mourn over my stupid, ignorant mind; but then I know the apostle says, The natural man, and I believe he means the natural mind of the child of God, for our natural mind is not changed, though we are born again, for the Savior says, That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and so if there are strivings and fightings within that is the reason why there are two opposing natures contrary the one to the other, and that this causes us trouble and sorrow is the best evidence that we are children. We never see a child mourn or feel bad because some one else's parents do not love him, but if his own parents are displeased with him there may be real grief and sorrow. But O it seems I cannot write, I am all confusion, my mind seems to refuse to work or give out any thoughts or expressions that will be of interest or profit to a child of God.

January 5.—I had to give up writing the other day, as it seemed my mind was so confused and stupid that no thoughts would come that any child of God could read with interest. I am in darkness; yes, darkness that may be felt, and it is said in Scripture, Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light, let him trust in the Lord and stay upon God. Do you ever get where it all seems dark, no light at all, all confusion, trouble and sorrow, and it looks as if you were entirely for-

saken? You look for evidences of grace, but there does not appear to be any; you look on the right hand and on the left, but it all looks alike; and O I think I know how Jonah felt when he said, It is better for me to die than to live. I cannot enjoy the world, and there is nothing in spiritual things in which I can find any comfort; but this is not trusting in the Lord, and yet we do trust in him, for we feel that we have nowhere else to go, and we know there is no other name in heaven or earth whereby we must be saved. Dear sister, have not all our trials driven us to this conclusion, and so we call upon God, though it only be by groaning, sighing and mourning? I do not often go through a form of prayer, though sometimes wife and I do bow in the attitude of prayer, but words are nothing, prayer is wrung out of the heart under a real sense of need. We are in pain, in darkness, in loneliness, or are strongly tempted to evil, these things bring us to deep, heartfelt groanings, for we feel our weakness, our destitution, our proneness to go astray, and we cry, Lord, help me; not perhaps with our lips, O no, it is often we go into the closet of our hearts, and perhaps like one of old we say, Yet will I look again toward thy holy temple; but O how often have I felt there is no use. I have prayed and groaned and cried in vain, God does not hear me; well, why not give it all up? Ah, why not? If it were nature I think we would, but there is that within us that is constantly springing up, and that is eternal life, the water of life, which Jesus said he would give, and Jesus said it would be in his people a well of water springing up into everlasting life, and may we hope that is the cause of our hope springing up and of our constantly crying to God for mercy, for pardon, for joy and comfort, looking to him to bless us with his presence and grace, and with his salvation. It is salvation we want, salvation from sin above all things, and yet how strange it is, constantly sinning, and yet wishing to be saved from it.

I am afraid you will say this is a strange letter, and yet I did want to write something that would interest and comfort you, but how can I do it unless the Spirit guides or directs my mind and heart. Then if I write what will please myself how prone to glory in it. O that I might glory in nothing save the cross of Jesus Christ, and could constantly be looking to him, instead of looking to self. I am as full of self as the devil is full of sin, and I am just as full of sin as the devil, for I do not know of any other devil, only that which dwells in this nature of mine, and if I could get rid of him there I would not be afraid of him outside of me, and I can truly feel with the poet when he said, "Of feeling all things show some sign, but this unfeeling heart of mine," but sometimes I think I know that God can soften it and conform it to his will, and then I wonder why he does not, and why I have to suffer so much on account of rebellion, indwelling sin, and all the other evils which so constantly harass me, until I conclude that God cannot dwell in such a heart of evil as mine. But how do I know it is evil? There must be some light somewhere within to reveal the sin. It is light that makes manifest, for we can see nothing in perfect darkness.

I feel I better stop, as I cannot write as I would like, yet I hope you will know that I desire to write better, but I can only write what is given me.

You spoke of Balaam; I have had some thoughts that he was a child of God, for it seems to me he knew what no man

in a state of nature can know, but he was greedy of filthy lucre, and I often am afraid I am like him. I hope you are feeling your hope and strength renewed. I feel sorry your child is so often sick, but it is your cross and you must bear it. I will be glad to hear from you again.

Unworthily your brother,

R. SCATES.

CHARITY.

"AND now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

Have we considered what the apostle means by charity? He has used the whole of the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians in setting forth what charity does, but have we considered what he means? It is commonly accepted among men in the world that charity means giving to others of this world's goods. But the apostle will not allow the meaning of charity to stop at that, for he says, "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." Therefore we will have to look still further for the apostle's meaning of this word "charity," the absence of which he felt rendered all that he did of no value or benefit. One might consider that much education in natural and spiritual things and then propounding them freely, would be considered to be charity, but the apostle says, "Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains," all this would avail him nothing if he lacked this one great essential point, charity. Then certainly this charity must be very essential, and in fact, the most to be coveted of all gifts, for the apostle says, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." Certainly if one may possess the tongues of men or of angels and in the absence of charity that would avail nothing, it behooves us to look carefully what and where this wonderful gift is, as one would be unfit for a place in the church, and neither would all the wisdom of the world, nor any other gift which he might possess, avail him anything in the absence of charity. In order to learn what charity is, we must look to what it does. The apostle says, "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." Certainly the apostle has made it plain, and when we see churches growing cold and lukewarm, and brethren becoming uninterested in each other, and neglectful of meeting together there can be but one answer if we ask the reason for this, it is the lack of charity. The apostle declares that all other gifts avail nothing if charity be wanting. But, says one, What shall we do, or how shall we become charitable, seeing that no church can exist without it, and that no deeds of any kind will avail anything without this essential gift? The apostle says, first, that charity suffereth long and is kind. What does he mean by this? There can be but one answer. Our God is said to be long-suffering toward His people. This means that though his children provoke him by sinning against him, and offend him in every way, yet he is long-suffering unto them, and continually kind. Thus we are reminded that in order to be charitable toward our brethren we must suffer all

their abuses and offences, and render kindness in return. This will in the end recall the offender and hold his respect; it is the heaping of coals of fire on his head. Again, Charity envieth not. This is certainly one of the sweetest gifts that one can possess; it is one of the greatest helps in the church. How often do I ask myself the question, Do I possess this essential gift? Have I been envious toward a gifted brother or of any member of the church? If so, this renders all my other gifts as nothing, and I had better never have united with the church. Charity vaunteth not itself. Have I vaunted myself over others? If so, then I have not charity. Charity is not puffed up. Have I been puffed up, and felt myself more able and wise than others? If so, it is evident that I lack the all-important gift of charity. So if we behave ourselves unseemly it is sure that we are lacking in this all-important gift, charity; and the same is true if we have been seeking our own, and have had no thought of others in the church nor of the interest of the church, no matter what beside charity we may possess, we are nothing. Charity seeketh not her own, but the welfare of others. If one possesses this charity he will look after the welfare of the church; he will hunt up the brethren and see how it is with them. When all the members of the church possess charity there will be a happy meeting, and warm shaking of hands, and a manifestation of love. Brethren, do we possess all this? If not, then all else that we may possess will avail us nothing. Still further, are we easily provoked over things in the church or among the brethren? Charity is not easily provoked. Are we lacking in this essential thing? If so, whatever else we possess amounts to nothing. We had better never have professed a hope than to lack charity. Do we think evil of brethren? If so, we are not fit to be among them, and the church would be better off without us, for charity does not think evil, and it suffereth long, and is kind, and envieth not. Where we see this charity among brethren there we are sure that peace will reign supreme. Do we endure any of the burdens of the church? If so, then we have charity, for charity endures all things. From reading this thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians one would have to conclude that if there be any lack of fellowship, or lukewarmness, or broken confidence, or neglect of assembling ourselves together, there is a want of charity, for, from what Paul has said, if charity exists none of these things can exist. If we desire a better understanding among brethren, and if there be any of this essential charity about us, our desires will be realized. If we wish for more meetings, more fellowship, more of assembling of ourselves together, more union and communion, charity will bring it about, for the apostle says, Charity never faileth; it always accomplishes its desires. Prophecy, tongues, knowledge, faith, giving our goods to feed the poor, all fail, or avail nothing, if we have not charity. Faith, hope and charity abide, but the greatest of these is charity. Hence the apostle exhorts the brethren to follow after charity. Here he means to follow after the things which belong to charity, and do them. The one thing needful in all this is love for the church, love for the brethren, and forbearing each other in love. Charity will tell us if in any way we have offended a brother or the church that we must in some kind way make reparation. If we have thought evil of a brother we are nothing to the church so long as we do so. All our

other deeds are nothing so long as this is the case with us. Are we holding aloof from a brother? If so, then charity is absent, and we are nothing, neither fit to commune with the church nor of any profit to any church or brethren. Do we think that there is a brother or sister we cannot fellowship? Then our usefulness is destroyed, for charity is wanting. Charity seeketh not her own, but suffereth long, and is kind; charity seeks the love and fellowship and comfort and welfare of others. Has this or that church grown cold and lukewarm? If so, charity is wanting. The apostle also says, Follow after charity. No one can be of any profit to the church if there be not a following after this all-important charity. If brethren neglect to assemble themselves together, it is for the want of charity, and if this is the case, Paul says we are nothing. We are only fit to be spued out. Do we hold something against a brother, and do not appreciate him as we used to do, there can be but one reason: charity is absent. If there be a feeling against a brother to the extent that his visits are not wanted, there can be but one reason: charity is lacking, and the lack of this renders that church or brother unprofitable in every way. Such ones are of no use as brethren at all. The same is true of us if we cannot endure or suffer long. If we think evil, and do not, unless providentially hindered, assemble with the brethren, we are not charitable. But do we desire that we might have good meetings once more, as we used to, charity can bring them about. Charity will heal every breach of broken fellowship among brethren; charity will enable us to take each other by the hand; charity will cause the servants of God to feel as though the word is as fire shut up in the bones, and will cause that brethren will fail to see anything save love; charity will cause a shaking of the dry bones, and inquiries will arise as to how brethren are getting along, and as to when they can meet to talk of the goodness of God; charity will cause the true saints to speak well of each other, and to think no evil. If we see a brother overtaken in a fault, charity will restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, and so long as that one is not restored, just that long charity is lacking, and the church can do no good, for without charity all else shall fail; therefore it behooves us to inquire whether we possess or lack this all-important gift. Is it wanting in the church or in ourself? We will each feel that we are as prone to fail in this all-essential thing as any one, and that we have done so more than any one we know. But one thing is certain: charity never faileth. The apostle says that love is the fulfilling of the law, and that no man can love God and hate his brother at the same time. He that hateth his brother is a murderer. Hate and charity cannot dwell in the same house; neither can coldness and charity dwell together in the same church. Brethren ask, Why is it that we have not the zeal we used to have, and why is it that brethren are not nearly so anxious to see each other as they used to be? The only answer is, that charity is wanting. I feel certain that charity never yet found fault with a brother, nor looked for motes in a brother's eyes. I feel certain that charity will forgive all wrongs, and cause us to seek after our brethren, and even to travel miles to see them. Charity will desire to hear them talk of God's love and mercy. Charity will always find a place and time to hold meetings, and will cause brethren to find no rest until they are sitting together in heavenly places, and with charity there will be gladness in thus meeting.

NEWTON PETERS.

WHAT I DO KNOW AND WHAT I DO NOT KNOW.

THOUGHTS OF D. M. VAIL IN THE NIGHT OF MARCH 28.

I do know that for many years I believed that salvation was by works of righteousness which the sinner must perform, and that I labored to that end; that thought being in my mind I do know that I did not know any other way of salvation. I do know that for several years I felt to be a lost and ruined sinner, yes, burdened with sin, without hope and without God in the world. I do not know that it was a revelation from God; I do know that at a certain time in my life my burden was taken away and I felt very happy. I do not know by what power it was removed; I do know that after this wonderful change took place I believed that salvation was of the Lord; I had an altogether different understanding of the Scriptures. I do not know that it was a revelation by the Spirit of God to me. I do know that I have at times had comfort in my meditations upon portions of Scripture; I do not know that they were revealed to me, I do not know that I have ever had a single revelation from God, but I do know that if I have not I have no knowledge of God, salvation by grace, heaven, hell or anything else that is only known by revelation. I do know that I feel to be the chief of sinners; I do not know that Christ is my Savior. I do know that I love God's people; I do not know that it is spiritual love. I do know that I have been trying to preach the gospel for thirty-six years or more; I do not know that I am called to that work. I do know that I do not know what I would like to know. I do know that I know some things that I wish I did not know. I feel that I know that if the brethren knew me as I know myself they could not help but spurn me from their presence, for I do abhor myself; I am hateful, selfish, full of deceit, conceit, pride, hypocrisy, evil surmising. Yes, I am by nature earthy, sensual and devilish; as I have already stated, this is why I abhor myself. I do know that I cannot preach like the servants of God, neither can they preach like me, and I do not think they desire to. I do know that I cannot tell God's servants how to preach; if I had anything to say to them on the subject of preaching it would be, Preach Jesus Christ and him crucified, the way, the truth and the life. I know that if a man is called to preach, he will preach with the ability that God gives, not men; anything fixed up is superfluous. I do know as I stand in Adam I am an unbeliever, an infidel, and if I have a standing in Jesus Christ, and am manifested as a new creature in him by spiritual birth, I am a believer. I know that I am troubled continually with unbelief; I do not know how to pray, but I have desired, and do desire, the Lord to help my unbelief. O could I but believe, then all would easy be, but I am helpless.

I have written this for publication; it is very much like myself, a strange composition, and I fear it may not be comforting or profitable to any one, but it is all I have. I am still on the earth, but I have no comfort in the earth, nor in the garden of the Lord. I am not looking forward with any encouragement, naturally or spiritually; am living, as it were, without any object or purpose, only to stay my time out here on earth. I am going about among the churches as I used to, but what for I cannot tell. God knows, if there is a God.

I sign myself, an infidel in Adam, a believer in Christ, I hope,

D. M. VAIL.

LUKE XXIV. 52.

"And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy."

Rare indeed are the instances when people rejoice as their friends are taken away, yet the saints of God ought always to rejoice in the death of their loved ones, just as the followers of our Lord rejoiced when they saw him taken up into heaven. But, says one, If I could but know that he is at rest. This is not our affair, and is no cause for grief for our departed; we ought to rejoice that he has gone from the evil to come, and that his destiny is in the hand of that God who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. My father died in August, 1897, at the age of seventy-three years, and I believe that I loved my father as dearly as any one ever did a father. He was my companion, and we seldom disagreed on any question, and our doctrinal beliefs were nearly alike, as much so as any two persons I ever saw, yet I never have wished him back into this sin-cursed earth, and while I find myself even yet sighing for his sweet companionship, I am usually content to pursue my journey, awaiting the time when I shall join him where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. It is a great comfort to me to still believe that my father lived and died in what I verily believe is the correct understanding of the teaching of the Scriptures, and that he many years before his death entered into that rest that remaineth to the people of God. Only in the flesh do I mourn; in Spirit I rejoice, even as did the followers of Jesus when they saw him taken up into glory. There are few themes in all the Scriptures more fascinating and consoling to the child of God than that deducted from the words of Joseph to his brethren: Except thy brother be with thee, ye cannot see my face. Now Joseph was a type of Jesus our Savior. Joseph had a monopoly of the corn of Egypt, just as the blessed Redeemer has a monopoly of that grace by which we are saved. When we apply to our God for salvation he is wont to say, Where is thy Elder Brother? Except thy brother be with thee, thou canst not see my face. In a recent conversation with a brother-in-law I had occasion to quote and thus apply this Scripture, and he said that this thought was one of the most beautiful that had ever entered his mind. He said that this one suggestion was of more value to him than many so-called sermons to which he had listened. Whether the application is right or not, it does remain that all who enter heaven must have Jesus, their Elder Brother, with them. Except thy brother be with thee, thou canst not see my face. May the Lord teach and sustain us.

Your brother,

J. M. AMSBURY.

Mason City, Nebr., Dec. 17, 1911.

Covin, Ala., March 14, 1912.

Dear Brethren Editors:—I will try to write you a few lines. My mind seems to be caught up with the sixteenth verse of the one hundred and second Psalm: "When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory." How does the Lord build up Zion? It seems to me that the only way is in the new birth; when the Holy Spirit quickens dead sinners into life, then Zion is built up, and the sinner is born again, and the Lord appears to that child of God in glory, as he appeared to Peter, James and John in the mount of transfiguration, and the child of God is to-day as were the apostles when they desired to build three tabernacles and dwell there. It is so lovely to dwell in such a place. But our Savior did not

allow them to dwell there, he brought them down into this old world of doubt again. But thanks be to his holy name, he does not leave us alone, for he said he would pray the Father and he would send the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, and that he should teach us in all the things which he had said unto us, and he has taught us to look beyond the grave, and we see Christ as he arose from the dead and went up to the Father in heaven, there to intercede for you and for me. Now is Christ become the firstfruits of them that slept. When Christ quickens the dead sinner into life he is in the family of God, and the family of God is the church of God.

Now I will say a little about the church. It seems to me that the three tabernacles which Peter desired to make in the mount is a very pretty figure of the so-called churches of to-day. Take the one for Moses, and how many different orders can we find worshiping under the Mosaical law. Then take up the one for Elias, who was John the Baptist, and under that we will find the Campbellites worshiping; John the Baptist preached the baptism of repentance; and then take the other, and we find some preaching the doctrine of Christ, but all without authority from God, so far as their organization is concerned; at least it seems to me that way. But when the Lord builds up Zion he adds to the church at the right time. But some will say that they have not been baptized as yet. Baptism does not make them members of Zion, the church of God. Baptism is the answer of a good conscience. If our conscience be good it must be a spiritual conscience, and so baptism just answers to the work of regeneration, and regeneration is in the hand of the Mediator. I know this of a truth, that we are helpless, and as for our part we can only just bow in humble submission to our Creator, and say, "Thy will be done." Another says, I have not been baptized as yet, but I have asked two ministers, and one of them refused, saying that his organization would not permit him. It seems to me that he was again entangled in the yoke of bondage, of which Paul spoke. The other minister has put off for a while giving me an answer. He says, I have an experience which dates back to 1900. I was alone in the field and this text was unfolded to me, Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. That day I was, like Paul, struck down for the space of about three hours, and when I was fully awakened it seemed to me that everything was praising God, and I was so happy all alone. One night in February I saw a light which I will try to describe to you. It was in the shape of a tunnel, and I was at one end and my Savior at the other, and he lighted up the way from him to me. It seemed to be the brightest light I ever saw.

Well, some one will say, He had better never have started this poorly written letter, but it has given my mind some relief to write to the children of God of his building up Zion.

Your brother in Christ,

WILSON BROCK.

WAVERLY, Pa., April 6, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a good letter from Elder Beal. If you find space I know you will publish it some time, not because I send it, but because it is food to poor, hungry, sinsick souls.

Yours as ever, D. M. VAIL.

BOWDOIN, Maine, March 30, 1912.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—MY DEAR BROTHER:—While lying in bed last night I was

thinking of you, and of how I would love to see you and greet you with a clasp of hands, but as I cannot do so I will write a word to you. I see by a letter of yours in the SIGNS that you are in your old home in Waverly, Pa., and that your health is not very good. You see that I have addressed you as "my brother," but at times I have heart-searchings, and a longing desire to know if I am one of the family chosen in Christ. I know that Peter said, There is salvation in no other, "for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," but I have so many doubts and fears, and these things of God are so dark to me, I wish I could feel an evidence of what the apostle Paul wrote to the church at Corinth when he said, "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." I do not doubt the apostle knew this, but I do not know that that house is for this poor, old, unworthy sinner. O, my dear brother, (I must call you so) I often tremble, as I think the church made a mistake when they called for my ordination, and also the council of ministers must have been deceived. Many times has my heart seemed to be full of trembling, and tears have come to my eyes as I have thought of these things, but I believe that I am in the hand of Him who has declared the end from the beginning, and am sure that he will do all his pleasure. Since my ordination I have been trying to say what I have felt to be truth, but have I preached the gospel? I know I have not declared the doctrines or commandments of men, neither the theories of this world. I think I have had seasons when I have been caught up above earthly things, crucified unto the world and the world unto me, and have heard and seen some of the glory of that kingdom which is not of this world; again, I go down into the depths of darkness, where there are weeping and wailing, fears, doubts, and unbelief is my companion. Elder Vail, are these some of the marks of a child of God? Is it ever so with one whom God has called to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, to comfort the people of God, to cry unto Jerusalem that her warfare is accomplished?

Now, lest I should make this wearisome, I will come to temporal things. I see by your letter in the SIGNS that you are not well. I am sorry for you, but, as you write, God's will is and will be done, and none can stay his hand. I am in poor health, and have been for a long time past (catarrh and bronchitis), cannot lie down in bed very well, but I am getting along in years. I cannot do much labor, and do not go from home very much. I read a letter in the SIGNS written by Elder T. M. Poulson, of Massey, Va. He is a wonderful man, and so also are all of God's ministers. I should love to see him and greet him with a clasp of the hand.

Now I must conclude this poor letter. Remember me with love to your wife and family, and may God bless you with his presence. My wife sends love to you and sister Vail. Good-by.

Z. M. BEAL.

TOUCHET, Wash., Dec. 11, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—The time has arrived that my subscription for the SIGNS is due, or nearly so. Inclosed you will find money order for the same, with the pay for two others: Elder J. T. Barnes, our pastor, and brother Marion Caldwell, a member of our church here,

I have been reading the SIGNS for over sixty-two years, and for fifty-eight years or more have been a constant subscriber, and part of the time agent for it in obtaining subscriptions. The doctrine advocated by the editors and correspondents has not varied any, so far as I am able to judge, from the first number to the last I have received, and it has been the medium through which I have received much comfort in reading, and it has always been a welcome visitor. For three years I lived in Utah, and I never heard a gospel discourse, and for twelve years in California, with only an occasional one. During these times the SIGNS was more especially precious to me, and I have often wondered how brethren situated as I was in those days can get along without it. But I feel now to be near the end of my journey in this sinful world of trials and afflictions, of which I have had my full share, if I am judge. But I do not wish to be understood as complaining, for these trials are the "must needs be," while we are sojourning in this life, but if the dear Lord is with us in these afflictions, all is well with us. I will now close.

Yours in hope,

R. CUMMINS.

GREENBRIER, Ark., Dec. 9, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I can say from my heart this morning, I do not feel worthy to call one of God's little ones brother or sister; I feel like a mass of corruption and full of sin. Where anything is full can it hold any more? The Holy Ghost came as a rushing, mighty wind and filled the house where the apostles were sitting. Was there room for anything more? The apostles were full. O yes, I thought I was full of love, but sin has a fair sweep at this Adam body, yet I hope His seed remaineth in me. The soul that sinneth it shall die, and here is where the warfare begins; the old man wants to hold the house, but when the new man comes the old man is bound, then the new man can rest a few minutes, hours or days. But the old man is not dead, he is cunning; yes, the first thing we know he is disputing again.

I thought I would tell you of our affairs. Our church is in peace as far as I know, with but few members. Our pastor lives sixty miles away, and he comes on horseback or in a buggy. It takes all day to come. He is sixty-eight years of age and cannot come often. It looks as if it is nearing the end of time, and I know it is with me, as I have passed my seventy-third mile post. I have one son fifty-two years old; he is a member with us. O the institutions of the day; the Arminians take the day here; it is lo here and lo there.

I did not write this for publication, but if it should not crowd out better matter you can publish it. The SIGNS and Bible are my companions, and if the paper gets mislaid it seems as if something is wrong. I will close lest I weary you.

Your unworthy sister, saved by grace if saved at all,

E. J. HURST.

MINERAL WELLS, Texas, May 9, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have been thinking for some time of writing you to ask if you will give us space in the SIGNS for a permanent notice of our meeting time. Mineral Wells is a noted health resort, and people come here from every State in the Union, so you can see the benefits to be derived from a permanent notice in the SIGNS. Our little church was organized three years ago with six members, and we have had five

join us since; lost one by death and one by letter, which leaves us nine, and three of the nine have moved so far away they cannot attend regularly, but we are not discouraged, for our dear Lord promised that where two or three come together in his name he will be in the midst, and we feel to hope and trust that we meet in no other name than Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. We feel to realize his presence with us, and O how gloriously sweet to be filled with that joy which is unutterable. One brother donated a house and lot for our meetinghouse, and the rest of us had it fixed up and seated, so we have a comfortable place of our own in which to meet. If you see proper to give us this notice we certainly will appreciate it.

Your sister in a precious hope,

(MRS.) W. W. HOWARD.

ASHVILLE, Ohio, April 25, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars, for which send me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have never before been a subscriber, yet have been a reader of it for years. For a couple of winters my health has been so poor that I could not attend the meetings, but a brother sent me the SIGNS to read, which was a great comfort, for it contains many good and interesting letters from the dear brethren and sisters. I also find in the editorials good preaching, which to me is a great feast indeed. I have always found the dear old SIGNS to contend for nothing but the truth: salvation by grace. I do love the doctrine, for it is taught by a higher power than poor, feeble man. I often think what a wonderful Teacher we have, our lessons we all learn and understand at the appointed time.

May you enjoy health and strength to continue sending out food for the poor and afflicted, is the wish of one who feels unworthy to be called a sister.

(MRS.) M. A. WINNER.

BLOOMVILLE, Ohio.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We wish to renew for the SIGNS, which comes regularly, bringing good news from the household of faith, but we cannot understand some of the deep expressions used by some of the writers. We read that man is fearfully and wonderfully made. We have many blessings for which we ought to thank and adore Him who is the giver of every good and perfect gift. Man is a fearful being when led by the flesh and by Satan; our daily papers are full of the many crimes and wrong doings of weak mortals, and of many in high places who were chosen to serve the people; but there is a people who have been taught of him who promised that he would put his law in their hearts and write it in their minds. Are we living in sweet harmony with the great lessons that we hope we have been taught? This old nature when not kept under brings trouble and distress to ourselves and to those around us. May we as Baptists be found seeking the things that make for peace, is the desire of one who wishes you a happy new year.

A. SEITZ.

NOTICE.

WAVERLY, Pa., May 13, 1912.

PLEASE give notice in the SIGNS that as the telephone service is so poor here, friends will telegraph to me as formerly, Glenburn station, Pa.

D. M. VAIL.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

B. S. PATE has changed his address from Dayton, Wash., to Cleone, Oregon, R. F. D. 1, Box 132.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1912.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 TIMOTHY II. 4-7.

"WHO will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity."

Our sister, Mrs. John T. Neely, of Charleston, Miss., writes us asking that we give such views as we have upon the above words. She says she is a firm believer in salvation by grace, but feels puzzled somewhat by the above language. No doubt the trouble with our sister, and also with many others, is found in the expression, "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth," and in the words, "Who gave himself a ransom for all." We trust that there is no desire in our heart to take away from any portion of the word of God the meaning that belongs to it, or to turn aside from the design of the Holy Ghost in the language used. We have always desired to give to each portion of the word its full intention and meaning, whether we could reconcile that portion of the word with other portions or not. It has never seemed necessary with us to be able to point out all the harmony that really is in the word, but it has seemed essential to us that we do not pervert the language which may be under consideration, and we do believe with all our heart that there is perfect harmony between all portions of the Bible in the infinite wisdom of God, though to us all may seem contradictory and irreconcilable with itself.

In the second place, let us remember that all the Scriptures are not the words of fallible men, who may err or be mistaken, but they are the word of God, and are plain statements of absolute truth, every one of them. Our God cannot lie, and he cannot be mistaken; he does not lack in knowledge, either of the past, present or future; all things are naked and open to him, so that there is not a thought in the minds of men of which he is uninformed, and there never can be a thought in their hearts which is not known to him now as distinctly as it will be when it shall be formed there. Men do not know what will be their thought one moment in the future, but God knows all men, and all their thoughts, past, present and to come, and as he knows their thoughts, so also he knows all their words and deeds, not with successive knowledge, as we come to know what before we have not known, but from the eternity that is past to the eternity that is to come. Let us then come to the consideration of the Scriptures with full belief that all is just as the Holy Ghost gave men to write. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God; there are no mistakes nor contradictions there; this is true, though to us there may seem to be many contradictions. They may appear to be so to us, but the fault really is that our eyes are blinded and our hearts dull of understanding. The sun still shines, though the earth sees it not, because of the mists and clouds which arise,

not from the sun, but from its own surface.

In the third place, there are some statements made in the word of God regarding the salvation of men from sin, death and hell, and made there many times, which stand out clear, and when these things are said to be recorded there, nothing must be understood to in anywise contradict those statements. For instance, if there be any expressions in Holy Writ that seem contrary to the doctrine of salvation by grace, we must believe that this contradiction is only seeming, and not real. This we must do, and this we will do, unless we are ready to accuse the word of God of teaching two opposite things as being both true. Far better will it be for us to confess our short-sightedness and want of understanding than to believe for a moment that the Scriptures contradict themselves. Still further, the doctrine of salvation by grace alone involves all other principles of doctrine relating to salvation. If salvation be by grace alone, then the predestination of the children of men, who shall be finally saved unto that salvation, must be true. This predestination to salvation would also include the doctrine of personal election, full and perfect atonement, effectual calling, final preservation to glory, with all that these glorious truths involve. If predestination, election, full atonement, effectual calling and final perseverance to glory be denied, one or all of them, then salvation by grace is denied, and then salvation would belong, not to the will of God, but to the will of man.

Fourth. The expressions in the text which we suppose are on the mind of our sister, and which seem to be a puzzle to her, are among those that upon the face of them seem to teach things contrary to the principles of doctrine that we have named. We say that this would appear that way upon the face of them, yet it is sure that they are not really so, unless we are ready to take the ground that the apostle was not inspired of God when he penned these sayings, and so may have been mistaken. But to say that the apostle wrote here what he was mistaken in thinking to be true is to throw doubt over all that he wrote, and, in fact, over all that all holy men of old wrote. This we are persuaded no child of God will desire to do. If, for instance, the expression, "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth," must mean that it is the will of God that all men everywhere and in all ages shall be prepared for glory, and be saved in the future world, it follows surely either that universalism is true, or that the will of God is not finally accomplished. But those who know the Lord know that all his will is done in heaven and in earth, and that nothing has any power to say, Why or what doest thou? and that what His soul desireth that he doeth. On the other hand, if universalism be true, and all men shall be finally saved, then election is denied, and other truths taught in the word, such as that some shall go away into everlasting punishment. The same things in substance may be said of the expression in verse six: "Who gave himself a ransom for all." If indeed the meaning of the apostle were that Jesus Christ gave himself as a ransom for all individuals of the human race, then either the whole human race are redeemed unto God, or else the dear Redeemer will not see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. To be satisfied he must receive in the end the full purchase of his blood, which was the price of ransom. But this is univer-

salism, and, as said before, universalism is a denial of election, and of the future punishment of the unredeemed.

Fifth. We have called attention, first, to the negative, or to what these expressions cannot mean, in order to clear the field of obstacles; now we desire to call attention to what the whole connection presents, for a little time. First, we will say we do not understand that the apostle was here speaking of final salvation through the atoning blood of Christ at all. A careful reading of the whole chapter will show that the general theme of the apostle relates to the present welfare of his brethren; we mean their welfare while they live below. God has called his people not only to partake of his eternal glory, but also to serve and honor him here. In this life there is, and always will be, a warfare, for many things fight against him all along his course; some of these things are within, and some without. His own fleshly lusts, the allurements of the world, the conditions which surround him, all may fight against the profession he has made. The church, considered as a whole, would find themselves affected by the powers over them in the governments of this world; quiet, good order and wise ruling would be a benefit to them, while the opposite things would tend to disturb them and to furnish occasions for practices which would be dishonoring to God; therefore the apostle prays, or rather exhorts to prayer upon the part of all who love God, for all men, among whom he specially names rulers and all in authority, to the end that believers may live quiet and peaceable lives, which is good and also acceptable in the sight of God. No doubt believers would find it in their hearts to desire that all whom they had to do with should come to know the Lord in the salvation of their souls if it were the will of God for this to be, but still, here it seems evident that the substance of the supplication and intercession which he enjoins does not relate to this final salvation, but rather to the giving of that wisdom which should enable kings and all in authority to enact and enforce by suitable means just laws, which should tend to the welfare of believers and to the glory of God, and lower down in the chapter the apostle enjoins upon believers themselves that behavior which will show forth the reality of the profession of godliness which they had made. All this would tend to peace in the churches, and is good to follow at all times.

In the sixth place, the apostle urges upon his brethren the one great truth that there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. It is thus presented to the churches that the God whom they adored was the only true and living God, and that they had access to this God through the one name, Jesus Christ, whom God had given as a ransom for them. Here was their encouragement to pray or intercede for that which they desired. This God was their God, who had already given boundless proof of his care for them, and interest in them, by the giving of his only begotten Son for them. It was his will that they should live quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness; this was good in his sight; this was the design of redemption through Christ, together with the attainment to final glory. Paul teaches that his brethren should pray for that which their heavenly Father had designed for them, and because he had put his Spirit in their hearts they would feel to pray for what his Spirit taught them. The whole design of the apostle here related to that which be-

longed to the travel of the children of God while on their earthly pilgrimage, it is the welfare of the churches that is had in view all through this chapter.

Seventh. From all the above considerations it is our conclusion that the expressions, "Who gave himself a ransom for all," and, "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth," relate solely to the elect of God in all nations and places, and his desire is not only their final glory, but that meanwhile, while on their pilgrimage, they may be so situated as not to be hindered in their course as disciples of the Lord. It cannot be remembered too often that many times in the New Testament the apostles found it necessary to remind their brethren that the gospel, with all that belongs to it, now is for the Gentiles as well as for the Jews. This the early disciples were slow to learn. Surely we do not need to present proof of this here and now. Let it be remembered that the people of God of Gentile nations who had been called out from the world, and given the Spirit of the world above, were still citizens of their respective countries and subject to the laws of those countries, therefore let them pray to God that he would take such charge of the hearts of infidel and ungodly rulers as to cause them to rule kindly and justly over their subjects who had come out and confessed themselves the followers of Christ. Persecutions might be expected, but such persecutions would be a hindrance to quiet and peaceable living; to secure this quiet life let them look to God; let them present their petitions to God and not to men. It was not enjoined upon them by the inspired writer here that they should come before rulers, beseeching them to be considerate and just, for the welfare of the churches, but that they should leave their cause with God, who holds in his hand the hearts of all men, yea, even the hearts of kings. Living quietly and peaceably after this fashion believers would find salvation, and a growth in the knowledge of the truth. To this knowledge Gentile believers should come as well as Jews, and what a blessed thing it is to know the truth which makes free. This the apostle desired for all his brethren, and to this end he gives these exhortations of his son in the faith, Timothy. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

SONG OF SOLOMON IV. 12.

(Continued from page 315.)

Fifth. "A spring shut up." Ezekiel, in his vision, saw a river of water issuing from the threshold of the house of the Lord, which carried life wherever it flowed. (Ezek. xlvii. 1.) "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be."—Zech. xiv. 8. A spring is a place in the earth, or rock, where some vein of water arises to the surface, and in a garden a spring of living water is of great importance to refresh the plants. In the garden of Eden, where God placed Adam in his primeval state, he caused a river to flow to water the garden, (Gen. ii. 10,) and this was undoubtedly a type of the garden in our text, for God has promised that the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water. (Isaiah xxxv. 7.) This last promise was in connection with cheering prophecies of the establishment of the church or garden of the Lord among the Gentiles, which should cause the

desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose; and so also we understand many of the Scriptures referred to to point, for the church, at the period indicated in the Song, had not been brought into her gospel manifestation, but was a spring shut up. Like the well of Haran unto which Jacob came on his way to Padan-aram, where three flocks of sheep were waiting for the removal of the stone from the well's mouth, so lay the great stone on which the law was engraved, on the mouth of the well of salvation, until our spiritual Jacob came and rolled away the stone. (See Gen. xxix. 2–10.) Thus until the adamantine tables of the law were canceled, the church of Christ, as a spring, was shut up. "Before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed."—Gal. iii. 23. We believe there can be but little doubt that the Scriptures to which we have referred fully agree with our application of the figure, "a spring shut up." The voice of prophecy clearly expressed a set time for the opening of this spring, when these living waters should go forth from Jerusalem, when Christ, the glorious Lord in his garden or church, should be made manifest as the place of broad rivers and streams, when he should call unto him all who thirst for salvation, to drink of that water which shall be in them a well of living water, springing up into everlasting life.

Sixth. "A fountain sealed." There seems to be but little difference between a fountain and a spring; all springs are fountains, but the fountain in this case is applied to gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon. Not that the church apart from Christ could be either a spring or a fountain, for these waters which Ezekiel and John in their respective visions saw proceeded from the throne of God and the Lamb, although they were seen issuing from the threshold of the house of God, and in the midst of the streets of new Jerusalem. God has set his Son upon his holy hill of Zion, the mediatorial throne of God and the Lamb is in the church, and all the springs of God's people are in Christ. The sealing of this fountain may signify,

1. That which was hidden, secluded or concealed, like the contents of the book which John saw in the right hand of him that sat upon the throne, which no man in heaven or earth or under the earth was able to look upon or open, (Rev. v. 1–8,) and as Daniel and John, were commanded to seal up certain things, the revelation of which was designed for remote ages in the future. In this sense certainly the gospel church among the Gentiles was in the days of Solomon a sealed matter. As Paul says, "Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ; which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel."—Eph. iii. 4–6. "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints. To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."—Col. i. 26, 27.

2. The church of Christ may be regarded as sealed, having the seal of God, as in Rev. vii. 3–9, as a mark by which they are identified and known, as this seal is in a prominent place, in their foreheads, where it is visible and known in distinc-

tion from antichrist, which bears the mark of the beast, and in her forehead her names and titles written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, &c. (Rev. xvii. 5.)

3. The seal of God is a binding and indelible testimony of her identity, and sacred consecration to Christ. As a seal is set to establish unchangeably a decree or covenant, as of Christ in his mediatorial relation to his Father and to his people, it is said, For him (the Son of man) hath God the Father sealed, (John vi. 27,) so also, "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."—2 Tim. ii. 19.

4. We may consider the seal upon the church of God to be the Holy Spirit of promise, "which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."—Eph. i. 13, 14. "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." —Eph. iv. 30.

5. The church is sealed by the impress of the image of Christ upon her. As a seal enstamps its peculiar marks or characters, devices, &c., upon the yielding wax, so the church of God, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, is changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. (2 Cor. iii. 18.)

6. The spouse speaks of the seal of her Beloved as an ornamental memento, or mark of affectionate esteem and tender love. "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death," &c.—Song viii. 6. The church in this expresses the most important desire of all intelligent christians, to be remembered in the love of the heart and protected by the omnipotent arm of her Beloved. An assurance of this will secure her from her doubtings and fears and jealousies, which she has found by painful experience to be cruel as the grave.

7. This sealed fountain is made to flow richly, sweetly and joyfully with those streams which make glad the city of our God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. From this inexhaustible fountain sealed flows the high and lofty praises of God her Savior, the doctrine of salvation by grace, the order of the gospel, the fellowship of the saints, and every gracious operation of the Spirit of truth and holiness. The light and truth of God go forth from her. Love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith and every fruit of the Spirit in living streams flow from this Jerusalem, half of them towards the former sea and half towards the hinder sea; in summer and in winter do they flow. Gardens also flow from her, for she is a fountain of gardens. Jerusalem which is above (having risen with Christ) is free, and is the mother of us all; that is, of all who, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. (Gal. iv. 26–31.) From the church of Christ as organized at Pentecost, in primitive glory and apostolic faith and order, have flowed all the churches of the saints which have ever been recognized by the word and Spirit of the Lord, whether among the Jews or Gentiles, down to the present time. We say churches, for although as the bride and spouse of Christ his beloved is but one, yet her various branches have been so recognized, and are called the daughters of Zion, children of Jerusalem and people of the most high God. As standing in Christ they are indivisible, but in location and date they are members one of another, and of the body of Christ.

In conclusion, may we not say to the

children of God, who bear the marks of the children of Jerusalem, which is above and is free, Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold your King, with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart?

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 15, 1865.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at Middletown, Del., May 14th, 1912, John S. Lynch and Miss Emma L. Redgrave, both of Philadelphia, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon Ely Clegg departed this life April 11th, 1912, in the 74th year of his age, following a brief illness. He was born in Milnrow, Lancashire, England, Sept. 1st, 1838, and when about thirty-one years of age emigrated to this country with his wife. In 1875 they presented letters from Hope Chapel, Rochdale, Lancashire, England, to the Salem Church, in Philadelphia, where he had been a worthy, loving and consistent member up to the time of his death. Several years ago he was appointed deacon of the church, which office he filled satisfactorily to all. He was defective in his hearing, through which he was denied the pleasure and privilege of listening to preaching, and of conversation with his brethren. His whole life was beautiful in its Christlike simplicity; it was truthfully said of him that he was never heard to speak unkindly of any one in their absence. His life was a living and speaking example of what the walk of the followers of Christ should be. He leaves to mourn their loss, his beloved widow, sister Sarah Jane Clegg, two sons and three daughters, three sons-in-law, four grandchildren, the Salem Church and many friends, but our loss is his eternal gain. At the close of his life he could say with the apostle, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness," &c.

At his funeral the writer used the last clause of the tenth verse of the thirteenth chapter of first Chronicles, after which his remains were laid away, and we know him no more after the flesh.

ALSO,

Sallie A. Cook died April 19th, 1912, after a long illness. Sister Cook was a loved member of Salem Church, Philadelphia, a sweet singer in Israel, faithful in her attendance of the appointments of the church and firm in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone. In addition to her husband and one son and one daughter, many relatives and friends, with the church, are left to mourn their loss.

Services were held on Sunday evening, April 21st, at her husband's residence in Philadelphia, and also the next day at the Cow Marsh meetinghouse. Thus one by one the Lord taketh to himself his chosen, which continueth until mercy's building is completed.

B. F. COULTER.

Mrs. Sarah Boone Russell, the subject of this notice, daughter of the late Elder N. A. and Margaret Humston, was born June 25th, 1848, died March 31st, 1912, and was therefore nearly 64 years old at the time of her death. Sallie Boone, as she was familiarly called, was married Sept. 13th, 1870, to James T. Russell. To that union were born six children, two of whom preceded her to the grave. At about the age of twenty years she professed a hope in Christ, and united with the Cane Run Primitive Baptist Church, near Turners Station, where she remained a consistent and honored member, being very devoted to her church and the cause. She was a true and faithful wife, a loving and indulgent mother, loved by all who knew her. For several years she had been a sufferer with that dread disease, consumption, but bore her misfortune and suffering without a murmur. She died as she lived, strong in the faith and love of her Savior, realizing that happy exchange from earth to a home in heaven, where sorrow, pain and death are unknown, and the light of God's countenance forever shines.

On Monday, April 1st, the funeral discourse was preached by her pastor, Elder P. W. Sawin, to a large concourse of sorrowing relatives and friends, in the Baptist church-house at Port Royal, after which all that was mortal was laid to rest in the cemetery at that place, there to await the resurrection morn. May God in his wisdom and kind providence guide, uphold and comfort the bereaved ones.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I herewith inclose the obituary of sister Russell, as written by brother G. R. Turner and clipped from a Henry County local. I could add nothing more than what is written. May the Lord bless and comfort our dear bereaved brother and children.

P. W. SAWIN.

Mrs. Anna C. Taylor, of Gardiner, Maine, departed this life May 2nd, 1912, aged 57 years. Our sister united with the church at South Gardiner in October, 1895, and was baptized by the writer. She was not a religious talker, but far better, she was a humble follower of our Savior Jesus Christ, holding fast the doctrine of Christ. Her pathway through this world was one of sore trials, not the ordinary afflictions of the family of God, but she was called to endure such sore trials as only a very few know anything about,

I often wondered how she endured them. Truly the Lord was her stay, upholding her. She kept her burden and griefs in her own bosom, scarcely ever a word escaped her concerning her sore trials. One thing was very prominent in her life, and that was her devotion to the interests of the church of which she was a beloved member, and her love was not in words, but in labors of love, in unselfish, sacrificing deeds. We shall remember her and miss her indeed. About a year ago she had a shock which affected her speech, and otherwise impaired her health. She did not recover from this attack, but declined in bodily strength. On the Sunday preceding her death she was found in her bedroom in an unconscious condition, from which attack she did not rally, but her soul departed to be with Christ, which is far better, on Thursday morning. Her body was conveyed to the Libby Hill Cemetery and laid to rest until the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall be raised first, changed, immortal, incorruptible. He shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. She leaves to mourn their loss, her daughter, sister Mabel Weeks, and grandchildren. She was a true, honest woman, a good mother and grandmother. They will miss her indeed.

At her funeral the writer preached from Psalms xvii. 13. FREDERICK W. KEENE.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

I. G. J., Maryland, $1.35; Mrs. Sarah Gandy, New Jersey, $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Pa., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 29th, 30th and 31st, 1912.

Those coming to the association from the north, by way of the Belvidere R. R., will leave the train at Lambertville, N. J., Tuesday p. m., cross the Delaware River to New Hope, and come to Ivyland, where they will be met. Inquire for Wm. Hobensack. Those coming from the south will take train at Reading Terminal, Philadelphia, Tuesday at 4:23 p. m. and come to Southampton, where they will be met. The train can also be taken Wednesday morning at 9:15. All are cordially invited.

WM. HOBENSACK, Church Clerk.

THE Middleburg Old School Baptist Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., has appointed her yearly meeting to be held, the Lord willing, the first Saturday and Sunday in June (1st and 2nd), 1912. A cordial invitation is extended to ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

ADDIE COOK, Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 5th, 6th and 7th, 1912.

Those coming by way of New York will take train leaving West Twenty-third St. at 2:35 p. m. Tuesday before the meeting. This train leaves Jersey City at 3 o'clock and arrives at Warwick at 5:10. Those desiring to leave New York Wednesday morning will take train from West Twenty-third St. at 8:50, and from Jersey City at 9:30, ariving at Warwick at 12 o'clock. Those coming from Middletown and points west can use train leaving Middletown Tuesday at 4:11 p. m., or Wednesday morning either at 6:54 or 11:10. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth to meet with us.

ISAAC S. BAIRD, Church Clerk.

A THREE days meeting will be held with the Bethel Church, Tallman, Linn Co., Oregon, commencing on Friday at 2 o'clock p. m., and continuing over Sunday, June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1912, where we hope to meet as many of the brethren and sisters as possible. All those coming by rail will stop at Albany, take cars for Lebanon, stopping off at Tallman. The church-house is close to the depot.

A. HORNER.

THE Lord willing, the yearly meeting of the Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held in the meetinghouse in the township of Euphemia, Lambton Co., Ontario, seven miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1912, and continuing two days. Brethren of our own faith are cordially invited to meet with us.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

FIRST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, at Mineral Wells, Texas, holds meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, and Saturday night before, in the meetinghouse, on Star Well Ave., Kidwell Heights. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

SALLIE E. HOWARD, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of southern California meets every third Sunday at 2 p. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

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SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILLIAMSTON, N. C.

I find the postage on my book, "Day unto Day," to America is 9 pence (18 cents), and I thought it would be 6 pence, or at most 7 pence. I think on consideration, as the expense of publication has been very heavy, notwithstanding a most encouraging sale, I had better say I will send to any of your readers the half calf gilt edge edition for 5 shillings ($1.20), or the cloth edition for 4 shillings (96 cents) postage free.

E. LITTLETON, JR.

CHAPEL HOUSE, CROWBOROUGH, England.

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THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

SALISBURY, Md., Feb. 18, 1912.

MR. J. B. BOWDEN—DEAR BROTHER:—Since I read your article in the SIGNS of December 15th, 1911, I have had some feeling to write you of the peculiar warmness that went out from me for you, and of my peculiar interest in what you wrote. I do not know that I should interrupt others who have such good thoughts as you expressed; at the same time it has appeared as a proper act among us that when we are fed by others who write their spiritual thoughts for publication, to make our gladness known to the writer; not that I believe you and others need applause from men to keep you encouraged in writing, for I believe all spiritual writing and conversation are enforced upon us by the Spirit of God; so then I say again, you do not need applause from me, but I feel that it is good for us to communicate our thoughts one to another. I feel out of place while I try to write to such as I feel that you are, for as narrow as my thoughts are, and as sinful as I am, I feel that I would do well to keep silent, and only be glad when I am made to rejoice in that joyful rejoicing caused by reading the perfect spiritual matter like your article that I have mentioned. Now strangers we are in the flesh, but I feel so near to you by having read your letter that I write to you to-night just as though I were writing to home folks, for you made mention of one fact I have been sorrowfully noticing for some years, and when once I could not hold my thoughts any longer I spoke to a dear old brother, and he reproved me, and told me not to talk about such things. This made me feel in several ways miserable. It is a fact that Old Baptists appear to be becoming cold and distant. Now you spoke about this so beautifully for me to read, for your writing seemed to bring out a review of my experience through life, and strongly of what I have taken notice since I have been interested in the church. You spoke of remembering how it was when you were a boy going to meeting with your father, and of the way it is now. I know, dear brother, you wrote the truth. I know now that I am not alone in my loneliness caused by the sight of indifference among brethren. It is a joyful thought for me that I have a sympathizer, even one way off down in Texas. You seem to to-night to be company for

me, though I sit here in Maryland in the country in a little farmhouse, on a dark, rainy Sunday night. I remember when I was a child, in the year of 1884, when I was four years old, that I would go with my father and mother to meeting at Barea, in Audrain County, Missouri. At that time my grandfather was living, and we lived eight miles from the meetinghouse, and it was woodland and hilly and rocky, muddy sometimes, dusty sometimes; the meetinghouse was in the woods, and it was hilly land with more white oak timber than other kinds, and yellow clay land; a lonesome view on earth it was for natural eyes, but the house was filled at each meeting, people came walking, on horseback and in farm wagons; maybe one had a sort of spring wagon, but the conveyances were not the object for observation. The people did not have much wealth then, but humility was abundant, and they would meet each other with warm handshakes and with spiritual conversations. It seemed queer to me, being a child, to see grown people so "childish" over each other. I left Missouri with my father and mother in 1893, and came to Hallwood, Va., (about forty miles south from here) and in 1896 I went back to Missouri on a short visit, and old Barea was just the same as ever, only some had died and some woods had been cleared away, and the roads were changed some. In 1900 I went into railroad service as a telegraph operator on the L. I. R. R., on Long Island, in the corporation of New York city, and commenced "high" life, and filled my desires for worldly pleasure. Though in times past a wave of sorrow had put me to serious thinking, this almost died away before I was grown, but in the spring of 1903 darkness was sent upon me so terrible that I wonder how I continued to peform my railroad duties. I was then at work on the N. Y. C. & H. R. R. R., and I got into some trouble, and the last part of March went to work on the N. Y., N. H. & H. R. R., in Connecticut, having occasion for frequent trips between Willimantic, Conn., and Hopewell Junction, N. Y., and as I say, it was springtime, in the month of May, I made a trip, on a beautiful sunny day; the hills were large and full of natural splendor of springtime, birds were singing; what more could nature do to cheer me? I was making a good, easy living, but dark were my days and lonely were my nights. Finally I concluded to shake off this dullness and wake up. I decided to take all the pleasure there was to be had, so I commenced attending circuses, theatres and living in the riches of worldly fun. Now notice closely—I did not attend Sunday School. I was a railroad telegrapher, making and spending money, mingling with reckless companions and wearing fine clothes, and in my strength I was of a strong determination not to allow darkness to come upon me, but I would repulse it with high life. I became a lover of the theatre, and could see more fun at an opera-house than any fellow in that city. But once while at a theatre a "new curtain dropped"—a curtain that hid all the beauty of the stage and darkened the house and hid my thoughts from all things here below. I went home with my lady friend and she asked me what ailed me. I think I told her I was sick. I tried the theatre again, but the "curtain" was down, and is still, between me and the beauty of such things. I tried hard to hold fast to the pleasures of the world, but that which had been fun for me became trouble. I drifted along in trouble, all alone in the world, in Connecticut, six or seven

hundred miles from my Virginia people, about sixteen hundred miles from my Missouri people. One night as I was on my way to my work I was walking through the city cemetery (as I had been in the habit of for about ten months) a strange thought shocked me to a standstill: Here lie the dead; all of these were once alive and went about in this world having pleasure, having sorrow; some were bad, some were good, some were killed while fighting on battlefields, and in their act of killing were killed before they could repent, some died suddenly; but they are dead, no matter how bad they were even to death they surely died. I am living now, but I may die without warning. I am a sinner, but I am not very bad. O yes, I have done this, and I have not done that; I am a vile sinner, I am an outlaw. Can I repent? Am I too far gone to repent? How dare I call upon the Lord for forgiveness? I am too ashamed of myself. I seemed to be unable to say, Father, forgive me, it was better for me to say, Lord, will you have mercy on me, forgive me for what I have done? Then I resolved that I would do better and live right; I would not be spiteful any more, I would not get angry any more. I went on to my work feeling that I had surely repented just in time, and I had been in the office but a few minutes when an operator said something to me by wire that I did not like, and I swore at him. There went my resolution; I had never used such language before, neither have I since, but see the strength of my resolution; I resolved to do better, and I did worse. That was a long, bad night for me, for I saw where I was too short to reach heaven of myself. O how can it be? will God have pity on me? What have I ever done? What can I do to cause him to pity me? Time rolled on, and I made up my mind that I was homesick and was tired of Connecticut, and that I would go where I would mingle with godly people. I could learn how to live a godly life; I thought I would go back to Virginia and commence a new life down there among good people, and I would get good, so I went to Virginia. It was springtime again, and I was with my people, but all was dark and dreary. I went to Arminian meetings, but was not comforted. I decided to fall in line for some more worldly pleasure, and shake off the gloom. I thought, The people here are not like they used to be, things are different, no comfort here, I will go to California, but stop at the World's Fair at St. Louis. So I bought a ticket for St. Louis and traveled along over the way with hope of pleasure, and as I crossed the Mississippi River at about 9 p. m. August 12th, 1904, over into St. Louis, I felt just as though awakened from a dream. I did not want to see the World's Fair, and amazed I stood in the union station at St. Louis with awful thoughts, such as, It is all nothing. What does St. Louis and all it contains amount to? It has no mercy for me, it does not know my feelings, and would not want to hear from me. I did not hunt for a hotel to lodge in until morning, but caught the first C. & A. train for Mexico, Mo. (fourteen miles from old Barea Church.) I visited my relatives a day or two, whom I had not seen for about eight years, which had seemed like a long time, but behold, it was all dark and gloomy to me within a few hours after I met them. I went to work as an operator on the C. & A. R. R., and Kansas was as near California as I went. I gave up railroading at Thompson, Mo., five or six miles west from Mexico, and

desired to do other kind of work, and went to Mexico and took up carpentering, and lived a hard life on account of poverty that winter. I fell in the company of a herd of professors of sanctification, and they tried to convert me. I tried to let them, and finally did give myself up to them to beg the Lord to save me. They told me I could not expect sanctification until I did my part, that I must change my way of living. Finally, when it was near Christmas, and I felt lonely and cast down, I thought, Well, if I could get married to a nice, good woman I might have a home on earth, but that is out of the question, as I have no nice clothes now, and no one knows me here. I cannot go in society, and I did pray to God to just let me have a wife. Then I thought, Why have I done this? Have I any faith in God? If I have, where did I get it? On Christmas eve I met a strange young lady, and became engaged to her New Year's day, and we were married the following 28th of March, in Mexico, not far from where I prayed for a wife, and if ever any man has been blessed with a good wife I am. Then we made a visit in May to New York city, and remained until the following October, when we went back to Missouri and settled in Hannibal, and until the next spring all was good enough, then the gloom came upon me so strong that I felt sure there was no way for me to escape, married or single, in the east or in the west, in the north or in the south, and that strange, solemn gloom hovered about me and cut me off from the world, O so dark, so dreary. In May, 1906, I went with a friend to Flint Hill to hear an Old School Baptist preacher (Elder Sutton). I went more to be moving around than anything else, and to have it to mention when I wrote a letter to father and mother. I had been at Flint Hill to an association once with father and mother, in August, 1888, and now in 1906 I was going where I had been once when a child, and to see Elder Sutton, as I used to like him when I was a child. I enjoyed the meeting, for I saw a few I used to know, and some shook hands with me. (I felt like a sneak.) At the close of the meeting I went to "Mr." Sutton while he was still in the pulpit and told him I would like to have a talk with him, then I was ashamed of myself as soon as I spoke, but he appeared so pleasant, and asked me when and where. I then was too full to speak. I went back to Hannibal, trying to talk unconcernedly, but the gloom was great, and I was ashamed of all about me. The following July I was taken sick, and in August I was able to go visiting, and we went up in Monroe County to my wife's father's, about one and one-half miles from Barea (that same old place where I used to go in my childhood, in 1884, being about my first remembrance of it, as I have mentioned.) Well, I soon got tired of visiting, and decided that if there ever was a lonely neighborhood the Barea neighborhood was it. I accepted a position at rebuilding a house of my cousin's, within about a quarter of a mile from where I used to live, and eight or nine miles from Barea. I felt better, being animated by being at work again, and in the old neighborhood where I lived until I was almost thirteen years old, but my gloom came and went, and stayed with me most of the time. One evening in September I was on a roof nailing shingles, the day was nearly gone, the sun setting fairly, when I thought, O, something must be done; time is going and I am just as vile as I was before I made my first resolution in Connecticut,

over two years ago. I will join a church at the first opportunity; I will do my part, and then the Lord will surely do his; but as this ran through my mind it sounded wrong, I felt that it was not right to settle it that way. The Scriptures condemned me, and such doctrine, too, so my misery was great. My cousin came and asked me if I would go to meeting with him that night. I said yes, and off the roof I came. It was a protracted meeting (I believe I will call it a distracted meeting). I went with a vow that I would join, but O, they had work for me; I had to work my way to heaven, so there I was left again. Can you not see I felt like a tramp? I was too footsore to walk, so would have to lie down by the wayside and beg for help, or perish. On the following Friday I gave up my work to go over to see my wife (could not wait until Saturday p. m.) and Saturday morning I was angry with myself for losing a day's work when I needed money so much. O well, I thought, I am here now, I will go squirrel hunting, so I got all ready, and right after an early dinner I took gun and dogs, and had gone but a few steps when I did not want to hunt, as I was so lonesome. Then I thought of it being Saturday before the third Sunday, so decided to go on up to Barea, and if it was meeting day I would see some of father's old friends and tell them when I last heard from him, and then I could write and tell father and mother that I went to Barea. Well, now I am at a period that is marvelous to me. I was the second one there, and had not been there for about eighteen months, and only about three times in the last thirteen years, yet it was like going to an old place again, as I had been there many times when a child, and three or four times in the last thirteen years, yet I felt strange this time, all things looked good but myself. The meetinghouse just the same, and now there comes one across a field that I recognized at a long distance, yonder is another. O there they come; there is Mr. Jimmy Dudley coming, and there is Mr. Sutton hitching his horse; he is the preacher, the man that I heard at Flint Hill last May. They came along by me and spoke to me. I went in and took a back seat (something I never did before), as I did not care to be in their way. They commenced singing a hymn I had heard there many times before, but it sounded loud this time, with a peculiar ring; another hymn, and the second one seemed to be with reference to me; the prayer seemed to take up my case, and the sermon was to me, about me, and I wondered why it was all for me, and how the members knew I was the sinner the sermon had reference to; and, brother, as the hymn was being sung, while the door of the church was opened for the reception of members, I went, blindly, and when I recovered my eyesight I was almost at the pulpit, and saw brother Sutton still singing, but with an outstretched hand to me. I am not able to further express it now. O who took my gloom? it had all left me; the great cloud that had hidden all brightness for more than two years was out of sight, the sun shone in its fullest light, the sky appeared to be not far off, the trees happy, the hills glad and great was my joy (a joy I never knew before). But I was not quite satisfied, I wanted to go down into the water, and it was that same pastor, Elder J. F. Sutton, whom I heard preach there in 1884, that baptized me the third Sunday in September, 1906. He died last fall.

I have tried once before to write my

experience, and omitted about my time at Flint Hill, Mo. This time I have mentioned it, but have not yet told it all. Excuse long letter.

Yours in love,

IRA FISHER.

MATTHEW V. 16.

"LET your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

These words (as well as all the words of the wonderful sermon on the mount) were addressed to the disciples only. To the worldly mind it would appear strange that the Savior should waste such valuable preaching upon a dozen men who were already possessors of the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, while there were multitudes close at hand who would be lost if the gospel was not carried to them. Certainly it does look to such a mind that much of his labor in the ministry, at least, was in vain. To know the worth and power of Jesus' teaching we must know him as the truth and the life, as the Son of the living God, with the wisdom and humility to confess that he is come in our flesh. The light of the truth of God must shine in us before it can shine out from us. It is God that shineth in his people, and also God that shineth out of them. Thus it is declared, Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. The Word, which was from the beginning, and which was God, is declared to be the life of the Father which is in the Son, and the life is the light of men. Surely then, it is Christ in you the hope of glory, which shines refulgent out of his holy temple which is set up in your heart. Jesus said, Ye are the light of the world; and it is also said of him, In him was life, and the life was the light of men. Death and darkness reigned in the world of Adam, and in the posterity of Adam, because of sin. Jesus came into the world to redeem his bride (the church) which included all the Father had given him, and inasmuch as in him alone was life, and that life, which was life eternal, he gladly bestowed upon his dearly beloved, and while they were in the world they were not of the world, but, as Jesus said, Ye are the light of the world. Therefore the world is preserved until this day, and in it all things are working together for good to them who are "the light of the world," the church of the living God. In our literal earth there is no light in itself, it is all dense darkness, the natural sun, moon and stars give their light to the earth, and the earth is preserved because of them. Now, as Jesus has declared, Ye are the light of the world, and, A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid, so he commands them, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." By reason of the opposing forces of our carnal mind, which lust against the Spirit, we become confused concerning the good works to which we have been called of the Lord, and we lose sight of the fact that the children of our heavenly Father are scattered throughout all the world; so we forget to entertain strangers, not realizing that we might entertain angels unawares. Thus are our minds led away and enticed through the lusts of our flesh, and we have almost forgotten that the Lord is gracious, then the light of the life of Jesus illuminates our heart to the purifying of the heart and mind, and we joyfully remember that, Where sin abounds, grace doth much more abound. Then doth the Spirit convey our mind to the precious words of our text, and ere we are aware

our light is shining before men, although unconscious ourselves as to any good works that we are doing, but like the streams that flow down the mountain side, without any effort of their own. So we do not exercise the gift of grace which God hath given us, but grace exerciseth us, causing us to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. When in conversation, or otherwise, we extol the name of Jesus, and talk of his power and wondrous love, we cannot tell the kind of ground upon which the good seed has fallen, but God knows, for he has directed the words of our mouth, that they may redound to his glory and to the comfort of a precious soul, according to his pleasure. Eyes have been opened by faith to behold our good works, and hearts of understanding are enlightened to the beholding of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, who is our life and our light. We are as clay in the hands of our spiritual Potter, and he mouldeth us into vessels that pleaseth him, whether they be unto honor or dishonor. Neither are we as brethren in the Lord independent of one another, being bound together and cemented into one bundle of love. In proportion as the Spirit of Christ worketh in us, so our light shineth. When Jesus tells you to "Let your light so shine before men," it will go on shining until the end of time with you, the lighted condle of God's grace will never be extinguished. But let us always remember the words of Jesus, that we are to let our light so shine "before men." We sometimes refrain from expressing the hope of our salvation, except in the presence of those with whom we have fellowship in the gospel, judging falsely that we may be speaking in vain, therefore casting our pearls before swine. We cannot tell what are the workings of the heart with those with whom we converse, neither can the preacher search out the hidden secrets of the hearts of those who listen to the words of the gospel. When our hearts desire to exalt the Lord of life and glory then will we glorify our Father which is in heaven. May our lamps continue to be filled with the oil of grace, and our Father in heaven be glorified therewith.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, July 4, 1911.

TO WESLEY AND RUTH SPITLER—MY DEAR CHILDREN:—I should like to write you concerning Jesus Christ our Lord. He is altogether lovely, the head, the standard-bearer, the chiefest among ten thousand. No tongue can tell of his glories, and though we have tasted of his preciousness, no heart can speak of the refreshing sweetness of him who is the fountain of living waters. In that song of love, the sweet singer in Israel sings, "My heart is inditing [boileth or bubbleth] a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the King; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer. Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee forever."—Psalms xlv. 1, 2. When the Spirit of truth glorifies Jesus in our hearts, when he takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto us (John xvi. 14), O to have Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith, to be rooted and grounded in love, with Christ in our souls the hope of glory, well may our hearts be warmed and burn within us, and the flames of love so stir us that the heart boileth and bubbleth up to sing the majesty, the grace, the surpassing loveli-

ness and immortal glories of him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. Our utter worthlessness, vileness, destitution, which often we feel, humbling us in our own sight, makes so needful and blessed all of those glimpses given to us by the Holy Spirit of the person and eternal excellencies of our lovely Christ, the Incarnate Son of God. I now remember my youthful days, when my happy heart so often sang,

"His loveliness has won my heart,
Dear Jesus, let us never part;
I'll sound thy lovely name abroad,
My altogether lovely Lord."

I was then beginning to see, to know something of Jesus' preciousness. Since then, amidst trials, buffetings, in the rugged path, in drought and cold, and desolations, more and more intimacies I have had with Jesus, more and more his fullness I have seen, and of his fullness received. He filleth all in all; no need but he can fill it, no straits but he can deliver. Though we are straitened, he is never straitened, but he cometh to our relief, to our joy and salvation. O our Beloved is like a roe, or a young hart. He has ever the dew of immortal youth. Behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills, and he comes singing into our hearts with divine melody the praises of our Father and our God. "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."—Heb. ii. 12. "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy over thee with singing."—Zeph. iii. 17.

"My soul through many changes goes,
His love no variation knows."

These changes are all fully described by the Holy Ghost in the holy Scriptures. I sometimes find my way hedged in, I am imprisoned, shut up, and cannot come forth, and a few times my feet have sunk in the deep mire, in the low dungeon. The dead in trespasses and sins know nothing of such things, the miry clay, the dark, vile dungeon of the heart's depravities is a place of sport and banqueting to them, but the chosen and called of God cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But though in the lowest pit, in darkness and in the deeps we are laid, (Psalms lxxxviii. 6,) though our bed be made in hell, our God is there (Psalms cxxxix. 8,) and we are not forsaken of him, he moves us toward himself, our heart cries out after him to come to our help, to show us mercy, to forgive all our sins, to bring us forth to the light, to restore our souls again. "Out of the belly of hell, cried I, and thou heardest my voice. For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me."—Jonah ii. 2, 3. I have learned, and am still learning, that the ministrations of the Holy Ghost in the covenant of grace are all essential to our continuing steadfast in the faith, to walk by faith, and to fight the good fight of faith, laying hold of eternal life. Without the gracious operations of the Spirit we languish, our joy and blessedness flee away, our peace of mind is disturbed, the carnality of our nature breaks forth, gloom, deadness, a blight is spread over our pleasant land, and what formerly had freshness, sap and sweetness in it is all parched up, or mildewed, the very doc-

trine of Christ becomes to us just a mere cluster of bare theories, and our thoughts upon the gospel, and our reading of the Scriptures, we find to be to us in word only. Truly the excellency of the power is of God and not of us, and then when providences try us, when contrary things happen unto us, and peevishness and rebellion come forth from our vile hearts, hard thoughts of God and hardness of heart have possession of us, and where are there any signs that we are of God? Hardly sure can they be worse who have never heard his name. Not only do we have to suffer from the internal corruptions of our Adamic nature, but the powers of hell, the insinuations of the devil, the world, the cares and follies of our earthly life, all are against us, and have dreadful power over us, unless we are defended and carried through them, and made to triumph over them by the exceeding greatness of Jehovah's power to us, who believe according to the working of his mighty power. But though ever so low and carnal, though sunk in despondency, all is changed if Jesus shows his lovely face. "I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh." O then our hearts are moved, then our stubbornness is dissolved, our peevishness is quieted and we loathe ourselves, our hearts are lowly and contrite, alternate sighs and desires move our souls, and we reach forth to embrace our dear Savior.

> "A single smile from Jesus given
> Will lift a drooping soul to heaven."

O, I know from many experiences, and from the testimony of the Scriptures, that no matter what our disabilities are, or the temptations and conflicts that may be upon us, that in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us, and in no other way can the believer triumph and lift up his face with joy unto our God. It is so essential and so blessed to be looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, to be considering him lest we become wearied and faint in our minds.

Truly the way and the fare of redeemed wayfaring men (Isaiah xxx. 5, 8,) are sacred mysteries. They are poor, base nothings, (1 Cor. i. 28,) vile, unworthy, corrupt, unprofitable. Thus time after time they are learning to abase all self-sufficiency, to stain all pride and creature gloryings, but he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord, and this innumerable times they do. They make their boast in the Lord, the humble hear thereof and are glad. God is the strength of Israel and his people are weakness, (2 Cor. xii. 9, 10,) therefore all our comings up out of the wilderness can only be in intimate companionship, by faith, with our dear Redeemer, leaning on our beloved. We lean upon his sacrifice for sin, upon his atoning, precious blood, and we so often have need that he tell us his name, Jehovah, our righteousness, (Jer. xxiii. 6,) and that as his name is, so is ours, for he hath betrothed us unto himself, he is married unto us, his everlasting love, his faithfulness, the blessed, comforting, immutable constancy of his love, and of all endearing relations and characters he sustains to his people are alluring indeed to poor, perishing worms of the earth, and happy are we to be found looking unto him, leaning upon him, leaning upon Jesus alone.

> "How can I sink with such a prop
> As my eternal God,
> Who bears the earth's huge pillars up,
> And spreads the heavens abroad?"

Many times has my soul been in a dry, parched land; I have wandered amidst sin's desolations, my sinfulness so dense, so vile, so mean, and my heart hard, har-

dened through the deceitfulness of sin. Unbelief, an evil heart of unbelief, departing from the living God, how have I thus dishonored God, what a shame! Saith the Lord, "Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? a land of darkness?"—Jer. ii. 31. No, dear Lord, thou hast not. But my vileness is a cursed wilderness, unbelief, a hardened heart, the cares and vanities of my earthly life are a wilderness, the deceits, suggestions, fiery darts of Satan lay waste my pleasant land, everything except thyself, O lovely Son of God, thou incarnate Word, Redeemer, precious Lamb of God, is a wilderness. Sweet prospects, sweet birds, sweet flowers, all the delights of the sons of men, are vanity and desolation, and the quickened soul finds them all to be a waste howling wilderness. The flesh can be gratified, and thrive in the things that are pleasing to the five senses of the body. These senses are inlets and outlets of what pertains to earth and time, and to us poor, vile worms of what is earthly, sensual and devilish. Ah, our senses at times seem to be as open thoroughfares of all sinfulness, of the devil and all his hellish crew. In and out apparently unhindered all that is unlovely, unholy, all that is shameful. Ah, all that is unlike, contrary to thee, O Lord, my God, mine Holy One, tread with polluted feet my soul and make it all a wilderness, and here I sigh and pine and die, and I am moved by thy Spirit to piteous bleating, and I say, "I have gone astray like a lost sheep: seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments."—Psalms cxix. 176. "A certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him."—Luke x. 33. So does Jesus our Savior come to us when we are ready to perish in the wilderness; we have faint glimpses of him, thoughts of him, hope springs up, and we sigh and long for nearness of presence, for open intimacy, for unveiled loves, that we might call him our dear Savior. "O that thou wert as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother! when I should find thee without, I would kiss thee; yea, I should not be despised."—Song viii. 1. O how sweet to live on Jesus, to lean upon his gracious, almighty arm; thus supported a poor sinner can tread the wilderness under his feet, and his kind words shall cheer us on our way, and cause us to cleave to him more and more. The word declares that he who hath begun a good work in us will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. The changes, conflicts, temptations, pains and shame and griefs that are mingled with our blessedness in Christ Jesus will some day be over; they belong to our pilgrimage. In the better country, and the city to which we are journeying, there will be no sin, no curse, no death, neither sorrow nor crying, there shall be no night there; these former things are all passed away. O how blessed it will be to be forever with the Lord, immortal, incorruptible, conformed to the image of God's dear Son, O precious Christ, lovely Redeemer, almighty, everlasting Friend.

"We look and we long for thy glorious appearing,
Thy pleasure at home we more fully shall know;
Safe lodged in thy arm, all thy glory then sharing,
Nor leave thee forever; ah never, O no!

No more shall we mourn that thy face thou'rt concealing,
No Satan, no sin, base intruders below,
But ever behold thee, fresh glories revealing,
Amen, Hallelujah! Come, Lord, even so."

The removal of Henry, my dear brother, from this world, has much exercised my mind; if I would call it sorrow it is sweetened that I drink it, saying, Father, thy will be done. He was a kind, good

man, who feared God, worshiped him in Spirit, rejoiced in Christ Jesus, and had no confidence in the flesh. All his family will greatly miss him, and your Uncle Charlie very much so. Our times are in the hands of the Lord, and I feel a rest of soul in this sacred truth.

I am wearied in writing and will close. May the Lord graciously watch over you and lead you in the way everlasting.

I am your loving father,

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Jan. 1, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel this morning that I must write. We read, "And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write; for these words are true and faithful."—Rev. xxi. 5. Now the thought comes to me, What shall I write? I know that our God sits upon the throne, and that he is the Prince of peace, and that he has said, Open thy mouth, and I will fill it. I am writing upon New Year's day. How will this new year end? This I do not know, and no other man knows, but God knows how it will end. The old year that has passed has been a new year to me in spiritual things, and I hope and pray that I may be led in the footprints of the flock another year, and many other years, if it be the Lord's will. I have enjoyed the truth as it has been preached among the Old School Baptists, and have been loath to leave the place at times. Dear brethren and sisters, please read hymn 541 in Beebe's collection, also read Revelation xvi. 3. It has been a pleasure to me the past few years to write upon God's word, or to try to write of what I see in it. I hope my brethren and sisters will bear with me, for I know I am prone to wander afar off from the truth. You who know me know that I have been Satan's willing slave, and his most easy prey, and he is very near my elbow at all times; he does not like to let me go, but thanks be to God, who has all power in heaven and in earth, he has said, Do not take his life.

Now a few more thoughts with regard to Philippians ii. 12: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." This was addressed to God's people, and others do not understand it; the worldly cannot see, for they are blind to it. A little more than a year ago I was husking corn with another man, a Methodist, and he said, "I believe a man can work out his own salvation." I could only stop and look at him, and I felt, It is not worth while to talk to you. I thought, If I could do this I would go to work at once and try to do some good in my own strength. But I believe I have been brought to know the weakness of man, and believe with all my heart that I cannot work out my salvation, in the sense that man meant it. In Psalms iii. 8, we read, "Salvation belongeth unto the Lord: thy blessing is upon thy people." He gives this to his people only. They are called by grace; this is a blessing indeed. Paul said, "As ye have always obeyed." A child will try to obey his father if he loves him, but he must be taught of that father; and we must be brought down to know that God is God. In his presence I feel to obey; in his presence is melody, so that we can sing his praises before all men. There is also a response from heart to heart, a felt sympathy. I know this is true with my brethren and sisters in the church of God. But Paul added the words, "But

now much more in my absence." Job was left alone for a little while. "The Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job?" But Satan said, Thou hast put a hedge about him. This is true with every child of God I believe, and they cannot go very far to work out this one salvation; the work all goes on within this hedge. We cannot see dark things in his absence, then our path is filled with thorns, and the tempter comes in through the breaks in the hedge and would take our life, but the Lord has said, Do not take away his life. Then working out our own salvation with fear and trembling, we know that it is God that worketh in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure. There are so many evil things that come into our minds that we are made to fear and tremble, and to ask, Am I his, or am I not? This often comes to my mind.

Now I have written what I believe, in my poor way, and hope that whoever shall read it may forgive all mistakes.

I inclose a letter from brother Morse, do with both letters as you deem best. I would love to hear from some one who may be miles away from any church.

Yours with love and fellowship,

GEORGE M. CONNER.

MARGARETVILLE, N. Y., July 29, 1911.

GEORGE M. CONNER—DEAR BROTHER:—I have just read your letter over for the fourth time, and find it better than when I first read it, and it is better than the first one, and has given me a great deal of comfort. I am now almost seventy-eight years of age, and more than fifty-nine years of that time I have been with the Old School Baptists, and to-day I can say with the sweet singer of Israel, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple."—Psalms xxvii. 4. I wish I could describe the beauty there is in this passage. David no doubt was telling literally about national Israel, as the chosen people of God, as the house of the Lord, but spiritually he was talking about the gospel church on the earth, of which Israel was a type. So his words come down to and fit our day. You had this desire when you went to the church; you did not wish to join the church that you might thereby become a child of God, but because you were a child of God, and you believed that they were the children of God, and you wanted to be with your brethren and sisters. You felt satisfied that the church was the house of the Lord, and you wanted to dwell in it, but you doubted, or feared that you were not a child of God. But your desire overcame your fear, and you were made willing to let them judge, then you stood before the judgment-seat of Christ. Am I not right? You now wish to dwell in this house all the days of your life. Why? To behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple.

I will not attempt to describe the beauty of the Lord's house, for I cannot; it never has been described; many of the children of God have tried and have failed. Solomon tried and failed, but he came nearer than any I have ever read after. You have, no doubt, read it, but read it again in the fifth chapter of first Kings, beginning at the fifteenth verse, and on to the end of the chapter. Is it not beautiful? Neither have the children beheld all the beauty, nor will they while on earth, yet all of them have beheld more than they can tell, but they shall see him as he is, and be like him.

"And to inquire in his temple." The first inquiry that Saul of Tarsus made was, Who art thou, Lord? The Scriptures are filled with the inquiries of the children of God, and they are not made in idle curiosity either, but often with bitter groanings and tears. Can you imagine good old Job's feelings when he cried out in bitterness of soul, O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat? But I will not speak of these bitter scenes, only to compare them with the bright ones. David said, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance."—Psalms xlii. 5. O what a help the countenance of the Lord is. One glance from the Sun of Righteousness drives all clouds away. In Song v. 1, 2, we have these words, "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey: I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved: I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night." Is not this beautiful? But in the sixth verse there is trouble and inquiry: "I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone; my soul failed when he spake; I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer." Then follows a description of bitter suffering in the seventh verse. Then in the eighth verse is a charge to the daughters of Jerusalem. Then in the ninth verse is an inquiry for a description of the beloved. The rest of this chapter then gives a description of him. When the child of God is in the presence of his King he is filled with wonder and amazement at his beauty and perfection. When his presence is withdrawn he is doubting and inquiring, but still he wants to dwell in his temple. David said, "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

Well, I will stop writing. The theme is endless. Good-by, and may God bless you, is the prayer of a poor sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all,

JOHN A. MORSE.

LEESBURG, Va., May 13, 1912.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—Our two days meeting at Frying Pan has just closed, and we feel the Lord blessed us with a season of refreshing from his presence in our midst. Elders John McConnell and J. M. Fenton were with us, and ministered to the refreshing of our thirsty souls. At the close of our meeting on Sunday, three came before the church; one was received on confession of faith and two by experience, to be baptized at our next meeting.

Inclosed I am sending a letter written to me last winter by one who was received by us yesterday. At the time I received it I felt like sending it to you for publication, but withheld it until he should cast in his lot with us, so I now submit it to your better judgment for you to do with as you see fit. May the sustaining grace of God and the guidance of his Spirit be with you in all your labor.

Affectionately yours in gospel bonds,

H. H. LEFFERTS.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 27, 1912.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—I feel this

morning that I would like to write you a few lines. I am going to tell you of an ever increasing love I have had for you since our meeting, the first time I was privileged to see you, and also hear you preach. From then there has been a feeling of love toward you, and a constant desire to hear you preach again. I am glad to say that that desire was granted a short time afterward, when you spoke in the school-house at Robey's Station. (That was our first acquaintance.) Your text was, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." The words of the text seemed to take root in me at the start, and as you went on speaking everything was clear to my understanding, and many times you would start a sentence and I could see the end long before you got to it. So plain indeed was your talk that there was a questioning going on within me: How is this man I have never known telling those things which I have wanted to know, something I had desired though I knew not what? As soon as you began talking I found food and drink; whatever my disease the remedy was being applied, and I have always felt that you were sent to me. Before this I had been hidden behind something, or at least cut off from the truth, that is, the truth of my condition before God. A few days after this I was enabled, I hope, to see the weakness of man. I just felt that no man living could be more sinful; lusting for the things of the flesh, nothing but evil thoughts, a vile and corrupt tongue, forever uttering lies and unclean language, ears that were open to all filthy expressions, stripped of all that is good, naked of all righteousness in the sight of God, with no place to hide, unable to get rid of all these bad things. O what a wretched condition was I in from day to day, until the load became so heavy I could no longer carry it. I wanted to pray to the Lord for his mercy, but there was such a lump in my throat that I could not utter one word, yet there were groanings from within and tears bedimmed my eyes. How could I escape the wrath of God? "The wages of sin is death." I was nothing but sin, unable to help myself, wanting to ask God's mercy, but where was my strength? Then these words came to me:

"What more can he say, than to you he has said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?
In every condition, in sickness, in health,
In poverty's vale, or abounding in wealth;
At home and abroad, on the land, on the sea,
As thy days may demand, shall thy strength ever be."

While I cannot sing, or rarely ever try, those words brought relief to my troubled soul, and my silent tongue of a few minutes before repeated those words freely and joyfully a great many times. O what peace of mind, with the blessed assurance that my strength should ever be according to my every need. After this I would read the Bible when I returned from work in the evening, and in reading I found that I could understand more clearly the meaning of what I read, then I felt that I was receiving strength of understanding. A short time after this I went to hear Elder Rowe; he preached on walking in darkness, and the road I had been traveling was made plain to me. But a short time after this there came an unsatisfied feeling; there was something I desired, but knew not what, then something within me kept saying, "Go to Frying Pan," so on the second Sunday in last March I went, and your text, while I do not remember the chapter or verse, read thus: Her neck is like the tower of David, builded for an armory, and on her walls hung a thousand bucklers, the shields of mighty men. When

you read the text I could see nothing in it, though you had not talked long before I was enabled to see everything in it regarding the predestination of man and the perfection of the works of God. First, by the sin of man was the church cut off from God, though it is written, What God has joined together, let no man put asunder. Thus it was intended from the beginning that Jesus Christ should come upon earth and take our sins in his body, that by his death he might destroy death, and by his resurrection bring the dead unto life, thus making the church which was dead unto God in sin, alive unto God in Jesus Christ. In my feeble understanding I was made to see during the sermon that in Christ ye are one body, yet many members. A body to be complete must contain all of its members. Then the church, which is the body of Jesus Christ, was made alive unto God when Christ arose from the dead, for all members of his body arose together; a complete work, finished forever.

Going back to the subject I first started with, our meeting at Frying Pan was one of much pleasure to me, not in the things of this world, but in the things of the kingdom of God. I was again privileged to attend the May meeting at Frying Pan, and was once more, as it seemed to me, at home, for the Old School Baptists are the people I love, and often I feel that I would like to sit down and listen to them talk for a whole day for the truth's sake; when we hear things that we ourselves can testify to, this we receive as the truth. I was blessed with the privilege of spending two weeks with my dear father last October, and with him attended the association at Bethlehem, and I received much comfort in what I heard, and the remarks you made at the close of the meeting seemed to me to contain the strength of the whole meeting. When you said that the doctrine preached during the meeting was of the same faith that saved Jonah from the whale, also the Hebrew children from the fiery furnace, I felt that nothing save the same faith could save me. Since I heard you speak I have desired that faith, and would pray to the Lord to grant me that faith, yet there is a choking that prevents me from uttering a word, though the Spirit makes intercessions through groanings.

I told you about the dream I had, of a fearful storm blowing houses of modern build around as though they were chaff, and that there was an old, unsightly house near me, and I found that my youngest child was in that old house. I thought if the big houses I saw were blowing away there would be no chance for this one, so I ran in to get the child, and when I was inside and about to pick the baby up, something said to me, Why fear you? the house of the Lord endureth forever.

I went to hear Elder Rowe preach on the third Sunday in this month; his text was in the first epistle of John, the last few verses of the second chapter and the first verse of the third chapter. "Behold, what manner of love," was the body of the text. He preached an excellent sermon, and I was able to hear most of it. That same night I had a dream which was sweet to me: I thought that I was being chased by the most desperate looking body of men I ever saw, and I was fleeing from them to my father's house, and on nearing the house, and almost given out, I discovered I was cut off by fire on all sides and the enemy at my back; seeing my condition to be hopeless I fell down face upon the ground, so I would not see my destruction when it

came. While lying there with the last hope gone, and with no one to help me, just at that moment the hand of some one took me by the arm and lifted me upon my feet; I turned and looked about me, but no one was in sight, not even my enemies or the fire, I was standing on safe ground and with nothing to fear. After I awoke it was interpreted to me this way: the enemies were the wicked and corrupt things of this world, and they were chasing me to destruction into this fire, but the hand of the Lord delivered me. Since then I am enabled to see when we are alone in this world, then we are not of the world, for we are separated from the things of the world. Since then I have, as I hope, a desire for the things not of this world, but of the world to come. We cannot serve two masters, for we will love the one and hate the other. We cannot serve God and mammon, for if we serve the Lord in spirit and in truth, and in this manner only can we serve him, then we cannot serve the world.

I have written more than I thought I would, yet I feel like writing more. May I ask your prayers, and may the Lord bless you with all the richness of his grace.

From the most miserable and sinful creature of creatures, yet hoping that I have a hope, with love to you and yours, I remain a lover of the truth,

K. C. SPINDLE.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am inclosing this good letter from our dear, precious brother, Elder C. W. Bond, which I think will be read with interest and comfort by others, as it touched a tender chord in my heart, as the welling up of the water of life to a thirsty soul. I do hope and pray the Lord will set before our brother an open door, that he may enjoy the blessed liberty of the gospel to his own soul in bearing it to others. I think I know the many besetments and trials by the way that he and all others must experience who are called as was Aaron. It is now fifty years the second Saturday in December last since I, a poor, ignorant, backward boy of eighteen, first attempted to speak publicly in my Master's name. It is a mystery to me yet that I ever began. I felt I was lacking in every qualification, having but few advantages of school at best in that day; I was compelled to give up school at the beginning of my seventeenth year, because of the heavy burden and exercise of my heart, so that I could not concentrate my thoughts upon my studies. I therefore left the little country school to go no more, but I sometimes hope and trust I was and am yet in the school of Christ, where he teaches his pupils the principles of holy love. While I have often felt the need of better school advantages, I must confess, the world by wisdom knows not God; knowledge of him and his divine power is only by revelation. Paul says he received it not of men, neither was he taught it, but by revelation. I have never learned how to preach or pray; I know full well I am just as dependent to-day as I was then, yet I feel sometimes there has been a broadening of thought in the knowledge of the truth, not by dint of study, but by the divine Teacher. "Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts."—Isaiah xxviii. 9. It is a mystery that a poor mortal could ever preach the gospel, no greater miracle was ever

wrought. After about a year's exercise I made a complete failure, and after two years I remained silent, determined I would never open my mouth again, but the sorrows of death compassed me about, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me, so that after two long, wearisome years, in some mysterious way, unexpected, I was driven from every refuge and fortification to surrender and speak again in obedience, I trust, to my blessed Master. I was married in 1865, and soon afterward moved to Illinois, where I exercised my gift but little. On my return to Indiana, the old home, in 1868, the church took up the matter of my ordination, against my protest, and I was ordained in September of that year. My age in the ministry gives me no precedence or advantage over my younger brethren, whom I esteem for the truth's sake. In all those years I have been favored to live in the peace and fellowship of the church. In all my serving as pastor there never has been but one exclusion; no other charge has been brought against a member. I have no knowledge of any one of whom it has been my privilege to baptize walking disorderly or bringing reproach upon the blessed cause. I speak of this to the glory of God. I love to see a revival in the church, but I want it of the Lord; I love to see his dear children gathered into the fold, with believers enrolled, but I want to see them come bringing fruits meet for repentance. No humanly devised means of fleshly power or wisdom can add anything to the church. Upon this rock, said Jesus, I will build my church. The Lord added to the church, he does yet, and the fruit he gathers in is ripe, does not need the shaking of the boughs, the gentle moving of his Spirit is all that is needful, for he works in them both to will and do, and O how precious is such ripe fruit when gathered in. Our churches here are in peace, fellowship abounds, but the dear Lord has seen fit to call from the church militant in the past year some of the dear ones with whom we have taken sweet counsel. We miss them in our meetings, but we cannot wish them back, knowing our loss is their gain. Soon we, too, must go the way of all living.

Dear brethren, these crude thoughts may not be of any general interest, and if in your judgment they are not, cast them aside, as I think too much of the fair pages of the SIGNS to be admitted to their hurt. May the Lord bless you with wisdom, as in the past, that the paper may maintain that high standard of excellence.

With love unfeigned to all the household of faith, P. W. SAWIN.

BAKER, Oregon, Feb. 11, 1912.

ELDER P. W. SAWIN—DEAR BROTHER:—I received your letter several days ago, and was glad to hear from you again, although you related much unpleasant news concerning your physical condition during the last few months. The wonderful contrast of your spiritual strength during those times of physical weakness is something to be thankful for, and is doubtless a source of joy to your many brethren, as it is to me, and of untold value to yourself by way of the confirmation of your faith. I feel too small and too much absorbed in the things of this world to attempt to add to or comment on the beauties and joys of those precious seasons which the Lord so gently led you through, in which he raised you above worldly joys, affections, and even bodily pains, to rest so sweetly on his promises, and to be completely

reconciled to his will. I have never attained to such glorious blessings, although my faith assures me they are in store for me, and not for me only, but for all the chosen ones of God, whose lives are held in his hand, and from whom the real pains of death have been removed by the gift of eternal life. I have read where Bunyan's pilgrim came on his way to the Delectable Mountains and the land of Beulah, where everything had the most pleasant appearance, and the odors of heaven reached those blessed places, and the very gates of heaven could be seen at a distance. When I read your letter I felt that surely you had come to those blessed mountains and the land of Beulah, but like that pilgrim you could remain there only a short while, and must descend again into the low grounds of sorrow, where other trials and afflictions await you.

"How strange is the course that a christian must steer,
How perplexing the path he must tread;
The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
And his life he receives from the dead."

Our lives are often a mystery to us, and our trials often hard to understand, but we have been led in such a way, and have tasted so much of heavenly sweetness while enduring the hard and bitter things of this pilgrimage, that we can but press forward toward the mark of the high calling of our God, where our souls shall be satisfied. There is nothing in the world able to come between us and the full realization of the blessed hope He has given us. I have often felt that if my earthly services were not for the good of my family, in providing the necessities of life, I would gladly welcome the time for my earthly trials to end, in order to enter into full fruition of the hope of eternal life. I feel, however, that when God's time shall come, be it soon or late, that it will be all right, and if it should please him to confirm me in the blessed assurance of spiritual life, as he has you, before entering the dark valley, I should feel blessed above all this world could ever give. I have some blessed seasons in experimental knowledge, but they are given in wisdom to prepare me for the trials of life, and I am always ready to give all praise for these to the Giver of every gift, and claim no merit of my own. I have lately been thrown much in the company of the "Freewill" religious people, and attended some of their meetings, where they were working so hard for the Lord and trying to save souls, &c. This sounds more foolish to me as I grow older and learn more of the depravity of the human heart. I once took delight in such things, and thought I was doing God's service by such works, but they are quite distasteful to me now. Those people call me selfish and narrow, and even suggest that I would have to occupy a corner of heaven, together with the very small number of others of this faith, while those generous and broad-spirited christians would enjoy the remaining portion of the regions of the blest. I was invited to preach once, and did so with the ability the Lord gave, and was surprised at the favorable comments aroused. I feel that the Lord has chosen ones among those organizations, and I have resolved to use every opportunity to find them by proclaiming the truth as he reveals it. At present I am teaching, and have but little spare time; for that reason your letter remained unanswered several days. We are all well. The two eldest children are in Baker high school, the next two are in the city graded school, the two youngest occupy the spare time of their mother and entertain her while all the

rest of us are away. My school will close in three weeks, the children will stop then and we all shall begin our farm work for the summer. May the Lord bless and spare you many days yet for the comfort of your family and the churches.

Yours in hope, C. W. BOND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 22, 1912.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I am sending you a letter from sister McKinney, which I think will be good for many to read. I submit it to you.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

OTTAWA, Kans., March 17, 1912.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—"When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them." This precious promise seems to be verified at times to me. The SIGNS came yesterday afternoon, and I read it nearly through the second time before going to bed. After reading your article twice, "The Song of Deborah and Barak," I got the Bible and read the narrative. I read it again this morning, and wish I could tell you all I think I see in your sermon. I hope I know something about these great heart searchings. This doing business in two places, the two homes, how often I have felt sorry for the ministers, and think if I only had the means I would see that many of them, at least, did not have to work to maintain their families. I have thought of the editors and publishers of the SIGNS, and of how much I would send them each year, so they need have no more financial worries, then the thought would quickly come that if God wanted it to be that way he has all power to bring it to pass without any of my help. I am always wanting to change God's plans; I am a willful child, if one at all. How plain you make it to me: the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. Again, when in that delightful company you describe, my heart responding to the searching power of the Spirit, as I hope, I dread to think I will soon be back among my worldly possessions, and at home in the body. How I dread the threatenings, shouting and tumult of the enemy, yet without it we could not know the peace of God which passeth understanding. I can say of a surety, It is the dear Lord alone who can bring us help. Yesterday while reading Elder Peter's article on the text, "But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed," it all seemed plainer than ever before: the law and the promise. By the law I would be without hope. His promises can never fail. The promise may be long delayed, but cannot come too late. He described me so well I felt to rejoice, and said, "Bless the Lord, O my soul." His letters are all good to me. I love strong doctrine seasoned with grace. In my humble opinion we cannot ascribe too much honor, power and glory to God. I have more trouble over wanting to share the praise than I have in giving too much to him. Brother Dobson, of New York, in both his letters of late has caused my heart to throb and tears to flow. I think I know how much he enjoyed those precious seasons in his heart, and I am glad he was given to write of them. Sometimes when all goes well with us and we have plenty and to spare, we are prone to forget the scattered ones who feel to be away off in the desert lone

and bare; they feel so insignificant and unworthy, and often fear all this has come upon them because they have no right to the children's bread. I hope I have a few times, when all alone, felt as he expresses it, "Heaven has come down my soul to greet." Again, "When a witness tells what we have seen and felt we know he is a true witness." In other words, my heart goes out in love to them. Once, when fervently desiring to know that I loved the Savior, these words came with much comfort: If ye love him that is begotten, ye love him that begat. Ye believe in God, believe also in me. I think I know I believe in God, but I am fearful that I do not believe in the Savior as I should. You may have noticed in my writings I usually say "Lord." This has caused me much trouble for several years; in all my life I could never think of Jesus as a human being, to me he has always been God. In his suffering here upon earth I always think he could have prevented it had it been his will; to my mind, this was God's plan before the world was created. I would like to grieve for his suffering as some do, but I cannot; my heart seems like stone. One day last fall as I sat Bible in hand, grieving because I could not grieve, the words came in an instant, and with great power, Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and your children. O now I could see the necessity for weeping, and my eyes were a fountain of tears. How dreadful the condition of those poor creatures who were crucifying the only One who could save them. I shudder at the words, His blood be upon us and our children. Words are inadequate to express what I saw that day. Dear brother, all that I can do is to beg God's mercy upon me and mine.

I have not written as I expected, and hope you will forgive me if I have said anything that is not according to truth. I am always fearful I may say or do something to cause those I hope I love for the truth's sake to lose confidence in me, though often fearing I am not what I profess to be.

I now begin to fear that I have said things I should not in this letter; if I have I hope you will tell me. I feel sure sister Pultz will be much comforted by your letter. She is very dear to me.

With love to yourself and family, unworthily, ANNA McKINNEY.

HAVILAND, Kans., Dec. 26, 1911.

BELOVED EDITORS AND READERS:—As I feel to be much benefited by your instructions and correspondence, let this be accepted as a token of my love for you, and a word of praise to Him who hath wrought this union of souls. "For, for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." Do we all understand who the gospel is preached to, and for what purpose? I feel sure that I do not fully understand this Scripture, but it is not to slay the living or to quicken or raise the dead, for the dead in this case are to be judged according to men in the flesh. The gospel condemns men in the flesh, and declares that "the flesh profiteth nothing," and that "it is the Spirit that quickeneth." Then the preaching of the gospel does not quicken the dead sinner, but rather judges him as already condemned. Christ came in the Spirit, but not to condemn the world; sin had long since cursed the world and all who walked in it. Then what effect did the gospel have upon the dead spoken of in this sixth verse of the fourth chapter of first

Peter, above quoted? Simply to judge them as they are: sinners in the flesh, and without the grace of God lost under the sentence of death, and the last part of this verse, "But live according to God in the spirit," shows to us that those addressed by the gospel are alive in the spirit and are to be strengthened and taught by the preaching of the gospel, so that they may walk according to the precepts of the gospel; they are taught as children of God. I mean by this that the gospel here spoken of is preached to persons who have "two nations of people" in them, one after the flesh and the other after the Spirit, so that when this complex person is troubled, as the mother of Jacob and Esau was, and the word of God is spoken to her or to him, it will be understood that the elder (or the flesh) shall serve the younger (or the spiritual man), that we now walk in newness of life, take up our cross daily and follow the meek and lowly Lamb. These are they who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead. Yes, he knows our flesh and our spirit, and is ready to judge all our parts, and we give account to him as to the way we serve with our body and with our spirit. But those in the flesh, without the Spirit of God, cannot receive the gospel message; not being made alive unto Christ, the gospel of peace is foolishness to them; they are now keeping their palace in peace, and their goods are not spoiled or divided, and "think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you." But the awakened soul feels that it has served long enough with that class, "when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revelings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries." They now, being weaned, the Ishmaelites mock. "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise."

Brother Chick, if this is a wrong use of the Scripture, do not give it your sanction by its publication.

E. G. WEBB.

WISE, Va., April 28, 1912.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I have been a reader of your good paper only a short time, but the more I read it the better I love it, and feel that I have ties all over the world. I am a poor, weak, unlearned soldier of the cross, and feel that I desire to converse with the beloved family of God, dear ones who write for the SIGNS, for it does seem to me that they are inspired of God, and come so close to my heart that it makes me hope we are all of the same family, and that I hope is the family of God's children; anyway there is something that seems to blend our lives together with a tender drawing that tells God's little ones they are all of the same family. O if I only knew that I were one of them. There are such good, spiritual people who write for the paper, I only wish I could be as well qualified to write as they. I have the greatest confidence that our people are not a criticizing people, and will surely overlook any mistake that is made through ignorance by the weak ones, so, my dear brethren and sisters, I crave your pardon for my attempt to write to entire strangers in the flesh, but as I hope, not in the Spirit. I am now sixty-six years old, and have been in the Primitive Baptist Church since I was fourteen, and have had a blessed hope in Jesus from my fourteenth year, and have been a Primitive Baptist in sentiment ever since I can remember. My father was a Baptist preacher, and I always thought the best of all of them. He was

called home eighteen years ago, and I have a hope that he is to-day where no sorrow ever comes, and where all is love, and where I know all of God's family will meet around the throne. We wonder how imperfect mortals can get through this wicked world and enter that glorious clime. O, my dear brethren and sisters who read this, I do so want to meet with you on this earth, and be permitted to clasp your hands in token of the love for our heavenly Father, who is watching over us and all we do. We know we cannot deceive him, and know that he knows our hearts and desires, and do hope he will pardon us for every wicked deed that attends every poor soul on this earth. None are perfect, all go astray.

Now, dear readers, I am an entire stranger to you all, but I hope you will pardon my imperfections and pray for me.

With love to all, yours in hope,

(MRS.) R. E. WHITAKER.

FEBRUARY 20, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter, asking that it be published in the SIGNS if it meets your mind. I have known the writer for about thirty years as a meek, pure-minded woman. Until the last two years our acquaintance had been a purely business one, as she bought produce from our market wagon. She had one child, a son of more than ordinary mind, but he had a disease of the heart, so that he was never strong in body, and died at the age of eighteen, about three years ago. A little while before he died the mother became afflicted with inflammatory rheumatism, so she has had to sit in a chair or lie down ever since. When I saw her so afflicted I thought, Surely the consolations of the gospel are to bind up the broken-hearted, and I felt a desire to write to her, which I did, using the words of James: Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, &c. I heard through some of her friends that she had enjoyed the letter, and since that time I have written whenever impressed to do so, not expecting any reply, for I did not suppose she could use a pen at all, and it must have been with much pain that the inclosed letter was written. I have not asked her consent, but think such evidence that the Lord of heaven still cares for his people belongs to the saints. I want our pastor and the brethren and sisters here to know about it, and I hope that some of the sisters, and Elder Chick, if he has anything to say to her, will write her a few words, that she may know that there is a God in Israel. She has never been among our people, and I doubt if she ever saw a Primitive Baptist minister.

Your brother,

A. E. RITTENHOUSE.

NEW CASTLE, Del.

MY DEAR FRIENDS:—I have been thinking of writing to you, but have not been able, as my fingers have been so stiff and sore. I hope you can read these few lines. I received a beautiful letter from your husband while he was in Florida; it came to me one evening just at the time when I was asking myself the question, Has God forgotten me? It seems sometimes that cares come more than my share, and for two days I just could not see my way. I tried to look to God, and when reading that verse in his letter the light broke into my soul. He wrote this verse (to me a promise):

"Again my Savior brought me aid,
And when he set me free,
Trust simply on my word, he said,
And leave the rest to me."

I looked and said, Trust, and leave the rest to me. That night when I laid my head on my pillow I had no care, all was peace, and then again that sweet message came to me when I could not see my way to the week's ending: "Mary hath chosen that better part." O why do I fret so? My boy would always say, "God will take care of you." If it were not for God I never could endure all.

Yours lovingly,

(MRS.) CORNELIA BACON.

DRAIN, Ore., March 15, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—The time has arrived for me to renew my subscription for our dear old paper, the SIGNS, and how I would like to tell of the many mercies I have received at the hand of our all-wise God, yet how doubtful and fearful have I been through this uneven journey of life. If I only could write like some, I would like to tell what I feel in my heart. Dear old sister Cummins, of Touchet, Wash., is a wonderful writer for one of her age. How much I do enjoy her writings. I never can tell the story of Jesus and his love as some do, but at times I feel that I know the gospel sound when I hear it. Many times, when my frail barque seems ready to sink, and I give up in despair, there is a view given me of Jesus at the helm. I know that none save a child of God has such a warfare to contend with, and this gives me courage to go on. They of the religious world think that they are all right, but the light has never shined in their hearts to reveal the sin and depravity that is there. Dear ones, we ought to take courage when we are in gross darkness, for there is no cloud so dark that our dear Savior cannot penetrate it. One of my dear granddaughters said to me once, Grandma, I doubt if I ever knew what a christian experience is. Will I ever get to be satisfied that I have an interest in Christ's atoning blood? I told her that as old as I am I was never sure of that. I have had a hope over forty years, yet I am often in doubt as to the genuineness of it, and am often afraid that I have grasped at the shadow and missed the substance. I have often thought that of all the families of the earth my companion and I surely ought to be thankful, as nearly all of our children and their companions and one dear granddaughter are members of our church, and those who have never come in hold the same doctrine; they never oppose it, and seem to be glad to attend our church meetings. I have always felt to leave them all to the care of our heavenly Father. It is nothing that I have ever done, or could do, that has brought them to believe in Christ; it is all the work of the Lord, therefore I give to him all honor and praise. He has all power in heaven and in earth, and he works all things after the counsel of his own will. There are things that come up at times that make us wonder how all things work together for good to them that love God, but the results we see are for our good; though they seem grievous at the time, afterwards they yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness. I hope that the dear Lord will revive the cold and lukewarm condition of our churches everywhere, and I pray for the peace and prosperity of Zion.

Now please remember this poor worm of the dust. I ask an interest in all your prayers. I am a poor old sinner, and if saved at all it is all of the grace of God. Love and fellowship for all his dear saints.

S. MORNINGSTAR.

LOS ANGELES, Cal., Dec. 5, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—I sometimes feel that if I were able to do so I would be glad to speak often encouraging words to the editors and publishers of the SIGNS, but I am too weak. I have been a reader of the SIGNS for forty-six years, and I want to say for the encouragement of its editors and publishers, that so far as I have been able to judge, the principles set forth in it are just the same now as they were then.

Brethren editors, I must say a few words on another subject. I heard a man say, not long since, that the Catholics were the oldest church in the world, and he said that they have the right Bible and that our Bible is not the right one. Since that time I have been thinking that an editorial published in the SIGNS on this subject might be very interesting to such weak ones as myself.

The above is left for the consideration of the editors.

WM. A. GWALTNEY.

MCGLONE, Ky., Nov. 20, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—We have been reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES over thirty years, and are glad to see it arrive at this office, for we find both old and new things which please us. We have a little church here numbering thirty-one members, which was organized or constituted with twelve members two years ago, and has now thirty-one. We are of the old Regular Baptist faith, and stand on the principles of the doctrine of Jesus Christ, and still hold to the doctrine that was handed down from our parents nearly one hundred years ago. We want Jesus for our guide, and he will lead us over all the new ways sought out. We have the true doctrine of our Savior Jesus Christ preached to us by Elders James E. Stewart, John E. Thornbury and Hiram H. Wilcox, who are not afraid to declare the whole counsel of God.

MISSOURI WHITT.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Association of Old School Baptists convened with the Ebenezer Church, Baltimore, Md., May 15th, 16th and 17th, 1912, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond sends christian greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As we do not wish to deviate from a long established custom, but to follow in the footsteps of our forefathers, we address you by our annual epistle known as a Corresponding Letter. While the weather has been somewhat inclement, we have had a good attendance each day, and it seems good to us to meet together and sit under the droppings of the sanctuary and partake of the good things of our blessed Lord, which are handed out to us through his servants. We have been blessed to have a goodly number of ministering brethren present, who have come to us in the fullness of the gospel, bringing us good news and glad tidings from a far country. May God in his love and mercy grant us many more pleasant seasons of refreshing in the Lord. We appreciate your correspondence, and earnestly desire that our correspondence may be continued.

Our next session is to be held with the Black Rock Church, Baltimore Co., Md., May, 1912, when and where we hope to meet your messengers and receive your messages of love.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1912.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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JAMES IV. 15.

"For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that."

There is nothing in the word of God that connects itself with our whole life on earth more than do these words, they cover every step from the cradle to the grave. Nothing that belongs to life here below is omitted from this truth, "Ye ought to say, If the Lord will." How important it is, therefore, that this admonition be remembered and considered. But, like most portions of the word, the scope and meaning of these words must be gathered from the connection; there is no other safe way of considering the Scriptures. The same rule is recognized among men with regard to all other writings. Men would not select one sentence from any law upon the statute book of a State, and seek to push forward its apparent meaning without regard to the general tenor of what is written there. Any of us would consider ourselves to be treated unfairly if that which we may have written should be thus treated. No one who has written very much will fail to remember that he has written sentences which, being isolated from their general connection, would lead to conclusions regarding his faith which would be false and unjust, therefore we seek to read carefully what men have written, and from the whole tenor of their writings interpret each particular sentence; there is no other fair way. Failing to handle the Scriptures as we would do any other writing has led to all manner of false interpretations of them, and to foisting upon them a meaning altogether contrary to their teaching. It has been good that Old School Baptists have always protested against thus treating the word of God. It ought to be our sincere desire and prayer to God that we may ever be kept from following that fashion among many who call themselves ministers of the gospel, of treating a text of Scripture as a motto. Thus they often make the Scripture seem to bolster up that which is false, and contrary to its true design. The servants of God may fail to see the meaning of a text through failure to look carefully to the connection, but true ministers of the gospel will so reverence the Bible as the word of God that they will greatly desire to carefully search the word to see what its meaning really is. Because of all these things it seems to us well to look up the connecting verses before speaking especially of the text itself.

First, let us notice this: in the preceding verses James writes a rebuke to some of his brethren for one particular thing, "Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." Then occur the words of the text, and in the verse following the text James continues the rebuke, saying, "But now ye rejoice in your boastings; all

such rejoicing is evil." Now let it be noticed that James does not rebuke his brethren for planning ahead as to what they will do; this he could not do, for all men do this, and cannot avoid it with regard to any and all the business of this life. He does not condemn his brethren for what they do say, but rather for what they do not say. They have not said in all this arranging of plans for the future, "If the Lord will;" that is, they have not acknowledged in their thoughts or words that they do not know what shall be, but that the Lord does know, and they have not confessed, either in thought or in word, that it is not theirs to control the future, but that all is under the control of the Lord. Man cannot know the future any further than the Lord has revealed it to him, and certainly he does not control either the things which have been revealed to him, or those not revealed. Men who forget this are rebuked in this language: "Ye ought to say, If the Lord will."

In the second place, there is no condemnation in this language for the endeavor to gain something of the wealth of this world. There is no censure anywhere in the word of God for the desire to accumulate a provision for the future, when old age or sickness may come; men are not to be sluggards, nor spendthrifts, nor wasters; industry and frugality are commended and commanded in the word of God. Professed followers of the blessed Lord who are of the first class, dishonor the holy cause which they have professed, but those who follow the second of these two opposites, honor the holy name by which they are called. Gain, sought after by oppressing the poor, or by chicanery or fraud, is condemned bitterly in the word of God, but gain, the result of honest toil or honest dealing, is a crown of honor to him who possesses it. All men unite in ascribing honor and praise to that man who has gathered his estate by frugality and the work of his hands; they speak well of him while he lives, and when he has departed men will make mention of his upright, frugal life. Spending one's living extravagantly and wastefully is condemned before God, as well as dishonest gain or oppression of the needy, but the censure administered by the apostle was because those to whom he was writing had forgotten to consider the will of God in the matter.

In the third place, there is no condemnation here of the exercise of that principle in men which leads them to purpose or plan for the future. In the Scriptures, when this is referred to concerning the Creator, it is called predestination, foreordination, his eternal purpose, decree and determination. These words may have some shades of different meaning, or rather of application, but in substance they all mean the same thing. It is impossible that one should have an active, energetic mind without being a predestinarian, so far as his own life is concerned; only one who is utterly idiotic can be said to have no purpose, no predestination. That a man has or does purpose to engage in any business or work, either for the coming day or the coming years, belongs to his very nature, and is not censured by the inspired apostle. But we are taught here to remember that our purpose may fail, either through our want of stability of mind or want of strength. Our purpose may change because of some unexpected obstacle or event; our power is not sufficient to overcome the obstacle which we find in the way, but the purposes of Jehovah cannot change and neither can

they be overcome; our purposes may not be in accord with his purposes, and so our plans must fail. We do not know what shall be on the morrow; even our life may fail ere to-morrow's dawn; where then will be the purpose that we have gloried in? God knows just the day and the instant of time when we shall cease to live on earth; we do not know, and it is good that we do not, but God has appointed the end for each of us, and his appointment shall stand, therefore it is presumption in us to say, I will do this or that to-day or to-morrow. Let us rather say, We will do this or that if the Lord will. Let us always remember that our predestination may fail, but God's predestination never shall. We do not understand the apostle to teach here that it is required that we always say, when we make some plan for the future, "If the Lord will," but let this be the feeling in our heart, the attitude of our mind. It is saying, "If the Lord will" in substance and in spirit if we make some promise, and add to it, If I can do so, or, If providence favors, or some similar expression. For ourself we may perhaps be permitted to say that for many years this one thought has been constantly in our mind, viz., that all our plans and promises are vain if the Lord has not so willed, yet we do not often use the words, "If the Lord will." James here teaches not so much that we shall say this in our dealings with others, as that we shall say it to ourselves in our own heart. It is our state of mind before God and in his sight that he sets forth in these words, rather than what may be our words before men.

In the fourth place, if the spirit of these words be with us we shall not be found boasting of what we will do, or of what we have done. We shall remember that all our life in the past has been not as we purposed alone, but as God purposed. If there has been what men call success in our endeavors after a competence, we shall remember, as did Job in his affliction, that, after all, it is the Lord who has given, yea, we shall remember that if we have possessed more wisdom, more industry, more carefulness in our affairs than some of our neighbors, these things also have been to us the gifts of God, and that he has blessed these gifts with other added gifts, so that all, both the qualities of mind and body, which are ours, and the gain which we have made by exercising these qualities, are from the good hand of God. Thus remembering, we shall be humble before God, and not boastful over men, and so also we shall be given strength to look forward without boastfulness on the one hand and without fear on the other hand. We shall not look forward saying, To-morrow I will do this or that, as though we were our own keepers, and had authority over the various circumstances that surround us, but we shall look forward humbly and yet hopefully, knowing that after all the will of God will be done. How good it is to feel sure that his will is best always. Because of this one truth that the will of God in all his providence is supreme, and must and ought to be done, we are taught in the word of God to pray, as well as to purpose, saying, If it be thy will. The Spirit of the Master, if it dwells and reigns in us, will lead us to pray as he did in the garden, concerning all things with which we have to do. It is well when we pray for some temporal blessing, as well as when we plan to do things, to sum it all up as did the Master, with "Not my will, but thine, be done."

Fifth, nothing shows more clearly the

fallen, alienated state of man from God than this one thing, that our wills are so contrary by nature to God's will. We do not want his will, but ours, to be done. We are speaking now of providential things, things pertaining to this life. Therefore we are often rebellious, and often men deny the will of God in the providences of their lives, because there is rebellion in their hearts against these providences. They deny that these events are providences at all, and assert that God could have had nothing to do with them. This seems worse than the other. Rebellion against God does not seem to be as bad as to deny that God reigns. The one is rebellion against his decrees, the other is putting him altogether out of his own universe. The one is saying that he ought not to reign, while the other says that he does not reign. The one acknowledges that he is and that he has to do with the affairs of men, but the other denies his very existence, or says that if he exists he is not concerned with his creatures at all. Both arise out of the truth that men by nature do not like to retain God in their thoughts. Knowing this rebellion in the hearts of men against God, James urges this especially upon the remembrance of the children of God, that they always say, "If the Lord will." He urges this also upon them, because, remembering that all is, after all, as God wills, when disappointments shall come to our plans the disappointments will not be so hard to bear. Feeling these things, one may say, I have been disappointed, but God's will has been done, and it is better that his will should be done than mine. He makes no mistakes, while I am full of mistaken notions. Perhaps had my plans been accomplished evil would have grown out of it, but no evil can grow out of the accomplishment of the will of God; I know that he is too wise to err, while he is too good to be unkind.

Sixth. In conclusion we will call attention for a moment to the word "will" in the text. It has more than the force of the word "permit," when it is here said, "If the Lord will." The word in the original Greek has the force of purpose. If God has purposed so, we shall live and do this or that. If the Lord now purposes this or that providential thing, it must be because from eternity he has purposed it, for there are no changes with him. There are no purposes which were once his that are now laid aside, and no purposes of his which have not been always his purposes. We are here taught to bow to an unchangeable God, who is in mercy, love, wisdom, truth, righteousness and decree, the same yesterday, to-day and forever. This is a gracious truth, full of unspeakable strength to the weak and the ignorant. Here is a stable rock which cannot be shaken; here is the shadow of a great Rock in a weary land. Our God is a rock; his work is perfect. How well the poet has written:

> The steps that we take, and the station we fill,
> Our Father determined and wrote in his will.

The words, "Ye ought to say, If the Lord will," in view of all this, bear not so much of rebuke as of consolation and strength to the weak and the ignorant, and this all the children of God feel themselves to be when led by the Spirit. C.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Old School Baptist meeting-house in Woburn, Mass., the fourth Sunday in June (23rd), at the usual hours. All who desire to attend are cordially invited to do so. L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, MASS.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Alvis S. Rowe.)

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Ebenezer Church, Baltimore, Md., May 15th, 16th and 17th, 1912, to the churches composing the same.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—At this, the one hundred and nineteenth annual session of this Association, we desire to call your attention to Paul's exhortation to the Hebrews, Heb. x. 19–25. Here the apostle charges the brethren to hold fast the profession of their faith, and not forsake the assembling of themselves together, but exhort one another, and so much the more as they see the day of wavering, unfaithfulness and forsaking the assembly of the saints approaching. When we united with the church by experience and baptism there was an implied agreement on our part that we would attend all the meetings of the church, and if we love our dear Savior and the brethren as we should it is no burden to us to attend our meetings; on the other hand, it is a work of faith and a labor of love to do so, for we love to meet and associate with those we love. The apostle teaches that as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. (1 Cor. xii. 12.) He teaches that we are members one of another, but all one in Christ, and he uses a natural body as an illustration of the spiritual body, which is the church. Now we know that when even one of the most insignificant members of our natural body fails to perform its regular function, office or duty, the whole body feels the effects of the failure and suffers more or less. Now one of the proper functions, duties or obligations of each member of the church of God is to fill his or her seat in the meeting, and if he fails to do so he causes trouble in the body. While it is right for us to esteem others better than ourselves, it is the duty of each member, however small he may esteem himself, to fill his seat in the meetings, and thus maintain the unity and order of the body, and not disturb the peace of the church or burden the pastor by his absence, but encourage him by faithfulness in attending all the appointed duties of the church. Paul says, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account; that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."—Heb. xiii. 17. Again, "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation."—Heb. xiii. 7. Again, "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves."—1 Thess. v. 12, 13. Again, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine."—1 Tim. v. 17. When we fail to meet our pastor as we should we do not honor him even with single honor. We should remember that as the days, weeks, months and years go by we are making our record for this life. Shall it be one of true devotion or one of unfaithfulness? There is some little peculiarity about each meeting we have—something done or said that will never be done or said again just in the same manner and under the same circumstances, and it may be that those present see the Lord, but you,

if you are not there, I fear will be like Thomas, ready to doubt it. We should respect our meeting days as days especially devoted to the public worship of the Lord, and should suffer no worldly interest whatever over which we have a legal right to control ourselves to prevent us from our duty in this particular. Let us take courage, for the fight will soon be over, the victory will soon be won, and while we are in duty's ways and faith is in exercise, instead of trying to find some excuse for staying at home, we can like David say, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord," and, "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." And again, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."—Psalms cxxxvii. 5, 6.

Now, dear brethren and sisters, this Circular Letter is not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, therefore let us pray for strength to hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

WE are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

T. W. Records, Mo., $1.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Jackson Bolyard was born near Meadowville, Barbour Co., W. Va. He departed this life June 4th, 1911, aged about 75 years. He was married to Miss Eliza Poling, April 30th, 1857, to which union were born four children, three daughters and one son, two of whom survive, his wife and two daughters having preceded him to the grave. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Little Bethel, March 5th, 1876, was ordained deacon October 4th, 1879, and remained true and loyal to his profession, faithfully discharging his duties as deacon until death called him home. He was faithful in attendance at his meetings, and it was seldom his seat was found vacant. Although we miss him much, we believe our loss is his eternal gain.

May the Lord bless and comfort all who mourn.

D. W. UPTON.

BELINGTON, W. Va.

Mary C. Hoagland, beloved wife of Henry A. Hoagland, passed away from earth on Sunday evening, April 21st, 1912, in the 69th year of her age, of heart trouble, complicated with other diseases, from which she had been suffering for the past five years. She was the daughter of Wesley and Louisa Hunt, and was the last of that generation, five brothers and three sisters having preceded her to the great beyond, where the weary are at rest. One sister had been an invalid, and had resided with her the last few years, being a constant care. Mother gave her the best of care until she was called away, just one week before the day mother died. It had always been mother's wish that she might outlive Aunt Amanda, so she could care for her to the end. Only a few days before she was taken ill she said to my sister and me, "Will you promise to see to Amanda? for I am so miserable in health that I know I will go first." But surely God moves in a mysterious way, and he saw best to call our aunt first, but mother was too sick to be told of her death. Mother never made a public profession of religion, but always liked the preaching of the word whenever she was able to go. Of late years her hearing was so bad and her health so poor that she was kept at home, but she would spend hours reading her Bible and hymn-book and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. She was a great sufferer, but was very patient. She would often say to us that she was tired of this world, and was not afraid to die, and she would pray for the dear Lord to come and take her home. She was called upon to lose a daughter, who died in her twenty-first year, which was a great blow to her, and just a little more than two years ago her only son was called home, which was another stroke that she could hardly bear, but she would say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away."

Her funeral was held from her late residence with her son-in-law, George B. Hunt, and was largely attended. Elder F. A. Chick conducted the services, using for a text Psalms xxiv. 16-18; also two hymns were read which had been mother's favorites, and which were read to her upon her death bed. She left to mourn their loss, a dear, devoted husband and two daughters. We sadly miss her, but feel that our loss is her eternal gain, and that God knows best. The interment was at Hopewell, in the Old School Baptist Cemetery.

Her daughter, CARRIE A. HUNT.

[WE desire to add to the above obituary of this good woman that from many conversations with her in past years we have no doubt that in her heart dwelt the sovereign, reigning grace of God. A sense of unworthiness, such as the children of God alone feel, kept her from making an open profession in baptism. Like the dear daughter, we do not doubt that for her to die was gain. The family have the sympathy of all who know them.—C.]

MEETINGS.

THE Lord willing, the yearly meeting of the Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held in the meetinghouse in the township of Euphemia, Lambton Co., Ontario, seven miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1912, and continuing two days. Brethren of our own faith are cordially invited to meet with us.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

FIRST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, at Mineral Wells, Texas, holds meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, and Saturday night before, in the meetinghouse, on Star Well Ave., Kidwell Heights. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

SALLIE E. HOWARD, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of southern California meets every third Sunday at 2 p. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

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D. W. OWENS.

HERSMAN, Ill.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 80. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1912. NO. 13.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GALION, Ohio, Jan. 21, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a letter from Elder Newton Peters, which I would like to see in the SIGNS, if you see fit to publish it. Elder Peters and I have had many pleasant times together, and I know that the brethren with whom I am identified would be glad to hear from him, as we do not see much of him in the winter season.

Your brother,

GEO. L. WEAVER.

PORTLAND, Ind., Jan. 19, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER WEAVER:—I will write you some thoughts upon the sermon on the mount. Israel had been under the law of Moses for fifteen hundred years; they had learned that there was a routine of duties to be attended to from the time an Israelite was born until he died; first was circumcision, and the offering that must be made at such times; there was no rest, for there was a steady routine to go through to the end. The tenth part of the income and the firstlings of the flock must be dedicated to the Lord. The tribe of Levi was given no inheritance, only these offerings must be brought to them; there was no recess. There could be no omission of those offerings and sacrifices; they must go on; that law knew no forgiveness and no mercy. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." The amount of those sacrifices is wonderful to read of; hundreds and thousands of animals must be furnished, Israel must not cease to present them; thousands of fowls and beasts must be furnished by Israel. There was no rest, it was steady work, work, work, the law must be obeyed, the ten commandments must be kept, and transgression of them must be atoned for. The lash, the prison, and often death, was the demand of the law. But all at once that routine ceased. What was the cause that ended those fifteen hundred years of daily routine? There could be but one cause: the law and the prophets were until John, but since then the kingdom of heaven is preached, and Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. The whole fifteen hundred years of legal works were typical of the great work which Jesus must accomplish. Those legal works could never make the comers thereunto perfect.

All those fifteen hundred years were before faith came. We were kept under the law; it was our schoolmaster unto Christ, but when Christ came and made the sacrifice, which all those fifteen hundred years of sacrifice typfied, then the shadow had reached the substance and could shadow forth no longer. It had reached the Antitype, law was superseded by mercy, grace began to abound where sin had abounded. Christ in his sermon on the mount taught new things. He had inaugurated a new kingdom, and hence a new law and a new doctrine. The first of these was, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." The law was a stranger to such characters; the poor in spirit would have a poor show under the law, the old schoolmaster. The next great expression under the new kingdom was, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." This rich and merciful truth was a stranger under the old covenant. Now all legal requirements had ceased. The new covenant makes no legal demands, but simply comforts those whom the legal covenant overlooked, and gives them rest from legal bondage. We have no further use for the schoolmaster. Jesus further said, "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy," and "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." What a wonderful change! He took away the first that he might establish the second. Jesus told the people of the first covenant that the kingdom of heaven should be taken away from them and given to another people, and they should be cast into outer darkness. Still further, this new Teacher said, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." Thus we see the contrast between the old and the new, the first and the second; one was rendering legal service to the schoolmaster for a legal reward, while the other taught mercy and forgiveness, without legal service. One, as narrated in the gospel, had committed a crime against the law of Moses, which said she should die, but the new Teacher said, Let him who is without sin cast the first stone. The next thing he said was, Woman, where are thine accusers? She said, Lord, I have none. Jesus said, Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more. In other words, I forgive, but sin no more. The new Teacher did not uphold her sin, but forgave, and admonished her to do right. How different this new doctrine from the old. There was here no sacrifice demanded but the fruit of the lips. The new Teacher told his disciples that when men should persecute them and say all manner of evil against them falsely, they were to rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great should be their reward in heaven. Again, this new Teacher so far departs from the doctrine of the old or legal covenant that he said, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but [under the covenant of grace] I say unto you, That ye resist not evil." All former teachings and all former laws had taught "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," but in this new covenant it shall not be so, now it is said, "Resist not evil." This spirit of non-resistance is not of this world, and it is contrary to all natural law. Jesus also said, If they smite you on the one cheek, turn the other also. Such a meek, non-resistant spirit can be found in none save the Lord's humble people; in fact, one must be wonderfully supplied with grace to meekly submit to such treatment, all our natural feelings would have to be curbed

by the meek and humble Spirit of grace. The Savior said to his own, "If any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." This unnatural course was to be rewarded in the kingdom of heaven. They were to give all that men demanded of them in the world, and find their reward in another kingdom. The order of this new kingdom is so diverse and unnatural that none can comply with it save those of like spirit. This unnatural law and the requirements of the new kingdom cut off all opportunity for any one to try to excel or to boast over others, but it works the reverse of what any natural mind or law can even think; this is why the world fails to see the kingdom, it is in all things the reverse of nature. Another unnatural thing the new order of things demands is, to love our enemies. No other law or covenant had even hinted at such a thing, neither do "free agent" churches find place for such a thing. They boast a legal service for a legal reward, their laws make no such demand of them as to love their enemies, and to bless them which curse them, and pray for those who despitefully use them; this is so unnatural, and so foreign to all legality, that churches striving for pride and worldly show know nothing of it. They read these things, but the spirit of them they never get; if they did, it would so humble them before God that they never again could have confidence in man. The Savior said, If ye love only those who love you, even the publicans do the same. In this we only do what is natural. He also said, If we salute only them that salute us, the publicans do the same. In this we should be only natural, but the Savior intended that we should be more than natural, and follow the Spirit of grace, doing the works of the Spirit in all our dealings with men.

Now again he strikes hard at all false worshipers, by telling his disciples not to do their alms before men to be seen of them. How this hurts natural pride. We are not to sound a trumpet, as the hypocrites do, to be heard of men. Worldly praise is to be left out of all such things, if we find any reward in heaven. This strikes at the very root of pride, and can be complied with only by and in the Spirit of grace. Prayer also is to be in secret. The world is to get no advantage of God's humble people. We may be ever so awkward and unlearned in language naturally, and the world think that we make poor prayers, but the Savior said, Use not vain repetitions, neither stand in the synagogues, nor in the corners of the streets to be heard and seen of men. In all the Savior's teachings in the sermon on the mount he required that which leaves out all fleshly pride and boasting, he required that which emanates only from a meek, humble and contrite heart; he had cut off all occasion to the flesh, and required the fruit of the Spirit. He says, "For yourFather knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him." The very first principles of the kingdom of grace cut off all worldly religion, and all pride and vanity, which modern churches are so fond of. They miss the all-sufficient substance of this new kingdom, because they have not been born of the Spirit, and thus cannot enter the kingdom and learn its first principles of grace. Another stroke which the Savior made against worldly religion was when he said of it, "When ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast." How often in seeing worldly-minded professors going from their six days (perhaps dishonest) business, on Sunday morning displaying

rich clothing, and perhaps a Bible under their arm, and with a long, sad appearing face, it has seemed to me that thus they were putting on such a face to hide their week's business. But the Savior said to his disciples that when they should fast they were to anoint their heads, and wash their faces, that they might not appear unto men to fast, for he said the Father seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth. Hence we see all worldly religion set aside, and all manner of strife to excel each other is also put away.

Again the Savior gave a blow to wealthy church members, who have gotten much of this world's goods, and who build fine places of worship, and pay for a fine pew in which to sit in their fine clothing, when he said to his own, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." How completely this divides between the wealthy worldly professor and God's humble poor; they are forbidden to seek the riches of this world, and to prove more and more the folly of it the Savior said, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." He means by this, the heart is upon their worldly treasure, because they have much of it. To the young man who had much goods Jesus said, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" He said, "It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God," yet many men are putting forth all their wit and energy to accumulate the very thing that makes it impossible to enter the kingdom of heaven. How strange this, yet it is no more strange than all other things of the kingdom of heaven. Everything that pertains to this kingdom is the reverse of every natural thing, and the more of the love of the world we have the less we have of the love of heaven. Still another thing the Savior said that is the reverse of all natural things, when he told his disciples to take no thought for their life, what they should eat and drink, and wherewithal they should be clothed, for, said he, the life is more than meat, and the body more than raiment. Yet this is one thing that, seemingly above all others, church members look after, that is, what to eat and to drink and to wear. Here also again we see that the things of the kingdom are the reverse of all natural things. The disciples were told by the Savior not to do as the world does. We do not stop to consider the fowls of the air, as we are bidden to do. They sow not, neither do they reap, neither do they gather into barns, yet our heavenly Father feedeth them. We do not have as much trust in God as the birds of the air. We are told to consider the lilies of the field; they toil not, neither do they spin, yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed as one of these. We are commanded to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and are told that all natural things shall be added unto us. One other manifest truth presented by the Savior is, that the tree is known by its fruit. He said, A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit, neither can a good tree bring forth corrupt fruit. We cannot gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles. He that created the tree created the fruit in it at the same time, and so it can bring forth no other kind. If it be a grape it will never bear figs. One born of the Spirit will bear the fruit of the Spirit, and such fruit cannot be

manifested by any other. He that was born of the bondwoman was born after the flesh, and could only bring forth of its kind. The same is true of the children of promise.

NEWTON PETERS.

HEBREWS XI. 25.

"CHOOSING rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."

While working with saw and hatchet I was thinking of some very dear friends, who I feel sure are inquiring the way to Zion and the rest which is within her gates, and thinking of their difficulties, and how to say a word of encouragement to them without infringing upon their rights of privacy, when the above Scripture was presented to my mind, and to those who are walking outside of the church, yet having an interest in the Lord's people, is this letter written, and should those who were in my mind fail to see it, I trust that others who are in like condition will find something in it that calls them by name. So far as Moses could see at the time, it was his own choice to no longer be counted an Egyptian, but Paul says it was by faith. Faith is the gift of God, and is the substance of things hoped for. We have no means of knowing when Moses' thoughts were first directed toward the Israelites, or whether he knew of his natural parentage or not; he knew that he was interested in this people and their welfare, the perishing pleasures of the Egyptian court did not satisfy his mind. It must not only have surprised those about him, but also have been a mystery to himself, that he should take so much interest in those poor laborers, when his worldly advantages were so much above theirs. Here is the mystery of the Spirit's work. Quietly in the mind of the man or child, often in early life they are given an evidence that they have an interest in the Lord's people; they say nothing of this to any one, but that little hope that came quietly as the breath of life never entirely leaves them afterwards; such acts then as are prompted by this hope are by faith. Little evidences from time to time strengthen their faith, but their mind is apt to go back to their first impressions for support, as other evidences often seem to be brought about by natural circumstances, like Moses' life in the desert with his father-in-law's sheep. The purpose of the Lord in making him acquainted with both the Egyptian court and the country about Mount Horeb was not known to him until long afterwards; to him it was all a new and strange experience. The doubts, fears, hopes and joys are all new to every one who is led by the Spirit; they take an interest in the Lord's people; they dislike especially to hear of any contention among them, so that the world can find cause to reproach them; they enjoy entertaining ministers and listening to their conversation, but do not claim to have an interest in these things for themselves, because it is a new way they are traveling; choosing even the affliction and reproaches of the Lord's people, so far as they can see, yet they of themselves choose. The sorrows of this people have become their sorrows, and they rejoice in their joy, even their worldly neighbors have counted them with the Lord's people, but they themselves are in doubt. Why do they choose to suffer with an unpopular people, often spoken of as being slow and behind the times in which we live? Yet they feel every reproach, and rejoice in mind whenever they hear of their prosperity. That still small voice is speak-

ing to them that spoke to Abel, to Abraham, to Isaiah and to Jonah. Of Abel's case we do not know, but the others all doubted and wanted more evidence. This is a very old doctrine that faith is the gift of God; Paul's saying it does not make it so, he only bears witness to the fact. Faith is based upon just such evidences as these friends have to whom I am writing. A still small voice says, This is the doctrine of the Bible, this is the way the prophets were called; it is a new way; no man ever traveled that way but once, hence it is new to each one, yet it is the way described all through the Scriptures. Ask for the old paths, where is the good way (Jer. vi. 16). My travel commenced when I was four years old, if indeed I have been traveling the way of the Lord's people. Yesterday I read the experience of the dear pastor who baptized me, Elder Joseph L. Staton, and found that he dated his first thoughts on this subject when he was four or five years old, and the faith given him then was with him all the way through. He had trials and doubts, but with these he helped others who were doubting their interest. In his darkest times he helped others who were in the dark; he found evidences that the prophets and apostles were often in the dark and discouraged; sometimes they seemed to get evidence that satisfied them for a time, but they were soon inquiring the way. One thing is positive, one cannot have the blessed assurance of having done the Lord's bidding until he has done whatever that voice has directed his mind to do. I think we have evidence that John the Baptist had doubts of his calling when he said, "But he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." —John i. 33. He seems to give this as an assurance that had been given him of his calling by the Lord, and that he was indeed the voice of one crying in the wilderness of whom Isaiah had spoken. Who but those who have been baptized and received the witness that they have done the Lord's bidding can have any conception of what John felt when he received the assurance from heaven that he had indeed baptized the Savior of sinners, whom he had declared should come? The faith that makes my friends to whom I am writing choose to suffer affliction with the people of God, is the evidence of things that they hope for; that is that the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, has called them to know his voice and to do his will. It becomes them now to put their shoes from off their feet, for they are standing before the Lord. The shoes represent the way they have been walking and have planned to go in future; now they are to ask the Lord's will, and walk in his commands, which are the ways of peace. There is fruit they did not plant, and there are strong cities they did not build. ("Salvation will God appoint for walls and for bulwarks.") All these blessings of grace, mercy, truth and love flow in the land of milk and honey.

A. E. RITTENHOUSE.

FEBRUARY 5, 1912.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The following extracts from letters written by our sister, the late Mrs. M. E. Carter, of Sumner, Wash., will be received with great interest I think by the readers of the SIGNS, many of whom hold her in very loving remembrance. Of one very

remarkable experience she has left what was to her but a partial record, but it is sufficient to awaken a hearty response in all those who really know the power of God unto salvation. It follows with some incidents connected with it.

Under date of Jan., 1911, she wrote: "Tell dear Elder Durand I do not know that I could write more of the manifestation the Lord gave a worm than I wrote to you. Just thereafter I wrote it out, telling all the thoughts that came to me while with the white-robed throng, and the scriptural answers of Christ, and inclosed and directed it, to be given to my daughter after my death. Two years afterward all we had went up in smoke, and I then thought it was not given me to tell, or it would not have been burned." Her account of her own marvelous rescue at that time from the burning building is worth recording. She says: "I was alone as B. [her son] worked at his trade in Seattle. I fought a big fight and carried much out of the house, but was at last caught where on one side was a wall of fire and all the other space was inclosed with pickets I could neither climb nor break. I went to a bare place and lay down, face downwards, to wait until I should burn, when there came a strong wind (a new thing here) and carried the heat and flames away from me, leaving me unharmed, but it burned up all I had carried out; my writings also. A neighbor passing took me to a shanty where he had a few things, and gave me matches to kindle a fire. I had thrown water to put out the fire, and I was thoroughly wet and chilled, so that I tried in vain to strike a match, my hand shook so. A great wave of bitterness swept over me, I thought I was the poor one of my father's children, and the Lord had taken all I had. But an answer came with strength as if spoken, 'Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.' It steadied my nerves, and I lighted a match and kindled a fire, for what did all these trifles amount to if the Lord loved me? That was more than all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. Now, as usual, I have written of my unworthy self, but I desire to bear witness of this kindness to the unrighteous and the evil, and if this mercy reaches even unto me who then need despair? I scarcely know how I can inflict all these personal happenings in regard to the fire, but I could not tell of the wind that came so suddenly and strong, nor of the words given that steadied my nerves, without telling the circumstances that called them forth."

The "manifestation" she refers to in the above extract and which Elder Durand had suggested she should write out for publication, she describes in a letter dated November, 1910: "Twenty-three years ago I was here alone in the woods, my son coming home only on Saturday nights and going away again on Sunday; I was in great distress over the passage, 'Sin shall not have dominion over you,' (the rest of the passage being shut out from me.) I felt that sin did have dominion over me, and hope seemed to perish; I cannot put the distress into words. One night as I was kneeling at my bedside trying to pray, these words came, and with power that could make a world, 'Quickened together with Christ.' Instantly I was up in a place where they were all white and all alike, and, O joy unspeakable, I felt pure and clean. One close by me spoke, and said, 'There has been nothing against you since I arose from the dead. You are pure and holy as I am.' I never spoke, but he answered all my thoughts by Scripture quotations, and the full-

ness that was in the Scriptures as quoted is not possible to utter, neither is anything connected with the vision possible to utter as I felt and realized it. I was filled with love, and then came the thought, I pray every day for the salvation of my children; if I ask him now he will save them. But I found I had no desire at all, except that his will should be done with them and all else in earth as it is in heaven. I have told you this, for there is a place where you and I will ask no more. We shall be satisfied. I do not wish to tire you with it all, but I saw, a great way off, down below, my body that I had left. It was a gangrenous mass of corruption. As I looked he said, It will never be different until the resurrection. Then the thought came, You are not here to stay, and with the thought the feeling that I was moving away. He leaned over me and said, O so lovingly, 'Wherefore didst thou doubt?' He seemed to fill me to overflowing with love, and then I was back in that body again in the woods of Puget Sound, but the love abode with me many days. * * * * Afterward it seemed to me that sore trials must be in store for me and this was given to strengthen and prepare me, and what the world calls calamities did come, but greater is he that is for us than all the things that be against us, and the manifestation I have been writing of comforts me yet, for I think if he intended to banish me from his glorious presence he would not have shown me all these things. But the same strong desire for the one supreme good for my children remains. * * * * I have written of this manifestation to Elder Mayfield and to two other friends, and to each of my absent children. Perhaps you will think this enough to tell. Paul's vision never comforted as much as his experience of no good thing in his flesh, his not being able to do the things he would, and his feeling himself to be the chief of sinners."

To those who were favored to be familiar with our sister's spiritual exercises it appeared that she had continual revelations such as might exalt one above measure, but one cannot read the little here given without being struck most by the deep humility of soul which was her most distinguishing characteristic, making her a follower of her Master indeed.

With love to the household of faith, yours,

CLARICE E. DURAND.

CANADA, Ky., Jan. 5, 1912.

DEAR READERS:—Pardon me for again troubling you, but there is much on my mind I would like to write, if it be God's will, hoping that what may be written will be of comfort to some of God's afflicted and poor people, and his name be glorified. I hope my only aim in preaching or writing is the glory of our God and the comfort of Zion.

I have been on a three months visit among the Baptists of Kentucky and a part of Virginia and West Virginia, and have had some good meetings indeed, an abundant evidence of God's cheering presence, but there are some things that make my heart ache of which I desire to speak, especially the fact that there are some brethren who cannot endure sound doctrine, and are fighting it with all their might. I feel to bear with all those who cannot (for lack of light) comprehend the doctrine of predestination, or who cannot see just as I do, and the love and fellowship is not broken, but I cannot feel so well towards those who are so bitterly fighting the doctrine, saying that it makes

God the author of sin, that it is a dangerous doctrine, that it will drive away a congregation, that it will divide God's people, and even some will say, Yes, I believe the predestination of all things to be the doctrine of the Bible, but it is best not to preach it, for a church cannot prosper or build up where it is preached, that it kills the congregation, &c. Now what must we do? Must we modify the doctrine of God our Savior? Must we rob God, the Sovereign, of his power and glory, and give his glory unto man? Must we preach an untruth? Must we trim our garments to seek love in order to please the carnal mind of man? Is that the kind of material to build with? and would a church built of such material stand? I am glad to see a desire manifested in our preachers to see God's people come home, but I think that such a desire in some has been their ruin and an injury to the cause. All I can feel safe in saying to the "kids" by the shepherds' tent is, to wait upon the Lord, that we are passive in the hand of God and cannot move without him, that to everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven; there is a time in God's arrangement for each one to join the church that ever will join, and all the preachers in the world, with all their persuasion, cannot hurry the purpose of God, neither is there any power anywhere, whether in earth or hell, sufficient to hinder the purpose of God. It is God who works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Solomon said that strength and honor are her (the bride's) clothing. O how wonderful to think of her clothing, which is the strength of her Husband and her King. She is also clothed with honor, hence she is in no wise in dishonor any more; she cannot be condemned; there can be no more charge laid to her, for Jesus is her obedience, her righteousness and her redemption, therefore she is perfect in all things in Jesus. He does all things for his bride, and it is done well, there is nothing lacking, all things are working for her good; as the husk around the ear of corn, or the chaff around the precious wheat, all is for the protection of the grain, and yet is no part of the grain, but is very needful indeed for protection against the destroying insects and the fowls of the air, the chilling rains and the parching sun, and in this way the tender grain is kept safe and secure, and allowed to grow and remain together until the harvest, when the chaff is separated from the wheat, the husk is removed from the ear of corn, and in like manner I believe all things, yea, even this vast universe, all the creation of God, is as this chaff, this shuck, to God's children, and do indeed work together for their good and God's glory; they are safe and secure in Jesus, and nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God, for his love is everlasting; yea, God is love. I can witness to the fact that churches may flourish under the preaching of the truth, as many of the churches of the Mates Creek Association, and elsewhere, are now in good condition, and especially the Big Creek Church of the Mates Creek Association; they are in a lively condition, and yet they have this same God-honoring doctrine preached to them; they love it and rejoice to hear it, for it honors their God, and that is why they love the doctrine, because they love God. My brethren, what is more comforting and cheering to the distressed than to be reminded that God is a precious Sovereign, that by him were all things created that are in heaven and in earth, visible or invisible, whether

they be thrones or dominions, principalities or powers, all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things (the all things enumerated above) consist. (Col. i. 16, 17.) Indeed, he has told us that he has created the waster to destroy. How can any one believe that God is sovereign, that God is God, and beside him there is none other, and yet contend that things happen contrary to his will and purpose? He says, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure;" not just leave it to his creatures to work his will at their option, but he will do all his pleasure. I am sure he is the first and great cause of every effect, and every effect we see is but the evidence witnessing to or testifying of that great cause, who is God, the Sovereign of all things; and yet he cannot do wrong. What a poor conception of the Deity to impeach him with any injustice, or accuse him of wrong doing, for he is above all law, all force or power; indeed, he is the great Lawgiver. If God's counsel (purpose) shall stand, and if he will do all his pleasure, what can prevent it? Shall the thing formed reply against God, saying, Why hast thou made me thus? If all things are not fixed and certain how could anything be absolutely sure? To take from me the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things I would have no ground for hope, I would be without God in the world and have no hope for time or eternity; I could not hope to reap, even if I should sow the seed for a crop, for without his predestination all things would soon be consumed one of another until there would be but little left upon the face of the earth; but all power is of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God. One thing I feel sure of: this doctrine is sweet to me, and I am desirous of earnestly contending for it while I live here in this world, and the time will soon come when we shall know the fullness of that which we only know in part now. O that I might see more and more of this precious truth; that I might be still and know that he is God.

Yours in hope, G. B. BIRD.

NASHVILLE, Tennessee.

ELDER H. C. KER—BELOVED BROTHER IN THE LORD:—The time for my renewal for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is here, and I hope I feel thankful to our heavenly Father for his great blessings all along the journey of my life, even down to old age. If spared to see the 13th of July I will enter my eightieth year. I have been reading the SIGNS for over fifty years, and find it holds to the same old doctrine: salvation by grace, not adulterated with man's wisdom. The true doctrine was revealed to the prophets and apostles to prophesy and preach; such promulgation man could proclaim only through the revealed will of God. Isaiah proclaimed, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." So the Lord sends forth his true messengers to preach his everlasting gospel to the poor in spirit, comforting them regarding his goodness and mercy while in rebellion against his loving Son, who suffered, bled and died upon the cross for poor, dependent worms of the dust. I feel had it not been ordered in all things I could not have had such a change wrought in me, as my feelings are so different now from what they once were. God knowing my heart,

I love the true, faithful servants whom he calls to feed the flock in deed and in truth, also feel it good to be among the dear ones, join in singing praise to his wonderful name. We are dependent upon God to make straight in the desert a highway, and the Lord whom we seek shall suddenly come. O bless the Lord, this is the only way we can enter into the heavenly Jerusalem. The people I love are not popular in this world, but I trust I see they are standing firm and not wavering, teaching the revealed will of God; he is above all power. "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field." "Surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever." Dear brother, man is but nothing in estimation before God. Our God is a consuming fire, God is a jealous God. His children are forbidden to make an idol of anything. It was not his purpose that man should worship the beast of the field, as man is nothing more than a beast; all return to mother earth from whence they came. O Zion, that bringest good tidings, behold, the Lord will come with a strong hand and his arm shall rule for him. Behold, his reward is with him, his work before him, and he will come quickly to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city, for without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie; but those in the city are written in the Lamb's book of life. Dear brother, this is one of the many trials I am passing through. The greatest of all is, Is my name written in the blessed Lamb's book of life? We cannot know in this life, but hope for that we see not, and with patience wait for it. For the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit maketh intercession for us. How consoling it is to be fed with the blessings of God's revealed word, given to his true and faithful servants. There is a reality in the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out the heavens with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure. Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being his counselor, hath taught him? Or who shewed him the way of understanding? I will just emphasize a little here. Where are those who limit such a God as this, when it is plainly declared that all nations are as a drop of a bucket, and counted as the small dust of the balance? All are less than nothing, and vanity. He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou? The great King Nebuchadnezzar felt in himself the greatness above all power, but there was a God who controlled all powers and brought the greatness of that king to naught, and he was made to eat grass with the beasts of the field. This shows to man that the most high God ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth to whom he will. So this is true: man has no will power, only as it pleases God to give; so it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. With all the inventions of men they have never been able to save a soul from sin. All who limit our blessed God are in the

dark, and will have to be sifted as Peter was, then the great message of truth and justice and righteousness revealed will proclaim, "It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in; that bringeth the princes to nothing: he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity." They shall not be planted, will not take root, they will wither, as there is no life in them; they will be burned as stubble. Who then is like unto our God? Let us take heed lest we forget the covenant of the Lord, for the Lord God is a consuming fire. Let us lift up our eyes and behold who hath created these things; all are numbered. He is strong in power, and nothing faileth. As he is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth, there is no searching of his understanding. He gives us strength, and the light of his countenance shines in the inner man to acknowledge his power, present and to come. We are taught to wait upon the Lord, that our strength be renewed. How wonderful and consoling it is while in the frame of mind to see by faith the glorious plan of salvation revealed to us poor sinners.

Dear brother Ker, after meditating upon the goodness of our gracious God my mind led me to write, though imperfect, what I hope the Lord has revealed to me. I know that without his loving arm I am forever lost. The SIGNS is a sweet messenger, and comforts me; I find it well established upon Bible truth. If you feel this is worthy of notice you can publish it, if not, it will be all right. May God bless you, my brother, in defence of truth as it is in Jesus.

Your brother, I hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

JOHN XVI. 23.

"WHATSOEVER ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you."

This morning, in my reflections over the past of my life since the day, I trust, that God gave me to hope that he, for his beloved Son's sake, had freely pardoned all my sins, this Scripture came so forcibly to my mind that I have taken my pen to write such thoughts as are in my mind; not that I expect to expound the text, or any other Scripture, to the understanding of any of the Lord's dear children; O no, for I am too ignorant, too weak and helpless a creature to expect to do that. Save God alone no one knows, or can know, what a poor, ignorant, weak creature I am better than I do. One thing I do know, that is, I am a poor, sinful old man, and am as dependent upon God for all I have, and am, as an infant babe in its mother's arms is dependent upon its mother for the natural food for the sustenance of natural life. There is not a living thing upon all the face of the earth that is not dependent upon the great Creator, God, for the very air, or element, adapted to the sustenance of its life, yes, even the tiny plant or blade that shoots forth from the ground year by year, and how much more are we, who are created, or made, in the image and likeness of our Creator, dependent upon him, not only for our natural life in this world, but for life in the world to come. While I feel to realize my dependence upon God for all things, at times I seem to be forgetful of it all, and am made to wonder why it is so. I call to mind days past and gone, when I could go to some secluded place, where no eye could see or ear hear save God alone, and there in the simplicity of heart of a little child before its earthly parent confess my shortcomings, my

weakness and inability to live as I ought to live, and there beg God to have mercy upon me. When I could realize his presence with me I could feel such sweetness of communion in my soul that like David I could say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name," but now, in my old age, such seasons of joy and rejoicing seem to be taken away; why, I do not know, unless when I try to ask of him that the spirit of prayer and true supplication be given me, I ask amiss, or else I ask without faith, and with wavering. I often address the saints of God as brethren in a precious hope and faith. When we can have that faith which is the gift of God, it is a precious faith indeed. It is only through faith, and in the name of Jesus, that we can approach God. Paul speaks more of faith than any other writer of the New Testament; he makes it the mainstay on which to build all our hope of a better life beyond this world of sin and sorrow. The Savior reproved his disciples for their little faith. His disciples were with him, witnessing the miracles he performed in healing the sick, giving sight to the blind and even raising the dead to life again. If they could behold those things, my dear brethren, and yet their faith be so little as to call forth reproof from the Master, is it any wonder that we almost lose sight of our faith when we are tried by the fiery trials of this life, when we can only know by the eye of faith what great things the Lord has done for us? O how needful for us at all times to pray the Lord to increase our faith, for without faith we cannot please God. We have no scriptural proof that the centurian witnessed any of the miracles which Jesus did, yet he no doubt had heard of them, and no doubt believed them, for his faith in Jesus was strong indeed, and Jesus said of him, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." Blessed indeed would we be if we had such faith, even as a grain of mustard seed.

I am making this too lengthy, so must stop.

I am, I trust, yours in faith and hope of the promises of God to his elect or chosen people in Christ Jesus our Lord,

J. H. YEOMAN.

LOVELAND, Colo., Dec. 18, 1911.

CORLISS, W. Va., April 14, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN, AND EDITORS:—I feel unworthy to address you thus, for it seems to me that my sins are too great to claim kin with the household of faith, but once again my mind is stirred to write a few lines, feeling sure that if the almighty and all-wise God does not direct my mind in truth, I will not write to any benefit. I do not wish to be contentious, or use deceit in my writings. But come, let us reason together, saith the Lord; and now what has stirred my mind to write is the letter in the SIGNS of April 15th, 1912, written by brother F. W. Keene, although I feel unworthy to call him brother, for I have read several good letters from him. After I had been called, or hope I was, out of darkness into the marvelous light of truth, having labored twelve years trying to keep the law of Moses for righteousness, I saw my failure on every hand, then I was made to believe that Christ is the Savior of sinners, and he appeared most precious to me, saying, Cease from your own works and put your trust in me, for I have redeemed you from under the curse of the law. There was great rejoicing in me, praising God for his wonderful works to the children of men. I thought

that the Spirit of God would keep me from the natural sins which burdened me so much, seeing my condemnation by the law, but it was not long until I found that the Spirit of God would not keep me from the natural sins which I had tried by the law to keep from. O how I loathed myself because of these sins, but I could not get rid of them by work nor by prayer, and I was made to say, like Paul, "I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." Furthermore he said, "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Again he said, "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." And all this is my condition now; the evil which I hate, that do I. Again Paul said, "If I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." No, the Spirit did not do those evil things, but Paul in his flesh did them, according to his own words. I will add here, so do I. Now I am not worthy to compare my life with Paul's, but you know when Christ was talking to the Samaritan woman at the well, she said he told her all things that ever she did. So Paul, the apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, I hope, has told me all things that I ever did. I am a sinner, both by action and thought; that is, referring to the natural mind, or man, which is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So my flesh cannot be subject to the law of God. As it is written, In sin did my mother conceive me, and I was shapen in iniquity, and for this cause the sentence of death is upon me, and I must die, because of sin. Now, if I understand brother Keene in his letter, he seems to think that if we do the evil we are tempted to do and yet claim a hope in Christ, then we are turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and are an abomination in the sight of God, though I may be mistaken in this opinion. If this be turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, I am guilty of the crime, but I do not so understand that we by our natural sins can turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, for our flesh is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. The apostle said we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual wickedness in high places. The word "we" in this text has reference to the children of God, and the children of God know, as God has said before, The heart of man is evil, and that continually, therefore they wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual wickedness in high places, against false worship, idol gods, men who try to worship God with their own hands, as once I did, and, in short, I will say that when one among the Primitive Baptists begins to uphold the doctrine of law worship this is turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and this false worship is an abomination in the sight of God, for there is no truth in it, for God's own arm brought salvation, and there was none to help him. We notice that in the beginning the Lord said, Let there be light, and there was light. Again it is said, He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. So the same God said by the mouth of Paul, Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that we should obey it in the lusts thereof. To my mind the sin spoken of in the above text has reference to the worship of false gods, and the Spirit being in you you are not allowed to worship dumb idols, which cannot see, hear nor walk. No matter how well we hear or see or walk naturally, we are dumb to the things

that pertain to godliness until God gives us the spirit of knowledge, and when one has been given this spirit then the sin (false worship) is not let reign in his mortal body, for no man having the Spirit of God upholds false doctrines, but cries, Unclean, unclean. This is what he should cry, according to Isaiah, the prophet, and he hears a voice from behind saying, This is the way, walk ye in it. My only hope is Christ Jesus, the Savior of sinners.

If you deem this worthy of publication in the SIGNS you may use it, if not, all will be well with me.

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

W. C. PENNINGTON.

McHENRY, Miss., Feb. 19, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The SIGNS is all the preaching I have. We have no church of our faith and order here, so we are very lonely, especially if we miss getting a number. The SIGNS is as good as it was when I began to read it in 1880, if my memory serves me right. It sets forth the doctrine I love, and have loved ever since I received a hope in Christ, the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone, both for time and eternity, the predestination of all things, unconditional election and the final preservation of the saints in glory. We have plenty of the so-called preaching, but it is a do and live system, and that is no food for me. It pleases the world, for it is of the world, and the world loves its own and will follow it, but the little lambs of God cannot feed on anything save what comes from on high. They must be taught of God, and need no man to teach them, for they are taught by the great Teacher. God's children are humbled by the Spirit that dwells in them, they cannot humble themselves. They must be led by the Spirit, for if they have not the Spirit they are none of his. Brethren, I ask an interest in your prayers. O may God reconcile us to all his providential dealings with us. May we feel to say, Thy will be done, not ours. The way of man is not in himself; it is not in man to direct his steps. A good man's steps are ordered of the Lord, who works all things after the counsel of his own will. None can say unto him, What doest thou? or stay his hand. He is God, and there is none like him. There is no salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given whereby we must be saved. Then we should give him all the glory for our salvation for time and eternity, for it belongs to him and to none other. I met one man since I have been in this place who claimed to be an Old Baptist, but I soon found out that he was not one, but a conditionalist. We did not talk very long before he called me a "Beebeite." I told him God forbid that I should be the follower of any man, for I was not taught by man, but by the Holy Ghost, I hoped; so that ended our conversation on spiritual things. O if I only could find just a few I could talk with upon spiritual things I would certainly enjoy it. But there is One who has not forsaken me, One I can confide in and pour out my troubles before. I feel so little and so like nothing so much of my time that it makes me cry for mercy: Lord, save, I perish. God, be merciful to me, a sinner. When I would do good, evil is present with me, and how to perform that which is good I find not. Then by the grace of God I am what I am. May God bless the editors and publishers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that they may continue to publish the truth as it is in Christ Jesus the Lord in the

future as they have in the past. May he bless his children also everywhere, is my feeble petition for Christ's sake.

Your little brother, in hope of eternal life through Christ our Lord,

J. M. WHITENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., May 18, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Inclosed is a letter from sister Phebe Faulkner, and it is at your disposal. I was at the Baltimore Association and had a good meeting, and also good preaching. Many inquired after you, and had expected to see you with them. Hope you will be able to be at Wilmington and Southampton.

In best of bonds,

J. M. FENTON.

MARGARETVILLE, N. Y., May 6, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER:—I was glad to receive a letter from you. I was quite disappointed to-day in not being able to go to Roxbury to hear Elder Vail, but I know we must experience many disappointments and trials all along the pathway, but if our life is hid with Christ in God I ought not to murmur or complain, for naught can separate us from him, nor from that love which knows no bounds. O depths of mercy, can it be that Jesus shed his blood for me, I who am so vile and ungrateful, so weak and worthless? Many are cut down in youth, while my unprofitable life is spared for some unknown cause, yet known to our great Creator, who doeth all things well. My mind seems to be in a comfortable state most of the time, yet mourning my depravity and coldness. The first Sunday of last month I was permitted to go to Arena to attend our meeting, and after meeting was our communion, of which I had been anxious to partake, as it had been a long time since I had partaken; but I was seemingly so cold that perhaps I ought not to have eaten with them, yet the Scripture says, Do it in remembrance of me. It does seem that I ought to have my mind stayed more on things eternal, on Jesus and his love. I am still hoping and trusting in God's mercy, that he will keep me to the end, be my guide, guardian and friend. Where must the weary sinner go, but to the sinner's Friend?

My sister and her husband had the pleasure of hearing Elder Vail, and I am glad the rest had the opportunity of hearing him if I could not. I shall hear just as many sermons as are designed for me to hear. The Lord is good, and has been good to me to enable me to hope in his mercy, better than all my fears; let us praise him for his goodness and mercy to the children of men, praise, love and adore him. I certainly should like to have you visit here, and would enjoy hearing you deliver the good tidings of peace on earth, good will to men, but if he is mine and I am his, what should I desire beside? I am not as often led into the green pastures as when I first believed, not basking in the sunshine of God's love as when I was baptized and received into the church; then Jesus all the day long was my joy and my song; then I could mount up on wings like eagles; it seemed as if my joy knew no bounds, but at times was almost lifted to the sky, and the world was put under my feet, and I was overwhelmed with the fullness of God; then I felt that my remnant of days I would spend in his praise, but now I am indifferent, yet I enjoy our meetings, our pastor's sermons, and others, when I have the pleasure of hearing them.

We are in usual health. Remember me in love to your mother and family.

Yours unworthily,

PHEBE J. FAULKNER.

DEER PARK, Wash., May 12, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I herewith send you the experience of sister Mollie Burch, at the request of her husband, brother Davis Burch. Both are members of the Primitive Baptist Church at Bellingham, Wash., and are good, humble people, and love the doctrine of grace, and are readers of the SIGNS. I hope you will kindly give it space, for the benefit of their children. I am not a subscriber to your paper, but often see it on my travels among our people, and have often enjoyed perusing its pages.

Yours, I trust, in gospel bonds,

W. T. EATON.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., April 2, 1912.

DEAR ELDER EATON:—I have long desired to write you what I hope the Lord has done for me, but still I do not know that I ought to bother you, as I have so little to tell.

My parents were Methodists, and at the age of seventeen I united with them. I had been somewhat concerned about my future, and really did not feel just right when I joined, but thought I would have to appear so after joining, but I was afraid to go into the water to be baptized. There were five or six others who joined at the same time (during a protracted meeting), and as they were all going to be immersed, I thought I would, too. I got through with it all right, but my sister told me afterwards that she expected to see me faint all the while I was in the water. I had no more trouble until the fall of 1889, when I had a sick spell. I was not very ill, but felt I was going to die, and I knew I was a sinner, and would try to pray. I had been reading how different ones would say they tried to pray, but their prayers would not go higher than their heads, and I did not see how they could tell, but I found out. My health improved though, and I got well. One day I went to the barn and was bringing some corncobs to the house (I had taken them from the feed-boxes into my apron), and when I got almost to the house I was singing, "Alas, and did my Savior bleed?" and as I sang the last two lines, "Here, Lord, I give myself away, 'tis all that I can do," it sounded as though a voice right at my ear said, "Thy sins are forgiven." I shook my head and looked around, expecting to see some one, but instead there was a bright light all around, and it seemed, and does yet, as though the sun had never shone brighter. I wanted to join the Old School Baptists, but my husband said I would have to be baptized again, and I really wanted to be, but was a little afraid, but in April, 1890, I united with Mount Hope Church, in Ellis Co., Kan., and was very anxious then to be baptized. I was very excited when I went to the water, but not at all afraid. Elder N. S. Burch baptized me, and when we started into the water I seemed to be walking on the water, and there was a bright light all around, and when we got out into the water the light appeared to hover right over me, and the loveliest vision. I cannot describe it, although I know what it looked like. I realized that he was about to put me under the water, and thought, O now he will put me under the water and spoil the vision, but it did not, for I still saw it plainly as I came up out of the water, and it seemed to glide along and follow me out of the water. For a long time everything seemed bright and happy, but doubts and fears came. The last two or three years have been so dark that I cannot even understand when I read either the Bible or the SIGNS, and I sometimes think it

may have been a delusion. I thought after I united with the church here I might feel different, but it is just the same. But I feel that the Lord has wonderfully blessed me, and if I know the desire of my heart, it is to thank and praise his holy name forever, and I want you to pray for me.

I will close now, hoping you will pardon me for taking the liberty of telling my troubles.

Yours unworthily,

(MRS.) MOLLIE BURCH.

TRYON, Nebraska.

DEAR EDITORS:—This is my first attempt to write for the SIGNS, our beloved medium of correspondence, and may God guide my mind in the way of truth, is my prayer, for nothing but truth will do us any good, either in this world or that which is to come. The Savior said, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me peace. How true we find his word; here heirs to grief and woe. O what a lot this is, but born again, O glorious hope, born to endless bliss. Dear kindred, we are pilgrims in a strange land, but we seek a country whose maker and builder is God; here we have losses, crosses and troubles on every hand, but if we be counted worthy to be among that happy throng which John saw, redeemed out of every nation, kindred and tongue under heaven, then all will be well in the end, and when we have done and suffered enough here we will hear the sweet call, Come up higher; then will it not be joyful when we see our blessed Savior and worship at his feet?

I find it quite a task to write, as I am sitting up in bed, on account of nervousness and inability to sleep. I have been afflicted that way all winter, and if I do not raise up when I awake, and either read, write or sew, I will get to trembling all over, which is caused by poor circulation. My feet and ankles jerk and cramp so badly I have to get out of bed and walk around several times during the night, and have cramps in my neck and head badly at times; that, with curvature of the spine, a most painful sore on my body and a bad cough, make up my cup of suffering, which seems indeed full at times, but there is none of God's children who suffers more than their Savior, for he was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. He said, The cup that my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? Then I do not want to complain, but I do want to be submissive to God's will in all things. Sometimes in those long, sleepless and painful nights it seems hard to endure, but when morning comes I feel better, and I am thankful it is no worse.

I will bring this letter to a close, for it is like the writer, very imperfect. My husband and myself are growing old; he is seventy-seven and I am seventy, so you see our race is almost run. We have raised a large family, eleven children; four of them have gone to their long home, and I hope and believe are at rest. I want to say to you, brethren editors, that we are very thankful to you for sending us the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; it is all the preaching we have out here in the sandhills of Nebraska, where we came to get a homestead. We have always been among the poor of the flock. My husband is a minister; he has been preaching over forty years, and has traveled a great deal in this western country trying to serve the churches to the best of his ability, but he is old now, and we are both feeble in body and mind, but are thankful that it is as well with us as it is. We are bent with age, and our steps are feeble, but our hearts are warm

with love to God and his children. We have to leave home for some months for me to be doctored, and as we do not want to be without the SIGNS to read would like to have you send it to Clarks, Neb., instead of Tryon, and we would be very thankful.

Now do with this as you think best, and all will be right.

From your little sister, I hope,

(MRS.) ISAIAH WAGGONER.

LIGONIER, Ind., Dec. 14, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—Noticing my time expired with the last number, I thought it right and proper to remit my subscription, hence inclosed find two dollars for same. Could you furnish me six copies each of October 1st and December 1st, present volume? The October number contains the obituary of my wife and a Circular Letter by Elder Frederick W. Keene, which I think is a masterpiece, and I want to present them to some very dear friends. The December 1st number contains the obituary of Elder L. B. Hanover, of Delaware County, Ohio, with whom I was acquainted, and the funeral discourse of Isaac Thurston, by B. L. Nay, of Mediapolis, Iowa. There were many other articles in these numbers that were excellent; in fact every number of the SIGNS contains rich and wholesome reading for God's humble poor, and every number comes to me as a jewel, but these articles struck me so forcibly that it begat in me a desire to send these special numbers to some friends. If you have them, send with bill for same, and I will remit immediately. I have been a reader of the SIGNS ever since I was a lad, and read them to my father and mother, who took them probably forty years, and I have continued right along since their death, and am now in my seventy-second year.

Wishing you a joyous Christmas and a happy new year, I am yours in hope,

ABRAM H. SMITH.

SAVANNAH, Mo., Dec. 8, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I thought I must write you a few lines and send in a little remittance, as it has been due some time; I should have sent it sooner. I also want to tell you how much I appreciate reading the dear old SIGNS, and I do not know how I could get along without it, for it has been of much comfort to me. As I read the many good letters I see that it still advocates the same glorious doctrine it has maintained for so many years. I do love absolute predestination of all things, which is to my understanding the only doctrine that gives God all the glory.

I must close this poor letter; I only wanted to tell how I love the SIGNS. I have not been able to do any manual labor for about four years, being afflicted with rheumatism, but I feel that the Lord is with me in all my afflictions, and when my sufferings are over here I have a little hope, if my poor heart deceives me not, that he will receive me to himself in that blest abode where all is love and joy and peace, there with all the blood-washed throng to praise him forever and ever.

With love to you and all the household of faith, I remain unworthily, in humble hope,

J. M. MOFFITT.

STREET, Md., Dec. 25, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed please find post-office money order for three dollars with directions. If I know my heart, I desire that the dear Lord may be your strength and give you an eye single to the glory of God in discern-

ing the matter or food that is put before the little ones of the flock to nourish and strengthen them. It is a serious thing to give poisonous food to an humble inquirer after God's truth. Know no man after the flesh in these holy and heavenly things. I love to listen to and read after those who stick to the Scriptures in the pulpit and out of the pulpit, with plain language easy to be understood. I once met a preacher, or he called himself such, who was double-tongued; since then I am very timid. The greatest blessing I can wish you is that the presence of God be with you, for in his presence is fullness of joy.

In christian love and fellowship, your sister, I hope,

HANNAH E. SCARBOROUGH.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The churches and messengers composing the Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Wilmington Old School Baptist Church, Wilmington, Del., May 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1912, to the churches and messengers with which we correspond sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—Your messengers have come to us once again, bringing with them the precious evidences of that zeal and fellowship that is born only by the indwelling of the Spirit of the gracious Master. The preaching has been sweet and with power, declaring one faith, one hope, one baptism and one Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, now and in the world without end.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Cow Marsh Church, at Cow Marsh, Del., beginning on Wednesday after the third Sunday in May, 1913, when and where we hope to meet your messengers and receive your correspondence again.

J. G. EUBANKS, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

The churches composing the Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Warwick Church, at Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., June 5th, 6th and 7th, 1912, to the churches and associations with which we correspond sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Once again it is our happy privilege to thus address you in the fellowship of gospel bonds. Your ministers and messengers have come to us in the comforting assurance of mutual faith, and the renewing of your messages of love has made our meeting a most profitable and enjoyable one. The gospel of the grace of God has been the theme of all the preaching, and we feel the association to have been a season of refreshing from the Lord. Unity of spirit in the bond of peace prevails in all our churches; surely the lines have fallen unto us in pleasant places.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the church at New Vernon, Sullivan Co., N. Y., beginning on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1913, and continuing three days. At that time we hope to be again favored with the attendance of your ministers and messengers.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

WE are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1912.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

LUKE IX. 62.

BROTHER P. E. Dahlstedt, of El Campo, Texas, writes us asking about the words of the Savior recorded in Luke ix. 62: "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." He asks, Who is this man that is not fit for the kingdom of God?

First. This expression of the Savior does not stand alone in the word, the same thing is taught in many places throughout the Bible. In the Old Testament it is recorded that Lot's wife looked back, and was turned into a pillar of salt; so also the children of Israel looked back to Egypt, and longed for the leeks and onions and garlic of that land. Israel in all their history was ever looking back to the things of the world, and departing into idolatry, and all manner of transgression; in the end they were rejected, and cast out and destroyed as a nation, and so this chosen people proved that they were not fit for the kingdom of God. In the New Testament we read from the Savior's own testimony that except a man come after him, and hate his father, mother, brothers and sisters, and his own life also, he cannot be a follower of the Lord. It matters not what a man's profession may be, if his heart still seeks after that which is of the world, even though it be the best things of the world, he is not and cannot be a real disciple of the Master. He whose heart runs after this world more than toward the kingdom of God cannot be a true follower; he is not fit or prepared for the kingdom of God. We also read of some who had followed the Savior, and who appeared to be in love with him and his teachings, who, when he had preached to them the true gospel, went back, saying, These are hard sayings, who can hear them? These were not fit for his kingdom. Others followed because they were fed by the loaves and fishes, but when they learned this, that his kingdom was not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, they went no more with him. These evidently were not fit for the kingdom of God, and all these classes of people were not fit for this kingdom, because they had not been prepared by the divine Spirit; the things of the Spirit had not been revealed to them as they had to others.

Second. The language to which our brother calls our attention contains an illustration which will be plain to all who have ever followed a plow. In plowing one must not all the time be looking back; to draw a straight furrow one must be constantly looking ahead to the mark set up at the other end of the furrow; he must do this, else his furrow will not be workmanlike. Such an one will draw a furrow that will be constantly deviating either to the right hand or to the left. This is especially true of the first furrow across the field; but even after the first is drawn, he who would plow well must keep his attention upon his work; there may be stones, stumps or other obstacles

in the way, which he must see in time to avoid, else his furrow will be spoiled. No wise farmer would set a man to plow for him who was all the time looking back, and so failing to pay attention to his work. He who would plow well must have his mind upon his work. This is so with any other business in which men may engage, the heart and mind must be in the work, else there will be failure, and if this be not so in anything in which a man may engage, he is not fit for that thing. An engineer must keep his attention upon the track ahead of him; a helmsman must constantly regard the compass which marks his course; all this is so plainly true that it seems hardly needful to call attention to it.

Third. Now the Savior says that this is just as true of him who seeks the kingdom of God as it is of him who plows in the field. The occasion of these words demands our attention for a little space. In the four verses just preceding the text it is recorded that three different men had said, "I will follow thee," but not one of them was ready to be his disciple in the true sense of the word. The first of the three said, "Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." But Jesus knew his heart, and saw that he, after all, had no true conception of what it would mean to be his disciple, and so he revealed the true spirit of this man by saying, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." This seems to have been enough, and we do not find that this man said, "I will follow thee," any more. There can be no doubt that he was one of those who looked for a visible kingdom which should have rewards of earthly ambition for all who should attach themselves to the Master's cause. But Jesus places before him the truth that he who would be his disciple must give up all hope of earthly reward, and be content to be in the world as the Master was himself, with no place to rest his head. So in the olden time Naomi set before Orpah and Ruth the same considerations, and Orpah went back, but Ruth clave unto her; because Naomi could promise no home nor husband the one went back. But Ruth said, Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Here was the secret of the difference between these two sisters-in-law; not this world, but the service of God, was the test between them. So Jesus tests this man, and we hear no more of him.

Fourth. The second of the three had not volunteered as had the first, but Jesus said unto him, "Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father." It seems to us that it does not necessarily mean that his father was already dead, but that rather he meant, I must care for my father while he lives, but when he is dead, and I have buried him, then I will go. But Jesus said, "Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." Here, too, was a heart that was looking back. On the face of it there would seem to be good reason to ask that first he might care for his father. This was a sacred duty enjoined upon men in the Old Testament Scriptures, and in the law of Moses, and elsewhere Jesus himself had taught this duty, and enjoined it upon all to whom he spoke. But Jesus was himself the giver of the commandments, and now he commands that which is far more important than all the outward forms of the law, viz., to go forth and declare his reign, his kingdom, and it is sure that when his kingdom is come and his reign established in the hearts of men, no other obligation will be neglected. His reign in

the heart secures all righteousness in the life of all in whom his kingdom is set up. If the kingdom of God be in the heart there will be no neglect of fathers, or mothers, or children, or husbands, or wives, but rather a more earnest endeavor to fulfill these obligations, not as unto men, but as unto the Lord. It is evident that this second man did not realize what following Jesus meant, and so he was looking back, and he was not fit for the kingdom of heaven; that is, he had not received that preparation of heart which must be wrought ere one can follow him.

Fifth. Now the third man comes, and says, "Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell which are at home at my house." This man also was looking back. Here, too, a sacred duty might be urged as his plea; surely family ties have some right to be regarded, he would be saying in his heart. But this very language showed that his heart was more with his earthly friends than with the blessed Savior. He was professing a willingness to put his hand to the plow, but, after all, things behind him were engrossing his attention. So long as this should be the case how crooked and imperfect would be the furrow which he should draw. This language does not mean that the common ties of our nature are not right, or that we are not to regard our families or friends with tenderness, or that we are not to treat them with a tender regard to their comfort and well-being. Jesus himself did not thus do; even on the cross he said to John, "Behold thy mother," and to his mother, "Behold thy son," and John knew what this meant, and took her to his own house as a son would his mother. But this man was, in his thoughts, putting these earthly ties over against the kingdom of God, and did not have in mind the one important thing, viz., to do all to the glory of God, and in subservience to his cause. Paul said afterward, "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God." These words then to which our brother has called attention refer not so much to some one particular act, or to the outward forms of a man's life in general, as they do to the whole spirit or motive that reigns within. Where is the chief desire, the prevailing motive? Is this world first, or is it the kingdom of God that is the one object in view? How heart-searching is the text and its connection. The text applies to any one, who, though he may make strong professions of zeal for the kingdom of God, still is, in heart and spirit, clinging to the things of this world and this life.

C.

LIFE INSURANCE.

OUR brother, Elder H. Ellison, of Arkansas, asks our mind about life insurance, as it is called. He says, Is there not quite a difference between life insurance and fire insurance? In reply we will say that both kinds of insurance seem to us to be purely a business matter, like putting money in a savings-bank, or in stocks or bonds, or in merchandise or in farming, or in any other investment. Fire insurance does not furnish any guarantee that one's buildings shall not be burned, but it does say that those who do not suffer loss in this way will help secure him whose buildings are burned from loss, on condition that they are also helped to bear their losses by this other man. It simply means that ten thousand or a hundred thousand men agree among themselves to help each other when any one among them suffers loss by fire. This is only a busi-

ness in which all these persons agree together for mutual help. So also life insurance does not say that we will secure any one against dying, but it is an agreement among a body of people that when one does die the rest will pay to his family a certain amount to help them in their day of adversity. To place one's money in a fire or life insurance company is only an investment, just like placing it in an annuity, or a savings bank. Certainly "A" has a right to agree with "B" that they will help each the family of the other if one of them should die, and what two men have a right to do, ten thousand have also a right to do. This is all there is to either fire or life insurance.

It is the feeling of many excellent brethren that to do this argues want of trust in God in matters of providence, but this we have not been able to see in this way, unless it argues want of trust in God to endeavor to accumulate some degree of wealth against old age, or as we sometimes say, "against a rainy day." There is, we are sure, too little trust in God in us all. We have had to deplore this in ourself much of our life. Many times we have looked forward with troubled mind to the future, wondering how the things we felt we needed would be provided for the coming year. We have realized that want of trust in the God of providence was the cause of all our anxiety, and have been ashamed often because of this, but still we do not see any more evidence of this lack of trust in those who insure their property against damage by fire or storm, or their lives against the time of death, for the benefit of their helpless wives and children, than we do in those who strive to accumulate some degree of wealth against the time of sickness, or of old age, or for a provision for their families against the time when death shall claim them. It seems to us only one way among a thousand ways in which men make investments for the good of themselves and their families. Nowhere in the Bible is frugality, industry and care in putting away something for the future condemned. The spirit of greed and covetousness is condemned there, but the people of God are told not to be slothful in business, and he that provides not for his own household hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. It is useless for any one to talk about trusting God when he is not careful to do the things which are commanded him of God. An industrious and frugal man may be fervent in spirit, or he may not be, but it is sure that a lazy man does not trust God, nor regard his commandment to labor to provide things honest in the sight of God and men, yet we all have need of watching unto prayer, lest we come to depend upon ourselves, and not in the Lord. It is ours to plant and water, and it is sure there will be no increase given unless we do these things, but, after all, when we have done these things it is God who gives the increase as seems good in his sight. To be frugal and saving, and to plan for the future, is in perfect keeping with the most simple and absolute faith and trust in God.

C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder B. F. Coulter.)

The Delaware Association, in session with the church at Wilmington, Delaware, May 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1912, to the several churches and associations with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Our object in sending you this Circular Letter is twofold; first, because it is a long established custom; second, that we may acquaint you with our order, and the love and fellowship which we continue to entertain toward you. To follow after a custom or tradition is to acknowledge that we believe that we are treading in the right path. If we have a "Thus saith the Lord" for the attitude we assume in adhering to certain forms and actions we cannot stray very far from the path of rectitude and spiritual judgment. Jesus said to a certain scribe, who had answered him discreetly, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." The citizens of the kingdom of heaven speak a language which savors of the things of the kingdom. Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel know not the language of Canaan, neither do they know the King, nor are they partakers of the blessings and privileges which are bestowed upon the inhabitants thereof. If, then, we declare unto you those things "which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life," then you who are of the seed royal will know that we are walking in the faith and order of the church of Christ. We remember with gladness of heart that Jesus said, A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. We believe we can truly testify that it has been the love of God that has kindled our hearts during the time since you last heard from us, and it is the same love that has brought us together on this occasion; were it not so we would not be walking together in harmony; two cannot walk together except they be agreed. The order of the church is observed when the love of God reigneth and ruleth in our hearts; this condition can only be demonstrated by those who have died to sin. The apostle sets forth this truth on this wise: "For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." This sets forth the actions and works of darkness in the one service, and the display of love in obedience in the other. God has provided all things for his church, both for the edification of his saints and for his own glory. He watcheth over his own heritage with unceasing vigilance, caring for each member of his flock. Thus he saith by the prophet, "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth." He hath also set apart his children in families for the convenience of worship, and the maintenance of order, and not because we differ in any respect one from the other in doctrine, or as witnesses of his truth. We recognize each other as

sister churches, or, in other words, as separate branches of the one church which is in Christ Jesus the Lord, and which is his body. Thus we address you, because we are one with you in heart and mind, having fellowship in the Spirit with you. Being therefore branches of the church, we may be compared to the branches of a tree, separate one from the other, yet bearing the same life, and receiving that life from the Fountain of life. We are sometimes asked our authority for holding associations, as the word is not to be found in the Bible. The word "associate" is found only twice in the Scriptures, and in both cases refers to wars and fightings and confusion in Israel. In all assemblies there must of necessity be a designation and identification in the object, order and decorum must be observed. We have no authority for calling a certain branch of the church the Salem Church, or the Ebenezer, &c. The seven churches in Asia were not designated, except the place of their location, and were addressed to the angel of the church in Smyrna, &c. Whether it be at regular appointments of the church or a regular appointment for an association at certain intervals, they are all embraced under the head of "assemblies," and in each case we act in obedience to the injunction of the apostle, who said, "Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together," &c., and each name applied to the different appointments is for designation, identification and for the promotion of the object of the assembly. We are to remember at all times that the church of Christ is not an earthly institution (neither is it to be compared to them), but is that holy city which cometh down from above, and is guided and directed by the faith of Christ (who is the head of the church), unto all good works. Our authority for all law and principle in the church, therefore, is the word of God, the spirit of which exercises the children to maintain its order, and to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, in which prayerful continuation we go not astray. May we continue to walk uprightly in the path of the just, which is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

J. G. EUBANKS, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

(Written by Elder H. C. Ker.)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., June 5th, 6th and 7th, 1912, to the churches composing the same sends love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In this, our annual Circular Letter, we desire to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance, and in so doing will call your attention to Eph. ii. 10: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Our Circular Letter is always intended as an expression of our faith in God and of the doctrine upon which we, as an association, are builded. It is written that Abraham's belief, or faith, in God was counted unto him for righteousness, and that this was not written for Abraham only, but for us also if we believe in him who raised up Christ from the dead. Hence we, Gentiles by nature, were embraced in the written statement of Abraham's faith, and through Christ the promised seed are Abraham's children, he being the father of the faithful. By the operation of the Spirit of God, and be-

cause of the power of faith, Paul wrote this most wonderful letter to the saints at Ephesus, declaring that he was an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, thereby denouncing the idea of "free will" in the creature to love and serve God. Because of the greatness of the mercy of God, manifested through Jesus Christ, Paul exclaims in praise to God, saying, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." In this is expressed our faith and hope, and we again go on record as believing with all our hearts that all spiritual blessings, embracing every spiritual comfort and joy, were given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, and are ministered to us as our needs require, but never according to our works, even of obedience. If we in any sense merit the least blessing it cannot possibly be of grace. The children of God are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ, thus showing the wisdom and mercy of God. Wisdom in knowing what the children would need, both in diversity of gifts and the number of them, and mercy in so blessing them without works on their part. This being true, not one blessing will be omitted because of disobedience, nor one added because of obedience. God had perfect knowledge of his children before time began, hence knew they would sin in Adam as well as by personal transgression, and, therefore, not being in the least deceived in them, there will be no surplus of blessings on the one hand because of disobedience, nor scarcity on the other because of obedience, which thing would surely result in the absence of God's infinite foreknowledge. According as God the Father chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, he hath quickened us who were dead in trespasses and sins, and hath raised us up together, both Jews and Gentiles, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ, that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus; for by grace are we saved. In this chapter, and particularly in our text, the apostle presents, through the work of Christ, the Jew and Gentile as one man. Hence the Jew who had expected and hoped for peace with God by the deeds of the law, and the Gentile who knew not God nor his law, but was an idolater, are now one in Christ, and if any man be in Christ he is a new creature—old things are passed away and all things are become new. "We are his workmanship." Wonderful, gracious work to create men and women, of Adam's race, in Christ Jesus. This one declaration is sufficient to establish us in our faith in God, in his power, in his grace, and in his doctrine of salvation. Whatever man, beast, bird or insect is created unto, that he or it will do, for out of that sphere he or it would be as much out of place as a fish out of water. The children of God were created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God before ordained that we should walk in them. How readily we see that not only did he create us in Christ, but he ordained the good works. These are not good works for the creature, even the subject of grace, to perform, but to walk in, to abide in. These ordained good works of God embrace his eternal purpose in Christ unto the salvation of all the elect, and in that purpose are redemption, regeneration, justification, sanctification, effectual calling by grace and resurrection from the

dead. All of these good works were ordained or predestinated of God that his saints walk in them, believe in them, continue in them, hope in them, live in them and die in them And the fact that we as an association are rooted and grounded in these good works of Christ our Lord, should encourage us to believe and hope that we are created in Him, and hence the workmanship of God.

Finally, brethren, farewell.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at his residence, Hopewell, N. J., Tuesday, May 7th, 1912, Lewis Blackwell and Miss Letha A. Shepherd, both of Hopewell, N. J.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at the home of the bride, May 8th, 1912, Frank Stewart and Stella A. Mead, both of Vega, N. Y.

By the same, at the home of the bride's parents, in Halcott Center, Greene Co., N. Y., May 28th, 1912, Marshall Bouton and Ella C. Slauson, both of Halcott Center, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Martha Frances Rixey died at her home, Rose Dale, Rixeyville, Va., June 15th, 1912, aged nearly 92 years. The larger part of her natural life was spent in lonely widowhood, her husband dying in early life, leaving one daughter, Mrs. Richard Lewis, who survives her mother, and who has herself been a widow for a number of years. Sister Rixey had made her home with Mrs. Lewis and her three daughters, in sight of the place where she was born, and where her early life was passed. She was particularly unfortunate in having many of her bones broken at different times, the most serious of which was a hip bone broken, probably twenty years ago, which crippled her a long time. I have not the dates, but after she had been going about for some time with the aid of crutch and cane she fell and broke the same hip again. Of course these misfortunes caused much suffering and privation, which she bore with the "patience of Job," as we sometimes remark. Surely it was the spirit which Job possessed which enabled her to endure the weary months and years allotted her in old age. I do not know what kind of temporal comforts Job may have had, but we know the advice his wife gave him, and I am sure the spirit that dictated his reply was in the mind and heart of dear sister Rixey in her afflictions. Sister Rixey was surrounded by all the comforts that the loving hands of her daughter and grandchildren, with abundant means, could bestow. A week before her death she fell unconscious in her room and dislocated her other hip. Doctors were summoned, but it soon appeared that but little could be done except to make her as comfortable as possible. Consciousness returned occasionally, but much of the time she seemed to sleep, and in that condition, without suffering seemingly, she passed away. So another aged pilgrim is gathered to her fathers. Sister Rixey was naturally a woman of fine understanding, with a lovable, unselfish disposition; almighty grace sanctified these traits and gave to her family, the world and the church a sample of an upright, consistent christian. Grace kept her true to the profession of her faith, and the love of her God kept her true to his cause, not merely in word, but in deed and in truth. I think she was baptized by Elder Lock, in the fellowship of Godwine Church. She subsequently moved her membership to Broad Run, in Fauquier County, where she had been a faithful and highly esteemed member ever since. She lived a long distance from the place of meeting of the church, but was faithful to her obligations, showing abundantly the genuineness of her faith and love during the bitter trials of the church in the past few years. It is hard to give even a hint of the prominent points of a life of such length and usefulness as that of sister Rixey in so brief a notice as an obituary for the SIGNS should be. She had but little opportunity of late years of mingling with her brethren and of hearing the gospel she loved, none of her family being with her in the faith, but she continued rooted and grounded in that faith without wavering, doing good to all around her as much as in her lay, possessing a meek and humble spirit, that pearl above price. In the last years of her life she was often heard to express a longing for "home," that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. She leaves one daughter, four grandchildren, with numerous kindred and a multitude of friends, together with the little remnant of her brethren at Broad Run Church, to mourn their loss. May God have mercy upon the afflicted.

J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., June 19, 1912.

Mary Jane Lynch died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Chester Lane, near South Gilboa, N. Y., May 25th, 1912, in the 77th year of her age. Sister Lynch was received in the fellowship of the Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury over fifty years ago, and was baptized by Elder J. S. Hewitt. Her maiden name was Burroughs. She was married to Omar Lynch, Dec. 31st, 1861, and to that union were born five daughters, all of whom are still living.

Sister Lynch lived the most of her married life some distance from the meetings, and since we have had a personal acquaintance with her she had not been in good health, and was seldom able to attend the meetings. She was a woman of sterling qualities, of a meek and mild temperament, and was held in high esteem by all who knew her.

Her funeral was held from the home of her daughter, Mrs. Chester Lane, and was largely attended, conducted by the writer, who tried to speak words of comfort to the mourning friends with such ability as the Lord gave, using for a text Rev. i. 17, 18, after which her body was laid in the silent tomb, to await the second coming of Christ, who shall change these vile bodies and fashion them like unto his own glorious body. May the Lord comfort the mourning friends with that comfort which the world can neither give nor take away.

ALSO,

Harriett Vandenburgh died at her home in Blooming Grove, N. Y., April 13th, 1912, in the 79th year of her age, after an illness of about two weeks. Sister Vandenburgh was received in the fellowship of the Albany and Troy Church the fourth Sunday in July, 1899, being baptized by Elder D. M. Vail, and was a faithful and devoted member of the church. During the last few years she was not blessed with very good health, and finally was not able to attend the meetings on account of failing health. Sister Vandenburgh's pathway through life was not a pleasant one, affliction being her companion for many years, which she bore without murmuring, feeling that all was well and desiring to be reconciled to the will of her heavenly Father.

The funeral was held from her late residence, conducted by the writer; burial was in Blooming Grove Cemetery. J. B. SLAUSON.

Joshua M. Bethard was born May 27th, 1834, and called away from the church militant to the church triumphant April 19th, 1912, and was therefore in the 78th year of his age. He was twice married, first to Martha S. Adkins, and after her death to Mary J. Collins, who also preceded him in death. He leaves five daughters, all married, and a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He is also survived by a twin sister and two brothers, together with the church at Forest Grove, of which he was one of the constituent members, faithful to the last. He was baptized at Indiantown by Elder Geo. W. Staton over forty years ago, and in 1886 was dismissed from there by letter with several others to constitute the church at Forest Grove. He spent most of his life within a few miles of, and finally died in the house where he was born, in Wicomico County, Md. May the Lord comfort the bereaved,

ALSO,

John C. Lecates, son of Perry D. and Peggy Lecates, was born Jan. 19th, 1862, and departed this life at Delmar, Del., March 19th, 1912, aged 50 years and 2 months. Brother Lecates was baptized in the fellowship of the Little Creek Old School Baptist Church, in Sussex County, Del., by the late Elder E. Rittenhouse, about twenty-five years ago, and continued a steadfast follower of the Lord Jesus until called away from earth to enter, as we hope, into the world of eternal glory. He had been in failing health for about two years, and finally, on the night before his death, suffered a stroke of paralysis, from which he never rallied, and passed away in about fifteen hours. He leaves a widow, to whom he had been married eighteen years, two children, three brothers and two sisters, besides the church and numerous other friends, to mourn, but our sorrow is not without hope; he sleeps in Jesus.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., June 10, 1912.

Mary Ellen Bavis, daughter of Peter and Nancy Borden, was born Jan. 20th, 1832, died June 4th, 1912, in her 81st year. "Aunt Ellen," as we all called her, was twice married, first to Coomer B. Martin, March 11th, 1852, who died forty-four years later, then to Elder Levi L. Bavis, Dec. 1st, 1901, who died April 6th, 1907. Two sisters survive her: Mrs. Sarah Darby, of Round Head, Ohio, and Mrs. Nancy Harness, of Jamestown, Ohio. In the summer of 1866 she professed a hope in her Savior, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Church called Caesers Creek, near Jamestown, Ohio, and died in the triumph of living faith. Sister Bavis, as long as her health would permit, was an active member of the church, and her home was always a home for her Baptist brethren, who will miss her. As a church we realize one of our active members is gone, one place is vacant; the community has lost a neighbor who was ever ready in sickness to lend a helping hand. Believing, however, that our loss is her gain, we bow in humble submission to the will of God, who doeth all things well. Sister Bavis made all arrangements for her funeral, requesting me to preach her funeral sermon, which I did to a large congregation of relatives and friends. May God comfort the dear ones who are left to mourn.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

Philip Cornell Smith died at his residence in Ekfrid township, Ontario, Wednesday morning, March 13th, 1912, in his 60th year, after two months of suffering from paralysis. He was born in Caradoc township, Ontario, Jan. 26th, 1853, the son of William and Jane Ann Smith. He was married to Henrietta Switzer, June 20th, 1889, and to them was born one daughter, Jennie A., who is at home with her dear mother,

He leaves to mourn their loss, his dear companion and one daughter, Miss Jennie A., one brother, George, and many other relatives, who did all that loving hands could do for his comfort, but the time of his departure to leave this world of trouble and sorrow to be forever with the Lord had come. Although Corneil was not a member of the church, he had been exercised in his mind about twenty-five years, and was a regular attendant at our meetings for many years, and had no use for anything other than that which gives God all the glory. Often when we were visiting at his lovely home I have enjoyed listening to his exercises of mind, but he felt unworthy to go before the church. It was his great delight to talk of the Lord's power and the glories of his kingdom. We hope the dear Lord will comfort the mourning ones and sustain them by his grace.

Funeral services were held at his late residence Friday, March 15th, conducted by Elder J. M. Fenton, who spoke from Ephesians ii. to the comfort of many relatives and friends present. The interment was in the family plot in Longwood Cemetery.

Written by request. D. M. GILLIS.

MUIRKIRK, Ontario.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

WARWICK, N. Y., June 14, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please say to my correspondents through the SIGNS that my address is now Box 342, Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., and oblige

GEORGE D. CONKLIN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

G. C. Jordan, Illinois, $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds their meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

FIRST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, at Mineral Wells, Texas, holds meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, and Saturday night before, in the meetinghouse, on Star Well Ave., Kidwell Heights. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

SALLIE E. HOWARD, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in Kimmy Hall, No. 12 Third St., in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of southern California meets every third Sunday at 2 p. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

(THIRTEENTH EDITION.)

The new edition of our Hymn and Tune Book, shape note, is now ready for distribution. The new edition of round note will be ready soon. Will those churches that are intending to get a supply in the near future kindly let us know as nearly as possible how many they will need, and which note? The price is 70 cents each, sent by mail postpaid, and six dollars per dozen, sent by express at cost of the purchaser. There will be sent with each book, upon request, without additional cost, a neat pamphlet of 30 pages, containing Rudiments of Music and graded lessons for use in singing classes, in connection with the H. and T. book. Send orders to Elder Silas H. Durand, Southampton, Pa.

ELDERS SILAS H. DURAND AND P. G. LESTER.

"Thoughts on Regeneration, the Spiritual Birth, the Christian Warfare and the Resurrection," is the title of a pamphlet of 58 pages, written by Elder H. B. Jones, of Winnsboro, Texas, and can be had of him for 25 cents per copy, five copies for $1.00 or $2.00 per dozen. Address, H. B. JONES,

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"SONGS IN THE NIGHT."

PRICE REDUCED.

This little book has been published for some time, and orders for it have been received from near and far, even to the most distant States. All from whom I have heard have spoken to me very highly of the book. For forty years it has been upon my mind to publish these poems and the experience of my brother, together with the account of his last hours, and have wondered why I did not do it. I felt sure it would be for the comfort of many, and the many expressions I have already received assure me that it is so. Elder P. D. Gold writes: "I have read the poems and experience of your brother with much pleasure. How wonderful was the view of divine things given to him. Surely to be absent from the body and present with the Lord is far better." Elder S. Hassell says: "I hope you may dispose of several thousands for the comfort of the Lord's scattered people." Elder H. C. Ker writes me: "Your little book, 'Songs in the night,' was duly received, and has given me more comfort than any reading I have done for months. Surely every lover of truth should have it." The price of the second edition has been reduced to thirty-five cents.

All orders sent to me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

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The ninth (the most important) chapter of my Church History revised and brought down to date. Scripture truth about the church, as stated by the greatest scholars of the world, and by the ablest Primitive Baptist ministers. Sixty closely printed octavo pages. The Church History, now out of print, was written and published to disseminate the truth, and was sold for two thousand dollars less than the cost, but through the kind appeals of Elders J. R. Respess, Wm. L. Beebe and P. D. Gold, in *The Gospel Messenger*, SIGNS OF THE TIMES and *Zion's Landmark*, this debt was paid by members and friends. The present volume, The Apostolic Church, will be sold at cost, or given to those wishing it and not able to buy it. Postpaid, ten cents a copy, or twelve copies for one dollar.

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILLIAMSTON, N. C.

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D. W. OWENS.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 80. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1912. NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE ONLY WAY OF SALVATION.

"JESUS saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."—John xiv. 6.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel my inability, and take my pen with fear in attempting to write about such a subject as this, but my mind has been burdened with it for some time, and I feel that I must write such thoughts as the Lord may be pleased to present to my mind. There are many things which we should carefully examine in the consideration of the way, or plan, of salvation. We must consider what is not the way, as well as what is the way. The words which I have quoted are the words of the blessed Redeemer, just before he was betrayed into the hands of sinners to be nailed to the accursed tree. Even his disciples, who had been with him in all his journey in the flesh, did not know him in the true sense of the word. They knew him as the man Jesus, and felt that he had come to be king over the Jews, but any further than that they did not know him. They loved him, but they knew not why. He told them that they did not understand what he was telling them, but that they would know hereafter. He would go away, but the Comforter, which is the Spirit of truth, should come, but he said, "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come."

I wish to go back further than this, and say a few things as to what is not the way of salvation, but time and space would fail to tell the many things which might be said. We are told that God made man of the dust of the ground, in his own image, and that out of man he took a rib and made it a helpmeet for him, and that Adam called her woman, because she was taken out of man, and he said, She is "bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh," and for this cause "shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife." We read that God placed man in the garden, and commanded him, saying, Thou shalt eat of all the trees in the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat, for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. We are also told that Adam was not deceived, but that the serpent beguiled Eve, and she gave to Adam, and he did eat. Thus they were a lively type of Christ and the church. Jesus partook of

flesh and blood for the sake of his bride. By one man's disobedience were many made sinners, so by the obedience of One many were made righteous.

But as we pass on we are told that God commanded Noah to build an ark, and have no record that Noah ever questioned the word of God regarding this matter, but built the ark according to God's direction, and when the flood came Noah and his family were saved in it. This, to my mind, is typical of the chosen family of God, chosen in Christ, and notwithstanding all the floods and storms and tempests which beat upon him while he was in the flesh, his church was safe, and none of them could possibly be lost. After the flood God commanded Noah to go forth and replenish the earth, and made a covenant with him that the earth should no more be destroyed with water, and he declared that he would set his bow in the cloud as a token that he remembered the covenant which he had made with Noah. The rainbow, as it is called, now brings gladness to the little child who does not understand its meaning as he looks upon it, and it brings gladness to them who understand also. This bow in the cloud is typical of that which is more important to the dear child of God; it is typical of the Sun of Righteousness shining forth in that dark and terrible cloud of the judgment of God against sin which overshadows us, when we feel that the floods will soon swallow us up. But when the fury of the storm is over, and we see the bow shining forth (the blessed Lord Jesus Christ), then we remember the covenant which God made, and with Noah rejoice once more. Yes, the little, weak and fainting ones, who feel themselves to be nothing and vanity, and that they know nothing of the Savior as they ought, and that they are ignorant of the things which pertain to the kingdom of Christ, rejoice when they see the bow in the cloud. Then we read that the Lord called Abram, saying, Get thee up into a land that I will show thee. Did Abram say, No, I will not go? On the contrary, he arose and went into the land which he knew not. Now is not this the experience of all the children of God when called by grace? They arise and go into a land they know not of, for no man by nature has ever known anything about that land which the child of God is called to pass through. But the Scripture says that it was by faith that Abram left his own land, his own country and friends, and went into that strange land. Thus it is with all who are called by grace. What is the land that we leave? Do we have to load our goods on the train and take up our abode in some other State or country to go out of this land into the other? No, no; but when the Lord speaks in the language of our text, saying, "I am the way," we by faith do leave our own country (this state of sin) and all worldly pleasures. We are loosed from them as Peter and James and all the disciples were. They did not stop for anything, but immediately followed him. So we do not leave our occupations, but do leave all that we have before enjoyed, and seek to follow him. We may have been fond of games, such as card playing, dancing, and many other worldly amusements, or we may have been profane, but when the call by grace comes, and Jesus says to us, I am the way, follow me, we will be made willing to leave all these things behind. It may be that the same serpent that beguiled Eve will try to beguile us by saying, O, there is no harm in these things, or we may be almost tempted to

despair at times, and still go on, leaving these things behind. Like Abraham, we may feel at times that it is impossible for His promises to be fulfilled in us, but still we are not willing to go back in that land from which we have come. We become very impatient at times, feeling that the Lord has forgotten us, and that he will be gracious no more, but still he gives grace to help us in every time of need. God's promises to Abraham were fulfilled in his own time; the promised seed was given in a mysterious way. His dealings with his spiritual people are mysterious, too. Jacob deceived his father, Isaac, that he might receive the blessing, not knowing for what purpose he was doing it, but it was according to God's purpose that he should have the blessing. We read in the word of God, "The children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand." It was said to the mother, "The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." See how God makes choice of his people. They do not have to be at such an age that they may know good from evil, and choose whether they want Christ to save them or not, which is the doctrine of the Pharisee, and of all religious sects who set forth salvation by the works of the creature. O what a weak savior that cannot save a man unless the man will let him. Dear readers, if you were in a drowning condition, unconscious, and just ready to sink, and one should stand on the shore, saying, I will save you if you will just let me, would you be saved or drowned? This is the most absurd of ideas. I hope I thank God that I do not believe in such a salvation, or in such a savior. If I know my own heart, I believe in the God who is able to save to the uttermost, and who needs not the help of man in the salvation of sinners. Why were the Israelites led safely through the Red Sea, and the Egyptians drowned? Because God had chosen Israel as his people, in order that they should show forth his praise.

Now a few words about the law that was given to the children of Israel by Moses from Mount Sinai. It was given that the offense might abound. If there were no law in the State in which we live, there could be no transgression; we could kill, steal, or do anything else, and it would not be transgressing, because there would be no law to sin against. The children of Israel were just as corrupt before the law was given as they were afterward, but they were not sinning against the law, because the law had not been given them. But the law was given. What for? Was it that man should do what the law commanded and thereby obtain salvation or eternal redemption? No, not in the least, but that the offense might abound that they might know what sin was, and that the children of God in all ages might learn the important lesson that by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified. If righteousness could have come by the law, surely righteousness would have come that way. Not one or all of the burnt offerings or sacrifices offered under the old covenant could make the comers thereunto perfect, yet the sinner, when the Lord calls him and shows him his vile and corrupt nature, flees to the commandments of the law which were written on tables of stone first, and goes to work to obey and to cover his wickedness, but he makes just as miserable a failure as did Adam and Eve in the garden when they sewed fig leaves together.

Dear readers, did you ever resolve to keep any commandment of the law which you did not straightway break in thought, word or deed? I believe not. This is not the way of salvation. Perhaps you have not heard the gospel preached, and perhaps if you live where there are any Old School Baptists some one has told you that they are dangerous, because they preach that it matters not what a man does, if he is one of the chosen he will be saved anyway, and you think, Well, I will not go to hear them. Such as these will tell you, Just pray and go to the mourners' bench, or come forward and be confirmed, or come up and take the hand of the minister and be baptized in a pool of warm water, and then go on and help support the pastor and the missionary, and all charities, and all will be well with you. Perhaps one will join in with them, but pretty soon he will find that he is not in the right place, and that he is not in the Father's house; that he is only a boarder or a hireling, and that the food does not suit his appetite, and will begin to long for some food, and would fain eat of the husks that the swine do eat, but finds that he cannot even do that. He sees others eat their fill, but there is no food for him. Truly he will then say, This is not the way; this is not salvation, but starvation. These people all fill the place designed for them, for the Lord has said, There shall be false teachers, and they shall cry lo here, and lo there is Christ, and were it possible would deceive the very elect. Thanks be to God, this is not possible. Now after being brought to the point where you are starving, and there is no comfort in what they say, and neither in the law of ten commandments, what then? Then you will give up in despair, but just then you will be led to the house of the Lord. Now for the first time in your life, in some peculiar manner you will hear the gospel proclaimed, and will be made to say with Jacob, "Surely the Lord is in this place." Then you will hear Christ saying, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." Now you will say, Surely this is the only way of salvation. Jesus must needs go away that the Comforter might come; for it is said that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. Therefore he came down to earth, was clothed with flesh, that he might fulfill the law for us. He was the only man that ever lived upon earth that did or could keep the law; he said, "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill," and it was through the offering up of himself that he brought salvation to his people. He said, "I am the resurrection and the life." What more could he have said? In the beginning of this chapter he said, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." He is the way; all other ways about which man talks are like chaff before the wind, but his words are true; he is indeed the only way of salvation to poor, dying sinners. He said, "I am the truth." We are told that his word is truth. Jesus is God with us, and all that he said is truth. And he is the life. What a comfort this is. We are told that this is life eternal, to know God and Jesus Christ, whom he sent; and he said, Because I live ye shall live also. Our lives are hid with Christ in God. None can come unto the Father but by him, therefore this is the very way of salvation, and there is no other way under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

Your brother,

JOHN L. HASTINGS.

DELMAR, Del., May 7, 1912.

RATCLIFF, Ky., Dec. 31, 1911.

MR. RUFUS KENDALL—DEAR FRIEND, AND I HOPE BROTHER IN CHRIST:—It has been in my heart for some time to write you, so I will now make the attempt, asking you to bear with me in the liberty I am taking. This portion of our dear and blessed Lord's word to his disciples is very sacred and sweet to me: "And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."—Luke xi. 9, 10. I cannot hope to reach the depths of this thought; it is beyond the search of the philosopher, the scientist or the theologian, yet the charm of the subject is ever attractive and impressive, so that I am lost in wonder. There is nothing so important to us as the name of God, yet he is not in all our thoughts. In nature the Creator is but dimly conceived, as a far off personage, so little and so feeble that he is only feared as a mysterious and yet a dreadful being, whom some consider to be so inferior to themselves that they trust in themselves, and worship the creature more than the Creator; in their conceptions they do not know God, but if God ever once reveals one quickening ray of his omnipotence and glory to their gaze, their trembling souls will be so transported into reverence for him that no language of theirs can describe their change of estimation concerning him. In the chapter from which our subject is taken one of his disciples said unto him: "Lord, teach us to pray. * * * And he said unto them [that is, to his disciples], When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven," &c. How can any but the children of God in truth call God their Father? If he is indeed our Father, it is because our spiritual, immortal or eternal life was with and in him from everlasting, and because he hath of his own will begotten us by the word of his power, and we consequently born again, not of corruptible seed (as in our natural birth), but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. To such gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; these are the children of God, and God is their Father, "for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." —Romans viii. 14. To be a son or child of God, and entitled to the blessed privilege of calling God Father, is to be begotten and born of God and have the Spirit of Christ, for if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his; he must possess the Spirit of Christ, and only by that Spirit, and through that Christ alone, can any man have access to God, for Jesus expressly says, No man can come unto the Father but by me. All of God's children are taught of him, and every one that is taught of God cometh to Christ. While no man cometh unto Christ except his Father which sent him draw him, and none that cometh to him is cast out, it seems to me that he was teaching only such to pray as are by the spiritual birth qualified to worship God in spirit and in truth, by praying with the spirit and with the understanding also, for God is a Spirit, and can only be approached in spirit through Jesus Christ our blessed Lord. We know not what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit helpeth our infirmities and maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. This intercession is made according to the will of God. To such

as are born of God, and led by his holy Spirit, and are humble followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, is the distinguishing name or appellation, disciple of Christ, given in the Scriptures, for except we follow him we cannot be his disciples. He said, But then are ye my disciples indeed, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Are any so dull of understanding as to believe that these words can, without violence, be applied to those to whom he had said, Ye shall seek me and ye shall not find me; ye shall die in your sins, and where I am ye cannot come? It is Christ from heaven that speaks, it is the voice of him who called the world into being, who spake and it stood fast, commanded and it was done. There is power, majesty, grace and salvation in his words, for he said: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life," and when his word goeth forth out of his mouth it shall not return unto him void. Now what does he here say to his disciples? "Ask, and it shall be given you." The disciple in asking virtually acknowledges his need of that for which he asks, and his whole dependence upon God to supply his need; he acknowledges that the name of "Father" is a hallowed name, expressive of divine or vital relationship, and that he has faith in his Father which is in heaven that he is able and willing to supply all that he is led by the spirit of prayer to ask for. Not all that our fleshly lust may desire or prompt us to ask for is pledged to us in this sacred text, as we sometimes ask amiss for things to consume upon our lusts, and we receive not. God in great mercy withholds from us such things as would be injurious to us; but what we are here taught by Christ to ask for in spirit and manner and form as expressed in the context, from the second to the fifth verse of this chapter, is the spirit of that submission which says, Thy will be done, as in heaven so in earth, when looking to God day by day for daily supplies and spiritual support, and when cherishing the same spirit of forgiveness to our enemies that we ask God to bestow on us: "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses."—Mark xi. 25, 26. This last quoted Scripture may explain to us why many of our prayers (which are natural) are shut out, especially when we are desiring that God should crush our enemies and lavish his gifts upon us and our friends. "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." —Matt. v. 44, 45. If God only forgives us as we forgive those who have done us wrong, how careful ought we to be to forgive. Do we mark iniquity against our neighbor, brother or fellow-being, and ask God to blot out our transgressions? If so, how vain are our prayers. Do we ask God to be merciful to our unrighteousness, and remember our iniquities no more? Then let us not seek revenge on those whom we deem our foes. The word and Spirit of God must teach us what to ask for, and how to ask, and in what spirit, and in what name to approach our heart-searching God, and thus directed we shall ask and God will hear, and we shall receive all that we ask, for the Spirit of truth and holiness will not lead us to pray for anything that God will withhold from them that walk uprightly.

"Seek, and ye shall find." Seeking not only implies a desire to find a cherished treasure, but also such qualifications as blind and dead men do not possess. To seek is to look or search after something that is hidden, and in order to seek we must have life and sight; but until quickened by the Spirit we are both dead in sin and blind to everything of a spiritual nature. Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God, and that is the very first thing the children of God are commanded to seek for. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."—Matt. vi. 33. All that we should seek is the kingdom of God and the righteousness of God. These we need, for under no other government can we be happy or at home, and in no other righteousness can we be holy and acceptable to God. But as the kingdom of God is spiritual, the natural man cannot see it, for it is spiritually discerned. In that holy and blessed kingdom we should be but aliens and strangers, unless qualified for fellow-citizenship with the saints by the righteousness of God in Christ. To seek to be popular in the religion of the world, seeking only our own glory and honor by the works of our righteousness, requires no new birth, no circumcision of the heart, for the world will love and recognize its own, but to seek successfully the kingdom over which our blessed Jesus presides, and the righteousness of God, without which we can in nowise be saved, requires that we shall be of God in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

"Knock, and it shall be opened unto you." This familiar figure presents the prayers of the saints of God as knocking at the door of mercy; as the weary traveler would gain admittance into the house to rest and have food and comfort, approaches the door and knocks for admittance, and as the child would come into his father's house and mingle with the children, and with them participate in the provision and comforts of the family, so the heaven-born child of God seeks the church of God and approaches the door of the sheepfold and knocks (he would not climb up some other way). This kind of knocking never fails to meet or receive the happy response, Come in, thou blessed of the Lord, why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized. Or if we apply this figure to our knocking at mercy's door, the result is certain, for God himself has promised to open the door to all such. This is attested by all the children of the house of God, for every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. What child of God has ever been turned empty away when asking supplies at the throne of grace with the spirit and with the understanding and in the name of Jesus? Not even Jonah when in the belly of hell was unheard, his face turned toward Jerusalem, and when we knock at the door of mercy how consoling is the assurance in the text: To him that knocketh it shall be opened. The subject affords great consolation to the humble, tried and trembling children of God, who feel that they have nothing in their hands to bring as an oblation or offering to God to procure his favor, but are unworthy to pronounce his sacred name, hungry, thirsty, naked, destitute and helpless. Jesus bids them come approach his mercy-seat, come boldly to the throne of grace to ask mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need.

I have written what seems to me to be set forth in the text, and submit it to your careful consideration; that you find some comfort in it, and that God be honored and his name glorified, is my humble prayer. Give my regards to your wife and reserve a liberal share for yourself.

I am yours to serve in gospel bonds,

J. E. THORNBURY.

NORTH BERWICK, Me., Feb. 12, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST JESUS:—The following letter from our daughter, Ruth A. Spitler, which I send for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, speaks for itself.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

CHICAGO, Ill., Feb. 13, 1912.

DEAR PAPA AND IRENE:—We expect to hear from you by to-morrow morning, and will hold this letter until then; however, since my dear little one is asleep I will begin writing; I cannot accomplish much when he is awake. We have been talking of our experiences in the past and the present, and afterwards sang together some hymns. We were singing, "O, Lord, how lovely is thy name," when the thought came to me, It is a wonderful thing to have Wesley here by my side, not only my beloved husband, but my brother. We share our joys and sorrows spiritually and naturally. It is wonderful, too, to be able to talk of God and sing of his goodness, to worship him; "no change of mind our Savior knows," how different from us! And yet Wesley and I, just we two, we are a church of God. Why do we pine because we cannot meet with others? "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." That command is to Wesley and me. I said most of these things to Wesley. He instantly acquiesced and saw the beauty of the thought that we are a church of God. We have prayed and despaired, and prayed again for a "church" in Chicago. Cannot God use the two as well as the three gathered together in his name as the nucleus of a congregation devoted to his worship? Our hearts were so filled with the beauty of this belief and the felt presence of Christ that we agreed with each other to put apart Sunday mornings and afternoons to his worship, also Wednesday evenings. Whether or not others come we will try to worship the Lord in the spirit of holiness, not because we are so good, or so spiritual, but because we must have him. One thing we have truly desired of the Lord, that will we seek after: that we may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of our life, to behold the beauty of our Lord and to inquire in his temple. In such a condition we can fear nothing, we can be anxious over nothing; though an host should encamp against us our hearts shall not fear; for in the time of trouble he shall hide us in his pavilion, in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide us. He shall set us up upon a rock. Sacrifices of joy, praise unto the Lord, are these duties? Call them rather most blessed privileges. When thou saidst, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek, with joy and trembling adoration of his goodness in thus holding out the golden sceptre, for had we not permission to enter his presence are we not presumptuous as Queen Esther? Yet Jesus Christ has made the way open; he broke down the middle wall of partition, through him, the gate of the fold, we may enter in and find rest, and go out and find food. How do we come? Weary, sore, torn by wild beasts,

well-nigh spent, scarce able to crawl to the gate, bleating in a poor, sick way, with the burs and thorns and filth of this world wounding and vexing us. How graciously the tender Shepherd cleanses us, pours oil upon our wounded heads, prepares food for us! Did we indeed crawl to the gate? Did he not come out in the wilderness for us, there where we wandered, bereft of hope and comfort, unable to find the way back? How soon when within his fold again do we forget the despair and anguish of the barren weeks and months. How we sit infinitely low at Jesus' feet, leaning on him again. "Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies." We can be of good courage, can wait on the Lord, when he gives us the power, not otherwise. Perhaps it has been with us as with the two disciples who journeyed to Emmaus; they talked together of all the things which had happened, they did not understand them, and as they walked they were sad. Then the Lord himself, whose dear presence they so desired, drew near and went with them, but their eyes were holden that they should not know who he was. After their eyes had been opened and they realized who had been their companion, they said one to another, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?"

I was reading the other day in John, the seventeenth chapter in particular engaged my thoughts, especially the fourteenth to the eighteenth verses inclusive. "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." What is "thy word?" Surely it is found in Christ's own sermon on the mount. The beatitudes—what precious assurances they are to the believer, what a source of contempt they are to the world. The commands in the latter part of the fifth chapter of Matthew, concerning the non-resisting of evil, the giving freely to him that asketh, the loving one's enemies—how contrary to the express teaching of the world, which still believes in an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, whose wisdom dictates that one be prudent concerning the giving to him that asketh, which cannot love its enemies. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth. I wonder how many, even of the children of God, are enabled to keep this word of God: Take no thought what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Sheer nonsense, says the world, such a doctrine would cause shiftlessness to reign everywhere; there would be no business, no commerce, no buying of land and houses, no savings-banks. Nonsense! God's word is not pleasant to the unregenerate, though they profess to love the Bible and to be "christians." "The world hath hated them." A brother dear in Christ was arguing one evening here that it was not necessary to shun what we term worldly men and women, and refuse their company and society, and to take advantage of the really good things they can do for us. Business success, social popularity, could never be gained by us if we were going to pursue this course. By our seeming to make ourselves appear religious we would bring the very cause of Christ into disrepute. The attitude of our people in general, for instance, toward harmless social gatherings, business associations, benevolent secret societies of the nonreligious kind, this atti-

tude had not been for their good, but had caused many well-wishers even to avoid their meetings and scoff at Old School Baptists. When I quoted, Come out from among them and be ye separate, and, The world hath hated them, he perceived a difference between the literal meaning of the words and their application to us. The world hates our doctrines, he maintained, it does not necessarily hate us. I replied that Christ's words read not thy doctrines, but them. Indeed, the world does hate our doctrines; it hates us, too, just inasmuch as we are enabled to fulfill those doctrines. True, business success and social popularity may never be ours, but what child of God lying low at Jesus' feet wants them? Does he not rather abhor the thought of such things influencing his conduct? Yet even by believers I am counted fanatical because I can but believe in the actuality of Christ's commands to us. It is true (I am the first to confess it) my life falls so far short of obeying these commands that it seems an act of hypocrisy to profess to believe in them and to follow them, yet before God I can say, Thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I would love thee, that I would be found perfect, walking in all thy commandments blameless. Wretched as is my life most of the time, I would not exchange the fierce striving and struggling against, as it seems, the very ocean of sin and worldliness I find about me and in me, for the dead indifference of some. I would rather cry out of the belly of hell to my God than be found in the palace of a king in company with those who do not fear God nor eschew evil.

> "Compared with Christ, in all beside
> No comeliness I see.
> The one thing needful, dearest Lord,
> Is to be one with thee."

I have been much drawn to Christ since Sunday in a way that causes me to know that he is with me. Though to-morrow he should hide his lovely face, yet he has been with me and comforted me by the way.

I will close now, although I may add a postscript to-morrow when the expected letter arrives.

Your letters have come, and were most gladly read. Until a few days ago I have been very lonely since mamma went away; one evening when Wesley was working overtime I could not endure it, and telephoned him to come home, yet since the experience I have mentioned in this letter I have felt no loneliness. How can I if the Greater than Wesley is with me, Jesus Christ? I have begun reading the "memoir of Ebenezer Wilmshurst," and have found much comfort in the account of his experiences, that of his conflict of soul concerning his place in God's house was especially refreshing. Wesley was saying last night that nothing so revived one who had been barren and indifferent as to go to meeting and hear some poor, trembling soul try to tell how Jesus had saved him, and given him the irresistible desire to be numbered among his visible church. That is true, and reading of this young man's experience brings back to me not only remembrance of my first exercises of soul, but the consciousness that Jesus is even more my Savior now, for do I not need him more? "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." I thought I had passed through some of the worst trials one could pass through and live before I was married, since then my way has been so hard, my warfare so hopeless, my chains so heavy, that what came before seems a trifle when I look back upon it. It has not been Wesley's

fault. Ah, no, no one but myself knows how tender, how loving he has been; my impatience and rebellion can be matched only by his patience and sweetness of soul. He has yearned and prayed for my happiness and deliverance from nervousness and bondage of soul with which I have been afflicted; he has constantly helped me in a thousand ways, as no other person could do. He, too, has been in bondage of soul, though not sick as I have been in nerves and mind, and we have spent nights weeping and praying together. Lately he has been saying that he could but feel that the trial I have been passing through was not one of my fault, nor his, but one of faith, that God might make us both chosen vessels, to glorify him, as we so passionately desired and prayed when we were united in marriage. From the first indeed our acquaintance was like that of no two people I ever met. The wonder of our meeting, the complete knitting of soul those first two days, all the subsequent events, have certainly shown that God purposed our union. We often expressed the thought in our long correspondence that we might, when married, more perfectly serve the living God, that natural pleasures might never be primary, always remembering by whom we had been brought to know each other. Have we not daily desired the constant presence of our Jesus? Have we not endeavored to worship him and serve him, to crucify our flesh and the lusts thereof, that he might dwell with us? And yet it has seemed as though we were outcasts, that our very efforts to live to him have brought upon us no reproach and enmity, and have not glorified his name either. That prayer of Wesley's that we might frequently pray together in sincerity; after all, what can make one pray but need? But we did not dream of our prayers being answered in this way. We prayed that we might share His cross, and when it was reached out to us it lacerated our hands. O, I see now how it has been for our good, this trial of three years—three years of mutual love and mutual suffering!

"With mercy and with judgment
My web of time he wove;
And aye the dews of sorrow
Were lustered with his love.
I'll bless the hand that guided,
I'll bless the heart that planned,
When throned where glory dwelleth
In Emmanuel's land."

Ah, "now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage."

"A little revival in our bondage," that is all, I know. If we could always be thus happy in Jesus the earth would seem indeed an Eden, the flesh pleasant. Such is not our destiny; we must learn that we are but pilgrims and sojourners here, that this is not our country, but that we seek for a better, that is, an heavenly. O may the Lord continue to be gracious, that we may look upon his beauty, may adore his goodness, may desire his purity, may worship him altogether, knowing no other God, no other life. May he enable us to say, Our times be in thy hand. Whatever thou sendest, O teach us thy will. Let us be willing to be altogether abased, reproached and scorned for thy precious name's sake. Let me count nothing of any value but thy presence.

I must close. With love, my dear ones, I am,

RUTH.

HAMPTON, Iowa, May 7, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—It has been a long time since I last wrote you. I have often thought of you, and all the brethren, and of the many good letters written and published in the SIGNS. I have enjoyed sweet comfort in reading them, especially the editorials; all have been good. It has been some time since I have written an article for publication, as there are so many who can write more ably than I. I am so dark in mind with regard to spiritual things I fear that I never knew anything about them. Dark clouds hover over me, and I scarcely see the light. I look back over my past life, since, I trust, the Lord called me by grace, unless I am a poor deceived mortal, and recall the crooked paths I have trodden, the sore trials through which I have been called to pass during the fifty-eight years since I professed a hope in Jesus and was received as a member in the Old School Baptist Church. For over forty years I have been trying to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. At this late hour of my pilgrimage here in this tabernacle of clay I am still unable to see one good act I have ever done. I will soon be seventy-two years of age, and it is still true with me that sin is mixed with all I do. I have no righteousness of my own. "O is there any one like me?" "Am I his, or am I not?" Did you, dear brother, ever feel like this? Yet I do know that I have a love for my brethren that the world knows nothing about. I love God and his people, I love to meet with them and to hear them talk of the things of the kingdom. I do know there was a time when I had no love for them or for the kingdom of God; I never can forget the change that, as I sometimes hope, took place with me when the burden left me and caused me to praise his holy name; everything in nature even seemed to be changed. I thought at that time I would always be praising him for his goodness to me, a poor sinner. But alas, soon I was made to doubt. I tried then with all the power I had to get the burden back, but I never did. I mourned over it and prayed over it for many weeks, and then my Jesus appeared again, and from that day to this hour I have sometimes been on Pisgah's mountain and sometimes down in the valley. This has been the way which I have trod.

Dear brother Chick, I will leave this for your judgment. Tell me, is it thus with you? I have passed through many sore trials since I wrote you last: my wife has been almost entirely blind for the last three years; there were cataracts on both her eyes. Last January she was operated upon, and it proved a success; she can now see very well again out of one eye, so she can do the housework. For more than a year she could not tell one person from another. I do feel thankful to God and render praise to him that she can see again. The doctor at first gave us but little hope. She is nearly seventy years of age. Now in writing to you I have described my darkness of mind in spiritual things, and will close this poor letter. I hope to hear from you soon, if this is worthy of an answer.

Will you please give your views through the SIGNS upon Solomon's Song, first chapter, eighth verse? What are the kids beside the shepherds' tents who are there to be fed? I have no light upon it.

Yours in love,

E. A. NORTON.

[IN reply to the request contained in this letter from brother Norton we will

simply call attention to the fact that under the law of Moses the clean animals numbered among them goats and kids, as well as sheep and lambs. Goats were commanded to be offered in sacrifice, as well as other clean animals. They were also clean for food, as well as sheep. Jewish shepherds possessed flocks of goats as well as of sheep. In Ezekiel xxxiv. the people of Israel are said to be composed of classes of men resembling great and strong goats, and tender lambs and sheep; some among them had waxed proud and rich, and had come to oppress others who were weaker, and the prophet compares the one to goats and the other to sheep, but both were Israelites. In the parable of the sheep and the goats, the Savior sets forth by one, those who are his own, and by the other, those who know him not, and whom he does not recognize as his, but this does not destroy the fact that under the ceremonial law both were clean animals. In the text to which our brother has called attention, the meaning would be just the same had the language read, Feed thy lambs beside the shepherds' tents, and it seems to us that the thought is for all who love the Bridegroom, and desire his presence, to abide by the places where the undershepherds care for the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers. Christ, the bridegroom of their souls, makes his presence manifest in his churches, where the word is preached and the ordinances of his house are administered. Whatever may be committed to our care under this chief Shepherd will be best cared for beside the tents of the undershepherds. It is through the administration of his word and of the ordinances of his house that we grow in grace and knowledge. The graces of the Spirit, and this knowledge of him, are the kids that are to be fed by the tents of the shepherds. We suggest these brief thoughts in reply to brother Norton.—C.]

DUNNINGTON, Ark., May 5, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have been reading Elder Chick's reply to the request of brother Ward regarding Proverbs xxi. 9, and it is full of comfort for me. I have been wanting to write you ever since, but have felt that any one so little as I am should not attempt to write to others who are so able as you all seem to me to be; but I feel like writing any way, and cannot help it. When I get the SIGNS, I look through it for the editorials of Elder Gilbert Beebe of long ago. It seems to me that he was blessed with a double portion of God's Spirit.

Now as to the text or subject above mentioned, I will say that I do not wish to detract from what Elder Chick has said upon the subject, for his words are full of comfort to me, neither do I wish to criticise in the least, but I feel that the subject is not exhausted, neither will it be when I get through, but I want to say a few words upon this subject, as it is one of the first Scriptures that I ever had any knowledge of, if indeed I have any knowledge of them. "It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house." Why? Well, what of the brawling woman? She is contentious, fretful, ill-natured, quarrelsome, and wants to rule the house according to her deceitful nature; her love is only momentary. This is so much the case that the man, who is of a quiet disposition, is hampered, and eventually his joys in life are destroyed, and he becomes a slave. This is true in nature. Though she be in a wide house, and it matters not how wide the house

may be, he cannot escape this troublesome woman, and the man soon wants to be away in some lonely spot, even the corner of a housetop, away from the noise of this woman. It may be that she loves him, but she loves to have him around so she can feed her disposition, which is to crush out the life of peace and joy which he desires to have. But this is a figure of another woman which rode upon the scarlet colored beast; this woman appears to be living in comfort and ease, and is dressed very finely on first sight. She has many colors to suit all sorts of eyes except pure ones. Her views upon dress are broad enough to take in the whole world; she has a wide house, and plenty of room. You will hear this woman boasting of a doctrine broad enough to take in everything; the house is wide. I thought of caring for this woman once, but upon investigation I found that her dress had too many colors, so I thought, as did Solomon, that it was better to dwell in the wilderness than to dwell with a brawling woman in a wide house. Why is it better to dwell in the corner of a housetop? I dwelt there eighteen years nearly. Well, there must be a house built before there can be a corner to dwell in. "Every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God." "Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands." "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." But why is it better to dwell in the corner of a housetop? Well, the stone that the builders rejected is become the head of the corner, the chief corner-stone. He is the head of the family. The head of the woman is the man, and the head of the man is Christ, so Christ has become the head of the corner. To dwell then in the corner of the housetop is to dwell nearer the love of the Son of God, and it is better to dwell in his love, his mercy, his joy and his happiness, though he be in the corner of the housetop, than to dwell with a brawling woman in a wide house. I think that this Scripture applies to a child of God who has not united with the church. I may be wrong, but some of them are, I believe, captivated by this wide house. There are times when this woman cleans up and puts on this apparently nice dress, puts things in order, collects a lap full of green gourds, makes a mess of pottage and begins to eat. In this section they generally begin as soon as crops are laid by, and continue until cold weather. They get warmed up by this strange fire, and seem to be very religious, but there is no food for a child of God in it, yet some of them are there starving; they have been captivated. I have been through some of this. So when you question the authority of some of these practices they say you are too tight laced upon religious principles. So it is better to dwell in the corner of a housetop than with this brawling woman in a wide house, because we feel to be near the love and fellowship of the blessed Son of God. These same builders refused the blessed Jesus, and he became the head of the corner. If they refused him, they will refuse his people also. If then, we can find a body of people preaching and practicing the doctrine of God our Savior there will be rest, and if he be our Savior, it is evident that we need a Savior. God's people need a Savior, and they have one, too. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." If we cannot find a body of people who preach and practice this doctrine we had

better dwell alone. This is so, because when we are alone in a wilderness, or in the corner of a housetop, we have the felt presence of the dear Redeemer. I have shed tears of joy at such times, when I thought I was the only one on earth who felt to be a great sinner in the sight of the holy and just God. Again I have been in these wide houses, when others would get drunk, as it seemed to me, upon the blood of the saints, and it was all as the brawling woman to me. I found no comfort there and no food for my soul; I was just starving, and without the faithful Shepherd I feel as though I should have died. Many of us have felt this way. One aged sister said to me last year that she thought she was all there was left. So Elijah felt, and they sought his life, but there were seven thousand even then who had not bowed the knee to Baal. Paul said, Even so now there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

But lest I weary you I will close. I have only offered these views, and have no desire to be wise above what is written, neither do I desire to be exalted, but rather abased, for I feel that this is the most appropriate place for me. Please cast the mantle of charity over this. May God bless you all.

Yours for the truth's sake,

WILLIAM H. EUBANKS.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April 16, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you a letter from sister Annie L. McColl, who was baptized in the fellowship of this church two years ago. She was then about fourteen years old. Her mind seems to have been led much, for these two or three years, in the contemplation of the order and beauty of the church, and to have been filled with a longing desire to meet with the brethren, and to sing and worship with them in the assembly of the saints. I think this letter will be of interest to the brethren.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, April 7, 1912.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND, AND THE CHURCH AT SOUTHAMPTON—DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—It is Sunday evening, and I want to write just a few lines to let you know how much I have been thinking of you all lately, especially this afternoon. O how I wish I could be with you at our church meeting. It seems almost unbearable when I think of the many times you all meet together when I am not in your midst. To-day Mr. Smallbone, a member of the Strict Baptist Church, came over to see me, and I do feel thankful that the gracious Lord saw fit to have us meet together in his name. O how great are his mercies, that this wonderful privilege should be shown to me, the most unworthy of all his children, if indeed I have any part in him. I have been brought so low since I last saw you all, two long years ago, and have often wondered whether I have not deceived the church, and have been taken in by mistake. But I am thankful that my faith is being tried, and that I am led to see that in myself dwells no good thing, for the Lord has said that His strength is made perfect in weakness, and my one desire is to be kept at his feet in humility. I have often felt that my prayers are an abomination to the Lord, and the words die unuttered on my trembling lips. I am afraid to cry out to him in my troubles lest he in his anger should cast me off forever from him; but it gave me some comfort this afternoon when our dear brother said

that the prayers of the Savior were sure, and all his utterances were heard and answered by the God of all grace. O if I were one of those for whom he prayed (John xvii.) all would be well, but what am I that I should even dare hope for this great blessing? I am but a worm, and am not worthy to come into the presence of the least of his little ones. But O what would this life and all its vanities be to me if the fellowship of his dear children was withdrawn? Surely, "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." I think that the eighty-fourth Psalm is beautiful. O how my soul hungers for the preaching of the gospel, but I know that the will of the all-wise Jehovah is best, and I wish to be submissive to his will, and learn to kiss the rod, for how sweet it is to know that the Lord chastens those whom he loves. All my ways are in his hand, and I am thankful it is so, for without him I am nothing, and how far would I stray from the paths of righteousness.

O, how precious are the letters I receive from the dear ones in my home church! I only wish I could be more worthy of them, but I know that there is nothing in me to merit esteem, and it is only through him who is my righteousness.

This is a very worthless letter, so full of self, "that legal thing and base," but when I speak of the power of God and his mercy and righteousness it is so far above me that I am drowned in the depths of that great love which is beyond all human understanding. It is a wonder to me that I dare to address this letter to his dear children, but I do want you all to think of me, a sinner, who has strayed far from the strait and narrow path leading to eternal life, and pray that I may be kept by his power, though I am far from the shelter of his holy sanctuary.

With dear love, in christian fellowship, I am, I hope, your most unworthy little sister,

ANNIE L. McCOLL.

P. S.—Now, dear pastor, if you do not think this is fit to be read at our church meeting, cast it aside, for I do not wish to intrude. I think this is the first attempt I have made to write to the church, and all I desire is to tell how much I think of you all meeting together in the name of our dear Redeemer, and pray that his blessing may rest upon you. I am far from the church I love, but I know that he can strengthen me to bear whatever trials he may cause me to pass through. I received your letter, and will try to answer soon, if the Lord wills.

A. L. M.

WAVERLY, Pa., May 14, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The inclosed letter of sister Mertie Andrus is at your disposal, to publish or not. I feel that it would be of great encouragement to many poor doubting, fearing souls who read our family paper, the SIGNS. I have known her for nearly forty years, and can say that she is a good christian sister, and is highly esteemed by her brethren and sisters at Brookdale, Pa., and Otego, N. Y.

Yours as ever, D. M. VAIL.

BINGHAMTON, N. Y., March 7, 1912.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER:—I have been thinking for a long time of writing you and telling the little experience I have, if I have any. To commence with, my first remembrance of life came with the knowledge of death. In some way my oldest brother, John, next

older than I, got me to understand. I think I could not have been more than six or seven years old. I can remember no impression except living, and that I had to die. As I grew older I think I must have had a dread of death, for when playing with schoolmates suddenly I would think, I have got to die, and I would think, How willingly I would give up life if I only knew I would be happy after death. Time passed, and I must have been twelve or more years old, when often after retiring nights my pillow would be wet with my tears, and I would pray for a new heart: Dear Lord, give me a heart of flesh, and take away this heart of stone. I never remember of being in such agony as some tell of in their experiences, I only remember a dread of death, and praying. My father was gifted in prayer, and often I awoke in the night hearing him praying, and I would try hard to keep awake to hear all he would say, but would often fall asleep. I attended protracted meetings, and felt to rejoice when any of my young friends would make a start to get religion. I thought if I could only get religion, and not have to go through with all the formalities they did, how glad I would be. My father and mother were Old School Baptists, and very strong in their belief, but never tried to influence their children regarding religion. About this time an Old School Baptist preacher came to our house and preached in the place occasionally; his name was Elder Simson. How I loved and revered that old man. At night before retiring he would read a chapter and pray. I can see him now, with the Bible on his knee, explaining the Scriptures. It was like a sermon, and I think in a way I learned to love the word as he explained it; hungering or desire to lead a better life was always with me, and when I had a home of my own, and children given me to care for, I felt the need more than ever. My husband was a Methodist, and I thought, I must not in any way be the cause of his forgetting his duties as a church member, so I would get the Bible and encourage him to have family worship. This I continued to do for a long time, and finally the duty, if one, was dropped, but now more than ever I felt the need of a Savior. I finally came to the conclusion if I ever had an opportunity to talk with my father all alone I would do so. Not long after this my husband was away on business, to be gone all day; my father came about ten o'clock to spend the day with me. Now was my trial; I had promised myself I would talk with him, and I must fulfill that promise. I think we talked some two hours or more; he prayed before leaving, and in a way I felt relieved. I asked him if I ever became settled in my mind and wanted to join some denomination, had he any choice whether I joined the Methodists or Baptists. He thought a minute and then said, "I leave you in the hands of God, he will direct you." Then came my doubts and fears of an evidence. I had two dreams; in one I was alone in the fields, seemingly happy, for I always enjoyed nature, when suddenly everything, trees, ground and sky, were filled with the most beautiful light, bright as the sun. I thought, This must be the end of the world, and I not saved. I felt to give myself away, and all fear left me, and I awoke. Another time I dreamed I was at some house, not a meetinghouse, and there seemed to be

people kneeling by chairs, and my father among the rest, when suddenly father raised his head and asked me why I thought I had passed from death unto life? I quoted a text of Scripture, but cannot now remember the text, only I remember he seemed satisfied. At another time it came to me that for a long time I had not worried over my load of sin. I could not see that I was any better; what had become of it? I think I have always had a desire to live a christian life, but when I would do good, evil is always present, consequently my life has been a warfare. Naturally I have a happy, cheerful disposition, always trying to be pleasant in my family, and tried to influence my children to be morally good. I am naturally affectionate, and love my friends with a deep affection, and often think, Do I love the brethren and sisters in the church with a deeper love? I do think that love for them is deeper and more satisfying than friendship.

Now, brother Marvin, I have jotted down these little experiences to ask you if you can make out a christian experience from the reading of them. For a year or more prayer seems to have been denied me. I love to sing the songs of Zion, and read the Bible and the SIGNS, but do not remember as I wish I could, and am fearful I am not a child of grace. I wonder why I was taken into the church, but our dear Elder Bundy seemed to think I had a right to come, and he baptized me, and that brings to mind a feeling of happiness which came over me as I sank in the water; it was only for an instant, but it seemed to be perfect.

From a very weak sister, if one, to a beloved brother.

NANCY M. ANDRUS.

DRAIN, Oregon, Dec., 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—I believe in the predestination and foreordination of God in all things, but there are some who take this doctrine as a cloak under which to hide, and others say they do not believe in works, and that the Lord will provide. I believe in works just as Paul taught good works. If a man has a good piece of land, and yet does not cultivate it, it will surely not produce grain; any one who wants returns will sow and cultivate that field, and will use the best seed he can obtain; he will not sow tares and weeds, by which I mean discord. After the transgression it was pronounced upon men that they should earn their bread in the sweat of their face. We must, with what ability our heavenly Father gives us, work; we must sow and water, yet the Lord gives the increase. It seems to me that the same rule will apply to our churches. Some will quote, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." We know that this is a fact, but how do we know beforehand whether the Lord will bless our labors or not? Can we expect the Lord's house to be built up if we forsake the assembling of ourselves together? Can we expect to reap a good harvest if we sow all manner of discord? No, no church will prosper unless all are walking together; we know that grievous wolves will creep in. Satan goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, but we ought to go to our heavenly Father with all our troubles, he, and he alone, is able to save us from all of them. If we contract a debt our conscience tells us that we must pay it; we cannot sit down and say, The Lord will pay it. We must ourselves work to that end, still never losing sight of the Lord, for though we labor, we know that we must have his

blessing upon our labors. It is in him and through him that we look for strength and ability to provide a way for our escape from this debt.

I do not want to be understood to say that our eternal salvation depends upon our works; the works I am pointing out are commanded of the Lord, and are not intended to puff up the mortal mind, but these things humble us at the feet of our Savior. James says, "Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works."

Now with regard to church difficulties, there are many mistakes made, as it seems to me. I look at it this way, but I do not want to assume authority in any sense. I am the least and the weakest of all, but still I will speak of the way I look at it. I do not think it right for any member, brother or sister, to think, "I" am the church. All ought to be considered in any matter that comes up, for all are one in Christ Jesus. As a general thing the younger look to the older, and in a sense this is right, and is commanded in the word of God, but still the younger ought to be heard from just as the older. Sometimes a broader view of matters is given to them than to the older ones, being taught in the same school of Christ. If anything comes up upon which all are not agreed, do not be hasty, but put it off, so as to give all time to study the matter, and perhaps when they come together again they will all be of one mind. Do not be hasty in anything that pertains to gospel order; many things come up and there are hasty words, either in writing or in speaking, and such words bring sorrow and trouble, which ought not to be.

In looking over this I almost shudder to think that a little, aged one such as I am should undertake to speak of such things as I have here done, but the half has not been told, I have only touched the subject, yet it is of great importance to us all. If this should appear in print I hope you will all spread the mantle of charity over it. Just think of it as being a little aged sister's thoughts. We do not work for a reward, but we do obtain the answer of a good conscience before God and man. My prayer is for the peace and prosperity of Zion everywhere. Brethren, let us be careful not to offend one of God's little ones. Let us overcome evil with good; let us never be hasty. May the Lord be with us all, is my prayer. The SIGNS comes regularly to my dear aged companion and me. We are alone now, as our children are all married and have homes of their own. We get much good out of our family paper. May the Lord bless and prosper both editors and readers.

From a poor sinner, saved, if saved at all, by the grace of God.

S. MORNINGSTAR.

[WE commend these solemn admonitions from the pen of our aged sister to all our readers. Faith and its fruit are both important to consider. The Lord gives living faith, and the proof of living faith is that it works in us by love, and as it works in us we work out its inward working. It is good to be admonished to these outward works, which are the fruit of faith. Paul exhorted his brethren at Corinth that they receive not the grace of God in vain. Natural men, who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, say, If we are saved by grace, there is no need and no use of caring for the manner in which we live, and this very thing becomes a temptation, through the wiles of the devil, to God's own dear children. Hence the need of exhortation and warning and counsel from those who minister

in word and doctrine. Hence the apostles thought it meet to stir up the pure minds of the brethren to a remembrance of these things. Our sister has well said that works do not save us eternally, for this is of the Lord, but still there is a salvation while walking as the Lord has commanded, and in thus walking there is rest found to the soul.—C.]

REESE, Texas, May 8, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed I send a good letter from Elder E. W. J. Adams, which I think you will like for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

With sincere love,

(MRS.) M. L. LILES.

PINELAND, Texas, March 5, 1912.

MR. M. L. LILES—DEAR BROTHER:—Your most excellent letter is just at hand, and contents noted; I surely enjoyed it. It is the truth, if I know anything about the truth, and sometimes when I go up to Jerusalem and stand in the temple and am made to declare the Lord's doings with his people I can say, I know that this is the truth as it is in Jesus. Then when I go away from the city and get down in the valley of Lodebar, and am crippled in both ankles, so that I cannot walk, and am compelled to wait for the King to send for me, I get very low indeed. But I have to wait until he sends for me; but "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run, and not be weary, and they shall walk, and not faint." You see there are several "shalls" in this promise, and they are all sure, and cannot fail, because God has made them. Yes, dear brother, I feel to know what it is to be bound with that girdle which no man has ever broken, and never will break, and no man can be bound with that girdle only as the God of heaven puts it upon him, and then it is done forever. The man may try to break this girdle, but it stays with him, for God has given it to him, and placed it upon him, and when he is caused to go up to Jerusalem he knows no more what he will say than Abraham knew where he was going when the Lord told him to leave the land of his nativity and go to a land which should be shown him. Yes, the Lord said to him, Go, and he must go. This brings me to my experience of last Sunday. I went to my meeting at Jasper, and on Sunday morning all was so dark that I could feel it, but a song came into my mind. It was number 559 in Lloyd's collection, and we sang it in the spirit. I went into the stand, and the spirit of supplication was upon this poor old sinner, and the first verse of the twelfth chapter of Daniel came to me, and if ever I knew anything about the plan of salvation, I was then enabled to tell it. I have been suffering ever since with my throat, but this does not move me from duty. My time is all taken up. I am called to the care of three churches. Sometimes I do not know what to do, only as the Lord leads me, and my prayer is that he will give me the true spirit of reconciliation to His will.

I will close. When it is well with you remember me.

From your little brother in bonds,

E. W. J. ADAMS.

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1912.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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ROMANS VIII. 28.

BROTHER C. S. Bond, of Philadelphia, Pa., recently called our special attention to the familiar words recorded in Romans viii. 28, and asked that we make some comments upon them. They read thus: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Perhaps no words are more familiar to the readers of the SIGNS than are these, and no words contain more that is calculated to confirm the hope and to encourage the tried and tempted people of God than do these words, and perhaps no words are more often referred to by those who preach the gospel. It seems impossible for us to say anything about them that has not been said a thousand times before in the hearing of all who may read what we shall write, yet these words are full of rich consolation still. Their sweetness has not been exhausted, though millions of believers have been drawing water out of this well of salvation ever since the language was written by the inspired apostle. If it shall be our privilege now, or at any future time, to find some refreshing stream flowing from this fountain, we shall be in company with all who before us have done the same. By this cool spring we also shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God. May this spring not be shut up or this fountain sealed as we contemplate these words now for a little season.

First. We desire to call special attention to the wording of the text. The language is positive: "We know," says the apostle. He doubtless means both himself and those to whom he was writing. He presents this truth not as a matter undecided, but as something well known and recognized among all who were called to be saints; he does not speak of it as a subject with regard to which he expected any objection to arise. It seems to have been reserved for a later day for men who are professed followers of the Lamb of God to claim that all things do not work together for good to the people of God. It has been argued that the apostle only meant to say that all the things of which he now proceeds to speak do thus work; that is, that foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification and final glory, of which he speaks in the following verse, are all that the apostle intended to include in the phrase "all things," but there is no warrant for this in the language itself. He did not say, All these things that follow work for good, but "all things." The apostle by these words must be understood to take in all that is embraced in the chapter at least, and so the verse following would not be excluded by any means, while all other things named in this chapter, and in the whole epistle, such as tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril or sword, must be included. It is sure that the apostle signified by this phrase "all things" not only the blessed work of redemption

through Christ, with all that is included in that redemption, but also all the providential circumstances of their lives, including tribulation, &c. There could have been no need that he should have said to his brethren that the foreknowledge and purpose of God should work for their good; this they would have been fully persuaded of before. But now for their strength and comfort the apostle declares that such things as tribulation, distresses and persecution also work, together with all these other things, for their good, and this assurance the afflicted brethren to whom he was now writing would especially need. This truth they had already known, but now they are reminded of it that they might not faint by the way.

Second. In the next place let us notice that the apostle uses the word "together." All things not only work for our good, but they work together. To the short sight of those to whom he was writing it might often have seemed as though there was no connection, or, at least, no harmony, in the providences of God with one another, or with his gracious work of redemption. It no doubt seemed to them often as though many of the events of their lives were working against them and to their harm, but the apostle reminds them of what faith had shown them, viz., that there was no division in the providences of God, but that all were tending to one end, viz., the glory of God and the good of his chosen. It is like the wheels of a watch, one wheel may seem, to one who looks for the first time upon its wheels and springs, to be moving in one direction while its mate moves in the opposite direction, and yet, after all, every wheel and spring under its skilled maker is only moving in its proper sphere of labor, and is working in full harmony with every other wheel and spring to one common end, and He who has set the wheels of the universe in motion, and who sees all, does not see any opposition in the machinery, but that all is working to one end, and all working together, and this is infinitely more certain to be so with this glorious plan formed by the all-wise and almighty God than can be the case with any machine, no matter how carefully it may be made, proceeding from the hand of man, for the watchmaker does not go along with each watch that he makes, nor does he with his own hand continually move each cog and spring and wheel of the watch, which he may carry in his own hand, while our God, who loves his people, performs what he has purposed. He all the time has his hand upon every event, whether of joy or sorrow, of pleasure or pain, and moves on his affairs each moment. He has not wound up the universe, neither has he wound up that little portion of it where we live, and left it to go on until it runs down, while he sleeps, but he every moment moves on each event with unerring skill and with love to his own. How wonderful was that revelation to the faith of Job in his trials: He performeth the thing that he hath appointed for me, and how wonderful must have been the consolation such truth brought to his heart in the midst of his sore trials.

Third. Let us notice that the apostle does not say that all things work together for good to all men. But as the grace of God is discriminating, so Paul discriminates in this language: "To them that love God," and, more than this, he discriminates still further by saying, "To them who are the called according to his purpose." It would be going far beyond the testimony of the apostle here to undertake to say that this language is

true of all men. He who would handle the word of God honestly must leave these promises where the inspired apostle left them; they are to them who love God and who are his called servants. Also let it be marked that the apostle does not here say, To them that will love God, but to them that do love him, and this is not a distinction without a difference. To say all things work together for good to those who will love him might imply a condition: that is, if men will love God he will see that all things shall work for their good. But love could not be induced in any person in any such way. Love must be shed abroad in the heart, if it be there at all, by the Holy Spirit which is given unto men. The language of the text says just this, viz., that where that love is found, there God will cause that all shall be to their good. The same love that gave itself to dwell in their hearts will also see to it that all things shall conspire to bring good to that one. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Again, Paul said, "All things are yours," life, death, apostles, everything. It is also sure that nothing can work for good to them who do not love God. Those who do not love God are still dead in sin, and sin in them perverts even the good things of God. Thus we read of some who turn even the grace of God into lasciviousness, and that gospel which is the savor of life unto life in them that are saved, is the savor of death unto death unto them that are lost. The same sun that softens wax hardens clay. This is not due to any difference in the sun's heat, or in its shining, but solely to the difference in the substances upon which its heat falls. But we do not need to multiply words or reasons here, it is enough that divine inspiration has limited this good to them that love God; and, negatively, it is sure that if there be any man concerning whom it is true that all things do not work for his good, it is manifest that he does not love God, and that he has not been called according to the purpose of God.

Fourth. Let us notice some Bible examples of this truth. How changeable was the life of Jacob. What a mixture of joy and sorrow, of fallings and revivings again, of departures in heart and life from the Lord, and of returnings again, is recorded of him in the Bible narratives. But as we read on carefully we see how all these things were needful in his life, and how they all at last made manifest the real faith that was in him, and how at last he was brought by all these changeable providences to rest in God, and how through all these storms and seasons of stress he came to a quiet old age and received the blessing of God in full measure, both in the things that were spiritual and the things that were temporal. Sometimes he said, as we often in our unbelief say, All these things are against me. But even this at the end humbled him before God, and brought him to know that faith itself must be the gift of God, and that without the constant presence of God that faith would not be sustained or increased. So also Joseph learned, through many wonderful providences, that even that which might appear contrary to him and to the promise of God was, after all, among the things needful to bring to pass that which God had promised. His brethren sinned, sinned in their envy against him, sinned when they sought to take his life, sinned when they sold him into Egypt, sinned when they brought a lie to his aged father, sinned in all their conduct towards him.

Potiphar's wife sinned against him when she told a falsehood about him, causing him to be cast into prison, yet all these things were needful links in the chain of events which brought out at last the fulfillment of the promise of God that he should rule over his brethren. It avails nothing to say that God could have brought all this about in some other way; it was not brought out in some other way, but in this one dark and devious way, dark and devious to Joseph, so that no doubt his faith was sorely tried during the long years of waiting, but it was one straight way in the all-seeing eye of the Lord. In these instances we have seen how providential things all work together for good, whether they be pleasant or grievous, and we may be sure that the things which were true of some of God's servants are also true of all his servants. In these narratives God has shown us samples, if we may be allowed to use that word, of his manner of dealing with all who love him. If all things worked together for good to Jacob and Joseph, his servants of old, we may be sure that he deals in like manner with all his servants, and if nothing really wrought harm to these men of faith, it is sure that nothing shall ever work harm to any of the faithful.

Fifth. The testimony of holy men of God in the former days is clear upon this one point: affliction is among the "all things" that work for good to them that love God. This was David's testimony: "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." Surely these are the words of experience and faith. Paul said, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, * * * but at the things which are not seen." Paul said again, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." Again, he testifies that "tribulation worketh patience," with all other good and heavenly graces.

Beside these divinely inspired testimonies of holy men of old we have unnumbered testimonies of humble-hearted children of God all around us. In former years we knew one to whom after years of happiness and prosperity there came multiplied adversities, a kind husband became a drunkard, and from affluence they were reduced to poverty; toward the last wasting disease came upon her. It was our privilege to know her and to baptize her in the fellowship of the church of God, and to visit her often during those years of affliction. Many, many times did she bear this testimony in our hearing: "In the days of my prosperity I did not remember God, but when adversity came, I was humbled before him and he heard my cry, and he has given me hope in his grace and salvation. My afflictions have been the greatest blessings of my life." This was the testimony of one. Millions of others have borne similar testimony. How wonderful that even our slips and falls are overruled again and again for our lasting good. So it was with Peter when he denied his Master, and how often looking back over our miserable failures, are we humbled before God. Thus even our falls are overruled to bring us to our haven of rest and safety. These things only illustrate the language of the text, they set forth examples where the language of the text is made clear. We do not speak of these things as confirming

the text as though it needed confirmation; it needs no confirmation, seeing that it is the word of God. Whether we ever see one instance where the text is borne out or not, humble faith will believe that it is all true. "We know," as said the apostle, that it is true. C.

ROMANS VIII. 31.

"WHAT shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

The above words have been in our mind at times during the past few days, yet no special lead of thought has been presented by them. Sometimes we write because of impression, feeling that we have something to say, at the same time hoping some one may be helped thereby. Sometimes we write because requested to do so, then again from the standpoint of duty. This time seems more duty than anything else, because we have written very seldom during the present year.

In this most wonderful letter to the church at Rome the apostle presents the plain, simple, yet glorious truth of the gospel, and from a natural standpoint it would seem that all men might see and understand the plan of salvation, but from a spiritual standpoint we fully know that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God," even though they be presented in the most simple language. We have sometimes thought that in the doubts and fears of the children of God this fact is not fully appreciated. We all in nature's darkness were as blind to the truth of God as was Saul of Tarsus in his pharisaical zeal, verily believing he was doing God service. Could he in that condition of blindness to the simplicity of the gospel have written such a letter as the letter to the church at Rome? He could have created a world as easily. The preaching of Jesus Christ and him crucified was more than distasteful to him; hope, faith and experimental teaching were foolishness to him, therefore he persecuted all who believed in Jesus and called upon his name. What wrought the miraculous change in that zealous Pharisee? Who enlightened him and caused him to believe Jesus to be the Christ? What wrought love in his heart for the people he once persecuted? Did the law of Moses open his blind eyes to behold the glory of God? Did any religious training he received at the feet of Gamaliel or elsewhere in nature enlighten him and cause him to preach Jesus of Nazareth, whom he had persecuted? Was there any persuasion on the part of the church that caused him to forsake his worldly prominence and become a despised follower of the meek and lowly Lamb of God? These questions can be answered fully by the one word, No. Then would it not seem a matter of inquiry among men as to what wrought the wonderful change in Saul of Tarsus that even afterward his name was called Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ? Yet there seems but little interest in such things in the world, and when the simple story of Saul's conversion is told it has no more effect upon men who believe not than the story of Jesus had upon Saul of Tarsus. The appearing of Jesus in the manifestation of his power and Godhead wrought the complete change in Saul; it made of him a preacher of the gospel and an apostle of Jesus Christ. It made him love the people he once hated and serve them in things pertaining to God, even to the sacrifice of his own life. This shows the power of God in the conversion of men without the "aids" and "helps" so universally resorted to by those in nature's darkness.

In the letter to the church at Rome he tells them of his longing desire to see them, that he might impart unto them some spiritual gift, to the end that they might be established. How very different this from the work of Saul of Tarsus, who obtained authority from the powers at Jerusalem to take, bind and cast into prison all, both men and women, who called upon the name of Jesus! Just here the thought occurs that the child of God, though considered ignorant and far behind the times, is infinitely beyond the world in knowledge. He knows fully every idea of salvation by works as believed by the wise and prudent, and he has also the secret of the Lord, which makes him wise unto that salvation which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Hence instead of the subject of grace being ignorant, and therefore an object of pity, those of this progressive age are the ones to be pitied, because of blindness to and ignorance of spiritual things.

We cannot even think of trying to enter into the great depths of our text and enumerate all "the things" therein embraced, but desire to call attention to at least a few things. In the preceding chapter the apostle gives an account of the life he lived in the flesh, serving with his flesh the law of sin and with his mind the law of God, and because of his inability to perform the things he would, said, "O wretched man that I am!" In the beginning of the eighth chapter he assured the brethren at Rome of the power of Jesus Christ to save sinners. So perfect is that work that there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ. How careful he was to tell what the law could not do, it being weak through the flesh, lest some one might still have even a shadow of hope of life eternal through its deeds. The words of our text seem to present a question of triumph, as it were, establishing forever the safety of God's people against every enemy in life and their victory over death and the grave through Christ the Lord.

On one occasion while Jesus was in the flesh, a certain woman was brought to him and accused of a sin which was unto death according to the law, and for such sin the law made no provision for escape, hence her life, the law and her accusers said, should pay for her sin. The accusers of the women called the attention of Jesus to what Moses said: Such shall be stoned, but added, What sayest thou? He answered: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." They all, "being convinced by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." This most beautifully illustrates what Paul means by the latter question of our text: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" The law could not put to death one whom Jesus came to seek and to save. All the enemies of that woman, who would gladly have stoned her to death, were themselves convinced of sin in their conscience, and no longer accused her. How wonderful, how gracious the question: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" This same blessed doctrine was presented by Balaam when he asked the king, referring to the Israelites, Who can curse that which the

Lord hath blessed? How often, even in this age of the world, the fearful in heart overcome enemies, obstacles and trying circumstances, all because the Lord is on their side. The Lord having known in his eternal purpose his people in Christ, calls them out of nature's darkness into his marvelous light unto the knowledge of himself and his Son Jesus Christ. He also justifies the called and glorifies the justified. These are a few of the things in which God is for us, and work together for the good of all who love him. We know of no better way to conclude this little effort than by quoting the last seven verses of this eighth chapter of Romans: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." K.

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EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

EXPERIENCE OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

We are acquainted with an individual whose history we will give in the following words, viz.: He was (like all the race of which he is a member) conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity. He was born in the eastern part of the State of Connecticut. He was a religionist from his birth, yet an enemy to God and a stranger to grace during the first seven years of his natural life (for he was alive before the commandment came). He had at this period been taught to say his prayers, but had never been taught to pray; he had made some progress in the "Westminster Catechism," and, in short, as touching the religion of the Pharisees he excelled many of his equals. It would have terrified him exceedingly to have gone to sleep at night without counterbalancing all the sins of the day by a repetition of his forms of worship, but on all occasions when he had paid his vows he had peace offerings at home. Up to about this period of his life he was led to suppose that as touching the righteousness of the law he was blameless. We cannot describe to our readers the mortification and disappointment of this young lad when being suddenly arrested by an arrow from the quiver of the Lord he was summoned to stand at the dreadful bar of divine justice and give the reason (if any he had) why the tremendous sentence of the law of God should not be executed upon his guilty soul. Great was his consternation when he cast his eager glance around in search of those fancied treasures of personal holiness

which he had believed himself to be in possession of. Alas, his stronghold failed him in this very critical moment, he felt that he was ruined, but like Edom he said, I am impoverished, but I will return and build again my waste places. Great were his efforts, his labors, toils and pains to mend again that holy law which he had broken. He would have prayed, but he could no longer view the great, the dreadful God as a being that might be trifled with, or pacified by what he could do. He struggled, but the harder he struggled the deeper he seemed to be involved in an horrible pit and in miry clay; these exercises continued for many days and weeks. Sometimes he meditated a retreat from this awful, wretched state, but whither could he flee? If on the wings of the morning he flew to the uttermost sea, God was there, everywhere present, beholding the evil and the good; there could be no retreating from God, before whose flaming eyes all things are naked and open. At length the day seemed to arrive when the dreadful sentence of the inexorable law of God must be put in execution. Now blackness and darkness and tempests gathered round his frighted soul, hell yawned before him, justice stood with uplifted arm, and the flaming sword of vengeance was drawn from its scabbard and brandished over his guilty head; the books were brought, the archaccuser was also there, and what was to him more dreadful still than all, the piercing eye of God brought the black crimes of years to light, and what had been transacted in midnight darkness was now exposed upon the housetop. Chilled thus with horror, and pressed down to death with intense despair, remorse, guilt and keen anguish throbbing in his breast, tell us, dear reader, did he need an anxious bench, or knives, or lancets, to secure his conviction? Or would it have comforted him to have been informed by some "Universalist" that there was no hell, when the very pains of hell had hold of him? As well might he be told when writhing on a bed of embers that there was no heat in fire. The spell of such delusion was now broken, the Spirit had moved upon the face of the great deep of his inmost soul, and although all had been without form, and void, yet God had said, Let there be light, and light broke in upon him, and in this light that heart which he had thought was a temple meet for the Holy Ghost to dwell in, was now manifestly the habitation of dragons, &c., the hold of every unclean and hateful bird. It was thus when in or about his eleventh year he went to a distant barn, under an impression like that expressed by the poet:

> "I can but perish if I go,
> I am resolved to try;
> For if I stay away I know
> I must forever die."

He fell upon his bended knees, but he could not pray; a rustling leaf, a turning straw, frightened his guilty soul and chained his speechless tongue; awful apprehensions and fearful forebodings pursued him back to his chamber, when despairing of mercy he threw himself upon a bed to die and meet his fiery doom. Worn out with labor and want of rest, nature sank beneath the load, he fell into a sleep. Unconscious of what passed while sleeping, he woke himself singing these words:

> "How glorious is our heavenly King,
> Who reigns above the sky;
> How shall a child presume to sing
> His dreadful majesty?"

He seemed indeed in a new world, his load of guilt and sin was gone, the love of God shed abroad in his heart.

> "His tongue broke out in unknown strains,
> And sang surprising grace."

At the age of eleven years and four weeks, on the second Sunday in December, 1811, he was permitted to be buried with his precious Lord in baptism, in the river Thames, in the city of Norwich, Conn., by Elder John Sterry, who has since fallen asleep. After remaining eight years a member of the Baptist Church in Norwich, he removed his relation to the church in the city of New York, then under the pastoral care of that defender of the truth, Elder Jonathan Van Velsen, who also has fallen asleep. While a member of the Ebenezer Church, in New York, the subject of our narrative, when in his twentieth year, was licensed to preach the gospel. The peculiar circumstances of his call to the work of the ministry our present limits will not admit; let it suffice to say that being experimentally, he could not help being doctrinally a predestinarian. For more than fourteen years he has been lisping the name of Jesus with such ability as the Lord has been pleased to bestow, without any of the polish of Gamaliel's school, and although it has been his privilege to suffer some persecution, yet he has not resisted unto blood, striving against sin; he finds by every day's experience that he is a sinner yet, his nature is evil as ever it was. To will is present with him, but how to perform that which is good he finds not. He is still the chief of sinners, and if a saint, the least of all.

NEW VERNON, N. Y., April 30, 1834.

[THE above article is republished by request of his daughters.—ED.]

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. M. Fenton, June 26th, 1912, at the home of the bride, Emley Holcombe Larison, of Lambertville, N. J., and Miss Helen Merta Kugler, of Frenchtown, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

George E. Gainer departed this life at his home near Meadowville, Barbour Co., W. Va., Jan. 28th, 1912. He was born near Montrose, Randolph Co., W. Va., Sept. 1st, 1844; was united in marriage with Mary J. Harris, Nov. 16th, 1865. That union was blessed with twelve children, five sons and seven daughters, all living and grown and all married at the time of the father's death except two, a son and a daughter, the son having married since. He had suffered for years from some chronic disease that was very weakening to both mind and body, and which even the most skilled physicians could not understand. Many times he had seemed very near death's door, but his last sickness was not thought to be fatal until a few days before the end came. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Little Bethel, October 6th, 1888, and served a number of years in the ministry, having the care of several different churches during that time. He was at one time pastor of two or three churches in Pennsylvania. It was in one of these (Meadow Run) that trouble came up, and through some church disorder he became disconnected with the church, which was a great affliction to him, and one to which he could never be fully reconciled. Several attempts were made to restore him, but it seemed as though it could not be done satisfactorily. He felt to be discarded and forsaken by brethren and friends, yet he never departed from the faith, but remained firm in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and it was remarked by a dear friend and brother after his death that he believed he would have suffered death at the stake rather than yield to any other doctrine. He was well versed in the Scriptures, and loved to dwell upon the things contained therein, that being his chief desire as long as consciousness remained. He is survived by his wife and children, nineteen grandchildren, two brothers and three sisters.

After a short funeral service at his home by Elder J. B. Cross, Jan. 29th, his remains were taken to Leading Creek Baptist meetinghouse at Montrose, where a large congregation of relatives and friends had assembled, and after a brief discourse by Elder J. W. Linn, from John iii. 16, his body was laid to rest in the adjoining cemetery to await the resurrection morn. Although we miss him very much, we sorrow not as those who have no hope, for we believe his spirit is resting in his dear Savior in whom he trusted.

ALSO,

Mrs. Martha Harris, relict of the late Job E. Harris, was born in Randolph County, (then) Va., Aug. 10th, 1825, was married July 10th, 1850, and died May 14th, 1912, at her home in Barbour County, W. Va., where she was maintained by her son, Capt. Floyd W. Harris, of Aldie, Va. She was the fourth

child of Benjamin and Elizabeth Morrison, her father having emigrated from Ireland when thirteen years old. "Aunt Martha," as she was called, had been in feeble health for some time, but was slowly recovering, and on the morning of May 5th walked out and was sitting on the porch, when suddenly about 11 o'clock her daughter, Mrs. America Chenoweth, who lived with her and whose constant care she was, found her standing in the hallway in a very dazed condition, wholly unconscious of all her surroundings, in which state of mind she remained until death, refusing to take nourishment of any kind for nine days. She had been a worthy member of Little Bethel Primitive Baptist Church for upwards of forty-five years, and was a faithful attendant at her meetings as long as she was able. She loved the company of God's dear people, and her door was always hospitably open to her brethren and friends. She enjoyed reading the SIGNS, and her Bible was her constant companion. Left a widow by the death of her husband Jan. 3rd, 1872, which was caused by felling a tree, she had a hard struggle, yet she met it bravely. Having a strong constitution, and being very ambitious, she managed to educate her children, her son, of whom she justly felt proud, having won distinction in military life, not only at home, but in foreign countries. God in his wisdom saw fit to send another affliction upon this dear woman. In January, 1901, she fell on the frozen ground, dislocating her hip, which rendered her unable to walk ever after, save by a chair or with crutches. This was a sore trial for her, and though she earnestly prayed and longed for death to release her, she desired to be submissive to the will of the Master. Her survivors are four daughters and one son (one son having died when a child), a stepson, one sister, eighteen grandchildren and seventeen great-grandchildren. In her death we realize the loss of a kind and loving mother, a loyal member of the church and a good neighbor, but she finished her course, fought a good fight and kept the faith, and henceforth is a crown of righteousness laid up for her. May He who alone is able, bless and comfort all the bereaved ones, and enable them to feel that for her to die is gain.

Funeral services were held in the meetinghouse near her home May 15th, in the presence of a large audience. Preaching by her pastor, Elder J. B. Cross, from Isaiah xl. 1, 2, as requested by her, after which her body was laid beside her husband to rest or sleep that blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep.

(MRS.) F. W. GAINER.

BELINGTON, W. Va.

Rachel Jane Cook Walters was born in Dearborn County, Ind., May 3rd, 1839, moved with her parents, Thomas and Lear Cook, to Adair County, Mo., in October, 1856. She was married to Lewis Walters August 9th, 1857. To that union were born sixteen children, of whom ten are living, six boys and four girls, the other six dying when quite young. She joined Spring Creek Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists at its regular July meeting in 1868, and was baptized by the pastor, Elder John Collins. Her husband was ordained deacon of said church at its regular meeting in August, 1873, which is one of the most important offices in the church, and has been filled by him to the entire satisfaction of the whole church. Her death occurred May 2nd, 1912. She lacked one day of being 73 years old.

The writer conducted the funeral service the next day at their home, and tried to speak some words of comfort to the sorrowing family and brothers and sisters, neighbors and friends, then we laid all that was mortal of sister Walters in the Walters Cemetery, about two miles from her home, there to await the resurrection morn, when the Savior she had worshiped so truly and so long will come the second time without sin unto salvation to take his ransomed people home. She will be raised an incorruptible body to meet her Lord and Master and see him as he is and be like him. The children have lost a kind and indulgent mother, the aged husband has lost a kind, loving, devoted and christian wife, the church has lost one of its truest and most faithful members (her seat was never vacant unless something more than common caused it), the neighborhood has lost a good and kind neighbor, one whose influence was always on the side of right, honesty, truth and virtue. She had no compromise to make with the religious world, but stood steadfast, always contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and would have nothing to do with the unfruitful works of darkness, but was always ready to reprove them. Sister Walters had been afflicted for several years, and grew steadily worse; she had not been able to attend her meetings for six or eight months, but bore her affliction with christian patience, seldom complaining, until death released her from her suffering. While we keenly feel our loss, we have a strong hope that our loss is her eternal gain.

ISAAC CAPPS.

APPOINTMENTS.

ELDER F. A. Chick expects to fill appointments in the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada as follows: Tuesday night after the fourth Sunday in July, in London; Wednesday night in St. Thomas; in Duart Thursday night; in Aldboro on Friday, at such time as the friends there may arrange; Dunwich, Saturday and first Sunday in August; Ekfrid, first Monday in August, as may be arranged; Lobo, on Tuesday, as may be arranged; also Brantford, Wednesday night.

DUNCAN McALPINE, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptists of Schoharie, N. Y., have appointed a two days meeting to be held in their meetinghouse on Wednesday and Thursday before the fourth Sunday in July. We expect Elders J. G. Eubanks and F. A. Chick to be with us, and we cordially invite all who may feel to do so to be with us at that time. We shall be glad to see all who may be able to come. J. E. LIVINGSTON.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.
JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

FIRST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, at Mineral Wells, Texas, holds meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, and Saturday night before, in the meetinghouse, on Star Well Ave., Kidwell Heights. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.
SALLIE E. HOWARD, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in Kinney Hall, No. 12 Third St., in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.
H. SEWARD, Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of southern California meets every third Sunday at 2 p. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.
OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at 5 cents per copy. Address,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 80. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1912. NO. 15.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JESUS.

TURN to any page in the Bible, and if the Spirit of the Lord God is upon you, you will find the subject which has impressed me on this occasion. Before ever the mountains were brought forth, and the valleys bowed in humble obedience to the mandate of their Creator, the God of heaven and earth, and before the sons of the morning sang the praises of the God of their salvation, Jesus was in the bosom of the Father. He was unto him as an holy thing, equal with him in all power and glory and majesty and love. Wondrous love existed eternally in the wondrous Godhead, consisting of three which bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word (which is Jesus) and the Holy Ghost, for these three are one. In the midst of eternal brightness and glory the church of God was chosen in Jesus, her Lord, her King, her Husband and her exceeding great reward. As the sun excels in glory the mellow light of the moon, so in the ancients of eternity the love of Jesus for his darling bride outshone all minor glory that should appear on the yet uncreated earth—a love unclouded, pure and holy, everlasting and eternal. In the unsearchable and unfathomable depths of the riches of the grace of God was stored and preserved by the Father the inheritance which should afterward be revealed in time for Jesus and his bride. There came forth from the infinite mind holy and unrevocable decrees, commandments of love and mercy, all of which were to be fulfilled in time in the person of Jesus Christ for the salvation of sinners. It was the pleasure of the Father and in his wise purpose that the bride of Jesus should be secretly formed in the lowest parts of the earth, and to be manifested as a creature of time, to become a transgressor of the holy law of God through the lusts of the flesh. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, and when he said, "Let there be light," the wheels of time began making their unceasing rounds, beauty and harmony appeared before the mighty word, chaos and confusion fled from his presence, for, "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." He stood and measured the earth, the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow. "Thou didst cleave the earth with rivers. The mountains saw

thee, and they trembled: the overflowing of the water passed by: the deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high." Thus in the beginning of time "was the Word [Jesus], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men." Upon the sixth day man appeared, a created human being, male and female created he them. This was the first Adam, the type of Christ and his church in one, as God had elected. Thus we note in embryo the first step in the progress of time which should be developed and fulfilled in Jesus our Head, to the glory of God our Father. The created man was of the earth, therefore earthy; every element of the earth combined to make up the creature man, called Adam, and every characteristic of every living thing that God had made has been manifested in the man in all ages of time. God touched the man, and while he slept he removed from his side a rib (representing the whole body of the man), which shape of the rib is like unto the rainbow, a beautiful emblem of the covenant of God's grace. "And he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man." Behold now the great and wondrous mystery presented to our view: the man and the woman separate one from the other, yet one flesh. "And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." Inasmuch then as every element of the earth was inherent in the creature of earth, and the characteristics of every living thing a secret part of him, when the test came in the commandment he was found wanting, for the heaven (God) was higher than the earth, which was the handiwork of God, and the earth was devoid of the righteousness of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Then when the temptation came the man was deficient in strength to resist, and all his fleshly characteristics leaped into lively exercise and gladly yielded to the desirable temptation placed before them; so she died who was tempted. Thus "every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Through this channel the woman must travel all the days of her life in the flesh. But glorious things of thee are spoken, Zion, city of our God. The man Adam was not deceived, but entered into the transgression for the sake of his wife, whom he loved, therefore when the church was swallowed up of sin, and had died, according to the decree of God, Jesus, the precious Bridegroom, though not deceived, entered into the pestilential chamber of his bride, becoming amenable to the law and under condemnation of death. However, before he (Jesus) appeared in the world in the likeness of sinful flesh, he constantly watched over her in the secret parts of the earth, and his Spirit was with her, leading her in a sure way to the place which he had prepared for her. The carnal mind in its imaginative wanderings places God in the heavens and separate from the earth, but faith beholds him everywhere, and follows his footsteps in the sea and in all secret places. He brought her out of the place of her nativity, causing her to wander she knew not whither, but by faith she was directed in the right way. She must needs go down into Egypt, to remain there four

hundred years, to be heavily burdened and then delivered by the hand of the ever watchful and omnipotent God, and then sent into the terrible wilderness to be tried, but found incapable by reason of the weakness of the flesh to walk in obedience to the commandments of their ever faithful leader. Forty years they wandered, but Jesus their Lord was with them through all the years, a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. In the archives of the chambers of God's building of mercy were secured precious promises to the inconstant bride, all of which were to be fulfilled, not in her, but in Jesus for her. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." After she had been delivered from the wilderness, and had passed over Jordan into the promised land, she was still subjected to many vicissitudes, from days of brightness to fitful, feverish nights, from joy and gladness to sorrow and weeping, but after the long night under the law, the occupation of Canaan, the rule of judges, the reign of kings, the captivity in Babylon, the restoration of Jerusalem, the scattering of Israel and the loss of the nation, there remained wonderful things and terrible in righteousness to be made manifest, that the bride should be led by her precious Husband before the Father's glory in garments of pure linen, which is the righteousness of the saints. In the days of Herod, the tetrarch of Galilee, certain men rich in faith and wise unto salvation, being guided by a star (the light of men) to Bethlehem in Judea, found him who was born King of the Jews. At a certain time heaven and earth came together, bringing to pass a most wonderful mystery. The virgin Mary (the earth) was overshadowed by the Holy Ghost (heaven), which resulted in the birth of the holy child Jesus, to whom the wise men were guided by the star, fulfilling the prophecy of ancient times: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." The shepherds while watching their flock by night on the hills of Judea were given the glad tidings by the angels of heaven, saying, "For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Unlike the monarchs of the world, Jesus was born King, after the order of Melchizedek, he is King forever, having neither beginning of days nor end of life; he is King of kings and Lord of lords. "And when they [the wise men] were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshiped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh." While all worlds were his, and the cattle upon a thousand hills, yet he was of lowly birth, born in a stable and cradled in a manger; there was no room for him in the inn, neither was there room for him in the world. The world hated him, because he was not of this world. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." The earth was filled with his glory, but the earth perceived it not, yet they that believed on his name beheld it by faith, and rejoiced with exceeding joy.

The name "Jesus," what does it not signify to the church, his beloved? It

embraces every attribute of holiness, every reality of righteousness, his Deity, his omnipotence, his perfection, and all that his many names imply, and all that our hearts acknowledge him to be. His name shall be called Wonderful, The mighty God, &c. He is Wonderful, his might and power prevail in heaven and in earth, the only name that can reach poor sinners' needs. "For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." He made himself of no reputation, yet he arose above all principalities and powers to the highest attainment of glory, honor, majesty and dominion. All worlds have uttered praises and all created things have glorified his name by acting in obedience to the law under which he has placed them, and "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." His goings forth are from the rivers to the ends of the earth, and from everlasting to everlasting. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." The apostle John closed the record of his gospel by saying, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen."

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

DELAWARE, Ohio, June 13, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—I inclose two letters from Elder C. E. Jackson, which I think will interest the readers of the SIGNS. I have his consent to send them to you.

L. E. STEPHENS.

GALION, Ohio, Feb. 28, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER STEPHENS:—As I have been in the house with the grippe since my return from Pleasant Hill, and have been thinking of you and of the good visit I had with you on my way to the train, and remember your request to write to you upon the subject of the "snuffers" that were used in the Lord's house in the wilderness, and although I feel too ignorant and unskilled in the word of the Lord to expect to say anything that will prove to be of interest and instruction to you, or to any of the Lord's people, yet I have a desire somehow to comply with your request, so will give such thoughts as may occur to me. The "snuffers" were used for the trimming of the lamps in the house of the Lord, and the reason why the lights were to be trimmed was that they might shine forth more brightly, giving a pure light. The apostle has said, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." I will leave the type and speak of the antitype. We know that the only light which the children of God have is the Spirit, and I believe, dear brother, that this light is often dimmed, being clouded by the flesh and by the things of this world to the extent that sometimes it seems almost extinct. Then our great High Priest takes the snuffers and trims the light. Then when he has taken our doubts and fears away, and has given us faith and grace to believe the law and the prophets, and to see the Lord high and lifted up, and ourselves as we truly are, and so causes us to give honor and glory to him, then the light shines forth in resplendent glory, and we say, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name give honor and glory. We see that in the type the snuffers were always kept handy, because

they were needed often; so in the antitype, or new covenant, we often go into by and forbidden paths, and the lamp of the Lord in us burns dim, and the snuffers must again be brought into use. My dear brother, it looks to me that the snuffers are nothing less than chastisements from the Lord. Paul says, Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. Again, he says, "If ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." So we see that the Lord chastises none but his sons, or as we might say, those in whom he has seen fit to place his light. These chastisements are not used to make the light, but to cause the light to shine more brightly. Job said, When he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold. It is so with all the Lord's people, when they are tried their glorying in the flesh, and in the world, and in the things of the world, is snuffed out and hidden in the snuffers. There is a place prepared in these utensils to hide the burned pieces of the wick and keep them out of sight, so with the children of God, when they have been tried in the fire all their own works and goodness and all the chaff and stubble are burned and hidden away in the snuffers from the eyes of the congregation, and they come forth bright and clear as gold, and then the light shines forth in all its splendor, and they give thanks unto him who giveth them the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. O, dear brother, how few and far apart are these seasons, and how often I think that the light in me must be darkness. How low my light burns, but thanks be to God, if the light has ever been kindled in a poor sinner it will never go out; it will be trimmed and kept alive by our great High Priest, for he has said, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. Again, I will never leave nor forsake thee. Still again, Where he hath begun a good work in us, he will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ. Dear brother, we can rest assured of this, and say with the apostle, Nevertheless the foundation standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.

But I will now close.

I am, as ever, your unworthy brother,

C. E. JACKSON.

GALION, Ohio, March 5, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER STEPHENS:—Your good and comforting letter received, and I wish I could write one as good in answer. You speak of my letter being good; it did not seem so to me, but seemed so empty after I had written it that I had a mind not to send it. I felt, and feel sure yet, that you had more light and knowledge of the Scripture than I had or can expect to have. When I see how little knowledge I really have of the Scriptures I fear that perhaps I do not know the true meaning of any of them, so I fear to speak of these wonderful things. But, then again, we know that the truth cannot be searched out, nor understood by natural minds, but must be given by revelation, or, in other words, if any one speaks or writes the truth concerning any portion of the Scripture it must be by revelation. There are but two ways of writing: one the truth, the other error; one is by the power of God, the other by the wisdom of the world.

In my weakness I will now try to comply with your request and leave you to judge the result. You refer to Solomon's Song, chapter one, verses five and six, and I will give such thoughts as occur to me regarding this Scripture. It reads, "I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon. Look

not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me." In the fourth verse it is said, "Draw me, we will run after thee. The king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee; we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee." It looks to me that this verse is the key, or gives the reason why the bride says, "I am black." We all, like the bride in the text, have to say, "Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me." This is how she is made to know that she is black. We can look to our own experience, how were we made to see and know that we were black? Was it not because the sun had looked upon us? Before this took place we were not black in our own eyes, but thought that we were all right before God, and that we could do many things pleasing to him, but when the sun had looked upon us and we saw the Lord high and lifted up, we saw that we were black, then we were made to cry with the old prophet, Woe is me, for I am undone. We find that in the fourth verse it is said, He hath brought me into his chambers. Is not this quite different from the way in which the religious world talks about the matter? Instead of saying the King brought me into his chambers, they say, He hath made a way possible for me to bring myself into his chambers, and now I have done it, I am somebody, I pay tithes of all that I possess. These do not feel black, but that they are whole, and that they can rejoice in the works of their own hands. But, on the other hand, all of those whom the King has brought into his chambers and blessed with a glimpse of the Sun of Righteousness, see that they are black; they are full of wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores, from the head to the soles of their feet, there is no soundness in them; these cry, like the poor publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner." And like Paul, they cry, Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? In the fifth verse the bride declares, "I am black, but comely." Returning to the fourth verse, we see that the bride said, He "hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee." Here we see that all the rejoicing is in the King, there is no longer any trust in the flesh, or in the works of men; it is as John heard, Thanks be to him who has washed us from our sins in his own blood. We read, "We will remember thy love more than wine." The apostle also said, Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Can any one ever forget the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost? He says, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. Again, it is said, We love him because he first loved us. It is therefore the love of God for his children, or church, that causes her to love him, and his church is comely, not in themselves, but in and through their King. Paul says that our Lord was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him; and, When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory. The Lord looking down through Christ, their King, beholds his church as being comely, having no spot, wrinkle or any such thing. They are holy and without blame before him in love; they are his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. He is their life, their light, their glory, their all in all. He beholds his bride as a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, that they should show forth the praises of him

who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. He saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Thus we see that the comeliness is through him and in him. He is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and the Lord of lords; he is the One altogether lovely. He is the chiefest among ten thousand, the King of Zion. He is the Head of his church, and she is the body, and all are members one of another; they are completely joined together in One. The Savior said, I in them, and thou in me. Here is the complete union of the King and his church, they are flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones. He gives to this church eternal life. He sanctifies, purifies and glorifies her. "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" The foundation of the church stands sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. The gates of hell shall not prevail against her, nothing can separate her from his love. Nothing, says Paul, shall ever be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

Now, dear brother, it seems to me I have said little that can be of comfort to you; I have hardly touched the Scripture which you desired me to write about. I am so black and ignorant and foolish that it does not seen possible I am numbered among those whom the King has brought into his chambers; if so, I am the least and blackest of all. Write to me again soon.

I remain your brother in hope,

C. E. JACKSON.

"THE LITTLE ONES."

THESE words are found in Zechariah xiii. 7, the closing words of one of the most awe-inspiring verses of the Old Testament. God had commanded the sword to awake against his Shepherd, and to smite him, then the sheep should be scattered: "and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." I believe that all these scattered sheep are "little ones," in the sense of being helpless, especially when the Shepherd was smitten by God's sword of justice, though the words may apply more directly to the little lambs of the fold. It is presumed that every sheepfold contains lambs as well as full grown sheep. I shall try to speak about these little ones who trust in the Lord as embracing all saints on earth, to whom the promises of God flow freely in a most gracious way, and who are kept "little" in the hollow of his hand. They are very rich indeed, but boasting is excluded, and they cannot grow big over their great wealth, for that wealth is hid from mortal sight, but it is theirs as sure as the Shepherd lives; it is secured to them in him and foretasted by them through faith and hope. These little ones have received riches, the riches of God's mercy and grace; they have received "an earnest" of their inheritance unto the praise of his glory. An earnest of anything is something real of the substance referred to, a pledge that remains. These "little ones" most surely have been once enlightened, and they "have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come;" how then can we say that they are not rich? Poor indeed in worldly religion (self-righteousness), but rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which is above all kingdoms.

The most that I wanted to say in writing to-day was about "these little ones" whom Jesus speaks of in Matthew xviii. There is a subject connected with these little ones spoken of in the tenth verse which I have never been able to hear my brethren speak of. I have thought very much about it for half a century, but do not feel able to make the subject any plainer than the reading of the verse mentioned, and I might try to enlarge its meaning and fail to impress the reader with the importance of this Scripture. Jesus says that, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." These little ones are very important and valuable in the sight of the Master; do not despise them, no, not one that trusts in Jesus. Jesus says they are of more value than many sparrows. He says they are of great importance, too, and rich. How rich! An independent line of communication from earth to heaven is theirs. Is this assuming too much for these little ones? Not at all. Listen to the King: "That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." O you little ones who are doubting your standing in the Son, can you realize that you, poor souls, have angels that are now beholding the face of your heavenly Father in heaven? Can it be a real fact that every quickened heir of that incorruptible inheritance is a "little one"—has an angel in heaven? It must be a real fact, because Jesus hath spoken it. Some might say that the heaven referred to meant the church on earth, or heavenly places. This would not destroy the meaning of the words, for "these little ones" are known in the church, for the Lord's body, the church, is composed exclusively of "the little ones" who trust in Jesus. However, I am simple enough to extend the meaning of the words beyond the clouds and the remotest invisible stars, into the heaven of glory, where the Father is. The phrase, "their angels," is significant of power granted to "these little ones." As the meaning of angel is messenger, or messenger of God, we might understand better by using the word messenger. No man has ever explained to my understanding what an angel really is; I feel safe in saying that no man can do it. However faulty our understanding on the subject, it does not put aside the fact that angels exist, not as some men would paint them, as having human forms, feathery wings and heavenly faces, but as spiritual beings; natural eyes cannot behold them, unless the Lord opens the eyes as in days of old. There are many places in Scripture where it is said that the Lord sent his angel, or angels, to visit the sons of men. In some places it speaks of them as having bodily forms, but we must bear in mind that these angels "appeared" unto certain persons, and not unto the world. Unto those who received the visits of the angels their forms were superior human beings. When Jesus came into the world God said, "And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire." God did not say at any time to any of these angels, Sit on my right hand until I make thy foes thy footstool, but they are all messengers, or all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. These spirits are sent forth unto the heirs, and unto none others, for there can be no mistake made by these ministering spirits. They do

not go about trying to win souls, wooing and beseeching, and sometimes failing in their efforts to convert sinners, and because sinners have power to resist the angel of God, but "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." The effectiveness of the power of God through his holy messengers, or angels, is attested to by David, and he would say, O taste, and see that the Lord is good. In his prayer to the Lord against his enemies he says, "Let them be as chaff before the wind: and let the angel of the Lord chase them. * * * And let the angel of the Lord persecute them."

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., June 23, 1912.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., January, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been meditating upon the goodness of God to such a poor worm of the dust as I feel myself to be. I am prone to go astray, and feel that I am not worthy to claim a name among the saints, whom I so dearly love for the truth's sake, and, believing in that truth which I trust it hath pleased God to reveal to me, I am trying as much as in me is to glorify him in giving to him all the praise. I feel that in my flesh dwells no good thing. There is nothing good in the fleshly man as such. The prophet, from the indwelling of the Spirit of God, said, It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. There is no perfection in man; he has sought out many inventions by which to carry out his purposes and desires, but the Lord will direct his steps in the way which he will have him go; he will make his people willing in the day of his power. I hope that it was the Lord who gave me a will to glorify and praise his holy name for deliverance from sin and death. As he hath all power in heaven and in earth, why should we not give him all the praise? There is no power above him. I feel to trust that he has given me a good hope, and to believe that there is no other power able to give us rest in the Lord. This rest he has prepared for them that love him. O may we be permitted to enter into this rest. But O my unworthiness and nothingness; I often fear I am nothing but a deceiver, and that I have not experienced the fellowship of the sufferings of the blessed Son of God. I sometimes feel to praise his holy name, but the question is, Is it for the love I have for his cause? I believe there is no other way in which we can be saved, except through the blood of the everlasting covenant. I hope that having been brought down to the dust I have come to believe that through him alone I must be saved. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day." Only in his name can we rejoice, for we are counted as nothing, after the flesh, in his sight. The natural man cannot do anything that will be pleasing to God. The prophet hath said that all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags before God. If saved at all, it must be through the imputed righteousness of Christ; in no other way can men be accepted.

In reading the SIGNS for January 1st I found a communication written by our beloved brother, Lester Dodson; he is a stranger to me in the flesh, but I hope not in the Spirit. It is the fruit of the Spirit that God has given him the gift of utterance, which I greatly enjoyed in his letter to you, brother Ker; it reminded me of one received from him while he

was in Richmond, Va., which, coming from one whom I never knew, was very consoling. We are admonished to speak often one to another, and seeing a letter from him in one of our papers, which seemed to me good, and which was read by me with a feeling of love, and as we saw eye to eye and seemed to speak the same things, I wrote to him in token of my belief that we possessed the same faith and love. I trust that the Lord has delivered us and given us both the new song, even praise to his name; I hope we both know the truth. He showed by his letter that the Lord had been with him, and that in that school he had been taught. This will stand the test when all else fails; this is that rock which cannot be moved by any conditions and inventions of men. I was glad to see the dear brother's name in the SIGNS, and your discourse, which he indorsed, I believe was good and sound doctrine. None but the poor in spirit can have a will to receive and accept the teachings of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, which gives to God all the praise in heaven and upon earth; this doctrine does not limit the Lord of glory. His letter to you was a feast of fat things, like the one which he had formerly written me. It appears from the heading of his letter that he has left Richmond and is now living in New York. He is a good brother, and I would be glad to see other communications from him in the SIGNS. I also would be glad, if it be God's will, for you, brother Ker, to visit us. I love to read your editorials in the SIGNS, as I believe the doctrine you set forth in them.

This cold season of the year I have been meditating upon the mercies of God, and my mind has been pointed toward that heavenly Jerusalem above, where I trust, through the mercy of God and through the suffering of the blessed Lamb, to abide in the place which he has prepared for this poor worm of the dust. I am living through the mercy of God, waiting the time when he shall call me hence to be with his redeemed ones at his right hand and around his throne, singing forever the praise of redeeming love. May God in his mercy bless you, that you may be long spared to wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, is my prayer. Pray for me when it is well with you.

Your brother in tribulations,

O. B. HICKERSON.

ESPERANCE, N. Y., May 29, 1912.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I will take the liberty of writing a few lines to you, and inclosing a letter that I received from a dear brother some years ago. I think there may be some yet alive to whom his words may sound familiar, for though it was written to me, he loved all who believed in our Redeemer, and his works do follow him. I often feel thankful when reading your editorials that God has given you the pen of a ready writer, to open the Scriptures to the comfort of the people of God. I could not tell what they have been to me.

Your sister, A. E. TUCKER.

SIDNEY, March 21, 1897.

MRS. A. E. TUCKER—DEAR SISTER:—Your very kind and good letter was duly received, and read with interest, profit and satisfaction, for it seemed to carry with it that same spirit of grace and thankfulness to the God of heaven for divine favors which has marked all the communications which I have received from you since our first acquaintance in Schoharie to this time, either by word or letter. You have seemed a little more

willing than some others to let your light shine, and to speak of or write to the praise, honor and glory of God, who has evidently and graciously called you out of darkness into his marvelous light, so in these things your letters have been a comfort, help and support to me. I have no religious company here except one or two aged widows who live in this village. I think that you never get lukewarm; indeed, I never saw you when you seemed to be dull and uninterested. My health has not been good the past winter, and I have not heard anything good and life-like in the way of the gospel for a long time. I read the SIGNS, and find great comfort in the writings of brethren and sisters and all who love our dear Lord. My wife has gone with a Methodist woman to a meeting, so I have it all quiet and peaceful here alone. I cannot endure to hear falsehood proclaimed as the truth of God, such as saying that the Lord offers to save men and women on condition that they repent and give their hearts to him. There is certainly no fear of God before their eyes. We have had quite recently here in Sidney a band of so-called salvationists, who would get right down in the streets to sing and pray, but they seemed to tire themselves out, and left the town, and that, too, much for the better of the town. It seems very strange to me that intelligent people will stand about and even go after such a rabble. I feel very glad at times that the Lord knows them that are his, and that notwithstanding all the delusions and false doctrines noised abroad he will save them ultimately in unfading glory. This is my hope, and, my dear sister, I confidently hope as much for you, saying with the good poet:

"Yes, I to the end shall endure,
As sure as the earnest is given;
More happy, but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven."

So let us praise him for all his mercies past, and humbly sue for more.

I think you spoke in your letter of knowing what subjects I delighted most to write and talk about, and you were right, for in my loneliness I can only think. Pray for me that I may have in my own family such company as you know I desire, if it be the will of infinite goodness, and is not too much for me to humbly ask. I congratulate you, my dear sister, that you have for your daily companion one of the Lord's chosen ones. Thus the Lord has, as I suppose, been better to you than your fears. Once it was not so with you.

I have written you hurriedly and poorly, but please accept it as it is intended, if it is not entirely satisfactory. You will please give my best regards to brother Tucker, while I assure you that it would be my happiness to meet you both, once more at least, before we go home.

Yours in love and fellowship,

JAMES BUNDY.

WOODSTOCK, Ontario.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Inclosed find two dollars for the SIGNS for the coming year. I am a little behind with my subscription, but I suppose if you do not have any one more delinquent you will not be much out, though I usually try to be on time, and I have been in business enough to know how worrisome and vexatious it is to have money due and not paid, and to have to wait months and sometimes years for it, and often not get it at all. It seems sad to think that those who profess to love the doctrine the SIGNS advocates, and the name of Jesus, can be so careless, for I cannot help thinking much of it is from carelessness,

and then all at once I think of myself, and say and feel, You better not say a word. O yes, I know I am all wrong, and but for the grace of God should sink down to destruction. Surely of all who have ever had a hope in the mercy of God I am the most unworthy and undeserving, and yet so prone to find fault with others because they do not come up to my ideal of what a christian or subject of grace should be. How inconsistent I am, and how little I live according to the rule of the Master, who said, Judge not, that ye be not judged, and often do I think of what he said: With what judgment ye judge ye shall be judged, and I lay my head down in sorrow and feel, No wonder that I am afflicted and cast down, for I know I am prone to judge harshly, and I dare not use the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples: Forgive us our sins, as we forgive them that trespass against us. Neither can I say, "Thy will be done" in us, for I know it is but seldom, if I ever have that spirit. When we come to look right into the teaching of the Scripture it cuts close and roots up every atom of self-righteousness, or at least I know it does in me, and I hope I feel a little as Ruth did when she said to Boaz, How is it you take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger? O yes, I often feel that I am a stranger to everything good; yes, in fact a stranger to the Lord's people, and yet when I get with them and talk with them I feel like Ruth did, that nothing but death can part us, and I hope even that cannot do it, for if I have a hope at all it lies beyond the grave, beyond the confines of time, for everything in this world is only vanity, all subject to change, for I am not in one mind but a few minutes or hours. I may have a little comfort, a little hope or a little joy for a moment, but almost before I can realize it it is gone, and it is the same with worldly joy or pleasure, we cannot keep it, try as we may, and no doubt it is wisely ordered, but it is hard for us to think or feel so, for we are constantly striving after something that we think will satisfy us, and perhaps we may reach the object striven for only to find it a disappointment. The children of God are told not to lay up their treasure here below, where moth and rust doth corrupt, but I find myself daily and hourly doing so, and forgetting all about the treasure that moth and rust cannot corrupt. Whether it means the heaven below or above does not matter, we know it means to set our affections on spiritual things and meditate on them is the great object to have in view. But I am not able to do these things, and I often think that these things are told us to show how far short we come; and as a line stretched over a crooked thing shows exactly how crooked it is, so these exhortations, or commands, show us all our crookedness and shortcomings, and I must acknowledge that the line of gospel truth shows me up the most destitute of any good of all God's creatures; but it does not matter how bad we are, the all-important question is, Do we want to be better? Do we feel the need of holiness? Do we want Jesus, and want him to come to us with healing mercies, to say to us, I am thy salvation? I have thought considerable lately about when Jesus was on earth that no one ever came to him to be healed and he turned them away; not one case have I noticed, and it has given me some comfort, for it seems it is not how bad or how good one is, but do you feel your need of Jesus? Do you feel you need his love, his mercy, his forgiveness, and above all, his justifying righteousness? O I do feel I need something

more than mere forgiveness, for that would leave me a sinner still. I want to be free from sins, and have them all washed away. I read that the great multitude that stood before the Lamb in Revelation were clothed in white, and they were without fault before the throne, and that is what I want, but how can such a great miracle be wrought on and in me? I cannot understand, but I hope a few times in my life I have known what it was, but O how few and short the seasons when I felt my sins were all gone, washed away.

But I have written enough, and will stop. I was glad Elder Francis wrote as he did in the last SIGNS; he made things very clear to me. Jonah and David and many others of God's people did sin wilfully, and it is on record for our learning and instruction. I was glad to see young sister Keene's letter in the SIGNS, too. I have always read after sister Ruth, her sister, with profit and comfort. We are both well, and hope to see you soon, if the Lord wills. Both of us send love to you.

Unworthily your brother, if one at all,
R. SCATES.

CANNON, Del., Dec. 3, 1911.

DEAR ELDER FENTON:—As I promised to write you a letter I will make another attempt. I have written one letter to you before, but did not send it, for the reason I thought there was nothing in it of interest. I have read your letter in the SIGNS for December 1st, and think it good. If I could write like that I would not hesitate about writing. I often wish, in fact it is my constant desire, that I might be given the tongue of the learned, that I might know how to speak a word in season to him who is weary, for if there are any people in this world I love they are the Old Baptists, whose hearts the Lord hath touched. Such characters do truly repent of their sins, and they are the ones to be comforted. When we see one whose mind is burdened because of sin, how we want to tell that one about Jesus and his love; we want to tell him about the words of Jesus, as recorded in his sermon on the mount: "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." You will notice I have been using the word "we," perhaps I am beside myself. I often feel this way, as I am nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity, but it does seem to me that there is a feeling of brotherly love for one who is cast down because of sin.

My mind seems to be upon the words of Jesus which I before mentioned: "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." The words of Jesus are beautiful, because they can be depended upon. Jesus always spoke the truth; there was no guile found in him; even Pilate said he had done no evil; I find no fault in him, he declared, and yet he was crucified, suffered, bled and died, but the Scripture must be fulfilled. To think about these things naturally it seems terrible that a man who was innocent, had done no wrong, should be mocked, spit upon, hissed and subjected to torture, but it was the will of the Father, and his ways are just and his counsels wise. Jesus suffered and died for the sins of his people, and was buried in Joseph's new tomb, but he arose triumphant over death, hell and the grave, and ascended on high; he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. All these things did the lowly Jesus do, and many other things; the half has never been told, nor ever will be under the sun. When we are enabled to view Jesus as the way, the truth and the life, how our

hearts burn within us, we want our tongues to be loosed that we may ascribe everlasting praise to him who was, and is and is to come. Such a being is Jesus. "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." In these words of Jesus we notice a distinction is made, he says "they that mourn;" now it is evident that all men do not mourn. We have all heard men use profane language, and they seem to delight in it, and the reason for this is the fact that they know not God; they know not what they do. Such are in the hand of their Creator, and if they are ever to know him it is known to God only. But to those who mourn on account of their sins I desire to speak, I want to tell them that Jesus came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance; that he says the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. Is any one mourning because of sin and unbelief? Have the sins of this one risen up before him like mountains, as it were? Has every idle word come back to you that you spoke even years ago? If so, let me tell you that the same voice which spake unto Saul of Tarsus has spoken to you and made you to see what manner of man you are, the Spirit of Christ is within you teaching you to love righteousness and to hate iniquity; this is the cause of your trouble. Perhaps your troubles have grown quite severe, perhaps you feel that you cannot bear up under this burden; let me tell you about the suffering of Jesus when he was put to death upon the cross, he was suffering for you, my brother, and it is declared in the Scriptures that it is given you in behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. If there were nothing else to consider, this would be a sad picture indeed, but let us notice that when Jesus fulfilled the Scriptures, when he declared it was finished, and gave up the ghost, and was buried, and arose again the third day, according to the Scriptures, it means that he had accomplished the salvation of his people, and in his own time he makes this fact known to them for whom he died, and as he arose from the grave a conqueror, so shall his people be raised triumphant in him. All hope of salvation is hinged upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, for it is so declared in the Scriptures.

Perhaps I have made this letter long enough. Excuse all mistakes.

I remain yours in hope,

A. T. BENSON.

LUKE VII. 9.

"I SAY unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel."

If guided by the Spirit of Christ, and the Comforter takes of the things of Jesus and shows them to us, then there is comfort in meeting together and in speaking of the precious truth of the gospel of the grace of God. I would not knowingly deceive a single man, woman or child in any part of the habited earth, white, black, or of any other color, with regard to their eternal salvation. The mist and blackness of darkness is reserved for teachers, and all those who handle the word of God deceitfully, whereby they lie in wait to deceive the simple. The words of Jesus are fitly spoken. He never spake a word in vain in all the questions that he asked individuals as he journeyed through Palestine teaching and preaching the gospel to the poor. He did not ask that he might gain knowledge, for he knew all things, but he asked that the ones spoken to might express what was in their minds, and this was for the comfort of all who have been given

the hearing ear, and to taste that the Lord is gracious, and that he hath mercy upon all them that fear him from generation to generation. This centurian, a Roman officer, was blessed with great faith, even that faith of which Jesus is the author, for it is said that in his name shall the Gentiles trust, and although this centurian did not feel worthy to come to Jesus, or for Jesus to come under his roof, yet as he was a man also set in authority, and had the right to say to one, Go, and to another, Come, and to his servant, Do this, and they all did as he commanded, the faith that was in him recognized in Jesus the Son of God, the King with all power, and that he had authority over all the Father's house, and over all things. The Son abides forever, and he had only to speak the word and the servant of the centurian, who was dear to him, would be immediately healed. This faith which Jesus gives his people, and which is the fruit of the Spirit, teaches us that without the Word was not anything made that was made, and that by him do all things consist. All was spoken into existence by the word of his power, and for his glory were all things made, and this glory he will not give to another, nor his praise to graven images. With his almighty power he stretched out the heavens as a curtain, and as a tent to dwell in; he comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in the balance, and taketh up the isles as a very little thing. This faith takes hold upon the fact that Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords. He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast; he shutteth, and no man openeth, and he opens, and no man shuts. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last. He hath declared the end from the beginning; that is, in the beginning, or ever the earth was, he decreed what the end shall be. He said that with sacrifice and offering he was not well pleased. "Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God." This Savior had power to lay down his life, and he had power to take it again. "This commandment," he said, "have I received of my Father." When one drew his sword against the rabble and officers who came by night to take Jesus, he said, Put up thy sword. I could pray to my Father and presently he would send me more than twelve legions of angels. This would be power sufficient to destroy every living creature from off the face of the earth. But then, he said, how could this Scripture be fulfilled? for this cause came I unto this hour. Ought not Christ to have suffered and to enter into his glory? "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes." He said, "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." When Jesus gave his life a ransom for his people, being nailed to the tree of the cross, bearing their sins away, being made a curse for them, and exclaimed with his last expiring breath, "It is finished," he forever delivered and secured the eternal salvation of all the elect included in the covenant of grace. All the gifts and graces now freely bestowed upon his people without money and without price are for his church, which is his body, his bride; he clothes her with the garments of salvation and with the robe of righteousness. They all are

perfect and complete in him, but we have the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, our trust is in the Lord for life and salvation. In the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength, and though we have lain among the pots, yet we shall be as the dove with wings covered with silver and her feathers with yellow gold.

Dear brethren, do with this as you deem best.

Yours in hope,

WM. F. SLOAN.

LEXINGTON, Ky., April, 1912.

CONESVILLE, N. Y., May, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel that I can call you dear friends, but whether I have a right to call you brethren is the question. God knows whether I should trouble you with my letters or not, but I have long held you in sweet fellowship. But in this have I not transcended my right? Yet as I am alone, and have read your exposition of Hebrews x. 26, 27, together with that of Elder Mayfield, I feel to write. I do not wish to controvert what either of you have said, for I feel as the Lord declared by Jeremiah: "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." I will say, "Correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing." This forenoon I thought of the sweet influences of the Pleiades, or of the Spirit of God. Hymns 485 and 229 were graciously given to me. One said, He that is down need fear no fall, and he that is poor need fear no pride, but he that is weak shall ever have our God to be his guide. While all this is so, yet how can I tell what spirit actuates me to write? In the courts witnesses are often wanted to testify to the truth, truth that can benefit either party. I cannot say that of myself, but as the man said to Joshua, Nay, but as the captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. That was witnessing to the truth. I will sketch some of the dealings which I thought were of the Lord with me, and how I was led. As I was so averse to the teachings of the Lord I rebelled with all my might. I had thought that I had passed from death unto life, because I loved the brethren, yet I remained outside of the church until I was sorely wrought upon. I looked for comfort, and I united with the church, which I thought was obeying the Lord's command. Well, about three years after, some spirit said to me, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." The next day, while sowing barley, I felt such a love that it seemed I must fall down and kiss the ground. After awhile these words came to me, Isaiah xxxiii. 19: "Thou shalt not see a fierce people; a people of deeper speech than thou canst perceive; of a stammering tongue, that thou canst not understand." This caused me much thought. Then awhile after these words came: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." Now the thought came, Why should I be so misled, and why should I feel so rebellious? Was it to show me what spirit I was of? Was it to show whether I would obey the Lord or no? At times I would awake from my sleep declaring the word of the Lord with all the zeal possible, and, as I thought, in the love of it. Could this be to show me where my thoughts were? I know that the Lord looks on the heart. None of the sons of Jesse were accepted save David. I was aware that I had no gift, and so fought these feelings with all my might, and prevailed. But no man can be so foolish as I was and not suffer. Ahab in his foolishness and re-

bellion was killed, but I remained to see my weakness. I thought that I was made to feel the judgments of God upon me. I had Abraham's temptation, and felt that I must take my life. I threw my clothes aside to do so, and then fell back. I thought there was a candlestick on the stand by my bed, and a dipped candle in it, and as often as one was burned out another was put in its place. This continued for years; then it was put under the bed for a few times. For years this has not been. I thought that I could not endure to be so small a light, and would not be. Then again, I thought that the Lord had impressed upon me that he would take away my wife, that he might be feared. Then I thought that I would obey, but, like Ahimaaz, I had no message. I want to say it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. May no mortal ever know what I suffered on two occasions. I had no hope and no friend in heaven or in earth, and I could not as much as cry, My God, why hast thou forsaken me? But this did not last long before I thought there was forgiveness. So I still remain, and the adversary is destroyed, and I have hope that soon I shall be where the dear Lord is, if not altogether deceived. If I am, he is guiltless, and I feel that there is forgiveness with the Lord.

I have written you, feeling that I knew something about the adversary, and that I might enlighten you somewhat by that which I have passed through, but I have come far short. I have suffered in mind and in property, yet I thought that I could not yield, even if he had given me a message, yet he gave me a will to accept what he gave, and a will to give it away. This has caused me much grief, but I trust that the Lord has delivered me out of it all. I feel sure that he will not deny his loved ones. If I live to see my eightieth birthday I hope to write you again. Let me be what I may, a sinner saved or lost, I do like to read the editorials and the communications of others as well. I hope you will pardon this letter. May the Lord guide and keep you in all your tribulations. The saints to the end shall endure, as sure as the earnest is given.

Your brother,

D. S. ELLIOTT.

SILVERTON, Texas, July 7, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The time for renewing my subscription for the SIGNS is a little past, and I would have renewed sooner, but felt I would like to write a few lines to the loved ones scattered over the land, especially to those whom I know personally who read our much loved paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and to those who contribute to its pages. I will here ask the question that Elder John McConnell once asked Elder B. F. Coulter, viz., "Do you know what it is to feel impressed to write to one, and yet be destitute of anything to write, and if in the attempt to write there occurs the thought, how cold, unfeeling and lifeless the expression of it appears as you write it?" I think the answer to that question (yes) would be sufficient to explain to all my correspondents among the saints of God why I have not written to each one in answer to their good letters to me. I feel ashamed to write so often of my nothingness. I would rather tell of some glorious season that I had just passed through, where love abounded, where brethren met together filled with the Spirit, making melody in their hearts, singing hymns and spiritual songs; but alas, I have no such good news to impart, can only tell that I long for such a sea-

son. I long to be carried to his banqueting-house, where his banner over me is love, where his fruit will be sweet to my taste. I want to meet with brethren where Christ abounds, for, as brother Peters says in his most excellent article on "Charity," in a recent issue of the SIGNS, when all the members of a church possess charity there will be a happy meeting, a warm shaking of hands and a manifestation of love. I am sorry to say there is a kind of lukewarmness among the churches, at least over our part of the land, they seem to be neither cold nor hot. I feel that what was written to the church at Laodicea is applicable to the churches in a number of places that I know: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Ah, what a wretched condition truly. When we are brought to realize that we are in that awful condition there will be a shaking of dry bones in the valley; may God in his goodness hasten the day.

I wish to say that the June 1st, 1912, number of the SIGNS was worth to me the year's subscription. I enjoyed every article it contained, especially the letters of brethren White, Vail and Peters, and sister Wright. I was glad to know that she had the pleasure of visiting her home church once more and had such an enjoyable time.

Brethren editors, I hope you have met dear sister Wortham (a niece of Elder James True), who moved from Ft. Worth, Texas, to Glenside, N. Y., last year. She is indeed a lovely sister and a devout follower of the Savior; there is no one who loves the cause more than she and who delights more to meet with the saints at all times; she is truly a mother in Israel. How much I did wish to be with you all at your association this year, but found it impossible to attend; maybe the Lord will open the way for me again.

Now I must stop, for I find what I have written seems cold and lifeless. Were it not that able ministers of the gospel write of their cold, barren feeling and spiritual blindness I would despair. Pray for me that my faith may hold to the end.

Yours in tribulation,

LYDIA C. RAY.

DRESDEN, Ont., Feb. 7, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—As it is about time to renew my subscription, I thought I would write a few lines to thank the dear friends for their good letters in the SIGNS. How often I am blinded with tears while reading them, they are so comforting and encouraging, as they write as I feel. I am a poor, weak worm of the dust, wholly depending upon the Lord for my salvation. In my past life I thought, Surely if we ask the Lord, pray to him to forgive our sins, he will, but we must do our part, but now I leave my case with the Lord, and my prayer is, Lord, save or I perish. I have passed through severe trials, and feel crushed with grief, but they seem to wean me from the world.

Yours in sorrow,

(MRS.) THOMAS LEATHERDALE.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1912.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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GENESIS L. 20.

"BUT as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive."

Similar expressions in the word are numerous. In Genesis xlv. 5, we read as follows: "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve life." In verse eight we read, "So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God." In Acts ii. 23, we read as follows: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." In Acts iii. 18, we read again, "But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." In Acts iv. 27, 28, we read again as follows: "For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." All these Scriptures, and others, many of them, are in full harmony of statement with the text named at the beginning of this article.

First we desire to say a few things in general regarding all these Scriptures, and then we desire to speak especially of some things that belong to the text in Genesis. In all these Scriptures the events spoken of with reference to Joseph, first, and to Christ afterwards, are said to be according to the purpose of God. Such words are used as these, "God meant it," "God did send me before you," "Delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." The things that God shewed by the prophets concerning Jesus he hath fulfilled: "To do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." This language cannot be restricted to anything less than this conclusion, viz., that each and every event, each and every step connected with the whole history of Joseph, and the whole of the betrayal and crucifixion of the blessed Lord, was foreordained of God, and that the things which he had foreordained he performed. This conclusion cannot be avoided if this language quoted from the Scriptures is believed. It is saying with Job, when he spoke of his trials, He performeth the thing that he hath appointed for me. In the next place, these same things were grievous sins on the part of those who did them. It is said, "Ye thought evil against me," "Ye sold me hither," "By wicked hands have crucified and slain" the Lord; The rulers conspired together against the Lord. Man's purpose was to do evil, God's purpose in the same things was to work good. For instance, the Lord purposed that Joseph should be sold as a slave, and taken down into Egypt, and then imprisoned, and his purpose was a righteous one; it was not evil in him to determine this humiliation and suffering for Joseph, but his brethren in their purpose to sell him meant only to carry out their anger

against him and seek his destruction. God appointed that some of his saints should be burned at the stake, or killed by being thrown to lions. This was not evil in him, for he has a right to take away the life which he has given in any way that seems good to him, but all this was most grievous sin in those who thus afflicted his saints. They meant not good, but evil, but God makes their evil spirit to fulfill his purpose of love and mercy for the good of all his people, and for his own glory. These are some of the general lessons taught in these and other Scriptures.

Second. The brethren of Joseph did not reply to these words of Joseph, quoted from the text, and from the forty-fifth chapter of Genesis, by saying, How then can we be condemned, seeing that we have only done just what God meant to be done, and what was needful to be done in order to save much people alive? No, they felt their sin, and they confessed their sin; they besought the forgiveness of their brother, and confessed that he had a perfect right to be angry with them and to punish them. They did not seek to take shelter from condemnation under the predestination of God, or to plead that in his predestination was full justification for their guilt. So it is written of those who crucified the dear Redeemer, They shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for him; that is, on account of him. Although Jesus had said to Peter several hours beforehand, that before the dawn of the coming day he should deny him, so that from that time on it could not be but that Peter should deny him, unless indeed the Savior's words were untrue (which God forbid any of us should even imagine), yet when Peter had done this, and the Lord had turned and looked upon him, he went out and wept bitterly. Peter looked at his sinful heart, his vainglory, and then thought of his grievous fall. Joseph's brethren looked at their envious hearts, at their anger without cause against their brother, and at the evil things which they had done, and those who shall look upon the dear Redeemer whom they have pierced, also shall look at their cruel tempers, and their angry opposition to the blessed Master, and so all these shall not seek to excuse their sins, but shall confess them, and not one of them will say, I could not help it, and therefore am not to blame. Carnal minds will seek to make the will of God their excuse for their sins, and thus turn even his grace into lasciviousness, but it will not be so with any who really love him and hate their sin.

Third. Let us notice now the declaration of Joseph, "But God meant it unto good." The special good named in the text is "to save much people alive." The things written of Joseph, and the circumstances of his life, were all literally true, and in the narrative we see how his father and his father's family were preserved from death in the famine through the fact that Joseph in Egypt had in the seven years of plenty stored away corn sufficient not only for the Egyptians themselves, but also sufficient to sell to others in the region round about, who were also suffering from the wide extended famine. This was the temporal good which resulted from the hatred of his brethren, and from their selling him into bondage; it all resulted in good to Joseph himself, to his household and to the Egyptians, and his faith embraced the fact that all the way in which he had traveled had been the purpose of God as well as the result. He had been led forth by the right way, that he might go to this city of habitation. The wrath of these, his brethren, had

worked for good to him, to them and to many others, and to the glory of God, and in them that portion of wrath which would not have wrought to this end had been restrained. They could not kill him, and he could not be returned to his father, as Simeon had thought to do, and the anger of Potiphar's wife was restrained, that he should not be put to death. All the way along in this narrative we see the wrath of man held in bonds by the unseen hand of God, so that they did the will of God, even when they had no thought of the will of God in their minds at all. How many times has it been true that because men did not know God's will they fulfilled his will. (See Acts xiii. 27.) How wonderful it is that in infinite wisdom even the wickedness of men is brought into subjection and made to subserve the purposes of God.

Fourth. Not only in a providential sense did all this work good for Joseph, but still more it is true that the Lord meant good in all these ups and downs of Joseph's life in their results upon his inward spiritual life. In him was fulfilled the words of David: "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." All the way in which Joseph was led to the fulfillment of God's promises to him taught him that it was not for wisdom or goodness in himself that these temporal blessings were bestowed upon him. Being convinced that the purpose of God had wrought out all these mercies, though it was by the hand of his envious and vengeful brethren, he could forgive them, and treat them with kindness, and as brothers indeed, and both humility and forgiveness would grow out of the faith expressed in the words of the text: Ye indeed thought to do evil, but God meant it for good. Seeing the hand of God in all these persecutions and afflictions, there would also arise in the heart of Joseph the grace of submission and reconciliation. Though these evils are the work of wicked and envious men, though imprisonment and deprivation be hard to bear, though dealt with most unjustly again and again, yet the knowledge of this truth that God had a good meaning in it would keep his lips silent from murmuring, and his heart would be held back from repining. He could say, It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth to him good. The sheep are just as confident and safe when their Shepherd leads them through the dark valley and the shadow of death as when he makes them to lie down in green pastures and to feed by the still waters; nothing can befall one of the Lord's dear ones to harm them; beside, those who are seeking the harm of the righteous are fighting against God, and when a child of God can remember this he will feel that his case is far better than that of his enemy. Paul and Silas in prison were far more blessed than he who shut them up there. It was theirs to sing a song higher than all the songs of mirth and revelry, because the theme of their song was of things that could not perish.

Fifth. In conclusion, the thought is in our mind that when we sin it is against God, and against God only; this David felt and confessed. He had deeply wronged his chief captain and his wife, and this he knew, but with him when Nathan the prophet came to him with the word of the Lord, convincing him of his evil doing, all else was forgotten in his heart save this one thing: his sin against God. He had committed a crime indeed against right and justice in his treatment of his faithful captain and Bathsheba, but what was that to the one thing that was now forced upon his mind, viz., that

this crime against them was also sin against God? He who is wronged is far better off than he who inflicts the wrong. The kind and watchful Father can make up to those who suffer wrong more than they have lost, but who shall make up to the wrongdoer what he has lost by his sin? All this, too, would be in the mind of Joseph, and so there would be great pity in his heart toward his brethren who had in their wrong against him created a grievous sin against God. Coming to feel the truth of these reflections, the saints of God in all ages when under bitter persecution have been enabled to forgive and to pray for those who despitefully used them and evil entreated them. Such a spirit is blessed indeed, and they in whom it dwells are blessed indeed, and when under these trials one is brought into such a state of mind how plainly it appears that while men intended evil in what they have done, God meant it for good. Again and again does our sovereign Lord bring good to us and praise to himself through the wrath of men, therefore we ought to bless him for the good, and pity and pray for those who intended the evil. C.

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EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

FORGIVENESS.

WHY did the inspired servant of the Lord say, Heb. xii. 24, that the blood of sprinkling speaketh better things than that of Abel? The voice of Abel's blood cried unto the Lord from the ground, and called forth vengeance upon the head of Cain. (Gen. iv. 10–12.) The punishment of Cain was a righteous retribution from the hand of God for the unprovoked murder of his innocent brother, according to the spirit of that law which requires even-handed justice, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, a foot for a foot and life for life. But in the execution of strict justice upon transgressors there can be no mercy, no forgiveness; he that despised Moses' law died without mercy, and every transgression received a just recompense of reward. But the blood of Christ was shed for the remission of sins, and speaks of peace, pardon and salvation. What an amazing exemplification of the peace-speaking excellency of the blood of the Lamb was given when the great Redeemer drained the last drop from his sacred heart for his most bitter and malicious foes, and while the purple torrent gushed from his pierced side, his temples, hands and feet, he cried, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Christians, can you see in this an example worthy of imitation? Did Jesus cry, Forgive, and leave his children at liberty to call for vengeance upon their supposed or real enemies?

"Led as a lamb to meet the sword,
He bowed beneath the stroke;
Not one revengeful, angry word
The dear Redeemer spoke.

O may his meekness be my guide,
The pattern I pursue;
How can I bear revenge or pride,
With Jesus in my view?"

Can we possess the Spirit of Christ and still desire the destruction of those we deem our foes? Let us all remember that as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God; but if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. Whatever may be our standing in society, whatever our religious profession, whatever our creed, our works, our recognition by those who profess godliness, we are forbidden access to the throne of grace if we do not from our heart forgive those who have trespassed against us. Solemn, momentous thought! Those who are taught of Christ to pray must say, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."—Matt. vi. 12, 14, 15. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."—Gal. vi. 7. Do we really mean what we say when we ask our God to forgive us as we forgive our debtors, or those who have offended us, or do we presume that our God will fail to note the malediction of our hearts and lips against others? We have heard men professing godliness, almost in the same breath pray for the destruction of their real or fancied enemies, and for their own forgiveness. Do not such believe God will allow us to mock him? If conscious in my heart that I am a rebel and a traitor to my God, and confess to him that I deserve his awful wrath, can I consistently with the admonitions of his holy word give my voice, my vote or my influence for retribution and wrath against those whom I deem rebels or traitors, and then ask God to forgive me only as I forgive them? Should our God only forgive us as we forgive others, what would become of us? It is not strange to hear those whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness, and whose feet are swift to shed blood, before whose eyes there is no fear of God, imprecating the thunderbolts of wrath upon those whom they dislike; devils may be expected to rage, for the devil was a murderer from the beginning, and those who are led by the spirit of Satan, or of the world, may belch forth the malice of the wicked one, but what can be more terribly astounding than to hear from the lips of those who pray God to forgive their own transgressions, the denunciations of wrath against their fellow-men? We admit there are ministers of justice in the civil government of states and nations divinely authorized to bear the sword, and to be a terror to evil doers, and to maintain the peace and safety of the righteous, but they belong to the department of state, not church, and even their authority is limited; if they transcend their bounds God will judge them, for his throne and authority are far above all principalities, powers, thrones and dominions. But where shall we find authority, from the precepts of Christ, from the examples of our Lord or his apostles or primitive saints, for christians to avenge themselves, or give their voice for vengeance? In the language of Pope should they not rather say:

> "Let not this bold, this erring hand,
> Presume God's bolts to throw,
> And deal damnation round the land
> To each I deem his foe"?

Vengeance is mine, I will repay, is the language in which God speaks to us, and he commands us to love our enemies, and to do good to them who despitefully use and persecute us, and he forbids that we should render evil to any man, whether friend or foe, saint or sinner. We are as

christians commanded to follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord, and as much as in us lies to do good unto all men, especially to those who are of the household of faith. We are as strictly commanded to lay aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisy and envies and evil speaking, as we are forbidden to curse and swear, lie or cheat, commit murder or any other crime, and we are told that if we take the sword we shall perish by the sword, and he that is angry with his brother is a murderer, and we know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. When the disciples saw their Lord treated with scorn, feeling indignant they asked if they might call for fire from heaven to consume the offenders. Though they did not propose themselves to execute the vengeance, but to call on God to send down the fire, Jesus rebuked them, and said they knew not what manner of spirit prompted their indignation. When for what seemed to be the most palpable provocation Peter smote the servant of the high priest, he was reproved and commanded to put up his sword. Indeed, all the precepts, instructions, reproofs, admonitions and examples of our Lord and his holy apostles were brought to bear upon this very point; forgiveness, meekness, patience, long-suffering, gentleness and benevolence, and the spirit and temper of christianity is fully expressed in the hymn which resounded in the plains of Judah from angel voices: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." In strongest contrast with which the dragon's voice of cruelty, malice, wrath and carnage marks the hell-born spirit of antichrist in every age, from Cain down to the last effort of the man of sin in the final gathering of the armies of Gog and Magog to assault for the last time the church of the living God. (Rev. xx. 8, 9.) "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain." —Jude 11. But, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also." "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for [mark, not prey upon] them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others?

do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Such are the instructions which were given by our Lord Jesus Christ to his disciples on the mount, and he says, Then are ye my disciples indeed, if ye do whatsoever I command you. If ye love me, keep my commandments. "And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple."—Luke xiv. 27. "And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels."—Mark viii. 34–38. If there ever was a time when these admonitions were specially required to be held forth to the children of God and solemnly considered, it is at the present time. It is in these last days in which many shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; in these days, in which the most powerful influences are brought to bear upon the Lord's people to lure them from the pathway of holiness and cause them to indorse the murderous spirit and madness of the sons of Belial. While all the synagogues of Satan are belching forth their most violent appeals for blood, and lashing the worst passions of men to deeds of cruelty, how important it is that God's dear children should watch and be sober. The elements of nature are now melting with fervent heat, the day of trial of our faith has come upon us, the line of discrimination between the carnal hypocrites and true disciples of our Lord is being manifestly drawn. May our God save us in this hour of temptation, deliver us from evil and enable us to show forth his meek, gentle, lamblike spirit, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us. The day of the Lord is surely at hand, it shall come upon this wicked generation as a thief, but ye, brethren, are children of the light and of the day, let not the day of the Lord come upon you as a thief.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., July 1, 1865.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Prepared by Elder J. M. Fenton.)

Circular Letter from the Delaware River Association to the churches composing the same.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—The subject under consideration will be Associations. The first appearance of such a body we find recorded in Hassell's Church History, mentioning the Philadelphia Association in 1707. The Kehukee Association was formed in 1765, with seven churches, and is still in existence. On page 662, Hassell's History, is recorded as follows: "Before these churches were organized into an associate body they held yearly meetings, wherein matters of consequence were discussed and determined." In their articles of faith the Kehukee Association says: "We believe that every church is independent in matters of discipline, and that associations, councils and conferences of several ministers or churches are not to impose on churches the keeping, holding or

maintaining any principle or practice contrary to the churches' judgment." "Much discussion arose as to the power of associations over churches, which resulted in an understanding to leave the churches their entire independence, and permitting the association (which is but a collection of churches) to act as an advisory council only."—Hassell's History, page 702. Continuing, it further says: "Should the churches ever allow the associations, or any body of men formed by their combination, to dictate to them against their consent, it has ever been held that their liberties in such case will have passed away, and they become no longer churches of Christ, but tools of tyrants." "A church of Christ has ever been considered, by genuine Baptists, the highest ecclesiastical power on earth."—Hassell's History, page 702. Thus is seen clearly set forth by the Lord's servants in their day where the association as a body composed of several churches of the same faith and order were to occupy. We do not understand that the associations acting as an advisory council implied that their advice was to church or churches, but only to embrace associational relationship. Associations receive church letters and observe the writing of circular letters and corresponding letters; should it be expedient for the association to withdraw correspondence from any church or association, it does not imply that there is any barrier for the servants of God to labor among the Lord's people from whom the association has withdrawn correspondence. There is no headship to the church but Christ; he is "the head over all things to the church, which is his body."—Eph. i. 22, 23. We "grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."—Eph. iv. 15. "Christ is the head of the church: and he is savior of the body."—Eph. v. 23. "And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell."—Col. i. 17–19. "And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power."—Col. ii. 10. It would seem that the apostle, by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, was instructing the church in all ages by the above Scripture, that we fall not away to seek instruction or guidance from any power, principality, assembly, council or body as over the church of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This would not imply that any church would seek independence from other churches, for the love of God would constrain them to seek the love and fellowship of sister churches, and their advice and counsel if necessary. The assembling of yourselves together for the worship of God is by command of the apostle, and we desire to see the same observed. The assembly of the saints we believe has ever been observed since the Savior set up his kingdom in the earth, and all that was necessary in the observance of that worship was given by our Lord and Savior and by his apostles in the New Testament. Therefore we regard the associations as a creation of the churches, and subject to the churches, and not the churches subject to the association.

S. H. DURAND, Moderator.
WILLIAM HOBENSACK, Clerk.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn third Sunday in August (18th), by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker. All lovers of truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, convened with the church at Southampton, Bucks County, Pa., May 29th, 30th and 31st, 1912, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is our privilege to write you at this another session of our association. We are glad to report that our meeting has been pleasant and harmonious; not a discordant sound has been heard. Your ministers have come to us preaching Jesus Christ and him crucified as the only name given under heaven among men whereby ye must be saved, he who hath loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the First Hopewell Church, at Hopewell, Mercer Co., N. J., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the first Sunday in June, 1913, when and where we hope to again meet and greet your messengers.

S. H. DURAND, Moderator.
WILLIAM HOBENSACK, Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

LOS ANGELES, Cal., July 7, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have to ask you to again change the SIGNS, from Cadiff, Colo., to 334 East 61st Street, Los Angeles, Cal. I am here with my daughter, on account of my poor health, and if I continue to improve as I have I surely will spend my few remaining days on earth here. I have learned of a little church of our faith in this city near me, and will hunt them up as soon as I feel able in body to do so.

I am yours in hope,
J. H. YEOMAN.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MY wife, **Clarice E. Durand,** departed this life Tuesday, July 2nd, 1912, at our home in Southampton, Pa. Her maiden name was Clarice E. Pusey. She was born in Maryland, March 2nd, 1846. She was baptized by Elder Wm. Grafton in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Harford the first Sunday in July, 1871. We were married in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Baltimore, July 5th, 1882, by Elder Wm. Grafton, assisted by Elder F. A. Chick. I cannot command language to tell of her worth and excellence in every relation in life, according to the estimate of all who knew her. One of the purest of women, most unselfish, most thoughtful of others, yet having a very low estimate of herself, and could not easily allude to any helpful thing she had done for another. She could hardly be persuaded to let anything she had written be published; she could not think her thoughts were of sufficient value for that. The sweet hymn which was published in the SIGNS of June 1st lay in my drawer two years before she consented to its publication. The chastening of the Lord, of which she speaks in it, had killed her to everything pertaining to the world, without in the slightest degree making her harsh or unsympathetic towards those who had not been led so deeply, and from her seemingly boundless store of love and wisdom she gave freely to all, of whatever creed or class, yet never robbing her own. Her health failed about twenty years ago; at times she was very ill. She was enabled to spend some time in Florida and other parts of the south, receiving some benefit. About seven years ago tubercular trouble was added to her bronchial disease, and from that time she had taken special treatment for that. She was very faithful and persistent in the treatment, feeling that it was her duty to do all she could for her health on account of her children, though having for herself a peculiar disregard for life. Her last serious illness began in July, a year ago, and heart trouble had been very distressing during most of the time since then. She valued highly the privileges of the church and of the meetings. It was a great affliction to her that she was not able to be at the meetings for about a year. On the second Sunday in June she was at our church meeting, and again at the communion season on Sunday. This was surprising to herself, as to all. It had been her longing desire that she might be once more at the preaching and sit down at the communion table. She felt it no injury to her, but an especial dispensation in her favor. She failed steadily from that time, and suffered greatly from difficulty in breathing. She feared that she might complain, but did not. Very sweetly she bore the great suffering, and was clearly waiting on the Lord. She was in very great distress of soul during the early part of her

illness in the fall, but during the last few weeks she felt a sweet relief. She was almost afraid there was something wrong with her that she could feel such an unruffled peace and quietude of mind. The Scripture found in 1 John i. 9, was now of special comfort to her. She said she had many blissful moments from it, especially from the closing words: "And cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Sin was so terrible a thing in her view that the cleansing of one from it seemed almost impossible. Her wonder and solemn joy were unspeakable when she felt that she was cleansed from all unrighteousness. For many weeks we had much conversation on the exercises of mind concerning prayer. Her mind was led deeply in the Scriptures, but she was as one feeling her way along timidly. One day these words came to her with power: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," and she said, "It takes the infinite power of the eternal God to make the atoning sacrifice of Christ effectual." Less than an hour before her departure she looked clearly at me and said, "I would welcome the summons any moment," and when the call came we rejoiced with her that after so great suffering she was now at rest.

A few words from what she wrote for the SIGNS at the time of her mother's death is the language of our hearts now: "But when we turn to the darkened household, and realize the indescribable vacancy pervading everywhere, and the awful blankness in the future, where is the hand that can roll back the terrible waves of sorrow that rush in upon the soul, and say to the surging waves, 'Peace, be still'? Will calm, patient resignation like hers some time come, and strength to tread life's journey cheerfully to its close? Surely only the omnipotent Hand can supply the needed grace."

The funeral was held at her home on our thirtieth wedding day. Elders Chick and Lefferts spoke greatly to the comfort of those present, and Elder Coulter spoke sweetly in prayer. Beside myself, two daughters survive her, the elder, Mrs. Gilbert B. McColl, living in Winnipeg, Manitoba, the younger, Mildred Durand, at the home.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., July 11, 1912.

SISTER **Sarah E. Bowyer Hammond** was born Jan. 22nd, 1847, in Anderson County, Ky., and died April 27th, 1912, aged 65 years, 3 months and 5 days. Her father was Wm. E. Bowyer, who was born August 8th, 1819, and died Feb. 7th, 1887, he being a son of Henry Bowyer, an emigrant from old Virginia. Her mother was Sarah Ann Tinsley, and was born June 8th, 1824, and died Feb. 4th, 1847, she being the daughter of Archibald Tinsley, who also was of old Virginia stock. It will be seen from the foregoing that sister Hammond was left motherless when an infant, and consequently had to be cared for and brought up by kind and loving relatives, but being of a lovable and loving disposition, she soon won the hearts of those who had the charge of her, and grew into childhood in favor with all with whom she came in contact. The writer, being a country school-teacher, had sister Hammond as a pupil in the year 1860, when she was about the age of twelve years, and a lovelier or sweeter dispositioned pupil than she it was never my lot to instruct, and it has been my good privilege to know much of her all along since that time. She was united in marriage to Joseph Hammond, Oct. 19th, 1865. Joseph Hammond, her husband, was born Feb. 17th, 1842. To that union were born twelve children, four of whom died in childhood and infancy. Eight survive her, namely: Eliza Ann Hammond Yount, born Sept. 11th, 1866; Sarah Bell Hammond Jamison, born July 23rd, 1868; Mary Dell Hammond Cox, born Oct. 4th, 1870; Nancy C. Hammond Carlton, born Feb. 29th, 1874; William H. Hammond, born June 14th, 1876; Josie Ora Hammond Ritter, born July 21st, 1878; John Taylor Hammond, born August 12th, 1885, and Richard C. Hammond, born April 20th, 1893. The names of the four who preceded her to the great beyond are: Estella N. Hammond, born May 15th, 1880, died Jan. 16th, 1882; Baby was born April 5th, 1883, and died April 6th, 1883; Melerah Catharine Hammond was born June 30th, 1888, died Sept. 14th, 1895, and Louisa Frances Hammond, born August 23rd, 1890, and died Sept. 19th, 1895. Sister Hammond's foreparents on both sides were Baptists, chiefly of the Old or Primitive order. She stood aloof from all church connection until being persuaded in her own mind that the Old School Baptists were right, then she came and presented herself to the old Beech Creek Church, and was joyfully received, and baptized by Elder P. W. Sawin in the year 1900, after which she soon realized that she had gotten home to her people at last, and from then to the day of her death she manifested that zeal in the cause of her Lord and Master which is according to knowledge, so much so indeed that she seemed to lose sight of worldly things. The writer often witnessed how joyful she would become while listening to the precious truths of the gospel proclaimed by the called and tried servants of God. I now call to mind the last time it was my privilege to be with and enjoy the dear sister's company. It was the first Saturday and Sunday in last September; she with her husband and eldest daughter attended the meeting at Mt. Pleasant, Pleasureville, Ky., which was indeed a meeting never to be forgotten by any believer who was present. Yes, she as well as all of us had such a feast that she never ceased talking about it until the day of her death. Her husband and daughter, though not members with us, seemed also filled to overflowing with the preaching and worship, and we pray God they may each come out

and openly take the yoke of Jesus as did the wife and mother, and learn of Jesus as she did and find rest to their souls. Sister Hammond's death was very sudden, and therefore unexpected. She spoke to her husband about getting up to prepare breakfast, and turned partly over in bed, and her husband heard a gurgling sound in her breathing and asked what was the matter, and receiving no answer became alarmed, but she was dead in about twenty minutes.

We failed to trace Mr. Hammond's genealogy in referring to him as the husband of sister Hammond. He was born and raised principally a close neighbor to his wife, of worthy parentage. His mother's maiden name was Taylor. He is a firm believer in the doctrine of the Old Baptists, being a great friend and helper to the cause. His is now a lonely life, being bereft of his loving wife. May God's goodness, mercy and grace sustain him and all the children in this sore trial through which they are called to pass. Sister Hammond was a kind and loving mother, a loving wife, an obliging neighbor, a true and faithful christian, and died leaving an example worthy in every respect of our imitation. She died leaving behind a saddened husband, eight sorrowing children, thirty-two grandchildren, three great-grandchildren and a host of neighbors and friends, together with the church, to mourn their loss, but we sorrow not as others who have no hope, for we believe our loss is her eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder P. W. Sawin, at old Beech Creek; interment in the old churchyard. W. T. RITTER.

ALSO,

Martishie Burk Hammond was born Dec. 26th, 1888, and died Jan. 31st, 1912, at the home of her husband, William H. Hammond, son of sister Sarah E. Bowyer Hammond and Joseph Hammond, near Waddy, Shelby Co., Ky. Martishie was not a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, but loved her God and gave glory to him. She was a beloved woman, and many are the friends who mourn their loss, which is her eternal gain. May God comfort the husband, and strengthen him to say, Dear Lord, thy will be done. Born to them was a baby girl, whom God called home about a year before the mother. The body returns to the earth from which it came, and the spirit to God who gave it.

It falls to our lot to chronicle the death of **Miss Elizabeth H. Boggs,** who for many years had been prominently known among almost all our eastern Baptists as a member of the First Hopewell Church, at Hopewell, N. J. She died at the home of her niece, in Trenton, N. J., May 31st, 1912, from the infirmities incident to old age. She was the last surviving child of Elder John Boggs, who from 1807 to 1847 was pastor of the First Hopewell Church. She was born at the parsonage farm at Hopewell, Feb. 2nd, 1827, and was the tenth of eleven children. Her life, from the age of sixteen years until a few years before her death, had been spent in teaching. She taught in the vicinity of Hopewell for several years, and in the early fifties she opened a select private school at Haddonsfield, N. J. She afterwards became principal of a leading public school in Washington, D. C., where she remained until 1866. From 1866 to 1890 she was principal of a young ladies' seminary in Hopewell, and there are many in different parts of the country who became her pupils and who still remember her with love and gratitude for her interest in them as her scholars and for her helpful kindness to them. In 1890 she removed to Colorado, and then to Raton, N. M., where she taught until her labors ceased with the encroaching feebleness of old age. About a month before her death she came east, and was cared for at the home of Mrs. Wesley Vandyke, her niece, until the end came. Many of her old friends came there to see her once more. It seemed good to all that it was her privilege to spend the last days of her life among the scenes of her childhood and mature years. Her body was brought to Hopewell on Monday after her death, and lay in state at the Old School Baptist meeting-house from noon until the time of her funeral, at 2 p. m., and very many of her old time friends availed themselves of the opportunity to once more gaze upon the features of one whom they had known in former years and whom they had esteemed as a friend.

The funeral service was conducted by the pastor of the church, after which her remains were laid away in the cemetery adjoining to await the resurrection at the last day.

The above items were furnished us by her nephew, Dr. John Garrison, of Hopewell, N. J. He, with the great niece in Trenton, at whose home she died, and some nephews and nieces in the west, are all that remain of the once large family, but very many will remember her as one who had filled a large place in their lives. Her home had been with Elder G. M. Fetter, the husband of her niece, for many years. His home is now broken up, and he will long miss a faithful friend. She became a member of the First Hopewell Church in the early fifties, while Elder Philander Hartwell was pastor of the church, and there never was a time when she was not interested in the cause of the blessed Savior in all the years since then. She was given clear views of the truth of salvation by grace, and never wavered from the doctrine which gives to God all the glory of salvation. She was a good hearer of preaching, and a friend to those who preached the gospel. She lived in the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, and died in that faith. When living in New Mexico she was dismissed from Hopewell Church to become a mem-

ber of the little church that at one time was organized in Raton. It had been her intention to restore her membership to this church, but she had never done so, owing to circumstances which had caused delay. Her memory will long remain with her old time friends and brethren in Christ, but we rejoice in the full assurance that for her to live was Christ and to die was gain. C.

Mrs. Lucy Ella Pulsifer, of Whitefield, Maine, beloved wife of Mr. Frank Pulsifer, departed this life to be with Christ June 28th, 1912. Our sister united with the church of Christ at Whitefield and was baptized by Elder Hiram Campbell, June 25th, 1874. "From her earliest recollection she always felt a condemnation in her conscience for any little act she considered wrong, and was always thoughtful and serious in regard to the subject of religion. As a child she would sit and listen to christian people as they conversed on their experience, and as they would tell of their evidences of God's salvation she would wonder what an evidence meant. When she was about twenty-two years of age there was a revival in the neighborhood under an Advent preacher, and during that time God made her to see herself a great sinner, and she was in deep distress for several days, after which she was brought forth to the light of Christ's gospel with great rejoicing that her sins were forgiven. Soon after this she went with her first husband to King's Mills, intending to go to the New School Baptist meeting, but across the way the Old School Baptists were assembled in a schoolhouse, and her husband persuaded her after they arrived there to go into the Old School Baptist meeting, and from that time until the day of her death they were her people. She was received by the church for baptism May 24th, 1874. She was a devoted christian, and if only a few words were spoken on the subject her countenance would brighten and her eyes fill with tears, and she was always eager to catch a word from some outsider whereby she might have some hope for them. The love and tender feeling which she always manifested were a comfort to those who knew and loved her in the gospel. As the years went by she grew firmer and saw more clearly how God saves his people. She was dearly loved by us all, and was always present at our little gatherings when possible, and her testimony of her hope in Jesus was always given in a voice full of love to the dear Savior and to his people. But she is gone from us. It was best for her to depart to be with Christ. Hers were years of suffering and pain. I have never known any one who suffered so many years and endured greater pain at times than she, but comfort and strength were given so that she could sing praises and run with patience the race set before her." Thus our sister, Mrs. Nellie Palmer, has written of her, all of which from my knowledge of her I know to be so. Her last season of acute suffering was of only a few days duration. The Lord has taken her away from the evil to come. Her husband and her daughter, Mrs. Paul King, and grandchildren and other relatives also will truly mourn their loss in her removal from them. She was a good wife and mother and a precious sister in Christ Jesus.

At her funeral the writer preached from the words: "But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me."—Psalms xlix. 15.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

F. M. Bozeman, my brother, died at his son's home, near Sylvester, Ga., April 8th, 1912. He was born Sept. 30th, 1848, in old Stewart Co., Ga., (now Webster) and was married to Miss M. L. Huckaby, April 10th, 1867, who died Dec. 20th, 1903. To that union were born fourteen children, nine boys and five girls, of whom ten are living, six boys and four girls. About 1880 my brother and his wife joined the Primitive Baptist Church at old Macedonia, Terrell Co., Ga., and were consistent members, and to the day of their death adorned the doctrine they professed. They were baptized by Elder W. T. Everett. My sister writes that brother's eldest son, T. A. Bozeman, is a Primitive Baptist preacher. I will say to the bereft children, Weep not for your parents. I know from experience it is hard to give them up, but we have a hope that our loss is their eternal gain. JOSEPH H. BOZEMAN.

TEHUACANA, Texas.

APPOINTMENTS.

ELDER F. A. Chick expects to fill appointments in the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada as follows: Tuesday night after the fourth Sunday in July, in London; Wednesday night in St. Thomas; in Duart Thursday night; in Aldboro on Friday, at such time as the friends there may arrange; Dunwich, Saturday and first Sunday in August; Ekfrid, first Monday in August, as may be arranged; Lobo, on Tuesday, as may be arranged; also Brantford, Wednesday night.

DUNCAN McALPINE, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

THE Otego Old School Baptist Church has appointed meeting to be held Saturday afternoon, August 10th, and Sunday, August 11th, instead of the first Sunday. Our friends are invited to meet with us. Our pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, and Elder J. M. Fenton are expected to attend the little meeting.

Done in behalf of the church.

S. C. F. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Rock Springs Church, Pa., commencing on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in August (24th and 25th), 1912, at 2 o'clock p. m. Those coming from Philadelphia will leave there Saturday, on the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore R. R., at 7:20 a. m. for Perryville. Those coming from Baltimore will leave union depot at 8 a. m. on the same road for Perryville. Change cars for Conowingo, where all will be met. A general invitation is extended to those who love to be with us. If it is possible, any expecting to come to this meeting please notify Miss Annie E. Jenkins, Peters Creek, Lancaster Co., Pa., Route 1, or Edward Dawson, Rising Sun, Md.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

C. J. ROWLAND, Clerk.

THE Albany and Troy Church will meet the fourth Sunday in each month at No. 2 Second St., Monument Square, Troy, N. Y.

J. B. SLAUSON, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

FIRST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, at Mineral Wells, Texas, holds meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, and Saturday night before, in the meetinghouse, on Star Well Ave., Kidwell Heights. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

SALLIE E. HOWARD, Church Clerk.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of southern California meets every third Sunday at 2 p. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 80. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1912. NO. 16.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WALKER, Oregon, Nov. 16, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I very much enjoy the soul-reviving food that comes to us from the pens of precious brethren through the columns of the SIGNS. It is written that He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, and gather the lambs in his arms. His ways of mercy are so many and varied that we have great reason to praise his adorable name. I am such a poor, weak, sinful mortal that I cannot come to the throne of grace at all with any other plea than, "God be merciful to me a sinner." I have not ability without his amazing grace to speak, or even think, a good thought. I have need of the living God, who has numbered the hairs of our head. I believe I know that every man in his best estate is altogether vanity. All nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted before him as less than nothing and vanity.

But how shall I my Savior set forth?
How shall I his beauties declare?
O how shall I speak of his worth—
Of what his chief dignities are?

His angels can never express,
Nor saints who sit near his throne,
How rich are his treasures of grace;
No, this is a mystery untold.

He laid all his grandeur aside,
And dwelt in a cottage of clay;
Poor sinners he loved till he died
To wash their pollutions away.

There have been volumes upon volumes written in his praise, and his beloved have spent hours, days, months and years trying to speak of his worth, of his love and mercy and justice, of his care for his saints, and of his excellence and perfections. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Since it has pleased him to make man with a mind that knows things only by comparison, it has also pleased him to make all things else so as to be comprehended or measured by comparison. The beautiful light of day is compared with the extreme darkness of night, also the lesser lights, the moon and the stars, which all borrow their glory from the sun. But the darkest and most deplorable thing is the human heart, which is declared to be deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and it is asked, Who can know it? All men are under sin, and there is none righteous, "none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have

used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known." This is the benighted condition of the helpless creature man, and yet he is ever boastful and proud, and so long as he does not know God he is thankful that he is not like other men, and is proud of the many good deeds which he has done in the flesh. But how all this is changed when the true light shines in our hearts, then there is no longer anything to boast of, and the creature appears in the true light. Now he learns that the creature is dependent for life, breath, will, strength and everything. Then he learns that there is nothing to plead but mercy, his cry is, "God be merciful to me a sinner." There have been many fig leaf aprons made (which may seem as aprons unto men) by fasting and doing many good works, but the light of the knowledge of the truth is too piercing, and it lays bare the lying heart, then we are weighed in the balance and found wanting. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." O, dear reader, this of all contrasts is the greatest: the depravity of the human heart and life, and the perfect holiness of our God and his adorable Son. The heavens are so far away; we can calculate the number of millions of miles, but our finite minds cannot grasp even the distance to the stars, yet God says, As the heavens are above the earth, so are my ways above your ways, and my thoughts above your thoughts. One of the filthy leaves of self-righteousness under which man ever tries to take cover is the humanly devised charge which was made against Isaiah's and Paul's arguments: If God has foreordained all things, why does he find fault? To the poor weakling who has been in the all-searching light, and thus has found out his dark, helpless condition, and his need of the God of purpose and power, and who has felt the sweetness of his tender compassion, and of his unmerited grace, this doctrine is as good news from a far country, and as cold water to a thirsty soul. How good to know that there is a God who is without variableness or the shadow of turning. He says, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Have not we poor creatures, who have never been able to merit anything save eternal punishment from the God of perfection and love, great cause to thank him for the blessed consolation contained in his own undisputable words in the sermon on the mount, recorded in Matthew, fifth, sixth and seventh chapters? There we are assured of God's knowledge of the things of which we have need, and then of his unlimited ability to provide of his love and of his care even for the sparrow and the lily of the field. He said, They sow not, neither do they reap, or gather into barns, and yet our heavenly Father feedeth them. And, The lily toils not, neither does it spin, and yet even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of them. O may we have abiding faith to trust him. It is said that he sits as a refiner of silver, and we may need many sore chastenings and many afflictions to burn up the dross, but every chastisement is in love, he will be with us in all our troubles. Paul endured shipwreck, was

stoned nigh unto death, was in perils from robbers and from false brethren, and was in bonds, but his faith in God only shone forth brighter. He said in Galatians, The life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God; and in the beginning of the following chapter he sharply rebuked the Galatian brethren for their lack of faith in God, saying, O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth? Again he reminds them of Jesus and his sufferings. If we are trusting in ourselves, or in anything save the Lord, for our salvation, even in time, which is, after all, but a part of eternity, let us again read Matthew vi., and notice that there the Savior is enumerating earthly blessings. Therefore he said, Take no thought what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Have you, my readers, ever seriously considered the expression of David: I once was young, but now I am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread? Then let us trust him, or else receive his plain and severe rebuke. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep." I do not understand all this to teach that an able-bodied man shall sit down and wait for the manna to fall in his plate; the will is all of God. The birds, whom the heavenly Father feeds, have the will to eat so long as it pleases him, and when the length of days appointed them ends, the will or the supply fails them. It is good indeed to find on nearly every page of his blessed word promises of his love and care for his beloved lambs. There is absolutely nothing left for the creature to boast of. In the ancients of eternity He comprehended all their need, and so Paul could well say, For we know that all things work together for good to them who love him. There are no exceptions, and the reason is that he works all things after the counsel of his own will. Cursed is man that trusteth in man, or maketh flesh his arm. Does he not need afflictions to sift out such chaff, to burn up such dross? Paul had no confidence in the flesh. Job said, Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. This kind of faith does not, as some slanderously say, beget a disposition to act the hypocrite, or to excuse our sin behind the doctrine of God's unalterable decrees. This would be hypocrisy in the extreme. Rather this doctrine causes us with Paul to mourn because of sin; it begets a desire to see Jesus and be like him; it causes anguish to know that while the will is present with us, how to perform that which is good we find not; it leads to the praise of God for the gift of his dear Son, and yet to crying out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" While faith dwells in man it begets deep anguish when he finds all manner of evil in his heart. It was so with Peter when with cursing and swearing he denied his Master. It is written that when the dear Redeemer turned and looked upon him he went out and wept bitterly. He had seen the Savior's power wrought in the miracles which he had performed, and his wisdom in refuting the contempt of his adversaries, and the raising up of the dead by his word, and he had voluntarily pledged himself to stand by the Savior, though all others should forsake him, but Jesus, knowing what was in man, had told him that he should deny him. O brethren,

may we lose all confidence in the flesh, and praise God only for his wonderful works to the children of men. Not only are our days numbered, but also every circumstance relating to our days is also numbered. But some one says, This makes man to be nothing. To this I say, Amen. All nations are less than nothing. One may say, This is before regeneration, but David says that man in his best estate is altogether vanity. Even the Savior did not boast of any goodness. "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God." Let us see how many times temporal salvation is ascribed to God. Noah and Lot, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the blessings of a temporal nature in all these instances were from the Lord in more ways than I can number. Elijah no doubt labored with his hands for food and raiment, but his life, food and raiment were no less secure when he drank of the brook and the ravens fed him; nor was his life and food less secure when he went to the home of the poor widow and lived from the handful of meal and the little oil in the cruse. Nor again was he less secure when he cried, They have digged down thy altars, and stoned thy prophets, and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But the Lord answered him, I have reserved to myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal. All these were blessings belonging in time. The purposes of God never fail. It was so with Joseph; in his case the wickedness of man wrought the will of God, which was a righteous will. So likewise our sinful acts, and the act of our first parents in the garden, emphasize the frailty of humanity, and show how unlike our Creator we are. Our Savior being nailed to the tree caused him untold agony, and it brings to our repenting hearts constant sorrow, and at the same time brings us to faith in him, because of his triumphant release from the pains of death, and gives power to his precious words, Because I live, ye shall live also. For the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame, and is forever set down on the right hand of the throne of God. The subject is endless, and I am entirely unequal to it. But again we see his handiwork in taking Israel by the hand and leading them out of Egypt from Pharaoh's galling yoke, who, being the leader of bondage, was without doubt a type of Satan, who holds all men in the bondage of sin. But the word of the Lord to Pharaoh was, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show forth my power in thee, and that my name might be declared in all the earth. Is it inconsistent to believe with Paul that all things work together for good? Shall we charge God with unrighteousness because he has been pleased to make in us a vast contrast with his perfect holiness? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? O that we might have the faith of Job to trust him, even though he slay us. We believe that when the earthly house of our tabernacle is dissolved we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. The Hebrew children had this faith, and trusted in him in the face of the whole world that stood in opposition to them. Stephen had this faith, and boldly spoke the truth, and then prayed for his enemies, even in death, and at the same moment received the blessed desire of his life, and saw Jesus at the right hand of the throne of God. This poor tempest-tossed soul has often found its expression in the hymn beginning, "How firm a foundation, ye

saints of the Lord," &c. Let us praise him by whom and for whom all things are and were created. May his everlasting arms be underneath us, and may he guide us to the glory of his adorable name.

Your unworthy brother in hope, as I trust,

G. O. WALKER.

PORT JEFFERSON, N. Y., Dec. 20, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you letters from Elder Chick, which are much esteemed by me, and I think the readers of the SIGNS will enjoy them also. Regards to you all.

From the least of the flock,

SARAH A. NORTON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Dec. 3, 1910.

MRS. W. G. NORTON—DEAR FRIEND AND SISTER:—I have just now been reading again your last letter to me, and have enjoyed its thoughts fully as much as at the first. You speak of questionings and doubtings and fearings, and I trust that I can understand you through having the same conflicts of mind. I recall that once my father said to me, "Is it right to doubt whether we are christians or not? Is it not a sin against God to doubt?" I could understand why he asked that question. There had grown up among those who were his companions a tendency to be always speaking of the dark side of things, and seldom, if ever, about the cheerful hope of the believer. He had come in his feelings to be dissatisfied with so much of gloomy speaking one to another, and this had brought up the serious question in his mind whether it was right to be always looking upon the dark side of things. In other words, while it is true that we are vile, and in us, that is, in our flesh, dwells no good thing, and we cannot esteem ourselves too little, yet is it not also true that we are now the sons of God, through the new birth, and if so, heirs to a heavenly inheritance, of which we shall not fail to come into possession at the end, and while we always sorrow because we are such great sinners, ought we not to rejoice always because we have such a great Savior? If we do err now, and sometimes look in vain for evidences that we are truly followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God, yet does it not still remain most blessedly true that he sees us and pities us, even when we do not see him? One side of the matter will bring sorrowing, but the other at the same time ought to bring gladness and rejoicing. What depths of shame and woe are wrapped up in that word "sinner," but what heights of glory and of joy are wrapped up in that other expression, "Saved by grace." Your letter had in its pages both of these confessions; first, that we are sinners all unworthy, and second, that in our blessed Lord Jesus Christ is our hope and ground for rejoicing. It seems to me that it was upon this ground that the apostle could say, As sorrowful, and yet always rejoicing. The sorrow is like the surface of the ocean in a storm, but the rejoicing is like the depths underneath, where no storm is felt, but calmness and peace forever. The joy of the believer is not like the froth and spume that rise to the surface, but like the untroubled waters beneath. We see the froth and spume, and watch the rolling waves, and almost think there is no rest anywhere, but still we shall find, as we have found, that after all, the great deeps of God's work within are not troubled, there is an undercurrent of gladness in the most troubled hours to the believer. It is well to

speak of that always, even when we feel constrained to utter, like Job, words of complaining. Trust in God is the ground of all true peace, and the God in whom we trust knows no variableness nor shadow of turning. Even when we sleep, or when we are troubled greatly, it is still true that Jesus is with us. He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps. I think that I am glad of this with a gladness that abides always. I am not always as full of the consciousness of this gladness as I am at times, but I think as I look back over my life that the joy of the Lord has been with me ever since I first believed. My failures and sins have often obscured my vision of this gladness, but still the Lord has not left me to utterly perish. Sometimes I hear his voice and see his face, and then I know that he has been always with me, after all. I would be glad could I write of all that your letter contained, as my hope has been strengthened in the reading of it, and I feel some degree of gladness as I am writing. The blessed Lord is all and in all. May you and I realize more and more of this one truth. We are all in our usual health just now. Remember me to your sisters, your husband and to the Terrys when you see them. I remember them all with pleasure. I should like to sit down with you and Mr. Norton and have a good talk about the things which I hope we all love.

I remain your brother in the hope of the gospel, F. A. CHICK.

HOPEWELL, N. J., March 4, 1911.

MRS. SARAH A. NORTON—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—It has been good to read your letter again this morning, as I have just now done, and I feel like writing to you once more. Your last letter seemed to me somehow especially good. My thoughts often run in this way, if I can express them. It is good to read the doctrine of the word of God; it is good to hear it proclaimed in any way, even when my own heart does not seem alive to it as I could wish. At such times I am sure that it is true, and that some souls are being built up in the most holy faith as it is proclaimed, even though I seem at the time measurably shut out; and this is good to believe. But how blessed indeed to not only hear, but to hear as one who now knows and feels that it is to himself that the word is being spoken, and that it comes as a cool breeze to a fevered brow, or as bread to the hungry and water to the thirsty. I sometimes know that a meal prepared and set upon the table is made up of excellent viands indeed when I am not hungry at all; and sometimes I have been sick, and all food was filled with loathing to me, yet my reason and the memory of former hungry days gave me full assurance that the food was in itself good, though to me it was not good just at that time. I hear preaching, read letters and read the Scriptures themselves sometimes when I am not hungry, and feel to be sick, as it were, and while I know that all I read is good, yet I cannot enjoy it for myself. The fault is not in the word, but in me. But O how good when the spirit is refreshed by the words of inspiration, when the Lord opens the heart to attend to the things spoken, as he did the heart of Lydia in the former time. I am daily reminded that I need not only the word of the Lord, but also the Spirit that can apply the word, the Spirit that takes the things of Christ and reveals them to me. We need not only to see that Canaan is full of milk and wine, but we want to drink our fill of that strengthening milk and comforting wine. Not

the food afar off, or even near at hand, but the food eaten is our strength and consolation, and our blessed Jesus always breaks the bread after he has blessed it. I think that he blessed the bread in your letter, and then broke it for me. It has been good to me this morning, and my faith and hope are strengthened in reading it; Christ is all and in all. How much we need to remember this. But he is all and in all, whether we remember it or not. How good that is! Our hope is not that we remember him, but that he remembers us. It is not that we see the blood, but that he sees it. But it is good to have that faith which assures us that he does see the blood. Our safety is in the sprinkled blood, and can be in nothing else. It is said of old Christmas Evans, two hundred years ago a noted Welsh preacher, and a Baptist, that on one occasion a young man had preached in his presence, and after the sermon the young preacher desired to know what Christmas Evans thought of the sermon, and after a little said so to him. Well, said Mr. Evans, I saw but one thing wanting in it. Indeed, said the young man, what was that? I very carefully prepared it, and thought I got into it all that was in the text. Well, said Mr. Evans, there was one thing lacking. Again the young man said, What was that? Why, there was no Christ in it. But I could see no place in that Scripture to introduce the name of Christ. Young man, said Mr. Evans, hereafter if you ever find any text of Scripture in which Christ has no place, search over hill and vale until you do find him, and bring him in. I feel that way, and I want to preach that way. Your letter was filled with that all-prevailing name, and that name you know is always as ointment poured out. The sweet savor of it always fills the house of the Lord, and how pleasant are the courts of God on earth because of that name. To him is given a name that is above every name, and all who are convinced of sin, and of righteousness and judgment, do make mention that he alone is exalted. This does not mean a mere repetition of the name of Christ, but that our whole testimony is, as it were, seasoned with it. That name must be the very spirit of what we say, if indeed it be in harmony with truth.

Some few Sundays ago I was kept from getting down to my appointment here, and it was the first time I have been hindered from being in my place by sickness for fifteen years. I was not, as we say, heartsick, and not in bed, but had a local trouble that confined me at home. That Sunday while sitting here and thinking of the brethren assembled together and conducting the service in my absence, I could but feel that the mercy of the Lord toward me had been wonderful all these years. I remembered also that in the forty-six years of my ministry I had been hindered from filling my regular appointments by sickness not more than ten or a dozen times in all. I could think of nothing else than the mercy of God which endureth forever. I was much humbled, and yet made glad, if you can understand what I mean by putting both states of feeling together. All the week following that state of mind remained, and the next Sunday I could speak of no other subject in the meeting, and read as the text the first verse of the eighty-ninth Psalm. It is all mercy. Mercy that we have life and comfort in providence, and infinite mercy that the gospel is ours to believe, and that it is ours to testify of it, and mercy that secures our title to eternal bliss. Sometimes we are led to think of one blessing and sometimes of another,

but they all come under the head of mercy.

Well, time fails, and I must soon close this letter. If the manner of my writing is poor and weak, it is sure that the theme of which I write is worthy of all praise. I hope that it may be blessed to you and Mr. Norton, and if any others shall see it to them also. I desire to once more visit you all, and think it would do me good to have another talk together in the family circle about the things that do not perish. We have not been very well part of the winter; that is, I mean that some one of the family has been ailing almost all the time, but we all seem better now. Remember me to you sisters and their families, and to the Terrys. I hold them all in kind remembrance. Write whenever you feel to do so; a letter is always welcome.

I remain your brother in the hope of the gospel,

F. A. CHICK.

FALLS CITY, Texas, April 12, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have just read an article in the SIGNS for April 15th, written by sister M. E. Bentley, the subject of which has for some time been on my mind, and, if the Lord will, I will write a few thoughts regarding it, not because I think I can do better than our dear sister, but because it is in my mind to write. I do not desire in the least to commend my poor, unworthy self, and when I do make the attempt to write I feel that you will do what is right in the selection of articles suitable for our dear paper, and if what I write is not such as becomes sound doctrine it ought to be cast into the waste-basket. Sister Bentley asked, "Is it right for church members to visit theatres, shows, or any such places of worldly amusement?" I will reply, I do not believe that the saints have any business in such places, yet I do not wish to dictate to our brethren as to what they must do, but I think that exhortation on that line is not out of place. The apostle Paul to the Ephesians said, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." Attending any or all these places of amusement most times places us in company with a profane class of people. I do not mean that all people who go to such places are profane, but we are most likely to meet with such wicked people, whereas we ought to feel as though we should enjoy ourselves much better if we were at home or at our meetings. I have known brethren in some localities to allow card parties, society gatherings and such like in their homes, all of which I cannot love. While there may be no real harm in such gatherings, yet I have no love for anything of the kind, and I do not think that our brethren ought to mix with anything of the kind. A godly walk and conversation become the saints of the Lord. I am a sinner, and have been so plainly shown that I am, that I have been made to hate the hateful ways of sin and to have no love for the things of the world. All the amusements of the world that I once loved I now hate, and I have been made to turn my back upon them, as David said, Psalms lvi. 13: "For thou hast delivered my soul from death; wilt thou not deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before the Lord in the light of the living?" We all often find ourselves doing the things that we would not, and the things that we would do we do not. Here is our daily trouble, yet it is no more we that sin, but sin that dwelleth in us. Sometimes we will think or speak something that we would not

could we at all times guard our thoughts, but the Spirit of grace is all that can deliver us from these things. Dear brethren and sisters, let us try to think of these things, and leave off the things that are so gratifying to the flesh. If we be dead with Christ, and yet living in the world, why are we subject to ordinances? Touch not, taste not, handle not. There are many admonitions in the Scriptures to which we would do well to take heed. All of them were written for our learning; they were not written to the world, but to the church. The church is the only body to whom the commandments and ordinances were given, and the whole duty of man is to fear the Lord. I believe that the experience of God's children is like that of David when he said, "For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." This shows the strength of their Leader. O that thou wouldest lead me! Hold thou me up! This is the daily cry of the poor child of God, for he has been made to see himself as he is, and that man at his best estate is altogether vanity, but the work of the Lord is perfect; when the Lord begins a work in the hearts of his children he perfects it. Paul said, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." The sinner has never begun anything that the Lord may finish it, for his best estate is vanity, and his works cannot commend him to the favor of God, for the Lord has loved his children from everlasting. Paul said, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in time past in the lust of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." The above language shows us our state before regeneration, and then it shows us how we were brought from nature to grace. In the time past we all had our conversation in the world, to the full satisfaction of our lusts and the pride of the eyes. We then delighted in the companionship of the things of the world, and the spirit of disobedience did work to the entire satisfaction of our desires. We all had our natural love for the things of the world, but when God in his unbounded mercy began the work of grace in our hearts we were killed to the love of the vain and perishable things of the world, and our desires were turned from such things, and we caused to hate them, though in time past we loved them. The grace of God, of which I have spoken, never causes a child of God to want to follow after the things of the world, but after the things of God. I, for one, do not have a desire any more to visit any kind of gathering where nothing may be expected but worldly amusements. I think it is an occurrence that very seldom takes place for an Old School or Primitive Baptist to find any comfort except where the saints

meet and talk of the glory of the kingdom. We all feel that it is a great mercy that we have been given hope through grace and have come to love the things of the kingdom, and to rest in the love of God and be brought to the feet of the dear Savior. While in a state of nature we had no desire for mercy, or, in other words, we did not feel our great need of it. We then were rich, but when we were given to see ourselves as we really were, we saw our depraved state, and found out how poor we were. Then hope was given us in the great mercy of God, and this hope we have as an anchor of the soul; in this is great comfort. Paul said that this anchor (hope) is both sure and steadfast, and enters into that which is within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus. When we are given to view this fact we can take courage. Now, brethren and sisters, let us lay aside all these things which are not convenient, and let our light so shine before men, not that we may have praise of men, but that they may see our good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven. Partaking of the pleasures of the world is not letting our light shine before men. Paul said, By the grace of God I am what I am. That is, if we have a godly walk and conversation, this shows forth the work of grace in our hearts, and so Paul could say, By the grace of God I am what I am. This is what grace in the heart does; it takes away our minds from vain and perishable things of the world, and causes us to follow after the things that are above, or that are spiritual. While in a state of nature we do not have any desire after the things that are spiritual, but after natural things, and when under the influence of grace we shall have no desire to partake of the things of the flesh. God alone can kill us to the love of natural things. O brethren, let us remember how we were brought up out of the mire, and how our goings were established. Look back to the time when all was dark, and we thought surely that the Lord would never think of us. Let us look back and view the road that we have traveled, then can we see that the Lord has been gracious to us indeed. He has caused us to love him, because he first loved us. I have been looking back to the day when I first knew anything of his mercy. Thanks be to him for the little hope that I sometimes think I have. I trust that some time in the future I will meet him in peace, then shall I be fully satisfied; then shall I rest in his glorious abode. Is not this your hope? I believe it is most assuredly so. Then, my brethren, walk worthy of this vocation wherewith ye are called. This is a holy calling, not according to your works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, but which is manifested in this last time. This hope sustains us in our lone pilgrimage on earth.

I have made this letter longer than I ought, but it is written in love, and with a good spirit, I hope. If there be anything amiss, please correct, and cast the mantle of charity over my imperfections and think of me when it is well with you.

I am yours in much affliction,

J. B. BOWDEN.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., June 30, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose the following two letters from Aunt Mary Hart and Mr. Fetter for the SIGNS. I think they will be appreciated by many.

Your sister in hope,

MARY HILL TERRY.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Feb. 23, 1908.

DEARLY BELOVED SISTER:—Just now as I opened my Bible the words that met my eyes were, O Lord, our God. The word "our" was what made me stop and think. Is such a poor, sinful worm permitted to hope? If not, how could I love the people and the doctrine everywhere ridiculed and everywhere spoken against? It is wonderful to me. The same doctrine is preached at Second Hopewell. I think of the trials the church passed through at the time that Elder Suydam left us. Our additions have been few and far between, but He who never slumbers nor sleeps has not forgotten us, and in loving-kindness he has sent us undershepherds to look after us. Our number is small. Elder Chick still fills his appointments, but the hearers are few. I feel while trying to write to you that if you were here we could do much better talking, but we might meet and part and not a word be said of Him who knoweth our frame, and even our thoughts. I feel that the principles of the lion and the ox dwell in me, and I hope that I am given sometimes to know that a little child leads them.

We have met with a great loss in the death of Helen Ege. She was always at Harbourton, and did not withhold her purse from us. She never made a profession, but always stood aloof from all the isms which surrounded her. Mary, did you not think that Elder Keene's letter on the refining pot was good? Also many others. Elder Coulter's letters are good; they tell very plainly that he has come to know that no flesh can glory before the Lord. Your Uncle James tried to make me understand the difference in his views from others. I always told him that he was too deep for me to take it all in. But one thing I know: if Christ is in us the hope of glory, his promise is that where he is, there we shall be also. I feel to earnestly desire that those who profess to be risen with him may show by their daily walk and life that they have been with him, and that they be not entangled with the do and live system. I have now arrived at an age long past that which is allotted to men, and according to age I shall soon go hence, to that bourne from which no traveler ever returns. It is a great comfort to me in my declining years to know that I have done my duty to my grandchildren. I thought when my daughter was taken that I could not do without her, but I could not even wish her back; I know that she has been taken from the sorrow to come and from all care and pain. In all my troubles she was a faithful friend. I was glad to see the editorial from Elder Chick upon Sunday Schools; it was to the point.

I am very weary. Good-by.

Your sister, MARY F. HART.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., May 26, 1912.

MY DEAR FRIENDS FRANK AND MARY:—How does your garden grow? According to the course of natural events the winter is over and gone, spring has returned once more, the warm sunshine comes down from above, and an occasional shower from the same source to moisten the earth, in order that vegetation may once more start to grow, that these poor, frail bodies of ours may receive food for sustenance. We till the soil, plant the seed, then watch for the tiny, tender plant to spring up; but our labor is not yet done, after the plant comes up it needs our care and attention; we must keep the soil loose around it, tear and pull away the weeds, or else the plant will be choked out or smothered to

death and all our labor be in vain. This is according to or in regard to the natural garden. But how about the spiritual garden? The same work that I have alluded to in the natural garden must be done in the spiritual garden. But by whom is it done? Is it done by such poor, vile, finite mortals as I? Am I able to do a single stroke that will accomplish any good? I answer, No, most emphatically no. It must be done by a far higher power than I possess: the great God of heaven, the great Ruler of the universe. But alas, how often do we think we can, and must get into the garden to hoe and dig and plant seed; yea, we do dig, hoe and plant seed, and watch for the plant to come up, and when it does come up we work around it and nurture it and are proud of it, but by and by the Lord tears it up and throws it into the fire and destroys it; it turns out to be a noxious weed; we do not know it at the time, but learn it later by sad experience, then how humiliating, and I might say also how ignorant we are; we do not know what we need, we may know what we want, but the question is, do we need it? The Lord alone knows what we need, and when we need it, and he does give to us poor, sinful mortals (for such we are indeed) what we need when he sees we need it, and not until then, and he knows when we need it, although we think at times it is a long time coming, and we become fretful and murmur because we think it is so long in coming, and when the blessing does come it is entirely different from what we wanted and what we were expecting, yet it is all right, it turns out to be just what we needed, although we may not think so at the time. But He never makes a mistake, his ways are always right, his ways are as much higher than our ways as the heavens are above the earth, and when he sees fit to reveal these facts to us and makes us to realize that his ways are always right and ours are wrong, how humiliated we feel and become; then are we ready to praise and adore him for his goodness and kindness toward us, and this makes us realize our nothingness; yea, we feel less than nothing, although our poor, finite minds cannot conceive of anything less than nothing; the spiritual mind only can discern such state of existence, and the question often arises with me, Do I understand it? I have so many doubts and fears that I am afraid I do not. I am satisfied that very little of the time I do understand it, and even then it is as through a glass darkly. If I did understand these things as I would like to I would not want things different so much of the time. What a great blessing is a contented mind; are we ever happier than when we have a contented mind, when we are satisfied with our surroundings? But alas, how seldom is this the case with me, I am continually wanting something that I have not. My dear friends, do you have such troubles? If you have you can sympathize with me; if you have not, I fear I am alone in this vile wilderness world; in fact, I must acknowledge that I feel as if out of the billion and a half of people supposed to inhabit this globe, there is not a single one just like me. I think if I should find one just like me it would be a little consolation to me, but I could not help but look upon such an one with pity, as they certainly would deserve it. The question frequently arises with me, Why am I so much of the time finding fault, and dissatisfied, always looking on the dark side of everything? Why do I not look upon the bright side sometimes? There is a bright side. If I would but

stop and think and meditate for a moment, and recall the numerous rich blessing the good Lord has bestowed upon me, and is continually showering upon me daily, I would be much happier than I am, but as I said, I am almost constantly looking upon the dark side of everything. Why is it so? I will tell you: I am not my own keeper, I cannot control my own thoughts, I cannot think one good thought unless the God of heaven directs it. What a poor, finite mortal I am! Is it any wonder then at times we feel less than nothing? My prayer is that I may be reconciled to his holy will, yet I know I cannot be, only as at times it is his good will and pleasure to so lead me, then am I happy in him. We must know he is able to accomplish that which he pleases. When we look out into the broad universe and consider the numerous bodies or planets passing through space (which to our finite minds has no bounds), we are instantly lost, we cannot comprehend how they are put or kept in motion; they each have their course to travel, their bounds are fixed, the same as ours, by the great God of heaven, the Ruler of the entire universe; some may go their rounds in a few days, while others may require centuries for aught we know, yet as I said, the bounds of each are fixed, and so are ours, and we cannot pass beyond them; our course is fixed for us, and we must go the full course, let it be long or short, rough or smooth, and at times we think it is very rough, but it is all for our good, though we may not be able to see it at the time, but we are made to realize it at the proper time. If we had sunshine all the time we would get tired of it, we would not appreciate it; it is for our good that we have severe storms now and then, so that we may appreciate the sunshine when it comes. You know that holy writ informs us that we shall have tribulations, consequently it is necessary for us to have those tribulations which are placed in our pathway through life, that we may more fully appreciate the many good things which are in store for us. It is not natural for us to desire these troubles and afflictions that beset our pathway, but the great God does not place one too many in our way, not one stroke of affliction but what he gives us sufficient grace to endure it. O what a blessing! Should we not be thankful that things are fixed as they are? O, is not this a blessed theme to meditate upon? The tears unbidden start and flow with indescribable joy while meditating upon this boundless subject. If our carnal mind had full sway in the arrangement of these things where would we land? It is a hard question to answer; I guess we would land about where the "Titanic" landed, at the bottom of the sea, or probably worse. One thing I know, I am not as thankful as I should be that these matters are fixed as they are; I am all the time wanting things different from what they are; all the time wanting that which I have not, and am never satisfied with my surroundings. Notwithstanding I am greatly blessed every day of my life, yet I will forget these blessings which are so freely bestowed upon me. I know that I am a poor, miserable wretch, and sometimes wonder what I was put upon this earth for, I cannot see what use I am to myself or any one of my fellow-mortals. This reminds me of the remark that Elder Purington made at the funeral of my sister (as I suppose you know my parents had five children, and I was the only one left then); he said I was spared for some wise purpose, but I am now past three-

score and ten years, the allotted time for man, yet I fail to see the wise purpose for which I have been spared; there is no good in me that I can see, or any good that I have accomplished. It appears as if I grow worse instead of better every day; I grow a greater sinner every day of my life.

My dear friends, I fear I am making this poor letter too long; I have already written much more than I intended when I began; I am afraid I will weary your patience if I continue. I have written just as the thoughts came to me, I doubt very much if you will find any pleasure or comfort in reading it. If, however, you should come across anything that agrees with your own experience it may afford both you and me a little consolation. I hope you will spread the mantle of charity over this epistle of love and make all due allowance for mistakes, as I have written rather hastily and rather carelessly. Please remember me when you approach the throne of grace, is the desire of your unworthy friend. May God bless you both through the remaining days you are allowed to stay upon God's footstool. C. S. FETTER.

ROMULUS, Oklahoma.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Again I feel like writing you, but whether I am impressed by the Spirit or by the flesh is hard for me to tell. It seems as though most of my time is spent in the valley of darkness. I feel many times as though all I have felt is but a delusion of the mind, that I have grasped the shadow and missed the substance. I feel sometimes that I have no good hope, yet it would be a fearful thing to be entirely without hope and without God in the world. Dear ones, do you, the children of God, get into this condition? There are two classes in the world; by nature all are alike, and I get so cast down sometimes that I fear this is all that belongs to me. Grace makes all the difference there is between the two classes of men. I would like to call back the burden of my sins that seemed so hard to bear, and then feel the sweet deliverance that did come. My mind goes back to those days when it seemed I first knew the Lord. The burden is gone, but still doubts and fears I do daily pass through. I have many cares and trials, and I come far short of living up to what becomes a christian life; there is not one bit of fruit to be seen, as it appears to me, sin is mixed with all I do.

Dear brethren, I hope you will not think I have forgotten you. Many times I think of you and the kindness you have shown me, and if I had the pen of a ready writer I would write you many times more than I do. It is not given me to write as others do, and I would rather read after others than crowd out better things from the SIGNS with my poorly written letters, yet low as I feel to be in the valley, my love is just as strong for the people of God and for the doctrine of God as ever it was; if not deceived, my love for the dear ones is stronger than words can tell. Sometimes it seems that my greatest evidence is this: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." There was a time when I did not have this love. When I first loved the Old School Baptists, and was made to feel that they were the people of God, I was at my step-grandfather's home. I had always fought against their doctrine until then. A preacher, with his wife, was visiting there, and after supper they engaged in singing, and sung until very late at night. I helped them sing until I became tired. I did not realize those sweet old songs at

the time in spirit and truth. I went to bed and shortly fell asleep, while they still sang, but after awhile the sweet singing awoke me. They were singing, "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand," and the chorus was, "Zion's ship is the gospel ship, the only ship that sails." I could not tell how long they sang before I was awake, but that was the sweetest song I ever heard in my life. It did not seem like human beings singing, but seemed to me like ten thousand angels. I never enjoyed singing as well in all my life before. Then it seemed that I had a different love for the Primitive Baptists. All the week following wherever I went I could still hear that sweet singing. It was not very long after this before I united with the church, and it is a lovely home to me, the dearest place on earth, yet I do not feel worthy of being allowed such blessed privileges. I sometimes feel that if they could only see me as I see myself, surely they could not have fellowship for me. I know they could live without me, but I could not live without them. Dear brethren, if I were financially able I would visit your country, just to see the dear ones and hear you preach, but I am sure that this will never be in this life. It seems that instead of times being better, they grow worse and worse. It seems almost impossible for me to make a living here any more. I think every year, perhaps this coming fall it will be better. Last year was almost a complete failure in this part of the country. People are all in bad shape financially, and one can hardly realize how hard it is unless they have had some experience along this line. The winter has been hard, and there is no work to be gotten, but I do feel thankful that things are no worse than they are. I will just say that you had better stop sending me the SIGNS, as it looks like a matter of impossibility for me to pay for it, and this worries me. Sometimes I cry over it to think I cannot get money to send. I do not see how I can give it up. You have been kind to me in sending it as you have done. The editorials are worth many times the price of the paper; but I do not want to complain of my lot in life, for I believe it is all the will of the Lord. If it is his will, we shall always be poor, but if this be not his will, it will be otherwise.

But I had better close this poorly written letter, hoping that you will overlook all mistakes. I pray that you may continue to feed the flock in the future as you have in the past, and may the Lord give you grace according to your need, and bestow upon you a happy and prosperous year.

I remain a sinner saved by grace,

(MRS.) ELLA DAVIS.

CHRIST JESUS THE LORD.

MY mind has from time to time been brought to meditate upon the titles given the Lord and Savior, and of their use by the apostles and the Savior himself. By faith we view him as the fulfillment of all types and shadows of the legal dispensation, and the fulfillment of the law and prophets in the end of the world (legal world), and the embodiment of the gospel, our all and in all before God for us. He is our Advocate, Counsellor, Intercessor, High Priest, Atonement, Mediator, Lawgiver, Redeemer and Justifier, and yet we find he is all these things in one person. The elect of God are what they are by him, through him, in him, and in no other way can they approach unto God except in his name. Jesus was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem his people from their sins. In this character he was separate from sin-

ners, holy, harmless and undefiled; he was without fault or blemish, and was the only sacrifice acceptable unto God; all other sacrifices were but types that pointed to the one offering made by the Savior. "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me," for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. "Wherefore, when he [Jesus] cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure: then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God." Thus it is seen that Jesus as the Lamb of God was the acceptable offering unto God, and did accomplish a complete atonement for the sins of his elect. When Simeon came into the temple and saw the child Jesus, "then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." So every one chosen of God sees Jesus as their salvation, and as he was a helpless babe, so all are as little children helpless before God to save themselves, but see Jesus as their salvation. The name Jesus means Savior. "And thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." It is the power of the Highest in the child Jesus that is the salvation of his people. Simeon felt this in his own soul, and blessed God. As the power of the Highest overshadowed the virgin Mary, so the power of God overshadows his people, and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. "These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb."—Rev. xiv. 4. So we find the chosen of God are what they are through the Lord Jesus Christ. As Christ he was the anointed of God. Aaron was a type of Christ. When Moses was commanded to anoint Aaron his brother for the priestly office, Aaron stood in his holy office for every one of the twelve tribes of Israel, and for them only. So Christ was anointed of God, and stands before God as the High Priest and Intercessor for every one chosen in him before the foundation of the world. The anointing oil was poured upon Aaron's head, and ran upon his beard and went down to the skirts of his garments. (Psalms cxxxiii. 2.) This anointing shows the anointing of the head and body. So the church was anointed of God in the Lord Jesus Christ, anointed with the precious love of God, for Jesus, when praying, said, "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." God loves the chosen in Christ as he loved his Son. This anointing is also wisdom, for he is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Christ is the head of the church in all things, and may we ever remember that the church is his body, and no headship but Christ regarded as over the body, and the members are what they are by the anointing of God by and through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The apostle says, joint-heirs with Christ; this implies that our inheritance cannot be mortgaged, wasted or sold. Joint-heirship means equal heirship, and each heir must be consulted regarding its disposal, showing

how impossible for an heir of salvation to part with his eternal inheritance. Furthermore, their life is hid with Christ in God; yea, how secure, for the powers of hell shall not prevail against it. Christ was anointed of God with power to lay down his life, by reason of the demands of divine justice, and to take it again. This he did for every one given him in covenant love and mercy before the foundation of the world, and so his life is manifested in us when we lay down our lives for the brethren. Paul has wonderfully testified to this in his labor and life; he counted all things but dung and dross that he might win Christ. Christ died to save his people from their sins, and bore their sins in his own body upon the tree. As Aaron wore the breastplate upon his heart before the Lord continually, with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel thereon, and also upon the ephods upon his shoulders, with six tribes upon each stone in the ephod, so Jesus has every member written in the Lamb's book of life, which is his heart, and also upon his shoulder, the place of power, and saves them by his power because he loves them. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." As Lord of lords he sits upon his throne, ruling and reigning in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can say to him, What doest thou? The prophet spoke of him saying, "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes (apostles) shall rule in judgment," and his people have no other king or lord. So as Christ he was eternally with God, as Jesus he is our Savior, and as Lord he is King over his chosen.

Respectfully submitted.

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

ATWATER, Ill., April 28, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Will you please publish this young sister's experience? I have watched her through those years she speaks of, and I have never known any one to make so hard a fight against duty; the Lord finished his work.

NANNIE SMITH.

CARLINVILLE, Ill., Feb. 6, 1912.

DEAR SISTER:—I received your letter, which I was glad to get, and to know that what I have done is all right with you. I am happy in my new home, but one thing I greatly fear is that I am not worthy of occupying a place among these dear people, but, dear sister, it is the work of the Lord that I am there to-day, and not anything that I have done, because I tried every way to find a place in this gay world to get away from the church, but it had been constantly with me for eight long years. I would go with friends to other meetings, but never liked them, they never did me any good. I am sorry to say that I have even gone to dances, trying to forget it and cast it aside, but the sweet thought would come to me sometimes when I was there, but going home, thinking of where I had been would hurt the most. Mother and father did not want me to go, but I would try every way to hide my feelings from them. A year ago last Christmas was the first time I ever said anything to mamma about it, I had waited seven years, and I never told papa until I was down sick. All during the services on Saturday I was afraid I would have to leave the church again, clinging to the thought that things would be a little brighter, feeling that if I went I would deceive the dear people, but when brother Conlee made a short talk, after Elder Bartlett had preached a good sermon, I could not,

I believe, have gone away without doing my duty, something that had troubled me all through my sickness. I hope that the Lord will guide me in the strait and narrow way. I will not be baptized until it is warmer, on account of my health, I think about May. It seems a long time to wait, but time will quickly fly. I am not very well this morning, have a very bad cold, but hope you are well.

I will close, hoping to see you soon.

With love, your sister in hope,

WANETA ALLEN.

RALEIGH, N. C., July 7, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Since your visit to Raleigh proved to be such a comfort to us, it is indeed gratifying to know that it was a pleasure to you. Mrs. Aycock and I often speak of your stay with us, and of your good sermons. Last week I thought of the one you preached from this text: "Ye are they which have continued with me," and I thought it would apply very well to many of God's servants to-day. I can recall some who have continued with Christ all through the journey, and when temptations came, instead of going away, they have said, Lord, to whom shall we go? I can wish for myself no greater reward for living if when the end comes it can be said of me, She continued with Him. Then I would be sure of the kingdom appointed by the Father, to eat and drink with him at his table. I have had some sweet thoughts about the little birds for the past few weeks; I hear each bird singing only one song. All these years that same song has been sung, and no other. Why? Because God only taught the one to each bird. Suppose the nightingale could speak to the thrush, and ask, Why do you not sing my song? If he could reply he would quickly answer, I do not know it. To us there is but one song given: "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." Suppose some one should ask us why we did not sing with the multitude the song of works. We would say in our hearts, We do not know such a song. With us it would be only a lamentation of works, but a song (if only one, and that sung in the closet with no one but God to hear) of free grace.

While thinking about God's ministers, and their humble walk, it occurred to me that they were prepared to preach to others by first learning themselves. How are they taught? In the school of experience. They are to teach only what they have seen and felt. Do they tell us that God quenches the violence of fire? If so, they must have felt the violence of the fire in their bodies burning up all the dross of fleshly desires. If one should come telling us that there was a chance for the fire to be quenched, he would only preach to those who had never been nearer the flames than he had. Suppose one professing to preach had told Daniel that there was a chance for the lions' jaws to be locked; I think he would have said, Go preach that to those who are in no immediate danger of lions, but as for me, I want a certainty. There are two classes of preachers, as well as hearers. The mother of the child will not have it divided, the other woman is satisfied with sharing only a part. It takes the blood of Jesus, all of it, unmixed with the blood of animals, to cleanse one soul. I love to think of a power that actually comes to me when in the horrible pit of sin and unbelief and takes my feet out and puts them upon a solid rock, giving me a new song of deliverance.

When God delivers me from myself no one can harm me. My enemies are all within.

Come and see us again; surely God sent you this time to bind up the broken-hearted. My sister in her sore bereavement would gladly welcome you at any time.

Trusting that you may be spared many years to speak comfortably to Jerusalem, I am most sincerely yours,

PATTIE WOODARD ANDERSON.

FOWLERTON, Texas, April 23, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars, which you will please place to my credit. As long as I can read or hear reading I want the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

I had to leave Kentucky on account of poor health, and have come to southwest Texas in hope of regaining my health, that I may be able again to publicly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints, which is the sweetest work mortal man may be blessed to perform. There is no pleasure found on earth to excel the pleasure of meeting with brethren and sisters in church capacity and realize the Lord of glory among us, the fairest among ten thousand and the One altogether lovely. Then we feel as the poet did when he exclaimed:

"Reach down, reach down thine arm of grace,
And cause us to ascend
Where congregations ne'er break up,
And sabbaths never end."

But O the deep sorrow that fills my heart because of my isolation from the brethren. I can say with the psalmist, I have found trouble and sorrow, but have hope that the good Lord will take care of me and my family in the future as he has done in the past. I know that all things work together for good to them that love God, but the puzzling question with me has been and is to this hour, Do I love the Lord or no? Am I his, or am I not? O that I could live a different life to that which I do. O that my life could be devoted to the cause of our Savior. O that the servants of God to-day might go out and continue in prayer all night, as our Savior did, for the welfare of Israel, for we behold her scattered upon the hills and mountains and down in the valleys, as sheep without a shepherd. May the hearts of the poor servants of God yearn after the little ones. O were it possible for all of God's children, both great and small, far and near, to engage in prayer day and night for the restoration of Israel, that we all could come together as one man, seeing eye to eye and speaking the same thing. Let us all pray to the Lord that we may be enabled to pray fervently and effectually.

Yours in hope of immortality,

L. D. HOSKINS.

DUNCAN, Okla., April 13, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As I have to write on business, my mind is impressed to write to the readers of the SIGNS, and has been for some time, but feeling my weakness as I do, and craving the love and sympathy of my brethren as I do, I fear that it may be only a selfish motive after all, but I want to write and tell you all of the death of my dear son, January 30th last, and crave the prayers of God's people everywhere, that I may be strengthened to bear all that is put upon me. O how I long to say, "Thy will be done," but it seems very hard to say it in spirit and in truth. How very true it is that without Him we can do nothing, not even bear the trials of life. My dear son, John Ellis, was forty years of age; he had married, and there seemed a bright prospect before him, but his wife

had left him some four years before, and the separation from his wife and child wrecked his life and mind forever. He had been most deeply devoted to them, so much so that he seemed to have nothing left to live for afterwards. His health gave way, and his mind was fast giving way, and we were greatly troubled and called a physician, who gave us some encouragement; but the day before my son died he was the most troubled person I ever saw; he read his Bible and prayed and talked all day. He said to me, There is something going to happen, for my coffin has been before me all day. I tried to encourage him, but I could plainly see that here was something the world could not see, and O what could I understand? It was not for me to see. When he had read his Bible and prayed as usual that night he retired to bed. Between two and three o'clock the next morning he arose and took his gun. I asked him where he was going. He said, There is something after the chickens. I begged him not to go, but he said that he could see, and went on. In a few minutes he came back into another room, and just as he came in the gun was discharged. We can never know whether it was an accident, or whether his mind was so far gone that he did not realize what he was doing. But O what an awful hour! None but God can know, no tongue can tell and no heart can forget. I have always believed in the purpose of God in all things. I thought of our afflicted and aged brother Vail when his son was killed by the cars, and thought, Why, O why is this? It is something hard to understand, but the dear Lord knows, and I do not know. My dear son had lived a devoted christian life for some two years, and so I have hope for him beyond the grave. Brethren, pray for us, and if you think well publish this.

Your little sister in affliction,

(MRS.) S. E. ELLIS.

DAYTON, Wash., Dec. 20, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my time has about expired, I will send in my little mite for another year. I was hoping I could send another name or two, but have failed. I let them read our paper whenever I can, as it contains such beautiful letters, experiences and editorials; indeed it is meat and drink to our poor, hungry souls to read such letters, they sink deep down in our hearts. My husband and I are always anxious to see the next number come so we can have another feast, for I assure you it is a grand feast to us old people to sit and read these long winter evenings, it fills our poor hearts to overflowing, and we feel to thank and praise our blessed Savior for his kindness to us poor worms of the dust. He has blessed us with so many rich blessings we know not how to thank him as we ought, as we are such weak mortals, but he knows our weakness better than we can know it ourselves. May we live the remainder of our days near the cross, trusting in our ever-blessed Savior for grace to sustain us through this life. We pray that God's rich blessings may rest upon the dear editors and publishers, and those who write such comforting letters. May his grace guide us all through this world, and through the dark valley of the shadow of death, then we shall give him all praise, honor and glory through all eternity. Blessed thought!

This is not for publication, for I am too poor a scribe for that, but to let you know how we appreciate the SIGNS, the editors, the publishers and the brethren and sisters.

(MRS.) W. R. SAVAGE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1912.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MISSIONARY SOCIETIES OPPOSED.

SISTER Grace V. Smith, who now resides at Arbela, Missouri, asks that we give through the SIGNS some of the reasons why we stand opposed to the modern Missionary efforts, and this we feel like trying to do as clearly and briefly as we can. Our sister has herself named some of the reasons which have weight with ourself. She says, first, that reports from the various fields show that the gospel is not comprehended where the religion of popular churches is taught. Many engage in it for purely mercenary purposes. The vices of so-called christian nations do the heathen much harm, and usually go hand in hand with the religious teaching sent them. Our sister adds to this these words, "But still there is the command, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. What does that mean?"

First. In reply to the above request we desire to quote from the Minutes of the Black Rock Convention of 1832 so much of the address issued by the brethren assembled there at that time as relates to the mission question; this will present the matter much better than we could ourself do. They say, "We will now call attention to the subject of missions. Previous to stating our objections to the mission plan, we will meet some of the false charges brought against us relative to this subject by a simple and unequivocal declaration that we do regard as being of the first importance the command given of Christ primarily to his apostles, and through them to his ministers of every age, to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, and we do feel an earnest desire to be found acting in obedience thereunto as the providence of God directs our way and opens a door of utterance for us. We also believe it to be the duty of individuals and churches to contribute according to their abilities for the support, not only of their pastors, but also of those who go preaching the gospel of Christ among the destitute, but we at the same time contend that we have no right to depart from the order which the Master has himself seen fit to lay down relative to the ministration of the word. We therefore cannot fellowship the plans for spreading the gospel generally adopted at this day, under the name of Missions, because we consider those plans throughout a subversion of the order marked out in the New Testament." They further say, "In reference to the medium by which the gospel minister is to be sent forth to labor in the field, that agreeable to the prophecy going before, that out Zion should go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, the Lord has manifestly established the order that his ministers should be sent forth by the churches, but the mission plan is to send them forth by a Missionary Society. The gospel society, or church, is to be composed of baptized believers, the poor is placed on an equal footing with the rich, and money is of no consequence, with regard to membership or to church privileges. Not so with mission societies,

they are so organized that the unregenerate, the enemies of the cross of Christ, have equal privileges as to membership, &c., with the people of God, and money is the principal consideration. A certain sum entitles to membership, a larger sum to life membership, and a still larger to a directorate, &c., so that their constitutions, contrary to the direction of James, are partial, saying to the rich man, Sit thou here, and to the poor, Sit thou there. In Christ's kingdom all his subjects are sons, and have equal rights and an equal voice, as well in calling persons to the ministry as in other things, but the Mission administration is all lodged in the hands of a few, who are distinguished from the rest by great swelling titles, as Presidents, Vice-presidents, &c. Again, each gospel church acts as the independent kingdom of Christ in calling and sending forth its members into the ministry; very different from this is the mission order. The mission community is so arranged that from the little Mite Society on to the State Conventions, and from them on to the Triennial convention and General Board, there is formed a general amalgamation, and a concentration of power in the hands of a dozen dignitaries, who, with some exceptions, have the control of all the funds designed for supporting ministers among the destitute at home or abroad, and the sovereign authority to designate who from among the professed ministers of Christ shall be supported from these funds, and also to assign them their field of labor; yea, also the authority to appoint females, and schoolmasters, and printers, and farmers, as such to be solemnly set apart by prayer and the imposition of hands as missionaries of the cross, and to be supported by these funds, whereas in ancient times the preachers of the gospel were set apart and sent forth by the Holy Ghost." (Acts xiii. 1-4.) This address goes on still further to say, "Regarding the support of the ministry, the gospel order is to extend support to them who preach the gospel, but the mission plan is to hire persons to preach. The gospel order is not to prefer one before another, and to do nothing by partiality, but the Mission Boards exclude all from a participation in the benefits of the funds who do not come under their direction and own their authority, however regularly they may have been set apart, according to the order of the gospel, to the work of the ministry, and however zealously they may be laboring to preach the gospel to the destitute; and what is more, these boards, by their auxiliaries and agents, so scour every hole and corner to scrape up money for their funds that the people think they have nothing left to give to a preacher who may come among them alone upon the authority of Christ and by the fellowship of the church. Formerly not only did preachers think themselves bound to devote a part of their time to traveling and preaching among the destitute, but the people also among whom they came dispensing the word of life felt themselves bound to contribute something to meet their expenses. These were days when christian affection flowed freely, then the hearts of the preachers flowed out to the people, and the affections of the people were manifested toward the preachers who visited them. There was then more preaching among the people at large, according to the number of Baptists, than has ever been since the rage of missions commenced. How different things are now from what they were in those days. Now, generally speaking, persons who are novices in the gospel, however learned they may be in the sciences, have taken

the field in the place of those who having been taught in the school of Christ were capacitated to minister consolation to God's afflicted people. The Missionary, instead of going into such neighborhoods as Christ's ministers used to visit, where they would be most likely to have an opportunity of ministering food to the poor of the flock, seeks the more populous villages and towns, where he can attract the most attention and do the most to promote the cause of missions and other popular institutions. His leading motive, judging from his movements, is not love of souls, but love of fame. Hence his anxiety to have something to publish of what he has done, and hence his anxiety to constitute churches, even taking disaffected, disorderly, and, as has sometimes been the case, excluded persons to form a church in the absence of better material, and the people instead of glowing with affection for the preacher as such, feel burdened by the whole system of modern mendicancy, but have not resolution to shake off their oppression, because it is represented as being so deistical to withhold and so popular to give." They further say, "Brethren, we cheerfully acknowledge that there have been some honorable exceptions to the character that we have here drawn of the modern Missionary, and some societies have existed under the name of Mission Societies which were in some important points exceptions from the above drawn sketch, but on a general scale we believe that we have given a correct view of the mission plans and operations, and of the effects which have resulted from them, and our hearts really sicken at the state of things. How then can we forbear to express our disapprobation of the system that has produced it?"

Thus we have quoted all that our fathers in 1832 said in the address sent forth from the convention at Black Rock. Nothing, as it appears to us, could be more plain or convincing than the above, and in what further we may here write we do not hope to improve upon this address, still there are a few suggestions we desire to make. It will be noticed that the above address does not at all object to the duty of preaching the gospel everywhere that Providence opens the door; on the contrary, it is in full sympathy with this obligation. The objection is to the man-made organization of the Missionary Society. For the preaching of the gospel everywhere there is full scriptural support, but there is not the slightest approval of any such organization as the Missionary Society for the advancement of this work. On the contrary, the whole spirit of the Scriptures is against it, as is so well set forth in the above address.

In the next place, it is not the object of any modern missionary society, so far as we know, that the gospel should be preached among the heathen, or anywhere else; Arminianism, and not the gospel of grace, is intended to be advantaged by the use of all such efforts in these days. No one who knows that salvation is by sovereign grace could therefore support this movement now; such as bring not the gospel are not to be bidden Godspeed. Still further, there is but one society authorized for the use of the people of God, or for the advantage of any religiously, in the New Testament Scriptures, and that is the church itself. The church is in itself all that any or all other societies claim to be for good to the people of God. To reject this and to place dependence upon other societies, which Christ and the apostles did not authorize, is to accuse the great Author of our religion with having failed to foresee or provide all that is needful for his

cause down to the end of time. It may be that in many cases the church of Christ here and there has failed to do that which is enjoined upon her by her Lord, but that does not excuse the formation of societies which the Lord has not authorized to supply what is lacking in his church. Rather, let those who see these failures strive to warn and rebuke and stir up the pure minds of the people of God to a remembrance of their obligations as the church of God called to holiness and to all obedience to the commands of her Lord. The whole narrative of the spreading of the gospel news in the gospels is opposed to the spirit of all such societies. Jesus sent forth his disciples, first the twelve, and on another occasion the seventy, and these were told not to take purse or script with them; that is, they were not to go depending upon provision made beforehand for their support. They were told to go thus, and when they had returned from one such journey and Jesus had asked them, Lacked ye anything? they said with solemn exultation, No, Lord, even the devils were subject unto us through thy word. Not men, but the Lord, was their trust, and the Lord has always shown himself the best provider for his servants wherever he may send them. Still further, they were told by their Master that whenever they should enter into a house they should say, Peace be to this house. If the Son of Peace were in that house there they should abide, but if not, they were to depart, and it was the same with any city into which they should enter. They were not to undertake to force unwelcome news upon any house or city, but if the word was not welcome there, they were to depart. How different this is from the modern Missionary spirit which would seek to impose unwelcome notions and ideas upon other people. The spirit of the commission given to the disciples of the Lord was then, and is yet, that they shall preach Christ, the Son of Peace, wherever they may go, but if there be none in a place prepared of the Lord to welcome the joyful sound they are to go on their way until they find some whose hearts are prepared to hear and to understand. The Spirit led apostles and early disciples to the places where he had much people, and the Spirit will always do this. If the Lord has not much people in any place the word will not abide there; if the Son of Peace be not in any place, the word will not find a response there; then let the servant of God go on, under the guidance of the Spirit, until the Lord brings him to the house of his Master's brethren, there let him abide, for the word will find a glad reception there.

In conclusion, we would say that the preaching of the word never has been intended to quicken sinners dead in sin into divine life, but it is intended by it to search out those who are living. Modern Missionary work is to save souls, not to find them out. It is also intended to add to the number of the elect of God, not to instruct and save from darkness and error those who have received the Spirit in their hearts. The true gospel searches out the living, and they will from the heart respond to it and gladly receive it.

We leave these reflections with our sister and all our readers. C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

JAMES V. 8.

DEAR ELDER KER:—Please give your views through the SIGNS on the Scripture found in the latter part of James v. 8: "For the coming of the Lord draweth nigh," and oblige J. C. NELSON.

SHARPSBURG, Ky., April 20, 1912.

We would be pleased to grant the request of our brother Nelson if we could feel equal to it. Such Scriptures are not seen and understood alike by some of the very best of brethren, but that seems no just reason for ill feeling between them, nor is it any reason why one should withhold such as he has when asked to give his view of such a text. In John xiv. the Savior said to his disciples that if he went away and prepared a place for them he would come again, and in John xvi. he said, "But I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice." Now while some fully believe that these expressions refer to the end of time, when Jesus shall come to receive his ransomed children home, and others just as fully believe that these promises have long since been fulfilled, whoever may be right, or whether both are wrong, it does not destroy the truth that Jesus did come again after his resurrection from the dead, and in bodily form and with audible voice greet his disciples, saying, "Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord." Nor does it destroy the truth of the coming of Jesus in the person of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, which filled the place, giving tongues to the apostles, causing them to utter dark sayings which had been secret from the foundation of the world. This same Spirit pricked men in the heart on that day, causing them to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Nor does it destroy the truth that Jesus comes now in the quickening of every dead sinner into divine life, thus building his church upon the rock. On the other hand, it does not destroy the truth that at last in some glorious way "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise" incorruptible and all meet the Lord in the air and so ever be with the Lord. Therefore, since all fully believe the whole truth as mentioned above, why should there be dispute if one should not present the exact view of a text that another holds?

Now with regard to the text under consideration, it does not seem to us that James had what is generally accepted as the second coming of Christ in mind when he wrote the words: "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh." If he meant by the term "draweth nigh" what any one of us would mean in using it: a few days or months or years at most, surely he must have been sadly mistaken, for two thousand years have about passed since then, and we have no assurance that he will come in the next two thousand or even in the next two million years, yet we all believe he will come as stated above. While one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years are as one day, it was not so with James the apostle, therefore we conclude that he meant by the term "draweth nigh" a short time.

In the verses preceding our text are severe rebukes to the rich who had accumulated wealth by defrauding their servants and by other unjust means. James also prophesied concerning the misery that should come upon them for their wickedness, but in the first part of the eighth verse he exhorted the faithful, many of whom no doubt had been defrauded by the rich, to be patient and

establish their hearts, giving as a reason, "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh." Two classes are here presented: the rich, unjust and dishonest ones, and the just, honest and faithful ones, and each class would be rewarded according to their works at the coming of the Lord. Misery and woe should be visited upon the one class and blessedness upon the other.

At the time James wrote this epistle the coming of Jesus in power with "all nations against Jerusalem to battle," (Zech. xiv. 2,) when the city should be taken, and also the fulfillment of the declarations of Jesus himself, as recorded in Matthew xxiv., was not far distant. At the time of that great work of destroying the city of Jerusalem, together with all the temple contained, the faithful were saved from death, Jesus having commanded them to "flee to the mountains," while thousands of others were killed in the battle. Jesus did come at that time, not in bodily form, but in power and might, conquering the enemies of his church and gospel. It seems to us that James meant to say to the afflicted and oppressed, Be patient, endure oppression, be faithful, establish your hearts, for you shall receive your reward when the Lord comes to destroy your enemies and deliver you from their cruelty and bondage.

These are such thoughts as we have on the subject, and we submit them, hoping that our brother may find in them something that may in some way lead to a satisfactory solution of the text. K.

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

WE are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

2 JOHN 4.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I would like if either or both of you would write on the following: "I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father."—2 John 4.

THE HINDERMOST.

The above request, from some one in Ontario, was forwarded to us by Elder Chick, asking that we write on the subject. In so doing we hope that what we write may be as the oracles of God.

This second letter of John is addressed by the elder to the elect lady and her children, whom he loved in the truth, and he also assured them that they were loved by all who knew the truth. Such assurance is most helpful to weary, doubting pilgrims. It helps them to hope the love of God has really been shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost. It helps them to crucify the flesh, subduing the passions and lusts thereof. The letter seems to have been written by John after he had visited the church at Jerusalem and when he was visiting the brethren in another part of the country. How striking it is that all the apostles in their letters reminded the saints of the things said when with them, and of the blessed liberty of the gospel of Christ. Never did they suggest anything new regarding either doctrine or practice, but ever exhorted the churches to continue in the love of God, his doctrine and the order of his house. How perfectly satisfied the apostles were with the goodness of the Lord's house, and how good it is for the churches of Jesus Christ now to abide in their doctrine and fellowship. To depart therefrom means disaster.

A special thing worthy of consideration is presented in the beginning of this letter: he told the elect lady and her children that they were loved "for the truth's sake," and by those who knew the

truth. This is a very peculiar reason for loving, and also it is a very peculiar love. We understand that by the word "truth" the apostle meant the doctrine of God in all its perfection. This "truth" Jesus came into the world to bear witness unto. (John xviii. 37.) In this truth is the secret of God, and all who have it are bound together with the sacred tie. It is never that one child of God loves another because of natural charms or characteristics; this would be altogether natural, but all who know the truth love for the truth's sake. In this love there is no such thing known as sex, "there is neither male nor female." It is the purest, strongest and strangest of all love. Some have been troubled because they loved, as they thought, one more than another; this could not be in the love of the truth, nor for the truth's sake. There are no degrees in the love of God nor in that love of the truth for the truth's sake. It is true, however, that one may feel that one is nearer to him than another, but it cannot be really so in the Spirit. When one feels that he or she loves one of the household of faith more than another, by careful study of the matter it will invariably be found that there is more congeniality naturally between the two than there is between that one and some others. We are both sorry and ashamed to say that in days past we have known some very comfortably situated financially who seemed to regard only such members of Zion as were likewise situated. Then again some who stood well socially did not regard those except of the same rank. Is not this absolutely carnal and contrary to the "truth" of God? Surely it should not be tolerated in the Lord's house. Paul said, "Do nothing by partiality." "Be not high-minded, but fear." James said, "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: but the rich, in that he is made low." Again James condemned such things when he told the brethren that when a man well dressed, with a gold ring on his hand, would come in, some would say, "Sit thou here in a good place;" but to the poor they would say, "Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool." We fear that there is such a thing as riches being a curse in the church of God.

The elect lady was not some special individual with a family of children around her, but the Jewish church at Jerusalem was intended by the term, elect lady. The children of her "elect sister" who sent greeting were no doubt some of those among the Gentiles who had been translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Both Jews and Gentiles are "elect," hence salvation is of God, he having had mercy upon all.

We will now try to show in a figure why John felt to rejoice because he found of the children of the elect lady walking in the truth. When a family of children are grown up to manhood and and womanhood and leave home to enter upon the storms and breakers of business life, with thousands of temptations surrounding them, and when many men and women are falling into the ways of vice and sin every day, what could more rejoice the heart of a loving father when visiting his children, and also when hearing from them, more than to know they were walking honestly and uprightly and soberly before men, having the confidence of all who know them? On the other hand, what could grieve fond parents more than to know their children were living in sin, disgracing themselves and bringing blots upon the good name of father and mother? John, the apostle of Jesus

Christ, as a father of children in the gospel longed after them with holy desire for their prosperity in the kingdom of God; hence when he found them "walking in the truth" he rejoiced because of their steadfastness, patience and charity. On the other hand, nothing so grieved the apostles as when those who professed Jesus Christ departed from the faith of the gospel. In this day and age of the world nothing gives a faithful pastor more joy and comfort than to see those of the churches of his care walking in the truth, rooted and grounded in the doctrine of Christ. Nor does anything grieve him so much as to know that they are walking after the flesh, denying the God that bought them.

The "new commandment" we have received from the Father is that we love one another. This commandment is not given as the commandments were under the law, written upon tables of stone, but it is put in the heart. "Ye are taught of God to love one another." This is the way the commandment comes, "and this is love, that we walk after his commandments." Even so let it be. K.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we will supply these free of charge.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn third Sunday in August (18th), by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker. All lovers of truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Silas H. Durand, July 6th, 1912, at Southampton, Pa., Samuel D. Cornell, of Newtown, Pa., and Mrs. Anna Eliza Knight, of Huntington Valley.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at the Inn, Leesburg, Va., August 7th, 1912, Miss Mary Virginia Byrne, of Arcola, Va., and Mr. Jacob Ernest Vetter.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Flora Black Macfarlane departed this life at Rochester, Mich., July 14th, 1912. She was born April 22nd, 1847, in Yarmouth, Ontario, and was married to J. M. Macfarlane March 31st, 1875. She was baptized by Elder William Pollard in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, in June, 1897. To those acquainted with her I need not try to describe her sweet and lovely character, but it is pleasant to speak of her attractive and endearing qualities manifested in all the relations in life, as the dear sister, the affectionate daughter, the reliable friend and the devoted, faithful, tenderly loved and loving wife. As a member of the church she was dearly loved and held in high esteem by the brethren and sisters. She prized highly the privileges of the church, and loved to meet in the assembly of the saints whenever she could, to hear the gospel preached and to talk with those who were exercised upon spiritual things. I met this dear sister often at the meeting of the church, and both her and Mr. Macfarlane at their home and at my home, and I am thankful to be able to say that the memory of our visits is fragrant of spiritual things. I deeply sympathize with our dear friend in his great and sad bereavement. His sorrow is great, but I believe he knows by experience the only Source of true and lasting comfort. May comfort from that holy Source come to him, and to the two surviving sisters and many relatives and friends.

By request I was present on the occasion of the funeral, which was from the house of Mrs. James Black, in St. Thomas, July 17th, 1912. I read the twenty-third Psalm, a favorite Psalm of hers, and spoke briefly and in weakness of the things contained in the first verse. I also read hymn No. 784 (Beebe's collection), which they often sang together; it begins, "Ye pilgrims of Zion and chosen of God."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., July 23, 1912.

Elder John Wriley was born near Springfield, Ill., Sept. 29th, 1827, and came to Adams County and was united in marriage to Lucinda Harris in the year 1849. To that union were born seven children, five sons and two daughters. The daughters are Savanah and Nancy Ellen, the sons are William and Elijah,

John F., I. A. and S. H., and of these there are three surviving. Elder Wriley in early life received a hope in the blessed Redeemer, and offered himself to Bear Creek Church for membership, and was received and was baptized by Elder Jacob Castleberry. He soon manifested a gift to speak in public, and was licensed by the church to preach, and was afterwards ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, and was considered one of the pioneer preachers of this country. He was associated with Elders Vanmeter, Dark, Cotrell, Castleberry and Warren, who have all gone to their reward. Elder Wriley knew something of the hardships of those early days. He had gone through heat and cold, sunshine and rain, to feed the church of God which Christ purchased with his own blood. During those years, through industry and toil, together with his faithful companion, they got them a comfortable home and reared their family and educated them, and they grew up to be honorable men and women. He of late years had lived in Bowen, near the old home, where he spent his last days. He had been a constant reader of the SIGNS for many years, and believed and preached the doctrine set forth by it through all those years. A little more than one year ago he had a light stroke of paralysis, from which he never entirely recovered, but continued to fail until May 15th, 1912, when surrounded by his wife, one son and friends, his imprisoned spirit took its flight to the God who gave it. His age was 84 years, 8 months and 24 days. He leaves his aged widow, three sons and eleven grandchildren to mourn their loss.

On the 17th we bore his body to Pisgah, near the old home, and the writer spoke from Job xiv. 14: "If a man die, shall he live again?" and there we laid him to rest. May the Lord be with sister Wriley in her great bereavement. L. E. FRAZEE.

Orpah L. Reitze, beloved wife of Mr. Ed. T. Reitze, and only daughter of sister Agnes Ballard, died in Kingston, N. Y., July 1st, 1912, aged 26 years. Her decease was due to drowning while bathing, and occurred upon the first day of the customary vacation of the family. Her late home was in Newark, N. J. She was married eight years ago, and is survived by her husband and two daughters, besides father and mother and two brothers of her immediate family. She was a loving, devoted wife and mother, a kind and faithful friend, and this bereavement is a grievous loss to all who knew her. May the God of all grace and comfort sustain and console all the afflicted and sorrowing.

The funeral took place July 3rd, from the home of her aunt, Mrs. Post, in Kingston, and was attended by many relatives and friends. Services were conducted by the writer; interment in the Kingston cemetery. Mrs. Reitze was well known to the Old School Baptists in association with her mother, who is a member of the New York church, as a friend and helper in furthering the interests of that people.

ALSO,

Phœbe Ann Fredericks died July 31st, 1912, at Spring Valley, Rockland Co., N. Y., after long ill health, aged 74 years. She was the wife of Mr. George Fredericks, a well known and highly respected citizen. Mrs. Fredericks was a lover of the truth, and while she never united with the church of her choice, she was strong in the faith contended for by the Old School Baptists, and requested the service of the writer for her funeral. The funeral took place from her late residence, and final service was held at the Reformed meetinghouse in Spring Valley, opposite the cemetery in which she was buried. The surviving husband and children have not only the sympathy of the whole community in which she lived, but also that of every one she came in contact with, for she was universally beloved.

JOHN McCONNELL.

George Weld, of Ingleside, Steuben Co., N. Y., died Sunday, July 28th, 1912. He had been ailing for two years or more with liver trouble, and suffered greatly at times. He was about 60 years old, and was born, lived and died on the same farm that his father owned. He leaves to mourn his absence his dear wife, a daughter by his first wife, who died several years ago, three brothers, two sisters and many relatives and friends. He was baptized, I think, by Elder A. St. John about forty years ago, uniting with what was called the Rikers Hollow Old School Baptist Church, and was a consistent, orderly member until called away by death. He was a lover of sound Bible doctrine, and greatly interested in the welfare of all his brethren. He will be greatly missed by his sad, lonely companion, daughter, brothers and sisters, and by his brethren, but he has gone to his home in heaven, which is to be like his Savior and Redeemer. May the dear Lord give great grace to all who need it.

The writer spoke at the funeral, which was held at his home Wednesday, the 31st, to a large congregation; burial at North Cochecton, N. Y.

D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. K. Schade, N. Y., $1.00; O. F. Ballard, N. Y., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Rock Springs Church, Pa., commencing on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in August (24th and 25th), 1912, at 2 o'clock p. m. Those coming from Philadelphia will leave there Saturday, on the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore R. R., at 7:20 a. m. for Perryville. Those coming from Baltimore will leave union depot at 8 a. m. on the same road for Perryville. Change cars for Conowingo, where all will be met. A general invitation is extended to those who love to be with us. If it is possible, any expecting to come to this meeting please notify Miss Annie E. Jenkins, Peters Creek, Lancaster Co., Pa., Route 1, or Edward Dawson, Rising Sun, Md.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

C. J. ROWLAND, Clerk.

THE Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will hold their fifty-eighth annual session with Providence Church, near Plano, Appanoose Co., Iowa, beginning Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1912, and continuing three days (August 28th, 29th and 30th). We extend an invitation to all, and a special invitation to those of our faith and order.

ISAAC CAPPS, Moderator.

H. C. CATE, Clerk.

THE Maine Conference will assemble, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church at North Berwick, York Co., Maine, on August 30th, 31st and Sept. 1st, 1912. We shall gladly welcome any who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity to assemble with us.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

THE Lord willing, the Maine Old School Baptist Association will convene with the South Gardiner Church, at South Gardiner, Maine, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 6th, 7th and 8th, 1912. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren.

GEO. R. TEDFORD.

THE Lord willing, the Clovesville Old School Baptist Church will hold their yearly meeting the second Saturday and Sunday in September (14th and 15th), 1912. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus to meet with us, especially brethren of the ministry of our faith and order. Trains will be met at Fleischmanns station Saturday, the day of the meeting.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Licking Association of Primitive Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, with Goshen Church, Anderson Co., Ky., on Friday, Sept. 13th, 1912, and continue three days. Those coming via Lexington or Louisville will buy tickets over the Louisville Southern to McBrayer, where they will be met Thursday at 6:40 p. m. and 10:10 Friday a. m. All friends and lovers of gospel truth are cordially invited. We hope to have a refreshing season from the Lord.

By order of the church. P. W. SAWIN.

THE Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Second Church of Roxbury, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday following the the third Sunday in September, (18th and 19th), 1912, commencing at 10:30 a. m. on Wednesday. We heartily invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Come one and all, our homes and our hearts are open to receive you. Those coming via Kingston will stop at Halcottville, and those via Oneonta will stop at Roxbury. Trains will be met Tuesday p. m. at each place.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Ebenezer Church in Baltimore, Md., will hold an all day meeting Sept. 29th (fifth Sunday). All who would like to meet with us are cordially invited to do so. We expect Elder B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., to be present.

ALVIS S. ROWE, Clerk.

THE Albany and Troy Church will meet the fourth Sunday in each month at No. 2 Second St., Monument Square, Troy, N. Y.

J. B. SLAUSON, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

FIRST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, at Mineral Wells, Texas, holds meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, and Saturday night before, in the meetinghouse, on Star Well Ave., Kidwell Heights. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

SALLIE E. HOWARD, Church Clerk.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 80. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1912. NO. 17.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ROMANS XI. 34, 35.

"For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?"

How strange that we try to do something for Him, or do something to gain favor of him who hath freely given us all things, and whose we are, ourselves not being our own for any time, but continually in the hand of the Lord to do with us as he sees fit, leading us about in the wilderness and instructing us, and keeping us as the apple of his eye. We are weak and yet strong, for our sufficiency is of the Lord, so we are only strong when he strengthens us, and not able at any time to offer suggestions or counsel, or to give anything to him, for the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof, and all flesh is grass, and our good works as the flower thereof; flesh and the good works shall perish, for the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon them, but the word of the Lord endureth forever; praise his holy name. Once a gentleman told my brother-in-law and me that he hoped we were prepared to meet the Lord. My brother-in-law, not feeling to have any talk about the matter, told him he guessed it was all right, but I, not willing to let him off so easy, asked him what was necessary for this preparation. He replied, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." I asked him if he knew where that was, and who said it. He said he did not. I told him it was Joshua's language to the Israelites, and to quote it more fully it said: "If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." He replied, "Well, you must give your heart to the Lord." I told him I did not know what the Lord wanted with it, for the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. He barely waited for me to finish, when he said, "Young man, I want no foolishness," and left us without another word. The heart of man, even if it were his own to give, could not be acceptable to the Lord, who is so pure he cannot look on iniquity. Being so deceitful and desperately wicked, of course when such an exhortation is given by any one, make up your mind

that the exhorter has never seen his heart in the light of the living God, who is the true Light, which searches all things, even the hidden things. When the great searching takes place, and reveals the hidden evils of our heart, we do not want it, for it shows us what we are by nature. As the Lord has all things, and all things are of him, and by him all things consist, we see plainly that we are in his hand, to do of his good pleasure, and it is a great blessing when one is aroused to the sensibility of his own helpless and sinful condition, that he is in the hand of an all-wise and all-powerful God, who deals justly, and rules in equity, and is not biased by any power, for the powers that be are ordained of him. He is also merciful to our unrighteousness, pardoning our sins and remembering them against us no more forever. For this God who has shined in the depths of our wicked hearts will never leave nor forsake the one he has revealed himself to, and where he has begun a good work he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, and this grief and anguish and mourning on account of sin is a sweet-smelling savor to him, for it is by his power that this groaning is wrung out of our unwilling heart. No man repents of himself, for the way of the Spirit and righteousness does not suit the natural man; ye must be born again or ye cannot see the kingdom of heaven, and we are born again, born of the Spirit, not of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God, or we could never know we are sinners, for the dead realize not their dead state, neither does the unborn child cry for food and ease, but as soon as born it cries for the things of this life, but the heaven-born soul cries for things from above, for he is born from above, and the wild pleasures of this life have become nauseating to him and he cries for the bread of life, which is the body of Christ, for he says, If ye eat not of my body and drink not of my blood ye have no life in you. Nature does not desire Christ, or to be like him, for none know what it is to be conformed to the image of Christ except he who suffers as he suffered; that is the only way to partake of his flesh and blood. The Jews did not understand him then, neither does the unborn child understand or care, but mocks as did the Jews. The desire to walk in the way of light and life is an evidence of the work of grace, for nature shrinks from these things; the flesh is enmity against God, and always will be, and none but those of the Spirit of Christ love God or righteousness, therefore a realizing sense of our own weakness and inability to do as we would is an evidence, for man of himself and by himself and in his natural state thinks he has some strength, and that there are many things he can do that are acceptable to God, such as his way of keeping the Sabbath, going to church every Sunday, almost regardless of the life he leads the other six days. Even if one were able to keep the whole law of God he deserves no credit, for necessarily he would have to receive all his desire and strength and knowledge from God. Man by himself, what is he? Yet they claim to do great things for the Lord, and can do as they please, either live in sin or repent and serve God and their services be acceptable, and that they will receive a reward for so doing, and that man can do just as he pleases; but to quote from a woman in a letter she had written just previous to being murdered: "We think we are free because at times we act as we please, forgetting that God gives us the please and that every act of our being is only

the result of a dictated plan." This is the truth, and the unborn child, spiritually, thinks he is doing as he pleases, and can do as he pleases, but he is only acting out the things that were ordained that he should do, and he is not aware of the power that controls him, but thinks he possesses a power of his own. Blind and unlearned are they who teach man's ability to reform himself and live right, and thereby gain admittance at the pearly gate and be acceptable. When the light shines in on us it shows us our own depraved condition, which is terrible, our very throats being an open sepulchre, a habitation of the dead, and corruption fills our beings, for we are dead in trespasses and sin, and with knowledge of our sins comes a knowledge of a holy law broken, for sin is a violation of the law. "When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died;" and, I had not known sin, except by the law. Paul was alive, born again, when he learned this; it was after the light shone about him while on his way to Damascus to do what he in his natural mind thought was service to God and acceptable to him. After this time Paul knew his weakness and inability to perform the things he would; he says, When I would do good, evil is present with me, and the good that I would I do not, and that which he would not do, that he did; so are all who are born of the Spirit. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Weak and sinful we see ourselves to be, our only hope being in the finished work of our gracious Redeemer, and that God will have mercy through him upon us and save us for his sake, who came to seek and to save that which was lost. Now that we have passed through these things we learn that all things are the Lord's. The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof, and we know that we cannot give anything to God except he gives it to us first; we cannot even pray except he gives us the spirit of prayer and a knowledge of our needy condition; he indites the prayer and also answers. He only can teach us to pray as we ought, and except he does instruct us we ask amiss, for we have not known his mind, therefore we cannot pray as we ought, for all things are according to a plan framed and formed by himself, and executed by himself, man having no part in it except as God sees fit to exercise him. It is blasphemy for men to say they can do of themselves, or can know or see what to do and how to do, for we every one must follow the path marked out for us, and no man can look on the Lord's face and live, but we are permitted to see his back parts. We can at times see where he has been, but can in no way see ahead of him where his next step will be. O how ignorant is man until the Father through the Son does illumine our way and show us our weakness. No one knows his mind, nor has any been his counsellor. O how wicked to presume that we may attempt to dictate to the God of heaven, and expect him to recognize such, for his course is unalterable, according to a dictated plan formed by himself, and is dictated by him alone, and in him is no shadow of turning, the same yesterday and to-day and forever. O no, no change in him, not forgetting to whom he has promised mercy, and casting them aside the next day, but his work is from everlasting to everlasting, the salvation bestowed on men is everlasting and eternal, always returning in mercy and loving-kindness. He is the Father of the fatherless, an ever-present help in time of trouble, a

shelter in the time of storm, remembering our iniquities against us no more forever, and spares us as a father spares his own son that serveth him. O how great to think of, that such mercy or loving-kindness is for such rebellious mortals, who are continually sinning, for our nature is so that we still sin, yet we mourn on account of sin, for with those who are born of the Spirit sin has become exceeding sinful, and we loathe it as leprosy, for it is an incurable disease, except by the blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin and makes us whiter than snow, and presents us to the Father holy and acceptable, without blame before him in love, and not one atom of praise can we claim for the great work. It is wonderful, and far above our natural minds; nature's mind cannot conceive the things of the Spirit, nor know of the indwelling sin which is ours by inheritance from Adam. Righteousness is also ours by inheritance from the second Adam, Jesus Christ. Adam was created, or formed, a natural man, and violated the law given him, sinking his unborn race in sin and shame. But do not censure Adam, for he was only laying the foundation for salvation by grace, for salvation was never designed to come by the law. Adam's fall proved the inability of man, that salvation by grace might be established. Future and eternal salvation was never promised to man for keeping the law; the law demands perfect obedience and no reward. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life. No man can come unto me except the Father that sent me draw him. So different from man's idea. Except a man be born of God he has no desire to serve him, and no man ever took any part in bringing himself into this natural life; he took no part and knew nothing of his conception, but was conceived and born without ever having known his parents' will, or giving them counsel whatever. Now after the children are born and grown up, some of them attempt to counsel their parents, but well regulated families will not allow it, and the Lord takes counsel with none of his children. He certainly did not get any advice from man about the creation, for man was the last thing formed, therefore no honor belongs to man. The heaven-born soul needs and receives food, but he cannot tell where it comes from, nor can he go get it at will, nor does he know when he will receive it. We may expect to receive nourishment at a time of meeting for public worship, and we go, but go away empty, and some other time a few broken words from some one very unexpectedly fills our whole being, and we are fed and built up. So we do not know the mind of the Lord even after we are made partakers of spiritual things, yet he pities us as a father pities his own children. We love our children and give them good things. If our child asks us for bread do we give it a stone? or if it asks us for a fish do we give it a serpent? If we know how to discern what is good for our children, how much more so does our Father know what we need. If our child asks us for something poisonous we will not give it, for we know it is wrong for the child to have such things. Then will not the Father also withhold poisonous things from us, even though in our ignorance we desire them? We cannot compare his attributes to ours; there is nothing we can liken him to, for no man hath seen him at any time. No man knoweth the Father, except the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him. Man has nothing to give the Lord; a broken and contrite heart only is accept-

able. None will or can break their own heart, but God alone must break it and cause him to pray out of a broken and contrite heart. When man renders this service is any recompense due him? No. The Lord gave him the prayer, therefore it is only returning to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. He first gives us, and receives at our hands the things which are his. People are chosen by him for special purposes, some preachers, teachers, evangelists, prophets and so on; no man can make himself any one of these. Isaiah could not have been Paul, neither could Paul be Daniel. No man can preach the gospel, except by divine gift; none can prophesy, except the spirit of prophecy be given them. What reward is due you then if you are a prophet or a preacher? None; you are only doing what the Lord designed you should do. Men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Ezekiel did not give the whole prophecy concerning the valley of dry bones at once, but prophesied in part, as the Lord instructed him, not knowing the mind of the Lord concerning the matter. Isaiah was told to cry, but what shall I cry? was his question. Cry all flesh is grass. He did not know what to say until it was told him, neither does a servant know what to do until bidden by the Master. These are called gifts, and are gifts from God to the church; it does not belong to the individual himself, but to the church, and is for the upbuilding of Zion, which is a city God hath prepared for a dwelling-place for himself. These gifts come out from God, and return to him for his pleasure and glory, man having no room to boast and glory by saying he did such and such a thing for the Lord or the church. Man only does as he is bidden to do because there is an overruling power that compels strict obedience. Man cannot do one thing God has not appointed for him, neither can he fail to do anything that God has ordained he should do. That is just how obedient the servants of God are. No flesh shall glory in his presence, but all glory and honor shall be ascribed to him to whom all honor and glory belong, so none give to the Lord that it should be recompensed to him again; though we were able to devote our whole time to the work of the Lord, it would be nothing more than reasonable and right, and no reward could possibly be due us for it. From my earliest remembrance I knew that salvation was by grace, that it was not by anything I could do that I might be a child of promise. Looking back now over my past life I cannot recall any time when I was not a firm believer of predestination and election. While I did not know it by those terms, yet I now know that I always believed it from early childhood. I was taught it not of man, for none can teach these things except the Lord. But I can remember when I wished that there was no such thing as predestination or election, for I thought had it not been that way there would have been some hope for me, who at that time was without hope and without God in the world, having fully realized my inability to do anything meritorious whatever, and if I could have been persuaded that man could save his own soul, and by his labors save the souls of others, I would have worked day and night until death claimed me; I could never have stopped while I lived; Saul of Tarsus could not have excelled me in my labors. But I could not believe that doctrine, however hard I tried. But to fear God and keep his commandments is the whole duty of man. It is man's duty to serve

God, and He is not responsible to man to carefully keep an account of man's good acts and reward him for all good done; how absurd to think such a thing. Were the black slaves here freed because they rendered perfect duty and obedience to their masters? Were the Israelites released from bondage to Pharaoh because they faithfully served him? Was he under obligation to them? No; there is no reward due any servant, for servants are required to render obedient service to their master. Our duty is, if we have been born again, to serve God and keep his commandments, not to inherit eternal life, but because we are born of God and have a heavenly desire to do right. We are wayward enough, and are not without sin, our feet are swift to shed blood, and our throats are open sepulchers, so if we are what some claim for man, able of ourselves to turn from sin and make the first start so God could do his part, that is, that Christ's work might be effectual, if this be the way, we all are mightily to blame for not doing it; but this is not the way, be not deceived and led about by persons of fine appearance, and by fair speeches, for if it were possible they would deceive the very elect. I feel safe in making these declarations, for I know what I speak, having been taught these things in long, tedious and painful lessons, and the God of heaven, who knows my frame, has revealed these things to me, that I might know the truth concerning the matter. Even if I know these things, what have I to glory in except the blood of Christ? for of man none doeth good, no, not one, they have all gone out of the way and become unprofitable. "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all."—Romans xi. 32. See what a deplorable condition man is in anyway; "helpless" fails to fully convey the meaning, but God is merciful to our unbelief, and longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. He is found of them that sought him not, for he visits whom he will, and divides a house, placing some members of a family at enmity against each other because of him who died that we might live, giving sight to some, withholding it from others. Christ said, I thank thee, Father, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes. He cleansed ten lepers, giving power to one of the ten to return and shout praises to God, while the other nine were not heard from, yet those who are born again will seek better things, and will hate the ways of the flesh and love right, and hate anything that maketh a lie. There is a prayer in the secret depths of his heart that he may be kept unto righteousness, and be conformed more and more to the image of the dear Son of God, who gave his life that wicked, vile sinners might go free and come in and inherit with him, who knew no sin, but was made to bear our sins in his own body on the tree. O precious name, how sweet it sounds in the believer's ear. No man having seen the beauties of light desires darkness, for the darkness has become unbearable. We are now the children of light, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He appears we shall see him as he is and be like him. We cry now for more light, and more light shows us more and more what we are by nature, which causes more grief, for we have been made to hate sin. The more He reveals himself to us the more of his beauty and strength we see, and the more of our vileness and weakness we see, realizing more fully that not unto us, but unto his name be praise, honor and glory.

Our hope is in Christ, it cannot fail, and it is through great tribulation that we enter into the kingdom. Christ rejoiced in Spirit, but was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. To be conformed to his image is to suffer for his sake, and to be tempted, for he suffered greater than any, and was tempted in all points like as we, yet without sin, bearing our sins, and having power to lay down his life and to take it again, no man taking his life from him, laying it down himself, paying the penalty attached to the law for the violation thereof. He is the door of the sheepfold; he that entereth by the door shall go in and out and find pasture, but he that climbeth up any other way the same is a thief and a robber. Also he says he is the good Shepherd, and a shepherd goes before his sheep; he calls them and they know his voice. O yes, a lost sheep in the wilderness will follow the shepherd, so glad to be found. We are weak, helpless sinners, who cannot pray except the Lord gives us the spirit of prayer. I at one time in my short experience found myself so weak and helpless that I could not pray. Is that true poverty? Naked, starving, helpless, and could not ask for help. O God, have mercy on a poor sinner who hopes he trusts in thee for all things, who has power to give me rest from all my labors and trouble. "Who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, that it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

May the Lord, if it is his will, bless this to the comfort of his poor children.

Your unworthy brother in the hope of perfection in Christ,

F. SELBY FISHER.

WORDS REMEMBERED.

DURING the last two or three days that my dear wife, Clarice, was with us she could speak only with great difficulty on account of shortness of breath, yet many precious words concerning her spiritual exercises fell from her lips, which I would like to recall. I will repeat a few of them. She could sometimes speak easily and distinctly for a sentence or two, then her voice would fall to a whisper and she would utter a sentence slowly, word by word.

"I thought it could not be possible for one to sin so much while lying on a sick bed. I am not thinking of daily transgressions, or of sins against people even in thought, but I am thinking of sins against the Lord; I am thinking of how infinitely holy he is, and I so vile, and yet I dare to rush into his holy presence with my little, trifling affairs, and to claim his attention to my poor, selfish thoughts. I fear at times that it must be presumption in me, and irreverence."

"'And cleanses us from all unrighteousness.' What a wonderful thing that is, to be cleansed, to be made absolutely free from sin, to become pure and clean and holy. Infinite power and grace only could accomplish such a wonder. 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.' It took nothing less than the infinite power of the eternal God to make the sacrifice of Christ effectual, to make reconciliation for sin, to cleanse a sinner from all sin and make him pure and holy. I have often been driven away from the Lord by the thought of his infinite power and greatness, and the feeling of my own great sinfulness, yet I have been rebuked for that feeling; I have known that what I truly wanted was to go nearer to him, not away from him."

"The friends are just as good and kind

as they can be. I know that I do not possess the good qualities which they think they have seen in me, but they minister to what they think I possess. I am so unworthy, but their acts of kindness are given me in the name of a disciple, and so I suppose I may take them."

"When one gets so very weak physically as I am it is impossible to make any exertion to say anything. We can think of the pleasant intercourse we have had in the past, but we cannot talk it over now. We must be content to remember the conversations we have had."

"When I was talking this morning I was not thinking of the things I had done, but of the things I had not done. I know the brethren think I have done the good things they speak of, but they must be mistaken. I cannot see any good thing in me, and it seems as though I must have been hypocritical to make them think so."

I said, "Is it not sweet and lovely to think how all your many friends feel that you have been good and kind, and have given many a cup of cold water to thirsty souls? You have to take the testimony of those who have received the cup at your hands. Those who give the cup may forget it, but the one to whom it is given never will." "Yes," she replied, tenderly and with much feeling, "I suppose I may take the testimony of the dear brethren; they have seen my desire, and have recognized that which I desired to do." To our daughter, Mildred, she said, "I do not know what I would have done if it had not been for the words in 1 John i. 9: 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' It has stayed with me, and I want you to know that I have had many blissful moments from that passage of Scripture."

I have never known one more keenly sensitive to sin, nor one more impressed with the solemn truth that all sin is against God. "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned." Her view of the infinite holiness of God, and of all the attributes of his character, was wonderful, and this seemed to show her by contrast the terrible nature of sin. How carefully and jealously she scanned and scrutinized everything that was presented to her mind as an evidence of an experience of grace. She feared to take anything as in her favor, unless it was clearly given to her through the dear Savior. She was dear to me beyond expression as my loving, faithful and devoted wife. I think I may truthfully say she was infinitely more dear to me, and I to her, as "heirs together of the grace of [spiritual] life."

I will now send with this and ask to have printed in the SIGNS an article written by her some time within the past two or three years. It shows a deep exercise of mind, and an ability to express it, which not many of us possess.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., July 30, 1912.

AN EXPERIENCE OF THE DEPTHS.

MR. DURAND has asked me to write out my experience of "the depths" that on a certain occasion I had tried to tell him of, but I am sure I shall not be able to give full expression to the intensity of the feelings that accompanied it.

I cannot remember details of time, nor just what preceded this acute distress, but I think it was a rather long period of gloom and depression, of which I have had many, as well as many other times of special sensibility of my sinful condition and of my personal transgressions. At the time above referred to, which was about two years ago, perhaps, there

seemed to be a special revelation to me of what my life had always been. I could not only not see one good act, but it seemed to me that every point of contact between it and any other had been but to soil and to injure. There are no words that can fully express the measure of my condemnation. I thought of forgiveness, but I could not bear the thought. It seemed I could not respect a God who would pardon sin like mine. I had the feeling that even though the Lord could or should forgive me I could not forgive myself. I thought of my life, compared with others, and knew I had not done the things that people call wrong, but there was not a ray of comfort in the thought, rather an aggravation. Also I knew all that I then saw was the truth. I almost feared a time when I should be comforted, and not look upon myself as I did then. I knew beyond question that God's holy light was shining upon my life, and that it discovered only what was there. I knew, and still know, nothing was exaggerated in the least degree, although I have had to thank the Lord many times that he does mercifully hide the truth from our eyes the greater part of the time, or else we would die. My mind without any effort of my will to direct it went back to Adam and his transgression at the first, but instead of charging my woeful condition up to him, I seemed to fully share with him the enormity of his sin. Then I could see the whole human race in just the same wretched plight as myself, but this companionship but added to the dreadful condition. It would have been a relief to have pointed out one innocent human being. It would have been a joy just to think of some one who was sinless. But the whole wide waste of iniquity filling the earth seemed too much for endurance, and something like a cry to the Lord to restrain his hand lest I die went up from my heart. I recall that this was in the night. I think perhaps it was the following night that the words, "Against thee, thee only have I sinned," were on my mind with power. I seemed to go over all the ground again, and to see that all the sins against myself, against all that were dear to me, against every rule of right conduct, were chargeable alone to him in some way that I cannot explain, but as these were truths that were shown me, I think it must be that I dimly perceived the mediatorial office of Christ in this. Then the absolute and righteous decrees of God were presented to my mind, and I was shown that not one circumstance, good or bad, in all time had been contrary to God's will; that in some way perfectly comprehensible to him, but totally inscrutable to us, the presence of evil in the world was to be accounted for, and then I was rebuked for my pity for all who had ever known me or felt my influence. I was shown that my children had just such a mother as infinite wisdom designed they should have, that my husband had just such a wife, the church had in me just such a blight and hindrance as it somehow seemed good to Him it should have. It was all taken out of my hands, and I was rebuked for my presumption in believing the responsibility was mine. Now it would seem I ought to feel like shouting from the top of the mountain because I had been relieved of this terrible yoke which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear. Perhaps I did, but it was not in the way that I have supposed others to mean when they have so expressed what they felt. With me it was a sense of being "feeble and sore broken," "all my bones out of joint," and a desire to

walk softly before the Lord all the days of my life. Again, however, a year ago perhaps, I gathered strength to cherish a spirit of irreconciliation to the will of the Lord in a particular thing, so that his heavy hand must once more be laid upon me, but by an application of the words, "All thy works shall praise thee," I was laid low in the dust of submission again, and since then I have felt that my work is done. I have the same interest in all that my hands find to do, and as much inclination to go on doing, but I have not since felt that the work of my hands is mine. I may yet rise to unsuspected heights of presumption, from which I shall have to be brought low; it is practically certain I shall, may even now, unconsciously, be doing so. My only comfort is that neither my presumption nor another's can stand before the presence of our righteous Judge.

CLARICE E. DURAND.

WALKER, Ore., July 31, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—I am inclosing two good letters, one from sister Mary Beaman and the other from sister Emily Tucker. I have enjoyed them very much and would like to share them with the other brethren, if you have space to publish them.

I have been requested by Elder B. S. Pate, and others, to write the evidence on which I base my hope, so, if the Lord wills, I will try to do so now. Sister Emily was nineteen years old last November, I was seventeen the same month and sister Mary has stated her age in her letter. I never thought much about spiritual things until after I was thirteen years of age. In September, 1908, I went to the hop-yard with my uncle and aunt. Of course there was a great deal of drinking, dancing and such things, and as I did not take part in them I thought myself much better than the other young people. One night as I lay thinking of this, suddenly all my sins arose like mountains before me, and I saw myself the blackest, vilest creature on earth. As I lay crying, and hardly daring to think, the sweet, comforting words, "Thy will be done," came to me and all my burden was gone, and I felt like praising God forever. I was very happy for a few days, and then that dark cloud of doubt, which overshadows our lives so much, entered my mind. It had all happened so quickly that I thought it must be a dream from Satan to deceive me. I went on this way, sometimes in the light, but more often in darkness, until our meeting time in July, 1910. Before we went to the meeting on Sunday father asked me if I wanted to join the church. I was very much surprised, for I had never said anything about my feelings to any one. I did not say anything, except that I was too wicked, but the next day I tried to tell him of my past travels. On Tuesday we had a little meeting at Grandfather Walker's, of which Elder Pate, who was then visiting us, was chosen moderator. I had firmly resolved not to offer myself to the church, but when the door was opened I could not stay away. The next month I, with four others, was baptized by my uncle, Elder Morningstar. I was very, very happy when, as they were singing, "O how happy are they who their Savior obey," he led me from that peaceful water. I thought I would never sin again, but found that I still had my old nature to contend with. I doubt much of the time that I have the grace of God in my sinful heart.

"So, by experience, I do know,
There's nothing good that I can do;
I cannot satisfy the law,
Nor hope nor comfort from it draw.

My nature is so prone to sin,
Which makes my duty so unclean,
That when I count up all the cost,
If not free grace, then I am lost."

Unworthily yours,
ICIE D. WALKER.

FOREST GROVE, Ore., July 12, 1912.

MY DEAR SISTER:—I surely enjoyed your letter very much, but do not feel worthy of getting such good letters. It does seem that there is a close relationship between those who feel they have received a hope of a place where there will be no sickness or sorrow. Though we are strangers in the flesh it does not seem like it. I was glad you wrote me some of the travel from nature to grace on which your hope is based. I will try to tell you some of the travels which the evidence of my hope is based upon. When we first moved to Oregon, in March, 1909, I began going to the invited neighborhood dances, but I never attended a public dance. Before I had attended them a year I began to tire of them, they were not a pleasure to me as they had been before. In October, 1910, I went to a place to work, and they were very religious, seemingly, regular Arminians, and very pharisaical. After I had been there some time I began to think I could say I was saved, too, and became as pharisaical as they, and felt it a great duty to do all I could to get others to "accept Christ" before they were lost in eternity. O how little did I know of God's power and abounding grace. It is a terrible feeling to think some of your dear friends may die and sink to the bottomless pit on account of your neglect in getting them to accept Christ. It reminds me of the passage of Scripture in Matthew xxiii. 15: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves." I have learned since to believe according to the Scriptures in Ephesians i. 4, 5: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." And in Ephesians ii. 8, 9: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast," and other Scriptures just as true. I was very glad when they talked of constituting a church, for I felt I would be much happier if I could follow my Savior in baptism, and have a home in the church. I did not think I would join at the first meeting, but it seemed there was a voice kept saying to me, If you do not you will regret it. After preaching Sunday night, when the opportunity was given, and they sang, "I am a stranger here below," it seemed that the hymn expressed my feelings better than I could myself. I went forward and offered myself to the church. I could not say much, but was received for baptism, and on Monday after the January meeting we all went in sleighs to brother Berry's, as the baptizing was at his place, had short services at the house, then went to the water. It was snowing. Elder Turnidge offered a beautiful prayer, then they sang, "O how happy are they who their Savior obey," while Elder Wilson led me into the water. I was so happy it seemed to me that every one there was happy. We returned to the house, and some sang the sweet songs of praise to God, while others got dinner ready. Last Sunday, and Saturday before, was

our meeting time, and Elder I. A. Moore, who has lately moved here from the east, Elder Pate, Elder Turnidge and Elder Fisher, from Texas, were all present, and we had a good meeting. After preaching Saturday, when the opportunity was given, Elder I. A. Moore and his wife, Mary Moore, joined by letter, and my two sisters, Clara and Rachel, came forward and were received for baptism, and at four o'clock Saturday afternoon we met at the creek, where Clara and Rachel were baptized by Elder Pate.

I have read and reread your letter, and would like very much to meet you and the rest of your people. We all enjoyed your father's and brother's visit with us here.

You ask me to give my age; I was nineteen the 25th of last December.

You will surely get tired before you read all of this; I did not intend to write so much. Write when convenient.

Your sister, I hope,

MARY BEAMAN.

BROWNSVILLE, Ore., June 10, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTERS:—I expect you will think it strange for me to write before you have hardly reached home, but some way I wanted to tell you how I felt, and as I did not do so, am going to write a few lines. I certainly have enjoyed the meeting very much, and am still enjoying it. I do not know where to begin, but on Friday before the Sunday that I joined, Elder Pate preached a good sermon, and that evening I was in the bedroom lying down, and felt that my sins were so great that the burden was more than I could bear, and began to cry for mercy, saying, Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner. I felt that I was the greatest sinner that ever lived. But that burden left me, and I sang, "Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail," &c. I sang it over and over again, and it seemed as though it kept getting sweeter each time. I thought, How can it be that I am one of his chosen? But it seemed as though it were so. My heart was full of love, but I cannot half express how I felt. We went to meeting the next Sunday, and Elder Pate preached just what I wanted to hear, and when he got through I almost went up to the front, for it seemed as though I could not wait any longer; I felt they were the children of God, and I wanted to be with them. The love and joy that filled my heart I cannot tell. I thought it was my duty to tell them some of my feelings, but I was so full of love I could not say anything. Elder Williams asked me a few questions, and I was received. I was afraid they would not receive me, but they did; if they had not I do not know what I would have done, for I had no other place to go. I waited until the Saturday before the third Sunday in October, then was baptized. The next meeting was in November, and I could not get there, and that made me think I was deceived and had deceived all the brethren I so much loved. I got one of the papers and tried to read, but I could not read, or sing anything to get a bit of comfort. This lasted for about two weeks, and one night father got his SIGNS and read an experience to us, and it seemed as though that was just what I wanted to hear; it had this expression in it: "And with lovingkindness have I drawn thee," and it seemed that I had been drawn by loving-kindness.

I expect you will get tired of reading this, so I will close. I cannot express my feelings as I would like to. Excuse this poor letter.

"O to meet again in heaven,
What a blessing it will be;
There with all our sins forgiven,
And from death forever free."

Your unworthy sister,
EMILY TUCKER.

WHEELING, W. Va., July 10, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter from Elder McClanahan which seems very good to me. This dear, humble servant of the Lord visited me about a month ago, and I can never describe how very precious his company was to me. His whole mind seems to be taken up with heavenly things, and I felt that his presence made our house a heavenly place. I enjoyed every moment of his stay, and dreaded to see the time pass by so swiftly.

Unworthily your sister in hope,
FLORENCE PULTZ.

LANHAM, W. Va., July 4, 1912.

MRS. FLORENCE PULTZ—DEAR SISTER:—I feel to write you a few lines, that you may know I found my wife and daughter well on my return home, for which I am thankful to the Giver and Preserver of life. This seven days visit among the brethren and sisters who compose the Maple Creek Church, at Charleroi, Pa., including the day I was at your pleasant home in Wheeling, was very pleasant indeed. A portion of the time I was at the home of my only son, in Bellaire, Ohio, enjoying the prattling of three little granddaughters. O how near our hearts are our grandchildren! May God bless them and keep them from all harm. The unscriptural institutions are many that are set up by designing men for the purpose of captivating the young and simple and leading them astray, for the purpose of making merchandise of them.

When I took my pen I felt to write something on the resurrection. It is a lovely subject; in fact, it is the hope of the saints that they have a part in the first resurrection, and that on such the second death hath no power. I am aware of the fact that there are some who do not believe there will be any resurrection of the dead, but let us read the words of Jesus in John v. 25: "Verily, verily, [double note of attention] I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." Now this clearly demonstrates his power to quicken dead sinners to life; those who were dead in trespasses and sin. He was now about his Father's work, and was manifesting his power in bringing to life poor sinners who were dead to the knowledge of the truth. If the doctrine of the resurrection is not clearly taught in Paul's writing to the brethren at Corinth, I am wonderfully in the dark: "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."—1 Cor. xv. 12–18. Again in the twenty-ninth verse: "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?" Also John v. 28, 29; "Marvel not at this; for the

hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." This testimony of Paul before Felix the governor, on the resurrection, agrees with the above: "But this I confess unto thee, That after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets; and have hope toward God, which they themselves allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." Now with such wonderful testimony of the resurrection of the dead, how dare we apply all of this to the bringing of dead sinners from nature's night to the glorious light and liberty of the gospel? Would not the unjust be embraced in this holy operation, since He is the resurrection of both the just and the unjust? If the resurrection simply means to bring to life dead sinners, by the operation of God's Holy Spirit, which leads and guides in the way of all truth, would not the unjust be led into all truth, since Jesus is the resurrection of both the just and the unjust? Let us quote from 1 Thess. iv. 15–17: "We which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." This surely is proof to me that mortals shall put on immortality. "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." This mortal must put on immortality. We are exhorted to comfort one another with the precious promises of deliverance from the bondage of corruption. Also there shall be a time for the gathering together of the saints from all parts of the earth when time shall be no longer; no more century or dispensation.

Yours in hope of the resurrection,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

JEREMIAH X. 23.

"O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

Being in poor health this winter, I could not rest well or sleep last night, so I arose from my bed about the hour of midnight, when the above declaration of the prophet came into my mind. I feel like writing some of my thoughts about the text, not that I feel I have any special light upon it, but it brings to my mind an incident which I personally knew when I was a young man, which incident then, and does yet, prove to me the truth of the declaration of the old prophet. I knew two men, brothers, who were riding along the road on their way home, when a thunder storm overtook them, and they took shelter in an old blacksmith shop. In the shop was a blacksmith's forge, a few feet from it stood the running-gear of a farm wagon; one of them took a seat on the forge, the other stood at the rear of the wagon, and were talking with each other while waiting for the storm to pass over. The one sitting on the forge got up from his seat, the one standing at the wagon stepped away and seated himself upon the forge, while his brother stepped to the exact place or spot he had stood; a bolt of light-

ning killed him instantly. There are some readers of the SIGNS who (if living) can call to mind the truthfulness of my statement of this incident. Now is it too much for one to say that these two men took just so many steps in life, so as to bring the one to the exact place where his life was taken away, while the other's life was spared? I think not. What does Job say concerning this? "Doth not he see my ways, and count all my steps?"—Job xxxi. 4. If our God doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, if the rise and fall of kingdoms, nations and peoples are under the watchful care of his all-seeing eye, is it too much for me to say that the life and destiny of individual men are also in his hand? May I not say with the wise man, "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord"? We sometimes say things "happened so," but there is no such thing as happenings with our God; all things are fixed and sure with him, everything in the universe in which we live tells us this truth. If we view the star-decked heavens, it declares his handiwork; the millions of planets each moving in its fixed orbit, all declare his wisdom, power and glory.

J. H. YEOMAN.

LOVELAND, Colo.

WILMER, Ark., Jan. 6, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In renewing my subscription to the SIGNS I wish to say, in the language of the psalmist, The Lord is great, and greatly to be praised for his wonderful works, and for his goodness and glory. Only a day or two before Christmas I was riding on the train, coming from Monticello to Wilmer, and overheard a conversation between two men, one a stranger to me, and the other, one of my neighbors. He had been lauding the Methodist workers, and other missionaries, for the great work they were doing, and had done, in sending the gospel to foreign lands in order to save the heathen. This stranger asked him if they had not been preaching in this kind of a way for hundreds of years to the people, and if they were not still crying for more money and men, in order to save the world for Christ, and thus far had completely failed to save anybody? And he said, "Do you not know that all this cry is falsehood absolute and indivisible?" Yes, it is impossible to turn around at this day at any crossroad, at any turn in the road, in the public schools even, at the universities, at a social gathering of any kind, without finding some Arminian pleader, ready and willing and thoroughly equipped with human learning, polished with ignorance, filled with egotism, striving to lead the people, even the children, yours as well as mine, away from and against the truth. Even women in these days are so steeped in folly and false religion as to allow themselves to indulge in lodges of various kinds and colors, all under the cloak of religion (of course,) and to go around, even in the dark hours of the night, having also the impudence to have the Bible in their lodges, making prayers to their god. Shame upon such deeds as these. I do not believe that any women who do such things have any true religion about them. I have long since come to the conclusion that, as Sir Isaac Newton said, we might as well try to roll back the curtains of the universe as try to keep the devil from doing his work. Or as Alexander Stephens said, we might as easily stop the ebb and flow of the tide as to stop the influx of false religion. We might as well try to tear the lovely Pleiades from the skies

as to endeavor to stop the missionary effort in foreign lands. But, speaking from a missionary standpoint, I believe that the almond-eyed Chinaman from the land of the Orient should send missionaries to this enlightened land of America, especially to Wilmer, if it could be done. But the idea of the puny arm of flesh sending the gospel (the power of God) to any land or clime at any time is too preposterous to believe. It is so absurd, so irreligious, so unscriptural, so unfounded in truth, that no man or woman who has a spark of true christianity about them can believe it, yet the world and the devil gloat over and applaud this enterprising missionary work by both men and women. But I have not told the worst feature of this business yet, the kind that goes down into the deep recesses of the heart, and that hurts so that we cry out in anguish of soul, O Lord, how long will darkness cover the earth, and gross darkness the people? I went, not long ago, to an Old School Baptist meeting; I heard well, and was somewhat strengthened at first, but just before the preacher was through he said, the absolute predestination of all things no man could live up to, nor practice it. He said it was heresy. To make a long story short, I will say that cold chills ran all over me, and I was completely upset to think that an Old School Baptist would deny this doctrine, which is all my desire, my experience and my hope beyond this world. Take this away from me and you have removed every vestige of my hope for life and salvation which is centered in the great "I AM." Take this away from me, the predestination of all things, and what else is there in the Bible to rely upon? Nothing at all. Take this away from me, and what have I to hope for beyond the cold, silent grave? Take this away, and what is the hope of heaven worth? Nothing at all. How glad I am that the SIGNS stands firm in proclaiming this glorious doctrine, the predestination of all things. How comforting it is to the believer.

Your brother,

C. G. IRWIN.

ODEON, Ark., Dec. 24, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—My poor, drooping spirit was greatly revived on the 22nd inst. by the coming of the SIGNS. I was agreeably surprised, as I had written you to discontinue it, and expected it to be done, as I had not paid for the preceding volume, as I was short of money, and had been shut up in darkness for two or three weeks, and bowed down with a hard, unbelieving, sinful and desperately wicked heart. I had been made to wonder whether any of the humble poor of the flock was ever plagued with so sinful a nature and deceitful a heart as mine. I had felt all manner of sinful thoughts, of doubts and of fears, of unbelief and distrust in our beloved Jesus, and was brought low in my feelings, so low that I almost doubted being born again, or having any hope in the adorable, loving and holy God. Such was my condition for some days before receiving the SIGNS for Dec. 15th, but when it came to hand and I began to read the communication of brother Ford, and then turned and read the editorial from Elder Chick, the darkness was soon dispersed, and I was so much comforted that my poor heart was filled with praise to the loving and adorable Savior, and I forgot my deep poverty and misery, for some little time at least. It is three days since then, and I am still enjoying some of the sweet influence of God's eternal and electing love.

Dear brother, I see that the SIGNS is extended from Dec., 1911, to Dec., 1912,

and, in the first place, I wish to say that I do thank God for his great kindness in directing matters in this way, and, in the second place, I want to thank the brethren for their kindness extended to me. I know that I am not worthy of such kind favors. I have been a reader of the SIGNS off and on for more than thirty years, and as a general rule I have thought that the writers were the most spiritual, or as much so, outside of the Bible of course, as any I have ever read after. To my great sorrow I see that there is, and has been for a number of years, a great number of Baptists who denounce this people as heretics, and who assert that they preach a doctrine that makes God the author of sin and wickedness, and in many places bars are set up to the extent that there is no longer union, but a severance of fellowship. O what a sad spectacle! No doubt our enemies rejoice over this sad affair. O how I have hoped that this breach would be healed, but instead, it seems to have become broader, so I can only wait, and say, The will of the Lord be done. It does seem that if every child of grace could see how helpless and dependent we all are upon the grace of God, and how much we continually stand in need of forgiveness, we would not be so ready to wage war upon our brethren. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." The editorial upon the two sparrows, recorded in Matt. x. 29, and the five sparrows, recorded in Luke xii. 6, was to me one of the richest and most comforting communications that I ever read in my life. Thank the Lord for such blessings.

I remain your brother,

H. ELLISON.

[OUR brother refers to the charge made against the doctrine of unlimited predestination, that it makes out that our God is the author of sin. Of late years we have been surprised to hear such an objection coming from any who bear the name Old School Baptist. When we were but a child, and afterwards in our youth, we were accustomed to hear this charge brought against this truth by Arminians. Methodists, Free-will Baptists, and all who believe in human merit or human choice as the deciding factor in the sinner's salvation, in our hearing often in those days urged this very objection against the doctrine. We could not be surprised that such as these should oppose this great truth, but we have been surprised that Old School Baptists should be found who would urge this objection. A careful reading of the ninth chapter of Romans shows just how the inspired Paul treated this very objection, which it seems was urged in his day. We have felt content to abide by the apostle's decision, and have ever feared lest we should be found among those who reply against God.—C.]

KELLER, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending you a brief note written by our beloved sister, Mary J. Boggs, now deceased. A few days since I was looking through a file of my papers and letters, and casually picked up her precious missive, addressed to me and sent in an inclosed letter from her sister in the flesh, E. H. Boggs, of Raton, New Mexico, although without date. She being dead yet speaketh in this expression of kind remembrance and christian salutation. She was a brilliant, pious lady, with great intellectuality, pleasant in conversation, earnest and devoted to the cause of her Savior, in common with her aged sister, who still survives her. These two sisters are generally known among the Old

School Baptists, and their example of true faithfulness and integrity is worthy of commendation, because our Jesus bestowed upon them the sweet graces of his Spirit, and hope of everlasting life, which endeared them in love and fellowship to all the brotherhood, so, if agreeable, please publish her letter, which will call forth fresh recollections of her to old friends and brethren.

Yours in gospel bonds,

ASA HOWARD.

DEAR BROTHER HOWARD:—We were all made very glad by the coming of your letter, glad to hear that you had a safe and pleasant journey, and that you had such delightful meetings, also that the Master of the vineyard opened a pleasing field of labor to you. May the great Head of the church keep you as ever, a feeder of the flock.

I often think that it is a great waste of time to live in this country, except when one's health demands it. Brother Fetter has not recovered from his cold yet, but I think he is some better. All the friends are in quite good health. I have not seen sister Vance since you left. We have had a very cold wave, considerable snow, and from what we hear much more out at the ranch. We are wondering where you are to-day, and what you may preach about. Perhaps some day we may have the pleasure of seeing the Texas brethren and mingling with them in the public worship of our God.

In christian love,

MARY J. BOGGS.

CALHOUN CITY, Miss., July 22, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I write to let you know my time, I think, is about out on your paper. I would like to send the money and still take it, but I am a widow with a number of children to work for, and it is hard for me to meet all demands. I surely do love your paper, as it is full of good things, besides I never get to hear preaching, except through the paper, as I live so far from meeting. I feel like one alone sometimes, as there are no Primitive Baptists near me. I have been made to rejoice when reading the good articles in your paper. I have had a hard road to travel, and sometimes feel that I cannot endure it much longer, then I will read something, or some thought will come over me that will help me to go on. May God bless you and all who contribute to your paper. Pray for me, that I may be enabled to lead a life worthy before my children and all.

I am your sister in Christ,

EUSIE GRIFFIN.

TOO LATE TO CLASSIFY.

THE Trinity River Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association will meet this year with Denton Creek Church, at Keller, Texas, on Friday before the second Sunday in September (6th), 1912. Keller is on the M. K. & T. R. R., fifteen miles north of Ft. Worth. All sound Baptists and lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

ASA HOWARD, Moderator.

THE yearly meeting of the Cow Marsh Old School Baptist Church will be held on the fourth Sunday in September, and Saturday afternoon before (21st and 22nd). A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends to meet with us. Trains north and south will be met Saturday morning at Felton station.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Pastor.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we will supply these free of charge.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1912.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

VISION OF DRY BONES.

BROTHER A. E. Wiggins, of Gantt, Alabama, has asked that we say something through the SIGNS regarding the vision of the valley of dry bones, recorded in Ezekiel xxxvii. 1–15. It is our recollection that some time since we wrote suggesting some thoughts concerning this vision, and, beside this, others have within a few years written about the same subject, still we feel like complying with the request of our brother at this time.

First. We are told plainly the reason of this vision in the preceding chapter. Israel had been distressed because of their sins, and then precious promises of a reviving were afforded them through the mercy and power of God. Israel had grievously fallen, and upon the face of things there appeared to be no hope that they ever could be restored to their former happy state, still, that they should be restored again was the promise of God. Now to meet and overcome their unbelief, and to encourage them that they should not despair, the blessed Lord gives the prophet Ezekiel this wonderful vision. In the vision the prophet sees a valley of dry bones. The valley was full of them, and they were very dry; that is, there was no life in them, there was not even flesh upon them. Here was a vision of death, and of death continued until the whole body of flesh which covered those bones was decayed and dried up, and only dried and withered bones remained. This was a description of Israel. So far as the love and fear of God were concerned there appeared to be none in all the land. They had forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living waters, and were all dried up, every spiritual grace had departed from their lives; they had a name still to live, but they were really dead. Even their national life seemed about to utterly depart from them; their case, to the prophet Ezekiel, and to all who really loved the law of the Lord, appeared to be hopeless. It did not seem that there ever could be a reviving again of the former glory of that people; it seemed that faith, hope and love were all dead among them.

Second. The prophet, being carried by the Spirit into the valley, beholds this representation of their state before God. A little later in the narrative he was told what these dry bones signified. It would seem that at first he did not see the meaning of the vision, but the word of the Lord came, trying his faith: "Can these bones live?" From every human point of view it appeared to be an impossibility, yet the prophet did not say, It cannot be. Whether they should live again or not he did not know, but he did know that the Lord was able to cause them to live, and this he expressed in his reply, "O Lord God, thou knowest." Here is seen real true christian faith. The same faith that was in the prophet concerning these dry bones of those who had been long dead, so that flesh and sinew had alike perished from them, is now in the heart of all believers when they confidently expect that one day there

shall be a resurrection of the dead. It is impossible and incredible with men, but nothing is impossible with God. Reason says, It cannot be, but faith says, The Lord can do all things. There is nothing too hard for the Lord. But let us remember that this was not a real valley of dry bones situated somewhere in Palestine, but that Ezekiel only saw in vision this picture of the state of the nation of Israel. Under this figure was the barrenness, desolation and death of that people set forth.

Third. In the vision Ezekiel is told of the Lord to prophesy unto these dry bones, and to say to them, "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord." A little further along in the narrative we read that this same Israel, so dry and dead, was saying, "Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts." Israel was still Israel, although they had so grievously departed from the word and way of the Lord and had become so barren in all that belonged to the love and service of God. They were like these dry bones, yet they were not dead, as were Gentile nations. The Lord's people often become dry and dead to all their former life of communion with the blessed Lord, but that they are not dead in trespasses and in sins is evident when they cry, We are dried, and our hope is lost, and we are cut off for our parts. So long as there is complaint there is life, and so long as there is life the word of the servants of the Lord can reach them through the Spirit by the command of the Lord. So the prophet is commanded to prophesy to them. Here it is evident that prophecy does not mean foretelling providential events that are future altogether, at least, for the message here is of that which the Lord would do. It is a declaration of the word of the Lord revealing his gracious purposes concerning his people. In that sense it is indeed prophecy, but it is not prophecy of future natural events, as so many of the prophetic declarations are. To these dry bones the message was, "Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord."

Fourth. This was the gospel message sent by the prophet to this hopeless people. Does it not seem well worthy of special note that there is here no exhortation to turn from their sins and live, but rather precious declaration of the Lord's purposes of love and mercy to them? There had been exhortations and warnings and reproofs urged upon this people before, but these are not set forth now. The former exhortations and warnings had wrought in them, so that they had come to confess their lost and fallen estate, as we have quoted above, but that which had convinced them of their sin had also convinced them of their bondage to sin, so that they had come to confess their inability to do good that they might be restored to their former glory. Now they had come into that state of heart and mind where they could appreciate the need of the work of the Lord, rather than any work of theirs. Seeing their own weakness, they had come to know that salvation must be the result of the life-giving power of God, and so the Lord now gives his prophet utterances of gracious mercy for them. Is it not true that the use of all exhortation and warning and rebuke is to convince of sin and weakness so that those thus convinced shall come to look to the Lord alone for each and every act of redemption from all sin and

all guilt? Exhortation is not to stir men up to self-endeavor, that thus they may turn and live, but it is always to convince of sin, and then when the soul thus convinced seeks to turn from his sin with abhorrence he at once comes into the knowledge of another fact, viz., that he has no power to break his shackles, and that all his struggles to that end must ever be in vain. Then there will come into his heart a calling upon the name of the Lord, and then will come sweet messages from the Lord, sometimes spoken in silence to his soul, sometimes spoken to him through the ministry of the word, messages of peace, strength and pardon from the Lord. Then do such as these learn that salvation first, last and all the way along is of the Lord. When the Lord's people have turned away from him, the Lord sends rebukes to make them afraid, and to humble them, but when the work designed by these heart-searching words of the Lord has been wrought in them exhortation and commandments cease, and then the Lord reveals his work. It was so in this narrative.

Fifth. Now in the vision the work is done. Upon these dry bones have come flesh and sinew and skin, and to them has come breath and they live. Every promise given in the vision has been fulfilled; it has been, all of it, a manifestation of sovereign power and grace. The goodness of the Lord, and of the Lord alone, has appeared. These men, seen in the vision, could none of them boast, Our help has come from ourselves; none of them could claim that they had in any manner deserved the blessings of life and beauty. Here is a picture of sovereign grace alone, here is mercy for their sins, here is love for their unloveliness, here is life from the dead. Once more these dry bones, in the vision, stand upon their feet, and once more do they enter into the blessed things that belong to life, once more do they breathe the air of heaven, once more do they behold the sun and walk in the light of it. So, declared the Lord, should it be with Israel. Their bones were dried, and their flesh perished, but they should come together, bone to his bone, and they should once more be clothed with flesh and with sinew. Their hope, which had been lost, should be restored to them, and instead of being cut off they should be brought nigh once more. They were as those dead and buried, but they should live and come out of their graves; they were banished from the land of Israel, but they should once more be brought into their land. They had forgotten the Lord, but when all this was done they should once again remember the Lord, and should know that he who had so graciously restored them was the Lord indeed; their idolatry should forever be put away. Israel had fallen asleep, and were lying down among the dead, but now the voice had reached them which says, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

Sixth. All this was true of Israel then, and all this sets forth that which is true of spiritual Israel now. The children of God may and do fall asleep, and sometimes they lie down among the dead. Thank God they are not dead, but only asleep among the dead. But the tomb is not their proper place, living men ought not to tarry in the abodes of the dead, only maniacs and fools would seek such shelter. The Lord's people become bewitched, and are often foolish, but they still are his living people; to them he continues to speak. One day they shall hear his word and see their folly, then there will be sorrow and re-

pentance. Thus by the faithful writing of the apostle to the church at Corinth was wrought in them, not the sorrow of the world, which worketh death, but godly sorrow, which worketh repentance unto salvation, which needs not be repented of, and Paul declares to them that the evidence that they sorrowed after a godly sort was that it wrought a turning from the evil in them that were spiritual. It wrought in them, as he had heard, shame and sorrow and zeal for the better way, so that they had cleared themselves from their sin and had returned to the the obedience which they had rendered before. It is sad to see living children of God making themselves companions of the dead; it is sad to see them departing from the home of the living, choosing rather the friendship of the world than the fellowship of the living in Jerusalem, but sometimes this is so; there remains for all such, barrenness, dryness and death. But still the Lord remembers them, and when it is best for them, and most for his own glory, he revives them; then do they have trouble and sorrow, and when through his sovereign mercy and grace they once more are restored to their own land it will be, as with Israel of old, with weeping and with supplication, and always afterward will they remember with shame and sorrow their departures, and always will they wonder at and admire and praise the rich mercy that sought them out and saved them. David, Peter and all who erred, as recorded in the word of God, must all their lives afterward have thought with self-abhorrence of their shameful falls, and the rich mercy of God must have been magnified in their view more and more as they continued to remember these things. The double life of the children of God, the life of sorrowing, and yet of always rejoicing, comes to them through the memory of their own weakness and folly and fallings, and then through the memory of redemption and forgiveness in our Lord Jesus Christ, and one great soul-comforting and God-honoring truth shines out through all these truths, viz., that the Lord will never put away his people. Nothing, not even their sins, shall separate them from his love. It is said of some that they did not know the goodness of God leads to repentance, but these, the dear people of God, do know this, for his goodness has wrought repentance in them that needs not to be repented of. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ISAIAH XLV. 19.

BROTHER BEEBE:—When you have leisure, please give your views on Isaiah xlv. 19, the middle clause in particular.

Yours in christian love and esteem,
MARY J. EDDY.

With great pleasure we comply with the request of our esteemed correspondent, being ready at all times to give such views as we have on the Scriptures to all who desire to know the truth as it is in Jesus. The text proposed reads thus: "I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain. I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right." Holy men of old have written the Scriptures as they were inspired by the Holy Ghost, and we are told that God spake to the fathers by the prophets, from which we infer the importance of every part of the inspired volume, but when passages are marked like the one proposed for our present consideration, as coming so immediately from the mouth of God, they seem to claim, from those who fear him, their most profound attention. This text is

specially prefaced in the context by these remarkable words: "For thus saith the Lord." This is a sufficient cause for reverential and solemn reflection, but to increase our awe and to prostrate our souls in the most humble and devout attitude, to wait with breathless silence for the words which proceed from his mouth, it is added, "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited; I am the Lord, and there is none else." What power has he displayed in the creation of the heavens and earth, and how successfully has he executed his predestinated design that the earth should be inhabited. Truly he whose designs can never be frustrated, whose purpose shall stand and who will do all his pleasure, has the right to declare, as in this case, "I am the Lord, and there is none else." Our destiny for time and eternity is in his hand; no power can successfully compete with him. He is of one mind, and none can turn him.

"The heavens above, the earth below,
Thee, Lord, their great possessor know;
By thee this orb to being rose,
And all that nature's bounds inclose.

From thee, amid the aeriel space,
The north and south assume their place;
'Tis thine the ocean's rage to guide,
And calm at will its swelling tide."

"I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth." That is, in the calling of Jacob, and in bidding his seed to seek him. Let us consider,

1. Jacob and his seed. Jacob as the father of his chosen tribes was a type of Christ, in whom all the election of grace is embodied. All the natural descendants of Jacob were chosen in him and set apart as a peculiar people in distinction from all other tribes of the earth, and embraced in the legal covenant, in which all the privileges of the law of a carnal commandment were secured to them before any of them were born. So all the spiritual family or seed of Christ were chosen in him as the antitype of Jacob before the world began, and embraced in the everlasting covenant of life and peace which is ordered in all things and sure. So clearly does this typical relationship appear in the Scriptures, that the church of our Lord Jesus Christ is frequently in the New Testament called Israel, the seed of Jacob, the twelve tribes of Israel, &c., and although we are informed that they were not all Israel which were of Israel, (that is, Israel after the flesh,) "Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."—Romans ix. 7, 8.

2. The doctrine of the special election of grace is by divine authority illustrated by the discriminating grace of God bestowed on Jacob, irrespective of any work, good or bad, on his part. "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand." God's purpose must always stand in all cases, for he doeth his pleasure in heaven and on earth, and worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. But that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand. How? In what manner must his purpose stand? "Not of works, but of him that calleth." This then was the object of God in conforming the type to the thing signified, to show that the election of grace stands not according to works, but of him that calleth; so the case of Jacob

and Esau was irrevocably fixed and unalterably settled before the children were born or had done any good or evil, and this figure the apostle assures us was thus arranged to show that the election of God's people in Christ was prior to their birth, and irrespective of their good or bad works, and wholly governed by the sovereign will of God who calleth. (Rom. ix. 11, 13.) "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast."—Eph. ii. 8, 9. This doctrine of discriminating grace is clearly indicated in the prophetic application of the names Jacob and Israel. "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine."—Isaiah xliii. 1. "Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel whom I have chosen" (or elected).—Isaiah xliv. 1. "Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles."—Isa. xlii. 1.

3. The open and manifest calling of Jacob, as signifying the clear and open calling and salvation of God's spiritual Israel. "I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth." Upon this subject what has ever been more clearly manifest?

1. The calling of Jacob personally to seek his face, instead of hiding or disguising his calling as a secret matter, as we have seen he declared it to Rebecca before the children were born, and in all his providential dealings with him, causing him to inherit the blessing of the first-born in Isaac's family, in shielding him from the wrath of Esau, in giving him favor with Laban, and in finally bringing him to the place of his nativity with great riches, all of which presents him as the type of him of whom the psalmist says, "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."—Psalms cxxvi. 6.

2. In his calling as the type of the election of grace Moses thus testifieth: "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye."—Deut. xxxii. 9, 10. This was not done secretly, for in the same chapter heaven and earth are summoned as witnesses of this distinguishing grace. "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth." This was not speaking in secret, nor in a dark place of the earth, but before high heaven and the listening earth. Thus openly the proclamation of Jacob's calling is made. The fathers, the ancient patriarchs, were advised of all this, it was no secret. "Ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee." What will they tell thee? They will tell thee this: "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel."—Deut. xxxii. 7, 8. So far from concealing his special favor to Israel, he is seen riding upon the heaven in their help and in his excellency on the sky.

3. The calling of Jacob out of Egypt

was no secret event. All the wonders of our God were executed. His arm was made bare in the eyes of the nations, and all the ends of the earth saw the salvation of our God. With a high hand and an outstretched arm the yoke of Egypt was broken, and so clearly visible was the display of his almighty power in calling Jacob then to look to him alone for deliverance and protection that it is said even "the waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee: they were afraid; the depths also were troubled. The clouds poured out water; the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad. The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook. * * * Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron."—Psalms lxxvii. 16–20. He rebuked strong nations for the sake of Jacob, and finally made public the entrance of his chosen tribes into the land of Canaan, all of which abundantly proves that in the calling of Jacob to seek his face, God spake not in secret, nor in a dark place of the earth.

4. So in the application of these types and shadows to the spiritual Israel of God, in their high and holy vocation, God's voice has been unmistakably heard. The very fact that their calling had been prefigured in all the types, and emphatically declared by all the prophets from the days of Abel, shows that God did not design to conceal his purpose in their calling.

Not in secret, nor in a dark place of the earth, was the calling of the spiritual Israel of our God when they were saved and called with a holy calling, not according to their works, but according to God's own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ before the world began. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."—Romans viii. 29, 30. Thus it is seen that the calling of God's people in Christ in this election and predestination to glory was not in any dark place of the earth, but in a radiant blaze of refulgent glory. The calling of the Israel of God experimentally is open, manifest and irresistible. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. iv. 6. The calling of the Israel of God from the bondage of the law, the guilt of sin, and from the power of darkness into God's marvelous light, is witnessed in the triumph of our Redeemer in his resurrection, in which he spoiled principalities and powers and made a show of them openly. Having abolished death, he brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. (2 Tim. i. 10.)

5. The infallible certainty that the calling of God's chosen Israel is and forever shall be effectual. "I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain." This very declaration implies, first, that God has said to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me, and second, that his word to that end is not in vain.

In this same chapter, verse 22, he reiterates this command, saying, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." As none but God can save a sinner, and as there is no other God, it is vain to look for salvation from any other source. All other powers in heaven and

earth combined could not save a single soul, could not deliver from wrath, purge from guilt, quicken from death or translate from the power of darkness any of the seed of Jacob. For their salvation is of me, saith the Lord. In this chapter the scattered condition of the seed of Jacob, as spread over the entire surface of the earth, and extending to earth's remotest bounds, is alluded to in the twentieth verse, and they are informed that wooden gods or other dumb idols cannot save them. "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not; for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west." How? "I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him."—Isaiah xliii. 1–7. "To give drink to my people, my chosen. This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise."—Isaiah xliii. 20, 21. These Scriptures show beyond all reasonable doubt that the seed of Jacob in our text is the Lord's people, who by the absolute decree of the unchangeable God shall be gathered and shall every one of them be brought from the ends of the earth, and shall shew forth God's praise. This decree, though offensive to men and devils, is not to be concealed nor kept in the dark, for God has spoken and proclaimed it before heaven and earth. His word goeth forth from his mouth in righteousness, and shall not return void of the work whereunto he has sent it; it shall prosper in the accomplishment of all his pleasure. This word going forth to all the seed of Israel, scattered though they be to the ends of the earth, shall find out every one of them to whom he has directed it, and in this word he says to them, even to every one of them, "Seek ye me." This fiat from the throne of God shall be effectual, it cannot fail, it has not been spoken in vain. We are aware that these words of our God, and those also in verse twenty-two of the same chapter, are treated as mere invitations, but let it be known to all men, the Lord God of Israel deals not in invitations. Where a king's word is there is power, and our God is a great King, and his kingdom ruleth over all. He speaks the word and it stands fast, he commands and it is done.

"Firm are the words his prophets give—
Sweet words on which his children live;
Each of them is the voice of God,
Who spake, and spread the heavens abroad.

Each of them powerful as that sound
Which bid the new made world go round,
And stronger than the solid poles
On which the wheel of nature rolls."

But we would call the attention of our sister to the efficiency of this saying of God especially: "I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain," for the power and efficiency of these words are established by the solemn oath of God that they shall not fail, for he adds, "I

have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come: and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed." Every knee and tongue of whom, according to this oath, shall bow and swear allegiance to the Lord Almighty? The knee and tongue of every one of the seed of Jacob, whom he has commanded to seek his face. For he further says, "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." We cannot doubt nor dispute the power and omnipotence of the words thus spoken by the Lord to the seed of Jacob without involving the sin of blasphemy. God, who cannot lie, has not only said that his word shall secure the accomplishment of his order, but he has confirmed it by an oath. To contradict is then to not only charge God with falsehood, but also with perjury. When the Lord, by his Spirit, applies these words to any of the seed of Jacob, God is himself in his word to make it effectual. David, in Psalms xxvii. 8, testifies to the power of God's word in its application to him: "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek." For David was one of the seed of Jacob to whom the words were not spoken in vain, and as it was in the case of David, so shall it be with all the seed of Jacob, even every one of them, for God, who cannot lie, has sworn it. They shall hear his voice, and they that hear shall live. "My sheep [says the good Shepherd] hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Men, even mighty men, kings and potentates of the earth, may fail to make their words effectual, but God says, I the Lord speak righteousness; I declare things that are right. Should God be disappointed in the effect of his word in the accomplishment of his designs, that would not be speaking in righteousness, for there would be a failure, something wrong. When he said, "Let there be light," if light had not come forth at his bidding there would have been a failure; but when he said, "Let there be light," and when he said to the seed of Jacob, "Seek ye me," instead of uttering an invitation, or an uncertain mandate, he called the words so uttered a declaration. "I declare things that are right," and so the sequel shall show, for not one of the seed of Jacob, which for multitude is like the sands of the seashore, shall fail to respond as did David, Thy face, Lord, will I seek. Let the children but know that the mouth of the Lord hath spoken and they can live on every word that proceedeth out of his mouth, for the word of our God endureth forever.

"He looks, and ten thousands of angels rejoice,
And myriads wait for his word;
He speaks, and eternity filled with his voice,
Reechoes the praise of her Lord."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., July 15, 1865.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

BROTHER Geo. L. Weaver has changed his address from Galion, Ohio, to 332 Park St., West, Mansfield, Ohio.

BROTHER L. D. Hoskins wishes to announce through the SIGNS that he has changed his address from Fowlerton, Texas, to Colorado Springs, Colo., care of Star Ranch.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Martha Randolph, our dear sister, died at her home near Macomb, Ill., June 24th, 1912, aged 51 years, 3 months and 12 days. She was the daughter of Elder I. N. and Lucinda Vanmeter, and granddaughter of David Lawson, of Kentucky, and was born in Illinois, near the place of her death. She was married to J. M. Randolph, Dec. 31st, 1897, and moved to the farm where she spent the remainder of her life. She was the mother of four sons: Howard, Raymond, Lawson and Gailard. For years she was the very picture of health, with a lively, cheerful disposition, but about two years ago that most deadly of all diseases, sarcoma cancer, made its appearance, and in a few months an operation was thought to be necessary. Shortly afterward the disease returned in an aggravated form, and she rapidly grew worse until the end. Her sufferings were very great, and there was no relief day or night, except while under the influence of opiates, which kept her in such a condition that she talked but little of death, but before she became so bad she told our brother that if it was the Lord's will for her to die it must be all right, and she often prayed for the Lord to give her strength and grace to bear her sufferings, and called on others to pray that she be submissive. She was baptized in the fellowship of old New Hope Church, at Greenbush, Ill., with our other two sisters, Mary and Susie, in 1889, by Elder B. F. Querry. This is the church where our father and mother and myself have had our membership, and where our father was the pastor for thirty-seven years. Sister "Mattie" was a consistent and devoted member for twenty-two years; salvation by grace alone was all her hope, having no confidence in the works of the flesh, and being a good singer, she delighted in the old songs of Zion, which we often sang together while tears filled her eyes. Many times had she talked of precious seasons spent with the dear saints at our associations, and how loth she was to part with the dear loved ones. She was a true and faithful wife, a loving and devoted mother, a kind and obliging neighbor, and, above all, a meek and humble christian, loved by all who knew her, and is sadly missed by her husband and little children. Beside these she leaves many relatives to mourn, especially our dear mother in her ninety-second year, who was able to be with her at the last, and helped to smooth her dying pillow.

Elder L. E. Frazee preached a comforting discourse from the words of Job: "If a man die, shall he live again?" and the hymns, "Jesus, lover of my soul," "O sing to me of heaven," and "Sister, thou wast mild and lovely," were sung, after which her remains were laid away in Oakwood Cemetery, at Macomb.

Though we sorely miss our dear, precious sister, we mourn not as those who have no hope, for we do firmly believe that while her body returns to the earth as it was, her spirit returns to God who gave it, and is now dwelling with the saints in light in the paradise of God, and when he shall come again with all his saints he shall raise the blessed dead, and the body which was sown in corruption shall be raised in incorruption; sown in weakness, shall be raised in power, and fashioned like unto the glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ, and shall dwell with the redeemed forever and ever. This is our hope and faith, dear kindred. May we comfort one another with these precious truths and humbly say, "Thy will be done."

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

It is with feelings of deepest sorrow that we are called upon to record the death of **Mrs. Margaret McColl,** widow of John S. McColl, who passed away Sunday, Oct. 15th, 1911, at the family residence, 163 Duchess Ave., London, after a lingering illness. Deceased, whose maiden name was Margaret McTaggart, was born in the township of Ekfrid Feb. 3rd, 1850, continuing to reside there after her marriage until three years ago, when she moved with her family to London. She was the eldest daughter of Lachlan and Mary McTaggart, and, like them, was a firm believer and a member of the Covenanted Baptist Church. Throughout her illness the natural brightness of her disposition was ever manifest, helping her to say with christian fortitude, Thy will, O Lord, not mine, be done. For many months she realized that her days were numbered, although able to be about the house the greater part of the time until Friday preceding the call, which came in perfect peace. She was conscious almost to the last, quoting among other words of sweetest resignation, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil."

On Wednesday, Oct. 18th, a short funeral service was conducted by Mr. Henderson at her late home, and the remains were conveyed by G. T. R. to Appin, where the service was continued in the meetinghouse, interment being made in the family plot at Eddie's Cemetery. A large concourse of sympathizing friends were present to pay a last tribute to one beloved by all.

She leaves to mourn their loss a son and daughter, Duncan T. and Mary Edna, both at home; also one sister, Mrs. N. A. Galbraith, and four brothers, Donald, Angus, John and Lachlan, all of Ekfrid. Her husband predeceased her fourteen years. The late Mrs. Gilbert McLean was also a sister.

[The above obituary was forwarded to us by Elder Chick during his recent visit in Canada. It was taken from one of the local papers published in London, Ont., and speaks none too highly of our dear sister McColl. She was more to her children and the

church than words can express, and will always be greatly missed. It was our privilege to baptize her in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, and also to visit her during her long illness. She was cheerful in disposition, and bravely endured affliction, being wonderfully sustained by "the everlasting arms," and quietly passed away in hope of the glory of God. We were sent for to conduct the funeral service, but much to our sorrow it was impossible to be present. To the children and church may grace, mercy and peace be multiplied.—K.]

Mrs. Rosanna K. Badger, of Whitefield, Maine, departed this life Feb. 2nd, 1912, aged 78 years. She united with the church at Whitefield, and was baptized by Elder Hiram Campbell June 27th, 1875. In the year 1876 she was married to Elder John Badger, who died Dec. 11th, 1877. For a number of years, through ill health, our sister was but seldom able to assemble with the church, but she ever manifested a warm attachment to the doctrine of God our Savior, and to those who feared the Lord, and showed by her conversation when she was at any of the meetings of the church that she esteemed it a great privilege to once more meet with them in the worship of God. FREDERICK W. KEENE.

A SEVERE stroke from the hand of divine Providence has fallen upon the family of our dear sister Emma Craig and her husband, Mr. George W. Craig, in the unexpected death of their only child, **George F. Craig,** at their home in Loudoun County, Va., July 19th, 1912, aged about 39 years. A man in the prime of vigorous manhood, cut down by that fell destroyer, typhoid fever. He was stricken with the disease about three weeks before his death; it was thought to be in a mild form, nor was he considered in any particular danger until a few days before the end, then symptoms developed which caused the family to call in a specialist from a hospital in Washington, who, after consultation with other doctors, decided on an operation. They found their worst fears realized, and he quietly passed away twenty-four hours afterward. Mr. Craig made his home with his parents on a farm in Loudoun County all his life. He married Miss Nena Chamblin several years ago, a very interesting and lovable woman, who bore him two boys, the elder is nine years and the younger three years old. He had been the hope of his parents as old age crept upon them, as well as of wife and children—a prop and stay suddenly removed. His business relations for a number of years had brought him in contact with a large community in Loudoun, Fauquier and Prince William counties, by whom he was esteemed as a man of sterling integrity and unblemished character. He possessed a lovely disposition, and his associates in business say that to know him was to love him. He made no public profession of religion, but was a regular attendant at the meetings of Mt. Zion Church, where his mother's membership is, and took a deep interest in the ministrations of the church and in her welfare. By an intimate acquaintance with Mr. Craig extending over thirty years I feel assured he had an abiding interest in divine things, a love for the truth and those who love the truth, which is found only in those hearts touched by almighty grace. He was a dutiful and ever faithful son, a most faithful and devoted husband, and among men he was esteemed as one of nature's noblemen.

May God sustain the young widow under the crushing blow, be a Father to her children and comfort the stricken parents as he alone can comfort.

J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., Aug. 11, 1912.

MEETINGS.

THE Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will hold their fifty-eighth annual session with Providence Church, near Plano, Appanoose Co., Iowa, beginning Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1912, and continuing three days (August 28th, 29th and 30th). We extend an invitation to all, and a special invitation to those of our faith and order.

ISAAC CAPPS, Moderator.
H. C. CATE, Clerk.

THE Maine Conference will assemble, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist Church at North Berwick, York Co., Maine, on August 30th, 31st and Sept. 1st, 1912. We shall gladly welcome any who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity to assemble with us. FREDERICK W. KEENE.

THE Lord willing, the Maine Old School Baptist Association will convene with the South Gardiner Church, at South Gardiner, Maine, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 6th, 7th and 8th, 1912. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren. GEO. R. TEDFORD.

THE Lord willing, the Clovesville Old School Baptist Church will hold their yearly meeting the first Saturday and Sunday in September (7th and 8th), 1912. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus to meet with us, especially brethren of the ministry of our faith and order. Trains will be met at Fleischmanns station Saturday, the day of the meeting.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Licking Association of Primitive Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, with Goshen Church, Anderson Co., Ky., on Friday, Sept. 13th, 1912, and continue three days. Those coming via Lexington

or Louisville will buy tickets over the Louisville Southern to McBrayer, where they will be met Thursday at 6:40 p. m. and 10:10 Friday a. m. All friends and lovers of gospel truth are cordially invited. We hope to have a refreshing season from the Lord.

By order of the church. P. W. SAWIN.

THE Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Second Church of Roxbury, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday following the the third Sunday in September, (18th and 19th), 1912, commencing at 10:30 a. m. on Wednesday. We heartily invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Come one and all, our homes and our hearts are open to receive you. Those coming via Kingston will stop at Halcottville, and those via Oneonta will stop at Roxbury. Trains will be met Tuesday p. m. at each place.

J. B. SLAUSON.

A YEARLY meeting will be held at Jefferson, Schoharie Co., N. Y., the third Saturday and Sunday in September. There will be teams to meet all who can come on Friday noon train. Will be glad to see all friends and those who love the truth.

D. C. HIX, Clerk.

THE Ebenezer Church in Baltimore, Md., will hold an all day meeting Sept. 29th (fifth Sunday). All who would like to meet with us are cordially invited to do so. We expect Elder B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., to be present.

ALVIS S. ROWE, Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Lexington Church, Lexington, Greene Co., N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (2nd and 3rd) 1912.

FLETCHER MACKEY, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Fairview Church, at Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa., beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1912, and continuing three days. Those coming by rail must come on Thursday before the meeting, via Western Maryland or Baltimore & Ohio Railroads to Hancock, Md., and are requested to notify beforehand Dennis Mellott, Plum Run, Pa., or J. C. Mellott, Needmore, Pa., so that teams will be sure to be on hand to meet all who desire to come, as the place of meeting is a long drive from the railroad. All who love the truth as it is in Jesus, both friends and brethren, are affectionately invited to meet with us.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting will meet, the Lord willing, with the New Valley Church, eight miles from Leesburg, Loudoun Co., Va., on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1912, and continue three days. Trains will be met at Leesburg on Tuesday before the meeting, and all visitors taken care of and conveyed to the place of meeting. Trains for Leesburg do not leave the union station, Washington, D. C., as formerly, the present terminal being at Thirty-sixth and M Sts., Georgetown D. C. The process of replacing steam with electricity is now going on, which makes the schedule very uncertain, but those coming to the meeting via Washington from the north, east or south will take green electric car marked Georgetown, outside union station, and go to the end of the line, where they will transfer to the cars of the Washington & Old Dominion Ry., which will bring them to Leesburg. Trains now leave Georgetown at 1:40, 4:15, 5:15 and 6:40 p. m., but this is subject to change at any time. Those coming from the south, via Southern Railway, would do well to change cars at Alexandria for Leesburg, and not go into Washington. Those coming from the west, via B. & O., will be met at Washington Junction, Md., five miles from place of meeting, if they will notify the writer at Leesburg, Va., beforehand. Ministering and other brethren of our faith and order and all lovers of the truth are cordially invited to be with us.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

THE Albany and Troy Church will meet the fourth Sunday in each month at No. 2 Second St., Monument Square, Troy, N. Y.

J. B. SLAUSON, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 80. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1912. NO. 18.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SONG OF SOLOMON IV. 16.

"AWAKE, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits."

Not many days since it was my happy privilege to listen to a sweet sermon from the above beautiful text by one of the servants of Zion's King, and the text and some of the things said, and other things in the connection not said, have since from time to time been lingering in my mind, and to-day, as I am confined to the house on account of rainy weather, I am minded to write of a few of these things, if the Lord will, and send them to you, brethren editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to dispose of as you may see fit. I hope I fully realize that I am dealing with beautifully solemn things—spiritual things, which the "natural man receiveth not;" that I am a poor weakling, and if anything spiritually profitable comes of my effort to myself or any one else, it must be the result of the light and guidance of the Holy Spirit. I think this may be truly said of all our efforts.

The above quotation from that beautifully sublime "song of songs which is Solomon's," is expressive in a measure of the Lord's dealings with his chosen and redeemed people; it is one of many figures of speech expressive of their relationship and attitude toward him, and of his toward them. These people collectively are the garden, for says the Lord, "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse." Individually each one, though a part in the (collective) garden, is to the Lord a garden, hence "a fountain of gardens." This wonderful garden, which is the Lord's, is securely and safely inclosed, as a city walled around. "Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks."

"Fenced with Jehovah's shalls and wills,
Firm as the everlasting hills."

No depredating beast, wild or domestic, can prey upon its tender trees, vines or other plants to their permanent hurt, for these trees, vines and every plant the Lord has planted in his garden represent his children, and "every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up," says Jesus. "For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," says Paul. This is the Lord's garden, he is the husbandman. He who holds the

winds in his fists certainly commands and controls every kind of wind. He who holds "the keys of hell and death" has fixed the rolling seasons of the year, has planted and fenced this garden, has inclosed this fountain of gardens, has sealed this fountain, has shut up this spring, and the Lord shuts and none can open, he opens and none can shut. The owner, the husbandman, is the sovereign Ruler of the universe, "King of kings and Lord of lords." Let us not doubt for a moment that he knew perfectly well how to prepare for the protection and safety of his garden, that each plant should in due time bring the designed and expected revenue. He who prepared and planted his garden for nuts and other fruits, spices and perfumes, will not be disappointed. When that condition of things comes about with the church (the garden of the Lord), most fitly symbolized by the cold, blasting winds of winter, or the depredations upon a beautiful flourishing garden of ravaging, devouring beasts, we are often fearful and discouraged, and fear that all is coming to desolation. We are forgetful in the bitterness of the freezing wintry winds that all this is necessary for the destruction of noxious weeds and ravaging insects. The wheat in the field will remain green all winter if it gets sufficient root before the first freeze, while most other plants that come up among it will be killed by the severe cold of the winter. Also the wheat is held in check by the cold until the proper time comes for it to run up and form the heads. When the necessary effects of the winter are accomplished the springtime is sure to follow, the filling of each plant with sap, the germinating and springing forth of those plants that come from the seed in early springtime, the formation and growth of those fruits that develop with the succeeding summer and ripen with the following autumn. When the winter is over and the beautiful springtime is upon us we are apt to become forgetful of the bitterness of the winter past for the joy of the springtime, but we are aware that the winter will come again, for there must be a continual repetition of the seasons. The Lord said to Noah after the flood: "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." Nor does the cold, freezing wintry winds destroy the seeds of the noxious weeds and ravaging insects, for they come again and grow and flourish during the warm seasons. All this seems to be according to the covenant of God with Noah and his sons: and "every living creature," as a token of which covenant God set his bow in the cloud. (See Gen. ix.) After the first freeze of winter it seems as though all the useless, troublesome vegetation and all the devouring insects, the snakes, frogs and lizards, are gone, and they are gone for a time, but they may be found imbedded in the earth, awaiting the return of the warm season. As He who gathers "the wind in his fists" commands at his pleasure the literal north and south winds, and no other can cause them to come, nor withhold, so he holds and commands the spiritual winds that blow upon his garden. There is a time for the cold, bleak, wintry season, and God says, "Awake, O north wind," and there comes that which humbles pride, that noxious weed that would be so hurtful in the garden of the Lord did not the wise Husbandman hold it in check; all fleshly aspirations and ambition, vanity, from which spring envy and strife, mutterings, bickerings and

backbitings, and various other evils that answer to the noxious plants and ravaging insects in nature's garden. I am sometimes wondering in mind as the question arises, Am I mistaken in the thought that almost universally the garden of the Lord, the church of God, which is the ground and pillar of the truth, is experiencing a wintry season even now because of the words, "Awake, O north wind; and blow upon my garden"? Or is it just this little garden with which I have most to do and am best acquainted? I know I often feel so cold and barren there seems to be no fruit in which the Lord could take pleasure. I would but cannot command or turn the cold, wintry winds from their courses. The Lord has blessed me, however, with a house, a retreat from the cold winds, where I can sit or lie comfortably for a little while, but then I must necessarily be out about business a good portion of the time, and then it is the cold hurts most. I look back at seasons past and see a time when the garden flourished, "every plant looked gay and green." I had but little need to retire to the house except at meals and times to sleep; there was great pleasure in outdoor business and perfect comfort and safety, and often exceeding pleasure walking among the various plants of the garden and inhaling the sweet perfumes of the beautiful flowers and eating the pleasant fruits. Sometimes when I look back to seasons of years gone by, in the parts where my lot has been cast, I think of the interest brethren and sisters of the church had in each other, and the different local churches manifested in the welfare of each other, how they often visited each other and loved the associations of each other and often conversed on things pertaining to the heavenly kingdom and loved to engage in singing songs of devotion wherever they came together, I am made to adopt the language of the poet Newton:

"Surely once thy garden flourished,
Every plant looked gay and green;
Then thy word our spirits nourished,
Happy seasons we have seen.
But a drouth has since succeeded,
And a sad decline we see;
Lord, thy help is greatly needed,
Help can only come from thee."

But thanks be to God, he commands the north wind, also commands the south, and the south is sure to come in due time. When the church grows strong numerically and gets to be a power for influence in the country, there is inducement for ambitious men in her midst; there is some inducement for the learned, talented and aspiring, and hence the development of aspiring, ambitious leaders. These things have generally developed in times we call prosperity. Both Peter and Jude, as well as others, spoke of these things. Peter says: "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them. * * * And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not." Jude says: "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." Are not such comparable to noxious weeds, depredating animals and everything hurtful in the garden of the Lord? and could

you suppose for a moment that they could come up and grow and flourish in the cold winter season? "The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Wherefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." But the tree of the Lord's planting "shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." This is Jesus first, but also includes every member of his body, for he is the Vine, the true Vine, and they are the branches. A sufficiency is provided for them in him, "that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." When first the poor sinner is made to taste "the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come," he is apt to feel that even the very seeds of evil are all destroyed and he will never think or do evil again, but he soon learns that all the evil tendencies of his old nature are still lurking within. This is also true of a church in a measure. We have seen them, as it were, rejoicing in the beautiful springtime, when God had commanded the gentle, refreshing south wind, when all was love and peace and joy. There were no visible signs of evil, but afterwards was developed the fact that the seeds of evil were lurking somewhere. When a serpent or a wasp and other biting and stinging things retire to their retreat for the winter they become numb and inactive, they cannot bite and sting, but if they can get the advantage of heat for a little while they soon revive, and bite and sting as formerly. Were it not God's garden that he has chosen and walled around, and otherwise provides for and prepares and keeps, adapting the seasons to it, and it to the seasons, the weeds and other hurtful things might crowd out and destroy some of the plants the Lord has planted, but only the plants which the Lord has not planted shall be plucked up. The "trees of the Lord's planting" are somewhat like the evergreen, the cedar for instance; though they bear not fruit in the winter they remain green, and when the snow and sleet melt from off the green foliage they seem the more beautifully green, and stand in striking contrast to the other trees around, whose leaves have shed and blown away before the cold blasts of winter.

I must now close; I know that I have but barely touched the subject, and much might be said about the different plants in the Lord's garden—their nature, their fruits, &c., and more might be said of the different kinds of winds, but suffice it for the present to say, The Lord is sovereign and commands them all, to the end "that the spices thereof may flow out," and that the bride may say, "Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits."

H. B. JONES.

WINNSBORO, Texas, August, 1912.

RATCLIFF, Ky., June 24, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—For many months my mind has been much exercised on Acts iv. 12, which sets forth the glorious truth that there is but one true Christ and Savior. The text reads: "For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." The expression, under heaven, or among men, undoubtedly not only refers to our eternal abiding-place in the heaven of eternal glory, but also to our salvation in this present time; that Jesus is not

only our Savior in bringing us from death in trespasses and sins to a state of spiritual life, but that even after being born of God, Jesus continues to be now, in this present time, the only name in which is salvation, and when men fail to present the connections of texts so that they shall teach that he is the only name whereby we must be saved in time, as well as in eternity, they certainly pervert the truth and do violence to the name of Jesus, our only hope and Savior. To say we have more than one Savior is to teach a plurality of names whereby we must be saved, and would contradict the text above quoted and destroy the Bible as the witness of our blessed Jesus and only Savior. If the old covenant, as some contend, contained an offer of salvation upon conditions unto Israel, so they could receive those offered blessings through obedience and good works, then by reading the history of their rebellion and God's wonderful dealings with them, we must also conclude that they of themselves never obeyed, and therefore never in a single instance obtained the blessings of life by the performance of the conditions. But we learn that God did, for his own name's sake, and for his own glory, with a strong arm bring them back. It was God who took away their stony hearts and gave them hearts of flesh. Thus he prepared their hearts, hence did they inquire of him to do this thing unto them. (Ezekiel xxxvi. 25–38.) Thus we learn that the salvation of national Israel, including all their temporal blessings, was by grace or mercy (and not by their own works), just as it is with us. If during the past thirty years I have not searched in vain to know the truth, this is the true doctrine of the Bible. To disconnect Scriptures from their connection we form erroneous conclusions; for instance, if we quote, "Save yourselves," "Choose you this day whom ye will serve," "Work out your own salvation," and fail to present the connection in each text, we would be guilty of perverting the Scriptures. To do this, as many have and yet do, would be to teach we could choose our own God and save ourselves, and to apply this to each individual in this way would result in the conclusion that there were as many names under heaven given among men whereby we might be saved, as there are persons to be saved; but in regarding the connection, as in the twenty-fourth chapter of Joshua, we find it was not given to Israel to choose between the Lord and those other gods, but the gods their fathers served, that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land they were. Those gods were all idols, no difference between them; they to whom it seemed evil to serve the Lord could choose between them. But not so with Joshua and his house, for they were the chosen servants of the Lord, hence he could say, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Those beloved and obedient did and do work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, "for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure," which they already possess. The subjects of Peter's address were those who were, and are, pricked in the heart, and said, Men and brethren, what shall we do? There certainly was and is a superhuman power within them, teaching them that there was and is something that they shall do. Peter, speaking as the Holy Ghost gave him utterance, and not of his volition or option, told them what they should do: repent and be baptized. We know repentance is the gift of God; Jesus is exalted to give repentance unto Israel,

and it is the goodness of God that leads us to repentance. "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Baptism is the gift of God, and is from heaven, as was John's. It seems to me that as repentance and baptism both pertain to life and salvation, both were included in this text. In 2 Peter iii. we read: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." We therefore see while Peter used many words, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation (this wicked and perverse generation), they that gladly received his word were baptized. Thus to repent and be baptized were given them by divine power, and could not come in any other way. We cannot suppose that this work could have been done otherwise, unless we can suppose they could have done differently from what he said they should do, and this would be to suppose that the purpose of God failed in giving those things that pertain to life and godliness, and to admit this would be to say the Lord is slack concerning his promise. We must also notice the reason why they shall repent and be baptized is because the promise is unto you, &c. Thus while by the Holy Ghost we do labor and save ourselves from this untoward generation, it is not, after all, we that labor, but the grace of God which is with us, according to Paul's testimony. Hence Peter could say, I made them obedient by word and deed, yet not I, but the grace of God; for like Paul he could say, I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me to make the Gentiles obedient by word and deed. (Romans xv. 18.) This is in perfect harmony with 2 Peter i. 3; it was therefore the Lord who added, and who still adds, to his church daily of such as should be saved. Thus it pleases God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe; we therefore take heed to ourselves and to the doctrine, and in so doing we both save ourselves and them that hear us; yet in speaking experimentally concerning ourselves, even after we are born again, we will say, "I am carnal, sold under sin." "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing. I do that which I allow not, and what I would not, that I do. O wretched man that I am! I am the chief of sinners; I am less than the least of all saints; I have no confidence in the flesh. Dear kindred, this is my experience. When taking heed unto ourselves God is leading us to thus take heed; it is his sovereign grace saving us from presumptuous sins and causing us to continue in the apostles' doctrine. Sin hath reigned unto death, even so grace now reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord; therefore our sufficiency is of God, and we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be of God, and not of us. We can say, "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place." By this text we see that Paul was by the work of God a savor (not a savior). Many believe that baptism actually saves, and indeed, without the connection of the Scriptures being considered, it would seem so. Peter referred to Noah being saved by water; it was the Lord who shut Noah in the ark. As God saved Noah by water, even so it is he

who shuts the righteous in the church now and saves them. Baptism is a figure of the salvation of God's children by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. When the jailer asked, What must I do to be saved? he did not have reference to the prosecution of the governor nor the danger of the earthquake. The governor had only required him to keep the prisoners, and Paul had told him they were all there, and the governor would not hold him responsible for the earthquake. It was therefore with him as it was with us when God made known his marvelous power; we also thought we must do something to be saved. The Spirit of God in Paul testified in him then as it does in us now: Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, thus teaching it is Christ who saves us. If it be said believing is a condition upon which salvation is obtained, I reply that believing in Jesus is the work of God in us. (Eph. i. 19, 20.) The jailer knew Paul had been cast into prison for preaching Jesus, and Paul simply preached unto him that Jesus is the only Savior and the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Those who oppose the doctrine of salvation by grace say: Suppose we do not obey, or do not believe, or suppose those on the day of Pentecost had not repented, would they have received the gift of the Holy Ghost? It is enough for us to know they did repent and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. According to the testimony, some received the Holy Ghost before, and some after they were baptized with water, yet we have no right to suppose how it would have been if it had not been just as it was with them, or with us either. So all honor, glory and praise in our salvation belong unto the Lord, for salvation belongeth unto the Lord and is of him. To him be all the honor, power and glory forever and ever. Amen.

I ask your judgment on this, and do with it as you think best. I hope that love for the truth has prompted me to write. May the blessed Lord enable us to trust, to look and believe in the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Jesus is our only Savior, and he being eternal, we cannot have any temporal or perishable Savior.

With love to all the household of faith, I am unworthily your brother,

JOHN E. THORNBURY.

TILBURY, Ontario.

BROTHER KER:—I have some letters I am sending to you which, with your consent and approval, I would like to see in the SIGNS. One is from brother Scates and the other two are from sister Pultz. Brother Scates sent me sister Pultz's first one in with one of his own. I enjoyed reading it so much I wrote to him to know if I might send it for publication. He wrote me in reply that I might as far as he was concerned, but to ask sister Pultz. I did so, and have her consent, as you will see.

I will close with love to all.

SARAH A. McCOLL.

WOODSTOCK, Ont., July 14, 1912.

MRS. SARAH ANN McCOLL—DEAR SISTER, WHOM I HOPE I LOVE FOR THE TRUTH'S SAKE:—Your letter was received a few days ago, and read with interest and satisfaction, and you request me to write soon, and ask for the liberty to forward sister Florence Pultz's letter to the SIGNS for publication. As far as I am concerned you have my consent, but sister Pultz is really the one to be consulted. It might be that she would not care to see it in print, but you can write her if you wish, or if you see fit to

send it without asking her consent you must take the blame, if there is any, and I hope it will be agreeable and profitable to all. Dear sister, I must tell you of a little comfort I got last Sunday, and it has been a help and strength to me since, for I had gotten where I felt it impossible for me to hope any longer that I had an interest in the kingdom of God or in the salvation of Jesus. I read these words: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." The tears came to my eyes, my heart softened and I felt, If this is the test I can hope yet, for I felt I loved those who love our Lord Jesus Christ. I do not know that I could say I show it, but I felt that when any came to me telling how great sinners they were, or when I heard any tell how poor, how helpless and sinful they were, there was a feeling went out to them that I cannot express. I want to take their hand and say, You are my companion, my fellow-pilgrim. I think I felt and knew what Paul speaks of in the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians: Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and give all my goods to feed the poor, &c., I am nothing without charity, the love of God. I may be a poor, miserable outcast, unfit even for the society of those called good, but if I have the love of God in the heart (and it will be shown by loving his children), then I am inclosed in the covenant of grace, and will certainly be gathered with the wheat into the garner. You know the wheat may grow up with weeds and trash, but it never turns to weeds. I am tempted, tried, forsaken of God, and am full of doubts, full of infidelity, full of evil thoughts, afraid there is no reality in religion at all, and am as bad as it is possible for one to be, yet I know I love to hear one tell of the riches of sovereign grace, and if there is one thing more than another I love it is to have one come to the church telling how sinful and vile they are, yet hoping God has had mercy on them, and they love God's people and the doctrine they hold and want to unite with them and be one of the family. It certainly is good and sweet, and there are many, I believe, desire this, but the briers and thorns have grown up with the wheat and choked it. Pride, fashion and society are ashamed to be numbered with the poor, despised people. I think I know, for I have been there, and until God's power is manifested they will remain there. I know some who say they feel unworthy, but if they could only probe their own hearts they would find it is the love of the world, its allurements and pleasures and vanities. Dear sister, I feel it to be a time when all the powers of earth and hell are combining against the church of God, not by persecution, but something more effective. I feel it myself, I am cold, careless, worldly, indifferent, anything but what a child of God should be, and there is only one consolation to give me hope: I know it, and I hope mourn over it, but God only can deliver me.

I read sister Morningstar's letter in the SIGNS with much interest. We are both well and send kind love to you all.

Unworthily your brother,

R. SCATES.

WHEELING, W. Va., June 11, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER SCATES:—I have read your good letter in the June 1st number of the SIGNS. The fact that it had been sent by my dear sister McKinney made me feel that in some way I had a share in it. The desire came to write to you when I had finished reading it, but my mind is so confused that as soon as I had

laid the SIGNS by it left my mind, but this evening I was reminded of it again; I got the SIGNS and read part of it over, and now, as I am all alone, I will try (if the dear Lord permit) to tell you what is given me to say. First of all, when I first read your writings I thought that you were a preacher. I have been in a very dull and uncertain state for a long time; my mind does not retain a thought any length of time; I usually only get flitting glimpses of things, so this matter had passed from my mind, but again I am reminded. This last letter of yours is as good a sermon as I have ever read, and now I feel a desire to hear your voice. In connection with this the feeling came with more strength of mind than I have felt lately that you can comfort the children of God. What you say under the head of January 5th about being in darkness, this very felt darkness, caused you to bring a precious promise to view. Who is among you that feareth the Lord? &c. Then you inquire if she ever gets where it all seems dark, no light at all, all confusion, trouble and sorrow. Dear brother, this is my condition at present, and has been much of the time of late. I am sure that I never felt so entirely at my wits' end in all my life. I am entirely bereft of all strength to work, or even to think, yet in this fog there seems to be sunshine somewhere; in the midst of this dimness there is a certainty. I am cast down, but not destroyed, at least my hope is not destroyed. I have a feeling that I am standing still. I hope to see the salvation of the Lord soon, or in his own good time. I have lately found consolation in thinking of the dry bones, they were very dry, and they were the whole house of Israel. If we could fully realize that we are nothing, and that God is all and in all; if we could only think of ourselves as the clay in his dear hands; if we could only be still and know that he is God; beside him there is no Savior. I have come to prize the privilege of crying to him. I am glad when I find my soul turning to him (at times) in an agony of entreaty. This is as much as I dare ask: O that he will give me the spirit of supplication. How many times I have been reminded that he alone can do helpless sinners good. I have felt comfort in the thought that he will be merciful to our unrighteousness, and our sins and iniquities he will remember against us no more forever. Dear brother, I cannot doubt his words, nor can I doubt his works, as he once said to believe in or on him for the very works sake. You know and I know that he has performed a work in us. I am sure you will never deny his work in you. I never can doubt his works for one little moment, unless he should destroy my faith. He is not divided against himself, therefore he will never destroy his own works; also he hateth putting away. He does cause us to know how frail we are. I have prayed to know this, and surely my prayer has been answered. I feel to be so bereft of all power in both temporal and spiritual life that I feel that I have come to the end of all things. All the time as I write, these lines are repeating in my mind:

> Weak in herself, she fears
> The battle's horrid din;
> Yet more than conqueror she appears
> O'er Satan, hell and sin.

There is comfort in the thought that we are restrained from unlawful sins in all our darkness; the hatred of all worldliness seems to manifest itself more and more. I look about me with a feeling of disgust for all the affectation and pride of life and lust of the eyes, the fashion and show. How very sickening it is to

our souls, and in some way we see ourselves as a part of it. For "such were some of you." In very truth I can plainly discern that in the midst of this darkness that can be felt we are being taught:

"How vain are all things here below!
How false, and yet how fair!
Each pleasure hath its poison, too,
And every sweet a snare."

I hope we are being weaned from all earthly pleasures; we are brought so low that we cannot take pleasure in any earthly thing, not even our children or grandchildren. I always dread what they will encounter in this evil world, which is surely waxing worse and worse every day, and yet this place abounds with people who think they are taking the world for Christ. Dear brother, as I write of this I can feel the scorn and contempt creeping into my face and heart; truly I cannot help it. I heard one of our ministers once in a sermon bring out these words in a way that made me smile for joy. He said very impressively, "The children of God know something." I do pray God that it is his own Holy Spirit that causes them to know that he is God, and beside him there is no Savior, and that salvation is of the Lord. Our God has all power in heaven and in earth. I remembered that there was a people that should call his name, The Lord our righteousness. I know of no other people on the face of the earth who can claim this. I think it is ours by the right of inheritance. Am I wrong? if so tell me. I am sure we did not merit it. We were bought with a price, and we are not our own.

I must close for to-night.

June 12.—I had not intended to write a long letter, as this is my first to my unseen brother in tribulation and patience of the saints. In connection with this I think of one of Mr. Hart's hymns; he speaks of talking with Him one never sees. Peter speaks of something to the same effect, about loving our Savior, although never having seen him. I do know that there are no other people on the face of the earth who love each other as the Old School Baptists do. How strong and secure we feel in this love, and how it melts our hearts and causes our tears to flow. I like to think of being bound closely together in the bundle of life. This is a sheaf of the Lord's gathering; it is nourished and ripened in the sunshine of his love, but it has to be threshed out; the deeper the grain is imbedded in the husks the harder the stroke must be to separate it. I think this is the process we are daily undergoing. This causes us to groan and earnestly desire to be clothed upon with our heavenly house. I am sure I need more threshing out than most people; my old body is sore broken because of sin. I am willing for the separating time, yea, I often long for it. The only inducement I have to live here is my love for the dear saints. I have a feeling that I want to have their company awhile longer, and if it be the will of God I would that we might all be gathered at the same time, that we might meet our Savior in the clouds and be forever with the Lord. Dear brother, what you said about yourself and wife bowing in the attitude of prayer struck a tender cord in my heart, my tears fell as I pictured that humble scene in my mind. Your niece (Mrs. Young) and I correspond. I love her dearly; in some sort our lives are cast in the same mold. Give my love to your wife, and tell her that I feel so glad she has a praying husband. Write if you feel disposed that way.

Your unworthy and sorrowful sister,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

WHEELING, W. Va., July 19, 1912.

MRS. SARAH MCCOLL—MY DEAR NEW-FOUND SISTER:—How glad I was to get your letter. Yes, it was a very pleasant surprise, but as I read your words you did not appear as a stranger to me, and as I went about my work this forenoon many thoughts came in answer to your letter, but now they have fled and left me as an empty vessel. I tried to beg our Lord to speak to your dear heart through me, not that I would desire the praise, but that he will in his boundless mercy use me to his own glory. I feel to be as I have seen little children trying to hide in the folds of the mother's dress, so I would hide in His robe of righteousness, I would touch the hem of his robe and be made whole from my plague of sin; I have been bowed down under it lo these many years. In my heart I seem to feel rather than hear his gracious words: Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace and be whole of thy plague. Dear sister, this wholeness must have been in the curing of the flesh. If we were whole of our sins we would not need our great Physician; it is our sins that cause us to cry after him. How well you know all this, I will not try to speak of these things farther. I see so much in your dear letter that is very interesting to me. Your description of brother Scates is sweet news; not that I expected to hear anything else or to the contrary of what you wrote, but it is so soul-satisfying to hear our Baptist people well spoken of. Their goodness is not of themselves, and the Author of it does not suffer them to claim it. They herein proclaim themselves to be that people who shall call, him, "The Lord our righteousness." How many times in a day I feel to exclaim, "Nothing in my hand I bring." In my utter nothingness I feel to need him more and more every day, and I am brought to love and appreciate his dear children so tenderly as I realize that it is the love of God in them that covers all my sins and permits me to share in their sweet portion. The Lord's portion is his people. If we are his, he is ours; if we love him, we know that he loves us. You speak of dear Elder Durand; I wrote him this morning after reading your letter. My heart was so melted in tender love and grief I could hardly write. I feel so sorry for him; I have seemed to feel in some sense how very precious his noble wife was to him. I can hardly bear to think of what his life will be without her, yet from what I know of him through his writings I know that he will endure patiently and without murmuring. God alone is able to fill the aching void. He held her so precious and so sacred, she was a fit companion for him. I can never describe the high conception I had of her. When he spoke of her in his kind letters I felt that he had conferred a great favor upon me. I have felt at times that I would like to sit at his feet and try to tell him how deeply I feel his loss; then again I am confronted with my unworthiness, and am saying, No, no, this is not for me. Dear sister, is it your son that married his daughter? I have always been interested in his writings in the SIGNS.

Now I have been a long time coming to the request you made concerning the letter I wrote to brother Scates; indeed, it or the contents of it has all passed from my mind; I only remember that I told him how I was exercised to address him. If you think there would be a

crumb in it for any of the flock you are at liberty to use it as you see fit. His letter to me is so good I was thinking it ought to be published. I started to reply to it the same day I received it, but laid it by and have not felt in a fit frame to finish it, and truly I have been much hindered by household cares. The weather has been distressingly hot for the last two weeks, but it grew cooler last evening.

I will draw to a close. No, dear sister, your letter is not amiss. This is a sweet liberty we can take among ourselves. I need you, I feel so thankful to God that I have found you; God has given us to each other in him. We hope it is love that unlocks our hearts to each other. God is love. This is such a sweet thought. To some God is terrible. Dear one, have we the perfect love that casteth out fear? Do we fear his vengeance? I almost hear you say, No, no, not that, but I do fear to grieve his Holy Spirit. This is our fear. We feel that our poor lives would be desolate indeed without his enlivening grace. There is a struggling in my heart for this utterance: I am my Beloved's, and he is mine. I am so blessed in this precious love. Often I feel to say:

"My God, my life, my love,
To thee, to thee I call;
I cannot live if thou remove,
For thou art all in all."

I am so blessed in the home he has provided for me in his many mansions (the hearts of his children), and here you come offering me another home or mansion. I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am there ye may be also. My heart is full, I have wept much to-day; I think I can claim that it is the grief of love. Write again.

Your unworthy sister,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

WAVERLY, Pa., August 6, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find three letters, one from J. A. Morse, one from Laura Ditmar, and one from Geo. Conner. If you have need of them you can publish them if you wish. Love to all the household.

Yours as ever, in the fellowship of the gospel, I hope, D. M. VAIL.

MARGARETVILLE, N. Y., July 15, 1912.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER:—I have been made glad by your letter of the 11th, and although I was sorry for you that you were down again in the valley, I am glad you told me of it. I think you and I have the same complaint: a feeling of vileness, a feeling sense of our own worthlessness, and are companions in tribulation and suffering, a sin-sickness, and this disease cannot be cured while we remain in the flesh, and when we realize this we long to be freed from this body of death. So far we are alike; yes, and in many more ways we are alike, which I need not mention now, but in one thing I surpass you, that is in vileness; in this I have no equal, of this I have not a doubt. Sixty-one years of bitter self-examination has convinced me beyond doubt that I am the chief of sinners, and therefore have the least cause to hope, and yet I do hope. Why do I hope? Because I cannot help it. Many times in my desperation I would have thrown away my hope if I could, but I could not. Like a wife in her sore heart trials sometimes thinks her husband does not love her, so I have accused Jesus of not loving me, but I know he cannot change, and that he knew what I was when he told me he loved me. Yes, when he first loved me (and that was before time began) he knew what I would be, so I have a little hope, but if he is like

Arminians say he is I would have no hope, but thank the Lord he is not. As I was looking out of my window yesterday and saw the people coming from what they call worship, apparently happy, I wondered if they ever felt as I did. I took up the Bible and without thought opened to Joshua xxiv. 15: "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." The thoughts of my mind were, Some likely have no doubt of their final salvation, at least if they hold out faithful; now why not go with them? they would be glad to have you and would do you all the good they could. No; although I like them as friends, I cannot serve their god, for he does not promise salvation, present or future, only on condition of faithfulness, and I cannot accept those terms, for I could not keep them. Did not I try with all the power I had at the first, and have I not been trying ever since? Have I ever succeeded even once? No, never; besides it is not future salvation I want altogether, but present salvation. They only promise salvation from eternal punishment, and that I do not fear, so why go with them? Well, then, why not go back to the god you served before you saw yourself a vile sinner? I cannot. Did I not try that at the time? Have I not tried often since then to throw away the hope I have? Yes, I have, but cannot, so I cannot go with them. As I read along and saw what they promised Joshua I saw what I promised Jesus, and like them I have broken every vow. Like Peter, I promised in one breath and denied in the next. Well, I read on and found in the nineteenth verse these words: "And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the Lord: for he is a holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins." Need I tell you what a situation I was in? I cannot if I try, so I leave you to imagine if you can, but I fear you cannot. Now what am I to do? lie down and die? But I cannot do even that. Is not this "hell"? and you cannot even dip your finger in water to cool my tongue.

Forgive this rambling letter and let me still call you brother.

JOHN A. MORSE.

MIDDLEBURG, N. Y., July 21, 1912.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—ESTEEMED BROTHER:—I have been thinking of you and all at Schoharie to-day. I felt so disappointed that I could not be with you that I wanted to write to you. I had my plans made to drive over this morning, but it was not according to the Lord's will. I feel disappointed when I cannot meet with the church, but why should I murmur when so many who are far better are denied this privilege for many months at a time, and some seldom, if ever, meet with the church? I was thinking this morning that it will not be long at the longest before the whole family of the redeemed shall meet to part no more, to be eternally with their Savior. The one great question with me is, Am I one? I desire to follow Him who is meek and lowly, but I come so far short in every way that I feel any who may read this who are acquainted with me will surely feel it is not in my heart.

I enjoyed our two days meeting very much; I was glad to see you and all the others. I do hope you are feeling much better now. How is sister Vail and all

your family? My heart aches for you, it does seem your trials would crush you. Surely you could not endure them if God did not give you grace and strength. He says if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him, and surely you have suffered. Elder Fenton explained the cross beautifully on Sunday following the two days meeting. I suppose others have written you about the meeting at that time. I hope to go to the meeting Wednesday.

May God give you and all his children grace and strength sufficient to endure all he calls you to pass through, is the desire of the weakest of the flock, if one at all. LAURA DITMAR.

HOPEWELL, N. J., July 18, 1912.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST:—I trust that we have been humbled to His will, and have been made to know that he is God, and that there is no other God before him, and that therefore we cannot worship idols. I want to build upon the Rock Jesus; I want to give him all power in heaven and in earth. Man is but vanity and, as the grass, fades away, but our God is everlasting. I want to thank my heavenly Father that no man has approached me and said, Come to-night, or you will be forever lost. This would be man's work, and the work of the devil, or, as Elder Cole once said, the bottomless pit. I think that the good Lord led me to this bottomless pit and showed me the snare. In other so-called churches I could find no resting-place. I have a brother who is a New School Baptist, and a sister who is a Methodist, and I had a brother who was a New School Baptist minister. I have been often led to speak to them as I am now speaking to you, but they became offended. But I speak of their doctrine. It is not my wish to offend any one, for I believe there are good people to be found in all so-called churches. The Lord knows them, and will call them out. This doctrine is a secret of the Lord, and if I try to tell them this way, the only way I believe, at last I am led to think of His words, "Be still, and know that I am God."

But I have been led far from the things of which I intended writing. You, my dear brother, have had your trials and troubles, the same as myself. You have lost, like myself, dear friends. By this you get very close to me, and I know are a true sympathizer. Some have lost father and mother, and they can truly sympathize with others who have lost the same. Those who have not lost cannot just understand our case. Now Jesus was born in a lowly state, below most of us, then he was raised up the Prince of Peace, and his name shall be called "Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father," and he sits upon his throne. He traveled each step that we take, and he knows each saint's peculiar case, and he knows the remedy for each and every one of his children. He knows how to use the rod, and just the time to apply it. In 2 Cor. i. 4, we read, "Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." Again, "Whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation." The above language is full of beauty and truth. I see something good, but cannot grasp it, throughout all God's book. This has been so the last three years or more. It is something

like a picture on a wall; the face is beautiful, then in a moment the back is turned toward me, and I can only see the back. I go on and try to tell my experience, but cannot get the beginning nor reach the end.

In this letter I started to answer yours, but hardly one word have I answered. So many rambling thoughts come to my mind that before you get it read the hymn will probably come to you, "What I am 'tis hard to know." That is just the way I feel. "I am a stranger here below." This is my case. As I read this hymn this morning tears came to my eyes. It is not always thus, sometimes I am so cold to the truth. I know it is the truth, but the dear Savior is gone, yet he has said, "I will come again," and his coming brings comfort. I am in feeling just like a piece of dry ground, and look like one, all dried up; it looks as though life is all gone. Then comes down the gentle rain, then life is refreshed again, and the plant begins to grow. Our life is safe. The Lord said to Satan, "Spare his life." He will not suffer his children's life to be taken away; no, not one shall be lost, for he has given them eternal life. "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" This lump of clay, myself, is in the hand of the great Potter. When the work commenced, the lump of clay was without form, and I believe that God has taken it up into his own hand, whether it be to honor or dishonor, and will fashion it to his own liking. I hope that I shall see him and be like him. I believe that God has led me thus far, and has brought me down upon bended knee, and has put a few words of thanks in my mouth, and has made me to pray a heartfelt prayer for his mercy, and to say, O Lord, have mercy upon me, a vile sinner. I will speak of one time nearly four years ago. My mother was on her deathbed. I was sitting up in the room with her. She wanted me to speak about God and his ways. I did say a few things, but could speak but little. I went home thinking of the loss of a mother; I could not rest, I was tempest-tossed. Something in a still voice seemed to say, Pray, pray for your mother. I was rebellious, I did not want to pray, I did not know how, but the Lord had spoken his word to me in love, and I obeyed, and got out of bed and fell upon my knees and tried to pray, and if ever I have prayed from the heart that was one time. I returned to my mother's home, she had passed away, but they told me that she had asked for that prayer.

Now I will come to your letter and go over it with you. You are several miles away from me, but I hope that you are near in spirit and in truth. I think that we are very near to one another when writing, or when at work, as I think you were at your writing. You say while the world is in high glee, having what is called a good time, you are at home hoeing corn and potatoes and other truck. I will say you are in a good place, if One other is with you. I have hoed corn and other things, and the time has seemed short, and the work light, while thinking of better things. Often I was thinking of my dear brethren and sisters, and often was traveling back in my experience, and often with tears thinking how kind they have been to me, coming often with outstretched hands. What a look there is upon their faces, and what a mark upon their foreheads. I cannot doubt this when I see it in a brother or sister. Those windows of the soul, the eyes, can we not seem to see the dove of peace coming with an olive branch? And as I am hoeing,

I think of the weeds in my nature sown, which must come out, but the more I fight in my own strength the thicker they grow. The words that were running through your mind with sweetness brought good to me, and I believe them. "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house." I believe that God's people will be abundantly satisfied with all that is stored up for them. We have a little foretaste here sometimes. Our beloved pastors are enabled to give us dainty morsels sometimes; I can testify to this. When I hear my brethren and sisters speak, there is always something for some one, though not always for me. Then along comes another one of God's ministers, giving us a taste of the fatness of the house. Now if this be but a foretaste, what will the fullness be in his house above? "Thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures." One must become thirsty before he can want to drink. One man cannot cause another to be thirsty after spiritual things; that thirst comes first, as I believe, from our God, and in no other way. Then we can drink from the vast river which flows on and on. It is a joy to drink from God's own cup, so cool and refreshing to those who thirst after it. You say, I wish that I could be with you to-day. Well, I can say I wish that you were with me to-day in person, but I hope you are present in spirit. I have given your love to Elder Chick and some of the brethren. I feel like saying with you in closing, I am hoping for a hope, or something, I hardly know what to call it. I trust that you will be able to read this, and that there may be a crumb for you to feed upon. You know that the ravens fed Elijah in the wilderness. Tell me something about these ravens. I have been thinking about the words in Acts ii. 1: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." I hope I have spoken with that one tongue which you also know. I am sure if you were to send this to the world, they would say as did some on that day, "These men are full of new wine." I would like to say something about the new wine, but it is now twelve o'clock and I must close. May the Lord lead you on in his glorious work, and feed you with the fatness of his house.

Yours with love and fellowship,

GEORGE W. CONNER.

FAIRFIELD, Texas, March 3, 1912.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—As I have never written you, I will try to write something of my experience. I was born in Grant Parish, La., Oct. 22nd, 1873, and from a boy of youthful age I believed that God was supreme, and that he was the God of might, and the Bible was always the book of all books to me, and this is so yet. At the age of sixteen I joined the so-called Missionary Church. After I was baptized, the preacher and several others, with myself, went to an old house to dress, and the preacher told me that he wanted me to read my Bible and be good. At the next meeting he asked me if I had read my Bible any. I answered "Yes," but said, "You told me to do something that I cannot do." "Why," said he, "what was that?" I replied, "You told me to be a good boy, and that is something a mortal cannot do." From that time I felt that I had no home and was without God in the world. It seemed to me that if I were to die, hell would be my doom. It seemed that I could see my sins roll up before me like mountains. I tried to roll this off by many evil thoughts of the carnal mind,

and decided that there was none like me or that believed as I did, that man is saved by grace alone. O wretched man that I was! I wanted to die, and yet was afraid to die, for I could see that if I died in that condition, hell was my doom. So to get if possible a little ease of mind I would go to hear the Missionaries and Methodists, and as I would start home I would think, This is all a delusion of the mind, and I will not believe it, but this was the question: Unto whom shall I go? I went on in this way of misery until the year 1899, when I was telling an old friend my trouble, and he said to me, "There are some people up the road a little way who preach that very doctrine." "Well," I said, "I would like to hear them, for I have been troubled lo these many years." I went to hear them, being a stranger. They began to sing, "How firm a foundation," and then the preacher read his text: "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." It semed to me that the kingdom of God was come, and that his glory was shining, and as the preacher talked on it seemed to me the mountains were moved away, and I thought, These are my people, and their God is my God, thanks be to his holy name. I attended their meetings regularly, and it seemed that my burden was gone. One night while I was asleep, the Lord, I thought it was, came and said, Come out of her, my people, and partake not of her sins, and I will receive you. I united with the Old School Baptist Church in 1900, and was baptized by precious aged brother Elder I. W. Bowers.

I will have to close now. Do with this as you see fit. Remember me at the throne of grace.

Unworthily your brother,

J. F. JONES.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, August 12, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The inclosed unfinished letter, written by our dear sister Durand, who has since been taken from us to realize the fullness of her hope, was forwarded to me by our dear pastor, and I think it would be gladly read by many of our brethren.

Affectionately your brother,

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

MY DEAR BROTHER GILBERT:—The fear that I do not love the Lord, his people or his ways has been the greatest trial of my spiritual life. Of late it has seemed I must have some assurance that I do or I cannot hold out. To-night it comes to me this way: Do I hate Him and the way of holiness? I cannot bear to think I do. If we love not our brethren whom we have seen, how can we love God whom we have not seen? says John. I do not always have compassionate tenderness toward every individual, even feel hardness toward some at times. I cannot even discern each individual, and I may mix natural love with spiritual where I do seem to feel love exercised; yet I do seem to feel I have had forgiveness in my heart for those whom I think are loved of the Lord and for his sake. If the spirit is in exercise I can but forgive in any case. I cannot bear to believe I hate holiness and truth, although the flesh murmurs and complains when a sacrifice must be made. It does not seem enough to know that others have said, "If I love, why am I thus?" &c. I want some assurance for both them and myself; the assurance of faith alone will satisfy. I can multiply evidence sufficient to satisfy in another's case, but there must be something personally applied or I cannot rest. I suppose I have

said all this a hundred times before, but out of a present experience I seemed forced to cry, and I have addressed my words to you.

Later. My thoughts travel in various ways as I lead my comparatively solitary life on my balcony. I have thought of the whole race of man as divided into two classes: those who serve God and those who serve him not. From all eternity the limits of each class have been fixed, and from the beginning to the end of time no individual has ever or will ever pass from one class to the other. But there is also an election in the mind of each individual corresponding to the eternal election of the Creator. An individual impartation of the Spirit causes each individual of the favored class at a set time to "leave the hateful ways of sin, turn to the fold and enter in," while without this Spirit each one of the other class chooses to remain in the "hateful ways of sin." No mortal has been or ever will be able to understand why the Lord chose "of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor," but who can dare to deny he has done so? Why the Lord should ever have suffered sin to enter into the world is a secret he has never revealed, nor will he to mortal. How trivial seems the speech of those who talk of God being the author of sin. Sin is the transgression of the law. Only man can sin, he alone could introduce sin. Sometimes it has seemed almost as foolish to follow on to their untenable ground those who say it is impossible that God could have predestinated the evil acts of men, in order to refute their accusations, as it is for them to make them. The Bible is so clear; better exhort men to read their Bibles. All the anxieties of the christian are based on his desire to know to which of the great classes he belongs, and to his faith alone is this knowledge ever revealed. Even the apostle did not undertake to settle the question for us ultimately, for he said: "We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end." Not until we have finished our course, I think, will our whole being be assured that we have been made "partakers of Christ," that we are not "reprobates." Were it not better then not to look for some knowledge that we can handle and appropriate and use as balm to our souls? Is it not better to have our eyes turned heavenward, to dwell upon those things we do know, that have been revealed to us by his Spirit, namely, that God is good and that his mercy endureth forever; that he is unchangeable, that his people are as secure in his care even while the waves of the great sea of iniquity rise mountain high in their sight as are those who have already "set to their seal that God is true"? Evidences are comforting when they come, but alas, how they fail to comfort at times. An angel from heaven could not reassure us at times, even as at other times all the spirits of the universe could not destroy our faith.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., July, 1912.

TO THE HOME CHURCH AT HOPEWELL, N. J.—DEAR ONES ALL:—As I cannot be with you at this time I will once more write you a few lines with desire for your spiritual comfort from our heavenly Father. How much I do desire that you may have understanding and discernment in the truth, which only those spiritually taught can know, for by the Spirit must these things be revealed. You cannot say to your neighbor, Know the Lord, but all the spiritual shall know him, from the least of them unto the great-

est, because all are of the same family and born of the same Spirit. But when we commence to speak of them as a family how it brings to our minds the different natures and aims in life. It is not in this family as with natural families, for these last do not have one source, but with this family of God all are from one source, Jesus Christ and him crucified. There may be some who cannot tell just what they believe, yet when they hear the faith of those who do understand and can speak it forth, at once they know that this is just what they believe. But they say, I did not know that I knew, and yet they stand firm in the love of the church. There may be a few at variance, yet in their hearts they do believe the truth, but have become entangled with man's wisdom and so cannot enjoy the truth as they would otherwise do. I often think how wonderful it is that this poor, despised people get as little entangled as they do; it is only by the power of God that they are kept. At times I think that this becoming entangled may be a warning or a lesson to others. Now I see a few in my mind's eye assembled in all truth and sincerity. The pastor is looking at those who love the truth, though perhaps they are not nearly all members. Perhaps the pastor is filled with desire that some may be enabled to openly confess their Savior and their heart's desire to come to the church openly, and the lovers of truth are looking at their pastor with desire that he may be strengthened and liberated in mind and speech to open to them the gospel and to encourage them onward; and, dear brethren and sisters, remember while you are being comforted, if it is in your power to do so, to return comfort to him who goes in and out before you, and help him to bear life's burdens and to hold up his hands. I have been able to be at the meetings but seldom for the year past, and in that time so often have been bereft of thoughts of the kindnesses of the brethren and of spiritual joy that I have not been the comfort that I would like to be to the dear ones, but if I know my heart, my desires are for the welfare of the dear church, wherever they may rove or rest. I will say that I do desire that my mind may be stayed on the better and more profitable things, and not stray to the more alluring things of earth, nor be so ready to listen to gossip's voice, or be so ready to criticise. I am sure that I do see and know that many sermons are spoiled, many good conversations overthrown and much peace and pleasure harmed by the terrible sin, criticism. May it vanish from our midst, and may we be enabled to listen and forget the little things that cause jarring among us. May peace, love and friendship according to the will of the Father be with you all. But above all these things may charity rest with you one and all. It is true that my name is not any longer on the church-book at Hopewell, but I still love to behold your order, love and zeal, as well as where my membership now is. Many of you are younger than myself, and many of the older ones are removed, but may you who remain continue true and faithful in every good work. May God bless you all.

In love and fellowship,

MARY HILL TERRY.

LAUREL, Miss., August 1, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is through the goodness and kind mercy of the all-wise and covenant-keeping God that I am still spared. I know no good that I have ever done has caused him to spare my

life. He has blessed me in many ways, for which I hope I am thankful, but it seems that my life has been so sinful and corrupt that I do not deserve anything but chastisement, though I sometimes have seasons of rejoicing, then am at other times cast down. My desire is that the God of heaven and earth will still keep me and direct my ways, that I may be found walking in the strait and narrow way. I know if left to myself I would never walk in that way, but Christ is the way, and if he directs our steps we will walk in him. Brethren, pray for me, that he may keep me humble and at the feet of my brethren. I want to tell you of our last meeting. It was a union meeting, and it seemed to me that I never saw greater love shown among the brethren and sisters. The Lord was surely there with his loving Spirit. We are in peace here at Palestine Church, for which we are thankful; it is a glorious thing to see brethren and sisters dwelling in peace. The Lord has surely given us a loving undershepherd to watch over us. He is kind and watchful in the care of the flock, and it seems that the Lord has given him great gifts in many ways, preaching the solid doctrine of predestination. I believe that God is sovereign, and governs the heavens and earth and all things, and to my understanding "all things" does not mean a part. Then as he has made all things, he made each thing for a specific purpose, and has established their goings.

I will stop, as I do not want to take up your valuable time. Please find check inclosed and accept my thanks to you for sending on the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES; I do not see how I could do without it. We have the same doctrine preached here that it advocates, and it is a medium of correspondence all over the United States, each writer telling the same good news. Remember me at the throne of grace.

T. J. KNIGHT.

WEISER, Idaho, Dec. 11, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I am sending in my two dollars for another year's subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which I consider a good, sound advocate of Baptist doctrine, which is, as I understand, the doctrine of the Bible. Brother E. G. Webb, of Kansas, sent me the paper this year, and I think enough of it to continue reading it. There have been many precious letters in the last year's edition. May the Lord bless you with strength and ability to continue.

Your sister in hope of a better life than this, (MRS.) EMMA WEBB.

MOODY, Ark., August 31, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I want to put a notice in your paper to get some Old Baptists to locate in our section. I will deed some lands free for homes to the right men or women to locate here near me. If I cannot do this I want to sell and move where there are some Old Baptists, and I mean Predestinarian Baptists.

Your little brother,

J. P. BAKER.

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1912.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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CHURCH MEMBERSHIP AND ORDINANCES.

SOME questions concerning membership in the church and the ordinance of the supper have been suggested to our mind by brethren, when in conversation with them lately, of which we feel inclined to write for the consideration of the churches and brethren who may be interested in reading what we may write. Certainly both these things ought to have our earnest consideration, because they belong to the order of that church which the blessed Lord established on earth for his own glory and the good of his chosen and called people.

One of the questions proposed by a brother was, What experience ought one to have before it is right to urge upon him the obligation of confessing his Lord in baptism, and becoming a visible member of the church? The subject presented in this question has always seemed to us to be of the utmost importance. It is fully believed by all Old School Baptists, so far as we have known or have read, that a church is a body composed of believers who have united together by mutual consent to maintain the worship of God and the order and ordinances of his house, and it is and has been their faith that believers only have right to membership in the church, or to the ordinances of the church. All who do not believe and receive these principles of faith are not Old School Baptists. This we need not enlarge upon. If the Scriptures teach anything clearly at all, it is that believers only are proper subjects for baptism, and when we say this we mean by believers such, and only such, as believe in and receive the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Redeemer of men, and still more, have come to believe in him as their own personal Savior. A believer is one who not only confesses Christ as the Savior of others, but also as that Redeemer in whom he places all his trust and hope. Now it is not enough that one shall say, I believe in the doctrine that Christ died, as declared in the Scriptures, to save men, or even to save his elect; it is not enough that one shall say, I believe in God as the Creator and Sovereign of all worlds and beings; I believe in Christ as he that lived in the days of Herod and Pontius Pilate and was crucified and buried and arose again the third day, and that by this death and resurrection sinners are justified and saved; but it is needful that he who shall come for membership in the church shall be able to testify to a personal experience of need, and a personal experience of salvation in this Savior. It is a personal faith in Jesus as the Redeemer of his own soul that constitutes one a believer in the Bible sense of the word. Neither is it enough that one has come to feel himself a sinner against God, or that he has confessed his sin before the Lord, or that he has felt the curse of the broken law saying, The soul that sinneth it shall die, or that there have been strong cryings and groanings beneath the intolerable burden of his sin, or that he is found seeking the courts of the Lord's

house and listening to the word of God, while as yet that word brings no consolation, but rather condemnation to his soul, or even that he has come to believe that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, and that there is salvation in none other. For ourself, we can say that this was our state of mind for several years before it was given us to see in this Savior our own hope, and to find our own feet resting upon this rock. In those years we could not have come to the church confessing Christ as our hope and trust truthfully. Had we come in those years we should have been making a confession of that which we had not felt and did not know, and this certainly would have been a grievous wrong. We should have sinned against our own soul and against that God who demands truth in the inward parts. Because of this experience of our own, and because we have believed from Bible testimony that only those who believe in Christ have any right to the ordinances of the church, or to a name with the church, we have never felt at liberty to say to any one before they could say, I have a hope for myself in the Redeemer, It is your duty or your privilege to be baptized and become a member of the church. Before burial one ought to be dead; so before burial with Christ in baptism one ought to be wholly dead to their former hopes and their former life, and before rising with Christ in baptism one ought to have risen to a lively hope in him. We do not mean by this that such ones must have come up into what is called full assurance, so as to be beyond doubt and fear. Very few of the Lord's people, of whom we have known anything, ever go for any great length of time without many doubts and much questioning in their own hearts as to the reality of their faith and the certainty of their hope. Still there must be a personal experience of death and a personal experience of life in Christ ere one can be a true witness for Christ. When believers are called upon to give a reason of the hope that is in them, it will always be with meekness and fear. But still it remains true that baptism cannot be the answer of a good conscience unless there be a personal faith and a personal confession of a personal Savior in those who come to this ordinance; and when we have felt that we had good reason to believe that this personal hope, though ever so much accompanied with doubts and fears, dwelt in any one, we have not hesitated to encourage all such to go forward in the ordinances of the Lord's house, as he has commanded all who believe.

A second question that has been presented in conversation with brethren recently is with regard to the ordinance of the supper. Is it an ordinance of the church acting as a body, or is it proper to administer this ordinance any where any person or persons may desire it? Of course the meaning of the brother who asked the question was that these individuals should be believers and members of some church or churches somewhere. If the faith held generally by Baptists concerning the church, as stated at the beginning of this editorial, be true, viz., that it is composed of baptized believers united together for maintaining the order and ordinances of the house of God, then it would seem at once to follow that the administration of the supper is to be regarded as an act of the church only. So far as we know, this has been the consistent practice of the churches in our land, and in former times as well as in these later days. We have never known of the supper being administered by any

of our ministers in former years except to regularly organized churches. There may have been violations of this rule, but if so we have not learned of them. It seems to us that this rule is scriptural, and that the reverse would be unscriptural. Churches, when once organized as churches, with pastors and other officers, generally appoint certain times for worship, church meetings, conference meetings, for the administration of the supper and such other things as may be thought needful to be observed; and the supper is generally regarded as a special season which should be appointed and observed by the church, as a church, with special solemnity. Now the church is not simply a body of believers who may, through the leadings of Providence, be brought together for a few days, weeks or months, or even years, either in the same house or in the same town or city. Such a body of believers may exist in many places who yet have never become organized as a church in that place. Perhaps there are circumstances of a temporary nature which have brought them together, and it has not been thought advisable to form a regularly constituted church there; each member still retains his membership in some distant place. It appears to us clear that this body of believers cannot undertake to perform the acts demanded of churches so long as they remain disunited in membership, although they all have full fellowship for each other. For instance, they could not attend to business, like calling a pastor, or receiving candidates for baptism, or administering the supper, lawfully, according to the example of the Scriptures; but when this body of believers think it wise to take letters of dismission from their several churches in order to form a church where they now live, and receive each other's letters and agree to live henceforth together, maintaining the travel and holding fast to the privileges of a church of Jesus Christ, then they are a church of Christ and ought to be recognized as such, and then it is not only their right, but also their duty, to attend to the ordinances of the Lord's house, and to administer the affairs of the kingdom of Christ in that place, and their right to appoint times for the administration of the Lord's supper. As we have said, we have not known of any other view of the matter held by any ministers or brethren or churches during the last fifty years. We have often seen references in history to a custom in the Romish church to this effect, viz., that the priest carries to the sick or dying at times the bread, which has been blessed, and administers it to them at their bedside. As all our readers probably know, the Romish church forbids the cup to the laity, reserving the wine for the priest who administers the ordinance, called by that false church the Mass. Hence only the wafer or bread is carried to those who are sick, and they do this because it is their superstition that the bread and wine have, in the course of the blessing by the priest, become the real body and blood of Jesus, and that there is real saving efficacy in the eating of the bread by all communicants. If all this were indeed true, then it would be apparent that for salvation to the soul one must eat the bread; hence there would very easily grow up the thought that the sick must partake in order to live forever, therefore the bread must be taken to those who are not able to come to the place of public worship. But we know that not one word of all this is true. The bread and the wine are only the emblems chosen by the Savior to represent his body and blood, and are no more than this after the bread has been broken or the wine

poured out, and the communion is the communion of the body of Christ. One alone or many together cannot engage in the communion of the body of Christ unless they are together as his body, the church.

We recall that once, many years ago, an aged sister, who had been unable to meet with the church of which she was a member for many years, through feebleness and distance, expressed a great desire to once more commune with the church before she died. She expressed that desire when we were visiting her. We desired greatly to comply with her wish, and to this end, at the next church meeting, we laid the matter before the church and asked them to appoint a meeting of the church at her bedside for the purpose of holding service and of administering the Lord's supper. This they at once agreed to do, and in a few days as many of the church as could possibly do so went to her home, some thirteen miles away, and it was our privilege to break bread there, and her privilege to eat and drink in remembrance of her Lord with the church. This was done as an act of the church. There were three other members of the church in her family circle, but we should not have felt justified in breaking bread for them simply as members and believers, from our understanding of the example of the churches in the early times, under the direction of the apostles.

Now, in conclusion, we desire to notice that in the New Testament will be found the complete rule for this, as well as for all other things pertaining to the order of the churches. There is no authority there for calling any body of people the church, save as they have been formed into bodies with proper officers and with a regular travel in the commandments of the blessed Lord. The church at Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, Colosse, Philippi, and the churches scattered throughout Galatia and other countries round about, were all of them independent churches in their organization, and in administrating the affairs of the kingdom of Christ in their own special localities, under the inspired direction of the apostles; none of them owed any allegiance to any other church as their superior; none of them attempted to direct the affairs of any other church; all were united in one fellowship by continuing in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers. This was their bond of union with one another, and with the first church ever established, that at Jerusalem. It is to the church, as a church, at Corinth, that Paul writes, giving directions as to casting out that which had come in that was evil, and following that which was seemly and to the honor of the name of Jesus. So far as we have been able to see, there is no instance where this ordinance was administered save in a regularly organized church.

Thus we have replied as best we could to the questions brought up in conversation with brethren of late, and feel to leave the matter with all who may read. It has seemed to us that this, as well as other similar subjects, ought to be well considered and understood, lest we depart from the way of the Lord unwittingly.

C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MATTHEW XXV. 30.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Please give your views on Matt. xxv. 30: "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." J. ARMSTRONG.

The parabolical instructions and admonitions of our Lord, recorded in the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of Matthew, were addressed especially and exclusively to his disciples. A careful examination of these two chapters will show that all which they contain transpired at a private interview which the disciples of Christ sought for and were favored with on the mount of Olives. "And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, [namely, to his disciples] Take heed that no man deceive you," &c. Then follows the answers which he privately gave to their inquiries, extending to the twenty-sixth chapter and second verse, inclusive. All his admonitions contained in his reply to their inquiries were solemnly enforced by appropriate parables, which the disciples undoubtedly perfectly understood to apply to themselves, especially and primarily in regard to their exposure to temptations, deceptions, and their liability to be deceived by others, or involved in disobedience and tribulation by their own want of vigilance, and inattention to the solemn warnings he had given them in regard to the dreadful trial and sore temptations they should endure while waiting for and at the time of the fulfillment of what he told them in regard to the destruction of Jerusalem. The fact that Jerusalem should be destroyed, and not one stone left on the top of another of all the splendid buildings of the temple, and that all these things should be fulfilled before that generation should pass away, was no less certain, for, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." But certain and irrevocable as was the decree that all this destruction should take place in their day and generation, yet the day and the hour was not a matter of revelation; it was known unto the Father only. God had purposely concealed the precise time, the day and hour, of the accomplishment of this terrible judgment from all men, his saints not excepted, and with a special design to try the faith of his children. For if the good man of the house had known in what hour of the night the thief would come, he would have watched, and not suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore, said he, be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh; that is, he cometh to execute these judgments upon Jerusalem. And he adds, Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and to drink with the drunken, the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

In what we have called attention to, as contained in the twenty-fourth chapter,

we have presented the admonitions, to more fully and solemnly enforce which the three parables in this twenty-fifth chapter are given. "Then [at that very time, when the faithfulness of the good and unfaithfulness of the evil servant shall be proved] shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins," &c. "For the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one," &c. Two of the servants in this parable sustained the character of good and faithful servants, and were applauded by their lord on the day of reckoning, but the third was found wicked and slothful, and was condemned and punished. Of his sentence and punishment brother Armstrong inquires. We have deemed the foregoing review of the whole subject necessary in opening the way to a clear understanding of this and to every other part of the whole.

We will now devote a few remarks to that part contained in the verse proposed, in which the sentence of the wicked servant is given. The parable of the talents represents the faithful servants who in the absence of their lord were diligent in the occupancy of their trust, approved, promoted and generously rewarded for their fidelity in the day of special trial, and the faithless and slothful servant cast out and consigned to darkness, weeping and gnashing of teeth. Such being the bearing of the parable, we are to look for its application to the disciples of our Lord, who are recognized as his servants, and by his will as the servants of his church. In the divinely authorized interpretation and application of the parable the man, or lord of the servants, represents the kingdom of heaven. The servants in the parable are those invested with gifts to rule the Lord's household and give to those of his household their meat in due season. The good and faithful servants represent the faithful servants in the church, in the ministry, who shall be found of their Lord giving meat to those of the household of God in due season, and who in the faithful discharge of their duty "have purchased to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus."—1 Tim. iii. 13. The slothful servant represents the servant of the church, who is intrusted with a gift for feeding the flock, who buries that gift in the earth, and with the people and things of the earth becomes intoxicated and infatuated, smites the menservants and the maidservants of his Lord's household when they disturb his sluggishness by application for their meat in due season, leaving the care of the flock of Christ for the vanities of the world, associating with the drunken fanatics of the world, to the annoyance, discomfort and distress of the saints; they shall in the day of reckoning receive of the temporal plagues and judgments which are held in store for the ungodly.

These three invested according to their lord's judgment with gifts or talents according to their several ability, were all equally his servants, his property, for a servant, in a scriptural sense, is one who is not his own, but is bought with a price, who therefore owes obedience and fidelity to his owner, or lord. Such were the servants in Abraham's household, born in his house, or bought with his money, according to God's law upon that subject. (Lev. xxv. 44–46.) Thus the term "servant" is always used in reference to the servants of God and of the church, always signifying the Master's right of property in them. The reason given by

the apostle why "ye are not your own," is that "ye are bought with a price," consequently the property of him who has bought you, owing to him all your powers to serve. Upon no other principle could the slothful servant have been held accountable to his lord for neglecting to improve his talent, for if his lord had no right of property in him he could no more have demanded obedience from the servant than could the servant from his lord. It must be remembered, however, that all of God's servants whom Christ has bought with a price are also children of God, and it is as children, not as servants, they are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. As sons, their inheritance of immortality is secure, being incorruptible, undefiled, and fading not away, but as servants, if they know their Master's will and do it not, they shall be beaten with many stripes. The gifts or talents bestowed on the ministers or other servants of Christ and his church are committed to them as servants and stewards. So the apostle has settled the matter, for, says he, "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." And this treasure, talent or gift, we have in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power thereof may be of God, and not of us.

The peculiar labor obligatory upon the servants of the kingdom of Christ is set forth in connection with this cluster of parables to be, first, to take the oversight of the flock; they are made rulers over the Lord's household, to give them meat in due season. But as rulers they are not lords over God's heritage, nor are they to make rules for the household, nor smite or abuse either the menservants or maidservants, but simply to administer the rule which Christ himself has laid down for the government of both pastor and people. The obligation of the church or household to recognize these servants whom he has commissioned to take the oversight of them is found in Hebrews xiii. 7, 8: "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation: Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." The word of God which they have spoken to you is the rule, and the only rule which they have or are allowed to have over the household of God, and if they do not speak the word of God unto the church they are not invested with any legitimate power to rule, nor are the saints or churches at liberty to follow their faith unless the end of their conversation be Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever. If they show such credentials as are here indicated, on their peril let not the churches or the saints despise them. "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves;" that is, to the rule, to the word of God which they have spoken unto you, for that is the rule, "For they watch for your souls, as they that must give account; that they may do it with joy, and not with grief." As watchmen, they are still servants, and must give account to their Lord and Master. Now, in administering the law of Christ, the word of God, as the rule, the servants of Christ and of his kingdom are also required to "feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."—Acts xx. 28. In feeding the church of God they are to give to those who are of the household of faith, both menservants and maidservants, babes and fathers, sheep and lambs, their

meat in due season. There are regular and stated times for meals in all well regulated households; if the family do not receive their meals regularly they may suffer from hunger and become disorderly. Paul indeed charged Timothy to "be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine."—2 Tim. iv. 2. As the children of the household may become hungry between meals, the servants in charge are to attend instantly to their necessities. "For," the apostle adds, "the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." In all such cases the servants of the Lord will be required to be seasonable with their reproofs, rebukes, exhortations, longsuffering and doctrine. They must not wait until the wolf has entered the fold and begun to devour the flock before they give warning, nor delay serving the wholesome food of the good word of the Lord until they see the children fainting, but they are required, as good stewards, to deal out such food from the word, whether reproof, rebuke, exhortation or encouragement, comfort and consolation, in due season; that is, just as the peculiar circumstances of the family require it. "Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing."

(To be continued.)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

A Lover of the Flock, Ontario, $1.00; A Friend, N. J., $50.00; Mrs. N. C. Stevens, Ga., $2.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, August 21st, 1912, near Newchurch, Va., Solie Edward Johnson and Miss Virginia A. Hickman.

By the same, the same day, near Newchurch, Va., Jay C. Taylor and Miss Clara Kelly, both of Accomac County, Va.

By Elder Joshua T. Rowe, Sept. 3rd, 1912, at the residence of the bride's mother, Falls Road and Cold Spring Lane, Roland Park, Md., Frank E. Robey, of Bluemont, Loudoun Co., Va., and Miss Rachel E. Baker. Both are members of the Old School Baptist Church.

By the same, July 3rd, 1912, at the residence of the bride's parents, Catonsville, Md., Quincy Gladding and Miss Alice Caines.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at his home, Leesburg, Va., Sept. 6th, 1912, Robert Thaddeus Gray and Miss Mary Elizabeth Wiley, both of Loudoun Co., Va.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at his residence, Halcottville, N. Y., August 20th, 1912, Bruce G. Croft, of Vega, N. Y., and Miss Florence Peet, of Kelley Corners, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Grace Hartpence, whose maiden name was Howell, was born March 23rd, 1835, and died August 13th, 1912. She was married to Everett Hartpence May 28th, 1859. She was born and lived in Kingwood township all her life. I do not know how many children, if any, were born to them. She leaves an aged husband and two or more sisters, with many relatives and friends, to mourn their loss. She was a believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and a regular attendant at the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church, in Locktown, N. J., but was not a member. A feeling of unfitness and unworthiness, which is the experience of all of the elect, seemed to be in her way of uniting. She was a kind, friendly neighbor, and a friend to all she knew. Sister Sarah E. Sutton, who is a sister in the flesh, writes that she is living with the husband, and that it is a lonely, sad house without her.

May God bless her very aged husband and all of the dear friends with grace sufficient for them, is the prayer of the unworthy writer, who officiated at the funeral, which was at the house August 17th. She is eternally home with her Savior and Redeemer in heaven.

D. M. VAIL.

WAVERLY, Pa.

Mrs. Jessie Faunce died on the evening of August 24th, 1912. Her life was crushed out while riding in an engine between Brighton and Alton, Ill. Her husband was not the engineer, as was stated. Her husband tried to rescue her, but in the wreck they were separated. Her age was 28 years, 5 months and 19 days. She leaves a husband, father, mother and many relatives to sorrow for her. Her funeral was held from the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. S. D. McMahans, one and three-quarter miles from Atwater, Ill., where but a few days before she had spent a delightful day with father and mother. Elders Madin and Jupin talked very comfortingly to the bereaved ones. The pall-bearers were fellow-workmen of her husband. A large concourse of sorrowing friends gathered to pay the last tribute of respect to one they had known so well. Interment was in Moors Cemetery, where rest her two brothers.

Her aunt, NANNIE SMITH.

MEETINGS.

THE Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Second Church of Roxbury, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday following the the third Sunday in September, (18th and 19th), 1912, commencing at 10:30 a. m. on Wednesday. We heartily invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Come one and all, our homes and our hearts are open to receive you. Those coming via Kingston will stop at Halcottville, and those via Oneonta will stop at Roxbury. Trains will be met Tuesday p. m. at each place.

J. B. SLAUSON.

A YEARLY meeting will be held at Jefferson, Schoharie Co., N. Y., the third Saturday and Sunday in September. There will be teams to meet all who can come on Friday noon train. Will be glad to see all friends and those who love the truth.

D. C. HIX, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Cow Marsh Old School Baptist Church will be held on the fourth Sunday in September, and Saturday afternoon before (21st and 22nd). A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends to meet with us. Trains north and south will be met Saturday morning at Felton station.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Church in Baltimore, Md., will hold an all day meeting Sept. 29th (fifth Sunday). All who would like to meet with us are cordially invited to do so. We expect Elder B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., to be present.

ALVIS S. ROWE, Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Lexington Church, Lexington, Greene Co., N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (2nd and 3rd) 1912.

FLETCHER MACKEY, Church Clerk.

A two days meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the First Church of Roxbury, Vega, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, October 9th and 10th, 1912. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Trains will be met at Roxbury on Tuesday p. m. before the meeting.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Juniata Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Fairview Church, at Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa., beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1912, and continuing three days. Those coming by rail must come on Thursday before the meeting, via Western Maryland or Baltimore & Ohio Railroads to Hancock, Md., and are requested to notify beforehand Dennis Mellott, Plum Run, Pa., or J. C. Mellott, Needmore, Pa., so that teams will be sure to be on hand to meet all who desire to come, as the place of meeting is a long drive from the railroad. All who love the truth as it is in Jesus, both friends and brethren, are affectionately invited to meet with us.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting will meet, the Lord willing, with the New Valley Church, eight miles from Leesburg, Loudoun Co., Va., on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1912, and continue three days. Trains will be met at Leesburg on Tuesday before the meeting, and all visitors taken care of and conveyed to the place of meeting. Trains for Leesburg do not leave the union station, Washington, D. C., as formerly, the present terminal being at Thirty-sixth and M Sts., Georgetown D. C. The process of replacing steam with electricity is now going on, which makes the schedule very uncertain, but those coming to the meeting via Washington from the north, east or south will take green electric car marked Georgetown, outside union station, and go to the end of the line, where they will transfer to the cars of the Washington & Old Dominion Ry., which will bring them to Leesburg. Trains now leave Georgetown at 4:15, 5:15 and 6:40 p. m., but this is subject to change at any time. Those coming from the south, via Southern Railway, would do well to change cars at Alexandria for Leesburg, and not go into Washington. Those coming from the west, via B. & O , will be met at Washington Junction, Md., five miles from place of meeting, if they will notify the writer at Leesburg, Va., beforehand. Ministering and other brethren of our faith and order and all lovers of the truth are cordially invited to be with us.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

THE Andes Church will hold a two days meeting, the Lord willing, at Union Grove, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, October 23rd and 24th, 1912. Trains will be met Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. at Union Grove. Those coming over the Ulster & Delaware Railroad from Kingston or Oneonta, or any points on the U. & D. R. R., will change at Arkville for Union Grove. A cordial invitation is extended to all. J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is to be held with the church in the town of Snowhill, Worcester Co., Md., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday after the third Sunday in October, 1912. We wish to extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. We hope no one will hesitate in coming for fear of being in the way, or that we will be crowded. We are making preparations for a full gathering of Baptists and friends, and if we fail in this we will be disappointed. We cannot tell you how the trains will run at that time, but those coming from the north get tickets for Snowhill. Those coming from Baltimore can come by the B. C. & O. Get tickets to Berlin, change for Snowhill. This you must decide for yourselves.

T. M. POULSON, Pastor.

THE Albany and Troy Church will meet the fourth Sunday in each month at No. 2 Second St., Monument Square, Troy, N. Y.

J. B. SLAUSON, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE ALBANY AND TROY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Meetings the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., in Kimmy Hall, No. 12 Third St., in Troy, N. Y. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. SEWARD, Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of southern California meets every third Sunday at 2 p. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 80. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1912. NO. 19.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ABERFELDY, Ont., Feb. 6, 1912.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Inclosed you will find a letter written by Elder Keene to brother Alexander McAlpine, Aberfeldy, Ontario, some years ago. It was given me to read, and I enjoyed reading it, and I have been asked to send it to the SIGNS for publication. I hope you will find a place for it in your paper. How true it is that God's word is ever new and comforting to his poor and afflicted ones as they travel through this world of trouble and sorrow. This letter was written years ago, but it is as fresh and has the same sweetness that it had when the writer penned it. Heaven and earth may pass away, but my words shall not pass away until all be fulfilled, are the words of our blessed Savior, and his words are spirit and they are life, and how sweet it is and how lovely to behold the saints of Jesus by faith when we see them speaking one to another of the things of his kingdom and meditating upon the wonderful works of God to the children of men. I hope that I am not taking up too much of your time and space.

I am your unworthy brother in friendship and fellowship of the gospel of Christ,

REUBEN BENSTEAD.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, April 26, 1895.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER MCALPINE:—What a wretched, hopeless plight we should be in were it not that our Redeemer brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Miserable, vile transgressors of the law, how could we justify ourselves before the throne of God? How should we be able to escape the damnation of hell? To certain ones spake the Son of God, saying, "Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." The world that lieth in wickedness believes in anything but the truth. Men believe in their own supposed ability in some way or other to make their peace with God and thus get to heaven and escape hell. Strong delusion is sent them that they believe a lie; they receive not the truth, but they delight in all the deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish;

they glory in that idol they call "free will," and boast of liberty, and yet are slaves to the corruption of their vile flesh. In their own doctrines they exalt themselves above all that is called God or that is worshiped, for they blasphemously affirm that God has done all that he can do to save sinners, and that he cannot save sinners unless they consent and yield themselves up to him, and open their own hearts and let him in. They speak of the Lord as being an offended and grieved being because that men in their hardness of heart will not yield to his persuasions and threatenings and let him save them. Well, as these sinners would not let God save them, antichrist says God then will have to damn them, as they would not come to him and be saved all the while he was drawing them by the strivings of his Spirit. He will say at last to them, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." But could they not, according to the doctrines of men, refuse and say, We will not go to hell? If God cannot save them against the will of their flesh, could he damn them against their will? But enough of this, for such doctrines pertain to the kingdom of darkness. Have we been translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son? If so, how were we translated? Was it of our will, or according to the will of God that we have come to the light and behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ? Who maketh us to differ from others? Is it the result of our endeavors, or does it all spring from the reigning grace of God? I am persuaded, my dear kindred, that it is not hard to find our answer. Our willing souls confess that Jehovah is God; "It is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture."—Psalms c. 3. "The Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel."—Exodus xi. 7. As we are led to contemplate the kindness and love of God our Savior that has appeared to us, do we not feel to fall at the feet of our gracious God and pour out our grateful praises, ascribing blessing and honor and glory and power unto God and to the Lamb for evermore? As the years glide by, with the appointed joys and sorrows, temptations and conflicts, we are increasingly confirmed that by the grace of God we are what we are. All the manifestations of grace to us poor, unworthy sinners prepare us to sing, "O to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be." Trace these streams of grace to their fountainhead and we see it is that "grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9. The eternal election of the people of God in Christ Jesus is that which puts a difference between the Egyptians and Israel, and this election is most blessedly declared to be the election of grace, Romans xi. 7: "The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." This doctrine is as an axe to the tree of creature boastings, and stains the pride of all pharisaical glory.

"What was there in you that could merit esteem,
Or give the Creator delight?
'Twas even so, Father, you ever must sing,
Because it seemed good in thy sight."

Cite this doctrine to the children of the bondwoman and they are offended, and some of them will boil over with rage against the God of truth. They bear witness that they are the seed whom God hath given over to delusion, to believe a lie. They are of too great consequence in their own eyes to bow before the throne of the Majesty in the heavens and own themselves to be vile, but dust and

ashes. Being corrupt in their minds and destitute of the truth, they do always resist the Holy Ghost speaking in his people; as their fathers did, so do they. But let us consider what our dear Savior has said: "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given."—Matt. xiii. 11. The apostle Paul also writes: "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"—1 Cor. iv. 7. Distinguished by the distinguishing grace of God. O may we never glory over our fellow-creatures as though we had not received every blessing of the new covenant freely, bountifully, according as God our Father, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. It is all of the love of God that we have been brought to love and to fear the name of the Lord. We love him because he first loved us. It was his right hand and the light of his countenance that brought us from under the law into the comfort and blessedness of the gospel of Christ. It was not our goodness and efforts that translated us from darkness into Christ's marvelous light. In darkness we were ignorant of experimental truth, a prey of divers lusts. With a poet I must confess I was

"At peace with hell, with God at war;
In sin's dark maze I wandered far,
Indulged my lust, and still went on,
As far from God as sheep can run."

But,

"O love, how high thy glories swell,
How great, immutable and free;
Ten thousand sins as black as hell,
Are blotted out, O love, by thee.

Loved when a wretch defiled with sin,
At war with heaven, in league with hell,
A slave to every lust obscene,
Who, living, lived but to rebel."

But in the time decreed from everlasting Jehovah called even me by his grace. When I first was conscious of this calling I did not know it was of grace, but I felt and judged it was nothing less than an enraged God, who had become wearied with my vile ways and had now apprehended me and was bringing me to the judgment of eternal damnation. "Verily, thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior."—Isaiah xlv. 15. Poor, mistaken, miserable wretch that I was, I looked for hell, he brought me heaven. It was in Christ and him crucified that I found deliverance and comfort, light and joy. In him we have redemption and forgiveness of sins according to the riches of Jehovah's grace. But this was none of my procuring, or applying, or ministering; O no, so sinful, so helpless was I, powerless to minister a grain of comfort and relief to my sin-stricken soul; but it was the gracious ministry of Jehovah, the Holy Ghost. "He [saith our dear Redeemer] shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."—John xvi. 14. Since then all my hope and comfort in divine things have flowed from the communion of the Holy Ghost. (2 Cor. xiii. 3.) O sweet, refreshing, much desired communion! How often I languish as in a waste wilderness; all my defenced cities are laid low in the dust, my sins and the Lord's chastenings have hushed the melodious strains of my tabrets, my inward vileness and temptations have so crippled me that instead of dancing I have hobbled along with painful steps, with sighing, weeping and with supplications. God led me until the set time to favor Zion had come, then the Spirit of truth has been poured upon me from

on high, and my wilderness has been a fruitful field. (Isaiah xxxii. 15.) The Holy Spirit has tenderly ministered to me out of the unsearchable riches of Christ all that my soul needed, and I have proven that word to be true, God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. O the blessedness of the communion of the Holy Ghost!

"Thy sweet communion charms the soul,
And gives true peace and joy,
Which Satan's power cannot control,
Nor all his wiles destroy."

O, I am not a whit more able to get along without the Comforter than I was the time I first experienced his divine ministrations. When turned aside from my God by the world, the flesh and the devil, as I have before told you, dear brother and sister, I find before long how poor and desolate is my estate, and in my soul's darkness, nakedness and manifold miseries who can bring relief but One? Ah, more than once in spirit I have sighed, "The comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me."—Lam. i. 16. But he who gives the spirit of supplications has in due season restored my soul again to a comfortable hope in the Savior of sinners. In all our trials, afflictions and vexations, amidst all the turmoil attending our earthly sojourn, when the Holy Spirit in covenant faithfulness draws near and we are blessed with communion, then we are revived, and lift up our smiling and grateful faces to the Lord; we are strengthened, and leap over a wall and run through a troop of foes. Yes, then we tread the world and sin and Satan beneath our feet and triumph through Jesus Christ our Lord. In the communion of the Holy Spirit,

"He sweetly unfolds the great mysteries of heaven,
Forbidding the sinner to fear;
Gives faith to believe all his crimes are forgiven,
And helps him to wrestle in prayer,
The blood and obedience of Christ he applies,
When Satan comes in like a flood,
And through his anointing the christian relies
On the covenant purpose of God."

But the self-pious among men would revile all this, and gainsay all that in truth pertains unto the life and godliness of God's elect. (2 Peter i. 3.) They have so high an estimate of their own powers and righteousness to make their peace with God and to worship him, that when they hear of the Redeemer of God's elect having done all things for their salvation and eternal glorification, in their damnable doctrine they belch forth their gainsayings as Korah did, saying, "Ye take too much upon you."—Num. xvi. 3. But as Korah and his company perished in their presumptuous gainsayings and ungodly attempt to usurp the priesthood of Aaron, so all the gainsayers of the present time will perish in their gainsayings. The love of the truth is the evidence of salvation in the hearts of the chosen of God, and they only love the truth because he has put it in their inward parts. The glory is thine, O Lord. None by nature love God, his people and his truth. He that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. There was a time when my poor soul was destitute of this love, but O I must, I will (no matter how Satan roars) confess I love my God, even Israel's God, his people and his truth.

"O thou merciful Redeemer,
Help me more thy name to love—
Love thee with intense affection,
Love thee as thy saints above."

I am persuaded, beloved ones, that the above verse expresses your own heart's longings. Often we sigh, bemoaning the meanness of our love to God. Our forgetfulness, unthankfulness and at times repining also make us very low, as but dust and ashes before the Lord,

"Lord, it is my chief complaint,
That my love is weak and faint,
Yet I love thee and adore;
O for grace to love thee more."

I have learned of the departure of Aunt Mary McAlpine. I am persuaded it is to be with Christ, which is far better. In a few years at most we all shall be called home. Let me hear from you, dear kindred. Give my love to all the friends. Often I have you all in my thoughts, and affectionately, too. May the gracious Lord bless you.

I am your brother and companion in Christ Jesus,

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., May 12, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—I feel impressed to write some for the consideration and comfort of the household of faith, and while I have such a desire, I am made to wonder why I, who feel that I am the least of all saints, have such a yearning and longing to comfort God's humble poor. Sometimes I think it is common sympathy born of the flesh, because I have been made to deeply drink of the bitter dregs of suffering and humiliation on account of my failures in this life as a business man, when naturally I was endowed with reasonably good qualifications at least, and far better than many of my acquaintances who have far surpassed me in point of worldly gain, and, of course, favor and popularity, for it is an indisputable fact that wealth in dollars is the shrine to which the knees of this world bow in humble, earnest worship, and whether I have always been different from that class of worshipers, or whether there was a power which caused obstacles to get in my way, preventing me from reaching that lofty goal of esteem and distinction which I felt was mine by right of honesty and faithful industry, I know not, for I surely started out to set a pattern for others to follow, and verily thought even the world would recognize a man who was honest and kind-hearted, whose God was the God of the whole earth. It was then that I came to the parting of the ways, for it was then that I first discovered the world not only had no use for the God that I loved and worshiped, but it hated him and all those who loved and worshiped him, and I had a great time trying by words and deeds to convince them that he was a Friend in whom we could safely put all our trust, for he has promised never to leave nor forsake us, and that he is a very present help in every time of need, but they would look at me aghast and become disinterested. Imagine my grief when I discovered that they turned against me and ridiculed me for being so foolish as to do and believe as I did, for I would divide anything I had or stop my work any time to go help another in need, even to great loss to myself financially; but it was a pleasure to me, and I thought they would appreciate what I did and recognize the fact that it was God who put the love to do those things in my heart, and that they would love and honor him for being such a good and kind Friend to guide into the way of truth and right; but to my surprise and great sorrow, in most cases, I found it was like casting pearls before swine, for they took what I gave readily enough, but in place of loving me they turned against me and made sport of the easy way in which I was imposed upon. This was a sore trial to me, for I had not then learned that there was a people who did not know God, therefore could not love him, for it is impossible to love one whom we do not know, and it is impossible to

know God and not love him, for he is love, and since it seems to have been a trait of my nature all through life to try to comfort and help those who were and are in sorrow or distress in temporal things, I am made to wonder why it is, if it is an earthly trait of character, that the worldly people do not appreciate that kind of disposition; but when I look around me and see the people who are considered worthy of note by those of the world, I find they are the ones who get all they can and keep all they get, unless they expect big returns, either financially or in the way of selfish pleasure, and I find that I did a very unwise thing. I heard an old soldier, one who was in the Rebellion, say that the best way to stop soldiers when they stampeded was to run with them for awhile, then you could more easily prevail on them to turn about face. I did not then realize that the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them. It was so plain to me, and so dear and sweet, that I verily supposed if they would only let me explain it to them they could see the beauty and grandeur of it, and I knew, or at least was so sure, that if I could get them to see and understand it as I did they would as hungrily and thirstily suck the honey from the rock and the water from the flinty rock as I did, for it was O so sweet to me, and I wanted every one else to drink from the precious fountain of life that I had found in the knowledge that Christ was my Savior, having redeemed me with his own precious blood from the lost and ruined condition which I was in by reason of being a child of Adam. I could see that it was thus fixed by prearrangement by the same God who had created heaven and earth without matter or material, and had commanded light to shine out of darkness. I felt that that light had shined in my heart, and had given me the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. I could see all of God's glory was in the face and form of Jesus Christ; he had become the chiefest among ten thousand and the One altogether lovely to me. I was awakened to the fact that the time had come when we could "not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest," and it was quite a disappointment to me; yet I wanted them to know it, so I tried to run with them in their sports, and left off talking of the sweet comfort and joy it was to me to feel that Jesus was my Savior, hoping that when I had endeared myself to them by associating with and taking part in their sports, that when I talked with them then they would listen and understand, and turn and go with me, but I tell you I got into a place that was hard to get out of, for I never could find a convenient time nor a fitting or suitable place to call a halt without breaking our friendship, and I felt that that would spoil the great work which I had started out to do, which was to catch them with guile; but I discovered to my sorrow that they had caught me, and that it was only the voice of the devil leading me on, for when I found out the truth they were even while I was mingling with them in their sports holding me in contempt as a hypocrite, and when they found out what I was after (for I finally told them) they dropped me very quickly, and it was a great relief to me, for I had become convinced by reading the Scriptures and comparing them with my own experience that salvation was something that could not be peddled, for I read in Eph. ii. 8:

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." I compared this with the words of our Savior, where he said that he came not to do his own will, but the will of his Father, and this is his will, that of all that the Father had given him he should lose nothing, but raise it up at the last day; and all that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. But they shall all be taught of the Lord (not of man), and great shall be the peace of thy people. This gave me great comfort, for by these and many other portions of Scripture I was fully convinced that God's children were safe in his hands. This all occurred after I had joined the church and was baptized, and it caused me much sorrow and fear, believing I had joined the church too soon, but looking at it now, if I had waited until I became a fit subject I would certainly have been still outside, and unless there be a great purifying change I never will be fit, for it seems that I am more unfit every day, and His mercy seems to grow greater as I grow less worthy. I have a hope, sometimes faint, and sometimes brighter than the noonday sun, that he has not cast me off, but still cares for me, for when I am suffering in the furnace of affliction, when the fires are the hottest, he is with me, O so near me that it is a joy to be tried when his dear presence is so near, and when the deep waters of adversity flow over me with their threatenings of destruction his everlasting arms are underneath me to hold me up, and his outstretched hand is ever leading me away from earth and its deceitful allurements until I get so happy in him that I long to fly away. This life is full of trouble; yes, how true the declaration, "Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble;" but O how light these trials seem compared with the joy which is eternal, when all tears shall be wiped away.

May God bless the dear editors and the household of faith everywhere.

In bonds of christian love,

DAVIS BURCH.

PROSPECT, Ohio, Aug. 5, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—It does me good to hear so many contending for the old path, salvation by grace alone. I have been traveling that much despised road seventy-three years in December, 1912. I have been told time and again that it would not be long before there would be no Old School Baptists on earth, but I have told them that when the last Old Baptist was called away from earth time would be no more. I will be eighty-five years of age the last of September, and cannot be here much longer. I have been a reader of the SIGNS sixty years, and I still contend for the doctrine it holds forth: the predestination of all things, and the vital union of Christ and his people; these are glorious truths. Inclosed you will find a letter written by brother Stevens to me. You are at liberty to publish it in the SIGNS if according to your judgment. I would like to have you tell us how that little sister can raise her children. It seems as though I can see something in it, but cannot tell it. Perhaps you cannot understand what I have written, it is written in such a blundering way. Please throw the mantle of charity over all mistakes.

Your unworthy sister,

RACHEL SCHULTZ.

DELAWARE, Ohio, Jan. 7, 1912.

DEAR SISTER SCHULTZ:—Your card is received and I will try to write a few lines

in answer, and let you know my address. I have often thought of you since I last saw you. I missed you at the meeting, and somehow I have been impressed to write to you, yet I do not know that I can write anything that will prove of interest to you. Now that I have my pen in hand there is a subject in my mind of which I have thought for some time, yet I do not feel that I can explain it, but will mention it, and perhaps you can explain it for me. We read in the last chapter of the Song of Solomon, "We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for? If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver: and if she be a door, we will inclose her with boards of cedar." Well, I am not able to explain this, but will only tell you what it makes me think of and then leave my thoughts with you. The natural mind would by this language conceive of a poor, little, deformed sister, so very unattractive that any one would hardly pay any attention to her, much less think of speaking for her. Who would want her? Now that is just about the way the carnal mind would think of the church of our Lord Jesus Christ. The natural mind cannot see any beauty in her, because the natural mind cannot receive the things of the Spirit, neither can it know them, because they are spiritually discerned. This is the reason that the carnal mind cannot know or see the beauty of this little sister. It is clear to me that she is the church of God. Solomon was one of the kings which were set over the Jewish kingdom, and unto that people were given the oracles of God; but still, when the Savior came to his own, the Jews, his own, received him not. Even after the Savior had been crucified, having fulfilled every jot and tittle of the law, and risen a triumphant conqueror over death, hell and the grave, and the day of Pentecost had fully come, and he had sent the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, and the visible church had been set up, there were still Jews that did not believe. So also when Paul and Barnabas preached at Antioch, and when on the Sabbath there came almost the whole city together to hear the word of the Lord, and when the Jews saw the multitudes they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which had been spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming, then we are told Paul and Barnabas waxed bold and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed." Right here is where it seems to me this little sister comes in. It is the bringing in of the Gentiles to a hope in the Savior, and to the visible church.

"Ye Gentile sinners, ne'er forget
The wormwood and the gall;
Go spread your trophies at his feet,
And crown him Lord of all."

Thus, sister Schultz, since we have the evidence of the Gentiles being brought into a lively hope and sharing in this spiritual kingdom, or in other words, being heirs of God and joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ, who came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, and since we have been made to see our own deformity, our weakness and our sinfulness, and our inability to do anything without the Master, have we not

right to hope and trust in him? But the Jews stirred up the devout and honorable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. So this little sister, and the devout and honorable, and the chief of the city, could not dwell together, because it is written, "Israel then shall dwell in safety alone." The path in which this little sister goes the vulture's eye hath not seen, nor the young lion trodden, nor hath the fierce lion passed by. So we need not fear those beasts of prey which prowl around in the dark, but looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, let us press forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Now may God bless, strengthen, comfort and uphold you, and cause you to feed on his word all the rest of your journey. Remember me in your prayers.

L. C. STEVENS.

AUGUST 5, 1912.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have a portion of the experience of sister Rachel Schultz, which she wrote years ago. I told her that I thought she ought to send it to the SIGNS, and as she has given it to me I submit it to you. She is the only remaining charter member of the Pleasant Hill Church.

Yours in hope,

L. C. STEVENS.

DELAWARE, Ohio, Jan. 30, 1893.

DEAR BROTHER STEVENS:—If indeed one so unworthy as I feel myself to be may thus address you. As you requested me to give a reason of the hope which I have, I will in my weakness try to tell you what the Lord has done for me. I was born Sept. 30th, 1827, in Berlin township, Delaware County. My parents were Baptists, but for some cause my father became deranged and was taken to Cincinnati, and there died, leaving my mother with six little children in this cold-hearted world. In her circumstances she could not keep us together. My lot was cast among Baptist people, and this my relatives now say was the reason that I became a Baptist. This I must leave with the Lord; but one thing I do know, viz., that they did not teach me religion. I was in my twelfth year when, as I humbly hope and trust, it pleased the Lord to show me that I was a lost and ruined sinner in the sight of the just and holy God. All the sin that I had ever committed rose up before me, and I was made to cry to the Lord for mercy. While in this condition I was standing upon the banks of the river, close by where I lived, beholding the ordinance of baptism. I thought the water looked beautiful for all but me. I cannot find words to express my feelings. When I returned to the house, one of the converts asked me how I felt being left alone. Dear brethren and sisters, tongue can never tell the sorrow that then filled my poor soul. I sank down in a chair and wept bitterly. As soon as I could rise I went upstairs and took the hymn-book to see if I could find anything in it to relieve my troubled mind, but I found no relief; all I could say was, "God be merciful to me a sinner." It seemed as if my doom was sealed, and that hell was my portion. I was in this condition three weeks, with no rest day or night. I well remember the morning that I was delivered from my troubles, if indeed I am not a deceived mortal. I arose in the morning feeling very badly. It seemed as if I must sink to rise no more, and as I walked out in the orchard I thought I would beg of the Lord once

more to have mercy upon my soul. All at once, as it were, I heard a voice behind me saying, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." I turned to see who it was that spoke to me, exclaiming, "Lord, I believe." The joy that then filled my poor heart can never be told, and how I got back to the house I can never tell. When I got into the house I began to tell what great things the Lord had done for me, and thought that I would be happy the rest of my days; but how mistaken I was, soon doubts and fears came. I thought that I could hardly wait until the next meeting, for I wanted to follow my Lord and Master in baptism. Still I went on rejoicing, and when the time came I told the church as well as I could what I hoped the Lord had done for me. I was received, and the next day, the third Sunday in December, 1839, was baptized by Elder Benjamin Martin. I then thought that I would spend the rest of my days in praising the Lord for what he had done for me, but O how disappointed I have been. Doubts and fears came into my mind, and I feared I was deceived and had deceived the people of God. Thus I have lived about fifty-four years, between fear and hope, and hope and fear, yet, amidst all my fears and doubts, I can truly adopt the language of Ruth to Naomi: "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried." Since I first received a hope I have passed through many sore afflictions, but the Lord has delivered me out of them all. We, a little handful of God's people, have had our names cast out as evil because we would not suffer the order of God's house to be trodden under foot. We were cast into the streets, and the door was bolted against us by those who profess to be Old School Baptists. But praise the Lord, his promises have abided, that he will never leave nor forsake his children. In this I feel well assured that we have seen his word verified.

Your sister,

RACHEL SCHULTZ.

TOUCHET, Wash., June, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—It has been some time since I troubled you for space in the good old SIGNS to speak a word of encouragement to its dear readers, who are the subjects represented in the text of which I wish to write, and which, if in your minds you deem it prudent, I desire that you should publish; if not, however, all will be right with me. The text is this: Jesus said, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." This I understand to be addressed to his disciples, concerning the abolishing of the old covenant and the bringing in of the new. This cutting off is of the legal worshipers, and those that abide are they who were chosen in him before the world was, which I will try to show later. First, the very term, "true vine," carries with it the thought that there is a false vine, even though no other Scripture should teach it; and further, if there were not another vine his saying to the same characters that they should know the true Vine by the fruit, would be useless and vain. Now, he being the true Vine, and ye (the ones who were to bear fruit abundantly and so glorify him) the branches, the quality and amount of the fruit must depend upon the

vine, for the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, as he said. This we will notice later. He said, "My Father is the husbandman." Jesus said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." In this we see how helpless the branch is (when considered alone or by itself) to bear fruit to the glory of God, for that glory depends upon the fruit. Now it seems to me that this plain statement should convince any child of God, or branch of the Vine, that boasting is excluded.

Now I wish to notice the manner of the fruit by which the branches are to glorify God. It was the kind of fruit that he ordained that they should bring forth, and which he said should remain. By this we must understand that it was a good keeping kind, and it certainly was a preserved fruit. There is too much here to get into one article, and I am compelled to leave off many things and notice only the main ones. First, I will say there is a vital relation between the branch and the Vine. This I know is stoutly fought against by some, yet the illustration or figure used by the Savior teaches this fact naturally. The natural branch does not come from any outside substance and connect itself to the vine, but when the proper time comes, or the springtime, we see coming forth from the vine first the bud, which in time develops into a branch, and by the life relation this branch is a part of the vine, and its growth and fruit depend solely on the vine. Now it seems to me that the fact of the necessity of the abiding of the branch in the Vine, which is Jesus, is clearly shown by the words of the Savior: "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." Some seem to think that this abiding in the Vine depends upon us, but I can see no more of conditions in our abiding in him than there is in the branch abiding in the vine. But I see the same fact taught concerning our abiding in Christ that is taught concerning the natural branch abiding in the vine, and this fact is that the life of the natural branch is the same life that is in the vine, and it is the nature and life of that vine that develops the branch when the proper time comes. The life that is in the branch is just as old as the life of the vine. It seems to me that the relation between Christ and his people is made manifest in this lesson. If we can find out how old the Vine is, I will tell you how old the branches are in the life which is in them. As every branch of the vine naturally was wrapped up in the vine, and hid in its life, so also every heir of God was hid in Christ before the foundation of the world, in life union with him, and they all are made manifest in time according to the will of the Father; for he is the husbandman, and he said, I am God, and beside me there is no Savior, and being sovereign in all his divine attributes, declared the end from the beginning. He in his wisdom saw all the wrath that Satan could arm himself and all his followers with against this Vine, but in his omnipotent power he declared, "I will do all my pleasure," and, as said the blessed Jesus, his pleasure was that of all whom God had given to his Son he should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. Jesus said, "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you." God is not willing that any shall perish, but that all shall glorify him. He also said, "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

Now I have noticed the character of the husbandman, and of the vine with its branches, and I desire also to taste and see the fruit that the Father is much pleased with. "Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." If not acquainted with the manner of this fruit we are liable to be mistaken. The disciples were to bring forth this fruit that should remain. To be brief, I will notice John, the forerunner of Christ. He was enabled to say, "Behold the Lamb of God." Was not such knowledge glorious? How sweet to my soul is a taste of this knowledge! This same branch, John, sent to Christ. Why did he send to him? Because he was in prison, which was not so pleasant to him. I will call this the purging of John. The intent was that he should bear more fruit. Not only in our bright moments are we to glorify God, but even in the dungeon John showed that his mind and heart were toward Christ. The same is true of his people to-day. When the mind and heart are enveloped in darkness, our message is to God, to ask whether or not we have been deceived in our past evidence, which we have tasted of the goodness of the Lord, and in this purging the double portion which Israel received is verified. How precious then is the message (fruit) to our taste. He said, "Shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." O how sweet is this renewed evidence! It is the twelve manner of fruits which John saw upon the tree of life. This tree or vine yields her fruit every month, that is, all the time. There never is a time when the Vine is not present with the branches; at home, on the land, on the sea, in the fiery furnace, he is there. This is the method of the Husbandman to purge away the dross which we, the branches, have in us by nature, and which we cannot purge away. But this dross must be purged out to give the Spirit's perfect work room to develop in that rich and alluvious plain which is called in inspiration by the name of charity, or love, which one of the ancients described in language like this: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" These brethren are the branches of the Vine, and this ancient saying is confirmed now by ourselves, the present branches. How we long to go up to the vineyard of the Lord when all the branches of the true Vine are bending under the weighty load of grapes, such as humility, &c. How sweet to our taste are these fruits! In these fruits we see the precious promise of the true Vine: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." The soul is made fat, and the life is drawn from the Vine. Bless the Lord, O my soul. Bless him, all that is within me. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the true Vine, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

Now here, brethren, we learn how all things work together for our good, because it is God, the Husbandman, who works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. Here also we are made to see how needful it is for us to be with him, the true Vine. It is through this suffering, or purging, that the glorious fruit of

reigning with him is borne. It is in this purging that the knowledge of the life of the true Vine is made manifest in this life. Ye shall have tribulation, but in me, the true Vine, ye shall have peace. How glorious is this fruit of peace! All boasting in the flesh is excluded through this purging. Then, like the apostle, we can say, Let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord. The fruit of this Vine is unfailing, but here, dear brethren, we have but a foretaste. What shall the fullness be but life evermore? Amen.

Yours in hope of this promise,

J. T. BARNES.

CANNON, Del., Dec. 31, 1911.

ELDER F. A. CHICK:—I have thought for some time past I would write you a letter and tell you how I have enjoyed reading your editorials in the SIGNS, but have put it off, thinking it would only be an intrusion upon you, but when I read your last, headed "New Year's Greeting," it seemed the desire was increased, so I am making the attempt. What interested me most in this article was when you mentioned that there is much in our hearts that we did not believe was there until it was made manifest, and how you had gone over your garden and pulled up or cut off every weed that you saw, and in a few days would see other weeds spring up. Now I say this does indeed interest me; it brings to my mind the experience of David when he said that many sins had laid hold upon him, so that he could not look up. Could any words better convey the feelings of the Lord's people than those above? I think not. I remember a time during the year which is now closing when I felt I was about the worst creature that ever lived. It seemed to me that there was no spiritual life in me at all, and that I surely was mistaken in my experience. Wicked thoughts would enter into my mind, and I recall how I wanted to be delivered from that awful state of mind, but, like David, I could not raise my head, and if I attempted to pray, sin was mixed with all I did. I remember when retiring on a certain night I was fearful that the Lord would leave me to myself, and I might at last be a castaway, or that I might commit some terrible crime, for I realized that I still had an evil heart, and unless restrained by some higher power I was liable to do terrible things. When I awoke the next morning these words were in my mind, and they were the first thoughts I had when I became conscious: "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." I seemed to learn something; I had never thought anything about this Scripture before that I remembered, but it seemed to me that I saw it was needful that the Lord's people should be tried, for the more they see of their own corruption the more beautiful Jesus becomes, and they learn to say with the apostle, "By the grace of God I am what I am." This Scripture also conveys the feelings of the elect family, for all will say that

"'Twas all of thy grace we were brought to obey,
While others were suffered to go
The road which by nature we chose as our way,
Which leads to the regions of woe."

Thus they learn to sing the song of the redeemed, and this song is forever new; it is the song of salvation by grace. The apostle says, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." There is no boasting by the Lord's people, all boasting is done away. One of old said, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." They

are allowed to glory in that, they cannot be kept from it. Self has been tried, but was not successful. This brings to our minds the time when the apostle was put in prison for preaching the gospel. Is it not interesting to read this Scripture? Interesting because it proves that there is nothing too hard for Israel's God. He provided a ram to be slain in Isaac's stead. But perhaps I am reaching out too far. I want to speak a few words in reference to the weeds which you mentioned as coming up in your garden, and in order that I may get at what is in my mind I will try in my weakness to present a few thoughts concerning a garden. When any one thinks of making a garden he first selects a piece of ground which he thinks best adapted to the purpose. He does not select a hard piece of ground, as it would not be a good place for a garden, but he selects a piece of ground which is porous and humid. Next he incloses it. "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed."—Solomon's Song iv. 12. After this the garden is made fertile. No expense is spared to make the ground rich if it is owned by a good gardener. Now let us notice what the gardener has in mind when he is doing this work. First he considers what he will plant in his garden, and he makes the garden large enough to have room for what he will plant, and no larger. Now in this garden he leaves a walk in the middle, reaching from one end of the garden to the other. This walk is for the gardener, that he may walk in this way and look upon his beautiful plants. Surely every gardener delights in this. But before he can see these plants grow they must be planted, as they cannot come into this garden without being brought there. Now the garden is ready to be planted. The winter is over and gone, the time of the singing of birds is come. On one side of my garden, he says, I will plant all kinds of vegetables, and on the other side I will plant all manner of fruits and shrubbery. The seeds have all been planted, and the gentle rain has fallen upon the garden, and the warm sun has shined upon it and caused the plants to come forth and grow. But something more is needful in order that the plants may grow. As you said in your article, you pulled up or cut off every weed that was visible, but in a few days you would see other weeds. Now, the reason for this is, the ground is corrupt; that is, it is full of wild growing plants. Now the garden has been made fertile and will grow beautiful crops with a good season; but if this garden is not constantly watched the tares, or weeds, will grow and root out the vegetables and precious fruits. But the good husbandman watches his garden and keeps the tares cut off or pulled up, and the more fertile the ground the larger the weeds will grow. It seems to me this garden resembles the church of the living God. As the good husbandman watches over his garden to see that the wild growth does not retard the growth of the plants and precious fruits, so in like manner does Jesus come into his garden in the walkway in the midst of the church, and he makes a way of escape for his tempest-tossed people. How many have felt that the hope which they have received would be at last taken from them, that Satan would at last gain the victory; but Jesus, the Husbandman, the good Shepherd, is watching his own, and brings to naught the work of Satan for awhile. But after awhile Satan begins to appear in another form, and he must be subdued again and again, and let us remember that Jesus

alone can subdue him. Jesus has power over evil spirits, and when he says, Get thee hence, they obey. What a comforting thought!

But I see that I have written lengthily, and will ask you to excuse this intrusion, as I only thought I would write a few lines to tell you how I was comforted by reading your editorial.

Yours in hope,

A. T. BENSON.

WESTON, Mich., May 14, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In looking through the old family Bible I came across a letter that my dear departed husband wrote in 1887 to Elder J. H. Biggs, but for some reason never sent it. Thinking it might be of comfort to some poor soul as it has been to me, I would like to see it published in the dear old SIGNS, if not asking too much. He is gone, but not forgotten.

From one of the least of all God's children, if one at all,

(MRS.) T. J. WYMAN.

WESTON, Mich., July 3, 1887.

ELDER BIGGS—DEAR BROTHER:—Since I have been acquainted with you I have been of the firm conviction that you are one of those that may be deemed a father in the Israel of God, one that has been tried in the furnace of affliction, that you may know what is the order of God's house, and also to minister comfort and consolation to the weary pilgrims from Egypt to the promised land; one that has been in the crucible of God's furnace of fire, that you may admonish the church of God to beware of the concision of the flesh; yes, and have been called to go down into deep affliction, to do work in deep waters, that your God may be honored and his name glorified, and his saints comforted and built up on their most holy faith, that they may be edified in the things of God, for he has ascended up on high and received gifts for men, and the rebellious also. Who are the rebellious? None other, dear brother, than you and I, together with all the true servants of God. O how good the Lord is to remember mercy to such rebellious, wicked and sinful mortals. O what a blessed truth that our God changes not, but is longsuffering and of tender compassion. Sore trials and deep afflictions are not joyous, but grievous, but they keep us from going astray. When our souls are in deep trouble we are made to cry unto the Lord, like Peter, Save, I perish. Yes, dear brother, the Lord thus far has delivered us from the jaws of the bear and the lion. How many times in our return we have found honey in the carcass. Our dear Lord can make bitter sweet, yea, make us to rejoice even in affliction. May it be remembered by all of the household of faith that they are chosen in the furnace of affliction, and that all their doubts and sore trials are for their good, for the trial of their faith, which is more precious than gold.

Dear brother, the visit that I enjoyed at your place with the dear brethren and sisters I remember with pleasure; I shall never forget their kindness, hospitality and brotherly love to one so poor and unworthy, less than the least of all saints, if one at all. I do feel that I can say of a truth that the dear brethren at Pleasant Hill have won my affection because of their love for the blessed truth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. From your place I went to Mount Sterling, where I found Elder Bavis, with whom there was no compromise with error. This is the way, walk ye in it. I went,

in company with brother Bavis, to their place of worship, and tried to preach with the ability the Lord gave. When I was done, Elder Martin, of Pleasant Hill, followed with another discourse. The next day, which was Sunday, I again tried to preach. I there formed a very pleasant and pleasing acquaintance with quite a number of the dear people of God. I there met with sister Yeoman, whose name has appeared in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Truly I can say that I had a pleasant season with those dear saints of God. From Mount Sterling I journeyed south until I reached Cincinnati. From there I crossed the Ohio River and landed in the hill country of Ludlow, Ky. I there met with Elder Peter Sawin and his wife, sister Sawin, and from the time I met with them until I parted with them our whole conversation almost was of and concerning the doctrine and the dealings of God with his dear children. I have faith to believe that brother Sawin has drank of the cup of affliction, that he also has been in the furnace that separates the dross from the pure metal, and has come forth as gold that is tried in the fire. In afflictions we learn obedience. On Sunday evening, after returning from meeting with brother Sawin to Ludlow, at brother Helms', where there was an appointment for me to preach, I met Elder George Weaver, and after trying to preach a short discourse I had the privilege of hearing that dear old servant of God proclaim the riches of God's grace with power, to the comfort of God's people and praise to the name of our exalted Head, the Lord, our righteous Judge and King, which made my poor soul rejoice and take courage, for it seemed that he entered into my feelings and told my experience and travel of mind much better than I can tell it myself. Truly it was a season of rejoicing, a feast of fat things to me. Indeed, there is nothing in all the realms of nature that is to be compared with the real spiritual enjoyment of the presence of our blessed Master.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

There is nothing more comforting to a poor, sinful mortal than when he can comfort and solace himself in the glorious doctrine of his adorable Redeemer. When we can truly feel that the blood of the everlasting covenant has been applied as a healing balm to our poor souls, then what ecstasy of joy and love is poured forth from God's little ones because of his great love to such poor, sinful, vile and polluted creatures as we are.

"Ye souls that are weak, and helpless, and poor,
Who know not to speak, much less to do more,
Lo, here's a foundation for comfort and peace;
In Christ is salvation, the kingdom is his."

T. J. WYMAN.

KELLER, Texas, August 3, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Reading the SIGNS for August 1st, 1912, I was touched by the announcement of the death of sister Elizabeth H. Boggs. However this information was not altogether unexpected, considering her great age, yet it was a shock to me. I was one of the presbytery or council that helped to organize the first Old School Baptist Church, at our beloved brother Dawson's home, on the Vermejo River, near Mount View, New Mexico, some sixteen or seventeen years ago. That was my first acquaintance with sister Lizzie Boggs and her sister, Mary J. Boggs, whom to know was to love for their piety, christian faithfulness and devotion to their heavenly Master. Both were wonderfully gifted in understanding of Bible doctrine

and in exercises of the faith of God's elect, which endeared them to me in the precious fellowship of the blessed Son of God. Several times after the constitution of the church I visited them to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, which they appreciated, giving glory to God, the author and finisher of their faith. Their conversation was cheering and strengthening to me, a poor, tired servant, making me feel free and welcome in their home, and to realize with the inspired writer, "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." I thought it would not be out of place to give a brief expression of my appreciation of the sincerity, firmness and untiring godly zeal so commendable in the exemplary walk of the two sisters. They will long live in the hearts of the Old School Baptists, particularly among their relatives, brethren and friends of the east. The sad news of her death filled my heart with emotions of joy and sorrow, but now their rest is glorious in the eternal city of light. I was glad that sister Lizzie was favored to return to her old home church, to abide with her niece and loving friends the few remaining days on earth. They all have my deepest sympathy in their affliction.

I will close with the first and last verses of hymn 1247 (Beebe's collection):

"When languor and disease invade
This trembling house of clay,
'Tis sweet to look beyond our cage,
And long to fly away.

If such the sweetness of the streams,
What must the fountain be?
Where saints and angels draw their bliss
Immediately from thee."

Affectionately,

ASA HOWARD.

MONROE, Ga., April 8, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—As my subscription is due I feel to write a few lines for the SIGNS, that my kindred in Christ may know that I am still living and enjoying the precious doctrine of God our Savior, who came into the world to save sinners, of whom I feel to be chief, without the aid even of the great religious movement that now seems to be spreading the light. But the light that seemed to put Saul's eyes out for three days, so he could not see his way to go on to Damascus, hence had to be led, also took his appetite, changed his meeting place and caused him to declare that God had delivered him from the power of darkness and translated him into the kingdom of his dear Son. It also made him cry, "O wretched man that I am!" I feel to contend that the light which this religious movement is spreading is not that Light which came down from heaven, and it does not have this effect upon men. It may be darkness that men take for light; there can be such a mistake made, according to the Scriptures. When this beautiful April sunshine can be bottled up and saved for some cold, dark, rainy night, and spread out upon this world, I may join in the work. But the Light that shines in the heart makes us see so much imperfection that it makes us cry daily, asking for help to walk in the good and right way. I wish I could meet with you all again at your associations this spring and enjoy that hospitality and christian love and fellowship that I feel is in store for me could I be there. I feel that I have an interest in all that you all have or ever will have. There is a love that binds us very closely together, our hopes and cares are one. I hope some time in the future to meet with you again. May the Lord lead, guide and direct us in the good old way.

Your brother in hope,

J. M. ADAMS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1912.

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ROMANS VII. 23.

"But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."

This is the summing up by the apostle Paul of all that he had before said concerning the inward warfare which was continually going on within him, and in his life as a believer in and follower of Christ. Since this warfare was continually going on in him, it could never have been long absent from his thoughts. A thorn rankling in the flesh must ever make itself felt in the consciousness of a man. One may not always be talking about it, but he will always be conscious of it, and be distressed by it. Paul, and with him every subject of the grace of God, must be reminded of this conflict under all the circumstances of their lives, therefore believers will be often complaining, as did Paul, that they are distressed, and hindered from doing the good that they would. Some reflections are in our mind concerning what the Scriptures say about this warfare. Some questions have also been presented to us by some brethren of late, of which it is our mind to speak.

First. It is sure that only the living in Zion ever know anything about this inward strife. Paul himself did not here speak of his former life as a Pharisee and an enemy of Christ, but of his present life as a believer. There had never been any warfare of two opposing forces while he was yet dead in sins, but now there had come into his person another life. Formerly there had dwelt in him but one man, viz., the man of sin, now another man, the man of God, the Spirit of Christ, had been given him to dwell within him, and between these two there was of necessity a warfare. The same is true of every man who has ever been called by grace. If any of us are servants of God, as was Paul, it is sure that we shall also feel and know the warfare which was his. There never has been a child of God of any length of experience who, when he reads what Paul has said about himself as regards this warfare, does not feel at once to say, Here is a man who knows what I feel. Many questions have arisen about just what Paul intended by some of his expressions regarding this warfare, but there never has been one single-hearted distressed child of God who could not say as he read this seventh chapter of Romans, Paul must have felt just as I feel, and who has not been convinced that he and Paul knew the same troubles within. Before much knowledge comes to a young believer, he, finding that he is still fallible and erring, will become almost convinced that he has been mistaken in the whole matter of his hope, but when he begins to find what the Scriptures say about the warfare in the believer, he will find that he is realizing just what Paul and others realized, and so his hope will still spring up, and once more will he overcome through faith. He will then learn that the warfare, instead of being an evidence that he is not a child of God, is full evidence that he is. Natural men do not complain that they cannot do the good that they

would, but this is the common complaint of all who believe.

In the second place, this warfare is not between the mind and the body, as some have seemed to think, but the mind and the body, making up the man, are together the field of the combat. This will, we think, appear when we recall what Paul has said about the man, and the two opposing natures in him. In the very connection of the text Paul often introduces himself under the pronoun "I," and then speaks of two opposing things within himself. On the one hand is "sin," or the law of evil, "another law," "warring against the law of his mind," "the body of death," and similar expressions. On the other hand, we find the expressions, "the inward man," and "the law of my mind." In other places we read of "the new man" and "the old man," "the law in the members," and "the law in the mind," "the flesh and the Spirit," and similar expressions. All these expressions set forth two opposing forces in the man, each striving for the mastery over the man. In this man, composed of soul, body and spirit, according to the testimony of the apostle, these two forces strive each to lead the man in its own way. This man is exhorted by the apostle to put off the old man and to put on the new man. This simply signifies that the man is exhorted to follow the will of the Spirit, and to turn away from following the will of the flesh. It is man, the believer, who is addressed in these exhortations. The old man is not told to put on the new man, neither is the new man told to put off the old man, but believers, such as Paul, James or any brother or sister who may be addressed, is told to put off the one and to put on the other. Put off the flesh and put on the spirit, put off the law in the members and put on the law of the mind. Whatever expressions Paul may use to describe these opposing forces, he always means the same two things, viz., the evil on the one hand, and the good on the other, which both dwell in the subjects of grace.

In the third place, as said before, the warfare is not between the renewed mind and the old body. The apostle does not mean, when in the last verse of this chapter he says, With the mind I serve the law of God and with the flesh the law of sin, any such thing as this. By the term "flesh" he does not mean this visible body, which one day will be laid away in the grave, and by the term "mind" he does not mean that power which we all, whether saint or sinner, have, by which we think, feel, will or perform any other mental act. The body has no power to act in any way, either for good or evil, if left without the guidance of the mind. If the hand moves, it is in obedience to a power in the mind which wills that it shall so move. If in any man the feet go to the house of evil, or to the house of God, if the hands commit murder, or minister to the needy, if the tongue speaks blasphemy, or if it ministers to suffering hearts the words of God, on both sides these members of the body are acted upon by a controlling will which is located in the mind. If the mind be wholly evil in its nature, then the members of the body will work only evil in obedience to the depraved will of the mind, but if the mind be made pure, and knows nothing but love and good will toward men, and love and reverence toward God, then the members of the body will be controlled in that direction. If the mind be single, then the course of the members of the body will be single, but if the course of the body be double, it is because the mind is also double. When Paul therefore

says, "With the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin," he intends by the mind to set forth the truth that there is now a power, a new man, a law in the mind, within him, that seeks that which is holy, and leads to the service of God and the good of men, while by the "flesh" he intends to set forth that which elsewhere he calls "the old man," or the "law in my members," which is opposed to righteousness and God.

In the fourth place, the mind is torn asunder and divided in its allegiance, just as is the body. These two opposing forces are striving against each other to control the mind, the heart and the affections, as well as to control the deeds of the body. Where is there a subject of this warfare who will not confess that not only is his body often sluggish in the service of God, or in obeying his commandments, but that also his affections grow cold, his heart fails to be moved at the word of the Lord, and anger, impatience, jealousy, malice, unbelief, with all the host of evils, often rise up within him? All these are qualities of the mind, and the warfare of the Spirit is against these passions of the mind, as well as against the weaknesses and sluggishness of the flesh. Sometimes the mind may be willing when the body is wearied, but how often do we have to confess that many times when the body is not at all wearied we yet find ourselves unwilling to do the things which we are commanded of God to do. Who does not suffer under a wretched wandering mind, as well as a sluggish body? There is a struggle within us to turn the mind away from the service of God. We often find ourselves taken up, not with thoughts of Him, and love to his name, but with desires after pride and vainglory. Are not all these things acts of the mind, rather than of the body? Is not the love of the world an inhabitant of the mind? By these things it seems to us clear that the warfare within comes closer home than between the mind and the outward body. It is in the mind and heart; it is a strife between two principles in the mind and heart themselves, and the consequence is that we all must complain of a divided heart and mind and will, as well as of inability to do the things that are holy. He who works in us to do his will must also work in us to know his will, and to have a will to do God's will at all. But how often are we aware that even our desire, our will after God, is divided. The warfare, then, is not between this body and our mind, but it is in the mind itself, as well as in the body, so that neither mentally nor physically can we do the thing that we would.

Fifth. It is this warfare that causes distress in the believer. It is because he cannot think of God as he desires, nor love him as he desires, nor fear him as he desires, nor even lift up his desires to God after holiness as he desires, that he is so much distressed. How often when bowed in prayer before God he is well-nigh frightened away from the throne of grace by the incoming of all manner of blasphemous thoughts, which arise out of his evil mind and heart, although he hates them. How often are his best moments disturbed by the coming up of the desires of the flesh and of the mind toward evil. Without the mind the body could feel no such desires. The body in itself is but a lump of clay, without life or power to originate anything good or evil, but with the mind dwelling in it it is moved to and fro, either toward good or evil. If, then, after one has come to be a believer he still finds his hands doing that which he abhors, it is because

back of the hands there are abhorrent qualities in the mind and heart which still dwell there, and because the spirit of evil, which still dwells in the mind, fights against the Spirit of God, which has come to dwell there also, and fights, first of all, for the control of the mind, the christian is compelled to mourn because he cannot do, even in his mind, the good that he would. If the mind be changed in the new birth, in the sense that it is no longer possessed of carnality, or of any evil nature, it has long appeared to us that there never could again be any evil thoughts, any envy, hatred, malice and desires for folly, or any grovelings after earthly things in the mind. There is a wonderful change wrought indeed in the new birth, but it is a change that affects the body as well as the mind and heart. If the mind and heart be thus turned toward God and to his service, even so is the body turned, and if the body does not serve God, it is because the mind and heart do not serve him. It is lawful and righteous judgment to say that a man is known by the company he keeps. It is also righteous judgment when we see one who has professed love to God, and has confessed his name in his appointed way, after a little time forsaking the house of the Lord and frequenting places of evil or folly, to say that his body is absent from the house of God, because his heart has grown cold toward that sacred place, and his mind is occupied with the things of the world, and if the Lord ever brings that man to repentance, he will, first of all, be sorrowful over the wretched wandering of his heart and mind which has led his body to go after the world and its vanities. Believers do err from the way, as they all confess. Peter through fear denied his Lord. His lips denied him, but first his heart was fearful, and then his mind decided to seek safety rather than boldly to confess his Savior.

Sixth. So long as we live below will this warfare continue; there will be no cessation until the end of life. Paul could have written this seventh chapter of Romans the last day of his life as well as at the beginning of his travel in the christian pathway; all the way along there was deep heart work with him; he said that he could not do the things that he would. By this he evidently did not mean that he could not preach the gospel, but he meant that in preaching he could not realize a single mind as he desired. He could give a cup of cold water to a disciple, but in doing so he could not feel that he was doing it without some selfishness arising within him. It was that which was within him that spoiled the ointment of the apothecary. Paul could minister of his substance to the needy, but he felt that he could not do it as he desired to; that is, with an absence of all thought of self. Ministers to-day can preach, sometimes with great freedom of mind and utterance, and have evidence that some are blessed under their ministry, but to them the service is spoiled by the knowledge that within themselves has arisen a spirit to seek applause of men. These are the things which make up the chief stress of the warfare. But still there is one supreme consolation, viz., that there is a desire that it should not be so, and a looking forward to the hour of full discharge from this warfare, and to waking with His likeness; then, like David, shall we be satisfied. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MATTHEW XXV. 30.

(Continued from page 572.)

"BUT and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken." How striking the contrast! The servant whom Christ approves is watchful, faithful and diligent in the most darksome and trying times, but the other, like an eye-servant, assures himself that his lord delayeth his coming, chooseth for himself a course of self-gratification and ease, at the expense of the household over which he has been called to watch. In the trying hour, when the conflict becomes intense and violent between the church and the world, or antichrist, in regard to the promise of his coming, in the execution of long predicted and impending judgments, the slothful servant, recreant to his trust, disloyal to his master and treacherous to his fellow-servants, falls to beating them and unites with their enemies, eats and drinks with the drunken. But the scene will soon change, the coming of the day of the Lord will not be delayed; he that is to come will come, and he will not tarry, and at his coming judgment shall prevail. The faithful servants of our Lord will be approved, but the wicked and slothful will not only be exposed and condemned and speechless, unable to utter a word in justification of his course, but will be compelled to share with the enemies of God and truth in the temporal judgments which shall consume the adversaries. His sentence is already written: "Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents." Depose him from the ministry, and let the privileges and gifts pertaining to his position be given to those who will improve them. "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." The execution of this order seems to be given to the church, who in the faithful execution of the discipline of the house of God shall disown, depose and withdraw support, countenance and fellowship from the wicked and slothful servant, and in doing this they shall cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Outer darkness is the opposite of inner light. The light, joy and peace of the people of God are realized in the church of God. "For the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."—Rev. xxi. 23. Expelled from the privileges of the church of Christ, and from the fellowship of the saints, the excluded, if a servant or child of God, is cast into outer darkness and utter wretchedness, "cut asunder," or, as the margin reads, "cut off;" his portion no more with the saints in sweet communion and fellowship, but he takes a miserable portion with hypocrites, with those whom he has been eating and drinking, and a sad portion it must be to one who has ever known the inner joy and blessed light of the house of God. No wonder it is said there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; for while the poor banished servant from his Master's house must weep bitterly when he remembers Zion, the hypocrites into whose society he is cast have no consoling words of comfort, but railing, reproaches and blasphemies. Like salt that has lost its savor, he finds himself good for nothing, but is cast out of the church to be trodden under foot of men.

We are aware that many have understood that this unprofitable servant is de-

signed to represent one who has never been a true servant of God or of the church of Christ, but the whole connection shows that he was. The man in the parable called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods, and to every one according to his several ability. What part of the gifts of the church, goods of the spiritual household of God, or talents for feeding the church of God, has our Lord ever bestowed upon graceless hypocrites? Or what punishment would it be to cast out of the society and fellowship of an orderly church into the society and communion of hypocrites one of their own stamp, who in reality never knew the Lord and never saw the inner light and glory of the church of God? The character here presented is a servant, equally bought with a price and equally bound in duty to obey his master, with those who received the ten and the two talents. If the disciples were not themselves liable to temptations and slothfulness, and to the consequences of rebellion and disorder, why were these parables spoken privately to them? In Rev. xviii. 4, John says, "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, that ye receive not of her plagues." This voice was heard speaking to those who were unquestionably God's people, yet they are admonished that if they partake of the sins of Babylon they shall also receive of her plagues. Of course the plagues spoken of are her temporal judgments, and so also in the case of the destruction of Jerusalem, to which all these parables primarily referred. Those who were admonished that when they should see the signs of Christ's coming to destroy Jerusalem they were to flee to the mountains, or participate in the temporal calamities which were to be poured out upon her. And so it is at this very day in which we are now living; the cup of antichrist is nearly filled to its brim; she has slaughtered her hundreds of thousands, and her clergy is still as bloodthirsty as before, and still crying for carnage, and some of God's servants who hold a commission to preach peace on earth and good will toward men are even now evidently eating and drinking with the drunken, and in their mad intoxication are smiting their fellow-servants, who cannot join them in their murderous howlings in consigning their fellow-men to the sword. The admonitions of these parables in thunder tones are addressed to them, admonishing them that the time of her judgment is very near at hand, but from their associations with the drunken, infatuated fanatics of the day they are still assuring themselves that the Lord delays his coming, and are crying peace and safety now, while sudden destruction is near at hand.

> "On wings of vengeance flies our God,
> To pay the long arrears of blood."

The talent of the infatuated and slothful servant, though it be but one, is buried in the earth, or in earthly speculations, delusions and infatuations of the present times, and many have turned away their ears from the truth and are turned unto fables. But as surely as we have correctly understood the fearful import of these solemn warnings, the day is not distant when they shall call for rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. The measure which they are now meting to others shall soon be meted to them again in full measure, heaped up and running over. Let those of God's children who can, put far from their thoughts and apprehensions the evil day, and fortify themselves with their delusions; nevertheless

"That awful day will surely come,
The appointed hour makes haste,
When they shall stand before their Judge,
And pass the solemn test."

We do believe, however much God's redeemed people may have to suffer with the ungodly world for their complicity with antichrist, they shall finally all be saved, yet so as by fire, for however far they may go in wickedness, and deeply suffer in consequence thereof, their spiritual life is hid with Christ in God; yet while here in the flesh, it is equally certain that they that sow to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."—Romans viii. 13, 14.

Our friend Armstrong will understand us to consider the unprofitable servant in the parable to mean an unprofitable servant of Christ, and his punishments to be a suspension of the comforts and privileges of the church, and a participation with hypocrites in the temporal judgments to which they are doomed; and further, that this solemn warning was given privately to the disciples of Christ in special reference to the judgments at that time impending over Jerusalem, and that a record of the same is preserved as an admonition to the servants of Christ in all subsequent time until the end of the world; and what Christ has said to those servants privately on the mount he says also to all his own servants throughout all time: "Watch!" "Watch and be sober." "Take heed that no man deceive you." "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them." "Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."

A day is now most evidently upon us in which the faithful and unfaithful servants of the kingdom of Christ whom he has commissioned to minister to those of his household, and to give them their meat in due season, are being called to a strict reckoning, and the line is now being drawn between those who shun not to declare the whole counsel of God, even at the peril of their lives, and those who prefer to eat and drink with the drunken, and to smite the menservants and the maidservants who remain at their posts; and it will be made fully to appear that those who seek to save their lives by withholding the truth and conniving at error, shall lose their standing as ministers of Christ and be driven into outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; and they who will lay down their life for Jesus' sake shall find it. Servants of the kingdom, beware; spread your banner fearlessly, in the name of your God. Bury not your talent in the earth. Stand boldly forth and contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, and count not your lives dear unto yourselves, that ye may finish your course with joy and the ministry which ye have received to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., September 1, 1865.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by Elder H. C. Ker in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., the second Sunday in October (13th), at the usual hours. All friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder Frederick W. Keene.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Conference, assembled with the church at North Berwick, Maine, to the churches of Christ composing the associations with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—We wish you all new covenant blessings from the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. The revelation of the good pleasure of Jehovah in the gospel of Christ is surpassingly glorious. Are there not moments when wrapt in contemplation of the manifold glories embraced in the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord that our souls are swallowed up in adoring amazement? So beyond what eye hath seen, or ear hath heard, or that which hath entered into the heart of man, is the exhibition of the attributes of God, of the predestined glories, blessedness and exaltation of the church of God, that we may well pray unto the Lord to strengthen us with might by his Spirit in the inner man, that we may continue to contemplate the heights and depths of the mysteries of his grace in his kindness to the church by Christ Jesus. The gospel of the grace of God reveals the good pleasure of the Lord from eternity to eternity. It is as a golden chain, so divinely linked, so immutably strong, not one of the links can ever be broken. Look at this glorious gospel chain that proceeds from the throne of God, reaches through all time, reaches down to earth, encircles the elect of God and ascends up into glory again. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" The things declared in the everlasting gospel are all important and precious, and are felt to be so by those who are taught of God; they are infinitely beyond the speculations that the human race sport themselves in. The wisdom of the world with all its ingenuity has only been able to invent cunningly devised fables, and those who place their hopes in these devices of men will find they have made lies their refuge. Happy is the man that is a believer in Christ Jesus, the Lamb of God; he shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end. So suited are the provisions of Christ's gospel to poor, perishing sinners, and when the mercies of the new covenant are ministered by the Holy Ghost unto us we have indeed everlasting consolation and a good hope through grace; and as we pursue our way to the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God, the gospel is made unto us our meat and our drink, and the one thing that strengthens and sweetens our life in the house of our pilgrimage. The trials of the righteous are many, but amidst them all they are given to prove the preciousness of Christ. Dear brethren, though we are often feeling poor and sinful, and sometimes we are perhaps much tossed about and dejected, we may

be heavy laden and self-condemned, we may be called to walk in darkness, yet we yearn for light; we yearn for intimacy with our holy God, who pardoneth iniquity and passeth by the transgressions of the remnant of his heritage, and though through manifold temptations for a season, if need be, we are in heaviness, languishing and ready to perish, yet we would not exchange places with the self-righteous.

"Boast not, ye sons of earth,
Nor look with curious eyes;
Above your highest mirth
Our saddest hours we prize;
For though our cup seems filled with gall,
There's something secret sweetens all."

The saints of God have no heart with the mere formalist, and gilded hypocrites walking in their vain, deceptive show are not companionable, but their hearts reach forth to those who fear the Lord and walk in his statutes. Our hearts reach out to know more of Christ, to taste more of God's mercy which is shed abundantly upon his loved ones through Jesus Christ our Lord. In our Savior we find that balm to soothe and heal and to bring health and cure and joy to our tried, mourning souls. "Unto you that fear my name [saith the Lord] shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." The Lord God is our Sun and our Shield; in the face of Jesus Christ his glories beam forth. Then if Christ arise and look upon us darkness flies away, the night is past, the glory of the Lord is risen upon us. Yes, it is in our Emmanuel's face that the beauty of Jehovah irradiates, pouring forth life and comfort and healing upon those who fear the name of the Lord. We hope our companionship is with Jesus, in his sufferings and dying, and with him also we are risen, by faith of the operation of God, and walk in newness of life. If for a time our Beloved is veiled from our sight, then disconsolate we wander, for our fair and sweet Lord Jesus is the desire of all regenerate nations, (Haggai ii. 7,) and we shall not be wandering solitarily and alone very long before our bereaved hearts will be crying out, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?" His felt presence is our protection and blessedness, dispersing our gloom, and makes all within us rejoice. On him we often feel to lean, while his melodious voice in our souls drives away our fear and fills us with good cheer. It is Christ's Spirit and doctrine in his people that make them meet companions, and constitutes the bond that unites them, and in all the sweet and comforting companionship that the redeemed of the Lord are blessed with in one another Jehovah Jesus is ever present. He is the center to which we are all attracted, in whom we are all drawn into oneness; our beloved Emmanuel is the chief among ten thousand, and the united voice of all the ransomed company, the ten thousand, proclaim him to be altogether lovely. The apostles Peter and John, when released from prison, "went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them."—Acts iv. 23, and in 1 Cor. v. 11, it is written, "I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat." Thus the members of the church of Christ under the new testament are companions; their companionship is in the precious doctrine of the gospel. When dead in

sins, the heirs of salvation had their companions in the broad way, in the paths of iniquity, but when it pleased God, dear brethren, to call us by his grace, to reveal his Son Jesus Christ in us, we found such associates no longer congenial. We shunned vile company, now so distasteful, so painful to endure. As poor, vile sinners, yet separated from the world, we found ourselves isolated, and not until Jehovah's pardoning love was felt in our souls could we feel fit for the companionship of any one under the sun. Not worthy to rank with Christ's flock, we felt ourselves veiled aside from the companions of the Chief among ten thousand; but when the Holy Spirit favored us to know that our sins were pardoned in the blood of the Lamb, O then it was not presumptuous for our hearts to say, "I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts." The fear of the Lord in our hearts is the sacred bond that unites the children of God, and according to which they live and walk and suffer together. Ruth said to Naomi (for she clave unto her): "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me."—Ruth i. 16, 17. They were truly companions. What a bitter ingredient was that in David's cup of grief when he spake of Ahithophel, saying, "It was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him; but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company."—Psalms lv. 12–14. Precious are those seasons when the saints assemble in sweet accord, in the fellowship of the gospel, and rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord one to another. (Judges v. 11.) They are companions in their joys and sorrows, in prosperity and adversity, "companions in tribulation," (Rev. i. 9,) companions of the persecuted, suffering family of God. (Heb. x. 23.) Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. When such companionship is realized among the redeemed of the Lord their communion one with another will be to edification. In the companionship of sinners called by grace O may we be favored to walk and dwell while sojourning in the world. If an assembly called a church are not companions in the soul-comforting gospel of Christ, then they fail to present the beauty that inseparably belongs to the church of Christ. As fellows, companions in the kingdom of God, the members of the body of Christ will be fellow-helpers, bearing each other's burdens, thus fulfilling the law of Christ. "Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our comforts and our cares." We read of Daniel and his companions, (Daniel ii. 17,) and surely there is some truth in the proverb, "A man is known by the company he keeps." O may we ever be counted, dear Savior, "thy companions." (Song of Solomon viii. 13.) May thy glorious voice be heard among us, and may we continue with thee in thy doctrine to the end of our pilgrimage, and then, when done with earth, and time is o'er, when raised in immortality in resurrection glory, may we with all the ransomed company be forever with the Lord. Amen.

Your messengers have come to us and we have gladly received them. May the Lord our God continue his mercy toward us all, and our fellowship abide in the gospel of the Son of God.

FREDERICK W. KEENE, Mod.
JOSEPH HALL, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence in Middletown, N. Y., August 8th, 1912, Charles J. Styger and Miss Mary E. Kimble, both of Unionville, N. Y.

By the same, at the same place, August 15th, 1912, John J. Hess, of Shohola, Pa., and Miss Kate Fickeissen, of Brooklyn, N. Y.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at his home, Leesburg, Va., Sept. 18th, 1912, Troylous F. Johnson and Miss Carrie Virginia Lee, both of Loudoun County, Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Maria Robinson, wife of Oliver Robinson, died at her home in Burdett, N. Y., August 19th, 1912, after an illness extending over a period of eight years. Her maiden name was Maria Holt. She was married to Oliver Robinson Sept. 26th, 1856. At the time of her departure from this life she was in the 76th year of her age. She had been failing quite fast for the past month. A week before her departure she fell into a comatose state and slept herself peacefully away. So writes to me sister Lovina Robinson, who sends me the request of our bereaved brother that I prepare a notice of her death for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Sister Lovina further writes: "I have heard her say repeatedly during her affliction that death would be to her a sweet relief. Brother Oliver feels deeply his loss. They have walked side by side fully two score years and ten, each a staff to the other always. The funeral was largely attended at her home. Elder Bogardus officiated and spoke very comfortingly to the bereaved family from Rev. xiv. 13."

It was my lot and privilege to baptize these two, brother Robinson and his wife, in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Burdett, N. Y., on Sunday, Oct. 31st, 1875. There was at that time a precious season of reviving of the Lord's work in some churches of the old Chemung Association, and this was the beginning of a considerable ingathering in this church at Burdett. The work of grace was especially manifest in this dear brother and sister. They were from the time of their baptism most devoted and faithful as members of the church, and have continued so to the present, as also have others who were brought into the church at that time, who are still living. The things of the kingdom of God were evidently first in their mind and hearts, and in their seeking. This was especially noticeable in the dear sister who has now gone home. She was of a timid and backward disposition, but was bold and steadfast and clear in spiritual things. I remember well that she, though fearful of entering water, went without hesitation into the baptismal water. I have visited that church several times since her sickness, and have found her uncomplaining, though helpless, and always desiring to hear the preaching of the gospel and to hear conversation on spiritual things. Many a pleasant meeting we have had at their home, both before and since her sickness. It is comforting to think of her at rest, perfectly happy in the dear Savior's presence, but the loss is great to our dear brother. May the Lord comfort him and all who mourn. She leaves three children: Carrie, of Trumansburg, N. Y., Parker, of Townsendville, N. Y., and Lina, at home; also nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. The dear church loses a most valued and dear sister. May the Lord's comforting presence be with them and their pastor.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

OUR dear mother, **Emeline Findley,** widow of Levi Findley and daughter of Elijah and Lucinda Waldo Kittle, departed this life August 19th, 1912, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Isaac J. Scott, Park View, Elkins, W. Va. She was born Dec. 13th, 1831, on the Kittle homestead, about two and one-half miles from where the town of Elkins is now situated. She was married Jan. 25th, 1848, to Levi Findley, and moved to his home in Taylor County, where they lived for a few years; they then removed to Randolph County and bought their home at Leiter, where they lived the remainder of their days. Twelve children were born to them, three boys and nine girls; three of the girls, Lucinda, Paulina and Tirza, died between the ages of one and three years, Alice D. died at the age of twenty-five years, and Harriet A. Taylor died at the age of forty-six years, leaving to mourn their loss four daughters: Mrs. W. J. Rowan, Mabie, Mrs. Isaac J. Scott, Elkins, Mrs. A. J. Workman, Harding, and Mrs. G. M. Koon, Queens, W. Va.; three sons, A. L., L. J. and J. K. Findley, near Leiter; also thirty-five grandchildren, twenty-two great-grandchildren, one sister, Mrs. R. Triplett, of Kerens, and one brother, David Kittle, in the far west, and a great many nieces and nephews and other relatives and friends, with the church, where she had been an active member for so long. Her age at the time of her death was 80 years, 9 months and 6 days. At the age of seventeen years she professed a hope in Christ and united with the Old School Baptist Church called Hepzibah, in Taylor County,

and was baptized by the late Elder J. S. Corder, of Philippi. When she came back to Randolph County she removed her membership to the Tygarts Valley Old School Baptist Church. For more than sixty-three years she lived a faithful and consistent christian life, and was highly esteemed in the church and throughout the association, where she was well known. The church feels that its loss is irreparable, as she was the oldest member and was steadfast and unmovable in faith and doctrine, and was esteemed as a mother in Israel and looked to for counsel and instruction. She lived a distance of twelve miles from the church, but always attended regularly until her declining years, then she was still enabled to meet with the church a few times each year. She told us often the greatest pleasure she had was in meeting with the church she loved and joining with them in humble worship to God. She attended the June meeting and had planned to go to the association. The morning after she was taken sick she spoke about it, and said she might not be able to go, but if not, perhaps by that time she would be at a better place than the association. For many years it had been her desire that when death should come she might not have to suffer long, and so it was, she was taken sick on Friday and died on Monday, and did not seem to suffer severely during that time, and was patient, and said she was ready and willing to go when the Lord should call her. Saturday afternoon she talked about her early experience to a friend who called to see her, and told how long she had hoped in God's mercy, and of her experience during those years, then repeated Paul's words in 2 Timothy, which read: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." Late in the evening she grew worse and sank into a deep slumber, from which they could not awaken her until early morning, when her doctor came and administered a heart stimulant. She then revived and knew us all, and talked with the many friends who called to see her and was glad to see each one, and spoke of her approaching death several times during the day. Early Monday morning she seemed worse, but was able to talk. When her sister spoke to her about the association she said by that time she hoped to be where "congregations ne'er break up, and sabbaths never end." Between eleven and twelve o'clock she seemed to go to sleep and did not waken, but breathed her last at 3:30 p. m. As we watched by her bedside in the presence of death, and saw her breathe her life away so peacefully, and remembered her many words and her perfect faith and hope in God, we realized that her death was our loss, but her eternal gain. She was a good mother, a kind friend and a good and peaceable neighbor, and was highly esteemed in the community in which she resided. She had been a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years, and was a firm believer in the doctrine which it advocates, and looked forward eagerly to the coming of each number. She was a great Bible reader; for several years she had read it through each winter. On Saturday after she was taken sick she told me how each time she read it through it was more comforting to her, and how it had been a special comfort and consolation last winter, and the doctrine of salvation by grace, which she had believed in all those years, was made plainer to her, and God's almighty and ruling power confirmed from the first of Genesis to the last of Revelation. We feel thankful to God for enabling her to speak to us of those things as she stood, as it were, on the shore of the river of death, yet dreaded not its dark, deep waters, but was enabled by faith to look across to the other side and speak of the bliss that awaited her there. She made her home with her youngest son, J. K. Findley, but during the summer months she visited among her other children, and now go where we may, to the home of brothers or sisters, there will be a vacant place, for mother will never again be there to greet us. We desire to be reconciled to God's will, and feel comforted when we think how she is enjoying the rest she longed for, but the ties of nature are very strong, and our hearts grow heavy and unutterably sad when we remember that in all the years to come we shall neither see her face nor hear again the sound of her voice. May God in his own time and way remove the sadness from our hearts and enable us when we think of her to be glad that she is done with sin and sorrow and has gotten the victory over death through her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and may he help her children and all who mourn for her to remember her upright walk and godly example and enable them to follow in the footsteps of the flock as she did and at last find peace and rest.

She had requested her pastor, Elder J. N. Bartlett, of Philippi, to preach her funeral sermon, which he did at the home of her daughter, to a large gathering of friends and relatives, using as a text the words found in Rev. xiv. 13. Her remains were brought to the family burying-ground, near Leiter, and laid beside her husband, there to await the resurrection.

Her daughter,

MRS. E. E. WORKMAN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

J. R. Unger, Texas, $1.00; D. S. Elliott, N. Y., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Lexington Church, Lexington, Greene Co., N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (2nd and 3rd) 1912.

FLETCHER MACKEY, Church Clerk.

A two days meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the First Church of Roxbury, Vega, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, October 9th and 10th, 1912. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Trains will be met at Roxbury on Tuesday p. m. before the meeting.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Juniata Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Fairview Church, at Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa., beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1912, and continuing three days. Those coming by rail must come on Thursday before the meeting, via Western Maryland or Baltimore & Ohio Railroads to Hancock, Md., and are requested to notify beforehand Dennis Mellott, Plum Run, Pa., or J. C. Mellott, Needmore, Pa., so that teams will be sure to be on hand to meet all who desire to come, as the place of meeting is a long drive from the railroad. All who love the truth as it is in Jesus, both friends and brethren, are affectionately invited to meet with us.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

THE church of Gilboa has appointed the second Saturday and Sunday in October (12th and 13th) to meet to worship God, and extend an invitation to all who desire to worship Him in the spirit to meet with us, especially ministering brethren.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting will meet, the Lord willing, with the New Valley Church, eight miles from Leesburg, Loudoun Co., Va., on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1912, and continue three days. Trains will be met at Leesburg on Tuesday before the meeting, and all visitors taken care of and conveyed to the place of meeting. Trains for Leesburg do not leave the union station, Washington, D. C., as formerly, the present terminal being at Thirty-sixth and M Sts., Georgetown D. C. The process of replacing steam with electricity is now going on, which makes the schedule very uncertain, but those coming to the meeting via Washington from the north, east or south will take green electric car marked Georgetown, outside union station, and go to the end of the line, where they will transfer to the cars of the Washington & Old Dominion Ry., which will bring them to Leesburg. Trains now leave Georgetown at 4:15, 5:15 and 6:40 p. m., but this is subject to change at any time. Those coming from the south, via Southern Railway, would do well to change cars at Alexandria for Leesburg, and not go into Washington. Those coming from the west, via B. & O., will be met at Washington Junction, Md., five miles from place of meeting, if they will notify the writer at Leesburg, Va., beforehand. Ministering and other brethren of our faith and order and all lovers of the truth are cordially invited to be with us.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

THE Welsh Tract Church has appointed a yearly meeting to begin on Saturday, October 19th, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue two days. Those coming from Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore will come on Saturday via B. & O. R. R. to Newark, Del. Train leaves Philadelphia at 8:15 a. m., and Baltimore, Mt. Royal station, at 8 a. m. Ministers and other brethren and friends of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE Andes Church will hold a two days meeting, the Lord willing, at Union Grove, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, October 23rd and 24th, 1912. Trains will be met Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. at Union Grove. Those coming over the Ulster & Delaware Railroad from Kingston or Oneonta, or any points on the U. & D. R. R., will change at Arkville for Union Grove. A cordial invitation is extended to all.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is to be held with the church in the town of Snowhill, Worcester Co., Md., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday after the third Sunday in October, 1912. We wish to extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. We hope no one will hesitate in coming for fear of being in the way, or that we will be crowded. We are making preparations for a full gathering of Baptists and friends, and if we fail in this we will be disappointed. There are two trains daily from the north, one arriving at 1:30 p. m. and the other at 9:30 p. m. Both trains will be met on Tuesday before the association and the friends taken care of. Those coming from Baltimore can come by the B. C. & O. Get tickets to Berlin, change for Snowhill. Friends will come to Snowhill on Tuesday. The brethren will meet the trains each day and take the friends to their homes. Any coming later than Wednesday will walk to the meetinghouse, only a short distance. We especially invite ministering brethren to meet with us.

T. M. POULSON, Pastor.

THE Olive and Hurley Church will hold a two days meeting, the Lord willing, the first Saturday and Sunday in November (2nd and 3rd), 1912, at Olive, N. Y. Trains will be met at Shokan on Fri-

day p. m. before the meeting. All who love the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. Elder B. F. Coulter is expected to be at this meeting.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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H. SEWARD, Clerk.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 80. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1912. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Sept. 7, 1912.

DEARLY BELOVED:—I have been thinking of late about the miraculous conception and birth into this world of sin and woe of Jesus, and of its significance to poor sinners, and have desired to write something of the beauty I have seen in meditating upon this wonderful and glorious subject, but realize that unless I am given that unction from the Holy One to delve into the mystery which enshrouds Christ and his righteousness, I will make an utter failure. I cannot think a good thought of myself, all is corruption and vanity with me.

Some seven hundred and fifty or more years before the birth of Christ the prophet Isaiah declared the event: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Lord with us). In the eleventh chapter of Isaiah, beginning with the first verse, is found this language: "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, and the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord." And in Micah v. 2, we read: "But, thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." These prophets spoke or wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. They did not live to see what they were declaring fulfilled, but it was as certain to come to pass as though it had already happened, for this was the voice of the Lord speaking through them. Christ was sure to come in the flesh, not as a descendant of man, no, for had he come in this fashion it seems to me he would have been born a sinner; but this could not be, he must be pure, holy, perfect, righteous, knowing no sin whatever except as a sin-bearer for his people. He was that Lamb without spot, wrinkle or any such thing; he was the one in whom no guile was found in his mouth; God's equal and eternal Son, yet he must come in the likeness of sinful flesh, for this High Priest must be touched with the feeling of the infirmities of his brethren; he must know some-

thing of their trials and temptations in order to sympathize and pity them; he must stand Mediator between God and man, hence this miraculous conception, for thus he became flesh and dwelt among his brethren, yet without sin. The plan is marvelous in our eyes. Man could not understand how such a thing was possible, for it was contrary to every principle of nature, but all things are possible with God. Joseph could not understand, "But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." While Christ was on earth his disciples did not fully understand, they thought he was to be crowned a natural king, but no, he was to be far greater than any earthly king. His priesthood was after the order of Melchisedec, without beginning of days or end of life. He was King eternal, over all and above all, and to his reign there was to be no end.

In the second chapter of Luke is given an account, beautiful to me, of his natural birth: "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judæa, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, (because he was of the house and lineage of David,) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." Here we see the decree of Cæsar Augustus, that all should be taxed, and that every one should go unto his own city, &c., working to the glory and praise of God. Joseph must go up to Bethlehem, his own city, to be taxed, and here is where it had been prophesied that Christ should be born. It is said that his mother wrapped him in swaddling clothes and that he was laid in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. Thus we see the King of kings was born at the very ends of this world, so to speak. There was no royal display, neither was he born in a palace, but in a stable, out among the cattle. No, this was to be the one to declare, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Neither, my friends, is there any room in the natural heart, the heart of stone, of mankind, for Him. One must first become destitute of all that the arm of flesh can offer—there must not be any room for him in the inn. One must be homeless, helpless, friendless and poor, sinking down beneath God's righteous frown, out of the reach of all human aid, before Christ is manifest in him the hope of glory. And what a miracle is this being "born again," born of the Spirit, born to love things we once hated and to hate the things that were at one time uppermost in our very heart's desires; it seems to me that this is about as great a miracle as the other. Surely there could be no more destitute place for the Sun of Righteousness to dwell in than in the heart of man, but when man is made to see this himself this is the appearing of Jesus to him; here in the place where

there is no help, and where there is no eye to pity, is where he makes himself known; here is where he reveals himself as the Savior of the vilest of sinners, for he came to deliver the captives from the very belly of hell, out of the very clutches of Satan. What a Friend, what a welcome Friend, then, is this Savior of sinners.

In the first chapter of Matthew is recorded this language: "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." This is very clear language, and we know that this Son was born, that his name was called Jesus, and we are as equally certain of the other: that "he shall save his people from their sins." Here is consolation for you, poor sinner; this is the foundation, the ground pillar, the chief corner-stone of your hope, that Jesus shall save you from your sins. This is what he came for, and the work has been declared by him to be a finished work. There is, therefore, nothing required at your hands in order to complete this glorious work divined and accomplished by the grace of God. These are the tidings of great joy the angel carried the shepherds as they were keeping watch over their flocks by night: "Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." We notice that this angel appeared to them in the night season, a time of darkness, a time, no doubt, of trouble, for it is said, "They were sore afraid;" but when the angel had told them of the Savior, that they would find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger, "suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." There have been times, dear friends, in my short and unprofitable life that I believe I have had a foretaste of this joy; I do believe I have heard the tinkling of the gospel bells, and to be sure it is a joyful sound. At times I felt He was leading me beside the still waters, and enabling me to rest in the green pastures of his love, and I was made to feel that "surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life;" but in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the Spirit took its flight, and I was left to mourn and doubt the reality of the work I trust God had wrought in my heart. I have been allowed to stray so far from the narrow path that leadeth to life eternal into the broad way of this world that I do not see how it was possible for a child of the living God to get there. I do not know the bounds the Lord hath set, but surely no one can ever go beyond me and be a child. My only hope is in the cleansing power of the precious blood of Jesus, and unless his blood erases the indelible deeds of blackest sin, then I will never meet the Lord in peace. I am confident though that his blood cleanseth from all sin whomsoever it is applied to, but has it been applied to me? He hath declared, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more," but does this include me?

> "'Tis a point I long to know,
> (Oft it causes anxious thought,)
> Do I love the Lord or no?
> Am I his, or am I not?"

Brother Ker, if this does not crowd out valuable matter, and you think it deserving of space in the SIGNS, and care to publish, all right, otherwise it will be satisfactory to me to cast it aside.

Unworthily yours in a precious hope,

R. LESTER DODSON.

WAVERLY, Pa.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The inclosed letter of sister Miller's, written August 5th, 1889, came into my hands not long since, and I feel that it would be enjoyed by many of God's humble poor people, so send it to you; use as you see fit.

D. M. VAIL.

CLARKS GREEN, Pa., August 5, 1889.

TO THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—The Lord being my helper, I will try and write why I hope in an exalted and loving Savior.

I was born in Wyoming County, Pa., Jan. 23rd, 1853. My parents were members of the Methodist denomination, and I was brought up in their faith and order. I said my prayers and went to Sunday School, in short I kept the whole law. When I was nearly fifteen years old my parents thought I had better join some church, so I went to the Methodists, and was received on six months' probation; that is, if I were good and faithful during that time they would sprinkle me and I would be received into full membership. I was satisfied with this, and when the time came they sprinkled water on my head and I became a member. I attended meeting and Sunday School for three years, thinking that I was as good as any one; but O this wild delusion, this bubble soon passed away, and I viewed myself a sinner, much worse than ever before; yes, it seemed to me one night when nearly eighteen years old that I was a condemned sinner, but I would say to myself, I have kept the law, &c., but that did not satisfy, I was in deep distress of mind, and it seemed that I had "sinned away the day of grace." I now read my Bible, but it was a sealed book to me. I would not tell any one how I felt for fear they would see me as I saw myself. I would cry unto the Lord in the night and in the day, but my prayers seemed to go no higher than my head. I continued in this way about a year, then I was married, and it seemed that the load of sin and guilt disappeared for a time and I was happy again, but it did not last; at times I was miserable, there seemed to be a great weight on my heart that I could not get rid of. My husband asked me at one time what was the matter with me that I seemed so sad. I told him that it was my sins, but did not tell any one else. I continued in this way for fifteen years, and it then pleased the Lord to take my husband's father to himself. O the anguish of my heart, for he had always seemed to me to be as one of the chosen apostles (he was an Old School Baptist). I thought if the Lord had taken me how much better it would have been, for I was not fit to live on the earth and he was so pure and just. There was now no rest for me day or night. One month from this time my eldest sister was also called home, and it seemed to me that I could see injustice in God in not sparing her life and taking me, for I longed to die, and hell had no terror for me, for it seemed to me that I was in the very belly of hell and nothing could be worse. A few weeks after this my husband asked me if I were going to prayer-meeting. I said, No, their prayers cannot reach my case, but I want you to go. He went, and as soon as he was gone I picked up my Bible and said in my heart, Lord, if there is anything in this Bible to comfort me direct my eyes to it. The Bible opened at the ninth chapter of Matthew, and my eyes fell on the twentieth verse: "And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment: for she

said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole." In my anguish I thought, What wonderful faith! I went in my room, threw myself on the floor and cried, Lord, give me such faith. I now saw my faith, my self-righteousness and strength were all gone. I cried, O Lord, give me such faith as that woman had, that I might touch his garment and be whole, and immediately the room was illuminated with a light that far excelled the noonday sun, and a voice said, Peace, be still, thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven, and the burden was gone. I said with a loud voice, Praise the Lord. I can never express the sweet comfort and peace of my soul in its earliest love. This joy lasted for two days and nights, and it was so glorious that I thought I must tell my husband about it. He said that it was imagination, and then the clouds that I had thought vanished forever began to cloud my sunny sky, and I was again in doubt. I prayed to the Lord that if I were deceived I might have the same burden again, but I never have been able to get it again, although I do mourn and weep many times on account of my sinful nature, and because I cannot do the things that I would. I am in the dark a greater part of the time, and have no light, but the Bible says He will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight, and I wish always to trust in him, the One altogether lovely and the chiefest among ten thousand. O how I did love to read the Bible, but could not understand it as it had been taught me at Sunday School. I knew from what I had experienced that if I were saved it was through the goodness and mercy of the Lord, and not because of any good that I had done. The Bible seems to correspond with this, for it says, Not of works, lest any man should boast. I then wished much for christian society, but the question would arise in my mind, Where can I find such people? The words, Come out from among them and be ye separate, were often in my mind. I continued in this way for three years after I received a hope in Christ, and it then seemed to me that if I did not tell of the goodness of the Lord to me, an unworthy sinner, some terrible calamity would befall me. I prayed to the Lord to show me the true church, and to open the way for me. About this time a neighbor asked me to go to meeting with her, and I went, but she talked to me of free moral agency, and I had learned that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, so I could not be comforted there. I then thought that I stood alone, that no one believed as I did; still that voice, If you love me my commands you would keep. I then went to the Old School Baptist meeting, and Elder Vail, the pastor, was led to preach on experience. O how comforting to know that some one else had been led in the same path that I had; still he said some things that I could not understand. I commenced reading the Bible, and in Romans, ninth chapter and eleventh verse, I read about "the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election might stand." "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." In this chapter, and all through the Bible, it seemed that I could see the doctrine of election and absolute predestination of all things, the very doctrine that I had heard Elder Vail preach. I longed now to be with that people, but felt my unworthiness so much. I stayed away as long as I could, for the stronger

man came and bound the strong man and spoiled his house, and now it seemed I must be baptized. I went before the church the first Saturday in June, 1889, was received, and the next day I was baptized by the much beloved pastor, Elder Vail. That was one of the happiest days of my life; it was three and one-half years since I had received this hope.

Jan. 26th, 1890.—Dear brethren, I commenced this some time ago, and felt that it was too imperfect to send to you, but I have been so comforted in reading the experiences of the saints in your valuable paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that I thought I would cast in my mite; do as you think best with it and all will be well, although I do not wish it published and crowd out better matter. I wish in as short a manner as possible to tell you my reasons for being an Old School Baptist. First, because I could not be anything else. Second, they preach that salvation is alone by grace, and I cannot find any others that do, and the beauty of it is we can prove it by the Bible: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." Then we are told by the apostles that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy; not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. Now, do not these Scriptures prove that salvation is alone by grace? I think they do, and many others, together with my experience, make me an Old Baptist. There are many things I might write, but know that I have extended this too far.

Your sister, I hope,

SARAH E. MILLER.

WALKER, Oregon, July 1, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I feel much hesitancy in thus addressing you, but I have so long enjoyed and loved your spiritual gift that I dare hope I belong to the family who speak the same things, so far as the spirit of utterance is given. My knowledge of spiritual things and of the written word is so limited that I do not write or talk to set up a standard for brethren to be guided by, but knowing your spirit of charity, and that you have these many years fought the good fight of faith, I take courage to speak frankly, and, as I trust, in the same spirit of love that I have always held for you, although I know nothing of your worldly estate. I have felt called upon to search the Scriptures diligently and carefully for their full meaning, so far as the Giver of every good gift would direct my mind by his Spirit, and I had looked into the so-called charitable institutions, with the charitable side of insurance, and had felt entirely assured that it was best to shun the very appearance of evil that is in them, and your editorial of July 1st caused me to think still more seriously. A sister clearly expressed my feelings once in saying, "If it is the will of Christ for me to have the good things of this life, no secret order can keep them from me, and what is not his will for me to have no order can give me." This I would apply to insurance companies. I felt that surely she was not guilty of the charge of faithlessness expressed by the Master, Matthew vi. 30: "Wherefore, if God clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" When the three Hebrew children were in the burning fiery furnace, without the least sign of treasure on earth, and opposed by the most

powerful agencies of nature, their life, and all that pertained to it, was every whit as secure as that of the king who had nearly all the wealth of the world at his command. So was Elijah safe. Was he not as sure to get his portion of daily food and raiment when he was by the brook Cherith, and ravens carried him food while the brook was gradually drying away, or when eating from the widow's barrel of meal, as are you and I with what we call modern conveniences? Even if we have a snug bank account and a ten thousand dollar insurance policy, our loved ones are no more secure than under the providence of God in poverty. After all King Nebuchadnezzar had provided against a rainy day, after being humbled with the beasts of the field he said that all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, and that He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and that none can stay his hand, or say, What doest thou?

Please do not understand me to discourage thrift and industry, but we can best manifest our love to him by keeping his commandments, and he says, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth." "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good," not to lay up treasure, but "that he may have to give to him that needeth." I am not holding myself guiltless, but should we not take the standard laid down by word and precept by Christ and the apostles? In the light of Matthew v. 34–38, can we give our oath to one man, or ten thousand men, that we will perform any obligation to him or to his legatee at a future time? Can we enter into this compact without being unequally yoked together with unbelievers, which is forbidden? (2 Cor. vi. 14–18.) Should we not rather say, "If the Lord will"? Then would not our neighbor with whom we are yoking ourselves together ridicule us as the mocking Ishmaelite did Isaac? Merely from a business standpoint it certainly seems to me that the fact that the insurance business is fast making millionaires is sufficient reason to warn the brethren against another man's game, rather than to encourage them. Do not the patrons say in substance, I will bet that I will die before I have paid the amount of my policy in premiums, while the company bets that I will not, or else that I will fail to pay my premiums, and so lose to the company? And the company has it timed to win almost exactly the same as the slot machine is timed to win, for they must win in order to keep up their enormous expense for salaries and commissions to officers, and to make millionaires. Paul had suffered perils of all descriptions, but yet he said, "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." David said, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, and to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep." It is, to be sure, from a natural standpoint, commendable to provide against a day of need, but is it, from a spiritual standpoint, commendable to encourage such worldly institutions? The most elaborate provisions are often entirely futile, or being once successful are swept away from our grasp in a moment. I can cite numerous instances where families have been denied the comforts of life, and almost the necessities of life, to keep up premiums,

only to fail later and lose all, and sometimes it is the case that when the beneficiaries receive it, it proves a curse to them rather than a benefit. Would it not be well to warn the brethren connected with insurance? The Catholic hierarchy, so I hear, has recognized this prolific means of wringing money from their members, and have organized a Catholic insurance institution. I am a very poor scholar, even in English, but I want to ask if my construction of 1 Tim. v. 8, is wrong. Paul was instructing Timothy, a minister, concerning providing spiritual food for the flock, and here speaks particularly concerning those of his own household (the margin says kindred), and the reason why a man failed to thus provide was that he sought it not by faith, but by his own works. This is denying God, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift, and this is worse than being an infidel, which is simply denying Christ. Paul said similarly to the Roman brethren, ix. 32: Israel received it not, "because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law." They stumbled at that stumbling-stone. Paul says, "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Certainly faith without works is dead. So inseparable are a good tree and its fruit that it is sure that if there be no fruit the tree is dead.

Dear brother, I am sure that you have many conflicts in your long fruitful labor of love as an editor that the rest of us are not called upon to pass through. I am not writing this for controversy, but simply to relieve my mind of a burden which seems to impress me to write. I once hunted as far as I could to find excuses for laying up treasure on earth when I thought that I had some prospect of gaining considerable of this world's goods. I was hunting to relieve my accusing conscience, but financially I have been more than relieved of this burden. I had in those days serious thoughts about the ministry, but was waiting to lay up something against a rainy day for my family, but now in my poverty I seem to have more faith in God, and have to some extent been weaned from the vanity of earth, although I yet have to continually mourn over my worldly mind.

From a poor worm of the dust,

G. O. WALKER.

[In a personal letter brother Walker said that he had not written the above for publication, but because it may have been that others understood the editorial to which he refers as he has done, we feel like publishing it and saying just a few words in reply. It is well indeed to be warned against worldly-mindedness and the love of gain. We doubt not that the most of us need such admonitions continually. Our editorial was not written to imply anything contrary to this, but it had come to our knowledge that some good brethren regarded fire insurance, and what is called life insurance, as indicating a distrust in God, to such an extent that they were ready to exclude from their fellowship any one who saw fit to thus invest his means, and our editorial was simply to set forth that to insure one's property or life was no more an evidence of distrust in God than to save money in land, or merchandizing, or to deposit it in a bank, or to loan it out on interest in some other way. We were not advising any one to invest their means in any way at all; that must be left to each one's own judgment. We could not undertake, especially through

the SIGNS, to advise any one concerning any business transactions whatever, whether for or against. We do not know enough about financial affairs to do that, and beside, this is not the work set before the SIGNS, but we do feel sure that there is altogether too much greediness and grasping, even among the Lord's children, after this world's goods. This tendency is not only shown by insuring property or life, but in all kinds of business, even in farming, or in the ordinary trades of life. In conclusion, we will say we think that if our brother will examine the text in 1 Tim. v. 8, with careful attention to the connection, he will see that Paul is speaking about caring for widows, and that the church is not to be chargeable where widows have children or nephews to care for them, and these children or nephews who will not care for their own mothers or aunts who have need, have denied the faith, and are worse than infidels. We can but admire the kind spirit and the mild words of our brother. Such a spirit it is our desire to possess.—C.]

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Aug. 26, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have had an experience in time down to old age, being now in my eightieth year, and the older I get the more positively I am impressed with the truth that I am drawing near to the end of my life here, but through the mercy of our all-wise God I am blessed with a reasonable degree of health, for which I try to return thanks to Him, and desire to render praise and thanks to his holy name. I trust I have been taught by his Spirit that I am spared by his mercy and not consumed. I feel to hope that God hath for Christ's sake given me the consolation of rendering to him all the praise. I feel to hope that I have been truly taught by his grace to put no confidence in the flesh. I have lived through many trials and temptations, both temporal and spiritual, but the Lord hath delivered me out of them all. I do not feel to be worthy of being one of the least of his chosen. I am prone to go astray, and know not what will be acceptable to God, therefore I am a mourner. I desire to do his will. I feel there is no refuge to which to flee but to the feet of Jesus. Let us bring all our complaints and helplessness to him, he is our sufficiency in all things, even to eternal life. We are traveling in a land of sin and sorrow. Like Reuben while wandering in a strange land, we have great searchings of heart, and like him we hear the bleatings of the flock. Like all who feel that they are at the end of their own works, Reuben was searching for truth in his heart. Let us stand in awe, and sin not, let us commune with our own heart and be still, and trust in the Lord. O Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us. Deborah and Barak sang praise to the Lord for victory, and that he had brought down all power under subjection to him, letting all know that he is a God above all power. Moses sang a song of deliverance before the Lord, saying that he had triumphed gloriously. The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. Moses proclaimed, The Lord is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation. David said, The Lord is my rock, my deliverer, my strength, in whom I will trust. The Lord led Moses. The Lord is his name. Who is this King of glory? It is the Lord, strong and mighty in battle. The wicked are the sword of the Lord. He did not make anything in vain. Our God is the God of purpose, and he accomplishes his purposes in all things. Just so he instructed Noah in the building of

the ark. Noah was a preacher of righteousness. Noah fulfilled the mission which God had instructed him in, in building the ark. So wisdom was given to Paul and all the apostles, and to all his faithful servants unto this day, so that they have placed no confidence in the flesh, and have preached His everlasting gospel; they have trusted in God to direct their steps. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Dear brethren, the great searching of heart with me now is, Have my steps been directed to walk in the narrow way which leads to everlasting life? I hear and read many discourses which encourage me to hope that the Lord has directed my steps in the right way. I know that there is no light nor life in the old man. Where there is light there is liberty given of God. Then we can sing of the great deliverance given us by our great High Priest, who shed his blood for poor helpless sinners, who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and when God begins a good work, with all such, he performs it until the day of Jesus Christ. Poor, penitent, broken-hearted ones will cry aloud with weeping and mourning, desiring to be delivered from the oppression which they feel under the yoke of bondage; they desire to have Christ's righteousness, which will be given as it was given to Moses, and then they will sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and of the Lamb. All to whom it has pleased God to give that song will sing it. It will all be praise to him who is our strength and sufficiency. There will be great searchings of heart to know the will of God when this good work has been begun, and this work will be performed until the day of Jesus Christ, and no man shall be able to pluck such as these out of his hand. His sheep hear his voice and they follow him, but strangers, who pervert the gospel of God, they will not follow. Paul said, Be ye followers of me as I follow Christ. Paul denied himself in all things, and claimed that he did not of himself do any good thing. He lived with many fears and much complaining and with trembling. Such characters as Paul have great searchings of heart, feeling their own unworthiness, and desiring to be kept unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. The Scriptures are being fulfilled according to Jude: "Remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit." These are of the flesh, and limit the Lord of glory, and cannot please God. The instruments of men's invention, who claim that they are the means in God's hand of saving souls upon conditions of man's performance, will not stand the test at the last day, when all shall appear before him who has power over all things, both small and great, and all who have not their names written in the Lamb's book of life will forever be banished from his presence. What searchings of heart and mind will arise when we realize that we are in God's hand, and do not know that our names are written in this book of life of the Lamb. I often feel to hope that this is so with me, but the reality is best known to God. "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then I shall know even as also I am known." Dear brethren, we are living in a time which tries men in their walk and conversation, there are many strange things coming up. There is much controversy upon the subject of the religion of our Lord and Savior, and

all claim to be right, but there is, after all, but one religion that is of God; so-called progressive religion is of man. Their progressive theory is to press forward in sending the gospel to the heathen, not being willing to trust in God, but go headlong, not knowing what they do. Jesus' great command is, Follow me. In all his life he suffered shame, and offered himself for the sins of his people. This God the Father gave him to do, and he is now honored at the right hand of God, forever making intercession for his bride. The poor afflicted ones are trusting in God to open the understanding of their minds that they may rightly divide the word of truth. We must deny self in all things, and trust in God to give us utterance. The faithful servants will go forward and feed the flock, and not shun to declare the whole counsel of God. He is the absolute sovereign over all things; he has formed all things, from the least unto the greatest. He forms light and creates darkness; he makes peace and creates evil. The eyes of the Lord are upon all things, and he sees all their goings; there is nothing that happens that is not embraced in his sight. The very thoughts of our mind are not hid from God; there is no darkness nor shadow of death where the wicked can hide themselves. The poor and afflicted cry to him and he giveth quietness. Who can make trouble when he gives peace? Who then can judge him, whether it be done against a nation or a man only? So our God is all-wise, he knoweth all things that must come to pass in fulfillment of the Scriptures, and none of us have the right to inquire, What doest thou? He hath power over the clay, of the same lump to fashion it as it pleases him, whether to honor or to dishonor. We all are as nothing in his sight, and we depend upon him for all things, therefore we submit ourselves to his will. We are in his hand to dispose of us as it may please him. We have no worth or merit to offer, and can only say, May it be thy will to take us to thyself, and dispose of us as it seems right to thee. My hope is that my name is written in the book of life of the Lamb slain, and I hope to sing the song of sweet deliverance from sin and death.

Through the grace of God, as I hope, I have been given liberty to write a few scattering thoughts as my mind has been directed, and leave it to your better judgment. I desire the prayers of all the children of God.

Your brother in hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

SALISBURY, Md., Sept. 20, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Yesterday p. m. the language of the apostle addressed to the saints at Ephesus and the faithful in Christ Jesus, came into my mind with so much power and sweetness that I felt how glad I would be if I could only present some of my thoughts in connection with that portion of Scripture: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." How beautiful did this appear to me many years ago, when I was first made to see my great need and entire inability to procure for myself that which from all eternity was provided for me (that is, if I truly am one of those whom Christ Jesus died to redeem, and rose again to justify). Yes, how blessed indeed to have such a precious hope given unto me, who in myself was only worthy of eternal death. Yes, my only hope then, as it has been ever since, was in what Christ alone had done for sinners. Then was I made to see of a

truth there was hope for just such a vile sinner as I, hope of eternal life and everlasting glory only in Christ, who is our hope; this is true, absolutely true, with respect to salvation in every sense of the word. I know but the one Savior; I know that God alone must save out of, or from, temporal distress and temporal destruction; if he does not save in this respect, then I am lost. But I do know by past experience, when I was made to see and was brought face to face with temporal disaster and ruin, and not able to help myself, my God alone was my help, and in every such case that I now call to mind wherein I lost all hope in my own effort, and saw myself completely hedged in, that God who appeared unto me as my only hope and refuge against despair has ever proven faithful, and I was made to see the hope he gave me in due time realized. Now these things I know, that when I have been brought exceedingly low God himself hath raised me up, and I do not want to be found guilty of giving any created being the glory of it. For the last few years it has pleased my God in his providential dealings with me to cut off opportunities such as I formerly had of earning a support for myself and family, and I have been gradually and steadily going down in a financial way. I know this is no more than I deserve, and that God has a perfect right to thus deal with me, for I never did merit any good at his ever-gracious hand, but the trials we must pass through are very painful, yet we are made to hope at times they are indeed for our good, feeling assured that no good thing will he withhold. In the very midst of my trial (in not being able to do as I once did) which God in his infinite goodness and wisdom has sent upon me, I have hope, but that hope is not seen, for there is no evidence to my natural vision that my condition will ever be better; all things in nature are against me, and have been for several years. But notwithstanding all this, there are times when that sweet feeling of assurance is given me that I shall yet see the realization of the hope that God alone has given me. Yes, there are times when I am made to believe that I shall yet receive at the Lord's hand (although contrary to all human expectation) the very thing that I have so long desired, for I am made to hope that it is my God who created the desire that I have within me, and if so, that desire will surely be satisfied, for if the desire is God-given, and the expectation is from the same source, as I am persuaded at times that it is, then that is a good hope, and such a hope I do not believe will ever be lost only in fruition, no matter whether the hope is for the possession of that which was provided in eternity and to be enjoyed throughout eternity, or whether the blessing be temporal and to be enjoyed here while in this time state, or, in other words, whether the blessing hoped for be a spiritual blessing or a temporal one, the hope is the same, the Giver is the same, for I know only one God and Savior, and him only am I made to adore.

Your little brother, whose only hope is in One who alone can and does save to the uttermost,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

DAYTON, Wash., Sept. 1, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a precious letter from our much beloved brother McDonald,* which speaks for itself, which I also think is good, and no doubt would be read with great interest and comfort by many of the Lord's humble poor. I have not asked permission

to have it published, but feel that it will be all right with him if in your judgment it would be profitable to publish.

Praying the Lord's blessings upon both the editors and correspondents of our dear paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that it may long live in defence of the truth and to the comfort and consolation of the poor in spirit, with christian love, I hope, and fellowship through the suffering of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, I am, as ever, your sister, though I feel unworthy of a place in the hearts of God's dear people,

(MRS.) W. R. SAVAGE.

PUYALLUP, Wash., August 20, 1912.

DEAR SISTER SAVAGE:—I want to acknowledge the receipt of your excellent letter last Saturday, in our family periodical, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. You express my feelings exactly about the SIGNS. How wonderfully God has preserved that paper and kept it true to its original declaration of principles. I am glad they published your letter, for it has given this poor sinner much comfort to read it, and while I know that I am a miserable sinner, it is sinners that Christ came to save, for he is exalted a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins. Repentance is his gift as well as remission of sins. How wonderful are the mercies of God, all of grace, both in time and in eternity. Even down to all age all his people shall prove his sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love. How I am made to realize the truth of that statement. You know how I have tried to lay up treasures on earth, to the neglect of spiritual things, and God allowed me to appear to have my own way for a time, but lately in his mercy he has removed those idols out of my way, and in his mercy has been stripping me of my earthly treasures and causing me to look to him for my daily bread, which he never fails to supply; then why should I be so faithless, and like Martha be so careful and troubled about many things, and not more like Mary, choosing the better part, which shall not be taken away? God knows. But my faith is firm in one thing: that He who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, and that he did begin that good work in me I cannot be mistaken. He found me in a desert land, in a waste howling wilderness, he led me about and instructed me, he kept me as the apple of his eye, and there was no strange god with me. He led me to his banqueting-house, where his banner over me was love. It was there that he showed me what a miserable sinner I was, that I was without hope and without God in the world. I was permitted to see that God had a people in the world, and I was not one of them, neither was it possible that I should be, because I belonged to a different people. My grief was unbounded, and I was sinking in utter despair under the load of grief, when instantaneously, as if I had stepped out of midnight darkness into the most brilliant light, where the trees of the forest were clapping their hands, resplendent with the glory of God, everything was praising God, my burden was gone, I was rejoicing, and laughing aloud, whereas I had been weeping in the bitterness of my soul, and ever since that time I have been free from the weight of that burden, notwithstanding I have often wished that I might again be crushed under its weight, in the hope of again experiencing the same joy when relieved, foolishly thinking I would surely be a better man next time. I never got that burden back again, but I still find

myself a sinner, but not a sinner without hope, but a sinner saved by grace.

In my mind's eye I can see you and dear brother Savage sitting by the table of an evening reading the contents of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that precious medium of communication, which has certainly been miraculously preserved these many years.

Hoping to see another letter from you soon, I remain your unworthy brother in hope, J. H. McDONALD.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., Sept. 6, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Some days ago I saw myself as the barren fig tree that deserved nothing but the curse of the Lord, then a little hope sprang up that I might be the one for which the husbandman interceded, that it might be spared another year that he might dig around it. I felt that if I were that one for whom the Husbandman is making intercession I am saved, for he sitteth at the right hand of God and maketh intercession for the saints; that intercession is according to the will of God and therefore it is acceptable. The day that I felt these things so sensibly was one of our church days, and I had to speak. I used as a text the language of Paul: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation," &c. I had good liberty of feeling, for the text was my own experience, and I felt to have sweet fellowship therewith. To-day my mind has been much crossed, I feel to be low down in the valley, and yet I am very barren of any good. We know that the richest soil is in the valleys, and yet I am so barren; I do not understand myself. I do not know how to write of my own experience, it is so mixed up. When I think of my vileness I am a vast wilderness, the growth of which is so dense that I am altogether shut in the prison, and no way of deliverance that I can see. If I try to look upward, there is a cloud, or a thickly darkened glass, that I cannot look through; if I try to look in the temple of God, there is such a veil that I cannot see the ark, the mercy-seat, the cherubim. I see only the brazen altar, and I am so poor, so desolate, that I have not an offering, even of the poorest sort, to burn thereon. Then I am so hard of hearing that I cannot listen for the ringing of the bells in the holy of holies, or if I would, there is so much confusion in my inward parts that all hearing is cut off. Then my smelling is not acute, and if the odor of the pomegranates does come forth, some disease has so enfeebled my senses that I do not catch the sweet odor. Is such an one, one with such enfeebled parts, fit to dwell in God's house? Is there any such land in the holy land? Do such briars, with thorns and thistles, grow there? Are there any such barren spots in those rich valleys that flow with milk and honey? Do such spots really drink water of the rain from heaven? Is the eye of the Lord on such places from the beginning of the year to the end of the year? Is his holy arm underneath such an one? Will he come and save me, even me? How these questions do ring in my poor, barren soul. Who will answer them? Will he do it? If he does, will it be a negative or an affirmative answer? How anxious, and yet with what fear and trembling, do I wait for his word. Is his grace of mercy for the poor and the needy, the desolate, the afflicted? Is it the barren land that shall rejoice and blossom as the rose? that shall blossom abundantly? Is this the land that shall break forth in shoutings and praises to God? Is this the solitary place that shall be glad for them? Then

take courage, my soul, for such art thou. If it is at such that He looketh and seeth of the travail of His soul and is satisfied, then canst thou rejoice and break forth into singing, for he is thy salvation. Is this the christian's hope? Then rejoice in it and look through the great telescope of faith and view the hills, the mountains, the valleys, the rivers, the desolate places and the mines of gold, silver and the precious stones, all from the temple to the poorest who may worship there, all from the mountain's peak to the lowest parts of the valley, the love, the joy, the houses, the lands, the wines, the children, the homes, with the food thereof, from line to line, from stake to stake, all are thine in joint heirship with Him who gave them to thee. Is this the heritage of the saints? It is enough. We will press onward in the fear of Him who is so full and free in all these rich provinces. Grace, mercy and peace be to such an household.

L. H. HARDY.

REESE, Texas, July 28, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a good letter written by my sister-in-law, which was of great comfort to me and to my companion, and I feel that it will give the same comfort to the household of faith. It makes me rejoice to hear the saints of God confess their faults one to another and plead Jesus as their righteousness and salvation. The John she refers to is my oldest living brother, and I have known for many years that he had a hope, but he never would acknowledge it. I in my weak way exhorted him to duty, but, as she says, he has not yet had courage to take up his cross and follow Jesus in the way and receive that peace of mind which we receive in doing our duty.

I leave this for you to dispose of as you see fit.

I remain as ever, your little brother in bonds of love, M. L. LILES.

WINNSBORO, Texas, July 23, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER:—We received your letter to-day, and have rejoiced that you could see your way more clearly. I have been satisfied for a long time that you had this duty to perform when the time came. You know God moves in a mysterious way in performing his wonderful works. I wish I had language to express my thoughts. Sometimes when I think I have a taste of heavenly things I long to tell my feelings, but never can tell what I do know, if indeed the Lord has ever bestowed the blessing of knowledge of himself upon me. However, I think I know that there has been a wonderful change in me from some cause. I would not give the love and fellowship of the brethren and sisters for the world and all it contains; if it were taken from me I would have but little to live for. I often go to the meetings, and am thankful to think I am permitted to live with such lovely people; it is more than I deserve. When I look back a few years, and see my sinful state, I wonder how the Lord in his infinite wisdom could see fit to show me what a sinner I was, and give to such a worm as me the precious hope of eternal life beyond this sinful old world. It is indeed a wonder to me. I know I do not praise his holy name as I ought, and feel so unworthy and sinful I often fear I have not been born again, and know if I am saved it is all of grace. I have known for several years I have no power to save myself. I think I gave it a fair trial, and the harder I worked the worse I got. I often look at others and wish I could

walk in the lovely christian way they do, but sin is mixed with all I do, and I am surely convinced I am not my own keeper, and know it is a good thing I am not, or it would be worse for me.

We went to hear preaching Friday and Sunday. I thought brother Jones did some wonderful preaching. You know he can do that, and in such an humble manner. I wish you could be with us at our three days meeting; I know you would enjoy it very much. Every time I go to meeting I think perhaps John will be there and tell what great things the Lord has done for him. O how happy I would be to have him tell it to the church, but I suppose the time has not yet come. Please pray for me and mine, and may the Lord be with you now and forever, is my earnest desire.

Your unworthy sister,

ELIZABETH LILES.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Sept. 27, 1912.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I inclose two letters from sister Mertie E. Bailey, one before her baptism, the third Sunday in September, the other is afterward.

In best of bonds,

J. M. FENTON.

MIDDLEBURG, N. Y., Sept. 8, 1912.

DEAR ELDER FENTON:—For a long time, and especially for the past few days, I have felt that I would like to talk with some one who understands the Scripture as I hope I do, but it seems I have not the strength, and I feel that I know so little, yet have faith to believe what I believe is from the Lord. It has always seemed there was no one like me, for no matter how well I enjoy the sermon it flees from me. It was a great comfort to me when you told at the last meeting of the woman who never could remember the text. I have prayed many hours that I might understand and remember these things better, but God knows best, and will lead me in the way I ought to go; he never, no, never, makes a mistake. It is a great comfort to know all things are predestinated. I have read many good hymns this afternoon. The first verse of 905 explains my feelings better than I can:

> "Unto thine altar, Lord,
> A broken heart I bring;
> And wilt thou graciously accept
> Of such a worthless thing?"

I should greatly appreciate an answer if you think me worthy of it. I wish I might write more, and something better, but I have not the gift. My prayer is that God may lead and direct me in the right way.

Very sincerely yours,

MERTIE E. BAILEY.

MIDDLEBURG, N. Y., Sept. 19, 1912.

DEAR ELDER FENTON:—I will try to reply to your good letter, which I have read many times with much comfort. I have been thinking of you and the good meetings I feel you have been having yesterday and to-day, and wishing I might have been there with you.

You asked me to write what I could of my experience. This has been a great burden on my mind for a long time, for fear I had no experience, but I know if ever saved it was by grace and grace alone, for of myself I could not do one good thing nor have one good thought. I have felt like a child wandering in the wilderness without a home, and felt I wanted a home with the Old School Baptists if they could fellowship me. When I was a small child I attended the meetings, and when I grew older thought I wanted to go somewhere else so I could

attend Sunday School, but never felt at home; then came back, and have enjoyed the meetings and believed the doctrine ever since. As you said in your letter, I knew not why I hungered after righteousness, but knew I wanted to be baptized. I thought I could not talk to the church without a better experience, but could not stay away longer. Since I united with the church the words have come into my mind, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

"The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will."

My prayer is that I may be reconciled to all things, for I know He doeth all things well and never makes a mistake. Truly it is wonderful, and such a mystery, but I feel I shall understand all that is intended for me. I shall be pleased to hear from you whenever you have time to write. It is a great comfort to hear how the Lord's people are led. I hope this will find you all well. Kindly remember me to sister Fenton and sister Marguerite.

Very sincerely, your sister in hope,
MERTIE E. BAILEY.

TRENTON, N. J., July 21, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I do not feel worthy to address you by that dear name. I have been with you in mind and spirit to-day, I hope. I always think of you all when it is not my privilege to meet with you and hear the sweet words of the dear Lord proclaimed to poor sinners like me. I have not been with you in nine weeks. There is no place so dear to me in all this world of sorrow as to meet with the dear children of God. I hope that he will keep me in the right and narrow path if indeed he died for me; I am so sinful that I cannot of myself do one good thing. My thoughts are evil and I prone to sin, but his word is full of sweet promises to them that love his name, and by his grace we are saved, and not by anything that we can do. Except when I am at Hopewell, all that I hear is good works, but I have the SIGNS with me, and in them I read the good letters from the dear brethren and sisters. I read of some who never hear preaching, save once in a while, and I think how hard it must be for them. Then again I think of those who seem to care nothing about the profession they have made before God and man; it seems that almost anything will keep them away from their meetings. But they are in the hand of God, and there we must leave them. I think sometimes, Have they ever had the love of God shed abroad in their hearts? If they have, how can they stay away from their meetings for some worldly pleasure or gain? May God forbid that I should be left to enjoy this world's pleasures more than the word of God. I have been reading some good sermons in the SIGNS. There is much in them to comfort a weary soul, written by the dear brethren and sisters. The editorial republished from brother Beebe, upon Songs iv. 12, was good to me. I heard Elder Coulter preach from that in Trenton once, and then thought it so good I was sorry when he stopped. The shortest hours I have ever seen have been when living in the love of God, made known to a poor sinful one, as I feel myself to be. I am one of the least, if a child at all.

I must stop this poor writing. I hope to be with you next Saturday and Sunday, if it be the Lord's will, but if not, all will be right in his sight, and with him I must leave it. I cannot always feel contented, but still I know that he does nothing wrong.

With love to all, yours in hope,
(MRS.) GEORGE GOLDEN.

DODD CITY, Ark., Dec. 16, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As it is time for me to renew my subscription for another year, I desire to write a few lines to let you know that the SIGNS still comes to me richly laden with the precious truth of the gospel. It is a feast of fat things to my hungry soul, and I often say that some one article is worth to me more than the price of the paper; but such comforting blessings cannot be measured in dollars and cents. I desire especially to speak of the editorial in the number for November 1st, and of the two editorials in the number for December 15th. I could speak also of many others, too numerous to mention, all of them good. I often feel a desire to write for the SIGNS, and then my littleness, nothingness and insufficiency come up, and I think of how the SIGNS is filled with things so much better than I can write, and I refrain from complying with the impression, but this Monday morning I will write a few of my thoughts concerning the gospel and its proclamation. As a starting point, I will call attention to the book of Esther, seventh chapter and fourth verse: "For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue, although the enemy could not countervail the king's damage." I believe that this represents the condition of God's people in the gospel day. They are not just bondmen, but are sold to perish, for the sentence of death is passed upon all Adam's race, as it was then upon the Jews in all the one hundred and twenty-seven provinces. The sentence of death was then revoked through the intercession of the queen, and the glad tidings sent by messengers upon mules, camels and dromedaries, that they might know that the sentence was revoked. This was not upon any conditions to be performed by them, but by the merits of the queen, who, in a sense, gave her life for the people. Just so the gospel messenger goes to his people with the sweet message that the sentence of death is revoked by the intercession of Jesus, and upon the ground of his merits, and not upon conditions to be performed by them. This is a glorious message indeed. Our Kinsman and Elder Brother has canceled our sins; he has paid our debt and redeemed us from under the law and from all iniquity, and purified us unto himself, a peculiar people zealous of good works.

I remain your little brother in hope,

WM. J. CASEY.

1633 TWENTY-SECOND AVE., SEATTLE, Wash., Sept. 25, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please change my address from Wise, Va., to 1633 Twenty-second Ave., Seattle, Wash. I am hoping I will find some of our people in this country. I know there are some near this place, and hope I will be able to go to their church some time soon, and if there are any of them in this country I would be glad to have them call at my address if they can make it convenient, as I shall be very lonely here away from my church.

As ever, your friend,

(MRS.) R. E. WHITAKER.

DEAR EDITORS:—I wrote you some time ago about my change of address from Galion, Ohio, to Mansfield, Ohio, and the way you had it in the SIGNS it is misleading in a way, a great part of my mail going to West Mansfield, Ohio. It may have been my fault. I wish you would just state that my address is Mansfield, Ohio, 332 Park Ave. W.

GEO. L. WEAVER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1912.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

CHURCH ORDER AND DISCIPLINE.

A DEAR brother has written us of late, asking that we reply to some questions through the SIGNS relating to the doctrine and order of the church. He asks first, Should not strict discipline be executed in the church for the health of the body? Second, Should a brother or sister conduct themselves in such a way that their course is hurtful, have they a right to justify their course of conduct by taking shelter behind the absolute predestination of all things? The writer says, "I think that a man who will try to cover his evil with the doctrine of absolute predestination, in defiance of the church, ought to be excluded from church fellowship." To this last sentiment we have no hesitancy in responding with a hearty amen. The sin is bad enough, but the excuse is worse. The sin might be through some sudden temptation when the man really desires to honor God in all his walk, but taking shelter, as our brother says, or seeking to absolve himself from all blame for his sin upon the ground that it was predestinated and that therefore he could not help it, and was therefore not blameworthy, is to deliberately despise the commandments of the Lord, and to charge God with that which he has a hundred times in his word declared that he abhors. If such a man has never known the grace of God in truth, such an excuse is in that man one of the dead works that belong to dead men, but if he be a child of God indeed, his mind and heart have become perverted by the devil. He is, in so thinking and saying, sowing to the flesh, and he shall of the flesh reap corruption; yea, he has already been sowing to the flesh, and this excuse that he brings for his wrong is corruption itself which he is reaping.

But we feel a desire to say a few things in general regarding the subject embraced in the above questions. First, it is no doubt true that strict discipline ought to be administered in the church, and by strict discipline we mean that order which is laid down in the New Testament for the churches to follow. When Israel came out of Egypt, and before the passover supper was observed by them, according to their families they were commanded to sweep their houses carefully, and to purge out all leaven. Leaven was a type of that which belonged to their former life of bondage in Egypt. This they were to forever leave behind, and this truth was first of all symbolized to them by the command to sweep their houses clean of that leaven which had always been one of the elements of bread, the bread of bondage eaten in that land. Now Paul in first Corinthians makes this use of the type in addressing the church. Purge out therefore, he says, the old leaven. This was the leaven of the Pharisees, the leaven of malice and wickedness. The reason which Paul urged upon the church at Corinth for this purging was, "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." As the lamb was sacrificed then, and was to be eaten with unleavened bread, so now Christ is sacrificed for us, and is to be eaten with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. By the

word "discipline" it should be understood that this, and only this, is meant. As each Israelite was to sweep his own house, so ought all believers to pay attention, first of all, to their own behavior. If each house is kept clean within and without, the whole city will be clean. In the order of the house of the Lord only that which is without can be seen or handled by the authorities of the city. It is not the business of the church to enter into any man's heart; this it is manifest they cannot do, but when filth lies in the street or in the dooryard, for the health of the inhabitants of the city it is needful that the city sees to it that this filth is removed and buried out of sight. But in attending to this important duty there is no room for any personal ill-feeling, all must be done with an eye single to the health of the city and the glory of God, and when the church proceeds to cleanse the street it should be with the remembrance that, first of all, we should carefully look out in front of our own house. This will make us careful and long-suffering and gentle when we have to deal with that house where the old leaven of malice and wickedness is found. It is important to do right, but it is also vastly important to have a right spirit in what we do. The chief thing is to do all to the glory of God and for the good of his cause upon earth. If this spirit rule in us there will be no haste, nor anger, nor hard sayings, but rather soberness, quietness and every effort to save that householder while we put away the filth before his door.

In the second place, it is well for us to remember that it is no strange thing for men to seek shelter themselves for their wrong doing under the doctrine of the Bible. Paul found this spirit existing in his day. Men thought then, as they think now, that if mankind is to be stirred up to the practice of righteousness at all, it must be by making out that their state in the next world depends upon their manner of life here, and when the apostles went forth preaching that salvation was not by human work at all, at once the objection was urged that this would destroy all incentive to good works. It is the mind of Satan that there is no such thing as unselfish service of God. He knows nothing of love, the highest and strongest force in the universe, and so he said concerning Job, when the Lord had called attention to his servant as a just man, one who feared the Lord and eschewed evil, "Doth Job fear God for nought?" That is, Satan would say, Thou hast blessed him and made him rich, and hast set a guard about him, preserving him from danger and from sorrow and loss, and it is for this reason that Job fears thee. Take these things away from him and see whether he will fear thee. It was inconceivable to Satan that men would ever serve God and seek after righteousness unless some hope of reward, either in this life or the next, was set before them, and this is the religion of mankind, and always has been. This is the religion which commands the approval of mankind to-day, as it ever has. The religion of unrenewed men and of Satan is the same. In this religion they are of their father, the devil. Human work and human merit are the spirit of every system of religion in the world, save the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ. Different nations and different sects prescribe different sorts of works, but they all agree that without work or merit in some way none can gain or hold the approval of their God. The apostles, as

said before, met this one principle of the evil one at once, when they began to preach salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. Satan had led all men captive in this false doctrine at his will.

Third. We have plain intimations that this was one of the objections which Paul had to meet, and which he was compelled to combat, and how completely he did meet this charge and refute it. It was charged, first, that the plan of salvation by grace through faith alone made void the law; that is, if men were to be saved by grace alone there was no use in the law at all. This Paul meets at the close of the third chapter of Romans by saying, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." He means that we establish the law because the faith of the gospel is that men are saved, not at the expense of the law of God, but by its being infinitely more completely filled through the obedience of Jesus Christ for us than the best of men ever could have fulfilled it. The law, then, is not thrown away, but fulfilled, and salvation comes to sinners, not at the expense of law, but because the law has been fully magnified and honored. When in reply to the doctrine of Paul that where sin abounded grace did much more abound, it was charged that the conclusion must be, Let us then continue in sin that grace may abound, for surely men would urge, It is a good thing that grace should more and more abound. Paul replies again, "God forbid." Instead of this being a proper conclusion, the reverse is true, for believers have become dead to sin. How then can they live any longer therein? Paul means to say that the grace of the atonement is connected with the grace of the new birth. Those who have been redeemed from sin and death and hell through the work of Christ, and not their own, have also received the love of the truth in their hearts, and have been created unto all good works by the operation of the Spirit of holiness in their hearts.

Fourth. Since the above objections were made to the truth, it cannot certainly be thought strange that other objections should also arise against other portions of the doctrine of the Lord, and so, turning to the ninth chapter of Romans, we find just the same criticisms of the truth that our brother has referred to in his letter to us. Paul there affirms, first, that election of persons to eternal life is a truth of God, and when one said that this would be unrighteousness in God, Paul meets that objection by saying, "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God?" And again he meets the objection as he did the two others to which we have called attention, by saying, "God forbid." It was not unrighteousness with God to choose Jacob rather than Esau, irrespective of either good or evil in them, or in their works. We will not here stop to refer to the thought that neither one of them had any claim upon the Lord in the first place, because we are writing to those who accept and believe that all that Paul says here is not his word only, but the word of God through him, and we are sure that our readers hold the word of God in reverence and do not seek to deny it. Still further down in this ninth chapter Paul brings forth the case of Pharaoh, and asserts that God had raised up this Egyptian king for the same purpose that was fulfilled in him, and the Lord did this in order to in this man set forth his own power and glory. Pharaoh did, from the first to the last, just that which almighty God had purposed, is the doctrine taught here by Paul. When some,

like those to whom our brother has referred, urged that Pharaoh therefore could not be blamed for what he did, Paul meets that with just a few words of rebuke: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power [right] over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," &c. It is a fearful thing to incur the rebuke administered here by the inspired apostle. These are God's words through him, and through Paul our God says, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" It is sure that all those who do evil, and then seek to hold themselves free from blame, either the blame of God or man, because this that they have done was included in the purpose of God, are incurring this awful rebuke. We have fully believed during our whole life that every word we have ever uttered, every thought that has ever been in our mind and every step our feet have ever taken, were in the predestination of God, and were parts of his eternal purpose, yet it has always been true that we have never dared to seek to remove blame from ourself when we have recognized sin in our heart or life by saying, Why does God find fault with us then? When our own conscience has much condemned us we have had no excuse to urge as a palliative for our conscience, and we have had no hope at such times, save in the perfect work of the blessed Lord on Calvary.

Fifth. In conclusion we desire to say that there has not been one principle of doctrine revealed in the word that has not been thought a source of evil by the carnal mind, and even the children of God may be captivated at times by the devil so that they cannot see clearly the truth, and many humble and tender-hearted ones have been made to sorrow greatly because they have been perplexed by these fleshly reasonings. Every objection that can arise to the doctrine of unlimited predestination can also with equal force be urged against God's unlimited foreknowledge. Equally strong objections have also been urged against the doctrine of his unchangeability. It has been said, If he is indeed God, and does not change, what is the use of prayer? But the reply is, that the same Bible which teaches his unchangeability also urges the obligation and privilege of prayer upon the subjects of his grace. The truth is that human reasoning can never see through the full harmony of the doctrine of God. Our finite minds will always be like the mind of a child when for the first time that child looks upon the machinery of a watch, or some other piece of workmanship. To that child one wheel moves in a direction contrary to another, and he will think that nothing like concerted action can ever be seen there. So God's ways are above our ways, and his word and his works will always to our short understanding seem full of contradiction. But as a little child is assured by the maker or owner of the watch that all is, after all, working together in full harmony, so ought we as the Lord's little children to believe that his words and works are, after all, in full harmony, though to us they continue to seem full of confusion. Faith will accept and believe the word of God against the evidence of all our human senses. Our senses, our reason, our judgment, may deceive us, but God's word is true, and cannot deceive; it is safe to believe in it all. C.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder P. W. Sawin.)

The Licking Association of Old School Baptists, in session with the Goshen Church, Anderson County, Kentucky, Sept. 13th, 14th and 15th, 1912, to the churches composing this Association, greeting in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD JESUS:—Once more we greet you in our annual Circular Letter. It is good indeed to be gathered together in an associate capacity to greet one another in the real love and fellowship of the gospel. Our annual meeting is called an association to designate it from other church meetings, this being a general meeting of the several churches as agreed upon, to hear from and of each other of their spiritual welfare, it being a creative body of the church.

As a subject of address to you at this time we call your attention to the brief words of inspiration, John i. 1: "In the beginning was the Word." We said brief words; not brief or short in meaning. In this brief language is embraced the fullness of the gospel, in them is every phase of the doctrine of God our Savior, the very germ of all gospel truth. The grain of corn falls in the ground, in it is the germ of life. What a wonderful development as it develops or grows; first the blade, then the stalk, then the full ripe ear. Wonderful indeed, but how infinitely much more so that which is contemplated in the text. "In the beginning." To us there is always a time of beginning. We go back to the time of beginning in creation, there we cease to exist; we can go no farther, and only know that God was, he existed in all his divine essence before of old, or ever the earth was. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. How lost in wonder and amazing glory are we as we think of the infinite power and wisdom that created from nothing and spoke a world into existence, bringing forth every living creature and thing, animate and inanimate, having life. Well might the poet sing,

> "Eternal Power, whose high abode
> Becomes the grandeur of a God."

O may we stand in solemn awe and reverence as we sing and speak of his majesty and glory. We must all admit the fact that all created things are passive in the hand of the great Creator, God, therefore by him and for him they are and were created. And God said, Let us make man in our own image. In the image of God created he him, male and female created he them, and called their name Adam. Somehow Jesus, the Word of God, was in the bosom of the Father. Three bear record in heaven: the Father, Son (Word) and the Holy Ghost, in essence one. In the image of God created he them. The image of the God-man, for he was before all, in the beginning. "when he gave to the sea his decree, that the water should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." Yes, he was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. (Prov. viii.) Adam was the figure of him that was to come, the God-man Christ. In Adam was the embodiment or life of all the human family, for he hath made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell upon all the face of the earth, having set the bounds of their habitation. This Paul declared at Ath-

ens. Whatever theories may have existed as to the human family before the flood, (the waters covered every mountain and high hill, so that just Noah and his family, eight souls, were saved, showing God's goodness and mercy in the election and grace of the human family, and out of or from them God hath chosen the heirs of salvation) the Scriptures teach us clearly the human family are all alike in nature the children of wrath, and recorded as nothing, less than nothing and vanity. Jesus is the word of God by whom all knowledge of God, his will and divine power, is conveyed unto his chosen people. Therefore while he is from all eternity, and verily God, he took upon him a body of flesh, to be identified with his people in the flesh, for in Adam they are flesh. Jesus comes to redeem from the law this people given him of the Father, having predestinated them unto the adoption of children, that they should be manifest as the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty. They are dead in sin, dead to any knowledge of his divine power. In the death of Jesus he redeemed each and every one of his people, being made a curse for them. In the quickening power of his Holy Spirit he raises them up and gives life, a feeling sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin. In him was life. "I give unto them eternal life." Now as we all had life in Adam, all the chosen heirs of glory were given life in Christ, the ever-living head, who was made head over all things to the church. Herein is it made manifest as in the beginning of creation, how much more wonderful in the gospel kingdom. To create is to bring forth or manifest that which was not, so in the very beginning of this wonderful work of grace is the Word, power by which the work is wrought out. He that hath begun a good work in you, &c. I am the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last. All that come before me are thieves and robbers. How wonderful this new creation, created in Christ Jesus, given life in him, brought forth in him and saved in him. How wonderful! "In the beginning was the Word." When you, dear child, go back to the beginning all was darkness, a dark beyond, nothing, chaos, but God in his rich mercy brought you forth, or from the dead, into his marvelous light. Revealed his Son in me, says Paul, and now the gospel presents him in all his fullness, for he is before all things. "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.
J. T. McCOUN, Clerk.
T. J. RATLIFF, Ass't Clerk.

(Written by Elder J. W. McClanahan.)

The Pocatalico Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Liberty Church, September 13th, 14th and 15th, 1912, to the churches composing her body, and the associations with which she corresponds, sendeth christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is a custom of long standing with us to present a Circular Letter to this body for their ratification or rejection; if received by this body then it becomes a part of the Minutes of this association, to go among the brethren of the several associations with which we correspond. The subject of the resurrection of the dead is one of vital importance to all who have been quickened to divine life and given a sweet hope in Jesus, who is the resurrection and the life. It must be conceded by Bible read-

ers that the apostles were inspired of God, hence their testimony cannot be doubted. Just how it shall be accomplished is a mystery to mortals, yea, even to angels. The word "resurrection" is a rising again from the dead, resumption of life by the dead. There can be no resurrection of anything only of that which has died. Just how the bodies of the saints shall be brought forth from death and the grave, mortals cannot comprehend, but it is ours to believe that they shall come forth to a state of glory into the fullness of immortality. We are satisfied that it is the Adamic man, the man born of the flesh, the man born of a woman, that dies and that is laid in the grave; to him death has a sting, because he has sinned; over him the grave has its victory. The Lord says by the prophet Hosea: "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." The hope of the saints in the Lord Jesus Christ is that the sting is taken away from death, and that the victory of the grave is not everlasting; death is swallowed up in victory. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" This man who rises a conqueror over death and the grave is the man who was of the earth earthy; he is the man who sinned against his Maker; he is the man who received the sentence of death for sinning; he is the man upon whom the sentence was executed; he dies and he is put in the grave. This man in the grave shall hear the voice of the Son of God and he shall come forth. If there be any other man or being that sins and is sent to the grave besides the Adamic man, we cannot find him by reading the Scriptures. The resurrection of the dead is so important in the doctrine and in the arguments of the apostle Paul, that without it the hope of the saints is vain; without it all the preaching of the apostles and preachers of the gospel is also vain. He sets it forth as the crowning work of redemption. His arguments lead to this conclusion: if the dead rise not, then there has been no atonement for sin. If the dead rise not, then the sins of the saints remain; "for if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised." If Christ be not raised, then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. Just so sure as Christ was raised from the dead, so sure it is that the dead will be raised, and that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead there can be no doubt in the minds of those who have living faith in the Lord. In his testimony King David speaks of this important event; he seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Peter says we all are witnesses. Paul bears testimony as though he were a witness of that great event, for on every occasion where it is needful for him to speak of it he uses the strongest language to establish the fact. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." There is no doubt of many persons coming back to natural life who had died previous to the coming of the Holy One, but it was reserved for Jesus, the Elder Brother, to be the first that should pass through death and come up victorious on the other side of the grave, firstborn from the dead; being the first one to enter his kingdom of glory, he is really the firstborn of every creature. The saints are to experience that change in their bodies that brings them to glory; it is through the res-

urrection that perfection comes to the saints. Now we see as through a glass darkly, now we know in part only, now we have the spirit of adoption, but in the resurrection we shall have the full adoption, the last and crowning work of redemption, to wit, the redemption of our body. The saints must suffer with their Lord and Savior on earth before they enter into their inheritance which cannot be corrupted nor defiled, neither can it fade away, because it is secured by the resurrection of their Lord Jesus Christ, he being the firstfruits of that incorruptible kingdom. There can be no doubt that Job had a view of that final redemption where he asks the question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" Yet he did not answer this question directly, but he continues his discourse, and, as it were, in the same breath says, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands." David says, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."—Psalms xvii. 15. Death, and the resurrection of God's people, are set forth in the Scriptures as falling asleep in the Lord Jesus and awaking to life from the dead in him. Daniel had a view of the final wonderful work of redemption, for he is assured of the safety of the Lord's people at that day, for at that time the great prince shall stand up for the delivery of the Lord's people. Jesus says the sheep are placed on the right hand, but the goats on the left. This is all done before the King calls his sheep to their final inheritance. At that time the sheep are to hear that welcome voice, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." The righteous shall go away into life eternal, the goats shall go away into everlasting punishment. The Scriptures teach us that the unjust, or wicked, are resurrected, but this cannot affect in any way the title of the righteous to their kingdom of glory, neither have they the right to ask their Lord why the unjust are resurrected unto damnation. "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." Paul, before Felix the governor, on the resurrection agrees with the above: "But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets; and have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." The apostle Paul understood that the law and prophets taught the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Moderator.
G. B. McCLANAHAN, Clerk.

(Written by Elder J. B. Slauson.)

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Second Church of Roxbury, Roxbury, N. Y., Sept. 18th and 19th, 1912, to the churches composing the same sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Another year is numbered with the past, and we are still blessed with the kind providence of God to assemble ourselves in an associate capacity, and according to a long honored custom you will expect our annual letter of love and fellowship. In writing this letter for the consideration of our brethren we desire to be directed by the Spirit of our blessed Master, who loved us and gave himself for us, that we may present no new doctrine among you, knowing nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified for the salvation of sinners, and, furthermore, that our thoughts may be centered upon the one great fundamental principle of truth, salvation by grace, as recorded in Paul's letter to the Ephesians, ii. 8, 9: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." These words which we have chosen for a basis to write upon with such ability as the Lord may give, are the words of the apostle Paul, written to the church at Ephesus during his imprisonment at Rome. The church at Ephesus was largely composed of Gentiles, who by nature were strangers to the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise, being without hope and without God in the world. The Gentiles as a nation were idolaters, and were despised by the Jews, being accounted by them as dogs and the offscouring of all things. (1 Cor. iv. 13.) It is clearly shown in this epistle that miserable as they have been by nature, that through the true riches of the grace of God they are heirs of eternal glory, and are builded upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone, that by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead the middle wall of partition contained in carnal ordinances was broken down. "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace."—Eph. ii. 15. We here wish to call your attention to the first and second verses of this second chapter of Ephesians: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." Including the third verse: "And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Therefore they having been quickened by the Spirit of God, and having been raised up together from that death state in sin, both Jew and Gentile, and made to sit together, both Jew and Gentile, in heavenly places, according as they were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began, the true teaching of this epistle of Paul to every believer in Christ Jesus is that God is no respecter of persons, neither can any one be justified by the deeds of the law, for the Scriptures declare that by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified in his sight (Romans iii. 20); for by grace, and not by works, are ye saved, establishing the fact that salvation to poor lost sinners of every name and nation is through and by the free and unmerited grace of God. This has been, and is, the living testimony of every heaven-born soul who

knows the plague of his own heart, and to such as are saved by grace sin has become exceeding sinful. Therefore, knowing "that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not," such characters who cannot think a good thought nor do a good deed must give all praise of their salvation to the all-sufficient grace of God. We are taught by the Spirit of truth, that takes the things of Jesus and shews them unto us, that should we be able to keep and live up to the very letter of the commandments written on tables of stone it would in no way ingratiate us in the favor of God, or make and prepare us as the recipients of his grace, for, "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace."—John i. 16. Not grace for works, or any merits of our own, but grace for grace. The teaching of the carnal mind, which is "enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be," is sounded forth from the four quarters of the globe by ministers of unrighteousness, whose God is their belly, teaching for the doctrines and commandments of men that man has some part of the work of his salvation to perform, contrary to the true teaching of the inspired word, for by grace are ye saved. We will here briefly present a few thoughts of what salvation implies to the subjects of grace. First, the word of inspiration here declares that they (the church at Ephesus, composed of both Jew and Gentile) were dead in trespasses and sin, so also is every subject of grace by nature, for "as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."—Romans v. 12. The salvation here mentioned is a salvation from this death state in sin by the death of our blessed Lord on the cross of Calvary, which was not alone to the church at Ephesus, but included every vessel of his mercy chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Second, a salvation from everlasting destruction, 2 Thess. i. 7–9: "And to you who are troubled, rest with us; when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." Third, a salvation from the place prepared for the devil and his angels, as recorded in Matt. xxv. 41: "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Fourth, a salvation from the power of the second death. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."—Rev. xx. 6. Dear brethren, what a full and complete salvation for sinners chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, both for time and eternity, was wrought on Calvary by our Lord Jesus Christ. And in the morning of the third day Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, burst the bands of death asunder, and arose from the dead, the victorious conqueror of death, hell and the grave, therefore death is a conquered foe. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus

Christ."—1 Cor. xv. 55-57. What a wonderful and glorious victory was wrought on Calvary's cross for the subjects of redeeming grace. Furthermore, dear brethren, the power of saving grace is manifested in the heart of every heaven-born child, saving him from the propensities of his nature, from evil temptations, from cruel unbelief and from all the snares of the enemy that lie in his pathway. How true and how sweet are the words of the apostle in the experience of the children of God, that by the grace of God I am what I am. All that we have and all that we hope for, not only in this world, but in the world to come, we must ascribe to free and unmerited grace.

J. B. SLAUSON, Moderator.
A. J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Licking Association of Primitive Baptists, in session with Goshen Church, Anderson County, Ky., Sept. 13th, 14th and 15th, 1912, to the churches and messengers with which we correspond sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Your messengers have come to us once again in love and fellowship. Your ministers have come preaching the same precious doctrine of Jesus Christ and him crucified. This is the one hundredth annual session of this dear old association; may it stand for many years to come. Amen.

Notice of place of our next session will be given later, beginning on Friday before the second Saturday and Sunday in September, 1913, when we hope to meet your messengers and receive your correspondence again.

P. W. SAWIN, Moderator.
J. T. COUN, Clerk.
T. J. RATLIFF, Assistant Clerk.

The Roxbury Association, now in session with the Second Church of Roxbury, Roxbury, N. Y., Sept. 18th and 19th, 1912, to the several churches with which she corresponds sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—We are once more delighted to address you by the way of a Corresponding Letter. The meeting has been good and profitable to all believers in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Your ministers have come to us laden with the rich blessings of the gospel, which to us has been the power of God unto salvation, declaring salvation through Jesus' name to poor lost sinners. We ask a continuance of your correspondence in the future as well as in the past.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Andes and Middletown churches, Union Grove, N. Y., when and where we hope to meet your messengers and receive your correspondence again.

J. B. SLAUSON, Moderator.
A. J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

NOTICE.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Please say through the SIGNS that Elder W. Lively is dead. He died in Birmingham, Ala., on the night of October 2nd. He was in bed for about fifteen months. I visited him often, and talked, sang and prayed with him. He felt that his afflictions were the result of his disobedience, and was greatly exercised upon spiritual things during all his illness. At his request I held short services at his burial.

In hope, H. J. REDD.

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

WE are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

William R. Keeler, a beloved friend and well-wisher of the Old School Baptist Church, died Sept. 18th, 1912, at the Hospital of the University of Maryland, in the city of Baltimore, Md., whither he had gone for an operation, the effects of which caused his death. Mr. Keeler was born in Stephen City, Frederick Co., Va., Oct. 21st, 1862, so was nearly 56 years old at the time of his death. When a small boy he moved to Millwood, Clarke Co., Va., but for the past twenty-six years had lived in Middleburg, Loudoun Co., Va., which was his beloved home at the time of his death. Twenty years ago he married Miss Laura Lee Cole, who, with two daughters, Ruth and Mary, are left to mourn their sad loss. The writer has been present on very few occasions as sad as the funeral of Mr. Keeler; seldom has it been his lot to be with a more grief-stricken family at the laying away of their loved one. Their home life was beautiful, for our friend was a devoted husband and loving father, and constantly endeavored to shield his wife and children from any business worries and cares, and while Mr. Keeler had been ailing for a long time, yet he always made light of it to his family and tried to not let them know how badly he sometimes felt. He was a man widely known and respected throughout Loudoun County, both as a citizen and as a business man. Very few knew of all he really did in the way of kindness and charity, for it was never his manner to flaunt it publicly. Besides his usefulness to the county generally, he was also one of the trustees of the Mount Zion Old School Baptist Church and a firm and substantial friend of the pastor, Elder J. N. Badger. The promises of God to his people are sure of being accomplished, so that when he is declared to be the husband to the widow and a father to the fatherless it is no meaningless joining of words together, but a living and present source of comfort and support to his tried ones when enduring temptation. May our dear Mrs. Keeler, who we feel confident is a subject of the grace of Jesus Christ, and the two daughters find this true now in their great bereavement, and be caused to feel that whatever God does is right because he does it.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer, from the Methodist meetinghouse in Middleburg; interment in the Middleburg Cemetery, Sept. 19th, 1912.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

LEESBURG, Va., Oct. 8, 1912.

Elder C. H. Jones departed this life June 5th, 1912. He was born in Sumter County, Ga., Sept. 17th, 1834, received a hope in Christ, was baptized in the year 1861, and ordained the same year to the work of the ministry, which place he filled as long as he was able. He had been a sufferer from asthma all his life, and more so in his last days, but was never heard to complain, although he was helpless four years. He was married to M. A. Parr, and to that union were born eleven children, six girls and five boys; six of the children survive him. He had taken the SIGNS thirty-seven years, and spent most of his time in reading.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder S. A. Smith, who spoke words of comfort to the mourning ones. Father leaves many friends, beside his wife and children, who will miss him, but we grieve not as those without hope.

His heartbroken daughter,

ALAFAIRE RICHMOND.

Mrs. Abbie Coddington, who has lived here for the past two years, died last night after a lingering illness of seven months. She was born in Orange County, N. Y., May 4th, 1837. Mrs. Coddington was stricken with paralysis several years ago, and received the second stroke in February. Since that time she had been confined to her bed. The only relative she has this side of New York is a son, Geo. J. Coddington, who is employed as engineer for the C. F. & I., and who did not know anything about the demise of his mother until after her death. She was a very able writer, and had published several articles, of which some were considered extra good among publishers.

Funeral services will be held in the Trinidad Undertaking chapel at 2 p. m. to-morrow, and interment will be in the Masonic Cemetery.

(From *The Free Press* of Trinidad, Colo., Sept. 20th, 1912.)

OUR dear father, **J. H. Yeoman,** died in Los Angeles, Cal., August 26th, 1912, and was buried there August 28th. He left his home in Loveland and went to Glenwood Springs, Colo., in hope that the springs would be of benefit to him for kidney trouble and rheumatism, from which he had suffered some time, but not proving beneficial went to California and got better only for a short time and died there after terrible suffering. He was born in Ohio, but lived in Green County, Ind., with his parents when a very small boy, and from there moved to Ohio and went west in the early days, where he had since made his home. He joined the Paint Creek Old School Baptist Church when a young man, and had been a member ever since. He leaves a widow, five daughters and two stepdaughters to mourn their loss. We feel that our loss is his eternal gain. His age was about 77 years.

His stepdaughter,

(MRS.) M. A. LAMPTON.

MEETINGS.

THE Welsh Tract Church has appointed a yearly meeting to begin on Saturday, October 19th, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue two days. Those coming from Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore will come on Saturday via B. & O. R. R. to Newark, Del. Train leaves Philadelphia at 8:15 a. m., and Baltimore, Mt. Royal station, at 8 a. m. Ministers and other brethren and friends of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE Andes Church will hold a two days meeting, the Lord willing, at Union Grove, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, October 23rd and 24th, 1912. Trains will be met Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. at Union Grove. Those coming over the Ulster & Delaware Railroad from Kingston or Oneonta, or any points on the U. & D. R. R., will change at Arkville for Union Grove. A cordial invitation is extended to all. J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is to be held with the church in the town of Snowhill, Worcester Co., Md., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday after the third Sunday in October, 1912. We wish to extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. We hope no one will hesitate in coming for fear of being in the way, or that we will be crowded. We are making preparations for a full gathering of Baptists and friends, and if we fail in this we will be disappointed. There are two trains daily from the north, one arriving at 1:30 p. m. and the other at 9:30 p. m. Both trains will be met on Tuesday before the association and the friends taken care of. Those coming from Baltimore can come by the B. C. & O. Get tickets to Berlin, change for Snowhill. Friends will come to Snowhill on Tuesday. The brethren will meet the trains each day and take the friends to their homes. Any coming later than Wednesday will walk to the meetinghouse, only a short distance. We especially invite ministering brethren to meet with us.

T. M. POULSON, Pastor.

THE Olive and Hurley Church, nothing in providence preventing, will hold their yearly meeting the last Saturday and Sunday in October (26th and 27th), 1912. JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

THE Olive and Hurley Church will hold a two days meeting, the Lord willing, the first Saturday and Sunday in November (2nd and 3rd), 1912, at Olive, N. Y. Trains will be met at Shokan on Friday p. m. before the meeting. All who love the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. Elder B. F. Coulter is expected to be at this meeting.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Mt. Enon Association of south Florida, holding to the doctrine of unlimited or absolute predestination of all things, and salvation by grace alone, will hold their next session November 8th, 9th and 10th, 1912, with the church called Kissimmee, at Campbell Station, on the A. C. L. R. R. This will be the forty-first annual session of this association, and we invite all lovers of like precious faith.

C. K. HAINES.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Albany and Troy Church will meet the fourth Sunday in each month at No. 2 Second St., Monument Square, Troy, N. Y.

J. B. SLAUSON, Pastor.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 80. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1912. NO. 21.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HEBREWS X. 26–31.

ONE who sees himself a justly condemned sinner in the sight of a holy God will try to put away his sins and to become righteous, but he will try in vain. In the Lord's own appointed time he will reveal Jesus to this man, as he does to every convicted sinner, as having died for him and put away his sins by the sacrifice of himself. This truth always comes to the sinner as a surprise, it is never expected, it always comes as something new and wonderful. Now they experience the new covenant without knowing at the time what it means, any more than a child understands what it is doing when it takes its food. "I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."—Heb. x. 16, 17. This one now has received the knowledge of the truth. The sins that burdened his soul have been forgiven, and will burden him no more with condemnation, though the remembrance of them will keep him humble and cause him to desire to walk softly before the Lord all his days. But now this one is "under law to Christ," and by the power of the law which is written, not on tables of stone, but by the Spirit of the living God in the fleshy tables of the heart, (2 Cor. iii. 3,) he feels from day to day the sinfulness of this old nature, so that he has to say, "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." Here, it seems, is the experience of the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ. (Phil. iii. 10.) The more nearly we are enabled to walk with God, and the more clearly we are given to know the power of the resurrection of Christ, the more acutely will we feel this depravity of the flesh. It is likely that there never was one child of God who did not feel more or less of this sinfulness in heart or word or deed, causing him to feel at times the supplicating prayer of the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The dear Savior graciously remembered this when he put this sentence into the prayer which he taught his disciples: "Forgive us our sins." Can such a man sin wilfully? He, looking into his own heart and life, has to say in all honesty, "The sins of one most righteous day might sink me in despair," yet he is walking in Christ by faith. He realizes that he cannot take one step in

his own strength or in his own name; he feels day by day that Christ is his life, that he cannot walk one step in holiness except by faith in Christ, and in the good works, which God before ordained that his people should walk in. (Eph. ii. 10.) Can this man sin in such a way as that his sin should be called a wilful sin? The apostle here says something that sounds like it: "If we sin wilfully." He did not say, If we should sin wilfully, but, if we do. John speaks of a sin unto death. Under Moses' law there were sins unto death, which meant a death of the body. But those of whom John and Paul are speaking are not under that law of sin and death. (Romans viii.) These have been born again, and have the law of Christ written in the new heart. Of course their transgressions are against no law that they are not under. It is against the law written in their hearts that they transgress; against the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus; against his commands. Is there a transgression that may be committed by a living soul which will bring upon him punishment, while other sins are not punished? Are there distinctions between different sins of the Lord's people? The Father says of the Son, "If his children forsake my law, * * * then will I visit their transgression with the rod."—Psalms lxxxix. The Lord says, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."—Amos iii. 2. Paul commands concerning one transgressor that the church should deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. (1 Cor. v. 4, 5.) Afterward he speaks of this as a punishment, and directs that the one who was punished shall be restored to their fellowship and love. (2 Cor. ii. 6–11.) Again, he speaks of delivering two unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme. (1 Tim. i. 20.) If evil thoughts and selfish lusts and desires for revenge are in my heart and mind, and they are suppressed by me through the power of the Spirit, and no word or deed of expression follow, I will feel a deep sorrow and be greatly abased before God, but there is no call for punishment; but if I give expression to that sinful thought and desire, then its character is somewhat changed, as all that hear or know of it are somewhat involved. If I covet I am a sinner before God, but it is before him and him only, and if I feel a hatred of myself for that sinful desire my cry unto God will be heard; but if my covetous desire has led me to do a wrong, then comes something more. If my envious or jealous feeling has been expressed in word or deed against any one, then punishment must follow. It is the Lord only who can punish, and this punishment is a most solemn thing. The church cannot punish; the church does, or should do, what the King and his princes, the apostles, direct. The punishment is by the dear Savior himself, and it is never in anger, but always in infinite love and tender compassion. God is not mocked. What a man (of God) sows that shall he also reap. When the evil thought or covetous desire was expressed in word or act, then the transgressor was sowing. If he sows to the flesh he will have a sad harvest of corruption to reap. If he keep under his body, and keep utterly to himself that corrupt desire, by the power of the Spirit, and, looking unto the Lord for help, he sows spiritual good wishes and love for his brother, it will be his blessed privilege to reap some of the special joys of life everlasting. Job's friends thought the Lord

was punishing him for some hidden wickedness, by taking away his wealth and destroying his children, but they did not understand his case. He asserted his integrity in regard to all the charges of guilt which their carnal minds brought against him, at the same time that he was bemoaning his sinfulness and corruption in the sight of a holy God. The loss of worldly wealth and treasures, and personal affliction, and pain of body or mind, are no indication that one is under the wrath and punishment of a holy God; on the contrary, the one whom the Lord is visiting with stripes because of his iniquities may find his worldly condition improved, but leanness of a most terrible kind sent into his soul. (Psalms cvi. 15.) The natural man knows nothing of this leanness, knows nothing of either spiritual joy or sorrow. The one who commits a sinful act knows that it is sinful. His conscience, which the Lord has made good and tender, tells him that what he is doing is wrong; he knows he is seeking in this way to gratify some evil propensity or fleshy lust. The apostle does not seem to be talking of a worldly man who is trying to deceive the church, and who feels no such thing as godly sorrow for sin, but he is referring to the Lord's people, saying, "The Lord shall judge his people," and this seems to me to be the same characters (his people) referred to in all this chapter and connection. It may be that one has, for no good reason, forsaken the assembling of himself together with the church. The apostle seems to refer to this as a transgression of a most important kind. To disobey any commandment of Jesus is to trample him who gave the commandment under foot, to count the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and to do despite to the Spirit of grace. These are strong expressions, but they can be spoken only of a child of God, for only a child of God has ever been sanctified by the blood of the covenant. This transgressor has known that Jesus atoned for the sins of all his people when he died. Now he is to feel the infinite importance of this truth, when he feels himself left without hope, as he says again and again to himself, "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." He cannot get the assurance that he is in this covenant of grace until the Lord shall have fully judged him and shown to him the holiness of his judgments. He is separated from the sweet comforts of the gospel, from the precious experiences of gospel fellowship. Now he feels a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries. These adversaries are all the evil propensities of the flesh; they must be devoured, destroyed. We have done the will of the flesh in turning from the sweet commandments which were delivered unto us, and now we feel the sad consequences. The apostles have told us urgently and tenderly to avoid the evil, not to live after the flesh, for if we do we shall die. "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men," telling the men of God not to fulfill the lusts of the flesh. Now this death is upon us; not the death of the body, not death in sin, but death to the joy and power of spiritual things. No power in prayer, no answer to prayer, no comfort of love, none of that gladness which once filled the soul, even in the midst of affliction. Only a living soul can experience this kind of death. A worldly man is dead in sin and cannot experience this death, which is a separation from the blessings of the gospel that the natural man does not understand. Should I meet

one who is suffering this, which he feels to be a just punishment for some transgression, and who does not think that he can ever be forgiven, I could not say to him, You sinned wilfully, and now you have no ground for hope, because there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins. I could not say that; I would have to say to him, You sinned wilfully, as you acknowledge, and your punishment, as you feel it to be, is just, but your sorrow and heart-brokenness are evidence to me that you are a child of God. You can do nothing to atone for your sins, but your sins were all atoned for by the dear Savior, and in his own good time he will reveal this to you and give you forgiveness for all your sins, as he has already given you repentance. It is a fearful thing, but also a most blessed thing, that you have fallen into the hands of the living God, as your Judge, who will judge his people, and who has declared this unfailing judgment: "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted;" and who directed one of his apostles to say: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness;" and who moved one of the holy men of old to say for our comfort now: "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause." "He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness." The judgment and fiery indignation which this man, who has sinned wilfully, moved by the will of his carnal mind, so fearfully looks for, will devour the adversaries; not the man, but the adversaries of the man, which war against his soul, (1 Peter ii. 11; James iv. 1,) seeking to destroy his hope and his comfort. The carnal mind and heart are full of them, they are "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life."—1 John ii. 16. These adversaries caused the man to sin, caused his downfall. They would, if it were possible, destroy the child of God himself, but that they cannot do, for Jesus has prayed for every one of them that their faith fail not. But these adversaries shall themselves be devoured. The poor sinner shall see them to be lying vanities, (Jonah ii. 8,) shall see them as nothing, as of the world, as passing away; shall see in the Lord's own time and way that this punishment, so sorely suffered, has been for the destruction of the flesh, that through mercy the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. (1 Cor. v. 5; 2 Cor. ii. 6–11.) This punishment is sorer than that of the one who transgressed Moses' law, as the things of the new covenant are higher, more holy and more desirable to the spiritual mind than the things of the old covenant, as the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus is higher and more glorious than the law of sin and death, from which it has made us free. (Romans viii. 2.) He who has suffered or who is suffering this punishment can never tell it; it is terrible, beyond his power to describe. But the deliverance from this suffering shall surely come to every wandering sheep, and the dark and terrible night of sorrow shall surely be followed by the morning of eternal and unfading joy.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

NEWFOUNDLAND, Ky., May 15, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you my dear father's, J. E. Thornbury, experience, which he wrote some fifteen or sixteen years ago, which to me is wonderful indeed. This letter has been of special interest and comfort to me, and I

believe it will be of comfort to many poor mourning ones. Inclosed you will find two dollars to renew my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. My husband and I would be very lonely without it, and we always look forward to its coming and enjoy reading the letters from the brethren and sisters, also the editorials, for they tell us things which we have experienced, and we are glad to hear those things confirmed by those we believe to be God's people. Often do I earnestly desire to know whether I am one of the afflicted and poor people who trust in the name of the Lord. Whatever I am, the God of all grace is my only hope; in the name of Christ is the hope of glory.

May you, dear editors, live long to comfort God's little ones, is the prayer of your unworthy sister in hope of eternal life,

(MRS.) KATHLEEN KENDALL.

SANDY HOOK, Ky., Dec. 5, 1897.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I will try to write something of my experience, or what I hope are the dealings of the Lord with me.

I was born April 14th, 1861, and very early in my youth, when I was only eight years of age, I was given to see I was a vile sinner in the sight of God, but I could not tell from whence this knowledge came, nor why I felt so miserable, yet I felt and saw I was lost in sin. This caused a fear to come over me, and I was made to weep. This feeling was not always present, but would return with greater force each time. I would try to put it away from me, thinking I would do better, and would promise to do so, only to break the promise each time, for I got worse all the time. I knew not at that time the way of man is not in himself, but thought I could please God and cause him to love me by what I could do. I was of the opinion I had a great deal to do, so I tried by searching the Bible what I must do, but found it written in the testimony that God has given that there is none that seek after God, that none doeth good, no, not one. This certainly did confuse me, for I thought I could do something good. In this way I passed many years, until I was about twenty years of age. I loved the Old Baptists as a people, but could not understand their manner of preaching; they preached salvation of God by grace alone. When I was about the age above mentioned I was not troubled so much over my sins as I had been before. This gave me some ease, and for a short time I enjoyed the pleasures of the world as I had not done before, and during that time the thought was suggested to me that all my former trouble was only imaginary, and that I ought to share all the pleasures which our nature loves. This I freely engaged in, running to a great extent, being at that time, I believe, left to walk in my own counsel and follow my own heart's desires. This I now believe was the purpose of God, that he show me my own weakness, my nature's sinfulness and my own inability to do good. During this season of enjoying worldly pleasure I thought that God ought not to hold any one responsible for doing things they might love to engage in, and this caused me to go deeper in my transgressions. I became so hardened that I tried to reason in my own mind that there was no God, but could not quite come to that conclusion. Though I was indeed fond of my lusts, I was ashamed to let all people know what I did. This season of enjoying the pleasures of life was broken by the sudden return of my burden of

sinful feelings, which was so heavy that I was made to realize my condemnation was just. I thought I would pray, but instead of being able to use words I could do nothing but groan and sigh. O the horror that filled my very soul. I desired to be alone where no one could see me, for I thought I was not fit to be in company with any one, and saw while in this condition that I only deserved to be punished forever. I would try to read the Bible, but could find no word of promise, all seemed to condemn me. I cannot tell with either mouth or pen just what I, at that time, was made to suffer. I thought there was no mercy for me, and that I was sure to die in my sins and be punished forever and ever. I tried to pray, but could only say, God, be merciful to me, a sinner; O Lord, save, if it is thy will. My burden was so heavy I thought the very earth trembled under me; I was weighed prostrate to the earth. Everything about me seemed to condemn me, even the trees and plants seemed to mock me. I thought if I could only pray it would relieve me. O, was there ever such a wretch as I? There was no mercy for me, I was left to perish for my sins, and in my sins I saw God was just in my condemnation. I could not see how he could be just and save me, a disobedient, hell-deserving wretch. One day I was in the field trying to work, and thought of the promises I had made and broken; I tried to pray again, but could not. I gave up all hope; I was doomed to die and perish forever; all was darkness around me. Lost, lost, forever lost. O how awful was my condition. I lay prostrate on the earth, and could only say, God, be merciful to me, a poor, perishing sinner. At this point I can only say that only those who have passed through this ordeal, and who know the weight of sin, can know my awful state of mind. Brethren, I cannot in words express to the understanding of any but those who have experienced the same what bitter and deep anguish I was then in. When I had lost all hope of obtaining mercy there shone round such a beautiful light; it seemed to light up my troubled soul and my burden of sin was removed. All things were praising God, I leaped for joy and praised God for the first time. Everything was praising him, he had put a new song in my mouth, even praise to God. I could see that God had spoken peace to my soul only for Christ's sake. I wanted to do my Lord's will, and earnestly desired to know who were his people. I had not been to meeting for two years; I felt too unworthy to be with God's dear people. I was no Arminian, for my experience was very different from what they preached. On the first Sunday in September, 1887, I asked my wife to go with me to an Old School Baptist meeting. The church was at Newfoundland, Ky. She went with me, but I did not tell her that I wanted to join the church that day. When I got there I met my father and told him of some of my troubles and that I wanted to join the church. Well do I remember the very expression of his dear face as he said, with tears of joy in his eyes, "My son, God will at his own appointed time bring in his chosen people." We went on to the house, and I never heard such preaching; it was just what I loved: salvation by grace alone. I could hardly wait until the invitation was given. When it was I offered myself and was received, after trying to tell what I hoped the Lord had done for me, and on the first Saturday in October my wife joined the same church and we were baptized the same day in the fellowship

of Concord Church, by Elder R. T. Parsons. I thought I would see no more trouble, but I soon knew doubts and fears. I did not doubt God saving his people, but I doubted myself. I knew what God did would stand forever, but I doubted my experience. So time passed on with me; there were some sweet seasons of rest in the Lord. I was certain then if the holy and only begotten Son of God, who knew no sin, became sin for me, that I should be made the righteousness of God in him, that all was sure. I am yet trusting in the same God, yet I cannot say I know I am a child of God. I hope through his mercy and grace to stand accepted in the Beloved. I know I am a sinner, but no man ever taught me; God alone can teach us we are sinners. If I am saved at all, it is a sinner saved by grace.

I have written a part of my experience, yet I do not know that it is the experience of a subject of grace.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

JOHN E. THORNBURY.

PORTLAND, Ind., Dec. 23, 1911.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER STEPHENS:—We send you Christmas greeting, hoping and trusting that it is well with you both, and that in looking back over the year that is just ending you will see that God has graciously kept you and made you the recipients of many blessings. When I think of the many deep sorrows that have fallen to the lot of many, and that thousands of heartbroken people, because of their losses and crosses, are everywhere to be found, then I seem to realize how graciously I have been kept and how I have been preserved and spared when I knew it not. I have had only a few seasons of pleasant meetings with the brethren this last year, because I have been tied at home, but I hope and trust that God will so keep me that I shall be counted faithful, and that in the new year just before us I may be permitted to mingle more with his people and talk more of his love and mercy and long-suffering, that I may give him at least a little of the praise due his holy name. We are in our usual health, as are the brethren so far as I know. Brother Hutchinson's wife died Nov. 23rd, and he writes me that he is all broken up because of his great loss. I will add some rambling thoughts which have been passing through my mind this winter while reading the Scriptures and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and other Baptist papers which I am taking.

"That you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." In the connection the apostle Jude has set forth the way in which the saints receive this faith. He exhorts the brethren to stand firm and contend for this faith, and then declares that it was delivered unto them. Much has been written about faith, and concerning what many eminent saints accomplished by this faith. Jeptha, Gideon, Sampson, Moses, Abraham, Noah, Joshua, Samuel and others are named in the word as examples. It is also said that without faith it is impossible to please God, and that faith is the gift of God, and that Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith, and that by grace we are saved through faith. Seeing, then, that faith has accomplished so much, or that men have accomplished so much through faith, the question arises, What is faith? If the children of Israel could put to flight the armies of the aliens through faith, and through faith stop the mouths of lions, and wandered in sheepskins, and in dens and caves, then what is it like? Through

faith we learn that Noah built the ark, and by faith we know that the worlds were framed by the word of God. The children of God are called the children of faith. Then what is it? Paul defines it thus, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Thus it is the strength of something, or the substance, of which Jesus is the author. It was once delivered unto the saints, or given to them. Who delivered this faith unto the saints? How could evidences exist of things unseen? How do we have evidences of things we never saw? God talked with Abraham, and he believed or had faith in what God promised, and his faith was counted to him for righteousness. Often we all believe in things that we never saw, upon the testimony of others. But men often believe in things which afterward prove to be false, so that naturally we often believe things that are not true, and yet we honestly believe them. Therefore there is a false belief sometimes called faith. Almost one-half of the world today believe in Buddhism or Hindooism, and have no faith in Jesus Christ, and we believe that their ideas are wrong. But the apostle designates the kind of faith of which he is talking by saying it "was once delivered unto the saints," and the disciples were to earnestly contend for that faith. The Jews have never acknowledged the faith of which Jude spoke as having been delivered unto the saints. Now the apostle Paul speaks of the faith of God's elect. Men now speak of different faiths, such as the Catholic faith, the Methodist, the United Brethren, the Dunkard, the Lutheran, the Mormon or the Mohammedan, but the faith of God's elect, which inspired the servants of God to endure all manner of privations and banishments, is something different from all manner of these many faiths. Jesus is the author and finisher of this faith, and he delivered it unto them. Again we ask, What is this faith? It is the evidence of positive things which are not seen. We believe that there is a country called England, because we have read so much about it, and we have talked with people who have been there in whom we have confidence, and so we believe that there is such a country, although we have never seen it. We have the evidence of things that we never saw, and hence believe them. Faith was once delivered unto the saints, and they have in all ages borne evidence of it. Now "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." But "the preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." Now "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Yet we are told that some have ears and hear not, eyes and see not, and hearts and understand not. The Jews saw and heard Christ, and yet believed not. Paul also said, "All men have not faith." This faith once delivered unto the saints, then, is the gift of God to them, it cometh by revelation. Paul said that the faith which he preached he did not receive of man, neither was he taught it by man, but by the revelation of Jesus. Thus the disciples of Christ had a revealed faith. The apostle Paul said, "Eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, neither have entered unto the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God." The Spirit of God, which dwells in all the saints, is the one thing that searches out the deep things of God and reveals them

unto us. Therefore this faith is the evidence of the things which we have not seen, for it is a witness within. The hearts of the children of God are prepared to receive the truth as the Spirit reveals it. We cannot describe our faith in meets and bounds of human language, we cannot photograph it nor see it, and yet it is the energy that moves to action in all our worship of God. It is like the wind that blows, we cannot see it, nor measure it, but we can feel it; and this faith delivered unto the saints is known by those who feel it and that are moved by it. Hence we always contend that all the proof the saints have of the things of the kingdom of God is by what is revealed unto them by the Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. Thus Noah was told to prepare an ark, that he and his family and two and two of all creatures might be preserved from the flood. This flood did not come until one hundred and twenty years after God had declared it, and Noah worked faithfully all these years before seeing the flood; he had faith in the word of God and labored in faith, having evidence from God that all should be as he had declared. God had revealed this unto him. Abraham was told that his seed should imherit the land of Canaan. Abraham never experienced this for himself, but he had faith in the word of God, and so went out from his own country and kindred's faith. When he was told to offer his only son, Isaac, he did so through faith, that faith which is the evidence in the hearts of God's children, so that they believe on him. It is true that the saints have never seen God, but he has shed his love abroad in their hearts and they have felt that love, and hence know that he lives. The Holy Ghost which is given them, is a witness of the things of the kingdom of God. John says, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." This is the witness of the Spirit which is given them. The love of God is declared to be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. Before the Holy Spirit was given, the disciples had the presence of Christ himself as their evidence or witness. Jesus said, If I go away I will send you the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth, and he shall take of the things of mine and show them unto you. This is the way that faith comes; it is the gift of God and the fruit of the Spirit. The Spirit is the tree, of which faith is one of the fruits, therefore one must have the tree in order to have the fruit. When Paul said, "All men have not faith," it was because all men have not the Spirit. The apostle said of some that they were sensual, having not the Spirit. And again, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." So faith is the fruit of the Spirit, which God hath given to his own. Faith is not of works; this is clearly set forth in all the evidence that we have in the Scriptures. It is declared to be one of the most gracious gifts of God, and those who have it have received it from heaven, it was delivered unto then. When we have tasted of the good word of God, and of the powers of the world to come, we are thereby given faith. We then feel his love and possess his Spirit, and have tasted indeed that the Lord is gracious. Because his love has been shed abroad in our hearts we know it, we have the evidence of it, we have the witness within. This is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God.

Your brother,

NEWTON PETERS.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Aug. 11, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—This is Sunday morning, and I have been sitting down in the wondrous love of our heavenly Father, pondering over the words in Genesis l. 20: "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." I have a little time to write before going to meeting. I shall be glad to see you again, and hear you talk of God and his love, for you have been gone from us for a little time. I am thinking how little I know whether I shall arise from this desk alive, but if I am a child of God it would not be death, but rather being made alive, to see him as he is and be like him. They that believe on the Lord shall not perish, but have eternal life. I often use the word "we," but am I included in the family of God's little ones? Not one of them shall be left out. What a precious promise! I feel I know that I love the place where his people meet to worship him, and I love the brethren and sisters in this Old School doctrine, if I know the doctrine, and I believe I do, because they speak as I feel. There must be and is a response.

"When saint to saint in days of old
Their sorrows, sins and sufferings told,
Jesus, the friend of sinners dear,
His saints to bless was always near."

But I must leave these thoughts for a little time and go to fill my place in the little band of God's people at the old brick church. I do not expect to see a board out telling us where the text will be; the Lord will give a text at the time it is needed.

Tuesday evening.—Since Sunday morning I have not dared to attempt to write. The preaching was good to me, and I would have followed you over to Harbourton in the afternoon, but could not, and stayed at home most of the afternoon. I seemed void of all spiritual thoughts, and took my little pocket Bible and sat down in the yard, and searched it for something consoling, but could find very little comfort, if any. I know that this was for my good, for He comes to me and goes at his own good will and pleasure. I went to brother Morgan Blackwell's in the evening, and we had a good old-fashioned sing. We sang some old hymns to the good old tunes sung by our fathers, and I believe that the Lord was with us in spirit and in truth, and once more I was made to sing his praise, when only such a short time before I was so void. But our heavenly Father once more said, Let there be light, and there was light. A few Sundays ago a man said to me, The Old School Baptists sing one hymn and tune over and over. Well, I must say that sounded good to me; I would like to sing one song, one melody of the heart to the last of my days. I would like to sing the old story of Jesus and his love, and ascribe to him all power on earth and in heaven. Some want to give him a part, and they themselves take the other part, but the word "all" comes in, and gives the Savior and Lord all power from the cradle to the grave, and on into all eternity.

Sunday, August 4th, we had in the morning a good gospel sermon preached by Elder Alexander, and I visited with him at brother Shepherd's. It was like one family; all spoke in one tongue, and the theme was Jesus and his love to sinners saved by grace. Brother Alexander sang hymn No. 671 (Beebe's collection). This hymn came to me again on Monday morning following, with sweetness and power, and stayed with me all day. I could sing it at work, and it seemed to make the work lighter. The

burden is not so hard to bear when God sends his hymns to us. When he sends either hymns or Scriptures they come with sweetness. I have heard brethren and sisters say, "I cannot sing," but in my mind I will respond, Yes, you can sing when you are alone, yet God is with you. I have heard brethren sing when they thought that no one could hear them, and I can say it sounded sweet to me. I believe that this is what the Scripture means, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord, and not to be heard by many people. The tunes and hymns sung Sunday seemed good. A short time after the death of my wife I was made to sing as I was working the corn, and I thought no one heard me, as I was not singing very loud, and the hymn came with sweetness to me, and I was rejoicing in my God and Savior, but a neighbor heard me, but, poor man, he did not know my case. But thanks be to God, I think that I know his case. I had been just where he was, in blindness. A child of God must be born again; that is, he must be brought out of such worldly things as vice and bad habits, and made to see the evil in them, and be made a new creature, and come to seek after spiritual things, old things must pass away, and all things become new, then he can see both sides, good and evil, but cannot tell it to a worldly man, until that man is given his sight by the Lord, and the Lord alone can do this, and not man; then we can speak, and understand each other. But God has meant it for good, let it be as it may. The psalmist said, "But our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased."—Psalms cxv. 3. Thus Joseph's brethren took him and cast him into a pit, and the pit was empty, there was no water there. Now this was all according to the plan of God. Joseph was to be cast into this pit, and all was to come to pass that the Lord had purposed, and good came from this evil through our God. Our God is a great schoolmaster. Sometimes the lesson is hard to learn, and we do not want to learn it, and will not if left alone, but after we have learned the lesson we can thank the great Schoolmaster for all things. He sometimes applies the rod when it is needed, and we learn obedience by the stripes of the rod. I feel as though I can say that I have been thrown into this pit. When we are in this pit we are in darkness, a secret of the Lord is to be revealed. We are made to go down into Egypt to buy corn, if we have the price, and pay for it, but when the bags are filled, and we return and find our corn and the money all given back, how humbled we are, and how thankful to our heavenly Father. I feel that I am not thankful enough, and must often be brought to a famine and be starved out. I have had, all at my own door as it were, good gospel preaching, which can only be preached by Old School Baptists, according to my way of thinking, and I feel that I ought to be more thankful to God for his gifts. I often think of those who are far from any church, and who do not hear the gospel preached for a long time, then I think that I should feel more thankful to God for all his goodness toward me.

But I must bring this letter to a close, yet as I read the Bible my mind and thoughts go out to his people. I do not read that he will save all people who will rise up at the bidding of man, and say, "I want to be saved." Men will say, "Come to-night, or to-day, or you will be lost;" this, to me, is the bottomless pit. I want to build my house upon the rock

Christ Jesus. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake." Now may God give you strength and wisdom to go on and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ; may he strengthen our faltering footsteps, and as our days so may our strength be. Can I dare say, I am your brother? This often comes to me. I love to hear a brother greet a brother as a brother, but I often hesitate to say "brother," because I feel so unworthy to be called by that name.

I remain your rebellious brother,

GEORGE M. CONNER.

[THE following letter was handed to us with the request that it be published in the SIGNS. The writer was for many years a much honored member of the church at First Hopewell, N. J., and for a long time filled the office of deacon among them well, and his memory is precious to the church still. The letter itself will tell more of the savor of his faith than any words of ours can. Not only for the sake of his memory among his brethren where he was known, but because we believe that the letter itself will be profitable to read, we gladly publish it, and doubt not that it will prove acceptable to all who love the doctrine of God our Savior.—C]

The First Hopewell Church, to the Delaware River Association, to convene with the church at Kingwood, N. J., June 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1887, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The time has arrived when it is our privilege as a church to correspond with you by letter and messengers. We assure you, brethren, that we esteem it a privilege to thus correspond with you, and to let you know of our trials and afflictions in this life in the flesh, and also of our glorious hope through our Lord and Redeemer. We, dear brethren, are still in the flesh, and consequently have to mourn over our unlikeness to our divine Lord, for we find that that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that it is not subject to the law of God, and neither indeed can be. So our inability to serve God as we would arises from the fact of our carnality, and of the things of this world, and we know that the above Scripture is true from sad experience. This is the way by which we are taught that the Scriptures are true, by having an experimental knowledge of them. But where sin abounded grace has much more abounded unto the praise and glory of grace. We are told that the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness and faith, and against such there is no law, for they are pure and holy and the gift of God. For every perfect gift comes down from above, from the Father of all spiritual light and knowledge. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Having been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and these precious graces having been planted within us by the Spirit, we are thus equipped for the warfare of the flesh against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh. Brethren, we rejoice that greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world, viz., sin. What a beautiful cluster of graces has the apostle brought to view in the above quotation. There is no evil in love, which is the gift of God. The apostle said, Love is the fulfilling of the law. By this love shall all God's people know that we are his disciples, for it is written, God is love. Now joy which comes from God is also holy; this holy joy is inexpressible and full of glory. Peace also is holy. Christ said, "My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you,"

and this peace is as a river, a fountain springing up into everlasting life; it is full of praise and thanksgiving unto God, the source from which it came.

Now what shall we say with regard to long-suffering? Is this grace exemplified among us as it should be? We should not make a brother an offender for a word carelessly spoken, but we should in love admonish our brother, and thus will long-suffering appear. We should come to him, not as an enemy, but as a brother. Also gentleness is another fruit of the Spirit. How gentle we should be among the flock of God lest we should wound instead of heal the broken and contrite heart, for God's people all have a tender heart of flesh, which the Lord gives them, a feeling heart. Also goodness is named. How careful we should be to manifest kindness in our acts one toward another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another. Then we have faith. Now without faith it is impossible to please God. We are also to show our faith by our works, and this is by manifesting the above named graces in our walk and conversation through life. Brethren, let us be admonished by these graces to walk as pilgrims seeking a better country, where sin and sorrow cannot invade. We feel persuaded that you know these things better than we can tell them, for God teaches all his children the same things to their joy and comfort. Our brother, Elder Wm. J. Purington, is still ministering to us in spiritual things, whom we love and esteem for the truth that he proclaims, which is salvation by Christ alone, without creature merit. We, as a church, have no fellowship for the means system which is so much abroad in the world, and which is sown all around us, regardless of all that God has said. Now we rejoice, brethren, that we have an almighty Savior who has all power in heaven and in earth. Our hearts have been made glad by additions to our number during the past year. We hope that the Lord will maintain witnesses here to praise his holy name. Our congregations continue as good as usual, or as in former years. We have also lost a number of members by reason of death during the past year, and we feel our loss, and especially of our aged members, being deprived of their counsel and words of comfort spoken by them. We feel especially the loss of our dear brother H. Stout, who had served as church clerk for over fifty years, and was a kind and faithful brother, but while we feel our loss, we know that it is gain for him. Do we realize, dear brethren, how near we are to our home above? If so let us take courage and press on in hope.

WM. C. TYNDALL.

COVIN, Ala., Jan. 9, 1912.

MRS. MELLIE JONES—KIND FRIEND AND COUSIN:—I will endeavor to write you a few lines in answer to your letter, which was very much of a surprise to me, first, because I did not think that I was competent to write anything that would be edifying to God's little ones, but nevertheless do not believe anything I said without you find a "thus saith the Lord" for it, for I am nothing but a poor sin-cursed sinner in the sight of God, but it gives me some courage to receive a letter from one of the old and firm in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. I feel cast down, and, as Paul said, that which I would I do not, and that which I would not that I do, but that is according to our nature, for we are of the earth earthy; that is, we are carnal, but sometimes I have a desire to write to God's little ones,

but I fear it is just mere imagination of mine, and not of the Spirit, as it should be to be worth anything.

You ask in your letter why I did not tell how Zion was built up. It was just for fear I could not tell it in the right way and in the right spirit, and the readers of the SIGNS would criticise me for it, but I will tell you the idea I have. If you will look at Luke i. 17, the last clause of the verse, you will find it reads this way, speaking of what John the Baptist was sent to do: "To make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Why was there a people prepared but not ready? I will try to tell you how that was, God being my helper. Now look at John v. 25: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." Those people who had heard the Lord before Christ was born, such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the prophets, were prepared, but they were not ready, so when Christ came to John and demanded baptism of him, you know John baptized for remission of sins, so John refused at first to baptize the Lord, but He said, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." When John baptized Jesus those people who had heard the Lord, as being taught of the Lord, were made ready in the baptism of Jesus; they were washed in the water of regeneration, and so was the whole church as the bride, the Lamb's wife, washed in the water of regeneration, but they have not all heard that still small voice as yet. Those of God's children who have not heard the voice of the Son of God are just about in the same fix that our fathers were before John baptized Jesus, for they are ready but not prepared, and how are they going to prepare themselves? for they are dead in trespasses and sins, wholly unable to do anything spiritually good. Now back to John v. 25; they have got to hear the voice of the Son of God; but how are they going to hear? Paul said to the Roman brethren that it pleased God through the preaching of the gospel to save them that believe. Again, we read, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of great joy. I understand this preaching is done by Christ through the Holy Spirit, for in John xiv. we read that the Lord would send the Comforter and he should teach us all things. If it does what Christ said it would do, and I believe it does, it teaches us to know the Lord, for we read that it is the Spirit that quickeneth; so it is the Spirit that maketh alive, and if the Spirit quickens us together with Christ and teaches us all things, we can only say, Salvation is of the Lord. You may think that I have missed the substance and struck at the shadow, which I may have done, but try it by the word of God, and if you do not find it in keeping with it lay it aside. I guess your mind has been carried to the death of Christ, so let us look at that for a little while. There was an agreement between the Father and Son, and the Son agreed to die for us, for without the shedding of blood there would have been no remission of sin, for if the Son had not died the agreement would have been broken.

I will close this poorly written letter, for the subject seems to get more and more full; the further I go the more there is to talk about, so I will close with best wishes to you, and hope this will find you enjoying good health.

Your cousin, WILSON.

JOHN X. 27.

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."

How wonderful are the words of Jesus; how plain and easy to be understood, so that the wayfaring man, though a fool, knows the voice of the good Shepherd. All the sheep of Jesus bear a mark, so that they are known unto the Lord wherever they may roam, for his people are circumcised in heart by the power of God's Holy Spirit. When they are quickened and given new life by being born again they love the things that they once hated and hate the things that they once loved. There springs up hope in the perfect and finished work of Jesus, trusting that he bore their sins away by the sacrifice of himself and perfected forever them that are sanctified, that is, set apart to this salvation. "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."—John xvii. 2. As we see the wickedness of man, walking in pride and speaking great swelling words of vanity, we feel often to exclaim with the psalmist, O that I had wings like a dove, I would fly far away into the wilderness from the winds, storms and tempest and be at rest. The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; it is to the Jew a stumbling-block and to the Greek foolishness, but to them that are called, both Jew and Greek, it is Christ the wisdom of God and the power of God. The Lord made the earth to be inhabited; he did not make it in vain, for the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein. For his glory they were created, and his glory he will not give to another, nor his praise to graven images. There is a oneness between Jesus and his people, so that they who hear his words and do the will of the Father are his; they live by him. "Because I live ye shall live also." The words that Jesus speaks are spirit and they are life. He says, Be of good cheer, thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee, and immediately there is life, joy and peace. They know full well that they have no claim upon Jehovah, for goodness and mercy have followed them all the days of their life; they are indebted to the Lord of hosts for mercies countless as the sands; the debt of love they can never pay. They know that salvation is of the Lord. He is found of them that sought him not, and vain is the help of man. His people flee from the voice of strangers, who are making a great noise and crying lo here and lo there, and striving to convert the world. But we know that salvation is all of grace; we preach that salvation is by the grace of God; he hath mercy on whom he will. We sing that salvation is by grace.

"How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

The Lord's people know that they dare not disobey the express command of God Almighty, for his work is perfect and admits of no addition from sinful man. They dare not attempt to convert sinners who are dead in trespasses and sins; they know that the Lord Almighty alone can give any of the lost life and bring them up out of the horrible pit. They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord. This is expressly forbidden by our Lord in the new covenant, who is a just God and Savior, and he is sure to bring into a good hope and into everlasting rest all that the Father gave him.

Yours in hope,

WILLIAM F. SLOAN.

LEXINGTON, Ky., Oct. 12, 1912.

FREESTONE, Texas, Sept. 17, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have often thought of trying to write a little of what I hope have been the Lord's dealings with me, a poor, hell-deserving sinner, but I cannot find language to express my thoughts as I desire. When I was sixteen years old I saw myself a great sinner, and as I had been reared among Arminians, and taught by them the theory of works, and knew nothing only that I was a condemned sinner in the sight of God, I went to work, in order, if possible, to get some relief from my troubles. I went on in this way for a number of years, and would go off by myself and try to pray, but it seemed that my prayers were empty words, and the more I tried to pray the heavier my burden grew. I felt that my case was an outside one, my sins rose like mountains before me, and I gladly would have changed places with the beasts of the earth, but could not. I sought to be alone in solitude, for I did not feel worthy to be in company with my neighbors. One evening when the sun was slowly sinking my burden was greater than ever, and I walked down into the field; it seemed that a voice said to me, Too late, you will not live to see another sunrise, your time is up, you are going to die, and that right now, and hell is your doom. O my soul, the agony of that moment no tongue can tell. I fell on my knees, for I could not bear up under such a load. I felt the sentence of death and the just condemnation of God resting upon me, when all at once my burden left me, and I found myself praising God. All nature seemed to rejoice with me; I felt that Christ had borne my sins in his own body, and that I was free. Such is the reason of my little hope, if I have one. I have prayed for brighter evidence, but it is all that I have, and for twenty long years I have been made to look back over these things and sometimes rejoice in them. I have had many sorrowful seasons as I passed along this rugged way, many thorns and stones in my path; many trials, afflictions and persecutions have fallen to my lot, but the grace of God has sustained me and I continue to this day, for a purpose known to God, who doeth all things well.

Unworthily your brother,

W. O. BEENE.

TOUCHET, Wash., Sept. 16, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I realize I am nearing the other shore, from whence none ever return. I was born Sept. 16th, 1828, so I know I am near the end of my pilgrimage here. I have no desire to live any longer, I cannot learn to be any other than a feeble, weak, sinful creature of God's creation. Our mother Eve took of the forbidden fruit, consequently fell from her primeval rectitude and the curse was pronounced. She could not put forth her hand and partake of the tree of life and live, so all her posterity are brought under the same curse. See the deplorable state; yet when by faith we are enabled to realize the ransom, yea, to see the Redeemer leave the glory with the Father, take on himself flesh, that he might more fully realize the state of our condition, the bride was in him; yea, he came to redeem her whom the Father gave him, even to die the ignominious death of the cross, that she might live. O can we see by the eye of faith the redeemed among the children of men traveling in this vale of sin and sorrow, carrying this sin-cursed flesh, which is full of sin, in which is no soundness? All is vanity of vanities, yet his children cry unto him. I am such a weak and feeble

lamb of the fold, if one at all, I fear to speak, yet I seem to wish to talk to some of my brethren and sisters I left years ago to come to this land. A few still live whose company I once enjoyed. One old sister, Louisa Pitman, of Willamette Valley, still lives, a widow, living with her children, going from one to the other; also others, but I do not know where to write them. All read the SIGNS, so I can let them know I still hold to the faith once delivered unto the saints. There is none other name given whereby we must be saved (although many lo heres and lo theres). I have never heard any other sect teach Christ the living way, the only way, so I try to stay within the fold, although a feeble lamb of the flock. I am an old Predestinarian Baptist, I united with them in the year 1849, in the Willamette Valley.

If this is worthy a space in the SIGNS I shall be thankful; if not, all is right to those who love the doctrine of salvation by grace.

(MRS.) S. J. CUMMINS.

PENNINGTON, N. J., Sept. 22, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—There is a quietness to-night that fills my mind and that seems precious to my soul. The leading thoughts in my mind are Jesus and the church in the bonds of peace. There is nothing just now that seems sweeter to behold than the dear saints humbled at their Maker's feet; it is a lovely sight to my eyes indeed. I have often wondered at this union in Christ, and how we are cemented together in one body; it is as you spoke of the bread to-day, we cannot be disjoined. We are members of that spiritual bread, the body of Christ, and therefore must be raised up. We are now walking in obedience to his commandment, and are feeding upon that bread of life which builds up the body to that full stature which fills all in all. What a sad thing it is when one member of the body is "bound on earth," it surely gives pain to the whole body, the church. Then how glad is the church when that member is healed and peace is restored and joy once more is felt through the whole body. Now, Elder, that is just what I see to-night: that good order and peace in the church of God. It is a real, true and unselfish love to Christ and his chosen that causes each one to see all others better than himself, and this produces good behavior, perfect order, peace and good will toward each other, and this is sure to make the body healthy, and wise in the kingdom of God. There is nothing more beautiful than this in all the world, nothing more beautiful than to see the church of Christ walking in the holy faith that is wrought in them by Jesus, the Savior, who leads them and keeps them in the fear of his name, and we, his redeemed and tried children, know that there is no other name given under heaven among men half so sweet or dear, or that can save. All other names are just as you said yesterday, they are as the tinkling cymbal or sounding brass, things having no life.

I find, Elder, that the more I think or write of the glorious theme of Christ and his church, the thoughts grow deeper, and become too deep for me to explain. I must go back in my thoughts to the beginning of time, and then come along down until now, and then I must go on and on into the future, until the end of time, to complete the sweet story of Jesus and his great love for the church, his body. What a wonderful figure the Savior presents when he speaks of the relation of husband and wife. After all, this is but a faint view of the reality of

the mystical union of Christ and the church as it appears to my mind to-night.

I wish to speak of one thing more to you, not in the way of praise of the creature, but of the Creator; that is, how good it is for any church to have the right doctrine bestowed upon them, and an undershepherd who looks well to the fold, that understands their needs, and is laden with pure gospel truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. I feel from past and present experiences that our dear church at Hopewell is not lacking, they have been fed and strengthened and kept in a thrifty state, which is a great blessing. Let us thank the Lord of all grace. There are many mistakes in this, but fill it in with love while you read it.

From your brother in Christ,

WILLIAM T. YARD.

ROCKY FORK, W. Va., Dec. 27, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I am behind with my subscription, I herewith send you two dollars, for which please give me credit. I love so well to read its columns that I do not want to do without it as long as I am able to pay for it. I am afflicted with divers troubles, neuralgia, nervousness, which make my life very miserable, but I do not want to complain, for the Lord is good to me, and has blessed me with a good husband, and with children to care for me in my affliction. I wish to tell you of a little exercise of mind I had while lying upon my bed a few days ago. I was suffering all, it seemed, that I could bear, and was begging the Lord for a little ease from his mercy; I viewed myself as being a poor, helpless beggar, and was in a sad condition, when light broke into my soul, and I tell you, dear tried ones, that there was a short period of time in which I was rich, but not with the riches of this world, nor anything that earth can afford, but I was rich in Christ. Now I want to say to all the dear tempest-tossed and tried ones, your treasure is laid in heaven, and is hid with Christ in God, and you are as sure to come into possession of it as that there is a Christ. I would have liked to spend the remainder of my days in this pleasurable condition of which I have been briefly trying to tell you, but I cannot tell it, for it was a joy unspeakable.

I will draw this letter to a close by saying that when I read the letter from dear sister Ida Search, in the SIGNS of December 1st, my heart went out in great sympathy for her in her affliction, and my prayer is, May she ever feel that the loving arms of the Savior are underneath her, and that in him is strength sufficient for every trial. Also I have been so comforted by reading sister M. C. Young's writings that I would like to speak a word of comfort to her, but I feel my inability to do so. Dear sister, write on, for you do not know how many poor weary ones you may help by the way. Now please excuse all mistakes, for I fear that there are many of them. I can hardly write at all because of nervousness.

Your sister,

ERNIE NULL.

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EDITORIAL.

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ISAIAH XLVI. 10.

"DECLARING the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

The truth taught in this language is all-important. It contains things that must be known by all who render acceptable worship to God. The one thing in which saints and angels shall join forever is the worship of the Lord, but to worship him means, first, to acknowledge and confess who and what he is. If we are to reverence God we must know what are the things concerning him that call for this emotion. It is always true that they who come unto God must believe that he is, and also it is true that they must know what are his attributes, and what are his works. Believers are not to be as the woman to whom the Savior said, "Ye worship ye know not what," nor as the Athenians, who ignorantly worshiped the (to them) "unknown God." In the Scriptures our God has been pleased to make known what he will have us know of his character and attributes. It is also true that the works of creation declare his eternal power and Godhead, as is declared by the apostle in Romans, but the revelation which he has made of himself through the inspired word declares these things in plainer lines. Not only do the Scriptures testify of the blessed Redeemer, but they also testify of God as he is, and of his works, and it is, as said before, all-important that we know what their testimony is, that we may worship him acceptably with reverence and godly fear. To worship God is to ascribe to him all that belongs to him, and to confess him as our Creator, our Preserver and our bountiful Benefactor. It is to confess our dependence upon him for all things temporal and spiritual. It is to acknowledge him as the author of our being, and the author of our salvation. It is to confess that he is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent, that he is just, holy and true, that he is good, kind and merciful, that he is our King, our Lawgiver and our Judge, that he is God alone, dwelling in that light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, or can see, that he beholds always all things in all his vast creation, and that he upholds all things by the word of his power. All these things which we have named, and all other things spoken or written in the Scriptures concerning God, ought to have our earnest consideration; that is, they ought to be spoken of and thought about and be received as settled truths by all who believe. We cannot understandingly worship God without this, and there can be no solid ground for our faith and hope to rest upon without knowledge of these things. Our safety, either as relates to providence or to final salvation, hangs upon his omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, love, faithfulness and holiness. In these things alone have we a bulwark sufficient to defend us against every foe, either from within or from without. Remove from our faith either one of these attributes and we at once become exposed to dangers against which we have no defence. Remove his omnipotence, and other powers

might prevail against us. Remove his omnipresence, and often our prayers would fail to reach him, and in a moment we should perish. Remove his omniscience, and straightway we should dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, because in his presence and in his knowledge of us and of our affairs every instant is fullness of joy, and here are all our pleasures for evermore. Remove these things from our faith, and we could not rest in the assurance that he is a very present help in time of trouble. Faithful servants of God, who are appointed to serve in his sanctuary, and who are the servants of the brotherhood for Christ's sake, must declare these truths in their ministry for the edification and strengthening of the faith and hope of those to whom they minister. The truth of God alone is that girdle about the loins of the mind which helps the followers of the Lord to endure to the end, and the admonition to preach the word means, not only to preach the work of Jesus in redemption, but also the character of God, from whom sin has separated men, and to whom, through the work of Jesus, they have been redeemed. Perhaps through these reflections we may gain some glimpse of the importance of the things which are taught in the text of which we desire to write.

The first truth taught in the text is, that God has from the beginning known what the end shall be. The word "declaring," here signifies, not that he has spoken or made known to others what the end shall be, but rather that he has set the end before himself; that is, it is all plain in his foreknowledge. It simply means that he has known from the beginning all that ever shall be unto the end. Also the words "end" and "beginning" do not here signify that either our God or his knowledge had a beginning, or that they shall have an end. The word "beginning" here has the same signification that it had when the apostle said, "Who hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation." As the choice of his people was from all eternity, so from all eternity he set before himself, or declared all things to the end, or to eternity. All the knowledge and all the purposes of God must be as ancient as his own existence, else there have been changes in him. But this cannot be, for we know that he has said of himself, "I am the Lord, I change not," and he is without variableness or the shadow of turning. If there be additions to his purposes, or subtractions therefrom, this would be change; and he changes not, according to his own word. If there be one thing known now by him that he did not know eternally, this would be change in him. Where there is growth in knowledge there is that much change. All creatures are the subjects of constant changes in knowledge, in purpose, in our loves and hatreds and in all that pertains to us, but in the perfection of Jehovah there is no room for change. There is no room for growth, since that which would be before growth would not be perfect, and there cannot be in him a loss of knowledge, for this would be for him to descend to imperfection, and the reverent mind will start back with abhorrence at the suggestion of lack or imperfection in God. They who deny to him perfection of knowledge from all eternity are doing what was charged against Israel, they are limiting the Holy One of Israel; they are teaching that God is altogether as they are themselves. What does such knowledge mean? Of it the psalmist said, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot

attain unto it," yet he wrote of it, and thought of it, and because of it adored his Maker. The text declares that God set before him the end; that is, he knows the end with perfect knowledge. Poor, frail man from what he has seen comes to conclusions as to what is likely to occur at some time in the future, but at the best this is not knowledge, but supposition. But God knows the end, it is set before him, and it cannot be denied that this knowledge must include every step of the way between the beginning and the end. Very few will deny that our God knows at what moment each of us shall cease to live on earth, but what does that imply? It must imply that naked before him are all the events of our life from birth, and before birth, through infancy, childhood and manhood, to old age. All these things have their bearing upon our strength and health, some tending to health and some to sickness, and all these things are the second causes which bring us to the end when and where and how the Lord has appointed. An illustration occurs to us: One might drive an ordinary brass pin into the ground, and then with a ball and mallet stand one hundred feet away, and say, I will drive this ball so nicely and accurately that it shall come to a full stop and balance exactly upon that pin. Probably such a thing could not occur once in billions of times, but still it is conceivable that it could be done. But what must that man consider in order to be able to bring his word to pass? He must take into consideration almost unnumbered things, and be able to calculate their influence upon the outcome. He must know the exact shape, size and weight of the ball, he must know the exact shape, size and weight of the mallet, and the exact force and direction of the blow that must be struck; he must take into consideration every grain of sand and every blade of grass between, he must also know the exact effect of every gentle breeze that may play upon the ball as it moves on its way, and he must be able to calculate exactly the force and direction of his blow against the ball, and thousands of other things must also enter into his calculation ere he can say with exact certainty, This ball shall stop precisely, balanced upon the head of the pin. But what no man could know, our God does know. No one thing of all that he has made is too minute to fall within his infinite knowledge, therefore he can declare just the moment when each of his creatures, from man himself to the tiniest insect, shall come into being, and when they shall cease to live. No wonder the psalmist cried out, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me."

We have heard this objection urged against such knowledge as this upon the part of Deity, viz., that such small things are too trivial for his notice, that to think this of our God is to belittle him in the sight of men, but men who say this are blind; rather, how infinitely does this thought exalt him, and magnify his wisdom and every other attribute which belongs to him. Men who can grasp, not only the general outline of things, but also the details, in proportion as they can do so, are counted worthy of praise, and are sought after to attend to the affairs of this life. The whole world is made of little grains of sand, of little motes that fill the air, of little drops of water that make the oceans. So the great things of God are, all of them, made up of what men call little events, little words and deeds of men, or of other creatures of God. His purposes are not only infinite and eternal, but they are infinite in the smallness of the things

which they embrace, as well as in the mighty works which attract the attention and excite the wonder and admiration of men. Infinite power is seen in the creation of the smallest grain of sand as well as in the mighty universe. The microscope reveals the wonders of his creation as well as the telescope. It is the joy of all humble-hearted believers that they have a God and Savior who is with them, and who has appointed the little events of their daily lives, as well as the rise and fall of nations, or the exaltation of kings, with all other great men of the earth, and how blessed it is to believe that, The steps that we take, and the station that we fill, our Father determined and wrote in his will. This leaves not out the smallest moment of our lives. What fearful dread would cover that one single moment unseen by our God, if indeed there were one such moment, but that his people may not know such terror, our God has made known to us in the text that he declared the end from the beginning, from ancient time to the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. One portion of the text is in full harmony with the other. First, God foreknows all things to the end, all was from eternity set before him. Then the second truth that his counsel and will are in it, and that he will do that which he has declared, is announced in the text. In this what consolation is presented amid all the ungodliness and wickedness of men. God is not presented as the author of sin or wickedness, but he is presented as overruling, controlling it, and bending it so that not one purpose of his shall fail, or be in the least hindered by it, and so that even the wrath of man shall praise him; that is, even their wrath shall be made to fulfill his purposes, though they mean it not so. The wrath of man, if unchecked and unbounded, would even assail the almighty God, and hurl him from his throne, but it is held in bonds, the bonds of his eternal purpose, and so enough of it shall be suffered to appear to work out his praise, and the remainder he restrains. He says to the wrath of men as he said to the raging sea, "Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." It is a great mystery, and will ever remain so to our poor, feeble sight, that any wickedness or wrath of man should be made to redound to the glory or praise of God, but yet it is so declared in the text of which we are writing, and instances are written in the word in which the evil purposes of men did work out salvation, either temporal or eternal, to men. Wicked men have again and again unwittingly fulfilled the purposes of God while working out their own evil designs, and so all the pleasure of God has been done, according to the text. We may rest confidently in this assurance amid all that now oppresses us, somehow, and in some way, all shall work together for the good of those who love God, and for his glory. But our sin, like that of Pharaoh, is none the less great because it is overruled to the glory of God, and since the evil which men mean to do shall not accomplish their will, but shall in some way be overruled for good, God mocks their devices against him, but each believing heart will say, Let not sin reign in me, but let my desire be toward thee, that I may not be as one mocked of the Lord. C.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder H. H. Lefferts.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 16th, 17th and 18th, 1912, to the churches composing the same, and to the sister churches and associations with which we correspond, sendeth christian greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The church is God's building on "the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." David, after he as king had established peace throughout Israel, having vanquished all his foes, thought it meet that he should build a house for the Lord, since he himself had a goodly house of cedar to dwell in while the holy things of Israel were tabernacled in a tent. The Lord very soon showed David that while build a house for himself he could, yet to build a house for the Lord was beyond his power. David was shown that after he should fall asleep and be gathered unto his fathers, the Lord would raise up of his seed to sit upon his throne a King whose government should be established forever. Some think that this refers to Solomon, and perhaps in a sense it does, but Solomon's kingdom was not established forever, for after his death the kingdom was rent in twain; so we think the promise of God to David had a deeper significance than to Solomon, and that it referred to Jesus Christ, who is the offspring of David, according to the flesh. He is the one who was promised to David as his successor upon tne throne of Israel, to have everlasting dominion and to build the house of the Lord, which building David could not accomplish. The church is built for the habitation of God through the Spirit, and is the work of the Holy Ghost resulting from the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said that except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but that if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. In this expression he speaks of his own death and resurrection as like unto the sowing of wheat: that in order to reap a crop the wheat must be sown in the earth, showing thereby that he, Jesus, could bring forth none of God's harvest in the saving of sinners, except he died and be buried in the earth. He must go away unto the Father in order to come again and receive his people unto himself, so that where he is they should be also. It is to his death and his lifting up therefrom he refers when he says: And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me. It is this "lifting up" power, the power of his resurrection, that raises sinners from death in Adam to life in Christ, and no other power short of this in heaven, earth or hell, can or will do it. The name of Jesus is the only name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. "We are his [God's] workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." It would seem that no further argument is needful to convince the spiritual that man cannot and does not build the house of the Lord, but that the church is built by the quickening and spiritualizing force of the Holy Ghost upon the chief corner-stone, Jesus Christ. This is a work in which the entire might and perfection of the Godhead is involved. Nothing short of the omnipotence and

infinite wisdom of the Father, of the awful sufferings, bleeding and death of the Son, of the revivifying and anointing force of the Holy Ghost, could possibly build the temple of the Highest. How foolish then to speak of ministers, evangelists, missionaries, or other human agencies, accomplishing that which only God in all the sovereignty and might of his attributes can do. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows, for so he giveth his beloved sleep." When the language is used that the church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, we do not understand it to mean that it is built upon such men as Daniel, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Peter, John and Paul, but that the same foundation upon which these men as believers in and servants of God were built by grace through the Spirit, is the very same foundation upon which every member of the body of Christ in all ages is built in the same way. Jesus did not promise to build his church upon Peter, but upon "this rock," and a careful reading of the connection in which these words appear will reveal what that rock is. Jesus has just asked Peter: Whom do you say that I am? and Peter answers: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Then Jesus says, "I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter." You will notice here that there is a recognition of the Shepherd by the sheep, and of the sheep by the Shepherd, substantiating what is said in another place: I am the good Shepherd and I know my sheep, and am known of mine. This direct, personal and mutual recognition of the Savior by his people, and of his people by the Savior, being revealed, not by flesh and blood, but by the Father in heaven, is the solid and everlasting rock upon which the church is built, and the gates of hell can never prevail against it. There is no intermediary or human means needed to introduce the Savior to the sinner, nor the sinner to the Savior, infinite wisdom, matchless grace and eternal love conduct it all. The apostles and prophets were built upon this foundation, and all other believers in all times and ages are built upon the same. The same hope, faith and love which animated them is in the church to-day; the same doctrine preached and contended for by them is held forth by the church now. If any man, body of men, organization or institution, claiming to be christian, preaches or practices any other thing than that advocated by the holy men of old, let them be accursed from our fellowship and association. If any man cometh unto us bringing any other doctrine than that we have received by inspiration, let us not receive him into our houses (churches), neither bid him Godspeed for those that bid him Godspeed are partakers of his evil deeds. Divine faith in Abel wrought recognition of the bleeding Lamb of God as the only atonement for sin; the same faith in Enoch wrought translation that he should not see death; in Abraham, it wrought separation from home and kindred, all the teachings and associations of his youth and manhood, and sent him forth a pilgrim and a stranger on the face of the earth; in Moses, it wrought denial of self, so that he turned his back upon all the inducements and emoluments of Egypt, and consecrated himself to service of his brethren who never were, in all their acquaintance with Moses, able to appreciate the sacrifice he had made for their sakes and for

the kingdom of God. The same faith that wrought in these, our brethren of old, works in the church to-day, producing the same effects. Every true believer to-day believes that Jesus is the only atoning sacrifice for sin; every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is translated from nature to grace, and shall never see death, but hath everlasting life; every true believer now, as always, is made to depart from his former carnal teachings and associations, and to confess that this world is not his home, thereby showing he is a pilgrim and a stranger upon the face of the earth, and every true servant of God now, as did Moses, loses his life for the church's sake. These reflections upon the truth, dear brethren, we leave for your consideration.

It has been gratifying to us to note the attendance of your messengers and other visiting brethren and friends with us at this meeting, and to have with us a goodly number of ministering brethren to preach to us the word of God. The next session of this meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, at the usual time next year, when and where we hope to meet your messengers and to hear from you by letter again. May the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
S. B. PAXSON, Clerk.

(Written by Elder H. H. Lefferts.)

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Fairview Church, Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa., October 11th, 12th and 13th, 1912, to the churches and associations with which we correspond sendeth christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—The fellowship existing between those of the same faith is a principle that cannot be induced or brought about by any effort of the natural creature, nor can it be broken or destroyed in the same way. Fellowship is the state of being equal to and with another. A being of a lower order of existence cannot have fellowship for one of a higher order, and also one of a higher order cannot be in fellowship with one of a lower. Thus Christ hath no fellowship with Belial; light hath no fellowship with darkness, neither belief with unbelief, nor sin with holiness, nor truth with error. The people of the living God are in fellowship one with another, because they have every one been wrought upon by sovereign grace, have been born of the Spirit of God, have been raised from death in Adam to life in Christ, thus being made partakers of the divine nature, so that they are sons of God, having him as their Father, and the church, the new Jerusalem, as their mother. All these are thus equal one with another in the kingdom of God, are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, so they cannot help but be in fellowship one with another. But they cannot be in fellowship with any that are not born of God, or that are not subjects of his grace, as one condition of being cannot fellowship another condition of being, for no equality or oneness can exist between them. The existence of fellowship does not depend upon its being felt, but when it is sensibly realized by the children of God it is of great comfort to those by whom it is felt. We have been speaking of fellowship in its broadest and most real sense, but there is what is known as "church fellowship," which must not be confused with the above. Christian fellowship exists between all the members of Christ's mystical body, whether they are members of the visible church or not. Church fellowship exists only among so many of them as are sub-

ject to the ordinances of the gospel church, have been baptized with water and are walking in the order and practice of the house of God. The members of the church are in christian fellowship with all true believers, whether baptized with water or not, but are in church fellowship only with such believers as have been caused by grace to walk in harmony with the ordinances and order of the church. When a member of the church is excluded for any reason whatsoever, it is church fellowship alone that is withdrawn from that one. Christian fellowship cannot be withdrawn from any one, for if the one excluded was ever a child of God he is still such, even though excluded from church fellowship, and his heirship in Christ is not destroyed, hence christian fellowship twixt him and all other believers is still unbroken.

Leaving these thoughts for your consideration, brethren, we bid you farewell. May the God of peace sanctify you wholly, causing us to more and more realize this bond of fellowship which unites all the children of God. Amen.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
A. MELLOTT, Clerk.

(Written by Elder W. T. Walters.)

The Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, now in session with Providence Church, Appanoose Co., Iowa, to the churches composing the same and the faithful in Christ Jesus.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—We feel it is by, in and through the tender mercies of an all-wise God that we have been spared to meet together in an association, for which we do hope we feel thankful to the Giver of all good and perfect gifts. Very dear brethren and sisters, it has been a long established rule of our association to appoint some one to prepare a Circular Letter to be printed with our Minutes. At the last association the lot fell on me. I feel that the association has made a great mistake in selecting me, though I will try in my weakness to do the best I can and leave it to the consideration of the brethren. I will call your attention to the words of the blessed Savior, which will be found in John x. 27, 28: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." It seems that when the blessed Savior spoke this language he was in the most adverse circumstances. It took the power of an all-wise God to convince the people that he was the Son of God. Now Jesus said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Now while Jesus was here on earth there were unbelievers as well as there are to-day, because some of the Jews came to him and said unto him, "How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." Now at the time the blessed Savior spoke this language the powers of darkness, the enemies of the truth, were doing all they could to put the doctrine of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ aside, but Jesus went about teaching and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. There were lo heres and lo theres in that day as well as now. Now, brethren, we are warned against false teachers that should come into the world, and we are told to beware of such.

There are many new doctrines taught in the world, having for their leaders designing men, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. Now Jesus tells us, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life." He also says, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." He also says, "They shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." He tells us the Father hath given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as he has given him. "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." If so, will he save them with an eternal salvation? We are persuaded by a sure promise. Paul says, "But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Now, according to the testimony of the angel that appeared unto Joseph, Jesus is the Savior of his people. The angel said, "He shall save his people from their sins." It was the Father's will to give them to the Son, and it was also the Father's will that he should save them by the death of his Son. So Jesus said he came to do the Father's will; so he died for them and purchased them with his own blood. I understand these to be the sheep that Jesus had under consideration. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." It was love, mercy and justice that brought the Son of God into this low ground of sin and sorrow to suffer and die the ignominious death of the cross for his people, or church. This people were dead in trespasses and sins; they were in a lost condition, so far as the power of man was concerned, but Christ came to save that which was lost. Then they do not know anything about the love of God while in that dead state until they are made alive by his Spirit. Now I understand them that are quickened and made alive to be the sheep under consideration, the elect of God, and they shall all be taught of the Lord, and all shall know him, from the least to the greatest of them. These are the ones that hear his voice, and he says, "I know them." Paul says, "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Now, as he is an all-wise God, there never has been nor ever will be a time that they were not visible to his all-seeing eye. There is nothing new or old with him, but all is one eternal now with him. Now, inasmuch as Jesus has redeemed us by the shedding of his own blood, let us still contend for that faith once delivered unto the saints. We are not able to stand of ourselves, but we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Let each one of us who loves Jesus and the truth go forward in every known duty which we owe to our blessed Savior, who has done so much for us; let us meet often and pray with and for each other.

Now may God bless, support, guide and direct us in all our deliberations for our good and his glory, and may the goodness and mercy of God be with every member of our body. May grace, mercy and truth be with all the true Israel of God, is our prayer for Christ's sake. Amen.

S. B. JONES, Moderator.
H. C. CATE, Clerk.

(Written by Elder A. B. Francis.)

The Elders and messengers composing the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Snow Hill, Worcester Co., Md., October 23rd, 24th and 25th, 1912, to the several churches whose messengers we are sendeth love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED:—It is not proper for the saints to engage in unseemly and unprofitable controversy, especially about things that are not clearly revealed in the sacred Scriptures, but it does devolve on them, and they are exhorted thereto by an inspired apostle of Jesus Christ, Jude 3: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Whether any are opposed or not, the obligation is the same, not to raise contention and strife among the children of God, but for the purpose of teaching, to instruct them in all things pertaining to the doctrine of God our Savior. Nor are they only to be taught, but it should be insisted on that they also walk in them. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." These "all things" embrace all the teachings of Jesus to his disciples, from the beginning of his ministry in the sermon wherein he taught them on the mount of Olives, to the time when he gave them the important command, Go ye into all the world and teach all nations. First of all is given a description of the character and attributes, spiritually, of those unto whom he was sent, and whom God chose and blessed in him with all spiritual blessings before the world began. In that description are to be found those distinguishing marks that show a difference between the Lord's people and the world. Those marks are put on them by God himself, and are only found in those whom the Lord has called out and separated from the world; they, and they only, are poor in spirit, mourning on account of sin, meek and lowly in spirit, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, &c., and these he declares are "blessed" already, not yet to be blessed. To them are given the promises, growing out of God's love to them, of all that God has prepared for them. After the Lord calls his children out and separates them from the world he consecrates them to his service and leads them in the way and to do the things (works) he has ordained that they should walk in; that they should confess him before men, following his example in all things and thus honoring him. Jesus came to save his people from their sins, finding them dead in sin and buried therein, but when his work is complete in them they shall be entirely without sin, he will present them to himself without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish. He wrought this for them by the sacrifice of himself, making atonement, satisfying law and justice in their behalf. Having in this manner redeemed them, they are now become his by a clear title, and he is now at liberty to adopt them, to bring them into his family, to join them to himself, giving to them eternal life and securing them against all harm, so that they can never perish. The final work in this great series, wrought upon and in his people, is their resurrection from the dead; that is, the bringing up of their dead bodies to be fully endowed with the life of their glorious Redeemer and fashioned like unto his glorious body, to appear with him in glory, to see him as he is. Then shall they

truly be enabled to say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Then shall they be witnesses to the fulfillment of the prophecy, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction; repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." Death is swallowed up in victory, and all the redeemed shall see it. They are of the sons and daughters of Adam, and are found here in the earth in the exact image of the earthy Adam, but are predestinated unto the adoption of sons, and when the process of adoption is complete, there will not be found in them even one lineament of the earthy Adam, but in the perfect likeness of the Son of God. This work is begun in them here, by which they see that they are like their earthy head and progenitor, and abhor themselves and repent in dust and ashes, mourn over their vileness and cry out to be delivered from this body of death. And he who has begun this work will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, the day of the full manifestation of his divine power and the assertion of his authority over death. "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." That "last enemy" still has dominion over our mortal bodies, and shall continue his reign unto the bringing of them down to the dust, for God said to Adam, "Thou shalt surely die." "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." But, "If a man die, shall he live again?" He surely shall. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." And then shall the full, complete, finished work of our Lord Jesus Christ be manifest, the full salvation of sinners. This is of that faith that was once delivered unto the saints. "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures. * * * Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen." This precious truth is not to be understood as we understand natural things, and so men ask in vain, "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" By faith we receive the assurance of a future change that we have not yet experienced and cannot comprehend, yet we look for it, we desire it and hope for it as the consummation of the work of salvation. We cannot conceive of any salvation that does not embrace the resurrection of our mortal bodies; without that there can be no such thing as salvation for sinners, and then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain, ye are yet in your sins. But, brethren, we are not left in such a deplorable condition; Christ is risen, and become the firstfruits of them that slept (the sleep of death), and as is the firstfruits, so shall all the harvest be. His resurrection assures our resurrection; not only the quickening into divine life and raising us up from death in trespasses and sins, but also the raising up of our bodies, that which was formed of the dust.

Brethren, these things are surely believed among us; contend earnestly for them. Amen.

T. M. POULSON, Moderator.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

(Written by Elder John Clark.)

To the Elders and messengers of the Lexington Association, in session with the Lexington Church, October 2nd and 3rd, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—In this our Circular Letter, according to our custom, we will call your attention to the second chapter and first verse of the epistle of Paul the apostle to the Philippians: "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies." "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle." "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work." "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail." "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vainglory, provoking one another, envying one another."

R. W. SANFORD, Moderator.

JAMES AVERY, Clerk.

J. H. BEVIER, Assistant Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at the residence of the bride's parents', Wednesday, October 9th, 1912, Abram Russell Drake and Miss Lillie Belle Voorhees, both of Hopewell, N. J.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. J. H. Rockafellow, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. C. White, N. Y., $1.00; B. Franklin Terry, Pa., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Olive and Hurley Church will hold a two days meeting, the Lord willing, the first Saturday and Sunday in November (2nd and 3rd), 1912, at Olive, N. Y. Trains will be met at Shokan on Friday p. m. before the meeting. All who love the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. Elder B. F. Coulter is expected to be at this meeting.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Mt. Enon Association of south Florida, holding to the doctrine of unlimited or absolute predestination of all things, and salvation by grace alone, will hold their next session November 8th, 9th and 10th, 1912, with the church called Kissimmee, at Campbell Station, on the A. C. L. R. R. This will be the forty-first annual session of this association, and we invite all lovers of like precious faith.

C. K. HAINES.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

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SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

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D. W. OWENS.

HERSMAN, Ill.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 80. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1912. NO. 22.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LEVITICUS XI. 45.

"Ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy."

This, as all other Scripture, is not conceivable by the natural mind, and neither can be, for it is spiritual and must be spiritually discerned. Even after man is given knowledge of his polluted and sinful condition there can be no idea formed how he can ever be clean, much less holy, as the Lord is holy, who is holy and righteous, and cannot look on iniquity and hates sin. Still in the morn of creation man was spoken to by the Lord, who said, In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. That is conceivable to the new-born child, for he knows what death is, having been alive without the law once, but when the commandment came sin revived and he died. You have eaten the forbidden fruit, and now suffer the penalty that is gained by the knowledge of sin and separation from the Lord of heaven and earth; this is death, the first one you know of; a separation from ease and ignorance, for this state in which Adam was created (so are all men born) was not a place of eternal happiness, as some say, and that because of sin he was cast out. Some say, Had he not sinned, then he had not died. True, but "thou fool! that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die."—1 Cor. xv. 36. In order for man to be quickened he must die, and God did not say he might die, but, "Thou shalt die," which did certainly come to pass, for all things Jehovah said shall be; he speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast. Now we who have passed from death unto life can see how it is that by God telling Adam he should surely die because of sin, knowing that whatever God said concerning Adam would surely be, it was not only in the future, but "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Now is it incredible that God says, "Ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy"? I say, is it incredible that it should be so? No, not in the least, and as this command came to national Israel, typical of spiritual Israel, so it is spoken to the chosen ones composing the true church, and God's church is holy and without blame, and they that are born again compose the church, and they who have received the commandment are born again, for only living subjects are spoken to, or, in other words,

being called gives life, as in Lazarus' case. This calling of Lazarus points to this. Our calling was prepared before time, and is being made manifest now in these latter days. All who are born again are born to a purpose, for God has ordained they should be a peculiar people, prepared of God before time for those things which take place with us each day of our lives. Now how can we say things are by chance, or that God does not know so far ahead and has not planned the end from the beginning? It is terrible to hear such talk, to even think such things seems like blasphemy. For we might see from the fact that things his prophets spoke concerning the coming of Christ are true, and were fulfilled, but no man except he who is born again knows there is a Christ, the reading of the Scriptures alone does not impart this great knowledge. I speak as one who knows, having been at one time ignorant of the fact, although I knew the Bible story of the child born in Bethlehem, but I did not see him as my Savior, nor did I see any virtue in him, but only looked on the thing as some great event in the world's history. For "the world by wisdom knew not God." No, by all the world's wisdom they have not known God, neither can they know his Christ by worldly wisdom and learning, for the preaching of the cross to them that perish in foolishness, but to them that believe it is the power of God. Now if it is foolishness to them that perish, they do not hear it, neither did the world know that Christ was born, neither do they know it to-day, nor will they ever know it by study, but by revelation. None know Christ except he be revealed to them. The dead know not anything. All men are dead until they are called to redemption and life. How plain this is to one who can see, but utterly obscured from those whose eyes are closed in death which is in the world, and when one is alive to righteousness then he is a new subject, no more of this world, but being born again is born of incorruptible Seed and cannot sin, for God's seed remaineth in him, he is holy, and prepared for the world of light, where all is love, peace and joy. I do not wish to be understood to believe that men and women reach a state of perfection in the flesh and do not sin, for the flesh not only sins incessantly, but is sin itself, and is corruptible, enmity against God and his holy law. Now how shall we know such things apply to us? for no man can make an application of the Scripture himself. God alone does this, for he doeth all things, and none can turn him, or say, What doest thou? But there are some who will say, I know that death has been pronounced upon me, for I have sinned and come short of the glory of God. I know I am a sinner, I know the law is holy, just and good, and I have transgressed and have sinned against heaven and thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son, having violated the law, the penalty of which is death, which I have received, for I am shut out from thy presence, and I am tilling the ground of remorse, and reap as a crop thorns and thistles. I did not at one time worry about my condition; I did not know there was anything like this; I saw only the bright world with all its attractions, which I delighted in, but now that is all dark, I am taken out of the garden of Eden in which I saw so much pleasure and ease. O what has come over me? How strange things look. I never saw everything so in mourning, so dark and dreary, even the laugh of others seems hollow and meaningless to me. Why is this? And as this wears on I see I am

a sinner, I see there is a God of heaven and earth, who rules justly. I see death and hell. No hope, shut out from peace and happiness. I know I am justly condemned. We know this, for we have been there, but until the commandment came we did not know it. Paul, who was so learned in the Jewish law that he was able to confound the rulers and show them their errors concerning the law, says of himself, I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came sin revived and I died, declaring plainly, though he was versed in all points of the law, and was blameless as touching the law, the commandment had not come to him, and when it did he died. Yes, dead and helpless, for the law kills, and never makes alive. By experience we know these things, we know what "shall" means when spoken by God concerning death; now shall we marvel when God says, We shall live through Christ forever and be holy? Through the law we enter into death; through Christ we enter into life eternal. Is it an incredible thing that God shall raise the dead? We know not with what body they come, nor how a holy thing shall appear, for flesh cannot view holy things, neither can mortal beings view immortal beings, but that is no reason why there are not such things as immortal and holy beings. No other god can do it, but there is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth in his excellency on the sky. There is none like unto our God, and there is nothing to which we can liken him, neither can we measure his strength, but by faith we know he can do all things whatsoever he desires. We know he can raise the dead, and will do it, and if he says, Ye shall be holy, it will be, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. By the knowledge of sin we see the separation, see ourselves aliens from the commonwealth of Israel. This knowledge is God-given, and in our anguish of soul we cry unto God for mercy; by this knowledge we know there is a God, for we would never remove ourselves from the case of the garden of Eden, but were cast out by a higher power, and I myself begged God that he might take me out of my trouble; that is, remove the memory of my lost condition from my mind and let me go in peace and enjoy the pleasures of the world, but he always blesses us greater than we can ask for. Natural man cannot comprehend the things that God hath prepared for them that love him, called according to his purpose, and we always receive at the Lord's hand double, and in his own appointed time Christ is made manifest in us. You are a subject of God's mercy which endureth forever, you see your Savior and are delivered from your burden of sins; unto you a child is born, a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder. Then, and not until then, do you know there is a Christ and a Savior of sinners. We know we have seen these things in our own experience, and what we have handled and tasted we know is true. When he hides himself from us we fear and tremble, for we thought it was he that was to redeem Israel. When our flesh has crucified him we are sad, and feel our King is gone. The flesh does crucify him, and says, We will not have this man to rule over us. It was necessary they should crucify Christ, by his death we are given life; that is, by the sacrifice made by the spilling of his blood we are made holy. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Washes away their sins by his own blood, for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. By his stripes we are

healed, and the wicked men who killed him said, His blood be on us and our children, while Pilate washed his hands, saying, See ye to it I am clean of this man's blood, showing self-righteousness, while the slayers of Christ are washed with his blood. They did not understand what they said or did. We know that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, while the self-righteous act of washing in a basin of water can cleanse from no sin, neither does any good act we can perform, but we love right, and want to do right because of the Spirit of Christ. This only shows the two characters of religion, one who washes himself, another who says the blood of Christ be on us, &c., and Christ saying in his dying hour, Forgive them, Father, they know not what they do. There are some still crucifying him, while Pilate still washes his hands of Christ, cleansing himself, but is not cleansed. Man in his lost and dead state cannot understand anything, therefore the preaching of the gospel to such is as sowing seed on stones, for they cannot receive it, but unto him who is prepared of God for the reception of the seed, he receives it and it brings forth fruit, some more than others, but it all yields an increase. The preaching of the gospel is not the gospel, but only the testimony of a witness. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation, glad tidings from a far country, and received with great joy. We can neither send nor carry the gospel, and unless the gospel has preceded our message the message is not received; but God does not send a message to him who is unable to receive it, but first prepares the ground and then sends the sower to sow the seed, also giving the sower the particular kind of seed designed for that particular spot of ground, and he says they shall be holy. "Shall," when spoken by God, is one definition of predestination. While the word occurs only a few times in the Bible, yet we can see it from first to last all the way through, for God said right early, Let there be light, and there was light, which shows God foreknew and predetermined there should be light—no guesswork about it. He did know it, and when he says a thing shall be does he not know it will be? Do not I know it will be? Yes, I know, I may speak boldly, but I have great boldness of spirit concerning the knowledge and power of God. A gentleman once said to me, "Well, you fellows are still hammering away on the same doctrine, predestination. I heard Elder Chick years ago, he preached it; I heard him again the other day, and still the same old story." I replied, "Yes, there is no difference in the preaching, it is still the same." He said, "I do not see why you do not preach about something else, it only occurs two or three times in the whole Bible, and I cannot believe it." I told him, "I could have no rest if I did not believe it, knowing the things I do." Knowing that he is the God of wisdom, who saw and knew the end from the beginning, able to determine beforehand concerning his children, even seeing me as I write this, knowing before I was born that I should do it, predestinating my every act, able to save me from the enemy by destroying the enemy; knowing this we are strengthened and encouraged and made to lie down in green pastures, beside still waters, and say, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." While we have our doubts, being tempted by Satan to lay aside all this concerning eternal life, he says there is none of it, this life is

all there is, so make the best of it; serve me. Such as this throws a child of God, a subject of grace, in gloom and despair; such a statement, or anything else from the evil one, and it all comes from him, can affect none but the living subject, as he never tempts the dead, but attacks the living from every side, and this is an evidence of life, not only an evidence, but an infallible proof of life. The way is strange, we are brought by paths we had not known, but the Lord knows, and did determine he would lead us thus, and we need not think that because the word "predestinate" occurs only a few times in the Bible that it is not true. It is in the incredible things, as men think, that the power and glory of God are revealed. This knowledge comes not by study and observation, but by "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass."—Rev. i. 1. Neither are we made alive by preaching or searching the Scriptures. Christ says, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." The Scriptures are a dead or sealed book until revealed to us. If Christ thanked the Father, and said, I thank thee, O Father, that thou hast withheld these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes, not only revealed unto babes, but withheld from the wise and prudent, how can you get a thing God withholds from you? All things are given us by the great God of heaven through Christ our Lord; we are his and he is God's. Some say he gives us our natural life and facilities and we are all on a level, and in order to know spiritual things we must apply our minds and study and increase our talent. He who only had one talent (the natural mind) when the master returned where was the increase? He had none. Those who had more than one had an increase. How plain it is he gives all a natural mind, but that cannot develop into anything else, it is still natural; but if one is given spiritual knowledge, there is a growth, not that we gain the increase, but it is he working in us to will and do of his good pleasure. Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, but God giveth the increase, and when we say God gives us our minds, we know also he gives one a mind and ability for one thing, and to another a mind and ability for something else; we receive our talents according to our several abilities and duties, not all alike, and if we only have one we may rest assured we will only have one when he comes, so let us say that all that we have God has given us freely, and not that he gives us our natural mind and turns us loose; no, he is more merciful than that. To those who are given more than one he will also cause them to bring an increase at his appearing. I do not mean to explain the parable, but we know all things were written for us whom he hath redeemed, and it is for our instruction, the building up of the building, and the result will be as he has spoken, for he changes not, nor knows the shadow of a turning. We cannot escape what is for us, and all things will take place as God appointed from the ancient times when we were without form and void; for he did know our substance when it was wrought in secret in the lowest parts of the earth, and knew our members when as yet there was none of them. Some use the words "absolute" and "limited" in regard to the predestination of God, but those two words should have no part in our vocabulary concerning the workings of God.

We are limited, but God is not; in fact we do not do anything that we do not determine beforehand. I once heard Elder Poulson say, "All people are either predestinarians or idiots, for no man goes about to build a house without first designing the house, arranging for material, &c., and counting the cost, seeing if he is able to build. A man who would not do this would be regarded by his fellow-men as being unwise and foolish. So if we, who are so small that a nation is as a drop of a bucket, are predestinarians, which no man can deny, how then can we say God did not foreknow and predetermine all events?" Therefore I think the words "limited" and "absolute" are meaningless in this respect. Still some who give bright evidence of the work of grace cannot believe that God predestinated all things which he did foreknow, that some should believe so. But we having had a perfect understanding about this matter from the beginning, do testify to the truth of it, and declare boldly that God is unlimited in all things; his knowledge is not to be compared with anything we know, or, in fact, with nothing, for he is above all and over all, and there is none like him. The wisdom of God is only imparted to man as is necessary for the upbuilding of Zion. So, limited can only be applied to the ones who believe in limited predestination, and out of their own mouths they are judged, for the testimony they bear is that they only have a limited view of the matter, and it is their wisdom that is limited, and not God's. But I wish not to find fault with any, for knowledge is a blessing, and if one is able to see clearly on any one point he must bear patiently with a weaker one, for God has not endowed all alike. We see this in nature, some are born more intelligent than others, some who are intelligent are better in some studies than in others; one may be well versed in one or more branches, while in others he must remain unlearned. In spiritual things we can only know the things revealed to us by the Spirit, and should never censure any one for his belief or idea, but should bear with him, at the same time earnestly contending for the truth as it was once delivered unto the saints, and not boast over any, for all we have or ever will have is freely given. Think it not strange that we should be holy, as He is holy, for we could not enter his presence except we were. He can help us up out of an horrible pit and miry clay and establish our goings, and put a new song in our mouth, even a song of praise unto his name. He is great, and we cannot know his ways. Man in this mortal state cannot understand how he can ever be holy. It is not ours to know how and why. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of the law."—Deut. xxiv. 29. I have no knowledge of how it is done, for it is secret; all God's ways are secret, he dwells in secret places, and the secret things belong to him and are his. How shall we gain the way to the secrets of his mind? No way at all, and we only know the revealed things, and they are for us and our children. Some try to show how the dead are raised to life, try to tell how the resurrection is; no man knows, nor when, but we know there is a resurrection yet to come, for the mouth of the Lord has declared it. This was the sign Hezekiah had of the Lord that his life should be lengthened fifteen years; that the Lord would do that which he had spoken. Paul never explained

the mystery of the resurrection, but said, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." It was revealed to him that all should not sleep, but all should be changed. He did not try to clear up the mystery, how it would be at the time, or afterwards. Showing a mystery and explaining one are two different things. The Lord's ways are mysterious, the way we have already come is full of mystery; my short life is full of mystery to me, and it is by the grace of God I am what I am. Surely it is by the grace of God. I would know more of the kingdom of God and his righteousness, but I am a dull scholar; I desire the knowledge, but dread the school. I earnestly prayed at one time that I might have wisdom concerning spiritual things, and for months afterwards was plunged into the blackness of despair; storm after storm swept mercilessly over me, until I felt I was sinking and lost; so dark was my way that often the brightness of midday was as the twilight of evening, when the sun is gone and night is hovering over all nature; the literal day, as far as I was concerned, was turned into twilight. This I know to be the school of experience, and I dread such things, I want sunshine and not gloom. But we know the little plants in the garden send out their tender branches in the hours of night; they stand out in their glory glistening and bright with the dew of evening, welcoming the sun of the morning; they make their greatest growth in nighttime, so do we, for we are plants in his garden. Where would hope be were it possible to convince us that God did not foreordain and predetermine everything? O wretched thought of unbelief that lurks around and stabs me in the heart at times. Get thee behind me, Satan. Our hope is centered in God's strength and mercy through Christ; all flesh is grass. We alone rely on him to shield us from the enemy, and in his mercy to give us rest from our labors, and save us for Christ's sake, who died for the elect. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"—Rom. viii. 29–31. What could we do with this language even if it had no likeness anywhere in the Bible? True, some deny it, but some deny the whole Bible, which we had as well do as to accept one part because it suits us and reject some other because it does not. God does nothing in vain, having a purpose in all things. The wicked, being for a purpose, carry out his plans as much so as do the righteous; Cain, being born for a purpose, as much as Abel, each fulfilled the things ordained they should. The very fact that one does a thing is proof that he was to do as he did, and was ordained for that purpose. The soldiers who crucified Christ carried out God's plan as much as did his disciples, who afterwards preached Christ and him crucified and raised from the dead, the Savior of sinners. And unto him who hath redeemed us with his own blood, making us joint-heirs with himself to the eternal glory he had with the Father before the world began, and will eternally keep us, be all honor and glory, now and forever. Amen.

Yours unworthily,

F. SELBY FISHER.

SALISBURY, Md.

GOOD NEWS FROM AFAR.

On Thursday before the second Sunday in August I set out enroute for Freestone, Texas, arriving there in the evening, where I was met by our beloved brother, W. O. Beene, and conveyed to his pleasant home. After taking some refreshments and resting a short time brother Beene conveyed me nine miles further, to brother Demic's house, near Donie, Texas, where I filled an appointment, and preached to quite an orderly congregation of friends and neighbors, who had gathered there to be at the service and to hear the preaching. Here at our brother's hospitable home I realized to some degree a felt presence of the Lord in the promulgation of his everlasting gospel to the comfort and joy of our soul's salvation. Next day we returned to brother Beene's, and rested there until Saturday morning, when we again pursued our journey across a rough woodland country, some eighteen miles, reaching our destination about sundown, Elder I. W. Bower's home church, previous arrangements being made to begin night service, it being the regular time of their monthly meeting. It fell to my lot to preach for the people; the text used for the occasion embraced the subject relative to the centurion beseeching Christ to heal his servant, and Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. Here again the blessed almighty Lord of heaven and earth manifested the power of his truth. As I proceeded to discuss the healing virtue of the blood of Christ, the efficacy of the atonement, the foundation of our hope, for the space of an hour, I could not tell whether I was in the body or out of the body; however, this old transitory world receded, giving me a clear perception of the wonderful things the riches of the Lord Jesus Christ contained in the subject. When I closed my sermon a young man came suddenly through the crowd and gave me his hand, weeping as a child, saying I had preached his experience, and what he believed, after which Elder Bowers talked a few minutes, and the church went into conference. The church called for any one who desired to unite with them, when this same young man and his wife came forward and related the exercise of their minds in consequence of their sins and their deliverance therefrom through the blessed compassion of the loving Savior. They were received unanimously, with great joy and gladness of heart, and at 9 o'clock, Sunday morning, we convened by the riverside, where the solemn ordinance of baptism was administered by Elder Bowers, after which the dear young brother and sister went on their way rejoicing. These two dear young children of God had been traveling several days through the country, searching for a place where they could discharge their duty, but found no place to rest until they were by the Spirit brought to the Old School Baptist Church. After the baptism was performed we at once repaired to the church-house, where we again enjoyed a precious service, preaching the gospel of the Son of God. Here at this meeting our beloved and highly esteemed old brother, King Chancellor, by reason of illness and age could not be with us. We pray the Lord to bless and sustain our aged brother in the declining years of his life to endure the infirmities of the flesh, who for years has been so devoted and faithful to fill his seat in the church. He is only waiting for the order, Child, your Father calls, come home. Thus we enjoyed a rich feast of royal things with this church, and then departed for Salem Church, near Teague, Texas, where the

dear saints assembled to worship God, and hear the writer and Elder Bowers preach the unsearchable riches of a complete, glorified Savior. This church has under construction a new, commodious building to worship in, where the Big Creek Association meets to hold its session this fall, beginning Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1912. At this juncture I took leave of the brethren, to visit the Pilgrim's Rest Association, held with Pleasant Valley Church, near Mount Calm, Texas, arriving there on time to see the messengers, brethren, friends and people congregating from every direction. Services commenced at the time designated, and the introductory was preached by Elder A. P. Cardwell, the moderator. For three days and nights the preaching was almost constant, and a fair representation and good order was obvious throughout. The business of the association was conducted in a spirit of peace, harmony and sweet fellowship. The committee appointed the writer and Elder H. T. Martin, of Angelina County, to occupy the stand for Sunday. Elder Martin introduced the services, and held the congregation spellbound for more than one hour with a stirring discourse momentous and edifying, demonstrating the Lord was there. Elder Martin is a gifted minister of the new testament, an able expounder of the word, a forceful speaker, hence my soul was filled with the animating influence of the power of the Spirit, as a fire shut up in my bones. When I rose before the audience with the words of the hymn, "From all that dwell below the skies," &c., the people standing while they sang, a peculiar incident happened at that moment: a young lady came forward, giving me her hand, weeping penitential tears that suffused her eyes, with the image of the dear Savior in her features, holding my hand enclasped until the song was almost finished. At once I began the discussion of my subject, and if I ever felt the power and glory of God resting upon me in preaching it was then and there on that eventful occasion. After that the moderator closed the meeting with appropriate remarks, extending an opportunity to any one wishing to unite with the church, when this same young lady gave her hand and began to relate the travel of her mind, and her deliverance from sin through the love and compassion of her loving Redeemer, and was received amidst great rejoicing and emotions of love and praise to God. The church and congregation soon repaired to a beautifu clear pool of water, where Elder Cardwell baptized the lady, to walk in newness of life in Jesus, her sweet salvation which closed the meeting, and we took an affectionate leave of each other, realizing how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. The presence of the Holy Spirit seemed discernible, but now our several engagements called us away. Separation is needful, and we must obey. O what a manifestation of peace and joy and assurance in the Holy Ghost, of true, genuine christian intercourse among the saints flowing from breast to breast. Many clasped my hand and said, O, brother Howard, remember me in your prayers. An earnest lady, who had not made any public profession of religion, came and gave me her trembling hand, saying, Pray for me. I said, My dear sister, I hope it is my desire when I am allowed to ascend the throne of grace to remember not only yourself, but all the finally faithful in Christ Jesus scattered abroad over these earthly shores. Returning to Keller, and finding all well, I felt to thank God and take

courage. Here with my home church I conducted the ordination of a preacher, Elder W. W. Cochran, which closed the services of a joyful tour. For want of time and space I have had to omit many things, and try to work on the principle of condensation, and, dear editors, at the request of many brethren I have written this sketch, which I hope you may be able soon to publish in our dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES in the interest and cause of Christ, and the consideration of all its readers. The Lord bless and prosper our editors and publishers, is the prayer of yours in gospel bonds,

ASA HOWARD.

KELLER, Texas, Sept. 11, 1912.

LANHAM, W. Va., Aug. 12, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I will send you this good letter from sister Florence Pultz for publication, as so many of the Lord's scattered children love to read her letters, which have from time to time been published in the SIGNS. I had the pleasure of visiting her in the spring, and spending a few hours in conversation with her. She is blessed with spiritual knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures. May God continue to bless her with a mind to write, is my humble prayer.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

WHEELING, W. Va., July 11, 1912.

ELDER J. W. McCLANAHAN—DEAR BROTHER:—I was made glad by the reception of your good letter, which came yesterday. There are times when I am made to wonder at the leadings of our minds. I had been thinking about you for several days, and said, Elder McClanahan is either writing to me, or I am about to write to him. I remembered your pleasant and wise conversation while you were here. It is true that I cannot recall your words, but I can feel the good savor of them. I am so glad that I had the great pleasure of meeting you, and shall ever feel deeply grateful for your kindness in coming to see me. I have felt I wanted to write to you several times, yet my mind felt too barren, and you know how prone we are to look to ourselves, and to think that we must have something laid up in store; at least this is my case, but I have ever been brought to a full stop when I have started off heedlessly, and have forgotten to look to the Lord and inquire of him. Often when I have it in mind to write I will find myself trying to treasure up the thoughts that are coming to my mind beforehand, but I am glad to testify to the goodness and mercy of the Lord, for there is always a check given me to this weakness, and I am reminded to take no thought of what I shall say or write. I sent your last letter to the SIGNS yesterday evening. It seemed so good to me that I felt your views on the resurrection ought to be read by others; indeed, I cannot see how any one could gainsay them. I truly feel that you were instructed and guided by the Spirit of truth. It is a subject that I have ever felt deeply interested in. One thing has ever seemed strange to me, it is this: that many claim that Adam was created a holy being, and that herein he was in the image of God; that is, in mind or spirit, but, my dear brother, how could this be, seeing that Adam was of the earth earthy? He was made of dust, or clay, and he was perfectly inanimate until God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. I believe that the life then given to Adam was natural, or animal life, or, in other words, it was the power that en-

ables us to live, move and have our being. Adam was good as all the creation of God was good, but I have never found where he was pronounced holy. Beside, had Adam been holy, as God is holy, he could not have sinned, for we are told that God cannot sin, and that neither is he tempted with sin. Only a creature can sin. It seems to me that Adam was not what we might call a wicked sinner, but a weak sinner. Adam was tempted to sin, but Cain, his son, was what I would call a wicked sinner, and it was in his act that God said, Sin lieth at the door. I am only giving my thoughts as they have ever lodged in my mind, and I lay them before you because I feel that you have been taught of God, and I wish to know what you think about it. How strange and mysterious are the dealings of God with his creatures.

Some days ago I received a letter from a brother over in Canada. He feels doubtful of his acceptance with God, and says that at heart he is an infidel, but for all this he finds sweet in the bitter, and in his weakness seems to give to God all the power, glory and might. He truly displays the ancient sacrifice with which God said he was well pleased: that of a broken and contrite heart. I felt that his letter could be a comfort to me, even when I was rejoicing in hope. His letter stirred my mind deeply, and set me to examining myself. I said, How is this? Is it possible that I am a boasting pharisee? Why is it that I have never doubted the existence of God, and of his darling Son? And why is it that I have ever had this strong hope that I belong to the fold? I wanted to set myself aright before this dear brother, and felt to beg of the Lord that he would enable me to do so. Then my mind was directed to the man who was born blind, and whose sight our blessed Savior restored, no, not restored, for he had never had his sight; Jesus gave him to see. I have ever gloried in the faith of this poor man, as recorded in verse thirty. He said, "Why herein is a marvelous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes." I hope his case is like my own. The faith was given in the operation, as he received his sight, and before he knew who the Son of God was, and his faith was so strong and unwavering that he gave God the glory, even before he believed in him as his personal Savior. We know faith is the gift of God, and that it is given by measure. The one thing which I have for many years felt to need much, is humbleness of mind. For several years my prayer to God was breathed forth in the lines of the hymn:

"Let thy grace, Lord, make me lowly,
Humble all my swelling pride,
Fallen, guilty and unholy,
Greatness from mine eyes I'd hide.

I'd forget my vain aspiring,
Nor at earthly honors aim;
No ambitious heights desiring,
Life is given through thy name."

Dear brother, this is Sunday, July 14th; I had to lay my letter by. This is very hot weather, and I am so weak this morning that I cannot work. A few moments ago I began to wonder what I should do for this great weakness, and as I hurried to take a quinine pill it came to my mind, Why do not I ask of the Lord? Then I felt to ask that he would always remind me that he has all power in heaven and in earth. How often I am comforted in thinking that he knoweth our frame, and that he remembers we are dust. I crave earnestly an interest in your prayers, yet I know that you cannot pray for me unless the Lord gives you the earnest of the Spirit in my behalf. Write me when you are so directed.

Your sister in hope,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Oct. 25, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have just read carefully your editorial in the SIGNS for Oct. 15th, and every word of it is in accord with God's eternal truth, according to the Bible. This I have always believed so far as understanding of the Scriptures has been given me. I occasionally hear it said the word "predestination" only occurs a few times in the Bible. If it did not occur at all, the Scriptures would prove this glorious truth that all things come and go according to the fixed purpose of God. It would seem that one could not read the historical facts given us in the Scriptures of the blessed Lord without believing that all was fixed according to the eternal mind and purpose of God. Cowper must have believed this doctrine when he wrote these sublime words:

"Chained to his throne a volume lies
With all the fates of men,
With every angel's form and size,
Drawn by the eternal pen."

In the prophecies we find many wonderful things foretold concerning the life of our blessed Lord, and every phase of his life is set forth there, not only in prophecy, but by types and shadows, and among these things are his betrayal and awful suffering. These things I must believe were eternally fixed in the mind and purpose of God, as much so as the heavens of glory. Zechariah saw these things when the Lord said through his pen, Awake, O sword, against my shepherd. The prophet saw his betrayal, and the price must then have been fixed when he wrote, "If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver [no more and no less], and cast them to the potter." What more accurate fulfillment could there be than that which is recorded by Matthew? "Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver [no more, no less]." "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me." Here the word "predestination" in not used, but can any one question that it was all eternally settled and decreed that it should be just this way? Suppose a Judas had not been born, then what? Then the purpose of God must fail. But Judas was born, the dear Redeemer was betrayed into the hands of wicked men, the definite price was paid and innocent blood was shed when the time had come, as appointed. Jesus said, Now is your hour, and the power of darkness; for unto this hour was I born, and for this cause came I into the world. The apostle seemed to understand by the Spirit of wisdom what was meant in the reading of the second Psalm, and showed that its prophecies were now fulfilling. He said, "Why do the heathen rage?" &c. "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." There can be no other construction placed upon these

words than that all was determined, fixed and appointed eternally, and the Scripture is teeming with the same sacred and sublime truth, for in it all is harmony. No more atrocious deed was ever committed than that of the condemnation of the blessed and innocent Son of God. Bad indeed, as meditated and perpetrated in the hearts and by the hands of wicked men and devils, and as weighed in the scales of justice, but good in the purpose and plan of the great Jehovah. What shall we say of the perpetrators? Joseph said to his brethren, Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good, to save much people alive. Wickedness indeed filled their hearts with envy, and I have no doubt that when he was made known to them each of his brethren felt in a deeper sense the wickedness and envy that was in their hearts, instead of self-justification. So will it be with the brethren of our Lord Jesus. But what of the wicked rabble? Paul said, "We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." No, they did not comprehend the wisdom and purpose of God. It was evil on their part, but God meant it for good, to save much people alive. But what of them? Judas went and hanged himself. The just retribution of the holy God fell upon them all. The Jews were scattered and dispersed among the nations. His awful judgments fell upon the chief actors in this greatest crime of the world's history. Pilate, who through fear of his superior, Cæsar, would not do justice, but delivered the innocent knowingly into the hands of the unjust, though it had been foretold in; his humiliation his judgment was taken away, and who himself said, "I find no fault in the man," and yet delivered him to be crucified, afterwards met the very fate that he dreaded, for he was deposed, degraded, exiled and committed suicide. Herod was dethroned, and died in exile. Caiaphas also lost his power and was deposed. Should we not stand in awe and holy reverence with bowed heads before the just and holy God? Should we not acknowledge his dominion and power, instead of asking the reason why, or saying, Why doth he yet find fault? Or, Who hath resisted his power or will? O vain man, who art thou that repliest against God? Finite worms cannot sit in judgment upon what is good or what is bad in the wisdom and purpose of God.

> "Not Gabriel asks the reason why,
> Nor God the reason gives."

What this event means, or that of yesterday, we know not, but we know that God knows, and here to me is the only source of comfort. He knows, and has appointed the end, and I know that according to the Scripture it all will be for good. But for certain events the wisest men of earth would not have existed. Without certain events the temple at Jerusalem would not have been built, yet David said, I acknowledge my sin and my transgression. He makes confession with shame, and prays for a clean heart and a right spirit, and so will every humble believer in the doctrine of God's absolute rule and control over all events and time. The true believer will ever confess his sins with shame, while the ungodly go on to their own destruction. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God; that my soul knoweth right well. May he ever keep me in his own right way. "And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may

speak thy word." For we can but speak the things that we have seen and heard.

I have written this by piecemeal, but submit it to your disposal.

From a poor sojourner, hoping in the mercy of the Lord,

P. W. SAWIN.

CANNON, Del., August 14, 1912.

DEAR ELDER DURAND:—Your letter received, explaining that my letter sent to you in March had been mislaid, but that you had sent it to brother Ker. I am in the same mind now that I was when I talked with you on the train; that is, if you and the editors think it of any interest to the elect family I have no objection to the letter being published. I leave this with those whom I deem capable of judging what is profitable to publish, and right here I will say, if I am not greatly deceived, I do not want anything I write published if the editors think it would be detrimental to the paper, and I will not feel at all offended if my letters are not published. I have great confidence in the editors of our family paper. I have felt a desire to write to you since I received the last SIGNS and read of the death of your dear companion, but have been reluctant lest I might say something that I should not; nevertheless I must say that I am glad the verses she composed were published, for I have read them over several times, and feel they have been profitable to me, and am sure they have to all who have read them. The Lord be exalted and his name glorified for such wonderful gifts. I sympathize with you, and my desire is that the Lord may be your strength and stay, and I believe he will. You do not have to mourn as those who have no hope, for surely your companion proved by her gentle manner that she was an heir of God and a joint-heir with our Lord Jesus Christ. I feel to say, Praise the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever. Dear brother, you cannot wish her back; consider that building which is not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, and be assured that this building is the home of your loved one in eternity.

"Who, who would live alway away from his God,
Away from that heaven, that blissful abode,
Where the rivers of pleasure flow o'er the bright plains,
And the noontide of glory eternally reigns?"

The words of Jesus to his disciples are now in my mind, I will quote them: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." What is meant by these mansions? I will attempt to explain as I understand it. Are not these mansions composed of that vast multitude whom the Lord has chosen out of every kindred, tribe and tongue under the heavens? I think the apostle mentioned somewhere in the New Testament, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" It seems to me that the Lord's people are his mansions; the Lord dwells in his people. Yes, but, one says, I cannot see how the Lord dwells within me, for I am so prone to evil. Certainly the Lord is holy, just and pure, and how can he abide in such a vile body as mine? To such an one I would say, This is positive proof that the Lord does reign within, or you never would feel sinful as you do. Jesus has set up a kingdom within you. The Savior said on one occasion: "The kingdom of heaven is like unto

leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." I have had some thoughts about this Scripture and will try to present them. It seems to me this sentence has reference to the work of grace in the heart. Let us for a moment consider the composition of the leaven. It is something sour, also it has an expanding effect, but this effect is not seen until it is hid in the meal. The housewife takes this leaven and mixes with the dough, also she kneads the dough, and in some cases a hammer is used to pound the dough to make it hard, if a certain kind of bread is to be made. Now the dough has been prepared for bread, excepting it has not yet been put in the proper shape. The housewife does not make all bread alike, but in different shapes, yet it is all bread. But we will notice the effect of the leaven. The dough has now been put in the shape to suit and the leaven hid in the dough, a fire has been made, the bread is put in the receptacle and the heat applied. The leaven is hid from view, but her mind is on the bread; she does not intend for it to get too hot, if so it will not rise so well, but a steady heat must be obtained for best results. The housewife opens the receptacle where the bread is, and we notice the bread is getting warm and that the loaves are beginning to expand; we do not see the leaven, but we do see the effect of it. The housewife continues her other duties, but her mind is upon the bread, she gives this her greatest attention. Again she opens the receptacle, and the bread has greatly expanded, the leaven is doing its work. The receptacle is closed again for awhile for the leaven to complete the work. Again the receptacle is opened, and behold, the bread is a beautiful brown color, and we notice that a loaf now and then has burst; the leaven was of a very good quality, and it caused the loaf to burst. Is not this a fair illustration of the work of grace in the heart of a poor sinner? Jesus comes and dwells in the hearts of his people; at first there is not so much evidence of it. We see people going about, but we do not know the secret desires of their hearts. All men are by nature the same, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; but here is one who seems to be a little different from what he formerly was; we notice that he comes to the Old School Baptist meetings occasionally, and he does not pay much attention to the do and live society as he formerly did; he is really a changed man, Jesus has changed him into a different being. It is a different looking house now, a new man has taken possession and the old man is in deep distress because he cannot control the new man. This new man is a strong one, he has even bound the old man hand and foot and has taken away his armor in which he trusted; he is being subjected to torture, and it is trying to his natural senses; he is in a strange land and he (the old man) says, I will return to my own land and to my kindred, but the new man says, No, but you must follow me; where I command you to go you must go, and the old man is defeated again. The new man has certainly gotten full possession, and if the new man should allow the old man to return to his own land and kindred I do not think he would be satisfied, I think he would find the land badly contaminated and filthy, and his kindred I think would not suit him; I think he would be altogether dissatisfied. Jesus is doing his perfect work, and his work continues steadily. Perhaps the poor sinner feels at times the Lord has forgotten to be gracious,

but let me say he has not, he hears your petition, he hears the prayers of all his people and can hear them all at once; he is attending to the case of each afflicted saint. As the housewife keeps her mind upon the bread, so Jesus is watching over you who are mourning; and remember, as the dough has to be changed before it becomes fit for use, so must man be changed before he is fit for the Master's use. Remember he will make of you what he pleases; wherever you belong in this wonderful building the Builder will put you there.

I have written lengthily. My mind seemed to drift until I saw a multitude in destitution, mourning on account of sin, and who were tempest-tossed, and I seemed to have a desire to tell them about Jesus and his perfect work, and I find I have been trying to talk to that class. Now to you I will say, May the hand of the omnipotent One uphold you in your bereavement, and may the words of the apostle dispel all gloom from your mind, if there should be any: There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

I forgot to say I was glad to receive your letter, but sorry to hear you were not feeling well. I hope you are feeling better now. I received a letter a short time ago from Elder Coulter, which seemed to strengthen me; also Elder Fenton and others have written me, and I prize these letters highly.

Your brother in hope,

A. T. BENSON.

WISCASSET, Maine, Oct. 20, 1912.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—May I call you that? I am far from being worthy to do so, and think I realize this more and more as I see more of myself. But I do not wish to write about myself, it is not worth while to do so. Your letter of last April 30th has been neglected, but time flies, and I have not been, and am not now, in a frame of mind to write to you, but I am alone, and thinking of you and of others of like precious faith, and do feel that I must write a little, even if I fail to answer your letter as I ought. I realize more and more as the years go by that I cannot even think a good thought, or one worthy of being put into words or upon paper. Why do I not in my heart feel to praise him more, who has so highly blessed me in the past by giving me a hope in his mercy? For surely it was the Lord alone who took me out of the horrible pit and miry clay, and placed my feet upon a rock, and gave me to say, Salvation is of the Lord. O how freshly it all comes up before me as I write all that I went through in that experience, when, as I did then hope and still hope, I was brought from darkness to light, from death to life. "Jesus all the day long was my joy and my song." But how about it all now? Why this dull and lifeless frame? I sometimes ask myself, Would it be different with me could I be more in company of God's people and with the people of the world less? I do not know. In those days I had opposition to contend with, now I do not. It may be that this accounts for some of the difference. I did not get to our association this year, as you know if you were there, as I suppose you were. I have not heard from any one since about it. I trust you were there. I thought I might never again be blessed to see you in the flesh, but still we both may be able to attend another year. At the time, I was getting ready to move, and did not feel able to go. I cannot endure very much. I have had much and continued labor for

some time, owing to various causes not needful to name, but am now rested from all that. I think it will be comfortable where we are now, but I dread the winter much. I hope I may get to one more meeting before the cold weather sets in. I do not as yet know whether Elder Keene will go to Whitefield again this fall. I shall miss sister Ella Pulsifer very much. I had planned to go up for a visit to her very soon, when I received the word that she had gone from earth. She looked very badly the last time I saw her, and I felt as though I must go and spend at least a day with her. How little we know what to-morrow may bring forth. There are but few left in the Whitefield Church; I often wonder, Will the Lord ever again build up his church there? You spoke of missing the old faces when you came this way. O how much we all do miss them. Why, my brother, when I do get to the meetings in Whitefield, or see any of them, it does not seem at all as the meetings used to. They who remain are all just as dear to me, but so many of the older ones are gone that it seems to change everything. I cannot express it, but you know how it seems and can understand my meaning. As I read over your letter it makes me wish and long to be able to go to those meetings of which you spoke. I have always had that desire ever since I have had any love for such things, but it has not pleased the Lord to have it so, or to grant that desire. I am now away from even my home church, and for how long I do not know. Sundays are long, tedious days to me. I could go to meeting here, but I have no desire to do so. I have never been to one of them since being here, as I feel as though there is nothing to go for. I feel like one alone in the world, yet I know that I am not alone, if it be that I am a subject of grace, and when I receive a letter from some one of the children of grace I read my own experience, and feel that I have been there, and that I know what they are talking about. Then again, when I turn my eyes within all seems so vile, so vain, and sin is so mixed with all I do, think or say, that I fear I am mistaken, but it is all in the hand of the Lord, and I am thankful that it is so. As you say, there is not one stone in the building of mercy, save what he has placed there, and it is good that it is so. Even though I am so cold and lifeless, and at times feel as though I am far away, I do rejoice that salvation is of the Lord, and not of anything that I have done. O what is man that the Lord should take thought of him?

But I must close this letter. Please excuse so rambling a letter, but it is the best I can do. You have always shown great patience toward unworthy me, and I hope you will still have patience with me a little longer. My best love to you all. I hope you will write me again.

I remain your sister in hope of a better life,

MARTHA E. GLIDDEN.

TORONTO, Ontario, Sept. 30, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—Having moved, I would ask you to kindly change my address to 320 Royce Avenue, Toronto, Ont., and I want to say to any one feeling an inclination to write me, do not refrain from doing so. I am yearning for the company of the saints, and would write if I could, but alas, the cares of this life seem to be choking the word. Pray for me that my faith fail not.

Yours unworthily,

(MRS.) W. C. YOUNG.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1912.

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EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
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MATTHEW XX. 20-28; MARK X. 35-41.

In these two portions of the word is recorded the narrative of the coming to Jesus of the mother of Zebedee's children, with her two sons, James and John, with the request that they be favored to sit the one on his right hand and the other on his left in his kingdom. The only difference in the two narratives is, that while Mark mentions only the two sons of Zebedee, Matthew speaks of the mother as well. In these two narratives, as well as in other portions of the gospels, there is set forth on the one hand that which the natural mind can attain to in its thoughts concerning the kingdom of God, and on the other, the testimony of the Master concerning that kingdom. The Jewish nation as a whole were at that time expecting the Messiah to come quickly. When he should come it was their understanding that he would overcome the foes of Israel and set up again the kingdom of David, and reign upon David's throne, only much more gloriously than David or Solomon. This was the universal expectation among that people. The spiritual among them also looked for this coming kingdom, although they also were in darkness concerning its nature and design. Therefore, when Jesus had come in the flesh and had begun to manifest his power by his miracles, and had gathered to him by effectual calling the twelve to be his witnesses, and had spoken to them of the kingdom of God, they did not comprehend his teaching, but still thought that soon he would take to himself the throne of David, and reign over Jerusalem and the chosen people at Jerusalem. This they continued to think, notwithstanding all that he said from time to time in correction of and in rebuke of their carnal ideas; out of their flesh proceeded fleshly thoughts and fleshly strivings. Upon other occasions as well as in this instance, they strove among themselves for the highest honors in the coming kingdom. Had they indeed understood the real nature of his kingdom they never could have sought for such fleshly honors among themselves. In this narrative we find not only the disciples in general, but those also who were taken nearer to him upon two special occasions, making manifest that they did not rise very far above the most gross and fleshly in their comprehension of the kingdom of God, and with a fond fleshly ambition for her sons their mother also came with them, to urge their plea for special places and special rewards in his kingdom.

First. From the foregoing considerations we learn that believers and disciples of the Lord ought not to claim perfection in knowledge or in spirit. In the hearts of all true believers there will be always a warfare between that which is fleshly and that which is spiritual. This one thing must be said however for the consolation of those distressed with this warfare, viz., that wherever there is a warfare there must be two opposing forces; there can be no such warfare unless the Spirit dwells in us as well as the

flesh. Where there is no warfare it is sure that men are still dead in sin; where there is a warfare it is sure that there is life from the dead. These two disciples were not among the dead in sin; there was love in their hearts toward the blessed Master. This love is itself full evidence of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Love is one of the fruits of the Spirit. Where the Spirit does not dwell there can be no love of God, yet these desires in James and John to be chief in the kingdom of God were altogether of the flesh. Such desires would suit any earthly kingdom, but they do not suit the kingdom of God. These two disciples did not then realize this difference between the flesh and the Spirit, and it does not seem that they felt any sorrow at that time because their thoughts and desires were so carnal. Often because we do not know what is fleshly we are found yielding to the demands of the flesh. It was so now with these two disciples. They wanted to be with the Master in his coming reign, but they did not know in what that reign consisted, and it is sure that could their desires have been granted, and they have become great in that visible reign upon earth of which they conceived, there would still have remained within them a hungering and thirsting that would not have been satisfied. How often the gratification of our desires would leave us more desolate and dissatisfied than before. Jesus mercifully withheld from these disciples that which they sought, and he still, with equal mercy, does not give his children the stone which they, thinking it to be bread, often desire. Natural things cannot satisfy the desires of the spirit. Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness cannot be put off with any worldly gain. The Father in his wisdom will withhold nothing from those who desire heavenly good, nothing, that is, which is heavenly. He will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. By the Spirit is meant all the fruits of the Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, &c., and to these two disciples he would give nothing less than that which his Spirit within them desired. Did ever any worldly gain of wealth, friends, station or what not, satisfy the real desires of a child of God? Yet how often they do desire such things. In this is there evidence of their ignorance, even as James and John asked the favor which they did ignorantly.

Second. The entreaty of James and John with their mother may have been suggested by the words of the Savior recorded in chapter 19, verse 28; there the promise is recorded that his disciples who had followed him should in his kingdom sit on thrones as judges, and it was the ambition of these two disciples to be chief of these judges, sitting nearest to him. In this, as said before, there was a wrong conception of his kingdom, and of the spirit of that kingdom. Princes, and the great among men, rule over their fellows, and demand their service. In this new kingdom those who were to be great must serve rather than receive service, and the spirit of his kingdom is the desire to serve rather than to be served. To those who served with the spirit of service, thus following the Master indeed, there should be thrones, but disciples were not to seek these thrones. Those who seek thrones shall never attain to them, but to those who seek service, with the spirit of doing to others rather than to receive from others, thrones should be given. There seems to have been in the minds of the disciples the thought that while they were now following the Lord in poverty, reproach and toil, after a while they

should reap a reward of ease, honor and riches. But to sit on thrones as judges does not mean rest from labor, but rather more labor. The same thing is taught in the parable of the talents and in that of the pounds. He that used well the ten talents should now have charge of ten cities; he that used well the five talents should now be required to take charge of five cities. The same principle in substance is taught in the parable of the pounds, and so also in the promise of these thrones of judgment we see indeed that while the Lord promises to honor those who follow him, this honor means much more of service to be required and much more diligence. Natural things are often figures of that which belongs to the kingdom of God, and this principle of which we are speaking here belongs to the affairs of the natural world as well as to the spiritual kingdom. He who, as is narrated in the parable, uses well and wisely that portion of this world's goods, be it wealth, learning or any other thing which is bestowed upon him, will straightway find that he is in demand more and more, and that there will be required of him more and more service, so that as the years go on idleness will be further from him, and the burdens will grow more and more weighty. Thus in every age of the church faithful servants of God will find more and more demands made upon them, and the more the spirit of service abounds in a believer, and the more he serves, the more is that servant honored by his Master by requiring still greater service. This is the law of the kingdom.

Third. If we ask, How shall we come to this throne, this spirit of service and this ability to serve? in the narrative under consideration the answer is given: Ye shall drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with. These were the dear Savior's words, and in substance the Savior here declared just what the apostle declared afterward, It is through much tribulation that we are to enter the kingdom. On another occasion Jesus said, "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me." In this last quotation the little word "as" ought to be emphasized. Just as Jesus entered into his kingdom so should they, and he entered into his kingdom by the road of suffering, and cross bearing, and death. Not knowing what it meant, they had said, We are able to drink the cup and to be baptized with thy baptism. Jesus said that it should be so indeed with them, and further he added that to sit on his right hand and on his left was not his to give save to those for whom it was prepared of his Father in heaven. This expression, "for whom it is prepared," includes in itself also the thought of the preparation of those who should receive it. The kingdom of heaven is prepared for the chosen, but then it is true that the chosen must be prepared for it. It has been well said, Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. This is equally true of the kingdom of God on earth, and there is no preparation for this kingdom save the preparation of tribulation, of humiliation and of self-abasement. Jesus taught in these words again the lesson that not human strength, or wisdom, or goodness, but rather weakness and foolishness, and such a sense of unworthiness as will take away all thought of boasting, will avail to give one a place in his kingdom. All boasting, save in the Lord Jesus Christ, is thus excluded. How searching the question, If the price of a place in his kingdom be suffering, self-denial and

crucifixion, are we willing to pay the price? Paul had evidently caught a glimpse of these things, and had come to possess something of this spirit when he said, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." And of others he said that they took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing that in heaven they had a better and more enduring substance. This spirit had been wrought in the heart of those ancient worthies who are numbered in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews as witnesses of the power and victories of faith, and as it was given them all to drink the cup of suffering and to be baptized in affliction, that they might enter into the kingdom, so also their power to serve others in like conflicts grew. There is no other way, and this way is effectual, so that all who travel it do serve. They do serve, though to themselves it often appears that they do not serve in any way.

Fourth. In conclusion, let us remember that there is a solemn lesson of warning in all that we have here called attention to. It is this, that the spirit of seeking honor and exaltation will, in itself, render all we may do of no account in the kingdom of God. Peter once said, Lord, we have left all and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? This he said when the young man had gone away sorrowful because he had great possessions. (See the close of chapter nineteen.) Then see the parable of the laborers in the vineyard which follows in the beginning of the twentieth chapter. The special words of the Savior to which we desire to call attention are there repeated twice, chapter nineteen, verse thirty, and chapter twenty, verse sixteen. But many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first. In these words Jesus would say to Peter, and to all who say, What shall we have because we have followed thee? You may have followed me from the first, and in doing so may have left all that men count dear in this life, but, after all, if the spirit which is controlling you be to seek a reward, and to be honored, that spirit is of the flesh, and has no place in my kingdom, and instead of being first, it places all who are actuated by it last in the kingdom. We do not attain to the kingdom by human merit, either of work or of self-denial, but we enter it by the favor of God. The greatest in that kingdom is he who feels to be the least. In the parable which follows, those who had wrought but one hour could not for a moment think of themselves as in anywise deserving of the penny which was given them, yet to them was the penny given. How gracious they must have thought the householder to be toward them; while the spirit of those who had indeed borne the burden and heat of the day was not to serve gladly and willingly, as had the others, but simply for the wages given them. Here was justice, but no mercy. These demanded justice, but felt no need of mercy. But the last received mercy. If any of us come demanding something in the kingdom as our right because of our service, we know not the spirit of the kingdom, and shall be last rather than first. It seems to us that this is in substance the spirit of this parable, and, in fact, of all the teaching of the blessed Master. Happy indeed are we if to us it has been given to be possessed of this spirit, and to be governed by it. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

CHRIST THE BLESSED AND ONLY POTENTATE.

"For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many and lords many,) but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."—1 Cor. viii. 5, 6.

Admitting all that can be claimed by principalities and powers, either in heaven or earth, to us, that is, those who are the called, quickened and spiritually instructed, there is but one supreme ruling power, transcending all the powers which are put under him. He is the only wise God, our Savior, his name is called "The Word of God." All the powers in heaven acknowledge his majesty, and all the angels of God are commanded to worship him. The four beasts (or living creatures), and the four and twenty elders, which represent all the principalities and powers in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, acknowledge him to be the Head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all, and he himself declares his supreme power over all flesh, which he must needs possess that he might give eternal life unto as many as the Father hath given him. When by a commission from him his apostles were seated upon thrones of judgment to judge and administer to the twelve tribes of his spiritual Israel, and the keys of the kingdom of heaven (that is, the direct inspiration of the Holy Ghost, with which they were baptized on the day of Pentecost) were given them expressly to make binding on earth all their apostolic decisions, they were distinctly informed that the excellency of all this power was of God, and not of them. He "came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."—Matt. xxviii. 18-20.

In asserting the absolute supremacy of our Lord Jesus Christ over all beings, all events and all worlds, we design in this article to show that in ascending his mediatorial throne all temporal as well as all spiritual authority was vested in him. The apostle in showing what is the exceeding greatness of God's mighty power to his churchward, "who believe accordcording to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come," adds, "And hath put all things under his feet," and in all this fullness of power over all things in heaven and earth, in this world and that which is to come, "gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." —Eph. i. 19-23. We will notice first his supreme power in the heavenly places, and secondly his supreme authority over all the principalities or departments of power in this world.

First. Christ is supreme, blessed and only Potentate in his spiritual kingdom, the departments of which are called heavenly places, wherein "are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David."—Psalms cxxii. 5. There are no thrones of legislation, for not even the

apostles were allowed to enact any law, or amend, annul or alter any part of the law of Christ. His princes shall sit in judgment, they shall sit in judgment over his chosen tribes, giving judgment and decision on every part of the law of Christ, and their judgments and decisions are authoritative, for they sit on thrones, and thrones signify places of imperial power. Thus in setting forth the principalities of the heavenly places the apostles are first brought to view, endowed with power from heaven to administer the laws of Christ, to set in order all that belongs to the organization and travel of the church of God. What they have written by inspiration of the Holy Ghost makes up a full, perfect and complete directory for the observance of all the children of God throughout all time. The man of God is perfectly and thoroughly furnished to every good work. The primitive church was organized on and in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and only so far and so long as we abide in the doctrine of the apostles can we continue in their fellowship. What they have bound on earth is bound in heaven, also what they have loosed on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Next to the apostles in authority are the prophets which God has placed in the church, having gifts from the Lord for the edification of the saints. Thirdly, teachers, in a more general acceptation of the word, as this principality embraces, as we apprehend, all the gifts, or all those to whom God has given ability to teach the doctrine, order and ordinances of the house of God. The same gifts which are simply called teachers in 1 Cor. xii. 28, are in Eph. iv. called evangelists, pastors and teachers. Next to these in their order come the gifts of healing, of helps, governments, tongues, &c., and all for the edifying of the body, the church, none of them to be despised or unappreciated, for these all being established as principalities in the heavenly places of the church and kingdom of Christ are to be regarded as thrones of power which Christ himself has set. They are to teach, exhort, reprove and rebuke with all authority, that is, with all the authority by Christ invested in them, and that is to be determined by his word. These principalities cannot be disregarded without violation of our loyality to Christ, for he has said to his servants, "He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me."—Matt. x. 40. The Pharisees were astonished at Christ's doctrine, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes; and it is a distinguishing mark of a servant of Christ now that they, and only they, have divine authority for what they teach. Jesus said to Nicodemus, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen. But we should remember that it is only when the servants of God speak as the Lord Jesus has authorized them that they speak or teach with authority. Now all these principalities and powers which Christ our King has set in the heavenly places of his kingdom are in subjection to Christ as the blessed and only Potentate. He is exalted not only above, but far above, all principality and power, and every name that is named, both in this world and that which is to come. They are only his servants, acting by his authority, having none of their own. He is the Head, and they the members of his body, and to him they constantly ascribe all power, might and dominion, saying, "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." Should any one therefore attempt to introduce

into the kingdom, or to bind any obligations upon the saints which our Lord Jesus Christ has not authorized, whatever their position may be in the church or in the ministry, their effort should be firmly resisted. Even the apostles are to be followed only as they follow Christ, and if Paul, or an angel from heaven, should teach any other doctrine than that which the apostles have preached, let them be accursed. To hold Christ as the blessed and only Potentate will not allow us to receive from any of his servants, or professed servants, aught in doctrine or order that does not bear the broad seal of his Holy Spirit. All the power or authority any of his apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors or teachers can have, or that the church has a right to regard or obey, is the power and authority of Christ himself, as he is the only, as he is the blessed Potentate, and it would be treasonable in any of his subjects to bow to any other sovereign or potentate in his kingdom.

Secondly. The principalities and powers of the earth, as well as all those of the heavenly places, are subordinate to him whose name and titles are written upon his vesture and upon his thigh: King of kings and Lord of lords. The boundaries of his government in providence are from the rivers to the ends of the earth. The heathen are his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth are his possession, and all legitimate powers, governments, thrones and dominions of or over the tribes of mankind are from him, and no power can be exercised over men except by usurpation that comes not from him. He as God of the whole earth has instituted human governments, set up kings, governors, rulers and judges, limiting their rights to govern within such bounds as to be a terror only to evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well. Paul gives this as the reason why every soul shall be subject to the higher powers, for there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. This applies alike to all degrees of power or authority by special ordinance of God, whether it be vested in kings, governors, presidents, judges, husbands, parents, masters, or wherever it exists, and for the limitation, regulation and duration christians are to examine the ordinance of God in which all these several powers are authorized. The powers are widely different in degrees; the parent or the master has not the power which God has given to kings, but their respective powers to the extent provided in the ordinance is as legitimate in the one as in any of the other departments of human power, and in every case christians are to respect all these powers and authorities simply because God has ordained them, not because one man of himself has more right to rule than another. The christian is to honor all men, love the brotherhood, fear God and honor the king upon the very same principle that servants are commanded to obey or be subject to their masters with all fear, because it is God's ordinance, and our obedience as children, as servants and as citizens of states and nations, is, so far as christians are concerned, that thereby we honor and obey God. This motive for the submission and obedience of every soul to the higher powers or authorities is urged alike in regard to every grade or degree of authority which God has ordained and enjoined. Children are exhorted to obey their parents, because God has commanded it; it is the first commandment with promise. Servants are commanded to obey in all things their master according to the flesh, not

with eye service, as though it were only from fear of man, as menpleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God; and to do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men. (Col. iii. 22, 23.) Obedience to kings, governors, judges and magistrates is by special command of our blessed and only Potentate to be faithfully rendered, because God has commanded it; not merely because men have enacted the laws, or kings have decreed them, with pains and penalties, but in the fear of God and in obedience to him. For rulers are not a terror to good works; that is, those whom God has invested with power, and who are his ministers to us for good. The extent of all power given of God to rule is that they shall be a terror to evil-doers and a praise to them that do well. They are ministers of God, in the civil department of his government, to protect the law-abiding in all their rights, and to punish those who infringe upon the lawful rights of others, hence the power to be recognized by christians, although ministered by rulers and judges divinely appointed, is none the less the government of our blessed and only Potentate, and all kings, governors and rulers of the earth are as firmly bound to rule in the fear of God, observing the limitation of all their powers, as their subjects are to obey them, as the ministers whom God has put in authority over us. A careful examination will show every candid and honest inquirer after truth that the obligations of subordination, submission and obedience enjoined on christians to all the principalities of the heavenly places, that is, in the church of God, and their obligations to obey all men who are divinely invested with authority over us in the flesh, as kings, rulers, parents, husbands, masters and all other institutions of power, to the full extent of the power thus given to them over us, rests alike upon the recognition of the divine power, and should be cheerfully rendered in obedience to our blessed and only Potentate as unto God, and not unto men. It is then as disloyal to our Potentate for a child to dishonor or disobey his parent, a servant to dishonor or disobey the lawful commands of his master, as it is for a citizen to disregard, dishonor or disobey the wholesome laws of the state or nation where he owes his obedience. No man on earth is invested by any ordinance of God with unlimited power or authority. Some have indeed usurped and exercised such power for a season, making the monarch's will the supreme law. Such were the pretensions of the haughty king of Babylon, when commanding all his subjects to worship his golden image, but God rebuked him and drove him from the society of men to eat grass with the beasts of the field until he confessed the supremacy of the God who rules over all. No earthly government has any divine right to judge the saints in religious matters, nor has any saint a right to be judged by them in meats, or drinks, or holy days, new moons or sabbaths; nor has any husband a right to dictate the religious faith of his wife, nor has a parent a right to command his child to disobey the laws of God or men, nor has the owner or master of a servant a right to require of him anything that God has forbidden, or that would be in violation of the legitimate laws of the land. In this view of the subject we bow our knee and swear allegiance to our blessed and only Potentate, as the King of kings and Lord of lords. "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men."—Col. iii. 23.

"All hail the power of Jesus' name,
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all.

Let every kindred, every tongue
On this terrestrial ball,
To him all majesty ascribe,
And crown him Lord of all."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., September 15, 1865.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, assembled with the South Gardiner Church, at South Gardiner, Maine, September 6th, 7th and 8th, 1912, to the churches composing the association, and to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth christian greetings.

DEAR CHILDREN OF THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, ISAAC AND JACOB:—We feel like using the language of the apostle Paul in his epistle to the Ephesian brethren, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: "Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." These are the chosen of God, chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world; they are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. This choice was not according to their works, neither was it according to their choice, neither for their good works, but according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. What a wonderful work is wrought when poor, justly condemned sinners are brought from darkness to light, and turned from the power of Satan unto God, and are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and old things have passed away, and all things are become new. They are now traveling in a new and living way, citizens of the new Jerusalem, which is above, which Paul says is the mother of us all, the heavenly Jerusalem, which cometh down from God out of heaven; it is the Zion of our God, it is a quiet habitation; no striving there, no laboring or toiling; it is a tabernacle that God hath built, it shall not be taken down, not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken, but the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams. The inhabitants thereof have no use for a galley with oars, neither is there any place for a gallant ship; it is there that the brethren dwell together in unity; it is the dwelling-place of our Judge, our Lord, our Lawgiver, our King and our Savior. Dear brethren, is not this a heavenly place to dwell in? It is the place where a great spoil is divided, it is where the lame take the prey; the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity. He that sits upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even forever, dwells in this everlasting tabernacle, and in him is infinite fullness, for it is in him that all fullness dwells, the fullness of the Godhead bodily. What a wonderful work is made manifest to the children of God, that they by faith in Jesus are enabled to see; but how often we try to build tabernacles for Moses and Elias and for Christ. But the law and the prophets were until John, then Jesus came to fulfill all that was written of him in the law and the prophets. Paul, in speaking of these things in words of truth and soberness, said that having obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than

those which the prophets and Moses did say should come; therefore we have the testimony of Moses and the word of the prophets all pointing to the coming of Jesus, and the apostle tells the churches of Galatia that "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." The angel appeared unto Joseph, and said, "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." It is this same Jesus that came into the world to save sinners; has he failed to accomplish what he came to do? If we believed the popular preaching of this time we should say that the Son of God had failed to do the will of his Father that sent him, but, dear children of the eternal God, our God has never failed to carry on the work of his eternal purpose, for he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast, and whatsoever his soul desireth, even that he doeth, for he is in one mind, and none can turn him. The spirit of prophecy has declared that he shall not fail nor be discouraged, until he shall set judgment in the earth; he came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him. "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Dear children, you are the sheep of his pasture, chosen in him, preserved in him and called, and he of God is made unto all that the Father has given him, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit; he was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification. The work of God is a wonderful work; it brings sinners from darkness to light; it makes darkness light before them; it brings them off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him that loved them and gave himself for them; his soul was made an offering for sin; it pleased the Lord to bruise him, put him to grief; he hath seen his seed, he hath prolonged his days, and the pleasure of the Lord hath prospered in his hand. The love of God underlies all that Jesus has done for lost and ruined sinners, for God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Dear brethren, if what we have written applies to us, it is because we were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, but if we were not chosen in him we have neither lot nor part with God's eternal Son. What shall we say more? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

"O hope of every contrite heart,
O joy of all the meek;
To those who ask, how kind thou art,
How good to those who seek.

But what to those who find? Ah, this,
No tongue nor pen can show,
The love of Jesus, what it is,
None but the loved ones know."

Z. M. BEAL, Moderator.

J. E. HUBBARD, Clerk.

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

WE are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Lexington Church, October 2nd and 3rd, 1912, sendeth love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We feel to be thankful for this one more privilege of coming together in fellowship and having the opportunity of hearing the gospel proclaimed by those whom the Lord has called to proclaim the everlasting truth of the gospel. We most earnestly desire a continuance of your correspondence.

Our next session will be held with the Olive and Hurley Church, first Wednesday and Thursday in October, 1913, when we hope to receive your Minutes and messengers.

R. W. SANFORD, Moderator.
JAMES AVERY, Clerk.
J. H. BEVIER, Assistant Clerk.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Fairview Church, Fulton Co., Pa., October 11th, 12th and 13th, 1912, sendeth christian greeting in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—As another year has rolled around, we send our annual letter of correspondence to the sister associations with whom we are in christian fellowship. The messengers in our association report peace and harmony, all in good fellowship, and we desire, as the true church of the living God, that he will guide and keep us in that faith which was once delivered unto the saints, which our ministers who are with us have so strongly declared unto us. They strive not to please man, but deliver it as it is in Christ Jesus, for he has said, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. He speaks and it stands fast. We earnestly desire a continuance of your brotherly love and fellowship.

Our next association will be held with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1913, where we hope to meet your messengers again.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
A. MELLOTT, Clerk.

The Salisbury Association of Primitive Baptists, in session with the church at Snow Hill, Worcester Co., Md., October 23rd, 24th and 25th, 1912, to the several associations with which we correspond sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—According to appointment we are privileged to assemble ourselves together in an associate capacity, although the weather is dark and gloomy, so much so that perhaps the congregations are not so large as usual, but surely the Lord is with us, for the preaching has been a demonstration of the Spirit throughout the meeting, for which we desire to render thanks to the Giver of all good gifts. The letters from the several churches assure us that peace, love and harmony prevail throughout this association. We desire a continuance of your valued correspondence, for in this we are assured of a friendly feeling toward us, which is greatly desired by us.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the church at Salisbury, Wicomico Co., Md., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1913, where and when we hope to again receive your messengers bearing your messages of love.

T. M. POULSON, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, Nov. 6th, 1912, at the Inn, Leesburg, Va., James H. Mooney, of Haymarket, Va., and Miss Arabella Dawson, of Lenah, Va.

By Elder J. McConnell, assisted by Elder B. F. Coulter, at the Ebenezer Baptist Church, New York city, Sunday, October 27th, 1912, Howard Lester Addis, of Philadelphia, Pa., and Ruth Frances Beard, of New York city.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Hattie E. Willersdorff, our beloved sister in Christ, passed away from mortality at her home, Bellvale, Orange Co., N. Y., October 21st, 1912. She was born Jan. 14th, 1847, the daughter of the late Abner Benedict, and all her life was spent in and around Warwick valley. Her home for many years was with her brothers, Joel and John V. D. Benedict, and the two sons of the latter, Charles and Efford, who had been with her from infancy, and who looked upon her almost as a mother, and indeed she was about the only mother they ever knew, as the wife of John V. D. Benedict died when these boys were very young. Sister Hattie was afflicted for many years, and during all that time the patient love and devotion of the two brothers and two nephews and of her sister Mary, who died a few years ago, manifested in caring for their loved one was touching and beautiful. During the writer's pastoral care of the Warwick Church it was his privilege to be in their home often, and it is no more than their due to acknowledge that he never visited there but that he felt comforted and soothed as the result of it. It was not a home in which the trivialities and nonsensical gossip of little minds had any place, for the time was invariably taken up when visiting there in talking of the blessings of God and the spiritual things of Christ's kingdom. Sister Hattie loved that kind of conversation, and was a gifted talker herself, but on account of her affliction was very seldom able to meet in Warwick with the regular meetings of the church. It was my privilege to baptize her in the fellowship of the Warwick Old School Baptist Church Sunday afternoon, Oct. 14th, 1906. Her experience dated back to the time when Elder Philander Hartwell was the pastor of Warwick Church, which was many years ago. Becoming confused in her mind regarding the Scriptures, and being somewhat alienated from the Old Baptists, because of troubles in the Warwick Church, she connected herself with the Dutch Reformed denomination, but never found there the rest and peace her soul craved, so that eventually she was brought back, as was the prodigal son, to her Father's house. When finally she did come back to us there were some that feared, on account of her afflicted condition, that she could not stand the ordinance of baptism, but she had no fears that day herself, and neither had the writer, for in all his experience in administering the ordinance it was never easier than on that occasion. During the last few years sister Hattie had several severe spells, when the family thought the end was near, but each time she rallied, and when at last the end did come it was sudden and unexpected. All day Sunday, and far into the night before she died, she suffered much, then fell asleep, and one could scarcely tell when the end came. While all that are left, both in the family and in the church, will miss her much, there is not one that can mourn for her, for she left a blessed assurance that the rest she so long sought is now hers.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder H. C. Ker from the home of the family, Bellvale, N. Y. May the Lord in his loving-kindness remember each one of the bereaved family, and also each member of the church of which our sister was one.

Written by request of the family of the deceased.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

LEESBURG, Va., Oct. 30, 1912.

IT becomes my sad duty to give an account of my dear mother's death, **Mrs. M. M. Coker,** which occurred on the evening of Sept. 18th, 1912, at 8 o'clock. She was born Feb. 5th, 1834, in the State of Georgia, and was the daughter of Cohen and Mary Attaway. She was married to Joseph Coker April 9th, 1855. To that union were born twelve children. Two of them preceded her to the grave, also my father, six years ago. His death was published in the SIGNS. Mother was a faithful member of the Primitive Baptist Church since 1860, when she was baptized in the fellowship of Cane Creek Primitive Baptist Church of Georgia, by Elder Jones. She was a Predestinarian Baptist in full faith and practice; her door was open to the Baptists fifty-two years, besides in her girlhood days she helped her father and mother care for them. She and father moved from Georgia to Texas in the year 1870. Those who knew them best can testify of their firmness. After father's death mother's home was sad; her children were her only delight. She did all in her power for the comfort of her children, and as long as she could talk she would speak of her love and care for them and ask God to guide and protect them through life. She remained on the old homestead until her death. May 29th she was taken very ill, and all her children were called to her and remained by her bedside almost all the time until her death. Through her sickness when she was able to talk she spoke of her anxiety to depart and be at rest, but was submissive to God's will. The first two months she did not suffer, but after that until death relieved her she suffered untold pain. She told us how she wanted to be laid away, and wanted Elder W. W. Slaughter

to hold services at her grave. She had spoken to him about it before she was taken sick; but we could not get a message through to him, which we regretted. Her son-in-law, Elder D. H. Riddle, was present, and spoke words of comfort to the bereaved children and relatives. Everything was done that human hands could do, but the same God that gave us this dear mother has taken her to himself. All her children (ten) were with her when death came, for which we all feel thankful. What a blessed consolation it was to us that she died in the full triumph of the faith. Mother said her future was peace and rest, but O how sad it is to give up a dear loving mother. God grant that we may become more reconciled. She always desired to live to see her children grown, and we are thankful that her desire was granted. She asked me to give notice of her death in the SIGNS, as she had been a constant reader of it since 1886. Her requests have been carried out, so far as possible.

Her daughter,

JENNIE COKER RIDDLE.

Mary C. Phillips died Nov. 21st, 1911, after a long illness. Her maiden name was Mary C. Drake, second daughter of Zephaniah Drake. She was born in 1853, and married Wm. H. Phillips in 1878. She leaves her husband and two sons to mourn their loss, also four sisters. Another son, Claude, followed her in death Dec. 13th. For several years she suffered from diabetes, which caused her death, but through it all, as well as her many trials, she exhibited a sweet and singular patience, and a reticence and unwillingness to burden others with her sorrows that was truly noble and remarkable. God was truly her only refuge and strength, and her last week on earth was a living triumph of faith. Often when she found herself sinking into a comatose condition she would calmly bid us good-by, with a smile on her face, repeating the hymn, "Jesus can make a dying bed as soft as downy pillows are." She would say, "Do not grieve for me, for I long to go." Many weeks she lingered with life at its lowest tide, to go at last so quickly and quietly that her husband in his faithful watching knew not just the moment her spirit fled. We can only say her life was, through grace, wonderful in its patience and resignation, and may God in his mercy help us to bear all things as she bore them, in prayerful resignation to his will.

[WE could not add anything beyond what sister Heston has said above concerning her sister in the flesh, but we do desire to say that none too much has been said of sister Phillips' patience in her affliction, nor of the steadfast faith that was given her. This faith had been hers when in good health for many years, but in her illness it was made more manifest, even as that of the ancient worthies named in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews appeared wonderfully in their trials and afflictions. No one possessed a kinder heart, and no one was more willing to help others in time of need than was she. She always attended her meetings until hindered by feebleness and many other causes. She loved the name of her Redeemer and delighted to exalt his name. We all greatly miss her presence in our meetings.—C.]

Miss Sophronia O. Heard, our beloved sister, died at her home near Covington, Newton Co., Ga., Aug. 30th, 1912, and was buried at the Heard family burial ground. Elder J. F. Moss conducted the funeral service, using for his text Psalms cxvi. 15: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Our dear sister was received in the church at Holly Springs, March 12th, 1859, and was baptized by the late Elder Joseph L. Purington, who was pastor of the church at that time, and to whom she was devotedly attached by the strongest ties of christian love and fellowship. A few years later Elder Wm. L. Beebe united with this church by letter, and our home soon became a home to him, and she looked forward to his monthly visits with great pleasure, and many were the happy hours spent around the family fireside, talking of their experiences, of the wonderful love of God to poor lost sinners and the marvelous plan of salvation by grace. I never knew a more devoted member of the church, nor one more firmly established in the truth, nor one who more clearly comprehended and understood the doctrine, nor one who loved it more. Notwithstanding her health had been failing for several years, and she knowing this was her last sickness, she never complained under her great suffering, but it was her prayer that she might have grace to patiently await the appointed hour when her heavenly Father would call her to that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, where she had so long desired to be. I have often heard her speak of hymn No. 881 (Beebe's collection), beginning, "Weary of earth, myself and sin," as expressive of her sentiments and wishes. She had been a reader and subscriber of the SIGNS for fifty years or more, and regarded it as more precious than gold. She leaves one dear sister (sister Susie), who will miss her more than any one else, for they had been inseparable since childhood, and their joys and sorrows, hopes and fears were one. May the God of all grace bless, console and comfort this dear sister in this her severe and sad bereavement. There are three brothers left to mourn the loss of our dear, precious sister, all are members at Holly Springs Church. While we in sadness mourn her departure, yet we trust that we do not mourn as those who have no hope. I feel that it can be truly said of her as the apostle said to the saints at Philippi, For her to live was Christ, and for her to die is gain.

From her devoted brother in the flesh, and, as I humbly hope, in the brotherhood of Christ.

EDWARD HEARD.

COVINGTON, Ga., Nov. 4, 1912.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 80. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1912. NO. 23.

POETRY.

PRAYER.

My great High Priest, I cry to thee,
O hear my sad complaint;
I count my failings by the score,
My faith 'tis nigh to faint.

I view my state with mournful eye,
So sick of mortal sin;
From this sad frame I fain would fly,
Thy spirit world to win.

O how I grovel here below
In sickness, pain and woe,
And how I strive to look to thee,
And seek thy love to know.

I seek in prayer thy loving help
In pity to bestow;
O draw my broken heart to thee,
And stay my tears of woe.

'Tis thou alone, who formed the heart,
That hath the power to heal;
Thou canst protect from Satan's dart,
And make thy love my shield.

O Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
I sing it o'er and o'er;
O let me hide myself in thee,
Until the storm is o'er.

How many storms in life I meet!
How frail my earthly bark!
How swift to danger running feet!
Within how sad and dark!

My great High Priest, I cry to thee
To tide me o'er the wave;
O let me to thy strong arms flee,
For thou alone can save.

FLORENCE PULTZ.

WHEELING, W. Va.

(Forwarded by Anna McKinney.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

WHEELING, W. Va., Oct. 13, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I am sending sister Wright's letter, which I received several months ago, and have read several times with unabated interest. I love to read after her gifted pen; her letters seem wonderful to me. Each time I have read this last, I have been melted to tears. I do not, however, ask you to publish it unless you deem it best. I recall that in one of your letters to me you spoke of having known her for many years. I feel sure that you will enjoy this letter with me.

Your sister,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., June 11, 1912.

DEAR SISTER PULTZ:—Your letter came very unexpectedly, and it was so good and helpful that I do not know how to thank you. I know that I felt drawn toward you in spirit and in truth, and more than that, wished, as I have done many times before, that I could write as comfortingly as you can. I have admired and enjoyed your gift in that respect ever since I first saw your name to an article in the SIGNS. In the first

place, I will tell you that I was especially glad to hear from you, and why. When I parted with the brethren at the association, many said, Let us hear from you, and I promised to do so. After arriving home, with much to do, and the excitement of the approaching holiday, I found that it would be impossible to write to so many, and concluded it would be as well to send a letter to our family paper, the first line, or lines, that I ever requested to be published. One, two, three and nearly four months passed without seeing it there, and I was grieved, because I thought I had written amiss, or had said something in my ignorance that was hurtful to the truth, and to make it worse, I had promised faithfully to let them hear from me, and they would think, She has forgotten us, and in so short a time. When you told of enjoying it, I felt fully repaid for the writing, and for the delay. I know that my two cousins whom I met were glad to see it, and that is enough. I thought of you as I neared your city, and long after leaving it. I wanted to stop for a day or two, and would have done so, but my objective point was the association, and I just had time to get there. I reached Washington Monday afternoon; was met by my daughter and cousin, and we went from there to my sister's, who lives about five miles from the meeting-house. I stayed in bed nearly all of next day, and the following one found me on the road to the place which had occupied my mind for months. No sickness after getting there. I felt revived, made new as it were, heard and saw, and was happy, so happy that I cannot explain it to you, but you must have had such seasons, and will understand. The people at Bethlehem were so good and kind, so willing to minister to one of like faith, and the preachers appeared so exalted, that I almost wanted to hide from them; at the same time, wanted to hear all that was being said. I was so hungry for the truth, was so delighted to see such fellowship, was so pleased to be with his people again, that I forgot my unworthiness, and there was no care, no sorrow, there was a triumph of faith, a renewal of hope long deferred, the realization of more than I had anticipated, and I was for the time another being. The Frying Pan meetinghouse is nearly as old as the history of Virginia; my mother was a member there for more than fifty years, and you know it was a blessed privilege to go there and greet in the Lord the many who had known and loved her. I missed the face and preaching of Elder White, for he had gone to his reward, but that little flock was being tenderly cared for by Elder Lefferts, who is a tower of strength, and who is loved by every member, and some who are not, but who clearly show that they have heard the voice of the Master. Believing that you are known of, and loved by Him, I could wish you nothing better than that you could have been present at all the meetings. The preachers must be highly esteemed by him who chose and called them to their respective places, for they have been deeply taught, and at the same time are loving and humble, willing to serve, even esteeming little ones like ourselves better than they. How much good it does us to see them so Christ-like. Is there anything like it to be found anywhere else? Are there any others who give God all the glory, or who believe it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God who sheweth mercy? Are there others who are so contrite in heart, so broken in spirit, so unable to help in saving themselves, who have so great a knowledge of

their sinfulness, who are so willing to renounce the world and its vanity, and who are so anxious to serve the Master, as those among whom we are numbered? If so, they are of us, though they may be in distant lands, and may never have heard the gospel preached. Then we ought to rejoice, and be glad that God in his mercy has included us, and put it in the hearts of the brethren to call us "sister." I wish you could have gone to Baltimore, then you could have told me the old but ever new story of how good it was to be there, of your love for those who already have mine, of the greetings and partings, and of the exaltation of our dear Lord and risen Redeemer. It is the old things in which we are most interested. The song of deliverance sung years and years ago is the sweetest; the promises written of by the prophets, and confirmed later are the surest; the wills and shalls of Jehovah are the firmest foundation, and the words, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," are among the most comforting ever uttered—a pillar of fire to us until we reach the land where there is no night, for Jesus himself will be our light. We cannot comprehend it now, but by and by we shall know as we are known. He can make our prisons palaces here, then what must it be to be there? Sometimes I think I will never know, but when I meet his people, when I read your letters, with those of others, when I hear the gospel preached, my heart answers to yours, my spirit testifies to the same things, a love goes forth to one and all, until I am able to say, "My Lord, and my God," and to believe that if he commences a good work he will finish it. I can, I must believe, but in his strength alone. When left to myself I am undone, but he returns with healing. He causes no thirst and then withholds the river of life; no hunger, refusing to give us the bread that endures; he causes no longing for a life with him, unless he has prepared the way thereunto. So if we are of all men most miserable regarding our inability to attain to these things, we ought of all others to be able to say of a surety, I know that my Redeemer liveth.

But I will conclude, lest I write that which I do not know, lest I weary you with so long a letter. We are having beautiful weather. We own our little home, which is surrounded by various kinds of flowers, an inexpensive but pretty place. We have raised four children, but the home got too small for them; first, they sought employment, later all have married, and we are as we commenced, all alone.

With much love, and a prayer that our God may shield you from all that would work to your harm, I am your sister in hope of a better life,

B. E. WRIGHT.

OTTAWA, Kans., Oct. 22, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—This morning the oft repeated desire is with me to try to write you a few lines. Your editorials have been comforting to me for years, and I have often wanted to write and tell you how encouraged I have been to hope after reading my own thoughts, my own hopes and desires from your experience. I must believe, for the husbandman must first be partaker of the fruits. In No. 18, your article on church ordinance caused great heart-searching and much deep sorrow, as I greatly feared I had not a personal experience of life in Christ, therefore could not be a true witness for him. I did not know that I had a personal faith and a personal Savior. The next day while my hands were busy

with my household duties my mind was busy on a, to me, vital subject, when the question came into my mind, Can you give up your hope in the Savior? Can you cease looking to him for everything? I said, No, no, I cannot live without him. Then I was encouraged to hope that this was what you meant by a personal Savior. As I read your explanation of the "vision of the valley of dry bones" I wept for joy, as I thought, How well I know all this. My only hope is in his power, wisdom, love and mercy. I do hope I appreciate the need of the work of the Lord, rather than any work of mine, or of any human being. I am so tempted and tried, I am so weak and helpless, I must continually call upon God for mercy to me, a sinner. It is my cry in the night and in the morning, and often when in company, in my heart I am made to say, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. Last June after reading your editorial on the text, "For that ye ought to say, If the Lord wills, we shall live, and do this, or that," I had a great desire to write and tell all that was in my heart as I read. It has not pleased the Lord to favor me with a gift to tell much of what I hope he has revealed to me, but it has been told again and again, and is still told by writers of the SIGNS. I do not think I ever receive a number that I do not feel that some of my travels have been told. If we have not been taught in the same school, and by the same great Teacher, how could they know all about me? We are miles apart, I have never seen their faces, yet they are not strangers, but kindred, and my heart goes out in love to them. I long with an intense longing to live among those who worship God in spirit and in truth and have no confidence in the flesh. I am so lonely, I feel at times to say with Job, "Have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God has touched me." Just think of it, dear brother, it has pleased the Lord to keep me continually exercised upon these things, without one person to speak to who understands me or has any sympathy for me. When I try to talk to any of them it seems but mockery. I feel that I could talk for days, and then not tell half of God's goodness to me. His promises have never failed. Again and again did he assure me that he alone would cure my little daughter, and it has now been more than two years since she had one of those dreadful spells; they stopped and never came back; we can give the praise to nothing natural. Less than a week ago our two little girls, aged nine and twelve, started for school, and being always anxious about them, I do not let them go alone, and that morning I went part of the distance with them; as I stood watching them go on their way, a neighbor came along, and as I saw them climb into the wagon with two other little girls I thought, Now they are all right, and started back home. In a short while I received a telephone message that the horses had run away, thrown them all out and to come to the schoolhouse for them. I did not know how badly they were hurt, and as I rode along every breath was a prayer to God for mercy. I found one of them very sick, from falling on her head the doctor thought. The other fell across a gas pipe and was bruised, but not a bone was broken, and as far as we know they are now about as well as usual. Those who saw the accident say they were within a foot of being caught under the overturned wagon drawn by the frightened team. When I was assured that all was well I wanted to praise and thank God for his goodness

and mercy to me, but try as I might, all I could think or say was, Lord, have mercy.

I would be glad, if you have the time, to read an editorial from you on Paul's words to the Philippians: "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." I remember once you said that Saul sinned in doing more than God commanded, when he refused to allow his army to stop to take nourishment. I am always fearful of going to extremes, of trying to do what I have not been commanded. Paul said some had a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. One thing causes me much trouble: they are continually having entertainments in our school; so far I have kept our little girls from taking part, but I feel it will soon have to be a firm refusal, and I do not know what is right to do. Of course if religion were mixed with it I would not be in doubt.

I am afraid this long letter will tire you. I am almost too nervous to write. Forgive the presumption.

Unworthily,

ANNA McKINNEY.

WALKER, Oregon, Oct. 3, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am frequently requested by acquaintances to write for the SIGNS, but I so much enjoy reading after the many precious brethren and sisters that I am fearful of burdening the paper to no profit, but if the Lord so wills I will write now some thoughts, which you will please use as you judge best for the cause. When the Pharisee, Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, said, as recorded in John iii. 2, "Rabbi, we know thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him," he plainly voiced the same natural mind that is now leading the world to heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and this is so much so that they are turned from the truth unto fables. But the Savior's answer was clear and concise: Except a man be born of the Spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven. Further he said, That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Paul said, The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. And, They that are in the flesh do mind the things of the flesh. Now without faith it is impossible to please God. So those whose hearts have been moved by the Spirit, that still small voice, are seen to turn and show the walk of a new creature in Christ. With the mind we serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin. The sin that was seasoned as with the poison of asps, and that was rolled as a sweet morsel under the tongue, is now a sore thorn in the flesh, and, when compared with the perfect righteousness of our divine Creator, it is sufficient to exclude all boasting from us, and to prevent us from being exalted above measure. God's way with all his children is as it was with Paul, not to remove the thorn, but to supply sufficient grace for each day's needs. With this new life comes new desires and new affections. We now love him, because he first loved us. We are no longer kept in subjection through fear of the old schoolmaster, the law, but the love of Christ constraineth us, yet this old man of sin is not altogether broken down with his various lusts and varied works, such as boasting, envying, strife, jealousy, emulations, but there is a growth in grace and in knowledge of the truth. Much to the

surprise of younger brethren, silver-haired fathers and mothers in Israel are heard to mourn more and more for sin as they come to realize day by day the depravity of the flesh and the holiness of God. He has this way of weaning his children from the vain and trifling things of time and of the fleshly mind. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." And, "If ye are without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." He says, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways." We have such a full pattern of this weaning in type that I will mention it to illustrate the reality. When the child of promise, born of the freewoman, Sarah, by Abraham, was weaned, there was a feast made, and Sarah saw the child of the bondwoman standing and mocking. He no doubt said in his heart in substance, I thank God that I am not as other men, that I have paid all my vows, and that I am not even as this poor, helpless, weeping babe, who in its helplessness can only cry for help. Have you not, dear child of God, been gradually weaned from the frivolous things of this world by the things that you have suffered, as one aircastle after another has vanished, crushing down your hope built upon works of charity, &c.? Has not your mind thus been gradually loosed from the world's treasures of vanity? And has it not been planted more and more within the veil, where Jesus, the forerunner, hath for us entered? And while thus mourning over your sin have you not been mocked, and derided, and told how easy it is to do good works, such as are required by those who have been born of some of the threescore queens and fourscore concubines and virgins without number, who have not been willing to wait upon the Lord? How anxious seems the bondwoman and her brood of profligates to labor before the Lord's appointed time to build the house. But, poor tempest-tossed child, have you not great reason to glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed? Paul suffered forty stripes save one, five times. Three times he was beaten with rods. Once he was stoned. He suffered shipwreck, and a night and a day he was in the deep; he was often in perils of robbers, and in perils among his own countrymen, and from the heathen. He was in perils in the city and in the wilderness and in the sea. He was in peril among false brethren, in hunger and thirst. He was often in fastings and cold and nakedness, and, beside that which was without, he had upon him daily the care of all the churches, and thus he lost all confidence in the flesh, and came to say, The life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. It is said of Christ himself, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him." Then if we cannot find comfort in the words of the boastful pharisee, the mocking child of bondage, "let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which

doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Also let us remember that "in all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them: and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." When we have been weighed in the balance and found wanting, when we have exhausted every self-righteous plea and find our neck bowed in shame beneath the descending sword of divine justice, then we will withdraw our plea of justice, and enter the plea, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Jesus traveled through every temptation, in poverty and fasting, over every thorny desert and through every dark valley, even to the cold, dark tomb, and he has taught his people by word and by example to pray, not for justice, but for mercy, and they come to know that it is not because they are better than others, but must cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." But in all they must say, Not as I will, but as thou wilt, as did the Master in the agonies of Gethsemane. After he had conquered the very last enemy, he left on record the sweet promise, Because I live, ye shall live also; then, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" If the road be rough and steep, let us still press on toward the mark for the prize of our high calling in Christ, steadfastly hoping that when this world and its vanities have been swallowed up in victory, and he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Certainly there could be no better hope given. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

Dear editors, do not crowd out better matter with this; it is but a very weak effort to praise and glorify the holy name of Jesus.

G. O. WALKER.

THE TRUE CHURCH.

I DENY the allegation of Arminians, that the Scriptures were addressed to the entire human family. The Scriptures are addressed to the living, and not to the dead. Jesus Christ and the inspired writers would not have written a spiritual message to the sinful dead. Jesus Christ's kingdom is a spiritual kingdom, and not an earthly kingdom. He and his apostles wrote to those who had been born into this spiritual kingdom. They did not write to the world, but to those who had been quickened (made alive) into spiritual life, regenerated and born of the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of Christ having been formed in them the hope of glory, the hope of heaven and eternal life. "And you hath he quickened, [made alive] who were dead in trespasses and sins."—Eph. ii. 1. No dead man can bring himself to life, the church, the Bible, the preacher, the gospel, neither can the good works nor prayers of the dead sinner put spiritual life in him. If so, his eternal life would be of debt and not of grace. Spiritual life must come from a supernatural power. Action follows life, dead men can neither accept nor reject Christ nor the gospel. Human sensibilities may be aroused in the dead sinner, but this sensibility is human and not divine. It must be accompanied by the Holy Spirit to quicken dead sinners into spiritual life. The popular religious world claims that the

good works of the sinner are the cause of God bestowing his special mercies and graces upon them. This is a false doctrine, or the New Testament has been wrongly translated. The do and live system is false, or the live and do system is false. As action follows life, I am constrained as an honest man to believe that only the living can accept Christ and the gospel. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14. Who is the natural man? The natural man is the man who has not been quickened into spiritual life, the man who has not been regenerated and born of the Spirit of Christ, the man who has natural eyes, ears and heart, but cannot see, hear nor understand the things pertaining to Christ's spiritual kingdom (the church of Jesus Christ). The Old School or Primitive Baptists are the only people in the universe of God who believe and preach this doctrine; they are therefore the church of Jesus Christ "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one."—John x. 28-30. No other denomination of christians, or so-called christians, believe and preach this doctrine, except the old order of Baptists. They do not have to buy eternal life with good works, God gives it to them, and no set of powers in earth, hell or heaven can take it from them. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."—John vi. 37. If the Father gave the entire human family to his Son for a bride (the church), then all will be saved, for they shall all come to him (no conditions in it) and he will in no wise cast them out. But the Arminian says the people are free agents, and can accept or reject the terms of salvation upon their own volition or will power, and be saved if they will. I emphatically deny the allegation that there are any conditions to be performed by the dead sinner in order to obtain eternal life, but there are many duties and commandments to be performed after eternal life has been given. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." I defy the Arminian world and all its preachers to point out the chapter and verse in the Bible where the dead sinner is required to perform any conditions in order to obtain eternal life. "I give unto them eternal life;" they do not have to buy eternal life by performing conditions, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."—Eph. ii. 8, 9. No denomination believes or preaches this doctrine except the Old School or Predestinarian Baptists. "According as he hath [past tense] chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."—Eph. i. 4, 5. According as he (God) hath (past tense) chosen us (saints) in him (Christ) before the foundation of the world. Not when they were regenerated and born again, not when they joined the church, not when they were baptized, but when were they chosen? Before the foundation of the world. This was done in God's eternal purpose and foreknowledge before the world began, and their names were

all written in the Lamb's book of life. "But rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven."—Luke x. 20. "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."—Rev. xiii. 7, 8. This Lamb was Jesus Christ. In God's eternal purpose and foreknowledge Jesus Christ stood a Lamb slain for all that the Father gave him for his bride, and their names were all written in Christ before the foundation of the world, and no power in earth, hell or heaven can erase one of their names without destroying the immutability of Jehovah. No religious denomination believes and preaches this doctrine except the old order of Baptists, they are, therefore, the church of Jesus Christ. There are many other characteristics of the Old Baptists in the New Testament, but I cannot refer to them all. I will only quote a few of them: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."—Luke xii. 32. Not the multitude, but a little flock. This suits the Old Baptists, "Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it."—Matt. vii. 14. This is characteristic of the Old Baptists—only a little flock compared with the multitude. "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."—John xv. 18, 19. This suits the Old Baptists. No denomination is hated by the religious world like the Old Baptists and the doctrine they advocate. Please remember that they were chosen out of the world by Jesus Christ. They did not choose Jesus Christ, but he chose them and gave them eternal life. No conditions mentioned on the part of the dead sinner. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son."—Rom. viii. 29. No other denomination teaches this doctrine except the Old Baptists. If I were as sure of heaven and eternal life as I am that the Old School or Predestinarian Baptists are the church of Jesus Christ, I would be a happy old man.

Yours in the faith of God's elect,

S. M. CARLTON.

THORNTON, Texas.

RATCLIFF, Ky., July 14, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—For some cause I am impressed to write a few thoughts on the resurrection and submit to you for your consideration. It is clear to my mind according to the testimony of Christ and the apostles, that the resurrection of the saints unto eternal glory was in the future, and their mortal body is the body that is changed. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."—John iii. 2. In the world the saints are plagued with sin and sorrows, trials, pains, sickness, and death terminates their earthly existence. In nature we look at them and cannot see that such are the sons of God; looking ever so intently on them with our natural eyes we cannot see that they are heirs of God, kings and priests to reign with Christ in eternal glory. The true believers in Jesus are despised and hated by

the world, they are accounted the off-scouring of all things unto this day, yet God hath chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him. In the removal from our midst of our dear kindred in Christ we have often witnessed the truth of the word: We do all fade as the leaf. Our eyes have looked upon the mortal tabernacle and I have said in my heart again and again, It doth not yet appear what we shall be. They have been carried to glory, their souls are with Christ before the throne, their bodies await the resurrection at the last day. What a wonderful transformation; it will be a better resurrection. Our dear heavenly Father shall raise again in the image of his glorious Son all the dear children, no more mortal, no more a mortal body, no more weakness, no more dishonor, no more corruption. "We shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible."—1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. Yes, my dear kindred, it is to me very infidelity to be quibbling, questioning, and what men in the vanity of their earthly minds conceive as the incredible, to be denying that the mortal bodies of the children of God shall rise again at the last day; they shall be raised spiritual, immortal, incorruptible, in power, glory and honor, changed, that they may be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, according to the power whereby he is able to subdue even all things unto himself. (Phil. iii. 21.) The resurrection of them that are Christ's (1 Cor. xv. 23,) is the crowning act, the actual accomplishment, the consummation of the regeneration of the chosen in Christ Jesus, the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. To see what we shall be, we need keener sight than the eye of the vulture, we have need of the eyes with which Abraham looked through ages to come to see Christ's day and to rejoice therein. With eyes of faith the believer in Christ is favored, as Moses was, to see him who is invisible; we look with eyes of faith upon the things that are unseen and eternal. (2 Cor. iv. 18.) When the eyes of our spiritual understanding are enlightened we have such sight to see beyond all that mortal eye can see, even though it takes to its aid all the modern improvements of the world. Ah, dear child of God, blessed are your eyes that see, that penetrate beyond the scenes of time, that pierce the mist and shadows of mortality. We see Jesus, who was made a little lower that the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor. When our blessed Redeemer was received up into glory he left not his body in the tomb, and when he ascended and passed into heaven by his own blood he did not divest himself of his manhood. Our beloved Intercessor and Mediator, who now within the vail appears in the presence of God for us, is David's Lord and also David's son. In the person of Jesus our manhood is in heaven, in eternal glory, and glorified in him, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. O blessed afterward, there is hope. Did the body of Jesus rest in hope? Ah, yes. Then my flesh shall also rest in hope, the bodies of all the elect, of all the church, of all that are Christ's, shall be raised from the dead, harvested to glory. Unbelievers may deny all that is said in the Scriptures, but let them traverse every inch of the earth, let them drain the great Mediterranean Sea, they will not find the body of Jesus, it is not there; the Son of God cast not his manhood away; it per-

ished not as he ascended far above all heavens that he might fill all things; our precious Jesus, who suffered, bled and died, and thus descended, is the same also that ascended. (Eph. iv. 10.) Then will the glorious body of the Son of God, his manhood, be the only manhood in heaven? will he only, the word made flesh, who verily (not in pretense) took on him the seed of Abraham, be formed in eternal glory with his resurrected glorious body? O no, faith in our heart says, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." It is Christ the firstfruits, afterward they that are Christ's, at his coming. When life's journey is ended, then the better country, that is, the heavenly, shall be our home; no sickness, pain or death shall ever invade the realms of bliss; it is the home of the glorified saints; we shall see him as he is, the King in his beauty, and be like him. The psalmist long ago exclaimed, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness," and then in the palace of God we shall dwell forever and ever. By faith we receive the revelation of God, and believe that in the eternal purpose of God our salvation was complete, and our ultimate glorification was perfect. Again, by faith we look to the crucifixion of the Son of God, to his descending in suffering unto death, and his rising again from the dead, and by faith as we look to Jesus we say, All is perfect in Christ, he is our salvation, and by faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, we embrace and rejoice in the precious word of Jesus, who says, I am the resurrection and the life. Christ Jesus, our glorious head, died, yet he saw no corruption, but his body at the appointed time of the Father, on the third day, rose again, he attained unto the resurrection, the firstfruits of them that slept; it doth not yet appear what we shall be. Our beloved brother Paul said he was not already perfect, that he had not yet attained unto the resurrection of the dead, but it was his hope and blissful anticipation. (Phil. iii. 9–14.) It doth not yet appear that mortality is swallowed up of life, this mortal hath not yet put on immortality, but God hath wrought us for the self-same thing, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. We have not yet attained unto immortality and incorruption, for our body, which is Christ's, which he bought with a price, is now mortal, corruptible, but this mortal must put on immortality, this corruptible must put on incorruption, &c. O blissful hope of the resurrection, he hath ransomed us from death and the power of the grave, and God hath given to us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts (2 Cor. v. 5), we are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope, but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Now our God hath given us the earnest, the Spirit foretaste by faith that mortality shall be swallowed up of life, for the earnest of the Spirit in our heart is the assurance that this mortal body shall put on immortality. "If the Spirit of him that raised Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."—Rom. viii. 11. "Shall also," therefore we shall attain unto the resurrection of the dead (Phil. iii. 12), to this we hope to come. (Acts xxvi. 7.) Our mortal bodies shall be quickened by his Spirit that dwelleth in us; they shall put on immortality and incorruption, mor-

tality shall be swallowed up of life. Having therefore the earnest of the Spirit in our heart we are by grace able to sing as we press toward the mark of the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

Humbly submitted by yours in affliction,

JOHN E. THORNBURY.

WEST ORANGE, N. J., Nov. 2, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have long wanted to write to you, but have felt my inability and unworthiness to such a degree that I have put it off, hoping to feel better. I wish to thank you for the kind, consoling letter you wrote me in my great grief and sorrow at the death of my dear son, but I am such a poor, imperfect creature, always doing the things that I should not, and leaving undone the thing that I ought to do. I am a mystery to myself, for if I know my own heart, I feel a desire to be found walking in the strait and narrow path, but for the most part my harp is hung upon the willows, and how can I sing the Lord's song in a strange land? I have been thinking much of the valley of dry bones. It is said that they were very dry and that they were the whole house of Israel. This was true spiritually, but there is nothing too hard for the Lord; he will cause his children to pass through the fire and to come forth without the smell of fire upon their garments, and this he does to purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. I think of Bunyan's pilgrim, when in the valley of the shadow of death, fighting with Apollyon, and of his whispering, and of the fiery darts, and it all seems to be my case. The enemy tells me that these glorious things are not mine, that I am taking the children's bread. How I long for some ray of comfort. Am I wholly deceived? I know that I am black as the tents of Kedar. I think that the Lord of late has shown me more of the hidden evils of my heart. Hymn 1007 expresses my sad case. My doubts and fears, which are many, arise. Am I one of his true followers? Have I built my house on the sand? Marks of grace I cannot show. I mourn and cry, and feel to say with one of old, Forsake me not now that I am old and grey-headed. Remember not against me the sins of my youth. It has been now more than fifty years since I began creeping after this people who worship God in the spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh. I think the time will soon come when it will be said, Ye saints, ascend the skies. Will I be among them? Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but through his great mercy he saves whom he will, and makes them white and calls them fair. Happy art thou, O people saved by the Lord. I have thought in times past for short seasons that I knew and enjoyed these precious things. Then I had given me the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Then my heart overflowed with love and thankfulness, and the world was put under my feet; I sincerely hoped that as I grew older I should know more and serve him better, but now I often feel to say with the poet,

> "So far from God I seem to lie,
> Which makes me often weep and cry."

There was a short time last spring when the Savior seemed near, when he communed and talked with me as I lay down at night and when I arose in the morning.

Precious moments! Happy seasons! If such the sweetness of the streams, what must the fountain be? These little sips by the way keep us longing and hoping for what the earth cannot give and cannot take away. I have been thinking how to fight the good fight of faith and lay hold on eternal life. Will you please write upon it? I know that the inspired apostles admonished the saints of nothing which they were unable to do. Also write about how they quench the Spirit. [We will try to comply with this request after a while.—C.] I am but a poor, ignorant worm of the dust. I am not able to get to hear preaching, and live so far from any of our faith and order, and my eyesight is getting so bad, that I cannot read, and can only write this imperfect letter with black ink upon white paper.

I would like to say through the SIGNS that if any Old School Baptist ministers find it convenient in their travels to call on me it will be highly appreciated. The same would be true if any others who love the truth would call upon me. I am becoming quite deaf, and feel that my earthly house is fast being taken down, but I cannot give up the little hope which has been as an anchor of my soul, though ofttimes I have been fearful and trembling.

Unworthily your sister in hope,
LUCINDA B. BREWSTER.

PLYMOUTH, Ill.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I will now try to pen you a few lines and send in my subscription, which is due the 15th of December. I have a good letter from our dear sister McCoy, of Dighton, Kansas, and would like to see it in the dear SIGNS. It is all the preaching she gets. She has been a subscriber a long time, and is satisfied with the doctrine it contends for. She is ever faithful to let us hear from her from time to time, and if all who move away from our church would do so we would have no trouble in telling who they are, where they live and how they are in faith. She has written one to the dear old church and one to us, and we will send them both to you for publication, believing that others will be comforted and edified in reading them. Our members are scattered in many of the States, and as some do not write to us we do not know whether they are living or dead; but dear sister McCoy does not forget her dear old home church, where she joined and was baptized, and where she first saw the light as a newborn babe in Christ, yet remained outside the Shepherd's tent many long years before entering in; but she found a joy in obedience that she did not find outside, and that nothing else can give. Being buried with Christ in baptism she arose to walk in newness of life and has been satisfied, although she has had many ups and downs, much sickness and sorrow, but the afflictions of this life, which are but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

I must tell you that at the association here the second Sunday in September, we had a good meeting; the ministers all came laden with good news from a far country. The weather was very warm and dusty, but there was a good attendance, all seemed to enjoy themselves, and those who entertained did everything in their power to make us comfortable, and we will not soon forget them. Many faces we saw there that we had hoped to see, but we know according to the course of nature that we will not all meet again on this earth. We heard that our dearly beloved brother Varnes, of Farmington, Ill., a

man of God, we believe, had a sick spell before he reached home from the association, which adds to his already weakened condition. He has suffered much in the last few years, but his suffering will soon outride the storms of this life, and he will be landed safely on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance, where we will all meet and be complete and ever together dwell.

I will have to close, as I am very nervous and cannot write more. May the Lord enable you to stand upon the solid rock, is the prayer of your unworthy sister, if one at all,

(MRS.) S. G. FRAZEE.

DIGHTON, Kans., June 12, 1912.

MY DEAR SISTER:—I have been wanting to write and tell you and the church how much good the last letter I received from the dear old home church did me, but I have not words to express the joy and comfort I had when I read it. I was surprised when I saw brother Frazee's name in the dear SIGNS, and commenced to read what he had to say first of all, as I always do when I see any brother or sister from home has written, not thinking that I would be named in the letter, but as I read, tears of joy ran down my cheeks; my mind went back to the day I was baptized and the loving welcome I received. Elder Newton Frazee was the first to meet me as I came out of the water, and the handshake he gave me, and that of my dear old mother, her face wet with tears of joy, I never can forget, and many other brethren and sisters, but there are few of them left that I know of who met with us in our good meetings in those days. I often wonder and would like to know how many of the old members who were there when I joined, and how many others, belong now, and who they are. I expected to write you a letter for the January meeting, but was taken sick and have not been able to leave my room until the last three weeks, but am feeling pretty well at this time. I wish I could be at your next meeting, but am not able. I wonder if the good Lord will ever send Elder L. E. Frazee or any one of his servants this way to preach to the people while I live. I would be so glad to hear the gospel preached, if it is the Lord's will. I wanted so much to go to the association last year. There is a sister Forbes there; she wrote me to come to her house and attend the association, and I wanted to go so much. I thought perhaps Elder Frazee and others from my old home would be there, and then I was hungry for the kind of preaching we do not hear in our town. She wrote me that they have a church of fifty members all in peace and harmony, and a comfortable church building free from debt. Their pastor's name is Brown, I think. I love to hear of my old friends or their children going home to their friends at old Providence. I hope to hear of others and some I have known a long time. May love and peace abide with you.

Your sister, I hope,

NANCY A. McCOY.

DIGHTON, Kans., June 12, 1912.

MR. AND MRS. S. G. FRAZEE:—I would have written to you long ago, but have been sick much of the time during the last two years. I cannot tell you anything about what I have suffered. If my children were not so good and kind to me I do not know what I would do, but best of all, when it seems I cannot live longer and every one gives me up the good Lord brightens my hope and takes away the fear of death and dread of the

grave, and I do hope he will be with me when my last hour shall come, as he has in the past. O, if I could love him more and serve him better for his goodness and mercy to me. I would like to see you and have a good long talk with you. Was it one of your brother John's daughters who joined our church? Write and tell me how you are getting along, and how Aunt Alzada Groves is, and where she lives. I often think of her. Write soon and give me all the news. I wish you both would write for the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES; I so much enjoy your good letters and would like for all the home folks to write more for the SIGNS. I would be so glad to have Elder L. E. Frazee or some of the good Old Baptists ministers come out here and preach to the people. I believe there are several who need to hear the truth and would enjoy it, but I must try to be content until the Lord's own time, then his people will hear the joyful sound without any of my worry, but I would like to see some dear ones making a profession claiming Christ as their Savior, the only way of salvation through his love, mercy and grace, free grace, for that is the only way, before I go home. I hope you both have good health for people of your age. Write soon; kindest regards to all inquiring friends.

Your sister, I hope, though poor and weak, NANCY A. McCOY.

RUSSELLVILLE, Ky., Oct. 19, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Allow me the privilege of joining in your little band of professed followers of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in ascribing praise to him for what he has done for us in the covenant of redemption, for he hath saved his people and called them, not according to their works, but according to his own grace and purpose, which he purposed in Christ before the world began. All the blessings and favors that God's children are recipients of were treasured up in Christ before the world began by the Father, and they are all in harmony with God's word, for we learn that there was a covenant, or agreement, entered into between the Father, Son and ever-blessed Spirit before time, to save his people, and in this covenant, or agreement, these people were given to Christ by the Father, and Christ's mission into these low grounds of sin and sorrow was to put away their sins by the shedding of his precious blood on the tree of the cross. Did he do it? He said he did, and I for one believe it. I have never doubted his word since I professed a hope in him; and this is not all he said about it; then, after he had shed his blood for them he cried out and said, "It is finished," and I believe that also, and this is not all I believe about it. I do not believe there has ever been a sinner saved since then, and never will be so long as time shall last. I understand from the reading of God's word that Christ went back to the Father after he had suffered for his people, and there he is to-day interceding for them according to the will of the Father. Jesus when he left this world told his disciples that it was needful for him to go away, for, said he, if I go not away the Comforter will not come, but if I go I will pray the Father, and he will send you the Comforter, and he will abide with you forever. How encouraging all this is to the little doubting child of God, to know that Jesus will always be with him in this world. Yes, he has promised to be with them always. Jesus is our all and in all, and without him we can do nothing, and are less than nothing and vanity. Man deviseth his way, but

the Lord directeth his steps. All power in heaven and earth is given into Jesus' hands, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him, and this is eternal life, that they believe on him whom the Father hath sent. "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Yes, Jesus was given this power of his Father, the absolute Sovereign, to lay down his life for his people, and he was given power from the same source to take his life again, and reign and rule for them according to the will of the Father in ceaseless eternity. His children are kept by this same power through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, bought with a price, even the precious blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; therefore glorify God in your body and spirit, which are the Lord's. Yes, all the power, glory and honor belong to God for the salvation of his people; he hath saved us and called us, not according to our own works, but according to his grace and mercy given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. In him we live, move and have our being, and without him we can do nothing. We are his by creation, his by adoption; whenever we lose sight of Christ we begin to sink, as did Peter when his Lord bade him come to him walking on the water.

Write on, dear brethren and sisters, in defense of God's truth for the comfort and consolation of his dear people; shun not to declare the whole counsel of God; hew to the line, let the chips fall where they may; let God be true and every man a liar, so says the word, but endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Pardon me, dear editors, for writing so much. I fully indorse the doctrine set forth in the SIGNS, and have often been comforted in reading it.

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

J. B. JONES.

HAMPTON, Iowa, July 20, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Inclosed I will send you a letter I received from our afflicted brother, Elder J. W. McClanahan; it was so comforting to me I felt that it would be edifying to the dear readers of our family paper, the SIGNS. I received the number of July 15th, also the views of brother Chick; they were very comforting to me. My wife is confined to her bed with a severe attack of rheumatism, but is some better at this writing. I wrote Elder McClanahan I would send his letter for publication. Love to all the household of faith.

E. A. NORTON.

LANHAM, W. Va., July 16, 1912.

ELDER E. A. NORTON—DEAR BROTHER:—I will try to write you a few lines to let you know that I am still in the land of the living, hoping you will pardon me for delaying so long in answering your request. Getting my right eye knocked out just before your letter came to hand, and suffering for months afterwards, has in part kept me from writing to you and many others. This fairest among women is the bride, the Lamb's wife, for she is the beauty of the whole earth, she is living by hope; she is not in possession of a perfect knowledge as others are who are not so fair. This fairest woman is the church of Jesus Christ, her going forth is in the power and strength of her Husband, Prophet,

Priest and King, she being directed by the unerring Spirit of her Husband to watch well the ancient landmarks by the footprints of the flock, which are traceable through the law dispensation and prophetic age to the coming of Christ and the gospel dispensation, Solomon being a figure of Christ, and his voice to this fairest woman is the same voice of Christ to the church. There is no people so mysteriously led about and instructed in truth and in the way of holiness as is the Lord's portion; the Jacobs are all found in the waste howling wilderness of sin and folly. The kids, to my mind, are those who love the truth, and stand close by the church, and when the enemy makes an attack on her they are ready to help fight her battles; they drop back on the east side of Jordan, as there they have more room, but for some cause best known to the God of heaven cannot get the consent of their minds to go home to their friends and tell them what the Lord has done for them. The shepherds' tents are the churches in all parts of this earth of the same faith and order, and these kids are fed by the undershepherds and by the church, this fairest woman, experimentally, for they do know the joyful sound and the waymarks or footprints of the flock, yet they cannot have the privileges of the church which those have who have gone home to their friends; they seem to like plenty of room, would rather not be subject to church discipline, yet in the Spirit they are one with the household of faith, and feast on spiritual food.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

MAY 14, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I want to write a few lines, if the Lord will guide me, for I know that without him I can do nothing. The subject that has been on my mind for some time will be found in John vi. 32, 33, which reads as follows: "Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." Dear brethren and sisters, do we believe that he was the true bread, or, in other words, the Son of the true and living God? If so, we are children of God, and joint-heirs with the Son of God. What a wonder it is that poor worms of the dust have such a great blessing bestowed upon them that they should be called the sons of God. The great question with me is, Am I one of the favored ones? When I see myself, that is, this vile nature of mine, it often makes me shudder at the thought of being cold; a child of God, Paul said, and I say, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death? I thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, dear brethren, he is the only one who has all power both in heaven and earth, for none can stay his hand, and there is none other name given among men whereby we must be saved. "But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not." How many to this day believe not this sixth chapter of John. It is a sermon in itself. Like all other chapters in the Bible, it proves to my mind the doctrine of election and God's unlimited power. Some of the brethren have written on predestination, and I love to read their excellent letters; I certainly love the doctrine. I often

think what a blessing it is we have the privilege of reading such good letters and editorials, for we are a scattered people. The Bible says God's people are scattered, that he has a people in every kindred, tongue and nation, and he saith unto them, It is I, be not afraid. No, there is no reason to be afraid; where our dear Savior is there is no need of fear.

Dear brethren editors, may God's richest blessings be with you and enable you to still conduct our good paper.

Your brother in a precious hope,

THOMAS ALDEN.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., Sept. 18, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—If the dear Lord will allow one so vile as I know myself to be to thus address you. My dear companion has gone from home to her sister's home, to remain for the night with the children, as her sister had an operation performed. She is a believer and a true Old School Baptist. I have united with the church, but cannot say the same for myself as for her. I am a mystery to myself, but I do believe the Old School Baptists are the church, the true children of the living God, whether I am really one of that flock or not. God alone is my judge. If I could forget all my past life, and did not think about sin, then I would believe that I am one of the Lord's children. My hope seems small, and I sometimes think I have no hope at all, but I do look to Jesus as the author and finisher of all the work.

We hold meetings once in every month at Bellingham, on the second Sunday, and Saturday before, but our last meeting we held at dear old brother Wood's place, on Samish Lake. We had a glorious meeting, and chose Elder Shields as our pastor. He is a dear good old brother from Virginia. As the distance was great, there were but six members present. O may the Lord of lords and God of gods call his people out of darkness into his marvelous light. Jesus said, Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst. In his presence there is blessing indeed. Being present at the meeting, I felt to be with the children of God. How glorious and how great to dwell in Mt. Zion.

Now, dear brethren, may the God of heaven and earth keep you and bless you with the faith that was once delivered unto the saints. Please remember me at the throne of grace.

Unworthily yours,

W. D. WITHERS.

CARBON, Texas, Jan. 26, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I want to renew for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as I am behind with my subscription. I do not want it stopped, as it is all the preaching I get. I am in my eightieth year, am feeble, and cannot get to the meetings, as there are none very near me. I thought when I was young that when I got old I would be better, but I seem to be more corrupt every day. I want to take the SIGNS as long as I can read. The doctrine it sets forth is what I believe, and I have been comforted in reading the experiences and travel of the saints. It seems there are others who travel the same rugged road that I have to travel. I know I have but a short time here in this sinful world, but have hope of a better life. It seems very small, but I would not let it go for all the world. I cannot see what I have been kept here thus long for, I am of no profit to any one. I hope you may live long to strengthen the weak and comfort the poor and lonely ones.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

J. J. HOUSE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1912.

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EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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1 PETER III. 21.

"THE like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

We have in these words a clear statement of the meaning and design of baptism. It is stated to be a figure of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and its design is, not to purify either the body from outward defilement or the conscience from sin, but that a good conscience may thus give answer outwardly to the work of God wrought in the heart. A good conscience is one which has been cleansed through faith by the application of the blood of Christ, which alone can purify from all sin. We have in this text first, a refutation and condemnation of the perversion which nearly all professing christendom has made of the ordinance of baptism, viz., that it is essential to salvation, in the sense that by baptism are souls regenerated and made fit to be heirs of glory. When vital godliness dies out of any people there straightway comes in formality and ritualism of various sorts, and salvation comes to be no longer ascribed to the death and resurrection of Christ for justification, and the new birth of the Spirit is ignored, and salvation and regeneration are held forth as the result of baptism or of other forms and ceremonies. This is true of Romanists, Episcopalians, Campbellites, and is also largely true of Presbyterians and Methodists. Campbellites teach that baptism is essential to final salvation, as an act of obedience, and the others named teach that baptism is essential to salvation, not merely as an act of obedience to God, but because in baptism the soul is regenerated, without which regeneration no soul can live eternally with God. It was the declaration of a Romanist preacher centuries ago that the wailing cry of the souls of unbaptized infants is heard throughout the regions of darkness forever. Such souls it is asserted are not in hell, neither can they enter heaven and dwell in the presence of God, therefore they roam, without rest or peace, forever in the regions of darkness. All who believe in infant baptism feel that they must have this ordinance attended to before their children die, else the children will lack something in that other world to which had they been baptized they would have attained. One many years ago said to us that she had lost one child by death which had not been baptized, and she then made a vow that no other child of hers should die without baptism. In reply to the question, "Why, do you think that your child was lost?" she said, "No, but it lacked something in that world which baptism would have secured to it." We could but say to her, "If your child is suffering through your neglect, instead of your suffering for it, where is the justice?"

Because Baptists have always insisted upon baptism as it is taught in the word of God, and have condemned sprinkling or pouring as superstitions of men, and because they have never received such

sprinklings and pourings as baptism when members of other professed bodies of christians have come to them, it has been for centuries charged against them by haters of truth, and believed by foolish and ignorant men, that they believe that baptism is essential to salvation. It has not mattered that they believe and have always taught the contrary, viz., that salvation is essential to baptism. Evil-minded men continue to urge this charge against them, and foolish men believe it. If indeed we do believe that baptism must be received in order to the justification of the soul and to an entrance into the world of glory, unless Baptists do not possess ordinary human sympathy with their fellow-men we certainly should be found urging with all solemnity and persistence upon all men the necessity of being baptized, and did we believe this there would never be any question asked of any one who came to us asking baptism; we should only be too much filled with rejoicing that another had come asking for that which would save the soul. It is not we, as Old School Baptists, who believe and teach that one must be baptized if he would be saved, but those who practice sprinkling of infants, and Campbellites, who practice immersion. Old School Baptists could not believe and teach salvation by ordinances of any kind, because they do believe and teach with all their hearts that salvation is alone through the atonement upon Calvary. They believe that it is the work of Christ for us that saves, and in which we are to trust, and not our work. Baptism by immersion and emersion (into and from) the watery grave is essential to walking obediently in the commandments of the Lord, just as to follow all other commandments which he has given his people is essential to obedience. But obedience to the commandments of the Lord does not justify the sinner, nor secure his abode in heaven; this is secured to him alone by the finished obedience of the blessed Lord. There is no more salvation in baptism than there is in any other act of obedience which we may gladly render in token of our love to him who loved us and died for us. We have not written here of all this with any expectation of silencing the charges of ignorant men to which we have referred, but that our readers who it may be have been disturbed by these false assertions, may have somewhat to reply when they hear such things said.

In the text the apostle uses the expression, "The like figure whereunto, even baptism." Baptism here is asserted by the apostle to be just such a figure of salvation as was the water of the flood by which he declares that Noah and his family were saved. The waters of the flood then were a figure of salvation; baptism is also a figure of salvation. Let us note that the apostle here did not say that Noah was saved from the water of the flood, but by the water. The ark, into which he was shut, saved him and all with him from destruction by the flood, but here the assertion is that there was a salvation by the water itself. What was that salvation? It appears to us that it could have been but one thing, viz., that by the flood Noah and his family were separated forever from the wicked antediluvian world, or saved from it. The same flood that saved Noah from the former wicked world, at which he vexed himself and against which he preached while preparing the ark, was the destruction of the world of wicked men. Noah was by the flood forever separated from all his former life, so also were the people said to be "baptized

unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea," when they passed over dry shod through the water standing as walls of brass on either side and under the cloud that hovered over them. True, the word "baptism" always signifies dipping or immersion and emersion, but here the reference of the apostle is not so much to the form of baptism as to the separating work wrought at the Red Sea, by which all Israel was forever separated from Egypt and their former life there, and were shut up to the leadership of Moses. "Separated from Egypt, and separated to Moses." So Noah was by the water of the flood separated from the old world and separated to the new world that appeared after the flood. All this was a figure of that salvation which God works for his people through the finished work of Christ by his death and resurrection. They are in like manner (not figure, but in reality) separated to the Lord and from their former death in sin and ungodliness. Now baptism is here declared to be just such a figure of this salvation in Christ as was the water of the flood. As the antediluvian world became dead to Noah by the flood, and he to it, so through Christ believers have become dead to their former life, and hope, and bondage, and have been raised up to newness of life, and now live in a new world, with new hopes and desires and blessings, and by the water of baptism they declare this work to have been wrought in them. As Noah was saved by the work of God wrought in him, separating him from the ungodly world in spirit and feeling before the flood came, so are believers separated from their former life and love by the work of the Spirit in their hearts before they receive baptism. Indeed, had not this work been wrought in the heart of Noah before the time of the flood, salvation by the water of the flood could not have been his. The water of the flood would not have wrought this righteous principle in him, and he would have been after the flood living the life of wickedness that all the world had been doing before. So also if righteousness has not been wrought in the heart of men before baptism there has been no real separation from others, and the water of baptism is to them but a solemn mockery.

Let us remember that, after all, the apostle declares that there is a salvation in the figure baptism, but this salvation is not that salvation which puts away sin, the filth of the flesh. The apostle declares that this salvation is now, but the putting away of sin is not now; that was accomplished when Jesus died and rose again; he was put to death for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification. Redemption, in the real sense of the word, was finished when Jesus had finished the work which God gave him to do, and was raised again from the dead. So the apostle here connects baptism with the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul sets forth the same great truth which is here declared by Peter, in Romans vi. 3, 4: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Here the meaning of the apostle evidently is that by real heartfelt experience of death to sin, and life to holiness and God, we have been baptized into him, and into

his death, and therefore we are in water baptism buried with him, and rise therefrom to walk in newness of life. So Peter in the text connects our water baptism with the resurrection of Christ. The resurrection of Christ is his work for us by which we are saved, while we testify to this work as having been wrought in us by being baptized, and this baptism is the answer of a good conscience toward God; it is our confession of what the Lord has done for us in the resurrection of Christ. Baptism, then, is a form presenting a reality; it is a form, but not an unmeaning form. The ordinances of the house of God appointed in his word are all of them filled with meaning. In them we do not find redemption, or justification, or eternal life, but they all testify of these things. So the supper tells of Jesus' body and blood, upon which we live and by which we are cleansed from sin. Baptism also sets forth three special things, according to the testimony of the word. In the first place, it sets forth our faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ for our justification and redemption. By our baptism we declare that our hope is in his work for us, finally finished when he died, and witnessed to us by his resurrection from the dead. In the second place, in baptism we declare that it is our hope that we also have become experimentally dead to sin by the body of Christ and alive unto holiness. Dying we are buried, and living again we rise to walk in this newness of life; and, in the third place, as our bodies are buried in the watery grave, and rise again from it, we declare that our faith is that our bodies are included in the redemption of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that they shall one day also rise as did his crucified body, and be changed into the likeness of his glorified body, and so live forever with him. In these three things are summed up all the principles of truth contained in the gospel of the Son of God. Lastly, baptism is itself a salvation to all who believe. It does not indeed put away sin, which is the chief part of salvation, but it does separate us from our former lives in and of the world in the sight of all who love God, and indeed in the sight of all men. We are henceforth known as the professed followers of Christ, as those who henceforth do not live as others live, in the vanity of their minds, but as those who live in union with that which pertains to God and godliness. It is a great help to one who loves the Lord, and who has in heart and desire been separated unto the Lord, to have it known by all that this is his hope, and it will, we think, be the testimony of all believers that they have found a help to resist temptation after worldliness by the very fact that they have been baptized in the name of the Lord. Even the world does not expect those who have made this confession to live as they did before, or as the worldly live. There is gain surely when we know that the world no longer expects us to run in the way that we once did; at least we know that in our early life young friends did not, after we were baptized upon confession of our faith, expect us or ask us to join in many things that they did insist upon our doing before. We did find in this sense a salvation in baptism. We doubt not that many have found it so. C.

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EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

1 TIMOTHY VI. 1–5.

"LET as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself."

In the discussion of the subject matter of this text it is our design to address our remarks especially and exclusively to the saints of God, and to the church of our Lord Jesus Christ, as to them who are redeemed from the tribes of the earth and called out of the world into that kingdom which is not of this world. With the political strife of the potsherds of the earth we have nothing to do, nothing to say. We are not responsible for the policy of human governments, nor are they responsible to us. God will hold them to a strict account who rule not in his fear. But while we shall cautiously avoid as far as possible alluding to the political controversy and strifes of the kingdoms and governments of the world, we design to shun not to declare all the counsel of God to his saints, and especially such portions of the sacred Scriptures as Christ, our blessed and only Potentate, has through his apostle commanded his ministers to "teach and exhort." Our mission is to the saints, and our paper is devoted to the Old School Baptist cause, and by the example of the apostle, and the precepts of Christ, we are forbidden to keep back anything that is designed to be profitable to the children of God. The laws of Christ and the doctrine of the apostles are only applicable to the children of God; they were not given for the government or instruction of the kingdoms of this world, therefore although they may conflict with the policy of human governments, they are nevertheless to be religiously observed by the disciples of Christ, and if any of them are repudiated by earthly legislation, that fact affords no license to the subjects of Christ's kingdom for disregarding them. Much of the apostles' doctrine, on which the church of Christ was organized on the day of Pentecost, and in which the primitive disciples continued steadfast, was repugnant to the laws, ordinances and usages of the earthly governments of that period, and brought the apostles and early disciples into frequent collision with kings, councils and human authorities, and they were frequently incarcerated in dungeons, and cruelly punished for the tenacity with which they adhered to their allegiance to Christ as the King of kings and the Lord of lords, for they counted not their own lives dear unto themselves, they loved not their own lives to the death.

The peculiar circumstances surrounding the saints of God upon the subject presented in our text, the great strife which has recently been witnessed and the disposition made of the subject by the secular powers, when considered in connection with the divine injunction which commands the children of God to submit to every ordinance of men, for Christ's sake, make it the more vitally important at this very time that we carefully, prayerfully and in the fear of the Lord investigate the subject, and seek to learn from the instructions of the in-

spired word the decisions of the apostles whom Christ has seated on thrones of judgment over us, what course we are required to take as disciples and followers of our Lord Jesus Christ, and nicely to discriminate between the things which belong to Cæsar and those which belong to God. A careful examination of our text, (1 Tim. vi. 1–5,) compared with Col. iii. 22–25; Titus ii. 9, 10; 1 Pet. ii. 18, and all other passages treating upon the same subject, clearly presents to us the three following propositions, viz., first, that the relationship of servant and master, with all the relative obligations of both, is an institution of God, in harmony with the name of Christ, and the doctrine which is according to godliness. Second, that Timothy and Titus, and all other ministers of Christ, are commanded to teach and exhort its recognition and observance by all the church of God. Third, that all who teach otherwise, and consent not to these wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, are to be put away from our fellowship; or, in the words of our text, "From such withdraw thyself."

Without going back to the record of the ordinances in the Old Testament, instituting the different grades of human governments, we find enough embodied in the instructions of Christ and his apostles in the New Testament to sustain our position upon this subject. Indeed, in the absence of all other testimony the five verses at the head of this article are abundantly sufficient for our purpose. Can it be supposed that the apostle Paul, inspired as he certainly was by the Holy Ghost, would enjoin on Timothy as a minister of Christ to teach and exhort the members of Christ's kingdom to observe and practice what God has not approved and enjoined upon them? His commission was only to teach them to observe all things whatsoever Christ had commanded, (See Matt. xxviii. 20,) and if it be admitted that Paul spake and wrote by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, then what he has said on this, as on every other subject, is said and written by God himself. To the apostles were given the keys of the kingdom of God, and what they bound on earth is bound in heaven, and what they loosed on earth is loosed in heaven. How then can we possibly avoid the conclusion that what the apostle has here bound on the church is ratified in heaven, and binding on the saints throughout all time? It would be trifling with the holy Scriptures to suppose that Paul, as an apostle, solemnly enjoined on Timothy, Titus and others to teach and exhort the churches to recognize and exhort the saints to practice what God has not authorized, much less what God disapproves. The apostle in this text not only recognizes the institution as of divine appointment, but says distinctly that it is presented in the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and according to the doctrine of godliness. Still farther, that to fail to observe and teach and exhort these things is to expose the name and doctrine of God to blasphemy. Again, as an institution appointed, approved and enjoined on the saints by God himself, it is classified with other unquestionable ordinances or laws of God, such as that of marriage, and all grades of human government and human subordination to be observed by the children of God. In almost every place where the relationship of master and servant is named in the apostles' instructions to the churches, it is placed in connection with the relations and corresponding obligations of parents and children, husbands and wives, kings and subjects,

governors and governed, and with all these institutions in view the apostle exhorts most solemnly that every soul shall be subject to the powers (authorities) that be. The soul of the child, of the servant, the wife, the citizen, and even the king or governor, in their turn is to be in subjection to the higher power of Him who holds his throne far above all principalities and powers, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the world to come. No man, in our understanding of this subject, can loose what the apostles have bound upon servants to honor and obey their masters without also loosing the obligation of children to obey their parents, wives their husbands, citizens their kings, governors, magistrates or rulers. These relative positions are all classified together by the apostle in Rom. xiii., and the saints are informed that these powers which be are ordained of God, and whosoever resists them resists the ordinance of God. "Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor." Among those to whom honor is due the apostle in our text recognizes the master, and commands that as many servants as are under the yoke shall count their own masters worthy of all honor. Dare any servant who fears God disregard this command, and refuse honor and obedience to his own master, or deny that the institution by which he is held under the yoke is of God, or say it is wicked and sinful, and ought not to exist? Peter goes still farther, and commands servants to be subject to their masters, with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward, and this rule we presume also applies to others in subordinate positions. Children may have ungodly parents, wives may have tyrannical husbands, and citizens may have oppressive rulers, yet they are, as christians, commanded of God to honor them in all cases, and to obey all their lawful commands; that is, all their commands which do not conflict with their obligations to obey God rather than men. The different degrees of power or authority invested in men to rule in any of these positions, as parent, master, husband, magistrate, governor or king, are to be determined by the christian, child, servant, wife or citizen, by the extent of authority expressed or implied in the ordinance of God by which such power is invested, for all the powers that be are ordained of God, for there is no power but of God; that is, as christians we have no right to recognize any authority but that which God has given. Neither parents, masters nor kings have any legitimate power to require those over whom they rule to disobey God. Indeed, the obligation resting on all christians to obey parents, masters, governors or kings, is simply because God commands them to do so, hence they are commanded to render this honor and obedience in the fear of God, "as unto God, and not unto men." That Timothy was commanded to teach and exhort these things is expressly stated in the most unequivocal terms that human language can afford: "These things teach and exhort." And as Titus is also commanded, in chapter ii. 9, 10, to "Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things." And as similar instructions are contained in nearly, if not all the epistles, we infer that what Timothy and Titus, as minis-

ters of the gospel, and as pastors, or bishops of the churches, were to teach and exhort, all the other ministers of Christ, and pastors and teachers of the churches must also teach and exhort. Here are two duties devolving on the faithful minister. First, to teach; second, to exhort. First. Teach these things, as the disciples are to be instructed in word and in doctrine; for a disciple means a pupil, a learner; and the ministers must be apt to teach, and according to their commission they must teach the disciples to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded, and these things, among all other things which he has commanded, and if Paul, or an angel from heaven, shall teach less or more than what Christ has commanded them, Paul says, let him or them be accursed. To teach is to expound, to explain, to show the authority of God on which these obligations rest, and how and in what manner they are to be obeyed. Timothy must teach servants how they are to honor their masters, and that their adherence to his instructions is required, that the name of God, by whose authority they are required to observe these instructions, and the instructions or doctrine, be not blasphemed. Titus is told also that they are not to purloin or steal anything from their masters, but to please them well in all things; not to be disrespectful, impudent or saucy, but reliable, honest and faithful. Peter adds to the instruction given, that if they have bad, or severe, or froward masters, still they are to bear it for their heavenly Master's sake; for this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience towards God endure grief, suffering wrongfully, &c. Second. In their exhortations the ministers of Christ are to faithfully admonish servants to discharge all the duties devolving on them in the position and relation which they occupy, in the fear of God; exhort them to do their duty faithfully, because it is the command of God that they should, and that they cannot fail to do so without disobedience to God; that is in special reference to the will and law of God which requires fidelity of them, and not merely as men-pleasers. Third. We come now to our third and last proposition: The duty of the ministers of Christ to withdraw themselves from those, if any there be, who teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words. Here are two points involving fellowship, or companionship. First, If any man teach otherwise. Second, If any man consent not to wholesome words, &c. Any subject involving christian fellowship demands a serious and careful investigation, for all the saints are required by the laws of Christ to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, yet to extend expressions of fellowship beyond the limits which are set by Christ and his apostles would be unjustifiable, and tend to disorder and confusion. The precise limitation of fellowship, or at least of companionship, on the subject under consideration, is so distinctly marked by the apostle in our text as to leave no discretionary power. Neither our feelings nor personal interests have any lawful bearing on our decision; the stakes are unalterably planted by divine authority. The questions arising on which we are to judge and decide are: What is it to teach otherwise? And, Who are they that will not consent to the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine which is according to godliness? We would not, and perhaps should not, include with those who teach otherwise, those whose minds have not been drawn to the subject, for

although it is the duty of all the saints to search the Scriptures, to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good, there are those who are weak in the faith, whose burdens we are to bear, and those who are lame and must not be turned out of the way. But by "teaching otherwise" we must understand those who teach that which is antagonistic to the plain instructions of our text, those who teach that the institution itself is wicked or sinful, and that it therefore ought not to exist, that masters have no right or property in servants, that the relationship is oppressive, unjust and incompatible with the gospel of Christ, and inharmonious with the doctrine of godliness, or that it is right, scriptural, philanthrophic and christianlike to oppose it, that it is not the duty of the servant who is under the yoke to count his master worthy of all honor, but that he may run away, or in any way refuse to comply with the explicit instructions of our text. They are understood to teach otherwise from what the apostle taught, who use their influence to deprive masters of their property in servants, and who recommend and justify the use of the sword in putting down the institution, and thus of depriving the masters of their property in servants. In short, we cannot conceive it possible for a christian, or one who professes the christian religion, to be what is at this time called an "Abolitionist," without teaching that which is clearly and palpably otherwise from what the apostle has taught in our text. Those who teach otherwise from the instruction given in our text are such as assume to be teachers and do not confine their instruction to what the apostles taught, but teach something else, and whatever they may teach must be otherwise from what Timothy was commanded to teach and exhort. Of this class of teachers, few have been found among Old School Baptists; antichrist has furnished her legions, who have made war upon the institution, blasphemed the doctrine which the apostle says is according to godliness, repudiated the plain instructions of the Scriptures and authority of Christ, and have used all their influence to stir up strife, envy, evil surmisings and perverse disputings on the subject, urging the most desperate and cruel measures for the abolition of the institution, denouncing that as unholy which God has authorized and approved. All these evidently teach otherwise from what Christ by his holy apostles has taught, and we are commanded to withdraw from them. We are neither to hold fellowship nor companionship with such. They who consent not to the wholesome words of Christ, and the doctrine which is according to godliness, whether they be teachers or pupils, are those who will not regard these plain instructions of the Scriptures, but set their judgments above the apostles' instructions, making themselves wise above what is written, and persistently refuse the admonitions of the word, and madly contribute their influence in opposition to what the apostle has so clearly enjoined. From all such we are commanded to withdraw. We do not, however, understand that this divine rule requires that we should withdraw from such as merely, from ignorance of the teachings of the apostles, or from the prejudice of education and habit, may feel an aversion to holding servants as property, providing they consent to the apostles' instructions. The institution, as taught in the Scriptures, requires no one who does not feel so disposed to own or hold servants, nor does it forbid the owners of them to set them free, but

the law of God does forbid that we should covet, or seek to deprive our neighbor of his manservant, or his maidservant, or his ox, or his ass, or anything that is our neighbor's, and the servant, if he may be free, by the consent of his owner, is allowed to choose it rather. But those who teach that the institution is not a divine appointment, that servants are not by the law of Christ required to honor, obey and faithfully serve their masters, and consent not to, but deny these apostolic injunctions, must be put away from our society and fellowship, or, in other words, we are commanded from such to withdraw. The necessity for observing this rule is as important now as at any other time or place, for heresy on this subject is fully as productive of envy, strifes, railings, evil surmisings and perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth now as at any former time. The fruits of undue prejudice against our southern brethren has already been betrayed, to some extent, and now that intercommunication of brethren, which has been interrupted, is being restored, this subject must be met; it cannot be avoided. Let us meet it on Bible grounds, and fear not for the consequences.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Oct. 1, 1865.

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Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at Loesburg, Va., Nov. 14th, 1912, Vernon A. Callar and Miss Priscilla C. Ellmore, both of Sterling, Loudoun Co., Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

William H. H. Pilchard departed this life at his home in Worcester County, Md., Tuesday morning, October 1st, 1912, after a lingering illness. He was the most quiet and composed person at the approach of death that I ever saw; he would talk as though he were going on a pleasant journey. He told his wife not to weep for him. His mind was clear almost to the last breath, and he spoke of his pallbearers and other matters. The last Scripture he quoted was, "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." He was born Feb. 20th, 1840, and was married to Mrs. Susan Payne Sept. 19th, 1871. Five children were the fruits of that union, three boys and two girls. He also leaves nine grandchildren. He was baptized by the writer in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Pitts Creek, Worcester Co., Md. He served the church as clerk and deacon much to his credit. His disease was supposed to be inward cancer. We all miss him, but not so much as his dear companion. The family has our sympathy.

The writer was called upon to officiate at the funeral, in the presence of the largest company of people that he ever saw at a funeral, using for a text, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." Afterwards all that was mortal was laid away to rest until the morning of the resurrection. T. M. POULSON.

John M. Dorman, the subject of this memoir, was born March 9th, 1846, in Dorchester County, Md. He was married to Miss Sarah Wells Jan. 4th, 1870. One son and one daughter were born to them, who, with the widow and two grandchildren, survive him. Mr. Dorman with his family moved to Baltimore city some years ago, and he and his son engaged in the drug business and were successful. It was the good fortune of the writer to know him and his family for nearly fourteen years, and always found him to be a kind, pleasant gentleman. Old Baptists always found a welcome in his home. Mr. Dorman never made a profession of the religion of Jesus Christ, but we feel from remarks made while in his last sickness, together with his apparent reconciliation to the Lord's will, that we have reason to hope that the blessed Savior was with him. He said a few days before passing away: "I have tried hard to get well, but I have got to go and it is all right."

He was taken very suddenly with a nervous chill on June 9th, later blood poisoning developed and he suffered a great deal for two months, but was very patient. His loving and devoted wife, son and daughter, together with the family physician and trained nurse, did all that they could do for him, desiring if possible to keep him with them, yet he kept sinking, and on the 9th day of August, 1912, he very peacefully fell asleep in Jesus, as we hope. On the afternoon of the 10th the writer accompanied the bereaved widow, son, daughter and daughter-in-law on the boat to Cambridge, Md., and on Sunday a. m. went to old Trinity Church, Church Creek, where the writer spoke for a short while from 1 Thess. iv. 13-18, after which the remains were laid to rest to await the resurrection morn.

To the bereaved ones I would say, May God give you to feel that your loved one is far better off than to be in this world of sin and affliction; so now, dear ones, make yourselves as comfortable and cheerful as possible, for the Judge of all the earth will do right, and may he comfort your hearts as no other can, is the prayer of your friend.

By request. JOSHUA T. ROWE.

CLEBURNE, Texas, Nov. 16, 1912.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I send you a sketch of the life and death of Elder J. B. Buntyn, written by his daughter, Mrs. Ellys Morris, who had it published in a Hillsboro paper, and it is the desire of the family that I send it to the SIGNS, with the request that you dispose of it as you see fit.

Yours in hope, W. L. ROGERS.

On Tuesday afternoon, October 22nd, at 2 o'clock, at the residence of his daughter, Mrs. Charles E. Smith, on Craig St., occurred the funeral of **Elder J. B. Buntyn.** The services were conducted by Elder W. L. Rogers, of Cleburne, an old friend of the deceased and his family. Elder Rogers spoke touchingly and tenderly from this passage of Scripture, which had been selected by Elder Buntyn some months before as a text for the occasion of his funeral, Acts xx. 24: "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." Elder Rogers reviewed the life and ministry of his deceased friend, and very earnestly endeavored to show that the doctrine so long loved and so ardently expounded by the departed husband and father was but the divine truth set forth in the Bible, and nothing of which to feel ashamed. He recounted the years of association and bond of brotherly love that had always existed between him and Elder Buntyn, and pityingly of the afflictions that overtook him as he neared the end of his earthly pilgrimage. At the conclusion of Elder Rogers' remarks M. T. Andrews very soothingly reminded the bereaved family that it was one of the most merciful directions of divine Providence that the recollections that would linger longest of the departed one were those dear remembrances of him in the prime of life, flushed with the vigor of young manhood, and not of the closing years, when paralysis had enfeebled his frame and robbed his eyes of their intellectual lustre. At the close of the services the remains were conveyed to the Old Cemetery and laid to rest to await the summons for the graves to give up their dead.

James B. Buntyn was born at the old homestead near Griffin, Spalding Co., Ga., Oct. 7th, 1855, being the youngest child of Joseph and Elizabeth Buntyn, and was at the time of his death 57 years and 3 days old. He grew to young manhood in the home of his birth, and on May 5th, 1881, was happily married to Miss Mary Ansley, of Griffin. This union was blessed with ten children, all of whom survive him except an infant son, who was buried in Jonesboro, Ga., the children being Mrs. Robt. L. Morris and Mrs. Chas. E. Smith, of this city; Mrs. Linda B. Willie, of Waxahachie; Mrs. Will E. Smith, of Benton, Ill., and Worthy J. Buntyn, of Amarillo. The children residing with their mother are Miss Myrtle, Forrest L., Miss Mary and Elon, also of this city. Only one sister, Mrs. Elizabeth Futral, of Griffin, Ga., is left of a large circle of brothers and sisters to mourn her loss. Although being a great Bible student from early youth, and loving the people of God, James B. Buntyn did not take upon himself the obligations of church membership until he had entered his thirtieth year, and then, in company with his beloved wife, was received in the Mt. Gilead Old School Baptist Church, near Newman, Ga., by Elder Jordan, in 1889. He had not long been a member of the church of his choice until it became evident to his brethren that God had bestowed on him the gift of the ministry, and he was soon licensed to preach. There were congregations in Newman, Ga., and also at Griffin, Ga., to whom he preached, but it was in the old home church at Mt. Pleasant that perhaps he is held in most tender memory. In December, 1894, he removed with his family to Texas and lived for one year near Chandler, in Henderson County. In the autumn of that year he visited the Old School Baptist Church then existing in Hillsboro, and was later called by that church as its pastor, and came with his family to this city to reside Dec. 31st, 1896. About 1907 the Old School Baptist Church at Martindale, Texas, desired him to serve as their pastor, and for two years his relation with the Martindale Baptists was very close and tender, and the love and sympathy of these brethren were very comforting to him when he was first stricken with the paralysis that was finally the cause of his demise. Gradually it took a deeper hold upon him, and he was forced to

give up the care of his church, and in the fall of 1910 the family returned to Hillsboro, sadly realizing that ere long the husband and father must succumb to the inroads of the disease that made useless his hands and dimmed his intellect. In those days of affliction the cherished Bible and religious papers were his comforting companions. He never murmured or complained at the weight of the cross upon him, but to him God must receive all the glory, and he often repeated the words of the poet Pope, "Whatever is, is right." He was a gentleman of the old school, he prized his honor and unblemished character above everything, and labored to inculcate in the hearts of his children the principles of honesty and veracity that should guide them as a light upon life's highway. He taught them to despise all things gross, and set an example in word and deed that will live long in the minds of his children and serve as a heritage to his grandchildren.

My beloved companion, **Mildred Herndon,** was born Nov. 2nd, 1844, and departed this life Sept. 4th, 1912, after an illness of twelve days duration, making her stay on earth 67 years, 10 months and 4 days. We were united in marriage Jan. 24th, 1861. To this union were born thirteen children, six sons and seven daughters, all of whom survive her. She, with myself, united with the Little Flock Church, Anderson Co., Ky., the fourth Sunday in July, 1866, being baptized by Elder John F. Johnson on the same day. She continued a steadfast member for a period of over forty-six years, always occupying her seat at our meetings unless providentially hindered. She was of a self-sacrificing disposition surpassed by none, ever ready to deny self for the comfort of others. Three of our children are members of the same church, viz., David W., Ella C. and Martha E. The last named is the wife of Elder C. W. Bond, of Baker City, Oregon. Truly it may be said that I have lost a devoted companion, our children a loving mother and the church a faithful member. May the sustaining grace of our heavenly Father abide with each of us, is the desire of one sorely afflicted.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder P. W. Sawin, at our residence, after which her remains were followed to Lawrenceburg cemetery by a large circle of brethren and friends and laid to rest to await the final resurrection.

A. G. HERNDON.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

FRAGMENTS.

I AM often thinking of Jacob, lonely, tired and forlorn, looking around for stones to rest his weary head upon. It is not a cheerful scene to contemplate, but desolate and doleful, yet my mind dwells upon it with a pathetic interest, and with a feeling of sympathy, as knowing something by experience of the meaning of this sad picture. Jacob is one day's journey from his father's home, but to that home he dare not return. He has undoubtedly traveled rapidly, and is a good distance on his way to the home of his mother's people, where he expects to escape the anger of his brother Esau. He lighted on a certain place and tarried there all night, because the sun was set. It was not, probably, a certain known place to Jacob, for likely he had never been there before, but certain to the Lord, whose will and purpose embrace and control all things and all events.

Now he is looking around in that desolate place for something to use as pillows. For some reason he took of the stones of that place for pillows, and the fact is made a matter of record. We might wonder that he should take anything that appears so unsuitable, but we may well conclude that he could find nothing else in such a place that would do at all. There were, no doubt, plenty of them. Whether they were smooth, or broken and harsh, we do not know, but we do know that they were hard, and not likely to promote restfulness. He seems to have taken several, as though he may have felt so tired that he knew he should need to change frequently, as one will who is excessively weary, even though he have the softest pillows. If one has heavy griefs or sore afflictions of body or mind a pillow of down will be as restless as a stone to him.

Jacob had something on his mind which made the stones of that place seem to suit his condition well as pillows. What rest could any kind of a pillow afford him who had been saying to his blind father, I am thy very son Esau? and that not merely on a sudden impulse, but after a careful preparation to carry out the falsehood so that Isaac will be deceived upon a full investigation. Jacob did not know that the Lord had a purpose in all of this. In Jacob it was pure deceit, and his name signifies his nature.

He had told a plain falsehood and was guilty. Now he is fleeing from his brother, Esau, whom he has twice supplanted.

In the Scriptures we do not find that any of the holy men of old are presented as standing in the favor of God on account of any merit which they possess by nature. Abraham, David, Hezekiah, Daniel, and all the rest of them, are presented as sinners, who need the same mercy and grace that we poor sinners need to-day, and whose only righteousness before God is that which is of God by faith in Jesus Christ.

How ashamed Jacob must have been when he came before Isaac, at his command, to receive his blessing and his fatherly directions. Isaac knew that he had been mistaken when he blessed Jacob, believing that he was blessing Esau. He knew now that the words he had used for Esau the Lord had meant for Jacob, and had given Isaac faith to say to Jacob, "See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed," while his natural mind thought that the words were meant for Esau.

And now Jacob is alone in this certain place upon which he had lighted, and has his terrible deceit to think about. No wonder he is looking for stones for his pillows; they will suit his state of mind wonderfully well. But soon sleep shuts him away from all surrounding things, and a dream appears to him, a dream framed in the darkness, like a picture, itself standing out in view in a wonderful and mysterious light.

In that legal dispensation every command given by Moses was as a stone for a pillow; no rest from work, no possibility of obedience to those commands by a sinner, who is already condemned. To obey is to die. Death is the wages of sin, and the wages must be paid.

The way of salvation through Jesus Christ was shown to Jacob in his dream in the figure of a ladder set up on the earth, the top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending on it. The Lord from above the ladder gave to Jacob the promise which he had before given to his fathers, Abraham and Isaac, and said moreover to him in the dream, "I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." And Jacob said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not." He was afraid, and called it a terrible place: the house of God and the gate of heaven. And he took the stone which he had put for his pillows and set it for a pillar, and he vowed a vow to the Lord. But Jacob did not have a personal experience of this salvation thus shown to him in a figure in his dream until after many years had passed by, and he was alone with the angel of God's presence, and wrestled with him all night, and had the hollow of his thigh put out of joint and a new name given him, even Israel, a prevailer.

ONE may hear from a preacher, or read from a writer, a sentiment so clear, so strikingly beautiful and so well suited to his own way of thinking, that it seems almost as though the thought, and the language in which it is expressed, had originated in his own mind, and he may be tempted to use it as his own, without giving credit to the author. Some one has said that where a sentiment is received from another in this way, which just answers his own mind, it really becomes his own, and he may use it as such. But this is not quite true. Could

any lover of the sweet words of Paul in 1 Cor. xiii. ever be tempted to use them as his own? Though in a sense they belong to every one in whose heart they find a deep, pure abiding place, yet everywhere, and by whomsoever they are repeated, they are still always the words of Paul, given to him by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

There is a real comfort in delivering a message of gospel truth which has come into our minds for the Lord's people. There can be no true comfort in delivering, as our own, sentiments which we have received from another.

TO-DAY. "And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Here is a "to-day" that can never have a to-morrow; a "to-day" that rises above all time, above all that ever has transpired or that ever shall transpire in time, and which comprehends all the unfathomable depths and all the unapproachable heights and all the infinite extent of eternity. This "to-day" rises in its boundless character above all the terrible scenes then taking place on Calvary. To our natural understanding this answer of the dear Savior to the dying thief would include merely the portion of time from the moment they were spoken until the going down of the sun, or until midnight. This is the ordinary meaning of the word "to-day." But immediately after these wonderful words were spoken Jesus died; and then that day's sun went down, and another day passed by, and the morning of a third day began, and on the morning of that third day Jesus arose from the dead, and then forty days of time passed by after his resurrection, when he ascended up on high as the King of glory, and forever sat down on the right hand of God.

But the words spoken to the dying thief must have been fulfilled. We can never understand by mortal intelligence the glorious mysteries involved in this most wonderful subject, but we must know that from the moment of the death of Jesus and the death of the thief they were both in paradise.

"And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." That heaven of eternal glory, the eternal dwelling-place of God, has never ceased to be full of the radiance of the Sun of Righteousness, and never will. While the eternal Son of God went down to the lowest hell, in his sufferings for the sins of his people, that glorious heaven, the eternal abode of God, was never dimmed by a shade of darkness. Its infinite glory has never failed in the least degree. The Father, and the Son which is in the bosom of the Father, are the light and glory of it. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."—Isaiah lvii. 15.

No change of place or of time with Him. He was with Abel when he slew the lamb. Abraham saw his day and was glad when he laid the ram in the place of his son upon the altar. He is with every one who worships, no matter how far apart they are in space or in time. "To-day," he said to the dying thief, although he must die on that day of Jewish time, and must lie in the grave three days, and must rise again, and must be seen forty days of witnesses chosen

before, and then ascend up to glory; yet "to-day," he said, "shalt thou be with me in paradise."

As the eternal Son of God he could not die. He came in the flesh that he might die. He took part of flesh and blood, that he might taste of death for every one of the many sons whom he, as the Captain of their salvation, was sent to bring to glory. He was here in time to redeem those sons from sin and death, and yet to him a thousand years are, and ever were, as one day, and one day as a thousand years, and he could say, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov., 1912.

PORTLAND, Ind., Sept. 1, 1912.

BROTHER KER:—I inclose to you a copy of a Circular Letter of the Greenville Association, situated in Ohio, which was published in 1894. The doctrine set forth therein and the prophecies by which the said doctrine is proved I would like to have published in the SIGNS.

The doctrine of the predestination of all things, as set forth by the Scriptures of eternal truth, the foreknowledge of God in foretelling future events, both of men and nations, of the virtues and vices, the good and evil deeds of kings and rulers, men and nations, of their good and evil practices, fully set forth by prophecy, the foreknowledge of God in foretelling future events, the rise and fall of kings and nations, and the setting up of the kingdom of heaven in the days of these kings, that should break in pieces all other kingdoms, I feel sure should be inquired into, for we are now living in some part of these prophecies, and the things that are now being fulfilled should demand our study and serious thought. If God knew sin would come into the world and cause all men to become sinners, and had power to keep it out of the world, and did not do so, it is most certain he had a holy, righteous and most certain purpose, for our God cannot foreknow an uncertainty; and if we say God knew man would fall, we would lack wisdom if we should say it was not certain and fixed, for how could our God foreknow an uncertainty? If Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost, did not our God know they would be lost? If he came to save sinners, did not our God know there would be sinners to save, and choose them in him before the foundation of the world?

Yours in hope,

NEWTON PETERS.

The Greenville Association, composed of the ministers and messengers of the church composing her body, sendeth salutation to all the members and friends of the church.

BRETHREN:—We have great reason to continue steadfast in the love of Christ, for we have abundant proof laid down in the Scriptures that our doctrine is the doctrine fully laid down in the inspired record. If the Lord enables me to set it forth in this short epistle I wish to prove beyond a doubt the fixed predestination of all things. First, in the fifteenth chapter of Genesis we learn that God made a covenant with one man he selected out of the nations (Abraham), and foretold to him in different chapters, in this connection, that Abraham should have a seed that should become a great nation, though Abraham and Sarah were both stricken in years and were counted as good as dead, also that the nation or seed should be in bondage to another nation and be evilly treated for four hundred years, and that nation to whom they should be in bondage God would judge, and Abra-

ham's seed should be delivered with a great deliverance. All this was foretold before Abraham yet had any seed, hence in this prophecy or promise to Abraham is foretold the seed that should be born, the four hundred years of Egyptian bondage, the deliverance by Moses and the overthrow of Pharaoh and his host, for it was foretold they should be delivered with a great deliverance, and that nation to whom they should be in bondage will I judge. Hence we see foretold the suffering of the Israelites, for, said God, they shall evil entreat them for four hundred years, and the judgment sent upon the Egyptians. First, the many plagues, such as the pest of frogs and lice, the murrain of cattle, the hail, the smiting of the firstborn of men and stock, and the final overthrow of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea. All this was a fulfillment of the prophecy or promise to Abraham. Hence the time between the beginning of the prophecy and the fulfillment of it was five hundred years, yet it took the combined human efforts of the nations to walk in line and fulfill that prophecy. Thus, brethren, it is this moving of the nation in line of prophecy that should give us great encouragement to stand steadfast in the doctrine of predestination, for even the going down into Egypt by the children of Abraham foretells another event that should not go unnoticed, and that is, they should go and dwell until the iniquity of the Amorites was full, so that while Egypt was fulfilling the prophecy told of her in evil treating Israel four hundred years, the Amorites were fulfilling their unalterable course in filling up their cup of iniquity, and when this cup was full the Lord delivered the two Amorite nations (Heshbons and Bashan) over to be destroyed by the Israelites, and the land given to Israel as a fulfillment of the promise God made with Abraham when as yet he had no seed; and it is further to be remembered that when Amalek smote the hindmost ones of Israel by the way, when they were weak and coming into the wilderness from the Red Sea, that God then and there made a decree against Amalek, saying to Israel, "Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way," and that they should remember and forget it not, but should blot out the remembrance of Amalek after Israel had rest from their labors in the land of Canaan. This prophecy so positively foretold in Deuteronomy xxv. was called up by the Lord unto Samuel the prophet, whom the Lord sent to anoint Saul king in Israel, saying, I remember what Amalek did unto the children of Israel, go destroy the Amalekites and spare neither age nor sex. Although this prophecy was not fulfilled for 420 years after it was made, yet it shows to us the unchangeableness of our God in whom we trust; that the king's heart is in the hands of the Lord, and he turneth it whithersoever he will. A man deviseth his way, but the Lord directs his steps. The way of man is not in himself, neither is it in man to direct his steps. He meted out the heavens with a span. He gave the seas their bounds and they cannot pass over, for he saith, Stay, thou proud waves. He made the earth, and created man upon it, and all beasts and creeping things had their beginning with God. He raiseth up nations and overthroweth nations. He setteth up kings and removeth kingdoms. Thus, brethren, we have great consolation in the doctrine we believe, that our God is a universal sovereign. He is of one mind and changeth not. He created all things for a purpose, yea, the wicked for the day of evil. He maketh peace and createth evil. He foretold to Abraham that his

seed should drive out the Canaanites and possess their land. Men who use natural reason for their judgment against God can see no justice in foretelling centuries beforehand the evil treatment of Israel by the Egyptians, and in pronouncing judgment upon Egypt centuries before the men were born that received the plagues, but we, brethren, have a hope that is sure and steadfast, and judge not God after the reason of the flesh, but after the mind of faith in Christ. We thus adjure you not to be blinded by the construction put upon the Scriptures by the enemies of the truth, when they say to you that God set before Israel good and evil, and life and death, and that Israel had thereby a right of choice, and hence they were thereby left free moral agents; but examine the Scriptures and you will find that after God had foretold, by Moses in Leviticus xxv. and Deuteronomy xxviii. the blessings that should come upon Israel for obedience, and the curses that should come upon them for disobedience, that he positively told Moses, and Moses recorded in Deuteronomy xxxi. and xxxii. that God knew they would disobey and receive the curses written in the book. Yea, even before Israel crossed Jordan to possess the land of Canaan, God foretold he would bring the curses upon them. Even the siege of Samaria and Jerusalem is foretold in Deuteronomy xxviii., the pestilence and famine, that tender-hearted mothers should eat their own children in the sieges. Examine the chapters above and then turn to the calamity of these sieges, and you will find all came to pass as foretold. Thus we have it, God foretold the curses and blessings, the life and death set before Israel, and foretold at the same time that they would choose the evil and receive the curses; hence the saints of God who stay themselves upon their God, not being moved by earthly commotions, have great reason for steadfastness in their doctrine, that in every age, even in our own time, men and nations, with their kings and rulers, are only marching in line with prophecy. In the sixth chapter of Joshua is foretold the curse that should befall the man that should rebuild Jericho: that he should lay the foundation in his first son and set up the gates in his second son. This was fulfilled by Ahab over five hundred years after (1 Kings vi. 34); it was foretold by the man of God that came out of Judah and cried against Jeroboam, after saying, Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name, and he shall offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon that altar, and burn men's bones, even that he should cleanse Judah of idols. This was fulfilled 351 years after Jeroboam built the altar, and 351 years after the man of God proclaimed it. (See 1 Kings thirteenth chapter, and fulfilled in 2 Kings twenty-second and twenty-third chapters.) Hence the word of God standeth sure. The division of the twelve tribes into the houses of Israel and Judah was foretold by the prophet that took the new garment of Jeroboam and divided it into twelve pieces, giving ten pieces to Jeroboam, saying, The Lord made thee king over ten tribes. This division was final, and is typical of divisions among the antitype that national Israel was a type of. The keeping of the house of Judah from departing after idols with the ten tribes was a thing God did because of his oath to David: for that, a Christ should be born, and the scattering of the tribes among the nations to be remembered no more was foretold in the curses pronounced against Israel in Deuteronomy xxviii., and the Babylonian captivity of the part

of the two tribes, the remnant of the house of Judah, was likewise foretold in the same chapters. The four Hebrew children, Daniel, Meshech, Shadrach and Abednego, who were kept in Nebuchadnezzar's palace, was foretold, 2 Kings xx. Thus we have great reason to stand steadfast in our doctrine, seeing that the walk of men and nations from Abraham's day down to the coming of Christ was foretold, also the virtues and vices of kings. It was foretold to Samuel when Israel desired a king that God would give them a wicked king; and Solomon's righteous, peaceful reign was foretold to David, and that he should build the house of God at Jerusalem; also God's delivering Israel over as captives and servants to other nations for their sins, is foretold in Deuteronomy xxxi. and xxxii., and the delivering them when they cried is also foretold in the same chapters; also the deceived and the deceiver are the Lord's, and if the prophet be deceived, I, the Lord, deceived that prophet. And can there be evil in a city and I the Lord have not done it? Israel shall cry, and that they would cry he foretold as certain. Thus, brethren, you have ample proof to stand firm in our doctrine, and the Scriptures furnish us ample proof that our God rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. The Lord bringing Nebuchadnezzar's army and besieging Jerusalem is first foretold in Deuteronomy xxviii. and xxxi., and then in many chapters of Isaiah and Jeremiah, as the king of the north country, as all the families of the north country, a strange language, a language that Israel knew not. Isaiah cried unto Israel that God would bring Nebuchadnezzar his sword, his battle-axe and destroy the land of Judah, and also that all the kings of the different nations should bow their necks under the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar. Then we have the seventy years' war of the Babylonian kingdom foretold in the books of Isaiah and Jeremiah, that he should fill the hills and valleys of the different nations with the dead. This, however solemn, is true, and it all came to pass. The Lord foretold 175 years before it came to pass, in Isaiah xlv., that King Cyrus, by name, should liberate the Babylonian captives and rebuild the city of Jerusalem, and this was foretold long before Cyrus was born, yet it took kings, men and nations to all march in line of prophecy to fulfill God's decrees; and also is foretold in Deuteronomy how the Lord would bring back the remnant of the captives and renew his covenant; hence it is with much assurance and earnestness we thus adjure you all to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made his people free, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for his people, and that as the world hath moved for ages in the line of prophecy, and the sure promises God hath made known to his people, therefore the sure mercies of David are decreed, to rest and abide upon the true Israel of God, upon the vessels of mercy he hath afore prepared unto glory. In Daniel's prophecy we have a wonderful decree made known unto the sons of men. After God had broken down all the nations by proud Nebuchadnezzar, he then broke the pride of that mighty king in sending him a dream, a vision which Daniel interpreted. He saw an image of four different metals. Daniel said those different metals meant four mighty kingdoms to arise out of the earth, and Daniel in a vision saw four different beasts, which the angel interpreted as being four different kingdoms, and the first was to be overthrown by the second, and the second by the third, and the third by the

fourth. These, brethren, were as follows: the first, Daniel said, was the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar. This he interpreted by the handwriting on the wall, was given to the Medes and Persians, the two arms and breast of silver; and the Medes and Persians were overthrown by the kingdom of Greece. As interpreted by the two-horned ram and the one-horned goat, the brass kingdom, and the third, or Greece, was overthrown by the next, fourth, or iron kingdom, that breaketh in pieces all other kingdoms, which was so done by the only kingdoms that arose to overthrow Greece, which is commonly accepted as the Cæsar or Roman kingdom. All efforts of the Babylonians to subdue the nations were made by them as though they were following their own free will, yet their will, desire and their course were all laid out before them in Moses and Isaiah and Jeremiah and Daniel and Ezekiel; and the coming up of the Medes and Persians was with great pomp and splendor; men ran to and fro and followed their hearts' desire, but perhaps did not know that man only deviseth his way, but the Lord directs his steps, and the way of man is not in himself. The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing is of the Lord. Even it is to be remembered that the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, he turneth it whithersoever he will; so the Lord turned the heart of Alexander to fulfill Daniel's prophecy, and push at the two-horned ram, the Medes and Persians, and overthrow them, though it had been about two hundred years after Daniel foretold it. And now we come to the fourth great kingdom, the iron kingdom, that was to be terrible and dreadful and divorced from all other kingdoms before it; it should wear out the saints of the Most High. Here is foretold the martyrdom of the saints. Daniel said this kingdom had seven heads and ten horns, and he looked and saw a little horn come up after the ten and pluck three of the first ten up, and that little horn was a terrible persecuting power. Daniel saw this beast with ten horns, and then another came up and took three of the first. Now, brethren, if we are not mistaken in the true interpretation, these two kingdoms connected out of one, first the beast of ten horns and then another coming after and taking his start by taking away three first, and then after this little horn waxed great, even to casting down the host of heaven. This we understand to be the same first ten-horned dragon seen by John, and the beast that came up out of the sea, or people, that the dragon gave his power, to be the same two-horned beast or kingdom in one that Daniel saw. We now understand the first ten-horned beast seen by Daniel to be the ten-horned dragon John saw, and the little horn Daniel saw that came up out behind the first ten horns to be the ten-horned beast John saw that the dragon gave his power to. The first of these powers to be Pagan Rome, the dragon that stood before the woman to devour her man child as soon as he was born, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed; and the second power we believe to be Papal Rome, that the dragon or Pagan Rome gave his power to, for Papal Rome it seems has been wearing out the saints of the Most High and cast down many ten thousand and stamped the residue with the feet of it. But all the world combined in their wild and mad career in following their hearts' corruption and desires have not in the least gotten ahead of prophecy nor gone beyond the wisdom of God in any way; then let us remember that it was also foretold by Daniel that

in the days of these kings the God of heaven would set up a kingdom that should never be destroyed, and to it shall the Gentiles seek, for Isaiah foretold his coming over seven hundred years beforehand. Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder. His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace, and of the increase of his kingdom there shall be no end. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was wounded in the house of his friends. By his stripes we are healed. He hath laid upon him the iniquity of his people. He was made sin for us who knew no sin. For the iniquity of my people was he stricken. He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb dumb before his shearers, so opened he not his mouth. So, brethren, we have ample testimony that God foretold that Christ should come and die for the sins of his people; that no other offering was acceptable unto God, and that he should be betrayed by Judas, and even the thirty pieces of silver was foretold as the price of blood, and the casting of lots for his raiment was foretold, and, as Peter says, I perceive of a truth that both Pontius Pilate and the chief rulers and the scribes were gathered together to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel hath determined beforehand should be done. And Peter said, Men and brethren, the Scripture must needs be fulfilled. Ye have by wicked hands taken and crucified the Lord, him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. We have much assurance that the Scripture abounds with ample proof that in all ages men and nations combined have only followed in line of prophecy, and have only fulfilled what prophecy has laid out for them. And now, brethren, it is our belief that we are living in the latter part of the reign of the two-horned beast John saw, and the toes of the feet of two legs of iron, which were part of iron and clay mixed. It shows the kingdom is now partly weak and partly strong. As this kingdom should mix with the people, but should not cleave to each other, so Rome to-day is mixing with the people, but they do not cleave together. Romans are Romans, even if some of them are mixed in every city; in them is the strength of iron, but as there is clay to keep them from consolidating, so they are only partly weak and partly strong, and the two-horned beast John saw, that spoke as a dragon yet had horns like a lamb. This, brethren, is, we believe, the two ruling elements that now causeth all, both small and great, to worship the beast, as all the world seems to be drifting back to Romanism under the two-horned dilemma. First, striving for power in numbers; second, the united acknowledged free agency believed in by all religious creeds, thereby setting aside from their faith the line of prophecy marked out in the Scriptures, for prophecy and free agency will not work together, for while prophecy foretells the certainty of events from the acts of men and nations, free agency makes nothing certain. Neither is it accepted that man's bounds are set, that he cannot pass. Prophecy is predestination; free agency renders nothing fixed, and, brethren, it is the calling of the Gentiles from nature to grace, the breaking down of the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile, that is so readily mistaken for universal salvation, or for free agency. They seem to overlook the prophecy that the Jews were to be blinded and their understanding deadened to the truth upon

the bringing in of the Gentiles. The words "all men," used by these men, should be compared with the declarations of Paul when he said he was to make all men see the fellowship of the mystery, and by his mouth all should hear the gospel, and that he was to preach the gospel to every creature. The calling of the Gentiles is what was alluded to, so stand fast. All men marveled at the miracles at one time, and all men were amazed at another time, and all men, it is said, were seeking Christ at the time he and Peter and John went up into the mountain, when Moses and Elias were transfigured before them. Thus the words "all men" were limited words in the Scripture, for Paul could not make all men universally see the mystery, as millions had died before Paul's day; but the Scriptures that are commonly understood as applying to each individual of all men only apply as Christ applied them when he gave the apostles their charge to go unto all nations and preach the gospel, and he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned. He also declared that as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. And Paul said to the Jews, Seeing you judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, I turn unto the Gentiles, and it is here declared that as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed; hence, brethren, even the belief is ordained, for with the heart man believeth, and the preparations of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue are of the Lord. Thus it is God first and God last, having abundance of proof that all things are fixed; even it is decreed that Satan shall be chained a thousand years, and that to the angel were given the keys of the bottomless pit. So, brethren, the keys of Satan's pit were given to the angel by a fixed prophecy, and that he should go and deceive the nations is foretold in the same prophecy that foretold the deliverance of the saints; so then we thus judge that all things were predestinated; if not, the unpredestinated might conflict with the predestinated things; and if some things are predestinated and others not, all then have their fixed place, the decreed and fixed predestinated things, and the other decreed, fixed and set apart unpredestinated things. If one is decreed and the other not, the things undecreed must be fixed, the predestinated unpredestinated things, so that the theory or heresy that is sowed abroad that God decreed some fixed predestinated things and left the rest as the certain unpredestinated things, I say this theory is dissolved by the very same theory that it is sought to be established by. Brethren, the line of prophecy from Abraham until Christ proves that the evil, as well as the good, was fixed, and the travels of the children of grace typified by the whole line of prophecy. After Moses had led the children of Israel forty years in the wilderness, and they had been eye-witnesses to the miracles, and themselves the recipients of the many blessings, such as being fed direct from heaven with manna in the morning and quails in the evening, and their raiment wore not out, even the Lord slaying the twenty-four thousand with the plague to prove they must trust in God, yet Moses summed it all up and told them in the face of all they had seen they yet had not learned anything about God, for that God had not given them hearts to understand, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear the sending of the prophets. The Lord

said he continued sending them, rising up early, yet they learned not, but slew the prophets, proving that from Moses' time, or at the beginning of the law, until God gave men hearts to believe and perceive, they could not know him; the fifteen hundred years trial of law proved without the operation of the Spirit man knew nothing; so now the unregenerated reject the truth. The revealed law of God condemns all man has trusted in; the law of Moses was understood only by those God gave hearts to perceive, and they wept because they understood that the law was a witness against them; even so the law of God when it is understood by the children of grace worketh death. There is no law given that giveth life, but it is clearly of faith that it might be by grace, to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed, that no doubt could arise, but sure to all the seed. So by grace salvation is sure to all the seed.

Seeing the affliction of Israel was appointed unto them by the hands of Egypt, and Egypt's appointed destruction declared centuries before it came, we then conclude the predestination of all things is proven by such prophecy or declarations. Also the declaration that the Amorites should fill up their cup of iniquity and then be destroyed by the Israelites centuries before the Lord did it, and also destroying the Amalekites centuries after it was declared, strengthens the proof. Also the certain failure of Israel to keep the law, declared as above cited, and also their turning and serving other gods, and provoking God to anger, until he should destroy many of them by sword, famine and pestilence, as cited above, which God not only said he knew, but declared it, which established it as certain. Also Saul's cruelty to Israel as their wicked king, still proves that God's decrees did not confine themselves to Israel, but to all the nations of the world. Wicked kings had their evil courses declared, as well as righteous kings. The dividing of the twelve tribes was declared and fulfilled, even the scattering them among the nations to be remembered no more was declared centuries beforehand. The Assyrians were declared to be the rod of God's anger, and the staff in their hand was God's indignation. I will send him (2 Kings xix. 25; Isaiah x.) against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge to take the spoil and to take the prey, to tread them down like the mire of the streets. And the Assyrians boasted that they had done all this by their own strength. The Lord says, "Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself." The Lord declares unto Assyria, Dost thou not know a long time ago how I have done it, and from ancient times how I have formed it? and now I bring it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay defenced cities into ruinous heaps. The Lord declares he had appointed the Assyrians from ancient times to destroy nations, and calls them the rod of his anger. It is to be remembered that while God declared he would establish his covenant with Isaac and make his people a great nation, he decreed at the same time he would make of Ishmael a great nation, so his decrees went farther than just with his chosen people. Also while he gave the children of Jacob Canaan for a possession, he also gave Esau and his seed Mt. Seir for a possession. He also gave

the Moabites and Ammonites, the children of Lot, the land of Ar for a possession. By his decree Josiah's reign was declared three hundred and fifty-one years before he performed it. So while God creates peace he also creates evil. While he forms light, it must not be forgotten that he also creates the darkness; and while he created Israel a joy, he also created the wicked for the day of evil; and while he created the vessels of mercy, it should be remembered he also created the vessels of wrath; and while he declares himself to be a God of love, he also declares himself to be a God of wrath; and while he declares himself to be a God of mercy, it must not be forgotten he also declares himself to be a God of vengeance; and while he created the innocent lamb, he also created the vicious lion; and while he created the dove, he also created the cruel vulture; and while he created the butterfly, he also created the crooked serpent; and while he loved Jacob, he hated Esau; and the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and whom I will I hardeneth. While the spirit of truth comes from God, an evil spirit from the Lord came upon King Saul, and repeatedly an evil spirit from the Lord came upon King Saul; also an evil spirit from the Lord came to the gates of Jerusalem, and God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the man of Shechem; and he sent a lying spirit in the mouth of Ahab's prophet; and the deceived and the deceiver are the Lord's; and if the prophet be deceived, I, the Lord, hath deceived that prophet; and can there be evil in a city and I, the Lord, hath not done it? Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom was declared by Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel as being an instrument in God's hand to break down and crumble all the other nations; and in turn the Lord declared Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom should fall by the Medes, and the Medes by the Greeks, and the Greeks by Pagan Rome, and Pagan Rome by reformers, and the reformers by Papal Rome, and Papal Rome by another beast, and so on. All powers that are earthly have their appointed time. All powers had to crumble before Christ, and all must crumble at their appointed time, for there is no power but of God, and all the powers that be are ordained of God, for by him all things consist, whether they be thrones, dominions or powers, or things on earth, or things in heaven, visible or invisible, but all must crumble before God, for God's kingdom shall never be destroyed, but shall break in pieces all other kingdoms. If there is no power but of God, then where is any other power derived from? And if all the powers there be are ordained of God, then all the powers there be are predestinated of God, for to ordain is to predestinate, says Webster. Hence the predestination of all things is proven, for by him they all consist, in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, and as they include all things, hence our point is proven, for be it remembered Satan being chained a thousand years is declared by the inspired writer, hence he is brought under by God's angel, that he should deceive the nation no more for a thousand years. Hence if God declared it he appointed it; if he appointed it he ordained it; if he ordained it he predestinated it; and be it remembered that after the thousand years is expired God has declared he shall be loosed out of his prison and shall go out to deceive the

nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, and shall encompass the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city; and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. So all powers being ordained of God, hath their appointed time to run, and also hath their appointed time for destruction, typifying that all fleshly pride in the children of grace must fall, all hatred to God's people must fall, all boasting must be given up, and the reign of the beast we are living under will finally come to its appointed end, and the people of God will triumph through their strength, which is Christ.

Your humble servant,

NEWTON PETERS.

WAVERLY, Pa., Oct. 30, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find three letters, one from sister Florence Weld, whose husband, Deacon Geo. Weld, died a few weeks ago, and another from Sandy Ardies, and Bertha his wife. You will also be glad of the letter from sister Young, stating her feelings in regard to moving from Alvinston, Canada, to Toronto. She is truly a living soul. Use your own mind or judgment about publishing them. Love to all.

Yours as ever, D. M. VAIL.

INGLESIDE, N. Y., August 11, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—Your kind letter received, and was very glad to hear from you, as you could not come back to stay any with us after the funeral. Yes, I believe that George is at rest and happy, far, far happier than it was possible for him to be in this life, and I cannot wish him back here to suffer as he had so long, but O, it seems so long since he was taken, yet I know it is all right, and for the best in some way, if I cannot see it. I am glad, and I hope thankful, that I had the strength given me to care for him to the end, and I feel that I did all I could for him as far as I knew. I shall miss him very much, but I do not feel to murmur and rebel as some do who are left that way, but feel to be still and know that it is God who rules. I know that it is no worse for me to bear than for hundreds of other women who are left alone. I know not what I will do, but the Lord has something in store for me, some place for me to fill, and I hope I can do it cheerfully. Sister Avery was taken to the asylum last Thursday. How much I rather have George go as he has than to have had him as she is, and be confined in an asylum; but, after all, it is the best place for one to go, I think, when they get as bad as she was. I expect I have seen her for the last time. I had intended to write you, asking you to write a notice of George's death for the SIGNS, and give you some dates, but since you have sent it, it will make no difference. I would be glad to hear from you once in a while, if you have time to write.

Your sorrowing sister,

FLORENCE WELD.

MAYFAIR, Ont., August 26, 1912.

D. M. VAIL:—My dearly loved brother in hope of eternal life by the gift of his dear Son, who died for his people's sins, rose again for their justification, ascended up on high and sits at the Majesty's right hand, making intercession for his poor and afflicted people, who trust in the Lord, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength, and, blessed be his holy name, all whom he has given that trust know that they themselves can do nothing, that all their righteousness is as filthy rags. But God, who is rich in mercy, wherein he has loved us, has

quickened us together with Christ; by grace are ye saved, not of works, lest any man should boast, for we are his workmanship, created in Christ unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. The dear Savior said he came to do the will of his Father, and this is the will of his Father, that all that the Father gave him shall come unto him, and they that come unto him he will in no wise cast out. O what comfort in the wills and shalls of Jehovah, who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast; who says, I am God, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed, when compared with a worm, made of the dust, to return to dust when the will of God will be done. David said, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor," and sitteth him over the works of thy hand. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me. Praise his holy name for his wonderful works to the children of men; he taketh them up out of an horrible pit and miry clay, and establisheth their feet upon a rock and putteth a new song in their mouth, even praise to our God.

I see by your letter you expect to be at Brantford some time in September. Do you expect to come our way? We will be pleased to have you visit us. It may be you will have appointments here. We hope it will be so ordered. Elders Chick and Peters preached for us this month. They both had dinner with us the day they preached here. We have our appointment at 2 p. m., as our people do not like to be out after dark. The friends are in their usual health as far as we know. Bertha's sister is visiting with us. She lives in Tarrytown, N. Y. Remember us to the family; hope sister Vail is well. Excuse mistakes. We are both well.

From your loving brother and sister,
T. A. AND BERTHA ARDIES.

TORONTO, Ont., Oct. 20, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—It has been four months since I last saw you and said good-by. In many ways it seems more like a year, yet in other ways the summer seems to have sped swiftly by. I cannot recall the time for many years that I have done so little writing or reading. The confusion and turmoil of things around me seem to deny me the privilege or convenient time to write. It has often been a serious question in my mind whether I have followed the impressions of the flesh in coming here away from what church privileges I had. It has caused great searching of heart, yet I do know I tried to ask the Lord to make known to me his will and reconcile me to it. In many ways it looks to me that it was well for us, as a family, and as far as I can see thus far, that we made the move; the opportunities and advantages in a worldly point of view for the boys and Verna are much better here. Our business prospects thus far are very favorable, and we have been blessed with good health. I do not remember a time of this length that Mr. Young has been so hearty. But what a loss to not be able to mingle with the saints of God in their solemn assemblies. But God, I trust, will be my all in all. May he be my guide and keep me in the strait and narrow path. May he forbid that I should be left to enjoy the pleasures of this vain world more than the word of God. Elder Vail, I need your prayers; I am weak, poor and needy. Yes, Lord, help me.

I was glad to read the letter from sister Miller, published in the last SIGNS. It came sweetly to me, and brought to my remembrance the comforting words that had been applied to my poor broken heart through your preaching, and all to the praise of God, the Giver of every good and perfect gift. I suppose you visited Brooke again the first Sunday in October. I have not heard, but it is my my own fault, for I have not written to any of them. It just seems that the cares of this world are crushing the better life. If ye sow to the flesh, ye shall of the flesh reap corruption. I am surely reaping corruption. Read Martin D. Fisher's piece in the last SIGNS. He says, "I have hope, but that hope is not seen, for there is no evidence that my condition will ever be better." I do not feel there will ever be a home feeling here on this earth, yet at times I feel a sweet assurance that some day I shall be satisfied when I awake with the likeness of our dear Savior and Redeemer. What a precious hope! How could I endure life's stormy battles if not for that God-given faith that Jesus is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him?

Now I forgot that you do not like to read small writing, but I will try to think and write larger the next time. Write and let us know how you and all the family are. Kind love to each member of the family.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) W. C. YOUNG.

HERNDON, Va., Nov. 24, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—I most always feel when renewing my subscription like writing you a few lines in commendation of the things that are written in the dear paper, the SIGNS, but at this time I feel to be void of the expression of praise I would love to give by the spirit of the inward man. I suppose Paul, the great apostle, felt something like I do now when he used the words: "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man." "But," he said in conclusion, "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind [spiritual mind], and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."

I am glad Elder Durand wrote that letter published in the November 1st number of the SIGNS. It has brightened my very dim hope a little, though I sin wilfully all the day long, and have to suffer its punishment. I would like to ask, Can a child of God live in this sinful flesh without sinning? If he can, then it leaves me to grope my way in darkness, and will cause me to cry out,

> "Like one alone I seem to be,
> O is there any one like me?"

I am crushed down so now with my daily sins that I feel it is a great shame for me to confess it before men, but if I fail to confess it before men I am sure to confess it before God, for he knows my feeble frame; he knows I am a vile sinner, and cannot do the things I would love to do in the spirit. "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." Paul concludes the chapter by saying, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." A child of God would never have a warfare while here in the flesh if he did not sin while in the flesh; he would never have any chastisements if he were not a son of God. What does the Lord chastise his children for? Not for being good, but for being disobedient and bad children, wilfully sinning against his

Holy Spirit, for the apostle said, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." "But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." I am that poor, wilful sinner that Elder Durand writes about, and I am willing to acknowledge my sins and punishment, for I am beaten daily with many stripes, and we are told that it is by his stripes we are healed.

But I must close, for I am too ignorant and sinful to write on such a subject; I am too sinful and disobedient to have a name with the people of God. I do not know what the end of my journey will be, but I suppose that I am either lost or saved, and it will not be by my works of righteousness, but according to the Lord's mercy I am saved, if saved at all. His blood must cleanse me from all sin; that would blot out wilful sin and all other kinds of sin that the flesh is subject to. Not one of his children can possibly be lost. His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. I have lived to be an old man, sixty-four years, and have been identified with the Old School Baptists about twenty-six years, and feel to be a greater sinner now than ever before. If I have ever had any light on the things of the kingdom of God in this life it has almost gone out, nothing but a spark it seems to me left. I long for the bright seasons to come back to me that I had in my early experience with the saints, but no light returns. I feel like David: "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." I long for living water, and to be made to lie down in green pastures, and be made to say, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want," but I seem to be far away from such bright places, far from friends and home, an exile in a foreign land. I mourn because I cannot mourn; I weep because I cannot weep; I am led as a captive; sin is mixed with all I do. I can fellowship the words of the poet who said:

> "But now I find a warfare,
> Which often bends me low;
> The world, the flesh and Satan,
> They do beset me so."

Now, dear editors, you can see at a glance that I am in no condition to write a letter of any comfort to the people of God, so just cast it into the wastebasket and pray for me that my faith fail not.

From a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all, JOHN F. OLIVER.

"BEHOLD THE MAN!"

PILATE uttered these words under great stress of mind; Jesus was before him. Pilate said, "I find no fault in him." Pilate was the sixth Roman procurator of Judea. The Jews had brought Jesus before him to find occasion of sentence of death from Pilate, but somehow Pilate sought to release him. Pilate said to the infuriated and bloodthirsty throng, "Behold your King!" Pilate and Cæsar did not wish to offend each other, and the Jews sought to prevail upon Pilate by saying, "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar." Pilate said, "Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him! Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Cæsar," and they led him away and crucified him.

When Jesus stood before Pilate he was in the very extremity of weakness; they had placed a crown of thorns upon his head and had put a purple robe upon him, a reed in his right hand; they

mocked him and spit upon him, and took the reed and smote him on the head. "Behold the man!" Brethren, sisters and friends, I saw this man long before I was brought into the Old Baptist Church, as I was singing hymn No. 420, fifth verse (Beebe's collection):

"Mocked, spit upon and crowned with thorns,
A spectacle he stood."

I had no thought then that I should ever be brought to hope that what he suffered was for my sins. I have but briefly related the scene enacted before the crucifixion.

"Led as a lamb to meet the sword,
He bowed beneath the stroke;
Not one revengeful, angry word
The dear Redeemer spoke."

While upon the cross Jesus said, "Woman, behold thy son." "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, [Mary], and his mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene," the three Marys, implying the three dispensations, the patriarchal, legal and the gospel. They shall look upon me whom they have pierced. Prophets beheld him as a lamb led to the slaughter, and as a sheep dumb before her shearers. They also beheld him as a King that should reign in righteousness. David beheld him as his Shepherd; Isaiah saw him high and lifted up, and John the Baptist said, Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. We behold him as the sufferer and the sacrifice for sins; Abel saw him, when offering the lamb, as the Lamb of God who should come; Abraham saw him when offering Isaac; he rejoiced and was glad. We behold him as our hope, our Advocate with the Father, our Intercessor, our High Priest, as King of kings and Lord of lords. "Behold the man!" He is the giver of all our temporal as well as spiritual gifts, head over the church, life and light of men, yea, chief among ten thousand and the One altogether lovely, the author and finisher of our faith, the mighty conqueror, having triumphed gloriously over death, hell and the grave, and is upon the right hand of God in glory. "Behold the man!"

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

TIAWAH, Okla., Nov. 24, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Please publish in the SIGNS that on Saturday, Nov. 9th, 1912, we organized a little band and called it a church, taking for our authority the words of Jesus as recorded in Matthew xviii. 19, 20, which read: "Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." In our case there were three that agreed to ask the Father in the name of his holy child Jesus that he would bless us in trying to walk together before him in love. Three letters of dismission were presented and read, articles of faith and church covenant were read. After pledging ourselves together in the love of the Lord Jesus, by subscribing to the church covenant we gave one another the right hand of fellowship. While singing a hymn the door of the church stood open, when a sister came forward, who gave us a reason of her hope in the Lord, and was unanimously received as a candidate for baptism, and the next day she was baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Our meeting day is the second Sunday of each month. The meetings are held in the upper room of a schoolhouse in Tiawah, Okla. Any brethren near, or brethren contemplating locating in the old Indian Territory, please call on me, near the above place, or write me. I will consider either a favor.

As ever, in hope of immortal life,

J. F. BEEMAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1912.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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ROMANS VIII. 3.

"AND for sin."

Some time since our dear brother, Elder B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., made a request that we should some time write upon the subject embraced in the above words. We trust that our brother will pardon our delay, and believe that it has not arisen out of any disregard to his request. We do not always find time to write, and sometimes when we do find time we cannot find ourself in a frame of mind to write. With regard to the above words, we have no doubt that brother Coulter has clear views upon them and could write to more profit than we can do, but there has always been a desire in our heart to comply with any such requests when made by those who love the truth, and so we will try to suggest some things that seem to us to belong to the text. In doing so it may not be amiss to call attention in a general way to the whole connection, especially the three verses in the third of which these words occur. To Old School Baptists in particular, these opening words of the eighth chapter of Romans are familiar, and much has been said and written by many concerning them. The whole chapter is a precious treasury of gospel truth. It begins with "no condemnation" and ends with "no separation." There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, and there is no separation from that love which also is in Christ Jesus.

First, then, let us call attention to the truth that there is no condemnation. There has been condemnation to all mankind alike, for all are by nature the children of wrath, the chosen of God to salvation, as well as others. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." All are justly condemned; this every convicted soul comes to know. Like the penitent thief, all quickened sinners confess, We are in the same condemnation, and indeed justly, for we receive the due reward for our sins. But how great the contrast between "condemnation" and "no condemnation." On the one side sin and death, temporal and eternal, on the other side righteousness and life everlasting. On the one side enmity to God, on the other love to him and fellowship with him. The apostle is speaking here specially, not of the work of the atonement, but of the work of grace in the heart. He has been speaking of the justification of the sinner through the atonement in the earlier chapters of this epistle, but now goes on to write of the power of that redemption as felt in the heart by all who believe. Before God, from the time when Jesus died and and rose again, justification was complete and full. But in personal experience the first thing felt is a knowledge of our own condemnation before God, and this abides in the heart until faith reveals the work of salvation through our crucified and risen Redeemer. But when Jesus is revealed to the soul as the sin-bearer who died for us, and who bore away our sins, as did the scapegoat in the type, condemnation is removed from the

conscience. It is this, as we think, of which the apostle is writing. It is in this sense that he declares that there is no longer condemnation, and this view of the matter is emphasized by the use of the word "now" in the text. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation," &c. This is true not of all men, but of those who are "in Christ Jesus." This is true also experimentally. The people of God were chosen in Christ, as we are told, before the world began. But we do not understand the apostle to be here speaking of this eternal choice. It seems to us that he is writing of being in Christ in the same sense as in Romans xvi. 7; there he speaks of two brethren as being in Christ before himself. This must evidently mean that they were in Christ as believers, or in an experimental sense, before himself. They had been called by grace to know and rest in the Lord before he had been thus called, and so in the text under consideration it is our mind that the apostle means those who have come to receive Christ as their Redeemer and their all, and who rejoice in his salvation and rest in him as their everlasting Sabbath. That the apostle is writing of being in Christ in this personal experimental sense, is further shown by the words which follow: "Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit;" that is, the trend of their life, of their thoughts, desires and purposes, is no longer after the flesh and the world, but toward heavenly things, the things of the Spirit. They no longer follow as their true element the works of the flesh, which are adultery, murder, theft, falsehood, the lust of the eye and the pride of life, but after the fruits of the Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, faith, patience, long-suffering, forbearance, &c. All this can be true only of living men, living, we mean, in Christ Jesus. But even the elect of God before being called by grace do walk after the flesh and not after the Spirit, and they continue to thus walk until made one with the blessed Lord in heartfelt, living and loving union with him. From these considerations it seems clear to us that the expression "in Christ Jesus" means not their eternal choice in him by the Father, but as we have said, their being in him experimentally.

This same truth seems to us to be further set forth in the second verse: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Manifestly he does not here speak of the atonement by which we are made free from condemnation and become freely justified forever before God, but rather of the actual presence in the hearts of the redeemed of the Spirit of life which now reigns in them and delivers them from the bondage of corruption, making them free. It has seemed to us that the apostle uses the word "law" in this second verse in the sense of that which reigns; and now the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus reigns. It is because of this inward reign of grace, the grace of eternal life, that believers walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, as declared in the first verse, and it is because of this that he proceeds to say in verse two that we are made free from the law of sin and death. Here also it appears to us that he uses the word "law" in the sense of dominion. The dominion of the Spirit of life hath delivered us from the dominion of sin and of death. Sin is named first, because there can be no deliverance from the reign of death until there is deliverance from the dominion of sin. The apostle does not here mean, as it seems to us, deliverance from the law which held

us in bondage because of sin, and which could not save us, but simply deliverance from the bondage of sin and corruption by the power of this divine life which now reigns in us. It ought to be noted also that Paul in this second verse uses the pronoun "me," thus bringing the matter to their minds as a personal one, which each must have come to know for himself.

The apostle in the third verse uses the word "law" in a different sense from before; he here means the law of God expressed in the commandments, the sum of which is love to God and the neighbor, and according to the apostle, the very law of God, which is holy, just and good, and which commanded all righteousness to be observed by men, but which was not obeyed by men, and which could not compel their obedience, because it was weak, not in itself, but through the flesh, is that which is now fulfilled through our Lord Jesus Christ, not only for us, but "in us." It seems almost incredible that any man can read what the Scriptures testify of the law and of sin, and of the impossibility of any man keeping the law so as to be free from condemnation, and of the truth that salvation is in Christ alone, and still believe that by the deeds of the law, or the works of our own hands, men must be saved, yet it is true that millions of mankind live and die in this delusion, and all men would live and die in this false hope were it not for sovereign and reigning grace revealing to some the truth. The law could not produce obedience to its own commandments. The law can therefore only condemn, it can never save any man; it never can create love to itself in any one. But what the law cannot do Jesus Christ came to do, and through this finished work upon Calvary, and the work of his Spirit in the hearts of men, the righteousness of the law, which was fulfilled first by him, is now fulfilled in his people; that is, love is shed abroad in their hearts, and love is the fulfilling of the law; love is the righteousness of the law. The whole of it, as said before, is summed up in love. The apostle here in all this argument places Christ and his work first, last and all the way along as being that which not only justifies, but which also sanctifies. Christ, according to the apostle, not only died for us to effectually justify us, but he lives in us to consecrate us to the service of God. We do not justify ourselves, and we do not consecrate ourselves. If we work out our own salvation, according to the admonition of the apostle, it is because, and only because, it is God who, through Christ, works in us both to will and to do; that is, it is his work to produce in us the will to do his will, and then it is his work to produce the doing of that which we will to do. Paul said, I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me; and it is equally true that without him we can do nothing. How glorious then, to one who desires to love and serve God, to learn that what he cannot do through the law Jesus did for him on the cross, and does now do for him in his own heart and life.

Now we come to notice especially the particular phrase to which brother Coulter called attention: "And for sin." It has been the mind of some very able men that the meaning of the apostle is as though he had said, And by a sacrifice for sin. It is true indeed that by his sacrifice upon the cross for sin he did condemn sin, as it could not in any other way be condemned, while at the same time, and by the same sacrifice, he magnified the holy law which condemned sin,

but, after all, it has not appeared to us that the words "for sin" will bear this meaning; rather it is our mind that the word "for" has the force of "because of," or "on account of." The word "for" in the original Greek is from *peri*, which literally means "concerning." It was concerning sin that Christ came. It was sin that made it needful that he should come into the world. He came to deal with sin. He came to condemn it in the flesh; that is, in his own flesh, and then he by the Spirit condemns it in our flesh. It was in the flesh that sin had manifested itself and had reigned unto death, and therefore it must be condemned in the flesh. It had always been condemned in heaven, and in the holy Son of God, but that was not enough, it must be condemned just where it had reigned, and so God sent his Son, his eternal Son, in the flesh, that sin might also be condemned there. It was condemned in his holy nature, and it was condemned by him in all his holy life, and then by his death and resurrection from the dead. By the death of the Son of God it is made manifest how hateful to God is sin, and we can never have such a view of its hatefulness as when we are given to see the holy Lamb of God dying for it, and dying in our behalf. The typical sacrifices under the old covenant all set before us that it is "concerning sin" or "because of sin" that Jesus Christ must come into the world in the flesh. All these sacrifices related to sin. There would have been no need of either sacrifice or priest had there been no sin. It is sin that has separated between us and God; nothing else lies between. If we are ever to come to God sin must be put away, but it can never be put away save by death, for death is the penalty pronounced against sin. But if we die we must die eternally; there is no power in us to live again; one must come in our place who has power to lay down his life and power to take it again. Jesus declared of himself that he had this power, and so he died for us and he lives again, and it is the inspired testimony that because he lives all his people shall live also.

These are the simple truths of the gospel. If we reject these truths there is no other way of salvation, and we are without hope in the world. Because sin lay upon us Christ bore sin, because he bears it no longer we shall never bear it again. He bore our sins in his own body on the tree that he might bear them away. If sins could ever be found again (our sins we mean) they must come upon our Daysman before they can find us again; he is forever between us and our sins. But they never can be found again. Did not the God of heaven once say, Thy sins and thy iniquities I will remember no more? And, I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins? If blotted out, where shall the record of them be found again? "If," says the apostle, "when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." He hath by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified. This glorious hope revives our courage by the way, and we need it all along the journey; thank God we have it. C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

CLOSE OF VOLUME EIGHTY.

THIS number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES closes the eightieth volume, and we hope that it has been as comforting and instructive this year as in the years past. Being founded upon sound principles, it has had the support of those who believe and rejoice in gospel truth, and while our subscription list has not increased to any extent during the present year, we are glad to say it has not decreased. Almost daily we hear from some one who reckons the SIGNS a special blessing, because of inability to attend meetings, owing to distance or infirmities. This is a part of our reward for the arduous labors connected with its publication. Then again, we are commended of those who love peace for the way the SIGNS is conducted. It is our desire to contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints, in love. We confess our errors and short-comings, however, and thank our readers for their kind forbearance. Our correspondents have helped greatly to make the paper what it is, and we hope that you all may still feel impressed to write for the SIGNS. All financial assistance has been and is much appreciated, and we are anxious that all should know it.

The postal authorities, according to the new law, are pressing us for better collections, and we therefore ask all who are in arrears to be as prompt in meeting their subscriptions as is possible.

Elder Chick, we think, has written for each number of the SIGNS during the year, but for ourself we cannot say so much. For some reason, or purpose, known to Him "who shuts and no man can open," we have been in the most barren state of mind since we have been identified with the Old School Baptists, not even a "raven" comes to feed us, and without light and inclination it is impossible to come forth. We ask pardon of those who have asked our views during the year to which we have made no reply; only those who have been in the horrible pit and miry clay know what an awful place it is.

Desiring the grace, mercy and peace of God and his Son Jesus Christ upon us all, we say, Farewell for 1912. K.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, there will be preaching in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., by the pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, at the usual hours, the fifth Sunday (29th) in December. All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at the residence of the bride's sister, Fifty-third and Chestnut Sts., Philadelphia, Pa., Thursday, Nov. 14th, 1912, Frederick Haviland, of Wallingford, Pa., and Mrs. Josephine D. Heston, of Philadelphia, Pa.

By Elder J. M. Fenton, at his residence, 5128 Master St., Philadelphia, Pa., Thursday, Nov. 28th, 1912, E. Montague Frid and Marguerite Fenton.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

John Oliver, Va., $1.00; Mrs. Wm. J. Clark, Conn., $3.00; Elder J. M. Fenton, Pa., $3.00; Attie A. Curtis, Maine, $1.00; Mrs. J. W. Parker, Ill., $2.00; H. J. O'Bannon, Va., $1.00; Mrs. John Pettit, N. Y., $3.00; Lester Bell, N. Y., $1.00; E. J. Hurst, Ark., $.75.—Total, $15.75.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Miss Jennie Williams died at her home near Unison, Loudoun Co., Va., Sept. 6th, 1912, aged 67 years. Miss Jennie was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Williams, of Stafford County, Va., and the sister of our much esteemed sister, Eppa Norman, of Ebenezer Church. A large part of her life was spent in the family of brother Norman. She never married, but gave her life (and a most useful one it was) to brother Norman's family. Three of his sons purchased a farm in Loudoun County and moved to it several years ago, Miss Jennie going with them and giving them all the care of a devoted mother, and was repaid by great devotion on their part. She never made a public profession of religion, but always attended the meetings of the Old School Baptist Church whenever she could get there, and gave the brethren assured evidence of the secret but powerful work of that grace which saves sinners. She loved to mingle with the Lord's people and to wait on them, giving them abundant welcome to her home, and I have no doubt often received the reward our dear Savior promised those who give a cup of cold water to a disciple of his because he is a disciple. There can be no doubt she had a sincere love for the truth, and she plainly showed she had a love for those who love the truth, and as sister Norman remarked to me, "She lived the truth." She is sadly missed in the two homes and in the little company at Ebenezer. May the great Comforter bless the mourners.

ALSO,

Mrs. Andrew Norman died at her home near Sterling, Va., Nov. 2nd, 1912, aged 58 years. I assure the readers of the SIGNS that it is a sad duty which causes my name to appear so often in the obituary columns of the paper of late years as I am called upon to record the deaths of those dear ones I have loved so long and esteemed so highly. It would seem that Mt. Zion Church is peculiarly marked in the past few years by death's cruel shafts, both in the church and congregation of those who delight in her ministrations. Sister Norman was another of the little company of whom the world is not worthy. Stricken down without warning on her way to a nearby town on family matters by a stroke of paralysis, she was found unconscious very soon afterward and expired in a few moments. She was with us at the last regular meeting of the church in apparently usual health. It was my privilege to baptize her thirty-three years ago in the fellowship of Mt. Zion Church. Her walk was ever that of a humble, sincere christian, a dutiful and faithful wife to her husband and devoted mother to her children, and a meek and lowly follower of her Lord, both in the world and in the church. Her house was a home indeed to her family and a hospitable home to her brethren. We feel assured our loss is her everlasting gain, but the loss is great, and it is hard to think we shall never see her face again. She leaves a devoted husband to mourn as old age creeps upon him, a grown son and daughter, together with the little band of brethren at Mt. Zion, and also the church at Frying Pan, whose meetings she usually attended and by whose members she was sincerely loved and esteemed. May God comfort the mourners and reconcile us all to his divine will.

J. N. BADGER.

MANASSAS, Va., Nov., 1912.

Mrs. Lois Ballard, widow of Deacon William Ballard, departed this life Sept. 2nd, 1912, in the 80th year of her age. Mrs. Ballard had been a great sufferer from gangrene in one of her feet for nearly two years. Her suffering was beyond description, but she bore it with a marked degree of patience until the end, breathing a prayer that if it were the Lord's will he would call her home. Mrs. Ballard never united with the church, but we feel that she left good evidence of a hope in her blessed Master. During her affliction it was my privilege to visit her, and she always expressed a willingness to go if it were the Lord's will. Their home was always the home of the Baptist brethren and friends, and they always found a cordial welcome. She leaves one son, Jonathan S., beside a large circle of friends and relatives to mourn their loss. May the God of all grace comfort the mourning friends with the assurance that what has been their loss has been her gain.

Her funeral was held from the Baptist meeting-house in Vega, N. Y.; burial was in the cemetery near by.

ALSO,

Mrs. Sarah Bogart, our beloved sister in Christ, was called from this earthly pilgrimage to enter into that sweet sleep in her blessed Lord August 28th, 1912, in the 79th year of her age. Sister Bogart was the widow of Alva Bogart, who died three years ago last May. Sister Bogart suffered a stroke of paralysis several years ago, from which she never fully recovered. This, together with the loss of her dear and devoted husband, preyed upon her, and she being weak in body and mind during the three years of her widowhood, lived a sorrowful and lonely life, anxiously waiting for the summons to call her home. Brother and sister Bogart were widely known among the Old School Baptists, and many can testify to the hospitality of their home during the forty years of their connection with the church. Sister Bogart was received in the fellowship of the Olive and Hurley Church August 29th, 1859, and baptized by Elder Winchel. She lived a faithful and devoted life in the church, always ready to lend a helping hand in times of need. She was kind and generous to all, a woman of sterling qualities, being held in high esteem by all who knew her. She leaves to

mourn their loss one son, Elva, of Kingston, N. Y., beside the church and a large circle of friends and relatives.

Her funeral was held from the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Olive, N. Y., conducted by the writer, and was largely attended, after which her body was laid to rest beside her husband in the Winchel Cemetery to await the second coming of her blessed Lord, who shall change our vile bodies and fashion them like unto his own glorious body. May the grace of God be with all who mourn.

ALSO,

Sister **Adaline Powell** died at her home in Roxbury, N. Y., Sept. 12th, 1912, in the 79th year of her age. Sister Powell suffered a stroke of paralysis several years ago and nearly recovered from the stroke, although never enjoying as good health as before. For some years she had suffered from heart disease, and was able to go out but very little. A few days before her death she suffered the second stroke of paralysis, from which she never rallied so that she was able to speak, although her mind was clear until the very last. Sister Powell was received in the fellowship of the Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury the second Saturday in July, 1873, and baptized the Sunday following by the late Elder J. D. Hubbell, who was pastor of the Second Church of Roxbury at that time, and to whom she was devotedly attached in bonds of love and fellowship. She was the second one to whom Elder Hubbell administered the ordinance of baptism. Sister Powell's life was adorned by an orderly walk, always filling her place in the church and lending a helping hand in times of need. She was loved and respected by all who knew her, and we miss her very much. It was my privilege to visit her a day or two before her death, and as I read to her the seventeenth chapter of John I could see her face brighten as she heard the precious promises contained in that most wonderful chapter. The words of her blessed Savior seemed to fill her soul to overflowing with joy. She leaves a lonely sister and one or two brothers, beside the church, relatives and friends to mourn their loss.

Her funeral was held from her late home in Roxbury, and was largely attended. The writer tried to speak to the comfort of all from Revelation xxi. 1-3. Burial was in the cemetery near the meetinghouse where she worshiped many years. May the Lord in his mercy comfort all who mourn.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Mrs. Mary Ann Frasher, wife of Peter C. Frasher, of Petersburg, Del., died April 17th, 1912, aged 77 years and 6 months, of chronic bronchitis. She was confined to her bed about two months before her death. In her later life she was not strong, and was at home much of the time. She became almost blind the last few years of her life, but lived a most wonderful and exemplary life. For fifty years she walked by the side of her husband as a most faithful and loving wife and mother. She attended the meetings of the Cow Marsh Baptist Church until her health prevented her leaving home. She was a reader of the SIGNS as long as she had eyesight, patient in her affliction. Towards the end of life she expressed the desire to fall asleep and sleep her life away, and this was the manner of the closing of life's day to her. We feel to assure those of the family and friends that from the manifestations in her life of her hope the awakening from that sleep is, to her, far more glorious and beautiful. She never united with the church, but enjoyed that hope in Christ which is an anchor of the soul. She leaves her husband, two sons and two daughters to love her memory.

The writer spoke to the comfort of the bereaved family and friends at the funeral, which was held in the Cow Marsh meetinghouse; interment in the cemetery adjoining. B. E. CUBBAGE.

WYOMING, Del., Dec. 8, 1912.

Mrs. John McFarlane, of Mandamin, Ontario, Canada, died Nov. 12th, 1912, aged about 83 years. Her maiden name was Margaret McIntyre. She was married to John McFarlane Dec. 15th, 1863. Five children (daughters) were born to them, all of whom are living, one in Seattle, one in California, one in Toronto, one in Komoko and one at home. One brother, Deacon Malcolm McIntyre, is living in Komoko. Her husband, with grandchildren and other relatives, are left to mourn the loss of one they dearly loved. The husband is left sad and lonely, bereft of a faithful, devoted companion, one who, with himself, had been a stanch believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace many years, often attending the meeting of the Old School or Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada. She with her husband had also visited the little Beulah Church. The dear daughters will mourn for a loving, tender mother, with all of the other relatives and friends. She has gone to rest eternally with her Savior and Redeemer, having gained the victory over the power of sin, death and the grave, and is now joining in the song of never-ending praise to him who loved her and gave himself a ransom for her, with all of the elect family of God. May the riches of God's grace be mercifully ministered to the dear husband, daughters, brother and all other mourning relatives and friends, is the desire of the unworthy writer, who tried to speak a few words at the funeral. The service was held at the home Nov. 14th, where a goodly number of relatives, neighbors and friends assembled, after which the body was taken to Sarnia for burial. The sting of death is sin, the strength of sin is the law, but thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. D. M. VAIL.

Eliphalet Ketchum, son of the late Deacon Eddy Ketchum, was born near Bucyrus, Crawford Co., Ohio, April 12th, 1835, and came to Marshall County, Ill., in 1852, where he grew to manhood. October 24th, 1861, he was married to Miss Amanda Hiltabrand, who became the mother of two sons and two daughters. In 1863 they settled in Henry County, Ill., where in 1871 he was one of the constituent members of the Barren Grove Church of Old School or Primitive Baptists, having been baptized in Michigan in 1865, by Elder Amos Dillon on profession of his faith in Christ. In 1875 the family moved to Ford County, Ill., where he was in the constitution of a church of the same faith and order. For over twenty years they lived a retired life in Henry, Ill. His death occurred October 19th, at the home of his son John, in Ford County. The burial was beside his wife, in Henry, Oct. 22nd, from the home of his daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Patter. The services were conducted by Elder D. W. Owens, of Hersman, Ill. He leaves two sons, two daughters, grandchildren, three brothers and one sister, beside other relatives. He had been an invalid for nearly forty years. He was a constant reader of the SIGNS and a subscriber for forty-five years; a steadfast friend and devoted lover of the doctrine of free and unmerited grace, as advocated by the Old School Baptists. May his ashes rest in peace until that great and notable day when they that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth and ever be with the Lord. He was my brother in the flesh, and unless I am greatly deceived, also in the Spirit. SMITH KETCHUM.

CHESTER, Nebr., Dec. 1, 1912.

Martha C. Staton, widow of the late Elder Joseph L. Staton, and daughter of the late George and Sallie T. Rounds, was born Feb. 18th, 1844, died Sept. 15th, 1912. She was married Oct. 24th, 1880, by Elder T. M. Poulson, and was also baptized by him. In attempting to write the obituary of our beloved sister I feel incompetent to the task. I had known sister Staton for many years, and a more uniform life I have never known. As a stepmother she could not be excelled. Her stepchildren have often told me they loved her as a mother, and this they proved in every act of kindness as long as she lived. I often visited her during her sickness, and a more patient sufferer I never knew. She was resigned to the will of God, never murmuring or complaining, though at times her suffering must have been intense. We sadly miss her in our meetings at Welsh Tract, but our loss is her eternal gain. May the Lord bless her children and cause them to follow her example, is my prayer. She leaves one daughter, Louisa Johnson, and one son, Henry Staton, also two stepdaughters and one stepson to mourn their loss.

J. G. EUBANKS.

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THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 81. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1913. NO. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BAPTISM, ONE.

"THERE is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."—Eph. iv. 4-6.

This is a very comprehensive Scripture, and embraces the most important beings and things in all God's universe. The writer has presented a holy cluster that is full of sweetness in the highest sense. Notice the order of oneness: one body, one Spirit, one calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father. Here are seven in One, and all seven, one, and each one of the seven, one. These are scriptural numbers. The manner in which the above Scripture is written is evidence itself that it was indited by the Holy Spirit. Not one of these seven is the product of men, nor established in any way whatever by the agency of men. This Scripture presents God and his works. No work of men is admitted in any of these phrases, and for this reason I am led to believe that the writer in speaking of baptism here as he did, did not have reference to christian baptism as it is administered to believers on their profession of faith, praying for admission into the church. As we have seen and known what is called christian baptism there appears a conflict in our minds about its unity. My argument is not to support Arminian theories of what baptism really is, but to appeal to the experience of many of God's saints who have been led astray in their walk by false teachers. All these false teachers that baptize by immersion claim that baptism administered by their ministers to be legal and right. This idea is strenuously taught within their "holy precincts." I have known of some that have "come out of her" who felt at the time of their immersion in water that the Lord had previously taught them they were sinners, and that their only hope was in Jesus, the way, the truth and the life. Believing as they did in Jesus, receiving immersion as their baptism, even at the hands of Arminian ministers, seemed to satisfy their conscience for awhile, but afterwards caused many doubts and heartaches, and perhaps the greatest bar against them from becoming orderly church members where their love centers is the idea of rebaptism. This idea has seemed to be odious even to some of

God's dear saints. Rebaptism has been a mark of hate for centuries. This is one evidence that the Anabaptists or rebaptizers of history were the genuine followers of the Lord. A good proof of their wisdom is shown in Acts xix. in regard to those baptized "unto John's baptism." I feel well satisfied that these disciples never had seen John the Baptist, and perhaps the ones who had baptized these disciples had never seen John. If either of these had seen John they would have heard that there was an Holy Ghost. John baptized with the baptism of repentance, that they (those baptized by John) should believe on him which should come after John, that is, Christ Jesus. All such believers had received of Christ's fullness, and grace for grace. These had legal baptism, but those mentioned in Acts xix., who were ignorant of God's character and power, had a baptism that Paul could not sanction, hence these twelve men "were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." These are not spoken of as being rebaptized, but they certainly were reimmersed. Paul recognized them as being baptized when he first met them, for notice his question to them: "Unto what then were ye baptized?" We might consistently say that these disciples were rebaptized. If we admit that all immersionists baptize, then there is more than one baptism. I knew a lady once who attended our meetings and seemed to have an interest in Baptist preaching. This woman I was told had been dipped nine times, and if she had been admitted a candidate for church membership with us her baptism would have marked the tenth dipping. Along the right and legal line of christian baptism we cannot admit that there is more than one true and right baptism, yet there are many in their outward forms that seem to be genuine. I understand that our Strict Baptist brethren of England of the present day will receive immersion as right baptism from the hand of any Arminian denomination. Perhaps they fear to make more than "one baptism," looking to the fourth chapter of Ephesus, which I am now speaking about. Having said that the phrase, "one baptism," as it occurs in Ephesians iv. 5, does not have reference to christian baptism, I shall try to show what baptism it does mean. First, from the language of Jesus as recorded by Matthew xx. 22, 23: "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with." Second, from the language of Jesus as recorded by Mark x. 38, 39: "Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of: and with the baptism that I am baptized withal, shall ye be baptized." Third, from the language of Jesus as recorded by Luke xii. 50: "But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" From these passages it is evident that his cup of suffering was mostly in the future, and that the baptism which he speaks of was then in the future, and it could not mean the baptism that he had by John in the river Jordan. Then Jesus was alone with John in the river—two persons. But the other which was coming seemed to be dreaded, for, "How am I straitened till it be accomplished!" However, in this baptism he was not to be alone, for he

told his disciples plainly that they should be baptized with his baptism. This baptism, however, was to be a "one baptism." There could not possibly be more than one. Jesus was in a strait till it be passed over; till then he was hampered, restricted, in distress. The cup of suffering preceded the baptism. It is recorded that he prayed to the Father to be relieved of his cup of suffering if it were possible, otherwise willing to be submissive to his Father's will. (See Matthew xxvi. 39; Mark xiv. 36; Luke xxii. 42; John xviii. 11. The salvation of sinners could be accomplished only by the "one baptism." There could be salvation in no other way, except through the waves and billows of death. As the Head did not go through the dark shades of death to cleanse himself, but the purifying of his body, of necessity his body was with him in his death under the law, passed through death with him, mysteriously, raised up on the other side of death and the law, henceforth the standing of his saints is not under the law, but under grace. "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." That this "one baptism" demonstrated the power of God in the hand of Jesus is well sustained by Scripture: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."—John ii. 19. (See Matt. xxvi. 61; xxvii. 40; Mark xiv. 58; xv. 29.) "But he spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them: and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said."—John ii. 21, 22. Though Jesus was the servant of his Father, and servant of his church, his body, he was supreme in all that relates to the redemption of his people. Of his life he says: "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."—John x. 18. He is the appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds. He is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, upholding all things by the word of his power. He by himself purged our sins, none other help was near. This was the work of salvation. "Therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me." This work of salvation was the "one baptism," one overwhelming of the waves of death and one rising up to newness of life. Jesus told his disciples that they should participate with him in that baptism. Is not this the regeneration that his disciples followed Jesus in? Regeneration cannot mean the birth of the Spirit, or the manifestation of the power of God in man, which all men must receive to know the Lord. If it be that, why was Christ in the regeneration? This word "regeneration" occurs but twice in the Scriptures. The literal meaning is not the same as that of a birth, but signifies something preceding a birth. Now I do not want a "far fetched idea" in trying to speak of this subject, but will refer to the only place that any of the apostles have mentioned this word: Titus iii. 5-7. I ask the candid reader, Is there in these three verses any similarity to what is called the birth of the Spirit? "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Savior; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Sal-

vation is the subject discussed by the apostle: the way it was done. It was not done by our works of righteousness. We were saved by his mercy, and by the washing of regeneration, and by the renewing of the Holy Ghost, these three: mercy, washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. These all point to a time when this work was done for us. If in our first knowledge experimentally the Holy Ghost is said to be renewed to us, when did we know him before this? We see that this is inconsistent, and cannot apply to dead sinners in their first knowledge of God. But of Jesus it has been said, he was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. We all seem to understand that the Spirit, or Holy Ghost, was withdrawn that Jesus might die. Scripture points to the fact; a prophet hundreds of years before the occurrence of these things spoke by the Lord, which was repeated by Jesus: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The time of the occurrence of these things was one of the most eventful in the history of the human race. The apostle with careful precision has lined out the remedy for poor fallen men. Mercy, as it were, moved the Lord to look on them with favor in sending his only Son to earth. He purged them from their sins by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior. This renewing of the Holy Ghost was shed on us through Jesus, not directly, individually to us, but through the Lord in his great work in rising from the dead. Abundantly would signify sufficient for all time to come, amply for all her needs. He is head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. There is certainly a sense in which when the Head was blessed by the "oil of gladness" above his fellows, they were blessed in and with him. The renewing of the Holy Ghost on this occasion is like the precious ointment that descended upon the head of the high priest, "that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." That being justified by the grace of the Lord Jesus in his work of regeneration, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life, and this eternal life was promised before the world began. Thus I have viewed this subject for many years.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., Nov. 15, 1912.

THORNTON, Texas, Nov. 12, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have permission from brother O. B. Hickerson, of Nashville, Tenn., to send you the inclosed letter for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, provided you think it worthy of space.

Yours in hope,

S. M. CARLTON.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Nov. 1, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER CARLTON:—Your good, interesting letter to me was read with much interest and edification, though from a stranger in the flesh, but from the fruits of the Spirit of God, as I trust, through his revelation I can claim spiritual relationship with you. The great High Priest of our profession, who suffered death in doing the will of the Father, humbled himself, was meek and lowly in heart, was betrayed by wicked hands and was crucified in the fulfillment

of the Scriptures, is now at the right hand of the Father making intercession for his bride. He represented his church, which was chosen in him before the foundation of the world. In no other way can poor mortal man enter into the portals of peace, except through the blood of the everlasting covenant, which was purposed in God's wisdom before time. The wisdom of man is foolishness with God; worldly religionists know not the path that leads to peace and happiness, as they claim a work of conditions upon their part. The Scriptures teach that man's works are nothing but filthy rags in the sight of God. God knows man's thoughts, which are evil in his sight. There is none that doeth good, no, not one, saith the Scriptures. God hath limited the bounds of man as well as the deep waters. Man's life is in God's hand, and he cannot go beyond the bounds. Men are counted as nothing, and less than nothing, as grass grows up and soon fades away, so all created things are to return to dust from whence they came. Nowhere in the Scriptures does the will power prove they are justified before God when they are counted less than nothing in the sight of God. Paul instructed the Philippian brethren to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Also the Ephesian brethren: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." You see, my brother, it is not man's will, but of God that sheweth mercy. So all the wisdom of worldly, progressive, pharisaical religionists is not acceptable to God, as they have to make an offering of their good works. Cain's offering was not accepted in the sight of God. The prophet proclaims, O Lord, I know it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. I know this poor worm of the dust does not know the right way; may it please God to direct my steps, that my walk may be acceptable in his sight. I feel to know my sufficiency is of God alone. I am living in doubt and fear, not knowing whether I am in the true faith or not. I feel like the poor and afflicted little ones, mourning, desiring the robe of Christ's righteousness. I am living with the desire that if it be the Lord's will to keep me humble before him in love, I may love him more and serve him better.

Dear brother, your good letter was a feast to me, with reference to God's dealings with man. I am glad you felt to write to a poor, unworthy one, as I feel myself to be. Your discourse was food to one who desires the crumbs from the Master's table. I would be glad to meet you, but as we are both advanced in age, and knowing our time is in God's hand, we cannot tell what a day will bring forth. I will do as you wished, that your letter be sent to the SIGNS for publication. The religion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is the greatest subject preached to a poor, quickened sinner, desiring to know Christ and his righteousness, and nothing but God's grace can show it to us through his revealed will. At the time of the division, in 1832, there was a beloved brother by the name of Gilbert Beebe called to preach, as was Aaron to go forth and speak the true oracles of God, and lead the true followers of Christ in peace and quietness. I was blessed with the privilege of seeing and hearing him preach. He stood up boldly

in the defence of truth, giving God all the praise, also explaining the union of Christ and his church, and that there is no power above God, that he is absolute, self-existing, having declared the end from the beginning, &c. He stood firm upon the teachings of the revealed will of God. He founded a religious periodical called the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, with the motto ascribed, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," which has stood the test and passed through perilous times in the defence of God's truth, as did Paul. The Lord blessed his labors down to old age in that glorious cause, preaching and teaching the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things, and that God is unlimited, having all power in heaven and upon earth. He limits the bounds of all his works to go thus far and no farther. He is not a God of chance, but of purpose. When it pleased God to call our beloved brother home the SIGNS was still published by his two sons, William and Benton Beebe. Since they were called home it has been published by brother Benton Beebe's widow, and son Gilbert. I hope you will exert yourself in your old age to get a good list of subscribers for the SIGNS, as it has stood the test. There are some claiming the name of Old School or Primitive Baptists who are limiting the Lord of glory; some have gone so far as to declare non-fellowship for the unlimited predestinarian Baptists. The SIGNS is standing firm upon the doctrine that was preached of old by the prophets and apostles as they were taught by the revealed will of God, and also in shewing the suffering of the lowly Lamb of God. The SIGNS has two able editors, Elders F. A. Chick and H. C. Ker. They are both dearly beloved, and with humility of spirit desire to know the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Also able correspondents, who declare the whole counsel of God, and not upon their works, nor upon conditions for reward, but believe that Christ is their reward, as the flesh profiteth nothing.

I will send your letter to the SIGNS. I am glad to know you have faith to believe that the Old School Baptists are the true church of God. They are a people despised by worldly religionists; it is through the mercy of our heavenly Father that we are not consumed.

Now, dear brother, when you read this imperfect letter remember it is from a poor old sinner, saved by the grace of God if saved at all, as I have nothing of myself to offer that would be acceptable unto One who rules all things after the counsel of his own will. I would be glad to read another letter from you. We are admonished to speak often one to another. May God in his mercy bless and comfort you, is my sincere prayer.

Your brother, I hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Dec. 13, 1909.

MRS. ADA A. CHADBOURNE—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I was glad to receive your short letter, although it was almost all postscript, and to hear from you again. Sister Attie's letter, eighteen years ago, carried me back to the days when she knew no sorrow, but walked constantly in the light, and it was good to witness the reflection of her joy in the Lord as she wrote and spoke to the brethren. I often go over those days, which I knew so much about, for our correspondence was almost constant for many years, and I never received an unhappy letter from her. Since those days the shadows have fallen upon her, so that while she comes, in some respects, nearer to her brethren, yet it has been hard for her. The blessed

Lord has guided her as has been most for his glory and her good, both in the happy years that were hers and in the more troubled ones that have followed since. She has been and is a dear child of God. Our correspondence has not been very frequent of late years, but I prize the memory of the former letters still. I would be more than glad to hear from her again as frequently as in former years.

I felt glad to see your handwriting, and to receive the expressions of fellowship which you wrote. I think of no place more often than North Berwick. How many happy days I have spent there. How dear and delightful have been the meetings from year to year. I can never forget that day when I stood up before the church there and tried to tell something of the hope I had in the Lord. I can recall my thoughts before and afterwards, my doubts and fears, how I could hardly believe that I could be received at all, and my wonder that Deacon Staples should be the one to move that I should be received, and that Elder Beebe could come to me and give me his hand and call me brother, as he did directly afterward, and how bright was the day of my baptism, and how peaceful I felt as I arose from the watery grave. I recall that I said quietly to Elder Quint, that I felt at peace, before we came up out of the water, and I told Aunt Mary so, after I had changed my clothing, as she came and kissed me and asked me about it. I remember, too, your face, with some others who sat just a little from me, and the tears in the eyes of some as I finished what I had to say. I could hardly bring myself to leave there at the close of the meeting; it seemed as though it would almost break my heart, for I did not expect to meet in worship with the Lord's people again for a whole year. Forty-six years have passed away since that time, and my faith has not changed, I hold to the same precious doctrine that I loved then, and my hope rests still alone in the finished work of the dear Redeemer. The Lord has blessed me with an abiding hope, although I have many ups and downs of feeling, and at times have been much cast down. My whole life must be summed up in this, "a sinner saved by grace." But one by one I have missed old friends whom I loved as the forty-six years have passed by. I can but be sad when I visit North Berwick, as I think of the dear ones whom I shall see on earth no more, yet there remains one blessed comfort, viz., the sure and certain hope that in that other and better world we have the assurance of meeting and joining in worship together, worship that shall never end. I find myself thinking more and more about the future hope as the years go on. Were it not for that hope what should we do? "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." But the peculiar joy of that hope is, that it embraces all eternity. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall we like him; for we shall see him as he is." When I feel the vileness of this body, as I do, there is an abiding consolation when I remember that this vile body shall be changed into the likeness of his glorified body. How great have been the mercies of God in the past, and how infinite they will be in the world of glory.

But I must close, though I could keep on writing much longer did time permit. I thank you for your kind remembrance of me. Now may God bless you both in your older years, as he has in the past. My family are all reasonably well now.

I remain with kind regards to you and all yours, your brother,

F. A. CHICK.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Oct. 28, 1910.

MRS. ADA A. CHADBOURNE—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—To say that I have greatly enjoyed your letter to me but very faintly expresses the matter. As I read it I think I realized a deep feeling of gratitude to God for you that he had so wonderfully blessed you, and with a deep feeling of fellowship for you in the narrative which you have given of your experience, and your dream, if it may be called a dream. The dear Lord does sometimes give his children special seasons of blessing. He does not always, indeed he does not often, place them upon the mount of transfiguration, nor often catch them up into paradise; nor does he vouchsafe to all his children such exalted seasons as he does to some, now and then. I remember for many years I thought, O could I only be favored as was Paul when he was caught up into paradise, or as were the three in the mount of transfiguration, I would feel more sure than it seemed that I could be now that I did indeed know the fellowship of the things of God. But I came to think afterward of the language of Peter when he described that scene in one of his epistles, and then said, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place." It would seem that nothing could be sure if that scene upon the mount was not sure. But the apostle declares that the word of prophecy is still more sure; it is as though he should say, Our senses may deceive us, but the word of God cannot lie. These seasons are but for a moment or two, and then pass away. These seasons seem to me to be like the special feast days, like Thanksgiving or Christmas days and dinners, but the word of God comes to be our daily bread which we live upon three hundred and sixty-five days in a year, and three times each day. We specially remember the Christmas dinners, birthday dinners and company dinners, but, after all, we live, thrive, labor and enjoy in the strength of the daily bread which is given us. Paul was never caught up to the third heaven but once. The three disciples were never in the mount of transfiguration but once, and the other disciples, so far as we are told, never were caught up as was Paul, nor in the mount as were the three, but they all were alike disciples, and all alike knew and loved the truth and the blessed Lord, and they all lived upon the daily bread given them every day as they had need. To me has never been given such seasons as have been given to some, and I used to be greatly troubled about it, thinking that I could not be a disciple at all, else it would be otherwise with me. But this does not trouble me in that sense now, for I believe that even to me has been given the daily bread, and it has been given to you all the way along, and now the Lord has given you this one special season of blessing. There have been in my own past life some special seasons of felt nearness to God, of which I love sometimes to speak, and often think. I would not give up the memory of them for all the world, and believe that I shall remember them and praise God for them in the world of glory, but most of the time I seem to live along from hand to mouth, as it were, receiving here a little and there a little, just sufficient for my need. I think this is better than "now and then" to have a season of feasting, and then starve for days and weeks, yet it is good to have the daily bread, and then along with it now and then some glad seasons of rejoicing to remember with special distinctness afterwards. I remember the meeting at North

Berwick with pleasure and comfort of mind. Among the pleasures were seeing you and brother Chadbourne. Happy days I have spent with you all in the years that are past. I believe they were foretastes of heaven. I have never been worthy of them. How full of blessings has been my life in nature, and in the church. Mrs. Chick joins me in sending love to you. Remember me to all who may inquire for me. May the blessing of a covenant-keeping God be with you both.

I remain your brother in the hope of the gospel,

F. A. CHICK.

[THE foregoing letters were written to sister Ada Chadboune, and as she requests their publication, we herewith give them to our readers.—ED.]

PAGE, Okla., Oct. 15, 1912.

BELOVED EDITORS:—I also wish to address the dear household of faith, who are the dearest people on earth to me. Well, I have changed localities, and it seems, dear ones, if ever I needed the dear SIGNS it is now, for it seems as though I am among the dead. There is no church here, and very few Baptists, and even they seem to be strangers to the doctrine of absolute predestination, and it also seems that they do not realize these things enough to talk about them; it seems that I am left all alone. You cannot realize such a condition unless you have had the same experience. Times were so hard where we had been living that it seemed I was compelled to go somewhere else to get work, but in my former home I was blessed with the privilege of meeting with the church once a month, and I always filled my place there, except when providentially hindered, and I rejoice yet that the Lord did send such a blessing to such an unworthy worm of the dust as I feel to be. We had a dear pastor, Elder A. Springer, for six years, who always came well shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, and preached Jesus the way and the truth and the life. There is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. I feel in my new home as one cast off and shut away from the church, which was a sweet home to me, and a place of rest. It almost broke my heart to give it up, but I realize that the Lord doeth all things well, and all things work together for good to them that love God and who are the called according to his purpose, and I fully believe that this will be for good to me if I am one of that number. It is not always that we are permitted to see the hand of God in these things, but God is his own interpreter, and he will make it plain. Sometimes the bud has a bitter taste, but the flower is sweet.

Now to those who have assisted me in paying for the SIGNS, I will say, tongue fails to express the thankfulness of heart which I feel for your kindness, but I realize that every good and perfect gift cometh from God, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. I realize that he has given you, dear ones, the gift to comfort others, and without him we can do nothing. I hope that some day he will allow me the privilege to bestow upon you some favor in return. I know there is no people like our Father's family, but I come so far short of filling my place that it makes me fear and tremble to even think of claiming relationship with such a dear people. But to him only can I go, he has the words of eternal life. Where his people go I long to go, and where they are buried I want to be buried, for their God is my God. If I could this morning but shake

hands with some of the loved ones how glad I would be; but I am expecting that some time all the redeemed of the Lord will be gathered together, then we shall see Jesus as he is and be like him. When I shall awake with his likeness then shall I be satisfied, and this will not be because of any good works that I have done. God's people are not of the working class, who see with natural eyes, but they have hope. "But hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." God's people cannot see their own good works as do others, but still they are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. We walk by faith, and it is said that faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. In the beginning was the Word, and this Word was made flesh and dwelt among men, and they beheld his glory, the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. If we love him we shall also love those who are begotten of him, and our hope is grounded and rests in that love. It is Christ in you the hope of glory, and this hope is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and enters into that within the vail, where Jesus the forerunner is for us entered, and we are sealed with this seal: "The Lord knoweth them that are his." I am not afraid that any of them will be lost, for Jesus has saved them with an everlasting salvation; he finished the work of redemption when he arose from the dead, and they all at last shall be safely housed in heaven with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob.

Well, dear editors, your card was forwarded to me from Romulus, and I was glad indeed to hear from you. I have been waiting since we moved to find out whether we should locate here, so will you now change my paper from Romulus to Page, Okla? I will say, dear editors, Continue writing your good words of comfort to the scattered sheep of the Lord's pasture, and may it be the Lord's will for you to still feed the little flock in the future as in the past, and when he sees fit to remove you from among them may it be said to you, Well done, good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord. It will be said of you, They are dead, but their works follow them. I have read much from the pen of brother Beebe, and rejoice in it, and think many times while reading after him, He is dead, yet he liveth. It encourages me to read the editorials in the SIGNS, for they all are taught of Christ, and are traveling the same road, and all serving the same God, and all singing the same song, and blessed are they that know the joyful sound of the gospel. Many are traveling over this country to give the sound of the gospel, but they fail utterly, for they have not been qualified of God; they have not received the white stone which, the Scriptures say, is given unto them that love him. I believe that this stone is the love of God, and none know that love save those who are born of God. I may be deceived, but if I am in his Son Jesus Christ no power can separate me from his love. What wonderful love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God, and if sons, then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ.

But I must close. Pardon this lengthy letter, and pray for me in my lonely condition. Please forgive all mistakes. May

the Lord be with you all, is my prayer. Farewell in the Lord.

If not deceived, I remain your little sister, saved by grace if saved at all,

ELLA DAVIS.

A FEW CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TRUE CHURCH OF GOD.

TO-DAY I am housed up on account of ill health, and feel a desire to write a few words for the dear readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I shall now begin, and will write just such thoughts as come into my mind. The church is spoken of in many ways, and several things are used in comparison, such as garden, city, street, beloved, woman, &c. Jesus said to Peter, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The storms of persecution and all the combined powers of antichrist cannot prevail because of its foundation. There is an idea in the world that when Christ said, "Upon this rock," &c., that was the beginning of the church, that the true church had had no beginning until that hour, and that Peter's confession was what it was founded upon, but a little further searching will convince them differently. "This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness, with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sinai, and with our fathers; who received the lively oracles to give unto us."—Acts vii. 38. The law came to them by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, and as the church of old received the law by Moses, so the faithful gospel church was set up by Jesus. Hence Moses delivered unto the church under the law covenant its laws, so now the church in the gospel day receives its lively oracles of the doctrine and order in the gospel of grace.

I will now go back and find a few types of each, the law covenant and grace. Abel as a figure of the faithful church, and the first type of the shed blood of Christ, was exemplified in the animal which was offered by Abel and was accepted of the Lord, in which he (the Lord) smelled a sweet savor. In the course of time Noah, a preacher of righteousness, (not the law) (a figure of the gospel day) preached the righteousness of Jesus, the anointed of the Father, just before the destruction of the old world. The ark was a type of Jesus, and those saved in it represented the chosen of God in Jesus. Jesus "went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein a few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. The like figure whereunto, baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."—1 Peter iii. 19–21. Then the conscience is first made good by the application of Jesus' righteousness imputed to the heirs of promise. Hence a legal subject for baptism is one whose conscience has been made good. Thus the baptism here spoken of is not to make the conscience good, but the answer of a good conscience toward God. In all the types and figures of the old Scriptures we see the doctrine of the true church very plainly. In the case of Abraham we find a close figure of the faithful church, as Abraham was called out from among his people in the flesh into a land he knew not of; thus he believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness. In the call was power, thus showing in his obedience where the power to obey came from. The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob never makes a call

upon conditions; when he calls they come, for the power comes from the same source as the call. Therefore we have the same God as ruled in the days of the law dispensation. The gospel was as clearly demonstrated in two dispensations passed as it is now, and we can see it in the lives of the men of God, such as Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joshua, Caleb, Gideon, Sampson, Daniel, and a host of others which could be mentioned, but suffice it to be, as time and space would fail to make mention of all the witnesses of the Lord's everlasting doctrine of salvation by grace, both for time and eternity. Jesus taught his disciples that they were dependent upon him for all things, and he taught also the doctrine of unconditional election, the doctrine of predestination, salvation by grace. The prophets of old preached it, Paul taught it; hear him: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."—Eph. i. 3-5. He assigns a reason for it, and no man can come up with scientific wisdom and say only the apostles were elected and predestinated to life eternal, for he said, "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he [God] hath made us accepted in the Beloved," i. e., has accepted us in Jesus. A careful search of a reader, even with a limited amount of spiritual understanding, will show that this doctrine did not originate among a few Old Primitive Baptists a few centuries ago, but has been the doctrine ever since the days of Abel. Where can one hear this doctrine preached now in the so-called enlightened religious age? It is preached only by Old School Baptists. What do those of the world say of it? They call it hard doctrine. So did they call it when Jesus preached it. Who can hear it? "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." The world says the word "predestinate" only occurs in the Scriptures two or three times. Yes, but the doctrine is found all the way from Genesis to the last verse of Revelation, all written by inspiration, the shalls, and purposes, and determinate counsel, and foreknowledge, are found in most every verse in the Bible, so we should take it as wholesome doctrine. May it please the God of all grace to reveal it to every subject of mercy.

J. B. BOWDEN.

FALLS CITY, Texas.

DRAIN, Oregon, Sept. 18, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I herewith send you some letters from our dear aged brother Miller, for you to dispose of as you deem best. We surely do appreciate his letters. Were all our brethren as faithful to the church as he is I would feel thankful. He is past ninety years of age. If you have room to publish these letters we would like for him to see them.

Your little sister in hope of eternal life,
S. MORNINGSTAR.

JULIAN, Cal., July 30, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN OF THE COAST FORK REGULAR PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH:—If the Lord will, I will try to report once more to my church, the church that Christ built upon the rock, the rock that will stand against all opposition.

May this find you all in good health, and in full fellowship one with another; this is my prayer. A church cannot stand or prosper divided against itself, and I hope and pray that the Lord may be with you in the fullness of his Spirit. May God cause all who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness to flock to the fold and take up their cross and be baptized in the full fellowship of the church. Dear friends, do not delay in order to get better. I held off for sixty years to get better, and all the time got worse. In keeping His commandments there is blessing and reward.

I have just received the SIGNS for July 15th, with all its good editorials and correspondence. O how much I did appreciate the good letter of our dear sister Morningstar. She has written my thoughts. May God bless her. May she live long to write many such good letters. O that I could only have the privilege of meeting with all the dear church, to have one more good hearty handshake with them all, but God's will and not mine be done. My circumstances are such that it is out of my power to be with you. I must accept the inevitable, and receive God's promise that he will be with all them that love him. I had the blessed privilege of meeting with a dear brother and sister Fish from Illinois two days ago, and had a good christian handshake with them. Our meeting was of only ten or fifteen minutes' duration, but what a happy meeting it was to me. Dear brethren, just think of it, this is the first brother of our faith I have met since I left my dear church. Can you wonder that I want to hear from you often? What a comfort it is to me to hear from the brethren. I received a good letter from the Little Flock Church, at Riverside, Cal., and it was a great comfort to me. It gave me assurance that the little remnant of despised ones is not done away with, as has been often predicted by the fashionable churches. God has never left himself without witnesses, and he never will. We have his word for that, and his word will stand to all eternity. What a sure prop this is to our weak and trembling frames. Our God loved us before we loved him, and sent his only Son into the world to save us while we were yet sinners. Shall we not thank him for every blessing that we receive at his hands? We are commanded to pray, and to give thanks at all times, and he has given us commandment how to pray; he said: "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Let us give to God all the glory, for all the glory belongs to him. We can do nothing within ourselves, but we must ask all in the dear Redeemer's name. Ask and ye shall receive. But we are told that we must ask in faith if we expect to receive what we ask. If we lack wisdom let us ask of God, who giveth liberally to all his people, and does not upbraid them. If we have not faith we are none of his. Without faith our hope is vain, for through faith we are saved by grace. It is not of works, lest any man should boast. The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, and it is written that the just shall live by faith. How blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. We are all sinners while in the flesh, and come short of salvation by the law. God sent his Son into the world to atone for our sins by his death, and to justify us by his resurrection, and he has said, Of all that the Father has given me I shall lose nothing, but will raise it up

again at the last day. Then we shall be with him and see him as he is. Let us then give thanks for all the blessings that we receive from him.

Now, dear brethren, please pardon me for this weak effort and poor writing, as my hand is unsteady.

From your unworthy brother in hope,
S. S. MILLER.

JULIAN, Cal., August 25, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN OF THE OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN CHURCH AT COAST FORK:—The time has arrived for my regular monthly report to my dear church. Yes, my brethren, the only home that I can claim on this earth is the church of Jesus Christ, the true Vine, of which we are the branches. Now if we are the true branches we are in Christ, and if in him we are the heirs of his kingdom, and if so, let us walk that our light may so shine that the true saints, seeing how we walk, may glorify God. If, on the other hand, we are not Christ's, there is no light in us at all. We feel at times that there is no light in us at all, but let us not be discouraged, for our God has declared that he will be with us to the end, and without trials and tribulations we would forget our God. The tempter is ever ready to tempt us, therefore let us watch and pray our Lord that he will not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for his is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen. So, dear brethren, all the honor and the glory shall be his, for we can do nothing within ourselves. If we lack knowledge we must ask of God, who giveth liberally. We ought to remember that we are under obligation to the Giver of all good for all the blessings that we receive, and all of them we receive at his hand, therefore let us do our duty in attending the church as much as in us lies. As for myself, I know that I fall short of my duty in a great many things.

I have received a copy of the minutes of the church for several years back, and also of the association, from the hand of our dear sister, Icie D. Walker, for which she has my thanks, and may God bless her for being so thoughtful of an old brother. I appreciate the favor more than gold, believing that no one but a child of God could have written such a good letter. I know that our dear sister will think of me often, though she has not seen me for eight long years. God's people never forget one another; no, never. The salvation of all God's people is sure. I will quote a few portions of God's word to show why it is so. The Arminians claim that all the world may be saved if only money enough is given them, but Jesus said, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Now, brethren, how can any man, or set of men, claim that if they will obey and do their part they shall be saved, and say that since God has done his part it now rests with them to do their part? Where in all this is the sovereignty of God? It is a blessed thing to know that all for whom Christ died are already saved. In the Scripture quoted above Christ calls his people sheep, and those who are not

his people he calls goats, and Christ never died for the goats. No, with all the gold between here and Ophir a sheep cannot be made out of a goat, neither can all the gold save a soul for whom Christ did not die. This cannot be denied, for it is all Bible truth. I do not see how one who has ever been brought from darkness to light can see this in any other way. Any one who preaches any other doctrine than Christ and the apostles taught preaches heresy, and all such should be shunned. Dear brethren, let us hold fast to the old paths and the old landmarks which Christ and the apostles gave us to go by. Let us do this in spite of all the persecution that the world may heap upon us. The little flock has stood fast from the days of Christ's first appearing on earth, and will stand fast until his second appearing.

Now remember me if this letter should be my last, for I am very weak.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

S. S. MILLER.

BELLINGTON, W. Va., Sept., 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I will try to write you of some of my trials from childhood up to the present time, if the Lord will direct my mind. My whole life has been one of many trials, yet God has kept me through all of them. My father died when I was quite young, and left my mother with six small children to do for, and as she was not able to keep us together, we had to be scattered. I can remember how bitterly I cried. I would see other children who had homes and parents, and would think, O if only my father could have lived. Sometimes I had very cruel treatment. When I was about eleven years old I went to stay with my grandparents. My grandfather was an Old School Baptist, and he took the SIGNS, and I would often read it. I loved to read the experiences, for I believed in the Old Baptist doctrine. My grandmother was a Methodist, and would say to me, "I do not know what makes you such an old Hardshell, when all your sisters and brother belong to the Methodists." But I believe the Lord was guiding me from my earliest recollection. I had a dread of death, and of the end of the world, and would often in my childish way try to pray and to be good, so that the Lord would save me, but it soon seemed to me that I was doing wrong; I thought that the devil was watching to devour me. When I was about seventeen years old my grandfather died, and I was again left without a home. Then it seemed that I had no friends nor home. O the sad days that I passed through no tongue can tell. I wished that I were some little bird, or some beast, so that I would not be wandering over the world and have no place to stay, and if I were only a christian I would travel on toward my home in heaven, where I should always stay. I was so distressed it seemed that I could not live. It seemed to me that the sun did not shine right, and when I walked on the ground it seemed to be sinking under me. I would try to pray, but it seemed the more I tried the worse I became. O my wretched condition! I would gladly have exchanged places with some creeping thing of the earth, if I could have done so, for I thought that they had no soul to be banished, while I had. One day I went out a little way from the house, and it seemed that I could not live, and I said, O Lord, what is the matter with me? Then these words came very forcibly to my mind, "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." During that time I would look at the sun as it would be going down at

night, and never expect to see it rise again. Some of the Old School Baptists came to see me, and I thought, If I could talk as they do I would be glad. I finally gave up and said, O Lord, I am in thy hands, do with me as thou pleasest. Then it seemed as if my burden was almost gone. One day as I lay upon a sick bed I was thinking of the Baptists, and it seemed that there was a greater love in my heart for them than I had ever felt before. I wondered what it meant, and these words seemed spoken to me: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." It seemed to me that I did love them and wanted to be with them, but I felt too little and unworthy, still I could say with Ruth, Entreat me not to leave thee, nor return from following after thee. Soon I went to the church and was received and baptized. I felt to rejoice, and thought my troubles over and all my sorrows gone. I thought that joy and peace and pleasure would be my lot, but I soon found many doubts and fears, and often would ask, Am I wrong? One thing I know: if I am saved it is by nothing good that I have done; it is through grace, and grace alone. I have eight children, but none of them belong to my church. O that the Lord would direct them in the way of truth and righteousness; but none save God can unstop the deaf ears and open the blind eyes. I would love to take the SIGNS, but am very poor so far as this world's goods are concerned, but I have a little hope that when done with this world I will have a home not made with hands.

Dear brethren, if it will not crowd out better matter you may publish this in the SIGNS.

There is a place of peaceful rest,
Where we shall be forever blest;
Our bodies lie beneath the sod,
Our spirits then return to God.

O may I then with them be found,
When the last trump of God shall sound;
And worship at Immanuel's feet,
Where all our joys will be complete.

O blessed thought, that we shall rise
To meet our Savior in the skies,
And ever there with him to be,
And peace and joy forever see.

O, Lord of love, look down to-day,
And guide me in the holy way,
And keep me in the narrow path
That leads to joy and peace at last.

There a place forever blest,
Where all the weary pilgrims rest;
They rest in their eternal home,
And never more on earth shall roam.

O what a meeting that will be,
When we in heaven our God shall see,
And ever there with him shall dwell,
And never hear the sound, farewell.

That awful day is drawing nigh,
When all that are alive must die;
Some go to their immortal home,
And some to their eternal doom.

Now I will close lest I weary you. May God be with you and bless you.

Your unworthy sister, I hope, in Christ,

ELIZABETH PHILLIPS.

TOUCHET, Wash., Dec. 12, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I received a letter a few days ago from brother Mayfield, which I have read with much interest and comfort, and have felt that it might be of interest to other brethren as well, so I send it to you for publication, if you see proper to use it. Elder Mayfield was the first minister I formed acquaintance with here in the west, about thirty-one years ago, and we have kept up an intimate correspondence ever since. We regard him as one of our ablest ministers in the west, and he is much beloved by the brethren generally.

Yours in hope,

ELGIN, Oregon, Dec. 8, 1912.

DR. R. CUMMINS—DEAR BROTHER:—I have just been reading the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of Paul's letter to the Romans, and the words of the eleventh verse of the thirteenth chapter claimed my attention: "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." Then he goes on and says: "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light." You and I, too, are not ignorant that the "night" (which it seems here the apostle Paul represents as this time state) is well nigh past with us, and the dawning of the day is at hand. Surely this has been to me a walking much in darkness and gloom. The old prophet says: "And it shall come to pass in that day [gospel day], that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: but it shall be one day, which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light." What can this mean: "that at evening time it shall be light"? It seems to me it means that as we grow older we shall walk more in the light—that our pathway shall be lighter as the day approaches. If so, I fear that I am not in the way, for certainly my experience is still walking in darkness. But if it could mean the more light one has the more darkness is seen and felt, then there would be more hope for me, and the language of the Lord, given by the old prophet, suit me well: Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? Let him put his trust in the Lord and stay upon his God. Now this is my own experience, but can this felt darkness be the result of light? Paul says: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." It seems to me this light here is given that we might have the knowledge to see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and I believe this shining in our heart reveals the exceeding sinfulness of sin that dwells in our hearts, which causes us to loathe ourselves and repent in dust and ashes, and at the same time gives us that knowledge of God's mercy and grace in "the face of Jesus Christ," and shows him to be the way, the truth and the life, and that no man cometh unto the Father but by him. Here is a great mystery: God commanded the light to shine out of darkness. It does not say commanded the light to shine in darkness, no, but out of, so it is a miracle that this light should ever shine in the poor sinner's dark heart, which is darkness itself; and here this light (of life) gives the knowledge of the glory of God, and always shines in the face of Jesus Christ, and we hear the Father say, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. We see him as the sin-bearer, yes, who bare our sins in his own body on the tree, for it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief, and now says, He shall see his seed, shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied. Then may it be that the light grows brighter unto the perfect day. All this shining in the face of Jesus Christ reveals more and more our darkness and dependence on that grace that saves to the uttermost, yes, that grace that could save a wretch like me. So we can here sing, "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound! that saved a wretch like me." But how much greater reason will we have when clothed in his righteousness, and mortality swal-

lowed up of life, and made like unto him; will we not be as David said, satisfied when we awake with his likeness? "By the grace of God." O that we could awake out of sleep, as we realize the night is far spent and the day at hand, but without him we can do nothing; Jesus, only Jesus, can do helpless sinners good.

I have tried to follow my mind with my pencil, and have enjoyed the meditation, though I have poorly expressed thoughts. We are all as well as usual, and hope you are all well.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

LIBERTY, Mo., Dec. 15, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It is through the tender mercy of our covenant-keeping God that I am spared to write you once more. I have been taking the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for over fifty-two years, and want to again renew my subscription, as it is out to-day, and I do not want to give the paper up as long as I can see to read it. I also send one dollar to help support it. I hope we may "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, (2 Cor. xi. 1, 2,) said, "Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me. For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." I have been, I hope, espoused to that one husband for many years, and do not feel that in my old age I want any other. I had rather suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Dearly loved fellow-travelers through this vale of tears, let us press on, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" When I look back over my past life, over every act and every breath, I can only cry, "Unclean, unclean." Thanks be to God, it is by his grace I have been kept through all the changes in this unfriendly world. Love to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ.

An old sinner,

RICHARD WALLER.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., Nov. 30, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—I will once more try to address you to let you know I am yet on the shores of time, waiting and longing for my deliverance from this sad world of sorrow to my blessed inheritance, which I trust is reserved for me in heaven, and which fadeth not away. All is vanity and vexation here; all is perishable here in time, but the dear, precious hope anchors the soul and enters within the vail which is beyond mortality. Now I desire to address my people in the Pocatalico Association who know me and have been to my once peaceful, happy home. The time has come when I cannot invite you to come to the Falls of Guyand to preach, or say, Brother McClanahan, Bird and Melton, come to my table and eat. No, dear brethren, the sad time came this fall for me to break up housekeeping and go and stay with my brothers and one dear old sister. O how very sad is the thought that I have to be a wanderer the remainder of my life. When living alone I enjoyed all my precious privileges that "home sweet home" affords: reading, prayer and praise, sweet meditation and communion in the Holy Spirit.

Dear editors, if you can give this sad, short letter a little corner in the SIGNS I will be glad, that my brethren may know about me. As my time expires with December, 1912, discontinue the paper to me for the present. I hope if I live through the winter I will be so situated as to take it again. Dear ones who may read this, pray for all such as I in tribulation.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

COQUILLE, Ore., Jan. 8, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As it is time for me to renew my subscription for the SIGNS I will write a few lines and send with the money. One never realizes the love and fellowship of the church until he lives away from it. Just about a year ago wife and I left Lane County and came way down here to Coos County, Oregon, something like one hundred miles from any church, where there has not been a true gospel sermon preached for years, and there are only five Old Baptists in all of Coos County: myself and wife, her mother, Mrs. Elizabeth Bulloch, brother Riley Bird and sister P. R. Spain; but we are living in hope that a few more of the brethren may locate with us, when we can organize a church, so if any of the dear brethren should see this little notice, and have a desire to come to Oregon, they will do me a favor by writing me, and I assure them I will give them a plain statement of facts about this beautiful country of ours. We have a lovely country, with no less than three railroads now building, which will make it lively here for the next few years at least. We have a very healthful and even climate. We have quite a bit of rain here in the winter (scarcely any snow), and were it not for that the climate would be ideal. For dairying, fruit, vegetables, &c., this country cannot be excelled.

With these remarks I will close, hoping some brother who is tired of the cold there in winter and the heat in summer will see this and be interested enough to write for further information.

Your brother, I hope,

W. H. NOSLER.

FRANKLIN, Tenn., May 31, 1912.

DEAR PEOPLE:—Inclosed please find two dollars and ten cents, for which give me credit on the SIGNS. Please pardon this delay, as I have not been well this spring, and then, too, I have had some reverses. The last big frost in April, I think it was, killed my pear crop. I had two thousand Bartlett pear trees that bloomed profusely, and I was calculating on a big revenue. The trees are fifteen or sixteen years old and were in fine shape, but the frost blighted all of them and we will have but very few pears. Our calculations are but "castles in the air," yet we have much to be thankful for; indeed His goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our life, and surely we shall have a goodly heritage at last. Our light afflictions are but for a moment, and will work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, as we hope, so then let us continue to thank the Lord and bow submissively and say, Thy will be done in heaven, in earth, in the sea and all deep places. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Not long since I was asked if I believed that passage of Scripture, and I replied, To be sure; why not? Why, that is absolute predestination. Well, said I, it is Scripture, and given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, re-

proof, instruction in righteousness, &c., that the man of God (no one else) may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. He said, O brother Harvey, that will not do. He was an Old Baptist preacher, too.

But I must now desist and get to work. I did not expect to write so much. You will please accept the continued assurance of our love and esteem, and I feel that I would like some time to visit Middletown and see you Old Baptists at headquarters, yet I am hoping that our paths will come together some time somewhere.

Yours in hope of a purer and better life, J. W. HARVEY.

PARRY SOUND, Ont., Nov., 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find express money order for two dollars, being the amount of my subscription to the SIGNS which expires shortly. I might say that I feel to know very little about spiritual affairs, but I am satisfied that I should know a great deal less if it were not for the regular arrival of the SIGNS, as I am located in a place where there is any amount of so-called religion, but there is not an individual within hundreds of miles of me, as far as I know, who understands "the language," the consequence being that I am absolutely isolated; however the bounds of our habitation are firmly fixed by a Power who doeth all things well, so I must not complain. For many years, although not a believer in some of the doctrines they preached, I was a very strong supporter of the Presbyterians here, but for some years I have not felt that I could consistently attend or support any of the "gospel shops," where you are earnestly welcomed if you are able to give all they call upon you for in aid of what they term "schemes of the church" (a phrase I do not like), but where you really are not wanted unless you can, the consequence being that I know I am considered a perfect heathen, although they do not say so in so many words; however I can stand it, and am satisfied to bear this stigma.

With very best wishes for the continued increase in the circulation of the SIGNS, and wishing it were double the size, faithfully yours, J. H. KNIFTON.

TAMPICO, Ill.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have just been reading our family paper, the SIGNS, and feel like I want to write, too. I read of many who live where they hear no preaching of the gospel, and my heart goes out in sympathy to such, for we live in a place hundreds of miles from any preaching that we enjoy, and they seem to think it strange that we do not follow after the so-called preaching. A few preaching brethren come our way and stop with us, and we enjoy their company, and surely our souls are refreshed, and we feel to rejoice that God remembers us and puts it in the hearts of his undershepherds to feed the little flocks. Elder Humphrey came the second Sunday in May, and we expect him in June, and likely all the summer months.

Dear editors, if I have said anything amiss look over it with charity, for if I know my heart I love to see Zion prosper; I love her walls, I love the church.

A trembling one,

ANNIE HOPKINS.

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

WE are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

NOTICE.

TO THE FORMER READERS OF "THE GOSPEL NEWS."

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—Owing to my health and the many other things which call my attention I have decided to cease the publication of the *Gospel News*, and now turn over my list to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, a paper which I can heartily recommend to you as a sound and faithful exponent of the doctrine of the Old School Baptist faith, and the one that I shall lend my support in its behalf. It will fill out the unexpired time of your subscription to the *Gospel News*, and I hope that you will (if you want a paper at all) support it. It will come twice a month laden with the rich tidings from the household of faith, and while it is not on aggressive lines, it never shuns to defend the doctrine of the Old School Baptists. I heartily recommend it to you. I want to thank you for the past favors you have shown me during the time I have been publishing the *News*. I do not have to stop because it was not supported financially, but because of failing health and the many duties I am called upon to fill, and so, praying God's blessings to abide with you, I must bid you farewell as an editor, but hope to still be borne up by the mercies of a covenant-keeping God to earnestly contend for that faith once delivered unto the saints.

I have sent the names and dates of those who have paid in advance. I have also sent most of those who are in arrears, and they will receive a few samples, and I would recommend that they subscribe at once for the SIGNS.

J. M. PERKINS.

DEAR BRETHREN:—By the request of Elder J. M. Perkins we have taken the list of subscribers of the *Gospel News*, and will supply them with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the time their subscription to the former paper is paid, and hope they may be so well pleased with the SIGNS that when their time has expired we may be able to retain them as regular subscribers.

While the subscription price of the *Gospel News* was one dollar per year, and that of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is two dollars, we believe that all who decide to continue with the SIGNS will feel the paper is well worth the extra dollar, for, in the first place, they will receive twenty-four numbers instead of twelve during the year; also the SIGNS is issued in pamphlet form, which makes a much nicer appearance and is much more convenient to handle.

The SIGNS is issued the first and fifteenth of each month, and contains only good, sound Old School Baptist doctrine, which is food to the hungry. The communications in the SIGNS are from all over the country, and are selected with great care, and anything that we think would cause strife or contention is barred from its columns.

As we are put to a heavy expense in supplying these extra papers, we hope that each one at the expiration of their subscription will let us know whether or not they wish the SIGNS continued. To those who are in arrears we will send one or two numbers of the SIGNS, and hope they will feel it in their hearts to subscribe for the paper.

In sending on remittance please be sure to have all letters addressed and money orders made payable to

J. E. BEEBE & CO.

Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1913.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

A NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS.

It has been our custom ever since we were connected with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES editorially, at the beginning of each new year to write what we have called "A New Year's Address" to all our readers. In this we have felt like speaking more intimately to our brethren than is the case ordinarily. We have not felt like saying very much concerning our personal ups and downs, or of the daily travel of our mind experimentally in our general editorial writing, but once a year we have felt like saying some things in this last named direction; yet, after all, we trust that in all we have written throughout the years that are past there has been the expression of that which we have tasted and handled and looked upon of the word of life, though we have not often referred directly to ourself. Indeed we believe it is true that any one who is called either to preach or write the word of the Lord must speak of what he knows for himself if he is to proclaim the word at all, and this he will do, though he may never say, I have felt this or that. It seems to us sure that David, for instance, spoke of that which was in his own heart as much when he did not use the personal pronoun "I" as when he did use that pronoun. Often it is true he spoke directly of himself in the travels of mind which he described, but often he did not. So also Paul did not often call attention to himself, yet always he was writing out of the fullness of the things that were wrought in his own soul. From our childhood it has been the case that we have shrunk from saying very much about our own inward travel in a personal way, yet we do hope there has been in all we have said or written concerning the word of the Lord some sweet savor of that name which is as ointment poured forth, because that name has been made holy and sacred in us; but as with David and with Paul, there were times when they spoke of their own conflicts and deliverances, of their own thoughts, either of joy or of sorrow, so we have felt now and then like doing the same, but in so doing, we, like these holy men of old, would not desire to magnify ourself, but rather the name of the Lord, who has so dealt with us. What a wonderful blessing from the Lord it is when given us from the inmost recesses of our hearts to say, as did John the Baptist: He must increase, but I must decrease. How good to feel that we are only the friend of the Bridegroom, but yet a friend. How good to know that we are but the voice of the great Preacher of righteousness. The friend of the Bridegroom does not appear when once the Bridegroom has come, and the voice is forgotten when men come to see Him who is crying through the servants whom he has chosen. It is sure that with all the disciples of the Lord there is that spirit which is glad to decrease if only Jesus may increase. There is experimental truth in the words,

> "O to be nothing, nothing,
> Only to lie at his feet,
> A broken and emptied vessel,
> For the Master's use made meet."

It is sure that all growth in grace is out of self and self-confidence, and into greater and still greater reliance upon the blessed Lord for all things. With all of us by nature it is all of self and none of Christ. When the blessed heart-work of the Lord has begun in us we are prone to still say, Some of self, and some of thee; and then as that work goes on there comes to be less of self and more of Christ, until at last, it is all of Christ and none of self. Then joyfully, as did John the Baptist, we can say, He must increase, but I must decrease. This is true of the whole church until at the last the royal diadem crowns our beloved Lord. With what hearty unanimity do all who are redeemed by grace cast their crowns at his feet and hail him as their Savior and Lord. This is the employ of the redeemed in glory, and blessed are we if we find it in our hearts here to say, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive blessing and honor and power and glory. And, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the praise for our great salvation. Such experiences as these will forever forbid that John the Baptist, or David, or Paul, or any minister of the gospel, or any believer in the gospel, should exalt himself in the place of the blessed Redeemer in any part or portion of his work of redemption. Those who are thus taught will not fail to ascribe salvation to the Lord. They will be made ready to testify that the atonement is all his work; that the new birth is also his work; that the fruits of the Spirit within are wrought by him through the Holy Spirit; that our feet are kept by his power alone; that our desires go up unto him solely because his Spirit creates them in us; that at the last it is his hand that finishes what he has so well begun; thus they are daily bearing witness that salvation is of the Lord. So far as we can judge our own self, it has been the desire of our heart these past fifty or more years to testify of Jesus and his salvation. The doctrine of grace has been precious to us, because we have needed it for ourself, and have believed that every other poor one of the flock needs it also, and after all these years we feel still more assured that in him alone is our daily help and salvation, and while we want no other salvation, it is sure that we need no other. He said, "My grace is sufficient for thee," and the children of God have always found it so, no matter what doubtings and fearings may have at times beset them as they approached the trial. His grace is sufficient for all his, whether they meet with inward conflicts with sin or with outward trials through affliction. Our God is the God of both providence and grace; our outward lines are in his hand, as well as the inward conflicts. He has marked out the providential ups and downs of our earthly journey, as well as the inward leadings of the soul in the way to God, and our God has often made use of his providences to further his work of grace in the soul, that he may thereby call forth from the lips of his chosen ones confessions and praises before him. It was so with David, and other holy men in the old covenant times, and with Paul and others of the early disciples of Jesus, and it is so with many of his followers now. Who among us has not been filled with wonder at the manifestations of patience and submission and reconciliation, and even of joy and rejoicing, in many of his loved ones while they were passing through manifold trials in either body or mind? These sorrowful things have been made the occasion in which he has seen fit to display in them his inward grace.

But, leaving these reflections, we will speak of some things relating to the past. The SIGNS was a visitor at our father's home from our earliest recollection; nearly as far back as we could read anything we can recall reading the SIGNS. In our early experience, when from twelve to sixteen years of age, we recall reading with great earnestness the narrations of experience which were often published then. The sermons and editorials we could not comprehend, very much at least, but narrations of experience seemed in some ways plain, and we thought that we did have some understanding of portions of them. For several years the portions of them that gave narrations of conviction and deep trouble because of sin and a felt sense of condemnation, seemed often to express what we ourself felt. When, however, the writers would go on to tell of the hour of deliverance, they were narrating that of which we knew nothing. How many times we wondered, Will such deliverance ever be ministered to us? A little after our sixteenth birthday that deliverance came, as we trust, by the revelation to our mind of the way of salvation through the atonement of the blessed Lord. From that time on we read the SIGNS with more and more comfort and interest, in connection with the Bible, and it seemed more and more plain to us that what was published in the dear paper was in full harmony with the teaching of the Scripture. Just after our seventeenth birthday we wrote some account of the way in which we had been led, and that fall it was published in the SIGNS. Since then there has not been a year in which something from our pen has not been published. We have always written with much fear, as we trust, before the Lord. No one has ever seen failure and weakness in us as much as we have felt it for ourself, and it is sure that if at any time any of the people of God have been edified through what we have written it is because of the blessing of God, who can feed a multitude with a few loaves and a few little fishes. Fifty years have passed since then, and in all these years we have not wavered in our love for the SIGNS. Since our connection with the paper in an editorial capacity it has been a source of great thankfulness to us that our brethren in general have born patiently with our failures. Very seldom have our brethren even named them to us, and we have been surprised often at this. At the beginning of each year the task of writing twenty-four editorials has seemed greater than we could bear, but as the years have gone onward something has been written which we do believe has been according to truth, and which we humbly hope has not been all in vain. We have felt greatly blessed in our association with the former and with the present editors. Not long after we were asked by brother Benton Beebe to become one of the editors our dear brother Jenkins was called away from the warfare. His churches missed him, and all who knew him missed him, but none could have missed him more than ourself. We could always open to him our whole mind and feel sure of understanding and sympathy. The same was true in our association with brother Benton Beebe, and while he lived our association with him grew more and more pleasant to the end. In all this we have felt to be greatly blessed of the Lord. Since brother Ker has been united with us in the conduct of the paper we have found in him a desire for the welfare of the SIGNS, and that the same faith should be maintained in its columns that was maintained at the

beginning. We have spoken of all these things because we have felt that in the companionship of these servants of God we have been blessed.

As regards the coming year, we feel to say but little. We hope that the Lord will bless us all, to the end that the same truth may be published in our columns that was begun to be published eighty years ago. We do not wish to publish local controversies, nor anything that would lead to such controversies. If there be fault anywhere among brethren, let charity cover it, and let it not be spread abroad. If the sore cannot be healed, let it not seek publicity, lest other parts of the body become affected and distressed. We are sure that the vast majority of our readers do not desire to read of dissensions or of strife among others. Such things will arise while we are in the flesh, but it is far better when they do arise that all who are involved should seek to keep the matter at home; thus it may be healed, but it is sure that spreading it abroad will further the difficulty rather than heal it.

We also desire to keep from the columns of the SIGNS doctrine which is unsound, or not scriptural. If, sometimes, there are reasons why it seems expedient to publish some matters which are not in harmony with truth as our people believe, our desire is to call attention to the matter, and to point out the truth on the other hand. But it is not often that we have thought it expedient to publish such matter, because even when a reply is made it may be that in some cases the minds of the Lord's people will be disturbed and distressed, with no compensating good resulting. The articles of faith which were first placed at the head of the SIGNS are well known, at least they are generally so, among our brethren, and it is our desire to adhere steadfastly to them still, and this we desire because we believe them to be according to the written word of God.

We trust that we have the prayers of all who love God that we may be sustained during this coming year, should the Lord spare us to its end. We wish for you all, dear brethren, sisters and friends, a truly happy new year. True happiness cannot be found unless the presence of the dear Savior is felt, and if he shall make his presence felt, then shall we know that in his presence is fullness of joy, and that at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore. If his presence can turn a prison into a palace, if it could cause that Paul and Silas should sing in the prison, while they were full of suffering, it is sure that that same presence can make the happiness of all who love him, no matter what their trials and burdens may be, and so again we wish you all a truly happy new year.

C.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

POETRY.

ADRIAN, Mich., August 27, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have some poetry which my father took from a hymn-book over fifty years ago. It is most dear to me. I would be pleased to see it in our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I love it for the truth's sake, it is next to my Bible. If in your judgment you deem these verses worthy, please publish them. LAMIRA CARY.

"Poor mourning souls in deep distress,
Making sad lamentation,
Find themselves lost in wickedness,
And under condemnation.

The thunderbolts from Sinai's mount
Do sound with loudest terror,
And they are now in God's account
All drowned in grief and error.

O woe is me that I was born,
Or ever had a being;
I would have had untimely birth,
Or had no future being.

Or had I died when I was young,
I might have been forgiven;
I might with babes with harmless tongue
Been praising God in heaven.

But here I am in deep distress,
Most worn away with trouble;
Day after day I seek for peace,
But find my sorrows double.

Saith Satan, Futile is your state,
Time past you might repented,
But now you see it is too late,
So make yourself contented.

How can I live, how can I breathe,
Under this sore temptation?
I feel my day of grace is o'er;
Lord, hear my lamentation.

For I am weary of my life,
Of pains and bitter crying;
My wants are great, my mind is strife,
My spirit's almost dying.

But who is he that looketh forth,
Sweet as the blooming morning,
Fair as the moon, clear as the sun?
'Tis Jesus Christ adorning.

Jesus can clothe my naked soul;
Jesus for me was dying,
And now I can with pleasure sing,
My wants he is supplying.

Farewell, vain world, I bid adieu,
My Jesus is most holy;
Fain would I be with Christ above,
Singing of him in glory."

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at the residence of the bride, 7 Lake Ave., Middletown, N. Y., Wednesday, Dec. 18th, 1912, Samuel B. Paxson, of Leesburg, Va., and Miss Florence S. Beebe, of Middletown, N. Y.

By the same, at the residence of the bride's brother, 6113 Elmwood Ave., Philadelphia, Pa., Saturday, Dec. 21st, 1912, John H. Silcox, of Betterton, Md., and Elsie F. Green, of Willow Grove, Del.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, at the home of the bride's grandparents, near Berlin, Worcester Co., Md., Cornelius Alfred Powell and Miss Sarah Augusta Laws, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

By Elder Joshua T. Rowe, Oct. 2nd, 1912, at the residence of the bride's parents, 18 N. Stricker St., Baltimore, Md., Miss Mabel C. Goodwin and Needham C. Turnage, of Washington, D. C.

By the same, Nov. 28th, 1912, at the home of the bride's sister, Liberty Grove, Md., Miss India Rowland and William Jarmon, of Wilmington, Del.

By the same, Dec. 10th, 1912, at the residence of the bride's parent, Port Norfolk, Va., Miss Marilda F. Hitch and Americus V. Pearce, of Portsmouth, Va.

By the same, Dec. 24th, 1912, at the residence of the bride's brother, 2101 N. Market St., Wilmington, Del., Miss Ida G. Jarmon and Daniel Holloway, of Snow Hill, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Dr. G. A. Emory died at his home, 15 Orchard St., Middletown, N. Y., Dec. 14th, 1912, aged 74 years, 1 month and 21 days. Brother Emory had been afflicted thirteen years with locomotor ataxia, and for ten years confined to the house—had not been dressed for seven years. The fortitude with which he bore his sufferings was wonderful to behold. More than a groan because of intense pain never escaped his lips. He was never heard to say other than the Lord's will concerning him was right. He settled in Middletown forty-three years ago, engaging in the practice of medicine, and continued his profession until his health failed. He was a man of kind and pleasant disposition and had many friends. He united with the Middletown and Wallkill Church forty years ago, being baptized by Elder Gilbert Beebe. He was always faithful to his profession, and served as clerk and deacon for many years. He will be greatly missed by us all here, for although he had been confined to the house so many years his interest in the things of the church never abated, and often with him we took "sweet counsel." He is survived by his widow, who was Mary A. Seybolt, one brother and one niece.

The funeral services were held from his late home, conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder John Mc-

Connell, of New York city. The interment was in the Plains Cemetery, at Otisville, N. Y. The text used was 2 Timothy iv. 6-8, which had been much in our dear brother's mind. The "crown of righteousness," which the Lord shall give to all who love his appearing, seemed to be the special part of the text he loved to talk about. Our desire is that the Lord may bless and comfort the widow, our dear sister, and the church with that peace of soul which none but he can give.

ALSO,

Warren W. Scudder died Nov. 16th, 1912, at his home in Kelly Corners, N. Y., aged 77 years, 2 months and 4 days. Brother Scudder was a faithful man in all the walks of life, devoted to his family and church. He had been a member of the Old School Baptist Church for years, was sound in doctrine, loving the gospel in its purity. He is survived by his widow, who was Mary E. Hewitt, a niece of the late Elder Isaac Hewitt, and five children: Mrs. George Fuller, of Fleischmanns, N. Y.; Dr. C. T. Scudder, of Baltimore, Md.; Mrs. E. H. Dimmick and Hewitt S. Scudder, of Halcottville, N. Y., and Mrs. Ward E. Truesdale, of Shavertown, N. Y. Brother Scudder, we are told, had been a reader of the SIGNS for fifty years. He was held in high esteem by all who knew him, and was especially beloved by his church. It was our privilege to know him for fourteen years, and our acquaintance was most pleasant, and we shall miss him much when visiting that part of the vineyard.

The funeral services were held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse at Halcottville, Delaware Co., N. Y., where the writer tried to speak to the comfort of the family and friends, after which the remains were interred in the Halcottville Cemetery. May the comfort of God abound toward all who mourn.

Written by request. K.

Jonas Lake, our beloved brother in Christ, departed this life at his home, Laidig, Fulton Co., Pa., early in the morning of Dec. 11th, after a brief illness of typhoid pneumonia, coupled with paralysis. He was just a little past fifty-nine years old, having been born August 26th, 1853. All his life had been spent in Fulton County, where he had engaged in farming, and had filled several public offices in the community, having been justice of the peace, school director, county surveyor, and at the time of his death county commissioner. He was the son of Jacob and Maria Lake, both deceased. His father and mother, and his grandparents on both sides, had been members of the Old School Baptist Church. Brother Lake himself was baptized upwards of twenty-five years ago, by Elder E. V. White, in the fellowship of the Fairview Church, at Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa., and lived a useful and consistent member of the church to the time of his death. He was clerk of the Juniata Association at its session in 1911, and the Circular Letter of that year was written by him. He was twice married, his first wife being Miss Anna Logue. To that union were born three children, two daughters and one son, all surviving him. His second wife, who is left to mourn her loss, was Mrs. Anna Ritchie. Besides his son, Ira, and his two daughters, Mrs. Roy Gromwell and Mrs. Wm. Youse, he is survived by his stepdaughter, Mrs. George Carbaugh, one sister, Mrs. Anna Troutman, three half-sisters, Mrs. Catherine Starr, Mrs. Martha Garland and Mrs. Sarah Garland, all three of whom are Old School Baptists, and one half-brother, James McDonald, living in Illinois, who is also an Old School Baptist. It is rather remarkable to see a family so many members of whom for succeeding generations have been and are Old School Baptists. It is something as Paul said of Timothy, that the faith that was in him was also in his forbears. This does not argue that this faith is or can be inherited from flesh and blood. It is the gift of God, and can come only by the revelation through the Holy Spirit of the work of Jesus Christ, but no greater blessing can the Almighty bestow upon sinful creatures than to choose a family through its succeeding generations and make them the recipients of this priceless treasure. Brother Lake's illness was brief, and toward the last he was not conscious, but while he was yet sensible of his surroundings he said often, "I want to go home; I want to go home." The Lord granted his desire, and released him from his earthly tabernacle, to be at rest forever with him.

The funeral services were conducted by his pastor, the writer, from the Sidling Hill meetinghouse; interment in the Sidling Hill Cemetery. May God comfort the grief-stricken widow and all who mourn.

ALSO,

Mrs. Lena Brady Huntt, our dear sister in Christ, passed away from this life at her home near Hunter Station, Va., Dec. 13th, 1912, after a rather protracted illness of tuberculosis. She was but in the prime of her womanhood, but the Lord saw fit to lay his hand upon her and take her from us. She leaves a grief-stricken little family, her husband, four motherless children, two daughters, one son, the eldest, and one baby boy two years old, also her aged mother-in-law, our dear sister Wortman. It was my privilege to baptize sister Lena in the fellowship of the Frying Pan Church, Sunday, Dec. 16th, 1906. She had heard but little Old Baptist preaching before her baptism, and her childhood and girlhood were passed under Arminian influence until she married Mr. Huntt and became thrown in the society of Old Baptists. It took her but a short time to realize that they were the people she had been looking for, and she was made to cast in her lot with them. The readers of the SIGNS will doubtless remember our sister, for her letters have from time to time ap-

peared in its pages. Five weeks before she died I was at her bedside and she then had no thought of dying, but talked of living and of getting well. At that time she complained of darkness of mind, and of not being able to enjoy her hope of salvation. Again, just a week before her departure, I visited her, and such a change as had come over her I could not but help noticing; not one word about living, but all about dying; not darkness of mind, but resting quietly and submissively in the will of her God, anxiously awaiting the summons from on high. All thought as to the future of her little family had left her, and she committed them willingly into the keeping of her heavenly Father. It was her request that the writer of this notice preach at her funeral, and if that could not be she wanted to be laid away without a word being spoken; so she was taken from her home and buried in the cemetery at Herndon with no services at all, as the writer, her pastor, was unavoidably hindered from attending at the last, being engaged elsewhere. How much better this was than to call on an Arminian to say something over her when dead that she did not believe when living. So should all Old School Baptists do when not able to have the services of one of their own faith and order. May the gracious Redeemer comfort the afflicted little family and care for them as only he can. Surely it was better for her to depart and be with Christ than to remain longer in these low grounds of sorrow. H. H. LEFFERTS.

LEESBURG, Va., Dec. 16, 1912.

Elizabeth Timmons, wife of brother Stephen Timmons, departed this life at their home, five miles from Berlin, Worcester Co., Md. Her maiden name was Bethard. She was born but a short distance from where she died, and where her body now lies awaiting the sound of the last trump, on the 18th day of August, 1839, and departed this life the 17th day of November, 1912, making her pilgrimage on earth 73 years, 2 months and 30 days. She and brother Timmons were married the 16th day of February, 1862, thus they spent a little over fifty years in peaceable and happy companionship. She, with her husband, united with the church at Indiantown, Wicomico Co., Md., a little over twenty-five years ago, and was baptized by Elder T. M. Poulson. She was a faithful and true Old School Baptist. Her place at the meeting was never vacant if she was able to attend. For several years she was sorely afflicted, much of the time not being able to leave home. She never had any children, but besides her husband and numerous relatives she is mourned by one to whom she was as a mother. She will be greatly missed by the church and many friends, as well as by our dear brother Timmons.

Her funeral was largely attended at her home on the 18th, many of her neighbors attesting the esteem in which she was held by their presence, and their sympathy for the bereaved by their tears. The services were conducted by the writer, using Romans iv. 5, after which the earthly remains were borne to the grave and committed there to await the glorious resurrection from death and the grave.

A. B. FRANCIS.

R. W. Beene departed this life at his home in Freestone County, Texas, June 15th, 1912, after two years of intense suffering of dropsy. The writer was with him most of the time during his sickness. He was born Feb. 12th, 1837, making his pilgrimage on earth 75 years, 4 months and 3 days. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church at the close of the war between the states, I do not know the exact date. He was married to Miss Sarah Beene, and to that union were born three sons. She and two sons preceded him to the grave many years. His second wife was M. E. Lindsey; to that union were born five children, four daughters and one son, of whom she and two of them are deceased and three living: W. T. Beene, Emma C. Rodgers, Rubie Burton Wren and L. A. Beene, son of his first wife. Brother Beene was born in Mississippi, and moved to Texas in 1859, volunteered in the confederate army in 1861 and served throughout the war. He was an honest, upright man, everybody had confidence in what he said, and a true Primitive Baptist, believing in election and salvation by grace and grace alone. He was always prompt in attending his meetings as long as he was able. He is missed in the community. He leaves two brothers and one sister: L. S. Beene, S. H. Beene and S. E. Betts.

The writer of this notice spoke at the burial. Brother J. H. Bozeman sang an appropriate hymn and offered prayer, after which the body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Salem to await the resurrection morn. We would say to his children, Grieve not, for he fell asleep in Jesus.

I. R. BETTS.

Mrs. Mamie Dale, of South Gardiner, Maine, departed this life June 4th, 1912. She was the wife of Frank Dale and daughter of sister Emma D. Lowell. She was unwell for several months before she died, and during the last of her sickness suffered very much. Our sister Lowell, her mother, writes: "I can remember things that she had said and done, so that I have reason to think she had passed from death unto life in a spiritual sense. She used to sing and play on the organ, and pieces she would sing were, 'Hide me, O my Savior, hide,' 'Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I,' and such like precious words, and I have heard her speak of erroneous things that people said, and that she could not believe such doctrines, all of which made me hope that she knew the difference between such people

and a true child of God. I have seen her reading the Bible in private, and when I read spiritual letters to her that I had received she appeared to like them. I know she was much better than I; she had a way of overlooking, or rather she had a very forgiving spirit, and was always doing something for others, being unselfish. O how I miss her! Sometimes I can hardly stand my loss, but I pray that I may be reconciled to God's will, and I think I am in a measure, when I think she has passed through so much pain. I do not want her back to suffer more, and I know she is with the Lord and is safe."

I had conversations with her in days past, and felt that she knew herself to be a poor sinner before the Lord, and to hope that she had a hope in Jesus, but felt herself unworthy even to acknowledge this, for she feared that she might deceive the people of God.

I attended her funeral, and trust preached the gospel of Christ to the comfort of sorrowing ones.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

I. L. Welch, our dear brother, was born in the state of Louisiana in 1851, and died in Anderson County, Texas, in September, 1912. He was married to Miss Anna Foster about thirty-nine years ago. They moved to Texas two or three years after this union, where they reared a family of seven children to manhood and womanhood, six of whom survive him. His wife preceded him to the grave sixteen years. One of his daughters died six years before his death and a son died when young. Our dear brother professed a hope many years ago, and feeling a desire to follow his Savior in baptism, never having heard a Primitive Baptist preach, he joined the New School or Missionary Baptists and was baptized by them. He told the writer that he was never satisfied while among them; that as he walked up to the New School Baptist preacher his experience was on his mind, and he desired and fully intended to relate it, but a voice spoke to him and said, Do not tell that here, this is not the place for that, and he could not tell it, but was asked a few questions and received. During this present year he had a vision, and in that vision he was directed to go to old Shiloh Church, of the Primitive Predestinarian Baptists, in Houston County, Texas, and give a reason of his hope and live with God's people what few days he had to live. On Saturday before the first Sunday in August, 1912, he was joyfully received, and the first Sunday in September baptized by Elder J. J. Brooks, if I am not mistaken. Brother Welch was afflicted during the greater part of his life, but bore his affliction without a murmur. I had known him for twenty years, and many happy hours we spent together in talking to each other of the dealings of God with us. His was the life of a noble christian gentleman, a good, kind and loving husband and father, loved by all who knew him, always in peace with his neighbors. If he had an enemy on earth we do not know it. He has passed away from this world of sin and sorrow, his body consigned to the tomb to await the glorious resurrection morn, when Christ shall descend with all the holy angels and shall raise that sleeping dust to immortality and fashion it like unto his own glorious body and take it home to glory, there to sing praises to Christ our King. This precious brother had been a father to me.

His son-in-law, W. O. BEENE.

Lucinda Smith Kennedy was born June 22nd, 1842, died Nov. 20th, 1912, aged 70 years, 4 months and 28 days. She was united in marriage to Deacon S. M. Kennedy June 22nd, 1879. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church about thirty years ago, and her life was one of devotion to the cause she loved so well. She was a great help to brother Kennedy as a true and faithful companion, not only in temporal things, but a great comfort in spiritual things as well. Brother and sister Kennedy's home at the time of her death was in St. Joseph, Mo., but they had rented their little home and gone to Hope, Ark., to join their son and family, who were going to spend the winter at his home in Orlando, Fla. They were to visit a few days with friends, then follow their son, who had gone on with his car. Little did they think how soon their plans would be blasted after all their arrangements had been made to start at an early date. Sister Kennedy was taken with a severe pain in her back, and they carried her to the bed and she passed away in about twenty minutes. They were at the time stopping with Mr. Sanford, an old neighbor and friend from Illinois. They at once made arrangements to start back to their old home in Illinois, and telegraphed to their daughter, sister Susie Bloomfield, at St. Joseph, Mo., to meet them at Plymouth, Ill., where she met them with a heart full of love and true sympathy, and was a source of great comfort to her father. The remains were taken to the Scotts Church, near their old home, east of Plymouth, Ill., where the writer tried to preach a funeral discourse to the memory of the deceased, after which we laid the body to rest in the old churchyard.

May the Lord comfort dear old brother Kennedy and sustain him by his grace in the great trial he is called to pass through. L. E. FRAZEE.

Mrs. Catherine Elmendorf died at her daughter's home, in Morrison, Ill., Wednesday evening, Dec. 11th, 1912. Catherine Bogart, daughter of Henry and Elizabeth Bogart, was born Sept. 29th, 1826, at Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y. She was married Sept. 26th, 1850, to Levi Elmendorf, who died May 8th, 1899. To that union were born four children, who survive: Henry B., George L., Frank M. and Mrs. Elizabeth Lutyen, all of whom reside in Morrison. Besides

these she leaves six grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and one brother, Hiram Bogart, of Prophetstown, Ill., to mourn their loss. The family moved from New York to Prophetstown, Ill., in 1867, and the following year settled at Union Grove, moving to Morrison, Ill., in 1885, where they have since resided. The deceased had been in good health until the past year, even though so aged. Her last illness covered a period of but a few days.

(MRS.) EMMA. C. JOHNSON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. E. C. Chandler, N. Y., $2.00; Mrs. N. E. Askew, Ark., $2.00; Richard Waller, Mo., $1.00; Mrs. M. M. Raunsavell, N. Y., $3.00; Mrs. Martha Beardsley, Ill., $1.00; Benj. P. Earl, M. D., Ky., $1.00; J. A. Tandy, Okla., $1.00; Mrs. L. Cary, Mich., $1.00; Lavina Morgan, Mo., $1.00; Elder T. R. Pittman, Kansas, $1.00; Catherine E. Mills, Montana, $2.00.—Total, $16.00.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 81. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1913. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"SONGS IN THE NIGHT."

(Job xxxv. 10.)

NIGHT is often employed by the Holy Spirit, in the Scriptures, to set forth the adversities, temptations and sorrows of the children of God; for though they are called the children of light, (1 Thess. v. 5,) and the children of the day, with the loveliness and preciousness that these names signify, yet many a dark night they have to pass through in their pilgrimage to the realms of immortal day. (Rev. xxii. 5.) Job exclaims: "Wearisome nights are appointed to me. When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise, and the night be gone? and I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day."—Job vii. 3, 4. And David thus tells us his pitiful story: "I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with tears."—Psalms vi. 6. Again he says: "My sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted." Yet even in this night he reviews his experience in former nights: "I call to remembrance my song in the night."—Psalms lxxvii. 6. Ere long the morning again appears, and chases away the shadows of the night. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."—Psalms xxx. 5. Blessedly true. But the Lord our God in his sovereign graciousness sometimes gives joy in the midst of the darkest dispensations. There is given to the tried people of God joy in tribulation. (Romans v. 3.) The Lord lights up our candle, he so ministers to his afflicted ones, so lights up with his exceeding great and precious promises the afflictions and temptations of the night, that in this light they walk through the darkness and are enabled to sing, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." These are periods in the lives of some of God's elect when they feel to have little else but night. "Neither sun nor stars in many days appeared."—Acts xxvii. 20. The providences of God that encompass their steps are such that their hearts cry out, "He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light."—Lam. iii. 2. In our simplicity we desired and we thought that our God and Redeemer who loved us would give us what we esteemed

to be good, then evil came; when we waited for the cheerful light then came darkness. Ah, then we entered into dismal nights, with dragons and owls for our companions. (Job xxx. 29.) How can you sing in such a place? What will be the theme of your song? That was a dark night with the apostle Paul when God gave him a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him. He was abased, brought low, found himself a mass of infirmities, and so weak that he was not equal to the conflict; he was constantly being buffeted by the messenger of Satan. He was weak, and the enemy thrust him sorely, thrust him down. Like others before him he cried unto God in the battle. (1 Chron. v. 20.) He tells us, "I besought the Lord thrice," and this was the answer and the blessed results: "The Lord said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."—2 Cor. xii. 9. Thus most gladly he gloried in the grace of God, which was so sufficient for him in all his weakness, and though the thorn pierced him, and Satan's messenger buffeted him, he could sing, "In all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us."

The singing of the church of God is not mechanical. The phonograph can be wound up, the record put in place, and then a little touch and the song is poured forth. But how is it with the christian? Is he a self-determinate being, self-operative? Carnal religionists can sing their songs when they please; they profess to have in themselves the ability to sing at all times; but the saints of the Lord tell another story. The songs they sing, that delight even the ears of the Most High, spring from the melody in the heart to the Lord. Ah, with the lips, sacred, precious words may be sung, and yet the heart of the child of God may be so asleep, so indifferent, as to be unconscious before the Lord of the words that the lips are uttering. But to sing with the spirit and the understanding is like all things else in the worship of God, it is of the operation of God. It is God's divine power that giveth us all things that pertain unto life and godliness. (2 Peter i. 3.) The people of God therefore very willingly confess, "He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God."—Psalms xl. 3. "Thou hast put gladness in my heart."—Psalms iv. 7. "Who giveth songs in the night."—Job xxxv. 10. When Jesus sings in the midst of the congregation (Heb. ii. 12,) the heart of all the congregation sings with him, their Head and Redeemer. When God rejoiceth over us with singing (Zeph. iii. 17,) how then can we be sad?

"As from the lute soft music flows,
Obedient to the skillful hand,
So, tuned by thee, my spirit owes
Her harmony to thy command.
Touched by the finger of thy love,
Sweet melody of praise I bring,
Join the enraptured choir above,
And feel the bliss that makes them sing."

Truly the religion of Jesus Christ is a divine reality, begun by the Lord and performed by him until the day of Jesus Christ. Praying and singing unto God are wrought in the soul by the Holy Ghost. To have a vital inheritance in the covenant of grace altogether surpasses any other portion possessed by any of the human family; for though a person could be made to have all the glory and riches of ten thousand worlds, O how would it all fade away and crumble into nothingness when weighed or compared with the inheritance of the

saints in light. O let me win Christ, (Phil. iii. 8,) and my soul shall readily relinquish its grasp of all corruptible things. The excellency of the ministry of the Holy Ghost is very blessedly declared in the songs he giveth in the night. I have mused a little upon the melody of these songs as portrayed in the Scriptures, and some experience I have, I hope, of the same in my soul, and I much desire that my heart might now indite the good matter while I write to you of these God-given songs in the night.

The worship of Jehovah in the temple was perpetual. Day and night the ordinances of divine service were being celebrated, and amidst all this typical service there was singing day and night. (1 Chron. ix. 33; Psalms cxxxiv. 1.) So the worshiper who looked by faith in God toward his holy temple ever found that which answered to his soul's needs. The every day service in the temple was sacred and glorious to those who had eyes of faith to behold the beauty of the Lord, (Psalms xxvii. 4,) and upon some special occasions it must have been, we would think, even to the unregenerate Jew, peculiarly impressive. Look at the description given in 2 Chron. xxii. 20–36. "Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept: and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the Lord, to the Mighty One of Israel."—Isaiah xxx. 29. In Zion, the city of our solemnities, there were solemnities in the daytime and solemnities in the night, and in all these solemnities the Lord ordained the song to be there; and very sure I am that when the Israelite by faith participated in those typical services he felt it was blessedly meet that the praises of the Lord in melodious strains should ascend unto heaven, for the song the singers sang was in his heart. "God my Maker giveth songs in the night." O thou art our lovely and loving God to give such songs to poor sinners. All prayer and all singing unto the Lord are very blessed privileges to sinners, and both flow forth unto the Lord the gracious fruits of God's grace in our hearts. (See Zech. xii. 10; Col. iii. 16.) When we pray and when we sing the tongue can never express all that the heart would say; so when the heart sings in the worship of Jehovah the lips can never tell our trust and hope, gratitude and adoration. When notes of gratitude swell the song there in review are the undeserved kindnesses of the Lord. When we adore him what self-abasement we feel. We declare in our songs his majesty and might, his holiness and loveliness, and we are conscious of our low estate, yet he remembers us, of our weakness, and he is our strength and salvation, and knowing ourselves to be poor, sinful, so unlovely, in our admiration of him our yearning hearts say, Be thou my God and Friend, smile upon me, O let the beauty of the Lord be upon me. When we are singing with grace in our hearts to the Lord there is often much prayer ascending in the same instant unto him who heareth prayer and inhabiteth the praises of Israel. "In the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life."—Psalms xlii. 8. Some friends of mine have a parrot which sings, "Nearer, my God, to thee." This parrot in his singing worships God just as well as that one who, though he has a most melodious voice and sings the most sublime words, if there is not the grace of God in his heart. "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips: but their heart is far from me."—Matt. xv. 8. The phonograph can sing Handel's "Messiah,"

and a large choir of chosen voices can do the same, (only, as we think, so very much better,) but neither of them worship God in spirit and in truth. The Father seeketh such to worship him. Songs in the night are frequently answers to prayers. Let me bring before you several examples. Nebuchadnezzar in his fury commanded all the wise men of Babylon to be destroyed, and the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain, and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain. Daniel and his companions pray to the God of heaven, and God in a night vision answers their supplications; then in the night his song breaks forth, and this is the God-given song in the night that he sings: "Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever; for wisdom and might are his: and he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding. He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him. I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee: for thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter."—Daniel ii. 20–23. Paul and Silas for Christ's name sake are apprehended, and "the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely: who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks." What a condition for the ambassadors of Christ, the Prince of glory, to be in! They are suffering for Christ's sake. One of these prisoners had formerly been injurious, an exceeding mad persecutor of the saints of God. Now in that innermost dungeon, with their bleeding stripes, and their feet held fast in the stocks, they languish in their sufferings in that dark, dismal prison. Ah, they think of their God, they think of the precious Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath ascended into the heavens, and they pray to God; they prayed for themselves, and no doubt for their enemies who had despitefully used them. I believe they prayed for that exceeding zealous, cruel jailer. O, it is so blessed to have a heart to pray, to wait upon God, to tell before our almighty Friend all our troubles. Poor, distressed, suffering, tempted, the heart prepared by the Holy Ghost, look with entreaty unto him who is mighty, the salvation of his people in times of trouble. No one cares, they pass us by, there is no helper, creatures and all our own resources fail, but God draws nigh, and there is the upward glancing of an eye when none but God is near. The Lord was near to those two prisoners, he came into their hearts by faith and they prayed to him. Then by his gracious operations in their souls (which the hypocrite can never understand) they contemplate, not so much their bodily sufferings, but the wondrous mercies of the Lord to them in Christ Jesus, and their hearts are tuned by the Comforter, and the song burst forth upon their lips, the midnight song. They sing praises to the Lord; they rejoice that they are counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake; they find his dear words to be spirit and life to them. "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in

heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."—Matt. v. 11, 12. Were the other prisoners asleep at that hour of the night? They are awakened, Paul and Silas, suffering, tortured, ambassadors of the King of kings, are praying and singing praises to God. The prisoners heard them. I am glad that is recorded, it is with comforting meaning to me. Did any of them find their own poor, sinful hearts moved? Did they, in a little measure, join in spirit in these prayers and this song in the night? God heard them. Read for yourselves Acts xvi. 22-34.

See the fugitive prophet. Poor, foolish, sinful man, he sought to flee from the presence of the Lord, but now he maketh his bed in the belly of hell. He goes down to the bottom of the mountains, the earth with its bars are about him forever, the weeds are wrapped about his head. God is there upholding in being and wondrously working in the soul of his wayward child. O the glories of the grace of God to vile sinners; to the rebellious also. Those three days and nights that Jonah was a prisoner in the belly of the fish were one long night to him. Here Jonah was taught wonderful, humbling and gracious lessons. The belly of the whale was his schoolroom, and God was the only Teacher and his almighty Friend. Here he prayed and here he sang. Was there ever such a temple for a worshiper of the Creator? The Lord prepared the great fish to swallow up Jonah, and thus sanctified, the fish's belly was to Jonah none other than the house of God, yes, and the gate of heaven. The night was dark, he felt a castaway from God. "I am cast out of thy sight." He feared God would never look upon him again. O his affliction was great, and he fainted; then he remembered the Lord. The remembrances were blessed and wrought very graciously, his heart was inclined unto the Lord, and though he felt cast out of God's sight as one that is an offence, an abomination in his eyes, yet there springs up a holy determination in his soul, and he says, "Yet I will look again toward thy holy temple." He makes his confession unto God, he cries unto him for deliverance. "Thou heardest my voice;" and then he exclaims, "I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that I have vowed," and the song of the Lord sprang up in his soul, and this is the song he sang: "Salvation is of the Lord." The belly of hell could not hold for very long such effectual fervent prayers, and such a singer with such divine melody in his heart to the Lord. The Lord heard his prayers and heard his singing, and Jehovah spake unto the fish and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry ground. (Jonah ii.)

The night that Daniel was in the lions' den was an unhappy, sleepless night for Darius the king. He went to his palace and passed the night fasting; neither were instruments of music brought before him, and his sleep went from him. Ah, there was no melody in his heart. But it was a blessed night to Daniel, for he believed in his God, and through faith shut the mouths of lions, and I feel satisfied there was a song in his heart to the Lord that night; he was glorying in his God, though his companions were hungry beasts of prey. (Daniel vi. 18-23.) How delightful and comforting were the tidings and song that the shepherds heard the night that Christ the Lord was born in Bethlehem. (Luke ii. 8-20.)

Perhaps some dejected child of God is saying, Ah, it is not so with me; my night is long, my trial continues, it is

now dark, and it seems to me to grow darker, and Jesus is not yet come. (John vi. 17.) If Christ would come my day would dawn and the darkness would be scattered, but my soul is cast down within me, my harp is upon the willows and I cannot sing. This trial and my sins, my fretfulness, I seem to have lost faith, unbelief so infests my soul I am all out of tune with myself and with God's providences, ah, I fear with God himself; I have no psalm to sing, with me it is little else but night. He giveth songs in the night? Yes, but not to me. O thou tossed and bruised, weather-beaten one! Thou hast been buffeted with evils, Satan and sin have plagued thee, thy way has been rugged and at times thou hast fallen in the rough places. God shall put thee upon thy feet again, there shall be a lifting up; the Lord in due time will put a few notes of blessedness, of hope in thy soul; the time of the singing of birds will come, and thy winter will be past. Weeping endures for the night, yet he who maketh the day dark with night, who is shewing thee great and sore troubles, and though you now are in heaviness through manifold temptations, will quicken you again, he will bring thee up again from the deeps of the earth, for he turneth the shadow of death into morning. O, he will lift up upon you the light of his countenance, and joy shall be thine in the morning.

The celebration of the passover in Egypt was a memorable season, and though in the first keeping of it there is no mention of singing, yet I have no doubt there were fervent praises in the hearts of many of that favored host who were sheltered by and passed over because they had the token of the passover blood. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt."—Exodus xii. 13. And the Lord brought forth his people with joy and his chosen with gladness. (Psalms cv. 43.) And well might they sing as they marched out of Egypt that night. Though in every house of the Israelites there was hope and comfort as they ate the passover lamb, yet in the houses of the Egyptians O what desolations and grief! Pharaoh rose up in the night, he and all his servants and all the Egyptians, and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead. (Exodus xii. 30.) There is one celebration of the passover that is wonderful indeed, and of all the God-given songs in the night that have ever been sung or that ever will be sung to the end of time, the singing on this passover night exceeds in divine blessedness, to me, a poor sinner, all other singing. At even, at the going down of the sun, (Deut. xvi. 6,) in a large upper room Christ and his twelve apostles are gathered to partake of the passover. All has been made ready by the disciples in the furnished guestchamber in the good man's house. When the hour was come Jesus sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. In that upper room that night there were some things over which there could be no singing. There was a strife among the disciples which should be accounted greatest. (Luke xx. 24.) Then there was that blessed example given by the Master in washing the disciples' feet, which they then so little understood. Then the consternation of their troubled hearts when Jesus told them that they all should be offended because of him that night, and one of them should betray him. (Matt. xxvi. 31.) Yes, these were truly bitter herbs to eat that night of the celebration of the passover. But

the Son of man sat with his apostles, and he said unto them, "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God."—Luke xxii. 15, 16. Christ so well knew all the deeps of meaning of the passover, not only as a commemorative feast, but its divine typical signification. He had many times kept the feast, now this is the last time, and he looked forward to it with eagerness of heart. How well he knew that he himself was the substance of it all, and that the time for the passover's fulfillment, with all its God-glorifying signification, was very near at hand. "For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God." The apostle Paul tells us, "Even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us."—1 Cor. v. 7.

"With desire I have desired." His whole heart is in it; he presses forward with divine fervor to the accomplishment of the passover. Is it not sacredly comforting to look upon our dear Ransomer, so eager, shall I say? Even as the hart panteth after the water brooks, so he panteth to eat this passover and to give himself a sacrifice for his people. (Psalms xl. 6-8; Heb. x. 5-7.) O how he loved his people! How willing was Jesus to die! To you is it nothing that Jesus should die? Take a glimpse at another transaction in this upper room. "As they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it: for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."—Matt. xxvi. 26-29. I will not attempt to expound these blessed acts and sayings of Christ. Let me simply repeat a few words in 1 Cor. x. 16: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"

When all was said and all was done in that upper room they sung an hymn and went out into the mount of Olives. (Matt. xxvi. 30.) What hymn was sung, what were the words, what the tune, is not recorded. Whether their human voices were bass, baritone or tenor is of no moment to me. Behold the scene. Twelve men are singing. (Judas Iscariot is not present at these closing transactions.) They are singing with the spirit, and with the understanding also; perhaps some of them only in a small measure. One of them in all things hath the preeminence. The chief singer is Jesus. Wonderful, dear name to poor sinners before God. Who is Jesus? The virgin Mary's son, and no less than the Word made flesh. He sighed, he groaned, he wept, he prayed, he rejoiced in spirit, and he sings. The Son of God incarnate sings, he sings with them, and they with him. The Head and the members are singing a hymn. "In the midst of the church will I sing praises unto thee." He who is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person, upholding all things by the word of his power, is found in fashion as a man, and sings with these eleven men. "I love the incarnate mystery, and here I fix my trust." O mystery so sacred, so comforting! The hymn sung on this night is a fitting close to all that has

taken place in that upper room; all in that moment is harmony, I will call it sacred, mellowed blessedness. But what most exercises my heart in the song sung this night is that it is on the eve of such a wonderful night, of scenes and acts and sufferings that know no parallel. Eleven sinners, sinful, mortal men, are singing with Jesus Christ, the sinless One. He had been tempted in all points as they had been, and was yet without sin. In acts and words and thoughts he was ever holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. They had continued with him in his temptations; their hearts knew he was the Christ, the Son of the living God, that he had the words of eternal life. God our Father in heaven had revealed it to them, and they sing together. Moved as they have been by the transactions in that upper room, by Christ's gracious teachings, by such infinite heights and unfathomable depths of doctrine that dropped from the lips of the Savior, of which by the Spirit of Christ in them they had been given a little understanding, the hearts of these eleven sinful men have been tuned to sing with him. Yes, it is the Spirit of Christ in their hearts that indites all the melody found in them to the Lord. With what mingled emotions do these poor, sinful men sing in union with Emmanuel, their High Priest, the Mediator and Sacrifice of the new covenant, for he had said unto them, "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." They were babes yet in the knowledge of Christ, but the Holy Ghost perfecteth praise out of the mouths of babes and sucklings. Their hearts are joined to Jesus Christ, and they are in oneness of spirit with him, they sing with him, and he with them. They rejoice with trembling, worshiping the God of Israel; they love one another, and each one holds in very dear esteem the beloved Jesus Christ. O does it not look as though they were so of one heart that nothing could sunder them from one another? that they never would be envious, that there would be no more strife among them who should be greatest? For O how humbled their hearts had been while the Master was washing their feet. They sing together. Sacred, blessed moments! "How sweet, how heavenly is the sight." Alas. Now they are singing with Jesus, everything is sacredly beautiful. The song ceases, and they go out into the mount of Olives. In a little while one of them is denying that he knew Jesus, he is cursing him. O God! O Peter, you wept bitterly over it; how bitter was thy grief, thy heart was broken, how thou didst loathe thyself. But that look of Jesus, the man of sorrows, broke thy heart, but also put drops of ineffable sweetness into thy cup. I know thy bitterness, and I have tasted thy sweetness; I am now weeping, too, not over thee, but over myself. I am ashamed, I sigh, my heart is smitten. O eleven men, in a few fleeting hours ye are all offended because of Jesus, and ye all forsook him and fled. Did not ye all esteem yourselves valiant soldiers? Did you not say that ye would never deny him, that ye were ready to die with him? (Mark xiv. 31.) But ye turned back in the day of battle. O, I am pained, for I see in you my fickle, sinful, shameful self. I would not utter a harsh word, I would not cast a stone at you; I see in you myself doing as you did on that dreadful night. Christ is singing! It is peculiarly blessed in my heart to think that he was singing just then. His work is before him; his meat is to do the will of him that sent him. This is the night of the powers of

darkness; the darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people, and in Jerusalem is concentrated all wickedness. Deceit, envy, malice and murder burn in lurid flames in the hearts of men. The devil and his angels find this their hour, and are in cursed activity in the hearts of men. All this darkness is arrayed against the God-man, Christ Jesus. There, O our Father in heaven, sings thine only begotten Son, the brightness of thy glory and the express image of thy person, found in fashion as a man, thy Holy Child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed. Though the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing, and the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his Christ, Jesus Emmanuel sings. In my musings I am saying, Christ the captain of our salvation is singing his battle song. He knows the fight is at hand, he anticipates the victory, he is exultant, defiant, he will tread down his enemies and trample them in his fury, the day of vengeance is in his heart, and the year of his redeemed is come. The singers went out before the army singing unto the Lord, praising the beauty of holiness, and saying, Praise the Lord, for his mercy endureth forever. (2 Chron. xx. 21, 22.) The priest blew the trumpets of rams horns, and the people shouted with a great shout, Jericho's walls fell down, and the Lord gave them the city. (Josh. vi. 20.) They blew the trumpets, brake the pitchers, and cried, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon. (Judges vii. 20.) I have read about the Marseillaise hymn being sung during the French revolution, and other battle songs. I have marched myself, by faith, a few steps with the ransomed singing our battle song, We are more than conquerors through him that loved us; O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? But this song in this night that Christ sings surpasses all others. He is "above his fellows," for he is also the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts. (Zech. xiii. 7.) He is in infinite preeminence, and his song is preeminent in fervor, majesty and glory. When his soldiers sing their battle song in holy confidence of eternal victory it is only by his Spirit in them, only as he inspires the song in their hearts, only as they are joined with him, looking with all affection, trust and hope unto Jesus Christ, the Captain of their salvation, the sweetest Psalmist in Israel. On the eve of the dreadful conflict he sings his own battle song. And yet, O thou mighty, valiant one, what griefs were thine, so bruised, and wounded, smitten for our sins! It is written that Jesus for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Heb. xii. 2.) And his song on the eve of entering Gethsemane, and from there to the palace of the high priest, to Pilate's hall, and to Calvary's cross was a song of expectant joy unto the Father. Thus by his Spirit in the prophet he sings, "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."—Isaiah lxii. 1. "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." He sings defiance to the night, to all the powers of hell. In defence and for the redemption of his church he will give his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that pluck off the hair; he will not hide his face from shame and spitting. And he sings, "For the Lord God will help me;

therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? let us stand together: who is mine adversary? let him come near to me. Behold, the Lord God will help me; who is he that shall condemn me? lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; and the moth shall eat them up." —Isaiah l. 5–9. O he loves his people great and small, and gives himself a ransom for them. And he sings, "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart."—Psalms xl. 7, 8. Christ knows there is eternal joy and everlasting glory for himself and his blood-ransomed church when the battle is ended, when the last enemy shall be destroyed. Then shall his people, all fair, without spot or blemish, holy, unblamable and unreprovable, in immortality and incorruption be conformed to his image, and with exceeding joy be forever with him. This is his joy in his song unto the Father before the battle. For the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, and though he so well knows what it will cost him, and why he is come to this hour, he delights to be obedient, for the redemption of his people, even unto death, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them (his loved, chosen people) who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. How exultant is his song, how determined is the counsel in his heart in that which is before him. Let your heart hearken; he sings, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes."—Hosea xiii. 14. This is not the vain boasting of Goliath, but the exultant confidence and shout of David when he hasted and ran to meet the giant, and slew him. (1 Sam. xvii. 43–51.) When Christ would make an end of sin, vanquish Satan, death, hell and the grave, it was such a battle that only he could undertake. There was none to help him. All his people were without strength, there was none to uphold, therefore his own arm brought salvation unto him, and his fury upheld him. (Isaiah lxiii. 1–6.) He was wounded and bruised, yes, for the salvation of his loved church, he bore all her sins in his own body on the tree, he bore sin's tremendous curse and shame. "He bore all incarnate God could bear, with strength enough and none to spare." O if Christ had not been Jehovah Jesus all had been a failure. But this was the determinate counsel, I (Jehovah) "will save them by the Lord their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen."—Hosea i. 7. "He shall not fail nor be discouraged till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law."—Isaiah xlii. 4. "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." "Mighty to save."—Isaiah ix. 6; lxiii. 1. He shall save his people from their sins. Very wonderful is the love of God which is in Christ Jesus the Lord, and the song he sang that night is "Love's own sweet song." Eternal love flows forth in every note as Jesus sings. In his love and in his pity he will go forth to suffer, bleed and die. O, Christ, thou art altogether lovely. God is love; dear Jesus, thou art love incarnate! Jesus and the eleven sang their song in the night. And when

all the ransomed are gathered home to glory, then in life eternal, in everlasting bliss we shall worship and serve our God, and sing immortal praises to God and the Lamb in endless day. There will be no more songs in the night: for there shall be no night there. (Rev. xxii. 5.)

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 9, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES this letter from J. P. Haarsma. He is one of the little company of spiritual friends who meet together in Winnipeg, Manitoba, for conference and for the worship of the true and living God. Some of these have membership in the Particular Baptist Church in England, two are members here in Southampton, two or three elsewhere and some have not yet been baptized. This dear friend and his wife are of the latter number, but I believe both of them are waiting the Lord's time to receive this solemn ordinance, desiring to follow their dear Savior in it when opportunity is given them. I met with this dear company in August and September, and much enjoyed my interviews with them.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, Nov. 30, 1912.

DEARLY BELOVED ELDER SILAS H. DURAND:—We are all, through the mercy of God, in good health. I remember that when you were here I promised to write you a little of my soul's experience, and I will try to do so, and may it be to the glory of the Lord. I do not mention anything that happened to me between fifteen and twenty-eight years of age, as the letter will get rather long. The thirtieth day of January, 1879, we had such a terrible storm that it made me afraid that the world was going to ruin. I fled to the barn to sing, but what I sang I do not know, when suddenly a supernatural light flashed in my soul, which had such an effect that all my fear took wings, the turbulent sea was quiet and I had peace, but how I felt I cannot tell. Just then my wife came in, I told her how frightened I had been, and how at ease I felt then, having perfect peace, and everything beamed of peace, and even if the world should have turned upside down with me I would not have been the least in fear, although I could not tell where my soul would have landed if such a thing had happened. This wonderful peace of mind was but of short duration, although there remained a little hope that all would be well with me one day, for I knew that this was a miracle of God, and comparing it with the word of truth I found that the disciples experienced something similar when they were on the turbulent sea in a frail vessel and He commanded the winds and the sea to be calm and they obeyed his voice; and they marveled not a little, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and sea obey him? This rather strengthened my little hope with regard to the future. When I was home, or with other people, I sometimes heard a still small voice, saying, "Return, ye backslider," just as distinctly as a voice is heard with natural ears, but in what manner this command could affect me I could not make out, so I was first up, then down, having a little hope, but the anxiety of mind getting worse right along. Pray I could not, and in going through mere formalities I could see no benefit for me, and I am sure that if I could have obeyed the precepts of the whole Bible it

would not have saved my soul from God's wrath. I am now glad that the Lord in his unfathomable wisdom does not use abilities which generally are employed to dethrone the Most High and set self upon the throne; firstly, from that source I can never have any misgivings, as if my knowledge was gathered through means of my natural abilities, and this to doubt my standing in the sight of God; secondly, I know through this that thousands are resting on their own lees, who are bold in praying and talking about faith and redemption, and think they are perfectly happy, loving the foremost seats in high places, while their faith is nothing more than a natural belief, relying solely on the letter of Scriptures, and expecting to be saved thereby. They talk about Jesus, whereas the Holy Spirit has never taught them to know God. They were never arrested in their soul through that terrible Judge; never been killed through the spirit of the law, nor their mouths been stopped, and they think and imagine that Jesus is their Redeemer, while it is nothing but vain and presumptuous imagination. Only those individuals who have been brought to the knowledge and felt realization of their lost condition, through the Spirit, and have lost all confidence in their own strength ever to be saved thereby, are enabled to say and understand the meaning thereof, No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. They understand the vast difference between the formal professors of religion and themselves, and they give all the honor to the Lord, who in his great mercy opened their eyes and understandings, to shun all such abominable rashness. Hundreds of times it has been said to me that the church must be restored in the church, and not by going out of it, but I am exceedingly glad that I have not offered anything to these Baal priests what belongs to the Lord. People would say that the cause of the church being sunk so low could be found in our sins, but I answered I felt not the least guilt on my conscience on account of it, and I believe if the Lord would but help me in the way of truth, such a constitution wrongly called "a church" would never testify against me. The Spirit says: "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." We hear cries on all sides that the gospel must be preached; everything is put to work to help it spread, which is, rightly considered, small wonder, for their gospel is an invention of human beings, and must therefore be kept on its feet by mortals, and they have to offer to it, but the word of God affirms that the disciple be as his master and the servant as his lord; having no strength in themselves, they live by faith, and their expectation is from Him who called them to work in his vineyard, although this is not a pleasing way to the flesh.

I will now relate what happened on Christmas of the year 1879, if I am not mistaken, for my soul's experience is yet fresh in my mind, though for natural things my memory is not to be trusted; as it is not in union with the things of the Spirit, it is dying with the natural man, and understands not the things pertaining to the kingdom of heaven. What I have written thus far I have written in the fear of the Lord, and in such measure as my soul has been enlightened, although I have thousands of times been afraid, and am often yet, that it is not impossible that I might be mistaken about the genuineness of this fear. This often makes me exclaim with the psalmist,

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Save me from self-delusion, for the eyes of the Lord look on the heart for truth in the inward parts. During the time from January 31st until the 25th of December of the same year were my soul afflictions very heavy, and I suffered the very pangs of death, although I was not wholly without hope that the Lord might be some day merciful to me. On the night following Christmas I finished my work much earlier than usual, because that night I wanted to go to my aunt's, to have a talk with her about soul matters, she being a woman who was not ignorant of such things. At that time I often had a verse of the Psalms upon my mind, namely, "Show me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me." That far I could come, but the words, "For thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day," were as impossible for me to utter as to create a world. After I had finished milking, and while I was yet in the barn, the same verse came into my mind again, and I perceived at once that now it was different with me, but I did not know what caused it. I had been in a frame of mind that I could not believe such a sinner as I could ever be made humble and brought to salvation; an unsurmountable mountain seemed to stand between God and my soul. I had many good intentions, and made thousands of vows, but I never kept them. Now came this verse in my mind, and my heart at once responded, "For thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day." I could do what was impossible before, I could sing it out, believing the obstacle I had felt before was suddenly removed, and with the eyes of faith I could look back and see that I had been waiting on him all the day, a long time already, but I had never been aware of it, and why I had not known this was a wonder to me. And thus light broke from above in my soul; then I lost consciousness, and how long this lasted I do not know, but when I came to I felt as if my senses had turned to praise in exalting God. I stood with the milk pail in my hand, looking in the light of the lamp, being astonished, and I exclaimed, O Lord, give me repentance, and as soon as the words were passed my lips the answer quickly followed, accompanied with majesty and power: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Then I already saw my name engraved in the handpalms of Christ, and I exclaimed, Now even the gates of hell can never conquer me, for I felt as if I was let down from heaven, never having committed sin, and my body seemed to be relieved of a very heavy burden, and I said, with the words of Paul, "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Then I went into the house and related to my wife the great things the Lord had done for my soul, which she was surprised to hear. I was allowed to live in that happy frame for a few days, and visited some of the Lord's people to tell them the wonders God had done for my soul, but the majority would not believe me. Their unbelief did not discourage me at all, for with Paul I could say, "Are they Hebrews? So am I." Do they expect to go to heaven? I am just as sure of it. Their doubt about the Lord's work in my soul I learned afterward was because as I had never spoken to them

about my poverty they could not believe my deliverances, being ignorant of the things which had preceded my deliverance from bondage. But at that time I had all my poverty completely erased from my mind, and it was impossible to talk about it. This happy frame, wherein the world seemed as banished from my mind, continued towards that glorious Being who became a curse to redeem me, and who so loved me that my love was drawn out towards Him. But now my love seemed to be decreasing, and this made me very uneasy in regard to my state. One night I came home feeling very dejected in spirit, and it seemed to me as if everything would soon be at its end with me. After I had laid myself on the bed such an awful stream of blasphemies was opened up in my flesh against the Most High that I shuddered, and it seemed as if I were lying on the very edge of a horrible abyss, expecting every moment to be cast down into eternal gloom, and the sentence I felt I justly deserved. I could no more pray then a corpse can, but all of a sudden this truth was dropped into my soul, "O keep my soul, and deliver me; let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee. Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee," and I sang this with heart and tongue, and fell into a refreshing sleep, and upon waking in the morning I found the dear Lord still abiding with me, and these words were applied with power, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." This blessed peace which I then enjoyed was of such an overpowering nature that it was past all understanding, and it was impossible for me to be at enmity with any person, and sure I am that if I could have communicated my peace with my worst enemy it would have turned him, the roaring lion, into a gentle lamb. Then I comprehended Paul's words which read, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?" In this happy frame of mind I supposed myself at the end of all my conflicts and beyond all strife, but alas, how ignorant I was in this matter, having no conception of my wants without number and the multitude of my scarlet sins, and had not my name been engraved in the palms of His hands, verily the gates of hell would have conquered me. The devil tried hard to make me believe that my repentance was only mere show in the flesh, but to my comfort the Lord added his light to his life, which enabled me to see the change that had taken place with me, and of one thing I was perfectly convinced, viz., that faith is a free gift of God, and no qualification of human nature; it cannot be produced by cultivation, nor increased, but it is freely bestowed of God. It knew its origin in me, viz., in the love of God shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost, which is also the case with the hope, and this encouraged me, seeing that the work in me carried the stamp of divine approbation, and it made me bold in conversing with sinners and with saints. When I talked with some I tried to find out where they obtained their religion, disregarding how few or how many their words were. When I found their religion to be void of divine authority I would question them about its

derivation, and point out its uselessness, although I was always filled with fear lest I might hurt the work of God, for I would not have done such a thing for anything. But this fear came generally from the wrong side to make me keep silent, but when I contended for God's truth my eyes were fixed upon the Lord, using gentle words at first, but when my adversary used the sword then I made use of mine, too, and was sure of coming off victorious. One Sunday night I heard one preach; I cared nothing for the sermon, but the last words of the portion that was read suited me so admirably that I felt as if drawn up into heaven, they were, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." At times I felt so overflowed with the loving-kindness of the Lord that I wanted heaven and earth to help me praise him. I could not praise him to such an extent as I desired, but I was comforted through the words of Jesus where he says, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Gradually I began to attend to my business again, but the things of the kingdom of heaven were uppermost, and the world was to me only of secondary weight. God's truth was in me like a spring of living water, his promises were applied to my soul out of the fullness of Christ, and returned to the Fountainhead from whence was their source. I had a very faithful friend, whom I visited often, for I met with many difficulties, and when I communicated them to him it seemed as if I felt relieved, and as if they were consumed like threads before the flames. It was not my happy lot to have that friend long; his death was the hardest stroke for me I ever had. I realized keenly what I had lost, for he had helped me carry many burdens, which I now had to carry alone. After the time mentioned until the present my life has been one of strife between the flesh and the Spirit, with much backslidings in heart, and many mistakes. Many times there is no opening of the blood of the Lamb, and I despair; especially are these last three years full of sin in the flesh. The heaviest trial is that His face is hid from me, which must be on account of sin. As I look upon my sin and inbred corruption, and think of the great mercies and deliverances of the Lord that have passed over me, I am astonished. I can claim nothing of what is good, either spiritual or natural, as it all belongs to the dear Lord. I cannot boast, or throw a stone at any one, and the name that suits me best is "The chief of sinners," yet I hope in his free mercies.

Yesterday, and a few other times, we had meeting at our house, which is very comfortable, I think. We would have liked it better if our dear friend Durand had been in the midst of our meetings; maybe you were with us in spirit. It is needful for us to be thankful that all is as it is.

Please cover all that is amiss in this letter with christian charity. I am an unlearned man, but would not write anything wrong if I could help it. Please, if you can, pray for us all at the mercy-seat, to the King of kings. We are all in good health.

With christian love to you and your household, and wishing you every blessing of the Lord that is needful to your soul and body, I am your unworthy friend, and I hope, brother,

J. P. HAARSMA.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Nov. 5, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose a letter sent me by an unknown brother, with the liberty of publishing it in the SIGNS if it meets with your approval. It seems to me the brother has set forth the truth according to the teaching of the Scriptures. I think his letter will prove of much interest to the lovers of truth.

Your brother,

O. B. HICKERSON.

THORNTON, Texas, Oct. 22, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER HICKERSON:—I am two years your senior, as I was eighty-two years of age October 1st, 1912, and have been an Old School Predestinarian Baptist in sentiment from my earliest recollection. My mother was a member at the time of the division in the Baptist family, from 1832 to 1840, caused, as you know, by the Andrew Fuller heresy of universal atonement and special application to any one who would accept the terms of the gospel upon their own volition, or will power, and that God would bestow his special mercies and grace upon them because of their obedience. I was born in Thomas Co., Georgia, October 1st, 1820. I was baptized by Elder Charles Holcombe, July 1st, 1880, in Panola Co., Texas.

Now will you bear with me if I attempt to prove that the Old School Baptist Church is the church that was established by our Lord Jesus Christ and the apostles? I deny the allegation of the Arminians that the Scriptures are addressed to the whole world, or the entire human family; the Scriptures are addressed to the living, not to the dead; Jesus Christ and the inspired writers would not have spoken or written a spiritual message to those who are dead in trespasses and in sins. Jesus Christ set up a spiritual kingdom, and his apostles wrote to those who had been born in this spiritual kingdom; they did not write to the world, but to those who had been quickened into spiritual life, or regenerated and born again of the Spirit of Christ, that Spirit which is formed in them the hope of glory, of heaven and eternal life. The apostle said, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;" that is, he had made them alive. No dead man can bring himself to life; neither the church, nor the Bible, nor the gospel, nor the preacher, nor the sinner by his good works, can bring spiritual life to a dead sinner; spiritual life must come from a supernatural power. Action always follows life. The dead cannot act. Were it not this way our eternal life would be of debt and not of grace. The popular religious world claims that by good works wrought by the dead sinner the special mercies and grace of God are bestowed upon him. This is a false doctrine, or the New Testament has been wrongly translated. In other words, the do and live system is false, or the live and do system is false, and as there can be no action without life, I am constrained as an honest man to believe that only the living can accept Christ and the gospel. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Who is the natural man? The natural man is the man who has not been quickened into spiritual life, who has not been regenerated and born of the Spirit of Christ. The man who has only natural eyes, ears and heart, cannot see, hear or understand the things that pertain to the spiritual kingdom of Christ. The Old School Baptist is the only denomination in the universe of God that believes and

preaches this doctrine, it is therefore the church of Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." Men do not have to buy eternal life with good works, God gives it to them, and no power can take it from them. He said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." If the Father gave the entire human family to his Son as a bride, then the entire human family will be saved, for he said, They shall all come to me, and I will in no wise cast them out. But the Arminian says, The people are free agents, and can accept or reject the terms of salvation upon their own volition, and be saved if they do accept. I deny the allegation that there are any terms or conditions to be performed upon the part of dead sinners in order to obtain eternal life, but there are many duties and obligations enjoined upon them after eternal life has been given them. These duties are not to be performed in order to purchase heaven and eternal happiness, but to save themselves from a guilty conscience in the discharge of their duty as the humble followers of the mandates of Jesus Christ. He said, If ye love me keep my commandments. The whole Arminian world and their preachers cannot point out a verse or chapter in the Bible where it is taught that the sinner is required to perform any condition in order to obtain eternal life. Jesus said, "And I give unto them eternal life." They do not obtain this life by buying it, or by the performance of terms and conditions; it is said on the contrary, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." Old School Baptists alone believe and preach this doctrine, and they are therefore the church of Jesus Christ. Paul said, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will," and this he said was according as the Lord had chosen them in Christ before the foundation of the world. This was not when they were regenerated and born again, it was not when they were baptized and united with the church; but they were chosen before the foundation of the world. This work was done in God's eternal purpose and foreknowledge before the world began, and their names were written in the book of the Lamb before the foundation of the world, and so Jesus said to his disciples upon one occasion, But rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven. We also read that it was given to some to make war upon the saints and to overcome them, and power was given them over kindreds and tongues and nations; and all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names were not written in the book of life of the Lamb before the foundation of the world. This Lamb was Jesus Christ. In God's eternal purpose and foreknowledge Jesus Christ stood as a lamb slain for all that the Father had given him to be his bride, from the foundation of the world, and their names were all written in Christ, and

no power in earth or hell can ever erase one of their names without destroying the immutability of Jehovah. No other denomination believes and preaches this doctrine, therefore Old School Baptists are the church of Christ. It is written, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." There are no intimations of any others being eternally saved, except those whom God foreknew and predestinated to eternal life.

I have made my letter much longer than I intended, but I could find no place to stop writing. I will just record a few more Scriptures which are characteristic of the Old School Baptists, and which prove them to be the church indeed. "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." It is not the multitude, but the little flock. "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." It is well known by all intelligent people that the great religious world hates the doctrine set forth in these Scriptures, and all who contend for it, more than they hate any other religious sect or doctrine that has ever been promulgated since the world was fashioned, and this is one of the strongest evidences that the Old School Baptists are the church of Jesus Christ. Were I as sure of heaven and eternal life, as I am that Old Baptists are the church established by Christ, I would be a happy old man.

Yours in the faith of God's elect,

S. M. CARLTON.

WAVERLY, Pa., Dec. 12, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have had it in my mind for some days to talk to the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if you should feel willing to publish what I write; if not, I will not withdraw my patronage from the paper, for there is good reading in it. First, I will say I do not know what spirit has suggested to my mind the thought of writing. I know I have a bad spirit, in fact, nature is all bad. I wish I were as sure that I had a good spirit, but I am not; I feel to hope sometimes that I do have the Spirit of Christ. One reason that makes me hope I possess the good Spirit is, I am grieved with the fruit of the flesh; I hate the vile things that I see in the old man (flesh), and I am positive if I should be left to act out the vile things of my nature no church would be walking in gospel order and keep me as one with them. I often think that if the dear brethren could see what a vile heart and nature I have they could not love and fellowship me. I do know that if my brethren should be left to act out what I see in my nature I could not and would not walk with them in church fellowship. I cannot fellowship these wicked things in myself, so how could I profess fellowship for my brother when acting out such things? I could not. The command of the apostle is, "Withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly."—2 Thess. iii. 6. Read also the fourteenth verse. This is gospel order, and should be heeded by the church of Jesus Christ; unheeded, inevitably death is the result. God is not mocked, for what a man or a church soweth that shall he or it also reap. (Gal. vi. 7.) The mind of Christ in the church will not admit of, or countenance for a moment, the works of the flesh, such as lying, swearing, drunken-

ness, adultery, theft or any other ungodly thing; the law of Christ demands that the saints shall manifest their hatred to these wicked things when duty requires, and duty does require it where they exist. No brother can excuse himself from acting on the ground that he is just as bad by nature as the vilest sinner on the earth, when duty requires that every member be ready to act. I do hope that God will restrain me by his grace from bringing reproach upon his church and people, which I will do if not kept; nothing but the grace of God will keep me from acting out my sinfulness. Paul says, By the grace of God I am what I am. He also says, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men [all classes and all nations] teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." This Scripture, like others, has a natural as well as spiritual signification, for a brother to walk contrary to its natural teaching would be to ignore the law of Christ, or order of God's house, dishonor the cause he professes to love and bring sorrow and trouble upon the saints, and if he should not repent (turn away from such a course of life) exclusion must follow as a result, if it is a living church. The sin of every child of God will surely find him out; our actions and conversation show what spirit we are of. But, brethren, be kindly affectioned one to another, and if it becomes necessary to deal with an erring one, deal faithfully and firmly, but tenderly, carefully, considering thyself, lest ye be also tempted. An orderly walk and godly conversation become the followers of Christ; order becomes the house (church of God). Should you have a diseased hand or foot would you not do all within your power or means to heal and save the member? Certainly. Should you fail in this, and see clearly that the whole body would be ruined by it, what would be the last resort? Amputation, of course. A regular surgeon should be employed, else the operation might affect the body more than the disease. The exhortation is, Ye that are spiritual, &c. (Gal. vi. 1.) No other would be qualified to heal or restore, and if necessary to cut off, let it be done in gospel order. Much confusion and trouble have been caused in many cases by being too hasty, and by having a wrong motive. If the desire or object in laboring with an offending brother is to exclude him, then it is certainly of the flesh; if to heal, reclaim or restore, it is of the Spirit. On the other hand, much sorrow and confusion have come upon the saints by tardiness or inaction; as in the case of the hand or foot, should the disease be hastily moving toward some vital part the surgeon's knife should be quickly applied to save the body. There are at times disorders in the church that require haste in action, for if allowed to run at any length they would be the destruction of the body (visible), but in every case it should be done with carefulness and love, for in the absence of love nothing can be done decently and in gospel order. It is within the power, authority or jurisdiction of the church to receive candidates, or reject them; is it not in the power of the same body to dismiss or exclude one they have received? Most assuredly so, and any argument contrary to this is without foundation. But O how full of fleshly notions we all are. There is none good, no, not one; all by and in nature are totally depraved. Brethren, all the time I have been writing this I have felt to put my hand over my mouth and cry,

Unclean, unclean. Who and what am I that I should write these things for the dear saints of God to read? Why I have written as I have God only knows. I feel to be the most vile, base and ungodly sinner that ever lived on earth, and but for the grace of God I might have been incarcerated in some doleful prison or strung up on the gallows long ago.

I will now say that I am still serving several churches as best I can. The attendance about as usual, small in some places, not large in any place. Several were baptized the past year. Elders Fenton and McConnell have visited churches I am serving, and each baptized one received; one baptized at Cammal, Pa., by Elder McConnell, the other by Elder Fenton in the fellowship of the church at Justus, Pa., for which we feel to thank God our Father, and we do feel glad that the brethren in the ministry feel willing to administer the ordinances for the churches when visiting among them. I feel to bid them God speed in their labor of love. I would be glad to have any of the brethren in the ministry visit us and preach for us, also brethren and sisters are welcome among us. We are common people, not up-to-date in fashion or style, but we will give you good, wholesome food to eat, and warm beds to sleep in, and entertain you in our farmer style the best we can. I am still serving the Beulah Church, in Canada, and baptized two there last June; also visit the brethren in Brantford, Canada, quite often.

I will now close by saying, I hope I will never think of writing for publication again, for I cannot satisfy my mind even a little, and evidently it will be a blessing to all if I never do.

Yours as ever, less than nothing and vanity, D. M. VAIL.

CLAREMONT, Cal., Dec. 21, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending you remittance, which please place to my credit, and oblige. I should have attended to this sooner, but I do many things that I should not do, and many things that I should do I leave undone.

I will, in my weak way, try to write some thoughts that have been presented to my mind, and if they have merit that will justify, you may give them place, but do not let them take the place of other more suitable or worthy matter. "This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones; to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men."—Dan. iv. 17. This language King Nebuchadnezzar heard in his dream, that Daniel was to interpret to him, was an announcement of a fact that the king was to learn and to declare, for directly after he had come into possession of his right mind he is recorded as saying, "And at the end of the days, I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me; and I blessed the Most High; and I praised and honored him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation; and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Nebuchadnezzar had had an opportunity to know the power of God, and had made mention of it, after he had seen in the fiery furnace the three men loose, who had been bound, and also the fourth, with a form like unto the

Son of God, by saying, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god except their own God." Here was a manifestation of God's power that is more remarkable than but few have ever witnessed, and the declaration of the king is remarkable also in that it was as strong a declaration of God's power as many of those who boast of their experiences are willing to make. The king saw the none effect of the terrible heat, that was made many times hotter than was needs be, so great in fact that those who threw them in were consumed. He saw them thrown in bound, yet he saw them walking about loose. He saw three thrown in, yet there were four that he distinctly saw, and one was like the Son of God. He knew, for he could but take into account the result of his own eyesight. He even declared in his decree in regard to this God of these men, There is no other god that can deliver after this sort. He was willing also to admit (which he did) that this God could make the decrees of kings of none effect. This was the sort of a declaration that God in his wisdom decreed that this king should make. But see what he must experience before he was made willing to utter the language of the text. How he was driven from men, and did eat grass as an ox, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagle's feathers and his nails like bird's claws. All this till seven times shall pass over him; seven years of this life, think of it, so degrading in the sight of men this experience of the once great king, yet this was all foretold to him in a dream that was rightly interpreted to him by one that he knew had power to interpret dreams. Twelve months after the dream the blow fell, and at a time when he was boasting of the great things he had done; and great they were in the sight of men. A voice from heaven said, The kingdom is departed from thee. After telling what should befall him (which was the repetition of what had been told him by Daniel as the interpretation of the dream) then it says, "Till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will." Then after he had lived the seven years, and at the end of the days, listen to the language he uses: "And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me; and I blessed the Most High; and I praised and honored him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and whose kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" We are often, by those who are prejudiced against our doctrine, accused of being out of our right minds when these manifestations of the holy things are being revealed to us, and it may be true as to our natural minds, but in this case we have no account of any words being spoken by this king during his period of dementation, so all the language of the king recorded here was uttered either before or after the period of seven years; either before he lost his mind or after his reason had returned to him. What he experienced while in that demented condition may have had a great deal to do with making him willing to

make this assertion; in fact, "till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will," makes us understand that it was for this purpose that the troubles of the seven years were put upon him. But since the declaration he made was such as to make sure that he had been convinced of what he should be made to know, the same is entirely satisfactory, for his reason was returned unto him, and also his former power and station. We notice that he was made willing to abase man, and to regard him as less than nothing, and that he stood in no sense in the way of God's plans; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation. If the king was made to declare the power of God in such a forceful and certain way, why is it that other persons who have had lessons that are severe enough to make them know this same truth are asked "for the sake of peace" not to make use of language that testifies to the same thing? This man that was made an example of, and was made to know this truth, could not keep from declaring it. If it had not been satisfactory to God, he certainly would have spoken his disapproval in some way. But we find that, "The glory of my kingdom, mine honor and brightness returned unto me; * * * and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me."

I have made this too lengthy already, so must close. Do with it as you think best. Remember me at the throne of grace as a poor, dependent creature, begging God's mercy, knowing full well that I am a lost and ruined sinner if it be not that his blood was shed for me at the time he said, "It is finished." If I was not included among those the Father gave him there is nothing that will save; if I am included in that number there is nothing that can hinder or keep me from the fulfillment of his decree. His promise can never be broken. I am made to feel sometimes that he has promised me, even a sinner like me, and then again, it seems, No, it cannot be.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS.

TOUCHET, Wash., Dec. 4, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have for some time had it in mind to write and ask your views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as to the gospel course of the church in ordaining, or setting apart, a member to the office of deacon. While I make the request, I am not alone in desiring your views. I want to make some remarks on the subject myself, and if you see proper to publish them, with my request for your views, do so, but if not published, all will be right with me. There are two customs at least in the United States in our churches in setting apart their deacons. The churches here in the west, in general follow the practice of calling for helps from sister churches, and when convened form a presbytery, examine the candidate and set him apart to the service of the church by prayer and the laying on of hands of the ordained helps, followed by exhortation, just the same practice as they follow in ordaining Elders. This practice applied to setting apart deacons in the church is bewildering, misleading and out of place to my mind and understanding of our rule and practice, as laid down in the Scriptures. The second practice of the churches to my knowledge is, the church's prayerful selection of a suitable brother from their members, having the requisite qualifications as given in the third chapter of Timothy, and then

to set him apart to the office of deacon by vote of the church. This last practice seems to me to be the proper order and course for the church, though it is not followed in that particular by the great majority of the churches here in the west. Those using a presbytery claim to take their authority from the practice of the apostles in ordaining the seven mentioned in Acts, sixth chapter, but it is nowhere mentioned in that chapter, or any other chapter in Acts, as being deacons, in the sense that they are mentioned in Timothy, or in the sense that the churches now use them. For some cause unknown to me, the translators have seen proper to mention them in the margin as the seven deacons. I suppose because the word "deacon" means servant. But is not an Elder a servant? And is it not more reasonable to believe that they were Elders? Do not their labors that followed their ordination prove that fact? It has been satisfactory to me now for over fifty years.

Brother Ker, I have given you in as condensed form as I can some of my views on the subject; I have had much thought on the subject, and could write lengthily, but do not feel it profitable to do so, and hope you may be able to instruct us in that line. If this letter should be published, and any brethren desire to ask me any questions on the subject, I shall take pleasure in answering them by private letter the best I can. Truth and proper order are all I desire, and I believe all the saints want them. This may be my last letter, and I want to say that in my younger days I used to think that as I grew older I would grow better by nature, but how sadly I am disappointed, for sin is in all my ways; while I long to be freed from it, it is always present with me. I am often made to lament, and cry out with the apostle, "O wretched man that I am!" I am now well into my eighty-third year, and have been a subscriber to the SIGNS for sixty years, and had a name with the Baptists for about the same time, and many severe trials I have passed through in that time, but out of them all the dear Lord has delivered me, and I do hope will be with me to the end. May the Lord be with you, is my prayer.

Yours in hope,

R. CUMMINS.

[THE question of our dear brother, Dr. Cummins, is well answered by him in his remarks. The old saying: "Customs make laws," seems in a measure at least to be true in the church. But the law of the New Testament is the only measuring line for such things; what it says is the rule always to be governed by. In the churches here in the east the two forms of appointing deacons to office are also observed, and there has been but little, if any, criticism on either side, of the other. In the churches served by ourself the deacons have been appointed by vote. A deacon, however, is not made, either by ordination or appointment, but by the Spirit of God. The gift is, or should be, always discovered beforehand, in that the man verily does the work of a deacon. This work does not consist merely in passing the bread and the wine, but in looking to the affairs of the church in every way; to visit the sick, report such to the church, and ask for help for those in need; to see that all business of the church is attended to decently and in order, including the welfare of the pastor and visiting ministers. When this gift is discovered, the man in whom it is should be appointed to the office in gospel order, that he may have the authority of the church in all

he does. And we, like brother Cummins, think appointment by the vote of the church as well if not better than ordination by a presbytery and the laying on of hands. With regard to the seven ordained by the apostles, mentioned by our brother, being Elders, we can safely say that two of that number, Philip and Stephen, were preachers of the gospel.—K.]

FARMINGTON, Ill., Nov. 24, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is in sorrow and affliction that I once more pen you a few lines, and should you give it a place in the SIGNS it may be read by many of my dear friends in the flesh, as well as many dear beloved ones in the Spirit. It is now more than four years since I had a paralytic stroke, and since then I have been a constant sufferer. In my present condition it seems to me that this may be my last writing to the SIGNS. I have had the attention of three doctors, and of many of my children. A dear daughter is now here from Greeley, Colo. I was taken down at a daughter's near Carthage, Ill., and since then I have become almost deaf and blind. Perhaps if I send this you cannot make it out. I shall have to ask you to stop the SIGNS when the year is up, as I cannot any longer read it. My affliction has been sore. I was privileged to attend the Salem Association, in Hancock Co., Ill., where I was taken ill, and have suffered much ever since. I feel sorry indeed to give up my papers. Now will you forgive me for this scrawl? It is the best that I can do.

In love to you all for Christ's sake, I remain your brother in hope of eternal life, E. D. VARNES.

[WE are sorry indeed through the above letter to learn that our aged brother is so feeble and full of suffering, but we are sure that the same grace in which he has so long trusted will be with him to the end. Our brother has dwelt in the fellowship and full esteem of all his brethren who have known him these many years. But when the summons shall finally come it will be, Child, your Father calls, come home. Here he has been often refreshed at the stream, there he will drink at the fountain, and dwell in light forever. This is the hope that is set before all who believe, and it is the hope that cannot fail. We, as well as all who may read the above, shall desire to hear that the last days of our brother's earthly life are spent in the peace of God, which passeth all understanding.—ED.]

NEW LEXINGTON, Ala., June 10, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have four more subscribers for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so I will send you post-office money order for eight dollars. My father was a constant reader of your paper, and was well pleased with it, and so am I, as it strongly contends for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints. I delight in reading the letters from the brethren and sisters who live in different parts of the land; they all speak one and the same thing: salvation by grace, and grace alone, which proves to me that they have all been taught of the Lord, for it is written, All thy people shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. Men are trying to teach the people to know the Lord, whom to know is eternal life, and it has ever been a failure, and ever will be.

I received the Bible you sent me, and am very thankful to you for it.

S. J. NORRIS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1913.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REPLY TO BROTHER BENSTEAD.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Should it please God, the only revealer of truth, to give to you the meaning of the following Scriptures, I wish you would write upon them. "God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"—Rom. vi. 2. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin."—Rom. vi. 6, 7. "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."—Rom. vi. 18. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Rom. viii. 1. "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth."—Eph. iv. 25-29. I hope I am not asking too much. If you do not feel like writing upon this, it will be all right. I know that we must be given knowledge of these things by the Spirit of God, even as all knowledge of him is given, and he gives it us as it pleases him.

I remain your unworthy brother, if a brother at all, saved by grace,

REUBEN BENSTEAD.

ABERFELDY, Ontario, Sept. 14, 1912.

We cannot claim wisdom to interpret the Scriptures beyond even the weakest and feeblest of his servants, but it has long been our desire to comply with the wishes of our brethren and friends with regard to any service that they may desire us to render. It is true, as our brother has said, that all true knowledge of God, or of the word, comes from him who gave the word through holy men of old. If He does not give understanding, first in the heart, and then if he does not see fit to illumine any portion of his word by the Holy Spirit, all our endeavors to expound the word will prove to be in vain. We cannot say that we have not had some views of the above quoted Scriptures, and such as we have we will try to present.

With regard to the text found in Rom. viii. 1, we will say that in the number of the SIGNS for Dec. 15th, 1912, in reply to a request from brother Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., we wrote somewhat at length upon it, and we refer brother Benstead (and any others who may desire to see what we there wrote) to that editorial. We desire also to say with regard to this Scripture, and to all the rest to which our brother has called attention, that it seems to us that the apostle is presenting what may be expected to be the effect of living grace in the heart upon the outward life of its subjects. In doing so he does not go over the same ground in all these texts, but he does present in a general way what is becoming in those who believe. Nothing that the children of God can do can ever have any effect upon their eternal destiny, and their entrance into spiritual life here is solely by the gift of God, according to the testimony of the dear Redeemer, who said, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Nothing that the apostles have written must be understood as a contradiction of this grand truth. The things which are said by them with regard to exhortation, or warning, or reproof, and concerning the results of well or of ill doing, must be understood to apply to

their travel while on earth. If believers are said to die, it is not eternally, else the Savior's words just quoted are not true. When it is said, They that live after the flesh shall die, but if they walk after the Spirit they shall live, the reference is not to the future world, or to a saving interest in Christ, but to a healthy growth on the one hand here and now, and, on the other hand, to decay and darkness and the reaping of corruption here and now. We have spoken of these general reflections by way of clearing the ground, as it were, for some thoughts with regard to what these Scriptures do declare.

With regard to the words in Romans vi. 2, it is evident that the apostle had met with those who said, If we are saved by grace alone, then there need be no anxiety as regards our manner of life, because no matter how we live our eternal destiny is fixed, and cannot be affected. Still further, they also said, If it be true that where sin has abounded grace does much more abound, as the apostle has taught, then let us continue in sin that grace may abound. They further said, It is surely a good thing for grace to abound, and if the only way for it to abound be by the abounding of sin, then it seems only reasonable that we should commit more and more sin, in order that we may cause the grace of God to abound. But Paul meets this false reasoning, this reasoning of the carnal mind, that mind which loves sin and finds in it its delight and joy, by presenting another truth, viz., that those who are redeemed unto God have now come experimentally to be dead to sin; that is, they have been shown the condemnation which sin produces, and then that Jesus has met that condemnation in full, and by so doing has condemned sin in the flesh, and sin has become to such as are taught in this way, exceeding sinful. Through the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ believers are to count themselves to be dead unto sin; they are translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son; there is now a principle in them which hates sin, and so sin has ceased to be to them a sweet morsel under their tongues. On the contrary, sin has become a loathsome thing; it has become to them a body of death indeed; it has become to them a loathsome, decaying, dead body, to which they are bound, but from which they must ever beg deliverance. "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" This effectual work of the Spirit is bestowed some time upon all who are redeemed by grace, and the apostle, as it appears to us, is in the text simply stating that one who feels to abhor sin cannot live any longer in it. Once it was his life and supreme delight, but now it is as a dead, putrefying body to him. Once he was dead in sin, but now he has become dead to sin. Once he was dead to God, but now he has become alive to God. He must therefore henceforth live unto God and not in sin This does not mean that he is not still plagued with the presence of sin in his heart and life. Were it not so, he would not be crying out, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But while sin is within, and while it still plagues him, he is not under the dominion of it. Sin, said the apostle, shall not have dominion over you. A sinner unredeemed from sin is fully under its dominion, so much so that there is no spirit of rebellion in him against it, but rather he loves his chains. But a sinner born again ceases to delight in his captivity, and begins a warfare against sin that shall never cease until he is finally the victor. Sin often disturbs his peace, but

emphatically it does not reign over him, and when he feels its presence it is death and not life to him.

The sixth and seventh verses in this chapter only enlarge upon the same thought. The old man of sin is crucified with Christ, who was crucified for sin, to the end that its dominion might be broken, and that sin itself might be destroyed, to the end that we should be delivered from the bondage of corruption, that henceforth we should not serve sin. This was the end in view when from the beginning it was the purpose of God to send his Son into the world for sin, and to redeem sinners. His finished work was not only to the end that he might bring us at last to heaven and perfect holiness, but also that even here and now we might be made free from the dominion of sin, and be free to serve God in newness of spirit. It is all summed up in the words, That henceforth we should not serve sin. So it is true, most blessedly true, that while sin annoys and plagues us, we do not any longer serve it. It is not any longer our master. One is now our Master, even our blessed Lord. This is the happy state of all who believe. It is their joyful privilege to say, I am no longer a slave to sin; the iron bondage is broken. True, I do often feel its power in me, and I do often find myself gone out of the way, but I do not any longer love this service, but hate and loathe it, and I do love the service of God, though I make such poor progress in his service.

In the seventh verse Paul only reiterates the truth stated in the second verse, viz., that believers are dead to sin. From that to which we are dead we are freed. This is the high and holy standing of all who are redeemed, no matter how much, through the weakness of the flesh and through the temptations of the devil, they are disturbed and distressed, and no matter how often they err and go astray. Amidst all the warfare it is still true that with the mind they serve the law of God.

The same thoughts apply to the eighteenth verse of this chapter. In the second verse the word used to describe the relation which believers occupy with relation to sin is "death," in the sixth and seventh verses the words are "crucified" and "freed," so in this eighteenth verse the word "free" is used with relation to sin, and the word "servants" with reference to righteousness. The whole argument of the apostle in this chapter, as it appears to us, is that all who believe are now to consider that they are dead, and freed from sin, so that it no longer has any claim upon them, and that they are now become the Lord's servants, and that since this is so, they are not to seek occasions to serve sin, but rather to always remember that it is their proper place to serve God. This is not slavery, but freedom and delight. What a help it is when under temptation it is given us by the blessed Lord to remember this wonderful truth: I am not any more under the dominion of sin and Satan, but I belong to the Lord, and he requires righteousness. Shall I therefore any longer so do as to declare that I am still the servant of sin? What a privilege to walk as becometh the princes of the royal family, to the honor of their Father, the King of kings. How wonderful to be lifted up out of the dominion of Satan, whose willing slaves we were, to the dominion of the King of Righteousness, and to the glad, willing service of free-born children.

In Ephesians iv. 25–29, the apostle is but setting forth in a specific way some of the things that belong to the reign of righteousness in all who are saved. In

the portions of the word of which we have thus far been writing the apostle has been treating of the general truth that believers have passed from death to life, from bondage to freedom, but in this last named portion of the word he calls attention to what this freedom from the bondage of sin is designed to produce in the daily conversation of men. Salvation felt in the heart takes a man away from his thieving, from falsehood and from vile communications with his mouth, and from all other things that are evil. This salvation tends to produce truth in our dealings with men, and all kindness to the needy, rather than robbery of them. The things named in these verses are all the proper fruits of the gospel when its effect has been wrought out in those who have received it, and the same is true of all the hundreds of admonitions found in the word of God addressed to the living and the free in Christ Jesus. Therefore the apostle urges upon his brethren to put away lying. Those who had been under the dominion of Satan, the father of lies, from the beginning, are now under the dominion of him who is the Truth, therefore let what they say be according to truth, and this includes not only the true doctrine of God and Christ and salvation, but also carefulness in all our statements, in all the relations of life. Let every man speak truth with his neighbor. Certainly he who does not in his temporal affairs speak the truth cannot be a good witness to the truth of the word of God. The spirit of falsehood does not live in one portion of our daily life while the spirit of truth lives in another portion. He that knows and loves the truth of God, and the God of truth, will desire that his every word shall be according to truth. Men lie to others for the purpose of unlawful gain, but if we remember that we "are members of one another," we shall have no desire to cheat or wrong each other; rather, we shall desire to do each other good. Still further, if forgiveness has been felt in our own souls we shall not be able long to hold anger against another. The sun will not be likely to go down upon our wrath, and if for any cause we become angry, our anger will not be likely to be such as to lead us to do wrong to another. Since anger is so likely to lead to sin against another, they who have felt their need of forbearance and forgiveness will desire to be very slow to anger lest they do sin, and since the devil has been so hard a master, and has now been seen of them as a liar and murderer, there will be a great solemnity to them in the admonition, "Neither give place to the devil." Let not Satan reign, but remember that Christ alone is your Lord and Master.

But without further comment upon these words we will leave the subject to the consideration of brother Benstead, and to all who may read what we have written. At best we felt that we could only make suggestions regarding the subject. C.

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OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Rebecca Jane Main, daughter of Elder J. H. and Rebecca Biggs, was born in Delaware County, Ohio, March 11th, 1849, died at her home, four miles north of Delaware, Dec. 26th, 1912, in her 64th year. She was united in marriage to James Sylvester Main, Nov. 1st, 1871, to which union were born five children, all of whom, except one (a daughter who died in infancy) survive. They are: Arthur D., Anna Bush, James C. and Clarence. Sister Main received a hope in Christ and united with the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church called Pleasant Hill, in the year 1895, being baptized by her father, Elder J. H. Biggs, who was pastor of the church, where she lived a faithful member until her death. The home of brother and sister Main was noted among the brethren, and often spoken of as an Old Baptist hotel; there were never too many, they could always find room for one more, and the hospitality which was shown would cause the brethren to want to go again.

The writer was called from Mansfield to conduct the services, using as a text John v. 25, 29, to a very attentive congregation of relatives and friends. Elder C. E. Jackson made some appropriate remarks, after which all that was mortal was laid to rest in the cemetery near by to await the call of the Master in the resurrection. It was with much sorrow we saw the body lowered in the grave, feeling we had lost a mother in Israel, but firmly believing she had an interest in the shed blood on Calvary, and what was our loss is her gain.

May the Lord bless the husband, children and brethren and enable us to say, Not our will, but thine, be done. GEO. L. WEAVER.

Littleton R. Groom was born three miles south of Gower, Clinton Co., Mo., May 17th, 1856, died March 13th, 1911, aged 54 years, 9 months and 26 days. He was the son of James and Rebecca Groom, who were among the earliest settlers, emigrating from Kentucky in an early day, and had a large family of seventeen children, nine of whom are still living. Brother Littleton was married to Miss Mollie Josephine Pearcy, Sept. 23rd, 1888, to which union were born four children, two boys and two girls. Brother Groom united with Mt. Zion Church of Primitive Baptists, near Gower, Mo., the second Sunday in April, 1897, and his walk, deeds and conversation had ever since testified in unmistakable terms of the work of grace within. He had been a great sufferer the past few years. Five years ago last June he had the bones in one leg badly shattered, and endured a severe operation. March 4th he was again brought to the Ensworth Hospital, St. Joseph, Mo., to be operated upon for appendicitis, and after patiently enduring untold suffering until the morning of the 13th entered into that rest that remaineth to the people of God. The writer visited him at the hospital, and said to him, "Brother Lit, I have been waiting for you to get better before coming to see you." He answered, "I am not going to get better, and I do not want to get better, I want to go." I said to him, "You feel that it is well with you?" He answered, "Yes." I said, "It will seem but a moment until you awake." He answered, "Yes, that is so," and it was in this hope that he fell asleep. He leaves to mourn their loss his bereaved wife, four children, seven sisters, two brothers and a host of relatives and friends. May God bind up the broken hearts and comfort the bereaved ones.

The funeral services were conducted by Elders Cash and Jones, at the Missionary church-house called Mt. Carmel, Wednesday, March 15th, 1911, Elder Jones using for a text Romans viii. 11: "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." After which the remains were tenderly placed in the grave to await the voice of the Son of God. Six nephews served as pallbearers, and a nephew was the undertaker in charge.

M. F. CULVER.

Mrs. Louise Glenn was born Oct. 3rd, 1841, at Greenville, Tenn., and in 1858 came with her father's family to Arkansas. In 1859 she professed a hope of eternal life and joined the Primitive Baptist Church the same year. In 1861 Cadron Church was constituted, and she was in the constitution, and remained a member of the same until her death, on Christmas day, 1912. She was all that comprises a true soldier of the cross, and died as she had lived, strong in the faith of her blessed Savior. She was sick three months, and bore her suffering with all the fortitude and patience possible. She knew from the beginning of her sickness that she could not get well, but she was perfectly willing for God's will to be done. Her children have lost a dear, good christian mother, and may her prayer for her children be remembered and we finally be brought to the throne of God, where she worshiped so long.

Her daughter, (MRS.) JOHN INGRAM.

BROTHER **Ellis Johnson,** of Justus, Pa., died Dec. 25th, 1912, aged 59 years, 4 months and 21 days. He was born and raised in Lackawanna Co., Pa. He was twice married, first to Miss Olive Russell, who died ten or twelve years ago. Second, to Mrs. Truman Akerly, who, with other near and distant relatives, is left behind. May God give grace and strength where it is needed; he it is who knows all our needs. There were no children by either union. He, with his first wife, united with the Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Pa., twenty-five or more

years ago. He was clear in every principle of the doctrine of Christ: election, predestination, grace, resurrection of the dead and eternal glory and happiness with Jesus, his Savior and Redeemer. We will miss him in our assemblies. The writer baptized him, also attended his funeral at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse the 28th, at 11 o'clock a. m. Burial was in Akerly Cemetery, near by. His death, according to reports, was caused by accidentally being shot by a gun in his own hands, which he took out of his house a few minutes before to shoot sparrows. A large congregation was in attendance at the funeral. The text used on the occasion was Job xiv. 5: "Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass."

D. M. VAIL.

DEATH has again visited our community, and taken little **Frank Padlock,** son of Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Padlock, aged twenty-one months. He was a sweet, bright child, and would visit his grandmother at any time, living next door. As he passed out of his home he said, "By, mamma, going to mammy's house." In about twenty minutes his mother called for him and he was not there, then she called for help. His father left the field and went to a deep tank about four hundred yards from the home and found him dead in the water. It seems to us that the angel of heaven guarded him safely all the way from the front gate down to the water's edge. O, think how heartbreaking it was for his father to pick up his lifeless baby. But he has gone to rest, to be with God forever blest, always to praise the Savior's love and redeeming grace.

HIS AUNT.

BROTHER **M. W. Cook** died Dec. 22nd, 1912. He bore many years of affliction, but would go among his brethren and attended meeting whenever he could. He was a strong believer in the doctrine set forth by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and loved the Baptist cause and suffered many hardships and deprivations for the sake of being with the brethren at their meetings. Brother Cook was 72 years and 1 month old. His death was due to a complication of diseases. He had been seriously ill about a month. At his request no funeral services were held. He leaves to mourn his death five sons and one daughter, and many friends and brethren, who esteemed him very highly.

C. Y. OSTEEN.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 81. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1913. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WINNSBORO, Texas, Dec. 29, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—After reading with comfort and encouragement your good, spiritual communications in the SIGNS, of which I have been a reader nearly thirty-four years, I sometimes from some cause feel prompted to pen a few of my feeble thoughts for your consideration, but so far does the glory of the Lord's house exceed my highest and best thoughts and expressions, that I am made to shrink at the thought of an attempt to write or speak of things pertaining to it. There are two spheres of which the Scriptures teach us, in which the sons and daughters of Adam live and act; the one natural, the other spiritual; the entrance into each is by birth. We are naturally born into this earthy or natural sphere, a son or daughter of the earthy Adam, without a choice on our part, or that of our parents, as to which. Our nativity, time or place of birth, size, complexion, color of our hair, disposition or temperament, are not matters of choice with us; in neither is our condition under the law, our attitude as creatures toward God and his holy law, matters of choice with us. These are self-evident facts, supported by both Scripture and sound logic, and must be apparent to all unbiased thinking minds. Even the first man was not consulted in those things by his Maker, but had as little choice of what he was made, and how, and when, his location and attitude as a creature, as we that live to-day. For what he was, how he was made, and the purpose of his Maker in him, and other things concerning him, we are dependent upon what his Creator and Maker has been pleased to have put upon record in his inspired written word. Therein we are taught that the whole human family are his descendants; that we all sprang from this one head. For God "hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." The first man, Adam, was only a natural man. Paul the apostle said he was of the earth earthy; pronounced with all the rest of creation, when the Creator finished his work, and looked upon the creation, "very good," fully adequate in every respect for all the requirements of the purpose in view in each thing. As the man was

designed to live and move in an earthy, natural sphere, he was given exactly that life (and all the qualities of that life) that adapted him to that sphere, and that sphere only, so even in his standing of innocency before the violation he was not capacitated for the spiritual sphere, for he was not spiritual, but natural. Man has often said he was possessed of a "reasonable and immortal soul," but the Scriptures do not so say. While there are passages of Scripture that imply to my mind (the parable of Lazarus and the rich man for instance) that even the unregenerate do not cease to exist in some way, though there must be a dissolution of their mortal existence, I do not think that the term "immortal" or "immortality" properly applies to the sons and daughters of Adam, from the fact, as plainly stated by Paul in his first letter to Timothy, 1 Tim. vi. 16, that Christ "only hath immortality, dwelling in the light," &c. Immortality, to my mind, carries the thought of divine holiness that cannot apply to man, even in his state of innocency before the fall. Again, it has been said, Man was made able to stand, but liable to fall. The truth is, Adam was not able to stand one moment longer than he did stand, and could not fall one moment sooner than he did fall. Let us reason from the Scriptures for a moment, and as we reason let us remember that the apostle said that Adam is the figure of him that was to come, (Rom. v. 14,) and further, that "Adam was not deceived; but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression."—1 Tim. ii. 14. In Genesis i. 27, it is said, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." We can readily see that in this the first man formed, and from whom all others have descended, there were the elements of the masculine and the feminine. In other words, his bride and all his undeveloped posterity were embodied in him. So it is that in Christ Jesus was his bride, her life and all his people embodied, and here to my mind we have the image, the figure. It is evident that the material which goes to make up our natural bodies was not literally in our progenitor Adam, but the germ, the life that develops and builds up those bodies and makes them manifest in the image of our earthy head, Adam, was in him. So in Christ is, and ever was, that spiritual life that quickens and makes manifest the heirs of promise, and that finally shall raise them up from the dead, and fashion them like unto His glorious body. It was after that the Lord God had given the law to Adam concerning the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil," (which law the woman received in the man) that he said, "It is not good that the man should be alone, I will make a help meet for him." "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Now the serpent's influence was brought to bear upon the woman, she was beguiled, and yielded to the temptation. Before she gave to the man and he ate, yea, even from the second that the woman ate of the fruit, Adam's flesh and bones were involved in the transgression; yea, his very life also, for her

life was his life. It has been said that the man partook of the fruit because of the love he had for his bride. It is true he loved his bride, it could not be otherwise, but because of the relationship he was necessarily involved from the time of the woman's transgression. To my mind the Lord has purposely given his people an appropriate "figure of him that was to come," Christ and his church, his chosen people, their relationship, their union and oneness with him. A definite number of the human race of all ages and nationalities were by the Father given the Son in covenant, elected, "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world," blessed with spiritual life and all spiritual blessings in Christ according to this choice, having been predestinated unto the adoption of children by the Father, &c. (Eph. i. 3–5.) Thus blessed in this everlasting covenant, "ordered in all things and sure," containing all their salvation and all their desire, and which he maketh not to grow, (2 Sam. xxiii. 5,) they have ever been in the eyes of Omnipotence one with Jesus. Jesus said to his disciples, At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. It is written in the one hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." This evidently alludes to Christ. He said in his prayer to the Father, in the seventeenth chapter of John, that his Father had given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, says he. I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of my Father which hath sent me, says Jesus again. His people are sanctified (set apart) by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ and called, called to be saints, called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his (God's) purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ before the world began. They are chosen and predestinated unto heaven and eternal glory in heaven after this life, of which they are given a sweet hope and a measure of assurance in being born again. The whole way also through which they must pass from the beginning of their journey or pilgrimage, to the end, is appointed for them. It lies through tribulations, afflictions and persecutions, with faith and hope and joy in the Holy Ghost to uphold and support them on the way. They transgressed in Adam, and fell under the penalty and curse of a just and holy law. Justice demanded death. The stroke that justice decreed fell upon him who was and is the Husband, the head of the body, even Jesus, who was made to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Only upon the principle of vital relationship could it have been just for our Savior to have suffered, the just for the unjust. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory? "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one; for which cause

he is not ashamed to call them brethren." —Heb. ii. 10, 11. Jesus being so identified with his beloved that they are bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh, their sufferings are his sufferings, and his sufferings their sufferings, and not only this, but the glory of it is, what they are given and feel of joy and peace and love is his, and all that is his is theirs, for if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him, as the Captain of our salvation, he was made perfect through suffering, so to reign with him we must be prepared by suffering. In order to be identified with the blessed Jesus in suffering, pain and death, it was necessary for us to fall in Adam; it was God's ordained way. In order that unnumbered legions of redeemed sinners should shout the praises of redeeming grace throughout endless and boundless eternity, it was needful that his people be under the curse of God's just and holy law, and that Jesus, the Husband and Redeemer, should identify himself with them under the law, and suffer, and bleed, and die, and rise again the third day. "Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." The kingdom of heaven and the things pertaining thereto, and the testimony thereof, recorded in the holy Scriptures, belong exclusively to the heirs of promise, and are matters of revelation. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." There is but one way of entrance into that kingdom, and that is by birth; all by nature are utterly disqualified. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The predestinated vessels of mercy were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. The infant and the adult, the idiot and the sound minded, the fool and the wise, and the ignorant and the learned, are all alike unequal to the task of preparing themselves for this kingdom. One has no advantage of the other. It is no less a miracle for the wisest and most learned man to be brought to know Jesus and the truth concerning him, than for the unborn babe to leap for joy in its mother's womb at the mention of His name. The little babe is as capable of receiving "the things of the Spirit" as the most learned adult, for all are alike incapable. After being "born again," the different degrees of wisdom and knowledge in the kingdom are gifts of the Spirit. The Lord hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and compassion on whom he will have compassion. So it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. There is no room for boasting, and all boasting is excluded in the kingdom of God. How happy are the recipients of the sure mercies of David.

In love to all the household of faith, your unworthy little brother in bonds,

H. B. JONES.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Sept. 24, 1912.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—This is primary election day, but this is the only ticket that I feel like voting, the God-man, Christ Jesus. If we have that God who rules we do not need to fear for the welfare of the country. He rules, and will rule to the end. I have just been looking over my Bible for some Scripture concerning Nicodemus, but have come to this: Jesus said, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved,

and shall go in and out, and find pasture." —John x. 9. He said, "I am the door." Now this we believe is the only Door. All Old School Baptists also believe it. I believe this is the only Door by which we shall be saved, and so, I am sure, you do also. But this Door is not opened to every one; it is not by man, but, as He said, by himself. He also said, "All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them." How true this all is. I do not like to speak of myself so much, but this appeals to me, and my brethren testify of the same truth. They say to me, You give me comfort by your words, and so do the brethren and sisters comfort me, so we must be of the same fold. We have been of the world, and were worldly, and seeking after worldly things, but after we entered in at this Door we did not hear those of the world, and did not want any thieving and robbery of the word of Christ. He said once, Ye have made my house a den of thieves. This we see is true in many so-called places of worship. Then he goes on and speaks of his dear sheepfold; he says, "If any man enter in, he shall be saved." Some would say that this applies to every man, but this is not my belief. "If any man," does not mean all men. Some did not understand his parables: they are only to those who are seeking after the sheepfold. The world does not desire this fold, they desire rather the den of thieves or wolves, to devour whom they may, but the little children come and want to know the way, and the only way. These are brought to this Door of the fold, and the Shepherd gathers them up as little lambs, and says to them, Enter into my sheepfold and abide with the flock. My dear sister in Christ, I believe we are saved, for he said, "If any man enter in, he shall be saved." How good to feel assured that my brethren and sisters are saved, but as for myself, I leave all to them and to God, who is my Judge. But I feel that I do know something of this divine truth, for does it not speak to me and to you? They shall go in and out and find pasture. As we dwell in the church and sheepfold we must go in and out to find pasture; this is the travel of the little ones. We are not always in nor always out; sometimes we can feed and sometimes we cannot feed. The good Lord is the Shepherd, and we feed at his good will and pleasure, going in and going out. We do not have preaching every day, and would not want it that way. We do not seek after pasture until we become hungry, and then we can feed upon the word of God, given from him to his little flock. If I know anything at all, I think that I have been in the green pastures while hearing from brethren and sisters. In our Saturday meetings face to face with God we see this. In the world we hear nothing of this feeling that they cannot talk, and truly they cannot of the trials and warfare of the inner man. The world knoweth us not. Jesus goes on further and says, The thief cometh not, but to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly. "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." I believe that in other so-called churches he has children, and he will bring them out, for they shall hear his voice, and shall follow him. In John xv. 17, the Shepherd said, "These things I command you, that ye love one another." True sheep will love each other, for God has commanded it, and we must obey. We have

very dear friends whom we love, though not of our family circle. I have brothers and sisters whom I love, but not as I do the church of God. One might say, How is it that you do not love your natural kindred as you do the church or the people of God? Well, there is a natural love and a spiritual love, and God gives us both of them. Even brutes love their young, and are ready to defend them. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son to die for sin. This was love indeed; there could be no greater love. I believe the Lord does cause us to love our kindred in Christ; he commands, and we obey. He knows each saint's peculiar case. They are tossed about to and fro, but if of the sheepfold, they want to be with the flock, whether scattered or together. If parted for a short time we, like sheep, shall be found bleating for those we love. It is good if we do feel the loss of a companion that we love. This no one can teach another, not even a parent to a child. God joins his people together, not man. See John xvi. 33: "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." These things he spoke to his disciples, that in him they might have peace, joy and happiness, and sing forth his praise. In the world we have trials and tribulations, doubts and fears, but how comforting it is that he said, "Be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." He has power over all the world; it is nothing but the footstool of God, why then do we doubt his power? Because we are looking so much to our own strength, and have not been humbled enough. Look at Paul's travels and experience, yet the Lord stood by him. See Acts xxiii. 11: "And the night following, the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me at Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome." Those who desired to imprison Paul were of the type of Nebuchadnezzar. He had set up the golden image, which he commanded all to worship when they should hear the sound of cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery and dulcimer, with all kinds of music. It is the same to-day, they set up the golden calf, or image, fitted to their own liking, and want to rule. Do we not see this daily? But at that time there were three who would not obey Nebuchadnezzar, but would meet death first. They unfurled the Old School Baptist banner, and upon that banner of love was written, Only one God will we serve. They said, "If it be so, our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king." This was faith, and they were delivered from the fiery furnace because God was with them. Our God has given us the good Shepherd, and he is the only Door, and he leads his people in and out, and commands them to abide with him. He says, I will be your God, and he is their Savior from the beginning to the end.

May there be some comfort in these thoughts.

"To thee, my Shepherd and my Lord,
A grateful song I'll raise;
O let the meanest of thy flock
Attempt to sing thy praise."

Your brother, in hope of eternal life,

GEORGE M. CONNER.

REVELATION XXII. 2.

"In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

I feel to approach all Scripture with trembling and doubt, most especially in the way of expounding, yet when a passage rests on my mind I find relief in writing, always hoping that others whose minds have been led in the same searchings may get some encouragement from what is written, for only those who have been in the dark can know the needs of them that are in the dark, yet seeing enough of light to earnestly desire more.

John had been describing his view of a wonderful city, which was evidently intended as a figure of the church. The street of this city is where those walk who dwell in the city, and the way all must walk who come into the city. This street, then, means the way that christians walk. It is a peculiar way, and has many waymarks, or footprints. All through the Scriptures we find accounts of the waywarks that travelers who have gone before have left on record, and yet all the way is a new way to every one who passes it into the city. Each one when he comes to a waymark that he finds a record of rejoices in hope, for this is an evidence that he is traveling the way that the Lord has made for his people. One of the waymarks is doubt, and another is hope. It seems to me we would hardly be able to understand hope if we had not known doubts. After a time of gloom, when we can see no evidence that we are in the way, hope is shown us, a waymark that others have described, a tree in the midst of the street. There is no mistaking such a mark as this; a peculiar place for a tree to grow, right in the way that christians walk. The evidences that the Lord gives his people that they are in the right way are in the face of obstacles, and not according to natural laws, or our expectations. A tree is never its full size at the beginning of its life, but starts very small, and grows, and we think this little hope will be crushed out in a day. It has sprung up right in the midst of all our cares and trials, so many little vexations to take one's mind, but John says that this tree of life, this hope of eternal life, grew by the side of the river that proceeded from the throne of God and the Lamb. It cannot die, it cannot suffer from drouth, it cannot be crushed, for it is kept by almighty power, and from so little a beginning it becomes a mighty tree, our trust in all the storms of life, our shelter in the dying hour. The river that ever nourishes this tree of life is the gospel; John says it is clear as crystal. To be so clear it must come from God, for any philosophy of religion would be more or less tainted by its author, but a sincere desire to worship God is not defiled by human theories. The river proceeds not only from the throne of God, but from the Lamb; that is, Christ crucified for our transgressions. There can be no gospel preaching without the Savior, therefore the burden of preaching is Christ crucified, and our hope grows beside the gospel. The Savior has put away our sins by his atoning blood. There is no other street in the city, nor any other way that mortals may enter the city, but by the hope that draws its support from our crucified Savior. For myself, it was never argument I wanted, but evidence, and I had this evidence when I found my hope remained, instead of being crushed as I expected it to be, and to grow stronger by little evidences as I found waymarks that others had described. I know of no bet-

ter evidence to give to others than that the little hope they have remains, gradually grows until it becomes a tree of life, or part of their life, a delight to think of, a support in trials; such hope has its roots in the river that flows from the throne of God and the Lamb. The tree was on either side of the river. If the river was the gospel, and the gospel is Christ crucified, as the only hope that was ever given whereby we must be saved, then the prophets and holy men of old looked to the same Savior that we do. They were on one side of the river, and we are on the other side, but the hope is one hope, whether on this side or on that; the tree of life must draw its sustenance from the same source. They looked forward to it, we look backward. "For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them."—Matt. xiii. 17.

"Which bare twelve manner of fruits." The fruits of the christian's hope are for the glory of God, and belong to him, and they are quite diverse one from another, as humility is diverse from rejoicing; love to God and his people, hatred of sinful thoughts, distrust in one's own power to live free from sin, and hope in the Sacrifice for sin, desire to be obedient to his commands and feel unworthy to be baptized in his name, rejoicing in hope, yet often complaining of doubts, prayer and praise to God, are fruits, and all are for his glory. Hope knows no winter, but bears fruit all the year.

"And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." John was given a view of the corrupt governments, in the form of an evil beast with seven heads and ten horns, (Rev. xvii. 13, 14,) all combining, or giving their support to the persecution of the saints, therefore the nations were in great need of healing, for upon his heads was the name, blasphemy. John does not say the nations shall be saved in their standing as nations, but only speaks of them as being objects of healing, and the leaves are the evidence of life in the tree. A tree may be alive, yet show no leaves, but the abundance of leaves shows that the tree is vigorous; so when the church is in a healthy and growing condition her influence is felt by the nations, and the tendency is toward purity in the governments and a separation of worship from government control, since political control will invariably be an injury to worship, if governors can appoint men to high places in churches, and the ruling powers of earth never would correct such abuse of power of themselves; the demand for such reforms must come from the churchgoing people, and in this manner the evidence of life and strength manifested by the church has healed the nations, and in this land, at least, we are free from many of the evils of former times.

Dear editors, I have written this article entirely subject to your better judgment, and if my exposition of the passage does not meet your minds I would rather you would not publish it. I think certain Scriptures have definite meanings, and do not believe in applying all Scriptures to all things.

Your brother,

A. E. RITTENHOUSE.

STATE ROAD, Delaware.

SAN DIEGO, Cal., Dec. 14, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have just found the inclosed letter among my mother's effects, and I take it for granted that it was written by her just prior to her last stroke and she was unable thereafter to

advise me concerning it; if you see fit to publish it you may do so, and should you do so, I would ask that you kindly send me a copy of the paper, and I would also ask that you return me the original letter, as I value it very highly, as I believe it contains the last words that she ever penned.

Very truly yours,

GEORGE J. CODDINGTON.

TRINIDAD, Colo., Feb. 12, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am reminded that my subscription for the SIGNS is again due, accordingly you will find in this, money order for two dollars. This is a duty incumbent upon me, which at one time I thought I would not be able to attend to. We find we have still many things to learn, which we hope will be profitable to us. The ways of God are unsearchable and past finding out, and I am glad that it is so. The psalmist, as he was led to reflect on the uncertainty of life, was made to exclaim, "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow: for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."

> "Man's age to seventy years is set,
> How short the term, how frail the state,
> And if to eighty we arrive,
> We rather sigh and groan than live."

Life is but a vapor, soon passing away, and man goes to his long home. Few and evil have been the years of my pilgrimage. Regarding my health, will say, at the present time I think it is somewhat improved. I now have some use of my limbs, for which favor I feel very thankful, although seemingly I am of no use to any one, and to myself a confusion, and a mystery hard to solve. Still I sometimes hope that the God of mercy does give me a glimpse of my true condition as it is in the divine mind of our covenant-keeping God, and how often in my weak and infirm condition, as I find myself deprived of many former privileges, I am hoping that He will give me grace and strength equal to my days, and that I may be reconciled to his will in all things concerning his dealings with me, who am but a poor, weak, dependent one, having no claim to any goodness in self; but my hope is that the grace of God may dwell in me richly, and clothe me with humility; for except God be a complete Savior, and salvation wholly by grace from first to last, my hope is vain. How thankful should poor, weary, burdened, sinsick souls be that "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." To him is given the Spirit without measure, and "He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth." He finished the work his Father gave him to do, which is complete salvation, to destroy the works of the devil, to make an end of sin, to swallow up death in victory, and bring everlasting righteousness to light through the gospel. Thus his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and rests upon a sure Foundation. O that we may be strong in our Lord Jesus, and in the power of his might. If his kingdom be set up in us, it is there he sways his mighty scepter, and it is our privilege to come unto him, and he shall lead us forth to conquest. To my mind there is a vast difference between sin reigning, and sin wanting to reign. It is expected that a conquered enemy will rage that he has lost his reigning power. Sin hath reigned unto death; then what have we to fear? Christ appears in all his beauty and power. He is King of kings and Lord of lords, who gave himself for his people,

and from him goes forth a law wherein is the bond of peace. He says, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Those who are caused to come, are those laden with a sense of guilt, and with nothing to recommend them. Poor, ruined, undone souls, it is you he calls unto him to rest, and it is by grace, free grace, without money and without price. He paid the debt for his people, and by the one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified. Behold him then as your righteousness, your sanctification and your redemption, your all in all, in whom is no variableness, nor shadow of turning. I feel that in myself I am all unholy, but thanks be to God, I do not trust in my own righteousness, it is as filthy rags, and is an unclean thing, but behold Christ in his finished work. The Father said he was well pleased with him, that his soul delighted in him. Then

"What more can he say, than to you he has said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

Many may talk of the wonders of man, and of their duties, but what saith the Lord? "I will guide thee with mine eye." "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors." "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn." I feel that I must bring this to a close. It has not come from the pen of a ready writer, but with such ability as God has seen fit to give a poor, weak creature. I know it is full of errors, but know that you will bear with me. I should not have attempted to write in my present condition, only I was anxious to send in my dues. Sunday morning I arose as usual, but was stricken down, and was again placed in bed, where I must remain, with doctor and nurse attending me.

ABBIE CODDINGTON.

[SISTER Coddington's obituary was published in the SIGNS of October 15th, 1912.—ED.]

THE CLEAN AND UNCLEAN TO ISRAEL.

DEAR EDITORS:—After worrying in my mind occasionally for two months in regard to writing for the dear old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, a wonderful medium of correspondence for the household of faith, and during this time having had many thoughts about the spiritual significance of the words at the head of this article, which seem to be of great importance to us all, and which should be strictly observed by the church of God in this our day, for that which was written aforetime was written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope, I therefore feel to write about them. It seems to my mind that the Israelites, God's chosen people nationally, were typical of spiritual Israel, God's redeemed people, who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began, and that which was unclean to national Israel ceremonially, represents to us those things which are unclean to spiritual Israel, the church of God, in her devotional exercises or worship in the gospel day, the sabbath of rest. Among all the beasts of the earth, fowls, fishes, insects and creeping things, that the Lord created and made for the use and benefit of man, there are unmistakable marks or evidences in the makeup, formation and manner of each and all of them, by which Israel according to the law that God gave them by Moses, could discriminate clearly between the clean and unclean among

them. A violation of this law involved Israel in trouble and sore distress, hence strict adherence to the law, or rule, of action was for the peace, comfort and welfare of Israel nationally; so also the church and people of God here in their organized state, are under strict obligations to God their Savior, and to one another, to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world; for the grace of God has so taught them, and as this grace, the stronger man, reigns supreme in the heart of all who have been born again, they with the mind serve the law of God, observing all things that the law of the Spirit of life enjoins upon them. "Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using; after the commandments and doctrines of men." So we can see plainly that as national Israel was strictly forbidden by the law to eat of those beasts that were unclean to them, or even to touch their dead bodies, even so spiritual Israel, the redeemed of the Lord, is strictly commanded to not touch, taste nor handle these worldly institutions, after the doctrines and commandments of men, as quoted above. Strictly viewed, there were but two classes of those beasts, animals and creatures to Israel, and those were the clean and the unclean; but there is a sense in which they are plainly divided into four classes, having marks of distinction, as follows: there were those that neither parted the hoof nor chewed the cud, and there were those that parted the hoof, but chewed not the cud. These two classes strictly viewed represent but the one class, the nonelect. All those that part the hoof, but chew not the cud, represent to my mind those professional people who separate themselves, being sensual, having not the Spirit, putting great stress on creature goodness and personal obedience, in order to eternal salvation, but having no work of grace wrought in the heart, they chew not the cud. While all that chew the cud, and part the hoof also, represent to my mind the church of God, or those of the redeemed family of our God who have the work of grace wrought in the heart, and are the called out and separated from the world by the Spirit of the living God (according to the doctrine of sovereign grace), who saved them and called them with an holy calling. These are called to be saints, even saints of the Most High, and these show forth his praise and his wonderful works throughout all generations. These are the very elect, who cannot be deceived, either in doctrine, faith or practice; they are the remnant of Israel, the definite number whom the Lord God of Israel has reserved (kept back) from bowing the knee to the image of Baal; they are the bride, the Lamb's wife, whose clothing is all of wrought gold; and all that chew the cud, but part not the hoof, seem to me to represent to us some of God's elect and redeemed family who have the work of grace wrought in the heart by the Spirit of grace, but for some cause only known to God they are not separated from the world professionally, and therefore they are unclean to the church of God in her organized capacity, separate from the world and all the worldly institutions of men, for which we have neither precept nor example in the Scriptures; and it has often occurred to my mind that the people who love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil, neither come they to the light (church), lest their deeds should be made manifest or reproved, are meant; that is, that many of the chosen and redeemed family of

God, so far as the covenant of grace is concerned, who have the work of grace wrought in their hearts, and yet belong to secret organizations (darkness), or similar worldly institutions, and know that if they come to the church (light), they will have to forsake these worldly things, although they chew the cud, or have the work of grace wrought in their hearts, and believe and love the God-honoring doctrine of sovereign grace, and love those who preach it, and have great respect for the church and cause of God, yet for some cause that God alone knows are not separated from these worldly things; these are they that part not the hoof. Hence, the elect and nonelect make up the sum total of all the families of the earth.

I have in a very brief way suggested some few of the many thoughts that have occurred to my mind on this peculiar subject. I do not know that I am sure that the views I have presented are right, but of course I believe they are, or I would not have expressed them, therefore I much desire the forbearance and also the prayers of all who may read this manifestation of one who is weak and very dimsighted spiritually. When fourteen more days shall have come I shall, if permitted to live until that time, come to the seventy-seventh milepost of my sojourn in this world of trials and tribulations, and of course never shall be called to pass many more, although I am strong and vigorous, as to my natural health.

Jan. 30th, 1912.—Since I wrote the foregoing I have been sick, and am very poorly this morning, but I think improving.

I wish you all A Happy New Year.

W. J. MAY.

PINSONFORK, Ky.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Jan. 1, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN AND FRIENDS:—Thinking to-day of the wonderful plan of salvation, these words came to my mind: "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." The wonderful doctrine that we contend for will be just as good during this new year as it has been ever since the world was. I fully believe in the doctrine of election, and the predestination of all things, that God foreordained all things before ever the world was, and that not one thing takes place that was not embraced in his eternal purpose. His "wills" and "shalls" are sure, but it is not so with our "wills." I am but a poor worm of the dust, but he holds the waters in the hollow of his hand, and he turns the hearts of men as the rivers of water are turned, and even the winds and the seas obey him. The miracles of his hand are wonderful to think of. In the days of his flesh he fed the multitude with the few loaves and two small fishes. This would seem impossible to our natural mind, but if we are spiritual discerners we shall know that it was so. He walked on the sea, and when they saw him thus walking they were afraid, thinking that it was a spirit that they saw, and they cried out, for they saw him and were troubled, but immediately he said unto them, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." His power and goodness were shown in all these things, yet men are so foolish as to think that they can take some part in his work, but all that they are, and all that they have, must come from him and through him. By the psalmist he said, I will strengthen thee, all ye that hope in the Lord. Then he says, Be strong in the Lord. Salvation is of the Lord; it is not of us, or by us, in any way. His ways are not our ways,

neither are his thoughts our thoughts. As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are his ways and his thoughts above our ways and thoughts. He declared, As the snow cometh down from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it to bring forth and bud, so shall his word be that proceedeth out of his mouth; it shall prosper whereto he sendeth it, and shall accomplish that which he pleases. By nature we were children of wrath, even as others, and only through his goodness and mercy are we what we are by grace; all our times are in his hand. He said, Feed my sheep; feed my lambs. The sheep and lambs are his, and he knows what kind of food they need. If they do not get the right kind they will not thrive and will not be contented. The food that many partake of is distasteful to them; it must be succulent and nourishing. The good old doctrine is what they need, and must have, if they expect to thrive. He said, I am the good Shepherd; my sheep hear my voice, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. He said again, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." He said, I am the Savior, and there is none beside me. He said, Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one of them shall fall without your heavenly Father. Behold the lilies, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin, yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of them. Behold the sparrows; they sow not, they reap not, and yet he feedeth them, and if he so clothes the grass that is in the field, will he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? He is the God of truth, without iniquity; just and right is he. It is said, Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, and finally raised up from the dead, and caught up into glory. How can we be justified if we are not justified by faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? There can be no justification or salvation in any other way. He said, I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again. Paul said, Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom (he said) I am chief. He died and rose again for our sins and justification. There is no other way by which we must be saved. I am thinking, How is it that some say the resurrection has been already? If this be so, where is our hope? I fully believe that he has power to raise the dead. "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption." "It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power." "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." Again, Paul said, "Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." Well could he say in view of all these promises, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." We have a little flock that often meets together at our Hopewell meetinghouse, and I love to join in with them, and listen to the things that pertain to the kingdom of heaven. It is good to be of one mind and one accord. It has been my privilege to be in my seat there at the most of these meetings. A few of

us get there regularly who have passed the fourscore mark. It is through the goodness and mercy of God that we are strengthened at this old age to meet with the brethren as we do. We are told not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is. Jesus said, If ye love me, keep my commandments.

I will close by wishing all my brethren and friends a happy new year, and may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, is my prayer; may you meditate upon his wonderful works both day and night. The psalmist said, My meditation of him shall be sweet. Again he said, I will be glad in the Lord.

Your unworthy brother,

D. L. BLACKWELL.

WAVERLY, Pa., Dec. 19, 1912.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find a good letter from sister Rose Tamsett, of Otego, N. Y. Do as your judgment directs in regard to publishing. She is sound and clear in the doctrine of God our Savior.

Yours as ever, D. M. VAIL.

OTEGO, N. Y., Dec. 10, 1912.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER:—Do not be startled by getting a line from this poor old sinner, but you are much in my mind, so I will write and tell you so, if I do no more. I hope you and family are well. We all are better, and able to go about our duties each day. I wonder if you had any chance to visit with Emily Solloway while up there over night. What a rainy day you had to go to brother Alger's. I hear you did not get away on the early train Tuesday. The Leonard family are all better of their colds. Mrs. Cole was sick in bed with a cold last week, but is better now. Mr. Wilbur is about the same. A line from sister Stilwell yesterday says she is well and likes it very much at East Orange; also they had plenty to do and she did not have time to get homesick. She had been to New York to meeting twice since being there, and heard some most excellent sermons. I am glad for her, but we miss her very much up here; she is a good, true sister, and I think very highly of her. She has much spiritual exercise of mind, so different from me; I scarcely ever have any good thoughts and happy seasons as I did years ago. I know I do not deserve any, for my heart is deceitful and desperately wicked; who can know it? I do crave a visit from the Lord, but have no power to obtain one, so I just have to wait and hope that in his own time he will cause the light to once more shine on me as it did seventeen years ago this month, which was the happiest month in all my life. O for just a little glimpse of what I saw and felt then; it was most wonderful; my poor heart was filled to overflowing with love, but how differently I do and live from what I wished to then; truly my life is a failure, and were it not for the grace of God which is given me I would be of all creatures most miserable. I am a mystery to myself, and think I must be to every one else. How many times I have thought how singular it was that you should preach from the same text that Elder Bundy did seventeen years ago to a day. You each preached the same gospel of the Son of God, and while I do not remember anything that Elder Bundy said, I do know that the preaching gathered me (experimentally) into the fold, with believers enrolled, with believers (I hope) to live and to die, and it was the very same truth that you preached Sunday. I

dare not say I do not understand it, for you told many things that I have felt in my experience, so how true it is that the truth will always be the same as long as time shall last.

I received word that Mrs. George Paine, formerly of Onconta, died in Cleveland, Ohio, Dec. 5th, after great suffering of heart trouble. My mother was with her the last day she lived. She is at rest. She gave evidence years ago that she had been with Jesus and learned of him, now she has his likeness, and is satisfied.

Where are you to be next Sunday? Love to all the family.

ROSE TAMSETT.

SALISBURY, Md., Dec. 14, 1912.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—As it is your request that I should write to you, I have often thought I would like to talk with you since I became a member, but have not had the pleasure of it. I will write what I believe to be my experience. In 1885 I became troubled, but did not know what it meant. A sad and lonely feeling came over me, and it seemed that I would not live very long. In 1886 some time, I cannot state just what time, one day all at once the thought came to me, What would become of such a sinner as I if I were to die? I said, O what shall I do? I thought I would try to do better. As time rolled on the way grew darker, and instead of getting better I got worse all the time. O what shall I do? I would try to pray. I would read the Bible to see if I could receive any comfort, or anything to suit my case, but I did not want any one to see me read it, and would close it if I heard any one coming, so they would not know I had been reading. I went to Baptist meetings, which I attended from a child; the preaching seemed to be more interesting to me, and sometimes I would think I received a word of comfort, and sometimes I hardly knew. I often thought, There is no one like me, my case is different from anyone else. I would try to pray time after time. One day a voice said to me, Fear not, if thou believest thy sins are forgiven. My heart was filled with joy for awhile, and I saw a beautiful light. I wanted to tell what my Savior had done for me, but before I could tell it something seemed to say to me, Do not tell it, for what you thought you saw was all imagination, and then came doubts and fears. Again I thought I would go to the church and tell them of the trouble I had passed through, but when I went to the Baptist meetings and the door was opened for the reception of members, I would feel so unworthy I could not go; I would put it off, waiting for a better and brighter hope. The more I prayed the greater was my trouble; I could not feel I was fit to ask for a place there. When I looked on them it seemed their countenances were beaming with the love of God. O how I wished I were one of them. Then the thought would come to me that I was not fit to live with or ask a home with them. Thus I traveled on, sometimes rejoicing in believing that my sins were forgiven, and sometimes fearing that I was deceived. It was my desire to go long before I did, but could not. Many dark and sad hours for days, weeks, months and years have I gone through; sometimes I would feel as though my heart would break, that I would sink in despair; my hope seemed to be small, and sometimes it seemed that it was almost gone; I was made to cry, Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner, there is nothing that I can do. The more I prayed the deeper was my trouble,

I would think sometimes there was no mercy for me, such a sinner as I, so I went on in this condition for about twenty-five years. I said, If the words I heard be of the Lord, may I hear them again. In 1911, one morning as I awoke I heard the words, Fear not, if thou believest thy sins are forgiven. O how precious, how sweet, how glorious the words were to me, they brought unspeakable joy to my heart for awhile, but not long after doubts and fears came again; but when I would think of the words I heard it would bring joy to me to know they did not come from human lips, that they must have come from the Lord, for he only can forgive sins. It is God who can give peace to the aching heart and rest to the weary soul. I was then made willing to go to the church. On the day I went, when the invitation was given a voice said to me, Accept it. I arose to my feet with fear and trembling. I could not stay away longer, and was received Oct. 29th, 1911, and baptized by you. After I was baptized I thought I would not have any more doubts and fears, no more trouble, there would be joy and happiness all the time. I rested for awhile, then came doubts and fears again. But I do not feel as lonely as before. Sometimes my hope seems to be so small that I wonder if I am one of the elect at all.

From your sister in hope, if one at all,
ANNIE W. TOADVIN.

LAURELVILLE, Ohio, Dec. 31, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—To-day in renewing my subscription to the SIGNS I wish to add a few words of appreciation. The dear paper always comes promptly to hand, showing that its publishers are not lax or unmindful of their duty or obligation. Such, I know from personal experience, cannot be said of all its subscribers. I am personally acquainted with one who does many things he should not, and leaves undone the things he should do. He is possessed of a cold disposition, a mind that wanders to the ends of the earth after those things that perish with the using. "So far from God I seem to lie," &c. I see a growing carelessness among the people of God in regard to attending meetings and their financial duties toward the church. We are so much inclined to say, Depart in peace; be ye filled and clothed. It seems that the "falling away," spoken of by Paul in 2 Thess. ii. 3, and in his first epistle to Timothy fourth chapter, is come. Peter called them "these last times," as though they were then, and it occurs to me that there may have been those among the strangers, elect according to the foreknowledge of God, and those who had obtained like precious faith, even in those days, who were lax in duty, and who fell away. We often look around and see no perceptible interest in the church by those without, and we think that there is no material for the upbuilding of her membership in the next generation. A few weeks ago I studied so much about this, and the case looked so hopeless that I felt very much discouraged, then one night in a dream I saw quite an ingathering of the church, and the one who was the most officious in the duties attendant thereto was a neighbor whom I never in my life saw at a Baptist service. When I awoke the interpretation came, that God was able to make of those who despised his people his most earnest disciples. He is able, and has all power in heaven and earth to do his will. He worketh, and none can hinder, neither does he require the aid in his work of the puny arm of man. Yet

this does not give his children license to be slothful and to neglect the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is.

"Lord, revive us, Lord, revive us;
All our help must come from thee."

Brethren, I must close this poor letter, as no doubt you are long since weary. Hoping for the welfare and steadfastness of the SIGNS in the future as in the past, I remain yours, the least of all,

GEORGE W. HARTSOUGH.

FLOYD, Ky., Dec. 27, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—As our pastor is talking of leaving us, I fear that I shall feel at a loss to know what to do, but of course God is everywhere, and I know he has been merciful to a poor, undeserving wretch, as I claim to be, and I wish to say that the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been a great comfort to me, and I feel that I want to take it again, as it is good food. I feel to be poor in spirit, if a child at all. I hardly know what to do or where to go for rest. I know this is a pilgrim's tone, and feel to wander alone. Yesterday I felt to enjoy the Savior's love; I had life to pick up a number of the dear old SIGNS, (April 15th, 1909,) and read such comforting letters that it made my heart rejoice, and now a feeling of sadness steals over me as I pen these lines, for I feel that some of the dear writers have passed away since I heard from you all. I should never grieve over the past, but as I do not know the future, what else can I do? Some persons talk as if they know that they are saved; if so, it seems that sorrow would never cross their path, but perhaps it would be a trial to them to see their friends in a lost condition; it seems that this would be their only trouble.

Now I want to change to another branch a little, but of the same vine. About three years ago I was in very delicate health, and about eleven months there was no ray of light for this poor little one; I thought that the great and merciful God had forsaken me forever; I cannot express my feelings, but after I felt the joy of sins forgiven, I tried to write my experience the best I could, and my desire was to send it to you to publish, if you thought best, but put it off until now, thinking it so jangled up and not fit to send, but some things were so sweet that it seems too good to keep back. Brother Paxton seems to think that my experience was a bright one, but, dear ones, I have crossed so many dark valleys since then that I hardly know what I am, and I have thought sometimes or many times, that I ought to have sent my experience, perhaps my burdens would have been lighter; but my path is unknown, and every fall makes us stronger, and yet we feel the weaker, or that is the way with me. Well, I hardly know what to say as I have paused a little. Not long ago I got so that I could not read the Scripture, I could not tell why, I would all but fall when I attempted to do so, I thought as I did about three years ago that I was certainly lost, but thinking here of late about my telling some of my experience, that I had been so backward about, it was something wonderful; whether it was Satan's work or the Lord's I do not know, but somehow I have felt better since I told it. I told it to Brother Sawin for one; he said if I felt better for telling it, good, as much as to say it was all right. I told him at the time I did not know whether I would feel better or not, but I believe I feel better by telling it, although it is a puzzle to-day to me to know what it means, and the greatest beauty that I can

see in it is that it shows that the natural mind cannot grasp spiritual things. I am not ashamed to speak of this in a plainer manner, but I often get in doubt what to do about it; let it be Satan's work or God's, it shows that natural minds cannot grasp spiritual things. Dear ones, pray for me, that I may not be deceived by the evil one. Now, dear editors, will you send me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for one year, trusting me to send the money in a few months if not hindered? and oblige a little wanderer,

MOLLIE B. CUNNINGHAM.

MASSEY, Va., Jan. 15, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I passed my eighty-second birthday yesterday, the 14th, and was kindly and generously remembered with birthday cards, having received one hundred and thirteen, and seven letters. The sentiment expressed in many of them brought tears from my eyes, with thoughts of wonder how it was that such a poor, weak, sinful and ignorant creature could be in the good graces, confidence and esteem of such a host of both old and young in the church and out of it. I see so much amiss in myself that I wonder others do not see it. I beg the Lord to deliver me from evil, yet I see my whole life is full of little spots, which show that my life is not pure, but I do believe that my desires are pure, if I could only live them out. Sometimes I have hope of an interest in that life that is pure, and for a little while I forget the life that is impure and am swallowed up with the other. I have been trying to explain to the Lord's people the signs or fruits of these two lives with love and good will for about forty-seven years, so I am encouraged to believe that if I were not a true witness of these things my own speech would have contradicted itself, and instead of drawing the people to me it would have driven them away in confusion. During this long period of time my mind has run all over the Bible, and my speech has been formed according to what I have seen in it, from Genesis to Revelation, and the sentiment is all in perfect accord, all emanating from one Fountain-head, having placed in me that measuring-rod like unto a reed to go forth and measure the altar and the worship and the worshiper during this long time. Many of the little hidden ones have come to me and said, "Who told you so much about me?" The only answer I had was, "The Lord, I suppose." This is what forms the strongest tie and divulges the strongest relation that exists: the relation of children through the Spirit. I am so glad, and I hope thankful, that some supernatural power has so kept me and directed me these sixty-one years among and before the churches and congregations. They claim that as the years go by the tie grows stronger, according to the sentiments expressed in the one hundred and thirteen congratulation cards. O how blessed to have this precious assurance after so long acquaintance, and now upon the very verge of the grave it takes it all to comfort and stay me. What my understanding and experience embraced in my first effort to express it in public has never undergone a shadow of change, and I feel free and glad in having the privilege to declare it with the ability that God has given me, and it grows dearer to me all the time to believe that we have a God revealed to us that holds his sovereign rule over all things and worlds, both great and small, giving all things their limits according to his purpose and predestination, having predestinated and elected his people in Christ Jesus unto

eternal glory before the world was. Therefore Jesus came to earth as the first witness, for he said, To this end was I born, that I should bear witness to the truth, showing that he came as a witness direct from the Father, and by one offering he hath perfected forever all that were given him, and the Holy Ghost is the second witness to make it known without human means or instrumentalities, and the gospel ministry is the third witness to bear witness unto the peculiar lessons taught by the Spirit. So you see it is all sure, effected by heavenly power, and Jesus not only completed the eternal salvation of all his elect people by his death and sufferings, but he secured their justification and their glorification by his resurrection and ascension; for as the grave could not hold his body only unto the appointed time of the Father, so it shall not have power to hold the bodies of his redeemed any longer than the archangel's voice and the trumpet of God shall sound; then shall they all come forth in the likeness of his glorious body, for the apostle says, They shall be changed in a moment of time, in the twinkling of an eye, and be made like unto his glorious body. Herein is my life and my all; I love it, I have lived in and by it sixty-one years, and I am willing to die by it and in it, and am willing to stand in judgment with it as my only plea.

Perhaps this is the last that you will ever see from my pen, but inquire if it is not my dying testimony.

T. M. POULSON.

FINDLAY, Ohio, Jan. 6, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find two dollars to cover the cost of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for another year. I find that my time expired last month, and I thank you for not discontinuing the paper on account of my neglect in sending the money. My dear aunt, Mrs. Samuel Frazee, of Plymouth, Ill., requested a year ago Christmas that the SIGNS should be sent to me, and I feel very grateful to her for such a liberal present, as I enjoy reading it very much. I trust that I shall always be able to take it and enjoy it as I do now. I also enjoy reading it to my husband, who likes to hear the truth as well as I. We always look up the references, and sit and talk about them with great comfort. I love to be with the Predestinarian Baptists, and have attended their meetings ever since I was a child. While I am yet young in years, and have only been a member a little over a year, yet I feel that I am quite old in affliction. It seems the sun is hidden and the way is very dark at times, but as time rolls on the clouds all disappear, and the way seems brighter than before. I have often wondered if there was any one who ever felt more miserable than I. As I read the SIGNS I find many in the same condition, and telling my feelings better than I can tell them. I love to read the Bible, and I find it a great comfort when I get so downcast that everything seems against me. O how many times I have been made to feel that I am a poor sinner, and have fully realized that without Him I can do nothing. This is clearly stated in the fifteenth chapter of John. In this same chapter we also read these words: "I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." How plain this passage appears to me this morning. It would be a great comfort to me to know that I am one of the true branches, but I have a little hope, if I

am not deceived. I am trusting in Him to direct my steps. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

I feel that I am making this letter too long, so will close. Please change my address to 220 Laguineo Street.

Your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) GEORGE HART.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan. 9, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have never found any comfort in arguing on any point of doctrine. If I do not see certain things as my brethren, I do not say that I am right and they are wrong; neither do I say that they are right and I am wrong, for I know that each must know for himself, and not another; but if I find brethren have witnessed things that I have felt, tasted and handled of the Word of life (and we speak of the things that we do know), then I find a stirring up of our pure minds. The things of the kingdom of God are not established in our heart by argument, but by a living experience of them, and so whatever we know of election, predestination, sanctification, resurrection, justification, atonement or other points of doctrine we only know in the measure that we have lived them in our experience; in this way we are taught of God, and not by argument. We know in part, we prophesy in part, but when that which is perfect is come then that which is in part shall be done away. (1 Cor. xiii. 9, 10.) While there is much thought or meditation regarding the body that shall be, and what we shall be, &c., I have ever felt to rest upon the hope that it is the sinner redeemed, it is the sinner that is saved, it is the sinner that is changed, and never does it appear to me that the body is lost sight of. There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body. All in Adam realize the Adamic environments, and all are of the natural creation. All in Christ realize the spiritual creation, and are given wisdom to attain to the blessings in that spiritual creation, but as we have not attained to the fullness, it is foolish to speculate as to what we shall be, for John says, "It doth not yet appear," but we know that when Jesus appears we shall be like him and shall see him as he is. David says, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." We can say that we hope in Jesus, but cannot say we are fully satisfied, for hope implies something not seen; we are yet waiting to be clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Paul, when writing to the church at Rome, (Romans viii. 22, 23,) says: "We know that the whole creation [spiritual] groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." This is our earnest expectation and hope.

J. M. FENTON.

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As our supply of the first volume of Editorials is exhausted, we will be unable to fill any more orders for them, but have quite a number of the second volume left, which we are closing out at seventy-five cents each. As neither of these volumes was electrotyped, we will not be able to supply either volume after what is left of the second volume is disposed of. Address all orders to

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1913.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PHILIPPIANS IV. 6.

SOME little time since, our sister, Mrs. Anna McKinney, of Ottawa, Kansas, asked that we write upon the words found in Phil. iv. 6. The text reads as follows: "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God."

In reply we desire, first of all, to say that we can only suggest a few things which seem to us to belong to the words referred to. It is vain to think that any of us can present all that is contained in any portion of the word of God. The things which we may suggest concerning any portion of the word often in their turn open up other and wider fields of thought. The field of gospel truth is infinite, and none of us can do more than glean a little here and there. It is this infinite fullness of truth to which John had reference when he said, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." It is here manifest that John could not have referred to just the simple words which Jesus used, for all the words that any one ever used, could they all be recorded for fourscore years and ten even, would not multiply volumes that would fill even one large building. But John refers, as it seems to us, to the meaning of the Savior's words, were that meaning to be all written. We have never thought that at any time we have succeeded in bringing out all the meaning of any Scripture, though we have believed that we have many times presented the true design of the text used.

First, we desire to call attention to the words, or some of them, which are prominent in the text. "Carefulness" here signifies what we generally mean by anxiety or distraction; that is, that one feels perplexed and disturbed, so that he cannot rest. One who might find himself in danger would be anxiously seeking a way of escape. One who is hungry, and saw no way to obtain the needed bread, would be anxious and restless, seeking relief. Now Paul says that christians do not need to be anxious, because in all their times of need there is a way of escape, or of relief. If one were hungry, and should know that in his cupboard there was an abundance of bread, he would not be anxious at all, or careful. The child, though hungry, is not distressed as to an assurance that his wants shall be supplied; his father has always supplied his wants, and he feels no fear that his father will fail him now. Paul, by these opening words of the text, reminds his brethren that there can be no circumstances in their lives wherein they need be distressed or distracted. Right here the conflict between that which is of the flesh and that which is of the Spirit comes in. Believers are to walk by faith, not by sight, both with regard to their temporal and their eternal interests, but the flesh wants to see, and because it cannot see it becomes anxious and is filled with fears. Unbelief comes in at this door, and instead of resting we are

found running to and fro in our minds, seeking help, or an open door out of our perplexities, where there is no door. This is all vain. We have found it so again and again; we find it so to-day, yet when to-morrow comes with its dark forebodings, we again find ourselves striving to find a way of escape, only to again utterly fail. This the apostle here warns his brethren against, and there is need of such warnings constantly, as we are also slow to learn. It was so with the disciples when upon the sea, they toiled in rowing, but could make no headway. Only a few hours before, they had witnessed and partaken of the miracle of the feeding of the multitude with the five loaves and the two fishes, so that the hunger of them all was relieved, yet now that they are confronted with another time of distress, they forget the miracle just wrought in their presence, and are again afraid, and the inspired narrator says, "They considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened." But Jesus again appeared for their relief. Our hearts are hardened when left to ourselves always, yet there is no need, no good reason, why they should be distressed or careful. The Lord who has delivered will still deliver. Distress comes when we are not looking to him; deliverance comes and distress passes away when he once more appears, and his words command the waves to be still.

The text quoted is exceeding broad: "Be careful for nothing." One may say, I do not feel careful about this or that, but here is one matter about which it seems to me I do well to be anxious. It may be one thing, or it may be another. It may be concerning things temporal, or it may be concerning things spiritual and eternal, but each of us have some perplexities at some periods in our life when we are ready to excuse ourselves for being distracted and anxious. How often we have need to be reminded of the words of the apostle, "Be careful for nothing." We are careful about our families, our reputation before men, our daily bread, where we shall live, what we shall eat and drink and wherewithal we shall be clothed; we are careful and anxious about to-morrow, and about what others may do or say; in short, there is nothing that has to do with our mortal life about which we are not often anxious, and this is also true with regard to our christian profession. We believe it right and good to follow the Lord, to contend for the faith, to do what our blessed Lord has required of us in his service, but our temporal interests get in the way, and we grow anxious about what will be the result of taking this step or that, and perhaps hesitate much to do what is right in the sight of God, because we fear the effect it may have upon our temporal interests. It seems to us that this point of view was especially in the mind of the apostle when he used the words of the text. He would say to his brethren at Philippi, True, you are surrounded with distresses, and stand in danger of losses and persecutions from the enemies of the cross of Christ, and it may well be that these obstacles shall cause you to hesitate in the testimony and defense of the cause that has been made dear to you, but I bid you be careful for nothing. Let not any of these things move you from steadfastness, or cause you to hesitate one moment in standing forth in defense of the truth, and that which the apostle here said to the Philippians is just as needful to be remembered still by us all. O that the Holy Spirit might apply this to all our hearts, that we may be

found steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, and that we may never be swerved, even in thought, from abiding fast by the word of God. The one reason which removes all need of carefulness from those who know and trust in God is then stated in this verse. Instead of being careful for anything, the apostle urges upon the remembrance of his brethren that they have one supreme, almighty Friend and Lover, to whom it is their privilege to go at all times and with regard to all things. Instead of being careful in everything he says, "By prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." Believers have indeed learned this, but need to be reminded constantly that it is not theirs to deliver themselves from oppression, or sorrow, or loss, or affliction, but that all such deliverances must come from God. It is not theirs to provide for themselves, either in things temporal or in things spiritual, but it is the Lord who provides. It is not theirs to win victories over any foe, but the victory is the Lord's for them. Just so the blessed Savior taught his disciples when he said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." And again when he said, Take no thought what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed, for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. It is the Lord that provides, and all provisions needful he has in store for all his disciples. In the peculiar times of distress which were then upon the followers of the Lord at Philippi and elsewhere, this admonition would forbid them to seek human strength or aid in order to deliver themselves from the oppression of their foes. They were not to seek to repel force with force; they were not to depend upon any human art or wisdom to secure their freedom from imprisonment and suffering; they were not to make appeals to their foes for any compromise whereby they might secure immunity from oppression; and they were not to put their trust even in princes or judges in times of arrest and trial. They were to simply trust in the living God, who had sent them forth as lambs in the midst of wolves. He, their great Shepherd, alone must be their protector and guide. These brethren knew these things already, but yet they had need to be reminded of them. We also know them, and yet we have need to be reminded of them; and so this admonition of the inspired apostle is as good for us now as it was for the brethren at Philippi.

In the words, "in everything," is included all that belongs to the life and welfare of all who believe. It includes the minutest as well as the greatest things. It takes in every temptation of every kind, and from every source. It includes each and every perplexity, each and every care, whether in things temporal or in things eternal. There is nothing too small for the tender care and the unfailing provision of the Lord. There is nothing so great that he cannot govern and control it. There is nothing so dark that he cannot make it light, nothing so crooked that he cannot make it straight. We need not fear that he will say to us, This that you bring to me is too trivial, and I cannot concern myself with it. He will never say to the least of his, This is so great that it is beyond your right to pray and supplicate concerning it. The words "prayer" and "supplication," broadly speaking, seem to have about the same meaning, yet there is a difference. Supplication is the stronger word. We

mean that it expresses a more earnest entreaty before the Lord than the word prayer. Prayer lays before the Lord our felt needs, and supplication entreats that they may be supplied. In prayer we confess our poverty, while in supplication we entreat that he will enrich us. In prayer we lay before the Lord all our wants, and in supplication we entreat that he will have mercy upon us and supply them. So the apostle enjoins upon his brethren that they bring all their cares unto the Lord and leave the matter with him. He will supply all your need through riches of grace in Christ Jesus. What need of care then save to be careful to lay all our burdens before him? How good it is not only to remember our weakness, but his strength; not only our necessity, but his willingness to give; not only that we need not be anxious, but that he does care for us. Then, as we come to remember his care, there must of necessity be mingled, as the apostle here teaches, thanksgiving with our supplication. There will be thanksgiving for past mercies from his hand, and thanksgiving for promises regarding the future, and also thanksgiving for the privilege of coming to the throne of grace in all our needs. How blessed that our loving God and Father does not hold us at arm's length, but takes us near to himself. He always holds out the sceptre to his praying ones. Esther might well fear as she came before Ahasuerus, for he was only a man, but believers need not fear at any time when they come to their King and Husband. He never has and he never will withhold his sceptre when his loved ones come before him, and they can never weary him with their coming. What blessed encouragement, then, to come is here, and what blessed cause for thanksgiving is also here! Prayer and supplication and thanksgiving are never far apart in any time of coming to the Lord. That which turns the heart unto the Lord in prayer, also begets in that heart praise and thanksgiving.

In verse seven the apostle records what is but the needful result of all prayer and thanksgiving, viz., peace. And the peace of God shall keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Indeed, it must be that where the teachings of verse six exist in the heart there must also abide comfort of mind, joy in the Lord and quietness as regards what is around them or before them, all of which is included in this word "peace." The prophet said, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." It is sure that if there be no spirit to come to God in our needs, if there be no thanksgiving for his mercies, because there is no recognition of them in our hearts, there can be no peace. The apostle calls it "the peace of God," because it springs from trust in him, and from the spirit of prayer and praise to him. The Lord's dear people do know something of what it is to be kept in this peace. We do not know what we want to know, but we do have some experiences, and have come to know thereby that this peace passes all understanding, as the apostle here testifies.

May these reflections be blessed to our sister and to others. C.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

2 PETER II. 4.

DEAR ELDER KER:—Will you please write your thoughts on 2 Peter ii. 4? The subject runs through the chapter. Who are the characters spoken of? They are called children, cursed children.

Your sister, I hope, in affliction,

L. B. BREWSTER.

In attempting to comply with our aged sister's request we desire to approach the subject with reverence and fear, knowing that all brethren do not agree regarding it. We hope that what we may write will not be darkening of counsel. Inasmuch as we are willing that "every man be fully persuaded in his own mind," we hope that others may be equally willing that we express our opinion of the matter.

In the preceding chapter the apostle called attention to the written word, Old Testament, and assured the brethren that holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and that what they spake and wrote was understood only by the same Spirit. "But," said he, "there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily [secretly, knowingly] shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." This seems to us the key to the subject, therefore we shall try to follow the thought here presented. The false prophets in days of old "among the people" were as much Israelites as were the true prophets. The term, "among the people," means of the people; not of other nations, but children of Abraham. So the expression: "Even as there shall be false teachers among you," means that of your own selves shall false teachers arise. This, therefore, without question refers to the quickened children of God. These false teachers shall, said Peter, privily, or knowingly, bring in heresies. Who can know what heresies are and bring them in except those who know the truth? Who can bring swift destruction (condemnation) upon themselves for so doing except those under law to Christ? The apostle also says they shall even deny the Lord that bought them. If the Lord bought them, was it not the price, even his precious blood? Many, said Peter, shall follow their pernicious (mischievous) ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. Is not all this in perfect accord with Paul's language in Acts xx.: "Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them"? This was Paul's prophecy concerning the church after his decease, yet he lived to see it fulfilled in a measure at least in that day. Hymenæus and Philetus, who preached that the resurrection was past already, and overthrew the faith of some, belonged, we think, to the same class as is presented in the subject under consideration.

Because of covetousness shall they with feigned words (knowing better) make merchandise of some, but their judgment (punishment) and damnation (condemnation) were sure. "For if God spared not the angels [ministers of the law] that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them unto chains of darkness [not bringing them into the light and liberty of the gospel], to be reserved unto judgment, * * * the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." Herein is presented an example, and an assurance that God still rules and reigns and will reward every man according to his works. If unjust and dishonest ministers of the law, such as the unjust steward, (Luke xvi.) were condemned and punished, so

shall it be with ministers of the gospel who are dishonest, deceitful and unjust. In this particular God is no respecter of persons; hence what a man sows he shall also surely reap.

The dishonest and unfaithful dealings of "false teachers" are, we think, embodied in the word "temptations" in verse nine of this second chapter of second Peter. Worldly wisdom and worldly gain, whether gold and silver or a good name and standing with men, appeal to the lusts of men and to the pride of the eye. Therefere, being thus tempted, the children of God in the apostles' day, as well as now, were made merchandise of and fell an easy prey of false teachers. The divisions in the church at Corinth were caused by such teachers, even though Paul uses his own name and that of other apostles in speaking of the matter, saying, Every one saith, I am of Paul, and I am of Apollos, and I am of Cephas. It was not the work of the apostles to cause divisions among the brethren, but rather to cement them, all speaking the same things, all declaring the same truth: salvation through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. In 1 Cor. iv. 6, Paul says: "And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written." It seems to us that to avoid the use of the names of the "false teachers" who had caused the divisions in the church, he transferred the matter to himself and Apollos in a figure, to the end that the brethren might be taught to beware of such men, who possessed of worldly wisdom and craftiness would make merchandise of them. It also seems evident that the same class, false teachers, caused trouble in the church at Galatia when they preached that except the brethren be circumcised and keep the law of Moses they could not be saved. This matter was taken before the apostles at Jerusalem to be decided by them, which if those false teachers had not been of the people, no notice of their teachings would have been taken by the church nor by the apostles, who sent written word to the church that they had not authorized those men to preach and to teach. The divisions and troubles in the church of God in the last few centuries have been caused by those identified with the church. The bringing in of one heresy after another by ambitious men, who knew better, has caused havoc from time to time. "False teachers among you," let us not forget, are the words of Peter. The word "ungodly" in this connection does not mean the nonelect, but "cursed children," those who had "forsaken the right way." Can a man forsake a way in which he had never been? and surely the "right way" mentioned here is the way of righteousness. They, like Balaam, loved the wages of unrighteousness more than the way of God, that afflicted way, that sorrowful way, that despised way. They were indeed wells without water to the spiritual people of God, because they used great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration, and used not the words of truth and soberness, which only can comfort the downcast and heavy laden. Those false teachers had been overcome by corruption, and were therefore its servants, even while they promised liberty to those who would follow them. (Verse 19.) They had "escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," but were "again entangled therein and overcome."—Verse 20. They

had known the way of righteousness, but had turned from the holy commandments delivered unto them. (Verse 21.) This is why Peter used the "true proverb:" The sow that was washed has returned to her wallowing in the mire. The sow was washed, but returned to her natural way, of wallowing in the mire. So were the "false teachers" washed, but through covetousness returned to the hole of the pit from whence they were digged. Who is the man or woman of God that has lived long and not seen this very same thing? Men with whom they had sweet fellowship have fallen from their steadfastness, and in some cases had others follow them. "Sin is the transgression of the law." None save an Israelite could transgress the law of Moses, for the reason that none but Israelites were under it, or governed by it, and our understanding is that none can sin as is presented and suggested in this second chapter of second Peter except those "under law to Christ."

We now leave the subject for the consideration of our sister Brewster and any others who may feel sufficiently interested to read what we have here written.

K.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

John D. Staples, Ark., $.50; Miss Emma Birdsall, N. Y., $2.00; S. C. F. Guernsey, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. Lavera Reardon, Fla., $1.00; T. L. Culpepper, Texas, $1.00; J. C. Clark, Maine, $3.00; Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $5.00.—Total, $13.50.

NOTICE.

PLEASE give notice in the SIGNS that I desire my correspondents to address me as follows until further notice: Box 113, Pine Bluff, North Carolina.

GEORGE D. CONKLIN.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Eliza A. Blair, eldest daughter of Deacon James V. and Mary Willard, was born May, 1832, and died June 6th, 1912, making her stay upon earth a little over 80 years. She was married to James T. Blair, who preceded her in death. She and her husband were members of Southampton Old School Baptist Church, both uniting at the same time. She spent her latter days between her two daughters' homes: Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Parham and Mr. and Mrs. Augustus B. Kerns. I visited her from time to time in her last illness, and found her ever speaking of the goodness and mercy of God, and never could speak praises sufficient for giving her two good sons-in-law and daughters. She told me an experience she had shortly before her death. She said the Savior seemed to hover over her so she could almost embrace him, and said, "Child, your Father calls you, come home." The terror of the grave and the sting of death were removed from her, and she calmly awaited the summons, proving the prophet's words: "I will ransom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death; O death, I will be thy plagues: O grave, I will be thy destruction; repentance shall be hid from mine eyes."

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder S. H. Durand; burial in Laurel Hill Cemetery.

May God comfort all who mourn.

ALSO,

Ella DeCoursey, wife of Holmes DeCoursey and daughter of Mary and the late Morris Hogeland, was born Feb. 13th, 1861, and died Nov. 1st, 1911. The subject of this notice was not a member of the church in its visibility, but manifested the life of her Savior. She was adorned with a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. I often looked upon her face and saw that hunger which desires the things which can only come from God. Many times she would sit at the organ and play and sing hymns, and seem to be wholly swallowed up in them; the hymns, "Abide with me" and "Forever with the Lord," manifesting the life of her Savior. We believe she is in the presence of Him who liveth for evermore. She leaves her husband and two children to mourn their loss, also her mother, sister and many others.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder S. H. Durand and Mr. Gimmel, of Ivyland.

Written by request.

ALSO,

William H. Stout, son of the late Deacon Henry and Mary Stout, was born May 14th, 1848, died July 20th, 1912. The subject of this notice was a resident of Southampton, Pa., from his boyhood days. His parents were faithful and honorable people, and members of the Old School Baptist Church at Southampton, Pa. I remember them when I was a boy

and went to meeting when Elder Wm. J. Purington served the church. Mr. Stout was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and attended the meetings as though he were a member. We believe there is nothing to attract any one to the preached word but a feeding upon the body of Christ. He held a position as trustee of the church for some time before his death, and was connected with other positions of trust and confidence. I talked with him a short time before his death regarding the things of the kingdom and the views of many, and his comfort was that he had a hope in the mercy of God, and that if it were of God he would be satisfied with his likeness. I believe he knew the truth, if I have any knowledge of it. He was twice married; his first wife was Miss Jennie E. Fetter, who died in September, 1890. To that union they had one son, Monroe, who survives him. In November, 1906, he was married to Mrs. Josephine Trego, who also survives him.

The funeral was largely attended; services were conducted by Elder S. H. Durand and Mr. Strahouer, of Churchville, Pa. Interment in Churchville Cemetery.

Written by request. J. M. FENTON.

Mrs. Anne Blue passed peacefully away Friday morning, July 26th, 1912, at the family residence, Muirkirk, Ontario, in her 74th year. She was born in Ekfrid township August 9th, 1838, being the eldest daughter of James and Jane McIntyre. She was married to Neil Blue, of Orford township, Nov. 6th, 1862, lacking just a few months of being married fifty years. There were born to them two children, a son and a daughter. Their daughter, Mrs. A. Love, died ten years ago. Mrs. Blue leaves to mourn their great loss, beside her aged husband, their son, James T., and four grandsons: Gordon, Arthur, Russel and Clifford Love. Three sisters: Mrs. T. Shaw, Mrs. C. Rutherford and Mrs. W. A. Coolley, of Illinois, and six brothers: Malcolm, Thomas, Angus and Daniel, of Illinois, James, of Florida, and Peter, of Colorado, also survive her. Although not a member of the church, she was always a faithful attendant, when possible, upon the meetings of the Covenanted Baptist Church, and her home was always open to any of their friends, especially any of their ministers. She always enjoyed reading the SIGNS, which they have taken for a great number of years. Some to whom she spoke her mind most say they have good reason to hope that all is well with her, that she is far better off, even though she is sadly missed in the sorrowful home. Her son says: "My aunt, Mrs. D. Blue, was with her a few nights before she died, and in their talks she told her that the words, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' had come with great comfort to her." She had not been feeling very well for some time, but was under a doctor's care but a short time, and was confined to her bed only two weeks when she was very unexpectedly called home, the doctor and all thinking she would be around again. She was a very patient sufferer, never murmuring or complaining. She was a kind and devoted wife and mother, always thoughtful to work and prepare for the needs of those depending on her.

Being unable to get a Baptist minister, as her wish would have been, Mr. Baunatyne, a Presbyterian minister, conducted a short service at the home, after which the remains were conveyed to the Duart cemetery for interment, followed by a very large concourse of sympathizing friends and neighbors, who thus sought to pay their last tribute to one beloved by all.

[By request of the son, James T. Blue, we publish the above obituary, which has been mainly prepared by himself and forwarded to us. We will add that a day or two after the funeral it was our privilege, in company with Deacon Gillis, to call upon this bereaved family. We could but feel a great sympathy for the aged husband, son and other friends, whom we were glad to meet there, and our regret was deep that it had been impossible for us to be with them upon the occasion of the funeral. May the God of all comfort be their help and strength.—C.]

Mrs. Jennie O. Cross, our beloved sister in Christ, was born Nov. 27th, 1858, departed this life Jan. 4th, 1913. She was the daughter of Elder Lambert Gass, born in Jewett Center, Greene Co., N. Y.; married to brother Cross Dec. 31st, 1879; baptized by her father in April, 1877, uniting with the Old School Baptist Church at Jefferson, Schoharie Co., N. Y. Some time afterward she removed her membership to the Schoharie Hill Old School Baptist church, same county. In 1902, when the church was established in Cleveland, Ohio, she and several others took letters and went in the organization of that church, of which she was an orderly, upright, faithful, helpful, loving, gifted sister until God her Father called her to the home of the redeemed, where she now is and will eternally be, never to return to earthly scenes, such as literal clouds or earthly afflictions, neither will she mourn because of sin and its effects, darkness of mind, unbelief, temptations, losses, crosses, sickness and pain; she is beyond and above them all, eternally happy. She died at her home in Cleveland, Ohio. She had been sick for two years, but was not confined to her bed except by spells. She went to bed feeling as well as usual; brother Cross awoke, heard a gurgling noise and spoke to her, but she did not answer. He then called the neighbors and telephoned for a doctor, but she breathed her last in a few minutes. Heart failure, due to a broken-down condition, was the cause of her death.

Elder George Weaver, pastor of the church, officiated at the funeral at the home, speaking very much to the comfort of brother Cross and friends there.

The body was then brought to Cobleskill, N. Y., where services were held in the undertaking parlors Jan. 9th, where a goodly number of relatives and friends met. The writer of this notice talked to the people. The remains were placed in a vault. She leaves her husband, one brother and one sister, with many other relatives to mourn their loss, which to her is gain. May God comfort dear brother Cross in his sad, lonely condition, the dear brother and sister, the little church and friends generally, with his felt presence. The writer had been personally acquainted with sister Jennie for many years, having held meeting at her home in Ohio. She was a noble christian woman. D. M. VAIL.

Mrs. Caroline Palmer died Oct. 11th, 1912, at the home of Mrs. Arminta Mapes, at New Vernon, N. Y., where she had made her home for several years. Heart disease was the cause of her death. She was confined to her room some weeks before the end came, and was perfectly resigned to the Lord's will. She talked of her departure, which she well knew was near, as one would of going on a pleasant journey. She was born Dec. 27th, 1824, the daughter of Robert and Lydia Harding Comfort. She married Thomas R. Palmer Dec. 23rd, 1848. Mr. Palmer died March 25th, 1886. Her brother, John Comfort, died in 1905, since which time she had been alone, so far as near relatives were concerned. Mrs. Palmer never made a public profession of religion, except in her untiring attendance upon Old Baptist meetings and in helping to bear all burdens of the church. She was a firm believer in God and his Son Jesus Christ, and her only hope of life eternal was in him. She was of a sunny disposition, and it was good to be in her presence, and her delight was to help the afflicted and distressed. We shall all miss her, but we know she is at rest.

The writer conducted the funeral services, which were held in the New Vernon meetinghouse and were largely attended, using as a text John iii. 16. The interment took place in the New Vernon Cemetery.

May the grace of God be with all who mourn.

K.

Mrs. Lachlan Campbell, widow of Lachlan Campbell, of St. Thomas, and daughter of the late John and Flora Black, of Yarmouth, departed this life at St. Thomas, Ontario, Dec. 8th, 1912. She was baptized by Elder Wm. Pollard, at Ekfrid, June 29th, 1876. My acquaintance with her began over forty years ago. Her house was a pleasant home for the brethren and friends; those who love the truth found a cordial welcome there. The church has no regular appointments for meetings there, but traveling ministers are encouraged by those living in St. Thomas to have appointments. She was always forward in this, and was always present at such meetings when able. She was a spiritually minded woman. Her sickness was long and painful, but she bore the suffering with patience and fortitude. She had endured great grief in the loss of husband, children and other relatives. Her quietude of mind under all her suffering was quite remarkable. I saw her but once during her last sickness, on the occasion of the funeral of her sister, Mrs. Flora Macfarlane, in July last. She spoke of feeling resigned and waiting the call to go home. I esteemed her very highly. She passed away at the home of her son, John. Elder P. W. Sawin conducted the funeral. She leaves two sons: John, of St. Thomas, and Duncan, of Klammath Falls, Oregon, one daughter, Mrs. R. Cochrane, of Winnipeg, one sister, Miss Christie Black, and some grandchildren.

I write this notice by request for publication in the SIGNS. SILAS H. DURAND.

C. N. Walker departed this life in the city of LaGrande, Oregon, Dec. 29th, 1912. He was the son of G. U. V. and M. J. Walker, and was born in Odd, W. Va., Jan. 9th, 1873; was married to R. A. Foley Dec. 14th, 1896, and came with his family to Wallowa Co., Oregon, in March, 1902, where he took up a homestead and resided on it until he made final proof, then sold out and came to Elgin, Union Co., where he and his wife united by letter with the Big Spring Church in October, 1908, and from Elgin moved to LaGrande. Our dear brother was called to pass through great sorrow, of which I will not here speak, that seemed to break him down, and he died of diabetes. He was reconciled to the will of the Lord, and said he was ready to depart when the Lord's time came. He leaves two little daughters, father and mother, seven brothers and three sisters.

I was called to attend his funeral Dec. 30th, and tried to comfort the bereaved ones in the assurance given in the precious promise of God that they that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. May this hope sustain them, that they sorrow not as those who have no hope. G. E. MAYFIELD.

Margaret Jordan Bandy died Dec. 30th, at St. Francis Hospital, in Litchfield, Ill., of erysipelas. Her funeral was held at the Baptist meetinghouse in Litchfield Jan. 1st, 1913, the services being conducted by Elder D. M. Masters, at Little Flock Church, Honey Bend, Ill., where her membership had been since 1897; interment in Crabtree Cemetery. Her maiden name was Martin. She was born in Vincennes, Ind., in 1868. She leaves five children, her mother, two brothers, grandchildren and many other relatives. We mourn not for her as those who have no hope; she has anchored safely over yonder, whence none have ever returned.

NANNIE SMITH.

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HERSMAN, Ill.

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SILAS H. DURAND.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 81. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1913. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JOHN XV. 1-6.

"I AM the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

I desire to offer some of my thoughts on the words of our Savior as here quoted, because these words of the Savior have been hard for me to reconcile with my belief of what the Scriptures teach: "salvation by grace," but now for some years past I have had my mind settled as to the truth taught by this parable. I have a desire that my brethren see them, provided the editors see fit to publish them, for I believe the editors are right in wanting to keep out of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that which is not in harmony with the Scriptures and does not make for peace. Self or our individual feelings should not be considered when the interest of the cause of truth is at stake.

The Savior here, as in many of his parables, takes a natural illustration: the vine and its branches, to teach us a spiritual truth. We know in nature it is true that a branch severed from the vine cannot bear fruit, so Jesus says: "No more can ye, except ye abide in me." So we see it would be just as impossible for a sinner to bear the fruit of the Spirit, separate from Jesus, as it would be for a natural branch to bear fruit separate from a natural vine. Now let us reason a little here. We know that no natural branch has anything to do in uniting itself to the natural vine in order that it may bear fruit; this alone is the work of the husbandman. In nature the abiding in the vine, the branch is passive, and I will also say in bearing fruit it is also passive, and the bearing of fruit depends not upon the branch, but upon the vine, and should there be any superfluous growth on the branch it is alone the husbandman's business and work to trim it off, or as the Savior says, purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit. In every sense of the word we know in nature the branch is passive. "I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bring-

eth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." So here we also prove that salvation is by grace, and that all depends upon the union: "If ye abide in me." This is a statement of a condition, and not a proposition, as though it depended upon the man. "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit;" no "if" about it. Now let me here call special attention to the words of the Savior as above quoted: "He that abideth in me, and I in him." I believe there may be an abiding in Him in the letter in profession, and they are the branches that wither and bear no fruit. Now this parable, like other parables of our Lord, was spoken of the state and condition of the kingdom of heaven at the closing of the law and the beginning of the gospel dispensation, at which time both saint and sinner were together; each had the same right in that law service, but in the setting up of the gospel dispensation the axe is laid at the root of the tree, and fruits meet for repentance must be brought forth. Take the parable of the ten virgins. The five foolish had no oil, though they had the lamps (the profession), and they could not enter the gospel kingdom, and here Jesus said, I never knew you. They were the fruitless branches taken away, because they were not in vital union with the Vine, so bare no fruit. Also the parable of the wheat and the tares, where it is said: "Let both grow together [in the law dispensation] until the harvest [the beginning of the gospel dispensation]: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn." In his explanation of this parable Jesus says: "As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world [the law dispensation]. The Son of man shall send forth his angels [gospel ministers], and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity." These are the fruitless branches that were in the kingdom, as represented in the vine, that were to be taken away and burned. So the parable of the net that was cast into the sea, which, when it was full, they drew to the shore and sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world (law dispensation), the angels (gospel ministers) shall come forth and sever the wicked from the just. These are the branches in Him nominally that are taken away; as they had no vital union with the Vine, so bare no fruit. "If a man abide not in me." If this is not indeed and in truth his state and standing "he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." But on the other hand, "He that abideth in me, and I in him [if this is his state and condition], the same bringeth forth much fruit [for no difference what our claim or profession may be]: for without me ye can do nothing." If I were in a vineyard with a friend and should point to a branch of a vine and say, Except that branch abide in the vine it cannot bear fruit, I would make a statement of a truth that my friend would not think of denying, nor would he for a moment think it depended in any way upon the branch to abide in the vine. Then if this proposition is true in nature, will it not hold good in the way and plan of salvation? Is the sinner passive in the reception of life? I here mean eternal life, for it cannot be disputed that he is in natural life. We take the position that man is passive,

that life to him is a gift, and the reception in no way dependent upon the act of the dead sinner, and that all are dead in sin no one who understands the teaching of the Bible will deny. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." And by reason of this death in sin there is none that doeth good, there is none that seeketh after God; they are all gone out of the way and become unprofitable, and in this state can no more go to God than could a natural branch engraft itself into a natural vine. "No man can come to me, [says Jesus] except the Father which hath sent me draw him." "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman." So all who bear fruit in this vine are grafted in by the Husbandman. Yes, all the branches were loved and chosen in this Vine before the world began, and because in union with the Vine, are born again and receive as a gift the "divine nature." So the Lord said to Israel, "From me is thy fruit found." Doing good works is the fruit, the evidence, and not the cause. He that is of God heareth God's words. "We are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error." Now is there any choice with the natural branch in regard to bearing fruit, or is it optional with the branch whether it bear fruit or not? I do not believe it is. Then has the sinner born again any option in the matter of bearing the fruit of the Spirit? Can he in any way prevent or hinder? I do not believe he can. The apostle said to the Philippian brethren: "For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Could those brethren in any way have prevented God's good pleasure being done in them? I am not carrying this point too far, am I, brethren? When Jesus said unto Lazarus, "Come forth," he could not help coming forth; so I believe that all who hear the voice of the Son of God come forth, having passed from death unto life.

Now let us go back to the branch again for a little while. There are only certain seasons when the branch bears fruit; there is in nature winter and summer, seedtime and harvest. There is no power in the branch by which it can bear fruit "out of season," it must wait the appointed time to bear fruit. Is not this true in nature? How is it then in the spiritual kingdom, does the antitype agree with the type? I must say I believe it does. All the blessings God has in store for his people are in his own hand; he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and will have compassion on whom he will have compassion. So says Paul, It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. David says: "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favor her, yea, the set time, is come." And the set time with our God can neither be hurried nor hindered. For he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. This, some may say, is all true as to the redemption and calling of God's people, but after they are called they are to perform good works. "A branch cannot bear fruit of itself," so Jesus says, "Without me ye can do nothing." Then if I do good, that which is pleasing to God, it is no more I that do it, but the grace of God that is with me. There is no inherent goodness in man from which good can come, and the stream will be like the fountain. A clean thing cannot

be brought out of an unclean, and to my way of looking at it it is very wrong to ascribe the glory to man when it is the grace of God that enables his people to walk uprightly, according to the gospel. If his people cannot do anything without Jesus, then it seems to me all the praise is his; and now, instead, as I believe, God's people are not blessed for doing, but blessed in doing. The blessing goes before, as we read: "Blessed are they that do his commandments." Just as it is written, "Blessed are they that mourn," or, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." We do not believe God's people, who understand the truth, would think that the poor sinner mourned or hungered and thirsted after righteousness in order to be blessed. Then why think they are blessed for doing? For all true obedience is the result of divine grace, for it is God that works in his people to will and to do, and it is all in the hand of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will and for the purpose of his own glory. The nights and the days, the winter and the summer of God's people, are the ordering of their heavenly Father, and he hath said, Summer and winter shall not cease. David says, Thou hast made summer and winter. He makes those seasons with his own dear children, and they cannot change winter to summer nor night into day. David says: "Thou hast visited me in the night; thou hast tried me." This is the time when the Husbandman purgeth the branches, and they are made to inquire, "Watchman, what of the night?" and are made to say with Job, "Wearisome nights are appointed to me." For here "He shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening." These are the appointed seasons of our God in the personal experience of all his people, and the night and the day, the winter and the summer come and go at God's appointed time, and are among the all things that work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. We might say if the natural branches could make the season, then they might always bear fruit, then they might escape the purging process; but this cannot be done. So if God's people could prevent the winter they might bear fruit the year round, and so escape the scourging. But whom the Lord loveth he scourgeth; bastards do escape, but no son or daughter does. Take Job as an example, for I believe he was a figure of the church, and the Lord bears this witness of Job: "A perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil;" and yet the Bible gives no account of one more afflicted and tried than Job. God has chosen his people in the furnace of affliction, that their faith should be tried as gold, and there is no way to escape this furnace. I have had a little hope now for forty-six years, and have been trying to preach about forty years, and I truly believe in these long years I have been taught the truth as expressed by the old prophet: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." I have walked much in darkness, doubts and fears, and can say as did one of old, I have heard from afar glory to the righteous, but as for me, my leanness, my leanness. Now if others can and have escaped bonds and afflictions by their obedience, I confess I am remiss in duty, I have not yet learned how; and there is no desire stronger in my heart than that the blessed Lord would say unto my soul, I am thy salvation, and that I might rest in his love. "Tell me, O

thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?" The answer to this inquiring one gives me some hope: "If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock." Here we are told to follow the pattern, "the footsteps of the flock," and to do this, then we know "through much tribulation" they entered the kingdom. So hope, blessed hope, is the anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and by this precious hope we are saved. Without him, we can do nothing.

Now, brethren editors, I have written more than I intended; I had only in mind to say something about the Vine and the branches, and that it was not branches in union with the Vine that were taken (not cut off) away, but I got to writing of my personal experience, and have written maybe more than will be profitable, if so, cast it aside and all will be well. I want to say I believe and love the doctrine contended for by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES: "Salvation by grace;" yes, the grace of God that bringeth salvation to the poor, helpless sinner, both for time and eternity.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

ELGIN, Oregon, Jan. 12, 1913.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Jan. 9, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing some, to me, very precious letters for your disposal, to publish if you think they will be of general interest. I have felt humbled in the dust, and made to cry out, "I am a worm, and no man," yet I am thankful to the dear Lord that he grants a poor undeserving worm to have the love and fellowship of the dear saints. May he ever guard me and deliver me from presumptuous sins.

With love to you and to all the dear kindred in Christ,

P. W. SAWIN.

ALVINSTON, Ontario, April, 1912.

ELDER P. W. SAWIN—DEAR BROTHER:—You will no doubt be surprised to hear from me, but I have often felt a desire in my heart when reading from your pen to write to you, but a deep sense of my unworthiness, along with many questions in my mind as to what might be the motive actuating me, has kept me from doing so, but, dear brother, since reading your letter published in the SIGNS for January 1st, in which you commended the letter I wrote to Elder Bird, I have felt that I must let you know how much it strengthened and encouraged me. It gave me hope to believe that the Lord had been my supply since you, a dear father in Israel, whom I have esteemed very highly for the truth's sake, should receive a morsel from my feeble effort. How true then are these words: As face answereth to face in water, so the heart of man to his friend. O let us praise the Lord for it all, he alone is worthy to receive honor and glory. We poor, weak mortals can do nothing without him. I want to tell you, dear brother, that your letters published in the SIGNS have all been very interesting to me, along with many others, but I have felt drawn nearer to the dear servants of the Lord; they seem to know so well the toilsome days and wearisome nights of the sin-sick soul. It seems needless to mention those among your letters which have seemed peculiarly adapted to my need. Often I have felt comforted and built up from them. You have had a thorny path to travel, but the

Lord has given you to see that it has been for your good, and he has brought you to feel, as did David when he said, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage." And as the poet has expressed it:

"Though my cup be filled with gall,
There's something secret sweetens all."

My mind has often gone back to one time, when at a meeting at Ekfrid many years ago, you were called upon to preach. You stood up where you were in one of the seats and spoke for a short time. You seemed to feel that you could not preach, and while I cannot remember now what you said, I felt that if I never heard or saw you again I could never forget you, for the word spoken was with reverence and godly fear, and the effect of it has never left me. I have seen you but very few times in your visits to Canada. The last time was three or four years ago last October, at Lobo, where I heard you comfortingly from the words, Israel shall dwell in safety alone. I do not know that you will remember me, but I am sure you will remember my grandmother Scates, and my mother, Mrs. A. Carter.

Now, my dear brother, I do not want to weary you with a long letter, but I felt I wanted to encourage you if I could in your declining years to press on. The toilsome days will soon be over, and you will be enjoying the full fruition of your hope. May God bless and sustain you, and enable you to continue writing and preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ. Trusting that the Lord will put it into your heart to pray for me, for I am poor and needy, I remain your sister in hope,

(MRS.) W. C. YOUNG.

WHEELING, W. Va., Aug. 5, 1912.

ELDER P. W. SAWIN—DEAR BROTHER:—I have just now reread your letter to me, which was published in the SIGNS of May 15th, 1912. I have read it several times, and each time my heart has responded tenderly to your words, and as I read it this time I was very deeply impressed with your closing words. You say, "I have written as a little child in understanding." I thought of our blessed Savior's words to his disciples, Except ye become as a little child, ye can in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven. I said that you had unconsciously paid yourself a high compliment in the sight of God, and I believe we can humbly say this of all who love God. This letter of yours is full of "the hidden wisdom," and it causes my tears to flow. You say, "But is it not true that words always come short of expressing our joys and sorrows? If understood, it is by the corresponding of the heart which witnesses to the things spoken." Your letter all the way through was as a sweet revelation to me. It revealed the thoughts that were yet hidden in my heart, things that were not yet fully brought to the light, things that I was not able to give utterance to, but you uttered them in such a way that I understood and rejoiced in them. Your description of your condition while suffering such pain of body is very interesting, and clearly described. How I have tarried and read it over and over. You say that for some weeks you felt a great love to your brethren, and it seemed also that they loved you. Dear brother, I have been in this frame nearly all the time during the last two years. Many times I am forced to go apart to hide the tears when my heart is melted in tender love. Ofttimes I feel to exclaim, What is it? There seems to

be a spiritual meeting and a returning of love in my heart, as if I were clasping hands with some dearly loved one. When I search deeply I find that this sacred union of love is not concerned with this fleshly body. No, no; I feel that this sacred love would be marred and polluted if mixed with mud. I do hope this is the love that is found in the kingdom of heaven; it is the love of our God-man, and is not mixed with sin; he was without sin. The thought that he would bestow it on such a worthless worm as I causes my tears to flow afresh; as you well say, I cannot understand it. It seems sometimes too much for a poor mortal in the flesh, and yet I want more of it; I want it for my daily bread, my meat and my drink. I am reminded that God is love. We need not fear of being led astray by this love; it is life and health and peace; it is the beauty of perfection; it puts the trustfulness of little children in our hearts, and causes us to stand still and wait for the righteousness of our God to be manifested in us. Dear brother, I wish I could describe all the sweetness and beauty that I feel in these pastures of love, but I have felt, and feel now, the application of these words:

"My heart o'erflows, I cannot tell
How his dear love my passions move;
His sweetest praise my heart employs;
I love and weep, and weep and love."

And yet in my flesh I am all sin. I see and feel this so clearly that one would think that I could not dare to hope in God's mercy, but there has come a feeling of late years that this is not God's portion, this part is of the earth earthy. I seem to see my two natures, one, as it were, in Satan's kingdom, and one in the kingdom of heaven. But we know that Satan is led in chains; he can go no further than God allows him. He, our God, has promised that we shall not be tempted above that we are able to bear, but with the temptation he makes a way of escape. His loving-kindness is so great that even though we are in the flesh he does not suffer us to fail of one jot or tittle of what he has appointed for us, (I should think) no more in this life than in the life to come, and yet I am often wondering about these disputed questions; I have never been able to understand it to my entire satisfaction. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, yet we are said to be under law to Christ. But this is the law of love, and is not enforced by any arbitration, but by love. Love is the fulfilling of this law. This is the law that we love; it is this law or love that fills our poor hearts with tenderness; it is the same love that caused the virgin Mary to say, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior."

Dear brother, when I started to write I felt that I needed your prayers, and I feel to beg for the prayers of all the saints. My general health is about the same; I am able to be up and about the work, at least the lighter part of it. The Lord willing, I will attend some of the Old School Baptist meetings this month.

I want to tell you that sister Bessie Durand enjoyed this letter of yours; she said she thought it was the best she had ever read from your able pen. My heart is full of blessings for you and your wife and children. God bless you in your labors in his dear service. O that he would be your daily and hourly portion. He is all we need in heaven or in earth. I feel that we can say in unison:

"My God, my life, my love,
To thee, to thee I call;
I cannot live if thou remove,
For thou art all in all."

In His precious name I feel to sub-

scribe myself your afflicted and unworthy sister,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

ATTICA, Ohio, Dec. 1, 1912.

ELDER P. W. SAWIN—DEAR BROTHER: —Your article in the last number of the SIGNS was of great comfort to me. I do love those who are true and faithful in the word of the Lord. I have been reading your writings for several years, to my comfort in spirit, and I longed to know where you stood on the all-important doctrine of the sovereignty of God. It appears that you wrote that article for my special benefit. This was because the dear Lord ordained it so, and you and I have great cause to thank him for this, as well as for all his mercies to us. I know there are some things that I cannot explain; one is, in both writing and preaching there are some who get nearer to me than others. No doubt they are all equally good, humble and sound in the faith, and why I cannot get as near to some as to others I cannot explain. Sometimes I have been persuaded that God has appointed some to discern the least unsoundness in doctrine, and they are called watchmen; they are the very elect, whom it is not possible to deceive. The Lord has elected them to this high office for the glory of his name and the good of his peculiar flock. There are some peculiar points in the gospel which all do not understand, but they are indispensable to preserve the identity and order of the church, and when the church begins to lay aside or to deny any of these God-glorifying truths she begins to lose her identity, but as it was of old, so it is now, the leaders of the people do cause them to err. Preachers draw back and question the propriety of mentioning some point of doctrine upon which some are not established, especially if that special point of doctrine be offensive to some, and thus there comes a falling away, and they are swept off, a little at a time, as Saul lost his kingdom, until they disappear in the world. There were many who went off with the Missionary Baptists in 1832 who preached good doctrine as long as they lived on some points, such as the atonement, and the order of baptism, but to-day they are not continuing in the doctrine of Christ and his apostles. We are told to mark them that cause divisions and contentions among us contrary to the doctrine which we have learned. We have learned enough in the ninth chapter of Romans to know that any denial of the predestination of all things is contrary to the doctrine set forth by the inspired apostle in that chapter. Neither has any objector ever dared to tread upon this ground, or tell us what Paul in this chapter means, but they all pass these things by in cowardly silence, which is the only retreat for those who handle the word of God deceitfully. Such ones can see how the Almighty determined the death of the holy child Jesus, who was without fault or blame. (This was the worst of all sins), but they profess to see in other sinful acts of men that predestination would make God the author of sin.

> "Shall the vain race of flesh and blood
> Contend with their Creator God?
> Shall mortal man presume to be
> More holy, just and wise than he?"

Dear brother, there is no surrender in this war, neither does a true soldier carry the weapons of this warfare concealed, but his loins are girt about with truth, and he has for an helmet the hope of

salvation, and his feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace which produces meekness, gentleness, brotherly kindness, &c. I have heard the truth contended for in a natural, fleshly way, which is always of no avail, but when it is done in the Spirit of Christ it is in power and much assurance.

Dear brother, my mind has not been led as I expected when I began this letter, for I had but thought to tell you that I am in fellowship with all you have expressed in your writing, and have desired much to see you and to hear you preach the word. Your very sentiments are such as I live in, and in them I hope to die. I feel assured that I love all who love the truth in our blessed God, whether they love me or not. I feel discouraged and lonely when I call to mind that there is but a scattered remnant left who have not been carried about with the wind of doctrine, "limited predestination." We have nothing in which to glory in ourselves, but I hope that I do sometimes glory in the Lord. But when I feel him near, even in my heart, I cannot express the joy, as I realize that his dear hand it is that makes rough places smooth and crooked things straight. We are strangers in the flesh, but I feel to hope that we are brethren; that we have the same Father, and are joint-heirs with Him who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. May God bless you with his divine presence in feeding his flock until your change come. I would be glad to hear from you if you can have a mind to write to one so unworthy as I am.

Yours in hope of immortality,

H. E. PURRIS.

PORTLAND, Ind., Nov., 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Two similar prophecies of two great events are found in Isaiah xxxix., and in Isaiah xlv. The first of these prophecies, recorded in Isaiah xxxix., was made to Hezekiah in the year 713 before Christ, as we read in the sixth and seventh verses: "Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the Lord. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon." This wonderful prophecy was spoken regarding the Babylonian captivity of the children of Judah for seventy years. The other prophecy, found in the last verse of the forty-fourth chapter, and the fore part of the forty-fifth chapter, reads as follows: "That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid. Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut: I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: and will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me." "I have raised him up in

righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of hosts." The dates of these prophecies, according to our chronology, show that the last prophecy was given one year before the first, one being 713 before Christ and the other 712 years before. The first, that given in 713 before Christ, foretold the future captivity of Judah in Babylon; the second, made in the year 712 before Christ, foretold the delivery of the children of Judah from that captivity. What would seem most miraculous about these prophecies is the fact that they had much to do with the certain future actions of men, with their lives and with their deeds. First, is the certain declaration that all the treasures of the temple at Jerusalem should be carried to Babylon, and that the sons of Hezekiah should be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. I would say again that these prophecies had much to do with the certain future actions of men and nations. These prophecies are emphatic, they declare that the Lord has spoken, saying what the future conduct of men shall certainly be, and this is true, while perhaps many of the men were not yet born of whom these prophecies were spoken. It will be seen by the dates given in the margin of our Bibles that it was a little over one hundred years after the prophecy recorded in Isaiah xxxix. that the treasures of the temple at Jerusalem were carried to Babylon, and that Daniel, Meshach, Shadrach and Abed-nego were made eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. The Lord had also told Jeremiah, as recorded in his prophecy in the twenty-fifth chapter, that he would take Nebuchadnezzar his servant, and bring him against the land, and against all the nations round about, and they should serve the king of Babylon seventy years. The one very miraculous thing about all this panorama, as we may call it, is that when each movement was made in the chain of events that had been foretold, men seemed to be following their own will and to do what they chose to do, while at the same time they did just what the Lord had foretold that they should do. These several movements in the chain of events foretold embraced the king of Babylon, and his coming with a great army and besieging Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, and the pillaging of the temple, and carrying the treasures of the temple to Babylon, and making the children of Hezekiah eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. While all this was in exact fulfillment of the prophecy, yet it is probable that not a man in all these movements knew that he was fulfilling those prophecies. On the other hand, no doubt each king or ruler thought that the scheme was of his own origin, and had it been said to any who had part in those movements, that it was of the Lord that it had been put in their minds to do these things, they would have denied and declared that it was of their own choosing But certainly if we find that the Lord had foretold all these things long before any of the men had being on earth, we certainly have cut off all occasion from any king or ruler to claim the praise for any of these things they had done. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, was made to eat grass as an ox seven years, until he learned that the heavens rule, and yet in the face of all those wonderful events men still claim that man is his own ruler, and that his choosings are in no way directed by any power save his own. Men still think that they stand or fall upon

their own free will, independent of the Lord's directing purpose over them, and this, it appears, was just what all those men who were bound up in Judea and in Babylon felt, so that the things in which men were mistaken then they are mistaken in now, otherwise the remaining prophecies, which are not yet fulfilled, have no certainty of fulfillment. Many things might be said concerning the life of Israel during the seventy years captivity, but space will not admit of it all, but there are two things that stand out prominently, and they are, that all those things which had been declared came to pass, and that the seventy years captivity were fulfilled. Nothing could change the fulfillment of those events, and no power on earth could lengthen or shorten the time of the duration of the captivity; and the second thing is, that men thought they were only following their own will all the time that they were fulfilling those prophecies.

The second prophecy was just as miraculous as was the first This declares of Cyrus: "He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid." This wonderful prophecy declared one hundred and seventy-five years before that a man by the name of Cyrus shall let go God's captives, and rebuild Jerusalem, and lay again the foundation of the temple. Now let the historian tell us what a great king Cyrus was, and how he marshaled a great army and besieged Babylon, and how the siege lasted three years, and in all that time there seemed to be no way to enter within the great wall of Babylon. Yet God had said, "He shall let go my captives," meaning the captives that were in Babylon, who had now been there seventy years. Cyrus was not yet born when the prophecy was written, yet at the end of the seventy years he was there in his place, as the Lord had foretold, and he was doing the very things foretold of him. The things that were prophesied of him now came into his mind, while perhaps he knew nothing of the prophecy, but the decree of God had gone forth, saying, "He [Cyrus] shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward." The Lord did not hire Cyrus to let the captives go. Cyrus was to overthrow the Chaldeans, who were holding the people of God captive. The king of Babylon had but fulfilled prophecy in taking the people captive, and Cyrus was but fulfilling prophecy in liberating them, yet perhaps not one who shared in all this knew that prophecy was but being fulfilled.

Let us now watch the prediction unfolding: "He shall let go my captives." History says that Cyrus had laid siege to the city, and three years had elapsed and yet the wall was not penetrated. Now how could Cyrus let go the Lord's captives? A scheme seemed to penetrate the mind of Cyrus, which was this, and did the Lord have anything to do with it? Let us see. The waters of the Euphrates flowed under the walls of Babylon and watered the city. At night however the gates were kept closed, but the Lord had said, I will open before him the two leaved gates. Babylón said they shall be closed, but the Lord said they shall be opened. Now let us see how the declaration of the Lord was fulfilled. Cyrus caused a channel to be cut, into which when he found the gates open he turned the waters of the Euphrates. God said they shall not be shut, and on the feast of Belshazzar, while they were in a drunken revelry, the water gates were not shut. The seventy years of captivity

were now at an end, Cyrus was there with his army, the canal was cut, the water gates were open, the water was turned into the canal, and the army of Cyrus marched up through the bed of the river, and while Cyrus was executing his scheme Belshazzar's feast was on, and all seemed to be moving on with great splendor, when suddenly a hand writing was on the wall, and there was a commotion. The hand that wrote was visible, and great fear took hold of the king, and his knees smote together. This writing no one in Babylon could read. The king was in great anxiety to know the meaning. An interpreter was at last found, Daniel, one of those whom God had said should be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon, was brought forth to read the writing. It was, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin." "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." Cyrus at that moment was marching at the head of the Medo-Persian army, and fell upon the Chaldeans, and that night they were slain. Hence we see in a very minute way of the fulfillment of the two prophecies which had been written one hundred and seventy-five years before, and thus far we have no intimation that either king or ruler, general or private soldier, knew that they were fulfilling God's predictions, and we have every reason to believe that they thought they were fulfilling their own will, and doing only what they wanted to do. Perhaps none of them knew that it had been foretold in prophecy, and that they were only doing the purpose of God. Historians the world over extol Cyrus and his scheme to enter Babylon through the bed of the river, and declare that it was a great piece of strategy, which they think he alone studied out, and, so far as men could see, it was a great piece of strategy, but our God who had said, He shall fulfill all my pleasure, also had said emphatically that the two leaved gates should not be shut, so that which Cyrus waited for God said should be, and that which Cyrus did God said he should do. Now then, from whence are the actions of men derived when fulfilling the predictions of God, whether virtuous or vile? The king of Babylon was a wicked king. The Lord so declared it. Cyrus he declared to be his shepherd who should fulfill all his pleasure. Let all those who have thought that God could have no righteous purpose in predicting the future actions of kings and rulers centuries before such men were born, declaring both their evil and their righteous deeds, stop here and study these predictions of God, and remember how the king of Babylon must dwell with the beasts of the field and eat grass as an ox until he knew that the heavens did rule.

But lest I be too tedious, for a moment I will follow the prediction, "He shall let go my captives." In the books of Nehemiah and Ezra we learn how Cyrus gave the children of Israel, who had long been captives for the seventy years prophesied of in Babylon, permission to return to the land of Canaan, and to rebuild Jerusalem. "He shall build my city." Cyrus laid tribute upon other nations to help rebuild Jerusalem, and the Lord said that this was "for Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect," that he had called Cyrus by his name, and that he had surnamed him, although Cyrus had not known God. The Lord said that he would gird Cyrus, yet Cyrus did not know him. "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: * * * that they may know from the rising

of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things." "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker. Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioned it, What makest thou?" "I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded." Therefore we must conclude that the heavens did indeed rule, and must shut our mouths as to the things which God hath purposed. These prophecies are very plain, and they foretold the certain future actions of men and nations, and history shows how these prophecies came to pass, and while men will laud Cyrus and others to the skies for their great wisdom and their great deeds, we will remember that it was written, Cyrus shall perform all my pleasure.

NEWTON PETERS.

FORSYTH, Ga., Dec. 23, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Your kind and much appreciated letter to hand, and read and read again, and it is indeed a great comfort to me to know that your mind was directed to write on the ten virgins as you did. It appears to me that your ideas in regard to the parable must be the truth. I have thought that the parable we have under consideration could be applied to the close of the law dispensation and the ushering in of the gospel, and that possibly the wise virgins represented the ones John baptized, those who come bringing forth fruits meet for repentance; that is, as I understand, telling an experience of grace like the Lord's humble poor have ever done, and will ever do. They come telling what great things the Lord has done for them, and how unworthy they feel of a place among the faithful. These are well represented by the wise, for they are made wise by the wisdom which God alone can give; so, as I understand, it was the given wisdom from above that made them wise. It is evident that no one can be wise unless he has wisdom, and it must be the wisdom that the world knows nothing of, for the apostle said, The world by wisdom knew not God. So it has ever been, and is yet, a living truth that no man can know God or anything about the things God has prepared for them that love him, except by this given wisdom which makes people wise unto salvation. Now while John the Baptist baptized those who came in the manner above named, the foolish virgins, as I understand, are those who came to John demanding baptism at his hands. But he said unto them, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" Then John demanded something of them that they did not possess, just what the old order of Baptists require to-day. Foolish indeed were those people to think that their relationship to Abraham would admit them into the church or kingdom of Christ. So I think these were foolish from the fact that they had not been given wisdom from on high, and therefore were nothing more than law worshipers, and knew nothing of the true worship of God in the gospel kingdom, nor what it took to give them admittance into this kingdom; but they realized, when they went and demanded entrance, that their lamps were gone out, because they had no oil. The one thing particularly necessary in order to have a light is oil, and the foolish virgins did not have it. How fitting is our Savior's

illustration of that people. What could be more foolish than to think that good works would give a place in the kingdom of heaven here on earth; and not only so, but some think that their good works will by and by place them in the sweet haven of rest beyond this life. I do not think there can be any doubt that the parable points out the two classes of worshipers, viz., true spiritual worshipers and law worshipers, and I think, as you say in your letter, it finds an application all the way down the line, because we evidently have the law worshipers until this day, and I feel sure we still have some of the true worshipers in the persons of Old School Baptists, and I think also that some of the Lord's children have been, and are yet, so deceived that they deny their Lord and Master and join in with the law worshipers. I think one strong evidence in favor of the above position is that our Lord said at midnight there was a cry made. We know, literally speaking, that means the passing out of one day and the coming in of another, therefore it appears to me our Master must have made special reference to the passing out of the law dispensation and the ushering in of the gospel. But there is a great field for thought here, and I know that no man can understand these great things any further than God gives him wisdom, still I think it is beneficial for the Lord's ministers to exchange views, and when I consider how very little I know, I surely feel that my fathers in the ministry (if indeed I am worthy of claiming this relationship with such men) can teach me, as Paul taught Timothy, at least in a measure. I certainly appreciate your prompt reply, and take this opportunity to express to you and your people my appreciation of your kindness to me, and your kind remembrance of me. I certainly feel to hope, dear brother Chick, that my brethren are not deceived in me, and shall be glad indeed if the good Lord sees proper to allow me the privilege of visiting you and your people again. Please remember me kindly to your family, together with the church, and always know that it will be a great pleasure to have a letter from you.

Desiring an interest in your prayers, I beg to remain your brother in hope,

W. E. BRUSH.

WHEELING, W. Va.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose this good letter from our esteemed brother, Elder J. W. McClanahan. If you think best, I would like for others to enjoy it through the medium of our dear family communion sheet, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. God bless you in your labors. I feel that your work is of God. You have the heartfelt testimony of the saints where it is read. I am unworthy to call you brethren, yet I hope that by the grace of God I may humbly claim the blessed relationship, and so subscribe myself

Your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) FLORENCE PULTZ.

LANHAM, W. Va., Dec. 25, 1912.

DEAR SISTER PULTZ:—Your good letter dated Dec. 5th came to hand, and finding me in poor health I could not write you before, but am now able to be around the place and do my own feeding of my stock. Your letter was surely a feast to me in my lonely hours of affliction. I feel that you were directed by the Spirit to write words of comfort. Words fitly spoken are like apples of gold in pictures of silver to all of like precious faith. We often revert to the background of our experience in search of brighter evidence of our acceptance in

the beloved Son of God. We take up our Bible in search of some word of comfort and read the words from his dear lips. It is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. Here he was reminding them of the prophecy of Zechariah: "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." If it be that we are of the little ones his protecting hand is turned upon us, and no harm can befall us. We may be scattered upon the mountains in loneliness, in isolated places, surrounded by modern Pharisees, yet the glorious gospel of peace comes to comfort us. Indeed, this peace is a precious legacy bequeathed to the heirs of promise by the Lord of hosts. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace."

To-day is the 29th of December, and I am able to write but little at a time, but feel this morning that I must write you a few more lines. Some weeks ago a brother from Ocean Park, Cal., wrote me to give him my views on the text: "And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." I was truly glad to see that Elder Durand had written on the subject in the last number of the SIGNS; however, I had written him, giving him such views as I had. There is no doubt about the words of Jesus being true; in the spirit they were in paradise. All the members that make this one body complete were represented by Christ on the cross, he being the representative Head of the spiritual family, redeemed by his blood; the one church, the body, of which Christ is the Head over all things. Christ was put to death between two thieves, between the living and the dead. The word of truth tells us that he is not the God of the dead, but of the living. In the wisdom and purpose of God all the members of this one body were present with him when as yet there was none of them; and because they are sons, God sends the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, "Abba, Father." This Spirit in the heart of the thief caused him to cry unto Jesus to be remembered "when thou comest into thy kingdom." This kingdom cometh not with observation, for it is a spiritual kingdom, and the subjects of it are spiritual worshipers, for Jesus their King seeks such to worship him as do worship him in spirit and in truth. The thief had the sweet assurance from the lips of Jesus, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise," for this is the gospel day, of which there is no to-morrow. For by the one offering made "to-day" "he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified;" by the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Christ, once for all. All the members of this one body receive this sweet assurance, that "to-day" they shall be with Jesus in paradise. Christ's body was taken and laid in Joseph's new tomb, and the morning of the third day he arose from the dead. We see in John xx. 11–18, (read it all) where "Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." Hence it is very clear that Jesus' body did not go immediately from the cross to heaven.

I do believe the thief was a figure of the church, for he did own the justice of the condemnation, while the other thief, a figure of antichrist, manifested that kind of spirit of self-saving and helping to save others in his words to Christ on the cross.

I will close for this time. Write me when you have a mind to do so. I am confined so closely to the house that I am glad to get letters. I shall send your letter to the SIGNS for publication.

Your brother in affliction,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

HARRISONVILLE, Pa., Dec. 23, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—Another year has passed away, and I, a poor old sinner, am still in this old tabernacle of sin, and the time has come to renew my subscription for the good old family paper, so you will find inclosed money order for two dollars for another year, for I would not know how to get along without it. It seems to me it is like wine, the older it gets the better, so many able correspondents. I thought Elder Chick's editorial on declaring the end from the beginning was good; it met my views exactly, although I could not have put it in words as he did, but, however, I was made to rejoice in reading it. Then came brother Thornbury's letter on the resurrection, which was grand; then came Elder Newton Peter's letter on predestination and the fulfillment of prophecy; it was a masterpiece of truth. Without further personal mention I will say the correspondence in general is good; the experiences told of God's delivering his children from the power of darkness and translating them into the kingdom of his dear Son I never tire of reading. Then those lonely ones, who are separated from church privileges, what a comfort and blessing the good old SIGNS is to them. Then there are those who cannot meet with the church on account of affliction; it is a source of comfort to them to hear of the travel of the church, and, dear editors, you do not know how many hundreds you are feeding through the columns of the SIGNS that you never hear from, so do not be discouraged in your labor of love. Brother Ker spoke in his remarks in the closing volume of being in a barren state of mind. My dear brother, the Lord is giving you an experience to prepare you for greater usefulness. Look what he brought Job through, but he brought him out in a broad place. I wish you a happy new year. May God's presence be with you in the coming year, as it has been in the past, to publish the glad tidings of God's eternal truth. Do not publish this at the expense of better reading.

Your little, weak brother in hope,

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

ARENA, N. Y., Jan. 9, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I wish you a happy and prosperous new year. As I write to renew my subscription, I wish to add one more testimonial to the worth of our medium of correspondence, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I feel I could scarcely do without it. It has formed a prominent part of my reading for the last fifty years. Since I have been a follower of the Captain of our salvation, the meek and lowly Savior, the Prince of Peace, I have at different times contributed short articles for its columns, but not often, for they have been so well filled by others more gifted that I have been content to read my own thoughts frequently expressed so much better than I could have expressed them, that it was a great comfort. Again, when I read the views of

our ministers and other gifted brethren, and they seem to have such clear understanding of the glorious truths of the gospel, I can but wonder and rejoice that our heavenly Father has given such gifts unto men. Our paper continues just as interesting as ever; though many of our fathers have been called home, the Lord has raised up others to stand on the walls of Zion to proclaim the glad tidings: Peace on earth and good will to men. Last Sunday our pastor, Elder J. B. Slauson, spoke on that subject. I thought his remarks very interesting and comforting indeed. Why was that message sent to the shepherds watching their flock? Why not to the kings and potentates of earth? I know not why, but our Savior declared, These things are hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. Again, he says, Not many mighty, not many noble are chosen, but God hath chosen the weak things of earth to confound the mighty, and things that are not to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory, save in the cross of Christ. I feel that perhaps my years are nearly numbered, but I have a deep and abiding faith that my Redeemer lives, and as he lives, I shall live also. My little hope is still my stay and staff. It is Christ within, the hope of glory.

Your affectionate, though unworthy sister,

JULANA H. DICKSON.

CASEY, Iowa, Nov. 7, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel like writing a few words upon the Scripture recorded in Matthew xii. 32: "And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man," &c. This is speaking against him as a man, not alluding to the eternal God, who dwelt in the man Christ Jesus, the man of God's right hand, whom he made strong for himself. Then the Savior adds, "It shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Then see what Christ said about the sin against the Holy Ghost in Mark, third chapter, beginning at the twenty-second verse: "And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils. And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan? And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end. * * * Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation; because they said, He hath an unclean spirit." Is not this the sin against the Holy Ghost? How could it be made more plain? Who said that he had an unclean spirit? The scribes, and what they said was the sin against the Holy Ghost, and Christ has told us what that sin is much more plainly than I have seen in any of the writings of uninspired men. The reason I have thus written is, that in the past fifty years I have seen and read after many who have written in several Old School Baptist papers who have feared that they have committed the unpardonable sin, or the sin against the Holy Ghost. I am now nearly eighty-two years of age.

Your brother,

R. S. BANKS.

BOWEN, Ill., Dec. 23, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—As the old year is drawing to a close and the new one will soon open, I take this as an opportune time to send you these few lines by the kindness of my son. I have been a reader of the SIGNS since the year 1855, and as the years roll by it becomes dearer to me, if possible; it is now my only medium to hear the gospel, as I am too feeble to go to meeting, and see very little of the brethren. It pleased God to call from our home my dear companion, who departed this life May 13th. He had been an invalid for over a year, and it was my constant care to attend him. He lived to a ripe old age, having died in his eighty-fifth year. I am only waiting for the reaper (death) when I hope to join him in, as I hope, a better world than this, where my Savior is the eternal Light. My husband, the late Elder J. E. Riley, was ordained to the ministry early in our married life, and the greatest enjoyment he had was to speak of the goodness of his Master, and to proclaim the salvation of his children saved by grace, and grace alone, and fully believed in the foreknowledge of God in all things. While I am at times much cast down, and my path seems wild and dark, the dear old SIGNS comes to hand and I read of the experiences of my brethren and sisters and find that it is thus with them. I feel to thank God for the great comfort it is to me to know that the Star of Bethlehem is still shining brightly at the end of the journey. I was much edified to read your editorial on the eighth chapter of Romans in the last SIGNS, and I would kindly ask, if you can spare the time, to give your views through the SIGNS on the twenty-fourth chapter of Job. As I said before, I have no other source of hearing preaching.

On account of the sickness and cares that overwhelmed me at the time, I did not remit last year's subscription, and you will find inclosed four dollars to apply on last year and this; my subscription expired December 15th, 1911. Perhaps this may be the last year that I will be on earth to read your ever-helpful paper, as I am now in my eighty-fifth year and quite feeble, but God knows best, and doeth all things well.

May the grace of God be with you and all the beloved to the end, is my prayer.

LUCINDA RILEY.

FARMINGTON, Ill., Dec. 30, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I will write you a few lines, and inclose a draft for two dollars for my subscription to the SIGNS for the year 1913. I am still very much afflicted, as I have been for several months. I did think that I would have to stop the SIGNS, as I am about blind, and can hardly see to follow the lines as I write. I have not been able to read for several months. I have been a paying subscriber for sixty years. In my affliction and blindness I realize that I am very near the end of my pilgrimage below. I am looking for death at most any time. Dear, loving brethren and sisters, good-by. I love you all for the truth's sake, and I am loth to give you up, but it is the Lord that has afflicted me, even as he did Job. Dear brethren, pray for me; before this reaches you I may be silent in death. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

"O happy day, O blessed abode,
I shall be near and like my Lord."

When I awake with his likeness, then shall I be satisfied. Fare you well, my dear and loving brethren and sisters, may the presence of the Lord be with you. My dear wife desires to still take and read the SIGNS. I feel to say,

"I love thy kingdom, Lord,
The place of thine abode."

I remain your brother in a precious hope, E. D. VARNES.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1913.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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1 TIMOTHY VI. 12.

OUR aged sister, Mrs. Lucinda Brewster, of West Orange, N. J., some little time since requested us to present some thoughts regarding 1 Tim. vi. 12, and also with regard to how we may quench the Spirit. The text referred to reads as follows: "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." This whole chapter, and indeed much of the whole epistle, is occupied with directions and exhortations to Timothy as to how he should conduct himself as a believer and as a minister of Jesus Christ. The general thought presented by the apostle to him is that he had been called by grace, and then called to the one work of glorifying God in the ministry of the word. To this one work the Lord had set him apart. Other believers as well as himself might not have been called to this work, while yet it was their business to seek to follow the Lord and to glorify him in all their lives, but for Timothy there was but one thing, viz., to leave all worldly considerations, and to be devoted to the one work of preaching salvation through Christ, and then to setting in order the things commanded of God in the churches. Others might rightly seek to labor with their hands to provide the necessities of this life, either for themselves or their families, because they had not been called to the ministry as had Timothy. It is right and pleasing to God that his disciples, all of them, should be not slothful in business, while at the same time they are to be fervent in spirit, thus serving the Lord. But some, like Timothy, Silas, Barnabas and Titus, are called to the one work of the ministry, and to them, as well as to Timothy, the command of the Lord is, not to be entangled with the business of this life. This, as it appears to us, is the general teaching of this epistle. In this chapter especially the apostle warns Timothy against certain evils to which by nature he and all the servants of God in all ages are subject through temptation. The apostle names in this chapter doting about questions, and strifes of words, which give rise to envy, railings, &c. Also he names perverse disputings, and from such he says, Withdraw thyself. He speaks of some who suppose that gain is godliness, and urges contentment with such things as we have, reminding Timothy that as we brought nothing into the world, so we can carry nothing out of it. He speaks of the evil results which shall befall those who make haste to be rich, and declares that the love of money is the root of all evil, and says that some having coveted these earthly riches have fallen into a snare, and have erred from the faith, and so have brought upon themselves to be pierced with many sorrows. Then, verse eleven, he exhorts Timothy as a man of God, that is, as one chosen and called of God, and set apart to the service of God, to flee these things and to follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness, and then concludes with

the words of the text to which our attention has been called. These reflections seem to us to set forth the general outline of that which Paul urges upon the attention of his son in the faith, Timothy, and surely it does not need to be said that these things, all of them, are equally applicable to and necessary for all the called servants of Jesus Christ to observe. It seems sure that if any minister of the gospel neglects these things he shall suffer harm, and his ministry will not be profitable to the churches.

In verse twelve the apostle makes use of a figure of speech which is not uncommon with him: that of a warfare in which the one chief thing is fighting. "Fight [he says] the good fight of faith." Warfare, either between men or nations, always has been common when differences have arisen, and some, even in this natural warfare, have fought for that which was right, have fought a good fight. But it is not of this kind of warfare that the apostle here speaks, no matter how just the cause may be. This is not a conflict against flesh and blood, but against the powers of iniquity, both within and without. He calls it a good fight, because it is the fight of faith. Neither is the apostle here specially speaking of that constant warfare which goes on in the soul of all who are called by grace, but of that going forward in open profession of the word and confession of Christ, which will constantly bring him who is engaged in this warfare into opposition with all other men, and also into conflict with the weakness which is within himself, and which would lead him to yield the field in discouragement very often. For Timothy, or for any other minister of the word, to fight the good fight of faith is to meet steadfastly the sufferings, deprivations, persecutions, reproaches and oppositions of men of ungodly and perverse minds, and this facing of these oppositions of men was not to be done with anger, ill-will and enmity, or with the spirit of revenge, or of strife, as when one wrestles against another with the desire of overthrowing him and winning the applause of victory. Fleshly motives can have no place in this warfare, and in this fight of faith all who serve God will complain more against that which they find within their own hearts than against any or all other men. They must pity and pray for their oppressors, but they must not pity the evil within themselves. They are to forgive others their wrong, but they cannot forgive their own wrong. They may excuse the anger of others against them, saying they know not what they do, but they cannot excuse their own anger, hatred or resentment against those who do them wrong. They are to take joyfully the spoiling of their goods, while they are to seek not the harm of others, but rather that they may minister to others, even to their most deadly foes. To contend for the faith of God's elect with faith in their own hearts, while yet to forgive and to seek the welfare of all who may do them harm, is to fight the good fight of faith. This is a good fight, it is a fight to do good rather than harm to others, to save life rather than to destroy it. This first expression, "Fight the good fight of faith," seems therefore to refer to the ministry of the servant of God, as made manifest in what he says and does to others.

The second expression, "Lay hold on eternal life," seems to us rather to refer to that which concerns the inward life of Timothy and all God's servants. It must not be forgotten that there would be no outward fight of faith were it not for the

inward laying hold upon eternal life, and where there is a laying hold by faith upon eternal life there will follow that which is outward, as the stream follows and flows out of its fountain. It seems to us that Paul would have Timothy to constantly remember his calling, first by grace to salvation, and then his calling to the ministry of the Lord, and that this is what he signifies by laying hold on eternal life. Perhaps if we change the language a little, and say, Lay hold upon natural life, it will help us understand better what Paul means here. Suppose one should, when advising his son with regard to his future life on earth, say to him, Lay hold on natural life. We think that while the expression might be deemed unusual, no one would have a moment's question as to what that father intended by it. It would mean in substance, Make the most of this life, or make the best of it you can. Use well and worthily that which you have which belongs to this life. Use the talents, the strength of mind and body which you have for good, either for yourself or for others. Now Paul would say to Timothy, Yours is the gift of eternal life. You do possess spiritual life, that life which is not earthly, but heavenly. You are raised up above the world, seek ye therefore those things which belong above the world; seek the things which belong to eternal life. As a man naturally might be exhorted to use the gifts which are his for usefulness, and the accomplishment of that which is good and profitable, so here Timothy is exhorted to so use that spiritual life which had been given him. "Lay hold on eternal life." Do not lay hold upon natural life, for you are in possession of a better life. Once you wrought that which men naturally count dear and profitable, but you have come to see that there is no good in the flesh, nor in worldly gain or advantage, but that there is infinite good in the possession and enjoyment of that which is eternal. Go on in thy ministry, and be faithful in thy testimony and in labor. These things will not indeed bring thee honor, fame or wealth after a worldly sort, but they will open up to thee peace of conscience and the joys that are heavenly, and they will be blessed to all those who love the Lord, among whom thy lot is cast. This seems to us to be in substance what the apostle means by laying hold on eternal life. To lay hold on natural life is poverty, though the whole earth be gained, but to lay hold on eternal life is to be rich indeed.

In the latter part of this verse Paul reminds Timothy that he has been called to this very thing, and has so professed before many witnesses. This letter was not written at the beginning of the ministry of Timothy, but after he had been engaged in it for some time, therefore he had borne this testimony already before many witnesses. Paul here seems to mean that Timothy had been called to this work of the ministry, and in that ministry he had already professed his faith in Christ, and his calling to walk according to the commandments of the Lord, and when any one makes proof of his calling to the ministry it also involves full proof that he has first been called out of darkness into light and has passed from death unto life. These two callings cannot be disjoined; that is, if one has the second he must previously have the first. Many indeed are called out of death unto life who are never called to the ministry as was Timothy. It is this last call to the ministry that we understand the apostle to present in this verse. The good profession therefore does not so

much signify that Timothy had been telling others of his own experience of grace as that he had been testifying of the doctrine of grace and salvation in general. He had not been saying to the people, I am a child and servant of God, so much as he had been declaring to them that salvation was of the Lord, and that he had called his chosen to walk according to his will and to his praise and glory. This Timothy had himself sought to do also, and so had professed a good profession before many witnesses.

In conclusion, we will say a few things regarding what it is to quench the Spirit. The expression is found in 1 Thess. v. 19. The word "quench," as used here, does not mean to extinguish, as water quenches or extinguishes fire, but rather it means to hinder or delay. Still further, it does not mean that the Spirit of God in us may be hindered in its life-giving power, so that one may refuse this eternal life, neither does it signify hindering or delaying that inward work by which life is given and maintained with love, reverence and the fear of the Lord, and all others proper fruits of the Spirit, but it refers to that which is outward, that which belongs to obedience, or to the display in word and deed of the Spirit that dwells within. This Spirit is, without doubt, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of life and truth, without the possession of which no one can be a believer, or a child of God. It is the Spirit by which we cry, "Abba, Father." Paul was addressing his brethren who were in God the Father. (See the first chapter of this epistle.) He was not saying to sinners who did not know the Lord that the Spirit was striving with them to induce them to become christians, but he was addressing those who already had the Spirit dwelling in them. It is not needful to further argue this, as the most casual reading of the first chapter will give full proof of it. Still further, we think that a careful reading of the connection will show that the apostle is not speaking to the members of the church as individuals with regard to their individual manner of life especially, (though no doubt there is such a thing as quenching the Spirit so that in outward life we do not show forth its fruits as we ought) but he refers to the manifestation of the various gifts in the church, the gift of prayer, preaching, tongues and prophecies, which are all for the body. Paul would here exhort the church not to throw cold water upon these gifts, as one would do upon a fire that had been kindled, but rather to encourage and sustain all those in whom such gifts are found. The next verse seems to sustain this thought, for he says there, "Despise not prophesyings," yet in the next verse he exhorts the church to be careful in her encouragement, saying, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." These three verses taken together present a very narrow path. On the one hand, do not seek to discourage the gifts of the Spirit which seem to appear in different members, and on the other hand do not act hastily in urging these gifts forward, but prove them, and then when proven to be gifts of the Spirit hold them fast. Thus it behooves the churches everywhere to carefully watch lest they discourage where they ought not to, and lest they encourage where they should not. It seems to us that this is in substance what the apostle is presenting in this text and chapter. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

PROVERBS XXII. 6.

"TRAIN up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

(In reply to a sister who has desired our views upon the text.)

The Proverbs of Solomon are short sentences of wisdom, which, while proverbially true in their literal application, as a general thing, are more immediately designed for the spiritual instruction of the children of wisdom; hence Wisdom is personified as giving divine instruction to her children, by whom she is ever justified. In many parts of the book of Proverbs the address is made to "My son," "My children," &c., and in chapter seven Wisdom is the speaker. "Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice?" Our Lord Jesus Christ is of God made unto us (his saints) wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption, for in him is found all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. To them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, he is the wisdom of God and the power of God. Admitting, then, as we must, that these proverbs are given by divine inspiration, we are to receive them as addressed to us by our divine Instructor, the Lord Jesus Christ, who says: "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly." And of whom God's voice, in the cloud of transfiguration, said, "Hear ye him." In literalizing the proverb now under consideration, its beauty and truth do not appear, for there is no human wisdom so perfect as to secure infallibly the result which is contemplated in our text. In Solomon's own case there was an apparent failure. His father, according to the flesh, was David, the man after God's own heart, and Solomon himself says: "I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother. He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words; keep my commandments, and live." Certainly Solomon was as brilliant an example of good breeding as we can find, yet we are told that when he became old outlandish women caused him to err. In his old age he was led into idolatry by his strange wives; and in our day we have many sad examples of the kind. How many anxious parents have taken all the pains in their power in the discipline and education of their children, and yet those children have in many instances departed from all the wholesome instructions and judicious counsels which had been lavished upon them in early life, while instances have not been infrequent wherein children who have in childhood and youth been exposed to the most unwholesome instructions and most pernicious examples have risen to eminence, and in old age been found among the best citizens in the world. Although the course suggested by the proverb commends itself to the wise, it does not give assurance that human care and prudence shall always be successful.

Many experiments have been tried by the wise and prudent of this world to improve the condition of mankind, and much discussion has been had on the question, In what way should a child be trained? The ancient Pharisees boasted their superior advantages, having the law and the covenants with them, of training their children, but we are told they made their pupils twofold more the children of hell than they themselves were, and our modern Pharisees, by Sabbath Schools, infant and Bible classes and Theological seminaries, have succeeded no better. The present generation has been raised and educated and trained under the full

power of all this humanly invented religious machinery, thoroughly drilled in Sunday Schools. We have often been told that when they became old they would be pious christians and good citizens, but what do we see as the result of all this kind of training? A more wicked, murderous, heaven-defying generation probably has never been upon the earth since the deluge. He that sitteth in the heavens has laughed, and God has had them in derision. (Psalms ii. 4.) According to his unerring word, "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." But as we object to the use or abuse to which our text is and has been prostituted by ancient and modern Pharisees, we will give our esteemed sister and our readers generally such light as we have upon its true and spiritual meaning. Understanding Christ as head over all things to his church, as personated by Wisdom, and as such set up from everlasting, or ever the earth was, as the Head of his spiritual family and Husband of his church, or his Jerusalem which is above, which is free and which is the mother of all the legitimate children of wisdom, we shall regard the admonition and instruction of our text as addressed by him to the church, the Lamb's wife, the spiritual mother of the family, directing her to "train up" her children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. None can successfully dispute that this application of our text most fully and beautifully expresses the instruction of Christ to his church, in regard to the discipline of his household. The church of God is under a most solemn charge from him whom her soul loveth, to train up her sons and daughters in the fear of the Lord. She is solemnly charged to see to it that all his laws and ordinances, precepts and examples, doctrine and order, be faithfully taught and constantly observed by all her children, and who has ever known a heaven-born son or daughter of the church of the living God, who has been trained from the infancy of their spiritual experience under the faithful administration of the word of truth, well instructed in the doctrine of Christ and constantly habituated to take the Scriptures as the man of their counsel, standard of their faith and rule of their conduct from their first connection with the church until their heads have whitened with age, that has not become well established in word and doctrine?

In the nature of the figure it is the peculiar office of the wife to instruct her household to honor and obey their father and their mother in all things, and as a mother her children are placed under her peculiar care and instruction; they are directed to look to her for succor, instruction and consolation. She is an helpmeet for him who is the "everlasting Father" of all her children. He bids her train them in the way they should go. To train is to exercise, to instruct, to keep them in the practice, to drill and accustom them to the constant practice of that in which they are to be trained.

Practically, the church of Christ, walking in all the order of the house of God, sees that sin is not suffered to rest unrebuked on any of her children. She has maternal charge as well as love for them all. She receives to her bosom the "newborn babe" as soon as it is born, feeds it with the sincere milk of the word, which flows from the breasts of her consolation; she attends to their numerous wants, hears and understands their cries for bread, or feeds them on milk, as she knows their condition and age can bear, teaches them to talk and turns to them

a pure language, that they may not speak in a mongrel or half Ashdod dialect, instructs them how to spell and pronounce Shibboleth and every other password or countersign required of those who are of the household of God. She sees that not a morsel of food from the pulpit, or elsewhere, goes into the mouth that is unwholesome; she examines well that there be no wild gourds served up by young and inexperienced prophets; that there be no "death in the pot" from which they are to feed. She has a charge to see that their clothing is in good order, white and clean, unspotted from the world, undefiled and unpolluted. Her Husband has stored the wardrobe well. The garments of salvation, the robe of righteousness, garments of praise and raiment of fine needlework are there; she is to see to it that they are seasonably put on, carefully protected from pollution and duly appreciated; she has a special charge in training them, to keep them out of bad company, for her Husband in one of his proverbs of wisdom has told her that "evil communications corrupt good manners." She must not allow them to go after strange women (professed churches); she must teach them to beware of the flattering words of the strange woman (antichrist), and thoroughly warn them against her subtle snares, and tell them plainly that her house is the way to hell, leading down to the chambers of death, lest they should let their heart decline to her ways; for she hath truly cast down many wounded, yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Such are her fascinating charms and seductive devices that many shall follow her pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. She must therefore faithfully warn them to beware of dogs, to beware of evil workers and to beware of the concision. She has a solemn charge to see that the discipline of the house of God is faithfully observed in all cases, and see that the little children love one another. She must in training them see that they are well instructed in all the doctrine of God their Savior, and that they perfectly understand and walk in all the order and ordinances of his house blamelessly and unrebukably until his coming.

Now, my dear sister, do you think a child of God, a son of the church, brought up strictly according to the laws of Christ and duly instructed to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded, from early infancy to old age, will, when old, depart from the doctrine, order or ordinances of his kingdom? Did you ever know such an instance? But even the children of God, who are left, like the few Jews in Jerusalem while the tribes were carried into Babylonish captivity, may forsake the law of the Lord, intermarry with the children of Ashdod, become corrupted, and their very language become confused and incoherent, so that they speak neither language correctly, but a mongrel jargon which betrays their lack of wholesome training. The children of God require the care and counsels of their mother, or they are liable to become as children tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine.

In conclusion, esteemed sister, although you are located somewhat remote from your mother, as to the privileges or frequent social intercourse with the church, and but seldom can hear the preaching of the word in truth and faithfulness, yet as God has graciously trained you himself, weaned you from the vanities of the Gentiles, led you about and instructed you and kept you as the apple of his eye, surely there is no good thing that he will

now withhold from you. Where you formerly sought a home, when you asked for bread they gave you a stone; when hunger compelled you to ask for a fish they gave you a serpent, and for an egg they gave you a scorpion. But the Lord heard your groaning and came down and delivered you; he brought you out of the house of bondage with a high hand and an outstretched arm, and he has brought you to his banqueting-house and over your defenceless head has he spread the banner of his love. Now we address to you the inspired admonition which has already been brought home by the Spirit to your heart: "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him."—Psalms xlv. 10, 11.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Oct. 15, 1865.

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OBITUARY NOTICES.

Fred W. Hess, of Shohola, Pike Co., Pa., died Jan. 8th, 1913. I had known Fred from a child; he was a bright, nice young man, a great help and comfort to his parents, brothers and sisters, and will be missed in the family circle very much. A vacant chair, sad, sorrowful hearts are made by this dispensation of God's providence, which none but God can heal or reconcile. Sister Hess writes as follows:

"It becomes my sad duty to give an account of the death of our beloved son, Fred W. Hess, which occurred Jan. 8th, 1913, making his stay upon earth 24 years, 7 months and 25 days. Our dear boy was sick fourteen months of that dreadful malady, Hodgkin's disease, for which there is no cure. The first doctor he consulted told him there was no help for him, and he then went west, looking for help in prominent hospitals, where he was told the same. Three months before he died he went to New York city to a hospital; there they told him he could not live three months. It lacked ten days of the three months when he died. What poor Fred suffered no tongue or pen can describe, but he bore it all patiently. He said he would like to live, if it was God's will; he did not want to leave us. He was the life and light of our home, and always had a smile and cheering word for every one. Those who knew him loved him. I have a hope that God is his Father, and led him all his days on earth. Many nights while sick, when all the family were asleep, he would ask me to come and help him sing hymns; they were his most happy hours. We would sing many times from one to three hours or more. The hymns were in Beebe's collection. I will give numbers of a few of them: 275, 911, 368, 901, 873, 1052, 916, with many others. You will know his heart or mind by reading them. He would sit and read his Bible day after day. One time I asked him if he desired to be baptized. He said, 'Mamma, put such a miserable sinner as I am among those golden sheaves!' He would talk and cry over his sinfulness, and say, 'I wonder if God will forgive me.' I would say, 'My boy, you have never committed any bad deeds.' He would say, 'Mamma, I cannot even think a good thought; even when I try to pray I feel that I am mocking God; but I have no use for any denomination except the Old School Baptists, they are the true and living branches of God; if I am saved it is by the work of God, not anything I ever did or can do.' Three months before he died he requested us to have meeting at our house. Elder Vail came and preached. He said the meeting was all for him; no one else in the room. He said he was filled with unspeakable joy, and everything shone like gold in the room. When he could not read any longer he would ask us to read hymns or the Bible to him. He grew weak very fast towards the last, and was delirious much

of the time and could get no sleep, only as we gave him morphine the doctor ordered. On the morning of Jan. 7th he had a sinking spell and we all thought he was dead; the family all stood by his bed; I laid him down and said, 'My loved one is gone,' but about five minutes afterward he opened his eyes and said, 'Mamma, your loved one has come back.' Then he called them all by name, reached out his hand to each one and said, 'Good-by, I am going to leave you,' then he turned his head in bed and said, 'Here is little Reuben, I did not say good-by to him.' Reuben was a brother who died twenty years ago. He told all of his desires, looked around and said, 'Mamma, I am clean.' He talked all day, and often would look up and say, 'I am coming.' He would say, 'Papa, I am tired.' About 3 o'clock in the morning I laid down beside him, his father and cousin sat by him, and he began to spell Israel; he spelled it over a number of times, but could not seem to pronounce it. I pronounced it for him, and he said, 'Yes,' and put his arms around my neck and kissed me and said good-by again and was gone, no more to return. Once he said, 'The seven seals have been opened to me,' which is very precious to me. We asked if he had any pain. He said, 'No, I have no pain, I am very happy.' About three weeks before he died he called for Elder Vail. I said, 'He is not here, what do want of him?' He said, 'I want to be baptized; my sins are all forgiven, I am happy.' He also said he wanted Elder Vail to bury him. He leaves father, mother, three brothers, three sisters and a host of relatives and friends to mourn."

I officiated at the funeral Jan. 13th.

D. M. VAIL.

Mrs. Mary J. Cox, wife of Elder Leonard Cox, Jr., died at her home, Charlotte C. H., Charlotte Co., Va., Jan. 20th, 1913, aged nearly 79 years. Sister Cox, the eldest daughter of Elder John A. Badger, was born in Anson, and reared, after very early life, in Brunswick, Maine. She was married to Elder Cox, of Cambridgeport, Mass., when about twenty-two years old. Her husband, now more than ninety years of age, survives her, together, with one sister, Mrs. Sarah Curtis, widow of Dr. I. S. Curtis, of Brunswick, Maine, three sons and the writer of this notice. It is hard for me to pen a suitable obituary or give an unbiased account of the life of my dear sister Mary, as I loved her so, and lived so near her in mind and heart that my expressions might provoke a smile from some of my readers. I think she was about sixteen years of age when she was baptized by our father in the fellowship of the Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church, Bowdoinham, Maine. When she was married her husband was pastor of the Woburn Church, near Boston, Mass. In subsequent years he was called to serve Bowdoinham Church, and thence in a few years to Warwick, N. Y. Soon after the close of the civil war troubled times in many churches were experienced, and the churches composing the Warwick Association did not escape, and Elder Cox's connection with the Warwick Church was severed, and finally his connection with the Old School Baptists generally. During these times sister Mary passed through severe trials. A part of her life along here may be helpful to others similarly situated. I take the following from her own relations to me, as far as my memory serves me. During her earlier experience in the church she was often subject to great fear that she had not the true faith of God's people. The hymn commencing, "I asked the Lord that I might grow in faith, and love, and every grace," all through was expressive of her own soul's experience. When troubles began to multiply in the church the tempter began to get in his work with her, and she was induced to think that perhaps the Old School Baptists were extreme in some of their views, &c., and finally was led to believe it was her duty to follow her husband and sever her connection with the church. It was a sad day when, as moderator, it became my duty to call for the vote of the church. Darkness of mind, with no sensible help from the presence of her Savior, was her portion during those unhappy months. She had yielded to temptation, and tried hard to persuade herself she was doing right. But God was with her; like Jonah, she was cast into the deep, and there was made to see the wonders of her God. In the belly of hell she was made to cry unto the Lord she had denied, and to remember and to pay her vow, that "salvation is of the Lord." It was a wonderful travel, occupying many years. Ultimately her longing for her Father's house, like the poor prodigal, could no longer be resisted. Meanwhile Elder Cox had received a call from three churches in southern Virginia to settle among them. He and family moved to Charlotte County in 1872. Not long after my removal here in 1876 sister Mary made application to the Warwick Church to be restored to their fellowship, which was joyfully granted, and receiving a letter shortly afterward she put her name with the Broad Run Church, Fauquier County. It seems to me she has been an example of christian holiness and virtue ever since. She could seldom meet with the brethren, her residence being so far away, but when she did come among them I almost envied the joy and rejoicing she experienced. She was clothed with humility as with a garment. It seemed that her wanderings in the wilderness were blessed to her in fruitful vineyards, and the valley of Achor was a door of hope. Bitterly was she made to grieve for denying her Lord, as she thought, and great was her sense of his sovereign mercy in bringing her back to her Father's house and to her brethren. She was quite extensively known among the Old School Baptists from Maine to Virginia. She died very sudden-

ly, without a struggle or a groan. Her sons brought her dear body here, and it was consigned to its mother dust in the private grounds of the family (Mr. J. Johnson's) near Bethlehem Church, according to her request.

May God comfort the aged husband and faithful, loving sons. J. N. BADGER.

Mrs. Margaret L. Savidge, wife of Lewis Savidge, departed this life Sept. 25th, 1912, at the home of her daughter, in Trenton, N. J., of Bright's disease. She was a daughter of the former Jacob Golden and Martha A. Lanning, both of whom died many years ago. Her age was 60 years, 1 month and 16 days. She had been failing for some months, and knew that she was soon to depart from this time state. She had been a member of the First Hopewell Church since about the year 1883, having been baptized at that time by the late Elder Wm. J. Purington, then pastor of that church. Of that church she remained a member until she died. During the last days of her sickness she could not talk much, but made the family understand that she wanted to be taken to Hopewell for burial, and that we, as pastor of the church, should attend her funeral. She also told some of the family that she had no desire to get well. One said to her a little before the end came, "You are going to see your Savior," to which she replied, "I hope so." On Saturday, Sept. 28th, we attended the funeral service at Hopewell meetinghouse, and used as a text the words found in John xi. 25, 26, after which the interment took place in the cemetery adjoining. She leaves a husband, one son and one daughter, two sisters, Mrs. Charles Pearson, of this county, and Mrs. Whitely Meredith, of Delaware, and one brother, Price Golden, of this county, and other dear friends to mourn their loss. We had known her for the past sixteen years as one who loved the solemn assemblies of the church, and who filled her place in the meetings whenever she could do so. It is the comfort of the friends, and of her brethren in Christ, to believe that she is forever at rest. In this hope there is relief from sorrow indeed.

ALSO,

George Earl Blackwell, infant and only child of Lewis and Letha Blackwell, died Dec. 3rd, 1912, at the residence of his parents, aged 3 months. The disease was pneumonia. The sickness was of several days, and death was sudden and unexpected at the last. Only those who have lost little children can know how hard it is to bear, but there is always one thing to console the bereaved at such times, and that is that to them belongs the same assurance that the woman of Shunam expressed in response to the questions of the prophet: "Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well." This was, with this woman, the language of faith, and with it also of true submission of spirit to God. In like circumstances these dear young parents may be comforted by the assurance, it is well with the child. The little child was dear to them, and it could not be but that they should mourn their loss, but they know that the Lord gave, and that the Lord took away, and he can do nothing wrong. May their hearts be stayed on him.

The funeral service was held at the home on Thursday, after which the interment took place in the cemetery of the Old School Baptist Church in Hopewell. It was our lot to attend the funeral service, and to use the answer of the woman of Shunam as the text. The loving Lord can sanctify all afflictions to the good of his chosen. May it be that this affliction shall be sanctified to these dear parents and to all the friends. C.

Mrs. Virginia Ann Corder was born August 21st, 1827, near Front Royal, Warren Co., Va. Her parents were Deacon William and Nancy Grant. She was married to Elder Joshua S. Corder, June 18th, 1850. She died at the old Corder homestead, near Philippi, Barbour Co., W. Va., Nov. 21st, 1912, aged 85 years and 3 months. She had gradually been declining and growing weaker for the last three years, but the immediate cause of her death was a stroke of paralysis five days before, which rendered her unconscious, in which state she remained and grew weaker and weaker until the last. She was the mother of three daughters: Ann Belle, who married John N. Bartlett, Blue Delle, who married Truman E. Cole, and Miss Semma Ell, who has always lived with and kindly cared for both her father and mother to the last. Mother Corder joined the Mount Olive Old School Baptist Church April 14th, 1853, so she was a faithful and orderly member nearly sixty years. She devoted her life to the cause she dearly loved. As an Old School Baptist she was uncompromising, being firm and steadfast in the doctrine of God our Savior, pleasant, loving and kind toward the brethren and sisters in the church. She was well established in the doctrine and order of the church, being a great reader of the Bible and SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which she read as long as she was able to read. As a mother she was kind and good, and will be greatly missed by her daughters. As the wife of an Old School Baptist minister she was a faithful help, able to share with him in his joys and sorrows and encourage him in his toils and cares. Many of the Old Baptist ministers from far and near will remember the kind hospitality and pleasant entertainment they received at the old Corder homestead. In sixty long years mother Corder fed many at her table, which was to her a labor of love and devotion to the cause she dearly loved. Her labor is done, henceforth she will rest from her labor. "She hath done what she could." This we say in memory of

her whom we dearly loved. She has gone, we hope and believe, to a better world than this, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest, to be in the presence of her God, where there is fullness of joy at his right hand and pleasures for evermore.

At the time of her burial we had Elder J. B. Cross with us, who spoke words of comfort to us all. Elder J. W. Linn also made a few very appropriate remarks. After the short service, which was held at the house, her body was conveyed to Mount Olive Church burying-ground and laid beside her husband, there to await the resurrection at the last day.

May the Lord comfort her children, grandchildren and all who loved her.

JOHN N. BARTLETT.

PHILIPPI, W. Va.

Angus McTaggart, son of Donald and Catherine McTaggart, was born in Knapdale, Argyleshire, Scotland, Oct. 31st, 1825, and died at Ekfrid, Ontario, Canada, Jan. 8th, 1913, aged 87 years, 2 months and 8 days. He emigrated from Scotland with his parents in the year 1831, to upper Canada, where they settled in the township of Lobo, where they remained for a short time, removing in the same year to the farm where he remained for over eighty-one years, and where he endured the privations of pioneer life, and helped to bring a forest country into fertile fields. He was married in the year 1855 to Margaret, daughter of the late Wm. McLean, of Ekfrid, and to that union were born eleven children, five sons and six daughters, who, with their mother and several grandchildren, survive him. I glean from a letter written by brother McTaggart in August, 1909, to Elder Durand, and printed in the SIGNS of Oct. 15th, 1909, that he remembers going to Lobo when he was but a boy. The meeting began on Friday and continued until Monday noon, the usual time for the quarterly meeting to close, but when Monday noon came the whole assembly urged the speakers to continue another day, and the meeting continued until late Tuesday night; the whole house was like waving corn. Some time after this he was at Lobo at a meeting at night; the people were singing before retiring, and it seemed as if a wind of mighty power was blowing among the people, and it was at this meeting he was smitten, and for his life he could not stop this emotion. Thus we have a short sketch of his early exercises of mind regarding things of the Spirit. I gather from this letter to brother Durand that he was a faithful attendant at the Baptist meetings in Ontario, and possessed a meek, quiet spirit, at all times feeling the power of sin in his members, to the extent that he did not become a member of the church until a few years ago, when he was baptized by Elder W. I. Carnell, but his home had always been a home for the brethren from the time he was married. I visited him last August at his home, and found him in a paralyzed condition, his whole left side being paralyzed for two years or more, so that he could not attend the meeting, yet while sitting in his invalid chair, his mind clear, he had before him his Testament, the psalms and paraphrases and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The wonderful truths contained therein comforted him in his long affliction, which he seemed to bear with christian fortitude; he seemed to have food to eat that the world knows not of. He realized that while his body was weakening, God's promises seemed to be growing stronger, if such a thing could be. He took much comfort in the everlasting promises made by his Lord and Master that he would never forsake his people, and was resigned in humble submission to the will of the Lord.

The writer was called to officiate at his funeral, which was attended by a very large concourse of people, at the Ekfrid meetinghouse. This large gathering of people, at a time when it was raining, showed plainly to me in what wonderful esteem he was held among his neighbors and brethren, that he had honored his profession with a Godlike walk and a chaste conversation. He knew most all the eastern Baptist ministers, as well as many from different states, who will sorrow to learn that they will see his face no more in this world. We trust God will comfort all who mourn his demise, and that his family will be given the spirit of resignation to God's will in calling his own to himself.

NEWTON PETERS.

PORTLAND, Indiana.

William A. Cook died at his home, three miles northeast of Franklin, Tenn., Saturday, June 29th, 1912, in his 70th year. Brother Cook was in many respects a great and good man; great as a citizen, industrious, kind, patient, longsuffering, charitable. His parents while he was a youth were poor in the goods of this world, but were honest and truthful, and taught him that truth and honor were better than the things of this world. When a young man he enlisted as a soldier in the confederate army, and served throughout the war, doing his duty whenever and wherever called upon. When a young man after the war he professed faith in Christ, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church at Macconicos. When this church organization divided over the means question and salvation by works or grace, he was numbered with the grace Baptists, which built them a house of worship within a quarter of a mile of the town of Franklin. He was a deacon of that church, always ready and willing to assist the church and those who preached the word in any and every way he could. He was sound upon the fundamental doctrine of God our Savior, believing in salvation by grace and absolute predestination of all things that come to pass. Many pleasant and

comforting hours I passed in his home. When he died he possessed a very large and rich farm. He was twice married, first to a Miss Little, to which union there were born nine children, six boys and three girls. His second wife was Sara Elizabeth Burch, by whom there were two children, a boy and a girl. We miss, and shall continue to miss, brother Cook, but our loss is his eternal and everlasting gain. We commend his children and his bereaved widow to that God in whom he trusted, and may we all by divine grace be also ready to go where there is no more sorrow, pain or weeping, and where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. J. K. WOMACK.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 81. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1913. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TOUCHET, Wash., Jan. 30, 1913.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I send you a letter written to me, but intended to be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if you feel it proper to do so. As you will see, it is intended as a reply to my letter, and your remarks in connection with it, in the January 15th number of the SIGNS.

Yours in hope,

R. CUMMINS.

ELGIN, Oregon, Jan. 21, 1913.

DR. R. CUMMINS—DEAR BROTHER:—Your letter came to hand in due time, and was read with much interest. I believe, with you, that ministers are too much given to find excuses to stay at home when some brother, or maybe the whole church, wants them to make them a visit. We believe when a minister can leave his home he should go, and no excuse should be valid, except sickness. Ministers should not be so entangled with worldly affairs that they cannot get loose. Do not think I want you to believe I am that man, because you know me too well. One mark the apostle gives of a bishop is, "not covetous," and I will here say, with no one in mind but myself, there is no hindering cause greater than covetousness, and I think Paul could see this, and that is why he said, "Not greedy of filthy lucre." If not the fear of losing something, we are counting what we could do, or what we could make, while we would be visiting our brethren, and how our work would get behind. We look around, and often when we return home say, Now had I stayed at home I could have had this and that done. I say all this of myself, for I do hope there are none of the Lord's ministers so unworthy as I am. When I look into my own heart, and then read what Paul says a minister should be, I see that I am not the man.

I saw your letter in regard to deacons, with Elder Ker's remarks, and have read both articles carefully. I was in hope Elder Ker would write at some length, and show from the Scriptures that deacons should not be ordained by the imposition of the hands by a presbytery, and especially that the seven were not set apart to serve as deacons. I have a desire to offer to you some of my reasons why I have to differ with you and Elder Ker. I believe there is no faith or prac-

tice in the church of God (that should be observed) that was not established by the apostles, as Jesus said unto the apostles: "Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." I will say this "regeneration" spoken of here by our Savior has reference to the gospel kingdom, and not the new birth, and it is in this new regenerated kingdom they are to sit "when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory." In God's providence the time had come for the office of deacons to be established in the church by these judges. "And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration." Here was the needs be of establishing in the church the office of deacon. Now this "daily ministration," in which these Grecian widows were neglected, could not have been the ministration of the gospel, which would have been the case if the seven chosen and ordained were elders, and their work was to preach the gospel; but a careful reading shows it was not the preaching or ministration of the word that they were neglected in. "Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables." Whatever these tables may be that were to be served, it certainly is self-evident it could not have been preaching the word, or why would the apostles have to leave the word of God to do it? So the apostle says: "Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." This new condition that had come up by the complaint of the Grecians, that their widows were neglected in the daily ministration, which, if the apostles had to do, they would have to "leave the word of God," laid this work on these seven men. "But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude." All could see the needs be of such a course, so they chose the seven men "whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them." Now if this is not where the office of deacon was established, I do not know where in the Bible it is stated. This was done, according to the Bible chronology, A. D. 33, and in A. D. 64 we see Paul in his letter to the Philippians speaks of "bishops" and "deacons" as though it were an established order in the church. I believe Elder Ker is correct in saying that neither choosing nor ordaining a deacon makes a man a deacon. No, nor does ordaining a man make him a minister. The qualifications must be possessed by the man in either case before he is ordained. We do not think of a minister administering the ordinances in the church before he is set apart by ordination, but it is expected that we should know he can preach the gospel—has the qualifications. So the apostle said: "Look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost;" and Paul in his letter to Timothy, after giving the qualifications of a bishop, says: "Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blame-

less." So it is neither the choosing nor ordination that makes a deacon, but when found, let them then hold the office. Thus we see the ordination is not to give the qualifications, but it must be for some purpose, to give the right or authority to act as an officer in the church, either to minister in spiritual or temporal things. A man may have all the qualifications to fill the office of notary public, yet he has no right to act or to do the work of that office without being appointed to the office and receiving the seal of the state. So I understand the ordination of ministers and deacons gives them authority and right to act. Because two of the seven chosen to "serve tables" afterwards preached, does not prove they were set apart to preach, for I have known of more than one instance where in our churches men have been ordained as deacons, who afterward became able ministers, and my mind is, where this is the case, that they should be set apart to each office by ordination and the laying on of hands. The apostle admonished Timothy to "lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins." This admonition should not be forgotten by the church in her setting apart men to serve as elders or deacons; let the qualifications be fully manifest and proven. It would not be a good sign, in my mind, to see a man anxious to be ordained; I would much rather see the spirit that would shrink from such a holy calling. "Neither be partaker of other men's sins." It seems to me here the apostle shows that to be hasty, and ordain a man that should not be ordained, the church would be responsible for his failures and blunders or errors he would make.

Now, whether a deacon should assist in the ordination of an elder or deacon, I do not know. It is a common practice among the churches, I believe, for them to do so. It would seem they should not, if we take those who laid the example first: the apostles. Then Paul said to Timothy, who was an elder: "Lay hands suddenly on no man." Then he speaks of Timothy being ordained with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Webster says: "A presbyter, an elder, a priest," and a "presbytery, a body of pastors and presiding elders." I would not wish to judge in this matter; I have never seen a deacon taking the place of an elder in the communion, or in baptizing. I believe each office has its own work. A minister could probably do the work a deacon should do, but the deacon could not do his work. I believe Elder Ker gives the proper work the deacon should do. If the seven were set apart to the office of deacon, as I believe they were, their work is given as "serving tables," and from the complaint made it does seem to me their work is plainly indicated as looking after the poor, as those widows would indicate, and we know such work is needful.

Another thing I want to call attention to before I close is, that for the office of deacon the church looks out the man to fill the office, just as the apostles commanded, but what church would now think of looking out for the man to fill the office of an elder and put him into it? They who are called of God to preach the gospel are called out by the Lord, and are manifested to the church. As Solomon says: "A man's gift maketh room for him," and it is not with the man at all who is called to preach, nor with the church, whether he preaches or not, but alone with the Lord. I believe it was Elder Beebe who said the best evidence the church could have that a man was

called to preach was that he preached. The Lord never makes any mistakes, he knows what the result will be as well before as afterward. I will here give by the words of an inspired apostle some of the marks of the man God has called to preach the gospel, and I do not believe there is one of them but could say, I am that man. "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence." This, too, I am sure those called of God to preach the gospel know something about, that no flesh shall glory in his presence. The depths into which the called minister often sinks teaches him lessons in weakness and felt nothingness that can only be hinted at, but never told. He who holds the stars in his right hand, will see to it that no flesh shall have the glory in his presence.

I must bring this, I fear, too long letter to a close. I wish our people could all be a unit in faith and practice, and I believe as you said in your last letter to me, that an exchange of views in the spirit of love is good; where brethren see differently, then brethren will investigate. When you have read this, if you think it would be of interest to the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, you may send it to brother Ker, and if he sees fit he can publish it, but if either of you think it not advisable, just burn it and it will be all right with me. Now if you or brother Ker feel to express your views further on this subject I would be glad to read them.

The last SIGNS was good reading to me. I like the SIGNS and the way it is conducted, no wrangling, and the doctrine I believe is in harmony with the teaching of the Bible.

Your brother, I hope, in gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

ELGIN, Oregon, Feb. 1, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—The inclosed letter from dear old brother Dr. R. Cummins is in reply to one I wrote him on the ordination of deacons by the laying on of hands by a presbytery, and he informs me he has sent my letter to you. If you should feel no harm could come by publishing my letter I want you to also publish brother Cummins' letter in the same number of the SIGNS. I believe it well for the Lord's people to investigate the truth. If I am wrong I do not want my brethren to accept my views. We have but the one standard, that is, the Bible. May the Lord be pleased to guide us all into the truth.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

TOUCHET, Wash., Jan. 29, 1913.

ELDER G. E. MAYFIELD—DEAR BROTHER:—I received your letter a few days ago, but being quite busy doing a little work about the house I did not have time to give it a careful reading until now. I have now carefully searched it, for a proper understanding of your views upon the subject, and from my understanding of your letter you started wrong. You have said many good things in your letter, and correct things. I, too, hoped that brother Ker would come out more fully in his exposition that I had requested his views upon. What I wrote was only to call out his views more fully, but as there is but little revealed in our divine rule of order on that subject, I suppose he felt it was better to say but

little, and while I felt thankful that others more able and gifted than I held the same views I am contending for, I was disappointed in not getting from him fuller views.

I will now take up some of the points treated on in your letter, but before I do so I want to explain some of the words I shall use in this letter, so that you may more readily understand them when used by me. The words "ordain" and "set apart" are the same with me. "Elders" and "evangelists" are equivalent, and mean the same persons. "Deacon" or "servant," rendered from the Greek word, means the same. Now, in your remarks on the setting up the kingdom of heaven, and of the apostles being seated on twelve thrones, you start off by saying, "Now, in God's providence, the time had come for the order of deacons to be established in the church by these judges." Surely there is nothing in the sixth chapter of the Acts of the apostles that by careful reading and comparison will convey the idea of the office of deacon at that time being established in the church. I will now try and get down to the fact of what office was established at that time. The church was in one body at that time at Jerusalem, and the apostles presided over that body and preached for them, and they all seemed to be serving God constantly together, having all things in common. I find no assurance on record in the Scriptures that the apostles ever served tables, where food, the element for natural existence, was administered, since the death of our blessed Redeemer. That the apostles gave instruction in the distribution of the natural food supplies, is quite likely, just as it was Jesus that fed the multitude of people who followed him. He gave instructions to his disciples, and they served the food to the multitude. The same may have been the case at Jerusalem, the apostles giving instructions, but others of the disciples ministering the food supplies. We read in the fifth chapter of Acts of the great amount of labor that was upon the apostles at that time: preaching the word, performing miracles in healing the sick, casting out evil spirits, and through this great work we read that believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes out of the cities round about Jerusalem bringing their sick, and them that were vexed with evil spirits, and they were healed every one. The congregation had become so numerous that it became impossible for the apostles to do the preaching to the satisfaction of the large multitude, and the murmuring was the result. Now we will take up the sixth chapter of Acts, and see if we can find the cause of the murmuring and complaints, and the remedy. "And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration." The great number of the church was such that it became impossible for the apostles to do the labor and preaching satisfactorily up to this time. So, "Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." And it "pleased the whole multitude; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost." Now the description here given of Stephen represents the gifts and qualifications of the whole seven men selected, as the instruc-

tion of the apostles was the same for all seven men. And when the seven were brought before the apostles, (as a presbytery) and when the apostles had prayed and laid their hands upon them, and the work of ordaining, or setting apart, was complete, and they were ready for service, immediately the work of Stephen follows in the same chapter, and continues on in the two following chapters of both Stephen and Philip. And after the ordination of these seven evangelists it is stated in verse seven that "the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." Could it be possible that the seven filling the place our deacons now fill could bring about such a radical change in the number of disciples? I think not. But the time had arrived to increase the preaching of the gospel, and the working of miracles was to be extended, and no more to be confined to the apostles, as it had been up to this time; and here the office of elder or evangelist (as you may choose to call it) comes in with the ordination of the seven. I am aware that our translators of the Scriptures have written in the margin of chapter six, "seven deacons," meaning, I suppose, seven servants, as the literal meaning of the word signifies. The name "deacon" as an officer of the church was not known at the time the seven were ordained; if so, I have found no record of it. The office of deacon came about after the scattering of the church from Jerusalem, by persecution, which increased after the seven were brought into service in the church. After the scattering of the church at Jerusalem they were gathered together in little bodies to worship in the different parts of the earth, as we now find them. These little bodies of worshipers needed officers to preside over them and to look after the local affairs of the church, that all their works might be done decently and in order. These needed officers with such qualifications as were mentioned by Paul to Timothy with the manner of setting them apart to the service, and with this instruction each little body is recognized as competent to select and set apart to service any officer or business of her own that may come up before her for disposition. The calling and setting apart of officers for the service in the church is all accomplished by vote of the church, by uplifted hand or any other manner she may see proper to choose. Now the difference between an elder and a deacon is, the deacon is a local officer of the church of his membership, and his services are exclusively confined there, while an elder's or evangelist's services are not confined, even to the church of his membership, only as he may be called as bishop or pastor to have the overcare of her. In that case he becomes an advisory counsellor in the church, as well as ministering to her in preaching the gospel. So it may be easily seen why a presbytery, formed in a great part from sister churches, is called upon to examine the qualifications, and if found satisfactory, set one apart to the service. All office qualifications, as well as candidates for membership, are gifts of God, which a church cannot bestow; but the church, when clothed with the Spirit, in gospel order, is the only qualified judge on earth of the gifts of the church, and too often mistakes are made in these matters, even with apparently the best of care.

My dear brother, this letter is intended as an answer to your letter addressed to me, and sent to me for inspection, and to be forwarded to brother Ker for publica-

tion in the SIGNS, if it meets with his approval. Should your letter be published, it is my wish that you forward this to brother Ker for publication, if he should be pleased to do so. You give a pretty full defence of your position, and the position taken by the churches setting apart in that way. I have tried to the best of my ability to show the error of that practice, and point out the true gospel mode. How near I have accomplished my purpose I leave with the brethren, if published, to judge. I do not feel competent to judge of my own work. I fear always that the work is too much like the writer, whose imperfections are uppermost in all his ways. Only as the dear Lord leads and governs the mind and heart can anything good come from me; of this I am fully convinced. May the dear Lord be with you, is the prayer of an old sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

R. CUMMINS.

[THE brethren have written in a very kind spirit, each giving his view of the matter, and we feel sure that no harm can come from their publication, but rather that other brethren will be more settled in their own minds regarding the subject, whether they agree with brother Mayfield or brother Cummins. We are sorry that the brethren were disappointed because we did not write at greater length on the subject. We did not feel it necessary to write more, since the word "ordain" means to "appoint;" hence whether the man is appointed by vote of the uplifted hands of the church, or by the laying on of hands, the result is the same. We have no record that but two of the seven ordained, in Acts vi., ever preached, nor does the Bible say the seven were deacons; therefore our own opinion is all that any one can have in the matter. While brethren may differ, "let brotherly love continue."—K.]

NEW YORK, N. Y.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—You have often been in my thoughts since I read your confession at the close of your letter in the SIGNS for December 15th: "Not even a raven comes to feed us." I am sure you had many sympathizers, for all who are taught in the school of Christ, like Elijah get into fearful places. The lessons are long and hard to be understood, and a valuable schoolmaster is strict, as well as kind and helpful; learners become discouraged and frightened, but shall we not believe that all our times are in the hand and all events at the command of Him who works all things after the counsel of his own will? I surely hope your feeding time has come long ere this, but if not, that you are enabled to wait patiently as well as to cry. It is mysterious, is it not? but both are signs of life. I think often when our ministers speak with so much demonstration of the spirit and with power, How strange that they must feel so utterly without strength and assurance at times; but a second thought tells me that Jesus increaseth strength to him that is without might, and when his servants are weak then are they strong; sensibly weak in themselves, but strong in the Lord. To be living and dying in the Lord seems a wonderful thing. How much I wonder if I know anything about it as some know it. I certainly feel unworthy, but glad to hope.

I have some extracts from letters written me by sister Clarice Durand, who seemed to understand me and who was very dear to me, often saying things that gave me help and courage in a wonderful way. I have copied some from two of her late letters, and feel that the readers of the SIGNS might be comforted by them; if you feel the same I would be glad to see

them in the SIGNS. Several years ago she said in a letter to me: "I feel my unworthiness to such a degree that it becomes a pain." At another time I tried to speak an encouraging word to her regarding the good opinion of her friends of her as a minister's wife, and she replied: "I feel so like nothing." I greatly admired her mind, so far superior to my own, appreciated her attainments, which I had not, but I loved her in a close tie because she felt the same trials as I, therefore ministered to me. Many others have done the same; indeed, it occurs to me strongly now that I have been wonderfully blessed of the Lord in his mindfulness of mercies, giving me dear, helpful friends and friendly opportunities. May his grace sustain us and make us kind and tender-hearted. I confess to impressions to say a little through the columns of the SIGNS at times, but am fearful about following impressions that might lead me into serious error. In past years I occasionally wrote a short letter, but I do not remember that I ever did so without lively questioning as to whether silence would not be wisdom on my part, for I cannot see that any can profit by my letters.

With all good wishes to you and your family, I am your sister in hope,

W. A. BEARD.

JANUARY 3, 1912.

MY DEAR SISTER:—I certainly was made glad by receiving your letter yesterday morning. I was just going to write to you, not a duty letter, although I had kindnesses to acknowledge, but just a hail across the intervening distance. I am not very capable of writing; body and mind are weaker than in any other sickness I have known. My hands often tremble very much, and my heart trembles still more. Sometimes it is because of an unfilial fear of the Lord, and you will pity me when you realize this, but at times I am raised above that, and I have a hope that in his pity and in his love, if I am his child, he will in some measure restore unto me the joys of his salvation. I recount his mercies so far as I can, realizing that they are immeasurable, and see a thousand things that ought to make me rejoice, and perhaps I do, only it is not the kind of rejoicing in which this heavy clay has any part; but the indwelling Spirit does in some cases make his people forget their infirmities, and this is what I am now yearning for, if only in his mercy I may taste this rest. I am thankful if my little letter seemed good to you; that ought to comfort me, and I think it does. I did not mind it being published, I feel as though I were past that sort of thing.

I do hope Elder Durand's visit may be a delight and blessing. We are looking forward with pleasure to Elder McConnell's visit here. I can have small part in it, but I hope I may be able to see him a little while.

C. E. DURAND.

JUNE 14, 1912.

MY DEAR SISTER:—I have no idea when I wrote you last. I cannot tell whether I have really written some of the things I have thought, or whether they have been only thought letters. You will infer from this that my mind is not quite as retentive as it has been, which I am sorry to say is the case. In all your letters to me you do two things which you might leave undone with credit, I think. You speak too disparagingly of my dear friend's letters and too highly of mine. I do not mind your getting comfort from mine, if the Lord

should so miraculously work in their behalf, as with the loaves and fishes, but no emanations from me; they surely are of little worth. But we do both of us talk about good and precious things at times in our letters, and it is quite possible for illuminating grace to make them profitable. I feel at present very helpless and I had almost said hopeless, but I just then realized I was before my righteous Judge, and I wondered whether this was the language of truth or of discouragement. I cannot "read my title clear," and I can see so little similarity between me and other professing christians that hope almost dies. Often I am like a clod, insensate, and I know it is all due to indwelling sin. Then comes to me from time to time the remembrance that He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, even this dullness and deadness which I do know and confess; therefore I am afraid to say I am hopeless, although hope does not flourish. I suffer a great deal, but just bear it stolidly. I do not seem able to read the message it surely has for me. I know it is according to the Father's good pleasure, and I do not feel any resentment, but I do not see any growth in grace under it.

I went to meeting last Sunday; it surely seemed good to be there again after so long an absence—nearly a year, and as we sat at the table I did have some hope that I was not "eating and drinking unworthily;" but I had allowed myself to hope there would be more glow in my feelings, some special rest and peace like other people have, so that after all there was some feeling of disappointment. I wish I could be simply content with the portion the heavenly Father has given me. I do not think going to meeting had any unfavorable effect, but I have not been able to be up and dressed since. The distress in breathing has been very pronounced, and the attacks of that kind do not seem traceable to any cause we can find. I was so thankful I was able to be up at the time of the association, and to see so many of the friends, and we had preaching two nights.

C. E. DURAND.

LAKELAND, Florida, Jan. 1, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am impressed, as I hope, by the Spirit of truth, to write you with regard to the London Confession of Faith. I feel that we have the true interpretation of it, and that it is sustained by a "thus saith the Lord." I feel that we are being grossly misrepresented by the "conditional time salvationists," who seek to limit the purpose of God. We read as follows in the Scripture: "Predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Again, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Again, "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." I have been stigmatized as an "absoluter," because I believe and preach the doctrine of the predestination of all things. Now it is sure that our God did predestinate all things that come to pass, or he predestinated nothing; for if he did not predestinate all things he could not have declared the end from the beginning, or make all things work together for good to them who are the called according to his purpose; neither could he make the wrath of man to praise him and restrain the remainder. Did our God make peace and create evil if he had no purpose in it? Would he form the light and create the darkness and have

no purpose in them? Could the devil have deceived Eve had not the Lord made him more subtle than any beast of the field that the Lord God made? If by him all things consist, how could evil conceive and bring forth sin against the will of God? If our God had no purpose for sin in the world, what purpose had he for the coming of Christ? If sin came into the world against his will, and he had not the power to keep it out, how could his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, destroy sin? Certainly he had no more power than God his Father. If God has all power, and the powers that be are ordained of him, where do men get the power to do evil? When Jesus said to Pilate, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above," did he tell the truth? I say, Yes, and our God had a wise purpose in giving men power to do wickedly, and it is for this purpose that God raises them up, that he might show his power in them who are ordained of old to this condemnation. It is said they "shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." It is declared that men shall be lovers of their own selves, proud, boasting of their own good works and righteous deeds, turning the truth of God into a lie, and, if possible, deceiving the very elect. I feel that the time has come when we should reaffirm the old London Confession of Faith. I know of some churches where a portion of the members believe the doctrine and others do not. How can two walk together except they be agreed? Should we not be of one mind, and speak the same things? If the Lord be God, follow him, but if Baal be god, then follow him. We cannot serve two masters, and if the doctrine of predestination be the truth, we should preach it; we should not shun to declare the truth. I believe that the Scriptures plainly teach the predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass. If I were to claim to hold in fellowship those who deny this doctrine, or they were to hold me in fellowship, would we not be acting hypocritically? Is it not better for all concerned for us to understand one another, so that we will not be disputing about this matter? Then let us reaffirm the London Confession of Faith, and say so, (all who do believe it) for this is what Old School Baptists have always believed and contended for in every age of the world. Our God declared it to the prophets and apostles. If it was true then, it is true now, and if it was not dangerous then it is not dangerous now, so let us stand fast by the truth. God said, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." Again he said, "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." The Lord is their righteousness, their wisdom, their sanctification and their redemption, and he declares that they shall all be taught of the Lord. Every one that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me, said the dear Savior, and they that believe in him have everlasting life. He is the Bread of life; we eat his flesh and drink his blood. He has the words of eternal life, and in him we have the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven." One had better believe in no God at all than to deny the power and purpose of God. It is an evident fact that God did have a purpose in all things, and he is just and right. We poor, weak worms of the dust go wrong, but blessed are we if we are

made to look to Christ to redeem us from our sins. He did purpose to conform some persons to the image of his Son, and no sin or blasphemy will ever rise to destroy his purpose. The goodness of God will lead us to repentance, and the love of God will restrain us, and he will make the wrath of man to praise him, and cause that all things work together for good to them that love him and are the called according to his purpose. He doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. Dear brethren, I feel that we are now in the evening of the last day of God's wonderful works, so let us be found earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints; let us speak forth the words of truth and soberness.

If you deem this worthy of a place in the SIGNS all is well, but if not, cast it aside. I pray God to open the eyes of all his saints to the understanding of the truth, that they may discern the idolatry that abounds, which some of the saints, I fear, are drifting into. May God bless you and all the faithful in Jesus our Lord.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

C. K. HAINES.

[WE have not been able to understand how any spiritually enlightened soul, with the Bible in his hand, could deny the predestination of God in all things. We do not indeed know how our God governs in the providential affairs of men, but it is clear from the Scriptures that he does govern absolutely, and by the word "absolutely" we mean positively and certainly, for this is the signification of that word. From the beginning the SIGNS has always contended for this as a most vital principle of faith in God. In ascribing predestination to him we are engaging in his worship. If we deny predestination to him we are robbing him of a part of his glory. We have heard predestination stigmatized as fatalism. It seems clear to our mind that the two things have no relation to each other at all. Fate declares that there is no God of all knowledge, and so involves the denial of his rule anywhere, while predestination asserts his being, and that he rules, and denies that things move on by chance. Further, it is sure that if predestination be fatalism, then so far as God's predestination extends so far does fatalism extend, and those who believe in the predestination of anything at all believe in fatalism that far. There is no way to avoid this conclusion, yet no predestinarian who is one really will ever seek to deny his sin by saying, I could not help it. The opponents of predestination may say this, but believers in it will never do so.—C.]

PAGE, Okla., Dec. 15, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I received your card, and I highly appreciate the loving-kindness of those dear ones in my behalf. I realize also that every good and perfect gift cometh down from above, from the Father of lights, who is without variableness or shadow of turning. Yes, dear ones, I am very poor, financially, and also spiritually, but I feel thankful to God that it is as well with me as it is. I feel sure that it is his will for it to be so with me, for he could have it otherwise were it his will, yet at times I feel cast down, and as though I am a burden to the little flock, and feel that they could do better without me than with me. I can never be able to help them in any way, but O how could I get along without them? It seems to me that to be turned out of the church would grieve me to death, but I am unworthy of the least kindness from

the dear ones. We had to change our location on account of two bad years for crops, and beside, there was no work there, so we came here to get work, but I am away from the dear kindred in Christ, and it grieves me sorely indeed to give up the pleasure I once had with them; it seems to me that I never can get over it. I hold those days in sweet memory, and I get my hymn-book and try to sing the dear songs, but I soon have to stop, for the tears fill my eyes so I can sing no longer. O if I could only confess all this to the assembly of the saints together, and meet with them this beautiful day. How glad I would be to meet them and have a long talk with them concerning the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. How I should rejoice; but here I am away from home. I call it home, one of the blessed places on earth. Here I never get to hear a sermon, nor his dear name exalted, and it grieves me, yet, dear friends, I feel that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. He is the God of purpose, and all will be made plain some day. Jesus prayed, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." On another occasion he said, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." Many times my troubles have been so great that I could not see how good could come out of them, but when I could realize that the hand of God was in them I could say, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." I sometimes wonder if the three Hebrew children realized any good in being cast into the fiery furnace. I think not, until Jesus was with them and they realized his presence, then they also could say, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight," and so I long to be with Jesus. Let it be the fiery furnace, so long as Jesus is with me, then I have naught to fear; so I realize that it is good to have these trials and tribulations, for there is a sweet deliverance in them all. Once I realized a deliverance from all my sins. I wished the burden back several times, but it never has returned again. So we read that the prophet said, Cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, and she hath received at the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

I do not want to make this letter too lengthy, but I do want to thank all the dear friends for remembering me. I fail to find words to express my feelings of thankfulness. I wish my paper changed from Romulus to Page, Oklahoma. The Bible and the SIGNS contain all the gospel that I get. It is a great pleasure when the Lord gives me a little understanding, but sometimes I feel that I know nothing at all about these things, yet I rejoice in hearing and reading, and feel sure that if the Lord has begun a good work in me he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, and what he does is done forever; no man can take from it, and no man can add to it. The little hope I have I would not exchange for ten thousand worlds like this. I hope to receive the dear SIGNS soon, and read again the letters and editorials; they tell my feelings far better than I can myself. May the Lord be with you, and all the household of faith. May the dear editors be spared to still feed the flock of God. May this be a prosperous year to you all. May grace be given us all sufficient for our day, and in the hour of death may it be well with us, and in the morning of the resurrection may we be raised to enter the better world in peace.

Your sister,

(MRS.) ELLA DAVIS.

RUSSELLVILLE, Ky., Jan. 12, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—Having derived so much comfort and encouragement from reading your epistles of love to the household of faith, I feel this morning like penning a few thoughts for your consideration and encouragement. I hope the Lord will take the lead of my mind and bless what I may write for your comfort and good, and to his own name's honor and glory, for if not deceived, my object in writing is to build up his little ones on that most holy faith, fear and love before him, and as a starting point, I wish to say, as the poet has so beautifully expressed it, that

"I'm not ashamed to own my Lord,
Or to defend his cause,
Maintain the honor of his word,
The glory of his cross."

Jesus said, He that is ashamed to confess me before man, him also will I be ashamed to confess before my Father who art in heaven. Why should his people be ashamed of Christ, when they all so well know in their own experience that he is their all in all, and without him they can do nothing, and are less than nothing, and vanity? Ever since I professed a hope in him, whenever I have heard his name exalted and his works magnified among the children of men, and men's works abased, I have felt like saying amen to it. Let the good work go on, shun not to declare the whole counsel, and make no compromise with Arminianism. Seek not to please men, says Paul, for, says he, if I seek to please men I am no more the servant of Christ, and so say I. This is not all Paul says about it: Let God be true, and every man a liar. I say amen to this also. Worshiping God is a warfare his people are engaged in, and if the trumpet gives an uncertain sound who shall prepare himself for battle? Not one. Then as good soldiers of the cross let us endeavor to put on the whole armor and go forward in the discharge of every duty, ever looking to Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith. He has conquered death, hell and the grave for us, and has promised to bring us off more than conquerors. Then let us cast our care on him, for he careth for us, praying that he will make us submissive to his will in all things, for he has promised to put nothing more on us than we are able to bear, and in every temptation he has promised to make a way for our escape, and not only so, but Paul says all these things work together for good to them that love God, and I believe it. This is all good news of Paul's to me. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance."—Psalms lxxxix. 15. This is comforting to me, for I think, if not deceived, I know the joyful sound wherever I hear it. Salvation is of the Lord; this is the joyful sound to the believer. When John was cast into prison, and heard of the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, and they said unto him, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." This was enough for John; he had heard of those things before, and experienced them in his own soul, and it was a joyful sound to him, as it is to every heaven-born soul, for John well knew, as all God's children know, by the revelation of God's Spirit, that no man can do these things except God be with him. Hence, "Blessed is the people that know the

joyful sound." Here is encouragement and consolation to the people of God in the gospel. Paul said he was not ashamed of this gospel. Why, Paul? Because, says he, it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, and so say I, and all of those who are born of the Spirit. This they all know to be the joyful sound. Paul also said on a certain occasion while addressing the brethren, I am determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified. Why was Paul determined to know nothing else? Because it was revealed to him, as it is to all God's children, that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life, and the only name given in heaven or earth whereby poor sinners can be saved. God's children have the witness in themselves that this is the truth, hence it is good news to them. Yes, take Jesus and the resurrection out of it and you destroy what hope the child of God has of heaven and immortal glory.

Brethren, I have written this in fear and much trembling; I feel my imperfections very sensibly. I know I am too weak and ignorant in and of myself to address the brethren upon the wonderful work of Christ, but Paul says for our encouragement, when he was weak in self then was he strong in the Lord, and that he could do all things through Christ that strengthened him. No, we of ourselves can do nothing. Jeremiah said, I know that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Our sufficiency is in Christ, and everything that is for our good and God's glory was treasured up in Christ before the foundation of the world; and not only so, but he has loved his people with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving-kindness he draws them. Brethren, this is the God that I try to worship in my weak way, the one that has all power. I believe he is an absolute sovereign, his power is unlimited, he doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and there is none can stay his hand; known unto him are all his works from the beginning. There is nothing new or old with him. He made all things, yea, the wicked for the day of evil, and rules and reigns over all things he has made, and acknowledges no other power but his own in the government of the things he has made. He is the God of purpose, and everything he made will answer the purpose for which he made it. O how I do love to worship and fear such a God as this. There is no risk to run in worshiping him. He simply speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. When he begins a good work in the heart of one of his children he is able to carry it on until the day of Jesus Christ. I say I love to fear and worship such a being as this, and the reason assigned is, it is encouraging, for when I converse with my brethren upon his works I find they, too, love to worship him, and fear and tremble at his word, and when I go to God's word for encouragement I find a people there who feared him also, and it is said of them that they spoke often one to another, and the Lord hearkened unto them and heard it, and there was a book of remembrance written of those things, and I will remember them, saith the Lord, when I come to make up my jewels. How encouraging; if he remembered them, maybe he will remember me also. Brethren, we ought, as much as in us lies, to get together often and talk of the wonderful works of Christ; tell each other our travels from nature to grace, and "if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are

spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." We will not stay here always, this is not our home, and while journeying to that home the Lord has prepared for all them that love him we meet with many troubles and trials on the way, and need encouragement. Why wait until our loved ones are dead and gone to eulogize their good deeds on earth? Remember the dead heareth us not. The Lord only has power to do them any good then, but while we have them with us let us encourage them all we can to fight the battles of life. He that knoweth his duty, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes. We are admonished to neglect not the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; then let us try to do what is commanded us, get together often and sing praises to God and make melody to him in our hearts, and remember that where there is only two or three gathered together in his name, there he will be in the midst of them to own and bless them. The theme is inexhaustible; the half has not been told.

I submit this to your disposal; do with it as seemeth best to you, and all will be well.

Yours in hope, J. B. JONES.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., Jan. 23, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I came to the hospital Dec. 31st, was operated on Jan. 2nd. The right side healed nicely, but the left side abscessed and has not entirely healed yet. I can bathe and dress myself, and to-day I have been walking some, but my left ankle is weak. I feel to thank the Lord for his great goodness to me; during my confinement there has not been a cloud across my celestial sky. One day I was thinking of the goodness of God to me, and my whole frame became filled with laughter. I could not laugh because of my wounded condition, but I was filled with laughter. Something within appeared to say, The Lord hath made me laugh. At once I felt that Isaac was born, and I was the son of the freewoman. Then the fountains were opened and my cup ran over. My whole being became love to God and his people, and my heart was full of thanksgiving and praise. I think now that I shall not soon forget that precious feeling. On another day I questioned the reasons why this affliction was on me, then an Edison phonograph record came in view. I said, A cock will crow, a hen cackle, a pig squeal, a hammer strike, a band of music play and a choir sing at the same time. When that record is in use, and the sharp point of the diamond touches that part of the record all these things will appear at the selfsame time. This was too great a mystery for me to understand, yet it is all true. This was a work of man. My mind went out to the great eternal mind, and I saw that every thought, every word, every deed of the human race and every event of time was made a matter of record before the wheel of time was set in motion, therefore nothing could occur as a surprise to the Lord, he purposed it and he brought it to pass. There are millions of events occurring every second, yet not one of them conflicting with any other event; so the divine purpose goes on in its perfect state without the least conflict. My mind reverted to February, 1877, when two of us stood holding up a log. We could not speak, nor could we put it down. Four other men took hold and helped us put it down, but I was hurt.

Then my mind ran on to the Saturday afternoon before the first Sunday in June, 1878, when Elder J. T. Rowe, his brother B. D. and my brother George and myself were cleaning out a bathing pool in a creek, and my hurt was renewed. Then from time to time when they were made worse, until there were three in the right and one in the left side. Time rolled on until it found me in the hospital. By the grace of God I had not feared the result, and now I am on the road to health. My heart is filled with praise to that God who does things in such a way that no event can occur without him. They that believe do enter into rest. I had had rest in this faith for some years, and now that rest is renewed. With us things happen; with God they come to pass just as he inscribed them on the wheel of time. By the prophet he told of the slaughter of the infants by Herod at the birth of our Lord. That word appeared to slumber, but when the disk got to that point the key was touched, and in Ramah, Rachel's voice was heard, weeping for her children. O the testimony that now comes up in God's word to show the truth of what I see as I lie here on my bed. There is no God but our God. Time is his, why should we fear any of its events? Eternity is his, why should we fear to enter there? Life is his, and he lived it; death is his, for he conquered it and saved his people from it. We are his, and we have no reason to fear any, but rather to love our God and his Son Jesus Christ. My heart is enlarged in the Lord, and I desire to praise him and trust him all the days of my life. I now hope to go home in a few more days. My wife has been sick, so she could not come to see me and I could not go to see her.

The last issue of the SIGNS is very rich. I devoured its contents as I was propped up in bed, and it was sweet to my taste. The Lord bless and strengthen you.

Yours in a good hope,

L. H. HARDY.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan. 12, 1913.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—Now that I have written this address I feel so insufficient to write to you that I am almost persuaded to cast it into the wastebasket, but the memory of many different ones asking me to write comes up, so that I feel I must make the effort. It has been a long time since I wrote to you. At times I get discouraged with myself, and fear that I have quenched the Spirit entirely, for many times I have felt to write, but would be busy, and put it off until another time. Now those sweet thoughts do not come to me as they did then, my mind seems blank, and at times confused and far off, upon things of the world which are of no account to me or to you. I just seem to be building aircastles, or else trying to plan things to be different from what they are, instead of being content with the things I have. The Lord has been very merciful to me all the days of my life. Why can I not feel to trust him all the way? Why am I trying my own schemes, knowing as I do my weakness and inability to do the least thing? I find myself such a rebellious worm, filled with dissatisfaction and unrest. I need nothing but the great mercy and love of God, and why not be thankful for his continual care, and trust in him all the way? Many times I try to search out the cause of this restless feeling, but cannot say that I have found it, except in being taken up too much with the writings of the world, and that these poison my mind so that I cannot receive the better things. I do not seem to have meditation or enjoyment in the

Scriptures, yet I am glad to say that I do feel a desire to search them, and I do love to hear different ones give their views upon portions of the Scripture. Often I feel that I have gained knowledge by it, but when I get by myself and think it over I find it is only borrowed. Some time back my mind had more travel upon the subject of charity than upon anything else, and I then had a season of enjoyment, but I did not pen my views of it to any one, and so again I have proved that we should pay the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. I looked up the meaning of this word "slip," and it has in it the thought of a broken or leaky vessel, and so I find it to be; all does not go out at once, as a bucket from which the bottom has entirely gone, so that all is lost at once, but leaking little by little until all is gone. The process has been so slow that no notice has been taken of it, but all at once need came, and then behold, the vessel leaked, or, as said in the text, we had let them slip. How very careful we ought to be to lay up these treasures, and not let them slip, for where our treasure is, there will our heart be also. Now all of this condemns me, for I seem to be doing the opposite of this injunction. Some speak of charity as almsgiving, but I cannot see it that way, I think that they are different. Charity will lead to almsgiving, but almsgiving is not always charity. I may be wrong here, but giving alms is almost always giving money or goods of some kind, but charity is far more. Charity may manifest itself in some act, some deed, some word. It is charity if a brother has a fault to feel sorry for him, and to speak kindly of him, or else not at all. It is charity to do good to all, and if one has not used us well to do good to him, and forgive him all wrong. If we see one going astray, and by some kind word or act help or save him from a fall, this is charity to that one. Let us not say, I would not do this or that, for it is by the grace of God alone that any of us are kept from falling. Perhaps we have dear ones whom we desire to see walking more uprightly, but they are being overcome of temptation, and are coming down to that place which shall bring them sorrow; it is true charity then to love that one more than before, and to show that we love him. Let us visit him, and continue to do so. It is good to esteem ourselves less than all these, and to pray for them as for ourselves, desiring that the Lord be merciful to them. Charity suffereth long and is kind; it envieth not, is not puffed up; it beareth with infirmities, rejoiceth in the raising up of others to that which is good, and, in short, is that meek spirit which Jesus exemplified. His robe, his righteousness, covers all, and is filled with love one to another and for each other, such as those to whom it is given alone can have. Now do I wear this robe of charity? This is an all-important and sad question to me. I am so hasty in my words, so quick to see, so ready to judge in my thought, so full of condemnation in my spirit, that I cannot see where there is room for this great gift of charity to abound. I would love to be clothed with it. As I write this it brings to my mind a time when I felt so anxious to be made humble I prayed for the beautiful gift, humility, but the answer came with great suffering, even unto death seemingly, and even when I remember the great blessings I received from that experience, I still am almost afraid to desire these lovely things. We shrink from the sufferings of the flesh, though

it is needful to be trimmed and pruned, and bent and bound, so that we may become small enough to wear this robe. It is a close-fitting robe, and so the flesh must be disposed of, and therefore comes the trimming and pruning of the Lord. The flesh is weak and cowardly.

I fear that I have written too lengthily. If there is anything in this letter that may meet with the approval of the loved ones I shall be glad, for all that will be of the Father, but all the refuse cast aside. May God be with the sick and the afflicted, and be the stay of the dying. May he comfort the doubting ones, and bring his own to the church according to his good pleasure, and may he cause those in health to remember his will.

In love to all,

MARY HILL TERRY.

DUNCAN, Okla., Dec. 3, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will in my feeble way write you a few lines, as my subscription is due. The paper is a great comfort to me in my old age, and worth double the price to me. We are just two old people (my husband and I) alone in this town, where they have plenty of the do and live religion, but they do not do much, only with their lips, but what is that to me? The dear Savior said, If they tarry until I come, what is that to you? Dear brethren and sisters, if I am a child of God I shall wait on him for eternal life. I shall not fear what man shall say, for in all my travels in this wilderness journey the Lord has been my stay and has blessed me; he leads me in paths I knew not. As for the doctrine of predestination, foreknowledge of God, free grace and perseverance of the saints, it is my soul's morning star, for I believe with all my soul that he decreed and determined all things that come to pass; there is nothing too large or too small for him to control. All the powers that be are ordained of him, and he is in one mind and none can turn him; he speaks and it is done. His word shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish the thing whereunto he sent it. O thank the Lord for this glorious doctrine. The Lord said, It shall drop as the rain and distil as the dew. He hath sent a word and it hath lighted on Israel. One of old took the child Jesus in his arms, and said, Blessed be the God of Israel, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation. So the Lord saw the travail of his soul and was satisfied. He said, I came to do my Father's will, and his will is to save his people from their sins. Unto this end was he born, and for this cause came he into this world. Yes, my dear kindred, he will save all that the Father gave him; they are already saved; there will not be one added. Those he chose in his Son will come forth, leaning on their Beloved, Jesus Christ the righteous, in whom eternal life is promised, and his promises are yea and amen to his own glory, for he will not give his glory to another. O blessed hope that he has chosen me in him and I have a foretaste of that blessed morn, and with patience I am waiting, hoping and trusting to hear the dear Savior say, Child, come home.

My dear kindred, since I commenced this letter I have received the first number of the SIGNS for this month, and O what a comfort it is to me. Sister Pultz's letter did touch a tender cord in my heart. May the Lord bless her, and he has already blessed her, for by his Spirit she was moved to utter her prayer. Not only was I comforted by her letter, but by all who wrote in this number. It gives me hope sometimes when I read from the pens of the dear saints that I am a

wayworn traveler, seeking that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, whose builder is God. O this is all my hope; I am longing to be clothed with his robe. Dear saints, blessed of the Lord, will you remember me in your prayers? for I am alone as for companions to talk with. But let me be still and know the Lord is God, and beside him there is none other. I live twenty miles from my church, and do not get there often, on account of poverty and old age. They are all in peace and fellowship with one another, which is the fruit of the Spirit of Christ dwelling in them, but wonder of wonders, is that Spirit dwelling in me? The Lord be my judge, for he only is my guide, and he doeth what seemeth good to him.

Well, my dear brethren and sisters, I ask you in love to criticise this well if it finds a place in our good paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. May the Lord bless the editors and writers of our family paper with all spiritual blessings everywhere, and give us grace to follow him. Please pardon all mistakes.

From an old sinner in a desert land, longing to be with the household of faith,

NANCY CREEL.

HERNDON, Va., Jan. 21, 1913.

DEAR ELDER H. C. KER:—While looking over the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to-day my eyes fell upon the words, "Close of Volume Eighty" of the SIGNS for 1912. My heart went out to you in sympathy, for you express my feelings in many expressions you used in your short letter. I say short, but it meant a long letter to me, for I was made to wonder why a true servant of God could tell me the things that I experience daily. Barren state of mind, and not even a "raven comes to feed us;" surely, my dear brother, you touch a tender cord in my heart when you write such things of yourself, and my old man (nature) can hardly believe that a servant of God can get so low in the valley of the shadow of death that he could lower himself so he could meet with a pilgrim and a stranger on the rugged road and commune with him by the way as he is journeying on his way to the celestial city. But when Jesus appears while we are journeying along in our pilgrimage all seems joy and gladness, and we are made to say with those pilgrims of old, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way?" I have felt of late to give up the race and quit the field, yet I still feel to love the people of God, and yet wonder why I should love them. I know if they they could know me just as I know myself they could not love me, for I am too black to be comely, and nothing that is black can ever give anything that is light. One of old said, Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean. We know that ravens are black, yet these black birds fed poor, old Elijah when he was almost starved, and so it is with the people of God in this age of the world, when ready to starve they will say, Let me have the ravens to feed me rather than starve. All hope seems to be gone, and they are made to cry out, Has the Lord forgotten to be gracious? Is mercy clean gone forever? This is my condition now, brother Ker, but I do not want you to think I am comparing you to the ravens, but I think an editorial from you in the SIGNS in the near future would feed my soul, for I feel ready now to perish.

Please pardon me for the liberty I have taken in writing you this letter, for it is

not worth your notice, still I crave your prayers in my behalf. I cannot write with any understanding; you can see that without my telling you.

Your poor, weak brother, if one at all,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

[THANK you, brother Oliver, and all others who have expressed fellowship for us in this lifeless condition of ours. Kind words often help us to bear our burdens. —K.]

CHICAGO, Ill., Jan. 22, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—You will find herewith four dollars to renew the subscription to the SIGNS of my sister, Mrs. Daniel Shields, and my own, as per blank inclosed. The SIGNS has been coming to the Reeves family since its first number; first to my grandfather, Elder George Reeves, then to my father, D. L. Reeves, and my sister and I have been receiving it since our father's death. We feel that we could not do without it, and hope always to be able to take it. I think the editors and publishers are to be commended for the very efficient manner in which the paper is conducted. We seldom find even a typographical error, and many of the editorials, as well as that of other articles, are worth many times the price of subscription, if we may be allowed the expression.

I have been in business in Chicago for about four months, but have not moved my family, although we hope to be located here by spring. There are a few Baptists in Chicago, but we are scattered, and for the present I see no hope for us to have regular services.

Wishing those connected with the SIGNS a prosperous new year, I am, I trust, your brother in hope,

M. C. REEVES.

VERNON, Texas, Jan. 12, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed post-office money order for four dollars to pay for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The SIGNS, if possible, becomes more precious to me each year. Time flies swiftly by; my age is seventy-seven years. I seldom get to hear preaching, and how could I live without the Bible and the SIGNS? Dear Elder Chick, your New Year's Greeting for this year is worth the price of the paper to this old, unworthy one. May the God of all grace spare you to write many more comforting greetings to your readers, is the desire of my poor heart. I hope Elder Ker will write often, too.

As ever, your sister in Christ,

(MRS.) ROENA WILSON.

NOTICE.

TO THE FORMER SUBSCRIBERS OF "THE GOSPEL NEWS."

YOU will please when desiring to remit for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES remit to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y. It will cost no more to send direct to them, but if you send to me, and I then have to remit to them, it costs me five cents for each remittance: three cents for each one dollar, and two cents in stamps, so if you all remit to them through me, and do not send postage and amount for order, you see where I am left. It is just as easy to send to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y., as to me. It is a pleasure to me to know that my old subscribers are going to take the SIGNS, and I already know of a number of them who will. I hope you will be well pleased with the SIGNS.

To those inquiring about my health, I will say, I am getting back to my normal condition of health.

Yours in hope, J. M. PERKINS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1913.

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EDITORS:
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GENESIS III. 1-6.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I desire to ask you one question, and would like to see the answer in the SIGNS as soon as possible: Did our mother Eve have any part in sin entering into the world? Please reply as briefly as possible.

Your brother,

P. E. DAHLSTEDT.

EL CAMPO, Texas, Nov. 7, 1912.

The part which our mother Eve had in the entrance of sin into the world is fully described in the following Scriptures. No one can know any more about it than is here declared. "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the women, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat."—Gen. iii. 1-6. "And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat."—Verse 12. "And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat."—Verse 13. "The serpent beguiled Eve."—2 Cor. xi. 3. "For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived; but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety."—1 Tim. ii. 13-15. So far as we recall at this time, this is all that is directly said by inspiration concerning the place which Eve filled in the coming of sin into the world. We learn by these Scriptures that Eve was deceived by the serpent, that Adam was not deceived, but was allured by her, and so remained one with her in the transgression, as he had been one with her in their innocency. Much, no doubt, might be said regarding what was involved in this transgression, of that, however, whoever at any time preaches or writes the gospel must always have something to say. It was our mind here to simply call attention to those Scriptures which tell of the part which Eve took in the entrance of sin into the world. Neither ourself, nor brother Dahlstedt, nor any one else, can give any further testimony concerning it than these Scriptures give.

C.

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Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

REPLY TO D. D. CARTER.

OUR friend, D. D. Carter, of Hubbard, Iowa, some time since wrote, asking the following questions. He says, "I see that you are strenuous upon the subject of baptism." He then says, "I see that there are Baptists in various States (which he names) who believe in the faith, but have no church and no minister, and cannot be baptized." Now he asks, "Can they be saved if they are not baptized? Or will a Campbellite minister do as well as one of your own order? The Bible says if we keep the whole law and offend in one point we are guilty of all. I would like to read your answers to these questions."

In reply to the questions of our friend we will say, first, that we are always willing to respond to such requests from any one when we can do so, and can only hope that what we say may be in accordance with the word of God, and that it may be of instruction to those who may read what we write. We will call attention to the first remark of our friend, viz., that we are strenuous with regard to baptism. We do hope that we are and shall always be strenuous with regard to this subject; and not only this, but we do desire that all who love the truth should be strenuous in contending for it, and not only for the Bible doctrine of baptism, but for all the doctrine of the word of God. We are exhorted to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. We think that the word "strenuous" perhaps expresses the same truth as is urged upon believers in the text above quoted. Ought not all who believe, to be very urgent in contending for the faith in which is their hope of salvation? Then ought they not to be exceeding careful to learn what is the will of God with regard to the order of his house, the church of God on earth? Ought they not to insist upon obedience to each and all his commandments? Baptism is commanded, with many other things, at the hands of the redeemed of the Lord. Because the blessed Lord commanded it of those who have come to savingly believe in him, and because the dear Savior has set the example first of all for us, we ought to be baptized. This we do insist upon, and upon the above named grounds. Furthermore, it is baptism that is enjoined in the word of God, not sprinkling, pouring or washing. There is a Greek word for sprinkling, there is another for pouring, and there is still another for washing, and there is not the slightest resemblance between either of these three words and the word which signifies baptism. This is so in our English tongue, and it is so in the Greek also. The three words, sprinkling, pouring and washing, are translated from the Greek into English, while, unfortunately for the casual reader, the translators of the Bible under King James had direction from him not to translate the word for baptism, but to simply transfer it. The Greek word for sprinkling is "*rantizo*," the Greek word for pouring is "*cheo*" and the Greek word for washing is "*louo*," and the Greek word which stands for what we call baptism is "*baptizo*," and this last word simply means "dipping." Baptism is only half expressed by immersion; emersion must be added to immersion, and immersion and emersion together express our word "dipping," and that is just what the Greek word "*baptizo*" signifies. Had the translators done with the word "*baptizo*" as they did with all the other words we have named, wherever we see the word baptism in the New Testament we should see instead the word "dipping." Those who translated

the Bible under King James were all Church of England men, and they would have condemned their own church, as to her baptism, had they put the word "dipping" in the New Testament; therefore they strove to conceal the matter by just transferring the Greek word "*baptizo*" in the form of baptism, out of the Greek into the English. Therefore we are strenuous in insisting upon dipping as the command of the Lord to all who believe. It is true that there are Baptists in faith in many places all over the country who are not situated near any Bible church and who hear no preaching. It is not ours to ask why the Lord in his providence has seen fit to so place many of his loved ones, and we esteem it a wonderful privilege that for near half a century we have not been so situated. Up to the end of our youth it was our lot to live far away from any gospel church, and we never heard a gospel sermon that we could remember anything about until one year after it pleased the Lord, as we trust, to give to us a good hope through grace, therefore we can and do feel a great sympathy for all who are situated in such lonely circumstances, but we do not doubt that the Lord has compensations for his loved ones in some other ways when they are so situated. It will be the desire of all who love the Lord to walk in all his ordinances, and they will seek for an open door in that direction, and there will be prayer in their hearts to the Lord that he will in his providence open the door for them to become numbered on earth with his church. They will look upon all the ordinances of his house as being most desirable. All such ones have been redeemed unto God, and all these have come to love the Lord and his people and his ordinances, and to greatly desire all these things as blessed privileges, but still it may be and is in many instances the case that some who love him and his cause most dearly are deprived of having their desires gratified. But these are saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation.

In answer to our friend's question: Can these be saved if they are not baptized? we have no hesitancy in replying that they are already saved. They have been redeemed and justified by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and they have come savingly to know for themselves the grace of God. But more than this, no one has any right to the ordinance of baptism unless they are already saved, and have the witness of this salvation in their own heart. Baptism, as well as all other ordinances given to the church, is not to save souls, seeing that this is done through the work of Jesus Christ alone, but it is for the blessing of saved souls. Baptism would be a solemn mockery to all who had not experienced this hope of salvation. He who takes upon himself this ordinance without an experience of this hope of salvation only acts a lie. Were sprinkling or pouring instead of baptism commanded in the word of God to all who believe, still it would remain true that all parents who bring their children to receive this rite are causing these unconscious infants to act a lie, because they have not given, and cannot give, any evidence that the Lord has redeemed them. Baptism is for redeemed souls who make profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior, and for these alone. "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest," is the one great rule by which the church of God and her ministry are to be guided. The elect people of God are known to the church and to ministers only by profession of faith, or,

in other words, by their confession that they hope in Christ alone for salvation. Until this confession is made upon their part, even the elect vessels of mercy cannot be known, and are not entitled to baptism or membership in the church. If this confession be made by a child of three years of age, or of any age whatever, as well as by people of older years, they are not to be forbidden this ordinance. We, as Baptists, do not teach either infant or adult baptism, but simply believers' baptism. Belief is the one test, no matter what the age may be. Baptism is indeed essential to a believer's obedience, but it has nothing whatever to do with his redemption and final glory. This is our faith. We think that this answers the question: Can one be saved if he has never been baptized?

So far as we have known, most of those who teach what is called infant baptism, also teach that baptism is regeneration, or at least that baptism effects something for the child which it cannot receive without it, in the next world. No one can be fitted to enter the world of glory without regeneration. The Romish Church teaches that baptism alone effects this regeneration, therefore that church very consistently teaches that unbaptized infants dying in that state must perish forever. The Church of England, or the Episcopal Church, teaches that in baptism the child is made an heir of heaven and glory. Without baptism, therefore, the child is not an heir of heaven or a child of God, and if that be true, what then remains for that child dying, but to perish from the presence of the Lord? A Romish preacher many centuries ago said, "The wailing cry of the souls of unbaptized infants is heard throughout the regions of darkness forever." In conversation, many years ago, with a Methodist lady at our home, she said that her eldest child died without baptism, because her husband did not believe in it. "But," said she, "I then determined that I would never lose another child without baptism." We said to her, "Why, do you think your child was lost?" "Well, no," she said, "but it lacked something, and does lack something in the future world." This is the feeling of all who believe in infant baptism. But what a difference from this there is in the mind of all Old School Baptists when their children die. We know that the salvation of our children is through grace alone, even as is the salvation of others. We cannot effect our own salvation, and certainly we cannot aid in the salvation of others. Emphatically it is not Old School Baptist faith that "there are infants in hell not a span long," but it is the faith of many who believe in regeneration by baptism. What a horrid doctrine is this which declares that children are lost because of the neglect of others!

In reply to the question, Will a Campbellite minister do as well as one of our own order? we will just say a word or two. It is the Campbellite faith that no one can be saved without baptism. If a minister of that faith leads a person down into the watery grave he does so claiming that by this act he is conferring salvation upon the candidate. If that candidate be worthy of baptism, that is, if he be one who has been called by grace, he knows that salvation is of the Lord. He goes down into the water with one faith, and the minister dips him with another faith. How can two walk together when they are not agreed? The candidate believes and hopes that he is already saved, the minister believes that he is not al-

ready saved, but that by the act of baptism he will be.

We will now leave these reflections, hoping that they may satisfy the mind of our friend and be of some instruction to all who may read. C.

HEBREWS II. 18.

"For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."

The writer of this wonderful letter to the Hebrews has therein said some most gracious things for the comfort of the church, and many other things hard to be understood. In the beginning of the first chapter the speaking of God to the fathers by the prophets and his speaking to the apostles and others by the Son are compared; and while the things spoken by the Son were in fulfillment of what was spoken by the prophets, it was far more glorious for men to be spoken to by the blessed Son of God than by men. The glorious character of Jesus is also compared with that of the Father, and the Son declared to be the heir of all things and the express image of the Father's person, upholding all things by the word of his power. This makes the Son equal with the Father. Hence it is shown how much better the Son than angels, and if every transgression and disobedience of the things spoken by angels (ministers of the law) received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation as is declared in the gospel of the Son of God? Unto the Son is put in subjection the world to come, and all things, both temporal and spiritual, are controlled and governed by him. Now while all these things are blessedly true of him, we are also told for our comfort that "he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham," and that it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren in all things. Therefore, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same. In this relation we view him as verily man, with all the weaknesses of his brethren according to the flesh, yet kept by the Spirit of the Father from being overcome by the evils of the human nature. He was born as other children are, grew and developed as other children do, labored at the trade of carpentering, associated with his brethren, other relatives and friends as others did, and was verily a man among men, and we have no thought that his suffering because of temptation began in the wilderness after his baptism by John in Jordan. Very little is said of him after old Simeon took him in his arms and blessed God, until he was twelve years old, then mention is made of him as being found with the lawyers and doctors asking and answering questions, and they were astonished at his wisdom. After this very little is said of him until he came to be baptized by John when about thirty years of age. He lived, labored and no doubt suffered untold temptations during those years. We do not understand that the temptations which assailed him during that time were different from those suffered by the children of God now, nor was he exempt from any temptation whatever that now assails the people of God. To write or preach of Jesus as the only begotten Son of God, a Prince and a Savior, the heir of all things, with power over all worlds and beings, does not present him as a companion of the tried and tempest-tossed, but as one exalted above all the weak and sinful inclinations and propensities of the human nature. But to sometimes remind the tried and suffering soul that Jesus was

also a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin, brings a ray of hope and sunshine into the heart. How glad we have been these last twelve or fourteen months of the declaration: "Tempted in all points like as we are." Yes, in all points, like as we are; not one point omitted, and exactly in the same manner as his children are tempted. Having taken on him flesh and blood, made like unto his brethren, he knew what sore temptations were, hence is now a companion and comforter of his poor, tried and tempted brethren. He therefore in the sad journey of life is one with the sorrowful and downcast, not often as a Prince and a Savior, manifestly, but as a man knowing the full power of sin and all the plagues of the devil. "He himself hath suffered being tempted." His temptations in the wilderness, which were according to the purpose of God, were peculiar, yet common to all the household of faith. Temptations regarding the sonship of the children of the Father are indeed numerous and presented in divers ways. If you be a son of God command the stones to be made bread; suck honey out of the flinty rock; cast thyself down from the pinnacle of the temple, or from any other elevated position that you have through grace attained to, if a child of God it will not harm you; if saved you are saved anyway. If a son of God, command the darkness to be light; command crooked things to be straight; if indeed a child of God, command Satan to get behind thee. All this is in your power if you are a child of God. These are a few of the many temptations we meet while pilgrims and strangers here, and instead of the poor soul who feels his feet slipping from the foundation rock being able to overcome the devil, he finds often that he is as helpless as a newborn babe, and that the fight is against him, and from fatigue and fright in the warfare he often sinks hopelessly in despair, at least it is so with ourself. Were it not that Jesus is able to succor them that are tempted, not one of "his brethren" would be lifted up from this state of death, hence could not know the power of the resurrection. But since "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints," he appears to give the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Thus we live and die and die and live all the days of our appointed time here below, but inasmuch as this world is not our home, we look forward to the day when mortality, with all its sufferings, weaknesses and sinfulness, shall be swallowed up of life; then all who have suffered with Jesus here shall be glorified together—translated into the glorious liberty of the children of God, to go no more out forever, but be ever with the Lord. K.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, Feb. 6th, 1913, at his home, Leesburg, Va., George W. Bradshaw, of Ryan, Va., and Miss Sarah E. Robey, of Bluemont, Va.

By the same, at the Inn, Leesburg, Va., Feb. 18th, 1913, David Welch and Miss Eliza Sutphin, both of Mountville, Va.

By Elder A. B. Francis, June 26th, 1912, at the residence of the bride's parents, Little Creek, Del., George W. Cannon and Elsie F. Hearn, both of Sussex Co., Del.

By the same, Feb. 8th, 1913, at the home of the groom, Frank E. Hastings and Carrie E. Davis, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

By Elder B. E. Cubbage, at the home of Thos. Meredith, in Willow Grove, Del., Nov. 21st, 1912, Milton True Frasher and Miss May Curry, both of Willow Grove, Del.

By the same, at the home of Robert Wallace, near Kennedyville, Md., Jan. 8th, 1913, Benjamin Ralph Cooper, of Woodside, Del., and Miss Sarah Roe, of near Kennedyville, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Nathan I. Feezor was born April 13th, 1835, and raised in Marshall County, Ky., was married Jan. 8th, 1857, to Martha G. Wallace, which union was blessed with five boys and one girl, who survive him, except the daughter, Mollie, who departed this life about twenty-seven years ago. The sons are: G. K., T. U., H. B., J. L. and N. B. Feezor. Martha G., his first wife, departed this life June 23rd, 1890, after which he was married to Mrs. Sarah Ann Wallace, March 26th, 1891, which union was blessed with peace, happiness and a crowning glory to his last days. The subject of this sketch joined the Primitive Baptist Church in the year 1886, at Union Church, but took a letter and became a member of Mt. Pleasant Church, where he remained until his death, which occurred Sept. 16th, 1912, at the age of 77 years, 5 months and 3 days. He served the church as deacon for a number of years, to the satisfaction of his brethren. He was ever faithful to attend his church meetings, and ever ready to do his part in all his church relations. In the death of brother Feezor the church has lost a faithful member, his widow a tender and loving husband, his children a devoted father and the community a noble citizen. We shall greatly miss him in our meetings, but can but humbly bow before Him who doeth all things well.

I was called upon to attend the funeral services at his home, where a large concourse of brethren, sisters, relatives and friends assembled to pay their final tribute of respect to so noble a citizen. The remains were laid to rest in the Bolton Cemetery, where we feel to hope the all-seeing Eye will watch over the dust until the good Shepherd shall come to take his redeemed to himself, when we humbly believe brother Feezor will be in that host that shall rise in the glorious image of the Son of God, to be received into everlasting glory, where no death will ever come, and friends will never separate again.

ALSO,

W. S. Moore was born in Graves County, Ky., Jan. 19th, 1838. When the Civil war broke out he joined the Confederate army and belonged to Company A of the Eighth Kentucky, and served eighteen months. He was married to Miss Satyrah Morrison, Nov. 12th, 1863. To them were born several children, the number the writer does not know, as he has no family record. He lived many years in McCracken County, Ky., and finally moved to Paducah, where he spent the remainder of his life, until just a short time before his death. He had been in failing health for some years, and finally became almost helpless, his mind also gave way, and he was sent to the Confederate Home at Pewee Valley, where he died August 25th, 1912, and was buried with military honors in the Confederate Cemetery. Brother Moore received a hope of salvation a great many years ago, but lingered out of the church for about forty years, never feeling himself worthy to attach himself, but at last he yielded to his impressions and joined the Old School Baptist Church at Mount Pleasant, in North Graves, where he remained a faithful and devoted member until his death. He was a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace through the merits of Jesus Christ. He was a man well posted, both in the Scriptures and in the politic circle.

A funeral service will be held at his home church at Mt. Pleasant, perhaps not before the fourth Sunday in May, 1913, as the writer was prevented by illness from attending in October and November of 1912. While we regret the loss of this worthy brother, we feel to hope our loss is his great gain.

J. M. PERKINS.

George Dobler was born in Holland, August 29th, 1826, and departed this life at his residence, near Woolford, Dorchester Co., Md., Jan. 31st, 1913, aged 86 years, 5 months and 2 days. Brother Dobler and his wife, who died in 1907, were both highly esteemed members of the Fishing Creek Church, having been baptized by the late Elder Joseph L. Staton during his pastorate there. The record shows that he came before the church the fourth Sunday in August, 1885, and was baptized the same day. He came to America when a young man, settling in the vicinity of Albany, N. Y., where he was associated with a party of the Dutch Reformed denomination, known as "Ballengerites." He remained there several years, then removed to Kansas; about what time or how long he remained there I do not know, but while there he lost his first wife and married a second time. About thirty years ago he moved from Kansas, and bought the farm where he died, in Dorchester County, Md., and settled there, soon after becoming acquainted with members of Fishing Creek, and began to attend the meetings, both he and his wife, discovering that they were identified by experience of the abounding grace of God with the Old School Baptists, and ere long sought occasion to be openly identified with them. They both walked worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called. He left no descendants, and since the death of his wife had lived alone, but was kindly looked after by Mr. and Mrs. S. W. Woolford, to whom he was much attached, and other kind neighbors. I believe his first wife was of the same nativity as himself; the last wife was a native of Norway. He had no relatives in America, and but few with whom he corresponded in his old country.

His funeral was attended by the writer in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse at Fishing Creek, near Woolford, Feb. 1st, where a large number of the neighbors attested the respect in which he was held, by their presence. After a discourse relating to the ground of his hope of salvation, his mortal body was

laid in the cemetery near by to await the sound of the trump of God and the voice of the archangel; but his spirit is with God who gave it.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., Feb. 11, 1913.

OUR brother, **Benjamin Campbell,** passed quietly away at his home in Wilmington, Del., Jan. 24th, 1913. He was born at the old homestead, near Iron Hill, Md., Feb. 2nd, 1852, and was nearly 61 years of age. He was the youngest of eleven children, six having preceded him through the dark valley. He had been in failing health for several years, his disease being diabetes, which took a serious form in October and caused much suffering until death relieved him. Surely the wondrous grace of God was extended to him during his affliction. The fear of death was taken away, and he seemed to be resigned to the will of Him who controls all things. Elder Eubanks visited him several times during his sickness, and was a comfort. Bennie was very fond of Baptist company, and loved to entertain them at his home. He loved the preaching, and went to meeting when he was able. He leaves a widow, one daughter, three sisters and one brother, also numerous relatives and friends to mourn, but we hope our loss is his great gain.

Elder Eubanks attended the funeral and spoke words of comfort to the bereaved family, after which the remains were conveyed to the cemetery to await the last summons. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

S. A. CAMPBELL.

Mrs. Belle Mobley Humston was born April 15th, 1862, departed this life Dec. 20th, 1912, at their home in Franklinton, Henry Co., Ky., in the 51st year of her age. Death is always a shock when loved ones are taken from us, but how much more so when it comes suddenly. Our precious sister in Christ was apparently in her usual health until a few moments before her demise. In an early hour of the morning she called her husband, complaining of a choking sensation, and soon passed to that blessed bourne where they shall say no more, I am sick. Sister Humston was married to Dr. Orlester B. Humston, May 6th, 1880. More than thirty-two years had they marched along life's journey, faithful to each other in joys and sorrows. She leaves her devoted husband, a precious daughter and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Fred C. Leach, and granddaughter Zelma, who deeply feel and mourn the loss of this dear one. Our precious sister united with the church at Sulphur Fork at the close of our three days meeting the first of last September, and was truly received with joy and gladness, and baptized the last Sunday in September. At the baptism, as we stood at the water's edge, we felt solemnly impressed as to the suitableness of the words, In all my Lord's appointed ways, &c., as the sentiment of her heart, and truly it was, as she often spoke of it in her short life afterwards, and by her request was sung at her funeral. In just three months to a day we were called to attend her funeral, which was largely attended at their home in Franklinton. Never have I seen a deeper sense of grief, of hearts that were broken, by family and friends, as she was kind, gentle and hospitable, loved by all who knew her. All, together with the church, have lost a dear one, but our loss is her eternal gain. For the dear family has gone out the silent prayer for sustaining grace. God alone can speak peace and give faith and grace which look beyond the turbulent waters of affliction and give peace and rest in the Lord. May grace, mercy and peace abound.

P. W. SAWIN.

Mrs. Mary A. Chamberlin, our sister in Christ, died suddenly in Trenton, Tuesday morning, Dec. 10th, 1912, of apoplexy, in the 67th year of her age. She was the daughter of the former Stout Hunt and Eliza his wife. One sister, Mrs. Catherine Hixson, passed away from earth a few years ago. Two brothers survive her: Mr. Garret Hunt and Mr. George Hunt, of this vicinity. She also leaves two children: Mr. Forris R. Chamberlin and Mrs. Louise Schanck, both of Trenton. Sister Chamberlin was baptized by the late Elder Philander Hartwell, then and for many years pastor of the First Hopewell Church, in June, 1869, being received at the church meeting in that month, with two other candidates. In the more than forty-three years of her membership in this church she had always walked in full union and fellowship with all her brethren, and always proved her faith by her works. We have known this to be so during the past sixteen years, and we are told that her life had been close with the church in all the preceding years. Like many others, she was not given to many words, but that life which speaks louder than words was hers, and by it she was blessed to bear full testimony that she loved the courts of the Lord's house, and felt it her highest privilege to join in the worship of God. In our acquaintance with her we found her clear in her views of truth and sound in the faith of God's elect. She believed the doctrine which saints in every age have loved: salvation by grace for perishing sinners, and by these tokens we feel full assurance that she belonged to the Lord in the covenant of redemption, and she abided very closely in the affections of all her brethren and sisters who knew her. At the last the gracious privilege was accorded her to pass away from earth without long continued suffering, having been up to within an hour or two of her death, conversing with some friends cheerfully, apparently in full health.

The funeral service was held at the home of her

son-in-law and daughter, and the interment was in the cemetery connected with the Second Hopewell Church, Saturday afternoon. It was our lot to conduct the services at the residence, using the Scripture found in Romans viii. 23-25. May the blessed Redeemer minister all needed consolation to all the dear friends who mourn their loss. C.

Samuel Ellsworth Strauser, son of Samuel and Dortha Strauser, was born May 23rd, 1865, died Feb. 4th, 1913, aged 47 years. He leaves his mother, a member of the Pleasant Hill Church, one sister and two brothers to mourn their loss. Elza, as we all called him, was very devoted to his home, always had a good word for every one, and was much liked by those who knew him for his kind and good disposition. He was taken very ill on Monday, at the home of his sister, from which he never recovered, but slept away his life similar to that of his father, who died last April, from all appearances suffering no pain, passing from this life to a better one, as we hope, to dwell in the city of immortality, where death never enters, but where all is peace and joy, and God our Savior reigns.

May God bless the mother, brother and sister, and enable us to say, Not our will, but thine, be done.

GEO. L. WEAVER.

Mrs. Ada Miller, wife of M. C. Miller, died Feb. 10th, 1913, in Edella, Scott township, Pa., aged 58 years, 1 month and 22 days. She was the daughter of Deacon Sanford and Almina White. She was born and lived in Scott township until death. She was married to M. C. Miller Jan. 22nd, 1871, and was baptized Oct. 4th, 1890, with her husband, by the writer of this notice, uniting with the Abbington Old School Baptist Church, at Justus, Pa., of which she was a worthy member until called to her eternal home. Sister Ada was a quiet, unassuming woman, but knew in whom she believed, what she believed and why she believed, was clear and sound in all of the principles of the doctrine of Christ, such as predestination, the resurrection of the dead, election, salvation by grace, &c., and was faithful in her attendance on all the meetings of the church when not providentially hindered. We will miss her in our solemn assemblies; dear brother Miller will be sad and lonely, none can know his sorrow except those of like experience; the children will miss a mother's counsel. She was kind and affectionate to all. She leaves to mourn her absence, her husband, three sons, two daughters, thirteen grandchildren, four brothers, three sisters, the church and many distant relatives. May God in his rich mercy and abounding goodness bless each one with a reconciled mind to his holy will. Her Father in heaven has called her home; she is now present with the Lord, her dear Savior, never to come back to earth or earthly scenes again.

The funeral was held at their residence, where a large company of relatives and neighbors assembled Feb. 11th to pay their last tribute of respect to one they dearly loved, the writer using as a text from which to try to comfort the living Romans viii. 28, after which the remains were carried to the Miller Cemetery and buried. D. M. VAIL.

Mrs. Susan Alexander, widow of George Alexander, and the youngest daughter and last one of the family of the late Elder Thomas Barton, departed this life Nov. 3rd, 1912. She and father were united in marriage Sept. 24th, 1846. Both lived to see their sixty-second year of wedlock pass by. Thirteen children were born to them, five of whom survive: Thomas B., Mrs. Lucy Shriner, Mrs. Emma Bogart, Samuel and William S. Our dear mother was born in Chester County, Pa., June 30th, 1827, in sight of the house in which she died. She was baptized by her father and received in the church over a half century ago, in which she lived a faithful, orderly and much beloved member until the end. The last days of her life were spent at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Lucy Shriner, where she received all the attention that a loving and faithful daughter could bestow upon the richest treasure earth contains: mother. Though the last days found her natural mind weakening, there was no falling away of that mind that was fixed on things above. Though she might be wandering in mind of things about her, if one would speak of spiritual things the eye would brighten, and that mind was clear, and she would recount how the tender mercies of the gracious Master had followed her all life's journey through. As she could see the end fast approaching the Lord was her strong tower, and she would say whatever his will was with her it would be well. O how sad our hearts as we remember the kind, gentle caresses of mother. In these through life we followed her, in death with saddened hearts we tenderly laid her remains away, knowing that it was our loss, but her gain, for the Master called her home. Gracious Master, may we who are left to mourn the loss of a loving, patient and ever-forbearing earthly parent be given that reconciliation whereby we may say, "Thy will be done."

The funeral services were conducted at the home of her daughter, by Elder J. G. Eubanks, who spoke to the comfort of the family and friends.

W. S. ALEXANDER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 81. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1913. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE SABBATH.

THE Sabbath was given to the tribes of Israel to commemorate the creation of the world, (Exodus xx. 8–11,) and to call to their remembrance that they were servants in the land of Egypt. (Deut. v. 15.) Israel was commanded to keep a sabbath of days, and every seventh year the land was to rest, and one of the reasons for the seventy years captivity of the children of Israel in Babylon was that the land should enjoy and keep sabbath. It was untilled and rested all those years. (Lev. xxvi. 34–43; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21.) The sabbath was given for a sign and a perpetual covenant between Jehovah and Israel. (Exodus xxxi. 13–17.) Having outlined the keeping of the sabbath committed unto typical Israel, it will be most blessed to enter into the gospel signification. Israel of old served God under the example and shadow of heavenly things, and the meats and drinks, holy days, new moons and sabbath days were shadows of things to come, but the body is Christ; (Col. ii. 17,) and we are not left to conjecture how Christ was the substance of the sabbath, for this is declared in the third and fourth chapters of the epistle to the Hebrews. When God led his people out of Egypt, through the wilderness into the promised land, I went (saith the Lord) to cause him to rest. (Jer. xxxi. 2.) Joshua caused them to inherit this land. (Deut. i. 38.) This was but a dim foreshadowing of the eternal sabbath of Christ and his church. This the apostle shows in Hebrews, and he tells us that the Holy Ghost, by a prophetic vision in David of the day of Christ (of the sabbath in him) moved him to say, "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways; unto whom I sware in my wrath, that they should not enter into my rest."—Psalms xcv. 7–11. This day the apostle declares was not the seventh day sabbath, it was not the rest that the pilgrim tribes inherited in Canaan, but it was a more glorious day, the eternal sabbath in Christ with the Lord our God, of which even now we which do believe en-

ter into. (Heb. iv. 3.) We have a little foretaste of it, the earnest of our inheritance of that eternal day of blissful rest in heaven. "There remaineth therefore a rest [keeping of a sabbath] to the people of God." These only are they who enter into and keep the sabbath. In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them, and on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that he had rested from all his work which God created and made; and God gave Israel this commandment: Remember the seventh day and keep it holy. While the keeping of this day was as a memorial unto them of the sabbath of the Lord their God, yet still further he taught his people, for other days than the seventh were appointed sabbath days unto them. Thus in the month of Abib, the fourteenth day of which was the passover, seven days they were to eat unleavened bread. "And in the first day there shall be an holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you." —Exodus xii. 16. And other memorial days associated with feasts of the Lord were given to be kept thus by God's people. (See Lev. xxiii.) Such were the imperfect shadows of the true eternal sabbath of Christ and his church. Of this sabbath the saints on earth have a little foretaste, just a drop, as compared with the mighty ocean. It is but an infinitesimal speck of knowledge that we now experience, just little moments of the blessedness of the sabbath that is the portion of the ransomed people of God.

"His rest shall be glorious." O how much more glorious than the seventh day sabbath is the sabbath of our Lord Jesus Christ in the redemption, regeneration and eternal glorification of his people. He makes them an eternal excellency. By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth; he spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast. But for the redemption of his people God was manifest in the flesh. Shall I say it cost Jehovah more? Yes; in his labors to bring all things pertaining to his church unto eternal perfection it cost the incarnate Son of God sufferings and tears, agonies and bloody sweat; he shed his blood and poured out his soul unto death to accomplish the work that must be done for the eternal salvation and glorification of his elect; then only he could rest and bring his people into this all-blessed and eternal rest with himself. "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."—Isaiah lxii. 1. The incarnate Son of God was in the world thirty-three years, and every moment of this time he was about his "Father's business." Even while he sucked the breasts of his mother, the virgin Mary, until he cried, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost, he was obedient, even unto death, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He came to redeem, to justify and glorify his people, and he delighted to do the will of the Father. His labors were the labors of love, and not one of them was lost, all were fruitful to the bringing forth of his church in perfection of beauty, a "glorious church." (Eph. v. 27.) Now when Christ's redemption work was done, and all Zion's sins atoned for, when he had

wrought and brought in her everlasting righteousness, all was so well done that looking upon them, a glorious church, he was satisfied, he rested and was refreshed. (Exodus xxxi. 17.) The heavens declare the glory of God, and the earth sheweth his handiwork, but how few have eyes to see and a heart to contemplate Jehovah's glory in creation. Truly blessed is the man who has a heart to meditate upon the works of Christ, our almighty Worker, who, with none to help him, wrought the salvation of his chosen people.

When the time of the promise drew nigh that God would bring Israel out of Egypt, they found Egypt an iron furnace, a land of trouble. So when the time comes when God will bring any of his chosen unto the fellowship of his dear Son to cause them to find their holy sabbath in him, they indeed experience trouble, for they are awakened to the knowledge of the ruin they are in as transgressors of the law of God. It is a solemn time with a quickened sinner, and fears oppress the soul of the eternal judgment of Him who is the Judge of the quick and dead. O what if I should die in my sins, how could I stand before the throne of God? The soul feeling its nakedness, destitution and defilement finds the demands of the law to be dreadful, for what has the poor sinner that can satisfy its holy demands? The best obedience of a perishing sinner dares not appear before God's throne, and when this is felt he becomes ashamed of all that he has done. The Holy Spirit teaches the sinner to see that much must be done that we may have peace with God; there are mountains of guilt to be removed, sin's pollution to be cleansed away, robes of obedience to be woven, that we may be in friendship, clean and white and acceptably appareled before the Majesty in the heavens. Not only are we taught that all this must be done, but it is so put in the heart to have it done that we say, I can never rest until it is all perfectly done. O that I could live before God, be holy and glorious, but I am vile and base, under the curse of the law. Our work is a work of naught. We begin to build, but are not able to finish; we have no proper materials to build with. Our works are decayed, corrupt, dead works, and we cannot with all our skill fitly frame together anything acceptable unto God. The sin-convicted soul finds continual humiliations, all of which are designed by the gracious God to teach us the need of the dear Savior. Though we labor to establish our own righteousness, what have we built? A worthless habitation, tottering, filthy, a fretting leprosy infects it, there is a plague in the house, and the child of God cries out, I cannot dwell in such a house. "It seemeth to me there is as it were a plague in the house." When dead in sin and the uncircumcision of our flesh, our transgressions gave us little unrest. If we had some disquieting thoughts we found a way to hush them. We were without God in the world, but when God called us by his grace we were no longer without him. Since that time we have been learning that it is with him we have to do (and very comforting it is to a vile transgressor when he is blessed to have to do with God through Christ, the Mediator of the new covenant). We have a consciousness that the Lord, though so infinitely exalted and removed from us, who are so base, so sinful, yet is near. Whither can we flee from his presence, the almighty, holy, dreadful God? His omnipresence overwhelms the guilty soul, and in our sin-plagued, law-condemned heart we fear there can be no help for us.

I shall be forever cast away. To me he will say, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Sin becomes exceeding sinful to those who are led by the Spirit of God, for we see that our sinful lives have belittled and dishonored God, and though the Holy Spirit graciously puts forth in our souls hungerings and thirstings after righteousness, yet we are discouraged, for we feel we cannot attain unto righteousness. We learn experimentally that

"Not the labors of my hands,
Can fulfill thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and thou alone."

All the humiliating experiences that the sinner experiences under divine teaching are to prepare him to appreciate the mercies of the new covenant which the Lord has stored up for him. Here he shall find salvation, happiness and rest. God beholds the quickened sinner toiling to accomplish the work to be holy and justified. But by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. God knows we long to see all things complete. He knows our distresses, he knows we feel we are poor, houseless, starving, ragged outcasts, whom no one cares for. He knows that we sigh because our hands are weak, and our knees feeble, and our hearts dismayed. He knows the poor sinner's miseries, and that he fears that everlasting misery must be the lot of such a transgressor, who cannot cease from sin. Though a sinner toil a lifetime under the law to establish his own righteousness and magnify the law, at the end he would see he had established nothing; there it is, a heap of rubbish. It is no easy thing in the heart of a sinner to learn this lesson; it is more than a theory about it in the head, it is something God wrought, a vital experience in the hearts of those who are the taught of the Lord. Though failure attends all the doings of a poor sinner, and he can find no rest, in the appointed time of the Lord his people are led to look upon the works of another. The Spirit of truth takes of the things of Christ and shews them unto us, and we begin to learn that the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, by which we draw nigh to God; and this perfection in which we come unto our God and Father is in the achievements, the obedience and sufferings, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the dear Son of God. He finished the work the Father gave him to do, and perfected his people by the one offering of himself for their sins, an offering and a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savor. From the time of the first glimpse of Jesus by faith, and every moment of the soul's growth in the knowledge of Christ our Lord, and what he has wrought, and what he is unto us, truly he is precious. I feel I know much of Jesus Christ, for if ever a sinner lived that needed to know, and has been given to know him, I feel I am such an one, and yet all the while (paradoxical though it be) my sighing, yearning heart is exclaiming, How little I know of thee, O lovely Savior. O that I knew thee, O that I could love thee. As what Christ has wrought is shewn to the soul we find our hearts exercised, and saying, Will he give me rest? Has he done all this work for a vile sinner like me? Has Christ atoned for sin? Has he wrought and brought in everlasting righteousness? Can his precious blood cleanse away my sin and present me faultless before the throne of God? Can he silence the

dreadful condemnation of the law, the accusations of Satan? Can such a portion be mine? Yes, Jesus has done all things well, we are complete in him. Jesus, the Surety of the new covenant, put his obedience and sufferings, death and resurrection, into the hands of eternal justice, and the mighty sum paid all our debts.

"Turn then, my soul, unto thy rest;
The merits of thy great High Priest
Have bought thy liberty.
Trust in his efficacious blood,
Nor fear thy banishment from God,
Since Jesus died for thee."

Creation's work was finished, and God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good, and the evening and the morning were the sixth day, (Gen. i. 31,) and O how very good is all the work of our salvation. Everything that Christ did is so good. Look at the atonement and justification of God's elect by the blood of the Lamb; is not that good? The law which we transgressed, dishonored, Jesus fulfilled, magnified and made honorable in our behalf. Is that not good? Look at the unwavering, perfect obedience of Christ, which is unto and upon all who believe. Jesus Christ is Jehovah our righteousness; is that not good? He ransomed his people from sin, death, hell and the grave; is not that good? What say you, poor sinner? My heart says, It is all so good, very good, nothing is lacking, love's redeeming work is done; here I can rest, this is the soul's sabbath, and, O my soul, keep the sabbath, mar it not with thy works.

The temple was the resting-place of the ark of the covenant of the Lord, (1 Chron. xxviii. 2,) the resting-place of the Lord. (2 Chron. vi. 41.) This is my rest forever, here will I dwell, for I have desired it. (Psalms cxxxii. 14.) This is what our God calls "my place." (Hosea v. 15.) "Every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this man [Christ Jesus] after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool."—Heb. x. 11–13. Jesus sat down a Priest upon his throne; his work of atonement is done, he rests, he reigns on high our Savior God. He dwelleth between the two cherubims, and there (saith the Lord) I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat. (Exodus xxv. 22.) Sacred, sweet communion. We tell him all our woes and griefs, our sicknesses, our sins, our shame; we sigh, we weep, we pray at his footstool, we cry unto him, Have pity, have mercy upon a vile transgressor. God answers our prayers, communes with us, speaks to our hearts of Jesus' precious, cleansing blood. "Though thy sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

When the pilgrims journeyed in the wilderness the ark of the covenant went before them to search out a resting-place for them. (Num. x. 33.) All of this is sacredly typical of the person and work of Christ, the throne of grace, his priesthood, sacrifice, mediatorship of the new covenant. Here Jehovah rests. The atonement is made, reconciliation and everlasting peace are the fruit of the blood of the Lamb. At the mercy-seat within the veil we meet with God, and all is well; we have everlasting friendship with God through our dear Savior, and our hearts are saying, Abba, Father, we rest in thy love. Sacred moments; blessed sabbath. Do you know such happy moments at the mercy-seat? It

is written, "He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."—Heb. iv. 10. This is true in our first blissful moments of rest in the finished work of Christ, and in all after experiences of entering into and keeping the sabbath by faith in Christ we cease from our works. We are tired in them, we see they are all useless, all defiled, all rubbish; everything we have ever done needs to be washed in Emmanuel's blood, and we are given to see all that Jesus has done is so well done, so perfect, not a flaw, so beautiful, so essential, God-glorifying, so satisfying; our rest in Jesus is so blessed. He that keepeth the sabbath keepeth Christ. The believing heart embraces Jesus, loves him, contemplates his labors of love in behalf of perishing sinners, confides in his merits and enters into rest. In him and with him we have righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. We are refreshed in beholding his work, and we joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement. The adversaries may mock at our sabbath, (Lam. i. 7,) but there is no other for Israel. O where can a poor, perishing sinner find quietness, forgiveness, peace with God and happiness except in Christ? There could have been no rest for Christ, the Head of the church, if his people were not redeemed, and all the work to perfect them done, and his church could have no sabbath to keep holy with him if anything were lacking. But who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Who shall find anything undone? Who can point the finger at a blemish in what Christ has done? In all his work for their redemption he could say, I do always those things that please him, my Father. All he has done is resplendent in the glories of our God. All God's attributes are so revealed, so shine forth, that we are filled with delight in beholding the salvation of God. We sit down under the shadow of our dear Redeemer with great delight, and his fruit is sweet to our taste. Happy is that poor sinner who has eyes to see and a heart to admire and trust in the finished work of the Savior. Here he rests, he is comforted, his heart is cheered, for he sees by faith that the pleasure of the Lord has prospered in Jesus' hands. He feels no desire now to do his own pleasure, but he longs to live unto him who died for him and rose again. We call Christ's sabbath delightful, the holy of the Lord, and honorable. This is the place where God's honor dwelleth, for Christ hath magnified the law and made it honorable, and our hearts honor him, not doing our own ways, nor finding our own pleasure, nor speaking our own words, but we would only speak of his glory and power, and declare all the counsel of God. O this satisfies the soul, and is our everlasting consolation and rest. (Isaiah lviii. 13.) To keep the sabbath holy is to walk in the Spirit, to walk in love, having received Christ Jesus to walk in him. But are there not times when the child of God is far from keeping the sabbath? Ah, there are such times indeed; we seem to come short of entering into his rest. (Heb. iv. 1.) Instead of quietness and blessedness in Christ we are tossed about, we are laboring and heavy laden, we are in confusion, and are in a languishing estate spiritually. The fire has burned low, we are but smoking flax; an evil heart of unbelief has drawn us away from our Beloved; we are imagining to replenish the fire, to kindle afresh our devotions, our faith and love, and have gone out to gather sticks on the sabbath. Ah, all mechanical de-

vices are of no avail in the kingdom of God. It is not by human might or power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts; only thus we flourish and are fruitful. We are poor and unprofitable sinners unless under the gracious and instructive ministrations of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost. Him we must have shewing us the things of Christ, and glorifying Christ in our hearts, or we are soon astray and fail to remember our sabbath day to keep it holy. But I have reminded you, dear children of God, that it is only a foretaste that is ours of the rest that remaineth to the people of God. Here we are often called to endure darkness, we encounter storm after storm, and in the world we have tribulation; but amidst all the conflicts and the rugged way, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee." "Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

"When Jesus with his mighty love
Visits my troubled breast,
My doubts subside, my fears remove,
And I'm completely blest."

When he comes to visit us we sup with him and he with us, the fire burns upon the hearth. We gather no sticks on that day, for Jesus our Beloved keeps the house and has all things ready for the feast and rest; it is our holy sabbath day. But notwithstanding all our sweet foretastes of everlasting rest we sometimes in our sighings and longings exclaim, "O land of rest, for thee I sigh." And then, when all the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory shall be gathered home, when we shall see his face, when conformed to his image, arrayed in his glories we shine, then we shall be immortal, incorruptible, holy and without blame before him in love, a glorious church, an eternal excellency, and dwell with Christ forever. O then we shall praise him and love him and serve him; we shall never grow weary, but in immortal youth and comeliness we shall delight ourselves with Christ our Husband, Redeemer, our all.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

ISAIAH IX. 6.

"AND his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

For many years I have thought much upon the names here given to the Son of God, the Savior of sinners. I have many times in preaching referred to this comforting testimony declared by the prophet seven hundred years before the child spoken of was born, though the language indicates present time, a circumstance already accomplished. I can comprehend to some degree the meaning of each name given, five in all, except "The everlasting Father." Until recently I had thought it might mean Christ as God the Father, in the sense that Jesus taught: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," and, "I and my Father are one." This is a very deep subject and a great mystery, and I have feared to speak much about it, as it seems to me to be too sacred and too high and holy for a poor mortal to try to understand. Yet as Jesus taught that there is a Father and that there is a Son, and that the Father is in the Son and that the Son is in the Father, we must accept the truth as mysterious to mortals. Jesus says: I go to the Father, and, Because I go unto my Father; and, "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God."—John xiii. 3. Also: "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father."—John xvi. 28. Although there is a distinction made in the

three that bear record in heaven—the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, we cannot say that there are three persons in the Godhead, as some have affirmed. The Scriptures nowhere say that there are three persons in the Godhead. I think the only place where the word "person" is used in regard to God is in Hebrews i. 3. Here the Son is spoken of as being the express image of his (the Father's) person. The next nearest to it is 2 Cor. iv. 4: "Who is the image of God;" and Col. i. 15: "Who is the image of the invisible God." That God the Father cannot be seen by mortals, is evident. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."—John i. 18. "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."—Matt. xi. 27. Not long ago it occurred to me that I had taken the wrong view of the meaning of the name, "The everlasting Father," as I had formerly understood this to apply to the Son, signifying his unity with the Father in great power, wisdom and mercy regarding his kingdom gathered from the ends of the earth. Reflecting on this subject in connection with what Paul said about the two Adams, it seems that the second Adam is presented as the head of a family, the Father of a family, the same as the first Adam; one is compared with the other in relation to being a progenitor. Adam "is the figure of him that was to come." We may inquire, How is he the figure, acting for all his seed? Or was it in some other way that he is the figure of Christ, the Head of the church? "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." If Adam acted for all his seed in disobedience, then the second Adam acted for all his seed in obedience. Or, if when Adam transgressed, his seed transgressed in him, then the second Adam obeyed with all his seed in him. I cannot come to any other conclusion than this from reading the fifth chapter of Romans and the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians. As the choice of God's elect was made in Christ before the foundation of the world, (Eph. i. 4; 1 Peter i. 2; 2 Tim. i. 9,) why should not Christ be called by the holy prophet, "The everlasting Father"? This is a very deep subject, and I am unable to follow lines drawn by my imagination or intellect looking at the figure and the development of his children. It is only in a general way that any one can view the Antitype and the development of his children. Notice that Paul in Romans, fifth chapter, makes exceptions, a variation from the main assertion. "But not as the offense, so also is the free gift." "And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offenses unto justification." The judgment was by one, and all condemned. On the other hand, through many offenses is the free gift. Paul, in speaking again of one man's offense, (death reigned by one) uses the words, "much more," viewing the substance, the Antitype; they which receive abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. There has been much misleading in trying to follow the antitype to the completion of the spiritual family. In doing this we lose sight of the earthly family, the object of redemption, which was secured by the life existing in Christ before the world began. Extremes on this deep subject have filled the minds of brethren until

their imaginations have become settled doctrines with them, so that on the one hand nothing but purely spiritual beings, having nothing whatever to do with the earthly, are presented. On the other hand, to try to offset this error it is taught that the new, spiritual or heavenly birth changes the whole natural man into a spiritual man in time, who cannot sin. How the choice of God's children could be made in Christ before the world began, and the Adam family yet uncreated, is one of the puzzling things that reason cannot comprehend. If we could be contented with the certain knowledge of a few things which are revealed unto us it would be much better for our spiritual enjoyment. Certain it is that in days of old inspired men were limited in knowledge, and were in doubt about many things. Shall uninspired men to-day have perfect knowledge of the dark sayings of old and have no doubts about them either? If there be any difference, we are less wise than the ancients on scriptural subjects, notwithstanding our advancement in learning and science. Paul said: "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part." Here we see a limited knowledge. Prophecy also is in part only, that no man can tell what the future shall be, either from the record or from his experience. But the hope of the subject of God's grace refers to the next saying of Paul: "But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." Are we as the children of God waiting for the Lord? or do we anticipate what we shall be, and how? For instruction let us go back over eighteen centuries and hear the word again: "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."—1 Cor. xiii. 12. As expounders of the testimony of the Word we ought to read and reread what the apostle here says, that we may not get wise above that which is written. We cannot be certain of the kind of perfection that waits for us "in the dispensation of the fullness of times," because "it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."—1 John iii. 2.

Dear brethren, I have ventured to try to say something, but fear that I have failed.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., Jan. 28, 1913.

WALKER, Oregon, Dec. 13, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I am glad that you found my letter unobjectionable, and that we are agreed that the inspired writers often reproved, rebuked and exhorted against laying up treasures on earth, while very little, if anything, is written to encourage worldly vocations, or especially investments for gain; and since you have dealt so kindly with me, may I further presume upon your charity by unburdening my mind to you upon a subject which I suppose more than all others has been contended over, viz., the intelligence and power of God?

We measure a man's intelligence and power by his success in accomplishing what his heart desires, or by seeing how nearly he succeeds in doing his pleasure. A man is successful in erecting a substantial, commodious building in proportion to his ability to plan and to cause everything that enters into this structure to harmonize with the plan which he has predetermined. Should we see a man out among several piles of lumber, sawing, hammering and carrying pieces of lumber

about, and ask him, Where does this piece belong? or, if this or that piece should be square? or how many pieces are required like this? or does this or that one enter into the structure first? and he does not know, we at once have serious doubts as to the success of his undertaking, and, in fact, would entertain thoughts of his need of treatment for weak-mindedness. Yet we hear it argued time after time that the great Architect, Builder and Upholder of the universe is undecided and doubtful as to what material will enter into his great eternal building, and also as to how it will be prepared in time. But we know that in the plan which he gave to David for the building of the temple his wisdom was so perfect that the material which was to be gathered from the entire world had no flaw, and so minutely was every article described, with the manner of its preparation, that when it was brought to its place it went together with never an ism or schism, without the sound of axe or hammer; and of the house not made with hands, eternal and in the heavens, it was said, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." All things that belong to man, even life and breath, and all other things, are the gifts of God. "What hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"—1 Cor. iv. 7. The Savior, who spake as never man spake, said, Of mine ownself I can do nothing. The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Inspired Jeremiah said, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," and so does each one who has the Spirit say the same things. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned. The flesh and the Spirit are contrary one to the other. The Spirit puts no limit to God's wisdom and power. But for the man of flesh a god of wood stone, gold, or even of imagination, will suffice, so long as it bears such resemblance to the God of the Bible that those blinded by the god of this world cannot tell the difference. The less power he has, and the more dependent he is upon the power and works of man, the better he suits the man who loves the uppermost seats in the synagogue, and this gives the more opportunity to exact tribute and reverence in prescribing rules for those who will bow at their shrine to worship. But it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, whose all-seeing eye discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart. In Isaiah xlii. 8, 9, we hear him who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast, say, "I am the Lord; that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images. Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them." He declares the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, and being God and none else, he declares in the most positive terms, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." As to those who have gods of their own minds or hearts, of more or less intelligence and power, he saith, And "setteth up his idols in his heart, * * * and cometh to a prophet to inquire of him concerning me; I the Lord will answer him by myself: * * * and if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that prophet; and I will stretch out my hand

upon him, and destroy him from the midst of my people Israel." I am well aware that most, if not all, who worship a god of their own imagination would not ascribe to their god such things as the living God here positively ascribes to himself. But the true and living God does according to his pleasure in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, Why or what doest thou? People say that they would not worship such a God as this, and so did Nebuchadnezzar say, until God humbled him in the dust of the earth to eat grass with the beasts of the field, while seven times passed over him, then he recognized the Creator as ruling above, and saw that the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing. Another of old when humbled said, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?" Let man stand still and know that he is God. David said, Let the nations know that they are but men. Has not the potter undisputed power over clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? Now he who will do all his pleasure is preparing material for a building, whose grandeur and duration find no resemblance in Solomon's temple. Each component part of it is kept as the apple of his eye, and he has loved them all with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness has he drawn them; they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. This great Architect has every one's name and identity written in the book of life of the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world, and all who dwell upon the earth whose names are not thus written will worship the beast. (Rev. xiii. 8.) O vain and mortal man, of whom it is said that every imagination of the heart in him is evil continually, let us not belittle our omnipotent Creator by saying that he does not work all things after the counsel of his own will, when the inspired Paul declares in the most positive terms that he does. (See Eph. i. 11.) A limited god, an idol of the heart, may satisfy the vain Pharisee who lays claim to many good works of his own to help him along, being rich in self-righteousness and feeling securely clothed with a fig leaf apron, but when the living God of the Bible walks in his garden and discovers to him that he is naked, miserable, poor, blind, ten thousand talents in debt, with not a farthing to pay, that he is in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity, the only thing that can relieve his anguished expectation is to know that there is a living God, who is able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto him, and, beside this, to know that his intelligence and power are so vastly above every name that is named, either in this world or in that which is to come, that none can pluck them out of his hand. O vain man, does your God wait until he can find out how much material he can get for his building, or how that material may fit itself by works good or bad in time? If he be asked, Where does this piece of material belong? will he say, I do not know as yet? I do not know how often he will attend church, or how he will acquit himself generally. If he be waiting to pick out the best pieces of timber, may it not be possible that so many will exceed you in righteousness that your name will be found far down on the list? No, no; if your God be the living God, he has every hair of your head numbered. The mother may forget the child she has borne, but I will not

forget thee, saith the Lord. Though you may walk through the valley of the shadow of death, yet you need fear no evil. Though the world hate you, and cast you into the lions' den, or into the furnace, yet all things shall work together for your good, and this is because he works all things after the counsel of his own will. Paul said that nothing, absolutely nothing, could ever separate himself or his brethren at Rome from the love of God, and is it not fair to assume that this applies to all whom the Lord shall call? "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them: and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." Even the devices of the wicked shall accomplish his purpose, for he says by Solomon: "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."—Prov. xvi. 4. See also Rev. iv. 11, and note that all things were made by him for his pleasure. Shall the wicked whom he has made to do evil turn from their wickedness and do good, and so thwart his purpose? No, not unless the Ethiopian can change his skin and the leopard his spots, then those who are accustomed to do evil may learn to do good. Our God makes no mistakes, he will do all his pleasure. He did not make this world to be void of sin, evil and sorrow; he made it after the counsel of his own will, and in it made peace and created evil, and he also made the light and created the darkness, and we may learn a great deal by all these things in this life, through revelation of darkness and light, of good and evil, in experience. Darkness and evil will not enter that abode where the bride will at last ever dwell in the presence of her Lord, robed in his perfect righteousness, but she will see enough of it here to cause her to praise him to all eternity for his great love wherewith he hath loved her and given himself for her. God raised up Pharaoh to fulfill the purpose that he did, and he has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth, and it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. When carnal reason says, "Why doth he yet find fault?" Paul does not retract his language, but says, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" Is it not a terrible thing for the thing formed to say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? If you think it right to do as you please with the brute creation, which you did not create, even to inflicting pain and death upon them, why do you question His right to do as he pleases with men, whom he has created? We are all by nature the children of wrath, and our just doom would be destruction were it not for the intercession of Jesus for those whom he chose for his bride, and he paid their debt by his untold agonies and death upon the tree, being their Surety, that they should awake with his likeness in immortality and incorruption. There is a wonderful boasting of good works these days, as there has been from the beginning, and perhaps some of those who are made for the day of evil will some time say, "Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" But he will say unto them, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." It must have been some advocate of a limited god who darkened their conception of the true and living God, and if it were possible these would deceive the very elect. Brethren, does it not be-

hoove us to examine ourselves and our standard? Let us not use our standard, but His standard in the divine word of truth, and see if our conception of him is short of the revelation which he has made of himself. Let us see if our confidence in him is so complete that we have none in ourselves. The dear Savior attributed even the temporal things that he did to the Father that dwelt in him. As man, God did not commit his works to his Son. Paul said, "Boasting is excluded," and of wicked men he said, Are we better than they? No, in no wise, for we have before proven all under sin. If, then, the holy Son of God disclaimed of himself any goodness whatever, why should man, whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness, lay claim to favor, either in time or eternity? Do we see him working all things together for good to them that love God, so that we can love him with all our heart, mind and strength? Then we shall not be living in envy or fear of our neighbor, fearing what man can do unto us. Or are we as the Savior said to the woman of Samaria, worshiping we know not what? Can we conceive of a limit to eternity? According to his word there is no limit to his intelligence or power. Or is our understanding so limited that we presume that we can love both God and sin? If so, I am sure that we cannot long deceive the church that is guided by the Spirit of truth into believing that we are dead to sin and alive to Christ by contending that we are too good to sin, but that God caused us to sin to fulfill his purpose. The truth is that we are, none of us, too good to sin, and are already unfit for the Master's presence.

Your brother, G. O. WALKER.

(To be continued.)

ROLAND PARK, Md., Jan. 16, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I desire to send you two letters for publication in the SIGNS, if in your judgment it is proper to publish them. First I will mention the paper written and read by our dear sister, Mary E. S. Johnson, at their annual entertainment of the brethren and friends of our church, a season looked forward to and always enjoyed by us all. Brother and sister Johnson are truly interested in the welfare of the church, and in the comfort of her members, and always give us a hearty welcome. Her reference to myself made me feel very small, and yet it comforted my heart, for when such expressions come from such as I know sister Johnson to be, they are indeed as oases in the desert in which I so often find myself. Our Lord said to Peter, "Feed my sheep," and, "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." I take it that there is no better evidence of one's call to the ministry than that he does feed the Lord's sheep. O how my poor heart does sometimes yearn to know that the dear Redeemer has called me to preach his blessed gospel. There are times when the evidence is so convincing and sweet that I cannot for that time doubt it.

The other letter I am sending you is from sister Laura Paschall, in the far away west, whom I never saw or heard of until I received her letter. This letter was also a comfort to my heart. Our little church is in peace, as is usual with them. They all believe in the old-fashioned doctrine of the Bible as it was preached by the fathers, and they are content with the order of God's house, and we hope we realize how good and how

pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.

Your brother in hope,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

MY DEAR BRETHREN, SISTERS AND FRIENDS:—It has pleased our heavenly Father to suffer you all to be with us once more, and I hope we are thankful for the privilege, and again I will repeat that you are welcome to our hearts and home. During the past year not one of our loved ones has been removed from us by death, for which I hope we are all thankful to the great "I AM." Some are absent who were with us last year on this occasion, and how much we miss them, but we know that our God has a purpose in that, as he has in all things. The poet says, "Not a single shaft can hit, except the God of love sees fit," but our carnal nature says, I am not satisfied; why cannot it be this way or that way? But God in his wisdom, love and mercy knows best, and we must submit to his will. We know that he is the God of purpose, and while we miss the absent ones, and wish that they were here, we hope that some of them, at least, have bettered themselves by entering into the bonds of matrimony. We all wish them well. Now we have others present who were not with us last year, whom we believe have the truth in their hearts, and love to hear the joyful sound of the gospel. Some of us have passed through afflictions to which our merciful God has reconciled us. Paul said, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Holy men have told us of the benefits of affliction, and of the danger of ease. When the child of God beholds the Father's love in affliction he kisses the rod and blesses God. If we have the Spirit of truth abiding in us we can say with the poet:

"Though cast down, we're not forsaken,
Though afflicted, not alone;
Thou didst give, and thou hast taken,
Blessed Lord, thy will be done."

Well, dear friends, it seems that I have digressed somewhat from my first thought. I desire to write something for this occasion, and have followed the bent of my mind. Now, in closing, I will say that I think all will agree with me when I say that it has pleased our dear Lord to give us a preacher and pastor who has been taught of the Lord, and who feels that it is much better to get wisdom than gold, and that understanding is rather to be chosen than silver. Again, Solomon says, "He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good," and we feel that our pastor has been endued with wisdom from on high, and that he proclaims it with humility and sweetness. Also some of our brethren have been blessed in speaking in prayer, and with words of comfort and cheer. I trust that as a church we shall continue to be of one heart and mind always, and if we are led by the Holy Spirit we will be. May the Lord help us, is my prayer.

COLUMBIA FALLS, Mont., Nov. 18, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER ROWE:—I have just read your letter dated June 14th, 1911, in the Aug. 1st, 1911, SIGNS, sent me by my uncle. Your letter certainly was a comfort to me. Only the other day I read and meditated upon that chapter (2nd John), but it was not so clear to my mind as it has been since reading your letter. O, brother Rowe, as you say, "We know how much more joy there is in being together," but I am where I cannot be with any of God's chosen people. There is no church near here that I know of, and

no one who belongs to the Primitive Baptist Church but myself. I joined the church at Peace Valley, Mo., July 23rd, 1911, was baptized July 24th, went from the water to the church and have not heard a gospel sermon from that day to this, as I left there Aug. 22nd, 1911, before our next meeting days, which were Aug. 26th and 27th. You say, "Can we live alone? Do we not need the companionship of the saints?" None but those who have tried it know what a bitter trial it is, and I could never do it but for the strength and help of my God. He says, I never will forsake thee, and this blessed promise has been a great comfort to my tempest-tossed soul. Brother, the trials I meet in this western country are many, and sometimes I am almost ready to give up, and say, I will quit, but no, O no, may I never give up, for if God be for us, who can be against us? I want to bear my cross without a murmur, knowing that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Jesus suffered my guilt and shame while here on earth that I might live, and why then am I so weak as ever to complain? I believe with all my heart that if it be God's will, when his holy purpose be fulfilled I shall once more be permitted to join the saints here on earth in praising his holy name; if not, his will be done, and not mine. I get some good letters from the pastor and some members of my home church. My uncle has sent me several numbers of the SIGNS, and they are a comfort to me.

Pardon the liberty I take in writing to you, and when at the throne of grace please remember an exile from the church of God.

LAURA M. PASCHALL.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Feb. 9, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am resolved to once more pen you a few lines, although I feel unworthy to do so. You have been very patient with and faithful to me, and I love you for your forbearance. We are told to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For some days I have been sick, and lying upon my bed I have had plenty of time to think of my shortcomings and barren life. Like dear old Jacob, few and evil have been my days. The words, Judge a tree by its fruit, kept running in my mind and my heart was sad, seeing a barren, lifeless tree. At the time of our January meeting it was so snowy and unpleasant, and I was so feeble I could not attend, and time seemed very long to wait another month, but when the time came the sun shone on dry sidewalks and I had more strength and was very anxious to meet with the dear household of faith. Jerusalem seemed my chief joy, and the old chapel was so familiar and dear to me, where my grandmother, my father, mother and sisters had all worshiped, now all gathered home to that house of "many mansions" and I alone am left here, a poor, feeble, trembling worm, full of doubts and fears. When I entered they were singing, "He dies, the Friend of sinners dies," and my little hope seemed to revive as I went back sixty or more years ago to a spot under some trees in New Jersey, where it was whispered, "Jesus came to die for sinners." One thing I did know, and had been burdened with for many years, that, like Paul, I was the chief of sinners, was it possible that Jesus died for me? Then the world seemed full of sunshine and my heart full of praise, and in the evening I hastened home from school and locked myself in my room, and sang

aloud, "What wondrous love is this, to cause the Lord of bliss to bear the dreadful curse for my soul."

But I was going to tell you about the meeting that day. I was starved, being shut in for two months, and our pastor seemed to preach especially for me. The text itself was a drop of honey: "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious." O how every word encouraged my trembling, doubting heart, and I told the dear servant of Jesus I was glad I could be there to hear the joyful news: sinners saved by grace. At the business meeting three letters came from our absent members in distant States, regretting being absent and sending love and greetings. Then we sang, "Am I a soldier of the cross?" &c.

With love, I hope, I am your weak sister, LINA W. BECK.

MONTGOMERY, Ala., Dec. 29, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have just finished reading an old copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, April 15th, 1903, sent me by my dear brother Brock, of Montgomery, and am so delighted with the tone of the doctrine therein that I am writing to become a subscriber. I find after several years preaching that upon reading your paper I have been contending earnestly for the very doctrine that Old School Baptists seem to stand for. I certainly do believe, from the word of God, in unconditional salvation. I believe salvation is of the Lord. I believe our Father chose every one of his children in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. I believe every one of them was dead in trespasses and sin before he quickened them into newness of life, and I believe God works continually in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. His children are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained for them to walk in. I believe the Bible, or the word of God, was given to God's people, about God's people, for God's people. I believe God means "the world" made up of his people in John iii. 18, for no one can believe except a child of God. None can believe or will except those chosen of God before the foundations of this material world were laid. In very truth, the children of Satan have no part or lot whatever, as to the glorious promises of our Bible. Satan long ago deceived Babylon with the idea that all the human family might choose Christ and be saved, notwithstanding Christ expressly negatives the base lie in these words: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." No wonder Christ speaks of him as "the father of lies" in John viii. 44. Christ also at the same time told Satan's children this: "And the lusts of your father [the devil] ye will do." Again, I believe every child of God can say with the apostle to the Gentiles: "With the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." God's children hate sin, they loathe sin, and yet they do that they would not, still they are righteous in Christ's righteousness, holy in Christ's holiness. As Paul says in Gal. ii. 20, they "live by the faith of the Son of God." I believe our Father foreknew, predestinated, called, justified and glorified all his children. The great transaction is done. "It is finished." I love with a pure heart fervently all those who are called according to God's purpose.

I just felt moved to write this little letter, as I believe, by the blessed Holy Spirit. If you think it may comfort any

of God's poor children in this evil world publish it; if not, throw it aside.

Yours complete in Him,

G. W. TOWNSEND.

[WHAT a wonderful God is our God. How wondrous are his teachings, and how merciful his dealings with the children of men. Does it not seem peculiarly strange that a man should be called to preach and earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints "several years" before being brought into union and fellowship with the household of faith? Our brother, for such we believe him to be, has our best wishes and prayer that God will make him a polished shaft in his kingdom of grace. Read 2 Cor. vi. 14–16.—K.]

REESE, Texas, Dec. 1, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The time is past again for me to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, that blessed medium of correspondence for the saints while here in this sin-cursed world. How much good it does my poor, weary soul when I read of the trials and conflicts of the weary pilgrims, who say that they seek a city whose builder and maker is God. It is no wonder that Paul said while tabernacling here in this low ground of sin and sorrow, combating with his foes, It is through much tribulation that we enter the kingdom of heaven. I feel when I read such good and comforting letters as proceed from the pen of others, that I would be glad could I write comforting words as they do, but I find myself like the poet when he exclaims, "Sin is mixed with all I do or say," and as the apostle said, I cannot do the things I would, but the things I hate I do. But he wound up his account of this conflict by saying, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." From this the apostle could say, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." "For to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not," and so I hope I can also say, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." All the correspondents of the SIGNS testify to the same old story, which, after all, is always new to the saints. But Jesus is the way, the truth and the life, and the salvation of all his people. He is the first and the last, the Alpha and Omega of his people, without beginning of days or end of life. He is their all-sufficient Savior, and all who correspond with the SIGNS exalt him and abase man, and say, with Solomon, that man is less than nothing and vanity. They declare that God is a sovereign, and that he rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say, Why or what doest thou? Yes, they give God all the honor, power and glory for his love and mercy to all the happy recipients of his grace.

Well, dear brethren, all you who have wrestled with the angel, as did Jacob of old all the night, and whom the angel has touched in the hollow of the thigh and so made a cripple of you that your legs being unequal you cannot walk as you would like to walk as becometh saints, do you not feel as did the poet when he said:

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again"?

When you write that you think your trials and conflicts are more than those of any one else, then you are comforting some poor soul. When you think that your trials and doubts and fears are

surely greater than can be the case with any one who is a child of God, you are comforting one poor troubled heart at least, who is saved by grace, if saved at all. This is some of my experience, dear readers of the SIGNS. Farewell for this time. Will you pray for me and mine? This is a request that I make of you all. Now please pardon me for my delay in remitting for the SIGNS. I am a very poor man, and could not do better. I hope that things may be better by the time my remittance is due again.

From your little brother and sister,

M. L. & J. B. LILES.

WALDEN, N. Y., Dec., 1912.

DEAR SISTER:—I will try to write a few lines. Your postal received, and I will look for the letter you speak of writing me.

A short time ago the Baptist minister called, and said he had heard that some one of our family was a Baptist. M. R. said his wife was an Old School Baptist. He said his sister married in an Old School Baptist family, where Elder Vail preached sometimes. He was very nice, and said any time we felt to come to the meetings here he would be pleased to see us.

This is quite a pleasant day, and I suppose you are at preaching; I hope all can receive something. I was reading this morning while dinner was cooking, and will try to tell some thoughts that came to me. "All that the Father giveth to me shall come to me." He does not say, If you will, but "shall." When he speaks it is done. We hear it said by many, Whosoever will may come. It is only the poor child to whom the Father giveth the will; he "shall;" it is not of his own will, but the will of God. The child of the natural birth has no will to come or stay, but comes forth at the appointed time, the time God wills his birth. So it is with the spiritual birth: we have no will or power of our own. We cannot tell when it is the Father's will to bring us out of darkness into light; we are blind, and he alone can give sight. Jesus says, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." How safe in him! He came not to do his own will, but the Father's. It is his will that of all which he hath given him he should lose nothing. Not one of these little ones shall be lost, but are safe in Christ the Father's Son, for all power is given unto him that he should raise them up at the last day, but none can come to him except the Father draw them. What poor mortals, to think it is as we will to do or not, and that if we are willing to do our part God is willing to do his. O how much we have to thank God that in love and mercy he has shown us that all power is of him. But these things are hid from them; they cannot see; they cannot know except taught of the Father. All must be taught of him, the great and only true Teacher; if he draws them to him they shall come to him, and he will not cast them out. We are fed upon the bread that does not perish, but is everlasting life. Jesus says, I am that bread, and he that eateth of my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life. He dwelleth in us; he in the Father and we in him. Many who heard what Jesus said, said, This is a hard saying, who can hear it? It is only the true children who can hear it and love it; they have been given the hearing ear, and it is not of themselves, but of God. O how much we ought to thank our Father for all his goodness and loving-kindness; his mercies are many and great. I feel to thank him, but I know not how to as I ought. I

know I did not learn it from man, but was taught of God. All his teachings are true. Sometimes I have been asked what the Old School Baptists believe. I never wish to talk on the subject, as they do not know and I cannot tell them, but when pressed to do so, I try in my feeble way, only to be stopped with the words, O my, that is dreadful; I never could think that. I think then of the words, This is a hard saying, who can receive it?

Excuse all mistakes. Write me one of your good letters. Love to all the dear ones.

Yours with love,

HANNAH ROBINSON.

SALISBURY, Md., Feb. 21, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed find money order for two dollars, which please place to my credit on subscription to the SIGNS, and excuse me for tardiness, for I would have preferred to have been more prompt had it been so I could. The reading of the valuable paper has been a great source of comfort and instruction to me for the last twenty-six years, and I would feel glad could I offer a word of encouragement to the editors and publishers in their labor of love, for truly I feel it to be a labor of love on their part. It is very evident to me that the love of God has been shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given unto them. I feel it to be a fact that it is only the love of Christ that constrains us and enables us to render that service which is acceptable in his sight, therefore unto him alone is due all praise, honor and glory, that worms of the dust should praise him. Surely there are times when we know we do desire to ascribe greatness, goodness and faithfulness unto him, just as we have been made to witness these things in our own heart and life, and I do feel that language fails me to give full expression to these things, for I do know that God has been good to me (yes, even me) all my life thus far, and there are times when I have that feeling of trust and confidence that he will be with us all of our journey through. Yes, I have this when he gives it to me. Surely this feeling is as much a gift as anything else. Verily it is our God who forms the light, and I am glad that it is recorded that he also creates darkness. Yes, all of our times are surely in his hand; if such were not so, I would have no hope, for much of my time is spent in darkness. But the light always comes after the darkness; that has been so from the beginning: the evening and the morning were the first day.

But I must close, for fear I weary you. My present address is 603 Park Avenue, Salisbury, Md.

Your little brother,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

ROSWELL, Ga., Jan. 7, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—Since I last wrote you I have passed through mixtures of joy and sorrow. The care and responsibility of my family, being assailed on every side by enemies, (especially within) have caused me at times to almost despair, but the Captain of my salvation has never deserted me. He will redeem us from the hand of our enemy. Thanks be to God that giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Then we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. I have been told by some who profess to be christians that they have never doubted that they were saved, but I cannot say this. One so weak and sinful as I would come far short of that blessed abode if it depended upon self or works. If I ever do reach that home it will be by

grace freely bestowed, for his great love wherewith he loved me even while I was dead in sin. We are begotten to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, to an inheritance undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them that are kept by the power of God ready to be revealed in the last time. Is not this enough? Should we not reverence our God for what he has done and will do for us?

I fear I have written you a very unprofitable letter, but excuse me, dear brethren, I have written more than I intended. I hope you will overlook my mistakes, for I am often ashamed of myself for making so many. My nature is very sinful and depraved, yet I hope that I have a hope in Christ that some time I will be separated from all sin and iniquity and shall be like him.

I want to thank you so much for the SIGNS. I am not able to pay for it, and would feel it a great loss to be without, but do not want to be burdensome to you. The cause of this attempt you will understand by the inclosed letter of brother John W. Dinning's, Ball Ground, Ga. Please send him a copy of the SIGNS, and help spread the truth among the Primitive Baptists in that section. Pray for me and mine.

Yours in tribulation,

G. R. JOHNSON.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., Feb. 17, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been earnestly solicited by friends to write for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES more often, but feel my ignorance and barrenness of mind so that I hesitate to try, and it is with a trembling hand that I make the attempt, knowing that the paper is filled with the product of far more able pens than mine, and I feel that there is nothing I can write that will edify or comfort the dear saints of God. I am like our dear aged brother Varnes, my hearing is so poor, and my eyesight is failing so fast, and my physical strength is so weak, that it is a task for me to do anything any more, and I seem to realize that the time of my departure is near at hand; but if I can be enabled by divine grace to drop a crumb or two my writing will not be in vain. I do not wish to murmur or complain, for I realize that I have been blessed beyond measure in many ways, and feel thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift that it is as well with me as it is, although I have had the stroke of his rod laid heavily upon me in the last three or four years; but he has brought me out with a high hand and an outstretched arm, and I am now able again to go to meeting, and sometimes I can hear the preached word of some who speak distinctly and not too fast, and I can see the dear brethren and sisters and hear them sing the sweet songs of Zion, which lifts up my drooping spirit and causes me to rejoice in the Savior's love, and feel that my Redeemer lives. But I am often in Doubting Castle, and shut in on all sides, and so low down that I wonder sometimes if I have ever been taught in the school of Christ. But when I think of that bright and beautiful morning when I arose, as I hope, a newborn babe in Christ, and was permitted to look on the lovely face of the dear Savior that I had prayed to him to let me see, my hope revives and I go on my way rejoicing for awhile, until another cloud overtakes me, and then I am down again.

Well, dear brethren, I will inclose an obituary of my dear cousin, Mrs. Maria Neel, beloved wife of John T. Neel, written by my dear niece, Mrs. George Hart, of Findlay, Ohio. I was well acquainted

with them both, having visited them several times. She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church at Union, in Perry Co., Ohio. I have been in that house and heard two funerals preached there. Sister Neel's funeral was preached by Elder Marlowe, text Romans viii. 10, 23; the hymn sung was "Rock of Ages." She left an aged and afflicted husband, one daughter, Nannie Parish, of Newark, Ohio, and a darling baby boy to mourn their loss. The boy is all they had to look to for sustenance, and now he is left broken-hearted and alone with his afflicted father, but the same Lord rules over them, and will take care of all that look unto him for help. Mrs. Neel was a faithful and highly esteemed member of Union Church, and was much devoted to the cause, and a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, as is her husband. There was nothing too hard for her kind hands to do for the dear saints of God. She was faithful in all things, and will be missed by them all. May God reconcile them all to every dispensation of his holy will, is the prayer of their affectionate cousin.

Now, dear editors, may the Lord keep you as the apple of his eye, and give you strength to walk in the strait and narrow way, and enable you to go on editing the dear old SIGNS to the comfort and edification of the saints of the Most High in the future, as you have in the past, is the prayer of your unworthy sister, if one at all, (MRS.) S. G. FRAZEE.

(See obituary on page 189.)

ST. JOSEPH, MO., Jan. 6, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I herewith send my dues for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. My home is yet at the same place, but our address is Station D, St. Joseph, Mo., R. R. 9. I want to say that the SIGNS is a comfort to us, and, if I am not mistaken, it advocates the true doctrine of God and the experience of those who have been translated out of darkness into the glorious light of the gospel of God's dear Son. We in times past walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. For the great love he had for them when they were dead in sins, he remembered them, has not forgotten them. O glorious thought, that our God has all power in heaven and earth, therefore can carry out all his will. He had willed them to the Son, and the Son says, All that the Father hath given me shall come to me, and I will in no wise cast them out. Glorious thought! although we may have gone in forbidden paths of vice and folly, yet he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever; manifests his love to us that he had when he chose us. I say "us," because I, even I, indulge in a little hope that he has manifested himself to me in divers ways and at divers times through my pilgrimage here, for which I sometimes feel to say, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord and Savior, who has blessed us in heavenly places in Christ our Lord, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose in Christ before the world began. O the depth of the mystery! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! Paul says, I received it not by man, neither was I taught it by man. Peter said, Thou art the Christ. Jesus said, Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And, Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. In the language of our Lord, all that have seen and learned of the Father com-

eth to him, and those who edit and those who contribute to the SIGNS believe the same: that God's people were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began. Then his people were chosen before Adam was created of the dust, and was nothing but dust until God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.

Will some kind friend write and tell me where to find in the Bible where God made a choice out of Adam's fallen race? I do not remember seeing that. Now I fear I have said something that I should not have said, but I will leave it to you. I do not think you will publish to please one and offend others, so I leave it to you.

J. L. MINTER.

LEBANON, Ohio, Jan. 8, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—My time has expired for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and you will please find inclosed money order for two dollars for the paper another year. I much enjoy reading it, and hope I will be able to take it as long as I live, for I receive very much comfort in reading the many good editorials and excellent letters from those I love to call brethren and sisters. Unworthy though I am, they can tell my feelings much better than I can, which makes me sometimes hope (almost against hope) that I have been taught in the same school by the same great Teacher. But

"When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark and vain and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?"

I am made to ask myself the question, Why does the Lord bear with me from year to year, and why am I not cut off as a cumberer of the ground? For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing. I am made to realize that every good and every perfect gift cometh down from the Father, in whom there is neither variableness nor shadow of turning, and what his soul desireth even that he doeth. My lot is cast where there are no Baptists near me, except my daughter. We go to meeting when we can, but must travel over forty miles by team to get to the place of meeting, and often the weather is not fit to go so far. Therefore I would admonish the brethren and sisters living near a church to not forsake the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is, but to meet often one with another and encourage one another as the Lord gives them liberty. Many of us are nearing the dark river of death. Soon the Lord will say to us, (I hope) It is enough, come up higher.

When it goes well with you pray for unworthy me.

W. S. AYDELOTT.

NOTICE.

IF nothing in providence prevents, we expect preaching in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn the fifth Sunday in March (30th), at the usual hours, by Elder H. C. Ker.

L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1913.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PSALMS XVII. 15.

"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."

David in this Psalm confesses his faith in God, and makes mention of the help which he had received from the Lord in his conflicts with the men of this world, who in wickedness sought to oppress him. In the verse preceding the text he mentions before the Lord the prosperity of the wicked, whose whole portion is in this world, who are full of carnal, fleshly pleasures, and who have no anxiety beyond, save to leave riches to their children. This arouses no envy in his breast, seeing that in heaven he has a better and more enduring substance which shall one day be his. The same thoughts in substance are presented in the seventy-third Psalm. In this last named Psalm he records the soul-conflicts which came upon him as he saw the prosperity of the wicked and the sorrows of the righteous, and in that Psalm he declares that it was only as he came into the sanctuary of God, that is, into spiritual communion with him, that he could overcome his weakness of faith and say at last: "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. * * * God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." The prophet Jeremiah, in the twelfth chapter of his prophecy, records in a brief manner the same conflict of which David speaks, yet he also had risen above the temptation, as did David, and confesses that the Lord, after all, is righteous in all his ways. But he, like David, desired to understand why the wicked prospered, while the righteous were distressed. To both of these servants of God was given the assurance that the things which were then were only for a time, and that in the next world the wicked should receive their evil things, while the righteous should find and be with God, and be satisfied. Our blessed Master gave the same assurance to those who love him, but yet are distressed in this life, while wicked men, who oppress the righteous, he declares shall in that coming state receive their evil things. This is the one special truth presented in this Psalm, and confirmed by many other portions of the divine record.

Now with special reference to the last verse of this Psalm, it is in our mind to say, first, that there is full evidence that even here saved sinners are now satisfied with the righteousness of Christ imputed to them; they have no other righteousness, they want no other. The discovery has been made to them that all their righteousnesses are as filthy rags, compared to the requirements of the righteous God, and then that there is a full and complete righteousness in Jesus Christ, which is imputed to them. "Jesus, thy blood and righteousness my beauty are, my glorious dress." With this they are all satisfied; they see in it no flaw, no spot, and the king's daughter confesses that this, her clothing, is fine gold. Not only do the saints count the righteous-

ness of Christ, imputed to them, above all price, but, on the other hand, they esteem all their righteousness, (not their sins) their best works and frames and feelings as altogether worthless; yea, as we have quoted from the prophet before, "as filthy rags." All this is true, and there will be found none among all the sinners saved by grace to dispute it. Legalists, self-righteous modern Pharisees, by which terms we mean all who in any manner trust in themselves that they are righteous, all who think to enter into peace with God here, and into heaven afterwards, by some work, some choice, some goodness of their own, may count the doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ for justification and final salvation lightly, and indeed strive to cast out the truth of this doctrine just because it robs themselves of all praise for their salvation; but all those who, however much they might desire it, after all cannot find one good thing in all their life, will continue to rejoice in imputed righteousness, and remain satisfied with it all their days below, and will rejoice to praise the God of righteousness and the righteousness of God to all eternity. But this is not what the psalmist is here speaking of. This he, as well as all believers, both in the old times and in the new or gospel dispensation, did receive with all his heart, and rejoice in. But here he speaks, not of what he has been doing or feeling, nor of what is now his satisfaction, but of a satisfaction that shall be, which he was expecting. In this David and Paul were in full agreement, and indeed not only they, but all prophets and apostles, and all saints in every age. Paul said: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better." Again he said: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do," &c. Again he said: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect," &c. David and Paul, and all who believe, do daily rejoice that there is redemption and salvation daily ministered to them by faith in Christ. As often as they look to themselves they are ashamed and afraid before God, but as often as it is given them to behold Christ, the perfect Son of God, they are filled with hope in believing, and can and do rejoice in the glory of God. But while Christ is so much to them as their imputed righteousness, they still daily are taught to know that they are imperfect in themselves. They have not attained to that which is promised them; this mortal has not yet put on immortality. They all are still wearing the image of the earthy, therefore they are looking onward and forward; they are looking and waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their body. In the Psalm under consideration David said two things: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness." And, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." Both words, "will" and "shall" in the text, mean that which is in the future. Both words also express positive certainty. This is true of them wherever they are used. So when David here says, "I will behold," &c., he means to say, It is certain that it will be so, and also by this word "will" he expresses the ardency of his desire for this glorious consummation. It is the earnest expression of eager longing. He means to say, There is nothing else for me; there is nothing beside that I desire; my heart is swallowed up in this one thing; what are all the boasted things of earth compared to

this which I desire? He is, as he writes these words, as a bird whose pinions are spread and whose neck is stretched out ready for flight. He is as one who would say, My business on earth is finished, and there remains nothing more for me among all the things that belong to earth. First, by faith he desires to look upon the face of the Lord, and not upon aught beside, and then he desires that glorious fulfillment of his hope, when he shall be like the Lord, for he shall see him as he is. I will behold thy face in righteousness. Like Paul and John, he believed that seeing his face he should be like him. It is sure that we are not like him now; the warfare is full evidence of that, yet our God sees no fault in us. He does not behold iniquity in Jacob nor perverseness in Israel. He remembers our sins and our iniquities no more forever. Here is our hope and our salvation. All this is true as we stand in Christ, justified freely by his grace through his redemption. But we desire full perfection, and this desire shall be satisfied, not here, but beyond. We have the earnest of the inheritance here, but we shall have the full inheritance itself there. But David does not even stop in his expectation with that entrance into the presence of God which saints know at the moment of death. He said: "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." It is never said of saints when they die, that now they are awake, but it is said many times in the Scriptures that they sleep; but sleeping and awaking are bound together inseparably. It is because of the hope of awaking again that when men die they are said to have fallen asleep, and it cannot be said of any one that they have awakened, unless they have first been asleep. Natural sleep, in our ordinary use of the term, is often referred to in the word as a boon from God to the weary. So death is robbed of its terrors to all who believe in God by calling it sleep. How gracious it is that the blessed God, our Father and Savior, through the finished work of the blessed Redeemer, has robbed death of its sting and made this mortal foe our beneficent friend. Jesus has conquered this enemy, and in him we shall conquer, too. We are given the victory of faith here, and in the hour and article of death we shall still find it, and then, in the resurrection, we shall actually triumph and enter into a real and personal experience of victory over death. All this is promised in the word, and all this David embraced in his hope, and then he knew that he should be satisfied. Our blessed Lord said of Lazarus: "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep." Then directly he said plainly: "Lazarus is dead; and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe." Jesus did indeed awake him out of sleep, but Lazarus was simply brought back to natural life once more, as were the two children raised up to life through Elijah and Elisha, as were the widow's son and the ruler's daughter, and as were the two persons named in the Acts. These all must still suffer, sin and die again, because only natural life was restored to them. To the awakening for which David longed there comes no more death, nor any sighing, nor crying, nor any sinning. Lazarus and the others who were raised up from the dead could not say, We are satisfied. They had not been raised in the likeness of the blessed Lord; but in that awakening to which David looked every desire after holiness shall be satisfied. As said near the beginning of this article, every poor sinner who has come to believe in Jesus, who has been made

wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption to him, and with whose perfect righteousness he has been clothed, and by whose blood he has been justified, is satisfied with all this that he sees in Christ, but he is not satisfied with himself. Christ is indeed his perfect Savior, but he is not yet perfect; he has not attained, he has not apprehended that for which he has been apprehended of Christ Jesus, and so he is not satisfied, and cannot be with his attainments in holiness, but he expects to be some day, and is promised that he shall be, and the hope of David was that this should be when he should at the last awake with the likeness of the Master. How glorious is the hope that we shall not only possess imputed righteousness, but also imparted righteousness. We shall then not only be counted holy, but we shall be holy, as God is holy. It is not until this vile body shall be changed that all this will be true. It is not until this vile body shall awake and be changed that we shall be satisfied. Our blessed Lord, after his ascension to glory, is represented as waiting until his enemies shall be made his footstool. It cannot therefore be amiss to say that the saints are waiting until this glorious consummation, this awaking, shall be attained to. It was a wonderful experience of grace that brought David to this state of looking and longing for perfection in the likeness of Jesus, and it was a wonderful inheritance to which he was looking. Unsatisfied now with all the world around him, unsatisfied with himself, unsatisfied with his attainments in true holiness, having conflicts within and without, enduring that warfare that must to the end go on between the flesh and the Spirit, it was graciously given him to believe in an inheritance beyond, a crown of righteousness which should be given him. In this he could and did rejoice. Amid all the conflict he was comforted by the memory that one day he should awake with the holy likeness of his Lord, and be satisfied forever. C.

FIRST VOLUME OF EDITORIALS EXHAUSTED.

As our supply of the first volume of Editorials is exhausted, we will be unable to fill any more orders for them, but have quite a number of the second volume left, which we are closing out at seventy-five cents each. As neither of these volumes was electrotyped, we will not be able to supply either volume after what is left of the second volume is disposed of. Address all orders to

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NOTICE.

TO THE FORMER SUBSCRIBERS OF "THE GOSPEL NEWS."

You will please when desiring to remit for the Signs of the Times remit to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y. It will cost no more to send direct to them, but if you send to me, and I then have to remit to them, it costs me five cents for each remittance: three cents for each one dollar, and two cents in stamps, so if you all remit to them through me, and do not send postage and amount for order, you see where I am left. It is just as easy to send to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y., as to me. It is a pleasure to me to know that my old subscribers are going to take the Signs, and I already know of a number of them who will. I hope you will be well pleased with the Signs.

To those inquiring about my health, I will say, I am getting back to my normal condition of health.

Yours in hope, J. M. PERKINS.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at the residence of the bride's parents, 1828 N. Twenty-first St., Philadelphia, Pa., Saturday, March 1st, 1913, Frank Garrett and Miss Florence Hellings, both of Philadelphia, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Elisha R. Harding, one of the oldest and most highly esteemed ladies of this city, passed away at her home, No. 20 Harding St., shortly before noon, Oct. 22nd, 1912, in the 87th year of her age, and by her demise breaks one of the oldest married couples in this county, if not in the state. Mr. and Mrs. Elisha R. Harding would have celebrated the sixty-eighth anniversary of their marriage had Mrs. Harding lived until Nov. 22nd, 1912. Mr. Harding, the surviving husband, is ninety years of age. Mr. and Mrs. Harding were both descendants of old Orange County families, and were among the most highly esteemed citizens of Middletown. Elisha R. Harding and Sophia King were married at the Seybolt place, near Otisville, N. Y., Nov. 22nd, 1844, by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, pastor of the Old School Baptist Church, of this city. Their whole married life was spent in this section, and all who knew them have watched their happy journey through life with pleasure. They have five children living: Mrs. C. C. Lutes, Mrs. David McBurney and Mrs. Warren J. Adams, of this city; Ashbel C. Harding, of Riverdale, Cal., and Charles Harding, of Omaha, Neb. Mr. and Mrs. Harding had ten grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Mr. Harding has one brother, George N. Harding. Ashbel C. Harding has a son Ross. Charles Harding has three children: MacMillan, Ruth and Carrie. Mrs. C. C. Lutes, of this city, a daughter, has one son, Wilbur E. Lutes, who has two children, Edmund and Helen Lutes, who are great-grandchildren of the venerable couple. Mrs. David McBurney, another daughter, has three children: Helen, Wilbur and Alfred, and Mrs. Warren J. Adams, another daughter, also has three children: Roscoe, Dorothy and Antoinette. On Nov. 22nd, 1894, Mr. and Mrs. Harding celebrated the fiftieth, or golden wedding anniversary, surrounded by their children and friends. God had mercifully spared them to their children.

[THE above is a clipping from one of the daily papers of Middletown, and while it speaks of many special things concerning our dear sister, we desire to add a few things. Sister Harding was one of the most gentle, lovely women we ever knew. She was devotedly loved by all who knew her, and especially by her children and grandchildren, who have lost one of earth's dearest treasures to them. Sister Harding was baptized by Elder F. A. Chick sixteen years ago, in the fellowship of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church. She loved the assemblies of the saints, and was faithful to her profession and in all the walks of life. We all miss her, but know she is far better off than to be in this world of sorrow.—K.]

ALSO,

Elisha R. Harding's spirit took its flight Feb. 6th, 1913, to Him who gave it. Mr. Harding passed his 90th birthday last July. He attained his education from the public schools of the county and from the Montgomery Academy, and began teaching when about twenty years of age. Mr. Harding was highly respected by all who knew him for his noble character and sterling qualities. He was a man of strong mind and decided convictions, yet as tender and kind in feeling as a child. He loved that which is good and abhorred that which is evil; was honest and upright in all his dealings, and his word was his bond. Mr. Harding was a deacon of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church, of which he had been a member many years, and the place and doctrine preached there were dear to him, and until age prevented he was found there most every Sunday in the year. His familiar figure will be much missed in this city, and especially in his home, where he was devotedly loved by his children and grandchildren.

[THE above is another clipping from the daily *Times-Press* of Middletown, to which we shall add some facts regarding the life of our dear brother Harding. He was really more like a father to us than a brother. Few fathers are more interested in the welfare of a son than he was in our welfare, and we owe much to him for the valuable kindnesses shown. He was a son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Harding, and was baptized by Elder Gilbert Beebe in the fellowship of the New Vernon Church, and ever loved the place where God's honor dwelleth. Brother Harding was a gifted man in prayer and exhortation, and sang beautifully the songs of Zion even to the last. For some time he had felt that his stay here below was short, and seemed perfectly reconciled, as he always did to all things, being strong in faith, giving glory to God. No man could be more settled and rooted in the doctrine of God's sovereignty than was he, and we shall ever be grateful to the Lord for the acquaintance and companionship of brother and sister Harding. He had been in his usual health until a few days before his death, and only a severe cold then seemed to affect him, and no alarm was felt by his children until the morning he died, when his heart action became extremely weak and very suddenly he stopped breathing and was gone. Surely a good man has fallen, and one sadly missed. We conducted the funeral service of both sister and brother Harding, and they were sad, sad occasions. These funerals were largely attended, and the interments took place in the New Vernon Cemetery. May grace, mercy and peace be ministered to the dear children by Him who is able to comfort all that mourn.—K.]

Elijah White, our dear brother in Christ, departed this life Feb. 28th, 1913, at his brother's home, Adamstown, Frederick Co., Md. His death was sudden and a great shock to all his kindred and friends, though he had been ailing for a long time, and it was known that his trouble was incurable. Brother Elijah was a son of the late brother Joseph and sister Ann White, two noble pilgrims of the cross, who, though long since gone to their rest, still live in the hearts of God's people in this part of the country, esteemed as pillars in the house of God. Also he was a nephew of the late Elder E. V. White. Of the immediate family left to mourn their loss there are two sisters: Mrs. Mollie Pratt, of Wheeling, W. Va., and sister Rosie Furr, of Adamstown, Md., and five brothers: B. F., Arthur and Furr White, of Adamstown, Md., Newton White, of Upper Marlboro, Prince George Co., Md., and John White, of Terre Haute, Ind. Besides these there is a very wide circle of relatives, friends and acquaintances, who will miss him. He was born in May, 1863, near Poolesville, Montgomery Co., Md., on the home place of the family, called Mt. Nebo, and all his fifty years were spent in this section, so that he was well and widely known throughout the county. It was the blessed privilege of the writer of this notice to baptize brother Elijah into the membership of the New Valley Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun Co., Va., Sunday morning, Oct. 20th, last year, immediately following the last session of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, held with the above church. The preaching at that meeting was much blessed to our brother's comfort. Five years before this time he first saw himself a sinner in the sight of a just and holy God, and for a long time labored under that burden of sin and condemnation, but at last realized a precious and comforting hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. He had for a long time desired baptism, but felt himself to be utterly unfit for the communion of saints. When he did finally come to the church it was in such fear and trembling, in such childlike simplicity, that all hearts ached for him, and with one consent the whole church gladly welcomed him. One expression he uttered then will not soon be forgotten by those who heard it: "Jesus is the sweetest name in all the world." After his baptism he confessed to the writer that he felt that a great load had been lifted off his soul. Two weeks after that time he said he was still realizing that wonderful and inexpressible peace which comes only to those who by grace have been made to walk in obedience to the Savior's commands. It has never been our lot to meet a more humble-minded follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, one who thought less of himself or that loved God's people more. The evidences he was enabled to leave behind him of his acceptance in the Beloved are in this hour of trial a great solace to all who loved him.

The funeral services for our dear brother were held Sunday morning, March 2nd, 1913, at Beallsville, Montgomery Co., Md., conducted by the writer, remarking upon the last portion of the eighth chapter of Romans. Interment in Monocacy Cemetery. "Thy will be done." H. H. LEFFERTS.

LEESBURG, Va., March 2, 1913.

Alzinia Cole Brayman, widow of the late William Henry Brayman and daughter of the late Elder Loren P. Cole, departed this life Feb. 25th, after an illness of seventeen days of pneumonia. She was married Oct. 12th, 1862. Her husband died about twenty years ago. She united with the Old School Baptist Church at Gilboa when in her nineteenth year. She related her experience the second Sunday in October, 1859, and was baptized the following day by her father. After her marriage and removal to the place where she lived with her son at the time of her death, she removed her membership to the Middleburgh Church, of which she was ever a faithful member, and loved to meet with the brethren and sisters. A short time before she was taken down in bed she said she was with her Savior for about fifteen minutes, and he told her among other things that her departure was at hand, and when she was taken with the chill and put to bed they asked her what they should do with her clothes, and she said: "Hang them in the clothes-press, I will never wear them again." In the first days of her illness and as long as she was rational she wanted to talk of her Savior. She suffered terribly during the long days and nights that she was confined to her bed, resting but little day or night. She leaves five children, ten grandchildren, four sisters, two brothers and many friends to mourn their loss. Although we shall all miss mother, we feel that our loss is her gain, and that her work and sufferings are ended and she is with her Savior.

Elder John Clark, her pastor, spoke comfortingly at her funeral from these words: "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him." Hymns 1256 and 1257 were sung.

Her daughter, AGNES B. GOODRICH.

Mrs. Margaret Robinson, wife of Wm. Robinson, died at her home near Forest Hill, Md., Feb. 9th, 1913, aged about 72 years. She was the daughter of Isaac and Jane Varnes, and was born in Juniata Co., Pa., where she grew up to young womanhood. At the age of twenty-two years she was married to Mr. Robinson, and had ever since her marriage resided at Forest Hill, Md. She leaves to mourn their loss a devoted husband, one son and one grandson, two sisters: Mrs. Lee Grafton, of Baltimore, Md., and Mrs. Samuel Horning, of Mifflin, Pa., and one brother, E. D. Varnes, of Farmington, Ill., besides a large number of nieces and nephews and a host of friends. My

dear mother, who departed this life nineteen years ago, was her sister. We who knew Aunt Margaret well feel sure that her interest in spiritual things dates back many years, but because of a deep felt sense of unworthiness and unfitness for a place in the church she long stood without, but at last, in May, 1910, she was given strength to come and ask a place in the Harford Church, where she was gladly received, and baptized by Elder J. T. Rowe. Aunt Margaret was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, but she had many doubts as to her interest in that salvation, which led her to be continually searching for evidence of the genuineness of her hope. "Yes," she would say, "I have a little hope, but O, it is so little." She was a great reader of the SIGNS, and the back numbers which she had preserved for many years she would read and reread, finding much comfort in them, especially in the experiences. In her last sickness she suffered much. All that loved ones could do was done for her, with the hope of restoring her to health, but the fiat had gone forth, the Lord had called, Child, come home. Her dear husband, our Uncle William, though in feeble health himself, was untiring in his devotion to her, seeming to forget himself in his anxiety for her. May the Lord bless this dispensation of his providence to the good of us all. We know that for her to die was gain, but the flesh is weak, and we can but sorrow that we shall see her face no more.

Elder Eubanks spoke at the funeral from the words, "Jesus wept."

JENNIE GRAFTON.

FOREST GROVE, Md.

Lucy Frances Clore Rush was born Nov. 7th, 1841, and died Nov. 27th, 1912, aged 71 years and 20 days. She was married to James N. Rush, August 12th, 1860, joined the Primitive Baptist Church in October, 1882, and lived a true christian until the Savior, whom she loved and served, said, Come home to rest. Sister Rush had been in poor health for three or four years. The last time I visited her, which was some three weeks before she died, she was suffering greatly, and said that if it continued that way she wanted to go home, where there would be no suffering, and I feel she is at rest with the loved ones who have gone before. Sister Rush is survived by her husband, five sons: William, Madison, George and Elmer, of Ottumwa, Iowa, and C. H., of Hedrick, Iowa, and two daughters: Mrs. L. Nickels, of Kansas City, Mo., and Mrs. Emma Goodwin, of Ottumwa, Iowa.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer at the home, 530 N. Hancock St., Ottumwa, after which the body was laid to rest in the McCormick Cemetery to await the Master's call. I pray that the Lord's blessing may rest on the family, and that his Spirit may guide them through life.

J. W. BRADLEY.

Mrs. Rosina Williams was born Nov. 17th, 1836, died Feb. 17th, 1913. She was married to Thomas Williams June 2nd, 1855, and lived in Steuben County nearly all her life. She was the mother of six children, two boys and four girls, of whom two are dead. She leaves behind, besides her four children, one brother and two grandchildren to mourn her absence. She died at the home of her son-in-law, Mr. Warner W. Graves, Penn Yan, N. Y., who, with his wife and other children, did all that loving hearts and hands could do for their dear mother, but the time had come for her to depart and be with Christ her Savior, who has called his dear, weary, suffering child to her eternal home, to dwell forever with the Lord. She was sick five weeks, and had two strokes of paralysis. She was baptized by Elder A. St. John in 1848, uniting with the Rikers Hollow Old School Baptist Church, of which she was a loving, worthy christian sister until called hence. She was a very affectionate mother, a kind, helpful neighbor and friendly to all with whom she was associated or brought in contact. We believe that each of the four children has a good hope, therefore they do not mourn as those who have no hope.

The funeral was held at the home of her son-in-law, Mr. Prestler, of Ingleside, N. Y., Feb. 21st, where a large congregation assembled. The writer of this notice endeavored to speak words of comfort to the dear mourning ones. May God bless with sustaining grace each mourning soul, is my desire.

D. M. VAIL.

THE community was greatly startled Thursday afternoon to hear that the spirit of **Mrs. John T. Neel** had taken its flight to the better world. Death came very suddenly from acute heart trouble. She had been confined to the bed only a little over a week. She had gotten able to be up and around, and seemed to be improved in every way. Maria Grove was born near Thornville, Ohio, Oct. 20th, 1855, departed this life Jan. 30th, 1913, aged 57 years, 3 months and 10 days. She was united in marriage with John Neel Oct. 29th, 1874. To that union were born two sons and one daughter, one son having preceded his mother to the grave. The surviving children are Mrs. T. B. Parish, of Newark, and Mr. O. G. Neel, of Columbus, Ohio. She also leaves a heartbroken husband, three grandchildren, one sister and two brothers. To these are extended the sympathy of the entire community. She was a good neighbor, a devoted wife and a loving mother. Mrs. Neel united with the Primitive Baptist Church called "Union," near Thornville, Perry Co., Ohio. She was baptized by Elder G. N. Tusing the fourth Sunday in November, 1879. She quietly fell asleep without a struggle, to await the resurrection.

(MRS.) GEORGE HART.

FINDLAY, Ohio, Jan. 30, 1913.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 81. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1913. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FRAGMENTS.

WHAT a wonderful word is Love; how deep, how broad, how full of sacred meaning, how infinitely comprehensive, and yet inexpressible. In the New Testament it is dwelt upon by all of the inspired writers with great variety, and yet every one who has felt its sweet and holy power and blessedness will seek some new form of words in which to tell of its wonders.

The apostle John says: "Perfect love casteth out fear." These words were given to me once, I must believe, with divine power; they lived in my soul many days, and I lived in them, it seems to me, though that is much for me to claim.

Paul, speaking of the abiding power and enduring quality of the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, names sixteen things which cannot separate us from that love, and then includes every "other creature" in that wonderful list, thus assuring the absolute security of all who have ever known that love, (Romans xxxv. 39,) and yet those who have surely felt that dear love in their hearts will give place to doubts and fears, and say;

"'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought,)
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

In another place this same apostle, expressing to his brethren at Ephesus his desire and prayer for them that they may know the love of God, tells some wonderful things concerning that love and those in whom it dwells. First, he bows his knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in prayer for them, that they may know this love; this knowledge I understand being a daily vital experience of its blessed power.

Second, he expresses the truth that part of the family of God are in heaven and part on earth, and that all of them in heaven and earth are named of Jesus Christ.

Third, his prayer shows that all the living children of God in earth, in order to know this love, must be strengthened, according to the riches of Christ's glory, with might by the Spirit in the inner man, and that Christ must dwell in them by faith.

Fourth, those in whom this infinitely blessed grace of the Spirit shall be felt and manifested must be rooted and grounded in love, sending their roots, as

a plant or a tree, down into the sacred soil of love, and grounded like a pillar standing firmly upon the solid Rock, upholding the order of God's house.

Fifth, all saints have a measure of this comprehension, which includes and embraces the breadth and length and depth and height of this boundless and incomprehensible love.

Sixth, still a greater wonder: to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge; to know what cannot be known. The mortal powers of the wisest man cannot know this love, but to the babe in Christ the knowledge comes without effort, as the breath of spiritual life. The love of Christ passes all human knowledge, the natural heart cannot know it. It is not the love of man, but the love of God, which is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost. We feel to be so vile, so unholy, that we cannot be a fit dwelling-place for that holy principle. But sunshine may fall into a polluted atmosphere, and it cannot be polluted; it may fall upon a heap of corruption, but it will not be corrupted or stained.

Seventh, and the last and best is that to know that love of God as it is here so wonderfully presented is to be filled with all the fullness of God. This is beyond my power to comprehend, or even to think, yet I do love the sweet truth so wonderfully presented. O that I may be given more ability to comprehend this wonderful love, and to feel some little measure of the fullness of God. Love is the deepest, broadest, most glorious thing within the range of thought, and yet nothing is so easy and so sweet to do, or rather to experience. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." God is love, and he that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. May that love be more felt in our hearts, and go out in word and act to all the family of God.

THERE comes a time in the experience of a child of God when the enormity of his sins in the sight of men is lost sight of in the more terrible enormity in which they appear in the sight of God; when any injury done to men by his transgressions, though unspeakably great, and its just punishment fearful, is in a manner swallowed up in the greater dimensions it assumes as we see it in the sight of God, who is "of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." In that state of mind we are constrained to say: "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight."

Now we are fearfully alone with our sins before God, who is our Judge. No excusing ourselves now, no comparing ourselves with others, and our transgressions with theirs as less enormous; no saying to ourselves, Others have done worse; no place for self-pity. A just God is our Judge.

This is indeed being alone with our sins and transgressions before that holy God. He has set our sins in the light of his countenance, our iniquities are ever before us. And can we see Jesus now? Can we have hope that there is a possible way in which he can come to our help? He was terribly alone in the garden of Gethsemane, with all of the sins of his people upon him in all their bitterness and guilt, and no man, not even his three dear disciples, with him. In view of that awful scene how can a poor, guilty sinner ever complain of loneliness, and pain, and agony, and separation from men, and desertion by them all? And how terribly alone he was upon the cross, not able to understand in that awful hour why the Father had forsaken him.

Through such terrible loneliness and anguish he comes to his people as their Redeemer, having borne their sins, with all their guilt and shame, and as having been buried by baptism into death for them, and thus washed them away, and opened a channel of mercy for poor sinners, and brought to their knowledge and experience the blessed truth that where sin abounds grace does much more abound. And this is my hope, that this Jesus, who is my Judge, my Lawgiver and my King, has come into my poor soul, and still comes from time to time in my experience. And is this my hope today, that Jesus, who came to me near fifty years ago, is truly mine, and that he who is my hope has given me everlasting consolation and good hope through grace? And is it for the confirmation of my hope that I am left alone from time to time with my sins and sinfulness, causing me to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and to ask and beg the Lord to show me a token for good, and to say unto my soul, I am thy salvation?

How precious is this doctrine of salvation by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ through unspeakable mercy, when it comes to us, not in the letter merely, but dropping like the rain upon the thirsty soil of our hearts, and distilling like the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb and as showers upon the grass, because the name of the Lord is published as having done all this glorious work.

On the fifth day of January I was eighty years of age. What a wonderful thing that seems to me. Many people have lived to that age, and beyond, and I have not thought that very wonderful, but now that it has come my turn to know that age I am taken by surprise, and my mind dwells upon it with especial attention and wonder. No especial change is noted from the day before, nor in the days that are following. Some who are much younger than I are more feeble, and others who have seen more years are stronger. I have reason to be thankful for the health I enjoy, and for my ability to walk and work. But to be fourscore, to be eighty; how very old that has always seemed to me. The prayer of Moses alludes to the age of man, and says that if one gets to be fourscore years it is by reason of strength. It is good to feel that strength, and I can but be thankful for it, though we know it is very near the end of our mortal journey. But the prayer of Moses declares that this strength, by reason of which the days of our years have become fourscore, "is labor and sorrow." This is the condition of the Lord's people while under the law. Their days while condemned by the law "are passed away in God's wrath;" they are "labor and sorrow." Laboring to fulfill the law and to obtain righteousness by their works, yet sorrow is the result. Their works cannot bring them the righteousness they need, but they are left in sorrow. Work in this world is followed by success and gladness. One works to build himself a house, and succeeds. If he dies, another takes up the work and the house is built; but in this work to satisfy the law, sorrow is the result; even though a man live a hundred years, yet his work of this kind is followed by sorrow.

How good to realize that this prayer of Moses concludes with a supplication for gospel blessings in the work of Jesus; "Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children." Thus the beauty of the Lord comes upon us through the glorious, finished work of

Jesus. Then the natural age disappears, and we return to the days of our youth, and our flesh is fresher than a child's. Then the work of our hands is established upon us, and we find the church, where these gospel blessings are realized, to be "the perfection of beauty," for out of her God hath shined. (Psalms xc.)

GOLD was mentioned in the Bible very early, before the woman was made, and the place where it existed, and its character. "And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good." How long that gold had been known to be there, and had been sought after, we are not told. Why the place of its existence was mentioned so early, before there was society to need and seek it, and why the inspired writer mentioned that it was good, has often excited inquiry in my mind. It is evident that the peculiar qualities of gold which make it the most precious of metals, were very early known. It is the heaviest of all substances, is soft, very malleable and ductile, and is quite unalterable by heat, moisture or by most corrosive agents.

We find that gold is used by inspired writers as representing the faith of God's elect. The apostle Peter writes to the brethren of the heaviness through manifold temptations that may come upon them, "if need be," "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ."—1 Peter i. 7. Thus that most precious of all metals is mentioned first of all substances, in order that it may represent that faith without which it is impossible to please God, and which must be present in every exercise of the soul that can be truly called the worship of the true and living God, from Adam down to the last vessel of mercy who shall rise from earth to glory.

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." By faith we are justified; (Rom. iii. 28; v. 1; Gal. ii. 16; iii. 24; Titus iii. 7;) by faith we walk, not by sight; by faith we live; by faith our hearts are purified; by faith we stand; by faith all manner of wonderful things are done by the Lord's people, as recorded in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews and elsewhere throughout the inspired Scriptures of truth. By this wonderful power or principle spiritual things are received and known. It is the sight and hearing and feeling of the spiritual life. It is the evidence that we have spiritual life, and the substance of things belonging to that life, which we who are in the body hope for.

Gold is tried in order to assure those who have been given the gold that it is real. For the devil is always trying to disturb and harass the people of God with doubts and fears as to the reality of their faith. So the faith is tried by fire, or by some other temptation. The fire will destroy everything else, but the gold will stand the test and will come out of the fire unharmed. The Lord says: "I will bring the third part through the fire, and I will refine them as silver is refined, and I will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is my people, and they shall say, The Lord is my God."—Zech. xiii. 9. The silver needs refining, but the gold only needs to be tried. The strokes of affliction are hard and painful

as they fall upon the Lord's afflicted and poor people; the bitterness of their souls is hard to bear; the heat of the furnace they fear will consume them, but the faith with which they went into the fire is not injured in the least, while all that was false is consumed.

The heavy stroke that would destroy the false material, that would break to pieces the bdellium and the onyx stone, which are gems mentioned as being in the same place as the gold, only render the gold more desirable, more valuable, ready for use. Many most important things used in making the tabernacle, and in making the things used there, were made of "beaten gold" and "wreathed gold." The cherubims and the candlesticks and other things were beaten gold. Heavy strokes were necessary in making the thin sheets of gold used to cover much of the woodwork in the temple. No metal can be beaten to a greater thinness to be used in the delicate work. But we do not read of anything being gold-washed.

It is said in referring to the land of Havilah, where there is gold: "And the gold of that land is good." I do not suppose that this implies that there was gold that was not good. Of all that the Lord made he said that it was good, not meaning to say that some things were not good. But in regard to this there seems a reason why this gold is said to be good. I think of this land of Havilah as the gospel land, and this gold as there in the beginning of the manifestation of spiritual things, to show the infallible character of the faith of the Lord's people. We can say of faith, It is good, it will never fail. So it is said, "The gold of that land is good." In every respect it is suitable, the very thing that is needed to show the absolute perfection of everything pertaining to the character and work of God so far as it is revealed to men.

Peter says that the trial of our faith is much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire. Though the gold will stand the trial by fire, yet it will perish some time, but the faith of God's elect will never perish; it will last to the end of time, when it will be needed no more.

The faith by which we see the church, and all spiritual things, is referred to as gold. The new Jerusalem, which John saw by faith, was pure gold, like unto clear glass. No mortal eye could see it. The street of the city was pure gold, as it were, transparent glass. This street is Christ. "I am the way," he said. His people walk in him. In all that great city there is only one street, only one way, which is Jesus. By faith alone can that street be seen. The clearest, most powerful and far-reaching sight of the strongest and wisest man can never discern it, nor can any one, even with the strength of the lion, enter into that street. "The redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

The faith by which that street is seen and walked in is called gold, and so the street is "pure gold, as it were transparent glass." The gold of that gospel land is good; it comes down from God out of heaven.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb., 1913.

WINNSBORO, Texas, March, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—In the March 1st number of the SIGNS I notice an article over the signature of brother C. K. Haines, and editorial remarks following, which gives rise to some reflections in my mind that I feel inclined to pen down for your consideration. The subject mainly dealt with is predestination. Brother Haines seems to entertain the idea that one who believes in unlimited predestination cannot consistently live in church fellowship with those who do not so believe, (as I understand him) even though they be agreed on all other points. I cannot agree with this idea. Those who have been readers of the SIGNS very long do not need to be told that I am a believer in the doctrine of predestination, and do not object to the word "absolute" prefixed, and the words "all things" following. I do not remember seeing anything editorially or otherwise in the SIGNS on the subject too "hard" for me. Yea, I have ever loved the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for its plainness and firmness, connected with its mildness and forbearance along the line. Here in Texas the matter has been made a test of fellowship, and the Baptists have been divided for some years. The bars of nonfellowship were set up, however, by the limited element. I have never heard of a single church that believes the doctrine declaring nonfellowship for their brethren who do not so hold and believe, nor do I remember in all the past years since the contention began among us of meeting a single brother of our faith who desired to make the matter a test of fellowship. I am truly glad in my heart now that this is so. The matter, however, of raising bars and dividing and alienating brethren who could and would get along together, is another question. I do not think it fair to take a few would-be regulators as a sample of an entire body; such by misrepresentation and a domineering spirit no doubt detain many where they would not remain if they understood the true situation. The greater portion of my time in Texas (about thirty-five years) I have lived in the church with one or more members who did not fully agree with my understanding of the doctrine of predestination. They have not been contentious, however, and I love them and have never felt that I could lift my hand or voice against them, as to church fellowship, for this difference, so long as they were willing to live in peace and maintained an orderly walk. I have wondered where the nonfellowship business would end if we should proceed on the ground that we would fellowship none in the church but were perfectly agreed on every point of doctrine. Among those who are fully agreed on predestination there are those who differ on the spiritual birth, and in some places there have been divisions on this subject; and the same may be said of the subject of the resurrection, the final destiny and disposition of the wicked, the condition of the saved between death and the resurrection. These are questions about which brethren have differed, and still differ, and no doubt there has been some needless speculation about all these things. Many more factions would we be divided into than we are now if all who differ on those different points should seek each other's exclusion from the church. We are all imperfect creatures, our language is imperfect and our understanding of it is also imperfect, therefore one often sees (at least as he thinks) involved in an expression what the speaker or writer does not see and does not think

is involved in it. I do not mean to convey the idea that there is never any real difference, but I do think often the difference between brethren is in the understanding of words and expressions. Where such is the case, if free intercourse, with all due forbearance and charity, will not obliterate the difference, all of which would be cut off, or very much hindered, by one party excluding the other from church fellowship, I cannot tell what would be of any benefit. Leaving aside all those who would set up their own understanding and judgment as standards of orthodoxy, let us suppose a case of two brethren who sincerely desire the truth, and nothing but the truth, and who love the peace and fellowship of the church, and I feel sure that there are such brethren on both sides of this issue. A believes that God alone is eternal, the great first cause of all causes, the just and righteous, holy, all-wise and all-powerful Creator, possessor, upholder and final disposer of all things, and that after the counsel of his own will. To his mind this necessarily involves the predestination of all things. He looks upon the things of time, as from the beginning to the end, though diverse and many, as constituting one mysterious whole, in which the perfectly wise Creator had a purpose good and righteous, and that the end designed is sure of accomplishment; each circumstance and event forms a link, or part of link, in the chain of circumstances and events necessary to bring to pass the end designed. To his mind this position is abundantly sustained by Scripture testimony. To deny this to his mind is an impeachment on the wisdom of God. If this be founded upon evidence given from above, mixed with knowledge of the frailties and deceptiveness of human nature, the one desire will be to love, honor and reverence the holy name in which he believes, and at the same time to walk in all kindness and charity among his brethren, knowing that he has no room to boast. B agrees to all this, except he cannot believe that God absolutely decreed all things from the beginning, including the wicked actions of wicked men down the annals of time, though he finds so much said in the Scriptures which seems to point to this, like Joseph's sale to the Midianitish traders by his brethren and the raising up of a wicked Pharaoh, the crucifixion of the Savior, &c. Such things, as the late esteemed brother Respess, of Georgia, is quoted as saying, that though he could not understand the doctrine, some things "smack so strong of decree that it shuts my mouth." B cannot understand how these things could be before determined of God and he not be the author of sin. He looks upon predestination as causative in every event and act embraced, and in predestination he thinks of compulsion, as though men are compelled against their own wills to sin and wickedness. He is agreed with A in general on his idea of the being and perfections of God, and on the atonement. They are agreed that the salvation of sinners is by grace, that Jesus Christ is the only Savior and Redeemer of sinners. They have both been convinced of sin and of judgment, and have come to the one joyful hope in the one Savior. They are agreed on rejecting every theory and practice that would dishonor their Savior, by implying that he is not a whole Savior. They are agreed on order, as to the qualifications of a gospel church, and of individual members thereof. They both love and desire to honor their Master by an orderly walk and godly conversation. If all this be

true, these brethren have the Spirit of Christ, and therefore are his, and love one another; governed by this Spirit these brethren will dwell together in the church in peace. I have known of several cases in life who stood about as B in the above supposed case, who finally came to see and confessed the doctrine as held by A. But if they never do, we have no right to boast over them, for it is not our province to force any one to understand. While this is true, it is our privilege to express what we feel the Lord has taught us, and if we be so blessed of the Lord as to declare his testimony in that spirit of meekness and humility which becomes finite creatures, it will not likely prove offensive to those possessed with like spirit. It is the privilege and duty of those called thereunto of God to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and that with all boldness and righteous zeal, but it certainly behooves us to watch, lest our zeal comes of the flesh, pride, self-conceit, fleshly ambition.

Let us think for a little while of the immediate disciples of our Lord, how that they were with him in visible bodily form, and could and did ask him questions and receive answers, and heard much of blessed truth at his own mouth, and yet the most important part of it all was not understood by them. At times their words and actions proved that they did not understand what manner of spirit they were of. (Luke ix. 52–55.) Although Jesus told them in the language of the prophets how that he should suffer many things at the hands of the Jews, and should finally be put to death, yet they understood none of these things. It had been previously revealed to them that Jesus was the Christ, and they had the law and the prophets, which testified of him, yet they were dependent upon the Lord every day for every idea that was a correct one of his kingdom; even after the crucifixion and resurrection and ascension, when their understanding had been opened that they might understand the Scriptures, and the Holy Ghost was shed upon them abundantly, according to the word of the prophets and the promise of their Master. The apostle Paul said: "For now we see through a glass, darkly; * * * now I know in part," &c. Many passages and incidents might be cited to show that those inspired apostles were imperfect, and they were free to speak of the things of the heavenly kingdom as a mystery. "Great is the mystery of godliness." "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery," &c. Now if all these things be true with reference to the inspired apostles, can we expect more wisdom, light and knowledge among his people now? We are commanded to "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." If there were no burdens to bear there would be no need for the admonition. "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak," said Paul. Again, "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations." I would not underestimate New Testament discipline and order, as highly necessary for the welfare of the church, but we need much of charity and forbearance in its exercise. Paul said: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but re-

joiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." It is as necessary that our walk be orderly as that our belief be right. If we should believe all that the Scriptures teach, and our walk be uncharitable, or we be living in forbidden indulgence of worldly lusts, 'what profit have we? I have seen whole churches, and associations of churches, that were in the main sound in doctrinal sentiment, according to my judgment, but the walk of many was not consistent with their profession: too much love of the world and too little love of the church; too many unwilling to make the necessary sacrifices to manifest the devotion due. Let us note a few things said by the apostle James: "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?"—James ii. 14–20. Again: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."—James i. 22–25.

Hoping that what is here written may do no harm, if it does no good, I beg to remain your little brother in hope,

H. B. JONES.

[WE have always admired brother Jones' writings, but nothing more than the above article. It is written in such a kind and tender spirit that neither brother Haines nor any one else can be offended by it. Then it contains so much truth, necessary for us all to consider, that it is sure to do good. Perfect agreement upon all subjects has never existed in the church of God, all because of lack of understanding, either of different points of doctrine, or of each other, and sometimes both. But we should not fall out by the way, because we are brethren. We have thought for many years that where perfect agreement is upon the glorious plan of salvation by grace, that such brethren not only can live and walk together, but should do so. As brother Jones so well says, if we are agreed upon the subject of "absolute predestination of all things," and not agreed upon the subject of the new birth or the resurrection of the dead, there is still opportunity for division, and should we divide on all points of difference where would the end be? It becomes us all to study the things which make for peace, whereby we may edify one another, rather than desire and press division in the house of God. Some of the best brethren we have ever known were not fully established in the doctrine of predestination, and we are not conscious of ever feeling different toward them in our love and fellowship from what we do toward those fully rooted and grounded in that special point of

doctrine. Those acquainted with the SIGNS know that it has always advocated this doctrine, and should widespread controversy arise it would still stand for "absolute predestination of all things," but controversy on the subject would be very unwise, and we hope that our brethren will not press the matter. If those who do not believe it desire in the future as in the years past to raise "bars of nonfellowship" against those who do believe it, we shall be compelled to submit to such action, believing that it is also, for some wise purpose, predestinated, and that as there were differences, divisions and separations among the tribes of Israel, (the type) so must it be now among the churches in different parts of the world.—K.]

WALKER, Oregon, Dec. 13, 1912.

(Continued from page 173.)

IT is written, "The people of Israel were gathered together for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Again, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Thus we see that what men did was none the less wicked because of its having fulfilled the purpose of God, and neither were the doers of those deeds fit to dwell in the realms of perfect holiness and glory any more than, having made the reptile, that reptile is fit for heaven. This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments, and we cannot prove that we love him by reveling in sin against his commandments. If he has been so merciful as to make us new creatures in Christ, we then hate the things that we once loved; sin that was once a sweet morsel under our tongue, is now a sore thorn in our flesh. We must be killed to the love of sin before we can love Christ, or even feel the need of a Savior. If he has not killed us to the love of sin, and made us new creatures in him, we are not fit to ask the fellowship of his bride. This is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." If we claim that things transpire contrary to the will of God we at once claim that he is weak, and that there is a power over which he has no control, but let us remember that the carnal mind is enmity against God, as much so as the spiritual mind is against sin and Satan. In Isaiah, forty-fifth chapter, he tells of a people who had limited him, and in order that we might know that he is God, and there is none else, he claims for himself the full responsibility of forming light and creating darkness, of making peace and creating evil, saying positively, "I the Lord do all these things." Then shall we, because of the fear of embarrassing our God, say that he did not do these things? Now let us candidly ask, Is this our God? Or, Is he the God of that people who claim to have done so many wonderful works, the makers of idols, who shall all go into confusion together? There is no necessity of a halt for refitting any of the lively stones that God has called to be built up into his wonderful building, that building not made with hands, for in Romans, chapter eight, we find these words: Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son; and whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. Now who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? As these

living stones are brought from the ends of the earth they do not need to be tried by a six months' probation, and repolished in some modern man-made institution. Of the kind that need making over Paul said, 2 Tim. iii. 7, "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." Just as he also said to the church at Rome: The world by wisdom knew not God. But when he puts his law in the hearts of men, and writes it in their minds, he becomes to them a God and they become to him a people, "and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest." "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." The Savior said of this people who make up this wonderful structure: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." And, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will rise him up at the last day." And the Son of God said of the Father's choice, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." Of these lively stones, the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord, and there is not one misfit. Again it is written, The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. Then is it a small thing for vain, mortal man to assume the right to boast over his fellow-creature because he has acquired either temporal or spiritual blessings? Paul has said boasting is excluded. Men seek darkness rather than light, and for this reason they prefer a god of little intelligence and power. If our trust is in Him who never slumbers nor sleeps we have nothing of which to boast, but abundant reason to praise him from whom all blessings flow with all our heart, mind and strength. Paul, who supposed that he was not one whit behind the very chiefest apostles, speaking of those who falsely accused him, said, "Are we better than they? No, in no wise." Thus neither in the holy Son of God nor in his apostles, do we find any disposition to boast. Paul said, The life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Beside Him there is no God, all other gods are the work of men, and one of old said, Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm; he shall not see when good cometh, but blessed is the man whose hope the Lord is. His wisdom and power are so perfect that he can unhesitatingly say, I will not suffer you to be tempted above what ye are able to bear. They that trust in him shall not be confounded. We shall not be called upon to pass through any dark valley, nor over any rugged steep, but that he will lead the way. Peter said, As there were false prophets, so shall there be false teachers, and they shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and through covetousness, with feigned words shall they make merchandise of you. They shall promise you liberty, while they themselves are the servants of corruption. Their converts, whom they compass sea and land to make, shall again turn like the dog to his vomit, and as a sow that is washed to her wallowing in the mire. How could Peter, hundreds of years ago, so minutely describe a modern revival, with its

aftermath, except that God, who declared the end from the beginning, had predetermined it, declared it by revelation to Peter? Some say there is a difference between foreknowledge and predestination, but there could be no accurate prophecy of the future before it was unalterably fixed, otherwise foreknowledge would perhaps fail, and cease to be foreknowledge. Intelligence and power and predestination and prophecy can only be attributed to Jehovah. He said, I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass. It is declared that he created the wicked for the day of evil, and if the wicked compass sea and land to make one proselyte, they have only succeeded in making him twofold more the child of hell than they are themselves. No one has yet changed the skin of the Ethiopian nor the spots of the leopard; they are simply filling up the cup of evil, in contrast with the perfection of God. Shall we then say there is unrighteousness with God? Then tell me of one good act done to bring our God under obligation to bear with the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. Do you say he created them, and so is under obligation to them? So also did he create the poisonous asp, and made it good for its own purpose. But of the stones he could raise up children unto Abraham if he so desired. Then again comes the oft repeated question, What then is the need of preaching? Like all other things, in his wise economy the best answer is, Because it seemed good in his sight. The word of God does not ascribe power to preaching to bring souls to Christ, for it is declared, He "hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," and it is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us. Since the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. To his people, in Rev. xviii. 4, speaking of Babylon, he says, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." When he sends his ministers to preach his word he says to them, as he did to Jeremiah, Thou shalt go to all that I send thee, and whatsoever I command that thou shalt speak. And, His word shall not return unto him void, but it shall prosper in the thing whereto he sends it, and shall accomplish that which he pleases. His sheep hear his voice. Paul preached Christ and him crucified to Jews and to Greeks, to the one a stumbling-block, to the other foolishness, but unto us he said, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. When his sheep hear his voice they come out of the great Babylon of all false religions, and away from the makers of all varieties of limited gods; they are benefited by the foolishness of preaching. Brethren, I can say that my heart's desire and prayer to God is that our people may be saved from idolatry and from the plagues denounced upon the makers of idols. Paul said of Israel, "For I bear them record, that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." How true it is that except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. It is high time for God's people to cease to be yoked with unbelievers, as is commanded them in 2 Cor. vi. 14. For the welfare of his beloved church he has left on record many

plain, positive commands and warnings, beside the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper. This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. We ought to try the spirits to see if they be of God. "And if there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, [the doctrine of Christ] receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds." And, If we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption. How lovingly in second Corinthians Paul entreats his brethren to cleanse themselves, and in Ephesians to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. Rather, he said, reprove them. It is a shame to even speak of the things that are done of them in secret.

By a careful study of first Corinthians fifth chapter, we find close communion commanded in the plainest terms, and that to withdraw fellowship from one who persists in his sin is commanded in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is not necessarily saying that such an one is not a child of God, but he is to be put aside for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of Christ. It is a dangerous thing to take anything away from the word of God. Paul only felt free from the blood of all men when he had not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God. We usually judge more the prosperity of a church by the love and fellowship among them, and by their being taught of the Lord, and so speaking the same thing, than by the numbers. Dearly beloved, who have been born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, if you have been enticed into the innocent looking tents of a false worship of limited gods, into the abominations of great Babylon, you will do well to read the seventeenth and eighteenth chapters of Revelation, and to remember and heed the commandment of God, "Come out of her, my people." Also you will do well to remember the admonition of the apostle, Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

Since writing the above I have been pleased to read in some late numbers of the SIGNS what, to my understanding, is the same sentiment that I have here feebly tried to express. But I will mail this, and leave it to your judgment.

Your very unworthy brother, in the hope of immortality,

G. O. WALKER.

RUTH I. 16, 17.

"WHERE thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried."

When we consider how far back in the history of men this was spoken, and recorded as the feelings of one who was called by grace to know the drawing power of love for the people of God, there is room for much thought on the subject. How many in the past years have found themselves written down in this narrative and their hope strengthened as by a fellow-traveler. How many, and who, are now in the same condition, desiring to be at home with the people who worship God in spirit, yet feeling that they are strangers and poor, so have nothing to recommend them to the Lord's chosen. The Moabites were related to the Israelites, but since their gods are spoken of in the plural, we suppose they formed them with their hands to suit their ideals, much as people have ideals now who have no revelation of the being who is the Creator and Dispenser of all the universe. The difference in the two nations as held

to our view was in what they worshiped. Naomi represents a true worshiper of God; she went out from among the people she loved, in a time of drought, so as to better the condition of her family, but in the purpose of God Ruth was to find in Naomi's religion a response in her own breast. While both Naomi and Ruth seem to have been on very friendly relalations with the Moabites, there is one subject that is in their thoughts that they cannot talk of with these people, and people talk most of what they think most about. If a person never inclines to talk of religious subjects we naturally conclude they occupy a rather small place in his mind. By her desire to go back to her own country and people Naomi gives evidence of her faith in the God of that people, a God who although invisible yet guides the minds of his people, who has in all ages given evidence of his overruling providence, by delivering the people who had faith to pray to him by miraculous ways, and in the face of circumstances, as by the ark and through the sea, and yet a God who hears the child's prayer. Wonderful religion; I can see and understand it while I am writing, but when I stop telling it to others my doubts come back. That Naomi fully trusted in God we have in the eighth and ninth verses, where she says to her daughters-in-law, "The Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me. The Lord grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband." Naomi thus prayed for them in regard to temporal blessings. She had then not thought of them as more than natural kindred, and the love she had for them was natural love, but the love for and desire to dwell with her kindred was stronger, and she would leave these natural ties and also dissuade the others from leaving natural ties until Ruth said, Thy God shall be my God. So many years has this difference divided people that some have an unwavering faith in an invisible Power, who draws by the cords of his love, who dwells in the high and holy place, yet hears the prayers of the destitute, even to this day and age of the world. How many, and where, and who are you, that, like Ruth, desire to live among a people whose God is the Lord? Ruth expresses it in the words, "Where thou lodgest, I will lodge." She had a prospect, in a natural way, of more friends where she was already acquainted, but they did not know the God in whom she trusted. If one could only know what her thoughts were before this time it would be very interesting, but the evidence of her full trust in the God of heaven, and her desire to live with the people who worshiped the same God, are what has been left on record: "Thy people shall be my people." There is much personal experience that comes to my mind in this connection: the desire to hear people talk of their trials and deliverances, listening to and treasuring up bits of personal experience told by ministers while preaching, the difference in what I believed and the Methodist companions among whom I was raised, a little hope like a guiding star, all the time, that I should some time be identified with the Lord's people. I had the privilege of going to Baptist meeting, but I have lived among people of a different faith most of my life and know the hungering for the company and talk of the things of the kingdom. The idea of many of my neighbors seemed to be that God in this enlightened age has trusted the saving of sinners to the ministry, and to be able to save all classes of sinners these ministers must learn their

creed out of books. I imagine the Moabitish religion was just about as intolerable to Ruth when she thought of going back to it as Methodist religion was to my boyish ears. I often find Baptists who will not talk on the subject of religion, but some will, and I love their company. I can find plenty of people who will talk of corn and potatoes, but occasionally one wants a real good talk. Ruth was not disappointed in this respect, as we see by the conversation of both Naomi and Boaz; she found the company she sought. That she wished to spend all her days with these people, and in her every day life should share their joys and sorrows, we have in the words, "Where thou diest will I die." We frequently know of some who have but little to say of religion, yet who show a friendly feeling all through life, who when they come to die leave a request for some minister they have heard speak to preach at their funeral; sometimes they will even select the text they wish used; thus while never feeling worthy to be numbered or counted as followers of Christ, they acknowledge their faith, and wish to be buried with the Israelites. Again, others who are members will write out their reasons for a hope, and lest they might seem to wish to be noticed will not have it made public while they live, but would have the future generations to know of the hope that sustained them through life, the people they desired for their neighbors and the faith in which they died. "And there will I be buried."

A. E. RITTENHOUSE.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Dec., 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am confined on account of cold, and able to get about but little, and I am meditating upon the goodness of God, while feeling to be the most unworthy among all his little ones, if I am his at all; but I have hope. I also feel that I have been brought by a way I knew not. I trust he has given me that faith which believes this to be the work of God, for no mortal man could of himself have power to perform such wonderful works. I have tried to observe the precepts of the holy word as best I could in my weakness, but after counting up all the cost, without free grace I know that I am lost. The flesh and the Spirit are opposite one to the other. I feel my inability to perform any worthy act that could be acceptable to God. I hope I have been taught by that revelation which comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is neither variableness nor shadow of turning, that he is God, and changes not. Men change and are consumed, but the sons of Jacob are not consumed; their names are all written in the Lamb's book of life. Dear brethren, the people of God are a poor and afflicted people, living in many doubts and fears, yet in hope that God for Christ's sake has forgiven their sins. The great worthies whom God calls to stand firm to the end, many of them have been called home, but some are still spared upon the walls of Zion to cry aloud and spare not. These are persecuted for preaching the truth into which they have been called, but they trust in God to deliver them from persecutions and disgrace. Paul said that great trials awaited him in his humanity, but God gave him strength not to be afraid, but to go and preach Christ, and him crucified, among the Gentiles, as he was chosen for that purpose. The true church of God was chosen to afflictions and trials and temptations, but the fleshly man goes on with easy mind, with money and prayers, or with money and good works,

in helping God save the world. This is not another gospel, but a perversion of the gospel of Christ. The world is full of such teachings, all of which are the inventions of men. Christ suffered in the flesh for all his chosen ones. In all his afflictions he did not complain. He came not to do his own will, but the will of the Father. Such also is the case with his people in their flesh. We have no will power of our own to worship God in the beauty of holiness, but his people shall be willing in the day of his power. When thus made willing they feel to be condemned in their own self-righteousness, and are burdened with sin as with a heavy load which they are not able to bear, with all their plans of fleshly worship. Sin becomes such a great burden to them that they cry out from the depth of their hearts, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Then they acknowledge that all their sufficiency is of God. For such penitent, broken hearts as these Christ died, for them he suffered in the flesh, and had nowhere to lay his head. In like manner his people have no place for rest, save at his feet, and he is the Mediator between God and man. He is our advocate and our righteousness, he is the great Physician; he gives the oil of gladness, and bids us observe the example which he gave and left on record for us, and his example was to deny self in all things. Man has no part in forming the plan of salvation, neither does he have part in executing it; all was determined before time, and in time comes to pass in fulfillment of the Scriptures; nothing will ever fail in all God's purposes. I cannot withhold penning down the following true and beautiful words:

"A child of Jehovah, a subject of grace,
I'm of the seed royal, a dignified race;
An heir of salvation, redeemed with blood,
I'll own my relation, my Father is God.
He loved me of old, and he loveth me still;
Before the creation he gave me by will
A portion worth more than the Indies of gold,
Which cannot be wasted, nor mortgaged, nor sold."

Yes, bless the Lord, the debt was paid by the shedding of the blood of Jesus for those who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and this was according to the everlasting covenant between the Father and the Son. None can bring any charge against God; he is the potter, and man the clay in his hand, to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor, therefore hath he mercy upon whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. All this goes to prove that there is no power above God, and so all things work together for good to them that love him and who are called according to his purpose and grace. The Lord of hosts hath sworn, "Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." "This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth; * * * for the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" From the beginning of time to the present all power is of God; he is the ruler of the universe, and hath placed the bounds of his creatures, and as he knew their indignation against all his works, so he purposed the destruction that should fall upon man; thus he shows forth his power and his glory.

My mind is scattering in what I have written here, but I trust what I have written is the revealed will of God, and you are at liberty to publish it if you feel to do so. May God bless you in your labors, is my prayer.

Your brother in hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

LANHAM, W. Va., Dec. 19, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—By the request of brother J. M. Boes, of Ocean Park, Cal., I will give my views upon the Scripture recorded in Luke xxiii. 43, which reads as follows: "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." This is a place of bliss, a region of supreme delight or felicity, secured through the atonement that was made that day by the obedience and personal suffering of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, on the cross between the living and the dead. (Num. xi. 48.) The word of truth is that God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. (Matt. xxii. 32.) We read that one of the malefactors which was hanged with him railed on him, saying, "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." This was not the bleating of a sheep, but it was of the carnal mind, which always manifests that kind of spirit: the spirit of self-saving and of helping to save others; it is the mark of the dead. But we are told the other one "answering, rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss." None but those of spiritual mind can own the justice of God in their condemnation. The rebuke of this man proves him to have been God-fearing: "Dost not thou fear God?" This proves him to have been in the possession of life, a living man, sensible of his true condition. "O fear the Lord, ye his saints." "Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord."—Psalms xxxiv. 9, 11. "Fear God. Honor the king."—1 Peter ii. 17. Peter's address is to those who fear the Lord. The excellency of knowledge is that wisdom that giveth life to them that have it. To my mind these two principles characterize the true and the false; those who are for and those who are against. It is said, They that are not for us are against us. The spirit that caused this poor dying man to ask of the Lord that he would remember him when he came into his kingdom, is the spirit that causes every poor, broken-hearted sinner to beg for mercy of the Lord, or that he would remember him when he comes into his kingdom. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation."—Luke xvii. 20. This is a spiritual kingdom; it is the government or dominion of God, according to Isaiah when he said, "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness." John the apostle was given to view Jesus "the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth," unto whom it was said, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." The dominion of the Most High is an everlasting dominion. "I praised and honored him that liveth for ever, and whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation."—Dan. iv. 34. The full atonement for sin was made by Jesus Christ. Our sin and rebellion constituted a permanent bar against all hope of mercy, but the mercy of God was exercised in the way of justice. Hence the need of a Mediator, or of one who could satisfy the claims of justice and make a full and complete atonement for all our sins, and give us just reason to hope for a full deliverance from sin, and from all its terrible consequences, by the one offering made that day when Jesus hung upon the cross. Jesus executed his Father's will, by the which will we are sancti-

fied through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified;" that is, them that are set apart in the covenant of mercy. All the covenant family were equally represented by Christ upon the cross. He was their living and representative head, and for their consolation he has said, Because I live ye shall live also. Their life is hid with Christ in God, and when he who is their life shall appear, then shall they also appear with him in glory. The words spoken by the Savior to the poor dying thief were true beyond all doubt; that day his spirit was in paradise. For then shall the spirit return to God who gave it. (Eccl. xii. 7.) The antitype must be in perfect harmony with the type. "As Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." I feel to say that there will never be another such day as this "today" which I have under consideration, while the sun continueth to rise in the east and hasteneth to its place of going down in the west. To our natural understanding of time, from midnight to midnight is called a day and night, and so it is true that winter and summer, springtime and autumn, seedtime and harvest continue, and "day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." It is sure that Jesus will never again hang upon the rugged cross and die for sins, for it is written that he has offered himself once without spot unto God. He was once God manifest in the flesh, and upon this seventh day he finished his work and rested from all his labors. "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." This was not in the body as it shall be in the resurrection, but still in vital union with Christ, our living Head.

"Hail, sacred union, firm and strong,
How great the grace, how sweet the song,
That worms of earth should ever be
One with incarnate Deity.

One in the tomb, one when he rose,
One when he triumphed o'er his foes,
One when in heaven he took his seat,
While seraphs sung all hell's defeat."

This sacred tie forbids their fears,
For all he is or has is theirs;
With him, their head, they stand or fall,
Their life, their surety and their all."

Your brother,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 19, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—By request of the writer I cheerfully send you the following letter for publication in the SIGNS, if you think best. Brother Wiles is an editorial writer, I think, for the *Australian Particular Baptist Magazine.* It is good and pleasant to read the truth we love written by those who live on the opposite side of the earth from us, and to see that in all parts of the world the Lord's people are taught by one Spirit, baptized by one Spirit into one body, gathered together in the one name of Jesus Christ, and are dwelling together in unity.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

AUCKLAND, N. Z., Dec. 25, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—I am glad to report the due arrival of your kind, loving and interestingly instructive letter of Nov. 20th, which reached me a few days ago, together with another copy of "Songs in the Night," for which accept my hearty thanks. I notice also that you have written my name on the inside cover, under date of Oct. 10th, 1912, so therefore I accept it as a birthday gift from you, and pray now that our good

and precious God will in his infinitely rich grace and mercy not only sanctify the gift, but bless you yourself, the giver, abundantly. I wrote some time ago to try and cancel the request for this second copy of the book, because the original one, which it seems I had lent to an old lady to peruse, has now been returned (as then explained, I had neglected to note that it had been lent to her in my "books lent" book). However, it is now out again for perusal by one of the young lambs of the flock, and again I hope and believe that the Lord will bless it with its rich and true delineation of the Holy Spirit's work in your dear but not forgotten brother James. I thank you for your kindly reference to our little magazine, and I am grieved at the many, many inaccuracies and printer's blunders (uncorrected) in every copy. The paper itself is also very thin and poor, and now and again there are some things I cannot agree with in its pages. We live in perilous times, and you at your great age of eighty years on Jan. 5th, 1913, must realize that this fact is more and more the case, manifestly, day by day.

Just a word here with regard to the mistaken notion of so much "work being done for God and the Lord Jesus Christ to help the latter to save and evangelize the world." How truly awful such statements are. Why, I heard only a fortnight ago here a prominent Baptist preacher tell his audience that God cannot save a man if the man will not let him do so. One trembles before the omnipotent Jehovah and his sworn declarations, all sealed by the blood of the everlasting covenant, to hear such awful lies so boldly and wickedly spoken by poor, crawling, dying worms of the earth. You know, I am quite sure, the whole of the truth as to the revealed will of God in the Scriptures of truth in regard to this important matter, for the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant, even them that think upon his name and abhor themselves and truly repent in dust and ashes as poor, vile, guilty and helpless sinners.

But again I must curb my pen. Your remarks about the fact that distance by sea and by land, a few thousand miles on this earth, not separating our gracious Lord from his people, or words to that effect, were refreshing and comforting to me. "Lo, I am with you alway," were his own sweetly precious words, and is he not the great I AM? and is he not always near? Are not the everlasting arms of our omnipotent God always underneath? Is not his grace always sufficient? Is he not the Friend at all times who sticketh closer than an earthly brother? Are not all the promises yea and amen in him?

Now to conclude this short reply to your kind letter, which I was thankful to get, let me just get you to tell your dear people this one thing, namely, that it behooves them to be deeply grateful to God that they are privileged to hear the sound and enduring truths of the everlasting gospel of salvation for time and eternity by free, sovereign and omnipotent grace alone. It is not so here; you may be surprised, but it is true, sadly true. O may our God support and strengthen you during the remaining period of your already very long ministry, so that when the end comes (as come it will) you may be enabled, like dear Paul, to say: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give

me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

Yes, dear Mr. Hazelrigg, who I well remember hearing preach, has at length gone to his everlasting inheritance above. May we also be found ready with the oil of grace in our lamps when the Lord our God shall call.

If you think it for the glory of God, (my only desire) you may let the dear readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES also read this short reply to your own kind letter.

In covenant bonds, yours lovingly,
EDWARD O. WILES.

OTTAWA, Kansas, Jan. 30, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have been halting between a desire and a fear. I have a desire to tell you how wonderfully your explanation of the text I sent you has been blessed to my comfort, and a fear lest I weary you, or take up your valuable time with words to no profit. Yesterday I looked at the calendar to see how long I would have to wait for the next number of the SIGNS, and decided in my mind that it would not get here before next Monday, as it has been four or five days late for some months past. In a little while my husband came in with the mail and handed me the SIGNS, and when I saw that you had answered my request, instantly there was a trembling desire in my heart that the Lord would open my understanding to receive it. I have read it three times, and have felt that my heart would burst with gladness and love as I saw how clearly you had answered all my questions. I believe and hope that I read my own experience there. How much I longed to see you and to hear you preach. In the words of Elder Fenton: "When I find brethren have witnessed things which I have felt, tasted and handled of the word of life, (and we speak the things we do know) it is then I find such a stirring up of my mind that I feel sure these things are not established in my heart by argument, but by a living experience of them, and I hope that I have been taught of God, and though it all seems so beautiful to me, I have no power to teach others to know how amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts, nor can I cause them to cry, 'My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.'" The psalmist explains clearly to my mind who will desire to praise the Lord, when he says: "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever." Then he says: "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy; and gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south. They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses." Those who have been led in this way need no argument, urging or coaxing to exclaim with the psalmist, "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" Words are inadequate to express how comforting, true and encouraging this editorial seems to me. Israel of old seems a clear type of Israel to-day. Again and again were they brought low through oppression, affliction and sorrow. Their soul melted because of trouble, they staggered like a drunken man and they were at their wit's end; they cried unto the Lord, and

he delivered them out of all their troubles and brought them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. But it is said that they forgot (and so do we) that the Lord who hath delivered will still deliver. We begin to be careful and anxious about many things. How often have I proven this true in experience. I have toiled and toiled, but could make no headway. A few days ago I was reading about polluting the Sabbath. It appeared to me then that when we try to bring in any of our own works we are polluting the Sabbath.

How clearly and beautifully you have shown the difference between prayer and supplication. O, I think I know what it is to beg and to plead and to entreat the dear Lord for mercy. The ninth verse of the sixth Psalm is one of the many assurances given me that my little daughter would get well when she was sick: "The Lord hath heard my supplication; the Lord will receive my prayer." Once these words came to me: I have shown you these things, that when they have come to pass you may know that I have told you of them before. Once these words were spoken so plainly to me that I can never forget them: After you have tried to do all, and have failed, how you will love that One who does all these things for you. I am just as sure that all temporal blessings are in the hand of God, to give or to withhold as he pleases, as I am that eternal life is the gift of God, and that this life is in his Son.

Last winter there was much excitement for a time because an epidemic of spinal meningitis was greatly feared. I, too, was alarmed, and began to cast about for some way of escape, when the thought came forcibly that though it was all around us, God was able to keep us, and that he would do so. In an instant all was quiet, and I had no more fears. Once I was shown very clearly that God does not have to remove the clouds in order to take care of us; he is able to keep us in the storm. The three Hebrew children were saved in the furnace, not out of it. Daniel was saved in the lions' den, not out of it. My desire is to wait patiently upon the Lord at all times. The first words of the text describe me exactly: I am perplexed and disturbed, so that I cannot rest. When confronted with another time of distress I forget past mercies, and am again in fear.

Please pardon me for this intrusion, and when it is well with you remember me, a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all. ANNA McKINNEY.

[THE foregoing letter was marked "personal," but we do not think sister McKinney will object to its publication, for we think it will prove to be a pleasant letter to many. We can but add to this that we are truly glad she was enabled to find some refreshing in the article of which she speaks. The praise is all the Lord's.—C.]

HOPEWELL, N. J., Feb. 9, 1913.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—To-day after meeting sister Burke and I were speaking to you of the sermon, and now I feel like telling you a little more about it, yet hesitate, because it will be done in much weakness; but I remember your kind forbearance in the past, and that gives me courage.

For some time I have been much troubled about my faith, wondering what it would amount to if tried. It is very easy to think one has faith when there is none required, but how would it be with me if an occasion required faith to carry me through? A short time since, at

your house one evening we were speaking of texts, and of not remembering them very long. You spoke from these words: "Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me." Perhaps this was twelve years ago, and I have never forgotten it. Many times the text and the sermon have helped me, and now I feel the same about the texts and sermons of last Sunday and of to-day, especially to-day. About two weeks ago I became aware of some of the doings of wicked men, which are yet concealed, but if they progress may lead to perilous times. My mind went back to the days when the followers of Christ were persecuted for the truth's sake, and I began searching myself to see what my faith would be worth were I tried as they were, and I fear it would not compare with that of Stephen's and many others. Then after so many doubts lest my faith is without foundation, I went down to the meeting-house and you spoke from these words: "Who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us," and now to-day you told us about the faith which upheld Abraham in the trying hour. It does appear as though nothing could have been more appropriate for my situation. To-day it really seemed I forgot everything else while listening, and could see the whole scene of the offering up of Isaac as being enacted before my eyes. It is not that I doubt God's power—that gives me no trouble, I believe that to be all-sufficient; there is not anything too hard for the Lord, but it is this vile nature and these oft repeated sins that rise up like mountains. I am often at a loss to know if I love God, and why I am so satisfied with the things of this world. Do not misunderstand me, I am not pleased with myself, far from it, but I live on peacefully and contentedly, and if my affections were set on things above would this be so?

"If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse
Who have never heard his name."

For some time these words of Peter have been with me: "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." I think they may be given me for a reminder of my weakness, lest I, too, deny the Lord. If ever you feel to talk about these words I would be glad. To meet with the church and hear the gospel proclaimed is my chief joy, and yet I often feel to shrink from meeting the brethren because of my unworthiness. Their love and confidence are very sweet, and I pray God may so guide me that I may not bring reproach upon his cause nor a wound to any of his dear children. The kindness of the brethren to one like me is sometimes surprising, but very precious, and with Ruth I can say, "Entreat me not to leave thee." Surely the love of God passeth all understanding, and his mercy endureth forever, else long ago I should have been overcome.

With love to sister Chick and yourself, as ever, your little sister,

ANNA J. SUTPHIN.

CLEARMONT, Mo., Jan. 14, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—In looking at my address on cover I find it marked thus: Mrs. H. P. McClure, 1 March 13. Am I to understand by that that my subscription expires on the first of March, 1913? I would like very much to know, as I desire to keep my subscription paid up, for I am getting old and my health is failing, and I cannot attend church meeting very often, once or twice a year at the most,

and the SIGNS is my only preacher, and I enjoy reading it very much. I am now seventy-six years of age, and have read it continuously since a little girl, my father and mother being regular subscribers to it for sixty years. You will probably find their names on the records back in the early fifties: R. C. and Isabel Mason, of Nanvoo, Ill., and Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, and later on at Braddyville and Clarinda, Iowa. Both departed this life at Braddyville, Iowa, in the faith as taught by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so you can readily see what a blessing it has been to us as a family, and it is still very precious to me. Noting the advertisement on back of the SIGNS, I would like very much to have the Bible there advertised, and as I am not able to get the three subscribers I inclose herewith $2.25. Please send the Bible to my address, and oblige your sister in Christ,

HANNAH P. McCLURE.

FOREST GROVE, Oregon, Oct. 27, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I wish to secure the two volumes of the Editorials of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I herewith inclose a postal order for $1.25, and while writing will say that the little church constituted here on Saturday before the first Sunday in December, 1911, with seven members, now has a membership of nineteen. Elder V. J. Turnidge, of Sheridan, Oregon, is the pastor, and Lewis Moore, Forest Grove, Oregon, is church clerk. Elder Turnidge and wife and sister, M. Butler, of near Sheridan, came to our church by letter, also brother and sister Berry, of Nebraska, and Elder I. A. Moore and wife, of New Mexico, joined us by letter, and we have received five by experience and baptism. Since the constitution we have had visiting us Elders Pate, of Portland, Oregon, Wilson, of Oakville, Wash., G. E. Mayfield, of Elgin, Oregon, J. T. Barnes, of Touchet, Wash., S. B. Moffitt, of Newberg, Oregon, and J. H. Fisher, of Texas, all coming well laden with the glorious news of the gospel of our Lord and Master. After being without church privileges seven long years, the last year has (to quote the poet) "almost seemed to good to be true." When it goes well with you pray for us, that each one may be led in a way that will let brotherly love continue.

Unworthily,

J. P. AYDELOTT.

BELINGTON, W. Va., Dec. 12, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will try to write and renew my subscription for the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, of which I have been a reader sixty years. My father took the paper when I was a boy, and I will be seventy-six years old the 5th day of January, 1913. I am almost worn out, and do not go to our meetings in winter any more, as our meetinghouse is about five miles away, with a rough road leading there. I am a firm believer in foreordination, predestination and election, salvation by grace, and grace alone, and that God has all power. A Campbellite preacher once said to me that God had no power except in the Scripture and the preacher. I told him that if I had no other hope than the written word and him I would have none. There are three church-houses close to me here, but I do not go near them; it would do me no good, no food for me. If I live I want to read the good old SIGNS this winter. I hope God will bless the editors and writers.

Your brother, I hope,

ABRAHAM POLING.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1913.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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REFUTATION OF FALSE CHARGES.

WE have seen of late statements from more than one writer in some papers, published as Old School Baptist papers, to the effect that all those who believe in the predestination of all things excuse their own wrongdoing by it. We do not often feel called upon to take notice of charges of this kind, feeling as a general thing satisfied that the truth cannot be harmed by falsehoods like this, but we will call attention to this, as it has been so often repeated. We are not surprised when those who deny the strong doctrine of the Bible in toto make such charges as this, but we do feel surprised that any one who claims to be an Old School Baptist should be found taking up the assertions of open and avowed enemies of the truth. From our childhood we have been accustomed to hearing from the lips of believers in "free will," as it is called, just such assertions as the above. It is, and has been, the conclusion of carnal religionists that the doctrine of grace, including predestination, election, salvation alone by sovereign grace, and the final perseverance of the saints, is a dangerous doctrine, because they say it takes away all incentive from men to live right. This class of men believe, as Satan asserted concerning Job, that no man fears God for naught; but, on the other hand, that if a man serves God at all it must be with the thought of gaining something by it, and so it is contended that if the doctrine of the divine sovereignty over and in all that takes place in the world be believed by any man, straightway he will be found saying, Why then does God find fault with me? How have I resisted his will? But when men speak thus they speak as men who do not know the sovereign grace of God by personal experience of that grace and of its fruits in their own hearts. It is sure that all who have felt the power of sin first, and then of grace afterward, never have and never can feel like excusing their sins by saying, It was predestinated, and therefore I cannot help it. The predestination of God is a truth running in full parallel lines with the experience of accountability of the sinner. We have lived all our life among brethren who found their greatest joy in believing in a God of purpose, and predestination so full as to embrace all the thoughts, words and actions of men, and yet we have never met one among them all who did not bemoan his own sins, and confess himself justly condemned before the Lord because of them. We have never heard a single believer in this truth, when approached by another, and reproved for some fault or sin, say, I could not help it, it was predestinated and had to be. They did indeed believe that this word, thought or deed was embraced in the "all things" purposed of God, but yet did not think of excusing their sin by this. This has been our observation and experience. We do not know what kind of Predestinarian Baptists those, to whom we referred in the beginning of this editorial, have lived among, and if there be any who bear the name of Old School Baptists any-

where who do seek to remove blame from themselves when they have done wrong, by saying, I could not help it, because it was predestinated, we are glad indeed that it has not been our lot to live among them. But we are rather of the opinion that those writers who have charged such things as these against believers in predestination have been doing just what we were accustomed to hearing some in our early life do, viz., utter that which was false. At least they have allowed their anger against the doctrine to so pervert their power to judge justly that they have attributed their own thoughts and conclusions to others who would themselves reject them with horror. It is not a new thing for men to form certain conclusions regarding the doctrine which some one else presents, and then to attribute the same conclusions to those who contend for the doctrine, when these conclusions are very far from the minds of believers in the doctrine, and would not be admitted by them as legitimate conclusions at all. Believers in the predestination of all things do take blessed comfort in their faith, but it is not because they shelter themselves from blame by it. Rather it is because that in it they find their sure and abiding hope for salvation here and hereafter. Here is their safety providentially and graciously. Believers do not hold this principle of doctrine as a theme for debate, though they feel to contend for it, as we are told to do with reference to all the doctrine of God, and to contend earnestly, but they hold it as their life, their joy, the foundation of their hope, the sure rock upon which their feet may rest and which can never be made to even tremble by the assaults of all the powers of hell. Thus in the olden time Joseph's brethren sought no excuse for their sin, because Joseph, their brother, when he found them penitent indeed sought to console them in their grief, by saying to them that while they meant what they had done for evil, the Lord, who had appointed it all, meant it for good, to save much people alive. The fact that they were told God had only fulfilled his own purpose in all they had done does not seem to have relieved their own sense of guilt in the least, and this was as we might expect it to be with all who fear God in reality at all. So also the sin of Shimei was none the less because David confessed that the Lord had bidden Shimei to curse him. The sin of the prophets who prophesied falsely was none the less because the Lord sent forth into their hearts a lying spirit. All this may be and is mysterious, and our finite minds fail to comprehend it, as they fail to comprehend God in any of his ways, or in any of his revelations of himself. It is not ours to strive to solve the dark and mysterious doings of the Lord, or to seek to reconcile with our weak judgment his word of revelation, but it is ours to receive what he has said, and believe it, no matter how much out of line with our finite reason it may seem. Let us not forget that the Lord did mean just what Joseph's brethren did for good, and that he did bid Shimei curse David, but none of all these were in anywise the less guilty in what they did and said because it was predestinated. Those who deny predestination may think that they were less guilty, but believers in predestination will not think so. These same truths are declared by both Peter and Paul in the New Testament. Yea, more, they are declared by the blessed Master himself. It is sure that from the moment the Lord said to Peter, "Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice," it could not have been any other

way. Notice the particularity of the Savior's language. He names the number of times that the cock should crow: only once, not twice, should he crow before Peter should deny him, and then notice that he should deny the Lord not once or twice, but three times. Even to the smallest minutiæ did the dear Redeemer declare what Peter should do. Had he only said, Before the day dawn thou shalt deny me, some one might have said, O well, he knew what was in the nature of Peter, and could well judge that under the stress of the events of that night this disciple would deny him. But it was more than this: "Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice," and yet Peter did not take shelter and excuse himself under this prediction of the living Savior; on the contrary, when the Lord turned and looked upon him, he went out and wept bitterly. Had Peter been a denier of the predestination of God it is likely he would have said, If the Savior's words must be fulfilled, then I was not to blame; I could not help it. But being a believer in the infinite wisdom and purpose of the Lord he could not make this excuse. That which Peter felt for himself he also applied to others, and so we hear him saying that the Lord was delivered by the determinate counsel of God, and yet that men did what they did with wicked hands. Some one might say to Peter as he spoke to the people upon the day of Pentecost, Why do you charge them with the guilt of the betrayal and crucifixion of the Savior, since you say that it was done according to the will of God? But still he did charge that as wickedness upon them, and Peter spoke by inspiration of God, and was right; and so also he in substance said the same thing again when a little afterward he declared to the people that the rulers had conspired against the Lord and against his Christ, to do what the hand and counsel of God had before determined to be done. The strongest predestinarian that we have ever met never said more than Peter here has said, and all predestinarians we have ever known were just as clear and insistent upon presenting the sin of man in all his wicked deeds as they were in insisting upon the purpose and predestination of God in these same wicked events. This is true, not only of the old London Confession of Faith, but also of the testimony of the apostles and of all holy men of the former dispensation.

It will be well perhaps for us to note the course pursued by Paul when he was confronting deniers of the predestination of all things. Of late years we hear little said about the ninth chapter of Romans, and sometimes it is said, O you hinge everything upon Paul, but we feel like saying as we used to hear the late Elder Wm. J. Purington say again and again, "Thank God we have Paul." We surely need not repeat here the language of Paul in this wonderful ninth chapter of Romans. Paul asserts the wicked course of Pharaoh, and then declares the purpose of God in the course which he pursued, saying, "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee." Pharaoh did not know the Lord, and in all that he did he thought only of his own will. He did not know that he was only fulfilling the will of God, to his own shame and condemnation and punishment indeed, but at the same time to the glory of God. How good it is that the inspired apostle was given to see beforehand just the objections that would rise in the natural heart to this statement of truth. "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? for who

hath resisted his will?" Why should he condemn Pharaoh, if indeed that heathen king only fulfilled the will and purpose of God to his own glory and praise? Paul does not at all attempt to solve this question, let us not therefore attempt to solve it. Rather let us do as did Paul, let us say, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" There is no other answer required of us with regard to any of the purposes of God when men deny them. Let us not seek to give any other answer when men ask such questions as Paul here was considering. Ever since we were but a child our mind has stood in awe of God, so that we have not felt to dare question why things are as they are. We have believed that all is right in all God does, and have not desired to try to reconcile to finite reason the statements of his word.

"Not Gabriel asks the reason why,
Nor God the reason gives;
Nor dares the favorite angel pry
Between the folded leaves."

We have not desired at any time to make what it called a hobby of any principle of truth; that is, we have not desired to insist all the time upon one principle of doctrine, and ignore others, and so we have not written or spoken especially of this precious doctrine frequently, at least directly, but seeing the assertion to which we called attention at the beginning of this article our mind was somewhat stirred up, and what we have here written is the result.

In conclusion, we desire to add this one thought, viz., that it has been our observation that those who have most firmly believed in the predestination of God have also been most strict in their judgment of themselves, and most careful to maintain good works. They have regarded the name of Deity with reverence, and so have received his commandments with a solemn desire to know them and do them. They have at the same time most sorrowfully, and with indignation against themselves, acknowledged before God their sinful nature, and their departures in daily life from the way of the Lord, and at the same time have confessed with deep humiliation the justice of God in their condemnation, and have felt to pray to be kept from temptation, that all that they are and all they do may be to his glory. It may be true that carnally-minded men may turn even this truth into lasciviousness, as they do all other truth concerning God and salvation, but it is sure those of spiritual mind will never see in this, or in any other principle of truth, any license to commit sin. The firmest believers in the predestination of God are at the same time most careful to maintain good works. To present this truth, and not to argue the truth of predestination, we have written this editorial. We are persuaded that our brethren who may read these thoughts will confess that in some measure, at least, we have here set forth their own desires and experience with regard to this sublime doctrine.

One other thing we wish to notice ere closing: we have heard, and have seen in print, the assertion that Elder Gilbert Beebe was the author of the phrase, "absolute predestination." Were it so, it would not be to his discredit, but as a fact it was used by one of the most spiritual of men nearly a century and a half ago. Toplady, the author of the hymn, "Rock of Ages, cleft for me," used this expression, and wrote lengthily in defense of it, as will be found in the fourth volume of his works. We have thought it well to call attention to this fact here, in connection with what we have written. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

"IT IS FINISHED."

WHEN the beloved Son of God hung on the accursed tree, when his soul was poured out unto death, when frighted rocks were burst asunder, the heavens in sackcloth were veiled, when the rugged bars of death were loosed and tombs of marble resigned their sleeping tenants, when by the rending of the veil of the temple the ark and cherubims and mercy-seat were all disclosed, while, nerved with malice, Jews and Romans mocked, while racking pains and most tormenting smarts were inflicted on that blessed Lamb who bore our sins, when justice drew its flaming sword and vengeance struck the dreadful blow, when hell exulting in her hour of darkness, amidst the awful grandeur of that dreadful scene, the voice of triumph from the expiring Savior's lips shook the creation to its very centre; stern death, in dreadful terror clad, affrighted, paused and felt the thunder of that voice which in all the power and majesty of the eternal Godhead shouted, "It is finished."

With due humility and that reverence which becomes the ransomed of the Lord, let us inquire, What was finished? From the sacred record of eternal truth we learn that all was finished that the glorious Mediator had begun. Love was not finished, for the love of God had no beginning. Election and predestination, with all the perfections of Jehovah which shine forth in the economy of salvation, were not finished, for these were without beginning and can never, never end.

But something was certainly finished by the Savior when he in triumph gave the victorious shout, nor has our Lord left this important subject in the dark. He who runs may read. He finished transgression, made an end of sin, &c. He himself has declared that he has finished the work that his Father gave him to do. We eagerly inquire, What then was the work that his Father gave him to do? The Son of God responds, I come to do thy will, O God. I am come to do the will of my Father who sent me, and to finish the work. And this is the will of him that sent me, that of all that he has given me I should lose nothing, but should raise them up at the last day. And the Father has given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. A shining messenger from the world of glory came down from heaven to earth to announce the work that Jesus was to perform, viz.: His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. He finished the redemption of his people agreeably to the prediction of the psalmist: "The redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever."

First. He has finished the redemption of his people, and it ceaseth forever.

Second. He has finished, or made an end of sin, as far as it relates to those he represented.

Third. He finished the law as far as relates to its demands in reference to the election of grace and the fulfillment of its divine requisitions. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." Heaven and earth shall pass away, but one jot or tittle of the law shall not pass until all is fulfilled. He is the end of the law for righteousness unto every one that believes.

Fourth. He has finished transgressions, for his blood cleanseth from all sin. He has given himself for his church, that he

might redeem it from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Fifth. He has finished the curse, having borne our sins in his own body on the tree, and being made a curse for us, as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.

Sixth. He has finished the covenant of works, having blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which were against us, nailing them to the cross.

Seventh. He has finished the work of making sacrifices for sin. "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins."

Eighth. He has given a finishing stroke to the perfection of his people, for by one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified.

Ninth. He has finished death, having destroyed death and him that had the power of death, which is the devil.

Tenth. He finished the work of his sufferings, being now baptized with that baptism for which he was straitened until it was accomplished. When deep called unto deep, and the billows of divine wrath went over him, deep waters came into his soul.

Eleventh. He finished the complete pattern which he set for his children to walk in. Let no presumptuous wretch dare attempt to change the pattern of the things in heaven.

Finally, he has completely finished all that was written of him in the law, in the prophets and in the psalms, and all that was necessary to secure the eternal salvation and justification of his people, and left them to challenge wicked men and devils, to declare, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." It is Christ that died. He was wounded for their transgressions, he was bruised for their iniquities, and the chastisement of their peace was upon him and with his stripes they are healed. He sees of the travail of his soul, and is satisfied.

Reflection. Is it finished, or is something remaining to be done by the redeemed in order to secure the blessed objects of the death of Christ? If something remains to be done, whether it be using means, or giving our hearts to God, or our money to modern institutions, or sitting on anxious benches, or anything else, much or little, then is the work not finished, and the words of the expiring Lamb of God are contradicted. But be assured, dear reader, whatever relative duties are enjoined on the disciples of Christ, there is among them nothing to be added to the finished work of the Redeemer—nothing to render his redemption efficient or effectual, or to extend its benefits to any for whom God did not eternally intend it; so far indeed from it, all the good works of the people of God are the immediate result of the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing can be added to or taken from the work which Christ finished when he yielded up the ghost and bowed his head unto death. "It ceaseth for ever."

Here then the Old School Baptists find a sure foundation to build upon, and hence we preach Christ crucified, and proclaim a finished salvation in his worthy name—a salvation completely suited to the case of the poor, the needy, the halt, the lame and the blind; a salvation suited to the condition of every hungry, starving soul who by grace is made to feel his wretchedness and mourn his sins, but by no means suited to the case of the whole, who need no physician. The Pharisees of eighteen hundred years ago rejected this finished work, and from that day to the present it stands rejected, de-

spised, opposed and slandered by all the workmongers who have flourished in our sinful world. But tell us, reader, how do you view the perfect work and finished salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ? for be assured if you despise this doctrine you are yet in your sins, but if you love the doctrine and can feed on it you are not far from the kingdom.

ALEXANDRIA, D. C., Feb. 10, 1837.

[BY request we republish the above editorial.—ED.]

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, March 19th, 1913, at the home of the bride's parents, near Taylortown, Va., Algernon James Padgett, of Garrett, Ind., and Miss Mary Frances Rodrick.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Lydia J. Scudder, of Colesville, Broome Co., N. Y., died Feb. 28th, 1913, aged 76 years. She was the widow of Corbin Scudder, who died twenty years ago. Her maiden name was Jenkins. Four children were born to them, two boys and two girls. She had lived in the vicinity where she died nearly fifty years. She also leaves behind one brother, one sister and other relatives. She was baptized by Elder S. H. Durand about thirty-five years ago, uniting with the Otego Old School Baptist Church, of which she remained a loving, faithful member until removed from earth and earthly scenes to live and reign with her dear Savior. She was sound and clear in the doctrine of God our Savior, and contended earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. She had a stroke of paralysis last Christmas, and gradually declined until death.

The writer spoke on the occasion of the funeral, March 4th, at her home. Burial was at Sanitaria Springs, N. Y. God bless all who mourn.

ALSO,

Selam Oaks died Sunday, March 2nd, 1913, near Ansonia, Pa., aged 56 years and 5 months. He was the son of James and Jane Oaks, and was born in the vicinity of Jersey Shore, Pa. He leaves three brothers and other relatives to mourn, but not without hope. From conversations I had with Selam on several occasions I believe he was a living soul, and contended for the doctrine of grace. We believe that he is now present with the Lord.

The writer officiated at the funeral, which was held in a meetinghouse in Ansonia March 5th. Burial was near meetinghouse. D. M. VAIL.

"BLESSED are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." —Rev. xiv. 13.

My sister, **Mrs. M. M. Milner,** was born Nov. 30th, 1845, and died March 1st, 1913, after an illness of six weeks, making her stay on earth 67 years and 3 months. She suffered much, but bore it patiently. She was the eldest daughter of J. J. and Elizabeth Ferguson. She was boarding with L. L. Ferguson at the time of her death. She was married to John A. Milner in the year 1867; he preceded her to the grave twenty years. To that union were born seven children, all of whom died very young except two sons. W. W. Milner, of Vaiden, Miss., was with her during her illness until her death, and did all he could to keep her with him, but the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Her youngest son, S. J. Milner, resides somewhere in Texas. She leaves a host of relatives and friends to mourn their loss. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church in the year 1887, near Crandall, Texas, (I do not know the name of the church.) On Saturday before the fourth Sunday in March, 1905, she joined by letter New Providence Church, in Attala Co., Miss., and lived a consistent member until death. She was a great reader and dear lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and had been a subscriber for years. She earnestly contended for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and greatly enjoyed the company of the brethren and sisters. She attended her church meetings and all the associations she possibly could, and greatly enjoyed the preaching of all true Primitive Baptists, but none better than our present pastor, Elder J. M. Palmertree, of New Providence Church, who conducted the funeral services on the first Sunday in March, 1913, at the family cemetery. His text was part of the sixth verse of the twentieth chapter of Revelation: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." Brother Palmertree beautifully set forth the truth contained in the text.

Written by her poor, unworthy brother, saved by grace, if saved at all,

H. C. FERGUSON.

NOTICE.

IF nothing in providence prevents, we expect preaching in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn the fifth Sunday in March (30th), at the usual hours, by Elder H. C. Ker.

L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass.

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ELDER SILAS H. DURAND wishes to announce that his supply of the book, "Songs in the Night," is exhausted, and that he will be unable to fill orders for them in the future.

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SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILLIAMSTON, N. C.

I find the postage on my book, "Day unto Day," to America is 9 pence (18 cents), and I thought it would be 6 pence, or at most 7 pence. I think on consideration, as the expense of publication has been very heavy, notwithstanding a most encouraging sale, I had better say I will send to any of your readers the half calf gilt edge edition for 5 shillings ($1.20), or the cloth edition for 4 shillings (96 cents) postage free.

E. LITTLETON, JR.

CHAPEL HOUSE, CROWBOROUGH, England.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 81. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1913. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECY.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have been requested by several brethren to write on the above subject, and seeing your answer to sister Brewster in the last SIGNS causes me to enter the task with great fear and trembling, for I do not understand that subject as you do, and while we may differ in our application of those false prophets, I trust we have brotherly love and forbearance one toward the other, realizing we are only mortal and liable to error. Such views as I have on the subject I will send to you for your and Elder Chick's investigation, and if you feel to publish them do so, and if not, it is all right with me.

The text I wish to call attention to is recorded in 1 John ii. 18, and reads thus: "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time." Here we have the word "antichrist," which to my mind is as separate and distinct from the true Christ as day is from night or darkness from light. They have no fellowship or union with each other; one is set as representative, or leader, of one class, and the other of another class. Now this is the principle by which I wish to follow the subject. First, I want to notice the true Christ, his character, and from whence he came, and what was his mission. He came from his Father, (God) and his Father uses as many appellations to designate him as his Son, the true Christ, as he does his followers, and none of the names or appellations by which he calls him is applicable to antichrist. But all the holy men of old who were moved by the Holy Ghost to testify used the word "antichrist" as opposite to the true Christ, who is moved by the will and command of his Father, (God) while antichrist is moved by the prince of the power of the air, (devil) the spirit that now (in these last times) worketh in the children of disobedience, and for this reason Jesus says, Ye shall know them by their fruits. John says, "Little children." This appellation is foreign to the name he calls the followers of antichrist. By this we know it is the last time, for we have heard (the prophets spoke of the last time) that there were false prophets in former times, and there shall be false

prophets among you. Jesus says they shall come, and tells just how they shall come: in sheep's clothing; that is, outwardly, with all humility, and as far as the "little ones" can see or know they are truly brethren, truly children of the Father. But Jesus says they are ravening wolves inwardly, and the true Christ cannot be mistaken; he knows all things, he can see and know the false heart as well as the true, but the "little children," who have the spirit by measure, only know as it is revealed to them, and John now has the fact revealed to him and the little children that the last time had come, for the prophecy has been fulfilled in them. The prophet of old said: "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." So Job would say: "I have heard of thee [the true Christ] by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee." So you see the oneness of the little children with Job. We have heard that antichrist should come, but now we no longer hear, but we see them, and by this revelation we are taught to know the truth regarding the last time, and O what peace it gives the little ones in the last time (the latter part of our journey) to come to some monument in the way set up by the true prophet. Is it not wonderful? No wonder the prophets called it the way of holiness, the good way, the way of peace. This last time spoken of here by John is a time the little children can and do sing the mixture of joy and sorrow we daily pass through. The sorrow was to see those going out. The little ones had been as close to them as the dear disciples were to Judas, but here in the last time, or end of the journey with Jesus, they were made to know Judas for the first time; although Jesus knew he was a devil from the beginning, yet the disciples had all confidence in him, trusted the bag with him; but now in the last time of their associations how painful to hear the words drop from the Master's lips, One of you is a traitor. O what solemn words: Lord, is it I? Can it be possible that I have followed him all these many years, and now in my last days have the sentence of traitor passed? None but the little children know the weight of the shock, and if there was not a revelation to teach us the true meaning of the word we would faint and fall under the cross. But the dear Jesus says, My yoke is easy and my burden is light, and you shall find rest to your souls. O precious promise, rest to the weary soul; and while the little ones said, Lord, is it I? we hear Judas saying the same (here we see the sheep's clothing). But Jesus says that which is hid shall be made manifest; they shall all be taught of the Lord, so listen; behind a frowning providence he hides his smiling face. The one to whom I give the sop is the one. Here, I feel, was a moment more solemn than death, waiting for the solemn manifestation, and how did that peace which passeth all understanding blow on their troubled breasts when they found out it was not any of them that should prove traitor to Jesus; so the sop when it was dipped was given to Judas, and he went out from among the little ones, and proved that he was not of them by hanging himself, and his bowels gushed out, and for the first time were the little ones enabled to know what Judas was, and here in our text John says, They went out from us, that it might be made manifest they were not of us; for if they had been of us they no doubt would have continued with us, but it was made manifest that they were not of us (the little children of God). I cannot believe that

those false prophets and antichrists who rose up among the children of God were born of the Spirit, for the evidence of the new birth is love, and if they had loved God they would have kept his commands, and this is his command, that ye believe on Jesus and love one another, and this is the evidence we have that we have passed from death unto life, that we love the brethren. How can I prove to the brethren that I love them if I wilfully and maliciously spread a net of deception to turn their feet from the strait and narrow way that leads unto life, into the broad way that leads to destruction? The only way we can know the tree is by its fruit. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? No, it is contrary to nature. A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit, neither can a good tree bring forth corrupt fruit. I believe the true minister of God is called with a holy calling, and God has called him to preach the truth, and if he preaches false doctrine God is thwarted in his purpose, and the sheep have no way of telling the false prophet from the true. Jesus says, My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me; they know not the voice of a stranger, (antichrist) neither will they follow him, but he says we (the little ones) shall not be tempted above that we are able to bear, but with the temptation he will make a way of escape. So while we are a poor and afflicted people here in the midst of a wicked and perverse generation, God says we shall trust in him, and while we are nothing, and less than nothing, sinful, blind and know not how to direct our steps, know not how to miss the fowler's net, we have the precious promise that he (our true Shepherd) will keep us and bring us off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him who loved us and gave himself for us, and the way he leads us is in paths we have not trod. But the precious promise is, he will make crooked things straight, and this last time here, when there is such a falling away and going out, the dear Lord straightens with the confirmation that his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure, and his pleasure is that not one of these little ones shall perish. He makes the rough places smooth by sealing his precious promise to us that he will never leave us nor forsake us, and we are sure if he never leaves us we will never leave the little flock, for there is no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God. Dear ones, there is nothing able to separate us from the love of God. We realize that there are many false prophets in these last times, and to-night as my pen moves there is an emotion coming up in my soul which is unspeakable. Looking back over the fifty-seven years of my journey here in this world of sin and sorrow, nearly thirty-five years of which time have been numbered with these little ones, with the lo heres and lo theres all the way along, I have seen them rise up and go out, yet I find my heart and mind pleading, Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee, for your God is my God, your people my people; let me live where you live, and there let me die and be buried. All the reason I can give for such feelings is that God has established me with you in Christ and anointed me, sealed me and given me the earnest of the Spirit, and this earnest assures me of the fullness of immortality.

In conclusion, I want to say that prophecy is statements of facts spoken by our Savior and the prophets of old, who were moved by the Holy Ghost, and the apostles were inspired by the same Spirit to

declare future events, and every prophecy which has not been fulfilled is just as sure to be fulfilled as God is true. Some seem to think if God's children would live more pious and show more zeal many of these sad events would never come to pass; for instance, Paul warns the Elders at Ephesus to take heed unto themselves, that is, watch. God has ordained and placed you, he would say, on the walls for watchmen; not only watch yourselves, but watch over the flock which God has placed you over. Here he plainly tells the purpose for which they are placed as watchmen: Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood, for I know (now Paul states a fact, he prophesies) grievous wolves shall enter in among you. Now if wolves are among the sheep, that does not make them sheep, and even of your own selves shall men arise, teaching perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Paul here states facts, he says the mission of the Elders is to feed the flock. The mission of the wolf is not to spare the flock, but to destroy; the mission of those who rise up among the flock is to draw away disciples after them. Now if these Elders fail to feed the flock, Paul is proven to be a false prophet, and if the wolf fails to enter in, and men fail to rise up among us, Paul is proven a false prophet, and so with all prophecy it must come to pass. Paul did not give this charge to those Elders with the thought that their taking heed (watching) would keep those wolves and false teachers out, but watch for the fulfillment of these things, for they must come to pass. John and the little children saw and bore testimony to the fact of prophecy; for you have heard that antichrist shall be in the world. That going out they would not have understood had they not been watching; and even so with us to-day, we see the going out from among us. What does all this mean? Are the little ones (God's children) divided? If so, where is the truth of the statement of Jesus: A house or kingdom divided against itself cannot stand? And if the church or house of God is ever thrown down, Daniel's as well as the Savior's prophecy fails.

Now, dear brethren, I will leave these remarks with you for your calm investigation; you are the judges, and I have had my case in your hands now for nearly thirty-five years, and feel perfectly willing to have it remain there. I know my thoughts of this subject are scattering, but I feel you can see that our obedience or disobedience will not change any of the prophecies of God, but will prove the fulfillment of prophecy. If I am faithful unto death it will prove that God has done a wonderful work for me, but if my lot should be as the true proverb, and I turn back to the world, it will prove that he has not done what I profess he has. Except the Lord build the house, they that build labor in vain. Except the Lord keep the city, (church) the watchman waketh (watcheth) but in vain.

Now unto Him who is able to keep us, be glory now and forever. Amen.

Yours in bonds of love,

J. T. BARNES.

TOUCHET, Wash.

[WE are glad, brother Barnes, that you felt impressed to write upon the subject: "Fulfillment of prophecy," and there is no difference between us on that subject, though we might have said some things that you did not say and our expression differ. The difference between us is our understanding of "false teachers" and "antichrist." You class them as one, and associate Peter's declaration: "Even

as there shall be false teachers among you," with John's statement that, "Antichrist, whereof ye have heard it should come; and even now already is it in the world." We do not understand Peter to even suggest a shadow of antichrist when speaking of false teachers among the brethren, but of themselves, as Paul declared, should men arise and make merchandise of them. Nor do we understand John to suggest the thought that the spirit of "antichrist" was in the children of God, but "in the world"—the Jews, who denied that Christ was the Son of God, and that he had fulfilled the prophecy of the Old Testament. Brother Barnes says: "I cannot believe that those prophets and antichrists that rose up among the children of God were born of the Spirit." Neither do we believe they were, but rather believe exactly what John said about them: "He that hath not the Son of God hath not life." And perhaps we would not believe the "false teachers" among the brethren were children of God had not Peter, the inspired apostle, said, The Lord bought them. They therefore must have been redeemed. Again, Peter said they had forsaken the right way. They must therefore have been at some time in "the right way." Again, he says they had escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, but were again entangled therein. To know Jesus Christ is eternal life, and therefore we conclude that they were not "antichrist." Still Peter continues and says they had known the way of righteousness, but had turned from the holy commandments delivered unto them. The commandments of the law were not given to any except Israelites, and we are inclined to believe that the "holy commandments" of the gospel were not delivered in the apostles' day nor in this day except to the spiritual Israel of God. Our opinion of this matter is based upon the declarations of Peter, not upon any theory or notion of our own, and as long as Peter continues to declare that they were bought of God, had knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, knew the way of righteousness and had the holy commandments delivered unto them, we shall be compelled to believe they were children of God, even though they forsook the right way and became false teachers. We hope, brother Barnes, that this may give you perfect understanding of our position upon the subject, and though you differ with us we assure you of our love and fellowship in the gospel of grace.—K.]

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 26, 1913.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I am sending to you a portion of a letter of a dear friend and sister well known to you and many readers of the SIGNS. This account of her deliverance from the deep soul trouble in which she had been many years should be a comfort and upbuilding to all of God's children, whether they are rejoicing on the mountain top or stumbling along in darkness and almost despair.

Your least sister, if one at all,

MILDRED P. DURAND.

APPIN, Ont., Feb. 7, 1913.

MY DEAREST MILDRED:—I have wanted to write you ever since the meeting, to tell you of my joy and peace, but have feared to do so. I thought Elder Coulter would tell you of the meeting, and that perhaps then you might write me, but when your card came this morning it seemed I could not wait longer.

I left home on Thursday afternoon and went to London to Beckie's. I had been

very busy before I left. Once in a while I would find myself planning on my visit in London, and I would wonder what I could ever say to Beckie, for my mind had been completely taken up with the world, not only with work, but with worldly amusements. Sometimes I would think, I must try to find time to read the SIGNS or the Bible, to see if it would stir up any good thoughts in my mind. As I sat in the train going to London I suddenly thought that I was on the way to the meeting, but there was no hope, and, I must say, not even a desire (as I once felt) that I might have pleasure in attending the meeting. I had a desire that the meeting might be blessed to Beckie, but for myself I had wandered so far away that I could never hope for any blessings from God. My visit at Beckie's was very pleasant; it was good to be there, and I felt a love for her and a joy in being with her and away from the world, but still I went on to the meeting with no particular feeling. When I sat down in the meetinghouse on Saturday morning there was not the least idea in my heart that I should have any pleasure in the preaching. I knew as I met the members and saw their sweet faces and felt the handclasp there was a joy. I longed to be with them and hear them talk, and be away from the world. I felt it was good to listen to the preaching that Saturday morning, and many things that Elder Slauson spoke of seemed sweet. That afternoon as Elder Coulter spoke I felt a sweet joy I had never known before. He spoke of the golden candlesticks and of the ordinances of the temple. There were the golden candlesticks of pure wrought gold, without alloy, which held the candles. The little candle could not stand alone, but was held by the candlestick. I had never seen such beauty in the church; it seemed they were all bound together by that wonderful love of God, so that they could not turn one way or the other, and O the process, the suffering, the fire that the gold must come through to be purified. To me there was a beauty in it all that I can never tell. I felt the power of the words, Go take thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place where thou standest is holy ground. There was a love in my heart for those people I had never felt before. I was sorry when Elder Coulter stopped, for it seemed he had just preached to me. All that night and the next morning I could not get away from the beauty of it, and as Elder Slauson was preaching and that desire was in my heart to be with these people, I could but think of my companions in the flesh, and wonder what they would say, and O, as many times before, the thought of the communion would come up. I knew in my heart that, Except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood ye cannot see the kingdom of heaven, and again I felt that, As oft as ye do it, do it in remembrance of me. I felt I could do as Mary did, wash His feet with my tears and wipe them with the hairs of my head, and O the feeling of unworthiness and the feeling that I could never partake of those emblems of his body, when the words came with much assurance and hope: And all these things shall be added unto you. The meeting seemed very sweet that morning. We went out to Deacon Campbell's for dinner, and the Elders were there, and how I longed to ask them if those words were in the Bible. At times they would seem very sweet to me, and again I would wonder if they were only a temptation of Satan. My heart was heavy, and I found a deep longing and sweet love for the people of God. I

loved to hear them talk, but all the time we were there I did not have a chance to talk to the Elders or any of the members. That night we went to the meeting, and it was very sweet; I cannot remember the words, but they seemed full of power. I had no desire to ask a place in the church, only a deep love for them all. As the church stayed in and I went out I felt it was a lovely place, and I could but cry in my heart, There shall ye taste unmingled joy and dwell in perfect peace. Mrs. McWilliams was received that evening, and in my very heart I felt a joy for her that I had never felt before. But I cannot tell you half. We went to Deacon Gillis' that night. O, I felt, if I were only good like those dear members. As we sat there in the parlor I felt I was nothing and less than nothing, and could willingly lie down and let them trample on me. I had never been in such a place, and had a longing to tell them of my own unworthiness and of their perfection in Christ; I felt he had washed their sins away. That night I felt I could not go to bed without talking to the members and Elders. I longed to be patient and wait God's time, and again and again the words would go through my mind with comfort: And all these things shall be added unto thee. Finally we went to bed. O, I shall never forget that night. I was given a sweet peace and joy that I had never known. As we went back over the past, and felt the wonders of God in leading us all the way, how I longed to praise his name. I felt I was nothing and altogether vanity, but he is the chiefest among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely. I could but clap my hands for joy, the burden was gone, and I was made to hope that, although the very smallest, I was a stone in that building, and was willing to suffer anything. I had hoped in the days that were past that I might be of some use in the church, but now that was all gone, and I longed to be only the least. I was altogether vile, but he was altogether lovely. I wondered how any one could sleep, and again and again I felt to cry: "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" I longed for some one to come and read the Bible, and felt if I could but praise his name, yet I was afraid to move lest this joy should leave me. I shall never forget that night; surely it was a night to be remembered in the land of Egypt, when the angel of the Lord passed by and saw the blood of the lamb sprinkled on the doorposts. I felt that I had passed through that same experience, yet I was afraid every moment lest this joy should leave. I wondered how I could get up and dress, then I was afraid that should it stay with me the church would not have time to wait, for I knew they would be in a hurry to leave for the train. But still, although assured that they would be willing to wait, I feared it would leave. Again and again I clapped my hands for joy, and we all lay there awake all night and praised God for his goodness to the children of men. For he shall bring his sons from afar, and his daughters from the ends of the earth, and they shall all praise his name, for they shall all know him, from the least to the greatest. I wish I could tell you of the glory of that hour, but I have been trying to tell it ever since, and yet I can say, The half has never been told. But there was the fear that it would all leave when I would get up, but suddenly the words came with much power, Arise, and shine, for thy light is come, and all fear was wiped away, and a sweet peace and joy rested on my soul that I am sure I shall never forget. I thought of many

precious seasons in the past, when I felt the candle of the Lord had shone around me, and I longed to praise his name for his goodness to the children of men. How I longed to tell the church of his wonderful goodness. I could not hold my tongue. When I went downstairs I found that many had heard me through the night, and they all seemed to rejoice with me. Elder Slauson had not slept all night, and many of the others, and it seemed so strange. I had not been well for a couple of weeks before the meeting, but that morning I had not an ache or a pain, but all was joy and peace. It seemed I could not wait until they ate breakfast and got away to the meeting. I wondered how any one could speak of anything else. I had longed for many years to be given in my heart the sweet song, "I'm not ashamed to own my Lord," but never until that morning could I sing it with a heart free from the feeling that although I might sing it before man and he could not know my heart, yet God knew it was not in my heart. O how many times has my mouth refused to utter the words. I have been trying to tell you of that hour, but no man knows until he comes to that place, and only they can understand it who have come through the same. As I lay there in my joy I thought of days past, and knew that if I should see any one act as I did I would think they had lost their mind. When we went to the meeting I still felt that sweet peace, and yet there was a fear lest when the service was going on I might lose it, but "Arise, shine; for thy light is come," seemed a sweet assurance, and I longed to do His will. At times before when I had heard the members say anything of the exercise of my mind I felt a rebellion in my heart, but this was all wiped away. They all looked lovely, and I saw a look in their eyes I had never seen before, and I loved them all, and felt I could lie at their feet. I was not worthy to be one with them, but Jesus was able to wash away all sin. I felt I knew something of what Jesus said when speaking of the tabernacle: Not one stone shall be left on top of another. I was all undone. The meeting was very sweet, but I believe there was so much in my own mind that I could hardly follow. All the time I wondered if God would grant me grace to carry me through, or if it would all leave me. I was impatient at first for the meeting to be over, for I longed to tell the church of his goodness to me, even the least of all, if indeed one of his saints. After the service they sang the twenty-third Psalm, and the words seemed very sweet: He leadeth me beside the still waters and he maketh me to lie down in green pastures, and O the beauty of the words, Goodness and mercy all my life shall surely follow me, and in God's house for evermore my dwelling-place shall be. Surely I felt my cup was running over. When the service was over I felt I could not leave the place; it seemed I could only sit down. I did not feel nervous, I did not feel like crying, but I longed to tell them how unworthy I was, and of all the goodness of God. All fear of the world, or of what they might say, was taken from me. I felt ignorant indeed of the order of God's house, but longed for the church to judge. As I stood there I could hardly say a word. I thought if it had only been as the night before, but now I felt sure they could not receive me. I even felt a desire to turn and run away. Again and again I felt if it were of God he would not leave me thus, and when I was received I could hardly believe it. But O the joy and

peace when the members came and kissed me. They all looked beautiful to me, and I felt indeed that they had taken me up in their bosom. Truly He had brought me to his banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love. I hated to leave the place where Jesus showed his smiling face. As I went out these words seemed sweet: With believers enrolled, with believers to live and to die. All that fear of meeting my old associates was taken away, and I felt the truth of the blessed promise: All these things shall be added unto you. First it seemed I felt only, "Glory to God," then, "Peace on earth," and as I went out I felt that "good will toward men," and truly felt I had not an enemy in all the world. I felt as I went on my way to Muirkirk, It is enough. I was ready then to come home; however, Elders Coulter and Slauson were to preach in St. Thomas that night, and there was a joy in staying. I felt very near to all the members, and longed to do only those things which would be pleasing to the church. "Be ye not slothful" in duty, and already I felt it my duty to attend the meeting at every possible opportunity. I feel to thank God that he had given me the same love for each member and for each Elder. When some one asked me if I felt a desire for any Elder in particular to baptize me, I could but say I felt to leave it all with the church, and when they asked me when or where I wished to be baptized, I felt just the same. In days past it had seemed if God should ever grant me such a blessed privilege that I would want to be baptized at home and have all my own family there, but that was all taken away. Before I had been a stranger and alone, but now I had been brought "home." O the depths of the meaning of that word, and I longed to do only those things that are pleasing in my Father's sight. That night in St. Thomas the meeting was very precious, but I was full. I had heard the members say how they felt they had been at a feast and were satisfied, but never before in my life had I gone to meeting that I did not come home with an aching void in my heart. Often the meeting was very sweet, but still I longed for something more, I knew not what, but on Saturday as Elder Coulter was preaching I thought of Ruth, and how the king had commanded that some handfuls be left of purpose, that she might find them, and I felt that the King had dropped some for me, and with Ruth I could say: "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee." We came back to London Monday night, and as we were leaving the dear friends I wondered if, after I had gone home and taken up again the cares and duties of life, they would still think of me, and the words kept going through my mind, Bear up the feeble knees. I knew I was feeble, and so apt to fall; I knew that only He could keep me, and O how I needed that love and forbearance and tender watchcare of the church. I longed that they might carry me in their bosom, for it seemed so small a thing would cast me down never to rise again. Surely they have all showed me the utmost love and tender care.

I have written all this, and yet feel I have told you nothing; but no tongue can tell of the love of God to its depths and fullness, and we cannot think of that love without first remembering the burden of the plague of sin, the wormwood and the gall. I hope you will pardon all I have written amiss, for I know I have not written as I would like to, but in my heart I feel to say and do only those things which are pleasing to God, and O

may I be kept, that I may never bring reproach or shame to the church.

Yours most sincerely,

ELIZA McDONALD.

[WE have known sister Eliza for some time, and something of her deep exercises, and are indeed glad to learn of the wonderful deliverance she has experienced. May the blessings of God attend her and sister McWilliams, who was received at the same meeting by the church. —K.]

EXODUS XII. 1, 2.

"AND the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you."

This, like all other Scripture, is mysterious, dark and meaningless unless the eyes of faith have been given us to see through the veil into the mysterious depths of that which Moses was given to write, when according to God's commandment he penned these words. In endeavoring to look into the mysterious depths of holy writ we must first consider who was speaking, and to whom the words were spoken. The Lord Jehovah himself spoke these words, and he spoke them unto Moses and Aaron, that they might deliver them to the childen of Israel, and his word was that this month should be unto them the beginning of months; that is, not only to Moses and Aaron, but to the whole house of Israel was it said that this should be the beginning of months unto them. The children of Israel were peculiarly dealt with. Let us bear in mind that they were the chosen people of God as a nation, being the promised seed of Abraham, and reading the narrative given us of their travel we find that time after time the Lord said unto them, I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob. This was that same Jacob who supplanted his brother Esau, and it was said of them: "The children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand. * * * The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." All the way along God in his providence, according to his all-wise purpose, mysteriously guided and protected his people. Time after time to them it looked so dark that it seemed impossible for them to escape death, and they were ready to give up in despair, but in their darkest hour deliverance appeared.

Now, dear brethren, look with me and see the same things in the travel of your own mind along the way in which the Lord has been pleased to lead you. If we cannot see the travel of our own mind in the troubles, trials and deliverances set forth in the types and shadows, then they are of no use to us, and we will never see them until it pleases God in his wisdom and mercy to reveal them to us. Let us see how Jacob was led in the wilderness, as it were, with no companion, fleeing from the wrath of his brother, fearing for his natural life and lying down with a stone for a pillow. Have we never felt that night had come to us and we were afraid, fearing that we had no friend, and were without hope and without God in the world? Have we never been made, like the dear Lord, to say, The birds have nests, and the foxes have holes, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head; and like Jacob, to feel that we have only a stone for a pillow? How hard this is, what an ordeal for one to pass through. What did Jacob see in his dream or vision? He saw a ladder that reached from heaven to earth. This

ladder was a vision of Christ; it showed that he had a Mediator between earth and heaven, between man and God. Then what did Jacob say? Surely the Lord was in this place, and I knew it not. The Lord had appeared thus to him in his night vision, and he called the place Bethel. Let us remember that it is always in the night season that the Lord appears to us, when we are fearing and trembling, fearing that our enemy will surely destroy us. But when we are aroused from this state we see the same ladder that Jacob saw. We see Christ as the way and the truth and the life, as our Daystar, our Mediator and Intercessor. Then we can say, as did Jacob, Surely the Lord was in this place, and I knew it not. Then we go on our way rejoicing. Was it always peace and joy with Jacob? Time and space would fail to tell of the many trials which Jacob passed through.

I will now come a little closer to the text, as I am making these remarks too lengthy. Jacob was prospered of the Lord for a little while for a wise purpose, to show that he was a chosen vessel of mercy unto the Lord, even while he was subjected to the severe trials which befell him, and which befall all the people of God. We are now told that Jacob met with an angel, who wrestled with him all night until the break of day, and Jacob was ever afterward a cripple. Do not all the children of God meet with this same angel, and afterwards do they not go halting all the days of their life? Then we are told that the Lord said, Thy name shall no more be called Jacob, but Israel. Then afterwards we are told how much he was troubled. His son, whom he loved, was sold into Egypt, and Jacob thought that he was dead. But afterward we hear Joseph say to his brethren, Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. Let us remember that the children of Israel were typical of the people of God spiritually, the church of the first-born, not of some little congregation, as a church in this or that place, where a few of the vessels of his mercy are permitted to meet from time to time to worship in his name, but the whole church of God, every one whom the dear Savior came to redeem, and he did redeem all whom he came to save; not one was left out, for he said, Of all that the Father hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day. In a most peculiar and miraculous way did the Lord lead his people down into Egypt, by sending a famine into the land of Canaan after making seven years of plenty in the land of Egypt. We read that he caused the king to dream a dream which the wise men of Egypt could not interpret. Now right here I will say that it seems to me that Egypt, as here presented in connection with the Lord's people, is typical of the flesh; not of the wicked people of the world, as they are termed, but this flesh of ours, which is continually warring against the Spirit, and the king of Egypt, Pharaoh, is a type of that evil spirit, the devil, who is always ready to make all manner of suggestions to tempt the Lord's people to despair. But God in mercy prospered Israel. They were not burdened when they first went down into Egypt, but the Lord directed the heart of Pharaoh so that he gave them the land of Goshen to dwell in, and prospered them in every way, so that jealousy might be aroused in the heart of the king, to the end that God show forth his mighty power, and so he turned the heart of Pharaoh against them, so that he bound heavy burdens upon them, and in the end sent out the

commandment to destroy every man child that was born to them. But while the command went forth to destroy all the male children who should be born among them, yet the midwives feared the Lord, and did not do as the king had commanded. Then he sent forth another decree that every man child should be destroyed. But see how the hand of God was in all this for the salvation of Israel from their bondage. The king's command was that they should be cast into the river. Now when Moses was born they saw that he was a proper child, and hid him three months, then in the Lord's own time, when they could not hide him any longer, they made an ark, something that would float, and placed the child in it, and cast him into the river, and his mother and sister watched to see what would become of him, and when Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe she saw the child, and had compassion on him. Then his sister came and asked if she should secure a nurse of the Hebrews for the child. Thus his own mother was taken for his nurse. Now all this was done to show the Lord's power and wisdom in leading his people, and in calling them. Moses must be saved and raised up in the king's house, with all the prospects before him that this world could afford. But we read that when Moses was come to years, he refused "to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Why did he so choose? Was it, as we hear said so often in the world, that God left him to do as he pleased, and that he leaves us to do as we please? No, dear brethren, no one ever chose affliction of their own will, but God led him to so choose, as he does all his people, and he was then ready to give up the pleasures of the king's palace, for the Lord had said to him, Follow me. He has never called one yet who was not made willing in the day of his power.

Now what about this first month? Moses and Aaron were told time after time to speak to Pharaoh, and to say unto him, Let the people go into the wilderness three days' journey, to worship their God. But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart that he would not let them go, and this was to the end that he might show forth his power in bringing the many plagues upon Egypt. But at last he said, I will bring one more plague, I will destroy the first-born of every man and beast in Egypt, from the house of the king down to the house of his servants, so that there shall be a dead body in. every house. But he gave command to Moses and Aaron what they should command Israel to do, so that there should not be one of them harmed. They should, according to their families, kill a lamb, and it should be without blemish, and the blood should be sprinkled upon the lintels and the door-posts, so that when the destroying angel should pass over and should see the blood he should pass them by, and this passover supper was commanded to be observed in all their generations. So Christ did eat this passover with his disciples in the night in which he was betrayed into the hands of sinners to be crucified. Now this was to be to them the beginning of months, the first month of the year to them ever after. After so many years of hard bondage they were to be delivered. This does not mean that it was the beginning of months in their natural life, or with regard to natural things, but this was a wonderful time to them, and they were to be brought to know that it was the Lord God of heaven and earth who

had been leading them all the way, and who was now their deliverer and salvation; you and I, who have been in bondage and have felt that our task was more than we could bear, and after all that we could do have been told, You are idle, you have not finished your task, and who have found that the harder we worked the harder was the burden to bear, when in the Lord's time we were called by grace, and peace was spoken to us, and found that the blood of Christ atoned for us, then, like the children of Israel, we have been led out, and led across the Red Sea, and have stood on the banks of deliverance, so that we have been made to sing the song of deliverance. This is to us the beginning of months, the first month of the year to us; it is the beginning of a new year to every heaven-born soul. It is not what the world calls the new year, ushered in with their watch-meetings. What do they see? Do they see any change from the old year? They do not really know at what moment the old year passes away; there is no change, but with those who are called by the grace of God, and delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God, there is a great change. It matters not whether it is January or December, it is to them the beginning of months. To those who are happy in him, December is as pleasant as May.

Your brother in hope,

JOHN L. HASTINGS.

DELMAR, Del., Jan. 2, 1913.

WHEELING, W. Va., Feb. 2, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending two letters, and if you think best I would like to have them published in your good SIGNS. They have been of especial comfort to me. Please return Elder Chick's letter to me, as I wish to share it with some of the dear children who do not read the SIGNS.

With sincere love and esteem, I am, I hope, your unworthy sister,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, April 12, 1912.

DEAR SISTER PULTZ:—I received your letter yesterday, and feel it is agreeable to my spirit to become acquainted with any one who fears the name of the Lord. In our age it is an easy thing to have knowledge of persons by "pen and ink" whom we have never seen, and I have had very gracious correspondence with many dear children of God in this way. You speak of knowing my writings even before you see my name. Yes, I suppose it is so, I cannot write like any one else. Many years ago I grew tired of my own way of writing, and thought I would change my style, &c., and tried it, but it was no use. I write as I feel the matter in my mind, and can only use such words and phraseology as I have power to handle; I am no copyist. One thing, dear sister, I feel I can say, that I only desire to write what shall be to the edification of the people of God, and often while I am writing my heart is in prayer to the Lord to give me words to pen that shall be for the benefit of his children.

There, I have written enough about that. Here are a few lines I wrote about two years ago, but to-night they are just as true in my heart as then. I wrote these verses after hearing some one sing a song: "Drink to me only with thine eyes."

Smile on me, Jesus, with thine eyes,
  That shall illumine mine;
Give me a kiss of pardoning love,
  That shall more cheer than wine.

The thirst that from my soul doth spring,
  Doth ask a drink divine;

Give me thy love, though but a sip;
O, there's no love like thine.

My heart to thee breathes forth its praise,
How far from honoring thee;
Thy loveliness and deeds of love
Hold me in captivity.

The wine, the fruits of thy dear love,
Doth strengthen, cheer my heart;
Since thou hast lived, yea, died for me,
O let us never part.

Held captive in the chains of love,
Thus drawn, I follow on,
In all things more than conqueror,
Till with thee on thy throne.

My triumphs are love's victories
O'er sin and death and hell;
Emmanuel's love shall bear me through
To heaven, with thee to dwell.

A few days ago I thought within me, What a sacred mystery this is, that for now more than forty years I have been sighing, panting, longing after Christ; I have been hating and striving against sin; I have struggled hard, it has been in conflicts all the way. God surely has been with me, Jesus has sustained me, and though many times the fire has burned low, and only as smoking flax I have been, yet God has maintained my soul in life and hope and everlasting consolation. No one has needed more to know the Lamb of God, and he has been precious indeed to my soul.

"Christ and my soul are now entire;
I'm smoking flax, his love's the fire;
Our firm united souls entwine;
Thus I am his, and he is mine."

When a child I sang those words, but I then knew not their signification, but now I enter into them, and many, many times I have sung of our Beloved, using those words. He inhabiteth the praises of Israel. Every grateful and adoring note in our song tells of his honor and majesty, grace and loveliness. O that I had a heart to love and praise him. My life, as one professing to fear the Lord, has been an exercised one; a few points of Old School Baptist doctrine in my head does not suffice my soul, the only thing that satisfies my longings is that personal heart intimacy with Jesus Christ. There is much religion in the world that is utterly void of knowledge of Jesus Christ. Ah, sometimes my poor heart is so dull, so unbelieving, and yet when preaching to others I am telling of the faithfulness of God, of the immutability of his counsel and of the exceeding great and precious promises in Christ's gospel, of the pity and generosity of Jesus our King, and of his matchless, undying love to his own, and that he is determined to have them all in immortality and incorruption with himself in glory. I would speak with all comfortableness unto Zion, and tell all her children to be of good cheer, and yet all the while I am speaking I am as a wretched outcast from it all in my soul's feelings. At times I have envied the comfort, the relish with which some of God's dear family have feasted upon the truth I have been proclaiming. I am as one languishing in a dry, parched place in the wilderness, while in the word of my testimony I am leading the "little flock" in the green pastures of the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure. I am so often such a paradox. The apostle saith, "Death worketh in us, but life in you." But though so dull, so desolate, innumerable times I prove that God has not forsaken me. I lament my hard-heartedness and inward departures from him; he moves me to mourn over my estate, to confess my sins, my heart is softened, I am humbled and crave some token for good. Does he regard the cry of the needy? He does, and I find hope and blessedness and strength in Jesus Christ.

I will not continue writing, for I am weary, but there is no end to the things

of the kingdom of God. May the Lord bless you and comfort you in the sure mercies of David.

I am your brother in Jesus,

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Jan. 8, 1913.

DEAR SISTER PULTZ:—I have felt like writing to you ever since the coming of your letter of October 13th. The delay has not been altogether because of being busy, (though I have been busy) but much of the time I have felt wearied in mind as well as in body, and at such times it is hard to think or compose even things that are familiar. To-day I am only writing because I want you to know that your letter was a blessing to me, not because I feel that I have much to say. First, I will mention your request that your letter to Elder McClanahan should not be published. I had already forwarded it to the office when your letter came, and then I, after having read it carefully, did not think that any one would take offense, and I have heard of no one doing so. I hope you will, for these reasons, excuse its being published. I cannot help a feeling of gladness that you could understand what I had written concerning the thoughts and feelings of the heart sometimes spoiling our service. Because I have found it so in my own labors, what the apostle wrote in the seventh chapter of Romans has at times been much blessed to me, and I have felt my hope and my strength renewed as I have read his language and have thought upon it. How true it is that sin is mixed with all we do. It is mixed with our service in the sanctuary as much as in our daily mortal life. This is not only declared in the word by many portions of the Scriptures, but especially under the Mosaic typical law there is one provision that just covers this ground. Among all the other sacrifices provided for sin there was one for the iniquity of their holy things. All these types, these sacrifices for sin, pointed to the one great sacrifice for sin, viz., the death of the Lamb of God in atonement, and by this special type we learn that his blood was shed for the iniquity that shows itself in our spiritual service. His blood cleanseth from all sin. The poet said, "If I pray, or hear, or read, sin is mixed with all I do." Sin taints prayer, preaching, singing, almsgiving, everything, as the poet implies. How then shall our service find acceptance with God? There is but one way: the blood of Christ washes away even the iniquity of our holy things. Poor and tainted as our gifts before the altar are, yet they find acceptance there, but it is through the perfect offering of the perfect Savior, and so even in our prayers and praises and thanksgivings we cannot do without Christ. But thank God we have Christ. How good it is that we are cleansed and justified freely through his redemption, and then that it is our privilege now and here to come to the throne of grace, although we are still aware of a thousand sins that cling to us, so that we cannot do the good that we would. But "'tis he instead of us is seen when we approach to God."

I want to say that your letters are always welcome ones to me, and I hope your mind may be stirred up to continue to write. I had learned that you did not have good health before your last letter spoke of it. The Lord has blessed me most of my life with good health, but of late I begin to feel that older years are coming onward. I begin to be afraid of that which is high, and the grasshopper is a greater burden than used to be the case. Those who look out of the win-

dows are not darkened yet, and the sound of grinding is not as yet faint. I have always had much to thank God for, and it is still so, but what is thankfulness? How should we define it? What will thankfulness lead us to do? I suppose that if we feel really thankful, love will also be mingled with it. I do not know that we can single out any one grace of the Spirit and hold it up alone from all others. If one grace be in the heart something of all the rest must be there, too, I think, but, after all, I do not know that I can find words to define what thankfulness is, but I want to be thankful. I trust that your health may be renewed once more. May the blessed Lord be with you in every lonely hour.

I remain, as ever, your brother in the hope of salvation through Christ our Lord, F. A. CHICK.

CLAREMONT, Cal., March 19, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As there has been a change in the time of meeting of the Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of south California, I was instructed to write you and have you make mention of it in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The hour has been changed to eleven o'clock, same date and place. We also meet on the last Sundays at the homes of members at Claremont, Upland and Ontario consecutively, at eleven o'clock, beginning with Claremont the first Sunday in April. All are invited to come to our meetings who can do so. We feel that the Lord has blessed us this winter, insomuch that he has seen fit to send among us able men to defend his cause and to feed the lambs, for which we hope we feel thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. Since the first of the year we have had the privilege of hearing the gospel as it has been taught to Elder Jackson, of Iowa, and it has been a comfort to us hungry souls to be enabled to feast on the good things that he can tell us of the mercies of One who suffered and died that his own loved ones might be allowed to go free from the curse of the law. He has been living in Los Angeles this winter, and having heard of this little band of, we hope, worshipers of the true and living God, made inquiry of us, and at the first opportunity came and met with us, and preached Jesus Christ and him crucified. He has been a faithful servant ever since, and it is with regret that we bid him good-by, as he is to go east soon and will not be with us any more for some time. Then we feel that blessings do not come singly: three weeks ago Elder Mayfield, of Elgin, Ore., came to us, having had a desire to see our people in this part of the world, and he has been preaching the gospel on several occasions, all of which it has been my privilege to hear, and it was indeed good to have been there. On the first Sunday in March he preached at the home of brother Yandel Bogart, of Ontario, as did also brethren Jackson and Carter. A table well filled indeed, and that free and without price, but not to take or leave alone, but to those who are bidden. How few of the so-called christians can understand that only those who are bidden to the supper can feed on the food that is free. Then on the second Sunday we (my wife and I) were permitted to meet with a few believers that it has pleased God to take up their abode at Ocean Park, and there on the sands of the great Pacific Ocean was the gospel preached. It made me think of the words of the Savior in regard to the gospel being preached in all the world, beginning at Jerusalem. There were the afflicted in body and mind, the maimed,

the lame, the deaf, and they were made to leap as the hart and to hear and to rejoice in their infirmities. There were the sailor, the soldier, the farmer, the builder and the fisherman. Indeed, it seemed to me that it was as near a representation of just such characters as were His followers as it would be possible to get in this day of strife and turmoil. Brethren Mayfield and Jackson through the power of God were enabled to tell those dear afflicted ones of the things that are beautiful and good, of the great sacrifice that the Savior made for them, and how eagerly they all reached out for the spiritual food that they all so much enjoyed. Yes, there was one of the places where I believe without doubt the declaration was being fulfilled, and if there had been special mention made of this particular place and time I do not think it would have been any more applicable to the occasion, and I was permitted to be there. O what a blessing it is to be where we feel that there is so much to signify, where we feel that the decrees of the living God are being fulfilled with such force and power. Then last Sunday at Riverside we were again made to rejoice in all that can make the hungry soul glad, for after brother Mayfield had told of the house of many mansions and the invitation given to those who felt they were soldiers of the cross, one came forward who had made a choice that proved not agreeable, and asked that she be taken into what she had come to believe was the true church, was accepted, and before the congregation was dispersed was placed beneath the water in commandment of the holy Savior. At the same time a brother and sister Steelman from Missouri, now living at Rialto, this State, presented their letters and were received in full fellowship in our midst. Then after the baptism of the dear sister who had been so long seeking her home we all met again at the house and took part in the solemn ordinance of communion. That evening brother Mayfield started home, and I hope he will be enabled to look back upon the occasion of having been with us with as much pleasure as we shall.

If you think this will be of interest to any one, and you have room to do so without leaving out more worthy matter, you may use it in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that able defender of the truth which is willing to ascribe all power and honor and glory to God.

One who feels unworthy,

OLIVER P. SPEIRS.

AVONDALE, Ala., March 18, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I feel an impression at this time to write to you. I read yesterday with much comfort and satisfaction your editorial in the SIGNS for the 15th inst. upon the language of David: "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." It seemed to come to me just at the right time. Take from me the future resurrection of my poor, vile, mortal body with the likeness of Christ's glorious body and I am all undone and without hope. Before reading your editorial I had been already stirred up over the announcement in a Primitive Baptist paper that regeneration and the new birth did not change a man's morals; that regeneration was the act or work of God, while morals were the attribute of man in his conduct, &c. I confess this is a new idea to me, the reading of which has gotten my mind into a considerable train of thought. I have believed and preached, both from my own personal experience and from my understanding of the Scriptures for over

thirty years, that regeneration, or the new, spiritual birth, does change a man's whole life, mentally, morally and religiously. This has been my own personal experience and my understanding of the teaching of the inspired word of God. I was not a very bad boy up to the age of fifteen years; in fact my life is almost a blank to me up to that time. At the age of fifteen I professed religion at a Missionary Baptist protracted meeting and united with them. I was sincere, and thought for a while that I was a very good christian; but as time rolled on I fell into the habit of dancing, attending parties, &c., far and near, drinking whiskey and carousing, and I kept this up until after I married, at about the age of twenty-two years. I did those things because I loved them, and my moral character was anything but good. At about the age of twenty-two I believe that Christ came into my life, and there was a great change wrought in me, which must have been from the power and Spirit of God. I was turned completely around, my whole life was changed, my mind was changed, my desires were changed, my religion was changed, and I must believe that my morals were changed. I forsook my former associations, and at once turned my back upon all my past life. I forsook it all, and felt to be completely divorced and separated from all my past life, religion, immoral practices and all. From that day to this I have never danced or attended parties, nor have I ever been in the least under the influence of intoxicating drinks. I believe that the grace of God wrought this great change in me, not by works of righteousness which I had done, but according to his mercy which saved me by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on me abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Savior.

The foregoing is some of my own personal experience. Now what do the Scriptures teach regarding this subject? Paul said: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new," for in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth anything, but a new creature. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. I could here quote many more Scriptures bearing upon this point, but will forbear. Now let me ask the question, Are not immoral practices the result of sinful, corrupt and depraved hearts? If this is true, does it not follow that moral practices are the result of the work of God's grace in that same heart? Paul exhorts Timothy to be a lover of good men, just, temperate, &c. Again he said: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ," who shall change our vile body and fashion it like unto his glorious body. Now if it be true that regeneration, or the new birth, effects no change in a man's moral life or character, then this might account for the ungodly life of many who profess to have experienced a spiritual birth. Is it possible that, after all, I have been mistaken in regard to my own experience and the teachings of the Scriptures on this subject? It seems to me that this "no moral change" theory leaves the way open for a child of God to live just such a life as

he had lived before, or as he chooses, whether it be good or bad, and if this be so, then his present, or time salvation, depends altogether upon his obedience or his disobedience. I noticed in one of our papers where a sister writing said: "Faith is the gift of God, and our obedience is the obedience of faith." This I believe with all my heart, and I believe that the change wrought in the sinner in regeneration is so great that it makes that sinner actually choose to live a godly life, and where such a life is not manifest the evidence of having passed from death unto life is wanting. I am well aware of the fact that the flesh, or the old carnal nature, is not changed in the new birth, but that when this birth takes place at once there is set up a warfare, the flesh lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh. I know that Jesus said, That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, but still I must insist that the new birth works a complete reformation in the life and character of those who are thus born, so much so that that one is now a new creature, and is passed from death unto life, and realizes that the time past of his life suffices to have wrought the will of the Gentiles. He is indeed killed to the love of sin and made alive to the love of holiness. He now hates the things he once loved and loves the things that he once hated. He has now heavenly desires, and new and holy aspirations, and the language of Paul applies to him: "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" "But now being made free from sin, and become servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."

I could write much more, but this letter is long enough. My heart is yet full. I would be glad if you would write upon this subject through the SIGNS, though I might not live to see it. I ask that you publish what I have here written, because it is just what I believe and what I have always preached, and it is my experience and my understanding of the Scriptures, and my faith, or belief, is public property.

Yours in faith and hope of the resurrection at the last day,

H. J. REDD.

[WHILE the word "moral," or "morality," is not used in the Bible, we have never had any objection to using the word. Very many words are not found in the Scriptures which yet are scriptural. It is not reasonable to say that writers or speakers upon scriptural subjects must not use other words than are found in the Bible. Indeed, if we ought to be confined to the exact words which are found there all our writing or preaching would be but a repetition of Bible words and phrases. The writers of the New Testament often referred to the language of the Old Testament, but did not confine their writing to exact quotations, yet what they did write was in full harmony with the former Scriptures. Likewise it is enough if our writing or speaking be in harmony with the teachings of the word, and it is not necessary, or even reasonable, to say that one ought not to use other words than are found there; only let those other words be in harmony with the word of God. In common use the word "moral" simply means that which is right and true, or that which is according to the revealed will of God, and it is certainly true that the grace of God felt in the heart will produce obedience to the law of God. This obedience brother Redd has called morality in his article, and as we said at the beginning, we can see no objection to the use of this

word. Morality does not save, neither does it produce righteous principles in the heart, but salvation produces this righteous principle in the heart, and then outward morality or obedience to the law of God in the outward life. What more wondrous change than this could there be? and sovereign grace alone can produce it. We feel glad and thankful that our brother approves the editorial of which he spoke at the beginning of his letter.—C.]

LANHAM, W. Va., Jan. 28, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am very lonely, as I am in bad health and cannot get out among the brethren, so I try to pass the time in reading and writing. We all agree that the church is the body, and Christ the head over all things to her. I have often thought what a precious gift to the church is the knowledge or gift or discipline executed in the spirit of meekness, love and forbearance, preferring others above ourselves. The apostle Paul in writing to the Corinthian brethren (twelfth chapter) beautifully demonstrates the usefulness of each member to the body; he speaks of the diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit; the differences of administrations, but the one Lord. There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God that worketh all in all. Paul continues to show the many precious gifts to the church, or body, of which Christ is the head. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ." We are aware of the fact that the neck is that which connects the head to the body, and it is without end, the upper part being completely taken up in the head, the lower part in the body, until there is no end to the neck, which to my mind represents God's unending love, so completely uniting the Head to the body. Solomon says: "Thy neck is like the tower of David, builded for an armory, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men." Hence the life of Christ is the life of the body (church). He says, As I live, ye shall live also, (spiritual) yet the course of conduct of a member may be such that amputation is necessary for the health of the body. "Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than, having two hands or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire" (confusion). A member as useful to the body as the hand or the foot may get into such gross disorder that it is better to cut that member off from the body, and thereby save the body from disorder and confusion. It is better for thee to enter into life halt (careful) or maimed (crippled in discipline) rather than to be led by one who has become heady and wise above that which is written. When one, though they may have been as useful to the body as the hand or foot, begins to strive for the mastery, a state of confusion is sure to be the result. Paul continues to use the members of our natural body to impart to us a more perfect understanding of the spiritual body which is under consideration. "If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?" The eye, the ear, the smelling, the taste, are all in the head; the head and body are connected by un-

ending love, and are equally sensible of touch, for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye. With the spiritual eye we see things quite differently to what we did with our natural eye; we are capacitated to look, hence qualified to look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities, and shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation. Isaiah says: "He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned." Job says: "Doth not the ear try words? and the mouth taste his meat?" Again: "For the ear trieth words, as the mouth tasteth meat." "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." John speaks of the churches in the plural, but they are all one faith in different localities, for Christ is not divided as the natural eye sees him and the natural eye tries him. With the nostrils we detect the offensive odor that arises from false doctrine. One may be gathering herbs, and get hold of something foreign and offensive to the brethren, as the wild gourds were to the sons of the prophet when found in the pot. Paul continues to show the necessity of those members of the body which seem to be more feeble, and those members which we think less honorable. How important it is to the body that all the members be kept in good condition. Hence strict discipline, when executed in the spirit of love and meekness, is calculated to keep the church in a healthy condition.

Yours in affliction,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

JANUARY 1, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription is due I will send in for another year. The letters and editorials that come with each number tell of my conflicts, hopes and fears, and my soul responds when I read of others who I think are traveling the same road of doubts and fears, so much of the time under a cloud, and sometimes for a short while things appear bright; but the brightness seems to pass soon, and the clouds return. As I find others have the same experience it makes me take courage for a little while. A little here and a little there helps us on life's journey. If we had no companions it would be a sad world. We should be thankful for friends, and thankful to the Giver of every perfect gift for the hope of what he has done for us unworthy ones.

I thought I would write a few lines to say to all, Write on, for there are many you encourage on their way. I have lived past the threescore years and ten, and now at most it will not be long until I will know what will be the hereafter, and I hope to meet my dear ones who have gone on before. Sometimes when alone in the still watches of the night my thoughts go back over my past life and it seems I have done very little. I have not been half thankful enough for my pleasant home and friends; sometimes I think we do not know how dear they are until they are gone. If we could make our lives as we wished them to be we would be glad, but we are told that the leopard cannot change his spots, nor the Ethiopian his skin. May he who hath all power both on earth and in heaven guide all who feel they need a Savior.

Yours in hope of a better life,

S. T. MATTHEW.

DRAIN, Ore., Mar. 19, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The time has come for us to renew our subscription for our dear family paper. While I feel incompetent to say one word that would be of interest to any of the Lord's little ones, yet there is always a longing desire

to tell the editors and correspondents how we have been comforted and drawn to them while reading their writings; and those "little ones" whose names we see, how we are drawn to them, for they are all taught in the same school, and, like me, (I hope) know the joyful sound when they hear it. I am often made to doubt whether I know it or not, but where there is no darkness there is no light. If the light had never shined in our hearts to reveal the sin and corruption there, we could never have doubts. So, dear afflicted child of God, let us press on toward the prize of the high calling which is in Christ Jesus. It will not be long before some of us older ones will have passed from this stage of action. O will we hear the welcome words, Child, your Father calls, come home? Many times we are cast down, but not destroyed; dismayed with all we must pass through in these low grounds of sin and sorrow, but at other times precious promises and joyful songs will come to our minds, and before we realize we are singing and praising our heavenly King, and we forget for a time our pain and misery. I do love to meet with the saints here on earth, and have often wondered while at our church meetings if our meeting each other here on earth is so sweet what will it be in heaven, where we meet to part no more? We are not allowed to view these things, only at intervals the curtain is slightly drawn and we have a glimpse, then we are back again in the old flesh, to grapple with darkness. Dearly loved ones, let us be as obedient as we can, looking to our heavenly Father for strength and guidance. He is able to overcome every temptation for us. May peace and brotherly love reign in the heart of every child of God.

Your little sister,

S. MORNINGSTAR.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Jan. 6, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please change my paper from 884 Loony Ave. to 781 Pearce St., Memphis, Tenn. The SIGNS is the best Old School Baptist paper published; it sets forth what I believe, and have ever believed since I received a hope in Christ, nearly forty years ago, and as long as it contends for the same doctrine, and I live and can pay for it, I shall take it. I have tried to get more subscribers, but have failed so far.

Brother Chick's New Year's Greeting is my experience, and I indorse it in full, and I also indorse all the writings, so far as I can see and understand. May God bless the publishers, editors and contributors, is my prayer.

Yours in hope,

J. M. WHITENTON.

SHARPSBURG, Ky., March 28, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am desirous of obtaining a copy of Hassell's Church History, and as it has long been out of print, I ask that you kindly publish this notice, as some one seeing it may have a copy that he would be willing to dispose of. If this meets the eye of any such, will he please write me, giving price?

J. C. NELSON.

FIRST VOLUME OF EDITORIALS EXHAUSTED.

As our supply of the first volume of Editorials is exhausted, we will be unable to fill any more orders for them, but have quite a number of the second volume left, which we are closing out at seventy-five cents each. As neither of these volumes was electrotyped, we will not be able to supply either volume after what is left of the second volume is disposed of. Address all orders to

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1913.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ISAIAH LXIII. 1.

OUR sister in Christ, Mrs. Isabella Wellman, writing from Rodney, Ontario, has asked that we write something with regard to Isaiah lxiii. 1. The words of the text are as follows: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." In the last three verses of the preceding chapter the gathering together of the people of God among the Gentiles in the coming time is set forth though the gracious work of the dear Redeemer, who should prepare the way before them and make it plain, and who should gather out of the way the stones, and lift up a standard for the people, that they should not stumble, and that they should not be at a loss for guidance, and this is declared to be because the Lord had said unto the end of the world, "Thy salvation cometh," and this people, who were regarded as unholy, were now to be called, "The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord," whose very name, because of this salvation, should henceforth be, "Sought out, A city not forsaken." Now the inspired prophet, filled with admiration at this mighty work and at the glorious appearance of him who had wrought this deliverance, bursts forth, not so much in a question as in a note of praise and wonder, saying, "Who is this?" Who is this that has wrought this great salvation? The prophet speaks as one beholding this glorious Redeemer. It is not our mind that the prophet did not recognize this coming one as the blessed Lord, but that by this question he simply thus calls attention to this wonderful person. Thus when Jesus spoke to Saul of Tarsus, his reply was, "Who art thou, Lord?" Paul knew that he who had thus arrested him was divine. When the glorious Lord reveals himself there is no need that some one should stand by to introduce him, his own presence reveals itself. So when the woman returned to the city from the well in Samaria she said, Is not this the Christ? Also some of the people of the city, when they had heard him, said, Now we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world. Testimony put in the form of a question is often the strongest asseveration; it was so in the cases just named. But as Paul was answered, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest," so here the prophet received the answer and records it for all who should read his testimony. The prophet was given to see and declare some things concerning this coming one. First, he came from Edom. The imagery of this whole connection is that of a conflict and a victory, and so reference we think is here made to the conflict spoken of before this, in chapter thirty-four, where is recorded the victory of Israel through their Lord over Edom. The prophet sees him as a glorious Conqueror, coming from the field of battle with all the glory and all the trophies of victorious war with him. He has gone forth to battle, he has fought the good

fight against his foes, he has conquered, and now he returns, bringing the captives and the spoils of victory, and it is fitting that a song of praise should now be taken up upon the lips of all his people who are victors in his victory. Edom had always been a deadly foe to Israel, but now they have become a conquered foe, and their Conqueror has forever put them to rout. Edom means "red," and sometimes "earthy," as we are told in the given signification of Bible names. Here then is an emblem of the blessed Redeemer coming up from the earth, into which he descended in death, by his own mighty power, a conqueror over death, hell and the grave, and over sin. He said, I have power to lay down my life and I have power to take it again. He went down into the very citadel of his foes and conquered there the last enemy, and now comes to Zion with all the gifts of redemption and with the spoil which he had won from his foes. How wonderful was our blessed Savior when he arose from the dead, all his foes put beneath his feet, and leading captivity itself captive, and triumphing over ordinances and all that stood in the way of his people, in his resurrection. Every redeemed and quickened soul beholding this mighty friend and conqueror, must also say, Who is this that cometh from the dust of death, clad in the robes of glory and victory? But the prophet saw also another thing: he came from Bozrah. Bozrah was a city in the land of Edom. In the thirty-fourth chapter the Lord declared that he had a sacrifice in Bozrah, and that sacrifice was the slaughter of many who had oppressed Israel there. So the name Bozrah as used here intensifies the thought of coming from Edom in victory over his foes. Upon this city had he meted out special judgment. But again it is worthy of notice that Bozrah, among other things, signifies "a sheep-fold." How well does this in type witness to the glorious truth that our Lord has his sheep in the midst of wickedness, whom he will redeem and bring with him into glory. He who once made the valley of Achor, or of trouble and death, a door of hope, can also cause that his own sheep shall find their victory in his victory, even though they now dwell in the land of the enemies of God, and that his garments were dyed only sets forth that there has been fighting, and that he has stained his garments in the blood of his foes. This will clearly appear by turning to the third verse, wherein the gracious Redeemer declares that his garments are sprinkled with blood, as one who treads the wine-press.

The prophet also saw and declares another truth concerning this sublime King: he was glorious in his apparel. Much has been thought of fine clothing in all ages of the world, and among all people. A rich man is not expected to be clothed as is the poor man, a king must not appear as do his servants, and the rank which men hold has always been marked by the clothing they wear. There has always been thought to be a fitness which should be observed in the apparel of men, so in the Scriptures we read much of apparel, or clothing. This is true of the ordinary apparel which men wear, but, as here, so often the word "apparel" is used figuratively in the Scriptures. Thus we read of being clothed with shame, with worms and clods of earth, with desolation, with filthy garments, when evil or sin is intended; and, on the other hand, we read of being clothed with righteousness, with salvation, with majesty, with strength, with honor, with humility, with our house which is

from heaven, and with glory. These expressions are applied to the God of heaven, to our Lord Jesus Christ and to the people of God, and are intended to set forth that which is heavenly and excellent. In the text the prophet is given to see that the apparel of this returning Conqueror is glorious; it is the glorious apparel of our blessed Lord and Savior that is meant. Our Jesus is presented as a King, and as a Priest, and as a Savior. As King he is clothed with the royal robes of power, majesty, righteousness and truth, and with complete sovereignty over all the worlds and all that dwells therein. As a Priest he appears clothed in righteousness, in purity and with intercessory power. To the poor suppliant at the throne of mercy he appears as the Savior, clad with sympathy, for it is written that he is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. As King and Conqueror all his people also share with him. We conquer in his victories, and with him we are kings and priests unto God and the Father. In him all his people reign over all that he rules over, so that all things are theirs, and all things work together for good to them. All that they are, all that they have, and all that they expect to have, is in this glorious Redeemer. He comes bringing salvation in the form of victory over every foe, and in the form of redemption from all sin, and from death and hell. One said, How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who bringeth glad tidings of good, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth. This heavenly messenger is our preeminent Lord Jesus Christ, and so his robes seem glorious, because he cometh, bringing salvation which he himself has wrought to those who are oppressed and without strength. As one of these poor and afflicted captives the prophet saw his Savior coming, and to him the garments of that Savior were glorious. Is not the work, merit, righteousness and salvation in which this glorious Lord is dressed glorious indeed?

Still another thing the prophet also saw: his King was traveling in the greatness of his strength. Kings of nations cannot fulfill this wonderful declaration, but our Jesus can and does fill it. Kings of the earth do not travel in the greatness of their own strength when they return with victory upon their banners, but have been dependent upon the armies which follow them. No earthly king has ever won any victory by the unaided greatness of his strength. Personally all of them are but men, and weak as other men, but here is coming a King who depends not for his success upon the armies which he leads; instead of receiving help from men, they all receive all their help from him. He is able to conquer, and he does conquer. He is a jealous God, and he will not give his glory to another. At the end no man shall boast before the Lord. He alone brings salvation. He alone fights the warfare and wins the victory. He alone redeems from death, and brings his loved ones to their final haven. He always goes forth conquering and to conquer. He alone smites through his foes, and overcomes in the hearts of his chosen. The battle is not ours; we shall never need to fight in this warfare, as though our aid was needed. At the outcome of every fight against whatever foe, if the victory be ours we know that it is our David who has fought the good fight, and that all the spoil is his. It is a blessed thing to learn that he is all and in all. Learning this all his people, the armies which follow him, go forth with singing and with instruments of praise,

instead of with swords and shields and spears. The shepherd's sling is nothing, the five smooth stones of the brook are nothing against the Goliaths of this world, but the power that wields them is everything. To both the army of Israel and the army of the Philistines David with his sling seemed but as the dust, to be swept away with a breath, but the power of God was with him. To men Jesus seemed in the days of his flesh to be only a man of sorrows, and to some only a madman, but with him was power and might, and he went forth needing the help of none, and making no appeal to the wise or the mighty of the world, yet this lowly man, like David, came in the strength of God his Father, and the victory was his. He traveled in the greatness of his strength, and now he returns from the grave and from death and lives for evermore, and thousands of willing captives now acclaim him Lord of all, and thousands have reason to bless him and praise him day by day, because he still comes in the greatness of his strength, giving them victory after victory over temptations, doubts and fears, over the world, the flesh and the devil, and upholding them under the weight of infirmities, of weakness and of care, and when by faith we see all our foes within and without led captive we can but join with the prophet, and say: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength?" The gracious King, who has been so terrible to his foes, in response to the admiration and praise of his people, most graciously and lovingly speaks to their hearts: "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." In this response there is no note of threatening or terror, but all is mercy, all is mild. But is not the truth that he speaks in righteousness calculated to strike his erring people with fear? Will not his righteousness find out and condemn their sin, which is exceeding sinful? This will indeed be so, and terror in them would be the result were it not that their King has found redemption for them, and unworthy of such a King as they are, still he is their King, and though they have often denied him, still his love has been shed abroad in their hearts, and, like Peter, it is theirs to say, Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee. He who speaks in righteousness, convincing of sin and righteousness of judgment, also declares that he is mighty to save. When he went down into Edom he was mighty to conquer his foes, but when he returns, coming from Edom, he comes as a Savior mighty to save. Thus he answers the voice of the people with gracious words, and while he holds forth that righteousness which his righteous law demands, and which in itself alone always condemns, he also sets forth to his hopeless ones his own perfect obedience as their hope and their salvation. Salvation is of the Lord. This satisfies every inquiring heart, and comforts every mourner, and brings hope to every broken-hearted sinner who feels that in himself is no power to redeem himself from death, and so he is just, and having salvation he by no means clears the guilty, yet he provides salvation. No other king could ever be just and yet justify the ungodly. This is our God and Savior, and he will be our guide even unto death.

We trust that these broken reflections may be of some interest to sister Wellman, and to all our readers. C.

CAN A SUBJECT OF GRACE COMMIT SUICIDE?

THE above question was asked us not long since, with the request that we write something on the subject. The inquirer said that the minds of a number were exercised regarding the matter. We have long since learned that both in writing and preaching it is impossible to meet the ideas of all the children of God, and we have no remembrance of ever trying to do so, but confess that we are glad whenever our views meet the approval of any of the brethren. It has always been our custom, both in writing and trying to preach, to present things as we understand them, yet knowing full well that all men are fallible and liable to err. The brethren have been very kind in their forbearance toward us, and though difference of opinion has sometimes been manifest, the brethren have been gentle and kind in their opposition to our views, for which we feel glad.

We are aware that there is a difference in the minds of some with regard to the subject under consideration, some believing that a subject of grace can take his own life, while others think it impossible. Hence we know that what we write will not be received by all, but we can only give such thoughts upon the subject as we have in complying with the request.

Some have tried to excuse the deed by asserting that "no sane person would take their own life." It is true that there are many forms of insanity, and most every one is a little weak on some subject or other, and likely would be pronounced by experts as insane on that special subject. It may be that some will better understand our meaning here if we use the old saying: "Every man has a hobby." While we believe that the majority of those who commit suicide are insane, we also believe that those of strong and sound minds can and do often take their own lives. We shall not attempt to enumerate the different conditions and circumstances in the lives of men and women which might cause them to commit suicide, but there are hundreds of them. But the fact that men and women can and do take their own lives needs no corroboration; the question is, "Can a subject of grace commit suicide?" and we answer, Yes, and can do anything else that mortal man is capable of doing, if not restrained by the Spirit of God. By reading the fifth chapter of Galatians any one can be acquainted with the works of the flesh, which Paul says are "manifest." These works are committed by men of the world, and we are sorry to say that some of those works are committed by the children of God. But if such evil works were not in the flesh how could any man perform them? They are, however, there, and as much in the flesh of the Lord's children as in the flesh of the nonelect. The flesh of man is the same flesh in all nations and kindreds of the earth; hence if it is natural for men to do the works of the flesh they surely will do them, unless restrained by the Spirit of God. Those who have this Spirit know of the warfare constantly going on within, and sometimes frankly confess that the bounds to which they would go except kept by the power of God are not limited. Now if these things be true of the flesh, why cannot a subject of grace commit suicide as well as to perform any other ungodly act?

As to the sin of suicide, we imagine that many are and have been troubled, some thinking it an unpardonable sin because there can be no repentance for it. Our understanding is that life is life,

whether in one's self or in another, hence cannot see how self-destruction, in the sight of God, is a greater sin than to take the life of another. Here it might be asked, Can a subject of grace commit murder? The answer is, Yes. Moses was a servant of God and appeared on the mount of transfiguration with Christ, yet he killed an Egyptian and hid him in the sand. David is called a man after God's own heart, yet he put Uriah at the head of the battle for the express purpose that he might be killed, so that he could have his wife. We think that according to the law of God, and also according to the law of our country, David was a murderer. In the Mosaic law there was no provision of escape made for any one who committed a sin unto death; repentance could not save him, sorrow could not excuse him. It seems clear to us that here is shown that a man is not saved by repentance, but by the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth us from all sin. Repentance is the gift of God and the evidence of salvation, instead of working salvation for men.

We have tried to show how it is possible for a subject of grace to commit suicide, and now we will try to prove that even that grave and unholy deed is atoned for by the blood of the Lamb of God. The declaration, "cleanseth us from all sin," does not simply mean that sins past, present and future are embraced, but to be cleansed from sin means that not a blot nor a spot is left; anything clean is not at all soiled. The word "clean" means clean in the fullest sense. This truth caused Paul to say, I am fully persuaded that neither life nor death shall separate us from the love of God, which we have in Christ Jesus our Lord. We think that could we ask Paul, Do you mean to say that neither the life we live nor the death we die can separate us from the love of God? he would answer, Yes. We have known of some brethren, one a deacon, who took their own lives. The deacon was a firm believer in God and in salvation through Jesus Christ, walked humbly, loved mercy and dealt justly, and was considered one of the best of men; had been a member for years, and no one doubted his experience of grace, and those who were members of the church with him never doubted his eternal salvation. The blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God cleanseth us from all sin. How glad we are at this very moment that it is so. Men are not saved because of their good works, but by the grace of God, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Neither are men lost because of their evil deeds, but their evil works are simply because of their depraved condition by nature. Men are either saved or lost already, hence on the one hand good works can never save a sinner, and on the other hand if a child of God takes his own life it cannot separate him from the love of God and that salvation which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

K.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

J. K. Yerkes, D. C., $1.00; D. S. Elliott, N. Y., $3.00; K. D. Westall, Ark., $1.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, March 26th, 1913, at his home, Leesburg, Va., Holland S. Pitzer, of Martinsburg, W. Va., and Miss Ruth Starr, of Shepherdstown, W. Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Joseph Albert Cole was born Feb. 22nd, 1841; was married to Miss Dorcas Brooks Dec. 15th, 1861. To that union were born two daughters, one of which died in young womanhood, the other, Mrs. Wilber Fowble, survives him. Brother Cole, with his wife, was received in the fellowship of the Black Rock Church, Baltimore Co., Md., May 20th, 1883, and baptized the same day by Elder F. A. Chick, then pastor of that church. Both proved to be useful and beloved members. Brother Cole departed this life Feb. 14th, 1913. He had been much afflicted for about five years before his death, and was unable to be from home much. He had been a very active man, and his resignation to his affliction was wonderful; he would say, "It is all right," and his faith in Jesus was strong unto the end. Even after he was confined to his bed he would lie and sing the praises of his dear Redeemer. All that the hands of a loving wife could do was done to make him comfortable, but neither the wife, doctor, daughter nor kind friends could keep him; his heavenly Father had said, Child, your Father calls, come home. His neighbors miss him, the church misses him, his daughter misses him, but no one misses him as does dear sister Cole, to whom the departed husband was so devoted. I would say to all the bereaved ones, Let us not sorrow as those who have no hope, for while we laid all that was mortal of him to rest in the cemetery adjoining the church, we know that it shall rest safely until Jesus shall call that which was natural to arise spiritual; the mortal shall put on immortality, the corruptible shall put on incorruption, and then the victory will be fully won. Let these truths comfort your hearts.

On the 17th his remains were taken to the meeting-house where he so loved to go, and there the writer spoke, commenting on the hymn, "Rock of Ages," and scriptural references (being requested to read said hymn).

ALSO,

Thomas Alden was born (and raised) in Cecil Co., Md., Jan. 31st, 1837, died March 2nd, 1913, making his stay on earth 76 years, 1 month and 2 days. He was married in early life to Mary Jane Lamap, of Newark, Del., to which union seven children were born, two dying in infancy and one in young womanhood; one daughter, Mrs. W. L. Turner, and three sons, all of Washington, D. C., survive him. From the first acquaintance of the writer with brother Alden he lived in Maryland, near the District of Columbia, and was a regular attendant upon the meetings of the Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., and on July 19th, 1903, it was my privilege to baptize him in the fellowship of said church, and from that day to the day of his death I never knew a more consistent member of the church, always devoted to the cause of his dear Redeemer and manifesting his love for his brethren and sisters and always very considerate of their feelings. Brother Alden was chosen deacon not long after he became a member, and was true to the trust reposed in him to the last. He was sound and steadfast in faith in the doctrine of salvation by grace, as the readers of the SIGNS know from his articles published in its pages from time to time. The church and pastor loved brother Alden dearly for his christian virtues, and we shall miss him from our assemblies and sorrow that we shall see his face no more in the flesh, but we are not without hope, for we believe that he now sleeps in Jesus, and that God will bring him with Jesus when he shall appear again the second time without sin unto salvation. In life brother Alden's body was much afflicted, which affliction he bore with much christian fortitude, but in its spiritual life it shall be like the glorified body of his blessed Redeemer. For this mortal must put on immortality, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption. Mrs. Alden told me that she asked him a day or two before he passed away if he wanted to see Elder Rowe. He said, "Yes, I would like to see him; he might say some comforting words, but I am now receiving my comfort from above."

On March 5th, at 2 p. m., the writer spoke at his late residence from the first chapter of John, as brother Alden had requested, after which the remains were laid to rest in Glenwood Cemetery to await the call of the Redeemer in the resurrection hour.

May God in mercy especially bless the aged widow in this her sore bereavement, together with her daughter and sons, and may the grace that so sweetly sustained the husband and father sustain the widow and children, is the prayer of their friend.

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

John A. Morse, of Delaware County, N. Y., died March 24th, 1913, of pneumonia, aged 79 years, 3 months and 25 days. He died at the home of his son, brother Eugene Morse, Dunraven, N. Y., with whom he had lived the past twelve years. He was born in Vega, N. Y., and always lived in that vicinity. He had the best of care by the son and his family, who loved him more than words can express. He was baptized by Elder Isaac Hulett about sixty years ago, uniting with the Platterkill or Middletown Old School Baptist Church. He united with the Schoharie Church about two years ago, and was ordained deacon of that church by their pastor, Elder J. M. Fenton, the fourth Sunday in February, 1913, and was highly esteemed by the church and enjoyed the meetings with his brethren very much. He was very spiritually minded, and his gift was highly appreciated by the church. He will be much missed by his family of two sons, two daughters, two sisters, two brothers, thirteen grandchildren, one great-

grandchild, with other relatives and church friends. He is now in glory. May God bless and comfort all the dear mourning friends with his divine presence. A few minutes before he died he went into a kind of faint and appeared to be gone, but directly opened his eyes and said to his son and daughter-in-law: "Tell Elder Vail I now know that what I have believed for many years is true."

The writer attended the funeral Thursday, March 27th, 12:30 p. m., which was held at the son's home. On account of a heavy storm and bad roads the burial was postponed until Friday morning, when the body was carried to the Hubbell burying-ground, Kelly's Corners, and buried.

ALSO,

Orin Slauson died March 25th, 1913, aged 52 years. He was the son of Hiram and Sally Slauson. He was born in Vega, and always lived in Halcott and Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y. The cause of death was heart failure. He was as well as usual, and at work at his stables, his hired man with him, when he fell on the floor. His man turned him over, he gasped once and expired. He leaves to mourn deeply for one whom they dearly loved a lonely, sad widow, four children, two brothers, (Elder J. B. Slauson being one of them) two half-brothers, one half-sister and many other relatives, but not without hope for him, as he had given clear evidence of being a heaven-born soul, having received a hope twenty years ago, and loved good, sound gospel preaching. He never united with the church. He also is in glory. God bless all who mourn with reconciled spirits.

The writer attended the funeral, which was held in the First Roxbury meetinghouse Friday, March 28th, 2 p. m. Burial in cemetery near the meetinghouse. D. M. VAIL.

NOTICE.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND wishes to announce that his supply of the book, "Songs in the Night," is exhausted, and that he will be unable to fill orders for them in the future.

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Association will convene with the Black Rock Church, Baltimore Co., Md., on Wednesday, May 14th, 1913, and continue three days. Those coming via Baltimore will take train at the union station, Northern Central R. R., at 3:30 p. m. Tuesday, the 13th, for Cockeysville. Those coming via Harrisburg will leave there at 11:55 the same day over the same railroad, arriving at Cockeysville at 2:35 p. m., and wait until the train arrives from Baltimore, when all will be met and cared for. We cordially invite all who may feel it in their hearts to meet with us, and we hope to see a goodly number.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

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SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILLIAMSTON, N. C.

I find the postage on my book, "Day unto Day," to America is 9 pence (18 cents), and I thought it would be 6 pence, or at most 7 pence. I think on consideration, as the expense of publication has been very heavy, notwithstanding a most encouraging sale, I had better say I will send to any of your readers the half calf gilt edge edition for 5 shillings ($1.20), or the cloth edition for 4 shillings (96 cents) postage free.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

PSALM CXXXIX.

"O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me." Thus this wonderful Psalm begins with the solemn declaration of the psalmist that he has been searched and known by the Lord, and closes with the earnest supplication that he may be searched and known. So in the beginning of every experience of grace the searching power of God is felt by the poor soul, who is thus made to know God as infinitely holy, and to know himself as sinful and justly condemned; and to the last of each experience of grace the infinite value of this searching power of the Lord is felt more and more, and the sweet and sacred words with which the Psalm begins are turned into the form of a humble supplication at its close: "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." This searching by the power of the Holy Spirit causes a knowledge on the part of the quickened sinner which can be obtained in no other way. It is to him that the knowledge comes, not to the Lord. There can be no increase or decrease of knowledge on the part of the Lord; he knows all things eternally. But when the heart is searched by his Holy Spirit, and the thoughts of the heart made known, it is to the sinner that the increase of knowledge comes. We now learn what Adam learned in the garden of Eden, that we cannot be hidden from the Lord. It is an intimate, vital knowledge that comes to us through this searching of our hearts by the Lord. We now know of ourselves what he knew all the time, that we are naked, that we have no righteousness to clothe us with. Whenever this searching power is in exercise in us wonderful things are seen by us down in the depths of the soul. The Lord knew of them all the time, but we did not. This searching brought them to our knowledge, and as we see them we cry out in wonder: "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me."

"Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising." This expression is the beginning of a recital of particulars in an active soul, deeply exercised, which is the most wonderful and comprehensive anywhere to be found. Every movement, every act, every fear or apprehen-

sion, every form of expression, every thought, every word, every emotion, all are here brought to our observation as the result of this peculiar searching. The downsitting comes first in this remarkable recital of conditions, activities and forms, as comprehending the state of quietude, before work is entered upon, and also the retiring from work already begun, in order to rest, while the uprising would indicate the emotions that start one into activity, whether to resume work or to enter upon new enterprises. The two expressions are necessary to each other, the downsitting and the uprising both together showing the disturbed condition of the mind when spiritual life is first experienced and brought into exercise, and the thoughts are restlessly moving to and fro, under the searching power of God, when we are brought first into his holy presence.

"Thou understandest my thought afar off." Here is a power recognized by the psalmist in the Lord which is beyond compare. There are those who profess to understand the thoughts of others who are in their presence, but I never have known one who claimed to understand the thoughts of those who are far off, out of their sight. Here is One who understands the thoughts of those who are far away from him. No skill is used here to find out what the thought of the person is; no necromancy; the mind of the one whose thought is read by the Lord is searched as easily, and the thought is seen as clearly, as though it were set in the light of the sun. To the one who is being searched the Lord appears to be very far off from such a sinner as he appears to himself to be. He cannot understand his own thought, even though he put forth all the power of his mind upon it. It is always a wonderful day with him when he discovers that the Lord understands his thought, though it may be no comfort to him at the time, the time of comfort not having come for him yet. But the thought itself is afar off. So far as distance in space is concerned a thought can go as easily and as quickly a thousand miles as into the next room. But here is distance in time as well as in space. It is our thought to-morrow, or next year; with him who understands our thought afar off, a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years. He understands the thought that will be in the mind of one to-morrow or next year. Hazael was astonished beyond measure when Elisha told him what thoughts would be in his mind at a future time, and said with honest indignation: "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" But the Lord understood his thought afar off, and told Elisha what Hazael would do in the future. (2 Kings viii. 13.)

What a wonderful and mysterious thing is thought; how impossible to understand. What is thought? Who can fully define it? Who can understand his own thought? Whence does it come, and where does it go? A thought may take hold on eternity, and yet a word, a look, may startle it apparently out of existence. But that which is so mysterious, so unexplainable to us, is clear and plain to the Lord. "Thou understandest my thought afar off." The Lord understands us, but we cannot understand him, except by the special revelation of his Holy Spirit, for his thoughts are as far above our thoughts as the heavens are higher than the earth. "It is beyond a creature's mind to glance a thought halfway to God." But when the dear Lord is pleased to give us a view of his thoughts, then our minds are quieted, and made to

rest, and are filled with comfort and joy. We had felt sure that the Lord's thoughts concerning us were that we should be cast out of his sight, because of our transgressions; but the Lord said: "I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." —Jer. xxix. 11. Then we can say with praise and joy: "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee."

"Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways." In this very unusual and striking form of language the felt presence of the Lord in all our experiences and movements and concerns is expressed, and his watchful observation of all our purposes. Not only is the path we are traveling, whether in body or mind, known to the Lord to its very end, so as to be truly compassed by his presence and power, but every time and place of resting, every relaxation of effort, whether because of fatigue or discouragement, every lying down, from whatever cause, is so fully and absolutely known to him that we are assured he is acquainted with all our ways. What wonderful, searching power is here. Why these minute particulars, entering into the mysterious depths of the soul, and noticing every thought of the mind and every movement of the body? Perhaps we shall see as our meditations go on some presentation of the church in her eternal relationship with Christ, and as she is manifested by his divine power as one with him. Then we may see why the psalmist declares: "For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." The eternal unity of Christ and the church must be thus manifested in the experience of the Lord's people. He is her life, and when that life is given to them this unity must appear in the peculiar and wonderful manner expressed in the portion of this Psalm I am considering. By inspiration David is telling his own experience of the Lord's knowledge of his inmost thoughts and feelings, and is thus telling the experience of all the church of God. The word which is in David's heart and tongue is the same Word which was in the beginning with God, and which was made flesh and dwelt among men. So in the prayer of faith by the poorest of sinners the word that expresses his desire after the love and righteousness of God are known unto God, for it came from him. This word which is in the tongue of the psalmist is a word of supplication, and shows him to be in the embrace of the God of salvation, as is expressed in the next sentence:

"Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me." This is the standing still place. No moving forward now to struggle and urge our powers to obtain some needed advantage; no turning back to correct some mistake, or try some new effort. Both the past and the future are barred against us. But we are quiet now, not disturbed and restless, for the Lord's hand is laid upon us and all is quiet; what we want is here. The Lord's hand resting upon us gives quietness and peace. The Word we sought is nigh us, even in our heart and in our mouth. Righteousness is in that Word, and that is what we hungered for. "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever." But all this is wonderful; we cannot under-

stand the work going on within our souls. No wonder the psalmist cries out in astonishment: "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." The way of life and salvation is beyond the power of the greatest mind of man to understand, though a little child can feel it and rejoice in it. The greatest prophets could not understand the mysteries which they were inspired to declare. They desired and searched diligently to know "what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify," but the knowledge was not given them, and the wonderful knowledge of spiritual mysteries is hidden from the wise and prudent to-day. The natural mind of the child of God cannot understand the wonderful workings of divine life in his own soul. Such knowledge is too wonderful for him, it is high, he cannot attain unto it. It seems too wonderful a work for me to undertake to write upon this most remarkable Psalm. It has been much upon my mind, but I have long hesitated to write, because I am too weak and ignorant and altogether insufficient for such an undertaking.

"Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" Thus the same subject is continued, the infinitely far-reaching and all-pervading presence and power and knowledge of the Lord. I do not understand this as expressing a desire to get away, as in another place the wish is expressed for wings like a dove, in order to fly away and be at rest. The searching is still going on, and the boundless presence and power of the Lord are still experienced and illustrated and declared. No place or condition can be found or imagined where the Lord is not. The mind cannot conceive of a hiding-place from him, nor can the divine life of the church desire it.

"If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." If one should desire and undertake to flee from the presence and Spirit of the Lord it would hardly seem that he would expect to succeed by going up into heaven. But that glorious dwelling-place of God must be visited by one who would be a competent witness that God is there. Paul was there, whether in the body or out of the body we do not know, for he did not know, but he was in Christ. Only in Christ could he or any other ascend up into heaven. The church and Christ are joined together, and they can never be put asunder. Wherever he is, there she must be; she cannot get away from him. Even though she made her bed in hell, by transgression, behold, he is there. It is not as a theory, or by tradition, that the church, or that any man, can know and testify that the Lord is in hell. No natural man can know of the Lord being there; it must be learned, with all other spiritual truth, by experience. It is only the one who can say, I made my bed in hell, who can say as a true witness, "Behold, thou [the Lord] art there." Every one who has felt the pains of hell get hold upon him, and has had to lie down in sorrow, will at some time be made to rejoice in the knowledge that Jesus went down to the lowest hell for the salvation of all such. (Psalms lxxxvi. 13.)

"If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." "The wings of the morning"! What a wonderful expression! What a swiftly moving power, filled with light and shining with brightness, moving with the rapidity of thought and carrying us over infinite space in a moment of time; carrying us

upon those infinite, shining wings, beyond the reach of imagination, to the uttermost part of some distant sea, utterly desolate. Surely here, if anywhere within the utmost reach of thought, we should find loneliness. Surely no being can dwell here, and here, in the uttermost part of the sea, we shall be alone. But even here, in this nameless, unimaginable point of space, the Lord's hand shall lead us, and his right hand shall hold us. And so, in language most wonderful, in imagery most transcendent and sublime, the Lord gives assurance that the quickened sinner, the church of the living God, the bride of Christ, can never be lost, can never get away beyond the reach of his divine presence and protecting power.

"If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me." Now the darkness is scrutinized to find if it can furnish a hiding-place from the Lord. Cannot the darkness cover one out of sight? No, "even the night shall be light about me." How wonderfully plastic language becomes when used by the power of the Holy Spirit to set forth the wonders of spiritual truth. The same infinitely wise God who called the darkness night in the morning of creation, now says that the night shall be light about the people of God, if they should seek a hiding-place from his presence. "Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee: but the night shineth as the day." No darkness in the presence of the Lord; "There shall be no night there." The night has become as an infinite center and source of light, and shineth as the day. "The darkness and the light are both alike to thee."

"For thou hast possessed my reins; thou hast covered me in my mother's womb." How sweet it is when the mind is made to contemplate the power and providence of God in behalf of poor sinners; when the present of our life is so wonderfully filled with the goodness of the Lord, and with a sense of his protecting care over us, that our mind goes back to the beginning, to see with wonder that his dear guarding hand was over us then, even before we were born, and that we were even then the favored subjects of his preserving care. The contemplation of such distinguishing mercy and care awakens in the heart a feeling of praise.

"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made." "All thy works shall praise thee." When we tell of his wonderful works we are praising him. If we could find one thing lacking, or one thing erroneous in all his works, or one thing existing contrary to his purpose, to that extent his praise would be lacking; yes, there would be no praise to him if even in one point his will were not accomplished. But praise is perfected even out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, for every babe in Christ shall know that the prayer taught him by the dear Savior shall be fully answered: "Thy will be done."

"For I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well." This can truly be said of this living, earthy body of ours. The more we learn of its intricate mechanism and mysterious workings, the more marvellous does it all appear. When we see even a little of the mutual relationship of its various parts, and their dependence upon each other, we can see the just use of the word "fearfully" as well as of the word "wonderfully." Truly we are fearfully and wonderfully made.

"Our life contains a thousand springs,
And dies if one be gone;
Strange that a harp of thousand strings
Should keep in tune so long."

But something more fearful and wonderful and marvellous that this natural body of ours is spoken of here by the psalmist. David, being a prophet, (Acts ii. 30,) spake here of the wonderful and mysterious body of Christ, that spiritual body, "the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."—Eph. i. 23. As a man, David is speaking of this body which was formed of the dust of the ground, and of his experiences and exercises as a man, but as a prophet, inspired by the Holy Spirit, David is speaking of Adam as "the figure of him that was to come," even Christ. He is the one who is so fearfully and wonderfully made. He is the marvellous workmanship of God, who inspires such admiration in the hearts of his people, when their souls are filled with the knowledge of him who filleth all in all. It is a solemn awe and a holy joy that comes into their souls with that knowledge of his marvellous works. This body of Jesus is seen only in such measure as faith is given to behold it. It is Adam manifested as one with his wife, who can never be separate and distinct from him. Wherever she is, there he is seen by faith to be, and his love has never been separated from her. It is a glorious sight for faith when she is seen as a poor, deserted and desolate woman, to whom he comes with holy and faithful promises of deliverance and eternal joy in his presence. Shall we say it is any more glorious when from the great and high mountain of God's holiness she is seen by faith as a glorious city, immeasurable in extent, perfect in her adornments as the workmanship of God, made all of gold, shining as the sun?

"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." The church is speaking to Christ, the body to him who is Head over all things to the church, the wife to the husband. This substance is the heavenly body. The margin reads, "strength or body," Christ and his bride. He was her strength or power or substance before the world began, but is now made manifest by appearing in the flesh and abolishing death. (2 Tim. i. 10, 11.) He was made manifest as the salvation of his people by coming in their flesh and taking their sins upon him, and by his death abolishing death. They must have been his before they fell in Adam, or he could not have redeemed them. No one can redeem anything which was not his before it needed redemption. So reference is made here, I think, to the secret working of the law in the consciences of the Lord's people when they are experimentally "in the lowest parts of the earth." It is in secret, not in the sight of men, that this work of God's grace goes on, and they are made to be manifest as his people in their experience, and so are curiously wrought and created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that they should walk in them.

It does indeed appear to every such laboring and heavy laden soul as though he were lower down in the earth than anybody else ever was. But now faith has done wonders, faith has saved them, and the poor soul is made to know the mysterious power of grace, and can see the truth of salvation by grace through Christ, and can say, "Marvellous are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well." This knowledge of the oneness of Christ and the church, which was a short time ago too wonderful for us, too high for us to attain unto, now comes sweetly into the heart and understanding of even a little babe. Now we can see so

joyfully that, "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." What a wonderful mystery this is, but what gladness it puts into our hearts to know that the church is never separate from Christ, that he knows, and eternally knew, her every thought and feeling and every desire, and all our longings; he saw the substance, the power, the body, of the church, and of every little babe in Christ. He saw the church "yet being unperfect;" not imperfect. All the work of God is perfect, so far as it is discovered to us, but no part of it can be called imperfect, though it is unperfect until the last stroke of work is done in its completion.

This must take our minds back to the beginning, before the foundation of the world, to the church as she appeared in the eyes of the Lord when he saw her substance. There is seen by faith the book which contains God's account of his eternal affairs. Here are seen by faith all the members of the body of Christ. Here is declared the truth that all of the members of his mystical body were written in that book while as yet there was none of them manifested. The expression, "which in continuance were fashioned," is very striking and full of meaning. To my mind reference is made here to the thorough foreknowledge of God concerning all the exercises, all the trials and deliverances, all the mourning on account of sin, and all the sense of justifying righteousness, which all the saints shall feel from the beginning to the end of time. God's purpose, which he purposed in himself before the world began, embraced all of this. Thus his people "in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." Thus he works in them that which is well pleasing in his sight, and fashions them according to his own will, to the praise of his glorious grace.

All that is done to the Lord's people in time by him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, is according to what he predestinated for them. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son."

How wonderful it is to have thoughts in my mind which I, though so dull and sinful, feel a sweet assurance were in the mind of the dear Savior for me before the world began. One life, one mind with that blessed and holy Jesus. Eternal life! "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." There is a sweet rest sometimes in such a thought of oneness with Christ as runs through all this Psalm. It is not a rest that turns us to the world for comfort, but a rest that wakes us up from worldly sleep and turns us to spiritual things and makes us feel and say as with renewed life, "I will praise thee: for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 12, 1913.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Jan. 8, 1844.

DEAR SON:—The warm expressions of kindness and esteem contained in your letter were to me, and I believe to all the family, highly pleasing, and can, I believe, be reciprocated with equal warmth and sincerity. We are always glad to hear of your welfare, and earnestly pray that you may enjoy increasingly the blessings of providence and grace. I am rejoiced to find that the things of religion

are engaging your attention, but I am truly sorry that our views of gospel truth are so widely different. However, I hope that as light increases you will see things differently as to the doctrines of unconditional election and the perseverance of the saints, terms which you say are not found in the Bible. They are however plainly taught in every part of the sacred volume. Read the ninth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, and then seriously and candidly say whether there is anything like conditional election to be found there. "The children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, [not of conditions] but of him that calleth. It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." The infidel and unbeliever will always raise the same objection: "Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" Your friend Mathis has even dared to charge the doctrine of the Bible with making God a tyrant. Tyrants are such as usurp and exercise unlawful authority. But who will give laws to the Almighty, the all-wise and all-holy God? "Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it." He has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth, yet he is not a tyrant, but God, a gracious God, holy in all his ways and righteous in all his works. True, the dispensations of his providence and grace are deeply mysterious, far beyond the comprehension of mortals; none by searching can find out God unto perfection; God alone can comprehend God. "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." If by our natural reason we could fully comprehend the attributes of God, we could not believe him to be, as he is, an infinite being, for we are finite creatures, and cannot comprehend infinity. Let us then with the apostle in adoring wonder cry, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

As to the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, or rather their preservation, it is true it is not stated in so many words, yet the substance of the doctrine is clearly taught. It is said, The Lord will not cast off his people, because it hath pleased him to make them his people; his love to his people is eternal and unchangeable. "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." My sheep hear my voice, and I give unto them eternal life. They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. Our great concern should be to know that we are his sheep, and then we have nothing to fear, for though the flock of Christ is a little flock, it is the Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom.

As to Miller and his dreams, we have nothing to do with them, nor with any other ism that is disturbing the world. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." The Lord has declared the end from the beginning, but he has not told us when it shall be. "Of that day and hour knoweth no man." "Watch therefore." Through the mercy of God we all are in moderate health except mother, she has now been confined to her room for between six and seven months.

Affectionately your father,

JOHN BOGGS.

[THE foregoing letter was written in

1844, as will be seen, by Elder John Boggs, who from the year 1807 to the year 1847 was pastor of the church at Hopewell, N. J. One of his daughters, sister Elizabeth Boggs, who for many years conducted a school at Hopewell, and who spent many of the last years of her life in Raton, New Mexico, and whose name was familiar to many readers of the SIGNS, passed away from this life about one year ago, and her obituary appeared in the SIGNS. We publish this letter because we believe it will be found interesting to our readers, and because it shows plainly that the faith held by the pastor of this church then was the same as that held dear by us now, and by all Old School Baptists.—C.]

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 10, 1913.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I inclose a portion of a letter from Rebecca McLachlin, a dear friend of ours. She has not given me permission to send it to the SIGNS, but I think she would forgive me for sending it if she knew it had been so good to me that I feel I would like to share it.

MILDRED DURAND.

LONDON, Ont., Dec. 25, 1912.

DEAR MILDRED:—Ever since I got your dear card from the association I have looked every day for a letter, and O, I have been so disappointed at times, and sad. I have been wanting to thank you so much for that card. I never thought that you would think of me at an association. I feel that I am altogether too sinful and wicked for that, and that it is not an appropriate place for me. I felt that there you would hear so much good preaching and be in such good conversation all the time that you could not think of me, but I find that even after all you have a warm place in your heart for me. I can see the mark in others, but when I look and turn to myself I fail to find one there, and I often wonder, Is there anything in me at all? I have such little discernment spiritually, and am so uninteresting, that I wonder if it is just because of charity that all those dear ones are so kind to me, or is it that they see the work of grace begun in my heart? I hope indeed it is the latter, but if it is I fail to see it. I do hope that I am not a deceiver, but there is one consolation: although I can deceive the people I cannot deceive God; but if I know my own heart at all, I desire that all might see me as I really am, and understand me. I remember feeling just this way some time ago, such a desire arising that I might be understood by the children of God, and, Mildred, a sweet peace seemed to come over me and a precious assurance that they would all understand me. However, that did not remain long, soon again I was groping along in darkness. Truly the words are sweet: "A little here, and a little there." Surely I have realized, if I know anything about spiritual things at all, that a man cannot keep alive his own soul, neither can we open when God shuts. Truly it is all a mystery. But it does seem to me that I am different from every one else, so unlike the people of God. If you knew how changeable I am perhaps you would better understand me, and why I have tried to impress upon you my wickedness. One time I am so indifferent to it all, so cold, that I feel I have the hardest heart of any human being. Then again I get so low down in sorrow that I fear I will never again taste of those heavenly joys, and it seems to me that I have suffered more from doubts and fears, and have gotten down

lower in the valley of despair, than any one else—all dry bones. I remember the sermon your father preached on "dry bones" in London two years ago. It was so good, and I understand it more now than I did then. I know that the ministers are deeply tried, or else they could never preach such sermons. I know I should not have said that I was brought down deeper in the valley of despair than any one else, but the darkness was so vast that it seemed as if no one else suffered as I did, but I know I am perfectly safe in saying that my wickedness exceeds that of any one else. Then again, it has pleased God to give me a sweet peace of mind, a heart to trust and a desire to first follow after the things of the kingdom, and in this frame of mind I shudder at the indifferent times coming on again. O, if I were to define more minutely those indifferent times, then you would see why I shudder at them. I do get into such a barren, cold state of mind that I feel hardly can they be worse who have never heard His name. Then again, "If I love, why am I thus?" Sometimes there is not one bit of love in my heart; there is not anything that I love, and I have wondered, as you have, if there is anything in religion at all; but then, as in your case, I have been aroused by some dear one whose being seems to be filled, as was dear Bonnie's, with the power and love of God. Do you ever get so indifferent that you would say, "I know not the man"? O, I have to my sorrow, and, yes, I have gone out and wept bitterly, bitterly indeed. O, if you knew all the wickedness of my own heart you would know and understand me better. O, will it ever be different with me? Instead of growing better each day, I grow worse, until I am completely tired of myself. I long for peace and rest, too. Dear Mildred, years ago I would own my Lord at the sacrifice of my own life, and I wondered at Peter denying such a loving Savior, and I used to feel, O, if I just lived in Jesus' time and could go to him and throw my arms around his neck and beg for mercy, and if I could just follow him as did the disciples. The love was great then. This was years ago, but I have never told it to any one before. Then I was full of love for God, and felt continually to sing:

> "Jesus, my Lord, I know his name;
> His name is all my boast."

I was very young then, and though the years were few in which I did not feel that love of Christ, I felt to say, Much of my time has run to waste. The love of Christ seemed so wonderful to me that I felt those years in which I did not know the love of Christ were of no account, and so often I felt, If I just had these moments of joy and peace how much more precious would those years have been. I cannot express the sweetness of my first love. When I think back over my life it does seem that I have been wonderfully led, and I feel that His love in times past forbids me to think that he will leave me at last in sorrow to sink; but I have grown older in sin as well as in years. Of late all has seemed very strange. You know I did enjoy the October meeting very much this year, especially Elder Lester. I told you I went over to Duart and had such a good time. Elder Lester was just wonderful, and I do love him. All the time I felt a sweet peace of mind, and felt to say within my heart, "'Tis sweet to trust thee." (And is it not, Mildred? Nothing in the world like it; there is no comparison.) I came up on the train with Elder Lester from Duart to St. Thomas, and he talked wonderfully, and so encouragingly all the

way, and for a week afterward it seemed I could not get my mind on anything of this world at all. Mrs. McColl was at our place the following week, and I did enjoy her company so much, and I had good visits with her. But since then I do not know where I have been exactly, and I have been O so low, just burdened down, and the happy, peaceful moments have been O so few. One day at the office, not long ago, I was sitting taking dictation, and for a few moments, between the letters, it seemed as if the curtain was lifted and I viewed God as in days past. O the love of those few moments I cannot express. Then I viewed him as a loving, tender Father, and I longed to stay in that condition, but it was soon gone. I could but think of the words, As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him, for it seemed as if I were in a sad condition, and he did pity me.

O Mildred, just look at the length of this letter, and I fully intended it to be just a note. I did not intend to write this way at all; please pardon me. O, if you can only understand it, and that you will see me as I really am. Perhaps I should not have written like this, for it does seem folly to me at times to complain about myself as I do and yet go on in the same old path, just as wicked and sinful as ever. I ask myself often, Why do I write of these things, when I am so wicked? I know that down deep in my heart, first of all I desire the kingdom of God; yes, and pray, "Thy kingdom come," but I do grow so wicked, so indifferent, that I do not want to talk about these things at all, and feel that I do not want this one or that one to hear me say anything on spiritual things at all. Sometimes I cannot join in singing, "I'm not ashamed to own my Lord." O, it is terrible, terrible to say, I know, but it is the truth. But it was not so in days past. O that it were with me as in the days of my youth, when the evil days came not, and the clouds returned not after rain. Then again it is different, I would own my Lord at the sacrifice of my own life; but I know if left to myself I will perish. But I long for the green pastures and the still waters, the peace of God which passeth all understanding. The flesh must be crucified. I wonder if it ever will be different. How long am I going to tread this lonely path? Pray for me, Mildred, that I may be given an understanding heart. I am neither one way nor another, just alone. I long for rest, and I am just afraid to say it to you, for my life is so different from that sacredness and blessed privilege, so different in every way, and I wonder will I ever enter into the fold, with believers enrolled, with believers to live and to die. I hardly ever mention this to any one, but yet I just felt I wanted to tell you; it is such a blessed privilege. I know that although I am weak, He is strong, and that he can melt hearts of stone.

Here I am, writing on and on, but I just felt I wanted to tell you these things, for I feel you will understand me; at least I hope you can. Please pardon anything I have said amiss.

I am sorry to hear that your father and Aunt Bessie are not so well. I hope they will soon be better again. Give them my dearest love. I often think of you in your lonely condition, but I know that God will give you strength according to your burden, for as thy day, so shall thy strength be. I trust you have had a happy Christmas. I know that you could not have the same Christmas as in years past; that would be impossible, but I do hope it was a happy one,

spiritually. Is it not good when we are happy and merry in the Lord? It has an altogether different meaning to a child of God than to the world. I thought of you, Mildred, so much when Christmas was drawing near; my heart ached and ached for you, and I hope that this day has brought you many spiritual joys, and that you were given the oil of joy for mourning. I do hope that the new year may be a blessed one for you, and that it may be filled with blessings from on high.

Ever your loving friend,

REBECCA McLACHLIN.

1 THESSALONIANS IV. 16.

"AND the dead in Christ shall rise first."

Our dear brother, Lisbon Stephens, of Delaware, Ohio, has requested me to write upon the subject of the resurrection. I feel like gratifying our esteemed brother, yet I have wondered why he should have made the request when there have been so many good articles in the SIGNS upon this subject. I think that brother Stephens could write better upon this subject than I can, seeing that his mind is exercised upon it. I have felt that when one's mind is exercised upon a Bible subject he is the proper one to write about it, presenting the things that have been shown to him. I do not know whether there is some one particular part of the subject which is impressed upon the mind of our brother, therefore what I shall write will be some of the thoughts that have come to my mind regarding it. I have been well satisfied with most of the writings I have seen in the SIGNS, and what I shall write will be simply such views as I have, and will not be intended to in any way oppose what any one else has written.

The resurrection of the dead is the end, or ultimatum, of all that Christ came into the world to accomplish. We learn from the Scriptures that the sentence of death pronounced upon Adam and his posterity had special reference to corporeal death, and the life which Adam lost in his transgression was natural life, for we have no proof that he possessed any other life to lose, and if we were to assume that Adam lost any other life than his natural life we might have a wonderful task on our hands to show what other life he had beside natural life. It was this death that was passed upon all men because of Adam's sin. Seeing, then, that all men do die, and that the apostle has said that all men shall be resurrected, both the just and the unjust, there arises the all-important question, "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" The apostle has said, "That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die," and Christ said, with reference to his own death, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." Thus we see that both the blessed Lord and Paul have used the natural figure of seed in the ground to represent the resurrection. What is sown must die before it can be quickened. It must die, else it must abide alone. This we know is true in nature, and the word declares that this is a figure pointing to the resurrection, and as man is of few days and full of trouble, while the resurrection is unto eternity, is it any wonder that brother Stephens' mind has been exercised about it? The apostle has said, If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised, and if Christ be not risen, then our faith is vain, and our preaching vain, and we are yet in our sins. For, says he, "We have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not." Then he adds, Why do we baptize for the dead, if the

dead rise not? The apostle declares that our God has been disappointed in the whole plan of salvation if there be no resurrection of the dead, and also that the whole mission of Christ into the world was a failure. The writer of Hebrews declares, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he [Christ] also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Then the apostle said, If the dead rise not, they that are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. I like the expression, "Fallen asleep in Christ."

The text says that the dead in Christ shall rise first. There seems to be a difference between the wicked dead and the dead in Christ. I shall not undertake to describe that difference, further than the apostle has done. He speaks of those who have fallen asleep in Christ, or of the dead in Christ, and that they shall rise first. Now I suppose that no one will affirm that the wicked dead have fallen asleep in Christ, or that they are dead in Christ, therefore I cannot think that the wicked and the righteous are dead alike, and somehow I can hardly subscribe to the idea that when the righteous die all there is of them goes into the grave. If so, why say that they are asleep in Jesus, or dead in Christ? Or why say that the dead in Christ shall rise first? When following my nearest and dearest relatives to the grave, and when viewing their cold forms in the caskets, the thought has come to my mind, Where are they? and I have taken much comfort in the hymn that is so often sung upon funeral occasions:

"Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep,
From which none ever wake to weep."

Hence I have thought that to fall asleep in Jesus is different from the dying of the wicked, and the quickening from the dead is also different. One is resurrected unto life eternal, and the other to everlasting punishment. I shall not stop to speak of what manner of punishment God shall mete out to the wicked; it is enough to know that God does punish the wicked. It is not this that I am interested in, and am not arguing upon that side of man's final state; the salvation of the righteous I am interested in. The dear Redeemer said, I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. There is no comfort to me in contention as to the manner of the punishment of the wicked, and I hope that such contention may be laid aside for the one theme of the resurrection of the dead in Christ. Paul said, "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." What a blessed thought, to sleep in Jesus until the Lord descends from heaven to awaken them. It sounds good to me to hear it said that Christ's people sleep in him, sleep the blessed sleep of the just, until the resurrection. "For the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have

done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Paul again said, "We which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Thus we see that the apostle admonished his brethren to comfort one another with the truth that we which are alive and remain on the earth when Christ shall come again to raise the dead shall be caught up with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, then our vile body shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. O what a glorious season that will be, when those who are asleep in Jesus, and those who are alive and remain on the earth, shall together meet the Lord in the air. Then shall the work of Jesus our Lord be completed, and all will be subject to him. Then all enemies shall be put under his feet, and the last enemy shall have been destroyed, which is death. Then our Lord will have destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. When we feel to be drawing near to death, the penalty of sin, the thought of the resurrection, and of meeting the Lord in the air, becomes dear to us. What firmness and sweetness do these blessed promises impart to our last days on earth. It is blessed to have our minds centered upon that glorious hour, when the complete body of Christ shall meet in the air, with the blessed Redeemer. This should be all our song, as it is all our hope. We have this to look for.

We know that death is near and our days are numbered. We must accomplish as a hireling our day. Job asks, "Is there not an appointed time to man upon the earth?" He asks, "If a man die, shall he live again?" This has been the one great question with man since time began. Each one asks the question for himself: Shall I live again? Job said, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." He entreated that God would hide him in the grave until these calamities should be overpast. Then, he said, God would have desire to the work of his hand. Man is the handiwork of God, and Job said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." John said, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." What more can we desire than to see him and be like him? I do not feel to worry about what we shall be in the resurrection, it is enough to know that we shall see him just as he is and be like him. One of the Lord's servants said, Then shall I be satisfied, when I awake with his likeness. So it is sure that whatever heaven is like the saints will be satisfied. Is not this fully enough for the least saint? Satisfied! Satisfied with the way that the Lord has arranged everything! John said that he saw heaven opened, and he saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and they cried, How long, O Lord, wilt thou not avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And it was said unto them that they should rest for a little season until their brethren on the earth should be killed as they were. Where were these souls? Were they in the grave? No, they were the souls of those who had been beheaded. John also saw an innumerable company around the throne, and they were arrayed

in white robes, and the angel asked John, Who are these? And John said, Thou knowest. The angel said, "These are they which came up out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." And they sung a new song unto the Lamb, saying, Thou art worthy to receive honor, and glory, and power, for by thy blood thou hast brought us to God out of every kindred, tribe and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth. These had been redeemed out of every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue, and yet John said they were angels, and were around the throne. So it appears that there are now some in heaven as angels, who have been redeemed from the earth. This is my understanding of John here. While I am as likely to be mistaken as any man, yet I know of no other way of understanding the meaning of John's vision. When Paul was brought before rulers he testified that it was because he had hope in the resurrection of the dead. For this he was bound with a chain.

I trust that brother Stephens may gain something from what I have here said. I send christian salutation to all the Lord's people.

NEWTON PETERS.

PORTLAND, Ind., Dec., 1912.

PINSONFORK, Ky., Jan. 12, 1913.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I am seventy-seven years and two days old this Sunday morning, and am sick. I have been confined to my bed nineteen days, but am convalescent, and begin to sit up a little. I have had a name and place among the God-loved and God-loving Old School Baptists for about fifty-two years, and have been trying to preach over forty years of that time, but with much weakness. I never have attained to the state that I thought a man whom the Lord had called with the high, holy and heavenly calling of preaching the gospel of the salvation of poor, helpless sinners must and would attain to, but have fallen infinitely short of coming up to what seemed to me to be the measure of Christ as is so plainly taught in the Scriptures on this all-important subject: preaching the gospel of the grace of God, that I often fear that I have been, and am, a poor deceived man. I have realized many restless hours, but my race is almost run, I am almost at my journey's end, and shall soon know as I am known. This is a matter of great seriousness and consideration, when shall it once be?

Now, as I am old, and shall not write much more, if any, for publication, I have a desire to say a few things in regard to Elder Beeman's article in the SIGNS for January 1st, 1913, on the one baptism. I may not have understood brother Beeman, but if I did I do not see the matter as he has presented it, yet his views may be right. I do not mean to say that his views on the subject are wrong, yet they are not mine, and I cannot believe that Elder Beeman or any of the brethren will be hurt at me in the least for expressing my views in brief upon the "one baptism" as is affirmed by the apostle Paul, Eph. iv. 5. I must say, first of all, that I cannot believe there is such a thing in existence as rebaptizing, or rebaptism. If it can be proven that there is such a thing as rebaptism, it can be proven also that there is defect or imperfection in baptism, the gospel ordinance, which cannot possibly be. Elder Beeman speaks of a lady having been dipped nine times. I am sure in my mind if she had been dipped ninety and nine times there would not have been the least stain of baptism

in all the performances. The ordinance, the one baptism, is too sacred to be trifled with in that or any other way. God forbid that we should ever view this sacred ordinance in such a trivial way. If the earnestness or good design of the candidate for baptism, or the one who puts him in the water, would make it good, or make it baptism, it would have the same effect on all their services, therefore all their religious maneuverings would be right, hence for us to receive immersion from the hands of any other denomination for baptism is to openly acknowledge that we are wrong. If it is right to receive immersion from the hands of Arminians for baptism, it is right also to receive their works in doctrine, faith or practice. If we receive any part of the Babylonish garment let us take it all; the one piece is as good and as clean as the other; all is right or all is wrong, one or the other.

Now I want to suggest a few of my thoughts drawn from the Scriptures upon the baptism of Christ in the river Jordan. It is plain from the Scriptures that Christ did not come to John to see if John would baptize him, but to be baptized of him, and John, probably feeling his unworthiness, said: "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." So there was not a person on earth who could have baptized Christ but John; neither could it have been done at any other time or place, or in any other way, for Christ said to John: "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us [Christ and John] to fulfill all righteousness." The word "thus" means in this manner, in this mode, immersion, just as it was done, hence could not have been done at any other time or any other place, neither in any other way nor by any others than Christ and John. I can but believe that the one baptism spoken of in Ephesians iv. 5, in connection with the one Lord and the one faith, is the sacred ordinance: the christian baptism, and is but one, fully as much one as is the Lord one, or the one faith one. If it were possible for a defect in one of them, there is the same possibility of a deficiency in any or all of them. When any one is immersed in the water for baptism, it is either baptism or not baptism, the one or the other, and as baptism is the answer of a good conscience toward God, when one is immersed the second time it is evidence that their first immersion was not baptism, or it would have answered their conscience; therefore nothing but baptism will answer or satisfy a good conscience, while dipping in the water might satisfy an evil conscience.

W. J. MAY.

[As will be seen, our aged brother May differs from brother Beeman in his understanding of the expression of the apostle: "one baptism." We feel sure that both of the brethren are agreed as regards all that is essential in the faith which they both hold, and that neither will feel there is any room for aught but the kindest and most brotherly feelings between them. We feel like saying that it has always been our mind that the apostle in the text by "the one baptism" referred to water baptism. The order of the language seems to us to imply this. It is first "one faith," then the "one baptism," and it is by baptism that profession of that one faith is to be made. As a door is a part of the house by which men enter the house, so baptism belongs to the church, and by it, as a door, men enter into the visible church; there is no

other way of entrance. It is sure that while baptism is nothing more or less than dipping, the word itself meaning that and nothing else, it is to be considered as the command of the Lord to be obeyed once, and but once. He that has been baptized has no right to a repetition of the ordinance. As brother May has said, one may be dipped in water under the form of baptism many times, yet but one of those times is really baptism as commanded by the Lord. So long as one believes that he has received gospel baptism once he has no right to go through the ordinance again. For ourself, it has always been our mind that if we were to be convinced that one had really received gospel baptism, even though he himself should be convinced that he had not received it, and should seek baptism again at our hands, we could not comply with his wishes, because that would be to reject what the Lord had commanded at his hands. But if one has not received real gospel baptism, though immersed by some one, then that one ought to be baptized. We ought not to reject the Lord's work, and we ought not to receive that which is not his work. Not our feelings in being immersed are to be the test as to whether it is gospel baptism, but the teachings of the New Testament.—C.]

ALVINSTON, Ont., March 12, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am forwarding a letter to you which you may insert in the SIGNS if you wish. I have not asked her permission, but think it will be all right. Though she is not a member of the visible church, I think her letter speaks plainly for her as being a subject of God's grace.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) W. C. YOUNG.

HAWARDEN SASK, Canada, Feb. 22, 1912.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—What a long time has passed since I received your last and welcome letter. In reading it over I find it is over four months. I do not feel at all sure even in that time I could have written anything that would benefit, comfort or help in the least. It just seems to me I am drifting, drifting, I do not know where. Did you ever feel like that, or, in other words, a wandering sheep outside the fold? But there is something within that says, If the Lord is our Shepherd, he will bring me into the fold and into his everlasting arms, and I feel his promises are ever sure, and also his ways past finding out, when I realize the way I am led, but only through deep waters of affliction can I feel his entire presence and my entire dependence on him. Surely his ways are not our ways. What are ours in comparison, such depraved, sinful creatures? There was a time shortly after I arrived here I had a sweet time for a season, then utter darkness, but in reading over your last letter I find my dear one has, too, passed through the same. Talk of finding comfort out of God's truth, or the written truth, how clearly it proves that all is by revelation, has to be shown us by his Holy Spirit. You wrote about the Lobo meeting. What a dear and blessed privilege to be able to attend a place where we feel God's blessed truth is proclaimed. I trust, my sister in the same hope for mercy, that you again had that pleasure and comfort at Duart. Every time I think of that place in connection with God's people, my mind turns to my dear brother, as that place always seemed such a dear spot to him. You wrote in your letter how Elder Ker spoke about, Let not your heart be troubled. Those words are of great comfort to me just now, for

why should we be troubled at God's dealings? Rather rejoice in the hope we have. When we are led to feel the love that caused such blood to be shed, then why such unbelief in our poor, sinful hearts? In reading over your letter again to-day I just feel as if there was a certain load lifted from my heart, for O how much comfort there is contained therein. I feel as if I am unable to write anything in return, but bear with me in my weakness, and if it pleases God to open your mind I would dearly love to have a message from you. You spoke about the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I was getting it quite often from my brother's family, but since they left I do not. I dearly loved to get it, and if spared to see home this year I think I will take it myself, but as I am moving about so much I would have to have the address changed very often. I am glad to say Dan is feeling better here. We are having lovely weather. I, too, am very well. I trust it may please God to grant you that one blessing. How I would love to see you and have a good talk. Love and kind regards to all.

From your loving friend,

B. MADDOCK.

OSKALOOSA, Kansas, March 12, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—By request of Mrs. N. L. Simmons, of Horton, Kansas, a dear old sister in Christ, I am sending you the inclosed letter from Elder Pate. Sister Simmons has long been afflicted with loss of hearing, and has not heard preaching for many, many years, and such messages as this are of great comfort to her. She is now past her fourscore and three years, and has suffered two strokes of paralysis, yet her mind is remarkably clear on spiritual things, and with her own trembling hand she writes occasionally to her children and friends. About her only comfort is in reading her Bible and the SIGNS, and though she cannot hear, I have seen her take her hymn-book and sing and make melody in her heart unto the Lord. Though so long deprived of "speaking one to another" with those of "like precious faith," yet she gives every evidence that she is one who fears the Lord and thinks upon his name, and for whom the book of remembrance was written before God. I can but voice the benediction of Elder Pate, that God may be with her to bless, comfort and sustain her in her few remaining days, and not only her, but all his afflicted and poor people everywhere, and the cry of my heart is, Bless me, even me also, O my Father.

In hope of eternal life,

MARY ELLISON.

CLEONE, Oregon, Feb. 16, 1913.

DEAR SISTER SIMMONS:—As I am alone to-day I will spend part of the time in writing to you. Dellie has gone to Dayton, Wash. My health has been very poor since about the middle of November. My children are all well as far as I know. We like our new home here at Park Rose real well. I was truly glad to get the letter you sent me by Ward.

As I have not much news to write, I will try to write an outline of the travels of my mind during my illness, upon the great plan of the salvation of poor sinners, and to draw a line of the difference between the Old Baptists and all other denominations. It does seem to me that I can plainly see that according to the Scriptures we are right in doctrine and practice, and all others wrong. I will try to show why I believe this. The Bible affirms that I, even I, am the Lord, and beside me there is no Savior. Again, it

is declared that there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. From this it is evident that there is but the one Savior, and he declares that he will not give his glory to another. Now compare this with the great evangelistic work of to-day, where men are receiving the honor that the Lord says he will not give to another, and they are claiming to save thousands of souls and adding them to the church. But compare this with David, where he says that except the Lord build the house they that build labor in vain. So the building of the house, or church, is not man's work, but the Lord's. Paul says that Paul may plant and Apollos may water, but it is God that gives the increase. Now this "only Savior" affirms that he will save his people from the east country, and save them from the west country, and that he will bring them, and that they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. This language is spoken in the most positive terms, making the salvation of his people as sure as God's word is true. Compare this with that which we hear so often preached, that thousands, yea, millions of God's people are going to hell for want of the gospel. It is an evident fact that the Lord has a people, and his word, which shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish that which he pleases, and prosper in the thing whereunto he sends it, hath gone forth that he will save them. Now how will he perfect that work? Paul says he hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace that was given us in Christ before the foundation of the world. Here we find that this salvation is not based on works, but on God's own purpose. Thus the all-wise God purposed to save his people, and provided the wise plan and means to accomplish that great work, and in his eternal counsel he provided a ransom, a Redeemer, that should come forth and accomplish and perfect his work, and thus the angel said to Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." This means that he shall accomplish their salvation. It does not mean that he shall make it possible for them to be saved, provided they comply with certain conditions, but he shall save them. How? Paul says by redemption. Redemption implies transgression and a debt paid, and it is evident that since the Redeemer came forth and paid the debt for the transgressor that the transgressor is freed from the demands of the law that held him. Many claim that the redemption was for all mankind. If that is true then all mankind will be saved, for God has affirmed that the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. He further declares that, I will gather you from among the heathen, and from among all nations whither ye have been scattered in a dark and cloudy day. Again, he says, I will gather thy children from the east, and bring them from the west. "I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name." It does seem by these and many other Scriptures that the redeemed of the Lord shall be saved, shall be gathered together. But the gathering of his people together—by what means is this accomplished? Is it by the agency of man? or by what man must do? First, let us understand the condition of man, his relation to the world. Paul said to

the saints at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus, which embraces all his manifest people to-day, the church, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." This is their deplorable condition in their relation to this world. But as we examine the word closely we find that they are not the children of wrath, only by nature. Read the first chapter of Ephesians; there we find this same people chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before God in love. Now the means by which they are being made manifest as the children of God, or their being saved, what are we to be governed by? Paul bases it on this means, saying, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." Here we find the means, the cause, based on God's rich mercy and his great love, that we are quickened together with Christ. Man's acts are not named, and further, Jesus says, "As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." So this quickening is not based upon the agency, will or act of man, but on the will of Christ, the only name whereby we must be saved.

Dear sister, I have only sketched an outline of the subject and my letter is long. It does seem to me that if the Bible teaches anything it does teach a complete salvation, independent of the act or agency of man in any respect. The question is often asked, If that doctrine is true, then what is the use of preaching the gospel, or trying to do anything? In answer to this I will say that, according to the teaching of the Bible, it is to comfort, to instruct, to feed the church of God; and further, we find that all the commands, admonitions and instructions given by Christ and the apostles are given to the church to govern and control us while here in this life.

Dear sister, I have not written as I desired, but have done the best I could, so as not to weary you too much in reading it. I hope you will overlook all that you see amiss in it. Give my love and best wishes to Cora and her husband, and may the Lord bless you in your declining days.

As ever, yours in love and fellowship,

B. S. PATE.

FORDYCE, Ark., Mar. 10, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I hope to get you some more subscribers during this year. The SIGNS is highly appreciated by our people here, and we do not hesitate to say that it takes the front rank over all other periodicals of our faith and order. There are other good and sound papers, but the manner in which the SIGNS is conducted gives it the preference over the others with us. We have never missed a copy of this paper from the day we first sent in our subscription, eighteen years ago, and hope that the Giver of all good will bless us with a sufficiency to continue it as long as our mortal life exists. The SIGNS contends for grace, the gift through Jesus Christ, and that all blessings are given to us, and as such are gifts; we show forth his praises according to his mighty

power working in us both to will and to do according to his good pleasure. This is in accordance with our experience, the way we have learned these things, and we understand that we were not taught it of man, neither did we receive it of man, but by the revelation of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We surely must be taught of him, we must be born of God, his Spirit must reveal things pertaining to his kingdom, or we are blind as to what it is. Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, and it hath not entered into the heart of man what great things the Lord hath prepared for them that love him, but he hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit. This is the way, and the only way, we can know him, and of his kingdom, and the requisites are first a birth, second taught by his wisdom, by him revealing to us what great things he hath prepared for his children that are born of his Spirit, then we can see, know and understand the things of the kingdom, for we are fellow-citizens of the household of God, being led by his unerring Spirit. Then, dear brethren, we feel that blessed rejoicing in the banqueting-house of God, and his banner over us is love. For the first time then we found that we were of another life, and saw and understood things in a way that we never did before, and we were startled at this, and said to ourselves, What does all this mean? Why is it I feel a sweet union and love for God and his people that I never felt or cared for before in my life? We were made to say, Great and marvelous are thy ways; even past finding out. Well do we remember the great and wonderful change that came over us, and how it seemed that all the world had changed with us, and how we wondered what had happened; even the cornfields looked to us as though they were a garden of Eden, a place of God's purity, being manifested, and the praises seemingly were being manifested of his mighty power and goodness.

Well, I will close. Pardon me, for I feel that your time is more valuable than to be spent in trying to interpret and get my meaning out of this.

Yours in hope, through God's grace, mercy and peace,

V. R. HARRIS.

LANCASTER, Mo., August 4, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will send you money order for four dollars, for which please continue my paper, as I do not feel that I can do without it. I have been taking it eighteen years, and the Lord only knows the comfort it has been to my soul. I prize it above all that I have seen. This is the first time I have been behind in my remittance since I have been taking it, which was not for the want of means, but I have been first one place and then another laboring for a living. I must say I heartily indorse your course in the management of the SIGNS, which has ever contended for the faith once delivered unto the saints, against all opposition, and it is sure that such a paper is badly needed. I feel that you need no commendation from such a worm as myself, for I am sure you are commended of the Lord. I am sorry to say your paper has but few friends in these parts. I have never desired to see my name in the SIGNS, as I have been unfortunate in life, but my heart has ever gone out in love to the editors and correspondents, for they have fed me with spiritual food, and I have long thought I ought to tell them so, but my unworthiness and the want of ability have kept me from doing so. I hope you may be blessed of the Lord in

the future as you have in the past, for there is no doubt but what you have fed and comforted thousands as you have myself.

I must bring this to a close, as it is too long now. Remember me, a poor, helpless sinner, who when he would do good finds evil present with him.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

W. K. BAIRD.

PORTLAND, Ind., April 20, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—While in Canada the fore part of the month I was requested to let the brethren hear from me on my return home, and if I thought it less trouble, to do so through the SIGNS. I will say that I arrived home safely, but it took me two days to get there, on account of the flooded condition of the country, because of which the railroads are not running as many trains as before. I was much impressed with the spirit of love and fellowship among the brethren in Canada, and felt I could see the effect of the good meeting they had in February at their quarterly meeting, which seems to be a time that will long be remembered by many. Wherever I went I could hear this meeting spoken of as being a time of great refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and the brethren were encouraged over the reception of those young members for baptism at that time. The preaching by Elders Slauson and Coulter was referred to at different times as being accompanied with the Spirit and power, and the felt presence of God among them seemed remarkable from their description of it. At all my appointments there were good congregations, considering the weather, and I can say for myself I enjoyed meeting the brethren, and at times thought God's love and Spirit were with us.

NEWTON PETERS.

INDEPENDENCE, Mo., Dec. 22, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—The last number of the SIGNS for 1912 has come, laden with good news from afar, and as I read each page the writers seemed to let fall a few crumbs for even me. Elder Chick's editorial surely was full of meaning, but I am too ignorant and blind to grasp the wonderful beauties of Christ's love for his people, yet in some way I sometimes hope there is enough given me to calm my tempest-tossed soul for a little season. Elder Ker's farewell for 1912 was touching, and his closing remarks were a whole sermon for me. Brother Oliver told my feelings when he said, I mourn because I cannot mourn. But why should I make mention of each letter, when all were very good, and to my mind just suited to the place they filled, the closing of a precious volume, written mostly by mortals who have been made to understand some of the mysteries hidden from the world, by God, whom we believe has power to open and none can shut. Dear editors, you will please send the SIGNS to my address another year. May I be able to pay for hearing from Christ's loved ones as long as I live. If this is published, please correct mistakes; if it is cast aside, the space it would take could be better filled by another. May it be God's will to give both editors and correspondents a peaceful new year.

LAVINIA MORGAN.

HAMILTON, Texas, Nov. 1, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—Seeing my subscription will soon expire, I wish to send my renewal, as I do not want to do without it as long as I am able to pay for it and it continues in the doctrine of God our Savior, as I believe it has from its beginning. I think I have been a subscriber to it about thirty years, and think I have

hardly missed a single copy of it. I feel safe in saying, God is the Alpha and Omega of it, whether it stands long or falls soon. My heart is too sinful to thank and praise him enough for the sweet comfort and joy I have had in reading it. As I am unable to write for its columns to comfort and edification, I wish to bid those who can, Godspeed, believing it is he and he only who enables you to continue in the doctrine so humbly and boldly. With this faint expression of my inexpressible love for the glorious truth you are publishing, I inclose three dollars, two dollars for my own subscription, and one dollar to help the poor saints who love the same and cannot pay for it.

Your brother in hope of immortality beyond the grave,

W. D. WOOD.

MOUNTAIN PARK, Okla., June 17, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—By some good fortune a copy of your paper for April 15th, 1909, was handed to me, and I will say there was much Bible truth and food in it for me. Though I feel unworthy of the least of my heavenly Master's blessings, yet I feel he has not forsaken me. My wife and I are members of the Primitive Baptist Church, but moved to Oklahoma in the opening of the last big Indian reservation, so are far away from friends and our home church, which was at Burleson, Texas, in Johnson County. We now have our church letters, and had hoped to get enough members to organize a church here, but so far have not succeeded, and now I feel that I cannot do without the SIGNS any longer, if it is still published. If it is, please send your next number to me.

I am your unworthy brother,

L. E. MCFARLAND.

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As our supply of the first volume of Editorials is exhausted, we will be unable to fill any more orders for them, but have quite a number of the second volume left, which we are closing out at seventy-five cents each. As neither of these volumes was electrotyped, we will not be able to supply either volume after what is left of the second volume is disposed of. Address all orders to

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WE are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1913.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS.

OUR sister, Mrs. F. E. Amsberry, of Mason City, Nebraska, desires some thoughts from us upon the above named parable. While many have written upon this subject in the past, and among others we think the present editors of the SIGNS, yet we feel like responding to the request of our sister at this time. It has for a long time been our mind that all, or nearly all, the parables spoken by the dear Redeemer had not only a special application at the time when they were spoken, and to circumstances that then existed, but that they all contain general principles of truth which are applicable to the kingdom of God all through the gospel day. The people of God are one in their experience of his grace in their trials, in their need of instruction, in their weaknesses of understanding, of faith, of love, and of all heavenly graces, and in their proneness to misunderstand the word of the Lord, and to depart from his ways. There is also the same distinction between them and the rest of the religious world, between them and all legalists, and between the wise and the unwise among themselves, as was the case in the beginning of the gospel, and so it is our mind regarding this parable that it not only fitted the time that then was near at hand, but that it also fits the time that now is, and all the past ages of the history of the church of God on earth. The great principles of truth have not changed; the same division exists between the wise and the unwise now that is presented in the parable. If there were obedient children of God then, so is it now. If there were disobedient children of God then, it is the same in this day. If some of the Lord's people were wise then and some unwise, it is no less the case now. Outward forms may differ, but the great principles of truth remain unchanged. Human nature remains unchanged also. God's manner of dealing with his disciples has not changed. Not to the Jew nationally alone does Jesus Christ remain a stumbling-block, but to those of like pharisaic legality among the Gentiles also. Not to the Greek only is Jesus Christ foolishness, but to all the self-sufficient wise men of the world as well, and every parable which was intended for a rebuke to the pharisaic Jew then is also a rebuke to all of like mind to-day, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, and our blessed Lord is to all who believe, whether Jew or Gentile, as he was then, the wisdom and power of God. We have alluded to these thoughts as illustrations of the truth which we are here trying to present, viz., that this parable and the parables in general, are as applicable now as when they were written. Now we will call attention to the general truth which seems to us to be presented here. The time when this parable should be fulfilled was in the future. This will appear by referring to the preceding chapter, in connection with the opening words of the parable itself: "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened," &c. It has been for a long time our mind,

from as careful reading of the parables as we have been able to give, that the term "kingdom of heaven," used in many of them, never refers to that which was past, but always to that which was to come, and, beside this, the use of that expression "the kingdom of heaven," in other places, so far as we have seen, is also with reference to that which was not yet, but which should soon be. John the Baptist preached, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand;" that is, he would say, It is not yet with you, but soon shall be; and likewise, when the dear Redeemer sent forth his disciples, first the twelve, and afterward the seventy, his bidding to them was, Preach that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. It does not seem to us needful that we fix the exact moment when the kingdom of heaven began to be on earth, it is sufficient to know that it was set up through the coming and work of the Savior. Its coming was like the rising of the sun in the morning: there is the appearance of its light for a time before it rises in the east, so there was the sending forth of the light and power of the kingdom from the ministry of John the Baptist until the full sun arose, when Jesus broke the bands of death asunder and arose from the grave and ascended to his Father. The kingdom of heaven does not mean the Jewish economy, although that was appointed and established in the wisdom of God to prepare the way for the coming of the kingdom of God, through the redemption of the Lord. The kingdom of heaven, in the sense in which the phrase is used in the New Testament, had never been on earth before the coming of the Lord. Isaiah was inspired to write, not, Behold, a king does reign in righteousness, but, Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness. Daniel also does not write the God of heaven has set up a kingdom, but, In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom. While the words "shall" and "will" always mean positiveness, they also always mean the future. The expression, "the kingdom of heaven," never means the visible organization of the church in any one place, or in all the places where churches do exist. There are many churches, as, for instance, the churches of Asia, and in other places the apostles speak of "all the churches," &c., but there is no reference to many kingdoms of God, but always to the one kingdom. Very many of the children of men are in the kingdom of God, and have been in all past ages, who never were connected with any church organization. The blessed Lord said that except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God, and cannot enter the kingdom, but some have become members of churches who were never partakers of that birth. Still further, one must be in the kingdom of God before he has any right to become a member of any of the churches of Christ. The kingdom of God is within you, said the dear Savior. That kingdom is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. It is not something visible, for it cometh not with observation, but the organization of the churches of Christ on earth is visible, and their order and their worship visible. Men, not even apostles, ministers, or any other men, can have anything to do with the entrance into that kingdom of any man or woman, but it is by baptism, administered by the hands of men, that we enter into the church located in this place or that.

We have dwelt here at some length upon this truth, because it seems to us

important to discern the difference between the kingdom of God and the visible organizations of the churches. Perhaps it is right to speak of the churches here and there as the executive, appointed of the Lord to administer the affairs of the kingdom of God in their several localities. According to the parable, there are in the kingdom of God itself two classes, called here virgins who are wise, and virgins who are foolish. The kingdom of God all along through the gospel day is compared by the Savior to a wedding feast. Christ is the bridegroom and all the redeemed are the bride. The customs that then existed are used to enforce the lesson which the Redeemer designed to teach. The time of the wedding feast had been appointed, the virgins who were to be present with their lights, had all been bidden, and all were rejoiced to attend upon the occasion. It was counted an honor by them all, and all of them were waiting for the appointed time to enter into the place of the wedding festivities. In the custom alluded to in the parable, let it be remembered that not one of these virgins would have been waiting had they not all been bidden to the feast. No other virgins were waiting, because no others had been bidden. From this consideration, and from the thoughts which we have presented concerning the kingdom of heaven, it has been our conclusion that these virgins, both the wise and the foolish, represent those who have been called by grace to dwell in the kingdom of God. The customs regarding wedding feasts in that land and time are clearly presented in the parable. Those virgins who, knowing what was required of them, saw to it that these things were attended to, were wise or prudent and thoughtful, but those virgins who, also knowing what would be expected of them, and did not make proper preparation, were unwise, foolish and improvident. In the affairs of this life we say of some who naturally possess ordinary knowledge, that they are foolish because they have taken some course that is unwise, and so the Lord's own dear people often act unwisely in their relation to the kingdom of heaven. This the Savior sets forth in this parable. From this point of view we may speak of this parable as a word of warning which all the people of God would do well to heed. The one thing needful, as regarded the coming of the virgins to the marriage, was that their lamps should be burning. To be kept alive there must be sufficient oil. But some had not provided the oil, while others had done so. While the bridegroom tarried they all, both the wise and the foolish, slumbered and slept. There was no hint of wrong or of foolishness in this. Not one of them was censured for this. This sleeping did not hinder their entering into the wedding. There was nothing for any of them to do before the coming of the bridegroom but to wait, and they neglected nothing required of them by sleeping up to his coming, and when the cry went forth, Behold, the bridegroom cometh, they all were at once awakened, the foolish as well as the wise, and all of them alike desired to enter with the bridegoom into the feast. Before they came to the door the foolish virgins found their lack of sufficient oil. Their vessels with their lamps were empty, and this lack the wise virgins could not supply. In this each one must stand or fall to his own Master. If this feast represents, as we believe it does, the privileges of the kingdom of God on earth, it is evident that they all possessed a heart to desire these things. The foolish desired to share in these

privileges as well as the wise virgins, and it does not appear to us that this could be true of unregenerated men, therefore it appears to us that the warnings and teachings of this parable altogether belong to the children of God. Perhaps it may not be so easy to make application of this general truth as it is to state the truth itself, but it seems clear that there is danger of the people of God being like the foolish virgins, else the blessed Master would not have spoken this parable. He used no unnecessary words, and taught no needless lessons. It seems to us the same general truth of carefulness in the affairs of the kingdom that is taught here is also set forth in the parable of the talents, and in the similar parable of the pounds, also in the parable of the unjust steward, and also when the Master said, Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, but rather lay up treasures in heaven. It is as true in the kingdom of heaven that the diligent soul waxes fat as in the affairs of this life. Canaan was given to Israel as a free gift, but it remained true still that those who were not diligent in that land did not reap much harvest. All these things present, as it seems to us, in a general way the same lesson that is taught in this parable. The parable related not to entering heaven beyond, but to entrance into the privileges of the kingdom of God here. In all churches of the saints everywhere there are those who are wise and those who are foolish. Who among us of any length of experience does not know that by our own folly we have at times been hindered when we would have shared in the marriage supper, and in its rejoicing? We have neglected the things that we ought to have done, and perhaps remember that we have done the things we ought not to have done. How many times do we look back with regret and mourn over our neglect in a hundred ways. Perhaps we have not done evil in the sight of men, but we must confess before the Lord that we have been neglectful of his cause. A time of refreshing comes to the people of God, and we feel that we desire to share it, but there is coldness in our hearts, the fire of love does not burn in us as we see it doing in others, and we look back and feel that our transgressions are coming in between us and this life of love that we once felt, and that we see others feeling. We have been worldly in our life, and have run after the pleasures of life more than after God, and now we are shut out of the joy of others. For ourself, we know it is true that we are reaping the sorrowful results of many wasted hours. The oil in our vessels with our lamps runs low. Sowing to the flesh we reap corruption. This experience seems to us to be set forth in this parable.

Again we desire to say that the parable does not relate to that salvation and that blessing which belong to the final hope of the believer, but to our present state in the kingdom of God. It is most glorious to a poor sinner who knows that his whole life as a believer is a failure, in the sense that there is not one perfect thing he has done, to know that all his failures cannot frustrate the purpose of his salvation. What wondrous praise then belongs to almighty grace through our Lord Jesus Christ, and what shame and confusion of face belong to us. C.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. M. Fenton, April 2nd, 1913, at the home of Mr. Orville Wood, Middleburg, N. Y., David Zeh and Helen Thorne.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

J. M. Macfarlane died very suddenly March 27th, 1913, in St. Petersburg, Fla., where he had gone for the benefit of his health. On July 14th last his dear wife, our sister, Flo Black Macfarlane, died and was buried in the family plot at St. Thomas, Elder Durand conducting the services. Her husband was not very long in following her. His sudden death was a severe shock to us, as we had been receiving letters from him stating that he was feeling much better, and hoped to be with us the last of April. Uncle Mar, as we lovingly called him, was brought up a Presbyterian, but loved the Old School Baptists dearly, and testified of his love and faith by his works, always being ready and willing to give of his substance for their good and comfort. Owing to the uncertainty as to when the body would arrive in St. Thomas we did not have one of our preachers, but a Presbyterian minister conducted the services at the residence of his sister-in-law, Mrs. James Black, from where also Aunt Flo was taken, and laid beside his dear wife, there to await the resurrection of the dead. They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided. From conversations we had with him at different times we feel sure that all is well with him. He loved his Savior, and felt him to be all in all to him, having no confidence in the flesh, feeling himself to be without strength or ability to do anything towards his salvation. We feel our loss greatly, yet can but feel glad for him, he was so lonely without his wife; they had always been so much to each other.

(MRS.) A. J. BLACK.

ST. THOMAS, Ontario.

OUR dear mother, **Mrs. Mary Robbins,** widow of William Robbins, passed quietly away at my home, in Chatham, Ontario, March 27th, 1913, in her 64th year. She was the daughter of the late John and Janet Campbell, of Dunwich, and was born July 6th, 1849. She and father were united in marriage Jan. 18th, 1876. Six children were born to them, five of whom survive: Reuben, Durand, Mrs. R. N. Errington, Mrs. A. T. Smith and Mrs. Oscar Campbell. Father died seven years ago, and since then dear mother's life seemed to be one of anxiety, trying to manage her farm and keep things up to the standard as when he was with her, until she was taken with paralysis on August 3rd, 1910, from which she had been a declining invalid ever since. From my earliest remembrance of dear mother there was never any excuse to be found on church morning to keep her from going. She received a hope in Christ at the age of eighteen years, which was her comfort all through life. Some of the words of comfort that came to her (I have heard her repeat them often) were: "Be still, and know that I am God." She lived a close follower from that time until eighteen years ago, when she united with the church, and was baptized by Elder Wm. Pollard, father uniting at the same time. After mother's affliction until last June she attended all the meetings it was possible to get to, and often said that was the only enjoyment here on earth for her. Two months previous to her death I was astonished to hear her singing in her room, which she had not been able to do for some time. The hymn was: "O when shall I see Jesus, and dwell with him above?" From that time on I never heard a murmur from her lips or saw a frown on her dear face; she seemed to have so completely given up the world that it was beautiful. Although she was not able to converse with us for some time, she was able to understand reading, and took on a look of satisfaction when I would read the Bible to her. O how sad we feel when we remember the love and kindly interest she took in each one of us, and fully realize that there is no one who can take the place of mother. Her one last desire was that as soon as she was gone we would telegraph for Elder Fenton and do our best to have him here to conduct her funeral service, and we feel very thankful that her request was filled. The funeral was held at her late residence in Dunwich, where a large gathering of relatives and friends assembled to pay their last tribute of respect to dear mother, who was highly respected by all who knew her. Elder Fenton spoke beautifully from Romans viii. 18, a verse that was a comfort to mother in her last days. While we feel our loss keenly, we cannot wish her back in this world of sin and sorrow, for we know she is at rest in Jesus.

Her daughter,

(MRS.) OSCAR CAMPBELL.

DEAR EDITORS:—Kindly publish the above, as I feel I could not add anything to what has been said. May the Savior be very near all who mourn.

J. M. FENTON.

Mrs. Mary Lillian Cordrey, wife of Mr. Zorah Cordrey and daughter of sister Mary L. Jones by her first husband, the late brother John H. Ellis, of the Little Creek Old School Baptist Church, departed this life at her home in Laurel, Del., Friday, Feb. 21st, 1913, of tuberculosis, from which she had been a sufferer for many years, aged 37 years. She was married to Mr. Cordrey Nov. 14th, 1894. She had no children, but is sincerely mourned by her devoted husband, whose loving care of and devotion to her was remarked by all who were acquainted with them. She also leaves her mother, stepfather, one sister, brothers-in-law, one nephew and one niece, besides numerous other relatives and a host of warm friends, by all of whom she was dearly loved, but their mourning is not without hope, for though she never made a public profession, yet she gave abundant evidence

of the possession of that inestimable gift: faith toward God through our Lord Jesus Christ. She loved the assembly of the saints, and the word of truth was sweet and precious to her, and we believe that she is now at rest in the bosom of her blessed Redeemer. She said but a little while before her decease that she had a desire to be baptized and to be numbered with the Lord's people here on earth, but she had then become too weak to pass the ordeal. It is as good evidence to be in possession of the desire, as it is to make an open profession, that one is a child of God and an heir of glory, for our salvation is not for what we do, but what the Lord has done for us, for God worketh in us, and imparts to us by that inward work, the blessed evidences and assurances of salvation, which is deliverance from death and hell and sin by the power of the eternal God, and Jesus Christ is that power, and God manifests his power to save by the atoning sacrifice of the spotless, bleeding, dying Lamb, who thus (by atonement) taketh away sin. Mrs. Cordrey was an amiable woman, and made friends of all with whom she came in contact. May the dear Redeemer grant the blessed consolations of the gospel to all who feel their loss, and may they be assured that their loss is her everlasting gain.

The funeral was held at the home of the deceased on Monday, Feb. 23rd. Services were conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder T. M. Poulson.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., April 23, 1913.

Mrs. Lucinda Pitman Dean was born in Crawford County, Ind., March 23rd, 1841, and died at her home in Grandview, Wash., March 30th, 1913. She moved with her parents when two years old to Knox Co., Ill., and was married Dec. 16th, 1858, to John Dean. To that union were born six children, five of whom survive: Oliver Dean and Mrs. H. M. Boyer, of North Yakima, Elza Dean and W. F. Elser, of Grandview, Wash., and Mrs. G. W. Hicks, of Galesburg, Ill. Sister Dean moved to Washington with her daughter, Mrs. Elser, in 1903, and lived in Grandview ever since it was a town. She united with the Henderson Primitive Baptist Church, of Knox Co., Ill., in 1861, and remained a faithful member of that church until death.

The writer was called to attend the funeral, April 2nd, 1913, and met Elder Hess and a large congregation of friends. Elder Hess introduced the service by prayer and a few appropriate remarks, after which I tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved from the seventeenth chapter of John, which was a marked chapter of sister Dean's. I used the same Bible which she used, and it showed by its marks she was a Bible reader. I only had the privilege of meeting sister Dean twice, first at Siloam Association. She heard me try to preach at that time, and visited our three days meeting afterward, and she had spoken to her children of me, and while I had never met any of them they tried to carry out their mother's desire regarding her funeral, and it seemed a great satisfaction to them to feel they had done so. Her body was taken back by her two sons to Galesburg, Ill., and buried beside her husband. Our prayer is that God may comfort the hearts of the bereaved ones with the precious thought that their mother is peacefully sleeping in Jesus, who will awake her to the fullness of immortality at that great day when he comes to gather or call his children home. May we, too, be of that number, for Jesus' sake.

J. T. BARNES.

Ann O'Bannon Foard was born Sept. 25th, 1834, in Fredericktown, Mo., died in Greenwood, Mo., March 11th, 1913, aged 78 years, 5 months and 14 days. She was married to Rufus Peyton in 1853. Her second husband was G. W. Foard, to whom she was married in July, 1869. Three children were the fruit of each marriage: Mrs. McFarland, of Fredericktown, Mrs. Smiley, of Kansas City, and Mrs. Zimmerman, of Pleasant Hill. Of the second marriage: A. J. Foard, of Newark, Ohio, Miss Mary Foard, of Greenwood, and Berdick Allen Foard, who died in infancy. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church in Redbud, Ill., about forty-seven years ago. She moved to Johnson County in 1874, and located in Kingsville, Mo., and had lived there nearly all her life.

Funeral services were held in Kingsville Thursday morning, March 13th, conducted by Elder John Teague, of Lamonte, Mo., and Elder L. H. Barnum, of Greenwood, Mo.

Forwarded by J. A. TEAGUE.

Sherman Miller Beardsley was born Nov. 13th, 1837, in Danby, N. Y., near Ithaca, and died at Bourbon, Douglas Co., Ill., April 10th, 1913, aged 75 years, 4 months and 27 days. He was married to Martha Cooper, May 25th, 1862, and to that union were born two children: Hattie E. and Samuel W., who, with their mother, are left to mourn their loss. Mr. Beardsley was next to the youngest of five children, two of whom are yet living, to wit, his oldest sister, Rebecca Miller, of Danby, N. Y., and his youngest brother, also of Danby, N. Y., who was in attendance at the funeral services. Mr. Beardsley with his family moved from Danby, N. Y., to Bourbon, Ill., in 1868, where he spent the remainder of his life. He was not a member of any church, but mother Beardsley was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church at or near Caroline, N. Y.

The writer attended the funeral at their pleasant home in Bourbon, and tried to speak words of comfort to the family and friends from 2 Cor. v. 1.

F. M. REEDS.

Helen Meeker, infant daughter of B. F. and Nannie Meeker, departed this life Feb. 7th, 1913. Little Helen was born July 10th, 1911, and was aged 1 year, 6 months and 28 days. She was taken sick with scarlet fever Saturday night preceding her death, and grew gradually worse until death freed her soul, God called her hence. All was done for little Helen that father and mother could do, but to no avail. God, who doeth all things well, knoweth best, and while it was hard to have to give little Helen up, it was God's will, and we should bow in humble submission. We know that her soul is now basking in the sunshine of God's everlasting love and presence, nevermore to know aught but joy and peace and love. Her little remains were laid to rest in Campbell Cemetery, Saturday evening, Feb. 8th, there to await the resurrection morning, when the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall come forth. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Father, mother and four brothers survive little Helen, and to them we extend our heartfelt sympathy, and pray that God will be with them in this sad hour and all along down the journey of life.

Written by a friend, T. W. BAKER.

Annie Hazel Walker died Dec. 14th, 1912. The death angel visited the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ben Walker, and took from them their darling Annie, a sweet little girl loved by all, aged 3 years, 5 months and some days. She was taken on Sunday night with membraneous croup, and suffered much. She lived until Saturday, Dec. 14th. The following day we had burial services, led by brother Clayton. Little Annie leaves a father, mother, one brother, six sisters, aunts and uncles to mourn her death, and we all miss her much. Little Annie was much company for me. It was hard to see her suffer. All was done that could be to keep her with us, but God took her. God giveth, and he taketh away; blessed be his name.

Written by one who dearly loved her.

IDA WALKER.

Mary Agnes Beene, infant daughter of S. D. and Ila Beene, was born June 3rd, 1912, died Feb. 22nd, 1913, aged 8 months and 19 days. Little Agnes was strong and healthy until about five weeks before she died. She had a very severe attack of pneumonia, and it seemed inevitable from the beginning that death would result, but she seemed to get better, and hope was entertained for her recovery, but all hope was blighted by a relapse of that terrible disease, and she passed away as gently as one falling asleep. Little Agnes was a bright, sweet little babe, and needless to say it was hard to give her up. May our heavenly Father fill the little babe's absence with his divine presence.

Her uncle, W. O. BEENE.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

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MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Association will convene with the Black Rock Church, Baltimore Co., Md., on Wednesday, May 14th, 1913, and continue three days. Those coming via Baltimore will take train at the union station, Northern Central R. R., at 3:30 p. m. Tuesday, the 13th, for Cockeysville. Those coming via Harrisburg will leave there at 11:55 the same day over the same railroad, arriving at Cockeysville at 2:35 p. m., and wait until the train arrives from Baltimore, when all will be met and cared for. We cordially invite all who may feel it in their hearts to meet with us, and we hope to see a goodly number.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

THE Delaware Association will be held with the Cow Marsh Church, Kent Co., Del., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 21st, 22nd and 23rd, 1913. A general invitation is extended to ministers and all visiting friends. Trains both north and south will be met Tuesday afternoon at Viola station, Del., from 3:30 to 5:31 o'clock p. m. Mail train will stop at Viola for Maryland Division passengers at about 5:30 o'clock p. m. south. For further instruction write B. E. CUBBAGE, Mod.

WYOMING, Del.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 28th, 29th and 30th, 1913.

THE Middleburg Old School Baptist Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., have appointed their yearly meeting to be held the first Sunday in June, and Saturday previous, (May 31st and June 1st) 1913. We are only a weak few, but we hope the Lord will put it in the hearts and minds of ministers, brethren and friends to visit us. Ministers desiring to attend the Warwick Association can go right on from this meeting, as it follows the next Wednesday after. Any coming by rail to Middleburg on Friday, May 30th, inquire for Mrs. O. B. Wood, or if coming to Cobleskill inquire for James E. Livingston.

ADDIE (COOK) LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

COBLESKILL, N. Y.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the New Vernon Church, New Vernon, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 4th, 5th and 6th, 1913.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 81. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1913. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE WORD MADE FLESH.

"THUS saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." —Isaiah lvii. 15.

In this one sacred testimony we have a very gracious discovery of the Lord. Though there is an immeasurable disparity between God the Creator and the creature man, yet he bows the heavens and comes down and reveals himself in very intimacy with lowly souls. As we are taught by the Holy Ghost to contemplate the revelation of the subsistence of God, the tripersonality of Jehovah, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, the attributes of him that inhabiteth eternity, O these attributes as displayed in creation, providence and grace are so glorious and infinite, and the fruit of this gracious teaching is that we worship God and are filled with admiration of his glories, and as we fall down and kneel before the Lord our Maker our hearts unfeignedly say, "Hallowed be thy name," and we rejoice with trembling before him. I mentioned that the disparity between God and man is beyond all our thought. He inhabiteth eternity; this can be said of no other. Our puny thoughts are lost in the theme, so infinite. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."—Heb. xi. 3. Such as have the faith of God's elect, believers in the Scriptures, cannot believe the athiestical doctrines of evolution. The generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, are recorded in Genesis, and all through the Scriptures God, the Creator of all things and of all mankind, is worshiped. The heavens, the sun, the moon and the stars are the work of his fingers, and that he is strong in power not one faileth. The infinite disparity between God and man is portrayed in Isaiah xl. 12–18. Ezekiel saith: "The heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. * * * This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face."—Ezek. i. 1, 28. God's understanding is infinite. (Psalms cxlvii. 5.) His omnipresence is both humbling and comfort-

ing to the saints. (Psalms cxxxix. 1, 12.) "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?"—Exodus xv. 11. In contemplation of God's infinite greatness, majesty and glory, Solomon in adoring amazement exclaims, "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?"—1 Kings viii. 27. Nevertheless it pleased the invisible God to give a visible token of his presence, for when the temple was finished and all things were set in order therein for the ordinance of divine service, "It came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord."—1 Kings viii. 10, 11. God appeared unto Moses in the burning bush, (Gen. iii. 1–6,) and though but a fire was visible, yet such was the conscious presence of Jehovah that Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God. In the pillar of fire by night and of cloud by day God led his chosen ones in the wilderness, giving them light by night and shade in the daytime. (Exodus xiii. 20.) He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar. (Psalms xcix. 7.) Such manifestations of the presence of the Lord, and others of which the Scriptures speak, were glorious and precious unto those who feared the Lord, but they fall very far beneath the one great manifestation of God. "And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."—1 Tim. iii. 16.

In all my attempts to write upon the things of God I never more felt than now my insufficiency and the insufficiency of language to declare the subject that I would enter upon. It is the one subject beyond all others that for many years has absorbed my thought and has yielded me strong consolation, and my spirit has often been refreshed as I have mused upon the theme. There is one act of God that surpasses every other; the creation of the universe in comparison with it is as nothing. The incarnation of the Son of God is this preeminent act of God. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."—John i. 14. "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman."—Gal. iv. 4. "Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men."—Phil. ii. 6, 7. This is the eternally glorious act of God. It has no parallel; indeed, all other acts of God, as creation and providence, (and in the gospel) redemption and regeneration, are only relatively great and glorious. This transcendent act of Jehovah might well cause the multitude of the heavenly host in praising God to say, "Glory to God in the highest." O, the disparity between the holy God and the sinful creature man is in so many ways infinite that it must ever have been to finite minds an inconceivable thing that the eternal Son of God should be made of a woman, be made flesh and dwell among us. Our Jesus is Christ the Lord. (Luke ii. 11.) Our last Adam is the Lord from heaven. (1 Cor. xv. 47.)

He is David's Lord and David's son. (Matt. xxii. 42, 45.) Emmanuel, God with us. (Matt. i. 23.) "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." —Heb. ii. 16. The angels he passed by, are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation? He took not hold of the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham. Heaven is the abode of the holy angels, and they do God's commands, hearkening unto the voice of his words. (Psalms ciii. 20.) There are also those angels that kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation. (Jude 6.) God spared not these angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment. (2 Peter ii. 5.) The Son of God took not on him their nature, he passed them by. Those angels that sinned are not the subjects of his redeeming love, but Jehovah in his justice and holy sovereignty hath reserved them in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. (Jude 6.)

In entering upon the consideration of the incarnation of the Son of God, I could wish that I might do so in all scriptural simplicity; for though the subject is, I feel, the deepest, the highest, the sublimest of all the revelation of God, yet the holy Scriptures abundantly and very explicitly set forth the fact of this transcendent act of God, and give glimpses to our faith of the manifold glories in the eternal purpose which he purposed therein. Let us look then first at the historical fact: "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." The Word was not made, but, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made."—John i. 1–3. "Being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God."—Phil. ii. 6. He, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, are one individual, uncreated, self-existent Jehovah. He is before all things, and by him all things consist. (See Rev. i. 8; Isaiah ix. 6; Titus ii. 13; Jude 25; Isaiah xli. 4; xliv. 6.) These clear, emphatic declarations set forth the true and eternal Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom: thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands."—Heb. i. 8–10.

"Being in the form of God."—Phil. ii. 6. He was not made in the form of God, but he was "made in the likeness of men."—Phil. ii. 7. The Word was made flesh. (John i. 14.) The Son was made of a woman. (Gal. iv. 4.) The incarnation of the Son of God was the eternal purpose of Jehovah; he was as such, and for the consummation of the manifold wisdom of God, verily foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times. (1 Peter i. 20.) In the garden of Eden it was foretold that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. (Gen. iii. 15.) To Abraham it was announced that in his seed (which is Christ) all the families of the earth should be blessed. And the patriarch David, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up

Christ to sit on his throne, he, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. (Acts ii. 30, 31.) He was made of the seed of David according to the flesh. (Romans i. 3.)

How and when did the Son of God become incarnate? This glorious mystery is with all sacredness told us in the word of God. When the fullness of the time was come God sent forth his Son, made of a woman. This time was decreed of Jehovah in the 4004th year of the world, according to man's fallible accounting. It was at the time that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be taxed, and this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria. (Luke ii. 1, 2.) If, as the Scriptures tell us, God had sworn with an oath unto David that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, Christ should come, by whom should he be born, even Christ the Lord, who is both David's Lord and David's son, the root and the offspring of David? Thus it was declared by the prophet, Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. This prophecy of Isaiah was about 758 years before the fullness of the time was come, and doubtless during all those years there were in Israel those looking and waiting for the fulfillment of the promise. (Luke ii. 25–28.) God singled forth a virgin who was to be the highly favored one. And when the time decreed was come the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. The city of Nazareth was the place of the conception of Christ, and in Bethlehem he was born. Let us now read the sacred record of the announcement to the virgin of this conception of the manhood of Christ which the Son of God took into indissolvable union with himself: "And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her."—Luke i. 28–38. It is all-important, and is it not divinely blessed to know the truth as it is in Jesus? Another Jesus will not do for the called of Jesus Christ. The only Jesus is he whom the Spirit of truth testifies of in the Scriptures, and whom he glorifies in the hearts of God's elect. (John xvi. 14.) At the salutation of the angel Gabriel the virgin Mary was trou-

bled, and though the quieting, "Fear not, Mary," sank into her heart, yet when the announcement was made, "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus," I do not conceive it was unbelief that caused her to ask the angel, "How shall this be?" but rather that in holy, wishful wonderment, as a little child she asks, "How shall this be?" So graciously and beautifully the angel told her. O what deeps are contained in it, and Mary in holy acquiescence exclaims, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." It was not every body that was meet to be taken hold of by the Son of God, but when he cometh into the world he saith, "A body hast thou prepared [fitted] me."—Heb. x. 5. This seed of Abraham which he took on him, conceived in the womb of the virgin, was that "Holy Thing." The virgin conceived, and the record tells us, "She was found with child of the Holy Ghost."—Matt. i. 18. The Son of God took part of the same flesh and blood as the elect adopted children of God, yet was he without sin. He was Jehovah's Holy One, thine holy child Jesus. He took not on him sinful flesh, his flesh was not of man's generation, but he took the likeness of sinful flesh, yet he was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. He was the Lamb without blemish and without spot. He offered himself without spot to God. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee;" and thus she conceived in her womb that "Holy Thing," "prepared," meet, and in the moment of its conception by the Holy Ghost taken hold of by the Son of God into indissolvable union with himself. "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise."—Matt. i. 18. "And she brought forth her first son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn."—Luke ii. 7.

"O wonder of wonders! astonished I gaze,
To see in the manger the Ancient of Days."

Everything here betokens poverty and humiliation. The Son of God is thus found in fashion as a man, a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. The Lord of glory, the Prince of life, whom none of the princes of this world knew, made his advent in the likeness of men, a little babe, in all the frailty and lowliness that we see in this stable. Is this a revolting sight? Are we so sensitive as to turn away from this scene and say, It is shocking to be thus born? Ah, though he made the world, and was in the world that he made, the world knew him not. It scarcely afforded him shelter, he often was shelterless, and lay on the earth, in the mountains, all night. Though the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air their nests, yet he had not where to lay his head. All this was his voluntary poverty; for our sakes he became poor; he stooped very low, he made himself of no reputation. The holy child Jesus "grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him." And when he was twelve years of age we find him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions, and all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. (Luke ii. 40–47.) When he was about thirty years old he was baptized by John in Jordan. (Luke iii. 21–23.) He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners; he suffered in the garden of Gethsemane, he was crucified and slain, he was buried, and rose again the third day, and forty days afterward he

ascended up into heaven. All these things as stated in the Scriptures are undeniable historical facts, of which there are "many infallible proofs," and are unquestioned by those who have the faith of God's elect. Having thus our Lord Jesus Christ before us it will now be meet to consider the glories of Jehovah's love and mercy and grace that shine with eternal excellency in this supreme act of the Most High. "The Word was made flesh." "God was manifest in the flesh." In declaring this mystery let us first consider the infinite exaltation of our nature in the Son of God, taking it into union with his person; and how near to him is our manhood, and how near he becomes to us. It verily was the highest and utmost that God could do in communication of his goodness to his creatures of Adam's race that he should take upon himself the seed of Abraham. This was in truth to marry our human nature, taking it into indissolvable union to himself. "Ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."—1 Cor. iii. 23. This was all done in consideration of Jehovah's eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. In the creation of the world God made a partial and temporary display of his attributes, for though creation is richly furnished with glories, yet millions of worlds could never declare such infinite glories that are revealed, that irradiate from the face of Jesus Christ. Here the lustre of all the attributes of the eternal God beams in undiminishing, immortal splendor, and though he dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see, yet when we shall come into the fullness of that eternal blessedness, and we shall see his face, "then face to face," we shall then truly know in its wondrous fullness that the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, doth declare him. Christ Jesus, who purged our sins and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, is the brightness of God's glory and the express image of his person. From the face of our ascended Jesus irradiates such light, such glory, that makes dim the noontide splendor of the sun. For such is the union of the holy child Jesus with the Word, that in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Infinite glories are put upon him; yes, through the man Jesus, our fellow, the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts, God declares and communicates all blessedness unto his chosen people. In God sending forth his Son, made of a woman, in such nearness of union is he with the virgin Mary's son that the angel said unto her, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." It is our everlasting consolation that our very Jesus, who lived and suffered and died upon Calvary's cross, who rose from the dead and ascended to glory, is verily of the seed of David according to the flesh, and he is David's Lord, the Son of the Father in truth and love. God hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds. Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. O to what heights Jesus has ascended! Far above all heavens, made higher than the heavens. Our precious Jesus being Lord and Christ, God manifest in the flesh, God the Father hath highly exalted him, and given him a

name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in the earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil. ii. 9–11.) Jesus Christ is the God-man, and is the object of the worship of men. "For he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy."—Luke xxiv. 50–52. And to the angels Jehovah saith, Let all the angels of God worship him. (Heb. i. 6.) Into such sacred, ineffable union is our manhood with God in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to such heights is our nature raised in him, that he is the head of all principality and power. So by Jesus Christ, who is God's dear Son, who in his Godhead is the image of the invisible God, and in his manhood the firstborn of every creature, were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. (Col. i. 13–17.) Thus when Christ ascended on high the Father did set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. And let it not be thought that these things declared concerning Jesus are flights of imagination. Far from it, they are verities of Christ's gospel, eternal realities, the faith of God's elect. For our Lord Jesus Christ, who was once in the world, and is passed into the heavens, is even now in very being, and forever will be, "The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath [inherently] immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen."—1 Tim. vi. 15, 16. Even when our Redeemer, Priest and King shall have finished his mediatorial work, and the glorious end of that work has come, and he shall deliver it up an eternal excellency unto God, even the Father, and his reign as Mediator and Priest shall be consummated, our Lord Jesus Christ will still be the King of saints, and with him, their Head and their Husband, they shall live and reign and inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. The mutability of our nature in the first man is manifest. We are sinful, Adam's offspring, subject to vanity. O so degraded are we, plunged by transgression in an abyss of pollution and dishonor, alienated from the life of God, the prey of innumerable ills. But in Jesus we see our manhood so exalted; taken into union with the person of the Son of God. Jesus is the immutable One, the same yesterday, to-day and forever; holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners and made higher than the heavens; and our predestined conformity to the image of God's dear Son will be to immutable holiness, to immortality and incorruption. This human nature which the Son of God made his own was filled with immeasurable grace and truth. On Jesus, who was the Branch, a rod out of the stem of Jesse, (father of David) rested

the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. This is so manifest to those to whom he reveals himself. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me. God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him, and unto his people he is meek and lowly in heart, our gracious, dear, almighty Friend. The apostle Peter exclaimed, "Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."—John vi. 69. But he was in the world, and the world was made by him, but the world knew him not. Flesh and blood could not reveal him to mankind; all man's ingenuity, familiarity with the Old Testament Scriptures, all the heights and depths of human wisdom, could not discover to man the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. They called him the carpenter's son, they called him a blasphemer, because he made himself equal with God, which he verily was. God was manifest in the flesh, seen of angels; they knew the Word was made flesh during all those thirty-three years he lived on earth, dwelling among mankind. He made himself of no reputation. He was in the world, and the world was made by him. The foxes had holes, and the birds of the air their nests, but he had no place to lay his head. He walked through the land of Canaan, he was wearied. Verily he was man; he was hungry, thirsty, he healed the sick, raised the dead, quieted the raging sea, hushed the winds; he suffered, was crucified and rose again from the dead.

(To be continued.)

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I inclose you a letter from brother Fetter, which I think you will perhaps desire to use.

Your sister,

MARY HILL TERRY.

RATON, New Mexico, March 14, 1913.

BROTHER AND SISTER TERRY—DEAR COUSINS:— If you had received from me as many letters as I have written in my mind you might have tired of reading them. I remember well the many happy seasons we had together last summer, and I thought when I first came home I would write at once to all my old friends. I dreamed a few nights ago of being in the Southampton pulpit, with a congregation before me, and the liberty of spirit which I had was wonderful to me. I think that as profitable a part of my visit east as I had last summer was the last few times I was at Southampton. I had in the past never felt to have any liberty or enjoyment in speaking there since the beginning of my speaking, and now to have the coals of liberty brighten into a flame that kindled my very soul to rejoice seemed good. For a long time the words, "Quench not the Spirit," have troubled me. While I do not want to overestimate my gift, I do desire to be diligent in doing what is mine to do. The time, the season or place, is not to be known by the messenger. The heavenly blessing to his people is not known to men until it is revealed to them as they are in the way of the Master's brethren. When I have a little of the choice morsels from the Master's table I think I never again will be so remiss in my duty; but a little more sleep, a little more slumber, makes the whole man that much more indolent. The obedient were to eat of the good of the land. To feed one is to give him the

fruit of your toil, and the servant can only give of the Master's goods. There is no dealing in the natural, when the spiritual has so much more strength in it to us. The one who loves most is the one who has the most misgivings, and who has been forgiven most. If we are in debt and have nothing to pay, then the greatest gift to us is he who pays the debt and liberates both body and conscience. I have thought that in the new birth both body and mind are liberated, in that the body is redeemed from that bondage in which it was held before; then not a shadow of doubt comes to one as regards the change from former things, for old things are passed away, and all things are become new. What is a new thing? Light is always new, and darkness is always old. Did we ever awake and find the sun darkness? Fair weather and foul weather may be discerned in the natural heavens, but what is discerned in the spiritual heavens? Here are opposite things. When we look for cloudy times we are surprised by fair weather in our souls, and are found rejoicing in the light. How light are our afflictions when we can see that they work out the peaceable fruits of righteousness. We are now exercised by the afflictions, and say how light they were to cause such a great change, and then we are apt to think that the old man will always do right. But when the old man for any length of time does not appear to be the old man to us, then we are troubled, and say within ourselves, Can it be that he is dead, or is he asleep? By the body of Christ he is dead; that is, the body of a believer is different from the body of an unbeliever. It is different in that grace reigns, and he can no longer boast of all he possesses. What he has, and he has great riches, is not his own, and yet he does possess them. But he waits for the adoption of his vile body, that he may put off the one and put on the other. He may now have a foretaste of putting on the body of our Lord, and come to know by suffering how much it cost, but still he must wait. Is not this waiting the cause of many of the sorrows of the people of God? The earth must produce the last vessel of mercy, inasmuch as in Adam all die. The life of Christ must be manifested in the Adamic man, and when the last of the seed shall spring forth of the woman, then shall the end come. The scaffolding and the tools when they are no longer needed shall be taken down. Christ shall reign until all enemies shall be put under his feet, and death is the last enemy to be destroyed, and when it is destroyed is it not shown that the price paid, the blood of Christ, is of great avail? And can the grave hold a prisoner for whom God has accepted a ransom? The spirit cries, Abba, Father. There is a longing, a great desire to be released, but the body is held in hope, and awaits the putting on. We cannot know what this great change may be until we see as we are seen and know as we are known; both knowledge and sight are required. Shall any be ignorant that he is their Lord, for whom they have waited and suffered, when they see him as he is? It does not seem to me a question of why, or where, or how, but it is sure that when the Lord is satisfied then heaven and earth can no longer hold any prisoners of hope, and if the blood of Jesus bought them when they were in bondage, and liberated them, shall he not surely take them to himself forever? Who shall then separate them when all their enemies are destroyed? And they who know and love the truth, shall in that truth rejoice forever.

I have written a long letter, and not at all as I intended when I began, neither have I written as I have written many times in my mind. I have always feared to talk or write of the resurrection, and here I have only written as it came to me while I penned the thoughts. I would not mystify so great a subject, or assume to know more about it than others. The workman finishes the building, and he may lay aside many or all of the needed saws and planes in an obscure place, and may never need them again, but still they are abiding monuments or witnesses of what he has performed. God has promised eternal life, and that life is in Jesus Christ his Son. The resurrection was to be preached in his name to all nations and among all peoples, and the Lord was and is with them that preach it, and they were all to be the Lord's at his coming. Those who had part in the first resurrection the second death should have no power over. God does not require death of his Son as our Surety and then again of us. What a glorious hope of immortality we have in him. We look to the grave, and then far beyond the grave, and see death swallowed up of life. Is it death to die when he has said, I will ransom them from the power of it? O death, I will be thy destruction! When death shall have an end, is it not destroyed? Who are they that know the power of God's anger, save those who know his love and matchless grace? We see as through a glass darkly, because there is something between us and the object, and so we see in part and know in part. I have never had reason to question the time, memorable to me, when the Lord pardoned my sins, and later when he laid the burden upon me of speaking as his witness before men, but I have in darkness had many doubts and fears during my earthly pilgrimage concerning the landmarks which seem to be so clear and familiar to my brethren. Few and evil have been my days. Sometimes, like Isaac, I have said, Here is the wood and here is the fire, but where is the sacrifice? But I feel that God will provide himself a lamb, and that he has said to my soul, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." I would, if I could, be often with you and be refreshed by you all again in conversation. I am not a ready writer, and can seldom read over what I write, but I trust that you may, like Ruth, be able to glean from the field some of the harvest at least. Remember me in love to all the church and friends. I hope some time during the spring or summer to see you. May Israel's God prosper your way, and cause that many times you may go down into his garden and smell the sweet incense of his heavenly word and truth.

Your brother in the gospel,

G. M. FETTER.

AVONDALE, Ala., April 16, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—The letter of brother Barnes on the "fulfillment of prophecy," and your remarks in regard thereto, in the SIGNS of April 15th, current volume, have stirred up in my mind some reflections and views that I have held to for a number of years, and with your permission I will give some of these views to the readers of the SIGNS, and leave all to judge for themselves as to whether I am correct or not, and shall think no less of those who differ with me about them.

First, the Scriptures are written in three ways, and are to be understood in three ways: first, doctrinal; second, experimental; and third, practical; and unless we keep these different phases in

view we are liable to become confused and misunderstand them; in other words, we must rightly divide the word of truth. This was Paul's course in all his epistles. He first starts out on doctrine, and lays the foundation of salvation and redemption, such as God's power, wisdom, election, predestination, foreknowledge, purposes and all those things upon which the hope of the people of God is based. Then further on he treats upon experience, upon the revelation of Christ to his redeemed people, the work of God's Spirit in the heart, of their calling and knowledge of salvation, of their joy, hope, &c. Then he almost invariably ends his epistles with admonitions, warnings, &c., showing that all these are necessary for us to understand as the children of God. Now I want to refer to a few Scriptures, and state where I think they apply. I can only refer to a few, for want of time and space, and will confine myself to the New Testament. When Christ says to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again," this is to be understood in a doctrinal sense. This birth is God's work, and cannot be undone, for a person once born can never become unborn, hence there is no such thing as "final apostasy" to those who are thus born of God, born of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. Again, when Christ says, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation: but is passed from death unto life," this is also to be understood in a doctrinal sense. In fact, all that is written in the Scriptures in regard to God's choice of his people in Christ, the completeness of the atonement, election, predestination, salvation by grace, effectual calling, the resurrection of the dead and final preservation of the saints to glory, and many other things, are to be understood in a doctrinal sense. When Paul says, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation;" and, "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us;" and, "Ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory," and all those Scriptures which speak of the belief, faith and hope and evidences of an inward work of grace in the heart, are to be understood in an experimental sense. Like the poet, I believe,

"If once the love of Christ we feel
Upon our hearts impressed,
The mark of that celestial seal
Can never be erased.

The Lord will scourge us if we stray,
And wound us with distress,
But he will never take away
His covenant of peace."

Christ and the apostles and prophets have time and again warned the people of God of the dangers attending any departure from the right way, either in doctrine, faith or practice, showing conclusively that such departures always have and always will occur. The Lord said to Israel at one time: O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help.

Now, coming to the New Testament, I will quote first the language of Jesus to his disciples: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under feet of men." This was said to the disciples, and doubtless applies at least to every man whom God has called and qualified to preach the gospel. But salt is none the less salt, though it has lost its savor, or strength. Lot's wife was turned to a pillar of salt because she looked back, and

Jesus warns his disciples to remember Lot's wife. Read the parable of the talents, and see the results of slothfulness, idleness, &c. I think what Jesus says about the branch abiding in the vine is to be understood in a practical sense, for here I am with the poet again:

> "Twixt Jesus and his chosen race
> Subsists a bond of sovereign grace,
> That hell, with its infernal train,
> Can ne'er dissolve or rend in twain."

If when Jesus says, "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me," he means that the children of God can do anything, or commit any sin that will sever that eternal life-relationship which exists between him and his blood-bought people, then we might have serious doubts as to whether any of them would ever reach the climes of immortal glory. Many of the people of God have from time to time departed from the Lord, both in doctrine, faith and practice, and the results have been, cast forth as a branch, and is withered, cast into outer darkness, talents or influence destroyed, salt that has lost its savor, and doubtless all of us have personally known of such cases. As I write I feel that I have experienced such things myself. Paul says, "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth." In this case there is "a certain fearful looking for of judgment," &c. This certainly applies to the people of God, and is to be understood in an experimental sense. I believe I have felt this. In Hebrews the writer says: "For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" Who is the "we" here, if not the people of God? Can the people of God neglect this great salvation? Certainly they can and do neglect it time and again. What is the result? "A just recompense of reward." I will give to every man according to his works. (Rev.) He that knoweth his Master's will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes. If his (Christ's) children forsake my law, and keep not my statutes, then will I visit their iniquities with the rod, and their sins with stripes; nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. From all these quotations it seems that the children of God can forsake the law of the Lord, sin wilfully and neglect their salvation. Of course this is in a practical sense. Now let us hear what Peter says: "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house [church] of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" This is also to be understood in a practical sense, and seems to teach that even those who live a righteous life, and do the best they can in obeying the precepts and commands of the gospel, are scarcely saved from the allurements and false doctrines of men and devils, and from the darkness, fearful forebodings and all the rewards that attend those who trample underfoot the Son of God, and count the blood of the covenant, by which he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and do despite unto the Spirit of grace, and are thus cast out into outer darkness and from the fellowship of the church, their influence destroyed, castaways, and have their portion with the hypocrites, and yet the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin, and these things all belong to this life.

It may be thought by some that what

I have here written is a contradiction of what was published over my signature in the SIGNS for April 15th. What I consider immoral practices include murder, theft, adultery, fornication, drunkenness, &c., and I think that a child of God can be guilty of the things mentioned in the Scriptures I have referred to in this article without engaging in immoral practices; still I am not prepared to say how far into sin and wickedness even a subject of grace may go when left to himself and unrestrained by the power and grace of God, and how it is that some of God's children live more holy, righteous and devoted lives than others, is a question I cannot answer, but I feel sure that all for whom Christ shed his precious blood on the cross will eventually be safely housed in heaven, without the loss of one.

Yours in all these conflicts, yet in hope,

H. J. REDD.

HAMPSTEAD Md., March, 1913.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—Another year is numbered with the things of the past since I welcomed your last most excellent letter. I cannot answer it, but desire to thank you and all concerned for the blessing that you have bestowed upon me in the gift of the SIGNS for another year, and for the great pleasure and comfort that I find in reading the revelations made to God's gifted people, for it is God that works within to will and to do of his good pleasure, therefore I am not forgetful of the source whence all blessings come, and to him my first gratitude should be directed, to him who is in all and through all and above all, and my desire is that I might be more worthy of the blessings I receive, and more humble before our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. But I suppose that I must have the thorn in the flesh to remind me that I must always be kept looking to "the Rock that is higher than I," and it is also very comforting that you desire to remember me in all ways you can for Christ's sake, for then you must believe that I am one of the little ones, and what a blessing to believe that we are Christ's, and that Christ is ours. All I ever knew of the song of which you spoke was that the grandmother in the family where I used to be would say to her granddaughter, "All of self and none of thee." I think that the dear old grandmother had reached the last line, "None of self, and all of thee." All the people of God desire this, but will I ever attain to it?

Yes, it was twenty-seven years ago last February since I was a soul in its earliest love, and, as you say, the Lord has been with us all these years, though his presence has not always been felt. In the darkness little children cling tightly to their father's hand. Does not this explain why our pathways lie so often through the darkness? God gives to each one of his children what is good for him, not what he desires. Knowing this, why do I so often murmur? It is because the flesh is at war with the Spirit, is it not?

I did not get my letter written to the church this year, as has for years been my custom, as I have been suffering more this winter, but I am feeling better now, and the Lord has been gracious. I read the book of Ruth, and, like her, still felt like saying, Entreat me not to leave thee, &c. I tried to sing a number of hymns, among them, "People of the living God," &c. Dear brother Cole, who was among the number who received me so kindly, is with us no more. But O blessed hope, we believe that he is singing the song of triumph in the home of the redeemed. How many have passed over since that time, and I am left in my weakness.

"Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." The dross must be consumed that the gold be refined. While the present only is ours, our God knows the end from the beginning. What a blessing that we are in his hand, and that we sometimes can feel we have been bought with the precious blood of his dear Son, therefore we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

A little time ago I was looking over some old numbers of the SIGNS, and came across the article you had written in connection with sister Rachel Ensor's obituary, and this came to me, The prayer of a righteous man availeth much. It impressed me much. I wish I could express myself with regard to the comfort I received in realizing the unity of the Spirit in God's people. Of course I had read it before, but had not the slightest recollection of it. Has God been leading and instructing me? I know you will say with me, I hope so. I have not been to Black Rock since last May, then sister Kelley gave me that pleasure, and that of a week's visit at her hospitable home. I have not seen them often this winter, for, as no doubt you know, sister Emma has been very far from well. Affliction is not always the punishment for sin, but the trial of grace and faith. Jesus once replied, when asked who had sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the work of God should be made manifest in him."

Before I close I want to thank Elder Keene for sending sister Ruth's letters to the SIGNS, and I feel as though I ought to ask sister Ruth's forgiveness, for I had always enjoyed her letters so much, and when they ceased to come I applied the words to her: She that is married careth for the things of her husband, and when I read her letters in the SIGNS and realized how much closer she had been living to her God than I had, I think that the tears I shed were penitent ones. It makes me sad to think I will judge, when I know that I have no right. It is before our own Master that we stand or fall. The words often come to me, Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.

I hope you all have enjoyed the greatest of earthly blessings since I last heard from you. I often wonder how sister Nellie is faring, and tell sister Bonnie that I miss her good letters. I expect you all are looking forward to the coming association. I do not anticipate that pleasure. Tell me about all the family when you write.

As Elder Rowe does not write often for the SIGNS, I am going to inclose two of his good letters to me. Situated as I am I feel blessed in having two such good pastors. I must again kindly thank you all. It is more blessed to give than to receive. I hope you have received that blessing.

Now remember your unworthy, but grateful sister,

GEORGIA D. ENGLAND.

ROLAND PARK, Md., Jan. 25, 1912.

MY DEAR SISTER ENGLAND:—I have thought many times to try to answer your good letter of quite awhile ago, but I have let one thing and another keep me from doing so, not the least of which is my felt sense of inability to write interestingly and to the glory of Jesus' name, for, if I am not deceived, I would like in all my writing, as well as speaking, to glorify his most holy name. Other names and things interest us for a time, but there is nothing lasting but Jesus and his love. He ever lives, and his love knows no end, neither does it grow cold as does that of mortals. All those who

in nature love us may forget, even mother, the most unlikely of all, for she is only mortal, but he only hath immortality dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto. But while we sorrow that we cannot go to him, we do greatly rejoice that he can and does come to us, and when he comes we rejoice, and he says, Your joy no man taketh from you. We know this is true, not only because he said so, but because he has given us to experience the power and sweetness of his gracious words applied to our sorrowing and overburdened hearts, so that ever we were aware that heart ready to break with sorrow is singing the praises of Jesus, our all-conquering King. We sorrow, and yet we rejoice; dying, we live. Yes, though the outward man perish the inward man is renewed day by day. In view of those wonderful mercies of God Moses said, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord?" The eternal God is thy refuge. Then what archer can hit us, since Jesus is the refuge in which we hide and fight the fight of faith? Who can hinder us from laying hold on eternal life? It is the gift of Jesus, and no power can rob us of that. Is it any wonder Paul said, Let him that glorieth glory in the Lord? Is there any other to glory in? Is not all flesh grass, and all its glory as the flower of the field? and is not man cursed who trusteth in man and maketh flesh his arm? O may God's people be given to realize the greatness of his amazing mercy, and be given songs of praise to his most holy name. Yes, may they cry out and shout as inhabitants of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of them.

We had a quiet Christmas and New Year's; had enough of the good things of this life to make us comfortable, and hope we recognize them as coming down from the Father of lights.

I baptized a young girl at Black Rock the first Sunday in December. She seemed in earnest, and asked that the 109th hymn (Beebe's collection) be sung at the water. May the Lord lead her. My wife joins me in much love and fellowship for you, and says she hopes to see you again soon; next summer, if not before. May the blessings of heaven rest upon you.

Your brother,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

ROLAND PARK, Md., April 29, 1912.

DEAR SISTER ENGLAND:—I have intended for nearly two months to write to you, and have put it off from time to time, hoping that I might have something to say, but it seems that I am still a blank. I have thought many times of late that I would love to write something for our papers, but have not made the attempt, because of a feeling sense of inability to write anything that would glorify God and comfort his dear people. I have had as sweet liberty in speaking as is usual for me, and have been blessed to fill all my appointments during the winter, except one, and my congregations have been good and interested. If only I have been interesting and profitable to them what a mercy to me. But O I do feel so poor and barren often that it seems impossible for me to be of any service to the sheep of God's pasture. But despite all this felt sense of weakness and unprofitableness, I feel that I must not dispute my dear brethren and sisters who so kindly give me encouragement, saying that they are given joy in the blessed word so feebly told by poor me, and then with my felt sense of weakness, and all the crosses it calls for, I would

rather be a servant of God and his dear people than anything else in this world. When I am blessed of my Savior (as I hope) to forget the world and all that the flesh seeks after, and think only of those things that perish not with their using, there are no happier moments on this earth, and I pray, O Lord, make me a true servant of thy dear people. He surely has blessed me in giving me a name and place among his humble poor since the year of our Lord 1876. They have been a great comfort to me, and I do most humbly hope I have been of some little comfort to them, and if so, how thankful I ought to be. "Unto me, whom am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

Dear sister, I hope you will be able to get to Black Rock next Sunday, for it is expected that the church will commune on that day. I have thought I would like to know how our young sister Cora Brown made out in writing to you. We all enjoyed your good letter. Now can you not come to the city to the association? We would be glad to have you. My wife joins me in much love and sweet fellowship to you. Remember us to Mrs. Lamotte. May the grace of God be with you.

I am, as I hope, your brother and pastor, JOSHUA T. ROWE.

WALLACETOWN, Ont., March 24, 1913.

DEAR ELDER KER:—Dare I call you a brother in the life or light of Christ? Your prompt reply seems to make me feel meek and lowly in heart that I should be granted any favors by the brethren in Christ, for I know I am not even worthy to have such good and kind people come under my roof. If I could only be peaceable and quiet, as I find others, and not borrow trouble from one time to the other, but I am a wanderer and a stranger here below, wanting what I do not deserve. Your parting words a year ago seemed to cause many tears of sorrow, and it seemed to me as if we were forsaken, but now we hear the glad tidings that you hope and desire to be with us at the May meeting. I hope it will be so you can visit a few days after the meeting, so I can ask questions, as I feel I have so little understanding of the truth. Why is this verse on my mind: "For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me"? Another text is: "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." This portion seems to fill me with wonder.

But I must not weary you with my writing, and will not expect you to answer just at present. Mrs. D. McWilliam requests me to send you these comforting letters to publish in the SIGNS, if you see fit, and if not, it will be all right.

I received those books all right. We would be pleased to have sister Ker attend our meeting with you. Pardon me for writing so much.

I remain your sister in hope of a better life,

(MRS.) JOHN D. McWILLIAM.

DUART, Ont., Oct. 14, 1912.

MR. AND MRS. McWILLIAM—DEAR FRIEND AND SISTER:—We feel to write you a few lines to offer our sympathy and love in your sad bereavement. We were shocked to know Sunday morning when we arrived at the meetinghouse that it was your son that was dead. We read the account of the death, but by the description and age we thought it was your brother. Well, dear friends, little did we

think when we parted at Lobo that trouble was so near, and nobody knows who will be the next to pass through the same. God knows, and in his hands are all our times. Dear sister, you may grieve that you did not have one word from him as a comfort that all is well with him, but God is able in a moment to change us, for if we were in the covenant of grace before the foundation of the world, nothing can alter that decree. Blessed are they whom the Lord loveth and sheweth mercy unto. We lost a dear little babe three weeks old, and we know that it would take the same saving power to save her that it would had she grown to womanhood. She could give no evidence of that saving power, and we have to leave her to God's mercy.

We hope these few lines will find you both well, and we hope God will give you his sustaining grace in this sad bereavement and comfort your souls by his presence. This is the wish of your sincere friends.

We close with christian love from your brother and sister, in hope of meeting you both again, if it is God's will.

MR. & MRS. D. W. CAMPBELL.

WOODSTOCK, Ont., Dec. 8, 1912.

MRS. JOHN MCWILLIAM—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I have thought of you much in the sad trial that God has called you to pass through, and have often thought of writing you a letter of sympathy and love, but it has seemed as if I have not words to reach such a depth of sorrow as you must have felt in this sorrowful affliction, and not being a parent, how can I know the depths of the trial you have been called to endure? But you know the Scripture says, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." This seems a strange way for the Lord to use his own dear children, and yet we find from Scripture that it has been his way in all ages of the world. Abel was killed because he served the Lord; Noah was scoffed at and derided the whole time he was building the ark; Abraham wandered up and down in the land without a home; Moses had a life of sorrow, affliction and trial; and so on all down through the ages of time it was the same, as we read in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews; and our blessed Savior was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and if the Master suffered how can his followers hope to escape? I know some will say, But mine is such a peculiar and severe trial. O yes, that may be, but the trial depends entirely on the grace given to sustain, as I know from experience, for in perhaps the most severe trial I ever had, the Lord, I hope, gave me these words to sustain and comfort me: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee," and the sorrow was gone, and I could not help but rejoice, though in the furnace of affliction. You know when the three Hebrew children were cast into the fiery furnace it did them no harm, and I have no doubt they rejoiced in the furnace, because the Son of God was with them, and if you feel that the Son of God is with you your sorrow will be turned to joy and comfort. This is impossible with men, but with God all things are possible. We know Job said, when God had bereft him of all his children and property, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." I know you cannot feel this way unless the Son of God walks with you in the furnace, but remember this, dear sister, that no child of God ever passed

through the world without tribulation and sorrow, for Jesus said to his followers, In the world ye shall have tribulation. It was a positive assertion, and he knew all the trials that every one of his children would pass through. I have had trials and tribulations all my life, but the heaviest to bear are the trials within a wicked, deceitful heart, that is constantly throwing up mire and pollution, and I dare not tell my own wife the polluted thoughts and temptations that arise in my heart, and I often think no other child of God can be tried and tempted as I am. I do not wonder that Job said, My soul chooseth strangling and death rather than my life. I know some might easily say, I do not see what you can have to trouble you. But I know the truth of what the wise man says: The heart knoweth its own bitterness. No one can tell what another experiences in his heart, for one may go along peacefully, as far as outward appearance goes, but none but God knows the tempest within, a tempest that sometimes seems as if it must wreck my frail bark, and would if the Lord did not keep me.

Now I think I will close, for I cannot write as I would like, and I know I cannot comfort you, but God can. I want you to know I think of you in your affliction, and may the Lord bless and comfort both you and your husband, and may he lift upon you the light of his countenance and comfort you, even in the midst of your trials, and may you be able to say, It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth best in his sight. My wife sends her love and sympathy to yourself and husband.

Unworthily your brother, if one at all,

R. SCATES.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Jan. 21, 1913.

DEAR SISTER MCWILLIAM:—You will pardon me in the delay in complying with your request, for soon after my arrival home our precious daughter, Vola, was taken seriously ill and had to be taken to the hospital to be operated on for appendicitis. It was such a shock to us all that we can never express our deep sorrow, as one can never tell what the result will be. My wife remained with her at the hospital until we brought her home. She is doing as well as we could expect, but has only sat up a few moments the past two days, but we think she is out of danger, for which we desire to be grateful unto the dear Lord. I have not forgotten, dear sister and friend, my, to me, very pleasant sojourn with you, and hope, if the Lord will, to see you all again. I feel I can say in the language of the song, "God be with you till we meet again." My entire trip was one of sweet enjoyment to me, but I lament my own unworthiness and unprofitableness for so high a position and favor, to mingle with the dear saints.

The words I inclose are precious to me, for they tell the sweet story of redeeming grace. If I know anything at all, it is a vile sinner saved by grace; no worth or merit in me. Remember me to all your dear family, and thank them for their kindness. The Son of peace be with you all.

Sincerely, P. W. SAWIN.

A SINNER LIKE ME.

I WAS once far away from the Savior,
And as vile as a sinner could be,
And the thought filled my heart with sadness,
There's no hope for a sinner like me.

I wandered on in the darkness,
Not a ray of light could I see,
And I wondered if Christ, the Redeemer,
Could save a sinner like me.

And in that dark, lonely hour,
A voice sweetly whispered to me,
Saying, Christ, the Redeemer, hath power
To save a poor sinner like thee.

I listened, and lo, 'twas the Savior
That was speaking so kindly to me;
I cried, I'm the chief of sinners;
Thou canst save a sinner like me.

And when life's journey is over,
And I the dear Savior shall see,
I'll praise him for ever and ever,
For saving a sinner like me.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Believing the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be glad to see something from the pen of those who hesitate about writing for its columns, and also believing they will grant me pardon for taking the liberty of sending a portion of their private letters to me, I send you what I have copied, hoping at your convenience you may publish them for the comfort and encouragement of the household of faith.

Unworthily your sister,

W. A. BEARD.

HOWELLS, N. Y., Jan. 28, 1912.

MRS. BEARD—DEAR FRIEND AND SISTER:—It has been some time since I saw you all who meet together in New York city to hear the precious truth, but think of you very often, and hope you are all well, and that you have both temporal and spiritual blessings. I have had some pleasant little visits with the friends at New Vernon at church meeting time, and it seems each time I feel more unworthy to mingle and converse with them of the precious doctrine of Jesus, but yet I hope it is worth more to me than all else besides. Though it seems an effort for me to express myself clearly concerning it, yet I dearly love to hear others tell of their experiences, for there seems to be a response within, at least I hope there is; but then the tempter comes, saying it is all a mistake, so the warfare goes on, flesh against Spirit; but last night I read some of the last words of Jesus after washing the disciples' feet: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you," and it seemed how much we sometimes know of that peace, and then again how little.

Perhaps you will think it strange I am again writing you, but you were all so kind when I first came over to meeting that I remember those days with pleasure, though I felt much cast down at the time, but know, or at least hope I do, that it was all the blessed power of the blessed Savior. May honor, glory and all greatness be ascribed to his name.

With love to you and all the friends, sincerely,

MARY DERBY HOYT.

NORTHBRIDGE, Mass.

DEAR SISTER BEARD:—As you see, I am again in Massachusetts. I really was sorry to leave Kingston, for while there I could hear preaching once a month and meet some of our dear Baptists quite often. I think, if I am not greatly deceived, which at times I am persuaded I am, that I did enjoy hearing the preached word our dear brother Slauson seems very much gifted with, words fitly spoken. I feel a deep interest in the meetings in Kingston. There seems much interest there, and the meetings, which are held in a hall on third Sunday evenings, are very well attended. May the Lord prosper them with his blessing, for I feel sure there are many who attend that are firm in the faith and doctrine of our Lord and Savior.

I enjoyed reading your letter in the SIGNS, and those of dear sister Durand's were very comforting. What a gift she

possessed, and in such humbleness of heart. If not entirely deceived, I think I can truly say the writings in the SIGNS comfort me, in that they tell of such beautiful thoughts that I feel but cannot express, and this most of the time is all the reason I can give for a hope, seeing so much that is vile and hateful in myself that it shuts out all spiritual growth, and I am made to sorrow and exclaim, O is there any one like me? Why am I thus? O to be renewed in the Spirit. I often wish I might mingle with only those who have come up out of much tribulation, who are unspotted with worldliness.

Dear sister, I began this letter nearly a week ago, and laid it aside after reading it, feeling it contained nothing of interest to you or any one else. My mind seems so barren of anything spiritual I fear to send it, but I do not know as another effort would satisfy me any better, so have concluded to send it, trusting to your charity to overlook all imperfections. Will you kindly remember me to all the dear brethren and sisters? I often think of them all. I greatly desire that God's blessing may be with you all in this, that the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, for as many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God. O what a blessed hope is this when it is given us to know it for ourselves and can say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

With love from yours in hope,

MARY E. SMITH.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Feb. 25, 1913.

DEAR SISTER BEARD:—The longing of my heart at this time is for the pen of a ready writer, and I hope it is not all of the flesh.

I have just opened the SIGNS of March 1st, and your letter to Elder Ker and the extracts you sent from sister Durand's letters to you have been read with interest. My heart embraces you in love that is not of natural origin. I feel sure though the natural tie has been strong since first I met you. Truly our departed sister possessed a superior mind; she was a lovely character, mild, quiet and of clear understanding regarding the truth, a model minister's wife, and though she is no more to be present she still liveth. These letters will be read by hundreds who will glean comfort and encouragement from them. But my pleasure is not all new: I enjoyed your letter to me of January 30th, and now as I again read it tears blind my eyes. I could better put my head in your lap and ask you to tell me again the old story in words that I can understand but cannot myself command. I believe I have been thankful for years that the psalmist said, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound." I cannot speak as others do, but, if I am not deceived, I love that sound; it awakens a love that is inexpressible, and satisfies as nothing else can. But why am I so cold, so prone to sin, always falling, seldom able to stand, and yet desiring the presence of my Father? Did I know it was in truth a hungering after righteousness I could claim the promise, and feel assured I should be filled in his time. Doubts arise, and the fear creeps in that I am longing for something short of the real substance. Again, if we had never tasted of the food of that kingdom how could we hunger for it? Things we never have known do not appeal to our natural minds.

But perhaps I am saying too much, and in a mixed way. My letters are so like myself: filled with mistakes and blunders, and often this keeps me from writing to

those I receive comfort from; particularly when I read letters in the SIGNS from isolated lovers of the truth, my mind will reach out to them in fellowship, and I would like to tell them so, but I dare not, and hope some other will do what I cannot.

A few days ago I received a letter from Elder Durand; it is one of the best. The day after we had three aged sisters of the Middletown Church to spend the day with us; I read that letter to them and it kindled memories in their minds of sermons they had heard him preach, and we rejoiced together. Next Thursday we expect three others for the day. I wish you could join us. I see so little of the church people I decided the best way to get a visit would be to extend a special invitation.

Next Sunday will be church meeting at home, (New York) remember us in love to them all. I trust we are one with you in love and fellowship. Our best love to you and brother Beard.

Unworthily yours,

H. M. STRONG.

HERNDON, Va., March 19, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have had of late some reflections on one verse recorded in Christ's sermon on the mount, which reads: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." Now it seems presumptuous in me to attempt to write on any portion of holy writ, even to try to give the meaning of only one verse recorded in the holy Bible. The chapter opens with the following words: "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." It seems to me by the language used that Christ did not wish to teach the multitude the lesson, but his disciples. A multitude signifies great numbers, and it reads: "And when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying: Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven."

I have been shut up indoors all this winter on account of a severe cold I contracted in December, and besides that I am afflicted with bronchitis, and do not seem to get any better of it, but rather growing worse. I have not been able to attend our meetings since December last, and feel to be very poor in spirit, for I feel to be shut up in a dark prison-house and cannot see my way out of it. I have lost the keys to the inner door and the outer door, if indeed I have ever had them at all, and must so remain until the prison walls are shaken by some great power stronger than man, so that I might grasp some ray of hope of my release. I often think of dear old John the Baptist while he was shut up in prison walls, doubting and fearing, and sending two of his disciples to Jesus, saying to him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Yes, his hope seemed to be blasted, and no doubt he felt lost forever, poor in spirit, without hope and without God in the world, yet he was included in that number called the blessed. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven."

I feel like dwelling a little while longer on John's case, and quote the words that Jesus spoke to the two disciples: "Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gos-

pel preached to them." All those characters that the Savior mentioned are poor in spirit; yes, even the dead that are raised up are brethren to the poor in spirit. I often wonder how long, O how long must I remain in this slumber of death? for I feel destitute of spiritual enjoyment. If one is poor, then he is destitute, and if he is destitute, then he is poor. I think that I must be one of the dead, like the ones Jesus speaks of in his message to John, that were raised up. Paul, in addressing the Ephesian brethren, said: "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." O yes, says the poor soul, I know that Christ can give light and life, and he longs for the time to come when the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings. O yes, let him shine on me even in my prison cell, for the poet said: "Prisons would palaces prove, if Jesus would dwell with me there." Jesus is the only one who can do helpless sinners good, for he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. It is written of him while he was in the flesh, He had not where to lay his head. He was rich, yet for his children's sake became poor, that they might be made rich, rich in the kingdom of heaven, but on the earth poor in spirit. To my dark mind the strongest evidence one can give that he is an heir of heaven is that he feels to be poor in spirit. Jesus said so, and we cannot doubt his word, for his word is truth; hence the words: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Jesus can never lose one of his little flock, for he says, My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

But I must now bring this attempt to a close. I do not know that it is right for a poor, weak creature like me to attempt to write on any portion of the written word of God, not even one verse, and in my condition of mind I think it would be best for me to lay my pen down, never to take it up again to write to the people of God, to those who feel poor in spirit, yet at times I feel to love God's people with all my heart, and at other times I do not know that I know what true love is, for I am filled with doubts and fears. I have enjoyed reading the SIGNS this winter, though I have been under a dark cloud most of the time, yet in reading the many good letters I have been comforted for a little season, for many of the writers tell me my experience better than I can tell it to any one.

I will conclude by saying that when I commenced to write this letter I thought I saw many beautiful things in the verse quoted, but before I had written many lines all the beauty seemed to vanish, and I just had to pick up such things as I could find by the wayside as I came along.

Dear editors, I submit this letter to your good judgment, to do with as you think best.

Your brother, I hope,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

[WE are very sorry indeed to hear of brother Oliver's poor health, and sincerely hope he may soon recover.—K.]

BOAZ, Ky., March 15, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As the time is about up for which I subscribed for the *Gospel News*, I now wish to become a subscriber for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I was once a subscriber for a short time, but feeling that I was not able to continue, I let it drop; not that I

had anything against the paper or any of its correspondents. I find there are still many able writers for its columns, and will just mention some of them, and I do not wish to cast any reflection on those I do not mention. I will first refer to Elder Newton Peters, of Portland, Ind. It seems to me that he is wonderfully gifted in the interpretation of prophecy, and the fulfillment thereof. I have just been reading the first and second chapters of second Kings, and would like to read a communication from him on these chapters, concerning Elijah and Elisha. In the fourth chapter of Malachi we read: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." Then we turn to the first chapter of Mark, first and second verses, and read: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; as it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee." Also Mark ix. 11–13: "Why say the scribes that Elias must first come? And he answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; * * * But I say unto you, That Elias is indeed come." Now who is this Elias, and in what form has he come? It seems there is a similarity here, and I want information.

I am making this too lengthy, so will hasten. S. M. Carlton, of Thornton, Texas, is also an interesting writer. He and I had a short correspondence some years ago. If I mistake not, he was located in Hillsboro at that time, if he is the same man, and I suppose he is, as his initials are the same.

I will now refer to brother G. E. Mayfield's article in reply to Dr. R. Cummins, on the appointment or ordination of deacons, and I will just say here that I never knew anything else in the setting apart of members to the office of deacon in our churches here in this country except the choice of the church, and the laying on of hands of the presbytery. This has been our custom as far back as I can remember, and we think we have a thus saith the Scripture for it. I do not wish to add anything to Elder Mayfield's explanation of the subject, but will say, if the other brethren are correct, we have been laboring under a mistake all these many years. I, like the brethren, do not believe that making a choice of a man, to the office of deacon, makes him a deacon. Churches sometimes make mistakes. I feel that way in my case at least. About twenty-five years ago the church at Mt. Pleasant chose me as one of her deacons, and while kneeling under the hands of the presbytery I realized one of the most solemn and heart-searching obligations I ever did in all my life, and have never felt that I possessed the least qualification for the position. Some have a mistaken idea as to what the office is. It has been our custom here for the deacons to pass the bread and wine at our communion seasons, and it is thought by some that no else has a right to do so, but in my feeble way of thinking it appears to me that other members have just as much right to do so, if necessary, in the absence of deacons. Now perhaps I am taking up too much time here, but the reason why we are more concerned about this matter just now is because there is a choice pending in our church at this time for the setting apart of one of our members for the office, and it appears to me that if we were just to elect, or appoint a man without the laying on of hands, as I understand from brother Cummins' article, that man could not feel that solemn obligation resting

upon him, as he would in kneeling under the hands of a presbytery. So, brethren, let us continue to follow what we humbly believe to be the instruction in the sixth chapter of Acts. Brethren, pardon me; I said I did not wish to add anything to Elder Mayfield's explanation, but one thing I do wish to say, and then I will try to close. It has been the custom of Baptists in this country to call upon other churches for their ordaining strength to assist in the ordination of deacons. The question with me is, What does it take to compose the ordaining strength? The apostles were sufficient at first, are they not sufficient yet? I do not think it necessary to have a great circle of ministers and deacons to sit as a presbytery, neither do I think we have authority for it, but I think that two or more ministers are sufficient. So, as it does not belong to the Old School Baptists to try to make a big show, let us leave off some of this. Nevertheless, if it pleases the brethren, I am willing to submit, for I am nothing.

Now, brethren editors, perhaps I have written more than I ought to; if so, cast it aside. I do not want to create confusion among the brethren. Forgive me if I have written anything amiss. I did not expect to write all this when I began. When all is well with you, remember a poor sinner like me.

G. P. BOAZ.

FULTON, Ky., April 11, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Please find inclosed money order for two dollars to pay my subscription another year. I want to thank you for continuing the paper to me so long over time, and beg you to forgive my tardiness. I have been troubled, fearing I would have to give up trying to pay for it any more, but the Lord is good to me, and has given me good friends. While he has seen fit to afflict me with rheumatism, so that I have not walked a step for nearly ten years, yet I feel that he has been long-suffering toward me, a sinner, and with David I feel to say: "I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me." I know I can never thank and praise him as I should for his goodness and mercy to me. If not mistaken, I have a little evidence, or reason, of a hope that my sins have been put away by the sacrifice of the Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Yes, my only hope is that, "Jesus paid it all, all the debt I owe." The SIGNS is a source of much comfort to me; may the Lord continue to bless it to his own glory and the good of his saints.

Your sister, I hope, in Christ Jesus,

(MRS.) M. J. DAVIE.

MANASSAS, Va., May 5, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I would like to say through the SIGNS to the many interested and inquiring friends and brethren, that Elder Badger, after a severe illness of several months, is improving, permanently, we hope, is able to be around again and drives out occasionally.

Most sincerely,

M. C. BADGER.

[WE are very glad to hear that brother Badger is regaining his health, and hope soon to learn of his complete recovery.—K.]

ELDER F. A. CHICK RECOVERING.

WE are pleased to announce to our readers that Elder F. A. Chick, senior editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, who recently underwent an operation at the Flower Hospital, in New York city, has so far recovered his health as to be able to return to his home at Hopewell, N. J.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1913.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JEREMIAH VI. 14.

"THEY have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace: when there is no peace."

According to our chronology, the time when these words were written was just a little before the beginning of the seventy years' captivity of Israel in Babylon. Much of this chapter, and of the portions of this prophecy connected with this chapter, is taken up with denunciations of the wickedness of the people, and their alienation from God, manifested among them in various ways, and in declarations concerning the coming judgments of God against them. Among the evils which existed among them the prophet names in the immediate connection of this text that they manifested no regard for the word of God, that they were filled with covetousness, that prophets and priests alike bore false testimony among them, and that the people delighted to have it so. The priests only thought to make merchandise of the sacred place they filled, and the prophets, with here and there an exception, dealt treacherously, both with God and with the people, while the people were penetrated and permeated with the same ungodliness that appeared in priest and prophet. They, the prophets, had healed slightly the hurt of Israel. The figure is that of one wounded and receiving the attention of a physician. For their real good, for the perfect healing of the wound faithful treatment was needful. But those physicians did not know how deep the wound was, and took care that the patient should not be told. They declared to the people that there was not much the matter with them, that they need not fear any specially evil results from their hurt, and so dulled whatever uneasiness the people might have felt concerning their condition before God. What inspiration calls the hurt of the people, means their transgressions of heart and life. These were the really hurtful things among them. Even the coming desolation and captivity was not here called their hurt, but the sins that brought upon them the judgment of God in this captivity. Sin had wounded them very near unto death. Their physicians sought to make light of the wound, but what these would not do, what these were too ignorant to do, the great Physician knew. He would by his judgments probe the wound and show how deep it was, and so at last bring them to repentance, that they might again seek the Lord and be healed. It was a sad time in Israel when it was said, "Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" But sad as was this time, it was still more sad when, as then was the case, they were not mindful of their need of this balm, and so were not seeking for a physician, and in the text the lament is made that their physicians had not plainly told them of their gross departures, but had smoothed them over and made light of them, as very trivial things indeed, and so had lulled the

people to sleep, instead of seeking to awaken them to their danger. They had healed slightly the hurt of Israel. This seems to us to be the direct application of the text. Israel had thus been lulled into a false security, thinking that all was well with them after all. They neither acknowledged their sins nor feared the judgment of God. Fearful calamities were about to come upon them while yet they anticipated no evil.

It appears to us that we shall do no violence to the text if we apply it to our own time and to the people of God under this gospel dispensation. There were teachers in the days of the apostles in the early churches who would have done the same thing, with reference to departures from the faith and practice of the gospel, but this did not the apostles themselves. No doubt many in the church at Corinth thought of the grievous departures there as being very trifling things. That church seemed to be almost settled down in carnal security when Paul wrote his first letter to them and in many things rebuked them so sharply; but in his second letter he tells them that he had heard his first letter had wrought in them a deep sorrow and repentance, so that they had purged out the evil thing from among them. To Paul was given wisdom, so that he was not only faithful, but could also see clearly their wrongs in their faith and order, and to him was given grace to point out to them unsparingly these things. He probed the wound to the bottom, warning the church of the sure results of their folly, and pointing out that there was but one safe way, viz., to return to the faith and practice of the gospel, and in the second epistle he expresses his rejoicing for them that they had repented and turned from their evil courses. How becoming it is in pastors now that they also are faithful, and that they do not seek by flattering words to gloss over the transgressions of Israel, saying that all is well, when all is not well, and what wisdom they need from on high to discern the nature and causes of the disease, and then to seek out and apply in a suitable manner the proper remedy. But as it was the case then that the prophets could not do more than plainly warn the people of their transgressions, and declare their sin against God, and announce the judgment of God because of their sins, so this is all that ministers of Christ can do now. As it was then, so is it now true, repentance for sin must be wrought in the souls of men through the working of the Holy Spirit in their hearts applying the word and making it to be as a probe that pierces to the root of the matter. One work of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, when he shall come, is to reprove (or convince) of sin. This he alone can do in the heart of either an unconvicted sinner or in the heart of his own living people. But in the latter case our blessed Lord does often use his servants to warn, rebuke and exhort, to the end that they may be turned from their disobedience to serve the living and true God, and so we read, They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever and ever, and one work which was laid upon Paul was to turn many from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. The spiritual are to restore those who have sinned, and "he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death." All these Scriptures manifestly apply to the order of the church and the walk of the people of God. In this God makes use of his called servants, but the work of calling men from death to life he reserves for

his own hand. He speaks directly to the soul that is dead in sins, and not through the words of men. The woe pronounced upon those who did heal slightly the hurt of Israel was a fearful one. No less fearful a thing is it now to pass lightly by the departures, either in spirit or in outward life, of the true Israel of God. Reverence for God and his word and love to the children of God alike demand faithfulness in this matter.

But there is in our mind still another application of this truth. How many there are who in their ministry and teaching do heal but slightly the hurt of those who have come to a knowledge of their sins, to some extent at least, and who have become anxious with regard to the salvation of their souls. No doubt in almost all congregations which meet for the professed worship of God there will be found some who have realized in themselves the abounding of sin, and to whom sin has become exceeding sinful, and who are oppressed under the condemnation of the law of God. Even though the great mass of such congregations are of a worldly or of a pharisaic mind, yet some of the former will be found among them. In the days of our Savior's ministry at times great crowds followed him who needed no healing, but there were sure to be some among them who were sick and poor and who did greatly feel the need of a cure. Many physicians had sought to heal the woman with the issue of blood, but all their ministrations were in vain. To such poor and afflicted souls as these there can be no real healing in that preaching which declares that sin is not exceeding sinful, that it is at worst an error, or a disease, that really there is no such thing as sin against God. All this is common teaching in these days, and then as sin is made light of the remedy proposed is also but a daubing with untempered mortar, a crying of peace, peace, upon grounds which can bring no peace, and when these men hold forth to such oppressed souls as these that salvation or healing can come to them through obedience of their own, through doing the best they can, through uniting with some church and living up to the rules of that church and complying with its forms of worship, through almsgiving and prayer, through morality, or even through a verbal confession of sin, and simply accepting the doctrine of forgiveness taught in the word of God, or through being baptized, or through any other feeling or act of men, they are doing just what is condemned by the word of God in the text, and healing but slightly the hurt of such souls. Very many convicted sinners have tried some or all these remedies, only at last to find that their hurt was increased instead of being healed. It is a literal truth that in healing wounds of the flesh but slightly there not only has been no gain, but rather an aggravation of the hurt. So the woman with the issue of blood, in the gospel, had not only not been healed by such physicians as she had applied to, but had, on the other hand, been both impoverished and made to suffer many things, beside the pain and weakness of her disease. Her case had been aggravated rather than bettered. So such convicted souls as these of which we are speaking find that all their endeavors to do what false healers advise them to be needful, do not help them, but rather add to their sins, upon the ground that all their righteousness is only filthy rags. But there is a way of healing thoroughly the hurt of all such souls, and the work of the true servant of God is to point out

the need of all such ones, and then the one way of salvation. All true servants of God will, like the apostles, plainly declare the sin, and point out its vileness and blackness, and the condemnation which belongs to it. They will not tell those who come to them to hear the word of God that sin is a light thing, or that they are not great sinners, or that they need not be anxious about themselves since God is merciful, and will pass by their sins if they will henceforth try to do the best they can. No, the true servants of God, like Jeremiah, will declare what sin is, and that the law of God is holy, just and good, and must condemn all sin. All this will they do to the end that they may point out the one remedy. These servants of God will point out these truths, because they have first of all felt them for themselves. They will preach as sinners to sinners. When they tell of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, or of its abounding, they will only be telling what they know for themselves, and all this is needful to be known and preached in order that the right remedy, the only remedy, may then be presented. In the gospel, which these men know and preach, there is no healing slightly "the hurt of the daughter of my people," neither is there any cry of peace when there is no peace. As ministers have come to know for themselves that it is in vain that men seek for peace with God by methods of their own, they will go on to declare this truth to others. As they found salvation alone through the finished work of the blessed Redeemer, so will they declare to others that there is no other way. If we look at the matter from the standpoint of the sinfulness of sin we shall be led irresistibly to some view of the greatness of the Savior and of his salvation, and, on the other hand, if we look at the matter from the standpoint of his holy character, of his relationship to God and of his atonement, we shall come to see something of what sin means. One in former time said to another who had said to him, But I am such a great sinner: Yes, but Jesus Christ is a great Savior. Only those who know themselves to be great sinners will ever know that he is a great Savior. We must magnify the law of God, else we shall never magnify the salvation that is in Christ Jesus. The gospel then does not heal slightly, it goes to the bottom of the hurt. The gospel never cries peace, when there is no peace. The message of the gospel tells us of Him who is our peace, and who has made peace by the blood of his cross, and all who are brought to this great salvation have found it suited to their great need. If their prayer has been, "O Lord, pardon my iniquity; for it is great," they can never be satisfied without finding a great salvation, a great atonement, upon which the pardon which they seek and need can be based. Jeremiah, that faithful prophet of God, was despised, and his message disregarded in his day, while false prophets were listened to gladly by the great mass of the people. But the message of Jeremiah commended itself to some who knew their hurt, and it is the business of the servants of God now to bear this plain testimony that all men have sinned, and that there is salvation and peace alone in our Lord Jesus Christ. This truth will never be a popular one among false teachers, nor among those who are pleased with their message, but it is the message of peace and hope to all who confess their sins. C.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

J. D. Mathis, son of Clarence and Matilda Mathis, was born March 3rd, 1854, and died at his home, six miles west of Benton, Marshall Co., Ky., Dec. 3rd, 1912, aged 58 years and 9 months. He was married to Alice L. Chester, Feb. 24th, 1881, and to that union were born four sons and three daughters: Flora M., Luther, Willie C., Oliver S., Gracie, Homer and Gorda, the latter two having preceded him to the grave in infancy. Brother Mathis leaves a broken-hearted widow, children and grandchildren, two brothers and three sisters, with other relatives and friends, to mourn their loss of a great and good man, great as a citizen, industrious, kind, patient, long-suffering and charitable. He had much experience in the educational field, possessing rare qualifications as an ardent worker all of the twenty years in which he taught in the schools of Marshall and Graves counties. He won the esteem and confidence of his students, and often in after years when meeting them called them his little boys and girls. He received a hope of salvation about thirty years ago, after having tried his own strength for fifteen long years (as he often expressed it) and found there was nothing he could do in securing his soul's salvation, saying that it was all of the Lord, and came in a way and at a time unexpected to him. Feeling his unworthiness, he lingered out of the church a number of years, but finally yielded to his impressions and united with the church of Primitive Baptists at Soldier Creek, in September, 1894, and lived a firm and devoted member until his death, growing stronger in the faith and more convinced of the truth of the doctrine as taught by the Primitive Baptists. Soon after he united with the church he was chosen clerk, and served faithfully and well until his death, and always had his minutes and letters of church correspondence neatly and well formed. He was assistant clerk of the Soldier Creek Association a number of years, and clerk of the same for three years, being ever ready to discharge his full duty. He was a strong believer in salvation by grace, and was well posted in the Scriptures. He always enjoyed the company of the Baptists, and seldom missed his regular church meetings, union meetings and associations. He was ever ready to welcome the Baptists, relatives and friends to his pleasant home. Though he was afflicted a number of years, he never murmured, and was confined to his bed but a few days. He, like all men in nature, dreaded the sting of death, but expressed himself as being ready and willing to go, and that he would be better off resting by the side of Homer and Gorda.

The funeral service was conducted by his much loved pastor, Elder J. P. Jenkins, who spoke comforting words to the large concourse of sorrowing friends who had gathered at the Soldier Creek church-house to pay the last tribute of respect to one they loved, after which the remains were interred in the Soldier Creek Cemetery.

J. C. CHESTER.

THE above obituary of our dear brother, J. D. Mathis, was sent to me to be forwarded to the SIGNS for publication, also that I say something in connection. It would be difficult for me to describe the worth and appreciation of our dear brother. We shall greatly miss him in our circle, both as a brother and clerk of our association. He had the confidence and respect of his brethren. I feel to say to dear sister Alice that the stroke is great, but He who gives taketh away at his time. We must humbly submit to the will of an all-wise God, who directs all things for the best. While our grief is great, the eternal God can soften the stroke of his providence, and he only can give the spirit of reconciliation. May God give you to be reconciled to his omnipotent will. Amen.

J. M. PERKINS.

Mary L. Cablin Chilton was born May 28th, 1830, and sweetly fell asleep in Jesus Feb. 10th, 1913. She was married to brother George Chilton many years ago, the date of which I have not at hand. Six children were born to them, two daughters and four sons; one daughter and three sons survive. Sister Mary united with the Cane Run Church, in Henry County, some twenty-five or thirty years ago, and was baptized by the late Elder Humston. She was faithful to the profession she made, and was found at the solemn feast when it was possible to be there. Like all the dear saints, she had her portion of trials and afflictions, but her faith was unwavering and she bore them uncomplainingly. With Paul she could triumphantly say, Out of them all the Lord hath delivered me. With the infirmities of age came a stroke of paralysis, and for a year or more she was almost helpless, but all was done for her that willing hands and loving hearts could do, until death relieved her of all pain, and she entered into that blessed rest which she so long desired. She leaves her husband and the four remaining children, with the church and many friends, who feel the loss of our dear sister in Christ. May the Lord bless and comfort each one, and graciously fit them for the heavenly joys.

Her funeral was largely attended at Port Royal, where the writer tried to present the gospel of Christ the power of God, after which the mortal remains were laid in the cemetery near by, in the hope of the resurrection of the dead.

P. W. SAWIN.

Mrs. Elizabeth Candler, wife of Edward Candler, departed this life March 23rd, 1913, at her home in Seneca Falls, N. Y., of old age. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Gilbert, both of whom died many years ago. She was born in England, near London, in 1822, making her age 90 years and 10 months. Her strength had been failing her for several months. She had been a professor for very many years, being baptized by Elder Brown, of Junius, and in her latter years she was a member of White Church, Tompkins Co. She was the mother of five children, four of whom survive her. She devoted the most of her life to the cause she most dearly loved, and as an Old School Baptist she was uncompromising, being firm and steadfast in the doctrine of God our Savior, and was pleasant, loving and kind toward the brethren and sisters of the church. She was well established in the doctrine and order of the church, being a great reader of her Bible and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which she had taken nearly fifty years. As a mother she will be greatly missed by her children. Her mind was very clear until the last. Her labor is done, henceforth she will rest from all earthly care. This we will say in memory of her whom we dearly loved. She has gone, we hope and believe, to a far better world than this, to be in the presence of her God, where there is fullness of joy and pleasures for evermore.

At the time of her funeral we had Elder Charles Bogardus with us, who spoke words of comfort. After a short service, which was held at the house, her body was conveyed to the cemetery vault, from where she was taken later to the family burying-ground and laid beside her husband, there to await the resurrection at the last day. May the Lord comfort her children, grandchildren and all who mourn and loved her.

Her daughter, MRS. PECK.
SENECA FALLS, N. Y.

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MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Association will convene with the Black Rock Church, Baltimore Co., Md., on Wednesday, May 14th, 1913, and continue three days. Those coming via Baltimore will take train at the union station, Northern Central R. R., at 3:30 p. m. Tuesday, the 13th, for Cockeysville. Those coming via Harrisburg will leave there at 11:55 the same day over the same railroad, arriving at Cockeysville at 2:35 p. m., and wait until the train arrives from Baltimore, when all will be met and cared for. We cordially invite all who may feel it in their hearts to meet with us, and we hope to see a goodly number.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

THE Delaware Association will be held with the Cow Marsh Church, Kent Co., Del., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 21st, 22nd and 23rd, 1913. A general invitation is extended to ministers and all visiting friends. Trains both north and south will be met Tuesday afternoon at Viola station, Del., from 3:30 to 5:31 o'clock p. m. Mail train will stop at Viola for Maryland Division passengers at about 5:30 o'clock p. m. south. For further instruction write . B. E. CUBBAGE, Mod.
WYOMING, Del.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 28th, 29th and 30th, 1913.

Those coming by way of Philadelphia on Tuesday will take train from Reading Terminal at 12:55 and 4:02 p. m. to Hopewell, where they will be met and cared for. Those coming from New York city will take train at 12:50 or 4:10 p. m. for Hopewell. Those coming Wednesday morning can take trains at same places and come direct to the place of meeting.

D. M. VOORHEES, Church Clerk.

THE Middleburg Old School Baptist Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., have appointed their yearly meeting to be held the first Sunday in June, and Saturday previous, (May 31st and June 1st) 1913. We are only a weak few, but we hope the Lord will put it in the hearts and minds of ministers, brethren and friends to visit us. Ministers desiring to attend the Warwick Association can go right on from this meeting, as it follows the next Wednesday after. Any coming by rail to Middleburg on Friday, May 30th, inquire for Mrs. O. B. Wood, or if coming to Cobleskill inquire for James E. Livingston.

ADDIE (COOK) LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.
COBLESKILL, N. Y.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the New Vernon Church, New Vernon, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 4th, 5th and 6th, 1913.

Those coming from and by way of New York city will take train from Twenty-third St. either Tuesday afternoon before the meeting at 4:25, or Wednesday morning at 7:10. Both of these trains will be met at Howells. Round trip tickets can be had at a saving of about one dollar on each fare. If there be any coming from west of Howells they will please notify H. S. Collard by card at Howells, N. Y., and they will be met. Those coming from the north over the O. & W. R. R. will be met at Winterton on afternoon

train the day before the meeting and on Wednesday morning. Trains due at Winterton at 4:08 p. m. and 7:49 a. m. The morning train leaves Kingston at six o'clock. We extend a cordial invitation to all who desire to meet with us, ministers especially invited.

H. S. COLLARD, Church Clerk.

THE yearly meeting will be held with Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, at Tallman, Linn Co., Oregon, commencing on Friday, June 13th, 1913, at 10 o'clock, and continuing over Sunday. Those coming by rail change cars at Albany, taking Lebanon branch, stopping off at Tallman. All lovers of truth, brethren and ministers are cordially invited.

A. HORNER.

THE yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held, the Lord willing, in their meetinghouse at Aberfeldy, Lambton Co., Ontario, seven miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1913, and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

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ELDERS SILAS H. DURAND AND P. G. LESTER

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 81. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1913. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PSALM CXXXIX.

(Concluded from page 263.)

"How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!" When we consider who the Lord is, and how infinitely great are his works, we can but wonder that he should have thoughts concerning such worthless creatures as we are. The psalmist expresses such wonder: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers; the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?" But we are given to understand that the dear Lord does have most precious thoughts concerning us, thoughts of love and tender compassion; "thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." His thoughts are not as our thoughts, but are higher than ours as the heavens are higher than the earth. If our thoughts were to prevail concerning the Lord and ourselves, then we could have no hope of his favor, for our thoughts are that a just and holy God cannot love sinners such as we are, for he is "of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." We not only feel condemned, but feel also that he is just and right in holding us condemned. When we are thinking these things over, and realizing the glorious attributes and divine perfections of the eternal God, our thoughts cannot bring us one ray of hope. We can but admire his glorious perfection, but we can but be overwhelmed with pain and sorrow and fearful forebodings on account of all that we know of him, and of our own sins, and of the claims of eternal justice. But when the Lord is pleased to reveal his thoughts to us, what a wonderful change takes place in our souls! How amazed we are! What surprising mercy and grace appear to us! We knew nothing of any such things before, although they were in the Lord's mind, as we afterward learn, eternally. These thoughts of the Lord, and his ways which they reveal to us, are as high above ours as the heavens are above the earth, and the word that goes forth out of the Lord's mouth, bringing these precious thoughts to us, comes as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, returning not thither, but watering the earth and causing it to bring forth and bud, giving seed

to the sower and bread to the eater. All the Bible is full of the Lord's thoughts concerning his people, and he gives knowledge of them to his people according to his own knowledge of their needs, and fills their souls with wonder, love and praise. When trouble and affliction on account of sin come upon one, so that "his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers," then the Lord sends a messenger, an interpreter, to show unto him the way of righteousness, and says, "Deliver him from going down to the pit; for I have found a ransom."—Job xxxiii. 24. Jesus appears as the only true and gracious interpreter of the Lord's precious thoughts, and then we are made to rejoice with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory. And so the church still goes on, telling of the Lord's wonderful thoughts and showing still that the church and the dear Savior are one, and ever to remain as one, and ever to be manifested in that sacred unity for the comfort of every member of that mystical and glorious body, until time shall end: "That they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."—John xvii. 22, 23.

More and more precious do the Lord's thoughts become to us as we are led sweetly into them from day to day. We cannot at any time get at them by our own will, nor can we get an understanding of them by study. It is only by revelation that they come to us, and for that we have to wait upon the Lord. Many a dark day and stormy night have we waited and longed for one precious word, for one "token for good," and have cried with the psalmist: "My soul thirsteth for thee. My flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is." Then, it may be, only a word has dropped into our soul, and immediately we have been made like the chariots of Amminadib, and in the multitude of our thoughts within us the Lord's comforts have delighted our souls. (Psalms xciv. 19.) Then it seems at times as though the Lord were talking to us out of his Scriptures of truth, and telling us of his eternal thoughts of mercy toward us, and of his abounding grace which was given us in Christ before the world began, and of the unspeakable gift of his dear Son, who died to redeem us from all iniquity, and who is our life, and is of God made unto us righteousness.

How great is the sum of these precious thoughts of the Lord to us. The more we see of them the greater in number do they appear. "If we should count them, they are more in number than the sand." Strange that they should be compared to the sand in number, for we cannot count that. But his thoughts of redeeming grace and dying love are set over against something that brings out to our view the great number of these thoughts. "Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of mine head; therefore my heart faileth me."—Psalms xl. 12. And this he says after he has experienced the power of saving grace, and has sung the new song, and has "preached righteousness in the great congregation." Thus it is shown here as elsewhere throughout the Scriptures, and in the experience of the Lord's children, that grace and mercy are needed every day by all of the Lord's people while in the flesh, and that only by the experience of a vital union with Christ can they have a satisfying righteousness, that righteousness which is of God by faith in Jesus Christ. Over against these iniquities, which are more than the hairs of our

head, are set these precious thoughts of the Lord which are more in number than the sand.

As we count these mercies of the Lord, and these thoughts which cannot be counted, we are all the time engaged in our almost constant work of looking over our account with the Lord, trying to see how it stands between him and our souls, asking ourselves what evidences we can see that we have a good hope through grace, questioning whether we have not been laboring in vain, or whether we have not left some necessary work undone, seeking to have some doubts removed and trying to confess to the Lord our transgressions in thought and word and deed; when, to our surprise, some sweet portion of the inspired Scriptures of truth comes into our mind, and we are at rest in a moment. All our restless work and struggling cease at once, and we are as one who falls into a quiet, restful sleep. It was vain for us to rise up early to our work, and sit up late in our efforts to accomplish it, so he has given his beloved sleep. Jesus is our rest and our peace, and "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding," is keeping our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. When we awake from such a peaceful, blessed sleep, during which the Lord has sustained us, we are apt to look hastily around us, at the world and at ourselves, to see if the Lord has not left us again to ourselves and to our doubts and fears. How inexpressibly sweet it is to be able to say, "When I awake, I am still with thee." The church thus feels and testifies truly to the faithfulness of the promise, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." "I laid me down and slept; I awaked: for the Lord sustained me."—Psalms iii. 5. "I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me to dwell in safety." —Psalms iv. 8.

The next four verses of this remarkable Psalm tell of the wicked and of the destruction which awaits them, and of the hatred which is felt toward them by those in whom the Spirit dwells. "For they speak against thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain. Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? and am I not grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with a perfect hatred; I count them mine enemies." This hatred does not appear to me like that which one man may feel toward another, of a worldly kind. Natural enmity may exist between two men, both of whom are at enmity with God. The enmity here spoken of is that which forever exists between the holy and righteous Spirit of God and all sin and wickedness. This hatred is a solemn, holy thing, a divine principle. It eternally exists between sin and the righteousness of God. It is not merely hatred against a man, but hatred of him as moved and controlled willingly by wickedness. Paul was the object of such divine hatred one day, and the object of divine love the next. Nay, even while one is yet a sinner, vile and polluted, he is the object of God's love, viewed as one of the election of grace. We cannot know who are of the elect until they are manifested; so when we see wickedness in any, and opposition to the Lord and to his glorious truth, we are grieved, and we can but feel that holy principle of hatred against them, though at some future time we may see them as lovers of that same truth and subjects of glorious grace. And we are to remember that our carnal minds are enmity against God, and that the principle of wickedness manifested in us is as hateful as when seen in a man

who is entirely controlled by wickedness. In this sense the manifested child of God hates his own life; he hates the appearance of sin in his own heart or lips or life. It is his desire to put off all that is sinful in his daily walk, not to be controlled by it. Therefore he prays earnestly: "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." This is the true and heartfelt prayer of every one of the Lord's manifested people when led by the Spirit of God. It was the desire of the dear Savior when he was in the flesh, and it was fulfilled in his experience, for he never sinned. He was tempted in all points like unto his people, yet without sin. In that sense he "knew no sin," and yet he suffered all their grief and bore all their pain and sorrow. This prayer has ever been the desire of the Lord's people, for they must be of one life and one mind with him in whose book they were written as members when as yet there was none of them. To be searched by the Holy Spirit is most deeply trying and terrible, and yet how good and grateful it is to one who has been made humble in the fear of the Lord, and who has the "sentence of death" in himself, that he should not trust in himself, but in Christ who raiseth the dead. He who began this Psalm with the acknowledgment that the Lord had searched him and knew his thoughts, now prays for that searching to continue, that all evil may be searched out, that all dependence upon the flesh may be driven away, and that he may be led in the way everlasting.

How good and pleasant it is to be thus in the experience of holy fellowship and communion with the Lord in any degree, either in telling to his praise what he has done for us, as in the former part of this Psalm, or in supplication for the same needed mercies to be given us from day to day all our life through.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April, 1913.

GRACETON, Texas, March 23, 1913.

ELDER AND MRS. SLAUGHTER:—I feel too much cast down to write much. While I cling to hope, I cannot sing the songs I love. I turn leaf after leaf of the hymn-book, but find little to suit my case. While bleak north winds have blown over the land, it has been bleak in my soul, though I find some comfort occasionally. One night last week I was so miserable I tossed sleeplessly, groaning every little while. Husband thought I was having heart spells, and spoke to me several times to find out the cause. I told him my heart was no worse, and said no more. I might have told him it was heart trouble, but of a different sort. I have not told him yet. I fear if you were to come to see me to-day you would find me a poor visitor. I am sick, both in body and heart. I feel so unworthy and unfit, I would be ashamed to speak to you if you were to come in now.

I will say no more, but will inclose a letter from my dear mother (your sister). She believes and loves the same good old story that you both tell so well. I told her of a conversation Elder Slaughter and I had when we first met, when he expressed concern that God would comfort them in their loneliness, they having lost three children at once, to be left alone. I wish you could visit them. Pray for us.

JOIE E. WOODS.

EDGEWOOD, Texas, March 20, 1913.

MRS. F. L. WOODS—HIGHLY ESTEEMED SISTER FOR THE TRUTH'S SAKE:—I have

been thinking of the Lord's humble poor all this afternoon, and none came before me greater than yourself, for I am sure you are highly favored of the Lord, for none can speak the things you do except the Lord teaches them. He is an infallible teacher, and he teaches his children all the same lesson, and that is, "Salvation is of the Lord," therefore the prophet could say, All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. Yes, in his teaching they all receive peace that the world cannot give nor take away. No prison of men can seclude you. Remember Paul and Silas in jail bound in the stocks for preaching peace by Jesus Christ. At midnight, when all the enemies of peace were slumbering, the apostles sang, I believe, Amazing grace, and rejoiced in that peace which is beyond all understanding. Yes, sweet peace, that we Gentiles, if I may say we, received by the sacrifice of our blessed Redeemer, for the chastisement of our peace was laid on him, and by his stripes we are healed of all our wounds. So after he arose from the grave he went and preached peace to them that were afar off. Yes, ye, who sometimes were far off, are now made nigh by the blood of Christ. The blood of Jesus Christ cleansed us from all sin, and brought the other sheep, which are not of the Jewish fold, and there is one fold and one Shepherd, one church of the living God, which is the pillar and ground of the truth. Rest in peace, knowing that the gates of hell shall never prevail against it. This is also great peace, that the religious world does not know anything about, because it is afraid of hell; but our God has ordained peace for us. David said, Thou hast blessed us with peace, so we can rest in peace in the finished work of our Savior, and have no time to idle away, but praise him, obey him in all things for that blessed peace that he has blessed us with. This we can do when he gives us the spirit of obedience. We cannot do anything without him, but can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth us. O, then may he give us the Spirit of Christ, that we may be able to sacrifice ourselves, and not please ourselves, but lay down our lives for the brethren, that we may dwell together in unity. David said, Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. It is like the ointment poured on the head, and that ran down on the beard, even the beard of Aaron, and to the skirts of his garment; like the dew of Hermon, even life for evermore, and this is great peace. When blessed with this peace, which is Christ, we can rest in a den of lions, or in a fiery furnace, or in Elijah's cave. For I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. Why? Because our Shepherd has an inexhaustible store, and we shall not want. This is peace, and manifests to us that our Shepherd loves us; for this reason he laid down his life for us, the sheep. This is great love, wherewith he loved us when we were yet in sin. Sweet peace, that when we were without strength, in due time, the right time, time enough to save us, Christ died for us. This is great peace. Like poor Ruth when she said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; let your God be my God, and your people be my people, and where you are buried let me be buried also. May the peace of God rest with you and reconcile you to your lot in this life, for I am persuaded that nothing shall be able to separate you from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

This leaves us all well, except my wife; she has been quite sick this week, but is able to be up now. I hope you and yours are well. Remember me kindly to Mr. Woods, also to brother and sister Arnold and all inquiring friends, if there be any. Cast the mantle of charity over this imperfect letter. Do as you think best with it and all will be well with me. I still remember your kind hospitality.

I am your unworthy brother, I hope, though less than the least of all saints, if one at all,

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

GRACETON, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As this letter was so comforting to me, I thought it might be a comfort to others, and as he had all the flock in mind, it is yours as much as it is mine. I have written several letters to the SIGNS of late, but have sent none of them. While I always felt a fear in sending letters to be published, this fear seems to increase rather than diminish; I am so afraid that my writings are only fleshly. But when such able ministers as Elder Slaughter profess to be edified by my letters, I feel at times some degree of freedom. As I wish to send a message of love, perhaps it is better at this time to send the reply I have written to him. It follows.

JOIE E. WOODS.

ELDER W. W. SLAUGHTER—HIGHLY ESTEEMED BROTHER:—I am not surprised that your most excellent letter was upon the subject of peace, the peace of God which passeth understanding, and just think, dear brother, now we only know in part. What will this peace and glory be when we enter into heaven itself, and know as we are known? I feel so little, so wholly unable to tell even a part of it; it is so high, so broad, so deep, so unbounded, so entirely unspeakable, that words seem futile. There is nothing earthly to compare with it. The joy of the whole universe is but as a drop compared with the boundless ocean of the love and peace of God. I recall a stanza of song, which may be Arminian in part; I remember but this:

"When peace like a river attendeth my way;
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whate'er be my lot, thou hast taught me to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul."

It may be vain confidence, but there is an abiding sweetness to me in the thought it contains. The glory and great fullness of this peace at times seem almost too great to be contained in my poor heart. Awhile ago, as I was thinking of this great peace, which is joy unspeakable and full of glory, it seemed the very fullness of it caused my heart to ache, and I thought of the words of the sweet songster: "I am sick of love." I long and pant for that day when mortality shall be swallowed up of life, when I shall worship Him in purity, no more to be tormented with self. We will not then be wondering if we are making a good impression. O, is it not awful that one selfish thought can intrude when writing or speaking of the great Sacrifice, the terrible suffering, the boundless love and mercy of God, and that, too, when our sin caused it all? How terribly that sin intrudes, even while praising his name for the unspeakable gift of salvation. How sweet it will be to be rid of self. But now does not this thought of our own baseness cause our song of praise to rise higher, because it magnifies the grace that can forgive and cleanse one so base as I?

"O for such love let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break."

Never was love like this, but I cannot tell it. I am glad you have felt the same peace, the same self-loathing, so that we are companions in this wilderness. Were it not for this kindred fellowship this world would be a dreary place. Am I wrong when I think that Jesus, our Lord, felt the sting of sin, though he knew no sin? I have thought that all the sins of his bride bore heavily on his heart, as though they were his, so that he has gone all the way before us. O what love, to become a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. His was real suffering, not imaginary, even sweating, as it were, blood. O self, for shame, get thee behind me, let Jesus only be seen. Let pride forsake me, so that when I am persecuted I may take it patiently. His dear face was spit upon, and he hid not his cheek from those who plucked out the hair. While I hate the sin that caused his sacrifice, yet his peace abideth. While I do not like the thought of sin, and it is momentarily grievous, he takes his own spotless robe and wraps it all around, and the stain seems gone, and he commands peace, and when he who is our peace bids calm, who can make us afraid? He is stronger than any foe without or within.

Well, you see I am feeling better than when I wrote the short letter which I inclose. Your good letter came when all seemed desolate, but peace came with it. I do not know how to thank you enough, but wish to thank God most, who gave you the will and the message to send. I think I will send your letter to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I was sorry to hear that sister Slaughter was sick. I hope she is well ere this. I missed your letter, dear sister. Pray for me.

JOIE E. WOODS.

DEAR EDITORS:—Suffer me one word more. While there have been years when it seemed that comfort was well-nigh dead, when I felt in a measure as our dear brother Ker felt awhile ago, yet it has not been thus during the past year. The most of the time I have felt that peace in the heart which cannot be told. If I strolled out in the sunlight I felt that God was there, guarding my every step; everything seemed to declare his praise. If a drought came I was made to remember, The Father knoweth that ye have need of these things, and it seemed verified in my heart.

"Lord, what shall earth and ashes do?
We would adore our Maker, too;
From sin and dust to thee we cry,
The Great, the Holy and the High.

Earth from afar has heard thy fame,
And worms have learned to lisp thy name;
But O, the glories of thy mind
Leave all our soaring thoughts behind.

God is in heaven, but man below;
Be short our tunes, our words be few;
A sacred reverence checks our songs,
And praise sits silent on our tongues."

A very unworthy one,

JOIE E. WOODS.

WAVERLY, Pa., Feb. 5, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending some letters, all good reading to me, and if you need them, and wish to, you can use them.

Dear brother Ker, your article in reply to sister Brewster, in the February 1st number of the SIGNS, was right to the point, clean cut, and did me much good. Write some more; you have given to the children what belongs to them, not to dogs. I want to say again, you hit the nail right on the head, and it has a clear ring.

Yours unworthily,

D. M. VAIL.

CLEVELAND, Ohio, Oct. 3, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—My mind is impressed to write you a few lines this afternoon, and try and tell you how I am still feasting on our good visit with you here, and our meeting on Sunday, how good it was; my poor heart was filled to overflowing. I had been for so long in such a cold, lifeless state that I feared there would be nothing for me, but as you began expounding the Scriptures I found with glad surprise my heart responding and witnessing to the words as they fell from your lips. You read from Ezekiel xxxiv. 11–15. The fifteenth verse reads: "I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God." What a feast I enjoyed, and I was made to lie down in sweet content, and in the words of the psalmist I could say: "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." I think we all understand (who know the nature of sheep) that a sheep will not lie down while there is anything to disturb its peace of mind; the presence of a vicious dog or beasts of prey would cause dire distress and confusion to the poor, timid sheep. But read still further in the thirty-fourth chapter of Ezekiel, twenty-fifth verse: "And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land; and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods." We do not have to look beyond our own nature to find the enemies in whose presence this table is spread, but they are subdued for the time, and we are graciously permitted to feast on the gospel's joyful tidings. "And I will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land." These evil beasts I believe are the evils of our old nature, everything that is in opposition to holiness; these for the time are subdued, and cease troubling us. This was my experience in our meeting Sunday. I was made to lie down in the gospel field, and here I am still, but I know from past experience I cannot long remain in this condition; no, not as long as I have so many enemies in my own household (my own nature). You remarked, "I do get so tired of Vail." I, too, get so tired of self, self, self. The evils in self are the "flies that make the ointment stink," and I find self mixed in all I do or say, even when I least expect it.

I cannot close without saying I feel glad you and our pastor, Elder George Weaver, have met, for now you know he is not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, and does not shun to declare God's whole counsel, so far as it is revealed to him. Did you not think he spoke nicely from the words, "I am the way"? May God's Holy Spirit be your guide until you are called to lay your armor by and dwell with Christ at home. Give my love to all the dear ones that I have mingled with in the past, as you have the privilege of meeting them.

Your sister in tribulation,

(MRS.) JENNIE O. CROSS.

[THE obituary of this dear sister appeared in the SIGNS for February 1st, 1913.—ED.]

FALLS CITY, Texas, Jan. 9, 1913.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER:—Your much esteemed letter came today, and as I have many other letters to answer, I will write you, before I neglect it too long, for I am so prone to carelessness or negligence that I fear to put any-

thing off for a convenient time, and am so dull and ignorant I fear to write to any of the dear saints, and especially those I have never met. Truly, dear brother, I am more than glad to know that even one of God's poor tempest-tossed children received one word of comfort from either my writing or speaking; and this brings my mind to reflect on the language of the preacher, Eccl. xi. 1, which reads: "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days." If I have ever had the least of the wisdom of God to impart, I am not perfectly aware of it, and have said many times that I would cease trying to speak in that name, and made many vows on account of the darkness of mind I am so often enshrouded with, and yet to forbear is as fire shut up in the bones. Brother Vail, it seems that I have had some precious hours of liberty and foretastes of the eternal wisdom, or insight to the heavenly mansions of the glorious love of Christ, but so few and far between that I often long for one more glimpse of light, that I may enjoy another hour, and many times have I tried to speak of the glories of Jesus and his kingdom of love, and could see but little, if any, comfort to the children of the kingdom; seemed to be words spoken to darken counsel. I often fear that I may speak or write words that would darken counsel, and yet the writer, as above stated, says, "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." We never know when a poor child has been comforted, but sow thy seed, casting thy bread upon the waters, it may be gathered not many days hence, is a Scripture often used by some to only multiply words, words without knowledge, as they imply a condition to be complied with by unregenerate persons; but the bread (heavenly manna) came of old to the church in the wilderness, and to none else; so to-day, the gospel day, the spiritual Israel is the only subject of gospel address. Manna is bread, to my mind, for when the Lord sent the church while in the wilderness manna, it came independent of the good works of Israelites, while hedged in the lonely wilderness, (a solitary place) yet they murmured and complained, and wanted flesh, so the Lord sent them flesh, which to my mind had reference to the gospel in the gospel day, which Canaan was a lovely type of while in the wilderness. On the other side of Jordan they had Moses; the law, and only the law, was taught. In this only were they instructed, yet Moses spoke very plainly in his prophecy of the gospel day, the coming of Christ, and yet they understood not, because of their relation to Adam, only experimentally; they had never been brought experimentally to the banqueting-house, and had no experience of grace, the type of flesh, (quail) sent into the camp. If I am not wrong, the manna, the flesh, represented the glad tidings of the gospel which was first preached by Jesus Christ, which was spoken of by Moses when he said, "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear," and when they entered the goodly land of Canaan, Joshua, a type of Christ, led them triumphantly over their enemies, and Moses, the law, was not permitted to enter the gospel Canaan, for the Lord buried him, and no man knows unto this day where his sepulchre is. As Moses was a type of the law, Joshua represented Jesus, or the gospel day, in which (Moses) the law was

not permitted to enter, but was fulfilled, and not one jot or tittle was fulfilled by Israel, for Israel did not even know where the Lord buried him; yet Satan has disputed about the body of Moses, (the law) and yet disputes concerning the same, in which they receive a rebuke, says inspiration. Jesus leads his children across the Jordan, into the lovely land of Canaan; there he instructs them in the way of peace, fights their battles, casts out the enemy, feeds them on the heavenly manna and adds to the church such as shall be saved. What a wonderful Captain; one who never makes a mistake, but gives orders, and every order under his guidance, every command, is given in power from on high, and not from beneath. Thus the apostle said, The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. Many are the precious thoughts of the glorious righteousness of Christ's kingdom, and if I know anything about it, every child of this great Canaan to which we, or any heir of same, is made a subject of grace, is the only source of comfort, and every word concerning the same is precious.

Now for fear I may, or have, written something not in strict harmony with this kingdom, I shall defer further writing, and hope you will be kind enough to throw the mantle of charity over my imperfections, for I may have used wrong expressions to convey my view. I would like for you to write me more explicitly on the subject, and forgive anything amiss.

As ever, your brother in tribulation,

J. B. BOWDEN.

WALNUT, Ontario, Jan. 15, 1913.

DEAR ELDER VAIL:—Mother received your letter, and was glad to hear from you, and she wishes me to tell you that she enjoyed reading it very much. She seems to be gaining in strength lately, and feels much better in every way. This week she takes a meal of solid food at noon, but the other meals are of milk or broth. Some of the time we think she will not be with us very long, and then again we have our hope raised, and believe she will be restored to her usual health again. Our times are in His hand, and so we know that all will be as the Lord wills, and whatever he does is best.

I might say that I, too, enjoyed reading your letter, but it seems different with me, for while I know that there is not one good thought in me, nor one good act ever performed by me, yet it seems to me that I am always thinking I can do something, and always trying to do something, but that is only to make things come out as I think they ought to be, and every time they fall through, but it is a satisfaction to know that the Lord is over all. It seems very clear to me the last few weeks that everything is controlled by him, and for the one purpose: that his will may be done and his name glorified. Sometimes when I undertake to tell any one what they should do, or should not do, I am made to ask myself, How are you to know what is for God's glory? and this of course closes my mouth for that time. The only things I know are for his glory are the things that have occurred already, and I shall know the rest as it comes to me. I am certainly made to wonder how he could make anything that I have ever done be for his glory. He doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou? I follow after the things of the flesh continually, and know that I shall always do so un-

less the Lord God himself makes me to do otherwise, and the only place from which I cry to him for mercy is in what seems to me the very depths of despair. Many times this summer my mother has said to me when in deep trouble: "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." It seems a little comfort for a season sometimes, but how can I stand still unless he makes me? I cannot do it, and am powerless, as you say, to even think one good thought. Much of my time I feel to be a Pharaoh. The God of heaven controlled him, but he was a natural hindrance to the children of Israel. God hardened Pharaoh's heart, that his name might be glorified, and so I know that whatever he does with me, whether to natural eyes it seems good or evil, is for his glory. If it is in his will that I am one of his elect, it will be so; if it is not, then it will not be so, for I am sure that his will will be done.

Mother has asked me to tell you that she very much enjoyed the writing in the SIGNS of Dec. 15th, 1912, by Elder Peters, on "The Predestination of God."

From one who is full of sin,

EDITH ZAVITZ.

NASHVILLE, Tenn.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—I write in response to your letter, received to-day, with reference to my letter in the SIGNS of January 1st. My dear brother, all of my communications to the SIGNS are written with fear and trembling, trusting in God to direct my mind what to write in glorifying him and giving him all the praise, in which I have never consulted with the flesh in directing the mind. The fleshly man is in opposition to the spiritual man, therefore what I may write I trust to be the revealed will of God, as I know my sufficiency is of God, for I claim nothing worthy of myself to offer that would bring me in favor with God. Dear brother, I feel to hope that God for Christ's sake hath revealed himself unto me altogether lovely, and that he hath drawn me unto him with his loving-kindness, and of his true faith that I feel when reading the good communications written in the SIGNS, and also the able editorials written by our beloved editors; this constrains me not to withhold my gift, which I trust the good Lord hath given me. Reading the good letters in the SIGNS makes me have a great desire to meet with the dear household of faith in mingling our voices together in singing the praise of His redeeming love. In no other way can we do this, except through the grace of God. Dear brother, I feel very much encouraged in reading your letter, and having your indorsement of what I have written through the SIGNS. The Lord has a people in every nation, kindred and tongue, and we are commanded to speak often one to another. I trust that the Lord has given us the eye of faith to see and to speak the same things, as in such union, love and fellowship abound. I do not write to see my name in print, but for the great love I hope I have through the shedding of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. If my heart deceives me not, I hope I love his cause, and know of his suffering, for in no other way can we ever enter into that rest prepared for them that love him. Yes, dear brother, he is the Captain of our salvation, and none is able to pluck us out of the Father's hand. I hope you will be given the eye of faith to comprehend what I have thus written, trusting in the Lord to guide me. May God bless you in your ministerial duties to feed the flock of God, is my prayer.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

O. B. HICKERSON.

CASEY, Iowa, Dec. 10, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you a few lines stating what the Lord has told us about the sources whence we receive mortal and immortal life. The first mortal, the second immortal. We read, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." What became a living soul? The man became a living soul, the man that God created of dust. Adam was created in the image of God manifest in the flesh, the man of God's right hand, and Christ made his soul an offering for sin, and poured out his soul unto death. (Isaiah liii.) If then God manifest in the flesh poured out his soul unto death, how could he who was only the image of Christ possess a soul that could not die? Jesus was the life of the body, the church. The first man, Adam, was naturally only mortal. As like produces like, we then by nature are only natural and mortal. "The Lord commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the graden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Before God's day of a thousand years was fully out Adam did die. He died in the evening of that day, for he lived to the age of nine hundred and thirty years. Methuselah lived until late in the evening of that day, for his life was nine hundred and sixty-nine years. Peter says, "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

Now we read, "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." The woman believed the serpent, and so does her natural posterity still believe this lie about the immortality of the natural man to this day, for the creature, man, was made subject to vanity. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked." "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever; * * * he drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden, cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." This tree represented Christ, who only hath immortality, and the fruit represents life, which can only be obtained through Christ. Thus the first man before the second birth is only mortal.

Thus I have tried to show from the Bible alone, not from what uninspired writers have said, but from what the Lord has said about the natural man, that from the first Adam we only obtain natural life that must die. And so it is written, "It is sown a natural body; it [the same body] is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.

As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly;" that is, after the resurrection. This alludes to the saints, who have received immortality in the inner man, when born of the Spirit. This is the time when Jesus, who only hath immortality, gives them eternal life which cannot die. This is more than we received from the first Adam. How could it be said that Jesus gave us eternal, immortal life, if we obtained this life from the first Adam? If Christ only hath immortality we can obtain it from none but him. Had Adam not eaten of the forbidden fruit, and were he here to-day, he would still be only fitted to enjoy natural things. Paul said that the first Adam was not spritual, and therefore he was not a fit subject for heaven, where all is spiritual. Therefore he could not enjoy heaven if he were there, with only natural flesh and blood. He was by nature only adapted to the pleasures of earth. Now after Adam sinned, God revealed to him that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. After the figleaf failure, the Lord God made coats of skin and clothed them. There must have been the shedding of blood to procure these coats. This represents, first, the blood of Christ, and second, the robe of righteousness which he wrought upon the cross for his bride. Paul said, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory." "He shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen."

I have written only what God has said in his word of eternal truth. I do not appeal to uninspired men.

Your brother,

R. S. BANKS.

[It seems clear to us from the language recorded in Gen. iii. 22, that the sense in which through the transgression man became "as one of us," was in knowing good and evil. It seems clear also from the Scriptures that it was not Adam only, considered as one man, who was said to be made in the image of God, but man in the sense in which we use the word "mankind." The following Scriptures seem to show this. In Gen. ix. 6, we read, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man." Here evidently the word "man" is used in the sense of mankind. So Paul said in 1 Cor. xi. 7, "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God." In James iii. 9, we read, "Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God." It has seemed to us that the narrative in Gen. i. 26, sets forth at least one thing in which this likeness especially consists. It is said in that Scripture, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Then it is added, "And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping

thing that creepeth upon the earth." Of no other portion of the creation of God is it declared that they have dominion over other things save man, and so man alone has dominion given him. Here is a likeness in man of that God who has dominion supreme and absolute over all things. Another thought seems clear to our mind, viz., that unending existence is not eternal life, nor immortality. It is never said of the angels of God that they possess immortality or eternal life. These things God gives alone to redeemed men, and the thought embraced in the Savior's words, "I give unto them eternal life," is not simply unending existence, but another kind of life. Life is never said to die. Life is taken away from men and they are dead, but life itself does not die. Death is the pronounced penalty for sin. As brother Banks has said, and well said, Adam did not literally die until more than nine hundred years after the penalty was pronounced, then he died a natural death, as we all die. Only two of all mankind have escaped this death, so far as we are told: Enoch and Elijah. It seems evident that without sin man must have lived on in the state in which he was created forever and ever; but he sinned, and death was pronounced against man, all men, because of that sin, and because this was the penalty our blessed Lord Jesus Christ must come in the flesh, possessing natural life, and must lay down that life in death in our behalf, and so to the believer death is no longer the penalty for sin, but is called falling asleep in Jesus. To the unredeemed death is still the penalty which was pronounced at the first against sin, and from other portions of the word we learn that there is also an eternal death, which death is said to be an everlasting punishment. Whatever else the parable of the rich man and Lazarus may signify, it is sure, from the Savior's words there, that there is a state of torment in the future world for the ungodly.—C]

CANNON, Del., March 26, 1913

DEAR ELDER DURAND:—Your letter received, and replying will say that I am familiar with Isaiah xxx. 17. I feel as though much more could be said concerning my article entitled "Beacon Light," but it seemed as though I had written enough, and stopped rather abruptly. My mind has been dwelling upon this verse, and in fact the entire chapter, and if you will bear with me a little while I will attempt to write further upon the subject.

"One thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one; at the rebuke of five shall ye flee; till ye be left as a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on an hill." Let me say, I feel incompetent to write upon this subject, but it is in my mind, and I have a little comfort in the thought that what I write is only for the consideration of those to whom I write, and I am perfectly willing to be corrected if I am wrong. This Scripture it seems to me relates to those who rebel against the Holy One of Israel. It seems from reading the Old Testament Scriptures that Israel was always quick to forget the mercies of the Lord. When the Lord brought Israel out of Egyptian bondage we are told they sung a song unto the Lord for their great deliverance. It would seem from reading this wonderful deliverance that the children of Israel would always remember these mercies, and never provoke the Holy One to anger, but we find in a little while they forgot the mercies of the Lord and murmured against their surroundings, and wished they were back in the land of Egypt. They remembered the leeks and

the onions. On this particular occasion (Isaiah xxx. 17,) the Lord is speaking plainly to the rebellious children. Isaiah has been chosen to speak the word of the Lord to them, and they refuse to hear right words and tell Isaiah to prophesy deceits. Thus we see they could not endure sound doctrine. They are arranging things their own way; they will flee on swift horses. They say, We understand. They were not interested in what the prophet was telling them, and perhaps the prophet had grown weary, but the Lord will do all his pleasure, even though they flee on swift horses, yet the Lord tells them that they which pursue them will be swift. This proves that the Lord controls all things; he will follow these rebellious children. Let no one think he can do wrong and the Lord not know it. Are there not some who want to keep the world from finding out their sins, and if they can succeed in this feel perfectly satisfied? Poor creatures they are, the Lord knows it, and he is the one they have sinned against. But is it not wonderful how merciful the Lord is to his rebellious children? He says in verse eighteen, "Therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto them." I do not say that the Lord causes his people to err, because he is pure and holy and tempts no man, but I believe he allows his people to follow their own ways sometimes, to teach them important lessons, and when they wander far enough the Shepherd brings them to the fold amid great rejoicing, and the sheep that wandered is both thankful and ashamed; he loathes himself, and knows how weak he is. He prays, Keep me near thee, O Lord, for if left to myself I will surely stray. Jesus, keep me near the cross, there is a precious fountain.

I will now write particularly upon the word "beacon," as mentioned in Isaiah xxx. 17. What does the word mean? What does it signify? It seems to me it can be compared to the true church, of which Jesus is the head. A beacon is a light which guides the weary ones into port. Now we notice that the rebellious children must flee until they become as a beacon on the top of a mountain. The Lord will gather them together, but they are to be a plain people; even as a tree bereft of its branches, they must be stripped of their pride; they must cease from their own works; they must learn to trust in the Lord Jehovah, for in him is everlasting strength. This peculiar church will not come down from this mountain to mingle with other churches, because she is satisfied upon the hill, yet she is asked to. She is asked to enter into an alliance with all other denominations and thus help to convert the world for Christ. Should she come down? I answer, no. Why not? some one asks. I answer, Because Jesus built her upon the rock, and said, The gates of hell shall not prevail against her. Praise his name. He shall find his church when he comes the second time pure and spotless as sheep that have come up from the washing. This church suffers criticism by other churches because she is so selfish; she will not even commune with other denominations; this is too much for human reason. They say, You are wrong; why not be friendly? If we want friends we must show ourselves friendly. Who is more friendly than these peculiar people? Who will do a kind deed for a neighbor quicker than an Old Baptist? But his religion and worldly religion will not mix any more than oil and water, and you know this is an impossibility. Let us see if these peculiar people are selfish in anything but religion; they are not selfish even in

that when properly understood. Are there any people in the world who rejoice more than they to see one come to the church confessing his sin? I answer, no. There is gladness of heart, as when one cometh into the presence of the Lord, and great love for that one. Moreover, these peculiar people even love their neighbors, and want to assist them in any way they possibly can; they know their neighbors often are under condemnation, and they feel sometimes prompted to pray even for their enemies. Well, says human reason, why not warn sinners to do better and thus escape the wrath of God? The answer is that the work of regeneration is that of the Holy Ghost, and all men are sinners, and how can a sinner convert a sinner? For one man to save another looks like a case of the blind leading the blind, both falling into the ditch. Again I say with emphasis, that regeneration is the work of the Holy Ghost. Well, says human reason, then it is no use to preach the gospel. O yes, it is well. What is the gospel? I will let the poet answer this question, as he has answered it much better than I can. This is what he says:

"The gospel brings tidings to each wounded soul,
That Jesus the Savior has made it quite whole,
And what makes this gospel so precious to me,
It holds forth salvation as full as 'tis free."

I notice also that when Jesus called the fisherman he said, Feed my sheep. He did not say, Make sheep. Notice this fact: the Lord's people are compared to sheep. This brings to our minds that wonderful Scripture: We all, like sheep, have gone astray, &c., and just think, our iniquities were laid on an innocent One. It seems to me I can imagine how Jesus suffered for my sins, and I want my stammering tongue loosed, that I may sing his praises here in this world: Dissolve my heart in thankfulness, and melt mine eyes in tears. Who is like unto thee, O thou Holy One? Thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee. O that I could be in the mind I now am in more of the time, but sometimes I am in great darkness and ready to give up. To-day at noon there was a destructive looking cloud in the west, and I felt a little fearful, when these words came into my mind: "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling," and I felt that all would be well, and a gentle shower passed over, and the sun came out and the birds were praising their Maker. Keep us in thy fear, O Lord, and lead us beside the still waters; increase our faith, and may thy church continue to shine as a beacon upon the top of the mountain, and as an ensign on the hill.

A. T. BENSON.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April 15, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—In looking over some old letters a few days ago, my brother handed me one from sister Abigail Dodge, whose communications used often to appear in the SIGNS. In reading it over the thought occurred to me that some of her old friends and kindred in Christ would be pleased to see her name once more in these dear, familiar columns, so I will send you a portion of this letter. It is now many years since she left these fading scenes for her home in glory, but her memory is still fragrant with tender love in the hearts of many to whom she was very dear. I can never forget what a precious mother in Israel she was in our dear home at Vaughan Hill, when in youth my unworthy name was enrolled there as a member.

Your sister in hope,

BESSIE DURAND.

TERRYTOWN, Pa., March 8, 1874.

DEAR BROTHER SILAS:—I thought this morning I would answer some letters that I had received from some of my beloved sisters, but I felt that I must read a few chapters first, and I commenced to read at the first of Romans (and you were in my mind all the time). I read to this: "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" Then it seemed that I must write a few lines to you first. O how beautiful are their feet when they come leaping upon the mountains and skipping upon the hills, in preaching the glorious gospel and proclaiming that salvation is of the Lord, and not of the puny arm of flesh. Yes, and their faces are also beautiful, of which they have four; and while they preach this glorious gospel of the Son of God, Jesus sits by with a writer's inkhorn by his side, and sets a mark upon the forehead of those who sigh and cry for the abominations that have been done in the midst of Jerusalem; and then the ministers of the gospel are to go forth and slay all that have not the mark; that is, they should proclaim to them that there is no salvation in their own works, or that the works of their own hands cannot bring salvation unto them. But they are not to come near to those who have the mark with such weapons, but to comfort them with the comfort wherewith they are comforted of God. I trust, my precious brother, that I have received many a crumb while sitting under the sound of your voice, and to God be all the glory. I have known people who thought it wrong to give a minister, or any one, the least encouragement, fearing it would puff them up with pride, but I believe if the Lord gives any one grace and gifts to comfort and edify his dear people, he will give grace enough to keep them humble at his own dear feet. We read that we should enter into our closets and pray to our Father in secret, and our Father shall reward us openly. Now in what way does the Father reward us openly? I say "us," because I believe we are his people. This Scripture has been on my mind for some time. I would like to have you preach me a sermon upon it, if not asking too much. I believe I have never taxed your precious time very heavily with questions.

If my poor letter is worth answering, please answer it, and remember that I cannot write as some others can. I have a precious letter from sister Hassell. She writes that they are having great revivals in some of their churches since the associations. O that the Lord would pour out his Spirit upon our little church, and revive his work here in the midst of the years, and in the midst of deserved wrath remember mercy.

Your unworthy though affectionate sister in Christ,

ABBIE DODGE.

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EDITORIAL.

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ROMANS XIV. 19.

"LET us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another."

One of the things which are impressed upon our mind as we think of this exhortation, and of the chapter in which it occurs, is the truth that all that is or can be needed for the counsel of the man of God while in this life is found in the Scriptures of the New Testament. By these Scriptures is the man of God thoroughly furnished unto all good works. All that we need to know concerning the way of salvation, including the atonement, the new birth, redemption, justification, sanctification and the final perseverance of the saints unto death, their victory over death through faith, and then in the resurrection at the last day; all that we need to know concerning that walk which becomes a christian before God or in the sight of men; all that tends to instruct and encourage and comfort those who love God, and all that behavior which becomes us in all our relations with each other in the church of God, will be found recorded in the word of God. All this is included in the saying that the Scriptures thoroughly furnish the man of God unto all good works. In this most interesting chapter the inspired apostle gives not alone his advice, but what is the will of God concerning two especial things which had come up in the church at that time, and concerning which the minds of many were perplexed. We say two things, because it appears to us that his teaching concerning those who ate only herbs, in the first part of the chapter, is a part of what he says concerning meats offered to idols in the closing portion of the chapter. The two things are these which we have named, and the observance or nonobservance of days as being sacred above others to the Lord. It is not our mind to go over what the apostle has said in all this chapter regarding these things, but simply to call attention to the general truth which he here has enunciated. It is evident from this chapter, taken in connection with other portions of the word, that the apostle taught that some things were essential to the faith of believers, and to their fellowship together. The things essential to be believed among all whose right it is to be numbered with the church of God embrace the doctrine of Christ, including his incarnation in human flesh, his death as an atonement for sin and his resurrection from the dead, thus justifying his chosen people, and securing their final salvation in heaven at last, together with the appointed walk in all sobriety of all who believe, and the appointed ordinances of his house. Those who reject these things are called heretics, and the churches are bidden to withdraw from heretics after the first and second admonition. But also there are things concerning which there may arise differences, both in understanding and in conduct, wherein there is to be mutual forbearance, and which ought not to involve alienation and separation and breaking the bonds of fellowship. The

things named in this chapter are among those things. Besides these two special things, there are many other things which the apostles warned their brethren against, and which they reproved freely, but which, after all, were not to be made the causes of nonfellowship among brethren. There are many admonitions given by the apostles, many reproofs, many warnings against that which is harmful to those who follow such things, but yet concerning many of them there is no admonition to withdraw from that brother who yet may need warnings and reproof. For instance, brethren are warned not to forsake the assembling of themselves together, as was then the manner of some, yet there is no command to cut such ones off from membership in the church. Other things might be found in such ones, and indeed are very likely to be found in them, which would cause a loss of fellowship, but still it is true that no special admonition is found to cut such ones off from the church. We have known of some who absented themselves from the church, and when visited and reproved for it so behaved themselves that they were afterwards cut off, not so much for the first offence as for the spirit manifested by them when approached about it. But it is not our mind to say more concerning this one thing.

From the language of the text it is apparent that the one special thing here urged upon the church at Rome, was not to make strife out of every difference that might arise among them. No doubt both these things that are named seemed important in the minds of those who are here exhorted to forbearance and patience concerning them. In the mind of him who did eat only herbs (perhaps because he wished to be sure that he had not eaten of meat offered to idols) it seemed all important, because it was his mind that by eating meat which might, so far as he knew, have been offered to an idol, he was practically denying his God and Savior. He was conscientious in this. The apostle says that he was weak, but still those who knew better what was their liberty in Christ must not condemn him, but ought to bear with him; and, on the other hand, he who did not eat meat, but only herbs, was not to judge the brother who did eat believing that in so doing he was receiving his meat from the hand of God, and giving God thanks for it. That he gave God thanks was full proof that he was not eating meat to the honor of the idol to which it might have been dedicated by him who slew it or sold it. Yet, after all, if this strong brother became impressed that by exercising this his liberty in Christ, he was leading some weak brother (that is, some brother who was weak in understanding,) to eat with conscience toward the idol, he ought to do as Paul said he would do: eat no meat while the world stood. This certainly did not forbid the strong brother to exercise his liberty of eating meat, only for the special occasion of which he here speaks. As soon as he could make it plain to the weak brother that his eating of the meat was not to the honor of the idol, and that he did not consider the idol to be anything more than a piece of wood or stone, it was his privilege to go on eating meat as before. This seems to us to be in substance the apostle's meaning here. So also with regard to the observance of days. Paul plainly teaches that he who observed the day was weak in the faith, and those who did not regard the day were strong in the faith. But his charge to them is that the strong should bear the infirmities of the weak. On the other

hand, he who regarded the day must not despise those who did not regard it. To both Christ had revealed himself, and both these classes believed in him as their Savior. This was the essential thing. Those who regarded the days, did not do so as though they expected to be saved by so doing, but because they supposed that though saved by grace alone, yet this observance of days was still commanded them. They regarded this as those who are baptized, and come to the table of the Lord, not because they expect salvation by these things, but because they are the appointed ordinances of the Lord's house. Had these brethren at Rome thought that salvation was in the observance of these days they would have been rejecting Christ as their Savior, and so there could have remained no true bond of union and fellowship between them and those who rested all their hope in him. These last considerations are also true of those who did not eat meat, and by these two things we learn that many know the blessed Lord in the salvation of their souls who are not yet instructed very far in the liberty which they have in Christ, nor in the order of the house of God. But even these are to be received, though weak in the faith, but the receiving of them must not be to bring up doubtful disputations; that is, it must not be made the occasion of strife and debate, by which things the weak are not made stronger, but rather confirmed in their weakness.

The conclusion of the whole matter is that we follow in all that we do the things that make for peace and edification. The things which are enjoined in this chapter would certainly tend toward this end. Forbearance, kindness, patience, gentleness, not seeking to magnify differences, but rather to heal them, all these things are set forth in the teaching of this chapter. At the same time all these things are not to be understood as implying that the servants of God should seek to stifle the truth. Truth alone can really tend to produce peace and edification, or building up in the church. The apostle would enjoin upon all his brethren that they have this one thing in view, viz., to do all things to edifying. They are to follow this one rule, to seek peace and ensue it. If we be really disciples of the Lord we shall be possessed with this desire. The text recognizes that there are things that make for peace and there are things that make for strife. It may well be that as we seek to insure peace we may make mistakes. We do not always know what will tend to this desirable end. Here we shall often feel the need of wisdom from on high. To seek that wisdom then will be one of the things that will make for peace. Seeking this wisdom we shall be slow to speak, slow to anger, slow to condemn, and this also will make for peace. It is sure that if the brethren at Rome were careful to observe the directions given them in this chapter concerning meats and days they would find that the result would be peace. Strife, debate, angry feelings and angry words, all of which tend to alienation, would be absent. There would be room when strife was not heard for silent examination of the word of God, and earnest prayer for light, and God would himself open the eyes of their understanding so that all would at last come into one mind concerning the things about which they differed, and Paul, while thus writing to them, sought the things that made for peace and the edification of the church, even when he faithfully told them that those on the one side were mistaken and weak in the faith. Bold-

ness and earnestness and faithfulness do not mean harshness, nor wrangling. The servant of God must not strive, in the sense of angry debate, but must be patient toward all men, peradventure God would give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, and Paul here sets the example by his faithful testimony concerning the truth, while at the same time he urges each one of these two parties in the church to walk in fellowship and union, each one in all kindness respecting the other, since they were all alike the servants of Christ, and since their hope for salvation was alone in him. This chapter has been a very solemn one to us for many years. We have desired not to depart, even a hair's breadth, from the truth in our testimony, either in preaching or in writing, but at the same time we have desired to be ready to receive those who are weak in the faith, and not despise them. If we know the truth it is because God has revealed it to us, and if any one is otherwise minded among the children of God he will reveal even this to them, and they can know it in no other way.

C.

FIRST VOLUME OF EDITORIALS EXHAUSTED.

As our supply of the first volume of Editorials is exhausted, we will be unable to fill any more orders for them, but have quite a number of the second volume left, which we are closing out at seventy-five cents each. As neither of these volumes was electrotyped, we will not be able to supply either volume after what is left of the second volume is disposed of. Address all orders to

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EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

1 PETER III. 8.

"FINALLY, be ye all of one mind."

This eminent apostle of our Lord Jesus Christ, in common with all the other apostles of the Lamb, was invested with divine authority to establish in the church of God every principle of faith and order which can ever be lawfully entertained in his kingdom. No religious organization can ever be recognized as a church of Christ, or a branch of the church of Christ, unless standing in the apostles' doctrine, conforming to their decisions, listening to their instructions and accepting all their decisions in judgment on all parts of the law of Christ. The apostle John lays down this rule of judgment, this infallible and everlasting test of fellowship, and criterion by which the saints of God shall know, without the least shade of uncertainty, who of all the professing world are of God, and who are of the world, and not of God. He says, "We [that is, the apostles, and the apostolic church, which holds the apostles' doctrine and order,] are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." "They [that is, they whose spirit and doctrine are not of God,] are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them."—1 John iv. 5, 6. To hear the apostles, in a scriptural sense, is to receive their instructions, accept and abide by their decisions in all they have said, and to obey their injunctions and heed all their admonitions. He that is of God will do all this, and if any who profess godliness do not in this sense hear the apostles, it is because they are not of God, but are of the world. This decision

is infallible, whether applied to individuals or to churches. By this rule the church is commanded to "try the spirits," and by it they are to discriminate between truth and error; between the Spirit of God and the spirit of the world, or of antichrist. In conformity with this unerring rule let us examine the admonition of Peter, which we have placed at the head of this article. It is given as a finality, admitting of no amendment, of no abridgment, of no alteration. "Finally." This word is used not only to express in this place irrevocable decision, but also legitimate deduction from the instructions contained in the context, in which the duties of all the saints to God and to men are distinctly and authoritatively laid down; as citizens of the world, to kings and governors, magistrates and rulers, of wives to husbands, children to parents, and of servants to masters. These are the instructions immediately preceding, and the "finally" of our text is expressive of the general summing up of what they amount to, or the unanimity of consent with which they must be accepted by all who are of God, all who are to be held in fellowship as "elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience," &c.

"Finally, be ye all of one mind." Unanimity of sentiment is indispensable to church fellowship. Of the church, in her original organization at Pentecost, we are informed that her constituents gladly received, or heard, the doctrine of the apostles, that their union was so perfect that they were of one heart and one soul. They on whom God had poured out his Spirit were pricked in their hearts, gladly received the word of the apostles, were baptized in that faith and order, continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. They could not possibly be in the latter, if not in the former, for if they were of God they would hear the apostles, according to the infallible rule copied from the apostle John, and if any one of them stood not in the apostles' doctrine, his spirit was of the world, and not of God. No one was allowed to dissent from the apostles' decisions on any one of those positions taken by them, on the plea that he had a right to his opinion independent of the apostles, or of the church of God in which apostolic rule and order are maintained. The apostles have not so decided, that if any man teach otherwise from their instructions that it is only a matter of opinion, and he has a right to such opinion, and his brethren and the church should tolerate such independency. No one is to be recognized as being of God who does not yield every opposite opinion, and bow to the decision of the holy apostles. Paul says, If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, &c., he is proud, knowing nothing; that is, knowing nothing of the things of the Spirit of God. How can he, if his spirit is of this world, and not of God? No man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man that is in him; even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. They are spiritually discerned, therefore the natural man cannot know them, and consequently he knows nothing, and in his blindness and ignorance he dotes about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, &c. From all such the command of God through the apostles is, "Withdraw thyself," and all who are of God will hear this last, as well as all other of the apostles' commands and decisions, admonitions and exhortations.

As all the fraternity of the household

of God are required to be of one mind, as our apostle has decided, then it follows, of course, that no member of the brotherhood has a right, or can be tolerated by the church, in holding sentiments or opinions discordant with the mind of the church, which is based upon the decisions of the apostles. How can the church of God be distinguished from the world, or from antichrist, if there be no unity of faith, no unanimity of sentiment, no agreement in doctrine and practice? It is indispensable to the existence of an orderly gospel church that all her members should be of one mind, and to be of but one mind; it is equally indispensable that all shall be of one spirit. If all are born of the Spirit, and led by the Spirit of God, then all will have the mind of Christ, and in that mind there is unity. That mind is always in perfect harmony with all the teachings of the apostles, and will recognize their high authority, as inspired judges of the spiritual tribes, to establish forever the order of the church of Christ. But, one demands of us, Have I not a right to my own opinion? Must I pin my faith on the sleeve of another? While we believe that all intelligent beings must have settled convictions and opinions of their own, and as members of the human family no man or set of men has a right to domineer over the conscience or judgment of his or their fellow-men, and while as citizens of states and nations freedom of thought and independence of opinion is the inalienable right of every man, so far as relates to the authority of his fellow-men to control his thoughts, provided, however, that he, in his freedom of thought, does not infringe upon the equal rights of others, by entertaining unwarrantable thoughts or malicious feelings against his neighbors, yet, while admitting all this independence of thought to men of the world, we at the same time hold and contend that as a member of the body of Christ no one has a right to entertain thoughts or opinions independently of the faith of the church to which he belongs. This point the apostle has settled in our text: "Be ye all of one mind." When called out of the world we were commanded to renounce the world and its doctrine, spirit and opinions, and on the profession of faith in Christ we professed to gladly receive the doctrine of the apostles, to take on us the yoke of Christ, to learn of him, and to take his word as the man of our counsel, the standard of our faith and the rule of our practice. In short, we relinquished all claim to an independent position, we gave ourselves to the Lord, and by his will, to one another, were baptized into one body, surrendered our individuality, became all one in Christ, a perfect unit; no more our own, for we were bought with a price; members of Christ, and members of one another. No reservation of rights which we did not hold in common with the church of the living God. As to the right of thought, take for example the case of Peter with Simon Margus. How terribly sharp was his rebuke: I perceive that the thought of thy heart is not right. Repent of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. Upon the plea of independence and right to think differently from the doctrine of the church, how is heresy to be detected and disposed of? The divine rule enjoins on the church to reject an heretic after the first and second admonition. Heresy is understood to be thoughts and words which are opposite to, or not in harmony with, the doctrine of Christ, as laid down by the apostles and held by the church. They were here-

tics who resisted Paul, as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, and Paul describes them as being of the sort which creep into houses, who lead captive silly women. He says they are heady, highminded, and lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power (or authority over them) thereof, and he adds, From such turn away. Timothy is commanded to "shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness; and their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some." There are many such examples of heresy recorded, and the peremptory command in every case is, "From such withdraw thyself." Now it must be seen that the church of God has no right to tolerate a diversity of sentiments or opinions on any matter of faith or practice which has been established by the authority of Christ, through his holy apostles. While on every matter only involving personal interests or rights we are admonished to be lenient, kind, forbearing, longsuffering and gentle, we are not allowed to trifle with the order of the church as positively established by divine authority. Those who are unwilling to yield their own independence, or who claim the right to dissent from the rules and authority of Christ in his church, should never be admitted to membership. Except they become as little children they cannot truly enter the kingdom of God; this is an indispensable prerequisite to membership in the church of God. No church can be all of one mind where this rule is not strictly adhered to.

It has been thought by some that there are exceptions to these divinely established rules; that the church has no authority over our worldly matters, such as belong to our domestic or political relations with mankind. If that be so, why did our Lord require that we render to Cæsar the things that belong to Cæsar, and to God the things that belong to God? The apostles have laid down rules which are binding on all christians, to regulate all their social, civil, political and domestic relations in the church and in the world. This fact is overlooked by many, and quite repudiated by others, but it is nevertheless true. They have given no rules for the world to be governed by; the world is not responsible to the church, nor the church to the world; the kingdom of Christ is not of the world, nor are the governments of the world of the church; they are quite separate and distinct. The apostles only sit on their twelve thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. "Them that are without God judgeth." All within the precincts of the kingdom of Christ are in their social relations to associate only as the apostles have directed. This department embraces the social relations of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, people and magistrates, rulers and ruled, and we hold that the apostles have clearly laid down and explained to the church of God the laws of Christ, commanding christians to be governed by them. By his law the christian can have but one wife; the parent must provide for those of his household, or he denies the faith. Children must honor and obey their parents; servants must honor and faithfully serve their masters, and every christian, by the law of Christ, is to submit to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king, as supreme, or to the governor, as unto them that are sent by him for the

punishment of evil doers and for the praise of them that do well, and every soul is to be in subjection to the higher powers. They are commanded to pay tribute, and, as good law-abiding citizens, render honor to whom honor, and tribute to whom tribute is due. Therefore, if any man seeks to evade the laws of the house of God by denying the right of the church, or of his brethren, to meddle with his politics, or his secret lieges, or oath-bound covenants, it is an evident mark of disloyalty to the King of Zion, and a virtual repudiation of the authority of Christ in his church over his members. Can the admonition of our text be duly regarded if conflicting views be entertained by her members? Is it possible they can all be of one mind if a portion of the members are allowed to deny responsibility to the church, and regard any part of their walk and deportment as being beyond the jurisdiction of the church to which dissenters profess to belong? Can two or more walk together except they are agreed? To be all of one mind in the church, as the divine law requires, can only be practicable where all the members are required to receive and continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, withdrawing from all who depart from the faith. We cannot repudiate the apostles' instructions, decisions, admonitions and exhortations and still be a church of Christ, nor can we tolerate in our churches such as the apostles command us to withdraw ourselves from, without repudiating them and their doctrine; nor can we repudiate the apostles, as enthroned in judgment over the church of Christ, and still retain Christ as our King; for when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, then shall his apostles also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. If the apostles do not sit over us in judgment, then neither does Christ preside over us as members of his spiritual kingdom. The church of God is the body of Christ. The necessity of unity in the body, harmony in all the members, is strikingly set forth in the figure of a perfect body. A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways, and if the members of Christ be not all of one mind, where is our stability? If in the body one hand claims to be independent of the body, not moved by the same volition, but by some spasmodic or rebellious impulse, it cannot work in harmony with the other. If one foot resolves to journey southward and the other northward, the rebellion of both against the government of the body would prevent the travel of the whole body. Or, if to compromise the matter, the feet be each in turn to have its way, the unstable body alternately swayed by its refractory members would, like the pendulum of a clock, vibrate back and forth, and make no progress. But the rule to be applied in case of such disorder and schism is, If thy foot offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee; or if it be the hand, or the eye, or any other member, and let all be of one mind. Let those who are refractory, if they cannot by gospel rule be reclaimed, go to their own company, where they can enjoy their independence of the body among their kindred spirits. Of the church it is said, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye [all her members] are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., November 1, 1865.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. T. Rowe.)

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, to the churches composing the same sends greeting and christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—We feel at this time to call your attention to some thoughts on the teaching of our Savior in the fifteenth chapter of John, and will confine our remarks principally to the first eight verses.

First of all, we wish to say that we understand that in this chapter the Lord is showing the relationship of himself and his children here in this world in the church militant, and not the church triumphant. As the land of Palestine was one of luxuriant vines and an abundance of delicious grapes, and the people were accustomed to their cultivation and understood the necessity of proper pruning in order to a healthy growth and profitable fruiting, the vine and its branches are a very forcible illustration of the relationship of Christ and his people here on earth, who are called upon to let their light so shine that others may see their good works, and glorify their Father which is in heaven.

First verse: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman." Now we have the right kind of a vine, wholly a right seed, and having this, the husbandman fertilizes it that it may grow, and prunes it when necessary. Jesus being the vine, his redeemed people the branches, and his Father the husbandman, we know that the vine and its branches will be properly cared for, for the Father has loved the branches as he loved Jesus, the vine, and he loved him before the foundation of the world. (John xvii. 23, 24.)

Second verse: "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." Now, since Jesus says these branches are in him, we have no right to say that any of them are only nominally or professedly in him, and notwithstanding they live after the flesh and die to the privileges and comforts of the church of God, they shall be saved, yet so as by fire. (1 Cor. iii. 15.) The failure of a branch to bear fruit is no fault of the husbandman or of the vine, but due to some foreign or fungus growth, and so "God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but ever man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."—James i. 13, 14. It is living after the flesh that causes this death. (Romans viii. 13.) Not that we cease to be the children of God, but living after the flesh we are judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit, (1 Peter iv. 6,) and some of us, like Peter, know something of the bitterness of disobedience. The branch that beareth fruit he purgeth (pruneth) it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Jesus said, "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."—John xiv. 23. And having Christ, we can do all things. (Phil. iv. 13.)

Third verse: "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." We understand him to mean that they are fully instructed in the things of the kingdom, and, having his constant presence, are capable of walking in that way which glorifies God and is an honor to the profession they have made. (John xvii. 17; 1 Peter i. 22.)

Fourth verse: "Abide in me," &c. It is perfectly plain that the branch which

the husbandman has taken from the vine cannot bear fruit, so our Lord says, "No more can ye, except ye abide in me." This abiding in Jesus is in a gospel sense, and means, as we understand, an observance of the order of the gospel church, as well as providing all things honest in the sight of all men. Putting off the old man with his deeds, and putting on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. (Eph. iv. 22, 24.)

Fifth verse: "I am the vine, ye are the branches," &c. Not pretended, but real branches. These are the obedient children of God, observing the ordinances of his house, doing with their might what their hands find to do, (Phil. i. 11,) being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God. These, dear brethren, are those of whom we often hear it said, O that I were like that one. Their fruits are seen, and are sweet to the taste of those who love Jesus, and this Jesus is that God-given power by which such weak, empty-handed sinners as we are can love and serve him. "For without me ye can do nothing," or, as it reads in the margin, "severed from me." So while we are delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh we can bring forth no spiritual fruit, (1 Cor. v. 5,) and in this gospel sense we are indeed severed from Him, and then come the fiery trials through which those who transgress his holy law must pass, as shown in verse six.

Sixth verse: "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." The dead sinner would not suffer under the fire of criticism, but how different with those who, like Peter, at heart really love the Lord. The fire is both within and without, and so it is a fiery trial indeed. Tried as gold and refined as silver, they are saved in the eternal kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Seventh verse: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." So, brethren, when we walk according to the gospel rule, thus abiding in the vine, (Jesus) and the Father and the Son making their abode with us, we find peace and comfort, and having the mind of Christ, (1 Cor. ii. 16,) we only ask that which is his will to give, and so it is done unto us according to our asking.

Eighth verse: "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." Yes, dear brethren, it is this abiding in Jesus as his followers, contending earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, and a strict observance of his commandments to us as members of his militant church, ever fighting the good fight of faith, not in our own name and strength, but in the name of Jesus, who has power both in heaven and earth, that the God of our salvation is glorified, and is there not comfort in this sufficient to encourage us to fight constantly and hard to overcome the temptations of Satan? "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."—James iv. 7. It is in this way that we are the disciples of Jesus Christ. One cannot in the fullest sense be a disciple of Christ unless that one follows him, and following him is not in word, but in deed. He said in the fourteenth verse of this fifteenth chapter, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." May he give us a sufficiency of his grace to enable us always to prove by our conduct that

we are the friends of Jesus, the true vine, ever abiding in him, doing the things he commands us, and thus glorifying our Father which art in heaven.

Brethren and sisters, forsake not the assembling of yourselves together. Speak to yourselves in hymns, psalms and spiritual songs, and as much as in you is, make melody in your hearts to the Lord. Comfort one another with the blessed and sure promises of Jesus, and the God of peace shall be with you; and how very essential it is for us to have the felt sense of his presence, approving our course. Then fellow him strictly, and be sure that you have a "thus saith the Lord" for what you believe and also for what you practice, for he hath said that he will not withhold any good thing from those who walk uprightly. In your upright walk and godly conversation your God is glorified and yourselves divinely comforted and benefited. "Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things."—2 Timothy ii. 7.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

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Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

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Mrs. Catherine Walker, Ontario, $1.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **Chloe Russell,** widow of Deacon Albert Russell, of Justus, Pa., died Thursday, May 15th, 1913. She would have been 94 years old in June. Old age and a complication of diseases brought her to the end appointed for her by her heavenly Father. I think she was born in Delaware County, N. Y. She was twice married, first to a man by the name of Britton, by which union two children are living: Jerome Britton, of Justus, Pa., and Mrs. Elizabeth Fike, of Olyphant, Pa. By the second marriage one child is living: Mrs. Tessie Ellis, with whom she was living at the time of her death, also Mr. and Mrs. Jones. Mrs. Jones was her granddaughter, daughter of Mrs. Ellis, who kindly and tenderly cared for her, with the assistance of other members of the family. She experienced a hope in Christ when fifteen years of age, and was baptized by Elder John Miller, I believe, uniting soon after with the Abbington Baptist Church, of which she remained an orderly, faithful christian member until removed by death. When the division took place in 1833, she stood firm for the things that had always been the faith of the Regular Baptist Church people up to that time, and ever since. She stood with what was called the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, believing in the doctrine of election, predestination, salvation by grace and the resurrection of the dead. Her whole soul, heart and mind were in the church to the last, when she had her mind. Her home was a home for her brethren, and she entertained very many; but she is gone to her eternal home, and near and very dear relatives will miss her, her neighbors will miss her and her brethren and sisters will miss her. Language would fail to express her worth to all, so will close. God bless all the dear, mourning friends with grace.

The writer officiated at the funeral in the meeting-house at Justus, Sunday, May 18th, a large company being present. She was buried in Akerly Cemetery, near by.

ALSO,

John Owens, of Waverly, Pa., who was over 80 years old, was born in Wales, moved to England, married and moved to America forty years ago, and had lived in Scranton and Waverly, Pa., ever since he came over. He was a deacon in the New School Baptist Church after coming to America, and was deacon in a Baptist Church in England, but said the preaching in England was not like it was here among his Baptist people; said they did preach in England the doctrine of God's sovereign grace, without the works of poor, puny creatures like he felt himself to be. I was with him more or less for three months before his death, and enjoyed his conversation on the subject of salvation very much. He was a very intelligent man on all subjects. He leaves behind a

poor, helpless, lonely widow, not having walked a step in sixteen years, I understand, and for six years previous could only get about with crutches, also one other relative, a nephew, I think, living in Scranton, Pa. May God bless his dear afflicted widow with the spirit of reconciliation to his most holy will, and the dear nephew, who was a near friend to Mr. Owens. God bless with his grace all who mourn.

The writer spoke at the funeral, by his request, Sunday afternoon, May 18th, to a large congregation, his pastor speaking in prayer and reading some Scripture selections, after which his body was buried in the Waverly Cemetery.

ALSO,

Norman E. Miers, of Schoharie County, N. Y., son of Deacon George and Maggie Myers, died May 18th, 1913, aged 7 years, 11 months and 9 days. He was seriously sick eighteen days of tuberculosis and meningitis, and was unconscious nine days. Little Norman was a very affectionate child, and had the appearance of being very healthy. However, he lived his appointed time upon the earth, and the dear Lord took him to his eternal home, bringing great sorrow in the hearts of father, mother, brother and sister and other near relatives. None can know the sorrow of a father and mother who have lost children but those who have had like experience. May God bless our dear brother and sister and all mourning ones with reconciled spirits to his righteous will.

The writer spoke at the funeral Tuesday, May 20th, to a large and attentive congregation, at the home. Burial in Lutheran Cemetery, Schoharie village.

D. M. VAIL.

Mattie Lee Knight Johnson, daughter of the late Thurston and Martha Knight, died at her home in Blue Springs, Mo., April 29th, 1913. She was born in Clay County, Mo., Dec. 8th, 1859, making her age 53 years, 4 months and 21 days. She was married to C. W. Johnson, March 10th, 1880, and to them were born six children, five of whom, two sons and three daughters, lived to be grown and to tenderly and faithfully care for their dear afflicted and devoted mother. Her husband and these children, together with five sisters and a host of friends, are left to mourn her departure. She became a member of the Old School Baptist Church called Little Blue, near her home, July 29th, 1893, and was baptized by Elder W. H. Newton. Her humble and beautiful christian life hourly reflected the sweet peace and comfort of her hope, which was as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil. For several years she had been a constant sufferer, especially the closing months of her life, and in the most crucial hours she could say, It is right; if my part of it could be for His glory I should rejoice, and her countenance beamed with an inner light as she spoke of his loving-kindness and care for her, to whom she owed the joy of suffering. Several times she said to the writer, "It is so much better for me to lie here and suffer than for so many other mothers who have not the care and attention of good, faithful children," and many evidences of her perfect resignation and trust are left to encourage and strengthen us on the way. Much could be written, but she would not have it so if she could speak. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

Elder W. L. Hall, her pastor, spoke comfortingly from Hebrews vi. 17-20, in a funeral discourse at her home, and her remains were interred in the Blue Springs Cemetery, there to await the resurrection, when she shall awake with his likeness and be satisfied. May the consolations of the gospel sweetly sustain the dear family and her dear sisters, is the prayer of the unworthy writer.

NELIA M. STARTZMAN.

BLUE SPRINGS, Mo.

Mrs. S. K. Stanley, my wife, daughter of W. N. and Mary Lancaster, was born Jan. 23rd, 1852, and was married to J. D. Stanley Oct. 15th, 1882. She joined the Old School Baptist Church of Christ called Enon, Marion Co., Ark., the second Sunday in August, 1884. Six children were born to us, four girls and two boys, all living. She was a kind mother and beloved by all.

Her funeral sermon was preached at our association, the second Sunday in September, 1911, by George Davis and W. E. Brambler. We sorrow not as those who have no hope, for we believe she is in the arms of her Savior.

J. D. STANLEY.

A. B. Shipman was born Dec. 11th, 1852, and died March 19th, 1913. Brother Shipman lived in Perry County, Tenn., where he was married to Miss P. A. Harder. To that union were born eight children, seven girls and one boy; five girls and the son survive him. With their mother they mourn the loss of the one most dear to them. Brother Shipman was esteemed by all true Baptists who knew him. He was a faithful defender of Bible doctrine. He, with his wife, joined the church at Cedar Creek, Tenn., in 1880, and was ordained to the gospel ministry in 1882, in the bounds of Buffalo River Association. He came to Texas in 1882, and located in the bounds of Trinity River Association, where the writer became intimate with him, and I have lived near him ever since. Brother Shipman's health began to fail fifteen or twenty years ago, but he was able to attend his home church up to three months before his death, and preached short but sweet discourses. He has gone to enjoy that rest promised to the faithful.

W. M. FREEMAN.

John Fooks died at his late residence, at West, Somerset Co., Md., May 5th, 1913. He was born Nov. 4th, 1856, making his stay on earth 56 years, 6 months and 1 day. He was a son of the late John Fooks, who lived near the Nassaongo meetinghouse, and was well known to those who attended the meetings at that place. The subject of this notice never made a public profession of faith by uniting with the church, but was a warm friend of the Old Baptists, and a firm believer in the doctrine contended for by them. I have often seen his face beam with pleasure as he sat drinking in the words of the ministers delivering their messages at the meetings at Nassaongo. He was highly respected in the community where he lived. We hope for him that he has met with a happy change in leaving behind the transient things of earth and entering into eternity.

The writer attended his funeral, and tried to speak to the comfort of the bereaved family on the afternoon of the 7th inst., after which his body was laid in the silent tomb to await the sound of the trump of God. His spirit has returned to God who gave it. He leaves a sorely bereaved companion, the wife of his youth, one son, two daughters, a son-in-law, one grandchild, one brother, and many other relatives and friends, by all of whom he was greatly beloved. May the Lord grant unto them the blessed consolations of the gospel. A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., May, 1913.

MEETINGS.

THE Middleburg Old School Baptist Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., have appointed their yearly meeting to be held the first Sunday in June, and Saturday previous, (May 31st and June 1st) 1913. We are only a weak few, but we hope the Lord will put it in the hearts and minds of ministers, brethren and friends to visit us. Ministers desiring to attend the Warwick Association can go right on from this meeting, as it follows the next Wednesday after. Any coming by rail to Middleburg on Friday, May 30th, inquire for Mrs. O. B. Wood, or if coming to Cobleskill inquire for James E. Livingston.

ADDIE (COOK) LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.
COBLESKILL, N. Y.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the New Vernon Church, New Vernon, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 4th, 5th and 6th, 1913.

Those coming from and by way of New York city will take train from Twenty-third St. either Tuesday afternoon before the meeting at 4:25, or Wednesday morning at 7:10. Both of these trains will be met at Howells. Round trip tickets can be had at a saving of about one dollar on each fare. If there be any coming from west of Howells they will please notify H. S. Collard by card at Howells, N. Y., and they will be met. Those coming from the north over the O. & W. R. R. will be met at Winterton on afternoon train the day before the meeting and on Wednesday morning. Trains due at Winterton at 4:08 p. m. and 7:49 a. m. The morning train leaves Kingston at six o'clock. We extend a cordial invitation to all who desire to meet with us, ministers especially invited.

H. S. COLLARD, Church Clerk.

THE yearly meeting will be held with Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, at Tallman, Linn Co., Oregon, commencing on Friday, June 13th, 1913, at 10 o'clock, and continuing over Sunday. Those coming by rail change cars at Albany, taking Lebanon branch, stopping off at Tallman. All lovers of truth, brethren and ministers are cordially invited.

A. HORNER.

THE yearly meeting of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held, the Lord willing, in their meetinghouse at Aberfeldy, Lambton Co., Ontario, seven miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1913, and continuing two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Schoharie, N. Y., Providence permitting, will hold a two days meeting June 21st and 22nd, 1913. We invite all ministering brethren, members and interested friends of our faith and order who can, to come. Those coming to Howes Cave will be met if a card is sent to Geo. A. Miers, Schoharie, N. Y. Those coming to Schoharie write sister Helen Kinney, Schoharie, N. Y.

GEO. A. MIERS.

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SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILLIAMSTON, N. C.

I find the postage on my book, "Day unto Day," to America is 9 pence (18 cents), and I thought it would be 6 pence, or at most 7 pence. I think on consideration, as the expense of publication has been very heavy, notwithstanding a most encouraging sale, I had better say I will send to any of your readers the half calf gilt edge edition for 5 shillings ($1.20), or the cloth edition for 4 shillings (96 cents) postage free.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 81. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1913. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE WORD MADE FLESH.

"THUS saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." —Isaiah lvii. 15.

(Concluded from page 296.)

"For verily [notice this verily] he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." This was not a phantom manhood that he assumed; he slept, he sighed, he grieved, he wept, he was amazed, his soul was exceeding sorrowful. Jesus had all the five senses of the human body. Verily he took on him the seed of Abraham. God was manifest in the flesh, and in this infinitely glorious mystery he was in the world that he made. He was seen with human eyes (as well as "seen of angels") a man, even as any other man, robed in garments, clothed with a seamless vesture, but the world knew him not. He was the Prince of glory, but none of the princes of this world knew him. But others to whom it was given of the Father could say, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." —John i. 14. "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount."—2 Peter i. 16-18. The Word, who in the beginning was with God and is God, could have created (as he did Adam) a creature, and have become incarnate in it, but this was not the eternal purpose purposed in Christ. For the elect, whom he chose in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, were in Jehovah's eternal decree of their election foreknown, the offspring of Adam, partakers of the flesh and blood of the first man Adam. Therefore he, the Son of God, the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person, also took part of the same. So "that

holy thing," "thy holy child Jesus," was conceived by the Holy Ghost in the womb, and born of the virgin Mary in Bethlehem. Then the ultimate design of Jehovah in the incarnation of the Son of God was the infinite exaltation of our manhood to such unspeakable heights of glory and blessedness. It was to unite unto Jesus Christ an elect company of his intelligent creatures, the elect of mankind, to be with himself, his "fellows," "companions," "friends," his "congregation," "brethren," congregated to him, "his church," a glorious church, which is his body, the fullness of him who filleth all in all, and through him, their Head, that they should be one in God. "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: * * * I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."—John xvii. 21, 23. "Ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." Jehovah's eternal purpose was to exalt these chosen ones of mankind to be conformed unto the image of his dear Son, and thus in him to arrive at the predestined glory and blessedness of the adoption of children unto himself, to be blessed in Christ, their Head and Husband and Brother, with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places; to be ordained unto and given in him eternal life ("your life is hid with Christ in God"); to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ; to be endowed, crowned with righteousness and immortality; to live and reign with Christ in everlasting glory. So shall we ever be with the Lord. This is such a glory, exaltation and blessedness; a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory than was attainable in our creation in Adam. To the accomplishment of this glorious destiny of the saints, to the fulfillment of the eternal purpose in Christ Jesus according to their election in him, the Son of God was manifested to take away our sins. He "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." He came into the world made of a woman, the Mediator of the everlasting covenant, our Surety, Redeemer, the destroyer of death. He is our properly qualified Mediator, uniting in his person both natures, the divine and human, the Son of God and Son of man, our precious Daysman that lays his hand upon both God and man, and brings us together in judgment. (Job ix. 33.) Christ Jesus is the High Priest and sacrifice, the Lamb of God slain for the sins of the church, to redeem them from the curse of the law, to ransom them from the power of the grave, to redeem them from death, to redeem them to God. He will bring unto eternal glory and present them to himself an eternal excellency, a glorious church, holy and without blame before him in love, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. So shall we ever be with the Lord.

Then let us look into Christ's gospel, and trace the unsearchable riches of Jehovah's grace, so richly declared in the incarnation of the Son of his love. But there would be no everlasting gospel if the Word had not been made flesh; there would have been no Jesus Christ; there would have been no election of a people unto God, no adoption of children unto himself, no redemption, no reconciliation, no inheritance of eternal glory; there would have been no discovery of the love, mercy and grace of the eternal God

unto sinners of Adam's race. Jehovah, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost would be unknown. The love of God is in Christ Jesus our Lord. His mercy is shed abundantly upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. His grace was given us and came unto us by Jesus Christ.

The purpose of God in embracing a people chosen unto himself to be holy and without blame before him in love comprehended the incarnation of his dear Son, for the election of his people was not apart from, but in Christ Jesus. Jesus Christ is the Head of the election of grace. Jehovah speaks of the Word made flesh: "Behold my servant, [he "took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men"] whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth."—Isaiah xlii. 1.

> "Ere angels fell, or time had birth,
> Or God to being spake the earth,
> In Christ, the Head, the saints were chose,
> One glorious body to compose."

"When he [God] appointed the foundations of the earth: then was I by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men."—Prov. viii. 29, 30. The highest and greatest grace ever bestowed upon the creature was the election of "that holy thing," of the man Jesus, (who was conceived by the Holy Ghost in the womb of his mother, the virgin Mary,) unto union with the Word, who is God. This is bestowing the highest dignity, the most transcendent grace and blessedness upon the creature man, and is the most exalted view of the election of grace. Our Jesus Christ in all things hath the preeminence. In arriving at the peculiar signification of being chosen in him we are led to seek how and in what relationship are we chosen in Christ, and yet new fields of delightful meditation will be open to us in considering what is the purpose and end of God in the church being chosen in Christ Jesus. The brethren, ("my brethren," saith Christ) the congregation, the church, are the body of Christ, the fullness of him who filleth all in all. "The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body."—Eph. v. 23. In Christ as the Head and Husband the church was chosen, and in him blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. All other relationships (revealed in the Scriptures) subsisting between the Word made flesh and the church, are related to and proceed from this highest revelation of the oneness of Christ and his people. We are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. It is therefore comprehending him in his person as Jesus, the anointed, the incarnate Son of God, that he is styled the Firstborn, the preeminent One, the firstborn among many brethren, and his "fellows," his elect "companions" are designated "the church of the firstborn." As to what concerns believers in Christ, the utmost end of God in the election was to exalt unto him his chosen people to a higher glory and blessedness than was attainable in the creation of man; that is, that they should be one with incarnate Deity. This is the height of our exaltation and glory to which we are predestinated, according as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.

I have already dwelt upon the transcendent glory and grace of the union of the holy child Jesus with the person of the Son of God. In this he hath the preeminence above his fellows, and stands distinct in infinite exaltation. Though

the union of Jesus Christ in God transcends our union to God, (for no other creature save that "holy thing" that was conceived by the Holy Ghost in the womb of the virgin Mary hath such union with the Godhead) yet that union is the pattern of the union of the elect to our Lord Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. "Ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."—1 Cor. iii. 23. "Your life is hid with Christ in God."—Col. iii. 3. "The head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God."—1 Cor. xi. 3. Will my language convey to you my meaning if I say that Jesus is in immediate union with God, and the elect church is mediately in union with God through our Lord Jesus Christ? The God-man, the Word made flesh, is the medium of our union with God. O lovely, adorable Jesus Christ, thou callest us, "My brethren," and we are called thy "fellows," and thou, Jesus, art the man that is "my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts." The Word made flesh is thus so meet to unbosom the bosom of Jehovah unto the chosen of Adam's race. He says, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the congregation will I sing praises unto thee. The only begotten Son is in the bosom of the Father, and declares him, pouring forth upon them into their hearts the love, the tender mercy and grace of God. Jesus said, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."—Matt. xi. 27. O to win Christ, that I might know him. (Phil. iii. 8-10.) Christ communicates himself unto his chosen by the formation of a new nature within them, quickening and transforming their souls, and thus they are born again of incorruptible seed, by the Word of God, that liveth and abideth forever. This nature which is Christ's, his Spirit within us, is vital, animating, and in this nature the members of the body of Christ are taken into union, fellowship and communion with himself; and Christ beholding his people thus, recipients of his nature, his Spirit, moved and transformed in their souls thereby, they are all comely and desirable, and are joined unto him, and shall I say they have the earnest that he is vitally married unto them, and they are no more twain, but one? For he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. (1 Cor. vi. 17.) "I in them." "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."—Gal. iv. 6. "The Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."—Romans viii. 15. If any poor sinner has the Spirit of Christ he is Christ's. He is his, not only as being possessed by him from eternity, by eternal election, in the everlasting covenant, not only his by eternal redemption, but he is Christ's by experimental nearness. That favored sinner has been apprehended by him, he is Christ's by love's conquest, drawn to himself by loving-kindness, and held a willing captive in his embrace. "I drew them with the cords of a man, [the man Christ Jesus] with the bands of love," and it is as quickened by his Spirit that we have that bitter and humiliating knowledge of our sinnership, and we are moved to contrition of heart to seek mercy, healing and salvation in him, even Jesus Christ, who is the Word made flesh, full of grace and truth. "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." Ah, the body is indeed dead because of sin; we have to groan within

ourselves in the bondage of corruption. The child of God has the dreadful, abasing knowledge that his body, in all the five senses thereof, is corrupt, alienated from the life of God, and though he can say, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man," yet he has to say, "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"—Romans vii. 22–24. But is there no hope for our mortal bodies? Must they go down into the dust and perish forever? No indeed. "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?" They are bought with a price, and are God's. Blessed be the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, who by the gospel hope of the resurrection of the dead moves us to earnest expectation that the creature shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God, and in this sacred expectation we are waiting for the consummation of the adoption, even the redemption of the body. O this is most surely believed among us, that "if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."—Romans viii. 11. In our faith we look for our Lord Jesus Christ from heaven, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. To the accomplishment of the salvation of his body, the church, it became the Son of God to be made like unto his brethren, (predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ) that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people, and to make this atonement it was necessary that he should have a nature capable of obedience and capable of suffering. Though the price he gave for our ransom was great, for he gave himself an offering and a sacrifice, yet how willing was Jesus to die. When he came to the closing hours of his sufferings, though he was sore amazed and very heavy, and sweat great drops of blood, though in the midst of his strong crying and tears, in unfathomed agonies he cries, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, will he cry to his Father to save him from this hour? No, for it was for this purpose he came unto this hour. As it was the will of the Father that he should suffer, bleed and die for the sins of the elect, he had no reluctancy. His meat was to do the will of him that sent him, and "the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" He willingly drank the cup; it came to him full, it passed from him empty. He drank it to the last bitter drop, and thus the cup passed from him. "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God."—Heb. x. 7. "I delight to do thy will."—Psalms xl. 8. Thus he came into the world for the redemption of his people. He said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it is accomplished!"—Luke xii. 50. Christ so freely, in love that knows no parallel, gave himself for the church. He did not fail, neither was he discouraged. When he stepped into the sorrows of death, and the pangs of hell gat hold of him, he did not draw back, he did not shrink, he hid not his face from shame and spitting. He was the ward, the shield of his church, he would not have her spit upon. Into

all abyssmal depths of woe he went to save us from our sins, and from the wrath to come. Repentance was hid from his eyes. Not a thought had our lovely, loving Christ of turning back from the accomplishment of the salvation of his people. O, if the Son of man, our Savior and Surety, knew what he smarted for, the Holy Spirit will have us know what we are pardoned for. Were all our sins on Jesus laid? Did he give himself a sacrifice to purge them away? How shall I then appreciate that blessedness of forgiveness unless I am made to know the enormity, the vileness and bitterness of my sins? Now consider this, for it is precious. When the Son of God became incarnate, and took into indissolvable union with his person our nature, was not this an act of infinite love? And when in those inexpressible acts of love the Son of God, made of a woman, being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself and became obedient even unto death, even the death of the cross. When thus in and through all the powers and attributes of that holy manhood such wondrous acts of love were wrought, it is still the love of the one and selfsame person, our precious Christ, God manifest in the flesh, Emmanuel. His acts are ever the acts of Deity. Thus in a glorious mystery in the gospel Christ's righteousness is called the righteousness of God, and his blood the blood of God. So when Christ poured out his soul unto death it was to abolish death, and bring life and immortality to light; it was to destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and to deliver his people. Christ is called, "Thine Holy One," having peculiar relation to the manhood of the Word made flesh, and when in all the humiliations of bearing our sins, enduring the cross, being made a curse for us, and culminating in his, Jesus', death, "He gave up the ghost," and there lies the sacred body that was conceived in the womb, and born of the virgin Mary, and was crucified, in Joseph's new tomb. But he saw no corruption. During all the time that his sacred flesh hung upon the cross and lay in the tomb, no symptom, not the faintest taint of mortality was found therein. It could not be said, as it was said of Lazarus, "By this time he stinketh."—John xi. 39. His flesh was pure and sinless, incorruptible. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."—Psalms xvi. 10. When Jesus said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them: and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said."—John ii. 19–22. On the third day he arose from the dead, and was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead. (Romans i. 4.) The Son of God, not by adoption, as the elect of mankind, but he is the Son of God in the eternal Godhead with the Father and the Holy Ghost. He showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of many forty days. God raised him up the third day, and showed him openly; not to all people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he arose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of

quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. (Acts x. 40-43.) The risen Jesus Christ was not a mere spirit with a phantom body, for when they were gathered together "Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of broiled fish, and an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them."—Luke xxiv. 36-43. Jesus met Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, saying, "All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshiped him."—Matt. xxviii. 9. The victory of Christ over death and the grave is so assuring. He hath the keys of death and hell. It is the assurance that our covenant Head, though he bore our iniquities and was made a curse for us, he has put away our sins, he has satisfied eternal justice, and the Holy Ghost testifying of Christ in our hearts, moving us by the power of his resurrection, we have a lively hope, our faith in our precious Christ is not in vain, and those who have fallen asleep in Jesus have not perished. For though by the first man came death, by the second man, the Lord from heaven, came the resurrection from the dead.

On the fortieth day after his resurrection he led some chosen disciples (who were witnesses that he was risen again from the dead) out as far as Bethany, to be witnesses of his ascension into heaven. Jesus lifted up his hands and blessed them, and it came to pass while he blessed them he was parted from them and was carried up into heaven, and they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. (Luke xxiv. 50-52.) God manifest in the flesh was received up into glory, whom the heavens must receive until the times of the restitution of all things. (Acts iii. 21.) He is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. He entered into his glory, and we see Jesus crowned with glory and honor. There reigns our Savior, from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. He fulfills all those needful and comforting characters that he sustains unto his people. He is our High Priest, Mediator, Advocate. He entered heaven our Forerunner, and the ransomed church of God shall like himself all arrive in glory and dwell forever in heaven with him. The expectation of Christ and the church is one. He, the Redeemer, Husband and Head of the church upon his throne in glory is expecting his enemies to be made his footstool, and they, the members of his body, now upon the earth, in the earthly house of this tabernacle, do groan, being burdened, but they are so wrought by the operations of the Holy Ghost in their souls, so buoyed up by the precious hope of Christ's gospel, by the earnest of the Spirit in their hearts, that they live in earnest expectation of the glorious liberty of the adoption, its con-

summation, even the redemption of their mortal bodies from the bondage of corruption. Will the expectation of Christ and his church be cut off? Never. The immutability of God's counsel, the omnipotence, grace and love of the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost in the new covenant are engaged to the accomplishment of the eternal purpose in Christ Jesus our Lord to give us "an expected end."

The apostles witnessed the ascension of Jesus into heaven, "and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."—Acts i. 9–11. Though in the last days there shall be scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and out of their unbelieving hearts are saying, Where is the promise of his coming? (2 Peter iii. 4,) nevertheless the faith of God's elect embraces Christ's coming the second time without sin unto salvation. They are looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ. Their "conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."—Phil. iii. 20, 21. And though now the church on earth experiences tribulation, thus the apostle speaks unto us: "And to you who are troubled, rest with us; when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day."—2 Thess. i. 7–10. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."—1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."—1 Cor. xv. 51–54. Our Lord Jesus Christ shall judge the quick and dead at his appearing and kingdom. (2 Tim. iv. 1.) "Because he [God] hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."—Acts xvii. 31. And when the elect of mankind (redeemed, regenerated and glorified, crowned with righteousness, with a crown of glory that fadeth not away,) shall be received up into glory, what language shall tell the

everlasting blessedness that shall be the portion of the church of the Firstborn? Our heart's expectation is:

"Forever to behold him shine,
For evermore to call him mine,
And see him still before me.
Forever on his face to gaze,
And meet his full assembled rays,
While all the Godhead he displays
To all the saints in glory."

O that sweet word "forever." Then in sweet gratitude, in immortal love, in everlasting worship and service we shall dwell with Him: heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

PRINCETON, Ky., March 28, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER:—I received your kind and welcome letter just before I left Lakeland, Florida. I am now at my old home in Kentucky. Words are inadequate to express my feelings toward you for your kind regard for me. I feel to be less than the least of all. I have thought of you often since we were together, and have often spoken of you to our brethren, and would have written to you before this, but I knew that you were burdened with office work and many good letters containing glad tidings of great joy, much more agreeable and profitable than letters from me could be. I know that those who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, especially those who speak forth the words of truth and soberness. It has been my desire to keep the identity of the church in view, and that is why I wrote you and sent the article cut from the paper. I know that the Lord has said, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay," and our God doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; he knoweth the hearts and minds of all men. I have been stigmatized as an "absoluter," and accused of preaching infants to hell, and of making God the author of sin, and some have gone so far as to say I deny that we must be born again. May God have mercy upon them all, for they know not what they do. But I have had this one consolation, that the dear Lord has said, "Blessed are ye when men shall persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake." They hated me before they hated you, saith the Lord, so let us stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. I know that God puts down kings and sets up kings, and sets up the basest of men to rule over us. God rules and none can hinder. Let us therefore take heed to ourselves and to the doctrine, and continue in them, for the time has come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but are heaping to themselves teachers having itching ears, and are turned from the truth and turned unto fables. Thus the Scriptures are being fulfilled. Yea, they have turned back and limited the Holy One of Israel. Some are guilty of doing this in these days. May God open the eyes of their understanding, that they may be able to see the truth and forsake the error of their way.

I have received several letters of late from dear brethren, indorsing my article in the SIGNS upon predestination, for which I feel to thank God. I am glad that many of the saints do love a God of all power, and who doeth all things well. He has said, "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." Like Jacob of old, they have to go leaning upon their staffs. They cannot walk alone, but must be led. They can neither will nor do of them-

selves, for it is God that must work in them both to will and to do, and they walk in the good works of Christ, and not in their own.

Dear brother Chick, your editorial in the SIGNS upon Psalms xvii. 15, has measured me up to perfection. I have ever held to that position, and have ever denounced every thought of obedience for reward, or for blessings, for in me there is no good thing. I have a desire to live perfect, but how can I, seeing that I am but mortal? My only hope is that when I awake with His likeness then shall I be satisfied. This is why I say that conditional time salvation is not the truth, for if I were now in the likeness of Christ I would possess the spirit of perfection, and could obtain all blessings by perfected obedience, even as Christ did, but the only hope I have of blessing of any kind is through my dear Lord's obedience, and not mine. His obedience has obtained for me all the blessing I have or ever expect to obtain. No doubt the self-righteous abhor this doctrine, for it cuts them off from reward for their obedience, but to me it is precious, and I love to speak of it, for it is my hope. But because I preach this I have been made to suffer from the persecutions of the self-righteous. Yea, I am killed all the day long. Yea, they seek my life to take it away, but the dear Lord has kept me and delivered me to this present hour, and I trust that he will yet deliver. Elder Ker in a Circular Letter for 1912 set forth a truth which is truly felt in the heart of every one who is taught of God. He wrote there, "Not one blessing will be omitted because of disobedience, and not one added because of obedience." I say, God bless brother Ker. I believe with all my heart that this is true, and I feel sure that the Lord put those words in brother Ker's heart and gave him to write them, and some day I hope to grasp his hand and tell him that I love him for the truth's sake. O how glad I am to feel that our God is omnipotent. But as for poor me, I am the chief of sinners, not meet to be called a saint, always disobedient. What am I but a dead dog, that I should eat at my Master's table? O what love and mercy is this that I should possess a hope that God is mindful of me. His goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life. Now, dear brother Chick, pardon my foolish speech, yet let me say that I am overjoyed to know that our God rules, and that he has until this day reserved to himself a few who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal, and who are not ashamed to declare to the world that our God is omniscient and immutable, regardless of men or devils. Yea, our God did determine, predestinate and decree before men were created to conform this poor, wretched sinner to the image of his holy and ever-righteous Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and, dear brother, while "when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Yes, it is his work that saves us from being punished for our disobedience, because he makes intercession for us. Thus justice is satisfied, for our God accepts the obedience of Christ and forgives us our disobedience. Christ is our life, and so it is by grace that we receive all our blessings, and not by our obedience. Our God does not accept anything but perfect obedience, and there has never lived a man on earth who was perfect, save our Lord Jesus Christ. Not one of Adam's children was ever, is now, or ever shall be able to render perfect obedience in one single

thing while in this tabernacle of clay, for it is written, If we keep the whole law, and offend in one point, we are guilty of all. No one save the self-righteous could believe in receiving blessings for his own obedience. Does a man glorify God when he expects blessings for his own obedience? No, he rather glorifies himself, blasphemes the name of the Holy One of Israel, and puts Christ to an open shame. All who are taught of God are satisfied, and do trust in the imputed righteousness of Christ, and have no confidence in the flesh. Circumcision of the heart kills confidence in the flesh. Therefore said the apostle, "The body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." But this body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and has been bought with a price, and this price was the blood of Jesus, which cleanses from all sin, past, present and to come. I hope to see him as he is, and then I will be satisfied.

If you think this will prove of any comfort to the poor and afflicted, you may pass it on. May God bless you and yours. Write to me when you have time. I love to hear from you.

Yours unworthily,

C. K. HAINES.

MOODY, Ark., March 8, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I have had a desire to write for some years, and have often written, but for some cause I could not send it to be published. I have felt much cast down, and have feared all was wrong with me, and that I was deceived, and feel so yet; if so, I do not want to deceive you, and beg you to be faithful, and if I pen that which is not according to God's word, it is because there is no light in me, cast it aside and all will be right with me.

I awoke about two o'clock last night with this Scripture in my mind, and I cannot get rid of it, so I was impressed to write to you, if so be, "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." Proverbs xvi. 7, reads thus: "When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." This text has caused me to examine myself to see if I be in the faith, for if I know anything, without faith it is impossible to please God, and to please him, the Sovereign of all worlds, is my greatest desire, yet how to do that which is good I find not. Now if I am not mistaken, the faith I once had was just the reverse of this text, viz., when a man's ways please his enemies (those who oppose the truth) it maketh even his God to be at peace with him. Jesus is our pattern, our example to follow, and did he so live, so teach and preach as to make harmony and peace with the enemies of the truth and the powers of darkness? First, then, I must know who are my friends, and how am I to know them as my friends, and as the opposite of my enemies? Jesus is that friend that sticketh closer than a brother, for he loved us when we were yet in our sins; he loved us long before we had knowledge of God, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, when we rolled sin as a sweet morsel under our tongue, when in no sense could our ways be pleasing to God, and this love of Jesus was the fulfilling of the law, and by love and kindness he hath drawn us. As Jesus was our first Friend, being God manifest in the flesh, and has sent forth his servants as sheep among wolves, the true servant of God is our friend, for he will tell us the truth in God's word, and not try to delude or deceive us by subtility and vain words and false worship, but will speak the

truth in Christ and lie not, and such is the church God set up that the gates of hell cannot prevail against it; it is the embodiment of friendship and love for all the poor, tempest-tossed and tried pilgrims and sojourners here on earth; it is our Father's house, our home and the home of our friends. How did the man who fell among thieves who robbed and beat him and left him half dead by the wayside know who was his friend, the one who showed mercy, the good Samaritan who bound up his wounds, put him on his own beast and took him to an inn and paid for his keeping, and told the host that if there was anything more he would pay at his coming? So God and his people are our friends, as set forth in the Scriptures. Our enemies are those who reject our King and his divine law, and first, we might say, Thine enemies are they of thine own house. We know the weakness and frailty of our flesh, and we soon learn by the Spirit to put no confidence in the flesh, for they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But in the church of the living God our worst enemies are. It does not hurt me for a nonprofessor or an idolater to strike me, but for one I love, as my mother, my father, my sister or my brother, there is a hurt not of the natural, but spiritual wound that makes the heart bleed, and makes me weep. O God, how deep and deadly the thrust, and yet to-day, dearly esteemed kindred, the greatest sorrow our church has comes in this way—men in sheep's clothing, wolves, beasts, as at Ephesus in Paul's day and time, of whom he was in jeopardy. Would it be more pleasing to our Savior for us to vacillate and change with every wind of doctrine, or to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord? God was well pleased with the sacrifice of his Son, and with his life and ministry, and at his baptism the Spirit like a dove alighted upon him, and a voice said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Then we have the assurance that our life, our ways, please the Lord, when we follow him in all the ordinances and order of his house, but rest assured there is displeasure when we remove the old landmarks and set aside the counsel of the Most High. If you desire the friendship of your enemies above the welfare of your Father's house you are deceived, and know not the truth. If you desire peace so much as to compromise with error, you are mistaken in your master, and your service is all vain. If you desire your own welfare above that of Zion, you have not yet attained to ways that please the Lord. God's people are willing to leave all and follow him, through evil as well as good report. We feel to know that our God works, and none can hinder; hinders, and none can work, and that he turns the hearts of kings as rivers of waters; that the rise and fall of nations are in his hand, and that all our enemies are in his hand, and that he not only conquered our own corrupt nature by his Spirit, but made us a willing people in the day of his power. He took Paul, the great enemy, and made him a consecrated worshiper, a willing, suffering servant, who resisted unto blood and died in full triumph of living faith, being put to death. I believe Paul was led by the Spirit, and his new life pleased our God. Dear brethren, I feel to be surrounded by wolves, by desperate, deadly enemies, some of whom bear the name of Primitive Baptists, and the thought often comes to me, What a battle! I once carried insurance, but was made to see it was wrong, and dropped it. I once belonged to the Missionary body, and was

ordained among them, but had to come out of Babylon. I once belonged to the Masonic order. I once got on the wrong side of what is to-day the Primitive Church, and was led out, I hope, like Lot from Sodom, and I feel I was made to see the Lamb's bride. For some months this Scripture was on my mind: "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself." I could not get the balance of the verse, and I did not hunt it up. One day after a severe battle with a delegated conference of more than a dozen men and three preachers, when they picked up excluded members and set up a church over the heads of all that body, not one of these delegates being a member of that church, on my way home that same Scripture came to me, also the balance of the verse: "not discerning the Lord's body," and right then and there was the second happiest time of my life. I was made to see the true church in direct opposition to the synagogue. So to-day, if I go among any people anywhere, and partake with them in their worship, and do not recognize them as the Lamb's bride, the true church, and I eat and drink, I indorse their disorder, I eat and drink condemnation to myself. While among the Missionaries I used to try to preach from that text, and would assert if we went to meeting at communion season, knowing we were guilty of some things we could not fellowship, and did not make a confession before communion, we ate and drank condemnation to ourselves. I had no use for the balance of the verse, but this had got to where there was no food in it to me. So, dear brethren and sisters, since I have seen the Lamb's bride, the true church, in direct opposition to all man-made institutions, I have been made to rejoice that I was led out from delusion and disorder. I believe in the absolute, unlimited, unconditional predestination of all things. "Thou art Peter; [right] and upon this rock [truth] I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." God's people have nothing to fear; victory is ours, through him that loved us and gave himself for us.

"Sure I must fight if I would reign;
Increase my courage, Lord;
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by thy word."

A poor lost sheep, if not deceived, in a wilderness of wolves,

J. P. BAKER.

PINSONFORK, Ky., April 27, 1913.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I have read your editorial in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for April 15th, on the subject or question, "Can a subject of grace commit suicide?" I say I have read your wonderful reply again and again with unusual comfort and gladness, because of its truth and clearness, or at least it seems so to me, so much so that I feel impressed to write you a few lines to let you know how well I enjoyed reading your view of the subject, although this feeble effort of mine will only be at best a very faint manifestation of my inward feelings and joy, for I cannot command words to express my feelings, therefore I am embarrassed to write you, yet I have decided in my mind to do so, feeling assured that you cannot expect anything more of me than a very feeble effort. The Scripture is clear and to the point that there is not a whit's difference, according to nature, between the sins of the elect and the nonelect, as Paul has so clearly shown in Ephesians ii. 1-3: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the

course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." That is, those whom God quickened, or made alive, were exactly like those whom he did not quicken, according to nature. Therefore there is no manner of sin that has been or ever will be committed by the nonelect but what has been committed by the elect, for they are precisely alike according to nature. Jesus said on one occasion, "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men."—Matt. xii. 31. Forasmuch then as all manner of sin and blasphemy is forgiven unto men, these men or people to whom all manner of sin has been and is forgiven, have committed all manner of sin and blasphemy, or it could not have been forgiven, and as Christ did not atone and put away the sins of any but his elect people, it seems clear to me, brother Ker, that it was and is the elect vessels of mercy to whom all manner of sin and blasphemy is forgiven. The Scriptures prove that the sins of the nonelect were not put away from them by the sacrifice of Christ, were not atoned for, hence are not forgiven. There is no doubt in my mind but what the transgression of one man, Adam, involved all the election of grace in all manner of sin, exactly as it did the nonelect, and that Christ by his atonement did make full, complete and ample satisfaction to the law of divine justice for all the sins of the election of grace in all their transgressions and their iniquities, and grace was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began, and that Christ their Surety and covenant Head did bear all their sins in his own body on the tree of the cross, and put them away for ever and ever by the sacrifice of himself. Therefore this redeemed and justified family of God are all as clean and clear in his sight, through the righteousness and merits of their dear Redeemer and loving Savior, as though they never had sinned, hence without fault before God in love. The word which the Lord put in Balaam's mouth declared that "he [the Lord] hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel."—Num. xxiii. 21. This shows their scriptural existence in Christ, for in him we (the spiritual seed) live and move and have our being, are complete in Him who is the head of the family. Although these things are everlastingly and blessedly true, yet these atoned for and put away sins crop out and are manifested in the flesh of the elect and redeemed family of God while here in their time state, for they are condemned in their flesh, and are but Canaanite enemies left in their flesh to war with them for their good and God's declarative glory, and there is no doubt in my mind (yet I may be deceived) but what the Scriptures fully demonstrate the fact that Christ does so minutely and so savingly keep all the elect family that he never suffers one of them to commit a sin that he has not atoned for; all the sins that all the elect family of God ever have or ever will commit are atoned for sins; Jesus suffered for them, "gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world."

Now in conclusion, I will say, in my humble judgment, that if any of God's elect family should ever sin so much as one sin that Christ did not atone for, or if even one of them should ever fail to act out or manifest so much as one sin

that Christ did suffer and atone for, it would prove a deficiency in the wisdom and knowledge of God, which cannot be; no, never, for Christ was delivered up to the law of divine justice by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God for our offenses and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God "through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

I have written much more than I expected, and feel that I must ask your kind forbearance. Remember us when so favored of the Lord.

Yours in hope of eternal life through Christ, W. J. MAY.

CAVE SPRING, Ky., March 14, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a letter written by brother J. B. Jones, and it seems to me a rich letter to read, as it is a sermon in itself. I hope you will publish it that it may do others good, as it doth the upright in heart. We have just received a letter from our dear sister Underwood, of Arizona. The inclosed letter will do her good, if no one else, for it is from her old Kentucky home. All the preaching she has is from the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." For, said the apostle, we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord.

Yours in hope,

E. J. ANDERSON.

RUSSELLVILLE, Ky., March 1, 1913.

ELDER E. J. ANDERSON—DEAR BROTHER:—It may be that you will be surprised to receive a letter from me; but be that as it may, if you are like me in this respect you have learned not to be surprised at anything that takes place in this life, very much at least. I am just recovering from a spell of sickness, which has confined me to the house and bed for about four weeks, but I am able now, through the mercy of God, to be up and to look after my little business affairs, for which I hope that I am thankful to him who is the Giver of every good and perfect gift. During my four weeks of sickness I did not see a soul of my faith to whom I could talk upon the subject of christian religion, the religion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, so you may know from this that I have been restless and low down in spirit. There are people all around me who profess to know the Lord in the pardon of their sins, but in their walk and conversation they deny him; they have not a thus saith the Lord for what they advocate. There are too many conditions to be performed by the sinner in their profession to suit me. They tell me that sinners must make the first start in order that God may bless and save them in the kingdom of heaven, and if they do not do this they will be lost. They say that sinners must exercise faith in the Lord, repent of their sins, believe on the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and then they will be saved, if they are baptized. This is also very essential, as they claim. Brother Anderson, I have not so learned Christ, and such talk as that is of no comfort to me, neither do I believe that there is any encouragement in it for you or any other heaven-born soul, in whom is his Spirit. If we be indeed the children of God we know very well that faith is the fruit of the Spirit, and belongs to the believer in Christ, and we also have learned from experience and the word of God that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost. We

have also learned that Jesus has been exalted a Prince and a Savior to give repentance to Israel, therefore repentance also is the fruit of the Spirit, or the gift of God, which is the same thing in substance. This we cannot doubt, because it is the word of God, and these Scriptures knock the last prop out from under the conditionalist, and place him where he started, without foundation. Poor men! I had much rather be dependent upon One who has all power, for it is said of him that when he begins a good work he performs it unto the day of Jesus Christ, and all who are taught of God believe this. Now I will quote a little of the language of the Savior to unbelievers while he was here on earth. He said unto them, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." I am persuaded that this is just as applicable to the unbeliever of this age of the world as it was to the Jews then. The question arises in the minds of some, Why would they not come to Christ? I know of no better way of answering this than to say, it was because they were dead in trespasses and in sins. They were in love with sin, and drank it down as an ox drinketh water. This the Scriptures teach us, and christian experience teaches the same thing. Now how can such characters ever come to Christ? The Savior again said, Ye cannot come unto me, except the Father which sent me draw you, and I will raise you up at the last day. In order for a sinner to come to Christ he must first be killed to the love of sin, and made alive to the love of holiness, by the application of the Spirit of God in the heart, then he has been made a willing character. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."

Brother Anderson, if I cannot be encouraged to build up my faith in God by hearing men talk upon the subject of religion, the sooner they stop talking the better I like it. I told a Campbellite so not long ago, and he took me at my word and has not so much as named the subject since. My experience teaches me, and this is in harmony with the word of God, that to enter into the family of God we must be born again, born from above, and have the love of God shed abroad in the heart. This alone constitutes one a child of God. It is not what a man believes or advocates that makes him a child of God, but it is what the Lord does for him. Hear Paul's testimony upon this subject. He says, "Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity." To my mind charity signifies love here. Paul said if he gave all his goods to feed the poor, it would profit him nothing without charity. Yea, he also adds, If I give my body to be burned, this would advantage me nothing without charity. The conditionalist is not embraced in this at all.

Before I close I wish to speak of one thing that in my travels has been of more comfort to me than anything else, and that is my faith in God and in his Son Jesus Christ. During this last sickness, and, in fact, ever since I possessed a hope in Christ, my faith has never wavered in the God of my salvation. I believe him to be the same all-wise and unchangeable God to-day that he has ever been. I believe in his decrees, foreknowledge, predestination and purposes, and that he is an absolute sovereign. I believe that he made all things, and that without him was not anything made that was made. By him all things consist. He has all power. The powers that be are ordained of God. His power is unlimited, and he doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and there is

none to stay his hand. I have all confidence in our God, and none in man if left to himself. This is my faith in him whom I try to worship. Like Paul, I can say that I have kept this faith, and I am encouraged to believe sometimes that this is the faith once delivered unto the saints, and if so, it will stand the test, and I have nothing to fear. Jesus said on one occasion to Simon, "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." I feel that, like Peter, I am very often in the hands of Satan, and that were it not for the intercession of the dear Savior in my behalf my faith would fail, for I acknowledge that without him I can do nothing, and I am less than nothing, and vanity. Bless his holy name, he never leaves his people. He has promised to be with them in six troubles, and in the seventh he will not forsake them. This I understand to be unto death itself. Then the people of God have nothing to fear, for he will bring them off more than conquerors through him that loved them. Dear brother, in my travels I have found that God's people are not carried to heaven on flowery beds of ease; it is, as the Bible declares, through much tribulation that we enter the kingdom, and his people are chosen in the furnace of affliction. By the prophet God said, I leave in the midst of thee a poor and afflicted people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord, and, dear brother, we have found it to be so. Like Peter, we have nowhere else to go. He alone it is who hath the words of eternal life. The Lord said to Peter again, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." It is a consolation to have the witness in ourselves that this is so. We did not receive it of man, neither were we taught it by man, but it was revealed unto us by the Holy Spirit.

I have not written this to you because I thought you did not understand these things, but I have done it in order to relieve my mind. I wanted some one to talk to, and I could not think of any one by whom I would rather my views should be criticised than yourself. Now when at the throne of grace remember me. If you can glean any comfort from this, give to God all the glory.

As ever, yours in hope of eternal life,

J. B. JONES.

DUNCAN, Okla., Feb. 11, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS, BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I will write you a line in thanks to you for your kindness in sending me the paper. Dear brethren, many thanks to you, for it comes to me as a sweet morsel from our Father's table. O what comfort to me to read after the brethren and sisters; their writing revives me and gives me hope that we have been taught in the school of Christ. When I hear them tell of their good meetings O how I long to be with them, but I know if it were the Lord's will I would be with them, for he has set my bounds and I cannot pass them, and it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, but I hope the Lord will direct my way in peace and righteousness, for in him is all my help; in him is life and peace, and in him is everlasting strength. He has promised to be with his children alway; he will ordain peace for them, for he has wrought all their ways in them. My dear brethren, I feel to be a castaway in a weary land; as David said, I chatter, and mourn as the dove. Pray for me, for I know I am a sinner.

I write these few broken words in sweet remembrance of your kind favor. If a child, I am the least of all.

I will send you a letter from brother J. F. Beeman, which I have had a long time. It was so comforting to me I want to share it with the household of faith, for it tells of the precious things of our Lord and Savior. Surely he is one of the Lord's servants. May the Lord bless all his servants to the edifying of his children. Dear Lord, keep us in the way of peace. Please pardon this letter, and pray for me. From an old sinner alone in this world, yet not alone, for the Lord remembers me. My hope is in him.

Your sister in hope of immortal life beyond the grave,

NANCY CREEL.

HELENA, Okla., July 30, 1908.

NANCY CREEL—DEAR SISTER:—Your letter of the 14th inst. was greatly appreciated, and we felt as though it would have been a great privilege to take you by the hand as a token of our fellowship for you, but the distance bars us from that precious act, and faith alone lays hold on the things unseen, and we are made to contemplate the riches of God's kingdom, so rich that what we call immaterial things are most precious indeed. The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. Peter said, Whom having not seen, ye love. Jesus said to Thomas, "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."—John xx. 29. I have thought much along this line; that is, to believe on Jesus without having the opportunity of seeing him as he was seen in the days of his flesh. What a power faith must be in the hand of the Lord to compel sinners to believe on the name of Jesus, especially so because poor mortals want everything verified to their natural senses.

"It breaks through flesh and sense,
And dwells in heavenly light."

Paul speaks of seeing the Lord as one born out of due time. Does not every awakened sinner by the eye of faith see Jesus as one born out of due time? When he appeared to you first in your experience were you looking for him just then? Was it not to you as one out of due time? Was not his coming unexpected? You had heard of him by reading the Scriptures; you had heard of him by the words of preachers, and no doubt some kind of thoughts had been in your mind as to what kind of being he was; that is, in power and mercy towards the children of men. But were you not disappointed in your estimate of his character when suddenly the cloud burst over your head and the dazzling rays of the Sun of Righteousness beamed forth to you in untold splendor? Was not the knowing of him by faith far in advance of all that had entered your mind previous to this? Your previous knowledge was obtained through the eye, ear and natural understanding; but the "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit," which he hath given unto us. Revelation. What a word! How different this is from man's teaching. The best worldly religionists will not admit that revelation is the groundwork of God's teaching. If we find one to admit that God reveals himself unto sinners in this modern age, he is sure to destroy our confidence in him by his claim of doing so much for himself and for a weak god. The revelation of God's Spirit teaches

poor sinners the greatness of our God in all things, so that they dare not boast of anything unless it be their sins which are red like crimson, and though they be as a stain that cannot be washed out, yet God says they shall be as wool, and white as snow.

Dear sister, I cannot write much more to-day, but I am glad that you have one in your town with whom you can take sweet counsel, and together you can sit in the fellowship of the Most High. I would like to visit your place; it is not so remote by railroad. Write when convenient.

As ever, in hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the church at Black Rock, Baltimore Co., Md., May, 1913, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—At this, the one hundred and twentieth annual session of this association, we are pleased to say that we have met your ministers and messengers and received your letters of love. The dear Lord has blessed us with favorable weather and good, kind brethren and friends. We feel to pray God's blessings upon them, and that he would raise them up as lively stones in that spiritual kingdom. We are glad to tell you that there has not come into our meeting any uncertain sound, but that everything has been in thorough accord with those famous principles laid down by our forefathers in this house eighty-one years ago. Now, dear ones, if these principles and this doctrine are dear to you, then we would exhort you as did Paul the Hebrews: "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together." But let us that fear the Lord speak often one to another. Let us bear this in mind, and attend our meetings, and thereby encourage our pastor and our brethren by our presence, for herein is your Father glorified, that you bear much fruit. We find many around this fold whom we believe desire the sincere milk of the word, but who have not yet obeyed their Lord's command. To these let us give encouragement and consolation.

Our next session is to be held with the church at Harford, Harford Co., Md., in May, 1914, where we hope to meet you and sing the sweet songs of Zion once more.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association convened with the church at Hopewell, Mercer County, N. J., May 28th, 29th and 30th, 1913, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting and love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We are pleased to greet you in another session of our association. Our meeting has been harmonious and pleasant, every speaker giving God all the glory, and not man, for his wonderful works to the children of men. Your preachers have come to us with sound doctrine, and have preached the word in all fullness of the gospel, proclaiming salvation by grace, which is music to the poor sinner's ear.

It is our sweet privilege to announce to you that our next session is appointed to be held with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon County, N. J., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the first Sunday in June, 1914, when and where we hope to again meet and receive your ministers and messengers.

F. A. CHICK, Moderator.

D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1913.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

EXODUS IX. 16.

"AND in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." (See also Romans ix. 17.)

These are the words of God, who created all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. They were spoken to Moses concerning Pharaoh, to whom Moses was commanded to declare them. Pharaoh was, like all mankind, a fallen man, a sinner dead in trespasses and sins, with a heart that knew not God, and that was set, as is the heart of every natural man, to do evil. He was placed in a position of power and authority over men, and could command their service. In this alone consisted the difference between him and the masses of all mankind. Naturally he was no better and no worse than hundreds of other rulers among men. His position made his ignorance of God and his opposition to his will more prominent than other men, but all other natural men were and are just as much the enemies of God as was he. All that Pharaoh did toward Israel was the result of alienation toward God and toward his people, just as all wickedness among all men is but the stream that flows from an alienated heart. Now to this man God spake the words of the text. We learn from this language that our God has a purpose which he will certainly fulfill in wicked men. This God was especially the God of Israel; he so declares himself in many portions of the word, but he also is the God of all flesh. He not only rules in the hearts of his people, but he rules over all men alike. In his providence he appoints the steps of all his saints, and to them all his paths are mercy and truth. But he also appoints all the steps of his enemies. He works his sovereign will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. This God had decreed the existence of Israel, and had appointed the bounds of their times and of their habitation. Because of this, Israel had been preserved; preserved as they went down into Egypt, preserved while they dwelt there in bondage and preserved to this moment when these words were spoken. But no less true was it that the Egyptians had also been preserved as a nation through all their vicissitudes until this moment. Moses, the servant of God, had been raised up to fulfill the purpose of God, in becoming their leader and law-giver. But it was no less true that Pharaoh had been raised up, not to be a righteous man, a lover of God and of his commandments, but for the purpose of showing forth in another way the wisdom and power of God, which should be made manifest through his stubborn-heartedness and his wicked ways. God would see to it that the wrath of Pharaoh should praise him; that is, he would not suffer Pharaoh to go one step further in rebellion to him than he would overrule to his own glory. God never suffers all the wickedness of men to appear. He puts bounds around the tongue, the thought and the life of all

men. As Satan is represented in the word as being bound in a chain, so all the servants of Satan are also bound, and to their wickedness God says, Thus far shalt thou come, and no further.

Let us remember that in all this narrative our God is represented as dealing with Pharaoh as a natural man, or as one already sinful and depraved in heart. Nothing is said here as to whence Pharaoh derived his rebellious heart and mind. He appears in the history as an enemy of God and as an opponent of his will. How he came to be so is another thing, and if we find the answer to this last question we shall also find how it is that all men are by nature dead in sin, and children of wrath. The answer is, that by one man's transgression sin entered into the world, and death by sin. It is not ours to inquire how such a thing as sin came to be in existence. We are told how our first parents came to transgress, but we are not told how Satan came to be what he was, a liar a deceiver and murderer. He was so, and it is all pure speculation, and presumptuous speculation, too, to theorize as to how he came into being as the archenemy of God. All that any of us can ever know of the origin of sin is that it is the transgression of the law of God, and that through the temptation of the devil our first parents sinned and died. Since men are dead in sin, if God deals in any way with them he must deal with sinners. He does deal with the chosen objects of his mercy and choice in redemption, to the praise of his grace. He also deals with those who are not the objects of his love and choice, not indeed to the praise of his grace, but to the praise of his wisdom and power and justice, and so, as he causes wicked men to do in providence his will, though they mean it not so, he secures to himself in all instances just the same result as he declares in the text he would secure in Pharaoh. After the wonders of grace have been manifested in giving divine or eternal life to sinners dead in sin, it does not seem strange that in their life, both inward and outward, afterward he should secure to himself fruit that must be to his praise; but it can never cease to be a wonder that he always causes that the wrath of wicked men shall in some way redound to his praise. His people desire to praise him in and by their whole life, but these enemies of his mean it not so, yet such is his infinite wisdom that their most fiendish plots against him and against his law are only made to mock their rage, and to abase them, while God is in all these things glorified, and his name lifted on high. Pharaoh raged against the Lord, but how vain his rage. How doubly vain, since his rage was to be turned, not to the reproach of the Almighty, but to his praise and to make his power known. In his people, Israel, was weakness which made manifest his power to save, while in Pharaoh was rebellion which only gave occasion to display his power to overthrow all the plans of his foes, and to make what they intended for evil to result in good. Because Pharaoh did not know God's will, and because he was striving to fulfill his own will, he did fulfill the will of God. "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth."

We learn from this narrative, as well as from other portions of the word, that men cannot see, and do not purpose that the will or purpose of God shall be done, even when fulfilling his purpose. A notable instance of this truth is recorded

in Isaiah, chapter ten. On account of the transgressions of Israel the Lord declared through his prophet that he would send against them in chastisement the Assyrian, who should be the rod of his anger, and the indignation of the Lord should be the staff in His hand, and these Assyrian hosts should spoil his people, and tread them down like mire in the streets. Nevertheless the Assyrian should not mean to fulfill the will of God in so doing, but his thought should be to destroy and cut off nations not a few. Thus the pride and rage of the Assyrian should work out the purpose of God in the chastisement of his people. Because the Assyrian meant evil, and not to do the will of God, he was also condemned in his doing, but through it all the Lord glorified himself. We do not recall how many times the Lord declares wicked nations or men to be his sword, or his rod, to correct his erring Israel, yet these heathen kings and nations meant not to be doing the will of God, and indeed did not believe in him or acknowledge him to be God, and it was true of them that just because they did not know God they did his will. It was also because those who betrayed and crucified the Lord of glory did not know him that they fulfilled the purpose of God in so betraying and crucifying him. There is a notable statement in the thirteenth chapter of the Acts covering this very ground: "For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him." (See also Luke xxiii. 34; Acts iii. 7; 1 Cor. ii. 8.) Notice the statement of the inspired apostle is that because they did not know God's will concerning his Son they did his will in condemning the just One; and indeed it must have been so, because Jesus must be betrayed and die, else no sinner ever could be redeemed, and it is inconceivable that any humble sinner who had come to trust in the Lord, and to love him, ever could have wrought this awful work, this greatest and vilest of all sins. All this is in full harmony with the conduct of Pharaoh toward the children of Israel. God had raised him up to do the things which he did toward Israel, but this Pharaoh did not know, and because he did not know he went on in the appointed way until the God of Israel was finally glorified at the Red Sea in saving his people, and overthrowing the hosts of Egypt in the sea.

We learn from the narrative of Israel's deliverance from Egypt that though Pharaoh with an evil heart did work out the glory of God by unwittingly fulfilling the purpose of God, (his stubbornness and rebellion against God giving occasion for the display of divine power and wisdom) yet he was judged to be none the less guilty, and was brought at last to destruction with his armed hosts in the Red Sea. As the children of Israel well sang, The Lord hath triumphed gloriously; he hath overthrown the horse and his rider into the sea. Paul bears clear testimony to all that we have here been saying; his words are, "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing

formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power [right] over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?" The word "fitted" here is literally "made up." Pharaoh was one of these vessels of wrath. He was by his fallen, unrenewed nature fitted to destruction. The fact that he manifested his rebellion against God so long was not because he was any worse than others who are not suffered to go so far in outward rebellion, but the wonderful truth is that our God can and does make use of the wrath of man, and causes it to fulfill his decrees, and the faith of his children, seeing this, rejoices in it, and glorifies his wisdom and power in it. The stream flows just where the Lord cuts the channel for it, and does not go save where he does cut the channel, but its filthiness is none the less filthy, and thus the heart of man is none the less evil, and man is none the less condemned because he is but fulfilling the everlasting purpose of God, and it is the consolation of his children in every age and every circumstance that over it all and in it all their God reigns, and therefore no weapon formed against them shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise in judgment against them they shall condemn.

We will close these reflections by adding a few thoughts with regard to the words, "Have I raised thee up." If it be asked, Does this mean that the Lord gave him existence? or does it mean that the Lord gave him a place of kingly power and authority? or does it mean that Pharaoh had triumphed over some dynasty that had occupied the throne before him? as some who have studied deeply the history of those times have thought, there can be but one answer to any or all these questions, viz., that for the end named, viz., the showing forth of his power and glory, God had raised up Pharaoh in all these ways, and this means that just as surely as it was the purpose of God from the beginning that Moses should be his servant, to lead Israel out of the house of their bondage, so sure was it that he also had determined before time that this man Pharaoh should be born, and should come to the place of ruler of Egypt, and should be the occasion of the display of the many manifestations of the power of God, in sending the ten plagues upon Egypt, until his people should have gone forth in triumph. By all these truths we learn what the prophet once learned for himself: "That the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." How true the words of the poet:

> "Through all the various shifting scenes
> Of life's mistaken ill or good,
> Thy hand, O God, conducts unseen
> The beautiful vicissitude."

And how true these other words:

> "Thy ways, O God, with wise design
> Are framed upon thy throne above,
> And every dark and bending line
> Meets in the centre of thy love."

C.

NOTICE.

We expect preaching in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in June (29th), at the usual hours, by Elders J. M. Fenton and H. C. Ker. We cordially invite all who can to meet with us.

L. B. FORD.

Melrose Highlands, Mass.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder Silas H. Durand.)

The Elders and messengers composing the Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with our sister church at Hopewell, N. J., May 28th, 29th and 30th, 1913, to the churches whose messengers we are, send greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—In this, our Circular Letter, we will call your attention to the ninetieth Psalm. This Psalm is "a prayer of Moses, the man of God," in which he declares the truth and doctrine of God concerning the eternal existence of his people in Christ, the Lord's work in bringing them into manifestation, their experience of suffering under the wrath of God, their sense of condemnation by the holy law of God during the legal dispensation, and their longing desires and supplications to see the glorious work of God in their salvation. "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations." This does not limit the dwelling of the Lord's people in him to the beginning of time, for Moses distinctly declares that it was "before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou God," (hast been our dwelling-place) omitting the italicized word "art." So it is declared elsewhere that the Lord's children were chosen in him before the foundation of the world."

"Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men." This is thus acknowledged to be the work of the Lord, and of him alone, to bring his people to a knowledge of their lost condition, as sinners justly condemned by the holy law of God, and thus to begin the good work of grace in their hearts. No man can know his condition as a justly condemned sinner until the Lord shows it to him, and shows him that destruction attends and results from all his own works, and when the appointed time comes to show salvation to that poor soul it is the Lord alone who can say, "Return." He that begins this good work in his people is the same one who performs it, the eternal God. Time is not reckoned by him as it is by us. Jesus is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. "For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. Thou carriest them away as with a flood." That is, the men who live in the years that are flowing by are carried away by them as with a flood, and nothing is left of all their numbers, and greatness, and grandeur; hardly a remembrance as of a dream. "They are as a sleep;" those whose work, and tumult, and great activities, occupy these swiftly moving years, are as a sleep which lasted but as a watch in the night. "They are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth. For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled." These are the men whom the Lord has turned to destruction, showing them the sure destruction of all their vain hopes, which rest upon the righteousness of the law, and to whom he now says, "Return, ye children of men." They cannot return; for "thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance." This is the work of the law, by which is the knowledge of sin. When the law enters the conscience the offence abounds. All our efforts to satisfy the just demands of the law are vain. "All our days," while under the law, "are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that

is told." We must remember that this is not true of a child of God whose sins have been forgiven, and whose hope is in the Lord; neither is it true of one who has not been quickened by divine life, but whose hope is in his own works of righteousness. It is only true of those who have been made to see themselves as sinners in the sight of God, and have not yet been given a view of Jesus as their Righteousness. These are under the law, and all of their days are passed away in God's wrath. They are at work constantly trying to find a way in which they can clothe themselves with a righteousness which will be acceptable to the Lord; but this hope is always vain, it can never bring one into the favor of God.

"The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow: for it is soon cut off, and we fly away." This natural strength is not followed by success and gladness, but by sorrow. In natural things our labor is successful, but in spiritual things the one who labors to satisfy the law labors in vain. Though we live to be fourscore, and though we rise up early to our work, and sit up late in our efforts to accomplish our deliverance from the bondage of the law, still is our strength labor and sorrow, for that strength is soon cut off, and we fly away.

"Who knoweth the power of thine anger? Even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath." "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil," therefore the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. In beginning a work of grace the Lord puts his fear in the heart, as he says, "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." If one hates a thing he will try to get away from it. The more we hate evil the more bitterly will we feel the wrath of God on account of it. "Even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath."

Now prayer begins, and supplication. As power to work fails, so the spirit of prayer is felt in the soul, though it is with groanings which cannot be uttered. Such a soul is hungering for righteousness. There is a cry felt in the heart that we may have mercy and forgiveness, and that we may be put into the right way. We want to be pure. Moses, the man of God, tells us our own desire: "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." Nothing will satisfy us now but true heavenly wisdom and righteousness, and we continue to cry: "Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants. O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days."

While under the law all his days, and while representing the law and administering it to the people, yet Moses was looking, as from Pisgah's top, into the promised land of the gospel. Everything in the legal dispensation had a gospel meaning, and all the things pertaining to that dispensation were patterns and types and shadows and figures of things in the gospel heavens, and those whose faith was in lively exercise, as was that of Moses, could see glorious things in the legal types, and Moses could sing as he stood before Israel for the last time: "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak." He could see all the glories of the gospel church by the power of faith, and could see that which makes His people glad, and the cry of every redeemed soul is, "Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil." For it is ever true that as the af-

fliction, so is the gladness; as is the feeling sense of God's wrath against sin, so is the joy on account of the great mercy and rich grace which are manifest in the forgiveness of our sins.

"From all our afflictions His glory shall spring,
And the deeper our sorrows the louder we'll sing."

We have been trying our own strength long in vain. Our works can be of no avail, for they are from a sinful source. A bad tree cannot bring forth good fruit, nor a corrupt fountain send forth clear water. So the cry is, "Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children." That is a good day when we are privileged to see the Lord's works. O how sweet those works are; how restful to our weary souls. There is no beauty like the beauty they present; no glory like the glory of the Lord. "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it."

We did not know that Moses understood our case and our wants so well. What holy men of old desired is thus expressed. They desired and searched diligently to know what, and what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. It was shown to them that not unto themselves, but unto us these things were spoken. They desired and longed for the time when the true spiritual meaning of their works should be established upon them. This was done when the gospel kingdom arrived, and the doctrine and order of the gospel church established. And now the Lord's people in the gospel dispensation desire that their works in the church may be established upon them. They want to know and feel the deep, true meaning of all the sweet order and ordinances and doctrine of the church, as they try to walk in those good works which God hath before ordained that they should walk in. They pray that the work of their hands may be established upon them, and that so they may "walk with God."

F. A. CHICK, Moderator.
D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

(Written by Elder H. C. Ker.)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the New Vernon Church, New Vernon, N. Y., June 4th, 5th and 6th, 1913, to the churches composing the same sends love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In our Circular Letter it is our custom to call attention either to some point of doctrine, or the order of the house of God, that those of our correspondence may know where we stand upon such things. In this day, when there seems to be such a falling away in many sections of our land, it is good that the few left who trust in the name of the Lord should, as witnesses of his grace, declare from the housetop the unsearchable riches in Christ Jesus. Hence we shall call your attention to Eph. i. 7, which reads as follows: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." It seems to have been the delight of the apostles to sound forth the power of God in the wonders of salvation to guilty sinners, and in no uncertain language Paul in this letter to the Ephesians declares how and why sinners are saved. So clear has he made it that it seems almost impossible even for a natural man to continue in utter darkness after reading his declarations, yet such is the case, and hence it is proven that the natural man receiveth

not the things of the Spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned. After the address of this letter to the Ephesians the apostle praises the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for having blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, and as the reason for the gracious work he said, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace." Therefore what we are as subjects of salvation is according to the choice and predestination of God, without will or effort on our part. God's choice of his people and their predestination unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ was because of his love for them, and that they should be to the praise of the glory of his grace. When Adam transgressed God's law all his posterity, elect and nonelect, sinned in him, hence were under the curse of the law. If God predestinated his people unto salvation, to the praise of his grace, it was absolutely necessary that sin enter the world, or there could have been neither salvation nor grace in this wonderful sense. Transgression and death by sin did not turn God's love for his people to hatred, but he loved them still, and just as well as though sin had not entered the world. This shows how and why it is that God loves sinners. Now the sheep having trespassed were held by the law until the debt should be paid, and none but a near kinsman could redeem them. Four thousand years while the Elder Brother tarried they were held captive by the law, but his coming was sure, it being according to the purpose of the Father, and at last their redemption drew near: Christ came, claimed the sheep, paid the debt and delivered them from bondage, leading captivity captive, therefore Paul said, "In whom we have redemption through his blood." Yes, the blood of our Elder Brother redeemed us from sin and all iniquity and presented us before God without blame in love, according to the riches of his grace. This is the doctrine that we as an association have held and loved lo these many years, and we gladly confess that it is our only hope of life and salvation, and we desire to be kept in it by the power of God to the end, after which to enter the fullness of glory and peace, that inheritance reserved in heaven for all who love him in truth and sincerity. Amen.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

WE are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

E. B. Ault, Texas, $1.25; A. F. Jones, Ga., $1.00; Sarah Gandy, N. J., $1.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Neil Blue, an aged and respected citizen of Muirkirk, Ontario, Canada, passed away at his home April 27th, 1913, in his 81st year. Mr. Blue had been in poor health for some time, yet able to be around until a few days before his death. He was married to Jane McIntyre Nov. 6th, 1862, and to that union were born two children, a son and a daughter, Mrs. A. Love, who died about ten years ago, leaving James T. Blue, the son and only child, who resides in Muirkirk, Ontario. It was the Lord's will to take Mrs. Blue from her dear companion last July, and since bereft of his dear and lifelong companion he had been filled with sorrow, and longed for the time to come when he could enter into the fullness of that rest which he had a foretaste of here. Mr. Blue was a man deeply exercised in his mind upon spiritual things; one who possessed sterling qualities, loved mercy, dealt justly and walked uprightly. His exercises began when but a mere boy, and it is said of him regarding his exercises of mind that in the days of Elder McColl many a time his boyish face would be wet with tears while listening to the gospel as proclaimed by the Lord's servant, and without question the preached word found lodgment in his heart. His conversation through life was such as becomes a follower of the blessed Lord. Although not a member of the visible church, we have every reason to believe him to be a member of the body of Christ. His delight was in talking of the things of the kingdom, showing that in old age, while the outward man was perishing, the inward man was being renewed day by day. His whole mind seemed absorbed in the welfare of the church and in hearing the gospel preached. His house was always open for the reception of his kindred in Christ, and many are they who have enjoyed his fireside and shared the blessings which a bountiful Providence had bestowed upon him.

His funeral was held from his late residence, and was largely attended by friends and relatives, which testified to the high esteem in which Mr. Blue was held. Burial was in Duart Cemetery. The writer tried, with such ability as the Lord was pleased to give, to comfort the friends, using as a text Rev. xiv. 13. May the Lord bless all who mourn.

ALSO,

Deacon James Huntley departed this life March 24th, 1913, at the home of his daughter, Union Grove, N. Y., in the 80th year of his age. Brother Huntley united with the Andes Church April 19th, 1874, and was baptized by the late Elder J. D. Hubbell. He faithfully served the Andes Church as deacon for many years, and was especially gifted in speaking and in prayer. He also served the church as clerk. His life was well adorned with uprightness, and he was faithful in the discharge of his duties toward the church. He was blessed with a meek and humble spirit, always esteeming others better than himself. His death came very suddenly, although he had been failing in health for some time. We feel assured he is at rest.

His funeral was held at the home of his daughter; burial in the Union Grove Cemetery. He leaves a large circle of friends and several children, beside the church, to mourn their loss. May the Lord comfort all who mourn the loss of so noble a man.

ALSO,

Albert Hitt died at the home of his daughter, in Griffins Corners, N. Y., May 5th, 1913, in the 84th year of his age. Brother Hitt was received in the fellowship of the Andes Church April 20th, and baptized by Elder J. D. Hubbell, being one of six baptized on the same date. Brother Hitt moved to Griffins Corners some years ago, and had been able to attend the meetings but very little since moving from Union Grove, where he formerly resided. He was well established in the doctrine of grace, and loved to see one walk according to their profession. While living in Union Grove he was a very active member, and shared his hospitable home with his brethren. He leaves two sons and one daughter, beside a large circle of friends and relatives, together with the church, to mourn their loss.

His funeral was held at the home of his daughter, in Griffins Corners, conducted by the writer; the burial was in the Fleischmanns cemetery. May the Lord bless the mourning ones with a reconciled mind, is my prayer.

J. B. SLAUSON.

It has become my painful duty to chronicle the death of my dear wife, **Mary Ann York Stephens.** She was born in Tallapoosa Co., Ala., Jan. 29th, 1849, and died at her home in De Leon, Comanche Co., Texas, April 7th, 1913, making her stay on earth 64 years, 2 months and 8 days. Her first marriage was to W. H. Partain, in Morgan Co., Ala., in 1871. To that union were born four children: H. W., F. M. and W. H. Partain, and one daughter, Mrs. Myrtle Plemmons, all of whom are living. Her second marriage was to S. N. Stephens, in 1883, in Morgan Co., Ala. To that union two children were born, the first dying in infancy, the younger, J. P. Stephens, of De Leon, living. She professed a hope in Christ in early girlhood, and joined the Missionary Baptists, but in the year 1889, together with her husband, joined the Primitive Baptist Church, in Perry Co., Ark., and in 1890 came with the family to Texas, where she spent the remainder of her days on earth. We were not surprised when death came, only the end was nearer than we expected. Her health had been failing for two years, because of a bronchial cough which became complicated with asthma. She had gone to her lovely daughter's home, whose hus-

band is a physician, and remained three weeks in hope of recuperating, but her mind seemed to be directed back to her home, where she died. She came just one week before death relieved her. The day after she returned home she seemed stouter and more cheerful than usual, but the third day she began to get weak, and gradually weakened and failed until Monday morning at 8 o'clock she peacefully and quietly, as if going to sleep, passed out of this sinful world into that blessed celestial where all is peace and happiness. Her children were all with her except two, and O how hard it was to stand by and watch her sweet face while her life was ebbing away. She was truly a minister's wife, always ready to shoulder the responsibilities of the family, and often when I would speak of not filling my appointment because of her feeble health, she would say, "Go on, they will be disappointed if you do not go; I will make out all right."

The day after she died we carried her remains to the Clairette Cemetery, where a large concourse of friends and relatives met us at the station, and all assembled at the Primitive Baptist meetinghouse in Clairette, where Elder J. C. Kilgore spoke words of comfort to us all from Eccl. vii. 1, after which her remains were quietly laid to rest in the Clairette Cemetery to await the resurrection morn, when all the blood-washed throng will come forth in the image of Jesus and will ever be with the Lord.

S. N. STEPHENS.

BLUM, Texas.

K. R. Chancellor, our aged brother, died Nov. 24th, 1912, seven miles east of Fairfield, Texas, aged 82 years, 9 months and 13 days. He was born in Wilcox Co., Ala., Feb. 11th, 1830, emigrated to Texas and settled on a farm in Freestone County in 1852, where he resided until his death. He was said to be the oldest pioneer citizen in the county. Brother Chancellor was never married. He was a man of strong constitution, retaining his health until about a year previous to his death, when he was attacked with la grippe. Our brother entertained a hope in the forgiveness of his sins, and his acceptance in the Lamb, and was made reconciled to the will of God, at which time a serious inquiry arose in his mind concerning the gospel church. He searched the inspired word of truth for thirty-five years in an honest and earnest endeavor to locate the true church, the Lord alone leading him step by step to see the footprints of the flock, and after hearing the doctrine expounded in its fullness and beauty recognized the Old School Baptist to be the new testament church of Christ, and feeling a desire to cast his lot among this poor and afflicted people, he united with Union Church, of the Primitive or Predestinarian Baptists of Big Creek Association, and was baptized by Elder Benjamin Young in 1895, and lived a consistent, exemplary member until called to the church triumphant, to dwell with the glorified saints in heaven. He was punctual in filling his seat at church until failing health deterred him. He was always a peacemaker, yet uncompromising with error; the Bible was his only rule of practice. He loved and was edified by reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and enjoyed the consolations of the preached gospel in its purity. Three sisters and one brother survive him. Elder I. W. Bowers married his youngest sister, all living peacefully together in the same house for nineteen or twenty years. His church, relatives and friends will keenly feel their loss. He was buried in the Union Church Cemetery, there to await the great resurrection morning.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Bowers, using the hymn, "While sorrows encompass me round," and the text so appropriate for the occasion, 2 Cor. v. 1. The Lord bless and sanctify this sad dispensation of his providence to the good of all the bereaved and to his own glory, is the sincere desire of the writer.

ASA HOWARD.

KELLER, Texas, May 26, 1913.

Welton Leachman Fergerson, son of Josiah and Frances Fergerson, was born in Fauquier Co., Va., Oct. 9th, 1850, died April 13th, 1913, making his stay on earth 62 years, 6 months and 4 days. He was married to Miss Mary C. Walk, Dec. 20th, 1876. To that union were born five children: Welton L., Angie F., Mary E., Herbert W. and Raymond K., of which two preceded him to the tomb. He leaves a widow, one daughter and two sons to mourn their loss. We should not mourn for him, for we feel our loss is his eternal gain, and we should be comforted by his expressions of faith. He was a man of usefulness, serving the people as magistrate in Loudoun County for years, and was ever ready to assist in meting out justice according to the laws of Virginia to his fellow-men. He attended the services of the Old School Baptist Church to hear the truth, and often expressed his appreciation of the same. He expressed to the writer in his last illness that he was willing to go at the bidding of the Lord. He was conscious until a few hours of the end, and gave full directions as to his business, and requested Elder C. W. Vaughn to attend his funeral.

C. W. VAUGHN.

IT becomes my sad duty to announce the death of our beloved brother, **Dr. S. M. Carlton.** Brother Carlton was born Oct. 1st, 1830, and died April 2nd, 1913, being 82 years, 6 months and 1 day old. He united with Siloam Church, in the city of Henderson, Rusk Co., Texas, July 1st, 1883, and was baptized by Elder James Holcomb. He lived a worthy member of the Old School Baptist Church to the day of his death, and we believe that he died in the tri-

umph of a living faith, and is gone to that rest which remains to the people of God. Dr. Carlton was a good physician and surgeon, and practiced medicine over fifty years, and it was never too cold or too dark for him to go and relieve the afflicted. Brother Carlton was not a preacher, but gave public Bible lectures, and was an able defender of the doctrine of the Old School Baptists. He was an able writer, and wrote several books. He told me several times that he wanted me to preach his funeral. His two sons telephoned for me when he died, and I tried to preach, using the text in the book of Job: "If a man die, shall he live again?" The body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Thornton, Texas.

SOLON GIPSON.

W. L. Hawk departed this life March 25th, 1913. He was born in Florida, Dec. 3rd, 1858, came to Texas in 1882 and joined the Missionary Baptists about 1885. He was married to Mattie Dykes July 7th, 1886, to which union were born ten children, two of whom died in infancy. One is married, Mrs. M. J. Culpepper. The widow and eight children are left to mourn the sad loss of a companion and father, which vacancy can only be filled with the presence of all-wise God, who doeth what is best and never makes a mistake. If we could but be reconciled to his will, but our minds are so hard to control. He became dissatisfied with his religion, and went to hear an Old Baptist preach. He said when he came home he could not see how they could preach so ably if they did not have it written down. He united with the Old School Baptists in 1893. He said if ever he was born again it was after he left the Missionaries. He was a firm believer in the predestination of all things and salvation by grace. During the twenty years of his membership he never missed a meeting if he could go. He often would go fifteen miles Saturday and Sunday. He suffered severely the last two years of his life. He said Christ had to suffer, too. When he was restless the boys would sing his favorite hymns and he would become quiet. I often console myself in thinking of God's messages being so consoling to him, and can rest assured he is at rest.

One of his favorite ministers, Elder J. B. Bowden, preached his funeral and sang hymn 1251, as requested, and two others. There is a sadness to us who are left behind that never can be healed, but we have hope of meeting him again where we shall all have a new body and be like Christ, and know no parting.

Written by his loving wife,

M. S. HAWK.

Walter H. Lane, son of Moses and Mary Lane, was born in Henderson Co., Ky., March 7th, 1851, died at his home near New Carlisle, Ohio, Feb. 12th, 1913, aged 61 years, 11 months and 5 days. I am not advised at what time or to whom he was married. He united with the Nettle Creek Primitive Baptist Church, in Ohio, and was baptized Oct. 15th, 1894, by Elder T. C. Williams. He was quiet and unassuming in manner, a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, loved to meet with the brethren and join in singing praises to the Lord, whom he hoped had called him out of darkness into his marvelous light, and to hear the unsearchable riches of Christ proclaimed by the servants of the Lord. His sufferings he bore with patience, and said family ties bind and we all cling to life, yet the Lord's will must be done. He willingly submitted to the call of the Savior. Thus he passed away in the triumph of faith, and we believe he is now resting on the banks of deliverance. In his death the church has lost a devoted member, the community an upright citizen and his bereft widow a true and faithful husband, but we indulge a hope that when done with the turmoil of life we may die in peace and dwell with Christ, where shines one eternal day.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Carnell, after which his body was consigned to the silent tomb in the cemetery at New Carlisle, where he will be safe from all the storms and tempests.

F. M. MAUCK.

MEMORIALS.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie, N. Y., at its regular meeting held May 24th, 1913, voted that the removal by death of our beloved and much esteemed brother in Christ, **Deacon John A. Morse,** calls forth our most sincere regret, yet we sorrow not as those having no hope, believing that for him to die is gain; and while he will be sadly missed in our meetings, we feel to say that the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken but his own. We desire to extend our sympathy to the family in their bereavement, and that this resolution be placed on our Minutes and a copy sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

GEORGE A. MIERS, Church Clerk.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Schoharie, N. Y., Providence permitting, will hold a two days meeting June 21st and 22nd, 1913. We invite all ministering brethren, members and interested friends of our faith and order who can, to come. Those coming to Howes Cave will be met if a card is sent to Geo. A. Miers, Schoharie, N. Y. Those coming to Schoharie write sister Helen Kinney, Schoharie, N. Y.

GEO. A. MIERS.

THE Siloam Association of Oregon and Washington will meet at Nesika, Lewis Co., Wash., commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in

August, 1913. Those coming by rail will take the Tacoma & Eastern at Tacoma, Wash., and go to Morton, where they will be met with teams and conveyed to the place of meeting. All are cordially invited to attend.

SONORA A. HESS, Clerk of Association.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

DROPSY REMEDY.

Dropsy remedy, purely vegetable, removes from one to two gallons of water in a day. Shortness of breath quickly relieved. Cures the worst cases of Dropsy in all its forms, and after being given up by the best doctors to die. Specially efficacious in Dropsy of the Heart. Best and cheapest known remedy, only $1.00 a package, six packages $5.00 by mail postpaid, and free to very poor people who are really unable to pay. Trial package free to any address when name, age, address and symptoms of patient are given, with ten one-cent stamps.

ELDER C. W. ANDERSON.

WITTER, Madison Co., Ark.

I know from my own observation that this is an effective remedy for dropsy, and I take pleasure in recommending it to physicians and patients.

ELDER S. HASSELL.

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These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Our assortment of small books embraces:

Cloth Binding, per copy, 75 cents; per dozen, $6.00.

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THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at 5 cents per copy. Address,

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SPECIAL NOTICE.

(THIRTEENTH EDITION.)

The new edition of our Hymn and Tune Book, shape note, is now ready for distribution. The new edition of round note will be ready soon. Will those churches that are intending to get a supply in the near future kindly let us know as nearly as possible how many they will need, and which note? The price is 70 cents each, sent by mail postpaid, and six dollars per dozen, sent by express at cost of the purchaser. There will be sent with each book, upon request, without additional cost, a neat pamphlet of 30 pages, containing Rudiments of Music and graded lessons for use in singing classes, in connection with the H. and T. book. Send orders to Elder Silas H. Durand, Southampton, Pa.

ELDERS SILAS H. DURAND AND P. G. LESTER

THE

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 81. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1913. NO. 13.

CORRESPONDENCE.

2 TIMOTHY II. 20, 21.

"BUT in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

In dreams, and meditations following, during the night just past, the passage just quoted came into my mind, and things that I never saw before, as to its meaning, seemed to be unfolded to my vision. Some of these things, if I may be so enabled, I feel impressed now to pen down.

In my dream I seemed to be in an assembly, which was at least religiously inclined, if they had not gathered for the purpose of worship. Some one in the gathering had a tract, written in somewhat sympathetic style, and relating a story of how an irreligious boy became "converted" by falling in company with and coming under the influence of another boy who was religious. A man who seemed to be a leader in their works and worship said to me in substance: Is not this convincing? meaning, of course, that it was convincing argument against my position, that all their efforts to bring dead sinners to life and into a saved relationship with Jesus were futile. I answered by merely asking him if he thought that all men who talked and wrote on such things told the truth and were sincere in teaching as they did. He seemed to think that, with few exceptions, they were honest and sincere in their claims and pretensions. Then the thought occurred, This is one reason why so many follow those teachers whose doctrines dishonor God, because they deny the teaching of the Scriptures and at the same time profess great reverence for them. Every theory that represents God as mutable and subject to influences dishonors him, and every theory that represents Jesus Christ as only a partial Savior and dependent upon men and their works, as to the outcome of his work to redeem, dishonors him. My mind finally reverted to the fact that those characters whose theories were God-dishonoring, who rejected the truth, and served "not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple," were identified with the visible church of Jesus Christ, at least at times, even in the apostles' day. Then the Scripture at the head

of this article came into my mind, with some of the following reflections. Where is, or ever has been, a greater house than the church of the Lord Jesus Christ? Jesus said, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."—Matt. xvi. 18. The apostle Paul writes to Timothy: "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." —1 Tim. iii. 14. This great house is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." Now every man who builds a house, and is able to build and furnish according to his own liking, does so, and every vessel in and about the house, whether gold or silver, wood or earth, is for a use, and does not enter the house against the owner's will or wish, but there is a use and purpose for each, whether it is a vessel to honor or to dishonor. Judas was numbered among the apostles: "Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" said Jesus. There was a "must needs be" for Judas. "It must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh." —Matt. xviii. 7. To the Corinthians the apostle Paul said: "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." Jesus, the great builder of his house, has asserted that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Who knows better how to provide to secure this end than the Builder? "Hath not the potter power [and the right] over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" Two facts we do well to keep in mind here: first, the Builder has the right to build and furnish his home as he sees proper, and this he does. Second, no vessel of dishonor within nor without the house shall hinder the object or prevent the success of the Builder. "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." When one turns away from the truth, which always honors the Builder, and substitutes therefor a false theory, which always dishonors the Builder, he proves himself to be a vessel unto dishonor. It was needful for such a man as Timothy to purge himself from such, also their "profane and vain babblings," that he should "be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." Commencing with the fifteenth verse of the second chapter of second Timothy, we find what gives rise to our text. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness: and their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." Then follows the text. Hymenæus and Philetus must then have been vessels of dishonor in this great house, as are all others who oppose the truth as taught in the inspired word. What the apostle had taught concerning the resurrection of the dead they were opposing. They taught that the resurrection had past already,

They must have been very insidious in their teachings, for Paul said their word will eat as doth a canker. I judge that they taught that when Jesus arose that was the last and final resurrection, hence the resurrection was past. But Paul taught that "if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." —1 Cor. xv. 16–20. If we would know what the apostle meant by "slept" in this last verse, we have but to turn back to the sixth verse of this same chapter. In speaking of those who saw the Savior after his resurrection he said: "After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep." If Jesus became "the firstfruits of them that slept," then it is sure that those who sleep must be raised up as he was. This was a very important point of the doctrine with the apostle, which if proven untrue would disprove all else for which he contended, or make it of no worth. Beginning with the twelfth verse of this same fifteenth chapter he says: "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is not Christ risen. And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not." When the enemies of Paul had arraigned him before Felix the governor, in his defence he said: "But this I confess unto thee, that after the manner which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets; and have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."—Acts xxiv. 14, 15. These enemies of Paul evidently did not believe his testimony concerning the resurrection of Christ, but allowed that there should be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. Paul taught this doctrine as one of comfort, and so said to his brethren, the Thessalonians: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Then further showing how that the Lord Jesus himself shall descend from heaven, and "the dead in Christ shall rise first," and how "we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord," says, "Wherefore comfort one another with these words."—1 Thess. iv. 13–18. The apostle does not teach that we shall be raised from the dead natural, or any more bear the image of the earthy, but on the contrary, "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. * * * Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall

be changed." When all this shall have taken place, "then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"—See 1 Cor. xv. 49–56. When Jesus arose from the dead and ascended up on high he had finished the work his Father gave him to do, which was the salvation of his people, the complete redemption of his bride from all sin and transgression, which includes their being quickened by divine life, the Holy Spirit, from their death in trespasses and sin, their calling out from the world and establishment as the church, their full and complete justification, resurrection and housing home in glory. Nothing has ever or can be added to or taken from his work. All that has or is now being or ever will be done is but the development of the eternal purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. All the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen to the glory of God by us. God is not slack concerning his promise as some men count slackness, but is able and faithful to do according to his promises. So all his children shall be quickened, called out and separated unto his love and service, his church established upon the rock of eternal ages, and though all earthly ties and relationships must be dissolved, and his saints go down in death, they shall be raised again incorruptible and finally housed home in glory with Jesus, their Redeemer and King. All this must be accomplished to fulfill the promise of God in Christ, and to make sure and certain in its application the finished work of redemption in the person of our blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

H. B. JONES.

WINNSBORO, Texas, April, 1913.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending this rich communication from a beloved, tried, yet highly blessed sister. I will copy a portion of a letter which accompanied it.

BESSIE DURAND.

BRANTFORD, Ontario.

MISS BESSIE DURAND—DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIEND:—No doubt you will remember asking me, when I was visiting with you, to write my experience. It has been on my mind more or less ever since. I tried to forget all about it, as I did not feel that I could write for publication, and if I did I might deceive the Lord's people, and I feel that would be a serious matter. I tried to ask the Lord to direct me. Several times when I have heard preaching something within me was saying, You have experienced that, you can write; and so it went on until at last I felt that I could resist no longer, so one evening when I was in the house alone on the 10th of December, I had to commence to write for relief, and I have been writing a little whenever opportunity offered. I know you will find it very imperfect, but I will send it for your careful examination, and do whatever you think best with it. May the Lord bless thee, and cause his face to shine upon thee, and give thee peace, is my sincere wish.

As the dear Lord may enable me, and bring to my remembrance, I will try to write a few things which I hope he has taught me by his divine grace.

When I was about thirteen years of age my sister, Mrs. Doyle, was living with an aunt about four miles distant from our home, and she used to walk to the chapel to hear Mr. Jull nearly every Sunday. I used to wonder what he said that would make her walk so far. So

one Sunday I thought I would listen, and in so doing I was made to feel that I was a sinner in God's sight. I cannot remember anything special that he said, as it seemed to come to me gradually. I thought how wicked I had been to sit there and talk, which I often had done with my little friends. I remembered one Sunday when he stopped during his discourse and said, "I do wish you little girls would stop talking." I also thought of many other things I knew I had done wrong, and felt how wicked I had been, and was afraid that if I should die God would send me to hell. When we were children mother taught us all to say a little prayer, but now this was not enough for me. I was obliged to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and, Lord, save, I perish. I knew God would be just to send me to everlasting woe, but O, would he? or would he have mercy on my soul? These were my anxious thoughts from time to time. Sometimes through the week I would feel very much troubled, and then on Sunday Mr. Jull would point out my case so fully in his sermon that I wondered how he knew what I felt; but as I had told no one, it would cause me to hope a little in God's mercy. One Sunday he took for his text: "Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope," and he pointed out those cases so clearly and beautifully that really I could say that I had a good hope through grace. At another time his text was: "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." He described that so sweetly that I could say with the poor man, "That whereas I was blind, now I see." "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." The hymns commencing, "'Tis a point I long to know," and, "Shew me some token, Lord, for good," were the language of my heart. It seemed to be my constant desire that it might be proven to me more fully if I were a child of God.

"Lord, decide the doubtful case,
Thou who art thy people's Sun;
Shine upon thy work of grace,
If it be indeed begun."

I remember in speaking once of God's dear people he pointed out the different characters and the way they were led, and I felt that I could not come in anywhere until he came to those that thought upon His name; and O, he did bring that in so sweetly that it made my heart rejoice. "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." How good it was to hear him on those words. It made me feel I had a good hope through grace. The dear Lord was pleased to bless me in this way at times, and at other times I would be sent empty away. I went on in this way for two years or more, then in God's providence I was moved away to Maidstone for three months. While there I heard the gospel preached, but it was not experimental. I then became troubled, thinking I could not be one of God's children, as I could see no evidence, and felt to say with the hymn:

"When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark, and vain, and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?"

I did not have such deep soul trouble as some, and this troubled me. But this passage gave me comfort at times: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I loved to be in their company. My sister, Bertha, and I had often walked quite a distance with them after leaving the chapel on purpose to hear them talk on the good things of the kingdom, for the things were so precious to us. I had a little Testament I used to carry in my

pocket, and when I thought no one saw me I would take it out and read, hoping that God would apply some word to my soul. One Sunday soon after my return from Maidstone Mr. Jull took for his text Hebrews xi. 16: "But now they desire a better country," &c. The words seemed good to me as he read them, for I knew that was my desire and chief concern. I felt he was preaching to me all the time. It seemed to establish, strengthen and settle me, and I felt I could say, My Lord and my God. I was happy, and from that time felt a great desire to be baptized, but O, was it the Lord's will? Would he permit one so unworthy to follow him through such a solemn ordinance? I sought earnestly for some proof. When mother would set me sewing in one room while she was working in the next I would take out my Testament and read, and in my heart was asking the Lord to bless some portion to my soul, if it were his will that I should be baptized, and as I read I came to these words: "For even hereunto were ye called: for Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." As soon as I read them, such great joy filled my whole being that I could have sung aloud, but I had not told mother any of these exercises. I felt this must be of the Lord, for I never could create such a feeling within me. Now I had a desire to tell some one, but who should I tell? My love grew stronger towards God's dear people, and the desire to follow him in the ordinances, and felt that I must tell it. On Sunday a dear man of God, a deacon in the church, was talking with me and asked me if I loved these things. I could not refrain from telling him my desire. I wanted to "tell to sinners round what a dear Savior I had found." I felt like singing all the time. I could say with Moses, I choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Mr. Ashdown was pleased when I told him, and he told Mr. Jull that he had a little visit with me, and that it was with fear and trembling that I talked with him. A church meeting was called to decide my case, but when I went before them I could say but few words. I was told to step out a few minutes, and I thought they would not accept me; how could they when I had nothing to say? When I was called in Mr. Jull told me I was accepted as a candidate for baptism. I was surprised, yet so glad. The dear Lord permitted this unworthy worm to follow him through that solemn ordinance April 24th, 1870. I was happy all the time, and felt I could suffer anything for Jesus' sake. They sang the hymn, "Jesus, and shall it ever be, a mortal man ashamed of thee?" I felt I could sing every word with my whole heart. I was sixteen years old at that time. In 1875 mother and her family came to Canada, and two years later I was married. I have had many trials and severe afflictions, both of body and mind. The first few years of our married life we were in very poor circumstances, and I would often wonder where the scene would end; but God did not forsake me. Such passages as these would often come to my mind: "The Lord will provide." "He knoweth them that are his," which comforted me and helped me to put my trust in him. Five children were born to us, but God saw fit to take two of them to himself, which was a great trial. But he did not leave me comfortless, he permitted me to have my dear mother with me. One of them was taken when a year old, and the other one four years

and five months. The evening after this little one was gone my mother was sitting in the room with me. She was very quiet, and appeared to be thinking. After awhile she asked me to get pencil and paper and write some verses which had come to her mind. They were about my two dear little ones. I was astonished, and yet it seemed so sweet, and made me feel that God must surely be with us. I think the verses were published in the SIGNS. After this when trials came I would wonder what it was all for, and at one time these words came with power and sweetness to my mind: All to make us sick of self and fond of Him. Then I felt I could bear it all.

In May, 1887, after we had buried our two children, the way was made for me to go to the Baptist meeting at Dunwich with mother and sister Bertha. It was such a blessing to me, as I had not been to a true gospel meeting since coming to Canada. Elder Biggs and Elder Wyman were there, and they preached beautifully. I enjoyed it very much, and it was so good to meet with the Lord's people again and to see how they loved each other and how loth they were to part.

In 1888 our youngest daughter was born, and while she was quite young I became very ill and had to keep my bed. My mind was very dark, and I could see no evidence of being a child of grace. I feared that what I thought I had experienced was all imagination. My distress of mind and body was very great, and I tried to ask the Lord if I were really his to appear for my relief, for I felt I was sinking beneath it all. At length he did appear, bless his holy name. The words came sweetly and distinctly to my mind, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. In a moment all my doubts and fears were gone, and I could see all the way the dear Lord had led me, and felt if I were able I could have written it all down. In about a year after this I was taken sick again, and was so low-spirited it seemed to me that my lot was more than I could bear. My sickness and trouble of mind were so distressing I could sleep but little. One night while feeling so cast down I fell asleep and dreamed I was standing at a door looking up, and saw the wall of a building, and a picture hung on it of God in the three persons, and a motto underneath with these words: "Rejoice in God." I awoke so doing, and could have sung aloud had I been alone, but I surely sang in my heart. Bless his dear name for his wonderful mercy unto me, and I so undeserving. I feel I never could have held on my way without these supports. Several times after this when troubles came I have been so tempted and tried I have wondered if there is a God, and if so, why does he permit all these things to be? O, if I could only feel that it were the Lord's will that I should walk this thorny way I could bear it patiently, and I would be willing to suffer for his sake; but I think he often sees fit to keep us in the dark for our own good and for his glory.

My mother was a great sufferer for many years from rheumatism, and the last few years she was in bed most of the time, and almost helpless. She bore it with wonderful patience. She was of a lovely and quiet disposition, and God gave her submission to his holy will most of the time. She would say to me, when speaking of her suffering, "It is all right, Emma; God has ordered that it should be this way." She loved to have us read hymns to her, and as she listened there was a happy expression on her face. As I was alone with her a little while the

last Christmas she was with us she said to me: "I shall not be here another Christmas." When asked if she would like Elder Durand to attend her funeral her face lighted up so quickly, and she said, "Yes, I would." Although very ill, we did not think the end was so near. Two days later she passed peacefully away to be forever with the Lord. My brother sent for Elder Durand, and we were so glad he could come, for he spoke in a very comforting manner on that sad occasion from Psalms xc. 16. (Her experience was published in the SIGNS in February, 1895.)

In August, 1907, Elder Lefferts came to Canada to preach. He spoke from the words about the poor man at the pool of Bethesda, and I felt he was preaching to me all the time. While he was speaking I felt I was being healed, that I could take up my bed and walk, that I could take up my cross and rejoice in the God of my salvation. For a long time after this I was happy, and could say I was glad I had been afflicted. Several times when I have been rejoicing, lines of poetry came to my mind that expressed just what I felt, and I believe they were given me of the Lord, as I am not gifted in that way at all. I could now see all the way the dear Lord had led me. I had never expressed to any one my suffering, so I did not tell them of my joy. But one day I was reading an article in the *Gospel Standard* headed, "The dying thief." The Lord had manifested himself to this poor man in a wonderful way, and he had never told any one. Then when he came to his dying bed it was a great trouble to him, saying he had robbed God of his glory, so called himself the dying thief. I thought of this a great deal, and as the Lord had proven himself so merciful, longsuffering to my unworthy self, I would also be robbing him of his glory if I did not tell any one. So I sent the verses that I felt had been given me to Elder Lefferts, and also to you, as I had written to you a few times before. As time went on I found the Canaanite still dwelt in the land, and I was prone to wander from the God I desired to love; I was made to see my sinfulness, and had to cry out, Can God dwell here? I feared I was deceived after all. I wondered if it was the condition of my health that had brought about the many changes that I had felt. That same week Elder Fenton came to Brantford. When I heard he was coming I felt I could not go, as I was too sinful to meet with those dear people, yet I could not stay away. His text was Zech. xiii. 1. I felt he was preaching to me all the time. He opened up this Scripture in a beautiful way, so that I was again enabled to rejoice in the God of my salvation.

Early in the year 1910 I had a great desire to visit in the States. I prayed if it were the Lord's will a way might be made for me. I had received kind invitations from my sister in Tarrytown and the late Mrs. Durand, but I could not see the way. But now my desire was so strong that I asked the Lord to make a way, and felt in my heart that he would. I had not told any one my wish. In the spring I was ill again, and very poorly for some weeks, and once when I went to see my physician he said, "You have some friends in the States, have you not?" When I told him I had he said, "I would like to have you go there; it would do you more good than any medicine I could give you, and stay away not less than two months." He told my husband the same, and he said I was to go. My children were delighted, think-

ing the change would benefit me. I left home on the 11th of June, and visited my sister, Mrs. Blake. She and her family did everything for my comfort; but after awhile my mind grew dark again. One Sunday near the end of June my sister took me to New York to hear Elder McConnell preach. We were late getting there, and when we went in the first words I heard were: "I will bring the third part through the fire." O how good that did sound to me, and he went on to show how many ways the Lord tried his people, and how many doubts and fears they had as to whether their religion was genuine, and he spoke of the love that binds them together, so different from any other love. His discourse was most beautiful to me, and a love went out from my heart to them all, and I said within myself, They all speak the same language. Early in the month of July I went to Warwick to visit at Elder Lefferts', where sister Bertha was staying. Sometimes in the evening Elder Lefferts was led to talk on spiritual things. The first time, he spoke from the words, "And made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." While talking he seemed to enter into and bring to remembrance the sweetness I felt when the dear Lord was pleased to set me at liberty under the sermon Mr. Jull preached from the words, "But now they desire a better country," &c. At another time he seemed to enter into what I had experienced, and I thought, How wonderful that he should be led to speak in that way when I had told him nothing about it. When I went to meeting on Sunday I could enjoy what I heard, and did not feel a pain while I was there. Those lines that were given me often came to my mind with much sweetness, and did all the time I was in the States: "I'll be thy Shepherd, Husband, Friend, and thy Physician, too." I felt Jesus was my Physician every time I was blessed with the privilege of hearing the things of the Lord's kingdom spoken of. I felt, O how good this Physician is to me, and I not worthy of the least of his mercies. All the dear friends that I met were so kind that sometimes I would be quite overcome. One night in bed I was thinking of all the kindness I was receiving from God's people, and these words came with sweetness to my mind: O bless the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men. Then I thought again, How wonderful that Elder Lefferts was led to speak of the things I had experienced, and the words came, Leading you into all truth. O, I thought, it surely must be all of the Lord; it must be God that has brought me here, and these words came so sweetly: It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good. My very soul was filled with praise to his holy name. Then it occurred to me that this must be the fulfillment of my dream: heaven in two parts, the church being the first part. This is the church, and I was brought here without any effort of my own, nothing but a strong desire to come; I was helpless in the matter; the orders were given and it was done.

While at Elder Lefferts Mrs. Durand sent a kind invitation for sister and me to visit them. Accordingly we went, and they all received us very kindly. They did not seem like strangers to me at all, and I felt certain I was with the Lord's people. I felt nearly all the time, How good the Lord is to me, to make a way for me to be with and enjoy the company of his dear flock. I had some very sweet times while in that pleasant home, and also with some of the dear ones I was

favored to visit. I enjoyed very much hearing Elder Durand preach the first Sunday morning I was there. He spoke beautifully, and his words were so comforting. It was sweet to me to notice the true love and fellowship that prevailed among them. How good and how pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity. I felt as I did at Elder McConnell's meeting: They all speak the same language, the language of Zion, love flowing from heart to heart. "How sweet, how heavenly is the place with Christ within the doors." While at Elder Lefferts he proposed that sister Bertha and I attend with him a five days meeting in Virginia. "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord," for such it proved to be. Both Elder Fenton and Lefferts were there. My sister and I felt that we had a feast of fat things. I saw the same love prevailing there as in the other churches. I was indeed in "another country," and it seemed so to me in a twofold sense. These words flowed through my mind: "If such the sweetness of the streams, what must the fountain be?" And, "'Tis a heaven below, the Redeemer to know." A lady came before the church and was received for baptism, the first I had witnessed in the Old School Baptist faith. I also saw Elder Durand baptize a lady at Southampton on our return, a sweet and solemn scene to behold. I also was favored with a very pleasant visit with Elder and Mrs. Coulter and Elder and Mrs. Ker at their homes. Thus the Lord bestowed upon me some of the choicest blessings, praise be to his holy name.

I still have doubts and fears on account of my sinful heart, but some way since I had those verses given me, and a way made for me to visit the true church, I cannot lose sight of them; they seem to stand out as a landmark in my path, and I cannot help thinking the Lord put them there. O may he ever help me to trust him where I cannot trace him, making me submissive to all his holy will concerning me, for without him I can do nothing, and his name shall have the praise.

Unworthily, EMMA SMITH.

SULLIVAN, Ark., April 10, 1913.

BELOVED BROTHER CHICK:—Again this morning I find my mind taken up in talking with you. I can think of no better way than to write to you, for I find no one here to talk to of the wonderful and glorious works of God, therefore I am forced to write to a few of my people in far distant places. I do not wish to crowd out better matter, nor am I writing to have my name placed in the beloved paper, the SIGNS, but I know of no other way to communicate with my kindred, and I hope the cause is the love of God. This love is manifested to the children of God here in time, though it was in the beginning with God.

I have been meditating upon the deliverance of the children of Israel when they were led by the hand of Moses to the Red Sea. The enemy was at their back, and the sea was before them, so that they could not go either way. If they turned back the enemy would swallow them up, and if they ventured into the sea the waters would destroy them. What could they do? What a terrible position they were in. Then we hear Moses say, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." This command was with power, and they stood still. Then Moses with the rod smote the waters, and, behold, the waters divided and they crossed on dry ground, and their

enemies were destroyed. This is a beautiful type of the way in which the dear children of God are led even in this age of the world. When we go just as far as we can in our works, and come to the end of all things, we are made by the mighty hand of God to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. As long as we are working for salvation we cannot see the salvation of the Lord. We must stand still to see his salvation. Then is revealed the work of deliverance from our dead works, and our heart is made to cry out, "Salvation is of the Lord." Dear brethren, the enemy is always at our back, and the blessed Savior is at the front, to lead and guide us, and to hold us up by the right hand of his power, for his own arm brings salvation, and he is the only deliverance of his people, and he is their Priest, their Savior and the fountain of life, the spring of all their joys, and when he delivers us he always gives us a song to sing, and no other can sing that song; it is a song of praise to his blessed name, who saved and called us with that holy calling which is in Christ Jesus. You, dear brethren, can remember when you were delivered from that burden of sin and you sang a song that you could not sing before. He delivers us from all our trials. If it were not so we would soon sink in deep waters of woe. How can our hope be lost when he loves us?

There is another thing that is in my mind much of late, and if it is not asking too much of you, dear brother, I wish to see your views upon this Scripture: The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion, &c. I hope the reason I ask this is to know the truth as it is in Jesus. It seems plain to me that they could not return to a place where they had never been, and neither can we thirst for something of which we have not already tasted. There are some other Scriptures that I hope to see your views upon. "And greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." I cannot express all that I see in the wonderful works of God. I do much enjoy reading your editorials; you express what I see. I do not think you have ever written upon any subject but what I have seen it just as you expressed it, therefore I feel to write to you because we see so much alike in the beautiful things of God. Your views upon the doctrine of predestination are just as I see the matter, but I cannot explain it as I would like to do. So many seem to me to make foolish expressions upon that subject. Although I realize my many sins, and am made to weep and mourn on account of my wrongdoing and shortcomings, I feel assured that all was predestinated, yet the sin is mine. Some that I know, when they sin will claim it was predestinated, and it seems that they have no sorrow for their sins upon that ground. But, dear brother, I do not see this as they see it. I see it as it seems to me Joseph's brethren did. They were very sorrowful for their sin, which yet had been but the fulfilling of the purpose of God. I do sin and come short of the glory of God, and grieve because of it. Dear brother, your mild and loving way of speaking encouragingly to the little flock gives me great confidence that you are a servant set apart for that purpose, to feed the flock of the Father's pasture. Also with you, I want to name brother Ker, and many other dear ones who write through the columns of the SIGNS. It all is edifying to the saints. Many times when I read their dear letters I feel as though I want to see them, and grasp their hands. I think of dear

brother Beebe, now sleeping, and I rejoice in reading from his pen, and many times am made to say in my heart, While he is dead, he yet is speaking, and still lives in the hearts of his dear brethren, who have the witness within to testify to the truth as it is in Jesus. I believe, dear ones, that when your bodies lie low in the dust your works will follow you, as was written of some of old.

But I am not writing as I set out to do. We are many miles apart, but I have you in my heart, and ask that you each and every one will pray for me. There is no church near of my faith, and it truly seems I am away from home among strangers to the cause of Christ. It almost breaks my heart when the time for meeting comes, and I can almost see the dear ones and hear their songs, and when I try to sing my poor heart overflows, so that I cannot sing, yet I believe that I have found his promises sweet, and he comforts me in many ways, even in the lonely places. Let me say to all, Prize the privilege of gathering together, and forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is. Remember there are some who have not this blessed privilege. I receive letters from different ones, and this is a great pleasure to me. I have received letters from brother Benson, of Delaware, and from brother Jones and others, which have done me much good. Some I have never seen in this life, yet they all tell the same story of Jesus, and bring good news to the hungry soul. Dear ones, I send this as a token of love, and to express my desire to know the truth. I am unlearned and very weak in spirit, but my desire is to follow in the footsteps of my blessed Jesus. I desire to be like him. Here we know in part and see in part, but there we shall see him as he is, and be like him. It is the Father's good will to give us the kingdom. May the Lord still give you of his Spirit to feed the little ones in the future as in the past. Remember it is written, If we give a cup of cold water to a disciple in the name of a disciple we shall receive a disciple's reward. Please correct all mistakes.

From your sister,

ELLA DAVIS.

TOUCHET, Wash., April 20, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER:—The last number of the SIGNS is at hand, and I have been reading the many good letters from the brethren. Your editorial in response to sister Wellman was so rich, and full of the good things of the kingdom, that I feel a desire to join with you in your joy in these blessed promises which were so clearly brought out by you as you wrote upon the subject. My mind is called to the record of John upon the same subject. (1 John i. 3.) It seems to me that John here enters into the secret chambers of the heart and mind with the same message which your editorial bore, and we are not left to guess why John bore such a message. There is an idea in the minds of many people that if the message of the gospel does not awaken the dead sinner to life there can be no use in any one so frequently declaring the gospel. Now if they could be blest with the spirit of understanding, and read this message of John, I believe that every one who has been called by grace could respond to what John has said. I will quote the message, third verse: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." John's purpose in declaring the

gospel was that those to whom he wrote might have fellowship with him, and then he assures them that his fellowship is with the Father and the Son, and to have fellowship with John is to be one with him, and in union with him to have fellowship with the Father and the Son. Fellowship and love are one, or are so closely connected that they cannot be separated. Paul, speaking of this fellowship, said, I am persuaded that nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God. God is love, and he that loveth is begotten of God. John tells us that this fellowship is wrought in us by the love of God shed abroad in the heart, and the result is that we love him and all those who are one with him. Our God makes this love manifest to us in his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. For "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." One said, "Behold," when he saw God tabernacling in the flesh. Paul said, "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh," and John records the words of Jesus himself that he was in the beginning with God, and that he was God. To Philip the Savior said, Hast thou been so long time with me, Philip, and hast not known me? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. I and my Father are one. Through these wonderful declarations of the Scripture we see the glory of this fellowship revealed. Jesus said, I in you, and you in me, and I in the Father. Thus we are new creatures in Christ Jesus, and all things are ours, and we are Christ's, and Christ is God's. No wonder that John said, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." John said, That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you. These two things belong to the senses of men. We see the lightning and we hear the thunder, we know these things because we have seen the one and heard the other. In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established, and John also here brings in a third witness. We have not only seen and heard, but we have also handled of the word of life. Thus we can now bear testimony of this life, and this is to the end that you may have fellowship with us, and that you may love us in Christ, for this is the evidence that we are passed from death unto life. One of old, beholding the beauty of this fellowship, said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" that is, in oneness, or fellowship. Now that we may mutually enjoy this goodness, we tell one another of this Word of life which we have seen, and this life is declared to be the light of men. It is this light which shows us the great depth of our corruption by sin, and it is this light which shows us the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It is this light which enables us to behold Zion a peaceful habitation, and we also by this light hear the voice of God, even under the cloud, when despondent and perplexed with the vexations of this life, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." All this we see and hear and declare, to the end that ye may have fellowship with us, and this which our eyes have seen and our ears have heard and our hands have handled of the word of life assures us that our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. John further declares that if we walk in the light we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. O how true all this seemed while reading

the sweet communications and your editorial in the last SIGNS. How my heart did run out in love and sweet fellowship to you all, who are strangers to me in the flesh. I have never seen any of you, nor seen your walk with the natural eye, but as I read my soul said, Behold, how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of great joy. Behold, what manner of love is this that reaches out to the ends of the earth, and embraces Zion, the city of our solemnities, in our affections, and joins in the heavenly song, joying and glorying in Jesus, our great Shepherd and our great sheepfold.

I must now stop, lest I weary you. But I hope you will pardon me for this intrusion. Whenever a new number of the SIGNS comes, and I begin to read it, I want to write to every correspondent and tell them what great comfort it is to me to read their articles. May God bless you both as editors in your labors, with the publishers and correspondents, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Yours in a glorious hope of life and immortality beyond this vale of tears,

J. T. BARNES.

LOGAN, Ohio, March 5, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have had the sweet privilege of reading your paper the past year, and have often wished that I were so situated that I could give you a word of encouragement. You surely have remained steadfast in that faith which is founded upon the Rock, which was rejected by the builders. Paul, in writing to the church at Rome, says, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." The way some people regard sound Baptist doctrine reminds me of children taking vermifuge. Any one who has ever smelled it knows that it is not pleasant to the taste, so something must be added to make it more pleasant to the taste. But this will nearly always destroy much, at least, of its effectiveness. So with sound doctrine; some will accept it very well if you allow them to add something by which to serve their own lusts, but it is a little too strong for them to take it as the Bible teaches it, but add a little conditional time salvation and limited predestination and to them it is then all right. But our God says, I have declared "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." If there is any limitation to this I fail to see it. He said also, I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more. Again he said, They that are whole need not a physician. I dislike much to see division among brethren. How delightful it would be if all could see eye to eye; but when ministers go so far as to say that they would as soon fellowship Methodists or Arminians as those who believe in the predestination of all things, it seems to me to be time to mark them, as Paul has directed, and perhaps avoid them. They are certainly endeavoring to cause divisions. I heartily indorse what brother J. M. Fenton said in the SIGNS of Feb. 1st, with regard to our views upon points of doctrine. They must be gained by a personal experience of them by those who have felt the need of them. Those who feel the need of salvation by grace

will hardly give over to the self-works plan. Paul in writing to the Hebrews said, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again what be the first principles of the oracles of God." If they had been clear there would have been no need of this second teaching; there would have been no need to feed them with milk any longer. But Paul further said, "Meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." I heard a person once say that good and evil, as used here, referred to our walk in life. But if you will read on you will find that it refers to sound and unsound doctrine, and the expression, "Those who by reason of use," refers to those who had a personal experience of these questions in their hearts. This may seem like a rude form of expression, but look, for example, at Peter's denial of his Lord. I feel from my own experience that I have often done the same thing, and under far less strenuous circumstances. To my mind predestination and election go hand in hand, and no Arminian will accept either. If all things were not predestinated, then some things must have been left to chance, and all chance work is Arminian in its nature. They teach that every one has a chance to be saved if he will only avail himself of it, and I think that all people in a state of nature believe this doctrine of chance, but with God all is certain, as he has decreed before the foundation of the world. I was once a believer in the doctrine of chance, and thought I could reform myself and please God at any time I saw fit; in fact, I thought I would not have many things to repent of, but when God showed me my condition as he saw me I was ten thousand talents in debt and had nothing to pay, and I was made to realize that if I were saved at all it must be through the sovereign grace of God and the mercy of Christ, and O what joy was mine when he first spoke peace to my soul. I thought that I never should suffer again, but several years have passed away since I received this hope and I still have to implore his mercy and forgiveness, for the old man, self, is constantly pushing up, and he causes me many heartaches. God alone knows all our weakness, and what a blessed privilege to be able to turn to him for comfort in all our afflictions, and to be made to realize that without him we can do nothing good, no, not even have one good thought. Some say that these questions should be avoided, but Paul says that we are to declare the whole counsel of God, and this cannot be done without giving God all the power and glory, and this cannot be done without declaring the predestination of all things. For my part I am glad to have a complete Savior who can save to the uttermost. Let his presence be withdrawn for a moment and we are at once given over to Satan's wiles. But let us remember that our blessed Savior has bruised the serpent's head. Let us also remember that he is the Door into the sheepfold, and that it is by him we go in and out and find pasture; he alone can speak peace to our souls. It was prophesied of old that perilous times should come, and false teachers should creep in unawares, but let us always contend for the doctrine once delivered unto the saints. May God strengthen and help you fight the battle for the truth in the future as you have so well done in the past, is the prayer of one who feels to be one of the least of all the brethren.

Now if anything has here been said amiss, please cast over it the mantle of charity.

Your brother, D. W. FUNK.

LAMONTE, Mo., April 28, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending you the letter of this dear young sister for your disposal. I have not her direct consent to send it for publication, but feel sure that it will be satisfactory to her. It will speak for itself. Could I write as I would, I would like to say something relative to the SIGNS as a standard paper among us. I think it is ably edited, and is as nearly a faithful standard of what has always been advocated as Old School Baptist faith and doctrine as can be found anywhere. This is the doctrine of the Bible, and it has always been advocated by the dear church of God. The SIGNS has been a constant companion of our fireside almost from my earliest recollection, and we have many early volumes of it filed away, and by comparing it as then edited and as edited now we find no change in it. It has always been, as it is now, firm upon the great principles of the doctrine of the Bible, yet at no time abusive toward others in defence of the doctrine. It has denied from time to time either advocating or believing that God is so connected with sin as to be the author of it, or in any way the cause of sin, and it has been stated from time to time by the editors that they could have no fellowship with the individual who would say that he had sinned because God had made him sin.

But I just wanted to express my love for the SIGNS and the excellent way in which it is edited. May grace still sustain the editors and the many able correspondents in this glorious work.

In hope of eternal life,

J. A. TEAGUE.

HARRISONVILLE, Mo., April 20, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER TEAGUE AND WIFE:—I have been wanting to write you since the meeting, but I am so unworthy, still the impression has been so strong to write that I will try this evening, and do the best I can. I have asked myself several times this week when I thought about writing, Why is it that I want to write, when I have nothing worth writing? I love much to read your letters, they are comforting to me. You spoke of my letter to you being good and comforting. I am glad you found comfort in it, if there was any, but it caused me to shed tears, for I could not think of one word I wrote that would be comforting to any one.

I have subscribed for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and have received four numbers, and find it a good paper, and the contents are sweet and comforting to me, and mamma also. The last number is laden with beautiful reading, especially the article on Exodus xii. 1, 2: "And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you." At first when I read this Scripture I could not comprehend the full meaning of it, but when I read the article the meaning came to me plainly, and I was made to think back to the time when I first received a hope, that that month was the beginning of months to me, and the first month of the year to me, and a sweet month it was. Brother Teague, the above is the way the understanding came to me while reading it,

and I received much comfort from it.

We had a good meeting last Saturday and Sunday; very many did not get out, because the roads were so bad. Sister Dobson did not come either day, as one of her daughters-in-law was very sick, not expected to live, and since then she has passed beyond this life. Mamma was not able to go again, on account of rheumatism. Papa and I went both days, and stayed for evening meeting Saturday. Brother Hall preached three good sermons. He said he would try and make arrangements so that he could be here at the May meeting. I hope it will be good weather, so mamma can go. I want to go to Kansas City this week and be at the regular meeting Sunday in the city. I intend to visit with brother Ogle if I go. I would be glad if he could come to the May meeting, and I hope that dear brother Fisher can be there.

Brother Teague, it will be a year this next meeting since I came to the church, and I have received many blessings, but have had times of gloom and sorrow. I have never regretted the step I took, although I do not feel fit to be among such good people, but I would not give up what little hope I have for anything, if I have any. Sometimes I get so low that I think there is nothing in all this anyway, and why do I grieve? But soon I feel the love creeping into my heart again for the dear people of God, for I love them with all my heart, and soon I am singing praises unto him, and O, if I could just stay happy like that all the time I would never grieve; but we are not promised these happy seasons all the time. It is well that we do not have them all the time, for we would not know how to appreciate them so well. After we have a long, dark season, and almost give up in despair, then when the bright side comes with its blessings how our hearts do go out in appreciation to Him who is the maker of all things, from the smallest insect to the largest things of this wide world. Sometimes I look on a little insect with comfort, and think the Lord has power over its life the same as over you or me. How sweet it is to believe this, and it gives me much comfort. When anything terrible happens I am made to know it has taken place for some purpose, and was fixed to come to pass.

Well, brother Teague, I have written along here, and every word is as unworthy as I am, for they came from my own unworthy heart. This is at your disposal when you read it, burn it if you wish. I hope to see you at the meeting, and well I would love to see you all. I closed my school Friday, and had a dinner in the schoolyard. I think I shall go to the Normal again this summer. Love to one and all, and may the grace of God be with you all.

I remain your unworthy sister in hope of eternal life,

MABEL URQUHART.

LIBERTY, Ind., May 11, 1913.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—I have just read with interest and comfort your article in the SIGNS on the one hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm. How sweet it is to fall in company, as we are traveling a lonely road, with one who can enter into our feelings and experiences. For a little while, at least, we can have a companion in joy or tribulation, as it may be, yet how often it is that the one thus comforting us vanishes from us (carried away by the Spirit into other experiences) and we see them no more for a time. I have been for months traveling, apparently, alone in a dark way, with no certain knowledge as to

where the road will lead me, or my business there, and have had many doubts, fears and mischievous thoughts while in this way. Many temptations are in the way, and I sometimes find myself on the brink of infidelity; my soul has been much "disquieted within me," and I would say, If the Lord be with me why does he not reveal himself to me? Or if he be truly God, why does he not remember Zion for his own name's sake? I have had some comfort in the language of the poor man who sought the healing of his son, (Mark ix. 24,) who "said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." His son had suffered from childhood, medical skill had failed, the disciples to whom he had appealed had failed; it looked like a hopeless case, and the poor man had nothing to base a hope on but his faith in Christ, and this faith was so obscured by doubts that he confessed it with a reserve and a prayer that the Lord would help his unbelief. Thus all things seem against me, yet deeper, higher and broader than all else is that abiding faith that God is able and will in his own time and way help me. The flesh of itself cannot have faith, neither can it destroy that faith that exists in the new man. Peter in the flesh denied Christ, but in spirit he said, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." I take comfort in such texts, because they remind me that in myself there is manifest these two contradictory principles: belief and unbelief. It is the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that I cannot do the things that I would.

I often reflect with pleasure on my visit to the eastern associations. Your meetings this year will soon be at hand, and I trust they will be in peace.

Remember me to sister Bessie and Mildred, whom I have learned to love in the Lord. Wife and I have not been very well the past winter and spring. We would be pleased to have a letter from you.

Your brother, I hope,

W. N. THARP.

JOHN III. 16.

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Jesus spoke these words to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. The Jews looked for their King, who should come and reign in righteousness, and Nicodemus was exercised in mind, looking for its consummation. Jesus spake as never man spake, and declared the things that were of God. The apostle John said, "God is love." We see the love of God manifested in his mercy toward us and in sending rain and snow upon the earth, that it may bring forth and bud and give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, and feed every living creature that God made. God's love is shown in his wise provision for all his creation upon the earth and in the world, but Jesus spoke to Nicodemus of a love of God that reached beyond these earthly blessings. God's love was to the world in his elect people, and they were by nature of the earth earthy, and of the world in Adam, and God so loved the world, that is, he loved them and all the world in them that goes to make up their earthly existence. Jesus would have Nicodemus to know that God did not confine his love to his elect as spiritual, but as of the earth. We might readily see how God would love that which was holy, spiritual, and not under condemnation, but the love of God extends beyond and embraces all that is of the world in his peo-

ple. In this we see the eternal, everlasting love of God displayed. As the poet says:

"E'en down to old age all my people shall prove
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love."

God's love was eternal and everlasting toward his people even before their creation in Adam, and Jesus declared this to Nicodemus. The love of God is manifested in the gift of his only begotten Son for the sins of his people. We who have an only son can measure in a faint way what this gift is. God's love is beyond depth, height, length or breadth, and yet it pleased the Father to bruise him and put him to grief. He was crucified by wicked hands, an acceptable sacrifice unto God. No other offering would answer or cleanse from sin. So we see the love of God to the world in the gift of his Son. "That whosoever believeth in him;" not whoever will believe in him, for it is not conditional, that we may or may not believe in him. Belief, spiritually, is wrought in God's people, for we believe according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead. One is not a believer in the Lord until he is raised from the dead. The evidence that Jesus is come is that the dead are raised up, &c. "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." When one is risen with Christ that one believes in the resurrection of the dead, and of the body, and agrees with Paul, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. Jesus said to the apostles, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." His word was spirit and life, and the apostles believed by virtue of his word in them, for it is the voice of the Son of God that the dead hear and live; his voice is the power whereby they believe. Jesus said of these that they should not perish. They who have come to believe in Jesus can testify that they have not perished; the storms have been very tempestuous and the waves have been high, but they still live, because Jesus lives. Jesus was the salvation of the apostles when they were upon the waves, and came with the comforting words, "It is I; be not afraid." So every one can testify to a deliverance from death, hell and the grave by his mighty power and love.

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., June 7, 1913.

FLORENCE STATION, Ky., Jan. 30, 1885.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am going to try in my weakness to give a short sketch of my travel, as I hope, from nature to grace.

It was in the year 1857 I felt myself a wicked sinner in the sight of God, and became seriously interested in my lost and ruined condition, in which I beheld myself. My thought was, If it were in my power to get religion, I would do all in my power. So I went to church regularly and sought to get relief there, but the more I went, the worse was my condition. I went on thus, trying to pray, and daily sinking, as it seemed to me, until I concluded I had sinned away my day of grace, and there was no grace for one so wicked as I felt myself to be. My wife, my little children, nor any other person on earth, was any comfort to me; I wanted to be alone, for I thought surely there was no one like me. Finally I gave up, knowing in my mind I was lost and ruined, and felt it was just. I should spend my days a mourner, and I tried to reconcile myself that my condemnation was just. I wandered in this darkness until the year 1859, when in an unexpected way, and unexpected time, I trust,

my sin and condemnation were removed. I was driving a team by myself, with my head cast down, feeling I had no comforter on earth or in heaven, and all in an instant I heard, or seemed to hear, a voice saying, When I am with you why are you lonely? This tongue of clay has never found words to adequately express my feelings at that moment; for when I looked toward the heavens the sky was illuminated with a brightness I never have beheld since, and all things, even the trees and birds, seemed to be praising God on high, and I was so light I felt I could almost fly. I stopped my team and thought I could freely kiss the mother earth in thanks for the goodness of my Redeemer. My burden was gone, and I thought my troubles were ended, but alas, it was not many moments before the thought came, Perhaps you are deceived. While I was so happy I wanted to see old brother Darnell, or some one to talk with, but when these doubts came to me I would think I would not tell any one. When I got home I doubted it so much that I would not tell my companion, but I was very anxious to hear preaching, and thought I knew I loved the brethren, but did not want them to know it. I went to preaching very often, thinking I would talk to the church, but I could not think I was worthy, or that they would have me as one of their number. It was thus until the year 1874, when I went to meeting the fourth Sunday in September (as I was deprived of the opportunity on Saturday) with no thought of offering myself to the church, when as if by magic power it came into my mind so forcibly I could hardly wait for them to proclaim the door of the church open. I was received, and baptized by Elder T. F. Harrison, where I have tried to serve as one of God's little ones; for it seems to me if one I surely must be the least of all, and I often wonder how the brethren have borne with my unworthiness.

Now I have told what I hope the Lord has done for me, and will close.

I remain your brother in love,

SAMUEL CROSS.

(See obituary on page 413.)

CHICAGO, Ill., Jan. 20, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am on my way to the far west, and would like you to publish in the SIGNS my new address, so the brethren can write to me, and should there be any brethren of the Predestinarian Old School Baptist denomination in my locality I would like to hear from them, as well as from my old and dear brethren from Ohio and Indiana. During the last three weeks of my stay here I have had the pleasure of visiting three yearly meetings in Ohio: the old Cæsar's Creek Church, in Greene Co., Ohio, in company with Elder Jackson, of Galion, and had a very pleasant meeting indeed. From there we went to the Pleasant Hill Church, near Delaware, Ohio, which church I have served for fourteen years as pastor. From there we went to the Providence Church, in Darke County, where I met Elder N. Peters and several members of other churches. The Beulah Church, of Cleveland, I visited seme time ago, and had the pleasure of the company of brother Cross and sister Barker to my home church and bade them all good-by. Little did I realize (when I first contemplated my move to Idaho) the love and fellowship which existed between us here until the last meeting came. Good-by was said with many tears, but believing that our God rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and that all things work to-

gether for good to them that love God, and feeling there is something for me beyond the Rockies, I feel to say, Lord, lead on; guide us in the strait and narrow way; keep us humble, and at thy feet; make our duty plain before us, that we may finish our course with joy.

I ask you all when in your devotion to think of me, and pray that I may be kept faithful. Now, brethren, write to me, and address my mail to George L. Weaver, Filer, Idaho.

Yours in hope of a blessed resurrection, when we shall see Him as he is,

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

HERNDON, Va., May 20, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I want you to allow me to say a few words to you in regard to the letter of mine published in the SIGNS of May 15th, 1913. I felt somewhat mortified after I had mailed it to you, for I felt that I had left out many things I had desired to speak of in the letter, and for that reason I felt mortified. All the "blessed" that Christ spake of in his sermon on the mount are so securely linked together that one cannot well speak from one verse without bringing in some of the following verses which state they are blessed. Jesus spoke of the poor in spirit; they are the same ones that hunger and thirst after righteousness. If one is financially poor and destitute on this earth he longs for something to satisfy his hunger and thirst, and it is in like manner we are made to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and Jesus said all such shall be filled. Where then shall we look for this righteousness to satisfy our hunger and thirst? We cannot look for it in the world, neither can we look for it in ourselves, but must look to Jesus, who is our righteousness, and when he appears we are filled. One of old said, "In thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." I feel this way when I attempt to write a letter, and am sure of getting into deep water, and unless the Lord holds me up I am sure to sink. I felt that way when I wrote my last letter to the dear editors of the SIGNS; I felt that I was sinking fast, and had to cut my letter short.

I am about well of my cold, but still afflicted with throat trouble.

Please excuse me for calling your attention to the things I have written about, and believe me to be your well-wisher and a lover of the SIGNS, and I beg to thank you, brother Ker, for your sympathy in my affliction.

Your brother, I hope, in Christ,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

[IT is not an unusual thing for those who write or speak of the wonders of grace to feel that the best things are left unsaid, but it does not always so appear to those who read or hear. We are sure that no one noticed any shortage in brother Oliver's letter, to which he refers. We enjoy his letters, and wish he would write oftener.—K.]

SHARPSBURG, Ky., March 26, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—You will find inclosed check for our dear family paper, which we have been taking about fifty years. Although it has been changed in form, we feel there has been no change in doctrine. It comes laden with such able articles from dear brethren from all parts of the land; we feel of late how good they are, and hope they may still write on, for their writings are comforting to the poor of the flock; and may the editors also continue their labors to our comfort, for, like many others, we hardly ever hear the doctrine preached. We

are many miles from any Old School Baptist Church.

I only intended to send my subscription, it being past due.

Your brother,

T. J. RATLIFF.

CARD OF THANKS.

I WAS born on the fourteenth day of May, 1842, in Fauquier County, Virginia, consequently May 14th, 1913, was the seventy-first anniversary of my birthday, which was kindly remembered by a large number of my friends with letters, cards and other tokens of remembrance and expressions of good will, and I take this method of conveying to them, one and all, my heartfelt thanks, and to express my appreciation of the kindness and love expressed in their letters and cards, of which there were seventy-one, just the number of my years. There was also inclosed in the letters tokens to the amount of fifty-seven dollars in money. I feel to say, Truly the Lord is good in raising up to poor unworthy me so many kind and loving friends, for which I know I can never thank and praise him sufficiently.

Your loving brother and sincere friend,

A. B. FRANCIS.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The churches composing the Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the New Vernon Church, New Vernon, N. Y., June 4th, 5th and 6th, 1913, to the churches and associations with which we correspond send greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Once more have we been blessed of the Lord in being gathered together in associational capacity, and the session just concluding has been harmonious and profitable in every sense. Your messengers have communicated good things, and the gospel of the grace of God has been the theme of all the preaching, and has comforted our hearts in the assurance of hope in the mercy of God. Our churches are dwelling in peace, and mutual interest in each other's welfare is so keen that we have the assurance of having all things in common and being of one mind concerning the order of God's house. We regret the absence of some of your ministers and messengers, and hope that our next meeting, appointed to be held with the Middletown and Wallkill Church, in Middletown, N. Y., next year, at the usual time, will be more largely attended.

Assuring you of our unabating love and fellowship, and desiring your prosperity and peace and the continuance of your correspondence, we are, in faith and hope, yours in the Lord.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

NO MORE LARGE HYMN BOOKS.

WE are very sorry to announce that the supply of our large Hymn Books is exhausted, and we will not be able to fill any more orders for same, but can furnish any number or binding of the small Hymn Books.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1913.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 PETER III. 19.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK :—If it be the Lord's will, I would like for you to give through the SIGNS your views upon the Scripture in 1 Peter iii. 19: "By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison."

Your sister in Christ,

(MRS.) R. G. AKERS.

WILLIAMSON, W. Va., March 8, 1913.

We hope that our sister will excuse our delay in responding to her request, as the delay has not been because of indifference to the request, but has arisen from other causes.

For a long time our mind has been settled as regards some things connected with the text suggested, and these thoughts we feel willing to present as clearly as we can.

First, we will say that there is here no reference to the Romish doctrine of purgatory, nor any proof of the theory that our blessed Lord, after his crucifixion and before his resurrection, while his body lay in the tomb and he himself was in paradise, went to those then dead and preached to them his gospel, thus giving to them, as it is asserted by this same Romish church, another chance to believe, repent and be saved. If indeed our Savior did thus go and preach to the dead whose spirits were in an intermediate state between hell and heaven, that preaching could not be thought to be limited to those who lived at the time of the flood and were drowned in its waters, as the text asserts, but must have been to all men, of all ages, from the creation down to the time when Jesus died upon the cross. But the connection of the text expressly declares that this preaching was to those who were disobedient before the time of the flood, during the one hundred and twenty years in which Noah was preparing the ark. Nothing is intimated regarding those generations which lived previous to this time of one hundred and twenty years, nor concerning the many generations between the flood and the death of the blessed Master. The truth is that the language of the text has no reference to anything that Jesus did after his crucifixion and before his resurrection from the dead. We know that his body was laid in Joseph's new tomb, and that it arose from the dead and came forth out of the tomb the third day, and we know that while his body lay in the tomb he was in paradise, as he declared to the dying thief should be the case with both of them. Paradise is not an intermediate state between this world and either hell or heaven ; on the contrary, the testimony of Paul in 2 Corinthians, twelfth chapter, is that paradise and the third heaven are one and the same place or state. Surely we may dismiss this theory of the Romish church without further comment.

The expression in the text, "spirits in prison," is not a solitary one in the Scriptures. Reference to other places in the word in which similar language is used will, we think, throw light upon it. In Isaiah xlii. 7, we read, "To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness

out of the prison house." As will be seen by carefully considering the connection here, the reference is also to the Savior and to his work of redemption from sin and death, which constitute a veritable prison house, and are felt to be so by all who have been redeemed. So also in Isaiah xlix. 9, it is said concerning this same work of redemption, "That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves." In Isaiah lxi. 1, it is written, as being embraced in the preaching of the Savior, that he should declare the opening of the prison to them that are bound. In Zechariah ix. 11, it is written, "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water." We have referred to these portions of the word to show that, sometimes at least, the word "prison" and the word "prisoners" are used figuratively, to set forth the condition of the Lord's chosen people, either in affliction or in the bondage of sin and condemnation. From these Scriptures it appears to us that we shall not be doing violence to the text in 1 Peter if we understand it in the same way; that is, it is a figurative presentation of the condition of those to whom Noah preached righteousness in the days when he was preparing the ark, wherein eight souls were saved by water. The language of the text has no reference to any such thing as a work of preaching, accomplished by the dear Redeemer while his body lay in the tomb, but to that preaching which through his Spirit was proclaimed by Noah in the days before the flood.

The language immediately preceding this nineteenth verse seems to bear out this view of the subject: "Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." It ought to be noticed that the preposition "by" may also be translated "in," and so would read, Quickened in the Spirit. This Spirit evidently is the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, which shall also quicken our mortal bodies, as his body was quickened. By the Holy Spirit working in his disciples all through the gospel time Jesus has been preaching his own gospel, so also by the same Spirit he preached to the antediluvians by the words of Noah, and in all the prophets afterward until his coming the Spirit wrought, testifying of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. It was not a solitary and strange work of the blessed Lord then when he preached to those who lived just before the flood, but, in all ages and everywhere Jesus has been proclaiming the truth by the tongues of men. He has done this by the Spirit of God dwelling in men and causing them to long to speak that their souls might be refreshed.

But it may be questioned, Why then does Peter here refer especially to this one time and this one generation of men? If our blessed Lord through the Spirit has been preaching to prisoners in all generations, why single out this one generation? It appears to us that the reason is found clearly set forth in the connection. In verse eighteen the apostle declares the great truth of the atonement, saying, "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." Through his atoning sacrifice he has brought all his people through the waters of judgment safely, as the ark bore eight souls safely through that judgment which destroyed the ungodly world. This was the most striking instance of the judgment of God against the ungodly that the world ever saw. Instances of his judgment of ungodly men are record-

ed elsewhere in the Scriptures, as, for instance, Pharaoh and his hosts at the Red Sea, the destruction of those who offered strange fire and the declarations of the Savior concerning the final destruction of Jerusalem, which were so completely fulfilled less than a generation afterward; but none of these equaled this overwhelming of the whole world by the waters of the flood, and in all these last named judgments, while some were destroyed others were saved. So here Noah and his family were saved by the ark, while all the world perished. It seems to us that this was the one especial reason why Peter refers to this one instance of the preaching of the Redeemer through the Spirit. Let us notice besides this that nothing is said about the effect of this preaching of Noah by the apostle, but the narrative in Genesis shows clearly that it produced no effect upon the ungodly; Noah and his family alone knew and received the truth, and were saved from death. The same thing has been true of the preaching of the gospel ever since. The burden of that preaching has been that all men are sinners, and that the judgment of God rests upon all men, for that they have sinned, and that all sinners shall perish, and that in Christ alone is salvation. But as it was in the days of Noah, so now, no one pays any heed to this save such as are possessed of faith as was Noah and his household. Thus by preaching the line is drawn which separates the living from the dead; those who are not of God do not hear it, while those who are of God do hear it.

Let it be noticed that the spirits in prison are said to have been disobedient. Noah and his family were not disobedient, because faith wrought in them obedience in preparing the ark, and the preaching through the Spirit by Noah did not produce obedience in the disobedient. Preaching is not intended to this end. Preaching produces an effect upon the men of faith, in that they hear it gladly and are stirred up by it to more rejoicing in Christ, and to a remembrance of his commandments. But at no time has preaching ever wrought the love of God in one where it did not exist before. It has indeed at times stirred up hatred, so that men have gnashed with their teeth upon those who preached to them, but by it has no man ever come to delight in that which he did not delight in before; and so we do not read that through the preaching before the flood by Noah any one included in this term, the disobedient, ever came to a belief in the impending doom, nor to any sorrow for their sins, nor to any desire to share in the building of the ark, nor to enter therein. On the contrary, they went right on in their careless, wicked ways until the flood came and they perished. Yet this gospel of the ark, and the salvation that was in it, was preached then in the hearing of all men by Noah, both by word and deed, and, no doubt, many knew that it was his faith that the judgment of God should one day fall upon the ungodly, while those who were of faith should not perish. Men do not love the truth of God, the truth of salvation by grace, salvation provided by the Lord, any better to-day than they did then. It is preached in their hearing, but as then, so now, they walk onward still in their disobedience, and will continue to do so until they also shall perish.

One thing further we desire to call attention to. The apostle says that they were saved by water, not from water, but by it. They were indeed saved from the water of the flood by the ark, but the apostle here declares that in a figure they

were saved by water. The waters of the flood wrought a complete separation between Noah and his family and the ungodly world in which he and they lived. This was a salvation from all that association with ungodly men which had been such a grief to the hearts of Noah and his family. But let it be remembered that there would have been no salvation to Noah by the water had there not been in his heart before the flood a salvation wrought by the Spirit of God, which separated him in desire and in spirit from the ungodliness of the world around him. Now the water of the flood separates him outwardly from that from which he had been separated long before in spirit. The waters of the flood would not have wrought any salvation for him at all had Noah come over on this side of the flood with the same evil heart that was his before his call by grace, and which now dwelt in all the wicked who perished. Now the apostle says that "the like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." The waters of the flood, which saved Noah from outward contact with the ungodly world about him, were a figure of that salvation which had been already wrought in his heart from the love of sinful things unto holiness. So also is baptism a figure unto all who are saved by the grace of God now. By the water of baptism we declare that we have been separated from our old sinful lives, and from all the ungodly of the world. We are buried in the figure of baptism as though we were dead to the former life, and have become separated from those who do not love and serve God, and in a figure we are raised up into a new life, even the life of God in Christ. But baptism would be a lying figure to us were we not already separated in heart and in spirit from the world. This inward separation God does work in all his elect when they are effectually called by grace, and he commands all such as experience this salvation to testify to this work by the figure of baptism, and this figure of baptism is appropriate and suitable, because in it is signified both a death and burial and a resurrection, and he who is dead and buried and has risen again lives in another state altogether. Such an one is as completely separated from his former life as was Noah before the flood in feeling and desire, and by baptism he becomes outwardly separated from his old companionships and associations, as was Noah and his family by the waters of the flood. There is then a salvation to the living in Zion, and to none others, in baptism. This salvation is not, as the apostle expressly says, the putting away of the filth of the flesh, which is sin, for nothing is really filthy but sin. There is no regeneration, no atonement, no cleansing of guilt from the sinner in baptism, as Romanists and others vainly teach; baptism is simply the answer of a conscience already made good, through atoning blood applied by the Spirit. This means that in baptism we confess what the blessed Lord has already done for us. Baptism is the "amen" which believers render to the gracious work of God in their salvation. By it believers declare that they hope in the atonement wrought by the death and resurrection of Jesus, and believe that the Spirit of God has wrought out in them the fruits of salvation, so that they now are living the life of the Spirit through faith in the Son of God. C.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder B. E. Cubbage.)

The Delaware Association, in session with the church at Cow Marsh, Kent Co., Del., May 21st, 22nd and 23rd, 1913, to the churches and associations with which we correspond sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We desire to declare in this Circular Letter the testimony of God's power to save, and of the wonderful riches of his grace and the beauty of his holiness, God sending his own Son Jesus Christ in the flesh manifest to Israel, his people (the church) his omnipotent power to do whatsoever he wills. Therefore we find the army of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth, all things in the earth and under the earth, heaven itself, and all the hosts of them, in perfect conformity to the will and purpose of a just and holy God, who is unlimited in power, might and dominion, and of whose wisdom, knowledge, grace, truth and mercy there is no end. Who can testify of God's power to save like unto the elect lady, (the church) or that poor supplicant at the throne of grace asking God's mercy, who has found comfort in the coming of Jesus with healing in his wings? Who can tell of God's power to save and testify of this salvation but those who are the lost sheep of the house of Israel, those who were lost, but now are found? These are they who were blind, but now see, by the grace of God and the efficacy of Christ's blood, that what they are they are by the power of God to save them from the law of sin and unrighteousness. Therefore, brethren, in your testimony of God's power to save, and of the riches of his grace, you are speaking the things you do know and testifying the things you have seen; you are telling the whole truth, ascribing the honor and praise to Him to whom all honor and praise is due. How wonderful then is the riches of God's grace, that his people should be given by faith to behold the everlasting arm of God round and about the church, the new covenant, Christ the Head over all things to the church; to be given to know and feel our nothingness and need of wisdom and knowledge and grace, yet to be furnished from time to time with the graciousness of divine favor, not because of our own merits, but because of our need of grace and the goodness of God's love of his people through Christ, who is made unto you wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, the fountain of God's love burst forth, wherein we see the beauty of God's holiness. He loved you when you were without merit, yet in your sins, and called you with an holy calling, that you should stand blameless before him in love by the righteousness of Christ, the Mediator of the new covenant, the whole order of things changed, your sins and unrighteousness remembered against you no more forever, transgression and disobedience credited in full by the obedience of Christ, unholiness turned away from Israel and dethroned by the coming of her King in the beauty of his holiness, who in love reigns in the hearts of his people. Therefore all blessings in church relations, the fellowship of the saints and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, emanate from the great Head of the church, who has all power in heaven and in earth to save all them that come unto him by the Father. Therefore, brethren, may we stand in this circle of love and fellowship and declare the praise of our risen Lord, and unite in naming him King of kings and Lord of lords over all things to the church, now and evermore. Amen.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, June 18th, 1913, at the residence of the bride's father, Mr. Wm. Laws, near Wango, Md., Elmer Francis Hastings and Miss Agnes Belle Laws, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Abbie E. Weeks, of Gardiner, Maine, died May 27th, 1913, aged 52 years and 10 months. Our sister was the beloved wife of brother Will Weeks. To that union was born one son. As wife and mother she was, as our brother Will expresses it, "pure gold," and sore in truth is their bereavement. Our sister united with the Church at South Gardiner in September, 1895, and was baptized by the writer. Her religion was not a lip religion, for she was of a quiet disposition. She was a good listener to gospel preaching and conversation among the brethren upon the things of God. Several conversations that I was privileged to have with her, especially during the last years of her life, showed that she was very graciously taught in the deep things of God, and that they were her chief concern. Her bodily health had been declining for some time, and when the time of her departure arrived she was sitting in her chair, as well, apparently, as she had been for some time; she leaned her head on one side and in a few minutes breathed her last, and her soul took its departure to be with Christ, which is far better.

At her funeral the writer preached from the words of Abigail to David: "The soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God." —1 Samuel xxv. 29. Her body was conveyed to the cemetery, there to await the resurrection at the last day with the likeness of the glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ. The bereaved husband and son have the sympathy of all who know them. May the Lord graciously comfort them. The little flock, the church at South Gardiner, sigh over the removal from our midst of another one whom we loved in the truth, yet we sorrow not as those who have no hope.

ALSO,

Miles Cunningham, of Whitefield, Maine, departed this life May 31st, 1913, aged 83 years and 6 months. Our brother united with the church at Whitefield, Maine, in September, 1878, and was baptized by Elder F. A. Chick. Our brother was one who ever manifested his soul's sacred pleasure in the gospel of Christ, and loved the conversation and companionship of the household of faith. Many times during the past twenty years the Whitefield Church assembled for worship in his house. In conversation upon his hope in the Lord Jesus and love unto the saints it was ever with deep emotions that he testified his faith in the Savior. Unto you that believe, he is precious. This was verily so with our brother. The gracious Lord carried our brother and our dear sister Cunningham through all the burden and trials of their pilgrimage, and they proved that word to be true, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be." Our brother's physical strength had been gradually diminishing for several years, but the Lord has released his spirit from the mortal tabernacle. He leaves to mourn their loss our sister, his wife, his daughter and granddaughter. May the Lord sanctify their bereavement unto them.

At his funeral the writer preached from the words: "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it."—Rev. xxi. 23, 24.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

Mrs. Laura Tubbs Culpepper was born July 1st, 1870, died May 22nd, 1913, making her stay on earth 42 years, 10 months and 21 days. She professed a hope in Jesus in early life, and united with the Primitive Baptist Church in Lavaca Co., Texas, in the year 1890. She was married to brother Louis Culpepper, Jan. 17th, 1894. To that union were born ten children, of which two preceded her to the grave. Sister Laura was a kind christian woman, a loving mother and a true and loving wife. She was loved by all who knew her, and was ready at all times to render assistance to those in need. She loved the Primitive Baptists, and stood firm and unmovable in the doctrine of salvation by sovereign grace. She had been afflicted many years with heart trouble, but lately other afflictions set in and an operation seemed necessary. She was taken to the hospital, but lived only a few moments.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral services, and reached their home the 23rd, went with a large company of friends and relatives to the Riddleville Cemetery, where a large number of friends were gathered. I tried in much weakness to speak words of comfort to the grief-stricken husband, children, relatives and friends from 1 Cor. xv. 49, and Romans v. 12, after which her body was laid in the grave to await the resurrection of the dead. As she has borne the image of the earthy, so also shall she bear the image of the heavenly. She died in full triumph of living faith. She had enjoyed a good hope through grace, turning neither to the right nor left, but lived and died in the love of the doctrine of grace from start to finish, having no confidence in the flesh. We would say to the bereaved ones that are left behind, Do not weep for her as those who have no hope, for she is only asleep in the arms of her Savior, in whom she so long trusted. It will not be long be-

fore the call will come and each of us shall lie down in sleep, only to awake in the morning of the resurrection, when this mortal shall have put on immortality. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. Weep not, dear children, your mother is asleep. She will not be disturbed, but shall sleep until Jesus shall come with the voice of the archangel.

Sister Laura sat up in bed the morning of the day she died and wrote some letters, some of which will appear later if we can get them.

J. B. BOWDEN.

Samuel Cross was born in Davidson Co., N. C., Jan. 15th, 1828, and moved with his parents when in childhood to Marshall Co., Ky. He was married at the age of twenty-five years to Miss Nancy A. Park, Dec. 15th, 1853, and to that union were born nine children, three boys and six girls, three of whom, together with their mother, preceded him to the grave, she having died in 1872, at the age of 41 years and 7 months. In the year 1880 he was again married, to Miss Emeline Austin, of Graves Co., and to that union were born five children, three boys and two girls. He was deprived of his last companion only two months before his death, she having died Nov. 8th, 1912, at the age of 68 years, 1 month and 15 days. Brother Cross moved from Marshall Co. to Graves Co., and settled in the northern part, where he reared his family. He joined the Old School Baptist Church at Mt. Pleasant, in Graves Co., in the year 1874. He was ever a faithful member, and so long as able he was always present with his church He was much devoted to the cause of his Master, and his house was ever open to his brethren and friends. For several years before his death he was afflicted, and became almost helpless before the end came. Notwithstanding his bodily afflictions his mind remained strong and firm. He often spoke of his hope of a better world, and often rejoiced in the thought of the finished work of salvation through Jesus. He fell asleep at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Susan Galloway, Jan. 7th, 1913, at the age of 84 years, 7 months and 23 days. His remains were laid to rest at Mt. Pleasant, the first and only church he was ever a member of, there to await the call from on high, when he shall come forth with the image of the blessed Jesus to see him as he is and ever be with him, where no suffering and death will come.

Written at the request of his children.

J. M. PERKINS.

William Barnes departed this life Feb. 17th, 1913. He was born March 12th, 1835. He was an orderly, quiet, firm Old Baptist. He joined the church Aug. 17th, 1880, was ordained deacon July 20th, 1881. He was faithful in every walk of life. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." I believe he received that crown. He left to mourn his death two sons and one daughter by his first wife. He had no children by his second wife, who was Miss Bettie Jones, now living in Guthrie, Ky. She was a faithful companion, and did all she could for his comfort, but God called him home, where we all hope to go when the Lord says, Come. He was a Confederate soldier, joining the army in the fall of 1861 and serving until the spring of 1865. He was always ready and willing to attend his church meetings. If brother Barnes was not at Red River Association we knew that sickness prevented him. To his widow and children who mourn his departure I would say, Weep not for husband and father, he is now better off than we are. There is no more sorrow, no more pain, no more trouble, all is glorious peace. When this earthly house of our tabernacle is dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. The battle will be fought and the victory won through our Lord Jesus Christ. Brethren and sisters of Red River Association, let us not sorrow as those who have no hope, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. May God's rich grace keep us all in the way of truth until he comes.

J. K. WOMACK.

Robert F. Morris was born in Worcester Co., Md., Jan. 18th, 1851, and departed this life May 11th, 1913, aged 62 years, 3 months and 24 days. He was the eldest son of our late brother John L. Morris, who was for many years a prominent and active member of the church at Nassaongo, Wicomico Co., Md. The subject of this notice was married to Rosa L. Tilghman, Jan. 28th, 1879. He and his wife were both baptized by Elder T. M. Poulson, June 26th, 1897, at Nassaongo, and he was an active, useful member and faithful deacon to the day of his death. He was a true and faithful husband, a kind father, a good citizen and a true friend. What more can be said to the credit of any man? But his hope of salvation did not rest on these virtues, but solely and absolutely on the atonement which our Lord Jesus Christ made by the shedding of his blood for sinners. He was a firm believer in the precious doctrine of salvation by grace alone through the effectual offering of Jesus Christ once for all, by which he forever perfected all them that are sanctified; also in personal and unconditional election, the absolute sovereignty of God, predestination of all things, effectual calling, preservation of the saints through grace to glory and the resurrection of the bodies of the saints from their graves. Brother Morris had been enjoying good health up to the time of his death. That morning he arose about his usual time and fell to the floor of his bedroom and died in a short time,

without regaining consciousness. He leaves a disconsolate widow, who feels that what the Lord does is right, but feels very lonely, as there was true companionship between them, both in temporal and spiritual things; also two sons and two daughters, several brothers and sisters and a large connection of relatives and friends, by whom he was highly esteemed; but most of all is the loss felt in the church, but their loss is his everlasting gain. May the Lord sustain and support the bereaved companion and children and comfort all who mourn.

A. B. FRANCIS.

Anderson Bray, of Locktown, N. J., died Friday, June 6th, 1913, aged 86 years, 6 months and 1 day. He had been in very poor health for many years, but was in bed only about a week before he passed away. Although he suffered greatly at times, yet he bore his suffering with patience. He always had some kind word of comfort for his family. He often would say, I am ready to go any time, but willing to wait God's time. Death came suddenly; the last words he uttered were, "This is death to me." Mr. Bray was born on the farm where he died. I was personally acquainted with Mr. Bray, and am well satisfied that he was a subject of God's saving grace. I have spoken in his house several times, and he always expressed complete satisfaction with what I said. I have not the least doubt but that he is now in glory. He leaves a lonely widow and two daughters, with friends, to mourn, but not without hope. God bless all who mourn with grace.

Elder Fenton preached from Hebrews ix. 27, 28, and sang Mr. Bray's favorite piece, "Death is only a dream," to the comfort of the friends. He was buried in Sandy Ridge Cemetery.

D. M. VAIL.

Ella Gay Poling, daughter of John and Celia Poling, departed this life April 11th, 1913, aged 21 years, 10 months and 24 days. She was a kind and affectionate child, and was loved by all who knew her. She had never joined the church, but gave evidence of a hope in Christ. She will be sadly missed, as she was the only child they had at home. She leaves father and mother, one sister, two brothers and two half-brothers, with many friends, to mourn their loss. May God comfort the aged parents and enable them to say, Though cast down, not forsaken.

ELISABETH PHILLIPS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. C. Schade, N. Y., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Red River Association will be held with the church called Tykes Grove, four and one-half miles east of Cedar Hill, Robertson Co., Tenn., on the L. & N. R. R., the second Sunday, and Saturday before, in August, 1913. All sound Predestinarian Baptists are welcome.

E. J. ANDERSON, Moderator.

THE Siloam Association of Oregon and Washington will meet at Nesika, Lewis Co., Wash., commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in August, 1913. Those coming by rail will take the Tacoma & Eastern at Tacoma, Wash., and go to Morton, where they will be met with teams and conveyed to the place of meeting. All are cordially invited to attend.

SONORA A. HESS, Clerk of Association.

THE Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet with Spring Creek Church, near Stahl, Adair Co., Mo., in her fifty-ninth annual session, on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1913, and continue the two following days. The passenger train from the east that leaves Kirksville at 10:22 a. m. will be met at both Novinger and Stahl on Tuesday. The same train will be met Wednesday at Stahl. Also the train from the west, due at Stahl at 5:45 a. m. will be met at Stahl Wednesday. A cordial invitation is extended to all who believe in a God that is able to do his will without the aid of man.

S. B. JONES, Moderator.

H. C. CATE, Clerk.

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SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILLIAMSTON, N. C.

I find the postage on my book, "Day unto Day," to America is 9 pence (18 cents), and I thought it would be 6 pence, or at most 7 pence. I think on consideration, as the expense of publication has been very heavy, notwithstanding a most encouraging sale, I had better say I will send to any of your readers the half calf gilt edge edition for 5 shillings ($1.20), or the cloth edition for 4 shillings (96 cents) postage free.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 81. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1913. NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

AVONDALE, Ala., June 11, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am in receipt of a letter from brother L. D. Seals, of Vanleer, Tenn., who seems to be confused over my article in the SIGNS of May 15th, current volume. He asks me several questions, which he wishes me to answer either privately or through the SIGNS, and as it is probable that others are like brother Seals, I feel that it might be best to reply through the SIGNS, as I am desirous of being understood, both in writing and preaching, and my religious views are always public property. If I know my heart, my object both in writing and preaching is not to confuse, but to edify and comfort.

Brother Seals wants me first to "more fully explain" what I mean by dividing the Bible into "three parts." I will say, first, that there is a division in the "word of truth," for Paul admonished Timothy to "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." The word of truth, I think, is the Scriptures. There is a division between the law and the gospel; there is a division between the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit; a division between the carnal mind and the spiritual mind; between the old man and the new man; between the outward man and the inner man; between the flesh and the Spirit; between obedience and disobedience; between the church and the world, and I might go on, but this will suffice. It seems to me very plain that some Scriptures are doctrinal, some experimental and some practical, and all are profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness, that the man of God might be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work.

Brother Seals wants to know what I mean by saying "doctrinal." Do I mean to say that God's little children do not experience the doctrine of God? In reply to this I will say that my understanding of the Scriptures, as well as my own individual experience, is that God's children do not learn the doctrine in their first experience. What I mean by "doctrine" is the fundamental principles of salvation, such as election, predestination, effectual calling, efficacy of the atonement of Christ, final preservation of the saints to glory, &c. In our first

experience we only rejoice in the fact that we know there has been a change wrought in our hearts by some power above our own. We know that we are not as we once were, old things have passed away, and, behold, all things have become new, and we find ourselves hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Still at this time we may be like the blind man, only "see men as trees walking," or we may say like another, Lord, who is he, that I might believe on him? We are now only babes in Christ, and as to doctrine (or even of the knowledge of Christ as our Savior) we have to learn these things line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, step by step, and all these things come to us as we travel along through life's pilgrimage, by searching the Scriptures, by hearing the gospel, by afflictions and otherwise. I do not believe that the Lord reveals these things to his people independently of the gospel; that is what the gospel is for, to give knowledge of salvation; to teach and instruct those who are born of the Spirit of God in the doctrine and faith of Christ; to instruct them in the way of the Lord more perfectly, &c., until they all come into the union of the faith, unto a perfect man in Christ, &c. When I first obtained a hope in Christ I knew nothing about doctrine. I had some ideas about election, but they were ideas that I have long since ignored, and I will here say that I learned but little about doctrine until I read the first volume of Elder Gilbert Beebe's Editorials, and that was six or seven years after I had united with the Primitive Baptists. I will add that I am by no means a graduate yet. Look at the thousands of the Lord's regenerated people now in the world who have no correct knowledge of the doctrine of God our Savior. I know the Scriptures say, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children," but I do not understand this teaching to all come at once, or all of it to come in the same way.

Brother Seals wants to know if I mean to say that the experience of God's children is outside the doctrine, and what I mean by saying "practical." In reply to this I will say that all these three things are inseparably connected, and all belong to the same class of people, but that we do not learn them all at the same time. Paul said to some that "When for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God." It seems that these were "forgetful hearers;" had forgotten that they had been purged from their old sins, &c. They had let slip the things that they had heard.

Brother Seals wants to know if the doctrine is one thing, experience another, and practical godliness another. To this I reply, Yes. But it seems to me that I have already answered these three questions.

Brother Seals asks again, Can a man that is being led by the Spirit of the all-wise God neglect his great salvation? To this I reply, Not while being led by the Spirit of God. But it seems to me that neither the church as a body, nor the individual members are at all times led by the Spirit of God. It seems to me (judging from the conduct of individual members and the turmoil and confusion which get into the churches sometimes) that the devil gets into the church and brethren sometimes act in a way that indicates that they are being led by the spirit of the wicked one, instead of the Spirit of God. I do not believe that a

child of God can so neglect his salvation as to forfeit eternal life in Christ. Salvation is something we obtain here in this life, and either enjoy or neglect in a measure according to our conduct and appreciation of it. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." The apostle said, "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." He also said, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," but he immediately added, To them "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Is it not a fact that God's people sometimes walk after the flesh, rather than after the Spirit? And when thus walking after the flesh do they not experience condemnation? The truth of the matter is that while the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the law of sin and death, we are under law to Christ, and "he that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." We are no more under the law, but under grace. The doctrine of election and predestination does not release the people of God from their obligations to the Lord and to each other, and every transgression and disobedience is sure to receive a just recompense of reward here in this world.

Next, brother Seals wants to know this: Can a man who has been taught by God's grace to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, can that man thus taught live in ungodliness? Would a man thus taught be considered a man of grace? I know that the apostle said, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world." To my mind the word "should" here implies an obligation, and it does not imply an impossibility of living ungodly, and some of the Lord's people do (to some extent at least) live ungodly and unrighteous lives, but at such times they are living after the flesh, and not after the Spirit, and are doing despite unto the Spirit of grace. Why all these admonitions and warnings if it were not possible for the people of God to go astray? I have only to refer to my own experience to know that these things are true, or else I am no child of grace, and am deceived in the whole matter.

Brother Seals wants to know if the child of God is kept by God's power, and if so, does he follow after ungodliness? Yes, the Scriptures say we are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time," and notwithstanding the waywardness, imperfections and unrighteousness of the Lord's people, the Lord will keep them by his power, deliver them from the wrath to come, and finally safely house them all in heaven. "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

Brother Seals wants to know if it is the child of God that cannot do the things that he would. Why of course it is, and it is this same child of God that sometimes does the things he should not do. No man is perfect in the flesh. Neither the flesh nor the carnal mind is changed in the new birth, hence the warfare, but Paul said, I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, &c. There is a continual warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, and sometimes we give way to the flesh, and then we are sure to go wrong, but (manifestly) as

many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God.

Brother Seals' last question is, "If God leads his children by his Spirit, does he not lead them anywhere and everywhere he wants them to go? If not, why not?" To this I say, Yes, he leads them anywhere and everywhere he wants them to go, and when thus led by his Spirit we do anything and everything he wants us to do, but when left to ourselves, and living after the flesh, we do anything and everything, or at least follow such a course as is not sanctioned by the word of God.

I believe I have now about covered all the ground brother Seals has assigned me, but of course much more might be said. I admit that the brother has given me some knotty questions to answer, but a ten year old child could ask questions that Paul himself could not answer if he were here, and Peter said that Paul had written some things hard to be understood. I have replied to these questions the best I can, and have tried to answer in the light of divine truth.

In afflictions and tribulations,

H. J. REDD.

PINE BLUFF, N. C., March 12, 1913.

MY DEAR BROTHER KER:—Inclosed I send you a copy of a fiftieth wedding anniversary letter which I wrote and sent to Elder P. D. Gold and wife on the anniversary of their wedding day, and if you think it worthy of a place in the SIGNS, you are at liberty to publish it.

Affectionately,

GEORGE D. CONKLIN.

PINE BLUFF, N. C., January 23, 1913.

ELDER AND MRS. P. D. GOLD—MY BELOVED BROTHER AND MY DEAR SISTER:—Fifty years ago yesterday, before the ceremony was performed which made you husband and wife, you sang in the deep recesses of your joyfully enraptured souls, if you did not sing with your pleasant voices, the following beautiful and very appropriate lines:

"With garlands be the altar crowned,
The shrine of love's devotion,
The festal flowers be strewn around,
Swell high with joy's emotion.

Let every heart with joy now beat,
While former vows we now repeat;
We pledge, we pledge our mutual love,
Which time no more can sever,
For with that sacred band above
We hope to meet forever."

And then when your solemn vows were lawfully witnessed upon the shores of time, and were solemnly recorded in the courts of heaven, and were now ready to be acknowledged by the courts of earth, in the same joyfully solemn manner you were ready to sing again the following appropriate lines:

"Before the eyes that watched our youth,
The hearts of our communion,
Before the friends we've loved in truth
Joined in a sacred union,
Without a doubt or single cloud
We'll swell the joyful strain more loud;
We've pledged, we've pledged our mutual love,
Which time no more can sever,
For with that sacred band above
We hope to meet forever."

The fiftieth anniversary of your wedding day is a fit occasion to call up in sweet remembrance the loving-kindness and superintending care of a covenant-keeping God in joining your loving hearts together in such a sacred union as has been a mutual solace to you while making your pilgrimage journey for fifty years. It is also a very pleasant and suitable occasion upon which to recall some of the cherished reminiscences of life through which thus far you have passed, and it affords you an agreeable opportunity to speak of some of the dear,

familiar faces of friends whom you have seen, together with some of the comfortable and pleasant moments spent with them in conversation, which now loom up brightly and sweetly before you as you now in memory turn over some of the silent pages of the past forty or fifty years.

In the bright and happy morning of your espousal, while looking forward with pleasant and hopeful anticipations to the future, I presume that you hardly expected your youthful lives to be prolonged to see the fiftieth anniversary of your wedding day, and to have the pleasure and comfort afforded you of witnessing and enjoying its pleasant festivities under such highly favorable circumstances as I suppose it was your privilege and joy to have through the kind smiles of an overruling and merciful Providence, and by the approving kindness of your heavenly Father, who has so tenderly and lovingly watched over you and yours through an eventful life, with an eye single to his declarative glory, and to your unspeakable joy and happiness. His providential and fatherly care over you both, his dear children, was most signally displayed in bringing you out of the dominion of mystery, Babylon, with a high hand and outstretched arm, when in your experience you had been brought to that sorrowful place in which you could not sing the Lord's songs, which had now become so sweet to your inmost souls, even while yet in that strange land, and he removed all the unpleasant obstacles out of your way and gave you a very welcome place in his beloved Zion, and qualified you, my beloved brother, in an eminent degree to fill the important place which he in his eternal mind so graciously designed from the ancients of eternity that you should fill, and he gave you the sweetest message that it was ever the comforting privilege of poor mortals to declare to his dear chosen people. For fifty, perhaps sixty, years, my beloved brother, you have stood upon Zion's walls, where you were set according to the eternal counsel of God, and have been declaring to her favored inhabitants, according to the commandment of your Lord and Savior, the comforting, cheering and soul-inspiring news that Zion's warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins, and while during all these years it has been such a sweet theme to you to thus speak comfortingly to Jerusalem, and to cry unto her such highly important and glorious news, yet there have no doubt been many intervals of time in your life when you have been led to seriously doubt your vital interest in your Savior's pardoning blood, and also you, no doubt, have been many times led to call in question the marvelous and gracious dealings of the Lord with you in calling you as a valiant soldier in Israel to stand upon his walls and declare his glorious truth, with which he was pleased in his infinite wisdom and boundless love to make you so fully acquainted, and to give you such a sweet relish for and taste of, and out of the abundance of your heart at times you have no doubt felt seriously to inquire of the Lord as did David, "Will the Lord cast off forever? and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" Did you, my beloved brother, ever get lower in your mind than that? Well, let us hear David again, when he had a little sunshine and was again

cheeringly ushered into the presence of the Lord manifestly: "In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be put to confusion." Again he said, "O God, thou hast taught me from my youth;" and he has also graciously and lovingly taught you, my brother. "And hitherto have I declared thy wonderful works," again said David, and this also has been your sweet privilege to his glory and to the great comfort of your dear and beloved kindred in Christ and dear, interested friends. David prayed, "Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not, until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come." Again, he said, "O God, who is like unto thee! Thou, which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shall bring me up again from the depths of the earth."

"His love in times past forbids us to think
That he'll leave us at last in sorrow to sink."

It is sometimes the pleasure of the Lord to hide his face from his dear servants, as well as from all his poor and afflicted people, and then they must mourn. But

"Anon the clouds depart,
The winds and waters cease,
While sweetly o'er their gladdened hearts
Expands the bow of peace."

"Though clouds his face obscure,
And dangers threaten loud,
Jehovah's covenant is sure,
His bow is in the cloud."

These inward trials and experiences in which the Lord schools his dear servants and his dear people are for their good, as you, I have not the least doubt, believe. Summing them all up the apostle Paul says of them, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

"How trying the process by which we are brought
To bow to the will of the Lord;
What care he bestows; yea, what wisdom and love
Are seen in his dealings, while making us prove
That 'tis well to pass under the rod.

He knows that when all things go smoothly along,
We recline on the wilderness sod,
And therefore he chooses by crosses and woes
To make us pass under the rod.

O discipline painful, yet needful, that we
May certainly wait on our God;
If necessity drove not, we seldom should go,
And much less his presence and Spirit should know,
If we did not pass under the rod."

Now, my dearly beloved brother, knowing that you have been such a true and tried witness of your dear Redeemer, and having so comfortingly, clearly, boldly and unhesitatingly declared the glorious truth of God, which has been so comforting to you, as well as to your dear kindred in Christ all these many years, and that with humble boldness which is so becoming in a dear, tried sentinel upon the walls of Zion, you have continued to labor to the present time, I do not doubt that now you, with your dear life-partner, are permitted to wait patiently, and with peaceful and firm resignation, for the display of your heavenly Father's will and pleasure concerning you both. I kindly hope and trust that when the last rolling billow of time with each of you shall dash and break upon the heavenly shore of the eternal world, it shall be your crowning joy to know that the many earthly conflicts and the painful experiences through which you have been called to pass are now about to be exchanged for the blissful and unalloyed happiness that is beyond the confines of time; and while I firmly believe that your now imprisoned spirits will then be released from these cold tenements of clay,

and be joyfully wafted upon heavenly breezes to the unclouded regions of immortal glory, your dust will be carefully and tenderly confided to the narrow earthly cavern for safe keeping, until the glorious morning of the resurrection, when it will triumphantly and gloriously arise at the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout to awaken the dead.

"Asleep in Jesus, peaceful rest,
Whose waking is supremely blessed;
No fear, no woe, shall dim that hour,
Which manifests the Savior's power."

Now, my dear brother and sister, in bringing this very lengthy fiftieth anniversary wedding day letter to a close, I feel to tenderly and lovingly say that we realize the solemn hour of dissolving nature with you draws every day nearer, and at the longest it will be but a little while when the sweet voice of your heavenly Lover will fall gently, I trust, upon your listening ears, and in the tenderest, loveliest and sweetest accents of the dear Savior's love you will hear the comforting words, "Child, your Father calls, come home."

"Away from sorrow, toil and pain,
Away from worldly loss and gain,
From all temptation, tears and care,
My home is there, my home is there."

It would have been one of the greatest of earthly pleasures to me could I have been with you upon this anniversary, but I was with you in spirit. I trust, my dear brother and sister, you had a lovely time, and that it all was of great comfort to you, as well as to each dear member of your loved family circle, both those living under your roof and those having homes of their own. I presume they were all gathered together on this pleasant festive occasion, and that the loving smiles of the dear Redeemer were pleasantly and comfortingly felt by you both, and by all who were so highly favored as to be of the happy number present.

With warmest and unswerving love, I remain your brother in hope,

GEORGE D. CONKLIN.

[OUR dear sister Gold has been called home since the fiftieth anniversary, and we deeply sympathize with brother Gold. —K.]

HORTON, Kansas, March 22, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS—Inclosed I send you a letter from sister Mary Ellison, which I received some time ago; if you see proper, please give it a place in the SIGNS.

Your sister in hope,

NANCY S. SIMMONS.

OKLAHOMA, Kansas, Feb. 27, 1913.

DEAR GRANDMOTHER:—I ought to have written you before now, to tell you that the two bundles of papers reached me all right, and that they have been a source of much pleasure to me, although I have not read them all as yet. I thank you more than I can tell. When I read after some of the gifted writers I feel like saying that no men can work the work they do except God be with them. Sometimes I think that some one excels them all, and then it is another that carries my mind away from my lowly, sinful self. Then there are the little letters from the poor, weak ones, like myself, and I feel such a kinship for them that I would love to take my pen and write to them all, telling them how much I appreciate them, and to bear testimony to my belief of the truth as it is in Jesus. But it is not in me to write like others, yet in my simple way I would like to tell you of some precious thoughts which have been of much comfort to me this winter.

I feel to hope that they were given me from the source of every good and perfect gift.

I was writing to dear old sister Wiley, of Oklahoma, yesterday. She is, like you and me and many others, situated so that she seldom gets to meeting, and I tried to tell her some thoughts that I have had on the name of the Lord in connection with this text: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." I trust that it is the blood of Christ which brings me into a sacred nearness to these people and that causes my thoughts to be so often with them. When deprived of the privilege of meeting with them how comforting it is to think that the book of remembrance was written, not only for those who speak often one to another, but also for those who think upon his name. O if I could only clothe the thoughts that are sometimes given me with language adequate to express the beauty and loveliness I see now and then in his glorious name, I would like to publish it to the ends of the earth, for unto me, even me, who am less than the least of all saints, is grace and mercy so abundantly given that for a small moment I am enabled to look away from self, and to think upon the Name that is more glorious than any name that is named, and to feebly hope that I am one of those for whom the book of remembrance was written.

So many of the poor and afflicted writers in the SIGNS complain that they never get to hear preaching, but this complaining shows that they are of those who think upon that dear Name. This is the Rock upon which we build our hopes of rest and peace after the weary toils of this sorrowful life are over. In the third chapter of Exodus he calls himself by different names. He bade Moses tell the children of Israel when they should ask him who had sent him to them, that "I AM hath sent me unto you." He said, "I am the Lord: and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty; but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them." He had heard the groanings of his chosen people, and remembered his covenant with them, and he said, I will take you unto me for a people, and ye shall know that I am the Lord God. It appears that all these names are uttered in demonstration of his wonderful power and majesty, but I always feel a special wistfulness, inquiry and awe when I think upon his name: "Jehovah." I fear that he is not known to me by that name; it seems that it must mean something sublimely awful, yet when he calls himself by that name, just before he gives such precious promises of deliverance from their miserable bondage, it must mean that though filled with awful majesty and power, he is also tenderly compassionate to his afflicted and poor people. But "such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." His name is indeed "Wonderful." His name "I Am" is very significant. "I am that I am." Not one thing to-day and something else to-morrow. "I am that I am." "I am God." "I change not." I am the same yesterday, to-day and to-morrow. Therefore his people may depend upon and safely trust in him, he will not fail nor be discouraged. He said, I the Lord have spoken, I will also bring it to pass; my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. He can never be frustrated

or turned about by men or devils. The wicked are his sword, he uses them to execute his vengeance, to pour out his wrath upon the wickedness of the earth, which is indeed great. For the Lord most high is terrible. Who is like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heavens in our help, and in his excellency on the sky? He said, It is I, fearful in praises, doing wonders. Great indeed is the Lord, and greatly to be praised. His name is also called Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. There are times in the experience of his saints when the significance of one or more of these names is applicable to their peculiar state of mind, but all pertain to his infinite attributes of perfection and holiness. How I would like to hear some one who is able to do business in deep waters take up each one of these dread and awful names and expound their meaning, and draw out the sweetness and comfort of each one. It would surely be honey out of the rock and oil out of the flinty rock. Take this one name, "The Almighty God;" how my heart thrills with ecstasy and admiration as I think of when he first appears to his people by that name, when they are under the cruel bondage of the taskmaster, sin, and it seems as if there is no eye to pity and no arm to save from this hideous thraldom, then truly it is a God of almighty power alone who could bring deliverance, then help must be laid upon One who is mighty, then the bondage is broken, and the poor burden-bearer is given rest and peace. Now he receives the garment of peace for the spirit of heaviness and goes on his way rejoicing.

"But 'tis not long before they feel
Their happy souls begin to reel."

Snares and pitfalls are on every hand.

"Ten thousand baits the foe prepares
To catch the wandering heart,
And seldom do we see the snares
Before we feel the smart."

Now whither for help shall I fly? Listen, poor, tried child: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." Like a father! O to whom could we more willingly and gladly turn in time of need for help than to a loving, pitying father? And the everlasting Father supports us in all our troubles, and will not forsake us.

Take the name, "The Prince of Peace." It is said, Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us. But in the weary turmoils through which we must pass in the journey of life it does seem at times that peace and comfort are nowhere to be found. But when Satan appears to stop up our path and fill us with fears, God's people triumph by faith.

"He cannot take from us,
Though oft he has tried,
This heart-cheering promise,
The Lord will provide."

The God of peace shall bruise Satan shortly under your feet. He shall give you the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, then you realize indeed that he is the God of peace. He is King of Salem which is King of peace. Then let us be of good comfort, and live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with us. He is our Prophet, Priest and King; he is our Lawgiver and Judge; he is our Daystar, the Sun of Righteousness. O think of the wonderful meaning encouched in the manifold names of our God and Savior. As our Prophet he foreknew all things, and by inspiration in his sevants he foretold all that was necessary for his people to know, and all that was written aforetime was written for our learning and for our instruction in righteousness. As a Priest

he made atonement for us, and by the one offering perfected them that are sanctified. Whatsoever he does is done forever, and nothing can be put to it or taken from it. Isaiah in the year that King Uzziah died saw the Lord high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. All for whom our great High Priest made atonement and perfected forever compose that train, and it fills the temple. There will be no room for any other train, such as the Missionary train, or Sunday School train, for his train fills the temple. Nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it; not one will be left out.

"How would the powers of darkness boast
If but one praying soul be lost!"

But it will not be so. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. He declares that nothing shall be able to pluck one of the little ones out of his hand. Every one of that train can prayerfully and trustfully say,

"But I have trusted in thy grace,
And I shall yet behold thy face."

He shall never fail nor be discouraged, he shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied. As a King he is all-powerful, and works all things after the counsel of his own will, and none can say to him, What doest thou? He is the blessed and only Potentate; he is the only Lawgiver, and as Judge he declares that his law is perfect.

Again, he is called "Counsellor." He does not need a mission board of learned theologians with which to consult, but he says, I, even I, am he, and beside me there is no Savior. Now unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings. He is the Word of God. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," and the Word was made flesh and came and dwelt among us. Thus his name is also "Immanuel," God with us. He took not on him the nature of angels, but a body was prepared him, and he partook of flesh and blood, and was made like unto his brethren, that he might be touched with the feeling of their infirmities, and be able to succor them that are tempted. His life is our example, and his death our only hope. He was made like unto his brethren, yet without sin. Without sin, and yet he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was bowed under the load of the sins of his people, which he bare in his own body, and for them he died; he was derided, insulted and slain. In agony he cried to his Father, If it be possible, let this cup pass from me. For this hour came I into the world, and then he said, "Thy will be done."

"He dies, the Friend of sinners dies,
See Salem's daughters weep around;
A solemn darkness veils the skies,
A shudder, trembling shakes the ground.

Come, saints, and drop a tear or two,
For him who groaned beneath your load;
He shed ten thousand drops for you,
Ten thousand drops of richest blood.

Here's love and grief beyond degree,
The Lord of glory dies for men,
But O what sudden joys we see,
Jesus the dead revives again.

The rising God forsakes the tomb,
The tomb in vain forbids him rise,
Cherubic legions guard him home,
And shout him welcome to the skies."

He is risen with healing in his wings and is exalted a Prince and a Savior, and is set down forever at the right hand of God, where he ever liveth to make intercession for us. Then let not our hearts be troubled, nothing shall ever separate us from his love. He pleads for his people at his Father's right hand. Whatsoever he doeth it shall be forever. His work is finished, the redemption of their souls is

precious, and it ceaseth forever. There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins; nothing more is required. The great Judge's decision is that the law is satisfied. And now what doth God require of thee, O man, but to do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with thy God?

Sometimes I think that one of the most precious names by which he is called is, "The Lord our righteousness." O does not that cover all our shortcomings? All our righteousness, which is but filthy rags, is taken from us, and the righteousness of the Most High is our righteousness. For their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.

"And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him," and he was clothed in filthy garments. So will it be declared of us whenever we try to clothe ourselves with the filthy garments of our own righteousness. We will have the same opposer that Joshua had: Satan will be right by us. But it was commanded to take away the filthy garments, and to clothe him with a change of raiment, and so they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. Now what kind of company is he in? And the angel of the Lord stood by, Satan was rebuked, and Joshua was a brand plucked out of the fire.

> "My filthy rags are laid aside,
> He clothed me as becomes his bride;
> Himself bestows my wedding dress,
> A robe of perfect righteousness."

And now, O glorious consummation of heavenly bliss, as a further token of love for the bride whom he hath clothed with his own robe of righteousness, he gives her to bear his own adorable name, and proclaims to all ages to come, This is the name whereby she shall be called, The Lord our righteousness. "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us who can be against us? O that we could at all times praise the Lord for his goodness, and his wonderful works to the children of men, until we shall fully see him as the Alpha and Omega, and behold upon his vesture and upon his thigh the name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

Dear grandmother, and I hope I can say, sister in Christ, these are some of my thoughts. I have had many interruptions in writing, and have but poorly expressed what I have desired to say. My hope in the name of the dear Savior is all that sustains me in my life of loneliness and sorrow. I go sorrowing, and yet rojoicing in the name of Christ. I try to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith I hope I am called, but I have to look to the heavenly Bridegroom for all my fine linen. He promised to supply all our need. I feel my need of the righteousness of saints to be very great indeed. I hope I am one for whom the book of remembrance was written, yet I feel so keenly my unworthiness in and of myself that I tremble and fear that it cannot possibly be that I am included in that bloodwashed throng. But this I do know, if ever I was embraced in that number I will never be left out.

I know that you read many good articles and that I ought not to intrude upon you with my lengthy letter, but you are often in my thoughts, and I felt that I would like to write this to you. If it wearies you, do not read it. You know so much of what my troubles have been and the

lonesome path that I trust you will overlook and excuse this long letter.

I remain as ever, I hope, your sister in the hope of a better life,

MARY ELLISON.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Feb. 7, 1912.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR FATHER IN ISRAEL:—For such I esteem you. I feel to be the least in my Father's kingdom, if one at all. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" This language is in a measure expressive of my condition of late. I know not why, but it appears that it has been my lot to pass through low places, and at times I feel to be in the very belly of hell, and the miserable state in which I am cannot be described. If I could only be assured that it is the light of God our Savior shining in the dark recesses of my wicked heart and making manifest its vileness, teaching me to know the corruption of my nature, there might be some consolation in the thought that the fires of hell are burnings of God's love to prepare me for his kingdom here on earth, and bring me to eat the crumbs that fall from the Master's table. Surely if I am to be given a place among his people I must needs be refined as gold is refined, and tried in the fiery furnace of affliction, doubts and fears. I sometimes consider the process through which gold in its crude state has to pass before it can come forth pure, and when my eyes are opened to see myself in the true light, I am made to hope that God is leading me and teaching me to know him as the only true God. I feel to be a pilgrim in a strange land, an outcast in the land of Assyria, but here is where I am made to call upon him to have mercy on me, a sinner. The language of Jesus as recorded in the fifth chapter of Matthew is very precious to me at times. He says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." I certainly feel to be of that class. "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." I hope my mourning is of the kind that is known in Zion. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." If I know my heart, I do hunger and thirst after His righteousness. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." Here, dear brother, I seem to be cut off, for when I turn my eyes within I am made to cry, "Unclean, unclean," but my prayer to God is that he will create within me a pure heart; that he will take away the heart of stone; that he will cause the meditations of my heart to be of him and his glorious kingdom; that he will undertake for me, else I must fail. A few nights ago I was reading this Scripture: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." I felt to know that our Savior was addressing his disciples, for verily a dead sinner could not knock, and I was brought to the point that I was made to call upon him to deliver me from that horrible pit of despair. I was so cast down in my feelings that I was hoping for some manifestation that his mercy had not clean gone forever. Upon reaching my office the next morning I found such a good letter from an esteemed brother in the Lord that I was built up and made to praise God, from whom all blessings flow. Ah, dear brother, there are times when he bestows his love and mercy upon this poor worm of the dust in such large measures that I

am crushed and am made to praise him with unutterable language. Why should he bestow his boundless grace upon such a wretch as I am, is something I cannot answer, except that he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy.

I meant to tell you what a feast of fat things I received while reading your article in the April 15th, 1910, SIGNS, under the head, "The Virtuous Woman." I just read it this last week, and the article which follows, by Elder Badger, was very, very good. When I read such writings from the pens of the dear fathers in Israel I am made to feel that I know nothing as I ought to know. I hope I am grateful to my Lord for such wonderful gifts as he has given his people. Surely it is all of the Lord, and his mercy shall endure forever. Sometimes I hope I am given to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven and drink from that living Fountain. What a glorious sight to see God's children coming from the east and the west, north and south, all rejoicing with joy unspeakable and proclaiming, "Salvation is of the Lord." This ground is holy ground, and man cannot stand in his own shoes or works. The poet has beautifully expressed it in these words:

> "Not the labors of my hands
> Can fulfill thy law's demands;
> Could my zeal no respite know,
> Could my tears forever flow,
> All for sin could not atone;
> Thou must save, and thou alone."

So it is by grace we are saved, and it is with loving-kindness that he draws us and brings us to know that it cannot be in any other way, and though we may be led through the fiery furnace, may be cast into a den of lions or thrown overboard into the sea, his grace is sufficient to keep us for the glorifying of himself. We are told that Joseph was a fruitful bough, so then we see he has a purpose in what he does, and while we may not understand at times, and may never, yet we are to remember that we are only vessels of clay in His hand.

Last Sunday at our conference meeting I was endeavoring to comprehend something of the inscrutable wisdom which drew the wondrous plan of salvation, and of his mercy to poor sinners, and I was made to say, I am nothing, and less than nothing. Brother McConnell asked me to say something, but the thought came, What are you, that you should speak to the children of the living God? I refused to say anything, but, dear ones, I wanted to ask you all to pray for me. Surely

> "I am a stranger here below,
> And what I am 'tis hard to know."

Brother Durand, I had something else on my mind to write about, but it is late, and this is getting to be a long letter. I felt a desire to write you, and so have complied. May the Lord direct my steps, is my prayer.

With best love for you and your dear ones, I am yours in a precious hope,

R. LESTER DODSON.

ST. JOSEPH, MO., April 30, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I am writing for information as to the right application of Matthew v. 30: "And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." I have long had the opinion that while this language of our Savior is for the instruction personally of all his followers, it was not intended for a rule of church discipline; that is, Peter was not instructed to cut off John in case he

gave offense, but Peter was here instructed that in case his own feet led him astray, led him, for instance, into the company of drunkards and murderers, it would be better for him (Peter) to cut off his own feet. To my mind the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters are filled with personal instructions to believers as to how they should keep each his own members in subjection, and as to his conduct toward all men. The beginning of the fifth chapter reads, "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying." I think that you are in a position to know the views held generally by Baptists upon that subject. Again, in the prayer which he taught them, they were to pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Has that prayer been answered? Did not his kingdom come upon the day of Pentecost? Is not his will done in earth, as it is in heaven? It seems to me that many Baptists are becoming blinded to the truth in all its purity. Many of them contend for predestination and the sovereignty of God in a limited degree, but cannot endure to think of him as an absolute sovereign, or an absolute monarch, who doeth his will in heaven and in earth. In the days of Peter many were carried away by his dissimulation. Thus it is also to-day. I also have been carried about by this error. Jesus taught, "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven." So it would seem that it would be some of his servants who should break his commandments and teach error. I think that the church sometimes may make mistakes in surgery, taking the directions for personal amputation and applying them to their brethren. If we take the beam out of our own eye perhaps we shall discover no mote in our brother's eye. The evidence with me grows day by day that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. I do realize at times that I am kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. We are assured that this is the last time. It will not be long to wait until we shall know even as we are known.

With love and best wishes, a little brother,

M. F. CULVER.

[It has long been our mind that the view of brother Culver regarding plucking out the eye, or cutting off the hand, is the correct one. We do not think that the Savior's words relate to what we generally call church discipline, neither does the Savior mean that literally the eye is to be plucked out or the hand cut off. Some fanatics in the past have thought so, and have acted upon their view literally, but to pluck out the eye will not destroy the lust within, to cut off the hand will not take away the desire after the evil that the hand may do. The meaning of the dear Redeemer, as it appears to us, is that no matter how dear anything may seem to us, or how needful it may appear to be, if that thing tends to lead us astray from the footsteps of the Master or the commandments of God, it is to be cast away from us, even though it may seem needful or innocent in itself. We are to hate that which interferes with our walking in the way of the Lord. It is in this sense that we are to hate father and mother, &c., if we would be disciples of the Lord. It is our mind, as it is our brother's, that these three chapters relate to each disciple personally rather than to public church

discipline. It must be remembered that the church, in her visibility, was not set up until the day of Pentecost. So also the prayer which the Lord taught his disciples has seemed to us to relate to personal needs and desires. Those to whom has been given a heavenly mind will desire that the will of God should be done in all times and in all places, in earth as well as in heaven. Chiefly such ones will desire that the will of God should be wrought out in their own selves, and by their own selves. They can be satisfied with nothing less than this, so they will not be satisfied while in this imperfect state, but will always be praying that God's will may be done in them and by them, but the perfect fulfillment will not be until they awake with his likeness. We think that the suggestions of our brother are well worthy of earnest consideration by us all. We know that very many brethren stand in doubt regarding the word "absolute," as applied to God's sovereignty and predestination. For ourself, we seldom use the word "absolute," not because we object to it, but because it seems needless to use it. It is sure that all that is embraced in the predestination of God is fixed and sure and settled, and that is all the word "absolute" means. Our predestination is as sure as we can make it, but we are feeble, finite creatures, and therefore our predestination often fails to be realized. But it cannot be that there shall be failure with the omnipotent and unchanging God, and to say that there cannot be failure in his predestination is to say that it is absolute, and God's predestination must cover and embrace all things, else there are domains where he does not reign, and who will dare say that he does not rule everywhere?—C.]

FAIRMONT, W. Va., April 11, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will try to write for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but as I am an unlearned person in many things you need not expect much; but still there is one thing I hope I know something about, and that is the great plan of salvation of God our Savior. The great plan of salvation, where did it originate? Did it spring from mortal man? No. Did it spring from the hills? No. Then where did it come from? Let us see. Jonah said, "Salvation is of the Lord," and it is true. It is vain for us to look to the hills for salvation, for salvation cometh not from the hills. I hope this is what I have been taught to know. This is one thing that is taught to God's children. All thy children shall be taught of God, and great shall be the peace of thy children in righteousness. Then salvation is of the Lord indeed. God is a God of salvation and love; man is a creature full of pride, enmity and hatred against the salvation of God; he does not love God, neither his salvation, but is at enmity against God; his carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Now for man to think he can make his peace with God is vain, because he is enmity against him, and his carnal mind cannot be subject to his law. Again, salvation is the gift of God; he gives salvation to his people. We do not get it by labor, nor for something we do, but God gives it free to us. Salvation! what a joyful sound! "Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to-day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace." Who is it that is going to show

them this salvation? It is the Lord, who is the author of salvation. What were the children of Israel commanded to do? Was it commanded of them to go to work and perform some good thing? O no, that was not the command; it was to stand still and hold their peace and see what the Lord was going to do for them. He was going to fight for them and to show them his salvation, and all this was to the children of Israel, not to any other people, and this was not to make them children, but they were children already, so he sendeth his Spirit into his children's hearts, crying, Abba, Father; not to make them sons, but because they are sons. God has his own time and day to do his work and to show his salvation to spiritual Israel. "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." We are able to sing this song, it is in the land of Judah. Christ came from the tribe of Judah, so we sing this song in Christ. We rejoice in him, he is our song, he has redeemed us by his precious blood out of every kindred, people and nation. O how sweet is this song to God's children. "We have a strong city." Already have it; we do not go to build it. Ye are a city set on a hill, said Christ to his disciples. Christ built his church, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against it, for it is a strong city. The enemy cannot beat down this salvation of walls and bulwarks; O no, it is all of God, and man is the partaker of it when God gives it to him. Abraham saw the day of the Lord: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad."—John viii. 56. David said, "Salvation belongeth unto the Lord." "That I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation." "Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages." —Isaiah xlix. 8. God is high and lofty, his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; it is not left to other people. Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, said Christ to his disciples, but unto them on the other hand it is not given, not left to others. He saves his people with an everlasting salvation. Christ thanked his Father that these things were hid from the wise and prudent, but revealed unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. So man is blind, he cannot see the right way; he knows not the way to the city; he must be brought by a way he knew not.

I will close. Do with this as you please. Correct all mistakes if printed.

Your unworthy brother,

JAMES W. LINN.

LANHAM, W. Va., Jan. 15, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—You will find inclosed a letter to me from sister Pultz, which I feel would be interesting to all of like precious faith. Her spiritual mind leads her beside the still waters and causes her to lie down in the green pastures of God's never-ending love, there to muse on the sovereignty of our eternal God. J. W. McCLANAHAN.

WHEELING, W. Va., Dec. 5, 1912.

ELDER J. W. McCLANAHAN—DEAR BROTHER:—I feel impressed to write you again. My mind often goes out in love and fellowship for our sent ministers. I love to meditate on the important fact

that you are chosen and qualified and sent of our blessed Lord. Ye are the salt of the earth. We hope that it is the Spirit of our Lord which gives the saltiness to the salt. I know that you all must fully realize this every time you go forth to preach and to teach in his dear name. How good and gracious the Lord is; he not only comforts his chosen through the word, but comforts those who proclaim it. Dear brother, I hardly know what it is that I want to say to you. There is a felt need in my heart for the comfort of your fellowship and christian sympathy, yet I cannot as yet express what this need is, but I am glad to believe that God knows and can direct my mind into it. Since you were last here I have been led about, and, I do hope, instructed in the righteous dealing of our just and holy God. I have been led in ways that revealed my total depravity. I have seen myself all vile and all vain. I read sister McKinney's letter to Elder Chick in the last number of the SIGNS. She says she is so tempted and tried, so weak and helpless, she must continually call upon God for mercy to her, a sinner. It is her cry in the night and in the morning, and often when in company in her heart she is crying to God to be merciful to her. As I read her words my tears flowed; she was telling my own feelings. I thought of the many times this cry goes out from a despairing heart. Sometimes I wonder if I know anything at all about the character or the divine attributes of our God. I have lately questioned if it were all hearsay with me. My very soul cries out for a closer walk with God, a calm and heavenly frame; a light to shine upon the road that leads me to the Lamb. I would suppose that a close walk with God would be a joyous and happy walk, a calm and heavenly frame, yet we are taught that in the world we shall have tribulation, but in him peace. It is true there is peace in believing that he is our Savior, and that his blood cleanses us from all sin in his sight or his righteousness, but our trouble is that we want to be clean in our own sight.

I have been reading "Grace Abounding," by Bunyan. I awoke this morning, and the first thing I became conscious of was my nothingness. I had dreamed that as I lay on my bed sick a minister stood in the room preaching. I could not recall a word he said in his sermon, but distinctly remembered that he had stopped in his sermon and came and placed my head more comfortably on my pillow. After I awoke and mused upon this dream I felt that I was all vanity; I thought not of spiritual things, but could be well pleased with personal kindness. Then these words came suddenly: "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," and I remember that it is said, A good man's steps are ordered of the Lord. As I tried to understand this I thought of you; you seemed to come into my mind with comfort. I recalled that I had started to write this letter to you last Thursday; this is now the 11th. I felt cast down and helpless in every way. As I said, I began to read Bunyan's experience, and found my own, especially in these words of his: "There fell upon me a great cloud of darkness, which did so hide me from the things of God and Christ that I was as if I had never seen or known them in my life. I was also so overrun in my soul with a senseless, heartless frame of spirit that I could not feel my soul to move or stir after grace and life by Christ." But he was delivered from this condition by the application of these words: "I must go to Jesus."

He asked his wife if there ever was such Scripture. She could not tell. Then as he sat musing Hebrews xii. 22, came suddenly into his mind, and he was filled with joy. As I read this I said, O that our blessed Lord would so manifest himself to me. I then turned to his call to the ministry, and read on to where he expresses his belief in his gift in these words: "And I thank God he gave unto me some measure of bowels and pity for their souls." As I read those words my tears began to flow; I thought I began to understand now that I was starving for spiritual food, and I thought of the Master's words to Peter: Feed my sheep; feed my lambs. This brought to remembrance what Elder Durand had once written in a letter to me: he felt discouraged at times, and almost doubted his call to the ministry; he would feel like giving it up altogether, but again when he heard the bleating of the lambs, and saw the hungry looks—I read no further for awhile, my tears blinded me so; I wept a long time; his words touched the tenderest spot in my heart. As I write I am blinded by tears. I have not a soul to speak to about such things, my only resource is that of pen and ink. Often Saturdays and Sundays I watch the clock for the time of our usual appointments. I think of our ministers standing before their flock. I am thankful to tell you that there have been times when you were as an earnest prayer to God in my lonely heart that he would be your mouth and wisdom. Then would come the desire that you might remember me when you prayed, not audibly, but in your heart, but I know that God alone can give me a place among you. It is in his name only that I would dare ask a place in his congregation. As I view myself I would have to stand afar off and continually cry, Unclean, unclean. I love to think of our blessed Savior when the poor leper came kneeling at his feet, saying, Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean; and he put forth his hand and touched him, saying, I will, be thou clean. Although the poor leper was unclean, he touched him with his hand. This portion has been made sweet to my soul; I have been permitted to view much of our Lord's graciousness in it. Also, when the centurian came to him about his servant, he said, I will come and heal him. I have many times lingered long, looking at and reading over again and again these gracious words; they are as a fountain of graciousness; not so much the words, but the Source from which they proceed. I sometimes think that he does adorn his words or sayings with a portion of his own gracious majesty. There have been a few times when the name "Jesus" has seemed to sparkle and radiate into my heart until I could not take my eyes off from it; I wanted to clasp it to my heart and wear it always. Another word has been graven in my heart deeply and tenderly, it is the name "saints." Once a friend asked me in writing why I applied that name to the Old School Baptists, as she did not think there were any on earth worthy to be called by that name. I wrote in reply that I had been impressed to call them that from the way the name had appealed to me whenever I came across it in the New Testament; as often as I saw the word I seemed to be chained to it, as if it laid hold of me and all of our people and embraced us. Not until it had fastened itself to me did I ever claim it for our church. I told her that we were called to be saints, and our gracious Master gave me Scripture to prove it to her. I know not whether she was convinced or

not, but she has never mentioned the matter since. There was a time when the subject of the new birth, or regeneration, seemed very obnoxious to my husband. The thought that we should claim that the word of God or the Scriptures could only be rightly understood by the direct revelation of God was hateful to him. I seldom ever spoke of those things in his presence, but one day as we sat at the dinner meal it was brought up, I know not how, but with it came his usual anger. I cannot tell what happened, or how I came to open my mouth and speak the words that were given me from the Scripture. I seemed to lose sight of myself altogether in my zeal to defend these truths. I lost all sense of fear, and spoke, I am sure, as I never spoke before or since. When I had finished, and came to myself, I felt that I had spoken in an unusually loud voice, and I was at once reminded of Elizabeth when the virgin Mary visited her. My husband sat looking at me pleasantly, when I had thought he would be furious at my boldness. From that time on he has never contradicted those things, and when he hears the worldly-wise telling of their work for Jesus he tells them that they know nothing about religion, and cannot know unless they have been born again. He has asked several of them to come to our house and hear me explain it to them, but as yet not one of them has accepted his invitation. Surely the Lord used me to convince him of the necessity of the new birth, but whether he would be pleased to use me to such purpose again I know not. From that day to this my husband respects my views, and he respects our doctrine and our people. He is usually willing for me to sit and write hour after hour, and is ever willing to accommodate any of our ministers with a place to preach if they should come to Wheeling. He says he cannot understand why our people cannot have a church here as well as at other places. He does not fully realize that it takes a few members to organize a church. As I view the people of this city the outlook is discouraging for members of the body of Christ here.

Dear brother, I must draw to a close. I had not thought to write to such length. If you should visit your son in Belair please come and spend all the time you can with us; I would feel it a great blessing to have you under our roof. My health is worse than when you were here before; I would fear to venture away from home, at least to try to walk any distance. My heart is so very weak the doctor says it is liable to stop altogether at any time. I do not feel at all affrighted at this near approach of death. It is not that I feel fit to die, but the sting of death has been taken away. For many years, even after becoming a member of the church, death was a terror to me; I thought of the time of dissolution with mortal dread, but now when I find that this has all been removed I do feel my heart glow in thankfulness to God. I am at this time able to be up all day, and I do a little light housework. My husband is in his usual health. I hope you and your good wife are blessed with health and are in the comfort of the Holy Spirit. Write if you should feel inclined.

With warmest regard for yourself and wife and family, I am your unworthy sister,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

GOD'S WITNESSES.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Though I have never seen you, I love you for the comforting messages you send out to the children of God, and I send you this imperfect article. I try to write but seldom. Do with it as seems best to you.

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." —Acts i. 8. These words were spoken by the Savior the last time he met with his disciples before his ascension to glory. The thought that is in this is as to the witnesses of Jesus Christ testifying of his truth. An acceptable witness must be one who knows the truth of what he affirms. The disciples were to bear testimony unto the truth that Jesus had taught them. I think that all the Lord's dear children are to be witnesses for him. As to be a competent witness one must know the things of which he testifies, so the witnesses for Christ must have an experimental knowledge of him. The disciples were to testify of him. Jesus imparted the knowledge of himself to them, so that they were qualified to bear testimony to the truth. While he was teaching his disciples there was a large number of people who saw him and heard him talk of his wondrous doctrine, who saw many of his wonderful miracles performed, and still they did not know him as the Son of God. They saw him only as the son of Joseph and Mary, living with his parents in that mean little village of Nazareth, and they asked, Can anything good come out of Nazareth? So that what the unbelieving Jews saw and heard did not qualify them to be competent witnesses as to who Jesus really was. Jesus said unto his disciples, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but unto them it is not given. A mystery is defined to be something that is hidden from view. There must be a revelation of that mystery to the soul before the sinner can understand the plan of salvation. By the inward teaching of the Spirit is this mystery revealed to him which had been hidden for ages and from generations, as Paul declares, but is now made manifest to his saints. That mystery embraced the eternal Sonship of Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Savior of sinners. The fountain of his cleansing blood is that which cleanses them from all sin. As they continue to grow in knowledge they see that this comes to them through electing love, and that God had chosen them in Christ before the foundation of the world. Now how wonderful this all appears to one who receives this revelation. Sometimes they are compelled to exclaim, Can it be possible that this wonderful choice embraces such a sinner as I feel myself to be? But to them faith is given to embrace the dear Savior; then all is well with the soul, joy takes the place of sorrow, and the soul rises to embrace its dearest Lord, then there enters into the soul sweet spiritual rest. How unspeakably precious is that peace or rest. I humbly hope this poor sinner experienced that joy and peace more than fifty years ago. I could not tell how great and glorious that peace was, but every one to whom this peace has been revealed knows something of its glory and power. Such characters are competent witnesses for the Lord; they know of that of which they testify. If we are faithful to our God and Savior we will be found lifting our voices in defence of his truth; we will, with no uncertain sound, declare that our God is

sovereign, and that he does his pleasure. We shall declare that Jesus is a complete Savior, that salvation is by grace alone, and not by works of righteousness which we have done. Such testimony may bring to us loss of friends, and our names may be cast out as evil by the world that despises this doctrine, but God will be our friend, and that is far better than all the praise of the world; so let us be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

Dear brethren and sisters, readers of that faithful witness, the SIGNS, I submit these imperfect thoughts to you. I will close by giving a few words uttered by a lady who lay dying, and which I read in her obituary. Testifying on her dying bed to a friend by her side, she said: "Is this dying? Why, this is beautiful. You need never be afraid to die." Was not that blessed testimony?

E. S. CULY.

FRANKLIN, Ohio, June 1, 1913.

CLAY, La., May 1, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending you the narrative of the experience of sister Lula Richard, with whom I have been acquainted for seven or eight years. She was a Missionary Baptist until a few years ago, and hated the Primitive Baptist doctrine. But, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." If you see fit you may publish this in the SIGNS; I leave it to your judgment. I receive the SIGNS regularly, and greatly enjoy reading it. I also hand it to sister Richard, and it seems to be a great comfort to her.

This is from one of the least of God's saints, if one at all,

J. R. CHANDLER.

CLAY, La., April 30, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—By request of a brother I will try to relate some of my experience as best I can, and trust that God will so direct my mind that I may write the truth. To begin, I will say that from early childhood I had serious thoughts about dying, so when about fourteen years of age I united with the Missionary Baptists at Ellerslie, Ga. I was satisfied, and thought I was a christian, and really was as good as I wanted to be, and lived in that state of mind for about fourteen years. In the summer of 1908 I found myself in an awful condition before God. I felt to be the vilest and most corrupt being on earth, but I had no idea then that it was the Lord working within me. I tried to go to God in prayer, but it seemed that every word I would utter fell to the ground, and in my feelings instead of getting better I was becoming worse all the time. I felt my doom was sealed, and that eternal destruction was my portion, and O the despair of my soul. The thought of being banished from the presence of the blessed Son of God to all eternity into everlasting misery and woe was awful indeed. One day I was feeling so badly that it seemed I could not live. I thought I would try to pray once more, but feared that it would do no good, but I just must do something; and when upon my knees trying to pray, begging God for mercy, I heard a voice saying, There is yet hope, and where despair and misery were but a few moments before, now there was happiness and perfect peace. I felt that this was the voice of the blessed Son of God that had spoken peace to my soul, and it seemed that I wanted to sing praises to my God forever. I could say, like Ruth, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee. But after

awhile doubts and fears began to spring up in my mind, and I would think, Surely one so pure and holy as Jesus would not stoop so low as to even think of one so corrupt as I; it seemed too much for me to claim. At times after this I would feel that I was in the light, and would have a season of rejoicing. Time went on, and I began to have a desire and, I trust, an impression from the Lord to go to the church and live with God's people. I believe the Lord showed me that there was no food for me in the Missionary ranks, but I did not know where to go. Then I chanced to be in company with Elder J. R. Chandler, and I related to him my experience. He said that just such as I would find a welcome with them, and be gladly received. I must say his words gave me more comfort than anything I had ever heard since, as I trust, Jesus spoke peace to my soul. I had never been to a Primitive Baptist meeting, so the first opportunity I had I went, and when the door of the church was opened for the reception of members I offered myself to them for membership, although feeling unworthy, and tried to tell them my experience, and was received. That was on Saturday before the third Sunday in March of the present year. On Sunday I listened to the most powerful sermon I had ever heard, from the pastor, Elder Chandler. It seemed that all he said was directly to me, and I rejoiced. It seemed that I could feel the very presence of the Lord in our midst. The weather not being suitable, I was not baptized until the third Sunday in April. It was a beautiful morning as we all gathered at the baptismal waters, and I was baptized in the fellowship of Ephesus Church, Lincoln Parish, La., by the pastor, Elder Chandler. As I stepped into the water all the cares of this world seemed to be taken away, and I believe that I found joy in obeying the command of our blessed Savior; but since then I have been in the dark most of the time, and wonder if I did right, as every one seems to be so much better than I am.

If you think this worthy of publication you may publish it, but if not, all will be right with me. I greatly enjoy reading the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES; it is a great comfort to me. I will say to the dear kindred in Christ, Write on, for you greatly comfort many of the weary pilgrims in this world of sin and sorrow.

From a sinner saved by grace and mercy, if saved at all,

LULA RICHARD.

FLEMINGTON, New Jersey.

DEAR ELDER KER:—Somehow I feel drawn to write a few lines to my kindred (I hope) at New Vernon, and to all who were gathered there from different parts of the country. I was very glad to be there with them, and as I gazed around the meetinghouse I saw some faces whose names I could not recall, yet they looked pleasant to me, and I thought that we were all one in spirit, even though we knew not each other's name. The meetinghouse being small, I heard better than usual, and wonderful things I heard, and was highly entertained. I think I was as near being satisfied as it is possible to be in this world. Dear friends, it had been so long since I had a crumb from the Master's table that I was hungry, and so the food was sweet to my taste, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. I thought how good was our Lord to give me, even me, a taste of this heavenly manna. I felt very humble and altogether unworthy of his notice, yet it seemed good in his sight to give me a crumb. The Lord gave the food to his undershepherds to distribute

among the sheep, as he did when on earth. I desire to thank all the dear brethren at New Vernon for their kindness to me in every way; I appreciate it with all my heart, and would love to return it. I fully believe that it was a pleasure to them, and that they felt it was "more blessed to give than to receive." I felt we were all one family, and that it made no difference where our home on earth was, we would eventually arrive at the home our Lord had gone to prepare for us, and so we would ever dwell together and be with our Lord for evermore; no more parting. I desire to thank the undershepherds, but I know they do not want me to, because they, as I do, believe the ability is of the great Shepherd of all, still I want them to know that their words to me were the "joyful sound," and I thank them for the effort to make me hear. Dear friends, it is my desire to love this great Shepherd above everything here below or in heaven above, and to honor him and glorify him in every way and at all times, and to find him the chiefest among ten thousand and the One altogether lovely, and my all in all. I felt sad when the hour of parting came, but thought it would not be for long, because "we nightly pitch our moving tent a day's march nearer home," and soon we would all meet there to part no more. O I hope I may meet there with you. Dear friends, since my return home I am lonely and feel to be a stranger; I do not understand the language, it is a foreign tongue. There is none here of my faith (I think there is one) so I feel to be alone indeed. I hear things said against my Lord (because speaking against this doctrine is speaking against him, for is he not the founder of it?) and it hurts me very much to hear it; and more than all because I once said hard things against it myself. This way is not one that we would choose ourselves, because we never could find it. I am sorry that I once hated this doctrine of our Lord, but he drew me and I followed on, and now it is my greatest comfort, because he revealed the truth, and the things I once hated I now love, and whereas I was once blind now I see.

I desire to say to my dear brethren at Hopewell that I was glad to meet so many of you at the association, and hope to meet you again some time during the summer, the Lord willing.

Dear Elder Ker, on account of my pastor's feebleness I am sending these lines to you, and if you think they will do to publish in the SIGNS you may do so. I desire to thank the dear friends who were so kind, and thought that instead of writing to them personally I would write to all in one letter and publish it in the SIGNS. If you do not think the letter worthy you may throw it in the waste-basket and it will be all right.

I hope this may find you and sister Ker in the best of health.

Sincerely, but unworthily,

MARY E. FISHER.

FREDERICKTOWN, Mo., Dec. 6, 1912.

DEAR EDITORS:—I would like to write and tell you how much I enjoy reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as I have heard no preaching for about fourteen years, only what I get through my papers. I am quite deaf now and could not hear preaching if we had a preacher. I have often wondered why people rather believe a lie than the truth, but it is no wonder when we think of our mother Eve in the garden of Eden; she believed a lie instead of God.

With love for the truth as it is in Jesus,

VIRGINIA F. HOLLADAY.

HENDRIX, Okla., May 11, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find two dollars, for which please send us the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We are here in Oklahoma, where we do not hear preaching, and if there are any Old School Baptists in this country we do not know where to find them. I think there are a few, for some one sent me the paper to read, and I know it must have been an Old School Baptist or he would not have the SIGNS, for it advocates the doctrine that the Baptists have taught as far back as I can remember. I wish the brethren would write us and let us know if we can find any preaching near us.

(MRS.) MALISSA CLAY.

CALVERT CITY, Ky., Feb. 4, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a money order for two dollars, to pay for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the year 1913. I have received three copies of the SIGNS since brother Perkins stopped the *Gospel News*, which I have been taking ever since he began publishing it. My time for the *Gospel News* expires March 1st, and I do not want to miss a copy of the SIGNS. I am seventy-seven years old, and live so far from the church I hardly ever get to hear any preaching, and I find comfort in reading my papers. I firmly believe the doctrine taught in the SIGNS, and hope to be able to read it as long as I live. May the Lord bless and be with you for evermore, is the prayer of your sister in hope,

ELIZA A. PHELPS.

PALO ALTO, Cal., Jan. 9, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—My time for the renewal of my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is past due, so find inclosed two dollars for another year. I do not want to miss one number, as they are so full of love and truth. The letters are of much comfort to me, for darkness surrounds me most of the time. I often feel that the Lord has forsaken me, and at the same time I know I do not deserve anything good from him. I want to say that the SIGNS is getting better all the time, if possible. I hope the writers may be permitted to continue in strength and grace, that they may be able to help the little weak ones like myself.

Yours in hope,

FLORENCE SCHROEDER.

GRANITE, Okla., Feb. 22, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have had so much to look after that I have neglected my paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that is the only bell I have to follow the flock by. I was raised and taught to despise the Old Baptists by Missionary people, and was driven through misfortunes and downfalls to what was termed "the wild west," among the Indians. I have been here over twenty-five years, but do not want to lose the flock yet. As the writers in the SIGNS are the only people I ever read after who explain Scripture the way I understand it, I want my subscription set forward another year.

JACK IRWIN.

FIRST VOLUME OF EDITORIALS EXHAUSTED.

As our supply of the first volume of Editorials is exhausted, we will be unable to fill any more orders for them, but have quite a number of the second volume left, which we are closing out at seventy-five cents each. As neither of these volumes was electrotyped, we will not be able to supply either volume after what is left of the second volume is disposed of. Address all orders to

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1913.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

BRIEF REPLIES TO REQUESTS FOR VIEWS.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—If you feel like it, and have the time to do so, I would greatly appreciate an exposition from your pen of Paul's language as found in Philippians i. 15-18, particularly the eighteenth verse.

Your unworthy brother in hope,
J. H. McDONALD.

PUYALLUP, Wash., May 31, 1913.

Beginning at the twelfth verse in this chapter, it will be noted that the apostle refers to his afflictions, which here mean his captivity and imprisonment at Rome, and which had come upon him solely because he preached Jesus Christ as the only Savior, and declared that there was no salvation in Jewish rites nor in any heathen gods. Of these, his persecutions, his brethren at Philippi had heard evidently, and because of this they would naturally be sad and oppressed. Now Paul, out of his captivity, writes to them not to be greatly troubled at these things which had befallen him, and in verses thirteen and fourteen he gives good reasons why they ought not to be troubled, but rather rejoice. He says that his bonds are manifest in the palace of Cæsar, and in all other places as well. But mark, it is his bonds in Christ. Thousands of other men were in bonds as well as he, and their bonds were also known more or less in the palace and among all other men. Some were criminals, and some were imprisoned as traitors. But while their bonds testified of their crimes, the bonds of Paul testified of Christ, whom he preached, and for whose sake he suffered this imprisonment. This also was known in the palace and among all other men. Now since in his captivity Christ was magnified, and his name set forth among men, Paul rejoiced, and he exhorted his brethren at Philippi to do the same. If Christ was glorified in him when he was free, that was well indeed, but if by his imprisonment and suffering Christ should be still more magnified, that also was well. It was to be rejoiced over, and not be an occasion of sorrow. How completely Paul was swallowed up in the one desire to glorify the Lord, whether it should be by life or by death, and this he would have to be the feeling of all his brethren; and more than this, he declares that many of the brethren, beholding his bonds, had become much more bold themselves in testifying of Christ. Surely all this ought to strengthen and console his brethren who sorrowed because they had heard of his bondage and imprisonment.

He proceeds in the next verses to speak of two ways in which Christ is preached, or rather, of two motives which actuate those who set forth his name, and to many minds there has seemed to be a difficulty in what follows, yet after all the language seems clear. Some, he said, preach Christ, even of envy and strife, supposing to add affliction to my bonds, while the others preach Christ of good will, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel. It is inconceivable that he should mean here that any of the brethren in Christ should

preach Christ of envy and strife, or that they should desire to so set forth Christ as to add to the sufferings of Paul. Brethren in Christ, who loved him and his ministers, would preach Christ of good will, good will to the cause, and to him the apostle of the Lord. Those who preached Christ thinking to add afflictions to his bonds, it seems clear to us were the enemies of Paul and of the gospel among the Jews, his accusers at Rome, who went about in their envy and strife endeavoring to create still further prejudice and ill will against him, by proclaiming everywhere that he professed to be the servant of Christ who had been crucified and who, they would say, claimed to be a king, thus being a traitor to Cæsar at Rome. This was their aim. But Paul declares that he is still glad that Christ is preached, even though the motive of these men was evil. It might well be that some who were inquiring after the way of life would hear what these false accusers said, and even in their malignant testimony God would preserve some portion of truth, which falling upon the ears of these inquirers would arrest their attention, and so bring them to inquire still further concerning this man Paul and his doctrine, and so these inquirers would be brought to hear more clearly the testimony of Paul himself, and come to find in the Christ whom he preached all that their souls desired, and thus the rage of men would be overruled to the glory of Christ and the good of those who were seeking after the truth. Thus these evil men should work out the purposes of God, under his overruling power, though they meant it not so. In verses eighteen and nineteen Paul sums the matter up, and declares that he is glad that whether in pretense or in truth Christ is preached, and therein he declares that he rejoiced and would rejoice. He could well rejoice in the testimony to Christ of those who love him, both for their sake and for the sake of the cause in general, and he could well rejoice to bear additional bonds through the rage of his and the Lord's adversaries, if the end should be that the name of Christ should in this way be also magnified. He declares that in every way Christ was magnified. Nothing else mattered if this end was attained.

OUR brother, Wilson Brock, of Covin, Ala., in a letter dated February 9th, 1913, asks that we say something through the SIGNS upon the words found in Hebrews i. 14, which read thus: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"

If the Scriptures assert anything plainly it is the truth that there is an order of beings higher than men, and invisible to men, who are called angels. Many appearances of these higher beings are recorded in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. It would extend these remarks to a length altogether unreasonable to call up all the places in the Old Testament in which angels are named, so we will just instance a few as we pass on. Two angels appeared to Abraham on the plains of Mamre. An angel appeared to Manoah and his wife, and ascended in a flame of fire out of their sight. An angel stood over against Joshua, saying that he was the captain of the hosts of the Lord. There is no evidence that these, and many other instances, were appearances of the Lord Jesus Christ, as some have thought. Indeed, in those instances where two or more angels appeared this could not be the case, and it is in no place said that the Lord Jesus Christ ever appeared to

men until the fullness of time came, when he took upon him the seed of Abraham, and was found in fashion as a man. In all these appearances of angels some message from God was brought to those to whom they appeared, so that the words of the text were abundantly justified by the records of the Old Testament. In the New Testament frequent references to angels are also found. An angel announced the birth of the promised Savior to Mary, his mother. Angels came and ministered to the blessed Redeemer after the temptation in the wilderness. An angel appeared to the disciples after his ascension, as they stood gazing up into heaven, saying that this same Jesus should come again. Angels were at the tomb of the Savior when the disciples came to it at the first. It is needless perhaps to refer to other instances of the coming of angels while the Savior was in the flesh, and in the New Testament, as well as the Old, the recorded appearing of angels was always to deliver some message, or to minister in some way to men. The text to which our brother has called attention only, as it were, sums up all that is declared concerning angels in the whole Bible. The theme of this chapter is the exaltation and glorifying of the Son of God and the Son of man, and the apostle declares that he is exalted higher than the angels. He has a more excellent name than they. He was begotten of God, which is not true of the angels. To the angels he has not said, Thou art my son; and of the Son he said, Let all the angels of God worship him; while angels are only ministers of his; but to the Son he has said, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; and to the angels he has not said at any time, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. Thus our blessed Lord is exalted far above not only men, but above all angels. In the text the apostle declares that angels, all of them, are servants of our blessed Lord to the church, so that these highest of all created intelligences minister to the chosen heirs of promise. How great the love of God to poor, sinful men, which not only gave his Son to die for his chosen, but also bestowed upon them the ministration of the angelic host as well, and from these words of the apostle, as well as from the fact that angels ministered to the blessed Son of God in the days of his flesh, we must rejoice to believe that angels also now do minister to the redeemed of the Lord effectually and comfortingly, although in ways past our comprehension.

PLATTSBURG, Mo., Jan. 21, 1913.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR FRIEND:—As a reader of the SIGNS I would like your opinion as to what was the condition of Adam before the fall, and afterwards. Please answer through the SIGNS.

S. H. MCWILLIAMS.

As will be noticed, this request has been by us for the past six months. Our delay in replying has not arisen out of any indifference to the request of our friend, but because of our stay at the hospital, and our slowly recovering strength since then, and because we have a great many such requests on hand, some of which are still unanswered. Besides, it is often the case that we do not feel to have any special understanding of Scriptures referred to us, and cannot undertake to write about that which does not seem clear to our own mind. We hope that all will believe that we are never indifferent when such requests come to us.

Now, as regards the above question, we will say, first of all, that our mere opinion can be of no worth regarding this or any

other scriptural truth. No one can ever know anything more about this matter than is declared in the Scriptures, and so we will here call attention to some things that are said in them. First, it is said that man was created out of the dust of the ground, therefore he was a creature, and not a son of God, and was of the earth, and not from heaven. It is also said that he was made upright, and he was pronounced by his Creator to be good. He was not sinful, neither was he spiritual. Of him in contrast with the second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ, it is said that he was made a living soul, while the second Adam was a quickening Spirit. He was natural, while the second Adam was the Lord from heaven. Very many inferences have been drawn from these truths, and from what men have thought was right and reasonable concerning Adam before he fell, but inferences are not plain Bible statements, and may have truth in them, and may not as well. Many brethren have thought it right to say that he was made "able to stand, but liable to fall." We know that he was made upright, and that he did fall. But it is nowhere in the word said that he was made able to stand, neither is the language used in the Scriptures that he was liable to fall. Both these statements are only the conclusions which seem reasonable to some men. But the things which we have written above are the plain statements of the Bible, and we have felt satisfied with them, and have not felt very much interested in discussions about what at best can only be the speculations of finite men.

The Scriptures also declare some things plainly as to the condition of Adam and all his family after the fall. To quote all they say of this matter would fill a dozen columns, and we can only refer to a few of them here. He was the subject of death after the fall. He was driven out of the garden in Eden, and could never enter that blessed abode afterwards because the flaming sword was in the way. He was to eat his bread in the sweat of his face, and must contend against briars and thorns to do so. He was alienated from God by wicked works. He was dead in trespasses and sins. He had now become an enemy to God. He was under condemnation, and the curse of the broken law abided against him. When it is said that he was dead in sin all that is written in the first two chapters of Romans concerning mankind is involved. God now was not in all his thoughts. His feet became swift to shed blood. His heart had now become a cage of unclean birds, among whom dwelt not one clean bird. These things, and hundreds of others of a similar character, do the Scriptures say of him as regards his condition after the fall. It is of no use to add any more to the above. We will refer to one concluding thought, viz., that in this fallen condition there was no power or desire left in him by which he could attain to righteousness again, and so we are shut up to the truth that if redeemed at all unto God, it must be by an act of sovereign grace working according to divine power, and so we have the testimony of the word of God that there is out of this foul mass of mankind an election of grace who are redeemed and who shall inherit the world of glory, while the rest of mankind are in justice left to the everlasting punishment which the dear Savior declared was their portion. C.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware Association, now in session with the Cow Marsh Church, to the sister churches and the associations with which we correspond, greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—In the favor and mercy of the gracious Master we have been blessed to mingle together again in love and fellowship. Your messages and messengers have come laden with the glad tidings of salvation by grace alone through the atoning blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and the response has been, It is good to be here.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Salem Church, at Philadelphia, Pa., in May, 1914, when and where we hope to receive your messages and hear your messengers again.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder S. H. Durand, June 19th, 1913, at the home of the bride's mother, Philadelphia, Pa., Arlington Lee Davis and Marion Willard Trego.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at his residence, Saturday p. m., March 29th, 1913, George M. Conner and Mrs. Mary D. Brewster, both of Hopewell, N. J.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

G. C. Jordan, Ark., $1.00; Mary Maddock, Ont., $1.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

William Hastings departed this life March 26th, 1913, at his home near Fruitland, Wicomico Co., Md. I have not the date of his birth, but suppose he was about 70 years of age. He was married Sept. 15th, 1867, and five children were the fruit of that union, two sons and three daughters. Three daughters, one son and his lonely and broken-hearted widow survive him, together with three brothers, one sister and the church, of which he was a faithful and humble member. He was entangled with other religious ideas for several years, but was brought to see that he was not in his Father's house and with his people, and in his inquiries he was soon shown the house that Wisdom builded, with her seven pillars shining, and he was soon attracted by her beauty, and he and his dear companion came to the church at Nassaongo, near Salisbury, March 28th, 1886, and were gladly and unanimously received, and baptized by the writer, and he adorned the profession until the day of his death. His seat is now vacant, but whenever he was not in his seat we felt sad, knowing that something was the matter.

His body was taken to the meetinghouse at Nassaongo, and Elder A. B. Francis preached a most wonderful and comforting sermon, which did us all good, assisted by the writer. His body was then consigned to the earth from whence it came, in the little cemetery beside the meetinghouse, to rest until the great day when the trump of God shall sound and the archangel's voice is heard, then shall it come forth in its immortal beauty. I would say to sister Hastings that she has my heartfelt sympathy, as I am under that same cloud myself. May the Lord bless the family and the church in his own peculiar way, to his own glory. T. M. POULSON.

MY dear uncle, **William Robinson,** died at his home near Forest Hill, Md., June 11th, 1913, aged 76 years. His wife, to whom he was married in early life, was Margaret Varnes, who preceded him to the tomb about five months. Their son and only child, John W. Robinson, feels to be bereaved indeed in being called to part with both mother and father in so short a time. May the God of the fatherless be his stay and comfort. Uncle William was not a member of the visible church, but he left every evidence of having been with Jesus and learned of him. His constant theme during the last few months of his life was the love and mercy and goodness of God. Such perfect trust and sweet reconciliation to the will of the Lord I never before witnessed. Though a great sufferer from cancer of the face, yet he never complained, and seldom spoke of his bodily ailments unless questioned about them. Once, some months before the end, he said to me: "If it were the Lord's

will I should be glad to go now, for I am weary; but if it is his will that I shall stay and suffer longer, then I am willing to stay and suffer, for I know there is some wise purpose in it." He talked much of how the goodness and protecting care of God had followed him all his life, shielding him from a thousand dangers, seen and unseen. "And now," he said, "seeing that I have received nothing but good from the hand of the Lord during my whole life, shall I repine because he now lays his afflicting hand upon me for a little season? God forbid that I should do so. Even this affliction has proven a blessing to me, and I would have nothing different if I could." I never talked with one who had a clearer view of the plan of salvation by grace alone, without the aid of the creature. In self he could see nothing but sin, and no Savior but one who saves to the uttermost could be of any help to him. Sometimes when talking of these things his face would light up with what appeared to me a halo of glory, which was very wonderful, and I would think, Surely the Lord is in this place. Besides the son, he leaves to mourn their loss one grandson, one brother and one sister, a large number of nieces and nephews, together with the whole community in which he lived, where he was held in high esteem. We miss beyond expression the dear uncle and aunt with whom we have for so many years held sweet intercourse, but desire to bow in humble submission to the will of God.

On the 13th day of June his body was laid to rest beside that of his wife in the Methodist cemetery at Forest Hill, the Methodist minister officiating.

JENNIE GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md.

Benjamin W. Mace, of Colwyn, Delaware Co., Pa., died Tuesday, June 17th, 1913, aged 49 years. Coming in contact with a live electric wire while on a ladder sixteen feet above the ground, he was fatally shocked by the powerful current and crushed by the fall, dying three hours after the accident. Mr. Mace was the beloved son of the late John, and Catherine Mace, members of the well known Woolford family, of the eastern shore of Maryland. He was highly esteemed and loved in the community where he lived, and by all who knew him. He was not a member of the church of our faith and order, but his sympathies and his interest were with us. He leaves a loving wife, one child, his mother, one sister and three brothers, with a number of other relatives and friends, to mourn their loss.

Funeral services were held at his late residence Thursday evening. The writer read and spoke from the forty-sixth Psalm, and on Friday his body was laid away in the cemetery at Rosemont, N. J.

We know not the day or the hour of our appointed departure from the scenes of this life.

B. F. COULTER.

MEETINGS.

THE Red River Association will be held with the church called Tykes Grove, four and one-half miles east of Cedar Hill, Robertson Co., Tenn., on the L. & N. R. R., the second Sunday, and Saturday before, in August, 1913. All sound Predestinarian Baptists are welcome.

E. J. ANDERSON, Moderator.

THE Siloam Association of Oregon and Washington will meet at Nesika, Lewis Co., Wash., commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in August, 1913. Those coming by rail will take the Tacoma & Eastern at Tacoma, Wash., and go to Morton, where they will be met with teams and conveyed to the place of meeting. All are cordially invited to attend.

SONORA A. HESS, Clerk of Association.

THE Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet with Spring Creek Church, near Stahl, Adair Co., Mo., in her fifty-ninth annual session, on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1913, and continue the two following days. The passenger train from the east that leaves Kirksville at 10:22 a. m. will be met at both Novinger and Stahl on Tuesday. The same train will be met Wednesday at Stahl. Also the train from the west, due at Stahl at 5:45 a. m. will be met at Stahl Wednesday. A cordial invitation is extended to all who believe in a God that is able to do his will without the aid of man.

S. B. JONES, Moderator.

H. C. CATE, Clerk.

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SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILLIAMSTON, N. C.

I find the postage on my book, "Day unto Day," to America is 9 pence (18 cents), and I thought it would be 6 pence, or at most 7 pence. I think on consideration, as the expense of publication has been very heavy, notwithstanding a most encouraging sale, I had better say I will send to any of your readers the half calf gilt edge edition for 5 shillings ($1.20), or the cloth edition for 4 shillings (96 cents) postage free.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 81. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1913. NO. 15.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May 20, 1913.

DEAR KINDRED IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—Here are some extracts from letters of sister Martha Young, of De Winton, Alberta. It is with much hesitancy that she has consented to have anything from her pen appear in print, but I feel there are some who will be glad to hear from her, some perhaps who have passed through the same trials and are far away from their kindred in Christ. She is the granddaughter of Elder Thomas McColl, whom I was favored to hear preach the unsearchable riches of Christ many years ago, and I well remember the enjoyment of it. Surely it was a feast, as well as my visit with his daughter, Mrs. Mary McCollum, who, with many other loved ones, has long since entered into rest It seems to me a great blessing to have mediums of correspondence, such as the SIGNS and *Landmark*, so that those most isolated and far from the assemblies of the saints can meet with them in communion, by winging words of love and sweet fellowship and in receiving responses in the same manner. We can but feel a tender sympathy for those so far removed from dear ones united in this most sacred tie, and often a message of love will seem to shorten the great distance and soothe the longing, sorrowing heart.

Affectionately,

BESSIE DURAND.

DE WINTON, Alberta, Aug. 18, 1911.

MISS BESSIE DURAND—MY DEAR SISTER:—Your letter came a short time ago, and I was much pleased to have those few lines from you. I seem to have known you since quite a child. I remember seeing you with my dear Aunt Mary when you were in Canada, and I think I have loved you ever since. I have always enjoyed your writings in the SIGNS. My dear father used to say I was much like his sister Mary. O, if I could but feel that I am as good as she, but I often feel there is nothing good in me; I cannot even think a good thought. I often feel very lonely, and to be so far away from the dear brethren and sisters is to me a great trial. We have been here ten years, and have not yet found a person who believes as we do. We are surely as a sparrow alone upon the housetop. My dear sister, I do thank you for writing to me; I feel to be such a poor

creature, unworthy of notice. But there is one part of the Scriptures that I can get hope from; it is this: Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. O how rejoiced I would be if we had some of them near us. But we believe there is ever a watchful eye over us, if we truly belong to the Lord's people, and we hope he will keep us in the right path.

February, 1912.—Your very welcome letter was gladly received, and I was so rejoiced to get it that if I could have taken wings and flown away to see you and hear dear Elder Durand preach the truth once more how gladly would I have done so. But O, the things of this time state take up so much of our attention; I often wish it were different; but we do feel there is One who knows us altogether, and will do everything for the best. It would never have been my wish to leave my home and people; but we often have to do things not to our mind for our dear families' sake, and indeed we have much to be thankful for, as we have all had a fair measure of health since coming here, and also it is easier for our family to get along in this world. But O, my dear sister, there is always something missing to me in this far away country; I can never be altogether satisfied.

You asked me how I was led to know the truth. Now the question comes home to me, Do I know the truth? or have I been raised up in that way, and that is why I love it so? It seems to me that from a child, when father would have us all reading the Scriptures every Sunday evening, that I could see there was a chosen people plainly written about, and also I seemed to feel that the dear old members of the church were such good people. How I did like to get in a corner and listen to them talk. But I was grown up before I was troubled to know if I ever could be worthy to be with the people I so dearly loved.

I will tell you of a time I was made glad. It was when there was a great storm raging. I felt very terrified, thinking that every minute would be my last, and if taken then there would be no hope for me, as I was such a great sinner it was only what I deserved, when a dear voice said, O so plainly, "Not a single shaft can hit till the God of love sees fit." O how strongly I felt these words, and my fear was all gone; nothing could disturb me then for a time. After awhile I began to wonder if those words were part of a hymn, as I did not remember ever seeing them. I took Gadsby's hymn-book, and as I opened it these were the first words that met my eyes. I felt that was most wonderful; surely it did seem that way to me. Dear sister, I am so glad these words are left for us to read: We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. They seem at times to be what my hope is founded on. I wish I could see you instead of writing. I cannot write like others, and I feel very unworthy of your letters, but I can never tell you how good it is to get them. I hope you are well, and that sister Durand is improving; it is so hard to have our loved ones suffer. Give my love to Elder Durand. I hope, if it is the Lord's will, to again hear him preach the truth I hope I love.

March 28, 1913.—How pleased I am to know that you have again so kindly remembered me in my far away home, but as you say, although our bodies are many miles apart, our minds can meet in sweet companionship. I have had many changes, and sometimes wonder if I truly know

anything of what I have professed. I remember a great longing to be made good enough to be with the people I so dearly loved. O, I thought the ordinance of baptism so lovely when I would see it, and the faces of the dear ones would seem to shine, and how I longed to be as they were. It was while listening to a sermon by Elder Vail that I felt I could not stay away longer. His text was in Ruth: "Entreat me not to leave thee," &c. Elder Pollard had one Sunday to preach before our May meeting, so I said to myself, If I hear him to my comfort at that time I will ask a place among those I love at that meeting. Now, my dear sister, it really seemed that everything he said was for me, and O how I longed to tell him so at that time; but it was not until Monday's meeting that I was given strength to go in and tell them a little of what I felt, and they kindly gave me a place among them. Three weeks after that I was baptized by the late dear Elder Pollard. It was in the year 1894. I feel if I am one of the Lord's little ones I have been brought along differently from many, not quite so low, but certainly where I could do nothing to save myself. We all felt it very much to leave our old home, but I prayed to be resigned to the Lord's will. I felt that he was able to change the plans that were being laid, and I desire to be thankful that he has prospered us more than I feel we deserve. If it were only his will to send a few of his dear people this way, so that we could meet together as they do in Winnipeg, how glad we would be, but the Lord knows what is best for us all. We feel it a blessing to have the Bible and the SIGNS, and many good books that our dear parents loved to read, and I have some that my dear grandfather McColl treasured greatly. My husband was over twenty before he ever heard the truth that is so dear to me, and now I think he loves it as well as I. He once heard dear Elder Beebe preach when he was in Canada, and it was a "joyful sound" to him. This is a comfort to me, and I think that our sons also know the truth, and this also causes a feeling of thankfulness.

Now, my dear sister in hope, I have written you this just to see if you could love and hold fellowship for me. I would love to write as some of the dear ones do, but the ability was not given me.

April 22.—Your kind letter has just come to me, and I am so glad to receive it. I had been thinking of you to-day, and wondering how you were keeping in health, and also if you had received my last letter, and if you would think it worth answering. I feel to be weakness itself. When I try to do good, evil is continually with me. What I wrote was only for your own eyes. I would like to write to the dear ones through the SIGNS some time, if the Lord would guide my pen and bring back the days of my first love.

"What peaceful hours I then enjoyed!
How sweet their memory still!
But now I find an aching void
The world can never fill."

How our dear sister Eliza McDonald's experience in the last SIGNS brings to mind the days that are past. She tells so much of my feelings better than I possibly could myself. I hear they are having very pleasant meetings in our church at home. How I long to be there with them. If the dear Lord would only see fit to send a pastor to look after the flock there how I would rejoice. When I get your kind letters how I long to see you, but if we never meet again in this world of sorrow we hope to meet in a better world, where there is no more parting, but where all is joy and peace.

You asked me if I ever read dear Aunt Mary's experience. No, I did not, but would be so glad to. We came across Grandfather McColl's experience not long since in an old number of the SIGNS; I think it was in 1861. I cannot remember the time when I did not like to read the SIGNS. I read the obituaries first, and how I hope my last days may be like some of whom I read.

I will close by asking you to read hymn 820 (Beebe's collection).

Now with love to you and dear Elder Durand and sister Mildred, I am, I hope, your sister,

MARTHA YOUNG.

WOODSTOCK, Ontario, March, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Inclosed you will find a letter which I received from sister Eliza McDonald a short time ago, and as I felt much interest and satisfaction in reading it I thought it would also be of interest to the readers of the SIGNS. To me it was wonderful, as is indeed true of every one who is a partaker of the grace that is in Christ Jesus, but the ability and liberty to tell in such a clear manner of the wonderful working of the grace of God in the heart are not given to every one, and her understanding of the truth is also clear and wonderful, and I felt I was indeed favored in having her write to me, telling of the exercises of her mind. I, with many others of the church, had long looked for her to come home to the church and tell the old and yet ever new sweet story of redeeming grace and dying love. But as the poet says,

> "The appointed time rolls on apace,
> Not to propose, but call by grace,
> To leave the hateful ways of sin,
> Turn to the fold and enter in."

How good it seemed to me to hear her tell of her fears lest she should bring reproach upon the cause. As long as that fear remains in her heart it gives the best evidence that she will be kept by the power of God from so doing; those who see no danger are they who fall. How true it is that God has an appointed time for his children to enter into the fold, and that all the desires or persuasions of men or angels can neither hasten nor hinder the purpose of God. Jesus said to his disciples, Your time is always, but my time is not now.

The meeting was very sweet and pleasant, from all I have heard, but I did not get there; that also was appointed, yet I do not want to excuse myself for not going. I fully intended doing so, but was hindered the last moment. Sister McWilliams, who united with the church at that time, I was told did not want to go because you were not there. But she went, and her time, too, had come, and she heard with such delight that she could not stay away, but was forced by love to tell her exercises to the church, and was gladly received. I have heard that her experience was like a heaven below, she was so filled with love, joy and peace. How wonderful are the works of God. We have been mourning because the church seemed cold, barren and unfruitful, and because we had no pastor to lead us, forgetting that the Lord is our great Shepherd and Pastor, who blesses and none can reverse it, who withholds and none can bless; no, not the ablest minister in the world. O how forgetful we are of the source of all our blessings. We look to this, that and the other one for help, forgetting that our help is in the most high God. O may we ever be kept looking to him, and not to man. We do much desire a pastor, feeling our need of one, but may we look to God and not to man. The Lord says in Jeremiah iii. 15,

I will give you pastors after mine own heart. The Savior said to his disciples, Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his vineyard, and it is to the Lord we must look, and not to ourselves or to man.

But I did not intend to write as I have when I began. I just thought I would say a few words about our dear sister's letter. I hope you will pardon me for taking your time. We are both well and send love to you and to sister Ker.

Your unworthy brother,

ROBERT SCATES.

APPIN, Ontario, March 3, 1913.

MY DEAR MR. SCATES:—We were very glad to receive your good letter. I have felt that the love and sweet fellowship which the church expressed for me is much more than I deserve. I felt on Monday of the meeting that the church could very well go on without me, but O how could I go on without the church? I felt to say, "There my best friends, my kindred, dwell, there God my Savior reigns." I had never seen the church in such beauty before. I had, as you know, been raised among Old School Baptists, and had always liked them, and for some years have felt a peculiar love for them that I did not have for other people, but never did I feel as I did that morning. On Saturday as Elder Coulter was speaking he told of the golden candlesticks, that they were of pure gold, without any alloy, and they held the candle so that it could not fall one way or the other; so the love of God shed abroad in the hearts of his people holds them. I felt to say, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." The words came to my mind, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." I thought I could say with John, "I saw a city," and surely she was the fairest among the daughters. As I listened to that beautiful discourse I thought of Ruth, and how Boaz commanded that handfuls should be left for her to glean on purpose. So it seemed surely that handfuls had been left for me, and I felt to say,

> "Thy love hath still its ancient power;
> No word from thee can fruitless fall."

How often I have wished that I might have lived on earth when Christ was here. I have felt that if I could but touch the hem of his garment. There seems much beauty in the words, Thy faith hath made thee whole. It was not in touching the hem of his garment, but because that poor woman felt in her heart to say, Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me whole. That faith was of God. How often have I wished in my heart that I had faith even as a grain of mustard seed. Once, as I was thinking of the church, the words came to my mind:

> "Abraham to unknown countries led,
> By faith obeyed the Lord."

I was wondering if I would be kept from the world if God should ever grant me the strength to go to the church, and I thought, What would I say to my own relatives, or to my old associates? I thought that I should perhaps be ashamed to meet them, and there were O so many things in that way. Then the above quoted stanzas came, but I had no faith, I was so fearful lest he should not keep me. On Sunday morning of the meeting I was thinking of all these things, when the words came, And all these things shall be added unto thee. Then it seemed

that I felt willing to trust him, and in a moment I thought of the communion, and I felt, How could I ever dare to take any part in that sacred ordinance? I thought of the words, As often as ye do this, do it in remembrance of me. Again, Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, &c. I felt very unworthy, when the words came and were made sweet to me, And all these things shall be added unto thee. Again, As thy days, so shall thy strength be. As I went out of the meetinghouse that morning the words came to my mind, There shall ye taste unmingled joy and dwell in perfect peace. Still then I did not think of going to the church at that meeting. But Sunday night I never shall forget; as some said, I felt surely it was a night to be remembered. It was surely a night to be remembered when in the land of Egypt the Lord passed over and saw the blood of the lamb sprinkled upon the doorposts. I felt in my heart that same sweet experience, and I felt that it was not of myself, but alone the blood of the Lamb. I was made to go back over many years, and I felt to say I was all undone, and not one stone was left upon another. Since the meeting I have thought often of the baptism of your niece, Mrs. Jones; to me it was a very beautiful baptism. O the feeling of loneliness that filled my heart. I remember as she came up out of the water how happy she looked, and how the church seemed so happy to receive her, and such a separation between the church and the world. Such a feeling of loneliness filled my heart. I felt that I was not with the world, and much less with the church, and I shall never forget that hour of loneliness and sorrow. The next morning as I was passing that place on the way to the meeting, my mind went back to it all again, and the words came, This is the way, walk ye in it. I looked around to see if any one had spoken to me. Some months after that I was in London, at Mrs. Davey's, and that night I dreamed I was back again at that baptism. My heart was just as lonely and burdened as at the time of that meeting, and I saw again the church standing there ready to receive with joy Mrs. Jones as she came up out of the water. I did not envy her that sweet joy, but I wondered in my heart if it ever would be mine, when the words came, Child, thy Father calls, come home. I felt willing to leave all at that moment, and follow him through evil as well as good report. But alas, how soon I was made to go back to the world again. Since the meeting I have felt the beauty of the words, When the fullness of the time had come. I have thought of the children of Israel, and how they came to the Red Sea, the enemy behind, the mountains on either hand and the sea in front; they must stand still, and how they murmured and complained, and longed to be back in the land of Egypt; and how they said to Moses, Why hast thou brought us thus far to cast us off? How often I had felt that way, and felt to cry,

> "Lord, decide the doubtful case;
> Thou who art thy people's Sun,
> Shine upon thy work of grace,
> If indeed it be begun."

Once the words came to my mind with much sweetness, They also serve who only stand and wait. But he speaks and it is done. Surely the Lord is not slack concerning his promise. At another time the words came to me with great power, Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. I would grow impatient, and would wonder if the morning would ever come to me. It is true there had been times

when I had felt a sweet calm and rest, but never had experienced real joy. Still sometimes I could feel the beauty of the words, If the vision tarry, wait for it. But surely that Sunday night I was made to rejoice in the Lord, and on Monday when I was received I felt to say, My cup runneth over. I felt to sing, He hath brought me to his banqueting-house, and his banner over me is love, and O how safe when underneath are his everlasting arms, and round about us are the walls of salvation. I know that in my flesh dwells no good thing. Since the meeting I have been made to feel that no man can keep alive his own soul, and that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. O that I might be kept so that I may never bring reproach upon the church or his cause. I know that he can keep me, and O that I might just lie at his feet. If I be but the smallest pebble among the stones of his building, or even a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord, it is more than I deserve. It is only by his blood that I am saved, and I feel to say, By the grace of God I am what I am. O how I wish I could make you understand how I feel. In him I every beauty view. Surely his church is altogether lovely, and the fairest among the daughters. O that I could but praise his name, but at best mine is but a lisping, stammering tongue. I feel to say again and again that the half has never been told.

I feel that what I have written will seem but as the prattle of a little child to you, but may you look on it with an eye to pity rather than to blame. We have Aunt Clara and Aunt Lish with us just now. I have felt loath to leave them to come to the store to work, for I feel that with them there is a union and companionship that is not to be found in the world.

Please pardon all I have written amiss. Pray for me, that I may be kept, and if you can feel to write me, I should be glad to hear from you.

Unworthily yours,

ELIZA McDONALD.

GARRETT'S BEND, W. Va., April 9, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have thus addressed you, though I feel unworthy to claim such a precious hope in Jesus. The liberty or freedom of God's people has been dwelling upon my mind for several days, and to-day, while it is raining, I thought I would try to write some of the things that have been on my mind. May it please God to direct my mind in writing, for I am not able to write anything profitable of myself.

In the first place, I wish to tell something of the God in whom I believe. I hope that I believe in Israel's God, who is but One. He declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. This God declares that his counsel standeth forever, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations. And, "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." He is God, who forms the light and creates the darkness, who makes peace and creates evil, and says, I the Lord do all these things. He is all-powerful and above all law. He says by the mouth of the prophet, I am the potter and ye are the clay. By the mouth of Paul the same God said, Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? He says to his people, "Fear not; for I am with thee: I

will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory."

But now I will try to get to my subject; first, however, I wish to give a few of my thoughts upon the clay of the same lump. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." This word of God is our Lord Jesus Christ. I hope that it is through this faith that I can see myself a lump of clay, a vessel made unto dishonor, for I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. But hath not the Potter power over the clay of the same lump? Yes, so he declares, and I hope that it has pleased God to make within this poor lump of clay a vessel unto honor. I understand that this vessel of honor is not under the law, but the vessel unto dishonor is under the law. Christ was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. Let me call attention here to Paul's admonition to the Galatian brethren: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." I am not trying to tell something that has not been seen by the eye of faith, for I believe that many of the Lord's people who in past ages have passed away from this world have had great comfort in this admonition, and many to-day have comfort in the same, by seeing that while they themselves are not able to keep this just and holy law, Jesus for them has kept it. There was a time in our life when we tried to keep the law for righteousness, but when it pleased God to reveal his Son to us at once we saw that we were guilty of the whole law, and that our condemnation under it was just, for we were rebellious sinners before God. We were sinners even when trying to keep the law for righteousness before God. There is but One who is able to keep that law, and to fulfill it, and that One is Jesus Christ. If we trust in our own selves to keep the law we seek to make gods of ourselves. But there is no man in the earth or on the sea who is really keeping the law of righteousness in any part of it. This is because the carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. The carnal mind belongs to every man, for all men are brutish; therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law. The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. Who is it that in his right mind does not dread death? Our great Redeemer dreaded death, but he redeemed his people from under the curse of the law, being made a curse for them. Now then if the Son has made us free we are free indeed. This is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by the grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." "What shall we say then that Abraham our father [the father of all the faithful] as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God." Neither can we glory before God for any good works, for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them, and I believe that

every one thus created in him will walk just as God hath before ordained. Christ will not build again that which he hath destroyed, and he is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. It is written, He taketh away the first that he may establish the second. He has taken the first away, which was the law, and has established the second, which is the gospel. He said, After those days I will write my laws in their hearts, and put them in their minds, and I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people. There are here no ifs or buts. There is no building again of the things which he destroyed. He says, I the Lord change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. The promise made to Abraham that he should have a seed, and that all nations should be blessed in that seed, is sure. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." It is not then by works of righteousness which we have done. Then, ye children of Abraham, who worship God in spirit, have no confidence in the flesh, ye elect people of God, who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began, fear not, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Then let us remember the admonition of the apostle to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and not be again entangled with the yoke of bondage. Let us not call to our brethren to go back under this yoke of bondage. Every man is guilty of the whole law in Adam, but is freed in Christ. If we see a man do something contrary to the law of God in Adam, we need not judge him, for if we judge we judge after the flesh, and the command is, Judge not, for with what judgment ye judge shall ye be judged. For while I judge a brother by the law, he can see himself that I am guilty of the law, and he would not need a spy-glass to see that I was guilty, and neither would I need such a glass to see that I was guilty, if the Spirit of truth is in me, which shows every man that he is guilty of the whole law, that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God. Then why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? Our hope is that God hath given us the spirit to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Let no one imagine that we say, Let us do evil that good may come. While I believe that salvation is absolutely free, without the works of the creature, I yet try to treat men right. I aim to be honest with all men, and to help those who have need of help. This is not to be seen of men, nor to have wherewith to glory before God, as though I had done some great thing toward keeping the law of righteousness, for I am guilty of the whole law, and cannot perform one act of obedience under it, neither do I want to trust in myself as being able to perform any good. It is written, Cursed is man that trusteth in man, or maketh flesh his arm. Jeremiah said, I know, O Lord, that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Let us not make the prophet of God a liar by saying that man is able to direct his steps. It is written, Let God be true, and every man a liar.

I will now close this poorly written letter, leaving it to your judgment as to what shall be done with it.

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

W. C. PENNINGTON.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., April 2, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have just received and read the SIGNS. The "Fragments" written by Elder Durand manifested such humility of feeling and trust in God to direct his mind what to say, and manifested no confidence in the flesh, that it all seemed good, and proved a consolation to me as I read it. The letter from Edward O. Wiles, of New Zealand, was also very good, and I was reminded as I read it that it is said that God has a people in every nation, kindred tongue and people. The brother writes that in his country the Arminian doctrine that man will not let God save him is preached. I feel thankful to God, as I hope and believe, for his declaration that his chosen ones are all sealed with the blood of Christ in the everlasting covenant of grace. The letter from Elder H. B. Jones was also good and instructive to the household of faith. There is certainly nothing gained by controversy with reference to the vital truths of the Bible. Those who have been truly taught in the revealed will of God, and who have a hope of immortal life, should deny self in all things, trusting in God to direct their steps. Our sufficiency is of God. This being so, let us not hurt a brother's feelings just because we cannot see eye to eye, but let us admonish all to be quiet and submissive to the will of God in all things, and by so doing there will no controversy arise, nor the putting up bars of fellowship. As long as the truth of God is so much controverted by men the true followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God must mourn on account of the disorders that are in the house of God. The children of Israel had similar trials; they murmured and limited the God of glory. The church of God is passing through the same trials now, but this is in fulfillment of the Scripture. Paul has declared that all things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to his purpose.

I trust that my mind has been directed in writing the above by the Spirit of God. This is my only hope for eternal life. I send, by permission of the writer, a letter, desiring that it be published in the SIGNS.

Your brother in hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

THORNTON, Texas, Jan. 20, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER HICKERSON:—I am in receipt of your welcome letter, calling my attention to my neglect in answering your former letter, and my excuse is that I have not been well, and did not feel like writing. My mind is not at all times in a condition to write to the brethren upon the grand subject of Christ's spiritual kingdom; in fact, I feel too small to attempt to write upon such a grand and sublime subject, which however often engages my thoughts, but one of my highest ambitions is to defend the doctrine of the New Testament as it is held and taught by Primitive Baptists. Now if you have the patience to bear with me in my weak manner of defense, I will give you some thoughts with regard to the building of the tower of Babel. Man's self-volition self-aggrandizement and free agency were the base and foundation upon which the ancient Babel was built. The vision of the builders was so obtuse and limited that they could not see the spiritual kingdom of God with their natural intelligence. God had given to but few of the ancient people of that time spiritual understanding of this spiritual kingdom. He had given a few prophets and their followers to see this, hence the remainder of the people

were more or less worshipers of idols, such as golden calves, Baal, Diana and other devices called gods. They decided to build themselves a tower upon which they could reach heaven, and this was by their own volition and power of will, and they designed thus to establish forever their own aggrandizement, and so claim part at least of the glory of their own salvation. This has been the theory and effort of unregenerate men in all ages of the world's history. The world is now full of Babel builders. They are at work with all the energy that their carnal minds can muster to build a tower that will reach to heaven by their own efforts, that they may have whereof to boast. "And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build a city, and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded." Instead of building with stone, just as the builders of the temple under Solomon rejected the stone which afterward became the chief stone of the corner, which was a type of Christ, they also rejected this material for brick, the manufacture of men, and instead of using cement they used slime. This slime is the type of man's filthy, carnal religion based upon his own self-righteousness and will. This is now known in the popular religious world as "man's free agency." Brick is also limited in duration, while stone, representative of Christ, will last forever. But like all the tower builders of both ancient and modern times, they said, And let us make a name. This name means arrogance and self-aggrandizement. This name is antagonistic to the character and name of the meek and lowly Jesus, and of his humble followers. But when the Lord came down to see the city and the tower he said, "The people is one, and they have all one language." Now when the work had progressed as far as the Lord had purposed it should, he confounded their language. Modern tower builders are using the same language, but they are using it under different names. They are also using the same spurious material and instrumentalities. They are still using brick, which typifies our natural selves with all our pride, arrogance and self-emulation. Their highest ambition is to excel in quality and superiority, attended with their own efforts to attain to exalted positions. They seek to embellish their self-made towers with the slime of carnal reason and self-volition, known among their workmen as free agency. They do not recognize nor confess the power of God to bestow his promises, mercies and graces upon them, only as a compensation for building towers to heaven, and they look for his blessing to be commensurate with their efforts to win his favor, and expect to be rewarded with eternal glory in heaven for what they have done here upon earth. But the tower that was built in the annals of eternity before the world was fashioned, was formulated in God's eternal purpose, and consummated by the holy Trinity, and erected by the God of heaven. Its capstone, as the symbolic stone which was rejected by the builders of Solomon's temple, is the Christ of God. This tower of God was built of stones which were everlasting, and they were put together and cemented with the mortar of God's omnipotent power, mercy and grace, and they will

endure forever. It is written, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." This kingdom was not to be left to other people, but it is presided over, ruled and controlled by our Lord Jesus Christ, who is King of kings and Lord of lords. This kingdom does not need to be supplemented nor assisted by the towers or kingdoms made or embellished by men. His kingdom will ultimately break in pieces and consume all the towers and kingdoms of this world, or false churches set up and idolized by men to make for themselves a name which will immortalize them in the estimation of their fellow-men. The builders of this Babel tower were not satisfied with the slow process of God, they therefore organized a company, possibly of rich stockholders, under the auspices and directions of some earthly king, to assist God in bringing them safely to heaven. But at the proper time, God confounded their language, and all their self-aggrandizement, volition and free agency came to naught. In like manner, and at God's own appointed time, all modern towers and inventions of men by which they think to climb to heaven, which now infest the world, will be broken in pieces and consumed by the kingdom of our blessed Savior, and he will say to these builders of false churches, Depart from me, ye that work iniquity. He set up his spiritual kingdom in the days of these false kingdoms. His kingdom is strictly a spiritual kingdom; it will stand forever, and will finally consume all earthly kingdoms that have ever been or that will ever be erected by the devices of men, who have sought out many inventions to establish their own self-righteousness, that they may make for themselves a great name, and share in the glory of their own salvation, and that of others as well.

Yours in the faith of God's elect,

S. M. CARLTON.

[SINCE writing the above, brother Carlton has been called home. His obituary will be found on page 381, current volume.—ED.]

HICKMAN, Ky., Feb. 9, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have a letter written by Elder J. B. Bowden, of Falls City, Texas, which I have read and reread with much pleasure, and I have the privilege of sending it to you to dispose of as you deem best. I notice that brother Bowden adds the title "Elder" to my name, which is not correct, as I have never been ordained. It is true that I have been trying to preach Jesus the way, the truth and the life, and I desire to say as Paul said to his brethren: "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified," but I have never felt worthy to be called a minister, and never have felt worthy to tell any one who never knew it that I had ever tried to preach.

Your humble brother, if one at all,

L. T. HEATH.

FALLS CITY, Texas, Jan. 26, 1913.

ELDER L. T. HEATH—DEAR BROTHER:—Your most welcome and loving letter came yesterday, and I was very glad to receive it. Yes, it did come as a surprise, more especially to think that you, an old soldier of the cross, could see fit to write to such a weak and unprofitable servant as I am, if indeed it be right to call me by so great a name as servant.

If I have ever reached to any real service to the great God, I know that it has been by grace. Paul once said, For by the grace of God I am what I am. That is, if I am a child of Jehovah, it is by grace. If I have ever preached Christ and him crucified, as the way, truth and life, that also is by grace, and in the same light and in the same way I determined to know nothing among God's humble poor save Jesus, and him crucified. I sometimes feel to say that I rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Paul said, We are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

Dear brother, you spoke of nearing your seventy-fifth milestone on the road of time. I believe you can truly say that you have found the merit of the flesh to be a complete failure. This was the experience of the apostle. He said in his letter to the Galatians that he was above many in his own nation, and profited in the Jews' religion above many who were his equals in his own nation. He was more especially zealous of the traditions of the fathers, "but when it pleased God," he says, "who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood."—Gal. i. 14-16. He had no use for the law school, the Sunday School or any other school, and he never referred to Gamaliel as authority; neither did he go to the oldest apostles, but he went where Jesus sent him. The flesh said, Go to Damascus, but Jesus said, Go to Arabia and then to Damascus, and immediately he went to Arabia. No wonder he could say, I have no confidence in the flesh. In the command of Jesus is power. No wonder he could say, By the grace of God I am what I am, and that this grace was bestowed upon him, and that he labored more abundantly than they all. Yet he said, Not I, but the grace of God which was with me. No wonder he could say, For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. Paul was sent to the Gentile world, which was never included in the covenant of the law, as a light and as a pattern, God giving like experience to Paul with them. Paul being a Jew, the Lord appeared to him in the day. So the angel appeared to Cornelius in a vision also in the day, and Cornelius sent for Peter as he was commanded, and Peter went and preached Jesus unto him, and to his household, and though Gentiles, the Holy Ghost was poured out upon them and they glorified God. Thus it is with every one of the objects of mercy. Every subject of God's kingdom shall be taught of God, and great shall be their peace. This is "the word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all.)" To Timothy Paul said, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come [it is here now] when they will not endure sound doctrine." You have witnessed the truth of this prophecy, but, dear brother, still contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints; neglect not the gift which is in you.

Well, I will now close. I have written as much as you will want to read at one time. This is the regular day of meeting at my home church. We had very good attendance both Saturday and to-

day. This leaves all as well as usual, and I hope that you are all well also. Write me again when you have time.

Your unworthy brother,

J. B. BOWDEN.

FALLS CITY, Texas, April 16, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I send you a letter from brother L. T. Heath, to publish in the SIGNS if you in your judgment think it all right. Brother Heath is a humble, orderly Baptist. Though very old, he has never turned aside to the right or the left, and is one who fears God.

Your brother,

J. B. BOWDEN.

HICKMAN, Ky., March 25, 1913.

ELDER J. B. BOWDEN—DEAR BROTHER:—Through the tender mercy of God my unprofitable life is still spared, and I am yet among the living awaiting the summons to depart and be at rest, if I am one among the chosen in Christ. I received your precious letter in answer to mine sent to you, and after reading and rereading sent it to the editors of the SIGNS, as you gave me permission to do. You spoke of sending my letter to them if I did not object. Well, my letters seem to me to be very imperfect, but when they reach you they are yours to dispose of as you think best. I know my imperfections and my inability to speak comfortingly to any of God's humble poor, and if I am not guided by the Spirit of truth I must fall, as there is no soundness in me. The flesh is very weak, although the spirit is willing, and the carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, and that is why we need the Spirit to guide us to know the truth as it is in Jesus. Sometimes, my dear brother, I fear I have never known that truth, and have not the Spirit of Christ, and if we have not the Spirit we are not his; but I have a little hope that Jesus has put my sins away, and that they will not be remembered against me in the day when the elect of God shall be safely housed in heaven. My dear brother, I have been shut up most of the winter, and feel lonely and desolate, still I feel at times that God has been mindful of me, and has not forgotten to be gracious. Why this is so I cannot tell, but at times the Scriptures seem to open to my understanding, and I am made to rejoice, at least for a short time, when the Scriptures seem revealed more clearly to me than at our regular meetings; but I always feel my weakness so much at all times. It seems to me that surely my preaching brethren are all furnished with a text, and have great revelation and understanding given them, and can speak with much comfort to the humble poor, and to the honor and glory of God, so much better than I can, that I fear I have never been called of God and sent, and how can we preach except we be sent?

Dear brother, I would love to talk with you once more as we did at your house. I have been made to think of the poor woman who had spent her all with physicians, and was no better, and felt if she could but touch the hem of Christ's garment she would be whole. Christ said, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of these little ones of mine, ye have done it unto me. So, my dear brother, how careful we ought to be not to offend one of these little ones, but be kind and bear each other's burdens, being ready to forgive, and not say, I cannot fellowship this or that one. Let us first get the mote out of our own eye, then we can clearly see to remove the beam from our

brother's eye. If our brother offends us, let us go to him in meekness and loving-kindness and tell him his fault, and treat him tenderly, and thus gain our brother. If we deal in this way with our brethren, esteeming each better than ourself, we more strictly follow the example of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and sit now at the feet of the brethren in humbleness and love.

Well, dear brother, I fear I will weary you with my long letter to no profit. I have not written to my satisfaction, but have given a few thoughts as they have occurred to me. I hope you will throw the mantle of charity over my imperfections and remember me at the throne of grace when it is well with you.

Your humble servant in the bond of peace, as I hope,

L. T. HEATH.

ROLAND PARK, Md., July 7, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I am writing to send you the letter which you wrote to our association, addressed to brother Kessler, with the request that it be published in the SIGNS, with brother Kessler's answer. Some of the members at Black Rock make this request.

Your brother in hope,

J. T. ROWE.

HOPEWELL, N. J., May 7, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER KESSLER:—The time for the association is drawing near, and as I shall not be able to be with you I feel like writing you a few lines, which I should be glad to have read to the congregation some time during the meetings, as a token of my fond remembrance of you all, with whom I have met so many times at these gatherings in the past. I think that I have not failed to be with the sessions of the Baltimore Association for forty-five years, until now. I know well that it is God's will that it should be so now, and I know that his will is wise and right. I do not feel to rebel, even in feeling, against his will now, but still it is a great grief to me not to share in your meetings this year also.

I am improving steadily, and feel well, but it is not yet safe for me to exert myself very much, and will not be until the wound is thoroughly healed. I went to the hospital March 31st, and returned home May 2nd. I was favored greatly in many ways while gone from home. I was kept from the first from much anxiety or distress of mind, and while in the hospital was favored with great peace of mind at times. The dear friends were exceeding kind to me. My wife was permitted to be with me every day, and almost all day, which was a great comfort to us both. I received many letters from dear friends, tokens of remembrance and affection, all of which comforted me and helped to pass away lonely hours. In all these ways, and in a thousand other ways, the Lord was good to me. I feel that I ought to praise him more than I have ever been able to. The Lord knows my heart, and I hope he sees in it some little gratitude and praise to him.

I find a great desire in my heart for the peace and comfort of your association. It has been in all these years since I came to Hopewell a great satisfaction that the churches I used to serve have had the same gospel preached to them that I in weakness for twenty-eight years tried to proclaim among you. If there is any difference between myself and your present pastor, Elder Rowe, I have never known it. I rejoice in this, because I believe I did preach the truth of the gospel to you, and it would be a source of great grief to me did I think

that now you were hearing any different gospel. I found consolation in the preaching of it, and there was in all those twenty-eight years great consolation to me that you received the word, not as my word, but as it was indeed the word of God. I pray God that the sound which began to go forth at Black Rock eighty years ago may be still heard there. May it be so that for many years to come there shall still arise among you many who shall love and believe the same things, for in these strong principles of doctrine alone is there strength and consolation to poor, needy and condemned sinners. What could such sinners do without salvation by sovereign grace? I trust that the presence and good will of Him who dwelt in the bush may abide in your meetings. I hope that some of you may feel to remember me at the throne of grace. Though away from you in body, my heart always goes out to you in love and gratitude. How good you all were to me for many years.

Elder Ker wrote me some little time ago that he would not be with you this year. Some of you will have business with the SIGNS, and as neither of us will be there to attend to it, I will suggest that you ask Elder Rowe to receive your subscriptions for us, or in our stead.

Now, brethren, farewell. With love in the Lord, I remain as ever your brother in the gospel,

F. A. CHICK.

BUTLER, Md., May 23, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Your kind and much esteemed letter of May 7th was received, and I would have answered it sooner, but thought I would wait until after the association. Then, as you know perhaps, brother Gladding, from Baltimore, who was staying with us during the association, was taken very ill on Wednesday of the meeting, and died at six twenty p. m. of the twenty-second, at our home. We cannot express how much we all missed you, and what a great comfort your loving letter was to all of us. It did not satisfy the people to hear it read, for they came to me to get it to read for themselves; in fact, it was on the go nearly all the time. The church passed a resolution expressing their appreciation of your kind remembrance. You can imagine how much we missed you and your preaching, but your comforting letter made up in some measure for what we missed by your absence, but it certainly seemed very strange not to have you and Elder Durand with us. We had a fine meeting, and the preaching was good, and I think that it reached the hearts of some. Mr. Holloway and wife, from Newark, Md., attended the association, and from what he writes to me since I think he was pricked in the heart. I attended, as you know, the association at Snow Hill last fall, and stayed with them. They promised me they would come to our association, and so they came with Dr. and sister Warren. They said they were much pleased with the association, and their trip in general. We had quite a large attendance at our all day meeting on Sunday, and two very good sermons from Elder Rowe. We hope your wound has healed, and that you have fully recovered from your trouble. Kindly remember us to sister Chick and the rest of your family.

With loving affection from a poor, needy sinner, and yet, as I hope, brother,

PETER KESSLER.

WHEELING, W. Va., May 3, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending this letter from sister McKinney. It has been of special comfort to me, and I believe will comfort others. Please give it a place in our good family paper if you think best.

Your unworthy sister in hope,
FLORENCE PULTZ.

OTTAWA, Kansas, March 16, 1913.

MRS. FLORENCE PULTZ—VERY DEAR SISTER:—Your precious letter was received some time ago, and the long delay has not been because of neglect, or indifference, or lack of thought, but because of what I can describe in no better way than helplessness. When I would think of writing I would soon be overcome by weakness, not physical, but mental. I have been troubled so much of late with a fear of having said things amiss in some of my letters that I can only speak of things which I hope have been revealed to me. I was going to ask if it might not all be imagination, when I was stopped, and was made to say, No, I know it is not, but I am often fearful that I know these things only as Balaam knew them. I am so full of sin my whole nature is corrupt. Truly the warfare is continual. My desire to do what is right in the sight of God at all times is just as strong as the will of the flesh is to do evil continually. I desire to serve the Lord, but through the weakness of the flesh I fail miserably. I am not speaking of desiring to take part with the world; it has lost all charms for me. My daily life is what troubles me. My weakness or helplessness is ever before me. In myself there is no way of escape. How fervently I must look to the Savior, who alone is able to keep me from falling, but he does not do it, so I am daily transgressing and daily repenting. Often I feel to give up in despair, and if I could I suppose I would. I have an intense love for the people of God. O, I cannot tell you how my poor heart aches; yes, the intense longing causes pain, actual pain. When I read their letters in the SIGNS or receive a letter from some dear one, I then feel I cannot bear the separation much longer, but then I must wait on the Lord to open the way. After reading your last letter you seemed so near to me that I clasped it between my hands, when the thought came, I must not do this, and it was instantly followed by this explanation: It is not her you are worshiping, it is the Spirit in her you love; it is because she has magnified the Lord. A short time afterward these words were brought to my mind, and I hope my understanding opened to their meaning: My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. Instantly I could see this was the experience of every child of God. Do they not desire to magnify the Lord in all they do and say, and does not their spirit rejoice in God their Savior? Surely they have been brought to know that he is God, and beside him there is no Savior. He is the first and the last, the beginning and the end. O yes, they do rejoice to hear him exalted above every name that is named. They do not want to give his glory to another, or his praise to graven images.

I want to tell you of another like experience which comforted me very much. I had been grieving over sin in the body, and was ready to believe there was no sorrow like unto my sorrow; away down deep in my heart I felt to be a justly condemned sinner, yet I did not know what to do. The children were confined to the room with colds, my husband was

lying on the bed suffering from a cold, it was raining outside, and to me it was a dark and cloudy day within. As I sat reading the first volume of editorials by Elder Beebe, I turned to the text, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit." Like lightning came the words, It is the Holy Spirit in you that is grieved. I wondered why I could not keep from sin when it caused such great grief. I had not read a word of the editorial, not even the text. I sat for a little while as one stunned, it was so sudden. I had thought of it as an unenlightened one would, as grieving the Lord. I wish you could read Elder Beebe's explanation of the whole text: "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."—Eph. iv. 30. If you have not the book, and desire me to, I will write it out and send it to you.

I hope you are feeling better than when you last wrote me. I was sending in my subscription to the SIGNS when your letter was received, and so I sent it along, for it was too full of experience and trials and deliverances by the way for me to keep hid. I felt sure you would not object, for your letters comfort many. I am glad sister Creel was comforted by your prayer; it was on my mind a long time before I sent it. I want to tell you, dear sister, that your prayer has certainly been answered in regard to my feasting upon the editorials and letters in the SIGNS. Is it not wonderful? To me it is a miracle, that not one number, but every number, not one letter, but every letter, I am permitted to see the Lord's work in them all; they tell me all things that ever I did, here a little and there a little. None of them fail to ascribe all power, honor, wisdom and glory to God. I often think what a delightful company it would be to me in which to spend the rest of my life. I think of dear Elder Durand walking thirty miles in less than three-quarters of a day to hear Elder Gilbert Beebe preach in a barn. Often my heart swells with emotion in thinking of it. I can imagine his feelings as he walked along. What a mingling of love, joy and hope must have been in his heart. The words of the prophet seem appropriate here: They shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. The dear Lord has promised never to leave nor forsake his children. O, there is such a fear in my heart the most of the time that I shall never see him as he is and be like him. I feel that I just could not live knowing that in this world only I have hope in Christ. Sometimes it is hard to walk by faith.

Some one or other of us has been ailing since Christmas. The children get better of their colds then take fresh ones. I shall be longing to hear from you, yet I do not want you to inconvenience yourself to write to me. Your letters are always welcome; your tender solicitations for me always touch me deeply. I feel so alone and forsaken, yet the dear Lord often remembers me in great mercy.

Your loving sister,

ANNA McKINNEY.

KELLER, Texas, Feb. 14, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a precious letter written by sister Stevenson, of Whitt, Texas, giving a sketch of her recent visit to Alabama to see her afflicted sister. Knowing sister Stevenson and her husband as I do, and have for over a score of years, I do not hesitate to comply with her request, and after a careful perusal I now forward her letter, which manifests the spirit of meekness and lowliness, for publication in the dear SIGNS. Very often have I gone to

the pleasant home of this sister, and she and her husband have entertained me with gladness, and to my great joy we have conversed upon the subject of the christian religion, and of our hopes and prospects of the glorious world beyond this transitory time state. She and her husband are both true friends and subscribers of the SIGNS, as is also her sister in Alabama. The spirit of her communication is so similar to her chaste conversation that it has cheered and comforted me. Paul said, When I am weak then am I strong. May Almighty God bless and prosper the editors and publishers of the SIGNS, both temporally and spiritually, is my desire.

Yours in hope of a blessed life beyond, through the grace and mercy of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,

ASA HOWARD.

WHITT, Texas, Dec. 26, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER HOWARD:—I feel much like trying to write you this morning, as it has been so long since we heard from you. We hope that you are well, and enjoying the many blessings that none save an all-wise God can bestow upon his dear children, who are unable of themselves to even think a good thought. I want to tell you how we have been blessed this fall. The good Lord blessed us with the privilege of making a visit to Alabama to see my only sister, whom I had not seen for thirty-nine years. She was very poorly with cancer in her breast, and sent for me to come and see her, as she was not expected to live long. At that time I could not see how we could go, not knowing how our crop would turn out, but thanks be to God's holy name, as time rolled on our crop kept opening, and turned out so well that we had a full sufficiency to enable us to go and see her dear face, which I had so longed to see. Brother Howard, no tongue can tell the real joy of our trip, and the untold joy we found in being together. My sister is a strong Primitive Baptist, both in faith and practice. To our surprise, on Saturday after we arrived there my husband and nephew went to their church meeting, and there heard my sister's oldest son preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. They brought another minister and his wife back home with them, and sister and myself had the pleasure of sitting and listening to the sweet sound of the gospel preached by a brother whose name I cannot recall at present, and by my nephew, Joseph Sieber. How many dear old faces I was permitted to see, and our old home, and the family graveyard where my brother was buried seventy years ago, and the place where I first went to school. Brother Howard, you do not know how thankful I felt. I never can tell it. As my sister said, it was good for poor, unworthy me. My sister was so strengthened by our visit that she was able to go with us to see all of her dear children. There are five of them, and of all of them a mother might well feel proud. My dear sister is a subscriber of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and she fully enjoys the doctrine which is taught therein. You may think that I am beside myself, writing all this to you, but be that as it may, I felt that I wanted to tell you about some of these great blessings which the dear Lord has bestowed upon us, and of the time of rejoicing with my dear sister. If I never meet her again on this earth I have a hope that we shall meet around the throne, where parting will be no more. The parting again was hard, yet it is sweet to think that some day we will meet around the throne of God, and

praise him for evermore, where no pain or parting will ever be known.

I will send you this badly written letter, and if it seems fit in your judgment to give to the readers of the SIGNS, you may send it to our family paper. I know you are competent to judge of that, and you know how weak and ignorant I am.

Your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) R. S. H. STEVENSON.

MANASSAS, Va., July 4, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Your excellent letter of the second instant came duly to hand, and so stirred up my mind that I must make the effort to reply in some sort. First, it takes me in memory back to childhood and early youth very vividly, and to my early acquaintance with your father and mother, whom now I can seem to see before me. You will excuse a pencil I know, for I am too weak and nervous to use a pen. I am very glad of the improved condition of your health. While our youth seems a sweet tie of memory, the Spirit of the Master breathes so sweetly in what you wrote that it touches my poor, broken heart, and brings me very near you in spirit.

I return sister Wright's letter, as you requested; I have received several such letters from her; she is very gifted in writing.

Now, as for my health, I am suffering much from my stomach and nerves; so much so that I cannot see any one much of my time, nor can I talk much with any one. I live on malted milk and barley water mostly; sometimes I eat a little oat meal. I was taken sick on the first Sunday in February, and from that time until about one month ago I remember nothing, only once in awhile a glimpse of some little thing will occur to me. God has been very good to me. The grave has seemed at times the sweetest resting-place in the world, and I cannot tell you how I have longed for it, but I soon think of the most faithful and loving wife a man can have, and for her sake I am willing to live and try to get well again, but I have longed to quietly lie beside my first wife at Mt. Zion; rest is what I craved, and I crave it yet. The resurrection appears, and the change that takes place when the dust returns to the earth, and the spirit to God who gave it. Eternity is a vast, incomprehensible thought to me, I can only remember the vision I had of it eight years ago, when I had my second attack of the grippe. I saw heaven's high dome like a magnificent crystal dome, indescribable; it seemed a crystalization even more brilliant than anything I ever saw or could imagine. It was full of people I knew, but I could see none of them. Then it was open at the top, but what appeared so wonderful to me, there was an inclosed way up to it. It appeared the color of light blood. Something impressed me with the name of Hannah, my sister. You will remember she died such a triumphant death at my home in Warwick. I thought that she was ascending to join the people in this wonderful dome. Was not that a strange vision? I have no doubt that she is at rest, everlasting rest, in Jesus, who suffered and who is the bread of life, of which I hope I sometimes partake. I could tell you much of the travel of my mind, but I refrain. I hope you may continue to gain strength. I am grieved to hear of the illness of brother Yard; I love him. But why should we grieve at the departure of the saints? They have entered into the rest prepared for the weary.

Did you ever hear my mother sing,

"A poor, wayfaring man of grief
Hath often passed me on the way;

He sued so humbly for relief
That I could never answer nay.
Once, when my scanty meal was spread,
He entered, not a word he spoke,
Just perishing for want of bread,
I gave him all. He blessed and broke"?

It was founded upon the journey of our Savior to Emmaus, and is a most beautiful thing. We see him feeding his disciples after his resurrection. The subject is inexhaustible. I long to preach it to the dear wayfarers yet in this tiresome world. My dear wife joins me in much love to you and your dear family.

I am yours in the sweetest of bonds,

J. N. BADGER.

[WE are sure that our brethren in general will be glad to read these extracts from a letter written by Elder J. N. Badger to us a little while ago. All will be glad to know that he has somewhat recovered from his illness, and all will rejoice that the favor of the Lord was shown him so signally. In all these past years his ministry has been blessed to many. In many ways no one among all our brethren has been nearer to ourself than he has been. His father, Elder John A. Badger, baptized our father at North Anson, Maine. Both his father and himself were sometimes visitors at our father's home when we were but a youth. Is was our privilege to witness his baptism at Jay, Maine, about one month after our own baptism at North Berwick, Maine, and five years later it was ordered in providence that he should be present and take part in our ordination to the ministry, he having been ordained about one month previous. At our ordination he named the closing hymn, beginning, "Am I a soldier of the cross?" Thus we have been close together in many ways, though not often meeting in these later years. We have written these things, thinking they might prove interesting to some of our readers. May God continue his blessing to our dear brother, and if it be his holy will enable him to again preach the gospel of the Son of God.—C]

MERCER HOSPITAL, TRENTON, N. J., June 19, 1913.

DEAR PASTOR AND BRETHREN AT HOPEWELL:—I hardly dare to address you in this way, because for nine days after I was hurt I was sure that I possessed no real true religion. I had my thoughts and my Bible, and the strongest words had no comfort for me. Not since the days of old, when Adam was being killed in me, had things looked so dark to my mind, and it seemed sure to me that I was nothing more than an infidel, and that I had never been anything else, and this proved it. It seemed as if I had been believing upon "ifs" and "ands" and "whys," instead of God's eternal "shalls" and "wills," and his unchangeable decrees. The pain in my broken limb, the bruises all over my body and the darkness of my mind seemed to keep me in "Doubting Castle" all that time. I would try to think of Paul and Silas down in the inner prison, with their feet made fast in the stocks. I was here tied down to my bed, but I could not sing. Then I would think of John the Baptist in prison, and craved the message that was sent to him by the Savior, but the word did not come to me. My family at home and the cares of the farm seemed to add more darkness to my mind; truly I had sunk deep in the miry clay. The Psalms, the book of Job, and Romans, did me no good. I knew that these books of the word of God had comforted me before, and why not now? I could not tell, except that I had nothing but head religion, and when comfort and joy left me and trouble took its place my

faith was gone and I was yet in my sins. But, my dear pastor, "Behind a frowning providence he hides a smiling face." Last Tuesday morning the words of the dear Savior to unbelieving Thomas came to me: "Be not faithless, but believing." They had crossed my mind a few times before, but not to break the bars of darkness. Poor Thomas could now believe without feeling the prints of the nails in the Savior's hands, or putting his hand into the Savior's side, and now poor, doubting Will was broken down in tears of belief, and broken loose from his darkness, and felt to thank the dear Redeemer for all that had happened to him, knowing that God is too good to be unkind, and too wise to err. I then felt that through whatever way this had happened, it was not contrary to the will of God, and that in some way or other the Lord would provide. Now I could thank him for the rod of affliction. I could thank the doctors and nurses for their skill and their attendance, and all my kindred in the flesh who had gone to my home and helped my wife with our three little boys, with the work on the farm, and also could thank the kind neighbors who have so willingly given a helping hand. Truly I am now an object of mercy in the hand of the Lord, and I feel to-day that he will never leave me nor forsake me, but that he will in his own way provide for all my needs.

Dear Elder Chick, the little sermon you wrote me, and the three hymns which you numbered, seemed to confirm that faith under affliction in which I have been resting for the past few days. Hymn 116 is good. Mother spoke of it in her letter to me. Number 901 is another that has done me much good.

Now use your judgment about reading this to the church. I would like them to hear from me, if you think that they would derive any comfort from what I have written.

With love to all, your brother in hope,

WM. T. YARD.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

To comply with the postal law, we are again obliged to revise our list, and have to drop subscribers who are in arrears. If we discontinue any who want the paper continued, and who expect to be able to remit soon, if they will send us word, stating when they will pay, we shall be glad to await their convenience, as the law allows us to continue subscribers who promise to pay for the paper. There are many from whom we cannot hear, and do not know that they are receiving the paper, although we have requested them to write us. Just a card to us would save us much time and expense, and is surely very little to ask of subscribers who are in arrears.

This is not a matter of choice with us, but is an order of the postal authorities, so of course we are compelled to comply with it. If any who are in arrears fail to receive the SIGNS after this number, they will know we have had to take their names from our list, but if any wish the paper continued, and will send what is due us on their subscription, or send us word when they will be able to pay, we will gladly continue sending the paper.

Address all letters and make all money orders and checks payable to

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1913.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ISAIAH XXXV. 10; JOHN XIV. 12.

SISTER Ella Davis, of Sullivan, Ark., has expressed a wish that we say something upon the words found in Isaiah xxxv. 10: "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." She has also asked our views upon John xiv. 12: "And greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father."

With regard to the first Scripture, it seems to us that we can say but little that has not been said many times by the servants of God concerning it. We suppose that there is hardly any one who has been called to preach the gospel who has not found great delight in calling attention to this text, perhaps many times, in their preaching, and there are but few of the children of God who have not been at times encouraged by this language; still we will in a brief way call attention to what seems to us to be the general meaning of it.

In the first place, a careful reading of the connection, going back to several of the preceding chapters, will show that the direct reference in the promises of the text is to the return of Israel from the seventy years' captivity in Babylon. In various places in the word the sorrows of that people during that bondage are depicted, and then their joy in being returned again to their own land. See Psalm cxxxvii. for an expression of their oppression and sadness in their captivity, and Psalm cxxvi. for a description of their gladness when delivered and restored to their own land. Space and time would not allow us to quote from this prophecy of Isaiah all that relates to these two things. Israel was delivered over to this captivity because of their idolatries and other transgressions of the law of their God. Our God made use of the heathen as his sword to chastise his children. The heathen meant it not so, but rather thought to destroy Israel and exalt themselves, but God used them, as he has used wicked men in all ages, to accomplish his purposes of wisdom and grace toward his erring people, that they might be chastised, and being chastised, be brought to repentance. The dealing of God with national Israel, and with heathen nations in connection with them providentially, is but a sample of his dealings with all nations in his providence. At the same time they are a type of his dealings with his spiritual Israel in this gospel dispensation. The wrath of man against him and against his people shall always redound to his praise and to their good, and that measure of wrath which would not thus redound to his praise and their good he restrains, or does not suffer to come into active deeds and words. What a consolation there is here to his humble people when the enemies of God and truth rage against them. So Paul rejoiced that his imprisonment at Rome had abounded to the glory of God, and to the strengthening of other

weak-hearted saints. He bade the brethren at Philippi to also cease from their sorrow because he was a prisoner, upon the same ground. All this does not lessen the wickedness of men, nor cause that they shall escape judgment, for while exactly fulfilling the purposes of God they do not mean it that way. In the text to which our attention is called, the Lord by the prophet encourages his chastised people with the assurance that his judgments for their transgressions are not to be against them forever. His intent was that through the chastisement they should be humbled and brought to repentance both of heart and life, and when this gracious result had been wrought in them he would restore them again to their own land; then they should come again to Israel with weeping and supplications. Weeping for sin, and supplicating for future favor and more evidences of forgiveness, and to be kept from again departing from his commandments; but in this weeping and supplication there would still be wonderful joy that they should again behold their own land, and dwell once more under their own vine and fig tree, and once more engage in the service and worship of God at Jerusalem. This is the substance of the meaning of the text, as it appears to us. This text does not relate to their first call to be his people in Abraham, neither does it relate to the first bringing of them out of the bondage of Egypt through the wilderness to the land of Canaan. The word "return" shows this, for one cannot return to a place from which he has not departed, and one cannot depart from a place until he has been in that place. They had been brought, after leaving Egypt, to this land of promise, and had been taken away from it to dwell as captives in Babylon, but now a return is promised, and the return is sure, for the Lord says they shall return. What power there is in the "I wills" and "you shalls" of the word of God. God's shalls and wills are not as the shalls and wills of his creatures, liable to fail because of our ignorance or weakness. There is no ignorance or weakness in him, therefore it is sure that all his wills and shalls shall find perfect fulfillment. From all this it is our mind that this text in its application to the experiences of the children of God spiritually does not apply especially to the first call by grace, by which they are brought to know him in the salvation of their souls through Jesus Christ, but to daily restorations from bondage, often brought upon them because of their transgressions day by day. So David prayed, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." He had experienced the salvation of the Lord, and that salvation still held good, but the joy of it had been lost through his transgression in the case of his chief captain and his wife, Uriah and Bathsheba. Therefore he did not pray, Restore unto me thy salvation, but only "the joy" of it. Likewise David in the twenty-third Psalm declares, "He restoreth my soul." There are soul-wanderings often, but blessed be the name of the Lord, he never suffers that soul which he has bought with so great a price to wander to perdition, but restores it, and restores it again, as often as it departs. "He restoreth my soul." It seems to us impossible that we could in any way make the language of the text plainer than it is in itself. These all when restored come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, rather than the former sackcloth and ashes, and obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing do flee away. What words could add to the clearness of this

testimony? We are persuaded that our sister knows for herself just what this all means, and no doubt she feels that she cannot describe the gladness of such experiences. It is all better felt than expressed.

The whole verse to which sister Davis has called attention in John xiv. 12, reads as follows: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." We know that these words are true, because they were spoken by that One who is truth itself, yet there have been many questions in the minds of those who hold the word of God in reverence as to just what their signification might be. To what do they apply? Since there have been such questionings in the minds of the most spiritual and able of the Lord's servants, we feel that it becomes us to speak with care and humility of them. In what we may here write we cannot pretend to cover the ground, or to bring out all their meaning, and we feel to write rather in the way of suggestion. It seems to us that the thoughts which we have do apply to these words, but yet we do not feel that our thoughts cover the ground at all. Jesus had appealed to his works in the verses preceding as being full proof of his having come from God, and calls upon his disciples to believe him for his works' sake, also he appealed to his words, as well as his works. No mere earthly man had ever done as he had done, or spoken as he had spoken. There was power and authority in his words that no man ever had before, not even the chiefest of the prophets, and his works exceeded all that had ever been done before. Both his works and words must have been of God. By his words we think that he means both the matter and the manner of his teaching. No one had ever spoken forth divine things so fully or so clearly as he had done. He had spoken as never man spake, both as regards what he taught and the way in which he taught. It is our mind that by his works he includes the miracles which he wrought from time to time, and not only this, but he includes all his works of love and of mercy, all which showed forth his grace and goodness, his forgiveness of sins, his consolations ministered to the hearts of the distressed, the preaching with power of his own gospel; all these things and whatever else he did to the children of men are to be included in his works, yet he declared that it was expedient for his disciples that he should go away in order that the Holy Comforter might come, and the work of the Holy Spirit should exceed all that he had done in the flesh, for the Spirit should take of the things which were his and show them unto them. Jesus indeed ministered comfort and healing to the bodies of many, but beyond this he ministered consolations that should never end. Those healed of diseases should one day sicken again and die. Those to whom their dead were restored should again be called to see them depart in death. All these wonderful works were but for a time. So also the present help which his presence afforded should give place, perhaps to-morrow, to sorrow again. They must not rest in these things, for one day he should go away from them and they should then have sorrow, and their hope that he was the Messiah, who should redeem Israel literally, would perish, but through the Spirit they should by his resurrection be begotten again unto a lively hope which could never die. The works which Jesus wrought in the days

of his flesh were truly great, greater than had ever been known on earth before; but there remained still greater works to be wrought when he should have gone to his Father, "for," said he, "my Father is greater than I." His glory on earth was dimmed by the flesh in which he dwelt. Once that flesh was transfigured before them, and now and then some words that he spoke, some work that he did, afforded them glimpses of his divine glory, but for the most part that glory was veiled. When he should have gone to his Father this would be no longer true; his Father was greater than he, and he now would be forever with the Father, and glorified with the glory which he had with the Father before the world was. In the text he declares that the works that he had done his disciples should do also, and that they should do still greater works beside. It is given to his disciples now to minister to the needy as he ministered to them. For a time after his resurrection the power to work miracles in his name was theirs. This power extended to raising the dead, as is twice recorded of the disciples in the Acts. They healed the sick, as did he; they were able to speak comfortingly to the afflicted, as did he. Thus they did the works that he did, by his Spirit which dwelt with them and in them. It seems to us that these things related mostly to the present and temporal welfare of those who received the blessings of his ministry. But there are greater things than these, and these greater things should his disciples do, because he should be with the Father. Now the full glory of the spiritual world should appear in the ministry of his servants; greater mercies than these temporal ones should be ministered by them in his name. There would be in the minds of those to whom he was speaking the remembrance of the sick healed, the infirm lifted up, the lepers healed, the lame leaping and rejoicing in recovered strength, and beside, those awful occasions when he had at a word broken the bars of death and restored life again to the dead. But the blessed Master assured them that though he must go away, yea, because he was going away, they should work even greater works than all these. It is our thought concerning this, that all that has been going on by way of the ministry of the word in the church ever since his resurrection from the dead are, all of them, greater works than all that he had done in the flesh. To comfort and bring healing to a wounded soul, to build up in the most holy faith, to encourage the weak and halting ones, to hold out the hope that takes hold upon eternity to the suffering and dying, to be able to so preach the word of God that his people are convicted of sin, righteousness and judgment by the Spirit, that the despairing are given to hear of Jesus, the blessed Savior, and to look to him for all they need, for all that belongs to salvation in short, is to do greater works than any of these miracles upon the bodies of men, and all this has the blessed Master bestowed upon his dear servants as the ministers of righteousness, as shepherds under the chief Shepherd.

We leave these reflections with our readers; they are but suggestions, and we are sure present but a few gleanings from this wide field of truth, yet these things seem to us to be in line with the dear Savior's meaning in the text. All these greater works do his servants do, because he has given to them the Spirit of truth, and because through that Spirit he dwells in them and does the works in them first.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

SOLOMON'S SONG IV. 16.

DEAR ELDER:—There is a friend here who begs an explanation of Songs iv. 16: "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out." Is the north wind the law, and the south the gospel? Or does God bring his children again under the law of sin and death, after they can say by faith, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death"? This friend has lately come out of a great storm, wherein his soul reeled and staggered, and he was at his wit's end. He thought God had brought the law to bear again upon him, and this storm was the law. Now he appeals to you as a father in Israel, hoping that you will instruct him according to the wisdom given to you. By complying with his request you will greatly oblige one whom I believe is a dear brother. F. E.

LONGWOOD, C. W., November, 1865.

It will afford us great pleasure to comply with the request of our tried and tempest-tossed friend, and if anything we may say shall serve to relieve, enlighten or comfort him, perhaps the same may also be interesting to our readers generally. We will first give our views on the text proposed, and then offer some remarks on the peculiar trials of our friend and his conflict with the law. Among the many beautiful figures employed by the Holy Spirit in this Song of songs, illustrative of the spiritual things of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, the church is compared to a garden, and the Spirit's operations on the church to make her fruitful are compared to the north and south winds blowing upon a garden of spices and causing their delicious odors to flow out. We have not understood the north wind to represent the law of sin and death, from the power of which Christ has redeemed his church, nor the south wind to designate the gospel in distinction from the law, although the figures might not be wholly inappropriate, if so designed, but in the general application of the wind in the Scriptures it is used to represent the Spirit of God. As in John iii. 8: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." So also on the day of Pentecost, when that day had fully come, and the disciples were all with one accord in one place: "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting."—Acts ii. 1, 2. There are many particulars in which the wind is emblematic of the Spirit. First, it is invisible; no mortal eye has ever seen the wind, nor can the Spirit of God, or any of the things of the Spirit, be seen or known but by its own revelation, as the natural sun in the heavens can only be seen by its own light. All the flaming torches or gas lights which nature can afford or art devise cannot aid our vision to see that glorious orb, the fountain and fullness of light; just so the lights of nature, art and science fail to reveal to us the Spirit, and the things of the Spirit, which are only spiritually discerned. Second, its power can be felt by those whose eyes cannot see the wind. So the power of the Spirit is felt by every one who is born of it, but whence it came, or whither it goeth, none can see. Third, the wind is sovereign in its course, it bloweth where it listeth. Not all the power of kings and potentates of the earth can change its course. So it is with the Spirit of our God, it can never be diverted from its course, or varied in the least from the execution of its immutable purpose. Fourth, the wind is also irresistible in its power. The towering cedars and the sturdy oaks bow their majestic heads

submissive to its might. Thus the Spirit is omnipotent and irresistible in all its operations, it brings down the lofty imaginations of men, and subdues every power in the children of God to the obedience of faith. The north and the south winds are the same wind, though they blow from opposite points of the compass. It is the wind that bloweth, whether it blow from north or south, and it would be absurd for us to say, because the south wind is warm, and the north is cold, that it is therefore not the same wind. The christian, led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where Jesus was led, fasting for forty tedious days and nights, to be tempted of the devil, and to be severely tempted concerning his relation to God, by the tempter's cruel, If thou be the Son, or, If thou be a child of God, may feel so chilled and benumbed by the trial as to doubt seriously whether he were led to the dreary wilderness by the same Spirit that had led him to Jordan's banks, or to Zion's open gates, but we are told that our Leader was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. It was the same Spirit of the Lord God which was upon him, and which descended upon him at his baptism like a dove, which led him to that dreadful scene of conflict in the wilderness, and as followers of the Lamb we must be led by the Spirit through conflicts, darkness, tribulations, persecutions and many a fasting wilderness conflict with a tempting devil; how else are we to be his followers? If we suffer with him, we shall also be partakers with him of his glory.

But the figure of the north and south wind has a still more forcible and appropriate application when considered as applied in our text to its effects upon a garden. The church of Christ is the garden, as the figure is used throughout this delightful song, and the members of Christ are the pleasant plants, the graces, or fruits of the Spirit abiding in the saints are the spices which flow out. The figure is so applied in the verses preceding our text: "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse." None but the bride, the Lamb's wife, is ever so addressed by him. He calls his church his love, his dove, his undefiled, and he also calls her his sister and his spouse, and as a sister and spouse she is a garden inclosed; and he says to her, "Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard, spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon; with all trees of frankincense, myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices: a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon." The church is the garden of the Lord, and by the pen of the prophet, Isaiah lxi., he says he is anointed with the Spirit of the Lord God to preach glad tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion; to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. The trees of this garden are those who bear the characteristics named, the meek, broken-hearted, captives, prisoners, mourners, mourning in Zion, and oppressed with the spirit of heaviness; for the most bruised plants exhale the sweetest odor. But they are in Zion; that is, in the gar-

den of the Lord, and are there known as trees which the Lord himself has planted. These comprise all the people of Zion to whom God has said, Isaiah lx., "Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified." Who else has the power or right to plant in the Lord's garden? Jesus has said, Every plant that my Father has not planted shall be rooted up. The good seed are the children of the kingdom, and he that sowed them is the Son of man. The garden then clearly is the church of Christ, and the plants, as trees of righteousness, are the children of the kingdom, whom God has planted there, in a soil which he has provided and prepared, in a garden which he has inclosed, and around which he himself is a wall of fire, and the glory in the midst. Those who are familiar with the figure know that for the growth of plants or trees something more is required than the inclosure, the prepared soil and the planting of trees and plants. To flourish, a garden must be well watered; this garden cannot lack for moisture, for she is a fountain sealed, a spring shut up; she is a well of living water, and streams from Lebanon.

"And all the springs of Zion flow,
To make this young plantation grow."

The genial rays of the sun and the dews of the night are abundantly supplied. Upon all these plants in Zion the Sun of Righteousness has arisen with healing in his wings, and his Spirit, like precious ointment, descends as the dew of Hermon descended upon the mountains of Zion, where God commanded the blessing, even life for evermore. Still, in nature the watered garden, supplied with sun and shade, requires the north and the south wind, for the following reasons: first, the soft south winds are necessary to start the sap, the life or vitality, up from the root, that it may be diffused to all the branches, swelling the buds and opening the blossoms, as also to mature and ripen the fruit in its season, and the north winds are required when the autumn rolls around, and the fruits are gathered, to send back the sap into the roots, and the wintry blasts of north winds to so shake the trees as to cause their roots to take deeper and wider hold upon the soil by which they are to be nourished and supplied. Indeed, it would be hard to tell which is more essential to the trees, the north or the south wind. Certainly the application of this figure to the dealings of the Spirit with the saints is very easy. Should the winds of the Spirit only operate on us experimentally in its soft south breath, like zephyrs from a sunny clime, the plants would always be shooting upward, tall and spindling, and for want of sufficient root they would become top-heavy, and bear very little if any fruit; to take root downward, and bear fruit upward, requires the action of both the north and the south wind. Now mark the christian who is never chilled with the northern blasts; he has no winter, no severe trials, temptations, doubts or fears, is he able to succor the tried and tempted of the saints? He is a stranger to their complaints. Peter must needs be sifted as wheat before he could comfort his brethren, and our dear Redeemer himself, as the Captain of our salvation, was made perfect through suffering; he knoweth how to succor them that are tempted, having been tempted in all points as they are. For such an high priest becomes us who is easily touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Our health, vigor, fruitfulness and well-being all require that we shall have

our trials as well as joys, downs as well as ups, seed-time as well as harvest, north winds as well as our south winds, cold as well as melting seasons, for we must drink our wine with our milk, and eat our honeycomb with our honey, our bitter herbs with our passover Lamb.

(To be continued.)

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Sarah E. Hunt Ford was born in Muskingum Co., Ohio, Oct. 16th, 1846, and died at her home at Seneca, Kansas, June 21st, 1913, aged 66 years, 8 months and 5 days. She was married to Elder Joseph Ford Aug. 16th, 1868, and came with her husband to Seneca, Kansas, the following October, settling on a farm, where they continued to live until five years ago, when they left the farm and moved to town. She was the mother of three daughters and two sons, all married, and all at her bedside when her spirit left its tenement of clay to go to God who gave it. Her illness dates from Oct. 21st, 1912, and was diagnosed as organic heart trouble. She never united with any religious order, but her meek, retiring and quiet disposition and strong attachment to her husband, children and home, for and to whom she devoted every energy of her whole being, and many other tokens so often strewed as flowers along life's pathway, have left an abiding hope in the minds and hearts of her loved ones that she had passed from death unto life.

The funeral services were held June 23rd, at the home, in Seneca, conducted by the writer, and the burial was in the cemetery at Seneca, Kansas. May the Lord reconcile and comfort our dear brother and the sons and daughters and all who are bereaved by her death. SMITH KETCHUM.

CHESTER, Nebr., July 10, 1913.

Allie Varnes, daughter of John and Rachel Wesley, was born March 1st, 1866, and died June 26th, 1913, at her home near Cramers, Ill. She was married to Ezra Doty Varnes, Jr., Dec. 24th, 1888. She leaves a devoted husband, four children, two brothers and four sisters, besides a host of relatives and friends, to mourn her absence, but we mourn not as those without hope, for we feel that she has entered into the joys of the Lord Jesus Christ. Sister Allie joined Harmony Church of Predestinarian Baptists, near Elmwood, Ill., and was baptized by Elder Smith Ketchum in May, 1885, and remained a faithful and devoted member until death.

Funeral services were conducted by Mr. B. Y. George, of Elmwood, Ill., who spoke words of comfort to the sorrowing ones, after which that which was mortal was laid away in the cemetery at Farmington, Ill., there to await the final summons.

J. L. THURSTON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Harriet Underwood, Ariz., $2.00; Mrs. D. S. Slawson, N. Y., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Red River Association will be held with the church called Tykes Grove, four and one-half miles east of Cedar Hill, Robertson Co., Tenn., on the L. & N. R. R., the second Sunday, and Saturday before, in August, 1913. All sound Predestinarian Baptists are welcome.

E. J. ANDERSON, Moderator.

THE Siloam Association of Oregon and Washington will meet at Nesika, Lewis Co., Wash., commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in August, 1913. Those coming by rail will take the Tacoma & Eastern at Tacoma, Wash., and go to Morton, where they will be met with teams and conveyed to the place of meeting. All are cordially invited to attend.

SONORA A. HESS, Clerk of Association.

THE Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet with Spring Creek Church, near Stahl, Adair Co., Mo., in her fifty-ninth annual session, on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1913, and continue the two following days. The passenger train from the east that leaves Kirksville at 10:22 a. m. will be met at both Novinger and Stahl on Tuesday. The same train will be met Wednesday at Stahl. Also the train from the west, due at Stahl at 5:45 a. m. will be met at Stahl Wednesday. A cordial invitation is extended to all who believe in a God that is able to do his will without the aid of man.

S. B. JONES, Moderator.

H. C. CATE, Clerk.

THE Maine Conference, the Lord willing, will assemble with the Old School Baptist Church at North Berwick, York Co., Maine, on August 29th, 30th and 31st, 1913. We shall be very glad to have any who love our Lord Jesus Christ come and visit us. Any who come will be met at the railway station on Thursday, August 28th.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

THE original West Tennessee Association of the Regular Old School or Primitive Baptists, will meet with the University Street Church, in Nashville, Tenn., to begin on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1913. All who believe in salvation alone being by and through the grace of God, are invited to attend this association. Take car at Union Station, to Transfer Station, then take Fairfield car and get off at Hazle St., and walk south five or six doors to University St. meetinghouse.

V. G. SEALS.

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11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

I find the postage on my book, "Day unto Day," to America is 9 pence (18 cents), and I thought it would be 6 pence, or at most 7 pence. I think on consideration, as the expense of publication has been very heavy, notwithstanding a most encouraging sale, I had better say I will send to any of your readers the half calf gilt edge edition for 5 shillings ($1.20), or the cloth edition for 4 shillings (96 cents) postage free.

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ELDERS SILAS H. DURAND AND P. G. LESTER

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

ELIJAH AND ELISHA.

BROTHER Boaz, of Kentucky, has requested that I write upon some of the things recorded in the first and second chapters of 2 Kings. In doing so I may not touch upon the matters that are in the mind of brother Boaz, for certain points may appear in a certain subject to one person which may not appear to another. I think from what brother Boaz has said, and the Scriptures which he has cited, that there is a chain of thought in his mind upon which he could write better than any one whose mind has not been exercised upon those certain points, but such thoughts as I have I will try to present as best I can.

The subject contained in the first chapter deals with the matter of Ahaziah, that king of Israel who served Baal and worshiped him, and who fell down between a lattice and was sick, and who sent messengers to inquire of Baalzebub, the god of Ekron, whether he should recover from this sickness. "But the angel of the Lord said to Elijah, the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, Is it not because there is not a God in Israel that ye go to inquire of Baalzebub?" The narrative that follows sets forth that when Elijah met the messengers of the king he said unto them as the angel had commanded, and that the messengers returned to the king, and when the king inquired why they had returned, they informed him, There came a man to meet us, and he said so and so unto us, and he also told us that thou shouldest not come down from that bed of sickness, but should die. At this information and declaration concerning his affliction the king inquired of them what manner of man it was who met them and told them these things. They answered that he was a hairy man, and girded with a girdle of leather about the loins. To this description we find a parallel in the raiment of John the Baptist that it would be well for us to note; but I will speak of this later, if it be given me to do so. When the king heard of the raiment of the man who met them, he said, It is Elijah, the Tishbite. From this we would understand that the king knew Elijah, and I feel sure that he did, or at least knew of him, for it was this same prophet who had prophesied against Israel when

the present king's father, Ahab, was king in Israel, for Elijah prophesied to King Ahab, as we find in the seventeenth chapter of 1 Kings, that there should not be dew nor rain for these years, but according to his word, and after this the Lord told Elijah to hide himself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan, and told him that he should drink of the brook and that ravens should feed him. After a time, as we read, the brook dried up, because of the great drought in all the land; then the Lord told him to arise and go to Zarephath, which belonged to Zidon, and also told him that he had commanded a woman there to feed him. Then the narrative relates how the prophet went to this city and there found a woman gathering sticks to bake the last bit of meal, and afterwards she expected to die of the famine, both she and her son. Then the prophet asked her to bake him a cake first, and the narrative relates how the barrel of meal and the cruse of oil did not fail. There is also the history of the death of this child, and of the restoration of his soul to him through the prophet's crying unto the Lord to let the soul come again into the child. The history of the return of the soul of the child would not make very good soul-sleeping doctrine. Then the woman, after the child had been presented to her alive again, said, Now I know that thou art a man of God. Now all the time in which the prophet dwelt at the brook and with this widow was the three and one-half years of the famine which had come upon the land, as the prophet had declared. During all that time the king had searched in every province to find Elijah, but had found him not. But it now came to pass that in the third year the word of the Lord came to the prophet, and told him to go and show himself unto Ahab, and that he would send rain upon the earth, and Elijah did so, and there was a sore famine upon the land. Then we are told that Elijah met the king, and the king said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? How often when suffering due chastisement for our idolatry we put the blame upon some one else, little thinking that the affliction is from the hand of the Lord for our idolatry and disobedience, and we accuse the Lord's prophets, or servants, of being they who trouble Israel, when it is we ourselves who trouble Israel. This narrative of the dealing of God with Israel also presents to us how the Lord proved to Ahab and his Baal prophets, after the famine was ready to cease, who were indeed the Lord's true prophets. We read of the prophets of Baal building their altar, and placing their offerings upon it, to see which the Lord would answer by fire, and thus the proof was made plain that Elijah was indeed the Lord's prophet. The history informs us that all the prophets of Baal were put to death by the order of Elijah, and that the rains came. Then the king told his wife, Jezebel, how Elijah had slain all their prophets. Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, The gods do so to me, and more also, if I make not thy life like one of them by tomorrow about this time. We are then told how Elijah, after he had heard this, fled for his life, and went to Beersheba, and left his servant there, and then went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came to a juniper tree, and sat down and asked that he might die. As he lay there and slept an angel touched him and said, Arise and eat. The angel did this the second time, and the prophet arose and did eat, for there was a cake baked on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head.

I have gone over much of the narrative concerning this wonderful prophet of the Lord, but now I wish to leave much of this history and speak of the carefulness of the Lord toward his prophet, and of how he was protected and fed in the most miraculous way, showing that the eye of the Lord is always over his servants. The chief gloom of the prophet was when he saw the departure of his people after Baal. Then he prayed to God against Israel, saying, "Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life." It seems that the prophet had given up, and felt that all was lost, that all had gone astray. This is one of the crosses which the true servants of God are sometimes called to bear. They sometimes with great sorrow see the brethren whom they have served so long a time go after strange doctrine, and they stand alone with none to fellowship them, and feel that they would rather die. Like the old prophet, they, as it were, almost have to flee for their lives. The whole body of the brethren turn against them, and would rather that they would not trouble them with their presence or their preaching. The apostle Paul experienced the same sort of departure of his brethren. At one time he said to them they were willing to have plucked out their eyes for him, but now they had become his enemies. Now after Elijah had eaten what the Lord had prepared for him he went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights, until he reached the mount of God in Horeb.

Now some other things in the life of this prophet I wish to notice. After the Lord had passed before the prophet by a great and strong wind, which rent the mountain, and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord, and (it is said) the Lord was not in all this; and then after the wind an earthquake, and the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after this a fire, and the Lord was not in the fire; then there was a still small voice, and Elijah wrapped himself in his mantle and went and stood in the mouth of the cave. The sight was too great, the power of God was more than the prophet could look upon. Now the Lord told Elijah to go and anoint Hazael over Syria and to anoint Jehu over Israel. The saints of God must look with wonder, seeing here that the Lord had more use for Elijah than men might have thought in anointing even wicked kings, showing that the Scriptures are true which declare that the Lord raiseth up kings and giveth the kingdoms to whom he will. Also Elijah must anoint Elisha to be prophet in his stead. Thus we see that Elisha received the spirit of Elijah. But there is one other thing I wish to speak of at this time. When Elisha met Hazael, whom the king of Syria had sent to meet the prophet, to inquire of him whether the king should recover, he began to weep. Hazael asked why he wept, and Elisha replied: "Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strongholds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and thou shalt dash their children. Then Hazael said to Elisha, Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing? And Elisha answered, The Lord hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria." Hazael was surprised that he should be thought capable of such heinous crimes, but when he became king of Syria we read that he did unto Israel just the things that the prophet had declared. See 2 Kings, twelfth chapter, and also tenth chapter. Thus we see

this great prophecy fulfilled. Also when Ahab found Elijah as he was going to take possession of the vineyard of Naboth, after his wife Jezebel had put Naboth to death, Elijah said to him, The Lord hath said at the same place where the dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood. This prophecy we see in 1 Kings xxi. 19, and the fulfillment we see recorded in 2 Kings xxii. 38. The prophet also declared that the dogs should eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel, and this was also fulfilled. See 2 Kings ix. In this same chapter in which Elijah foretold the death of Ahab and Jezebel he also foretold the death of all Ahab's posterity. This prophecy, and all the particulars pertaining to it, we find recorded and fulfilled in 2 Kings x. All this shows how minutely God brings the things to pass that he has declared by his servants. Elijah and Elisha were two great men in Israel, and they were called men of God. Each of these prophets foretold future events to be fulfilled, sometimes by the wickedness of men and kings, sometimes by the virtues of men and kings. This certainly shows that he has a certain positive prescience of future acts of men, both of virtuous things and of vicious things, both of their wicked practices and of their righteous practices. But I will not stop to point out all the prophecies spoken by these two prophets, what I have cited is sufficient to show forth the mighty works of God. I know that honest brethren seem to see a great difference between God's certain foreknowledge of the good and evil practices of men. They seem to take some comfort in the thought that God foreknows all things, but that his foreknowledge of all things is quite different from his decreeing all things. They think that he is much less the author of sin if he foreknows it, while if he decrees all things, that would make him the author of sin. My answer to all such brethren is that such a position only needs a little puncturing to show how thin a screen they have hidden behind. First and foremost, I do not for a moment believe that God is the author of sin in decreeing all. If God is infinite in wisdom, as the Scriptures declare, and has a certain foreknowledge (which is infallible) of all things, we must acknowledge that when God made man and placed him in the garden of Eden, he also knew that Satan would cause Adam and Eve to sin, and thus ruin the whole human family. I say that God certainly knew when he made man and placed him in the garden that he would fall, and we must also acknowledge that our God had all power to keep sin and Satan out of the garden, and out of the world, and could as easily have prevented all that which has caused wickedness in the world, and if any blame could be predicated of God in predestinating the entrance of sin, there would be as much blame in allowing it to enter, seeing that he could have prevented it. Were I to place my child in a field, knowing that there was a lion loose in that field, and knew at the same time that that lion would destroy my child, would I be excusable because I could say I did not predestinate that the lion should destroy my child? I think the whole world would hold me just as guilty of the death of my child as though I had decreed that the lion should destroy it. So the decree that placed man in the garden and made him subject to temptation, which some brethren excuse themselves from believing, no more makes our God the author of sin than their view of his foreknowledge would do. They believe that when God made man and placed him in

the garden he knew that Satan would tempt him and overcome him, and so bring sin and death into the world, but seem to think that such a course would be less likely to make God the author of sin. Now I say that in the case of a man doing this he would be considered just as guilty as though he had directly purposed it all; but in neither case is God the author of sin. God, for wise and holy purposes and most gracious ends, decreed all things that come to pass, having at the same time his wise plan, whereby his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, became as a lamb slain, even before the foundation of the world, for the sin which Satan brought in, and his people were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, and the law which was given to Adam entered, that the offence might abound, that where sin had reigned unto death, even so might grace reign unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Here Paul would say that sin abounded that grace might abound, and as by the disobedience of one many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One many should be made righteous. Paul here has given the reason why it was in the decree of God that sin should enter into the world, and Satan alone was its author. I believe that our God had gracious ends in view when he loosed Satan in the garden of Eden, or, in other words, when he did not keep Satan out of the garden, although he knew all that Satan would do; and so our God is not the author of sin, whether he decreed the work of Satan, or whether he merely foreknew it all, and so planned the death of his Son for sin before the world was.

I will leave this for the examination of the brethren, and examine some more of the Scriptures which brother Boaz has cited. We read in Malachi, last chapter, where the prophet is foretelling the judgments to be meted out to the people of the first covenant: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." This Elijah that was to come before that great and dreadful day I understand to be John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, and the great and dreadful day of the Lord was the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. The people said, Why do the Scriptures say that Elias must first come? Then Jesus said, Elias has already come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Then he said that John was Elias. I referred to the testimony given to the king that Elijah was a hairy man, with a girdle of leather about his loins. Now when John came preaching in the wilderness he is said to have worn a raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins. I trust that we can see in John just what Christ said: Elias has already come. Malachi wrote: "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple." Thus we see the similarity between these two, Elias and John, for John came in the spirit and power of Elias, and Jesus said that among the prophets there had not arisen any greater than John the Baptist, and there was no greater prophet in Israel than Elijah. In the transfiguration the same Elias was

present talking with him, and also Moses was with them. John was born six months before the Lord, and was sent before him preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; hence he was preparing the way of the Lord, and making ready a people prepared of the Lord. The Lord prepared them, but John in his ministry made them ready. John began the work of the ministry of the gospel, and baptized our Lord, and said, "He must increase, but I must decrease." That is, I must step aside for him who is greater; my work is done. When John baptized the Savior it seems that he had attained to the height of his ministry, and then must decrease. His doubts and fears when shut up in prison were similar to those of Elijah when he sat down under the juniper tree to die, as Jezebel had threatened his life, and Israel had killed the prophets of the Lord and had digged down his altars, and John sent messengers to Christ to ask, Art thou he that should come, or look we for another? John's great faith had become weak and he wanted another assurance. Thus we see that both Elijah and John had their dark seasons. I have wondered how the spirit of Elijah could rest upon Elisha, and how John could come in the spirit and power of Elias. Here we see the two Eliases, wearing the same raiment, and both called Elias, and also see the same Elias in the transfiguration.

I trust that brother Boaz may gain something from what I have written, and that others may be led to inquire of the Scriptures how these things are, and how the great purposes of God run through both the Old and New Testaments.

Your brother,

NEWTON PETERS.

PORTLAND, Ind., June, 1913.

HOPEWELL, N. J., July 5, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have just finished reading the last number of the SIGNS. How good it is to read the different messages from the north, south, east and west, all speaking of the same truths, love, joy, peace and the long-suffering of God. They do not speak as with the tongue of men or of angels, but all declare the testimony of God, and all contend for the foundation that is sure. They are not like the foolish man, who built his house upon a sandy foundation, but like the wise man, who built his house upon a solid foundation. The one went down, but the other stood firm, not being shaken by the wind and storm. The world to-day stands as the foolish man did, delighting in pleasure, seeking things that are to no profit, rather than the things which do not perish with the using, but are from everlasting to everlasting. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." The foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of the world. We love to praise him for his wonderful works to the children of men. Men claim to do wonderful things in the way of inventions; they do not think of Him who gave them the mind for the inventions. They claim to go into all the world and preach the gospel, but the gospel is not the declarations of men, but it is the testimony of God. It is good news and glad tidings of great joy, and the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy and peace.

The apostle said: "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." "If God be for us, who can be against us?" "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or fam-

ine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us." Paul said: "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Also, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." The blessed Lord declares that all that the Father hath given him shall come unto him, and that he that cometh unto him he will in no wise cast out. For he said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Our heavenly Father will supply all our needs, and he is not slack concerning his promise, and it is a faithful saying, that if we be dead with him we shall also live with him: and if we deny him, yet he remaineth faithful, he cannot deny himself. He also said, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." And, "They shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Yet "no man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father." "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." He said again, "I am that bread of life." "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever." And, "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." Many of the disciples when they heard this went back and said, "This is an hard saying, who can hear it?" Now "when Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? * * * It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. * * * No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." Thus it was fulfilled that they that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick; these need the great Healer of all ills. Were not the great miracles he did wonderful? He opened the eyes of the blind, made the lame walk, healed the leprous, telling Peter and the other disciples where to cast their nets after fishing all night and catching nothing. Then they marveled at his wonderful works in stilling the winds and saying to the waves, Be still, and there was a great calm. Cannot we trust such a Savior? We will praise him for all that is past, and trust him for all that is to come. Peter denied the Lord thrice, but afterwards he was made to say, Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus is the chief corner stone, for it is said, "Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be diso-

bedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner." Peter testified, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." The Lord has said, I will be merciful to their transgressions, and their sins I will remember no more forever. What a blessing to have so merciful a Father. I think often of the beautiful hymn:

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word."

This faith was that which kept the lions from hurting Daniel, and this faith saved Jonah from the great deep, and the three children from the fiery furnace. The Lord our God in the midst of us is mighty, and he will save. "I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it that men should fear before him. That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been." Peter, as a natural man, could not walk upon the waters of the great deep, and was made to cry, Lord, save, I perish. We are nothing, and less than nothing in ourselves. Man is as the grass, as the flower of the field, which springeth up in the morning, but the wind bloweth over it and it is gone, and the place that once knew us knoweth us no more forever. Our Savior said, The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but know not whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus could not understand how a man could be born when he was old, but the Savior said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." But Nicodemus answered, and said, "How can these things be?" Jesus said unto him, "Art thou a master of Israel, and knoweth not these things? * * * We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" John the Baptist said of the dear Redeemer, "He must increase, but I must decrease. He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthy, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all." Our God is merciful, he will not chide, neither will he keep his anger forever, and as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his mercy to them that fear him, and he has promised never to leave nor forsake one of his little ones. He said, "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, when thou passest through the rivers they shall not overwhelm thee." This Savior died and rose again for our justification, therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Dear brethren, my race is almost run; at the end will I be able to say, I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is a crown of righteousness laid up for me, and for all them that love his appearing? May we be at the end enabled to say, The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord, is my prayer.

From an unworthy brother in hope,
DAVID L. BLACKWELL.

WEISER, Idaho, July 5, 1913.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—It has been quite awhile since I wrote you, and it has not been because I have been busy, for I have sat in the house the last fifteen months, and have done no work, neither have I attended the churches that I am trying to serve as pastor, but have been going through (to me) a long trial of deep anxiety, trouble and fear, without much, if any, hope. My wife was taken sick a year ago the 16th of last March. She was very ill from the first, and has continued so up to the present time, and at present has to be fed. Now maybe I better correct an expression I have used, and say I have been busy. The doctors give me no hope, and say the end may come any time. Under these conditions I have had much worry, and have not always been able to say, "Thy will be done," neither can I always say that all things work together for good, &c., unless I mark out my little hope, and just say I am not one of the called, and much of the time it seems it would be only right for me to not claim an interest in the blood of Christ, for the way I have traveled has been dark indeed, yet I feel sure the Lord knoweth the way I take, and if I could but know I should come forth as gold, all would be well, but this I can only have a little hope for. Many times my wife prays for release from these sufferings, begging if there is rest for her that she may have it. At such times, dear brother, my heart is heavy, and I find myself between two desires, one to restore her to health, the other, "Thy will be done," but my cry is, Lord, hasten to our help. O Lord, undertake for us. Be with us; do not leave nor forsake us, for we are helpless, we are clay. Be merciful to us. O where is the boasted strength of man? He has failed me. I have tried man's wisdom. Since she was first taken sick (thirteen years ago) with stomach trouble, I have tried twenty-one doctors, and they have failed me; the case has grown no better, and O, if they fail where help is so badly needed in natural things, how far short must they come in spiritual things. If man cannot cure a sick person naturally, how can he give a person spiritually dead, life? It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. This is just what we Baptists out here believe. Circumcision profiteth nothing. What, the very right to keep the law does not profit? No, for the outward form of worship is not accepted, but one must worship in spirit and in truth, for God seeks such to worship him. Could we, do you think, with all the sincerity the natural man could possess, render service to God? No, the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. If he cannot receive them, how can he do them? They are foolishness to him, and the unregenerate have eyes, but cannot see; ears, but cannot hear spiritual things. How would one approach them to cause them to act in that way? Their condition is bad indeed, for they have no life. A living man may have eyes and not see, and yet there are ways to make things known to him; so with a deaf man, but O, a dead man, how can we instruct him? My brother, there is a way, a high way, and I do rejoice that it is not in men's hands. O no, we are content to leave this work alone to Him who speaks and it is done. Lazarus, come forth, and he came forth bound. This shows to me that when the King of kings speaks he needs not man's assistance. Lazarus came forth; he was dead, now he is alive, but he is not a free agent: "Loose him, and let him go."

Even so Saul had to be led. Glorious thought, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. Lazarus came forth bound hand and foot; God called him, and brought him forth. I think every one of God's dear children has come the same way. The first thing they see is their awful load of sin, then they go mourning, viewing the Savior in his holiness, themselves as sinners without help, with certain doom before them, but, glorious news, let the prisoner go, there is a Ransom; yes, loose him and let him go. Jesus on the cross paid his debt; he has been redeemed, not with corruptible things, as money, but with the precious blood of Christ. He is one of the elect, chosen, predestinated, for whom Christ died, and by the one offering He forever perfected them that are sanctified. This is alone the work of God; he asks help of none; his own arm brought salvation; he doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. If he desires the salvation of a man he (God) will accomplish it, for whatsoever his soul desireth, that he doeth. Glorious thought, God works and none can hinder, nor say, What doest thou? and he will bring all for whom Christ died off more than conquerors.

Dear brother, I only thought to write you a line that you might know how I am, and that I still cling to my little hope, with a few scattering assurances that it is not vain, for if I am not altogether mistaken, sometimes the blessed Lord comes to me and enables me to say, All is well.

Yours in hope of a better resurrection,
T. E. ATTEBERY.

[WE deeply sympathize with our brother and his wife in their sore affliction, and sincerely hope that the Lord may bless them.—K.]

"THIS IS A GREAT MYSTERY."

WHAT is a great mystery? Christ and the church; the wonderful Head and the redeemed body; he, who is the chiefest among ten thousand, or standard-bearer, and she that cometh up out of the wilderness, leaning upon her Husband and Elder Brother. Mystery means something that has not been, and cannot be, explained. It is something beyond human comprehension when applied to godliness. "Without controversy [admitted as a real fact by all the children of God after being taught the weakness of the flesh by the Spirit] great is the mystery of godliness." In the sense in which Paul speaks to Timothy, godliness, or that which pertains to God and his house, shall always remain a mystery with the wisest of the saints while remaining in the flesh, for now we know in part only, now we see through a glass darkly. But when we consider the great work of the Spirit in making known to our understanding what the Lord has done for us, we may say with Paul in 1 Cor. ii. 7: "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory." In this sense the mystery of God is revealed unto us, but not unto the world; that is, all that is necessary for us to know while on earth is revealed to us, but these things are not revealed unto the "princes of this world." God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit. Had the princes of this world this knowledge—the knowledge and power to believe on Jesus—they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But it was determined that his blood must be shed, and these princes in their ignorance did what was determined beforehand should be done. Personally, they were not excused from penalty because of their ig-

norance. Now this of itself is a mystery to mortals, and they are apt to question the right of Jehovah to foreordain and raise up men to murder his own Son. He came into the world to die a violent death in the prime of manhood, but not by his own hand, nor by his Father's hand, but by the hands of sinful men ordained for the very act. For, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day." Without this suffering there could not have been any redemption, and this suffering was not self-imposed, but brought on by his enemies; nevertheless the work of the enemies of Christ and the church was only fulfilling the purpose of God and fulfilling the word of prophecy. If brethren can truthfully say that there is no mystery in these things I must say that I certainly differ with them. To me they are so deep that when I think on them praise of itself goes out to the Most High, and I cannot restrain it. This may be the fear of the Lord, for the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and at that time he will show his covenant. The wonders of God's way, the wonders of God's love for sinners, the wonders of Christ's relationship with mortals, the wonders of redemption, the wonders of his almighty power, and the wonders of his way in revealing himself to puny worms of the dust, cause me to want to say: "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." He is the Rock, firm and secure, his work is perfect; all his ways are judgment. He is the God of truth; he is God, without iniquity, just and right is he.

"God was manifest in the flesh." Who on earth can explain how this could be? Even angels desire to look into this great mystery, but they cannot. The most that we can know about this mystery is that of his name, Immanuel, which indicates to our understanding something of his great mysterious power, wisdom and relationship with the children of men, which means by interpretation, "God with us." How sublime and uplifting are these three words: "God with us." What words can bring more cheer and comfort to us in any time of trial than these? We were unable to reach up to him, but he in mercy came down and did more than man can conceive could be done: he was made flesh. He took part of the same flesh with us, yet he was no sinner, he was holy, harmless and separate from sinners. He was made to be sin for his people, yet he sinned not. This is a great mystery. As I am thinking about this grand and great mystery to-day, it seems to my mind that only the glory of immortality will cause the mists to be lifted from our eyes that we may behold the beautiful wonders of all the mysterious ways that the Lord has led us through while we were on earth, trembling before him because of his greatness, while our poverty was made so plain to us that we were forced to cry in anguish of soul, Unclean, unclean.

"God with us." O what nearness is this, O what condescension is this, O what kind of a seeming of equality is this, O what a familiarity with the Elder Brother. All this melts our iron nature to flow as water, and molds us firmly to praise his name and to have a holy desire to worship none except God, who rideth upon the wings of the wind. We feel to know that there is none like unto him, because we are so firmly molded by his invisible power to desire none but the supreme God as our God and Deliverer.

"God with us." To me it is mysteri-

ous, though I believe the interpretation. Thoughts on these things daily do not make them less mysterious. A reader of the SIGNS writes me that there is no mystery to him about these things, and that if I would visit him he would show me that there was no mystery about them. I feel safe in saying that I would rather take the word of the apostle Paul than the word of any uninspired man.

I submit this to the editors, and then, if passed along, to the readers of the SIGNS.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., May 12, 1913.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., June 23, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—This is Sunday, and I have been very happy this morning, thinking of God's goodness and mercy. Then I began to think of those who would assemble themselves in his name, and how much I wished that I could be with them. Then the thought came, too, of your good letter, received so long ago, and I felt reproved for delaying so long in answering it, yet I know that so many write you who are better taught, and who can express themselves to far greater advantage. God's people all tell the same story, but to some there has been given a greater talent in that line. If I have been made fit for anything except to love him and his people, and to desire their companionship and comradeship, I do not know what it is. I am all alone, save the occasional presence of the blessed Redeemer. I grope in darkness, but not in unbelief, and I pray for him to guide me, that I may not stray, and to guard me lest I be devoured by the adversary. I still believe that he is able to save to the uttermost, and that he does his will concerning us, and I am thankful for it. If I am saved it is by and through that which he purposed before the foundation of the world. I have had no part or lot in it, save to receive. If it be his will that I should not be numbered among his people he is the same just and good God. I am as nothing when I think of all that he is. I sometimes marvel that he loved the world enough to give his Son, in whom he was well pleased, to die for them that believe. Lord, do I believe? Am I not a poor, guilty, condemned sinner, who sometimes hopes that I shall one day participate in all that he has prepared for his people? Dear Lord, make my faith stronger, and quicken me spiritually, that my unbelief may be helped, and that I may walk closer to thee. I look on my right hand, and on my left, and behold thee not. I call often when there is no answer. But it must be that the shadow of this world intervenes, for thou hast promised to answer all who call upon thee aright. Thou changest not; from everlasting to everlasting thou art God, and thy redeemed ones are safe, whether thou hidest thy face or whether thou art one in their midst. I thank him to-day for all the way in which he has led me, and I feel to trust him to the end of life's journey. To whom else could I go? Where else would I find help in time of need, save in the merit of his dear Son? How can we be lost if we are heirs of his promise? I wander in mind away from all that he has said and done for us, and I get worn and weary, and well-nigh despair because my sins are weighing me down and the law of God hangs heavily over me; but when I can get no further, and can do no more, I am led again to the banqueting-house, where the banner over me is love and salvation

by grace, and where once more I remember that my sins have been washed away and my iniquities blotted out, and that the law has been but a schoolmaster to bring me to Christ. All the real happiness I know is when I am present with the Lord. All that causes me to mourn and doubt is that which I see in myself, and the greatest encouragement I receive from the brethren is when I hear them tell of their weakness and unworthiness. I have especially in mind now Elder Badger, and brethren Long and Oliver, and one or two others, whose names I have forgotten, of the Frying Pan Church; their remarks and writings are food and drink to my soul. I have thought to write and tell them so, but have been hindered by inability to write as I would like. Brother Chick, I look upon you, and upon all others who have been called to declare the things taught in the Scriptures, as being far above me in goodness, as high above me as the heavens are in knowledge, and as able exponents of God's revealed word. I remember all with whom I met, and can never render praise enough to him for so great a privilege. Here the weather is all that one could desire, and I wish that those who live in countries which are intensely hot or cold had the opportunity of spending a year with us, yet I do not know why, for they would return to their home dissatisfied, and if some should be Primitive Baptists they would be so lonesome here that they would want to return to those who know the joyful sound, to those who have tasted of his grace, to those who esteem one day in his courts as better than a thousand, and more than climate or all the world.

I hope this may find you and family well, the cause in which you labor prospering, and may He be mindful of each of you until he cometh to make up his jewels. I have hoped that we might meet again, but the state of my husband's health seems to preclude all possibility of this, but if in that house not made with hands, that mansion prepared for his people, we may live forever with the Lord, all that we have hoped and prayed for will be realized, and we will be happy for ever and ever. When you ask of him who giveth liberally and upbraideth not, remember me. I hesitate to write anything for your perusal, but I do not hesitate nor forget to ask God to pour out his richest blessings upon you. I enjoyed your last letter, and was especially interested where you told of the different texts selected before arriving at the place of meeting, only to find after getting there that they were no longer with you. But how good God was to you when one approved by the Master was given you, for he gave you great liberty, and his people were comforted. I have thought of the sweetest things to say to you, and to others, only to find that when the opportunity for writing came I could not recall them. Sweet things did I say? Yes, because I was in the spirit, and they were given me by the Lord himself.

I read in the SIGNS that you and brother Badger had been sick, and I was sorry. I would have been sorry that any of his servants should have suffered, or that they had been kept from their appointments, but if you and brother Badger seem a little nearer and dearer God knows why, and you will understand it. The difference is a feeling born from above, and increased by your tender, loving ministrations. I am glad that both of you are better once more, and my prayer is that you may both be spared yet a long time to comfort and edify those who hear you. We need, or at

least it seems to me so, more to-day than ever before, every one whom he has called and qualified for that purpose. If ever the sheep needed undershepherds, if ever watchmen upon the towers were necessary, the time is at hand. There is such a confusion of tongues, such a variety of beliefs, such a denial of the God who created them, such wickedness in high places, that our little band needs to be renewed day by day, not alone by the Author and Finisher of our faith, but by that reproof, correction, example and the preached word of those whom he has made overseers of the flock. With all their shortcomings they still stand out before me as the one great proof of the wisdom, the truth and the fulfillment of all that has been declared in the word concerning his people. There is a oneness with them, a humility, a greater reverence for God and a more thorough searching of self than is to be found elsewhere, and I admit this to his honor and glory, knowing that it is not of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

I am quite well, also the rest of the family, except my husband. I remember the meeting at which I had the privilege of meeting you and so many able exponents of God's revealed word; I remember it all.

With love to all the household of faith, I am your unworthy sister,

B. E. WRIGHT.

GAINESVILLE, Ga., April 11, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I left my home in Montgomery, Ala., on the fifth instant for a visit to my only daughter and child, Mrs. H. J. Pearce, she being the wife of the president of the large female college here, and now having some extra leisure on my hands, I feel drawn to write something in comfort to the Lord's children, I trust by the blessed Spirit. The Missionary Baptists of this city have a very fine church-building, costing something like seventy-five thousand dollars, and they now are carrying on in this great temple what is called a revival. It is typical; just the sort that Babylon glories in. Every year, and sometimes oftener, they put on all steam and make a great ado saving souls. They have an evangelist from Missouri, who is about as full of the urgent spirit as any one that I ever saw, crying and laughing anecdotes, and the general hurrah mannerism included, and I have seen and heard many of the tribe. He shouts forth their doctrine of works twice a day, and proceeds to gather in his recruits every meeting. I notice among these recruits some whom they converted in past revivals, and most likely a lot of them will have to be converted another year. To my mind a more superlative farce could not be palmed off on thinking beings. Time was when Missionary Baptists would have recoiled at such folly, that was long ago. But falling bodies increase in momentum in their downward rush. They are now at the bottom, mingling lovingly with "falling from grace," &c. But, bless the Lord, his people are neither surprised nor made to complain at Babylon's antics, for they know that these are also among the "all things" that are working toward the highest good, the great output of all good, for them that love God. Yesterday as I sat in their church-building gallery, and looked over the large audience, made up of Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians and unbridled sinners, I could but wonder how many of God's children, the real wheat, were submerged in this great mass of chaff. I felt that there were a few poor sinful lambs there.

How my heart went out to them. How I wished that they could hear the truth from one of God's ministers. Brethren, this false doctrine, sometimes called the do and live doctrine, with great emphasis upon the word "do," is unthinkably repugnant to the children of God. It is so dishonoring to God, it is so unspeakably false, it flies irreverently, and, I may say, impudently, in the face of God's word, which teaches everywhere in its sacred pages that salvation is wholly of the Lord. It is not of works of men, nor angels, nor other beings, earthly or celestial, but of the Lord, and yet men calling themselves preachers, evangelists and workers, go about the land crying to the people to get to work, save their souls, save their families and friends, save sinners. But they say to me when I make bold to refute this false doctrine, Does not the Book say that Christ tasted death for every man? Does not Paul tell Timothy, God would have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth? And, This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Now these, and some other Scriptures of similar import, being superficially read (and the world can read only superficially) seem to lend color to Babylon's contention that all men will be saved, or that all men might be saved, if they try. I say these Scriptures seem to do this. God's people who know God, and who hear the voice of the true Shepherd, and who have the law of God put into their hearts and into their minds, never take a seeming meaning, they have in mind and heart the real meaning, and contexts and texts are all the same to them. They read from within, while Babylon reads from without. They suck the marrow, while Babylon gnaws away at the crust. Moreover, God's people always compare Scripture with Scripture. Babylon frames upon isolated texts, by which nefarious practice Satan has always established his lying theology, and hence it is that Babylon is always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. "Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith." "Taste death for every man," compared with, "All things work together for good to them that love God," easily shows to the child of God that the death of Christ was but one of the "all things" working together with every other thing for the good of God's children. There is no argument here at all that all men will, or can, be saved. Babylon could with equal force prove the possible salvation of all men, by setting forth the Scripture, "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." We know that this is just another one of the "all things." Our God is kind and generous; he extends his great favors to sinners, to the ungrateful as well as to the grateful. He even placed in his wonderful plan of salvation the event of Calvary, death, that sin might be destroyed from the face of the universe. Christ came to take away sin, and as all men have sinned, Christ tasted, by the grace of God, death for every man. This Scripture then has no reference to the salvation of the children of Satan. (John viii. 44.) It simply sheds light upon God's way of taking away or destroying sin, and it also shows that death became Christ, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, thus making the Captain of their salvation perfect through

sufferings. (Heb ix. 9, 10.) It is written that God would have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. God's children compare this Scripture with John xvii. 1–3: Jesus "lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." Paul accordingly then exhorted, or desired, as the margin reads, all followers of Christ, all children of God, to pray for all men, governors, those in eminent places, sinners of every degree, that God's children might lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty. This means to pray for God's restraining grace, or favor, to be extended over Cæsar's kingdom, to the end that God's children might have some quiet and peace in the exercise of the sweet graces of godliness and honesty; and also that Cæsar's subjects, from the king down, might come to the knowledge that God was supreme. A part of his truth is that surely the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain. So the prayers of God's people are heard, and all men, Satan's followers, are restrained from the remainder of their wrath, and God's people do thereby enjoy some peace and quiet. Christ in his prayer, John xvii., prayed not for the world, but for the eternal salvation of his people only. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. These are God's children who were lost in the mountains of sin. All God's children have sinned in the ignorance of unbelief, and because of their ignorance God has shown them mercy, as Paul declared concerning himself. The text and context of the first chapter of first Timothy clearly teach that the sinners to whom he refers are his sinning children, and not the general family of Adam, and so we again see how Babylon distorts God's holy word.

Thus in a feeble sort of way I have tried to expose Babylon's false construction of some portions of the word. Now let us turn for a moment to such portions of the word as these, which parts of Babylon used to pretend to believe. "He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." "By grace are ye saved through faith; * * * not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." "My sheep hear my voice. * * * I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Babylon in these days is as silent as the tomb as to these Scriptures, but, brethren, I believe the time has fully come when we can truly rejoice over her, and say, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." May God bless and comfort all his people everywhere.

Yours complete in him,

GEORGE W. TOWNSEND.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS OF THE SIGNS:—I have before me August 1st number of the SIGNS, current volume, in which there are many good letters, containing the good things of the kingdom, sent in by the different correspondents. Both the editorials are good, and I have read them with interest, comfort and instruction. Elder Beebe's, written many years ago, contains beautiful language; how expressive, how true of the experience of all the dear saints, who have felt the chilling blasts of the cold north wind until they feel that they are perishing. How necessary, yet how hard to feel, all for good. I am comforted sometimes in the thought, and can say, "I know what He appoints is best, yet murmur at it still." Our dear young sister, Eliza McDonald, has written out of the fullness of her heart, filled with the love of God. I have enjoyed all her letters, and have been carried back to my youthful days in the church, but now oft I am saying, "Where is the blessedness I knew when first I saw the Lord?" How changed from those sweet, refreshing moments. Now I am like the pelican, and like the crane I do chatter. With Job I am crying, O that it were as in days gone by, when (as I hope) the candle of the Lord shone round about me, when in the sunshine of his love and life of his Spirit my soul was filled with laughter, and I went skipping upon the hills; but now I am down in Lodebar the most of the time (if not all the time, if I only knew it). Sometimes I have fondly hoped I have been brought to the King's table, and felt the power of the soft, balmy south wind, but "'Tis seldom I can find myself as I would wish to be." I humbly hope and pray our dear young sister, together with every young soldier of the cross, may be strengthened for the conflicts of this life. They, too, must sooner or later feel the cold north wind, that they may take root and grow more and more out of self and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But remember, dear child in the gospel, you will never go where your blessed Jesus has not gone before you, and in and through him the victory shall be yours.

But I am not writing as I intended. I want to say, first, that I have been a reader of the SIGNS for almost sixty years, becoming interested in the things it contained in my eleventh year, my father being a subscriber then. While I am a man of limited understanding, if I am able to judge at all I do believe the paper now contains the doctrine, faith and order it did in my early years of reading. Many times I have felt one number was to me worth the year's subscription. For more than forty years I have been a subscriber most of the time, but two or three times in life it became necessary for me to pay up my subscription and discontinue, for lack of means. This was always a sad task, as we keenly felt the loss, and always renewed as soon as able financially. I have always felt a sacred obligation to pay for any paper I subscribed for, and cannot understand how any one with a clear conscience can repudiate or pass by such a debt; with the love of God and reigning grace in the heart they cannot. The golden rule, or law of love, is the only true principle (or should be) with a child of God. I know that many of us are poor in this world's goods, and with all the economy possible there come the pinching times, and I think I know how to sympathize with such; as Paul says, how to abound and to suffer need. So, dear brethren readers of the SIGNS, or any other paper, write the publishers, and let them know you aim to be honest, and will pay them at the earliest moment, and then do so. The debt is a just one, and before God you

stand adjudged. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me," said the dear Redeemer. The publishers have always been liberal and patient, willing to do everything possible to the help of the poor and needy, so in paying up your subscription, dear reader, you are helping them bear this burden. I have never known them to refuse the paper to one who was too poor to pay for it and yet desired to have it, if they knew it. I have known several instances where parties were abundantly able to pay at any time, that were careless regarding this matter, and let their subscription fall back two or three years, and this ought not to be. While the amount is small to each one, in the aggregate it is a large amount; perhaps there are thousands just like you. Remember the golden rule. When I leave this world, ere long, I know there will be an immense debt of gratitude that I owe to God, to the church and to my dear friends that I cannot hope to pay, but let me live and die with the thought that I have coveted no man's gold and silver, and owe no man.

I have written this after reading your notice to subscribers in the August 1st number, just received. I have desired to write in the love and fear of God to and for all concerned. May each and all come meekly and humbly to the throne of grace to obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need. I feel that my tongue and pen should remain silent, (I have written but little this year) as I am so lacking myself. I know I have need of the prayers of the saints more than any one.

Submitted from the least of all,

P. W. SAWIN.

[WE much appreciate brother Sawin's kind words in our behalf, and thank him for them. What he has said is certainly true, and while the amount due us from each one is small, still the grand total runs far up in the thousands of dollars, and as the cost of publishing the SIGNS is increasing each year, it makes it very hard for us to meet our obligations. If those who are in arrears, and are not able to pay all at once, would send on small amounts whenever they could, they would soon be able to cancel their debt. We do not wish to hurry those who are only slightly in arrears. Brethren, do what you can for us.—ED.]

SWOFFORD, Wash., May 12, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As I am now resting for a day or two at the home of our beloved brother, E. D. Overstreet, who is a subscriber to your most excellent paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and having been perusing its pages, I am constrained to drop you a line in the way of indorsement, and especially am I well pleased with brother Chick's views of the ten virgins, in the May 1st issue. It has long since been my view concerning all these parables that in some way or other they represent the children of God. The kingdom of heaven is likened unto, are the words of our Savior, hence the apostle said, These things are written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope, &c., and to presume for one moment that the children of God cannot be, and are not sometimes disobedient to the law of God, would seem to me to completely paralyze and overthrow the entire tenor of divine writ. The apostle said, For if we sin wilfully, &c., which, to my understanding, implies there is such a thing as God's people sinning wilfully, and the Savior says (right along in line with this, as I see it), "And that servant which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his [lord's] will, shall be beaten with many stripes."—Luke xii. 47. I do not under-

stand that any except the Lord's people are his servants, in the sense under which the sentence is here used, and for me to say the wicked serve the Lord while doing wickedly, the same as the righteous when doing righteously, is getting into deeper waters than I find my Bible leading me. Also brother Ker's reply to Elder Barnes, in the April 15th issue, in regard to the "fulfillment of prophecy," I fully concur with, and that, too, on the same grounds as before stated. I fully believe that herein is the line drawn between God's people, instead of between his people and the reprobates, commonly called by some "nonprofessors." While Peter gets into some deep waters along here, (2 Peter ii.,) yet as brother Ker says, the Lord bought them, and they have forsaken the right way, following the way of Balaam, the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness, but was rebuked for his iniquity, &c., who had escaped the pollution of this world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and had turned from the holy commandments delivered unto them, and I can hardly be reconciled to the thought that these holy commandments were ever delivered unto reprobates, at least I do not find such to be taught in holy writ, to my understanding. Also the article from the pen of that venerable old soldier of the cross, Elder W. J. May, of Pinsonfork, Ky., in May 1st issue, indorsed by Elder Chick, was good. It was not my privilege to read the article referred to, from Elder Beeman, but it has long been my understanding that the baptism under consideration here is water baptism, and as there is no other way into the visible church except by experience and baptism, it might be rightly called the door into the church; hence the language of the Savior to Nicodemus: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom [or church] of God." It will be remembered that he had just said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom," &c., so I conclude being "born again" is the only power or Spirit through which the children of men will ever be able to know where the true church is. Hence the language of Solomon: "If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, [made fair by the blood of Christ] go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents." —Song of Solomon i. 8.

But I must close lest I weary you. I only wanted to tell you I fully indorse your views on these things, and want to implore the blessings of God on you in your labor of love. I am at present visiting among some of the churches in the state of Washington. I was at the regular monthly meeting of the Cowlitz River Church, first Sunday and Saturday before in this month, also yesterday, and will go from here to Salkum, where services are arranged for next Sunday, and from there I will go to Oregon City, Oregon, for the fourth Sunday, where arrangements are made for a three days meeting, beginning Friday before at 2 o'clock p. m. I am pastor of the church there, also of Pilgrim's Rest Church, in central Oregon, near the town of Madras. The time of our meetings there is the first Sunday in each month and Saturday before; hour of meeting on Saturday, 2 o'clock and Sunday at 11. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend any and all these meetings. My home is at Newberg, Oregon, where I will be glad to receive correspondence from any of our dear Baptist people who may read this.

Unworthily, but as ever your little brother in gospel bonds and bonds of afflictions, S. B. MOFFITT.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1913.

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EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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ISAIAH XXXVIII. 4-8.

ELDER H. Ellison, of Huddleston, Ark., some little time ago wrote, desiring that we should give our views upon the Scripture found in Isaiah xxxviii. 4-8, which reads as follows: "Then came the word of the Lord to Isaiah, saying, Go, and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years. And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria: and I will defend this city. And this shall be a sign unto thee from the Lord, that the Lord will do this thing that he hath spoken; behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sundial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down."

We feel sure that the most of our readers do not need to be told that this Scripture narrates the sickness and recovery of the king Hezekiah, in the midst of which the king was promised that his days should be lengthened fifteen years. The sickness of the king, the declaration of the Lord to him through the prophet Isaiah, that he should die and not live, the mourning and petition of the king before the Lord, the promise of recovered health and of lengthened years, and then the experience, deep and heartfelt, of the king under these circumstances, and afterward, as recorded from the ninth to the last verse of the chapter, all present matters of deepest interest to every one that is spiritual, but we cannot attempt here to dwell upon them all. We suppose the special thing in the mind of brother Ellison is the lengthening of the days of Hezekiah. At least we know that in the minds of very many it has been a question how the Lord by the prophet could say to the king, "Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live," and how this can be harmonized with the later words delivered unto him by the same prophet: "Behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years." It has been asked many times, How could both these things be declared to the king, as the word of the Lord to him, unless we are to understand that there is changeableness with Jehovah? This has seemed impossible to be believed in the face of the many Scriptures which teach his unchangeableness, or, in other words, his immutability of will and purpose, by those who hold the word of God to be true, and regard the God of the Scriptures with reverence. The language seems positive: "Thou shalt die, and not live," and it seems impossible to question that Hezekiah understood by it that his death was to be soon, as the result of his sickness, and we have no doubt that Isaiah himself regarded the message which he announced to the king in the same way. The question then is, How could it be that an unchangeable God could declare to the king that he should die, and not live, so positively, and then a little afterwards

announce to him that he should not now die, but that his days should be lengthened fifteen years? How can this narrative be reconciled with the doctrine of God's unchangeability? A vast number of the professedly religious among mankind have seen no difficulty here, because they deny the immutability of God, and believe that he can be of one mind to-day and of another mind to-morrow. Their claim is that although our God has appointed that when men sin they shall suffer in various ways, yet this suffering, as the consequence of their sins, may be avoided by repentance and confession before God, and a return to the ways of righteousness; and that the God of heaven threatens that he will overwhelm the guilty with his judgments, only meaning that he will do so if they do not repent and turn from their sins. But this could not apply here even were it true, because there is no charge of sin against the king; in fact, he was one of the good kings of Israel, who did that which was right in the sight of God. It was not said to him, Because thou hast sinned and unless thou repentest, thou shalt die, and not live. It is indeed true that death is the penalty for all sin, and must befall all men, for that all have sinned, and that sin is the sting of death, but it is not true that when one dies in youth, or in middle age, it is an evidence that he is in some special grievous sense a sinner. The prophet did not intimate this at the first, and the king as he turned his face to the wall and prayed did not confess any special sin, but rather besought the Lord to remember that he had done that which was good in the sight of the Lord, and the king received no rebuke for thus praying. Thus the announcement that he should die in the first place, was not because he had sinned, and the announcement that his days should be lengthened, in the second place, was not because of repentance and the promise of amendment on his part, therefore there could be no change in the mind of God upon the above named grounds. Besides, it is not worth while to argue concerning the immutability of Jehovah; the Scriptures too plainly declare that he is in one mind, and that none can turn him. But still the difficulty remains, how can this narrative be true, if indeed our God is unchangeable? A similar question has arisen in regard to the narrative of Jonah and his preaching to the inhabitants of Nineveh. Also with regard to the dealings of God from time to time with his chosen people under the old covenant. How differently did he deal with them under different circumstances, and it is no less true that with each and every one of the children of men his mind seems, but only seems, to change at different times. Tokens of his love and providential and covenant care are made to abound toward them at times, and then again he seems to withhold his blessings. Perhaps we may never on earth be able to account for these various changes in our lives, but still it is true that in them all the same unchangeable God rules, and these changes do not show that there is any change in his mind, will or ways. We only see what is present; and so God gave to Isaiah and to Jonah to see only what his present message was. Isaiah did not know at the first that fifteen years should be added to the days of the king, and neither did Jonah know that Nineveh should be given repentance at his preaching, and that the city should be spared. Neither did Hezekiah know the mind of God any further than was declared to him. Nor did the Ninevites know any further than what Jonah was

bidden to preach to them, and we are sure that it never entered into the mind of the prophet, nor of the king, that the God whom they worshiped had in any way changed his purpose from the first. Perhaps a simple illustration may help us here. We say commonly, and all the time, The sun rises and sets. The sun is compared to a king, ruling the day, as our God rules in heaven and earth, yet we know that the sun is immovable, so far as its relation to our earth is concerned. In reality, while it appears to us to rise and set and to move across the heavens, it does no such thing; on the contrary, our earth moves daily and yearly, and when the darkness comes on it is only because our earth has turned itself between us and the sun. Men are changeable, but God is not.

We leave these reflections with brother Ellison and our readers. C.

MARK XIV. 29.

"But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet will not I."

Some time since sister Annie Sutphin, of Hopewell, N. J., requested that we at some time write concerning these words. The substance of these words of Peter are recorded by each of the other three evangelists, Matthew xxvi. 33, 34, Luke xxii. 33, 34, and John xiii. 37, 38. It is not needful that we should repeat the whole narrative connected with these words, as all Bible readers are familiar with it. The dear Savior was about to be delivered into the hands of men to be crucified, according to the purpose of God and his own purpose in coming into the world. But this truth had been hidden from the understanding of the disciples, so that they had not understood either the Scriptures concerning him and his sacrifice for sin, or his own intimations, given at various times of this coming hour in his life. It was in fact altogether foreign to all their conceptions of the design of the coming of the Messiah that he should die. All their conception of the kingdom that should be set up in the world as the kingdom of God centered around him as King ruling upon the throne of righteousness at Jerusalem and subduing all enemies under his dominion. They had not conceived of his kingdom and reign as a spiritual one in the hearts and minds and lives of men. As the hour drew near for the fulfillment of his purpose, and the shadows of the crucifixion began to appear, they were perplexed in their minds, and could not understand some intimations which he had given concerning the future. Jesus, who knew all things, knew what was in their hearts, knew their weakness of understanding and what would be their thoughts when the hour of his betrayal and death should come. He said to them all, "Ye shall be offended because of me this night," and this brought forth the language of Peter, to which our sister has called attention.

First. Peter spoke without full understanding of what his words involved. He did not know what was before him. He did not know his own weakness, either in understanding or in purpose. He did not know the hour or the power of darkness. He did not know what he said. It is not our mind that he intended to claim superior devotion to his Master above all the rest. He did not mean to imply by his words that all the rest would be offended, but only that it seemed impossible to him that he should ever be. It was true in this language of Peter that the spirit was willing but the flesh was weak. This impulsive disciple spoke out of the fullness of a willing

heart, but that the flesh was weak he did not as yet know as he knew afterward. It seems to us as we think upon this incident that all the circumstances then surrounding the disciples, together with the intimations of coming disappointment and distress in the words of the Master, and the perplexity of their minds regarding all these things, had stirred the heart of Peter to its depths, and that the affection and longing of heart which he had to the Savior compelled this expression from his lips. Though all men deny thee, though all men be offended at thee, yet will not I. It did not seem possible to him that he could ever fail in love and steadfastness toward his Master.

Second. We hear no words of rebuke from the Savior here, even as we hear no words of rebuke from him a little afterwards when he found them sleeping. His words, "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" were not so much a rebuke as a reminder of the great claims of devotion which they had made, compared with the present failure. Ye have said, We will go with thee to prison and to death, and behold, ye have not been able to watch with me one hour; and then, lest they should be overwhelmed with the thought of their failure, he said with all graciousness and pity, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." It is as though he had said, I know that your flesh is weak, but I also know that in spirit there is a willingness in you to do and to suffer all for my sake. Ye, my disciples, have only seen in yourselves the love that ye bear to me, and the readiness that is in your hearts to share with me in all that befalls me, but you have yet to learn that the flesh is weak. This they could learn only by trial and failure, but out of this trial and failure, and out of many other trials and failures, they should come to know that without him they could do nothing; but how blessed is the truth enunciated by Paul on the other hand: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," and it is sure that the first lesson of failure in self must be learned before the second lesson of sufficiency in Christ can be known.

Third. How good it was that Peter had to do, not with men, nor even with his fellow-disciples here, but with the blessed Lord of life and glory. If our heart condemns us our fellow-men may also utterly condemn. But Peter had to do with One who was greater than his heart, and who knew all things; he knew the failure, and back of that the weakness which led to the failure, but he also knew all things. He knew the willingness of the spirit. How consoling have been the words of the apostle just alluded to: "God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things," to so many who have sinned. True, he knows the sin, but he knows also the real desires of the heart, and he knows all his purposes of love and mercy; he knows the sorrow which is felt for sin, and the prayers that we may be kept from it, and he knows his love even to sinners, and the full atonement that has been provided, and most blessed is that one who is given to see something of this fullness of grace in our Lord Jesus Christ. Like Peter, we have, all of us, to do with him who knows all things. Just before these gracious words, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak," were spoken the Master had himself passed through an experience which prepared him to know just what this weakness and what this willingness of the spirit meant. He had prayed thrice, Let this cup pass from me, if it can be thy will, but to him

had been given the victory of the spirit which was willing. Out of that conflict he came to his weak disciples, knowing all their weakness for himself, and knowing that in them there was also that Spirit which had enabled him to conquer in his conflict.

Now let us be humbled as we read of the failure, but let us not be disheartened. It is good to know how frail we are, but it is good not to despair when we see this, but to remember that after all he who sees our hearts has testified for us, as for this one disciple, "The spirit indeed is willing." How closely Peter comes to us in his experience narrated here. How closely are we brought to the dear Redeemer, who felt what all such temptations mean, and so knows how to save us.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

SOLOMON'S SONG IV. 16.

(Concluded from page 478.)

THE north and the south winds are required to waft abroad the delicious odors of the garden of the Lord. It is for this purpose the desire is expressed by the spouse in our text: "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits." The rich fragrance of a garden of spices and of frankincense would never bless the surrounding regions if there were no winds to convey it abroad. The north and south winds of the Spirit, as we have noticed, blew upon the garden of the Lord on the day of Pentecost, causing the spices to flow out, as the apostle Paul has explained, 2 Cor. ii. 15: "For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ," &c. This savor was sent abroad by the descent of the Holy Ghost, like a mighty rushing wind from heaven, upon the apostles and primitive disciples. Moved by the wind of the Spirit, the apostles and new testament saints exhaled the odoriferous savor of the gospel of Christ far abroad, even among the Gentiles. The prayers, the songs and all the devotion of the saints arise as sweet smelling incense from his church, but that they may flow out the Spirit must operate upon the plants which God has set in his garden. The north winds of afflictions, tribulations, losses, crosses, disappointments, and sometimes bitter persecutions, have the same tendency to draw out our humble aspirations of prayer to God that the south winds of comfort and joy in the Holy Ghost have to tune our songs of praise and thanksgiving to God and the Lamb. When the Lamb in the midst of the throne was seen to take the sealed book, the four beasts, or living creatures, and the "four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."—Rev. v. 7–10. From these Scriptures, with many others, we learn that the spiritual worship of God, from those who are led by the Spirit, is compared to sweet incense flowing from the trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord; but our experience tells us that these fragrant spices never flow out from the plants of Zion except when the Spirit blows upon the garden. Again, all the

fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance, are productions of the Lord's garden, and are borne only by the plants which he has planted, and the delightful perfume of them, like that of the precious ointment poured upon the head of Aaron, fills the whole house of God, the savor whereof transports the saints with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Will any experienced child of God doubt that the north as well as the south wind is required to send forth these rich perfumes from the garden of our Lord? Joy and peace, and even gentleness and faith, may be richly developed as fruits of the Spirit, grown in the Lord's garden, by the gentle, warm and refreshing south breezes of the Spirit acting gently, softly and agreeably upon the trees of righteousness, but meekness, patience, humility, contrition and self-abasement require the cold north wind to send the sap down to the roots of the plants, to make them vigorous and deep-rooted.

By our application of the figure of the north and south winds to the operations of the Spirit, we do not mean that the Spirit is changeable, sometimes cold and stormy and anon soft, warm and melting, but rather that its operations are suited to the necessities of the plants; there are diversities of operations, but one Spirit. The same Spirit that leads the saints to feel their poverty also leads them to hope in God, who is the health of their countenance and their God. The desire of the spouse, in the closing words of our text: "Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits," receives a gracious response in the next verse of the Song: "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey: I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." As he has eaten his honeycomb with his honey and drank his wine with his milk, so he has spread the banquet for his friends, so also must they eat the bitter with the sweet, and the milk for nourishment, as well as the wine for exhilaration. Of all the provisions he has spread upon his table the saints may eat freely, without fear of famine or want, for his resources are inexhaustible, and all that he has blessed is wholesome, and all who are hungry may freely eat, for every soul who has a relish for the food it is provided. All who are his friends are bidden; the poor, who have no money or treasure wherewith to buy, shall be supplied without money and without price.

The law. We cannot conceive it possible that one who is redeemed from the dominion of the law by the blood of Christ, and by the law of the Spirit of life, which is in Christ Jesus, made free from the law of sin and death, should ever be brought again under the power and dominion of that law. It has been held and taught by very many that Christ only redeemed his people from the curse of the law, leaving them still under its dominion, as a rule of life, but nothing can be found in the Scriptures to sustain that position. Indeed, the testimony of the apostles most clearly proves the very reverse, for the apostle most positively affirms that as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse. We cannot therefore be under its dominion and free from its curse. What "the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God." If then we be under the dominion of the law we are guilty before God, as the

apostle adds: "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."—Romans iii. 19, 20. The perfect redemption and deliverance of God's people from the dominion of the law is thus forcibly illustrated: "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband, so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."—Romans vii. 1–4. Our connection with and subjection to the law is thus compared to the relationship of a wife to her husband. Our obligations to the law forbid our union to Christ as long as the law's claim on us remains uncanceled. Until the last jot and tittle of the law was fulfilled it were adultery to be married to Christ; hence the necessity of redemption. To remove this impediment out of the way, Christ, whose claim to us was prior to that of the law, came himself under the law, by being made of a woman, or by being made flesh, for it was in our fleshly nature the law held dominion over us. So Christ was made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death," &c.—Heb. ii. 14. As the head and embodiment of his church, now identified with them in the flesh and under the law, he was delivered up for our transgression; he died our death. When he died for us all, then were we all dead, and buried with him by baptism into death, that like as he was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, we also should walk in newness of life; that is, in the newness of his resurrection life, being risen with him, quickened together with him and raised up with him, now completely and forever delivered from the law by the body of Christ, dead to the old husband, and married, and one flesh or one body with the risen Christ, and therefore no more under the law, but under grace. That law under which we were held being now dead to us, as a husband, or as holding dominion over us, the legal impediment to our marriage to the Lamb is removed, the marriage is consummated in our resurrection with Christ to newness of life, we are no more under the law of sin and death, but under the law to Christ; dead to the dominion and claims of the dead husband, and under law to our living husband. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, [or by a sacrifice for sin, as it reads in the margin,] condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk

not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Romans viii. 1–4. It is not possible that those who are dead to the law and married to Christ should ever die to Christ and be reunited with the law, for the deliverance from the law was and is by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which is an immortal life that cannot die, and as the marriage to Christ cannot be annulled except by death, and the power of an endless life makes it impossible that death, or life, or angels, or things present or to come, shall separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, it is altogether impossible that we can ever be placed back in that former relationship to the law of sin and death.

As to the conflicts of our friend with legality, we suspect that he, with very many, if not all, of the redeemed saints, has become entangled with the yoke of bondage, by walking after the flesh, as did the Galatian brethren when they were bewitched by the heresy of Judaizing teachers. So far as we are led by the Spirit, we are led into the liberty of the sons of God, for where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. But our fleshly nature is still full of legality, and its inclinations are to adhere only to that law which we see in our members, which brings us into bondage. "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit." Our earthly bodies and carnal minds being born of the flesh, are after the flesh, but that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and that spirit, being born of God, is after God created in righteousness and true holiness. Therefore to be carnally minded is death, for there is no spiritual life or immortality in our flesh, for the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. From the opposite and belligerent propensities of the flesh and Spirit in every christian arises the warfare, the flesh striving against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that we cannot do the things that we would. All our doubtings, unbelief, darkness, murmurings, unreconciliation to God and opposition to his word, all our fear and discontentment, as christians, arise from the flesh, and we are called on to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts. The leadings of the Spirit incline us to deny ourselves of ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. Our fleshly bodies, though sealed with the Spirit of adoption, are not yet adopted, but the sealing gives assurance that they shall be delivered from their corruptions and brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." When that deliverance shall come there will be no more groaning or warfare, for mortality shall be swallowed up of life. But whatever may be our conflicts, we who are born of God, and by the immortal life implanted in us made free from the law of sin and death, can never be unborn and replaced under that law from which we were redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. In our wanderings, as led by the flesh, we may become entangled with the yoke of bondage, and terrified by frightful images, painted by our imagination. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., December 1, 1865.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Hester I. Brittingham, wife of brother Noah R. Brittingham, died at her home in Showell, Worcester Co., Md., June 11th, 1913. Her disease was cancer, from which she endured months of intense suffering, which she bore without a murmur. She was a daughter of the late brother James B. Timmons, who was long a faithful member of Indiantown Church. She was married to Noah R. Brittingham, Dec. 24th, 1873, by whom she had three children, all boys, two of whom, Joseph and Francis, survive; the eldest, Bassett, died several years ago. Her age at the time of her death was 64 years and 4 months. She never united with the visible church, but received a hope of salvation through the redemption of the Lord Jesus when about eighteen years of age, but was hindered from a public profession of her faith by a deep feeling sense of unworthiness. She told her husband shortly before she passed away that everything was bright to her. She leaves a husband, who is a faithful member of Indiantown Church, two sons and one sister, besides numerous other relatives, by all of whom she was held in high esteem. We commend the bereaved ones to the care of Him who is the source of all comfort.

The funeral was held at her home June 13th, and was attended by a large number of friends and neighbors. The writer tried in weakness to present the consolations of the gospel to the comfort of the bereaved, after which the body was consigned to the earth to await the time of the coming of the Lord Jesus, who shall change our vile body and fashion it like unto his own glorious body, when that which is sown in weakness shall be raised in power and glory.

A. B. FRANCIS.

John Vandevoort died at his home near Warwick, N. Y., May 1st, 1913, aged 76 years. He was the son of John and Fannie Holbert Vandevoort. April 19th, 1883, Mr. Vandevoort was married to Elizabeth A. McKeachnie, who died Feb. 18th, 1888, leaving no children. Three sisters and one brother preceded him to the grave; two of the sisters were members of the Old School Baptist Church, as was also his mother. One sister, Mrs. James Clark, of Campbell Hall, N. Y., survives him, together with three nieces and five nephews. Mr. Vandevoort owned one of the finest farms in the Warwick valley, and his entire life was spent thereon. Many will remember the hospitable home. It was one of his greatest pleasures to entertain his friends. He never made a public profession of religion, but verily believed in salvation by grace. He was honest and upright in all his dealings, and reckoned as one of Warwick's best citizens. He had been in failing health for several years, and was faithfully cared for by Mrs. Wm. Sproul, his niece, who, with Mr. Sproul, made her home with him. Heart disease was the immediate cause of his death, passing away very suddenly.

His funeral service was largely attended at the home, and the writer tried to preach Christ and him crucified as the only hope of salvation. The interment took place in the family plot in the Warwick Cemetery. The relatives and friends have our sympathy.

K.

Thomas S. Denton was born in Merriweather Co., Ga., April 9th, 1836, and when a child his parents moved to Tippa Co., Miss. He enlisted in the Civil war, serving four years under General Jackson. The only wound he received was the loss of a little finger by a bullet. He was in many hard-fought battles, and evidently bore his full share of the privations and hardships of the life of a soldier, and was discharged at Richmond, Va., returning home, and then to Texas. He was married to Miss Mattie Handley, at Birdville, Texas, Jan. 2nd, 1879, and afterward moved to Eastland County, where he united with the Old School Baptist Church called Corinth, in the year 1903. In the year 1904 brother and sister Denton moved to the town of Comanche, and placed their membership with Antioch Church, where it remained until he was called to his final reward. Brother Denton had been in declining health for a number of years, and had become so feeble as to prevent him attending the regular meetings for some twelve or eighteen months, yet his mind was always with the church on meeting days, and it was his great delight to have the brethren and sisters visit his home. The writer baptized brother Denton, and was his pastor at the time of his death. He was a strong believer and advocate of the doctrine of God's eternal sovereignty, and salvation by grace. Brother Denton passed away as if going to sleep, Jan. 25th, 1913, leaving his heartbroken and lonely companion to mourn his demise. I cannot say to sister Denton, Weep not for brother Denton, having felt the pang myself. There is a sweet relief to the broken-hearted sometimes in shedding a tear, though some would call it weakness; nevertheless we cannot help it where our lives have been cemented in love. But I would say, Weep not as those who have no hope, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring forth with him, where all the redeemed family out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people will be raised up to meet the Lord and will ever be with him.

S. N. STEPHENS.

BLUM, Texas.

Alvia R. Bond died June 30th, 1913, at her home in Anderson Co., Ky. She was the second wife of Turner H. Bond, and in her 67th year. She was born and raised on an adjoining farm to that on which she died, and at no time in her life lived more

than two miles from her birthplace. In her marriage thirty-six years ago she became stepmother to four children between one and seven years of age, the eldest of which is the writer of this notice. She was the mother of three girls, all of whom are living; the two oldest are married and live near the old home, the youngest still resides with her father. Mother was of a quiet, self-sacrificing disposition, and filled her place of wife, stepmother and mother in a worthy manner, never making any difference between her own children and her stepchildren, we never realizing we had a stepmother. A few years ago she united with the New School Baptist people, and retained her membership with them until her death. She never took an active part in religious matters, and her ideas and opinions were rarely expressed, but when they were they showed her to contend for the substantial principles of faith. She enjoyed reading the experimental letters in the SIGNS. In her last illness, which lasted about one month, she suffered much, but bore it patiently. She knew the end was near, and her manner and conversation showed her to be entirely reconciled to the approach of death, with no fears for the future. She took leave of the members of her family as a christian woman, assuring them of her hope of a better life. She had selected the hymns and text for the funeral exercises. The text, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" was used as the subject, by Mr. Moore, a minister of that denomination, who officiated at the funeral exercises at the home. Interment was then made in the Lawrenceburg Cemetery, to await the glorious resurrection. We feel to admonish her friends and those of her family who miss her most not to weep as those without hope, for death to the righteous is the entrance to life eternal, where sorrow, sickness and tribulation shall be known and felt no more, but joy and bliss in the presence of God shall be forever. C. W. BOND.

BROTHER **Job Mellott** died at his home near Gem, Fulton Co., Pa., March 20th, 1913. This notice of our dear brother's passing away is somewhat late in being written, but it is as fitting now as ever that a brief sketch of him be prepared for our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He loved this paper, the doctrine it advocates and the people who believe it. Our brother was aged and infirm, and had been feeble for a long time. He had been a dentist by profession, but for the past few years was able to practice but little. He was twice married, and is survived by several children and his last wife, who, with our brother Job, was a member of the Sidling Hill Old School Baptist Church. Brother Job was the clerk of this church, and served his brethren faithfully and well. That for which our brother is most lovingly remembered is his devotion to the cause of Christ, and for his wonderfully spiritual mind. His grasp of the Scriptures, and his ability to apply them in the right place, was a little out of the ordinary. Seldom does one find an Old School Baptist who is clearer on church order than was he. His counsel was valuable to the church and to its pastor. He stood for the purity of the visible church in its doctrine, order and practice, and could not tolerate any innovations that were contrary to the rule and practice of the Apostolic or Primitive Church. He was one who would prefer to enter into life maimed than to suffer hell-fire with both hands or both feet if any of these members offended. One thing I do positively know, that is, I loved brother Job, though I had known him but a short time. Brief as was my acquaintance with him, he had grappled himself to my heart with hoops of steel. But more wonderful than my love for him, I think he loved me, too. That any of the Lord's people should love me seems very strange, but I have the Lord to thank for it, for I know they could not love me were it not for Christ's sake.

The writer of this notice, his pastor, was sent for to preach his funeral, but could not go because of another appointment in the way, therefore his widow, our sister Mellott, asked Elder Funk, of the Clark Baptists, to officiate, which he did. Interment was in the cemetery at Sidling Hill, Fulton Co., Pa.

May the dear Lord remember in mercy the afflicted church and family. H. H. LEFFERTS.

George Wright died at his home in Shelbyville, Ky., June 3rd, 1913. The subject of this notice was born in Shelby County, Feb. 27th, 1830, therefore was in the 84th year of his age. He was united in marriage to Miss Amanda Hackworth, Nov. 1st, 1860, and to them four children were born, three sons and one daughter, Mary, who departed this life in 1885, a lovely daughter indeed. James, the youngest son, died in 1900. We believe both of these children entered into eternal rest, saved and washed from their sins by the blood of the dear Redeemer. Our friend Mr. Wright never made a public profession of his faith, yet he daily evidenced that he had been with Jesus and was taught of God, of incorruptible seed, that liveth and abideth forever; the fruit was abundantly manifest in his daily life, by that meek, humble spirit. He was mild, gentle, quiet and reticent, and loved by all who knew him, and was possessed of those graces of the Spirit that commended him to every man's conscience. There can be no question but that his glorified spirit dwells with God, our righteous Judge. His death was sudden, and a shock to us all. He had gone out in the early morning to look after some plants, and soon returned complaining of feeling ill. The doctor was sent for, but no physician could relieve him, and he soon passed away of heart failure. He leaves his devoted wife, our dear sister, two sons, Joseph and

David, with numerous friends, who feel their loss, but he sweetly sleeps in Jesus, having left us all an example and pattern of good things.

The funeral was largely attended at the home June 5th, after which his mortal remains were laid to rest in Grove Hill Cemetery, near Shelbyville. The Lord comfort the broken-hearted and give every needed grace to the weary ones. P. W. SAWIN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

A. MCGUGAN has changed his address from Lobo, Ontario, to Komoka, Ontario, R. R. No. 4.

MEETINGS.

THE Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet with Spring Creek Church, near Stahl, Adair Co., Mo., in her fifty-ninth annual session, on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1913, and continue the two following days. The passenger train from the east that leaves Kirksville at 10:22 a. m. will be met at both Novinger and Stahl on Tuesday. The same train will be met Wednesday at Stahl. Also the train from the west, due at Stahl at 5:45 a. m. will be met at Stahl Wednesday. A cordial invitation is extended to all who believe in a God that is able to do his will without the aid of man.

S. B. JONES, Moderator.

H. C. CATE, Clerk.

THE Maine Conference, the Lord willing, will assemble with the Old School Baptist Church at North Berwick, York Co., Maine, on August 29th, 30th and 31st, 1913. We shall be very glad to have any who love our Lord Jesus Christ come and visit us. Any who come will be met at the railway station on Thursday, August 28th.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, to begin on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1913, and continue the two following days (Sept. 5th, 6th and 7th). All lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. E. HUBBARD, Clerk.

THE original West Tennessee Association of the Regular Old School or Primitive Baptists, will meet with the University Street Church, in Nashville, Tenn., to begin on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1913. All who believe in salvation alone being by and through the grace of God, are invited to attend this association. Take car at Union Station, to Transfer Station, then take Fairfield car and get off at Hazle St., and walk south five or six doors to University St. meetinghouse.

V. G. SEALS.

THE Clovesville Old School Baptist Church will hold its yearly meeting, the Lord willing, the second Saturday and Sunday in September (13th and 14th), 1913. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, especially brethren in the ministry of our faith and order.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Andes and Middletown Churches, at Union Grove, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday following the third Sunday in September (24th and 25th), 1913, commencing at 10:30 a. m. Trains will be met at Union Grove on Tuesday p. m. All are requested to come direct to the meetinghouse, which is one-quarter of a mile from the station. A committee will be at the meetinghouse to direct all to places of entertainment. Those coming over the U. & D. R. R. via Kingston and Oneonta, will change cars at Arkville for Union Grove. Those coming from any parts on the O. & W. R. R. will change cars at East Branch for Union Grove. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth to meet with us. There is room for all who desire to come.

J. B. SLAUSON.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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CHAPEL HOUSE, CROWBOROUGH, England.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 81. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1913. NO. 17.

POETRY.

THOUGHTS ON NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS.

(Inscribed to my dear wife, M. C. Badger.)

If wishes in the heart for those
  Whom we sincerely love,
Were fountains whence the blessing flows,
  Our earnest love to prove,
Then coming days and coming years
  Would multiply their joy;
Their life would be devoid of tears,
  Their peace without alloy.

But He who measures out the way
  Our journey must consume,
Provides the light of every day
  Our pathway to illume;
To tell us why, and tell us how
  His kindly providence
Ordains the bitter tear to flow
  In heartfelt penitence.

He mingleth with his loving care
  Our cup of weal and woe;
The cross to bear, the crown to wear,
  He teacheth us to know.

We love, but as we love we pray
  That clouds may never rise
To intercept a single ray
  From the unclouded skies.
We pray that eyes may never know
  The washing of a tear;
That heads may ne'er in sadness bow,
  Nor hearts e'er throb with fear.

No burden should the heart oppress,
  No cross to take or bear,
No spirit groaning in distress
  To seek relief in prayer,
(Of prayer itself no need would be,
  For prayer betrays a need,)
If all our wishes we could see
  Fulfilled in very deed.

But He who makes the fertile plain
  Its rich abundance yield,
Must send the blast, must send the rain
  O'er all the verdant field.
Were sun to shine through all the year,
  No cloud obscure the sky,
All life on earth would disappear,
  And death itself would die.

'Twas Wisdom's self ordained the law
  That rules the universe;
From Wisdom's fountain angels draw
  The praises they rehearse
When round the throne of God they stand,
  And with united voice
Proclaim the wonders of his hand,
  And "vent their swelling joys."

Could rays of wisdom from above
  Illume our darkened mind,
Then would the objects of our love
  Our prostrate spirit find
In humble supplication bowed
  Before the Father's throne,
To ask for sun, or ask for cloud,
  As pleases Him alone.

To ask that from His mighty hand
  Should every portion come,
With strength within their lot to stand,
  With grace to guide them home.
Each year begins its destined round
  Of measured weal and woe;
We'd have our hearts in union found
  With Him who orders so.

The darkness first precedes the light,
The night precedes the day;
Infinite love ordains the night,
And morning's gentle ray
Reveals the gracious providence
That in the darkness lay,
And justifies Omnipotence
In all its work and way.

The angry cloud upon whose breast
Rode tempest, storm and flood,
Has stamped upon its lofty crest
The sign of coming good.
Jehovah rides upon the blast
Across the angry sky;
He has his bow of promise cast
In gracious prophecy.

Omniscient Wisdom has ordained
The season's varied round;
In winter's grasp there is contained,
In icy fetters bound,
The bud, the bloom, the fruit, the ear,
Which sun and breath of spring,
With summer's heat and autumn's sere,
To golden harvest bring.

As needful is the winter's cold,
As is the summer's heat,
And should the skies the rain withhold,
The tempest cease to beat,
Then life would perish in the bud,
The seed within the bloom;
Then nature would deny her God,
And man would curse his doom.

Unchangeably the changing times
Their fixed courses run;
Ordained of old, the changing climes
Obey the unwearied sun;
The days, the nights, the months, the years,
His stately march attend,
And in "the music of the spheres"
God's praises never end.

And so in all creation's bound
Is writ in fairest lines,
Above, beneath and underground,
For tokens and for signs,
The works of an almighty Hand,
All wrought for man alone,
That he before His face may stand,
And worship at His throne.

To read these signs the heart must be
In union with the Lord,
The wisdom of his ways to see,
The glories of his word;
For by his word the heavens stand,
The earth maintains her place,
And worlds and suns at his command
Their fixed courses trace.

But can my thoughts ascend on high
Up to that sacred seat,
Beyond the sun, beyond the sky,
Where saints and angels meet,
Beyond the reach of mortal sight,
Where God in secret dwells
In bounds of everlasting light,
And all his goodness tells?

Tells to the babe the wondrous things
That from the wise are hidden;
Tells whence eternal knowledge springs,
That comes to fools unbidden;
Tells of His secret dwelling-place
Within the soul of man,
Who by His own almighty grace
His wondrous doings scan;

Tells of the mighty works he's done
For rebels doomed to die;
Tells of the glories of his Son,
Whose awful majesty
He in the dust of earth concealed,
And veiled his lovely face,
That, as the Son of man revealed
To men of sinful race,

They may behold a friend and brother,
Who in their sorest need,
Each for himself, and not another,
Shall find a friend indeed;
Tells of the victory He won
O'er death, and hell, and sin;
Tells of the heavens where he's gone,
And shut his glories in.

O wondrous are the things he tells,
Beyond all mortal thought;
To one who in his presence dwells,
And by his Spirit taught,
Has tasted of his mighty love,
The essence of his being,
And like the wandering, weary dove,
Unto its window fleeing,

Would come and drink, and drink again
Of rivers of His pleasure,
And list with rapture to the strain,
The music's gentle measure,
That flows from lips inspired with grace
To tell the sacred story
Of love divine to sinful race,
And of the Savior's glory.

'Tis of this Savior I would sing
In heaven's flowing numbers,
Mount to this seat on angel's wing,
But sin my flight encumbers.
With bitter sighs and gloomy fears
My burdened breast is heaving,
My longing eyes suffused with tears,
No Savior's face perceiving.

My harp upon the willows hung,
  I wait in lonely sadness
For Judah's King to tune my tongue
  To notes of solemn gladness;
But if my tongue refuse to sing,
  My hand forget her cunning,
And in the ways of Judah's King
  My feet forget their running,

Yet would the very stones cry out,
  If man himself was dumb,
And all the host of heaven shout
  Hosanna to the Lamb.
He mounts to Zion's sacred hill,
  Where God has placed his throne,
And there reveals his sovereign will,
  And makes his glory known.

'Tis there the secrets of his love
  His bride with rapture hears,
Her voice as sweet as turtle dove
  To His attentive ears.
When winter's rain is past and gone,
  And tuneful birds are singing,
When on the wings of love upborne,
  With life and hope upspringing,

She lists with wonder and surprise
  Unto the gracious story
Of things concealed from mortal eyes,
  And hid from ages hoary,
The mysteries of redeeming grace
  To fallen, ruined man,
That gives the sinful soul a place
  Above at God's right hand.

He tells the "secret of the stairs,"
  And to her heart makes known
The mingled cup his love prepares
  To share with him alone.
He tells her how to read aright
  The chastening of his rod,
When on her lonely bed at night
  She mourns an absent God.

With weary eyes bedewed with tears,
  Her breast with sorrow heaving,
Oppressed with anxious, gloomy fears,
  Her widowed spirit grieving,
Temptations cross the darkened sky,
  And evils that were hidden
Like clouds of armed scorpions fly,
  In sinful thoughts unbidden.

With bitter tears and broken sighs
  She seeks the way he's taken;
She asks, but hears not his replies;
  Why am I thus forsaken?
Does not my heavenly Lover know
  Without him I must perish?
That bound to him for weal or woe,
  'Tis only him I cherish?

He hears her grievings and complaints,
  He treasures up her tears,
He knows it is with love she faints,
  He justifies her fears.
Those tears are heavenly dews distilled
  In rain and gentle showers;
Those groans, through every fibre thrilled,
  Are interceding powers

Ascending to the throne of God
  In sacred incense sweet,
Where Father, Son and sacred Word
  In holy oneness meet,
And there in majesty proclaims
  Through earth and heaven's bound,
The name above all other names
  In heaven and earth are found.

He teaches her to lisp that name
  Upon her lonely pillow;
He teaches her to read the same
  When tossed upon the billow;
To know it in the lightning's flash,
  The tempest's threatening horror,
To hear it in the thunder's crash,
  When hearts have failed with terror.

He teaches her his times to know,
  That, like a fertile field
Where heavenly plants and spices grow,
  It may the harvest yield;
He teaches her the time of seed
  Which he himself comes sowing,
Of rain and sun and storm decreed
  To haste its perfect growing.

He teaches her a mother's love,
  And in her bosom burning
Divine compassion from above,
  Unto his sons returning,
Binds her to him with ties divine
  In everlasting union,
Where righteousness their hearts entwine
  In holy, sweet communion.

O could my spirit mount and rise
  Up to that blessed seat,
And see the "Wonder" of the skies,
  A woman strangely meet
To be the bride of heaven's Lord,
  And in his glory shining
Beyond the light that suns afford,
  Or suns and stars combining,

Then would my soul in lofty strains
  Unite with saints in glory
To sing the song whose sweet refrains
  Repeat the sacred story
Of peace on earth, good will to men,
  Which into rapture raises
The hearts of men and angels when
  All heaven shouts his praises.

But no, my spirit, like the dove
Which sits and grieves alone,
When times and seasons o'er me move,
When days and years are gone,
Must wait and hope, and wait again,
While seasons go and come,
And wait for sun, and wait for rain,
Until the harvest-home.

J. N. BADGER.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE AFFLICTIONS OF JOSEPH.

(Amos vi. 1-6.)

THOSE who are at ease in Zion are described in the first verses of this chapter as living in luxury, resting upon their own works, self-satisfied, having all that heart can wish, claiming for themselves whatever they think belongs to the Lord's people. But one thing they lack, which essentially characterizes and distinguishes the people of God: "They are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph." All of the family of God are grieved for the afflictions of Joseph. One may appear to be possessed of every gospel grace, and of all spiritual riches and all christian qualities, yet if he is not "grieved for the affliction of Joseph" he is not a child of God. It is evident that the Holy Spirit is directing the prophet to make this distinction between the carnal professor and one who has been born of God.

The manner of the prophet's allusion to Joseph, ages after he and all his brethren in the flesh had passed away, shows clearly that he speaks of Joseph as representing Jesus, and all this touching history as having its fulfillment in the experience of the saints. The Lord sent a man before his people, even Joseph. (Psalms cv.) All that took place in Joseph's crooked and terrible journey to the end, we must remember, was according to the Lord's purpose, for the Lord sent him. He was his father's best loved son. His brethren hated him because he was his father's favorite. He dreamed peculiar dreams, and told them to his brethren, who hated him the more. In his dreams he was exalted, and this still increased their envy.

His father sent him down to where they were keeping sheep, to see how they did. One found him wandering in a field, and asked him what he sought. He said, "I seek my brethren." He was told where they talked of going and he went there. So far how clear the likeness to the history of the dear Savior. His brethren hated him because he told them that he was to be exalted.

Joseph's brethren said to each other: Here this dreamer cometh; let us kill him, and see what becomes of his dreams. They took the very way that led to the fulfillment of his dreams. Stephen said in his wonderful sermon (Acts vii): Through envy the patriarchs sold Joseph into Egypt, but God was with him. It seems impossible that a human being could have been so cruel as these men were to that child, only seventeen years old. Murder of the most atrocious kind was in their hearts. Reuben, the eldest of the sons of Jocob, seems to have had a tender feeling, and undoubtedly felt the natural responsibility as the eldest, and as a kind of leader of the rest, but we do not read of any sign of repentance, or any word of confession to his father, or that he refused his part of the money. He induced his brothers to put Joseph in a pit, intending to deliver him, and he seems to have felt badly when he returned and did not find him. Then Judah seems to have conceived the idea of making money by selling Joseph to the Midianites. He talked nicely about it being no profit to slay their brother and conceal his blood, and about not letting their hands be upon him, because he was their

brother and their flesh, but he could advise the selling of him for twenty pieces of silver. I do not see a spark of true compassion in either or any of them. It seems that no mortal could be so vindictive as they were; but he who has looked into his own heart in the light of divine life has had to acknowledge that such possibilities are there. These are the very cruelties which were manifested in the crucifixion of the dear Savior, and which were in the heart of Saul of Tarsus when he held the clothes of them who stoned Stephen to death; and it was not in what they did, but in my own experience, that I learned that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked."

When the Lord will teach his people concerning all these things he calls for a famine upon the land and breaks the whole staff of bread. (Psalms cv.) Years have passed by and we hear of nothing being said on the subject of Joseph among his brethren. All of Jacob's sons and all of his daughters have done what they could to comfort him. But he does not yet know the true history of Joseph, and how shamefaced those men must have looked to each other. But now the Lord's time comes to have this history opened up in the Lord's way. Now the sons of Jacob, ten of them, are standing before Joseph, who is the lord of Pharaoh's house and ruler of all his substance. They have money in their hands to buy corn; they are confident, and with honest face before this ruler, as they think, they can ask for this corn with the money in their hands to pay for it. But the man spake roughly to them, and declared his belief that they were spies. How confidently they can assert that they are true men, and not spies. But the ruler insists that they are spies, and insists the more roughly, saying, By the life of Pharaoh ye are spies. Then they tell him something of their family, and the fact is brought out that they have another brother who is at home with his father. Now their position is worse than ever. The younger brother must come down, or they are surely spies.

Now something is transpiring which is of a most wonderful character. These men find themselves thinking of their brother whom they sold into Egypt so many years ago. They never forgot that crime, but it did not seem to have hurt them, and they had evidently not thought of being troubled and hampered in this business transaction by that memory. But now that boy is before them, and between them and this man, and they hear his sobs and cries, and see the anguish of his soul; and even as they are engaged in this purchase of corn, and are denying the charge of being spies, they cannot keep his cries out of their ears, nor his piteous face out of their sight. Now they are beginning to be "grieved for the affliction of Joseph," not knowing that he stands before them, and that already he has turned aside to weep on their account. "And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us."

They are not yet fully humbled, they must have further teaching. They are now released from prison, and sent back to their father with corn, but Simeon is kept until they shall return to Joseph with their younger brother. But when they stop to feed their beasts they, to their astonishment, find their money in the mouth of their sacks. This fills them with terror. That corn which Joseph had

laid up means grace to all the brethren of Jesus; they cannot buy it. While all the world can buy it with their money, their possessions, or by selling their labor for it, to the brethren of Joseph it can be received only as a gift of grace. Those who have spiritual life will find all their money and all their works of righteousness thrown back upon their hands. It will not be received in exchange for the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Their father will not consent that they shall take Benjamin. "Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me." But finally he consented to let Benjamin go. He must give up all worldly treasures, all worldly possessions. And he said, "If it must be so now, do this; take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds; and take double money in your hand: and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand; peradventure it was an oversight. Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man: and God almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother and Benjamin. If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."

All is given up. The same promises we made to the Lord, which were broken, are renewed, and double promises are made. We are still depending upon our money, upon our good works, but are not allowed to go far with that false hope. They were told by the steward that God gave them treasure in their sacks. "I had your money." It is a most valuable treasure to know that Joseph's corn cannot be bought by one of his brethren, but that they must receive it as a free gift.

The steward, as directed by Joseph, has put the money back again in the mouth of each sack, and his divining cup in the mouth of Benjamin's sack, and when the cup is found in the sack of Benjamin they are lost in consternation, and have no more to say. Silently they return and throw themselves down before Joseph. He appears still to them as a stranger, and says, "What deed is this that ye have done? Wot ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine? And Judah said, God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants." They are now grieving for the afflictions of Joseph, and soon they are to know that this man, who has so long made himself strange to them, and has spoken roughly to them, has been their brother all the time.

But why Benjamin? Why must he appear to be the vilest of them all? Why must the divining cup be found in his sack? To show that each one of the Lord's people is to appear to himself to be the chief of sinners when he is tried by that divining cup. When the trial comes he has to say, "I am less than the least of all saints." "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." No one can learn this truth from another, each must learn it for himself. Benjamin was not guilty with his brethren of this crime, but feels, by the power of that divining cup of Joseph, all the sinfulness manifested in those who committed the crime.

The afflictions of Joseph were because of the wicked treatment of him by his brethren, and so when they came to have a true brotherly sense of those afflictions of Joseph they were grieved for them. So the afflictions of Jesus were on account of the sins of his brethren against

him, and when they are made alive spiritually, then they grieve for his sufferings. It was their sins that nailed him to the tree. He was afflicted in all their afflictions. They are crucified with him. Those who do not suffer with him will not reign with him. "As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."—2 Cor. i. 5.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

LOVE.

FOR some cause unknown to me, my mind has been absorbed in the thought of love. There are many portions of the Bible which speak of love. While reading Paul's letter to the Romans I took special notice of his declaration: "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." This love is from everlasting to everlasting. Paul in making this statement first asks the question, "Who shall separate us from the love of God?" And then he goes on to say, "Shall tribulation, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" Then through the power of the eternal Spirit he says that none of these great powers of nature, nor height, nor depth, shall do this. The love of God passes all understanding or comprehension. Solomon said, Many waters cannot quench love. Love casts out all fear. The love of Jesus for his bride was so great that he left the heights of eternal glory and came down to this low ground of sin and sorrow and suffered the death of the cross, to redeem her from the just demands of a righteous law, which said, The soul that sinneth shall die. To this death his people stood exposed by reason of their relation to Adam, for in him all have sinned, and all die, but in Jesus shall all the bride be made alive. It was not for anything seen in us, but because we were members of his body, that he loved us. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)."—Eph. ii. 4, 5. He hath already, in the past tense, quickened us together with Christ. When Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father every one whom he represented in his death was also represented in his resurrection, for it was written, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."—Isaiah xxvi. 19. God, who is rich in mercy, is also rich in love, for it was according to his love, which is stronger than death, that he loved us even before we had existence, and in his love and in his pity he redeemed us, and out of his unbounded mercy he hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the foundation of the world. Love is of God, and he that loveth is born of God. Our love makes manifest God's love shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. Love is the connecting link that unites each member in fellowship, and is the cause that leads us to desire to meet together in the worship of God. It is written, The love of Christ constraineth us. Here is the incentive, the cause, the propelling power which brings us together in love and fellowship, and it is written,

If we love not our brother, the love of God is not in us. Love begets love, and love is of God, and he that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love. It is certain that God loved us prior to our existence. It is written, "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." This love of God is from everlasting to everlasting, and is so strong that all the powers of darkness shall never separate one of his from it. Man is changeable, but our God is without change; there is not even the shadow of turning with him. If our God were changeable, and could be induced to love one whom he did not everlastingly love, is it not a fact that he could also be induced to hate one whom he once has loved? When we look through the glasses that the world looks through, we think we can see an arrangement, or plan, which would seem as though our God was a mere man, and subject to change. But our God is the opposite of this; he is immutable, infinite and unchangeable, and therefore it is said, Ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. This unchangeableness of God gives us great ground for consolation, for he has said, I will never leave nor forsake you. There is a wide difference between the love that is in the world and the love of God. The love of the world, like the things of the world, is perishable. The love of money is the root of all evil. Money is a great idol, and is the foundation of most of the sects and parties in the world, and of all worldly worship. It is written, "They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." It is impossible for the world to love the things of the Spirit, and it is impossible for one who is truly born again to love the things of the world, in the sense that he once loved them. The children of the kingdom have love one for another, which is unlike the love of the world. The words "love" and "loveth" occur in the fourth chapter of first John twenty-four times, and it is spoken directly of the church, and there is no way of placing it upon the conditional plan. John says it is of God, and he declares that we love God because he first loved us; and God manifested his love first to us in giving his only begotten Son. "Herein," says John again, "is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

It has been said by enemies of truth that our doctrine declares that men are drawn into the church by the hair of their heads. But a careful examination of the Scriptures will convince any unprejudiced mind that love is the mainspring of action. Paul said, For the great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, and enemies to God, and in open rebellion against him, and trampling his holy law under our feet, he saved us and called us with an holy calling. For when we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. Thus, if we are to render works of righteousness in order to influence God to love us, the whole tenor of the Scriptures would be found perfectly amiss, and void of meaning. He has brought us to his banqueting-house, and his banner over us is love. The bride said, "Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples; for I am sick of love." Where the love of

God is there is peace and quietness and a frequent assembling together of the children of God. We sometimes feel a coldness in ourselves, and fear that we never did love God as do his children, but let the time of meeting together approach, and we will find a love for association with our brethren springing up in our hearts, and if some hindrance comes in the way we will find ourselves lamenting and longing for the presence of our dearly loved brethren. We can then put up with a shortage of natural things in order to once more have the privilege of meeting with our kindred, and the privilege of talking together of Jesus and his love for poor sinners. Even where two or three are gathered thus together in his name, there is he in the midst. But O how sad it is when one comes into the house and faces confusion. Once since I began to have a desire for the things of the church contention crept in among the fold, and it became so sharp that it seemed as though the love of God had never been shed abroad there, but soon after the contention had been settled the brethren manifested a renewed evidence of the great love which is of God, and quietness and peace were restored among them. This subject can never be completely finished. There might be volumes written about it, and the half not be told. O the wonderful love of the Father in heaven! "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."

But I am taking up more space than I should, and perhaps will crowd out better writers if this should appear in our paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Remember the writer when it is well with you.

Your brother,

J. B. BOWDEN.

FALLS CITY, Texas, 1913.

HERNDON, Va., July 21, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter I received some weeks ago from brother Robert Scates, of Woodstock, Ontario, that I would love to see published in the dear old SIGNS, if you think proper to do so. I wrote to him soon after I received his letter that I wanted to send it to you for publication, but as yet I have not had his consent, so I am making this venture in sending it to you, trusting that if you see proper to print it in the SIGNS he will pardon me for the liberty I have taken in sending it to you. I see nothing in the letter that would cause him to want it withheld from the household of God's elect, but I will leave the matter entirely with you, dear editors, to do as you think best. I believe sometimes that I do love brother Scates with all my heart, although he is a stranger to me in the flesh, but I hope not in the Spirit. I gladly welcome all his letters to me, and enjoy all his letters published in our family paper. O how I would love to meet him face to face. I think sometimes if I could see him and talk with him I might talk better than I can write to him; but no, that could not be, for I am of a slow tongue; I cannot speak the things I would like to speak, and if I should ever again attempt to write a letter for publication in the SIGNS I would like to state that when I attempt to write a letter to the saints of God I almost always feel as one dumb to the knowledge of speech, and I often feel when I sit down to write that I have nothing to write, and often hold my pen in my hand for a long time, wondering, Can I write one sentence, poor, helpless creature that I am? And when a brother or sister writes to me and tells me that he or she is comforted in reading my letters I just have to break down and weep,

and the only consolation that I can get is that it must be of the Lord and not of man. All glory is to him, and not unto us poor worms of the dust. Isaiah points to this gospel day when he said, "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped: then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert," &c. It seems to me that the above language expresses my condition to the letter, so to speak, for I am blind, deaf, lame and dumb, and unless the good Lord pours out his refreshing streams of pure and living water upon me, and into my inmost soul, I shall die alone in this wilderness country and desert land. I feel drawn to all who feel themselves to be pilgrims and strangers in a desert land, and feel to say to them at times as Ruth said: "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee," &c.

I have not written this for publication, and did not think when I sat down to write to you about the publication of brother Scates' letter that I would write more than a dozen words, therefore I hope you will excuse me for writing so much.

With love and best wishes, I beg to remain your brother, I hope,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

WOODSTOCK, Ontario, June 15, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER OLIVER:—Brother in affliction and sorrow, and O I have a hope that I am also a brother in the fellowship of the saints, and in that spiritual relationship which neither time nor eternity can dissolve; but O the questionings, the doubts and fears, and worse than all, the terrible deceitfulness of my wicked, corrupt heart, which seems continually to cast up everything that is evil and sinful, and I am powerless to stay the flood of evil which sometimes seems as if it would overwhelm me, and yet I keep on hoping against hope. O what a wonder I am! I think the psalmist says, "I am a wonder unto many," and such seems to be my case.

Your last letter to the SIGNS seemed to come very near to me, and I have felt like writing to tell you so, but I am so empty, so cold and lifeless, so taken up with worldly things, that there is no room for spiritual things, and, to be honest, I am afraid I do not want them, do not care, yet as I write this I think, What makes me cry from my heart, O that it were with me as in the days or years that are past? What brings the tears to my eyes as I wonder, Will it ever be morning again with me? As the sweet singer of Israel said, "Even as a morning without clouds."

I did not intend to write in this way, but it is hard to control the anguish and sorrow we feel at being such poor, unprofitable, inconsistent followers of Jesus, as I feel myself to be. Jeremiah said, "Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable?" What a relief to know that others have suffered as I do, but O it seems they did not suffer just in the way I do; such rebellion, such discontent and murmuring. Now I must stop this, but it just seems I want to tell some one, who I think knows, a little of what I feel.

I was reading in the Bible this morning, which, I am sorry to say, is not a very frequent occurrence, and the words of Jesus to the Pharisees: "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick," and, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance," came as a relief. O if I could only tell

you what I felt I would write a lot about it. You know I am very prolix, write much and say but little, or put little meaning in my words; but I cannot help that, for where little is given we cannot expect much. But O these words of Jesus seemed to convey volumes, and contain all the principles of religion. They that are whole do not need any help, any cure. Do I feel whole? O the Lord, who knows my heart, knows that I do feel anything but whole, for all the frailties that human nature is possessed of belong to me, and to begin to enumerate them would do no good. As the old prophet said, from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet I am full of wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores of iniquity. O how good it is to know that there is a great Physician, who can make the sick whole. I hope there are times, brother Oliver, when I can say I am sick, and know I need the great Physician to heal and make me whole. How many there are who do not know or feel they are sick, and are great sinners; I have no fellowship for them. "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." O how glad I should be that I am a sinner, but I am not, for I mourn and cry over my sins and wickedness, and say with the prophet, "Woe is me!" But do I glory in being a sinner? I hope not, but rather I am sorry, and ashamed of myself, and sometimes hope I do repent, but often I fear all my repentance is just fear of punishment, or because I want the respect of the world, and you know that would only be hypocrisy; yet why then do I cry and mourn in secret, where no eye but God's can see? O what a multitude of disquieting thoughts come to my mind, and I can answer none of them satisfactorily, but ever they keep coming up and bring turmoil and trouble to my heart, but the words of Jesus come as a healing balm: I came to call sinners; are you a sinner? Do you feel you are a sinner? O yes, I do; I know I am the chief of sinners. Well, I came to call just such as you, and all that I call will surely come to me, for I never call in vain.

I think I will not write any more, for it seems as if my writing is only a jumble of words, and I hope you will excuse what I have written.

We have had our quarterly meeting, and it was pleasant, although I went cold and heartless, but I hope I was glad to meet the dear brethren and sisters. Elders Ker and Fenton were there, and their preaching was able and good. O how good it seemed to hear the clear ringing of the golden bells, the sound doctrine of the Bible. Elder Ker baptized three sisters, and O how good that seemed. My wife and I are all alone here with our belief; there is not another soul in this city we have heard of who knows or loves the truth. At our meeting several asked me to write for the SIGNS, but I cannot. I have nothing to write, only a repetition of former things, and you know that gets stale. O if I could only feel and experience that peace which Jesus said he would give, but I cannot reach it. I hope you are better and are enjoying that peace.

From your poor, unworthy brother, if one at all, R. SCATES.

ATLANTA, Ga., Feb. 13, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I wrote a letter the first of the week, intending to send you a letter received from Elder C. K. Haines, and forgot to inclose it, so I now send it to be published, if you wish.

With love to all the household of faith,
(MRS.) H. H. BENTLEY.

LAKELAND, Florida, Jan. 8, 1913.

MRS. H. H. BENTLEY—DEAR SISTER: —I received your letter, which was kind and welcome, and was glad to hear from you, but sorry to learn of so much sickness among you all. I hope all are well by this time. We are as well as common, and are having some good meetings. Two were added to the church at the last meeting, by baptism. I feel that God is opening the way of many into an understanding of the truth of God's unlimited predestination, the predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass, and he is confounding and bringing to nothing the understanding of those who oppose this truth. The Scripture is very plain. We read, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits." "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God." It is the spirit that confesseth and beareth witness, for the spirit is truth, and we speak the truth only by the spirit, it is not left optional with us whether we speak it or not, for the spirit speaks it, and this is the record: "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." Whosoever "abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." Now Christ said, "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me." Now let us see what this doctrine is, for the doctrine of God is true. "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew."—Deut. xxxii. 2. Again, verse four, "He is the Rock, his work is perfect." Read all the chapter. Now if God's work is perfect, I ask, Will he fail? Does he begin the work of our salvation and then leave it for us to finish, or does he work in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure? My experience and my Bible teach me that our God does his own will both in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say to him, What doest thou? And Christ said, This is the will of him that sent me, that of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing. Well, some seem to think that we shall lose some blessing if we do not obey him, but did Christ tell the truth? All spiritual blessings are in Christ. Do we obtain them for our obedience, or are they freely given to us? If they are freely given to us, then it is by grace, and if we get them for our obedience it is not by grace. Those who believe this are not now saved by grace. But the Spirit testifies like this: "By grace are ye saved." What are we saved from? The Spirit said, He shall save his people from their sins. I ask, Did the blood of Jesus Christ save us from our sins? Jesus said, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, and God says, I will remember their sins and their iniquities against them no more, and the Scriptures declare that he put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself, and that he forever perfected them that are sanctified. We are said to be sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and called. Now are we not fit subjects for immortal glory? If not, what do we lack? I say it is the love of God that moves us to obey God, and it is the love of God that brings us to repentance and to turn from our sins, and that brings us to hate sin. It is the love of God that constrains us, and our obedience is but the fruit of the Spirit, and not the work of the flesh, therefore boasting is excluded. All of God's elect do desire to do

right, but when they would do good, evil is present with them, so that they cannot do the good that they would. Thus they are made to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I feel sure that we die daily, but of course those who believe in conditional time salvation do not have any such feeling as this, for they believe they can escape it by obedience. But there is a remnant according to the election of grace who have this same feeling to this day. God has said, "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." These are the circumcision, which have no confidence in the flesh. But of course those who believe that they are blessed for their obedience do have confidence in the flesh, and do not need to wait for the Spirit to lead and guide them into all truth.

Well, sister Bentley, I am called an absoluter, and other hard names, but Jesus said, Blessed are ye when men shall say all manner of evil against you falsely. I only hope it is for the truth's sake. You can show this letter to any one, and send it to the SIGNS if you wish. I hope to hear from you again soon. May the Lord bless you and all the faithful in Christ Jesus.

Your unworthy servant,

C. K. HAINES.

PHILIPPI, W. Va.

DEAR EDITORS:—The inclosed letters are at the disposal of the editors of the SIGNS. In case they are not published please return them to me.

SEMMA E. CORDER.

BELINGTON, W. Va., Dec. 15, 1913.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—If I have any right to call you such. This I hesitate very much to do with any of the Lord's dear people, for I know how weak and unworthy I am to claim such a relationship. I have been thinking ever since your dear mother's death of how I would like to write you a few lines to tell you how much we all think of you in your loneliness, and how our poor hearts go out in sympathy for you and your dear sisters in your bereavement. I know full well that none can feel the loss so deeply as yourself, for you have been her companion so long. How glad I would be if I were only gifted, that I might write a word to comfort your heart, but I can only commend you to the Comforter, who alone is able to heal all our sorrows. Unless he directs my pen I feel that all I say or write will be as chaff before the wind. Indeed, when I remember who I am, I am made to wonder often that I even attempt to look to him for guidance, and yet to what other source can I look? I am helpless, needy, miserable and wretched in myself. How often I am comforted by these words: Be still and know that I am God, and beside me there is no Savior. It seems that you are almost an entire stranger to me, but the memory of your dear father and mother is so vivid that I feel like renewing our acquaintance. I had hoped to be able to see your mother before she must go hence, but it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. My husband told me about her when he came from the June meeting, and of how lovely she appeared to him. He said, I do think that she is the sweetest old lady I ever saw; it seems as though she looks almost like an angel. Strange as it may seem to you, as well as to myself, I often behold your father's face in my dreams. Why this is so I cannot tell, for I had not seen him in years before his death. Though my own

dear mother has been dead for more than five years, her memory still lives, and her face is continually before me, both in my sleeping and my wakeful hours. It seems sometimes that I can hardly realize she is gone, or that it has been so long since she was here. It was hard to give her up in death, but I would not, though it were in my power, call her back again to this world of sin and sorrow, for I believe she knows happiness now that this world does not afford. It seems of late that I cannot mourn on account of death as I once did, but rather I rejoice, especially if it be one who had a good hope in a crucified and risen Savior. Why this is so I do not know, and wonder if it be because I am so hard-hearted that tears refuse to flow, or is it because I am controlled by the sweet spirit of resignation, and am made to realize that it is not death to die, but life eternal given? Sometimes I cannot help thinking that it is the latter. I well know that you are very sad and lonely without her, and that the vacancy can never be filled, but may you be enabled to feel that your loss is her gain, and to say, The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

Fearing to make my letter burdensome I will bring it to a close, asking you to overlook all my mistakes and shortcomings. Remember me to dear Elder Bartlett and his family, and tell him that we long to see him again. Some time, if you feel like it, I shall be glad of a letter from you. I know that I do not merit the love of God's people, but somehow I cannot help entreating them, like Ruth of old, not to leave or forsake me, but to allow me to follow them, even though it be at a distance. It seems to me that if I am only permitted to keep in sight of them I shall be satisfied.

With much love and sympathy from both Mr. Gainer and myself, I remain yours in hope,

(MRS.) F. N. GAINER.

HARDING, W. Va., Dec. 5, 1912.

DEAR SISTER:—I have just received a letter from brother Bartlett containing the sad news of your mother's death, and hasten to extend my sympathy to you in this your sad bereavement. I know that words of sympathy sometimes seem very empty to the heart that is aching from tender ties so recently broken, but I do want to assure you I feel a deep sympathy for you, and can understand your sorrow, for it seems but yesterday since I sat by the bedside of my dying mother and knew that she was passing out of this life for all time. I felt deeply the pain of parting, yet dared not cry out or make any noise to disturb her. I had to give up my mother just as you had to give up yours, but I feel that it is sadder for you, because you were right with yours all the time, and cared for her so incessantly. And now the empty room is before you, the empty chair, but sadder than all is the lonely feeling in your heart. How sad it is to watch by our loved ones and see them suffer and die, and feel that no matter how long we live we can neither see their faces nor hear again the sound of their voices, and speaking naturally, there is only darkness; a veil is drawn over our vision, we cannot look beyond death, and all seems dreadful. How thankful we should be that we are enabled by the eye of faith to look beyond the dark, deep river and behold them now in glory; and as we think of their dying we call to mind that their Redeemer and ours also died and felt the pains of death in his flesh, but think how he is now risen again, and our

loved ones who have fallen asleep in him hoping in the resurrection will also rise again. How glorious that will be to his loved ones, for they shall love his appearing. All other things shall pass away, and every eye shall behold him. The apostle commanded us to comfort one another with the thoughts of the resurrection. I loved your mother as a mother in Israel, as a dear sister in Christ and as a kind friend. I feel sad to think that she has gone from the church, and shall miss her when I visit there, and I shall miss her in her home, where she has received me and treated me so kindly. May the Lord comfort you with his Holy Spirit, and enable you to say, Thy will be done, and may you feel that while it is hard for you to part with mother, yet it is far better for her to depart and be with Christ.

With kindest regards to all who mourn for her, I remain yours in fellowship,

(MRS.) E. E. WORKMAN.

WAVERLY, Pa.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending you two letters. Brother and sister Boes are members of the church at Otego, N. Y. They are aged and afflicted, but are sound and substantial Baptists of the old stripe. Also you will find a short letter from our aged sister Williams, who is a faithful member of the church at Cammal, Pa.

D. M. VAIL.

OCTOBER 8, 1912.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER:—May this poor, sinful worm claim such a blessed relationship? Often I feel to be the worst hypocrite on earth, and feel sure that if the brethren knew me as well as I know myself they could have no fellowship or love for me, but I do love them with a love beyond all earthly ties.

Yesterday was my seventy-fourth birthday. God has been good to me in thus prolonging my days on earth and providing me with so good a home, and with kind, loving children to care for me in my declining years. I know not what is his purpose in sparing my unprofitable life until the present hour, while so many are called away in their youth who are needed so much more in their families, but as the precious hymn says:

> "Blind unbelief is sure to err,
> And scan his work in vain;
> God is his own interpreter,
> And he will make it plain."

My health is about as usual. I can still get around very well. My folks are all well, so far as I know. Can you tell me anything about sister Florence Weld, whether she has moved to Wellsboro? I would like very much to write to her, but do not know her address. I do long to hear from her or to see her.

I enjoyed our meeting so much more than I can express, and was blessed in having the sweet comfort and peace remain with me for some time after I returned home. I believe that I realized what it was to make melody in my heart to God. My heart was singing his praises all day long. But how short and fleeting those seasons are with me, yet praise to his great and holy name, he shows me that I am not forgotten or forsaken by him who loved us and gave himself for us, and died to redeem us from under the curse of the law.

With love to you, your very little sister,

MATILDA WILLIAMS.

OCEAN PARK, Cal., Sept. 30, 1912.

DEAR ELDER VAIL:—I have been thinking of you a great deal since we re-

ceived your kind and good letter. I was very much surprised, and we both were glad to get a letter from you, for I was afraid you would never write us again, and I beg your pardon for not writing to you. I will try and write a few words, and hope you can read them. Dear brother, you say you are so very bad, but right here is one far worse than you; I cannot even think a good thought, much less talk about it. I cannot express my mind, but I do love to hear others talk. I remember hearing you speak of the Scripture that filled my heart with the desire that I might build a tent and always stay there. Dear brother, the Lord does not want good folks, but sinners. I am glad you are not good, for I could not call you brother, as I am such a dreadful sinner. It is not pleasant to be down in the dust and mourning our sinfulness, but the dear Lord knows best what is good for us. John read the letters in the SIGNS from brethren Morse and Conner, and I was glad they wrote such comforting letters to you. I wish I could say a good word, but I cannot. O how often I wish I could be present with you all when you have meetings. I do not know why the Lord has sent us out here, but it must be for some good; nor do I know why he has afflicted me so that I cannot go to see the brethren. This also must be for some good, though I cannot see it, but I hope he will help me to bear my affliction. I know he has helped me in times of trouble, but I have so little faith, and often fear that I am only a hypocrite. We are pretty well, and have a comfortable home and very pleasant weather, and everything that is needful. When I think of you and many others who have to go out in all kinds of weather I am ashamed of myself, for we have so much to be thankful for. I would be good, but cannot. I expect you have heard of John's trembling; it is very bad, and is very hard for him. His hearing is also bad, and that keeps him from going to see the brethren, for he cannot hear what is said. I am very sorry, as he enjoys being with them. As for me, I am so busy with this world that it seems I am content to stay there. I am very lame, and it is very painful, but I often hear of some others who are a great deal worse off than I. I hope the Lord will give me strength to bear it. I do hope he will keep me from murmuring and being dissatisfied.

John sends love to you, and so with love from both of us I will close.

Your sister,

BERTHA BOES.

ACTS XVI. 31.

"BELIEVE on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

I believe there was war between the North and South, although I was not born at that time. I believe there was a man, George Washington, because I have read of him, but do I believe the Bible in the same way? If so, then my belief is only natural. Belief of natural things is by the natural man, and it is evident that we do not believe spiritual things by the natural mind, but by the Spirit. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Now if it is natural belief with me regarding the Lord Jesus Christ, that he was born of a virgin, that he was made to be sin for his people, and that he was put to death for their sins; that he was buried in Joseph's new tomb, and on the third day arose again, and was seen by many witnesses, if I believe this be-

cause I read it in the Bible, then surely it is natural belief, but if I believe according to the working of His mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and believe the Scripture by that same power, then I have hope that my belief is spiritual. Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible, so we are told, but let that be as it may, whether Moses or some one else, how do we believe that, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep," &c., only by our own experience? You know there was a time in your life when you were without form, and void, and when God said, Let there be light, there was light, and how it did show the evils of your heart, the corruption of your nature, and how you then knew you were a sinner before God, that no other than the light shining in your heart could have revealed. Then you believed the testimony in Genesis in a way that you had never believed before, and this I understand is spiritual belief, because of spiritual life. The gift of God is eternal life (not will be, but now is). As Jesus said, The hour is coming, and now is. John says, Beloved, now are we the sons of God. Not sons of God later on, but now, and life is now your portion; eternal life is now your possession, being the gift of God to you, and having the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ, God gives all the attributes of the life of his Son with the gift, and one of these is belief. The apostles believed in God; they looked for redemption for Israel. The prophets had said, "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness," and they looked for that King, believing in God. Jesus was with them and said to them, Ye believe in God. He told them something that commended itself to their minds: they did believe in God. Then Jesus said, Believe also in me. No man ever stood clothed in flesh and spake as he did. His words were spirit and life, and by the power of his voice men believed in him. Abel believed in Jesus when he offered the lamb. We believe according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead. Being risen with Christ, we seek the things that are above, (things above the law) and we seek them because of life in us. None ever hungered and thirsted after righteousness until quickened from the dead. None ever believed in God until the light shined in their heart to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. We believe regarding the ark, wherein eight souls were saved by water. Peter believed this, and spoke of it, and said, "The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: who is gone into heaven," &c. Peter believed regarding the ark and its eight souls being saved, because he had been in like experience with those eight. He had been upon the waters of tribulation and no light manifested to him, but the flood of God's wrath destroying the world in him, yet at the same time the windows of heaven were opened to him in love and mercy. Peter knew the fountains of the great deep of his depravity were broken up, and then the windows of heaven were opened in God's love and mercy to him, and so he believed and spoke concerning the ark. The Scriptures testify of the things of the kingdom of heaven, and the kingdom of heaven is within you, so we

believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, who is King in Zion, and are saved.

J. M. FENTON.

KINGSTON, N. J., July 20, 1913.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER AND PASTOR:—It has been two Sundays that I have been away from Hopewell and could not meet with the dear brethren and sisters and hear your joyful words for such poor, sinsick souls as I feel myself to be. I can do nothing good, but hope that the dear Lord has washed away my sins in his redeeming blood. If this be not so, I must be lost; but the dear words are written, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." The greatest joy in all the world to me is meeting with the children of God and hearing them tell of the joys and sorrows through which we must all pass in this world. How sweet their words are, and how restful to weary souls; but I do not feel worthy to call you or any of the brethren by the name of brother.

I always take the SIGNS with me when I go where I cannot get to the meetings, and find it good to read. It contains the words of the dear children of God, telling how he has led them and shown them his love and mercy, and declares what I have passed through better than I can tell it. I cannot praise him enough for his great love to me when I was keeping the commandments of men and not those of God. We cannot keep his commandments until we hear his voice, but when he speaks we do hear. We cannot tell his love to our dearest friend, neither can it be taught of men, nor can we learn it by reading the Bible. I read it in vain to find the narrow path of life, until God had mercy upon me and opened my blind eyes, and said unto me, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Then came the words, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." I had been for six years a member with the Presbyterians, and thought that I was doing the will of God in all their good works. I came to Hopewell thirty-three years ago, and heard Elder Purington preach, and I did not hear him many times before he told me where I was. I had never had my experience told before in all the preaching I had ever heard. It was all good works which I could not do. I would sometimes think that Elder Purington was talking directly to me, and I would think, How does he know how I feel? I thought that I was doing the will of God in my good works, trying to teach others the commandments of the Lord, as I thought, but which were really the commandments of men. When Elder Purington took for his text the words, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," I was given to see the truth. The dear Lord said, If ye love me, keep my commandments, and follow me, but I have been far from doing so. I have made crooked paths, but I hope that the dear Lord will keep me in the strait and narrow path through this world of sin and sorrow.

Well, dear brother, I will close this poor letter, for I fear you cannot read it. I hope you are getting stronger and better, and that sister Bonnie and the rest of your family are well. I think of our brother, Will Yard, and hope that he is fast mending. I now hope to be with you at the meeting on Saturday, if it be the will of God; if I am not there, remember me as a poor sinner saved by grace.

With love to you all, your sister,

(MRS.) GEORGE GOLDEN.

RUSSELLVILLE, Ky., May 10, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Though God's people are separated by many miles of land and sea, and a great many are strangers to each other, and of no kin in the flesh, yet they are all related to each other by the same one Spirit, God is their Father in the Spirit and Jesus Christ is their Elder Brother. How encouraging to the believer to know that this same Jesus was given all power in heaven and earth by the Father, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him, and we are told that this is eternal life, that we believe on him whom the Father hath sent. We cannot help believing that Jesus Christ is the Savior of sinners. And why? it may be asked. I can assign no other reason than that the children of God all have the witness in themselves that this is the truth. How did they learn this? say some. I want to say to such that if I know anything about the matter at all, they did not learn it of man, neither were they taught it by man, but it came to them by revelation of God. Jesus declared that the Holy Spirit should take of the things of his and shew them unto men. Now, taking the word of God as the man of my counsel, and my own experience as a witness to the truth, there is not a doubt in my mind but what salvation is of the Lord. What say you, brethren and sisters? Paul said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom [he said] I am chief," and the children of God have no better writer to follow than Paul, for he was inspired and sent of God to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. If conditionalists want any stronger testimony than this I will cite them to the testimony of the angel to Joseph, and leave them there. What was the testimony of the angel to Joseph? He said, "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." Here are three shalls without one if attached to them. There is no conditionalism in this, is there? We know there is not. Well, say some, this is a hard doctrine, and God is unjust if he does not give all men a chance. The only reason that I can assign for a man talking that way is that he has never been born again. As to the thought of chance, if the sinner had all the chance in the world within and of himself to come to Christ he would never come. But why? asks the objector. Because the Scriptures represent the sinner as being dead in trespasses and in sins, and the dead cannot know or move. We must not contradict the Scriptures. "Let God be true, but every man a liar." Let us hold it just as it is declared in the word of God. Life must precede action, and if the sinner is dead, where is the life to come from, without which he cannot act? It cannot be from himself. The sinner is dead to spiritual things, and he is in love with sin, and rolls it as a sweet morsel under his tongue; he drinks it down as an ox drinketh water. It is no wonder that he does not come to Christ while he is enjoying these things. Jesus said unto the unbelieving Jews, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." To do away forever with free moral agency, as it is called, or the act of the creature to get to Christ, he still further said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Nothing save the Holy

Spirit of God will ever bring one sinner to Christ. "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." He said, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Yes, all that the people of God need for time and for eternity was treasured up in Christ before the foundation of the world. He is their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption; in him they live, move and have their being. Without him they can do nothing; they are less than nothing, and vanity. Ever since I professed a hope in Christ I have been a beggar at the throne of grace. We have nothing that we have not received at his hands. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, from the Father of lights. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof," man has nothing of which to boast. The richest and the wisest man of whom we have any account, viz., Solomon, had nothing that he did not receive at the Lord's hand. When he came to his father's throne, we learn that he came as a little child, asking the Lord for wisdom, that he might govern the people aright, and the Lord gave him wisdom; and not only so, but said to him, Because thou hast asked wisdom and not riches at my hands, I will also give you riches; and he made him the richest and wisest man on earth. Then away with conditionalism, or the act of the creature to obtain salvation. Men can do nothing but stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Salvation is all of the Lord, from the beginning of time to the end. The sinner dead in sin must be killed to the love of it and made alive to God and the love of holiness, and nothing short of the Spirit and power of God can accomplish this work. Man must be quickened, or made alive, ere he can possess divine life. Listen to this testimony: "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Again, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." God's chosen people are hearing this voice all over the land, and will continue to hear it until they all shall be brought into the one fold which God gave to his Son in the covenant of redemption before the world began. When all shall be gathered in, then time shall be no more. God's children will then hear the joyful sound: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." O may it be my privilege to be among that happy number.

Dear brethren editors, I submit this to you to do with as you please. I hope that I am one who loves God's people, and the truth, and his kingdom here in this world.

I remain still a poor sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all,

J. B. JONES.

NEW YORK, N. Y., March 8, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I awoke early this morning with this Scripture bearing on my mind: "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." While I thought upon it and of what constitutes a believer on the Son of God, many things presented themselves for

and against the witness that I hope has been planted in my breast. The vital question with every one must be, Am I a believer on the Son of God? If so, what are the evidences? What proof can I bring forth that I have known the Lord? One will say, I feel that I can see many things in the brethren and sisters which convince me that they are children of the heavenly King, that their walk is ordered of the Lord, but with me how different; how vile am I, how prone to do that which is wrong. Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips; sin is mixed with all I do. I cannot live as becometh the profession I make; there is no soundness in me; I am corrupt from the crown of my head to the sole of my foot; unclean, unclean. Yes, we are made to abhor our very lives on account of the sin that has been mixed therein from the very day of our advent into the world. We are shut up, and all is darkness continually within. Notwithstanding all this, there is something we cannot define that causes us to watch and wait and pray that we may get one more cheering ray or glimpse of the Sun of Righteousness, that our hope may be revived and we enabled to trust in him still. We are longing for the passing of the night, for the coming of the morning, for the appearing of the springtime, the singing of the birds, the warm south wind to come laden with the fragrance of the flowers from the garden of the Lord, for the sweet smell of the pomegranates and the odors of the cedars of Lebanon. These very longings to behold the beauty of the King, this thirsting for the living water, of which if a man drink he shall never die, this hungering for the manna of heaven, this mourning on account of sin, this feeling of destitution, poverty of spirit, barren as the desert, unfruitful mind, and earnestly desiring that the Lord create within us a new spirit, a clean heart, pure desires, heavenly thoughts and acceptable words of praise to his great and adorable name, it seems to me that all these are testimonies and witnesses within us that we have been made partakers of his sufferings and trials, and if indeed and in truth we know anything about his sufferings and trials we shall as truly take part in his joy and reign with him in glory. Again, we may be listening to the proclamation of the gospel of glad tidings from a far country, (seemingly far from us) or we may be reading the inspired word as recorded by the prophets and apostles, when our eyes are opened, our ears unstopped, so that we can take hold of what is being said or read, and can discern something of the mystery of God in saving wretched man; then our hearts burn within us and we feel drawn to such an one, because we have the witness in us that the things set forth belong to us; their meat is our meat, their drink our drink and their life our life. We sometimes marvel that they should know so much about us. We feel sure some one has told them all about us, and we stand naked before their eyes. Like the woman at the well, we can but exclaim, Come, see a man who told me all things whatsoever I did; is not this the Christ? Yes, we know what they declare is true, that their testimony is what we ourselves have seen and felt, and would, but cannot, express. Thus there is a drawing together, a desiring to be with those whose feelings are our feelings, whose fears our fears and whose joy and comfort our joy and comfort. The apostle said, "We know that we

have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," and this love causes us to repeat with one of old: "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me."

Dear friends, in conclusion let me say, I do not know what manner of spirit I am of, or what prompts me to attempt to write of these wonderful things. What right have I to them? Sometimes something seems to say, You are acting a hypocrite, gathering together words and expressions you have read or heard some one else use, and are trying to get the credit for it yourself, thereby deceiving the brethren and making them think you are better than you are.

With this I will close. I have simply endeavored to present some of the things which to me appear to be witnesses within ourselves that we are believers on the Son of God, joint-heirs with him, and he our Elder Brother.

Unworthily yours in a precious hope,
R. LESTER DODSON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March 12, 1913.

DEAR ELDER KER:—The inclosed letter from brother Morse is for your consideration for a place in the SIGNS.

In the best of bonds,
J. M. FENTON.

MARGARETVILLE, N. Y., Feb. 27, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER FENTON:—As I sit alone this morning I am thinking of you and of the pleasant and profitable time we had in our visit together. I wrote to my sister yesterday, but my mind was shut up, and I went to bed last night feeling cast down, and awoke in the night with the feeling of a terrible load of vileness and sin pressing me down. I tried to pray for help, when these words came to me: "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." I had such a feeling of utter helplessness and loneliness that it is impossible to describe it; I felt forsaken of God. Just then the words followed: "I will; be thou clean." Immediately there was a calm. I did not feel like shouting for joy, but a calm and restful feeling possessed me. As I thought of the wonderful change which had so suddenly come over me, something seemed to whisper to me, Yes, you are clean before God through me; not in your own eyes, nor by your efforts, nor in your own strength, but by me. Then the feeling came over me like this: O how glad I am that it is just this way, that all I had to do was just ask him to save. But, like Peter, I must know that I was sinking before help should come. In my own eyes I was still a sinner, but in the eye of the Father I was clean. Well, with this sweet feeling I went to sleep. This morning I found the words in Matthew viii. 2, 3. In the next verse Jesus said to the leper: "See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them." Now why was this? This leper was under the law; by this law an offering was commanded to be made; Jesus was also under the law, and it was necessary that the law should be kept. As for telling to the priests how he was healed, that would be useless. None would believe him if he did tell them, but would rather say it was the offering that had healed him, for the offering was to be a testimony unto them.

Now this command of the Savior comes to me in this way: I think that Jesus heard my prayer to be made clean, and he showed me that in the sight of the Father he had made me clean, but I was not to go to the world and tell them of it; I could not make them believe it if I did. No power on earth can make them believe that this healing has not come by the works of the law, so what I am to do is to go to Him and trust in him for strength to walk as becomes a child of God, and as will bring no reproach upon the cause of Christ. If I do this it will be a testimony unto them; but I am not to attempt this in my own strength, for if I do I will surely fail. But let me pray that he will work in me both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and to give me strength to work out what he works within. But this command, Tell it to no man, does not debar me from telling it to the children of God, for they are spiritual, and can understand and judge me, whether I have been taught by the Spirit or not. My brother, pray for me, that I may be kept from bringing reproach upon the cause of Christ, and from grieving the dear children of God. O, I know that you will. May God bless you and your family with his richest blessings. But this I know may mean sorrow and suffering, groaning and praying, dark days and gloomy nights, for this is the heritage of the children of God while on earth. By these things we are kept in communion with Jesus, and these are his richest blessings while we dwell in the flesh. O what happiness to suffer with Christ. Again I say, May God bless you and yours. Forgive all mistakes. Good-by.

From an unworthy brother,

JOHN A. MORSE.

(See obituary on page 253, current volume.)

SALISBURY, Md., July 4, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Sometimes it appears surprisingly strange to me how that one who knows God has been exceedingly good to him in delivering him out of his distresses and bestowing upon him blessings and favors which were very much needed, yet entirely out of his reach, can have questionings. Yes, it seems strange indeed that after witnessing God's goodness and tender mercy to me in the past, I should ever doubt and fear that surely I will be left to perish and come to utter desolation and destruction, knowing that at times I have been given strong assurance that God will yet bless me in granting unto me the desire of my heart; yet after repeatedly looking and waiting and not seeing the fulfillment of these things I am made to question the reality of the things which I at times have been made to say were given me of God; that is, my faith, my hope, for there are times when I am made to say that I know it is no vain imagination on my part, but that it is a divine reality, that my hope is in God, and not in man; it is of the Creator, and not of the creature; then all is light and joy. On the other hand, all is dark and vain and wild, a perfect wilderness of confusion, two opposites, two opposing forces in the one being or person, and sometimes it is a serious question as to which will be finally victorious. I know that God's work will stand, and if it is God working in me then I need not fear any evil. If the faith that is in me is wrought by God's power, (which I sometimes hope it is) then all the powers of hell (confusion) can never overcome it, but I shall some day sing the victor's song, triumphing alone in God's mighty power, for some day I shall receive the temporal good that I have desired and have been

made to expect and look for through God's goodness, mercy, power and purpose. It is only occasionally that I write any of the exercises of my mind, and about as often as I do I resolve to do so no more, but the Scripture is true, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." It is sometimes a relief to the mind to unburden itself, but a fear comes over me at times lest I burden others. My address at present is 119 Upton St., Salisbury, Md.

Yours unworthily,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

PENNINGTON, N. J., July 26, 1913.

MY DEAR PASTOR:—Knowing that to-day is the time of our church meeting, and feeling a great desire to be with you, yet knowing that I am not strong enough to stand the journey there, I will choose the next best thing, and write a letter to you all. Yesterday I was reading the last number of the SIGNS, and thinking how wonderfully good it all was, when I came to the letter of sister Mary Ellison to her grandmother. This letter seemed to me like a sermon to my soul. She spoke so much of the dear Redeemer, and of his great and wonderful power to save, and she so explained the meaning of his almighty names that I was made to rejoice with her, and to say, Amen to all. She is far away in the flesh, but we are near in the Spirit, for I felt drawn to her in fellowship which is above the world. Dear brethren and sisters, what is on my mind this morning lodged there yesterday from her letter, and they are words found in the last book of the Old Testament, Malachi: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." One can plainly see by reading this short book that the Lord by the prophet was sharply reproving both the prophets and the people for their departures from God. These were the nation of Israel, his chosen people, but how plain to see they were not all really saved that were of Israel. There were just a few who were called by grace, and who spoke often one to another, as you will do this afternoon, if the Lord will. But what next does the prophet say? He adds, "And that thought upon his name." This is what gave me comfort, because though I could not meet with you, I could still think upon his name. How completely the ground is covered. When the Lord speaks he takes us all in, in our every condition, whether in sickness or in health; not one of the dear Redeemer's children is left out, it matters not what they are or where their lot is cast in this world. If they have love for him and his people and think upon his name it is well with them when they die. Now the Lord adds, "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Brethren, are not these sweet and precious promises?

One thing more I desire to speak of, viz., your little visits to me since I was hurt. Dear Elder Chick has made me three calls, and several of the brethren and sisters have been in to see me, showing a love for me which I prize dearly. It has just seemed to me that those who have come have spoken for the whole church. They could not all come, I know, but those who have come have brought me the same love and good wishes that I am persuaded they all feel toward me.

With love and good wishes, I remain your brother, W. T. YARD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1913.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MARK VIII. 36.

If not asking too much, please give your views upon the words in Mark viii. 36: "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" I heard these words used in a protracted meeting several years ago.

Your unworthy brother,

WM. T. TAYLOR.

As our brother has said, this text has been used many times in protracted meetings held for the purpose of reviving the work of the Lord, and of saving souls. It has been used as though the blessed Savior was here expostulating with men who were going on indifferently in the ways of evil, in order to stir them up to seek salvation. The argument has been in substance this: that men are foolishly neglecting the weighty matter of their soul's salvation for the gain or pleasure or follies of this world, all of which are trifling things, and all of which must perish with the using, and it is claimed that the Redeemer here was urging upon such sinners their foolishness by the argument, What shall it profit you, even though you should gain the whole world, since at the end your soul will perish unless you seek salvation? But we need not enlarge upon this, as probably almost all our readers have heard such appeals as this to unregenerate men many times. The words of the text to which our attention has been called, taken by themselves, can be used with great appearance of force in the way just named, but a careful consideration of the connection will show at once that they bear no such meaning. It will at once appear from the connection that the Savior did not address these words to unregenerate men at all, but was speaking directly to Peter, one of his apostles, who had been already called to be his disciple, and this address to that disciple had been occasioned by some things which he had just said to the Master, of which we will directly speak. Whatever the language of the Savior may mean, then, it does not mean that Peter was here exhorted to seek salvation, seeing that he had already been called to this salvation, and these words, like all the teachings of the Savior, were calculated to come to the living spirit of this disciple with warning, reproof and instruction, which only the living in Zion can ever receive. Nothing can be more certain than that the dead in sin cannot hear, or even desire to hear, the word of the Lord in the way of comfort, warning, reproof, admonition or promise. These things belong to the living, and Peter was living in the Lord when the Savior thus addressed him. The occasion which led to these words from the Savior was as follows, as will be plainly seen by reading the preceding narrative: Mark records, verse thirty-one, that the Master declared that he must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He spake these words openly; that is, before them all. But Peter took him and began to rebuke him, saying to him, as is recorded in Matthew xvi., Far be it from thee; this shall not be unto thee. Now mark

this, first, that the Savior here announces the cause for which he had come into the world, viz., to die for the redemption of men, and let it also be remembered that this was farthest from the thoughts of all the disciples when he called them to be his disciples, and even unto the time when he laid down his life. It was their conception, as it was of the whole nation of the Jews, that when the Messiah came he would set up such a kingdom as David and Solomon had reigned over, only with more power and glory, so that while the kingdom of David had been overturned and destroyed, this kingdom should exist forever. But they thought of a visible reign over the bodies of men, and had but little understanding of that kingdom which is spiritual, or of that salvation which should redeem men from sin, therefore, when Peter and the rest heard from his lips that he must die a violent death at the hands of men, they could not accept it. They could not reconcile this with their hope of the coming kingdom, and it was this violence which the words of Christ did to their understanding of his coming and kingdom that led the ever-impulsive Peter to thus set himself in opposition to any such thing, and to say, Far be it from thee, Lord, this shall not be unto thee. The Lord replied in the language of reproof, as recorded in verse thirty-three: "But when he had turned and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men." It surely needs no argument to show that the things that were of men meant the opposition of Peter to his crucifixion and death, while the things that were of God meant that it was the purpose of God that he should be crucified. The will of God was one way, and the will of Peter was another way. Peter was herein setting himself up against the purpose of God. When the spirit in one savors of the things of God, the whole desire in that soul will be that the will of God should be done. But the spirit that is in man naturally opposes the will of God when that will is revealed, unless that spirit is subdued by the Spirit of God. The weakness and ignorance of the flesh in this disciple spoke here, as afterwards it appeared in the garden when Peter, James and John slept, and could not watch with him one hour. The Master then said, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." In all who are called by grace these two opposing forces exist: the flesh and the Spirit. They desire opposite things, hence the warfare within which all the living in Zion feel. But how blessed it is that the dear Savior said as just quoted, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." So here Peter by these words showed that his mind and will were not the mind and will of his Master, nor the will of God. He savored therefore of the things which were of men. Let it be especially noticed that, according to that which is of men, the language of Peter was the language of love to his Master, and of desire for the setting up of the kingdom of God. There is nothing more lovely in men than that affection for others which would shield them from all pain and loss, and which would see them exalted among men. There could be no more lovely expression than this of Peter, considered from a merely human standpoint, and yet this most lovable thing did not savor of the things which were of God. This natural desire for the glory and happiness and life of the Master was as much opposed to God and godliness, as was the very betrayal and crucifixion of

Jesus by wicked hands, and the name which Jesus gave to Peter was intended to characterize the spirit that was in him, rather than the man Peter himself. Even his gentle, loving words were here as much in opposition to God as at another time his denial of the Master with cursing and swearing was in opposition to him. The name "Satan" simply means an "adversary," or "opponent." In the words of Peter were to be seen the counsels of the archenemy of souls, who always seeks to destroy men in perdition. But the dear Savior, intent upon doing this one thing, viz., the will of his Father in saving all the elect vessels of mercy, responds to this, saying, Thou shalt not die, and by saying, Get thee behind me, Satan. The dear Redeemer could not and would not give heed to that which while saving his natural life would put an end forever to that joy which was set before him in the final salvation of men. It is, he would say, the will of God that I should suffer these things, and it is my will also; every thought, every motive that stands in opposition to this glorious end I cast behind me. I will regard it not.

In the next two verses he goes on to set before his disciples the two lives, the life which relates to the things of time, and that life which relates to the things of the kingdom of heaven. To come after me, he would say, is to deny all that self delights in. It is to lay down your earthly desires, hopes and aspirations, and to follow me in all the road that I must travel. I must lay down my life that I may take it again. I must leave this world that I may reign in the kingdom of God. Glory and honor and kingly authority over the kingdoms and nations of men are not for me. In the flesh these things would appeal to me as they do to you, but I am not come to this end; mine is a heavenly kingdom, and I cannot enter into that kingdom save by laying down this earthly life, with all the delights, hopes and ambitions that naturally belong to the earthly life, and as it is with me, so must it be with all who follow me. I do not put before you any worldly power, honor, glory, riches, ease or pleasure, rather, you must endure the putting away of all these things for the kingdom of heaven's sake. This means a denial of self, a laying down of the life that is of the earth for you as well as for me. This embraces the substance of the thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth verses.

Now this brings us to consider the text especially named by our brother, and we think a close attention to the preceding statements will show that we have here no justification for the Arminian use of this text. It is plain that the Master is not arguing with lost sinners to seek salvation and live, but with Peter to show him the necessity of his own crucifixion and death which Peter had just said must not be. The argument is in substance this: Peter, if I am not put to death as I have said, your soul is lost forever. What shall it profit you though the kingdom should be established, which you expect, and you should gain the very highest place in it, at my right hand, and enjoy that place all your natural life, if at last your soul be lost? And without my death, not only your soul, but every soul, is lost forever. In all this seeking of the promised kingdom of the Lord by the Jews there was no thought higher than the obtaining of worldly honor for themselves. Also, even the disciples of the Lord at that time seem to have attained to no higher conception of the kingdom of the Messiah than that he should visi-

bly reign at Jerusalem as a mighty conqueror, subduing all other nations under his feet, and under their feet also. He should indeed reign in righteousness, but still they desired the high places, and the disciples at this time had much of the same thoughts about the matter, as witness the sons of Zebedee when they besought him with their mother, that they might sit at his right hand and his left in the coming kingdom; that is, that they might be exalted above all others; also witness the dissension among them at one time as to which should be greatest in his kingdom. This it was that led Peter to resist the thought of the death of the Master, since this, according to his understanding, would destroy this hope. But he that in this sense should save his life, should lose his real life; that is, should not enter into and partake of the spiritual riches of the real kingdom of God; and though one should attain to all these earthly hopes, what, after all, should it profit him in reality, since thus all hope of eternal life should perish? It has long seemed clear to us that this is the true meaning of the text to which our attention has been called.

In conclusion, we would call attention to the truth that Jesus said that the Son of man must be killed. He could not die as the generality of men die, coming to the natural end of life, he must be killed. Had the blessed Master sickened and died as other men die, there would have been no atonement in his death. He must be put to death, and more than this, he must be lifted up, or, in other words, crucified; his blood must be shed. To this all the sacrifices for sin in the former dispensation pointed. It is the blood of Jesus Christ our Lord that cleanseth from all sin. It is true that he said, I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again, and it is true that he gave himself to die, and it is true that his life could not have been taken by men had it not been appointed thus of the Father. But still, though he became a willing sacrifice, it was by violent hands that he was slain, and, as said before, this must be so if there is to be eternal redemption obtained for men. His Father had appointed him in righteousness to die, but men did wickedly in fulfilling the will of God. From eternity it was the decree of God that Judas should betray him, and that the Jewish rabble should demand his death, and that Pontius Pilate should order him to be put to death. In this God was righteous, but man was wicked, and intended only evil. How wonderful the mystery that men unwittingly fulfilled the will of God toward him; because they did not know the will of God they fulfilled that will. Still further, we will add this concluding truth, viz., that all the sufferings of the Savior preceding his death did not aid in the atonement for sin; the atonement was to be alone by his death. It was not said in the beginning, The soul that sins shall suffer, though it is true that sin produces suffering, but, The soul that sins shall die; and so he who took our sins upon himself must die. God's people suffer much in this world in various ways, and from various causes, but all this suffering does not help atone for sin. The penalty for sin is death, and were it not that a Ransom has been found to die for us we must have perished forever. The death of the Son of God is then our one hope, and Jesus must be killed, though Peter and all other disciples in their ignorance would forbid it.

We leave these thoughts with brother Taylor and our readers.

C.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder S. H. Durand, at his residence, Southampton, Pa., August 8th, 1913, Alexander Cleveland Conner, of Pittsburg, Pa., and Alberta Lillian Bronson, of Girardville, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

C. M. Bird, my dear father, departed this life July 27th, 1913. He was born in Franklin Co., Va., Dec. 10th, 1850, and was married to Sarah A. Bird early in life, to which union were born fourteen children, nine of which survive him, four sons and five daughters, who, with his widow, the church and a host of friends, are left to mourn their loss, which we feel satisfied is his eternal gain. Father joined the Providence Old School Baptist Church the fourth Sunday in October, 1878, and was baptized by Elder John Byrnside the first Sunday in November of that year. He was soon chosen deacon, and served in that capacity until his transport was sealed. His labors as a deacon proved that he was a deacon in very deed and in truth. His was a labor of love, and his home was truly an Old Baptist home. He was truly gifted in discipline, and was a pillar in the church. He was quick to speak when it was necessary, and his speech was powerfully effective, it being in meekness of spirit and prompted by the law of love. He never wavered in the faith, but earnestly contended for the sovereignty of God and the atonement of Christ. Owing to exposure and hard work during early manhood his constitution gave way some years ago, and his health had been declining for some time. He was taken down in June with congestion of the lungs, which later developed into typhoid fever, and was confined to his bed nearly eight weeks. He was willing for the doctor to be called, but said he had no faith in doctors. He told us he dreaded all the suffering that would be needful to bring him down to death. He seemed to realize that the end was near. He was mild and patient, resigned to God's will in all his sickness, and would often say if it was God's will he would be glad if he would take him home. He was laid to rest in the family burying-ground by tender and loving hands. He raised an honorable family of children, all of whom are married but two, and two of his children belong to the church, a son and a daughter. We mourn the absence of a precious parent, but not as those who have no hope. The church will miss his presence and able counsel.

Dear friends in sorrow, father is at rest now, no more waiting; hope is ended with him, and he is now enjoying the blessed fullness of all that he hoped and waited for here on earth. So be of good cheer, he has just gone home, a sweet exchange, a glorious release from sin and sorrow; the manifestations of the salvation of the Lord and Savior for him are full and complete now. While in conversation with him many times have I heard him feelingly remark that when life was over here he would then have no more need for the anchor of hope, for all would be done away but love, no more waiting; this was his hope. O gracious hope, it bore him on and on into the dark valley of death. Jesus was with him, and may he be with those who are left behind, and that to bless, is the prayer of his sorrowing son.

GILBERT B. BIRD.

Deacon W. T. Baker departed this life at his home in Bradley County, Ark., March 24th, 1913. He and his grandson, Guy Lestley, and the writer, went out to Dr. Mitchel's sanitarium for treatment, at Texarkana, Texas, and while gone brother Baker was exposed to the measles, and he had been back but about nine days when he broke out with them, and all that his kind relatives and friends could do for him proved in vain. It was truly a sad thing to see one taken that we loved so well, and we are at a loss to express our sadness. As a husband and father he was kind and loving, always speaking and acting so as to try to avoid offence to any, yet he was firm and unwavering in what he considered right. As a neighbor he was ever willing to minister to the necessities of those in trouble, either by his help or advice, and his advice was sought by many. He was a member of Antioch Church, of the primitive faith and practice, and was ever devoted to its cause. He was very zealous, and surpassed many of us in earnestly contending for the faith and in looking after the interests of the brethren. He was known by all the Baptists near here, and his acquaintance extended into Texas, where he found many lovers of the truth, and he would often tell me of their noble characters as it was molded in his memory. Brother Baker was our spokesman in almost all of our conferences, as the brethren would wait on him for his advice. None will ever fill his place with us. He was a son of Wm. Calvin and Rachel Elizabeth (Grider) Baker, and was born in Meriwether Co., Ga., near Caliet Springs, August 26th, 1851. They moved to Drew Co., Ark., near Collins, in the fall of 1865, where he grew to manhood, and at the age of twenty was married to Miss Cinderilla McDaniels, to live a life of joy and sorrow. Many trials and much sorrow did they pass through, but he and sister Baker (a noble, good christian) enjoyed their joys and bore equally their sorrows as devoted husband and wife. They had eight children; three sons and three daughters survive him. In the year 1883 I met him at old brother Baker's, in Drew Co., Ark., at Ephesus Church. He joined Antioch Church July 20th, 1884, and was baptized by Elder T. B. Little, who is now with the limited predestinarians, but brother Baker ever stood a firm believer in the true and living God,

who rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. In the year 1888 he was ordained deacon. He ever felt himself unworthy of that office, or even to be a member of the body, yet this people was his delight. We believe our great loss is his heavenly gain, and we sorrow not as those without hope. Our great confidence is that the Lord took him from the sorrows of this life to a better life with him. After his death sister Baker and Miss Bertie and Arch. (his son and single daughter) were stricken with the measles, and while Miss Bertie and Arch. soon recovered, sister Baker lingered along for a month or six weeks, and they did not know whether she would get well or not. She is now able to be up, but is not strong. Brother Baker was a lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

In the presence of a large concourse of people he was laid to rest in the cemetery known as Hickory Springs. J. H. BLYTHE.

HERMITAGE, Ark., August 3, 1913.

ERRATA.

IN the obituary of Allie Varnes, in the August 1st issue, it should read, daughter of John Wesley and Rachel Riner, instead of daughter of John and Rachel Wesley.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

W. B. Ennist, N. Y., $4.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Maine Conference, the Lord willing, will assemble with the Old School Baptist Church at North Berwick, York Co., Maine, on August 29th, 30th and 31st, 1913. We shall be very glad to have any who love our Lord Jesus Christ come and visit us. Any who come will be met at the railway station on Thursday, August 28th.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, to begin on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1913, and continue the two following days (Sept. 5th, 6th and 7th). All lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. E. HUBBARD, Clerk.

THE original West Tennessee Association of the Regular Old School or Primitive Baptists, will meet with the University Street Church, in Nashville, Tenn., to begin on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1913. All who believe in salvation alone being by and through the grace of God, are invited to attend this association. Take car at Union Station, to Transfer Station, then take Fairfield car and get off at Hazle St., and walk south five or six doors to University St. meetinghouse.

V. G. SEALS.

THE Clovesville Old School Baptist Church will hold its yearly meeting, the Lord willing, the second Saturday and Sunday in September (13th and 14th), 1913. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, especially brethren in the ministry of our faith and order.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Jefferson, N. Y., will hold its yearly meeting, the Lord willing, on the third Saturday and Sunday in September (20th and 21st), 1913. Those coming by rail to Stamford will be met there on Friday before on the 11 o'clock a. m. train. We extend an invitation to ministers of our faith and order to meet with us.

Done by order of the church.

G. E. MEAD, Church Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Andes and Middletown Churches, at Union Grove, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday following the third Sunday in September (24th and 25th), 1913, commencing at 10:30 a. m. Trains will be met at Union Grove on Tuesday p. m. All are requested to come direct to the meetinghouse, which is one-quarter of a mile from the station. A committee will be at the meetinghouse to direct all to places of entertainment. Those coming over the U. & D. R. R. via Kingston and Oneonta, will change cars at Arkville for Union Grove. Those coming from any parts on the O. & W. R. R. will change cars at East Branch for Union Grove. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth to meet with us. There is room for all who desire to come.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Juniata Old School or Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 10th, 11th and 12th, 1913. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Those coming by railroad either east or west will come on the Pennsylvania R. R. to Mount Union on Thursday and take the East Broadtop Railroad to Three Springs, where they will be met and cared for. It is only about two miles to place of meeting. Trains leave Mount Union at 10 a. m. and 4 p. m. We would like to see a good turnout, as it is the most convenient point of any church in our association.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT, Pastor.

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SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILLIAMSTON, N. C.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 81. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1913. NO. 18.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PREDESTINATION.

I CAME upon these words the other day: "None should go to the University of Predestination until they have been at the grammar school of faith and repentance." I have known one or two persons who imagined themselves to have graduated from the university, and to have attained to all knowledge upon the subject, and yet they made no profession, and gave no token that they had been taught of God one jot or tittle of the knowledge of repentance towards God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. There are many millions of Christless predestinarians in the world to-day. The Mohammedans are firm believers in the predestination of all things, but they do not know our precious Savior Jesus Christ. According to Josephus, the Pharisees were predestinarians, but with the exception of a remnant of them according to the election of grace they were enemies of God and of Christ. Let not any one think that I am making light of predestination, for with all my heart I believe in God's predestination of all things. It is (my soul confesses) all of the sovereign kindness of God to be taught of him, and he gives his own elect a teachable spirit; their hearts are opened to attend to what he speaks. "Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand; and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words." Before I was sixteen years of age I was brought, as I hope, by divine teaching through sore exercises of soul to believe that God's decrees embraced all things in the universe; that all that has been, is or shall be, is all declaring the one eternal thought of God; and since then, though unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out, so I believe. But I do not want that Christless predestination of Mohammedans and Pharisees. I have no comfort in that without Christ, without hope predestination of "The Rubaiyat" of Omar Khaiyyam. All these predestinarians are, in my view of them, only limited predestinarians. Their vision of God's predestination is so circumscribed, because having no knowledge of Jehovah's covenant of grace in Christ ordered in all things and sure, they have no eyes to see, no heart to perceive the vast realms of grace and glory, declared in the gospel of Christ, wherein the

mightiest and most glorious, and, shall I say, the fairest and sweetest acts of God are wrought, in the person of the Word made flesh, in the works of redemption, and regeneration, all according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. Here all the glories of the eternal God are revealed, and here we may contemplate the heights and depths, the lengths and breadths of God's absolute predestination. It is inconceivable that the all-wise, almighty God created and made anything purposeless, or that anything should fail to fulfill or exceed that purpose. Who can point to the things or creatures, or anything done by anything animate or inanimate that were created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers, and say of Him whose understanding is infinite, and for whose pleasure they are and were created, that he hath no purpose therein? There is not an atom in the universe that God hath no purpose in, and it shall fulfill the purpose, and nothing else, of the all-wise, omnipotent Creator. I am comforted and strengthened in my contemplations of the eternal counsel of Jehovah's will, so comprehensive, so limitless and so clearly testified of in the Scriptures, and though "the glories of thy mind leave all our soaring thoughts behind," though the heights and depths of the decrees and government of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will are beyond our finite understanding, yet let me bow at his footstool, believing that all his ways are judgment, a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he. We, it may be, purposed things a year ago, a month ago, yesterday, to-day we have other intentions; our purposes, whether new or old, we cannot bring to the desired end. "There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless, the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand."—Prov. xix. 21. God's purposes are all eternal, and he is without variableness or shadow of turning. "I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." His thoughts are not frustrated, they are not as man's that perish, but the counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations. (Psalms xxxiii. 11.) God's unalterable decrees and his foreknowledge are in absolute agreement. Shall we acknowledge God's understanding to be limitless? so the counsel of his will in absolute oneness with his understanding hath no bounds. "Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite."—Psalms cxlvii. 5. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."—Acts ii. 23. It is painful that brethren should be opponents of Jehovah's unlimited predestination, and that in their representations of the attributes of God they should reveal a lamentable lack of the Bible knowledge of the eternal God. The most of them admit his foreknowledge to be infinite, but imagine his determinate counsel to be circumscribed. If anything is, or transpires, how hath it being? how does it come to pass? If beyond the bounds of God's determinate counsel, then the things done would be acts of self-determinate beings. But there are no such beings, save One, the eternal God, who inhabiteth eternity. Eternity past and to come he inhabiteth. Jehovah's omniscience, omnipresence and omnipotence possess eternity. O from everlasting to

everlasting thou art God (Psalms xcii.) in all thy perfections infinite. The language of the Bible declaring our God is very sacred. "The determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God."—Acts ii. 23. The good pleasure of his will (his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself) being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. (Eph. i. 5, 9, 11.) The counsel of his own will does not vary, for our God is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me, and many such things are with him. (Job xxiii. 13, 14.) Thus spake Job when he was in the furnace of affliction. God's will is self-determined; in this he has no peer. He saith, "I change not." He is without variableness or shadow of turning, and the highest, most glorious revelation of this is in that of which the apostle speaks in Hebrews vi. 17–20: "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath," &c. How common are the utterances, "We must trust in providence," or when events have been in some unforeseen way in our favor, "How providential," but when our plans are frustrated, when our prospects are wrecked, when adversities and painful affliction befall us, are they any less providential? And who is the Provider, the Governor of all providences? The Lord God omnipotent reigneth. "Job's wife said unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die. But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Perhaps we have known, or it may be have simply read of some dreadful event, and the thought of it has had a dreadful effect upon us; we have been staggered at the enormity of the cruelty, the crime, the affliction, our heart has been depressed, sick, as if it were bruised. Did it happen by chance, or is there an omnipotent Jehovah who hath decreed in himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever come to pass, yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin, nor hath pleasure therein? I firmly believe the latter, and though we cannot see why God hath ordained it so, yet he is just and true in all his ways.

"There's not a sparrow or a worm
But's found in his decrees;
He raises monarchs to their thrones,
And sinks them as he please.

If light attends the course I run,
'Tis he provides those rays;
And 'tis his hand that hides my sun
If darkness cloud my days."

Are you always in acquiescence to God's dark, distressing providences? No, I have been unreconciled, fretful, I have murmured. This has been my shame. But the Lord has in mercy subdued my heart, and though his providences I could not fathom, yet I have said in my spirit, "Thy will be done." I have loathed myself because of my hard thoughts of God, and have prayed for forgiveness, and have felt through Jesus' precious blood that sweet pardon was mine. But some have not submitted to God, but have raged and cursed God, and have died in their sins? Dreadfully so! The thought of this has humbled me before the Lord. Amazing grace, so sovereign, free, bestowed upon a worm like me.

"Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed."—Isaiah x. 1.

This can never be said of Jehovah's eternal decrees. Read the entire chapter and know that in all the wickedness in men in seeking to carry out their wicked decrees it was all to the fulfillment of God's decree, and "the consumption decreed [according to the most wise and holy counsel of his will] shall overflow with righteousness. For the Lord God of hosts shall make a consumption, even determined, in the midst of the land."—Isaiah x. 22, 23. The Assyrians in their pillage and slaughter of the people, in the havoc and desolation that they spread over the lands, had no thought therein to fulfill the purpose of God. "Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few." O, he was proud, he esteemed himself wise and prudent, glorying in his robberies and in his supposed strength, a valiant man. Yet he was but God's "axe" and "saw" and "rod" and "staff" to execute his counsel, and his damnation slumbered not, for thus saith the Lord, "Wherefore it shall come to pass, that, when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks." Behold in this chapter the partial execution of man's unrighteous decrees, and therein the complete fulfillment of God's holy decrees. Behold judgment and mercy, the goodness and severity of God, and believe that not only in the providences, such as are portrayed in this chapter, but also

> "In heaven, and earth, and air, and seas,
> He executes his firm decrees;
> And by his saints it stands confessed
> That what he does is ever best."

He is God in heaven above and in the earth beneath. He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power: not one faileth. (Isaiah xl. 26.) "Fear ye not me? saith the Lord: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea, by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it; and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it."—Jer. v. 22. "Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity."—Isaiah xl. 15–17. "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."—Acts xvii. 25, 26. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows."—Matt. x. 29–31. God saith to the church in Smyrna, Ye shall have tribulation ten days. If he has appointed the number of ten they cannot be diminished, and we never shall have eleven. "There is a time to be born and a time to die." Man's days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast ap-

pointed his bounds that he cannot pass. (Job xiv. 5.) Not a step, not a breath beyond the bounds that God has decreed. We may obtain glimpses of our God in creation and providence. O how limited is our vision, and how imperfect our understanding. "He hath his way in the sea, his path in great waters, his footsteps are not known. Read the twentieth of Job and this is the conclusion: "Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him; but the thunder of his power who can understand?" And if in our understanding of his wisdom and omnipotence declared in creation and providence we are so finite, what shall we say of those larger and more glorious realms of the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? Except a man be born again he cannot see, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. (John iii. 3-5.) And it is altogether essential to the children of our God that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. (Eph. i. 17, 18.) Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know, even as also I am known. (1 Cor. xiii. 12, 13.)

The most notable instance on record declaring the foreknowledge and predestination of God, and wherein man's wickedness and God's love-deeds were enacted, where darkness and light, man's shame and God's glory are exhibited, is in Acts ii. 23, 24: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."

The second instance is the life of Joseph. These two records have been the most frequently quoted by brethren in declaring their belief in God's predestination of all things, and rightly so, too. Many other accounts are narrated in the Scriptures in which God's predestination is clearly seen. As in the matter of Shimei cursing David. (2 Sam. xvi. 5-13.) And David numbering the people. (2 Sam. xxiv.)

Look at the case of Peter's denial of Christ. "Thou shalt deny me thrice." Is it only Peter's wickedness foretold? Is that the only thing to be? No, indeed! Peter was weak, cowardly, sinful enough to have denied Christ many more times that night; but he could only deny Jesus three times. God's holy power restrained him. That look of injured love from Jesus' eyes put a stop to his denials, cursing and swearing, and Peter went out and wept bitterly. What else was foretold by Jesus to Peter? Many things. Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. (Mark xiv. 30.) This denotes the time when the third denial would be consummated. Immediately, while yet he spake, the cock crew. This was told, Satan hath desired to have thee that he may sift thee as wheat. This is a scene of invisible wickedness of the adversary, the devil. But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not, and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. This is beautiful! Scenes of love, compassion, grace, covenant faithfulness, a broken heart, of divine healing, holy fortitude and willing service. It says, I love thee, Peter, I have prayed for thee, thy faith in me shall not fail, I will not give thee up, thou shalt

not be plucked out of my hand, I am thy Friend and Intercessor before the Majesty in the heavens. "When thou art converted." Notwithstanding your sinful, shameful denials of me thou shalt be converted, I will heal thy backslidings, I will love thee freely. Jesus knows how he will accomplish Peter's conversion. O that look from Jesus' eyes! "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Peter did, declaring, We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. (1 Peter i. 5.) "Thy brethren." The household of God. I will not cast thee out of the family, I will not disown thee. During all the time of thy shameful sinning against me mine eyes and my heart shall be ever toward thee. (1 Kings ix. 3.) I shall earnestly remember thee, I will surely have mercy upon thee. (Jer. xxxi. 20.) O God, O Jesus, who is like unto thee? It was all in God's foreknowledge and predestination, the whole chain. It is not the scriptural way of declaring God's predestination to hold up an item, and contend that it was predestinated and forget all other things in the account. This is an error of the opponents of God's predestination who hold up some awful sinful act, and exclaim, Was that predestinated? If so, &c. Trace the streams of love and mercy up to their fountain, God, and in his sacred bosom see eternal thoughts of love to his people whom he hath chosen in Christ Jesus, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. He hath blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. He hath predestinated them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself. He hath predestinated them unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. He hath ordained them unto eternal life, he chose them unto salvation, to redemption by the blood of the Lamb of God, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world. He hath chosen them to be holy and without blame before him in love, he hath predestinated them to be conformed to the image of his dear Son, he hath called them unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? (Rom. viii. 30, 31.) Read on to the end of this chapter, and all that can be said is said. Truly all this is that wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory. In the everlasting covenant God speaks, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people. (Jer. xxxi. 33.) They shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God. (Zech. xiii. 9.) And when the end cometh, the redemption of the purchased possession is accomplished by the resurrection of those that are Christ's at his coming. Behold I show you a mystery, (saith the apostle Paul) we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in vic-

tory. This shall be the crowning act to our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body; the creature shall then in spirit and soul and body be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God, then we shall be conformed to the image of God's dear Son, we shall bear the image of the Heavenly. We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is, and we shall ever be with the Lord in eternal glory. And we shall then indeed know that it all from eternity was the determinate counsel of God our heavenly Father; the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. But I desire, and will endeavor to tell you of the more personal experience of my soul in relation to God's predestination. The subject with me has not been a mere philosophical speculation, a plaything for the mind, as fate, the doctrine of necessity, was with some ancient heathen philosophers. It has been more to me than a biblical research, so that I could know and defend the doctrine. And the effects of believing the doctrine have not been as a license to wickedness; neither has it hardened my spirit in stoical apathy, but I have found it to be both sacred and wholesome. In the trying dispensations of His providence it has been my soul's rest to believe my times are in thy hand. (Psalms xxxi. 15.)

> "Sovereign Ruler of the skies!
> Ever gracious, ever wise!
> All my times shall ever be
> Ordered by his wise decree."

A few times in my life I have experienced deep, and sore, and sacred exercises of soul over God's decrees relative to my own sinfulness. These cogitations have been before God, between my soul and God, when I felt he was sacredly near. Although some have not perhaps experienced such exercises, yet I believe there are examples of the same declared in the Scriptures, and therefore I tell how the doctrine has wrought in my soul's experience. Before doing so let me again tell you what I mean by God having decreed in himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever come to pass; yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin, nor hath pleasure with any therein. I firmly believe that God's predestination is so limitless as not to be bounded, as regards the creature man, to the things that may be seen in our fellows, as the show of man's countenance, (Isaiah iii. 9,) whereby may be indicated pleasure or discomfort, love or hatred, pity or scorn, or his speech, or his visible deeds, but God's foreknowledge and predestination embrace all the unseen acts of the creature. For man's invisible acts, (invisible to man) the thoughts and intents of the heart, (Heb. iv. 12,) are by far the worse, and by the operations of God's grace in the heart, by far the best acts that any creature on earth brings forth. God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (Gen. vi. 5.) They thought upon his name. (Mal. iii. 16.) Man is always more wicked in his heart than he is in his outward acts, for he is not capable of putting into execution, to the uttermost, the thoughts and intents of his heart. And when I speak of my sins I am not speaking of my outward acts. My outward life has not been without many blemishes; but God in riches of mercy has so kept me since he gave me hope in Christ crucified (for now over forty-two years) that my behavior has been what people call good; yes, I consider it a great mercy from the Lord to

be kept from external sins. But all my outward life has no beauty in my eyes. I see it all deformed, sin-polluted. It is nothing in which I glory or trust. It is nothing but "filthy rags." But though from day to day my life may be circumspect, yet in the thoughts and intents of the heart I have been made to feel I am a poor, vile sinner. I frequently sigh over my sinful emotions, and I am moved to prayer for relief, for forgiveness, that he will suppress the evils of my heart, and keep me from the executions of my sinful thoughts, and hope and consolation I have many times found in the cleansing blood of the Lamb of God. Then there have been times when I have had the most dreadful and bitter consciousness of my inward iniquity. I cannot describe the depravities that have been shown me, filling me with dismay and grief, but this will cover it all: The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it? O so great and holy and dreadful has God's name been to me that I have felt I am too contemptible, too vile, I dare not lift up my eyes unto heaven; unto me belongeth shame and confusion of face. Ah, sin burdened I have been before the Lord, and more than once there have been suggestions, and taunting darts thrust into my mind, the language of which has been, Never mind, it had to be, take your fill of sin. These dreadful thoughts have pierced me, made me shudder years before I ever heard the lips of man utter them. I have known a few men talk in this way, which has persuaded me that the spirit in which they talked was not of God. Does any one imagine that God's predestination is an excuse, license, to continue in sin? If there is any such person let him know that he does not know the grace of God, and let not his seared conscience flatter him that all is well with him, for the grace of God is an effectual teacher. Read Titus ii. 11–14, and the "us" of whom the apostle speaks find this grace effectual to denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts. It teaches that we must not indulge sinful thoughts, intents, emotions, God's grace is a continual lifelong teaching, and the fruits of grace will appear in the lives of the "us" who are taught by the grace of God. Instead of wickedly imagining that we have license to sin because grace abounds, if we know the grace of God in truth, (Col. i. 6,) we shall exclaim, God forbid. (Rom. vi. 2.) I hope by God's grace ever to loathe my sins, and to loathe myself because of my sins. (Ezek. xx. 43.) I expect while in the body to find cruel sinfulness there, for I know that in me, that is, in my flesh there dwells no good thing. I often cry to God that I may be tenderhearted, easily hurt by my sinfulness, and that I may crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts. O, I so dread to become hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Well, amidst all the commotions within because of sin there have come into my mind thoughts, such as, Are not all the thoughts and emotions of your sinful self embraced in God's foreknowledge and predestination? Are not all things under the dominion of the Lord God omnipotent who reigneth? Jesus answered Pilate, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above. (John xix. 11.) Thus saith the Lord God, It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought. (Ezek. xxxviii. 10.) And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change the times and laws:

and they shall be given into his hand, until a time and times and the dividing of time. (Daniel vii. 25.) My spirit, compassed with infirmities, has asked the Lord foolish questions; I have said, Why this? Why that? questions to which I have obtained little or no answer. I have talked very ignorantly before the Lord, "I have uttered things that I understood not." When I have mourned over sin, and while I have been tasting the sweetness of the pardon of my sins, I have asked, Why dost thou show me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance (Hab. i. 3,) in my sinful heart? It is written of Hezekiah, God left him to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart. (2 Chron. xxxii. 31.) But I have said unto the Lord, I do not want to know the sinfulness of my heart, surely, Lord, I know enough, it grieves me so. These are dreadful thoughts thrust into the mind by the devil, "fiery darts." Without the Almighty he has no more power than Pilate, "no power at all." But he and his angels are suffered to do no more evil than to fulfill the purposes of God. The words "suffered," (Acts xiii. 18; xiv. 16,) "permit," (Heb. vi. 3,) "endured," (Rom. ix. 22,) "restrain," (Psalms lxxvi. 10,) are scriptural, but when God is said to do so we may with certainty believe that it is the determinate counsel of God to permit, to restrain, to suffer, to endure. Can any one believing that God is all-wise and almighty think otherwise? He is under no coercion, under no law of necessity. God is not necessitated; but the Holy One worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Then I have thought, He has dominion over the wrath of man. Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain. Then much more, will he not restrain, subdue my iniquities that make my life unhappy, over which I pray for relief and forgiveness? I think I can say he does. God is able to subdue all things unto himself. (Phil. iii. 21.) Can he not suppress all the motions of sin in my Adamic nature? Could not God, who is, I hope, my Almighty Friend, so restrain my corrupt nature that during all the rest of the days of my earthly sojourn I should never have even one sinful thought? O, I have wished it might be so. Do you despise me because of my weaknesses, because I am frail, sinful, mutable? Look into the Psalms, and if you have a heart hear and behold the tears and groans and prayers of the children of God because of their sins, because of their enemies, because of affliction. Are you altogether a stranger to these things? O, if you have never tasted sin's bitterness how can you have tasted the Savior's sweetness? What? Are all these internal exercises, these thoughts, intents of the heart, sinful emotions, gracious emotions, sighs, moans, self-loathings, tears, prayers, faith and hope and love and praise all predestinated? Yes, verily so, and none of it isolated from the rest, it all is inseparably linked. If the thoughts and intents of the heart, deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, the lustings of the flesh, in which there dwells no good thing, in number and measure are not held in the bounds of, and governed by God's decree, where would the limit be of the wickedness of the human heart? I believe that God's decree according to the most wise and holy counsel of his own will has set the bounds of all evil, visible and invisible, of all mankind, and of devils, too. Thou rulest the raging of the sea, when the waves thereof arise thou stillest them. (Psalms lxxxix. 9.)

Having believed for over forty years in God's predestination of all things, shall I settle down upon my lees, and be at ease to be just a little sinful? Never! God forbid! I feel it is impossible. I have the comforting persuasion that according to the grace given me, in his kindness toward me in Christ Jesus, God hath ordained, and so wrought in my heart that my sinfulness shall be my burden while in this tabernacle. For God has so wrought me and in me that I have hope I am born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, and after the inward man, after the power of the life of this seed, of which I hope I am born, I cannot have fellowship with, I cannot be in accord with the sins of my flesh. There is a warfare within. God hath, I hope, put his law in my mind, and written it in my heart, and this writing cannot be erased, but every pulsation of this new covenant heart throbs with it, and I desire to be holy even as God is holy. I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with my flesh the law of sin. (Rom. vii. 22–25.) How can I make light of sin when our loved Savior in Gethsemane, being in an agony, prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground? The whole world lieth in wickedness, makes its bed, finds sweet pleasure and repose therein; but how can I? Rather let me weep in this dungeon-house of clay, I am wretched in the bondage of this death, I am in travail, pained to be delivered, and the redemption surely draweth nigh. Are all the sighs, tears and prayers of God's people in vain? I believe not, for I feel I know it is the Lord who taught me thus to pray. He taught Israel, saying, Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously; so will we render the calves of our lips. (Hosea xiv. 2.) We are taught in the gospel to look to the cross of Christ, and there we see God's way and his power to save his people from their sins. And our comforted hearts embrace the revelation that our old man is crucified with Christ that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we shall not serve sin. This is the precious assurance: "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace." God shall bruise Satan under our feet shortly. Christ, by the blood of his cross, hath made an end of sin. And though now in some measure we endure the bondage of corruption and groan and travail in pain for deliverance, the eternal excellency shall be ours. We taste the earnest of it now, for this is the decree, by the blood of the everlasting covenant, The creature also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. O blissful thought, the saints' earnest expectation! We are predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son. Here all our prayers shall be answered. We shall be like Christ, for we shall see him as he is; we shall bear the image of the heavenly. Till then let me fight the good fight of faith, let me wrestle against principalities, and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places. Let me resist the devil, and strive against sin. And look-

ing unto Jesus this shall be our threefold challenge, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" "Who is he that condemneth?" "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" And this is our song, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

MANSFIELD, Ohio, March 26, 1913.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—Some days ago Elder Jackson and myself received the inclosed comforting letter from Elder Peters, which we would like to see in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Yours in hope,

GEO. L. WEAVER.

PSALMS XLV. 14.

"She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework."

DEAR BRETHREN JACKSON AND WEAVER:—I have been shut up at home for a couple of weeks with a slight siege of la grippe, and have had much time to meditate and think of the brethren, and yourself and brother Weaver came into my mind along with many others. I was wondering how it was with you both. I see in the SIGNS the obituaries of sister Cross and sister Main. I know that you both feel as though the Lord was calling his children home, and you do not see others filling their places. I was also called to Canada the eleventh of the month, where I preached the funeral of a dear old soldier of the cross.

The text at the head of this letter is one calculated to inspire confidence and hope. In the thirteenth verse is a strong declaration and promise: "The King's daughter is all glorious within." This I understand to mean that the Lord hath cleansed her heart, and shed abroad his love there, and hath put his Spirit within. The strong man armed has been dethroned, and God has created in her a clean heart, and renewed a right spirit within her. This only could be the cause of her being all glorious within. The King's daughter is none other than the daughter of Zion, and "her clothing is of wrought gold." This I understand is the righteousness of Jesus Christ, with which she is clothed. The robe of righteousness which was wrought out on Mt. Calvary is the only suitable raiment to make her presentable to the King. It is added, "The virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the King's palace." There is one thing I am glad has been repeated three times in the thirteenth and fourteenth verses, and that is, they shall be brought. They do not voluntarily go, but they are brought. You know the Lord has said, "I will bring the blind by a way that they know not, I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight." Again, he said, "I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name." All these come unto the King in raiment of needlework with gladness and rejoicing. David said, Psalms xlvi. 1, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." Therefore in all our discouragements we have much to comfort us. Therefore David said in

the same Psalm, "Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early." So, dear brethren, what wonderful and strong assurances we have here that Zion shall endure, even though we see her numbers growing smaller. In Psalms xlv. 16, it is written, "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth." "And I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations; therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever." Therefore, dear brethren, God will preserve his name in the earth, and keep raising up his sons, who will continually praise him in all the earth, and this shall be so, even though we do not see them. In Psalms xlvi. 10, he says, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." David says, The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge. How many are the strong assurances that our God reigneth, even though we cannot see his hand, and while it is true that at all times we cannot read our title clear to mansions in the skies, yet David said, The Lord will choose our inheritance for us. How much better is this than to be left to choose our own inheritance for ourselves. Some think we are left free to choose or reject, but David here declares that our God does the choosing for us. In one Psalm David breaks forth in words like these: Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. This is none other than the daughter of Zion, the church of the living God. This is the King's daughter who is brought to the King in raiment of needlework and is all glorious within. God is in the midst of her; he shall help her, and that right early. How then can she help but be all glorious within, when her God is within her for a refuge? She is also the mountain of his holiness. She is beautiful for situation, as David declares again, and why should she not be, for God is a wall of fire round about her and the glory in the midst? Her clothing is of wrought gold, and she is brought to the King in raiment of needlework. David says of her again, She is the joy of the whole earth, this Mount Zion, this city of the great King, and God is known in her palaces for a refuge. This is the great beauty of this city. We remember, dear brethren, that Jesus said to his disciples just before he was crucified, In my Father's house are many mansions. Well, this house of the Father is none else than this beautiful Mt. Zion. This is the church of Christ, the bride, the Lamb's wife. Paul said to the Ephesians that God has raised her up and made her sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. These mansions, these palaces and these heavenly places are all one and the same thing. "Let Mt. Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments," said David again, and he tells us to "walk about Zion, and go round about her." This is what I am now trying to do. I am trying to tell of her wonderful magnificence, and not only this, but how strongly she is fortified. We are also told to count her towers, her defences. How high is the mountain of God's

holiness! She is not only called Zion, but Mt. Zion, and we are not only to tell her towers, but to mark well her bulwarks. It is said that when the kings of the earth assembled and passed by together they saw it and were troubled and hasted away, and fear took hold upon them, and pain as of a woman in travail, and we are not only told to mark well the bulwarks of this mighty city, but also we are to consider her palaces. Here again the palaces of Zion are spoken of, the mansions of the house of God, the heavenly places in Christ. How good it is to behold this wonderful King's daughter, who is all glorious within, and to consider her palaces, for God is known in her palaces for a refuge. Now the psalmist gives the reason why we are to be so careful in our examination of the daughter of Zion. It is that we may tell it to the generations following. This is what all of God's ministers have been trying to do for generations. It is also said that this God, who is in the palaces of Zion for a refuge, will also walk in her, and out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. This city hath no need of the light of the sun, moon and stars, for God and the Lamb are the light thereof. One may wonder while viewing his own sinful nature and inborn corruption, and the corruption of every thing in nature, how it can be that the church of God is arrayed in needlework and can be all glorious within, and her clothing be of wrought gold, and also how she is called the perfection of beauty out of which God hath shined. But when we take into consideration that the apostle Paul said to the Ephesians, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish," we learn the way in which she becomes perfect, so that God is known in her palaces. Christ clothed her in this raiment of needlework, he sanctified her with the washing of water by the word and he made her presentable to himself. John saw her coming down from God out of heaven as a bride adorned for her husband, all glorious within, and adorned with raiment of needlework; and in this city John saw a pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing out of the throne of God, and on either side of the river was there the tree of life, and God is known in her palaces for a refuge, and he and the Lamb are the light thereof. The river of life is there, and the tree of life also. There is a river the streams whereof make glad the city of our God; this is the river that John saw flowing out of the throne of God. Our God sits upon his throne there. John saw this city fenced with a great wall, and it had twelve foundations, and in them were the name of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. John further said that no one could enter this city save those whose names were written in the book of life of the Lamb.

But I am getting tedious, and will hasten to another view of this Zion. I have been presenting her in her light seasons, but in the forty-ninth chapter of Isaiah we are told that Zion gets into dark seasons. At one time she said, The Lord hath forsaken me: the Lord hath forgotten me. But the Lord said unto her, Can a woman forgot her sucking child? Yes, she may forget, but I will never forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, and thy walls are continually before me. I

create the smith that bloweth the coals, that formeth an instrument for his work, and no weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper. Again, The word that goeth out of my mouth shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish that which I please, and prosper in the thing whereto I have sent it. Again, Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down. Not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, nor one of the cords thereof broken, for there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, and neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. Therefore, brethren Jackson and Weaver, let not your discouragements swallow you up with overmuch sorrow, for the Lord will keep Zion safe. It is written, Isaiah liv., that the Lord has bidden Zion to break forth into singing, because although the desolate had more children than she had, now she should enlarge the place of her tent, and stretch the curtains of her habitation, and lengthen her cords, and strengthen her stakes, because she should break forth on the left hand, and the right, and her seed should inherit the Gentiles, and her desolate cities should be inhabited. "For," he said, "thy Maker is thine husband; The Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called." Here was one of the dark seasons of Zion, but the Lord comforted her with promises of enlargement, and declares himself to be her Husband and Redeemer. He tells her that he had forsaken her but for a small moment, but that with great mercies would he gather her. In a little wrath he had hidden his face from her, but with everlasting kindness would he have mercy upon her, and that the covenant of his peace should never be removed from her. For, he said, this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee. I have laid thy beams with fair cedars, and all thy boarders with pleasant stones. All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. The mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee. Let my right hand forget her cunning, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I do not prefer Jerusalem above my chief joy, was the exclamation of one who had been given a view of this glorious city.

I only intended to write a short letter, but when I got started the fountains of the great deep became broken up, and I could find no place to stop until now. Excuse this long letter, and if you deem it worthy a place in the SIGNS you may send it there.

Yours in hope of blessed immortality,
NEWTON PETERS.

PORTLAND, Ind., Jan 28, 1913.

MONTGOMERY, Ala., June 30, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—If God chose his people in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and I certainly believe he did, then man could have had no part in that choice, as he was not made until the sixth day of creation. Also, beside this palpable fact, the Scriptures everywhere declare that salvation is of the Lord. Satan's children, inheriting their father's disposition to be equal with God, have always manifested an innate desire to work for, or in some way or other, earn their salvation, to make God their debtor. But God, real-

izing this bent in carnal man's nature, has over and over said to him, Not so, salvation is not of works, but of grace; my favor, all of my favor. Still, man persists in his claim. He writes great libraries, and builds great denominations upon his works preachments. For two thousand years man has insisted on having a hand in his salvation, and his puny efforts will continue until Jesus comes again and calls away his people to meet him in the air. But O, how comforting to the Lord's children to know they belong to the purchased possession; to know they were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world; to know they are being kept of God, and not one single grain of wheat will be lost; to know that all things work together for their good; to know positively they were all foreknown, predestinated, called, justified, glorified. On great solid truths like these are based the faith and the patience of the saints. Again, if God chose his people in Christ Jesus so long ago, then I believe every detail of God's plan of saving them was foreseen and worked out by him long before the morning stars sang together. It has never been, and never will be possible for anything in the universe to hinder him. His plan was complete, perfect; he knew from the beginning that Eve, the mother of all living, would be deceived by Satan, and also knew Adam would sin of his own volition. "Adam was not deceived; but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression." He also knew the great purchase price to be paid for the redemption of his children. Blessed be his holy name, he knew all things. And what is passingly sweet to us is, he has written his laws before our minds and put them in our hearts. So his children do not need a lot of peripatetic evangelists, wandering up and down the land, commanding us to know the Lord, for we know our Father, every one of us, from the least to the greatest, and our sins and iniquities, our Father says, he will remember no more. While we were yet among the mountains of sin, lost sheep of the house of Israel, dead in trespasses and sins, Jesus found us and brought us all into the one fold, that there might be one fold and one Shepherd. We were quickened, we were born from above. Right here at this link in the plan of salvation, called the new birth, these works preachers offer more strange fire before the Lord than anywhere else in their false and ignoble work. I have never met any two of them that were agreed in an explanation of the text, "Ye must be born again." Each offers strange fire before the Lord, but no two fires are alike. They all agree, however, that everybody can be "born again," if they just will. Although the Scriptures teach the doctrine as plain as noonday, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." "O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" In due season God will avenge himself against these Nadabs and Abihus. And fire went out from the Lord and devoured Nadab and Abihu, and they died before the Lord. In that day, he will say unto all false prophets, and strange fire offerers, Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, for I never knew you. O brethren, readers of the SIGNS, I would to God I could have a face to face, heart to heart talk with one and all of you on the mercy and love of our heavenly Father. My heart is full to overflowing

with love for every one of God's children.

If the editors think my words will be of any comfort to the Lord's people they will publish as the Lord may direct.

Your brother "complete in Him,"

G. W. TOWNSEND.

JEFFERSON, N. Y., Feb. 20, 1913.

ELDERS CHICK AND KER—DEAR FRIENDS:—I have been thinking of writing to you for some time. I am a kind of half-brother to the chosen of God. The word says that they are chosen and called. I trust the Lord has shown me, as he did Paul, that it is hard for me to kick against the pricks. I was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, viz., among Methodists. I verily thought that I could get religion at any time I wanted it, and then could lose it, and then get more. I thought that I had had religion two or three times. I had heard of Old School Baptists, but thought they were some old sect, gone years ago. But the Lord had something to teach me. It is declared that we must all be taught of the Lord. Finally I was married to an Old School Baptist, and it seemed to me that they believed the worst "stuff," as I called it, that I had ever heard of. I tried to convert my wife, but could not. She said that men could make Arminians, but the Lord alone could make Old School Baptists. I did not believe what they preached, but would go to hear them so as to get something to argue about. But now I could not get religion. I went to revival meetings, and did everything they told me to do, but it did me no good. I got so that I wanted to go to Baptist meetings, but did not let any one know it. It began to worry me. I thought that there was no way for me. I thought that I would die and go to hell, and told my wife so. She said that she had hope for me. I became sick and took medicine for some time, but this was not what I needed. There was nothing on my mind but the horrible pit and the miry clay. We went around to meetings some. We went to the Gilboa meeting, and I took some of my medicine, and I thought it was going to kill me. Right there something told me that it was wrong for me to take it, and I threw it away. That night we went to D. S. Elliott's to stay. I felt worse than I ever had in my life. I told my wife when we retired that if I died she should tell the people that I was lost. I went right to sleep, which before I could not do, and about three o'clock I had what seemed to me like a vision; I was neither asleep nor awake. I thought that I was up high upon a scaffold, and that I must go to the end of it, and go down into a sort of pit. This pit was about ten feet square on top, and down as far as I could see, and was dark. There were slats around it like those upon a blind. I thought that I must go down into the pit, so I started, and as I started, the slats turned lengthways and were very slippery. I was almost down in the dark, and was holding with all my might when two children seemed to be on my shoulders. I thought that I was gone, when some one was by me. I knew who it was, but still I said, Who are you? He said, I am Jesus, and I have saved you. I was raised right up out of the pit, and I felt that I had been saved, and now I feel like praising his great and holy name for saving a sinner like me.

It is preached that one can get religion as many times as he wants to, but the Bible does not say so. There it is written, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of an incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." When the Lord saves he saves

with an everlasting salvation. He made me to love the things I once hated, and to hate the things I once loved. He brought me up out of an horrible pit and the miry clay, and placed my feet upon a rock, and established my goings, and put a new song in my mouth, even praise to his name. We do not feel the need of the Savior until we know that we are lost, and when we feel this, and cry, Save, I perish, he does reach out his hand to hold us up.

From the vilest of sinners,

I. P. McINTYRE.

DELAWARE, Ohio, Aug. 13, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a letter written by Elder C. E. Jackson to Rachel Schultz. At our last meeting sister Schultz gave it to me, with the request that I send it to the SIGNS for publication. She is very aged, and a regular attendant of the church, and a bright example, and is very kind to me. I therefore cheerfully forward the letter for her.

Your brother,

L. E. STEPHENS.

GALION, Ohio, Dec. 30, 1912.

DEAR SISTER SCHULTZ:—I have been thinking of you this evening, and somehow the Scripture of which you spoke has been on my mind, so I will try to write you such thoughts as may be given me. The Scripture is in 1 Peter iii. 21, which reads as follows: "The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." From this we learn that our salvation is not on account of baptism, but on account of what Christ has done for us, and baptism is only the showing forth of what Christ has done; that is, it is a figure of what he has done for us by his death, burial and resurrection. Thus we see that baptism does not make a christian out of a sinner, but is ordained that the child may thus show forth what he hopes and believes the Savior has done for him, and we have the only true baptism as it was set forth by the Master. (See Matt. iii. 13-15.) The only true and effective baptism is for a child of God to be baptized by a servant of God, and not as some say, to make one a child. Lawful baptism must be administered only to a child of God by one sent of God, otherwise the baptism amounts to nothing. Philip was sent of God to baptize the eunuch, and when the eunuch said, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Philip said, "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest." Thus Philip required the fruits of the Spirit before he would baptize the eunuch. Also on the day of Pentecost, when the visible church was set up, the apostles baptized none save such as gave evidence of being born again. They did not baptize all that came to them demanding baptism, but only those who gave evidence of being the sons of God. John the Baptist said to the scribes and Pharisees who came to his baptism, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." So we see that one is not constituted a son of God and an heir of salvation by baptism, but by birth. It is just as necessary for a child of God to be born of God as it is for a child to be born of its mother in order to be a child of his parents. The Savior said to

Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."—John iii. 3. This birth is not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. Dear sister, we are told by the Savior that he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. The angel said to Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." He cried out upon the cross, It is finished, and gave up the ghost. Thus we are taught that he finished the work that his Father gave him to do, and saved all his people with an everlasting salvation, and so left nothing for baptism or any other thing to do in that salvation. He will bring his sons from far and his daughters from the ends of the earth. Once he thanked his Father, the Lord of heaven and earth, because he had hid these things from the wise and prudent and had revealed them unto babes.

But I will close lest I weary you. I do not know that I have written anything that will prove of any interest to you. This leaves us in just medium health. We hope that it will find you well. I hope to hear from you soon.

I remain a poor sinner, saved by grace if saved at all,

C. E. JACKSON.

HEBRON, Ohio.

DEAR EDITORS:—Mrs. Peter Campbell, of St.Thomas, Ont., sent me some letters recently which Elder McGlade wrote to them a few years ago. One I feel is too good to keep, and I am sending it to you, that the friends who once loved to hear him speak may enjoy it also. It was written, as you see, soon after his return home from his last trip east. It has been almost three years now since he ceased looking back, for he has at last, after a long and weary journey, reached that "City." I feel it in my heart to be so, if not, why this sweet peace which surrounds me? The sweet songs he was wont to sing still echo and echo through our home, where his voice was once heard. I went alone to the cemetery last evening after the heat of the day, strewing flowers where our dear one rests, and what peace flooded my soul as I knelt there and gazed over it all; "the city of the dead," and the moon bathing it in its golden light. A few years ago the place had no charm for me, yet I love to go there now. It seems the presence of God rests there ever, and last night as I wept over my loneliness and my sinfulness in this world, these words came to me forcibly, The Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. And a song broke forth in my heart, praises unto the Lord God. "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord God will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them."

With this I will close, with love to all the dear ones far and near who know and love the joyful sound; all are bought by the same God, whom to know is life everlasting.

MYRTLE McGLADE.

HEBRON, Ohio, December 22, 1909.

MR. AND MRS. PETER CAMPBELL:—Your good letter was here on my return home, now four weeks past, and was enjoyed, because in it you speak of things concerning the King, yours and mine,

It is not always that we can do it, or feel like it, yet at times it comes to us over and over, like the babbling brook in pastures green, when the heart is inditing good matter, then we feel like speaking to one another of things concerning the King, his reign, the length of it, it has been a long one; he is the oldest of all kings. He raised up all other kings, and they rule by leave of his will. He has a crown filled with jewels. He made it himself; wrought it out of gold and precious stones; every motion of it is dignity, and it fits him. The coronation day is coming; it is not yet, but it is appointed. He told us about it, and we are going to it, and shall be there to see it and rejoice in it. Here we try to sing about it as we go along, there we shall sing sweeter and louder.

"Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all."

We hear some object to the idea of a judgment day, as though the advocates of it believe that somehow there were changes made, where they say all is settled now, and has been since the foundation of the world, just the way it will be. What is the use of a judgment day? they ask, &c. They do err, not knowing the Scriptures. The judgment day is not to make one more sheep, nor to give goats a chance to become sheep, but when Jesus was here on earth as a man he told the world whose Son he was; he said he was a King. The world said, You have a devil, are not what you claim to be. Now in that day when he comes in his glory the world shall see and behold. He is to be glorified in his saints; they who pierced him shall behold him. They saw him through all that mock trial, through that tedious night, his poor, tired body tortured by every invention known to devilish minds and depraved hearts, saw him crowned with thorns in mockery when he was led as a lamb to the slaughter. His crime was blasphemy, which only a few make: he made himself equal with God. His death was crucifixion, which the Romans had to do ever since Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, and before he lifted up the serpent, because of what was before, and also what was to come. They will all be there, those who that night cried the loudest, "Crucify him," will now call for the rocks and mountains to fall on them to hide them from the face of him who sitteth on the throne. Now I think you can see what I think is meant by a day of this kind, and so you are going, and I am going, and we can talk to each other as we go along of what we will do when we get there, what we will wear, where we will stay, and how long, and who will be there. We have gotten far enough on the road to see some signs of the near approach to that country; the last hill I was on I looked long and hard to see if I could discern the "City," and when I get to the top of this I will look again. I used to look back over the way I had come, to see if I were on the right road, and do yet, but not so much. The comforting things you said in your letter, as well as things like it, assure me more than anything else that I am in the right way, and shall hold to it and grow stronger and stronger.

Now you see how long a letter I have written with my own hand. The subject is really interesting to me, and I hope to you all. I was east from October 1st to the last of November, and was well received and cared for, and improved some in body.

Myrtle and Hugh Boyd are well, and join me in expressions of love to you all.

Your brother in love,

FRANK McGLADE.

OTEGO, N. Y., July 20, 1913.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I am, by request of the Otego Church, sending some letters to be published in the SIGNS, which were written by sister Stilwell to the church when she could not meet with us.

From the least of all,

ROSE TAMSETT.

TO THE DEAR BRETHREN AT OTEGO:—I remember that it is nearly time for your meeting, and as I cannot meet with you I will send a few lines, that you may know I still think of you, and am very thankful that I am permitted to have a home with you. I esteem it a great blessing, and how thankful I ought to be for the many blessings I receive daily, but still I ask for more. I feel my unworthiness very much, and I am thankful, I hope, that I have been made to know how unworthy, weak and sinful I am, for if I had not been awakened to this I would never have known it. Salvation by grace is a most wonderful thing, and I often think of it in great wonder and amazement; what a great mystery it is, and it is all for the glory of God. He hath said he will not be without his witnesses, and it is true. It is also true that great is the mystery of godliness; it is too wonderful for one like me to contemplate. I ask an interest in your prayers, that I may be kept humble, and not become puffed up.

Your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) E. A. STILWELL.

EAST ORANGE, N. J., Jan. 25, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As it is again drawing near meeting time, I will write a few lines, that you may know I have you still in remembrance, and as I desire the watchful care of the church, I will try to tell how my mind has been led for the past few weeks, that you may judge whether I am still in the right path. I attend the meetings at New York every two weeks. My mind of late has been led in very pleasant fields, and I have been blessed with many comforting passages of Scripture. I feel to say, Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. How very good he has always been to me, but more especially of late have I felt his goodness. My past few months have been of joy unspeakable at times, and his goodness has been very great to me. I cannot begin to express my feelings. My health has been most excellent; I think I can say it is as nearly perfect as can be, and for that alone I cannot praise the dear Lord enough. I must not forget that many times he has been just as good to me in dark hours that I have passed through. I feel thankful for them also, for I have been taught many things good for one in those dark seasons. I feel my unworthiness greatly, and hope the Lord will always keep me in remembrance of my many sins, that I may not get puffed up and become a castaway. I wish the prayers and watchful care of my brethren.

Your unworthy sister,

E. A. STILWELL.

HALCOTTVILLE, N. Y., April 3, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is with sadness that I write you, as I came to Delaware County to attend the funeral of my brother. I was very much in hope I might reach his bedside before he passed away, but it was ordered otherwise. How I miss him, for he wrote me many very excellent letters, and gave me wise counsel, but I feel that I know he is better off; he is now at rest from the sorrows of this world. If I were as sure of my

future as I am of his I would be free from some of the anxieties I feel; but that cannot be in this world, for we walk not by sight, but by faith, and faith that is seen is not faith. What a blessing we have in the Bible; how many things are recorded there that give us courage, yet it would be but an empty sound if we were not given the understanding also. What a blessing that understanding is, even if we feel most of the time that we know but little, and we feel to say our hope is small. But if it is only a glimpse, it is a great blessing, for if we are given a hope, it is from the God of heaven, and be it ever so small it is great; each one has just what the merciful Father has seen fit for us. He knows all our needs better than we do, and gives his children just what they need from day to day. Like the manna that the children of Israel gathered in the wilderness, it will not keep over, but we gather from day to day just as our needs require. How great and glorious is the plan; what a wise Head is ruling for his children. I do take comfort when I can think on these things. O what a blessing has been bestowed on me, yet I am left to complain often, and do mourn for the loss of friends, although I know His way is just and His counsel wise. The greatest cause I have to mourn is on account of my sinful nature and my unworthiness, which is great, but I do have cause to rejoice that I have been shown my vile nature. I do hope I may be able to ever keep that in sight, for it is good for me to feel I know my nature; it keeps me from vanity. I feel it is good to be made to eat of the unleavened bread.

Your very unworthy sister,

E. A. STILWELL.

HOWES CAVE, N. Y., July 1, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As the meeting time draws near I am reminded that I have a duty to perform, and it often seems a pleasant duty, for I feel it right that you all know how my mind is, for it seems to keep me in closer union with you all. I do hope and pray I may never forget my dear kindred in Christ, or be drawn away by worldly lusts, although I feel I cannot write anything good. I am not a deep writer, nor have I any special knowledge of the great things of God; at times I feel that I have none at all. I may only be the scaffolding to the building, but even that is of use as long as it is needed, and it is a great thing to be of even very little use in the house of God. Could I be but a doorkeeper, or even less than that, what a blessing it would be. I feel to ask daily that I may have grace given me to fill my place with honor to the cause. The last words my father ever said to me were these: Strive to honor the profession you have made by a well ordered life and a godly conversation. How often they come to me, but I cannot do that without the help of my Savior. I feel my weakness, and am liable to fall if he withdraws himself from me for a moment. I need his strength every hour and moment. He has promised never to leave nor forsake his children, but am I one? I have a very imaginative mind, and I may have made a mistake, but one thing I know, the Lord makes no mistakes, he knows them that are his.

I will close this, as I feel it is much like myself, very poor.

Your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) E. A. STILWELL.

CONESVILLE, N. Y., August 27, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel so alone naturally and spiritually, that I am like a little child that says, "Mother, take me." I cry, but if Jesus will only take me, and have mercy upon me, I shall be comforted. When upon earth he had mercy upon those who cried unto him to heal and restore sight and hearing, and will he not now hear his children when they cry unto him with all their heart? He sees us when we see him not, and has promised to hear the cry of the poor and needy; yet at times it seems so long and our faith so small, we almost despair. But how blessed are we when we can hear of his coming, as did Mary and Martha.

"What cheering words are these;
Their sweetness, who can tell?
In time and to eternal days,
'Tis with the righteous well."

Yes, I am glad of that, but am I one of those whose God is the Lord? I profess to be, but at times he is gone, and I seem to be alone; no eye to pity, and no arm to save. What shall I do? Well, one may say, did not the children of Israel pass through all these trials, the sea before them and the enemy behind, and mountains on either side? Yes, but God was with them to deliver, and did deliver. The waters stood like walls to let the children of Israel escape. When we can see him in all these things it is well; but I am so prone to wander. "Lord, I feel it." I know his promises are yea and amen, and never frustrated yet. Then why am I so unbelieving, dull and lifeless? Ye who love the Lord, come tell me, is it thus with you? I have been reading the SIGNS, and it seems so good that my heart feels full to bursting, knowing it is good, but not for me; the enemy appears to come in like a flood. One of old said, "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." So a little is discernible, and we may almost conclude that the Lord will be gracious. Can it be that a cloud has obscured the sun, that its rays can be felt more keenly, that our hearts may overflow with love and gratitude to the Giver of every gift, and we may say, My soul doth magnify the Lord? It surely does lighten the load. How good to find it true, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength."

I thought I would write these few words, hoping to find relief.

D. S. ELLIOTT.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I have been impressed to write to the church and let you know how I feel, but have been putting it off, feeling too unworthy to make the attempt, as I cannot say anything to comfort you. I am made to feel the blessedness of this sweet and precious relationship: one large family, one here and one there. We are bound together by the strong tie, love. "God is love." The apostle says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I have been meditating upon the goodness of God to such a poor worm of the dust as I feel myself to be. I am prone to go astray, and feel that I am not worthy to claim a name among the saints, whom I dearly love for the truth's sake, and to believe in that truth which I trust it hath pleased God to reveal to me. I do at times feel to lean entirely upon him, and feel calm while the waves and billows roll, and almost overwhelm me; I do rejoice that God reigns. I am so vile and full of sin, and feel wholly dependent upon God for everything, and realize

deeply my nothingness and inability to perform one good act. I want to trust the Lord with all my heart.

I am somewhat better than I have been, and able to go out in the yard.

Your unworthy sister, saved by grace, if saved at all,

FRANCES MABEL TRYON.

[THE above letter was written to the Middletown and Wallkill Church by our young sister when she was sick and unable to attend the meetings.—K]

JEFFERSON, N. Y., March, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I was reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, with tears running down my face, and rejoicing with joy unspeakable that there was a people that knew the joyful sound, I felt to say to each of the little ones (although I often fear I am not one, but feel to leave that with Him who is able to save to the uttermost),

"Ye are traveling home to God,
In the way your fathers trod;
They are happy now, and ye
Soon their happiness shall see."

I know all things work together for good to them that love God, but do I love him? Has he ever spoken peace to my troubled soul? Shall I see him as he is and be like him? I long to know. I know I am the chief of sinners, weak, ignorant, full of sin and never doing or saying anything as I should. Yes, I feel to say,

"All untilled has been my vineyard,
And it's soil is hard and dry;
O my God, my only refuge,
No one needs thee more than I.

For without thee I am helpless,
Fast in sin's strong fetters caught,
Blinded by my evil passions,
Swayed by impulses untaught.

I could do no good unaided,
It were worse than vain to try;
Come thyself to me, dear Jesus,
No one needs thee more than I."

I know the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save, neither his ear heavy that it cannot hear. As I awoke in the night the hymn 188 (Beebe's collection) came to my mind with much sweetness, and it seemed the Spirit of the Lord was with me. I was made to rejoice and say, Sing, O heavens, and be joyful, O earth, for the Lord has comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted. God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid, for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song. I believe the Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit, and the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy. Had he not come to sinners I should have no hope. I feel to ask the prayers of all the dear saints. I will send what I have written and if you do not feel to publish it in the SIGNS it is all right.

I am the least of all, if I am one of his little ones.

M. A. McINTYRE.

HENDERSONVILLE, Tenn., June 18, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS—As my subscription has expired, inclosed find money order for one dollar, for which send me the SIGNS six months. I cannot do without your valuable paper, as it is all the preaching I get. I have two churches near me, but neither one has had a pastor in quite awhile. O that the Lord would put it into the minds of some of our good brethren to come this way. We certainly believe in the doctrine that the SIGNS advocates. It does my heart good to know that there is a God that rules in the army of heaven and among men; that he has raised up able men to stand on the walls of Zion and

comfort the poor of the flock, to speak comfortably to Jerusalem, that her iniquity is pardoned.

Brother Chick, your editorial on Exodus ix. 16, of June 1st, was good. When you have time please write on Matthew xxiv. 15: "When ye, therefore, shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand)." Has that Scripture been fulfilled? I hope you will pardon me for this intrusion. All I can hear in these low grounds of sorrow is do and live, not one word ascribed to the great Ruler of the universe.

Please excuse my mistakes. I pray for the prosperity of Zion.

Your sister in tribulation,

(MRS.) HENRY J. DORRIS.

FLORENCE, Colo., July 27, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I will now write you about our little church, called Antioch, of Greenwood, Colorado. We met once more for the purpose of worship, on the last Saturday and Sunday in June. Brother Perdue, of Lamar, was present to preach for us. He is an able minister, and we had a pleasant meeting. Our brother Isaac Sanders, a brother in the flesh and Spirit also, I believe, with my dear companion, C. L. Higbie, came before the church and was received, and was baptized by Elder W. C. Perdue in the Arkansas River, at Florence, the following Sunday evening. I believe there will be others coming into our little church soon, and we will be much pleased if it be the Lord's will to see our little church thrive once more. If we could be blessed with a minister to preach for us oftener we would be glad, but the Lord knows best what we are in need of. We love to hear brother Perdue preach, but he is so far away he cannot be with us much. We intend to meet once a month, and read the Bible and offer prayers and sing hymns, if it is the will of the Lord. We will try to meet on the first Sunday in each month. I will send this to you, and if you think it worthy of a place in the SIGNS, you may publish it. We wish to be remembered in your prayers.

From a little sister, I hope,

S. E. HIGBIE.

LAUREL, Miss., July 23, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is through the goodness of God that I am spared for purposes best known of God. Our union meeting was last Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and I never attended a better meeting. All was harmony and peace, and the Lord was surely there. We had the best preaching I think I ever heard; not a jar or discord was among us. Brethren Cob, Graham and Bradshaw, and our beloved pastor Easley did the preaching, each one preaching the doctrine of election and predestination, and they did not shun to declare the whole counsel of God, which we surely love to hear. We are at peace here at Palestine, and pray that God will still keep us in peace. We received three members during our meeting. May God still bear you up to publish the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for it surely does contend for the doctrine of our Lord and Savior. Remember me at the throne of grace.

Your very unworthy brother,

T. J. KNIGHT.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1913.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 PETER IV. 18.

WILL you please give your views on 1 Peter iv. 18? This Scripture came into my mind day before yesterday, and opened up to me in a way that I had never seen it before. The way this came to me, and the light that came with it, has caused me to rejoice so that I have not thought of much else for two days. The reason why I rejoice is because I feel that it is of the Lord. If I know my heart there is nothing I desire more than to understand his word and to do his will.

Your sister in a precious hope,

(MRS.) W. W. HOWARD.

MINERAL WELLS, Texas, July 25, 1913.

The Scripture to which sister Howard has called attention reads as follows, including the seventeenth verse also: "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Our sister speaks of pleasant reflections in her own mind regarding this Scripture, and we should have been glad had she written some of those reflections. It is good when the Spirit of God thus opens to our view some of the precious things of his word, and those to whom these heavenly truths appear lovely have the witness in themselves that they are the objects of his everlasting favor. Our own mind has in past years from time to time been led to think of the things spoken here by the inspired apostle. We do not know that our thoughts upon it are as those given our sister, but we will endeavor to give such thoughts as we have had about it. In the immediate connection preceding the text, Peter addresses his brethren with regard to the fiery trials which were to try them, and bids them not think such trials strange, as though some strange thing had happened to them; that is, these trials were common, and had always been common to those who were godly. For a comment upon this, see the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, especially the latter portion of it. It is one of the things which seem common to men that each one is very likely to think his own trial peculiar, in the sense that it is greater than others, or that it is a trial altogether different from what has ever befallen any one else, therefore the brethren now, as well as then, need to be reminded that their trials are not greater, nor in any wise different, from the afflictions of other men. Do not think it strange that you are tried, but remember that this is the lot of all who have ever loved God and served him. Rather, he goes on to say, rejoice in these trials, because in them ye are partakers of Christ's own sufferings; that is, he would declare that in this suffering they have fellowship with saints in all ages; but above all, they have fellowship with the blessed Lord himself, and the outcome is that when the glory of the dear Savior is revealed they shall be glad with exceeding joy. "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." With these thoughts, and with the considerations embraced in the following

verses of this chapter, Peter would encourage and strengthen his brethren under all their persecutions. We speak here of persecutions especially, because that is the theme upon which the apostle here dwells. A careful reading of the whole connection will show this. He urges upon them this one thing, viz., not to suffer as a lawless man; that is, as a thief, or murderer, or evil doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. This would not be persecution. This indeed would not be to the glory of God, but to their own shame. But if any man should suffer as a christian he need not be ashamed, but rather glorify God, because he had been counted worthy of God to thus suffer. If a man have faith he shall have trials of that faith. No trial means that God sees no faith there, therefore if trials or persecutions come upon one for the name of Christ's sake, here is room made for praise to God, who has given the faith, and then tries it to show of what good metal it is composed. Peter says, "The time has come that judgment must begin at the house of God." It has long seemed plain to us that the emphasis is to be laid upon the word "begin." But each word in the sentence demands attention. The word "judgment" here, as it appears to us, signifies these very persecutions of which the apostle had been speaking. The Lord will now judge, or try, his professed people. He will do this by subjecting them to that which will try their faith, and all their other graces as well, for faith cannot be tried without involving every other spiritual grace as well. That which would try their faith would also test their love, their fear of God, their hope of salvation, their humility, and, in short, every other heavenly grace. How can a believer know whether his faith is real, whether his love is genuine, while all is propitious in his life? If there is no persecution, how shall one know whether his faith will endure to the end? If there be no losses and crosses and burdens to bear, how shall one know whether his love shall endure through stress and storm, as well as through fair weather? How shall the steadfastness of the children of God be witnessed by others until they are tried? How shall the reality of our christian profession appear otherwise? In that time churches had been formed here and there, and many, it would seem, had united with them, and appeared on the surface to be possessed of saving faith, but no doubt it was true that some had been gathered in who were without faith. The time, Peter declared, had come when this must be tested. The churches should be tried, that those who possessed real faith might be separated from those whose faith was not genuine, and the one way which would most effectually make this manifest was the way of persecution. The time had now come when the fire must be kindled that should burn up the wood, hay and stubble. It was the fire of persecution in this case. Who is there among the living subjects of God's grace who has not questioned in his own spirit like this: Suppose persecution should once more arise; suppose that to profess to be a follower of Christ meant danger, and perhaps death; suppose that shame and reproach, even to false accusations, must attach to those who confess his name, should I stand fast? The only thing that can settle this question with any one is to meet the trial, then it will be seen, if we have the victory, that it is faith that overcometh the world. Read again the eleventh chapter of Hebrews for a record of the triumphs of faith under all manner of affliction. God will

try the faith of his saints, and Peter by inspiration knew that the time had come to try, or to bring to judgment, the house of the Lord. Judgment must now begin. We have not understood Peter to mean that judgment should now begin at the church, the house of the Lord, and then go on to other people; that is, we do not think it is his meaning that the Lord will first try his people, and then proceed to subject those who are not his people to the same judgments. The churches had been prospering, and many had been added to them, now it was time to test the genuineness of their profession, and this the Lord would do to his own praise and glory, and to the cleansing away of all that was only chaff. The Lord would thus thoroughly purge his floor, and this he has done again and again in the history of the churches. This has always been his will and work. There has never been great prosperity given to any visible church organization on earth in the way of great additions that afterward a sifting time has not been necessary, and happy is that church, happy is that member, that endures under the trial. The judgment or sifting may be brought about by many different trials, for there are many things to try our faith, and the reality of our religion, beside persecution, but in some way the testing will come, and this trial of our faith is always in the hand of God. It is always according to his will, for he will try all his people and purify them as gold is purified by the refiner's fire.

Now the apostle says, If this trial begins with us what shall be the result? What shall be the result with those who obey not the gospel? That is, with those who do not really love it and rejoice in it. Some, even in the apostles' days, walked who did not love the Lord, but whose god was their belly. What should be the result with them when the test should come? The next verse throws light upon this whole sentence. It is clear to our mind that the ungodly and the sinner refer to those who know not God savingly, who yet have flocked to the churches in their time of prosperity. There have always been such characters, and there always will be. A broad distinction is always drawn in the word between those who serve God in truth and those who are called ungodly and sinners. The people of God all of them have been among the ungodly and the sinners, but they have been redeemed and quickened into divine life, and given to love and serve God, and henceforth, with all their shortcomings and imperfections, are called saints, while the men who know not God are the ungodly and the sinners. This distinction must always be kept in mind as we read the word of God. Now the apostle declares here, in substance, that the trial, the persecution, will be so fiery that it will be by sovereign grace alone that any shall be able to endure to the end. He expresses the greatness and the fiery nature of the trial by saying, "If the righteous scarcely be saved." How many of the tried people of God have felt at times as though they had barely escaped the snare of the fowler, as though they had almost fallen under the stress of their trials. All who know themselves, and who know the Lord, know that in themselves they are altogether weak, and that if they stand it is by sovereign grace helping and upholding them. But those who are called righteous in the text do fear God; his rich grace has brought them to exalt his name; they love all righteousness, and his fear is before their eyes. When such as these are tried they shall endure.

They shall be saved from falling and failing in their profession; their love shall endure and not wax cold. If indeed they for a time tremble and draw back, it shall not be unto perdition. If they deny him, soon they go out, at one look of their blessed Lord, and weep bitterly. They are saved, though it seems to them they are but scarcely saved from this falling away because of persecution. Looking back over the past, where is the believer who will not recall many times when it appears to him that he has escaped narrowly, as a bird from the snare of the fowler? But still he has escaped. How foolish he has been to dally with wickedness, with folly and with temptation, and had he been left to himself he would have fallen grievously. This he knows, and knowing this he must ascribe praise to that God who has so loved him and so cared for him that he has escaped. But he who obeys not the gospel, in whose heart there is no faith in it, and no love for it, notwithstanding any profession that he has made, has nothing within him by which he may withstand the test. Rather, all that is within him demands what this world can give, and sees no excellency really in the gospel of grace, the gospel of salvation. As the apostle expresses it, though they have walked, their god is their belly; that is, self is their supreme love, and to fulfill the desires of the flesh and of the mind is their chief desire. In this time of testing how awful is the question, What shall their end be? Where shall they appear? Let it be remembered that it is not ours to apply the test. We must not seek to usurp the application of this judgment; it is in the hands of God, and he will apply it as and when it pleases him.

C.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. B. Bird, August 28th, 1913, at the bride's residence, Ben Staton and Elsie Thornberry, of Pike County, Ky.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Miss Addie Florance died at her home in New Baltimore, Fauquier Co., Va., July 18th, 1913, of typhoid fever and a complication of other ailments. She was the daughter of the late Robert H. and sister Adaline Florance, and was born in the house where she died June 6th, 1858, making her stay on earth 55 years, 1 month and 12 days. She was baptized by Elder Joseph N. Badger, in the fellowship of the church at Upper Broad Run, about twenty-five years ago, and continued a faithful member of that body until called to enter the triumphant state. Sister Addie was a lovely character, dutiful and affectionate, faithfully caring for her aged and invalid mother until unable to do so longer. She was a true and devoted Baptist, and loved sound doctrine. We hope and believe she is now at rest in that land where "rests no shadow, falls no stain." She leaves to mourn, her mother, who is an invalid, two brothers and numerous other relatives and friends, together with the church, but their sorrow is not without hope, for there is reason to hope that when the Lord our Savior shall make his appearance the second time, without sin unto salvation, she will be in that numerous train redeemed by his blood and cleansed from every stain, and ascribing her victory to the Lamb. I feel to tender my sincere sympathy to the bereaved ones, and commend them to the care of Him who careth for all his saints, and pray God to minister to them the blessed consolations of the gospel.

I am writing this by request of our dear, aged and afflicted brother, Elder J. N. Badger, to which I cheerfully comply, only regretting that he could not with his able pen have done more full justice to the memory of this precious sister.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., August, 1913.

Samuel Miller, son of Moses Miller and Elander Coy, was born July 14th, 1831, in Henderson County, Ill. His parents moved to Keokuk County, Iowa, when he was sixteen years of age, and he was a resident there until he was married to Sarah Lemmons, June 17th, 1851. To them were born eight children, one, a girl, dying when four years old; five boys and two girls survive him. He professed a hope when in his twentieth year, and joined the Separate Baptists, and remained with them two or three years, then began reading his Bible and hearing the Old School Baptists preach, and very soon became con-

vinced that they were the true church of God, but did not live near a church, but was a firm believer for fifty years. In 1911 he joined the Old School Baptists in Wapello County, near Ottumwa, Iowa, and was baptized by Elder Bradley in Cedar Creek, in his eightieth year, and departed this life July 1st, 1912, at his home in Lincoln County, Kansas, and was buried in the cemetery near his home. The unworthy writer has known him for more than twenty years, and he was the best Baptist I ever knew. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of the Old School Baptist Church, and this world had no charms for him. He never tired of talking of the doctrine of his Savior, in whom all his hope was founded, and he had a deep interest in the welfare of the church, which he esteemed above all things on earth.

There being no Baptists near, his funeral was preached by W. D. Maury, a Missionary, by request of his children.

W. J. EARNEST.

LURAY, Kansas, Aug. 17, 1913.

Emma L. Lynch, beloved wife of John S. Lynch, 1214 Green St., Philadelphia, Pa., died on Tuesday, August 19th, 1913, after an illness of only four days. Before her marriage (fifteen months before her death) she was Miss Emma L. Redgrave, of Middletown, Del. She was not a member of the church, but with her husband attended the meetings when convenient for her to do so. She was highly esteemed by all who knew her. She leaves a bereaved husband, a widowed mother and several brothers and sisters and relatives to mourn their loss. She was laid away in the cemetery at Middletown, Del., the writer using as a text John vii. 37–40, on the sad occasion.

B. F. COULTER.

J. W. House was born in 1849, and died July 19th, 1913, aged 64 years. He was married in 1871 to Clara J. Tilman, daughter of Bennett and Dicy Ann Tilman. He professed a hope in Christ in young manhood, but never attached himself to any church. He was very generous in a financial way to the writer, and his help was always appreciated. He resided in Martin, Tenn., where he leaves an afflicted widow and one daughter, besides a host of friends and relatives, to mourn his sad taking away.

Written by one of his many friends.

H. N. OLIVER.

INFORMATION WANTED.

IF there are any Baptists in northern Colorado, near Loveland, Boulder, Berthoud or Estes Park, I would like to have them write me at Estes Park, as I intend going out in that part of Colorado for awhile, and would like to find some Old Baptists.

C. M. BRUCE.

PAWNEE ROCK, Kansas, June 18, 1913.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Jefferson, N. Y., will hold its yearly meeting, the Lord willing, on the third Saturday and Sunday in September (20th and 21st), 1913. Those coming by rail to Stamford will be met there on Friday before on the 11 o'clock a. m. train. We extend an invitation to ministers of our faith and order to meet with us.

Done by order of the church.

G. E. MEAD, Church Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Andes and Middletown Churches, at Union Grove, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday following the third Sunday in September (24th and 25th), 1913, commencing at 10:30 a. m. Trains will be met at Union Grove on Tuesday p. m. All are requested to come direct to the meetinghouse, which is one-quarter of a mile from the station. A committee will be at the meetinghouse to direct all to places of entertainment. Those coming over the U. & D. R. R. via Kingston and Oneonta, will change cars at Arkville for Union Grove. Those coming from any parts on the O. & W. R. R. will change cars at East Branch for Union Grove. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth to meet with us. There is room for all who desire to come.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE yearly meeting of the Cow Marsh Old School Baptist Church will be held on the fourth Sunday in September, and Saturday afternoon before (27th and 28th), 1913. A general invitation is extended to friends desiring to meet with us. Trains from north and south will be met at Viola station Saturday morning.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Pastor.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will, according to appointment, meet with the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, Ulster Co., N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday in October (1st and 2nd), 1913. Those coming by rail will stop at Ashokan station, viz., U. & D. R. R. Ample provisions are already planned for all who feel to trust in the Lord to meet with us and enjoy the blessing that he is pleased to bestow upon us while together in fellowship of the gospel of Christ our Savior.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Old School or Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 10th, 11th and 12th, 1913. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Those coming by railroad either

east or west will come on the Pennsylvania R. R. to Mount Union on Thursday and take the East Broadtop Railroad to Three Springs, where they will be met and cared for. It is only about two miles to place of meeting. Trains leave Mount Union at 10 a. m. and 4 p. m. We would like to see a good turnout, as it is the most convenient point of any church in our association.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT, Pastor.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa, N. Y., has appointed the second Saturday and Sunday in October (11th and 12th), 1913, to hold its yearly meeting, and extends a cordial invitation to lovers of the truth to meet with us, especially ministering brethren. We hope the Lord will put it into your hearts to visit us.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

THE New Harmony Association of Predestinarian Baptists will convene with Willow Springs Church, Texas, beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1913. Conveyance will be at Sipe Springs on Thursday for all who have a mind to come. Sipe Springs is on the branch line of the T. C. R. R. from Deleon to Crossplains. A hearty welcome is extended to brethren of like precious faith.

S. N. STEPHENS, Clerk.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 15th, 16th and 17th, 1913. Trains will be met at Herndon, three miles from the meeting-place, on the line of the W. & O. D. Ry., Tuesday afternoon and evening before the meeting, and Wednesday morning. Frequent electric trains for Herndon leave Thirty-sixth and M Sts., Washington, D. C. To reach this terminus of the electric road, those coming into Washington at the Union Station will take green car marked Georgetown in front of the depot and transfer therefrom to the Old Dominion line at Thirty-sixth and M Sts., where car direct to Herndon is taken. We hope to see a goodly number of our visiting brethren with us at this meeting, and cordially invite all ministering and other brethren who can, to assemble with us at the above appointed time.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

THE Old School Baptist Church in Wilmington, Del., expects, if the Lord so wills, to hold its yearly meeting in its new house on Jefferson St., between Thirteenth and Fourteenth Sts., on the third Sunday in October, and Saturday preceding, to commence at 2 p. m. on Saturday. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

By order of the church.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

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THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

"SHOULD CHILDREN OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS ATTEND SUNDAY SCHOOL?"

I still have about 100 copies of the board cover and about 50 copies of the limp cover of "Should Children of Primitive Baptists Attend Sunday School?" Those desiring the book will kindly order soon, giving name and address plainly written or printed, with the price by post-office or express money order, or in stamps. Board binding 40 cents per copy; limp binding 25 cents per copy. Address all orders to D. W. OWENS.

HERSMAN, Brown Co., Ill.

I have yet a few copies of my pamphlet, "Thoughts on Regeneration, the Spiritual Birth, the Christian Warfare and the Resurrection," which I will dispose of as follows: one copy, 15 cents; two copies, 25 cents. If there are any who do not feel able to spare the money, and would like to read it, I will send a copy to their address if they will write me. Address,

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SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILLIAMSTON, N. C.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 81. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1913. NO. 19.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., Aug. 28, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am in receipt of another letter from brother L. D. Seals, of Vanleer, Tenn., in which he has asked me several more questions, and earnestly requests me to answer through the SIGNS, and with your permission I will try to comply with the brother's request as best I can. I want to say in the outset that I am not writing in any spirit of controversy, for I am too near the end of my journey for anything like that, but I simply desire to give a reason of the hope that is within me to every man that asketh me, with a desire to both write and speak for edification, and not confusion.

First question: "Did Paul say to 'divide the Bible into three parts,' making one doctrinal, one experimental and one practical?" I do not think I ever said that Paul or any one else ever said to "divide the Bible into three parts," but it does seem clear to me that some Scriptures are doctrinal, some experimental and some practical, and all are necessary to the life of the child of God here upon earth. I will give one quotation here: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." This Scripture has a threefold application: doctrinal, experimental and practical. It seems to me that this is plain, and these things are all connected, not disconnected.

Next question: "How many experiences do God's children have? and in what experience do they learn doctrine?" My idea is that in the first experience of God's people they learn that they are sinners before God and exposed to his wrath. They realize that all is not right with them, they are not as they once were; the commandment has come to them and sin has become exceeding sinful. This is because the light of God has shined in them, and the Spirit of Christ has "quickened" them, spiritual life has been given them. In other words they are "born again," "born of the Spirit," subsequently they are given faith to believe in Christ as their personal Savior, either through the gospel or otherwise, and are made to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Further on they

learn, either through the gospel or the inspired word of God, the doctrine of election, predestination, efficacy of Christ's atonement, resurrection of the dead and all those things which go to make up the fundamental principles upon which the hope of God's people is based. I know that Paul said, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." But it occurs to me that the "all things" here referred to are not the things we experience here in this world, but "the things" that we are to receive in the world to come. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not year appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Besides this, when Paul says, "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit," the question in my mind is this: Did the Spirit reveal these things to all God's children alike, or only to holy apostles and prophets? Paul says, God hath revealed them, (past tense) not will reveal them. In speaking of the calling of the Gentiles Paul said, "Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel." These things, then, it seems to me, were revealed to the holy apostles and prophets, and through them to the sons of men, for they were inspired men, and they preached the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and this gospel is revealed from faith to faith, consequently it (the gospel) is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. I believe that God reveals some things to his children independently of the gospel, but in the absence of God's written word or the preached gospel how much would God's people know about the doctrine, faith or practice, or of the things concerning the kingdom of God, either here or hereafter? Paul exhorted Timothy to commit to faithful men the things he hath heard and learned, who shall be able to teach others also. Why "teach," if the Spirit reveals all these things independently of teaching.

Brother Seals asks, "Do not all denominations who disagree with us say that God does not reveal these things independent of the gospel? Do not all denominations stand united against us upon these things? Then can you explain the difference between us and Campbellites and all others if we, too, believe that God does not reveal himself and all deep things to his children direct of himself?" Space will not allow me to quote everything brother Seals says, but I will say that I am not writing about Campbellites, or other ites. So far as that is concerned, all denominations claim that the Bible is God's revealed will to man, and that all men have to do to be saved is to keep the commandments, accept Christ and be saved, or reject Christ and be lost. If I understand them they do not believe in any revelation of the Spirit at all.

Brother Seals refers to what I said about learning doctrine from reading Elder Gilbert Beebe's first book of editorials. I do not claim to have learned all I know about doctrine from reading after Elder Beebe, but I do know it was here that I first learned anything about the fundamental principles of the doc-

trine of God our Savior. I am not here setting up Elder Beebe as a standard, but Elder Beebe had first learned these things of God and then communicated to others. Paul communicated the gospel to some privately, lest he had run, or should run, in vain. I have not Elder Beebe's first book of editorials now. I have already answered brother Seals' eighth question in the first part of this reply.

Ninth question: "Are God's children in the flesh? If so, is it God's child that minds the things of the flesh?" I am inclined to believe that God's children do oftentimes "mind the things of the flesh." Paul said, "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." Who is "ye" in these quotations if not the children of God? The truth of the matter is this: God's children are possessed of two distinct natures, one is human, the other is divine; one is carnal, the other spiritual. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. So Paul could say, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." It is very plain to my mind from experience, observation and the teaching of the Scriptures, that God's people are not always led by the Spirit, but that they are often walking after the flesh, and in that condition cannot please God. "When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." From this it would seem that our ways do not always please the Lord. I think this covers the ground of the ninth question.

Tenth question: "Does the word 'ungodliness' (Titus ii. 11, 12,) cover all ungodliness? Then if one is a member of the church and lives ungodly, have we any evidence that God's grace taught him to deny ungodliness?" This Scripture reads: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." Notice it does not say, shall live soberly, righteously and godly, but "should." To my mind the word "should" here implies an obligation on the part of one thus taught. The grace of God always teaches us to live godly, &c., but do we always live godly? Does brother Seals feel that he at all times lives a godly life? or does he not rather experience with Paul, "When I would do good, evil is present with me"? "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." If the truth as it is in Christ does not feed the child of God, I confess I am at a loss to know what will. I think there should be a distinction made between ungodliness and disobedience. I think a christian can be disobedient and yet not be what I term ungodly. "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" It seems to me that ungodliness includes murder, theft, idolatry, adultery, fornication, lasciviousness, profanity and all

that goes to make up an ungodly life, but disobedience is to fail to do what Christ has commanded us in his word, or to do what he has commanded us not to do, and who of us can truthfully say, I have done all that Christ has commanded me to do, and am not guilty of doing anything that Christ commanded me not to do?

Brother Seals covers nearly a whole page with his fifteenth question. I cannot quote it all here, but he wants to know if disobedience causes God to chastise his people, and if so, were those saints who "always obeyed" chastised? and so on. If God does not chastise his people for their disobedience, I am at a loss to know what he does chastise them for. Paul said, "We have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live?" The Lord said by the prophet, If his children forsake my law, and keep not my statutes, then will I visit their iniquities with the rod, and their sins with stripes; nevertheless my loving-kindness I will not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. Notice, their iniquities with the rod, and their sins with stripes. The Savior said, He that knoweth his master's will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes. The truth is, the Lord chastises his people when they disobey him, and this he does for their good, which at the time is not joyous, but grievous, yet afterward they yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby. It has been the case in all ages of the world that God's people have been more or less disobedient, consequently they have been chastened of the Lord more or less in all the past ages. Now when any one can live an ungodly life, or a life of disobedience, and fail to realize any chastisement for such a course, to my mind there is no evidence that such an one is a child of God.

In answer to some other questions propounded by brother Seals, I want to say that the gospel is a revelation in all cases. Paul said that the gospel he preached he neither received it of man, nor was he taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. This gospel which was revealed to Paul is what he preached to both Jews and Gentiles, and this gospel covered all the doctrine, experience and practice of all the people of God. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, * * * teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." This gospel or faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, and how can they hear without a preacher? and how can they preach except they be sent? "So we preach, and so ye believed." This is the gospel of our salvation.

Now these are some things I believe, but I feel very much like an old brother I used to hear talk some in public. He would say, "Brethren, I think that I sometimes think that I do not think right," and like him I fear that I do not always think right. Our "think so's" are but little worth if not sustained by the word of God.

Brother Seals says, "Each of these questions is of great importance to me." He says he is forty-seven years of age, has been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church since February, 1895, and can furnish reference as to his standing if necessary. He says he is nearing the end, and has no confidence in the flesh, and asks the question, "Am I right?" Yes, brother Seals, you are certainly right in this, for Paul said, "We are the circumcision, which worship God in the

spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Paul had realized that "in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing," hence he had no confidence in the flesh.

I want to say in conclusion that I have nothing but the kindest feeling for brother Seals, and I hope I love him as a brother in Christ. I really like to be thus drawn out upon the questions he has propounded to me, and trust that what I have written may be as bread cast upon the waters, to be gathered up after many days. I am sixty-five years old, and know that the end is near, and I hope to be found in Him not having mine own righteousness, but the righteousness of God by faith.

In afflictions, H. J. REDD.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Aug. 21, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have had in mind often to write you since I learned of your illness through the SIGNS, but have been from home much of the time and often wearied in body and mind, so the time has gone by. At this time I have nothing of interest to write you, as my mind is very barren and unfruitful in the things of the Spirit. I cannot think that a line from one so poor in spirit as I am can do you any good, yet we are commanded to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. It seems to me somehow this way, that we may enter sympathetically into the afflictions and sorrows of our dear kindred in Christ, as members of the one body, if the love of Christ be in our hearts. When one member suffers the other members do enter feelingly into his every pain and sorrow. I cannot think of anything more vital than the unity or oneness of Christ and his people, who are identified with him as their living head. The gospel presents clearly to my mind the two headships. Created in Adam, our earthly head, we had life in him, and fell in him. "As in Adam all die." All the human family went down under the curse of sin, under the law, when Adam fell, for all are under the law, under the curse, under sin, which has dominion and power over every son and daughter of Adam, who was the figure of him who was to come, which was Jesus, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven. In him was life, so when he came into the world the life of all the redeemed was in him. In him was the life of the bride, the Lamb's wife, as Eve was in Adam when he was created. This to me, dear brother, is a blessed, comforting doctrine. "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." One is just as certain as the other. The disobedience of one brought sin, ruin and death to all who had life in him; so the obedience of one, Christ, brought life, peace and immortality to all the chosen of God in him. Two sentences present the full tenor of the gospel: "Death in Adam," "Life in Christ." This is true, and is realized in experience I think. The saints can truly sing,

> "In union with the Lamb,
> From condemnation free,
> The saints from everlasting were,
> And shall forever be."

It is by this inexpressible indissoluble union with Christ, the ever-living Head, that each member in the real spirit of love can enter sympathetically into and bear one another's burdens, thus fulfilling the law of Christ. Outside of the life of Christ it cannot be done. The language of David implies this: "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head. * * * As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that

descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." When this is seen and felt the Lord appears in his glory in the beauties of holiness.

"When each can feel a brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part;
When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart."

The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord, and as this life flows we are moved to action in the Spirit, and the fruits are born, or made manifest. "I am," said Jesus, "the vine, ye are the branches." Separated from him there is no fruit of the Spirit. This fruit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, faith. Here we find the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and this identifies the church of the living God, and "we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "He that loveth is born of God." I, dear brother, sometimes feel that I do love the brethren, the household of faith, then again it is a serious question. Well, what a fool I am, surely there are none like me, presuming to handle these weighty things, but I only thought to inquire of your welfare, and to express my sympathy, and good wishes for your speedy recovery, and for your spiritual comfort. Will you kindly bear with me in my weakness and presumption? for I am a worm and no man.

Now I will write what I specially purposed to do: that I have just returned from the Red River Association, held this year in North Tennessee. The meeting was very largely attended, and was orderly; the sessions were pleasant and harmonious; there was not a jarring note in any way; the preaching was clear and discriminating, and, to my mind rightly divided the word of truth. It was what I have been hearing and trying to preach these many years. This will let the brethren and friends hear of my safe arrival home, and that I bear them all in loving remembrance, and desire again to thank them for their loving-kindness to the poorest of the flock. May the dear Lord remember them in his tender mercies, and bless them with all things needful in this life and in that which is to come. I intended to go to the Highland Association, near Earlington, Ky., on the third Sunday, and Friday and Saturday before, but was called to attend the funeral of a dear friend near Glasgow, Ky. The God of peace and love be with you all, I would ever pray.

I inclose two good letters for your disposal.

Yours in love of the truth,

P. W. SAWIN.

[OUR dear brother said that he did not write this letter for publication, except the last portion, but it has seemed so full and rich to us that we have taken the liberty to give it all to our readers, and we feel sure that our dear brother will pardon us.—C.]

PINSONFORK, Ky., August 8, 1913.

ELDER P. W. SAWIN—DEAR BROTHER:—Dear brother in much love, and, I hope, in love of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. I can readily realize how just a word from your pen, written by you or yours, would rejoice my heart, which so often seems disconsolate and sad, but I cannot see how such a dry morsel as I can communicate can possibly be of any comfort to you, yet I often have a desire to write you, and would love much to have a crumb of comfort for you, but I am entirely destitute and utterly unable of myself to think anything as of myself, but my sufficiency is of God, therefore if it is not in the divine arrangement to

bless and break the prepared loaves, or some of them, and then communicate a morsel of them to my mind, I cannot write so much as one crumb of comfort to you, for I am wholly dependent upon the Giver of all good, the source from whence all blessings flow. It often looks to me that a deep, heartfelt sense of my weakness and unworthiness would hinder my desire to write to the Lord's redeemed children, but it has not as yet. The Lord knows why these things are so, as for me, I know not. Dear Elder Sawin, I have been thinking of you occasionally all through the day until now, and have some of the time felt that the language of the apostle Paul was in a measure applicable to my feelings sometimes when thinking of you, which is as follows: I have you in my heart to live and to die with you. This life that God's redeemed family live together, or dwell in together, has occupied my mind very much of late, and some thoughts which have come to my mind concerning that life have been very much to my comfort and consolation. Of course my mind readily reverted to what the gleaning Ruth said to her mother-in-law: "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God," &c.—Ruth i. 16. Now I have thought of this wonderful and experimental narrative for many years, with no higher view than this blessed privilege that the Lord's humble poor have been and are favored with, to meet together and live together in love and fellowship, and in the sweet communion of the saints, the household of faith. This is a blessed privilege that the Lord has conferred upon his poor and afflicted people, to be gathered together and to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in love and fellowship in the visibility of this glorious gospel kingdom; but it does seem to me there is a more exalted view of this mysterious life which the Lord's redeemed children live and in which they dwell together in harmony with the language of the apostle when he said, I have you in my heart, to live and to die with you. While these living and loving children are separated, geographically, hundreds and thousands of miles, yet they are living together in that one element, eternal love, and when faith exercises their minds and hearts they realize this sacred and heavenly dwelling together, joying and beholding the order and steadfastness of the faith of God's elect, and they are in such a sacred oneness that when one suffers they all suffer, and when one rejoices they all rejoice.

My dear brother, as to my own personal feelings when realizing that element of eternal love while writing you and others, I seem to be in your presence in sweet enjoyment and communication. If I am not deceived, I am daily living and dwelling in my mind and feelings with the Lord's little children in that one mysterious life which is so plainly realized that we can for a few moments say with the apostle Paul again, 2 Cor. v. 1: "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." This gives us the idea clearly of the Lord's chosen and redeemed family being now, while here in these low grounds of sin and sorrow, possessed of one tabernacle, but two houses, one earthly, the other eternal, or two lives, one eternal, the other mortal. Therefore God's people do not have to wait until they die in order to be possessed of this house, which is

eternal, but we have it now; and not only so, but we are possessed of this earthly or mortal house now also, and it is in this mortal or earthly house that we groan and are so heavily burdened; not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Hence there is a time when all God's people will be swallowed up of that eternal life which they have, or are possessed of here, which is from heaven, and then mortality will be no more. O blessed thought! O glorious hope! when shall it be? As I have already truly said, the glorious privilege that God in his wonderful mercy and infinite wisdom so ordered that his children should live together here in church capacity, worshiping him under their own vine and fig tree, is an unspeakable favor indeed. But they have been in the ages past disallowed this blessed privilege, yet they lived together in that blessed life of eternal love and mutual enjoyment which is unspeakable and full of glory. And now, dear brother, I as much believe as I believe I live, that our religious liberty will soon be taken away from us, yet I may be deceived in that particular. I should be glad to know that these things are not manifesting themselves so plainly as it seems to me that they are. This cannot be unless the Lord has so ordained it. But it does seem to me as plain as the sun at noonday that the evidences are too plain for us to be mistaken, although we may be. The plainest evidences to me are being developed in our common schools and the laws regarding them. The Scriptures plainly teach that coming events cast omens before them. Notwithstanding all these things shall come to pass, and all these earthly things be dissolved, there is a river of life, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God. This city is so united and compact in that one life of which the apostle said, I have you in my heart to live and to die with you, that they all can say, I was and am with (not only among) you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, and they are so lovingly and feelingly living in each other's hearts that that which causes one to fear causes all to fear, and that which causes one to tremble causes all to tremble, and all of them together realize their weakness, that "They are but a feeble folk, yet make their houses in the rock," and with one mind and one mouth they glorify God and live in love and die in the triumph of living faith, and all shall surround the throne of God and sing redeeming love forever and ever.

Dear brother Sawin, I hope the Lord will bless you to cast the mantle of charity over my weakness manifested in this long and wearisome letter, for I am ashamed to send it to you, yet I cannot communicate to you that which I have not, but it does seem that I ought not to send such a dry morsel as this. We are all well, and hope the same for you. Remember us all in your prayers.

W. J. MAY.

WOODSTOCK, Ontario, Aug. 17, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER SAWIN:—If you will allow me I will call you by that endearing name, although I know I am unworthy of doing so, yet I know that if not a brother my lot is miserable, even though I owned the wealth and title of a king. If I only knew that I am a brother how happy would I be; I think that then I could sing the livelong day. But alas, I am so full of doubts and fears that my hope often seems vain; yet I cling to it, or it clings to me, and it will not let me

go. I have thought dozens of times how I would like to write to you and tell you how much I appreciate your letters in the SIGNS, for they seem to tell my feelings so well. They are so full of humility, meekness and self-abasement, and you tell us much of your unworthiness, and of your doubts, fears and misgivings, that often I feel like taking you by the hand and saying, You are my brother in these things at least. I feel then that I must write and tell you how near you come to telling my feelings. Then I have thought, O, I know he is so far above me, and is good and humble and loving, while I am proud, hateful and full of evil; how can he care to hear from me? So time has passed, but I have never forgotten your pleasant visit to our house many years ago, and also I have not forgotten the visit of Elder Pollard and myself at your home, where we talked of the things of the kingdom of God, and of our own experience in them. Now, and for a long time past, I am in a strange land, and among enemies who are strong, and who hate me with a cruel hatred, and who harass my life and often bring me to the borders of despair; and the worst of it is that I seem to be careless and indifferent, so that I think, Surely God can never dwell in such a heart as mine. Then comes the question, Who told you that you were cold, careless and indifferent, and full of hatred, and of every evil thought? Or, as God said to Adam, Who told you that you were naked? Then I think, Would I have it different if I could? O I think that I would. I would love to be pure, holy, good, loving, kind and full of the traits of which the apostle tells us that they are the fruits of the Spirit. But alas, alas, my fruits seem to be those of the flesh, and there is no help for me. Yet the fight goes on, and often it seems that there can be no end but defeat, disgrace, dishonor and death, and that I will at last go down to the grave as a false professor. O my God, how awful is this thought, that I, a professor for many years (now nearly forty) of the name of Jesus, should at last go to the grave as a vile hypocrite. This I know will be the case unless almighty grace prevents. Could I feel the awful solemnity of it and dread it so if I had not some of the fear of God in my heart?

I love your letters, because they tell so much of the daily experience of the people of God. Once I wanted to talk and think more of doctrine and the purposes of God, but of late years it has become a personal matter between myself and God. What evidence have I that I love God, or that I have been born again? How do my walk and conversation conform to my profession? As I analyze my life, walk and conversation, I have to say I am very far from being an example as to what a professor of the religion of Jesus Christ ought to be. Neither can I console myself that others are as bad as myself, for this is a personal matter between God and my soul. If all other professors are gone astray, that does not justify my conduct in the least. If a thousand men commit murder, and I am one of them, I am just as guilty as though I were alone. But, dear brother, I do feel that it is a day of coldness and deadness in the church of God, and when the people of God meet it does seem as if worldly things constitute the main theme of conversation, the crops, the fashions, and even the sports of the world, seem to be the main topics, and I am sorry to say that I am the man, and yet, how much I would like it to be otherwise; for while it is true that we must have to do with the things of the world while in it, yet

when we meet together how pleasant it is to talk of our experience in spiritual things.

But lest I become wearisome I will bring my letter to a close. Elders Durand and Peters were at our June meeting, and it was a peaceful, quiet and orderly meeting. I hope that you and sister Sawin are both well. It is a long time since we first met. Goldie was a little girl then, but is now a woman. My wife and I are well, for which we ought to be thankful. We both send love to you all.

Unworthily your brother,

R. SCATES.

MAYFIELD, Ky., August 27, 1913.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I herewith forward you a letter written me by brother T. J. Carr, of Golconda, Ill., which, by your consent, I would like to have published in the SIGNS. I think the article is to the point, and timely.

Yours in hope,

J. M. PERKINS.

GOLCONDA, Ill., August, 1913.

ELDER J. M. PERKINS—DEAR BROTHER:—For several days I have been thinking more or less along the line of predestination, and how natural it is for one to try to absolve himself from guilt for his sinful acts by saying it was to be, and hence had to come to pass according to the decree, that he could not help it, &c. If I could submit my thoughts to writing as I think them I would not mind offering a thought or so upon that line.

It will be remembered that Jesus in speaking to Peter said, "That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice."—Matt. xxvi. 34. The foregoing circumstance was as certain to come to pass as it was that Jesus knew and said it would. Hence Peter could not help or refrain from doing that which God determined beforehand he should do. Now it does seem from a natural point of view that one may not be held blameworthy for doing that which he could not help doing, even though it were sinful. A great deal of the argument for the overthrow of absolute predestination is probably from this standpoint. While I admit that Peter could not help thrice denying Jesus, yet I believe he was blameworthy for doing it. You remember that after the cock crew, Jesus turned to Peter and gave him a look that was doubtless so piercing that it brought vividly to his remembrance what he had done, and this in so short a space of time (probably not more than two or three hours) after he had told Jesus, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee," thus making him to fully realize his guilt and shame for having done that which he vowed or affirmed he would not do. No marvel then that he went out and "wept bitterly." But if the foregoing circumstance was only a fulfillment of the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, which it most assuredly was, why did not Peter face the look of Jesus and say that it was absolutely decreed that he should thrice deny him, that it had to be, that he could not help it and that he was not going to worry over it? Such a conclusion would be in keeping with that of those who deny absolute predestination. While the foregoing incident was a very carrying out of a matter that God in his wisdom had determined should be done, yet we have no evidence that Peter tried to justify his denials of Christ by saying he could not help it, but his going out and weeping bitterly plainly showed that he felt guilty indeed. Peter evidently was a predestinarian. In his ser-

mon at Pentecost, a short time after his denial of the Savior, he ably set forth that doctrine in the following forceful language: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken." If Peter had stopped just here, and had told them that since their killing of the Prince of life was the very carrying out of the determinate counsel and purpose of God, they were not to blame, there would have been some grounds for them to claim that they should not be culpable for doing that which they had to, and could not help doing; but Peter spoiled all this self-justification theory or teaching by continuing, "and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Peter later on says that certain characters and peoples had gathered together to do what God's hand and counsel determined beforehand to be done, and although he seemingly offered an apology, rather, for their killing of the Prince of life, by saying that he knew they did it through ignorance, yet he seems to hold them guilty and responsible for the act, by telling them that they did it by "wicked hands." Now if they by wicked hands killed the Prince of life, so also did Peter, by a sinful tongue, deny him. Peter in this notable sermon, among other things said, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." This language of Peter seemed to awaken them to a full and vivid realization of the atrocity of their act, and being pricked in their heart they gave vent to their feelings of guilt by crying out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Here, it seems to me, was a golden opportunity for Peter to have said, Brethren, your gathering together was only to do what God had determined you should do; you had to do it, you could not help it, hence you were not to blame, therefore you may not worry over it. But there is nothing left on record to show that he ever made such apology for them, or that they tried to justify their wicked act by saying they could not help it. The heart pricking seems to have brought such a realization of their guilt so intensely to bear that they probably had no thought of trying in any way to justify the heinous crime they had so recently committed. Their crying out, What shall we do? seems to have occupied their minds at this instant. Of course God "meant it for good" what they had done. It was indeed a very carrying out of his eternal purpose, and though they did it through ignorance, (Acts iii. 17,) a thing they would not have done had it not been through ignorance, (1 Cor. ii. 8,) yet since it was done, nor could it be undone, what else could they do than feel both guilty and sorry? We also see in the prayer of Jesus concerning this momentous circumstance that, although "they know not what they do," yet they were blameworthy notwithstanding; hence from the foregoing we discover that neither ignorance nor predestination absolved them from guilt. From the foregoing we may also deduce the following corollary: that whatever is true of any given circumstance is equally true in any similar circumstance. But we are so apt in our nature to look at spiritual things, things pertaining to God and his decrees, from a natural standpoint, courting the sympathy of the flesh, that we probably fail to compare spiritual things with spiritual. Paul in his letter to the Roman brethren, among other things said: ("For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according

to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." That God, before either one of those boys had done good or evil, even prior to their birth, loved the one and hated the other, is not congenial to our nature to see the justice in, but we are bound to concede that it was that the purpose of God according to election might stand, else deny the Scriptures. The apostle just here seems to anticipate what might be natural for us to conclude, and asks, "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God?" and answers himself by saying, "God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Just here Paul seems to anticipate what those who reason from a natural viewpoint—those who contend that absolute predestination and man's responsibility are incompatible, might entertain, by saying, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" Yes, they are ready to say that if God decreed a thing should come to pass, it had to be, nor could it be prevented; that if God works all things after the counsel of his own will, it matters not what one does, he is only carrying out God's will, and hence should not be considered blameworthy for doing it. To such reasoning as this Paul answers by saying, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" Should not one be very careful when arguing along this line lest he be found replying against God? If God hardened Pharaoh's heart so that he would not let the children of Israel go after he had consented to let them go, and then sent flies and frogs upon him sore because he objected to their going, who art thou, O man, that you would reply against God, or call in question the justice of it? If Pharaoh was only carrying out what God had predestinated he should do, if he was doing God's will, and hence not blameworthy, would not those who oppose absolute predestination be ready to ask, Is there not unrighteousness with God? that it were unjust in him to drown Pharaoh and all his army, together with his horses and chariots, when they were doing what God had determined they should do? But what saith the Scripture? "For this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." Hence it becomes us to be still and know that he is God, that he doeth as he pleases in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou? (See Daniel iv. 35.) Paul continues his reasoning: "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on

the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory," &c. What if God, willing to make an exemplification of his wrath, by raising up Pharaoh "for this same purpose," and finally drowning him and his army in the Red Sea, and at the same time demonstrate his power in mercy by leading the children of Israel dry shod through the same, thus saving them from not only Pharaoh and his army, but from a watery grave? Yes, what? Are we ready to say then, Is there not unrighteousness with God? But Paul said, "God forbid." What if God loved Jacob and hated Esau even before birth? What if God should have mercy on one and harden another? What if God willing to and did make choice of a people in Christ before the foundation of the world, and leave out a people that shall be called the border of wickedness, and the people against whom the Lord hath indignation forever? But, says the objector, this would not give every one a chance to be saved, and would make God unjust and partial. "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Does the potter consult the clay as to whether the vessel shall be made unto honor or dishonor? Does not God hide these things from the wise and prudent and reveal them unto babes, nor give reason therefor other than that it seemed good in his sight? If we could be made to see and understand that God is a sovereign, that he is above all law, that he gives no reason for what he does nor offers apology as to why he does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, we would doubtless be more willing to be still and know that he is God, nor dare call in question his sovereign right to and justice in the execution of his determinate counsel and foreknowledge as it seems good in his sight.

In conclusion, I desire to say that I believe the selling of Joseph by his brethren is one of the most striking illustrations of absolute predestination given in the Bible. I thought of taking up the said case, but probably I have already written at too great a length.

Your unworthy brother in sorrow,

THOMAS J. CARR.

FORT SCOTT, Kans., Sept. 2, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—A short time ago I forwarded to you a letter I had received from a dear brother, which I thought would be of interest to your readers, and I think I wrote a few lines expressing fear that the readers of the SIGNS may not have understood brother J. F. Beeman's position on water baptism. I am sufficiently acquainted with him to know that he would not consider dipping baptism unless it was orderly administered. With this I inclose a letter from him to me, which I would like to see in the SIGNS, because he has made his views very clear, so there can be no danger of his being misunderstood in regard to what constitutes scriptural water baptism. I know many brethren may not agree as to what baptism is referred to in Ephesians iv. 4-6, but I think most Old Baptists will agree that brother Beeman has explained what constitutes the dipping that is valid. I will leave it to your discretion as to publishing. You see he has said, "You can pass it to the brethren."

Yours with unfeigned love,

M. B. WEEDON.

TIAWAH, Okla., Aug. 17, 1913.

M. B. WEEDON—DEAR BROTHER:—Your letter of the 8th instant came a few days ago, and in replying to your request about what constitutes legal, scriptural, christian, water baptism, I am not certain that I can make it plainer than what I tried to express in the letters published in the SIGNS for January 1st, 1913, and in November 15th, 1911. I wish that you would read the last mentioned letter. On page 675 you will perhaps get my understanding of water baptism. But that I may be more positive than formerly I desire to say that there can be but one legal christian water baptism. The church is supposed to be the judge of what is the right baptism. The subject must be prepared by God's grace to see the way of salvation, and a holy desire to walk in that way by going down into the watery grave with the servant of the Lord qualified to administer the ordinance in the name of the Lord Jesus. The servant must be a gospel preacher, set apart by solemn ordination, and in fellowship with the church he is acting for. If the quickened sinner be prepared as spoken of above, and the minister a servant of the Lord and a servant of the church, there will be no mistake about the mode, one dipping of the whole body, a burial. The reference that I made about a lady being "dipped" many times, yet had not received gospel baptism, was to show that christian baptism can be many times counterfeited. This counterfeit baptism has not been received by orderly Baptists for hundreds of years. That water baptism can be counterfeited and pass among religious people claiming to be followers of the Lord Jesus you must admit, and sometimes this counterfeit passes right into churches holding to the doctrine of grace and in the correspondence and fellowship of many Old School Baptist churches. Forty years ago I was well acquainted with two very prominent Elders in Ohio, who passed into the Old School Baptist churches on their Missionary baptism. These churches were in associations that corresponded indirectly with the Old School Baptists, and many of the members were readers and supporters of the SIGNS. One of these Elders preached for the Old School for more than twenty years. In the last thirty years I have known of several members who passed into the Old School Baptist churches of south and west Pennsylvania on their Arminian baptism. This is no proof that those churches did the right thing, but it is proof that the genuine baptism can be and is counterfeited. In Ohio and in Pennsylvania I fought against this disorder, but where it once gets a foothold, even among what we would call good brethren, it is like any other disorder or false doctrine, hard to handle without causing divisions. Again to summarize, a proper subject, a proper administrator, a proper mode, these should be the sole requirements for a legal baptism. If there be any one of these lacking there could not be a gospel baptism. There have been some instances where the candidate has imposed upon the church, and received baptism by the hand of the church's servant. A case of this kind might pass on for years before the fraud be discovered. This would never be a legal baptism, because the ordinance was given away to one not entitled to it. It never was legal, though for a time it looked that way; even before a discovery was made of the fraud it was illegal. Who knew of the fraud at the time of its commitment more than the candidate himself? Even he might have had an

honest carnal feeling to join a church for the sake of a home and to follow the teaching of false teachers, who say, "You ought to join some church." Your notice of my article in the SIGNS for January 1st, 1913, and Elder May's and Elder Chick's dissent from my views, do not agitate me in the least. If you carefully read after brother May you will notice that he has not brought a single argument to show what the Lord meant in the language quoted especially, Luke xii. 50: "But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished?" On the other hand, he speaks as though I countenanced counterfeit baptism. The point which I wished to show was that the baptism which Jesus speaks of as being in the future, and which was necessary to be accomplished to unburden him from his great work on earth, could never be counterfeited. Water baptism administered by the hand of sinful men could be and was counterfeited, even in the days of the apostles, as proven in the nineteenth chapter of Acts, which I have referred to in each letter published in the SIGNS. Although I am classed with the "absoluters," because I believe in the consistent attitude of the predestination of all things, yet I will not say in regard to the meaning of the words in Eph. iv. 5, that I absolutely believe it to have reference to the words of Jesus in Luke xii. 50, just quoted, but I may be mistaken in what the apostle means. As I have noted above, there can never be but the "one baptism" that our Lord speaks about, not even a counterfeit that can ever show a single feature of the genuine. Water baptism given to the children of men is counterfeited over and over, and the counterfeits are often declared to be genuine, and I have known many precious brethren who have been deceived. I am not writing to cause any undue agitation of this subject among the brethren, but I will say that I am not alone in my view of this subject, though I have thought much about it for more than thirty years. Elder Gilbert Beebe preached on this subject in my presence, taking about the view which I have tried to show. If he has left any writing upon it I am not able to tell, but I think so, so it is not original with me at all. To understand the language of Jesus to his disciples long after his baptism in the river Jordan is to know that there never could be any other but one baptism. There never could be even a faint resemblance of such a baptism that our Lord was baptized with, except christian baptism, which points to it. The text that Elder Beebe used on the occasion above mentioned was Eph. iv. 4–6. His expression on the words, "one baptism," is still fresh in my mind; it was like this: "I do not think these words mean christian baptism." While Elder Beebe was a very able preacher, and not disposed to try to force his opinions upon the brethren, yet we cannot claim that his views are the exact standard for Old School Baptists, as many portions of the Scriptures have been differently understood from the apostolic age until the present time.

Since I commenced this letter I have reread my letter on baptism published in the SIGNS for November 15th, 1911, and I call your attention to it again, for then I tried to show the great importance to believers of the ordinance of baptism. The expression which I used in the letter on the resurrection in regard to the apostle Paul not being an eyewitness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, was drawn from the fact that at the time of his rising and ascension Paul

was yet unknown to the disciples as a believer, but a vile persecutor. Jesus had risen and ascended before Paul helped to stone Stephen to death. I do not think there is any record that Jesus ever appeared to any but believers after his resurrection. It is from the account given in Acts of Saul of Tarsus and from chronology that I have drawn my conclusion that Paul was not an eye-witness of His resurrection as the other disciples. I am not doubting the words of Paul in the least about seeing the Lord after his resurrection, 1 Cor. xv. 8: "He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." Margin, "or abortive" time. We find reference of Paul seeing the Lord on his way to Damascus. (Acts ix. 4, 17; xxii. 14, 18.) When he was in Jerusalem praying in the temple. In 1 Cor. ix. 1, he says: "Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?" In Acts xviii. it is recorded where the Lord spake to Paul in the night by a vision, saying, "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee, to hurt thee."

Now, my brother, I have written a great deal to tell you so little; may some of it be to your good, and if worthy you can pass it on to other brethren.

Your brother in hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

FAIRMONT, W. Va., April 8, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been thinking of writing to the SIGNS for some time, but have put it off from time to time, but this morning I will write, and if you count this worthy of a place in your columns you may publish it, if not, all will be right with me. I was born and raised in Marion County, W. Va. My parents are both dead. They both held to the Primitive Baptist faith, and gave evidence of a better life than this. As for myself, I was an ignorant boy seeking the pleasures of this life, until I was called to a halt by the mercy of an all-wise God and Creator, and was brought to know him as the God of mercy, and one who will save his people without works or merit on their part. As I said, I was seeking the pleasures of this life, and was not seeking God, so it was not by my good works that I was brought to know the dear Savior Jesus Christ. He showed me what a great sinner I was by nature, and by practice also. I had many trials and troubles to encounter, which I will pass by in this letter. When about twenty years of age I went to a Methodist meeting in much distress of mind, and went forward to the mourner's bench, as it was called, and while striving, and praying as I hope, I felt some relief, and I hope that the Lord did bless me. O what gloom and darkness came over me before I left the meetinghouse, and I had a sad time for some days. One day while out in the fields I had a little hymn-book called Gospel Hymns, and as I opened the book my eyes caught these words: "Yield not to temptation, for yielding is sin." Then, O dear people of the true and living God, what joy and peace filled my whole being; all things seemed to be praising God, and I was also praising him. Then I thought I would never see any more trouble, but how greatly I was mistaken; doubts and fears soon came, and I thought that I was mistaken and deceived. Then I begged the Lord that if I were deceived he would undeceive me, and show me that I was truly blessed. At times afterward I felt his presence, and at other times he seemed to be far from me. After this I became dissatisfied with the ways of the Methodists, and one day while trying to pray it was shown plainly to me that when Christ

suffered and died on the cross he suffered and died for all my sins, all that I ever had committed and all that I ever should commit, and O what a glorious light this was to me, and what a pleasant sight it yet is to me. After a long struggle I left the Methodists and went to the Baptists, and was received and baptized by them. It seemed that when the time for me to be baptized came I wanted to talk and tell them something, but I did not know what it was. I went on for some time wanting to talk to that church, but did not, but after some time I asked liberty to talk to them, and did so. Then I thought I never would attempt to do so again, but could not refrain. As time went on trouble sprang up among the Baptists, and O what sorrow that gave me. No one can tell this but myself, and, if my heart does not deceive me, I tried to stand for the truth of the Lord. I hope that I did stand fast in the truth, for I had many precious things given me to encourage me, and I do hope that I am with God's people to-day: the Old School Baptists. If any one doubts this, let him prove it by the word of God, as this is the way to prove all things, and I do not want to be deceived. The Old School Baptists preach Christ as the way, the truth and the life.

Recently I started on a trip to Florida to see my sick sister, Hattie Linn. I went by way of Baltimore, to visit Elder Joshua Rowe, and from there with him to Washington. I am glad that I visited those two churches. On my way I became very sick, and was not able to talk to the church in Baltimore, but in Washington spoke about twenty minutes, and the members seemed very glad of it. As I was still sick, I went to the doctor's for him to give me a course of medicine. He was like a father to me, and took me in. Monday and Tuesday were happy days to me; at least part of the time I was enabled to rejoice in my dear Savior. O how beautiful did the Scriptures seem to me, and I lay in my room thanking the dear Savior for his goodness to me. That evening I began to sink very low. My pulse ran from one hundred to one hundred and sixty a minute, and my temperature from one hundred and one to one hundred and four. By that time the doctor and his son, who is also a physician, became alarmed, and called in another physician. They examined me, and said that I could not live without an operation, so they took me to a hospital and performed an operation. They found a ruptured appendix and abscesses on the kidney and lung. I have not given all the details, as it would take up too much time and space. When they went to give the anæsthetic I realized it was death or life, and asked the Lord to be with me. I did not know very much after that for about twelve hours. I am now at home again. It seemed to me that the Lord gave me strength to bear my afflictions with patience. I felt reconciled to God's will, and felt as though I was willing to die if it were his will for me to go, and I said, Not my will, but thine, be done. But God spared my life. O how good he has been to me. His mercies endure forever.

But I will close, for it would take up too much space to tell all I would like to. I hope that I have written for the good of the cause. O let us love one another. I love, as I hope, peace among the Baptists. Let brotherly love continue.

Your unworthy brother,

JAMES W. LINN.

[WE are sorry indeed to read of our brother's affliction, but rejoice that he

was brought through it, and that he has been raised up to health again through the mercy of God. In such afflictions we learn how to sympathize with others who are afflicted.—C.]

TORONTO, Ont., August 3, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will ask you to again change my address from 320 Royce Ave., to 100 Wright Ave., Toronto, Ont., and I have a desire to add a few lines to the dear kindred in Christ. Having moved from our former place of abode at Alvinston, now over a year ago, I have not been able to meet with the saints in their solemn assemblies during that space of time, which has never been the case to my recollection since my baptism, now nearly thirteen years ago, and seldom if ever in the past twenty-five years. While there it was usually granted me to attend the meetings three, four and five times a year, and occasionally I would be favored with a visit from some of the brethren. Since coming here I have met a few who understand our language. One dear sister made my heart glad by hunting me up, having seen my address in the SIGNS, and our words surely flowed together like two drops of water. Those who have the privilege of attending the meetings can hardly imagine the dreariness of life without them. God alone knows how my heart yearns at times to again mingle with the saints in praises to our heavenly King, yet I do try to pray to him to reconcile me to his will, and to make my duty plain before me. When reading many of the communications in your paper I have had a strong desire to write and tell the writers how they comforted me and built me up in the most holy faith. Sister Ella Davis is now in my mind as one who is deprived of former privileges and who has written out of the abundance of her heart. I felt I wanted to say to her, Write on. There are others I might mention, but space forbids. They are all good, but especially so when they meet your present condition of mind. Mine has surely been a strange condition for some time. I feel the Lord does surely bless me above what I could ask or think; his goodness is ever before me. He is kind and ever gracious, but I mourn my coldness, barrenness and unfruitfulness. The question arises in my mind, Have I been lulled to sleep? If so, it is a troubled sleep, for I feel restless and uneasy. I feel unfit for the world, for it seems but vanity. I feel that he who is so blessed as to have fellowship with God is spoiled for this world; yet while here there must be a place for us to fill. O if I could but acknowledge him in all my ways, and he would direct my steps, but I must confess my utter helplessness to do the good that I would. Sister McKinney has well expressed it, in saying the desire to serve the Lord is just as strong as the will of the flesh to do evil continually.

I would love to say more, but cannot command language to express what is felt within. Pardon my imperfections, and will some of you, if your heart be inclined, write to one who feels lonely for the company of saints and craves their fellowship? Do with this as seems best to you, also with the letter I inclose; it has comforted me much. May God's blessing attend you.

Yours very unworthily,

(MRS.) W. C. YOUNG.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., March 6, 1912.

MRS. W. C. YOUNG—MY PRECIOUS SISTER IN CHRIST:—You little know what joy and comfort your words of love and sympathy gave me, who feels to be

the least of all saints; but, dear sister, if I and all the dear children of the true and living God could only throw away that reserve which keeps us so distant from each other, and pour forth the words of love and gladness of heart which are so strengthening and encouraging to the weary, heartsore, sinsick ones, we could comfort one another. It is the new commandment which Christ, our precious Savior, gave to his loved ones just before he left them, to love one another. Then in his name why should we be ashamed to let our love flow out, when we know it is so comforting and is acceptable in his sight? It is a sore trial indeed to starve for want of food for the nourishment of our natural body, but O let that body die, and give me that food which is sweeter than honey in the honeycomb for the strengthening of the inner man, and for this I bow the knee unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named. O that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit, that Christ may dwell in your heart by faith, that ye be rooted and grounded in love, and be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the length, breadth and depth of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, and be filled with the fullness of God. And unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, be glory in the church throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. The fifteenth verse of the third chapter of Paul's letter to the brethren at Ephesus seems to be in my mind this morning, and I feel sure that God directed your mind and pen to write me, who, while I am not worthy to receive such missives of love, am surely strengthened and built up by them. As to my letters giving comfort to you or any of God's dear little ones, I do not see how it can be possible, for they are full of complaints of trials which I cannot bear alone, so tell them, for the sympathy I hope to receive from those I do love, if my sinful heart deceives me not. I know I deserve all, and even more affliction than is sent me, for you do not know, dear sister, how disobedient I have always been, while his love and protecting care have been over me. I feel that I have gone further into sin and disobedience than any one ever did, and it is only through his tender mercy that I have not been utterly cast off. O if I could only live over my unprofitable life, and live it all in his service, what a joy it would be to me; but there is only the husk left, I am receiving my just reward, and that tempered with love and mercy, which makes me weep and mourn and long to go home, where I will be with Jesus, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. That is our hope, that we will all meet there, without the loss of one, for if even one little lamb were left out, the number would be incomplete. Christ said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." O what a glorious time that will be. We shall have no more fear of death, hell or the grave, for our Priest and King has overcome them for us, and there only remains joy for his children. Sorrow and sighing will be done away, and we will receive the full fruition of our hope. O is it not enough, dear sister, to comfort our hearts and satisfy us? When we reach the city

of our solemnities, our quiet habitation, we shall have this joy unspeakable and everlasting. We cannot describe or imagine it, for "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Sister Young, it seems a strange coincidence that you should have been comforted by my letters in the dear old SIGNS, when I have felt that the editors only published them through forbearance toward me. I have esteemed your letters much, for they all seem so filled with the spirit of christian love and humility that I have many times wished that I could tell you how they built me up, and with many others have I felt the same desire. O that I could only write something that would comfort them as they have me, but my leanness and unfitness have kept me from writing for publication. I seem to get worse instead of better, although I try, like David of old, to go forth in the strength of Israel's God. I still talk for the little church here, (I am ashamed to call it preaching) but have tried several times to give it up and they will not let me. It seems to me it is with them as with the editors of the SIGNS, only through forbearance. If it is of the Lord, he will prosper us, but I surely feel dumb and blind, so if there is any good it is of the Lord.

I am able to be around and ride out some, but am not able to do any work. I was hurt again, causing the rupture in my heart (called aneurism) to enlarge, and the doctors say I must not try to do any work, or it will prove fatal. I have not strength enough to do even the little things needed. My wife is now in the hospital, having been operated on Feb. 15th for cancer. Pray for me. May the blessing of God rest upon you.

Your unworthy brother, in hope of eternal life through Christ,

DAVIS BURCH.

PICNIC, Ky., June 15, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—There has never been a time since I first realized anything but that I felt the need of mercy, but never could feel that the power of money or of man was strong enough to save any one. I studied a great deal about religion, thinking I would work myself into favor with God some day, for all I ever heard taught was law religion, which I could not trust in, but did not know that the gospel was preached without money and without price. When I was about fifteen years old I attended a large meeting with the intention of seeking religion; but with all the things told to frighten people I never found this so-called religion. I often heard people say, Just give yourself to God and give up the world, but I did not have the power to do that. So I went on as before, and after I was married we were with my dear old father-in-law, and it came about that a Predestinarian Baptist preached at our home, and it was then I saw myself a vile sinner in the sight of God. I tried to beg for mercy, but the door seemed closed, and there was no help for me. I thought I had only a short time to live, and what would become of me if I died in my sins? I was sure I would go straight to that burning hell they talked of so much. This condition lasted a long time, and I cannot tell the many trials and the suffering I endured, but I wanted to keep it all concealed. Something seemed to say to me finally that when Christ ascended up on high he led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men. Then the words came with comfort: The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want, and I was

made to rejoice that salvation is of the Lord, and not of man, and I hope to be ever found trying to give to God all praise and honor, to whom all belong. I do rejoice when I can hear the gospel of Christ preached, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. This law religion contains no comfort, for we can have no confidence in the flesh, and we get from record and experience that there is none that doeth good, no, not one. So we know that our own righteousness is but filthy rags, and we know we are saved only by grace through Jesus Christ, who is our life, our resurrection, our all.

Yours in hope,

SALLIE ANN PATTERSON.

FORT SCOTT, Kansas, August 23, 1913.

MY DEAR BROTHER KER:—With this you will receive a letter I received from brother T. R. Pittman, answering my request for his views on Ephesians iv. 5. As there have been others who have written upon the same subject in the SIGNS some time this year, this communication, written as it is in such a mild, though firm manner, knowing, as he says, his conclusions may not all be in harmony with those of many of our brethren, after reading it, if in your judgment there would be no objection, I would like to see it published in the SIGNS. He has given his permission. I wish to say, though we see brethren differ as to what baptism is referred to in Ephesians iv. 5, I fear they have not made themselves clear as to what they believe constitutes scriptural water baptism with us as order-loving and God-fearing people. We love a church that is in order; they will see that their minister is in order; the mode is as we administer it, and the subject is one the church believes a suitable subject. There is no legal water baptism short of this, and do any of our people believe in any repeating?

In hope, your brother,

M. B. WEEDON.

EPHESIANS IV. 5.

"ONE Lord, one faith, one baptism."

DEAR BROTHER:—I shall now attempt to write you, as you suggested in your last letter, some of my thoughts upon the above Scripture. My conclusions may not all be in harmony with many of our brethren, but my earnest desire is, when I write or speak, to adhere to what I feel the Scriptures teach. "Preach the word," should be the incentive of every gospel minister, regardless of the opinions of men. Men are mutable, the truth is unchangeable.

"One Lord, one faith, one baptism," is presented by the apostle as a succinct summing up of his arguments and deductions embraced in the preceding chapters of this wonderful book.

"One Lord." The third verse of the first chapter expresses the authority and power of God as Father in his relation to the saints or the church in its concrete form: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Then he follows with the declaration of the import of those blessings: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world," &c., "having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." The will or choice of sinful man had no support in the mind of Paul, yet the great religious world predicates the faith of all men upon the liberty of the will to accept or reject the atoning sacrifice of

Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It rejects the truth that God hath made us (the saints) accepted in the Beloved. "I am the Lord; and beside me there is no Savior." It is so popular in the world to hear religionists making elaborate plans, supported with abundant money, to save mankind from eternal condemnation. "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." They do not understand that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth; they do not comprehend that it is God that justifieth; it is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again. In the opening of the second chapter it is clearly shown how those chosen, predestinated ones are brought to God as their Savior. "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him."

"You who were dead in trespasses and sin." This is a clear statement of the condition of every man born into the natural world. They are endowed with natural life, and all are appointed unto death, and return to the dust from whence they came. They walk according to the course of this world, the laws of nature, according to the prince and power (sin) of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. There is no power of relief within that man appointed unto death; natural remedy will not reach the malady. There is a perfect remedy. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin [death] of the world." "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in."—Psalms xxiv. 9. Paul vividly understood the remedy, and cheerfully gives it to penitent sinners. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)." Then in this quickened one sin revived, and for the first time he felt its terrible power. He with trembling fear, like Paul, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Realizing his lost condition, he humbly begs for mercy. In the depths of his distress there is given to him the blessed theme of the text: "One faith." By it he is enabled to cry, "Abba, Father," and made in a spiritual understanding to lay hold upon the hope set before him. Faith is the shield of defence to turn away all the fiery darts of the wicked. Therefore being justified by faith, he has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Then, following the quickening power of God and faith in him, he receives the last and glorious gift: "one baptism," which I understand to mean "the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." I do not feel that "one baptism" has reference to water baptism, as applied as an ordinance of the church, but that spiritual baptism bestowed by Jesus Christ, to wash away forever the sin of condemnation. The baptism of fire and the Spirit forever and completely appeases the wrath of God and assures the recipients immortality, eternal life, when Christ comes the second time without sin unto salvation. One Lord, the Savior, one faith, the gift of God to the believer, one baptism, the spiritual washing away of sin.

I do not find that Paul treated upon the subject of water baptism in the book of Ephesians. In all his epistles he alludes but a few times to the mode of baptism. He did not seem to dwell much upon that subject. The command for baptism was received from Christ himself, and the command and the mode were so clearly understood that it was never a subject of controversy. Paul declared: "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel," &c. He baptized but few. He never shunned to declare and defend at all times the one baptism of the Holy Spirit, a baptism wholly wrought by the eternal Father through Jesus Christ the Lord.

"One Lord, one faith, one baptism," is the foundation upon which the church of the living God is builded. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," the precious name that embraces all that is centered in the gracious words of the text. Every true believer is the recipient of all the graces embraced in those three words; he is then entitled to the ordinance of water baptism. The baptism of the Spirit destroys the power and effect of sin and appeases the wrath of God and assures the believer immortality, eternal life, when Christ the Savior comes the second time without sin unto salvation. "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God."

Dear brother, I submit these thoughts for your consideration.

T. R. PITTMAN.

HAVANA, Kansas, August 14, 1913.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Aug. 3, 1913.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—For a long time I have had a great desire to pen you a few lines, but have not been permitted to do so, but this morning the desire is so strong that I feel to make an attempt, hoping that the ever-guiding Hand will guide my pen, and may it be to the comfort of the little ones. Many times have different ones desired me to write, but no one would have had much comfort from it if written in my own strength, for I am vile, "a worm, and no man." I cannot speak the things that I would, nor keep from doing the things that I would not. I am as weak as that. O that I could love the heavenly Father more and serve him better. I look and see that he has guided me and kept me all my days, and I see how great a debtor I am to him. How rich is the thought that Jesus paid the debt, and O that I might have praise and thankfulness to the Father for his great mercy, but I seem so far from thankfulness. I was real sick a short time ago, and I thought I would be very thankful if I were permitted to get over the attack; but I afterwards questioned it, and it seemed to me it was gladness that I was not called to suffer so much, and could wait on my family. So my days go; I am a real mystery to myself. If I love as I have professed to, why am I at times so cold and lifeless and so indifferent to the better things? Why do I question so often if I know anything about Christ and him crucified? How do I see any difference in the Old School Baptists from other professed religionists? Why do I when I go to meeting go so far when it is such a trip, and pass by other places so much nearer? I find there is a power that holds me, and my conscience would not permit me to go. What! go where I would have to work my way? Ah, puny is my arm, and I would sink. All I can do is to beg for mercy and desire to be kept from falling; I have no strength of my own.

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

I have enjoyed the SIGNS very much for a few weeks, and the number before the last was truly rich. Brother Redd's letter was much to me, also sister Allison's. I thought, Now if could only write like that. Then came the thought of envy, and I desire to be kept from it. Often when I read these letters from the dear ones who are far from a church (visible) I feel the blessing to be hungry is so rich. They pick no flaws in what they hear, they condemn no language in the way it is spoken, they make no remarks about the manner of its delivery, but just digest every word that has a "thus saith the Lord," and praise God from whom all blessings flow. How rich a feast they have; to them all is good and precious. Then can they gather and feed and rejoice and love, and not see any imperfections, and they will not make a mountain out of a molehill. As I write these lines they seem to be so plain, but I do not believe one reader of them (should they be printed) will feel that he is hurt more than I feel to be as I pen them. O Father of all mercies, how glad I am that thou knowest me altogether. Yes, thou art One who cannot be deceived. Thou knowest the thoughts and intents of the heart. Yes, thou knowest that for a long time I have desired to be kept from so many evils, and it has not been granted me. But somehow this morning I feel different, and I am given for a little time to see that I have had some of these desires granted me for a little season. I have been given compassion and sympathy, and a desire that all his followers may lose the coldness that has seemed to creep among them, and be clothed with love one for another, and leave all contentious disputings aside, and bear with each other in gentleness and long-suffering, each esteeming others better than themselves. To the afflicted I do desire that the Father will in his own time show his smiling face. How true it is that we cannot see the Father's face and live, but as he passes by we behold his back parts. When I read brother Yard's letter in the last SIGNS I was made to think of this passage. If brother Will had seen all this coming it seems to me he could not have lived, but when he was being brought out from its terror and distress he beheld the will of the Father, and could bless his holy name, feeling that the Lord is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. Is not this beholding his back parts, when one can look out of such affliction and give the Father all the glory, and praise his holy name? For those who are languishing on beds of sickness my prayer is, May the Father be near to comfort and ease your pain and distress, and may you be given faith and trust in his mercy. How very, very dependent we are upon him for all things. We are as helpless as we can be; of ourselves we are nothing, but in him all strength dwells, and he gives to us as is his pleasure.

Now I have used many words, but have said little, and very different from what I desired to. May we all be made submissive to God's will.

MARY HILL TERRY.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1913.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JOHN XV. 22.

BROTHER J. H. McDonald, of Puyallup, Wash., has requested some thoughts upon the words of the Savior, recorded in John xv. 22: "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin." It has been a pleasure to us these many years to speak or write concerning the things that are written in the Scriptures. The one thing that has more often than any other thing marred our enjoyment in this has been our want of understanding and comprehension of what they contain, yet if we cannot reap the great harvest in this gospel field, it is a great blessing to gather the gleanings which our blessed Lord commands the reapers to let fall on purpose for us, and we feel willing to write here such thoughts as we have in reply to the request of our brother. When such requests come to us we nearly always feel sure that the writers themselves have far greater travel of mind about the text or subject that they name than we are given to have, yet we do not feel excused by reason of this from responding when we can, as best we may, and often it has pleased God to give to us some satisfactory thoughts concerning a text at the time when such requests came to us, upon which we had not thought before or which before had been hidden from us.

First, we desire to call attention to the fact that the dear Redeemer could not have intended in these words to say that those of whom he spoke had never been sinners until he had come and had spoken to them. Surely there need not be much argument with regard to this. The minds of all who have come to know the grace of God through Christ in the pardon of their sins, know that all men are by nature sinners. The words of Isaiah have often been in our mind, as they bear upon this one great and awful truth that all men are, by nature as well as by practice, sinners. As recorded in the sixth chapter of his prophecy, when he had seen the glory of God, and had heard the thrice repeated testimony of the seraphim to his holiness, he said, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." The same vision of God and of his holiness that convinced him of his own sin also convinced him of the sin of all His people. Not only did he see that his own lips were unclean, but he saw that the lips of all the people were also unclean. He was a sinner, and so were they all sinners, and the general testimony of the Bible is that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. The testimony of Paul was, "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." We do not need to multiply testimony here, we desired to simply call attention to the fact that the dear Redeemer could not have meant to deny this one great truth that all men are sinners. Let us also remember, as perhaps throwing some light upon the Savior's words, that sin and death were in the world before the

law of God was given upon Sinai. But by the law was "the knowledge of sin." After the law was given, men had no covering, no cloak for their sins; sin was in the world; sin dwelt in the hearts and was made manifest in the lives of all mankind before the law, but men walked in blindness, and were without the knowledge of sin until the law came. In a deeper and more heartfelt sense, Paul afterward, in declaring his own experience, said, "I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." That is, as his language must signify, before the law came to his conscience he was at ease; he thought that he was righteous; his conscience had no power to convince him of sin, and he believed himself to be in the favor of God; but when the commandment was applied to his conscience by the power of the Holy Spirit of God he was awakened out of this vain satisfaction with himself, and saw himself the chief of sinners ever afterward, and that his righteousness was but loss and dross and dung before the Lord, and that the hopes which he had built upon his righteousness were vain. By the coming of the law to his conscience he obtained the knowledge of his own sin, and as a consequence he died, for death is by sin, and wherever sin is revealed to one in his own heart that one knows that death is his portion forever. So Paul said, "I died," meaning that all his former hopes had now come to naught, and instead of being able to claim eternal life because of his righteousness, only eternal punishment was his portion. It seems to us clear that it was in this sense that Paul died when the law came to him. All that was included in and that pertained to the law-covenant was calculated to declare the sin of men and their condemnation. There is not one thing in all the ritual law of Israel but that declares that men are sinners, but until the Holy Spirit enlightened their hearts and opened the eyes of their understanding this truth did not come to them. On the contrary, the blinded people sought to build up for themselves a righteousness by the deeds of the very law which declared that man had no righteousness in himself, and could attain to none by his own works. Paul had himself been thus blinded, but now through the light of the Holy Spirit he saw the folly of this way, and so was brought to know that salvation is of the Lord, while all man's works condemn him. It is not our works of unrighteousness that are but "filthy rags," but all our righteousnesses. By works of unrighteousness the whole body is defiled, and from the head to the feet all are wounds and bruises and putrefying sores. But the works of righteousness by which a sinner strives to cover the vileness of the whole body are themselves no better; they are but rags. They are not even clean rags, but filthy rags. This the law, when applied by the Spirit, reveals to us. If the righteousness of the law convinces of sin, or gives the knowledge of sin, how much more must the words of him whose words are spirit and life, when they come to our consciences, convince of sin. After the ascension of the blessed Lord the Holy Spirit came, and the dear Savior said that a portion of his work was to take of the things of Jesus and show them unto us, and among the things of Jesus were his words, therefore the Savior could well say again that the work of the Holy Spirit should be to convince the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. That which could appear but dimly under the moonlight dispensation of the law, now under the

dispensation of the gospel, when it is no longer night, but day, appears standing out in full relief. The law truly, as is testified, gave knowledge of sin, but the life of the dear Redeemer and his words gave a still clearer knowledge of sin. The law condemned sin, besides revealing it, but the life and testimony of Jesus much more condemned sin in the flesh. The law upon tables of stone forbade sin, which yet men still committed, and which the law had no power to save men from, but in the person and life of our blessed Jesus there was the perfect fulfillment of the law, for he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, and thus he condemned sin in the flesh, as it is written. It is true that among men, in our ordinary life together as neighbors and citizens, one upright man, who is recognized as beyond doing the mean things that thousands of other men do, is itself a rebuke of sin, stronger and more weighty in the minds of men than any outward commandment can be. Infinitely beyond what the life of any man can be in this respect, the perfect life of Jesus stands forth and condemns sin. If by the law is the knowledge of sin, when that law is applied as it was to Paul when the commandment came to him, much more does the revelation of Jesus to our hearts as he who has fulfilled all the law and who has given himself for us, dying that we might be redeemed and live, bring the knowledge of sin, so that henceforth sin becomes to the believer more and more sinful. As the light of the Spirit shines in the heart, the hidden things within, the sin of our nature, come out to the light, and so every believer comes into the experience recorded by Paul, embraced in the words, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Sin becomes more and more sinful, the more the light of the Spirit shines in the heart, and the words of Jesus as they come to be illumined through the Spirit, while they show us the mercy and grace that saves, also show the depth of that pit of miry clay from which we are saved. So it comes to pass that the soul which praises Jesus in the highest, also abases itself to the lowest pit and thus by the application of his words of spirit and life, after awhile the soul comes to say just this, I am a sinner saved by grace. All the way along, from the time when the blessed Lord takes a dealing with the soul to the end of this mortal life, we grow out of "all of self, and none of Christ," into "none of self, and all of Christ," and this knowledge is wrought in the soul by that light which shines upon the path of the just more and more to the perfect day. In that light the hidden things of dishonesty in us are revealed.

It appears to us that all the preceding thoughts are involved in the language of the text. As we said at the beginning, the text does not mean that all men are not sinners, nor that those of whom Jesus spoke were not from their birth sinners, but simply that his words spoken to them and his works wrought among them (verse 24) had made their sinful nature, their innate opposition to God and godliness, more clearly manifest than it had ever been before. The clearer the light of God's righteousness shined forth in his words and works the more plainly were their evil natures and works made manifest, even as the spots upon a gar ment grow more and more clear to view when the light of day shines upon them. It appears to us that the closing expression of the text shuts us up to this conclusion, as to the meaning of the first clause: "But now they have no cloak for

their sins." That is, they have no excuse, no covering, for their sin. In Romans i. 20, the apostle uses the same word concerning the sin and condemnation of both Jews and Gentiles; he declares the wrath of God against all sin to have been revealed, and against all sinners as well, saying in verse nineteen that this is because that which may be known of God is manifest in them. "For," he says, "God hath shewed it unto them." Then in verse twenty he says, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." This is the same thought that is embraced in the word "cloak" in the text. Notice here is no reference to the work of the Spirit of God in the heart of any man, but simply such a revelation of God as his works in nature and providence give; just such as the Jews themselves possessed, and just such as the Gentiles possessed. This was not knowledge of God wrought by the Spirit in the heart through the revelation of Jesus Christ, but it was just such knowledge as the natural Jews possessed under the old covenant. They believed in one God, and after many years of discipline came to reject all idols of wood and stone. It is clear that this is not spiritual knowledge of God, but only such as the natural mind can attain to. Even devils fear and tremble through the knowledge they have of the Divine Being, and devils recognized the Son of God when he cast them out of men in the days of his flesh. Now if the light of God's creation, which made manifest his eternal power and Godhead, took away from all men under the old covenant all excuse for their sin, is it too much to say that the still clearer light of holiness manifest in the words and works of the Son of God would still more effectually remove the cloak from them, so that their sin should stand out in all its horrible deformity, and so that the disposition of man should appear as it is, irreconcilably opposed to God and his righteousness? Men in all former ages were just as much dead to God and dead in sin as were the men of that generation, but now this depravity was brought out into the clear light of day through the revelation of the perfect Savior. The light of the moon and stars at night will give us some dim knowledge of the things around us, but this will appear to be relatively no knowledge at all, compared to the revelation of the sunlight. It appears to us that it is in this sense alone that they would not have had sin had the blessed Jesus not spoken to them and wrought his works of righteousness among them.

May the Lord add to our knowledge of ourselves and of him; of ourselves as sinners, and of him as our perfect righteousness. C.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER C. K. HAINES has changed his address from Princeton, Ky., to Lakeland, Fla., and desires his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. B. Bird, Sept. 3rd, 1913, at his home, Rell Farley and Liddie D. Smith, of Pike Co., Ky.

By Elder A. B. Francis, at his residence, Delmar, Del., Sept. 4th, 1913, Joshua E. File, of Los Angeles, Cal., and Miss Anna Isabel, daughter of the officiating minister.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at his residence in Halcottsville, N. Y., Sept. 9th, 1913, Nelson J. Roberts and Katherine Mathews, both of Vega, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

George W. Smith, a highly respected citizen, one of the early settlers in Pocahontas County, passed peacefully away after a lingering illness of bronchial trouble at his home in Albert City, Iowa, May 30th, 1913, aged 63 years, 5 months and 4 days, and was buried in the cemetery near his old home Sunday afternoon. The deceased was born near Decatur, Macon Co., Ill., Oct. 26th, 1849, the son of Dr. John G. H. and Martha Smith, being the third child of a family of eight children, three of whom passed the river in early life; the other four who survive him are A. J. Smith, of Webster, Wis., Mrs. Mattie Wall, of Columbus, Nebr., Mrs. Sarah Goodrich, of Bement, Ill., and Henry Smith, of Carey, Kansas. He was married to Annie Elizabeth Kemp, August 13th, 1872. To that union six children were born: William H., who died in infancy, Charles G., Edward E., James and Jennie, and Benjamin F., who also died in infancy. Four grandchildren and two nephews, Dick and Robert, who made their home with the Smith family until their marriage, are left, with his devoted companion, to mourn him. They moved from Illinois in 1884, settling near Laurens, where he resided until last fall, when on account of failing health they moved to Albert City, where his death occurred. Mr. Smith was a man of genial, even temperament, giving his time to his home and family, having a noble christian character, one who truly loved God and his Savior. In the year 1894 he, with his wife, joined the Otto Creek Baptist Church, and remained a faithful member until death. His loving-kindness leaves an aching void in many hearts, but what is our loss is his eternal gain. During his last illness, extending through nearly two years, he was an intense sufferer, yet bore all with patience and fortitude, returning a cheerful smile for the labors and efforts of the devoted wife and children, who so tenderly cared for him.

A large concourse of friends, neighbors and relatives attended the obsequies. His pastor, Elder G. J. Jones, of Knoxville, Iowa, preached the funeral sermon. The funeral was held in the English meetinghouse, in Albert City.

Mrs. N. C. Brizendine, aged 77 years, 3 months and 21 days, died at her home in Washington County, Idaho, near Weiser, after a two weeks illness, from which she suffered intensely, but bore her suffering with patience and manifested great faith and hope in her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. She was born in Graves Co., Ky., and was the daughter of Berry and Barbara Barton, of Kentucky. She professed a hope in Christ when young, and joined the Old School Baptists in Henry Co., Tenn., and was baptized by Elder T. L. Daniel, and lived a faithful and devoted member until death. She loved the doctrine of predestination and election, and loved the dear brethren and sisters, and her door was always open to the dear people of God. She was married when seventeen years old to James L. Wells, and five children were born to them. In the year 1862 her husband died, leaving her with four small children to battle her way through the dreary years of that cruel war, and with loving care and perseverance she toiled and maintained her little ones and kept them all together. In the year 1868 she was married to T. J. Brizendine, and to them were born four children, two preceding her in death. They lived in Henry Co., Tenn., until 1878, then moved to Graves Co., Ky., then in 1900 they moved to Idaho. She leaves a husband and five children to mourn her death: G. H. and John L. Wells, of Texas, G. H. and Nanly Brizendine and Mrs. Etta Lasiter, all of Weiser, Idaho.

Written by her daughter,

ETTA LASITER.

W. F. Richey, our beloved brother, was born Sept. 25th, 1835, and was married to Mary E. Powell in September, 1859, to which union were born seven children, five of whom survive him, one dying in infancy and one at the age of six years. His wife, who was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, and always true to the cause, preceded him to the grave ten years. He and sister Richey joined the Primitive Baptist Church in the State of Mississippi, and afterwards moved to Arkansas, where he stayed several years, then moved to Freestone County, Texas, in the year 1890. They lived lives of honor and devotion to the Master's cause. Brother Richey was honorable in every walk of life, and so far as we know died without an enemy. The writer was with him in his last illness, and he frequently expressed his willingness and even his anxiety to die and be with Christ. In his last moments he looked into my eyes and said, "I am dying, good-by," and reached out his feeble hand, which I clasped in my own and bade him a sad farewell. We believe that his spirit has gone to God who gave it, there to enjoy sweet peace and eternal rest, where no trouble shall ever enter.

W. O. BEENE,

FREESTONE, Texas.

MEETINGS.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will, according to appointment, meet with the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, Ulster Co., N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday in October (1st and 2nd), 1913. Those coming by rail will stop at Ashokan station, viz., U. & D. R. R. Ample provisions are already planned for all who feel to trust in the Lord to meet with us and enjoy the blessing that he is pleased to bestow upon us while together in fellowship of the gospel of Christ our Savior.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Lexington, N. Y., has appointed a yearly or two days meeting to be held with the church in Lexington, N. Y., the first Saturday and Sunday in October (4th and 5th), 1913. A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth as believed by Old School Baptists.

FLETCHER MACKEY, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Old School or Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 10th, 11th and 12th, 1913. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Those coming by railroad either east or west will come on the Pennsylvania R. R. to Mount Union on Thursday and take the East Broadtop Railroad to Three Springs, where they will be met and cared for. It is only about two miles to place of meeting. Trains leave Mount Union at 10 a. m. and 4 p. m. We would like to see a good turnout, as it is the most convenient point of any church in our association.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT, Pastor.

THE Soldier Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, with the church at Mt. Pleasant, Graves Co., Ky., commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1913, and continuing three days. All Old School Baptists are cordially invited to attend. Those coming by rail from the north or east on the I. C. will be met at Florence station, nine miles south of Paducah, on Thursday evening at 4:30, and also Friday morning at 7:30. Those coming from the south will be met at Boaz, ten miles north of Mayfield, Ky. Those coming on the N. C. & St. L. from Paris, Tenn., via Murray and Benton, will be met at Oak station, six miles from the church where the association is to be held. Mt. Pleasant Church is located midway between Paducah and Mayfield, on the main Paducah and Mayfield road. Come, brethren, all who have a mind to do so.

Done by order of the church at Mt. Pleasant.

G. P. BOAZ.

THE New Harmony Association of Predestinarian Baptists will convene with Willow Springs Church, Texas, beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1913. Conveyance will be at Sipe Springs on Thursday for all who have a mind to come. Sipe Springs is on the branch line of the T. C. R. R. from Deleon to Crossplains. A hearty welcome is extended to brethren of like precious faith.

S. N. STEPHENS, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa, N. Y., has appointed the second Saturday and Sunday in October (11th and 12th), 1913, to hold its yearly meeting, and extends a cordial invitation to lovers of the truth to meet with us, especially ministering brethren. We hope the Lord will put it into your hearts to visit us.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

A yearly meeting will be held with the church at Snow Hill, Md., on the second Sunday in October, (12th) 1913. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

J. H. TRUITT, Church Clerk.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 15th, 16th and 17th, 1913. Trains will be met at Herndon, three miles from the meeting-place, on the line of the W. & O. D. Ry., Tuesday afternoon and evening before the meeting, and Wednesday morning. Frequent electric trains for Herndon leave Thirty-sixth and M Sts., Washington, D. C. To reach this terminus of the electric road, those coming into Washington at the Union Station will take green car marked Georgetown in front of the depot and transfer therefrom to the Old Dominion line at Thirty-sixth and M Sts., where car direct to Herndon is taken. We hope to see a goodly number of our visiting brethren with us at this meeting, and cordially invite all ministering and other brethren who can, to assemble with us at the above appointed time.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

THE Old School Baptist Church in Wilmington, Del., expects, if the Lord so wills, to hold its yearly meeting in its new house on Jefferson St., between Thirteenth and Fourteenth Sts., on the third Sunday in October, and Saturday preceding, to commence at 2 p. m. on Saturday. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

By order of the church.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Association of Primitive Baptists is appointed to meet with the church at Salisbury, Md., October 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1913. All lovers of the

truth are cordially invited. Those coming from the north take train that leaves Broad St. station, Philadelphia, at 3 p. m., and Wilmington at 3:44 p. m. Tuesday, 21st. From Baltimore, Claiborne boat leaves Pier 8, Light St. wharf, about 4 p. m. via Claiborne, or boat for Salisbury (all water route) leaves Pier 1, Pratt St. wharf, 5 p. m., 21st. Tickets for Salisbury; get excursion tickets. Those from Philadelphia and Wilmington can get ten day excursion tickets to Delmar. Those coming from the south take train leaving Cape Charles at 11:20 a. m. Tuesday, arriving at Salisbury 3:10 p. m.

GEO. W. MEZICK, Church Clerk.

THERE is a two days meeting appointed at Cammal, Pa., the fourth Sunday in October and Saturday before (25th and 26th). All lovers of the truth will be welcome.

By order of the church.

WM. M. HART.

THE Second Church of Roxbury will hold a two days meeting, the Lord willing, at the yellow meetinghouse, near Roxbury village, Nov. 8th and 9th, 1913. Trains will be met at Roxbury Friday p. m. and Saturday a. m. A cordial invitation is extended all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

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JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 81. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1913. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JOB XXVI. 14.

"Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?"

In attempting to write upon a passage of Scripture I always feel as though I have attempted a great undertaking, and wonder if the desire to write is from above. If it be not from above, all that I write will be of no use to any one, and wasting time. One mind suggests that I stop writing, because what I write is of no use to any one; but these words came to my mind under rather peculiar circumstances. To-day has been a very stormy one; during the morning we had a thunder storm, and one peal of thunder seemed to shake the earth, there was a heavy jar, and immediately these words came into my mind: "But the thunder of his power who can understand?" In this chapter Job is setting forth, or making known to Bildad, the greatness of God, but he cannot tell how great the Lord is; no one knows; no one knows anything about the wonderful works of our Lord until the Lord reveals something of his greatness. Most of us have read during our school days that the earth turns or rotates upon its axis, &c., but this is as far as we can go (naturally). The natural mind cannot know anything about the power that causes this revolution; no man by searching can find out God. Well, but, some one might say, cannot one who has been taught of the Lord teach this wisdom to another? I answer, No. They shall all be taught of the Lord, is the inspired word, and it is true. The book of Job is indeed an interesting book, because we have recorded there the dealings of the Lord with Job, of the sore troubles through which he passed and of the coming of his three friends to comfort him, and that they proved to be of no comfort to him, but instead were burdensome, and that the Lord in the end did deliver Job from his troubles. Our minds seem to inquire, Why was Job so afflicted? His three friends tried to make it appear to him that it was because of some secret sin, and of course prescribed a remedy. Now what do we see in this? Do we not see Job representing the gospel church, and his three friends representing legality? Job contended that the Lord had a right to afflict, and that it was just, and that he should receive evil as well as good at

the hand of the Lord, when his wife told him to curse God and die. There are some things which Job's three friends said to him that seem very near being the truth, when we merely consider them in the light of human reason, but when we are enabled by the Spirit to understand, we can readily see that they do not conform to the truth as it is in Jesus. It seems to me well to consider the words of Elihu, as recorded in the thirty-fourth chapter, verse five: "For Job hath said, I am righteous: and God hath taken away my judgment." Elihu is proving that if Job was righteous, as he had said, the Lord would not pervert judgment; he is showing that all the sufferings of Job were caused by wickedness, and he accuses Job of keeping company with wicked men, and with drinking up scorn as water, &c. Now what did Job mean when he said, "My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go"? I believe it was the Spirit speaking in him. Job was not referring to anything which he had done by his own works, but he was referring to the righteousness of Jesus; indeed, I believe it was the Spirit of Jesus speaking in him. Is there not just such a feeling in the hearts of the Lord's people to-day? They hold fast the righteousness of God, and will not let it go; they will not give this hope which they have in the finished and righteous works of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for any works of legality, and why? Because the Spirit has taught them that they are not saved by works, but by the grace and mercy of Jesus.

I am getting into a deep subject, but beautiful, and may the Spirit teach me to speak the truth. I perceive that there are those who would say that if this doctrine be true it permits one to do wickedly in this world, and that it is a dangerous doctrine, but let us look a little further into the matter. How does one come to believe this doctrine? I must speak experimentally, and we must consider man in his natural state understandeth only natural things, and the words of Jesus are very impressive when he told Nicodemus that he must be born again. Nicodemus could not understand how this could be. Man always has some kind of a religious notion, and the prevailing notion is that if we do the best we can that is all that is required; keep the ten commandments and all will be well. Such people are alive without the law just as Paul was, but what a difference when the light shines from heaven above the brightness of the noonday sun, and a voice accompanies the light; what effect does it have? We are told that Paul fell to the ground and said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? This is beautiful to meditate upon. Paul was zealous toward God, as he thought, when he was persecuting the church of Jesus Christ, but he was ignorant, for he confessed it after he obtained mercy. Instead of being saved by adhering to the mandates of the law, he finds that he will be forever lost because he violated the law of Christ. This is just the same experience of each individual whom Jesus has spoken to. Do you not remember, my brethren, when you were under the law, how that the law condemned you? how that you felt the law was just and good, but you were carnal, sold under sin, and how you tried to do that which was right in the sight of God, but you utterly failed, and that you sank in deep mire wherein there was no standing, and the harder you tried to get out the deeper you sank? This is true naturally; if one gets into the mire he must stay until some one comes to his rescue; so the

child of God must remain in the mire until One comes, and I will say, that One will come just at the right time; it may not be at the time one desires, but it will be at the right time, and this One will be our Lord and Savior, praise ye his name. Jesus comes and puts your feet upon a solid rock, and puts a new song in your mouth; you are now delivered from that horrible pit and miry clay, and have a feeling of gratitude to this One who has delivered you. It seems to me that you join in these words:

"All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all."

Why not crown him Lord of all, this lovely Jesus who feeds his flock like a shepherd? The above description of one in the mire is not fiction, it is not a picture, but a reality, as every heaven-born soul will testify. Do you want to continue in sin that grace may abound? I think I hear you say, No, but I am ashamed of everything I ever did against this lovely Jesus, and you still remember your sins, even though you are given an assurance at times that God for Christ's sake has forgiven you, and you will remember them as long as you live in the flesh. May it please Jesus to save us from delusion. The doctrine that one can continue in sin, and roll it as a sweet morsel under his tongue, and will at last be saved, is false, and prompted by the evil spirit, which is the devil, and such doctrine cannot be charged to the Old School Baptists, for there is no class of people under the sun that hates sin as the Old School Baptists do. I know, or I hope at least, that I hate sin. I am ashamed to be in good company, for I am so sinful and prone to evil. By good company I mean Old School Baptists.

I feel like mentioning the association at Delmar last fall; I cannot forget that meeting, indeed, I do not want to forget it. I must mention the names of Elders Durand, Chick, Poulson, Eubanks, Francis, Coulter, in fact all the ministers, but I had a peculiar feeling (some way I cannot just describe it) in looking upon the faces of the six mentioned, because they are well advanced in years, and I noticed how the Lord directed their minds, how they were enabled to present Jesus so beautifully. Surely they are fathers in Israel, and may those who are younger in years love them, for God is love. I cannot say this with too much emphasis.

Well, I have gotten away from the subject. "Lo, these are parts of his ways." Job tells us that hell is naked before him, (the Lord) and that he stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing, and he divideth the sea with his power. Wonderful indeed is the Almighty, hence these words:

"Eternal Power, whose high abode
Becomes the grandeur of a God;
Infinite lengths, beyond the bounds,
Where stars revolve their little rounds."

It is no wonder that one of old said, I am a worm, and no man. Many times for the last few years have I felt just this way, that man is nothing as compared with his Maker, and I have wondered why the Lord had respect unto man, but the answer it seems to me is in these words: "God is love." Surely he is love, and he has said, This people have I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise. Who is this people here spoken of that must show forth his praise? It is that chosen generation, that peculiar people spoken of in the Scriptures. We must notice that the Lord formed this people, and they are found in every nation, kindred and tribe under heaven; they shall come from the east and from

the west, from the north and the south, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God. These words are very positive, "they shall," no conditions or provisos. The word of the Lord does not return unto him void, for he said it shall not. So he doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou?

I am inclosing a few lines which came into my mind a short time ago when I was much cast down; they are yours to do with as you think best:

Help me, O Lord, to trust in thee,
And to thy promise may I flee;
Help me, O Lord, this truth to tell:
How thou didst conquer death and hell.

To Jesus may my thoughts arise,
To him who sits above the skies,
Hearing my praises and complaints,
Who is Lord of lords and king of saints.

If this letter is of any interest to the elect family you can publish it.

Yours in hope,

A. T. BENSON.

JULIAN, Cal., July 3, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I will try to write you a few lines, thanking you for your kindness in sending me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES so long free of charge, because I am not able to pay for it. I am now receiving a small old man's pension of a few dollars, enough to furnish me with writing material and medicine, for which I am very thankful. Now, dear editors and publishers, if you think me burdensome I will ask you to discontinue the paper, as I am getting so old that I cannot expect to be here much longer. I am in the sere and yellow leaf, in my ninety-third year, and am getting very feeble, like Jacob of old, I am leaning on my staff. Why God has ever suffered me to live so long is more than I can tell, unless it is on account of the black stripes due me; I know it is not for any good that I have ever done, for I know that I have been an unfaithful servant all my life. I questioned the call of my Master from darkness to light and from death unto life for sixty long years, thinking that I would get better, but was all the time getting worse. My burden was getting so heavy that I could bear it no longer, so I traveled all the way from Arizona to Lane County, Oregon, where I found a church of my choice, the church that Christ built upon the rock, and then I took up my cross and reported my case to the church, and was received, and baptized on the second Sunday in August, 1903, by Elder W. M. Gerard, in the full fellowship of the church, which I call my home in Christ. He is the true church, as he is the true Christ, and the only one there is. I only had the pleasure of remaining with my dear church one year, when I was called away to my old home in California, over twelve hundred miles distant. I do not recollect of not reporting to my church every month since I left it; that is a duty I think all church members owe to the church when they cannot attend. There is a church about a hundred miles from where I live: the Little Flock Church, at Riverside, California, with which I correspond. There are plenty of Missionaries here, but it seems that people of our faith are very scarce in these parts; it seems that God's little remnant is not popular in these days of progression. The popular denominations say that this little despised few will soon be a thing of the past, but they have stood for over nineteen hundred years, and still they stand. God has never been left without witnesses, and he never, no, never, will be.

Now, dear brethren, I am writing without glasses, and with the sight of but one eye, as I cannot see out of my left eye

enough to tell one letter from another, and I have to write with a pencil, as my hand is so unsteady. When I lack wisdom I ask of God, who giveth liberally. Without faith we can do nothing, and without light we can see nothing. When I want to write I always pray God to give me light, for we can do nothing of ourselves, and if we want to write anything to the edifying of his people we must ask of him. All the preaching I get that I can understand is through the SIGNS, and what comfort I get is from my Bible, and what writing I do is the pastime I have to while away my lonely hours. I am a little hard of hearing, so that makes it lonely for me since I lost my dear companion, over three years ago. As I said in the beginning, I do not know why God has not cut me off as a cumberer of the ground long ago, for I know that I have been a great sinner all my life, and if I am saved it is by grace, and grace alone, and but for the little hope I have that Christ died for me I would be the most miserable of all men. I know that if he died for me I shall be with him and shall see him as he is at the last, for he has said he will be with us at the last day.

Dear brethren, if you discontinue my SIGNS it will be all right with me. I have all my back numbers to refer to, and I know I have but a few more days to stay here, so pray for me in my loneliness, and excuse me for writing. I hope you will live long to publish the SIGNS, for what would the poor like me do without it? God be with us.

From an old worn out sinner in hope,
S. S. MILLER.

[WE are glad our aged brother has been comforted in his loneliness by the SIGNS, and we will gladly continue sending it to him.—ED.]

2 KINGS IV. 6.

"AND it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel: and he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed."

This passage is the history of a woman who was not only poor, but was in debt, so that her sons were in danger of being taken for bondmen to secure the obligation. It has pleased the Lord to present the church to our view as a woman, as the chosen and well beloved bride of the King's Son. Again, in her times of need, as a widow, as in this case; again, as one body, having many members. All the saints are one church, yet all have passed through individual experiences, and there is variety enough so that every christian experience is interesting, yet it is the same story of the work of the grace and goodness of God. Not only does every member of the church learn to know the warfare with sin, but each church has her own trials and deliverances, yet all have one faith, and are kept by the same almighty power; so these saintly women of old are representatives of the church in her various needs, trials and triumphs, and also of the individuals of which each church is composed. Jesus did not say to all the blind in Judea, Thou shalt see, but in every case where one was healed that one was spoken to personally, and each case was of a different trouble, so as to require different treatment, but all were in need, and there were no failures to cure when they cried personally to the Savior. One could not walk as he saw others walking; another could not see where to walk; another was leprous and could not go in the company of others, &c. In the Song we find the church spoken of as the fairest among women. In the New Testament we find women ministering to the Savior's needs, bathing

his feet with their tears and anointing him with very precious oil. John seems to be summing up all these figures in his wonderful vision of the church as redeemed and triumphant: "A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." This woman spoken of in the text then represents both individual trials and the church in times of need. The woman is moral and upright; it is not for wrongdoing that she is brought into a needy condition, but that the power of God may be made manifest and left on record for all time, to show that he is our strength, our spiritual food supply, rather than schools to supply preaching; such cannot give the oil of joy for mourning. The woman with her family feared and trusted the Lord, a time of poverty comes upon her and she finds herself in debt, without any resource within herself or her natural powers. Are they not all brought to view, and in their own sight, as hopelessly in debt, with no good thing to offer? Surely her cry is from her heart; the old prophet knows that cry is not for show. The cry of the sinner to God for relief has never needed any scholarship to display it, it is too real for any counterfeiting. The cry is, I know the Lord has a people who are saved and are safe, but O, I am in debt; I have nothing to pay with; I must be banished from his love. The old pastors who love their flocks in this day all know the distress that is hidden under that cry, and the certainty of relief in the Lord's time. But the widow has only enough to keep her family alive a day or two more; the prophet comes that way, and she tells him of her sore distress. He is as poor as she, but he knows the Lord's power in delivering.

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

The prophet asks of her resources: only one pot of oil, so little, and she needs so much. Her creditor is pressing for payment, from him there is no relief by day or by night. Elisha did not increase the oil, or make it different from what it was; he only told her to pour it out, not to scatter it about in wasteful manner, but to fill all the vessels, not only those she had at hand, but borrow of her neighbors empty vessels. "Borrow not a few." The oil was a blessing from the Lord, her little hope is blessed in pouring it out to the filling of all the empty vessels that her sons found, but the vessels had to be empty ones or they could not have been used to contain this treasure. As applied to the individual it would mean to pour out one's distress to the pastor and to the church, but the text seems rather to apply to a church in a despondent condition. She is a widow, she has sons, but her husband that was her stay and support has been taken from her. She has been favored of God in times past by the care of a loving and God-fearing man, now she has lost her support; she has borrowed until she is heavily in debt, so that the little she has is lost sight of in her great need. When she makes her distress known to the prophet, he at once finds use for her sons: Go borrow empty vessels; you cannot take care of the oil with which God has blessed you without empty vessels; you cannot find them without looking for them; you cannot help the wounded man by passing by on the other side. They were not sent to look for a certain kind of vessel, nor did it make any difference to what particular neighbor they belonged, so that they were empty and would hold oil. "The oil of joy for

mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." For surely whenever the God of heaven pours out a blessing to fill the hungry, empty souls, it is the very oil of joy. The vessels are sought and found by her sons; they neither came of their own accord nor made themselves empty, they were passive in the matter, but were chosen vessels, and were empty, and were filled with oil that was miraculously poured out from what was apparently a very little store, while in reality it was only a little foretaste of the boundless store of love laid up for those who are hungry for that heavenly food. The widow begins to pour out, but what goes to fill the empty vessels does not decrease the stock she had, and she fills the vessels of mercy until her sons cannot find another one. There was no increase until she began to pour out, and there was none after all the vessels were full. The hungry, the poor in spirit and those who cannot get to meeting are ever around us; the fullness of the blessing of God is made manifest when we pour out our little hope. Our troubles often come in floods, but our joys are more apt to come in little things. A pleasant word, a word of hope, a manifestation of confidence, cheers our way, but must be poured out freely, even as the Lord has given us a hope in his mercy. Go then and pay thy debts; you have received comfort from the ministers of other churches, and from the members of other churches in your need. What have you given? What have you in the house? Have you a little of the oil of gladness yet reserved for a trying day? Are there empty vessels round about you? Has the Lord anywhere in all his word commanded to hoard his blessings? Has he not rather said, Freely ye have received, freely give? Also, It is more blessed to give than to receive. And, Live thou and thy children of the rest. The widow is destitute and almost hopeless when her prayer goes up to God through the prophet, but after she has poured out of her little store until every vessel that could be found was full, and her debt all paid, she has an abundance, both for herself and her children. If the widow is a figure of the church, the oil is a figure of the gospel. The distress of those who are hungry for spiritual blessings is terribly real, and O the emptiness of soul. How can such emptiness ever be filled? Will the Lord ever grant me a personal token of his love? Are not such ones the empty vessels that were to be searched for by the sons, that they might be filled with precious oil? Yet the sons have no power to make one drop of oil more or less. Should they not search diligently that no empty vessel shall be overlooked? for when all are full we have no promise that mercy will still flow.

Since this letter was partly written I attended the Delaware Association, and met many there who give evidence by their walk and conversation that they love the cause, yet are not filled; some of them, too, went away without getting the comfort they sought. Here are still empty vessels for the sons to seek, to be filled with the oil of gladness. May they all come to know the abundant mercy of the Lord, whose love is as rivers of oil, and may those who cannot get to hear preaching be yet comforted by his words of promise, and their hope strengthened from time to time as they need with the assurance that the gospel speaks to them and calls them by name by describing their condition.

A. E. RITTENHOUSE.

MATTHEW VIII. 15.

"AND he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose and ministered unto them."

The subject was the mother of Peter's wife, and the touch was the finger of Jesus. The incident was one of many which set forth the power of God in Jesus Christ our Lord while he was in the flesh. When God said in the beginning, "Let there be light," the power and wisdom of his word touched all the machinery of time and set it in motion, both in the heaven and in the earth. The heaven received the touch of the creative power, and the sun and moon and stars sprang into their designated places, obeying the perfect law of their nature. The earth, also being touched by the same mighty hand of power and wisdom, immediately made manifest the springs of life and motion, by which it was meet for the use of him who created it, that it should bring forth joy and sorrow to a nation which should be spread all over the face of it. The whole of this wonderful creation was placed under the law of its own nature. Life is light, and heaven's myriads of wonder and beauty, which studded the whole canopy with glorious and unsurpassable brightness, reached down and touched the cold, dark earth, giving it both warmth and gladness, that it should bring forth fruit from the seed that God had planted there for the use of the nation that he had placed thereon, also clothing it with green verdure and making it a beautiful world. But alas, by the disobedience of the man (who had been given dominion over all the creatures of the earth) to the commandments which God had given him, thorns and briars sprang up in the earth, sin and death and pollution marred the once unsullied creation. But God was yet to be glorified in a new creation which he created unto himself for his own pleasure and glory. The beginning and the first fruit of this new generation, and the power and the wisdom and the glory of it, were vested in Him who had touched the hand of the woman, and she was made whole, and who is prominent in the subject under present consideration. The generation of Jesus Christ, the church of the living God, which is called a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that (they) should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light, they are the people of Adam's race whose hearts have been touched with the Spirit of God, created in Christ Jesus, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. The woman "laid, and [was] sick of a fever," her disease was curable with medicine in the hands of the physicians of the land, but such physicians, however great their learning, however profound their knowledge, however wide their reputation, could not by simply touching the woman cure her disease; faith alone can stay the progress of a disease by a touch. Another miraculous cure by faith in the subject herself, by a touch, is recorded: "A certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, when she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment: for she said, If I may but touch his clothes, I shall be whole. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up: and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague." When Jesus touched the hand of the mother of Peter's wife she had already beforehand received the

faith of God, she had already been born from above. Faith must answer to faith, and the answer is the remedy which produces the cure. When Jesus preached his own everlasting gospel to the multitudes which often thronged him, only the few could receive it who possessed the faith which God had given them. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." Our hope then does not rest upon the things that are taught by our carnal mind, but upon that faith once delivered unto the saints.

"And she arose, and ministered unto them." How beautiful and how precious are the ministrations of the daughters of Jerusalem, and how joyfully she enters into the sanctuary of her Beloved, and with glad hands sets in order the house devoted to his worship, and then we hear the Beloved say, "Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart." Our life in the church is made up of daily ministrations. In loving our brethren with pure hearts fervently we minister to them in deeds and in spirit. Inasmuch as the woman did minister unto those who were in the house, so also, whether present in body or in spirit, she ministered unto Him who had touched her hand and healed her. If we are sick we pray to Him who is able by his touch to heal all manner of sickness, and he ever heareth the cry of the sick and the afflicted. In our poverty we seek Him who is rich in mercy and abounding in grace, and he supplieth every need. If we are straying away towards Jericho we hear his gentle voice from behind, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, and, like Peter, we turn and look into his sweet, sad face, and then turn away and weep bitterly. Each trial and each pitfall in which we stumble are valleys of unrest through which we must pass in order to reach the haven of rest which is to be found only upon the bosom and within the folded arms of our gracious Redeemer, who toucheth us and we are healed.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Sept. 6, 1913.

WALKER, Oregon, July 6, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—My mind seems to be burdened with a subject of much concern to the household of faith. I know I am not worthy to admonish any of the children of God, but if it be his word it will not return unto him void, but will prosper in the thing whereunto he sends it, and accomplish that which he pleases. From time to time reports come of strife and divisions in various sections of the country, and we are naturally wondering about the cause. One of old said, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Many of us fail to go to God's word, but resort to carnal reasoning. Well-meaning brethren sit silently by and allow more assuming brethren to teach for doctrine the commandments of men, and throw a church into confusion about a small matter, because they are not sufficiently versed in God's precious word to know whose position is wrong; in other words, we have been too careless to study the Scriptures, the infallible rule of faith and practice, so we can hear all, prove all and hold fast that which is good, as we are commanded to do, simply because we have not been interested enough to know what is or is not good. The carnal mind

or reasoning is enmity against God, and therefore is entirely unreliable in the law of his household. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. This is the love of Christ, that ye keep his commandments. So if a child of God is reasonably well versed in God's word he should not be at a loss to know what action is proper, by taking time to hunt up the Scriptures that he remembers to refer to the subject under consideration. Jesus, the most high God and the lowly friend of sinners, the King and Lawgiver, was afflicted in all the afflictions of his people, and expounded every phase of their life as individuals and as churches, and the twelve apostles sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, interpreting the law that Jesus laid down, more minutely applying it to the various conditions that arise in the churches; and beside this, "Search the Scriptures;" (Old Testament) said Jesus, "for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they that testify of me." Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and have left for our instruction, by prophecies, types and shadows, a complete delineation of the gospel of Christ and the christian warfare, and we do well to search them thoroughly for evidence of the best thing that ever was given to men: eternal life. But, says one, I cannot find time to read. That depends very much on whose servants we are; to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon," says the King, so if our minds and affections are so much on the mammon of unrighteousness (the gods of this world) we cannot obey the plainest and simplest commands of Him who quit the courts of all riches and glory to condescend to poverty, shame and abuse, even to the meanest reproaches of the world, and death itself, for us poor sinful creatures. Let us remember that one of the twelve judges said, "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God [by forsaking his word and his bride for the beggarly elements of the world] and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? [by affirming it is part or all of works, when Paul says it is of grace and cannot be of both grace and works. See Romans xi. 1–7, and note the bowing of the knee to Baal is a temporal matter.] For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." —Hebrews x. 28–31. Satan, the bad master, often suggests that God is slack concerning his promises, but he is not, he will repay. Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. "No chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Read carefully Hebrews x. Many men have tried in vain to write a complete set of rules for the faith and practice of the saints, but at best they only cover a small portion of the ground that is so simply and completely covered by divine inspiration. It is far better to go to God's word, because he has said, "If any

of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and "he is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent," hence if we have a "thus saith the Lord" we need not fear contradiction; but men are fallible, and hence we are strictly admonished against teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. No doubt most of those who read this are better versed in God's word than the writer, but none of us know too much about his word, and if God in his wonderful mercy should enable me to provoke any to more searching of the word of truth much good will be done. The more I read the more I find how little I know of the vast oceans of doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness contained in this one small volume. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Let us note a few instances of simple clearness: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar." This is the love of God, that ye keep his commandments. "Preach the gospel. * * * He that believeth, and is baptized, [as the house of Cornelius] shall be saved; [fellowshiped] but he that believeth not, [although he may be baptized] shall be damned [not fellowshiped]." "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, [of Christ] receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." Satan suggests, Better take him in and try him awhile; the world might point the finger of scorn if you do not. But the King's language is plain; who will we obey? whose servants are we? If we are Jesus' servants, certainly we will unhesitatingly obey what he says; 2 Cor. vi. 14–18 is plain. The flesh suggests that if we urge a brother to break off his hold on the world some poor widow might be left without an insurance policy. So did Judas, who was a devil, say, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor? (John xii. 5.) And so did Satan suggest to Ananias and Sapphira, The Lord may not provide, so you had better serve both me (mammon) and God. (Matt. vi. 24; Acts v. 1–6.) When Jesus was an hungered forty days and promised infinitely more than a ten thousand dollar insurance policy if he would bow down to Satan, he spurned it. Now shall we, for whom he was so freely given, forsake his holy command for so paltry an amount, and that when we are not hungry and perhaps never will be? Elijah had plenty to eat when the ravens carried it to him. When the Hebrews were in the wilderness they were never allowed to prepare more than two days ahead, yet they had plenty. The grass of the field was better clothed than Solomon; God has promised it to you, he will also bring it to pass. "If God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" Please, if you can spare time, read Matthew sixth chapter, especially verses nineteen to thirty-four. If God spared not his own Son, but freely offered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things? The Savior says, "If any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also." The flesh says, Do not do it, the people will laugh at you, and you might get cold. But whose servants are we? Paul said, The

time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, therefore reprove, rebuke, exhort, not harshly and impatiently, nor with enticing words of man's wisdom, but with all longsuffering and doctrine. The flesh says, Give them milk with the doctrine or cream skimmed off, and enough worldly wisdom, good oratory and witticism to make it entertaining to the flesh. If you do not you will lose your congregation. Whom shall we obey? Of how much sorer punishment shall we be deemed worthy if we serve Satan and hypocritically pretend to serve Christ. There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof is destruction. The way of the transgressor is hard. Let us appeal to Jesus and his word for counsel, for his yoke is easy and his burden is light, and his word is able to make us wise unto salvation.

I have simply referred to a very few of the bookful of plain words of instruction, to illustrate how perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work, the man of God is if he only goes to it instead of carnal reason for counsel. I am not writing these things from a holier than thou standpoint, nor because I am free from any of them, but from experience, and, I verily hope, by the mercy of Him who doeth all things well. I know by experience that my flesh is covetous, jealous and everything bad that any other brother's flesh is heir to, and hence the great reason to be charitable and try to bear one another's burdens, and especially to pray continually, for every moment when I would do good, evil is present with me. I sometimes have the desire, but how to perform that which is good I find not. I am speaking experimentally, if indeed I have any experience. How much easier it is when we think we find a fault in a brother to tell some confidential friend than to serve Jesus and obey his command: to go to him, and him alone. Let me note two more full, clear admonitions: Matt. xviii. 14–23, and 1 Cor. v. 11, and let us remember when questionings arise how much easier it is to turn to the infallible rule with prayer, than to wonder and dispute for days, weeks and months over a question of doctrine or practice that is surely, plainly, fully and concisely answered in God's word. May God in his tender mercy guide us by the still waters, and to the glory of his perfect, holy name.

Your unworthy brother, in hope that I may enter the kingdom, even though it be through much tribulation,

G. O. WALKER.

REESE, Texas, July 6, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am in receipt of a good letter from my sister-in-law, which has been of great comfort to me. I feel glad to read from the pen of those who are endowed with power from on high to write so comfortingly to those who are cast down by the way, to bind up the broken-hearted, and strengthen the feeble knees, and to turn the lawful captives free. This was what the prophets were commanded to do. The blessed Master said that they who should give a cup of cold water in his name were blessed. Such sweet words from the pen or the mouth of the called and tried among the Lord's children build me up in the most holy faith, and enable me to go on my way rejoicing in hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie promised before the world began. It encourages me when I see how humble and dependent the little ones feel themselves to be, for, as I hope, this is also my condition when it comes to the way and plan of salvation, and I

think it our duty when we receive such consoling letters from the poor and afflicted ones of the Father's family to send them to you to pass upon, and, if you see fit, to publish them, that they may be encouraged to the discharge of their duty which they owe to God and the household of faith. Write on, all you who feel so impressed, do not quench the Spirit, for if you do this you will suffer loss, you will not receive that sweet rest that is found in obedience. For, said Jesus, take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, and ye shall find rest to your souls. How sweet that rest is.

I remain your little brother in the bonds of love,

M. L. LILES.

WINNSBORO, Texas, June 8, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER:—As it has been some months since I have written to you, I will now make the attempt. We are both as well as we deserve to be, I suppose. Emma and Silas are here, having been called to the bedside of his father, who is very low. He seems some better to-day.

We received your letter some days ago, and thought to have written sooner, but John has been very busy. Well, Martin, we are still enjoying good meetings. Last Saturday and Sunday were our regular meeting days at Canaan Church, four miles from us, and we had brother Davenport with us. You may know him. He opened the meeting Sunday morning and gave us a good talk, as I thought, and was followed by brother Jones. His tongue was loosed, and he preached a grand sermon; surely the Lord was with him.

You told John that you were anxiously awaiting a letter from me. I cannot see why you talk this way, knowing me as you do, for I feel to be less than the least, and too weak to even think of trying to comfort one who has been taught of God, as I believe you have been. If I had confidence in myself, as I have in you and others, it seems as though it would not be such a cross to me to write. However, I am writing and talking upon this subject all the time. Writing is mostly in my mind daily, but I cannot see why I am in this frame of mind so much. I try hard to control my mind, but I have long since found out that I am not my own keeper. I know that I am too weak to have such divine things with me all the time, and I fight hard against this frame of mind, but I cannot seem to get into the right attitude. I feel too unworthy to even have a name among God's people, much less seek to comfort one of them. I do not know how you are, but as for myself, I sometimes get into such a strange condition that I do not see how the church can fellowship me, and I do not think they would if they knew me as I am, or as I think I know myself. I am so prone to sin, so vile, am but as filthy rags, I wonder if it is possible that I am born again. I have almost forgotten how to pray, if indeed I ever knew. Often it is the case that I can only say, Show pity, Lord, O Lord, forgive. Then again, I hear others talking, and I glance back over my little experience, and something makes me say, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound," &c. I do believe that if grace has caused my poor heart to fear, that grace will lead me safely home. I am not like some, trying to help the Lord do something that he has already done, even before the world was. I do not think that he needs my help at all, but poor me, I need his help all the day long, and I am perfectly illing to rest upon him in all things. I

used to be trying to help him, until I found that he could manage all his affairs alone, and I believe that what he has done is well done, and forever done, for he is God, and changes not. That sounds like predestination, does it not? Yes, I certainly believe in predestination of all things, from the least to the greatest, and that from before the foundation of the world, and I believe that his predestination will forever stand just as he has appointed it, and that all will take place just at the moment he predestinated it to occur. For this reason we must stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. He says, My grace is sufficient for you. So, dear brother and sister, "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." You can have no idea of the good it does me to know that the Lord is so wonderfully blessing you in going forward in the discharge of your duty. It would be as manna to my soul to see your tongue loosed to proclaim Jesus Christ, and him crucified, to the comfort and consolation of his little ones. How glad we would be to have you with us at our union meeting, which will be held the first Sunday in July, beginning on Friday before.

But now I must close, as I have written too much already. I fear that you will not get much sense out of this letter, for it seems to me that in writing I have caught at the shadow and missed the substance, but I believe that you will throw the mantle of charity over all the imperfections that are in it. May God lead us in that narrow way that leads to eternal life, peace and happiness. I ask an interest in your prayers.

Your sister in much tribulation,

E. E. LILES.

HALCOTTSVILLE, N. Y., Jan. 13, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am herewith mailing you an article written by Arnold Bellows, which appeared in one of our local papers, and if in your judgment it would be good matter for the SIGNS, I would like you to publish it. Mr Bellows is not a member of the church, but always attends our meetings whenever he possibly can do so, and is a firm believer in the doctrine held by Old School Baptists.

Yours in hope of life eternal,

J. B. SLAUSON.

CHRISTMAS.

THE return of another Yuletide, bringing comfort to many homes and sunshine to many hearts, has a deeper significance than a mere holiday respite from toil, the exchanging of felicitations and the giving and receiving of gifts. The expression of good will and the giving of gifts are but the types and shadows of which Christ is the substance. "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." With expressions of peace on earth and good will toward men was the humble birth of the righteous and glorious One proclaimed. Amid the formalities and customs followed in the commemoration of this auspicious event it may be well to consider the sacred import of Christmas. To comprehend the meaning of Christmas one must ascend the stream of time further back than the occasion when Mary and Joseph traveled that memorable journey to Bethlehem, for this blessed day had its divine incep-

tion back in the earliest twilight of the morning of creation, before the curse of sin had entered the world. To a sinless and perfect man had been given a righteous and inexorable law, the severity and strength of which were equaled by its penalty: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." A law would be without force if its infraction were without a penalty. It is the law that makes the commission of an act a crime, and the penalty of a law is equal to the reparation necessary for the restoration to the state previous to the violation of the law. To illustrate, if an unlicensed chauffeur were to drive a certain automobile valued at one thousand dollars, and as a result of this forbidden act the machine should be demolished, the penalty for the commission of this act should be the forfeiture of one thousand dollars, or its equivalent, but if the offender should be financially or otherwise unable to meet the requisition, he should surrender his liberty, and submit to prison confinement until the debt should be canceled. If no friend were to pay his debt, life imprisonment would be his doom. In this homely example are a few inspirations for Christmas thoughts.

Sin is defined in the Scriptures as the transgression of the law. Without the law there is no transgression. Paul wrote, "I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Therefore it was necessary that a law should be given to our first parents; God must suffer sin to enter into the world, and man to fall, else how could the wonderful love, the all-sufficient grace and ample mercy of Jesus Christ be manifest? Knowledge is gained largely through comparison, and by contrasts, especially of opposites. The beauty and perfection of the lily are rendered more striking when this flower is compared with the thistle. One would be unable to discern and appreciate beauty were it not for the existence of the antithesis of beauty. Were it not for darkness it would be impossible to conceive light, and had there been no sin in the world man would not have known God as a righteous, loving, gracious, merciful and long-suffering Being. Food is not enjoyed unless the partaker is hungry, and it is the thirsty who drink and enjoy the potations of nature. Only by realizing the sinfulness of sin can come hungering and thirsting after righteousness. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled," and only the poor in spirit shall be rich in grace. Man must be lost before he can be saved. Hence the law and its transgression, the tempter and the Savior. Fallen man could not free himself. Like the penniless chauffeur who violates the law and demolishes the automobile, man cannot pay his debt to God. He cannot redeem himself from the curse of the law, but naked and condemned before God he must forever be a convict in the prison-house of sin, unless redemption is provided. His natural life must terminate, and he must be cast off from heirship in the kingdom of heaven. The law demands this penalty, and it must be paid; and it was paid, but by another. The seed of the woman came to bruise the serpent's head. God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, condemned sin in the flesh, kept every jot and tittle of the law, answered its demands in full, paid the ransom price of fallen man, and his own precious blood released man, the sinner, from the prison-house of sin, and clothed his people, the church, of which he is the Head, with the garments of salvation, to raise them up

kings and priests unto God. The Mosaic law, which was holy, just and good, was added because of transgressions, until the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and though sin is not imputed where there is no law, nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness unto them that believe. Through the law of God given to Moses on the mount offences do abound, yet through Christ grace doth much more abound. What an unspeakable gift to man! What wonder that heaven's noblest music celebrates the stainless birth, the sinless life, the ignominious death, the glorious resurrection and the mediatorial office of the immaculate Son of God. What wonder that the noblest of all themes is redemption, and the grandest of all literature is the inspired literature, the christian Bible.

Christmas has then many lessons for mankind, but they cannot be more than touched upon, and only a few of them at that, within the limits of this article.

ARNOLD BELLOWS.

COLUMBUS JUNCTION, Iowa, April 20, 1913.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—If an unworthy worm of the dust may thus address you. I have felt for some time that I would write you and send in my remittance, which I see is in arrears, but have had a feeling sense of unworthiness and barrenness of mind, unable to say anything interesting or comforting to the household of faith. I wish I could tell the dealing of the Lord with me as some of the able writers of the SIGNS tell it. I do love to read the communications of all the poor in spirit, for they seem to have walked the same paths I have trodden, and are filled with the same doubts and fears, having no confidence in self, ever feeling the need of an advocate, One who is mighty and able to save, even to the uttermost. I know that in me (my flesh) dwells no good thing; that without his goodness and mercy I must perish; that if left to myself I should be cast out as a useless cumberer of the ground, a vessel fitted to destruction, yet if my soul is sent to hell, his righteous law approves it well. The Savior said, Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Surely I need his comforting presence to sustain me through all the journey of this wilderness life. The allurements of this life are many, and we are prone to run after them, to forget that we were bought with a price, even the precious blood of Jesus; blessed be his holy name. He declared, My sheep know my voice, and they follow me. Thine they were; thou gavest them me, and none shall be able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I call my sheep by name, and they follow me, and a stranger will they not follow. There remaineth therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. He is their surety, and in him is everlasting life.

Precious brethren and sisters, you who have written such comforting letters, may the Lord enable you to write often, and guide your pen, and so lead your minds to comfort his little ones, to speak comfortably unto Zion; and you, dear editors, may God enable you to stand firm in the doctrine, to publish the good news of salvation by grace through the crucified and risen Jesus. I desire an interest in the prayers of all the saints. You who are of a broken spirit and a contrite heart, speak often one to another, remembering how your hearts did burn as He talked with you by the way.

Remember a poor, unworthy mortal, whose only hope is through the blood and righteousness of the meek and lowly Jesus. J. L. THURSTON.

Moss, Tenn., May 12, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been a subscriber of the SIGNS only a short time, having received in all four numbers, but if I know myself I greatly love the doctrine it advocates. I am now in the sixty-fourth year of my natural life. I was raised under the Arminian system, and have been surrounded by Arminianism all my life. I have often longed for the company of some regenerated soul, in order that we might talk in regard to the things of the kingdom, but so far I have been denied this privilege. I would like to talk at some length as regards my travel as a stranger and pilgrim on the earth, but I am too weak and ignorant to talk of spiritual things. I can only say that if I were to write a volume the half would not be told. I have spent many dark days, yes, even years, and if it were not for the work of grace in my soul I would be without God and without hope in the world. I grope the most of my time in darkness, although there are some bright spots in my journey that I never can forget. I have sometimes been foolish enough to think that the remainder of my days would be full of joy unspeakable, but to my sorrow it is but a little while until I am in the depths of despair, and made to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then it is that I fully realize that if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. Satan has sometimes suggested to me that my profession is a delusion, but I take courage from the language of the apostle where he says that we shall not be tempted above that we are able to bear.

I pray God that he may keep you and all the contributors to the SIGNS humbly bowed at the feet of Jesus, and that you may be enabled through divine assistance to wield the sword of the Lord to the satisfaction of all God's children. Now I ask you to overlook all the mistakes that I have made, and I would say further that you all have my very warmest and deepest love.

Yours in hope,

P. L. SAVAGE.

PRESCOTT, Ariz., July 9, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—You will find inclosed post-office money order for two dollars to aid in sending the SIGNS to some of the flock who are situated as I am, who have not the gracious privilege of hearing the gospel preached in its purity. There are many good letters and editorials written in the SIGNS, and I much enjoy reading them, as they are all the preaching I get. I have just entered my seventy-fifth year, and am a weary pilgrim in a waste howling wilderness. I have been reading from the pen of brother Silas Durand for many years. He is a dear old soldier of the cross, and O what a wonderful gift is his, and how precious to the hungry soul are the sacred words that flow from his pen. I feel a longing desire to behold the faces and grasp the hands of the dear old shepherds who have so faithfully fed the scattered flock, but alas, I feel like a wandering sheep away on the mountain, far away from the tender Shepherd's care, and were it not for the precious letters and editorials I read in the SIGNS I do not know how I would spend my time; also the precious little book, "Songs in the Night," which I read over and over with deep felt tears, and they never grow old.

Now, dear editors, there is one name in the SIGNS, Newton Peters, that awakens

old memories, and I may say carries me back fifty years, or to the time during the civil war. At that time I resided in Scott County, Ill., and near me lived a lady, a very dear friend, whose name was Nancy Peters. Her husband, Joseph Peters, lost his life in the service of the civil war. There were two children, Hattie and "Newty," as they were familiarly called. Now if this should meet the eye of that dear brother I would be glad to know if he was that boy. We were not naturally related, but I hope I may claim kindred with him spiritually, and trust I may be permitted to read many more precious letters from his gifted pen. O if I could only write such letters as the dear sisters do, it would be consoling in my lonely hours. My heart responds to them, but I cannot command words to express my thoughts.

Dear editors, may you long be spared as watchmen on the walls of Zion, is the prayer of a lonely old sinner in a desert land.

(MRS.) HARRIET UNDERWOOD.

WESTFIELD, Ill., Sept. 15, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I write to tell you that I am still receiving the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as, I suppose, one of the "poor of the flock," as it has been some time since I have had the money to pay for it, and am sorry that I have not yet, for I do not know how I could do without it, but do not feel right to enjoy such a blessed privilege as to have it to read at the expense of the dear brethren and sisters. I am a poor crippled widow nearly seventy-six years old, and live alone, and reading my Bible and the SIGNS is the most enjoyment I have, as I seldom get to meeting, for I have no way to go very often, so I write to tell you that the SIGNS has been a source of great comfort to me in my loneliness. Reading the good letters from the dear saints from all over the country makes me wish sometimes that I could take them by the hand and tell them how I enjoy reading their good letters. I have had a name with the Primitive Baptists for fifty-six years, and they grow dearer to me every day, but I feel that I am not worthy of a place with such dear people.

Now, dear friends, if you wish to discontinue sending me the SIGNS, do so, but I do surely thank you for sending it as long as you have. I have tried to get subscribers for you, but have not been successful; some say they think the price too high, but guess that is only an excuse. I think the SIGNS is the same now that it has always been. I read it in my early life, as my father was a subscriber then.

With best wishes to you and all the readers, I am, as ever, a lover and well-wisher of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

(MRS.) MARY J. PETTY.

BELINGTON, W. Va., Feb. 17, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is through the mercy of God that I, a poor, afflicted mortal, am once more permitted to try and write you a few lines, and I hope this may find you enjoying good health. I received my SIGNS a few days ago, and you do not know how glad I was to get it. I hope it will come regularly now, for I dearly love to read it, as my health has been so bad for several years that I have not been able to get to meeting very often. I had to shed tears when I read brother Varnes' letter in the SIGNS; poor, afflicted brother, he may be gone to a better home by this time. I love to read the letters that the brethren and sisters write, for they seem to cheer my lonely hours.

Dear editors, if you think this letter is worth it you may publish it, as I would like to thank brethren Garrett and Elliott for their kindness in having the SIGNS sent to me, and I pray that the Giver of every good and perfect gift may bless them. Our blessed Savior said if you give a cup of water to one of his little ones you shall not lose your reward, and if any one offend one of these little ones that believe in him, he had better have a millstone hanged about his neck and he be cast into the sea; so we should be careful not to offend one of his little ones.

I will close by asking you all to remember me, and I hope that when done with the troubles of this world it may be my happy lot to hear that blessed voice say, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you. May God take care of you all.

Your unworthy sister,

ELIZABETH PHILLIPS.

CANADA, Ky., Sept. 16, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I failed to get my SIGNS for September 1st, and would be glad if you would send me a copy. I received the Sept. 15th number yesterday, and like it well. My health is very poor. I am suffering with stomach and heart trouble, and am made to believe that the end is near with me, and though I dread death's chilling tide, yet I sigh for home, that blessed immortality for which we wait here in this body of sin and death. Sometimes I can rest in the sweet assurance of faith in God through Christ the Lamb, though I often feel lonely and forsaken when Jesus hides his smiling face, as I feel that I am about to cross the dark waters. All I have is a hope, but O what a rich treasure is this good hope of ours; it is indeed as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. It enters that within the veil, and Jesus, the forerunner, has gone on before, and O how sweet it is to follow him even in death, in persecution, in reproach and shame. Ah, is not this the path of righteousness (Psalms xxiii. 3,) that he leadeth us in, through which all must pass who are the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus?

Yours in bonds, G. B. BIRD.

HARRISONVILLE, Mo., Aug. 11, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please send the SIGNS to my home address (Harrisonville, Mo., R. 6), as I am now at home from school, and will be at home all winter. I do not want to miss a number, for it is a source of comfort to mother and me, and is the best paper I have read that sets forth the Old Baptist faith; it contains just what I believe.

Yesterday and day before were our regular meeting days at Little Flock Church. Elders Hall, Summers and Hodges were there and we had a glorious meeting. One young brother offered himself to the church and was received, and was baptized yesterday afternoon by brother Hall; it was beautiful, and good to look upon. Little Flock has thirty members, and all in peace.

I hope you will get this before you send out the second number of the SIGNS this month, so you can send the paper to Harrisonville instead of Warrensburg.

Unworthily your sister in hope,

MABEL URQUHART.

HOPEWELL, S. Dak., July 15, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please find inclosed post-office money order to pay the amount due for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and advance my subscription for the balance. I do not wish to miss any numbers, es-

pecially those telling of the Delaware River Association, as the Kingwood Church of that association was my home from 1866 until I came west in 1877, to Nebraska, and since May, 1901, we have lived on a "homestead" here in South Dakota. The past three years have been very dry ones, and crops have failed, and having had seed and feed to buy, then losing the crops, have kept us close for cash, and that is why our subscription got so in arrears, and we desire to thank you for your kindness in continuing the paper to our address so long.

I well remember Elder Chick's first visit to Kingwood, and of his visit at father's house, also the sermon of Elder Durand's at Wm. Sutton's, spoken of in the SIGNS by George D. Conklin, as I was there. Those times are dear to my memory. That was some forty-seven years ago, when I was nineteen years of age.

Very sincerely your brother, I hope,

E. R. MYERS.

MIDVALE, Idaho, May 22, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As the time has about expired for which I subscribed for the *Gospel News*, I now wish to become a subscriber of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for I enjoy reading the letters from the dear brethren and sisters so much I eagerly look forward to the time when the SIGNS will come, for I am sure of a feast, as it always comes laden with sweet messages from the dear saints, which is a great comfort to poor, unworthy me, and if my sinful heart deceives me not, I love the gospel truth that it so ably sets forth: the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be all power, honor, glory and majesty on high. Pray for your little, unworthy sister, for I feel poor and needy.

I inclose a money order for two dollars, as the SIGNS is all the preaching I get, or all that I enjoy, as there are no Old Baptists in this part of the country that I know of, so I am very lonely.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) W. F. SEID.

LEBANON, Kan., July 9, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—By request I will write of a precious meeting which was held last Sunday, about seven miles southeast of Glenelder, Mitchell Co., Kan., at the meetinghouse called Honey Creek. Elder J. H. Hammon met with us and preached for us, much to the comfort and encouragement of all present, and the Lord seemed to be with us. A small band of brethren and sisters try to meet at that place once a month, on the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before. Elder Joseph Ford, of Seneca, is our pastor. His wife had been poorly for several months, so he could not be with us regularly, and she passed away June 21st. We would be glad to have more of the brethren and sisters meet with us.

Your brother, I hope,

W. S. AYDELOTT.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, Sept. 23, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—My attention has been drawn to a mistake of mine on page 549, which should read, "twenty-sixth of Job," and on page 553 read, "There are dreadful thoughts thrust into the mind by the devil."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1913.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REPLY TO BROTHER MILLER

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I, as an old worn out sinner, would like to ask you to give your views on a few portions of Scripture. The first is Galatians iii. 28: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Are we all in the body of Christ, or are we all in separate bodies, knowing one another as we know in this life? I hold a different view from most others. If I am wrong I want to be made right, for it is the truth I am seeking. I am in my ninety-third year, and do not want to die in error. I am but a babe, anxious to learn. Now in the case of the seven brothers having one woman for wife, it is said that they are not to be married in heaven. If this relation is not to be known in heaven, how are we to know our friends there? I have been a reader of the SIGNS for some time, and my name has appeared in its columns a number of times. I have always enjoyed the good editorials and correspondence. Should you not notice this request, I will take no offence, for I know your time is all occupied. The SIGNS is all the adviser I have, which is my reason for asking these questions. I am more than twelve hundred miles from my church, and have seen but one brother of my faith here for nine years, Elder Fish, of Illinois.

Your brother in hope,

S. S. MILLER.

JULIAN, Cal., Aug. 25, 1913.

We shall be glad indeed if we can write anything in reply to the requests of our aged brother which will be of any satisfaction to him. It is but natural that in his old age his mind should rest much upon the future world, and what it shall be like. As we are growing older we find that this is more and more the case with ourself. As with increasing years little is left to anticipate in this life, it would be strange indeed were not the thoughts of those who believe in Jesus, and have hope of the life to come, to rest much upon the things that are beyond this life, yet there is but little we can know of that life until we enter it. What will it be to be there? is a question which seems to grow weightier and weightier with us. But all that we can now know concerning that life is what few intimations are given us in the word of God concerning it. The Scriptures do not answer many curious questions which may come up in our minds relating to that world; indeed, but very little is said in the Bible about it. We feel sure that if it were needful that we should know here about all that pertains to that life, the Scriptures would have revealed it, for we know that the Scriptures contain all that is necessary to godliness or to perfect the man of God, and this certainly is sufficient while we are below. They also contain the promise of the life to come, which is declared to be free from sorrow, sin and dying, thus holding out to the believer the consoling truth that it shall not always be with him as it is now. Here is a state of warfare, of unrest, of dissatisfaction, which must continue so long as we are not perfected, but there and then we shall be satisfied when we awake with his likeness.

First, we desire to call attention to the text in Galatians which our brother has quoted. It is not our understanding that the apostle is speaking there of the future world at all. A careful reading on the connection will, we think, show unmistakably that the theme of the apostle is to set forth the union of all who have believed in Christ in one body,

as it were. Naturally, among those who had believed, there existed still all the distinctions of state, or calling, or birth, that had been among them before, but the choice and redemption of men in Christ was without consideration of these natural distinctions, and it mattered not whether men were naturally bond or free, rich or poor, Jew or Gentile. In the kingdom of God none of these distinctions existed. God does not look upon the natural qualities of any man; with him there is no respect of persons. The slave to him is as the man that is free, the Gentile as the Jew, the poor as the rich. He calls men from out of all these classes, and their position in this life has nothing at all to do with this call. Because a man is a Jew he is not therefore accepted in this new kingdom of grace, and because he is a Gentile he is not rejected. A man's wisdom does not help him enter the kingdom, and neither does his ignorance serve as a bar to that entrance. Illustrations might be multiplied here, but we will forbear. The apostle's declaration here means, in short, that there is but one condition of entrance into the kingdom of God, or into the visible church union and fellowship here below, viz., that one be in Christ Jesus. Having this living union with Christ, all have faith, all have been baptized in spirit into Christ, and all have put on Christ. Every earthly robe has been put away at the entrance of this kingdom, and all dwell there clothed in the one robe of the righteousness of Christ. Still further, as this is the case with the kingdom of God here on earth, much more will it be the case in the world of final glory. In this life this perfect union in Christ of all classes of men is much marred and hindered, as to our experience of it, by the conditions of the flesh, but all that hinders here will be removed there, and we shall be like our Savior, for we shall there see him as he is. It is true, and will remain so while we live on earth, that we shall see in part and know in part, but there, where that which is perfect is come, we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known. Much more belongs to the theme of the text, but we believe that the above presents the substance of the apostle's meaning.

In the second place, we desire to notice especially the questions of our aged brother regarding our life in the world to come. He has referred to the language of the dear Redeemer, regarding the question of the Sadducees who denied that there was any resurrection, or that there was any angel or spirit. Jesus had taught that there was to be a resurrection of men at the last day to life and immortality. This they knew, for they had heard him so declare, but, denying this as they did, they thought to catch him by asking what they supposed would be an unanswerable question. They put before him the case of seven brothers who has one woman to wife, one after the other, which was according to the law of God given to the Jews. (See Deut. xxv. 5.) They did not lay before him the opposite case, of one man having seven wives, for the reason that it was their thought, no doubt, that the Master might reply, There is no difficulty in this, for there it will bear as here, men may have more than one wife, but a woman cannot have more than one husband, and they say, "Whose of the seven shall she be?" This brought out one of the most sublime utterances from the Savior, and one which ought to satisfy all minds as regards the existence of natural ties in that world: In that world they are neither married, nor given in marriage, but are

as the angels of God, being the children of the resurrection. Much is said in the word concerning angels, but nowhere is it intimated that there are fathers or mothers or children among them. Such relationships are not known by them; each one stands forth as the direct creation of God. Even so is it with regard to the redeemed in that world. The marriage relation does not exist there. This relation is the foundation of all other relationships among men. If, therefore, this relation does not exist in that world, certainly no other can. This is the chief relationship among men, the one out of which all others spring. Without this one no others could exist even here. If, therefore, the dear Savior's language is received and believed by any one, that one must also believe that in that world the redeemed shall not meet as parents and children, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, but as is the case here in the kingdom of God, there will be neither one class nor the other, but all will be kindred in Christ, and the relationship which all will occupy there will be simply children of God and heirs of glory in Christ. Many thoughts will arise in our hearts relating to our loved ones gone before, and it is but natural that we should desire to see again those whom we have loved. We do not feel to condemn those who have lost children by death for the feeling that they desire once more to see them, and know them as their children. Parents' hearts must be tender toward their children, and when they are taken from them by death it is but natural to long to see them again, but all this is of the flesh, though it is the flesh manifested in the most tender way. It has been our feeling that if we are so favored as to gain that blest abode, we shall be so occupied with the glories of the dear Savior, and with the desire to exalt and praise him in the highest, that we shall have no room or time left for the consideration of anything else. Every power will find full employ in contemplating the God and Savior of men, and we do not in the word hear the redeemed singing praise to self, or glorying in the reunion which they have had with former friends, but rather saying, Worthy is the Lamb, and with the angel host singing, Glory to God in the highest. A whole eternity will not exhaust the glories of Zion's King, her God and Savior. In full harmony with this are the words of the sweet singer of Israel, Psalms lxxiii. 25, 26: "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." Surely David must have been in the Spirit ere he could say such things as these. See what he has here said: "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" Not even angels or redeemed men engaged his attention when thus in the Spirit, God alone was his desire and hope, his riches and his life, and thus beholding the hope set before him in heaven, he could also say, There is none upon earth beside thee. All the vain things of earth now took, in his view, their proper place, and came to be counted as nothing, while in this spiritual state of mind, and this God was the strength of his heart and his portion forever. His portion here, and his portion in eternity. All this does not mean that there shall be a destruction of individuality there. The union of saints in Christ here, where there is neither bond nor free, male nor female, after all does not signify that Paul is not any longer Paul, nor that Peter is not any longer Peter. That union which is so sweet and dear in the churches of the

saints here exists between men and women who still have an individual existence upon earth. Salvation has come to men and women personally, and it will be the case, we may be sure, that it will be the song of redeemed men and women that shall exalt the Lord forever and ever. We have scriptural proof of this, as it appears to us. In the translation of Enoch and Elijah, they were not merged into one, but they are still in glory, individually praising the Lord. In the New Testament, inspired men spoke of them separately, and individually, and in the mount of transfiguration, Moses, who had died, and whom the Lord buried, and Elijah, who did not see death, but ascended in the body into heaven, both appeared, talking with Jesus of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. The three disciples saw them and heard them, and knew the theme of which they spoke, and knew them, and so we know that Moses and Elijah were not as yet merged into one individuality. Twice in Revelation it is recorded that when John would have worshiped the messenger who showed him the wonderful things which he saw, and John would have bowed down and worshiped him, he was bidden not to do so, for, said the messenger, "I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book." Which one of the prophets he was we are not told, and it would be but vain speculation to inquire, but it was one of them, who was now sent to John, and who showed him the things which must shortly come to pass. We speak of this to enforce the thought that men and women are saved, and men and women shall in heaven do God's will, and praise him forever. Whatever the change may be when saints enter that world, one thing seems sure from the Scriptures: they are not thereby hindered from communion, as God wills it, with their brethren on earth. These things our frail minds cannot grasp, but faith rests upon the testimony of God's word and believes what is there written.

All these things of which we have spoken are but feeble glimpses of what that world shall be, but our God has, for his own wise purpose, hidden that which it is not needful that we should know, so we now leave these thoughts to the consideration of our aged brother, and may they be blessed to him and to others, if it be the will of God. C.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder F. W. Keene.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Conference, assembled with the church at North Berwick, Maine, to the churches composing the associations with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—We greet you again in our annual epistle, wishing you grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Your correspondence and messengers have come to us, and we feel it is an unspeakable mercy from our God that we continue to be found in the fellowship of the gospel of Christ. Believers in our Lord Jesus Christ are often in need of the strong consolations of the gospel, for their pilgrimage is often amidst troubles and conflicts and afflictions, and they find themselves weak and wearied. We should be cast down indeed were it not for the sure mercies of David. O these mercies of our God are not as a deceitful brook that fails in a time of drought, but the mercies of the everlasting covenant are unfailing, refreshing and strengthening, and they are

sure to all the seed. It is part of our comfort to know that He who hath begun a good work in us will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Having called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, we are made meet by him to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. He will make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory, even us whom he hath called; not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles. That faith and hope and love wrought in us by the Holy Ghost shall not fail us, so the believer by the power of God continues to hope to the end. It would be very discouraging if we were called upon to pursue our journey, to engage in the warfare that necessarily is the portion of the called of God, at our own charges. We have no resources in ourselves, and consequently no sufficiency for any such undertakings. God will provide. This is the glad tidings of Christ's gospel. All things for our pilgrimage, for every step of the way, are amply provided for the heirs of promise in the covenant ordered in all things and sure. The steps of the believer in Christ are steps of faith; they walk by faith, and not by sight. In faith they are found looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith, and they are taught of their God to run with patience the race that is set before them; they press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. We do not run at an uncertainty, for the assurances of Jehovah our God are that he will guide us with his counsel and afterward receive us to glory, and our dear Savior Jesus Christ is in our hearts, cherished there in faith and love, the hope of glory. The children of God are called strangers and pilgrims in the earth. They are seeking that city of habitation whose builder and maker is God. They desire the better country, that is, the heavenly, wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city. Though there are those that depart from the faith, (the profession of it) and give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, they make shipwreck of faith, for their faith is not the faith of God's elect; they die in unbelief and perish in their sins. But Christ is the author and finisher of the faith of those who are his. These are not those who draw back unto perdition, but those who believe to the saving of the soul. The Lord who hath begun a good work in us will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, and though in the rugged way, in the rough places, in the warfare with the world, the flesh and the devil, we are often found in difficulties, and we prove the flesh profiteth nothing, it is not capable of affording us any assistance, and though unbelief assails us, and our faith is weak, yet our faith shall not fail, for Christ is the author and finisher of our faith. Jesus said to Peter, I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not, and the same is true of every dear child of God. There are strong assurances in the new covenant that believers in Jesus shall be preserved and persevere unto the end of their journey. The righteous shall hold on his way, for the Lord will hold him up, and will not leave him at last in trouble to sink. This is the word of our God: "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be."—Deut. xxxi. 25. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." "Hearken unto me,

O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb: and even to your old age I am he: and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you." —Isaiah xlvi. 3, 4. Such precious promises (and how many such there are in the Scriptures) are to confirm our hope and trust in God. All the promises of God in Christ, our covenant Head, are yea, and in him amen, and unto the glory of God by us. Tribulation is promised us, and is to be endured in our pilgrimage, but no temptation shall take us but such as is common to man, and our merciful God will make a way for our escape, that we may be able to bear it. He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. This God is our God forever and ever, he will be our guide even unto death. He saith, "I will guide thee with mine eye." Psalms xxxii. 8. Never for a moment are the loved of the Lord out of his sight. Our vision of eternal things is sometimes dim, and all to us is wrapped in obscurity, and ah, sometimes clouds intervene, or dark nights are our portion, and it is our complaint that God and our Savior we cannot see. "Verily, thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior." But he sees us when we see not him, and always hears our cry. Contemplate the lives of the saints as recorded in the Scriptures, and there behold the riches of God's mercy and his faithfulness in his covenant that he hath made with them in Christ Jesus their Head, in sustaining them all their days, and to give them an expected end. When the Holy Ghost first wrought in our souls and raised up in us expectations of salvation, of eternal life and glory, surely these sacred expectations are not vain; no indeed. The Spirit of truth has taught us, and is still teaching us, showing us the things of Christ, glorifying him in our hearts, and we see that all our expectation cometh from him. The Holy Ghost upholdeth our souls in life in him, and will not suffer our feet to be moved from the narrow way, the path of life. Though the storm may arise, and the waves run high, and our strength and wits are at an end, he will teach us to cry unto him out of the deeps, and he will deliver us out of our troubles, and in gladness and quietness he will bring us into our desired haven. God hath called us unto his kingdom and glory by Christ Jesus, and by the working of his mighty power in us our faith and hope and love abide. Christ Jesus, the Head of the church, so graciously, mercifully and tenderly communicates of his fullness unto us by the way, and so an entrance, in faith and hope and love in him, shall be ministered unto us into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Remember, tried children of God, that his mercies, his compassions, are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness, O our God. It is sacredly comforting to remember that whether we live we live unto the Lord, or whether we die we die unto the Lord; whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died and rose and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and of the living. We are ever the Lord's, every moment cared for by him. All shall end well, ye fearful, trembling ones; the Lord by his sacred operations in your souls will hold you unto himself, the God of thy salvation, in faith and hope and love; upheld by his righteous, omnipotent hand. Our hope in Christ Jesus has its sustenance in the ministrations of the Holy Ghost,

and as our Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, did not fail in his covenant suretyship in behalf of the elect, neither will the Holy Ghost fail in his covenant work in the hearts of the saints. Jehovah, our God, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, will be ever mindful of the everlasting covenant of grace. Our hope shall not fail and perish as the hope of the hypocrite. Having begotten us unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, we shall hope to the end for the grace that is brought unto us by the revelation of Jesus Christ, and this shall support us in our last moments, for the righteous hath hope in his death. (Prov. xiv. 32.) This is not to die in unbelief, this is not to die in despair. O no, the covenant of Jehovah's grace secures to us a better end to our pilgrimage. The steps of our pilgrimage are in faith and hope and love, and the last step in our journey will not be a hopeless one, not a step of despair, not in wicked desperation. We shall be well cared for by our dear Savior, who is faithful and true, when we shall come to die, for "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." O is not this comforting? The moments of our departure to be with Christ, (which is far better than even the best and happiest of our pilgrim days) when at the command of our covenant God the souls of believers are in departing and making their exodus from the body, our Lord Jesus will be with us; these moments will be peace and blessedness in him. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace."—Psalms xxxvii. 37. The perfect, upright man! Of whom speaketh the psalmist this? of himself, or some other man? First he speaks of him who in all things hath the preeminence, the man Christ Jesus. He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners and made higher than the heavens. He was immaculate, immutably perfect in all his thoughts and words and works, he was glorious and honorable. He was perfect in his being, perfect in his obedience, perfect in his mediatorship in the new covenant, and in and through the perfect man Jesus Christ irradiated all the perfections of God, and it is in union with Christ, our covenant Head, that the church, the members of his body, are perfect. They are perfected by the atoning sacrifice of himself in their behalf. By the cleansing of his precious blood, by his perfect righteousness, they are perfect, faultless in God's sight; they are clothed in fine linen white and clean, which is the righteousness of the saints. Yes, in their glorious Head Jesus Christ they are in perfection of beauty, presented unto himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. They are complete in him who is the Head of all principality and power. In the body of his flesh through his death they are presented holy and unblamable and unreprovable in his sight. And also by his Spirit within them, by his law written in their hearts, by his truth put into their inward parts, they are all glorious within, their raiment is of needlework, their clothing is of wrought gold; and though they confess that in their flesh there dwells no good thing, yet, after the inward man, the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, they delight in the law of the Lord. Thus they are upright in heart, and the upright love thee, O Jesus. Job thus in union with his Redeemer who liveth was accounted a perfect and upright man, one that feared God and eschewed evil. (Job i. 1.) Noah was a just man, and

perfect in his generation, and Noah walked with God. The disciple is not above his Master, but every one that is perfect shall be as his Master. And this, O ye fearful saints, is our comfort: "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world."—1 John iv. 15–17. So sacred and wonderful is our standing in our union in life eternal with Christ Jesus, the perfect, upright man, our Lord and Head, our Husband and Savior. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace."

"As they draw near their journey's end,
How precious is their heavenly Friend,
And when in death they bow their head,
He is precious on a dying bed."

Looking unto Jesus we shall fear no evil when we are called to walk through the valley of the shadow of death. Then our Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, shall be with us, his rod and his staff shall comfort us. We shall not die in unbelief, but as it is written of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, "These all died in faith,"—Hebrews xi. 13, so all the seed who walk in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham will die in faith also. They fall asleep in Jesus, they die in the Lord, they pillow their head, in faith and hope and love, upon the Savior's breast, upon the sure mercies of David. How blessed thus to die; thus to die is gain. How often in the house of our pilgrimage the statutes of the Lord have been our songs! We raise our Ebenezers, and in our heart's gratitude sing, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.

"His love in times past forbids me to think
He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink;
Each sweet Ebenezer I have in review
Confirms his good pleasure to help me quite through."

To you that believe, Jesus is precious; his consolations uphold and give us courage by the way. Ah, and when we have been drawn aside, and we, to our shame, have become backsliders in heart, how merciful he has been. He has chastened us in our departures, and in weeping and supplications he has brought us to himself again. He will not give us up a prey to the world and to Satan, but he saith, I will heal their backslidings and love them freely. He sees our foolishness in following lying vanities; he seeth our wayward ways, and will heal them. O many times he has wrought thus with us for his name's sake, pardoning our iniquities, transgression and sin, because he delighteth in mercy. What sore trials may yet be before us, what deep waters and fires we may have to pass through, we do not know, but our heavenly Father knows, and in faith in Jesus we shall overcome the world. "And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

We have appointed our next annual conference to be held, the Lord willing, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday before the first Monday in September, 1914, when we hope, dear brethren, to receive your correspondence and messengers.

FREDERICK W. KEENE, Mod.
JOSEPH F. HALL, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

OUR dear sister, **Hannah S. DeCoursey,** daughter of Elias and Harriet Yerkes, was born in Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., Jan. 3rd, 1828, and died Jan. 14th, 1913. She was married to Stephen DeCoursey, of Hartsville, Bucks Co., Pa., March 4th, 1851, and lived at that place all of her married life. They had five children, all sons, four of whom are living. She buried her husband over twenty years ago, and a year or more later her youngest son. Her grief was great, but she was given grace to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." She also leaves eight grandchildren and two sisters. She was devoted to her family, was a loving sister, and the loss is deeply felt.

In addition to the above I will say that our dear sister was baptized in the fellowship of the Southampton Old School Baptist Church Nov. 20th, 1892, and was a consistent, faithful and well beloved member while she lived. She enjoyed very much the privilege of attending her meetings, and seemed especially glad whenever she had the opportunity of being in the assemblies of the saints. Her whole appearance when in the meetings seemed to express what the psalmist said: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." During her last sickness she was inclined to talk of spiritual things, and even when her mind wandered concerning natural things, her thoughts were upon the meetings. She was a dear sister, and is sweetly remembered by her brethren and sisters.

SILAS H. DURAND.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. J. H. Rockafellow, N. Y., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Juniata Old School or Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 10th, 11th and 12th, 1913. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Those coming by railroad either east or west will come on the Pennsylvania R. R. to Mount Union on Thursday and take the East Broadtop Railroad to Three Springs, where they will be met and cared for. It is only about two miles to place of meeting. Trains leave Mount Union at 10 a. m. and 4 p. m. We would like to see a good turnout, as it is the most convenient point of any church in our association.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT, Pastor.

THE Soldier Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, with the church at Mt. Pleasant, Graves Co., Ky., commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1913, and continuing three days. All Old School Baptists are cordially invited to attend. Those coming by rail from the north or east on the I. C. will be met at Florence station, nine miles south of Paducah, on Thursday evening at 4:30, and also Friday morning at 7:30. Those coming from the south will be met at Boaz, ten miles north of Mayfield, Ky. Those coming on the N. C. & St. L. from Paris, Tenn., via Murray and Benton, will be met at Oak station, six miles from the church where the association is to be held. Mt. Pleasant Church is located midway between Paducah and Mayfield, on the main Paducah and Mayfield road. Come, brethren, all who have a mind to do so.

Done by order of the church at Mt. Pleasant.

G. P. BOAZ.

THE New Harmony Association of Predestinarian Baptists will convene with Willow Springs Church, Texas, beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1913. Conveyance will be at Sipe Springs on Thursday for all who have a mind to come. Sipe Springs is on the branch line of the T. C. R. R. from Deleon to Crossplains. A hearty welcome is extended to brethren of like precious faith.

S. N. STEPHENS, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa, N. Y., has appointed the second Saturday and Sunday in October (11th and 12th), 1913, to hold its yearly meeting, and extends a cordial invitation to lovers of the truth to meet with us, especially ministering brethren. We hope the Lord will put it into your hearts to visit us.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

A yearly meeting will be held with the church at Snow Hill, Md., on the second Sunday in October, (12th) 1913. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

J. H. TRUITT, Church Clerk.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 15th, 16th and 17th, 1913. Trains will be met at Herndon, three miles from the meeting-place, on the line of the W. & O. D. Ry., Tuesday afternoon and evening before the meeting, and Wednesday morning. Frequent electric trains for Herndon leave Thirty-sixth and M Sts., Washington, D. C. To reach this terminus of the electric road, those coming into Washington at the Union Station will take green car marked Georgetown in front of

the depot and transfer therefrom to the Old Dominion line at Thirty-sixth and M Sts., where car direct to Herndon is taken. We hope to see a goodly number of our visiting brethren with us at this meeting, and cordially invite all ministering and other brethren who can, to assemble with us at the above appointed time. H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

A TWO days meeting will be held with the Olive and Hurley Church, Olive, N. Y., October 18th and 19th, 1913. Trains will be met at Ashokan Friday p. m. and Saturday a. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON.

THE Old School Baptist Church in Wilmington, Del., expects, if the Lord so wills, to hold its yearly meeting in its new house on Jefferson St., between Thirteenth and Fourteenth Sts., on the third Sunday in October, and Saturday preceding, to commence at 2 p. m. on Saturday. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

By order of the church.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Association of Primitive Baptists is appointed to meet with the church at Salisbury, Md., October 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1913. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited. Those coming from the north take train that leaves Broad St. station, Philadelphia, at 3 p. m., and Wilmington at 3:44 p. m. Tuesday, 21st. From Baltimore, Claiborne boat leaves Pier 8, Light St. wharf, about 4 p. m. via Claiborne, or boat for Salisbury (all water route) leaves Pier 1, Pratt St. wharf, 5 p. m., 21st. Tickets for Salisbury; get excursion tickets. Those from Philadelphia and Wilmington can get ten day excursion tickets to Delmar. Those coming from the south take train leaving Cape Charles at 11:20 a. m. Tuesday, arriving at Salisbury 3:10 p. m.

GEO. W. MEZICK, Church Clerk.

THERE is a two days meeting appointed at Cammal, Pa., the fourth Sunday in October and Saturday before (25th and 26th). All lovers of the truth will be welcome.

By order of the church.

WM. M. HART.

THE Second Church of Roxbury will hold a two days meeting, the Lord willing, at the yellow meetinghouse, near Roxbury village, Nov. 8th and 9th, 1913. Trains will be met at Roxbury Friday p. m. and Saturday a. m. A cordial invitation is extended all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON, Pastor.

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THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 81. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1913. NO. 21.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TIAWAH, Okla., Aug. 21, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I inclose in this the experience of sister Odell. She was a little girl when I preached near her father's and grandfather's home, about twenty years ago. I read it over carefully, and concluded to send it to you, though I have not her consent to have it published in the SIGNS. One point in her experience I wish to notice: she says: I often fear that my hope is only imagination. I, unlike some, never saw the Savior in a light; I never heard any voice say, Thy sins are forgiven thee, notwithstanding she loves the church and the brethren.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

GARDEN CITY, Mo., July 20, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER IN CHRIST:—I feel my weakness to-day to answer all you spoke of in your letter. To tell why I feel all the sweet remembrances, I would have to begin at where I hope experience began with me. I never have been able to tell my experience, nor write it, so you need not expect much of an answer. If God be my helper, I may say some things; if not, I cannot. I have learned that without him I can do nothing, not draw one breath, I am helpless. All I have has been given me, yet I find I am still wanting more, so unmindful of what has been given me. My experience, or hope, is little, yet I feel like the poet, it cannot be wasted, mortgaged nor sold. The first I remember of being brought to a sense of my sinfulness was when a child eleven years of age; it was something that a Primitive Baptist preacher said. I do not remember all he said, nor what he was talking about, and do not remember who it was. I began to think, and think seriously, of my condition, and thought I must live better and do better; I will not do this or that. The more I tried to do better the more failures I made, and often found myself doing just what I promised myself I would not do any more. About that time there was much talk about the world coming to an end, and this terrified me greatly. I knew I was not fit to live, nor fit to die, and thought that if I died I would surely go to torment. Do not think for a moment my family taught me this, for they never did. They never said a word about religion to me, which I am thankful for

I cannot say they taught me to believe as they did. I have often had it thrown up to me that they did, but I will not have it that way, as I learned these sayings of other people while telling their children that if they were bad they would go to torment, and, being a child, I believed it, yet was not taught it at home. I asked auntie one night when we went upstairs to bed when the world would come to an end, and she said, "Well, child, it cannot stand much longer." Of course one question called for another, and finally she said, "Well, let us go to bed now, you cannot understand." I soon got over that, then it was something else, and it seemed to me I had more to grieve over than any one else. I never did anything wrong but that I was sorry for it. I would often cry when I was out where I could have time to get my eyes brightened up before any one saw me. Children at school were not feeling that way, and if I spoke of feeling bad they only made fun of me, so then little did I say. I never said anything, except to one grown person, about these things. Sometimes I would not have any trouble for a long time, and when it did come back every mean thing I had done between this and my last sorrow came up before me, and this seemed more than I could bear, and I often cried myself to sleep at night. After I got older this fear of torment wore off, and I was brought to think more of Jesus, though not as a Savior. I thought I ought to love him, but found I could not. I did not know where to find him, nor how to approach him, he who was holy, and I being such a vile wretch. I could not even pray, and if I tried to pray it was for my good; not because I loved God, but for my own sake, which of course was worse than to be silent. Then again I would often feel that I needed to be prayed for, as I could not pray for myself. Often Uncle Billie Taylor and wife and others came to grandma's house to sing, and one night I called for the hymn, "Keep silence, all created things," &c. Uncle Billie said to me: "What do you think of that hymn?" All I could answer was, "It is pretty," then I left the room, for it seemed my heart would leave its resting-place. I did love the hymn, but did not mean for him to know it. As soon as I could get myself quieted I went back into the room, but he said no more to me, for which I was glad. They went on singing, but I took care not to call for any more hymns that night. I know now I was not then keeping things secret, though I thought I was. After I was married a preacher came to Little Flock carrying the Primitive Baptist name, but he has gone now where I think he then belonged: to the Missionaries. He went home with me one night and right away he commenced talking about religion. I told him I felt that I had ears and could not hear, eyes and could not see. Then he said, "Why, it is the Savior knocking; go join the church and be baptized and you will be all right." I said I did not think so. He said Jesus was knocking, and if I did not receive him he would soon cease knocking. I did not feel that he would. O the misery I felt; it seemed I was so shut up I could not come forth. I loved the Old Baptists, and loved what little I could understand, but there was so little for me. After he went to bed I commenced crying, for it seemed I was forever lost, and that no one was like me. I thought that if that preacher told an Old Baptist experience I surely was not one, and it troubled me, for I loved them better than any other people. I had gone

some to other denominations, but not even one crumb could I get. I must go back a little. While I was crying my husband came and sat down by me, and tried to comfort me by telling me I was as good as any one else, which I thought I was not, yet I did not want him to see me as I saw myself. I was like Job, all were poor comforters, and made me feel worse instead of better. Quite awhile after this trouble Addie Jefferies was at our house, and I asked her what denomination she thought the most of, expecting her to say Old Baptists, as her father was a minister, the pastor here, and her mother a Baptist, but she did not, which disappointed me. I had thought we would have a good talk if she did favor the Old School Baptists, she not being a member, for I would not talk to a member. Soon we moved away ten or twelve miles from the church, and it was then I felt what I was missing, for often I did not get to hear preaching. It was then I began to pray; O yes, with more love, more longing. There was a drawing towards the church that I could not explain. The next year we moved closer, then I did not miss many meetings. I do not remember when my mourning was turned into joy, but my sorrow was gone and I could not grieve as I had done. I tried to get it back, but could not. Often at meeting I could not keep the tears back, but I could not feast on anything after I went home, for all the comfort would be gone. When they had the association here, brother Ogle preached at my father's house, and I sat by brother Teague, but did not know him then. Brother Ogle was giving out such good food to the sheep that brother Teague could not be still, and it seemed to me I could not stand it any longer from the way he did, and the way I felt. After brother Jefferies was pastor here they had feet washing. I always left the meetings at those times, for it was too much for me, and to this day I feel I could not allow any of the brethren or sisters to kneel at my feet; O let me be at their feet. I often fear that my hope is only imagination, for, unlike some, I never saw the Savior in a light; I never heard a voice say, Thy sins are forgiven thee. It seemed that I knew so little about the Bible, and I kept waiting for better evidences, which never got any better. On Saturday before I joined the church on Sunday, sister Addie Rowland, who had been Addie Jefferies, offered herself to the church, and while they gave her the hand of fellowship Uncle Please Taylor offered himself to the church, then I left the house, for it was too much for me. I went back of the church-house, where auntie was taking care of Addie's baby; I just broke down and said, "O, Uncle Please has gone and left me, too;" it seemed they were gone where I never could go. Auntie said, "Can you not go, too?" I could only answer, "No." I put in a miserable night. I went to meeting Sunday morning, and brother Teague preached about how the eagle stirs up her nest, how she took the last prop out from under her young. I felt that every word was to me, for I was like the little eagle, ready to fall; I had lost every prop, yet was too unworthy to join the church, feeling that I would have to do it, yet saying I would not and that I could not. The hymn that day was, "'Tis a point I long to know," and when they came to, "Do I love the Lord or no?" I do not know how I ever got up there, nor how they ever received me; it was for nothing good that ever I did. When they then called for a hymn no one had one select-

ed. I do not know how I ever did it, but I called for them to sing:

"Hungry and faint and poor,
Behold us, Lord, again
Assembled at thy mercy's door,
Thy bounty to obtain."

After I was baptized I was very happy, and like the poet I could scarcely believe that I ever should grieve, that I ever should suffer again, but not so very long after this many doubts and fears came to destroy my happy frame of mind; but I do not want to go back again, but rather, like Moses, suffer afflictions with God's people than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

Dear brother and sister, I have told you some of what I hope have been the Lord's dealings with me, and have left out a great deal, but it is the best I can do. To me it seems the best evidence I have is, I love the brethren and sisters. I do feel to love them all, and they are far better than I. Now I can begin to answer some of the things in your letter, which was such a comfort to me. Yes, the memory is sweet to me, to look back to the days when a child, and remember the older ones, how they loved to meet together to worship God, and I feel that I, too, can sing, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me!" Yes, I do feel how much I lost by not being able, as you said, to comprehend the love, mercy and goodness of God, and I, too, must say, Salvation is of the Lord. Yes, I do feel like grasping your hand with fervor, and to shed tears of rejoicing over that love that flows from heart to heart. Yes, and I know how and what it is to go so far to meet together, and, as you say, go right by other places of worship, but, dear ones, we do not find at those other places of worship Jesus and him crucified, but the works of the flesh. I feel like Ruth: Entreat me not to leave thee. Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. You spoke in your letter about reading a letter in the SIGNS from sister Mabel Urquhart. Her membership is at Little Flock. I was glad to hear that she could write comfortingly to brother Teague, and worthy of a place in the SIGNS. May God still give her light to write comfortingly to the brethren and give God all the praise, honor and power, and may God be her guide and only refuge and all in all. O that God may remember Zion everywhere, and send his servants laden with the precious gospel to feed and strengthen and comfort his sheep, for often they get down in the valley, hoping against hope. O the sin that does so easily beset us. O that we may run with patience the race set before us, ever looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith.

This is a long letter, and not much said. May you have one comfort, and that is, I do remember you and have that christian love to you both, and would like to see you.

Now may God bless and comfort you as in days of old, and may you, too, prove his sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love. I would love to hear from you again.

ESSIE L. ODELL.

WOODSTOCK, Ont., Sept. 21, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I inclose two dollars for subscription for SIGNS for the year, as I see my subscription has expired, and I do not wish to be numbered with the delinquents, for you already have too many. I am sorry any professing to be Old Baptists should be, for it certainly is carelessness, to call it by no worse name.

I am very sorry to hear that you are not coming to our quarterly meeting in

October, but it does not seem to matter with me, for I dwell in a barren land; no dew nor rain, and no fruit, and it does seem as if I had no religion at all, just an empty, barren professor. O is there any one like me? and O what will the end of it all be? I have just one consoling thought: I long for it to be different, and I hope I long for some manifestation of the love of God, some evidence that I am a child of God, and that I might live and act as becomes a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, and O for a faith to realize and know that the religion of Jesus is true, and not merely an imagination of the brain. I want Jesus and his power and his revelation, but I cannot get them.

I am inclosing two letters for publication, if you see fit. The one from brother Benstead you will see he is willing for me to send. I read it with some comfort and satisfaction, as he told my feelings, as I also did the one from brother Oliver. I have not his consent to publish, but as he sends my letters to you, I suppose I may send his. Use your judgment about publishing this letter.

We were very sorry to hear of sister Ker's affliction, and hope she is better. We are both fairly well.

Unworthily your brother, if one at all,

R. SCATES.

ABERFELDY, Ont., Aug. 31, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER SCATES:—I have for some weeks past been very deeply impressed to write to you. I enjoyed very much reading your letter to Elder Ker in August 1st number of the SIGNS, and after reading it I felt that I must write to you, as my mind had been exercised very much in the same way concerning a shepherd being sent among you, but I did not seem to get started to write to you, and then when I read your letter in the last number of the SIGNS (Sept. 1st) it was such a comfort to me that it seems that I am compelled to write you. I feel as I attempt to do so that I am too vile and unworthy to write to any of God's dear children, and am often made to feel and say that there is none just like me. But when I read such letters as you wrote to the SIGNS I am made to feel and hope that there are some, at least, who know of the darkness and sin that I have passed through. But I can say with you, O the terrible deceitfulness of my wicked, corrupt heart, which seems continually to cast up everything that is evil and sinful, and I am powerless to stay the flood of evil which sometimes seems as if it would, and which does overwhelm me, yet I keep on hoping against hope. But as you say with the psalmist, I am a wonder unto many, for truly I am. As David said in another place, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works." —Psalms cxxxix. 14. I felt as I read your letter that you were telling me all things that ever I did, and how these words of Jeremiah suit me: "Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable?" But they that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick; and, He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. I think, If it ever could be that Christ Jesus came to call the good and the righteous, then where could I stand? I would be entirely left out. But we read, All have sinned and come short of the glory of God; and, There is none righteous, no, not one; because we all by nature are sinful; and, as Elder Ker wrote in the SIGNS in answer to the question, Can a subject of grace commit suicide? that the flesh of the child of God is no better than of

those who are not. I do not believe that Christ came to make flesh Spirit, or Spirit flesh, but he said, That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. I can only speak from my own experience. I know that I feel and know of the sinfulness of my nature, as I never knew when I was without hope, and I can truly say that sin is mixed with all I do, and as John Newton wrote,

> "Instead of this, he made me feel
> The hidden evils of my heart,
> And let the angry powers of hell
> Assault my soul in every part."

I know that some of my brethren and sisters say that they live better since they received a hope, and that they do not do the things they did before, but I have to say that when I would do good, evil is present with me. To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not; and, as you wrote, How many there are who do not know or feel that they are sick, and are great sinners, and I can say from the bottom of my heart, I have no fellowship for them. We read that Jesus Christ, the Savior of his people, the Redeemer of Israel, was crucified between two thieves, and some will say that it was the choice of the angry mob; but no, it was that the Scripture might be fulfilled: He was numbered with the transgressors, (Mark xv. 28; Isaiah liii. 12,) and then am I one with him. It does not read that he was numbered with those who did not or do not transgress. Some will say that there is no harm if we do not do anything wrong outwardly, but there would be no transgression then, and then we are not numbered with the transgressors, and so are not numbered with Jesus. Again, David said, Then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee. We also read that he who hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin, and what greater suffering can there be in the flesh than to know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing? Jesus Christ said, If any man come after me let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. He does not say to deny ourselves of this thing and that thing, but to deny self, and what greater cross is there than this? For I know that I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, and why? For mine eyes have seen the Lord of hosts. (Isaiah vi. 5.) I might be placed in a dark room full of wild beasts and would have no fear, but when daylight appeared I would be terribly frightened, and there could be no rest, no matter how much those from without would try to comfort or console me; and so with our sins, we may think we are not sinful and would not do as others do, but let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall. David said, Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance. Again, the psalmist said, Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil. But as you say, we are not glad, but we are sorry, because we want the respect of this world. In James iv. 4, we read, "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God." It is only when we are made to travel in the darkness of the wilderness that we are made to cry unto God, for they that have no darkness do not need to cry for light. They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. We read in Deut. xxxii. 10, "He found him in a desert land, and in

the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." In Amos v. 18–20, we read, "Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for you? The day of the Lord is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand upon the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?" If it were always light with us, and no darkness, or grief, or anguish of spirit, why would we hope? for if it were light we could see. But Paul says, "Hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." David says, "Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee: but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee."—Psalms cxxxix. 12. And again, God said, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew." We know that the rain cometh when the sky is clouded, and the dew falls in the darkness of the night, so we may know that when God is leading us through the darkness he knoweth the way that we take. When he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold. "For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him. Therefore am I troubled at his presence: when I consider, I am afraid of him. For God maketh my heart soft and the Almighty troubleth me: because I was not cut off before the darkness, neither hath he covered the darkness from my face," and as he said, Let there be light, and there was light, so will he speak peace to our dark and weary soul in his own time. Psalms cii. 13: "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favor her, yea, the set time, is come." So I would say, may we hope on, as he is our only hope.

I have written more than I intended. I will be pleased to hear from any of God's little ones any time. You can use this letter as you wish.

I am a sinner saved by grace,

REUBEN BENSTEAD.

HERNDON, Va., June 30, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER SCATES:—I am glad to say that I received your good letter of June 15th. I say glad, but I was more than glad to receive your epistle of love and fellowship, and said to myself on receiving it, O how can brother Scates still remember me, a poor, feeble worm of the dust, filled with doubts and fears? I do not feel worthy of the notice of any of God's children, and I am made daily to cry out, Unclean, unclean am I, in the sight of a holy God, and in the presence of the people of his great choice. Your letter came at a time I greatly needed it, for I had almost come to the conclusion that I was one alone in the world, and no one else on God's green earth just like me, but after reading your letter I said, O I have found another one almost like me, but yet not quite as bad as I feel myself to be. Just a short while before I received your letter I was pondering over the verse written by the dear old poet, who said,

> "When I turn my eyes within,
> All is dark, and vain, and wild;
> Filled with unbelief and sin,
> Can I deem myself a child?"

I mused over the words a little, and said, Dear old poet, you are dead, but your words live in the hearts and minds of God's dear children, who experience great darkness in this wilderness country

that can only be felt. Yes, can only be felt by the children of God, who are pilgrims and strangers on the earth, seeking rest and finding none, and it is only when the Lord finds them that they have any rest at all. I think it is stated in the Bible that by searching we cannot find out God, and should we be able in searching to find him while we are in this body of flesh, we could not look upon him and live, for he is "a consuming fire." Then, dear brother, all our conflicts, all our doubts and fears, must come upon us as upon gold tried in the fire. All our doubts and fears, unbelief and infidelity, come upon us by the persecutions of the flesh, and how can we, if we are children of God, escape this persecution? For the apostle said, Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. We could never fellowship the suffering of Jesus while he was here in the flesh if we were not tormented and persecuted by this old man, the flesh; daily and hourly must this strife go on, until time is ended with us on the earth forever. Then may we be enabled to say, in the language of the apostle Paul, Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ; and as Moses sang his song of deliverance from captivity, so will all the redeemed of the Lord sing: "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." Then, O then, what joyful news to captives set free, and as old Isaiah, the prophet, said, "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." I sometimes ask myself the question, Who is this man of sorrow and acquainted with grief? I am so ignorant and blind so much of my time that it is hard for me to answer such a question, yet I cannot think for a moment that it is the fleshly man, but it must be the Christ-man, formed in a man the hope of glory. It is this man, Christ, formed in one that makes him see all the hidden evils of his old corrupt nature. If Christ has ever been formed in me, then of a truth I have been made to see myself a very vile creature, filled with creeping things of the earth, and, worse than all, full of infidelity. I do not think you can possibly be quite such a sinner as I know myself to be. You write of being so taken up with worldly things that there seems to be no room for spiritual things. My dear brother, that is one of the things that I trouble over daily and hourly, being mixed up with worldly things. I am in public business, and it is a great trial of my life. I often think that if I continue much longer in it, it will drive me mad. If I could tell you the conflicts of my daily life here at my home in old Virginia, I believe you would pity me from the depths of your good heart. I often say to myself, If I could only sell out my business and retire from the bustle of the world, I might then have some comfort in spiritual things.

I greatly appreciate your letters, dear brother, but I fear that if you could know me just as I know myself you would never write to me again. Sometimes I think I will stop writing to the saints of God altogether, and stop deceiving them, but when I receive a letter such as you wrote I am led again to try and answer it, though it be written in a very imperfect manner. I am then reminded of the words, The way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

Yes, dear brother, the Scripture you

refer to in your letter is comforting indeed to the poor, sin-sick soul that needs the great Physician. The proud pharisee does not need this great Physician, for he feels to be whole and full of righteousness of his own make, but poor publicans and sinners crave this wonderful healing balm which makes the wounded spirit whole, and calms the troubled breast. It is no wonder then that when the Pharisees saw Jesus set at meat in the house with publicans and sinners that they asked of the disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? Of course they could not understand why Jesus could stoop so low as to eat with such a set of sinners, but when Jesus heard what they said unto his disciples, he said unto them, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

But I must not dwell any longer on this wonderful subject, for I feel to be getting into very deep water, and I am so weak and ignorant in spiritual understanding that I am at this very moment ready to cry out in the language of Peter, Lord, save, I perish.

I am making this letter too long, and must soon bring it to a close, but before I close I want to say to you, please write often for our family paper, the SIGNS, as I always enjoy reading your letters. I would love to send your last letter to the editors to be published. I most always look the SIGNS through before I read the letters, to see if I can find your name signed at the bottom of a letter, so you know that I greatly enjoy reading them, and do hope you may write often.

I am glad to know that you had Elders Ker and Fenton with you at your quarterly meeting. I believe I love both Elders Ker and Fenton, and have heard both of them preach to my great comfort, and I hope they will be able to attend our association this next fall, that will meet with our home church, Frying Pan. Now, brother Scates, why cannot you and sister Scates come and attend that meeting? O how I would love to meet you face to face and tell you in broken language how much comfort you have given me in all of your letters.

I must now close, for I have written too much already. I can fully agree with you in saying that when I write a letter it is nothing but a repetition of all I have ever written, and for this cause I am often made to feel ashamed of myself for attempting to write at all to any of God's dear children. I am all the time telling about myself, of my doubts, fears and infidelity, and cannot come to the exhortation to faith and godliness. As Paul said, "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." O poor, weak creature that I am, I cannot come boldly to the throne of grace, that I might find mercy and grace to help in every time of need.

Please pardon me for writing this long letter; it is not just what I wanted to write to you, but as I have told you before in some of my former letters, I have to write along at the time of writing just as my mind leads my pen, and can never lay up anything to write.

I will now conclude, by saying my health is much better than when I wrote the letter you refer to, published in the SIGNS May 15th. If you still feel that I am worthy of your notice, I would be glad to hear from you again soon.

From the least of all, if one at all,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

LAMONTE, Mo., July 19, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I am sending you this letter from this young sister, and if you think proper please publish it. She is feeble in health, but strong in mind, and is graciously blessed with the light of the Spirit for one so young in the Master's cause. Her abundant revelations of the Spirit cause a deep searching of self, and doubts and fears of self bring her to look on others as better than herself, and as the perfect work of the Spirit goes on the flesh is brought very low, and Christ and his perfect work are exalted. Hence her desire, as is the case with all of God's little ones who see themselves scarcely fit to sit at the brethren's feet, is to live the life of Christ. I remember your writing at one time on the parable of the five virgins, or of the five talents, and your saying that as the poor servant of the Lord found a dispensation of God's power entrusted to him, it caused a deep searching of heart, and he found himself sinking lower and lower in his own estimation. My dear brother, I have never had any confidence in myself, and as my brethren call for my poor services it causes much weeping and sorrow of heart, and a constant prayer for grace to strengthen me, that I may be strengthened for so great a work, and that my feeble services may feed, comfort and strengthen God's humble poor, and that peace may abound, and most of all, that God's great name may be honored, and his glorious cause held up in glory, and all to his own praise and glory in the full salvation of his dear people in time and eternity. Man is not in it at all, only as the happy recipient of God's manifold blessings. O for grace to see him, the great "I am that I am," and his people heirs of his glory.

Brother Chick, the SIGNS has many friends in the circle of my acquaintance, for which I hope I am thankful. We are having many warm meetings in the bounds of Mount Zion Association, and I feel that all have a desire to praise God for all his blessings.

I was sorry to see that your health had been poor, but rejoiced in heart to see that it was better.

I feel to hope that my poor heart goes out in prayer to almighty God for the welfare of the editors, and for all connected with the peace-loving, God-honoring, soul-comforting SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

J. A. TEAGUE.

GARDEN CITY, July 15, 1913.

MY DEAR PASTOR AND WIFE:—It is not my time to write, I know, if we count times. I have just received a letter from Elder J. F. Beeman, of Tiawah, Oklahoma, and it has proved a great comfort to me. I have been much cast down and in the dark, and did not enjoy the meeting as well as usual, and am just as hungry as though I had never been to the meeting, for I am so unable to keep the blessings, and am continually in need of God's grace. I do hope that you are feeding from the food that falls from the Master's table. I do believe that the truth was preached, yet I was unable to feel the power of it in me. I tried yesterday evening, as I hope God gave me the ability, to write to brother Hall. When I do not get to the meetings I like to hear about them, and it is so with brother Hall, and he likes to feel assured that his presence was wanted. I believe that he feels, as I often do of myself, that he is of no use anywhere he may be. While I cannot speak for the whole church, yet I believe that they all love him for the truth's sake. I fear the

choice that some have among God's called servants is more of the flesh than of the Spirit, and ought not so to be. Now I am only speaking for myself. I believe that when God calls his servants he has a purpose for them, and they will fill that purpose, and if not called, they cannot preach the word, for the natural mind, or carnal mind, is enmity to God, and cannot please him. I have looked for older and more able ones to write, for I feel so little to be writing to any of you, yet I do hope that it is the love shed abroad in my heart that prompts me to write, yet I cannot praise God as I would like. O that I could praise that blessed One, who is our guide, our life and our Lord, nay, more, our end and our all in all. I was in hope that you and brother Willis would be led out on the subject about which you asked him on Sunday evening. I am inclined to believe that when Jesus said, "It is finished," the work of redemption was done.

Brother Beeman said that he had just read a good letter from sister Mabel, of Harrisonville, forwarded by brother Teague, in the SIGNS, saying that her membership was at Little Flock, and that she would like to be with Little Flock again, but that she did not see the way open. This is one reason why I am writing to you, for I was glad that sister Mabel was given ability to write comfortingly to you, and that you sent it to the SIGNS. I hold her as a dear sister, and missed her at the meeting. I suppose you arrived home before I did, for I had to wait over at Kempton two hours. On the train I met brother and sister Kembrels, and they wanted to know all about the meeting.

After writing the above I laid it aside and went about my work, and while at my work the thought came, You are selfish; if brother Teague thinks that your letter will comfort some other poor soul, he is more able to judge than you, so leave it to his judgment. I have always written to you as a father, and if I write anything that is not right I want you to correct me as a child. I am but a young soldier enlisted for war, if a soldier of the Lord at all, and am the very least of all. I like that hymn, "Am I a soldier of the cross, a follower of the Lamb?" This is often a great question with me. I do not want a high name in the world, but O that I may sit at the feet of Jesus and the brethren, is all I ask, and far more than I deserve. If I am there, it is of sovereign mercy, and for nothing good that I have done or ever can do. Praise God from whom all blessings flow. If I am permitted to sit at his feet it will be of his mercy alone. I hope that you will understand me, if I do have a poor way of telling things, so I will leave my letter in your hand and to your judgment. I hope that you and your wife will come again, for we like to have visiting brethren and sisters. It makes manifest that sweet fellowship that flows from heart to heart, and comes from above. Our hopes, our fears, our aims are one, our comforts and our cares. We are but poor worms of the dust, and must look to Him who is the author and finisher of our faith, and he is our hope; our aim must be to give to him all praise, honor and power. Why is this? Because he works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure.

But I must close, or you will not wish to hear from me again.

Yours unworthily, BESSIE.

CASEY, Iowa, August 19, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—"Jesus answered and said unto them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." But he spake of the temple of his body. Who was the "I" that was to raise that temple, his body? The eternal "I AM" that then dwelt in that body of clay. Where did the I AM come from? He came down from heaven. What for? To do the will of him that sent him. What was his Father's will? That of all which he had given him he should lose none, but should raise them up at the last day. By the prophet Isaiah he said, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."—Isaiah xxvi. 19. Again, "After two days will he revive us: in the third day [the day Christ arose from the dead] he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." (In the world to come, when we awake with his likeness.)—Hosea vi. 2. When Christ on the cross cried with a loud voice, saying, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? then the eternal I AM that created all things, that had power to lay down his life and to take it again, left his body, then that body was dead. The third day the eternal I AM entered into that body, as he said he would, and the body awoke from its sleep, an immortal body, that will live eternally. After Christ was laid in Joseph's new tomb, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, "saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead; so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch." "As it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it." The angel said unto the women, "Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, "All hail." Then he said unto two of his disciples, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." "And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" Jesus said unto Mary, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." Christ opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures. Neither can we understand the same, unless Christ opens our under-

standing. "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad when they had saw the Lord." But Thomas, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples (that Jesus had revealed himself to) therefore said unto him, "We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days, again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." (See Matthew xxviii., Mark xvi., Luke xxiv., John xx.) There is a great deal said about doubting Thomas. In that immortal body, changed from mortal to immortal, that Christ arose in, not one of the Marys or one of the apostles or disciples knew Christ until he revealed himself to them. He had not revealed himself to Thomas. The time had come that Jeremiah spoke of, xxxi. 34: "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me," for the revealing of God to man is God's work, not man's. It is written in the prophets, All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, therefore every one that has learned of the Father cometh unto me. And no man knoweth the Son, but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Neither the apostles nor Marys could reveal Christ to Thomas; Christ alone could reveal himself in that glorified body. "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel: which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner [with the same body that arose from the tomb, like all his children will have when they arise in his likeness] as ye have seen him go into heaven." Paul said he was seen then of the twelve; after that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once. When Christ ascended up into heaven then were fulfilled the words of David in the twenty-fourth Psalm: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors: and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? [Christ] The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory." David also said, touching Christ's resurrection and ascension: "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet. Sing praises to God, sing

praises; sing praises unto our King, sing praises. For God is the King of all the earth."—Psalms xlvii. 5–7. "He that goeth forth and weepeth [when Jesus came to die for his people, the elect, whose sins he bore on the cross] bearing precious seed, [they were so precious he laid down his life for them, but not for the tares] shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."—Psalms cxxvi. 6. As he said in John xvii. 24: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world [that he would not pray for] hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these [of the other world that he saved] have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." Not one sheaf will be left in the field (this world). Paul wrote saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead. (Acts xxvi. 22, 23.) Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep. (Heb. xiii. 20.) And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he might have the preeminence. (Col. i. 18.) And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness and the first begotten of the dead. (Rev. i. 5.) But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. (Romans viii. 11.) Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus. (2 Cor. iv. 14.) Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high he led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men. Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. (Eph. iv. 8–11.) The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place. Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men. (Psalms lxviii. 17, 18; see 1 Thess. iv. 13–18.)

Yours in Christ, my only hope of heaven, R. S. BANKS.

SUTTON, W. Va., Sept. 6, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have been requested to write by a dear and precious brother and father in Israel, Elder J. B. Cross, upon the following portion of God's word: "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Rom. viii. 1. I feel my weakness so sensibly that it is with fear and trembling that I make the attempt. I feel that I am wholly inadequate to the undertaking, and that unless guided and directed by almighty power I shall not be able to write anything that will be of any interest or that will be of comfort to the children of the heavenly King. In the preceding chapter the apostle had been describing, or rather reciting, his conflicts with sin, saying that when he would do good, evil was present with him, so that the good he would he did not, and the evil that he would not that he did. This I believe to be the experience of

every child of grace after that they have received a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. It is only the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ that enables them to see and to hate their sin. Thus the exceeding sinfulness of sin is revealed to them, so that they cry out, as did the apostle, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then he exclaimed, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." The brighter the light of Jesus shines in our hearts the more of our total depravity we see. Thus it was with the apostle, he saw that in him, that is, in his flesh, there dwelt no good thing; and so says every one who has been born of the Spirit. Such an one realizes that all his best works are but as filthy rags, and that without free grace he is lost forever. It is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus only that enables the children of the kingdom to see themselves as they are, the worst of all God's creatures. It is no wonder that they cry out, "O wretched man that I am!" But this power which enables them to see themselves the worst of all God's creatures also preserves them from condemnation and death.

Now come the words of the text: "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Although they walk in the flesh, they do not war after the flesh, but there is still a continual warfare going on. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, * * * so that we cannot do the things that we would." But notwithstanding the many conflicts during our pilgrimage journey in this world of sin and sorrow, not one of the redeemed family shall ever come into condemnation, for they are bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh; they are members of his mystical body, the purchase of his blood. God hath placed every member in the body as it hath pleased him, therefore the body is complete in him. He died for their offences, and rose again for their justification, and through his suffering they are made the righteousness of God in him. Again he said, He "hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." "He hath saved us," that is, he hath delivered us from a state of condemnation and spiritual death, and brought us into a state of justification and spiritual life. We are born of the Spirit, and washed in his blood, and therefore cannot come into condemnation, but have passed from death unto life, and the Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, and it is written, "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." They are sons by election, by adoption and by covenant relation with him; then for one of them to come into condemnation would frustrate God's will and overturn his purpose. But he says, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Thus they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. They were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, he having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto

himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. It is of God that we are in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, and Christ so loved the church that he gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, nor wrinkle, nor any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blame before him in love. The elect members of Christ are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." "And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." O what love Christ hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ? Then the apostle asks, "Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For [he continues] I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor pincipalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." No, nothing shall ever separate one of the mystical members of Christ from his love, therefore they cannot come into condemnation. Jesus said, "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Again, he said, "Upon this rock will I build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." This was the stone that was set at naught of the legal builders, and that is set at naught by all legal worshipers and workmongers of this our day, who trust in their own good works for salvation. But Christ alone is the salvation of all the elect vessels of mercy, and there is salvation in none other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, but we are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called, therefore there can be no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.

But I must bring this letter to a close, as I have already written more than I expected when I began. I do not know that I have written anything that will prove to be of interest to the flock, but will mail it to you for your consideration, and if you think proper to publish it you may do so.

I am your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the hope of a glorious resurrection, and a blessed immortality beyond the grave,

J. R. DENNISON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., April 2, 1907.

DEAR SISTER BREWSTER:—Your letter of March 26th, 1907, was received and enjoyed. Our consolation in this life is to communicate and speak one to another. I was over to New York city Sunday, March 24th, and met your mother-in-law, and was glad to meet her. We had a good visit with the New York people. Sister Brewster spoke of the passage in Matthew iii. 12: "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." This passage, like all Scripture, is given for our instruction, reproof, &c., and pertains to God's people, and this relates to the experience and exercise of a soul quickened by the Spirit

and born again of incorruptible seed. His fan in his hand I would say meant the Word, or Spirit, which is sharper than any two-edged sword, dividing asunder between joints and marrow, and separating the precious from the vile, the same Spirit that kills the flesh and makes alive in the Spirit. John the Baptist is here declaring the office and mission of Christ. He will thoroughly purge his floor. The fan, or Spirit, now sweeps away all our righteousness that we have of our own making, and we see it as filthy rags. This fan brushes away the chaff and all that is combustible and leaves the wheat. We know that the wheat in the stalk is hidden, inclosed with the chaff, and in the stalk all wheat looks alike, the same as all the human family look alike. The wheat would remain the same, or in the same condition, unless it passes through the threshing machine and is torn asunder and all shaken up. So it is with subjects of grace, this process they undergo of being torn asunder, passing through tribulations and trials. We are separated from what we were covered with, and the hidden wheat brought to light. Now this chaff, or covering, had its usefulness for its day, for when the wheat is matured and ready to pass from one state to another all that it had rested securely in must be torn from it, and it is now presented without clothing, or naked. So a subject of grace is brought to a condition as naked before God, all is laid bare in his sight, and the fan in the hand of Christ is the only power that will do this, and it is thoroughly purged. He will "gather his wheat into the garner." The wheat is now laid bare, and travels no more with the covering it formerly did, but is gathered into the garner. I would liken the garner to the church. God's children are gathered into the church by the same fan that separates chaff from the wheat, and they now see eye to eye and faith is revealed from faith to faith; they are made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. This chaff, or self-righteousness, good works, is now consumed by the unquenchable fire. I understand the unquenchable fire to be God, for our God is a consuming fire. After all this process the wheat must be ground to powder, that it may become bread. This process is not pleasing to the wheat, but is necessary, as there is still some covering that must be yet separated. As we come to the stage of wheat in our new birth all things are now new, our eyes opened to a new world; songs of praise and thanksgiving go forth. We know nothing of the grinding and crushing that we are to pass through in order that we may all be one in Christ, as the wheat after being ground is one in a loaf of bread. There is no distinction, now it is all one. Should a grain come in that has not been ground up, and the remaining hulls separated, it would not mix with and be a part of the loaf. So you see the travel of a pilgrim to Zion is through rough and thorny roads, and all that is earthy must be torn off.

I must close, but will say a word or so more. I believe the church of God is one body, and stands complete before him, those who have passed from this life, those who are now living, and those who are yet to be born, and that the travels, trials and tribulations of God's children are for their own salvation and their own experience. Every child of God stands pure and holy, without spot or blemish, before God, for Christ has redeemed them, fulfilled the law for them, and none can pluck them out of his hand. So whether we are on the mountain or in the valley the names of his saints are written on the palms of his hands.

Your brother, I hope,

J. M. FENTON.

AVONDALE, Ala., May 9, 1913.

DEAR ELDER KER:—Among the many good and comforting letters received from Elder S. S. Crumpton from time to time this is one, and I have decided to send it to you for publication in the SIGNS, if you see proper to do so. Elder Crumpton is a precious brother to me, and is a sound and able defender of the doctrine of God our Savior, and I would be glad if he would take and read the SIGNS regularly.

I assume the responsibility of sending you the letter without consulting him about it.

Your brother in affliction and hope in Christ, H. J. REDD.

MAY 7, 1913.

ELDER H. J. REDD—DEAR BROTHER:—I have just received and read your letter of May 5th, and have enjoyed it very much, and feel that I do not want to wait until next week to say so to you, but I want to write you now, for I know not what another week may bring forth. My nephew and his family spent last night here, and I was speaking to him about some of the very things contained in your letter, even using some of the identical words you have used. Why is this? Are you and I being exercised by the same Spirit? Walk we not in the same steps? This is strength to me. With my full confidence in you as one of the redeemed of God, to find that I am in a measure, though a small measure, being exercised in mind and thought as you are, I repeat, is strength to me, and I glean comfort and have hope that I am not deceived, but am, too, a child of God. Yes, I received the two copies of the SIGNS you sent to me. I have read all of one and a part of the other, and have enjoyed all that I have read, especially your article and Elder Silas H. Durand's letter, and have read nothing that I dissent from. I saw brother Lampkin yesterday eve, and I let him have the one I had read, and I asked him to read it, assuring him that there was a feast in it for him. I asked him to take care of it and return it, for I want to read it again.

Yes, we had a good meeting at Mount Olive, and it was good to be there. No one joined, but I saw much evidence of a desire upon the part of seven, and I think we may have some additions there this year. I hope to meet you at brother Dyke's on the 3rd. You will be met Sunday morning at Calera. I am glad to think of having you wish me at Ebenezer in June. I also want you at Mt. Olive in June if you can come. I know something of stemming the current in this cold, declining day, when the love of many waxes cold, and while many have given up their zeal for the order, service and worship of God. There is now a falling away of the Gentiles, and in this I feel as did the apostle when he saw the falling away of the Jews: I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my kinsmen according to the flesh. Will the kingdom be taken from us and given to a people bringing forth the fruits thereof?

Yes, brother, I verily believe that "the last days" and the "perilous times" are upon us, and how needful, how necessary, that the "few" continue to walk uprightly, and stand firm for the order and doctrine of God's house. I am sure there will be at least a "few" to die at their post, earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints. But the heart-searching question now arises, Shall I be one of the few who shall be so highly favored of God as to stand unmovable, always abounding in the work

of the Lord? This seems too much for such an one as I to hope for, yet it is not too much for me to desire. I confess that I am nothing but a sinful wretch unless grace has done something for me. I confess, too, that I cannot stem the current of wickedness unless God works in me the power, the will and the earnestness necessary thereto.

I have read the letter from the brother in Texas, which you inclosed with yours, and noticed his two questions, and now that I have read them, I suppose I am about as anxious as he to have your answer to them. If it pleases the Lord to exercise your mind along this line you may tell me in your next letter.

I suppose I have written enough for this time. We are all as well as usual. I hope you and yours are enjoying all of God's blessings.

I am yours in sweet fellowship, though unworthy, S. S. CRUMPTON.

INFORMATION WANTED.

MRS. LINA W. BECK, who has recently moved to Spokane, Wash., wishes to know if there are any Old School Baptists in or near that city, and if there are, she would be pleased to hear from them. Her address is 826 South Monroe Street.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

NOTICE.

EXPLANATION.

FOR some time I have thought that I should explain more fully why I have not written as often as usual this year for the SIGNS. The only reasons given so far have been darkness of mind and lack of inclination, but there is yet another reason perhaps more justifiable. My wife has been in failing health since April, and has needed all my time and attention when I have not been from home filling my regular appointments, and that only a few hours with one exception, when I was away two nights, but only seventeen miles from home. Her condition is not at all improved at this writing, hence I cannot tell when I shall be able to write as formerly. Assisting in the preparation of copy and proof reading, with few exceptions, has been all that I could do toward the publication of the SIGNS, since April. I have never thought my writings of special importance, yet have tried to cast in my little mite, being one of the editors of the SIGNS. My relations with Elder Chick and the managers of the SIGNS have always been most pleasant, and I would not have any one think otherwise. I have often questioned, however, my vital interest in the things of the kingdom of God, and fear that my worldly and bodily afflictions are the cause of my depressed condition of mind.

We are receiving numerous letters from our brethren, sisters and friends, expressing love and sympathy for us in our affliction, and while we fully appreciate each letter, and even a card, many are unanswered, and we hope all will excuse our neglect and accept this as an expression of gratitude as well as an explanation.

H. C. KER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1913.

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EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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REVELATION XXI. 12.

"AND had a wall great and high."

This is a description of the wall which John saw around the city of God, the new Jerusalem, which he saw coming down from God out of heaven, and this city is the church which is redeemed unto God, where he makes his dwelling-place, and wherein all who love him shall also dwell. Much is said in this chapter concerning this city, all of which is full of sublimity, and all of which furnishes ground for rest and gladness to the inhabitants of the city. But it is our mind now to write of the wall in its greatness and its height, and to call attention to some of the material of which it is composed. The Scriptures are full of all manner of illustrations and figures of speech by which through natural things the things which are spiritual and heavenly are set before us. One of the figures most frequently used in the Scriptures to set forth the safety and security of all those who love and serve God is that of a wall. The people of God are compared to a city with strong walls for defense. They are compared to a house which is glorious, built up of living stones, and then they are compared to those who dwell in the house. They are also compared to the inhabitants of a city which abide within its walls in safety. These things would have, when and where the Scriptures were written, great meaning. Turning to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, or reading ancient history, one of the first things which will arrest the attention of the reader will be the constant need of defense against foes from without. It will be seen that every village had its wall of defense. This was needed, both against ravenous beasts at night, which would creep in upon the flocks and herds and destroy them, and even make men their prey, and also against enemies among the tribes and families around them, who would, both by night and by day, soon learn their defenseless condition without a strong wall around them, and come upon them to destroy them. A very simple wall would serve against wild beasts, but more elaborate defense would be needed against armies of men, and so all through the history of eastern countries and olden times we find constant references to walled towns, villages and cities.

In the first place, we learn that which was true in general of all eastern cities and towns was especially true of Jerusalem, the city of the great King. Jerusalem was walled about from the beginning, in common with all other ancient cities, and men were called often to view her walls and towers, which were a wonder to other people. Her natural defences upon the hillsides were strong, and that strength had been used to the best advantage in the erection of her walls. But we must remember that that city had a defense which no other city ever had: the God of heaven and earth was her special defense. Other cities might have had walls around them as high and massive as those around Jerusalem, but

they lacked the one strong defense which belonged to Jerusalem, viz., that God was on her side. So we read expressions like this in the Old Testament: God is my refuge and defense; my strong tower, and it is declared that he is a wall of fire round about his people, as well as the glory in their midst. And, "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever." And, "We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." The walls of cities then were, first of all, as we have been saying, designed for defense against outward foes, but still they also subserved other purposes. Often they were made broad and high enough to become places of observation; from their top the approach of either enemies or friends could be noted, and so defense against the one or a welcome of the other provided. If an enemy was approaching, the sentry on the wall giving notice at once, the gates were closed. If a friend was approaching, at once, upon notice by the sentry, the gates were opened. Beside, the walls became a place of meeting for the inhabitants of the city in the cool of the evening, where in security all manner of pleasant social intercourse was carried on. We have intimations of this throughout the Old Testament Scriptures. Therefore the walls of cities became a source of gladness in more ways than one, but defense was, after all, the chief thought, and those who were sheltered behind these strong walls could sleep in safety by night, and go about their usual business or pleasures by day, feeling well assured that there could no danger set upon them to do them harm. I will both lay me down in peace and sleep, for thou, Lord, only maketh me to dwell in safety, was the language of one who trusted in the sure defense provided for Zion.

Let us note that all that is said in the Old Testament concerning Jerusalem is made use of in the New Testament to set forth the strong defense of spiritual Jerusalem, the church of God on earth, and especially in this book called Revelation is this true. The people of God, called by grace, and brought to know and desire the Lord, are spoken of as making up the inhabitants of that city whose builder and maker is God; they are the true city of God, the city of the great King; they enter in through the gates into the city. Both these last expressions are right expressions. They are called "the city of God" because a place with no inhabitants could not be called a city. If we speak of any city our thoughts at once go to the inhabitants thereof. Many people must be gathered and dwell together ere we can speak of any place as a city, but the people do not make up the streets and the walls of that city. The people are one thing, and streets, walls and provisions for the happiness and safety of the people is quite another thing. But people dwelling together within the walls, and walking upon the streets, and partaking of the advantages of that city, with its walls and buildings, homes and temples, make up what men call a city. Thus all the redeemed of the Lord are sheltered and protected and dwell in the mansions of God within the strong walls of defense which God has provided for them. All this is true concerning the city of God; they all have a great and high wall around them. All this belongs to their state on earth. In that heavenly world to which they go there shall be no need of defenses, for there will be found there no foes to assail them, but here and now the church of God needs strong defenses, for her foes are many and strong, stronger than any

feeble man can contend against, and these defenses are spoken of in the text as a wall great and high.

This brings us to ask, Of what are these walls which surround the city of God composed? In the chief and highest sense of the word, Jehovah himself is their wall of defense. But our God reveals himself in various ways, and through various means, to his people in all the relations which he bears to them, and this is true also when we read of him as the wall round about his people. God is their defense, providentially from death and destruction, from being overcome through persecution and from being allured from their steadfastness through the friendships, the pleasures or the ambitions of this world. That invisible God who guarded Israel all the way from Egypt to the promised land, coming to their help in every trying hour, still guards the natural life of his people and preserves the visibility of his church. This is true providentially. But also this God is their defense against all the lying devices of their chief adversary, the devil, so that they stand fast in the love of God and in the doctrine and order of his house. He it is who keeps back the floods of error, or else when those floods come in upon the people he strengthens them against the waters. All this comes to his people through his own direct care over them and daily provision for them. But while this is most blessedly true, yet the figure used in this chapter in Revelation seems to compel us to speak of Jehovah rather as he who has erected the city, and built its walls, and furnished its streets, and brought in the people who dwell there. God is in it all, but yet we must speak of walls, streets and inhabitants as being his appointment, and not himself. God is in the city, but, after all, the city is not God. Often in the Scriptures the church is spoken of as a building. When this is the case, each lively stone which has a place in the building is presented as being one of the subjects of grace. They are called lively stones built up into the house, but this will not apply when we speak of the walls of the city. God's people dwell within the walls, but they are not the walls themselves. So strong, great and high are these walls that they can rightly be called salvation itself; they are salvation to the people sheltered by them. The walls of a city are built up of many different stones gathered from the country around, and these stones are cemented together strongly. In this city of God these stones are the visible evidences of the wisdom, love and care of Him who is invisible. As said before, it seems evident beyond all question that this city is intended to set forth the church of God guarded and safe in the midst of all her foes. Without that city are all manner of evil characters, and all that love and make a lie. The inhabitants might well tremble at their foes were it not for the wall of defense which God has erected between them and their foes. It is not here to be forgotten that God is always personally their defense, but still, for the existence of the visible church he has provided riches of gracious help.

It is our mind that the walls of this city are built up of the doctrine and order established and revealed in the word of God. To what refuge do the people of God flee when the enemy is all around them, or when they find still more dangerous enemies within their own hearts? What is the answer to their questionings as to how they shall stand in the day of temptation and trial? What is their defense in the day of adver-

sity? Do not we find the answer to these questions in that which God has revealed of himself in his word? Is there any defense comparable to the revelation of his omnipotence, his omniscience and his omnipresence? Is there anything that can give greater strength than to remember his everlasting love, his truth, his gift of his dear Son and his bestowal of the Holy Spirit to bring to our remembrance the things which Jesus spake to us in the days of his flesh? What can overcome the terrors of a guilty conscience if not the remembrance of the atonement upon Calvary, and the full redemption and justification wrought out for sinners there? As a defense against the assaults of the enemy, who often hurls such darts as this: You are such a sinner that even though once you may have obtained mercy, it must be all forfeited now, what is better than to look for a little once more upon that precious portion of the wall of salvation, the final preservation of the saints through grace to glory? When the enemy hurls this dart, You are no better than any of your fellow-men, and there never has been in you anything that could merit the esteem of Jehovah, what can silence these accusations like a glimpse into the glorious doctrine of election, the election of men through grace to glory, upon no grounds of merit of their own, but solely upon the ground that God will have mercy upon whom he will? Each one of these truths is unassailable and never can be overcome, and when taken together they make up this great and high wall, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail.

Still further, as they walk about this Zion, and behold this wall of salvation which has been their defense, and the defense of their fathers from the beginning, they can and do say with exultation, Rejoice not over me, O mine enemy. What can the strongest foe do against the wall which God has provided? The foe may, yea, he surely will, prevail against every human defense that we may set up, but who or what can prevail against the work of God? And this is our refuge, our defense. In all the generations of the past the church has been sheltered by the order and doctrine which God has set up and revealed to her. When within these walls she has dwelt in safety alone, and in the doctrine and order of the church has been always found that which has separated her foes from her, so that while behind these walls not one of them could set upon her to harm her. This wall of truth is great and high, so great that no power has ever overthrown it, so high that no enemy has ever scaled it, and its foundations have been laid so deep in the everlasting purposes of God that no foe has ever undermined it. This is the defense of the city of our God, this is the refuge of his people forever. C.

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CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by James Avery.)

To the Elders and messengers of the Lexington Association, in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, Ulster Co., N. Y., Oct. 1st and 2nd, 1913, greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In the providence of God we are permitted to meet according to previous appointment, and in this, our letter, we desire to call your attention to the words found in the epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. xv. 20: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." This is a great and glorious chapter truly, beginning with the gospel by which we are saved, and ending with the complete subjugation of all things unto him who died for our sins, and was buried, and rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures. (Verses 3 and 4.) "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."—Acts i. 11. The writer of this epistle seemed to know nothing but Christ crucified, Christ risen and ascended, and returning to reign. In this chapter he gives special prominence as to the resurrection proving that the life and death of Christ would have availed us nothing if he had not risen; that apart from this great fact there is no gospel to preach, no ground for faith, no salvation; but, Christ being risen, all is well with those who trust in him, and as he is in his risen body, so shall we be. (Phil. iii. 21; John iii. 20, 21.) "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."—Rom. v. 12, 19. All are in Adam, without exception, and therefore all are sinners, and dead in trespasses and sins. All who are born again are in Christ, and he is wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption and life eternal to all who have been born again. (1 Cor. i. 30.) "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." The kingdom of God will be that condition of affairs on earth when the will of God shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven, (Matt. vi. 10,) or as in verse twenty-eight of our chapter, when the Son having during the thousand years (Rev. xx.) subdued all things unto himself, and cast Satan and all his followers into the lake of fire, God shall be all in all. In order to enjoy that kingdom and its glory these present mortal bodies of flesh and blood must be changed, and be made like his resurrected body, of flesh and bones. (Luke xxiv. 39.) They will be as real and tangible as his resurrected body, and no longer subject to the powers and circumstances which control our mortal bodies. (Luke xxiv. 31.) "Behold, I shew you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment." In 1 Thessalonians iv. 16–18, this is more fully set forth, and so clearly that we do not see how we can fail to see it. Our Lord himself referred to it in these words: "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." The natural man can never see or inherit the kingdom of God, unless he is born from above, and all who, being born again, belong to the kingdom, must, in one of two

ways, obtain a body fit for the kingdom. The body must die and rise from the dead at his coming, or be in a moment changed without dying, as were the bodies of Enoch and Elijah. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. Corruptible and mortal are terms referring to our present bodies; incorruptible and immortal describe the bodies that shall be ours at his coming, when we shall be like him. This quotation in Isaiah xxv. 8, 9, reminds us that when he comes and the glorified church is with Christ reigning over it, Israel shall have her place, with her rebuke taken away from off all the earth, for she shall see him coming in his glory. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." In Hosea xiii. 14, from which part of this is quoted, the words are, "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." Thinking of these words, we often say that we are glad that God hates death and the grave, and will destroy both, and will never alter his purpose about it, while in the case of the believer the curse of death is changed to a blessing, and brings only gain, and the very "far better." (Phil. i. 21–23.) The glories of the resurrection, the kingdom, the new earth, concerning which Paul speaks in Rom. viii. 17, 18; 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18, and many such words, may well encourage us to be steadfast in the faith, unmoved by any false doctrine, and gladly walking in the good works which he has prepared for us. He only demands us to present to him our bodies, which is truly a reasonable thing, since he has bought us with a great price, that he may work in us all his good pleasure, causing all grace to abound toward us. (Eph. ii. 10; Rom. xii. 12; 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20; 2 Thess. i. 11, 12; 2 Cor. ix. 8; Matt. xxvii. 51–53; 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18.) "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power."—Rev. xx. 6.

R. W. SANFORD, Moderator.
JAMES AVERY, Clerk.
J. H. BEVIER, Assistant Clerk.

(Written by Elder J. B. Slauson.)

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Andes and Middletown Church, at Union Grove, N. Y., September 24th and 25th, 1913, to the churches composing the same sends christian greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—Through the kind providence of a covenant-keeping God we are once more blessed with the privilege of meeting in an associated capacity, and we hope that the blessed Spirit of our adorable Redeemer will guide us in the way of truth, and that the bright rays of his blessed Spirit may shine into our hearts, that we may be enabled to rejoice in the blessed truth as proclaimed by his servants, and in writing this, our annual letter, for the consideration of our brethren we wish to call attention to the word "associated." There can be no association unless there is agreement, no agreement without fellowship, no fellowship without like experience. To be associated in the things of the kingdom of our God there must be likeness or sameness. For example, the apostle used the comparison of light and darkness, showing that there is no communion between two elements of opposite nature, therefore no association. In 2 Cor. vi. 14–16, we read, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness

with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." Hence the children of God cannot be associated with unbelievers in the things of the kingdom of our God, for one is actuated by a heavenly and divine Spirit, and the other by a carnal spirit, which is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Again, as recorded in John x. 26–28, the Savior said unto the Jews, "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." In John viii. 44, while Jesus taught in the temple he said unto the scribes and Pharisees, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." The sheep of our heavenly Shepherd hear the voice of their Shepherd, and they follow him because they know his voice, and they desire to obey their Shepherd in all things whither they are called. Here we see that the children of the devil desire to do the lusts of their father, hence cannot be associated with the children of our heavenly Father in the things of the kingdom of God; there must be a like interest in these heavenly things, in order to be associated in those things, and to have a like interest we must be actuated by the same Spirit. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. * * * Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." This is a positive declaration of our blessed Lord, and every recipient of his grace must be born of the Spirit in order to see the kingdom of God, and must be born both of water and of the Spirit to enter into the kingdom of God, and being born of the one Spirit, and of the same water, by which we enter into the same kingdom, we rejoice in the things of that kingdom, hence are associated in the kingdom of God, and have a mutual interest in the welfare of the kingdom of God, for the exaltation of that kingdom to the praise and honor of his great name. Furthermore, we are associated by the love of God, for he sheds abroad in our hearts his love, whereby he loved us and gave himself for us. Therefore being bound together by the one cord of love, we love one another with a pure heart fervently, praying for the welfare of each other, and holding up each other's hands, by ministering to the needs and necessities of our brethren, and so fulfilling the law of Christ, hence associated. Again, the children of our heavenly Father are associated in the songs of Zion. Those whose hearts have been tuned by the Spirit of him who brought again from the dead that great Shepherd of his sheep, will join their voices in singing:

"From whence doth this union arise,
That hatred is conquered by love?
It fastens our souls in such ties,
As distance and time can't remove.

It cannot in Eden be found,
Nor yet in a paradise lost;
It grows on Immanuel's ground,
And Jesus' rich blood it did cost."

John in Revelation informs us of an innumerable company who had washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, standing upon Mount Zion, having their

harps tuned, and singing "the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." The same apostle by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit declares that none can learn that song but those that are redeemed from the earth by the blood of the crucified Lamb. Being redeemed by the same blood and singing the same song, we conclude they are associated, and we trust that our heavenly Father, through kind providence and tender mercy, has gathered us together that we may be associated in deed and in truth to the lifting of Jesus on high and crowning him Lord of all. Amen.

J. B. SLAUSON, Moderator.
A. J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Roxbury Association, now in session with the Andes and Middletown Church, Union Grove, N. Y., Sept. 24th and 25th, 1913, to the several churches with which she corresponds sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—We are glad to address you once more by the way of a Corresponding Letter, as it has pleased the Lord in his all-wise providence to spare our unprofitable lives another year, and bring us together in an associate capacity, for which we feel very thankful. His loving-kindness and tender mercy have surrounded us, and his watchful care has been over us. Your ministers have come to us declaring the unsearchable riches of God's grace, preaching unto us Jesus and him crucified as the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, and it has been a feast of fat things to poor hungry souls, whereof our hearts have been made glad, and we can say with the poet:

"Blest be the dear uniting love
That will not let us part;
Our bodies may far off remove,
But we are joined in heart."

We ask a continuance of your correspondence in the future as well as in the past.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Olive and Hurley Church, Ulster Co., N. Y., where we hope to meet your messengers and receive your correspondence again.

J. B. SLAUSON, Moderator.
A. J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

The churches composing the Lexington Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, Ulster Co., N. Y., October 1st and 2nd, 1913, to the churches and associations with which we correspond send christian salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—If we can truly and honestly address you we would desire to be led by the Spirit into all truth while thus engaged, that we may have fellowship one with another for the hope set before us in the gospel that worship God in the Spirit and have no confidence in the flesh, for we are informed by the word, They that worship God must worship in spirit and in truth, for God is a Spirit and seeketh such to worship him. Yes, my dear brethren, when we are led by the Spirit our eyes are closed to all the vanities of this life and lifted above the things of time to that inheritance which is above, where everlasting day abides, and pleasures banish pain.

"There we shall see his face,
And never, never sin;
There from the rivers of his grace
Drink endless pleasures in."

We trust that our coming together has been profitable and encouraging to all, and that all have felt to say in their heart

that it has been good for us to be here. Our ministers have come laden with the precious fruit, and it has been good to our taste, and we have been nourished and fed, in the language of the Scripture, as calves of the stall, fed on the sincere milk of the the word, and have been strengthened thereby, and we trust that it may be the will of God to gather us in many an associate capacity, to hear those whom we trust and believe he has set upon the walls of Zion to proclaim the everlasting gospel of the Son of God, for he that cometh unto God must believe that he is, and is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Our next session, the Lord willing, will be held with the Second Roxbury and Middletown churches, Halcottsville, Delaware Co., N. Y., at the usual time, first Wednesday and Thursday in October, 1914.

R. W. SANFORD, Moderator.
JAMES AVERY, Clerk.
J. H. BEVIER, Assistant Clerk.

MEMORIALS.

IT has pleased our heavenly Father to take out of our midst our much esteemed brother and father in the gospel, **Elder James Miller,** whose voice we have listened to in meeting for many years while declaring the gospel of the Son of God in its purity. He was sympathetic and forgiving to a fault, and unwavering in church order. Though physically weak, he was spiritually strong in the faith of God's elect. It was manifestly shown in him, as it is written, "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." We are made to mourn because we cannot see his face and hear his voice in our meetings again. Truly a grand and good servant has gone to his reward. May God give christian resignation to his holy will to those awaiting that crown of righteousness received by him, and laid up for all them that love His appearing. May his dear widow, our sister, be blessed with the same living faith of her departed husband, together with the brotherhood.

R. W. SANFORD, Moderator.
JAMES AVERY, Clerk.
J. H. BEVIER, Assistant Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at the bride's residence, Wednesday, Sept. 24th, 1913, Benjamin H. Millard, of Harrisburg, Pa., and Miss Estella A. Smith, of Pennington, N. J.

By Elder J. M. Fenton, Sept. 3rd, 1913, at the home of the bride, Lee H. Daughenbaugh and Mildred D. Fenton.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Miss Blanche Baird was born Oct. 31st, 1865, and sweetly fell asleep in Jesus in the triumph of a precious hope in Christ August 11th, 1913. The subject of this notice was born near Cave City, Barren Co., Ky., and spent all the years of her life at the old home of her childhood. This dear friend was a woman of wonderful character, one of the most self-sacrificing persons I have ever known. Her chief delight seemed to be to spend her life and strength for the comfort of others, never seeming to think of herself. It was my privilege to be at their home quite often, holding meetings there, as her dear aged mother was too feeble to attend at other places. This dear one always seemed delighted to wait upon and minister to all who came, and to sit in her quiet way and listen to the spiritual conversation and the preaching of the word. It was in this way and with the oft falling tear she told of her exercises and interest in the things of the kingdom of our God, which were unmistakable evidences of a gracious work within. She could not look upon herself to think anything of herself, yet no one loved to attend the meetings more. Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. By their fruits shall ye know them, and these fruits of the Spirit were abundantly manifest in the meek and humble life she lived. I was absent from home when the message of her death came and was forwarded to me, and I could not reach the dear old home until the evening of the day after her burial. The following day, August 14th, her sorrowing friends gathered again at the old home in her dear memory, and to mingle their tears in sympathy with her loved ones, where the writer tried to present the consolations of the gospel of Christ to the living in Christ. There never was but one Blanche; she died of tubercular trouble, having been a sufferer for some months, but the end was not thought to be so near; death came as a shock to all. She was resigned, and patiently endured all. She leaves a dear aged mother, her care, for whom it was her desire, if it were the Lord's will, to be spared to care for, but the path of the Almighty is in the deep. Who can understand his ways or set his bounds? Who can stay his hand or say unto him, Why or what doest thou? She also leaves one sister and two

brothers, with many friends, who deeply mourn her absence and feel the loss of her companionship. We feel the ever-supporting hand of the dear Lord has been graciously manifest unto all in the sad bereavement, and would ever pray its continuation for and in their behalf.

Written by request. P. W. SAWIN.

Mrs. Harriet Jordan Corwin, wife of the late Oliver Corwin, died at her residence on Knapp Avenue Wednesday morning, August 20th, 1913, after an illness of two months. Mrs. Corwin was born in the town of Wallkill, near Winterton. She was the eldest daughter of Samuel M. and Ruth Ann Jordan. In 1873 she was married to Oliver Corwin. After a few years' residence in New York and Otisville they came to this city. Mr. Corwin died about ten years ago. She is survived by three daughters: Misses May H. Corwin, Anna L. Corwin and E. Josephine Corwin, all of this city, and one sister, Mrs. Henry Wollenhaupt, of Winterton. Two brothers, Moses W. Jordan and John B. Jordan, died a few years ago. Although in delicate health for many years, she was patient and uncomplaining, and always took an interest in the welfare of her loved ones and all of her friends. She was a most devoted wife and loving mother, an example of patience and fortitude.

The above was written by one of the daughters of Mrs. Corwin and published in the *Times-Press* of Middletown August 21st. We feel to add a few lines giving expression to our regard for Mrs. Corwin as a subject of saving grace. She manifested daily the workmanship of God, though it pleased him that she remain outside of the visible organization called the church. She believed firmly in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and rejoiced in the hope of the glory of God. To say she was a noble woman in the fullest sense of the term, hardly expresses what we would like to say, yet it is the best language we can command. We have all lost a good friend in the death of Mrs. Corwin.

The funeral services were held at the home and conducted by the writer, and the interment took place in the family plot in the New Vernon Cemetery.

By request.

ALSO,

Miss Anna Mary Perry died at the home of her sister, Mrs. Josephine Carpenter, in Jersey City, N. J., August 22nd, 1913, aged 59 years. She was a daughter of Lewis S. and Mary Doland Perry, the latter being a member of the Middletown and Wallkill Church. Miss Perry had not been in good health for some years, but the end came very suddenly and without the slightest warning. She was not a member of the church, but a regular attendant when able to be there, and much enjoyed the privilege. She was a good, kind-hearted woman, always doing for others, even at the sacrifice of her health, a kind and faithful friend. She loved the doctrine of grace and those who love it, and always felt at home in their company. She is survived by two sisters, the one above mentioned and Miss Sarah Perry, of Middletown, who is left very lonely, as she and Miss "Mame," as she was familiarly known, had lived together for years, and were more devoted to each other than is ordinary.

The funeral services were held in Middletown, conducted by the writer, and the interment took place in the family plot in the New Vernon Cemetery.

May grace be ministered to all who mourn.

By request. K.

My dear mother, **Mrs. Penelope Monk,** departed this life at her home in Lasalle Parish, La., July 8th, 1913, aged 83 years, 2 months and 14 days. She was born in Dekalb, Co., Ga., April 24th, 1830, the daughter of Henry and Melinda Swinney. She moved with her parents when thirteen years old to Tallapoosa Co., Ala., where her father died the same year; moved to Harris Co., Ga., the next year, and to Jackson Parish, La., when about eighteen years old, where she was married to my father, W. W. Monk, March 11th, 1851. She joined the Missionary Baptists before her marriage, moved to Arkansas about the year 1854, and to Jasper County, Texas, in 1859, and to Newton Co., Texas, in 1876. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church in Newton Co., Texas, in 1879, and was baptized by Elder J. K. P. Burns, of Nacogdoches Co., Texas. Moved to Rapide Par., La., the same year, and in 1891 to Catahoula Parish, La., now Lasalle Parish, where she died. She had not heard a Primitive Baptist preach for many years, as there was none near her, but she read her Bible and the SIGNS. My father was a subscriber of the SIGNS before his death, in 1895, and she had carefully preserved every copy. She was a devoted mother and a kind neighbor. It can be said of her that she never lost a friend or made an enemy. She never wasted anything, yet was charitable to a fault. She was the mother of nine children, five of whom survive her: Mrs. M. M. Singletary, of Oakdale, La., W. B. and J. H. Monk, of Jena, La., Mrs. W. T. Russell, of Urania, La., and M. C. Monk, of Turkey Creek, La. She also leaves twenty-five grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, an aged sister, Mrs. A. J. Peddy, of Newton Co., Texas, and many friends and relatives. Mother had been in poor health for some time before her death, and was confined to her bed twelve days. She was afflicted with paralysis and catarrh of the stomach. She suffered much, but was resigned to God's will, and said all the time she would not get well. She prayed God to take her out of her sufferings, and told us how she wished to be put away. She was buried in Belia Cemetery, beside her husband. (MRS.) W. T. RUSSELL.

URANIA, La.

OUR aged brother, **Deacon William Simmons,** departed this life at his home in Stoutsburg, N. J., Thursday, August 7th, 1913, in the 87th year of his age. Our brother had been in failing health for three or four years. It had been nearly three years since he had been able to attend the meetings of the church very much. This was a source of great regret to him, for he had been one of the most faithful of men in that way all his life; still we did not hear any murmuring from his lips, but on the contrary expressions of submission and reconciliation to the will of God. He had been able to be around the house and to sometimes walk in his yard up to the day before his death, which took place not long after midnight of the 7th, as said before. He was never a man of many words, but no one was more steadfast in the faith nor lived a more humble and honorable life than he. He was baptized by Elder P. Hartwell in the fellowship of the First Hopewell Church, June 24th, 1872. He was chosen to be one of our deacons in November, 1881, which office he filled well, thus purchasing to himself a good degree and great boldness in the faith of Christ. If any man ever had cause of complaint against him, either in his relation to the church or in his worldly relations, we have never heard of it. It has been our privilege to know him well for the past seventeen years, and to often see and converse with him, and we always found him the same humble, quiet, faithful man. His course of life proved that he loved the courts of the Lord's house, and the place where his honor dwells. His companion, who was also a well loved member of the church with him, departed this life a few years ago, leaving him lonely, yet he bowed to the will of God in meek submission. He continued to live in the same house with his two daughters, who lovingly and faithfully cared for him in his declining years. He leaves three daughters and one son to mourn their loss.

The funeral service was held at his home August 9th, and the interment was in the cemetery of the Old School Baptist Church. The text used by the pastor on the occasion was Psalms cxvi. 15. The church feels sorely bereaved. May the Lord bless the dear family with all needed consolation. C.

MEETINGS.

THE Salisbury Association of Primitive Baptists is appointed to meet with the church at Salisbury, Md., October 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1913. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited. Those coming from the north take train that leaves Broad St. station, Philadelphia, at 3 p. m., and Wilmington at 3:44 p. m. Tuesday, 21st. From Baltimore, Claiborne boat leaves Pier 8, Light St. wharf, about 4 p. m. via Claiborne, or boat for Salisbury (all water route) leaves Pier 1, Pratt St. wharf, 5 p. m., 21st. Tickets for Salisbury; get excursion tickets. Those from Philadelphia and Wilmington can get ten day excursion tickets to Delmar. Those coming from the south take train leaving Cape Charles at 11:20 a. m. Tuesday, arriving at Salisbury 3:10 p. m.

GEO. W. MEZICK, Church Clerk.

THERE is a two days meeting appointed at Cammal, Pa., the fourth Sunday in October and Saturday before (25th and 26th). All lovers of the truth will be welcome.

By order of the church.

WM. M. HART.

THE Mt. Enon Association of Primitive Baptists will hold their forty-second annual session with the church called Mt. Enon, one mile from Youmans station, on the A. C. L. R. R., second Sunday in November, and Friday and Saturday before. All lovers of the truth are welcome. For further information write me. Come and be with us and behold our order.

C. K. HAINES.

LAKELAND, Fla.

THE Second Church of Roxbury will hold a two days meeting, the Lord willing, at the yellow meetinghouse, near Roxbury village, Nov. 8th and 9th, 1913. Trains will be met at Roxbury Friday p. m. and Saturday a. m. A cordial invitation is extended all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

J. B. SLAUSON, Pastor.

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SYLVESTER HASSELL.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 81. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1913. NO. 22.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GRAFTED INTO CHRIST.

"THOU wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree."—Romans xi. 24.

The apostle Paul, speaking to the Gentile believers concerning their salvation and union to Jesus Christ, and partaking of his fullness, describes their blessedness by a figure in husbandry, but contrary to the practice of earthly husbandry. Here is the story of God's goodness toward these chosen Gentiles whom God took out of the nations a people for his name. (Acts xv. 14.) "Thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree." As I contemplated this picture I thought I could see in it the dealings of the Holy Ghost in bringing Gentiles unto the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and the blessedness of our union to him. The whole subject embraced in this chapter I will not now touch upon, but rather tell you some things that I see in this one verse.

"A wild olive tree."—Romans xi. 17. The Gentiles were likened to this. There it grows, uncared for, bearing its wild fruit, undesired, despised. What are we by nature? Sinners of the Gentiles, without God, without Christ, without hope in the world. We are alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in us because of the blindness of our hearts. Vile, base, transgressors, enemies of God by wicked works, by nature children of wrath, even as others, under the curse of the law, such is the Bible description of us; wild by nature, and bearing only wild fruit. Can any branch of this wild olive tree so cultivate itself as to bring forth desirable fruit unto God? If it could, what self-boasting there would be. "For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God."—Romans iv. 2. The branches of a wild olive tree can only bring forth wild fruit. "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?"—Matt. vii. 16. "A wild olive tree." Sinners. We were the servants of sin, free from righteousness, we were all unrighteousness. "A wild olive tree." Prune it, dress it, dung it, make it flourish and it is still nothing but a wild olive tree. It is in gratitude of heart and glorying in the Lord when believers join with the apostle saying, "By the grace of God I am what I am," and

the abounding riches of God's grace is more and more felt as we look unto the rock whence we were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence we were digged. (Isaiah li. 1.) Look into the abyss of sin, of condemnation, of the curse of the law. But the Lord quarried us out, hewed us from the rock, brought us up out of the hole of the pit. "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." The lively stones, God hews them by the prophets, by the words of his mouth, cutting them, putting them into shape, bringing them by his divine teachings, by faith, of the operation of God unto Christ, the living foundation. Yes, child of God, he used his iron tools upon thee, and all thy soul's afflictions, all thy bitter knowledge of thyself as a sinner, all thy sighs, weeping and supplications, were in the pathway unto him who is the Rock of thy salvation. The vessels of mercy are afore prepared unto glory, and when in the last day the Lord shall descend from heaven and raise us up from the dead, immortal, incorruptible, and we shall be in spirit and soul and body blameless, in all things conformed to the image of God's dear Son, it will still be in adoring gratitude our glorying to say, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

"Thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature." God knows where all his elect are in all nations and kindreds, tongues and peoples, and in the fullness of times he takes them out unto himself, he calls them by his grace, to bring them into living intimacy with Jesus Christ, the Son of his love. God, who cannot lie, promised them in Christ, their covenant Head, and ordained them unto eternal life in him before the foundation of the world. (Titus i. 2; Acts xiii. 48.) So in the set time in his counsel the Lord, the heavenly Husbandman, comes in everlasting love, and his almighty, gracious hand takes hold of a branch of the wild olive tree, and with his sharp knife cuts out that branch that he has taken hold of. Men may talk of laying hold of Christ, but what can they tell of being apprehended of Christ Jesus? (Phil. iii. 12.) No one ever was found laying hold on eternal life; no one ever fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us, unless God first laid hold of them. "I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." God takes hold of the branch and cuts it out of the wild olive tree. While thus held in the hand of God, and his sharp knife is cutting us out, we cannot then realize that we are in the gracious hands of God, and that all the sharp cuttings are gracious, according to his purpose and grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

"Thou wert cut out." Other branches were left. O my soul, what distinguishing mercy! How sovereign is the grace of God! Had not God's electing love taken hold of thee, poor sinner, and cut thee out, thou hadst still been without God, without Christ and without hope in the world. In contemplation of this my spirit is humbled before the Lord; self-esteem and self-pity and fleshly vaunting are suppressed, and my heart in fervent gratitude is saying, It is even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.

"Thou wert cut out." That sharp knife is the word of God, which is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword. It is the word that God speaks in the soul that cuts us out, takes out of the Gentiles a people for his name. His word takes hold of and cuts its way

into the heart and conscience of the wild olive sinner. The doctrine of the Lord cuts, sharp convictions of sin are felt, and all the sharp cuttings of God's truth are to put the quickened sinner into shape to be grafted into Christ. Watch the Husbandman cutting and shaping the wild olive branch that he holds in his hand. I will say, He eyes it tenderly, his thoughts are gracious, for the Lord, the heavenly, all-wise, almighty Husbandman, saith, "I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart, and with my whole soul."—Jer. xxxii. 41. I have known trees to be grafted, but though the scions were well selected, and the wisdom and skill of the husbandman were brought into requisition, yet sometimes some of the grafted scions did not live, the work of man was a failure. But when God, the Holy Ghost, takes hold of and cuts out of the wild olive tree a branch, and engrafts it into Christ, the good Olive Tree, there is no failure. Every one so engrafted into Christ lives to the everlasting praise of the Lord, and not all the powers of earth and hell shall be able to undo this work of our covenant God. When the wild olive branch has been so shaped to fit into the place prepared for it, the gracious, wise Husbandman puts it into its place, and the cleft in the good olive tree takes a firm hold of it. The good olive tree was cleft for the branch cut out of the wild olive tree. This cleft olive tree is our precious, wounded, bleeding, crucified Savior. Moses was put into the clift of the rock, (Exodus xxxiii. 22,) and the dove has her sanctuary there. (Song of Solomon ii. 14.)

> "Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
> Let me hide myself in thee."

Look at that cleft in the good olive tree held open to receive the branch of the wild olive tree, or rather upon Christ crucified, the cleft, wounded, bleeding Jesus. Crucified for thee? crucified for me? Can it be? Many give their assent unto and profess to have knowledge of points of doctrine, but what heart-intimacy have you with Christ and him crucified? O, I have felt for many years that it is all essential to me, a poor, vile sinner, to have experimental intimacy with the crucified Jesus Christ. The called of God are made alive to their sinnership, and to their perishing condition as transgressors of the law. In the hands of the Lord their hearts become wounded, smitten and contrite over their woes, and under the sharp cuttings of the word of God they sigh and cry unto God, and are brought with weeping and with supplications for mercy unto Christ the Redeemer. O, when a broken-hearted sinner and the crucified Savior come together there is such a uniting as must be experienced to be understood. It is only poor and perishing, sick and wounded sinners who have need of or are ever joined in faith and love to Christ crucified. O the cleft olive tree, the sufferings and wounds of the crucified Savior speak to us the mercy, the grace, the love of God, and the hearts of quickened sinners are drawn to him, we are moved by the revelation, given us by the Holy Spirit, of Christ crucified, to desire to find a sanctuary, to find forgiveness, healing, life, salvation in the atoning sacrifice of the Lamb of God. "For the transgression of my people was he stricken." What covenant graciousness is manifest in the work of the Holy Spirit moving our heart to faith in the crucified One. He teaches us, exercises our souls to look to, to trust in, to flee for refuge to Jesus. O, he poured out his soul unto death, he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for

the transgressors. O thy heart, O Christ, was rent and cleft with sufferings for the atonement of our sins; thou wast wounded, bruised, smitten and afflicted for our iniquities. Here at thy cross are "mercy's streams in streams of blood."

The wild olive branch does not graft itself into the good olive tree, neither does the sinner, of a humble and contrite heart, engraft himself into Christ crucified. For those motions of his exercised heart toward the Savior, his sighs and desires for forgiveness, his faith, believing, love by which he enters into the revelation of Christ crucified to his heart, are all the fruits of the operation of the Spirit of truth in the heart. The good olive tree takes hold of the wild olive branch, and O, the smitten, bleeding Savior holds unto himself those for whom he suffered and died upon the tree.

> "Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
> Let me hide myself in thee."

We are put into the cleft, and are held there in love and life, to our comfort, healing, health, salvation, life and growth. "Rooted and grounded in him." This is no fiction I am declaring. Though it be but an idle tale to some, it is not so to those who have been brought to Jesus and joined to Christ crucified. Life is springing up from the cleft olive tree into the wild olive graft, so forgiveness, healing and salvation flow up into everlasting life from our precious Christ to the consolation of the poor sinner who is joined in a believing heart to the crucified Savior. This is experiencing that Christ crucified is the power of God and the wisdom of God. O sacred, refreshing, saving power. Thou art the fountain, precious Jesus.

After the tiny, wild olive branch is put into the cleft of the good olive tree, what then? The wise, gracious husbandman seals it with a mantle of wax, or some other suitable substance. This kind covering, protecting the graft from the storms, from the scorching heat of the sun, is all to insure, is all saying that the engrafted branch shall live by the upflowing life of the good olive tree. Here is something of the signification of this in Christ's gospel. Saith the apostle: "In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."—Eph. i. 13, 14. The exceeding great and precious promises, which are yea and amen in Christ Jesus, are the assurances of life to the believer; they are words of eternal life, which only Jesus' lips can speak. (John vi. 68.) This mantle of wax, so kindly wrapping up the little branch and the big good tree, is also significant of the imputed righteousness of Christ, which is unto and upon all that believe. It is the mantle of our espousal to him that we are taken unto eternal wedlock with the Lamb of God, Christ crucified. "Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine."—Ezek. xvi. 8. "He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness."—Isaiah lxi. 10. This is love's sealing, the time of love. The Holy Ghost, by such wonderful, comforting teachings, wraps up the believer joined to Jesus Christ in the promises of the gospel, by the oath and covenant of God, by the robe of Emmanuel's obedience, by the love of his espousal, his words of life. How assuring and comforting this is to the poor

sinner! It is all teaching, convincing, sealing home in our hearts that we are one with Christ, joined, wedded to the Savior.

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

We are sealed unto Christ until the day of redemption, and thus joined to him this is our wedded name: "The Lord our righteousness."—Jer. xxiii. 6; xxxiii. 16. We are bound in the bundle of life with the Lord our God. (1 Samuel xxv. 29.) O, it is so wonderful, so blessed. "Your life is hid with Christ in God."—Col. iii. 2, and lest any shall hurt us the heavenly Husbandman shall keep us night and day. (Isaiah xxvii. 3.) Muse upon it, ye that were cut out of the wild olive tree. "Ye are God's husbandry."—1 Cor. iii. 9. When the sinner with a broken and contrite heart has been brought unto and grafted into the crucified Savior, then the winter is past, gentle spring is come, the warm, genial sun, the dews of the night and the upspringing life of Christ, the good olive tree, all say, Live (Ezek. xvi. 6,) unto the engrafted wild olive branch, and it grows, bearing fruit unto the glory of God. The apostle Paul in using this figure has been careful to tell us that all this heavenly, spiritual husbandry and the fruits thereof are beyond, yea, "contrary to nature." O ye Gentile sinners, one with Jesus Christ, ye are miracles of Jehovah's grace. Though thou wert cut out of the wild olive tree, yet viewed in Christ, grafted unto him, "The Lord called thy name, A green olive tree, fair, and of goodly fruit."—Jer. xi. 16. Though grafting a wild olive branch into a good olive tree is contrary to the practice of earthly husbandry, yet as a figure of the union of Gentile sinners with Christ it sets forth one of the sacred miracles of the gospel of Christ. Nothing is more dreadfully true in the life of a believer in Christ than that he is still a poor, sinful creature. Thou wert cut out of the wild olive tree. Yes, and the believer in Jesus will say, I feel I am a wild olive branch yet, a poor, wretched sinner, who often sighs, mourns unto the Lord over the wild olive baseness of his Adam nature. But how can a wild olive branch, even though grafted into a good olive tree, bear "goodly fruit"? This is so "contrary to nature." Yes, but it is that miracle of grace wrought of God, and verily declared in the life of faith of that sinner who is joined to Christ. "Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me."—Luke viii. 46. So also in all the life and growth of the believer in the Savior it is the virtue of his Spirit in the soul that animates and is the fountain of our life unto our God. Jesus Christ is our Root that beareth us; from him is derived our sap, our food; he nourishes and cherishes the church. We thrive upon him, for the Spirit of truth takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto those who are Christ's. We are favored thus to live upon Christ's fullness, he glorifies Christ in our hearts. O the innumerable sweet thoughts, glimpses, upspringing refreshings, encouragements that are ours in Jesus Christ by the ministrations of the Comforter, the Spirit of truth. "He shall glorify me: [saith our dear Savior] for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." Yes, it is by the communion of the Holy Ghost that we grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. "Your life is hid with Christ in God." This is more than a theory, it is an experimental reality with true believers in the Lamb of God, and the grace of the life of Christ

in the soul is love to God and to Christ our dear Redeemer; it is sweet gratitude, trust and prayer and praise; it is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; it is meekness, gentleness, goodness and hope, that maketh not ashamed. Thus we are exercised toward the God of our salvation, and we are moved in love and graciousness toward the saints in our thoughts and words and deeds. Did not our Savior say, By their fruits ye shall know them? And, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples"? If then by a miracle of sovereign grace we have been cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and contrary to nature grafted into the good olive tree, so the working of this same miracle of God's grace will be the life, growth, beauty and goodly fruit put forth in us. That person who is destitute of longings after righteousness and God, that one who has no thirstings after Jesus Christ, no prayers for forgiveness, no trembling at God's word, no adoring gratitude for God's salvation, surely such a professor of Christ's name has no vital union with Christ. Look also at the outward life, and inquire, Who are our bosom friends, our sought for associates? Do we love the world, the things of the world? Have there ever been any moments in our lives when our hearts in truth were saying, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world"?—Gal. vi. 14. Is the world crucified unto me? Again the Scriptures speak: "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."—Gal. v. 24. And, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" —2 Cor. xiii. 5. How solemn and searching is the word of God! I hope I can say I live with the dear Savior; O, I cannot live apart from him. Some give their assent to a few points of doctrine, and they are contented, but they have no heartfelt knowledge of Jesus. But I confess I am a poor, tried sinner; so often I am so sick, so plagued with sinfulness and temptations of the devil, that I feel I must have some moments of heart communion with Jesus, I must seek him, I must find him, I must cast myself at his feet, I will tell him how wearied, how grieved I am, that I implore forgiveness, cleansing, healing, yes, and victory and comfort through his precious, atoning blood and justifying righteousness. Without Christ I feel I am undone, as a very castaway. The apostle saith: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."—Gal. ii. 20. The day to day and year to year union of sinners called by grace and the Savior is all fruitful in this, that we learn that the root beareth us, that if there is anything of Christ in us, any true worship of God, any God-glorifying fruits in our conversation, the source of it all is our union with Christ crucified. "Christ liveth in me." Severed from him we can bear no fruit; he is our sap, our life, our all. Truly our hearts are all acquiescence to that voice that saith, "From me is thy fruit found."—Hosea xiv. 8. Let me continue to tell the mystery which no figures or types can ever fully tell. While love and adoration are springing up, while prayer and praise exercise my heart unto the Lord, what is this that intrudes, that mars my blessed-

ness in Jesus, that grieves my spirit, that makes me sigh and moan and blush and cry? O, it is the dreadful consciousness that I am a sinful being. The most sacred moments are not exempt from vain thoughts, vile emotions. Ah, I loathe myself, I am base, a sinner.

"My wild olive nature discloses to view
More vileness than I can declare,
And were not the promises true,
I'm sure I should sink in despair.

Fresh succor from Christ I receive,
Who did all my conflicts foresee,
And through his rich grace I believe
He saved a sinner like me."

Over our wild olive nature we have to bemoan ourselves. Israel knows the plague of the heart, (1 Kings viii. 38,) and after the inward man they cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"—Romans vii. 24. This bitter, heartfelt cry is only known by believers in Jesus Christ. If we are to see the beauty of the church of God we must behold them joined to and one in Christ Jesus, the Head of the church.

"Would you the church of God survey—
Its beauty, strength and harmony?
Then Christ Emmanuel see.
Where all perfections in him meet,
There is the church of God complete;
The sum of all is he."

It is not in the first man, Adam, that we are fair and comely, but in Christ Jesus, the second man, the Lord from heaven. Here the Lord commands the blessing, even life for evermore; and joined to Christ, the Lord our God saith: "I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon."—Hosea xiv. 5–7.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

PSALMS XLVI. 10.

"BE still, and know that I am God."

David, after closing the forty-fifth Psalm, begins the forty-sixth, which contains the above words, by revealing to us the fact that his strength was not in himself, by the exercise of any motion of his own, to either go backward or forward; and this admonition to the saints of the kingdom of heaven holds good throughout the whole volume of inspiration. But to keep still has been a most serious consideration to me, and the great struggle of my life to observe, under any and all conditions to be reconciled to my lot, especially so in the midst of suffering, affliction, of poverty and grief, the bitterness and anguish of soul, the darkness and fiery temptations that doth beset me round about, coming before me in many different phases, and a multitude of worldly cares, divert my attention from the right way. Like the ship in mid ocean, driven by the wind and tossed upon life's tempestuous sea, surrounded by a vicious enemy, the quicksands of nature that assault the little hope, to be still, to not move or strive, has been to me an insurmountable difficulty in the absence of the great Captain of our salvation, who stills the rage of man and makes the wind and sea obey him. However, our destiny is fixed, and the bounds of our habitation, and therefore we must stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. (Exodus xiv. 13.) In order to know God, or to hear God's words, we must be of God, (John viii. 47,) and the fact of this knowledge portrays to our mind that we are helpless and passive in the hand of the just and holy God. For the last forty years of an eventful life in the ministry, I have had peaceful seasons of rejoicing in the worship of the Lord of life and glory, and

the preaching of his everlasting gospel, along with the fellowship of God's people, and the consolations in the promises of God. On the other hand, I have had an immense quantity of sin and rebellion, the natural proclivities of the flesh, the allurements of the world, and I am often dragged into heated controversies on some mooted questions regarding practice, order and gospel discipline, and the opinions and varied kinds of judgment exercised in the discussion of the subjects have often appealed to my conscience as to the merit or demerit of these things. Yet they come, and the Scriptures have given warning to beware of the cunning craftiness of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. The more I have tried to be still and to heed the commandments of God, the more necessity has brought me forth to contend for the Bible discipline, which admonishes to abhor evil and cleave to that which is good. To be still at all times, in the midst of approaching storm and adversity, surrounded by darkness, seems impossible to obey. Only the power of the all-powerful God can subdue and overcome my wild passion. We know that Jesus is at the helm, the beacon light of heaven, guiding the ship (the church) safely to port, where the buffetings of time's ocean have ceased. The phraseology of "be still," and "stand still," &c., in the Scriptures, is very similar to that of "wait," (Hab. ii. 3; Lam. iii. 26,) because the just shall live by faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, teaching us, the elect family of God, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. Any effort on the part of creature man to go backward or forward is utterly vain. God speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast, therefore I glory in the Old School Baptist doctrine, which glorifies the Lord, exalts Christ, the only Mediator, whom to know is life everlasting. In him is the salvation, justification, resurrection and glorification of all the saints. My hope rests in the principle of God's sovereignty, his eternal love, omnipotence and supremacy; unto him shall the gathering of the people be. The traducers and unscriptural religionists of the day have ever opposed the gospel truth of salvation by grace, and substitute instead the doctrines and commandments of men, which are filling the world with the teachings of human agency and the co-operation of every false way; but the Lord's cloud and pillar of fire still give light and protection to his people, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against them. All through the religious life of the christian, how important to heed the injunctions to walk circumspectly as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil, to beware of men and the vain philosophy of the world, to be still, and reconciled to God's will in adversity as well as prosperity; and therefore in the final consummation of all things Christ will bring his bride, the elect lady, off more than conqueror; he will be exalted among the heathen, he will be exalted in the earth.

These are a few of my simple thoughts, which I now submit to the consideration and approval of the editors of the dear old SIGNS. At this writing I am happily ensconced under the roof of our beloved brother, Elder W. S. Bourland, of Vernon, Texas. He is the son of the late Elder A. D. Bourland, who was a warm friend and supporter of the SIGNS for over thirty years.

I also wish to state that I attended the

Pilgrim's Rest Association, where I enjoyed a precious season of peace and fellowship. It was a harmonious session. Elder A. P. Cardwell, the moderator, kept order and conducted the business of the association to the entire satisfaction of all the messengers.

I pray God's blessings upon you, the prosperity and preservation of the old reliable SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and its readers everywhere.

"Kingdoms and thrones to God belong;
Crown him, ye nations, in your song;
His wondrous names and powers rehearse;
His honors shall enrich your verse."

Yours in hope of a glorious beyond,
ASA HOWARD.

VERNON, Texas.

DUTTON, Ontario, June 26, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I received your very welcome and precious letter, and was indeed glad to know all about your affliction, and that the dear Lord was merciful and kind to you, and that it was also the case with all with whom you came in contact in the hospital. I often feel that we do not know how many friends we have until we are afflicted. We are all glad that you are so nearly restored to health, and hope that you may continue to improve, so as to be able to visit us in October as usual. I also hope that Bonnie is better by this time. Sister McDonald is some better, but was not able to be out the last Sunday meeting, but Elder Durand spoke at her house on Sunday night for her benefit, as she was very anxious to once more hear the gospel preached. Our meeting in Ekfrid was good; it was another such revival as we had in Duart last February, and I surely felt that it was good to be there. It seemed a heaven below, the Redeemer to know, and to have our evidences renewed and brightened. The preaching was good all through, but the best wine was kept until the last. On Monday the preaching was exceedingly good. Elder Peters spoke first, followed by Elder Durand; he read the fourth chapter of Daniel all through, and then spoke of Nebuchadnezzar, and of how the dear Lord wrought with him, and brought him down into the dust and humbled him. O it was good, for I felt that this is the way in which he will bring all his children down when they become too high-minded. This is when they are left to themselves, and their carnal minds get the better of them. I felt that everything he said was true of the church to-day. How the Lord leads us in paths we have not known. How wonderful that Daniel interpreted the dreams and prophesied what should come to pass, so many years beforehand. I can see that the Lord has a purpose in all things, even when he leaves us to do the things which we ought not. It seems to me that it was Elder Peters who spoke on Sunday of the afflictions of Joseph when they sold him into Egypt, and he spoke of how the rest were not grieved for his afflictions until they had gone as far as the dear Lord had purposed that they should go; then we find, at the last, when they found that it was their brother, they were very sorrowful. Then they were told by him that what they had meant for evil God had meant for good, all to show that the dear Lord works and none can hinder; his purposes must all be fulfilled, and he must have all the glory. You, my dear brother, will know all about the story better than I can tell you. While in the meeting and listening to those precious truths I thought of you, and if I had had pen and paper I could have written it all down for you, but now most of it has gone from me, and I can only tell a little

here and there, but the sweetness of it I will never forget. Elder Durand followed, and thought at first that he would only say a few words, but the storehouse was full and he spoke for a good while, and I can never tell the joy that filled my heart, and I was made to weep to the praise and glory of God for the wonderful truth those dear men were given to speak; it seemed to me that they were filled with the Holy Ghost. Dear Elder Durand's age did not hinder him from speaking with power, for I never heard him better. The truth they spoke was a witness to what I felt in my own soul. Monday morning a dear sister came before the church, telling what great things the Lord had done for her. It was a Miss Maddock, brother Maddock's sister. She has had a letter in the SIGNS. We were all glad for her, for she is one who truly fears the Lord, and I hope that she may be made a blessing to the church. Her manner of life is consistent with her profession. O dear brother, when we find one done with the world, and made willing to serve Christ alone, we can but have fellowship with that one. She will be baptized at the October meeting, if all is well. Brother Cross was over from Cleveland, and a sister came with him, also her daughter and son. Elder Peters was much pleased to meet Elder Durand and to hear him preach, and would like much to meet you and Elder Ker, also others who come here from the States, and I wish that he could have that privilege. He is a very precious brother, who feels that he is the smallest of all.

But I must soon close. A dear sister was speaking of how she felt that the Lord was chastening her for wrongdoing. I replied to her that I was glad to know she was chastised, for we are told that whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. This is one of our evidences that he loves us. Many have been the times that I have felt to be chastened for wrongdoing, but I felt that it was in love to me. If we are without chastisement, then are we bastards, and not sons. I feel that the dear Lord has a wise purpose in all things, even in leaving us to ourselves for a time, and in letting our steps fall in slippery places, and even in leaving us to say and do things for which we will be sorry afterwards; it is all to teach us how little we know of his power and wisdom.

Now whatever you see amiss please pardon, for I am a poor sinner, saved by grace if saved at all. God bless you.

Your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) THOMAS L. LILLY.

TOUCHET, Wash., July, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—My mind is moved to write about the chastisement, or purging, of the Lord's dear people, or upon the difference between the Lord's dealings with his children and with the world. It seems to me that there is a great difference between the chastening of the child of God and the curse of God poured out upon the wicked, or non-possessor, who yet may be a professor. I do desire to rightly divide the word of God. It is a fact that God does chastise every son whom he receives, and scourges them, and it is also a fact that he shows his displeasure upon those who only pretend to love him and do not.

Now, first, I want to notice the purpose of God in the chastening of his sons. I believe that God has a purpose in all he does, and that his purpose shall stand, and that he will do all his pleasure. I understand that his purpose in chastening his children is in the way of correction, and that it is in love, for he chastens every

one whom he receives, and whom he loveth he chasteneth. It is for this reason that his children do not run into perdition. He corrects them, checks them, turns them about and instructs them. In this correction there is instruction, and they come to a greater knowledge of God's love and care for them, and in it he proves to them his love and power to save, and his faithfulness to his children. This humbles them and fills their hearts with praise to his holy name, and they are made to see the same glorious sight that David did, viz., that the mercies of God are everlasting. We poor sinners often forget him, but his loving-kindness changes not. Because he is God and changes not, we are chastened, but not consumed; we are cast down, but not destroyed. All these, and many more, are God-glorifying thoughts and exercises of mind, and are the fruit or result of God's chastening.

But now I want to notice some of the witnesses of God's dealing thus with his people, or in the way of chastening and purging them. I will first call attention to John, fifteenth chapter, where the Savior uses the figure of the vine and the branches. I want to notice this very carefully, because some able brethren differ in their views upon this subject. Some seem to think that all the branches, both those broken off and those not broken off, are the children of God, simply because they are all said to be branches, and they seem to think the same of the faithful and the unfaithful servant, because they are both alike called servants, and the same is said of the ten virgins. They also say the same of the apostle's writing, 2 Peter ii., because they are said to have known the way of truth, and to have turned therefrom, therefore some think they must be the children of God. I have mentioned the above passages because they all set forth two classes, and the Lord is represented as dealing differently with both. Now, returning to notice John xv.: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." Here the purging is to improve the amount of the fruit, and not the quality, and the one that bore no fruit was not purged, and it never bore fruit. It was like the fruitless fig tree, and he had a purpose in cutting it off, just as he did in sending reapers into the field to gather the tares in bundles that they might be burned. This was his purpose. Notice the expression, "And men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." It is branches that are burned, and not fruit, for they bare no fruit. Some have brought in the apostle's teaching in Corinthians, where he admonishes the brethren to take heed how they build, for it is said that every man's work shall be tried as by fire, and the work that is not right shall be burned, and the person shall suffer loss. But there is a difference between the burning of the unfruitful branches and the burning of the works of his children, while they are saved. Here is set forth the difference in chastisement of the children of God, and his wrath poured out upon hypocrites.

Now I will notice the ten virgins and the servants, as space will not permit me to notice them separately, and the same lesson is taught in both parables. The wise virgins were blessed to enter into the marriage supper, while the door was shut against the foolish, and, still more, the word of the good man of the house

is, I know you not. Now if they were the children of God, and this was chastisement for not having oil, it seems that it did not have the effect of making them wise unto repentance. If the coming and knocking for admission had been produced by the chastening hand of God the door of mercy would not have been shut against them, for we are told that there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine that need no repentance. Also let me note that two of the lord's servants were applauded by the master because they had put their master's talents to good use, while the third had buried his lord's money. When the lord comes to reckon with them the servant gives the reason why he buried it. Now I will ask of you who believe this servant to be a disobedient child of God, Did you ever hear one under the chastening rod say unto God, I knew that thou wast hard, gathering where thou hadst not strewn, and so I was afraid and went and hid thy talent? Is there any fruit of grace apparent here? No, the fruit of a branch which the Lord has caused to bud is, "If my soul were sent to hell, thy righteous law approves it well." No, dear brethren, no heart or mind under the afflicting, chastening hand of God would ever dare to accuse God of being hard or unjust, but the poor, weak branch of grace down in the belly of hell will say, I will return unto the Lord; my soul's salvation is of the Lord. Here we see a great difference between the dealing of the Lord with his disobedient child, Jonah, and with the unprofitable servant. The good man of the house says, Take the talent from him, and cast him into outer darkness. If all the stars were to fall, and the moon cease to give her light, would not this be outer darkness? Well, it was just such a time with the unprofitable servant cast out with weeping and gnashing of teeth. But how different with the children of God under his afflicting hand; they still serve him even in the lions' den. But then behold the power of God manifested in love: how he seals the mouths of the lions so that there is no gnashing of teeth, and the tried saint comes forth victorious from the den. But we behold the unprofitable servant, who buried his lord's money, cast into outer darkness, and there is gnashing of teeth. Yes, they are destroyed before they reach the bottom of the pit. Thus the unfruitful branches, the unprofitable servant, with all legalists, are cast into the fire and are burned, while God's humble poor come through the fire without the smell of it upon their garments.

Dear brethren, I have here sketched my views of the difference between the chastening of God of his children, and his judgments upon the hypocrites who only pretend to love him. Some brethren seem to think that because I do not apply the parables to the children of God alone I do not believe that they can do wrong, but this is not so; they are so prone to do wrong that they cannot do the things that they would, or that they desire to do. But I do see a great difference between God's purging his true Israel, and his casting out the bondwoman and her children, because they shall not be heirs with the children of the freewoman. To those who take the position that the branches that were cut off must represent true children of God, because they are said to be in the vine, I will say, Tell me how the bondwoman and her children are to be cast out if they are not in with the freewoman and her children, and how are the tares to be gathered out from the wheat if they do not grow in the same

field with the wheat? And tell me how the goats could be separated from the sheep, if they were not all together before. Jesus said they should come from the east and from the west and sit down in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the children of the kingdom should be cast out. I understand almost all the parables of Jesus to be setting forth what shall take place at the setting up of the new covenant kingdom, and at the wind up of the old dispensation, or legal covenant. Under this legal covenant they were all together. The publican and the Pharisee went up to the temple to pray alike, but this did not make the Pharisee a publican, nor the publican a Pharisee. The prayer of the Pharisee shows what he was. Neither is the false teacher a child of God because he is raised up among them. Neither is a goat transformed into a sheep because he is with them. By the fruit of each are we to know them.

Dear brethren, I leave these reflections to your judgment. I have had several inquiries as to the reasons for my views upon these judgments of God, that they are not the chastisements of his children.

Yours in fellowship,

J. T. BARNES.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Oct. 4, 1913.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I will try, if the Lord will, to pen a few thoughts upon the fourth chapter of Ephesians, beginning at the first verse: "I therefore the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." I have been reading the SIGNS for October 1st, 1913, and have read some letters of brethren one to another referring to this Scripture: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." I feel that I want to begin at the first verse and then go on. Paul here is speaking of the church of God, and as one of the family, and confesses himself the prisoner of the Lord. I believe that each of God's little ones is a prisoner, kept by the power of God a prisoner from his birth to the throne. These prisoners have their trials here below, sickness and affliction, pain and sorrow; step by step they must be led and tried. All the children of God will say, Yes, this is so, and they often look back and think of the journey that they have trod. There are those like Paul here to-day, who will say, I beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, and all this is summed up in love to the church. I would like to walk better than I do, and I feel this daily. But so is the travel of a child of God. We, like Paul, would like to see our brethren do better, but we are subject to falling; and when one does fall and get into the mire it is better to beseech him than to push him further down; rather pluck him out of the mire, and this with all long-suffering, lowliness and meekness, forbearing one another in love. It seems to me that this verse covers a great deal. We must be brought to know all this by the power of God in trials and afflictions. Thus we must be brought down at the feet of the Lord from pride and the vain things of the world, and must pass through the fiery furnace and be tried as gold is tried. When passing through the refiner's fire it is hard to bear, but when brought forth it is joy; then we can sing and our hearts are glad. We read, "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," and I feel like saying, Let us all join hands and sing one song. Let all dwell in peace, and be careful not to offend. We all have our special views, and when summed up and put in the balance all point to

the same God. It is like a compass which may be shaken about but still points to the same spot. This is true religion. This is held by Old School Baptists, and this is what I am trying to talk about, and I believe this is what Paul was talking about to the people called by God's grace, and not by works of man, and I believe with Paul that there is one body and one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling. I believe there is one body, and they are my brethren and sisters, if indeed I am one at all. I feel too vile to be one of them, but whether I am or not, I believe in this one body, and in no other, and it seems that the Spirit testifies to this within this tempest-tossed soul of mine, and this Spirit speaks face to face with the church of God. One says, I feel to be the least of all, and this brings the testimony within me, No, I am the least.

"When each can feel his brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part,
When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart."

"One Lord, one faith, one baptism." This covers all the Old School Baptist doctrine, if I know it at all. If I have been taught of the Lord, there is no place for so-called churches which believe in a little water sprinkled or poured on the head; there is but one way, and that is being put beneath the water, and there is only one Lord who can bring his children to that place, baptism, step by step. They are led through trials, and the way is rough, and they try to turn back, but they cannot, because a prisoner in Christ Jesus cannot get beyond the bars. They can go so far, and no farther, and they are made to know that there is no other God beside him. We must be tried to become of one faith; like Abraham, we are put to the test, even to the lifting of the knife. A child in its earliest love would turn back if it obeyed the flesh. There is a warfare within; one cries, Do not do this, you are not fit; stay and test a few more things of this world; but they are made sick and tired of worldly pleasure and want a home among that people who have tasted and handled the things which they have handled, and so at last are brought to the water's side. Some go in and some stay out, for I believe there are children of God on the banks of this baptism. Those who are brought to this baptism cannot turn aside, for God has been fitting them for this one baptism, and it takes place, never to be needed again. This one baptism is sufficient forever if it be from the Lord; that is the main thing. "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." It takes all these three to make the one body and the one Spirit. It is beyond man to find out all the meaning of the Scriptures, we have but a glimpse here and there. There is also one God and Father of all, who is above all and through you all.

Dear pastor, I must close this letter; written as it is, in a rambling way, I hope the Lord has led me. I was reading the SIGNS last evening where brethren were speaking of baptism, and I felt to write a few words, hoping that it might be for the welfare of Zion. Paul said, "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you." What good admonition this is. If we could all feel this way how good it would be. Let us love one another. If we should have a different opinion of the Scriptures, may the Lord stand between each brother. There is an altar where they meet with a sacrifice, and can clasp each other in sweet fellowship. May God bless you, dear pastor, and all my brethren and sisters in Christ. O what a comfort to know that he came to save sinners.

Your unworthy brother,

GEORGE M. CONNER.

HAVILAND, Kans., Jan. 20, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—While sending in my remittance I will try to write a short letter of love, if indeed the love of God is with me, but if his love be not with me I can never write a love letter to his bride. No one ever loved her but the three in one: the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Now if none of these be in this letter the bride will read no love there. I often have a desire to do many great and wonderful works, but the greatest and most wonderful work that man in this world ever does is to love God with all his heart, mind and strength, and his neighbor as himself. This is the sum of all the commandments, and this is what Christ did do, and what we do of this wonderful work we do in Christ the Lord, and I hope it is Christ in me that gives me the desire to do this work which I have in mind. In John xvi. 6, we read, "But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your hearts." This was spoken by the Lord unto his disciples, and not unto the world. He had just told them that the Jews would put them out of the synagogues, and that the time would come when whosoever should kill them would think that he was doing God service, and he said, "These things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me." He also told them that he was going away to the Father, and he said, Because of these things sorrow hath filled your hearts. Now was there any love there? Yes, because the thought of parting brought to them a heart full of sorrow. This was not to the world, but to the chosen out of the world. The world and its religion were then possessed of a great desire to put Christ away from them, and that he should be crucified and slain. Their desire toward him was all enmity. Enmity against God is the carnal mind, but to know God is eternal life. But while the bride thus sorrowed, the Bridegroom explained that it was needful that he should go away, that the Comforter might come, and he said, "I will send him unto you." He comes to the bride, and not to the world. Here was his love, and he would send comfort to the heart of his love. The world hated him, because it never knew him nor his Father, but every one that knew him loved him and his Father, and those who love are of the bride. He that loveth is begotten of the Father. Again, while his disciples were inquiring what he meant by saying, "A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me," he said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy." He also told them that he would see them again, and they should rejoice, and their joy no man should take away, and now we can see that this is all true. The bride did sorrow while Christ was in the tomb, and the world rejoiced over what the Jews thought to be a victory for their religion, for Christ was now dead. This was the little while that they should not see him. But there was another little while that they should see him, when their sorrow was indeed turned to joy. When the grave was found open the news spread very fast that Christ was risen from the dead, and when he was revealed to them they had real joy, and the world then had sorrow. The sorrow of the bride was from her love of her dead husband, but this was literally turned into joy because of her living husband. He who was dead lived again, and this joy no man can ever take away. The world can never rob the

church of her joy and her faith in the Lord Jesus, hence the world is ever left in sorrow, and the sorrow of the world worketh death. Yet the world has often made efforts to destroy the righteous, but blessed be the tie that binds our hearts in christian love, this joy no man taketh from you. This is not the tie that binds the self-righteous together, for they are held together by the love of money, of honor of the world, and all these things are against the Lord our righteousness, and so is all false religion, with its worldly institutions and secret societies, all of which claim salvation by another gospel, which is not another, but a perversion of the gospel of Christ. We never see the church of Christ entangled in these lying vanities, or a member caught by some secret society, but that the world rejoices, while the bride is made to sorrow and the world is honored, and but for the love of Christ all these who depart would be destroyed. But we know that his love endureth forever, and for this reason the joy of the church shall be forever.

In love to all the household of faith, I remain your brother,

E. G. WEBB.

ASHBORO, N. C., Sept. 13, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have had an impression for some time to write a few lines for your consideration. I was reading concerning God's dealings with King Hezekiah, in telling him he must die and not live, and then telling him he should live and not die, and promising him other blessings. These dealings with the king had always been a mystery to me that I could not understand. As I was thinking over these things my mind was greatly impressed to read the one hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm, which I had done many times, especially since Elder Silas H. Durand wrote upon it, which, to my mind, was the most powerful of sermons. It was as sweet to my taste as honey and the honeycomb. I read the Psalm down to the eleventh verse: "If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee." When I had read in these two verses that the darkness and the light were alike with God, my mind was impressed that his dealings with the king were alike both times, in the fulfillment of his decree and purpose.

August 31st I was eighty-two years old, and I have been a member of the Baptist Church since 1851. I love the doctrine the SIGNS advocates, for I think it is the old apostolic doctrine, giving God all glory, honor and praise, teaching that he is perfect, unchangeable, and works all things according to his purpose, and feeble man can neither help nor hinder; that nothing is old or new with him, that one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day, and that salvation is all of his grace. I believe that the bride, the Lamb's wife, was in God before Adam's dust was fashioned as a man. "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." I do not know what I am, but I do know I love the Lord's people, and the doctrine of salvation by grace. Sometimes I can rejoice in it, but more times am in darkness, and fear I am mistaken and do not

know anything aright. So I hobble along, part of the time rejoicing, and again in the depths. I will send this to you to do with as you think best. If you do not publish it, it will be all right with me. Since writing, I doubt if it is best to send it.

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,
WM. F. TROGDEN.

ASHVILLE, Ohio, May 12, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I see my time has about expired for the SIGNS, so you will find inclosed money order for two dollars for the paper another year. I do not want to miss one of the papers, for they are so much pleasure to me. My health is poor, and much of the time I am not able to attend meeting or go among the brethren, which I much enjoy. I get my package of SIGNS and pass the time in reading them in turn with the Bible, and it seems that every time I read them it is made plainer how our heavenly Father has made a way by which the poor and afflicted family are to obtain food.

Elder Shumaker, of Ashley, Ohio, an able defender of the truth, was with us last Saturday and Sunday, and spoke wonderfully on predestination, the resurrection, &c.

Unworthily,
(MRS.) M. A. WINNER.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., October 10th, 11th and 12th, 1913, sendeth christian greeting in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Another year has passed away, so we send our letter of correspondence to the sister associations with which we are in christian fellowship. The messengers of our association report peace and harmony, and we trust, as the true church of the living God, that he will direct and keep us in that faith which was once delivered unto the saints, and which was so earnestly declared by the ministers present, who determined to know nothing among men save Jesus Christ and him crucified. He speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast.

Our next association will be held with the Sidling Hill Baptist Church, Fulton Co., Pa., commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1914, where we hope to meet your messengers again.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
J. C. MELLOTT, Clerk.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 5th, 6th and 7th, 1913, to the associations and meetings in correspondence with us, greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—Through the abounding goodness and mercy of our God, who rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, we have been permitted to once more assemble in an associate capacity, and have gladly received tributes of your love and esteem. Your messengers have preached unto us the unsearchable riches of the gospel of Christ in its purity. We feel to praise God, from whom all blessings flow, for this meeting and its privileges. We desire a continuance of your correspondence. May brotherly love and sweet fellowship abound.

Our next session is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Whitefield, Lincoln County, Maine, to begin on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1914, when and where we hope to meet and greet your messengers.

Z. M. BEAL, Moderator.
J. E. HUBBARD, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1913.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PHILIPPIANS I. 9-11.

"AND this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment. That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ. Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God."

Two things stand forth very prominently in the epistles of Paul to the churches, viz., his rejoicing over them because they have been called by grace, and his anxiety for them that they might walk as becometh saints. The certainty of their salvation through the grace of Christ, while it called for praise and thanksgiving on their behalf, did not at all prevent the deepest anxiety on his part that they should so conduct themselves as to bear clear testimony to their call to salvation. But realizing as he did the weakness of man in the things of God, this anxiety put him upon prayer to God on their behalf, that he would strengthen them, and so abundantly bestow his grace upon them that the fruit of the Spirit might abound in them always. This is the substance of the language which we have quoted above. In all this Paul sets forth how false are the conclusions of those who, knowing not the grace of God for themselves, declare that if salvation in Christ be secure to the chosen and called there need be no anxiety concerning the manner of their life here. Paul's testimony evidently is that because his brethren professed their faith in just this manner of salvation, it was incumbent upon them to prove they had received it, by bringing forth the fruit belonging to it. The best way to prove that the tree is a living one is to see that it bears fruit. The best way to prove that one possesses living faith is to produce the fruits of faith in the daily life. James plainly said, "Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works," and Paul is in full agreement with him in every instance where he urges upon his brethren a manner of life consistent with their profession. The order of God in providence and in nature is, first, life, and then fruit, and this is no less his order in the kingdom of grace. Hence we never hear the inspired writers urging upon men to "work and live," but always, because they live, to work. The tendency of all life is action, or fruit-bearing. But one may say, If this be so, if indeed life always tends to produce its own proper fruit, why the need of exhortation in this direction? Why the need of prayer to God for these results, since they naturally follow life in the soul? The answer is that in the believer there is an opposing principle, and a warfare against the Spirit. Paul felt this, and because of it found himself unable to do the good that he would, often doing the evil that he would not, and having felt this for himself, he knew that his brethren were also subject to this conflict, and had need of help under it, therefore he prayed for them and exhorted them. In Paul's view exhortation was not out of place in connection with prayer to God. So far indeed is this from being the case that

there could be no encouragement to exhort believers to fight the good fight of faith, and to avoid that which is evil, and to follow after that which is good, were it not for the truth that there is a prayer-hearing and a prayer-answering God. It is sure, on the other hand, that where the heart is so needy and so full of desire for that which is excellent, that prayer wells up like waters from a fountain, there will be also watching and striving unto the attainment of that object. Prayer to God does not mean idleness or sleepiness on the part of him who prays, but rather it means that the whole soul is stretching out her hand after the blessing, and striving to attain to it. There will be striving after godly living, but the soul will come to know that, after all, the blessing when it comes is the gift of God; and so prayer, exhortation and earnest seeking and knocking are all in full harmony in the believer's experience, and each earnest-hearted believer who longs after all that is excellent in his manner of life will be put upon prayer to God, and will rejoice at all exhortation which stirs up his mind to remember these things. A dear brother in Maryland used often to say, when speaking in the church meetings, I love to hear preaching that tells me my faults. He loved to be reminded of them, that he might be helped to avoid them. Of course he did not mean that he wanted the preacher to stand up in the pulpit and say, Brother B. is guilty of doing this or that, or that brother B. possesses such and such a manner of disposition, but he loved that preaching which was itself heart-searching, and which showed himself to himself, and every true believer will respond with a hearty amen to this remark of the dear brother. We may be sure that while Paul longed after his brethren in Jesus Christ, and so was stirred up to admonish and exhort them, it was equally true, on the other hand, that his brethren were equally glad to receive these admonitions and exhortations, that their minds might be stirred up to remember the way of the Lord. If there were any among them who did not welcome and rejoice in these reproofs and admonitions, it was because they were not spiritual, and therefore had little desire to walk at all in the way of the Lord. Now, as said before, all this is in full harmony with the text which we quoted at the beginning, and so we hear Paul give expression to the prayer that their love might abound more and more in all knowledge and in all judgment. It is well to notice the carefulness of the apostle, or rather of the Holy Spirit, who spoke here through the apostle. Love, in the judgment of the apostle, is not a mere excitement of feeling by which one may be carried away without understanding or judgment. The love of God which is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit is always according to truth. It rests in the truth, and abides fast by it at all times. It is not good to love all things, and Paul here limits love to that which is according to wisdom. True love discerns between that which is from heaven and that which is from below. Brethren are to increase in love one to another through the gift of God. Paul here does not mean so much to pray that there might be an increase of love; that is, of the feeling or emotion of love in the heart, but that in all their outward dealings with one another there might be greater and still greater manifestations of that love, and this must not be by simply telling each other how dear each is to the other, but by kindly deeds, by such things as are in full agreement with the truth, and as will further each other

in the knowledge of God's will, and tend to a growth in grace and every heavenly gift. He desired that their love might abound, meaning their love to God, to the truth and to each other, and that this might be in all knowledge and in all judgment, and this we think implies, first, the knowledge of God and the dear Savior, then knowledge of the doctrine of God, all of which must be by experience as well as by knowledge of the Scriptures. Here the word "judgment" signifies understanding.

Next we notice that through this love and this knowledge and understanding Paul declares that they should be able to discern and approve things that are excellent. The thought of trying things is involved in this; in fact the primary meaning of the word translated here approve, is to try. In another place the apostle desired that his brethren might have their senses exercised by reason of use, that they might discern good and evil. It is important beyond all words to describe that there be warm love continually increasing in the heart, but it is also equally important that that love be wisely directed, so that it does not rest upon that which may seem good, but, after all, be really evil. It is of the greatest importance that our love should rest upon that which God approves. To the attainment of this end we need to be informed, that our love may be wisely bestowed to the glory of God and to our own good. Love and discernment are both needful. It is not enough to know the right, but we need a heart to love the right. It is not enough to love that which is right, or rather to desire to love right things, but it is important that we come to know what is right. There are those in whose heart the spirit of love has been shed abroad, but who yet have not been given discernment between that which is false and that which is true. We sometimes say of such ones that they are wiser in their hearts than in their heads. Without love there is no service acceptable to God, and without knowledge or discernment our love may display itself in foolish ways, and so bring discredit upon our faith. Paul therefore prayed that both love and knowledge might abound in his brethren, that they might discern right things and approve them. As the result of these excellent gifts of love and discernment, they would be sincere and without offense until the day of Christ. The word "sincere" signifies not only what we commonly mean by sincerity, that is, that one means just what he says and does, but rather it signifies here that which is clear or spotless. Indeed, without the love of God in the heart, and the knowledge of his will, our nature is so full of all evil that there can be no real sincerity in us. The grace of God and the knowledge of his will, and love to his name alone, can remove insincerity from us and from our service, and give us to serve God with singleness of heart and mind. Even believers, left to themselves, fall straightway into all manner of transgression in speech and conduct. Sovereign grace alone can make us and keep us sincere. How often do we mourn divided affections. Desiring to attain to that which is heavenly, we are ashamed and grieved to find our hearts groveling here below, and this attainment to the upper and better way is a task beyond our utmost strength. No doubt the brethren at Philippi, to whom Paul was here writing, felt all this weakness and deplored it; therefore to them, as to us who feel the same, this prayer of the apostle that God would bless them with love,

discernment and with all sincerity, would come as a holy delight and their hearts would respond, Amen. Even so let it be, Lord Jesus. As Paul prayed that they might be without offense until the day of Christ, so also would their hearts respond, and be found asking earnestly for the same things. The thought involved in the word "offense" is that of stumbling, like one who walks in the dark. Walking in the dark, even that one who is most desirous of not stumbling may sometimes find himself hindered and even falling by reason of unseen obstacles before his feet, and for such an one nothing can be quite so welcome as the light which shows him the stumbling-blocks, and this light Paul here prayed might shine along their pathway, so that seeing that which was in the way they might be able to avoid it, and so not stumble and fall. How plainly it is to be seen here that there is no note of self-sufficiency, but a confession that all our help must come from God. There are exhortations in this epistle to all carefulness of walking, but still, after all, it is to God alone that the apostle prays for help and strength that his brethren may be sustained in that which is holy, and that they might avoid that which is evil, and Paul desired all this for them until the end should come, for it appears to us that "the day of Christ" here signifies the hour of full fruition of all our hopes and desires, when we shall be like him, seeing him as he is. Thus would the brethren be filled with the fruits of righteousness, such as faith, hope, love, humility, peace and steadfastness in the faith and in all outward right living. But these would not be to the praise of men, but to the praise of God. When the branches of the vine yield good fruit we do not say, What a good branch, but rather, What a good vine, yet this does not exclude the branches, for they are parts of the vine. Therefore the apostle could consistently commend the brethren to whom he wrote, but not aside from their union with Christ. The branches did not bear the root, nor yet did they bear themselves, but the root the branches, and the branches are good because the root and the vine are good, and so Paul in the text declares that the fruits of righteousness which they should bear, or with which they should be filled, were by Jesus Christ, and unto the glory and honor of God. That God should be glorified in all things was the highest desire with Paul. This caused him to keep under his own body, and this caused him to both exhort his brethren and to pray for them, to the end that the name of Jesus might be exalted in them and by them. How good it is if we find in our hearts this same spirit dwelling and reigning. Cannot every pastor or minister say, as did John, "I have no greater joy than that my children walk in the truth"? And if one is a true pastor, there will be prayer in his heart for the people whom he serves, that God may be glorified in them. C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder Ahimaaz Mellott.)

The Juniata Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., October 10th, 11th and 12th, 1913, to the brethren of this and other associations with which we correspond, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As it has been a long standing custom of this association to address you with what is called a Circular Letter, there is no better subject than the love of God, so we will call your attention to the words found in Hebrews xiii. 1: "Let brotherly love continue." Let us remember that these words are the foundation of all peace and fellowship in the church of Jesus Christ, and were only addressed to the church of Jesus Christ, spiritual children, children born of God, sanctified by God the Father, and cannot be comprehended by the natural mind, but are revealed to the renewed mind, so "let brotherly love continue." "Let" means something already existing, and we are admonished to let it continue, which we do well to consider, and carefully compare with our experience. There is nothing in the word "let" to indicate that we should or could originate love; it is the gift of God. "Let" means to not hinder, or hide, or put obstacles in the way. The child of God does not love from a sense of duty, or even from choice of the natural mind, as that would be a resolution, and is not love at all. God has an elect and chosen people, ordained, or set apart, from the foundation of the world to show forth his praise, to whom he manifests his love and choice, and they are precious in his sight, perfect in Christ, but not in their own sight, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, called out of darkness into his marvelous light, and manifest his love shed abroad in their hearts. Here is love beyond the power of man to originate. God is love, and we love him because he first loved us.

> "Love is the golden chain that binds
> The happy souls above,
> And he's an heir of heaven that finds
> His bosom glow with love."

Of his own will he begat us, and if we love him that begat, should we not also love those who are begotten of him? In our first experience our love embraced the whole household or faith, we took in our arms of love the church of God; all looked alike good and lovely, and we would stay in just such a frame as this and inquire in his temple; no faultfinding with our brethren. We then loved as little children, full of charity, and charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not, charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up; charity beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Every other thing may fail, but charity, or the love of God, never fails. But while this little child is basking in the sunlight of God's love a cloud hovers over it, and it opens its eyes to another law in its members, and realizes a strife within the flesh lusting against the Spirit. Temptations appear, and sooner or later we feel a disposition to listen to the suggestions of the flesh. Now let brotherly love continue. Resist the devil and he will flee from us. There are many things come up in our carnal minds to mar this brotherly love; we grow careless about our meetings and stay at home for some trifling excuse, and sometimes on Sundays will go somewhere else to meetings for the sake of seeing friends. Sometimes we are led to join secret organizations of the world.

All these things are calculated to hinder the continuance of brotherly love. How careful we should be not to put anything in the way to mar the peace and order of the church. Let us strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is.

"Love is the fountain whence all true obedience flows,
The christian serves the God he loves, and loves the God he knows."

Put off the old man, the flesh, and put on the new man, Christ Jesus, and let brotherly love continue. There are many temptations along the christian's way that lead him in by and forbidden paths. The world has many allurements that attract the fleshly mind, and among them are so-called innocent games of pleasure which have the appearance of evil, if not evil in themselves, which we do well to shun. Let us listen to what Paul says: "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." If I see my strong brother do so and so, I, being weak, can do the same. The flesh is weak, and we are liable to be drawn away after those things which mar the peace of our beloved Zion, therefore, beloved brethren, let us strive together for the things that make for peace, whereby one may edify another, striving to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of love, each esteeming his brother better than himself. Now the Lord of patience and consolation grant us to be like-minded one toward another, according to Christ Jesus, that we may with one mind and one heart glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. May the God of peace be with us all. Amen.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
J. C. MELLOTT, Clerk.

(Written by N. J. Jones.)

To the Elders and messengers of the Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, and the churches they represent, and to all who love our Lord, with whom we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED OF THE LORD:—Through the tender mercy of our God, who doeth all things well, we are enabled to meet again, in mind to pray the only one with whom the words "Holy" and "Reverend" can be connected with his name, to have mercy on us poor sinners and give us a proper waiting before him, that we may worship toward his holy temple in spirit and truth. Now, very dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, when we come to meet in counsel it reminds us that since we have met, another year of time, with its joys and sorrows, cares and toils and sins, has gone by with the past, which reminds us that we shall some time be brought to the open door of the morning of our death, and at God's command we will pass through, and try the realities of our long home. Now, very dear brethren in the Lord, in compliance with the action of the association at her last meeting, and in accordance with her previous custom, you will expect something in the form of a Circular Letter to attach to our Minutes, and as this lot fell on me, I will call your attention to the twenty-third chapter of Job, tenth verse, which reads as follows: "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Now, brethren, Job was one of the elect of God, and looked forward with the eye of faith (as we walk by faith, and not by sight) to the coming of the Son of God, when he shall gather together the outcast of Israel and the dispersed of Judah. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout,

with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Now, brethren, to the text. Job says, "He [God] knoweth the way that I take." "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world."—Acts xv. 18. Then surely Job was right when he said, God knoweth the way that I take. Now as to the way, surely it is Christ, for he is the way, the truth and the life, which is the only name under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved. Now some of the ways of Christ are like this. It was said of him, he should save his people from their sins; and again, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" His Father's business was his Father's will. Jesus was obedient, for he said that he came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him, and the will of him that sent him was that of all that the Father had given him he should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. Brethren, remember that where you can find any record of any work that Christ was to do while he was on earth and with us, it is done; for, God bless his holy name forever, he told his Father, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum. We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. Brethren, consider the way that Job spoke of to be Him that Simeon took in his arms in Jerusalem, and blessed God and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people." Job says in our text, "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Brethren, here are some wonderful words, spoken by one who spake as he was moved by the Holy Ghost. Brethren, when I think of the way the Lord allowed Satan to try Job, and then think of myself being tried like Job, my heart sinks within me, for he suffered him to be deprived in one day of his children, servants and goods, and he submitted to God's will and blessed him in the memorable words: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." It seems that, "In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly." Brethren, these are not the last nor the least of the things that Job spoke of his being tried in; neither are these the last things that he gave us to understand that God ruled in. For Job was moved by the Holy Ghost to, for our learning and comfort, ask the question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" I believe Job had in his mind when he asked this question, the resurrection of the children of God at the end of the world, that they should ever be with the Lord, for he said: "All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come. Thou shalt call and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands. For now thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sins? My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up my iniquity." When we come face to face with these facts it is no wonder Job said, "Behold, I am vile: what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine

hand upon my mouth." O the Lord is to try them in himself, for it is said, I will try them as gold is tried. "They shall call on my name, [notice the word 'shall,' brethren,] and I will hear them. I will say, It is my people, and they shall say, The Lord is my God." "But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers sope: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord [notice who is doing the work] an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord." "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Surely, brethren, it is in Christ ye are tried, and if you are chosen and tried in Christ, then you will come forth as gold; yea, and as pure gold, for he hath forever perfected them that are sanctified. O brethren, is it any wonder that the psalmist said, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well"? "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee." Search us, O God, and know our hearts; try us, and know our thoughts, that we may come forth in all things in Christ as pure gold.

Now, brethren, as we have already said, our Savior finished the work that he came to do, therefore the way that Job spoke of in our text is recorded in the unchanging book, and his trial is over. Then if we are what we hope we are, we can say as Job, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." For surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.

Brethren, I fear I have written too lengthily already, so I will close with the words, As sheep of his pasture we should remember him as our Shepherd, and pray God that he may enable us to follow him while in the pasture, and extol his holy name above every name that is written or spoken in heaven or on earth. Pray with and for each other; bind not burdens on the brethren, but bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator.
H. C. CATE, Clerk.

(Written by Elder Z. M. Beal.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 5th, 6th and 7th, 1913, to the churches composing the same sends greetings of love and fellowship in the Lord Jesus Christ.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began. In writing this, our annual letter, we would first call your attention to some things that are written, both in the Old and New Testaments, in relation to the natural man, that is, the man that is of the earth. "The Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh."—Gen. vi. 3. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."—Gen. vi. 5. "The imagina-

tion of man's heart is evil from his youth." —Gen. viii. 21. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"—Jer. xvii. 9. "The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies."—Psalms lviii. 3. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." This is the language of David, recorded in Psalms li. 5. The foregoing are a few of the testimonies and declarations of God, and without controversy they establish and prove this truth: that all nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity. These are the men that compass sea and land to make proselytes. Jesus called them scribes, Pharisees and hypocrites. These are the natural men, that receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto them, neither can they know them, because they are spiritually discerned; yet they abound, and prosper in this world. "They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men. Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment. Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish. They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily. They set their mouth against the heavens; and their tongue walketh through the earth."—Psalms lxxiii. 5–9. These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts, and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage. They talk of the way that seemeth right unto a man, but they know not the way of the Spirit, nor the works of God who maketh all. This, dear brethren, is not God's way of salvation. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. * * * For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it to bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." God's word will never fail, for the word of the Lord endureth forever. "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law. To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father," and we are made the righteousness of God in him who knew no sin, but was made sin for us. He came to seek and to save that which was lost; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them and carried them all the days of old. He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Our peace with God is through him by faith; he was slain, and redeemed us unto God by his blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation. The natural man cannot sing this song; none but the redeemed children of God can ever sing the song of redeeming grace and dying love. Except a man is born again, born of the Spirit, his heart will never sing: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." He of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. He hath said by the prophet

Hosea: "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction."—Hosea xiii. 14. In Isaiah it is written: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust."—Isaiah xxvi. 19.

Dear brethren, the major portion of this letter is quotations of Scripture. We read in the second epistle of the apostle Paul to Timothy that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!
What more can he say, than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's."

Z. M. BEAL, Moderator.

J. E. HUBBARD, Clerk.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

POETRY.

In memory of a loved one, who is not lost, but only gone before.

In a home of peace and comfort,
Where for years was all sunlight,
Fell a shadow deep and gloomy
As the darkest shades of night.

Such as falls on every homestead
Where the Reaper, death, has been,
Taking off some dear beloved one
With his sickle cold and keen.

Now a mother and her children
Weep with aching hearts to-day
For the husband dear, and father,
Who so lately passed away.

Yet they censure not the Reaper,
Though their lives are filled with pain;
If, midst sheaves of buds and blossoms,
He would blend the ripening grain.

But O, they miss his dear, kind face,
And the good advice he gave;
His vacant chair reminds them
Of a freshly moulded grave.

Lord, send some messenger of love
Those broken hearts to heal;
We know they fully understand,
They realize and feel

That they can praise thee every hour
For thy promise freely given;
Although their dear one slumbers here,
His soul is safe in heaven.

O land of peace and glory,
Home of eternal rest,
They give their loved ones to you,
And murmur, God knows best.

(MRS.) SADIE GOULD.

POETRY IN OBITUARIES.

WE wish to again call the attention of our subscribers to the fact that, as our space is limited, we are unable to publish poetry in obituary notices. We often receive some very good verses in this line, but, in order to be fair to all, we are compelled to make it a rule not to publish any poetry in obituary notices.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Wm. Darby, Md., $1.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon Jonathan Winchell died at the home of his son, Olive, N. Y., Sept. 14th, 1913, in the 92nd year of his age. Brother Winchell was a son of Elder Jacob Winchell, who served the Olive and Hurley Church for a number of years as pastor. Brother Winchell united with the Olive and Hurley Church Dec. 22nd, 1867, and was baptized by Elder I. S. Hewitt. He was chosen deacon of the Olive and Hurley Church shortly after he united with the church, and filled the office well. He was a faithful and devoted member as well as a deacon. In the days of his youth and vigor he was always first to lend a helping hand to those in need; many are the acts of kindness he performed to the poor and needy. Brother Winchell was a man of sterling qualities, upright in all his walk; he loved mercy, dealt justly and walked uprightly. For a number of years he was not able to get out to meeting; he was not sick at heart, but his great age brought with it the infirmities of old age, which confined him to his home. He longed to depart and be with Christ, yet was willing to wait the Lord's time. The end came very peacefully, and he fell asleep in Jesus, to awaken with the likeness of his risen Lord.

His funeral was held from his home, and was largely attended by friends and relatives, which spoke louder than words the high esteem in which he was held. Burial was in the Winchell Cemetery. The writer conducted the services, trying to speak to the comfort of the friends such as the Lord was pleased to give.

ALSO,

Brother **Thomas Jenkins** died at his home in Sanitaria Springs, N. Y., August 20th, 1913, in the 91st year of his age. Brother Jenkins united with the Otego Church in August, 1871, and was baptized by Elder S. H. Durand, who was then pastor of that church. Brother Jenkins was married to Emeline Fenn, of Plymouth Hollow, Conn., in the year 1847, and to that union were born two children: Mrs. Jane Farrington, of Binghamton, and Calvin, of Sanitaria Springs. Brother Jenkins was a man of good report, upright in all his dealings with his fellow-men. He loved mercy, dealt justly and walked uprightly, was a kind and devoted husband and a loving and indulgent father. He lived a life of faithfulness to his church and people, whom he loved for the truth's sake. He leaves his son and daughter, his dear widow, a lovely companion, who has been afflicted for many years by the loss of her eyesight, one granddaughter and one grandson, two sisters, beside the church and other relatives, to mourn their loss.

His funeral was held from his late residence, conducted by the writer, and was largely attended. Burial was in the cemetery at Sanitaria Springs.

May the dear Lord by his grace comfort the mourning ones, and in mercy remember his lonely companion in her bereavement and affliction, is my prayer.

ALSO,

Brother **Lorenzo Eckert** died at his home in Olive, N. Y., August 13th, 1913, in the 78th year of his age. Brother Eckert had been in failing health for some time, but was confined to the house but a few days before his death. A few months before his death he passed through a very dark season in his mind, and sometimes felt that he was almost without hope, but the cloud was dispersed, and the blessed Lord by his Spirit shone upon him, so that he was made to rejoice in the hope of his salvation. Brother Eckert was received in the fellowship of the Olive and Hurley Church the first Saturday in June, 1859, and baptized the day following by Elder Winchell. To say that brother Eckert was a faithful and devoted member, expresses but lightly what we feel in our hearts for one who lived so devoted to the church and cause as he, a firm believer in salvation by grace, and he lived and died in the faith once delivered unto the saints.

His funeral was held from the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Olive, N. Y., and burial was in the Winchell Cemetery. The writer tried to preach Christ and him crucified for the salvation of poor sinners to the comfort of the friends and relatives.

May the dear Lord comfort all the mourning friends, is my prayer.

ALSO,

Brother **Uriah Wood** died at his home in Griffin Corners, N. Y., July 22nd, 1913, in the 71st year of his age. Brother Wood was married to Effenda Scudder in the year 1869, and lived a number of years in Halcott, N. Y., where he united with the Halcott Church in the year 1877, being baptized by Elder Maben. A few years after he united with the church he moved to Brown Station, and lived there until his property was taken by New York city for the building of the Ashokan reservoir; he then moved to Griffin Corners, where he lived until the time of his death. A few years ago the Halcott Church became extinct, and brother and sister Wood united with the First Church of Roxbury. Brother Wood was a man of marked integrity, and loved the doctrine of God his Savior. He was faithful to his church, and his chief delight was to meet his brethren and be in the company of his kindred in Christ. Brother Wood's home was always open to his brethren, and many can testify to the cordial welcome and hospitable home of brother and sister Wood. Brother Wood was stricken with paralysis last February, from which he never fully recovered. He was blessed with the privilege of attending our yearly meeting in Vega the last Saturday and Sunday in June, which he enjoyed very much. The hymn No 821 was sung at his request. This was the last meeting he ever attended. He suffered a second stroke of paralysis, and

only lived a few hours. We feel that he has left good evidence of a good hope through grace, and is at rest. He leaves his widow and an adopted son, beside other relatives and the church to mourn their loss.

His funeral was held from the Methodist meeting-house in Halcott, N. Y., and burial was in the Halcott Cemetery. The writer tried to comfort the friends by using for a text 2 Peter i. 14, 15, a request of our dear departed brother.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Mrs. Olive Powrie, daughter of A. and S. Morningstar, was born in Fulton Co., Ill., Feb. 27th, 1868, died Sept. 1st, 1913, aged 45 years, 6 months and 4 days. She was married to J. B. Powrie July 3rd, 1889, and to that union were born eight children: Pearl, Emmett, Omar, Larch and Robert; three under four years of age preceded her in death. She leaves three brothers, two sisters and her mother, whom she tenderly cared for. Her father was very ill all summer, and she was with him as much as possible, but living forty miles away, she could only be with us part of the time. She was getting ready to come back and stay with her father while he lived, but Aug. 30th she was stricken with paralysis and lived only twenty-seven hours. She was a very unselfish woman, living for others, a loving mother, daughter, wife and sister. She professed a hope in Christ, I think, in the year 1891, and in October, 1895, she, with her sister, Dollie Walker, united with the Coast Fork Church, and was baptized by Elder Waldon. She ever afterward lived a blameless life, was a meek and humble follower of her blessed Savior, ever ready to contend for the truth as it is in Jesus. She was highly gifted, and spoke so sweetly in our church meetings, and was a great strength to her brother, C. F. Morningstar; but alas, she has gone, never to return. She was a great sufferer, and often expressed a desire to depart and be with Christ. She was lovely in life and death. Her heartbroken companion surely has our sympathy, for she was everything to him. May his loss be for his good and God's glory.

ALSO,

Abram Morningstar was born in Knox Co., Ohio, Feb. 22nd, 1843, and died Oct. 1st, 1913, making his stay on earth 70 years, 7 months and 8 days. His death occurred just a month to a day after that of our daughter Olive. He professed a hope in Christ in the year 1866, and united with the old Mt. Zion Church, in Fulton Co., Ill., the second Sunday in October of the same year, giving bright evidence of a hope beyond this vale of tears. He was ill for nine months of diabetes, but did not seem to suffer much, except in mind, until the last twelve hours. He was a humble man, a good neighbor, and above all he loved his family, who greatly miss him; but none can miss him as I do, and I wonder why I am spared to suffer this double bereavement. He leaves three sons: C. F., Ernest J. and Riley W., and two daughters: Mrs. Dollie Walker and Mrs. F. C. England, with three sons-in-law, three daughters-in-law and twenty-eight grandchildren and his aged companion to mourn their loss. We came to Drain, Oregon, from Fulton Co., Ill., in 1877, and it was some time before we found any Baptists of our faith and order, and he could not mingle with any other. His favorite hymn was, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound," &c., and salvation by grace was his hope.

Dear saints of our God, remember us at the throne of grace, that we may be enabled to say, "Thy will be done."

S. MORNINGSTAR.

Oren S. Womack died in Supply, Okla., Sept. 14th, 1913, of Bright's disease. Brother Womack was born in Bartholomew Co., Ind., in 1848. His father was an Old School Baptist preacher in southern Indiana many years ago. The subject of this notice was a boy soldier in the last year of the Civil war. After the war he was with the United States Surveyors in the Dakotas. He was married to Miss Sarah J. Henderson, of Indiana, many years ago, who, with five children, remains to mourn his loss. He moved to Stafford Co., Kansas, about thirty years ago, and from there went to Oklahoma in 1893, entering a homestead near Alva, which he completed, but later moved into Alva city, which was his home, but at the time of his death he was on a visit to his daughter in Fort Supply. Naturally, brother Womack was an outspoken man in regard to his opinions, carrying no deception on any subject. For years many people thought that he was rather rough in his demeanor among men, and carelessly indifferent about religion, but for twenty years after coming to Kansas he was looking around for Old School Baptists, refusing all offers from Arminian denominations, contending for the doctrine of salvation alone by the grace of God. His firmness caused his name to be mentioned to me, and I drove thirty miles to pay him a visit. It appeared to me then that the Lord had wonderfully kept him from the idolatry which had surrounded him, as he was apparently alone in the midst of opposition. He came to our meetings, and at the organization of the Ebenezer Church, near Driftwood, Okla., October, 1901, was the first member that joined by experience after the church was organized. The writer baptized him at the next meeting, in November. He soon commenced taking the SIGNS, which suited him exactly, as he was a thorough "absoluter." He was strictly conscientious in believing that brethren should belong to only one organization in this world: the church of the living God. He abandoned the G. A. R. for the church, esteeming the fellowship of the saints as the greatest riches for him on earth. His faithfulness in

attending our meetings when able was not excelled. For about five years our meetings were held in Helena, Okla., forty miles from Alva, brother Womack's home. He seldom was absent, driving in all kinds of weather. About a year before he died I preached at his home, and though he was afflicted, I did not think the end so near. He had been our leader in singing the mighty songs of Zion, but now he is fallen asleep in Jesus, from which none ever wake to weep. J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla.

Joseph Clevenger was born in Putnam Co., Ohio, Dec. 1st, 1830, and departed this life Sept. 28th, 1913, aged 82 years, 9 months and 27 days. He was the son of Jacob and Eliza Clevenger, and one of a family of fourteen children, six of whom are left to mourn the loss of their brother. He was a lifelong resident of this county, and was honored and respected by all who knew him. He was united in marriage with Miss Margaret Krouse, March 27th, 1850. To that union were born eight children, viz., Lucy, wife of Peter Roose, of Marion, Mich.; Emeline, who died at the age of three years; George W., who died in infancy; Malica, wife of Albert Schindler, of this county; Isaiah, of Walkerville, Mich.; Martha J., wife of Samuel Harris, of this county; Joseph H., deceased, Pennock, Mich., and Hulda, wife of Edson Rower, of Kalida, Ohio. There are left twenty-one grandchildren and twenty-two great-grandchildren. Upon a profession of faith in Christ he was baptized by Elder Morris in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church called Thompson, Putnam Co., Ohio, Jan. 22nd, 1870, and lived an honored member and in full fellowship until the end. His last hours were peaceful, and after giving the parting hand to his loved of earth he lifted his eyes heavenward and without a gasp or struggle peacefully fell asleep in Jesus; blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder A. F. Dove, who read the beautiful language of the one hundred and thirty-sixth Psalm and preached the funeral discourse from 2 Timothy iv., latter part of verse 7: "I have kept the faith," which words were in line with his living.

THE death angel visited our home and took our dear old grandmother, **Mary Ann White Halsell.** She was born in Todd Co., Ky., August 1st, 1830, died Oct. 18th, 1913, aged 83 years, 2 months and 18 days. She professed a hope in Christ in her school days, and joined the Primitive Baptist Church, and lived a consistent member until death. She was married to Elder E. B. Halsell Sept. 15th, 1853, who preceded her to the grave thirty-seven years. To that union were born twelve children, three boys and nine girls, of which only three are now living: L. B. and C. E. Halsell, of Arlington, Ky., and Rufina Clark, of Cunningham, Ky., at whose home she breathed her last. She was confined to the house six months, and to her bed three months, but never murmured nor complained, for she was ready to go, and said, "Not my will, but thine, be done." O, this stroke we deeply feel, though I can but say, Weep not for grandmother, for she wanted to go and be with Jesus for evermore. All was done for her that kind and willing hands could do, but when Jesus comes no one can stay his hand.

Written by her granddaughter,

DULA CLARK.

I desire to express my heartfelt thanks to my dear friends and neighbors for their kindness shown her during her sickness, and when death's cold hand shall visit their home, may they be blessed with all the help that kind hands can give in time of need.

Her daughter, RUFINA CLARK.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at 5 cents per copy. Address,

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,

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"SHOULD CHILDREN OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS ATTEND SUNDAY SCHOOL?"

I have remaining about fifty copies of "Should Children of Primitive Baptists Attend Sunday School?" in board covers at 40 cents per copy. The limp covers are all sold. This binding is substantial and attractive, and every Primitive Baptist should have a copy in their home. The cost to me has been every cent I am asking for the book. My time and labor have been freely given to the cause. Please send all orders to me at the address given below.

D. W. OWENS.

HERSMAN, Brown Co., Ill.

I find the postage on my book, "Day unto Day," to America is 9 pence (18 cents), and I thought it would be 6 pence, or at most 7 pence. I think on consideration, as the expense of publication has been very heavy, notwithstanding a most encouraging sale, I had better say I will send to any of your readers the half calf gilt edge edition for 5 shillings ($1.20), or the cloth edition for 4 shillings (96 cents) postage free.

E. LITTLETON, JR.

CHAPEL HOUSE, CROWBOROUGH, England.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND wishes to announce that his supply of the book, "Songs in the Night," is exhausted, and that he will be unable to fill orders for them in the future.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 81. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1913. NO. 23.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MATTHEW XXV. 14; MARK XIII. 34; LUKE XIX. 12.

"THE kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country."

"For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey."

"A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return."

BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—The above texts, with something of their meaning, have been on my mind somewhat of late, and while I shall only be able to set forth a small portion of the truth contained in them, yet I hope thereby to draw forth from the editors some explanation of them, and of the great matter contained in them.

First. All these texts seem to me to mean one and the same thing, and I think that all three of the apostles are recording the same truths as presented by Jesus. The first text, recorded by Matthew, is embraced in one of the three parables recorded in that chapter, the first being the parable of the virgins, of which Elder Chick wrote so ably recently, and the third, found in the same chapter, tells of when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and before him shall be gathered all the nations of the earth, and he shall separate them one from the other, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats. I have thought that this group of parables were all intended to set forth one and the same thing. Now the question in my mind is, When was the kingdom of heaven as a man traveling into a far country? Brother Chick has made it very plain that the parable of the ten virgins had reference to the time of the beginning of the gospel kingdom. It was the time of the coming of the bridegroom. The man who went traveling into a far country I understand was Christ our Lord. Mark records it in this way: "The Son of man [Christ] is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch." Luke records it that the nobleman went into a far country to receive a kingdom, and to return.

Now the first two things into which I wish to inquire are, When did Christ take his journey to receive a kingdom and return, and when did he go, and when did he return? I understand that the time when he left his house was when he was crucified and arose from the dead and as-

cended to heaven. That was the journey he took, and the eternal heavens was the country to which he went. This is, as I understand, when the kingdom of heaven was like unto a man traveling into a far country, who called his servants and delivered to them his goods, to one five talents, to another two, and to another one talent. I have understood that these servants were his apostles and disciples, to whom he gave talents according to their several abilities. I understand that when Christ was exhorting his disciples as to how they should conduct themselves after he should be taken away from them was when he delivered to them his goods, or the talents, or the pounds, upon which to occupy until he should come. Luke says that when he had returned, having received the kingdom, he commanded these servants to be called unto him, that he might know how much each one had gained by trading. This, I understand, was when he came to reckon with his servants. Matthew says he called his own servants (not the servants of some one else). Mark says he gave authority to his servants. Luke says he called his ten servants. Thus it would appear that these servants were his disciples, who had followed him while he was here on earth.

Now having, as I have thought, pointed out the time when the Son of man left his home, and having tried to show that the place to which he went in his journey was heaven itself, where he sat at the right hand of God, and having also tried to show that the servants to whom he gave the ten pounds were his disciples, the next question of which I wish to speak is, as to when it was that he returned, having received his kingdom, and called his servants to whom he had given his money. The Scriptures upon which I shall rely to settle the time of his coming to reckon with his servants are found in the same chapters upon which I have relied to fix the time of his leaving his house. It was the time of fleeing to the mountains, before that generation to whom he was talking should pass. It was the time when the sign of the Son of man should be seen in heaven. Christ had been crucified and left his house about the year thirty-three, and so it seems that the appearance of the sign of the Son of man was about the year A. D. 70. We read in Matthew xxiv., Mark xiii., Luke xix., xxi. and xvii., that at the time of their fleeing to the mountains they should see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and glory. (Matt. xxiv. 30.) The same is recorded in Mark xxiii. 26. Thus I have shown the time of his returning back to the house which he had left. I do not wish for a moment to be understood as holding that this coming of the Son of man has any reference to his second personal coming at the resurrection at the last day. No, no; be it far from me to attempt to give it such a meaning. But still this returning after having received his kingdom with power and great glory I have understood to be when those who fled to the mountains saw the sign of the Son of man in heaven; then they saw him coming in the clouds with mighty power, taking vengeance upon his enemies. This was a coming in judgment at the end of the legal covenant, and at the beginning of the gospel dispensation. Many things were to take place at that time. Two women should be grinding at the mill, one should be taken, and the other left. Two men should be in one bed, one should be taken, and the other left. Two men should be in the field, one should be taken, and the other left.

The question was asked of the Savior, Where? and he replied, Where the carcass is, there shall the eagles be gathered. I have thought that the place of the carcass must be in the mountains, whence the disciples of Christ should flee to escape the great distress that was to come upon the nation. Jerusalem was destroyed in this fearful time, together with the whole land of Judah, and the people of the first covenant. This was the time when all people should have been destroyed were it not for the elect's sake, but for the elect's sake these days of vengeance should be shortened. I also understand that the day of judgment, which came at the end of the legal covenant upon Jerusalem, is typical of the last day, when it shall be declared that time shall be no more. Then the gospel kingdom shall have finished its work in gathering the elect out of the world. The great separation which took place at this time, when the Son of man was as a man traveling into a far country, is typical of the time at the resurrection of the dead.

We find much said by the Savior about the kingdom of heaven. He preached the gospel of the kingdom, and also sent his apostles to preach that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, and afterward the seventy also had the same message to deliver. I find in all the parables where the kingdom of heaven is spoken of, that the time meant is the ending of the old and the beginning of the new covenant, but I do not think for a moment that all the parables end with the commencement of the kingdom of heaven. I have thought that they have been in force all through the gospel dispensation, and that the gospel is now calling out and separating, as it did in the beginning, and the coming of Christ in judgment at the destruction of Jerusalem is meant to be in force during the whole gospel dispensation; and as we see how the work of God's servants was appointed to them, and how at his coming in the clouds with power the disciples were in the mountains, and he reckoned with them, so I understand that God is still giving authority to his servants, and a time of reckoning comes to them all; and still it is true that the slothful servant must lose his gift or talent, and it must be given to those who have made better use of what was entrusted to them. I have felt that I have seen for myself something of this day of reckoning.

We find, by reading, what the angel showed to John the revelator about the seven churches in Asia. This is supposed to have been written about the year A. D. 90, which was some twenty years after the first reckoning, when Jerusalem was destroyed. The Lord made known to John by the angel that he had somewhat against the church at Ephesus, because she had left her first love, and she was bidden to remember from whence she was fallen, and to repent, and do her first works, else the Lord would come quickly and remove the candlestick out of its place. And to the church at Pergamos he was bidden to write, "I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam. * * * So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come to thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth." And to the church at Thyatira he said, Write; notwithstanding all thy charity and service and faith, and thy patience, yet "I have a few things against thee, because thou suffer-est that woman Jezebel, which calleth

herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. * * * Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he that searcheth the reins and hearts. * * * But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden." To the church at Sardis he said, Write; "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. * * * I have not found thy works perfect before God. * * * If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief. * * * Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments." The church at Philadelphia had done better, and the Lord would keep her from the hour of temptation. The church at Laodicea he said was neither cold nor hot; it was lukewarm, and the Lord would spue them out of his mouth.

Now I have dwelt at length upon these judgments of the Lord, and what they were for; they show that the eye of the Lord is ever over his churches, and as the nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and return, so Jesus went and returned, having received his kingdom. When he arose and ascended all power was given unto him in heaven and in earth. Thus we see the sign of the Son of man in heaven, where he sits upon the mediatorial throne. There he metes out his reckoning with his servants, blessing them who had watched and had been faithful, and as it was in the beginning of the gospel kingdom, so it has been all through the duration of the gospel kingdom to the present time: the kingdom of heaven is still as a man traveling into a far country; he still calls his servants and delivers to them his goods, and he still reckons with them. The kingdom of heaven is still as it was when it began to be like the ten virgins. Men must still be born again in order to see the kingdom; they are the only ones who have oil in their vessels with their lamps. The kingdom is still like the king who made a marriage for his son. This I think is true, although those who were bidden in the beginning seem to have reference to the Jews who disbelieved. God's servants are still proclaiming the marriage supper, and there are still those who reject it and fail to come to it, but as it was then, so is it now, the Lord will have his table filled by sending out his servants into the streets, and lanes, and highways, and bringing in hither the blind, the maimed, the halt; he brings and compels them to come in. This was the way at the beginning of the gospel dispensation, and it is the only way in which the guests are brought in to the marriage supper of the Lamb now. The wedding supper will not be over until the last vessel of mercy has been gathered into the supper. It also may still occur that the servants may bring in some who have not on the wedding garment. Some may join the church who have never been born again, but the King who made the marriage supper will detect them, and they shall be cast out into outer darkness, for the kingdom of heaven is a separating kingdom; it gathers of every kind, and then they are separated. The bad fish are thrown away and the good are gathered into the kingdom. The wheat and the tares are both to grow to the harvest, and then the separation takes

place; then the chaff is separated from the wheat, and the wheat gathered into the garner. This kingdom at the beginning did not come with observation; the Savior said, The kingdom of heaven is within you, and it is yet within the people. No one can see the kingdom within others unless it be first within themselves. One must be born again to see it in himself, and one must be born again to see it in others. How often we see some in great distress because the kingdom of heaven is set up in them and the separating process is going on within them. Such ones may try to hide this work, but those who have it in themselves can see it in others. As the kingdom of heaven had a separating influence then, so now, when one is born again and sees the kingdom, he is separated from those who are not born of the Spirit, and he seeks the company of those who have the same experience that he has, and as we see that Christ returned and reckoned with his servants, we may be well assured that he will come and reckon with all his servants all through the gospel dispensation. How often we see churches removed when they have become careless or lukewarm. When we look over the field we see the same judgments meted out now to churches that the revelator saw meted out to the seven churches of Asia. The history of the departures of those churches, and of God's swift judgments upon them, was written for our admonition; they show to us that we cannot depart from the true doctrine without receiving the rod, and we cannot become cold or lukewarm without being spued out of the place we have occupied as churches and being remembered no more as churches. These judgments are in this life, and pertain to churches now as well as then, and the same is true of the servants of God. We find that some of God's servants have so conducted themselves that they are not now making use of the things of which they were placed in charge, and not waiting the Lord's coming, and are to be counted as slothful servants. These two conditions seemed to prevail then, viz., slothful servants, and churches departing from the doctrine and becoming lukewarm. They did not care much about meeting for worship, and were not watching for the coming of the Lord. They were like they were in the days of Noah. They had heard Noah giving the warning, but they went on eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until Noah entered the ark, and the floods came and they were destroyed. So also it was with Sodom and Gomorrah, they heard the warning given by Lot, but as soon as he went out the judgment came, and Christ said so would it be in the days of the Son of man. Christ and his apostles must first preach this gospel of the kingdom in all the world for a witness, and then the end came; that is, the end of legalism, the end of the first covenant, city, people and land. There are some things meant in some of the parables which differ from the things intended in other parables. In most of them the meaning seems to me to be the same, and the time the same, but the parable of the vineyard which was let out to husbandmen while the king went into a far country, and in which it is said that at the time of fruit he sent his servants to receive the rental, and some they stoned, and some were beaten, and some were killed, and to whom at last he sent his son, saying, They will reverence my son, seems to me to be the covenant made with Abraham, and the servants who were sent for the rental were the proph-

ets, and answer to those of whom the prophet Elijah spoke when he said, "Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars," and of whom Christ spoke when he said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee." But in the parable at the last the lord sent his son; then they reasoned among themselves, saying, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be our's." The Savior said, What shall the king do to those wicked husbandmen? He will come and miserably destroy those wicked husbandmen, and burn up their city, and give the vineyard to others. Hence, as it appears to me, the parable of the vineyard had its beginning with Abraham, but the reckoning was when Christ returned, having received the kingdom.

Then the parable of the king who made a marriage for his son seems to have its beginning when the gospel began to be preached to the Jews. They are the ones who seem to have been bidden, but the reckoning seems to have been when Christ returned from his journey, having received his kingdom, and sitting as King upon his throne, all power being given to him in heaven and in earth, and the parable of the ten virgins begins with this reckoning. The ten virgins went to meet the bridegroom when he returned from his journey, but the talents and the ten pieces of money were given when Christ left his house and departed from it. But the time of reckoning in all these parables was when he returned, having received his kingdom. This was what he ascended into the heavens for, and when he returned he returned as King enthroned. His coming was in the clouds with great power and glory, visiting judgments upon his enemies. That kingdom was to be seen coming with power before some of the apostles should meet death; it was to be seen before that generation should pass; and if this coming was so wonderful, what must his second personal coming be at the resurrection, when he shall be a triumphant Conqueror, delivering the kingdom to the Father, and he himself being then subject to the Father?

Hoping that our brethren may glean something from what I have written, I will now close.

Your brother in hope,

NEWTON PETERS.

PORTLAND, Ind., 1913.

"MAN."

"AND the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."—Gen. ii. 7.

There was a creation prior to this, regarding man; so the creation is one part, and the formation another part of God's work. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust;" not from the dust, but of it. After his transgression the Lord God said unto Adam: "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; * * * in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." The man was as much dust when the Lord God spake to him as he ever would be, for the Lord God said, "Dust thou art."

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, [he is now that far in the process of God's handiwork] and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became [by reason of this] a living soul." He was not a living soul in the creation or in the formation, but by virtue of God breathing into his nostrils the breath of life, and his very ex-

istence ever since is of God, who breathes into his nostrils the breath of life. When God ceases to continue the breath of life to him man ceases also to live. Solomon, in speaking of man and beast, says, All have "one breath; [one breath at a time] so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity. All go unto one place: all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?"—Eccl. iii. 19–21. David said, I was as a beast before thee. And Adam gave names to all the cattle and to every beast, &c., and if Adam finds one without a name to-day Adam will give it a name; he will name it to correspond with that principle of the beast in itself. The sheet let down from heaven for Peter to behold contained beasts, wild beasts, creeping things and fowls of the air, and these were figurative of God's elect. We need not go outside of ourselves to find the beast, or wild beast, or the creeping things. David felt he was as a beast before the Lord in his transgression. I have seen some of the Lord's children as wild beasts on some subjects, then some manifesting the traits of the serpent and creeping things, and some were as the birds of the air, singing and praising God for his goodness and mercy.

But to return to my subject: man, whom God created in his own image. This image did not imply that God made man holy or eternal; breath of life is one thing, and eternal life is another. The image was that Adam was the figure of him that was to come. Adam is one of the signposts pointing to Jesus Christ. The first man is of the earth earthy, the second man is the Lord from heaven. Man as a living soul has a mind capable of predestinating before determining what he will do, and he has a purpose and aim in this life; in this respect he is a figure of Him who was to come. In his creation the woman was in the man, in a mystical way, in his formation, and becoming a living soul he was alone. The Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man made he a woman. The flesh has ever been closed up to Adam of God's wonderful ways concerning the children of men. This image is pointing us to the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the head of his bride, the church, chosen in him before the foundation of the world. As the Lord God made a complete woman, and brought her to the man, so when Christ was crucified, and the soldiers pierced his side, the church was complete in his robe of righteousness, washed and cleansed in his blood, and ye are complete in him, says the apostle. God gave Adam dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth; his dominion was confined to the earth, and the earth alone. Man is to replenish and subdue the earth; this is his habitation, here he sojourns and earns his bread by the sweat of his face until he returns unto the ground. God gave his Son a kingdom, the kingdom of heaven. He should have wisdom, and a mind, and a purpose, and his throne is a sceptre forever, he abides eternally and his kingdom knows no end. God gave him a bride, the church, and brought her unto him, and he loves her as bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, as, says the apostle, "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother,

and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."—Eph. v. 30–32. We believe that Adam loved his bride, and as a living soul he had every principle and attribute in him that has ever been manifested by him since his creation and formation, but let it ever be remembered that God did not create or make him a sinner. God made man upright, and pronounced him very good, with all the rest of God's creation. Sin is the transgression of the law. By man sin entered, and death by sin; man by nature is depraved. The works of the flesh are "adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like."—Gal. v. 19–21. These are the attributes in man by nature, and are contrary to the law and godliness, and man is wholly accountable for his acts; he may try to hide himself among the trees of the garden, but nevertheless he is justly condemned and guilty before God. What a vast difference between the first man, who is of the earth earthy, and the second Man from heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law. Well might the apostle say, "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. * * * The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. * * * As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."—1 Cor. xv. 42–49. In this tabernacle we groan, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.

Dear Elder Ker, I send you a few lines for publication in the SIGNS, if in your judgment they are proper. In my travels in Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York and Canada I find many who are comforted by the correspondence and letters in the SIGNS, and I would like to see more from our able ministers, such as Elders Durand, Lester, Lefferts, McConnell, Vail, Slauson, Coulter and others. There are many private letters which are good, but we need some strong meat. I would be glad to see more from your own pen. My prayer is for sister Ker and all interested in her.

In best of bonds,

J. M. FENTON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Sept. 7, 1913.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR PASTOR:—We are glad that the blessed Master has brought you back again to us from the hospital. We do not know how much we as a church should miss you, only when you are taken away for a time, then we are made to fear that perhaps we shall not see you again. But God has been good to us, and also to our dear brother Yard in restoring him, and he has been made to sing sweeter and louder, and to feel the cords of love and fellowship drawn closer, if indeed that could be, since he was absent from us so long. Trials make the promise sweet. These words seem to come into my mind: All the way the Lord did lead him. And again, There was no strange god with him; this God was with him when he

wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way. Dear children of God, do you not remember when you were in the wilderness forty years in a solitary way? There was no comfort. You were made to cry, Lord, remember me, and deliver me out of my destitution. You felt that the Lord had forgotten to be gracious, and that his mercies we were clean gone forever. I love to go back in memory, and think over this wilderness journey, how the Lord led me, and there was no strange god with me. Then how sweet was the deliverance, then the wilderness was made to blossom like the rose, and there was a Rock there, a Rock in a weary land. How solid is that truth which is founded upon this Rock; the shadow of this Rock in a weary land was so cool and restful, and then the Lord's people sing in this wilderness, "If I must sing I'll sing of grace, which raised me from the fall." There is a crown of righteousness which is laid up in heaven, and all the elect children of God will receive it, but not one thing can they do to merit this crown of righteousness. It is the gift of God; it is the pure unlimited favor of the Lord, bestowed upon his children, who are born again, and called by his grace. It is not of works, lest any man should boast. He whispers, Child, your sins are all forgiven you. Jesus atoned for them by his death upon the cross, and at the last cried, "It is finished." How beautiful a sight it is to see one of these little ones made willing to follow his Lord and Master in baptism, buried beneath the yielding wave, to show forth his death, burial and resurrection, and so rising to walk in newness of life. Yes, it is new indeed, all old things are passed away. We cannot take the same comfort in the things of the world. We may be where there are gay things going on, such as light talking and feasting, but we feel that all is vanity. Begone, ye gilded vanities, ye have no charms for me; I want to hear about Jesus, my light and my song. How often I have been made glad that there was a Peter. Had there not been, at times it seems that I would have no hope. In my early exercises of mind, one time, when sixteen years of age I went to Otego, N. Y., to a meeting, and had a good feast upon the preached word. One dear minister came to me and said, You love the truth, I can see it in your face. He said, Have you ever felt like being baptized? I replied, O no. Right there, like Peter, I denied my Lord, that I knew him. All the time I felt these words in my heart, If ye love me, keep my commandments. I had a desire to go and tell the church what a great sinner I was, and yet that I loved them. I went along some years thus burdened, so much so that my health was undermined for a time. I was still clinging to Egypt and her allurements. At last I was brought to the Red Sea, as were the children of Israel. The sea was in front and the enemy behind, and it seemed as though there was no way of escape and I must be swallowed up, then the waters parted, and, like the Israelites, I went through dry shod, and I could, like them, sing the song of deliverance. When the Lord's time came I was made to go to the church and tell them what great things the Lord had done for me. Jesus said to one, Go home to your friends and tell them what great things the Lord has done for thee. Dear Elder Chick, you used those words for your text that day, fifteen years ago. "There my best friends, my kindred, dwell, there God my Savior reigns." Let us strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Let us seek first the kingdom of God and

his righteousness, and all needed things shall be added unto us. May God keep me in the footsteps of the flock that I may walk as becomes a member of the church. I feel very unworthy to be called sister. I am a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all. By the grace of God I am what I am. Let God have all the glory for ever and ever.

Your unworthy sister,

MARY BREWSTER CONNER.

EPHESIANS II. 8.

"By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."

How wonderful are the works of Jesus, who made all things and upholds them by the word of his power. All this vast creation was brought into existence for his bride, the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who filleth all in all. They are the little flock whom Jesus bids, Fear not, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. The Lord seals instruction when we are asleep. The words at the head of this article were given me while asleep. I was talking with some one, and saying, How plain is the way of salvation through the sovereign and reigning grace of God, and yet mankind will not have it, but will follow their own devices, and the vast multitude say, Away with the man, we will not have him to reign over us. They run eagerly in the way of those who by cunningly devised fables and enticing speech lay in wait to deceive, and they lay heavy burdens on those who are caught in their net in their worship of a Jesus who is trying to save people, but who is not able to accomplish his purpose without the aid of puny man. Why? Because they want to divide the glory, and to glory in the works of their own hands, and exalt the creature more than the Creator. Verily they have their reward. The prevailing religion of this wealthy city is all a vain show to be seen and applauded of men. What they do they do to be seen of men; yet there are a few names here who have not bowed the knee to Baal, and who have been taught that salvation is of the Lord. It has been my lot for several years to be deprived of the privilege of meeting with the brethren and sisters at church meetings. My position keeps me up most of the night, and I sleep through the day. While up at night I often look at the bright and starry sky and wonder at the wonderful works of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for by him were all things made, and he guides these bright orbs through their course in the heavens, and will continue to do so until the last vessel of mercy has been manifested and brought to a knowlege of the fact that Jesus is their Savior, and that this is all of his own grace and purpose. This salvation is in store for all of his elect people, whom he has redeemed with his own precious blood. His grace is rich and free, a boundless store. Our God is the God of purpose; his entering into this world was no haphazard affair. He came at the appointed time, sent by his Father to save his people from their sins, and when he yielded up his life on the accursed tree, being made a curse for them, that is, his people, he paid evey debt that was charged against them. He cried, "It is finished," for he had finished the work that the Father had given him to do. He was laid in Joseph's new tomb and then was raised up by the Father upon the third, the appointed, day, a victorious conqueror over death, hell and the grave. For six long hours he hung on the Roman cross, suffering for your sins and mine, and the sins of all his

people through all ages of the world, from Adam the first, to the last one of the election of grace, even all that the Father gave him, and not one of the purchase of his precious blood will ever be lost or left out, for it is not the will of your Father that one of these little ones shall perish. Hence his people know that salvation is all of the grace of God, and they desire to render all praise, majesty and glory to the blessed name of Jesus, who is the first and the last, the Alpha and Omega, he that liveth and was dead, and behold, he liveth evermore, and has the keys of death and hell. He said, I am he that shutteth and no man openeth, and that openeth and no man shutteth. His people are hidden in the cleft of the Rock. He is the sure foundation on which the church is built, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her. His kingdom will break in pieces all other kingdoms, and stand forever. He ever lives to intercede for his people. He is the lion of the tribe of Judah, and has prevailed to loose the seals of the book. In him are the sure mercies of David. His church is built upon this revelation to each one. Through the teaching of God's Holy Spirit each one is led to see Jesus the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, for he has fulfilled the law in all its jots and tittles. He forever removed the sins of his people far off into the land of forgetfulness, to be remembered against them no more forever. Justice will not demand a second penalty for the same offense. His people have not only been judged for their sins, but also they have been justified. Therefore, "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, * * * for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Here are pardon and justification both.

"Thy flock, thine own peculiar care,
Though oft they seem to roam uneyed,
Are led or driven only where
They best and safest may abide."

When I consider the heavens, the work of thy hand, what is man, that thou art mindful of him?

Your brother,

WM. F. SLOAN.

LEXINGTON, Ky., July 28, 1913.

FILER, Idaho, August 18, 1913.

BROTHER KER:—By request of several of the brethren of Ohio I will try to write on the subject of the apostle Paul, 2 Cor. i. 1, first clause. It has pleased God in his wisdom to leave on record words of comfort for his chosen people, and we all in our experience find many things that correspond in a way with the apostle's experience; were it not so we would have no hope. Saul of Tarsus was a zealous Jew, brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and had learned what we all have learned in the schools of men, that salvation depended on our own works. He was taught to keep the law perfect, and saw himself a better man than the rest, being more zealous; and natural religion has always caused us to see in others their imperfections, find fault, and if others did not believe as we to force them to, even to compelling them by imprisonment and death, following them into strange cities. A great many of us were brought up as Saul, and were taught to observe the law, and that if we did not do certain things, such as going to meeting, saying the prayers we had been taught, and keeping Sunday holy, that the devil would get us, and we were very quick to look around and find others who were worse than we, and say to ourselves, I thank God I am not as others; I pay tithes, I

fast, I pray; man has organized the Sunday School, I am a teacher, I instruct them in the way they should go, I tell them that salvation is by works, and that the Lord has done all that he can, and now it rests with you, you must make the start; (notice, action before life) hailing men and women, committing them to prison, compelling them to fall down and worship the image which almighty man has organized. Can you, my brother, look back to any feelings of this kind? Can you recall when you thought, Some day I will get religion and become good; some day I will join the church? I can recall very plainly the time that I said to myself that I would never join the Old Baptists, for they were not popular enough, and I was ashamed to have it said that any of my relatives were foolish enough to belong to them, and I said all manner of foolish things about them, and tried to help exterminate them, and when a boy I have blackened my face and preached, as I thought, "Hardshell" sermons many times. Saul, while in this same madness, and full of persecution, on his trip to Damascus in search of the followers of Christ, was stopped. Now here is the point I had in mind when I commenced this article: Saul was stopped, you were stopped, all natural things have an end, even natural religion; when the One from heaven speaks earth must fall away, nothing can withstand the power of Him who rules in heaven and in earth, and you and I, with all our natural attainments, asked with Saul, Who art thou, Lord? O the bitter blindness that has come, what a miserable sinner I am; what can I do? and the one in all his greatness who was armed with self is now felled to the earth, and his armor is taken away, and helpless as a child he is made to see that salvation is of the Lord. How truly the Master said that except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. How joyous is the news when we have given up all for lost to have the assurance that we have a part in that finished work which was wrought out for us. How about that which Saul had been taught? Where is that you had been taught? O brethren, it is gone, it was false, I was deceived; the true Light now shineth, and I have other desires; the people I once despised and persecuted are now my people, and their God my God; how good they all appear to me. What great tribulation Paul passed through to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, and whenever Paul is brought into question he goes back to that trip to Damascus, to his conversion, and we must also go back to that time when the Lord began a good work in us. There is now placed on us a mark, and the world points at us the finger of scorn; sometimes even one's own companion, brother or sister, father or mother, will cast us off as evil, and our enemies are of our own household. But there is something which cannot be told, that precious influence of the Spirit which has sealed our hearts together; the only unity that exists is with that people who worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. Now you are not your own, you are bought with a price, you are kept by the power of God, and, as Paul, I thank God through our Lord Jesus Christ that I myself with my mind serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin. Paul no longer is going about persecuting the saints, he no longer boasts about his education and religion, but now preaches Christ and him crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block and unto the Greeks foolishness, but unto them who are called, the power

and wisdom of God; not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power; not what I am going to do, but what is done; it is finished, by grace are ye saved; not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. That which once to Paul was works is now not of works, it is the gift of God. Boasting is excluded, and they speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives them utterance. Paul was no longer popular, but cast out, put in prison, beaten with stripes, led about in chains, brought before kings and rulers for the defence of the truth, showing what great things he must suffer for "my name." Finally his life was taken from him, but his words, written by inspiration, still live; and, brethren, our God has promised to never leave nor forsake us, but all those who had part in that offering made on Calvary will hear the words, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

May God's richest blessing rest upon all of the dear children of Christ, is the prayer of a poor sinner.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

TIAWAH, Okla., Oct. 5, 1913.

EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—To-day, as time has brought me thus far on my path through this world, that I shall never retrace, thoughts of the merciful God and Savior fill my mind. This is emphasized by the fact of the many years that have left their marks on my head; to-day especially, the centennial birthday of my father, and which measures off the fifty-three years since I was baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. At that time I was to all appearances a confirmed invalid, and it seemed certain to me and my friends that the grave would soon hold my feeble body, but thanks be unto the Lord, it seems that the grave has been robbed for these fifty-three years, and though to-day I am somewhat aged, yet my health is good, and to human appearances I am not as near the grave as I seemed to be fifty-three years ago. This is as men see into the future, but as God knows all things, he knows my allotted time and the passing of all men. As I think of the unbounded mercy of our God, and his ways past finding out, how insignificant, poor and frail does man in his best estate appear to my mind, and though he boasts of the power to be able to acquaint himself with God on the ground of making himself righteous, I cannot see from experience or Scripture testimony one single proof of his ability, but, on the other hand, many proofs of his deadness towards God. I hope and trust that the Lord made me taste the bitterness of sin before the day which I have just mentioned, and sweetly led me up to his glorious height above sin and its fearful consequences, giving me a good hope through grace. Grace thereafter has been my theme; it was my stay when less than a month after the time mentioned my friends thought I was falling by the hand of the great Reaper, for I had rejected all aid from medical science, and refused all medicine, declaring that my sole trust was in my Savior and Redeemer, and if I got well it would be by and in the strength of the Lord. This has been testified to by a number of people, but many of these have fallen asleep. Forty years after this great miracle of grace was given me, I was speaking to a large congregation in northwest Oklahoma, where I had never been before, and at the close I said that I had the very best reason for ascribing all power for salvation and de-

liverance, both for time and eternity, unto the most high God, as he manifests himself through his Son Jesus Christ; then I stated to those people how the Lord had raised me up and preserved my life these many years, and that this was the forcible reason for my belief in his matchless name. As soon as this meeting closed two men appeared who were about thirty-eight and forty years old respectively, and said: "Our father has told us this same story; he was an eye-witness of your sickness and recovery; he has sent you word to call on him." At this point I called the attention of the congregation to the fact that they had proof among them of the power of God in delivering and preserving me, and that I had not misrepresented, as far as outward circumstances were concerned. I visited the father of these men the next day, whom I had not seen for forty years. He was afflicted, but rejoiced at our meeting, and recalled many things more than I have mentioned. His brother, then living in Iowa, was the person who closed my mouth and eyes in death, as they thought. Three hours after the spirit came again, and the physical improvement was beyond any case known at that time in southwest Ohio.

In conclusion I am bound to say, The Lord brought me up. Praise ye the Lord.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

FLEMINGTON, N. J., Sept. 5, 1913.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Seeing that I was writing in mind to the household of faith as I lay awake through the long hours of the night, I will take my pen this morning and begin to write you in reality, but the thoughts of the night have vanished, and I seem left with nothing profitable to write. Still I do want to talk to you, dear friends, and tell you of some of my travels in these low grounds of sorrow. Of late I have been treading over the road which I have so often trod before to look for something that I am not sure I ever possessed, which is the evidence of my heirship to life eternal. I start at the beginning of my journey (for it is a journey, even though it may not be in the King's highway) and go along very carefully, and gather up every little thing that is of a hopeful nature, and I find that there are many stopping-places, where I must tarry a while to investigate my little findings and be sure of their worth, and having gotten them all together, I view them in the light of a stern judge, but cannot come to a decision, so then I settle down again to the old doubts and fears which have so long harassed my soul. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." These words have been and still are of special comfort to me, because I never could tell the time when the birth of the Spirit took place with me, if indeed it ever did take place. My mind always goes back to the time when I heard about Jesus restoring the withered hand. The desire came to me then to be a christian, and I think it was at that time that the birth took place, if ever, because I could not have had the desire otherwise. I was but a very young girl at that time, and all the sin that I ever consciously committed was after that, and much of it was because of election, which had a strong hold of me, and holds me yet. I had no hope of being included in it then, but now I have a faint and trembling hope that it may be so. I do not want

to have election as an excuse for sinning now, but I think that then I did, because I felt that I must have an excuse, and that was the best one I had, and it was the scapegoat of a great deal of my sin, because it was all settled in my mind that I was an outsider, so I railed at it, and determined to enjoy life at all events. But every child of God knows how that would work in the whisperings of conscience and dread of the day of doom which I saw ahead of me. Often when I was with my dear old grandmother she would sing:

"Hark, from the tomb a doleful sound,
Mine ears attend the cry;
Come, friends and neighbors, view the ground
Where you must shortly lie."

The tune was just as doleful as the words, and I could hardly keep from bursting into tears, and possibly I did, but not in her presence. She and grandfather would talk together on the subject of religion apparently all the time. This was very distasteful to me, because it made me feel so forlorn. I was not like some that I have heard of, who would hide out of sight so that they could hear unobserved when this subject was being discussed. Now do not form the opinion that I was trying to lead a better life because of my serious impressions; I was as bad as I knew how to be, and that is saying a great deal. I despised and hated the doctrine more than anything else. I looked upon all those who believed it as subjects of God's love, because, notwithstanding all my hatred of it, I believed it, too, and, dear friends, the cause of my hatred was the fear that I was outside of it. Of course all this occurred many years ago, but it is very vivid still with me. At that time I tried to banish all the serious impressions I had, but now I cherish them, hoping that they were the beginning of a christian experience.

This letter is getting entirely too long, yet the half is not told. I will finish now by saying that I joined a people who claimed that salvation was free for all, and that there was no election about it. Yet there was one member there who had election in her heart, notwithstanding all her efforts, assisted by the whole congregation, to get it out, and, dear friends, it is the same yet.

Unworthily,

MARY E. FISHER.

[WE hope that our sister will write still further and give an account of her further experience till she came to the church of Christ, and since that time.—C.]

HICKMAN, Ky., April 16, 1913.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—You who call yourselves poor scribblers cannot realize how much comfort the weaker ones derive from the blessed truth which you "scribble." They are to me what a strengthening tonic is to one weak physically. I am alone in the midst of a great company of "lo heres" and "lo theres," and am so often in the dark that I sometimes fear I shall fall. But sometimes I am made to see that I am not my own keeper, then how safe I feel, and how my soul rejoices. How much I would like to always see and believe this way, but I find that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. If the blessed Lord sees fit to hide his face from us for a time it is for our good. I sometimes think that I would be willing to do anything if I only could be spiritually-minded, and view Christ as my Redeemer oftener, and not always be questioning and groveling in the dark, but here I am mistaken again, and prove that I do not know myself, for it seems that I am not willing to do anything, only some-

thing of a worldly nature. I have felt a great desire to write to the Lord's people for the past thirteen years, and have written several times, and have even mailed them. I wrote one to our pastor, but requested him not to publish it. The next letter was written to our present pastor at Mud Creek. I was made willing to write after being greatly afflicted. We read in the word of God about a poor and afflicted people who are blessed. I often wonder whether that does not embrace bodily affliction, too. My affliction is of such a serious nature that I sometimes despair of ever being any better, and if in the near future called to go hence, am I willing? Not at all times, for I have two daughters of tender age. Poor weak worm of the dust that I am, could I know how to advise even my own children if the Lord did not teach me? But if they were given to Christ in the covenant of redemption, he will take care of his own. Since I began this letter I am made to see that it is very little that we are willing to do that conflicts with our proud, sinful nature.

I was reading in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to-day where some one mentioned another paper, and immediately the thought presented itself, You can send your letter there, for none of your acquaintances take that paper, and if your letter should come out in print they will not see it, and you will escape the humiliation of meeting some of the Lord's people after they have read it, when you know that they will be thinking of it. But, dear true and tried ones, we ought to know from what source such thoughts as these come. I know with what great fear I have made the attempt.

Now, hoping to have an interest in your prayers, I will close; it is imperfect, but no more so than the writer. O that we all may be enabled to be submissive to the will of God in all things, is my prayer.

Before closing, I wish to ask a question or two. From whence did the Gentiles spring? The Jews trace their descent from Abraham. But Adam was the first man. Do Seth and Cain, and Jacob and Esau, represent the Jews and the Gentiles? Also there is the prodigal son and his elder brother. Does the elder brother represent the Jews? I have thought for some time that the generation from Seth were the elect.

Your sister,

ALLIE M. ANDERSON.

[BRIEFLY we will say in reply to the above questions from sister Anderson, that all the present generations and nations of mankind have descended from Noah and his children. At the time of the flood he and his family alone were saved from destruction. Both the elect vessels of mercy and the nonelect then have alike descended from Noah, and of course, going back, they all descended from Adam through Noah. It is the testimony of the word that Jacob and Esau represent the elect and the nonelect among both Jews and Gentiles. It is our mind that the elder brother in the parable of the prodigal son was meant to represent the scribes and Pharisees who found fault with Jesus' eating with publicans and sinners, and who said, "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them," at the beginning of the chapter in which the parable of the prodigal son appears. Noah descended from Seth, as the genealogy recorded in Genesis, chapter five, shows. Since the time of the flood there have been no descendants of Cain on the earth.—C.]

HAVILAND, Kansas, Oct. 22, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I would like that you write something regarding the Scripture found in Luke vii. 29–35. Your writings have been a comfort to me for more than thirty years, and I sometimes feel like telling the good writers in the SIGNS how much they help me in this life, by strengthening me to fight my battles, as against the unbelieving world. We are but few in this western country; not many here are willing to place their faith upon predestination, election, salvation by grace and the resurrection of the dead. Too many, like the Pharisees and Sadducees, reject the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of John. The Lord spake of those Jews, saying, "Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like? They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling to one another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept. For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil. The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners! But Wisdom is justified of her children." And in the twenty-ninth verse we read, "All the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John." The Lord called this John, John the Baptist. There was but one kind of Baptists in those days, and those who were not baptized with John's baptism rejected the counsel of God against themselves. Would it not be the same to-day? And if those Pharisees and lawyers were like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, were they not simple-minded, not knowing what their conduct really meant? Each one claimed to have piped, and to have mourned, but the others had neither danced nor wept. Well, suppose that they had all danced and wept, would it not have been, after all, as children's play? If the faith of the Pharisee and the lawyer was as is here described in those days, what is it like now? They still claim that John's baptism is not necessary; they claim that any kind of baptism will do, and that John was only a Baptist, and that his baptism was no better than many other kinds of baptism. But John's baptism was the only baptism to which Jesus submitted. Thus he was one of the number who justified God, who gave John the authority to baptize in water, and Wisdom is justified of all her children. All who honor John's baptism as being the only water baptism, and as being necessary for the true followers of Christ, justify God by their submission to this form, thus becoming members of the Baptist Church; and those who, like the Pharisees and lawyers, being not baptized of John, reject the counsel of God against themselves, are doing as did those to whom the Savior was speaking. The statement is as true now as when it was spoken. All the children of the new birth justify the wisdom of God in electing some to eternal life and in leaving others to die in their sins. Those not so blessed are ready to condemn the Father and the Son for not having made all vessels unto honor, or, at least, for not having given to all the chance to become honorable, and to be honorable in their sight would be to pay all their debts, and keep all the law, and so place the God of heaven in their debt, so that of necessity he must bestow upon them eternal life. This is what some claim as honoring to God, but to my

mind it is like unto children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another. Each one is saying the same to the other, and none of them seem to be of age, or in their right mind. They are in a very public place. This is what they like now as well as then. But what does their calling to one another mean? It means the rejection of John the Baptist, and also of Jesus Christ the Lord. All this serves to attract the attention of the public, and it carries on children's play in the place of justifying religion; but the children of John's baptism and of Christ's baptism all justify God in his plan of salvation, and in setting up his church.

Now, brother Chick, I hope that what I have said here will not hinder you from writing more extensively on the subject. You have sometimes said that those who ask questions ought to give their own views. I have now given a part of mine, but wish you to write as though I had said nothing. You can see what I have tried to touch upon.

Your friend and brother in hope,

E. G. WEBB.

(See editorial reply on page 725.)

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—As it is again drawing near meeting time, and I am not able to meet with you, I will send a few lines, that you may know I am thinking of you. How sweet it is to put one's trust in such a wise and holy Being, who has all power in heaven and in earth. Very truly does the holy word say, "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed." Firmer, stronger, more immovable than the strongest, most lofty mountain is the everlasting Rock of our salvation. "Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." In this river of God's love do we not find a balm for all our sicknesses? and do we not long for "a thousand tongues to sing our great Redeemer's praise?" "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee." What depth of meaning to the child of God have these words. This is the peace that passeth all understanding, when after long days and nights of rowing upon a storm-tossed sea, unable to see any light upon the shore, feeling that we are forsaken and lost amid the darkness of the awful deep, how sweet to hear the still, small voice, sweeter than the sweetest music, saying, "Peace! be still!" Feeling ourselves hushed into quiet as tenderly and sweetly as a babe cradled in the mother's arms, with peace filling every avenue of the soul, do we not realize that Jesus is with us on the storm-tossed waves, and that the delicious quiet and restfulness that comes over the soul is indeed that peace which passeth all understanding? When this great wave of peace sweeps over the soul how all turbulent, evil passions are made to slumber. Being taken into his secret pavilion, resting under the shadow of His wing, the troubles and trials of this transitory life dwindle into nothingness, and our soul is full of love, not only to our Savior, but to his people. The sweet and holy power of the Spirit rests upon the soul, quieting all murmuring, and making us willing to suffer, to bear all things he in his wisdom lays upon us, and making us glad, yea, causing us to rejoice that we may reign with him in glory.

I am sure you will throw the mantle of charity over my imperfections, knowing I am a poor, weak worm of the dust, but one who wants to know the truth.

From your sister in hope of a better life,

FRANCES MABEL TRYON.

FARMINGTON, Ill., Oct. 13, 1913.

VERY DEAR EDITORS:—Through the mercy of our all-wise God, I have been spared and have been thinking of writing to you, and the dear people of our faith. I am a poor and afflicted mortal, and have been for over a year. The good Lord only knows what lonely hours I have had to endure, and I have desired to die, and felt to say, Come, welcome death, and I will gladly go. I have just received the SIGNS for Oct. 15th, and I see my name there mentioned by sister Elizabeth Phillips, and it seemed to do me good to think that a dear afflicted one had thoughts of sympathy for this poor mortal. What poor creatures we are. I thought I would write a few lines to the household of faith and send love to all. Many I met in the east in former days, and was permitted to sit with them and listen to the preached word. Now I am deprived of that blessing, and O how I have longed to meet with the dear saints and hear of our blessed Jesus. I look back, one year ago last September, when I attended the Salem Association in Illinois, and was taken sick, and have been hovering between life and death ever since, and do not expect to be here long. Dear sister Phillips said she expected I had gone to my better home. I would be glad to receive a letter from her if this should meet her eye. If we are born of God we have Christ in us, the hope of glory, and when we awake in his likeness we shall be satisfied. That will be a blessed abode to be with Jesus, where there will be no more suffering or sin, and in a nobler, sweeter song we will sing his power to save. Dear readers of the SIGNS, all through the year I have been thinking much, and hoping I could meet with you at the association, but was not able to attend. My heart was there, and though the spirit was willing the flesh was weak. We may propose, but God disposes, and his ways are just and right. I am so afflicted I can hardly see to write, and this may be the last time I can write you. I am deaf, and almost blind. Dear brethren Chick and Ker, will you pray for me, a poor, helpless worm, and if you can read this give it a place in the dear old SIGNS? I have been reading it ever since I was fourteen years old, and am now, since the 9th of August, in my 80th year. I feel to say, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been," in my pilgrimage through this sinful world, but my hope is in the dear Redeemer. I trust him in all things, and am waiting till my change comes. I am deprived of the comfort of reading, as I suffer much when I try to read. I have not heard a gospel sermon in over a year. O how I love the blessed gospel. Fare ye well, my kindred in Christ. E. D. VARNES.

UPLAND, Cal., Oct. 2, 1913.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—May one so utterly unworthy as I feel myself to be thus address you? Having received the dear old SIGNS for October 1st, I have just been looking over the many good letters it contains, and have read the sweet message of love and fellowship to you from Elder P. W. Sawin, which I hope fully expresses what is in my own mind, and in much choicer language than I can command. Since first hearing of

your serious illness I have felt a desire to communicate to you some tokens of love and sympathy in your affliction, but through a felt sense of my inability to write anything that would be of the least comfort to one I esteem so highly for the truth's sake I have not made the attempt. You have been in my mind, and I have rejoiced to hear that the dear Lord in his mercy and goodness has seen fit to restore you to some degree of health. May you long be spared to ably defend the truth in the future as you have in the past. This is, I am sure, the prayer of every reader of the SIGNS.

I would love to tell all the good writers in the SIGNS how much I enjoy reading their excellent letters from time to time. Many of them I have known personally, and many of them I have never known in the flesh, but with it all I sometimes hold sweet communion and fellowship in the Spirit. This is indeed good and pleasant.

We are a little church here in southern California, are in peace, and have been meeting together nearly five years, for which great blessing we hope we are truly thankful to the Giver of all good. We have no pastor as yet, but we trust that the dear Lord in his own good time will favor us with a faithful undershepherd.

Dear brother, this is like the writer, very imperfect. My wife joins me in love to you and your dear family, and to all the household of faith.

Yours in hope, G. A. DUNDAS.

POETRY IN OBITUARIES.

WE wish to again call the attention of our subscribers to the fact that, as our space is limited, we are unable to publish poetry in obituary notices. We often receive some very good verses in this line, but, in order to be fair to all, we are compelled to make it a rule not to publish any poetry in obituary notices.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Salisbury, Md., Oct. 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1913, to the associations with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—In the wisdom and mercy of God we are again permitted to meet as an association. We have had excellent preaching, and we feel that his banner of love has been over us. Seemingly there has been but one sermon preached, in which all the Elders present have taken a part, all speaking clearly on the one great subject, the salvation of sinners by the mercy of God through Jesus Christ. The letters from the various churches give expression that peace reigns in our midst, for which we are glad and rejoice, giving thanks to the God of heaven and earth for this great blessing, as well as all other blessings he has so graciously bestowed upon us at this meeting. We appreciate your correspondence, and desire to continue the same.

Our next session is appointed to be held with our sister church at Messongoes, Accomac Co., Va., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday after the third Sunday in October, 1914, at which time and place, the Lord willing, we hope to meet again and receive your messengers and Minutes in the love and fellowship of the gospel.

SILAS H. DURAND, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1913.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

LUKE VII. 29-35.

WE do not feel that it is needful to add much to the comments of brother Webb upon the above text, with regard to which he has written on page 721, but as he requests that we write as though he had not written any comments at all, we will try to do so. We are told in the connection that the Lord had been speaking to the people regarding John the Baptist, that he was not as a reed shaken by the wind, nor was he clothed with soft raiment; in other words, he came in the same spirit and power that was formerly upon the prophet Elijah, who unflinchingly testified to the wickedness and ungodliness of Israel in his time. The mission upon which John had been sent was one of denunciation of the sins of the people, as had been the case also with the prophet. John was not as one shaken like a reed with the wind; that is, one who would yield the truth for the sake of gain or popularity, and he did not come as the minister of luxury and ease, but as one who held a mission so high and holy that the pleasures of earth could have no effect upon him. He was not clothed in soft raiment. John was indeed the greatest of all who had been born of women, but his greatness was not that of the kings of earth, and so he occupied no palace, and did not live delicately. John's mission was above the vain things of earth; his ministry was a ministry of righteousness, and so strength from above was given him to stand fast against the evil of the times, and to turn away from the luxuries and pleasures of earth, thus in his manner of life confirming his doctrine, which was of a kingdom above the world. We are told that the people and the publicans, being baptized with the baptism of John, received his message and justified God; that is, they declared their faith in the divine ministry of John, and confessed God as their God and Father. But the Pharisees and lawyers had not received the testimony of John, and had not received his baptism. In the days when the ministry of John was prominent they had not received his message and had not sought baptism at his hands, and when Jesus had entered upon his ministry, John having passed away, his ministry being finished, neither did they receive his testimony nor become his followers. They were displeased at the ministry of John, and so were they equally displeased at the teaching of the dear Redeemer. Like many others since their day, they made a pretext of matters of indifference, matters which were trifling in their nature, as the reason why they did not follow John, and as the reason why they did not accept the teachings of the Lord and become his disciples. We say that the reasons which they alleged were mere pretexts; the real reason of their opposition, both to John and the blessed Master, was the doctrine which they declared. But this opposition they could not well justify before the people, seeing that the teaching of both was in stern condemnation of all wickedness and sin, and for the uphold-

ing of all righteousness. The teaching of the Master especially was an exposure of the false zeal and the vain professions of godliness which they were making, laying, as they did, great stress upon forms and ceremonies, while neglecting judgment and justice, and all the weightier matters of the law. The teaching of both John and Jesus laid the axe at the root of all this sort of righteousness; this was the real cause why the Pharisees and lawyers rejected both of them. But, as said before, they could not openly declare this, for the people at large knew that they were mere formalists, and so all such objections to both John and the Savior would have fallen upon the ears of the people with no weight, therefore they urged against John one objection, viz., that he had a devil, and against the Savior another objection, viz., that he was a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, and a friend of publicans and sinners. John did not eat, therefore they rejected him; Jesus did eat and drink, and therefore they rejected him. How striking was the illustration which the Savior used to set forth their hardness of heart: children are at play in the marketplace; some of them desire the pleasure of all, and propose different games. They said to the others, Let us have music and dancing; but this did not please. Then they said, Let us have the opposite; let us play that we are sad and mournful. But neither did this please the churlish and selfish remainder. In the illustration which the Savior used, some of the children were pleased with nothing that the others proposed. We all know that there are such children still. We have all seen them at their play, and we have all seen some children who could not be pleased, no matter what manner of play was proposed, and we do not need to limit this to children. We have all seen grown men and women who are just as unreasonable as any children ever were; they will not join with their fellows, though their fellows strive to please them to the uttermost. The Savior said that these Pharisees and lawyers were just like these children. John came, not eating and drinking, and this did not please them. Jesus came both eating and drinking, and this did not please them. What would please them? To this we feel that it is safe to reply that nothing would have pleased them but a full indorsement of their false righteousness and many flattering words concerning their own goodness. Had John and Jesus thus spoken of them, little would they have cared whether John did not eat and drink, or whether the Savior did eat and drink. The real objection of men in all ages to the gospel has been their hatred to the doctrine. Some followed Jesus until he began to plainly declare his doctrine, then they said, "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" To-day millions of men profess admiration for the life of the dear Savior, who yet reject and abhor the doctrine of the atonement. They will not have him as a Savior from sin, but profess to admire his morality and his righteous life. Whatever these men may be, they are not christians.

Just one thought more we feel like adding here, although it is somewhat outside the main theme. This thought is, that it is very evident from the language which the people used, accusing Jesus of being a gluttonous man and a winebibber, that the wines which he was accustomed to drink were intoxicating wines. Had it been just the mere unfermented juice of the grape, as has been loudly claimed by some who are fanatical upon this one theme, there could have been no

room to have accused Jesus with being a winebibber. We are as strenuous as one can well be against the abuse of all intoxicating beverages, but still nothing can be gained for a cause by holding forth untenable claims, and the claim that the wine of the new testament was not intoxicating is an untenable one.

C.

1 CORINTHIANS XIV. 34, 35.

A DEAR brother, who wishes his name withheld, has written, asking that we say something about the language of Paul in 1 Cor. 34, 35: "Let your women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak: but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church."

We have often heard it questioned what the apostle could have meant by this language, and different views have been presented by different brethren. We feel that it becomes us to speek modestly, for the above reason, in what we may say concerning the text.

First, it seems evident from other portions of the word, to which we desire to refer, that the apostle could not have intended that women should never speak in the meetings of the church, but he certainly does enjoin upon the church that they shall not speak in some certain ways. That women did speak and pray in the meetings of the churches in the apostles' days, seems evident from other portions of the word. Paul, writing to Timothy, enjoined upon him to see that women learn in silence with all subjection, but he said, "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." This seems to us to throw some light upon the question as to the manner in which a woman is not to speak or teach. It is in the sense that she must not assume to be a teacher or ruler. The scriptural rule in the family is the same. The man is the head of the family, and the wife is to be in subjection to her own husband, yet in her place the woman has the right to speak in the family and to counsel and advise with her husband. She has the right to take part in whatever conversation may go on regarding the affairs of the household, yet she is not to take the place of teacher of her husband, or assume authority over him. As we said, this seems to us to be a pattern of the place of women in the church, and this seems to us to be in substance what Paul intended in the text, and in his letter to Timothy just referred to. That women were accustomed to take some part in the meetings of the church seems apparent to us from the following portions of the word. Turning to the eleventh chapter of this same epistle we read, "But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered, dishonoreth her head." Here the apostle speaks as though it was customary for women to pray or prophesy, and he does not condemn them in this, but simply declares that when they do pray or prophesy it should be done in a becoming manner. In all ages and among all peoples it has been considered that women in public should appear with their heads covered, and Paul here teaches that in the meetings of the churches this custom is no less becoming. But the one consideration to which we would call attention is the fact that women did pray and prophesy in the gatherings of the churches, and

so it is evident that Paul could not have intended to forbid such exercises as these when he said, "Let your women keep silence in the churches." Also in the twenty-first chapter of the Acts we read that Philip, who was one of the evangelists, had four daughters which did prophesy. Right here it may be well to say that the word "prophesy" does not always mean one who foretells future events. We suppose that in most minds as they read of prophesying the first thought is that of foretelling future events. This was indeed one great part of the work of the ancient prophets, but it was not even then all that was meant by prophesying. The prophets were teachers and instructors in righteousness, and much of their ministry was occupied with warning, exhortation and reproof. No one can read the prophecies in the Old Testament carefully without seeing the truth of this. So likewise we need not understand that prophesying as used in the New Testament signifies prediction of future things alone, but also teaching, exhortation and declaring the word and work of God in different ways. This these daughters of Philip did, and this we believe is what is intended by women prophesying, according to the words of Paul. All this seems to show that women did take part in the public worship of the churches, but that they were not to take the place of teachers or rulers, and this is what we think the apostle meant by the words referred to by our dear brother. Women were prominent in all the Savior's public ministry. Much is said of their faith and their works in all the New Testament, but in all the narrative of the gospels we see clearly set forth what we feel like calling a holy propriety in their behavior as the disciples of the Lord. We see, not forwardness, but rather modesty and humility in all that is recorded of them.

Still further, we will call attention to a few other considerations. If the language, "Let your women keep silence in the churches," is to be understood in the broadest sense, much of the order of the church would have to be modified. For instance, women could not be allowed to take part in singing even. Still further, how could the experience of candidates for baptism and church membership be heard at all by the church if women are never in any manner to speak in the churches? If a woman may speak that one time, and if she may be allowed to take part in the singing, by what right can we say that she is never to speak again in the meetings of the churches? We know that in different sections of the country there is a difference of opinion among the churches with regard to what this keeping silence means. The churches with which we were first acquainted, and the church where we are now a member, and the pastor, do not allow women to vote in the business of the church. Some churches where women do not vote, call upon them in their conference meetings to bear public testimony to their faith, and in some churches where women do vote, in the transaction of business, they are yet not expected to speak, except when they come to be received as members. It would be indeed well were all to see with one mind in these things. Because of this difference in understanding we have felt like writing modestly and carefully. We trust there may be something here that will commend itself to the dear brother who made this request, and to all who may read.

C.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Eli T. Kidwell.)

The Corresponding Meeting of Virginia convened with the Baptist Church at Frying Pan, Fairfax County, Virginia, October 15th, 16th and 17th, 1913, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, greeting.

BRETHREN BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We feel not only by force of custom, but we hope in the love of the truth, to address you this, our Corresponding Circular Letter, and while it is a sweet source of pleasure, yet as we contemplate the design of such a letter, we feel but little able to give expression to our feeling, as we look back over all the way the Lord has brought us, that truly we have been brought by a way that we knew not, and have been kept, too, through all this wilderness journey down to this moment. We know it has been our custom to write something from some portion of Scripture, like a sermon, but at this time we feel more like talking to you as the one family of God our Savior as we are assembled around our common table of his love, partaking of that bread which if one eats he may hunger no more, and we feel that we want every one of the children to meet with us while we thus commune. In 1 Corinthians viii. 10, we have these words: "For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols?" Now, brethren, the apostle was here talking with the brethren of how they should walk in newness of life, and telling of what they should live upon, and of what their food should be, and how they should behave at the Lord's table, and we will talk about that bread that comes down to us, and how kind and mindful of us the Giver is. We do not have to labor for it like that which (by reason of transgression) we obtain by the sweat of our brow, but each day in the morning it is here; it is never offered to idols, it is indeed and in truth the children's bread, and unmixed with the leaven of this world, and yet it is all life, and life-giving, and sustaining, and remember, brethren, it is healthy and sweet, belongs to you, and is always ready to eat, and satisfying. The dear saints when shut up in prison, and darkness and gloom cover the whole earth to them, and the Redeemer seems gone forever and they become thirsty and hungry for one drop or one morsel which the bars forbid, their Redeemer gone down to the grave, and the morning light is not yet come, and they talk of their hopes, and their sorrows are great, thus driven, as it were, to seclude themselves from the high and giddy world, they may know what they want, but it is not so sure that they know their need. But what causes any of us to thus get together? Fellowship is the word we use, and it is well, for each is as the other, a unit, and they are at-one-ment. This is the sum and substance of that great and powerful atonement, when Jesus, your Lord and Master, shed his blood upon the cross, and you hath he quickened, begotten again from the dead, yea, ransomed from the grave, and it is this at-one-ment that brings the saints together; indeed they are always together, never separated, for they all eat the same bread of heaven, the life of Christ is their life, they live because he lives, and all their sins and transgressions were laid upon him, and he ransomed them from under the law of sin and death, brought them forth and established their goings, and it often occurs in the way we have

been trying to describe, and to establish the same they are given to look back on their journey, and are made to be afraid, and even to complain, They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him. They cannot think a good thought; they cannot think that it behooved Jesus to be put from them that he might become their daily bread, they often want his visible presence when that of the invisible is far better, as was the case of those who were journeying from Jerusalem to Emmaus mourning an absent Lord, while the dear Redeemer was yet with them and they knew it not. Dear brethren, this should teach us a lesson here; but we pass on to that little precious few that had met, as we hope we have, to talk of all Jesus began to do, and is doing, to teach, and is teaching all through our life's journey, with great and wonderful things in store for us who are kept by his almighty power through faith, ready, yes, always ready, to be revealed in the last time. How comforting to feel it was Jesus as he broke bread to them; and rest assured none of the saints ever refuse to take their share in due season, for it is life and truth to them, and when He appears they all appear with him in glory, not away up yonder somewhere in the sky, but in the power made manifest in his presence, for the manifest power in the heart of his people is the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ, and we behold this in that bread of heaven (Jesus) in the life of faith which is given unto us.

Now, brethren, we will give a few hints at the text quoted at the beginning of this our feeble epistle. We ask in all candor, Who among us visits the temple of idols? Let such an one remember all the way the Lord hath led us, and hath brought us thus far on our journey. Who of us who have tasted the Lord, who gave us himself and his gracious presence, have gone elsewhere to eat? What hath caused a poor, weak brother or sister to think it was not wrong to leave the feast the Lord hath given and have eaten elsewhere because it was sweet to the natural taste? Who among us are stumbling at predestination and the election of God's grace? We could quote a great deal of Scripture here, but time and space forbid. Who of us that take the time to examine the record but will find that the children of God for their safety must needs dwell alone? We must acknowledge these points, and not be found partaking of things forbidden. We wish to examine ourselves and see that the door is shut, and look well to our feet, that they are shod with the preparation of the gospel of the grace of God, shunning not to declare the whole counsel of God, and all the while remember the weak ones, and hold them, as it were, in obedience to the truth, and take heed to the doctrine, and may the God of peace and love dwell with you, and may you find the true Bread of life sweet and nourishing, and may it come to you in the Spirit of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. We desire your correspondence and fellowship, always remembering that it is through great tribulation we enter the kingdom.

Now, we wish to tell you our meeting has been as pleasant as could be to us, and the preaching clear and to the point, for it was Jesus, and him crucified, which is so truly expressed, "The doctrine of God our Savior."

We have appointed our next meeting to be held with our sister church, called Mt. Zion, Loudoun County, Virginia, to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1914, when and where

we who are still alive hope to see your ministers and messengers, and enjoy their company again. May the grace of God be with you all. Amen.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
S. B. PAXSON, Clerk.

(Written by Elder A. B. Francis.)

The Elders and messengers composing the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church in Salisbury, Wicomico Co., Md., October 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1913, to the several churches composing the same sendeth greeting.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—In pursuance of a long established custom, we will address you in the way of a Circular Letter, in which we would stir up your pure minds by putting you in remembrance of a few of the things for which we are under obligation to our heavenly Father to render unto him the sacrifice and service of our lives, to ever present our bodies a living sacrifice, offering a continual sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, serving him day and night with our bodies and spirits that he has bought with a price, and therefore we are his, and not our own. No one whom God has called by his abounding grace has the right to say, I am free, and will do as I please, and what I have is mine, and I will use it as I wish, without regard to what the Bible or the church may say. In setting these things before you we will call your attention to the words of an inspired apostle of Jesus Christ, recorded in 1 John iii. 1–3: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." The wonderful thing about the love that "the Father hath bestowed upon us" is, that it is an everlasting love, existing within himself before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth was, and that the entrance of sin into the world, even though it brought us into death and made us children of wrath, did not cause any change with the Father towards the objects of his love, as the apostle Paul says: "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us together with Christ," and saved us by his grace. For his great love toward us he gave his Son to die for us, and now has manifested his love toward his people, whom he chose in Christ Jesus before the world began, by calling them. This calling is an holy calling, wrought in them by the Spirit, by which they are not made sons, but are made manifest as the sons of God. "Because ye are sons, [in the choice and purpose of God from eternity, looking into the vista of time and viewing the development of the body of Christ, the bringing into manifestation all the members of that body, which were written in his book,] God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." That is the Spirit of adoption, the witness of our sonship, whereby the love of God is manifestly bestowed upon us. It is the testimony of God in his people, Christ in them the hope of glory. By this there is a separation, a cutting off, (circumcision, not of the flesh, but of the heart, in the Spirit,) a crucifixion to the world, and the world is crucified unto them, therefore the world knoweth them not. It knew not their Lord, neither does or can it know them,

for they are not of the world. The world has no knowledge of the marks of the children of God; it is not apprised of the rich robes with which they are clothed, or the costly ornaments with which they are adorned, hence they are looked upon by the world as objects of scorn and contempt, and accounted as the offscouring of all things. But, beloved, the opinion of the world does not in any way affect the standing of God's children in him, for even "now are we the sons of God." Now, yes, even now, though feeling poor and weak and sinful, are we the sons of God. But what we shall be hereafter, that is, in the world of eternal glory, after our course here is finished, our race on earth is run, does not yet appear, that has not yet been shown to us, but hope is given us, by which we are looking to the future with great expectations, and are waiting for the (full) manifestation of the sons of God, for deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. While waiting thus shall we say, My Lord delayeth his coming, and spend our time, as children of the night and of darkness, in rioting and drunkenness, in chambering and wantonness? Ah, no; every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure, even as Jesus is pure; to look to him as our example, pattern and guide, learning of him meekness, submission, purity of life in all our deportment. "As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation."

Beloved, think on these things. We cannot hope for the sweet enjoyment of that peace that passes all understanding if we neglect those things that accompany salvation. May the God of peace keep your hearts and minds in the love of the truth.

SILAS H. DURAND, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, Nov. 5th, 1913, E. Leslie Mellott, of Ambridge, Beaver Co., Pa., and Miss Mae B. Mellott, at the home of Jefferson C. Mellott, near Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Emily Pray, of Sanford, Maine, died Nov. 3rd, 1913, aged 82 years, 11 months and 26 days. Our sister was the beloved wife of Mr. George Pray, to whom she was united in marriage May 30th, 1857. Some years before her marriage the Lord showed her that she was a poor, perishing sinner, and brought her to his feet to sue for mercy and salvation. The Lord gave her a hope that her sins were forgiven through the blood of Christ, the Lamb of God, and she professed her hope in Christ the Redeemer, and was baptized in the fellowship of the church at North Berwick, Maine, and was ever esteemed as a dear, humble follower of Jesus Christ by all the household of God who knew her. She was a faithful, good wife and loving mother, and indeed all the relations of life she fulfilled to her honor and to the praise of God's grace, which was manifest in her daily life. In her confession of the name of Christ as her hope and salvation she was of a lowly spirit, renouncing all creature merit and building all her expectations for time and eternity upon the righteousness and blood of Christ. Her last illness (pneumonia) was but of few days duration. During the first days she wished to get well again, that she might be able to attend to the needs of her husband, who, because of his infirmities, needed, as she thought, herself to wait upon him, but toward the last she was resigned to depart, for she could leave all things in the hands of her gracious God. She leaves to mourn their loss her husband, two sons and grandchildren.

At her funeral the writer preached from the words: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."—2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

Henry Miller, of Cammal, Pa., died Oct. 13th, 1913, of paralysis, aged about 72 years. I had been acquainted with him for thirty-five years. Although he was not a professor of religion, he told me that the doctrine as preached by the Old School Baptists was the only thing that did him any good; he had no use for anything else. He has gone to rest, leaving a widow, sister Sarah Miller, several children and other relatives. May the dear Lord comfort all the mourning ones with his sustaining and supporting grace.

The writer spoke at the funeral, which was held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Cammal, Pa., Oct. 16th. Burial in cemetery near Bluestone station.

ALSO,

Mrs. Nancy M. Andrus, of Binghamton, N. Y., died Nov. 10th, 1913, aged about 80 years. Her husband, Mr. Elmore Andrus, died several years ago, since which time she had lived with her children. She was received in the love and fellowship of the church at Otego, and baptized, I think, by Elder Balas Bundy. Afterward she transferred her membership to the church at Brookdale, Pa. We do not know how long ago she was baptized, but conclude it was twenty-five or thirty years. She died in the love and fellowship of her dear kindred in Christ. She was possessed of a very loving, amiable disposition, and was a great admirer of the things of nature, especially flowers, of which there was a great display at the funeral, presented by the neighbors and friends. She always seemed to me a bundle of sunshine, still she had her dark moments and times of questioning her interest in the atoning blood of Christ, but gave satisfactory evidence of being born of God. A loving, faithful mother, a kind neighbor and dear sister in Christ has gone to her eternal home, to be forever with her Savior and Redeemer. Six children, seven grandchildren, two great-grandchildren with many friends are left to mourn their loss of one they dearly loved. She died at the home of her son-in-law, Mr. James Cator, who, with his wife, her daughter, did all that could be done for her comfort. She was sick but a few days.

The writer spoke at the funeral, which was held at the home of Mr. Cator Nov. 13th. Burial at Sanitaria Springs. D. M. VAIL.

Ervin Emerson was born in Maury County, Tenn., Sept. 11th, 1839, moved with his parents to Graves County, Ky., in 1842, and there grew to manhood. In 1861 he joined the Confederate Army in the Third Kentucky Regiment, Company E, and served throughout the great struggle. He came home March 7th, 1866, and was then married to Nannie Semore. To that union three children were born. In 1874 the Lord saw fit to take his companion from him, which left him with three small children, and July 20th, 1876, he was again married, this time to Martha Walker. To that union were born two children. He professed a hope in Christ when young, and united with the Primitive Baptist Church at South Mt. Zion, where he lived a consistent member until his death, which occurred Dec. 25th, 1912. His age was 73 years, 3 months and 14 days. Besides a host of relatives and friends, he leaves to mourn his death an aged widow, two children, seven grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, two brothers and three sisters. He had been afflicted for many years, but was only confined to his bed about four weeks. Though his suffering was great, he bore it with christian fortitude. He called us all around his bedside a short time before the end, and told us that his time was short with us, and for us to be quiet and not grieve, for he was waiting and ready to go at the call of his Master. It was hard, so hard to give him up and see him on earth no more, but the Lord saw fit to call him home, where there is no more sickness, no more sighing, no more pain, no more death, but all is peace and love. Sleep on, dear father, your troubles are all over; surely thou art at rest with the Lord for evermore.

His daughter, SALLIE F. EAZLEY.

Alvera Culpepper, daughter of Noah and sister Sophia Culpepper, was born Nov. 22nd, 1908, departed this life Nov. 1st, 1913, aged 4 years, 11 months and 8 days. She was sick one week, and suffered untold agony. All that a good physician and nurse, together with the loving hands of relatives and friends, could do, was done, but to no avail, the hand of death could not be stayed; God in his all-wise providence saw fit to call her from this natural life to bask in the sunlight of that blissful, heavenly land where no farewell tears are shed, no parting hand is taken, where God shall wipe away all tears. We should not weep for her, for she is done with sin, affliction and death, but should sing as one of old, The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord. May God grant unto us the spirit of reconciliation and submission, and enable us to say, Thy will be done.

The writer was called upon to speak a few words of comfort to the grief-stricken parents and friends, using as a text the ninetieth Psalm. We would say again, Weep not for Alvera, for she is now at rest in the arms of Jesus.

ALSO,

Since I wrote the obituary of Alvera, daughter of Noah and Sophia Culpepper, the Lord has seen fit to take from them their darling baby, **Jewel Brantly Culpepper,** who was born Dec. 24th, 1911, died Nov. 4th, 1913, making his age 1 year, 10 months and 20 days. There were only three days between the death of the two dear children; one died on Saturday and the other Monday night. May the Lord give to the afflicted parents his gracious presence in this sad bereavement. May he give them reconciliation to his providential dealings, and although the stroke is heavy, may they say in the language of Job: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Owing to such a short time to attend, we could not preach a sermon, but sang a hymn and held a short prayer service, conducted by the unworthy writer.

J. B. BOWDEN.

FALLS CITY, Texas.

William Flint was born May 9th, 1843, and died Oct., 1913, aged 70 years, 5 months and 14 days. He was united in marriage to Charlotte Hand, who died July 27th, 1894. To that union were born five children: Charles A., Alida, Naviock and Harry A., now living in Elden, Iowa; Mattie and George live in Ft. Worth, Texas. Oct. 26th, 1898, he was married to Mrs. Ellen Yount Bowels, who, with her daughter, survives him. He also leaves two sisters and one brother, but they do not mourn as those who have no hope.

His funeral was held from his home, and was largely attended by friends and relatives, which spoke more loudly than words the high esteem in which he was held. Burial was in the Elden Cemetery. The writer conducted the services, trying to speak to the comfort of the friends such as the Lord was pleased to give. W. M. ROSE.

OUR dear sister, **Mattie Richards,** daughter of the late brother Barton and Maria Richards, died at the home of Dr. C. E. Brown, near Bloomfield, Va., Oct. 22nd, 1913, after a brief illness of paralysis. She attended the association at Frying Pan, Va., came to the home of Dr. Brown apparently in good health, and seemed to enjoy the meeting very much, and died on the following Wednesday. Sister Mattie was born April 21st, 1841. She was baptized by Elder J. N. Badger, Sept. 11th, 1898, and lived a faithful and consistent member until her death. She was one of a family of five sisters and two brothers, and all preceded her to the grave, she being the only one of the family that made a public confession. We believe the other members of the family were lovers of the truth; a more devoted family I never knew. She was always at her meeting if not prevented by sickness, and was loved by the brethren. We as a church mourn our loss, but believe our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted at the old Ebenezer Church in Virginia, Oct. 24th. The unworthy writer tried to speak to the comfort of the brethren and friends, after which her remains were laid to rest in the Ebenezer Cemetery. F. E. ROBEY.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 81. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1913. NO. 24.

CORRESPONDENCE.

REVELATION III. 21, 22.

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

These words were directed to a church that had been overcome with evil; it was for that reason that the Lord would spew them out of his mouth. It is to him that overcometh that the Son will grant to sit with him in his throne. I suppose there are many ideas among God's people as to how God's people overcome. Evidently all that are in the condition of the church of the Laodiceans will claim that they have the ability in and of themselves to overcome every temptation that may befall them. They said they had need of nothing. I now desire to notice first who spake these words, and what he said of himself concerning overcoming, as well as what is said concerning the subject of overcoming. Evidently no mortal man has the right to claim to have more power to overcome than the Son of God claimed to have. He said, "I can of mine own self do nothing."—John iv. 30.

The Son of God said in the words of our text: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even [that is, in an equal or precisely similar manner—Webster] as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." I now will first notice some things said of this Son in the holy Scriptures. The first promise that was made of him we read in Genesis i. 15. The first man that worshiped God and at some time showed by his works that his faith was in Jesus, the Son of God, I think was Abel. (Genesis iv. 4; Hebrews xi. 4.) His offering was not the works of his own hand, but evidently typified the blood of Christ. Cain killed Abel, and Seth was born instead of Abel. (Gen. iv. 25.) "And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." Then men (by faith) began to look forward to Jesus, the Son of God; much Scripture testifies of this. I will notice one prophecy, and then pass on to the New Testament and notice a few things said concerning the Son of God. Isaiah ix. 6, reads thus: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful,

Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." There evidently is not a greater mystery presented in the Scriptures than is presented in the above words. Paul said, 1 Tim. iii. 16: "And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." No mortal being has ever explained this mystery. Paul did not undertake it, but contended that it was a fact. John testified to the same fact; he said, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."—John i. 1. John also declares, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." John v. 7, reads thus: "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." The same mystery (God manifest in the flesh) is still presented here. This is the child born, prophesied of by Isaiah, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." Matthew said, "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost." Wonderful mystery here, but not explained. The angel of the Lord said to Joseph: "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." It was this Jesus, born of the virgin Mary, that died and rose again. Another wonderful mystery presented here, but not explained. "He shewed himself alive after his passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God."—Acts i. 3. Then again another mystery was presented to them: Jesus "was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Many years after this John said, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia."—Rev. i. 10, 11. John tells many things that he both saw and heard. He heard that wonderful form that he saw say, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and I have the keys of hell and of death. Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter; the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest, are the seven churches." It was to the seventh church in their order as named that the words of our text were directed: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Each church is to

heed what was said to the churches. We note the conditions of these seven churches vary greatly in some respects, hence no two of them are alike in all things, yet evidently the members of each church once knew by experience what it was to sit with Jesus. It is a heavenly place to sit with Jesus, (Eph. ii. 6,) and evidently every one thus raised up claimed none of the glory. Their cries and prayers to God were answered just so, or in like manner, as the Son of God overcame; he, too, "in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered."—Heb. v. 7, 8. Jesus, the Son of God, was made a high priest, and is still a high priest; he was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin, said Paul, and in verse fifteen continues, Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. This Christ always did in time of need; that is, as a Son he prayed to his Father in time of need, and he overcame every temptation that he came in contact with, and came out a mighty victor in the days of his flesh, and said he had the keys of hell and death, and yet he attributed all power to his Father, therefore ofttimes prayed to his Father. On one occasion he prayed, saying, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." "He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. And he came back and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. And he left them, and went away again and prayed the third time, saying the same words." (Read Matt. xxvi. 39–44.) O what a lesson in that trying hour, yet submissive to his Father's will. He told his disciples to, Take ye heed, watch and pray, for ye know not when the time is. Evidently the church of the Laodiceans was not watching or praying. A church that says they have need of nothing, has nothing to pray for. They may offer a form of words, and call that prayer, and yet only be asking amiss, to consume it upon their own lusts. They are not going boldly unto the throne of grace, that they may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. These words of our text are not addressed to a church in their first love. God's people do not say that they have need of nothing in their first love. Jesus said, Without me ye can do nothing. O how sorrowful is the condition of God's people when they conclude that they have the ability in and of themselves to overcome, when Jesus himself did not claim that power in and of himself. May we remember his words: I can of mine own self do nothing. I do not remember of ever hearing any one tell their experience but claimed they were dependent upon God for all blessings, yet I have heard dear brethren preach that God's people had a salvation to work out, that there was no grace in it. O how differently Paul preached; he attributed all to the grace of God, both for time and eternity. (Read 1 Cor. xv. 10.) The church of the Laodiceans was not thus engaged, they were living as though the grace of God was in vain. They did not feel the need of the grace of God, or else such a picture would not have been drawn by their Savior; in Christ's illustration they were represented as having the door shut, and Christ standing on the outside knock-

ing. Hear him; he said, Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. If there were one such man there who heard and opened the door it would prove his felt need of Christ. On the other hand, if they heard, and did not open the door, that would prove that they still would harden their hearts, as described by Paul in Heb. iii. 7–19. Paul begins this: "Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith,) To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation." Again he says, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end." This the church of the Laodiceans had not done; if they had they still would have felt the need of Christ, instead of saying, I have need of nothing. We should notice carefully these words in the fourteenth verse. Evidently to be a partaker of Christ means the same as Jesus meant when he said, To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne. All such will be partakers of his suffering, as well as his felt presence; they will know the furnace of affliction as well as the joy of his salvation. Many of God's people do not hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering; if they did there would be less in the condition that many of the churches were in, and more in the condition of the church in Philadelphia. The churches of Galatia had not held fast the profession of their faith. Paul said, I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel. None but God's people can be thus removed. Paul admonished them, saying, Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. These brethren had not done that. Paul was rebuking them for being in their present condition; they were not rejoicing in the doctrine of the grace of Christ as they once had done. Paul asked them this important question: Where is then the blessedness that ye spake of? He also asked them this question: Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth? O how sorrowful to see God's people drinking down the glorious doctrine of the grace of God, then afterwards to see them bewitched by false teachers, and following them instead of Christ. I reckon all Primitive Baptists have witnessed such sights to their sorrow. Evidently no person in like condition was at the same time sitting with Christ in his throne. They have been overcome, and are no more running as they once ran. Paul said, Ye did run well, who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? And then said, This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. It was God that called them into the grace of Christ. But now they desired to be under the law of Moses, rather than the law of Christ; they desired to be entangled again with the yoke of bondage, rather than to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ made them free. No wonder Paul said, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth?" Again he said, "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain." From this these brethren evidently had once been persecuted for

righteousness' sake. That was all in vain, according to their present belief and walk. Paul said, "And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased." Those crafty teachers knew that, hence chose to preach a man-pleasing doctrine only, lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. Evidently none but God's people were ever afraid of being persecuted for the cross of Christ. The doctrine of the cross of Christ has never been popular with the world, but is hated, not only by the world, but many of God's people have turned out to be the most vile persecutors of those who stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free. James said to his brethren, "Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you." These brethren had been overcome with evil. James was laboring to get them to turn from their evil ways; he told them to confess their faults one to another, and pray one for another, that they might be healed. They evidently were as blind to their true condition as was the church of the Laodiceans. James' brethren were rejoicing in their boasting, but they were not rejoicing in the cross of Christ. They were condemning and killing the just; instead of being persecuted for the cross of Christ, they were persecuting even unto death those who remained faithful unto the end. These persecuting brethren had been overcome with evil; they were not of those who had overcome; they would not be granted to sit with Christ in his throne as long as they remained in their present hardened condition; they were not going boldly unto the throne of grace, that they might obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Peter also spake of those who were overcome; he said, "For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." This is the way Peter taught his Galatian brethren. Peter continues: "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."—2 Peter ii. 19–21. This is not a new doctrine; the Lord God taught in substance the same by all his prophets. Peter said, "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." Evidently none but God's people can be guilty of denying the Lord that bought them. The Arminian world (I think) is teaching that Christ bought the whole human family, but Primitive Baptists deny this. The Arminian says all that are thus overcome, referred to in the Scriptures, especially those referred to by Paul to the Galatians, and also Peter and James in their epistles, also those of the Laodiceans referred to by Christ, if they died in their present condition as described in the Scriptures, they were eternally lost. There also are Primitive Baptists who are teaching the same; that is, they are teaching that those who die in the condition of those Galatians that were bewitched, will be eternally lost. They also say the same of those described by Peter. Hence we

see the end will be just the same in either case, whether the Arminian doctrine is true, or whether the doctrine preached by some Primitive Baptists is true. Dear brethren, these things ought not so to be; according to this doctrine, God's people have never been enabled to know a child of God only by their works. If a church or a member of the church is overcome, that is proof to them that such an one is not a child of God. Now let us reason together. We believe the twelve tribes of Israel typified the church of Christ set up by Christ; if that is true (and I think it is) then the false prophets were as truly a type of the false teachers referred to by Peter, as were the true prophets a type of the true ministers of the church of Christ. A false prophet did not (that I am aware of) lose his identity as an Israelite, even if he were a false prophet. He yet belonged to one of the twelve tribes; he was an Israelite by birth; even though he despised the law of Moses and had to be put to death, he still retained his identity as an Israelite. Now all these things were written for our learning, whether we comprehend them or not, should be the solemn question with us all. I think all will agree that the false prophets referred to by Peter were Israelites under the law of Moses; of the true prophets Peter said, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." The false prophets brought upon themselves swift destruction, but, as stated before, they died Israelites. We should note here Peter says, "There shall be false teachers among you;" that is, it will be equal or in precisely similar manner with spiritual Israel as it was with national Israel. Paul tells why these things are; he said, "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you."—1 Cor. xi. 19. Christ said, "It must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!"—Matt. xviii. 7. This I think is a sufficient reason, yet I know it is hard to be reconciled to. But it will be that way whether we are reconciled or not, there shall be false teachers, there must be heresies. Let us take heed to Paul's reason; he says, "That they which are approved may be made manifest among you." Notice Paul said among you. Dear brethren, how would it sound to read this way: For there must also be heresies among you, that they which are the children of God may be made manifest among you? To thus say would be the same as to say there were false prophets among the children of Israel, that they which are the children of Israel may be made manifest among them. According to this rule no one could tell who were Israelites, except there were false prophets among them; neither could any one tell who are God's children, unless there be false teachers among them. There evidently was a needs be for those false prophets, even as there is for false teachers among God's people to-day; it was that they that were approved might be made manifest among them. It seems that Elijah was the only true prophet that was manifest at our time; at least he thought so. There were, however, seven thousand men that had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. That made manifest who were serving the true God and who were bowing

idols; but it did not distinguish between those who were Israelites and those who were not. Even so in the antitype having false teachers as well as the true makes manifest them which are approved among you. I do not remember of a single church that Paul wrote to that he did not commend them for their faith and practice as long as he ministered to them in person. But how soon we see some of the same churches departing, both in faith and practice, shortly after Paul left them. In the case of the Galatians, Paul was made to marvel that they were so soon removed from him that called them into the grace of Christ unto another gospel. In their case it was soon manifest that these brethren would follow false teachers, instead of the God-called apostle Paul. This evidently was sorrowful to Paul to see those brethren so doing. If God's people never met with temptation we never could know who are approved and who are not approved. Evidently all that are approved are also the same that overcometh, as spoke of in our text. To all such the Savior would say, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." Evidently all faithful persons referred to in the Scriptures were men who prayed often to their God and had no confidence in the flesh. Daniel attributed all the wisdom he had concerning the interpreting of Nebuchadnezzar's dreams to the revelation of God. Daniel and his companions prayed to God for mercies in this matter, and their prayers were answered. Then again we have the instance of the lions' den and the fiery furnace, as well as many others. These all prayed to God for deliverance; in and of themselves they were helpless to rescue themselves. O that we all had such faith in God; we then would ask in faith, believing that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him. (Heb. xi. 6.) That is the only way faith in God is manifested. These fiery trials, from whatever source they come, manifest who the faithful are. Evidently the Laodiceans did not believe that God was a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. It was their lack of faith in God that caused them to be lukewarm and lacking in the zeal of God, and yet to say, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." Daniel felt his great need, and in faith prayed for deliverance. His prayer was answered, he received his reward, both by the felt presence of God in his supplications and also in suffering no harm from those vicious beasts. O how sorrowful is our condition when we say that God's people should not expect a reward for diligently seeking God. James reminded his brethren of Elias, the Lord heard his prayers, and James tells them the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. James nowhere taught that the brethren had ability to heal themselves, but he did admonish them to pray to One who was able to heal them. Evidently when God's people pray in faith, asking God for wisdom, they also will receive the reward in God's own time. Christ said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Such commands are to God's living children, but never to the alien sinner dead in sin. It seems that no church was more destitute of the faith of God than the church of the Laodiceans. Not one of them was commended for one thing, and in their case it was Christ that was knocking instead of them. Christ, however, was not (we think) knocking be-

cause of any aid expected from them, but rather as a rebuke for their manner of living. He said, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent." O what a lesson this should be to God's people in all ages of the world. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

Submitted in love to the dear brethren and editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

JOSEPH FORD.

SENECA, Kansas.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, Nov. 21, 1913.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—A little while after I received your letter the following words came into my thoughts, and they were expressive of my mind regarding yourself: "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."—3 John 2. When a child of God is in health and prosperity, both in body and soul, he is happy indeed. But we see from this text that the body may be in ill health and yet the soul be in a flourishing condition toward God. Indeed, the apostle Paul writes, "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."—2 Cor. iv. 16. Our beloved Christ nourishes and cherishes his church, and this is so essential to our health in the kingdom of God. We know, dear brother, what it is for our souls to be in health and prosperity, it is that we are worshiping our God and Father in spirit and in truth; our heavenly Father seeketh such to worship him. And when our souls are in ill health, when we are sick and prosperity is gone, and we are in the straits of spiritual adversity, we learn, we know what has brought us low; it is internal insurrection, it is the uprising corruption of our Adam nature, it is these unquelled, uncrucified thoughts, surmisings, imaginations, warring against the soul; it is an evil heart of unbelief that is carrying us away from our God, that is enveloping the soul in fears, suspending prayer, and soon we are in obscurity, we are in realms of darkness, and the cares or vanities of life have us in their power, as though we were their homeborn slaves. Then there comes to us those bitter, humiliating times, when we feel our soul's ill health; we feel we are in a downward course, in a decline, and we feel guilty, for we know some of the reasons why we are languid, weak, without appetite for gospel food; we know that we are carnal, sensual, in unbelief, and we are afar off, we have been enticed away, we have wandered from our God. Ah, we know that though our tongues may use words and utter sound phrases professedly to God and to our fellows, we feel there is so little heart in it. How weak is our heart! It looks as though it were hypocrisy to say anything about the preciousness of Christ when we are so cold, in dismal darkness, and our consciences accusing us of our backslidings from our God. "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint," and though we apply all our home-manufactured remedies, they cannot avail to restore us to health; we have no healing medicines. (Jer. xxx. 13.) The Lord, the great Physician, only can bring us health and cure, and reveal unto us the abundance of peace and truth. (Jer. xxxiii. 6.) O my brother, how great in mercy and covenant faithfulness is our God! Though we have "procured" (Jer. ii. 17; iv. 18,) through our neglectful behavior, through our unbelieving, shyness and wandering from the Lord, all the ills that afflict our souls, yet he calls us back to himself. "In their af-

fliction they will seek me early." We begin to sigh for health, we bemoan our ill health, we long for restoration, to be found walking with God, to be found in very spirit and truth worshiping our God and Father. Upon our bed of languishing we are strengthened by the Holy Spirit bringing to our remembrance former loving-kindness, and the Lord's power, who healeth all our diseases, and our hearts sighs and cries say, "Lord, be merciful unto me, and heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee."—Psalms xli. 4. He restoreth my soul; yes, our gracious God leads us into contemplations of the gospel of Christ. Christ and him crucified is the cure to our sin-wounded conscience, for his precious blood cleanses us from all sin. They looked to the brazen serpent, were healed and lived, (Num. xxi. 9,) and often, my dear brother, when I am faint and sick in my soul a little God-given meditation upon the obedience and blood of the Lamb of God restores me to health. I worship the Lord our God, I pour forth my prayers and my soul's adorations to his holy name, I glory in the cross of Christ, for here in Emmanuel's face the glories of our God irradiate, his wisdom and power, and the exceeding riches of his grace, and I am as one bathed in the sunshine of beauty of the Lord our God, and I am strengthened, cheered, restored. O what mercy, O what love and saving power is shed upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Lord.

"Seek, my soul, no other healing,
But in Jesus' balmy blood;
He, beneath the Spirit's sealing,
Stands our great High Priest with God."

O to be in health and prosperity of soul is to live in communion with God. And if this is lacking in the life of one that professes the name of Christ, vain indeed is that profession. Our dear Savior's words are sacredly, blessedly true, "Except ye eat of the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him."—John vi. 53–56.

Christ Jesus is the Sun of Righteousness with healing in his wings, and as he arises in exaltation in our hearts by faith, under his wings, under the light of the glory of God shed forth in his person, the Word made flesh, the God-man, Christ Jesus, under the rays of God's glories, his attributes so declared in the mediatorial obedience of Christ: O, to look up from our sicknesses, sorrows, weakness, depressions and guilt, our hearts thus moved with trust, with desire, with hope in obedience and blood of Christ, look to the wondrous, glorious and soul-satisfying exploits of our Redeemer, and there is poured down into our souls such light, such healing warmth, such kind assurances of the Lord, and mercy of our God, that we know that he is the health of our countenance, and our God. Some professors of religion get along, according to their own account, very well indeed; they are always in soul prosperity, they are always strong, strong believers; they say they believe in such and such points of doctrine, but you can never learn that they ever believe in Jesus, that his righteousness and sin-atoning blood are all their trust and expectation before the throne of God, and you can never learn that they have ever, as poor perishing sinners, cried for mercy. They live without prayer. They know nothing of communion with God at the blood-sprinkled mercy-seat. "There I will meet with

thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat."—Exodus xxv. 22. I will confess it again, dear brother, that I cannot live, I have no courage, no health of soul, only as I am found often coming (poor and needy and much tried as I am) to the mercy-seat with much entreaty to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Here my meditations are sweet, and these affectionate musings are the comfort, health, cure, food and strength of my soul.

"Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,
Which before the cross I spend;
Life and health and peace possessing
From the sinner's dying Friend."

Ah me, I am never well but when I on my best Beloved lean, and then I am never ill. If this is so sacredly so with me, a poor sinner, how rich is the mercy of God. What a work has been wrought in the soul, and is still maintained by his divine power, bringing a poor, sinful, frail creature into such knowledge of God our Savior. Just now I feel I cannot deny but God, I hope, has begun a good work in me, and I am of good cheer, believing he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. A very pleasant, God-glorifying manifestation of the soul's prosperity is that we love, not in word only, but in love deeds, the brethren. Being in the fear of the Lord, worshiping him in spirit and in truth, we are graciously constrained to walk in the truth. If my soul prospereth, then in desires, in prayer to God, in my acts, I shall be found seeking the prosperity of Zion. "They shall prosper that love thee." "Thy soul prospereth." Beloved Gaius and his works declared it, and God was glorified.

But, dear brother, I will not pen more. I had not thought of writing this much when I commenced. Well, while in the world I would that I could live to the praise of our heavenly Father. Your times and mine are in his hands, and surely he who has been so gracious, so rich in mercy hitherto, will continue his loving-kindness all our journey through.

I am glad you are able to write favorably of the health of your family. We are about as usual; my father is feeble. Though you are improving slowly, I trust that you will continue until you are like yourself again, in good health.

I am yours affectionately in the bonds of the gospel of Christ,

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., Oct. 2, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I will now try, according to promise, to write a few lines for the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES and its readers, but it is with fear and trembling that I make the attempt, knowing my weakness and inability to write to such as the editors and readers of this dear paper. I feel very little, and less than nothing, to have a name among the dear saints of God. I feel there is none so sinful, so vile and unworthy as I am, and that if they knew me as I know myself they would not want me to write, yet I sometimes hope that I have a good hope through grace that when I am done with time and time things I shall enter that rest that remains to the people of God; yet doubts and fears are in my mind most of the time and keep me down in the valley of despair, and thick darkness hovers over me at times, so that I cannot see my way, but sometimes when dear Elder Frazee, or some one of the true ministers of God, is preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ, I am permitted to feed on the holy manna that is scattered all around, and feel to rejoice in the Savior's love, the thick clouds are

removed for a season and I feel his presence with me once more, and can say, Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life. But my experience teaches me that we are subject to disappointments in this low ground of sorrow, which make our burdens heavy to bear; but we read that he will be with us in six troubles, and in the seventh he will not forsake us; so we go on from time to time, hoping and trusting that he will never leave nor forsake us in these trying hours, and finally receive us home in heaven, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.

I have received another good letter from sister Nancy A. McCoy, of Dighton, Kansas, in which she writes of her steadfastness in the faith. She is one of the pillars of our dear old church here, called Providence, and has been faithful to let us hear from her from time to time; how she is never forgetting that the dear old church wishes to hear from her, and they wished me to send it to the SIGNS for publication, as all the preaching she gets is through the family paper.

Asking an interest in your prayers, I remain your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) S. G. FRAZEE.

DIGHTON, Kansas, Sept. 1, 1913.

MRS. BELLE FRAZEE—MY DEAR SISTER:—I write this morning to let you know I am still here, and as well as usual physically, but often wonder what I am kept here for, as there seems to be no pleasure in this world for me, only that of being with my children and grandchildren. It gives me pleasure naturally to have them all good and kind to me, but O, I am so lonely for some of my own kind of people, if I can call the Old School Baptists, or God's people, my kind of people, for I do believe they are his people, whether I am one of them or not. But one thing I do know, there is nothing in this world I crave as I do their fellowship, their company and their preaching, but all I get is the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which is precious to me, but I have no one to talk with and enjoy the good things it contains. I read and reread them, and feel that I would like others to enjoy them, but it seems to me they are captives in Babylon, and are blinded with their good works of this world. I often think that maybe I am the blind one, for it seems there is none like me. Then I read the Bible and take courage, and the SIGNS strengthens me, and I think I will not have such doubtful dark times again. Being away from my dear old home church, and all the good preaching and meetings of the dear brethren and sisters, and their sweet fellowship, cause tears to blind my eyes, and I long to be with you all once more. O, if I could be there at your next meeting and hear Elder Frazee preach, and meet all the members of the church Saturday and Sunday, and then attend the association at Bentley, I think my cup would overflow. O how good it would be to be there; but I must try to be reconciled to the Lord's will, he knows what is best. I feel that my sojourn so far from my kindred in Christ will not continue much longer, as I am now past seventy-seven years. I would love to have a letter from you, telling me about yourself and the church at Providence and the association. You can read this to the church if you think it worth the time. I feel like writing to them often, but am such a poor writer, and cannot find words to express my ideas. I write them long letters in my mind, but fail when I come to put them on paper. Has sister Mary Rigg been to meeting this summer? She wrote

me she would go if her health would permit, but she never knew when she could go, even there in town, to visit with her children. She seemed to hope some of you would visit her. She said she wanted to go to meeting very much, for Elder Frazee's preaching just suited her. I hope she will be able to enjoy some of your good meetings this fall. Go visit her if you can.

Now, my dear sister, do write more for the SIGNS. If you knew the good it does some of us to read your communications you surely would feel like writing, and I often think if Elder Frazee would write I would feel almost as if I were hearing him preach while reading his views. I would be glad to see any of the members' writings in our good old paper; it is good to speak often one to another.

You will tire reading my letter; if so, throw it in with the kindling and it will be all right.

N. A. McCOY.

MAYFIELD, Ky., Nov. 5, 1913.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I am sending you another good, strong letter which I received from brother T. J. Carr, of Golconda, Ill. The arguments speak for themselves. To my mind the very acts of Joseph's brethren were determined by the eternal God when he told Abraham several hundred years before it took place that his seed should sojourn in a strange land and be evilly entreated four hundred years. It is worse than folly for any man to admit that God had decreed the end and not the means. For God to have decreed the end and left the means to chance, or even Satan, is wholly incompatible with the character of an all-wise and omnipotent God. It is said, He hath declared the end from the beginning, and if so, all the means to bring the end about are as surely decreed as the end. I submit this with brother Carr's letter for your disposal.

Yours in hope,

J. M. PERKINS.

GOLCONDA, Ill., Nov. 3, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER PERKINS:—My object in my former letter to you was to point out, or try to at least, that absolute predestination is a Bible doctrine, and that man at the same time is both guilty and accountable when he disobeys the laws and commandments of God, even if he determined in his wise counsel that man should break them. Sin is a transgression of the law, but where there is no law there is no transgression, hence the law entered that sin might abound. This, to me, embodies the very idea of violation. But let us suppose that Adam had kept the law, as many think he was able to do, then there would have been no computation of sin, no need of a Savior; the scheme of redemption would have been set at naught, and the whole plan of high heaven frustrated.

In continuing the line of argument begun in my former letter, I desire to state that I forgot one item I intended using, though I quoted the words of Jesus: "Father, forgive them." The thought was this: If certain characters had assembled to do that which God had determined they should do; if the act which they were gathered together to accomplish was to carry out God's will; if it was a righteous act only, where would have been the propriety in Jesus praying the Father to forgive them? Forgive them for what, because they had met to do a righteous act? Who ever heard of any one praying God to forgive his wrongdoing when he was not doing wrong? The Bible plainly sets forth the object of

Christ's mission in this world: to do the will of his Father, which evidently was to put away the sins of his people by the sacrifice of himself, all in fulfillment of the Scriptures and in accordance with the foreknowledge and determinate counsel of God. While this had to be, yet it is considered the most wicked and atrocious crime ever committed, done at the instance of a remarkable verdict. What would you think of a judge who, after having sat as a court and tried a person charged with a criminal offence, to say: Mr. Sheriff, take this man and hang him, for I find that he is not guilty? Pilate did that very thing, and more, he would have had no power at all against Jesus to do even that had it not been given him from above. That God absolutely determined that Jesus should be put to death, and even gave Pilate the power to render such a remarkable verdict: Take him and crucify him, for I find no fault in him, and at the same time hold the executioners guilty of murder, is a difficult matter from a natural point of view to see the justice therein, but when we consider that they crucified Jesus from a selfish motive, in order to get rid of him, with no thought of its being a redemptive feature or a carrying out of the will and purpose of God, and in that sense it was sinful and wicked in them, the seeming inconsistency is made to disappear.

In the person of Joseph we have, I think, a case of absolute predestination, and withal very much like that of the Savior in several respects. It appears that Jacob loved Joseph more than all of his eleven brothers. This seemed to cause them to hate him, and when Joseph told them his dream their anger was raised to such degree that they determined to put him out of the way, so to speak. Hence we see that their getting rid of, or selling him to the Ishmaelites, was from a selfish motive. Little did they think that they were doing the very thing God purposed they should do. Little did they think that their selling him would result in his being made ruler over Pharaoh's domain, to preserve the lives of "much people," together with that of their own; and O how sorry they were later on, when Joseph made himself known to them. But he told them to not be grieved, nor angry with themselves because they sold him, for it was God that sent him before them to preserve life. Joseph further told them that they thought evil against him, but that God meant it unto good. While they were sorry that they had treated Joseph so unkindly, yet they should have rejoiced (and doubtless did) that they sold him into Egypt, since it resulted in their salvation, together with that of all Israel.

From the foregoing circumstance I conclude, first, that the selling of Joseph by his brethren was a sinful act, in that it was done through a spirit of jealousy and hatred, and meant for evil. Secondly, that it was doing God's will, in that it was in fulfillment of his purpose and meant for good in sending Joseph into Egypt to save much people alive. But why did not his brethren slay Joseph, as they had conspired to do, and thus see what would become of his dream? Simply because God had otherwise ordered, and as he has "purposed, so shall it stand." Joseph's dream had to be fulfilled. His brethren had not as yet made obeisance to him, which was done later on to a finish. They could not even leave him in a pit. God had thought otherwise, and as he has "thought, so shall it come to pass." God in his wise

counsel had determined that Joseph should go before them to preserve them a posterity in the earth and to save their lives by a great deliverance.

It seems that Reuben was opposed to the killing of Joseph, but consented to have him cast into the pit. His object in this was to get him out as soon as opportunity offered and return him to his father. But this was not to be, God's plan was not to be frustrated. After they had thrown him into a pit, Reuben, it seems, absented himself for a time, and when he returned to the pit he doubtless expected to find Joseph therein. But when he saw that Joseph was not in the pit he evidently was much disappointed, and "rent his clothes." Reuben, it seems, did not know that his other brothers had taken Joseph out of the pit and sold him. He went to them and said, "The child is not," by which he probably meant that Joseph had been killed. Little did those brethren think that they were doing God's will. Little did they think that it was God's plan to send Joseph before them to preserve life. Little did they think that Joseph would "rise again the third day," so to speak. At the proper time Joseph made himself known to his brethren. He said to them, "I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt." Ye thought evil against me. He told them to "be not grieved," "it was not you that sent me hither, but God." Now, instead of bowing their faces in sorrow and humility, why did they not face Joseph, since he was so kind to them, and say they could not help it, it had to be, and therefore they were not blameworthy? Their conclusion was quite different: "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear." Is that the way people express themselves when they feel they are not to blame? Just here I draw upon my imagination for a short time. I see those brethren conspiring as to the disposition they were to make of Joseph. Some think to slay him, others object. The pit is discussed; the casting of him therein is agreed upon. I see them seize the lad; I hear him begging piteously for them to not kill him; I hear him beseeching them to not hurl him into the pit; I see upon their rugged countenances a determination to carry out their wicked agreement, and to not listen to his pleading; I see them with their brawny arms raise him from the earth; I hear him scream as he is hurled headlong into the gaping pit, and O, how hard he strikes the bottom! What a piercing wail comes from him as a result of the fall! What anguish of soul must he feel while lying, in contemplation of the thought that he might die from starvation, the while his wicked brethren are seated near the mouth of the pit and turning a deaf ear to his bitter groans. Is it any wonder that they later on said that Joseph "will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him"?

More might be said of Joseph and his brethren. That which I have alluded to concerning them has been for the purpose of proving the doctrine of absolute predestination and man's accountability, and I leave what I have written to you, and to those who may read this, to be your own judges as to whether or not I have succeeded.

Yours unworthily,

THOMAS J. CARR.

CLAREMONT, Cal., Oct. 26, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—While burdened with the cares of life, and feeling heavily the hand of oppression upon me, I will try to write, wondering if it is so that I might be guided by divine thought to be able to interest those whom I know to be of like environments, feeling the same depressions of spirit, wondering why it should be that the world is so cold and cheerless, full of temptations that are continually trying our ability to "yield not," many times not having the power to do that which we would, and many times failing to do that which we should do; yes, I wonder if I, a poor worm of the dust, who knows myself to have felt that I was and am the chief of sinners, but yet having felt cause for great rejoicing, in the fact that in the most trying times of my life I have been made to feel that God in his mercy sent his beloved Son, as Paul says, to save sinners, of whom I am chief. Yes, when I was in the mire and clay, when everything was void of hope, and when friends were mourning me as beyond help, I could but thankfully look to the Giver of every good and perfect gift as the only one that had done my poor soul any good. O how slack I have been as regards my obligations to my dear Redeemer. I know that only by his goodness and mercy have I been brought through the trials of earth, and yet such is my striving with corrupt things that I know that my pleadings for mercy from the Holy One of Bethlehem sound as but mockery and hypocrisy, knowing full well that as deserving his love and mercy I have no claim upon him. But there is a satisfaction in knowing that God is all-powerful and all goodness, and that he rules in heaven and among men; that he notes the sparrow's fall, that the winds and waves obey his call, and that he has promised never to leave nor forsake those who are his own; that he has a chosen people that he gave to his Son Jesus there is no denying, if the book is truth, and that they should by the shedding of the meek and lowly Jesus' blood be redeemed from Adam's fallen race, is also plainly taught, and there is no plainer truth taught in the Bible than that he will save every one of those whom the Father gave him, and that when he said, "It is finished," he had redeemed every one of them, and if so, nothing can change this; even the exact number, no more, no less, is determined. Then it only remains for us to know if we are of those chosen ones. There is the all-important question. Sometimes we are made to cry, I know that my Redeemer liveth, my Savior and my God. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Paul says, I die daily. Do not we all? Also, But when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. How do we all remember the time when we honestly thought that we would grow better and better, and that we would never sin again, and we felt that holy ability to do the Master's will; yes, it was pleasant and sweet to us, and we thought that we could do all these things; but there came a time when we were made to know that we were slack in our duty to him whom we believed had saved us, and there came, as it were, to our minds something like this: You have accepted Christ as your Savior; you thought you could do all that was required of you; you owe to your Redeemer in return for what he has done for you all the requirements that he has asked of you; now do it. What a shock. It kills you. You have broken your promise. You find that you cannot do the things that

you would, and that you do the things you would not. What shall you do? There is nothing the dead can do. You have sinned against your God and Savior, and the wages of sin is death. The commandment came and you died. We die daily, and then how sweet is the feeling that comes over us when we again feel his shining presence.

Paul prayed that the thorn might be removed, but was made to know that it was not best that it should be removed, for he would become exalted beyond measure. We must be brought to know that our ability to do depends on the strength that is given us. Let us give God all the praise.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS.

CONNERSVILLE, N. Y.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—May I be allowed to use such an endearing title? I feel that it will be but a little while, if I am one whom Jesus died to save, ere I shall see him as he is, and be like him.

"O wondrous love, to bleed and die,
To bear reproach and shame,
That guilty sinners, such as I,
Might lisp his glorious name."

Is it not wonderful that he should descend so low as to raise beggars to his throne, and set them at his Father's right hand, and make them pure as he is pure, by putting his robe of righteousness upon them, and giving his honor to them? Though their sins be as scarlet, and have separated them from him as far as the east from the west, and the flaming sword of divine justice turns every way to keep the way of the tree of life, so that they cannot approach unto it, and so there is a total separation, and they have no eye to pity, and no arm to save, and they go about the streets crying in bitterness of soul, "God be merciful to me a sinner," feeling that they are aliens from God and strangers to grace, and though they are told, as was the blind man, that they must keep still, they, like him, cry all the louder, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me," he yet has thoughts of peace toward them. How often do the poor blind children of God feel that they, too, are forbidden to come to him, yet they cry unto him still, "Have mercy on me." They say in heart, I cannot approach unto thee, for the sword of the law of God turns every way. It seems to them indeed that there is no eye to pity, and no arm to save. But then what joy fills the soul to hear Jesus of Nazareth as he passes by.

"What cheering words are these?
Their sweetness, who can tell?
In time, and to eternal days,
'Tis with the righteous well."

Yes, Jesus has heard his cry, and worked salvation in his heart. Now he is no longer lame nor sick, for Jesus has heard his cry, and has said unto him, Son, thy sins are all forgiven thee. There is joy then in heaven, and there is joy upon earth, and christians rejoice at the poor sinner's birth. Now the praise is the Lord's, and praise fills his soul, joyful strains fill his heart, and he can say, Come, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul.

"Was ever love like this?
Was ever grace so free?
This be my constant joy and bliss,
That Jesus died for me."

While he thus feasts upon the fruit of the vine all is well. Yes, he says, Jesus is mine, and I am his. What can I want beside? Yes, this is Jesus, for he has told him all things that ever he did. He knows that this is the Christ, the Son of God, who should come into the world to take away sin, the sin of his people. This is he of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write. Truly there is

now music and dancing in his heart. But ere long it may be that Jesus withdraws himself, and, Peter-like, he begins to sink, then he cries, Lord, save or I perish, and so he finds it true that without Jesus he can do nothing. David could rejoice when the Lord gave him the victory, and he exultingly cried, "By thee I have run through a troop; by my God have I leaped over a wall," and I, too, at times feel strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, for it is he that subdues my enemies under my feet. His right hand and holy arm have gotten him the victory. Like David at Ziklag, he recovers all the spoil. How wonderful it all is. By his sweet resistless grace he saves all the chosen race. Surely he has loved them with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving-kindness has he drawn them. We had evidence at our meeting yesterday, and at our meetings previously, that made us, like Paul, thank God and take courage, yet a blight seemed to chill me for a time. But we read that all things work together for good to them who love God, and who are called according to his purpose. And the poet said,

"His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower."

I send this to you to read, as I have felt lonely.

D. S. ELLIOTT.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Oct. 8, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I send you this short letter for the SIGNS, if you think best. I hope sister Ker is better. We all feel a deep sympathy for her in her great suffering, and for you. Sickness kept me from filling my Salisbury appointment the fourth Sunday in September. I am now better, and went to South River, where I spoke Sunday and Monday nights. I do not think of going to the Virginia meeting, but expect to be at Salisbury if the Lord will.

With love to you both, your brother in hope, SILAS H. DURAND.

CALHOUN CITY, Miss., June 23, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—I have been made to rejoice so much in your writings I cannot help writing you. Although we are strangers in the flesh, I do hope and feel we are kin in the Spirit. I have just read your brother James' experience, and last words on his deathbed. O such a glorious thing to die as he did. Have you his writings in print? If so, where can I get them?

I do trust that I may hear some good preaching this year. I live so far from meeting I do not get there often. One good brother (Verrell) came through and preached one sermon for us, and it was good to me. I do wish you could come this way some time. I much enjoyed the book you sent me, and have read and reread it. May God still bless you and give you strength for many days more. Pray for me, for I am a widow with a large family, and you may know some of my trials. I do enjoy anything in the way of good reading. I do feel God has been good to me. I wrote the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, telling them I was not able to renew, but the paper still comes, and you do not know how I appreciate it. I pray God to bless them, and all our faithful ministers, who are doing so much good for his people. I have been low down many times, and taken up a paper, and read one of your good articles, or one written by some one else, and have been greatly lifted up and fed.

With a prayer that God will bless you and yours, I close by asking you to pray for me.

Your sister in Christ,

EUSIE GRIFFIN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1913.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE RED SEA.

OUR sister, Mrs. E. J. Loyd, of Los Angeles, Cal., asks what the Red Sea represents. Probably no Bible narrative has engaged the minds of the people of God more than the exodus of Israel from Egypt, and the incidents of their travel to and through the Red Sea, and into the wilderness, and finally into Canaan. Very many have written concerning the different stages of this wonderful journey, which was under the direct guidance of God, through the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night. In a general way all understand that we have here a typical narrative concerning a typical people, and that it all sets forth in some way the dealings of God with his spiritual people, yet there have been differences in the judgment of brethren concerning what many things recorded there do represent, and for this reason we desire to speak carefully in what we may write in response to the request of our sister. Besides, in former years we recall that we felt very positive that some views of ours concerning some of the types were right, but afterwards we became convinced that we were mistaken. For this reason we have felt like speaking carefully when we do not find some express interpretation of the types in the New Testament. Inspired apostles have given the meaning and application of some of the former types, but not of all. Where they have written by inspiration concerning them we may boldly express our thoughts, for we then are sure that we are right; but concerning many of the types there has been nothing said in the New Testament, and so we are left to our judgment as to their meaning, and our judgment may easily be mistaken. We do not recall that there is any place in the New Testament where the Red Sea is defined, or its special typical meaning presented. It is indeed spoken of there, and spoken of more than once, but not in the way of defining its place in the experience and travel of the church. Still we desire to call attention to a few thoughts with relation to the inquiry of our sister. First, we will speak of the places in the Bible where the passage through the Red Sea by Israel is spoken of, some in the Old Testament and some in the New. Several references are made in Psalms to the miracle wrought at the Red Sea. Especially in the seventy-seventh Psalm we are told that beside the strong wind which the Lord caused to blow that night, beating back the waters so that they stood like walls on either side, the rains fell, and there were thunderings and lightnings in the heavens, so that the earth trembled and shook. From all this we learn that God was pleased, not only to thus wonderfully deliver his people from destruction, but to do so with manifestations of his awful glory, and in this Psalm, immediately after the above declarations, it is written: "Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known. Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and

Aaron." It seems very clear from these words that it was given the psalmist to look upon the wonderful work of God at the Red Sea as an emblem of his dealings in general with his people Israel. Their pathway through the Red Sea was an emblem of their journey all through their history, but let it be especially noticed that their pathway was only God's pathway. It was not only that their way was in the sea, but God's way is in the sea. Not only do they pass through great waters, but here also is the way of the Lord. God was there before them. Israel when they came to the Red Sea could not and did not know by what pathway they should still further advance. More than this, it would appear that even Moses did not know beforehand what mighty works the Lord would show forth in their deliverance. He was confident that deliverance would come, but he does not seem to have known in what way. It was literally true that the footsteps of the Almighty then were not known beforehand, but the revelation came shortly afterwards, when they saw the waters divided and heard the command to go forward. It is still true that the people of God do not know the footsteps of the Lord until he brings them into his pathway. This was God's way for them to escape, in it he wrought more than they could have conceived of for themselves. It could never have entered the mind of any man to think, We shall find a pathway through the sea, and it could never have entered the mind of man that deliverance would come to them in such a way and by such means as would also result in the destruction of the enemy, so that they should never see their foe again. But this was the pathway of the Lord. When the inspired psalmist said that His footsteps were not known, he evidently meant the way in which the Lord would lead his people, and in this sense of the word his footsteps are their footsteps. As his way is in the sea, and through the great waters, so also this is their way, and may we not without doing violence to the text say that in prophetic vision the author of this Psalm saw that great deep of sorrow, suffering and death through which he who is the Redeemer of Israel must afterwards pass to accomplish for his people a richer and more wonderful redemption than was this that was given to Israel at the Red Sea? Here, too, the way of the Lord was in the sea, and through the great waters of the judgment of God, and here, too, his people are led by him and come to know what his sore trials meant in some measure. Thus from this point of view the Red Sea may well be considered as a type or emblem of all trials, afflictions and temptations, and also of the great deep of God's judgment, by which his people are saved and his enemies destroyed.

We also may learn from the words of this Psalm that the people of God do not go, save where they are led. All their pathway in all their deep trials and distresses is also the pathway of the Lord. They go where they are led. When the way is not opened they stand still; when the way is opened, then the word of the Lord is, Go forward, and they go forward. But deliverance has always come in a way unexpected, and afterwards, as Israel sang praises to God alone, when they saw how he had triumphed gloriously, and had overthrown the horse and his rider in the sea, so every spiritual believer, looking back, will bless the hand that has guided him and the heart that has planned for him. It is good to look back over the many Red Seas which we have come to, and which we have crossed,

believing that in them all the grace and wisdom and mercy of God have appeared. There is not a trial of any kind, not a sickness, not a pain, not a loss of either friends or fortune, not an hour of deep distress of mind, but what is to us as a Red Sea which we have no power to cross, but which still we shall cross, and cross safely. How good it is to believe that all our trials, sicknesses, sufferings, losses and crosses are not ministered to us of the devil, neither do they come by chance, but the blessed Lord leads us to them and through them when he is ready, and we find that our tried pathway is, after all, only his pathway, and that the footsteps that appear are his, made by his blessed feet, either in his providence or in his grace.

We have here dwelt upon the testimony of the inspired psalmist, because it sets forth in a few words just what we may learn from the narrative given in Exodus. Quite a number of years ago we remember writing something along this line concerning the words of which we are now writing. Soon afterwards a criticism reached us in this way: that we did not seem to find any place for the devil, but that we ascribed all our afflictions, trials, sorrows and sicknesses to the Lord. We recall that there came into our mind then, just what we have felt to be true ever since, viz., Suppose we select some one of the Lord's dear people, who has been passing under the rod of long continued and hopeless sickness, and in conversation hear that one express a feeling of reconciliation and submission in the sickness and pain to the will of God; and then suppose we should say to that one, This is not the Lord's work, it is the work of the devil. The Lord does not send sickness; it and all such things come from the malice of Satan, you should not therefore be reconciled at all. No one ought to be reconciled to the work of the devil, and your sickness is his work. It is our mind that such spiritually-minded child of God would feel a great relief when we took ourselves away from their presence. We are sure that such an humble child would not want to see us again. Millions of sufferers have believed that all was from the will and hand of that God who cannot err or be unkind. Has their faith been vain? If anything is taught plainly in the Scriptures, the lessons of submission and reconciliation to God in all our burdens and trials are taught there. It is blessed to believe that our God both brings us to the trial and brings us through it.

It was also our mind to call attention to another aspect in which the Red Sea may be viewed. In first Corinthians, tenth chapter, occurs the language, "And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." Here it would seem that the apostle presents a similarity between the passage of Israel through the sea and under the cloud, and the ordinance of baptism which our Lord has ordained for all who now believe in him and follow him, and the special consideration in view seems to us to be the following: just as by passing through the waters of baptism believers now are separated outwardly, or by profession, from their former worldly life, and are shut up into being followers of Christ, so were the Israelites by passing through the Red Sea separated forever from Egypt and all its idolatry and bondage, and shut up unto the guidance of Moses, as the appointed servant of God to be their leader all through the journey of the wilderness. Thus they came to Moses as their lawgiver, judge and guide, and their former

life they were to know no more forever. So in the ordinance of baptism believers confess Christ to be their leader, their guide and their lawgiver. Another thing is true of both Israel passing through the Red Sea, and the children of God passing through the waters of baptism, viz., before there could be any reality in either baptism the hearts of the people must be prepared. Israel passed through the Red Sea willingly. There was a heartwork preparing the people to desire to escape from Egypt, and to seek after the promised land. This must have been so, else their crossing the sea would have been a merely formal deed, without any real heartwork in it. So also there must first be a uniting of the heart in love to our great Leader and King, so that the soul can be satisfied with nothing less than being a follower of Christ, else baptism is but a solemn mockery upon the part of him who engages in it. But where this solemn heartwork of the Holy Spirit is found, then baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Spirit is not mockery, but simply a solemn declaration of what has been wrought in the heart by the Spirit beforehand.

We trust that these reflections may be of some satisfaction to our sister, and to our readers in general. C.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

LETTER TO CORRESPONDENTS.

HAVING received may letters and cards since my last note appeared in the SIGNS, and it being impossible to acknowledge each one personally, I take this means of expressing our appreciation of the messages of love and sympathy. It is good to know we have friends in deed and in truth; it helps us to bear the burdens and crosses of this life.

I am very sorry to say my wife's health has not improved since my last report, but instead she has grown rather worse, and is now very weak, and spends most of the time lying on the couch. At times she suffers intense pain and extreme nervousness. We both desire to be reconciled to the Lord's will, but find it means more than to simply say, Thy will be done. I still meet my regular appointments, but do not visit at all among other churches.

We hope that all who have written us will accept this as an acknowledgment of their kind messages of sympathy, and while we cannot promise to write personally to our friends for some time to come, we shall be glad to hear from any who feel to write us.

With love in the Lord, I am as ever your unworthy brother in hope,

H. C. KER.

FIRST VOLUME OF EDITORIALS EXHAUSTED.

As our supply of the first volume of Editorials is exhausted, we will be unable to fill any more orders for them, but have quite a number of the second volume left, which we are closing out at seventy-five cents each. As neither of these volumes was electrotyped, we will not be able to supply either volume after what is left of the second volume is disposed of. Address all orders to

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

WE desire here to acknowledge the receipt of many private letters from almost all parts of our country, asking after our welfare, and expressing earnest desire for our final recovery, and for much peace of mind while our health remains feeble. It is impossible for us to reply to many of these letters, for about all that we feel able to do is to keep up our work on the SIGNS. We hope that our correspondents will believe that we have felt their kind remembrances deeply, and that our uppermost thought is that we are all unworthy of their thoughtful kindness. The fact that they have remembered us brings a sense of gladness and thankfulness, and then what they have written has often been made a blessing to us. They are all dear to us in the bonds of Christ. We are saying this through the SIGNS, that those who have written us may know the reason if they do not receive a reply. They have all expressed the desire that the blessing of God may rest upon us, and we do certainly desire the same for them. We will also say that in some things we are improved, and hope that by the favor of God we may continue to do so. But the Lord's will must be done, and his will is always best. C.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANKS.

AS most of our subscribers' time expires with the end of the year, we always inclose a subscription blank in each paper of the December 1st issue, for the convenience of those wishing to renew their subscriptions. The blanks are not intended as bills, but simply to call attention to the fact that the end of the year is near at hand. As usual, one of these blanks was sent with each paper of our last issue, and we hope each one will consult his or her date on the little pink slip attached to either the paper or wrapper in which the paper comes, and if in arrears forward to us the amount due.

Address all letters, and make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, N. Y.

CLOSE OF VOLUME EIGHTY-ONE.

WITH this number of the SIGNS volume eighty-one is concluded, and again we wish to thank our subscribers, writers and friends, for their kind and valuable support during the year. The SIGNS is the oldest publication of its kind in the United States, and has ever advocated the doctrine of God our Savior, notwithstanding the many departures in these latter days, and has been of much comfort to those of like precious faith.

Our business report at this time does not differ materially from that of last year. The subscription list remains about the same.

Elder Chick, as all our readers know, has been in poor health this year, but has been able to write an editorial for each number, and we trust will soon regain his former health. As for ourself, all understand why we have not written. We hope that the same kindness of 1913 may be shown the SIGNS during 1914, that our hands be held up while endeavoring to help and comfort many of the flock through the publication of the same.

With best wishes for the new year, we say good-by for 1913. K.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

H. J. O'Bannon, Va., $1.00; Mrs. J. W. Parker, Ill., $2.00; J. H. Knifton, Ont., $2.00; John F. Oliver, Va., $1.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, Nov. 26th, 1913, Walter Irving Fox and Miss Ona May Thompson, at Sunnyside, the home of the bride's parents, near Herndon, Fairfax Co., Va.

By the same, Nov. 27th, 1913, Charles Franklin Riticor, Jr., and Miss Jessica Gulick, at Mt. Bulah, the home of the bride's parents, near Aldie, Loudoun Co., Va.

By Elder B. E. Cubbage, Oct. 8th, 1913, at the home of the bride's father, Calvin Cubbage, William H. Holton, of Newark, Del., and Miss Helen K. Cubbage, of Philadelphia, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **Jane McCallum,** widow of Daniel J. McCallum, died at her home near Wallacetown, Ontario, on the evening of Oct. 29th, 1913, in her eighty-third year, after several months' illness due to infirmities of old age. She was one of the early settlers of this part of Canada, and knew the privations of those days. She was the mother of fourteen children, of whom five sons and six daughters survive: Mathew, Archibald, Maggie, Lena and Lizzie, at home, Zachariah, of Dunwich, Daniel, of Decatur, Ill., Alexander, of Erie, Pa., Mrs. Mary McFarlane, of St. Thomas, and Mrs. John A. Campbell, of Dutton, who mourn the loss of a kind and affectionate mother, whose generosity and hospitality were notable, as many who have visited at her home can attest. She united with the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada in May, 1868, and was baptized in Lake Erie at a later date. She had the pleasure of seeing two of her daughters (one of whom is blind) unite with the church of her faith. When health permitted, she seldom failed to be at the meetings of the church, where to hear the preaching of the gospel in its purity was her chief delight. Her constant theme was the wondrous love and abounding mercy of the just and holy God to poor unworthy sinners, of whom she always felt to be the chief. She possessed a beautiful voice, and during her last illness, as long as strength lasted, repeatedly sang favorite psalms and hymns, among which were the twenty-third Psalm and hymn No. 807 (Beebe's collection). She had no desire to get well, but rather to depart and be with Christ, having full confidence in the hope that was an anchor of her soul so long. Many precious passages of Scripture would fall from her lips, such as, Who is like unto the Lord our God? He is a merciful God. Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his, and many others which might be mentioned. One day when several of the family were in the room she said: "Children, I wish you could see the sight I saw last night. I saw the heavens open, and all the children of God were there; it was so beautiful I can never describe it to you." Thus are those who were near and dear to the subject of this notice favored with unmistakable evidences of the triumph of that faith of which Jesus is the author and finisher, and by which they are enabled to rest in the assurance that their beloved mother has fallen asleep in Jesus, that blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep.

Elder P. W. Sawin was called to attend the funeral, but owing to failure in making train connections was unable to be present, and the services were conducted at the house, where a large number of people assembled, by Mr. Thomas Urquhart, of Toronto, a nephew of the deceased. The remains were laid beside those of her husband, who predeceased her fifteen years.

The church has lost a valued member, and the community in which she lived so long a noble citizen. May the bereaved ones like one of old be enabled to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Written by request. JOHN T. KERR.

OUR aged brother, **Johnston T. Blackwell,** departed this life August 21st, 1913, aged 81 years, 10 months and 7 days, after a short illness from infirmities of old age and weakness of the heart. He was baptized in the fellowship of the First Hopewell Church by Elder Philander Hartwell, August 28th, 1869. He was chosen one of the deacons of the church August 27th, 1874, and was also appointed one of the trustees March 27th, 1875. He was married to Catherine Titus, Nov. 6th, 1856, who survives him. In all these years he was a faithful, earnest member, esteemed and honored by his brethren. As a deacon, he filled the office well, attending faithfully to the duties involving upon him; as a trustee, he was esteemed by the board as a safe adviser. We have been slightly acquainted with him for about forty-five years, and intimately acquainted for the last seventeen years. It has been our privilege to visit him often, and to have him and his dear companion at our home often. We do not recall that we were ever in his company long without the theme of Christ and his salvation being named. He had always been a hard-working man, faithful and honorable in all his dealings. He has left behind him the savor of a good name, which is better than great riches. Two children were born to them, one of whom died in infancy, and the other, a daughter, died a few years ago. Thus of late the church has been deprived of two of her prominent members and deacons. We as a church feel bereft, and shall miss the presence and counsel of our brother, but we feel well assured that for Deacon Blackwell to depart was to be with Christ, which is far better. He had spent all his life at the homestead where he died, about three miles east of Pennington. He leaves his bereaved companion of many years and

three grandchildren to mourn their loss. Our dear sister feels sorely bereaved in the loss of her long time companion and the breaking up of her home.

The funeral service was held at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Hopewell on Monday, Aug. 25th, and the interment was in the yard adjoining. The text used by his pastor upon the occasion was 1 Thess. v. 9, 10. Our brother sleeps in the full and certain hope of the resurrection at the last day.

C.

J. Monroe Willard, son of James and Mary Delany Willard, was born at Rocksville, Bucks Co., Pa., Feb. 18th, 1848, and died in Germantown, Pa., July 3rd, 1913. He was married Dec. 22nd, 1870, to Sarah A., daughter of Henry and Mary Ann Stout, who, with their daughter, Florence W. Robinson, and four sisters, survives him. He was baptized by Elder P. Hartwell, April 14th, 1867, in the fellowship of the "Southampton Baptist Church," and was appointed deacon on Saturday, April 10th, 1880. The affairs of the church were mainly of the first importance in his mind during all those years, from the time of his acceptance as a member of the church to the day of his departure from this mortal life. He was engaged in school work all his life, and devoted himself faithfully to that, exerting all his powers in the performance of his work. But still the duties and privileges of the church were evidently first in his mind, even when under great depression of soul, as one would learn by intimate conversation with him. During the last number of years, while experiencing great weakness and weariness of body, it was noticeable that his seat in the meetinghouse was filled as by one that was experiencing great and sweet rest. He had several times of serious illness, when it seemed impossible he could recover. Each time when he recovered so as to be able to go again to the meetinghouse he seemed to appreciate the privilege still more dearly. The church and all the members of the church miss him very much. He was held in the highest and most affectionate esteem by all the brethren and friends. We feel great sympathy with his wife, sister Sarah A. Willard, and his daughter, sister Florence W. Robinson, and also his four sisters. May the Lord comfort all that mourn.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Miss Eula Ophelia White was born near Keller, Tarrant Co., Texas, July 28th, 1892, and died Sept. 5th, 1913, aged 21 years, 1 month and 7 days. She was respected, admired and loved by all who knew her. While having never made a public profession of religion, yet on several occasions while talking to friends was minded to say that she had a hope that after this life of sorrow and suffering was over she had a home which is eternal in heaven, and many other like expressions, which greatly comforts and consoles the bereaved parents, brothers and sisters. She was amiable, affectionate and charitable, and to know her was to love her. That dreaded malady, abscess of the liver, seized her, and finally destroyed her life. She bore all her sufferings with patience, and the only murmur she was ever heard to utter was, "O, mother, why is it that I am made to suffer so?" Her sufferings for four months at intervals were excruciating; medical skill was exhausted to no avail. One of her last requests was that "Asleep in Jesus" should be sung at her burial. Her mother, Mrs. Fannie White, is a member of the Old School Baptist Church at Keller, Texas, and is a daughter of the late Elder A. D. Bourland. Her father, while a Baptist in belief, has never made a public profession. While they weep and mourn, yet their sorrow is not as those having no hope. While surrounded at the tomb by a large concourse of people the poor, unworthy writer of this notice tried to speak some words of comfort to the bereaved, looking forward, as we hope, when this mortal shall put on immortality, when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and death is swallowed up in victory.

W. S. BOURLAND.

William Allan was born in Berwickshire, Scotland, July 4th, 1825. In 1850 he came to the United States. In 1855 he was married to Miss Helen Imrie, also a native of Scotland. To that union were born eight children, three of whom preceded their father in death. The wife died in 1902. Mr. Allan was a great Bible student, from which he derived much comfort. He had been a regular subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for years. Although no one lived near who believed in election, still he read and spoke to many of the doctrine. The past nine years he had made his home with his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Ada Allen, and her son, her husband, Edward D. Allen, having died five years ago, leaving a fatherless boy.

(MRS.) ADA ALLEN.

C. G. Irwin died at Wilmar, Ark. The Scriptures say that all our times are in his (God's) hands, a time to be born and a time to die. He was perfectly resigned, and desired to depart and be at peace and rest. His only regret was to leave his dear wife and little girl in this sinful world. He was perfectly conscious until the end, talking of the beautiful city of God that he saw, and repeated many times one verse of the hymn he selected to be sung at his grave: "Reach down thine arm of grace," &c. He selected the text for me to speak on, Romans viii. 33: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" and asked me to conduct the exercises, preach at the house and accompany his body to the grave at Andrews Chapel, where we laid it to rest beside his four little children, to await the Master's call. A sweet smile covered his face as his last breath left him, and

he was still holding our hands. Christ said: "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

Brother Charlie took the SIGNS for many years, and wrote a few short letters for publication. He loved the doctrine it advocates, and always spoke in its praise. He was a true Predestinarian Baptist. I feel no one here will miss him more than I, but I weep not as those who have no hope.

J. P. BAKER.

EXPRESSION OF SYMPATHY.

THE Salisbury Association sincerely sympathizes with our dear brethren, Elders T. M. Poulson and F. A. Chick, in their severe illness, and deeply regrets their absence from this session of the association. Both have been faithful in their attendance for many years. Elder Poulson is pastor over five of the churches, and has been for more than forty years, and has never missed a session before this. To them both we wish to say that we miss their presence, their excellent counsel and able ministry in word and doctrine. Our sincere desire and prayer to the God of all grace is that he will restore them again to health, and that we may again see them and hear them preach the everlasting gospel at future sessions of our association.

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JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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SYLVESTER HASSELL.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

FRAGMENTS.

"CASTING all your care upon him, for he careth for you."—1 Peter v. 7. But how can that be done? I have tried, O so many times, but never have accomplished the task. The care the apostle refers to is evidently of a very especial kind. He seems to be talking to ministers of the gospel, and in that case he not only has in mind the care which each individual has in regard to his personal affairs, and in his worldly relationships, but also the care of the churches. It is evident that this care is something that presses heavily upon the mind, causing much anxiety. It claims absorbing attention; it engrosses the mind; it swallows up the thoughts. Now to cast that care upon the Lord is, or appears to be, beyond my power. Many a time I have tried to cast some particular care upon the Lord, but found it impossible. The anxiety, the care, the painful worry, would remain unmoved. It would seem to me that it was presumption in me to think of such a thing as trying to burden the Lord with my affairs, so unimportant, and I so unworthy of his notice.

But the Lord can do it. These words of the apostle came to my mind not long since with some degree of power, and there was felt in my heart a sweet sense of relief; the weight of care was lessened, and a feeling of thankfulness was in my soul. The words had a new effect upon my mind; the care was in a measure gone; I hope it was cast upon the Lord, but it was his work, not mine. The coming of the words of the inspired apostle had done the work, or had caused me to do it; and it is one of the wonders of the gospel that the Lord's work is manifested in his people, and becomes their work by faith. He works in them "that which is wellpleasing in his sight." He will fulfill in them "the work of faith with power."

It is a sweet and comprehensive exhortation, or command, of the apostle to the saints to cast all their care upon the Lord. The apostles have the authority and power to issue such a command from their King, as his princes ruling in judgment. (Isaiah xxxii. 1.) He commands those to whom he thus writes to humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt them in due time; then follow the words of the text as a

part of the sentence, and as a part of the same work. Casting all their care upon the Lord is a part of the gracious work of the Lord in them, causing them to humble themselves under his mighty hand. Casting all our care upon the Lord does not leave the dear children of God without care, without work to do; does not leave them under the power of indolence, but rather makes them more heartily engaged and abounding in the work of the Lord, more careful to "maintain good works," more attentive to the needs of others, and more trustful in the Lord, and more abiding in the doctrine and order of his house. It is very wonderful that whenever the Lord's people realize in their hearts and in their lives a gospel work, a walk with God in any measure, they at once give thanks to God for it. They do not seem in their own minds to take to themselves the credit of it, but ascribe it all to the great goodness and tender mercies of the Lord, and this is according to the gospel. We do not read in the Bible of any one receiving honor and praise but Jesus. Faithful servants of God are named, whose praise is in the churches, but one of them, who labored more than others, is very careful to remind his brethren that no one is to be regarded in his person as more to be noted or praised than another; that all are God's laborers together (laborers together with or under God); that all the praise for work done is fully and freely rendered unto God. When the heart and eyes of the Lord's people are lifted up, after beholding the saints, the greatest of them, with Jesus in glory, they see no man, but Jesus only.

"For he careth for you." This is a most wonderfully precious assurance given by the apostle to all of like precious faith with the apostles. "He careth for you." We had not thought of this as being possible, for the psalmist's thought had been ours, when we considered all his power and greatness and glory: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" and especially what are we, poor worms of the dust, that we should dare to think he could care for us? But, says the inspired apostle, "He careth for you." As the shepherd cares for the sheep, as the mother cares for the child, as the father cares for the son; and when that holy persuasion comes fully and sweetly into the soul, how freely and fully the cares that have been burdening us go out to the dear Savior, leaving us free and unburdened in the felt presence of our dear Redeemer, and then how sober and vigilant we become in opposition to the works of the devil, as the apostle commands us to, and how delightedly we abound in the works of the Lord. How full of tender love and compassionate interest are these words: "For he careth for you."

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."—Luke xiv. 26. This word, "hate," in this place has not the same meaning which is expressed by it in ordinary conversation upon worldly things. The meaning of it in this natural sense is, a strong aversion, an intense dislike, with a desire to avoid the person so disliked, and generally a wish that evil may befall him. As used by the dear Savior it expresses the strong aversion of the Holy Spirit to all sin and wickedness. All men are sinners, made so by the disobedience of one man, Adam. When, therefore, any one of Adam's race is made alive to see himself as he stands in the

sight of a holy God, he hates his own life. It is in this sense that the dear Savior speaks of one as hating his father and mother and all natural relatives. Job, the perfect man, said, "I abhor myself." In the same sense the man who is a follower of Christ must be one who has a strong aversion to all sin and sinfulness in whomsoever it exists. While this is the case with him, he still loves his wife and children and all his relatives with the same natural love as before, and would do them good. His hatred of the sin and wickedness which is in them, and in himself, and in all flesh, does not destroy his love for them nor interfere with the sacred obligations which are binding upon him in those natural ties. The Savior and the apostles give commands and directions with reference to those sweet natural relationships, that all the mutual obligations which belong to them should be carefully and faithfully observed by his followers; while, at the same time, the heavenly, spiritual relationship in Christ, with all that pertains to it, rises high above all that is natural, as the heavens are higher than the earth, and swallows up all natural love, and light, and glory, as the light of the natural sun swallows up the light of the moon and stars. The child of God has an aversion for all that is evil, and a desire for that which is good. With the mind (the mind of Christ) he serves "the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." The new man of grace desires to follow the leadings of the Spirit, and to them he will cling, and them he will follow, when he is in the spirit, though all earthly relatives oppose him. In that sense he hates them all when he is following Christ, but is still faithful to them in all that is right and just.

I WROTE in these fragments some years ago about the desirability of plain penmanship in letters. My personal correspondence has been very large, though not as large now as formerly. Sometimes I am not able to read all of a letter, and sometimes the name and the address of the writer are written so carelessly that I cannot make them out. A pencil should not be used. If readable at first, it is apt to become unreadable by rubbing over the paper. If a communication is important, greater care should be taken. I suggested to one of my very valued correspondents many years ago, whose writing it was impossible for me to read, that he make every letter absolutely separate and distinct. There was soon a marked improvement in his penmanship. Many an hour is spent in trying to make out a letter, when the reading of it ought to be a pleasant exercise. I am now writing with great care, so that the typesetter will not be able to laugh at me for my poor writing. I have sometimes found difficulty in reading my own writing.

"COME unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." These are the words of Jesus, who has all power in heaven and in earth. Some regard them as an invitation which may be accepted or rejected by those to whom they are addressed. But think of Jesus, who has "power over all flesh," whose name is above "every name that is named;" think of him saying, If you will come unto me I will give you rest. Think of him, before whom angels bow, before whom stand that great company of the redeemed which no man can number; think of him waiting to see what they will do in reply to an invitation from him. Think of them taking into

consideration the question whether they will accept his invitation or not, and think of their pride in the thought that they are able to successfully oppose the will of God.

No, this is not in the form of an invitation, nor do the circumstances allow it to be consistently regarded as such. Those who should come in answer to an invitation would have the right to regard themselves as on an equality with the one inviting them, and even as superior in the fact that their acceptance was necessary in order that his will might be done.

Grace and faith do not deal in invitations; their subjects are helpless. While there is one thing left to be done, even so much as the acceptance of a fancied invitation, and one particle of strength left with which to make an effort to do it, there is no call for grace or faith; no work for them to do. Those to whom the dear Savior addresses these wonderfully sweet words of love and power are clearly described in his language; they are laboring. The words show their condition as sinners under the condemnation of the law. They are laboring to fulfill its just and holy commands, but laboring in vain; they find that to be impossible; they are already condemned by all its holy requirements. So while they work daily, the same work remains to be done every day, and yet it brings them no righteousness; the burden of the law still remains upon them; they are laboring and heavy laden. So the language of the Redeemer fully describes them as those who "labor and are heavy laden." To them he calls when every other refuge fails them, and when sin abounds over all their works. He does not call them to hear a proposition from him concerning something he will give them if they will accept an invitation from him, but he calls them as helpless and undone, justly condemned and feeling themselves unable ever to come into the favor of a holy God. He shows them that the work which they could never do he has already done. The burden which they could not bear he has taken away. The obedience which they could not render to the demands of the law he has rendered by his death and resurrection, and now he calls them into his rest and tells them the good news of salvation by his glorious grace. The first they know of salvation as possible for them is that they have it in their hearts. He gives them rest. They wonder at the great change in them, from sorrow to joy, from fruitless labor to sweet and glorious rest. They do not know what it means until he tells them the goodness of salvation by giving them rest. These are the babes to whom the things of the gospel are revealed, which are hid from the wise and prudent. These also are those spoken of in the preceding verse, unto whom the Son reveals the Father. And no man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. The revelation of the Father by the Son appears to me to be by these very words of the text.

And now come the sweet and gracious commands of the gospel to those who have been thus called by grace into this gospel rest, and who are henceforth "under law to Christ." "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." This is the dear Savior, by whom "we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Until he gave us life there was no laboring in our hearts to keep the law, no

hungering after righteousness, no care for spiritual things, which were foolishness to us. After life was given us a labor for righteousness began, but always in vain, until the sweet voice of Jesus called us into his rest. From the time we heard that powerful, life-giving voice which the natural ear cannot hear, whatever of true rest we have enjoyed has been by the power of that voice. From that time in whatever heart there has been felt the aboundings of sin, there surely has been, or will be, felt the superaboundings of grace; and wherever sin has reigned unto death, even there will grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov., 1913.

WAVERLY, Pa.

DEAR BRETHREN:—You are at liberty to use these if you desire.

Yours as ever, D. M. VAIL.

SALISBURY, Md., July 17, 1913.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—For some time I have had a desire to write to you, but for the lack of interesting matter, which I never am able to keep in stock, I put it off. My natural pride would never suffer myself to be poor in any respect, but my substance is generally very limited, and I sometimes feel to be altogether destitute, and, although it seems strange to say, at times I am glad that I am empty, else how could I ever be filled? Glad that I am poor, else how could I ever be made rich? Glad that I am a fool, that I may become wise. There is a wisdom that I long for that is not of this world; there are riches that I would have that are more desirable than gold, and these things are never attained unto by much labor on our part. This I have found: that all we may gather up with our own hands perishes with the using. This I know to be true, therefore the desire for things imperishable, the things that are eternal, forever abiding. Now I wish I could write you in an intelligible, plain, simple manner of some of the things I have been taught in my experience, for I cannot claim to have any real knowledge of truth, only as it has been revealed or made manifest to me in my experience. It is true we may gain some knowledge by observation, for it appears to me that any intelligent being when he looks upon this earth, this material world, and what it contains, with all the planetary system, must acknowledge and admit that it is all the handiwork of the all-wise Creator. But with all our observation and study we can never come to a true knowledge of Jesus Christ, the Savior of sinners; in fact, we have no true knowledge of sin, only by the operation of God's Holy Spirit, therefore in our natural state we do not know or realize the need of a Savior, and that which a man is ignorant of he never seeks after. Man's being ignorant is due to the state or condition he is in, and the Scriptures declare that to be a state of death, dead in trespasses and sin, separated from God because of wicked works, and we know that the dead know not anything. But after being quickened (and that is by the power of God alone) the man is made to know and realize the truth, is made sensible of the fearful condition he is in in consequence of sin, and his guilty distance from God, and the separation being so great and so complete, hence the needs be for a Daysman, a Mediator, who hath already redeemed him from under the curse of the law, and has been made a curse for him. All this provision, although made from all eter-

nity, man is just as ignorant of as he is of a need of what was provided for him. Brother Vail, I believe I know this to be true, from a heartfelt experience, as well as from the declaring of it in the Scriptures of divine truth. I know there was a time when I was going about to establish my own righteousness, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and I find it in my nature to still do so. The Canaanite is still in the land, and not until his utter removal can I expect perfect rest and peace. Yes, I am made to hate my own life on account of that self-righteous spirit that is within, that is, in my flesh. I have been made to hate Arminianism (which I once loved) wherever I see it, but hate it in myself more than anywhere else; that which is about others does not concern me so much, for I am just selfish enough to be more concerned with regard to such things about myself than about any one else. My time is more taken up just now with that which is hateful in myself, and how I long to be rid of that which sticks to me like miry clay in that horrible pit, that pit that no man ever did get out of, but my rejoicing is because of the fact that untold millions have been brought out.

I commenced this letter a few days ago, but cannot write as I wish to, for I would like to make things clear and plain. If I know Christ at all, (whom to know is life eternal) I only know him as he is revealed unto me and in me. If the power that works in me, causing me to hate sin and love righteousness, is not God, then I know not God at all. That power which works in me, causing me at times (notwithstanding my own vileness, unworthiness and utter helplessness) to hope and trust in God's goodness and mercy, causing me to believe that he will grant unto me my soul's desire, causing me to say from the very depths of my heart, as the leper did, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean;" if this is not Christ in me, I know him not. To tell me of a Savior who does me no good, unless I can feel his presence, except he be in me the hope of glory, I am not helped; except I am one with him I am nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity. It does my very soul good at times to meditate upon the vital unity of Christ and his bride. That oneness, how wonderful indeed, yet how good, inexpressibly good.

Well, I may just as well stop, for I still find that I cannot write as I desire to, and since I commenced I have been tempted to cast it all aside, but I cannot help the feeling of wanting to let you know that I still have you in loving remembrance.

Your brother,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

APPIN, Ont., Sept. 21, 1913.

DEAR ELDER VAIL:—It was good of you to write me. I hope you have not been deceived in me. After the Duart meetings it seemed that Jesus all the day long was my joy and my song. I was filled with joy and peace, and thought I should always be just that way, but I did not then know of all the temptations from within and without that lay in wait for me, nor did I realize how weak I was to withstand them all. I went skipping along on top of the mountains, crying out that I had been lifted from the miry clay and the horrible pit, and that my feet had been set upon a Rock, and in my heart I felt to say, Thanks be to God, who hath given us the victory through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He was surely the chiefest among ten thousand, and his bride, the Lamb's wife, was

altogether lovely, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. But now the clouds have returned and the dark days come, and I cry out, Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and wonder, "Where is the blessedness I felt when first I knew the Lord?" Then I wondered how any one could be cast down, but now it is of comfort to me to know that others pass through the same dark places. Not that I wish others to have trials, or be burdened, but I feel hope renewed when I know that those whom I believe to be children of God have just such questionings and such doubts and fears as I have.

I felt very much disappointed when I heard you were in Canada twice this year and did not stop in Ekfrid. I think of you often, and a cry goes out from my heart that the pathway might not be so rough and full of thorns; that you might find rest for your troubled soul, that sweet peace of God which passeth all understanding; but we must wait his appointed time. "If the vision tarry, wait for it."

I hope you can pardon this poor rambling letter, like the writer, full of imperfections. Mother joins me in warmest love.

Unworthily yours,

ELIZA McDONALD.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 20, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER:—I send to you for publication, if you think best, two letters written me by the senior editor of the SIGNS. I feel a wish to have them published, and do not think brother Chick would object. The first was written after the funeral of my dear wife, and the other was written lately. I am sure they will be read with interest and profit.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

HOPEWELL, N. J., July 9, 1912.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I received your note yesterday morning. I felt as though I could be of but little use to you all, yet was glad to do what I could for your comfort and help. We have known each other for forty-five years, and both of us have seen many ups and downs among the churches and in our families during that time. I suppose there has not been any part of your life in which I have not felt an interest as I have come to know about it in all these years. I remember the first hymn that I heard you read to be sung, and the first text that I heard you use. Your preaching has been much to me often since, as it was then. I can recall the substance of more sermons I have heard from your lips than I can of any one else, and I would be glad if I could minister to you as you have ministered to me many times, if in only a very small measure, but this I have never thought possible. I lack so much in spirituality of thought, feeling and life that I could not hope to be of much use to any one of the Lord's servants, yet the desire has been with me always to minister to others, and I am glad of the assurance which your note conveyed, that my presence at the funeral services was a pleasure to you. But, after all, we both know that the comfort of our ministry is dependent upon the blessing of God, and he can make one crumb of bread to feed and satisfy the multitude of the hungry. If he blesses our ministry to any one he will have that one know and he will have us know that the praise is his. "Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion." I heard you preach once from that text, and have never forgotten the truth you presented. The cold, icy waters are thawed out when the spring comes, and

the Lord is that warm sun that unbinds the frozen heart and causes the streams of praises to his name to leap out from their bonds. In various ways, sometimes by storms and sometimes by warm sunshine, the icy barriers that are around our hearts are broken up, and his praise flows forth from the heart and lips.

We have all been talking much about you all since last Friday. I felt moved to write to Edith to-day, that she might know we thought of her. Each one must bear his own burden I know, but still it is also written, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." If to know that we remember her will prove of any comfort to her I shall feel glad to have written her. Funeral occasions are always solemn seasons, but I felt, and think others felt, that last Friday was especially a solemn time. I do not mean simply a sad time, for solemnity is not always sadness; it is the solemnity of the felt presence of the Lord that I mean. I believe all felt that the Lord was in that place. Jacob could not anticipate that the Lord would meet with him in the midnight darkness when he was fleeing as an outcast from home, but it was there that the Lord did reveal himself to him. How often his servants have gone down into darkness and have felt as though alone, with no friend near, only to find right there the presence of the Lord. Then night ceases to be night, and heaven comes down to earth, and the angels are for us and to us ascending and descending upon the Son of man. Their presence brings great searchings of heart, and we learn much about ourselves there, and we learn much about the blessed God as he is revealed in grace, love and mercy, yes, and in righteousness and in justice, too, in Jesus Christ, and all such places are solemn places. I think I had some such experiences as these last Friday. I felt that I could say but little about the dear one gone from your home, but knew that but little needed to be said. I would have been glad to exalt the blessed Jesus, her trust and hope, and her wellnigh lifelong friend.

But I will write no more now. May God bless and be with you all.

I remain, with love to all, as ever your brother in Christ,

F. A. CHICK.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Oct. 22, 1913.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I received your very kind letter the next day after it was written, and was very glad to read it and to hear from you again. Your kind words touched me deeply. Although we feel and confess ourselves unworthy of the least of all God's mercies, yet we do crave them, and not the least of his blessings are the expressions of kindness and fellowship which come to us from those whom we believe to be the children and servants of God. Of late I have been thinking much over the past of my life, and there has appeared so little that bears the stamp of the divine approval to me that I have felt depressed, and have been made to wonder whether all my hope in the dear Lord has not been a mere delusion. One may labor much, preach much and write much concerning the things which are in the Bible, and yet not have the unction of the Spirit, without which neither preaching nor writing can be of use to the people of God, or to his glory. I have wondered at times whether I have ever known these things for myself, or have I all the time been telling what others have seen or heard without having tasted them for myself? and one great plague has been

that I seem so little moved to anxiety by all these thoughts. Looking at self is poor comfort indeed. I find myself trying to look away from self to the all-perfect One who loved and died for us and rose again. I must try to look to him, for all other refuge fails. Yet I want much more longing after him, much more feeling of desire toward him and much more sorrow over myself than I do feel. I am not without hope, but I want more life, more feeling of gratitude, of desire, of praise to God in my heart. If I have ever known what the words mean, "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling," I think that I know their meaning now, and of late, and yet I seem to cling so little after all to that cross. After all, I find myself coming back to the old familiar words, I am a poor sinner, and nothing at all, but Jesus Christ is all and in all. It is not my love to him, but his love to me; it is not my clinging to him, but his clinging to me; it is not my faithfulness, but his faithfulness that avails for me. I believe this even in my darkest hours, but I want to feel the power of all these truths more. There is some little stirring of gladness in my heart as I think of the words which comforted the psalmist long ago: "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." But surely not until then, and I know that it would be a sad thing to be satisfied before that.

But I had not purposed writing in this way when I began. I am very glad that your visit in Winnipeg was so pleasant, and that you returned home safely. I find myself greatly regretting that I am not able to attend any of the fall meetings, as all these fall meetings have been glad seasons to me as a rule, and I shall greatly miss the companionship and conversation of the brethren. Yet these meetings are not to me what they once were, because of the many dear faces and forms that I miss. But, as you say in your letter, their work is done, and they have entered into their reward. You and I are now but living over in our turn what older generations have felt before us. While so many are gone, I find myself clinging in affection all the more to those who remain.

I have a good appetite, and my digestion is good, but I am not as yet well. I have been able to go down to the meetings thus far, and to speak with some liberty and at some length, and to attend such funeral services as have been desired of me. The doctors speak encouragingly to me, and I hope that I may ere long be well again. Most of the time I am busy in the forenoon, and then rest and read in the afternoon. The Salisbury Association begins to-day, and I hope that all may have the presence of the Lord, and be given the spirit of devotion.

We all join in love to you and sister Bessie and Mildred. Write me whenever you can do so.

I remain as ever, your brother in the hope of Christ, F. A. CHICK.

ELSMERE, Del., Nov. 14, 1913.

MY DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have been trying to write you a few lines to tell you how often I think of you and wonder how you are, and I just as often hope that you are much improved. I wish here to convey to you in part, for I am unable to give it expression, either with pen or lip, the high esteem and the marks of perfect love which dwell in the hearts of the brethren and friends among whom I have been called to go of late. Their anxious inquiry for your welfare, their expression of sympathy for you in your affliction, their earnest longing for

your early recovery, call to my mind the words of John: Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Now the relation of a son to the father is that which gives the son a portion of that which is the father's because he is begotten of the father. Jesus says, The Father and I are one. Here is presented the perfect relationship of Father and Son. This is beyond the comprehension of the natural mind. We see the earthly father and earthly son going in opposite directions, having a different desire; not so with those who are begotten of the Spirit of God, the Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings and made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. There is no difference of thought here; all things are working together for good to them that are called, who love his appearing, all things moving in the same direction, that is, to the praise, honor and glory of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, in whom dwells the Godhead bodily, he in his people, and they in him, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. Father, Son and Spirit, these three are one; the Father in heaven, the Son ascended unto glory, the Spirit in his people. As the heart sends forth the blood to maintain the life of the natural body, so from the great Fountain-head comes the stream of spiritual life in which the whole family are brought to say, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." This is not a remark of uncertainty by God. God is love; he is in his people, hence his love is shed abroad in their hearts, and just as one who has found a precious treasure calls to a friend, Come and behold what I have found, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Well could the poet say:

> "From whence doth this union arise,
> That hatred is conquered by love?
> It fastens our souls in such ties
> As distance and time can't remove."

Again, Jesus is the only begotten of the Father, hence all the Father has is his, for so he declared, that all power is given him, both in heaven and in earth, and the apostle says, All things are yours. The rich man of nature bequeaths to his heirs that which he has gathered together: house, farm, precious gems, yea, all of his wealth, and yet these are little things, they all fade away and decay, and, too, they only represent that handiwork of Jehovah and the longsuffering of God to the sons of men. But the Lord has reserved unto himself a people, and these people are precious in his sight, and his people are the precious inheritance the Father bequeathed to his only begotten Son. Men gather treasures together because they love them; they keep them close to themselves, they keep in constant touch with them each day, and provide all things that are necessary for the proper care of them, and do not allow them to get out of their sight or mind. If men are able to care for earthly treasure, how much more is the heavenly Father, who knoweth all things, able to care for that which he has reserved unto himself. Yea, they are gathered as wheat into the granary, as gold refined in the fire, they are prized above rubies and all the glittering things that earth affords, held in his everlasting arms secure from all danger in all the fiery conflicts through which he calls them to pass here in this stormy voyage of life. How often we have been made to realize that indeed his banner over his people is love. God is love; he in his people and they in him,

hence they are drawn together with bonds of love that distance or time, sickness or sorrow, cannot rend asunder. Surely in this we are brought in a measure to behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

May the gracious Master impart unto you many evidences of that perfect love which is shed abroad in the hearts of those whom he has gathered together, and in the midst of whom he dwells, is the humble prayer of your unworthy brother in hope.

I expect, the Lord willing, to leave for Messongoes to-morrow morning, and hope to be with you the fourth Saturday and Sunday. W. S. ALEXANDER.

OTTAWA, Kansas, April 6, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I feel it a duty as well as pleasure to send these two letters to you to do with as you think best. A few weeks ago this dear sister was unknown to me, now the love I feel in my heart for her makes it hard to realize that she is a stranger in the flesh.

Your sister, I hope,

ANNA McKINNEY.

JEFFERSON, N. Y., March 14, 1913.

MRS. ANNA McKINNEY—DEAR SISTER:—May the chief of sinners call you sister? My sins are numberless as the sands of the sea; yes, sin is mixed with all I do, but I know that the blood of the Savior is sufficient for me, and that an arm of flesh is nothing to trust in. How many times have I been brought down into the valley, and made to feel that the world is all vanity of vanities. Temptations, trials, doubts and fears, wants, losses, crosses, groans and tears have been my lot through life, and if through the grace of God our friend they shall in everlasting triumph end, it is enough. O that I could know that I am one of God's little ones, that I could hear him say, Thou art mine, I have redeemed thee, I would count the present trials small, for heaven would make amends for all. But I am such a poor, weak, ignorant worm of the dust, always doing and saying things that I should not, that it causes me much trouble. As you say, I feel that I deserve all the affliction I receive, yet am utterly unable to do better. The letter which you sent to the SIGNS from dear brother Scates told my feelings, and was a great comfort to me. Also the same was true of the letters of dear brother Durand and brother W. J. May, in the SIGNS for May 1st and 15th, 1912.

I have long known that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing, and that I cannot do the things that I would. O that all christians would pray for me, that the God of all grace would keep me in the strait and narrow way. It seems sometimes that I have been in the way only long enough to cross it. O that I could follow in his footsteps, and be always meek, lowly and humble, and look to him in all trials, knowing that he does all things well, and that "not a single shaft can hit till the God of love sees fit." Though we travel in darkness, doubts and fears, his hand directs the rod. Often I sing the verses,

"Weary of earth, myself and sin,
Dear Jesus, set me free,
And to thy glory take me in,
For there I long to be.

Empty, polluted, dark and wild
Is all this earth to me;
May I the better world obtain,
For there I long to be."

I feel sometimes that I am wicked in

wanting to leave the trials of this world, but the Lord knows my heart, that I do not want to sin any longer.

As I read the SIGNS to-night I thought that I would write you, and whether it is a comfort or not it has relieved my mind. I pray the Lord to strengthen us for whatever we have to do or to bear. The SIGNS is a great comfort to us. We do not take it ourselves, but we have it to read. All the writings are good, and I hope the dear ones will write on, for God only knows how many weak and lonely ones they may comfort. A few crumbs to-day, and a few to-morrow, how they strengthen and help us on our way; it is a strength to know that others are traveling in the way that we are. My husband is not a member of the Baptist Church, but the Lord has made him to see that He is the way, and the truth, and the life, and he has had a great struggle; but he feels willing to leave his case in the hands of those who are better able to judge than he is.

I feel that this letter is like myself, poor and imperfect, but if you can feel it in your heart to write to me I shall be glad.

March 30th, 1913.—Dear sister, your letter was gladly received, and read with eyes almost blinded with tears. O how unworthy I feel to receive or read such good letters. Would I feel thus if I did not love God or his chosen people, who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world? I get so worldly at times, almost as it seems, forgetting that there is a God who speaks and it is done, whose voice all things obey, and I often find myself asking of him why this or that must be so, then before the words are scarcely out of my mouth I ask him to forgive me. If I love, why am I thus? Why do I wander? Why do I stray like the hundredth sheep? I seem to be always astray. I know that not one of his little ones shall perish, because the dear Father says so, and in this I rest for a short time. I feel that he has been merciful to me in times past, and that he will not leave nor forsake me. He is a just God, and what he does is right. O how I long to praise him always.

My husband and I have good talks of the Savior, and sing together his praises, but the time passes away too soon, and I am left in darkness and gloom, and feel to put my mouth in the dust and say, "Unclean, unclean." I pray that the Lord will not let me offend one of his little ones. It seems that I am praying all the time for the God of heaven to keep me, and if he keeps me I shall be kept. Dear sister, I need thorns each side of me as I go through this world. I, too, believe in the predestination of all things. It is a comfort to feel that he is a God who knew the end from the beginning. As you say, I feel that my troubles have brought me to the feet of Jesus, to plead for his help in time of need. I need him every moment of my life. O for a strong and lasting faith! O for a closer walk with God, a calm and heavenly frame, and to always feel that he is mine and I am his.

A dear sister wrote me as follows: she says: "At present I am in a comfortable frame of mind. It does seem good to arise from the deep sometimes, although I sometimes fear the uplifting. Having my own weakness, I soon get on slippery ground, and then what a fall. How it does crush. It seems that I will never get there again, and that I will watch.

'Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love.'

Our paths are so crooked. We wonder why we cannot have an easy time in this life. How vain, how foolish! Does

not our all-wise Father know what we need? He has given us a hope that we are cared for by himself, and underneath are his everlasting arms. Darkness comes, yet we know that he is at the helm. The whys he has not revealed to us, but his mercy will endure to the end."

I have copied this, because it did me good to read it, and I hope you will enjoy it. I cannot see how my poor writings can be of any comfort to any one. I just felt that I must send it to you, and am glad I did, for your letter has been a great comfort to me. But my heart is like the troubled sea.

"From fear to hope, and hope to fear,
My shipwrecked soul is tossed,
Till I am tempted in despair
To give up all for lost.

One look of mercy from God's face
Will set my heart at ease;
One all-commanding word of grace
Will make the tempest cease."

I do not know what I wrote in my other letter, but if you think best to send it to the SIGNS, I do not feel to say no, still I do not feel as though it is worthy of a place there. Pray for me when it is well with you. O how I long to see my Savior's face and feel his animating grace while I live in this world.

But I must close this poor letter. I have written as my mind has wandered on, and I wonder why I should trouble others with my feelings, but I find myself longing to be with the little ones, talking with them of Jesus. I long to be kept from the world and from worldly things. I know that I cannot keep myself, for I fail in every way when I try to go on in my own strength. May God, who is able to keep us, be with us to the end.

Your unworthy sister in hope of the better life,

M. C. McINTYRE.

HUNTINGDON VALLEY, Pa., Oct 30, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I am inclosing a letter from brother Bond, of Philadelphia, which I believe all lovers of the truth will indorse. If you think proper, I would be glad to see it published in the SIGNS. While I have not the gift of writing, nor even conversing, upon the Scripture as I would like, yet I feel to praise the Lord that he has given me a hope through grace and a desire to know more of the precious things which are recorded in the Scriptures for our comfort as we journey here.

Your brother, I hope,

C. HOWARD DURHAM.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Oct. 17, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER:—Being home alone, I have been reading in Revelation where Jesus revealed to John the wonderful things recorded in that book. In the third chapter, twentieth verse, we find these words: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." He does not say, If any man will open the door I will come in, but if we hear his voice and open the door he will come in and sup with us. Now when one is in trouble and in a condition to need help, and Jesus knocks, such a poor sinner hears his voice, and knows the voice, and also knows that help has come, and he will quickly open the door, not because he has the will-power to reject or accept, but because he needs help, and help has arrived just at the right time. This voice is only heard by the one that needs help. This voice is not heard by the world, nor by all who stand around. You remember how that voice came to Saul; how they that were with him heard

it, but it was only for Saul; he alone felt the power of that voice and saw the light; it was not for any one else. Saul was shown the power of God, and he saw the new Jerusalem that came down from God out of heaven. He saw into that city whereof God is the light and the power; the streets of this city are pure gold, and a high wall is around it. This wall is the power of God, and no man can get over it. There are four gates, one each at the north, south, east and west. These gates are protected by the Son of God, our Savior; no man can enter therein except by him; thus you see all this is but looking at the power of God. We are lifted up away from self once in awhile, as John was, and are shown some of these things, but we are soon back to self again, and find ourselves troubled with the flesh. I remember on one occasion I felt that I was lifted above self; it was one Sunday morning at Southampton. We had no minister, and brother Reeves asked me to open the meeting with prayer. I arose to my feet, but do not remember one word I said, but know that I felt to be away from self for a few moments at least. I do not feel that I know as much about these things as you do, but I like to talk about these wonderful truths as they are presented in the Bible; all present the power of God, and do not ascribe to poor man any ability to do the Lord's work. This will and testament of Jesus Christ is wonderful to behold, it declares how he came down into this world and died that we might live. He conquered death, hell and the grave, and rose again for our justification. He came to do the will of the Father, and he did it all, leaving nothing undone for us to finish. Wonderful to behold, he comes quickly, and brings his reward with him, and gives to every one according as his works shall be. He does not reward us for our conduct in the past, or for what we have done, but after he reveals the light to one he leads that one in the strait and narrow path, which the lion's whelp never trod, nor the vulture's eye ever saw. No man of himself has ever walked therein, but Jesus did all this for us poor sinners. We do not know this until we are made to see it by his speaking to us, and his people hear his voice. "He that hath an ear let him hear." One must have an ear to hear. Just as soon as one has the life of Jesus in him, or the Spirit of life, then he has an ear to hear the things that belong to that life, but while he is dead in sin he cannot hear, for he has no ear to hear. A dead man cannot hear anything in nature, and one dead in trespasses and sin cannot hear the voice of the Lord, but there is power in it, and it gives life to the dead. O what power is this, that just the word spoken by the Lord is power and life itself. He speaks and it is done. He is his own counsellor, his own law-giver, and our life and resurrection, our hope and love, and our all in all. Now I see myself nothing, yea, less than nothing, and helpless.

I am not worthy to write this letter to you and talk about this Jesus and his power, when I feel as though I do not know anything about it. Right now I am feeling so weak and sinful I fear that I have done wrong in writing this letter to you, but will send it, and if you throw it in the waste-basket all will be right with me. I hope that you are all well. May God bless you and your family.

I am your brother, I hope,

CHARLES S. BOND.

ATTICA, Ohio, Dec. 8, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed please find remittance for the coming year. We expect to take the SIGNS as long as we live, or as long as it continues to contend for the faith of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. The SIGNS has demonstrated from its beginning that it believes there is no Scripture or prophecy of private interpretation, whether it be predestination, foreknowledge, election, effectual calling or the preservation of the saints to glory. Its editorials and general correspondence have been to the comfort of God's poor and afflicted people throughout the earth. The dear Lord has been its strength in feeding his lonely and wandering sheep in the wilderness of this world, whom he has promised never to leave nor forsake. The SIGNS has been persecuted, and it has been misrepresented by those claiming to be Old School Baptists, but in reading the original prospectus we find the charges are not true, and that the SIGNS has continued steadfastly in the faith of our fathers, in 1689. (See third and fifth articles London Confession of Faith.)

I have been requested by some of the Lord's dear people to write for the SIGNS, but am so imperfect, and my case at times appears so doubtful, that I shrink from it, and yet at times I feel a deep desire to do so. Romans v. 19, has been a feast of fat things to me of late, and if God will I will give some of my thoughts concerning it. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners." Adam is the one man here referred to in his disobedience in the garden, when he transgressed the law God gave him. The many that were made sinners by his disobedience embraced all who had a life-standing, or existence, in Adam when he disobeyed, and by virtue of their standing in him they were equally involved with him in his disobedience; when he went into transgression, he carried them with him. Like begets like, and when his children appeared, or were manifested, they were like him; they were sinners. It is not what men do now that makes them sinners, but they were made sinners by the disobedience of one man. All the human race were identified with Adam in his transgression, and were equally involved with him in sin, and as a result they sin, they suffer and die in him. It is written that in Adam all die. Our beloved brother Paul is here presenting this truth in a figure; he uses the word "as" by the disobedience of one man. He presents the type, that he may more clearly present the great antitype, which is Christ and the church. Some of Adam's posterity were given to Jesus; they were his by gift and redemption. They being his, gave him the right of redemption, and having redeemed them from all iniquity, he purified them by the gift of eternal life, and they received his divine nature. This is an inheritance, for they are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. God speaks of them as "my people;" they had an eternal life-existence in him from the beginning, or ever the earth was. As they were identified with Adam by reason of a natural life-standing in him when he disobeyed, so they were also identified with Christ in all his obedience; not in their relation to Adam, but in their relation to Christ, their spiritual Head. They receive more in Christ than they lost in Adam. In him they lost their state of innocency, in Christ they receive eternal life and are made partakers of God's divine nature. This is that life of which mortality is swallowed up. O wondrous Christ, who brought to the dead that inheritance

which is incorruptible, undefiled and fadeth not away. In his manhood he hungered, he ate, he labored, he talked and walked with the sons and daughters of men; he prayed for poor sinners to the Father; he suffered death on the cross, and by the blood of his everlasting covenant he cleansed his people from all sin, and in their relation to him they are spotless in his sight. They shall never perish, neither shall they ever be separated from the love of God.

In hope of immortality,

H. E. PURRIS.

COLUMBUS JUNCTION, Iowa.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been reading to-day some of the communications in the SIGNS, and they do my soul good. I love the strong doctrine they all write about, that saves poor, lost, ruined sinners, dead in trespasses and sin. Our dear Savior left the courts of glory to take upon himself our nature. He did not take the nature of angels, but of fallen man, to save them from ruin, and he said, "It is finished." Then nothing can be added to or taken from, it is complete. There is a dreadful woe pronounced upon those who presume to add to or take from the word of God. He predestinated his people to be saved with an everlasting salvation; he hath loved them with an everlasting love, and called them according to his purpose. No wonder they love him; such compassion melts the hard and stony heart of the sinner, and causes him to cry for mercy. We go mourning all the day, until God lifts the dark clouds and calms the turbulent waves which sweep over us, and like Peter we cry, "Lord, save me." He has but to speak, "Be not afraid, it is I," then all is peace. He is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble. We sit at his table and feast on the food he so richly supplies, and we try to thank him for the many blessings we daily receive at his hand. His benefits are more than we can number. O give thanks unto the Lord, glory ye in his holy name. Let the hearts of them rejoice that know him. Yes, I think they do rejoice, for his mercy endures forever. A dear sister in the flesh, and also in the Spirit, wrote to my husband a short time before his death, and asked if we would know each other in heaven. He answered that then shall we know as we are known, for we shall be as the angels of God in heaven. If God in his love which he has for all his children, condescends to lift us up above all earthly love, he will also give power to love as we are loved. O what will it be to know no more sorrow, pain or parting? for death cannot enter that blissful abode. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? O for a submissive spirit to wait until the time appointed of the Lord, when he will say to us, Child, come home. May I be found among the number, although the least of all.

When I began this letter I thought to speak to brother Keene of his rich communication about Jesus being the good Shepherd, but my mind was led away, and I will just say it was all I could desire. How often do we deny our Savior, not only in words, but in deeds. I thought when I joined the church that my trials were all over, that I should never sin again, that all was well with me; and so it seemed for a time. For about four years God seemed to be with me, and I could sing and praise his dear name all the day long. But the day of adversity was to come; clouds began to gather thick, and I called upon the name of the Lord out of the depths. We often inquire of the

Lord concerning ourselves. If we could only realize that he rules and reigns in heaven and upon the earth, and what he does is right, all would be well with us. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge, and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust." We shall be satisfied, when we awake, with his likeness. The words,

"Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed!
I, I am thy God, and will still give thee aid,"

came to my mind last night with great power and sweetness.

Your sister in hope of the resurrection,
REBECCA RINER THURSTON.

VANLEER, Tenn., Feb. 7, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find a letter from brother O. B. Hickerson, which has been of great comfort to me, a poor sinner. I love to read the writings of all those who extol the Lord above all things.

Yours in sorrow and hope,
L. D. SEALS.

NASHVILLE, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER SEALS:—You may think it strange when you open this letter and see who it is that has written to you, but since hearing you preach last Sunday your discourse has been impressed upon my mind, and I have felt to write to you. I trust that this is from one who desires to know the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, who is our advocate and our righteousness. Our sufficiency is of him who knows the very secret recesses of our hearts. This you so ably declared in showing forth the power of God unto salvation. This is opposed to the power and wisdom of the Arminian world, which is all of works, and not of faith. We are informed that without faith it is impossible to please God. It is not faith upon conditions which the creature must perform, but faith in our spiritual Head, who suffered death upon the cross for his bride, the church, which was chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and he gives us faith to accept him as our Savior, for it is God that worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. The natural man knows not the work of the Spirit, because it is foolishness unto him. It should be noticed how all the inspired writers set aside all our self-sufficiency, as well as all the merits of man; all our salvation is represented as a work of free grace, and not something to be worked for or bought. It is all a free gift from God, who is the author of all our righteousness, and this righteousness is not given to us by our resolutions or strength, but by the almighty power of God, and the spirit is given us to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. This is where the will comes from. Man's will is not taken into consideration in the saving of the soul. Our God shows us the fullness of Christ, and he brings us to Christ. He has implanted us in Christ, and he makes us partakers of his merit. This merit the Son of God has procured for poor sinners, and has brought them to a state of acceptance with God and unto eternal life. Christ brought in everlasting righteousness and life for sinners. Our own righteousness is but superficial, it is a mere form and nothing more. It is but an outward performance, which cannot be acceptable to God. Nothing less than the pure vital working of the Spirit of God can bring life and immortality. Here is peace which is not of man, but of God. Sinners who believe in God are quickened and made alive in Christ, they are brought

down to deny self, and are given a hope in our Lord Jesus Christ and his righteousness, which is imputed to them through faith. Adam was the head of all his posterity, and likewise Christ is the head of his people. Adam's transgression brought death into the world, and Christ's obedience brought life and everlasting happiness. As by one man judgment came upon all men to condemnation, so by the righteousness of One does the free gift come upon all men to justification of life. This disobedience of one was the transgression of Adam, who was the transgressor of God's law, and many by him were made sinners and fell under condemnation and death. This seems to me to be the view which the apostle is here showing forth, and embraces the sense of his reasoning. The obedience of One is the obedience of Christ, his actual fulfillment of the whole law, and in him by this obedience of his, many are made righteous, and they are redeemed from condemnation and given everlasting life. This is the view of the subject which I trust the Lord has given me. Our natural head (Adam) is of the earth earthy, and cannot rise any higher than the earth, but our spiritual Head is from above, and we cannot go above him. The first Adam was the figure of him who was to come. The fulfillment of this was ordered in the all things, and sure. It was in the purpose of God that all this should come to pass in time. These are some of the secret things of God.

"Life, death and hell, and worlds unknown,
Hang on his firm decree;
He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be."

"Not Gabriel asks the reason why,
Nor God the reason gives;
Nor dares the favorite angel pry
Between the folded leaves."

God deals all this out at the appointed time, and his wisdom and purpose are so far above man that they have no right to ask, "What doest thou?"

Dear brother, these are some of the deep things of God. I have written this with deep searchings of heart, and with a desire to know that my name is written in the blessed Lamb's book of life. But I will close. I am but a sinner saved by the grace of God. I hope you will be charitable and read this with a prayerful heart. Let us trust in God to guide and direct our steps, that we may not fall out by the way. I love you, my brother, for the truth's sake. I have feasted while hearing you declare the whole counsel of God as I trust I have been made to see it. I hope to hear from you soon.

Your brother in hope of immortal life,
O. B. HICKERSON.

TEHUACANA, Texas, April, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—As the time is drawing near for me to send in my remittance for the SIGNS, I feel impressed to write a few lines for your consideration, and if you think them worthy of a place in the family paper, the long-standing medium of correspondence, you may publish them, yet I feel incompetent to do the subject which is on my mind justice, but this does not lessen the impression. It is in the fear of God, and for the love that I have for his cause, that I make the attempt to write upon such a wonderful and sublime subject, regarding the three brothers, Cain, Abel and Seth.

In the first place I will say these were full brothers, not half-brothers, as some say. Genesis iv. 1, 2: "And Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord. And she again bare his brother Abel." "And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name

Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew." I understand these three brothers to be representative characters, Cain to shadow forth the law-worship, or self-righteousness, and also a figure of the Jews, Christ's brethren nationally, who crucified him. Cain represents the descendants of Adam and Eve in a state of nature, not operated upon by the Spirit of God. Abel prefigures Christ in his humanity. Abel was murdered by his brother, just as Christ was crucified by his brethren nationally. He also represents Christ naturally, in that he left no descendants, while Cain had many. I understand Seth to prefigure Christ in his risen and spiritual state; his spiritual existence is given to his people in the room and stead of his natural existence in his humanity. As Seth left descendants, so Christ also has many descendants in a spiritual point of view. Seth was not another seed in opposition to either of the other two spoken of in the third chapter of Genesis. The seed of the woman is Christ, and in him are all the descendants of Adam and Eve who are regenerated and born of the Spirit of God. The believer in Christ was by nature a child of wrath, even as others. All who oppose the truth of God are of the devil, and all the wicked thoughts and imaginations of the mind in a wicked direction are of the serpent bruising the heel of the seed of the woman, in that these wicked thoughts and imaginations worry and harass the children of God. The serpent always attacks in a sly way. He approaches the children of God in diverse ways, and is continually injecting evil thoughts into the mind of the children of God. He subsists upon dust that should be the serpent's meat. Of this he is to eat all the days of his life. The heel being the hinder part of the foot, is spoken of to illustrate the sly, cunning, artful way in which he attacks the child of God. The thorn in the flesh, of which Paul speaks that it was being given to him, is this bruising of the heel of the seed of the woman to-day, and this heel of the woman means the flesh. He will continue to bruise it as long as time lasts.

Now, dear brethren editors, remember me at the throne of grace. May we all be blessed with the boldness of a lion, the humbleness of a lamb, the wisdom of a serpent and the meekness of a dove, in earnestly contending for the truth as it is in Christ, making no compromise with error by accepting any of its allurements.

Your brother,

JOSEPH H. BOZEMAN.

WHEELING, W. Va., June 5, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending Elder J. W. McClanahan's good letter. I feel it will be comforting to those who know and love the truth. I am so sorry to hear of his being shut in by ill health. Elder Chick, I sincerely hope that you will soon be restored to your usual good health.

Unworthily your sister in hope,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

LANHAM, W. Va., May 14, 1913.

DEAR SISTER PULTZ:—As I have not been able to write for a long time, I will try, if it is the Lord's will, to answer your good letter dated March 23d. I wrote a few lines the same day I received it, thinking to send it by return mail, but my health continued to grow worse for a time afterward, so much so that I had no mind to write letters, or send out those I had written. This morning, as I was looking

through my Bible, I came across the letter I had been writing you. A feeling of solemnity took hold of my poor heart, and I asked God to give me strength to write you a few lines, to let you know that I received your letter, and was truly glad to hear from you at that time, for it seemed to be the appointed time, as I was in deep waters, sorely depressed in mind and body. The Spirit which I am sure directed your pen, took hold of me, and led me into the green pastures of God's love, and caused me to remember now my Creator in the days of my youth. When born in this spiritual kingdom we desire the sincere milk of the word. It is then we love that good old hymn, "Amazing grace," and will always love it, for it was grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved; how precious did that grace appear, the hour I first believed. I earnestly hope to be reconciled to God's will in all things, as, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." There are times when I do feel the spirit of reconciliation, and am brought to his banqueting-house, and his banner over me is love. Then I rejoice for a season, with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Here I remember my Creator in the days of my youth, the man Christ Jesus, the Lord of hosts, the Captain of my salvation, who delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. O how glad we would all be if the Spirit of the Lord would abide with us, for we feel that we are pilgrims and strangers, seeking a city whose maker and builder is God. I am fully satisfied that there is a purpose in the dark clouds that so often intervene between us and our God, for he is the God of purpose. By the pen of one of his prophets he said, "Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." We never have rain, except when there are dark clouds, that intervene between us and the sun; yet the sun continues to shine behind the clouds just the same, but out of our sight. The rain falls upon the living substance for the purpose of giving life more abundantly, but when it falls upon a dead substance it hastens decay. "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass."—Deut. xxxii. 2.

I will close for this time, asking you to pardon me for delaying so long in answering your good letter. Ill health has kept me from writing to many of my kindred in Christ, but I am always glad to hear from the dear saints, and hope they will feel like writing me from all parts where the dear old reliable SIGNS is circulated. I am suffering from a large tumor in my side, and only have any ease in a sitting or standing position. If you wish you may send this poor letter to the SIGNS.

I remain your brother in affliction,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

CLARKS, Nebr., Oct. 9, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am writing this afternoon to request you to change our paper from Tryon to Clarks, where we want it sent as long as we live and can see to read it. You have been very kind to us in sending it so long, for which we are very thankful. We were completely broken up with the terrible drouth here in the nineties, but we have struggled along. Old as we were we went west and took a Kincaid homestead, although we had to leave the church of

our choice and sojourn among strangers in a strange land, with our harp often hung upon the willows. Yet we were not forsaken, for the Lord often visited us in our little sodhouse among the sand-hills of McPherson County, and we had some pleasant seasons reading the Bible and the SIGNS. We have not attended meeting for over two years; age and infirmities have so disabled us that we cannot travel, and as we have to live close to some of our children, and none of them lives near the church, we are deprived of the blessed privilege of meeting the dear saints in the worship of God. It seems so hard, after we have spent our life with them, to be unable to meet with them; but we must be still and know that he is God, and he works and none can hinder, nor dare we say, What doest thou? If the bounds of our habitation are fixed, how can we alter them? We have accumulated a small portion of this world's goods, enough to keep us from having to depend entirely upon others in our old age, and will send you two dollars for the SIGNS for one year, and we feel thankful to God for giving us the means to send to you, after so long reading the paper through charity.

Now, dear brethren, I would like to say a few words to all of the household of faith who are acquainted with us and feel an interest in our welfare. We are in usual health, and are living near our oldest son, who watches over and cares for us. Our children are all good and kind, for which we feel thankful to our heavenly Father, for that is worth more than gold. We often think and talk of you all, and would like so well to write to each one separately, but that is impossible. This may be my last letter, as I am seventy-one years old and feeble, and feel my time upon the earth is short, and O may I be found at my post. This world has no charms for me now, and I often long to be released and fly away beyond all that can trouble or annoy. There will we meet to part no more, and see our beloved Savior, who trod the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with him. Even his dear disciples could not watch one hour with him. No, he had to be alone, and at the last had to feel himself forsaken of God. O what suffering he endured.

"'Twas you, my sins, my cruel sins,
His chief tormentors were;
Each of my crimes became a nail,
And unbelief a spear."

Was ever love like this? and all for poor sinners. It was the love he had for his bride that caused him to leave the shining courts of his Father's glory; his love was so great that he would suffer and die rather than be separated from her. Even so Adam would take of the forbidden fruit rather than be separated from his bride. Eve was deceived, but Adam took of the fruit knowingly. Even so our Savior knew what he had to suffer before he left his heavenly home and came down to this sin-cursed earth to die the ignominious death of the cross. I believe when he cried, "It is finished," then and there the work was done, and every heir of promise was just as safe as they will be when they are home in heaven. Nothing was left for man to do. I feel that if there was one thing for me to do I should be lost, for there is nothing good in me. I am as prone to sin as sparks to fly upward, and I often exclaim:

"O for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame,
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb."

I must close, with love and sweet fellowship for all the household of faith.

Your little sister,

PHEBE WAGGONER.

VERNON, Texas, Nov. 18, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am inclosing an obituary notice of Miss Eula White, who was a niece of mine; also a good letter (as I feel) by her grief-stricken mother. Please make necessary corrections and publish both in the SIGNS.

Yours in hope,

W. S. BOURLAND.

KELLER, Texas, Oct. 14, 1913.

MR. AND MRS. W. S. BOURLAND—DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER:—I will try in my weakness to answer your very kind and comforting letter, which was read and reread with much consolation to me in this my lonely and sad condition. My dear brother, I was made to rejoice for a little season in those things pertaining to that heavenly kingdom which we hope we are subjects of. This is all the real joy I have, and these seasons are short and far between, but when they do come I am made to think sometimes they are too rich for poor me.

"I find myself out of the way;
My thoughts are often gone astray;
Like one alone I seem to be;
O is there any one like me?"

Oftentimes I think my troubles and afflictions are sent upon me for being so sinful, so ready to murmur, complain and find fault; then to me my punishment seems greater than I can bear. I long to be (as I trust) as in days of old, when the days passed by almost unnoticed, when the Sun of Righteousness was shining brightly, when all nature seemed to be praising God, when I felt to be able to say, I know that my Redeemer liveth, but of late it seems I have been so filled with worldly things that there is no time for spiritual things, and now I go mourning and weeping all day. Sometimes I take a little courage in the thought that the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord. Again I ask, Why was my darling taken from me in the bloom of life, and I spared to weep, mourn and suffer? I am lonesome, for I cannot hear her kind, tender and affectionate call, "Ma." She is gone, gone forever from this life; gone, but thanks be to Him who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, we hope to meet her on the other side of Jordan, where all sickness, sorrow and death shall be no more, where we shall be changed and fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, where we will be able to ascribe undivided praise to the worthy name of Father, Son and ever-blessed Spirit, in that world which shall have no end. It is said our Savior was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and in all our afflictions he was afflicted. If I could only know he felt those things for me I would feel to be satisfied. But, my dear brother, one consoling thought is this: the Lord has promised to be with us in six troubles, and not forsake in the seventh. Bless his holy name, but for this comforting thought I fear I would despond. During the day now, when all are gone and I am alone, yet I trust not alone, sometimes in my feeble prayer I am made to feel that Jesus is near, even with me, and his blessed presence is enough for me. I have thought if the Lord had been pleased to take Eula from me when she had a very severe spell of sickness at the time she was about three months old maybe it would not have hurt me so much, but now after she was grown, and was so dutiful, affectionate, obedient, and so ready to take all hardships from me, the ties of nature had grown so strong that when the separation came like one of old I could but exclaim, My afflictions are greater than I can bear. But, my

dear brother, we mourn not as those having no hope, but believe God is faithful and true, and that he will not deny his own, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. He has said, I am he that was dead, but, behold, I am alive for evermore, and because I live, you shall live also. This is my hope; this is my support. Pray for me when at the throne of grace, and visit us at our church meetings, and may the Lord bless us all, and finally receive us unto himself, is the prayer of your sister,

(MRS.) FANNIE WHITE.

[THE obituary of Miss Eula White was published in the December 15th, 1913, number of the SIGNS.—ED.]

PLYMOUTH, Ill., Dec. 15, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I will now try to write a few lines for the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but feel too unworthy to write for such highly gifted servants of the Most High as I feel that you are, and all who write for and read the dear old SIGNS, and I have been traveling in thick darkness for so long, with scarcely one ray of light it seems, and have felt so cold, barren and unfruitful that I dare not take His sacred name upon my sinful lips, for darkness envelops me, and I sometimes wonder if I have an interest in the blood and righteousness of Christ, and almost cast my little hope away. I wonder if any of the dear saints get as low as that, but in reading the dear old SIGNS I sometimes come across one who tells my feelings and travel better than I can, and some of the good letters I receive touch every point and give me some comfort, yet I cannot think of one of God's children who seems so sinful, so unworthy, so full of imperfection, so ungrateful as I feel myself to be, and yet I feel such an awakening sometimes when sitting under the sound of some of our true and tried servants of God proclaiming the glorious gospel of the Son of God, it seems that the light of God's countenance shines around me for a little while, as it did at our October meeting, when our dear pastor, Elder L. E. Frazee, preached. I was in such darkness that I thought it was no use to go to meeting, and felt so until he began to preach on the atonement. It was one of the grandest sermons I ever heard him preach, for he preached with the spirit and understanding also, and the cloud that had been so thick that it could almost be felt began to lift, and before he got through it was entirely gone, and I felt comforted with the crumbs that fell from the Master's table for a week or two, then the cloud again began to appear, and so it goes on from time to time. But of one thing I am sure, whether I am one of his or not, God still reigns in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say, What doest thou?

I am very weak and nervous, and will have to close for this time. May peace, mercy and goodness be with all, is the prayer of your unworthy sister, if one at all, (MRS.) S. G. FRAZEE.

WAVERLY, Pa., Dec. 12, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS AND READERS:—I wish to write just a few lines, and say I am still going about to and fro, up and down the earth as usual, trying to serve several churches, also hold meeting at several places where there are no organizations, but a few members and believers meet together for worship occasionally. The churches are about as last year, not much change. I am still hoping that the dear Lord will send ministers of the gospel to preach for them, but I see no prospect as yet, he may some day;

God knows. I have had several requests the past year to write on different subjects, and concerning different things, but have had no mind to make the attempt, and I still feel the same. The reading in the SIGNS is good.

I will answer one question that has been asked by several lately: Are there in all the churches I have served, or am serving, any among the Old School Baptists who claim to be better than before they experienced a hope? No, not one. The general confession of all is: I am the same poor, miserable sinner I have always been by nature, sinful and depraved as I can be, but by the grace of Almighty God I have been kept from doing many things that I once delighted in doing. This is the experience of every one who is born again. Paul said, By grace are ye saved. He also said, By the grace of God I am what I am; not one good thing to boast of.

I am as ever, a poor, depraved, helpless, hell-deserving sinner, and if saved, saved by rich sovereign grace.

D. M. VAIL.

MAY 14, 1911.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is time for me to send the money to pay for the SIGNS. I will be eighty years old May 19th, and have been a reader of the SIGNS for forty years, and appreciate it and the doctrine it contends for. I have been a member of the Old School Baptist Church for fifty-three years, and have been clerk of the church for fifty-two years, and deacon for thirty-seven years. It is through the providence of God that I have been blessed until this day, and I want to take the SIGNS as long as I am permitted to live on this earth. I believe that God is a sovereign, and works all things after his own will. I believe that God is all-wise, and comprehended the end from the beginning, that his people were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and that his elect will be made manifest in time, and that they will be raised from mortal to immortal, and will live with God through never-ending eternity.

J. D. STANLEY.

FOREST GROVE, Oregon, May 17, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel that I would like to speak a word of praise for the good news we receive from the editorials and letters written by the dear children of God, who are scattered over the United States. When we read from the pen of one who has traveled the way we believe a child of God is led by the power of God, we feel brotherly love going out for that one.

Our church holds her meetings the first Sunday of each month, and Saturday before, at 11 a. m. Sunday and at 2 p. m. Saturday in the future. Elder V. J. Turnidge is our pastor, and Elder I. A. Moore assistant. Brother J. H. Beaman is moderator, and brother Lewis Moore church clerk. We much enjoy our little meetings, and feel that the Lord is with us. We love to have those of like precious faith visit us when they so desire.

Your sister in hope of eternal life,

JEMIMA BEAMAN.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1914.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

A NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS TO OUR READERS.

WE are now in the twentieth year of our labor as one of the editors of the SIGNS. Our service in this way began in November, 1894, and it has been our custom to write what we have called a New Year's address at the beginning of each year, and it has been our feeling in so doing to speak more personally of ourself than in our usual editorial writing. At the beginning of this new year we find ourself looking back, and looking forward. As we think of the past we recall that the SIGNS was in our father's home from our childhood, and we do not remember when it was not a welcome visitor there. We could not have been more than eight or nine years of age when we began to read its columns. If our heart deceives us not, even then we felt that sin was in our heart and life, and that we needed a Savior. Most of the sermons and editorials then published we did not comprehend, but when we would find a narrative of christian experience we read that with eagerness, and sometimes, as we thought, with some understanding of what the conviction and distress of which they wrote meant. For a long time this was the case, while as the writers would go on to speak of deliverance through the revelation of salvation in Christ wrought in their hearts we could not follow. We did not doubt the reality of this experience of hope and salvation of which the writers spoke, and found ourself often hoping that some day such deliverance might be ours. We could not understand what this joy of which they wrote was, but we believed that it was real, and that it was something glorious. At last the time came when, one day in September, 1861, in the field on our father's farm at work, there came the revelation of the way of salvation to our mind, as we had never seen it before, and with that revelation there sprang up a great delight and joy which filled our mind for perhaps two weeks. After this, as we read these narratives of experiences, we began to feel that we understood a little of the joy which they expressed, as well as of the conviction and sorrow. Since that blessed day of the Lord we have never been left for a moment to question the way of salvation. It dawned upon our mind then so clearly that Jesus had wrought out all our righteousness, and had become all the salvation hat a sinner could need, that no clouds have ever obscured that truth in our mind. Like most of the people of God of whom we have known, we have at times had many doubts and fears as to whether the work then wrought in our mind was the work of the Lord or no, and as to whether we have been really personally interested in this great salvation, but the doctrine has never waned in our mind that salvation is of the Lord. Soon after this we began to write now and then for the SIGNS, and since 1863 there has not been perhaps a year that our name has not appeared in its pages, and, so far as we can judge our own self, our

faith to-day is as it was the hour that we first believed. It seemed clear to our mind then that God was a sovereign over all things that exist, that to him belong omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence, that he is and must be the God of predestination and foreknowledge, and it is impossible but that his foreknowledge and predestination must be co-extensive. It was then clear in our mind, as it is to-day, that there is not a mote that floats in the sunbeam, not an insect that dances in the evening sun, not a word that ever should be spoken, not a thought that ever should enter the mind of any being, not a step that should ever be taken by man or brute, not a movement in all the vast creation of God, animate or inanimate, but what was foreknown and appointed to be. Then, as now, we felt that such knowledge was too wonderful for us, that it was high, so that we could not attain to it, yet we then rejoiced, and we do still rejoice, to believe all these things of the God whom we have desired to honor and to serve. It has been also our faith all the time that our God from all eternity chose out of the race of mankind his people, to redeem them, and to finally bring them to glory, and we have been sure that this, his purpose of love, mercy and redemption, should not fail. All that the Father had given unto him shall come unto him, and whosoever cometh unto him he will in no wise cast out. We believed then in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and that his body had ascended to glory after his resurrection, and that it abides at the right hand of God in heaven, and this we still believe. Then it seemed clear to our mind that just as Jesus died and rose again, so should all his people rise at the last day from the dead, and in that resurrection be changed into the likeness of the risen and glorified body of their blessed Lord. This has been our hope all these years, and it is now our hope. Then "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."

We cannot think back over the past without recalling the unnumbered mercies of God; these we cannot begin to name, for every day has been filled with his kindness. His mercy endureth forever. He has fulfilled his word, As thy days, so shall thy strength be. Looking alone at self, there is nothing but what ought to make us ashamed. We have nothing, not one thing, of which to boast before either our fellow-men or before God. A wretched, wandering mind, a cold, unfeeling heart, affections often set more on things below than on things above, seeking the praise of men more than the praise of God, and many other evil things have dwelt in our nature, and these things have made themselves known to our own heart, even when they have not appeared to our fellow-men. Man's judgment is but a light thing, but it is a solemn thing to stand before one's own conscience and feel that our conscience condemns us, and that God, who sees clearer still, must much more condemn us. But still the hope that is in the finished work of Christ has not failed us, and the joy of his salvation has often driven out of sight for a time the sorrow of our own sinfulness; God's mercies have outweighed our unworthiness. Where sin abounded grace has much more abounded. Sin has indeed reigned unto death, but grace has reigned much more, even unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. We quote this text, as it has seemed to us to fit in with the experience of the past in our life. We have had much to sorrow over, but we have had still more to rejoice in. Our

sins are great, but how exceeding great has been the grace of God, and though our sins have been great we cannot despair; Christ came to save sinners. Our desire at the first was to glorify him, and this is still, we believe, our desire. But it has been a joy to us at times that though we may have forgotten him he has never forgotten us, and though we deny him he cannot deny himself.

Among the greatest mercies of the Lord, we have counted our association with the editors and publishers of the SIGNS, first as a correspondent, and then as one of the editors. If at any time there have been differences of judgment regarding some course to be pursued, the blessing of God has vouchsafed to us all a willingness to consider each other's views, and seek some mutual ground, and our relations with all have been most kindly. All who have had to do with the publication of the SIGNS in the office have shown us all forbearance. Our correspondents have been forbearing, and many kind words have they written us, and but few words of criticism. We have never felt sufficient, either for preaching the word or for having anything to do with the conduct of the SIGNS, but the dear Lord has helped us thus far, and so we continue unto this present time.

The past year has brought unusual trials to the families of the editors of the SIGNS, and sometimes we have not known whether our physical strength would enable us to continue the work which we have been doing on the SIGNS. Elder Ker's affliction has not been in his own bodily health, but in the illness of his beloved companion. But we have been assured that to both of us the hearts of all the brethren have gone out in sympathy, and this is a great consolation and help. Thus we conclude our retrospection of the past, and will proceed to speak of a few other reflections relating more to the future. It is sure that none of us know what to-morrow will bring forth, and this is good for us, whether the future contains joy or sorrow; but it is equally sure that the God whom we worship does know every step of the way in which we shall be called to tread, and this is also good. If the future be blind to us, it is not dim to him; all the pathway is marked out for each of us, and it is sure that the way in which we shall be led is the right way, though it may seem dark and trying to us. We recall that once when under great stress and anxiety of mind, many years ago, the special particulars of which it is not needful to name, sudden and complete relief came in the words, The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice; let the inhabitants thereof be glad. The truth that the Lord reigns is sufficient to still all anxiety, to dismiss every fear and to encourage in the darkest hour. If this be so, nothing can set upon us to harm us, and we may be sure that even the sorest trials are but mercies in disguise. We believe these things, but more than simply believing them, we desire to be able to rest upon them. We know that the table is bountiful and good which the Lord spreads before us, but we want to eat and drink at that table, and find our own strength renewed there. We want to be like the disciples, who, after they had distributed to the multitude the provision which the Lord had blessed and divided, gathered an abundance for themselves also. This we desire for all who have to do with the publication of the SIGNS.

As regards the conduct of the SIGNS, should we be given sufficient health and strength to continue to have some part in

it, we desire to continue some rules which have been in our mind from the first as being best to follow. We have not desired to admit long continued controversies, and we have not desired to admit even brief ones if any unkindness or unbrotherliness of manner or of speech seemed to be creeping in. It has been our mind all the time that articles which assailed the doctrine at the first advocated in the SIGNS had far better not be admitted. For instance, the doctrine of personal unconditional election was among the foundation principles advocated in the SIGNS, and it has not seemed to us right to admit any article attacking that doctrine; that is one of the settled principles of the faith. The same is true of all other principles of the doctrine which we hold and love as Bible doctrine. This does not mean that questions may not be proposed concerning any of these great truths, and replies given, but there must be no denial of the doctrine itself. We also hope that more brethren and sisters may be moved to write narratives of experience for our columns, as we have found great delight in our correspondence in the past.

Now, dear brethren, we leave these new year's thoughts with you all. May the blessed Lord be with you all this coming year. C.

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Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

IT becomes my sad duty, by the request of our beloved brother, **Elder Thomas M. Poulson,** made a year ago, to write an obituary notice of his departure from the shores of time, with some of the incidents of his life. He was born in Accomac Co., Va., Jan. 14th, 1831; received a hope of salvation through the once crucified, but now risen and exalted Redeemer, in August, 1851; was baptized in the fellowship of the Messongoes Old School Baptist Church, by Elder Thomas Waters, in March, 1852. His first exercise in the public ministry of the word was at Messongoes, in November, 1864. He was ordained to the full work of the ministry July 25th, 1869, Elders Geo. W. Staton, E. Rittenhouse and S. H. Durand composing the presbytery. Soon afterward he was called to the pastoral care of the Indiantown and Nassaongo churches, in Wicomico Co., Md., and continued to faithfully serve them until a few months ago, when he became disabled by reason of illness incident to his extreme age. When the church at Snow Hill was constituted, about thirty-six years ago, he was called to serve as pastor, which he also served until his death. He was also pastor at Messongoes and Pitts' Creek. He was wonderfully gifted as a pastor, and was true and faithful in all his duties, having the welfare of the churches always in his heart. He was an able and gifted preacher, as all who ever heard him can testify. Elder S. H. Durand writes me since his death: "In Elder Poulson's death a truly good and great and faithful preacher has gone from us, and we shall miss him much, but you will miss him more than others;" which is all true of him. Language cannot be framed to more truly express his character as a minister. As a man he was one of the most truthful, honorable, noble and unselfish characters that I ever knew. As a christian he had learned of Him who was meek and lowly in heart, of an humble and contrite heart, trembling at the word of the Lord and fearing God, but with no fear of man before his eyes. He was married on his twenty-first birthday, Jan. 14th, 1852, to Mary E. Byrd, who was also born and raised in the same neighborhood. His wife died August 24th, 1905. To them were born six children, two dying in infancy, and a third, a son, was dragged to death by a runaway horse in his tenth year. The other three are Mrs. John Davis and Lorenzo D. Poulson, residing in New Church, Va., and Erastus, who lives in Delmar, Md. He also leaves thirteen grandchildren, several great-grandchildren and the churches he so long and so faithfully served, and to whom he was truly a father in the gospel, having baptized nearly if not quite all those living now. They sorrow, but not without hope, for they are assured that he lives in the eternal presence of God, and that when Jesus our Lord shall appear, he also shall appear with him in glory. He departed this life at his home in the

village of New Church, Accomac Co., Va., Dec. 1st, 1913, his age being 82 years, 10 months and 17 days.

His funeral was held Dec. 4th, a brief service being held at the house, after which he was conveyed to the Messongoes meetinghouse (the place that had filled so large a place in his life) for the regular funeral service, which was in the following order: First, Elder J. T. Rowe read the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians. Second, Elder B. F. Coulter spoke beautifully and comfortingly in prayer. Third, Elder J. G. Eubanks read hymn No. 1252 (Beebe's collection). Fourth, the writer tried in weakness to preach a sermon from 2 Timothy iv. 7, 8; followed by Elders Coulter, Rowe and Eubanks, with appropriate remarks; then hymn No. 1257, "Asleep in Jesus," was read. The body was then laid in the grave, within fifty feet of the spot where he stood to deliver his first sermon forty-nine years ago.

May the good Lord remember the bereaved family, and visit them with the blessed consolations of the word. Their noble ancestor has left them an honorable name; may that ever be an incentive to them to follow after that which is good and noble. May the great Shepherd of Israel tenderly care and provide for the churches of his late charge, and continue to send unto them messages of love by whom he will; and may they with one heart and one voice pray to the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into the harvest, for truly the harvest is great and the laborers are few.

I am feeling sad and lonely. Elder Poulson has not only been to me a dear brother and yokefellow, but also a father in Israel. In the forty years of intimate intercourse, and the last twenty-five of close association as pastors of the majority of the churches in the Salisbury Association, there has never been a disagreement between us on any point of doctrine.

ALSO,

Mrs. Hettie A. West departed this life Nov. 30th, 1913, at the home of her daughter, in Wicomico Co., Md. Her maiden name was Ruark. She was born in Worcester Co., Md., Sept. 8th, 1840; was married to Burton West in 1863, to whom she bore twelve children, six sons and six daughters, of whom nine are yet living. She also leaves quite a number of grandchildren. She was baptized in the fellowship of the church at Nassaongo by Elder T. M. Poulson, in April, 1892, where her membership continued until called into the church triumphant. She was a true and faithful follower of the meek and lowly Lamb of God. She died in the faith of God's elect, and now sleeps that "blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep." May the great Comforter come to the help of the bereaved.

Funeral was held in the meetinghouse at Nassaongo Dec. 2nd, when the writer tried to comfort the bereaved family and friends, using as a subject a part of the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians.

A. B. FRANCIS.

Benjamin D. Titus was born near Mt. Rose, N. J., April 20th, 1865. In his nineteenth year he moved to Oxford, N. Y., where he entered into the hardware business, and continued in the same about twenty-one years. He was married to Bertha Izola Swartsfigure, Dec. 27th, 1885, who preceded him to the grave about eight years. There were born to this union one son, who died in infancy, and one daughter, Mrs. Edith Frazer, of Wilmington, Del., who survives him. After his wife's death he came to Hopewell, N. J., and later made his home with his daughter in Wilmington, Del., where he died of heart trouble Sept. 19th, 1913, living not more than a half hour after calling his daughter to his bedside. He was baptized on the first Sunday in November, 1912, at Welsh Tract, in the fellowship of the Wilmington Church, by Elder J. G. Eubanks. He dated his experience back nine years, being shown the way through the preaching of Elder D. M. Vail.

The funeral services were held at the home of his daughter, in Wilmington, Del., Sunday evening, Sept. 21st, conducted by Elder B. F. Coulter. The remains were brought to Hopewell on Monday, Sept. 22nd, where services were held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse, conducted by the pastor, Elder F. A. Chick, the text used on this occasion being Psalms cxix. 49. The interment was in the cemetery adjoining the meetinghouse.

He leaves one daughter, three sisters and one brother, beside many other relatives and friends, to mourn his departure. The church at Wilmington will sorely miss him, as before and since he became a member he had been very useful among them. During the past few years it has been our privilege to be acquainted with brother Titus, and during that time we have enjoyed many pleasant conversations with him on portions of Scripture and on matters of personal experience. We doubt not that it is well with him. May the blessing of God rest on all who are bereaved, is our prayer. C.

Mrs. Martha K. Hubbard departed this life at the home of her son, brother James E. Hubbard, Gardiner, Maine, Dec. 3rd, 1913, aged 80 years, 10 months and 21 days. It pleased the Lord to call our sister by his grace unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, in her girlhood days. She was made by divine teaching to feel herself to be a poor, helpless, perishing sinner. How often have we heard her rehearse the dealings of the Lord with her soul, and how with her sin-burdened conscience she sought to find relief, but knew not how to find acceptance before the holy God, against whom she had sinned. During the time of her sorest perplexities over her lost condition she was living in Woburn, Mass., and sought to see if she could learn the way of the salvation of sinners, and attended the various churches in the city. Their doctrines afforded her

no light and comfort, but rather increased the burdens of her soul. At length hearing of the despised, much spoken against church of God, she, after much hesitation, ventured to attend their meetings, and there she heard the truth proclaimed to her soul's satisfaction. She united with the Old School Baptist Church in Woburn and was baptized by Elder Leonard Cox about the year 1853, and with this church her membership remained until her departure from the scenes of time. She was united in marriage in March, 1857. Her husband enlisted in the Union army in 1862, and was last seen in battle on the 8th of May, 1864. Thus our sister was left a widow with her son James to care for. Occasional private letters of our sister have been published, and thus she was known to the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. She took pleasure in attending the assemblies of the saints, and loved to hear and talk of the dealings of the Lord with his children. About a year ago she was very sick, and it was hardly expected that she would recover from her illness; she did in a measure, so that she was able to visit friends and relatives at a distance from her home and to attend the assemblies of the church of God. The day before she died she was in her usual health, but at 2:30 p. m. she arose from her bed, fell to the floor and in a minute or two afterward was found, but her soul had departed, as we hope, to be with Christ, which is far better. She leaves one half-sister, Miss Etta Townsend, and her son, James E. Hubbard, but they sorrow not as those who have no hope.

At her funeral the writer preached from Hosea xiii. 14. Her body was taken to the cemetery at Jay, Maine, in which vicinity she had lived the most of her days. There her body rests until the last day, when the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

Abraham Poling was born near Meadowville, W. Va., (then Virginia) Jan. 5th, 1837, died at his home on Bills Creek, Barbour Co., W. Va., where he had lived nearly forty-five years, August 27th, 1913, making his stay on earth 76 years, 7 months and 22 days. He was married to Margaret Ann Thompson, Nov. 15th, 1869. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Little Bethel Old School Baptist Church by the writer in June, 1891, so he was a faithful, sound Old School Baptist for over twenty-two years. He was very much devoted to the cause, and dearly loved the truth as preached by the Old School Baptist ministers, and died in fellowship of his church. Brother Poling was an honest and upright man, well respected in his neighborhood and dearly loved by his family, and will be sadly missed there and in the Little Bethel Church. He leaves a widow and seven children to mourn their loss, as follows: Jerome J., Worth and Daniel B. Poling, Mrs. Mary L. Findley, Mrs. Lizzie Coonts and Mrs. Frances Poling, besides a number of grandchildren, two brothers and two sisters, but their loss we hope is his eternal gain. May the Lord comfort those who loved him, and bless them, if according to his will, with a good evidence of his grace.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder J. B. Cross, at the Little Bethel Old School Baptist Church, where his remains were laid to rest to await the great resurrection day, when this mortal shall put on immortality.

JOHN N. BARTLETT.

PHILIPPI, W. Va.

Mrs. William George, widow of Elder Wm. George, died Nov. 5th, 1913, aged 87 years, at the home of her eldest daughter, Mrs. George R. Boxall, Putnam, Ontario, Canada. Her health had been usually good up to Nov. 5th, when she had a stroke of paralysis, from which she never regained consciousness, and passed away about 7 p. m. She was not a member of the Old Baptist Church, but knew and loved the doctrine of salvation by grace, and often spoke of her little hope, which was as an anchor of her soul, both sure and steadfast, and her support and comfort through the changing scenes of a long and eventful life. She was a good, kind mother and an exemplary christian woman. Interment at Banner Cemetery, Oxford Co., Ontario, Canada.

Her daughter, (MRS.) G. A. DUNDAS.

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M. M. Rounsavell, N. Y., $3.00; Richard Waller, Mo., $1.00; Mrs. E. J. Hurst, Ark., $.75; Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $5.00; Mrs. Sarah J. Hawk, Ind., $1.00; Mrs. Wm. J. Clark, Conn., $3.00; Mary A. Barnett, N. B., $1.00; Mrs. N. E. Askew, Ark., $2.00; Elder T. R. Pittman, Kansas, $1.00.—Total, $17.75.

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SYLVESTER HASSELL.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 82. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1914. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

I HAVE been thinking of late both of our good medium of correspondence of the above title and of the words of our Savior recorded in Matthew xvi. 3. Especially have the condition and surroundings of God's worshiping people, both at those times and now, been a subject of much thought for me, yet as I proceed to write I am wondering if my thoughts can be of any profit to others. The Lord only knows as to this.

It is evident from the writings of those who lived and wrote at the time and just before and after the periodical named SIGNS OF THE TIMES was founded, that it was a trying time for those who knew and loved the doctrine and order of the Lord's house, as taught in his sacred word. With Fuller's "General atonement and special application" theory as a basis, many institutions and practices hitherto unknown among Baptists had sprung up, and it seemed as almost the entire denomination had been carried away into idolatry, yet there were a few scattered throughout the different parts of the country who mourned for the ways of Zion and longed for a return to the ancient landmarks. No doubt many of these scattered ones hailed with much satisfaction the first announcement that a periodical, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, was forthcoming that was to stand for the doctrine and order of the Bible—regular Old Baptist doctrine and order. In due time, as per announcement, this paper came out, carrying into the homes of many of the scattered ones an expression of the doctrine and order of Bible Baptists, and an able defence of the same, and a bold exposure of the vain speculations that had apparently carried the denomination away as with a flood. It was through this medium that many of those scattered ones came to know of each other's whereabouts. Evidently it was a Godsend to his poor, afflicted people. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as shown by editor and correspondents, even among those that bore the name Baptist, indicated that the ruling spirit was one of covetousness, idolatries, pride, ambition, &c. The gods newly set up were the Mission system, (modern) Bible and tract societies, Sabbath schools, Theological schools, protracted meetings, the salaried preaching system, &c. Israel (nominally)

had gone as Israel nationally in the days of Jeroboam, son of Nebat, into gross idolatry, and had forsaken Jerusalem, the place where the Lord had chosen to set his name. The sons of God had gone in unto the daughters of men, (Gen. vi. 2–5,) and giants had been born into the world, and such became men of renown in those days, and hence Fullers, Carys, Judsons, &c., and later Spurgeons, Beechers, Talmages, and hundreds of others, I might say a vast army of learned clergymen, not only ambitious to dictate and dominate church, but state policies as well. Elder Beebe and others saw in the things mentioned signs of a terrible storm gathering, and so lifted a warning voice, but that voice went unheeded, save by those who had "the testimony of Jesus." "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."—Rev. xix. 10. Seemingly forgetful, or ignorant of the awful consequences of uniting church and state, which had been so fully demonstrated throughout the period of time known as the "dark ages," the leading clergy sought to employ and manipulate every avenue to the public mind, even from infancy, so as to mold public sentiment favorable to all their projects, and finally precipitated a most disastrous civil war of four years' duration, in which hundreds of thousands of human lives were sacrificed, and thus the predictions of a few scattering Old Baptists were fulfilled, and so far as I know, they now are the only people who recognize the fact (at least to openly say so) that the "clergy," the church, so-called, is more than all other causes responsible for that sad event. It has ever been thus. It is good for God's children to know that he rules, and "doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth." The Lord has designed by these things to accomplish his purpose in the earth, part at least of which is to separate, purge and purify his worshiping people. Long ago the Lord said by the mouth of one of his inspired servants, "Moab is my washpot." What Moab was to Israel, a combination of things, as mentioned above, may be to the church to-day. The numerous alluring things found in the worldly churches of to-day, so congenial with carnal minds, and so calculated to gratify every inclination of such a mind, can but draw away from the true church such as prefer the gratification of worldly pride and ambition to suffering the offence of the cross of Christ. At the same time those things are calculated to drive out of Babylon those who are spiritually taught, who love the beauty and simplicity of Bible doctrine and order. Hence when the Lord has prepared them they gladly heed the divine admonition: "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."—Rev. xviii. 4. Our Savior, in the instance referred to at the commencement of this article, was reproving the hypocritical Pharisees and Sadducees who came to him desiring "him that he would shew them a sign from heaven. He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather; for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to-day; for the sky is red and lowering. O ye hypocrites! ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?" Some of the greatest events that had or were ever to mark the history of time were drawing near to hand; the prophecies relating to those events were rapidly being fulfilled. To the fulfillment of the prophecies and the coming to pass of those events the "signs of the

times" clearly and unmistakably pointed. But none of these signs could be understood by those people, for they were given "the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear."—Romans xi. 8. The long-promised Messiah had already made his advent among them, and they knew him not. He must, according to the purpose of his holy and divine Father, as expressed through the law and the prophets, be crucified and slain and rise again the third day. The spirit (of antichrist, "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience,") that was to bring together and unite and combine the opposing elements, was already at work to this end. The dreadful overthrow of that nation and the destruction of their long-idolized city, Jerusalem, foretold by the prophets, and Jesus himself in the twenty-first chapter of Matthew, was drawing near. The "signs of the times," on the one hand, was hypocrisy, covetousness, pride, &c., among the ruling element of the Jews, teaching for doctrine the commandments or traditions of men; they turned a deaf ear to the signs marking the entrance of the Messiah into the world, the miraculous coming of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ, the wonderful signs that accompanied these events, together with the miracles of our Savior, in raising up the dead, casting out devils, giving sight to the blind, healing the leper, and many such works, in which it would seem that any sane mind could not fail to see the finger of God, yet the ruling spirit of the age, it seems, forbade that any should acknowledge him and honor him, only in so far as they might thereby be fed with the loaves and fishes, except those favored by God with a revelation from heaven that he was the Christ. In the accomplishment of the purpose of God in the crucifixion of the Savior there was a gradual coming together of three elements of power, each all the while exercising its influence upon the other: blind, religious zeal among the Jews, the wisdom of the world with the Greek, and civil government; all these must come together, and on the day that Jesus was crucified Pilate and Herod made friends. After the crucifixion of Jesus, history shows that the Jews waxed worse and worse in the expression of envy, jealousy, malice and every evil propensity. They divided up into warring factions and contentious seditions, and revolts were constant, and all those things concerning the fall of the Jews and the destruction of Jerusalem, as foretold by the Savior, came to pass. Also before this great day came there was developed in the church strife and contentions, schisms and divisions, idolatries, fornications, &c., with various departures from the faith. We have only to read Paul's first letter to the church at Corinth, and the account of the seven churches of Asia, to learn that this was the case. In all that the blessed Savior said to his disciples concerning his sufferings and death, and the final downfall of the Jewish nation, and destruction of Jerusalem, it was not once intimated that any of these things might be by any means averted or deferred, but they were spoken of as things appointed and must come to pass, yet he deemed it of profit to his disciples to tell them about those things. So the apostles have written prophecies concerning "the last days," and of many things that should transpire, and "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."

It seems that the greatest possible unfulfilled event of prophecy pertaining to this universe is its final dissolution. The apostle Peter I understand refers to such a time and event when he says, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up. * * * Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat."—2 Peter iii. 10–12. David said, "Of old thou hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure."—Psalms cii. 25, 26. Perhaps the terms, "the last days" and "latter days," as used by the apostles, may properly be understood to cover all that period of time from the days of our Savior on earth as the "son of man" until the end of time. Like our brother, Elder Peters, in his interesting letter in the SIGNS for December 15th, I see in the downfall of Jerusalem, and the Jewish nation, figuratively set forth the end of this present world, and I have thought that in the quotation from the apostle Peter given above that both these great events are alluded to. It seems to my mind, at least, I see the manifestations of the same spirit in its workings among the people, and very similar manifestations to those existing among the people just previous to the downfall of Jerusalem. Organization of all classes and avocations (and centralization of power) is the spirit of the age. Organized capital against labor, and *vice versa*, each striving for the mastery. All kinds of organizations, political, social and religious, and through all runs the spirit of war, each striving for the mastery, combinations of "churches" of different orders and combinations of preachers at their head throughout the nation and the different states, striving for more power and more money, inaugurating, promoting and enforcing state policies; in short, the "church" has fairly entered the political arena with all the zeal of the ordinary political party. The indications are that the "church" will soon dictate (so far as they wish) our state policies, then down goes our long-cherished freedom in many respects. It may be that before the gathering storm subsides and the end comes that we will no longer be exhorted, admonished, begged and teased for our money to support the men-made institutions of the day, in operation pretendedly for "the conversion of the world," and which to my mind are an abomination in the sight of God, but by law will be compelled to contribute our pro rata share in taxes. May it not now be that there is rapidly developing one of those great "beasts" mentioned in the book of Revelation? The time may come in the not far distant future when we will not have all the privileges of meeting together and contending earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints as we now enjoy it. We cannot tell in what form the great "man of sin," now so rapidly developing, (at least as some of us see it) will execute the power given him, but have reason to know that it will not be with any love or mercy to the true worshipers of the Lord. Another sign (to my mind) of the approaching dissolution is the schisms, divisions, strife and contentions among those whose names only a few years ago clearly implied (and ought to so imply now) that they stood for the doctrine of predestination, elec-

tion and salvation wholly and solely by grace, viz., Primitive or Old School Baptists, which name also stood for a belief in a separation of church and world, and an orderly walk individually, and for new testament order in the church collectively. I think, taking the country over, we all can see that the name does not carry with it what it did a few years ago. To my mind (though poor and weak it may be) the present "signs of the times" indicate a sore and trying time for the true church, such as she has not experienced for many years, but similar to such as she has passed through before; but the same protecting Power is with and round about his true worshiping people, whose hearts he has prepared to worship him as has ever been, and that is sufficient, and will finally manifestly bring them off more than conquerors through him that loved them and gave himself for them.

H. B. JONES.

WINNSBORO, Texas, December, 1913.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 19, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I send these two letters from Elder H. H. Lefferts for publication in the SIGNS, if you think best. Our brethren will be glad to read them.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

LEESBURG, Va., Dec. 11, 1913.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—There are times when a feeling comes over one that prompts getting in touch with those we seldom see face to face, but from whom we are never separated in spirit. That the demands of a material existence necessitate a physical absence one from another is no reason we should allow such materials to forbid our spiritual intercourse. In this I am especially culpable, for I am too prone to neglect correspondence with those I love. This may reasonably give rise in the hearts of my brethren to questionings as to the sincerity of my affection for them, but, searching my own heart, I honestly think the root of the matter is not that I love my brethren any the less as the years go by, but that the mere thought of sitting down to write a letter always appears like such a gigantic undertaking. It would not be so did my thoughts flow freely when writing, but instead they come haltingly, lagging far behind my intentions, and when they do come express my meaning feebly and unsatisfactorily. A word is but a symbol anyway, and symbols at best do but inadequately convey soul matters. Jesus used many symbols in his ministry to teach spiritual truths, and ever since his day these symbols have given rise among brethren of the best motives to controversies as to just what Jesus did mean to say in these emblematic expressions. Depth in one's self is a very vital qualification to an understanding of Scripture symbolism. "Deep calleth unto deep." The deep mysteries typified in the symbols of Scripture are appreciated only by those who have a measure of spirituality in themselves, and the deeper this measure the greater their appreciation. Paul condemns the eating of the Lord's supper by any one who discerns not the Lord's body. He requires, therefore, some depth of spirituality in the communicant as a necessary requisite to a sincere observance of the ordinance. The bread and the cup are literal, it is true, and perhaps no different from the same substances used secularly, but the fact that the Savior saw fit to employ them in instituting this part of our church order is enough to set them apart from a common to a sacred

use. Romanism teaches transsubstantiation, or that at the blessing of the sacrament by the priest the body and blood of Christ do actually pass into and become part of the literal bread and wine. Luther revolted at this teaching, and substituted for it consubstantiation, the idea that the bread and wine are not actually the body and blood, but that the body and blood are partaken of with, not in, the bread and wine. Luther, it seems to me, fell short of hitting the true meaning of the matter himself. Jesus said when giving out the bread and wine to his disciples, "This is is my body," and, "This is my blood." He did not say, This is an emblem of my body, or, This is an emblem of my blood. So it would appear that if we concede at least a measure of spiritual depth in the participants of the supper, then it must follow that although the bread is not actually the body, nor the wine the blood, yet to the faith of the believer the bread is received as the body and the wine as the blood of his Savior who died for him. Depth in the believer is requisite to an appreciation of the depth in the symbol, bread, and in the symbol, wine. "Deep calleth unto deep." Also, baptism is a symbol of glorious things, a mockery only when engaged in by those who have no depth in themselves, but a blessed privilege and act of righteousness to those having depth in themselves, who are awed and subdued most blessedly when contemplating the deep significance of the water symbol. The ones who get the full benefit out of gospel preaching are those who hear the most, I will not say the best, for the difference in spiritual hearing is not one of intent, but of extent; of quantity, not of quality, and the one who hears the most is the one who has done business in great waters, whose business has taken him into deep waters.

Well, here I have been wandering on without asking how you are. My prime reason for writing you this morning is to reestablish the somewhat broken intercourse between us. I want to know how you are, and this I want to know in the best sense; not so much the state of your body as the state of your mind and heart. Are you close to the Lord? Do you feel him near you, or are you as a child crying in the dark for its mother? Whatever your present lot, it shall not be barren or unfruitful. It may seem so, but seeming does not make it so. All things, all the various moods of mind and heart and soul, come alike from Him who deals all these things to his people in infinite love and mercy, for the ultimate, if not the immediate, good of his people, and for his own declarative glory.

I am glad to say my family are all well. We send much love to sister Bessie, sister Mildred and yourself.

Affectionately yours,

H. H. LEFFERTS.

LEESBURG, Va., Dec. 17, 1913.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—It is hard for me to realize that my letter could possibly have done you as much good as you say. I wrote it right out of my own heart and mind, little thinking that any other soul in all this big world would chord with the same string that had been touched in me. John does not say in the Revelation that those he saw on the sea of glass mingled with fire had their harps in their hands. The phrase, "in their hands," is not there, but they had their "harps of gold." The stony heart has been taken out of them, and they have hearts of flesh; a right spirit is renewed within them, they are a pure-hearted people. This heart of faith is their harp of gold; with it they sing

the song of Moses and the Lamb. Here may be found the antitype of all those instruments named in the last Psalm. No wonder one of the prophets said, Woe to them that invent to themselves instruments of music, like David. Who that has ever heard the Master Singer awakening the melody in the midst of the great congregation as the finger of his Holy Spirit sweeps over the living strings of the thousand-toned harp, would want to revive the ancient symbolism? Who that has ever walked about Zion, counted her towers, marked her bulwarks and considered her palaces, would want to rebuild Solomon's temple with its ephemeral glory?

But to revert to our former subject, how wonderfully the name of Jesus supplies the key to a right understanding of the forty-second Psalm. Surely he did have the tongue of the learned, and he only knows to speak a word in season to him that is weary. By his knowledge this righteous servant of God justifies many. You have witnessed this justification in your own soul as you have been led experimentally to testify of the same things as are testified of in this forty-second Psalm. "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts." Jesus learned obedience by the things he suffered. The depths he endured were those in which was manifested his obedience to the deep things of God which had been kept hidden from the foundation of the world. Election, predestination, vital unity, redemption, justification and resurrection are deep things not to be cavilled at, but to be considered reverently by those who have any measure of spiritual depth in themselves. All these fundamental doctrines which are too deep for finite reason to grasp called to him in his depths, and in his depths these eternal principles upheld him. Thus it was deep calling unto deep. This echoing and re-echoing, calling and recalling, came at the noise of God's waterspouts, in the midst of the whirling of the waters which engulfed him. Though he doubtless felt that contrary winds had hold of him, even as a waterspout is the whirling of the water caused by the meeting of contrary currents of air, yet in that seeming contrariety was wonderful method and harmony: the mysterious method of a miracle-working God, and the harmony of all the attributes of the Godhead. The way of our salvation was in the whirling of those waterspouts that overwhelmed him; and now, my dear brother, just as the deep, underlying principles of godliness echoed and re-echoed to and from Him in the depths of his humiliation and suffering, so Job, when the swirling currents caught him and sucked him under, could not help but call unto the depths which Christ himself endured, for his succor and relief. So Jonah at the bottom of the mountains learned the doctrine of God our Savior, that "salvation is of the Lord." Here the depths of Jonah call unto the depths of Christ, and echo and re-echo as they resound on down through the ages, reflected from chamber to chamber in the many mansions of the Father's house. We usually think of depth as a going down farther and farther into darkness, and that at the bottom all is dark, but when Jesus got down to the very deepest depths of all his grief and suffering he found it to be light, the light that never was on sea or land, the light that no flesh can endure; it was the glorious, full radiance of the immediate presence of God. "At evening time, it shall be light." So when Jesus' life's sun was sinking, in a natural sense, eternity with all its fullness

burst upon him. So our depths, even though we may apparently be going down, are in reality leading us upward to where the light is, such light as you and I have but glimpsed here below.

I will not say more on this subject, for it is getting beyond me. It is inexpressible, too deep for words. As to your sending my former letter to the SIGNS, I did not think of such a thing when I wrote it. I did not write it for the public eye, but will leave it to your judgment, as it is now in your possession.

With sincere love to you in the best of bonds, I am, I trust, yours in some knowledge of the depths,

H. H. LEFFERTS.

MATTHEW XIII. 31, 32.

"ANOTHER parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof."

A parable is a similitude taken from nature to set forth (in Scripture) a spiritual truth. All things in the natural creation typify in some sense that which is found in the spiritual or gospel kingdom. The church of Christ (which is the kingdom of heaven) in its travel continues in the world from which it was taken, yet it is separate from the world and not of it. All that was found in the type of the church (Israel) under the first testament may be likened unto that which is found in the antitype, (spiritual Israel under the second testament) so when Jesus presented a parable it was an illustration true to nature, comparing it to the kingdom of heaven.

"The kingdom of heaven is like." Whatever view we may take of the figure drawn from nature it must be like that which it is intended to represent, otherwise the parable would fall short in its lesson. We cannot mistake the kingdom of heaven, what and where it is, if indeed we are part of it, for none have ever beheld it save those who are inhabitants thereof; they see it not with natural, but spiritual vision.

"To a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field." The kingdom, then, is like to a grain of mustard seed. A kingdom is composed of, first, a king, and second, his subjects. The grain of mustard, in order to manifest life, must fall into the ground and die. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." So our gracious Redeemer must needs die (which is the seed of life eternal) and the King of glory, that he might bring forth out of death the subjects of his kingdom, that they should show forth his power and glorify his Father in heaven.

"Which a man took, and sowed in his field." "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The spiritual seed was sown in the field of this world. Jesus came, he suffered, he fell into the ground and died, and when he came forth a victor over death, his church, in that wonderful mystical sense, arose with him and became manifest in the world. This is "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."

"Which indeed is the least of all seeds." In his humility Jesus was the least of all seeds. When he was in the world the

world despised him; he was so poor that he had not where to lay his head, he was rejected of men, but "for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Jesus himself said, "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

"But when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree." Since the day of Pentecost, when there appeared unto the disciples "cloven tongues, like as fire, and it sat upon each of them: and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance," the church has been manifestly growing, not in numbers simply, but growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. As the germ of life in the seed sendeth the roots thereof downward, and the vine upward, the life, being in both root and vine, furnisheth life and support to the branches (the church) and all grow together in knowledge and glory. Of Jesus the inspired prophet said, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground," &c. The elements of the soil supply the body of the root and vine, so Jesus was made of woman and grew to manhood. Jesus said, "I am the root and the offspring of David." As the mustard seed is the least of all seeds, when it is grown it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so also Jesus was the least in the kingdom of heaven; he is the greatest; his name is above every name; by him all things consist; his power and authority are over all; he is the tree of life in the midst of his garden (the church).

"So that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." It is well that our minds should be impressed with this truth: that although the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches, yet they are not part of the tree. The seed and all that it bringeth forth is *like* unto the kingdom of heaven. We must consider it under the figure or parable, first the seed, then the sower, the downward and upward growth, and lastly, the greatest of herbs grown into a tree. In these the kingdom (church) is presented in its spiritual completeness, it is fully nurtured and the fruit yielded. Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." The tree or its antitype is complete, even if nothing from the outside ever comes near it. The inspired prophet presents a similar prophetic figure, saying, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." Not into it, but unto it. The parable does not present the birds as feeding upon the fruit of the tree, but simply lodging in its branches. It is declared in prophecy that, "In that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." How clearly does this represent the do and live systems of the world. They want to take refuge in the branches, (the church) to be covered thereby, so they may take the name of Christ. They claim to be able and willing to support themselves, which they do, for they have not the life

of the vine and branches to support them. The sanctuary of the Lord is reserved for "the living in Jerusalem." Again prophecy declares, "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem." When the wild olive tree (Gentiles) is brought to the good olive tree (Israel) it does not simply lodge in the branches, but is grafted in among them, and with them partakes of the root and fatness of the olive tree. These become "the living in Jerusalem;" their "life is hid with Christ in God." The church is in the world, but not of the world, neither is it in any way identified with the world, yet the world claims it that its reproach may be taken away. May we by faith be made to realize that our life is in the vine, Christ Jesus. B. F. COULTER.

MACOMB, Ill.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—The old year is drawing to a close, and soon a new year with its untried realities will be ushered in upon us. How fast time flies! It seems so short a time since the beginning of this year. It brings to our mind the solemn truth that,

"Time is winging us away
To our eternal home;
Life is but a winter's day—
A journey to the tomb."

The year passing so swiftly reminds me, among many other things, that it is time to renew my subscription for the dear SIGNS, and I hope I am thankful to be able to send it, and while doing so I have a desire once more to write a few lines to the household of faith, to the poor of the flock, weak ones like myself. But I know not what this will prove to be, for I do feel so barren, so destitute of all good, how can I write to any comfort or edification? I know that of myself I can do nothing, and in my flesh dwells no good thing. So I know unless I am directed by a power above my own I can write nothing worthy of reading. But I have a desire (I hope after the inner man) after spiritual things, and feel I can say with confidence that I love the truth as it is in Jesus, and love those who speak or write it, and once in a while this poor weak one, though in a stammering way, attempts to tell you all how much I love you, and how I appreciate your dear letters, and what a comfort the SIGNS is to me. I read each number with much comfort and satisfaction, and often with tears of gratitude to God that he still upholds and supports it, and gives grace and wisdom to the editors and correspondents, so that nothing harmful appears in its columns, but that only which feeds and comforts God's people. Often I would love to take the writers by the hand, for O how sweetly they tell of God's dealing with them, and tell my own experience so much better than I am able to do myself. They tell of how the Lord has led them from darkness to light, and before I am aware I am claiming some of these precious things for myself and rejoicing, too. How dear and sweet is this bond of affection which draws us together in spirit, though in reality many miles apart. The seasons of rejoicing are very short and far between with me, for how soon the tempter comes and destroys my peace, filling me with doubts and fears. I am often brought low, and see so much sin in my heart I feel unworthy to say brother or sister, and doubt if any of the rich

treasures of the gospel are for me, and if my dear kindred in Christ Jesus could see me as I see myself they could have no fellowship or love for me. I often fear that I have deceived them, yet in all the twenty-eight years that I have journeyed with them they have never told me so, but have borne with all my imperfections and shortcomings, and treated me far better than I deserve. O, I could not do without their love and companionship, but of what use am I to them? I feel to be only a cumberer of the ground; perhaps only a hindrance, instead of a comfort along the way. But God knows me altogether, I cannot deceive him. Man looketh on the outside, but God looketh on the heart. He knoweth my thoughts afar off; he knoweth my downsittings and my uprisings; nothing is hidden from him. He knows the end from the beginning, speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast; to whom the nations are but as a drop in the bucket, and he taketh up the isles as a very little thing; who is the Creator and Upholder of all things and the Disposer of all events, and nothing is impossible with him. How great, how mighty, how wonderful are all his ways. O how we should fear and tremble before him. How can such a guilty sinner approach unto him? Yet, "This awful God is ours, our Father and our love." Yes, he stoops down to poor mortals; he has tender compassion on his chosen people, giving his only begotten Son to die for them that they might live. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without him. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. He remembers we are but dust, and makes us to know we have no strength and no will to come unto him unless he gives it to us. When he gives us the will and strength, O how sweet to be drawn towards him. The yoke is easy and the burden is light. We feel a desire to follow in his footsteps, to walk softly before him all the days of our life, and wish to dwell in the house of the Lord forever. He hath died for us, and arose for our justification, and just as surely as Christ arose from the dead, being the Head of the church, which is his body, just that sure will the bodies of the saints, which are his body, also arise and be made like unto his glorious body, and will dwell forever with him and be satisfied. Dear brethren and sisters, when I think of these glorious things that are held in store for us, reserved in heaven for the saints of God, to them who have suffered with him and were not ashamed of the testimony of Jesus, but have kept their garments white and unspotted from the world, (these are they whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life, and they shall enter in through the gates into the city) when by the eye of faith I have a momentary view of these things, I think I should never murmur or complain, but praise should ever fill my mouth, that I should ever be reconciled to his will in all things. But O the weakness of the flesh. How frail we are! A cloud comes over our sky, darkness surrounds us, all the sweet promises are gone; we become distrustful, rebellious, unmindful of the Lord's goodness, and complain of the roughness of the way, until in pity the Lord looks upon us, and we are made to weep bitterly over our hard and stony heart.

Dear ones of our Father's household, is it ever thus with you? Can you have fellowship for such as I? Have you ever been led along in this way? I feel that some of you have, and so I take courage. But O to be better, to be more like Christ, to be submissive to his will, is my heart's

desire. May he give me grace and strength to run with patience the race set before me, and press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Now, dear ones, write on, Elders Durand, Keene, Sawin, Lefferts, Vail and all, also the dear sisters. How I wish I could write as you do; you give God all the praise, and testify that "salvation is of the Lord," which is the truth we love. May God bless you all, and keep you unto his heavenly kingdom.

Dear Elder Chick, we are so glad you are improving in health, and hope you may be spared many years to comfort God's little ones. My mother has now entered her ninety-fourth year, and is able to be around and is a dear lover of the SIGNS, which she reads regularly. We hope Elder Ker will soon favor us with some more of his excellent articles.

Now, dear brethren and sisters, if this poor letter comes before you, remember the weakness and many imperfections of the writer, and I ask you to cast the mantle of charity over all amiss. May the new year be fraught with blessings both temporal and spiritual for you all, is the desire and prayer of the least of all.

With much love, I hope I am your sister,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

RUSSELLVILLE, Ky., Sept. 19, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—Please bear with me in my weakness while I try, as I hope by the guidance of God's Spirit, to pen you a few thoughts upon his wonderful works to the children of men. We learn that when Jesus ascended on high he led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men. He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. I think to a certain extent or measure these gifts are imparted to each member of the church, and each member of the body of Christ depends upon every other member of the same body, because all the gifts God has given to the church are in the body, and each member has his or her own particular gift, while all the gifts are necessary to each other. This is brother Coulter's belief, and I indorse it heartily. O that I could but know the will or gift of God to me, if there is indeed any, that I might go forward in the discharge of my duty, ever looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of my faith. Sometimes I think if I have any gift at all, it is in talking to my brethren personally, or in writing to them concerning God's wonderful works, but sometimes when I have written a letter to them, and then look over it, I am tempted to throw it away and never try to write again, for I can see nothing in it that is calculated to build up and encourage God's little ones. But I go out among the brethren and sisters, and try to talk about the plan of salvation, and how I believe sinners are saved, and I am encouraged, for I find that they believe as I do about it, that it is alone through the precious blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and not according to their works, and very often while we are talking about these things they will mention a certain letter I was tempted to throw away, and say, Why do you not write oftener? I enjoyed that letter, it was very comforting to me. This encourages me to write again, and so I have kept on. May God have all the glory and honor for these sayings, for I know within myself there is no good thing. Every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights, and it is by the grace of God I am

what I am. Yes, if I am one of God's children it is by this same grace that I am saved, through faith, and that not of myself, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast, for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Brethren, if we are what we hope we are in reality, are you not glad that you are not your own, but that you have been bought with a price, even the precious blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? Not only this, but you are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. This is encouraging, for we know if left to ourselves we are sure to go astray, and we are prone to evil; this we have learned from experience. There is another thing we have learned, viz., that we were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Bless his holy name, this is encouraging to the child of God, and the reason assigned is that they have experienced it, and have the witness within themselves. Comfort ye, comfort ye my people with these things, saith your God; cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, and that she has received at the Lord's hand double for all her sins. Brethren, I am inclined to believe that after God's children have been born again, whenever they are unrestrained by God's Spirit they will still walk as the children of wrath, as much so as ever, and I find that I am not by myself in this. Listen to Peter when he said, Though all men forsake thee I will follow thee even unto death. Jesus said to him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. Did Peter deny his Lord? He most assuredly did, and not only did he deny his Lord, but cursed and swore, and said, when he was accused by the damsel of being one of the party, I know not the man. What was the matter with Peter? Ah, I can imagine that Peter feared death if he made the acknowledgment; he had lost sight of his God when it came to the test. In other words, he was left to himself for awhile to prove to him his weakness and inability to do anything within himself. For it is in Christ that the believer lives and moves and has his being, without him we can do nothing. This is in direct opposition to the theory of time salvationists. Pardon me, I mean no offence, but I am trying to tell it just as the Bible teaches it. We must stick to the truth. O that I could worship God and praise him at all times in an acceptable manner for his wonderful works to the children of men. I have come to believe that the only true worship we can render to him is that which we have to be whipped into. David said, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." Again he said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray." It is hard for God's children to serve him aright, as it seems, when they are in good health and in a prosperous condition. They that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution; there is no escape from this. Again it is said of them that they are chosen in a furnace of affliction. "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." He has gone to prepare a place for them, that where he is there they may be also. We learn also, for our encouragement, that

though Christ was a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things that he suffered. Hence we are following right along in the footsteps of Jesus. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Then, according to all this testimony, we can do nothing without him. He has borne our sorrows and carried our griefs, and he died for us, that we might have life through a ceaseless eternity, and be forever happy in his love. He is now at the right hand of the Father interceding for us according to the will of God. Brethren, are you not glad that you are not your own, that you have been bought with even the precious blood of Christ? Not only so, but you are kept by his power through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. This is encouraging, for we know if left to ourselves we are sure to go astray. We also learn that by nature we are children of wrath, even as others. But it is said, God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ. We have this witness within ourselves, and it is all in harmony with the word of God. Jesus learned obedience by the things that he suffered. It seems that we can only have a foretaste in this life of the joys that await the children of God. It is like the manna that was fed to the children of Israel, it will not last all the time in this life. But, thank God, if we are favored to be carried to the better world we shall leave all our troubles and sufferings in the grave and go home to Jesus, and there be like him and be forever blessed in a Savior's love, and we shall praise him throughout a ceaseless eternity for what he has done for us, and this will be enough, and, like the poet, when I contemplate all these joys I can truly say, "I would not live alway."

I submit this to you to do with as you please. Pardon me for taking up so much of your time.

Yours in hope,

J. B. JONES.

RISING SUN, Md., Sept. 25, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed find check to pay for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which is a little overdue. I also inclose a letter from our dear aged sister, Martha E. Carter, which I know her eastern friends will greatly enjoy, as will all others of her acquaintance.

Affectionately,

SALLIE LOWE.

SUMNER, Wash., Jan. 19, 1913.

MY DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I received your kind letter in due time, and gladly read it, but was, and am, sorry for your continued trouble. How great a blessing is health; we only know its value by its loss. When He who is our hope was manifest in the flesh he went about doing good. He healed the sick, put life in the palsied frame, opened the blind eyes and unstopped the deaf ears, cast out devils and restored the dead to life. At his word sorrow forgot its grief, and sickness its pain; and since his resurrection from the dead all power is given unto him on earth and in heaven. We are told that he heareth the cry of the destitute, and will not despise their prayer. He has promised to hear, and we know he is true. If we obtain not, it is because we have asked amiss, and he is as kind in withholding as in giving. May he give us to trust and not be afraid, and what time we are afraid to trust. We will ask, and continue to do

so, that he will graciously restore you to health, if it seems good in his sight. He was in the world reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and has committed unto us the ministry of reconciliation. "We pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled to God." We cling to our dear ones, and though we are sure to be with Christ is far better, yet feel it is more needful for us that they remain, and hope therefore they will be spared. Full reconciliation will come when we shall see him as he is, and shall be conformed to his likeness. Like as a father pitieth his children, so he pitieth us; he knows our frame and remembereth that we are dust. We are as the wind that passeth by and cometh not again, we are less than nothing and vanity; at his best estate man is altogether vanity. Of our depravity and its entirety he that maketh manifest knoweth full well, and that of his fullness have all his chosen received, and grace for grace. The more we are given to see and realize of its length and breadth, of the depths and heights of his love, the more our wonder increases; he has given unto us eternal life, and we shall never perish, but with ever-increasing joy will sing, Not unto us, but unto thy name be all the praise. No one can learn the song but those redeemed from among men, and they learn it all through their wilderness journey, for with weeping and with supplications will he lead them. O, the depth of his riches! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! Only he can give quietness, and when he does so none can make afraid.

I have just reread your dear, good, kind letter, written while under such bodily affliction; may the Lord restore you and heal your afflictions. We both know how much we cling to our dear ones. You write the experience of all that Christ has put forth before whom he has gone, and they follow him, for they know his voice. I was much interested in the letters from Ray Kauffman, and from Elder Rowe. I am glad Elder Eubanks called to see you. The Lord's dear people are taught of Him to love one another, and are given the earnest desire to be found of him walking in all his commandments blameless. Every deed of kindness done to one of the least is done unto him, but the power to think, speak or act aright is of him. Without me, he said, ye can do nothing. Without his Spirit we are none of his; it is Christ in us the hope of glory.

I have many letters written to me by my brother John during his long, painful suffering, which tell of his self-abhorrence and of his hope, and I have an assured hope for him. The Lord's people are sealed, and the seal is, The Lord knoweth them that are his, and we are sure his omniscient eye will never lose sight of one of them. Ever in my remembrance is the loving-kindness of the Lord, and his mercies which are new every morning, and his all-glorious name, which he reveals to us in our experience. All our journey in the wilderness he has surely been long-suffering to us, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy, and we know his name. His name is all our trust, nor will he put our soul to shame, nor let our hope be lost; he will by no means clear the guilty; no, for he spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all; how will he not with him freely give us all things? He is our hope and help and salvation, and when he manifests himself we are glad and rejoice in hope, and glory in his holy name, and he has given eternity in which to praise him.

Elder Mayfield was still not well when I last heard from him, and had lost his voice, so he could not speak aloud. I hope for his recovery, if the Lord will. I think that he is not more than sixty-four years of age, and he is an able preacher. I expect Edith has told you of his writing to me, asking that I thank you for sending my letters to the SIGNS. He asked me long ago to write out some of my experience for the SIGNS, and I had not done so.

"Hail sacred union, firm and strong,
How great the grace, how sweet the song,
That worms of dust should ever be
One with incarnate Deity.

One when he died, one when he rose,
One when he triumphed o'er his foes,
One when in heaven he took his seat,
While seraphs sang all hell's defeat."

April 1st, 1911.—We received your excellent letter, and I desire to acknowledge its coming, though not able to answer in kind. I am glad you have relief from your affliction, and if it seemeth good in His sight may he grant you a renewal of health, but we can only ask, hope and wait. He has not only given us the privilege of making our wants known by prayer and supplication, but commands us to pray without ceasing, and when we ask aright he hears and the answer is sure, and we have no doubt of the fulfillment of every promise, for surely God is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him. I am glad of the welfare of all of our dear old neighbors. I am glad you are enabled to attend your meeting and see and meet with the dear ones in Christ Jesus. May the Lord enable your dear son to confess His name before men, even as the Lord will confess him before his Father's face. One of your members has passed from earth and finished her wilderness journey, and we a little longer wait; how long none may know. She was two years older than I. It was a comfort, no doubt, to have your dear pastor to preach the gospel to all the relatives and friends.

I am glad you have two dear children with you, and I still hope for your recovery, if it seemeth good in his sight. Remember me to all our old neighbors and friends.

MARTHA E. CARTER.

WEISER, Idaho, Oct. 23, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—The letter I wrote you, which was in SIGNS of August 15th, brought me many letters of sweet sympathy that were greatly appreciated by me, and I do hope I am not deceived when I say comforted and strengthened. Many of the letters came from dear brethren and sisters whom I had never heard of, but they contained that same sweet trust, and a final admonition to look to him who is ever able to comfort. O how proud I am of my brethren, my friends, my kindred in Christ, they who depend not on an arm of flesh, but look to him who is able to save to the uttermost, even every one that is called by his name. I will say to those who wrote, Those little expressions of fellowship and love were at least a part of the "all things" that work for my good, so go on, bear one another's burdens, thereby proving that you have fellowship one with another. Some of these dear ones asked me to write more for the SIGNS, but I am fearful anything I might write would be so much like self that it would be unprofitable, for I think I can say truly that there is no good thing I can do. I must claim salvation, not by my will, but alone of grace, and blessed be God the Father for it. God changes not, the plan of salvation was ordained in eter-

nity, it cost the blood of his dear Son, and is the only salvation that has or ever will be, either for time or eternity. Because God changes not, he says, I am God, and change not, therefore (for this reason) ye sons of Jacob are not consumed; then as long as God is merciful we will not be consumed. But if I know anything of Jesus as a Savior, he found me as he did one of old, in a howling wilderness, (sin) and he led me in a way I knew not; I did not choose him, but he me. I did not have to accept eternal life, (for if I am his) it was given me in Christ Jesus before the world was made, but was made manifest in these last times. Did you ever hear of any choosing Jesus while he was on earth that they might have life? Do the Scriptures teach such an idea? Is it not a fact that all the evidence we have teaches the opposite, viz., Jesus does the choosing? Dear brother, no doubt you have used this text: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God," &c., which positively says, Tell them they have received double at the Lord's hands for all their sins. Not good works, nor choice, but double for all their sins.

There are only two powers: the mighty and the Almighty, and every act we do is proof of which power we are serving at that time; hence it is not in man to direct his steps. This includes the whole family of Adam; but, to get a little closer to the children of God, the steps of a righteous man are ordered by the Lord. Now notice, not just the righteous steps, but the steps of a righteous man. So we must say for ourselves, at least, that the mighty power is subservient, for Jesus gave the apostles power over unclean (evil) spirits, and Satan could only go so far even with Job, one who was given into his hands. Now a question comes into my mind: Was God, who has all power, and what he desires he does, ruling and accomplishing his will in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, was it his will for Job to be delivered into the hands of Satan? Who delivered him into the hands of Satan? God said of Job that he was a perfect, upright man, &c. Did this save Job? No. God alone could and did save and bless him, both naturally and spiritually, for Job trusted not in an arm of flesh, but in the living God. How many of the servants of God to-day teach the children to observe just what God has commanded? and I verily believe his commands cover all the ground, both natural and spiritual. There are many ways of providing natural things of this life, some honorable, some questionable, and some altogether dishonorable, so we would do well to take to those ways approved in the Book of books, shun everything wherein is the appearance of evil, or that would cause a brother to take offence. Let us consider we are only here for a short time, and let us endeavor to follow after the things that make for peace, and not serve mammon, but be found humble at the feet of Jesus, our glorious King, and if we only have one talent, use it. How? You tell me of your hope, your doubts and your fears, and I tell you of my trials and of my joys, thereby strengthening one another.

Dear brother Ker, you see what a poor, weak one I am; how there can be profit in my effort is more than I can see, but such as it is it is at your disposal.

My wife seemed to gain a little strength when it got cool this fall, but only for a short time; she is now about as she was when I wrote before.

Yours in hope of rest after our trials here are over,

T. E. ATTEBERY.

OTTAWA, Kansas.

DEAR ELDER KER:—If you think best, I will be glad to have you publish the inclosed letter from Elder W. L. Hall at your earliest convenience, hoping it may be as comforting to others as it has been to me. Brother Hall is a son of the late Elder John Hall, of Virginia.

Your sister, I hope,

ANNA TURNER McKINNEY.

BLUE SPRINGS, Mo., Dec. 21, 1913.

DEAR SISTER McKINNEY:—For some reason not known to me my unprofitable life has been spared to the present moment, and I feel like trying to pen you a few thoughts in regard to the coming into the world of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of sinners. By one man sin came, and death by sin, and thus death has passed upon all, for that all have sinned. All who have felt the power of death by sin have felt that they stood in need of a Savior. Blinded by their own righteousness, some have thought to purify the heart by outward signs, boasting of their works as evidence of a perfect knowledge of their acceptance of the Lord. The true child of God has not whereof to boast, but is ever a pleader at mercy's door. Jesus says he came down from heaven, not to do his own will, but the will of his Father which is in heaven. At a very early age he was about his Father's business, astonishing learned men with his questions and answers, and as the will and purpose of God was unfolding and ripening fast, we find that wicked men began to hate his sayings and to persecute the Son of God; in fact, it was only through the purpose of God that he had not already been slain, when a wicked king had slain all the children from two years old and under, so that Rachel mourned with great lamentations, and would not be comforted because they were not. But Christ had come to do his Father's will, and his time had not yet come, hence we see him setting up his kingdom here on earth, and manifesting the power of love and grace in doing miracles, healing, forgiving sins and preaching his own doctrine. His life as a man was one of hardship, he having not where to lay his head. No tempter ever caused him to do or say an unkind thing. Every utterance had a deep, significant meaning. The Spirit, like a dove and heavenly voice, attended him in every obedient act. The will of the Father must be done. Ages of prophecy was unfolded when to the shepherds was wafted the glorious news of a Savior born in the city of David. Sweet-smelling myrrh as an incense to God was the token of love and the manifestation of joy expressed by those shepherds who had waited long, trusting in the promise of the Lord, that Christ should come. No wonder old Simeon felt that heaven was near, and desired to depart in peace. Prophecy must be fulfilled, and he must go down into Egypt, must be called a Nazarene, must be persecuted, must be crucified, must go to the tomb, must rise again, must ascend unto the Father.

Now let us consider some of the things he did while on earth. He never reviled against those who reviled him; he was merciful to those in distress and need, and rebuked every appearance of sin and form of self-righteousness, so that Pharisees accused him of being a deceiver, and yet were astonished at his doctrine; but his Father's will must be done. Often men sought to accuse him, and would have put him to death, but his time had not yet come. At his coming the kingdom of heaven was at hand, he was the end of the law for righteousness to every

one that believed. Burnt offerings and sacrifices were not pleasant to the Lord, there was no perfectness in them; they, as a shadow, must pass away. The substance is now made manifest, the one offering by whom all the sanctified (set apart) are made perfect is now ready to be offered, he is led before the judge. Many are ready and waiting to testify that he is not the Christ. He had eaten with sinners, he had said he would raise up the destroyed temple (his body) in three days, he had caused an uproar among the people and had made himself equal with God. Judgment was passed: Take him and crucify him, for I find no fault in him. Now we find the purpose of God unfolding fast, and our blessed Savior praying in the garden of Gethsemane, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass; nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done. O what sorrow was for him, to bear in the body that the Father had given him, and in which he bare all our sins on the tree, for all our iniquity was laid upon him, by his stripes are we healed; for as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many were made righteous. He was obedient unto death, and said, For this hour I was born, and for this day came I into the world. On the cross he bowed his head and gave up the ghost, exclaiming, "It is finished." A sacrifice had been made and accepted whereby we poor lost and ruined sinners are redeemed unto God. It was not possible that the tomb should hold the victory over him. The prophet Joel eight hundred years before Christ came prophesied of the outpouring of the Spirit of God, and when it did come all nations praised God in a well known language, and Peter talked freely of the patriarch David, a prophet to whom God had sworn that of the fruit of his loins according to the flesh he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne. He, seeing this beforehand, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses. He says, I am the resurrection and the life. My sheep hear my voice. I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish.

Now, dear sister, what are our hope and evidences of this life? Have we ever felt to be lost and condemned, without hope and without God in this world? If so, it is evidence that we have been killed to the love of sin. Have we ever been made to rejoice in God's mercy? Then we have the evidence within that we have been born again, made alive to righteousness, and by this we may know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. I once asked Elder Flournoy if he thought any one could love the doctrine of God our Savior and embrace the fellowship of the children of God, and not be born of the Spirit? He said they could not, for love is the fruit of the Spirit. This has given me much comfort, for I know the carnal mind is not subject to, neither can know the law of God. Astonished men of Galilee stood gazing into the heavens, whither Christ had ascended, and heard the glorious news that he would come again. Does not our hope hold forth this anticipation in earnest pleasure that at his coming the saints will come forth, and by the power of Jesus, our resurrection, enter into the joys that are everlasting around the throne of God, where Christ is now entered and is making intercession for us?

I see my letter is getting long, so I will stop with this brief account of what I hope I have seen and felt of the coming

of Jesus to do his Father's will. Dear sister, knowing your lonely manner of life, being cut off from the association with Baptists and church privileges, I have felt a desire to write something for your comfort. Hoping the mantle of charity will be manifest when you read it, I will now wish you a Merry Christmas, with love to you, Mr. McKinney and the little girls.

Yours truly, W. L. HALL.

PORTLAND, Ind., Oct. 25, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I received a letter to-day from Elder C. E. Jackson, of Galion, Ohio, which I believe would make good reading for the brethren, if it meets your approval. I asked him to write on what the opening of the eyes of Adam and Eve when they saw their nakedness typified in the experiences of the children of grace, and I think he has given a very able and satisfactory answer.

In hope, NEWTON PETERS.

GALION, Ohio, Oct. 21, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER PETERS:—Your very good letter was received some time ago, and I was, as ever, very glad to hear from you, also glad you were well, and hope you are still both enjoying the same great blessing; we are all as well as common.

Now as to the Scripture you have asked me to give my views on. It looks as though the whole of Adam and Eve's sojourn in the garden, and their transgression of God's law, and the judgment God passed on them, and his covering them with skins, were typical of something. In the first place, the woman transgressed the law. Now we are told she was Adam's bride, and flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones. She was led into the transgression not knowing what it would lead to, and by her disobedience she died, and was separated from her former standing. Now Adam knew what he was doing, he went into this transgression because he loved his bride, so as to be with his bride. The church is the bride of Christ, which sinned, or was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who had subjected the same in hope. Now as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive; that is, all in Christ. The bride had sinned, was condemned by the righteous law of God, and was dead. Christ saved his bride, and he came down just where she was: made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. So just as the God of heaven made a covering to hide the nakedness of our forefather and his bride, just so Christ prepared a covering to cover all the nakedness of his bride. He took her sins out of the way and nailed them to his cross, and clothed her in the robe of righteousness that he wrought out on Mount Calvary, sanctified her, and cleansed her, and presented her to himself, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish. Adam and Eve did not know they were naked until they had eaten of the forbidden fruit and the eyes of their understanding were opened. So with the bride of Christ; until the eyes of her understanding were opened she did not know she was naked, but when the Lord opened her eyes she could see that she was naked, lost, ruined and undone; but before her eyes were opened she was just where Eve was, in the land of paradise; she felt rich now, thought she was able to save herself, and could thank God she was not as others were;

so with Eve, she transgressed the law of God, but did not know it until the Lord opened her eyes, and then she knew she was naked, and the first thing she did, just like all of the Lord's children, was to sew fig leaves together to try and cover her nakedness. When the Lord opens the eyes of one's understanding, and he sees he is a poor lost sinner, justly condemned, he tries to cover himself with the works of his own hands, good works, good resolutions and everything else he can think of, to find favor with God, to find in the end they are all but filthy rags, and will not hide his nakedness from the all-seeing eye of the eternal God, and he sees that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, and that that robe of wrought needlework is the only thing that will cover his sins. Since by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned; and as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive, for as all of the carnal family die in Adam, their natural head, even so all the spiritual family shall live in the second Adam, as their spiritual Head, for he came to give life to his sheep, and said, I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; and just as all of the human family were in Adam, just so were all the heavenly family in Christ, and we are told they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love.

Well, dear brother, I will close, as I have made this too long already, and have hardly touched the subject, and I do not feel I can write anything to comfort you or any of the Lord's children, for it seems the more I think on these things the less I know, and most of the time I feel I do not know anything.

Hoping this will find you all well, and to hear from you soon, I am, as ever, a poor sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all,

C. E. JACKSON.

WATERLOO, Ore., April 21, 1913.

MR. AND MRS. JERRY BROWN—DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER:—Your much appreciated letter is at hand, and has been read with much interest. I had begun to think and hope that sister Hattie would prompt you again to write, as my wife often has to chide me for putting off my correspondence. Our meeting just concluded was one of much interest. I had hoped to see some of the good brethren from Marcola there. I somehow feel an especial interest in the brethren there, for well I know that little Mohawk has been sorely tried in the furnace of affliction, but let us remember though the furnace be heated seven times hotter than is wont to be the case, still the Lord can preserve. The three Hebrew children were seen walking in the midst of the fiery depths with the fourth, whose appearance was like unto the Son of God to the king. How did he know this? Yet he did know, and was made to give testimony which has been so beneficial to the children of God while journeying on their daily pilgrimage seeking that city whose maker and builder is God. It was because of their faith that they were cast into the furnace. It was because of Daniel's faith that he was cast into the den of lions, and in all ages it has been true that he that will live godly in Christ Jesus has suffered persecution. And why? Because the trial of their faith, which is more precious than that of gold, which perisheth, shall be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. The blessed Master

said, I will never leave you nor forsake you. He does not leave us to travel the fiery depths of trials and persecutions, and to feel the depravity of a corrupt heart alone. Lo! I see the fourth. It is there that our living Redeemer, Prophet, Priest and King is manifested in the wonderful deliverance of his children. It is there that we feel his life-giving and soul-renewing power, which enables us to emerge, not having the smell of fire upon our garments, to the great astonishment of our persecutors.

Now, my dear brother, I hardly as yet dare to promise, but will say, the Lord willing, I hope to be at your May meeting. I would have liked much to have been with you this month, but I cannot, on account of my farm work. We have arranged to have a three days' meeting in June; you will see the announcement later. I hope that many of the brethren from Marcola can meet with us.

As the hour is nearly eleven, and all are sleeping, I will have to bring this letter to a close, so farewell, brother, may the Lord God abundantly bless you all, and sustain you in all tribulations.

Your brother, A. HORNER.

DUNCAN, Okla., Dec. 26, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel that I want to drop you a line in my weakness, in remembrance of your kindness in sending me the paper. May the Lord bless you, for the Savior said, Whosoever giveth one of my disciples a cup of water in my name shall not lose his reward. Dear brethren, how much the SIGNS has been, and is, to me in my old age. It contains nearly all the preaching I have. O blessed thought to me, that I am remembered by the dear saints who have never seen me in the flesh. I fully believe if they knew me as I do they would have no fellowship for me, for I can say with Paul, I am the chief of sinners, yet I hope I can say, His grace is sufficient for me, and his blood cleanses me from all sin. Yes, my dear kindred, this is my hope, and has been for years. Although I have traveled in darkness, and doubts and trembling, yet it seems that I have been permitted to taste the dew of Hermon a little here and there, and it was as honey and the honeycomb. "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." What blessed hope, to eat and drink in his kingdom. A few nights ago I awoke upon my sick bed and the words came to me, How precious also are all thy thoughts unto me. My soul was filled with joy, and for several days this Scripture was with me, and I said, Surely the Lord has remembered me in my low estate. Upon me, who am less than nothing, has this grace been bestowed. Being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my Master's brethren, wherein do I rejoice, for it is a place of broad rivers to me, to dwell with the dear saints of God. "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!" said David. Dear brethren and sisters, I sit here alone and meditate upon the goodness of God, none to converse with, the SIGNS being all the spiritual company I have. I have heard two sermons in two years; one by brother Keeny, of Michigan, the other by brother Moody, of Oklahoma, a young brother. They both brought out things both new and old from the Lord's storehouse, and, dear brethren, I felt that I was gleaning fast by the maidens, as Ruth did. O how sweet to my taste. "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee:" for thy God is my God. The good letters that are in our paper are a delight to me. If I could only write as the correspondents do I

would write oftener, but I have not the pen of a ready writer. But, my kindred in Christ, let me be still and know that God is God, and he knoweth me, and his grace is sufficient for me. If this grace has been bestowed upon me I shall be gathered with the redeemed of the Lord, there to dwell with the dear Savior, where there is life and peace for evermore. Dear brethren and sisters, if we have hope only in this life we are of all men most miserable; but our hope is in Jesus beyond this vale of tears. We are traveling through this wilderness, waiting for the redemption of our body.

Now, my dear friends, I will close by asking you all to remember in your prayers one who feels to be the least of all saints, if one at all. May God's grace be ever towards his children in these low grounds of sorrow. I hope I am a sister to the children of God. This may be my last, as I have been sick for some time, not able to walk, and am so blind I cannot see to write, but I wanted to thank God's dear children for their liberal contribution to me, a poor old sinner. O how good the Lord is, and has been to me all my life. Bless the Lord, all ye people, and praise him, all ye saints.

Do as you please with this, and all will be right with me.

In hope of eternal life, which is in Christ Jesus, NANCY CREEL.

MINERAL WELLS, Texas, Dec. 9, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will please find money order for two dollars to renew my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It would afford me great pleasure to assist in sending the SIGNS to the "Poor of the Flock," but conditions at present forbid me doing so. About a year ago it became necessary for the church at Mineral Wells to build a new meeting-house, and at that time there were only eight members. We bought a nice lot, 80 by 120 feet, on the street car line in Lawn Place addition to Mineral Wells, and built a neat, substantial house, without asking aid from any one, although we had to borrow $250 from the bank, and we lack $75 of having that paid out. We are a happy little band now, eleven in number. Sweet peace, love and true fellowship reign with us, for which we sincerely desire to thank and praise our dear heavenly Father and Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. How much we enjoy meeting together and feasting on the truths of the pure gospel, the Lord himself being with us, and he puts such sweet and gracious words in the mouth of his humble servant, our pastor, Elder J. H. Fisher, that tongue or pen can never tell.

I did not think of writing so much when I began, and still the half has not been told of the mercies and blessings of the Lord to this little flock here at Mineral Wells. The privilege of reading the SIGNS is one among the many blessings we thank God for. Please pardon me for taking up so much of your valuable time with this poor letter.

Yours in hope of eternal life, through the merits of our risen Lord,

(MRS.) W. W. HOWARD.

MOODY, Ark., Jan. 2, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—After a vain effort to get some Old Predestinarian Baptists to come and locate here I have decided, if the Lord wills, to go among the brethren in search of a home. I am well fixed here, but palaces are prisons without the association and fellowship of the poor for they are my people, if not deceived. I ask any who feel interested to write me.

J. P. BAKER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1914.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

OUR SINS.

WHEN men sin, is it because they cannot, or because they will not, obey God? This question has been discussed somewhat of late in different localities through the papers, and it has rested somewhat upon our own mind. We have no question concerning the teaching of the Scriptures upon this matter. It is clear that they teach that both statements are true, as regards unregenerate men. They both cannot, and will not, cease from sin. The Scriptures are clear as to the whole bent and aim of the heart or will of man. It is declared that before the flood, God did look down from heaven to see if there were any that did good, and that did seek after God. The result of the searching of that all-seeing eye was, that he found none that did good, or that did seek after him. And he declared that every imagination of the heart of man was evil, and only evil, and that continually. Such was the condition of man. So totally depraved was he that there was nothing in him that did tend toward righteousness. The declaration just referred to says the same thing precisely as does the apostle when he declared that men were dead in trespasses and sins. The dead surely cannot be supposed to have any longing after life, because the Word emphatically declares that they know not anything. Besides, it is declared in the Word that men cannot cease from sin. The doctrine of total depravity has always been abhorrent to proud, vain man. The most grievous criminal will not admit that he is totally depraved. The vilest murderer will contend that some one else has done worse than he. But the depravity of man is not measured by what appears in the outward life. God, by his providence, and in other ways, has put restraints around his creatures, that they cannot act out all the hidden evil of the heart. Were it not so, earth would be uninhabitable. The depravity of man is stated in the Scriptures as being inherent. Man is depraved in all his parts. The earthly house of this tabernacle is not only affected with the leprosy, but it has penetrated into every stone of the structure. We cannot say of any faculty of our being that it is good. Owing to the restraints of providence which are thrown around man, no one acts as bad as he is. This is what is implied in the expression, "The wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." Some men are restrained from acting out the wrath that is in them more than are others; or at least they are not suffered to act it out in the same way. The thief on the cross was no worse a man by nature than was Saul of Tarsus. The vice and open crime of the one was no more vile in the sight of God, who searches the heart and sees not according to appearance, than was the righteousness of the other, which led to boasting in the sight of God. In his sight open crime and vice are no more to be condemned than is that religion which exalts men and sets them to boasting before God. It is not

what men do, neither is it what men feel, that fixes their state in the mind of God, and before his justice, but what men are. And though one man may have been so restrained in his life by various causes that he lives a moral and charitable life, according to the judgment of his fellow-men, yet as he has not had God in all his thoughts, and he seeks not the glory of God, but his own glory, he in the sight of the Searcher of hearts is deemed no less guilty and depraved than is that man who has lived out what is in him, in the way of open vice and folly. The testimony of the apostle in the first two chapters of Romans settles this matter with all who believe the Scriptures. Paul there makes no difference; he declares all to be vile alike. Beside this, all christian experience teaches the same thing. Isaiah said, "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." All were alike vile in his sight, when he saw the glory of the righteousness of God, as recorded in the sixth chapter of his prophecy. So Paul would not admit that any one was a greater sinner than himself. He said, "Of whom I am chief." Hundreds whom we have ourselves known, whose outward lives were such that they were regarded as models of what was desirable in men and women, have confessed that the Lord had shown them that no good thing dwelt in them by nature, and have insisted that none could be more vile than they; and christian experience does not lie. Thus it is clear from both the testimony of the Scriptures and of experience, that there is no difference, and that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Indeed, when we consider that the law of God is all summed up in the two commandments, love to God and to the neighbor, we shall find that this awful truth of total and universal depravity stands out still more clearly. Men by nature do not love God with all their powers; they do not love him at all; they do not like to retain him in their knowledge. What greater depth of depravity could be imagined than this? All men are included in this, no matter what the good morals of their outward life may be. God is not in all their thoughts. This sums it all up; this is the greatest depth of depravity. No man can be worse than this, and this is the state of all men by nature. Let us remember that the apostle said, "There is no difference." Whatever the appearance of difference may be in men, there is no difference at all. God has said so, and it must be so. Therefore men cannot cease from sin; it is in them, and what is within settles the state of men. Human depravity of nature prevents men from doing anything else but sin. Whatever they do it is a sinful nature out of which it springs. All is sin that has not the love of God as its motive or spring. A bitter fountain cannot send forth sweet waters, and the fountain is bitter in all men, by nature. The outflowing streams are also bitter, however fair they may seem to be in the sight of men. Surely this will not be disputed. What a mercy from God, then, that man is guided and controlled by his power, (not by his grace, but by his power,) so that he does not act out all that is in him. There is no praise due to men who do not do ill, but all credit and praise is due to God, who restrains the wrath that is really in them. Paul felt this when he confessed that in his flesh dwelt no good thing. If no good thing was there, then all must have heen vile. Men who are in the flesh have nothing but vileness. Is not this total depravity? But when men

cannot cease from sin, it is because they will not. The fact that they will not turn from sin, is the chief factor in the fact that they cannot. How can a man who wills to continue in sin, turn from it? It is this very will that settles the matter of sin, in the outward life. The will is itself depraved. It is of course a faculty of the mind, and as the whole man, body, soul and spirit, is sold under sin, so also is this faculty of the mind or, if any choose to so speak of it, this act of the mind. The mind of the unregenerate man cannot will anything else but to sin. Because the mind cannot will to cease from sin, therefore he cannot cease. The will is not free, because it is sold under sin. It has become enslaved as completely as any other part of the man. Therefore it is true that men both cannot and will not cease from sin. There is no need to discuss the question, then, as to whether when men sin, it is because they will not or cannot. Both are true; they cannot, and they will not, cease from sin.

It is utterly profitless to discuss the state of the will of man before the fall. We know that then sin had no dominion over man in any of his faculties, else he could not have been said to have been upright. He over whom another reigns cannot be said to be upright. He bows his head to a yoke. But since the transgression, men are slaves to sin; sin reigns, and reigns unto death. Neither is it worth while to argue that if this is true, men are not justly accountable for their sins. That is, that men are not really blameworthy. This brings us to state again what we have once before called attention to in this editorial, viz., what men are is what the Bible testifies to. Men are condemned for what they are, rather than for what they have done. What men do is only the index of what they are. It is what men are in the sight of God, and not in their own sight, that we mean. The fair appearance cannot deceive the all-seeing eye. When it is said in the Word that men cannot cease from sin, the language is used to present the exceeding guilt of men. It is not used to excuse or palliate their sin, but rather to show its exceeding enormity. The fact that the will of men is not free, but sold under the dominion of sin, is an aggravation of the guilt of men, instead of being an excuse or a plea, that men cannot be held guilty unless the will is free. We repeat that it is useless to discuss what was the state of the will of man before the fall. We are interested in knowing what its state is now, and the Word tells us that it is enslaved, and is not free.

Thus far we have spoken of the unregenerate portion of mankind. Let us now call attention to the part of mankind who have been born again, and have been made free in Christ. When they sin, is it because they will not cease from sin, or because they cannot? Here again both the word of God, and the facts of personal experience, testify with no uncertain testimony. Notwithstanding the fact that admonitions are given almost without number, notwithstanding the fact that all motives are urged that divine wisdom saw needful to be presented to the believer, notwithstanding the fact that the believer himself abhors sin, and prays constantly to be given the victory over it, notwithstanding all the help which the presence and the admonitions of loving brethren can do, each believer testifies as did Paul, I cannot do the good that I would. (Galatians v. 17; Romans vii.) We recall that when but a child, we heard men argue against this doctrine,

and as they argued they would ridicule it, and call it the "can't help it" doctrine. "Why," they said, "the believer can do good, and there is no need that he should ever do otherwise," and when some humble-hearted believer among them, who had become convinced of his weakness, and proneness to do wrong, would confess to this, he would be told that he was all wrong, and that it was folly to talk in this way. We recall how many times our own heart was distressed by such words from those around us, in whom we at the time had confidence, and we would turn away sad, convinced that we were not as they were, and wishing that we could be like them. We had learned at a very early age that notwithstanding all the earnestness of desire which filled us to do right, and to serve God, and notwithstanding all the resolutions which we made, and made in all earnestness, that we would abstain from sin, we were never able to live one day, or for that matter one moment, without the consciousness of the presence of sin in our heart, and its affecting all our words and actions in life, and we could not help it. How to do good we found not. How to abstain from sin we found not. It seems passing strange that those who do really know the plague of their own heart, and the warfare which every believer must know and feel, can adopt the arguments and assertions of open Arminians, and contend that we can do the good that we would. And especially have we felt to wonder that they should cast up the old slur against the doctrine of Paul, and the experience of all who love God, and call them "Can't help its." We remember that we rejoiced as we read the language of Paul, in our youth, to find that Paul said that he could not do what he would. We have found that it was so with us, and we could but rejoice that inspiration had said the same thing of the eminent apostle. We feel the same way yet. We cannot do the good that we would. We do that which we would not, because we cannot help it. This is our experience, and we derive grief from it, and yet hope, since we find ourself in the company of the apostle. We do not rejoice that it is so, but being that it is so, we do rejoice that it was so with the apostle. But there is this difference between those who know not God and those who do know him. Of the one it is true that they both cannot and will not serve God, and cease from sin. Of the believer it is true that he wills to serve God, and to turn from sin, but complains that he cannot do the good that he would. The one does not complain, but is satisfied to go on in sin, while the child of God groans under the burden, desiring to put it off forever, and find rest from the conflict. And what a difference is this; and grace alone has wrought it in us. But the work of grace is not completed; the period is coming when we not only shall be able to say, Not only do I will to do right, but I am able to do right. That however is when the work of redemption shall be fully completed; and we shall be satisfied when we awake with his likeness. So long as we remain below we shall complain that we cannot do the good that we would. But how great is the work which has given us a will to do the will of God. For this let us be thankful, and rejoice and praise infinite mercy, while yet we mourn that all that we desire is not ours yet; but it shall be ours. Not one longing desire shall be unsatisfied. Our God opens his hand, and satisfies the desire of every living thing. If God satisfies the lesser wants of his creatures, shall he not

much more satisfy the chief desire with that which is better than bread?

But why cannot we do the good that we would? There is one and only one reason that the child of God realizes as what hinders him. He says it is the flesh, the old man, the law in the members, which always is with him, and which holds him back from his joys. He blames himself, and feels condemned, because he is so slow to work righteousness. He says, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then sometimes, like Paul, he rises to the height of faith, and sees Jesus as his salvation, and then exclaims, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." "I find a will to do God's will, but I find a hindrance in myself, which will not let me. I cannot help sin. Yet I want to be righteous, and to do righteousness." The more that the true light shines in the heart, and the more perfectly we realize the conformity which we desire to God's will in the spirit, the more shall we complain that we cannot attain to what we would in righteousness. In fact this conformity to the will of God in the spirit, is as a light which reveals to us our distance from God in the flesh. C.

[WE republish the above editorial by request of one of our Canadian brethren.]

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Silas H. Durand, at his home in Southampton, Pa., Dec. 25th, 1913, Douglass D. Durand and Ruth Vantier, both of Philadelphia, Pa.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, Jan. 1st, 1914, Charles B. Morris, of Baltimore, Md., and Miss Bertha Emmalyn Beauchamp, at the home of her parents, near Snow Hill, Md.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at his home, Leesburg, Va., Dec. 30th, 1913, Claggett O. Myers and Miss Nellie M. Ward, both of Loudoun County, Va.

By the same, Jan. 10th, 1914, at his home, Leesburg, Va., Leroy Covert, of Washington, D. C., and Miss Myrtle R. Turner, of Leesburg, Va.

By Elder W. L. Rogers, Nov. 23rd, 1913, at the bride's residence in Hillsboro, Texas, Elder S. N. Stephens and Mrs. Mary Buntyn, widow of Elder J. B. Buntyn.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Dr. R. Cummins, a pioneer resident of Touchet, Wash., peacefully passed away Dec. 12th, at the age of 83 years, 5 months and 8 days. Dr. Cummins was born in Spencer County, Ind., July 4th, 1830. He moved to Wapello County, Iowa, in 1848, and while there he studied medicine in 1850 and 1851, and practiced medicine in the same place until May, 1864, when he emigrated to California and graduated in the California Medical Association at San Francisco and practiced in that state until 1878, when he was called back to Iowa by the illness and death of his brother, after which he came to Washington and settled near Touchet and followed his profession until he lost his hearing, after which he did office work only. Dr. Cummins was first married to Catherine Tolbert, of Iowa, July 28th, 1852. To that union one son was born, D. E. Cummins, March 16th, 1855, and Nov. 5th, 1856, he was called to give up his companion in death, and Nov. 5th, 1857, he was married to Mary Jane Higdon, of Iowa, Elder Flint officiating at both marriages. To that union two sons were born: A. C. Cummins, who preceded his father in death about four months, and J. M. Cummins, of Montana. After coming to Washington he was called to give up his second wife in death July 7th, 1893, and Sept. 23rd, 1894, he was married to Mrs. Sarah J. Waldon, Elder McDonald officiating, who still lives to mourn the loss of a dear companion. Dr. Cummins was a man who delighted in public life. After he retired from the practice of medicine he engaged in the mercantile business, and was postmaster here for many years. His public life gave him a large acquaintance, and he was respected by all who knew him. In all his dealings truth and honesty were the principles and foundation upon which all his business

was done. Truly the community feels the loss of such a noble man.

After giving a short sketch of the life of the late Dr. R. Cummins pertaining to this life, we desire to give a short history of his relation to his God, his heavenly Father, his church. Many of the readers of the SIGNS who have never met him have learned to know him by his writings. He had been a reader of that paper from its beginning. He was a dear lover of the doctrine set forth by the SIGNS. He was very particular to save every number, and at the end of each volume had them bound in book form. I now have them in my library, and esteem them as jewels. Dr. Cummins received a hope in Jesus in 1850, and after trying hard for four years to feel worthy to ask the church for a home with them, he, like the poor man who after lying so long by the pool, had to take up his bed (unworthiness) and walk, so in 1854 he asked Moravia Church for a home, was received, and baptized by the late Elder Joseph Armstrong. While brother Cummins' life had been one which brought him in contact with all classes of mankind, he esteemed above everything else his church privileges, and never allowed his business to keep him from his church meetings. The writer has been intimately acquainted with him for twelve years. A more spiritually-minded and devoted brother I never met. He was well versed in the Scriptures, and his delight was to converse on them. The last few years his health as well as his hearing failed him, so that he was not able to attend to the business which demanded his attention. His oldest son, D. E., and wife, came from California to care for their father and mother, in which they showed a noble spirit in children for their parents. After his son took charge of the business, the father and mother spent their time reading and conversing with the brethren. It seems the words of the apostle, when he spoke of the perishing of the outer man and renewing of the inner man, was demonstrated in brother Cummins. We could see he was failing fast in body, but it seemed he grew in grace. He realized he could not live long, and often spoke of it, and seemed to rejoice, and expressed a desire to go. He was wonderfully blessed in his last days, with his mind so exercised on divine things, and while he will be wonderfully missed in the vicinity, yet none outside of the family will miss him like his church, and surely none can miss him as much as I, for he was a true father in Israel to me in all my trials and afflictions; he seemed to so understand them that he could apply the right remedy. He was a peacemaker in Israel, and often requested the writer to go with him to churches where fellowship was likely to be broken, and even where it had been broken; his mind and heart were ever with his brethren. He was established in the doctrine, and while he was charitable and desired peace, he desired it on principles, as he never felt it right to sacrifice any point of the doctrine. He loved to engage with his brethren in singing the songs of Zion. He had to use his ear-trumpet in his last years in conversation, and he used an electric instrument in hearing preaching.

He had requested Elder Mayfield to attend his funeral, and selected the hymn and text to be used. The hymn is No. 185 in Durand & Lester's book, and the text John xi. 25, 26. Elder Mayfield not being able to attend, I tried to comfort the bereaved family and large concourse of friends from the same text, after which we laid the body to rest in the Touchet cemetery in the blessed hope that the same Spirit which raised our blessed Master from the tomb would quicken his body and raise immortal, and we were made to feel as Job, to say all our appointed days we will wait until our change comes, and then we will be satisfied. Our prayer is that God may strengthen and comfort the bereaved ones, and may Benjamin's portion be measured to dear old sister Cummins in her lonely hours. J. T. BARNES.

TOUCHET, Wash.

Mrs. Lucinda Cockrill passed away from earth and all its lights and shadows, at her home near Hunter's Mill, Faixfax Co., Va., Friday, Jan. 2nd, 1914. She was the daughter of the late William and Jane Boswell, and born at Rockville, Montgomery Co., Md., May 4th, 1829. She was first married to James W. Allen, who lived, I think, but three months after the marriage, by whom she had one child, who is now dead. Afterward she was married to Henry W. Cockrill, in April, 1855, and to that union were born fourteen children. Of this large family three daughters, one step-daughter (a daughter of Mr. Cockrill by a former marriage) and four sons, together with the aged husband, are left to survive her and to mourn their loss in the departure from the family circle of one who filled the place of wife and mother in the very best and truest sense of those relationships. Mrs. Cockrill never made a public profession of religion, but for years and years was an attendant of the meetings at the old Frying Pan Church, and was not ashamed to openly avow her hearty accord with all the doctrine and experience contended for by the ministry at that place. She loved strong meat, the stronger the better, and as for the absolute predestination of all things, and salvation alone by free and reigning grace, such themes were food and drink to her soul. She rejoiced in the able ministry of such heaven-sent men as Trott, Gilbert Beebe, Purington, Leachman and White.

Her funeral services, though the weather was inclement, were largely attended, and the neighborhood bore silent testimony, by their presence, to the esteem in which she was held. These services were held in Andrew Chapel, not far from her home, the

writer using as a text Job i. 21. Interment in the cemetery adjacent to the chapel.

The bereaved husband, who for fifty-nine years traveled in devoted companionship with this beloved woman, keenly feels his loss. May God comfort him, as well as every one of the children, and reconcile them to this dispensation that has befallen them.

This notice is written at the request of the family, and it has been a real privilege to testify to such strength of character.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

APPOINTMENTS.

I AM sending the following appointments for Elder D. M. Vail:

Kingston, Jan. 22nd, at 58 Smith Ave.; Olive, Jan. 23rd; Union Grove, fourth Sunday; brother Faulkner's, Jan. 26th; Vega, Jan. 28th; Roxbury, Jan. 29th, at home of Mead sisters.

J. B. SLAUSON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Dr. B. P. Earle, Ky., $1.00; C. H. Vandyke, Ill., $1.00; Mrs. L. Morgan, Mo., $1.00; Mrs. Hannah E. Scarsborough, Md., $1.00; Mrs. E. R. Churchill, Ind., $2.00; Simeon Hiltabrand, Ill., $3.00; Mrs. P. W. Koebig, N. J., $1.00; Mrs. Sarah A. McColl, Ont., $2.00; J. A. Tandy, Okla., $1.00.—Total, $13.00.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)]

These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Our assortment of small books embraces:

Cloth Binding, per copy, 75 cents; per dozen, $6.00.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 82. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1914. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PORTLAND, Ind., Aug. 25, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—Our esteemed brother, O. B. Hickerson, of Nashville, Tenn., has requested that I write something regarding what is meant by the words in the Song of Solomon viii. 5, which read as follows: "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? I raised thee up under the apple tree: there thy mother brought thee forth; there she brought thee forth that bare thee." Brother Hickerson wants to know who it was that was raised up under the apple tree. I have thought it was the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife. The Song of Solomon is the most peculiar of the Old Testament, as it appears to me, for it seems to be a conversation between Christ and his spouse. It is a love story between Christ and the church, who is called the daughter of Zion, and in this conversation each seems to be pouring out their love for each other in the most endearing terms possible to be expressed; each seems to strive to outdo the other in lavishing their expressions of affection for each other. No one can read this wonderful book without realizing that there exists a marvelous bond of love between Christ and the church. The spouse pours forth in words of wonderful love her affection for her husband. She portrays his many excellent qualities and his admirable appearance, and declares that he is to her the chief among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely, that he has all the beauty that a bride could desire, and that he possesses all the love for her that a bride could desire. She expresses herself that he stands so far above all others that there is none to compare with him. She declares that he fills her heart's desire in every way, and that in comparison he is as the apple tree among the trees of the wood. She declares how he brought her into his banqueting-house and his banner over her was love; that she sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to her taste. In declaring that she sat down under his shadow she sets forth that she was thus protected from the heat of the natural sun, or rather, that the apple tree was a shield over her. In declaring that the fruit was sweet to her taste, Christ is figured forth as a tree that produces fruit. Thus she

declares that he is all things to her, and that she rejoices, as does every one of the members of his bride, to be enriched by his love and to be permitted to taste of his heavenly graces. Thus it is the bride of Christ who is raised up under this apple tree, under the protection of his hand. She requests that if any one of the daughters of Zion shall see him they shall tell him that she is sick of love. She is constantly yearning for him. In him she lives, moves and has her being, and without him she can do nothing. She tells how, after she had retired to her couch, that she heard her beloved knocking, and saying, Open to me, my sister, my spouse. She had been sleeping, but he appeared unto her in the still hours of the night. How sweetly the hearts of the saints seem to commune with what they feel to be his presence in the dark hours of the night. When the night is come in their experience, and darkness has enshrouded them, and they seem to be asleep, still their hearts wake and they feel that it is Christ knocking at the door, or in some other way coming to them. The bridegroom seems as much interested in the bride as the bride is in him. He visits her, and desires to be admitted into her presence, saying, "Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled." This was spoken in the most endearing manner, and he adds, "My head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night." All this indicated his great desire to be within his garden, his church, and to be admitted to the presence of his bride, to share in her wonderful love. Each is necessary to the other. He tells her that he has come to dwell with her. He says, "I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on?" This indicates that he had purposed to stay through the night of Zion's darkness, and if he is to dwell with her through this long night how could he appear as though he would not remain through the night, by putting on his coat again? He said, "How shall I put it on?" This means, How can I leave thee? He declared that in preparation he had washed his feet, and said, "How shall I defile them?" After coming to her with clean feet he desired not to go out again and thus defile his feet. These are figurative expressions, and portray most beautifully Christ's never-failing love for his bride, the church, and also show his wonderful preparations to appear in her presence with comfort and consolation. He also declares that he comes not only to console and comfort her, but that he is as much delighted in mingling with the church as the church is in him. Here is where two loves meet. The church says in this connection, "My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door." Here the Zion of God sees the hand of the bridegroom reaching out for her through the door of the house of God. This seems to be the only proper place for entrance into the fold. The bridegroom himself is the door of the church, and it is in his own way that he comes into the house of God, where his bride dwells. This is called his banqueting-house, where he brought her when his banner over her was love. In Ephesians, fifth chapter, Paul tells us that Christ so loved the church that he gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that he might present it unto himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish, and in the Song the bridegroom declares of his bride, "There is no spot in thee." Those who have had a view of themselves, and

have seen what they really are by nature, can hardly see how it can possibly be that Christ can be so filled with love for the church that he can say of her, "There is no spot in thee," or how it is that he can present her unto himself having no spot or wrinkle, but holy and without blemish. But when he washed her in his own blood, and took all her sins upon himself, and clothed her in his wonderful robe of righteousness, she then, in the eyes of the law, stood completely cleared of every claim against her, and hence perfectly acquitted of every sin. When sin has been atoned for and forgiven and Christ's righteousness has been counted their righteousness, and his obedience their obedience, then we can see how it can be said of them that there is no spot in them. We may be helped to arrive at an understanding of how this can be by considering the union or relationship between husband and wife. The wife may have been ten thousand talents in debt, but because her husband has such unbounded love for her, and they are in union one, he freely cancels all her debt, and she stands clear in the eyes of the law, for when her legal husband paid the debt, in the eye of the law it was the same as if she had paid it; and hence her husband after paying the debt for her has no legal claim against her, for all he made use of to pay her debt, because of the marriage union, was just as much hers as his in the eyes of the law; therefore his money was her money, and her debts were as much his as hers. In marrying him she married all that he had, and in his marrying her he made himself liable for all the claims against her. Hence all the church can claim for her justification is that she was redeemed from condemnation through marrying one who became responsible for everything the law held against her. The bride did not atone for her own sin, but her husband did; the bride did not cleanse herself, but her husband cleansed her; the bride did not save herself, but her husband did save her, and hence all that the saints can claim as a reason why they might be allowed to hope in God's mercy is because of marriage relationship in Christ. We love our companions so that we forgive and overlook all imperfections, and do not want to remember anything against them. In reading the Song of Solomon, and marking how Christ has portrayed his love in the most endearing terms that it seems possible to use, then it is we get a glimpse of why he endured so much for his people, and then we realize more fully the meaning of his own words in John, telling of the sheep and sheepfold, and how the good shepherd will lay down his life for his sheep. He says, "I lay down my life for the sheep." Again he says, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." Thus there is a fountain opened unto the house of Israel for uncleanness. How good it is there is such a fountain. Here is where the bride is washed and made white. This is how it is that she can be said to be without spot before God. "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." Living waters shall flow out of Jerusalem, part toward the former sea and part toward the hinder sea. This language has seemed to me to mean that the blood of Christ reached back to Adam, the hinder sea, and flowed forward to the last of time, which is the former sea. Christ has compared his church, or bride, in this Song, to a garden inclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. He also calls her an orchard of pomegranates, a well of living water, and declares that she has ravished his eyes

with her beauty. Both Christ and the church have described in this wonderful Song how each is charmed with the beauty of the other. As an encouragement to the cast down child of God the bridegroom sets forth how greatly he is charmed with the beauty of the church. He tells how he comes into his garden among the beds of spices and they flow out toward him. How often when the saints meet together for worship, and they begin to sing some of the songs of Zion, are their hearts filled with love. They feel that his presence is with them. Where two or three are gathered together in his name, there is he in the midst. That Christ raised up his church, is set forth by the pen of Isaiah, where the church proclaims that he has taken her up out of an horrible pit, and out of the miry clay, and placed her feet upon a rock, and established her goings, and put a new song in her mouth, even praise to his name. In Ezekiel the Lord said, I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee, Live. When Christ raised up the church under the apple tree he wrote his laws in her heart and printed them in her mind, and promised to be unto her a God and that they should be unto him a people, and that they all should know him, from the least to the greatest of them, and he declared that all her children should be taught of the Lord. Here under the apple tree she is kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time.

The Song of Solomon is the greatest love story ever written. Jesus has said there is nothing stronger than love, and that a man would give all that he had for love, that love is as strong as death and as cruel as the grave. Love was the great moving cause that brought salvation down to men. Jesus said, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." It is written, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Love is the one thing that can hold brethren together. We may have rules of decorum as long as the moral law, and church disciplines many, but without love no rules or discipline will hold brethren together. Now, as Paul has said, if God has so loved us, we ought also to love one another. In the text under consideration the question is asked, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" Here the church is set forth as leaning upon Christ, her beloved. The legal church was forty years in the wilderness, and could move only when the cloud moved by day or the pillar of fire by night, but I think the bride of Christ comes up out of the wilderness of sin. As a vine clings to the sturdy oak, so the church is raised up under the apple tree. Hence the saints of God are called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord. In the text it is written, "There thy mother brought thee forth; there she brought thee forth that bare thee." Here they are born of the Spirit. Here is where Zion travails and brings forth her children. Here they are borne on her sides and dandled on her knees. The Savior said, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of heaven, and it shall be said of Zion that man was born in her. Brother Hickerson, here under this apple tree is where all the saints are born; here their mother brings them forth; here Zion, the perfection of beauty, meets her spouse; here is where Zion is delivered of her children, and all

of her children are taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of her children. Have you ever noticed when the love of God was strong among the brethren, and they came together often, how the brethren felt they could not miss the meetings? Then how wonderfully Zion travailed and brought her children. On the other hand, when love began to wax cold, and brethren did not seem to care whether they met together or not, have you not noticed that there was no increase in the church? When Christ and the church, as husband and wife, seem to live apart, there is no begetting. This I think is true of the church always. But where two or three are gathered together in Christ's name, there Christ and his spouse meet in the time of love, and they flow together in the bonds of love. Love or charity will cover a multitude of sins. We may exhort brethren to duty, but in the absence of love all is vain. A strong flame of love will melt the stubbornness and hardness of any brother.

In love, your brother,

NEWTON PETERS.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 3, 1913.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I inclose an article written by mother a few years ago. It seemed to me it would be of interest to all our spiritual family, and I should have sent it sooner, but it is unfinished. I was hoping to find the rest, but have been unable to do so. I will send what there is. I have always been full of a spirit of rebellion that she was not given more joy and comfort in the conscious presence of her Savior, but lately have come to know that this cross also was sent in tenderness and love, for it caused her to have to go far, far deeper than frames and feelings for the ground of her hope, and in her earnest, constant seeking for Him she was given that wisdom which is promised to us when we ask of him. Truly she sought first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and so all things were indeed added unto her, so that through her was given many a word of instruction, of comfort, many a cup of cold water. It may be that the less of light a child of God is given, the more he is to be used for the comfort and help of others. When we are given strength we can thank God even for bitter darkness, if by means of that we can be of help to another.

MILDRED DURAND.

HAVING in my later years so much time for meditation, I find myself often trying to trace over all the way the Lord has led me. If I could write or speak of it to his praise I would do it with great delight, but it is so difficult to decide where I have been the subject of the Spirit's guidance and where I have followed the devices of my own heart. I cannot always do it; perhaps the reader may be given more discernment. The Lord's providence has been about me always. It may not be wrong to speak of that. I cannot think of the Lord without also the thought, His mercy endureth forever. Surely no creature ever needed so much mercy as I, or received so much in a life of sixty-four years. I learned early that God is all-powerful, all-knowing and ever-present. I do not recall a time when these thoughts were not a part of my inner consciousness; they seemed to shape somewhat all my other impressions. I think I could not have been six years old when I first heard discussions about predestination, foreknowledge, &c. I wondered how any one could think that God, who is both omnipotent and omniscient, could possibly fail to know the end

from the beginning. About the same time I heard some talk about natural depravity, original sin, &c. I always, so far as I can recall, thought of all persons, including myself, as sinners in need of some change before they could hope to enjoy heaven after death. I do not remember any deep personal conviction except when overtaken in a fault, when I would often feel as if I were hopelessly bad, and suffer for a time great distress. If punishment came there seemed some sense of expiation in it, and generally it would be followed by a desire to "walk softly" for some time.

We were a strictly moral family, but not a religious one. We were surrounded by churches of nearly all denominations, which we attended in turn, as fancy dictated. I always loved to go, and always paid serious attention, and expected some time to be a church member. For a time I greatly preferred the Methodists, hoping their passionate appeals might arouse some of the feeling I thought I ought to have. I read "Alleine's Alarm" about this time with great diligence, and tried perhaps as hard as any one ever did to feel its force. I was not satisfied with the effect. Time went on, and one after another of my companions made profession of religion, and I recall that in the spring of 1865, after seeing a number of them confirmed in the Episcopal faith, I began seriously to ask myself why I was left alone, for I had scarcely a friend who had not made profession somewhere. I was convinced then that the Episcopal was the church of my choice. I loved the solemn dignity of its services, and the reverent, devoted attitude of those attending them. When the minister would open the service with the words, "The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him," it did seem to me a sacred place. The particular minister I was accustomed to hear was one who knew the truth in his heart and loved it, but could not preach it in its fullness, because bound by the traditions of his denomination. So I resolved that by another year I would overcome this mysterious something which always held me back. I could not feel as it seemed I ought. I wondered if the others did. I could not be sure about all of them, but finally concluded no one had such a hard and impenitent heart as I. A gloom settled upon me and I could not dispel it. I heard constantly at this time about "the divine spark that is in every one's nature," and the necessity of "taking the first step," &c. I spent much time on my knees, and would sometimes spread all this out before the Lord and beg him to help me if it were true. A more blind, helpless creature than I felt myself to be could not well be imagined. Sometimes I would beg the Lord to note my attitude of supplication, for I had no words. There was a long time when "Lord, thou knowest," was repeated over and over in my thoughts almost continually. There was one other consideration that may have had some weight with me. My mother had never made a profession, lovely christian that she was, and I am not sure I could have gone before her. I had many lovely dreams of our going together. Some one said to me once, "You are too much of an Old School Baptist to join any other church." This was not at all to my liking. I had never, I think, found any fault with their doctrine, and I suppose I advocated it if I ever talked on the subject, but the outward appearance of the church was not seemly in my eyes at all. I saw nothing stately or decorous about it, as it seemed to me there should be. I did not know then that

"the kingdom of God is within you." I suppose if I had met the apostle Peter at that time he would not have looked to me as I would expect an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ to look. One other thing I did not know then, neither for a long time afterward: I did not know that one who had named the name of Christ and departed from iniquity could fall into temptation and do iniquitous things. When I learned this bitter truth (after I had become a member of the church) I thought my faith was dead. I did not think I could ever believe in any thing or any person again. I had not gone to my Bible on this point. I did not remember then Peter's sad experience. It always seems to me one of the special things I have to praise the mercy of the Lord for, that I was not suffered to fall into some terrible transgression to show me my error. It was terrible thus to insult the wisdom and justice of the Lord as I did in my thoughts.

I have spoken of my feelings in the spring of 1865. I was then just nineteen. In the summer of that year I heard Elder Wm. J. Purington for the first time. I had heard of him as a man of power and eloquence, and I went to hear him with perhaps much the same motive as I read "Alleine's Alarm," hoping for something, anything, to break up my stony heart. My great desire was that I might feel, and surely that was granted, for from the first word until the last I was shaken with emotion. It seems to me now that I was so much overjoyed because my heart had at last been touched that I gave little attention to what was said; but I do not know how that may have been, I had surely heard a joyful sound of some kind, and I walked as in a dream for some time. "Ye must be born again" was the subject, and as he dwelt upon "The wind bloweth where it listeth," it was wonderfully impressive. Before long, however, I recalled an illustration he had used in speaking of the preaching of the Word, saying it was like the rain which waters so beneficently the parched soil, nourishing vegetation, while it only "spattered the stones" on which it fell. Immediately my comfort was gone, for I saw myself as the stone, and I resolved never to hear him again, as comfort so short-lived as that was worse than none. But I did not keep my resolution, and lost no opportunity to hear during the year, and always with the same feeling of delight such as I had never known before in anything. I was more anxious in May, 1866, to attend the association at Black Rock than I had ever been to go anywhere. I longed to hear the old ministers, whose names I had long known. There were giants in the earth in those days. Elder Trott and Elder Conklin had not yet been called home, but were soon afterward. Elders Beebe, Barton, Leachman, C. B. Hassell, Joseph L. and Wm. J. Purington were all still very active in the service; Elders Durand, Chick and Francis had just entered the ministerial field. I think I heard nearly or quite all of these, also Elder Wm. L. Beebe, within two years. On Wednesday afternoon of the association I have referred to, Elder Leachman preached from James iv. 4. I was convinced then that my prejudice against the Old School Baptist Church was because of my desire to retain the "friendship of the world," since they, and they alone, preached what I loved to hear, what I believed to be truth. I did not know that I should immediately renounce my prejudice, but felt sure I could no longer be in doubt about the reason if I did not. On Thursday I heard for the first time Elder Durand, from the seventy-

third Psalm, naming the twenty-sixth verse as his text, but referring to many others during the sermon. He was followed by Elder Gilbert Beebe, from Eph. vi.: "Put on the whole armor of God," &c. I had never heard anything so soul-satisfying and delightful as these two sermons, in such beautiful accord. The whole meeting was so interesting, and my experience of interest so new and charming, I could do nothing but wonder; to leave the meeting seemed like turning my back upon everything. I had no knowledge of anything that could be carried away, or of comfort coming from any other source. On reaching home I picked up the last number of the SIGNS, which had come in our absence. I had never read the paper with great interest, but on the first page was the account of the last hours of James B. Durand, which I read with feelings I could never describe. Anything so heavenly being experienced in this world was quite beyond my imagination up to that time. Of course I spoke of it to mother, and I think she called my attention to his experience as published in another volume, also that of Elder Durand, both of which I read with the most absorbing interest and strong emotion. I remember falling on the bed as I finished, weeping uncontrollably, I know not for what reason. It was the first time I had ever read my own feelings and emotions described, and to find the strongest and deepest there set down filled me with extreme wonder. I read also the account of sister Bessie Durand's early experience about the same time, and found it also deeply touching. But all this time I neither heard nor read intelligently. I felt deeply, it is true, as I had so earnestly desired to do, but it was the antithesis of the dull ache I had known so long, and I could not have explained the cause of either. However, there was a new tie of sympathy binding my mother and myself, which to me was inexpressibly delightful, although I had supposed we were before as closely united as mother and child could be, and from this on until the separation came, nearly five years later, the union grew more and more nearly perfect. The shadow of the coming event had even then fallen. In those days we had no thought of the possibility of staying the progress of her insidious disease, only strove to make its work as painless as possible. I had a power at that time, such as I never felt under any other circumstances, of extracting the joy out of the present, so that while full consciousness of the coming separation was ever present, we enjoyed to the full each precious day of our companionship. Those years were in some ways the happiest, as well as saddest, of my life. We talked little except of common things, but there seemed no need of speech, the understanding was so perfect. We read the Bible with ever increasing interest and delight, and found in old volumes of the SIGNS treasure untold. I had not looked beyond the inevitable end. My greatest desire, that the end might come to me, too, at the same time, I almost believed would be granted, but a long journey was yet before me, and I soon found that walking alone was a very different matter. I had not known how thought and action were so completely dominated by my mother's influence.

On Saturday before the first Sunday in July, 1871, I offered myself to the church at Harford. I had not the evidence of my right to do so that I desired, but I had long wished for the privilege, and thought that longer delay would perhaps be disobedience. I had been much en-

couraged by several ministers to whom I had talked about the exercises of my mind, and had been addressed on the subject by Elder Grafton, whose judgment I esteemed perhaps more than that of any other. Other members of the church also had assured me of a welcome. It never occurred to me to consider what I had to say when I should offer myself, and I found myself unable to utter a word, except to mechanically answer such questions as were asked me, none of which I remember, except the last one, when Deacon Durham said: "Do you believe that God has for Christ's sake forgiven your sins?" The moment I answered, "Yes," I was seized with a dreadful fear that I had answered untruthfully, as I could recall no time or place where I had experienced such assurance. It was a terrible moment; the next I was requested to withdraw, as was the custom of that church when the qualifications of a candidate for membership were being considered and the vote taken. My one hope then was that they would not receive me, and when I was recalled and informed that I was received, my distress was inexpressible, but I was still speechless. All night long a heavy storm of wind and rain raged, but it was as nothing compared to the tempest I felt within. My one hope was that some natural circumstance would make the baptism impossible. I cannot remember that I even thought of praying for the mercy I so needed at this time. Morning dawned and the storm subsided, and nothing promised to interfere with the administration of the ordinance, and I still felt that a dreadful thing, the baptism of an unworthy candidate, was about to be performed, still I was speechless. I felt the matter was out of my hands entirely; I had given it into the hands of the church, and the act was irrevocable. I have kept this feeling always. When belief has been the strongest of my utter lack of the marks of grace, I have still felt I dare not take the initiative; the church must be the judge of her own actions. I do not know why I then and ever afterward reserved the right of private judgment in my own case, why I could not take a little comfort in her favorable judgment, if it was faith that caused me to respect so highly her decisions. I have never found in myself anything but inconsistency. I was so absorbed in this one thought, so sure I was making a false pretence, that I was lost to everything else. No event of the day made any impression on my mind. Memory is almost a total blank. I have a momentary recollection of standing by the water side while something was being said of which I knew as little then as now. I also remember standing for a moment in the water, nothing more. I was even past feeling then, for intense emotion had spent itself. I do not recall returning to the meetinghouse, the sermon, the supper, or any of the events of the occasion, nor for days afterward, although I know I went about my usual affairs mechanically. The first thing I do recall is receiving a letter in which was this sentence: "I know you feel like a traveler who has arrived at the end of a long and wearisome journey, and is now at rest." Nothing more unlike my state of mind could be imagined, and again the warfare. A thousand times I have asked why I should have been left so completely to myself in all of this. Almost every one who has a story of darkness and gloom to tell can tell also of the brightness that followed, but my way seemed hedged in for many weary years. I was not entirely without hope, not entirely

comfortless, but it seemed there was something surreptitious about my enjoyment of anything; I never could feel that sense of being at home that the true-born child feels in its Father's house. This has followed me more or less always, but I know now that it is because my garment of flesh has clung to me so closely. I cannot "read my title clear." "At evening time it shall be light" once dropped into my mind and remained. I had much experience concerning it. Sometimes I feared to ask for light, lest the evening time should come too soon. But the evening time has now come, and with it light enough to show me more and more of my depravity.

CLARICE E. DURAND.

"PREACH THE WORD."

My correspondence has been published from time to time in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. What I have written has arisen from a desire to share with my kindred the things that have comforted me, also a desire to edify and comfort. I have no thought that the SIGNS will cease unless my articles appear, neither do I desire them to be published to the exclusion of more able writers. I wish also to have the judgment of the editors to pass upon the advisability of what I write, whether it is profitable to publish or not.

The words of the apostle to Timothy, "Preach the Word," have come to me often in my travels trying to comfort the Lord's people, and a few thoughts upon them may be acceptable. Elder Lefferts once said that there was such a variety in the gospel that one sent to preach need never be at a loss for a subject. I have looked upon the volume of it at times, and wished I had a thousand tongues to declare it, at other times I have felt so destitute and in prison I wanted to remain silent. I have never spoken any two times alike, my condition of mind and state, and condition of those before me, have actuated my discourse, my desire to have a felt power of the love of God in my heart as a part of my preparation. Naturally I have desired to measure up with my brethren in declaring the Word, and I have always felt this was of the flesh. I am often reminded of the Savior's words to Peter: "Feed my lambs." Mind you, lambs, then, "Feed my sheep." A shepherd who looks after the welfare of the lambs will always have a flock of sheep to feed. I have been preached to by my brethren, and their words have been a living word in me, and I believe were given them of the Lord.

Elder Grafton once said, "Watch the hand of the Lord in it." Elder White said that if a man could not take a text and expound the subject he was not able to preach. These and many other sayings of able men have been laid up in my heart and pondered over. The times of our yearly meetings and associational meetings are opportunities to hear much preaching of the different gifts, and there are no two gifts alike. All we believe are God's gifts, and therefore perfect gifts in his sight. To their own Master they stand or fall, as says Paul, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand." If he preaches the Word he will have some standing in the kingdom. The apostles each had their gift, and each testified as he had been led by the grace of God. The servants of the Lord to-day each have their gifts, and are accountable to the Lord. So we should be slow to speak of any man's gift, but try and discern if

he preaches the Word. The Word is Jesus; he is presented in such an endless volume that there are no bounds to the variety of the gospel. If we present him in the types and shadows, David as king, Aaron as high priest, Moses as the lawgiver, as fulfilling the law, as the Peace and Comfort of his people, as the Wisdom and Counsellor of his people, as the Head of the church, the Husband, Brother, Friend, as the Sacrifice for sins, Atonement, Advocate with the Father, what an endless variety there is. Philip preached Jesus to the eunuch; Peter preached Jesus to the house of Cornelius; Paul determined to know nothing among them save Christ and him crucified. Preaching the Word feeds the flock. They may be scattered, wolves been in among them, but if the Word be preached they will begin to come together and feed. How important Paul's word to Timothy: "Preach the Word; be instant in season: out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine." There may be times when the Lord's people are in prison, and the servant of the Lord is in prison, and he preaches to them. I have received comfort from Noah's ministry, as well as David's in the Psalms, not only when David said, Praise the Lord, but also when he said, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" The Word has appeared to me at times as a flower garden filled with innumerable plants growing therein. I have viewed one subject and tried to tell a little about it; later on the same subject has grown and developed so that I would try and tell more about it. As one said, The gospel is ever unfolding, but never unfolded. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. We beheld his glory, (triumph and victory over death, hell and the grave,) so John goes on and tells a little of what he felt, tasted and handled of the Word of life. John had some experience of the volume of the Word when he said that of all that Jesus did the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. We find they overflow the world, and our cup runs over. "Preach the Word," is to preach the gospel, the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Not enticing words, not the power of man, not the speech of them puffed up, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power.

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Dec. 26, 1913.

"CHURCH OF THE FIRSTBORN."

(Hebrews xii. 23.)

THIS church belongeth to the Firstborn, who has complete control and full jurisdiction over it. This church is "the general assembly," and the members of this assembly have all their names written in heaven. The head of this church is the image of the invisible God. He is also the firstborn of every creature. (Col. i. 15.) "He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead."—Col. i. 18. From these Scriptures, if they stood alone, we could consistently say, The Firstborn's church. There can be no other church, though men may claim that there be many churches. The choice that God made for his saints was in Christ, the firstborn, before the world began. Notwithstanding this choice precedes creation, yet it embraces many things of the created worlds. The first of all things in relation to the created worlds is the great King, the beginning of the creation of God. (Rev. iii. 4.) When we speak of the church, it signifies that creatures are made lively stones

within her borders. That the church is composed entirely of heavenly materials, so to speak, cannot be established by Scripture. It is a spiritual house, but made so by the Builder out of earthly materials. If the church were altogether of heavenly materials, where would there be redemption for lost sinners of Adam's race, who are of the earth, earthy? In speaking of the spiritual house of David's Son we sometimes lose sight of the individuals who compose this house. What I mean to say here is, that the man born of the flesh is sometimes eliminated when "counting up the Lord's people." In fact, the Lord's people, who compose the church, are his saints, who have been sinners of Adam's race. These dead sinners are made alive to God and polished by his mighty hand, and thus become qualified to be called spiritual children. It is only through their Head that the children are heirs of spiritual things. Only in the line of durable, eternal life can any one enter into the joys of the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God; though in entering into these eternal joys the original individual remains, is preserved from final ruin, saved from the consequences of reigning sin, and is Abraham's seed, and heir according to the promise. My attention was called to Heb. xii. 23, first part, by a leading worldly preacher, who is a "creed-smasher," and who misquoted a portion, making it read, "Church of the first-borns." In commenting upon this word "borns" he said, There are firstborns and there are afterborns. Thus he eliminated the Head as the chief subject in this sentence. In adding the one letter "s" he has changed the meaning of the apostle's teaching, and by doing this, perhaps he will mislead thousands who read his published sermons. This popular "Divine" is condemned by the apostle Paul in Col. ii. 18, 19, which reads, "Let no man beguile you of your reward, in a voluntary humility and worshiping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." I am at a loss to tell why men will palpably misrepresent the Lord by changing the Scriptures, and in this try to curtail God's power over the work of his hands; they would rob the Lord if they could. Perhaps they are taken captive by the devil at his will. I feel to say that it is certain in regard to such men, that they are walking "according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."—Eph. ii. 2.

This is yours, editors of the SIGNS, use or reject it.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., Sept. 9, 1913.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I herewith inclose an excellent letter from our dear brother and fellow-laborer, Elder W. J. May, believing it will be read with interest, and impart some spiritual gift to some of the dear household of faith. We have now entered upon a new year; what it has in store for us none can tell, except as we judge from the past. We may expect sorrow and joy, and many no doubt will drink of the bitter cup, will taste the wormwood and the gall, will endure temptations, will be beset with foes without and foes within, and will often wonder, Can it be that I am a child of God?

These are the marks whereby the children of God are known. If ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. John, the beloved disciple, was shut up in prison, doubting, and tossed to and fro. Paul was carried in chains as a prisoner by his enemies. Devout Stephen was stoned for the truth's sake. May we not therefore expect to meet with trials and difficulties along the way? In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. Said Jesus, Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. I trust it may be a year of prosperity to the SIGNS. It comes filled with good things of the kingdom, and sometimes it seems as wine on the lees well refined. I extend to the dear editors, publishers and readers greeting for the new year in the Lord. May every needed blessing be bestowed upon you all; may abounding grace commensurate to every trial be with you. The love and peace of God abound to you all, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

With love unfeigned,

P. W. SAWIN.

PINSONFORK, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER SAWIN:—I have been thinking of you all the evening, and have just come to my room from the supper table, and have decided to write you once more, and abide the consequences. Knowing you, as I am sure I do, I can write the more freely, for you are so highly favored of the Lord that you have great forbearance with the weak ones, especially such an one as you know me to be. I have been thinking considerably for several days about the people of God, in their differing gifts and callings here in their time state, together with the responsibilities each of them is under, and I have come to the conclusion that in some instances, at least, it is the responsibility we are under that causes the great burden of heart and mind, more than the actual services. For instance, the man whom God has called to preach the gospel, and to feed the flock, taking the oversight thereof, is under much greater obligations than those who are only to be fed and watched over, therefore a great deal more is required of him. I will now quote a few passages of Scripture that seem to me to be relative to the idea that I have suggested, though I do not know that my views of these passages are right, but you know. "And that servant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more."—Luke xii. 47, 48. This, and similar Scriptures, for several years has seemed to me to have reference to the church here in her visible order, reckoning with her servants. We readily see that the word, "lord," is with the small "l," and does not mean the Lord God, but it means the church, clothed with the authority of her Head and Husband. The more the church has or does commit unto her servants, the more she requires of them, and the greater responsibility they are under, therefore the more care and burden of mind. There was not as much required of the servant who had the one talent as there was of the one who had the two; neither as much of the one who had the two as of him who had the five. Of him to

whom much is given, much is required. I have thought of late of the following Scripture in reference to the thoughts which I am trying to convey to you in my rambling way, which I will here quote and comment briefly upon. "For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, [family] and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter [watchman] to watch [this was his work]. Watch ye therefore; [ye porter] for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning. Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. [you porter.] And what I say unto you I say unto all, [all the churches] Watch."—Mark xiii. 34-37. Now in this is a plain manifestation of the differing (not different) obligations of the Lord's servants, and the responsibilities that await them. The porter in this instance means the watchman, I think, and as a sentinel he is set on guard by higher authority, and commanded therefore to watch over and for the family, while they lie down in green pastures and sleep sweetly in the shade. According to military laws, it is death for such an one while standing on guard and under such obligations to go to sleep. And in a scriptural or gospel sense they watch for their souls or lives, hence the watchmen on the walls are under as strict command and solemn obligation to watch themselves and for themselves as is any one in the household or family. They are also under as strict command and obligation to watch for all the rest of the church; therefore there is much committed to them, and therefore much required. The apostle Paul, just before he was called home to his blessed and immortalized state, called up the elders and gave them this solemn charge: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood," &c. And again, the apostle Peter said to all of the watchmen who are set upon the walls of the Zion of our God: "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory which shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind."

My dear brother, I see I have made this letter extremely lengthy, and must close with what few hints I have suggested, realizing that this, my letter to you, is much more in length than in depth.

Mrs. May joins me in best wishes to you and family, and to the brotherhood generally.

W. J. MAY.

WINNIPEG, Man., Nov. 20, 1913.

MISS BONNIE CHICK—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I was saying to Edith this morning that I never received letters any more. I knew I was not deserving of any, for my own side has been almost entirely neglected, but I have missed hearing from those I believe I love for His sake. When I came home for dinner your letter was waiting for me, and as I read it my mind went back over past years, times that were full of trouble and darkness, yet sweetened by a sense of trust in God. I well know what awful depths we may be called on to experience, and I pray that he may never suffer me again to go so far into the region of de-

spair as I was at one time. It was years before I could mention my state to any one, partly through fear lest it should return upon me, and partly because I felt that another might through hearing my temptations be brought into a like condition. None but a chastened child of God knows what it is to find himself separated from God, with no ray of hope in sight, and yet be filled with an overwhelming longing for peace and reconciliation. With what terrible cruelty Satan afflicts such an one with the taunt, Curse God, and die. It is then that we find our weakness as we pitifully cry out to God to keep us from evil and from the power of the tempter. If then the heavens are brass over our heads, and our prayer seems shut out from God, our lot is dreadful. I know this place, when I have wished for death, yet feared to die, and have been so torn about in my mind that I thought I must surely lose my senses altogether, and then the dread that I should blaspheme God, not knowing what I was saying. When at last I had lost hope, and even become reconciled to be a castaway if it was his holy will to destroy me, the light broke in with such sweetness that I had no remembrance of my awful troubles. It was only for a few hours that all was filled with love, yet it was enough to raise me up from despair and give me hope in the mercies of God. Well I know that no one can understand your state. It is a way to be walked alone, but you may hear in the darkness a voice crying out to God, which is a source of companionship even in the valley of the shadow of death. While I would not desire affliction, I often wish I could have a deeper interest in spiritual things, and not be so entirely taken up with the things of this world. Temporal troubles are strange in one respect. Generally we are fortified to bear up under sudden and great bereavements, and can look to the Lord with comfort, but it is the little every day worries which we cannot presume to take to the throne of grace, because they are so petty and selfish in their nature, which wear us out. I hope that you may realize more and more of a peaceful dependence on the Lord. The "sweet sadness" you speak of is what I believe to be reconciliation to the will of God. We are sad because we are afflicted, but find a secret sweetness even in the chastisement of the Lord. The lines you quote from, "Jesus, lover of my soul," have often been comforting to me. Sometimes one hymn is sweeter than another, as it tells our present experience. In my darkest hours the hymn, "Keep silence, all created things," was the only one I could get any comfort out of, and the last verse was always a heartfelt prayer. I feel to thank our dear Lord that he has directed you to answer my poor letter, for it gives me needed encouragement.

"O hope of every contrite heart,
O joy of all the meek;
To those who ask, how kind thou art,
How good to those who seek."

Would that we could know more of him, be filled with the riches of his grace, that we might know him and the power of his resurrection. Edith joins me in love.

Your brother in hope,

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

OCEAN PARK, Cal., Jan. 12, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have on my mind to write a line of encouragement to you, the Lord directing me. I have found our dear family paper advocating the same precious doctrine for many years, the doctrine of our Lord and Savior, giving God all power, glory and honor, ascribing praise to his great name. We are here

in Ocean Park, Cal.; we have no church, but sometimes it pleases our heavenly Father to send us glad tidings by one of his dear undershepherds, the Lord's missionaries, not man's, and they always preach the power of him who sends them. They have no word for us from man's mission-board, and the hat is not passed around to get our pennies to send the gospel to the heathen; instead of that, they come clothed with the righteousness of our Lord Jesus, and they preach his power to the edification of his few scattered little ones, and we are made to rejoice in the truth as it is in Christ Jesus; a feast of fat things; wine on the lees, well refined. Even I, in my weakness, am made to rejoice at these times, and am given courage to press forward in faith that the Lord in mercy has remembered this poor worm of the dust, a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all. If I have a hope, it is in the sufficiency of the blood of Christ, not in or for anything that I have done to merit the favor of God, for I find nothing but sin at my door, and in myself I find no good thing. But let us look away from self and this world of corruption, to the great and glorious God, whose ways are ways of pleasantness and all his paths are peace. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Do I love him? I ask the question many times, and there are beautiful passages of Scripture that come to my mind at times which strengthen my hope. There have been many good communications in the SIGNS during the past year, and in fact all years since the beginning of its publication. I have been a subscriber for more than forty years, and find it advocates the same doctrine to-day that it did then.

I do hope sister Ker is better. I was sorry indeed to read of her affliction. I also hope Elder Chick is restored to his usual health.

I will close this, for it is imperfection from beginning to end, it seems to me, but how can a good thing come from an unclean? But if the blood of Christ has made us clean, how can we be any more unclean? Great mysteries; and who by searching can find out God? Please do not publish this and crowd out other and better articles; I have only written because I felt I wanted to say a word to you all, and hope you can forgive my imperfections. Pray for me, for I feel that I need the prayers of God's people.

"My nature is so prone to sin,
Which makes my duty so unclean,
That when I count up all the cost,
Without free grace I know I'm lost."

Farewell. Your sister in much unworthiness,

(MRS.) J. B. DAWSON.

HARRISONVILLE, Pa., Dec. 14, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription is about due, you will find inclosed money order for two dollars for the year 1914. I do not feel like doing without the SIGNS, for it seems to me it gets richer in the deep things of God's eternal truth as time moves on; so many able letters on experience and doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty. Surely when God created man of the dust of the earth he knew exactly what he would do throughout all ages until the end of time, otherwise how could he have declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure? He surely appointed all the means to that end. Just trace the dealings of God with Abraham and his seed from the day God manifested his name to Abraham until the coming of Christ, and any

enlightened mind can see God's dealings with that people fulfilled just as he predicted by the prophets. He told Moses that after his death they would go after other gods, and he would carry them to Babylon, which thing he did, and also foretold their return to Jerusalem, even named Cyrus as being the man by whom they should be returned to their own land. It seems to me the Scriptures are so plain that every honest and enlightened mind can see these heavenly truths, but it is not given them to see, for we read of a people who have eyes, and see not, ears, and hear not, and hearts, and understand not.

I will stop writing and exposing my ignorance. Do not publish at the expense of better reading.

Your little, weak brother,

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

"When first I knew my Lord, my God,
'Twas in his deep humility,
With garments rolled in his own blood;
With eyes of love he looked on me.
Lo, then my fainting heart revived,
When I beheld the Savior smile;
'Twas then in Jesus I believed,
And felt the glory of his toil."

O, in what humiliation was I when first I looked on Jesus crucified. The Holy Spirit had arrested me and convinced me of my sin, and made me to realize that I was under the curse of the law. My iniquities were before me, I saw myself in shame, a guilty criminal, self-condemned and under the righteous wrath of God. I feared there could be no escape for me from the damnation of hell. I thought, I shall soon die, I shall die in my sins, and then I shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. These dreadful apprehensions of the wrath to come abased me, crushed me down, and I put my mouth in the dust before the dreadful and just God, for perhaps there might be some way of hope for a vile transgressor, but I could not see how it could be. I did not know Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who delivered us from the wrath to come. (1 Thess. i. 10.) I was humbled indeed, I loathed myself, and I was moved by God's gracious power to mourn over my iniquities. My heart was smitten and contrite over my sins, I sighed and wept unto God; yes, he moved me, he drew me unto himself; (I see it now) sin-stricken, wounded and bruised was my soul; law-condemned, self-condemned, I fled unto God, against whom I had sinned, and before whom I trembled, and I prayed, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. For some time it appeared as though he regarded me not, or rather I feared that my damnation was sure, there was no mercy for me. Day after day was spent in distress in the regions of the shadow of death, and I feared all evil. At length the Lord heard my cries and shewed me his salvation. There came into my mind a vision of Christ upon the cross. A sacred awe came upon my spirit, my prayers and groans were suspended, and I was wrapped up with the sight; yes, the eyes of my heart were drawn to, riveted, absorbed in contemplation of the crucified Redeemer. It was a revelation to my soul, my natural eyes saw nothing; it was in the darkness of the night as I lay upon my bed. O the instruction that was imparted to me by the Holy Spirit in this vision of the crucified One. I was shewn that mercy and salvation were in Jesus, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; and that night, when my heart was made to understand that God's salvation of sinners was in the sufferings and death of Christ, O how my

heart went forth to him, and I cried unto God to save me from my sins for Jesus' sake; to let me know that he died for me.

"When first I knew my Lord, my God,
'Twas in his deep humility."

There on the cross my yearning heart beheld the incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, suffering, bleeding, dying for poor sinners. O what humiliation! (Isaiah liii.) In his humiliation his judgment was taken away, he was cut off. (Acts viii. 33; Daniel ix. 26.) It was opened up to me a little, just some wonderful glimpses of how Christ Jesus in his everlasting, boundless pity for wretched, vile transgressors, humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. He endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. My sin-distressed soul entered a little into the sacred mystery of the cross of Christ, and I was made to hope that it was for crimes that I had done he groaned upon the tree; amazing pity, grace unknown, and love beyond degree. And though I was made to hope that all my sins were forgiven, all washed away in Jesus' precious, atoning blood, and my burden was gone, and I was happy in my hope that the dear Savior died for me, and that he had reconciled me unto God, and that God was my Friend, my God and my heavenly Father, yet in a little while there was mingled with my blessedness such sorrow, for as I pondered over the humiliation of the crucified Redeemer I saw it was my sins that brought him low; it was my transgressions for which sake he was made a curse. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." And then I mourned over him to think that he suffered so to ransom vile transgressors, to save a sinful wretch like me from my sins, the curse, from death and hell. I mourned for him. (Zech. xii. 10.) O how Jesus must have loved me! and my heart was melted, and wept over his love. How base I saw myself.

"Love and grief my heart dividing,
With my tears his feet I'll bathe."

Thus I mused upon the love of God declared in the bleeding, dying Lamb of God, and sweet pardon was mine in his precious blood.

"I nothing had when thou, dear Lamb,
Didst shew me all my sins forgiven;
I nothing had but sin and shame
When first I saw my name in heaven.

Bought with the Savior's pains and blood,
Amazing love! what tongue can tell
The glory which I saw in God,
When at his footstool first I fell?"

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

WISDOM.

"WHENCE then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding?"—Job xxviii. 20.

Man in all of his searches cannot attain unto wisdom; money cannot buy it, it is above the price of gold; gold cannot equal it, therefore man in all of his searches cannot find it, yet millions of dollars are spent yearly in search of wisdom. There are thousands of men every year attending different schools of theology seeking wisdom, but the Scriptures say wisdom is above the price of rubies, yea, much fine gold cannot equal it. The Scriptures teach the utter impossibility of obtaining it with money, and also teach where it is found, and with all the Scripture teaching men try other methods in search of wisdom. Also the Scriptures teach where gold, silver, iron, brass, copper, lead, pearls and rubies are found, and men of natural minds try to find all in the same way and place: the earth,

Surely there is a vein for the silver and a place for the gold, where they find it. Out of the earth cometh bread, but where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding? "Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living. The depth saith, It is not in me: and the sea saith, It is not with me. It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof. It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire. The gold and the crystal cannot equal it: and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold."—Job xxviii. 12–17. No exchange of gold, silver, onyx stone, pearls or rubies are equal to wisdom, seeing that a mention of all the earth's most valuable metals, the great stones of the sea, combined with all the great powers of the world, cannot obtain wisdom, so how vain and foolish is the great presumption of men in their endeavor to procure this valuable and most precious gift. "Whence then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding? Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living, and kept close from the fowls of the air." "Unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding." Quite a difference in the scriptural analogy of the word "wisdom" and the vain and presumptuous meaning given by theological students, which teaches slavish, selfish, fleshly fear of the regions of despair, to be shunned by creature ability. As the word of inspiration says, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is (already) understanding (not in order to understanding). Wisdom is the gift of God. "And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship."—Exodus xxxi. 3. "Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."—1 Cor. i. 20, 21. Not by foolish preaching of slavish fear, and human ability, and sympathetic talk, which arouse the sympathy of the carnal nature of man to hypocritical obedience. To what? To the commandments and doctrines of men of corrupt minds, which teach for doctrine the commandments of men in order to life. "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: [earthly wisdom] but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."—1 Cor. i. 22–24. It would be foolish in us to preach unto those uncalled of all nations that which is foolishness and a stumbling-block, and it would be just as foolish to try and call them from nature's darkness to spiritual light by proclaiming to them something that is foolish. But some are called with an holy calling, as it is written: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9. The wisdom which we preach is of old, shining forth from an endless life down the channel of time, according to the purpose and will of God. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, therefore showing forth his eternal wisdom, the only source of true wisdom. God is the perfection of wisdom, for when he said, Let there be light, behold, light shined forth at his command, and there

was light. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. iv. 6.

Well do I remember when, as I hope, the light was given me; it seemed that the true light did shine within and manifest divine light from within to the acknowledgment of God's mercy, for with the heart man believes, and with the mouth confessions are made unto salvation.

Written in much weakness. Yours in bonds, J. B. BOWDEN.

FALLS CITY, Texas.

EDGEMOOR, Del., Aug. 11, 1913.

W. C. PENNINGTON—DEAR BROTHER:—My son and I so much enjoyed the reading of your letter in the SIGNS that I thought I would take the liberty of writing a few lines to you, to let you know that we, too, believe in the old-fashioned doctrine of predestination. I believe that many who call themselves christians do not worship the same God you wrote about. Their god seems to be a limited being, controlling some things, permitting some things and having nothing to do with many events, but with me a limited God is no God at all. I can plainly see you have learned the truth of the following Scripture: "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will;" and you have learned that we have obtained this inheritance because we are heirs of God. "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." Is it not a wonderful thing that God has predestinated this relation of sons and daughters for all his elect people? Many do not believe in the new birth, and such people cannot obtain this inheritance, because they are not heirs, never having been born of God. My mind lately has been much exercised on the subject of the perfect work of Christ in the redemption of his elect people. Surely he did not simply provide a means of salvation, with conditions on our part to fulfill. I notice that you have received the truth of the following Scripture: "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." As you write, there are no "ifs" or "buts" in this work, and I believe all his elect children will come to the knowledge of what Christ has done for them; and to me it is a great comfort to know that his children are ordained to walk in good works, as you write and evidently believe. Surely the Lord's work is perfect in all things. It seems to me there is a tendency to drift back to Arminian doctrines by many who call themselves Old School Baptists, advocating that there is something for the creature to do to perfect the perfect work of Christ, claiming also that our old carnal nature is changed gradually to something better. They do not seem to read the Scripture you quoted, that the carnal mind cannot be subject to the law of God. It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. I am glad your letter was published in the SIGNS, as all our family were comforted in reading it.

Yours in fellowship,

B. F. HAMILTON.

NIAGARA FALLS, N. Y., Aug. 24, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER PENNINGTON:—Father had me read this letter before mailing it to you, and to me it is a precious privilege to read and feel that I am given an understanding of such a glorious liberty, and full salvation, and perfect work, as

is that which you two loved ones of the great Jehovah are witnessing with each other. Think of all it means for us. The prince of darkness himself is working out the great Jehovah's will and purposes, so how absolute is the safety and security of the heirs of God in Christ; nothing shall touch them to harm them. None of God's work is in vain or in any way incomplete or uncertain. Brother Pennington, your letter has the sure sound of God our righteousness. May his rich blessings be unto you in riches untold. Read Psalms lxxi. 3: "Thou hast given commandment to save me," &c.

Your little brother in hope,

CHAS. W. HAMILTON.

FREESTONE, Texas, Oct. 14, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have just returned from the seventy-fourth annual session of Union Association, held with Bethel Church, in Anderson County, Texas, near the town of Frankston, which commenced on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1913. This is the oldest association in Texas; one of her churches (Pilgrim) was constituted in the state of Illinois when Texas was under Mexican rule, and traveled overland to Texas, holding their meetings and baptizing members on their journey, and is the oldest church of any order that was ever in Texas, except the law religion of Mexico. The original members of old Pilgrim Church lived under three flags: the flag of Mexico, the republic of Texas and the United States flag. Needless to say these old soldiers of the cross had many sore trials during their pilgrimage through this land of sorrow. They have all passed away, their bodies have returned to the dust, there to await the glorious resurrection, when this mortal shall put on immortality, when he (Jesus) shall change our vile body and fashion it like unto his glorious body. David said, I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness. Although they are dead, they still live in the memory of God's humble poor. While there my wife and I met many precious brethren, many of whom we had met before, and many whom we had never met. The preaching was all of one piece, all to the glory of God and to the comfort of his saints. Elder J. C. Sikes spoke Sunday to a large and attentive audience, and in my humble judgment his discourse was fraught with grace throughout. As I sat under the sound of those precious truths of the gospel I thought of this Scripture: He "hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ," for it was indeed a heavenly place. But the sad time came when we had to part, and we were made to shed tears of both joy and sorrow; tears of joy for the blessings we received in his name while we were together, tears of sorrow when the parting hour came. But thanks be to our great Deliverer, the time is coming when sad partings will be no more. Farewell.

Unworthily yours in a precious hope,

W. O. BEENE.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., June 8, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—The time has come, according to promise, for me to send a little mite to pay for my dear old comforting paper. By the blessing of our all-wise Creator and Preserver it is better with me now than it was when I wrote you before, for then I felt to be a wanderer, but, bless the Lord, O my soul, when spring came I was permitted to return to my own dear, humble, earthly home, and am given strength to still do for myself in my sixty-ninth year. Many

have left the shores of time, and I, too, long to quit this unfriendly world; but not now, for the Lord has loved ones who are sad and weary. Wilt thou not cheer them with a kindly word? Sick ones, who need me in their lonely sorrow, can I not tend them yet a little while?

Please give this a little corner in the SIGNS, if you see proper, so my brethren who are interested in me may know about me.

Yours in hope,

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

JAMESTOWN, Ohio, Jan. 16, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—You will please excuse delay in sending my remittance. I am not very active any more. As you may know, my age is one hundred years and nine months. I still appreciate the dear old paper; it is a great comfort to me in my declining years. It is about all the preaching I have, as I am unable to get out to meeting any more.

Yours in hope of a blessed immortality,

VIOLET HATCH.

HAYNESVILLE, La., Jan. 31, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Your card of the 27th inst. to hand, together with the "Feast of Fat Things." I have just finished reading the pamphlet, and the "Riddle" is worth the price of the pamphlet. I am always glad to read anything from Elder Beebe's pen, and have been reading his writings for over fifty years. I have both volumes of the Editorials. I sent the money for each one before they were printed, and got one of the first of each volume that was sent out. I look on the writings of Elder Beebe as next to my Bible. I cannot expect to read them much longer, as I will be eighty-eight years old if I live to see the 29th day of next March, which will soon be here, and I have nothing to place a hope on but the doctrine that old brother Beebe always advocated: salvation by grace, and grace alone.

Pray for me, an old sinner, friend and brother, as I hope,

SHELVY BAUCUM.

LITCHFIELD, Minn., Dec. 10, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am thinking of going to Monroe County, Pa., and would like to know if there are any Baptists in that part of the country. Kindly send me the names of some of the members, if any, near Cresco, Pa., Pocono, Pa., Stroudsburg or in that neighborhood.

A. J. TOLLERD.

LETTER TO CORRESPONDENTS.

AGAIN I take this means of acknowledging the many letters and cards received from all parts of the United States and Canada since my last short letter appeared in the SIGNS. We appreciate every word of sympathy and act of kindness, and would write each one personally were it possible. Am sorry to say my wife shows no improvement whatever in health, and at times is much discouraged. All who have written us will please accept this as an acknowledgment of their messages of good will.

Your brother in gospel bonds,

H. C. KER.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. R. Dennison.)

The Tygarts Valley River Association of Old School Bible Baptists, now in session with the Leading Creek Church, Randolph County, West Virginia, to the churches of which she is composed, and to all of like precious faith, sendeth christian salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Another year with all its joys and sorrows has passed and gone, and we are one year nearer our eternal home than when we last met in an associational gathering. Some of our dear ones have been called away since our last association; they will assemble with us no more here, but we hope through the grace and mercy of our covenant God to meet them on the bright and sunny side of sweet deliverance in the happy, peaceful world of glory, where there will be no sad partings, no farewell tears, but all will be joy and peace and love. There all the ransomed of the Lord will be sweetly employed in praising and glorifying his holy and infinitely adorable name a whole eternity along.

"When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise,
Than when we first begun."

It is said that, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." No, our finite minds cannot comprehend the infinity of great Jehovah; we can only say as did the apostle, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" We cannot by searching find out God, as the worldly wise in their humanly effort system are in their various organizations teaching their children that they can, and are learning the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, whereas God says, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord." And again, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." So it is "not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Then, O dear brethren, let us praise God for his mercy, for it is everlasting. Whom he loves he never leaves, and Christ having loved his own, he loves them to the end. He hath loved them with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness hath he drawn them. So it is alone through his grace and mercy and love that we poor, weak, helpless, sinful creatures of Adam's fallen posterity are brought to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. And "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." One of old said, I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, and I will be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, and he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness. "This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." So we, dear kindred in Christ, as a church, as a people, are the only people who do not claim something in our salvation for our works, or means, but we give all the praise and glory of it to God, where and to whom it justly belongs.

Now, dear brethren, may God in his mercy grant to keep us from falling, and to feed our souls on the riches of his grace while we tabernacle in the flesh, and eventually receive us to himself in glory for Jesus' sake. Amen.

J. B. CROSS, Moderator.
J. N. BARTLETT, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1914.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE WORSHIP OF GOD.

FOR some time our mind has been resting upon the Bible testimony concerning the worship of God, and in connection with this the solemn question has been much in our mind as to whether we have ever for ourself known what it is to truly worship him. One of the first testimonies that will occur to the minds of all who desire to worship the true God and to worship him aright will be that of the Savior to the Samaritans: The time cometh when neither in this mountain, neither at Jerusalem, shall men worship the Father, but they that worship him will worship him in spirit and in truth. This must ever be the one solemn question with all who truly fear God: Is my worship after this sort? It is evident that the dear Redeemer did not mean that none should ever be found in Samaria or in Jerusalem who should be true worshipers, but that worship rendered to him from any spiritual heart anywhere should be just as acceptable to him as in either of these places regarded as being specially sacred by men. The same truth holds good still; one place and one time is just as precious in the sight of the Lord as another. God can be worshiped in grand cathedrals and in gilded temples, but he is no less pleased with worship arising from spiritual hearts who dwell in hovels, and we believe it to be true that the most of the people of God feel that they are permitted to come nearer to him when in some humble place they meet for worship than in the midst of all the gilded appointments which please the eye and ear of man; at least this has been our experience.

We desire to call attention to some things said about worship in the Scriptures. The worship of the true and living God is there again and again set over against the worship of idols, the works of men's hands or the figments of their brains, and also true worship is set over against false worship more than once. It is all-important then that we know whom we worship, and that we know whether we are worshiping aright. But first let us ask, What is worship? speaking in the general sense of that word. It is ascribing unto the being worshiped attributes that are supposed to belong to him, with reverence, fear and admiration, and when we come to speak of the worship of our God, the God of heaven and earth, it means ascribing to him the characters, attributes and the mighty works that belong to him, and these things we must have been taught and have come to believe ere we can ascribe them to Deity. All that can be known concerning the unseen God must be by revelation made by himself to us. No man can by searching find out God, is the plain testimony of the Word. So Paul declared in Romans concerning faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? How shall they hear without a preacher? By the next verse it is made plain that by the preacher he means the

ministry of the Word by those sent of God. This same truth must apply to the worship of God. How shall we say men worship him in whom they have not believed? How shall they believe in God when they have not heard of him? How shall they hear of him without a preacher? that is, some one inspired and qualified of God to declare Him unto them. In other words, before we can worship in ascribing to him the glorious attributes that belong to him we must come to know that he is, and then we must come to know that to him belong those attributes. Paul found at Athens among the multitude of idols at Mars Hill an altar erected to "The Unknown God." This did not mean that the Athenians had any real conception that there was a being supreme over all others, but simply that they did not wish to omit any god from their worship, regarding them all as being equally worthy of worship. We read that Paul, taking this inscription as his theme, preached to them that God who made all things, and who therefore ought alone to be worshiped, rather than the works of men's hands. But we do not find that after this preaching any one believed upon the God whom Paul preached to them. We do not read that they forsook all other altars for the worship of the one God. While Paul declared the truth concerning Jehovah there was no place in their hearts for him; they were destitute of the Spirit, and so could not worship him. To-day, as then, there are worshipers all over the world; idols are bowed down to now as well as in former days. The revelation of God in his Word has been made almost from the beginning, and by personal intercourse with our first parents at the beginning he made himself known, and all through the Scriptures of the Old Testament he made continued revelations of himself, and in Jesus Christ he was made manifest, and this Jesus has been proclaimed constantly for nearly two thousand years in preaching and in writing, and yet how few comparatively believe in the true God, and in Jesus Christ as the Savior. After all these thousands of years it still remains that two-thirds of mankind do not like to retain God in their knowledge, and do not know his name, and a vast majority of the other third show that God is not in all their thoughts, and that Jesus Christ is but merely a name to them. This proves another Bible truth, viz., that there must be more than miracles, more than preaching, more than afflictions, more than blessings bestowed upon man, ere he can come to believe really in God and to love him or his service. It is a Bible truth, and what we have said just now confirms it, that the Spirit of God must come and work directly in the heart of any one ere that one comes to really know and serve God. It is all summed up in this one sentence: Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of heaven. Therefore does it not follow that ere preaching, or setting forth the character of the God of heaven, can bring men to love and worship him, there must be begotten in the heart of men by the Spirit of God a nature that is in harmony with the things of God? This seems to us plain. But still where this work has been wrought, where the heart has been touched with this divine life, there still remains a place for the preaching of the Word, that such spiritual hearts may be instructed in the right way, and come to render right worship to God. In the Acts we read of Lydia, and of the eunuch, and of the Roman centurian, all of whom reverenced and feared God, being Jewish

proselytes, but who yet did not know of Jesus until the blessed Lord sent his servants to proclaim him to them. Then how eagerly they embraced the message, and then they began to grow in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

For the reasons given before, it has seemed to us this long time that much of the ministry of the Word ought to consist in setting forth that which the Word declares concerning the God whom we profess to worship. To worship him is to believe with reverence, and confess before him that he is almighty, omnipresent, omniscient, just, holy, all-wise, the God of truth and righteousness, whose name is love, who hates all sin and transgression, so that it is declared that he cannot look upon it, and who rules in all the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, so that none can stay his hand. These are some of the things of which we must know if we are to worship God in a manner well-pleasing in his sight. Let us then in all our ministry set forth these things to the praise of his name. Then, in addition to these things, we worship him when we ascribe salvation to his name. If any one ascribes his salvation to his own goodness, to the prayers of his parents and friends, to the teaching of his childhood by those under whose charge he was placed, and withholds from the God of heaven the plain, simple testimony which Jonah once gave: "Salvation is of the Lord," he is not thereby worshiping God, but the creatures of God instead. If we think of God as one who is changeable, having one purpose to-day and another to-morrow, we are thus far robbing him of his true glory, for he declares himself to be the God who changes not. If we think of him as knowing to-day what he did not know yesterday, we are robbing him of that worship which belongs to him in a confession of his omniscience. If we confess not that we are sinners, helpless to redeem ourselves, and justly condemned before him, but claim that we have some right still to claim our final salvation more than others, because we have sinned less than others, we are robbing him of the glory of salvation, thus withholding the worship due to his name as the God of salvation. Is it not important then that even believers be instructed in these things? Indeed, to this end were the Scriptures given us, that the man of God be instructed, admonished and reproved, lest he be found ignorantly rendering service that is not acceptable to God. If we may be allowed to speak particularly of the leadings of our own mind these many years past, it has seemed to us all-important that these things should have place in our ministry. We have desired to set forth the things which belong to the consolation of the tried people of God, and what can be of greater strength to the weak than to learn that they have a strong, an almighty Friend? What can be of more consolation to the afflicted than to learn that all their afflictions are in the omniscient will of God, so that not one can really do them harm? What can more exalt the blessed Redeemer in his work of salvation for them than to learn that our God is holy, just and righteous, so that before sinners can be reconciled to God a full atonement must be made, that the full measure of justice may be rendered before God, and when the child of God feels forsaken, and is forsaken, by all men, what consolation can there be equal to the assurance that their God is everywhere present, that he is omniscient and omnipresent? It is not dry doctrine, but rather that rock out of which Israel shall

suck honey, to set forth these truths concerning Jehovah. These are the living wells of salvation out of which God's people draw water at their need. To acknowledge these things in the heart and to confess them with the lips constitute worship that is pleasing to God, and in all our ministry we have desired not only to proclaim these great truths, but to do so with reverence in spirit and with understanding. Christian experience is not made up simply of changing frames and feelings which may go on in our hearts, but in coming to know the power of sin in our nature and the power of God in Christ in our salvation. Our feelings change with every passing breath, but these solid truths do not change, and the hope that is based upon them will prove to be as an anchor of the soul indeed in times of stress and storm. These holy truths are our comfort; may they prove to be the same to others. C.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

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J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE SHAKING OF HEAVEN.

"See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: whose voice then shook the earth; but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire."—Heb. xii. 25-29.

In the preceding context the inspired writer has spoken of the terribly grand display of the majesty of God in the dispensation of his fiery law from the summit of that mount which might be touched, and that burned with fire, and blackness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words, which words they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more, for they could not endure that which was commanded. On that most fearful occasion the tribes of Israel filled with consternation heard the voice of words which shook the earth with terror and amazement, which caused the mountains to skip like rams, and the hills like lambs. Although that fiery law applied to the fleshly tribes and the shuddering earth, the leaping mountains and skipping hills were emblematic of the legal dispensation, the worldly sanctuary, and carnal, or fleshly ordinances, in striking contrast with the heavenly Jerusalem and gospel state of the church in her present organization, yet the promise is given that as the former, so shall the latter also be shaken. That voice which then convulsed the earth hall also shake the heavens, and so terribly as to remove from the church what-

ever can be shaken, allowing nothing to remain that is not immovable.

As the carnal Israelites in the type, by their frequent unlawful affinity with the nations round about them, became corrupted from time to time, so as to require the judgments of God for their purification, so the church of Christ has from time to time been infested with "strange children," who have brought in with them "divers and strange doctrines," which have required the shaking of the heaven, or church, for their removal. As in the old dispensation there were false prophets among the people of Israel, even so there shall be false teachers among those of the new, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. "And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of."—2 Peter ii. 2. The apostle Paul is also the bearer of a special message to the church of God on the same subject; he says, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron."—1 Tim. iv. 1, 2. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come."—2 Tim. iii. 1. From these, with many other warnings, we are admonished to look for the fulfillment of these predictions in these last days, and truly the developments of the present times afford most unquestionable demonstration of the perfect accuracy of the predictions. While the various departments of antichrist are swiftly hurrying on to their doom, being suffered to fill up the cup of their abominations, the church of Christ is invaded by men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who have crept in unawares, who come not but to kill and to steal and to destroy. But although all these predictions must be fulfilled in all their jots and tittles, it is nevertheless true that every plant that our heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up. All who come without grace into connection with the church of Christ shall be cast out without favor. For the fulfillment of the Scriptures, for the trial of the faith and patience of the saints and for the greater display of the righteous judgments of the Lord, God shall choose the delusions of his adversaries and suffer them to mature their plans, promulgate their doctrines and perplex his saints, only however until the appointed hour of judgment, for in due time his voice which once shook the earth shall shake heaven also. "Also" seems to express the idea that it shall be in like manner, as when in audible words his voice shook the earth in the thunder tones in which the precepts of his fiery law were uttered from Mount Sinai. But however this may be, we are perfectly confident that the shaking of heaven, as witnessed at this present time, is occasioned by the voice of God in the Scriptures.

At this very moment there is evidently an unusual agitation and stirring up of the passions and fears of nominal professors and graceless hypocrites who have had a name to live while they are dead, and a form of godliness, while they deny the power thereof. "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites."—Isa. xxxiii. 14. "There is a voice of the howling of the shepherds; for their glory is spoiled: a voice of the roaring of young lions: for the pride of Jordan is spoiled."—Zech. xi. 3. Their consternation is most unmistakably occasioned by the voice of him whose voice

shall shake the heavens, but it is the power and majesty of his voice in the written Word. Scriptures which uncover their deceptive doctrines and drag forth to the light their base hypocrisy, are falling like bolts of wrath from heaven upon them. The ministers of Christ are led by the Spirit of truth to open the batteries of heaven upon the hidden things of dishonesty. Their craft being exposed, makes them desperate, and in their desperation they vent their malice against those who faithfully declare what God the Lord hath spoken. The church, which is called heaven in our subject, is necessarily shaken by the conflict of truth against error, and the children of the latter, with all their inventions, doctrines, plans, merchandise and appliances, are being shaken out of their concealment. All doctrines antagonistic to that of the truth, however cherished, must be exposed, and nothing suffered to remain in Zion which the truth of God condemns. This word, "Yet once more," has an awful significance, for it signifies the removing of those things that are, or that may or can be shaken. Nothing that the voice of God, as sounding in his Word, will shake, shall be suffered to remain in the immovable kingdom of our Lord. The things of the kingdom of Christ which God has established are immovable, his Word will never shake, disturb or displace them. They are not things which are made, but things which are eternal. But everything that is made, all things of time, of earthly origin, must and shall be removed, and the heaven shall be sufficiently agitated and shaken to eject from her sacred precincts whatever can be shaken. The legitimate elements of which the kingdom of Christ is composed are immutably established. Not one of her stakes shall ever be removed, not one of her cords shall ever be broken. The subjects of this kingdom can never be separated from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, by angels, life, death, principalities, powers, things present or to come, height, depth nor any other creature. The King is immovably seated, his throne is forever and ever; his sceptre is a right sceptre, his kingdom is everlasting and his dominion has no end. His laws are right, and will admit of no amendment, improvement nor abolition. The ordinances of his kingdom are as the ordinances of the throne of God himself. The foundation of this kingdom stands sure and steadfast; the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. The doctrine of this kingdom is the doctrine of God, that cannot change. There is nothing that properly belongs to this kingdom that can be shaken or changed. None of the things of earth could move the apostles, nor shall they be able to move or shake the everlasting purpose and grace of God, or pluck out of the hands of our Redeemer one of those whom the Father has given to him.

"Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved." Such a kingdom it is the Father's good pleasure to give to his saints. It is not of this world, or its subjects would fight. It is not of this world, therefore its subjects will not fight with carnal weapons. Receiving this kingdom, we do not need materials out of which to organize a kingdom, nor power to defend it, nor wisdom to improve it, nor ornaments to beautify it, but "Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably." This is all we need, and this our God will abundantly supply, for he will give grace and glory; and as it is only by grace we are saved, so it is by grace alone that we can serve our God and King acceptably, with rev-

erence and godly fear. "For our God is a consuming fire." "And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offer in righteousness."—Mal. iii. 3.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., November 15, 1865.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon Joseph Hunt was born Dec. 24th, 1846, and departed this life Dec. 30th, 1913. Our dear brother was a firm Primitive Baptist, a strong believer in God's foreknowledge, predestination and purpose in all things. He indorsed the doctrine advocated in the SIGNS, and put no confidence in man, but looked to God for his deliverance from nature to grace. He was an upright and honorable citizen, and tried to observe the precepts enjoined upon him as a deacon. He was very prompt in visiting the sick, especially those of the household of faith. He felt that his sufficiency was of God.

The funeral service was held at the home of his son, J. T. Hunt. A large gathering of relatives and friends attended the service, conducted by our dear brother, Elder George M. Hite, of North Nashville Primitive Baptist Church. He was a member of the University St. Primitive Baptist Church, South Nashville. Our pastor, Elder J. K. Womack, was not able to attend the funeral. Our dear brother requested that two hymns be sung: "Amazing grace," and "Jesus, lover of my soul." His wish was complied with. He leaves many relatives and friends to mourn their loss, but we hope our loss is his eternal gain. Elder George M. Hite spoke very comforting words from the twenty-third Psalm. May the Lord bless the bereaved and the poor in spirit, is my prayer. O. B. HICKERSON.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Jan. 5, 1914.

SISTER **Elizabeth J. Clark** departed this life Jan. 5th, at her home in Shelby County, in her 85th year. She united with Bethel Church, this county, many years ago, I think about 1846. I have not the date of her marriage, but she was left a widow with ten children forty-two years ago. Since I have known her in church relationship, for the past twenty-five years, she had been a faithful, devoted member, beloved by the church. For several years she had been greatly afflicted, but bore all with patience, as becometh the humble followers of the dear Redeemer. She leaves five sons and one daughter, twenty grandchildren, ten great-grandchildren and two sisters. Their loss is her gain, because we believe she sleeps in Jesus.

The funeral was largely attended at the home on the 6th, and that which was mortal laid to rest in the family burying-ground near their old home.

May the dear Lord comfort all who mourn.

P. W. SAWIN.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 82. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1914. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"GREAT IS THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS."

TRUE, what a wonderful mystery! God manifest in the flesh, its power over all flesh. David said, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made: * * * that my soul knoweth right well." When we contemplate the life, the being of a child of God, as we consider him in his complex character, it is no wonder that David gave utterance to the above language. Solomon said, As the company of two armies. Ericson the poet is quoted as saying,

> "To good and evil bent,
> I'm both a devil and a saint."

Let us consider these things, dear reader, and see where we stand, find the position we occupy, and perchance gather some evidence of sight to continue to hope in the mercies of the Lord, or that we have been born again, or to sing,

> "I once was lost, but now am found,
> Was blind, but now I see."

What is man? or what am I as I stand related to the earthy head, Adam? Do we fully realize the full meaning of the words when God said, Adam, where art thou? Let us keep these deep-searching words in mind, and language will ever fail to describe the awful pit of human depravity, the depraved, iniquitous heart of man. Paul describes fallen man, the place he is, and what he is, in Romans viii., when he uses the language, "Their heart is an open sepulchre; * * * whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness," &c., and with this the fruits they bear as they are manifest. Then we may know something of the meaning of the words, Adam, where art thou? It is the man in this awful state of pollution, sin and death that God hath chosen to be heir with him in glory. But how shall man be just with God, seeing he is fallen and depraved? To dwell with God one must in a sense be equal with God in holiness and righteousness. In nature every stream is downward in its course, and this is as true with humanity as with the rivulets and streams. If it is downward in its course, then in and of itself it cannot be turned. No human agencies have or ever will be devised that can turn depraved mortals upward, heavenward. Man is dead, dead in sin. We read of one, the second Adam, from heaven, made (manifest) under the law, having power over

all flesh, to give eternal life, or to impart another or better life, to fallen man, to give him a righteous and holy life, whereby he may commune with God and eventually come into his holy presence and dwell with him forever. It is the mystery of this life, as mentioned at the head of this article, I want to speak of, (not to explain) for the more I think of it the greater the mystery. There are three prominent mysteries mentioned in the Bible: the mystery of iniquity, the mystery of godliness, and, Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, &c. Paul as he journeyed along, intent on carrying out the evil of his heart, was met by the way, and it was in the purpose of God fixed and ordained, that he should take the last step in that blinded zeal of human depravity. To him it was as God had said to the proud waves: Thus far shalt thou go. He comes to a standstill, is turned about and goes in an opposite direction; immediately he is found in the synagogue preaching Jesus, that he is the Son of God. Just before he was contending for the law, and that this Jesus whom he now preached was an impostor, and making void the law that was their rule and faith. In this work no human agency was felt or seen, but it was the work of God or of Christ, the work he came to do: to translate from the kingdom of darkness (nature) into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Jesus says, I give unto them eternal life. This was given to Paul, or Saul, as he journeyed to Damascus. It was alone the power of this life that turned him about, that caused him to bear about him the dying of the Lord Jesus, to bear fruits of righteousness, the evidence of a godly life. As it was with Paul, so with every saint of God. O how mysterious the working of this life, that turns the man from his downward course to flow upward, contrary to nature; for the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountain and people shall flow unto it. I had fondly hoped in my early youth in experience that when I grew older I should grow better, know myself better, live a better life and have less doubts and fears, but have not found it so. I find life a greater mystery, and wonder if I really have or know the godly life in myself. I think I know of it in others, but what a mystery in myself. Can it be, with all the beasts of the forest, with my plagues of sin, the cesspools of Hades, with all guile and hypocrisy as I feel sure dwell in my nature? How is it that brethren confess love and fellowship for me, when swarming close in every part the hidden evils are? Do I love these principles? No, at times I have perfect hatred, abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes, and am a brother to Job, knowing I dwell with owls and dragons, with all the unclean beasts and birds. If these be the evidences may I not hope? The one nature I know I have, and sometimes hope I have, or am partaker of, the divine, as it is light that makes manifest. A very dear sister from the far west wrote me not long since that she had not attained to that she had hoped for in early life. There was a sweet response in my heart of companionship. One thing I know: if there is one good thought or one good act it is because of the power of that life that is from above. If it be that I am traveling heavenward, it is because I am dying daily, since the more we die the more we live. Again, how wonderful that death and life can dwell in the one being; nay, more, heaven and hell; dead, but living. In the wonderful contrast of natures and the subjugation of our evil

nature the power of the godly life is made manifest, so that, "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them."—Isaiah xi. 6. For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel and set them in their own land, so shall the Lord cause you to triumph, and cause you to cry out, "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!" "The seed of evil doers shall never be renowned. Prepare slaughter for his children for the iniquity of their fathers; that they do not rise, nor possess the land, nor fill the face of the world with cities. For I will rise up against them, saith the Lord of hosts."—Isaiah xiv. Therefore we hope through grace, and grace alone, to triumph over the pains of earth and hell in time and eternity. Yesterday, or last week, you had a joyful season, and your soul was filled with laughter, was joyful in your God, to-day you are cast down, darkness is your portion, you feel your very flesh is filled with rankling devils and demons. Stranded upon the rock of infidelity, crying out in bitterness of soul, Can I deem myself a child? O where is the blessedness I knew when first I saw the Lord? Ah, this is but the life and portion of each dear child of God, and all the wild beasts of our nature will be destroyed in death, when we put off the body of this flesh, and it is swallowed up in the blessed and holy life of Jesus our blessed Lord. The mystery of godliness yet remains.

I have extended this letter to too great a length, and said but little. I am occasionally asked why I do not write more. This letter will give you the reason. I have many unanswered letters for this same reason, but appreciate all the letters I receive. I now feel to send New Year's greetings, with love and best wishes to editors, publishers and all the household of faith. May heaven's richest blessings rest upon each, according to his gracious promise and will. To those with whom I have mingled in the years gone by, I have you all in loving remembrance and sweet fellowship. I just passed the seventieth milestone the second of the month (January) and enter upon a new year in life as well. Physically I am stronger than in the years gone by, but by nature and practice no better, and often fear I shall one day fall by the hand of Saul, that archenemy, but feel as the dear Lord hath hitherto helped, I pray he may yet keep me in the way. The past year has been one of deep trials and affliction in my family, and oft the way has seemed dark, and I have been filled with doubts and fears, and in the "Slough of Despond."

> "Filled with unbelief and sin,
> Can I deem myself a child?"

But hitherto hath the Lord helped me, and I go on from day to day. My dear wife, whom the Lord gave me for a true helpmeet, has been very sick for the past two months, and under the care of a specialist, but I am glad to say, is gaining slowly, and is able to be up most of the time. May the Lord still remember us in his mercy. Pardon this digression, and do with this entire letter as you think best.

In best of bonds to all the household of faith,

P. W. SAWIN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Jan. 4, 1914.

LIBERTY, Ind., Jan., 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I was born Dec. 9th, 1849, in Marion County, Ind., near the city of Indianapolis, and was the sixth child of a family of ten. On Dec. 25th, 1850, my father and mother, with their children and household goods in a wagon, moved to and settled on forty acres of swampland that father had previously entered in Tipton Co., Ind., forty-five miles north of Indianapolis. He had built a one room log cabin, but had not yet built a chimney nor put down a floor. The floor was soon made of hewn slabs, and the chimney was built of sticks and clay. The land was wet, except a knoll here and there over it, and all was covered with heavy timber, and being without money, we had but little except what the forest and the few patches of land, which were soon cleared and planted, could furnish. There was plenty of wild game, of birds and animals, from the small quail up to the deer, so that we had plenty of meat, and there were many fur-bearing animals, which were the source of some revenue. Our circumstances improved as time passed. Our clothing was scant until we could raise sheep and flax, from which mother spun and wove our wearing-apparel and bedding. Schools were poor in buildings, teachers, methods and books; in short, it was a new country, with all its hardships. I was very strong and healthy until I was eight years of age, when I became afflicted with inflammatory rheumatism, and lay helpless most of the winter. From this I never fully recovered, and have always had to labor under burdens that were too heavy for my strength. My desire from my first recollection was to do right. This has been my motto all through life: "Do right, regardless of the opinions of others or consequences to myself," yet I have never been able to live up to this ambition, for mistakes have made up a large portion of my life, and many sad moments have I spent as the result of zeal in that I found afterward to be wrong, the mistakes of a depraved conscience, a depraved judgment, a depraved intelligence, and every other depravity of the flesh. There is nothing more vivid in my memory than the things that I have done from pressure of circumstances and other temptations that were wrong. My own life, though never in reproach, is sufficient proof to me that the doctrine of total depravity is true, and that we cannot merit mercy or grace, nor do the things that we ought.

From my earliest recollection the thought of death was repulsive to me. I believed that all the good people would go to heaven and that all bad people would go to hell, and that each case was determined by the manner in which they spent this life. My parents were Baptists, but conditionalism was well established in my mind before I ever read the Bible or heard a sermon. There was no church of any denomination in our community, and the only sermon that I had ever heard was by a Methodist preacher, and I had paid no attention to that. The first Baptist preaching I heard was by Elders Thomas Martin and George Weaver, in father's house when I was about ten years of age. This preaching made no impression upon me. Some time after this Elder Wilson Thompson and his son, John A., began preaching in the neighborhood, and I took some interest, and began to think more seriously about my state. I reasoned that all people were sinners, because they did things that were wrong, but that they might obtain forgiveness and be saved if they would cease sinning and be good. This I re-

solved to do, and succeeded well for a time. I read the Bible, and was careful about all my words and actions, and was soon happy in the thought of my righteousness. I believed that I was better than my associates, even my own brothers and sisters. I read the life, crucifixion and resurrection of Christ with much interest in the narrative, but failed to comprehend its meaning, and had no thought of him as Mediator in a vital sense. I do not remember how long I continued in this state of mind, but there was an end to my righteousness, for "sin revived, and I died."

I think it was in 1864 that Elder J. G. Jackson moved into our community, and Providence Church was constituted in 1866, and the meetings were held at private houses. I attended all these meetings, but had ceased to rejoice in my own supposed righteousness. It had dawned on my mind that I myself was sinful, and because of that I was in a state of condemnation, and no amount of righteous acts could purify the flesh. The fountain being corrupt, all acts flowing from it must be corrupt. With this view of the case I felt to be hopelessly lost. A deep distress of mind pressed me down, and only those who have walked in this valley and shadow of death can know what I suffered. "The soul that sinneth it shall die," and, "The wages of sin is death," were words that continued to threaten and torment me. My days were full of gloom, and my nights filled with fear. When asleep I was tormented by wild beasts seeking my life, or menaced by dark pits into which I was about to fall. One horrid nightmare that is vivid in my memory that occasionally annoyed my sleep was a falling in of the earth behind me, as from the burning of intense heat, yet dark as midnight. It seemed that the earth was burning up, and when it should reach me I would be swallowed up and destroyed forever; but the crumbling earth never reached me. I would awake in great fear, and would dread to go to sleep again lest a worse thing come upon me. Often I would retire with the fear that I would not see the light of another day. My constant prayer was for mercy, if mercy could be extended to such a wretch as I. One day while reading of the agony of Christ in Gethsemane, it came to me with much force and assurance that he was suffering for the sins of his people, and in that suffering they were redeemed, and could no more be brought into bondage. With these thoughts came a change in my feelings. Could mercy be extended to such a wretch as I? was no longer the question in my mind, but was I embraced in the suffering of Christ? If he suffered for me it is enough, for his blood "cleanseth us from all sin." From this sprang a little hope, and the thought would come, Maybe my sins were put away in that sacrifice; then the words would come, Thy sins, which are many, are forgiven thee, yet I dared not take this as an answer to my earnest inquiry, nor as spoken personally to me. This frame of mind, which had in it an element of hope, kept me from despair. This hope increased until it became a resting-place for me.

My next trouble was in hearing others tell their experience. They would speak of a time when their burden of sin and sorrow was suddenly removed and joy took its place. I took this to be the time of their being born again, and as I could not point to such a moment of time I feared that I was not born again. It was my prayer by day and by night that if there was a part of my experience answering to this time of deliverance in the

experience of others that the Lord would show it to me. After much anxiety and supplication my mind was carried back to the time when I saw Jesus suffering in the garden for his people, and I was made to see that the hope given me there, and which hope so gradually supplanted my sorrow, was the same that was given to others in greater measure and banished sorrow at once with them. This view has never left me, and has been a resting-place for me for nearly fifty years, although I have been in "Doubting Castle" many times, and have had many sore trials. I desired to be baptized, but my unfitness kept me back. I wanted a brighter evidence; I was young and ignorant. One cold Sunday in January, 1868, I was walking to the meeting in company with my parents and Elder Jackson and wife, and Elder Jackson asked me to walk with him ahead of the others, so we walked fast, and when we were some distance ahead he asked me to tell him something of the travel of my mind. I told him some things about my exercise of mind, and he advised me to offer myself to the church, and that in so doing I would find rest. One month later I asked for membership, and was received, and in March was baptized, in company with my sister and a brother Martin, both of whom long since died. It was a happy day to me. I have thought of it as the happiest day of my life, yet on that day began a new trouble that I had not before thought of. There was snow on the ground, and the weather was cold, and as we came out of the water a young man remarked that if he could not go to heaven without going under the ice he would not go at all. I pitied him from the depths of my heart, and there came over me such an impression to speak of the mercy and love of God and the joy in obedience that it was with an effort that I refrained. My mind continued in almost constant meditation on the doctrine and order of the church, and eventually the suggestion entered my mind that I must preach the gospel. This suggestion I always resented with the argument that I was too young, ignorant and slow of speech, and that the ministry was a high and holy calling, of which I was unworthy. As I was about the farm work my mind was always absorbed in serious thoughts concerning my duty and my place in the church, often struggling against the impression to preach. On one occasion when our pastor was absent there was an effort made to get some one to open the conference by prayer, but no one would do so. It distressed me that none of the older members would engage in public prayer. I felt guilty myself, and was distressed about it for many days. I was impressed to talk to my pastor about my trouble in regard to preaching, but excused myself with the thought that I was too busy to take the time, and had no excuse to offer father for leave of absence, as I had never mentioned my trouble to him nor any one else, and felt that I must not do so, except to my pastor, in whom I had all confidence. Before the week was ended there came a rainy day, and the suggestion came, Now is your opportunity. I went into the house, picked up the Bible, let it fall open where it would, with the desire that it would open to something that would help me. My eyes fell upon the forty-fifth chapter of Isaiah. I read to the fifth verse, but could not apply this to myself. I laid the book down and told father that I was going to Elder Jackson's. I walked rapidly for awhile, but before I reached his home, one and one-half miles away, I had lost all my

courage, and when I came in sight of his house I stopped and was about to turn back, but thought perhaps they had seen me and would wonder what I meant, so I went on, and after spending an hour or more with the family returned home without mentioning the subject that was on my mind.

In the spring of 1870 I left home, hoping to get away from my trouble by new surroundings. I worked on a farm in the summer and taught school in the winter. On my way from home I stopped over night with brother Martin, who was my companion in baptism and a fast friend. As I was taking my leave of him he said, "You need not think that you can run away from preaching." This surprised me, for I had never spoken of my impressions to preach to any one, nor of trying to run from it.

I was married in the fall of 1872, and moved to Hancock County the next spring, and placed my membership with Shiloh Church, in that county. My burden continued to press upon me with increasing weight, and the brethren would occasionally speak to me about it, and at our November, 1874, meeting, the church licensed me to preach the gospel wherever God in his providence cast my lot. I did not abuse this liberty, although I always attended Baptist meeting whenever and wherever it was my privilege and opportunity, as I had done from my earliest love of the truth, frequently walking a long distance to reach the meeting, but never trying to preach when I could escape it without positively refusing. I went on in this way for several years without making any appointment for myself. In 1880 Bethlehem Church called me to preach for them each alternate month, to assist their pastor. I accepted this call, and in October, 1881, I was ordained by a presbytery composed of the following thirteen: Elders P. K. Parr, G. S. Weaver, Harvey Wright, J. G. Jackson, W. P. Jones, T. J. Jones, R. W. Thompson, D. Cadell, Isaac Sawin, P. W. Sawin, James Martindale, W. H. Curtis and G. R. Riggs. I have been trying to serve from two to five churches ever since, but have never overcome my timidity nor come to think I am a good preacher, but have attained to a good degree of boldness in contending for what I understand the Scriptures and the Spirit in the heart to teach, and to oppose unscriptural innovations. This zeal and boldness have often been to my hurt, but I trust to the good of the cause. Since my ordination, thirty-two years ago, I have traveled and preached in eighteen States and in Ontario, Canada, yet I have never traveled with a mere desire to do so, but with the same motive that I have served churches, without seeking my own comfort or profit. I have never (with one exception) gone on a tour at the request of others without a mutual impression on my own mind within. The one exception was by repeating the request urging me to go after I had declined. I finally consented to go, and left home with a sad heart, under trying circumstances, and the trip is noted for its disappointments, railroad wrecks and lack of interest, and I returned without filling all the appointments.

I believe that the churches should supply the temporal wants of the pastor, and have so taught, that the pastor be able to give his time to reading, meditation and visiting the sick, and members generally, yet I have never sat down and waited

for them to supply my wants, but have labored with my own hands for the support of myself and family. I have always felt that the work of the gospel minister is so sacred that there should be no room in his life for vanity or egotism; he should always conduct himself, both in and out of the pulpit, so as to honor his calling and command the respect of all who know him. I have never sought for authority or precedence among uninspired men for what I preach. There is enough plainly declared in the Scriptures of inspiration so that we do not need to speculate, draw unsupported conclusions and place unwarranted constructions. It is not enough that we find Scripture that we can construe, or interpret to prove our assertion or serve our purpose, but we should not be satisfied with anything short of Scripture language that does contain our thought. I have understood the Scriptures to teach that God is perfect in all his attributes, and that man is depraved and imperfect in all his attributes, and that salvation, or any other good, must proceed from the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, who is one God over all, blessed for evermore. This I have preached, whether men will believe or not, and have opposed with the same zeal everything that contradicts the above principles of truth, regardless of the opinions of others or the consequences to myself.

I have now presented a few of the footprints of my journey, but only enough of them to show the road I have traveled, the burdens I have borne and the labor I have done. I submit it to the editors of the SIGNS, and, if published, to its readers, with the prayer that it may comfort some of God's little ones.

Your brother in hope,

W. N. THARP.

SANTA CRUZ, California.

DEAR BRETHREN:—This letter is to my pastor and the little flock at Bethlehem, to brother Chick and all the household of God. When I last wrote brother Chick I deemed it a very poor attempt, but I sent it, and afterward wondered why, sincerely wishing that I had destroyed it. Then came his good letter, which amply repaid me. He said he enjoyed it, and I was satisfied, but as I read on, he said he had taken the liberty of sending it to the SIGNS, and I wondered more than before. What had he seen in it that was worth sending to our family paper? Finally I summed it up in this way: It was not for what I said, but for what I was trying to say; not for what I am, but for what God is; not for what I can do, but for what God did for us before time was. Well, the letter was published, and I prayed that it might find a responsive chord in the hearts of a few. Only a few days had passed, when, on my birthday, there came a card from sister Florence Pultz, whom I not only love in the Lord, but in the flesh, for I have pictured her as a woman beautiful in all christian graces, as one very companionable, and as one who has walked with the Lord, and has learned deeply of the things taught by him; besides, she can tell so much of it sweetly and comfortingly. I said she wrote me a card; well, I wish you could see how much she put on it, and how well she put it. Did I feel elated over its contents? No, instead the tears came to my eyes, and I thanked God that there was such a person as sister Pultz. Then shortly after I received a letter from brother D. M. Vail, who after writing much that was highly appreciated, asked to be pardoned for his intrusion. The dear brother did not know with what

pleasure I had read his writings, and how often I had wished to see him. He said, in part, that it was wonderful how he could take so much comfort in reading the great and good things that are written concerning God's people, when there was nothing in himself but sin. The thought came to me that he could not be dead in sin or there would have been no comfort, and right there I took courage, thinking if all for whom I had so great a reverence could confess their sins, could acknowledge their just condemnation and then kiss the rod, the hand of God must surely be in it. Why, I would have given up in despair long ago were it not that all who love the Lord tell the same story. Some have wonderful gifts in doing so; they have read and understood the writing on the wall, and boldly declare it. We are carried to the top of the mountain, and realize that we are in Beulah land, but the stay there is short; we are again in the valley listening to the feeble, timid ones as they sit with stammering tongues telling of the mystery of godliness, of their poor understanding of it, of their sinfulness and their inability to do a thing that would be pleasing in his sight. We mingle our voices in like testimony, are willing to know nothing but Christ crucified, and once more we are happy, for God is there, too, being touched with the feeling of our infirmities; again, his promises are to just such. I am glad there are different talents; one convinces, one comforts and another surprises, telling more about ourselves than we thought possible.

A week after the arrival of brother Vail's letter I had the privilege and pleasure of reading one from sister McMillan, of Westerville, Ohio. She, too, said she felt drawn toward me by ties of relationship through our Lord and Savior, and I was glad that she had been moved to tell me so; moreover, she expects some day to come to California. If she should come to Santa Cruz the humbleness of my home and the love in my heart will be shared with her. A little later I received a communication from brother G. A. Dundas, of Upland, in our own State, but many miles from me. He, too, has been taught in the things which make for our good and His glory, and sent greetings to me in His name. He also reminded me that a small number of our faith and order met monthly in Riverside, and extended an invitation to visit them. I would enjoy doing so, but it seems impossible at this time. How the coming of the above mentioned letters did touch me. Such occurrences touch all of us, and call to the surface all the good that is in us, and they reveal all that is bad. I am sure I felt like hiding myself from all His people, believing that if they knew me as I know myself they would want to hide from me. I pray that I am not deceiving them, and that I am not being deceived. If so, I will be the only one to suffer, for nothing can separate the redeemed from their Redeemer, no one can overthrow the "wills" and "shalls" of the Almighty, for they are as firm as the everlasting hills. In all my weakest, darkest moments my reconciliation to his will concerning me, and my love for his people, were with me, and were my stay and comfort. So if I do not answer individually all the dear letters that have come to me, it is not because they are not treasured articles, but I am old, do my own work, and my time for writing is limited, and I must write to my scattered family. I would appreciate a line from any willing heart of like faith, because I cannot hear their

voices, cannot assemble with them to hear the preached word, and because I am hungry to be fed from the same table. O yes, God does feed me, or I would have perished, but I want to hear of that which they explain to me so wonderfully, to receive the love they bestow on me so unstintingly, to share in their joys and their sorrows and to be like them, even as we shall be like him if we are favored to see him. If we suffer with him, we shall reign with him. "Afflictions all his children feel. He wounds them for his mercy's sake, he wounds to heal." Such a Savior, we cannot fathom the breadth nor depth of his love. We cannot understand all the ways of our blessed Lord, for there is a great mystery in connection therewith; if it were not so we would know all and not in part, would not see through a glass darkly, but his will would be known to the world, and there would be greater confusion than at present. There would be no earnest expectation, and faith would be eliminated. But he knew the end from the beginning; he spoke and it was done, and he knew what was best for all of us. He chose the weak and gave them strength to contend against the mighty; he chose the ignorant to confound the learned; he chose sinners, that he might impute his righteousness to them, and he will save them because it seemeth good in his sight. I wish we could shake off our fears more frequently and tell how high our own Deliverer reigns, and how glad we are that he left nothing for us to do. We cannot direct our steps, cannot control our thoughts, cannot do as we would like, so if we are numbered among his people it is all of God and none of self. Indeed, if I knew I had a part to do I would be the most unhappy person living, I would know I was doomed; so I try to be charitable to those without the gates, for by nature I am not one whit better than they; we were prone to leave the God we now love, were filled with unbelief, were dead in sin, and but for a merciful God, and the hope we have through a risen Redeemer, we would be walking in darkness yet; would be aliens from his commonwealth; therefore let us go slowly and not make haste, let us forget the things that are behind and remember only those that are before. I try to read the Bible, but the most of it is a sealed book to me; again, what I understand is soon forgotten. Not the sweetness and beauty of it, for that is lasting, but when writing I cannot use those verses absolutely correct, and the many comforting things they contain, so much food for weak, tired children, and yet when I forget the world, when I feel my heart being drawn by cords of love, when I experience the joy that rises insurmountably high, it is when I hear the cry of one who has been brought from darkness into his marvelous light. It is akin to the joy of heven itself, for, It is a heaven below, our Redeemer to know. And even down to old age all his people shall prove his sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love. He is with us when called to pass through the furnace of affliction; he has promised that the deep waters shall not overflow us; that though all hell should endeavor to shake, he will never forsake us. We have much to make us happy when we look up to Calvary, much to depress us when we think of ourselves as he sees us, but he will give us the victory, for when we are weak he is strong; the lower down we get the higher our songs of praise will rise. Then we should pray to be able to follow him in all his appointed ways, and if his judgment grows severe

we are condemned, but he is clear. His mercy and grace surpass our worst crimes; he sheds his love in our hearts and causes us to trust him though he slay us; even when dying he enables his people to exclaim, O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? After that it is not in man to conceive the joy that is in store for us. We are told that we shall rest from our labors, that there shall be no more sighing or crying, no more parting or pain, and that we shall know as we are known. Is it not worth all we have endured here? Are not our doubts and fears, our sufferings and sorrows, as well as our hopes and joys, working out for us a far more exceeding weight of glory? Ought we not be willing to watch with him a few hours more, when we are promised the benefits of his suffering and death? Let us pray to be willing in the day of his power; let us pray that we may honor and glorify him the rest of our days, walking soberly and godly, and being at peace one with another.

You have noticed, I imagine, that all through this I have been writing of "us." When I began it, it was not an easy matter to call you brother or sister, it was hard to include myself with you, but as my mind was stirred up I seemed to get nearer the Father, nearer to you, and before I realized it I was believing in all earnestness that I was one for whom Christ died. Just now I believe it with all my soul, for I have the witness of the Spirit that I have been born again, born of water and the blood, and an heir of his promises. But it will not always be so; as sure as the night succeeds the day the tempter will come, and there will be whisperings of unworthiness, of God's limited power, of a conditional salvation, that predestination is a delusion and everything calculated to distract and annoy. But the foundation of the Lord is sure, he knoweth them that are his, and though weeping may endure for a night, joy will come in the morning. Life is a struggle from the cradle to the grave. We first contend for that which makes us prominent and powerful, but when God by the Spirit reveals our littleness and his greatness, we count the world but dross, and are willing to become the least of all for his sake. However, the warfare continues, the flesh and the Spirit are opposite, one is sin, the other holiness, and knowing that without holiness we cannot see God, the flesh strives for mastery, but thanks be to Him, we shall be conquerors in the end.

This rambling article is intended for all who care to read it. It contains nothing that you do not know; it leaves out more than I could tell in a lifetime, because we are renewed day by day. It will not lead you as I have been led during the writing of it, and in all my spiritual life I never thought to attempt to instruct any one, I merely wanted to put you in remembrance, to tell you that I think of you all and love you, and in a way that is mysterious and unaccountable. The SIGNS has just arrived, and I have only glanced over one letter, and that from brother Keene, but I saw enough to know that I am in perfect accord, and want him to know how I enjoyed it. I have felt it in my soul, but could not tell it. How earnestly I hope that brother Badger's health has improved. How sincerely I wish that I could meet you all once more; as it is, I can only pray that He may keep you by his grace, establish and comfort you while sojourning here, and at last receive you unto himself in glory.

From your undeserving sister,

M. E. WRIGHT.

FLEMINGTON, N. J.

DEAR FRIENDS OF THE SIGNS:—I will now try to finish the letter begun in the SIGNS of a few months ago. I think when I closed that letter I was telling you of my having joined the Methodists because the doctrine was more suited to my taste at that time. I remained with them for fifteen years, and in all that time I did not for one moment think I was a christian, but kept hoping that I would become one if I did my part, and that God would do his part without question; so I was informed. I could not know what my part of the work was, but I knew there was an inward work to be done, which I was unable to do for myself, so of course that was God's part of the work, and how could I prevail with him to do this work? I was told to go to work for God and to let his part alone. I asked what I must do, and was told to bring others to Christ, and to give to the poor, and to own him upon all occasions. I was a very backward worker, and had to be urged quite frequently to do my part, and I do not believe that I made the attempt. I was willing, but I could not undertake such a great work, for I felt altogether too unworthy, so like a worm. How could I own him when he had not owned me? The consequence was I became a backslider, and a good one. I engaged in all the pleasures of the world as before for some time, and then my steps were arrested by a dream, in which I was shown where and what I was: lost in the wilderness of sin, sinking in miry clay. In the dream I was delivered from the mire and told to go and sin no more. Again I returned to the Methodists, and was very faithful to my duties, so far as I knew them, still there was a feeling of unrest and fear, because I saw that all the duties and faithfulness I could do did not make me a christian. I cannot describe my feelings; my heart was like a stone, I could not weep and mourn over my sins as others did who could get religion so easily apparently. The tears would not come as I thought they ought to. About this time I accompanied my parents to Hopewell, where the association was held that year. I simply went for the ride, not caring at all for the meeting. My hearing was quite good then, and of course I had to hear the preaching whether I wanted to or not. I do not recall the preacher's name who was preaching when we entered the house, but my attention was arrested at once by something he said. I do not recall the words, but the effect was astonishing, to me at least. A storm of tears overwhelmed me, and I wept as never before. It was here that I must make bare my very soul; the church I so hated must witness my overthrow, for so I thought it. That Old Baptist sermon was the means of my deliverance from the Methodists, and I could never fellowship them again. I still hated the Old Baptist doctrine however, and it was some years that I just drifted, not attending meetings anywhere. I still had the desire to become a christian, but could not see the way. Then my dear mother died and Elder Chick was called to preach the funeral sermon, and it was the first gospel sermon I ever heard, and I understood and believed it, and was fully satisfied it was the truth. On that sorrowful occasion was the first time I met Elder Chick, and little did I think then that he would ever become my pastor. Afterward I wrote to him and stated my case, and he quickly responded, saying it was christian experience. My heart gave a glad throb when I read it, but soon I was doubting again, thinking that I had not

told him enough of my unworthiness and so had deceived him. Soon after this I came across the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and in reading it found my first solid comfort. I saw in it a people who felt just as I did, and I subscribed at once, and have taken it ever since, for it has become my meat and my drink, so to speak. The next time I saw Elder Chick he broached the subject of baptism, but not to urge it, and it was several years before it took place, for I felt altogether too unworthy to take the solemn step, so different from the other baptism; I wondered how they could receive me into the church, I had so little to say. I was baptized by Elder Chick the same day I was received. I had no special joy when I came from the baptismal water, but was glad I was strengthened to come. This thought seemed to be with me, at least before, Shall I blush to own his cause, or fear to speak his name? I was unworthy, which he knew, so I came with the prayer in my heart that if it were not his will to have me come he would prevent me from doing so. My first communion was quite a long time after, because I lived some distance from Hopewell, and it took place at Harbourton, N. J. I went there with brother and sister Yard to attend a two days meeting. I was trying all the way there to realize the solemnity of the Lord's supper, which would be served. I felt I ought not to partake of it while in so cold a state, when all at once the words came with comfort, This do in remembrance of me. It was not my worthiness, for I had none, but to obey his command and to rest in his worthiness. I cannot tell you of many, if any, joyful seasons, but I have had solid comfort at times, but much of the time I have traveled in darkness of mind. There has been only a glimpse now and then of his presence (his felt presence). I know he is always hovering around his loved ones, but O, am I one of them? Many of you know that I live in almost perpetual silence, but this would not trouble me could I feel him near at all times and know that I am his and he is mine. I feel lonely indeed when I cannot realize him near me nor hear him spoken of, but when he comes again all is well. Ever since I have known him as the Savior of sinners I have had the utmost faith in him, and I want to praise him and love him and see him, the One altogether lovely and my all in all. To have this dear Savior for a friend who sticketh closer than a brother is worth more to me than anything this world can offer. In the coming year (if it be his will for me to live) I hope I may love him more than in the past. I see much to regret in looking over the past, of coldness and indifference. What! coldness to this dear friend on whom my hope of heaven depends? But so it is, dear fellow-travellers; is it so with you?

I think I had better draw this to a close now, but first I want to say, which I almost forgot, that I now love the dear Old Baptists more than I ever hated them; yes, a thousand times more, and I hope to live with them through all eternity.

I wish you all a happy new year, including the dear brethren and sisters in Virginia and in Salisbury, Md., whom I met there at the association last fall and who entertained me so royally.

With love to all the household of faith, unworthily,

MARY E. FISHER.

WALKER, Ore., Nov. 29, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have so much enjoyed your faithful, clear and comprehensive manner of dealing with the various subjects you have taken up in the SIGNS, that I feel constrained to write you a few lines on the same subject you wrote for our dear old brother, S. S. Miller, current volume, October 15th. It is not a wonder that in his advanced age, when his earthly pilgrimage, a mixture of joy and sorrow, is about ended, that his mind should dwell heavily upon the realm that he must soon enter, to know as he is known, and fully realize the untarnished glory of the Son of God in that clime where none of the flesh are known, but where the fragrance of the fruit of the Spirit will eternally sweeten every thought. It is a glorious gift of him whose love and watchcare never cease, that they have that grace to anticipate its coming with continued prayers for its approach. Solomon said, Better is the day of a man's death than the day of his birth. Paul said, It is far better to depart and be with the Lord, and brother Miller has not failed to express the same sentiment in, I believe, every one of scores of letters the Coast Fork Church has received from him in his far away southern home. The subject is our knowledge of each other in person. Your views, which were based on the unerring testimony of God's inspired word, and which were much more exhaustive than I have knowledge or language to express, perfectly coincided with an exercise of mind I had in my experience of grace, if indeed the hope of such a poor sinner may be founded on such a glorious thing as God's grace. When my mind had been in the depths of gloom a large portion of the time for about four years, when all hope seemed to vanish in despair, when I tried to justify my flesh by the deeds of the law, when I had tried the advice of many church members, friends and relatives, when there was absolutely no help in man, when I seemed to see everything in creation was for a good purpose but my own sinful self, as it were, God had made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil, (Prov. xvi. 4,) then in this awful dilemma, without a ray of hope, I was given the sweetest prayer that ever I breathed: "Thy will be done," and then I could sing and rejoice exceedingly, and I could see because of his unerring, glorious wisdom, and his unbounded power, that even if I made my bed in hell, behold, he was there, and that anywhere, from the side of his throne to the threshold of the glorious city, or even in outer darkness, regardless of the position of myself or any of my earthly or fleshly relations, it would all ultimately redound to his glory. As it were, having the mind of Christ, I had so far, for the time being, left the fleshly mind behind, that whatever was his pleasure would be my pleasure. If it were his pleasure to make even the wicked for the day of evil I knew by experience that God and his law were good, just and holy, and I was carnal, sold under sin, and could cry in sentiment with the four and twenty elders, Thou art worthy to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, for thyself, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. (Rev. iv. 11.) Hence if God, who loves his own with an everlasting love, and with loving-kindness draws them, as I have been vain enough to hope, carried me away in the spirit, leaving the fleshly mind behind, I must conclude that it is the fleshly mind that brings into the battlefield of our soul such a desire for the welfare of our dearly

beloved earthly friends and relatives this way, but with the mind of Christ we love our enemies, and pray for them that despitefully use us, and say, whatever may be his pleasure, "Thy will be done;" for in that day of ecstasy the meadows of the field bowed to his praise, the trees of the great forest clapped their hands for joy, and not only so, but the gates of hell opened and shut and made obeisance to his good pleasure. There was no remorse in the thought that he had need for me, who was curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth, to fulfill his purpose, even in the lowest parts of outer darkness. Then Satan accused me in vain, for whatever his wicked, flaming tongue might suggest, for days, weeks, yea, even months, the sweet words, "Thy will be done," were a sovereign balm; they were sufficient to banish every evil thought, for I knew all his works praise him. The language of this stammering tongue, or this mind, which is burdened with heavy clay, is entirely inadequate to express these things, and thus we become tedious and tiresome in our efforts to tell of the wonders we sometimes see, when the Spirit, as it were, flew into our hearts, and the new song was put in our mouth, even praises to our God, which beautiful song we hope to sing in perfect accord with all his blood-bought saints, eternally feeding on the smiles of his face, being released from this weight of clay, and no longer burdened with any of its fruit or propensities, when this vile body shall have been changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body, then to see him as he is and be like him.

But now I must close, having only slightly hinted at the things I wanted to say. My feeble petition I breathe over and over, that we may more and more grow in grace and the knowledge of the truth, and in our love for our great Benefactor, and in love and charity for one another.

Your feeble, sinful brother in the hope of immortality, by the gift of God's dear Son, G. O. WALKER.

PORTLAND, Ind., Aug. 25, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I inclose to you a letter received from brother O. B. Hickerson, of Nashville, Tenn., that I feel sure will make good reading for the SIGNS. I have his consent to send it for publication. It sets forth how this aged brother has been made to stand firm in the faith once delivered unto the saints. May God's grace, love and mercy be with him the rest of his pilgrimage here, and his faith enter into that within the veil, whither Jesus, the forerunner, has for us entered, is the prayer of your unworthy servant,

NEWTON PETERS.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Aug. 19, 1913.

ELDER NEWTON PETERS—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I notice in August 15th number of the SIGNS that by request of our beloved brother, Elder Boaz, of Kentucky, you have written upon some things recorded in the first and second chapters of second Kings, which I have read with much comfort. You have written with reference to what has been fulfilled, and not one jot or tittle has failed. We read that it is easier for heaven and earth to pass than one tittle of the law to fail. There are none that know God's purposes, but we know that he will never fail, for he is of one mind. I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. Truth will stand when all things fail. We are commanded to let brotherly love abound,

to let our conversation be without covetousness and to be content with such things as we have. We have that precious promise which God hath spoken: I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. How encouraging this is for one who feels the need of such a friend to look to, that we are all in the hand of God, who knows all things, even the very secrets of our hearts. The true church is commanded not to be carried about with divers and strange doctrines. It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, and not with meats which are of the works of the flesh. Believers have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat, which serve the tabernacle. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp bearing his reproach. This is not our home, for here we have no continuing city, but seek one to come. Let us therefore by him offer the sacrifice of praise to God; that is, the fruits of our lips giving thanks to his name. How true it is, my dear brother, when the Lord begins a good work he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. This was shown very plainly with reference to Elijah, the prophet of the Lord. Baal's prophets could not be heard, but God heard Elijah; it was a revelation given him from God, to show to Baal and his followers what man could not do. But still it is insisted upon by finite men that they are the instruments in God's hand in saving the world, which is nothing but an invention of men. Nebuchadnezzar felt at one time that there was no power above him, but in God's appointed time He gave to the prophet Daniel to reveal to the king an interpretation of his dream, and how he should be brought down, and that his kingdom should be taken from him, and he was brought down to the very dust of the earth, and was made to eat grass as an ox. Then he learned that God will give the kingdom to whomsoever he will, and that all the inhabitants of the earth are counted as nothing. He does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? We read, The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man; he shall be like a man of war; he shall cry, yea, he shall roar. He shall prevail against his eneemies which have risen up against him denying his truth. But there are those who are standing firm in defence of the truth. It is said in the Scripture, "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things." "Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" The Lord made all things for himself, yea, the wicked for the day of evil. It was given to the prophets to foretell events that should be fulfilled at some time by the wickedness of men, and sometimes by the virtues of men and kings. I believe the Lord has a people in this present time who do not for a moment believe that God in decreeing all things is the author of sin. He is the beginning and ending of all things. In his purpose he made man, forming him of the dust of the earth, and making him subject to vanity. Our God had all power to keep sin and Satan out of the garden and out of the world, but for a wise and holy purpose, and for most gracious ends, decreed all things that come to pass. In his wise plan his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, was appointed to be slain before the foundation of the world, and his people were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Dear brother, this subject is deep. I feel to hope that the Lord has

given me understanding to comprehend what you have tried to explain to Elder Boaz. It was good, and I felt a desire to write you, trusting in God to direct my mind by his Spirit. I am always glad to read your good letters in the SIGNS. If you feel this to be worthy, you are at liberty to have it published. I would be glad, if you have light, if you would give your views through the SIGNS on Solomon's Song, eighth chapter, fifth verse, and tell us what it was that was raised up under the apple tree. I feel to believe that you have been taught the revealed will of God, and that you have unfolded many deep things concerning God's purposes and decrees. No finite man can tell it save those who have been taught of God. This is as I understand it. I have now entered upon my eighty-first year with a feeling of love which I trust that God has given me. This is why I love to read and write concerning his glorious cause and of his grace. I feel that I have been wonderfully blessed in this world, but it has pleased God to show me my weakness more and more, and therefore I feel to become more reconciled to his will, as I know my imperfection and inability, and that my sufficiency is of God, and I have no confidence in the flesh. Dear brother, I hope that you will remember me at the throne of grace.

Your brother in hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

WAVERLY, Pa., Jan. 8, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Here are two letters inclosed; use them if you wish. They are both good, at least to me, and I think will be to others.

Yours as ever, alone in the wilderness,

D. M. VAIL.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Sept. 10, 1913.

DEAR ELDER VAIL:—I inclose you by mail my photograph, and I think you will know who it is, as it looks just like the old man in Hopewell who likes to meet you and hear you talk of things that are worth more than all else to us; things that do not perish with the using, but are from everlasting to everlasting, founded on the rock that is higher than all. Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." On that rock I hope we stand. Paul said by Christ's strength he could do all things. What are we without him? Poor, helpless worms of the dust. As you said in your letter to me, a big lump of sin. Paul said, By the grace of God I am what I am. How true. Blessed are they that hear the joyful sound. Why should we fear when our Father is at the helm? He will guide the ship through the deep waters safely, and none can make us afraid. Salvation is of the Lord, and can be in no other way. He said, I am the way, the truth and the life. We love to praise him for all his wonderful works, and say amen to all his ways. Our ways are not his ways, our thoughts are not his thoughts. As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are his ways and thoughts above our ways and thoughts. "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow, from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, * * * so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth." When God speaks it is done; he spake as man never spake, he taught as man never taught. Man in his best estate is but vanity, helpless in the way of salvation, but our God has all power to lay down his life, and to

take it again. Are we not greatly blessed to know that he is God, and our Savior, and that his strong arm is always underneath us and will bear us up, and finally carry us into glory, where there will be no more losses or crosses, no more pain, no more sorrows, but all will be continual bliss? We cannot praise him enough for all he has done for us. He suffered on the cross as man never suffered, and is faithful in his promise toward his children, saying that none shall perish, but he is their merciful and true God. He will be merciful to their transgressions, and their sin he will remember no more.

The picture I send you was taken when I was in my eightieth year of age. Come and see us when you can. I often think of you and the other ministering brethren, of what a trust you have. There are many who think differently from what we do, but we have nothing to fear, for if God be for us, who can be against us? That sums it all up.

I have written more than I intended, but my mind seemed to run along in this way, and there has been no stopping-place.

From your unworthy brother in hope,

D. S. BLACKWELL.

EDELLA, Pa., Dec. 27, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—I thought I would write a few lines to you, if the dear Lord would give me strength, for I feel to be very helpless; I cannot breathe one breath without him who doeth all things well. I do know that all things work together for good to them that love God, but, dear brother, do I love him? No, not unless he first loved me. I had been praying for some evidence that I knew something of that love, as I could not see any evidence, and felt to be in total darkness, when all at once, in the night, it came to me: How can any one know he is in darkness unless he has eyes to see and they have been opened by the good Lord? It seems as if to know one is in darkness, is a sure evidence. For a few minutes I felt to say, All is well. I feel that I have none to go to but the Lord; and O, how wretched, vile and lonely I feel most of the time; still, I know what he does is all right, for he is God, and beside him there is no Savior. If you can write me a word of encouragement do so, and oblige a poor old sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all,

M. C. MILLER.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 1, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you two letters from Elder L. H. Hardy, which I think will be of interest to the readers of the SIGNS if you think best to publish them. Many will remember his visit to our associations a few years ago, and his good gospel preaching.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Jan. 15, 1914.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—Your letter came yesterday, and I was glad to hear from you again. Sometimes I feel nearly cut loose from the things of this world, and have an indescribable longing for the joys to come, and sometimes those longings grow in me until my little hope grows so strong that doubts are lost sight of, and I weep for the joy which so fills my poor, longing heart. Paul's language, To me it is far better to depart and be with Jesus, comes into my fellowship, and I rejoice that the Lord gave him that expression to comfort me. But it is not always that way. In our move it became necessary for us to

be separated from all our immediate family connections, except our young granddaughter, fifteen years old. Sometimes my attachment and care to wife and her are so great that I want to live here, and am made willing to suffer much more for them. Then I have a very near attachment to the churches I try to serve and the work I believe the Lord has given me to do in his holy name. With these feelings I am made willing to wait all my appointed time, until my change comes. Thus I am living from day to day. Whether it be the life of a christian or not I know not, but I know I have been made partaker of many mercies of the Lord. His blessings to me are beyond counting, and they are continual. I am glad that David rejoiced so much in the expression, The mercy of the Lord endureth forever. When this wonderful expression first came to me there appeared to be something that said, This is evidence that he was continually a sinner, and that he knew it. Mercy is for the poor and needy sinner. My heart rejoiced in the Lord, and there was an inward desire to praise him for this rich provision of his grace. I, too, was a sinner continually, and every moment in need of just such mercies. It it were true in David's case, was it not also true in the case of all poor and needy sinners, and therefore in my own case? O the richness I saw in that blessed word. Then one of the sweets of it all is, it has never left me, and it comes up often to remind me and to comfort me. Were it not for this, what would life be but a terror? To be here, such a sinner as I know I am, and no mercy? It would be a continual hell to me. Therefore I rejoice in the mercy of the Lord, and take courage to press onward, and to look upward to God in blessed hope that his sweet mercy and grace will keep me all the days of my life, and bring me safely into his holy presence to praise him forever and forever. Time is but a little moment anyway. Eternity! we do not count it by moments, nor yet by years. How sweet to feel that the life the Lord has given to us is eternal life; that assures us that it is of equal existence with him, and that our unity with him is eternal also. To see Jesus as he is and to be like him is all my desire; to this all other things are only secondary. This is my hope, which I have proved for these forty-one years, and which gets more precious as my trials come and pass by. From this no storm has ever been able to move me, and though the waves and billows have often gone over me, my anchor has enabled me to outride them all. Bless the Lord.

I do not wish to weary you, and will close with love to you and all your family.

Your brother in a good hope through grace, L. H. HARDY.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Jan. 20, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—Your good letter came to hand yesterday, and we were, as we always are, glad to hear from you. You are welcome to do with my former letter as you see fit; it is yours, as all my letters to you are. I do not remember just what I wrote, but am glad that you have received comfort, and if you have it published I hope others may do the same. I am such a poor sinner that if any one receives a word of comfort from my writing or speaking I take comfort that it is of the Lord. I do know that in me, that is, in my flesh, there is no good thing. I am so weak that I cannot stand alone, much less can I hold others up. They can only find comfort

(if indeed they find any) in being made willing to abide with me in my weakness. I have often thought of those who can walk in obedience to the word of the Lord; how happy they must be. If they were as I am they would many times find themselves so far away from the path of righteousness that they would not know which way to turn to get right.

I was lost once in the woods. It was in the night. The moon rose, and it appeared to me to be in the west. I knew it was in the east, yet it was hard for me to believe it. I was east from home, and to go home appeared to me that I was surely going from home. Of course I went according to my knowledge, contrary to what appeared to be right to me. Thus I was right in my going, but wrong in what appeared right to me. Had it not been that I knew my course from home I would have been lost worse and worse the more I sought to be right. Thus it has been with me in my experience and travels as a christian, if indeed I have ever traveled that heavenly road at all. I go, but so often find that I have gone wrong, that it appears to me that my whole life is a complete failure. Indeed I know it is. I am a failure in every part, and unless the Lord leads me I will never get to the desired haven. I often feel this so clearly that I am made to ask the question, Have I ever known the Lord at all? and fear fills me so that I weep tears of bitterness and sorrow, yet there is with me an abiding hope that I have known the Lord, that he has revealed himself to me as my Savior and Lord. Thus I am compelled to go hoping and fearing all the way. Dear brother, if this is not the way of the christian, then surely I have never known the Lord at all. If it is the way of the christian, I have a hope that I am one of that blessed number.

For some cause unknown to me I live without any fear of hell. If that is necessary for one to be a servant of the living God, then surely I am not one. I have hope in the election of God, that he has chosen me in Christ Jesus, to live with him in his glory, and that hope enables me to look to him. I know that if it were not for that hope I would sink at once in despair, but that hope abides with me and I live in it. I believe he will keep me safe in all my trials and deliver me to himself in the end. Somehow all my troubles, persecutions and departures from the right way have not yet been able to move me from that hope. Sometimes that hope is so far hid from me that I hardly dare to claim it. It then appears little, then it revives, and I am made to lay hold upon it as eagerly as a very hungry child will lay hold on the breast from which it draws its living. Then I can hold on and go to sleep in the arms of my Beloved and trust him, though every one and everything in the world were turned upside down. I care but little then how the world goes or what becomes of it. I realize that my home is not here, and there is a longing in my soul to go home. I feel cut loose from the world and all its pleasures, and want to go home.

Dear brother, lest I weary you with reading so much about myself, so unworthy of your time or attention, I will stop, but it is hard to find the place.

You ask me to come in the spring to the associations, and I would love to accept that invitation. There has not been a spring since I was there that my mind has not been in those meetings, but for some cause the way to go has been closed up so far. Now I am settling in this new home which my brethren and friends have very graciously given to me, and it

takes every moment of my time when I am from my appointments to try to fix things so we can live; that, with my obligations to the churches, will keep me this spring. I have promised that, if it please the Lord, I will go in 1915; that is as soon as I can now see an opening.

Dear brother, pray for us. We are a little people, and feel the need of the prayers of the saints. The Lord be with you, and abundantly bless and sustain you, that these, your latter days, may in every way be your best days, and when your deliverance comes may it be sweet in the Lord.

With much love to the whole family, I am your brother in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

BARRY, Texas, April 10, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed find a soul-cheering letter that I received from a precious brother in Christ, which I would like to have published in the SIGNS. I had not heard a gospel sermon for seven months when I received brother Howard's letter, and it came as manna to a hungry soul.

Your unworthy brother, saved by grace, if saved at all, C. T. COFFEE.

SABINAL, Texas, March 11, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER COFFEE:—Your very kind letter of February 22nd did not reach me until Friday before our first regular Sunday meeting in March. I had been away from Keller for some time, and this accounts for my delay in answering. Immediately after our meeting on Monday night, at Ft. Worth, I boarded the train for this place, in Uvalde County, southern Texas, not far from the border line. Brother Staggs and wife sent for me to visit them, as they had lost their youngest child, the first serious trouble in their family, and therefore they desired that I should come to comfort and share with them in their affliction, and now by the grace of the blessed God I am here, and in my weakness and unworthiness try to mingle with them and speak of the sufferings of our adorable Savior, the sweet salvation of all his elect people, his will and new covenant, and the glorious consolation in the gospel that comes to our souls. It waters, feeds and supports every branch of the true vine (Christ) which he has redeemed by his own blood. They are from among all nations, and are purified unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. The woman clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars, has no spot of self-righteousness or creature merit, but is wholly imbued with the life of her Husband, and is clad in the righteousness of her glorified and risen Redeemer, to chant everlasting praises to God.

Dear brother, please pardon me; I started to write you a letter, but have wandered off to the ends of the earth, or the nether land of immensity, which makes old nature to exceedingly fear and quake. For by the law no flesh shall be justified in the sight of God. The whole working system of Arminianism must ultimately go down to oblivion, like a cloud that vanisheth forever, but the whole elect family will finally and forever be housed in heaven, the port of eternal peace, saved by the grace and righteousness of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the chief corner-stone, the everlasting foundation of Zion.

I was much rejoiced to hear from you, but sorry to learn that your health is still poor, also of your mother's affliction. I hope you both are better ere this, and that the others of your family keep well.

I shall perhaps be here until nearly April, and desire when I return to stop over and see you and the brethren. I had a card from brother Cardwell, and answered it.

Brother Coffee, upon receipt of this please drop me a few lines, so I may hear how you are. The Lord bless and prosper you in all things needful, is the prayer of one who I hope loves you for the truth's sake.

In gospel bonds,

ASA HOWARD.

ELGIN, Oregon, Dec. 22, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Having to write you on a little business on behalf of a brother, I want to ask you to give your views through the SIGNS on the language of Paul in Romans v. 20: "Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." I know that some brethren apply this law here spoken of by Paul as the law that was given to Adam, but it seems to me to be the law as given by Moses, for the language, "that the offence might abound," implies that sin was already in the world. But was there sin in the world before Adam transgressed the law? Sin, we are told, is the transgression of law; then there was no sin until the law was violated, so there could have been no offence. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world." So that Paul said, "For until the law, [of Moses] sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law." Again he said, "I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Now we see that sin was in the world before the law entered that the apostle here said "entered that the offence might abound," yet was not imputed, and Paul said he would not have known sin but by the law; and when sin is revealed to the poor sinner it is by the law. As the apostle said, "Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful."

Now, brother Chick, I have in a few words given my views on this law that Paul said "entered that the offence might abound," and I would be pleased to see your views, for I am so liable to be wrong in my ideas. I am pleased with the SIGNS, and love to read the precious truths published in its columns.

Dear brother, let me add a line here, to say I sympathize with you in your affliction. I myself begin to feel the weight of years. I am sixty-seven, and am not well at all this winter, nor have I been for the past three years. I do hope the dear Lord will remember you for his Zion's sake. To us poor, weak creatures it would seem an irreparable loss were you taken away, and yet we know our God is able to supply all our needs, according to the riches of his grace, by our precious Savior.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

FREDERICK, Md., Jan. 28, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—You will find inclosed a check for two dollars to renew my subscription for your paper. I am sorry to have waited so long. I am a poor widow with two children who can neither hear nor speak; am sixty miles from my church, in Baltimore, Md., so I do not get there often, and O how lonely it is here. All I hear is what people are doing for God, and their own works. I do not go to their meetings, but hear it

talked, and I get very homesick for the dear people who give God all praise. I am very comfortably situated here, but a palace is a prison without the company of God's dear children. O how I long to be situated so I could go to my meetings and meet my dear kindred in Christ. I often ask why I am left all alone, but yet I am not alone, for at times in the midst of the greatest trials I am made to feel that the dear Savior is very near, and what comfort it is. My husband was a member of the church only a short time before his death, which occurred six years ago in August. It pleased the dear Lord to take my mother from earth the last day of November. She also was a member, and loved the doctrine and faith. It is hard indeed to give our loved ones up, but what a comfort to be assured they are now with their Savior, free from the trials of earth. I often wonder why my trials have been so many and severe, but know our God doeth all things well and never makes a mistake, doing according to his own will with his children, having a purpose in all he does, and gives us all we need at just the right time. Sometimes we feel cast down and ready to give up, and then he reveals himself to us and we are revived for a little while. O if I could only be reconciled to his dealings and say at all times, Thy will, not mine, be done. I think our trials are sent upon us because we are so sinful and ready to complain. I love to get the SIGNS and read the letters from the dear ones who are scattered over the world. They tell my feelings better than I can, and how I would love to take them by the hand and tell them what great comfort their messages of love give me; they often bring tears to my eyes. What a blessing the SIGNS is to the scattered people of God. Please send me January 1st number, as it contains the obituary of my mother, and I want to send it to my brother.

I have written more than I intended. Pray for me and mine when at the throne of grace.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,
(MRS.) IDA SHOCKLEY.

LANHAM, W. Va., Jan., 1914.

TO THE FAITHFUL IN CHRIST:—Through our medium of correspondence I feel to address you as a band of brethren and sisters, bound together by the sweet cords of God's never-ending love, which cannot be broken, neither are any of his stakes to be removed (shalls and wills), for "there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the Lord is our guide, the Lord is our law-giver, the Lord is our king; he will save us." This is the prophecy of Isaiah, speaking to us by the power of the Holy Spirit that moved him to pen these precious words of comfort to all who are trusting in the finished work of Christ (in their salvation). While on the cross, dying for offenses, he uttered these precious words: "It is finished," and we are satisfied that the work of redemption is complete in Jesus, he having the power to lay down his life for his sheep (the covenant family). Now, dear trembling ones, if it be that we are embraced in the covenant of redemption, the offering made by Christ on the tree, or cross, hath forever perfected them who were set apart by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called in time from nature's night to the glorious light and liberty of the gospel, and are no more the children of the night, but are children of the day.

There are some who profess to love the

Primitive Baptists who say some things I do not like to hear. They speak slightingly of the poor minister who has not accumulated much of the goods of this world. We often see such servants of the Lord who are very poor, yet wonderfully blessed with spiritual knowledge; they are burdened with the Word of truth, therefore they cannot hold their peace. They are compelled to cry aloud and spare not; the Lord has given them a message to deliver to the inmates of the everlasting covenant. As the dove, that bore a message to Noah and his family in the ark, is the gospel minister who is burdened with a message to be delivered to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for he must cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she has received at the Lord's hand double for all her sins. Those who are the most able to minister to the poor, humble servant, as a rule are the furthest from contributing to his necessities, and are the most apt to speak slightingly of his financial circumstances. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? I think a church that will not minister to the need of its pastor is not worthy of a pastor, and when they call him it is their duty to encourage him instead of discouraging. I think that churches sometimes make a mistake in liberating one to exercise his gift in a public way. If the one fails to preach, the evidence is clear that the church has made a mistake, for if one fails to preach, it is clear that God has not called him, for God qualifies his servants to preach the preaching he bids them, and the evidence that God has called one to preach is that he does preach. If he fails to preach, the evidence is against him, and the church should call in the liberty she has given him, and not keep one standing a licentiate for years. If a church gives one liberty to exercise his gift in public, that church should be careful not to give him liberty that will extend further than the church of his membership until they are satisfied with his efforts. In some cases I have known licentiates to get in a hurry about their ordination. It is all-important that churches watch those who are anxious about their ordination. I once had a licentiate come to me complaining that he was only half-harnessed, that if he had been ordained he could have baptized five at his last appointment. I told him to be quiet; that the church would judge in that matter, that she would decide as to whether he should be half-harnessed or whole-harnessed, or be harnessed at all. In two years from that time he was preaching for the Methodists.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

CHEHALIS, Washington, Sept. 4, 1913.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed please find draft for five dollars, for which credit to my account two dollars for the SIGNS, and send me twenty copies of the "Feast of Fat Things." I prefer that you send one copy cloth bound and the balance of the three dollars worth in paper covers.

I am very well pleased with the SIGNS. It is not new to me, as my dear father, who is now dead and gone, took it about forty years ago, and I took it myself when I lived in Ohio, and when my name was Minnie B. Matthew. I was married twelve years ago to F. W. Zastrow, and eleven years ago came to Washington, which country I like much better than Ohio, though Ohio is a good State. I met Elder Silas H. Durand at our association in Ohio, twelve years ago, and we

would love to meet him again at our home in Washington. I will say here that I received much comfort from reading of the last hours of his brother. I am like John Bunyan's "Mr. Fearing," I am afraid of my shadow, and often wonder how I can face death, and wonder if Jesus will be present at that trying hour; but the reading of brother Durand's great happiness, and the love of the dear Savior which he enjoyed while passing over the river, gives me great consolation, and I can scarcely believe, either, that when I die I will be unconscious of any happiness or misery until the resurrection. It seems to me there is a principle within that never dies, and does not sleep.

(MRS.) F. W. ZASTROW.

SENECA FALLS, N. Y., Dec. 8, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I received my December 1st number of the SIGNS, which tells me it is time to send on my remittance for another year. Dear brethren, I have written out the order for many years for my dear mother, Mrs. E. Candler, who in the past year has passed from this world of sorrow to be with her Savior, and now I am left to send in my own behalf. While it gives me great sorrow to be without her, yet I realize that my loss is her gain. I have always had her SIGNS to read, as I lived near her, and so, loving it as I do, I cannot do without it. I love the truths it proclaims of our loving Savior, and it is very enlightening to me. As I have no church of my own near by, it is all the preaching I have, and I shall always take it. I would love to swell the number of subscribers, but I find that the people of the other denominations will not even look into the paper. I have been sending mine to my sister, Mrs. Brown, of Clyde, but this year she will subscribe for herself, or perhaps has already, so that will make one more, and I will send my paper on to some one who cannot take the SIGNS.

Hoping you may both be spared for many years to continue to put forth the truth, I will close, and remain your weak sister,

(MRS.) W. J. PECK.

MCHENRY, Ky., Oct. 3, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I will now drop you a few lines, thanking you for the paper which I have so much enjoyed, for I do enjoy the good editorials and letters. I should have written before now, but I am old and nervous, and cannot write myself, and have to trouble some one to write for me, so I have put it off from time to time, but I was enjoying the good old SIGNS just the same. It is all the preaching I get, for there are none of our people for miles that I know of. There is plenty of so-called preaching within my hearing, but I never go to hear it, for it is no food for me, for it is all working for the Lord, and I am such a poor hand to work I do not go to hear them.

I have the promise of one subscriber for you. She is a Missionary Baptist, and if she will subscribe I will write again. Now if I become burdensome just drop my name from your list, and I will not think hard of it. I am getting feeble, and do not feel that I can go through the winter (I am now over seventy-six years of age); the Lord only knows, but if anything should happen to me my daughter will notify you.

Farewell. I may never write again, but if I live long I will.

MARY PAYNE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1914.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

2 TIMOTHY IV. 8.

"HENCEFORTH there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."

This is the last letter which Paul wrote before the Lord called him home; at least there is no record of any written afterwards, and certainly no farewell words that Paul could have used could have been more suitable as his farewell to his son in the faith, Timothy. The whole epistle breathes forth his great anxiety for the cause of God, for the success of the ministry of Timothy, and that he might never depart from the faith of the gospel. Read carefully the solemn charge with which this chapter begins: "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word." This was to be the theme of his ministry. This was not by any means a limited, narrow field, but vast as the unbounded fullness of God manifest in Christ. See also the admonitions which follow, which show that in preaching the Word is included reproof, rebuke and exhortation. The mind of God, speaking through Paul, is that the people of God not only need the direct consolation of the word of salvation through Christ, but also to be warned against that which might lead them astray. Now Paul has presented these solemn realities, urging upon Timothy that they become the substance and spirit of his ministry to the end. Following this he urges upon his beloved son in the faith the need of watching, of giving himself wholly to the work and of making full proof of his ministry, and this he is all the more anxious that Timothy should not cease to bear in mind and to do, because he himself was about to depart from the field. How many of the servants of the Lord, as old age has come upon them and death is close at hand, have felt toward the younger in the ministry who are, as was Timothy to Paul, their sons in the faith, just as is expressed in this connection. Their counsel and advice will soon cease to be heard, therefore let this last solemn charge be remembered and heeded. For ourself, we remember that when the aged Elder Philander Hartwell gave us the usual charge at our ordination, when we were still, as it were, but a child, in the midst of it he took up the Bible from the stand, and placing it in our hand, he repeated these words of Paul: I charge you, my brother, that you preach the Word. We have never forgotten how all-important and solemn his words sounded to us, and how our own desire and prayer sprang up toward God that his Spirit might fasten this upon our heart so that it might control all our ministry in after years; and it is a solemn joy to us that we have at least desired to know the meaning of the Scriptures, and to hold forth the doctrine which they teach. It has seemed to us that Timothy must have remembered these words all his life, acquiring as they do special solemnity, because they were the last expressed desire of Paul toward him.

But our mind had not been to write so many words in this direction, but to call attention to some reflections, which have for some time been with us, upon the words named at the head of this article. First, it seems only natural that when men reach any great turning-point in their lives they should be found looking back and looking forward. Of what use has the past been to me? and of what use have I been in the past? and, on the other hand, what awaits me in the future? Especially must this be so when we stand upon the hither verge of life. In every spiritual mind, at least, there must arise serious questions of this kind, and still more searching must these questions become in the near light of the eternity to which we go. Paul as he wrote was looking back and looking forward. As he looked back upon his own personal ministry before God and to the churches, at this hour when there could be no false glorying, he could and did write, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." This covered the past of his life as an apostle and servant of God. Looking over all his ministry as one who stood to be judged in the presence of God, he could say these three things of his ministry.

"I have fought a good fight." Let us notice that there is no boasting here. He knew he had been engaged in a warfare that was good. As a soldier may feel sure that his cause is just, that he is fighting upon the right side, and yet count himself at best but an ordinary soldier in the ranks, and feel that there is nothing in his record with regard to which he may boast of himself, so Paul could say what he knew: that his warfare had been a good one, though he confessed himself less than the least. He had fought a good fight, whether it had been done well or ill. We feel that there is encouragement in this thought to ourself. There is an encouragement to all God's ministers in this. We are fighting in a good cause, however poor our ministry has been. Again, he says, "I have finished my course." This does not mean simply, I have reached the end of life, even as all things else do some day, but, I have been running in a race, and I have not ceased to run until I have completed the course. "I have finished my course." I have not given up in the midst of it and fallen by the way discouraged. Paul does not boast of his swiftness, or of outrunning others, but simply declares, I have continued on the course to which the Lord called me, until he is now ready to dismiss me from the race. How good it is if any of us can look back and feel that faltering often, stumbling often, often perhaps to our shame, failing to keep our eye upon the goal, we have yet been strengthened, and have not ceased to run until the course is finished and we are ready to be called home. How much we have to lament in our race, and yet having obtained help of God we have continued. So also Paul testifies of the past, that he had kept the faith. This we doubt not means that he had always held steadfast to the doctrine of Christ. He had not failed to preach the Word, and the Word of God only. It has been one of the demands of the church of God in all ages, when some sentiment or doctrine has been presented which seemed on the face of it to them strange or new, Show us a thus saith the Lord for it. All that is set forth in the Scriptures is to be believed and received by all believers. Anything which is not in the Word of God we must not accept or be guided by, either in doctrine or practice. Thus Paul kept to the Word of

God; therefore he exhorted Timothy to preach the Word and nothing beside. Paul did not mean by keeping the faith that he had kept himself in the possession of faith, but, as said before, that he had been at all times faithful to make known the Word of God; he had held fast to it, and constantly proclaimed it. Here also was no spirit of boasting; he had kept the faith in the manner in which we have here written, because the God of faith had called him and filled him with the spirit of faith. This inward work of God had been the cause of the faithfulness of Paul in his ministry. He preached that which was welling up as a living spring in his own soul. Out of the fountain in his own heart had flowed these healing, comforting streams to gladden and strengthen his brethren, and by the favor of God even we, nearly twenty centuries afterward, drink at these streams and are glad.

But now, having declared his thoughts of the past, Paul turns to the future: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." Here let us note that he does not say a crown for righteousness, as though he thought of it as a reward to be bestowed upon him because of his own merit. If there be anything for which all true believers hope and long it is to be righteous. So David, centuries before, in the same spirit could say, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." It was the assurance of an apostle, "We shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." The crown of which Paul felt assured was not then something to be bestowed because he had been good, but it was a crown to be made up of righteousness. In other words, Paul would say, Then I shall be holy as he is holy; and for this he longed. What will it be to be made perfectly holy, and never again to know sin in the heart, to be conformed to the will of God in all things, and never again to murmur at his will? What will it be to not only read, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength," but to find the fulfillment of this in our own selves? What will it be to never again have one evil thought or desire? Ah, who can tell, save those who have already entered into that glory. Again, it is not a crown of happiness, or of honor, or of glory, which the apostle desired, but of "righteousness," and this, if bestowed, will surely bring all these: happiness, honor and glory. There is no happiness, honor or glory compared with the crown of righteousness. It has been said of men of this world, that they who seek after happiness, honor or glory alone, shall not attain to them, but he who thinks only of doing what is right, shall find that scattered all along in his pathway all other good things will be found. Let this be as it may, we do feel well assured that all those who desire holiness, and seek after it as the gem of gems, shall not miss the blessedness of the Lord, and who are they that desire righteousness, save poor, broken-hearted sinners, who feel the plague of sin? Once Paul had cried, Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Here he has found the answer, and tells us of it: "There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day," the day of his departure, which he knew was at hand. Paul was one of those who hungered and thirsted after righteousness; now he tells of the assurance which was his, that the words of the blessed Master should be

fulfilled when he declared that all such should be filled with righteousness, for the crown which he expected contained all the fullness of his desire. What wondrous comfort there is in all this for the servants of the Lord, who often faint as they toil by the way. We need not ask any more about what heaven will be when we have learned that there we shall be righteous as he is righteous. If righteousness be ours, all that belongs to heaven will be ours also, and in that world the righteous Lord and his righteous people shall dwell forever.

"O blessed abode, and happy they
Whose sins have all been washed away."

We often feel ashamed of ourselves, ashamed of our manner of life, ashamed that we have about us so little of the Spirit of Christ, ashamed that our faith has been so weak and faltering, but still he will not be ashamed of us, for through Jesus Christ he sees no spot in us; and, like Paul, when the end of this conflict draws near, though we have doubted often whether we could be true believers, because we have always looked upon death with such dread, we shall in some small measure be able to say, as did Paul, "I am now ready to be offered." This we never read of Paul saying before. Let us take courage then in the midst of our fears, and let us hope that at the end it shall be with us as it was with Paul: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." C.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

We have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence, May 22nd, 1913, Llewellyn B. Ker and Fannie C. Gordy, both of Delmar, Md.

By the same, Sept. 21st, 1913, at Warwick, N. Y., Silas Ezra Hyatt and Caroline Ophelia Williams, both of Warwick.

By the same, Jan. 28th, 1914, at the home of the bride's parents, Wisner, N. Y., Charles A. Benedict, of Bellvale, and Myra Mabee.

By Elder Silas H. Durand, Jan. 31st, in Philadelphia, Pa., Charles W. Search and Mary C. Doughty, both of Philadelphia.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mr. E. F. Stewart, my dear friend and brother, was born March 26th, 1849, near Selma, Ala., and died Jan. 5th, 1914, making his stay on earth 64 years, 9 months and 21 days. He moved to Carroll County, Miss., in 1870, and was married to Miss E. F. Weeks Feb. 29th, 1872. To that union were born eight children, five of whom survive him: Miss Minnie Stewart, Mrs. Rilla Austin, Mrs. Lily Kelley, Cola and Hubert Stewart, all of Vaiden, Miss. His wife preceded him in death sixteen years. He united with New Providence Church, Attala County, Miss., on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in July, 1903, and was baptized by Elder J. M. Palmertree, and lived a consistent member until death.

Elder J. M. Palmertree, his pastor, conducted the funeral service Jan. 6th, and at the family cemetery he read the fourteenth chapter of Job and beautifully set forth some of the truths contained in a few of the first verses of that chapter. He was a faithful husband, a good father, a friend to all and a true neighbor. He leaves a host of relatives and friends to mourn their loss. Brother Stewart was a true Primitive Baptist in every sense of the word.

H. C. FERGUSON.

Catharine Arnold Longacre was born Feb. 22nd, 1837, and died Jan. 7th, 1914, aged 76 years, 10 months and 15 days. She was a daughter of Nicholas and Nancy Arnold. She was married to Isaac Longacre in 1887, who died about fourteen years ago, after which she remained on the farm and kept her home. She was baptized about forty-five years ago, by Elder E. Rittenhouse, in the fellowship of the Tuscarora Church, Juniata Co., Pa., of which church she was a faithful and devoted member until it pleased the Lord to call her up higher. I have been pastor of the little church for about sixteen years, and always found her glad to see me. She was one of the most humble persons that I ever met, always esteeming others better than herself. Her house has

been my home when I visited the church ever since the death of our beloved brother, Mitchel Varnes. I always tried to preach two or three times at her house during my visits with them. Her whole theme was of heavenly things, but she always felt her unworthiness. The immediate cause of her death was a fall down the stairs, when she received injuries from which she suffered intensely for nine weeks. I do not know whether there was any service held at her funeral or not. My age keeps me at home during the winter. She leaves to mourn their loss, the church, which will greatly miss her presence, and two brothers, brother Jesse Arnold, of Port Royal, and Dr. James Arnold, of Williamsburg, three brothers and three sisters dying before. Her parents were Old School Baptists.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $1.00; J. C. Chester, Ky., $3.50; Joseph F. Hall, Maine, $1.00; Mrs. T. V. Richardson, Md., $8.00; C. Stevens, Ark., $1.00.—Total, $14.50.

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CLAREMONT, Cal.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 82. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1914. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MIRACLES.

A MIRACLE, we understand, is a supernatural performance, an overruling, a reversal or suspension of the laws of nature. God alone, and his power in men, has ever been able to perform miracles. Many men in times past have been able to produce imitations, but real miracles are performed only by the Spirit and power of God. The great Creator of the universe, who created all things, established and set in motion all the laws of nature, and he only has thorough and perfect knowledge of them, and full and perfect control over them; he can change, reverse or suspend them at his pleasure. Such is the representation of the power we call God in the inspired record, and this testimony is corroborated by all our eyes behold in nature. Men naturally do not believe in God; they say they do, but their doctrine and practice say they do not. They may be, and are, trained to confess a belief in the Scriptures, but the logical deductions of the best theories of the natural minds of men all lead away from the truth of the Scriptures, and following them to consistent conclusions, they lead to open infidelity. I was reading, not long since, a part of what purported to be an address of a prominent college professor. He was discussing what he called "The twentieth century religion," from which he virtually eliminated the story of the garden of Eden, in which we are told the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and that afterward he caused a deep sleep to fall upon him, and took from his side a rib, and closed up the flesh instead thereof, and of the rib made woman, and gave her unto the man for a helpmate; that this woman was beguiled by the serpent, and took and ate of the forbidden fruit, and gave to her husband, and he did eat, by which offence "judgment came upon all men to condemnation." —Rom. v. 18. All miracles also are eliminated from this advanced and up-to-date system. All things must be scientifically accounted for, are really solvable by human wisdom and reason, and where this cannot be done they are not to be credited as truth. Such is the theory founded on the wisdom of this world. But God hath made foolish the wisdom of this world. Then how can man by this wisdom have a right conception of God?

Only those who are taught of God know better than to accept such teachings as truth, and only such really believe the truths set forth in the written Word. This belief in them has not, and does not, come by virtue of a superior intelligence, or by any faculty of the natural mind, but by revelation, in which evidence from above is given. It is not to the natural mind, even to the "born again," that the truth of the Scriptures appeals, but to that faith in them of which Jesus is the "author and finisher," "the fruit of the Spirit," "the gift of God," and "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." All men have not faith, says an inspired apostle, and without faith it is impossible to please God. It is by and in this heaven-born principle, called faith, abiding in the heart of those who have the Spirit of Christ, that the truth is received, believed and reverenced. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."—Heb. xi. 3. Men without faith cannot understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear, so they endeavor to account for the existence of things in some other way. Men may loudly profess to believe and greatly reverence the Bible, and yet their ideas, which they are ever promulgating, that God is limited in power, changeable in purpose and imperfect in wisdom and knowledge, show that they do not really believe the testimony of the Scriptures. But though the heaven-born are blessed with faith, to which is revealed the unbelievable (to the natural mind) truths of God Almighty's power and knowledge, yet this faith is meted out to them by measure. (See Rom. xii. 3.) This work of the Holy Spirit in the heart, by which faith abides, has not removed or destroyed the natural or carnal mind, which is enmity against God, not subject (not in harmony with) to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Hence even they are sometimes given to theorizing, and are sometimes inclined to explain away things they cannot harmonize with natural reason. But faith receives the testimony of the Word as true, though a great mystery. The account given by the inspired penman, Moses, of creation, could not have been other than by direct revelation of God, for no man existed until all the work of creation was done. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good," &c. Now this was before he made the literal sun. What a wonderfully mysterious power this is. He only had to say, Let there be light, and there was light; and he divided the light from the darkness; so in all his creation he only had to say, Let it be so, and it was so. There was none to counsel him or to instruct him, so he did according to his own will. When he had finished, everything was pronounced "very good." What wonderful and mysterious wisdom and power are manifested in creation. Every single thing in all the animal and vegetable kingdoms is in itself a wonderful and complicated machine. No man, nor any combination of men, no matter how learned in science or arts, can duplicate the least insect, nor a single animal nor plant in all creation, and even could they get together the material, and

the different elements, blood, flesh, bones, muscles, nerves and all the little fillings, and so lay and combine them that they would produce a mouse, then there is that mysterious something called life that they would have to bring into being and impart. Let the smallest insect be dead, entirely devoid of life, and all the wise men of the world, with all their knowledge of science, could not cause that insect to live again. In all the world, from the beginning until now, man has never been able to originate life and impart it to a single dead thing. With all his boasted wisdom and power, no man, nor set of men, can by centering all their wisdom and knowledge upon a single living man keep him from dying, keep him alive indefinitely. Every man in himself is a wonderful machine, a mysterious, complicated machine; so we carry about with us continually the evidence of the wonderful power and skill of the great Master-workman. Every plant, every fowl or bird, every insect and everything else our eyes behold, carries continuously this evidence in itself. Paul tells us, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." David says, "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." Faith sees evidence corroborating the testimony of the Scriptures, as relates to the wonderful wisdom, power and knowledge of God in everything; God is seen in everything: the trees of the forests, the plants of the fields, the fowls of the air, the fishes of the sea, the sun, moon and stars, but the depraved carnal mind of man sees God very imperfectly. Men cannot see perfect wisdom, knowledge and power, so they believe in a changeable, imperfect, dependent God, always wanting more than he can get, always in need of help, and always in trouble with the devil, and with all the help that he is able to get from men by hiring or persuasion or threats, he does not get all he wants; the devil seems to get the best of it.

The first man, Adam, was of the earth earthy. God formed him of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. God made man upright, but he hath sought out many inventions. He was not a sinner at first, for "sin is the transgression of the law," therefore until he had transgressed the law he was not a sinner. But there was evidently in his makeup that which was susceptible to temptation, and when he was tempted he sinned; then he died, for it was said to him by his Creator, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." This, according to the established laws and order of his Maker, was necessary, for, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." Hence the multiplicity of the human family, of all of which Adam is the father, head and representative, came about. "God hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell upon all the face of the earth, and hath before determined the times appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." Adam brought all his posterity, though yet unborn, into a state of death, death in trespasses and in sin; so the apostle Paul said, "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." And again, "Therefore

as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation," &c. To the Ephesians he said, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Now it is a miracle to raise up the dead, and nothing short of the power of God can do it. Jesus, the God-ordained and God-promised Messiah, and the only Redeemer and Savior, he by whose righteousness the free gift came upon all men, (all that the Father had given him, John xvii. 2,) unto the justification of life, (Rom. v. 18), he whose conception in the womb of the virgin Mary was a miracle, was the very power of God, performing many and diverse miracles in the sight of men. Many men who heard the Scriptures read in their synagogues every Sabbath day, which Scriptures were the testimony of him, beheld his wonderful works of raising up the dead to life again, casting out devils, cleansing the lepers, giving the blind their sight, healing all manner of diseases, &c., and believed him not. "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep," said Jesus. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish," &c. Jesus had power over life, and power over all flesh; he had power to lay down his own life, and to take it again, he said. He also had power to give "eternal life," the highest order of life that exists, to his sheep, who in nature are poor, dead sinners. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." Again, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth," &c. He gave abundant evidence of his power to raise the dead when he raised Lazarus out of his grave, where he had lain for four days. Men say that the days of miracles are past, but it is a truth nevertheless that every time a poor sinner of Adam's race is given eternal life, and is born of the Spirit, a miracle is performed. The dead is made alive, the blind receive sight, the deaf hear, the dumb speak. Jesus Christ himself was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, raised from the dead, and, Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. There were many witnesses to the truth of his resurrection, for Paul says, "And he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." But though there were so many witnesses, there were some among the Corinthian brethren who questioned this great miracle of the resurrection of the dead, for the apostle said, "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep

in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." There were those also in the days of the apostle who, though they professed a belief in this miracle of the resurrection of the dead, taught that it was past already, and overthrew the faith of some. If their doctrine was true, where is the hope for those who are "fallen asleep in Christ"? Paul said that Christ was seen after his resurrection of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater portion remain unto this present time, but some are fallen asleep. Now if there be no resurrection of the dead, these have perished, and so likewise would we all perish. It is those who have died who have fallen asleep in Christ. It is the dead upon whom this miracle of the resurrection is wrought, not the living. Hence Paul comforts his Thessalonian brethren concerning their dead: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope; for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so [in like manner] them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. * * * For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the cloud, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." When Jesus ascended in the presence of his disciples, "while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel. Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." So when he shall come the second time without sin unto salvation (the first time he came with sin, so to speak), bearing our sins in his own body, then by his mighty power he shall raise all the dead. "All that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have done good [the elect, those in whom dwells the Spirit of Christ] unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation [condemnation]." "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." "Change our vile body"? Yes. "As we have borne the image of the earthy, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly." "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Certainly the faith that embraces the truth, that by the word of his power God spoke into existence the heavens and the earth, and all the hosts of them, will not stagger at the promise to raise the sleeping dead in the day which he hath appointed. Truly it is a mystery. The wonderful power of God in all his miraculous works is ever a mystery. Paul said, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the

twinkling of an eye." Let the theorist talk about knowing each other there as we know each other here; to my mind this is vain speculation. The Sadducees seemed to think that if the resurrection of the dead was true, that this would be, but Jesus said to them, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." The apostle John said, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." The psalmist said, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." This is enough for us; to see our Savior and Redeemer and be like him, our vile body fashioned like his glorious body; no more natural, but spiritual; no more sin and sorrow, no more sickness, pain or death, but love and joy and peace forever and forever. Amen.

H. B. JONES.

WINNSBORO, Texas, February, 1914.

WHEELING, W. Va., Jan. 11, 1913.

MY PRECIOUS SISTER:—I received your card a few days ago, and am sorry that you have been ill. I think of you very often, and when I read the many good editorials and letters in the SIGNS I always think that your dear eyes will peruse these very words, and I always feel impressed to pray that you may be permitted to feast on them. Dear sister, I know that I do not write you as often as I used to. I feel at times that I am surely decreasing. I, too, have been quite ill. I was taken with chills and high fever on Saturday before Christmas, and have been bedfast ever since, up to the last three days. The doctor said it came near developing into pneumonia; I felt for awhile that I would never recover. I could not define my feelings as to the matter. I did not think that I wanted to live any longer to battle with temporal problems. In my great weakness I regarded all such exertion with terror. I lay helpless in mind and body, and could seldom frame a feeble petition to our Lord for mercy. Once in awhile I would realize my great weakness and helplessness before God, then the tears would start and I would have a little season of tender grief and remorse and pleadings for mercy. During the time that I was confined to the bed I received many letters from the dear saints, and they were as angels of mercy to my sinking soul, and seldom failed to soften my heart until I was relieved by a flood of tears; indeed, my dear, it pleased the dear Lord to restore my strength with my fainting spirit in this way. The members of the dear little church at Donora wrote me of their precious meetings, and lately dear sister Compton wrote a letter containing so much good news and glad tidings of the mercy and goodness of God, both in providence and grace, that in reading it through streaming tears I seemed to be lifted above my infirmities. After her letter came another and another from that church, all telling what great things the Lord had done for them. After I emerged from the comfort and joy of these glad tidings I found myself standing securely on the Rock of our salvation. He had become the health of my countenance and my God. They told me that brother Jerry Corder's ordination had been called for, to take place the last Sunday, and Saturday before, in March, and they hoped I would be able to be with them then. I now believe I will

be spared to witness this sacred ordinance. I was present when he was liberated to preach, and it was an affecting time to me. He sat before me, and I have never forgotten the look of deep humility that rested upon him. He spoke of his unworthiness in tones of such deep sincerity that I was moved to tears. His preaching since that time proves that he was sent of the Lord, and the members rejoice greatly in his gift. I receive many letters from them, telling of the comfort and consolation they receive under his preaching. His father, John A. Corder, was an able preacher. I have heard him many times, in my young days, but his gospel was hid from me at that time. I felt very sure that he preached the truth, for there was a ring to it that I knew was the true sound, and yet I failed to understand. I well remember when members of our church would come to our house; I can see the joy in my father's face yet. I think dear mother loved them as well as he, but she was not so demonstrative as father. She was so calm and quiet I think the current of her faith was so deep and firm that it ran smoothly. When they sat talking of spiritual things I listened, and I had a great desire to understand. Once after the company had gone father looked at me very tenderly and asked me if I understood. I said, "Not quite, but almost; it seems as if there is a veil over my mind." He turned away, and said brokenly, I pray God the veil may be removed. That little incident stands out clearly in my mind. Before he died he had the joy of knowing that the veil was being removed little by little, a little here and a little there. How good the dear Lord has been to me; he suffers me to follow in their footsteps. It is the narrow way, with here and there a traveler, and, my precious sister, every step of this way is a crucifixion of the flesh; we have to deny ourselves at every step; we do not desire to do our own will, but the will of our heavenly Father. He has brought us to say almost with every breath, Not my will, but thine, be done in earth as it is in heaven. A short time before I was laid on a bed of sickness I felt to pray this prayer that our Lord taught them. I spoke each word slowly and tremblingly, and felt a very great desire to get the meaning of them in my heart. When I came to these words, Thy will be done in earth as in heaven, I burst in tears. "In earth," I thought meant me, as I was of the earth earthy. I felt that his will in me would be to purge away the dross of my nature. I wondered how I could bear more afflictions, and was at once reminded of the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, and Daniel in the lion's den, also of our Savior's agony in the garden, and his shameful death on the cross. After surveying these things I was made more than willing to suffer even death at his dear hands if only he would be with me. I had a sweet season of converse with him this morning. I awoke early, and as usual tried to put myself in frame. You know we are apt to commit this folly, but my mind took trifling flights about the things that profit us nothing, but ere I was aware I felt my mind going out sweetly on heavenly things. I was so glad, the dear Savior seemed so near, my prayer had but little way to go. Directly I was asking him why he ever chose me. The words came quickly, "I have need of thee." What? surely this could not be possible. Then I was reminded of the stones in his building, then I was willing to believe that I was needed. Those words came also, "All that the Father giveth me

shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Then, as if to seal his promise true, my mind was carried back to the time that he revealed himself to me in the dream. I was permitted to call to mind his great loveliness and majesty and grace as he stood in the crowd, yet separate from all others. "As he stood;" my soul bows down in silent adoration and burning love, and in my heart I cry out, O my Savior, O my Savior. But, dear one, I can never describe it. I wondered if he looked thus to John the Baptist when he said, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world. It was in his first appearing (on this occasion) that I was given to behold his great majesty, and yet from him there seemed to emanate an atmosphere of love, love that kindled in my heart a flame that caused all earthly love to sink into nothingness by comparison.

My dear sister, I believe you will think I have drifted back to the days when I poured out my heart to you. I believe the dear Lord has lifted up my fallen head. I was reading in Psalms some days ago, and was struck by these words: "Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne."—Psalms xcvii. 2. I wondered if we were as apt to find him in clouds and darkness of the mind or in trouble and affliction as in the clear shining of the sun (mentally), when all seems well with us.

My letter is growing lengthy, yet I want to mention one more spring of hope which I was permitted to drink from. Lately I was wondering why I had never been given any inheritance of earthly things. Others around me have possessions of houses and lands, and many of them seem to crave no other riches. As I pondered this matter I had a faint remembrance of a people unto whom he gave none inheritance. I wished that I knew where to find this Scripture. I asked for my Bible, and my hap was to light upon the book of Joshua, and in the thirteenth chapter, fourteenth verse, I found it. It reads thus: "Only unto the tribe of Levi he gave none inheritance; the sacrifices of the Lord God of Israel made by fire are their inheritance, as he said unto them." Dear sister, whether or not I could find any application in this portion to myself I know not, but I felt to apply it thus: The sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart is well-pleasing to our God. If this condition is wrought in us by the fire of affliction, or oppression, or any other trials, we should be happy that this is the lot of our inheritance, and, dear sister, (I fear to breathe it for fear of presumption in me,) if we could but know that the Lord had made choice of us, his humble handmaidens, to minister his holy things, would this not be wonderful indeed? O to hope that he has made us to be faithful in a few things, that we might hear the gracious words, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, &c.

I must close, as my body is full of aches and pains. Write when you feel impressed.

Your loving but unworthy sister,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

ABERFELDY, Ont., Jan. 21, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have had a desire to write you for some time, for I was very much comforted by the letters that were published in the SIGNS of Janu-

ary 1st, which you wrote to Elder Durand. The second one seemed to suit me well, and I can join with you when you say that after all I find myself coming back to the old familiar words: I am a poor sinner and nothing at all, but Jesus is my all in all. It is not my love to him, but his love to me; it is not my clinging to him, but his clinging to me. I often feel with Paul, To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good (the law) I find not; and I have to say that I hate sin as I never did before I had received a hope, if I ever did hope in the mercy of God. I am plagued with sin as I never was before, because the law of God is written in our hearts, and how can any heaven-born child of God help feeling sorrow for sin? When the holy law of God is written in their hearts by the Spirit of the living God, the sorrow on account of sin is just as much the gift of God as any other gift that God has bestowed on his people. No man can create sorrow for sin; the work is all of God. Paul said, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." But Paul when he spoke of himself, said, To will is present with me, but how to perform (or work it out) that which is good I find not. I do not rejoice because I am such a vile sinner, nor do any of God's people, but I do rejoice, when I know how sinful I am, that Paul had the same experience. We all mourn because of our sins, but this does not stop us from sinning, because we are carnal, sold under sin, but we are made to hope in the mercy of God. I have felt for some time past that I would like to write a little for the SIGNS, and perhaps I might tell or explain to my brethren and sisters why I am made to hope in the mercy of God, and what I am made to believe. I am not doing this to stir up any spirit of contention at all, nor do I wish any one to feel that I have any hard feelings against any of my brethren or sisters. I know I am as hateful and as selfish as any one could possibly be (in the flesh), but I know that I have passed from death unto life, because I love the brethren, and love is the fulfilling of the law. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, and he, Jesus Christ, came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing, and I am sure that it is with the flesh that I sin. Paul said that he served the law of sin with the flesh. We cannot find in any of Paul's writings where he said there was any good thing in the flesh, but to the contrary, all flesh is sin, both the good things of the flesh and the bad things, all are sinful in His sight. Christ said to Nicodemus, "That which is born of flesh is flesh," and it will always be so, because it is flesh, and cannot do good. So when we judge or condemn our brethren and sisters for the acts of the flesh, may we remember the words of Christ: Ye judge after the flesh, I judge no man. Also the words of Paul: For wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself, for thou that judgest doest the same things. I often am made to cry, O is there any one like me? I cannot satisfy the law, nor hope nor comfort from it draw. I would love to do good and have no sin, but this is not His way; I would soon be satisfied with myself; but none but Christ can satisfy. I read a verse in the daily paper some time ago, written by John Bunyan:

"He that is down need fear no fall,
He that is low no pride;
He that is humble ever shall
Have God to be his guide."

Now I would like to say a few words about the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have been made to love it of late as I never did before. I have felt for a long time that if some of the brethren believed as they wrote that they would have no use for me, but I know and am made to feel that if I have any fellowship for any people at all it is for them that write in the SIGNS; and not only them, but all who love that truth, and though we may not see eye to eye in every point of doctrine, I have been made willing to bear with you all as brethren and sisters, if you can only bear with me. I know that I am asking a great favor, for I know and feel that I am the least of all; and I would say, if any one would like to know what I believe, the editorial that Elder Chick has republished in the January 15th number of the SIGNS will and does explain what I believe better than I can tell it or write about it; and I now thank Elder Chick for his kindness in republishing it. I was very much comforted with the editorial in the SIGNS of January 1st, 1914; it was excellent reading to me, and I am made to rejoice in the fact that God does and will ever make his saints contend earnestly for that faith once delivered unto them.

I would like it if some of the brethren who feel that there are any of the "footprints of the flock" in what I have written, would write to me when they are of that mind, for I feel much of the time to be a castaway.

I must now close. With love and fellowship to the brethren and sisters of the household of faith, a poor sinner,

REUBEN BENSTEAD.

PSALMS LXXVII. 10.

"SURELY the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I tried to preach yesterday and had no text, subject, or anything to take hold of as a starting place, but felt to have good liberty (for me) before I closed, and in reviewing my effort I find that the Scripture quoted above to be so full, so many wonderful things contained in it, that if the Lord will, I will mention some of them, but you may disapprove of them. The writer was fully satisfied of two things contained in the text: namely, the wrath of man shall praise the Lord, and the remainder the Lord will restrain. If God has not changed, and is the same to-day, I reckon we can affirm the text, preach it, rejoice in it, and thank our God that the wicked cannot let all their wrath loose and devour us. But are we to understand that God will allow just enough of man's wrath to manifest itself as will praise him? If so, we must conclude it will work, too, for our good. It may be necessary to state this in a different form before we conclude. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." —Rom. viii. 28. There are some who can tell just what and how much is included in the all things that work together for the good of his children and the glory of God, but the text says the wrath of man shall praise him.

I will now notice some of the acts of men produced by envy, to wit, Joseph's brethren. Joseph had some dreams, and because of them and the great love his father had for him there was envy in the hearts of his brethren, and at a certain time when they (his brethren) were all together Joseph came to where they were,

and when they saw him coming they said, Let us slay him. Thus we see the wrath of man, and it says, Slay him. Did they slay him? No, instead they cast him into a pit to die. Did he stay there and die? How much more wickedness could they have manifested, but this was going too far, and the restraining power of God was manifested, and the brethren of Joseph took him up out of the pit and started him on the way the Lord had sent him. "And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you, to preserve life."—Gen. xlv. 4, 5. Surely the wrath of man shall praise the Lord. David gives us a little knowledge in Psalms xvii. 13: "Arise, O Lord, disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword." Thus we see the sword of the Lord here dividing, holding the wrath of men, so that they do just enough to praise the Lord, and surely their wicked works are included in the "all things" that work together for the good of his children.

We read of a character who came into the world to save sinners, and at different times there were people who would have destroyed him, but he said, Mine hour has not yet come. Here again we see the Lord restraining the wrath of man, because it must come just at the right time, because he works all things after the counsel of his own will, has a time for everything under the sun. Zechariah saw this, too, and said, "Awake, O sword, [awake, O wicked] against my shepherd." In Mark xiv. 41, the Son says, "The hour is come." Awake, O ye wicked, smite the Shepherd. God hath determined before that you wicked men should do this work. Awake, for your victim is ready; for this cause came he into the world. What shall we say of the wicked? I will just refer you to what is said of Pharaoh: God said he raised him up for the purpose he was fulfilling. The child Jesus was pure, he had done nothing worthy of death. We cannot think of a worse act of men or devils than to kill one who was pure, one who had done no wrong; yet listen, in Acts iv. 26–28, it is said, "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together." What for, I wonder? "For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." In Acts ii. 23, we see that it was by the counsel and foreknowledge of the Father that these wicked men crucified the Son. In John xix. 10, 11, Pilate claims a great deal of power, but Jesus tells him he could have no power against him at all, except it were given him from above. The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder he will restrain. Dear brethren, if God sent Joseph into Egypt, and delivered his Son to wicked men to crucify, I think we need not fear, for there will always be a Pharaoh, a Joseph, or just the right person in just the right place, so that the wrath of man shall praise the Lord, and the remainder he will restrain, and the true believer can always say, "Thy will be done," for all things work together for good to the children of God.

T. E. ATTEBERY.

WEISER, Idaho.

CHRIST'S DEATH, AND THE DEATH OF HIS PEOPLE.

"AND I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."—Rev. xiv. 13.

It has been questioned, as if it were doubtful, that this death spoken of here meant the death of the natural body. Job in bitterness of soul, longing for relief, seemed to be longing for death when he said: "Why died I not from the womb? * * * For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept: then had I been at rest. * * * Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been; as infants which never saw light. There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest. There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and great are there; and the servant is free from his master."—Job iii. 11–19. He also in the seventh and tenth chapters speaks in the bitterness of his soul, desiring death to come and end his troubles. The preacher of old said, "Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead, more than the living which are yet alive."—Eccl. iv. 2. These Scriptures that I have referred to about death cannot mean a death in trespasses and in sins, but must mean a corporeal death. That the saints of God die a corporeal death there can be no doubt, notwithstanding that they have been redeemed from the curse of the law. A few places in Scripture, it seems by literal meaning of words, are that redemption completely abolished death. As, "Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."—2 Tim. i. 10. And, "I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction."—Hosea xiii. 14. The contexts determine the meaning of these passages so that no just inference can be drawn that corporeal death is eliminated from God's people. The cause of my mind resting upon this subject was from reading this sentence: "His (Christ's) death redeemed and exempted us from the penalty." If I may interpret this sentence to read and mean that Christ's death redeemed us from sin, and also exempted us from the penalty of sin, then I fail to comprehend the last clause. That he redeemed us from sin is clearly taught, but to say that Christ exempted us from the penalty of sin is incomprehensible to me from the proofs of Scripture and from observation, only so far that when the bond of death is lifted the penalty ceases. There ought not be any doubt about the penalty of sin, which is death. What is death? The wages of sin. Christ's death took sin away. Did it take the wages also? I think that all saints will draw their wages. I have pondered over this subject for many years, and have criticised (in my mind) preaching brethren who seemingly have established the idea that the saints are henceforth exempt from death. It is made plain by the apostles that the sting of death is sin, also that the strength of sin is the law. Sin is completely obliterated from the holy records that stand by the saints of the Most High. Death's sting is completely and forever extracted and thrown down beneath hell, never to rise again. The wages of sin remain for the personal experience of every saint. How can I see it otherwise, when we have almost daily proofs that all human bodies must die? The saints die, or their mortal bodies die, and to them it is like sleep, so expressed by inspiration, for

faith has entered their hearts, sealing them through the "great deep," so that they fear no evil, but they sleep peacefully "clear through to the promised land." Death to the saints is different from that by which the wicked fall. The saints have seen a great Light; that Light has gone before them; the way is open to them; but the wicked are without God and without hope in the world. Christ bore our sins in his own body on the tree. (1 Peter ii. 24.) He bore our griefs and carried our sorrows; he was wounded for our sins; he was bruised for our sins; his stripes healed us from our sins; the Lord laid on him the sins of us all; for the sins of God's people was he stricken to death. He had done no violence, there was no deceit in his mouth, yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief. He was innocent and pure, no guile in his mouth; his soul was an offering for sin, not death. His days shall be prolonged in the face of death, signifying his rising. He shall bear their iniquities. He bore the sin of many, though he poured out his soul unto death. (See Isa. liii.; Matt. viii. 17; Rom. iii. 25; iv. 25; v. 6; viii. 32; 1 Cor. xv. 3; 2 Cor. v. 21; Gal. i. 4; Titus ii. 14.) Christ suffered for the sins of many. (Heb. ix. 28; 1 Peter iii. 18; 1 John iii. 5.) Death is swallowed up in victory, finally, after all pass through it, and they all can pass through it, because the sting is gone. (See Isaiah xxv. 8; 1 Cor. xv. 54; Heb. ii. 14.) The devil, who held the power of death, is destroyed by the death of Jesus, and by his life he destroys the works of the devil, for that Wicked shall "be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders."

In hope of that blessed immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., Nov. 23, 1913.

GRACE! GRACE!!

WHAT power this word carries to the heart of a sinner who has tasted the powers of the world to come! While the literal meaning of the word signifies favor bestowed, independent of anything previously given to obtain favor, the scriptural import means a great deal more. The grace of the Lord Jesus is a bounty to every child of God who feels the power of his Spirit. It is the foundation of his experience. The Headstone was brought forth with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it; so every lively stone is brought forth with shouting, and the cry is, Grace, grace! Let the heavens rejoice, and the earthly vessels be glad. In heaven there are shoutings and joyful sounds on the return of every poor sinner to the kingdom of grace. He does not return until grace frees him from the bonds of sin, then like a kite that is cut from its cable, he rises, and it is by grace, on the wings of faith, and to see his walls salvation and his gates praise. How precious is the grace of our Lord Jesus. Hear God speak of it: "Grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee forever."—Psalms xlv. 2. The word "grace" is used only a few times in the Old Testament, but many times in the New. It seems peculiarly adapted to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The law, as a law to regulate the affairs of Israel, was a stranger to grace. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." The law was given, but grace came. The covenant of Abraham was a gracious

covenant. The words of Jehovah to Abraham set forth the holy principle of love which God has for his people through his Son, Jesus. The Lord blessed Abraham while he yet was in unbelief, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. He believed God, and his faith was counted to him for right doing, yet he was not justified by the law of works, but by the law of faith. So then, to sum up Abraham's justification, it is thus said of it, Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace. Faith itself is a grace from God, believed to be such by the modern believer who wrote,

> "Faith, 'tis a precious grace,
> Where'er it is bestowed."

The law, coming after the covenant with Abraham, could not set aside the promise of God to Abraham. The principle or foundation for Abraham's justification was just the same for all God's saints until the coming of Christ, and his coming did not set it aside, but firmly confirmed the law of faith by grace to all the heirs of promise. The apostles in their exhortations and writings to the saints use the word "grace" with great freedom, and seemingly as a tender tie that unites the members of the body and the Head as one. Their addresses at the beginning, and their farewells at the close of their letters, generally speak of the grace of the Lord Jesus. Paul is much given to it, for in Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1st and 2nd Thessalonians it is, "Grace be unto you," or "Grace unto you." To Timothy and Titus it is, "Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord." His closing words are about the same: "Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit." O how important, sweet and soul-satisfying is the grace of the Lord Jesus! Are not the saints rich in his grace? The riches of Christ is unsearchable, so his grace is beyond his investigation. We stand aghast as we try to show the exceeding riches of his grace. Our strongest words only faintly hint at the power and richness of that grace. "Being justified freely by his grace."—Rom. iii. 24. Now being justified freely by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, just think how easily they are saved: By grace are ye saved through faith; you do not have to do one thing towards saving yourself, the Lord is so merciful and gracious that he does it all for you, and if you should be a black offscouring of all things, miscreant, left out of the count of men-made institutions calling themselves "Christian," you can be blessed of God in spite of the rejection of men. You are a despised remnant; then rejoice in the election of grace. God is able to make all grace abound toward you. If your salvation is by grace, "then is it no more of works." The self-righteous Pharisees, to-day, stumble at the word "grace," as did they of olden time stumble at the Corner-stone in Zion. As they did then, so the same class now cannot see any beauty in the word "grace," nor in the justice of God, nor in his holiness, nor in his mercy. Man, whose heart is veiled in nature, and dead in sin, cannot see the beauty of the Lord's house. When law-workers talk about the Scriptures they seem to ignore the many allusions that the apostles have made to the grace of the Lord Jesus. The strong will of man does not need the "God of all grace," but the feeble walker needs grace all the time. The outer man perishes, but the inner man is renewed daily. "By the grace of God I am what I am." So he

can further say: I have a "good hope through grace." Then there is the throne of grace to which he can boldly come, through the mercy of the King of grace, to the praise of the glory of his grace, and his ears can be opened to the gospel of the grace of God. (Acts xx. 24.) There is no end to grace for the child of God, because he is "held up" by it, and would fall without it.

"Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

I have only hinted at this wonderful grace.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., Dec. 17, 1913.

ONEONTA, N. Y.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending you this letter of Elder Fenton's, for it seems good to me, and if you think best you may publish it in the SIGNS.

Your afflicted sister,

L. B. BREWSTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March 11, 1908.

DEAR SISTER BREWSTER:—Your letter of March 10th at hand, and was much enjoyed. I also would say that I have in loving remembrance my visit to Hopewell, and our talks on the things of the kingdom. My mind has been much bothered by being just as you write of yourself, viz., doubting and fearing if my name is written in the Lamb's book of life. Living at ease, and cold and indifferent, I suppose is why I did not feel to write you. You ask yourself the question, What evidence have I that I have passed from death unto life? Peter said, Give diligence to make your calling and election sure. You are doing the very thing that Peter said to do, that is, seeking some evidence of your acceptance in the Beloved. First I would have you examine yourself, whether you are in the faith, and if you have faith, where is it? and upon what does your faith rest? Is it your walk and deportment, or is it in the blood of Christ? All of the Lord's chosen are brought to the ends of the earth, not once, but time and time again; the teachings we receive in our experience are so soon forgotten. We are brought to the end of the earth, and cry out, Lord, save, I perish; Lord, save me; "God be merciful to me a sinner," and when we have peace spoken to our soul we rest for a time in his promises and live, rejoicing in Jesus as our salvation. After awhile we start in to trust in the arm of flesh, and try to walk alone; we feel we are armor-proof against Satan, and the Lord leaves us to drift along, to know we are weak and cannot of ourselves do or think one good thing. Then we come pleading for mercy, and "his mercy endureth forever." It seems to me the secret of the Lord given his people is that they come to the knowledge that without Jesus they can do nothing; without faith it is impossible to please God. Our faith lays hold of the fact that with God all things are possible, and the great mystery of mysteries is, How can a vile sinner be holy before God? There is only one way, and that is having been chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, predestinated of God, and being included in that covenant of grace and mercy which God saw fit to bestow upon them, not according to their works, but according to his mercy, which he purposed in Christ Jesus before the world was. Was it for crimes that I have done he hung upon the tree? Yes, every one for whom he died, their sins nailed him to the cross. Peter said, By

the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God ye have by wicked hands crucified the Lord of glory. We are apt to think of those who crucified Jesus as worse than ourselves, whereas it is I that look upon him whom they have pierced, and it was my sins that helped nail him to the cross, and it is now my love flows out to such a glorious Redeemer, but O how much of my time I forget and neglect to praise him. Yes, if I can only have a few moments of communion with him whom my soul loveth it is more than all else in this world to me. Reason and faith seem to be battling, and reason gets me all clouded and in the dark, and I am bewildered, but as soon as faith gets more in evidence then reason declines, faith lays hold of things not seen and is evidence of life. We have no power to increase our faith, as it is the gift of God.

You ask me what my mind is about heaven. The word itself, as dear brother Eddie Rounds said, is fraught with perfume, and he loved to have his mind dwelling upon it, and I believe he now knows the joys of heaven. The Bible has many passages speaking of heaven, and Jesus speaks in the gospels, especially in Matthew, as "Father which is in heaven." I once felt the Savior very near me, and thought as I walked along the road he was even very near in the clouds. This I thought on as the natural clouds, and the words came, "Christ in you the hope of glory." Then I found it was in my soul's experience I knew Christ. I thought of God as being everywhere, and felt to be lost in my meditation of space and also duration of eternity, and I read that heaven is God's throne and the earth his footstool, and Christ sits upon the right hand of God, making intercession for his people. There can be no conception of how this is to the carnal mind, as things seen are temporal, and the things not seen are eternal, and my mind of the matter is that of the things not seen we have but faint conception, even by faith, what the glory of the eternal heaven is. We know that Jesus is King, and reigns eternal; that when we awake with his likeness we shall be satisfied. My faith beheld my father pass from this life, and I believe he is now in heaven, and I rejoice in that the Lord has given me to believe this. I think of the angel that appeared to the shepherds at Bethlehem while watching their flocks by night, and there was a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, saying, Peace on earth, good will toward men. Glory to God in the highest. Also of the voice from heaven that spake to them on the mount of transfiguration: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Also when Jesus was baptized, the Spirit descended in bodily shape as a dove, and the voice from heaven said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, showing in that one act of Jesus' baptism the ordinance of Jesus in the flesh to be baptized, and the Holy Spirit approving it, and God speaking from heaven of his approval. Then I think of the two altars that were built and the fire from heaven consuming that which was the true altar. We hear the voice of thunder in the heavens, and God has set his bow in the heavens. There are the legal heavens and the gospel heavens, and the heavens as that which is space above the earth, but heaven where Jesus has entered cannot be described. It is all a great mystery, and only known as our faith reveals the hidden things to us. In this life we live by faith upon the Son of God; the hope we have is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and we trust in the power

of his might, and rest in his promises. We are what we are by the grace of God, and will never get beyond hope in this life, and we believe that the fashion and things of this earth pass away, but things of the kingdom shall abide eternally.

Your brother in hope,

J. M. FENTON.

WYOMING, Del., Feb. 16, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find copy of a letter written by our dear sister, Mary A. Cohee, of the Cow Marsh Church, who is in her seventy-ninth year. She has been in such poor health for the last few years that she could not attend the meetings. She is now quite feeble, but has written the following testimony of the Lord's merciful dealing with her, to the church, and I feel that the readers of the SIGNS will share in our gladness of heart on her behalf, if it meets your mind to publish the same.

Your brother in hope,

B. E. CUBBAGE.

WYOMING, Del., Jan. 13, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER CUBBAGE:—You asked me to talk some for you when you were all here, and I told you I could write better than I could talk, so I suppose you will expect me to write a few lines, but unless the Lord directs my mind it will not be of any comfort to any of you. In the first place, I want to thank you all for your kindness in coming so far out here in the cold for my benefit. I felt it was good for you to be here, to strengthen a poor sinner like me, for it surely did strengthen me. It was a very pleasant surprise. I think sometimes, Who am I, and what am I, that people should be so mindful of me? It was the Lord's work, for he says, Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst. This is another blessing to me. I have many blessings, and am not worthy of them. Sometimes I feel so lonely and lifeless the words come to me,

"Like one alone I seem to be,
O, is there any one like me?"

But the Comforter comes and clears the mist away, and I am given courage to go on my way rejoicing. I have so much to be thankful for here with my son and wife. They are very kind, and try to make it pleasant for us with all the luxuries that heart could wish; we are blessed so far as that is concerned. Sure mercies and blessings, for which I hope I am thankful, and praise the Lord.

I will tell you some of my travels of mind from nature to grace. I was a long time under conviction, and felt so sinful I was ashamed to go to meeting. I thought people knew how sinful I was, and felt it would have been a relief to me to sit where no one could see me. I wanted to hear the preaching, but was too sinful to face those good people; they all looked so good, and I was the meanest sinner on earth. I loved God's people, but could not see how they could ever have any love for me. Brother, has it been thus with you? If so, I am not alone. I had some revelations that would give me peace of mind for a short time, but they were soon gone. The Scripture reads, Marvel not, ye must be born again. I knew in my mind I had not been born again, then the burden would come again. I looked for a brighter evidence; I was not satisfied.

"I waited patient for the Lord,
Who bowed to hear my cry;
He made me rest upon his word,
He brought salvation nigh."

I went for some time in this way, loaded with a heavy burden; I was sick, soul and body. One bright morning in June, 1891, I felt so sad and lonely; the house

looked so dark and dreary that I could not stay in it. I thought I was going to die. I took my bonnet and went out, not expecting to get back alive. I walked on until I reached the wood-shed, there I knelt down and said, Lord, be merciful, I pray. That minute a bright light shone all around me, and as I looked up it vanished, but I felt a change; when I got up my burden was gone. I looked around, and everything seemed to be praising God, and I was happy. As I went back into the house everything looked bright, and very different from what it did when I went out of it. I went out on the porch, and even the trees seemed to be waving praises to the Lord. That was the happiest day of my life. Well, now I began to think it a duty to be baptized, and wanted to be, but there was a black gulf of water before my mind. I never could be baptized with that scene before me, so I prayed to the best of my knowledge to the heavenly Father to remove this obstacle. After some time it was removed, and I have not seen it since as I did then. I went before the church and told them a little, but not all I have here related, for I was afraid they would not believe me; but to my surprise they received me, and I was baptized the next day in the afternoon by Elder E. Rittenhouse.

"What peaceful hours I then enjoyed,
How sweet their memory still;
But now I find an aching void
The world can never fill."

I must stop or I will tire your patience. I want to say I believe in the predestination of all things, and salvation by grace, and grace alone. I see much beauty in the fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians.

Dear brother, please correct all mistakes, for this letter is like the writer, but you can read it to the church if you think it proper. Brethren and sisters, pray for me, that my faith fail not. I have written along as my mind ran. My hand is weak, and I have to stop and rest. If a sister, the least of all, in hope of life eternal, through Jesus Christ our Lord. MARY A. COHEE.

LAKELAND, Florida, Feb. 8, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have had the pleasure of being present at the forty-second annual session of the old Mt. Enon Association, of south Florida, held with the old mother church of this association, called Mt. Enon, constituted in 1865, by Elder James Mosley, Andrew Kicklightes and others. The meeting of the brethren and sisters from the different churches composing this association was full of love for God, and the groundrock of their own salvation was grace, and grace alone, and Jesus Christ their only hope. Dear kindred in Christ, I felt it was good to be there. O that all men would praise the Lord, for his mercy endureth forever. I am made to joy in God our Savior when I hear the dear saints and servants of God stand up and in the face of all the world declare the riches of God's holy truth in the predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass in meekness and humility, and as Paul said, "I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness." It is very evident to my mind that God has reserved to himself a few faithful and tried witnesses who have not yet bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Dear brethren, and servants of the most high God, these are troublous times; stand firm in the faith once delivered unto the saints. Do not suffer yourselves to be drawn into the net of Arminianism by the cunning craftiness of evil men. Demand a "thus saith the Lord" on

every point of doctrine, for the time is at hand when they would deceive the very elect if it were possible. Dear saints, God knows my heart; I would not manifest a domineering spirit, or seek to be a ruler over God's heritage, but I do desire to be firm and sober, and have ever prayed God to give me wisdom and knowledge of the truth; this I do desire even above life and health. Day by day I see a falling away of the steadfastness of the saints, until I am made to cry out, O Lord, how long until thou take vengeance on them that believe not the truth, who are leading God's lambs who are weak in the faith into confusion? Dear saints, can it be even possible that God would declare the end from the beginning, and then leave anything to take place by chance? To me this is a horrible thought. I just as firmly believe that God declared every link in the chain between the beginning and the end as I do that he declared the end from the beginning, and I believe there is nothing that ever has or ever will take place in all this world that can hinder the purpose of God.

I pray God's blessing on all the household of faith.

Your servant,

C. K. HAINES.

HAMPTON, Iowa, Feb. 6, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have been, and still am, confined to the house, since January 1st, with a severe cold, which settled on my lungs. I am still under the doctor's care, but am improving slowly.

I have just perused the dear old SIGNS of the 1st and 15th of January, present volume, and have read all the articles, and have been made to rejoice and render praise to our covenant-keeping God that he declared that he would never be without witnesses; there will always be "seven thousand" who never will bow to the image of Baal.

The articles of Elders Peters, Fenton, Beeman, May and Keene, and of sisters Durand and Runkle, as do all the others, speak the same language, and I believe they have all been taught of the Lord, if I know anything about spiritual things. Sometimes I fear I am a stranger, as I have so many doubts and fears. If I were as sure that I am one of the happy recipients of his grace as I am that God will carry on his work, and that all his redeemed will be called to know him as life eternal, I would be a happy old man. I am now in my seventy-fourth year, and have had a name among the little few for nearly fifty-eight years, and for over forty-one years have been trying to proclaim salvation by grace: the unsearchable riches of Christ. I look back over these many years, the trials and afflictions I have been called to pass through, knowing and realizing that I soon will be called hence, but, brethren, that little hope I trust (if not a poor deceived mortal) I received so long ago, I would not give for ten thousand worlds like this, although at times it seems very small; but, as I said, in reading the communications in the dear old SIGNS, it strengthens this poor old sinner to look upon Zion, the city of our God, and count her towers, and cry unto Jerusalem that her iniquity is pardoned, her warfare is accomplished, that she hath received double at the Lord's hand for all her sins. O, dear brethren, cry aloud and spare not.

You, brethren Chick and Ker, and most all, like myself, are growing old, yet when we are sleeping under the clods of the valley God will raise up others to fill our places, and further, the dear old SIGNS, the oldest periodical of our faith

and order, will be sustained, and he will call others to take the places of the present editors, as he did our father in Israel, Elder Gilbert Beebe. I asked when he was called to his reward, Who will take his place? I do believe it will be sustained henceforth. O may the God of all grace keep his children and give us grace in all our trials here, is the humble prayer of a poor old sinner, saved by grace if saved at all. I will say to all our brethren and sisters, Write on, and help sustain our beloved paper by paying your subscriptions, for remember there are a great many on its list who are not able to pay for their paper.

I will close this letter, and feel it will be the last one I ever will write to the SIGNS, and know the editors will do with it as they think best. Farewell.

E. A. NORTON.

TEHUACANA, Texas, Dec. 4, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As I am writing to send in my renewal for the SIGNS, I feel that I would like to write a few lines to the many writers for the old family paper, whose writings have been a great source of comfort and satisfaction to this old sinner. I wish I could write in a way that would be of interest or edification to its readers, but it seems that I travel in the dark valley of doubts and fears, and low down in the "Slough of Despond" so much of the time that I fear I would fail to write anything that would be of interest to any one. It is seldom that I can talk with any one on the subject of religion that I can agree with, and when the SIGNS comes laden with such good news from a far country I feel that I want to join with the writers, and let all know how much I appreciate their writings. They tell my travels much better than I can. Sin is mixed with all I do. I do that which I would not, and that I would do I do not, and am made to question within, What am I, a deceiver? or am I deluded? or am I a hypocrite? Again, I will question whether there is any reality in the religion of Jesus Christ or not, and try to throw it all away, and to deny my Lord and Master, and with the fool say, There is no God. Those questionings come, and I feel I have become the habitation of devils and every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. But when it pleases my Lord and Master to restore unto me the joy of his salvation, if indeed I ever was in possession of it, I am carried back to certain spots in old southwest Georgia, when I was sixteen years of age, and I am made to rejoice with that joy that is unspeakable and full of glory, and acknowledge there is a God, the Creator of the universe, and he upholds or disposes of the same as seemeth good to him.

I will close by asking you to pardon me if I have intruded on your time with this letter. Remember me when all is well with you.

JOSEPH H. BOZEMAN.

EXPLANATION.

OUR readers will probably wonder why we do not publish an editorial from the pen of Elder Chick in this number, but as our dear brother was not strong enough to prepare one, we know that our friends will excuse us for the omission, and we hope we may be able to give them one of his good articles in our next issue.—ED.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1914.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MATTHEW XII. 34.

"OUT of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

How true the above words, yet how many things of the heart, on the one hand, of sorrow, are too deep, too terrible for utterance; and on the other hand, of sin, too dreadful, too vile for speech. In contemplating the Savior's words we should always think of their wonderful depth, ever referring either to his disciples or unbelievers. When we say unbelievers we think he referred to the scribes and Pharisees particularly, yet the subject of grace need not go out of his or her experience to find all those abominable things characteristic of those classes in the days of Jesus in the flesh. It is also well to be careful about the connections when speaking or writing of the Scriptures, that we rightly divide the word. In this connection we find that Jesus was accused of being in league with the devil, hence a party to his evil works, even though the works of Jesus at this particular time were to heal the sick and afflicted and cast out devils. Jesus showed them plainly how impossible it was for such a thing to be by telling them a house or city or kingdom divided against itself could not stand; therefore no connection between God and the devil, between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness, between heaven and hell. The tree is either good or bad, and is always known by its fruit. The words of our text were addressed to a "generation of vipers," for such they were in the eyes of God's law, notwithstanding they were the children of Abraham and claimed to be Moses' disciples. It seems to us that the term "vipers" was used because it signified the vileness of those addressed. Many of this class came to John the Baptist desiring baptism, but he refused them, because there were no fruits meet for repentance such as are found in the lives of the trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord. John addressed them as a "generation of vipers," by the Spirit of Jesus, knowing their vileness. In that day it required righteousness in excess of the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees for one to enter the kingdom of God; the relation to Abraham was not sufficient; the righteousness of the Son of God has been necessary since the beginning of the world, and without it no man can approach unto God. Hence when Jesus asked the question, which composes the preceding part of the verse from which our text is taken, "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things?" he did not mean that they were doing such a thing, but simply telling them the impossibility of a bad tree bringing forth good fruit, or in other words, for an evil heart to send forth that which is good. Now while this is verily true of unregenerate men, because the love and word of God do not dwell in them, we think we know that both good and evil can proceed from the children of God, the only begotten Son excepted. The good man out of the good treasure of the heart will surely bring

forth good things; it could not be otherwise; and it is equally true that an evil man will, out of the evil treasure of the heart, bring forth evil things; this could not be otherwise. We who have been long in the way realize to our sorrow that no change took place in the Adamic nature when we were born of the Spirit. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," and ever remains so, regardless of what men or angels think, if so be that the words of Jesus are true, of which we have no doubt whatever. Sometimes these two are spoken of as the "old man" and the "new man," the "outward man" and "inward man," "the flesh and the Spirit," and sometimes alluded to as "two principles." To us all this simply means the life of Adam and the life of Christ, each in the same tenement of clay and never blend—never work in unison, but ever "contrary the one to the other." Hence Adamic life is one and spiritual life another, and each in every subject of grace, and the things of each life are from time to time manifest; sometimes praise, thanksgiving and singing, making melody unto the Lord; sometimes walking with God; sometimes sitting down in the kingdom of God with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, having communion with God and his Son Jesus Christ; sometimes crying aloud, declaring the wonders of salvation through the Lamb of God; sometimes poor in spirit; sometimes mourning; sometimes hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and thousands of other experiences in the Spirit, or Christ life. On the other hand, sometimes filled with bitterness; sometimes bubbling over with mischief, scorn and pride; sometimes planning evil against a brother or a neighbor; sometimes almost hating the ways of righteousness, the mind filled with all things hateful to God and that bring death and destruction to the children of God in soul, and sometimes actually, so far as the fellowship of the church is concerned, often justifying self and condemning others, and ten thousands of other things too despicable to mention. Now, if these things be true, has not each quickened sinner an evil life and the good life, natural and spiritual, and within each heart a treasure, the one evil, the other good? Hence "out of the abundance of the heart [life] the mouth speaketh." But as said in the beginning, some things of sorrow are too deep for utterance, the soul overwhelmed; no words can describe the dreadfulness of a blighted soul; no one can enter into the solemn place, they have not the password; the secret, as it were, is unknown, the tongue has failed for utterance. But sometimes the furrowed brow, the pale cheek or the silent tear gives a faint expression of the flood going on within. This experience brings one nearer Jesus when in the garden sweating, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground, than any other, and while no one can understand the condition of mind and soul, Jesus knows every throb of the heart, every inward groan, every spasm of pain, and at times is touched with the feeling of our infirmities; then we learn why he was made perfect, as an High Priest, through sufferings. Then again from our natural life proceed things too sinful for utterance; there seems enough of that Satanic spirit in this Adamic life to teach us that it feeds upon the dust of the ground, never rising above it. Who would want another to know exactly what he is in thought, word and often, yes, too often, in deed? What minister would want his congregation to know what is often running through his mind

when entering the stand, and even when trying to speak in prayer? What member of the congregation would want the minister to know the thoughts which often occupy the mind while trying to listen to the gospel preached? Then shall we go back two thousand years to find the "Pharisee," the "liar," the "hypocrite," the idolater, or even worse? We think not, nor do we have to wait until after the resurrection to have our part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone. Is it wrong therefore to say that the children of God have both an evil and a good treasure, and that each is made manifest, the one according to the Adamic life, the other according to divine life?

In writing these things we have not meant to infer that the bodies of the saints do not partake in salvation through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ, but mean only what Paul said in Romans viii. 19: "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." Again, in Galatians he said: "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit; and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other." We believe the whole man, soul, body and spirit, was redeemed by our Elder Brother, and that we shall all be changed—mortality swallowed up of life, yet it remains true that while in the flesh the body is dead because of sin, and that everything vile, hateful and sinful will proceed from it, while on the other hand it is the same man, bodily, who manifests the life of Christ in his mortal flesh.

Great is the mystery of godliness, and how gracious to be taken into the secret of the Lord, taught to know self and Him whom to know is life eternal. K.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

REPENTANCE.

In replying to the inquiries of brother Samuel Rixey, of Culpepper, Va., we will in the outset observe that although we are not very familiar with all the theories of theologians on the subject of repentance, and therefore but poorly qualified to follow them in all their applications, explanations, divisions and nice distinctions as to the meaning of the word, when applied literally, we nevertheless feel willing to give to our brother, and to our readers generally, such views as we can gather from a close attentive reading of the Scriptures. That the word is used in our version of the Bible with a variety of applications, is certain, from the fact that it is not only applied to good men and bad men, but also to God himself, and that it does not apply to God in the same sense that it does to man is clear from the declaration that God is not a man that he should repent. That is, God does not repent, yet in the same chapter (1 Sam. xv. 29, 35,) we are told "the Lord repented that he had made Saul king over Israel." This he did by simply deposing him from the throne, and supplying the throne with a better man. Repentance, when applied to God, does not intend a sorrow for what he had done, a conviction of having done wrong, or even a change in his mind or purpose, but, as we understand, it signifies a change of his outward administration in his dispensations, and all in perfect harmony with his eternal and immutable purpose. Nor does the term when applied to men always mean sorrow, or regret, for what we sometimes denominate evangelic or gospel repentance, which is unto life, is not, but results from a godly sorrow for sins.

In the text referred to by brother Rixey, (Mark i. 15,) the word is used in the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom by Christ himself, and not in the ministration of the law by Moses; it was not therefore legal repentance, but a repentance preparatory to a cordial reception of the gospel of the kingdom which Christ was preaching. If the term "legal" be used as an adjective, to signify a repentance demanded or required by the law, we should first inquire whether the law ever did or could demand or accept of any kind of repentance. It is not in the nature of any absolute law to require repentance. The law of God does not require that we shall be sorry for having sinned, but it forbids that we should sin. It requires perfect and perpetual obedience, and condemns to death for the first transgression, and could our tears forever flow, could our grief no respite know, it would avail us nothing by way of expiation. "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy." No repentance or mercy can flow to transgressors, from the law.

From the confused theory of Arminians of a legal repentance, grows also the doctrine of obligatory repentance. That repentance which is unto life, and is connected with godly sorrow, is the gift of God; it proceeds from a godly principle implanted in the heart, and which cannot possibly flow from an ungodly source. Any sorrow or repentance that could come from an ungodly sinner's heart, or from any sinner's heart before a godly principle is therein implanted, would be like the fountain from whence it emanates, ungodly. We search the law and gospel both in vain to find this obligatory repentance which is in such great demand among all the legal workmongrel tribes of the Arminians. We do not wonder that our dear brother's mind has been puzzled and perplexed to bring the obligation of repentance upon unregenerate sinners. We might as well speak of their obligation to remit their own sins as to procure their own repentance, seeing Christ alone is exalted to be a Prince and Savior, for to give both the one and the other unto Israel. It would be equally as proper and scriptural to speak of their obligation to be saved, to go to heaven, and to make themselves sons and heirs of God. But does man's inability to repent, or to believe, or even to keep from sinning, relieve him from his obligation to do so? Certainly not, if it can be found that such obligations are upon him. Now the sinner is one that has sinned. Sin is the transgression of the law; but where has the law under which the unregenerate sinner is held either required him to repent or believe the gospel? The law truly forbids him to transgress, and holds him answerable for every transgression. Sin, not a want of repentance or faith, is what the sinner is condemned for. Without the faith of the Son of God no sinner ever did or could believe the gospel; for believing the gospel is the assurance of faith, and that is the gift of God. Is there any obligation devolving on a graceless sinner, making it his duty that God shall give him either faith or repentance? How absurd. But suppose the sinner could control the convictions of his own carnal mind so far as to make himself believe that he is a christian, that he was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that Christ died for him, that he is freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, would that carnal assurance make it so? Would he not believe an untruth, even if he believed literally just what the chris-

tian believes? because that which is true in the case of one that is born of the Spirit is not true of him who only possesses a carnal assurance. The heaven-born child believes that God is his Father, and has the witness in himself, the Spirit bearing witness with his spirit that he is born of God. But if the unregenerate sinner without that witness, believes himself to be an heir of immortality, he is deceived, and believes a lie. But to believe the gospel is to believe all this. It is precisely so with all that passes for true gospel repentance; if it be not the work of God, and the gift of God, it is all delusive and vain.

But, we shall be asked, Did not John the Baptist and our Lord preach to the people, saying, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"? All this is admitted, but if we carefully observe when, to whom and by whom this repentance was preached, it will enable us the more clearly to understand what manner of repentance was called for.

"The law and the prophets were until John: since that time [and until these words were spoken by our Lord, see Luke xvi. 16,] the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." At this particular time John was sent from God to prepare the way of the Lord; to preach that the kingdom of heaven, so long predicted, was at hand; that the Messiah had come; that Jewish rites and ceremonies were now about to be abolished; that their fleshly descent from Abraham was no longer to avail them, for God was able of "these stones" to raise up children unto Abraham. John's mission was only to the Jews, to preach repentance to them, and to baptize them with the baptism of repentance. This repentance and baptism both signified a turning away from the works, rites, ceremonies and ordinances of the law, as a ground of acceptance with God and a coming out from Jerusalem, and a reception of Christ as that Messiah which was to come, and which they professed to be looking for. Their repentance did not signify that they were at that time born of the Spirit, or that they had not been subjects of that spiritual birth for many years, but it did signify that they came out from Judaism, sensible that the works of the law could not purge their consciences from dead works, to serve the living God; and hence they came to John's baptism of repentance confessing their sins, and professing their faith in and reliance upon that Christ whom John pointed out to them as the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world. Remember that John was sent to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. His work was stated by the angel of the Lord. (Luke i. 13–17.) Also in the prophetic declarations of Zacharias, Luke i. 76–79, "And thou, child, shall be called the Prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord, to prepare his ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto his people, by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." Now observe, John's commission was to go before the face of the Lord, to announce his coming, and to "give knowledge of salvation" to God's people, by remission of their (God's people's) sins, and to make ready a people already prepared by grace for the Lord, by calling them out from the house of bondage and by baptizing them with the baptism of repentance, or reformation, saying unto them that they

should believe on him that was to come, that is, on Christ; that they should receive him as the true Messiah, and look to him alone for salvation. The repentance which John preached, and to which he baptized the people prepared for the Lord, is further defined, in its peculiar nature and effects, by the rejection of the Pharisees from John's baptism of repentance. "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."—Matt. iii. 7–9. Had these Pharisees and Sadducees possessed the repentance which John preached they would have signified it by turning away from their cherished traditional hopes of being saved by their fleshly relation to Abraham, and by a reliance alone on him whose kingdom was about to be organized. The repentance preached was an abandonment of all confidence in the flesh, and a ready and hearty acknowledgment of Christ. "And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees." They were about to be cut off from Abraham as their root, and scattered among the Gentiles. The wrath to come, of which John spake, was that wrath which had long been accumulating and now hung impending over Jerusalem and the Jews as a nation. Every tree in this wilderness of Judea which God by his grace had not made good and fruitful was to be cut down. Their confidence in Abraham as their root, and the covenant of circumcision, were now to fail them, and only such Jews as God had prepared, and John was commissioned to make ready, should be admitted into the kingdom which was at hand.

The preaching of Christ, referred to by brother Rixey, was addressed to the same people, and was a continuance of the preaching of John. "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." —Mark i. 14, 15. The time appointed, Daniel's weeks, or the "fullness of time," when God was to send forth his Son, the time allotted to the legal dispensation, the time for the worldly sanctuary and carnal ordinances, was fulfilled. The good news, tidings of great joy to those who could show fruits meet for repentance, the gospel of the kingdom, which the God of heaven was to set up, was now preached, and those who had oil in their vessels were to go in to the marriage, and the door to be shut. This proclamation was made, that all such as were prepared for the announcement should abandon their former position under the works and ritual of the law of a carnal commandment, and adhere to the gospel. This proclamation was not a proposition that if they would repent and believe the gospel they should be saved for doing so, for that would suppose that a bad tree could bring forth good fruit, without first being made good, which Christ says is impossible. (Matt. vii. 18.) We are told that when Jesus thus came to his own (his own people, the Jews,) his own received him not. But unto as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (John i. 11–13.) The twelve disciples also which were sent out were in their commission forbidden to go with this mes-

sage to the Gentiles, for God had not yet granted repentance to the Gentiles. (See Acts xi. 18.) Nor were they allowed to bear these gospel tidings to the Samaritans, "But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."—Matthew x. 5, 6. The time had not yet come for the gathering in of the other sheep which were afar off among the Gentiles, for this preaching of repentance and remission of sins in Christ's name must begin at Jerusalem. (Luke xxiv. 47.) At the preaching of John, of Christ, of the twelve, and of the seventy, as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed, and came forward, confessing their sins and professing faith in Christ, renouncing their former hopes of salvation by the deeds of the law or works of the flesh, and signified the same by being baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and not unto Moses.

We have perhaps said enough to signify our views as to the nature of the repentance preached to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, by John, by Christ and by the disciples before the crucifixion and resurrection of the Son of God, to satisfy brother Rixey that we do not understand the repentance preached by Christ in our text to be either that, strictly speaking, which results from fear of wrath, or that which proceeds from godly sorrow for sins, but rather a turning away from their former legal works and adherence to abrogated rites and ceremonies, to receive that promised Messiah of whom Moses and the prophets had written, and whom they were expecting should come, and although the words were addressed to the Jews generally, they were only applied to a people prepared for the Lord. All such on hearing the proclamation came from Judea, Jerusalem and from regions about Jordan, to Jordan, and were baptized of John in the river Jordan, confessing their sins, thus fleeing from the wrath which was then about to come upon Jerusalem, and other cities of Judea, and thus by baptism signifying their death to Moses, and resurrection with Christ to newness of life.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Dec. 15, 1865.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. E. Cubbage, at the home of Sidney Jones, near Viola, Del., Feb. 14th, 1914, Edgar Furr Gordon, of Bunker Hill, W. Va., and Ethel Cornelia Whitacre, of Whitacre, Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

James Baldwin, our beloved brother in Christ, suddenly departed this life Feb. 9th, 1913, just two months past 73 years of age. He was an humble, God-fearing man, a faithful member of the church to the day of his death, and one that will be greatly missed, not only by his beloved companion, but by the little flock at Hughesville as well. He lived several miles from the New Valley Church, the place of his membership, so that he seldom attended services there, but was always on hand at the meetings at Hughesville, which is a branch of the Valley Church. In 1866 he was married to Miss Fannie Cockrill, and in 1887 both he and his wife were baptized by Elder E. V. White. Brother and sister Baldwin have for years been the care-takers of the meetinghouse at Hughesville. It was a joyful labor of love on their part to sweep and dust the house, and in winter time to build the fires, that when the congregation should assemble for meetings everything would be pleasant and comfortable. How vividly in my mind's eye I can now see our dear brother and sister standing on the steps of the little meetinghouse door as we would drive up and alight for the meetings. Can it be that this pleasant scene, like many others of the past, is now gone never to return? Brother Baldwin was at one time a member with the Missionaries, but there never was any real food for his soul there. It was given him to become enlightened in the truth before sister Fannie, but they both came to the church together, and were baptized together, and together they traveled all along the way, perfectly joined in heart and soul, and not only as man and wife. He was strong in the faith of Jesus Christ, and delighted in a whole gospel. To him God was an unlimited sovereign over all things in heaven, earth and hell, even devils being subject to his will. Grace, and

grace alone, was the theme he constantly loved to hear. He believed and felt in his soul that Christ and his people were eternally and vitally one; that the unity between Christ and his church was not a thing that ever began to be, but always was. Do not understand me to say that our brother could always walk in the sunshine of these lofty doctrines. O no, he had his dark seasons, times when such gloom filled his soul that he could not sing his beloved hymns or read his Bible with any comfort. At such times as these the heavens were shaken, and everything that could be removed was shaken out of its place, that there might be a revelation of those eternal substantialities that could not be dislodged. Like John the Baptist in prison, no matter how bright had been the evidence of his acceptance in the Beloved, he was often left to doubt the validity of his hope and his experience of grace. Two of our members of the church drove out on Monday, the 9th of February, to call on brother and sister Baldwin. This day found brother Baldwin feeling comfortable in his mind. Both of them sang two or three hymns, one being No. 239 in Beebe's collection, beginning, "Sovereign Ruler of the skies, immensely great, immensely wise." After singing this hymn sister Fannie said: "I believe every word of that hymn." "And so do I," replied our brother. A few minutes later the callers rose to leave. Brother Baldwin held the horse's head while the ladies got in the buggy, and before they could both be seated he dropped dead. Death came instantly and painlessly, the result of apoplexy. O what a good way to go home! A shock, of course, to those left behind, but a blessed way for the one that is taken, not to have to be left to suffer pain for days, weeks and perhaps months, as some often are. Our dear sister Baldwin is surely sad and alone, yet not alone. She has One with her from whom she can never be bereaved. They never had any children, so that the church and her God, the consolations of Christ, are her only comfort. But who would want better? May the heavenly Father in love and mercy remember the sorrowing widow and the bereaved church.

The funeral was preached by the writer from the words: "Death is swallowed up in victory." Interment in Leesburg Cemetery.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

LEESBURG, Va., Feb. 12, 1914.

Ann Rebecca McGuffin was born Sept. 17th, 1816, and died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Jane A. Poling, Montrose, Randolph Co., W. Va., Dec. 6th, 1913, aged 97 years, 2 months and 20 days. Mrs. McGuffin was born in Page County, Va., the daughter of Robert and Elizabeth Carter, and was the eldest of eleven children. When a young woman she moved with her parents to Barbour County, then Virginia, but now West Virginia, where they settled on Bills Creek. She was married to James W. McGuffin in 1841, and to that union were born eight children; two of these, Mrs. Mary Katharine Poling, of Philippi, and Mrs. Jane Amanda Poling, of Montrose, W. Va., are still living; the other six died in childhood. She leaves two daughters, one brother, several grandchildren and great-grandchildren, beside a host of friends, to mourn their loss. Mrs. McGuffin was received by experience, and baptized in the fellowship of the Mount Olive Primitive Old Side Baptist Church, near Philippi, W. Va., by the pastor, Elder J. S. Corder, nearly forty years ago, of which church she was a faithful member until the time of her death. As a wife and mother she was kind, loving and faithful; as a friend and neighbor faithful and true, ever ready to help the sick and afflicted. While she was able to go there was not a sick bed in her neighborhood that "Grandmother McGuffin," as she was affectionately called by all who knew her, did not visit. As a church member sister McGuffin was ever faithful, attending regularly all her church meetings whenever it was possible for her to go, never letting her own affairs prevent her going, until about fourteen years before her death, when she was stricken with total blindness, and some years later partially lost her hearing, after which time she did not attend the Mt. Olive Church any more, but at that time she was living with her daughter near the Leading Creek Primitive or Old Side Baptist Church, which she frequently attended as long as she could hear preaching, but left her letter in the Mt. Olive Church. Sister McGuffin was an orderly walking member, and loved to see peace and harmony in the churches composing the Tygarts Valley River Old School Baptist Association. She was a strong predestinarian, and believed in salvation by grace, and grace alone, putting no confidence in the flesh or in works as a means of salvation. Surely sister McGuffin was a child of grace. She often said to the writer: "If I am saved at all, it is alone by the grace and mercy of a kind and gracious God, and not by anything that my poor, weak and feeble hands can do." The longer she lived the more she seemed to realize her own weak and helpless condition, and to rely more fully on Jesus, her precious Savior. For she said, "He is all in all to me; I have no other helper. His blood is sufficient for me." Having had dropsy for some time, she began to fail shortly after her ninety-seventh birthday, and to grow weak and feeble, and to require more and more the attention of her faithful daughter and her grandson and his wife, with whom she resided. A few days before her death, and while she could yet speak, she said that she dreaded death, and on being asked by her grandson why she dreaded death she answered: "I am ready and willing, even anxious to go, but Christ, my Redeemer and Savior, dreaded death, and I cannot help dread the pangs of death."

Like Simeon of old, she surely could say, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Like Paul, "Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better." When the end finally came she gently and quietly passed away, like one sinking into a peaceful sleep.

By request, the funeral services were held in the Little Bethel Primitive Baptist meetinghouse, in Barbour Co., W. Va., and were conducted by Elder J. S. Murphy, pastor of the Leading Creek Primitive Baptist Church, in Randolph Co., W. Va., after which the remains were laid to rest in the family plot in Bethel Cemetery, by the side of her husband and children, there to await the final resurrection of the saints. A. C. KELLEY.

MONTROSE, W. Va., Feb. 5, 1914.

John Richardson was born at Ramsey, Huntingtonshire, England, Dec. 31st, 1833, and died at his home, 1019 N. Chicago St., Pontiac, Ill., Dec. 14th, 1913, thus lacking seventeen days of being 80 years of age. Mr. Richardson came to America in 1851, to Evansville, Ind., and the next year he returned to England, coming again to America, accompanied by his parents, three sisters and two brothers, in 1853, the family arriving in June and settling at Evansville, where the father and one brother died that year. Late in the year 1853 he came to Marshall County, Ill., where he was married to Miss Sarah Richardson in 1854, and in 1856 he with his family moved to Livingston County, on a farm near where the village of Flanagan now is. To that union seven sons and four daughters were born, two sons dying in infancy, and two sons and three daughters after they had grown to manhood and womanhood. July 31st, 1879, his wife died. He was married to Miss Ann Main, March 14th, 1880, and to them one son and three daughters were born. He continued to reside on the farm until 1895. Retiring, he moved to Pontiac, where he lived until his death. Deceased suffered a partial stroke of paralysis more than a year previous to his death, but had kept up most of the time, and was able to ride out until about five weeks before he died, when he suffered another shock and took to his bed. It affected his speech greatly, and at times his mind wandered, and he gradually grew weaker until he passed peacefully away. Mr. Richardson was a strong believer in and advocate of the election, predestination and sovereignty of God, and also a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years. He was an Old School Baptist in faith, but never united with the church. He freely confessed himself a sinner in the sight of God, and we have a comfortable assurance that God had given him a good hope through grace that Christ had atoned for his sins by the sacrifice of himself. His hope was in Christ, therefore we take comfort in our sorrow. In the last days of his life, when he could be understood he expressed his continued trust in the Lord. He was a man very widely known in business affairs, and greatly respected and esteemed for his honesty and generosity in both word and deed by all who knew him. He never forgot those in need, and constantly in everyday life expressed praise and thankfulness to his Master for all his gifts and blessings to him, both spiritual and temporal. His family has lost a most faithful, devoted husband and father, and his brother, Thomas, of Flanagan, who is the only surviving member of his father's family, a lifelong, close companion, and the community a very valued friend. Besides the brother, he is survived by his companion, four sons and four daughters, twenty-one grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and many other relatives. May the good Lord in his providence be with those who feel their loss.

Short funeral services were held at his late home in Pontiac, conducted by J. H. Ryan, a Methodist minister, and his remains were brought to Flanagan, where more lengthy funeral services were held in the Methodist meetinghouse in Flanagan, Dec. 16th, M. D. Obenshain, the Methodist pastor, conducting the services. The funeral was very largely attended by relatives, friends and former neighbors. Interment was at Mt. Zion Cemetery, in the family lot and near his old home. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

FANNIE R. INGREY.

FLANAGAN, Ill., Feb. 10, 1914.

Thomas Lyons, son of Thomas and Mary A. Lyons, was born in Columbiana County, Ohio, Feb. 13th, 1829, and died Feb. 1st, 1914, aged 84 years, 11 months and 18 days. He came to Jay County, Ind., nearly sixty years ago, where he commenced to make a home for himself in a dense forest, and endured the privations and hardships of a pioneer life. Being very energetic and industrious, he accumulated considerable of this world's goods, and contributed his part of all it took to bring a prosperous country out of a wild forest. He was married to Amanda V. Templeman in the year 1855. To that union were born eleven children, eight of whom survive him. That union was dissolved by the death of his wife in the year 1879. He was united in marriage to Flora Harkins in the year 1880, and to that union were born eleven children, eight of whom survive him, thus making him the father of twenty-two children. He leaves to mourn his demise a widow, sixteen children, twenty grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren, besides a host of other relatives and friends. He served his country in the Civil war. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church nearly fifty years ago, and was a faithful member until called to his reward. His mind had been affected for a few years,

but meetings were held at his home for a number of years, and he seemed to never tire of listening to the preaching of the gospel. Often when there were two or more ministers present, when one was through talking he would call on another to speak, until all had preached. He would say, Preach the faith once delivered unto the saints.

The writer has served as pastor of the church of brother Lyons' membership for a number of years, and was called to speak a few words of comfort to the family, after which our brother was laid to rest to await the resurrection morning, when he expected a full and complete realization of his hope.

N. PETERS.

Agnes Jane Brinson, our mother, was born Jan. 5th, 1840, and died Oct. 20th, 1913, aged nearly 74 years. She was the daughter of W. P. Scarlett, and was married to John Q. Brinson, an Old School Baptist minister, Dec. 1st, 1870, who preceded her to the grave seventeen years. There are left to mourn their loss four children: Mrs. Jennie Worley, Mrs. Elizabeth Nolen, Mrs. Stella Cornwell and Oscar Brinson, with whom she made her home, also two brothers and two sisters: John and Lafayette Scarlett, Mrs. J. M. McKenzie and Mrs. Mattie Phillips. She joined the Old School Baptist Church soon after her marriage, and was a consistent member as long as she lived, always filling her place at meeting if it was possible for her to get there. She dearly loved the SIGNS, and was a firm believer in the doctrine it advocates, and though she had been a constant sufferer for many years, her faith in the lowly Nazarene never wavered. The doctrine of election, predestination and salvation by grace was truly her meat and drink. "How firm a foundation," was her favorite hymn. We try not to mourn for mother, feeling perfectly satisfied that it was not death for her to die, but life eternal. We had no funeral services, her pastor being unable to be present, and knowing she would have had no other, we laid her quietly away beside father in Moores Hill Cemetery, there to await the resurrection, when "the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."—1 Thess. iv. 17.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 82. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1914. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Jan. 26, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I am thinking of you, and feel that I would like to say a little word to you if I could. It is just one year ago to-day since I went home from the hospital, and I have been thinking of the many events which have come since then, of many things which have befallen me. I have been made to ask, Why is all this? My mind runs back to the vision I saw Jan. 6th, 1913, as I lay on the bed looking at the wheel of time on which God had made his record of all coming events. I felt that the record had continued to turn, and many things had befallen me which I had not desired; things all unseen to me, but perfectly well known to the Lord. Events which are past are no better known to him than those which shall come a thousand years hence. I was made to feel that it is as necessary to have the winter to harden up things, as it is blooming spring, fruit-bearing summer or the autumn, which ripeneth the fruit. The north wind comes by his word, and so does the south wind. The north wind brings to us sudden cold, with ice and snow, and there is a treasure in them that we can only learn by having the experience with them. The children of God are compared to wheat. That grain will not grow successfully in a climate which is always warm; there must be the cold, freezing weather to prepare the soil. The harder cold makes the deeper soil and yields a richer harvest. Were it not for our dark, cold and cloudy days it might be that we would bring forth no fruit. Our Lord is compared to the apple tree. For that tree to yield good and perfect fruit it must pass through times of hard cold. Even our Lord learned obedience by the things which he suffered; he was made perfect through suffering. Here is our salvation. The times of coldness got hold of him, darkness overshadowed him, he bare all our shame and overcame all for his people. His holy life is imputed to us, so we live by him. He does not call us to go where he has not been. If we feel the sharp winds and hear them roar, the Lord heard and felt them first; even now he comes to us on the tempest. The clouds are his chariot, and he rides upon the wind. He feels our every pain and grief, and is our deliverer. When the warm south wind blows and brings in

the beautiful and comfortable springtime it is by his word. By him the rose comes out with all its pleasant odor, and we begin to realize that it is the breath of God we smell. The ice and snow have done their work, and they melt away before the heat of the Sun of righteousness, we feel a revival from the Lord and his grace becomes precious to us; the streams of mercy flow freely and appear everywhere, and we realize that his hand was with us even when the cold winter time was on us. We could not realize it then, but now it is an assurance to us. The wheat, which so many times during the winter appeared to be dead, now begins to grow and to take on a new color; it shows the growth of spring. The Lord has spoken, and his word has found access. He has the same command of this time that he had of the time of coldness; they are his to do his bidding. We receive all in our hearts and give God the praise. It is his hand that has made the change. Now fruiting time comes, and we feel the revival in our hearts, and have a desire to serve the Lord. The fruit is ripe and ready to eat as soon as we realize it is there. The first we know we have eaten and are full, and our tongue breaks forth into singing. The Sun of righteousness is in view, and we love his divine presence with all our hearts. It is a time of love as we enter our mother's tent in company with our Beloved. All our times are in his hand; he knows just how and when to speak in our hearts. When he speaks we know his voice, for it is the voice of our Beloved. He says, "Arise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; * * * the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." How precious is our Beloved to us, and how merciful! We forget him, but he never forgets us. We neglect our duties to him, and look at the things of this world, we merit banishment, but he loves us still. He comes to us in loving rebukes and in tender mercies; he shows us that in his bosom is our safe and sure dwelling-place, the place of our rest, and there we lie down, and none can make us afraid. It is a place of gentle and continual flowing streams and of still waters; it is the place of green pastures, there there can be no harm to come to the little ones. Why can we not always feel to be there? But the Lord has said, In the world ye shall have tribulation. This must come, we must know something of the chastening of the Lord. He that is without chastisement is a bastard, and not a son. Are we children of God? We must feel the correcting rod. The fire is kindled in the breast to burn up the dross, the wind blows to take away the chaff. His fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor. He shall sit as a refiner's fire. Then it is the Lord who does this. It is not the hand of the enemy we feel, the voice of destruction we hear, it is the voice of the Lord walking near us, even within us. He is not there in wrath, but in love, to make known to us his salvation. We learn that all our doubtings of him are without cause, that he has never turned away from us. Esau's children can content themselves with a visit in six troubles and a promise for seven. Such was the language of Eliphaz to Job. Eliphaz was one of Esau's sons. He could never know the afflictions and sufferings of Job, nor could he know his necessities. Such a promise as his could not meet the case of one who felt what Job felt. They were all miserable comforters; they were not kinsmen to him in

his afflictions. Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts. One must be down in the deep to hear the voice of that calling. If he is not there he can laugh at the anguish of soul of the one who is there, and point out his mistakes, and tell him how he might have kept away, or what rich things he would now receive if he would only "be good and obedient." David's faith said, "His mercy endureth for ever." Mercy is what is needed; that is what the poor one is crying for. That is alone in Jesus. He wants to come to his deliverer. Tell me where I may find him, would be his cry. Do not tell me of creature good, that is all a failure; I have done all I could, I have tried to live sinless, I have tried to shun all the paths of vice, and yet I am in this state of darkness and affliction. Do not tell me of creature obedience, but tell me where my Beloved dwells with his flock, and where he feeds them at noon, when the burning sun is high; let me rest under his shadow. Surely I can trust nothing but Jesus; it was he who first took my feet out of the miry clay and brought me up from the pit; it was he who set my feet on the rock; it was he who filled my mouth with singing that new song, and made the heavenly arches ring in my poor, needy soul; I can trust no other. Tell me of Jesus, the only way of life and peace. I know enough of myself to know that I am only the clay in the hand of the Potter. I am passive, he is active. I move as he moves in me, of mine own self I can do nothing. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." So must we go now if we go in the way of the Lord. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." He hath wrought all our works in us, thus all is of him. He keeps us and guides us; we must come to the Father by him. "I am the way," saith Christ. All but this is false, and a child may not walk in it. The whole world is going another way. Their way seems right to them, but it is the way of death. They cannot be convinced; they have Moses and the prophets, if they will not believe them they will not believe though one arise from the dead; that has been fully proven. Our Jesus arose from the dead, and yet they will not believe.

Dear brother, I hope the Lord will restore you to your former health, also dear sister Ker. You all have my love and tenderest sympathy in your afflictions.

With much love, I am yours in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

NEWARK, Del., Jan. 19, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Your letters and editorials have been such a comfort to me, especially when I was an invalid, I cannot feel satisfied until I write and tell you. No doubt you have been burdened with expressions of appreciation from the brethren and sisters, as well as cheered. When I went to Delaware Hospital I took a copy of the SIGNS with me containing two letters you wrote to sister Norton. The first one appealed to me very much, and I read it again and again. I appreciate your father's attitude; the tendency among Old School Baptists to talk about gloomy things has never seemed right to me. I once thought it was more spiritual to be gloomy, but I long ago concluded there is much natural gloom and some spiritual cheerfulness. I know there is a warfare going on, but I would not encourage members to be all the time reproaching themselves, yet I prefer that to hearing a general round of criticism of their brethren. Of course I have never seen any unkind criticism between brethren published in

the SIGNS that was really intended to offend; it is a medium of instruction as well as comfort. I know we are prone to evil as the sparks are to fly upward, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defileth the man. Our evil thoughts cause us to suffer; our evil words cause others to suffer also. I know from experience that burdens are lessened when shared; it is a great relief to give expression when the heart is full to bursting. I am willing to mingle my tears and "with them bear a part." I do believe that while we are in the flesh cheerfulness is one of the virtues. In my first great love for the church I thought the members were more lovable than other people, and I somehow cling to it, that the divine Spirit within the heart holds the natural man in subjection, without making flesh Spirit. People do not need to do mean acts before they can be termed sinners; the very fact of their being in the flesh is enough. There is a "good" in nature in the sense that God, in the beginning, pronounced things good after he had created them. I see much beauty in nature and art, in theory and practice, but when we bring the contrast to bear between natural things and divine principles, then is when we see this is a dark earth indeed. There is a fullness in the divine life (of which we have a foretaste) which admits of no comparison, an illumination of the love of God in the heart of poor, weak worms of the dust. Different persons may have different ways of expressing it, but in substance it is the same.

I have been requested to write my experience of a shut-in life for the SIGNS. I was baptized nearly nine years before I was married, and I wished to locate near the meetinghouse, so I would be sure to get to meeting. I was not very strong even then, so we went to the parsonage farm where old Elder Barton once lived. I also wished to entertain. My husband was a member, and we started out full of zeal, enjoying church privileges. After we had been married fifteen months I was taken with typhoid fever, which left me weak, and other symptoms developed which kept me weak. A local doctor advised surgery, some other doctors discouraged it, and I took treatment which seemed to benefit me some, but I finally realized I was an invalid. I saw at once that I must not grieve over my affliction, but must try to be cheerful and study the happiness of those around me. My husband possessed sterling qualities, was patient, cheerful, considerate and a wonderful man in our home, and could influence me to see the bright side when I needed encouragement. I felt that I ought not to murmur if I had to remain at home the remainder of my life. I believed I had already had as much pleasure in going about as many who had lived to be old, and could enjoy meditating over past pleasures. I seemed to have the faculty of enjoying whatever was not really sad or distressing. When in health I naturally entered into the pleasures of my friends, and did not envy their greater good fortune (if they had it), so after I was shut in I could still share, in a sense, their pleasures. The most humiliating part of my invalidism was having to be waited upon. We appreciated the advantages and comforts of a simple life. I kept in touch with the outside work, kept the account book and superintended the housekeeping, but whenever I went upstairs or out into the yard my husband carried me in his arms. I could see some very pretty scenery from our windows. I dearly love country life; so much can be gotten out of little things. We appreciated the necessities of life more than

some do their abundance. When we begin to count our blessings how soon we feel that it is a privilege to live. While Elder Grafton was pastor here I never fully realized what it meant to be deprived of going to meeting, for he came to our house and stayed all night nearly every time. He was such a good fireside preacher, a dear old father in Israel. As years passed we had additional difficulties. After one wave of trouble would roll on us and break and spend itself, before we could fully recover another would be forthcoming. "In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him." There have been extremities that would have driven us to despondency had we not been sustained by the great God of grace and providence. I surrendered to my inevitable limitations and enjoyed repose, but I regretted, O so very much, that my nerves required visitors to be under restraint. It caused many to stay away who, no doubt, would have made calls occasionally, and caused me to be more completely shut in. But the cheering ray of God's love causes rejoicing in affliction when he thus favors poor, weak mortals, and hope that I might some time enjoy better health was a stay to me during all those fourteen years, but it came in a way I had thought impossible in my case: through surgery. The Lord strengthened me in the ordeal so I did not suffer shock. The doctors and nurses were most gentle and kind, and my heart is full of gratitude to them, and I wish to sing praise to my heavenly Father, for I can now do light housework, go to meeting and visit my friends. It all seems most wonderful. I had thought that preaching would sound beyond my comprehension (similar to a pupil absent from class for a long period), but it sounds clear and familiar, for I had been learning deep lessons in fiery trials. Great strength is given in the day of great trials, misfortune and affliction; little strength is given in the day of worry, aggravation and discontent, but "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," and I dislike for persons to say that if I had gone to the hospital years ago how much better it would have been. I do not any more believe that I could have gone in my natural strength than I believe that I could now keep on hoping in my spiritual birth, unless the dear Lord strengthens me with his mighty power. At times when I would be in agonizing pain I would think, I will try to go to the hospital; then after I would get relief I would brighten up and be happy. The more we try to reason out the mysteries of God the more and deeper we become confused. I have heard that a person once remarked to an Old School Baptist preacher that he did not preach with his brains, and the preacher replied that he did not preach without them. We were given will-power and judgment to exercise, and the doctrine of predestination does not lead us to temerity, but it comforts us when we are undone and at the end of our natural strength. I wish I had more trust and courage and could prove by my life the profession I have made. I do not understand just as some Old School Baptists express themselves, but I know I am not of any other denomination, so I can only take it to the throne of grace and wait upon the Lord.

I have just read this letter over, and find it disconnected and contradictory. I have written it during my resting periods between my work. I have had quite a struggle in getting the use of my limbs,

for I had not walked alone for seven years before I went to the hospital. My worst symptoms became alarming and medicine inadequate before I went, but now I have so much to be thankful for that I cannot worry over our financial embarrassment as I might if I had not learned patience through tribulation. I trust the dear Lord will restore you to your accustomed usefulness.

If you think anything I have written might be acceptable to the readers of the SIGNS mark out portions that may not be. I want to subscribe for the SIGNS again just as soon as we recover from the expense of my operation.

Your sister in hope,

LUCY MEREDITH ROUNDS.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 19, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have asked brother McConnell for the privilege of sending this letter to the SIGNS for publication, if you think best. Without waiting for his answer I send it, for I very much wish to see it in the SIGNS, and I hope he will not object.

I am also sending you a letter from sister Elizabeth P. Fetter, a member of this church, and two letters written by Mrs. C. A McKinney. I feel they will all be read with interest.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Feb. 15, 1914.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—Your letter received, and am glad to know that you have had us in mind to see and visit with us. Your coming would certainly be a great pleasure to us all, and I hope you will soon see a way open to gratify us. The sooner you come the better we will like it.

You ask me to write and tell you how I am getting along in spiritual things, whether I ever get lonesome without knowing why, and whether I ever get so weak in vision that I see men as trees walking. I do not understand how anything I might write about myself, my travel, or exercise of mind, could be of interest to you, but I appreciate your remembrance, and will reply as best I can. I am not "getting along in spiritual things." The pathway of my life is so uneven, so crooked, so filled with lines of confusion, and stones of emptiness, of mountains and valleys, darkness of mind and coldness of feeling, that most of the time I question my right to a name with them who sanctify the Lord God in their hearts. Instead of growth in the knowledge of God, there seems to be decay, and a falling away. For myself I am seldom reconciled to such travel in the belief that herein is the patience of the saints. I say seldom, for I must confess there have been times when the garment of praise has been given me for the spirit of heaviness; when the Lord has made himself known as better to me than my fears, and joy and comfort have abounded in the revelation of the glory of God in fulfilling his word: "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be laid low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain."—Isaiah xl. 4.

The experience of your late wife, as published in the SIGNS of February 1st issue, related much of my own travel. In all the twenty-eight years of my life among the people I love, no one has ever told me my questions as she did in that letter. Locked up in my heart all these years has been a feeling sense that of all the people there are none with me.

It may be presumption, but I cannot

help believing that the Lord spake by her, to me, "acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth." Some way that letter has renewed within me the hope that perhaps unto me "it is given in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;" "to," as you quoted, "know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death," and that perhaps my way of declaring the things which I have seen, tasted and handled in a living way is witnessing to the power and glory of the Lord. To know God is eternal life. But it seems to me that the knowledge of the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, is always associated with a knowledge of ourselves, and these two knowledges are so dependent on each other that neither is attained, in any true sense, without the other. Men of old, who had the testimony that they pleased God, have left on record their experience of being in captivity to the law of sin which was in their members. As they increased in knowledge that the "heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," they increased in sorrow for, and hatred of, sin. These things were written for our learning, that we through the fellowship of the same sufferings might have hope. No matter how heavily we may be burdened with a sense of our vileness, and destitution of any good thing in our flesh, men who lived thousands of years before we were born tell us clearly and exactly of their hearts meditating the same terror, and these things they wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. It was not written in vain, and in fellowship with them we behold the beauty of holiness, and with them we "give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; and worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." In this way we die unto sin and live unto God; in this way a change is wrought in us, an ignorant, thoughtless, unfeeling, dead creature is changed to a living, thinking, self-conscious being, and in that change we are as clay in the hand of the potter; we have no efficiency of our own. A real and vital existence is in evidence, in body, soul and spirit, renewed day by day, and walking in a light the very nature of which cannot be hid. It is a light which makes manifest the things that are reproved; that reveals the man of sin in his true character; searches and tries the hearts of men, and makes them know that all their righteousness is as filthy rags. It is a light shining in a dark place, whereunto we do well to take heed. There is surely a hatred of sin in God's holiness, and a sentence of death in his justice, and if this is the living testimony of our heart, surely such a heart must be right in the sight of God.

I would like to write at greater length; the theme of God's salvation is a wonderful subject to me, but you know the truth, and the way of life as it is in Jesus far better than I do, for I am the most unprofitable of all men who dare to name the name of Christ. I do know in a living way what falling away means, and in some sense I know that the mystery of iniquity doth already work, therefore have I hope at times that the day of Christ is at hand, "for [it is declared] that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, * * * whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."—2 Thess. ii. 3–8.

As you are aware, I am still trying to

serve the church here, of which you were pastor many years ago. Mine is a very poor and unprofitable service, and it is an ever-increasing wonder how they can be so forbearing and long-suffering with me. Their loving-kindness has never failed; it has been the salvation and joy of my life. We are blessed of the Lord to dwell in perfect peace and love for one another. When I consider my unprofitableness, and how unworthy I am of the least of their confidence and love, I feel to say, Surely "the lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places." "Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation."

This winter we have had three added by baptism, and one by letter. The Lord is good and greatly to be praised. We have no sleeping members; they are awake, not forsaking the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is. Send us an appointment soon and see for yourself.

With much love to sister Bessie and sister Mildred and yourself, in which my wife joins, I am unworthily your brother in faith and hope,

JOHN McCONNELL.

OTTAWA, Kans., Dec. 5, 1909.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—I trust you will pardon me for again bothering you, for I have had a great desire for some days to write you, and to-night I find myself giving way to it. I have read many of your letters in the SIGNS, and in them you have told my travels so much better than I could possibly have done that I have been greatly comforted. These words came forcibly and unexpectedly to my mind: Come see a man that told me all things that ever I did. I could but say, How he must have suffered to be able to so comfort those who mourn. At present I feel to be crucified to the world; I have no pleasure in it. I do indeed feel to be a mourner, without power to change my condition.

I can never tell you how much I enjoyed your two sermons, written so many years ago, one October, 1900, and the other December, 1902: "No good thing in the flesh," and "All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the field." I could but smile, while the tears flowed fast. How could he know my thoughts, and tell me so much that I have said and done? There is only one way, and it gives me hope: we must have had the same great Teacher. I do desire to live right in his sight, and pray to be kept from the appearance of evil, but as you have well said, "The sins of one most righteous day would sink us in despair." During the summer I had a plain view of our fall in Adam, and I then felt that if there was one soul Christ did not redeem I could see no reason why that one should not be me. I knew then that I would be just as fearful if only one were to be left out as I am now, believing that many were not included. What could cause us greater sorrow than to feel that we were to be forever banished from his presence? I know from experience that it is a fearful thing.

The night before Thanksgiving day I was mourning because of sin, when these words came creeping into my mind: Where sin abounded grace did much more abound. Shall we sin then, that grace may abound? and I said from the depths of my heart, God forbid. But if we sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. I may not have quoted correctly or connectedly, but I have written it just as it came to me at that time. Now, while those words were comforting, I saw in

them no excuse to continue in sin, nor have they removed the burden of sin. What a dreadful condition (words are inadequate to describe it) to feel after having been a member of the church so many years, that you have been a hypocrite, deceiving yourself, and what is worse, have deceived the children of God. I think I have always felt to be a sinner as far back as I can remember, but never did I feel the utter depravity of my heart, and that in my flesh there dwells no good thing, as I have the past summer. None but those who have experienced the same can know what I have suffered. Strange to say, though feeling cast off entirely at times, never has the Bible been so precious nor so plain to my understanding; never before have I found such continued comfort in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; though numerous papers and magazines come to the house they are no temptation to me now. A few short months ago I could not have said this.

In looking over some old letters the other day, I came across one written to me by dear brother White a few weeks after I was baptized, and as it was such a comfort to me in my present state of mind I thought it might comfort others. [Brother White's letter will be found on page 171.—ED.] What a tender, faithful, loving pastor he was. While we all loved him dearly, I fear now that he was not always sure of it. I feel very unworthy of the love and confidence expressed in his letter at that time. While reading it I was so humiliated I felt like trying to hide myself from the all-seeing Eye. In the words of your brother, "But in the hour of suffering and trial where can I go, O God, but unto thee?" I thought of sending brother White's letter to the SIGNS, but instead will inclose it to you and let you do as you may think best. I hope another long letter may not weary you.

With love and best wishes for you and yours, both temporally and spiritually, I am, I fondly trust, a sister,

ANNA McKINNEY.

OTTAWA, Kansas, March 27, 1912.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—Your kind and encouraging letter just received. I know of no reason why my letters should not be published, except that, like the writer, they are full of mistakes. I thought of the letter often after it was sent, and wondered if you would not find many reasons to reprove me. I feel that I can tell little of what I have experienced in the past few years, my mind being kept exercised on these things. I have been in deep waters indeed, but surely it is out of the depths we cry unto the Lord for help, for it is then, and only then, we see our need. I have felt for a long time to be very careful, lest I let these precious things slip. This has caused me to look to Him who is able to keep me from falling; it seems to be my daily prayer. Not long since the assurance came very sweetly, soothingly and comfortingly in these words: Mary has chosen that better part which shall not be taken from her. I hoped then, and do yet, that the Lord will keep me in his love and fear, and to him be all the glory. I am not expecting, nor feel to want, a life of ease or pleasure in the world; it is through great tribulation we follow the Lord. I desire to be kept at the feet of Jesus and the brethren, and to understand the things he has hid from the wise and prudent, but revealed unto babes. I want to know him whom to know is life eternal. Your thoughts as you read your letter over in the SIGNS that were you to write it over you could

make it plainer, there was so much more you did not say than what you did say, remind me of an experience I had just one week before I wrote you. I wrote a letter to the home church, of which Elder Lefferts is pastor. As I lay awake that night thinking, so many things came into my mind that I desired to say and had left out, that I decided to rewrite the letter. I made the attempt, but became so confused in my mind and made so many mistakes that I did not know where I was. As I threw it aside I said, This is a lesson to me; I will write what is given me and let them be the judges. Your son-in-law is not a stranger to me, I hope, in the Spirit. I have long felt to be acquainted with him through his letters in the SIGNS. My heart has often gone out to him in love, for I perceived that he had been with Jesus and learned of him; I am sure man cannot teach the heart. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." I have more than once exhausted my efforts, without any effect, trying to teach dear ones to know the Lord. Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but God must give the increase. I was once reproved by these words, I did not then know they were in the Bible: "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it." We have just two little girls, and I think I know something of the sorrow it must cause you all to have your daughter live so far from you, but it must be a comfort to think she is with one who knows and loves the Lord. I hope the dear Lord may continue to strengthen and keep you all in the future as he has in the past.

With love to all, I remain yours in hope,

ANNA McKINNEY.

TRENTON, N. J., Jan. 28, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—Did you ever feel so weary of life that there was nothing to satisfy the awful longing in your heart to be away from all, and everything, and yet know that all the days of your appointed time must you wait until your change come? If so, you can surely feel sorry for me. You know much better than I can express it. I do not know why I am writing to you, except that I want a few words of comfort to cheer me on my way. These words come to me quite often lately: O that I had the wings of a dove, that I might fly away and be at rest. I have been looking back over my life, and I fear sometimes that the very glance back has made me fearful to press forward, but "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and that has been, and is still, one of the greatest comforts I have, for I know that he doeth all things well. My experience has been one of quietness, and a feeling of faith that all things are for my good, but I have come to where two roads meet, and I fear I may take the wrong one. My desire is to be led in the right way, that I may have peace. Is it not strange that we are so selfish as to think of our own spiritual comfort? I can never worry over a brother's trials, doubts and fears as I do my own, although I feel like helping him in any way I can, but always my own fears seem so much greater. Is this right? I know it is not as it should be, for Christ gave his life that we might be saved, and to be Christ-like surely I should think of others above and before myself. I surely need your prayers, and the prayers of every saint. I often hear brethren say they doubt if they have a hope; dear brother, no such doubt ever troubles me, I know I have, and a feeling of condemnation comes over me if I

say or think for one little time that I have no hope, for that is my life. If I had no hope in an eternal rest beyond the grave I could not live in this world of temptation and sin. "For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground: he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead. Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me: my heart within me is desolate." These words express my feeling at present.

Please forgive me for taking your time, but I felt that you should know where I am. I need your prayers and words of comfort badly. Love to sister Bessie and Mildred, and all who may inquire.

Your sister in hope,

ELIZABETH P. FETTER.

LEESBURG, Va., Dec. 17, 1882.

MY VERY DEAR SISTER:—Your letter was duly received, but want of a good opportunity has prevented an earlier reply. O that I could answer your precious letter as I would wish, or as it deserves. But, dear sister, I am as utterly unable to speak or write words of wisdom as the simplest of the flock. With you, I have to say, "Of myself I have nothing. May God direct my pen." The mystery of godliness is great. We are all one in ignorance as well as in wisdom. The Spirit teaches that our wisdom is not wisdom, but foolishness. Did you ever think who makes this to be so? Paul tells us it is God. Is not this then a gracious work in our hearts, and a manifest evidence of his work in us? To learn that we know nothing, is to know much, I think. May you and I ever be the little child, for of such are the kingdom of heaven. You speak, and seem to lament much over your unworthiness. "That such a one cannot be a child of God." If that is the true evidence that one is not, then, dear sister, I am also excluded. I could cry, O my unworthiness, my unworthiness, my leanness, my poverty. Why has one so vile been called by grace? can it be that I am? But in all our troubles and fears on this point, where can we go? Do you feel like going back to the world again? Do you feel like trying another way? Do you feel like surrendering the hope you have, and live to the flesh, and serve the devil? Such thoughts, what sorrow they bring. Though we live in terrible extremities, not knowing what will be the final result, fearing constantly that we shall yet fall by the hand of Saul, yet, dear sister, my experience teaches me that this dreadful apprehension of impending danger is well calculated to drive us to and keep us near our Savior. We may, and sometimes do, think we may as well give up all for lost, and indeed we would if we could; but for some mysterious cause we cannot. Why we hang on is as unaccountable to us as why we do not give up. But we live alone upon the bounty of our God. It is a wonderful mystery; a mystery you cannot explain to any, except to those who know it. But God is so much better than our fears. He sends us words to comfort us in our fears, saying: Fear not, for I am thy God, and thy exceeding great reward. O he is a terrible and mighty God. He will make these barren and desolate places to bring forth, and to abound in springs of living waters. He will teach us that all our fears, doubts and troubles are from him. They are the clouds in which he rides, filled with the life-giving waters of his divine grace. Tokens of his love and mercy; his purpose to do us good, and not evil. He is such a mighty God, that when the light of his counte-

nance falls on our troubles, let them be ever so black, it changes the blackness to brightness, the gloom to glory. In the language of Isaiah He gives us "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." The object of them is, the thing accomplished in us is, that he may be glorified. Dear sister, is not this our object, the desire of our hearts, that he may be glorified? Well, the Lord accomplishes it in his own way. It is the best way, it is the only way. As said by Moses, His way is judgment. If we are in this way, in judgment fear him, (troubles and trials and afflictions abounding in us,) be assured this is the right way. He has but one way; it is judgment, and we are in that way in him. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life."

Can it be, my dear sister, that you and I, poor, naked and blind, not deserving that we should ever be noticed by God except to condemn, have been brought into this way that leadeth to lasting blessedness? O lead us, dear Savior, and let us not go, and we will say to all our dear kindred in the language you quote, Entreat us not to leave thee, or from following after thee. I pray God he may ever keep you, and though your way may lie through floods and fire, fear no danger there; for where God is, there is safety.

Dear child, I cannot tell you how much my heart has been drawn to you since I heard you glorify God in telling your experience, and in your letter to me. Dear sister, my labors are not easy, my time is closely engaged, so do not wait every time for an answer, but write me every time you feel like it, and write freely, just as you feel. I hope to be with you next Saturday and Sunday, if it is the Lord's will. Love to all.

E. V. WHITE.

WOODSTOCK, Ont., Feb. 10, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have been a reader of the SIGNS for fifty-five years, and a subscriber for thirty-six or thirty-seven years, and it has always advocated the same principles of doctrine: salvation by grace, which almost seems to me includes all the other principles we believe in, for if saved by grace, it is because we were loved before time began, and if he loved his people from all eternity, those who are not his people he did not love, and he always determined in his eternal mind to save his people, and the rest he determined not to save, and to me it seems that all the events of time hang on these two purposes, but if these are not true, then all things depend on chance, and there is no God at all, for to me the very idea of God signifies a being who controls and governs all things, both great and small, if there are any small things. In God's sight all things are alike.

But I did not intend to write about spiritual things in this way. I felt I could not agree with Elder Mayfield on the vine and the branches, for I cannot conceive of such a thing as a nominal branch; I never heard of such a thing in nature. The Savior said to his disciples, I am the vine, ye are the branches. Can or could it be possible that some of those to whom he was speaking were only nominal branches? I cannot think it possible. Now he says, If ye abide in me, and I in you, the same bringeth forth much fruit. No child of God can bring forth fruit only as the Spirit of God leads and guides him, for as one of old said concerning the matter, From me (that is, God) is thy

fruit found. Now I will just tell a little of my own experience concerning the matter, and you can exercise your judgment of the matter. Before I united with the church I was for nine or ten years as much a believer and a child of God as I am to-day, and I remember once the words of the Savior came with wonderful force and weight to my mind, If a man abide not in the vine he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered, and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. Now it came to me like this: I am not gathered by the church, but by the world, "men gather them," and if I know anything of burning, I was burned. I need not try to explain, for you know what it is to be burned, dried up, but being burned with the church or people of God is very different from being gathered by the world and burned. I had a rest for a long time after uniting with the church. Another portion of Scripture which followed me for years was this: "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?" I tried them for a long time, but, like Naaman, I had to come to the waters of Israel.

I want to tell you, too, I differ from a great many on the foolish virgins. The Savior at the end of the parable said, Watch therefore, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. To my simple understanding there is no force to this exhortation if they were not all his children. Watch, or you will be like these foolish virgins. If this is not the application, then I must say I do not know the meaning of words. Again, I noticed a writer said that the Savior said, or the bridegroom said, to the foolish virgins, "I never knew you." These are not the words used, but, "I know you not." One may think they mean about the same thing, but if I say to a person who comes to me and professes to be an old friend, I know you not, I do not recognize you, is not that very different from saying, I never knew you? How often we feel we are not known of God; I do, at least, for very often I fear I know nothing about religion, or God, or spiritual things, and worse still, think or fear it is all a delusion or imagination, and that there is no reality in religion, and often worse still, fear I am only a hypocrite, and will be manifested as such. O who can tell of the hundreds of temptations that assail me from day to day, many of which I would not dare tell to the dearest friend on earth. But sometimes there is a little comfort in telling it all to God in thought, if not in word. I am so beset on all sides that sometimes I cannot see how I can escape, and if I do I can say with Job, I am escaped with the skin of my teeth. O how close; God only knows how close these things sometimes come.

I cannot see with brother Banks on the sin against the Holy Ghost, for I believe God's children have been guilty of all the sins that have ever been committed, but their sins are all laid on Jesus, their sin-bearer, and are not committed against the Holy Ghost, but instead are laid on Jesus. I cannot explain, but I do believe that God's children are just as wicked, and have committed every sin possible. It may not have been in deed, or in open acts, but the thoughts of the heart, they are terrible. I heard Elder Badger once say, Not every child of God is led into the depths of Satan as I am. O how strong was my fellowship for him; I felt sure I had been led into or to know the depths of Satan, whether I have ever been led to know the heights of God's grace and his redeeming love or not, but

I do know that if God banishes me forever, it is just.

Now I am writing a long letter, but it seems to be a little relief to my burdened, heavy heart, and I hope you will forgive me if I have trespassed upon your time.

I was glad when I heard the meeting in Duart was a pleasant, joyful meeting, and two were received into fellowship, Eliza McDonald and a Mrs. McWilliams, a niece of sister McCallum, of Ekfrid. I intended going almost until the last minute, but was hindered just at starting time, so, of course, that was God's purpose concerning me, and it must be right; I am not worthy to be among God's people.

I will say we are both well, and hope this will find you the same. Mrs. Scates, with myself, sends kind regards.

I will say no more, but again hope you will forgive my writing this long letter, and hope we may see you in May, if God will.

Unworthily yours for the truth's sake,
R. SCATES.

DELMAR, Del., Jan. 18, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have had in mind for a long time to write you, but a feeling sense of my inability to write anything that would be of comfort to any of the dear family of God has kept me from making the attempt. You were afflicted, and unable to be among us at our association, and I have had you much in mind, thinking of the many times I have enjoyed your conversation, as well as your preaching, and thinking of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the paper that contains the pure doctrine of God our Savior, not wavering from the doctrine that was first set forth in its columns, which is very precious to so many of God's tried and afflicted ones; thinking that you, like all the earth, must at the Lord's appointed time give up this life that we live in the flesh for that which we have good reasons to hope will be a glorious change for you. We are but mortal, and will have anxieties about the future, as regards things of this earthly state. We know that the Lord, if it is in accordance with his will, can raise up others to conduct the paper as it has been from the beginning, and we feel to rejoice that he has kept you in the way, and that you have so earnestly contended for that faith once delivered unto the saints, and have always prayed for the peace of Jerusalem and the prosperity of Zion, and the upbuilding of God's kingdom, and if it be his will, may you be restored to health again, that you may long be spared to contend for the doctrine you have so long and earnestly contended for. We are told in God's word that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Shall we take this as it is written, or shall we try to modify it to suit the carnal or natural mind? We who have been called by the grace of God, who have been given faith to see Christ as the way, the truth and the life, the only way of salvation whereby poor, lost and ruined sinners must be saved, do not wish to modify or change this positive declaration, but only pray to God to give us faith to see and believe, not only this, but every word that is written by inspiration, and we feel that all things do work together for the good of God's chosen people, but feel to tremble, and say, Am I one of that number whom Christ died to save? It matters not whether it is health, wealth, sickness, death, poverty, or what may be our lot in life, it is for our good and his declarative glory, although we

may not see how these things are working for our good.

Let me see if I can speak a little of the hidden mysteries that are contained in this. I will take first the natural point of man. Man, when first he is brought to feel that he has launched out in the world, begins to build air-castles, lay his plans, and perhaps may prosper for a while, when soon he begins to think, Well, I can do almost anything I wish. There is my neighbor, he has no management; he is not doing things like I am; if he had as much sense as I have he might do better than that. I am not speaking of the unregenerate, but of the called subject of God. He may not yet know he is called, may not have heard the voice of the Shepherd, but he is learning a lesson that will be revealed hereafter. He feels that he needs no religion, that he is better than that man who belongs to the church and who attends meeting every Sunday. He thinks, When I want to I can get religion. But after a time something happens, and he finds himself in trouble, and he cannot rest or sleep, and he says, I will not let this man, as it were, rule over me. I am going to go through this, or, I am not going to live in this way. Perhaps he will have some misfortune, and will say, I do not know what I have done that I should be treated in this way. The scales have not yet fallen from his eyes, but God is working in him both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and in his own good time he is made to realize that he is a sinner. He has never seen himself a sinner before, and he begins to see that he cannot do the things that he would, and wonders what is the matter. He cannot rest day or night, and begins to search for some comfort, but as he reads God's word no comfort can he find, it all condemns him. He tries to seek salvation and relief by the deeds of the law, but no relief can he find. He cannot do the things that he once could, and he feels he is not as good as his neighbor, and is now made to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then when he is brought down from that high and lofty state in which he has been, and made to grovel in the dust, sinking down in that horrible pit and miry clay, spoken of in Psalms, he is made to say with the poet, All my little strength is gone, sink I must without supply. Then his eyes are opened, and for the first time he sees the light of the Sun of Righteousness shining as the brightness of the noonday sun, and lo, the winter is past, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land. He then sees that all things work together for good. He has ridden on the high places of the earth, and has been made to prosper in the things of this world, but all this, like all of Job's substance, must be taken away, that he might see his utter weakness, and say with Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Then all these things which have been of so much comfort to him have no more charms, his strength is gone, and he is made to say, These things have all been for my good, now I can give God all the praise, for all things are made by him, and all things are controlled by his power; all these things I felt were the works of my hands were only the power of God working in me, both temporal and spiritual. Even the very breath I breathe is his, and not one thing can I now claim as my own. He first gave me my existence, my natural life, my physical and mental powers, and now he has called me by his grace to live and reign with him, to praise him for his goodness and mercy to a poor

sinner. O what matchless grace. It is so high, so deep, so unfathomable that no tongue can express it. He has called him according to his purpose, and all these things are working for his good; he must learn the important lesson that God works and none can hinder, that he speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast, and that man is nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity. These are parts of his ways, but the half has never been told.

May the God of all grace keep you and strengthen you in your bodily affliction, and may you be made to fully realize that all things work together for good to them who are called according to his purpose, is the sincere prayer of an unworthy brother, in hope of life eternal,

JOHN L. HASTINGS.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., Jan. 16, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—You will no doubt be surprised to receive a letter from me, I who am surely the least and most unprofitable of all the household of faith, and sometimes I am surely without faith, otherwise I could not get so low down and void of any knowledge of the truth as to declare (to myself) that there is no God, or else he would hear me when I cry, and not let mine enemies flourish and prosper at my expense, while I suffer adversity and affliction and languish in distress and am sorely humiliated before the eyes of the greedy and exacting world, when I so much want to stand out in bold relief before all the world as a living monument of God's unbounded love and mercy. Now, dear brother, you who are blessed so abundantly with the spirit of God's reigning grace, can it be possible for me to be a child of God and deny that there is a God, just because he would not grant my desires, which were for the gratification of my fleshly mind? I hope, brother Chick, you will bear with me in my weakness, for I only wish to speak of myself so far as it will exalt him a Prince and a Savior. How weak and short-sighted man is. How many times I have said I would never deny my dear Savior and my God, no matter how excruciating the pain or dire my distress; no matter if I were compelled to beg from door to door for our support, I would still say, "Thy will be done," and feel that it was his will, and a part of the "all things" which work together for good; but alas, my strength; how insignificantly small is the power of our will in comparison to God's omnipotent will and power. Christ said to Peter, Before the cock crows thou shalt deny me thrice, and notwithstanding Peter's boasted strength of will-power he did deny him, and very vehemently, too, but it only took one look from those compassionate eyes to wilt Peter's heart, causing him to go out and weep bitterly. But with me it is different, I seem to be in a semi-indifferent state, as though nothing matters, although I have had several seasons of rejoicing since I was in such a dark and gloomy state of mind. But I learn O so slowly the things pertaining to His kingdom, and sometimes I am not sure that I know anything about it, and yet I do have a yearning desire to be with those whom I feel sure have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, and talk and sing of the redemption of poor, lost and ruined sinners, giving God all the honor, praise and glory.

Dear brother, you have been much in my mind of late, and my heart goes out in love to you, and I have wished that I might talk with you, but this, too, is a selfish desire, for I alone would be benefited. Your New Year's address was of

much comfort to me, for I could fully sanction every word in it. You surely have been led over the same road I have, else how could you know the same landmarks? and you must have the same Teacher, for you have learned the same lessons, only I feel that you have been a better and more obedient child, for I surely have gone further into the ways of sin than any one else ever did, and it seems so wonderful to me that he has not cast me off entirely, for not one thing have I ever done that is a credit to me, which makes me loathe my very being, for it seems that I could have done better, and am surely guilty of every sin and transgression I ever committed, whether they be of commission or omission, and sometimes I think the sins of omission are the greater of the two, and am made to rejoice in the fact that our salvation is not of works, for then I surely would be left out. But says Paul, "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindess and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Savior; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." —Titus iii. 3-7. The only hope we have of eternal life, is that we are one of the number whom he did predestinate unto the adoption of sons by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will; having predestinated that we should be adopted, will he not do it? for who shall say him nay? Right here, brother Chick, I believe you and I come together on a point where I thought we differed, only I did not have the light on it that you have, so I could not understand your explanation of it. Let us take the ninth verse of the third chapter of first John and connect it with Ephesians i. 5, and then consider that sin is the transgression of the law, and that when these sons and daughters of Adam are adopted into the family of God they are no longer under the law, therefore they cannot sin, because they have been born of the Spirit of God, which is God, for he is a Spirit, and these vile bodies we so much despise, which are so contaminated with sin, are the ones which he adopted. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." But we, like Paul, find a law within us, that when we would do good, evil is present with us, for we delight in the law of God after the inward man. Now if we do that we would not, it is no more we that do it, but sin that dwelleth in us. Now "the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."

Now, brother Chick, I have relieved my mind to some little extent, but there is no end to the subject. I thank you and the rest who are connected with the SIGNS for sending it to me, for every number is a love letter to me; not of the love of this world, but of God, for God is love.

Your brother in hope,

DAVIS BURCH.

ALBANY, N. Y., Feb. 24, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Deacon Morse sent me the inclosed letter about a month before he died. I enjoyed it very much, and think that others might enjoy it also.

I sympathize with you and sister Ker in your affliction, and also in the severe illness of Elder Chick, and hope this may find you all improved.

Yours in christian love,

GEORGE SCHADE.

MARGARETVILLE, N. Y., Feb. 1, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER SCHADE:—Since I saw you and sister, and brother Charles, in Schoharie, you have been on my mind much of the time, and I write this for all three of you, and all that may see and like it. I have no other excuse than this: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not."—Malachi iii. 16–18. I do not mention this Scripture to tell you anything you do not know, but because you do know what it means, and because I hope I know a little of the meaning, and this is why I want to talk to you about it, for I think we understand it alike. There is little or no comfort in talking even with the children of God on Scripture that we do not understand alike. I think to thoroughly understand the Scriptures we must have them thoroughly worked out in our own life.

Now, let us see if we can apply the Scripture quoted, to ourselves. Do we love to speak often one to another about the fear of the Lord and what he has done for us? Yes, and to say it is all of the Lord and not of our works, but entirely of grace. We do not speak often one to another because we want the Lord to hearken and hear us, but because he has heard our cry for his help and we love him for it. But often because we feel so poor and vile and so full of sin, so dark and so far from him, and wonder if there is any one just like us, and feel in our very soul that we are the chief of sinners, then we want to speak often one to another, and we know he hearkens and hears us, for he does comfort us and remembers us in mercy and speaks kindly to us.

But it is of the last verse I wish to speak more particularly. "Then shall ye return." What does the prophet mean? After these terrible, dark seasons, when we have been left, like Peter, to deny him and learn by bitter experience the weakness of the flesh, the vileness of our sinful nature; after we, like Paul, have learned that in our flesh there dwells no good thing; after we have learned, not by being told it by another or by reading it in the Bible, but by bitter experience, that God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship in spirit and in truth; (John iv. 24,) after we have learned that the flesh is not a partner in this worship; after we, like Abraham, have learned that the son of the bondwoman cannot be heir with the son of the freewoman, then, and not until then, are we prepared to discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. O my dear brethren and sister, these are hard lessons to

learn, and they can only be learned in the school of Christ. These things are not between me and my neighbor, but actually in the one person, between the flesh and the spiritual child of God, and I fear he that thinks he worships God with the flesh has many bitter lessons yet to learn, and cannot discern between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. I have never found either in my experience or in the Scripture anything that proves to me that Adam, or any of his children, ever has or ever will worship God.

Now, may God bless and lead you into all the ways of truth, and fill your hearts with his love for his holy name's sake.

From your unworthy brother, if one so vile can claim that sweet relationship.

JOHN A. MORSE.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 18, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have an inclination to pen a few of my wandering thoughts. I say "wandering" with emphasis, as they are continually roving; I cannot control them; I doubt if I can control them long enough to gather them together sufficiently to put upon paper some that occasionally pass through my mind. When my mind does settle down nothing affords me such great pleasure as to meditate upon those things which are controlled by the heavenly Spirit. But when I stop and look back over my past life, what am I? What good am I to the world? What have I accomplished in it? My life of over threescore and ten years is filled with sin; sin is mixed all through everything I undertake. I can scarcely think a good thought; if I do, evil ones immediately follow, and destroy what good ones I had, and I feel worse than before. When I read the many good letters in the SIGNS, which so often describe my feelings and thoughts much better than I am able to do, it makes me feel ashamed of myself, and I wish I could describe my travels through life as they do. I think I would write often then, but I have not the gift, so I must be resigned, and endeavor to be content with what little I possess; I said content, that appears to be an impossibility; if I could be contented with my lot, I would be much happier than I am. It appears to be a great affliction of mine that I am never satisfied with my lot, but am always wanting something I have not, and no doubt many times I want things that it is best for me that I do not receive. Then again, I feel thankful that there is a God who is ever watching over me and giving me the things that are needful for me. He knows best what are needful, and when I need them. We cannot thank him enough; we are too negligent, and are as prone to evil as the sparks to fly upward. How true it is that man is not capable of controlling his own steps, or even his own thoughts. What helpless mortals we are; it is difficult to tell what would become of us if left to ourselves. It is a wise providence that our bounds are set, so that we cannot go beyond them; we would be going in byways that would lead us to destruction. I frequently find myself being led away, until the good Lord checks me and brings me back to where I am made to rejoice in his guardian care over me, then I feel to thank him for his protecting care and love. I feel as if I am alone in this world; of all the billion and a half supposed to exist upon this globe, there does not appear to be one like me, and why I am permitted to remain I cannot understand. I am the only one left of my parents' five children. The Lord has a wise purpose in permitting me to remain upon

his footstool; whether I can discern it or not, makes no difference to him; he does not consult his creatures about his affairs; he speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast.

I find I cannot write as I intended to, nor as I wish to, and I cannot see anything interesting in what I have written to the household of faith, so think it would be better to close. I hope you will pardon me for intruding, and will spread the mantle of charity over all my imperfections, for I know they are many.

You are at liberty to do with this as you wish; I suppose the wastebasket is the most suitable place.

A lover of the truth,

O. S. FETTER.

CLAREMONT, Cal., Feb. 22, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending you the notice of the ordination of brother G. A. Dundas, of Upland, California, as deacon in the Little Flock Church. We have had only one deacon since the organization of the church, and as it was a suitable time to attend to such matters, and believing that we had one among us that the Lord had prepared for the place, we think we have made no mistake in having this dear brother ordained to this sacred office. Our church is now enjoying a warm spiritual uplifting, and we feel to thank the Giver of all good, in that he has seen fit to send from time to time those who feel that they can associate with us, and even fellowship us to the extent of asking to be counted with us. We hope they may never regret placing with us their names and their presence whenever they can do so, and hope that God will guide us all aright. It may be, dear brethren, that we are presumptuous in regard to what we expect from God in relation to this church, but O how we have prayed that he would bless it, and prove that it was of his own planting, and that he would prosper it, and though we know that as individuals we make mistakes, we have hoped that collectively we might not do so; and now we feel at this present time that there is reason to rejoice for the manifestations that we experience of his goodness and mercy toward us in maintaining peace and harmony, and the expressions of good will from others that are in a position to look on us without prejudice, and have such expressions as this for us: O how I do love to be with you people, you love each other so. And, O I am so glad that I am here. And, O how I have feasted, &c. Yes, I will say that it has never been my lot to have known such complete peace and harmony existing in any combination of individuals as we experience here in this little band, all of whom (with one exception) I know to be worthy the esteem of the saints everywhere, and the wonder is that it is possible that my name should be among them. O how can it be? Yet at one time I felt sure that I was "a soldier of the cross," and maybe I am. But if I am one that he has called and chosen, O let me not forget that it is entirely of his free grace and mercy, and not of any merit of my own. May the Lord bless the truth and pardon error, is my prayer.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS.

MIDDLETOWN, New York.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I wish I were able to meet with you all once more, but as I am not, will pen you a few lines to let you know that I am thinking of you all and longing to be with you. My mind is barren of spiritual things, and I am way down in the valley. I want to have an assurance that I am one of God's little ones, but no lines of

Scripture come to me nor verses of hymns to cheer me on life's weary way. I am a poor, weak, helpless sinner, and feel wholly dependent upon God for everything, and realize deeply my nothingness and inability to perform one good act. I want to trust the Lord with all my heart, and not lean upon my own understanding, but I am so vile I grow faint and weary at times in traveling this toilsome road, but have the desire that grace, mercy and truth may follow me all the days of my life. How aching and tempest-tossed my heart has been for some time no language can express. I do not have that blessed assurance that underneath me are the everlasting arms; I seem to be without hope and without God in the world. In vain have I sought comfort in prayer; but the face of my dear Redeemer is hidden behind the thick cloud that my sins have formed between me and his blessed, soul-cheering presence. O if it were only so I could get out to meeting, and mingle with the dear saints of the Lord, whom I dearly love, I could bear the pain much easier. I do not know what I would do if it were not for my Bible, and the beautiful hymns; they express my feelings much better than I can. I get a great deal of comfort from reading the SIGNS, for the only preaching I get is from the dear old paper. My health has been very poor this year, and the pain is much more severe. I try to keep around the house, but am not able to do much.

Your afflicted sister, saved by grace, if saved at all,

FRANCES MABEL TRYON.

[OUR young sister is much afflicted in body, and we miss her presence in our meetings very much, and hope she may recover her health ere long, so that she can mingle with those she loves so well for the truth's sake.—K.]

PALO ALTO, Cal., Jan. 7, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—The old year has passed and another new one has entered into our lives. How thankful we should be for past favors and blessings given us from almighty God, who knoweth our every need, and who doeth all things perfectly. He makes no mistakes; so unlike us sinful mortals. I know I have very much to be thankful for, but the question arises in my mind, Am I thankful? I know I want to be, and want to live so as to let my light so shine that others may see my good works, and glorify my Father which is in heaven. O how sadly I fail in this. I fear I have no light in me. I feel this morning that my hope is all in vain, that the Lord has turned against me. When I examine myself I find so much imperfection and ungodliness that I do not blame him.

The letters written by the dear servants of God, and other brethren and sisters, for our dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES, are a great comfort to us little ones, who cannot express our feelings as they can. If I know the truth, they certainly do advocate it. I would give all I have if I could write with such power and edification for the loved ones, but I can only read, and, if the Lord gives me a heart to understand, feast upon them. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." This Scripture is a great comfort to me, for I know I love them all with my whole heart. I crave to be among them, but the dear Lord has planned it different, for which I pray to be reconciled, for he knows best. We never know how dear they are to us until we are separated from them.

May God's richest blessings rest upon each one of you, his chosen ones.

Yours in love,

EUGENIA F. SCHROEDER.

FAYETTE, Ala., Feb. 19, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find a letter that I received from brother Andrew Robertson last October, which I have been requested by several brethren to have published in the SIGNS. I think it is sound doctrine. Brother Robertson joined the church last year, and I had the pleasure of baptizing him. He is a young man and is much interested in the Bible.

Your brother in hope,

G. W. BERRY.

COVIN, Ala., Oct. 5, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER BERRY:—As I am left almost alone to-day, I have had nothing to do but read and study the good Book of all books. What I have read has caused some deep thoughts to bear on my mind. I have been made to think of Matt. vi. 10: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," and it is one of the most beautiful thoughts that ever entered my mind. Certainly we know that his will is done. What is "thy will" here on earth? Is it his will that every one here on earth be saved? Matthew vii. 14, says, "Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it." Is it his will that only a few find this gate leading to eternal glory? God hath power over all things, so if it be not his will for some to be lost, hath he not power to save them? I believe he will save those whom he did foreknow, and choose according to his own purpose and glory. He saved Saul, a persecutor of the righteous. If it were his will could he not save others as he did Saul? God's will is that faculty of the soul whereby he chose or refused things. "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things."—Isaiah xlv. 7. Is it not his will that these things be done? If it be not his will for man to do evil in his sight, why did he create evil? Go to Isaiah xliv. 22, and see what he did for Jacob. Why not do the same for others, if it be not his will for some to be lost? The thirteenth verse of the forty-third chapter of Isaiah says that there is none that can deliver out of his hand. Well, if none can deliver out of his mighty hand, can any deliver themselves into his hand? The first man, Adam, was made a living soul. Who made him? God. Why? Because it was his will to do so. The last man Adam was made a quickening spirit. Why? Because it was his will. To show his power he did this. There is a great lesson taught in the seventh, eighth and ninth verses of the thirteenth chapter of Zechariah.

Now, if you will, I would appreciate any further information that you will give me on any and all of these Scriptures.

Your unworthy brother,

ANDREW M. ROBERTSON.

PAYNES MILLS, Ont., March 5, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year has rolled around and my subscription has expired, so I will inclose two dollars for another year, and I hope I will always be enabled to take it. Elder Chick's New Year's Address was worth more than the price of the paper for a year. How often I think of Elders Chick and Ker, and my heart goes out in love and sympathy to them. They were the two Elders who preached in Lobo when I was taken into the church. It has been a wonder to me ever since how those two men, who looked so good to me that I felt the ground whereon they stood was holy

ground, could take me by the hand and call me sister. I never can forget that day. I have never heard Elder Chick since, but I never read his writings in the SIGNS but I can hear his voice. May he who has promised he will never leave nor forsake his people be with them to bless and comfort them. I often feel that I would like to write to those who write for the SIGNS, for they do write so comfortingly, but when I get my pen and paper I feel there is nothing in me, that I am the chief of sinners and not worthy to call those dear people brethren and sisters, but I do love them all, and pray that the dear Lord will bless all the household of faith.

Unworthily your sister,

(MRS.) J. A. MALCOLM.

GREENFIELD, Tenn., Nov. 20, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Find inclosed two dollars, to pay for the SIGNS another year, as my subscription has expired and I feel that I cannot do without it. This is my first year, and I have enjoyed the editorials, and the good letters from the dear brethren and sisters. They are all strangers to me in the flesh, but as I read I feel to know them. O how I wish I could know that I am one of God's children. It seems impossible when I look back over my past life, and see so many things I have done, and am still doing, that I should not. How can I deem myself a child of God when I am so unworthy to be called one of his children? I wish I could express my feelings, but I am too ignorant, and my mind seems to be wandering at times. When I read my Bible it seems that I cannot understand it as I wish I could, and that troubles me, but I have some consolation, as Christ's disciples could not understand all his teachings. I hope to believe right. I cannot see why every one who reads the Bible is not an Old Baptist, but I suppose it was not intended for all to see alike. Let me be what the Lord sees best; but I hope to be one to meet the Lord in the air at his coming. If it were not for that hope to help in time of tribulation I feel that I could not live. I am a sinner saved by the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, if saved at all. It is nothing that I have done, and I feel to give God all the praise, glory and honor. My continual prayer is, God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

(MRS.) M. J. STAFFORD.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Dec. 22, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed find money order for two dollars, which pays my subscription for the SIGNS until April, 1914. I am sorry that I have allowed my subscription to get behind, and hope you will pardon my negligence. I will request that if it is not paid when my year is out to stop the paper, and probably I will be more punctual, for I know that you cannot furnish the paper unless the subscribers pay for it. I subscribed for the paper through brother O. B. Hickerson, who has been sick and confined to his house for some five or six months, but I am not offering this as an excuse for not renewing my subscription, as I knew my time was out. I enjoy reading the SIGNS; in fact, it is the only religious paper I know of that I care to read, as its policy is to contend for the doctrine as taught in God's word, and it keeps clear of things that gender strife and confusion among God's humble poor. I do not know whether I am even entitled to a home among this good people or not, but one thing I do know, and that is, I love the doctrine they contend for, and they are the only people on earth

that I have found who can give my poor soul any food. I have had a name among this people about twenty-eight years, and have had many pleasant seasons with them, and have also met many disappointments, and often am in the dark, and am made to feel that mine is an outside case, if indeed I am one of God's little ones, and if I am, it is by God's eternal mercy and grace, and not for any good thing that I have done, for I feel that my entire life has been a complete failure. Not long after joining the church I felt there was something that was required of me in a public way, and thought it was my duty to preach, but I have made such a miserable failure in all my attempts that I have decided I am mistaken in the matter. If there is a mistake made, it is mine, for I do not believe the Lord makes any mistakes. I am a conductor on the N., C. & St. L. R. R., and live here in Nashville, and have a home with the church at University St., of which Elder J. K. Womack is pastor, and I do think he is an able defender of the truth.

I did not think of writing so much, but felt that I wanted to relieve my mind by writing some to your paper, so do with this as you think best, and all will be well.

Your unworthy brother,

W. B. CHILTON.

CONESVILLE, N. Y., March 5, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have a letter from brother D. M. Leonard, who is now in Florida, which he wrote to the church at Gilboa, and I think it best to send it to you to publish, as the church members are so scattered, and the weather cold, and the traveling bad, so it would be a long time before the brethren would get the letter, and many would be glad to hear from him. I am at a loss many times to know what is right in regard to forwarding letters so received from brethren, but I feel sure this is right. I hope the Lord will give grace to his poor and afflicted people, and will not leave them comfortless. I feel to pray, O Lord return unto thy scattered flock. O Lord, if thou should mark iniquity, who could stand? Although dark has been my way, and at times I have mourned, yet I can say, Dear Savior, still lead on nor leave me until I say, Thy will be done. I have been so much afflicted of late I have felt to cry, My lot is harder than I can bear; but when led by the Spirit, the child of God is made to see, and to say, It is good to be afflicted; so learned I thy law, and can say, Good is the Lord, for his mercy endureth forever; let the redeemed of the Lord say so. My sympathy is with both Elder Chick and Elder Ker in their affliction.

Yours in love,

D. S. ELLIOTT.

BRADENTOWN, Fla., Feb. 17, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have had you in my mind much of the time for several weeks, realizing our lonely travel; so few in number and so scattered. I have felt many times to try to write you, but for some cause I have been hindered. We are, in bodily health, about as we have been since last June; very little change. Spiritually we often question ourselves, to know if we have life or not. God has given us a hope, and a strong desire to praise his holy name, and this gives us an assurance that we shall see him as he is, and be satisfied. Yes, dear ones, there is a feeling sense that after all this turmoil we shall be satisfied. I would be content while here with such things as he is pleased to give, and I feel

to say though the future is dark, yet we know we shall be satisfied. We long to meet with you, and hope to do so soon. Our health has been such that we have been unable to attend any meetings here, but have met several brethren and had good visits. We hope to attend two or three meetings before our return. What the Lord's will is concerning us we know not, but we hope to be still and know that he reigneth. We have learned many sad lessons in the last few months, and can say of a truth, it is good to be afflicted. Surely his mercy endureth forever. O how my poor soul rejoices when I have a feeling sense that he created all things, upholds all things and disposes of all according to his will, and does his pleasure in all places, and at all times. May it be his pleasure to own and bless us as a church, and individually.

Yours in christian fellowship,

D. M. LEONARD.

INDEPENDENCE, Mo., Dec. 25, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Will you allow me a little space in the dear old SIGNS to express my sympathy for both of you in your sorrow and afflictions? Also I would like to cast in a mite once a year at least, that some of the dear family may know they still hold a place in my old heart, although I often feel like a stranger and lone wanderer, who has no inheritance in the home of the blessed, but still I long to rest with the chosen flock whom the great Shepherd ever shields from all harm. If my poor heart deceives me not, my soul's cry is, Lord, lead, and forsake me not now when my strength faileth as I stagger beneath the load of seventy-five years of toil and sorrow. Sixty years of that time I have tried to mend my ways, but God knows I have made a miserable failure. O that he would give me a thankful heart for his long forbearance and loving-kindness to the least, if one at all, of the redeemed.

An old wayworn sinner,

LAVINIA MORGAN.

HOPEWELL, N. J., March 5, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—My father wishes me to say through the SIGNS that he is not able to write private letters, and has not written one for three months, not because he is too weak to write, but because of great suffering in his side when sitting up. He cannot express how much he appreciates the kindness of the dear friends in writing to him, and also all their expressions of sympathy. He wishes me to write this in answer to many inquiries and many requests for letters.

He hopes to soon be able to write again, but we none of us know what the Lord has in store for us. Our days are in his hand. We know that all things work together for good, even though our weak flesh rebels many times against the trials.

With love, your sister, I hope,

BONNIE A. CHICK.

NOTICE.

To our correspondents we again say, We thank you for your kind letters and other messages of inquiry. The condition of my wife is not encouraging; she is now confined to the bed, having failed very much in strength the last month. She seems hopeful, believing the Lord is able to heal her, yet if not in his purpose she wants to be reconciled to his will.

We shall still appreciate your letters and cards. H. C. KER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1914.

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EDITORS:

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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MARK XVI. 15, 16.

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

The above words were among the last spoken by the Savior before his ascension to the Father. It is wonderful to behold the perfect order in which the Lord has done all things past, and with which he is now accomplishing his purposes in the earth, among kings and rulers as well as among the most humble of mankind. There were reasons why the words of our text could not possibly have been spoken before, hence the order of God. Sometimes it has seemed almost impossible to convince churches that everything should be done "decently and in order." Order seems, in the minds of some, "too much like other people," yet when we think soberly about it the world has never, with all its advancement and attainments, been able to compare any part of its order, or systematic movements, with that which God has ever governed all things.

When the Lord called Abraham he blessed him, and made promise to him that he would multiply him; that his children should be as the stars of heaven and as the sand of the seashore for multitudes, and that in his seed all nations should be blessed. While by faith Abraham saw the day of Christ and was glad, it scarcely seems credible to think that he conceived the vastness of God's promise and purpose in the salvation of an innumerable host unto eternal blessedness in the realms of glory. However, the promise was made and the purpose purposed in himself, and every detail thereof was carried out in perfect harmony. To Abraham was born Isaac, and to Isaac Jacob, and to Jacob the twelve patriarchs, and to these the twelve tribes. Beginning with Abraham, the Lord dealt with man as never before, and this dealing was confined to Abraham and his descendants. To them was given the land of Canaan; they had the best land of Egypt, Goshen, during the time they were "strangers in a strange land;" they were not affected by the plagues visited upon Egypt, were delivered from bondage across the Red Sea, were blessed and provided for during the forty years journey in the wilderness, crossed the Jordan (judgment) in safety and inhabited their land that flowed with milk and honey. To these children of Abraham the Lord sent prophets declaring his Word, renewing his promise, telling them to wait for it, it was for an appointed time and should surely come, and at the appointment of God a virgin conceived and the child Jesus was born for the redemption of Israel. Be it remembered that the Lord was still dealing with the children of Abraham, hence Jesus called Peter, James, John and others, all Jews, to be his followers and ministers. These he sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, positively commanding them to go not in the way of the Gentiles, nor into any city of the Samaritans. Their labor being confined to the Jews, they preached to them the kingdom of God, cast out

devils and healed the sick, Jesus having given them the power. In the promise to Abraham the death of Jesus was embraced, for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins, and when the appointed time came he was found at the appointed place, "for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem." Now while the dealings of the Lord, the ministry of Jesus and his disciples had been confined to the Jews, let us not forget the fact that the salvation of the Gentiles was also embraced in the promise made to Abraham: "In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed." Therefore in some wonderful way these opposing nations, Jews and Gentiles, must be made one, the lamb and the lion feed and lie down (rest) together. The handwriting of ordinances, which pertained only to the Jews, must be taken out of the way. The wall of partition which separated between Jews and Gentiles must be removed. In the death of Christ the handwriting of ordinances was forever removed and the Gentiles "blessed" equally with the Jews in the promised Seed of Abraham, so that now we are one in Christ, no longer under the law, but all under grace.

In the beginning of this article we said there were reasons why the words of the text could not possibly have been spoken before the time uttered by our crucified and risen Lord and Savior. The first reason is the wall of partition between Jew and Gentile must absolutely first be removed. Second, the apostles had to tarry in Jerusalem until visited from on high by the Holy Ghost and endued with power, light and understanding regarding God's promise to Abraham embracing all nations in the salvation of Jesus Christ. This all having been done, Jesus appeared unto his disciples forty days after his resurrection from the dead, and just before his ascension, and gave them the command embodied in our text. Now, instead of being confined in their labors to the Jews and the Roman Empire, they were to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, men and women, of every nation, kindred and tongue, declaring the gracious promise of God and the fulfillment of it through Jesus Christ. From that day to the present this same Jesus has been preached from the housetops, openly, publicly, and such will continue until time shall be no more. To establish the fact that the command of Jesus to his apostles: to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, was obeyed, we call attention to Col. i. 23: "Be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven." Learned men of to-day, as well as those of the past, for some cause fail to see and declare that the apostle spake of this matter in the past tense. How vain therefore for men in this age of the world to try to accomplish that which was done nearly two thousand years ago; yet they do make the attempt, saying, Jesus said, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." In this Scripture Jesus foretold what should be, then in our text commanded his apostles to do it: preach the gospel to every creature, or all nations, and as quoted above, Paul declared it had been accomplished. The "end" referred to by the Savior was not the end of time or of this material world, but of the legal world, or law dispensation, and the destruction of Jerusalem was the end of all things pertaining to the law. Now instead of the Jews only worshiping God

at Jerusalem in rites, forms and ceremonies, all nations worship him in "his holy mountain" in spirit and in truth. Wherever the gospel is preached it finds believers, these having been baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire, which, as John the Baptist declared, is verily the work of Jesus. These, both men and women, were also baptized by the apostles by immersion, which was right then and is right now. All unbelievers were then condemned, not eternally lost, set aside as not suitable subjects for the church of God. But then, as now, a man might rail on Jesus one hour and the next call on him for mercy. This the thief on the cross did. No man can say Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost, hence until operated upon by the Spirit of God all men are unbelievers. Such was the state of all of us when in nature's darkness, but having been washed, having been called with an holy calling, we are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God. K.

"IN PLACES OF DRAWING WATER," is the title of a little book just printed in this office for Elder Frederick W. Keene, of North Berwick, Maine. For further description and price see advertisement of same on page 191 of this issue.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

On and after April 1st my address will be changed from Halcottville, N. Y., to 52 Forest Ave., St. Thomas, Ontario, Canada. J. B. SLAUSON.

Elder C. W. Bond has changed his address from Baker, Oregon, to La Grande, Oregon, R. F. D. No. 2, where his correspondents will please address him.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mary Jane Grove was born Nov. 21st, 1852, and was married to George W. Grove Jan. 18th, 1872. To that union were born six children: Freeman W., who resides in Plymouth, Ill., Emma F., who died in infancy, Fannie I. Rice, who resides on the home place, Cora M. Huff, who resides in Plymouth, Ill., Daniel Hugh, who resides in Alberta, Canada, near Bituma, and Sarah Anna, who lives in Findlay, Ohio. She departed this life Jan. 8th, 1914, at the old home place, aged 61 years, 1 month and 17 days. She joined the Predestinarian Baptist Church, called Providence, on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in April, 1889, and was very devoted to the cause of truth and constant in attendance at the meetings of the church. She was a precious mother in Israel, and held in high esteem by her kindred in Christ. As a wife, she was affectionate, amiable and sympathetic; as a mother, she was firm, yet tender, gentle and indulgent; as a neighbor, she was hardly equaled by any. She leaves to mourn their loss a respectable family of five children, all married, eight grandchildren and a devoted and afflicted husband, who has sustained a loss that is irreparable. He has touched a mournful day, but that is our portion in this life; we are subjects of sufferings and disappointments in this sinful world, but believe that our light afflictions here, which are but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, for if we reign with Him we must also suffer with Him, and we have the blessed assurance that our loss is her eternal gain. She had been ailing for over a year, and at last succumbed to that fatal disease, pneumonia, but bore it all with fortitude, never complaining of her troubles and trials as some do, but was ready to go when her heavenly Master called her to come up higher, fully believing that in the resurrection morning she would be raised in his likeness and see him face to face, then will she be satisfied. He gave her a peaceful hour in which to die. Jesus can make a dying bed soft as downy pillows are. Through his resurrection a halo of light was shed on the tomb, and a rainbow of peace spans the valley of death.

The funeral was held at the dear old church of her membership, where she so much loved to go and was very careful in keeping and caring for the order of God's house. Elder L. E. Frazee preached from 2 Cor. v. 1, to a large and sorrowing congregation.

O how we shall miss her smiling countenance and sweet fellowship who was so faithful in all things. May the good Lord reconcile us all to every dispensation of his holy will, and that her dear old husband and children may know that he doeth all things well. May we be prepared to meet her in that better kingdom, is the prayer of her affectionate sister,

BELLE FRAZEE.

Sophronia Horton Vail departed this life Dec. 3rd, 1913, at her home, 6 Highland Ave., Middletown, N. Y., aged 69 years. She was the daughter of Wm. H. and Prudence Horton, and widow of Benjamin Vail. She had been in feeble health for a number of years, but bronchial pneumonia was the immediate cause of death. Sister Vail had been a devoted member of the Middletown and Wallkill Church for many years, and her place was never vacant except when hindered by illness. She was one of the most lovely characters we ever met, the sunshine of the home and of whatever company she was in, and is sadly missed. In all our acquaintance with her we never heard her complain of anything, nor speak discouragingly or illy of any one. Her faith in God was beyond any ever witnessed by the writer; her communion and conversation with him seemed almost "face to face." The funeral service was held at her home, and largely attended by relatives and friends. We tried to comfort those present, using the words of Jesus regarding the woman who anointed him with the precious ointment: "She hath done what she could." We tried to show that the woman was the only one of all that company who could anoint him, because she was the only one who had the ointment, and as the church, the bride, is the only "woman" having faith in God, she is the only one who can anoint Christ with glory, honor, love and praise. This dear sister Vail always did, being a member of His body. She is survived by one brother, J. Decatur Horton, together with several nephews and nieces, all of Middletown. The interment took place in Hillside Cemetery, Middletown, N. Y.

May the Lord reconcile us to his will. K.

John T. Campbell, our beloved brother, died Dec. 25th, 1913, at the home of his sisters, near Iron Hill, Md., in his 71st year, after a short illness of pneumonia and Bright's disease. He was married to Alice Griffith April 27th, 1869, who died July 19th, 1873, leaving one son, J. Frank, of Washington, D. C. May 21st, 1874, he was again married, to S. Elizabeth Hands, who survives him, also two sons, Charles A. and John T., and one daughter, Nellie Slater, of Terre Haute, Ind. Brother John was baptized by Elder F. A. Chick in the fellowship of the Shiloh Church, Washington, D. C., in the year 1878, and was later chosen by that church to the office of deacon, which office he faithfully and lovingly filled for several years. He was very hospitable, and ready to welcome to his home the brethren and friends, as many of the brethren can testify. He was always interested in the welfare of the church, and spared neither time nor money to give aid. He was a successful business man in Washington for years, going there in early manhood, where he married and raised his family, but having reverses in business, and failing health, he came to live with his sisters about 1909, and that was his home most of the time until the summons came: Child, your Father calls, come home. He was never heard to complain or murmur at the afflicting hand of God, but was strong in the faith to the end. He attended services at Welsh Tract, and enjoyed the meetings. We extend our deepest sympathy to his widow, our dear sister Campbell, and to the children, all of whom were present at the funeral except the daughter, Nellie, and pray the Lord to comfort them. We sorrow not as those who have no hope.

Monday, Dec. 29th, services were conducted at the homestead by Elder A. B. Francis, who spoke to the comfort of the family and friends, followed with a few remarks by the writer, after which the remains were conveyed to the Welsh Tract Cemetery, Newark, Del., and laid to rest beside his kindred.

May the Lord comfort all who mourn, and resign us to his will. J. G. EUBANKS.

L. J. Barton, eldest son of Elder G. B. Barton, was born Oct. 23rd, 1856, in Henry Co., Tenn., and died in Washington County, Idaho, Dec. 4th, 1912, making his stay on earth 56 years, 1 month and 11 days. He was married to Nancy Wills Sept. 15th, 1878, and to them were born nine children, but two of them in death. He professed a hope in Christ in 1882, and in 1883 he, with his wife, joined the Old Baptist Church in Howell Co., Mo., being baptized by Elder W. A. Bowden, and both lived true and devoted members until death. In October, 1900, his devoted wife died, leaving him with seven children. In 1906 he was again married, to Ellen Richardson, of Graves Co., Ky. She proved to be a kind and devoted wife and a good helpmate. He was blessed with the grace of God, and a gift of great faith, and also with plenty of this world's goods, and it seemed that his last days were his happiest days on earth. His last wife was also a devoted member of the same church, and was baptized by his father, Elder G. B. Barton, and they together were always present at their church meetings when possible. He was a kind husband, a good father, a faithful deacon and a useful citizen. He leaves a father, stepmother, five brothers, four sisters, seven children, and a host of friends and relatives to mourn his departure, beside the little church, which sadly feels her loss of a good and faithful deacon, but we desire to be submissive and to say, "Thy will be done." Our loss is his eternal gain.

Written by his cousins,

ETTA L. & KATIE W.

Florence G. Lucas was born in Boone County, Iowa, July 21st, 1866, and died at her home in Ames, Iowa, Dec. 18th, 1913. She leaves to mourn their loss three brothers and four sisters. She was the youngest daughter of Hiram and Susan Lucas, who were Primitive Baptists and widely known to a great many

readers of the SIGNS. Sister Florence was not a member of the church, but was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. About two years ago she was taken with numbness in her limbs, which proved to be progressive paralysis, and she grew gradually worse until she passed peacefully away. She bore her sufferings with patience, always trusting in God. She talked so beautifully before she died that we feel our earthly loss is her eternal gain.

The funeral was held at her home in Ames, and her remains were brought back to Boone County and laid to rest by the side of her parents until the trump of God shall sound. JANE LUCAS.

ORDINATIONS.

RIVERSIDE, Cal., Feb. 15, 1914.

IN accordance with the expressed desire of Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California, a presbytery composed of Elder S. B. Moffit, Elder M. L. Jackson and Deacon Yandel Bogart (O. P. Speirs acting as clerk), did on the above date, and in accordance with usual practice and in gospel manner, ordain to the office of deacon, brother G. A. Dundas, of Upland, Cal. The church, and presbytery as well, feel to know that the Lord has well fitted our dear brother for this position, and we believe we have only done our duty in ordaining him to this sacred office.

S. B. MOFFIT, Moderator.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Clerk.

APPOINTMENTS.

MY appointments as arranged for the present with the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada are as follows:

Commencing with the first Sunday in April, at Dunwich; Ekfrid, second Sunday; Lobo, third Sunday; Duart, fourth Sunday; St. Thomas, Wednesday evening following the first Sunday; London, Friday evening before third Sunday and the fifth Sunday when there are five Sundays in the month.

J. B. SLAUSON.

MEETINGS.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 82. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1914. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ISAIAH XLIV. 4.

"AND they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the watercourses."

If I know anything of the application of this text, in regard to my personal interest in religion, it began when I was but four years of age, and came in the form of impressions that I should know more of these things in after life. In the verse preceding the heading we find: "I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed."

In trying to write my testimony that the way the Spirit of the Lord is poured upon mankind in these days is in the same way as it was poured upon the Israelites in the days of Isaiah, I am reminded of a remark made by Elder Wm. Grafton. He read for a text: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God,"—1 John iii. 1, then he said: "I do not know that I know one thing about it." But the conviction that was given me in my first thoughts of the subject has been with me all the way. What I learned of religion, aside from this hope given me, was by hearing the older members of the family talking of such subjects, so I came up as a willow that chance, in time of high water, left in the grass by the river. Was it the river of life that planted and has watered it, that those early impressions should have remained and become more firmly fixed with my years? I have always enjoyed hearing a preacher expound Scripture, and have always gone to meeting when I could, but until I was twelve years old sin did not trouble me much. When I was eight years old I had a very bad spell of sickness, and became so weak that to get well seemed such hard work and such a long way that I thought I would much rather die; but pray as I would, I did not feel that I was ready to die, and my old impressions were with me, that I should some time be a baptized believer, and that my work on earth was not yet done. This occurred at my grandfather's home, and if those who took care of me at the time should see this they will remember it, and know better my condition when I began to take an interest in life again. I believed if I should live to get out of doors again I would always be good, and I sometimes remembered my resolutions, but when full health came back it is doubtful if others saw any evidence of the serious thoughts in

my mind. When I was eleven years of age I heard my father preach from Isaiah liii. 2: "As a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness," &c. I thought, That is just about my condition; I wish to escape torment, but I have no other interest in religion, nor do I see all this loveliness in it; I want to have a good time. From that time on I sometimes looked over the account, and always found I was losing ground, and although I never ceased to strive against it, sin gradually gained the mastery, until I often considered if it was worth while to keep up a losing contest. I knew that I was a sinner, and although I stood well enough before men, the weight of condemnation was upon me, and I kept a sort of debit and credit account with the Lord for some years, until a preacher from the west (I have forgotten his name) preaching at Bryn Zion, said: "Some people get to keeping an account with the Lord. It is like a man fencing his farm; he starts in the first of the week, and he wants a good fence. By and by he gets tired, and he puts up a few panels carelessly, then he walks around awhile, then goes to his dinner. He gets rested and starts to work where he comes to the line, several rods away from where he left off. Now he feels very strong, so he builds two fences for awhile, but he soon tires of the double work and goes to see a neighbor, and comes back to a new place and starts again. When he gets around the farm, some of the way he has two fences, some of the way one, and about half of the way he has none at all." I thought, That is just the way I am building my fence, and I never kept that account any more. In my sore distress I thought that if it were only possible to start at the beginning of life again I could do some better, and lighten the load a little. As if in answer to my reasonings came the thought that I was sunk in Adam's transgression, and guilty even before I knew what sin was. That was a gloomy day for me. I tried often to pray, but knew I should only pray in the Mediator's name, but could not feel that I had any right to use that sacred name, and that all-seeing Eye, that saw all my broken vows and transgressions, could not be deceived with a forgery; but I did, and would always say, "In the name of Him who died for sinners." There was always a Bible in our living-room, but I seldom read it when any one was around; and although father talked to all other families where he traveled, he talked very little of Bible subjects at home. I bought a pocket Bible, so I could read in my room when I wished to. One day, feeling particularly discouraged, I stopped work and went to my room to see if I could find some promise in the Bible to do me good. I opened at random, and read of Judah's sin with Tamar. I closed the book and opened again, and read of another that did evil. I closed it, and opened a third time, to the account of David's sin with Uriah's wife. I laid aside the book and went back to work to think it over. These were men of renown; not only Israelites, but were on record as prominent christians, yet they were sinners. My comfort had come in an entirely different way from what I had looked for, for if all the good men were also sinners there might be some hope yet for me. After this the Lord hid his face from me. I searched the air, the earth and all that I saw moving on it, but all was according to fixed laws, and needed no guiding hand. The more I sought the Lord, the less evidence I could find to prove his existence, until I was an infidel, yet hating the thought,

Even preaching was without proof to me, and if I tried to pray it seemed as if there was a thick floor a little above my head. I began to look for holiness in men, and found them less perfect than I had used to think christians were. I believed the historical part of the Bible, but the rest seemed sealed to me. The first evidence that I could get came while listening to my father and Elder J. L. Staton preaching at Welsh Tract. I could not satisfy myself that they knew the truth of what they preached, but I did know they were conscientious, and were declaring it for truth. If they were chasing a phantom, as I had come to think, they were at least honest. From that time on my mind was arguing these questions over most of my waking hours. One day a passage of Scripture came to my thoughts in answer to my questionings that was an evidence to me of a living, supreme Power who knows us altogether, and that was followed by other evidences of like character. A few dark and troubled days would be followed by days of hope, so that I came to expect some sentence or word to come into my mind to end each gloomy spell. Sometimes I felt as if my prayers were heard, and some word of hope would cheer me for days. I tried to talk to one or two ministers, but they did not seem to wish to talk, so I fought out my own battle. When I was twenty-four years old I thought I would like to belong to some church, but if it would do just as well I would rather be with a popular company; and as I visited a family where the young folks were Methodists I went with them, intending to become a Methodist. But I could not believe what that preacher said. If I did not know the Lord or the Bible, I did know something better than that sermon. I argued it over with the others, and went again; that time he made me angry, and I wished for a chance to answer him. Then the foolishness of my standing up before all that house and answering a popular preacher came to me, I, a weak-voiced, bashful boy. By the time I had reached the street the thought came to me, If you cannot come here without getting angry, you had better stay away, and I never went again. I married when I was twenty-seven years of age, and found much comfort in talking over the arguments of my mind with my wife. When chopping wood in the woods in the winter I would be alone all day, and after one of these days of arguing with the devil (and I have since thought the devil can argue well) as I started to go upstairs to bed I turned and said to my wife, "Well, religion is good for children, to make them grow to be moral men and women, and it is good for old folks, to give them rest to die by." When I got into the bedroom these words seemed to come back at me: If it is good for children, and good to trust in to die by, it must be pretty good for men in middle life. I have never been able to find an answer to that argument. One clear sunny day the next summer, after one of my gloomy spells, I was walking with my head down, thinking deeply over my sinful condition; I felt guilty before God, and about hopeless. I thought, Others have found relief, but I can see no end to this warfare. I was walking past my own barn, when I seemed to see an account-book a few feet above my head and in front of me. It was a very long book, and was opened so as to show two pages full of charges. I stopped and looked at the account, when a hand passed down the two pages, and with the ends of the fingers blotted the whole account from top to bottom, and I seemed to hear the

words, Thy sins and iniquities are remembered no more. Then a view that seemed away across the country, of the Savior on the cross, and that he died for sinners. All my load was gone, and I was as light as air; no guilty feeling, no burden to carry. I often read of people wishing their burden back, so they could know how it went away, but I never want to have another hour of that load of condemnation to carry. At first all my thoughts were of my deliverance, then I began to ask myself if I should go to the church, but I felt no drawing towards the church, and only went as I always had gone. One day my wife showed me a letter of dismission she had from her Presbyterian pastor. She said, "I wanted to be free, so I sent for a letter." I was chopping wood about a mile from home that winter, and on Saturday morning my wife made some remark that made me think she would like to go to meeting in the afternoon, but she did not say she wanted to go or why she thought of it. As I went to my work I concluded I would rather not go to the Saturday meeting, but we would go Sunday morning. I selected two trees which would make a cord of wood, and thought to have them cut by about 2 o'clock, then I would go home to dinner and have time to get the stock fed by dusk. I argued the question of church and world, as was my daily custom, while I cut one tree into wood, and the debate was about even when I started the second tree, then a large piece broke off the edge of my axe. This was a conclusive argument; it was 11 o'clock, and I had just time to get ready to go to meeting; my wife wanted to go and I must have a new axe. The points presented went through my mind as a flash, so I threw the axe down, while I thought over how I was beaten by an unseen power. I fed my horse as I passed the barn, and told my wife to hasten dinner, as I would have to have an axe we would go to meeting and get it on the way. When we drove in the yard by the meetinghouse Elder Staton walked down to the carriage; my wife spoke to him and went on to the house. The Elder asked me if I had come to offer myself to the church, and said, "You do not often come Saturdays." I said, "I had no thought of doing so at this time." "Well, has your wife?" he asked. I replied, "Not that I know of." He turned and went to her, but when he asked the question I did know, for I saw it all; she had received a letter of dismissal from the Presbyterians, and wanted to come to meeting to-day, and I had tried to stay away and had been overruled by the Lord while hunting arguments to prove that all events are brought to pass by natural causes. I would have done anything I could to have helped her if I had known what was on her mind. The members gave me every evidence they could that they were ready to receive me that day, but I could feel no assurance from the Lord that I had a right there, but Sunday morning while standing by the water I wanted to be one with them. I concluded that as I had not come prepared I would not say anything until the next monthly meeting. That month, February, seemed very long. I had but one desire, and that was to be baptized, to own my Savior by obeying his command. There seemed to be a beauty in water whenever I saw any, no matter how much ice there was on it. I went forward on Saturday and one of my brothers came Sunday morning. Then I could understand why I had not been permitted to come in at the same time my wife did. When I came out of the

water I was flushed with heat, and a new joy, such as I had never felt, and when later in the day my wife said it was worth living all her life to see that day, my cup was full. As we stood on the bank, while the congregation sang a hymn, I wished that all who had ever known me could witness the confession I made that day. As I went up from the water the hills seemed to be singing and the trees clapping their hands. (Isaiah lv. 12.) I now had an answer to the questionings of all the years before. I had the assurance that the Lord did answer prayer, not according to any rules of science or philosophy, but in his own time and in a personal manner. I knew for myself that the God of heaven had instituted the ordinance of baptism, and that it was his command I had obeyed, not just an act of my own springing up then as a broken branch that had taken root among the grass by the water. I wish to leave the reason of my hope on record, both for my children in the flesh and my kindred in the Spirit. Is it a good hope or a mental delusion? If there are others who recognize in the twenty-five years of carrying a heavy load their own trials, then mine is a good hope, for the Lord is leading others over the same pathway. God grant to one and all of these heavy laden a full and final deliverance and rest in the name of him who died for sinners.

A. E. RITTENHOUSE.

SHELBYVILLE, Kentucky.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter from my brother, J. G. Sawin, written to me personally, but I submit it to you for publication in the SIGNS, or that portion of it you may think of general interest to the readers of our dear old paper. Nothing has appeared from his pen for a long time, and I am sure it will be read with interest, as he is often inquired after, both here and in Canada.

With love and best wishes to all the household of faith, in gospel bonds I subscribe myself in full,

PETER WALDO SAWIN.

SUNDAY EVENING, Nov. 2, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER:—I have commenced one or two letters to you since I received yours, written while in Canada, but was prevented from sending them, hence they were laid aside. This may result the same way, for somehow I cannot wield the pen of a ready writer, and never could for that matter

Physically speaking, I am well and active for one of my age, for which I sincerely desire to be thankful. In mind and spirit I am like the tempestuous sea, always casting up mire and dirt, causing me to wonder again and again if, after all, I have ever known the truth and righteousness of Christ. The sin, the shortcomings, the carnal mind and my proneness to evil are continually before me, so that the darkness becomes very great, and the light seldom penetrates the blackness of the night. Then I wonder why the Lord tolerates such an one, when thousands far better, and more helpful to their fellow-men, are struck down and called away from earth and I left to mourn my sins and rebellious nature. But for me the good Lord's appointed time has not come, though it will come after awhile; only "a few more days on earth to spend." To me this world is truly a wilderness of woe. For a score of years my pathway has been hedged with thorns, whose lacerations have brought me down in sorrow and shame and confusion of face. But,

"Must I be carried to the skies
On flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize,
And sailed through bloody seas?"

No better children and grandchildren than mine ever lived, the kindest of friends greet me on every hand (there is no lack on this score), then why should I be weary and darkness continually before me? I long for the company of the saints, and yet why should I, with all my weakness and sinfulness of nature? I have no companion in tribulation near me, except brother Spitler, and David and Jonathan were no more closely bound by the ties of love than we; our hearts flow out together as the waters from the fountain. Then I have recourse to the SIGNS, which I have just been reading this evening, and deriving some comfort therefrom. I hope your sojourn in Canada was full of promise, and that your labors were not in vain in the Lord. I would love to see the brethren there once more, but that privilege will probably never be mine; the Lord only knows. I do not wish to complain of my afflictions; no, not for a moment, for while they look big to me, the sufferings of Christ were so much greater that these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, sink into comparative insignificance. All the suffering of mind and soul that I have are visited upon me for some wise purpose, which will be made manifest in due time. I have never had a moment's thought that the Lord was unjust to send these things upon me, but, on the other hand, I deserve all; yea, a thousand times more. Since my early experience, when I felt that if my soul were banished to eternal oblivion, his righteous law would approve it well, I have maintained the same resignation to his righteous judgment, always willing rather to fall into the hands of the Lord than into the hands of men.

Brother Wesley Spitler and others want me to come to Chicago the fifteenth and sixteenth of this month, and I have indicated to them that I would try and do so, if the Lord wills.

But I must bring this to a close. I hope you found all well on your arrival home. Give them all my love, and that of Vera.

Your brother,

JOHN G. SAWIN.

2 CORINTHIANS IV. 10.

"ALWAYS bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body."

Do God's children suffer with Christ? Is the dying of the Lord manifested in us? Is the suffering with him an evidence that we shall reign with him? If these things are true, why should any child refuse to suffer? What is it to suffer with him? Did Christ suffer for, or on account of sin? If so, and we suffer with him, do we not suffer because of sin? His suffering could atone for our sins, but our suffering cannot. The just One suffered for the unjust, but the suffering of the unjust cannot pay the debt. The objector might say, If Christ suffered for us, justice will not demand that we suffer; if not, mercy does, for it is of the mercy of God that we are made partakers of the sufferings of Christ. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." Then it must be that the suffering of Christ is made manifest in us. Do God's children suffer in conscience or in spirit on account of their personal sins? If not, I do not know how to account for that distress of mind and soul that one feels who follows the outcroppings of his own wrongs. I would here say, according to my own experience, in that first soul-sorrow and deep repentance on ac-

count of sin I did not sorrow for sins since committed, but only for the past, but even since I received a hope sin has been mixed with all I do, and as often as sin crops out I am made to suffer for it; it is death to me. Now may I not believe this is a manifestation of the dying of the Lord? Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? And yet we are not freed from sin in the flesh; sin does reign in the mortal body. Sin must reign unto death, and he who thinks he is clear of sin is mistaken. Sin remains in the flesh, but it is condemned by the death of Jesus Christ. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Let me here note that righteousness of the law is not fulfilled by us, but in us. Now this is done by Christ in us. Then the dying of the Lord is manifested in us as well as his sufferings, and when his death and sufferings are manifested in us we both suffer and die. We are bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord, and O how we hate the life of the flesh, and are crucified with him. Then O how we groan within ourselves, and abhor our very self because of the sin we see in ourselves. Are we then apt to take this as an evidence that our hope is all a delusion? Is it not a fact that the poor child is wont to take this very evidence of the death of Christ manifested in him as evidence that he has no part with Christ? Yes, but you want to feel good, and holy, and righteous, and sinless, and if you could feel that way you think you could claim to be one of the number. But ah, sir, you must be made a partaker of the sufferings of your Lord, and his death and suffering must be manifested in you, but it will make you mourn. Then you will fall on Paul's platform, and cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" How strange, and yet how true with nearly every one, that the very Bible marks of God's children should be by them put for evidences against themselves. The very things we so often complain of are the very things that distinguish between the child of God and the worldly man. We often see so much sin and corruption in ourselves that we feel we are deceived and have no grace, and forget that the seeing and feeling these things are the result of the light of divine grace in the soul; being, or having been killed to the love of sin, we cannot fellowship what we see in ourselves, and then we are made to mourn, and are cast down in our feelings, and are made to cry mightily to God. Now the fact is, without the life we would never trouble over our wrongs, and O how we are made to abhor the sin of the flesh, and come to see clearly there is no good in us. Then, child, you are learning Paul's doctrine: "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." The whole secret of the matter is, we can never know the meaning of the Scriptures until we live the life just there. All Scripture is to us a dead letter until we get there in our own experience. Jesus was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. What think ye, that you will have no sorrow or feel no grief? and because you do, think it to be an evidence you are not a child, when in real-

ity you are suffering with him. How strange God's people are!

Brethren editors, I submit the above to you to do with as you think best. It was written some weeks ago, and I thought I would not send it, but have concluded to let it go.

In hope, J. M. PERKINS.

JOHN VI. 67.

"WILL ye also go away?"

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—A little while ago the following words came into my mind, and as I thought over them my heart was exercised with varied emotions:

"When any turn from Zion's way—
Alas, what numbers do!
Methinks I hear my Savior say,
Wilt thou forsake me, too?

Ah, Lord, with such a heart as mine,
Unless thou hold me fast,
I fear I must, I shall decline,
And prove like them at last."

When our Savior was upon the earth many professedly believing disciples went back and walked no more with him. There are those whom the apostle Paul speaks of who draw back unto perdition, in whom he saith, "My soul hath no pleasure." These have "forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam, the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness." There are men who turn from the holy commandment; such depart from the faith and give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. How dreadful is the condition of men who bring in damnable heresies and pervert the gospel of Christ. Though they sport themselves with their own deceivings, their damnation slumbereth not. We cannot bid such Godspeed, for God has not sent them, and he does not speed them. "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied."—Jer. xxiii. 21. Some go away from the profession of Christ's name, and fall into sin, and walk in open immorality. Such a career is dreadful to contemplate. Others who once professed to love Jesus Christ are now indifferent, they are gone into the world, there endured for awhile, but God's truth had no deep root in them, also thorns and briars have choked their profession, and there is nothing in their lives in word or walk to declare that they have been with Jesus.

"Will ye also go away?" Was it not Jesus Christ who drew us to himself? and have we not found him to be the Fountain of living waters? Unto you that believe, he is precious. Yes, and in my inmost heart I have sung:

"Jesus is all I wish or want;
For thee I sigh, for thee I pant;
Let others after earth aspire,
Christ is the treasure I desire."

And yet to my shame I must own my backslidings in heart have been many. But it is written in the new covenant, "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." How very comforting was this verse to me awhile ago. The apostle Peter, in answer to Christ's question, "Will ye also go away?" exclaimed, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." Peter could see no place, and no one to whom he should go. To him, and to all poor sinners who are taught of the Lord, it is so essential for their comfort, their nourishment in life unto the Lord their God, that Christ shall speak to them, all the days of their journey, the words of eternal life. No one has these words

to speak, they flow from Emmanuel's lips. His lips are like lilies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrh. God hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son the words of life eternal. His name is, The Word of God. (Rev. xix. 13; John i. 1.) But let us hear the voice of our God in the everlasting covenant: "I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."—Jer. xxx. 40. In the eternal counsel of his will he chose his people unto himself in Christ Jesus, and blessed them in him with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, and in his everlasting love, his unspeakable, covenant, immutable love he saith, "I will not turn away from them." They are ever contemplated in Christ Jesus their Lord, their covenant Head, and he will rest in his love. "I will not turn away from them." O, dear children of God, this is our security, our happiness, the rock of our steadfastness in the faith. Surely we shall cleave to Jesus Christ, our dear Redeemer, for he cleaves unto us. "I will not turn away from them." He does not become tired of his own, he will not cast away his people whom he foreknew, whom he hath loved from eternity; he will hold them fast unto himself. "I will not turn away from them." How can we turn away from him? O what shameful behavior to do so. Have we ever treacherously departed from Jesus the Savior, the Lamb of God? Have we ever been drawn aside and wandered away? Surely shame and confusion of face belong unto us, and unto the Lord our God belongeth mercies. Saith the Lord, "I will not turn away from them, to do them good." This is what we poor sinners need. We need the gracious ministrations of our covenant God, his acts of tender mercy; we need continual sustenance, we need to live upon, to feed upon the words of eternal life. O precious Jesus, thou hast the words of eternal life. There is no other one, there is no other fountain of blessedness, of forgiveness, of salvation, of righteousness, of justification, of eternal life and glory. Our God does so often, so graciously do us good in and through Jesus Christ, our covenant Head. The Holy Ghost in covenant love glorifies our precious Christ and takes of the things of Christ and shews them unto us. O truly this does us good. Compared with the good things in Christ Jesus there are no good things; all things else in comparison are but dung and dross.

"Compared with Christ, in all beside
No comeliness I see;
The one thing needful, dearest Lord,
Is to be one with thee.

The sense of thy redeeming love
Into my soul convey;
Thyself bestow, for thee alone
My All-in-All I pray."

"I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." O this sacred, undying, unquenchable fear of the Lord in our hearts is our preservation. Though we are tempted to stray away from Jesus, though we, through unbelief, wander from the Lord and are backsliders, this fear of the Lord shall not utterly perish in our souls, for Jehovah, our covenant God, hath said, "I will not turn away from them, to do them good." He will do us good, he will heal our backslidings, he will chastise us in love, he will bring us with broken and contrite hearts to seek his face and to lie at his footstool. His sacred, precious fear in our hearts shall revive and grow and glow in divine warmth to our God and Father, and unto our precious Christ, in whom all the excellencies of our God are declared. Our hearts in very truth

shall say, "Hallowed be thy name." His fear shall so operate in our hearts "that [saith the Lord] they shall not depart from me." Though we feel in our humility and grief to say,

"Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it!
Prone to leave the God I love,"

yet by the Lord doing us good we are brought to return again and again unto him, our Savior and our God. Those spurious disciples mentioned in the sixth chapter of John may become offended with Christ, go back and walk no more with him, but, "Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me," saith Christ, and his own elect are taught to know that all their hopes for time and eternity are centered in the Savior.

"Let earth's alluring joys combine,
While thou art near in vain they call;
One smile, one blissful smile of thine,
My dearest Lord, outweighs them all."

"Will ye also go away?" O dear Savior, let us never part; shew me mercy, keep me near thee, cleaving to thee with full purpose of heart.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Feb. 17, 1914.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER AND PASTOR:—I have had a desire to write you for a long time, but have felt that not one thing I could say would be of any comfort to you, nor to God's glory, so have withheld the desire until now. Although not feeling that I may comfort you, you will know, at least, that although absent in body you are present in mind, yes, and in heart, too, for there are many times I am thinking of you and yours, and while I know that God's all-seeing eye is everywhere present, yet from my heart there arises a petition in your behalf for health and strength, and if this is not the will of our heavenly Father, that he will make all your bed in your sickness, and that you may be assured of him that underneath are his everlasting arms, that it is he, and he only, that can give the healing power, the oil of joy for mourning and the spirit of praise for heaviness. A great many times I have come over, thinking I would say something of the better things, the things that never grow old, but by the time I would get there my tongue would be powerless to take the name of the Lord upon it, and the praise I had felt would "sit silent on my tongue," and I would go home feeling sad and distressed that I could not speak of the things I know are uppermost in your heart and mind. But God's ways are not our ways, they are past finding out, yet if I know my heart at all, I desire to love him more and serve him better, and I would rather be scoffed at by men than to have the slightest feeling against him who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind.

I want to tell you in my weak way, if I may, the experience I have just been passing through. For a long time it seemed my heart was of stone, and I could not think one good thought, and felt that God had laid his afflicting hand too heavily upon me, naturally, and that he must be displeased with me, that I had no favor in his sight, and really begged for strength from day to day, and felt no light would I ever see again. But I have been made to see that God afflicts in love, his tender mercies are in the affliction, and while we cannot see it, it is for our good. His grace is sufficient for us; he will not let us fall by the wayside, and he keeps us wherever we are, whether in "Doubting Castle" or in green pastures of his love.

Yesterday the mail was brought to me at noon at the office, and the SIGNS was

with the rest, and although I felt, "A crumb of mercy, Lord, I crave, unworthy to be fed," I just could not leave the SIGNS alone. I read, and felt then, and still do, that God revealed to me the things written in those pages. As I think of it now, I was as a ravenous beast devouring its prey, I was so hungry, and as I said, I read and read, and finally read it through, and really wished for more. Your editorial was most precious to me, and I read it with tears coursing down my cheeks, tears of thankfulness that I was permitted of God to understand the things there, and even now I feel thankful to God for the rich experience of that copy of the SIGNS. Last night all at once I felt a great desire to sing praises to God, and I sang within me for a time, then commenced to sing aloud. I went to bed singing, and was singing when I awoke in the night. I laid awake quite a long time, and passages of Scripture would come that seemed very sweet to me, and hymn after hymn, probably one line or two, and in some cases a whole verse, would go through my mind, and I could not help thinking, If this is a taste, what must the realization be? But already doubts are beginning to assail me, and the tempter is trying to put the better things away, and make me feel that it was not of God. Dear brother, have you ever experienced the same, and then soon felt it could not be as you had thought and hoped?

One thing in Elder Vail's sermon last Sunday that stays with me is this: a sheep is a sheep, regardless of the color of the wool. How true; a black sheep is a sheep as well as a white one, and I feel myself so black, so uncomely, but if it is God's pleasure that I am a sheep, the blackness and vileness will not be seen in his sight, that I have been made never so clean through the imputed righteousness of Christ, and I feel to leave it there, that God is good, and he is love, and I feel to thank and praise him for mercies past, and trust him for the rest.

Fearing this will be tiring you, (but I felt I wanted you to know some of the ways I feel the Lord has led me,) I will close, and my heart's sincere desire is that your health may be restored, and that right early, but if otherwise, may God give you the assurance he is very near, and that his rod and his staff shall comfort you. While I know this is far short of what I should liked to have written, it is done in all sincerity and love.

Your little sister, if I can claim such a sweet relationship,

ELVIRA H. PERRINE.

HEBREWS XIII. 14.

"FOR here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come."

Had I, like David, the pen of a ready writer, and the proper knowledge of how to apply the Scriptures, and the wisdom of God to expound their meaning, surely it would be edifying and soul-consoling to the wayworn pilgrims and strangers of God' chosen people scattered throughout earth's vast domain, who cry unto him day and night for his mercy and sustaining grace to be their only guide. Surely we realize that we have no continuing city, but by faith are made able to endure sorrow, affliction and the flood of persecution that assail our little barque as we pass through this world on our journey to the eternal city, and our sweet repose in the presence of God and his holy angels will more than compensate for a lifetime dragged out in this sin-cursed earth. God's children live by faith, and not by sight, which, like the true polar

star of heaven, ever points to the Lord Jesus Christ, whose gracious presence disperses the gloomy clouds and drives back the angry waters of despair, and they rest under the balmy wing of hope in anticipation of final felicity in the paradise of God. As it is written, The just shall live by faith, which capacitates them to remember all the way the Lord their God has led them. In types and shadows God has spoken to his people down through the ages, teaching them precept upon precept, and manifesting his power to them in their deliverance from the bondage of the law, and in covenant relation of offerings and sacrifices given them to know the will of God and their preservation in him, to look forward from the dim light of divers washings and carnal ordinances to the fulfillment of prophecy that Christ the Messiah should come to redeem his people. The prophet Isaiah, speaking of the ushering in of the gospel day, said of the Jewish, or mother church, "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." This elect family of God, as indicated by the apostle Paul, had no continuing city here, but confessed they were strangers and pilgrims on earth. How beautifully is this demonstrated in the experience and exercise of the heaven-born soul, who sees himself a poor, helpless sinner, revealed to him by faith, as an heir of God and joint-heir with Christ, (Rom. viii. 17,) no longer under the shadow of condemnation of the works of the law, but under grace, in the blood of the new covenant. The Jews, or carnal Israelites, were carried in captivity into Babylon, and shut up as prisoners for seventy long years, with no cheerful word from their enemies; not even the peerless glory of the Chaldean world or the sparkling waters of the Euphrates could afford them any hope of deliverance or brighten their prospects in a strange land, until Cyrus, the shepherd of God, went forth and opened the river gates, bidding the captive Jews to return to their own land. The same people that walked through darkness, upon them hath the light shined; moreover, having the blessed assurance in the promises of God that they should return from the land of the enemy to see the promise verified, and realize that their Shiloh (Deliverer) had come according to the time appointed of the Father, fulfilling all the provisions of the requisition of the law that stood against his poor and afflicted people, satisfied divine justice, making a complete atonement for all the sins of his chosen, the sure foundation of the purchased possession of the glorified saints in hope of eternal life which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began, thus making the saints comprehend through the revelation of Christ that they have no abiding city here, but, like Abraham, look for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. The converted soul is made to know in hope of the resurrection that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building (kingdom) not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. They whose robes are washed white in the blood of the Lamb have their treasure above, in the new Jerusalem, where all is perfect peace, rest and praise to God, in the world of glory, honor, immortality, eternal life. (Rom. ii. 7.) O the joys of heaven when freed from sin and all the delusive charms of this world, and transported to the region of bliss, moored forever on the glorious shore of sweet deliverance.

I fully indorse the views of Elder Chick touching the resurrection of the dead, that like as Christ was raised from the dead,

so all his chosen people shall be raised in the resurrection, and changed into the likeness of his risen and glorified body. For over forty years that I have been in the ministry I have sincerely desired to trace the Bible on the subject of the resurrection, and all other portions of inspired Bible truth, and not make a hobby of any one idea or word. I freely accept the expression of Elder Lefferts that there is a variety in the gospel, and the preacher need not be at a loss for a subject. My hope alone centers in the Lord Jesus Christ, and I trust I am one of that company alluded to and described by Paul that has no continuing city here, but seeking one to come, where all tears shall be wiped away from our eyes. Let us live together in peace and sweet fellowship, standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage, walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, and not make provision for the flesh, fulfilling the lust thereof, ever endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, have forbearance one for another, and so fulfill the law of Christ. There are wholesome instructions and gospel duties laid down by Christ and the apostles as admonition to the church of God. This our rebellious nature cannot do, but the influence of the Holy Spirit prompts to obedience and to every good work, to worship God, to serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear, shewing all fidelity to adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.

Dear brethren, remember me at the throne of grace. The very God of peace bless and prosper the SIGNS.

Yours affectionately,

ASA HOWARD.

KELLER, Texas.

HAVILAND, Kans., Feb. 1, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will send in my remittance, also my hearty indorsement of our good family paper. If there is anything on earth that I love it is the doctrine of free grace, and the fulfillment of God's purposes, but you would not be likely to think so if you could see me and know more of my conduct, for I fall so far short of my own purpose that I cannot know myself, but I am glad that God knows them that are his. I would write upon some portion of Scripture, for that is what I love to see in our paper, but do not feel that it is in my power. I have felt cast down lately, and almost in doubt, and it occurred to me that if others were like me I would love to speak to them in our own language: the language of faith, hope and charity. We have faith in God, hope in the Lord Jesus Christ and charity one for another. Our faith tells us that God rules all things, our hope tells us that Christ died for our sins, and our love, or charity, tells us that we are all brethren. There are no people on this earth who feel a closer knit tie, one to the other, than the readers of our family paper. I hope that is not flattery to its editors or readers, but only truth, that our God has seen fit to maintain it; how long that may last we cannot tell, but we do feel a great desire that this sweet fellowship remain, and the same truth be fearlessly defended. This union, or strength, does not exist in our works, but in the work of God in our hearts, giving us a love for the pure gospel of Christ our Savior. We are scattered over the United States, and some in foreign lands, but our hearts seem almost like one. This is no new thing, for the SIGNS is our oldest paper, and it has stood more abuse from unbelievers than any other Old Baptist paper; but the Lord has been for us, and who can be

against us? We now have other very true and friendly sheets in support of the same God-given faith, and we bid them all Godspeed, and rejoice in their good will, but until they have stood in the defense of the gospel of free grace for time and eternity for at least eighty years, they need not call the SIGNS OF THE TIMES by a new name, or speak of its youth. We believe its principles to be as old as God himself; the contrary can be no older. Its first editor was left with a small minority; these advocates will never have a very large following until Satan is bound; in fact, Satan must be bound, or cast out, before any man can believe the truth. We cannot bind Satan. If we could keep the whole law, then we would not need to confess our sins or complain in our weakness and shame; we would then go forth in our own strength and procure our own blessings; we could watch and pray, not only "one hour," but one day, one year or one lifetime.

I surely did agree with the editorial of brother Chick republished in the January number. When I went to school we stood in as good favor with our teacher if we tried and failed, and then confessed that we could not, as if we said that we could and yet did not, for an honest effort was no discredit. Our desire is to fulfill the law of Christ, we feel that our duty, but if any fail in that duty it must be those who are under that law; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Now I did wish to greet you with a friendly hand and an honest heart, but both seem to be gone from me, or never were mine to give, and I also wanted to ask the writers to use Scripture subjects when convenient, and let us have their thoughts. Search the Scriptures, for they testify of Christ, and tell us in what way you see their testimony, for we all want more witnesses to our salvation.

Yours in much weakness,

E. G. WEBB.

BENTON, Ky., March 3, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am a stranger to you in the flesh, but I hope not in the Spirit, yet I feel that I am assuming too much when I call you brethren, for I feel my unworthiness to address you as such. I herewith send you a money order for two dollars to extend my subscription for another year, as I see my time is out the 15th inst. I have only been a subscriber for one year, but find the SIGNS a close friend to me while traveling the thorny road that leads to the mount of God, if indeed I be in the way. I am now nearing my eighty-first birthday, and from my earliest recollection have had thoughts of death and the future life. I was brought up among the Old Baptists, and believed, except at times, the doctrine. Sometimes I would try to get away from it, as there were some things in it I could not understand or reconcile to the carnal mind, which I have learned since cannot be done; for the carnal mind is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. I have thought that this is the great trouble with the religious world to-day, only reversing it: trying to subject the law of God to the carnal mind. The first thing that ever confirmed me in the doctrine of the sovereignty if God and the absolute predestination of all things, was, many years ago, reading the editorials of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, whom I regard as the ablest expounder of the Scriptures the United States has ever had.

Dear brethren, I herewith inclose a letter I received from brother J. C. Chester, which I think would be read by the brethren with interest. It seems to me it shows that he has been with Jesus. If it seems good to you please publish it.

Dear brother Chick, please give your views on Matthew xxi. 44. In speaking

of the Stone the builders rejected it says, "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." Here are two characters, and I have thought that those on whom the stone falls are the believers who shall be purified, for in Mal. iii. 2, 3, it is said, "He is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' sope: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." Is not this grinding into powder the same as the purifying process? and does not falling on this stone and being broken represent the Jews as well as all unbelievers to whom Christ was made a stumbling-block and rock of offense? Am I right? I hope you will explain it more fully, as I cannot get all out of it that I know you can.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

R. J. HILL.

BREWERS, Ky., Jan. 6, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER HILL:—I have had a desire for some time to try and write you, but it seems that I have been in the same condition that Paul was when he said, "For to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." You know this entire connection. It seems that could I write my thoughts as they come to me sometimes while I am about my daily affairs, they would be more appreciated. I know that I have a hope; this question I do not doubt, as most others pertaining to this life, but here is the all-important question: Is it the right kind of a hope? Some time ago I was reading of Daniel being cast into the lions' den, and for some cause my mind continues to dwell on this, so that I have read and reread this Scripture. I wonder if I am doing violence to apply Daniel's case to my travels. I imagine wicked kings and rulers around me, as it were, ready to pass and sign the decree to cast me into the lions' den, (into worldly institutions of the devil,) and I am made to ask myself the questions, Do I serve, or am I serving, the God of heaven? Do I fear men and devils? If I can only be found as Daniel was, kneeling and praying to the all-wise and merciful God to lead me, I know the lions would be pushed aside, and not even the smell of these wicked fellows will be found on my garments, as with the Hebrew children when cast into the fiery furnace. Then I read in Matthew iii. 12, "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he [God] will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." O that I had the pen of a ready writer, to jot down the beauty and show the great God swaying, as it were, his mighty power to and fro (his fan) to purge the chaff from his wheat. We feel many times while here in this sinful world that surely the last ray of light is gone, and we are like Daniel in the lions' den, or as poor old Jonah in the belly of hell, but when that still small voice says, It is I, we realize that it is the God of high heaven with his fan purging his wheat, and when we see all the unprofitable works of our sinful hands fail and come to naught, and we are brought low at the feet of Jesus, then we can say the chaff is being burned, and to this fleshly tabernacle there is balm in being placed on God's floor and being threshed, as it were, to get all the chaff from the wheat. Then, brother Hill, if you and I are what we hope we are we

need not wonder if we are brought very low and many times our hope is almost gone. We read in Zechariah xiii. 9, I "will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried." I wish that I could be with you and talk just now about the last three verses of this chapter, but not so. When this great fanning is over, and we can say, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thee be praise, honor and glory forever, then will we be satisfied.

Dear brother, as you can see, this is very scattering indeed. I made two attempts to write last night and failed, and am writing this at early morn, in the fear of the Lord, who rules and none can stay his hand, nor has any right to say, What doest thou, Jehovah? Let charity surround this puny letter.

Hoping to hear from you with your strong message of love, I remain your unworthy brother,

J. C. CHESTER.

BOYDS, Md., Feb. 7, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—You will please pardon me for not sending my subscription sooner. I confess worldly affairs had something to do with it, but I now inclose check for two dollars for this year, so as not to keep you waiting longer. I feel that I must have the paper, but not at your expense. It comes twice a month laden with the rich food that falls from the Master's table, and we poor worms of the dust are strengthened and encouraged, and have our experiences and travels told by the many brethren and sisters who write for its pages better than we could possibly do, and are made to rejoice in God our Savior, also to think that maybe we are one of the flock that our Father has promised to give the kingdom, and to have our names written in the Lamb's book of life. Our little spark of hope which seemed gone entirely, revives, and we are made to exclaim as David in Psalms xxxi. 23, "O love the Lord, all ye his saints: for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer. Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your hearts, all ye that hope in the Lord." The Lord has truly blessed us. The various gifts of our brethren, which the apostle Paul speaks of, no two alike, are manifest in every copy of the SIGNS. The Bible says that a book of remembrance was written for them that thought upon his name. Write on, dear brethren and sisters, for you know that you are commanded by your blessed Master to let your light shine, and to cry unto Jerusalem that her warfare is accomplished, and that she hath received double for all her sins.

I have never met brother Ker, but both he and his wife have my deepest sympathy in their affliction and trial, and I hope she may be restored to health, if it is the will of the Father. Also may brother Chick be spared long to write in the defence of the truth.

I have written more than I intended. I only wanted to send in my remittance, but had to cast in my mite.

Your brother in hope,

JOSEPH T. WHITE.

HERMLEIGH, Texas, Dec. 13, 1912.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I will write you a few lines, as I want to thank you for your kindness in sending me the dear old SIGNS free of charge this year. It is always full of good things to me, a poor worm of the dust, and if I know myself, I do love the doctrine is sets forth, and long for the precious editorials and letters; in fact, all of them are good to me

Our dear brother Asa Howard's letter, in the November 15th number, was of much comfort to me, as the association he wrote about was at my old home church and where my dear companion was pastor as long as he lived after he was ordained to the ministry, and he was much loved by all the dear ones who knew him. My heart leaped for joy while I read brother Howard's letter, and in December 1st number another dear old Texas brother, S. M. Carlton, wrote what I believe much better than I can tell it. There is not a word in it that I cannot fully indorse. O how my heart goes out in love to all the dear ones when I read their letters in the SIGNS. The SIGNS is about all the preaching we get, so, dear brethren, you may be sure I thank you for sending it to me this year. I will send two dollars, one to pay for what I owe for 1910, and one to go on another year's subscription, for it does not seem that we can do without it. I love the doctrine it advocates, and if it is not predestination, foreknowledge and salvation by grace, and grace alone, I am not saved, for I know it is not of works, lest any man should boast, but of God that sheweth mercy.

Well, I had better close lest I weary you. May God spare you many years to edit our paper, and in the end take you home to himself for ever and ever. Excuse this poor letter, and accept my thanks.

Your little sister, if one at all,

(MRS.) M. E. WILLIAMS.

STOCKTON, N. J., Feb. 27, 1904.

MRS. KATE HIXSON—DEAR SISTER:—If you will allow me to thus address you, for as I know myself I fear to thus address any one, for there is a feeling I am of the number only in name. I sit here thinking of you, and hoping you are sitting under the sound of Elder Chick's voice while he is telling the old story of Jesus and his love, and singing the songs of Zion. Although I hardly dare to think of asking a place with you in your solemn assemblies, yet my heart longs to meet with you. My mind goes back to the time I was so lonely, when I felt I had no home anywhere, for the world held no comforts, and I was too unworthy to ask a home in the church. Well do I remember the lonely walk from Moore's Station to Harbourton, and the questionings about what I was going for. These became so strong that I was forced to leave the road and seek the shelter of the woods to ask for guidance, and that I might be led in the right way. When I reached the meetinghouse sister Golden met me, and she led me to a seat near the pulpit. This seemed very nice, but I thought my place was further back. I do not remember much about the preaching that day, but you took me home with you, and Elder Joseph Purington was there. I listened intently to his conversation, to see if I could gain some evidence that I had been born again; that I had a new heart or right spirit, which I so much longed for. The second day Elder George Staton preached from the words that had been my language and prayer so long: "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." That was a lovely meeting to me, but yet I had not the evidence that I looked for. I came home feeling but little better than I did before I left. I thought I would like to read some in "Pilgrim's Progress," but I had not this book. Then I thought of a lecture on the book that was in the house, so I got it, and opened to where it told of how

Pilgrim was frightened at the lions before the "House Beautiful," but the porter called to him and told him not to fear, because the lions were chained. When I stopped I wondered if this could be for me, for it seemed to give me a little hope. I went to bed, but not to sleep until almost morning. The first thought that came to me when I awoke was, "My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies." I found these words in Solomon's Song. O that day was surely my happy day, for everything was praise, and my song was,

"Jesus my all to heaven is gone,
He whom I fixed my hopes upon."

Even the thunder shower in the afternoon had no terror for me, for it was the voice of the loving God. But how soon my rejoicing came to a close, for the thought came that I was deceived, and that I had deceived Elder Staton. I was worse off than ever, and for a long time my mind was so troubled that I could not even attend to my family. Now it sometimes appears to me that it was all a delusion, and nothing but a deceived mind; that it was not a work of grace in the heart, but this I have to leave with the Lord, for I am unable to do anything unto his praise, but must say,

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

Your sister in hope,

RUTH H. BUTTERFOSS.

STOCKTON, New Jersey.

DEAR GEORGE:—The sun has risen in all its glory, as I hope the Sun of Righteousness has risen in our hearts, causing us to sing praises to his great name. I thought to tell you something of the wanderings of my mind through the silent watches of last night.

Elder Fenton, who preached for us last Sunday, was ordained at Southampton the last day of May, and I think he preached his first sermon after that at Locktown. At that time Mr. and Mrs. Demot and their son, who was about fourteen years of age, came from Clinton to the meeting, asking for baptism. It was a lovely sight, and even though it rained there was nothing in that to hinder. Thinking over the past, I thought of the time when, I hope, I was given strength to carry my babe, Sammie, almost twenty miles to tell the Hopewell Church of my little hope in and through the precious Savior, and to obey that still, loving voice that had whispered in my soul so long, "If ye love me keep my commandments." They were not grievous, for he also gave me that longing desire to follow him, and the desire to have a home with his people, and this made baptism appear as a lovely ordinance to me. O how sweetly I thought of the ordinance one day when I went to the canal for water. It looked so peaceful that I desired much to be buried with Christ and arise to newness of life, and if I remember rightly, it was forty-two years ago the fourth Sunday in November that Elder Hartwell led me down into the water, with ice cakes floating around me. But what of that? if our hearts are warm, ice and snow can do no harm.

Your mother,

RUTH H. BUTTERFOSS.

[THE foregoing letters are published by request of sister Butterfoss' family.—ED.]

(See obituary on page 222.)

FAIRMONT, W. Va., Feb. 9, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been thinking of writing to the readers of your paper, of which I am also a reader, but the question arises, What shall I write, and will it be of comfort to any of God's children?

Much is said about faith, and true, genuine faith is a grand thing. We find a passage of Scripture which reads: "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." The next verse reads: "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."—Heb. x. 38, 39. Much has been said about faith being the act of the creature, and no doubt it has perplexed the minds of many, as well as have other passages of Scripture. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Faith is not an act of the creature, and it is a good thing, it is the gift of God, and God's Word tells us, "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." None righteous, no, not one; so then it cannot be of the creature. Poor, doubting one, you cannot of yourself believe in God; by no act of your own can you exercise faith in God if you have no faith in him. Now what is true and saving faith, and who are those that have it? and how do they get it? Well, it is the gift of God, and he bestows it upon his children by his Holy Spirit, for it is a fruit of the Spirit. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith."—Gal. v. 22. So we see that faith is the fruit of the Spirit, and the Spirit is given to God's children, for Christ said, If I go away, I will send the Comforter, which is his Spirit. I will put my Spirit within you. So it is not the act of the creature at all, for all men have not faith. (2 Thess. iii. 2.) So those who have not faith cannot exercise faith, and without it we cannot please God. This faith, which the children of God have, will not fail. Luke xxii. 32: "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." His prayers are always heard. This is enough to show that faith is the gift of God. This Scripture is addressed to God's children, not to the unjust. "Now the just shall live by faith." How can we by nature be just, when we are corrupt from the crown of our heads to the soles of our feet? and who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Then how is it that there is a people who are just? How are they justified? It is not by the law, it is not by works of righteousness which they have done or can do. We are made "just" by the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin, and by him all who believe are justified from all things, from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses.

I have tried to show that all men have not faith, but all who believe have faith as the gift of God; these believe to the saving of the soul. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." The just shall live by faith, or, in other words, by the gift of God, and not by works of the creature. Christ is all in all. All our works God works in us. The apostle told of some who had crept in among them, and that they went out to make it manifest that they were not of them. So they that are not "just" draw back. There were some in the days of Christ who, when he declared the truth to them, drew back, but his disciples did not; O no, for Christ saved them from perdition. "But if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." Those who drew back, and walked no more with Christ, he had no pleasure in, and he said of them, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." Ye are not of my sheep; as I said unto you, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them

eternal life; and they shall never perish." After being reconciled to God by Christ, shall he not freely give us all things? and shall we not behold the glory which he had with the Father before the world began? Christ redeemed his children when he suffered on the tree, and justified them, for he "was raised again for our justification." So the poor sinner is reconciled to God by Christ, and not by his works. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." Faith removes great obstacles out of our way, for it is the evidence of things not seen. How glad we should be that it is the gift of God, for when we are shut up in prison, like John we begin to inquire whether it is the Christ or not who has given us such evidences that we can say, This is the Christ, "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." What takes away the sin of the world? Well, says the legalist, and those who believe in conditional salvation, this is what we believe: that Christ gives every one a chance to be saved. Well, let us see about that text, whether it gives every one a chance or not. What world is this portion of Scripture referring to? Is it the ungodly, wicked world, which has not seen his form nor heard his voice at any time, which Christ said of some of those who were contending with him, "He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God"? And again, "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." He that is of God heareth God's words. So there are two classes of people, one class belonging to Christ, and the other class are not his. There is a righteous world and an unrighteous world, and Christ came to take away the sin of his people who are called godly. He did not take Judas' sins away; if he had, then it could not have been said of him that he was the son of perdition. When anything is taken away it is gone, and what the Lord does is done forever, never to be remembered against them. So if he took Judas' sins away he would go to perdition without sin, and surely no one believes that. But Christ took away the sin of the world, those that the Father had given him. He gave him a portion, not all, of Adam's race. "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." The apostle said, He bore our sins in his own body on the tree; he put them away, never to be remembered against us any more. He died for our sins, and our transgressions were laid upon him; not only Adam's sin, but the sins of all his people, his righteousness being imputed to us. Then we can be called righteous, and are those who compose this world I am writing of. John, in speaking of another world, said, "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." If this included all of Adam's race, and Christ took away the sin of them all, then how could any lie in wickedness? So there is no foundation for the conditionalist to build his hope upon; it is and will stand as Paul said: the just shall live by faith. We find in the verse preceding my text this Scripture: "For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Before faith came we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Faith came to us; we did not have it in our possession, but it must be revealed, (Gal. iii. 23,) and this revelation comes to us by the same power as it did

to Peter; flesh and blood did not reveal it unto us, but our Father which is in heaven. It is sure to all the seed; the whole number shall obtain this faith, for God will lead them, he will bring them; none of them shall fail; every one shall appear before him. So the just shall live by faith; they shall live because the gift of God is eternal life, and this life is in his Son. When we have Christ we have eternal life, and he is all in all. We have all that we need to fit us to dwell with him in heaven, and are not of them that draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. It is well to run well, to learn well and to have a true Teacher, and there is but one who can teach well, and that is God. "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. * * * For all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." So the just shall live by faith.

J. W. LINN.

ATLANTIC, N. C., March 22, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—Through one or two it became known in New York, Delaware, up in Pennsylvania and round about Philadelphia, Maryland and northern Virginia that March 17th was the sixty-first anniversary of my birthday, and the good, sweet messages began to come in from all those parts, and made my heart glad to hope that I had been given the grace to belong to such a family of love. Now, by your permission, I want to write this one letter of thanks to all who so kindly spoke to me at that time.

I feel, dear brethren and sisters, with a friend, that you have stooped low to put your hands underneath such an one as I to lift me up from doubting valley and set me on the hill of consolation. My hope is renewed, and I take new courage to press onward, hoping that in the Lord I may win the fight with my ugly self and gain the victory in his grace. Your words of assurance of your confidence in and fellowship for me have given me new courage. I feel that I have tried the strength of the enemy's fortification, and know my insufficiency to demolish his castle, but when I hear the Lord's host rally forth in the battle cry and see every one with lifted hand pointing in the one direction to the King who went forth in the battle for all the poor and the weak, the lame and the blind, and those who are fallen by the way, I take courage, for all of these and much more am I. Some of you were very expressive of many things which I find in myself. How did you know me so well? Is it because there is a kindred spirit in us? I hope it is that way. If it is so, then I am the more encouraged, for I can have no doubts about your being children of the kingdom. Is it not strange that when one is so low and others do not know his condition, that the Lord will move some one or more to put their arms underneath the fallen one and lift him up or give him companionship in the deep? But such turns out to be the case. For two weeks before the 17th I had appointments to get home on that day, but the Lord had ordered otherwise. On the 8th I received a message from my granddaughter, telling me that my dear wife was very sick and asking me to come home. In one hour I was on the train bound for home, where I arrived on the 9th and found my wife in a very sad condition. Since then I have been nursing her, and am glad to say that she can go to the table for her meals. I had expected to have a pleasant time with the brethren and churches, but such was not the mind of God. As

well as to shut me up at home he shut me out from the throne of grace. I had a strong desire to pray for my dear wife's recovery, but could not pray at all. It was not my privilege even to use words. All was taken from me, and I was so desolate of everything but the one burden of darkness and trouble. Brethren and sisters, were you ever so heavily burdened that you could not even sigh before the Lord? If so, you can have fellowship for my condition on the 17th and other days adjoining. Surely it is a pit without bottom, brim or shore, one great ocean of sorrow, rolling with billows of woe. I wonder if David was there when he said, "All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." If he was, then the Lord has been there; that is my only hope. I now feel that if the Lord's child is being swallowed up by his waves and his billows he will deliver that child. It is his to still the tempest and to calm the winds, or ride on them and walk on the face of the troubled sea as it pleases him. In everything he comes with his holy arm full of blessings. What a poor, faithless mortal am I to not always trust such a dear and ever-present Friend, and yet it is as much out of my power as it is to make a world or to command the sunlight. How helpless I am! If my comforts and joys here were based on my obedience or goodness I am sure they are gone forever. I know the truth of the saying, "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." I am glad that our God is the God of the hills, the valleys, the earth, the seas, the heavens above and all the host of them; that he rules in the one as much as he does in the other, and that all our times are in his hand.

Brethren and sisters, please accept this poor letter as an answer and a token of my thanks to you for your kind remembrances of such an unworthy and needy one. The Lord bless you all with grace to honor and praise him.

Your brother in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

PSALMS XLVI. 1–11.

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." This we must be made to feel. In the beginning God said, Let there be light, and there was light. In the beginning with this sin-sick soul, something was to take place to make him feel that God is the refuge, a place to retreat to for deliverance from his sins. In the beginning of my natural life I did not know God, and did not look for refuge, and my strength was within myself, as I supposed; I saw as the world sees to-day, all in self-works, not in God's strength, and as I journeyed on in life it was over forty years before I was made to see and to know that God was my refuge and strength, and it took trials and stripes, losses and crosses, and the death of a dear friend here on earth, and then He whispered gently, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be his holy name. It seemed the burning bush burned, but was not consumed; burned on and on, then I knew it was surely from God. We must be made to long for a place of refuge in the church of the living God, who is a very present help in trouble.

"Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." This is true, but we must pass through fiery trials and be tested before we can say this. There have been children who have passed through all this, and God calls them his children, who seemed to have had the last prop taken from under them, and they were made to cry out, My God, my

God, why hast thou forsaken me? But he caught them up in his arms, because he loved them, and does not forget his promise that he will not forget them, for they were his in the beginning of time; not one will be lost, no, not one.

"Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High." To me there is great comfort in this river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God. As I see it, spiritually, I hope, God's little children sailing along in their barque, tossed about by the waves, sailing on and on down the stream of time, getting nearer to the Most High; they are God's children, called by grace, not by works. The world in their stream feel they can get out, but not so with God's people, they are as helpless as babes, floating on and on without strength, only as the Lord may give it. We read in the Psalms, "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early." Here is a promise sure and steadfast. He is a very present help in time of need. God is in this river, close at hand in time of trouble.

"The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted." Yes, the heathen raged; they do not want God, but the so-called pleasures of this world. Satan says, Stay a little longer and partake of the things I will give you; you do not know what you want; all is vanity; God cannot speak and give unto you his tender mercies; he is a fraud. There is a warfare, the battle goes on. But the kingdoms were moved, he uttered his voice: Peace, be still, and worldly things melted like snow.

"The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah." Yes, they know the voice of Jacob, and want to be where Jacob is.

"Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth." As we hear from a brother or sister we think, Behold the works of God, what he has done for some sinful creature, how he has brought their feet from that miry clay. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following.

"He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder: he burneth the chariot in the fire." He maketh wars to cease, both natural and spiritual. When this warfare in a child of God rages, he speaks and it is done, If it is his will, when we feel to throw a spear at a brother, he cutteth it in sunder; when a brother gets worldly-minded, and wants to ride in a chariot, and travels too much with the world, he burneth it. This pride in worldly things is as stubble. He shows them the way, the only way, and keeps them as the apple of his eye.

"Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." How often should we be reminded of this: to be still, and not complain of our troubles, as all come from God; he maketh us to lie down in green pastures, and sometimes where it is very barren, no life in sight, and he will be exalted among the heathen by his own power of love and divine grace.

"The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah." The psalmist is here speaking of the church: "The Lord of hosts is with us." This I believe is the Old School Baptist Church. Where there are two or three members under a shed, in a field or under a tree,

all are brought in fellowship and love to gather in his name from the far ends of the earth, and are called his church with one voice, may be clothed as a lily, pure and white, and the one voice Jacob's.

This letter I have written through the love of God and his wonderful grace, I hope.

From a brother, I hope,

GEORGE M. CONNER.

CHICORA, Pa., Feb. 20, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As the time is here for me to renew my subscription for the good old SIGNS, you will find inclosed two dollars for same, as I do not feel like doing without it, as it contains all the preaching I get. I have just reread dear brother Chick's New Year's address, and it does much encourage a poor sinner like me to read such messages of love; one article like that is worth more to me than the price of the paper. I feel truly thankful to the Lord that I can read with the spirit and the understanding, if I cannot talk much in that way. I always had thought that as I grew older I surely would grow better, but I find it not so, but it seems to be the reverse. There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end of that way is death. It seems to me the way here spoken of is the way that is taught almost universally: to do good and be good in order to be saved. But we find that Jesus did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, so it is sinners Jesus came to save, not in their sins, but from their sins.

I had not thought to write in this way, but just give a word of encouragement to those who write for the paper. I love to read the experiences of the Lord's people, for they do me much good.

With this I will close.

WM. MELLOTT.

ELKVILLE, Ill., March 7, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will in my humble way try to write you, as I have moved to Elkville, Ill., R. F. D. 2, and want the SIGNS sent to me at that place. As I am far away from the church or any Old School Baptists, my Bible and the SIGNS are all the food I get. I have not heard preaching since 1911, and sometimes I think I will be compelled to go back to my church, but as it costs so much to go I cannot spare the money, but I try to be reconciled to God's will, and say, God's will, not mine, be done. I feel so humble and cast down sometimes that I think if I am a child I am the least of all. I love to read the letters from the dear brethren and sisters, for some can tell my feelings better than I can myself. I think that God foreknew all things, and marked out for us just what we should do, and that our very steps are numbered. I know that if I am saved it will be by grace, not of works, for there is nothing good that I can do. My very thoughts are sinful, and if I want to do good, evil is present.

Well, I will close, as my letter is getting too long. You can do as you think best with this letter, but I do not think it would be of any interest to the readers of the SIGNS.

Your unworthy sister in Christ, I hope,

ROSE ANN ROE.

CEMENT, Okla., Jan. 2, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—As it is time to make my remittance, I will add a few words to the contributors to our dear family paper. I do believe it belongs to the whole family of God, and it is one of the ways in which his children are to be comforted. As we look back, we see how God has sustained the dear editors through all the storms of persecution, and we believe he will uphold them as long

as he has use for the paper. I, for one, could not bear to have it go down, for it has been of much comfort to poor unworthy me when I was away from my kindred in Christ. I want to say to the dear brethren and sisters, one and all, Write on, for I do love to read your writings, as they tell of my travel in this low ground of sorrow much better than I can. I would love to tell you all about it, but my sinfulness is always in the way when I try to speak of the things of the kingdom, and I cannot write or talk like one of God's little ones, but want to be content with my lot in life, and only say that I hope I love God and his dear children with a love that this world knows nothing about. O yes, my dear brethren and sisters, at times that seems all the hope I have, and then I fear I do not love you as I ought; but I do know you are dearer to me than any other people, and there are many things I would like to tell you, but cannot. I want to thank you for writing, for I have often been comforted by you, and love to read your writings. Cast the mantle of charity over my imperfections, and pray for me.

S. E. ELLIS.

WEISER, Idaho, Feb. 18, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find money order for two dollars, which has been due since last September. I should have sent the money before this, and I hope you will pardon me for not doing so, for I do love the doctrine the SIGNS advocates. I have been a reader of the paper for fifty years, and see no change in the doctrine it now advocates from that it contended for fifty years ago, and I want to take the paper as long as I live. I am getting feeble; if I live until October I will be seventy-six years old.

G. B. BARTON.

HAVANA, Ark., Dec. 4, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—My health is very poor, and has been since the first of June, but I hope all is well with you. I am a Primitive Baptist, and have been for fifty years. I have not heard a gospel sermon since July, as our pastor is so old and feeble that he does not come often to Magazine Church. I am ninety-one years of age, and when meeting day comes I am very restless. I am still contending for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints, and am not ashamed to own my Lord, nor to defend his cause, and am clinging fast to Zion's landmarks. I am going to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, and if I live another year I will remit again before the time is out, as I prize it highly, for it is nearly all the preaching I get. Remember me when you pray, for I am a sinner saved by grace.

Your sister in Christ,

NARCISSUS JANEWAY.

HAMILTON, Texas, Nov. 2, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars to renew my subscription to the dear old SIGNS. I think I can truly say that by the goodness and continued mercy of God I have been a subscriber to it for nearly forty years, and the longer I read it the better I like it, because the doctrine it sets forth is what my soul rejoices in. May the abiding love and peace of God rule in the hearts of editors, writers and readers, that all may more fully behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, is the desire of one of the poor in spirit, I hope,

W. D. WOOD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1914.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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COMMUNION—WHAT IS IT?

In years past we were exercised more upon this important subject than of later years; not that it has become of less magnitude, but because we have become more settled upon the matter. In our first experience in the church, the matter of communion was mentioned three or four times a year, a certain Sunday appointed for the purpose. Often before the time some brother or sister would say, "The next third Sunday is our communion season." At first we thought nothing special about it, further than to desire to be present at that time, but later the subject occupied much of our thought, until, as we hope, the Lord gave us to understand the matter better than before. When a boy we used to wonder why Baptists did not admit other denominations to their table, and among those with whom we associated there was a bitter feeling against the Old Baptists because of their "close communion." This feeling has grown no less bitter toward them as the years have gone on, nor will it ever be less among those who oppose the church of God. When Jesus instituted what is called "the Lord's supper," he "sat down with the twelve," and to them only gave he the bread and wine, which he called his body and blood. There were many at that time who claimed to be his disciples, yet not one other than the twelve ate and drank of the bread and wine. Now was Jesus guilty of "close communion" in this particular sense? If so, why censure the Old Baptists for not admitting any except their own to their Lord's table? "Communion," however, means more than to sit at the same table and eat and drink of the bread and wine, and it was along this line that we were given to understand many years ago. It is right to have times set apart for this holy ordinance, and right for every member to be present, and no one identified with the church has the privilege to refuse to partake of the supper, for in so doing that one manifests direct contempt of the command of the Judge of the whole earth. Yet there is such a thing as communion regardless of the above course, which is always of the flesh. Again we say, communion means more than to eat and drink of the bread and wine. Some years ago we were present at a communion season of an Old Baptist Church, and when the members took their seats to be served, a lady of another denomination being present, took a seat with the church, and when the bread and wine were passed, the deacon, being an old man whose sight was somewhat dim, did not notice that she was a stranger, and passed the emblems to her, and, of course, she partook. After meeting was over some one mentioned the fact to him and he was very much wrought upon, and suggested that he go to her home and tell her his mistake, which he admitted to the church. Several thought his idea of going and telling the woman good, and doubtless would have been carried out had we not spoken and said, "My brother, no harm

has been done; that woman did not commune with the church to-day." "What?" he replied, "why not? She surely partook of the bread and wine, for I passed them to her." We said, "Yes, we know you did, and while we all would oppose such a thing in a general way, communion is impossible where there is no union." Oneness, agreement, "union," must exist before there can be communion. Therefore, instead of partaking of the bread and wine in order to commune with each other, we partake of them as an evidence of communion one with another. Had Christ sat down at the table with the multitude of five thousand who claimed to be his disciples, there would have been no communion except between him and the apostles, because of lack of union. Union means "united," hence being united in one body to one Head, there is communion with the children of God, though the emblems were never seen or tasted. As said above, to absent one's self from the table does not affect the union and communion of saints. When we sit down in the kingdom of God with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, it is in union and communion with them. Though they be dead according to the flesh, yet they live unto God, and the saints of to-day are brought unto the spirits of these and other just men made perfect. Paul presented the union of the church of God in the figure of a body having members: "One body, but many members;" so also is Christ. Being "members one of another," there is perfect union, though the members be located some distance apart. It requires all members to compose a perfect body, and the very fact that no one member is independent of the others proves conclusively the union, hence communion. If this be so with a natural body, how much more so with the body of Christ, having members in particular, God having placed them in the body as it hath pleased him. The vital unity of Christ and the church is one of the most sublime subjects of the doctrine of God. Unity that eternally unites Head and body; unity from which communion of members (the church) springs and abides forever and forever.

Again let us say, communion means more than to simply partake of the bread and wine, and that those redeemed who refuse to eat the bread and drink the wine do still commune one with another. On the other hand, those who are not members of the body of Christ do not, cannot commune with the church of God, though they were to sit at the table and partake of the bread and wine every day in the year. We have ever been glad that we were given to see, and, we trust, feel, communion in this blessed light, and we hope that what we have here written may be of interest and comfort to others. It is good when questioning in our minds as to whether we keep the commandments of God or not to be led by the Spirit into the deep mysteries and purposes of our Creator, there to behold that the arrangements of him are such that with all our powers we could not transgress his laws governing us as members of his spiritual body. For instance, the Israelites could break the sabbath day by gathering sticks, kindling fires, leading their beasts to water, &c., but the spiritual Israel of God can do nothing but keep the Sabbath (gospel day), because there is absolutely no work to be done; all was finished by Jesus Christ our Lord. Rest, therefore, as well as communion, is sure to and for all who believe in Him.

K.

ADAM AND EVE IN THE GARDEN.

ELDER KER:—I want your views on the length of time that Adam and Eve were in the garden before the transgression. I love the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Your unworthy friend, IRA NANCE.

HICKORY GROVE, Ky., Feb. 24, 1914.

Our friend has asked a question not answered anywhere in the Scriptures, and we do not think any one can have the slightest idea as to the exact length of time Adam and Eve were in the garden before the transgression. The Bible most positively declares, however, that they were there, and disobeyed the Lord's commandment relative to the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Adam lived nine hundred and thirty-five years on the earth; he was in the garden long enough to know the blessedness of innocency and the guilt of conscience because of sin; there long enough to make aprons of fig leaves; long enough to be clothed by the Lord with skins and receive the promise of eternal life through the Seed of the woman. He lived outside of the garden long enough to know there was no way in himself to enter the garden again where the Tree of life was; the flaming sword turned every way to prevent the approach of the transgressor. No doubt he felt, as well as saw, the necessity of a Mediator between him and God. Hence the days of his years were those of sorrow and affliction while he tilled the ground from whence he was taken. To our mind no man has ever known better than did Adam why the ground brings forth briers and thorns, nor better what it is for man to live by the sweat of his face. He knew experimentally the vast contrast between the garden of Eden, with all its glory, and the cursed ground outside, in which he had to toil and of which he was a part, therefore could appreciate the bitterness of earth life equal if not to a greater extent than any one of his posterity.

It may be in the mind of our friend Nance that the creation of the world, the giving of the law to Adam and the transgression of the same all took place in six days, as we now count time. Such may have been, but each "day" may have been a dispensation of time covering hundreds of years, as careful reading shows a multiplication of all beasts, fowls of the air, fishes of the sea, and every tree brought forth after its kind from the seed during the six days. Does it not seem right to think the Creator gave, in the creation and formation, a nature to all creatures? If so, that nature was the same in the beginning as now, hence it required the same length of time to multiply then as now, and the same time for a tree to bring forth fruit then as now. If this idea is correct, then Adam may have been in the garden several hundred years before the transgression. We have often refrained from presenting a thought that would seem a little different from the general idea of brethren, lest some one be disturbed by it, yet it is well, we think, to have the pure mind exercised to investigation of things for one's self, that "the Scriptures be the man of our counsel," and not the notion or idea of any man. One thing is most positively sure, which all must admit, viz., when the prophets used the term, "In that day," they did not refer to a day of twelve or twenty-four hours, but to the gospel day, which has now lasted two thousand years about, and the Maker thereof only knows how much longer it will endure. Be it a million years, or even longer, it will be "one day unto the Lord."

We leave these reflections for the careful consideration of our friend. K.

POETRY.

THE PSALM OF LIFE.

OUR fathers, mothers, where are they?
We know they're gone before,
While we a little longer stay
On life's tempestuous shore.

They oft were here dissatisfied;
They had their storms in life,
By pains and sickness often tried,
And oft beset by strife.

Born of the same inheritance,
We nothing have to boast;
Our life lies 'long the same old sea—
A rough and stormy coast.

Where if for once the sea be calm,
We know from age to age,
There often rises boisterous storms,
And winds and waves do rage.

'Tis then we hear the ocean's roar,
The surf sounds loud and deep;
The waves of trouble o'er us roll,
And we in sorrow weep.

Yet we still linger on the shore,
Here nature has a tie;
But soon we'll know the place no more,
For we alike must die.

Our storms of life will then be past,
We'll know them then no more;
Just like the souls now at rest,
Those souls gone before.

ELLIS MEARS.

BLOXOM, Va., Feb. 12, 1914.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE following appointments have been made for Elder J. M. Fenton, of Philadelphia, Pa.:

Kingston, Saturday evening, April 18th; Olive and Hurley, April 19th; Union Grove, April 20th; brother Faulkner's, April 21st; Vega, April 22nd; Roxbury, Mead sisters, April 23rd; Albany, April 24th; Schoharie, April 25th and 26th.

J. B. SLAUSON.

MY appointments as arranged for the present with the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada are as follows:

Commencing with the first Sunday in April, at Dunwich; Ekfrid, second Sunday; Lobo, third Sunday; Duart, fourth Sunday; St. Thomas, Wednesday evening following the first Sunday; London, Friday evening before third Sunday and the fifth Sunday when there are five Sundays in the month.

J. B. SLAUSON.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Albert G. Cole, son of George and Mary Cole, was born at Beaver Dams, N. Y., March 27th, 1858, and died March 2nd, 1914, aged 55 years, 11 months and 5 days. He was one of a family of seven children, three of whom, with his parents, preceded him in death. He was married to Leota Peters, daughter of George and Betta Peters, Sept. 25th, 1901, and to that union were born three children, one of whom died in infancy. He leaves to mourn his demise a widow, two children, two brothers and one sister, beside many other relatives and friends. Albert was one whom to know was to love and respect. He was known by his many friends and relatives to be a kind and devoted husband and father. His life was somewhat isolated from society, that he might confine it to the home circle, where by his love and devotion and constant care he cemented together a wonderful family tie, that makes the severing of this union the more heartrending. But we sorrow not as those who have no hope, and the fond remembrance of the happy life we lived with him here will be cherished with sweet memories and reminiscences of days gone by, which help to lighten our future life now made sad by his absence. One of the highest tributes that can be paid to any departed friend is that he was a model husband and father, and we are glad we can bear testimony to this truth. May our heavenly Father give us grace to bear our great loss with christian fortitude.

Elder Newton Peters was called to officiate at the funeral, at his home in Springfield, Ohio.

LEOTA COLE.

Mrs. Nancy Elizabeth Butler, wife of Samuel Butler, departed this life March 6th, 1914, at her home in Hampton, Iowa. She was born March 30th, 1845, in Green County, Wis., and was a daughter of Dixon and Izzy Bailey. She was married to Samuel Butler Dec. 1st, 1864, at Monroe, Green Co., Wis., and lived there until the spring of 1869, then moved to Hampton, Iowa, and in the fall of the same year moved on their farm, three miles north of Hansell, Iowa, and lived there until the fall of 1901, then moved back to Hampton, and resided there until her death. Deceased had been ailing for over five years with a complication of diseases. She received a hope in Christ through the once crucified, but now risen and exalted Redeemer, about the year 1861. She joined the West Fork Church of Primitive Baptists Saturday before the fourth Sunday in June, 1885, and was baptized the following July, with her husband, by their pastor, Elder A. J. Norton, and was a faithful member until the end. She leaves to mourn their loss six children, two having preceded her to the better world. The surviving children are: Mrs. Mary Anna Eitel, Dennis Franklin Butler, Mrs. Isabel

Woodley, Loyd Butler, Mrs. Edith Rowson and Clifford Butler. The children who passed away before her were Samuel Roy Butler, who died April 17th, 1899, and Mrs. Angeline Esslinger, who passed away Oct. 27th, 1905. She also leaves to mourn their loss nineteen grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, one brother, Samuel Bailey, of Hampton, two half-brothers, Elder Williman Stilwell, of Webster City, Iowa, and Benjamin Stilwell, of Payett, Idaho, beside the church and friends of the community in which she dwelt. She was a loving mother and a kind neighbor.

The funeral was held at her late home, conducted by Elder Robert Keeton, of Grinnell, Iowa, assisted by Elder A. H. Nay, of Cedar Falls, Iowa, after which her body was laid to rest in the family lot in Hillside Cemetery to await the coming of the resurrection morn. ALBERT C. WOODLEY.

Ruth Hunt Butterfoss was born May 7th, 1827, and died Sept. 26th, 1913, of cerebral hemorrhages. She was baptized and received into membership of the First Hopewell Church, by their late pastor, Elder P. H. Hartwell, about forty-five years ago, of which church she remained an esteemed and honored member until her death. She was married to Joseph Hall Butterfoss Jan. 3rd, 1850, and was the mother of seven children, five of whom are living. The most of her life she lived a long distance from her church, but attended the meetings as frequently as possible. She probably attended the meetings at Kingwood oftener than her own, as she lived nearer. She was naturally a woman of a quiet, unassuming disposition, but her steadfastness to the faith which she loved was known by all her acquaintances. She died in the faith in which she lived, leaving to her friends the memory of a well ordered life and a godly conversation.

The funeral service was held at the home of her daughter, Mrs. R. H. Romine, Sept. 30th. Her pastor, Elder F. A. Chick, was able to attend the service, and spoke from 1st Corinthians xv. 10, first clause. The family grieve over the loss of their mother, but are comforted by the assurance that it was gain for her to die. BONNIE A. CHICK.

Emeline Winchell Simmons was born Feb. 15th, 1835, in the town of Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y. She was married to Hiram V. Simmons Sept. 9th, 1854, and lived in Ulster County until Nov. 17th, 1868, when they moved to Kansas and settled in Jefferson County, and in 1905 moved to Kansas City, Mo. Sister Simmons received a hope in the blessed Lord at the age of thirty years, and united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Emporia, Kansas, August 6th, 1881, transferred by letter to Neosho Church, Coffey Co., Kansas, August, 1902, then to Mt. Vernon Church, Kansas City, Mo., October, 1907. She ended her pilgrimage in life and fell asleep in Jesus Feb. 9th, 1914, and leaves to mourn their loss her husband, two daughters and one son. Sister Simmons was a mother in Israel who was loved by all who knew her, and she gave abundant evidence of the spiritual life which Jesus had given her in regeneration. That which is our loss is her gain, and may it please the God she worshiped to comfort those who loved her with a hope like hers.

The funeral services were conducted at her home by Elder J. W. Skaggs and the writer. Her mortal remains were laid to rest near Strong City, Kansas, there to sleep the last sleep until Jesus comes to take his jewels home. L. H. CLEVENGER.

George Junior Neel, the subject of this notice, was born March 7th, 1912, and died Feb. 24th, 1914, in Marion Co., W. Va., making his stay on earth 1 year, 11 months and 17 days. He was the son of George and Mary J. Neel. The mother died of dropsy when he was sixteen days old. The father is still living, also three brothers and two sisters. By request of the father we took the little baby boy and kept him until death released him from his suffering, which was caused by spasms, the last one lasting about five hours. O how he seemed to suffer until just before he died. We called him our darling, and no one knows how we miss him except those who have traveled the same road. We loved him, and he seemed to be as one of us, and we faithfully cared for him, as he had no mother and was so little. It is well with him; he has gone from the evils to come, while we are left in this world, where troubles and trials annoy. By request I tried to speak at the grave, and spoke about Christ blessing little children, and tried to show they needed to be blessed; that there is but one class of people who are saved, and they are the redeemed, saved by Christ Jesus. May God's blessing rest upon the bereaved ones, is my desire.

JAMES W. LINN.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER SMITH KETCHUM has changed his address from Chester, Nebr., to 2613 Elma St., Kansas City, Mo.

JOHN J. OLIVER has changed his address from Twin Lake, Mich., to Manson, Montana, where his correspondents will address him until further notice.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

A. M. M., Pa., $1.50; Thomas A. Ardies, Ontario, $2.00.

MEETINGS.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 82. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1914. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

1 JOHN III. 14.

"WE know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death."

How is it with you? There is no mistaking the language; we occupy one position or the other. John in this third chapter, first verse, begins with the most wonderful declaration: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Another witness says: "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. An old author has written:

"Sons we are through God's election,
Who in Jesus Christ believe;
By eternal destination
Sovereign grace we here receive."

When one is brought to know the righteousness of the law in his just condemnation he has no claims whatever, or demands, for love or mercy; viewed in his sins and ruin he cries out in the agony of his soul, I know the law is holy, just and good, but I am carnal, sold under sin.

"And if my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well."

I am trying to bring these things to your remembrance, beloved in the Lord Jesus, that we may get a better view of the infinite height and depth, length and breadth of the love of God in Christ Jesus, and the great, inexpressible condescension of Jesus, the blessed Son of God, to remember love and mercy to such insignificant, crumbling worms of the dust. Outside of this love not one of the human family would or could ever dwell in the paradise of God, or with God. There is love in the world, in the human family, and something akin to it in the animal kingdom, but this love is changeable; in the human family we love to-day and hate to-morrow; we are governed by conditions and circumstances. Man in his best estate is not equal to the dog. His master may kick him about, abuse him, stone him, and yet he will protect his master and follow him to his grave, and there starve and die. Viewed as we stand, related to our earthly head under the law in sin, we are enemies, rebels against God. Then truly what manner of love is this that would reach out in the salvation of these rebels, enemies, traitors? There is no love in the human heart for such; this is now being verified in Mexico. This manner of love that is so inexpressibly superior to all we know

and can think, is of God, for God is love. Love that overshadows and fills all his divine attributes does not dwell in any human heart by reason of creation of the human family. No one can assign any reason why God should have ever loved any one outside of his own divine perfection, purpose and holiness. Now I want to bring it home to you, dearly beloved, in your experience, for it is said, The Lord spake unto me of old, saying, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." With what wonder and amazement you stood when you was first made to realize that in his love and pity he redeemed you, and carried you all the days of old; when that love was shed abroad in your heart, and you shouted aloud for joy, On earth peace, and good will toward men. You, dear one, may now be old and your head white with the frosts of many winters, but you remember the springtime of your soul, when it was filled with joy and gladness; yes, you could say with David, He has brought me up also out of the miry clay, and put a new song in my mouth. O wonder of wonders; well might we sing in the most exalted and heavenly strains, What wondrous love is this, that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dreadful curse for my soul? In those blessed moments of peace and joy how your very soul went out in love and reverence to God for his mercy, in love to the brethren, the household of faith; you saw them in that perfect state as you felt in your heart, swallowed up in the fullness of the power of his love, and when you tremblingly asked a home with them, and you were kindly and lovingly received, love flowed as a river, and the beams of his glory shone round about you. O that memorable day of peace and joy, when your soul would break forth into singing,

"What a mercy is this,
What a heaven of bliss!
How unspeakably favored am I!
Gathered into the fold,
With believers enrolled,
With believers to live and to die."

You thought then you could suffer all things, bear all things for the excellency of the name of Jesus; love would never grow cold nor zeal less. No, with Peter you felt you would never deny him, would go with him even down to death. Let us keep in mind the Scripture at the head of this article, for it is one of the most blessed evidences, if we dare claim it. Love the brethren! If we truly love God, we love them that are begotten of God, and it seems evident if we do not love the brethren we do not love God, and we abide in death. Here is a serious question, and it must be answered in each heart. "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light." The holy love of God and the love of the world cannot abide at the same time, for the love of the world is hatred to the love of God. If we hate our brother, what evidence have we that we have passed from death unto life? Do we conceive in our minds what an awful crime hatred to our brother is? If a man premeditates and knowingly takes the life of a fellow-being he is a murderer, and condemned; an awful crime indeed. Listen to the beloved apostle: "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." How different from the day of your espousal; then love filled your heart, now hatred. "A murderer." It is true we all do wrong, and have wrongs to

meet, and it is the spirit in which we meet those wrongs I am seeking after. Some things must be borne, other things must be met and condemned, but all must be done in meekness and love, with, He is my brother, my kindred in Christ. Suppose the dear Father should deal with us as we deal with our kindred, who of us could stand one day before him? We would be cut off forever. "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." We may receive some kicks and cuffs as we go along, but can it be that we who have been taught of God, filled with his love, recipients of his mercy, are worse than the dog that remained faithful? If hatred fills our hearts, we are worse than brutish. It is right to contend for right, if it is done in the right way: in meekness, fear and love. To illustrate, some twenty-five years ago, when there was contention upon a doctrinal point, one who had been dear to me as a father in Israel publicly charged me with being a deceiver and preaching false doctrine. I immediately went to him and demanded an explanation, but he refused to answer; I begged an answer, and he still refused. I believe to-day he was wrong, and that I had an inalienable right to do as I did, but with shame to myself I confess the manner in which I did it was wrong. I made myself a transgressor, and afterwards wrote him, confessing my fault in the manner in which I did it, but I never had a response from him. Jesus taught his disciples to pray thus: Forgive our trespasses, as we forgive, &c. How dare we approach the throne of grace with deception in our hearts, asking forgiveness, with murder, hatred and envy in our own hearts? O may that precious "manner of love" ever rule in our poor hearts, that we may be able to lay aside all guile and hypocrisy and evil speaking, that we may cease from shooting forth the fiery darts with the fumes of burning hell from these unbridled, untamed tongues of ours. Then would wars and turmoil cease among the dear children of God, and peace flow as a river, when we could again sweetly sing:

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue: but in deed and in truth." "I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth."

Dearly beloved in the Lord Jesus, I have desired to write in love, and in the fear of the Lord, that I might stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance of these things. In the years I have lived, and in my travels, I have known that such things exist all over our land. I have tried to speak plainly, and call things by their right names, but for the good of our beloved Zion. I do not expect this will remove the trouble, but humbly hope some dear ones will carefully and prayerfully consider, by searching out their own hearts, and freely confess their own faults, trying the spirit they are of, ever remembering the blessed words of the dear Redeemer: Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my little ones, ye did it unto me; he that toucheth them toucheth the apple of mine eye. Again, John said: "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love."

I have written from an exercise of

mind to do so, but feel that I have only touched upon the surface, and left the marrow and fatness, but such as I have I give unto you. May the blessing of the Spirit of the Lord attend it unto the heart of some dear weary one, and lead him in the paths of righteousness for His own name's sake, and by his Spirit create within us a clean heart and right spirit, build up his beloved Zion, that we may indeed and truth see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a sure dwelling-place, when again the dear saints shall walk hand in hand and sing as in the days of her youth, that we may know him that is true, and that we are in him that is true, even his Son Jesus Christ. "Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

Dear editors, the foregoing is for you to pass upon, and if you think it worth a place in the dear old SIGNS, and it will be of use to any poor, weary pilgrim, you can use it; if not, cast it aside, and all will be well; we will remain in gospel bonds. In consequence of illness in my family I have been kept in closer this winter than usual, so have written more, though children kept in sometimes get into things they ought not; it may be so in this case. I have hesitated in sending this in so soon, but I know your mature judgment will be exercised, and should there be a vacant corner you would or could use it.

Our best wishes and sympathy to Elder and sister Ker. My wife is gaining slowly, but has not put her foot on the ground for over three months, but we are hopeful now that when warmer weather comes she may get out.

Awaiting in the hope of a better resurrection, I am, I hope, in that blessed bond of union, yours in Christ,

P. W. SAWIN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky.

SAVED BY THE LORD.

"HAPPY art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord."—Deut. xxxiii. 29.

This heavenly and sweet message by the servant of the Most High to the afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted ought to inspire them with courage to hope in the Lord. If they have a good hope through grace, are they happy? In the sense of contentment in the provisions of grace, yes, they are happy; in realizing their weakness in not having any good works that can be exchanged for the grace of God, they are happy; in discovering their poverty and the riches of God's grace, they are happy, for why would they want to be rich in their own name only from an earthly standpoint? When the bright assurance of faith has opened their minds to the only way of salvation they cease from their own works as God did from his; they have entered rest, they are happy in the thought that their salvation does not depend upon themselves, but upon the Conqueror of death and hell; they rejoice. If they feel that the rich blood of Jesus is sufficient for the putting away of their sins, do they not rejoice that it is so? Do not praises go out to the Lord in thought, if not in words? "Happy is that people, whose God is the Lord."—Psalms cxliv. 15. "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help."—Psalms cxlvi. 5. To the world these curious people may not seem happy, and many in a worldly sense are not happy; for what is all this world, and all the most lasting enjoyments that any man has yet found, to be compared to the hope of eternal life, which God promised before the world began? There is no doubt about the fact that God's little ones take less interest, consolation and enjoyment in the things of this life than those who have never known the Lord,

I believe that Paul looked at it that way when he said: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."—1 Cor. xv. 19. To be sure he was speaking about the resurrection of the just, but is not the resurrection which we hope for the fulfillment of all the promises of God? "Who is like unto thee?" I answer from Scripture testimony and from experience, There is none like unto the bride, the Lamb's wife; she embraces all the people of the most high God of every nation, kindred, tongue and people in every and all ages of the world. "My dove, my undefiled is but one: she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her." —Solomon's Song vi. 9. Who is like her? One of a distinct kind, the only one of her mother and the choice one, by election. All these mean sought out, separate and peculiar from all other classes of beings on earth or in heaven. She is the first and only bride, and it is impossible to duplicate her. "Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." To these people Peter said: But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, and because of being chosen, and being a royal priesthood, and being an holy nation and a peculiar people they ought to be happy, and should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light.

"Saved by the Lord." What a strong pillar for the saints to rest upon! Who in all the earth can lay claim to these words except and only they who rejoice in the way of salvation by the grace of the Lord Jesus? You who make boast that man is entitled to the reward of a promise of salvation by his obedience can never on this ground lay hold of the sacred words, "saved by the Lord." The deliverance wrought, as signified by these words, is not accomplished by dividing the work of rescue between God and man, but all the work is in the hand of the Lord. God has no cooperative plan to offer poor, weak mortals so that they may have excuse for boasting. In all the work of salvation boasting is excluded; not by the law of works, but by the law of faith. How just and right is God in this work! It is written, The just shall live by faith. We may inquire and say, Where does the just get this faith that he may be enabled to serve the living God, only through the Lord of hosts? How does he obtain that faith? It is not obtained, it comes straight from the Lord himself, the giver. The Scriptures tell us that without faith it is impossible to please God, and that also faith is the gift of God, which plainly teaches that we are altogether helpless before Almighty God in the way of procuring our own salvation in any way whatever. By nature we have no hope, and are without God in the world. For us to be benefited by any provision of grace the Lord must first come to us; we cannot go to him, because we are dead, past feeling. If in that state of ignorance we were happy, are we now happy having a good hope through grace? Would we, if we could, go backward to that simple state of ignorance? If to be enlightened, and to taste of the heavenly gift, and be made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and taste the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, make us sad or unhappy, where then is the advantage of a good hope through grace? Do we, who claim that salvation is of the Lord, feel happy in our knowledge of him and in our rest upon his promises? It seems from the testimony of Scripture that believers ought to be

happy. Am I happy? This is hard for me to answer. I do sometimes rejoice in soul and try to offer thanks unto our heavenly Father, because he has hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto weak, helpless worms of the dust, who are constantly crying unto the Lord for mercy. I often wonder if my crying and lamenting in the ears of my merciful Father is real happiness on earth, or the end in view, which is sometimes a faint foretaste of that crowning work of our God—the resurrection, or that I am happy in the thought that I shall be happy. Surely when we awake with his likeness we shall be satisfied, for all tears shall have been wiped away.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., Jan. 29, 1914.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Feb. 28, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—For some time I have had a desire to pen a few thoughts for the consideration of God's dear people. Perhaps it is presumption on my part, but they will have to judge, and I will leave it with you to decide whether or not this letter shall be submitted to the readers of the SIGNS. For a long time my mind was in a stagnant state, and I could not read the Scriptures with any degree of comfort, much less think of trying to write, but of late certain portions of holy writ have been very sweet and precious to me. I would like to give expression, if I can, to some of the exercises of my mind in connection with the language found in Genesis xlix. 22, and following verses: "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall," &c. There is a sense in which Joseph here is a type of Christ, whose branches run over the Jewish wall, even unto the Gentiles, and while it is certainly not my desire to make a misapplication of Scripture, yet we read that no Scripture is of private interpretation, and as my mind seems to regard Joseph as a type of the child of God, I want to treat upon the subject from this point of view. In the parable of the sower we are told that some seed fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them; some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprung up and choked them; some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth, and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no depth of earth, and when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away; but others fell into good ground and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Now I believe that this good ground was the preparation of the Lord. All the vegetation of the natural man must be uprooted, the seed and the germs must be exposed to the fire which cometh down from heaven, and man must be killed to the law of works and made alive unto righteousness as it is in Jesus before he can bring forth fruit acceptable to God.

In the Scripture selected, Jacob had called all his sons unto him to tell them what should befall them in the last days. On some he pronounced curses, while others he told some one thing and some another, but when he came to Joseph he said, "Joseph is a fruitful bough," and not only this, but "even a fruitful bough by a well." What a significant thing is this well! In the next verse the writer gives some of the reasons why Joseph is a fruitful bough. He tells us, "The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him." It seems to me

we can trace from the very time of Joseph's dreams, on account of which his brethren became envious of him and hated him; the beginning of the work which was to make Joseph a fruitful bough. His second dream caused even his father, Jacob, to rebuke him, but this was not all. His father sent him unto his brethren, and when they saw him approaching their hearts became filled with evil, and they said, Away with this dreamer; let us kill him, &c.; but there was one among them who said, Let us not kill him, but let us cast him into this pit, and so he was cast into the pit; but we observe the pit was empty, and he was later taken out and sold to the Ishmaelites. What a trial this must have been to him, to receive such treatment at the hands of his own flesh and blood, but the soil must be prepared before the seed can fall into good ground and bring forth fruit. No doubt he felt forsaken of God and man, but we are told that the Lord was with him and blessed him. Joseph was sold unto Potiphar and carried down to Egypt; the Lord gave him favor, and he was advanced in the house of his master. Here he was encouraged a little, perhaps, but how soon did trouble come again. He was tempted, and because he refrained from yielding was cast into prison. Perhaps he felt it would have been better for him to have committed wrong, but no, he must be shown in a terrible way that right must and will prevail. The Lord did not forsake him in prison, and he found favor in the eyes of the keeper of the prison and all the prisoners were committed to his charge. It is said the keeper of the prison looked not to anything that was under his hand, because the Lord was with Joseph, and that which he did the Lord caused to prosper. It was while he had charge of the prison that King Pharaoh became wroth against two of his officers, and had his chief butler and baker cast into the prison wards. We remember each had a dream, and Joseph interpreted their dreams, and according to the interpretation of the dreams so it was with them, and notwithstanding the chief butler was restored unto his butlership again he forgot Joseph, but God, who moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform, did not forget Joseph. The king had a dream, and his spirit was greatly troubled. Not until all the wise men and magicians of his kingship had proven worthless did the chief butler remember his faults and recall to mind Joseph. Joseph was sent for by the king, but his first words were: "It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace." It is plain to my mind that Joseph had been to the right school; the ground had been made good ground, and the seed which the wonderful Sower had sown was now bringing forth fruit to the praise and glory of God's grace. Joseph's interpretation of Pharaoh's dream was so wonderful to the king that in looking out a man to prepare for the great famine that was to follow, he said unto his servants, "Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?" So Joseph is made second in power to the king himself, and now begins to bear the most copious fruit of his life, that of storing up supplies to save much people alive. He was indeed a fruitful bough by a well, but it had been accomplished in such a miraculous way that he had nothing of himself whereof to glory, but when he was given to behold the hand of the Lord in the whole matter, from beginning to end, he gave thanks to God, and his joy was unspeakable. How often have the Lord's chosen desired to become fruitful boughs,

to have spiritual minds, that they might tell the wonders of our God in saving poor, hell-deserving sinners, and to proclaim something of the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, and of how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out; but when the Lord sends that which is necessary for them to become fruitful, they shrink from the fire which is to try them, and wonder if indeed the Lord has ever begun a good work in them. Truly the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. There are times, no doubt, with many of us when we are considering how the Lord has led us about and instructed us, we can feel that all the way he has brought us, that each and every trial or experience through which we have passed was in some way, we know not how, ordered of the Lord, that he is the Creator of all things, and that all things were in some mysterious manner created for the glorifying of his dear name, that his power might be made manifest and all made to acknowledge him as the only true and living God. How sweet is the language of the poet where he says:

"In every condition, in sickness, in health,
In poverty's vale, or abounding in wealth,
At home and abroad, on the land, on the sea,
As thy days may demand, shall thy strength ever be."

The next verse I cannot refrain from quoting, for it is life itself when applied with power by the Holy Ghost to the famishing soul:

"Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed;
I, I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand."

Yes, poor soul, take courage, for although the Lord through deep waters may call you to go, the rivers of woe shall not you overflow. May we be given faith to lay hold on his precious promises, knowing he will never, no, never forsake, and that he always regards the cries of the destitute.

Brother Ker, may it please the Lord to strengthen and uphold you, is my prayer.

I have written hurriedly, and leave what has been said to your better judgment as to publication.

Yours in a precious hope,

R. LESTER DODSON.

ISAIAH IX. 16.

"THE leaders of this people cause them to err."

It is said that Henry Clay had very little confidence in humanity; not that he hated the race, but because of their depravity. Another writer has said, "The more I learn about humanity, the better I like my dog." I would change the above just a little, by saying, The more I learn about humanity, the more sympathy I have for them, as we all make so many mistakes. "The leaders of this people cause them to err," is as applicable to-day as it was twenty-six hundred years ago, when the prophet Isaiah spoke it. In the third century before our era there lived two great philosophers, to wit, Zeno and Epicurus. Zeno was the founder of the celebrated school of the Stoics, who believed and taught that man's chief business here is to do his duty. Epicurus taught, in opposition to the Stoics, that pleasure is the highest good. He recommended virtue indeed, but only as a means for the attainment of pleasure, whereas the Stoics made virtue an end in itself. In other words, Epicurus said, Be virtuous, because virtue will bring you the greatest amount of happiness. Zeno said, Be virtuous because you ought to be. The same history that I have quoted from says that under the influence of Stoicism "were nourished some of the purest and loftiest characters produced by the pagan world," while it is said that

of all those who held with Epicurus (that pleasure is the highest good) not a single great mind was ever produced. Whether the above be true or not, I am sure that the only real pleasure in this world is found in the full discharge of our duty. It strikes me very forcibly that we have too many Epicurians in our day. The prophet Daniel might be appropriately called the chronological prophet, for he gave the time accurately when Christ would come, five hundred years before he did come, (Daniel ix. 24,) and by the same method of computing time he tells us in the last chapter of his prophecy when the mystery of godliness will be finished. He also tells us in his last vision (chapter eleven) of all the great monarchs that shall rule the world at various times, and the last one he sets up is described in verse twenty-one of that chapter, as follows: "And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honor of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries." I am persuaded that this "vile person" is the ruling principle in our day, for I do not think the prophet had reference to individual kings altogether, but to ruling principles. My reasons for believing that we are living under the reign of this last and "vile" monarch is because there is not a (so-called) benevolent institution of human origin in all this country but in its infancy was looked upon by the better class as being no good, but being stamped with religion (?) and headed with prayer (?) (comes in peaceably) they always have a way of making the people believe it is a good thing, and gain their confidence (obtain the kingdom by flattery). Especially is this flattering spirit manifest when we consider the fact that money is the aim of every one of them, and more especially those institutions styled as "aids" to the church. It is certainly amusing to see the measures resorted to to collect money "for the church." Some are ready to say that when Christ and his apostles were here they had a bag, and carried money in it. Admitted, but remember that they had a "devil" to carry it, and when you see a man now always talking about money for "the church," you may know that he is a devil. Jesus called seventy Elders and sent them forth two and two without scrip or purse, with but one coat, and after they were gone awhile and returned he asked them if they lacked anything. They said, Nothing; even the devils (bag-carriers) are subject to us through thy name. And Jesus told them he saw Satan (the bag-carrier) as lightning fall from heaven. God has a use for devils, and when he gets through with them he knows how to manage them, and "all power in heaven and earth" can do it. As for the secret institutions, while it is a fact that some of them have attained to almost colossal proportions, yet with all their corpulency there is not one of them that can live without money. The church of God is not built upon any financial basis, neither does the salvation of God's people depend upon the same thing that governs the price of produce, but it is founded upon the principle of love. Bonaparte said, "Alexander the Great, Julius Cæsar, Charlemange and myself have all founded empires, but we did it by force of arms. Jesus Christ founded his upon love, and unto this day thousands will die for him." The true church of Jesus Christ is the only institution on this earth that can survive all panics and still exist without a particle of money, the love of which "is the root of all evil." If they would all lay down

their trashy literature and take up the Bible, and instead of hiring a stranger at a princely salary to dictate their lessons, learn what God Almighty says, we would soon see a great change in the morals of our country, for I have never known a man to take up the habit of daily Bible-reading without becoming interested. Benjamin Franklin said, "Young man, my advice to you is that you cultivate an acquaintance with and firm belief in the holy Scriptures, for this is your certain interest." Thomas Jefferson said, "I have said, and always will say, that the studious perusal of the sacred volume will make better citizens, better fathers and better husbands." Daniel Webster said, "The Bible is the book of all others for lawyers as well as ministers, and I pity the man who cannot find in it a rich supply of thought and rule of conduct."

It is possible, and very probable, that I may be wrong in some things that I have written, but be that as it may, it will be seen from the above quotations that I am not alone in my errors, but have the indorsement of those who have the distinction of being the founders of our once happy government. Now, in conclusion, I would not have any one think for a moment that I would pose as a model of good morals, but it has been truthfully said, Thou that teachest another teachest thyself also. I feel that I have said some things which ought to be said, and I have done it conscientiously; read it carefully and see.

Dear brethren, the foregoing article was written by me some time ago, and I have been asked to send it to you for publication. Do with it as you think best. If you do not wish to publish it please return it, and I will send you postage.

Your brother, G. W. BERRY.

FAYETTE, Ala., Feb. 7, 1914.

EZEKIEL XXII. 2.

"Now, thou son of man, wilt thou judge, wilt thou judge the bloody city? yea, thou shalt shew her all her abominations."

Perhaps of all men I am the most unfit to write upon this important subject.

In this Scripture we have presented to our minds the solemn fact that Israel has transgressed the law of God. Jerusalem is to be punished for her wickedness, and Ezekiel has been chosen of God to deliver a message to her, and he must do so, because the Lord speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast; yea, his word does not return unto him void. It is plain in reading the Old Testament Scriptures that Israel was disobedient, and also that the Lord punished her for such disobedience. He sent prophets to cry unto her, but the people refused to hear them, and the prophets grew weary on many occasions, and felt that they would stop crying or speaking. The people will not hear, why should I cry? Am I mistaken in my impressions? It seems to me these were their thoughts, but the Lord God omnipotent did reign then as he rules now. The Lord is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and he has decreed a decree and nothing can annul it. There are many things coming to pass to-day which are hard for us to understand, but they were decreed by the great I AM. One mysterious thing to me is, that the Lord remembers mankind, which has been rebellious against him. Love is the reason; though Ezekiel must deliver a harsh message to Israel, yet he (the Lord) says, My loving-kindness I will not utterly take from them, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. Thus we see he is a merciful God and does not afflict willingly, but Israel had sinned and must be punished. What about Israel to-day, is she any better than in olden days? Not a whit better. I want

to write plainly. Does the church need admonishing to-day? Perhaps some one will say, You had better look at yourself before you admonish any one else. I heartily agree with such an one; I need it badly, and am glad to say I have not yet heard a sermon too strong for me. I need to be told of my waywardness, for it seems there is no soundness in me, yet I do believe I hate evil, or the new man hates it at least, and I hope the new man will put the old man to silence for awhile, for he has gotten me into a great strait: he is putting up a wonderful argument now against the new man, and I am wondering which is going to be victorious. Only a short time ago I thought the old man was put down for good, and told my wife I would never doubt the power of the Lord again. I was sick then, now I am able to work again and am once more in doubt, and am asking for more evidence, not satisfied yet. My present condition brings to my mind the desire of Gideon. How many times have I thought that if a certain thing came to pass then I would believe, and I can say that many of those things have come to pass, and yet I doubt. Why is this? Is there any one like me? Why cannot I always believe? Only a few hours ago I had a season of rejoicing, and had a great love for the Lord's poor people, but now I seem to be cold and indifferent.

Well, I am rambling again. Jerusalem has grievously sinned, and she still sins. I know there are things existing in the church to-day that ought not to exist: a brother will find fault with another brother, and go and tell some one else about it, in direct opposition to gospel order; parents will use language in the presence of their children that is unbecoming; I mean some who are in the church; husbands speak abruptly to their wives, and *vice versa.* I have heard these things and I cannot keep quiet. My dear, precious friends, I do believe I love you, and that this is why I am writing these things. As I said before, the Lord does not afflict willingly, but he will punish his children when they do wrong. How can we escape? A parent who loves his child will punish him for wrongdoing, not because he delights in it, but for the good of the child. Consider the words of the apostle, for they are so much better than my words: My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not, &c. How beautiful are these precious words. My dear brethren and sisters, cannot we show more love to each other? How beautiful for us to meet together in peace and harmony, and how melodious that old hymn sounds: "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in christian love." "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Let us examine ourselves and see if we are sincere in our minds.

Very unworthily,

A. T. BENSON.

ACORN, Missouri.

DEAR EDITORS:—As it is time to renew my subscription, I will send you this letter from my son for the readers of the SIGNS. It is the first he has ever written of spiritual things, and I hope it will be of benefit to the Old Baptists.

Yours, B. H. YATES.

POPLAR BLUFF, Mo., Feb. 18, 1914.

ELDER B. H. YATES—DEAR FATHER:—I will again try to write you, for I think you wonder at what I believe, so I will tell you what has been on my mind for quite awhile, and then you can tell me what you believe me to be. Very few

people believe in the total depravity of the human race. If I write anything that is not right overlook it, for this is the first time I have tried to write any of my thoughts, and I do not know why I do so now. Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." What does the word "dead" mean? Does it mean all the human race? If it does, then all will be saved, for he says, "They that hear shall live," not may if they will live; or does it mean the chosen people of God, chosen before the world began? for Jesus says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing." Now the Father hath given him (Jesus) power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as God the Father gave him. Again, Christ said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." "Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." It does seem to me that these quotations from Christ's own words should prove sufficiently what he meant when he said, The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. Christ, in speaking to the Jews, said, "He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." Then certainly they had no life in Christ, or they could have heard his words. In no sense did he redeem the whole world. Why did he say to the Jews, "I told you, and ye believed not: * * * ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life"? The reason they did not believe was because they never heard the voice of the Son of God. They could not believe, because he had blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, that they should not see with their eyes nor understand with their hearts, and be converted and he should heal them. (John xii. 40.) Here we have sufficient proof that Christ came to save his people from their sins, and his people were dead in trespasses and sin, and must be quickened by God's grace before they could become living children. Jesus said, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." The angel said, "She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." Notice those "shalls" all along. Christ said, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." If he finished his work he must have saved his people from their sins. His people could not have been the whole world, because he said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." If "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" were the whole human race, then the whole race received the special benefit of the atonement and all will be saved. Paul answered this question when he said, "He took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Again, Paul said, "Wherein God willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel confirmed it by an oath." If any believe in doing a deed in order to give one a chance to be saved, let them read the fourth chapter of Galatians and see that

the children of the bondwoman can never be heirs with the children of the free-woman. In the ninth chapter of Romans Paul tells us what the promise is, whether God's mercy is extended equally to the whole world, or to his chosen people, whether it is of him that willeth, or of him that runneth, or of God that sheweth mercy. Then if the Scriptures be true the seed of Abraham, the chosen vessels of mercy, the lost sheep of the house of Israel, represent the chosen people of God, and are the only ones Christ died to save. "Of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Paul says, "For to be carnally minded is death." Then as long as a man is carnally minded he is dead, and it seems to me that he will remain dead unless God gives him life, for who can raise the dead but God? Some may say, In what sense were they dead? Paul says they were dead in trespasses and in sin.

Well, I see that I am making this too long. If I could write all my wandering thoughts on the subject it would take me a week, and then would be unsatisfactory. If you can get anything out of what I have written it is more than I can do. I do not know why I have written this, unless God put it into my mind. I think I am of them who cannot help it. I have given you just a little idea of what I think of the total depravity of the human race; if it is not right pay no attention to it. I do not know just what I am; it may be you can tell. I hope that God will lead us into the right light, and will fill our hearts with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. May the mercies of the all-wise God be with us until we meet in his kingdom, where we will be troubled no more, where sorrow and sin cannot enter, and we can there sing praises for evermore.

Your unworthy son,

A. I. YATES.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec., 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have received from our dear sister Pultz permission to send this letter, written to my sister Bessie, to you for publication in the SIGNS. I feel that it will be read with comfort by the readers of the paper.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

WHEELING, W. Va., Dec. 9, 1913.

MY PRECIOUS SISTER:—I want to write (if only a few lines) to tell you how much I appreciate your dear kindness. I have to wonder that you can have such great patience to answer all my letters and cards, and that under such difficulties; indeed, my dearest sister, it is more than I can ask of you. When I made the request for you to write of some of the incidents of your home life, I pictured you much alone in your room, but it seems that you have company quite often. I cannot wonder at this. How often my mind is turning to you, and also to your brother, for there are many things I would love to have his opinion on. I have thought that it might be better for you that I do not live in reach of you, for I fear I would be a worry to you all, as I feel so drawn to you in spirit, and to have much reliance on you for my pleasure in the fellowship of the spirit. You have never failed me in this sweet spirit communion. Often when I have felt hungry for the love and fellowship of the dear saints I would wait for the mail, hoping and yet fearing. I wanted their sweet letters, and yet felt that it was too much for me to expect of them; and O how un-

worthy I feel of their notice. The thought of their writing to me causes a strong feeling of self-abasement. But as I started to say, many times when I go to look for the mail I find yours. I know your dear writing from afar; how familiar it has become to me. I pick your letters up with eagerness, and often say, Dear, faithful sister. Your letters are always comforting, and I see much in them, and surely I do feel to beg the dear Lord to bless you for them.

I was very sorry to hear that your brother had been ill, and I almost shuddered at the thought of his going to his appointments so soon after being bedfast, and yet I love and admire such faithfulness in our ministers. What is sadder than a congregation without its minister? One cannot well reconcile the mind to a disappointment of this kind.

You speak of sister McKinney. No, I have never met her, but have corresponded with her for the last five years, and have longed to meet her. I had a few lines from her a short time ago, along with an article from the late Elder Beebe's writings. The dear, good soul had been so comforted with his views on, "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption," that she copied it and sent it to me. I have read it carefully, and can sanction every word. I always feel glad and (I believe) thankful for the wisdom that our Lord gives to his sent servants. Sister McKinney visited brother and sister Pittman, and attended their association, about three years ago, I think. She wrote me an account of it which was very touching. I lately had a letter from a sister Odell, of Garden City, Mo., in answer to one I had written to sister McKinney several years ago, and which was published in the SIGNS. It gave me some comfort, and these words came to me: Cast thy bread upon the waters, and after many days it shall return to you. It seems wonderful that the dear Lord would suffer me to be of comfort to his dear children. It is too much for me to understand; truly I cannot bear to think of myself in connection with this.

Now, as it is getting near supper time, I will have to close. I had the company of my nearest neighbor this afternoon, and this hindered me in writing. My health continues the same: I am better than for several months. The dear Lord is good to me and makes kind provisions for my welfare in temporal things.

I have been reading "The Perfect Law of Liberty," by Mr. Gadsby, and it is wonderfully good. I have wondered if you or your brother ever read it.

Dear sister, I laid my letter by last evening, and this morning when I arose my head was in such a bad state that I felt I could not write, neither could I read. It is as if there were a great weight and tightness in the brain. I was conscious of this feeling in my sleep last night, and dreamed of being in different places, all strange except one, that was the dear old church house in Hampshire County, where my membership is. In each place I seemed to be very weak and feeble in health, and was lying down and desiring quietness and rest. My mind wanders much in my sleep, and I always feel thankful for pleasant dreams, for sometimes they seem to help my journey through the next day. I can see that each day is rather a dread to me, and I am glad when it is done, for I am usually worn out with the activities of it, and often retire as early as eight o'clock. I find that my mind refuses to work; I cannot read or write, and I cannot help

seeing that my natural powers are failing fast. It is as if I were being cut off from life or energy. I see that I fail to grasp many things that I used to be concerned about, and at times when I force myself into such things it brings this great oppression in my head, and unusual weakness of both mind and body, also great confusion of the mind. True, my mind still follows after or in its wonted course, but it is a feeble grasp, nothing permanent or enduring. How plainly I can see the decay of nature, and how small a thing it seems. How unctiously I can say, We all do fade as the leaf, and how fully I can feel the truth of this assertion: I am nothing, yea, less than nothing; yet, dear sister, in the midst of all this natural decay there is something in me (I am unable to define it; it is a power not my own) and I know, or at least I hope, it is a separate life from this decaying force, and yet I have no power over it. O how I desire it, how I try to pray for it to live and abide in me continually. I long for it, yet feel well assured that I am too sinful and vile for it to abide with me. I only have glimpses of it, a sip now and then, yet as little as I am permitted to sip of this life, it appears to be all that is keeping me alive. I am permitted to rely on it alone for all my help, I trust it for every breath I draw and every step I take; I feel sure it is the only reason or support of my life. I am drawn to you in much love and tenderness, because I feel that you have this same lifegiving well to sip from, and it has brought forth much fruit in you, fruit that is pleasant to see and taste and handle. I do hope it is this life that seals our bond and makes us one in spirit, and although we have never seen each other, yet we love each other in this spirit of life or love. At present this is my most sustaining hope, that I am a partaker of this life; that is, that I love the brethren, but at times even this love seems but a cold, dead thing. As the poet has said, "Love extinguished to a spark." My heart is melted with the assurance that our Lord never extinguishes this feeble spark. This is the first sip I have had from the well of life to-day, and it brings a shower upon the tender blade.

Dear sister, I will close. My heart is full and my eyes also. May you and all the loved ones drink deeply from this lifegiving well.

Dear one, I cannot ask you to answer all my letters, for it seems like asking too much, yet I love to hear from you. Give my best regards to your household.

Your loving but unworthy sister,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

WAVERLY, Pa., Feb. 10, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—If you need any of these letters, and think they would be comforting and profitable to the saints, you can publish them.

Yours as ever, D. M. VAIL.

EROS, La., Sept. 4, 1913.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your letter was received a month ago, and read with much comfort. I often think I am the most peculiar individual in the world. I am too vile to even have a good thought; evil thoughts are continually springing up in my mind, and if I try ever so hard I cannot avoid them. I sometimes think it impossible for our blessed Savior to even think of one so corrupt as I, and yet I know it is through his great mercy that I am permitted to remain on earth. I know I am wholly unworthy of even the least of his blessings, and right here this Scripture comes to my mind, his very words when

hanging upon the cruel cross: "It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost."—John xix. 30. Now, brother Vail, I would like very much to hear your views on these words: "It is finished;" however I will just write a few thoughts which have come to my mind on the subject. It seems to me those words mean that Jesus had accomplished everything the Father had given him to do, his work was finished, and no human being on earth could add one thing to that work or take one thing from it; he had saved his people, those chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and I believe if I was included in that number I am already saved, and all the powers of earth cannot change it in the least, for what God has decreed from all eternity must and will stand fast. But I fear I am not one of that number, yet I do know that a change has been wrought in me; whether it is of the Lord, I know not, but sometimes have a faint hope that I have been taught of him who only hath power on earth to forgive sins.

I did not intend to write such a lengthy letter, and am afraid I have already wearied your patience. I have read some of your good letters in the SIGNS, and greatly enjoyed them, and hope you will write oftener in the future. If you think this worthy of a reply, answer, if not, all right.

From one of the least of God's saints, if one at all,

LULA PRICHARD.

BRANTFORD, Ont., Oct. 19, 1913.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER:—Christ hath said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." My mind has been upon you much since your last visit, and wondering how matters were going with you. Tribulation seems to be the lot of God's chosen people ever since our first parents fell from that holy communion with God in the garden of Eden. The evil one would not permit (even in the early stages of the history of our race) a close walk with God; he has ever been ready to interject a doubt into the minds of those who walk most closely to God, as, Hath God said? Can God do this? Will he do that? My mind at times seems to be nothing but doubts and fears. When trial comes upon us how hard we find it to try the spirit to see if it be of Christ, but are ever ready to run into tribulation, like a runaway horse, until God brings us to a sudden stop, and then we are ever ready to confess that the greatest troubles or enemies are those of our own hearts, for the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? Paul said, in writing to the church at Rome, "We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." I could never say I could do this, neither, I fear, has it worked patience, and because it has not, I fear I know nothing about the love of God, but I am glad it does not say my love to God, but "the love of God." What is the love of God? Why is it not God himself? for "God is love," and if any love (that is, true love) is made manifest through his children, it is but the reflection of God's own nature. There are times when we hope we have a portion of his love, when we hear his voice saying, Little children, love one another, and we trust at times we do love him, and are able, like poor Peter when in an-

swer to the Master's question, Lovest thou me? to answer, Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee. Even my backslidings, and even the boastfulness, when he said, I will follow thee even unto death. At times we believe we can say from the heart that we do love the brethren, and that our chief desires are to be in their company and walk in fellowship with them. Tribulation does drive God's people to call upon him when the world, flesh and the devil seem to beset us on every side, and ready to condemn our every action, even when we are trying to do that which is (or we hope is) wellpleasing to our heavenly Father. I have an evil nature within, and it oftentimes makes itself manifest without, and drags me down into self-abasement, and I am ready to give up, but cannot even do that, for a God, have mercy, will spring up even when he seems to be clean gone forever. Tribulation, I must confess, has driven me, like the children of Israel in the land of Egypt, and at times I have faith given me that he does hear my cry, for he speaks some words of comfort to my troubled breast. This morning I awoke with these words: "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms," and then I began to wonder, Are these but words I learned when young in years? But they give me comfort, for they seem to come when they are most needed, and God only knows my great need, and hath he not said, Our God shall supply all your needs, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus? These words often come to my mind: I need thee every hour, most gracious God; stay thee near by. I know not what would become of me if left to the devices of my evil heart, and I know not why I am writing thus, but my mind seems to be led along these lines, but fear I shall weary you, so will close, with love and best wishes for you and yours.

Yours in christian fellowship,

FRED SIMMONS.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 9, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER MARVIN:—What a variety of things there are in the life of a child of God! Like it is in our natural life, winter and summer, clear weather and stormy, days when everything is pleasant, followed by darkness and absolute gloom. When one is enjoying spiritual comfort he will preach about affliction and great tribulation, and assure his hearers that these are a necessary part of their experience, and the next day these tribulations will come upon him, and he will at once conclude that he is not a child of God. "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Such thoughts came into my mind when I read your letter of yesterday. It was a real help and comfort to me. To think that I should be forced to write of my soul troubles, with a great many questions as to whether I ought to write of them, fearing that I am mistaken in regard to my standing before the Lord, and then what I write reaches your heart, and the hearts of others, with comforting power. I think I asked you to get around here again, and you did not tell me when you could do so. I am in a good degree shut up in regard to writing; I cannot seem to get at it. I want to have a talk with you some time about spiritual things. All send love.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

"THE UNKNOWN GOD."

(Acts xvii. 23.)

WHILE the apostle Paul waited at Athens, his spirit was stirred within him when he saw the city wholly given up to idolatry, and he preached to them, showing the folly of idol worship, and spake to them of the God of heaven, whom they termed "The Unknown God," and ignorantly worshiped. Delivering to them the truth that "God made the world, and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent." That is, cease their worship of dumb idols. When at Lystra the apostle looked on the crippled man and perceived that he was given faith, he said to him: "Stand upright on thy feet, and he leaped and walked." And when the people saw the notable miracle, they said: "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius." They would have offered sacrifice to them as gods; but when Paul and Barnabas heard of these things, "they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, and saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you, that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless, he left himself not without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." Thus we know the race of Adam since the fall, is to-day totally depraved; and with all the zeal, and earnest appeal of Paul at Antioch, none believed but those who were ordained to eternal life. So to-day when the truth of the gospel is preached by God's ministers, none receive it but those who have the witness within. None turn to God but those who are plucked as brands from the burning; none but those who are brought up out of the horrible pit, in which the race of Adam was plunged. They have a new song put in their mouth, even praise to God, and know that salvation is of the Lord, and vain is the help of man. None know Jesus and his power to save, only those who are quickened by the Holy Spirit and drawn by his love. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." No man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him; so it is evident that God is known only by revelation. Thus the Tree of life is guarded by the flaming sword, which turns every way, and none shall eat thereof but the election of grace, whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world. Jesus said: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

"He loved me of old, and he loveth me still;
Before the creation he gave me by will,
A portion worth more than the Indies of gold,
Which cannot be wasted, nor mortgaged, nor sold."

"He hath given assurance unto all men,

in that he hath raised him from the dead. And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked." Yet there were certain ones that believed; they were no doubt quickened by God's Holy Spirit, for none believed when the apostles preached the gospel but those who were ordained unto eternal life. So today, none believe the preaching of God's ministers but those who have the witness within. This mystery that hath been hid for ages, and generations past, but is now made manifest, which is Christ in you the hope of glory, even all that were chosen in Christ before time began, all of these the Lord our God will call in due time, and they are all called by the same name. They are all taught of the Lord to know that salvation is by the free and reigning grace of God, and desire to ascribe all praise and glory to the Lamb forever for their salvation and deliverance from the dominion of Satan and the bondage of sin. Simeon preached the pure gospel of God when he said, "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Jesus was set for the fall and rise of many; the rise of all his people from under the law, to walk in newness of life, and the fall of every enemy, for God hath put them all under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. Then shall he present all of his chosen people before his Father, saying, Here am I, and the children thou hast given me. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me.

Yours in hope,

WM. F. SLOAN.

LEXINGTON, Ky.

DRAIN, Oregon, March 21, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—I received my SIGNS for March 15th, which reminds me that my subscription has expired. I would like to say something to the people who I hope are my people, and their God my God. I could not tell in volumes what I have passed through in the last year and a half. My sorrow and grief for my dear husband and daughter seemed more than my frail body could endure, and my health failed, and had it not been for the strong hand of the Lord supporting me my frail barque would have sunk. He gently led me along and his arm supported me, and I have none else on whom to depend. He said before he left this world that he was going to prepare a place for all his redeemed family, and that place was ready for my dear ones. All the powers of earth cannot stay his hand when he calls his people home, but O how hard it is to give up our loved ones; still we have hope that we shall meet again where parting is no more. I often wonder why my unprofitable life has been spared, but it seems my mission on earth is not done. My daughter left a baby boy, eighteen months old, and his father and I live together and are caring for him, which is a great comfort to us both.

Elder Ker's editorial in the March 1st number of the SIGNS was a feast to my poor soul, for he told my feelings much better than I could, and made all so plain that I could say amen to every word. How often when we feel our sin and corruption, and that we are less than nothing, we take up the dear, old SIGNS and find that some one has written for our comfort, and described our feelings better than we could possibly do, yet they have no knowledge while writing where it will give comfort. I do so long to be with the people who worship a whole and complete Savior; there is only one class of people who do this, and they are the Old School Baptists. The world has no use for the God we worship. I do hope he will revive his church here on earth, and cause his people to come to Zion. So

many we know are standing without the fold, who it seems should come in and find rest to their souls, in obedience. O if they could all say, "I'm not ashamed to own my Lord, or to defend his cause."

I find I have rambled from what I wanted to say, but the half can never be told. I pray constantly for patience to bear the heavy cross the Lord has seen fit to put upon me, but if we suffer with him we must be reconciled. We are commanded to rejoice in tribulation, but I, for one, do not. After all, I am made to see it is for my good, and I hope for the glory of God.

"O for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame,
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb."

We cannot tell of anything new to those who have been taught in the school of Christ, yet it does our souls good to be drawn away from the transitory things of earth, but we can see these things only as our heavenly Father sees fit to reveal them to us.

Dear ones, do remember a poor, old, afflicted sister (if I may call myself one) at the throne of grace. O how often my heart goes out to you all, and I feel sure that if we are of the chosen family of God we shall all meet by and by, saved by grace.

Your sister in Christ, I hope,

S. MORNINGSTAR.

CORNING, Ark.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I call you brethren, because I have hope and faith in you that you are children of God and heirs of glory, and as I have a little hope, small as it is, it is yet a hope that I, too, am a child of God, therefore a brother to all who are in the kingdom. Though weak and unworthy, I feel a desire to write to you, all the more because of my indebtedness to you for the paper, which has been coming regularly, for which I am very thankful to you. You will find inclosed two dollars to pay my subscription for the year. Again I must say, Thank you for your kindness in sending me the SIGNS so long a time without pay.

Well, brethren, I have felt for some time that I would write at least a little of my experience in grace, as I hope it is by the grace of God that I have been counted worthy of instruction, even under the chastening rod. Yes, I feel I know that I have been instructed by reproofs, as it is written in Proverbs vi.

Now, brother Chick or Ker, will either of you tell me through the SIGNS, that is, if you see fit to do so, what law is under consideration, as referred to in Proverbs vi. 20–22: "My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother"? &c. Now, brethren, as I asked the same question of a Missionary Baptist, also of a Methodist, both of them preachers, and as I differ with them, I would like to have your opinion as to who the mother is, &c., and what law is under consideration in the text.

Your brother in hope of the resurrection, if a brother at all,

R. C. SMITH.

(See editorial reply on page 247.)

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1914.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 TIMOTHY V. 3.

"HONOR widows that are widows indeed."

Not long ago we were asked to give our view of this subject, and shall now attempt to do so with such ability as may be given of the Lord.

The apostles were very careful in setting things in order not to omit anything commanded them of God. The ordinances seemed first in importance, and they were established in order and each church directed to observe them as commanded. Nothing should be added, nothing taken from them, they being perfect in the plan and purpose of the Master of the house. The rule of life, in the church, was kept before the people of God always by the apostles; not only individual members, but ministers were taught how they should behave themselves in the house of God. Paul particularly instructed Titus and Timothy with regard to their conduct toward all classes and sex. Each was to be an example of good works, holding fast the profession of their faith. In the beginning of this fifth chapter of Timothy Paul instructed him not to rebuke an elder, but entreat him as a father. The word "elder" as used here does not mean a minister of the gospel, only as he may be included with the aged, for an old man is meant by the word "elder." It would not have been becoming in Timothy to rebuke an old man in years and experience, he being a mere boy in the way, even though a minister of the gospel; hence Paul told him to entreat him as a father; yes, a father in Israel, who had traveled long the rugged way of the pilgrim. Should there seem a difference between them in understanding of Scripture or some point of order, Timothy should think of the old man as a father, and respect him as such, rather than feel that he knew all that could be known, and rebuke the old man for being less informed. If young men, sometimes young ministers, could only realize that it will require years of suffering, temptation, crosses and losses for them before they know as much as old men, it would be a great help to them and a comfort to their brethren. Not only was Timothy instructed as to how he should treat old men, but how he should treat younger ones: treat them as brethren, equals, fellows; then the elder women as mothers, giving them reverence, bestowing attention as a son should do. The younger women were to be treated as sisters, with all purity. Just as a brother would and should feel toward a sister in the flesh, so should he feel and act toward his sisters in the church—kind, gentle and thoughtful, desirous of their spiritual as well as moral welfare. After this the apostle gave, as it seems to us, what might be called the law of the church regarding the care and support of widows indeed. The word "indeed" designates the class of widows to be cared for by the church. A widow who has children to care for her is not a widow indeed. A widow who has nephews and nieces able to care for her is not a widow indeed. But a widow desolate, alone,

without means, with none to assist her, and her years, "threescore," prevent her from earning a living, is "a widow indeed." These are the class to "be taken into the number" for care and support by the church. To meet the question sure to be asked: But suppose a church is not able to take care of such widows? we will say that the churches so commanded by the apostle must have been able to care for their widows "indeed," else the instruction would not have been given. We know of no point of law, either of God or men, impossible to be kept. Every point of the Mosaic law could be kept and was kept by some. Saul of Tarsus, for instance, kept it strictly in the letter, so that he was blameless as touching the righteousness (obedience) thereof. It is possible to keep every point of law governing our country, though there be thousands of transgressors. Our government would not recognize as law any enactment that was impossible for its subjects to obey. Such law would make men involuntary transgressors. Therefore in considering these matters of the church we should understand that the apostles in giving such instructions were not binding impossibilities upon the churches. On one occasion Paul wrote the brethren at one place to take a collection for poor brethren in another. Because of the different circumstances he could not have reversed the matter and had the poor take a collection for the more able brethren. Along this line we should consider these things. A church able to care for widows indeed should do so, but on the other hand, those not able cannot be expected to do it, and Paul's instruction is not applicable to them at all. There are many "widows indeed" in different parts of our land worthy of this honor, who are members of churches able to care for them, yet often no attention is paid to them at all until the sad cry of want is heard directly or indirectly. When God gave his Son to die for us, and the Son shed his precious blood for the sins of his enemies, it really seems a very small thing for the followers of Christ to minister to his body in giving his brethren bread, water, clothing, shelter, and to visit them when sick and in prison. Now, as in the days of James the apostle, there is decidedly too much distinction made between the rich and the poor children of God. James rebuked sharply the rich for their treatment of the poor, and his rebuke is as good and needful now as then. In some places there seems to be an idea that a little mite of this world's goods adds greatly to the standing and dignity of the children of God, when indeed it is not the case at all. If children of God, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, ten thousand worlds like this would be less, if one possessed the whole, than the smallest mote that floats in the air in God's account. Then why should any of us think for a moment that a few dollars make us more important in the church or in our daily lives than the poor, "rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom"? Yet it is so, and as in the apostle's day, the good clothing and the gold ring get for those who wear them the best seats in the house, while the poor brother or sister may stand, or sit under the footstool of some one. We have no record that Jesus ever acted or intimated that he felt better socially than the poorest offcast of that age of the world. He associated with the most humble of mankind. He, the King of kings and the Lord of glory, washed the feet of men, giving the example of humility, not highmindedness, and said as he did, so should

his followers do. Have no man's person in admiration, do nothing by partiality.

We have now given such as we have on the subject, and leave the matter for the consideration of our readers. K.

PROVERBS VI. 20-22.

THE Proverbs of Solomon are speeches of wisdom, and much profit is gained by reading them and in meditating upon them. Many of them have a literal meaning good to observe, yet there is a spiritual application to each one far more important to the church. The children of the Israelites were instructed in the law, and there was special reward to the children who honored their father and mother. This would seem the literal application of the text under consideration. Special things are mentioned as abominable, and the son exhorted to refrain from those things, which under the law were forbidden. But it seems more necessary, in trying to answer our brother's request, to make mention of what seems to us the spiritual import of the text. First, we will call attention to the fact that a "son," a child, an heir, is addressed, and is reminded of his father's commandment and of the law of his mother. The commandments of our Father are given to none save his sons and daughters, and the law of our mother (the church) is the rule of life only to those born of her. Verse twenty-three says: "The command is a lamp, and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life." It is indeed wonderful to behold the perfection of the Scriptures. The command a lamp and the law light; these perfectly united. No lamp without the command, no light without the law. These are found in the church of God, therefore having the lamp and light the children of God are not ignorant concerning the commandments of God the Father and the law of their mother in the gospel dispensation. We have no hesitancy in saying that the law of Zion, the church of the firstborn, was in the mind of Solomon when he wrote the words of the text. A proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and the sowing of discord among brethren, are an abomination unto the Lord, hence are enumerated in the command of the Father and in the law of the mother, and reproof is sure if we depart from the lamp and light governing the deportment of all who profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord in this respect is no respecter of persons, but rewards every man according to his works.

Hoping this explanation may be satisfactory to brother Smith, we leave the subject. K.

THE ILLNESS OF ELDER F. A. CHICK.

As we were about to go to press with the SIGNS we received word from Elder Chick's family that he has not been so well during the past few days, and sleeps much of the time, but that the doctors are hopeful that his setback is only temporary. We do hope the Lord may be pleased to strengthen our dear brother, and that we may be able to give a more favorable report of his condition in our next issue.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE SABBATH.

We have been strongly urged by some two or three of our readers to give our views on the sabbaths which were enjoined on the people of Israel "throughout their generations." One of the number has desired us to give a reason why it was changed from the seventh to the first day of the week. We have frequently expressed our understanding on the subject in the past volumes of the Signs, and still retain only such views as we have frequently given on the subject. Other brethren have also from time to time written and had published in our columns their understanding in perfect harmony with our own. Having no new light to give we would decline writing further on the subject were it not that those who now urge us have not the files of our former volumes to refer to. Feeling bound to give such views as we have on all scriptural subjects when called to do so, we will briefly repeat that we have no reasons to give for changing the sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week. We search the Scriptures in vain to find any such change made by divine authority. Human laws are liable to change; they may require to be modified, amended, or abolished altogether, but it is not so with the law of God. Heaven and earth may pass away, but no jot or tittle of God's law can change until all is fulfilled. Those who profess at the present day to regard the sabbatic law as binding on the Gentiles, are responsible for changing the day specified in the law. We may address to them the interrogatory of the apostle: "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?" If the sabbatic law is binding upon us at all, we are bound to observe it as it came from the mouth of God, lest we may be charged, with the hypocritical Pharisees, of making void the law of God by our traditions. But the law commanding the observance of a legal sabbath was never given to the Gentiles at all. For about twenty-three hundred years from the creation of the world, not a word is recorded to indicate the existence of a sabbath day, nor in all the record of crime which provoked the deluge which destroyed the old world is the violation of a sabbath mentioned. Nor from the beginning of the world to the present day is there a charge recorded in the Scriptures against any but the descendants of Jacob for transgressing the law of the sabbath day. The first mention of a sabbath is found in Exodus xvi. 23, in which the institution was so new to the children of Israel that they went out to look for manna on that as on other days. In Exodus xx. 8–11, the institution is embraced in the ten commandments given to a people whom the Lord God said he had brought out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, &c. In Exodus xxxi. 12–17, Moses was commanded by the Lord to speak to the children of Israel, saying, "Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore, for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of

Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed." This sabbath was a sign and a covenant between God and the children of Israel, wherein they were sanctified or set apart from all the families of mankind forever, throughout their generations, extending from the date of giving them the law in the wilderness, until the time of the summing up of their generations, as in Matthew i. and Luke iii. Where can we find this or any similar sign given to the Gentiles? As a covenant, Moses declared that it was not only not given to the Gentiles, but that it had not been given to the patriarchs, their fathers. Hear him: "And Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and keep, and do them. The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day."

If this law had been given also to the Gentiles, in what respect could it have sanctified, or distinguished Israel from the rest of mankind? If it were also a sign to the Gentiles, what did it signify? as God had not brought the Gentiles out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, nor consecrated them for the sabbath of rest. If it were given to the Gentiles for a covenant, what were its stipulations? What promises did it record for, or guarantee to them? None whatever. Israel in and throughout their generations were the type of the spiritual Israel, or the church and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, in its gospel organization. The laws, ordinances and ceremonies enjoined on the carnal, or fleshly Israelites, including meats, drinks, holy days, new moons and sabbaths, were a shadow of things to come. As saith the apostle, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."—Col. ii. 16, 17. All these institutions, in their legal observance by that fleshly but typical people, but cast the shadow before of the body of Christ, which body is his church. (Eph. i. 23.) Hence as signs they signified those things which were to come, and as a covenant, they described that Christ whom God has given for a covenant unto his spiritual people.

The sabbath of the law, as a sign to Israel, signified a coming rest. As the Israelites rested from manual labor on the seventh day, were forbidden to gather manna, or to kindle fire, or to think their own thoughts, or to speak their own words, they nor their sons, or daughters, nor their manservants, nor maidservants, nor the stranger within their gates, on pain of death, so it signified a day of spiritual rest unto the people of God under the gospel dispensation; when the carnal Israelites should have fulfilled their typical record, and the gathering of the people should be to Shiloh, not to Moses, and when he should no longer be a Jew who was one outwardly in the flesh, but he should be a Jew who was one inwardly, and circumcision that of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God. Turn to the third and fourth chapters of the epistle to the Hebrews, and you will find a complete and perfect application of the type to its special antitype, of the

shadow to its appropriate substance. The spiritual Israelite, when circumcised in heart and spirit, becomes a believer on the Lord Jesus Christ, and ceaseth from his own works, as God did from his when he had created the world and rested on the seventh day, and blessed and hallowed it. Even so, says the inspired apostle, "We which have believed do enter into rest." While of them that do not believe, God has sworn that they should not enter into his rest, or his sabbath, for sabbath is rest, and God, by the mouth of his prophet, has declared that the wicked are like the troubled sea that cannot rest, which continually casteth up mire and dirt.

Instead of the sabbath of the law being given to prefigure another day of the week, to be substituted in its place, and used by Gentile "clergymen" for vending their Babylonish merchandise, its spiritual significance points to the day which was ushered in when Jesus arose from the dead, having finished transgression and made an end of sin, when he had redeemed his people from the wrath, the toil and labor of a yoke which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear. That day which the Lord has made, by the rising of the Sun of Righteousness with healing in his wings, the rising of that Sun that should never again go down, and who should secure to his redeemed, quickened, believing children that rest which remaineth to the people of God, and which was never found anywhere but in our Lord Jesus Christ, whose rest the prophet of the Lord said "shall be glorious." As in the sign or type given to the children of Israel, the six days of labor, in which all their servile works should be done, represents the legal dispensation under which the carnal tribes were held under a covenant of works, an endless routine of rites and carnal ordinances which could never make the doers of the service perfect. The seventh, or sabbath, foreshadowed a full and perfect release from the law of commandments, ordinances and unavailing works and an entrance into that rest which remaineth for the people of God. Weary and heavy laden with their own fruitless works, the imperfection of which continually drew down on them the curses of the law, quickened souls are called by the great Law-fulfiller to come unto him, and assured that they shall find rest to their souls. Instead of the yoke of Moses, which was a yoke of bondage to them, they are to put on Christ's yoke, which is easy, and bear his burden, which is light, and learn of him who is meek and lowly in spirit, and find rest to their souls. They are no more under the law, but under grace, redeemed from the law which was written on tables of stone, and brought under law to Christ, under the power and dominion of the law of the Spirit of life, which is in Christ Jesus, and free from the law of sin and death. Dead to the law which could not give life, and by the obedience of which no flesh can be justified in the sight of God, they are delivered by the body of Christ, that they may be lawfully married to him who has risen from the dead, that they may bring forth fruit unto God, not to Moses. The handwriting of ordinances is blotted out, and the law of commandments nailed to the cross, with all its meats, drinks, divers washings, new moons and sabbaths, and the law of the spirit of immortality written in their hearts, and in their inward parts recorded, as the royal law of liberty. This hallowed rest is God's holy sabbath to all who believe and have entered into it, and ceased from their own works as God did

from his. This holy sabbath of rest to the people of God was not only prefigured under the law by the seventh day sabbath, but also by all the sabbatic days and years in which the children of Israel and their lands, their cattle, their servants, their strangers within their gates were to rest. It was also set forth by the land of Canaan, in which Israel rested from the fatigues of the wilderness, and also, as we have seen, it was signified by the day in which God rested from the works of creation. The law of the legal sabbath commanded total abstinence from servile labor. No manna was to be gathered on that day, no fires to be kindled, no going out of their tents was allowed, an unbroken rest was commanded, and the penalty for any violation of this law was death. But let the reader observe that none but the Israelites and their households were capable of either keeping or of desecrating the legal sabbath, or could be subjected to its penalties; so under the gospel dispensation, none but the people of God, who are quickened and have the faith of the Son of God, without which it is impossible to please God, can enter into spiritual rest, keep or desecrate the spiritual and antitypical sabbath of the Lord our God. As the carcasses of the unbelieving Israelites fell in the wilderness, and they could not enter into rest because of unbelief, so falls the carcasses of God's children in the wilderness, because that in their flesh, or carcasses, there dwells no good thing, no faith, for faith and confidence in God are not fruits of the flesh, but of the Spirit. "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."— 1Cor. xv. 50. With the mind of Christ, which is in the christian, he serves the law of God, enters into rest, and hallows the holy sabbath of the Lord his God, suppresses his own thoughts, listens not to human reason, but delights in the revelations of the Spirit of truth and holiness. To think their own thoughts, or to speak their own words, or to make any provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof, is a violation of the law of Christ, and they who are guilty of such desecration of the sabbath die short of the promised land, for they cannot enter rest because of unbelief. "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace," or sabbath. "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."—Rom. viii. 6, 13, 14. The christian knows from his own experience that all his doubts, fears, carnal reasonings and unbelief, which hinder him from entering sweetly, calmly, confidently into his sabbath of spiritual rest, arise from his fleshly nature, for with his mind he serves the law of God, but with his flesh the law of sin, and when the law of his members bring him into captivity to the law of sin, which is in his members, he cannot enter into rest; he breaks his sabbath, he is pelted with stones, he dies, that is, his carcass falls in the wilderness. But, though his carcass, or body, is dead because of sin, his spirit, or the new man, is life because of righteousness. To rest in Christ his faith must triumph over his fears and doubts, his unbelief; but when his flesh predominates, he is led by the flesh, he dies, and his carcass falls.

There is also a fleshly propensity in the christian, when dreary and cold and hungry and starving for spiritual life, joy, comfort and food, to attempt some expedient of human origin for relief; to

supply present light and warmth he would gather sticks, kindle a fire, compass himself with sparks and attempt to walk in the light of his own fire and warm himself by its heat, but this is sabbath-breaking, and this shall he have of the Lord's hand: he shall lie down in sorrow. (Exodus xxxv. 3; Numbers xv. 32, 36; Isaiah l. 11.) Or if to satisfy his craving appetite for food he shall go forth contrary to the word of the Lord to seek supplies of manna, he shall find none. The gospel sabbath of rest to the people of God requires that we shall discard all confidence in the flesh, and trust alone in God, resting on his oath and promise, confiding in his wisdom, power and grace, being perfectly satisfied with his dealings with us, casting all our care upon him, waiting patiently and submissively the openings of his providence, and in whatsoever condition we may be, therewith to be content, knowing that all things are working for our good, and that our light afflictions, which are but for a season, do work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not on the things that are seen, but on the things which are not seen, for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal. Those therefore who have the faith of the Son of God which overcomes the world, and which relies unwaveringly on the power, providence and grace of God, are Israelites in a spiritual sense, and the gospel sabbath is to them what the ceremonial sabbath was in the type to the carnal Israelites: God's sign and covenant with them. As a sign it signifies to them that God is their refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble, that the Lord is their shepherd, they shall not want, and as a covenant it secures them all the promises of God which are in Christ Jesus, yea, and in him amen to the glory of God by us. Let then the scribes and Pharisees of the age quarrel and strive about their days of the week, their new moons, their meat, drink and legal sabbaths, they have only the shadow, or what once was a shadow, of things to come, but as the things to come of which they were the shadow have now come, our faith embraces the substance, and we will not debate with them about the shadow. It is enough for us to know that the inspired apostles have decided that the Jewish sabbath was only typical of spiritual rest. Those who would perpetuate the observance of the shadow now, virtually deny that the substance has come, as do the Jews who continue the other rites and sacrifices of Judaism deny that the true Messiah has come. But when any of God's quickened children are allured and led astray in these things we remind them of the apostle's words, Gal. iv. 10, 11, "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain." Those who observe a legal sabbath, whether on the seventh, or the first, or any other day of the week, clearly indicate that they are not under grace, but under the law, that they are not come to Mount Zion, but are trying to approach the Mount Sinai, and that they are strangers to that sabbatic rest which remains to the people of God. But although both parties are manifestly under the curse, being of the works of the law, yet they who observe the seventh day are far more consistent than they who substitute another day. Those who contend for a first day sabbath tell us that the first day has been substituted for the seventh in honor of the resurrection of Christ, but when, where or by whom the change has been made they have never been able to tell.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Jan. 15, 1865.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Violet Hatch, daughter of Allen and Jane Barber, was born April 16th, 1812, in Virginia, and died March 12th, 1914, at her home in Jamestown, Ohio, aged nearly 102 years. In the year 1835 Grandma Hatch (as we all called her) came to Ohio and was united in marriage to Ebenezer Hatch in 1846. In the summer of 1835, upon relation of her experience, she was received a member of the Cæsars Creek Predestinarian Baptist Church, being baptized by Elder George Reeves, then their pastor, and she remained a steadfast and faithful member for over seventy years. Her husband was also a member of the same church, and they donated the plot of ground for the meeting-house, which still stands, and the brethren still hold their meetings there at irregular times, the church being supplied by Elders N. Peters, C. E. Jackson, W. I. Carnell and the writer, since the death of their pastor, Elder L. Bavis. Grandma Hatch was blessed in many ways above others. A life of over fivescore years, a deep understanding of the Scriptures, a memory to retain what she read, the ability to converse on almost any portion of the Bible, sight to see, in fact all her senses except her hearing, which was a little dull. Her mind was clear until the very last. A year ago I had a very pleasant visit with her. She told me of her visits with Elder Gilbert Beebe, Elder J. F. Johnson, and many others whom I cannot now recall, and among other things showed me a hymn-book that Elder Beebe had given her. Also she was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which was a source of great comfort to her in her latter years. As a counsellor in church order, she was above the average, careful in dealing, wishing to abide by the law and the testimony, asking for the old paths and a what saith the Lord? in all things, very firm, yet kind. Several years ago she spoke to me about preaching her funeral sermon, and it seemed to me that the hand of the Lord was in it, for I had been absent for about a year in the western states, and on the day of my arrival in Green County her spirit took its flight and her long life was ended. At her funeral I tried to speak from the words of the Savior, "I am the resurrection and the life," to a large congregation of friends and relatives, also seven of the ministers of Jamestown, and when I had finished my discourse I asked for remarks from them. Four of them spoke of her wonderful memory and the pleasant talks they had had with her about the Scriptures, and how we should take heed to her sayings, &c. Her remains were laid at rest in the cemetery near by, and as her body was lowered in the grave I felt reconciled, fully believing that God, who had watched over her all her life, and had given her a good hope in Christ, would in the resurrection speak, and she would come forth to see her Savior as he is, and be like him, and be satisfied. For several years Grandma Hatch was taken care of by her step-daughter-in-law, Mrs. Clara Hatch, whose whole aim seemed to be to make her happy. Every comfort mortal hands could give was hers, and I think of the saying of the Savior: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." We bow in humble submission to the will of God, who doeth all things well.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

Frances Mahala Thompson, who departed this life March 24th, 1914, was born near Hopewell, in the town of Crawford, Orange Co., N. Y., Oct. 24th, 1840, and was the youngest child of Horace Thompson and Mahala Horton. Her only brother and three sisters passed away, leaving her the last representative of the family. She had been a resident of Middletown from early life. Her mother died in Circleville Sept. 24th, 1861. She had had very good health during her years, and took part in the pleasures and pains of life. She owned a property on Sproat St., where she lived when she was stricken with paralysis, Dec. 18th, 1913, and suffered much until about three weeks before her death, when she was removed to the Middletown Sanitarium, where she seemed to improve, until the death summons came suddenly and she passed to her heavenly home, leaving Harrison Thompson, her brother-in-law, and his six children, one son and five daughters, their mother being her sister Catherine, who departed this life a few years ago; also three nephews, Horace and Gilbert Beebe Horton, and their half-brother, Frank M. Hicks, who was named for his aunt, sons of her sister Elizabeth. Mrs. Leander Brink and her brother, Henry R. Horton, are an aunt and uncle, and with a few cousins are left to mourn their loss.

Her funeral took place March 26th, at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse. The services were conducted by Elder H. C. Ker, and her remains were placed in Hillside Cemetery with the others of the family who had gone before. She will be missed, but remembered by those who are left. Her mother and sisters Elizabeth and Catherine were members of the Primitive Baptist church, this city, having been baptized by Elder Gilbert Beebe.

SARAH WILKINSON.

Captain Charles Albert Buck was born in Dorchester, New Brunswick, Canada, Sept. 21st, 1848, and died in Hartford, Conn., March 11th, 1914. He was sick only three days, of double pneumonia. When a young man he joined the Old School Baptist Church in his native town. At the age of thirteen he went to sea, and followed the sea until 1887, when he came to Hartford, Conn. Whenever his vessel was in New York he attended the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church. He was a strong believer in the election, predestination and sovereignty of God. He was a

reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years. He was a kind husband and a good father. He is survived by his widow, two sons and three daughters.

After Scripture reading and prayer by a Baptist minister, he was laid to rest.

HIS DAUGHTER.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE following appointments have been made for Elder J. M. Fenton, of Philadelphia, Pa.:

Kingston, Saturday evening, April 18th; Olive and Hurley, April 19th; Union Grove, April 20th; brother Faulkner's, April 21st; Vega, April 22nd; Roxbury, Mead sisters, April 23rd; Albany, April 24th; Schoharie, April 25th and 26th.

J. B. SLAUSON.

MY appointments as arranged for the present with the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada are as follows:

Commencing with the first Sunday in April, at Dunwich; Ekfrid, second Sunday; Lobo, third Sunday; Duart, fourth Sunday; St. Thomas, Wednesday evening following the first Sunday; London, Friday evening before third Sunday and the fifth Sunday when there are five Sundays in the month.

J. B. SLAUSON.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

THE address of Elder Geo. L. Weaver is now 694 E. 125th St., Cleveland, Ohio, where his correspondents should address him.

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association will convene with the Harford Church, Harford Co., Md., on Wednesday, May 20th, 1914, and continue three days. Visitors via Baltimore will arrive in time to leave over Maryland and Pennsylvania R. R., about 3 p. m., for Forest Hill, on Tuesday, the 19th. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, and we hope to have a goodly number with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Moderator.

FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Baptist Church, in New York city, to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (10th), 1914, and continue three days. The meetinghouse is No. 1216 Intervale Avenue, Bronx, near the Freeman Street station of the Subway. Take Subway train marked "Bronx," bound north, at any station south of 96th Street. A cordial welcome awaits all who can meet with us.

JOHN McCONNELL, Pastor.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 82. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1914. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

1 CORINTHIANS XII. 18.

"BUT now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him."

The above text has come into my mind many times of late, and I have thought something about the meaning of it all, and felt that the apostle had in view the wonderful work of the Lord in determining the place each and every member of the body of Christ should occupy, leaving out all the theological training of men, and confines the arranging of his body in harmony with his own training and his own schooling, that there be no schism in the body. The apostle does not have reference to the Lord's different servants only, but every member. The apostle said Christ was given to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who filleth all in all. The apostle in the twenty-seventh verse of this twelfth chapter of 1st Corinthians says: "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church; first, apostles; secondarily, prophets; thirdly, teachers; after that, miracles; then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." He asks: "Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?" &c. No one can read the twelfth chapter of 1st Corinthians without learning that the church of Christ, or body of Christ, is a well organized body, and that there is discipline and order in every part, and that none has any hand in making the order of this body but God, for he hath set every member in the body as it hath pleased him. In calling the many members in their order, Peter, James and John, Paul and Barnabas, and the seven who were to look after the serving of tables, and the Marys and the Marthas, each is set in the body as it hath pleased him. The apostle has said there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. How would man go about it to arrange the body of Christ? Men have schools of training to fit men to do certain things in the church of men, but do they know where to place each one? And how about the diversities of gifts? Might they not get too many ministers, or too many prophets, or too many teachers, or not enough of some kinds, and there be a schism in the body? I have thought there are some gifts men would lack in knowing how to supply, especially the

gifts of miracles and healings, but in the body, or church of Christ, the Lord furnishes the different gifts. One cannot say, I would rather teach than preach, hence I will teach; or one cannot say, I would rather prophesy than preach, hence I will prophesy, for the Lord hath set the members, every one of them, in the body as it hath pleased him. The foot cannot say, Because I am not the hand I am not of the body; the ear cannot say, Because I am not the eye I am not of the body. Let us suppose, as Paul has said, the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? and if they were all one member, where were the body? Paul says those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are just as necessary, and those members of the body which seem to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more honor. But God hath tempered the body together, giving more honor to the part which lacked, for now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. Can any one who has ever felt the power of God's saving grace, and also seen what they are by nature, and what they must be by grace, think for one moment that God has left any part of the arrangement of his church to the will or choice of man? Has there ever been any power delegated of God to place any of the members of the church in any part of it? We must acknowledge that Christ did not delegate that power to the apostles, for God hath set each and every member in the body according to his own pleasure, there being diversities of these many gifts, but always by the same Spirit; and there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord; and there are diversities of operations, but the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every one of the members of the body, to profit withal. To one, by the Spirit is given the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge, to another faith by the same Spirit, and so on. Shall we allow for a moment that any one but God could have any hand in setting any one in the church? for no man knoweth the Father, but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. I have wondered where the free will of man would come in, in the face of all this testimony, declaring that God himself set every member in the church; he did not even ask the help of one of the apostles in arranging the order of his church. He gave gifts unto men, for the edifying of the body of Christ, until we all come in the unity of the spirit, or faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. This is what all this order in the body of Christ is for: that we might come in the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the complete body of Christ, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, in order that we might be steadfast, that we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive. Therefore we learn the necessity of the various gifts in the church; it is that the brethren be well established in the doctrine, and not tossed to and fro. These gifts are all edifying to the church, causing a unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, and through this instruction they grow unto a perfect man, or the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. The meaning is, that the church takes on a healthy growth until the fullness of the stature of Christ. The apostle in summing up how mem-

bers are set in the church, said the Ephesian brethren were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they had in time past been Gentiles in the flesh, that at that time they were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope and were without God in the world, but that they which were in Christ Jesus afar off are now made nigh by the blood of Christ. They had been dead in trespasses and sin, but now they who had been thus dead were quickened and raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ, for the special purpose that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace toward us. One would think from the testimony before us of the complete order and arrangement of the body, or church of Christ, with every member set in the body as it pleased our heavenly Father, and the diversity of gifts for the edifying of the body, that none would be carried away by every wind of doctrine, that the hearts of all God's children should be well established in the eternal sovereignty of our God over all events, they being the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Hence he has not only set each member in the body of Christ, but they are created in him and chosen in him, and he ordained the good works they should walk in, having even their feet placed upon the Rock, Christ. He has not only set each member in the body, and created them in the body, but has placed their feet and has also said that not even the gates of hell shall prevail against them; and having given his life for them, he declares they shall never perish. The apostle has gone further, and has declared there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, those God has set there and created thus. It is true Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, but it is God that giveth the increase. The apostle has said that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. God loved Jacob, but hated Esau, and hence placed Jacob in the body, or church; also he rejected Ishmael, but set Isaac in the body, just as it hath pleased him. The saints are not their own, they are bought with a price; their bodies are the members of Christ and the temple of God, and are builded together for an habitation; through the Spirit they as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, God setting every member where he pleases. They are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord. They are compacted together by that which every joint supplieth, making increase of the body of Christ. How well this all is fitly framed together, every member set where the Father hath pleased. How wonderful and complete is the work of God in the creation and order of the church of Christ, so compacted by that which every joint supplieth, making increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. O what wondrous love! Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ in that eternal inheritance which is held in reserve for them that are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready at all times to be revealed in the last time. Hence one must conclude and understand that Christ has

a complete body, or church, that was chosen in him before the foundation of the world; that he hath set the members within it as it has pleased him, and this church is the bride, or spouse, of Christ, that went in with him to the marriage feast. This body, or church, or bride, the Lamb's wife, was seen by the revelator John coming down from God out of heaven, as a bride adorned for her husband. Christ loved her and gave himself for her, that he might cleanse her by the washing of water by the word, that he might present her unto himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish. The Bridegroom said there were threescore queens and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number. Yes, no end of them, but his dove, his spouse, is the only one of her mother, she is the only daughter of Zion, she is as fair as the moon and as clear as the sun, and as terrible as an army with banners. It was commanded of Isaiah to go unto this daughter of Zion and tell her that her warfare is over, and her iniquity pardoned, and that she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins; for the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin. The apostle Paul in his letter to the Colossians said, "Let no man beguile you of your reward, in a voluntary humility and worshiping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind." Here the apostle warns against a voluntary humility, a humility one can put on and take off as one pleases. Also he warns against the worship of angels, because in doing so one would be intruding into those things he hath not seen; something God has not commanded, something no one has seen, but simply such ones are vainly puffed up by their fleshly mind, and such ones the apostle says are not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. The Head here spoken of is Christ, from which the body by joints and bands have nourishment; here, we are informed, is where each member receives nourishment: they are knit together by joints and bands, and compacted together by that which every joint supplieth. What a wonderful body, or church, so completely united to the Head, and every part receiving the proper nourishment that every joint supplieth. How wonderful it all is! Are we to suppose for one moment that such a compact body, so minutely joined to the Head and so perfectly supplied, can be said to be any other than the full and complete body of Christ? And if God hath set every member in the body as it hath pleased him, can it be thought that any one will ever be joined to this body, or church, only such as those whom the Father has set in the body? And can we for a moment think that with the perfect order for supplying all the members in every part of the body, or church, that any of them can perish when they are declared to be rooted and built up in him and established in the faith? When we contemplate the wonderful works of God in creating our natural bodies, we would not think there could be any member attached to our bodies only those God created and placed in the body, and we understand the number of the natural members of our natural bodies have never been increased, but have remained full and complete to this day; therefore how much more impossible to increase the number of the members of the complete body of Christ; yet we are told that by

the proper nourishment there is an increase in the body of God, not in numbers, but each member increases in love and worship. Man might put on all the voluntary humility he desired, and make long prayers for a pretence, yet that would not give the complete body of Christ any additional members, for our God sets every one in the body just when and where it suits him. He has said that all his children shall be taught of the Lord, and that they all shall know him, from the very least unto the very greatest, and that he will bring his sons from far, and his daughters from the ends of the earth, even every one that is called by his name. The whole Jewish nation was rejected at the time of the apostles, except the elect, for Paul, in speaking of this thing, said, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." Christ, in speaking to these Jews, said, Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep. They were not members of the body, or true church of Christ, for God had not set them in the body, because they were not his sheep. The apostle Paul wrote many admonitions unto his son Timothy, in order that Timothy might know how he ought to behave himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. Now in this we have it plainly expressed that the house of God is the church of the living God, and the apostle said, If our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. In this explanation the apostle would assure all of God's children whom he hath set in the house that when this earthly house (our natural bodies) of this tabernacle is dissolved (by death) we have a building of God awaiting us, a house not made with hands; this house is eternal in the heavens. The apostle means by this, that when our mortal bodies die, we have the complete body of Christ left us to be clothed with. All the members of this body of Christ must always be members of this body, for while our natural bodies have an end, yet the body of Christ is eternal. The apostle says, In this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house from heaven. How wonderfully true is this; how great have been the groanings of all of God's feeble children while finishing out their allotted time in this world, so earnestly and prayerfully and longingly desiring to be clothed with their house from heaven, if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. The apostle seems to deplore the condition of those who are not members of this house, in that they would be found naked. How wonderful is this promise to his dying members, that they shall be clothed with their house from heaven, and not be found naked, for this covering is all that any have to hide their nakedness. All the sins of each and every member of the body, or church of Christ, are completely covered by this house from heaven. The apostle says that we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened, not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon. How earnestly have all the poor and afflicted people of God groaned, being burdened with the aches and pains of this old, sinful body, and the constant proof of the vileness of this body, and the certain knowledge that within this body dwelleth no good thing; hence it causes them to groan, and they are burdened with a heavy load of sin, and desire to be clothed with their house from heaven, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

The apostle says we are always confident that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord, and that we are confident and willing rather to be absent from the body and present with the Lord. How true this is with every tempest-tossed child of God when they have seen the unprofitableness of their nature, and can see nothing but groanings and burdens in this life; if their lot in this life be fourscore years, yet is there labor and sorrow. How often we hear the aged brethren and sisters who feel their race is nearly run, and have felt the unprofitableness of their lives, groan and desire earnestly to be released from cumbrous clay, and be clothed with that building of God, clothed with their house from heaven. Many are the times I have heard the poor, feeble, suffering children of God tell how anxiously they were waiting to be clothed upon with that complete body of Christ. When we, with anticipation, look longingly for that release from earthly toil, earthly commotions and earthly sufferings and vexations of spirit, we do so earnestly desiring that if we are members of that body of Christ that he hath set us in the body just as it hath pleased him.

NEWTON PETERS.

FOREST GROVE, Oregon, March 9, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I am sending you a letter from Elder J. F. Beeman, by his request. We enjoyed reading it, and think it in harmony with the doctrine held by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which we enjoy reading. We missed your editorial, but enjoyed Elder Ker's.

J. H. BEAMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., Feb. 18, 1914.

J. H. AND JEMIMA BEAMAN—DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER:—Yours of the 2nd inst. received and highly appreciated. In regard to the ancestors of your family, it was of interest, but when you spoke of our Royal Ancestry way back, before the mountains came up that the sea might be bounded, you touched a chord that vibrated with love which leaves in darkness all forms of earthly love. I have often thought of the ignorance and foolishness of some very pious and religious (?) people, when they tried to speak about the love of God, quoting from John: "God is love." Now, say they, any one who loves is of God, for God is love. According to their idea, any kind of earthly love is the love of God. How foolish, but then they are ignorant of God's love. The prophet calls this love eternal love, and the apostle Paul calls it great love. It surely is great love that he could love us when we were dead in sins, the same eternal love wherewith he loved us before the foundation of the world, when we were hid in his Son, and decreed that we should be conformed to the image of Christ Jesus the Lord, who was appointed heir of all things.

In trying to answer you about the judgment day, I suppose you have reference to the day spoken of by many religious people, and set forth by them: that there will be a general judgment day at the end of this natural world, or after it is restored, when all classes of men, and all men of every class, out of every kindred, tongue and people, shall be assembled before God in his high court, that he may find out for a certainty who are entitled to go to heaven, and who must go to destruction. In trying to answer you I shall not try, as some do these days, to prove that there is no hell, only the grave. First, I want to say that it becomes the Lord's people at all times to be more anxious about them-

selves and their future prospects than to try to find out just how the Lord is going to treat the wicked after they die. I believe that there will be a great day at the sound of the last trumpet, but this shall call the elect of God from all parts of the earth and heaven. Eph. i. 10: "In the dispensation of the fullness of times," all in Christ shall be gathered, "both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him." None outside of Christ shall be gathered together in this oneness. Some people seem to think from the Lord's parable of sheep and goats, that they are not separated until the last day. Notice Matthew xxv. 31: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." Before him, at that time, all nations shall be gathered. Is not this the judgment day? I ask, When is the judgment day? I answer from Matthew, When Christ shall sit upon the throne of his glory. Two proofs from the apostles ought to suffice, but more might be given setting forth the power of Jesus in the gospel day, and in his gospel kingdom. All Old School Baptists admit, and rejoice in it, too, that Jesus prayed the truth to his Father, recorded in John xvii. 2, when he said, "As thou hast given him [Jesus] power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." Here Jesus speaks of his power. In Heb. i. 3, the testimony that after Jesus had put away our sins, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, and God saith to the Son: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever."—Eighth verse. And, "Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."—Thirteenth verse. See also Psalms xlv. 6, 7. That he is at the right hand of the Majesty on high is testified to in Rom. viii. 34, Mark xvi. 19, Psalms cx. 1, Matthew xxii. 44, Mark xii. 36, Luke xx. 42, Acts ii. 34, 1 Cor. xv. 25. That Jesus is at the right hand of God in the throne of his glory, far above all other powers that can be named, and that all things are under his feet, see Eph. i. 20–23, Heb. viii. 1, x. 12, 13, xii. 2, 1 Peter iii. 22. That Jesus ever lives to make intercession for us, see Rom. viii. 34, Heb. viii. 25, ix. 24, 1 Tim. ii. 5, 1 John ii. 1. Is not this the gospel day, when the power of his Spirit is felt in his saints, prophesied by Isaiah xlii. 1–4, when Christ should bring forth judgment to the Gentiles, when he should not cry nor lift up his voice in the street, (none of these noisy revivals) when he should not fail or be discouraged until he set judgment in the earth, and brought forth judgment unto truth, and the isles should wait for his law? I think that this is the notable day of the Lord, the sabbath, and that his saints are judged. They are made to confess that they are sinners. He hears their cry, (Psalms xl.) and gives beauty for ashes and the oil of joy for mourning. (Isaiah lxi.) They are brought to judgment, they feel the condemning sentence of God's law, they are made to cry for mercy; as blind men they are brought by a way they knew not, and are led in paths that they had never trodden; songs of praise fill their hearts, and though they shall be tossed with tempest, they shall never be brought to judgment the second time; that faith, the faith of God's elect, is once, and only once, delivered unto the saints. A perfect work is done, an indelible impression is made in the heart, circumcised in heart. The saint having received His fullness, and grace for grace, the only dread that remains for him in the future is the voice

that can be seen, as well as being heard: Come, thou blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Are not the goats always on the left hand of God, so to speak? The calling of his people from among the goats places them on his right hand. If the saints must undergo a formal trial after they have tasted the powers of the world to come, why does Paul tell them, Ye are no more under the law, but under grace? Again, when Paul is speaking of the great resurrection day (1 Cor. xv.,) if God's people are going to be detained until God shall try them in court, or judge them, why then does he say, Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump? The connection shows that the "we" here are the saints only, for the dead here spoken of shall be raised incorruptible; which could not include the wicked. Nowhere is it taught that the wicked shall put on immortality, else where is the victory of the saints over death and their enemies? The wicked can never sing, Death is swallowed up in victory. Another place, 1 Thess. iv. 17, dispels all doubt about the detention of God's people on the day of the sounding of the last trump: "Then we [those who believe in Jesus] which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." There is a judgment spoken of in the Scriptures, recorded in several places, but I do not think that they disagree with Paul's teaching which I have mentioned. In Deut. xxxii. 36, it says that the Lord shall judge his people. Also in Psalms cxxxv. 14, judgment shall begin at the house of God. See Mal. iii. 1–5. Is not this the work of the Spirit in the gospel day? For it is written, God shall judge his people. See Eccl. xii. 14. Judgment day, see Mark xii. 36, Acts xvii. 30, 31, John xii. 48, Rom. ii. 16, 1 Cor. iv. 5. God's Son the judge, John v. 22–27, 2 Cor. v. 10. Christ judge of the living and the dead, Acts x. 42, 1 Peter iv. 5, xiv. 10, 2 Tim. iv. 1. Day of crowning and the last trump, 2 Tim. iv. 8. Now is the judgment of this world, gospel day, John xii. 31. Judgment shall be laid to the line, that is exactly according to justice, Isaiah xxviii. 7. God is the judge of his people, see Psalms l. 6, lxxvii. 7. God is the judge, the lawgiver and the King of his people, he will save them, Isaiah xxxiii. 22. Judgment does not always mean condemnation, or a sentence of death, or consigning people to punishment, it often means discernment, discrimination, decision. I believe that in many places in the Scriptures where the word "judgment" occurs, it means discrimination, or decision, executing what had previously been decided upon to be done. The end of the world is sometimes spoken of, meaning the gospel day, the last dispensation to the children of men, as in 1 Cor. x. 11, Upon whom the ends of the world are come. In the last two verses of the ninth chapter of Hebrews the judgment spoken of there, I think, means simply decision, or distributing the inheritance. Notice how the apostle uses the words of comparison: "as" and "so," to illustrate to our understanding the great importance of Christ's power to execute his own last will and testament; because he had power to lay down his life, that made the testament legal, of force; and power to take his life again, that gave him the right, and qualified him to execute his own testament, seeing that he ever lives

to make intercession for all the saints. He is well acquainted with his own will, which he sealed with his blood; it is not needful that he must have a lawyer, or assistants, as men do who are executors of wills, that they may know the stipulations contained in the wills which they are executing, and in finding all the heirs, but Jesus, who is the anointed of the Father, knows all the intricacies of his last precious testament, and O, thank the Lord Jehovah, he will find every heir, for they are kept, and all their inheritance given unto them. To quote Hebrews ix. 27, 28: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." If the connecting word in the twenty-seventh verse was "and" instead of "but" we might conclude that it meant differently, and that the judgment was in line with the appointment of death; but the word "but" disjoints it from the condemnation of death, and points to the temporal inheritances of men. The colon after judgment indicates that the attention of the reader is called to that which follows. The meaning seems to be that all men are appointed to die once, but after they die the judgment of their goods takes place; that is, the executors of their wills decide who are the heirs, what the amount for each heir, and after this decision they distribute the inheritances. So Christ was once offered. The word "once" is all-important to notice here. See Hebrews vii. 27, For this he did once, when he offered up himself; and ix. 12: By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place. Verse 26: But now once in the end of the world. 1 Peter iii. 18: For Christ also hath once suffered for sins. To return to Hebrews ix. 28: "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him [there will be no fierce judgment for those who are looking unto Jesus] shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation." He shall appear to the broken-hearted, those who have fallen on the "stone and have been broken," not to judge, bringing up their sins again, but shall appear before them without any sin, and shall say, Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee. (Songs iv. 7.) Once more, the last clause of the twenty-seventh verse, ninth chapter, is a subsidiary clause, and the primary, or principal meaning goes over to the beginning of the twenty-eighth verse.

Now, dear brother and sister, I have used very little if any Scriptures from Revelation, as I feel that much of it is dark to me, especially the judgments. After reading this, if you think it worthy a place in the SIGNS, you may forward it to the editors. There is here much more than I expected to write, but I have left room for worlds of thought.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

CERULEAN, Kentucky.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—There is, and has been much said about the heathen perishing for the want of the gospel, and that it is the duty of the church to send the gospel to them. I would earnestly inquire, Where can such duty be found? In the first place, it looks somewhat strange that men would claim to have power to either send or carry the gospel anywhere, if the gospel is the power of God, and Paul says it is. Then it is God's power that sends men, and nowhere in the Bible do we find that any one that was sent failed to go, or failed to preach the power that sent him; neither do we know of Jesus sending any out without

instructing them what to preach; neither do we know of any one who was sent by him that did not obey the instruction given. We want to notice who it was that Jesus called and sent out, and for what purpose he sent them. He called unto him his twelve disciples, he names them; these Jesus sent forth and commanded them, saying, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go [not send] rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand."—Matt. x. 5–7. This command was carried out. (Mark vi. 12.) He also sent out seventy others under the same restrictions. (See Luke x. 1–9.) After Jesus had been crucified and had risen from the tomb, he spake to the eleven, saying, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations."—Matt. xxviii. 18. Note that they were no more under restrictions as to where they were to go, but were instructed as to what to preach: Teach all nations, "to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." The "all nations," were the Jews and Gentiles. Mark, in speaking of the commission, said that he (Jesus) appeared unto the eleven and said unto them, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Now if they obeyed this command, then the Gentiles have heard it preached, as well as the Jews, hence it is ours to search the Scriptures for the desired information. "And they went forth and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."—Mark xvi. 20. Now if they went everywhere, did they not go into all the world? "But I say, Have they not heard? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."—Rom. x. 18. The prophet had long before foretold of the gathering in of the Gentiles into the fold. Jesus said, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."—John x. 16. Were not those other sheep the Gentiles? and if so, and they never hear the gospel preached by man, will they sink down to hell because there was no missionary board established prior to the seventeenth century, by which to offer them salvation on the terms of propositions? Hear Isaiah: "Arise, shine: for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."—Isaiah lx. 1–3. "A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."—Luke ii. 32. "The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God."—Isaiah lii. 10. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come."—Matt. xxiv. 14. It has been shown that the gospel has been preached and that the end came: the end of the law dispensation. "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man passeth into it."—Luke xvi. 16. "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled."—Matt. xxiv.

34. "So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations."—Matt i. 17. Forty-two in all. Abraham was born over two thousand years before Christ, so a generation would last nearly fifty years; hence it is very evident that the gospel had been preached, and I think signs that were spoken of, so far as we can understand them, have been fulfilled. I may be wrong in this, if so, I want to be righted, and hope that some one will set me right. I am slow to believe that Christ meant the end of time, or the final winding up of all things during that generation. If so, what will become of that generation? it was not to pass until all things were fulfilled. It would be at this time nearly nineteen hundred years old. I would like for some one to write on this. Let us further examine the testimony concerning the preaching of the gospel. Peter said, "Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel and believe."—Acts xv. 7. Paul and Barnabas, and certain others of them, declared the conversion of the Gentiles, and it caused great joy unto all the brethren. See Acts xiii. 47, 48; xxvi. 16, 17; Col. i. 3–6, 23. "We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints; for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth." Verse twenty-three reads, "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister."

Now I do think that I have shown that the commission has been fulfilled and was done by the apostles some sixteen or seventeen hundred years before Fuller, Cary or Judson set out to accomplish the work.

Yours in hope,

D. R. TURNER.

FRAGMENTS.

THE preacher may have some particular person in his mind to whom he is trying to give a word of comfort, or possibly a word of needed reproof or exhortation, but in my view he will seldom, if ever, succeed in reaching his intended mark. If his message has been noticed at all by the one at whom he aimed it, its whole force and meaning was probably lost upon him, or it was immediately handed over to some person unthought of by the preacher. It is not for the servant to decide as to who is the especial lamb or sheep that he is going to feed; it is not for him to say for what particular Ruth he is going to let fall some handfuls on purpose. That is for the Lord to decide. He sends by the hand of him by whom he will send, and the word that he sends never fails to reach the heart of the one to whom he sends it, and the praise goes directly back to him.

I have heard this of Mr. William Gadsby: He noticed a certain young nobleman attending his meeting for awhile. He hoped it might be the Lord's purpose to bring the young man into the church,

and had him in his mind when he was presenting some portions of gospel truth in his sermons. After awhile the young nobleman ceased to attend the meetings, and one day there came a beggar boy before the church asking for admission and baptism. In telling his experience he referred to some of those things in Mr. Gadsby's sermons which he had preached when the young nobleman was present. Mr. Gadsby said: "Where were you when you heard me preach? I never saw you in the church." "No," the boy replied, "I did not feel worthy to be in the congregation, I was around back, under the stairway." And Mr. Gadsby said, "What I intended for the young nobleman, the Lord sent to the beggar boy under the stairs."

SOMETIMES I fear that I am losing my gift, if ever I had one, or if the church ever had a gift in me. But if so, what can I do? I am so cold at times, and I cannot warm my cold heart by anything I can do. Sometimes I fear that the love of God is gone out in my heart, and I cannot kindle it again. I cannot put love into my heart, and that is the one essential thing in any gift. Without love no gift is of any real value to the Lord's people. Whatever power there may appear to be in the speaking, or writing, or other work, of any one, without love he is of no value to the Lord's hungry poor. If the love of Christ does not constrain him in his work nothing else will cause him to reach the needy soul. To one who is in a dry and thirsty land where no water is, and is calling unto the Lord for help, no power of thought or fervency of expression, no zeal, no self-devotion, will be of any avail, unless love is dwelling and moving in all. I surely have known that love, and there is a kind of comfort in remembering the seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, when his love filled my soul. Once, in a time of darkness and sorrow which had been long extended, the words, "Perfect love casteth out fear," were given me, and instantly there was in my soul a solemn joy and peace that I cannot describe. Now in this time of coldness and sorrow I look back with longing and a kind of confidence in the Lord to that time of comfort, which lasted me long, and cry for it again. I want it again, and I want it still more, and I want to live more fully under its divine and holy power; I want to have my heart and life full of that love which passeth knowledge; that love which is not merely an emotion, but is a holy and immovable principle; that love which "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." It is a comfort now to think of the words of a hymn which have just come to my mind:

> "If once the love of God we feel
> Upon the heart impressed,
> The mark of that celestial seal
> Can never be erased."

IS the carnal mind, the old, sinful nature, changed and made pure and sinless in the new birth? Then after the man is born again he has no sinful nature? In that case would there be any sins in thought, or word, or deed, any more? Would there be any crying, "God be merciful to me a sinner"? It appears to me that in the new birth a new life is given, a new nature is manifested. A birth does not change the nature of anything, but brings forth into manifestation that which previously existed. This new life is spiritual and holy; it is distinct from the flesh, but is manifested through the flesh; as the Savior says, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that

which is born of the Spirit is spirit."—John iii. 6. Then, while there is no change of nature in and by a birth, there is a great change of circumstances and of experience in the one thus born from above. There is a conflict now felt which was never felt before the man was born again, and which is a sure evidence that he is now a subject of that heavenly birth. This conflict is between the flesh and the Spirit. "For," the apostle says, "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." The man is now a partaker of the divine nature, as the apostle Peter says, and this divine nature causes him to hunger after righteousness, and to desire to live a pure and holy life, while the flesh, the Adamic life, is sinful and defiled, and its tendency is to lead into evil. In the flesh there dwells no good thing, the apostle says. The man who possesses spiritual life has to acknowledge that he has a vain, deceitful heart, and a wretched, wandering mind; and this causes him great distress, which is only relieved by the felt presence and power of the dear Savior. When we are made to understand that it is because Christ is in us that we feel that the body is dead because of sin, that we can find any comfort. (Romans viii. 10, 11.) It is the light that manifests the darkness. Whatsoever makes manifest is light. The life of Jesus is the light of men. (John i. 4.) If we feel that this body is dead because of sin, so that we are not able or fit to do spiritual acts, it is because Christ is in us; not that he will be in us at some future time, but is in us now. And then we shall sweetly learn that by the quickening power of him who raised up Christ from the dead we shall be enabled to do spiritual work, and shall know that we are not debtors to the flesh to live after the flesh, (Rom. viii. 12,) but are enabled to walk in those good works unto which we were created in Christ Jesus, which the Lord before ordained that his people should walk in. (Eph. ii. 10.)

When I am asked concerning my present condition of mind spiritually I am likely to begin considering how I ought to feel if I am a child of God, instead of how I do feel, and to draw the conclusion that my hope may well be questioned. If I feel as one in a furnace, in great tribulation, in affliction, darkness and coldness, and that the sinfulness of my soul is greater than I can bear, I set this all down as against me. But it is not what I think my present state of mind ought to be, if I am born of God, that I am asked about, but what it is. No one is fully qualified to decide upon the character of his own exercises of mind and his spiritual condition. He must have witnesses, must have the testimony of others who have been called by grace. As he is constrained to tell honestly of his darkness and trouble of soul, of his sins and transgressions in thought and word and deed, that often assail him, with the fears of death and the terrors of hell, he finds a response in the dear Savior's words, who is the faithful and true witness, and in the testimony of all the saints in all ages. Those who stand before the great white throne, clothed in white robes, with palms of victory in their hands, have all come out of great tribulation. Sin is hateful to all who have been made alive unto God. From all sin these shall all be brought away by the sweet power of Jesus. They shall come with weeping, and with supplica-

tion will the Lord lead them, and they shall all sing in the heights of Zion. (Jer. xxxi.)

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April, 1914.

STREET, Maryland.

ELDER J. D. COCKRAM—DEAR BROTHER:—Having read a copy of your book, "The Celestials and Terrestrials, or Spiritual Law in the Natural Kingdoms," and being greatly comforted thereby, will ask your views on Matt. vi. 22–24. Please send to the SIGNS, as I am a subscriber to that paper.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) HANNAH SCARBOROUGH.

FLOYD, Virginia.

DEAR SISTER:—It appears that the eye being single here in the twenty-second verse means centered upon one object (Jesus). Notice, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." We have a treasure in an earthen vessel which is evidently the hidden man of the heart. "If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." This is pointing out devotion unto God in full measure, and brings us in strict conformity to the divine rule in gospel obedience. In this some of the saints seem to think they are active at volition, while others have felt they are passive in the exercise of the grace of God in whatever sense. The eye (to return) is so constructed as to form by its vision a picture on the retina, and impress the mind. If the picture is bad, or from an evil communication, the impression must be bad and penetrates the body as darkness (evil). "If thine eye be evil," &c., the result is darkness, but if the object on which the eye is centered is good, the impression is good, and the result is light, or understanding. The eye is wonderfully connected with the mind and heart, hence the vision seems to be directed greatly by the power governing or controlling the organ. Of course we have good impressions from a good source, and evil impressions from an evil source. There are the two spirits, but "no man can serve two masters." In speaking of laying up treasures here the Master assures his disciples that they cannot love the world and still enter into his worship. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Are we not afflicted more in recent years with the cursed idolatry of mammon worship? In this the eye is evil, for we covet and lust after filthy lucre, entangling ourselves with the goods of the world. Mammon is the god of this world, and never fails to afflict and pierce a child of grace when once in his clutches. Happy is that man who has contentment with godliness, for this is gain. We see him in the congregation of the godly, and his whole body seems to be illuminated with the light of God's grace. Such an one we say is a living member. But there is one who has become engrossed in worldly conformity, laying up for himself treasures on earth; his communications are evil, his object is an earthly treasure, hence our experience is that we find him distressingly dark and indifferent to spiritual things. Now there seems to be, as we said in the outset, a question as to the extent of man's ability, who has been enlightened by the grace of God. Whether all men are to be read and understood as having the ability to come to repentance in their natural state at will has been a great question in all ages. It is held that they are, by all people except Old School Baptists, who say the sinner has no strength or ability to come to Christ until divine

quickening, at which time he is a new creature. Now whether this new creature is capable of acting in the exercise of faith, hope, &c., at will, or acts only when moved by the Holy Ghost, seems to be still a question among some. Prophecy pictures to us a falling away, or a departure from the faith. This is necessary before the end, that the prophecy be fulfilled, and possibly the love of money is doing more in this direction than all things else. It is hard for man to understand just why he should not exercise the graces of the Spirit in such a way as to prevent the evil and establish the good. God has ordained good works, but it has been fully proven that they are not to be attributed to man, hence Christ's obedience must be our theme.

J. D. COCKRAM.

HERNDON, Va., April 4, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have often felt of late that I would like to write once more to the household of faith and tell them in my imperfect way how I am getting along in this low ground of sin and sorrow, but language fails me to tell of all the way I have been led in the many days and months of the past. I have been living in a frozen state of mind, but some weeks ago I had a very pleasant dream, and I thought in my dream that my icy heart had been broken up and the warm sunshine of midsummer had melted the ice and snow away and I had a heart of flesh, and I thought in my dream that I heard the still small voice of Jesus speaking in tender words, as he did to his bride, Rise up, and come away. No doubt he found her low down, for he tells her to rise up, and come away. "For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." Now it seems to me in this narrative, told in the Song of songs, that it sets forth natural love of the bride to her husband, and the great love of the husband to his bride, but a greater love than natural love is here set forth, of Christ and his bride, the church, for we are told that Christ is head over all things to the church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

Now, brethren, these things I am writing about I thought I saw in my vision, or dream, and I will say right here that if I keep on telling God's little ones my dreams they will think that I am nothing but a dreamer, and I could not blame them for thinking so, for I feel to be a dreamer and nothing more.

But to continue with my dream. I want to dwell a little on the voice of the turtle that is heard in our land. It is called in the Scriptures the turtledove. You never hear the turtledove sing in winter, and just as soon as you hear this bird sing you may be sure that summer is at hand and the flowers appearing on the earth. This is a joyful time of the year to us, naturally, when the voice of the turtle is heard in our land, but much more so when we can hear the still small voice of Jesus speaking to the downcast soul, Peace, be still. In speaking about the turtledove, we must remember that God has made this bird, the dove, with the knowledge to know the time of its coming, as it is written in the book of Jeremiah, viii. 7, "Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow, observe the time of their coming: but my people know not the judgment of the Lord." The poet said,

"Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace,
Behind a frowning providence,
He hides a smiling face."

If God has made the birds of the air to observe the time of their coming, why then should we doubt the coming of the Lord Jesus at his appointed time? He says to his loved ones, Rise up and come away, and in that dove-like voice he whispers, Peace, be still, and there is a great calm. The bride said, He brought me to the banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me. What a lovely sight to behold, Christ and his bride, the church. She says, I love him, because he first loved me. She says, Draw me, and I will run after thee. He says, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.

But I must bring this letter to a close, for I have written too much already. I have tried to give you some of the outlines of my vision, but failed to tell you all I saw in it. I hope, brethren, you will excuse me for writing in this manner. I had nothing else to write at this time, only to tell you my dream, and as I said in the first part of my letter, I am a dreamer, and I fear that I am nothing more. But I will say right here before I close, that if I know anything about the conviction of sin, it came to me many years ago, while I was sleeping in my dear old grandfather's house, in a dream. I was only a boy then, and could only see in part, but to-day I see more of the depravity of my old man (nature) than I have ever seen before; I am brought to the ends of the earth.

I submit this letter to your good judgment, to do with as it seems good in your sight.

Dear brother Ker, I do hope that your dear companion is much improved in health by this time.

With much love and best wishes to the household of faith, I crave to remain your brother in the bonds of love,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

MAYFIELD, Ky., Dec. 27, 1913.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—Your kind letter reached me the 26th inst., and it is a source of consolation to know you stand on the same foundation that I hinted at when I wrote that little note. It is the only foundation I have. If the eternal God does not rule the machinery of this universe, then all is left to chance. It is remarkably strange that any should think that God should leave things to his creatures, and at the same time must know they will not nor cannot do the things he desires. I do not know how to restrict God when Paul says in Ephesians, He, God, worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. I firmly believe the law entered that the offence might abound. If there had been no law, there had been no offence; and if no offence, no manifestations of grace, so God's goodness would never have been known by the creature. The first transgression itself (and on which all others hang) was the partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and I must say I am at a loss to know how Adam could or would have known what good was without a knowledge of evil. My thought is, he was destitute of the knowledge of either until he partook of that tree. No man could know that sugar is sweet if everything he had tasted was sweet. It takes the opposite of anything to bring to our

senses the properties existing in anything. We could not know what heat is unless it be contrasted with cold. I cannot think that God intended that his creature, man, should never know what good is, for then he never could know what God is. If it were not God's intention that man should come to a knowledge of what he himself was, and is, through transgression and consequent fall, then grace must have been a matter of necessity on God's part, wherein he was placed under the necessity of venting, that he might make known himself to his creature, man. But ah, we hear the apostle say that grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. Was it then given because he foresaw the fall? If, then, God's stupendous system of salvation was based on what he foresaw, and did not intend the fall, it must follow that he was put to the necessity of fixing the plan, and all because of the work of Satan, which he could not prevent, if so be that God intended that sin should not abound. But such a theory places God behind Satan, putting up the gaps Satan has thrown down, and making the best of things that he could. This destroys the sovereignty of God, and puts the devil in the lead. My dear brother, I can have no fellowship for a theory that takes from God his absolute sovereignty. If God did not fix all things before time began, and then executes all things according to that he had decreed, then I know nothing of what the Scriptures teach. I know we are assailed by men on the other side, and charged with making God to be worse than the devil himself, but what do they do but make him out a perfect failure, always trying to do something and failing? But for me, I must accept his supremacy, doing as he pleases in the heavens above and in the earth beneath, raising up a Pharaoh that he might show forth his power in him, and calling a Cyrus from the east to execute his counsel; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.

Brother Vail, pardon me for this, for no mortal on earth is responsible for it but myself, and I believe it because I cannot help it. You closed your little note by saying, "All bad and no good." Now that is just what I must say in my case. I have not one solitary thing that I ever have done upon which to claim anything. I have nothing to rely on only what Jesus has done for me. It is his righteousness alone I am trusting in, if I trust at all. I know I have none of my own, neither do I know anything else to preach but Jesus. I have this hope: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." So you see if I have anything at all it is Jesus, and I often fear I have not him. But I have nowhere else to go; with me it is Jesus or nothing, for my best works are as filthy rags.

I submit this for your perusal. If I am deceived I am lost, for I can trust in nothing else but God's grace through Jesus Christ.

Yours in an humble hope,

J. M. PERKINS.

PERSONVILLE, Texas, Dec. 5, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I thought I would write a sketch of my travels. I was born in Murray County, Tenn., and as far back as I can recollect I had a faint idea that there was a God, and as I grew older I believed stronger. In January, 1860, I was in a ballroom at a dance, and the first I can remember I was arrested that

night, but did not give it much thought, and did not know what it was; after that I was made to study about the matter. I had not read the Bible, but I had a desire then to read it. In September, 1860, there were two Campbellite preachers holding a meeting close to where I lived, and I went to hear them, and listened to them with all the care I could, to try and learn something. I thought them right, and joined them, and then went to preaching Campbellite doctrine. Dear brethren and sisters, I fully believed I was doing right. I kept on reading my Bible to find out more about things if possible. Nine months from that time I was convinced that it would not do, and it still seemed that something was drawing me; I was not satisfied. Two years after that I attended a big Presbyterian meeting, and during that meeting every time there was an opportunity given to be prayed for, I wanted them to pray for me, for I felt I was a sinner. On Sunday during their meeting it seemed to me I was lower down than ever, and had no earthly or any other kind of friends anywhere. That evening, with two or three others, I went to what was called a secret place, and there I bowed on my knees and tried in my weakness to ask God to forgive me and to deliver me. I felt just at that time that I was all right, and could live right, but the first thing I knew it came to me that I was mistaken, that it was not so. O the warfare that set up within me, and then doubts and fears began to come. I never have had the least doubt that there was a supreme God, ruler over all things, and that Jesus by the grace of God tasted death for every man, and I hope I am one of that number. The Adam man says they can all be saved if they will, but I hope I have been taught that it is by grace and by grace alone. About six years later I was working in the fodder field, and during that day I was studying how to go and what to do, and in the evening it came to me that the Primitive Baptists' way was the right way. My wife had joined the church one month before and was to be baptized the next day, which was Sunday. I was so well satisfied I went home that night, and told my wife that she could fix my clothes, that I was going to the church next day and tell them my little experience, and I hope the Lord enabled me to go and tell them what he had done for me. They received me, and we were baptized that evening. It has been about thirty-five years now, and I have not regretted it for a moment from that time to this, but I still feel my unworthiness, and doubts and fears still come. I often say, O is there any one like me? Am I deceived, or am I not? Dear brethren and sisters, I desire your prayers, as I am in a lonely place. We have some who claim to be the same as I am, but I cannot believe what they preach, for, dear brethren and sisters, it is no food for me at all. They say that there are many things here that God never had anything to do with.

Brother Chick, I wish to make a request of you. If in order, I would like you to give your views on 1 Thes. ii. 7, and the balance of the chapter. If this is not sound just throw it into the waste-basket.

J. K. P. FITZGERALD.

CHICAGO, Ill., Feb. 12, 1914.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—In reading the SIGNS for February 1st I notice a short article from sister Violet Hatch, of Jamestown, Ohio, in which she says she is one hundred years and nine months old. She should have said one hundred and one years and nine months old,

as she was born April 16th, 1812. I thought a few words relative to this wonderful old sister might be of interest to many of the brethren, and as I felt that I also should write you a letter, I will leave it to you as to publishing it.

Sister Hatch (every one called her Aunt Violet) is the widow of brother Ebenezer Hatch, a soldier of the war of 1812, who was some twenty years her senior, and who has been dead probably thirty years. She draws a pension for her husband's service in the war named, and a rather amusing incident happened a few years ago, when the government sent an official to Jamestown to see if there was not some mistake in her receiving the pension, thinking perhaps that it was not legal, as it hardly seemed possible that such a pension would still be in force, but when the gentleman got to the city Aunt Violet was out in the country visiting, but he had no trouble in satisfying himself that she was alive. I have known her from my childhood, and to me the words "Old Baptist" are inseparably connected with this dear sister. She is probably as well posted in the Scriptures and in the doctrine of the church as any brother or sister in the State, and her counsel has always been very much sought after. She knew her Bible well, and was able, and is yet, no doubt, to set forth her views in such a way, to the comfort of the brethren, as is seldom given a woman. I visited her in June, 1912, just after her celebration, and my faith was surely made firmer by the little talks we had. Her mind was as clear as when younger, although her body was somewhat frail. She reads the news of the day, and keeps posted and able to discuss current events, reads without glasses, and does a great deal of needle work, "fancy work" we call it. I asked her what she ascribed her long life to, and she said, "To nothing I have done." Said she did not know why the Lord permitted her to live, and although she was contented and well taken care of, she was ready to be taken when the time came. On her one hundredth anniversary the citizens of the city and county, together with her friends from a distance, celebrated the day in her honor; schools were dismissed, and all came to greet her with a kind word. Although I was not present, I was told that she seemed less excited and went through the ordeal with more ease than many of the younger people.

Aunt Violet would be pleased to hear from the brethren, although she is unable to answer all. In this busy life that most of us live, we are prone to forsake the duties of life and to neglect our friends, and when I was permitted to visit sister Hatch, see her firmness and the confidence she has in the Lord that he will perform whatsoever is right, it revived my hope and caused me to thank the Savior that I, even I, am at times given that hope, or, I might say, am permitted to hope I have a hope, so that I feel I would rather be the least of these than to have the praise of the world and all its gold and splendor. May I ever be worthy (in his name) to honor the hope.

Well, I do not know why I have written this, and trust you will not publish it, especially that with reference to myself, if you deem it not best, but you have been so near and dear to me that I felt I wanted to talk to you. I hope you are well of your late illness, and that the family is well. My wife and daughter have been in Chicago with me since Christmas, although we have not moved here from Paris yet, owing to not having disposed of our property there. We are

very anxious to get settled, so as to be together. As it is, I run down home once a month or so. We have had two or three meetings this past year at brother Spitler's. Elder J. G. Sawin was here in November and preached on Saturday and Sunday to the comfort of the few that are here among the millions of people. I often ask myself: Can it be that I am right in my belief and hope and these many people are wrong? Surely it cannot be, for many of them are good people, and have many more of the marks than I feel to bear. One of the so-called Baptist churches here is holding a series of meetings, being in charge of the fourteen-year-old boy preacher from London, England. I have gone a couple of times to hear him, and must admit that he is a wonderful boy, and I think he comes as near preaching the Old Baptist doctrine as any preacher I ever heard that did not belong to our people. Many things in his talks impressed me very much, especially his not being of the radical stripe, and what he said seemed to me to be almost too plain for some of his members. It is seldom I care to go to hear any of the popular preaching, as it usually makes me feel that I am outside of my flock, but in this case I went through curiosity, and although I will not say that he preached the whole truth, he preached many things that would appeal to many of our people, and the thought came to my mind that perhaps he has not been instructed in the right way, "for how shall they hear without a preacher?"

I have made this a long missive, and have not written as I intended, except what I wanted to say with regard to sister Hatch. Excuse mistakes, and should you find time to drop me a note once again do so, although I do not ask it, knowing how your time is occupied.

With kind regards to the family and friends whom I met at your place, I remain, I trust, your brother in a precious hope,

M. C. REEVES.

[THE above letter, as will be noticed, was written before the death of either brother Chick or sister Hatch, but as we think it will be received with interest we give it to our readers.—ED.]

(*See obituary of Mrs. Violet Hatch on page 253, current volume.*)

BOAZ, KY., Feb. 19, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I again attempt to drop a few lines to you by way of explanation, and to disabuse the minds of some of our dear brethren in regard to my own unworthy self. Last night I was reading in the SIGNS, taking the communications in rotation, as I generally do, when my eyes were arrested by an article written by brother O. B. Hickerson, of Nashville, Tenn., to brother Newton Peters, of Portland, Ind., in which he says to Elder Peters: "I notice in the August 15th number of the SIGNS that by request of our beloved brother, Elder Boaz, of Kentucky, you have written upon some things recorded in the first and second chapters of second Kings." I, like brother Hickerson, was wonderfully comforted, and also had a feeling of humiliation on account of one so unworthy as I feel myself to be being granted a request by a brother esteemed so highly for the truth's sake. I thought at the time that I would send him a letter in reply, thank-

ing God for the loving-kindness in which his servants are made willing to grant the request of a brother, though he may be a weak one like myself, if I am one. At the time of making the request I wrote a short communication to the SIGNS, in which I felt to indorse Elder G. E. Mayfield in the manner in which we are authorized by the Bible to set apart members of our churches to the office of deacon. I never once thought that any one would suppose that I was an Elder, for I consider God's called ministers as having the highest calling among men, notwithstanding we are looked upon by some as being an ignorant people. Brethren, there is encouragement in this to me sometimes, as the Lord Jesus Christ and his followers while they were tabernacling here on this earth were looked upon the same way.

I felt last night that I wanted to write, but it seems since I commenced that it is gone from me, so if I write any more I will have to wait until I am given something to write. Please pardon this weakness.

March 25th.—As I failed to finish my letter a month ago, and knowing that my subscription expires April 1st, and as I do not want to fail to keep my subscription paid up, I now send you a two dollar post-office money order, for which please give me credit for another year. I send you the former writing also, in order that brother Hickerson and others may know that I am only a poor, little, weak worm of the dust, not worthy to be called a deacon of the church, or even a church member at all.

With love to the household of faith, and especially to the editors and correspondents of the SIGNS, I submit this for your consideration.

G. P. BOAZ.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., April 20, 1914.

DEAR EDITOR AND PUBLISHERS OF THE SIGNS:—It was with much sorrow indeed that I learned of the death of our dear senior editor, Elder F. A. Chick. The loss will be keenly felt all over the land by the many readers, and grave questions will arise in the minds of many as to the future conduct of the paper, as well as the deepest sympathy, prayers and good wishes for its continuation. God alone can supply all the needs, he alone can strengthen, give faith and hope to the publishers, strengthen and support our dear brother Elder Ker, the surviving editor, that they may be able to continue as in the years gone by. We think in our minds we can enter in a small degree into the feelings of the editor and publishers, of the darkness and gloom overshadowing, but we feel hitherto hath the Lord helped. For more than eighty years the SIGNS has been supported and maintained amidst every opposition. Founded upon the doctrine, faith and practice laid down by the apostles, it has stood firm all these years against the powers of darkness, the floodgates of hell, and has maintained inviolably the faith and doctrine upon which it was founded, and I trust and sincerely pray it may continue; its columns have been filled with that which is God-honoring and creature-abasing. If I know my heart's desire, it goes out in deep sympathy and humble prayer in your behalf, that you may be strengthened of the Lord, made strong in the power of his might, and find grace to help in every time of need, and truly that is every day and hour. May the sunshine of his gracious presence lift you above the darkness and gloom, doubts and fears, and enable you to lay hold of the ever-gracious promise, As thy days, so shall thy strength be. I had

grave fears when I read the Elder's last editorial on Paul's language: For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand, &c., and said to my wife, He has written his valedictory. The article was rich in the power of the Spirit of life, yet softened with dews of heaven, as one treading softly, coming into the courts of the Lord, and so it was. God is righteous in all his ways.

Again wishing for you the gracious smiles and divine aid and care of our kind, loving Father and God, I am most sincerely yours in Christ,

P. W. SAWIN.

BELINGTON, W. Va., March 25, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—It has been on my mind a great deal of late to try and write you a few lines to let you know I am still among the living, and I feel thankful to our heavenly Father for sparing my unprofitable life. While I have been afflicted for many years, many who had good health have been called away; we have to wait until the appointed time comes, and then we will go. O dear brethren and sisters, sometimes when I have to suffer so much I almost get tired of life and long to be at rest. Often the lines come to my mind, "O land of rest, for thee I sigh," &c. I see many letters in the SIGNS written by poor, afflicted ones, and my heart can sympathize with them.

"Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

I saw my name mentioned in a letter written by brother Varnes in the SIGNS of December 1st, and he requested me to write him, which I did, and requested him to answer my letter, but I have not heard anything from him. Perhaps he never received my letter. If this finds a place in the SIGNS, and the dear old brother sees it, he will know I wrote to him.

Dear editors, you do not know how much comfort the SIGNS has been to me. My SIGNS and Bible are all the preaching I get, as my health is so bad I do not get to meeting any more, which causes me to shed many tears. But the Lord has a purpose in all things, and we would be submissive to his will. While the spirit truly is willing, the flesh is weak. If any of the brethren or sisters would write to me I should be very glad, for I see many lonely days. I saw in the last SIGNS that brother Chick and sister Ker were still sick, but hope they are now better. If I could write as some of the brethren and sisters can I would be glad to write. Dear editors, may it be God's will to spare you for many years to publish the good old SIGNS, and when your work on earth is done may you hear that blessed voice say, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of the Lord. May God keep us in the strait and narrow path, and when done with earth may we meet around his throne, where there will be no sorrow, but all singing grace, free grace, where all is love, and there will be no sorrow there.

From your afflicted sister,

ELIZABETH PHILLIPS.

NEWARK, Del., April 7, 1914.

MY DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am sending you a copy of a letter from a member of Bryn Zion Church, near Kenton, Del. One of the genuine whole-souled kind, nothing wavering, who knows she is a great sinner, but feels that she has a great Savior. My best love and sympathy to you and sister Ker.

Your sister,

LUCY MEREDITH ROUNDS.

ODESSA, Del., April 1, 1914.

DEAR SISTER LUCY:—You asked me to write, so I will tell you some of my travels of mind from nature to grace. O, I thought I was the greatest sinner on earth, my burden of sin was so great. I traveled for some time in this way, praying to the Lord to forgive my many sins. I would see light in the evening, and thought the world was coming to an end, and thought, I am a sinner, I will be lost. O, dear sister, how good the Lord has been to me; he brought me out of that horrible pit and miry clay. Often I would retire fearing that I would not see the light of another day, and one night I got up, for I could not sleep, and in the dead hour of night I went out into the yard. The moon and stars seemed to praise the Lord, but I was a poor siuner, and was loaded with a heavy burden, sick soul and body. I would go into the cellar and while there pray to the Lord to forgive my many sins. We moved to Kenton with my load of sin, and there is where I hope the Lord spoke peace to my troubled soul. One bright Sunday afternoon in August I told my husband I was going to die. O, the distress I was in! They all went out of the room and I thought I would pray once more. My prayer was, Dear Lord, I give myself away, it is all that I can do. That minute a bright light shone all around me, and my burden was gone. I looked around and everything seemed to be praising God, and I was happy. I went to the Old Baptists and heard Elder Rittenhouse preach. I thought every word he said was for me. I went before the church and told them a little, and to my surprise they received me, and I was baptized the next day by Elder E. Rittenhouse.

If you see anything in this like a christian experience, you may send it to the SIGNS. I love the dear old SIGNS. Dear sister, I have thought of you much since I came home. Remember me to brother Rounds.

From a poor sinner saved by grace if saved at all,

S. E. GREEN.

BOWDOINHAM, Maine, Dec. 15, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription has expired you will please find two dollars for the year 1914, as I do not feel as if I could get along without the SIGNS. I gave it to my wife some years ago as a Christmas present, and it has been a lasting token of remembrance. She has been sick nearly a year, having been taken with liver trouble and indigestion and then a paralytic shock, which affected her mouth and eyes, so that I have to read it mostly to her. She wanted to hear Elder Keene's letter in the SIGNS of November 15th several times, and thought it very deep and excellent.

Dear Elder Chick, we missed you very much at our association at Bowdoinham, as you always made it a point to be here. Your sickness and trouble hindered you from coming, but we hope to meet you next year. The Lord sent us Elder Keene and Elder Joshua T. Rowe, and we had excellent preaching. The Lord can feed the hungry ones.

Dear brethren Chick and Ker, you well remember Martha K. Hubbard. She fell asleep in Jesus December 2nd. The dear sister visited us a few days after the association, and we enjoyed her company and conversation very much, and little did we think it was her last visit to us. She was a Bible reader, and a firm believer in the resurrection of the dead. She is at rest, and may the Lord comfort the mourners. We are saved by grace in

Jesus as our Redeemer, and grace in the believer has its fruits and will be made manifest in the believer. We see the disciples going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, to bow before God, the giver of every good and perfect gift, from whom all our blessings flow. When Peter was cast into prison and bound with chains, prayer was made by the church for him and he was delivered to them, and Rhoda was the messenger to carry the glad tidings to them. But how is it now? Prayer is simply a routine of formality, the gold has become dim, and the most fine gold changed. "For the bed is shorter that a man can stretch himself on it; and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it."—Isaiah xxviii. 20. And my poor soul is as guilty as any. Brethren, forgive me for writing so much, as I only wanted to pay for the SIGNS and speak of sister Hubbard. I may some time write a line to the SIGNS if health and memory abide with me.

Very lovingly, yours in the faith of God's elect and hope of a blessed immortality beyond the grave,

JAMES H. WILSON.

CHICORA, Fla., Dec. 24, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I am now sending in my subscription to the SIGNS, I wish to speak a word of praise for the dear paper. It has been of inexpressible comfort and consolation to me to read the writings of the dear saints of God from almost all parts of the world, telling of the good things the Lord has done for them. What a wonderful thing it is that people so far apart, who never knew each other, can tell one another's feelings so well. This I feel sure is one great evidence that these must be the Lord's people, for he has said in his word that his people shall see eye to eye and speak the same thing. He teaches his people the same lesson wherever they may be, for he is the same God now that he ever was, and will ever be the same, unchangeable, ruling all things after the counsel of his own will, having all power over all things, for he says he created all things, and without him there was nothing created.

May the God of all grace ever bless you, that you may continue circulating his sacred truth in your dear paper.

Yours in tribulation,

E. C. TAYLOR.

ATLANTIC, N. C., April 18, 1914.

DEAR EDITOR:—I have just learned through Elder J. T. Rowe of the death of Elder F. A. Chick. You, and all the SIGNS' force, as well as its readers, and his dear family, have my profound sympathy in this day of sorrow and mourning. For him it was better to depart and be with Jesus, but the readers of the SIGNS, and the churches, will know now more than ever his great worth to them. The Lord bless this bereavement to the good of all the sorrowing, and fill the vacancy by his own divine presence, and put a man after his own heart to fill the vacancy on the editorial staff and in the churches in which he served.

Your fellow-partaker of this bereavement,

L. H. HARDY.

SYMPATHY APPRECIATED.

THE family of the late Elder F. A. Chick wish to acknowledge through the SIGNS the receipt of many kind letters of sympathy from the brethren and friends all over the country, and to state that while they would like to answer each individually, this is impossible, and so they take this means of thanking them for their kind and comforting words.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1914.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REVELATION XXI. 27.

"AND there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

Either in speaking or writing upon these wonderful things in the book of Revelation it should always be remembered that they were shown John for the benefit of the people of God, and while the sayings generally are dark, there are some things clear, and these can be considered the same as any other Scripture. Two or three chapters preceding the twenty-first, and the one following, all seem peculiarly connected, beginning with the conjunction "and," which shows a continuation of the revelation to John. In the twentieth chapter the victory of the saints, through death, over their enemies and the enemies of the cross of Christ, is shown; also the fleeing away of the old heaven and the old earth and the appearing of the new. The great white throne and He that sat upon it established forever the reign and judgment of God. The binding of Satan for a season simply means that the church should have peace and quietness for awhile, and the loosing of Satan after that season, represented by the term, "a thousand years," means that the church should again have tribulation and persecution at the hands of other religious monarchs and those who had their mark—"mark of the beast." In the twenty-first chapter John describes the new Jerusalem as he, in vision, saw it descending from God out of heaven. Here is seen the marked contrast between old Jerusalem, which Paul says was represented by Agar, the bondwoman, and her children, and new Jerusalem. The bondwoman was in bondage with her children; that is, all were in bondage together, which of course could not have been otherwise, as a bondwoman cannot bring forth free children. Hence old Jerusalem was in every sense of the word of the earth, and all that pertained to her was carnal. It is worthy of special note that old Jerusalem never became the new—the bondwoman and her children never became the freewoman. All through this revelation John was being shown the passing away forever of things pertaining to the legal dispensation and the bringing in of spiritual, heavenly and divine things—things that abide, durable, everlasting. Therefore he tells us he saw new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. This is the opposite of that which was all of the earth, earthy. Could we all behold the sight as John beheld it, how convincing it would be that all things are become new, and that all things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by the death of his Son. Yet John was only a looker on—no part whatever of the holy city in his own view or feelings. In this surely we all have fellowship with him. In this tabernacle of God all tears are wiped away; there is no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, because former things are passed away. This is now a time of rejoicing, a time of gladness of heart, a

time to bless and praise God from whom all blessings flow, for surely he hath done great things for us.

In verse nine of this twenty-first chapter John says an angel came and talked with him, saying, "Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife," and he carried him away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed him that great city, the holy Jerusalem, having the glory of God. We do not understand that John meant the angel carried him bodily or led him by the hand to the great and high mountain, but that in spirit John was carried away, forgetting self, surroundings, the desolation of the isle of Patmos and the persecution of the enemies of Christ; mortality swallowed up of life, as it were, in the revelation of the glory of God. Perhaps there are some who may read this that can well remember such times, when there was a refreshing season from the presence of the Lord, an outpouring of the Holy Ghost, a carrying away in the spirit to the great and high mountain of the Lord, there to behold his glory in the holy city. The city that John saw had a great and high wall, and twelve gates. In this part of New York State there are perhaps miles of what is called stonewall, stones gathered from the land by those long gone the way of all flesh, and placed one upon another about four feet high and two feet wide, yet it is not a wall at all, only a fence. To build a wall cement or mortar must be used, in order to cause the stones to cleave together, so that when the work is done the wall is, as it were, one body. Such was the wall John saw. In olden times cities had walls round about them for protection, and the safety of such cities depended upon the strength of their walls. So this holy city has a wall great and high; salvation for walls and bulwarks God hath appointed, hence the safety of new Jerusalem, the bride, the Lamb's wife, is absolute. So high it is that it cannot be scaled; so compact that no natural eye can penetrate it; so strong that the archenemy with all his angels cannot batter it down. This is the kind of wall round about the city of God, and he is the glory in the midst. The twelve gates, three on either side of this four-square city, are for the entrance of those who keep the commandments of the King. They have right to the Tree of life, and enter in through the gates into the city, in which there is no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God and the Lamb is the light thereof. When the Lord says to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth, there is no need of a journey by those called from either point of the compass, because the entrance is immediately in front of them—three gates on either side. Yes, they enter this city where there is but one street, and that pure gold, in perfect keeping with the holy city. Now, inasmuch as this city is holy, there shall in no wise enter into it anything unholy. Nothing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, shall enter this place of perfection of beauty. Perhaps there is a twofold meaning here worthy of our consideration. When it says, In no wise shall anything enter that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, it appears that everything in the way of inventions of men is excluded. The Lord's train fills the temple, so that there is no room for "Judson's" train saved by him, nor is there place for any saved except by the blood of the Lamb, who is the temple of it, and the glory is his.

No works of the creature shall ever be mentioned in the city of God, much less enter there. An ungodly man must be justified, guilt removed; the liar must have his lips touched with a live coal from off the altar, the sinner made clean before he can enter the holy city; every one entering there must be in perfect keeping with the holy place. By nature and by works, therefore, all men are cut off; not one can enter simply because Abraham was his father, nor because his father and mother were christians, nor because he may pray twice a day and give alms of all he possesses. A man must be "a new creature," "God's workmanship," a partaker of the divine nature, a son of God, in order to enter the place where God's honor dwells. All such have their names written in the Lamb's book of life. These names were written before the foundation of the world—not one written since. This most wonderfully presents election, salvation by grace, yes, God's unmerited favor. The book of life is a peculiar one, not such as where ordinary records are made and kept, but the book is "life." The names of all the household of faith are written in God's record of "life," eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began, and this life is in his Son. When Paul said the Lord, the righteous Judge, should give him a crown of righteousness, he did not mean a crown of something else, but "righteousness" itself was the crown he received. Again, when James said, Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried he shall receive a crown of life, life is the crown. This means life to the one who endures temptation, instead of death because of sin in yielding thereto. Yes, we say again the book is "life," and the names of the Lord's people having been written therein shows clearly His decree: predestinated unto final glory by Jesus Christ our Lord. It matters not what our achievements and attainments are here, nor how wonderful the revelations nor that the devils are subject unto us, through God's word, our greatest reason for rejoicing is that our names are written in heaven, in the Lamb's book of life. This unbounded mercy will cause us to ever sing in the holy city, the church of God, "redeeming love," and when called home to enjoy the fullness of the glory of God, that infinite Being: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, there to see Him face to face, the song shall echo still: "Saved by grace." Amen. K.

DEATH OF ELDER F. A. CHICK.

It is with profound sorrow that we announce the death of Elder F. A. Chick, editor of the Signs of the Times. He entered into everlasting rest April 14th, 1914, after more than a year's illness. All his friends had hoped for his recovery, and longed for some favorable report through the Signs, but none came. Such men as Elder Chick are very few, so kind, loving, gentle and faithful, yet firmly rooted and grounded in the truth of God. All connected with the Signs will miss him, and scarcely know how to go on without him, but we hope the Lord will supply our need, that the Signs may continue to the comfort of many. We extend our deepest sympathy to the dear family, desiring God's blessing and grace to rest upon them.

An obituary will appear soon. K.

We, the publishers of the Signs of the Times, feel we wish to add a few lines to those of our dear remaining editor, Elder H. C. Ker, with regard to the great loss we have sustained in the death

of our much loved senior editor, Elder F. A. Chick. He will indeed be greatly missed by the brethren far and near, who loved him for the truth's sake.

Elder Chick had been an editor of the SIGNS since November, 1894, and his editorials were always written in a kind, loving and gentle spirit, yet he never failed to stand firm in the doctrine once delivered unto the saints. If his views differed from those of another, the one with whom he differed could take no offence, as he always expressed himself in a mild and loving manner, which indeed was a good index to the character of the man himself, whom to know was to love.

To his dear family we extend our deepest sympathy, and pray that God, who alone is able to reconcile them to this great loss, may be their guide and comfort, and that they may be enabled to look to him for strength to continue on in their way.

To his churches, and to the brethren in general, we would also offer our sympathy, and hope that the Lord will raise up some one to fill the place of the much loved brother.

For ourselves, we feel we have sustained a loss that only One can fill, and we look to him for help and guidance.

J. E. BEEBE & CO.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER J. E. THORNBURY has changed his address from Ratcliff, Ky., to Grayson, Carter Co., Ky., and desires his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, April 15th, 1914, at the home of the bride's mother, Pleasant Ridge, Fulton Co., Pa., Cadiz Wiles Schooley and Veda Rebecca Mellott.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Jennie O. Ham, wife of Mr. John B. Ham, who passed on to a higher life March 15th, was a lady greatly beloved by a wide circle of friends, and her death has caused the deepest sorrow in this community. Her character was rounded out with the experiences of a long and useful life. She was an interesting lady to meet, and her place will not soon be filled in this community. Richly endowed by nature, of refined sensibilities and of a true, noble, christian womanhood, her life in its sincerity and integrity was a living witness to her superior worth and strong personality. Her kind ministries for the welfare of others made her a friend to all who knew her. She loved her home, and brought into it strength and devotion, with the love and influence of wife and mother, that will never die. With her loved ones they mourn, with a host of dear friends, their loss, and many rise up and call her blessed. She, with her husband, was a worthy and consistent member of the Primitive Baptist Church of Woburn, Mass., where they joined many years ago, although they were always residents of this town, where they were baptized fifty years ago, by Elder Wm. J. Purington, and always attended this church and were members of the choir. A few days before her death Mrs. Ham wrote a letter of hope and trust to her pastor, Elder H. C. Ker. Her last illness was brief. Medical skill and loving hands availed not; she continually failed until she was gone, for God took her. She died as she had lived, with her trust in him. H. R. M.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, March 29, 1914.

[THE above clipping was forwarded us from North Berwick, Maine, the late home of our dear sister Ham, and is expressive of the high esteem in which she was held in her own neighborhood. It also tells of her life in the church and of her devotion to the people of God. Sister Ham talked but little of herself in any sense, yet her life talked, bearing testimony to the grace of God. She lived seventy miles away from the church of her membership, but was seldom absent from the services. She attended also very regularly the meetings of the North Berwick Church, of which Elder F. W. Keene is the pastor, and with which she united Oct. 2nd, 1864, being baptized by the late Elder Wm. J. Purington. She was dismissed by letter to unite with the Woburn Church, in March, 1878. Her age at the time of her death was 72 years. She is survived by her husband, brother John B. Ham, two brothers: Trustram John-

son and Frank O. Johnson, both of North Berwick, Maine, and one sister, Mrs. Mary E. Ross, of Danvers, Mass., also three grandchildren: Everet, Lulu and Beatrice Allen. The funeral services were held at her home Thursday, March 19th, conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder Keene. There was a very large attendance. The interment took place in the family plot in the North Berwick Cemetery.

May God dwell richly in the hearts of the family to keep, sustain and comfort them, and may the church of her membership be remembered in much mercy.—K.]

William A. Martin, our dear brother, departed this life March 21st, 1914, at his home, Legato, Fairfax Co., Va., in his 83rd year of age. Brother Martin died very suddenly while eating his dinner. He complained of a pain under his left shoulder, and before his wife could get to him he was dead. He was the last surviving juror which convicted John Brown, and the youngest one of the twelve. He was baptized by Elder J. N. Badger in the fellowship of Ebenezer Church in 1882, and remained a faithful and consistent member until death. Brother Martin was twice married. His first wife was S. A. Thomas, who died in 1908, and he married sister Elizabeth Ferguson about three years ago. It can be truly said that a good man has fallen. He was beloved by his brethren and all who came in contact with him. He was known to all as "Uncle Billy." He was firm in his belief of salvation by grace, and had no compromise to make with the unfruitful works of darkness. He was a kind and devoted husband, a true friend and neighbor, and had a character as strong as iron. It can be said of him that he was a peacemaker, both in the world and in the church. Ebenezer Church will miss him, and it is sad to think we will see his face no more. He lived far from the meetinghouse of late, but managed to come and see us once in every year. We believe our loss is his eternal gain. He was brought back to Ebenezer for burial beside his first wife.

ALSO,

Mrs. Elizabeth Martin, wife of our brother Wm. A. Martin, died one week to a day after her husband's death, in the 87th year of her age. Sister Martin was baptized by Elder Leachman, but we do not know the date. The writer did not know sister Martin as well as brother Martin, as they lived so far from us, but has every reason to believe she lived a faithful member of the church.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral at Legato, near Fairfax Court House, Va. The funeral services of both were conducted at the same time, after which her remains were interred in Fairfax Court House Cemetery. May the Lord bless the sorrowing brother and friends of both, is the desire of the writer. F. E. ROBEY.

Adliza Winslow Hill, my dear wife, was born May 9th, 1856, and died Jan. 25th, 1914. She was the daughter of the late Nathan Winslow. We were united in marriage Sept. 28th, 1876. There were born to this union eight children, two boys and six girls; two girls preceded her to the grave. Two boys and four girls are living to mourn with me our great loss, as follows: Mrs. Lizzie E. Miller, of Caraway, N. C., Mrs. Julia F. Miller, of Asheboro, N. C., Nathan W., of Mechanic, N. C., Eunice A., Alice and John M. Hill, who are yet with me at home. My dear wife was born of Quaker parents and raised up in their faith. The Primitive Baptist faith and doctrine, as well as the church itself, had been evilly spoken of and badly misrepresented to her, and in our early married life she was very much opposed to them, but it pleased the Lord in his own good time and way to perform in her the work of grace, which wrought such a change as he worked in Saul of Tarsus, and her religious views were so changed that she saw and believed just to the reverse of that which she tried in our early married life to get me to see and believe, so that I do believe she was of the elect family of God, and that she is sweetly resting with him in glory. For many years she loved to hear the glorious gospel as it is set forth by the Primitive Baptists, and she was always ready and willing to entertain them and to care for them in our humble home. I am satisfied she had a mind to be with the church, but for some cause unknown to me she never united with us. She was truly a good woman; I know of none who was her superior in uprightness and moral character. She was a good wife and a dear, precious mother, and never tired in doing for her children, to whom she was much devoted.

M. H. HILL.

Roland Hoff Rittenhouse, our dear little son, died at his home in Clinton, N. J., Dec. 8th, 1913, aged 6 years, 4 months and 15 days. He was stricken with diphtheria in its most malignant form, and was sick one week. All that the physician and two trained nurses, who were in constant attendance, could do, was done, but his days were numbered and the Lord saw fit to take him. Owing to the contagion of the disease it was necessary to convey the body from the home without services to the cemetery at Frenchtown, where we met Elder Fenton, our pastor, and a few dear friends. Elder Fenton spoke in prayer, and the little form was laid away. We have felt the stroke almost too heavy to bear, but through it all the Lord has been our strength, and we have been given comforting assurances that he is now in the full fruition of that blessed inheritance. The day he passed away he said nothing hurt him, and there rested such a peaceful, happy look, his face seemed to shine with heavenly light. As I stood watching him I felt that the Lord was speaking to me, that he

was happy and it was beyond all earthly comfort. A few days before he was taken sick, on Thanksgiving day we were singing hymns, and Roland passed through the room and stopped. Never shall I forget that moment; as he stood there motionless looking at us these words came to me, He is listening. I was deeply touched, and that little experience has come with much comfort many times. O how much we miss our little sunbeam, yet we desire to be submissive to His will, he who doeth all things well, and to be able to say, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

His mother,

ELIZABETH H. RITTENHOUSE.

Deacon Eli T. Kidwell was born in Fairfax County, Va., July 26th, 1840, and departed this life March 23rd, 1914, aged 73 years, 8 months and 17 days. He was married to Miss Jane M. Mills, Jan. 30th, 1868, who departed this life March 30th, 1878. He was again married, to Miss Sallie E. Thomas, of Washington, D. C., Dec. 21st, 1880, who departed this life Dec. 9th, 1909. He was baptized by Elder Joseph L Purington Dec. 7th, 1875, and was given a home in the fellowship of the Bethlehem Church, Prince William Co., Va., and served as deacon for a number of years up to the time of his death. The writer had known brother Kidwell for over twenty-five years, and I would like to tell of the many sweet seasons I have had with him in all those years, but space for a notice of this kind forbids me doing so. I believe I shall miss brother Kidwell as much as any Old Baptist that ever knew him. He was a strong believer in the doctrine of predestination, election and salvation by grace only, and the resurrection of Christ and his people from the power of the grave. The apostle said, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Bethlehem Church will greatly miss brother Kidwell, as he was faithful in attending their regular meetings, and in the absence of their pastor, Elder Badger, brother Kidwell would open the meeting by reading a chapter and talking to the brethren and friends. Brother Kidwell is survived by one son, Walter A. Kidwell, and two sisters: Mrs. Roberta Hopkins, of Fairfax, Va., and Mrs. Lavinia Ledbam, of South Boston, Va. We extend heartfelt sympathy to all his relatives and friends, and to the church, and especially to his dear sister, Mrs. Hopkins, who was at his bedside when he passed away.

Brother Badger being too ill to preach at the funeral, they had no preaching. They tried to get Elder Lefferts, also Elder Vaughan, Elder Lefferts being away from home at the time attending a meeting in Pennsylvania. When the writer reached the house where the remains lay the relatives and friends requested that I conduct the service by reading a chapter and offering prayer, which I did in much weakness and fear. His body was laid to rest beside his two wives, at old Paines Church, now called, I believe, Jerusalem Church, to await the morning of the resurrection and awake with the likeness of Jesus and ever be with the Lord.

Written by request of a dear brother of Bethlehem Church. JOHN F. OLIVER.

HERNDON, Va., April 18, 1914.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, by request of the churches of the Roxbury Association I will be at Kingston, N. Y., Saturday, May 16th, Olive and Hurley, Sunday, 17th, Union Grove, Monday, 18th, brother Faulkner's, Margaretville, evening of same day, Tuesday, 19th, Vega, Wednesday, 20th, Roxbury.

D. M. VAIL.

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association will convene with the Harford Church, Harford Co., Md., on Wednesday, May 20th, 1914, and continue three days. Visitors via Baltimore will arrive in time to leave over Maryland and Pennsylvania R. R., about 3 p. m., for Forest Hill, on Tuesday, the 19th. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, and we hope to have a goodly number with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Moderator.

FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will hold its annual session with the Salem Church, at the southeast corner of Broad and Cherry Sts., (the Parkway building) Philadelphia, Pa., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 27th, 28th and 29th, 1914, convenient to all railroad stations. Take elevator to seventh floor. Ministers of our faith and order, and also all lovers of the truth, are cordially invited to meet with us.

B. F. COULTER, Pastor.

FRANKLIN TERRY, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., June 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1914. Those coming by B. D. R. R. to Stockton will be met with conveyance on arrival of the 5 o'clock p. m. train on Tuesday, or on going to Frenchtown will be met and cared for by friends living there. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

CYRUS RISLER, Church Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Baptist Church, in New York city, to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (10th), 1914, and continue three days. The meetinghouse is No. 1216 Intervale Avenue, Bronx, near the Freeman Street station of the Subway. Take Subway train marked "Bronx," bound north, at any station south of 96th Street. A cordial welcome awaits all who can meet with us.

JOHN McCONNELL, Pastor.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 82. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1914. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

1 TIMOTHY III. 16.

"AND, without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

The first promise we have of God manifest in the flesh is in Genesis iii. 15: "And I will put enmity between thee [the serpent] and the woman, and between thy seed [the wicked led by his spirit, led captive by him at his will] and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou [the devil] shalt bruise his heel." Christ's flesh only was put to death, his Godhead did not suffer. Then in Isaiah ix. 6-9, God manifest in the flesh is again spoken of. "For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; [alluding to Christ's blood on the cross] but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire. For unto us [the church] a child is born, [God manifest in the flesh] unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, [the Creator of all things] The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, [for it is eternal] upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever [eternal]." Next I refer to Psalms cxxxix.: "For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: [Christ the spiritual David] marvelous are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance [his people] was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, [his chosen, his elect] yet being unperfect; and in thy book [the book of life; see Revelation xx. 12,] all thy members were written, [as Christ said to the apostles he sent, not to rejoice because the spirits were subject to them, but rather rejoice because their names were written in heaven] which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel; which being interpreted is, God with us [God manifest in the

flesh]."—Matthew i. 23. See the gospel of John i. 1–16. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we [the apostles and all the saints to whom he was revealed] beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us [the redeemed] to himself by Jesus Christ, [by his death] and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, [when Christ was manifest in the flesh] reconciling the world unto himself." He came not to save the world he would not pray for, (See John xvii. 9,) "but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." "Not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we [the saints] might be made the righteousness of God in him." "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, [Christ manifest in the flesh] and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us."—1 John i. 1–3. See Luke i. 31–36: "And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: [according to the flesh] and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." When he died upon the cross, Christ's last words were, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Christ said before his death, Destroy this temple (his body, not the divinity that was then in the body) and the third day I will raise it up. The divinity that left the body at his death, entered into the same body the third day, and he arose as he said he would, a victorious conqueror over death and the grave. See 1 Cor. xv. 38: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins [to atone by his death for the sins of all that were given him by the Father] according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures; and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; * * * After that he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also." Some then, as now, denied the resurrection of the dead. Paul wrote: "But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised; and if

Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." The body is sown a natural body, it (the same body) is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body (that we get from the man Adam) and there is a spiritual body (we get from the spiritual Adam, the Lord from heaven). And so it is written, (Genesis ii. 7,) The first man Adam was made a living soul. What was made a living soul? The man that God made from the dust of the ground. If God had breathed into that body his own eternal Spirit, the first Adam would have been a spiritual man, like Christ the Son of God, but God only breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. "The last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterwards that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. [Manifest in the flesh to save his people from their sins.] As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we [the saints] have borne the image of the earthy [here on earth] we shall also bear the image of the heavenly [when we awake with his likeness]." "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest [in the flesh, showing the mystery of godliness] in these last times [of the Jewish kingdom] for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. * * * For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word [Christ] which by the gospel is preached unto you."—1 Peter i. 18-21, 24, 25. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. (John xix. 30.) What was finished? The work he was manifest in the flesh to do. For the transgression of his people was he stricken, yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul (his body) an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall see of the travail of his soul (that suffered on the cross) and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many (all the Father gave unto him) for he shall bear their iniquities. He poured out his soul unto death. (See Isaiah liii.) "Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me."—Isaiah xlix. 16. "And the Word [Christ] was made flesh, and dwelt among us [the apostles and saints] and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."—John i. 14. "He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man: the field is the world: the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the chil-

dren of the wicked one: the enemy that sowed them is the devil: the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world."—Matthew xiii. 37-44. Back to Psalms again. "They that soweth in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, [surely they were precious or he would not have died for them at his first coming] shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."—Psalms cxxvi. 5, 6. "Fear not; for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed [Christ's elect] from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him. * * * I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Savior."—Isaiah xliii. 5-11. After Christ had fulfilled his Father's will here in the flesh he ascended up into heaven, is the testimony of over five hundred witnesses. "God has gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.—Psalms xlvii. 5. Then the Lord said by David, Psalms xxiv., "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in [to heaven]. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors: and the King of glory shall come in. * * * The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory."

R. S. BANKS.

CASEY, Iowa, March 17, 1914.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., April 20, 1914.

DEAR EDITOR:—I inclose herewith two, to me, excellent letters from our esteemed sisters Pultz and Runkle, whose names are always welcome, as they are among the excellent writers, and whose letters are always read with interest and comfort by the dear, weary, burdened pilgrims. Sister Runkle is a daughter of the late highly esteemed Elder I. N. Vanmeter. I was comforted in these precious messages of love and fellowship, humbled and encouraged, but feel if they knew me better their love and fellowship would be less, or that blessed tie severed. I am often made to cry out, I am a worm, and no man, but the Lord said, Fear not, thou worm Jacob, so I take courage.

Yours in Christ,

P. W. SAWIN.

WHEELING, W. Va., May 8, 1910.

ELDER P. W. SAWIN—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—It has been some time since I received your last kind favor. I have often thought that I must try to write, for it would seem much out of place for a poor, unworthy creature like myself not to acknowledge a letter from one of the dear servants of the most high God. Indeed, were it not that perfect love casteth out fear in this case I could never attempt to approach any of the dear saints, especially the ministers of the gospel. It seems to me that I have always loved and honored the dear men of God, but never as I do now. Of late I have been given to see so much of truth and godly wisdom in their writings. In reading through some of the back numbers I came to your experience; it is in No. 3, February 1st, 1909. I read it with renewed interest since having this little pen acquaintance with you. In your early life your experience is my own,

One thing I find, that I have never suffered as keenly for sin as some I have read of. Many have been brought, as it were, to the point of death before their deliverance. I never grieved so much for anything only the thought that God did not love me. I somehow felt that I belonged to him, and was conscious of having offended him. This caused what I hope was godly sorrow. I have often wondered much at my own experience. I cannot deny that I have been changed in spirit; there is a feeling that forbids me to deny my hope. I have come to believe that my first convictions were more outward than inward, and yet even then there was some kind of a change wrought in me. Before this the New Testament was a sealed book to me, then it opened a little to my understanding, especially the commands and promises. I seemed to know the part of it that sustains Methodist belief, or at least sustains it as they understand it, and right here I will say that I believe they are sincere in their belief, as far as they can understand. I was very zealous in attending their meetings for awhile, but little by little I began to feel a separation from them. Some of the sisters came to hold prayer meeting at our house. I remember they asked me to pray, and I tried, but I know it was only lip service. They sang hymns (some of their popular kind) and to this day if they come into my mind they cause a sickening feeling. Through all of my trying I was conscious of failure and shame and confusion. Once I even tried to teach a class of young ladies in Sunday School. I stood up before them and made a stammering effort to admonish them to seek the Lord, whereupon one of them looked up in my face, and I thought her expression said plainer than words, Who are you, to try to teach us? I felt terribly condemned, and never from that day attempted to teach in Sunday School. My dear parents felt grieved to see me so deceived in myself, but still as father had been in the same place when he was young I think he trusted in God's mercy to open my blind eyes and unstop my deaf ears. I was about thirty-three years old when I was "converted" at a Methodist mourner's bench. It is such a long story, and I have written it so often, that I have come to lack interest in it. The one part that I know was real was my great grief; I might say that I had never known such grief before. I tried to pray, but could only ask God to be merciful to me, a sinner, and while I knelt there making this one plea our Savior was presented before me sitting with his disciples. He turned his face partly toward me and smiled; then my grief was stilled, and I lifted up my poor, tear-swollen face and tried to sing. For a little while I thought my burden was gone, but directly the thought came that my Savior was only partly reconciled, as he had turned his face only partly toward me. Still I tried to hope that he loved me, and went on in this uncertain way. I tried to do good works; I visited the sick whenever I had a chance; I went to meeting, but found no pleasure in the preaching; I loved the world as well as ever, and I loved sin as well as ever, and yet I thought I was as good as most believers. In the year 1892 my dear father died, but before that time I had come to love the Baptist doctrine, or people rather, for I understood but little doctrine. The day that his funeral was preached by Elder Powers I was made to rejoice in Christ as our righteousness. I had never heard a sermon before; I had listened, but never heard. My dear mother and I went before the

church soon after this and were baptized by Elder Powers. Here again I cannot claim to be like many; I had no scruples or fears as to my fitness. I knew that I was not nor ever could be fit, only in Christ Jesus. I looked not to my own righteousness in anything, but trusted alone in his merits as being imputed to me. After this I returned to this place, and was shut off from all our people and service. I was unchanged in heart, I believed on Jesus, but not in him. I went on in this way until the year 1900, when my dear mother died. I can say truly that I had never really hungered for the pure gospel until that year. My sins became a great burden, and I could not rest. I laid down in sorrow and rose up in sorrow, and O how I longed to hear a good gospel sermon; I felt that I would find relief in it. I was blessed with the opportunity of hearing what then seemed to me the best sermon that I ever listened to. For the first time the precious promises seemed all for me. I could lay hold on the hope set before me, and O how I did rejoice in this hope; I sang from morning until night; election and predestination were sweet themes to me. By the grace of God I have been kept from the flesh and the world; I have no love for them; the things I once loved I now hate. Now, dear brother, what will you think of me if I say that I have always loved righteousness and desired to be like the good, saintly people even from a child up to this day? I do not think I am telling a lie when I claim this. I loved good people and despised the wicked, that is, those who were depraved and devilish. I believe I have ever feared God and desired to do right, but have ever failed. There is hardly an hour that does not show me some sin and great deformity of mind. My tongue is so unruly that it often causes me to sin. One thing I desire to be thankful for, among so many undeserved blessings, and that is, that I am constantly rebuked for my sins. The rebukes come from the word of God. The many sweet admonitions which I dearly love will come to my mind, showing me that I am not obeying them. I think every slip and fall we have serve to make us more careful. I do not like to offend my fellow-creatures, but that is a little thing compared to offending our precious Lord and Master. Our Savior said, If ye love me, keep my commandments. How well he knew that only his love in us could keep them.

Now I will draw this to a close, as my mind is shut up. I ask your pardon for this long and maybe uninteresting letter. I sent your first letter to the SIGNS. I certainly do enjoy reading it; it is the best Baptist paper we have. I trust you are enjoying both spiritual and temporal comforts. I ask an interest in your prayers.

Your unworthy sister, I hope,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

MACOMB, Ill., Feb. 20, 1914.

ELDER P. W. SAWIN—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS FAITH:—If such a poor, unworthy sinner as I may claim this blessed relationship to one whom I esteem so highly for the truth's sake. I am such a weak, ignorant one, so helpless, and seem to know nothing as I ought to know it, and I am made to wonder and exclaim, What am I, that God's dear people should feel constrained to write to me? Surely it was all of the Lord directing you that caused you to send me your precious epistle of love and fellowship. Dear brother, I was surprised indeed to receive your letter, but gladly so, and while tears filled my eyes,

I read it over and over with rejoicing; as cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country. I had been in great darkness, and wrote the letter for the SIGNS and sent it in fear and trembling, doubting my interest in the blood of Christ, cast down. I tried to pray that if I were a hypocrite and deceived in it all it would be made manifest. O, I felt if there were just one other like me, so filled with doubts and fears, misgivings and mistrust, I would be so comforted to know it, I would not then be entirely alone. In a short time came your good letter, and I could not help but rejoice. I thought if such an one as Elder Sawin could have fellowship for me, and had traveled and was still traveling the same road that I in much weakness tried to portray, there surely was ground for hope, I was not alone, I had companions in tribulation. I have not the pen of a ready writer, and am so ignorant in spiritual things I cannot express my feelings as you and others do, but I have been stumbling along for many years, relying alone on God's mercy and grace; without these I am nothing. I have often tried in my mind to decide which of the writers of the SIGNS appealed the strongest to me—whose writings comforted me the most. This was always hard to decide; but among several whose letters seemed especially sweet and comforting to me were your own. I cannot tell why, but in writing you often speak of the afflictions and trials and darkness of the way, which always finds an echo in my heart, for so much of my time is spent in "Doubting Castle," and I go mourning day by day over a sinful and depraved heart. As you say, Is it not strange that we get no better? Indeed it is even so, nothing to me seems more mysterious than this. If I hate sin and love holiness why do I not do better? Why do I not live free from sin? The only answer I can find to these questions is that I cannot do the things I would, for the sin that dwelleth in me. If this is true, we cannot do the things we would because sin still reigns in our mortal bodies, and while we tabernacle in the flesh this thorn, the buffetings of Satan, will remain to tempt and try us, but God's grace will be sufficient, so his children will be enabled to bear it; not escape from trials, but with the temptation be enabled to bear it. We are not promised an easy journey through this world of sorrow, "But we must fight if we would reign." And, "In the world ye shall have tribulation."

Yes, dear brother, I remember when you were at my father's house, though I cannot remember the year. When I was a little girl I used to feel that when an Old School Baptist minister came it was almost like an angel's visit, I had such reverence for them. I cannot recall in what way we ministered to you, but I know my father's house was ever open to God's people, and they were made welcome. I was talking to my mother a few days ago, and she remembered your visit to them, but said she felt that she had done but little for her brethren. This is characteristic of our dear mother, humble and unassuming, yet many a cup of cold water has come from her hands to cheer and comfort the weary. She was a minister's wife for over fifty years, raised eleven children, and surely during the ninety-three years of her life and now seventy-five years since she became a Baptist she has experienced and can testify to some of the ups and downs of a minister's life. Her mental faculties are good, and she can tell of many things all along her pilgrimage. She is especially

thankful to be remembered by her brethren. She and an unmarried son live on the old home place settled in 1856. I think your father's family is highly favored of the Lord. Ten children members of the Primitive Baptist Church and three of them eminent ministers of the gospel; truly your mother was highly favored. I was pretty well acquainted with your brother, Elder Isaac Sawin, of Iowa, having met him for a number of years at associations in this state; he was considered an able minister. The Baptists here are few and scattering. The church of my membership is twenty miles from me, and I cannot attend regularly. My father served this church thirty-seven years, and three others twenty-five years each, and traveled much. He had the highest regard for you, and esteemed you among the excellent of the earth.

I love the dear old SIGNS, and have not missed a number in twenty-eight years, and often read the old numbers. I also read three other Baptist publications, and love peace and hate controversy. The SIGNS is the freest from that of them all, I think.

Dear brother, I must surely bring this lengthy letter to a close; I feel that it is more lengthy than profitable. I had not intended writing so much; I wanted you to know that I highly appreciated your good letter, and that your writings are very comforting and edifying to me, and I would like to send your letter to the SIGNS were it not of such a personal nature; I may do so anyway. Mine is not for publication. Though my letter is long, I could fill pages telling of my sinfulness, shortcomings and trials by the way; but to sum it all up, I am only a poor sinner saved by grace alone, if saved at all, whose only hope is in the death, resurrection and intercession of Christ. "Nothing in my hand I bring."

I hope your dear wife is better, and if she can glean a crumb from this it is for her also.

Now may grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus rest and remain with you and yours.

From your unworthy sister, if one, the least of all,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

JOHN IV. 29.

"COME, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?"

This is the language of a woman of Samaria after she had seen the Savior at the well, which is located in a strip of country between Judea and Galilee, called Samaria, where Jacob's well is. The Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. The people of Samaria thought that God could be worshiped nowhere but in "this mountain," and the Jews thought Jerusalem was the place of worship. (See John iv. 20, 21.) Jesus appeared at the well, and there came a woman of Samaria to draw water, and Jesus asked for a drink; then came the conversation between Jesus and the woman, in which she said, "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." From this fact she knew that he was a Jew, or, in other words, judged him to be a Jew, and he said, "Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews." Jesus informed her that, "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."—John iv. 23, 24. Yes, regardless of the high mountain of Samaria or the law

worship of the ancient Jew. John said, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath [destruction of the Jewish ceremonial worship] to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance," and not claim relationship with Abraham, for God is able of these stones (dead sinners of both Jew and Gentile) to raise up children unto Abraham. (Matt. iii. 7–9.) Though the people had the law and the prophets to read, and they were read every sabbath day in all their synagogues, yet they did not know Jesus when he came; therefore no amount of book-learning, no amount of teaching one another, saying, Know the Lord, has ever taught them Jesus, but Jesus must appear individually to the child and tell him or her all things that they ever did before they can say, Is not this the Christ? O how many times, brethren, has Jesus appeared unto you in that still small voice and told you all things you ever did. How humbled you were then. When you were young (in the flesh) you walked whithersoever you would, but when you were old (crippled) you sought one (Jesus) to lead you. As Abraham was, so were you called from your own country and from among your people (in the flesh) unto a country you knew not of (heavenly places in Christ); then you could say, Will not the Judge of all the earth do right? and sing:

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;
I one was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see."

When you traveled the road all the earth travels, nature's dark and rough road, you could not see. The words of Jesus are to you, Verily, verily I say unto you, Except a man be born again from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God. You do not see how this can be, yet Jesus said, Ye must be born again. Jesus must come to you and say, Though thy sins be many, they all are forgiven thee. When you experience a quietness in your very soul after a siege of confusion of mind and restless nights have passed, after the load has been lifted from your poor heart you are made to see how dreadful was this place of your standing. Yet some might say, I cannot tell of a great manifestation of God's power in my deliverance, if so be I have ever been delivered, though I feel to have different desires to those I have had. Yes, dear one, it might be like this comparison I have often used in my weak efforts to preach: Just imagine a man with a large sack of sand on his shoulder, and he carries it until it becomes a great burden to him. Finally there comes a small hole in the sack, the sand begins to leak out little by little, until at last the load is gone. To be sure he cannot tell just how it got away, nor just at what moment it all disappeared, yet he now feels the load he once carried is all gone. As the poet said, was lost, but now am found; was blind, but now I see. You travel this road for awhile, and then you find yourself enshrouded with a deep loneliness, a feeling of sadness in the depth of your poor soul; you just cannot tell why you cannot help it either. Here then will arise in your mind, O, I am surely mistaken, I have not been born again; surely if I were a child of God I would not have these feelings. Why, every little, idle word, every trifling thought, every mean thing that I ever did, comes creeping into my mind. Jesus is now telling you of all things that ever you did; then you can fellowship Paul, and cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then comes the answer, as with Paul, I thank God through Jesus Christ our

Lord. Here then is Jesus' saying come to pass in your experience, The hour is come that you neither worship God in this mountain (high and lofty place of the earth), nor yet in Jerusalem (among the ancient self-righteous Pharisees), but in spirit. As Jesus has appeared to you and told you everything you ever did, this self-righteousness and fleshly pride has been humbled. He has told you of your carnal attachment to worldly things, and has set aside the waterpot you had been depending on in times past to draw, at your own option, water from the natural fountain, which is only satisfying to your fleshly ambition; and he has now told you that he that drinketh of the water that he should give shall never thirst, for he (Jesus) is the fountain that is opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. (Zech. xiii. 1.) He is the fountain of living waters to every one he appears to in putting away sin, and says, Though thy sins be many, they are all forgiven thee. "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones."—Zech. xiii. 7. The stroke was made, the Shepherd was smitten, the sheep scattered. (Mark xiv. 27.) Peter positively declared he would not forsake his Lord, but, according to what Jesus said, he denied him, and that with an oath. No wonder Jesus said to him, When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. We find in our experience that daily we need converting from self-reliance to that of dependence upon Jesus.

What I have written is more and different from what I intended, and scattering and rambling as it is, if it does not find its way to the waste-basket may it be of some benefit to the household of faith.

Your afflicted brother in bonds,

J. B. BOWDEN.

FALLS CITY, Texas, April 5, 1914.

DAYTON, Ohio, April 19, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Although being strangers in the flesh, yet I hope we are not in spiritual matters, as I have claimed a home in the Old Baptist Church for a number of years, and my dear christian parents from my earliest recollection were stanch believers in election and the absolute predestination of all things, and were subscribers to the dear old SIGNS during their lives. When I was a young girl in my parental home I cared but little to read an Old Baptist periodical, but as time rolled on, and I grew to womanhood, at a time when I least expected the Lord in his infinite wisdom and mercy showed me what a poor, unworthy sinner I was, and O how I begged for mercy and grace from his kind hand. He showed me, too, that we cannot do anything of ourselves to claim a home among God's chosen. A great trial of doubts and fears surrounded me until God, in his own time, relieved me of such doubts and fears by showing me his pardoning love in forgiving my innumerable sins, and set me, a poor captive, free. For many days thereafter all the day long Jesus was my joy and my song, but soon dark clouds obscured the glorious sunlight, and all through my journey in this life I have my doubts and fears, wondering many times if I dare claim a home with God's people. In these pages I wish to speak of the love of God, which is all heavenly and divine, for poor, worthless ones of earth; worthless in our sight, but precious in the eyes of the Lord. I am fully aware, too, that it is a theme upon which, for a tongue to

speak, it must be guided by heavenly love and light, as it is a heavenly theme. I grieve many times for lack of expression, for a door of utterance, for power to do justice to so sweet and glorious a subject; but trusting in Him who is our strength in weakness, in light, in darkness, I will endeavor to write this letter for the perusal of the readers of your much appreciated paper, trusting it will find a response in the hearts of my dear brethren and sisters in the Lord. It is wonderful to contemplate that we knew nothing of the dear Redeemer's love to us, nor of the inheritance in the kingdom which was prepared for us before time began, but that the Lord knew it all, and he came to redeem us unto himself. He bore the curse of the law and destroyed sin and death for his people, and in due time this will be known to all of God's people scattered over all the earth. "Chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world." Precious and soul-cheering words. Had it not been his will, these things would never have been revealed unto us. O who can tell the fullness of that love with which the all-wise God could so love creatures of earth, and choose them in his beloved Son, then deliver him up for us all, and also with him freely give us all things? Strait and narrow is the way of pleasantness and the path of peace. Walking in this way only can the wayfaring one find rest, for this is to walk in Christ. I am the way, saith Christ. "In the world ye shall have tribulation," but in him we have peace. Precious and comforting words. Soon after I united with the Predestinarian Baptist Church did I picture the calm serenity of mind which would attend my declining years, but alas, I have found that to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do. Even at this day the perils and trials of the way are just as great as at the commencement. God is the Lord, and beside him there is no Savior. It was according to his own wise arrangement to form a people for himself, to show forth his glory, that they should be a separate people, walking as he commanded and after the pattern he has given. They are to be a peculiar people, zealous of good works. The dear Lord inspires their hearts with zeal for the right way, for that which is good and acceptable unto him, which he has ordained that they should walk in. Here it is that they find peace, for his ways are ways of pleasantness and all his paths are peace. The glorious kingdom of our God is not meat and drink, but love, joy and peace in the Holy Ghost. "For without me," said the Savior, "ye can do nothing." So when we do not have his manifest presence we can but slumber and sleep in spiritual things. Dear brethren and sisters, you and I are one in Christ, I trust, and if we are by virtue of our unity with and relationship to Christ born of his Spirit, are we not brethren indeed and members of that royal company which composes his body, the church, which is the bride, the Lamb's wife? What a great and deplorable thing for finite men to assert that they are instruments in God's hand in saving sinners, when it is nothing but man's invention. Nebuchadnezzar felt at one time that there was no power above him, but in God's appointed time he gave to the prophet Daniel to reveal to the king an interpretation of his dream, and how he should be brought down to the very dust of the earth and made to eat grass as an ox; then he learned that God will give the

kingdom to whomsoever he will, and that all the inhabitants of the earth are counted as nothing. God does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou? He is the beginning and the end of all things, the Alpha and Omega.

Dear editors, this subject is a deep one, and I cannot fathom it. I feel to hope that you will cast the mantle of charity over all my imperfections. How very true, dear brethren, these words: Blessed are they that hear the joyful sound. Why should we fear, when our Father is at the helm? He will guide the ship safely through deep waters, and none can make us afraid. Salvation is of the Lord, and can be in no other way, for he said: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." So when God speaks it is done, for he spake as never man spake, and taught as man never taught.

In looking over my long epistle I find so little of interest given that I am almost tempted to destroy it and begin anew, but fearing a repetition of the same I will leave it just as it is, and if you deem it worthy of a place in the SIGNS you may use it, but if not cast it aside, and all will be right with me. Dear editors, I hope you will remember me at the throne of grace.

Your sister in hope of a blessed immortality, (MRS.) LIDA KELLER.

GALION, Ohio, April 26, 1914.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—No doubt you will think strange of receiving this letter from me, one whom you have never met, and yet I have always had a desire to meet and hear you talk of the things of the Spirit. I just want to tell you of some of the comfort and instruction I have felt to receive in years gone by in reading after yourself and Elder Chick, and in fact all the writers of the good old SIGNS, but for a year or more these blessed favors have been withheld from me, and I have been made to feel that I have no part or interest in these things, and am deceived, and deceiving the dear children of God; and all of this time I have read and reread the SIGNS with but very little comfort. I would try to read the Bible, but there seemed nothing in it for me, poor, miserable sinner that I am, and I feel it is just the way I should feel, and I do not deserve anything better, and just about resolved that I would not try to speak in His name, neither try to read any more, but being all alone, I picked up the April 15th SIGNS and opened it to the article written by brother Sawin, and O how I was changed. The same thing I had read, and there was nothing in it for me, was now so full, and as I read on through the many now good letters they seemed to all be addressed to me, and written for my special benefit. These same letters in which I could see nothing are now overflowing with the love of God, telling of his mercy and eternal purpose in all things, and of how the Savior finished the work his Father gave him to do, which was to save his people from their sins, and how it is impossible to add anything to a finished work, and I was made to reflect and compare the writings and to see how perfectly they all join together, and give God all the glory, and can say with the poet, "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." I had been feeling for some time that I was forsaken of God and man, and that there was nothing left for me but eternal destruction, and that there was none on the face of the earth as far removed from the things of the Spirit as myself, and to

read that those of God's children I have read after and enjoyed so much should say the same things, much encouraged me. I think I have been looking for something good in the flesh, and yet I know that in the flesh dwells no good thing. Paul said, "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not." And the old prophets say, Cursed is man that trusteth in man and maketh flesh his arm. I feel that all we have, both temporal and spiritual, comes as a free and unmerited favor from the bountiful hand of the all-wise and merciful God, and that all the heirs of mercy were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and are not to be presented to him, nor to present themselves to him, in their own righteousness, but that he presents them (his bride) to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, clothed in the robe of righteousness which he wrought out for her on Mt. Calvary when he died the just for the unjust; died that she might live.

I have extended this far beyond what I expected, for I had thought to just tell you and the rest of the writers how I have enjoyed the SIGNS, yet do not know that I have written anything that will be of interest to you or any of God's dear children, but will send it as it is and leave to your better judgment whether to publish or not. I hope the Lord may see fit to restore Elder Chick to health, and give you both health and strength to still edit the SIGNS many years to his glory and to the comfort of his poor and afflicted people.

With love and best wishes to yourself and family, and all the household of faith, I am, as ever, your unworthy brother, if not deceived,

C. E. JACKSON.

RUSSELLVILLE, April, 1914.

DEAR EDITOR:—Having derived so much comfort and encouragement from reading the SIGNS of late I feel that I want to say something in return for what I have feasted upon. I hope that the Lord will take the lead of my mind and bless what I may write to the good of his people and the honor and glory of his cause and kingdom here in this world, for I confess I can do nothing without him. We read that "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." We also learn that the Word is truth. Hence Paul's admonition to his son Timothy was to "preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine." I am persuaded that to do this is to preach Christ, and him crucified, as the way, and the truth, and the life; the only name given in heaven or on earth whereby poor sinners must be saved. Paul said in addressing the brethren at one time upon this theme, that he was determined to know nothing among them save Jesus Christ, and him crucified, and all of God's professed followers would do well to follow in this path, for it is in him we live, move and have our being, and without him we can do nothing, and are less than nothing, and vanity. This alone seems to my mind to destroy the theory of time salvation, and to do away with voluntary obedience. I mean no offense to any one, but am simply trying to hew to the line. I believe, as it is written, that every good and every perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights, and all that his children need was treasured up in Christ before the foundation of the world. Then if we need anything let us go to him, for he is the mediator between God and man, and intercedes for his people

according to the will of God, and whatsoever is his will he will grant us. God said to his children, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." Again, Jesus said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me [notice this is in the past tense] I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Brethren, it seems to my poor finite mind that the majority of the professed followers of Christ have ruled him out of it all, and have taken the power in their own hands, and are going about trying to do something for the sinner that was done nineteen hundred years ago; then they talk of the "Hardshells" being behind the times, not up to date. I am glad that we are behind the times when it comes to trying to save sinners, when it was done in the mind and purpose of God before ever they had an existence in time. Let us listen to the words of Jesus. He says that a people was given to him by the Father, and I am sure from the reading of the Scriptures that this people was given to him in the covenant of redemption, entered into between Father, Son and Holy Ghost before the world began, and their names were written in the Lamb's book of life then. I affirm that the mission of Christ in the world was to save these very people from their sins by the shedding of his blood on the cross, for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. When the blood was shed he cried out, "It is finished." Right there I believe the work was accomplished that the Father gave him to do. I believe there has never been a sinner saved since, and never will be as long as time lasts, for I understand that after this he went back to the Father, and there he is and will remain until he comes the second time without sin unto salvation to take this same people home to himself, that where he is there shall they be also. Hence to take away the crucifixion of Christ, and his resurrection and ascension to glory, is to destroy our hope of heaven and immortal glory. These are my convictions, brethren, and I expect to advocate them as long as God permits me to live, for I believe it in this way with all my heart. Brethren, when we are comforted and built up in our faith in Christ we should not withhold it from one another. This is the reason I have written this letter; I want to comfort others with the same comfort wherewith I have been comforted while reading the messages of the brethren and sisters. Let us endeavor to encourage each other while the Lord permits us to live, and in doing this we help to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ, for that law is not fulfilled by us or in us unless we thus help, and become partakers of one another's burdens. May the Lord bless the truth, and save us all in his kingdom above for Jesus' sake.

I submit this to you for your disposal; do with it as you please, and believe me one who hopes he loves God's people, his cause and his kingdom in this world, still a poor sinner saved by grace if saved at all, J. B. JONES.

RALEIGH, N. C., April 26, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am writing to send my subscription for the SIGNS, and to say that I cannot express how much I regret to hear of the death of dear Elder Chick. How we all shall miss his

editorials. You will, perhaps, feel the loss more than any one except his immediate family, because you were so intimately associated with him in your work. I have known and loved him ever since I was a small child, when he used to visit our town (Wilson) nearly every year. It was our good fortune to have him in our home many times, and each time he endeared himself more and more to all who met him. His fireside conversation was delightful, and his sermons always instructive and most comforting to God's people. His last visit to Raleigh was a timely one, and must have been providential. My sister (Mrs. Aycock) had just lost her husband, and had not been to meeting or heard any preaching since his death, and when Elder Chick came she went to hear him four times, with very great pleasure and much comfort; she said she felt that he was sent to preach to her. When I saw him, so well preserved for one of his age, I felt that we would have him many years yet to preach with that great ability that God had given him. One by one the older ministers are leaving us, and I often wonder who will fill their places. It has been predicted for years that the church would die when these old men are gone, simply because we are not raising up others. I was told that not more than one month ago. We did not raise these up; such gifts as these are only made by God, who is just as able now as when he called Paul. Sometimes it does seem hard for us to be so few, and all of us so helpless, but is it not true that we have some painful evidences that ours is the true church? The very fact that we are not trusting in an arm of flesh is one evidence. We would if we could. "I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above." The minister is, I think, one of the best gifts we have, and I do not want to be instrumental in raising up one to preach to me, for he would, no doubt, be no better qualified than his teacher. Our ministers are so approachable, because God has raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. We are together in weakness, in fear and in much trembling. We are also together in rejoicing that our faith does not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God. I am not afraid to stand still, and I am not afraid that the gates of hell will prevail against the true church.

About one month ago I went to Cuba, and when we returned we had a very rough sea; the captain told me it was the roughest he had seen this year. At one time there were only three people on deck, and I was the only lady. I sat there all day and watched the waves as they rolled higher and higher, breaking over the deck, covering me with spray, but I did not care to go inside. All day I thought of God's power and of his wonders in the deep. I thought of Paul and the shipwreck, and many other things of interest. Instead of being afraid of the billows they preached a good sermon to me. I remembered this Scripture: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee." I knew that in every affliction and trouble, however hard it had seemed to be at the time, God had at the set time calmed the troubled waters and had spoken peace to my soul. Cannot he who hath delivered, and doth deliver, be trusted to deliver each and every one of his people from evil?

With my very best wishes for the continued success of the SIGNS, I am most sincerely,

PATTIE W. ANDERSON.

GAINESVILLE, Ga., Dec. 7, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am just from my home in Montgomery, Ala., to Gainesville, Ga., on a visit to my only child, Mrs. H. J. Peace, and found awaiting me the last issue of the SIGNS, and I think the issue an unusually comforting one; indeed, let me say there is ever an order and decorum and dignity about the SIGNS that appeals to the quiet, humble child of God. The editorials seem to say softly, These are our views, compare them with the holy Scriptures and tell us what you think of them. One beautiful characteristic of your paper is its utter lack of all trace of boastfulness, and it is this very thing which so distinguishes it from the publications of the works denominations; as a rule they abound in that hateful spirit of boasting. The apostle to the Gentiles wrote unto the Galatians these strong words as to boasting: "God forbid that I should glory [boast], save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I [am crucified] unto the world." Paul taught that nothing availed anything to God's children save being in Christ Jesus, being a "new creature;" hence the utter folly, yea, sinfulness, of being a boaster, going around among God's people, telling what great works he is doing for the Lord. For one, I do not believe that one of God's children could have the temerity to boast about any single thing he ever did or could do. Perish the thought of such a thing. It is not his to boast, but to humbly, quietly walk in the "good works" which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Now, speaking of "walk," it is a doctrine I think too often overlooked by Primitive Baptists, or rather, I should say, too often or too commonly unemphasized. God commands his children to "walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is." "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs," giving thanks always to God. His true ministers, just as Paul did, will ever be found pleading with us, beseeching us to "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness, and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." To "walk worthy" should be our constant care, our hearts' delight. We should be much in prayer. Our delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law do we meditate day and night. But, some one may say, I am so weak, is it possible for me to walk worthy? Well, I think so. Do you believe our Father, through his apostle, would "beseech" us to do a thing unless he knew it were possible for us to do that very thing? Our Father knows all about us; he knows our weaknesses, but at the same time he also knows the potentialities wrapped up in his children when lovingly led by his tender hand and guided by his all-seeing eye. He commands us to speak often one to another, to assemble ourselves together to worship him. In short, he gave his Son, "who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." I believe that when God's children shall have grown in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ to that degree where a well defined hope of some day seeing Jesus as he is and being like him has sprung up within them, they will purify themselves

even as Christ is pure. "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he [Christ] is pure." O how true, how beautiful, how comforting the thought that this purification doctrine is dual in its processes: Christ purifying unto himself a peculiar people, while these same people are purifying themselves even as he is pure. So, then, let God's children walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called. Then again, to walk worthy, I believe some things are taught in God's Word as absolutely essential to this end. First, we should know whether we are the children of God. The word "know," as I remember counting it on one occasion some years ago, occurs thirty-six times in John's first letter alone; only five chapters in the letter. I will quote just one verse with a "know" in it: "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Again, hear one of the ancient worthies: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." Again, Christ taught us in praying to say, Our Father which art in heaven, &c. I could multiply Scriptures showing the children know their heavenly Father, but let these suffice. We should "put off concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts," by following Paul's directions as specifically laid down in Colossians iii. 1-11. Then we should enter the quiescent stage of our spiritual life. "Be still," and, Be ye renewed in the spirit of your mind, and then, dear brethren, "ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

I was led to these last reflections by noticing in the conclusions of many letters to the SIGNS such remarks as this: Yours, a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all. The expression, it seems to me, is susceptible of but one inference: doubt as to your sonship. With the thought of England's greatest poet: Doubt the sun, moon and stars; doubt truth to be a liar, but doubt not your sonship, your Father which art in heaven; for your Father in the long, long ago hath chosen you in Christ Jesus, that ye should be holy, as Christ is holy, and without blame before him in love.

But, my dear brethren, with my whole heart I love you with a fervent love, and conclude my letter with this statement of my firm belief, that whether we walk worthily or unworthily, the relationship between us and our heavenly Father remains unchanged; we are the sons of an eternal Father.

Brethren editors, you are at liberty to publish these poor words of mine if you wish. And now unto God our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Affectionately,

GEORGE W. TOWNSEND.

WAVERLY, Pa., April 9, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—You will find inclosed three letters, and if you have need and approve of them you may publish them.

Your brother, I hope,

D. M. VAIL.

BOWDOINHAM, Maine

DEAR ELDER VAIL:—I have been thinking for some time that I would love to see you and talk with you, but as I cannot I will use pen and paper to express my thoughts and feelings about a few things that I think I know, and the things without number that I do not know. I would indeed love to address you as brother, but I do not know that I

am a brother to you; I feel more like a brother to the owls and bats. I surely know that I am a sinner, and the apostle Paul has said that Christ came into the world to save sinners, but I do not know that he came to save me. He also says in his epistle to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints, that he (Jesus) was delivered for their offenses, and raised again for their justification. Was he delivered for my offenses, and raised again for my justification? Was this poor sinner included in that company that was beloved of God, called saints? Am I a child of God? Have I been born again, born of the Spirit, born not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever? Have I ever seen the kingdom of God? O I do not know. I do not know that God has loved me with an everlasting love and drawn me with loving-kindness, but I realize that I am nearing the end of my mortal life, and O that I could say with Paul, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day." I think that I believe in an incomprehensible God, and in his Son Christ Jesus the Lord, and that the Son and Father are one, and that all the members of the one body were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. I do not know that this poor old sinner was included in that company, but it is written that we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren, and although I do not know that I am a brother to the chosen of God, and precious, I cannot help loving those who bear testimony to the truth that I believe is in the fullness of Christ, and who walk according to the rule that is written by Paul in his letter to the churches of Galatia. I think that I love them with an everlasting love, a love unfeigned. I am tossed about by doubts, fears and temptations, and it makes me sigh, mourn and weep. The things that I do not know may be called legion. Often the words of Moses, recorded in the ninetieth Psalm, are in my heart: So teach me to number my days, that I may apply my heart unto wisdom. Also David's words in the one hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm: "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am." Also the continuing verses to the end of the chapter.

Perhaps I have written enough to let you see that I am ignorant, but I cannot change what I have written, for it is the truth in relation to this poor, old, ignorant sinner.

Elder Vail, I am going to ask you to write and tell me the truth (for I think you know) about what you think of one who has had the impudence to stand before God's children and try to declare the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Now a few words in relation to things of this world of pride and vanity. My wife and myself are yet alive, and why we are I do not know, but God knows. We both are getting old, my wife is nearly eighty years, and I am nearly seventy-nine; the vigor of our mortal life is past, and we have arrived at the place where the grasshopper is a burden, and I have to say, as the wise man did (not that I am wise), Vanity of vanities, all is vanity. We cannot do much labor, have not been away from our home during the winter. God has been good to us, but it is not because we are good; we have had enough to eat and drink, and wood and clothing enough to keep us warm; if there is anything we need that

we cannot get, our children see that we have it. God has given us good and kind children, and I hope that we are thankful to him for his gifts.

In conclusion, I will say that I would love to see you, and should be pleased if you could attend the Maine Association this fall. I do not know that your health is good enough to make the journey, but I hope it is. My wife and I greet you and your wife with love. May God bless you both.

A poor old sinner,

Z. M. BEAL.

MARGARETVILLE, N. Y., March, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—I am very glad that you could make us a visit, also that I could have the pleasure of hearing you declare the truth again. I had been dreading the long, cold winter without any preaching, as there had been no appointments made here for the winter, when you came and refreshed our hearts. I wish I could be more content to do without preaching, not be so unreconciled and rebellious at times, knowing that the Judge of all the earth does right and that none can turn him; I know that I shall hear just as many sermons as are designed for me. I am so sinful and unworthy, doing and saying the things that I ought not, that I do not deserve to hear any preaching. During the past year I attended two two days meetings. I had been very anxious to hear Elder Coulter, but never had the pleasure until the Vega meeting last summer, and it was a sweetly solemn meeting to me; the communion was solemn, and it was good to think that some more had been gathered into the fold, with believers enrolled, and the sermons were excellent. Our association was also a good meeting, at Union Grove, although I missed some of the ministers who are usually with us, but the sermons we heard were refreshing, the letters excellent and the singing all so harmonious that I felt it good to be there and partake of the feast, good to assemble with the saints. How lovely, how divinely sweet, O Lord, are thy sacred courts; fain would my longing passions meet the glories of thy presence there, but I am so worldly-minded the most of the time it is only at short intervals that my mind is dwelling upon the goodness of the Lord to me. O why do I not more often seek those things that are above, which perish not with the using; so different from twenty years ago this winter, when I first felt peace in believing, when these words came into my mind, Let thy servant depart in peace, for I have seen thy salvation. Then Jesus all the day long was my joy and my song. That was a happy winter, and again after I united with the church, in 1892, my joy was too great to express in words; then I was often soaring upon the mountaintop, but now I am seldom ever there, but my mind is in a calm state the most of the time, and at times cold and careless, and indifferent to everything pertaining to the gospel I love to hear proclaimed in its purity. I know that the Lord is good, and a stronghold in the day of trouble, that he will be with me and will not forsake me if I am what I profess to be; but,

> "I am a stranger here below,
> And what I am 'tis hard to know;
> I am so vile, so prone to sin,
> I fear that I'm not born again."

In those happy golden days in my mind I would be singing the hymn commencing, "While my Redeemer's near," now I seldom ever think of it, but the old familiar hymns often are coming to mind, the ones my mother used to fre-

quently sing: "How firm a foundation," and others I can remember, which I enjoy repeating to myself. I like the hymn, "Awake, my soul, in joyful lays, and sing my dear Redeemer's praise." I know that I ought to feel to sing his praises more often than I do, and ought to serve him better, but I am a poor frail worm of the dust. I often wish that I could converse upon the kingdom, and was more spiritually-minded, for I do love to hear others, but it seems as if I cannot talk of Jesus and his love, but it is of him I would sing. Salvation by grace; how sweet and delightful the theme. Give glory and honor to him; break forth and extol the great Ancient of Days for his rich and distinguishing grace. He drew us with the cords of his kindness, and taught us to love his great name. O what was there in me to merit esteem, or give the Creator delight? Did it seem good in his sight? Give all the glory to his holy name, for unto him all the glory belongs. I take great comfort reading my Bible and THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for there are so many excellent communications in it, and while others are going to meeting I read some comforting sermons there. I also enjoy reading the hymns in Beebe's collection. I hope it will be so that you can visit again soon and preach for us.

Yours in hope of a blessed immortality beyond the grave,

PHEBE J. FAULKNER.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, March 22, 1914.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER: —I am glad you felt like writing me, for I do not get many letters nowadays, so any I am favored with are doubly welcome. It is encouraging to hear that the letter I wrote to sister Bonnie Chick could give enjoyment to any of the Lord's dear people. It is not lack of time that prevents me writing letters, but the unfavorable state of my mind. About the only thing that makes me feel disposed to write is to hear of the Lord's little ones crying out in the darkness, for there is a sense of fellowship with every one who knows the affliction of a sinful heart that draws me to him. On the mountain-top of joy and peace there is not the same need of companionship. It is in the vigils of the night, when the storm darkens around us, that we feel the need of the companionship of those who are in the same plight as we are.

When I was young the thought of death was dreadful to me, but for many years I have not felt anxious on that account, neither do I feel the fear of after-punishment. The same light that brought peace and forgiveness to my soul destroyed the fear of death. But what has caused me greater anguish is the thought of being cut off from God, not to be included in his covenant of grace. I cannot express my meaning clearly, but you understand me, for the same experience is our common lot. There is much in what we are taught through the Spirit's inward work that can never be put into words. Often as a little child, unable to talk, we cling to Christ, trusting him even in our doubting fear, and yet are unable to tell another why we have hope. Prophecy is given of God through the Spirit, and all have not this gift; it is not for the one who is gifted, but for his brethren, the church. What is for a child of God alone, to rest in his own soul, needs not the form of words or literal understanding, it is a hidden, secret thing, to be pondered in the heart with thanksgiving and praise.

Write me when you feel so disposed, and be sure your letter will be welcome. Edith and Ellen join me in love.

Affectionately your brother,

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—The following was written by my father about thirty years ago.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

FROM my early childhood it was my happy privilege to hear the free grace gospel preached. I can scarcely remember the time when Christ was not dear to me, but I knew nothing of myself as a poor lost sinner until about the age of fourteen, then my soul began to be troubled. One day, being sent on an errand, I happened to hear a poor black Hindoo preaching upon the street corner. He was telling out from the fullness of his heart what God had done for his soul, having brought him out of heathen darkness, and that the love of Christ the Savior filled his soul to overflowing. I shall never forget how the tears rolled down his cheeks as he sang the words, "In the christian's home in glory there remains a land of rest." But O the anguish that my soul was in; I could only cry out, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. He went on speaking again a little while, and then sang:

"Lo, on a narrow neck of land,
Twixt two unbounded seas I stand,
Yet how insensible!
On moment's time, or inch of space,
Might land me on yon heavenly place,
Or shut me up in hell."

This, by the power of the Holy Spirit, went to my soul like a two-edged sword; I saw myself a poor lost sinner, and my cry was for God to show mercy on my poor soul. I continued in trouble, and often my heart would cry out:

"'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought,)
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

My mind became established in the belief that the Scriptures teach the doctrine of predestination, election, salvation by grace and the final perseverance of the saints unto eternal glory, but whether God had chosen me was my trouble night and day. I was apprenticed to a good God-fearing man, Mr. Green, a deacon of the Strict Baptist Church in Camden Town, London, England, and with this man I attended Zion Church, of which Mr. Nunn was the pastor. Mr. Green's talks to me were often a great comfort to me in my soul's distress.

"It was mercy for me that I saw my sad state;
By the light of his Spirit I saw it was great;
A refuge I wanted, and for it did cry,
O save me, dear Jesus, or else I must die."

The mystery of the crucified One was much opened up and sealed home to my heart by the hymn:

"Alas! and did my Savior bleed,
And did my Savior die?
Would he devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?

Was it for crimes that I have done
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity! Grace unknown!
And love beyond degree!"

And under a sermon preached by Mr. Nunn from the words: "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." The marks of God's redeemed were beautifully opened up with comfort to my soul, and I was confirmed in my hope that Christ had redeemed me. I united with Zion Strict Baptist Church, and was baptized by Mr. Nunn.

Is there anything here more desirable than the enjoyment of Christ in the heart the hope of glory? Can we comprehend anything so glorious as the rest that remains for the people of God? And, bless the Lord, I feel I can now say that I know he is mine; I know that when this house of clay shall be dissolved that I shall have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. O the glory, that unspeakable glory. Be astonished, O ye

heavens, and wonder, O ye angels, at the infinite grace, for is there any one under the heavens more beholden to God's free grace than I? O bless the Lord with me; come let us shout for joy, and boast in the God of our salvation. O help me to praise the Lord, for his mercy endureth forever. How sweet is our blessed Jesus! How shall I speak a thousandth part of his praises? O for words to speak his excellencies, but it is inexpressible. How sweet and glorious is our precious Jesus; he is altogether lovely. He has ravished my soul with his beauty. O help me to praise him, to admire him who hath done such wondrous things for my soul. Come help me, all ye glorious ones on high, who are so well skilled in heavenly praises, that I may love and adore him that hath, I hope, given himself for me, and washed me in his precious blood and made me fit to sit with him upon his heavenly throne.

FREDERICK B. B. KEENE.

(See obituary on page 317.)

BLUE SPRINGS, MO.

DEAR FRIENDS:—The time has arrived for me to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, which has been a welcome visitor to me for many years, and I hope to have it continue as long as I remain on earth, for it surely advocates the doctrine of the Bible, unless I am mistaken, and always has, from the prospectus issued by dear old Elder Beebe in 1832. Though nine years before I was born, I have been familiar with the doctrine it has advocated from the first, having both volumes of the Editorials, and it is a comforting thought to me that the same doctrine advocated in the SIGNS eighty-two years ago is still earnestly contended for by the editors and publishers, and I trust and believe it will be sustained in the future as in the past by the God who controls and predestinates and works all things after the counsel of his own will. I as firmly believe God raised up Elder Beebe to establish the SIGNS and advocate the doctrine of the Bible and expose antichrist with all its false doctrine, as that he raised up Paul to preach his unsearchable riches to the Gentiles. The SIGNS has been wonderfully blessed with able editors from the first, but when such men as Elder Chick are called to their reward sorrow fills the hearts of those he had so often comforted and edified by his writings. The news of his death was sad to me, and my sympathy goes out to his family, Elder Ker, the publishers of the SIGNS, as well as the churches he so faithfully served and all who have been edified by his writings.

Your friend,

THOS. W. RECORDS.

LAMBERT, Okla., March 20, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have finished reading March 15th number of the SIGNS, and it is a great comfort to me to read the good letters from the brethren and sisters scattered over the country. I am one alone out here in this western country, and do not see many Primitive Baptists in these parts. I am always glad to receive the SIGNS and to hear from some of them. I am sorry to know that Elder Chick is so afflicted, but hope the good Lord will bless him yet to us for a number of years, and may he also bless Elder Ker by restoring sister Ker to health again. I was much pleased with the editorial written by Elder Ker in the last number, on Mark xvi. 15, 16. I have been taking the SIGNS since 1903, and have not missed a number. I think it advocates the same doctrine now that it did when I first began to take it. I am

now past seventy years of age, and want to take the SIGNS as long as I am able to pay for it, and keep my eyesight to read it. You will find inclosed post-office money order to pay for the SIGNS, and also fifty cents to pay for the little book written by Elder F. W. Keene, "In Places of Drawing Water."

I remain yours in hope of a better life,

JAMES J. CLARK.

JASPER, Mo., Aug. 25, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have often felt it to be my duty to tell the dear ones who write such comforting letters for the SIGNS how I appreciate their letters. They are all the preaching I get, as I am deprived of church privileges. Many of the writers express my feelings so much better than I can that it often brings tears to my eyes. I have always hesitated when impressed to write, because I am not gifted in expression, either by tongue or pen, but I can at least express my love and sympathy for those who, like myself, are alone, as regards the company of those of like faith. I love to read sister Creel's letters. She, like myself, is nearing the tomb, and seems to be resting in hope of life eternal, which the dear Lord has promised to his children. I am much of my time doubting whether I have any right or interest in those promises, and when I read of those in whom I have all confidence being troubled the same way it revives my trembling hope.

I am sending a small remittance and would be thankful if I could make it more. I want the SIGNS as long as I can pay for it, but if it is the Lord's will to withhold the means I must submit.

Unworthily your sister,

CYNTHIA A. STRATTON.

WINNSBORO, Texas, April 22, 1914.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—While I generally find pleasure in reading your editorials in the SIGNS, I am especially pleased with the two in the last number. I am glad, and I hope thankful, to see you measuring up to the responsibilities resting upon you, thankful for the evidence that the Lord is affording you grace according to your needs and those of the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

I received the sad news of Elder Chick's death a few days ago. This puts upon you double duty, so to speak, but the Lord in whom you trust is able to hold you up. I have wondered how the SIGNS could get along without brother Chick, but the Lord is able to provide. The SIGNS and its readers have suffered a great loss, but we should rejoice in that it is our brother's gain. One more added to the church triumphant and one less with the church militant. One more of the Lord's redeemed has passed the dark valley of the shadow of death and one less to so pass. May the Lord reconcile us to his holy will.

I am your little brother, I hope, though ever so unworthy,

H. B. JONES.

ERRATA.

IN the May 1st issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, on page 283, in the article headed "Death of Elder F. A. Chick," and signed "K.," in the eighth line below the head, it will be noticed that two letters have dropped out of the word "came," making it read, "but none me," when it should read, "but none came."—ED.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1914.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

"WHO IS A LIAR?"

(1 John ii. 22.)

THE above question may seem a strange one, yet it is very significant. The apostle John, that beloved disciple, had been exalting the name of Jesus in testifying to his Sonship, and Lordship over all things, yet a man, the son of Mary. In his wonderful testimony of Jesus the brethren were confirmed in their faith and hope and made to rejoice in God their Savior. Such firmness of faith in the Son of God was a blessed gift in those trying days, when so many believed not on him, nor did they reckon the apostles as men of God. But Jesus said to them, "Ye are my witnesses," and they testified unto the truth, because they knew it, in the face of all opposition and persecution. When Peter and John were whipped, cast into prison and commanded to speak no more in the name of Jesus, an angel came by night, loosed their fetters, led them out and said, "Go stand in the temple and preach all the words of this life." This was done, as it seems to us, first to show that the powers of earth could not prevent Jesus in his work, through his disciples, of preaching his everlasting gospel. Second, it was for the confirmation of the faith of those called to preach, that he would be with them alway, even unto the end of the world. Such blessed tokens of God's power and mercy made the apostles bold in the Lord to testify to the grace of God, saying, "He hath delivered, and he doth deliver, and he will deliver." Such demonstrations built up the churches on their most holy faith and caused them to triumph over the enemies of Christ and of the cross of the Lord Jesus. No man can testify to the truth unless he knows the truth; no man can receive such testimony except he be born of God. In the revelation of Jesus Christ the whole truth is made known in the same power and fullness to each one alike. The minister in this sense has no advantage over the feeblest of the flock—knows no more of the glory of God in the salvation of sinners than the most illiterate son or daughter of God. He is given power of expression, perhaps, in a greater degree than private members, but never tells them anything they do not know. It is now as John said to his brethren: "I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it." Therefore there is a sense in which all the children of God are witnesses of him and to his truth. One who testifies that Jesus is the resurrection and the life, the only way to God, bears witness unto the truth, hence is not "a liar." Now, if all these be true witnesses of God, "Who is a liar?" Surely there must have been such in John's day, or he would not have alluded to them in this most wonderful letter. Yes, there have always been liars in the world since the day Cain preached, by his offering, that favor with God depends upon works—fruits of the ground. It does not seem to us that John was finding fault with the liar for his lie in the sense that he might have done better, but merely making the statement that

any man who denied that Jesus was the Christ was verily "a liar," and the truth was not in him. It was just as impossible then for a man to bear testimony unto the truth who had not the truth in him, as it was for Cain to offer an acceptable offering, by faith, unto God, when he had no faith in him. Hence when writing along this line or preaching along this line Old Baptists do not mean to find fault with a man because he is blind, nor because he is "a liar," but, like John, simply call attention to the fact that such are in the world, and without the revelation of Jesus Christ will continue to lie in presenting false doctrine. The name "Christ" means "anointed," and by referring to Isaiah lxi. 1, it will be seen what he was anointed for: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek: he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." This anointing was different from that of Aaron, who was anointed with ointment that he might minister in the worldly sanctuary. Jesus was anointed with the Spirit of the living God to do the will of the Father in bringing many sons unto glory. The witness of God testifies that Jesus was anointed of the Lord God, given power over all flesh, that he might give eternal life unto as many as the Father had given him; that to these subjects he preached glad tidings; that these were all broken-hearted because of sin, and that he bound them up; that he proclaimed liberty to the captives and opened the prison to them that were bound. Herein is the full work of Jesus in the salvation of sinners presented, and he himself read this Scripture and said, This day is it fulfilled in your ears. The man who speaks the truth tells of Jesus, his power and Godhead, and that he did all that the Father sent him to do. Yes, today Christ Jesus, the anointed Savior, is the theme of all gospel preaching, and the adoration of all the saints of God. But, "Who is a liar?" is the question of John the apostle. To confess Jesus Christ is to give him all glory, power and dominion, thus crowning him Lord of all. To preach Jesus is to preach life from the dead and the final glory and peace of all the saints. To sing such songs as "Jesus, lover of my soul," is to render praise to him for his loving-kindness and tender mercy. To pray in his name is to acknowledge, confess him as the Mediator between God and man, which means that all our righteousness, all our worthiness, all our peace, is in him. This excludes all merit in man, and brings Jesus to view as the only name in which men can ask favor of God, and the only access to the throne of grace. To believe that Jesus is the Christ is to verily believe that he was God manifest in the flesh. If a mortal believes this it is with the heart unto salvation, and confession is made with the mouth of all such witnesses that Jesus is the Christ, to the glory of God the Father. But, "Who is a liar?" It seems almost unnecessary after what we have already said to comment upon the question, yet to make the matter more complete we shall give a slight description of the man John calls "a liar." We have listened to preaching from time to time for about forty-five years, and can well remember many things that far back; have heard most every denomination give their opinion of Jesus, and with all due respect to all, have never heard one, except an Old School Baptist, or those in sympathy with them, exalt Jesus a Prince and a Savior to give repentance

to Israel and the forgiveness of sins. To preach Jesus as wanting to accomplish something, yet not able to perform it without the help of man, is to limit him in power, which is contrary to his own declaration: "All power in heaven and earth is given into my hands." To preach that Jesus opened a way through which men can be saved if they will, is contrary to his last words: "It is finished"—salvation for time and eternity. To preach that there is a spark of eternal life in every man, and that by a little effort on his part he can produce a flame, is to deny the word of God when he said by his apostle, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." To preach that Jesus was only an example of the highest type of manhood, and that all men can be as divine as he if they will live right, and that the best citizen is the best christian, is to deny the Sonship of the only begotten Son of God and assert that morality is religion. To proclaim that men, women and children can be taught the way of life and salvation by earthly teachers, is in direct opposition to the Scripture which declares: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." To say a man's prospect of salvation and everlasting happiness depends upon his own volition to accept the terms, is to deny flatly Paul's testimony: By grace are ye saved, not of works, lest any man should boast. To affirm that children that die without being baptized (sprinkled) are lost, is to deny the blood of the Lamb, saying it has no efficacy, but sprinkling is salvation. To say a man can reform and be a child of God to-day and to-morrow go back into his old habits and be a child of the devil, denies absolutely the unity of Christ and his bride.

Now, after calling attention to these few of the many things contrary to Jesus of Nazareth, we will give John's answer to his own question: "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also." What a blessed favor to have the Father and the Son, and what a privilege to acknowledge, confess them in all their glory and Godhead before men! This same Jesus whom the enemies slew and hanged on a tree, God hath made both Lord and Christ. Though placed in the tomb, and a watch set to keep him there, God raised him from the dead and sit him at his own right hand in the heavenly places. Unto him his children look, in him they trust, with him they commune and with him shall they ascend the skies to ever be with the Lord. K.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

We have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder F. A. Chick was born in Somerset County, Maine, August 10th, 1845, and passed away from this life April 14th, 1914, in his 69th year. He was baptized in September, 1863, and ordained at North Berwick, Maine, in the year 1868. A short time before his ordination he was called to the pastoral care of the churches at Black Rock, Baltimore and Patapsco, in Maryland, also the church in Washington, D. C. He served the above named churches about twenty-eight years. In March, 1896, he was called to the pastoral care of the Hopewell Church, Mercer Co., N. J., also the churches at Harbourton, Cedar Grove and Mount Rose, all of which he faithfully served until his death. He was married to Miss Amanda Williams, August 7th, 1867. To that union were born seven children, one dying in infancy (not named). Edith died in childhood. The five now living are Mrs. Alice Zouck, Mrs. Nellie Poulson, Mrs. Annie Hart, Miss Bonnie Chick and Mrs. Lucy Johnstone. His wife died August 18th, 1888. Sept. 26th, 1889, he was married to Miss Delilah Ensor, to whom were born one daughter and one son: Miss Mary Chick and Forris Chick. About twenty years ago Elder Chick was appointed to the editorial chair of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which position he filled most acceptably until his death. He traveled extensively among the churches and associations from Maine to North Carolina, and as far west as Illinois, also in Canada. He was an ornament as well as a pillar in the church of Christ. All his time was devoted to his labors in the ministry and his editorial duties. He was mild in temperament, bold and firm in his declarations of the truth of the gospel, wise in counsel, mature in judgment. He was an unusually loving and lovable brother, pastor and minister, esteemed and respected by all who knew him, both in and out of the church. In the first sermon that he preached upon entering his ministerial labors he read for a text Luke xii. 32: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." He also read the same text when he preached his last sermon, and his preaching throughout all his ministry was with power and in demonstration of the Spirit. We cannot estimate the great loss the church has sustained in his death. We hesitate to dwell at length upon his many virtues and excellent qualities, for the reason that he was not favorable to long obituary notices. The last Scripture that he quoted and commented upon in conversing with sister Chick shortly before he passed away was Job xiv. 14: "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." He said to her, "I think I now understand what Job meant when he used those words." He was patient and uncomplaining to the end, and fully reconciled to the will of the Lord. He leaves to mourn their loss, his dear wife, seven children and several grandchildren, one half-sister, Marilla Rowe, other relatives and a host of brethren and friends.

Funeral services were held at his home and in the Hopewell meetinghouse on Friday, April 17th. Elder S. H. Durand preached a comforting and able discourse to a large, attentive and sorrowing congregation, from 2 Timothy i. 10. Elders Francis, Eubanks, Keene, McConnell, Lefferts, Fenton and Alexander also spoke words of truth and soberness. The writer read the fourteenth chapter of Job and spoke in prayer. On Saturday, April 18th, his body was taken to Black Rock, Md., where he was laid away in the Black Rock Cemetery, after preaching by Elder Joshua T. Rowe and Elder Frederick W. Keene to a large congregation. B. F. COULTER.

IN compliance with the request of the sorely bereaved sisters of our much loved and highly esteemed sister, **Hannah Louvenia Jenkins,** I will try to write a brief notice of the life and passing away of this dear sister. She was a member of a family of devoted and faithful Old School Baptists. Her father and mother, brother George and sister Susan Jenkins, were baptized in early life in the fellowship of the church at Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa., and continued in the unabated love and esteem of the large circle of acquaintances which they enjoyed among the Old Baptists from Maine to Virginia until called many years ago from earth to enter into the joy of their Lord. Her ancestors were among the constituent members of the Rock Springs Church over one hundred years ago, and the roster of that church has not been without the name of Jenkins in all the years of its existence. Five of her sisters have also been members with her in the same church. Her baptism took place at the hands of Elder Wm. Grafton, July 10th, 1870, when in her sixteenth year. She was born in Lancaster Co., Pa., Oct. 31st, 1854, and passed over to the other shore Jan. 11th, 1914, within two miles of her birthplace; thus her stay on earth was 59 years, 2 months and 11 days. She was a member of the Rock Springs Church, with the exception of a few years' connection with Salem Church, in Philadelphia, forty-three years and six months. To say of her that she was a devoted and faithful member all those years, would be but a weak presentation of the facts; she was all that, and more. I had known her intimately during all those years, having a great deal of correspondence and many precious conversations, and can truly testify of her that verily Christ lived in her, and her whole life was by the faith of the Son of God, who loved her and gave himself for her. She was very sensitive, and fearful that her experience was not that of a child of God, consequently she mourned much, and thereby gave evidence that she was one whom the Lord had blessed, for he said, "Blessed are they that mourn."

She was well established in the doctrine, and firm in defence of the truth. She hoped for the resurrection, when her vile body of flesh and blood shall be changed, at the coming of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, and fashioned like unto his glorious body. Her health had been poor for several years, but for the last few months much worse, so that she was confined to the house, and much of the time to her bed, and those who watched her saw a gradual failing, and for the last few weeks was confined to her bed and suffered from a troublesome cough, a weak heart and dropsy, and seemed to feel the end was near. The day before her death she said to a sister in the church who was calling, "It will not be long." Early in the morning her sister Hattie asked her, "Are you going home?" She repeated the words, "Going home." So quietly did the end come that those who were watching beside her could hardly tell when it came.

Elder Eubanks, her pastor, spoke greatly to the comfort of the family and friends in a funeral discourse, after which six nephews bore the casket containing her mortal remains, followed by six sisters and one brother (her other brother was in the west and could not be present), the members of the Rock Springs Church and other friends, to the cemetery at Rock Springs, and there deposited to the keeping of mother earth beside parents, grandparents, brother and sisters who had gone before, until the sounding of the trump of God to awake the sleeping dust and raise it up with the likeness of her risen, triumphant and glorious Lord.

May the Lord comfort the mourning ones.

A. B. FRANCIS.

Mrs. Harriet M. Larue, our much beloved sister in Christ, departed this life April 24th, 1914, at her late home near Castleman's Ferry, Clarke Co., Va. She was born July 19th, 1825, at Hampstead, Rockland Co., N. Y., the daughter of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe and Phebe Cunningham. She was baptized by her father at the early age of eleven or thirteen years, and lived a straightforward and consistent member of the Old School Baptist Church to the day of her death. She was married to Robert A. J. Larue, of Clarke Co., Va., when she was but seventeen years of age, having become acquainted with him while attending school in Alexandria, Va., during Elder Beebe's residence in that city. To that marriage were born two children: Gilbert and Phebe Frances. Gilbert died seventeen or eighteen years ago, as the result of wounds received and exposure endured during the Civil War. He left no children. The daughter, Frances, married Capt. James Dorsey, and died in 1870, leaving two children, Edward and Henrietta. Sister Larue's home for the last several years had been with the widow and children of her grandson, Edward Dorsey, and her granddaughter, Henrietta Dorsey, or "Hallie," as she is generally known. Sister Larue was left a widow in 1863, and for the last several years had been cared for by her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, who were all devoted to her and did all in their power to make her life comfortable and happy. Sister Larue at the time of her death was a member of the Ebenezer Church, in Loudoun Co., Va., whose pastor is Elder J. N. Badger. She united with this church by letter several years ago after Virginia became her permanent place of residence. She never lost an opportunity to attend her meetings when at all possible to do so. Her familiar presence will be greatly missed at the annual sessions of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting and at other meetings of the churches composing that association. In all her journeyings from home of late years she had been accompanied by her granddaughter, Hallie, who was kindness itself to her. Her death can be ascribed to no other cause than feebleness due to her advanced years, and also to the shock of her great-grandson's extreme illness of pneumonia. This young man at the time of sister Larue's passing away was seriously ill in the same house with her, and owing to this fact it was not deemed advisable to have any funeral service at the late home of our dear sister. The young man did not know his great-grandmother had passed away, and everything was done to keep him ignorant of the fact, as it was feared the shock of such news might cause his death also. Therefore a silent and very respectful little group of relatives and friends followed the body of dear sister Larue to its last resting-place in the cemetery at Berryville, Va. At the graveside the writer of this notice held brief services, nothing more being possible, owing to the pouring rain. Our sister is survived by one brother, George M. Beebe, and three sisters, Mrs. Virginia Bailey, Mrs. Phebe McNally and Mrs. Frances Simons, all living in New York State. Besides all these kinsfolk above mentioned there are many other relatives and friends living in the States and in Canada that will be saddened to learn of the death of sister Larue. She was of an attractive personality, and as she grew older her countenance much resembled that of her father, the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. Her manner was charmingly refined, and she had a bright, intelligent mind, capable of taking an interest in things and people about her, and could make herself agreeable to the young as well as the old. Of the constancy of her faith and vitality of her religious life, what shall we say? She never liked eulogy of the dead. Suffice it to say, therefore, she outwardly lived what she inwardly believed; she showed her faith by her works. She was one of those children that cannot lie. Need more be said of any true disciple of the Lord of glory? To the loving care of an ever-gracious God we commend all who mourn. May his Spirit comfort their hearts.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

Frederick B. B. Keene departed this life April 3rd, 1914, in North Berwick, Maine, aged 78 years, 3 months and 10 days. My father was born in London, England, and came to Canada in 1870. Nearly all the years of his sojourn in Canada were spent in London, Ontario. About five years ago my father had a stroke of paralysis, which incapacitated him for all business, and in August, 1911, my father and mother came to make their home with us. Father gradually became more and more feeble, and for the last seven months of his life he was confined to his bed. He was patient, uncomplaining and very grateful for every attention bestowed upon him. In all my recollections of him from my early childhood he was such a good, kind father; I think there have been few better parents that have lived in this world. In his relations with his fellows he was honorable, and sought to walk in that royal law of the kingdom of Christ: "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets." While a young man he and my mother united with a Strict Baptist Church called Zion, in Camden Town, London, England. I well remember attending that place of worship in my childhood. My father was one truly taught of God with a good understanding of the doctrine of Christ. All free will, fleshly-pleasing, God-dishonoring doctrines of men were abhorrent to his soul, but he loved the glorious doctrine of the gospel of Christ. He was humble and lowly in heart in regard to his relations to the Holy One who inhabiteth eternity, and loved to converse with those who were taught of God. During the last three weeks of his earthly life, when day by day the earthly house of this tabernacle was being dissolved, though it was so manifest that his mortal powers were rapidly declining, yet it was mine to witness in him God's gracious covenant faithfulness in sustaining his soul in comfort, in the blessedness and hope of salvation in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. I talked to him of Jesus, and of the sure mercies of the covenant of grace, and in answer to what I would say, with his face lighted up, in feeble whispers he would tell me, "Jesus is precious; he will never cease to love me, ah never, O no. O the pain, the bliss of dying." Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth. He leaves his wife, my mother, and myself, their oldest son, and my brother, Charles E. Keene, of London, Ontario, twelve grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren. My father has departed to be with Christ, which is far better. Released from the mortal tabernacle, his ransomed spirit is now with Christ in paradise, with the spirits of just men made perfect, and his dear body we have laid away to await the resurrection of the just at the last day, when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. His body shall be raised an incorruptible one, changed, fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, and his spirit now made perfect, now with Jesus in glory, shall in that moment take possession of this body, an immortal, incorruptible, spiritual body, and thus reunited, his whole spirit and soul and body blameless, conformed to the image of Christ, he, with all the ransomed church of God, shall be forever in eternal glory with the Lord.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, April 22nd, 1914, at the home of the bride's father, Pennington, Mercer Co., N. J., C. Howard Ewing and Eva Belle Sked.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER B. S. PATE has changed his address from Cleone, Oregon, to Camas, Washington.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Bettie Thomas, Texas, $5.00; Thomas W. Records, Mo., $1.00.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, by request of the churches of the Roxbury Association I will be at Kingston, N. Y., Saturday, May 16th, Olive and Hurley, Sunday, 17th, Union Grove, Monday, 18th, brother Faulkner's, Margaretville, evening of same day, Tuesday, 19th, Vega, Wednesday, 20th, Roxbury.

D. M. VAIL.

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association will convene with the Harford Church, Harford Co., Md., on Wednesday, May 20th, 1914, and continue three days. Visitors via Baltimore will arrive in time to leave over Maryland and Pennsylvania R. R., about 3 p. m., for Forest Hill, on Tuesday, the 19th. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, and we hope to have a goodly number with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Moderator.

FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will hold its annual session with the Salem Church, at the southeast corner of Broad and Cherry Sts., (the Parkway building) Philadelphia, Pa., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 27th, 28th and 29th, 1914,

convenient to all railroad stations. Take elevator to seventh floor. Those arriving in the city on Tuesday will go to Dr. Coulter's, 1910 N. 22nd St. Ministers of our faith and order, and also all lovers of the truth, are cordially invited to meet with us.

B. F. COULTER, Pastor.

FRANKLIN TERRY, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., June 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1914. Those coming by B. D. R. R. to Stockton will be met with conveyance on arrival of the 5 o'clock p. m. train on Tuesday, or on going to Frenchtown will be met and cared for by friends living there. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

CYRUS RISLER, Church Clerk.

THE Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church has appointed her yearly meeting to be held the first Saturday and Sunday in June, 1914. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth to meet with us. A. LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Baptist Church, in New York city, to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (10th), 1914, and continue three days. The meetinghouse is No. 1216 Intervale Avenue, Bronx, near the Freeman Street station of the Subway. Take Subway train marked "Bronx," bound north, at any station south of 96th Street. A cordial welcome awaits all who can meet with us.

JOHN McCONNELL, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Our assortment of small books embraces:

Cloth Binding, per copy, 75 cents; per dozen, $6.00.

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SPECIAL NOTICE.

(THIRTEENTH EDITION.)

The new edition of our Hymn and Tune Book, shape note, is now ready for distribution. The new edition of round note will be ready soon. Will those churches that are intending to get a supply in the near future kindly let us know as nearly as possible how many they will need, and which note? The price is 70 cents each, sent by mail postpaid, and six dollars per dozen, sent by express at cost of the purchaser. There will be sent with each book, upon request, without additional cost, a neat pamphlet of 30 pages, containing Rudiments of Music and graded lessons for use in singing classes, in connection with the H. and T. book. Send orders to Elder Silas H. Durand, Southampton, Pa.

ELDERS SILAS H. DURAND AND P. G. LESTER

"In Places of Drawing Water."

(Judges v. 11.)

By Frederick W. Keene.

Allegorical Narratives for the instruction and comfort of Babes in Grace.

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Can be had from this office, or from Elder Frederick W. Keene, North Berwick, Maine.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at 5 cents per copy. Address,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 82. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1914. NO. 11.

POETRY.

WILMINGTON, Del., May 8, 1914.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I am inclosing a poem that, if it meets your mind, I would like to have published in the SIGNS, to the memory of our father and of our beloved late editor, Elder Chick. It was published in the SIGNS once before, about thirty years ago, at our father's request. It is a gratification to us to see his name appear occasionally yet, as a token that he is not forgotten, although his work on earth ended nearly thirteen years ago.

With sincere sympathy for you and sister Ker, your sister, K. RITTENHOUSE.

THE EVERLASTING MEMORIAL.

UP and away, like the dew of the morning,
That soars from the earth to its home in the sun,
So let me steal away, gently and lovingly,
Only remembered by what I have done.

My name, and my place, and my tomb, all forgotten,
The brief space of time well and patiently run,
So let me pass away, peacefully, silently,
Only remembered by what I have done.

Gladly away from this toil would I hasten,
Up to the crown that for me has been won;
Unthought of by man, in rewards or in praises,
Only remembered by what I have done.

Up and away, like the odors of sunset,
That sweeten the twilight as darkness comes on;
So be my life, a thing felt, but not noticed,
And I but remembered by what I have done.

Yes, like the fragrance that wanders, in freshness,
When the flowers that it came from are closed up and gone,
So would I be, to this world's weary dwellers,
Only remembered by what I have done.

Needs there the praise of love-written records,
The name and the epitaph graved on the stone?
The things we have lived for, let them be our story,
We ourselves but remembered by what we have done.

I need not be missed, if my life has been bearing,
As its summer and autumn moved silently on,
The bloom, and the fruit, and the seed in its season;
I shall still be remembered by what I have done.

I need not be missed, if another succeeds me,
To reap down these fields that in spring I have sown;
He who plowed and who sowed is not missed by the reaper,
He is only remembered by what he has done.

Not myself, but the truth that in life I have spoken;
Not myself, but the seed that in life I have sown,
Shall pass on to ages, all about me forgotten,
Save the truth I have spoken, the things I have done.

So let my living be, so be my dying,
So let my name be, unblazoned, unknown;
Unpraised and unmissed, I shall still be remembered,
Yes, but remembered by what I have done.

PRAISE.

I WOULD praise the name of Jesus,
Whose all-sufficient grace
So satisfies and soothes me
In every time and place.

He scatters all the darkness
That gathers o'er my way,
Illuminates and sanctifies
The longest, darkest day.

In pastures green and beautiful
He leadeth me along;
He comforts me with holy words,
And many a heavenly song.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"TOUCHED."

How many there are without God in the world; being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their hearts, they desire not the knowledge of his ways. But when the Lord calls a sinner by his grace, then that sinner begins to seek after God, and to desire to know him as his almighty Friend, whom thus to know, in Christ Jesus, is life eternal. All creation is his; the sun, the moon, the stars, are the work of his fingers; the sea is his, and he made it; the stormy wind fulfills his word. He looketh upon the earth, and it trembleth, he toucheth the hills, and they smoke. (Psalms civ. 32.) When Jehovah gave the law unto Israel at Sinai he but touched the mountain, and Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire, and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. (Exodus xix. 18.) And when God spake unto his people his fiery law, his voice touched them so that all the people trembled, stood afar off, and even Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake. The people said, Let not God speak with us, lest we die. When God speaks to us in the law, that law voice of the Almighty discovers to us our transgressions. By the law is the knowledge of sin, and touched with the breath of God in the law we are withered, we are condemned, we die, for we are guilty transgressors. "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass."—Isaiah xl. 6, 7. This is the old covenant touch, this is being touched by the breath of the Lord in the law; we are withered, we fade, our comeliness is turned into corruption. We are but touched by the withering breath of God and all our supposed righteousness and self-esteem are blasted. But O the sacred blessedness of God's new covenant touch, this is life and peace. Our dear Redeemer, while here in the world, by his own omnipotence wrought wondrous miracles among the people. He but said, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise,"—Luke vii. 14, "Lazarus, come forth,"—John xi. 43, and touched with his voice the dead arose and came forth from death's embrace. So the sinner dead in trespasses and sins, not in simulative death, no, but as it was said of Lazarus, "By this time he stinketh," so the sinner dead in his sins is a moral stench, corrupt is he, having done abominable works, in uncleanness, in the lusts of the flesh, alienated from God, an enemy in his mind by wicked works. Thus the Scriptures describe the sinner. This is being dead in trespasses and sins. But O, when the voice of the Son of God, who is our life, speaks to the soul of a poor, vile sinner, the Spirit of life from God enters the soul, and the sinner is quickened into divine life. Because of this holy, divine life in the soul of the sinner what trouble, what dismay, what mourning there is from day to day to find that the body is dead because of sin, that in our flesh dwells no good thing, but that we in all the five senses of our bodies are corrupt, we are sensual, the five senses being the inlets and outlets of our sinfulness. A very gracious result of this life-giving touch of the God of grace is that it is a well of water springing up into everlasting life. There flows forth from

the soul unto God a sacred fear of his name. His name is held in hallowed contemplation, for we are taught of his Spirit that the Lord is holy, just and true, gracious, merciful, almighty; and in this fear of the Lord our souls are exercised with cravings to know him as the God of our mercy.

Touched by God's law touch a sinner experiences condemnation. He finds the law to be the ministration of death to the transgressor. But touched by the blessed new covenant touch this is the ministration of life; the gospel sweetly, graciously ministers life. We are made meek and lowly in heart, our hardness of heart, our hard thoughts of God depart, we are mellowed before the Lord. Thus touched we are of a broken and contrite heart. From this touch of life from the Holy Ghost there arise in our hearts hungering and thirsting after righteousness; yes, this lifegiving touch is the fountain of the sinner's cries for pardon, for salvation and reconciliation with the Holy One. Because of this quickening touch we pray for life, we pray that we may live before and unto the Lord; we hunger for the Bread of life, we thirst for the Water of life, and our precious Lord Jesus Christ is in due time found to be all this unto our quickened, needy souls.

In many aspects Jehovah's new covenant touch is set forth in the Scriptures; let us glance at a few of them. The prophet Isaiah, beholding in prophetic vision the glory of the ascended Redeemer, was made to exclaim, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." He felt as a very outcast from the temple of the Lord, as a very leper whose mouth must be covered, and had to cry, "Unclean, unclean."—Lev. xii. 45. So Isaiah felt himself undone, unfit to be of the glorified host, Christ's train that filled the temple. "Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." Isaiah's leprosy was the leprosy of sin, and under the dreadful consciousness of it his despairing cry was, Woe is me, for I am undone. That publican that stood afar off, who would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner, (Luke xviii. 13,) was in the selfsame affliction as the prophet Isaiah. Have you ever cried in spirit before God, Woe is me, for I am undone? God heareth the cry of poor, humbled, undone sinners. "And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy; who seeing Jesus, fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And he put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him."—Luke v. 12, 13. Jesus touched him! Dear Physician, precious Savior, one touch of thine and sin, vile leprosy, is cleansed. Thy sacrifice, atoning, cleansing blood purges our sins away. "He touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them."—Matt. viii. 15. The body is the prey of sicknesses, but Jesus' healing touch cured them all of whatsoever diseases they had. So there is sickness of soul.

"The worst of all diseases is light compared with sin;
On every part it seizes, but rages most within;
'Tis palsy, plague and fever, and madness all combined,
And none but a believer the least relief can find."

The whole head is sick and the whole heart faint. (Isaiah i. 5.) You say, I have never been so. Just so, there are many millions like you; they are whole in their own esteem, and need not the Physician; they have no need of Jesus' touch. But those who are called of God are such that their sins and iniquities are as a distressing, wasting sickness, that afflicts their souls as a raging fever, and they feel they cannot live and walk before the Lord; they are made at length to feel to be so without strength that they are cast upon a bed of languishing. But let but Jesus Christ touch the sinsick soul. "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth." —Song of Solomon i. 2. Let the forgiveness of sins drop from the Savior's lips into the distressed sinner's heart and we shall revive and live and praise the name of the Lord, who is the health of our countenance and our God. The prophet Jeremiah saith: "Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth."—Jer. i. 9. Thus with his touch the Lord enabled his servant to utter his terrible judgments, and also to declare most wonderful and gracious new covenant mercies unto Israel. The life of this faithful prophet was amidst reproaches, ignominy and sufferings. Though his enemies persecuted him, yet through God's abounding grace he diminished not a word. (Jer. xxvi. 2.)

They brought unto Jesus one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech, and they beseeched him to put his hand upon him. And he took him aside from the multitude and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue, and looking up to heaven he sighed, and saith unto him Ephphatha, that is, Be opened, and straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain. (Mark vii. 33–35.) It is Christ's touch that makes the tongue of the dumb to sing, (Isaiah xxxv. 6,) and the poor, stammering sinner speaks plainly. O the virtue of Jesus' merits, and if touched with the atoning blood of the Lamb, if Jesus' grace, that grace of the eternal God given us in him before the world began, touch a poor, perishing sinner, then the heartstrings are tuned by his hand, the psaltery and harp of our heart awake, and we make melody in the heart to the Lord. O how hesitating, lisping, stammering is our speech sometimes; such fears, such trembling is upon us that we fear we have no right, we feel we have no power to say what our hearts yearn to say. But all impediment of speech is removed by Jesus' kind touch, then we can lovingly say, "Abba, Father;" we can say, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." We have power then to say, Jesus Christ is my Savior, he loved me and gave himself for me. Then there is a touch that is love's touch, (Rev. iii. 19,) but it is not easy to understand while we are under this touch that God's love to us is in it. It is our heavenly Father's chastening touch. (Heb. xii. 5, 6.) Job cried out in his affliction, "Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me."—Job xix. 21. Ah, these touches are gracious, even though we shrink from them. The Lord lays affliction upon our loins in varied ways. It may be trials from without, or the outward aspect of our affairs may be fair, but in our souls there are the sharp conflicts; the adversary may be sorely vexing us, and his fiery darts piercing and burning their way into the soul; we are as though we were set up as a target for his arrows. Then also our consciences are smitten by the Word of God. The voice of the Lord in his doctrine reproves and rebukes us, our backslidings in heart are made manifest. Though we may murmur, though self-

pity may fill us with complainings, yet our God's afflicting touch works for our good. All the touches of his chastening hand are for our good, they are in love, and for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. This is the gracious design of God in all our afflictions. Shall we wince, fret, rebel? We do (so sinful, so contrary are we in our fleshly nature to God,) unless much grace every moment accompanies the strokes of our heavenly Father's chastening rod, and this he does not withhold from his children. So he brings us by his grace to endure chastenings, to acquiescence to his afflicting providences, draws us to himself for consolation, for forgiveness, for grace to hope that we are the children of God, and that we may, even while under the rod, glorify him, yes, even glorify him in the fires. (Isaiah xxiv. 15.)

"Dear Father, we consent to discipline divine,
And bless the pain that makes our souls still more completely thine;
Supported by thy love we tend to realms of peace,
Where every pain shall far remove and every frailty cease."

But the hypocrite, the self-sufficient, know nothing of these things.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

ST. THOMAS, Ont., April 29, 1914.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I am inclosing a letter from sister Eliza McDonald for publication, and by request of some of the friends I am also sending my letter in reply to hers. Her letter is worthy of a place in the dear old SIGNS, but as to mine, I cannot say so much.

With love to you and dear sister Ker, I am your brother,

J. B. SLAUSON.

APPIN, Ont., Feb. 18, 1913.

DEAR ELDER SLAUSON:—I was very glad to receive your good letter. You may know how glad when I tell you it was the first letter I received after the meetings at Duart from any of the church. I had a sweet, peaceful and joyful feeling that morning, and when we were about to part at St. Thomas how I feared that I would be forgotten. I felt I was weak and feeble and so apt to fall, and wondered if the church would be patient and forbearing with me. I do not mean that I wanted to go on in sin and that still they (the church) would not tell me of it, for constantly the words would go through my mind:

"And shall we then go on in sin,
That grace may more abound?
Great God, forbid that such a thought
Should in my breast be found."

O no, I longed that my walk might be in accordance to the will of the church, and O that I might never bring any reproach upon the church or His cause, that I might be kept in the strait and narrow way. But in my heart were the words, "Confirm the feeble knees," and I felt indeed my knees were feeble and I was apt to fall by the way, and I wondered if the church would bear me up. It is that sweet love of God which keeps them bound together. I had never seen it that way until that day as Elder Coulter spoke of the golden candlesticks, that love which knit them together and held them (the little candle) so it could not fall one way or the other. That love seemed clear and sweet to me then. Many times as I sat in the meeting I would look at the members, and I would think, They are so good and different from other people, yet I never felt as I did that day toward the church. Again and again the words would come up in my mind, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the

place whereon thou standest is holy ground." That day at Deacon Campbell's, and again at Deacon Gillies' that night, I thought if only I could ask you and Elder Coulter some questions—ask if words that had come to my mind were in the Bible or where I heard them, but it seemed there was no opportunity, and when I went upstairs that night I felt I never wanted to speak of those things again; but the words have been very sweet to me, "When the fullness of the time was come." How often I had felt that I knew something of the experience of the children of Israel as they stood at the Red Sea, the enemy behind, the sea in front, the mountains on either side, and I felt truly to say, Why hast thou brought me thus far now to cast me off? and I longed to be back in Egypt. I could not go out into the world, or if I did I felt condemned; I could not go with the church, only on Saturday night. The cry of my heart had been:

"Lord, decide the doubtful case;
Thou who art thy people's Sun,
Shine upon thy work of grace,
If it be indeed begun."

Three years ago last summer my mind was stirred up, and the constant cry of my heart was, O that I might be a christian. Then the thought would come, What does it mean to be a christian? To be like Christ, to be pure and undefiled, separate from sinners, to be meek and kind, and it seemed to me that such a life must be full of joy and gladness. I felt I knew nothing about it at all. There had been times in my life when for a moment I had felt a little calm and rest, but all the journey I had seemed to be tossed hither and thither. I had longed for that joy, that joy that belonged to Christ and his people, and I thought that would be my first evidence that I was born of God; but alas, instead of joy it seemed I was placed under such a burden that at times I wondered if I would not sink beneath the load. One night I shall never forget, I lay there sleepless all night; I wished I would die. I felt sure the torments of hell could be no worse, and I felt that would be my doom anyway, and I knew I might just as well suffer first as last. The burden seemed to grow and grow, and I got up and sat by the window. All nature seemed quiet and calm, but O the burden on my heart; when suddenly the words, As a cart under many sheaves, and then the thought that Christ had suffered and felt all that burden, and that I had been longing to be made like unto him, little realizing that that meant to be placed under such a burden, and still in my heart I felt I longed for peace and joy, the experience of a child of God; but for days this burden continued. Once I was at the meeting, and as I went out I felt, How could I go out with the world? I had no love for the world, I felt I could not go with them, and O I was so far from the church, I was all alone, O such a feeling of loneliness. Then the words came to my mind, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head;" yet in my heart I felt that this was very different from what I had hoped or longed for, and felt indeed this could be none of the experience of a child of God, for it was all sadness and suffering, no joy. Then the words came, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Still I felt I did not realize the joy of a child of God. It did bring me a little peace and a little calm, but not the joy I had hoped for and still longed for. Then the words came, There is joy in obedience, and O, I longed that I might do his will, if only I knew what it was.

The cry of my heart was, "Show me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths," when the words came, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come." I felt then I could give up all and follow him. I longed to be buried in baptism, and felt I could hardly wait until the next meeting (that was over three years ago), but soon questionings came, and I felt how dreadful it had been for me to think of such a thing. There were so many older people than I who had been exercised and had received a sweet hope in God and had not gone to the church, and how could I dare go, who knew so little? Then the words came, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." This brought a little rest, but then I began to fear, for I still thought I had not received the joy and the sweet hope I had longed for. I knew that God had a chosen people for whom Christ died, but was I one of them? I felt I had no reason to claim such a thing, and the words were constantly on my mind, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable," and I feared this was the only hope I had. I felt glad in my heart that I had not been given an opportunity to go to the church, lest I might have been deceived myself, and then deceive the church. My mind would go back over the way I had been led, and I could see no reason to hope that I knew anything of the experience of a child of God, for mine had all been sorrow and no joy. Then the words came, If ye suffer with him ye shall also reign with him, and O such a sweet hope and rest, and I longed for the meeting time to come; but alas, before the meeting came many doubts and fears filled my mind. Often I had longed that I might be given faith, for I had often feared that should I ever be given strength to go to the church why then I might wander away and be a disgrace to the cause. Once the words came to my mind and seemed very sweet, "Abram, to unknown countries led, by faith obeyed the Lord." O how I longed that I might be given that faith, just as a grain of mustard-seed. Then how often I have thought that if I had only lived when Christ was on earth I could have said, If I could but touch the hem of his garment, but lately the words of Christ seemed very sweet (it was not in touching his garment), "Thy faith hath made thee whole."

When I started I had not thought of writing so much, but only intended to tell you how glad I was to hear from you. I hope you will pardon me for writing so much, and pardon what I have written; it is, I am sure, to you but as the prattle of a little child. Since I have been home it has seemed so hard to come to the store and mix with the people of the world, and sometimes I just feel I can hardly go on, but the other evening the words seemed very sweet:

> "The steps that I take, and the station I fill,
> My Father determined and wrote in his will."

Of course I do not mean that I am better than the people of the world, for I know I am not one bit better. I can truly say, "In my flesh there dwelleth no good thing," but I feel that in Him is the beauty of perfection.

That Monday of the meeting I wondered how the church could leave the place without saying, Now unto him who hath washed us in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, unto his name be honor, glory, dominion, majesty and power, both now and forever, world without end. It seemed I could praise his name for his wonderful goodness to the children of men. I had

often thought of the song of the shepherds: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." It seemed a mystery to me, and I could not grasp it at all, but that Monday it all seemed very sweet. First I felt to give all the glory to God, then when I was received a sweet peace filled my heart; then as I went out again and met my old associates, whom before I had dreaded to meet, there was that feeling in my heart of good will toward all men. Surely God is not slack concerning his promises, and the words that had brought comfort to my soul in years past, and had almost left my mind, or at least I had felt they were not for me (at times), now seemed sweet again. How often the words would come to my mind, If the vision tarry, wait for it, but I would grow so impatient.

Here I am, still going on. I have determined ever so often since I started that I would only write another line or so, and yet I go on, but I feel that although I have written so much, the half has not been told of all his love and tender mercy and power to save. Please pardon all I have written amiss. I should be very glad to hear from you if at any time you feel to write to one so unworthy. I feel I need all your letters, and all the care you can bestow upon me. If only the church will be willing to put up and bear with me. I know He only can keep me and guide me. "Strength in the Lord Jehovah is eternal as his years."

It seems hard to stop. I feel that I have not told you at all what I wanted to, or what I tried to, but I hope you will look on it all with an eye of pity rather than of blame.

Yours unworthily,

ELIZA McDONALD.

HALCOTTVILLE, N. Y., Feb. 27, 1913.

MISS ELIZA McDONALD—DEAR SISTER:—Your most excellent letter was duly received, and words cannot express the comfort I received in reading it, and if I have any knowledge of an experience, truly you have a bright one in the works of grace, and the Lord has done wonderful things, whereof you are glad. My dear sister, you will find the fellowship of your kindred in Christ to be very sweet, and the church will be great strength to you in many ways. It is true, as you said, there is only One to whom we must look for all things, and he is made to be all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. Jesus said in Matt. xi. 27, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." What a glorious truth is expressed in these words by our dear Redeemer: "All things are delivered unto me of my Father." The work that Jesus came to do and to finish in the salvation of his people is included in the "all things" delivered unto him of his Father, and embraced in the "all things" was all that he suffered for our sake; every pain and every stroke inflicted upon him were delivered unto him of his Father, yea, all the temptations of Satan, to be mocked, spit upon and crowned with thorns, to be led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep dumb before his shearers, so he opened not his mouth; to sweat great drops of blood falling down to the ground in the garden, as a cart under many sheaves, bearing the sins of his people which were laid upon him. Let us go a little farther with this Man of sorrows, the one who was acquainted with grief,

low kneeling in fervent prayer to his Father: "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." O the sighs and agonizing groans of this Man of sorrows as he plead with his Father. But he undertook and must go through; yes, he must go on to conquer all that the Father delivered unto him, and in all his suffering and temptations he was the victorious conqueror over all the temptations and every trial he was called to pass through. The Father not only delivered unto him the trials and temptations, but delivered unto him grace without measure, which enabled him to withstand all the powers of darkness arrayed against him, that he should be the faithful and great High Priest that could be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, for in all points like as we are he was tempted, that he should be able to succor them that are tempted.

"All things are delivered." Yes, my dear sister, what a victory to a poor sinner saved by grace. The Father delivered unto Him the power to destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. When we are enabled by grace divine to view this wonderful work of salvation through our adorable Redeemer, and are given to hope in the finished work, it is a most blessed season; yes, basking in the sweet smiles of the Savior's love.

> "Sweet was the time when first I felt
> The Savior's pardoning blood,
> Applied to cleanse my soul from guilt,
> And bring me home to God."

Jesus as the Savior and Redeemer of his people, as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, was the only Sacrifice that could take away sin and present a sinner pure and holy before the Father, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, and the sweet and blessed assurance of this perfect cleansing is expressed in the Song of Solomon: "Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee."

"All things are delivered unto me of my Father." Jesus, as the Sacrifice for sin, must of necessity be delivered into the hands of sinful men, who delighted to crucify him, and rejoiced in his sufferings, and cried out, Away with him, away with him; we will not have this man to rule over us, desiring a sinful man to be released unto them instead of Jesus. This was the hour and power of darkness, and the dear Redeemer said, For this cause came I into the world, and unto this hour was I born. Jesus must die upon the cross, the cruel cross, and there drink the cup of vinegar mingled with gall, and be forsaken of God in this most distressing hour, and with his last expiring breath say, "It is finished." This was all delivered unto him of his Father, that the Captain of our salvation should be made perfect through suffering.

"All things are delivered unto me." Jesus bowed his head and gave up the ghost and came under the power of death, was buried in Joseph's new tomb, a watch was set, a stone rolled against the door of the sepulchre, and the dear Redeemer remained in the tomb until the morning of the third day, the time appointed by the Father that he should rise from the dead, then by the commandment of the Father he came forth the victorious conqueror over death, hell and the grave, having washed away the sins of his people in his blood and taken away the sting of death and robbed the grave of its victory, and declared, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, amen; and have the keys of hell and death." "Glorious

things of thee are spoken, Zion, city of our God." Jesus was first seen of many, then of his apostles, and after forty days was received up into a cloud out of the sight of the apostles. The power to quicken sinners dead in trespasses and sins is among the "all things" delivered unto him of his Father, and all power in heaven and in earth now centers in him. As the King of immortal glory he unfurls his banner of peace with a shout of triumph over the enemy, death. His word has gone forth with the power of omnipotence, declaring that the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. Yes, they shall live in the sweet embrace of the dear and loving Savior, and shall come into the promises of God stored up in Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, according as we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world.

Dear sister, the good hope through grace, which is as an anchor of our souls, both sure and steadfast, reaching to that within the veil, whither Jesus, the forerunner, for us hath entered, will hold these frail vessels of ours through all the tempests of life, and finally we shall be brought into the fullness of that hope, when this same Jesus shall come the second time, without sin unto salvation, to take his people unto himself, then shall we be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

I had no thought of writing at this length when I began, but I have gone on and on, and now there seems to be no place to stop. As you said in your good letter, the half has never been told of Jesus and his love. There is one favor that I ask of you: that you grant me the privilege of sending your letter to the SIGNS for publication. I know that you would not withhold any comfort from your kindred in Christ. I shall be glad to hear from you at any time, and will try to answer your letters with such as the Lord may be pleased to give. The Lord bless you with joyful seasons, is my prayer. I wish to be remembered to your dear mother and all who may ask after me.

Affectionately your brother in hope of the gospel,

J. B. SLAUSON.

PSALMS XXII. 28.

"FOR the kingdom is the Lord's; he is the governor among the nations."

This twenty-second Psalm presents our Savior, by the inspiration of God, in the heart of David. When suspended between the heaven and the earth he was forsaken of God, for he had given him into the hands of the last enemy that should be destroyed, which is death. He was also forsaken of all the people upon the earth, even his disciples and the women who had followed him during his incarnation; he was alone, and no mortal can tell or even speculate what was that entire loneliness, and the agony of it. His cry in that dreadful hour was, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? Could the clearest mind conceive of the awful suffering through which our gracious Redeemer was called to pass? As recorded in this Psalm, he says, "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death. * * * I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They part

my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." And this was the King of kings and Lord of lords, the Judge of all the earth, into whose possession were given all power and majesty and glory, "the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Yet there was no place in all the world for him; "he had not where to lay his head." His prayers to the Father were delivered in the fullness of faith and grace and were without measure in the Holy Ghost. When he said, in the twentieth verse, "Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog," he knew the Father did hear him and would deliver. Then how beautifully and sweetly his promise goes to the Father and reaches down to us when he said, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee." Then he calls upon all who fear the Lord to praise him, all the seed of Jacob to glorify him and all the seed of Israel to fear him. How wonderfully sweet and precious are the words of promise which fell from the lips of Jesus. Again, he said, "The meek shall eat and be satisfied; they shall praise the Lord that seek him: your heart shall live for ever. All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord."

"For the kingdom is the Lord's." He declared, "My kingdom is not of this world." The King and his kingdom were in the world, but not of the world. The inhabitants of the kingdom were all subjects of his grace; they were taken out of the world, redeemed from death in sin and in transgression, and gladly and willingly do they follow him and obey him and take heed to his precepts and watch for the morning. In anthems of praise and thanksgiving the inhabitants sing with one of old, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever." How different is the kingdom which is the Lord's from the kingdoms of this world. Their power or dominion is an earthly power or dominion, their inhabitants depart from within their boundaries and live under other flags; a king sits upon his throne for a little season, then he dies and another takes his place; but the kingdom of our Lord is an everlasting kingdom, and to the reign of our glorious King there is no end. His glory and power come not from the earth, but from the power and glory of God our Father. The King's table is spread not with earthly provision, but with the variety of choicest heavenly food. The children hunger and thirst not for the fruit of the ground, but "after righteousness," and the promise is, "They shall be filled." The King loveth each one of his subjects alike, and they with one heart and one mind love him, and one another with pure hearts fervently. It is the kingdom of love, because it is the Lord's, for "God is love." The Lord himself is our dwelling-place, and has been in all generations; to dwell in him is the joy and happiness of the saints. So long as we remain in our earthly house of this tabernacle we are beset upon every side by the enemies in our own household. Temptations are presented to us by the enemy of our souls, and when in our weakness we are overcome by the desires of the flesh grace is given

in measure according to the gift of Christ. The apostle warns us, saying, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." Our sufficiency however is not in ourselves, but in Christ, who died for us and paid the full penalty of the law. Therefore the kingdom being the Lord's, and we being the inhabitants thereof (his precious bride), he hath done all things for us. He is the King of glory, "the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." The kingdom is the Lord's in every sense of the word. We are willingly, gladly and completely passive in his hands. He watcheth over us, careth for us and doeth with us as it pleaseth him; we glorify him in walking in obedience to his precepts and commandments. We walk before him in love because his kingdom is ruled by that love which passeth our finite understanding.

"He is the governor among the nations." He is the motive power in the heaven and the earth, his power and wisdom know no limit, and as the governor over all events, times and seasons all things work together in perfect harmony to accomplish the end designed and decreed by the Father. "Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves: we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture." Thus are we under his governing power and control. The rider controls the actions of the horse by placing the bit in his mouth and the bridle about his head. The Lord declared to Moses that his chosen people (Israel) were a stiff-necked people, therefore their pride, vanity and self-conceit must be curbed and bridled, that they may become subservient to the superabounding of grace. We need the directing and restraining hand of our gracious and wise Governor in every step that we take, for we not only do not know how to walk, but we know not how to pray, or for what to pray, except he indite our prayers and giveth us the spirit of prayer. How rich and full is his grace and truth because of his wondrous love. May our minds be stayed upon him all the days and nights of our appointed time here below, and all praise and glory be ascribed unto him with whom we have to do.

B. F. COULTER.

MOODY, Ark., Nov. 29, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Not only that you are subscribers to the SIGNS, but that there is a people in this world who discern the signs of the times, and can to-day, as they did of old, read the signs of the times. In Matthew xvi. 1–4, we read, "The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting, desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven. He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather; for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to-day; for the sky is red and lowering. O ye hypocrites! ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times? A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed." Great is the mystery of godliness. (1 Tim. iii. 16.) But the secret of the Lord is with his people. (Psalms xxv. 14.) Also, There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets. (Dan. ii. 28.) Now I do believe, brethren, that Israel's God is

our God, and that he, Jehovah-jireh, reveals himself to us (his chosen people) as he does not unto the world, and he says to us, Except your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees ye can in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven. The scribes and Pharisees came to him, but our God (in Spirit) goes to his people and seeketh such to worship him as worship in spirit and in truth—all to us is revelation. These same scribes could discern the face of the sky, and it is true to-day as then, red sunset for fair weather, red in the morning and lowering and soon comes rain. So in the letter they can discern the face of the sky, but they know nothing of the God who made the sky red; they cannot bind the sweet influences of Pleiades or loose the bands of Orion. That Sun of Rightcousness who arose with healing in his wings was the Son of God, who came with dyed garments from Bozrah, whose lifeblood was poured out on Calvary, who was an all-sufficient sacrifice, the redemption-price of his people. The rising of this Sun in the east purported the destruction of the old world, to be burned up, that One in whom dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily, even Jesus our Savior, to whom belongs all power in heaven and earth, and so we read the face of the sky; in the morning it tells us Mazzaroth —the seasons, or signs of the times; no redemption without blood—the blood of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Our covenant-keeping God entered into this covenant before time began, to die, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. As poor, puny creatures we have nothing to do with robing the eastern sky in red, as with a garment dipped in blood, and we have nothing to do in bringing disaster, the storm clouds, rain, hail, sleet and snow, but our God, who rules all things, times and events, is he who paints the sky for us, and gives us even the eyes by which we behold in awe its beauty and splendor, and our hearts, souls and minds are filled with wonder and admiration of his great skill and power; we feel deep down in our hearts admiration and praise to his great name for his wonderful works to the children of men; no conditions on our part, only that we are given eyes to see, ears to hear and hearts to understand. There is no life in the letter, and this natural sky is as a letter, but the Spirit giveth life. This old sinful world tried to bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, to stop the rising of the Son of God and prevent his reign as the King that should rule in righteousness, and so from his very birth, or the rising of this Son, the eastern sky was painted red. Thanks be to God, our God works and none can hinder, hinders and none can work. He made the sun to rule the day, and for 1913 years our blessed Savior has ruled his people, Israel, and to-day sits enthroned at the right hand of the Majesty on high with more dazzling splendor than ever a noonday's natural sun poured out upon the world. Yes, he is exalted a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance unto Israel, where he ever liveth to make intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered.

But these signs of the times. The day is far spent, the closing of the day is now red, bespeaking to God's redeemed little remnant according to election, that shall be saved, fair weather. Yes, dear brethren, the sky is red, purporting bloodshed, the great battle of Armageddon, which to my mind means the battle of destruction, is near at hand, that Son arrayed in dyed garments at the closing of the day of the

Lord God Almighty, who shall bind Satan. God says, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you."—Acts xiii. 41. The signs of the times as I see them, dear brethren, have painted the sky red by the rising of the lamblike beast with two horns; the old beast with seven heads and ten horns, old mother Rome, is no more to be dreaded, but she has dressed up her daughters and sent them out to charm the world, and if it were possible they would deceive the very elect; and all the world shall wonder, except those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. Yes, dear brethren, the fairest in nature, most costly arrayed, most richly adorned, most attractive, most reasonable, logical, ethical, scientific, the most prosperous, imposing temples, cathedrals, synagogues, buildings called churches, are but the abodes of these daughters of Rome, all of whose windows are darkened to exclude the light from heaven. Men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. O, my brother, are you to-day with a body in a meetinghouse whose windows are darkened? If you are (it is true in nature as in grace) you are with a harlot. Have you a hired ministry? Any man you can hire to preach for you you are simply his merchandise; he is teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. That red sunset holds forth to the Israel of God an eternal rest in the city of gold, whose gates are of pearl, where Jesus, the light and joy, reigns in every heart, and where songs of redemption that no man could learn are sung for evermore. O that great white throne and that numberless throng gathering there, in obedience to our Master's call: Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, that ye receive not of her plagues. Behind the red sunset I am made to see the bow of promise: no more deluge, no more danger, no more death; the old ship of Zion, sailing upon the waters like the ark in the days of Noah, shall enter in through the gates into the city. Heaven as a cloudless sky above us, and the multitudes and nations and tongues as the sea beneath us, shut in by the hand of God, his little flock is safe from storm; like as in the days of Noah, so also shall the coming of the Son of man be. We to-day as Predestinarian Baptists are counted as the offscouring of all things, and count ourselves as those who are the offscouring of all things unto this day, but we have hope in the resurrection of the dead and God-given faith in the Lord Jesus Christ who arose from the dead; we look not at things which are seen, but to him who is unseen. As is shown us in Scripture, whenever God has seen fit to visit this old world with judgments he has always reduced his church to a little remnant, and it seems to me his visitation is now upon us. The day is far spent, the evening shades appear, the whole sky is red in the west with a halo of glory; no artist can paint the sky as it is. Can ye discern the face of the sky and not discern the signs of the times? This red is but the blood-dipped raiment of the Son of God dying at the close of the day, the last day, no more Sun to rise, no more Savior to be crucified. The encroaching influences of Romanism as taught and practiced by all the orders around us tell us that here is the element to be feared and fought, the lamblike beast having two horns. O, brethren, a new and broader field opens up before me of Rome and her daughters. May

God keep us from her thraldom is my prayer, for my heart's desire and prayer to God is that Israel might be saved.

In bonds of love, your little brother,

J. P. BAKER.

WEISER, Idaho, March 11, 1914.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I find myself seated to write you a few more of my scattering thoughts, and as good reason as I can assign is, I am lonely.

Well, supposing God did determine the big things, and force men to further his purpose, such as sending Joseph into Egypt, and the crucifixion of his Son, is that evidence sufficient to establish as fact that all things are according to his will? To me, yes; to others, I cannot say. But let us look around a little and see. What you, I or others believe, is of little consequence, nothing but the truth will stand. Paul, in second Corinthians, first chapter, reasons that by the grace of God he was qualified to comfort others by and with the consolation and comfort he received while in tribulation, suffering and affliction. This is good, comforting reading, for Paul sets forth the condition I feel to be in, in a measure at least. In verses nine and ten he says, "But we have the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: [Why should we not trust in ourselves?] who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust he will yet deliver us." Three glorious truths are here set forth; one has been done, one is now being done and the other will be done. This has been for the comfort of the children of God ever since it has been on record, and has always been past, present and future. Paul had learned not to trust in himself, but in God, the one who had delivered him, and was delivering him, and would finally deliver him. My mind is that Jesus on the cross is the one, and that the time when they were delivered from so great a death, and that the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, is now delivering, and that the Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead is the One who will yet deliver us. Then, first, Jesus came fully qualified to redeem all whose names were written in the book of life, not to make a way possible, but to absolutely perfect their salvation, for by the one offering he has forever perfected them that are sanctified (set apart). Yes, his blood was sufficient to cleanse, and by his death he freed them from the law, so that the law is satisfied and his bride delivered from the curse of the law. The Son freed us and we are "free indeed," so that now they (children) stand justified before God in the Son. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?" "And doth deliver." To my mind this is going on every day, hour and minute; it was true when Paul wrote it, and it is true to-day. In Job v. 19, he throws all our troubles together, and he declares that he is delivered from all of them. The seventh one is the last, death, and we are saved then. O yes, death shall not hold or triumph over us. In Psalms xci. 3, David includes much that God would deliver him from, for in God did he trust, and he is mighty and able to save. O let us pray this same God to be our strength, our all in all. The same trust manifested by the prophets is also the one in which the apostles trusted: 2 Tim. iv. 18: "And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." Thanks be to God, he has not

only delivered us from the condemnation of the law, but he is going to deliver us from every evil work. O dear, trembling child, take courage, the Lord has, is now and will deliver you. You have never been delivered from evil or sin but that it was the gracious work of your dear Lord, and he will preserve, or keep, you unto his heavenly kingdom. Yes, we are kept by the power of God; we may devise our way, but the dear Lord directs our steps.

Now we want to notice some of the little things. Job was a perfect man and a servant of God, yet God delivered him into the hands of Satan. What for? O, dear child, have you never thanked the almighty God for the glorious truth manifested in Job's trials? Job was declared to be a perfect, upright man, but did this condition save him from trials and sore afflictions? Was it God's will for Job to be so afflicted? God gave him over to Satan, and in doing this we learn that before God gave him over Job was not in Satan's hands to afflict and bereave. So we see that Job's uprightness did not save him, and he could no more trust in himself, but could affirm that the Lord knew the way that he took, and that when he had tried him he should come forth as gold. I can but believe that it was God who had put Job in the furnace of affliction, and that it was he who was trying him, and that he knew Job would come forth as gold, and should not trust in his own works, but know by experience that God's grace was sufficient. I think that every heaven-born soul has learned, or will learn, that his efforts do not save, or deliver, and will learn the truth that he has received double at the Lord's hand for all his sins; two salvations: one here and one hereafter. So it was with Daniel; he was not thrown into the lions' den because he sinned, but because he prayed to the God of heaven. Likewise the three Hebrew children, but here God, not man, saved them, and he could not have manifested his power as he did had not the wrath of man been turned loose just enough that the whole work praised the Lord, and we gladly trust in this God who "doth deliver," and "we trust that he will yet deliver us," for if in this life only we have hope, we are of all men the most miserable; surely this is so. If there is no resurrection of the dead, if Jesus rose not from the dead, our faith is vain and we are false witnesses. "But now is Christ risen from the dead." Glorious thought! He rose the third and appointed morn, he is the firstfruits of them that slept, and all who have passed through the new birth, they who have the Spirit from above within them, shall also in like manner come forth. In our Savior's answer to John he affirms that by him the dead are raised. (1 Cor. vi. 14.) The apostle here affirms that God raised up the Lord and will also raise us up, and I rejoice that it is so. This is our hope, that in the last time we who shall be asleep shall come forth, and they that remain shall be changed. It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but this we know, that when we see him we shall be like him, and when we awake with his likeness we shall be satisfied, and be fully qualified to sing the new song acceptably: "Saved by grace." Dear brother, this is a glorious hope, and it is sure to all the seed; there shall not be one left out, the body must be complete. Glorious truth! He who hath promised these things is able to do them.

Yours in hope,

T. E. ATTEBERY.

1 CORINTHIANS II. 2.

"For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

I am thinking of the apostle's preaching, his manner of preaching and what is real gospel preaching. The solemn charge is given: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." The command is to feed the church of God. In the foregoing chapter it seems there had been dissensions and strife, so the thought in his mind was to know nothing among them, to know no man after the flesh, nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified. In my early efforts to preach I was much given to fighting other denominations, but think I was enabled to see the folly of such a course. I am now convinced that if we keep in mind the Scripture above quoted we will cease that manner of preaching or talking and feed the church. There is nothing in such preaching that will feed the church or build them up on their most holy faith. I am convinced it is all flesh, and cometh not from that wisdom which is from above. It is always with deep regret that I hear of our good brethren holding debates with the unregenerate, or unbelievers, contending with men who know not the grace of God. I fail to see Christ in it, and again, the truth of the Bible, or in Christ, is not to my mind a debatable question; there are no two sides to it. Our government at this time is engaged in deep questions, or principles, as to the best policy for the good of the whole nation, therefore debatable, but God is the author of our faith and doctrine, his work is perfect, it has been assailed on every point and yet stands as our God made it, and will stand forever. No argument will ever make an unbeliever a believer and supporter of it; it seems to me like casting pearls before swine. Can one stand up and contend with such and know nothing among the people? Does he not see the foe and not Christ? I know it was true when I followed that manner of preaching: I saw men and not Christ. In the more than fifty years I have been trying to preach and hear preaching I have observed the results of both manners, or ways, and the true spirit of the gospel fills the soul with rejoicing, the fighting spirit causes a smile and look to see who is taking it. I say this with shame to myself, as good brethren have patted me on the shoulder, saying, You gave it to them to-day. As I get older I trust I do the more realize the high calling, the position we occupy and the sacredness of the moments when we arise to speak in the name of our blessed Master, Jesus Christ. I feel the more as the years go by that I want to know nothing but Jesus. It matters not who make up the congregation, whether there are two or three or fifty or more, if in the real spirit of the gospel we lose sight of men as we roam the gospel field or dwell in the courts of the Lord. If I know my own heart, I want to preach as though every one believed it, and yet I am not responsible if no one believes it; God alone can make heart-believers. God forbid that I should ever swerve from declaring all the counsel of God, but I want to preach it in gentleness, meekness and faith, remembering what the apostle said: The servant must not strive, but be gentle, in meekness instructing, &c., those that have an ear to hear. Said the apostle, "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and

Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." Philip preached Jesus unto the eunuch. Paul in the synagogue preached Jesus, that he is the Son of God. The gospel field is large, and may we ever be found in it, preaching to believers, those who have an ear to hear. The worst Arminian I have to contend with is P. W. SAWIN.

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1 CORINTHIANS II. 4, 5.

"AND my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

Sitting in the waiting-room at the railroad station a few days since, I noticed the meeting of two men who professed to be ministers of the gospel. After the common salutations they began talking of some of the great lights of the world, and of their wonderful ability as orators and speakers, attractive and charming, and by these holding the attention and attracting the people. John says, They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them, so we need not be concerned, or argue the point with such; the context is given by the Spirit of wisdom, and I could but compare their ideas of a minister with that of a gospel-called minister of the Lord Jesus. There is no doubt oratory will sometimes charm the dear children of God (I think I have seen this) and lull them into insensibility, but it will never feed a poor hungry soul. No doubt the children of God often seek after that which is flesh-pleasing, but always works death; whatever is of the flesh is death, is sin and contrary to wisdom. Churches as well as individuals become highminded, seeking after men of great natural ability. These are among the things as well that are included in the "if we sow to the flesh," so I write not these things to condemn the world, but to stir up the pure minds of the dear saints of God by way of remembrance. All that men can teach is head-knowledge, that which is of God is from above, a revelation in the heart, in the spirit. Therefore Paul came in the true spirit of the gospel, not with excellency of speech, nor of man's wisdom Paul knew that as he journeyed and lived in the teaching or wisdom of men he was ignorant of God and that righteousness that is by faith in Christ; he knew that whatever heights he may have attained to, he, by that wisdom, knew not God (for man by searching cannot find out God), and so does every saint of God. What wisdom our God hath shown, that we should not be creature-worshipers. Therefore he strips his dear servants of all creature-power, as they learn daily by sad experience: "Without me ye can do nothing." I presume we have all attempted this vain show, but the dear Lord will not allow this with those whom he calls, as he did Aaron. Paul would not discourage scholastic training, but by this one cannot attain unto the knowledge of Christ. Jesus thanked the Father that these things were hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. So Paul comes to them just as they are: babes in Christ; he enters into their every feeling: "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." To the weak became he as weak, that he might gain the weak. Every principle of worldly wisdom would lead away from such a feeling or desire, but the spirit of wisdom brings the true, tried servant of God down into the very feelings of the babes and sucklings in Christ. It is good that we all be emptied of all fleshly wisdom and self-conceit, and be filled with that wisdom from above,

Preach the gospel in childlike simplicity, in demonstration of the Spirit and power of God, that our faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

"Dear Lord, if I am one of thine,
From anxious thoughts I would be freed;
To trust, and love, and praise is mine,
The care of all belongs to thee."

Just a few rambling thoughts from a poor, weak one, hoping in the continued mercies of the Lord, a sinner saved by grace, P. W. SAWIN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Feb., 1914.

CLAREMONT, Cal., March 20, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—A sister who was visiting at my home, having heard me read a letter that I had just written to the Coles Creek Church, said that she would like certain of her friends to see it, and for me to send it to you. I do not think it is of any importance, but I told her I would send it to you and you could do with it as you thought best, so I am willing to leave it to you. I would not have thought of sending it if she had not remarked that she would like to read it in the SIGNS. May your afflictions be tempered with God's mercy and your strength be sufficient for each day, is the prayer of

O. P. SPEIRS.

CLAREMONT, Cal., March 17, 1914.

ELDER JOHN PRESTON—DEAR BROTHER, and all the membership of Coles Creek Church:—I have just read in one of our periodicals a letter from a sister who mentioned having been to a meeting of the Coles Creek Church, and having heard Elder Preston preach such good sermons, and enjoyed the meeting so well, that it caused my mind to travel back to the time when I was at a meeting at the same place, when it seemed that you were the most beautiful people I had ever seen. Every one of you seemed to be so loving that I remember I wrote to a friend telling him how dear you all looked to me, and that it had done me much good to be there. But it was many months before I again met with you. I had planned that I would go often to the meetings, but I found soon after this an experience that helped to prove to my mind that it is not in man to direct his steps, and that man proposes but God disposes.

I remember one Sunday evening that came upon a meeting day. It seemed that although there was nothing of consequence to hinder me from going, (and I had desired to do so) yet from some hindrance that I could seem to feel, yet was not present in any tangible sense, I did not go, but my mind was with you all day at close intervals. In the evening the impulse to be wtih you for a short time at least was so strong with me that without consulting my watch or other means to tell me the time, I walked down to the car line just in time to see you all getting off the car. I remember that the car was crowded, and the streets, too, seemed to be full of people, and it was with difficulty that I was able to get with you. It seemed that one person and his companion were determined to stay between you and myself. These persons I thought were Methodists. Why I should think so I do not know, but I was governed more by my impulses than from any sort of reasoning, and I took it for granted that they were Methodists. I have no doubt but that he was entirely ignorant of having interfered with my purposes in any way, yet it seemed to me that he was so persistent in his efforts, that I made up my mind I would show him, and I doubt if you ever knew, but I brushed him aside, and planted myself right at

your rear, and it would have taken a pretty strong person to have set me aside. It seemed that after these persons saw that I was a fixture, they walked to one side and gave me no further trouble; but I remember that I had a sense of exultation, and looked at them with a feeling of having been the victor, and as much as to say, This is my place, and I have shown you that you are not to hinder me. It must have been amusing to them, seeing my peculiar actions, but it was all very real to me; in fact, all the incidents connected with it were all so real that only sober impressions took possession of me. Whether there was any significance in it or not, I do not know. But I have so many friends who are Methodists, that I wonder if it were not for the purpose of installing in my mind that in the matter that was becoming so important to me, I was not to be influenced by any natural inclination of friendship's ties. After I had secured the undisputed right to walk where I pleased, I was content to just walk at your heels, and I felt a sense of being where I belonged by right, but I have had my doubts many times since. We walked on (I do not think that I talked with you) until we came to your gate and the others all had left one by one, and I remember that it seemed that there was nothing to do but to walk on. And now what did this mean? I had walked with you by desire, and as I thought by right; I had come as far as your gate, and then there was nothing arranged, I had not made up my mind to stop with you, neither had I thought I would go on; the matter must be settled then. I walked on, then the thought came to me, I wanted to walk with them, and I did so; now I was to go farther, what could it mean? (I always have felt that that day's travel had some prophetic significance, but never could see its import until this day.) I went on until I came to water, and then on going back to my home I heard some people whom I believed were happy singing "Home, Sweet Home." O how beautiful it sounded to me. I stopped and listened for some time, then went back to my rooms, wondering what it all meant.

Now do not think what I am going to write is with any disrespect to the dear people, but I was to go and leave you. I must have interpreted it wrongly, but with the desire to know what it all meant, I began to think, or try to. The impression that seemed to take possession of me was that I should unite with you, and become a member of Coles Creek Church, but there was something more for me to do, and as my mind was to stay in that vicinity, the question was, What should I do that the rest of you could not do? and consequently trying to mix the desires of my mind, or rather natural heart, with the sovereign will of God, I became confused, and my mind became entangled with impossible things, and as I said before, I never was satisfied with the solution until this day; and now I remember that my mind was so much on California, (I was expecting my sister) and after I left you and came to the creek (water) from there back to where I heard the music of "Home, Sweet Home," my mind was continually almost on her and her family. Yes, it is plain, I was to become as one of you, but O what there was to be before I was to be a member of Coles Creek Church, and when the time came it was but for a night and a day. You remember when I had declared in a court of law that I believed I was in God's hand and that he would see me safely through. Yes, at brother Dawson's when you sang, "Am I a soldier of the cross?" I felt that I was one. I felt that it had been upon me heav-

ily, and while the great desire to be baptized had left me, I thought it a duty to do so. Yes, Saturday night and Sunday, a night and a day, and it was the last time I was to be with you. I believe it was the prearranged will of God that my path should lead me on past this home, as it were, of my mother. Yes, you are my mother, you nursed me in my infancy (spiritually, if so be I am of the Spirit), and it is still your home, and I am glad for you that you have this pleasant home in your old age, and look upon this church as a son who has taken himself a wife and has established himself a home, looks upon his mother's own home, a place where he knows he is welcome to come. I am far away from you, but I feel that I am of the household of Coles Creek, nevertheless, having a home (church) where it is my lot to associate with those who seem to me to be the most lovable band of brethren that could be brought together. Yes, He has brought me here where I believe the gospel is preached. Then, too, from this dear old home of my mother comes an older brother and sister to share with me this new home, as it seems to me, to be my guardian angels, to look after my good, and may God bless them, and through the blessing he extends to them may you also receive a blessing. I refer to brother John and sister Mary Williams. They live at San Bernardino, and it is my good pleasure to grasp their hands once or more each month. O it is sweet to sit with these dear people in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and to hear the tidings of good news from a far country. Yes, we all have our appointed ways, and when we can see the hand of the Lord in it how blest we should feel ourselves to be.

Good-by, dear ones, and remember me, a wayward child,

OLIVER P. SPEIRS.

LAUREL, Miss., March 23, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It is through the goodness and mercy of God that I again try in my weak way to write you, and to send the inclosed letter from sister Anna Windham, which we would be glad if you would publish in the SIGNS, as she lives quite a distance from us and seldom gets to meet with us, and for the love and appreciation of her and her letter we ask you to publish it if you have space to do so.

Remember me at the throne of grace.

Your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life,

T. J. KNIGHT.

HOMEWOOD, Miss., March 8, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS OF PALESTINE CHURCH:—From my far off home I send greeting. It may be that you all feel I have lost interest in the dear old church of God (that is, if you ever think of poor me), but be it far from me to do that. As the days pass by my love for her and her welfare seems to increase, and I seem to see more plainly that this is indeed the true church. How glad I am that I, unworthy though I am, have the sweet privilege of claiming a home among them. How glad I would be to meet with you and enjoy the good news that brother Easley will bring. Brother Easley, while you are delivering that precious message, should you chance to think of those who cannot have a seat with you all, can you let a breath of prayer ascend heavenward for me? O how often I think of you as you stand firm, contending for the Bible principles, and also of the brethren and sisters who stand with you, and I feel to ask the God of heaven to bless you all, and grant, if it be his holy will, that he will restore peace in dear old Zion. He tells us in

the Scriptures that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them that are called according to his purpose, and I believe his word. Then let us look to him, for he alone can bless.

Dear brethren and sisters, I would love to tell you of the dealings of the Lord with me since I wrote you last, but space forbids. I must say I have suffered until I was made willing to do, or try to do, anything the dear Lord saw fit to put upon me; he alone knows what I suffered. I felt impressed to write a book, but knew nothing to write. It was the greatest trial of my faith that I had ever known; my utter helplessness pressed me down so that sleep forsook my eyes. Finally I made the attempt with fear and trembling, and since writing one hundred and fifty sheets of paper I can never express the peace and joy I have felt. I have had a desire to tell you all of the goodness and mercy of the covenant-keeping God to me. O how can he be so good after I murmured so because he placed such a task before me, knowing that I had no education and was not even familiar with the Scriptures? It seemed that any on earth could write of the true church better than I. He seemed to lead me in paths that I had not known. O rejoice with me that we have such a wondrous God, who works in the army of heaven and among the children of men, and none can stay his hand, or say, What doest thou? Blessed be his holy name.

Please pardon this lengthy and poorly written letter, and remember me and mine at the throne of grace.

We attended meeting at New Chapel two months ago yesterday, and it was indeed good to be there, for brother Joiner came bearing a comforting message, and it was glad tidings indeed.

Your little sister in hope,

ANNA WINDHAM.

SPOKANE, Wash., May 3, 1914.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR SORROWING BROTHER:—Yesterday the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for May 1st came to me draped in mourning for the loss of our good editor, Elder F. A. Chick; also a card from dear sister Bessie Durand, saying her brother had gone to Elder Chick's funeral last Saturday. My sympathy goes out to the poor, suffering Baptists of the SIGNS who have met with this great loss in the death of this soul-comforting brother; but we will have to reason together, knowing as we do that the great Head of the church will in wisdom supply our great loss out of his unwasting fullness. I never met Elder Chick or heard him preach, though I have often expressed a desire to hear him. He came into my knowledge in 1894, when he commenced editing our precious SIGNS. His plain, sweet messages have often comforted and cheered me. I did not know he was sick for some time, but I could not help missing his soothing words. In the April 15th number I saw that Elder Chick was much worse, sleeping continually, then I was very sad, and said, May it be the Lord's will to spare him. But his ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts. I remember about Elder Gilbert Beebe being removed and mother saying she felt the sun had ceased to shine, and she feared the SIGNS would stop. Then Elder Wm. L. Beebe and his brother Benton laid aside their armor and we had no more of their comforting writings. Still our dear family paper comes to our homes, and the great Father will continue to send

by whom he pleases. I know you must feel the loss much more than I do, being so intimately acquainted with him and associated in the ministry. I hope you are well enough to help dear Elder Ker bear his great burden in this trying time. I hope his wife is better and that he has strength given him according to his day. I know in whom he trusts.

"Our God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home."

Dear brother, take your SIGNS and read again those two letters Elder Chick sent you when you were in deep sorrow over the loss of your beloved wife. They were full of soothing words directed by the divine pen, and spoke sincere sympathy. I, too, remember the first hymn I heard you read, commencing, "How sweet, how heavenly is the sight when those who love the Lord." The text you used in preaching was, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." How that sermon is laid away in my storehouse of memory. Elder Southard was there, and his face shone as the sun when at the close he gave out the hymn, "Come hither, all ye weary souls," &c.

This last SIGNS is a precious number. All the letters, especially from those who knew our dear, faithful editor had gone to his perfect home of rest, were a tribute of loving remembrance. I thought of the alabaster box of precious ointment poured upon the head of our dear Savior by the woman, the odor of which filled the house. I wish I could hear a good gospel sermon once more. I have been here since last September, and have only heard three different speakers try to preach, but they were not Old Baptists; the husks did not satisfy me. I hear there is a meeting of my kind to be held in this city the fourth Sunday in May. I hope my health will continue good, so that I can meet the assembly of the saints once more.

Forgive me for writing so much. I am alone, and my heart is full of sorrow for the family of Elder Chick. May the dear Father bless them.

LINA W. BECK.

SMITHFIELD, Ky., May 20, 1914.

DEAR EDITOR:—I am inclosing herewith a copy of a letter written to the Cane Run Church by our aged and highly esteemed brother, W. H. Chilton, which was read at our last meeting and by the church ordered sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication. Brother Chilton has recently been deprived of his hearing, so that he cannot hear preaching at all, and he being a very noble brother, the church feels that it is due him to give this public notice through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Your brother in hope,

G. R. TURNER.

CAMPBELLSBURG, Ky., May 3, 1914.

BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I would love to talk to the church, as I cannot hear preaching any more, so I will write a few lines to the members. O how I would love to again hear you all sing that good old hymn, "I am a stranger here below," &c., and hear brother George Turner start that good old hymn, "Salvation! O melodious sound to wretched, dying men," which was one of my father's favorites. He was singing clerk at Sulphur Fork Church for many years. Brethren, I have enjoyed meeting with you all in the past, and know that I have fellowship for you all, whether or not

you have for me. It has been one of my greatest pleasures to meet the members, and our dear pastor (Elder P. W. Sawin, supplied) has been breaking the Bread of life to us for many years, coming to us through heat and cold; so, brethren, stand by him and hold up his hands; be faithful to attend your meetings, it is encouraging to the pastor. I know he has always been faithful to come to us. Brethren, pray for me. May God's blessing be with you all, is the prayer of a poor old sinner saved by grace.

Your brother,

W. H. CHILTON.

ELGIN, Oregon, May 7, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I wish to give notice of a general union three days meeting to be held with the Big Spring Church, at Elgin, Union Co., Oregon, beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in July, this year. There was a call made by the Mizpah Church, at Touchet, Wash., in November, to the several churches in Oregon, Washington and Idaho, to meet with her at her regular meeting in November, to see if there could be some plan or agreement entered into by the several churches which do not belong to any association to hold an annual three days meeting, and at this called meeting it was agreed to hold a meeting at the place and time above named, and all the churches which desire to unite in such a union meeting once a year are invited to meet with us. We thought it well that each church send a letter giving their statistics, so that if it was thought expedient there could be a minute printed, and we believe this would be a good thing to do, as it would give some general information of the churches in the west. It was further agreed that the moderator of the church where the meeting is to be held should be the moderator of the meeting, and the clerk of said church act as clerk of the meeting. There is to be no business done except what is necessary to maintain order. The purpose of the meeting will be for worship and a manifestation of brotherly love. Now I want to say that this general union meeting of the churches need not hinder or interfere with any of the churches that may wish to hold a three days meeting, as most of the churches are given to doing. Now, brethren, remember the meeting and the time and place. I will say to those who do not know, that Elgin is 326 miles east of Portland and 20 miles from La Grande, on a branch line. To leave Portland in the evening you would arrive at Elgin next morning at 8:30, but if you leave Portland in the morning you will have to stay in La Grande over night. Those coming from either east or west change cars at La Grande.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

LEXINGTON, Ky., May 7, 1914.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I sympathize with you in your loss by death of dear Elder Chick. When I received the SIGNS stating that he had passed away the thought came to me, The Lord is calling his children home. The many readers of the SIGNS will miss his able editorials, which were clear and firm, yet gentle and kind. The church has lost an able defender of the faith once delivered unto the saints. Please tender to his family my heartfelt sympathy in this their sad bereavement. It is said that the heart feels most when the lips move not.

Yours in hope,

WM. F. SLOAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1914.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ALONE.

HAVING had a little time to reflect upon the past and that which so recently took place: the death of our beloved associate, Elder Chick, the above word is very expressive of our feeling, and we think a short article along this line will not be out of place at this time. The SIGNS was founded by Elder Gilbert Beebe and other brethren, as will be seen by the prospectus, and edited and published by him from 1832 until 1881, when he was called home to enjoy the fullness of salvation at the right hand of God. After his death Elder Wm. L. Beebe, his son, was appointed to the position of editor, and continued until 1894, when he retired. During his service he resided in Warwick, N. Y., and Elder Benton Jenkins was in the SIGNS office, and of course was of great assistance to Elder Beebe, so that he was not "alone." Elder Jenkins was still in the office when Elder Chick succeeded Elder Wm. L. Beebe, and was appointed to the editorial staff with Elder Chick, so that neither was "alone." At the death of Elder Jenkins, in 1897, brother Benton Beebe, owner and publisher of the SIGNS, became associated with Elder Chick in the editorial work, hence was not "alone." At his death, in 1904, we were assigned to the office work that had been done by him, and after a year or two were appointed to the editorial staff with Elder Chick, so that he was not "alone." We served together in perfect union and fellowship to the day of his death. Now that he has been called to his eternal reward we are left entirely alone, a condition of no editor of the SIGNS since the time when Elder Gilbert Beebe was the sole editor, and even then in the latter part of his work Elder Jenkins was in the office with him. The fact of Elder Chick having lived in Hopewell, N. J., one hundred and twenty miles away from the SIGNS office, much of the work, such as preparation of copy and proofreading, fell upon us, but while he lived we felt that he shared the entire responsibility of the publication of the SIGNS, and whenever anything of special importance came up we could advise with him, and always found his counsel wise and his attitude kind and gentle. But he is no more, and we are "alone" in the editorial department, which position we feel altogether unequal to, and never imagined that such responsibility would fall upon us. Few, if any, realize what the position means. Not only are we expected to write for each number of the SIGNS, but to see that nothing but sound doctrine enters its columns, also to avoid controversy and at all times to deal gently and kindly with all writers and subscribers, regardless of conditions or circumstances. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES has ever been a representative periodical, setting forth the doctrine of the original, or genuine, Old School Baptists of America, and to maintain its standard means more labor and hardship than many imagine. To write editorially number after number requires a very fruitful mind, in order to

have sufficient variety to keep its readers interested. To answer the many questions regarding doctrine, order and practice requires much understanding of the Scriptures, order of the house and plainness of expression. To judge matter for publication, and the preparation of the same, requires almost acute judgment, much patience and hours of labor. To convince a brother that it would be better not to publish his article, which in itself might be excellent, for the reason that it would be likely to cause controversy or offend some tender conscience, is not at all times an easy matter to accomplish. After enumerating the above qualifications of a man suitable for an editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, is it any wonder that we feel utterly insufficient for the responsibilities now resting upon us? We humbly trust that the Lord has a David or a Solomon somewhere for the place, but until made manifest we shall have to do the best we can. Some way or other we feel that the Lord does not intend that such a grave position shall be occupied long by us.

We have received many letters of sympathy and encouragement since the death of brother Chick, and we appreciate each one and thank the brethren for their remembrance of us. Some have hoped and suggested that we maintain in all our efforts the meek, quiet, gentle and loving spirit that characterized all of dear brother Chick's labors. How gladly we would be such a man as he was, but the brethren doubtless know that every man has his own gifts, and it would be hypocrisy to be other than self, or, in other words, try to imitate another. Each editor of the SIGNS from its first issue has had his own gift, style of writing and expression; no two have been at all alike. This is also true in the ministry, every man has his own gift, and while the same truth is expressed, it is always done in different language and with different emphasis. We can only look to the Lord for help, strength and guidance, and if he gives to the writers and subscribers of the SIGNS to hold up our hands we shall do the best we can to maintain the high standard of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Be it remembered that if we delay in replying to requests it will be for lack of time or understanding, as we do not mean to be indifferent toward the wishes of any one. We hope the brethren and sisters will continue to write for the SIGNS as often as they can, we need their help in this direction also, and while it may be burdensome to one, and another feel that his or her gift is not great in writing, we say for your encouragement that often articles and private letters published in the SIGNS are much more enjoyed than the editorials, and we feel sure that such will be the case now more than ever before. The SIGNS is read by hundreds of believers who need just such comfort as those give who feel poor and needy, weak and worthless, sick and faint.

Before closing we desire to say that the Old School Baptist denomination has suffered a great loss in the death of Elder Chick. Not only was he an able editor, but an excellent preacher of the gospel of the grace of God. We had known him almost from childhood, and knew him to be a favorite with all classes of men, because of his kind and gentle manner. We never knew of his speaking illy of any one, but rather was always ready to excuse and forgive any who manifested faults and failings. His disposition was to be envied. He said of himself that he was never angry but once in his life, and that time when a mere boy. How richly

blessed of the Lord was he, an example of good works.

Often the people of God are made to wonder at his dealings with men, suffering hundreds to remain who would be glad to go because of age and infirmities, because of poverty and distresses, and taking those so useful, so much needed, in the very prime of life. At this time in our eastern associations there seems real need of ministers, as there are many more churches than preachers, and some churches accustomed to having meeting every Sunday have had to divide the time of their pastors with sister churches that have been left destitute through the death or moving away of their own ministers. But the Lord is able to supply all the needs of his people through the riches of Christ Jesus, and his promises are yea and amen to his honor and glory. Yet often many of us become "faint-hearted," and say with Jacob of old, All these things are against us. May the Lord give to each of his ministers to stand in their lot with zeal and fortitude, remembering that He is the builder of the house and the keeper of the city, and that when it pleases him the wilderness shall blossom as the rose, rivers break forth in the mountains and springs in the valleys. May the Lord keep all his people as the apple of his eye and reconcile them to his holy will in all things. K.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, May 20th, 1914, at the home of the bride's mother, Glenmore, N. J., Raymond Yard and Helen M. Drake.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **Emily J. Ker,** beloved wife of Elder H. C. Ker, departed this life at her home in this city (Middletown, N. Y.,) Monday, May 25th, 1914, after months of patient suffering. An obituary will appear soon.

Mr. D. T. Gillis died at his home in Muirkirk, Ont., Feb. 1st, 1914, in the 56th year of his age. The following is taken from the local paper, showing the high esteem in which Mr. Gillis was held among his fellow-men:

Our village sincerely regrets the death of our leading citizen, the well known retired general merchant. He had done much for our village, and his exemplary life gained for him the respect of all. The bereaved widow and children, Mina and Marvin D., have our sincere sympathy in the loss of a kind husband and devoted father. Although in poor health for years, he was up and around as usual last Sunday, and enjoyed the company of relatives. Soon after dark he suffered a stroke of paralysis, from which he failed to rally, and passed peacefully away at 9:30 p. m. He leaves, beside his widow and two children, two brothers, Duncan and Angus, and three sisters, Miss Anna, Mrs. Scoot and Mrs. Mitchell. Mr. Gillis was a man of sterling quality, a consistent follower of the Baptist Church. Funeral was held on Wednesday; burial in Duart Cemetery, after which Elder Slauson spoke comfortingly from Isaiah xliv. 22, 23.

The departed was favored to hear gospel preaching from his earliest years, and spoke of feeling his need of a Savior while mourning for a departed brother, whom he tenderly cared for, when the words came to him, Weep not for him. He was ever ready to do all that hand and heart could do for the comfort of the brethren. During a time of illness he said, "O, if I had a hope." I replied, "Blessed are they that hunger." He received a good hope in the year 1900, when we were on a visit to Dunwich. On a Sunday morning before he awoke he was repeating Isaiah xliv. 22, and it was told him where the words were. As I awoke he was reading the Bible. I asked him what he got. He told me the words came to him before he awoke. It seemed as if the clouds had parted and the glorious Sun of righteousness poured his effulgent rays upon us. Elder Pollard baptized his son's wife and sister Lizzie McCallum that day, and it was one to be remembered. Another morning Psalm viii. came to him in power and assurance. A feeling of unworthiness kept him from

uniting with the church, although he was often looked for to come. He said it took the same power that showed him those wonderful things to bring him. A few days before his death, when a brother wrote saying he hoped he would be given strength to come home, the tears flowed from his eyes. He was one with them, being baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire of the Spirit. His disease seemed to baffle the most skillful specialists and physicians; they could give only temporary relief. There was but one Physician who could give relief, and to him he looked. Like Jacob, he was led about, instructed and kept as the apple of his eye. The reading of the Bible, hymns ("Keep silence, all created things," was his favorite) and all books that exalted a risen Savior, were his delight; we read many together. A few hours before the close as he rested he requested me to read Chamberlain's letters, and spoke of a text Elder Pollard used: "As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." He had a slight stroke before Christmas, but, although somewhat weaker, was able to be around, and seemed more conformed to the will of him who was his tender Shepherd. He expressed gratitude for tender care, and as ever was anxious to aid in the duties of his home as his strength allowed. Feb. 1st he was sitting in the twilight, and as I passed through the room I took his hand and noticed the change. When asked if he were better, he said cheerfully, "Yes, better, better." He peacefully fell asleep in Jesus, as we are given to hope. The vacant chair draws many a sigh, but He who gave has taken. May he give strength to say, Blessed is his name. JESSIE GILLIS.

I feel to add a few words to the above obituary. It was my privilege to know Mr. Gillis for three years, having met him on my first visit to Canada, little thinking at that time I should be called to attend his funeral, but the Lord's ways are in the deep. Mr. Gillis was a man deeply exercised upon spiritual things, and loved the truth as recorded in God's Word, and I feel assured that he left a bright evidence of a good hope through grace, and truly we cannot mourn as those who have no hope, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, then they also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. May the dear Lord comfort the mourning friends with these words. J. B. SLAUSON.

America Katherine Darnall was born May 29th, 1851, and departed this life August 17th, 1913. She was married to Marian Darnall Dec. 3rd, 1868. To that union were born eight children, five of whom are living, as follows: Mrs. J. H. Rose, Joe Darnall and Mrs. Headley Heath, of Benton, Ky., Mrs. James A. Darnall and Mrs. Horace C. Jones, of Paducah, Ky. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church some twenty years ago, being baptized by Elder J. P. Jenkins, and lived a devoted member until death. She was never too busy to attend her meetings, and her home was always open to the Baptists. Her death came as a great shock to us all, having been taken sick one day with cholera morbus and heart failure and dying the next. We can hardly realize yet that she has gone forever. She prayed God to send the children all home so she could see them once more, but they could not all reach her while she was conscious, yet they were present during her last hours. We want to go home and find her and father there, with so many things dear to our childhood memories, but her death has broken up the dear old home forever. We must live and fight life's battles without her help and sympathy. We miss her so much to come to us in sickness; she was never too tired to do anything to relieve the sick or help the poor and needy in any way. While it is hard to have her taken from us, yet we know the all-wise God doeth all things well. We feel that it was his will. Her whole trust was in God. She claimed no merits, but lived in the hope of God's grace. In these darkest hours, these hours of loneliness and sorrow, it is sweet to think her troubles and suffering are over, that she has been called home to the God in whom she trusted, there to live forever in his love, to join the angels, to sing praises to his holy name forever.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders J. M. Perkins and J. P. Jenkins, after which she was laid to rest in the family cemetery.

A DAUGHTER.

Elder J. D. Hopkins, of Knox County, Texas, died at his residence May 1st, 1914, of pellagra and bronchitis. The subject of this sketch was born near Albany, Clinton Co., Ky., Feb. 22nd, 1846. At the age of twenty years he joined the Missionary Baptists. He was married to Juan F. Wynn., of Gap Creek, Ky., July 28th, 1870. To that union were born five children, all of whom are still living. When he was twenty-eight years old he felt that God had called him to the ministry, and he was ordained to preach among that people. Not long after locating in Texas he began to be dissatisfied with them, and in 1895 united with the Old School Baptists during a session of the Pilot Grove Association, near Whitesboro, Texas. Not long after this he was set apart to the full work of the ministry among the Primitive Baptists. His companion died Feb. 27th, 1905. May 3rd, 1906, he was again married, to Mrs. A. E. Lagow, who still survives him. Elder J. D. Hopkins was well known all over north Texas. He had preached from Grayson County over most of west Texas. He was a man of peace, and I never knew him to be a party to church trouble or division. In politics he was a republican, also he was a conservative prohibitionist, not one of the kind who

felt that he should do all he could by his vote to do away with the evils of the saloon. He was a timid man, and never urged his views upon any one. In the pulpit he was a son of thunder, and gave out his words with powerful emphasis, but notwithstanding his forceful delivery no one ever supposed him to be angry or vengeful toward any who disagreed with him. Last year I arranged a tour for brother Hopkins, commencing at Bethel Church, in Wilbarger County, on to Mineral Wells, in Palo Pinto County. He filled all of his appointments, and was well received by the churches, and returned home feeling thankful for the journeying mercies of the trip that he felt might be his last one. It was last year that he moved to Knox County and placed his membership with the Little Flock Church, and therefore was enrolled with the ministers of our association at the last associational meeting. He was pastor of the above church when he died. One more name is taken from the list. Brother Hopkins and I have been intimate, and there never has arisen a point of difference between us on any doctrine or point of order. I visited him three days before his death at his home in Knox City.

Services were conducted by John Yarbrough and Elder Cowan. He was buried at Sweetwater, beside the remains of his first wife, where I endeavored to preach a sermon from the text, "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?"—2 Samuel iii. 38.

May the Lord of glory extend mercy and care to his children and lonely widow, and may we all be enabled to say, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. J. H. FISHER.

GRAHAM, Texas.

Sarah E. Betts was born Nov. 11th, 1839, in Itawamba County, Miss., and departed this life Nov. 5th, 1913. She was married Oct. 8th, 1858, to I. R. Betts. To that union were born three children, all of whom preceded her to the grave. Sister Betts joined the Old School Baptist Church, in Freestone County, Texas, in 1873, and was baptized by Elder J. L. Lindsey. Sister Betts was truly a mother in Israel. She was sick a great many times in her life, so seriously that all hope for her recovery had fled, but God in his providence had designed that she should recover, and she had to remain on earth until our Father's time to call her to rest. In all our dear sister's afflictions she was never heard to complain or murmur, but was always cheerful even in her sickness. She was always faithful to every duty, a loving and devoted wife and mother. Her house was always a home for Primitive Baptists, as many who are still living can testify; she never tired of waiting upon the brethren. The Lord had blessed her with a comfortable home, a kind husband and a moderate competency. She leaves to mourn her demise an aged husband and a host of relatives and friends, also the church, of which she remained a devoted member thirty years, or until her death. While our hearts are sad, and our nature is to mourn for our departed loved ones, we mourn not as those who have no hope. We feel sure that our heavenly Father has taken her to that haven of rest prepared for all his humble ones. Her body was laid to rest in the old Salem Cemetery, there to await the resurrection morn, when Christ shall come the second time without sin unto salvation.

W. O. BEENE.

FREESTONE, Texas.

Mr. John Hobson passed away in the month of March, in a home at Hawthorne, N. Y., where he had been for several months. He died of cancer of the stomach, in his 78th year, if I am not mistaken. His children, five in number, three daughters and two sons, and his grandchildren, were at his funeral, and gave him tender burial. Many will remember him as one who loved the truth of Jesus, ever seeking the company of those whose chief interest was in grace abounding to the chief of sinners. He mourned deeply because of his shortcomings, and truly hungered and thirsted after righteousness, and was blessed in that he was often filled with praise to his heavenly Friend and Deliverer.

W. A. BEARD.

Daniel McIntyre, our dear brother, departed this life June 22nd, 1913, in the 71st year of his age. Brother McIntyre was born in Aldborough, Ontario. At the time of his death his home was in Rodney, where he had resided for a number of years. Brother McIntyre in his early youth was exercised in mind regarding his lost condition as a sinner before the just and holy God, but desired that he might in some future time become a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus and hear the word of his blessed Lord speaking peace to his troubled soul. While sitting in the church one Sunday morning when there was no preacher present these words came to him with great power: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek." These words broke up the hard and flinty heart, and there the good seed of repentance was sown. Many other words of comfort came to him in his lonely hours, bringing that sweet comfort which only the Lord can give. Brother McIntyre was received in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada in 1885, and was baptized by the late Elder Pollard. His life was an exemplary one, adorning his profession with a well ordered walk and godly conversation, a lover of the precious gospel of God and our Savior Jesus Christ. He was sick a long time, but bore all his sufferings without a murmur, being very submissive to the

Lord's will, and felt that he would not suffer a pain too many, for all our sorrows and joys he fully believed are held in store for us. He was finally released from his sufferings June 22nd, 1913, when the dear Lord called him to his long home, as we fully believe, to appear with the likeness of his blessed Savior.

Elder Newton Peters preached his funeral sermon much to the comfort of the mourning friends. The body was laid to rest in the Rodney Cemetery.

Written by request of Mrs. McIntyre.

J. B. SLAUSON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

A. F. Jones, Ga., $1.75; J. C. Nelson, Ky., $1.00; Mrs. W. F. Seid, Idaho, $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., June 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1914. Those coming by B. D. R. R. to Stockton will be met with conveyance on arrival of the 5 o'clock p. m. train on Tuesday, or on going to Frenchtown will be met and cared for by friends living there. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

CYRUS RISLER, Church Clerk.

THE Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church has appointed her yearly meeting to be held the first Saturday and Sunday in June, 1914. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth to meet with us.

A. LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Baptist Church, in New York city, to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (10th), 1914, and continue three days. The meetinghouse is No. 1216 Intervale Avenue, Bronx, near the Freeman Street station of the Subway. Take Subway train marked "Bronx," bound north, at any station south of 96th Street. A cordial welcome awaits all who can meet with us.

JOHN McCONNELL, Pastor.

THE Lord willing, the yearly meeting of the Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held in the meetinghouse in the township of Euphemia, Lambton Co., Ontario, seven miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1914, and continuing two days. Brethren of our own faith are cordially invited to meet with us.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Church Clerk.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 82. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1914. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JEREMIAH X. 23.

"O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

It seems to me that to-day I realize the truth of these words, and I will try in my blundering way to tell why I realize the truth of them. Less than a week ago I was feeling so ignorant and unprofitable I resolved that I would never write another letter nor attempt to tell my thoughts and feelings; to-day, Sunday, I am at home, and my mind seemed to wander all over the country; that is, I began to think about the Lord's people scattered over all the land. How are they getting along? Are they rejoicing or mourning? Perhaps there are some rejoicing and some mourning. Yes, I believe there are some in each condition, because we are told there are times to weep and times to rejoice also. Those who are mourning I will refer to the words of Jesus: "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." Hence the promise is to you, my friend, wherever you are. It matters not whether you are in the church or in some dismal forest, Jesus is watching over you; you cannot get away from the presence of the Lord. He is not confined to any place, for his presence is everywhere. He is near you at times, and yet you cannot perceive him. Remember, you cannot look upon his unveiled face and live; but you desire to see him and to be like him, do you not? But before this can be, this mortal must put on immortality, and this corruptible incorruption, and when all this shall be accomplished, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. This is a mysterious and peculiarly serious subject. Perhaps this last sentence will seem void of meaning, and I will try to explain. When we consider the fact that we must some day lie down in death we feel sometimes very serious, yet, as said before, it is a peculiar seriousness. The fact is, it is not as serious as it seems to be. Why? some one asks. Well, I will attempt to answer, but I will need wisdom to do so. Will the Lord bestow such wisdom? I must tell what I thought in days past I should keep to myself, but it now seems to me that part of my dreams and anxieties of mind are for my brethren. "For my brethren and companions' sake, I will now say, Peace

be with thee," says the psalmist, so, regardless of ignorance, there are times when we want to say to brethren and sisters, Peace be within you. What are you mourning for? What is the need of it? You say, I am a sinner. Well, if you feel that you are a sinner, and are mourning because of the fact, then you shall be comforted, said Jesus. Remember it was Jesus that said it. He is the fairest among ten thousand; he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him; he is the one that sticketh closer than a brother; he is the one that speaks, and ten thousands of angels rejoice; he is the one that prepares the tongue of the stammerer to speak plainly, and there is nothing too hard for the great I AM.

But perhaps you want to know what I was going to tell. It is this: The subject of death has given me much concern in days past. (Inasmuch as the church has found out the condition of my mind I can now speak a little more plainly.) The words, Comfort ye my people, have caused me much concern, and I have desired to do this. But here was the subject of death. One mind in me said, How can you comfort one who knows he must die? And moreover, what do you know about the next world? How do you know there will be any resurrection of the dead? Look at the horse and the ox and the fowls also, they breathe just as you do, and when they die that is the last of them, and how do you know but that it will be the last of the human race? You notice man, and see what there is in him; you will see him do things that are no better than a beast; you will hear him say things that are contemptible; he must die and return to the dust, and how can he be raised up again? Now I believed that the Lord was able to raise the whole human race from the dead, but it seemed I wanted to know that this was true. It seemed that I wanted some reason given me why I did believe this, and I had a dream, and this was the dream: It seemed as though I was standing in a graveyard, and in the middle of it, and something said to me, Do you believe these bodies can be raised again and look again as they did when you knew them? (for I did know some who had been buried in this graveyard) and I did not know what to say, for it seemed to look like an impossibility, yet I believed the Lord was able, and this seemed to be what I said in reply: The Lord is able. Instantly I heard a noise from underneath, and it seemed like bones coming together, and they seemed to rattle, and it seemed I was about to see those bodies come forth; the graves were ready to open, and I awoke greatly frightened. My friends, this is not all I have seen in dreams, but it is enough to tell now. Now I feel as though I can say with some degree of certainty that the dead are raised up, and the Lord does this by his mighty power. My friends, let us reason together; let us, according to the wisdom given us, fight the good fight of faith. Let us ask the spirit of unbelief some questions, and see if it can answer them. Is it any nearer an impossibility to raise a man from the dead than it is to create him out of nothing? Is there not a power stronger than that of man? If this spirit should say no, then let us ask, Can man create a grain of corn or wheat that will sprout? Can man command the sun to come up, and can he make a course for the sun to follow? Can man change the seasons? Can man cause the wind to blow or to cease from blowing? Can man teach the newborn babe to cry and thus draw oxygen into the lungs that it may live?

Can man teach the robin to choose his mate? Did man give the mother hen the knowledge to use that peculiar note whereby she calls her brood when she sees danger approaching? The spirit of unbelief is sitting now in silence, and can hardly keep from praising the God of heaven. Surely the Lord is to be praised and held in reverence by all who are about him; praise ye his name.

Jeremiah said, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." How did he find it out? did some one tell him? No, I think he found it out by bitter experience. In no other way can a man know the Lord. I do not want to be harsh, but I must speak the truth: this doctrine that one can become acquainted with the Lord by studying books is false doctrine. The reason I say this is because I tried these things myself for two or three years. I read after men who claimed to be ministers of Christ, and I tried to teach children, but the time came when I was shown how ignorant I was, and I have been ignorant ever since. If I know anything of spiritual things it is because the Lord has revealed it to me. I feel that I know only a little, yet I am glad, for there are some things that I do know.

I find I have not written as I thought to. I have not said much about the text or subject, but as I have already written lengthily I will not say more at this time. I will not say that I shall not write any more, for I do not know. It seems that I do just what I think I will not, so it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. A. T. BENSON.

CANNON, Del., Jan., 1913.

CANNON, Del., Aug. 8, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending you some reflections which I have written to relieve the impression of my mind, and I hope that I am not controlled by a wrong spirit in doing this.

The spirits of just men who have fallen asleep in Jesus are praising him all the day long for what he has done for them, and at the appointed time the sleeping dust and the spirit will reunite, and the body will be changed and fashioned like unto His own glorious body, as the apostle has told us. I do not know how this will be done, but I feel as though I must say it will be done, and I do not believe it is the natural mind that is prompting me. It seems sometimes as though I am being controlled by a mysterious power. It seems as though some being comes near me and tells me what to write, and sometimes this same mysterious power seems to open my mouth, and I can talk a little upon some passage of Scripture, but this is not often. It seems as though I am commanded to write the following words and send them to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. You who are bowed down and mourning, you who are so situated that you cannot get to meeting, and yet desire to go, take courage and press onward, for your redemption draweth nigh; the Lord will gather his jewels at the proper time, and you are included among these jewels. If Satan tempts you, care not for it, but rejoice, as the apostle has told you. It seems to me that I have been given a glimpse of what will be hereafter, as relates to the elect family. There is a great rejoicing going on now by the redeemed of the Lord, and when the Lord has done his will with his chosen he will gather them with the redeemed; therefore let us watch and be sober, and pray to be kept from evil.

I have said it seemed as though I had been given a glimpse of what shall be hereafter, as relates to the elect family.

I know this is saying much for a sinner like me, but I must speak the truth, and I do not feel satisfied in keeping these things to myself. First, I will say I have been greatly cast down for the last few years at times, and at just such times have I realized the power of God. I will tell of an experience I passed through about two years ago. It seemed that I became wicked, that is, I had a wicked heart and mind; some terrible thoughts passed through my mind, but I was kept from doing wicked acts or what the evil spirit suggested, and this terrible experience almost put me in bed, for I reasoned that no child of God could have such wicked thoughts as I had. I reasoned that I was deceived, that there never had been any change in me, even though I had been baptized. I thought I was the worst of all hypocrites. I thought I could not dare to pray in that condition, that the Lord knew all my thoughts, and I could not dare approach unto him in prayer, until at last I had to pray. I could bear this burden no longer, so I went to the barn one Sunday morning and plead as a little child would with its parents. I think I was humbled on this occasion, I could not raise my head, yea, I was brought low. I tried to tell the Lord what a sinner I was, and how I was troubled. Then it seemed I waited to see what he would say to me, and there was a peculiar silence, and I started to go back into the house, thinking that he had refused to hear me, but before I got out of the barn these words came with wonderful power: My grace shall be sufficient for thee. I wanted these foolish thoughts forever removed from my mind, but I had no assurance that this request would be granted while in this earth below, but I did have an assurance that his grace would be sufficient for me, thus I could again sing. I had not felt like singing for some time, and I had a dream which comforted me, and it may comfort some one else, though of course I cannot know that. It seemed I was in a congregation, and in that congregation there was a wonderful being, having the form of a man, only he was perfect. It seemed he had no beginning nor ending, that he always existed, and he knew all things, and that he had decreed certain decrees and nothing could change those decrees. It seemed that I was ashamed, because I knew that he knew all about my wicked thoughts, and I expected that he would look with scorn upon me, but to my surprise he did not. It seemed as though his mind was fixed, and what I thought would cause him to look upon me with disfavor he paid no attention to, but it seemed to be made known to me that Jesus was my sufficiency, that my completeness was in him and that he had atoned for my sins. My dear friends, what a friend we have in Jesus; how much we are in debt to him, and nothing to pay. O let us bind his law upon our fingers, that we may remember him; let us not provoke the Holy One of Israel, let us not use vain language, let us turn our eyes from evil. Dear Jesus, help us, we need thy help; all the glory is thine. Let us never glory in ourselves, but in thee, for righteousness is of thee only.

A. T. BENSON.

CHOUDRANT, La., April 30, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Can it be possible that I, a poor, unmindful mortal, should address you as brethren? I am a stranger to you, and often to myself, and feel to be to others, yet I sometimes have a little hope, and do have a name among the Primitive Baptists, and know that I love them and their doctrine, but can it be

that I am a sister to them in Christ? When we meet together, and often when reading the SIGNS, it seems sweet to me to have them claim relationship with each other; but I am so little it seems too much for me, and I am ashamed. But, dear christian readers, if I am really kindred to you in Christ, O what a rest, and what wondrous love is this, and what manner of person ought I to be? I fall far short of what I ought to be, and can only hope. I cannot live right, or do anything as I wish.

I am sending the experience and preaching travail of my brother in the flesh for publication in the SIGNS. I have often asked him to write it for me, and was very glad when he handed it to me. I thought it would be no trouble to address you and ask you to publish it, but when I would sit down I would feel so unworthy that I kept putting it off, until this morning I felt I must send it, and when I addressed you as brethren it rushed into my mind, Are those good people any relation to me? I could not say yes, and I hated to say no. O is there any one else like me? Dear editors, if you think this not worthy of publication just throw it aside, but I would much like to see this experience in the SIGNS, although he has left out many things I desired him to tell, feeling his unworthiness, and fearing it would crowd out better matter, but we submit it to your better judgment.

LUCINDA STOTT.

CLAY, La., March 20, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN, SISTERS AND FRIENDS:—I have been asked many times to write out my travails, and many times have asked myself why such a poor, ignorant sinner should try to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.

I was raised by Primitive Baptists, and as far back as I can remember I had serious thoughts about death. When I was about twelve years of age, as I sometimes hope, the Lord caused me to feel I was a lost sinner, but I tried to reconcile myself by promising to live better. As time went on I often asked myself if I were any better, and the answer was, No, but getting worse as fast as time moves. I began, I hope, to beg God for mercy, but it seemed I was too great a sinner, and could not get low enough to beg aright. My heart was too hard to even repent, and it seemed I mourned because I could not mourn. When I was about fifteen years of age I was picking cotton with my brothers and sisters, and I felt so sinful and so condemned, and nothing but a poor castaway, that I took my cotton sack off and went to the woods to try to pray. It seemed that even the bushes could see that I was too great a sinner to attempt to get on my knees before the holy God. Time went on until I was about twenty-one, and after I was married I was plowing in the field alone when my sins came upon me heavier than ever before, and I firmly believed my doom was sealed and I must sink down to hell. You who have been there know my poor feelings better than I can tell them. I could not see how God could remain just and save a sinner like me. I did not think I could live long in that condition, but thought the day of grace was past for me and I must sink down into everlasting punishment; all I could do was to go down begging for mercy. I sought a silent grove, and there fell on my knees, and all I could say was, Lord, have mercy on me; but the words seemed to fall to the ground. I arose, and going back to my plow was trying to beg God to make me reconciled

to justice, and though I went to hell I did not want to sin any more. It was then, I hope, the Lord gave me those words in the spirit, and I find the same in the letter: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Then I sometimes hope I was enabled to rejoice in Jesus my Savior, and have loved the words "free grace" ever since, both for time and eternity. If I ever had any impression to preach it was when relieved of that burden of sin. I then felt that if I knew where there was a poor mourning sinner I wanted to go to him, or her, and tell them that Jesus was their Savior and Friend. But in a few days I became doubtful of my sweet hope being of the Lord. Why should such a sinner as I think of going to others to tell them Jesus was their Savior? Then the words came into my mind: The days are coming when you will have it to do. This was a year or two before I offered myself to the church. I could not believe the impression was of the Lord, and do not know yet; I live by hope. I commenced trying to throw impressions away, for I could not believe that God would call a poor, ignorant sinner like me, and thought I would die before I would let any one know I had such thoughts, yet I felt condemned, with a fearful looking for God to send some punishment upon me. About this time I went to the church, and was received, hoping this fearful looking for some judgment would leave me, and it did for a few days, but soon came back heavier than before. When I would go from meeting it seemed as if I had left something I ought to go back and get. I began to want to leave the country and go where I was not known, so I sold out and went to Texas. I seemed to think that if I could travel all the time the impression would leave me. While in Texas my burden grew so much heavier that I again thought I could not live and keep my mind, so I decided to come back to Louisiana, where my wife's parents lived, so they could take care of my wife and three little children. I moved back to Louisiana, and carried my church letter from Ephesus to Texas, and brought the same letter back, thinking I never would put it in the church again. I kept it for some time, and one day my father said to me, "John, why do you not put your letter back in the church?" I told him that I did not feel that I was fit to live in the church. He told me that our fitness was in Jesus, and he would like to see me come in with them again and do my duty, so in a few days I offered my letter to the church and was received, and my membership is there yet. At that time I was working father's land, and in the fall of the year my burden became so heavy I could not walk as I wished, and wanted to keep my troubles hid from every one. I was still looking for some great calamity to be sent upon me, and could not believe the Lord would call such a being as I to preach. One day when out in the field I heard my wife calling me, and I knew by her voice she was in trouble, which I was constantly looking for, and thought the time had then come. When I got to the house my oldest child was burned, but not seriously, and O how I wanted to thank the Lord that it was no worse, but I began to feel that that was only a warning of what was coming. I stayed about the house the rest of the day in so much trouble I could not conceal it from my wife. Before night I saw the tears running down her face, and thought I knew then that God had made known to her that he had laid a curse upon me, and

tried to beg him not to let her suffer for my deliverance; I felt I was too sinful for her to claim me as a husband. That night I asked her what was the matter with her, and she just said, "What is the matter with you?" I told her I did not know, but if I did not get better I could not live long. She said, "I can tell you what the matter is with you." Dear reader, it may seem strange, but I felt that I knew just what she was going to say, and it was almost like death to hear her say it, when she knew I could not preach. She said, "You are troubled about preaching, and you will have it to do." I replied, "Do not talk that way; you know I cannot preach, and God never calls such ignorant ones as I." But I told her it was on my mind, and the trouble was I could not get rid of it, and she knew I could not preach. This was the first time I had confessed it to any one, and I made her promise she would not hint it. Now this was a year or two before I made the attempt, and the trouble became so heavy even the sweet hope I once had in Jesus was gone and I became afraid of every cloud that came over, for fear God was going to destroy me by lightning, yet I could not believe that God would call such as I, still it was continually in my mind, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? and I was often on my knees trying to beg him to remove this burden he had laid upon me. While in this condition it came into my mind to go and see my oldest sister in the flesh one more time before God took me from this world. She then lived forty miles from us. She believed with me on the subject of salvation by grace, and O how I wanted to see her and ask her to pray for me that I might know my true condition. I often feared that God was punishing me because I pretended christianity and was nothing. I started to see my sister, but wanted to bid my wife good-by, as I felt that I knew I would never live to see her again, for I was so wicked God would not let me live with her and she so good, and he would be just in it, too. I started, and got to the gate, but went back and told her I wanted to bid her good-by for the last time, for I could not live to get back home, and I asked her to forgive me for being such a wicked husband to her. She was shedding tears, but I could only tremble, and felt to be too wicked to cry. I had sinned against every one, and every living thing hated me and wanted me out of their sight. Yes, it seemed that I felt the very fury of hell poured out upon me. While in this condition our communion meeting was held at Ephesus, and O how I wanted to tell them my condition, and ask them to pray that I might know what my duty was, for I could not yet believe that God would call such as I to preach, and it would give my poor heart some relief to tell the church, but I failed; and after all was over I was traveling the road with the wrath of God yet laid upon me, when, I hope, God gave me the power to pray to him. It came to my mind that I knew God was punishing me for something, and that he, and he only, knew what it was. In my heart I said, Lord, if it is my duty to speak in public, be pleased to give me some evidence. It was then my great burden seemed to be taken from me, and O how lovely everything looked to me. I tried to ask him now to give me once more the sweet view I had had of Jesus. That night while lying on my bed, trying to beg God to reveal to me Jesus as my Savior, as I had once thought, this hymn came to me: "O Zion afflicted," and it spoke my feelings. That passed away, and the New Testament took its place.

My mind was caught by Paul's writings, and I saw that he had suffered what I had, which was the reason he could write as he did. The Testament moved away and it seemed that a vest dipped in blood came in its place and was in my mind for a time. This passed away and I saw Jesus hanging on the cross. Although he was suffering, he looked on me with pitying eyes, and his dear countenance seemed to say, I know your sins are many, but my blood cleanseth from all sin; arise, go preach it to the poor mourner, and I will be with you. O how my poor heart did rejoice in Jesus my Savior. I have been trying to preach from time to time ever since, but, dear reader, many have been the times I have come home thinking I would go no more. Soon after this our church meeting came, and just before services father was sitting on the seat with his Bible opened and turned to me and said, John, will you talk some for us to-day? I made no reply, but taking the book from his lap read these words: "Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." I do not know how long I talked, but shall never forget the relief that came to my poor mind. When I stepped out into the yard everything looked beautiful, and God was my friend. But O, dear brethren, the doubts and fears I have been through since that day are more than I can tell. I am now sixty-four years of age, and know I have not many more years in this sinful world, but am living in hope of meeting all the poor and afflicted in that happy world above where Jesus is, and where is no more sin or sorrow. This is precious to me, but I feel to be the least of God's children, if one at all. I am so weak and little I cannot walk unless Jesus leads me. I have to cry, Lead me, O Lord, and I will run after thee.

Now, dear readers, you can see why I did not go with the conditionalists; what I hope the Lord taught me kept me back. I do believe that God is all-powerful, and that he controls all things and nothing can pass its boundary, and there is no chance for his sweet promises to fail. His promises are yea and amen. Then fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. I want to give our blessed Jesus all the praise for salvation, both for time and eternity. I cannot believe there is any sin so great that the blood of Jesus cannot cleanse.

Now, dear kindred and friends, I have written this as my mind directed, but have left out many things I thought of writing when I began. I have written to get it off my mind, and hope all who may read and who can have any confidence in it, will remember me, a poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

J. R. CHANDLER.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, May 17, 1914.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I inclose two letters which I believe would be read with interest and profit by the readers of the SIGNS. I have crossed out a few personal references. We feel deeply for you here in the great affliction that is being laid upon you, and pray that God may sustain you in his love and give you strength and faith to trust in him and find refuge in his everlasting covenant. We keep very well. Edith joins me in love.

Affectionately your brother,

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

CHICAGO, Ill., Feb. 3, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER GILBERT:—The Feb. 1st copy of the SIGNS has just come, long enough for me to have read two or three articles in it. The first one I read was your letter to sister Bonnie Chick. It gave me a desire to write to you, as the experience recorded in it has not an unfamiliar ring to me. I read my father's and the lovely article written by Edith's dear mother. I must say here that her articles and letters have invariably, I believe, come to me as gratefully as the late summer showers to the denuded and parched fields; this morning proved no exception. Sister Mildred in her little preface spoke the truth: sister Durand was indeed given to minister often the cup of cold water to the thirsty one, the word of comfort to the hopeless. Though now where mortal eye cannot behold her, she speaks to us of the Savior and of his precious dealings with his own. I would read her letters for the very beauty and simplicity of the diction, yet the deep and heartfelt experience she records is beyond all comparison even with her gift of expression. You no doubt knew her personally; I never saw her, yet she is, in her character of one of the little ones in whom we see the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, as dear, inexpressibly so, to me as to you. She so often speaks of her uncertainty, of her lack of that very knowledge I have above spoken of, and yet I would have to go far before I would be able to find one who has been given, through the grace of God, to reveal to me in times of darkness more of that light than she. I was about to sit down and write her a little over a year and a half ago and tell her how very wonderful her last letter had been to me, when your wife's letter came, telling me her dear mother had died a few days before. I grieved to think she was gone, and that I could no longer think to let her know how much she had comforted me, but O, for her how sweet the change. Yes, when I consider her I know that there is undoubtedly an eternity of blessedness in the presence of the triune God, and do you know, dear brother, that is a thing which often causes me to believe that for me at least there is nothing in religion, for by nature I am a skeptic, and this characteristic pursues me, the last three or four years particularly. I wonder if there is anything in the doctrines of our church; I wonder if there is anything beyond this life. Wesley does not know anything of this infidelity, his trials are from a different source. I have had experience similar to that you mention: separated from God, with no ray of hope in sight, and yet filled with an overwhelming longing for peace and reconciliation. You say you hope never again to go so far into the region of despair. I could not choose to do so either, nor to go through the peculiar experience which led me into the pit. This was in 1905 and 1906, yet I believe I can say now: Do with me as it seemeth best, but O lead me again to thy feet; cause me even to mourn all the day long, to be as one bereft of reason; let me again know the fellowship of thy sufferings, though it bear me down to my death, but leave me not as I am now, cold, full of infidelity, in captivity to Satan, incapable of forcing myself to read the Bible or the experience of those instructed of thee. Yes, I can look back to that period of seven months, most of them days of blank hopelessness, when the heavens were brass, when only love for my parents and sisters and dread of bringing reproach upon the church I still loved,

kept me at times from risking all in self-murder, even to that time, and say, Though I knew it not, the soil of my heart was being plowed deep; my nights were, it is true, filled with anguished prayer and tears, my soul drew nigh unto death, but sometimes I was given a ray of light which, though momentary, caused me to hope that this was a time of knowledge and growth in grace, that only by knowing to the full extent the awfulness and vastness of my own iniquity could I also know the sweetness and blessedness of deliverance. Jesus Christ cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and this I cried out from my heart many, many times during those months of trial. Would that I could now say, My God. O indeed I can say, What things were gain to me those I count but loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ my Lord, for whom have I not suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith, that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death, if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Sister Durand says: "I did not know that one who had named the name of Christ and departed from iniquity could fall into temptation and do iniquitous things." This dreadful experience of mine was after I had been a member five years. There was, too, in that experience a peculiarity never felt in any other. I could, like Job, declare my integrity concerning the very thing which Satan employed to bring me low, and this sense of innocence, the knowledge that, as it were, in the midst of prayer to God for guidance and strength the devil had taken me, took away all my hope. During this time I received my first letters from Wesley N. Spitler. They were blessed to me, and for the short period in which I could remember their contents I would feel a little, though strangely, uplifted. When God's time did come, on the eve and night of Feb. 13th and the early morn of the 14th, 1906, it was as it was with Job, a time of great things, wherein I saw that indeed my fault had not been that which I had imagined God had chastised me for, and of which I knew I was guiltless, but that he might withdraw me from my purpose and hide pride from me. O what a night that was, sleepless, one of ceaseless weeping, yet one in which I prayed unto God and he was favorable unto me. I saw his face with joy, my flesh was fresher than a child's, I returned to the days of my youth. On the 14th I was enabled to do something which I had for some time felt to be imperative, but which I had not been able before to do; an act which was to me the funeral of my hopes and plans and thought of life, and every vestige of earthly pride. Another sleepless, weeping night, in which my suffering and sorrow seemed as the billows of the ocean on which I tossed, yet ever the sense of the everlasting arms beneath. I rejoiced in my tribulation, I sang praises to God from my soul, though my natural heart was torn and broken and my natural eyes could not see for weeping. After this came a period of blessedness which lasted fully a year. In June Wesley came to Boston (from Schenectady) to see me, and the days of Saturday and Sunday, June 1st and 2nd, we spent together,

conversing constantly of the wonderful things of God. Great peace had been mine since February, but with the companionship of this young man came a joy I had never before experienced. I simply cannot attempt to describe the summer that followed, nor the fall. I often found myself wondering how the Lord could be so infinitely gracious to a poor creature of the dust as he had been to me. I find myself suddenly wondering just why I have written thus to you. I can but trust it has been of the Lord, for I had absolutely no intention of thus writing when I felt the desire and began to do so. I often think of you in Winnipeg, and wonder how it is with you. A year or more ago we thought your circumstances and conditions to be somewhat similar to ours, but I think yours, so far as church privileges at least are concerned, are brighter and more promising than ours. We have had such a weary way to travel, somehow, in Chicago, yet we do not wish to leave the city either, for there have been blessed times, and somehow we seem fixed here. Last March a dear brother, B. G. Ford, of Ohio, came to the city on business, and stayed three months. His stay was very blessed to us. There have been very few with whom we have felt to be in such sweet and sacred accord as with him. He had just come from New York city, where he had enjoyed the meetings greatly. We never missed a week when we saw each other and talked or sang together. He usually came over either Saturday evening or early Sunday morning, and if possible accompanied us to the Jacobs' (our English friends). During his stay, and largely attributable to his own zeal and love, we were able to have preaching three times: Elder Sawin in April, Elder Silveius in May and Elder Tharp in June. He left, and we lived at Jacobs', as you perhaps remember, two months. Since then I can date my own great indifference and barrenness, although for a very brief period after our move I did feel God's sustaining presence. There appears to be a spirit of indifference enveloping the very, very few of us there are in Chicago. This has given Wesley and myself many hours of distress and attempted prayer to God. In July Elder Owens came one Tuesday and preached that evening so sweetly. This was at Jacobs' house; they heard Elders Tharp and Owens and enjoyed them greatly. In October Elder Humphrey came to us, and I did enjoy it, but felt exceedingly downcast and hurt because only two members beside ourselves appeared. In November Elder John G. Sawin preached again. That is the last time we have had preaching, and from present indications would seem to be the last for a good while. We have a very dear brother living about one hundred and twenty miles away. We spent ten days at his farm last August, and while there heard Elder Humphrey for the first time, and he certainly did preach sweetly and powerfully. His brother, with his wife and youngest son, were with us three days last month. We were not able to persuade a single member to come over while brother and sister Hopkins were here, but we did have sweet seasons just together. Brother Ford's son (who succeeded him) came over, as indeed he always does when possible. He is not apparently experienced, but likes to hear (and occasionally joins in as well) spiritual conversation. He, too, will soon be gone. Our children have coughs, so Wesley alone went with the Hopkins' to Jacobs' that Sunday. They had a most blessed meeting over there. Perhaps it

is best we have no visible church here in Chicago. Lost in infidelity and far from God as I have personally felt myself to be the last four or five months, I have never yet lost the desire that there should be a church here with members in sweet accord, and with frequent opportunities of hearing the word of God preached. Strange contradiction, is it not? Of course there are times when for a few moments or hours I have been given some enjoyment in hearing conversation (I rarely take part in it any more), and at such times it does certainly seem most desirable that we should be able to meet regularly with others of like mind. I have never been so dead, however, that I have not, peculiarly enough, been eager to meet and talk with believers, or hear them talk. I was very happy while brother and sister Hopkins were here; that we could have them as our guests was a blessed privilege, and their conversation savors truly of the grace and love of God. Wesley and I both, I believe, earnestly desire and await better things. O that we might be indeed constant in prayer, looking ever to God to direct our lives for us. O that we might constantly feel the sweet presence of Jesus Christ, as I trust I did when I read your letter this morning, with sister Durand's and Mildred's, and my father's (I have not had time to go further in the SIGNS as yet). I do feel now that a period has perhaps begun in which my heart shall be soft, when God's candle shall shine upon my head again and Jesus Christ shall indeed be my joy and song and every hope.

I have read once or twice some letter in the SIGNS where the writer has mentioned me and wished that I would write. I have desired very often to be able to write, as I used to occasionally, and then the thought has come, Why? I have no heartfelt sense either of joy or of sorrow, no living experience to recount. It must certainly be a very fleshly feeling, that I should be again remembered, if only while my letter is being read, by many throughout the country. I do hope that God will never permit me to write if such is my motive. O that God will indeed send light to us, as individuals and as a church.

With love to you and Edith, I am

RUTH K. SPITLER.

CHICAGO, Ill., April 9, 1914.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—Ruth wrote a letter to you in February, and has held it, awaiting a note from me to you. Poor girl, she is waiting yet; I fear you will wish she had sent it on at once. We received a very nice and welcome letter from Edith a day or so ago. Perhaps we can get around to answering that before long.

Ruth has told you of the Jacobs. Three weeks ago to-morrow (Saturday) Mrs. Jacob, after a week of severe suffering, fell asleep in the Lord. A few minutes before she died the pain left her; but a little before that when in great pain her daughter asked her how she felt, and she said, "My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever." Mr. Jacob was very weak, too much so to be told of his wife's death until Sunday evening. He slept almost continually, and it was considered unwise to waken him. He became a little brighter Sunday evening and asked where his wife was. His daughter told him that she had "gone home." He wept a few minutes and then went to sleep; he hardly spoke after that. On Monday evening he could hardly talk at all, but I asked

him whether he would like me to read to him. He whispered, "Yes." I then asked what portion he would like to hear, the Psalms, Isaiah, or something in the New Testament. I could just distinguish that he said Isaiah. When I inquired what chapter he wanted he managed to whisper the fifty-third. What a lovely character he was we can never tell, but his humility and spirituality were such evident marks of the Holy Spirit we wonder others could not see their brilliance. We shall miss these two, but they are at rest. O that we could be as patient under such trying circumstances. It comes to me now that we have prayed so often that the life of Christ be more manifest to and in us, and we have been granted the sight, with our eyes opened, of two of God's loveliest. Now they are gone, and we in the very conflict and tumult of life. How long shall Satan keep us in bondage?

But I will close. Our love to Edith and baby.

Your brother, I trust,

WESLEY N. SPITLER.

LANHAM, W. Va., Feb. 6, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER HICKERSON:—As I read brother Peters' reply to your request in the February 1st number of the SIGNS there was such a feeling of love for him in my poor heart that I was constrained to thank God for such a gift. I felt truly that our God is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, for he has said he will never leave himself without a witness. Such testimony as Elders Peters', May's and Beeman's, with a host of others too numerous to mention, is to me plain proof that God calls and qualifies his ministers. Such, and only such, have ever, can or will preach the gospel of the Son of God with comfort and beauty to the household of faith. As I pen these lines my mind goes back to the days of my youth, when my heart was filled with laughter; Jesus all the day long was my joy and my song. O that more of his salvation I might see. Alas, my dear brother, I now go mourning much of my time, with but little sunshine upon me. I have felt that truly dark and thorny is the desert through which poor pilgrims must travel. My experience is that I have been much of the time in darkness, and with David, the sweet singer of Israel, can say, I am like an owl of the desert. This is a very homely bird indeed, and most of his traveling is in the hours of darkness; his mourning is different from that of any other bird. Job in relating his experience said, "O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness; as I was in days of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle." He continues to describe the evils of his nature by saying, "I am a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls." I have felt, my brother, that the evil propensities of our Adamic nature, which so often perplex us, and cause us to mourn on account of our inbred corruption, are here represented by Job as "dragons." In our flesh dwells no good thing. Solomon, in describing these enemies in the flesh (yet he is speaking in the spirit which is applicable to all of God's children, for they are spiritually minded), says, "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes." Here, to my mind, is represented the cunning, crafty disposition of our Adamic nature, which so often springs up in our few moments of rejoicing. It is then our joy is turned to mourning. We

mourn because we cannot mourn. We hate our sins, but cannot turn from them; when we would do good, evil is present, and how to perform that which is good we find not.

Brother Hickerson, after you have read this imperfect letter, if you feel that it would be of any benefit to the faithful in Christ, you are at liberty to send it to the SIGNS for their consideration.

Hoping to have a letter from you soon, I remain your brother, trusting in the finished work of Christ,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

LANHAM, W. Va., March 3, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I feel to send you this good letter from brother O. B. Hickerson for publication, as his writings always ring just right in my ears. I have never had the pleasure of meeting brother Hickerson face to face, but I am sure I have met him in full fellowship in the doctrine of God our Savior.

Yours respectfully,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Feb. 23, 1914.

ELDER J. W. McCLANAHAN—MUCH BELOVED BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—Which hope is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast; this hope we trust has been given to us poor worms of the dust with his love revealed to us, which is far above all natural love. The true love is sweeter than honey, and He is represented as the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valleys, and is full of love for his bride, and keeps them as the apple of his eye. He looks over his bride, and protects her members while in darkness, but brings them forth with joy which is unspeakable and full of glory.

Yes, dear brother, Elder Peters' reply to my request was all that the poor in spirit could wish for. He showed to my mind that Christ was the apple tree, lavishing his fruit upon his bride, and his fruit was sweet to her taste, and when he comes he stays with his bride. As he hath said, all that the Father had given him shall be raised up at the last day. Dear brother, the great question with me is, Will I find my name written in the blessed book of life? We have the promise that he will not be left without witnesses, and such witnesses are Elders Peters, May, McClanahan, Beeman, Durand and others of the same faith, standing firm upon the apostolic faith, and putting no confidence in the flesh.

I read with pleasure your good letter in the SIGNS, also the one you wrote me, which drew me closer to you with a feeling of love which is unspeakable and full of glory; it was filled with humility, with humbleness of heart, with the desire to be taught of God and not of man. Our dear Savior humbled himself; he was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. It was foreordained before the foundation of the world that God should send forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons, and because we are sons God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son crying, Abba, Father. But while here in time the enemies of truth are opposing the poor of the flock; we have dark seasons to pass through, but when the light of his countenance shines within us we feel to rejoice for a season, even with the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, which is the warfare while in the flesh. It appears to me that we are left in the dark to show us our nothingness, which brings us back to our first love, when his countenance shines bright and gives us the true light which

makes us hope we are pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ, forgetting the past, which is of the worldly-minded, the inventions of man, and cannot stand the test at the consummation of all things. The poor in spirit are the afflicted people living in doubts and fears, desiring to be with Christ, which is far better, but we must await God's appointed time, as he is our lawgiver. Dear brother, can we truly sing of that hope, that blissful hope, that hope which grace has given, that when days and years have passed we all shall meet in heaven? We can only hope for that which is not seen; we can only see through the flesh darkly, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. We can never know until this mortal shall have put on immortality and this corruptible put on incorruption, but we feel to hope that our life is hid with Christ in God; in no other way can a poor sinner be saved. We feel we have nothing of ourselves to offer, as our works are nothing but filthy rags in the sight of God, so we have to go mourning all the days of our life until our change comes. We are in the hand of the Lord, and he is our sufficiency. My feelings and thoughts are poor, and filled with burdens and doubts, and I feel to say, O Lord, afford me kind relief, and strengthen the inner man. I trust I was brought down to the very dust, to feel the need of the Friend of sinners, one of which I feel myself to be, and that my sins were washed away by his precious blood.

Dear brother, your good letter was a great comfort to me, and I feel to hope it will be a welcome message to those who see it in the SIGNS, and I will be glad to read a letter from you at any time, as they are food to my hungry soul.

Your brother in hope of immortality,
O. B. HICKERSON.

FOREST HILL, Md., May 25, 1914.

DEAR ELDER KER:—The inclosed letter from our dear departed sister Durand has been of such sweet comfort to me that I feel a desire to share it with others, and so am sending it for publication, if you think best.

Brother Ker, the hearts of our people go out in love and sympathy to you and your dear wife in your affliction. May the Lord very graciously remember you both, and grant you strength according to your day and trial.

Your sister in hope,
JENNIE GRAFTON.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April 2, 1912.

MY DEAR SISTER JENNIE:—I feel as though I could not let you call me "patient and quiet," when my mind is in such a state of perturbation, filled with apprehensions of every kind, while hope and trust have departed, and faith seems dead. My prayers seem a mockery, and my hope the hope of the hypocrite, and like the spider's weaving, evolved from myself. For many months I have not had a season of real comfort. For awhile it was such deep distress I could but cry out. For awhile it seemed that the Lord hearkened and heard me, but now, while my condition is as perfectly apparent to me as it ever was, there is a sort of apathy or something, that stifles prayer. I know I want a better state of things; I know I desire comfort here, and heaven hereafter, but so does every one, and I cannot assure myself that I want it in any other than this selfish way, and I fear to insult the Lord by asking for something I do not want, and unless I have a spiritual mind, I cannot wish for spiritual grace. I am surely undone, unless the Lord will undertake for me. I know what the gospel says about Jesus having only come to

save sinners, but not the sinners who do not love his appearing. Why, if I love him, should I be filled with fears of every shape and name? All this after forty years of profession. In youth one likes to think of the path of the just, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day, and when faith is in lively exercise to hope that perhaps one is walking in that path. Looking back how many disappointed hopes we see. Many years ago I thought I had the promise that at evening time it shall be light, and I hoped it would so illumine my path that I need not stumble. I thought it would enable me to "read my title" more clearly to that inheritance reserved in heaven for those that love the Savior. It certainly does show me more clearly than ever my utter unworthiness, and although I seem so sinful, I cannot bear to think that I hate holiness and truth. I know that in times past I have felt like saying, "Praise the Lord, because he is good," and his holiness and justice, as well as his mercy, have caused me to rejoice. I cannot help hoping that he may yet show some mercy to me, although less than the least.

I do not feel like writing more now, but will say that I value your letters highly. Much love to you all.

Your sister,

C. E. DURAND.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., May 1, 1914.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—On this, my seventy-seventh birthday, I feel like penning a few thoughts, telling of the goodness of Him who brought me into this world, and after a time gave me a good hope through grace, and brought me into his church with the dear Old Baptists fifty-two years ago next month, and has kept me all these years in the fellowship of my dear kindred. O what great reason I have to praise his holy name. I have been made to look back over all these years since I heard of dear Elder Chick's death. Another of his servants has been called home, and not one that I knew when I was first brought into the church is now living. Elder Durand came into the field a few years after, and he is now the oldest one I know. In reading his "Fragments" in the May SIGNS I thought, Why should he fear that he was losing his gift? for what a gift to give those "Fragments" to those who feel they have not even the gift of loving their brethren, nor can they tell them of the love they feel. It revived my hope, and just seemed to prove what brother Peters said in the same paper: that God is the one who placed the members in the body, the church, and was for the good of the church, and was complete in him before the members were made manifest in time, and how perfectly they fit in the body, each one filling the very place that was meant for him, as has been the case when former editors have been removed from the SIGNS. How well I remember when dear Elder Beebe was taken; the question was, Who will take his place? But there were others prepared and fitted to take up the labor. So it shows us that the work goes on, that the building was complete in the mind of the great Architect long before there was a building or church in the world, or ever the foundations of the earth were laid, and I have faith to believe that our dear family paper will still be a blessing to His people, although in the death of one of the editors it casts a gloom over all, and our hearts go out in sympathy to him who is left alone, still not alone, for He who has been with each and every one of the editors in all these years will be with dear Elder Ker, also with all who mourn the death of Elder

Chick. None will miss him as will his dear family, but they have one comfort: he had fought a good fight, and finished his course, and kept the faith, and henceforth there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give him at that day, and not to him only, but unto all those also who love his appearing. O what a comfort to us when we are called to lay our loved ones away that they are with Jesus.

I would say to the publishers, you also are remembered by me in your sorrow, and I have thought of what a loss it is to the churches he served so long. May the good Shepherd give you another who will be as faithful as was he.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) HELEN W. KINNEY.

HUNTER, N. Y., April 5, 1914.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I have just been reading your article in April 1st number of the SIGNS, and as I have been impressed for a long time to write you, after reading this I felt I could not wait longer, although I feel my insufficiency to write anything that would be of comfort to any one, yet I can truly say that I have been greatly comforted by this, as I had never heard any views on the subject, and it had been on my mind, even before I united with the church, but at that time it was settled in my mind, so I could go forward in the solemn ordinance, although I have always felt I was too unworthy to participate in any of the blessed ordinances of the people of God, but I felt at that time that I did truly desire the Lord's body, and wished to be joined to them. But since then I have felt, as you express it, that there was something deeper than the mere partaking of the bread and wine, and you have satisfied my mind and established the fact that I had the true meaning of it in both views, and O how it helps and strengthens one on the way who wishes to walk as a child here below, and proves that we are bearers of one another's burdens. Is it any wonder God's people are joined in bands that distance or time cannot sever? It is written that if one member suffers the whole body suffers with it, and we know it is true in a natural sense, and we have to prove it in the spiritual, and I think suffering affliction is a very efficient teacher, for when we suffer how much more ready we are to sympathize with others afflicted. I truly sympathize with you and sister Ker, for I, too, have been passing through the furnace. My husband has been sick for the past year, and January 5th he was very ill of pneumonia and heart trouble, and for weeks it did not seem he could live, and once we thought he was passing away; but no, he had not finished his work, and is now able to be around again. How wonderful it seems that mortals can be laid so low and then raised again; it is all through the mercy of our covenant-keeping God, and how plainly I can see and feel this sustaining grace under such conditions, yet how far short I come of rendering the praise to his adorable name that I should; I forget and complain, and feel sometimes that I am the most ungrateful and sinful creature that ever professed to call upon his name, and fear I never have known him experimentally, or believed to the saving of my soul. I come far from learning obedience from the things I suffer, and what a comfort it is to feel an assurance that his mercy endures forever, and that his loving-kindness he will not take from his children. But am I one of them? Is my name graven on his hands? Did he shed his

precious blood for such a worm as I? How often I am made to ask myself those solemn questions, for I cannot see how such wonderful love can ever come to such as I, and yet I am made to hope that this is the case, and that I shall yet behold his face and praise him. I once thought that as I grew older I would be better, but to my sorrow, such is not the case, and it seems to me the older I grow the worse I am, and I often feel to say, O, Father, take me away before I sin more, for it is more than I can bear. Then some sweet promise comes to give me new courage, or I read something from the pen of some dear one who complains of coldness and shortcomings, and I do not feel as though I were so much alone. Trusting in his love I tread the path of duty on, although the fleeting joys and dreams of life are past. I try to be still and know he is God, and that all of my ways are in his hand, and that he will not withhold good if I am his, but if not, O the solemn and awful thought, What if my name should be left out in that most solemn day! I often wonder if others ever pass through such days of self-abhorrence and regrets. O if I could only be restored to the bright and happy days I experienced in times past, when it seemed that the candle of the Lord shone around me, and I could sing praises and give thanks to his name for all his benefits to me. Those are all bygone days, and we are passing on, too, in paths we have not known, but I think I can hear sometimes the voice of One gone before in the same path.

Now, dear brother, I did not intend when I commenced this to write what I have, and I am ashamed to send it, for I am afraid instead of being of comfort I have only written things of a depressing nature, which was not my intention. I will close, trusting that He who is the strength of Israel and the upholder of the universe will be with and sustain you and sister Ker, and all who look to him as their staff and shield, and that he will sanctify to each and every one their deep distress, and cause us to realize that our light afflictions here are working for our eternal glory.

Excuse poor writing, and believe this is written in love and sympathy.

(MRS.) G. H. FAULKNER.

GENESIS VI. 4.

"THERE were giants in the earth in those days."

This was after men began to call upon the name of the Lord.

In a letter written by sister Durand and published lately she spoke of the late Elders William and Joseph Purington, Beebe, Trott, Leachman and others, and I was led to go back over the travel of the church in her separation from the isms of the world.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, instruction, reproof, &c., so we believe this Scripture has some spiritual application also. It says, "The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose." And there were giants in the earth in those days. In the days before Elders Beebe, Purington and the rest the sons of God saw the daughters of men, the daughters of Babylon, and they were attired in an attractive way; they had begun to bedeck themselves with Missionary societies, Tract societies, Bible helps and Sunday Schools, and made quite a show and appearance; in other words, they were fair to the eye. The sons of God were among them, and the result was that giants were brought forth, men of renown. As all Scripture

is profitable for doctrine, instruction and reproof, should we not beware of any affiliation with these fair daughters? I know some who have professed Christ as their hope and salvation who have gone among these Babylonish gatherings hoping to gather a crumb. Surely this is contrary to godliness, going after false lovers. We had better be in most any place than to be where the name of Christ is blasphemed. Their sincerity does not make them right, and we who have come to know Christ should not follow after the harlots. We are commanded to come out from among them and be separate. The beast John wrote of in Revelation is rapidly forming, and we who have known the Lord should be unmovable, steadfast, always abounding in the work of the Lord. J. M. FENTON.

HICKMAN, Ky., May 15, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been in my mind for some time to try to write something for the SIGNS, and leave to your judgment as to giving it space in our precious paper, but I am so ignorant, and cannot write as the dear ones do who have comforted me so often through the columns of the SIGNS. I am a poor sinner, and if saved it is all of grace, and grace alone; of myself I can do nothing, and am a failure if God does not lead me by his Spirit and uphold me by his strong arm. I sometimes hope that God for Christ's sake has put away my many sins, and will not remember them against me any more, but I have so many doubts and fears, I seem as one alone, and what I am it is hard to know. "I am so vile, so prone to sin, I fear that I'm not born again." My heart is desperately wicked, and I have to go mourning and begging for mercy all the time. I need the grace of God all the day long for a staff to lean upon, I cannot walk alone. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." I feel as did David, that I am about shut up and cannot come forth. Surely I am a poor prisoner. Paul called himself "the prisoner of Jesus Christ." If I am a child at all, I am what I am by grace given me. Brethren, is this the way you are led? Do you have to beg for mercy as I do? To whom shall we go but to Christ who said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life"? Peter said, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." God so loved the world that he gave his dear Son to suffer for the elect's sake. "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called, The way of holiness; * * * No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there."

I have tried in weakness to write, as it is time for me to send in our remittance for the SIGNS another year, and if you should see fit to give this a place in the paper, do so; if not, cast it aside, and all will be right with this poor sinner.

Yours truly, L. T. HEATH.

PORTLAND, Ind., May 3, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—It is with sorrow that I write you, because I have learned of the death of our esteemed brother Chick, and may a double portion of the Lord's Spirit be given you to enable you to fill the editorial staff, and to be equal to the occasion, and may you be guided by that gentle, kind spirit that always characterized all of Elder Chick's writings, allaying controversy and strife by manifesting much charity to all the brethren, thereby cementing together a strong brotherly tie that has had a heal-

ing influence, turning brethren's minds to a right dividing of the Scriptures, and enabling them to grasp the truth from seeming contradictions, or, as it were, conflicting conditions, bringing out the spiritual interpretations of seeming hard-to-be-understood questions. I think I can truly sympathize with you and with Elder Chick's family.

NEWTON PETERS.

LAURELVILLE, Ohio, April 26, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Our subscription is past due, so I inclose the price for another year.

I would like Elder Ker to give us an editorial on, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness," &c. I am, and for some time have been, wandering in darkness, and generally can say that I have no light. I feel to trust the God who forms the light and creates darkness, and who for national Israel was in the cloud as well as in the light. The darkness and the light are both alike to him. (Psalms cxxxix. 12.) He is omnipotent. I love to trust in a God who can save to the uttermost, one who can reach me in the lowest depths.

Pray for the weakest, poorest, most sinful being who dares to call on the name of the Lord,

GEORGE HARTSOUGH.

(See editorial reply on page 373.)

LETTERS ACKNOWLEDGED.

SINCE the death of our beloved wife and mother we have received many letters of love and sympathy, and as it is impossible to reply to each one separately we take this means of expressing our appreciation of the kind and loving remembrances. Your words have helped us bear our exceedingly heavy cross and loss.

H. C. KER AND FAMILY.

MIDVALE, Idaho, May 20, 1914.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—The time is near for me to renew my subscription to the paper. I do not want to miss a number, for the dear old SIGNS is a great comfort to a poor sinner, and such I feel myself to be.

I was truly sorry to hear of Elder Chick's death. He will be sadly missed among the Baptists, and I fear his place as senior editor of the SIGNS will be hard to fill; but the Lord is able to send another, and I hope he will send one as loving and true as our dear brother Chick was; such a kind and loving brother. I truly sympathize with his bereaved family, and hope the dear Lord will comfort and bless them in their sad bereavement. We read that there remaineth a rest to the people of God, and we are fully satisfied that our dear brother Chick is enjoying that rest, sweet, sweet rest.

How is sister Ker? I hope she is better ere this, and I hope the dear Lord will restore her to health and strength again. Brother Ker, I hope the Lord will bless you, and continue the publication of the dear old SIGNS.

Please find money order for three dollars, two of which is to renew my subscription for another year, and the one remaining dollar is to help send the SIGNS to the poor of the flock.

Your little, unworthy sister, if one at all, for surely if one of God's children, I am the very least of all.

(MRS.) W. F. SEID.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1914.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

LUKE XVI. 9.

"AND I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations."

It is encouraging to know that the mind of brother Hartsough is exercised to know the import of this parable. He speaks of darkness and wanderings of mind. How pleasant to find now and then a companion in the journey—two so agreed that they can "walk together." These experiences unite the children of God in love and fellowship, and cause them to long for the company and companionship of each other.

This parable, like all others, has a hidden import from the wise and prudent, but revealed to babes in Christ. Parables, because of the hidden treasure, should never be handled literally. The term, "a certain rich man," was used often by the Savior, but we hardly think meant the same thing always. Whatever the saying may mean in this parable, the lesson, or instruction, to the apostles was very important, and meant much to them in after years. This instruction, like many other sayings of Jesus, had to be sealed to them by the Holy Ghost. It really seems almost strange that the understanding of the disciples was so limited during the years Jesus was with them in the flesh, yet in the wisdom of God it was far better so. They, like the prophets, knew just enough for the time, and the Lord's people know just enough now for their needs. The fullness of the revelation awaits those who are still on this side of the river. This rich man had a steward, and having all confidence in him entrusted all his goods to his care, but the steward wasted his goods. When the rich man heard of the unfaithfulness of the steward he called him and told him what he had heard of him and required of him an accounting of his stewardship, saying he should no longer be steward. He seemed to understand that the decision was final, hence offered no excuse, nor did he offer an apology, but began to plan within himself further dishonesty. He seemed very much opposed to work, and to beg he was ashamed, yet either would have been much better than what he decided to do. In shrewdness, however, he won the commendation even of his master. He had sold grain and oil, and knew perfectly well to whom and how much; therefore he went to his lord's debtors and said to the first, How much owest thou my lord? And he answered, One hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill and sit down quickly and write fifty. Then he said to another, How much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said, Take thy bill and write fourscore. This wisdom reminds us of the lawyers whom Jesus said would bind burdens upon others that they would not touch even with their finger. The debtors had no idea what they were doing when they were changing their bills from their original amounts, but the steward knew perfectly, having planned it all in

his mind for his own benefit. The debtors no doubt thought the steward was a real friend, when indeed he was an enemy, which had to be made manifest later. Just how long before his design was known to them we are not told, but when put out of the stewardship he made it his business to see these men again, and doubtless said to them, I will now make my home with you, and as I cannot work shall live in ease. Astonished they began to say, How is this? Under what obligation are we to you? Why should you expect us to take care of you, you to live in pleasure and at ease while we labor to support you? Ah, said the steward, do you not remember your indebtedness to the rich man to whom I was steward? Do you not remember that when you owed him one hundred measures of oil you defrauded and wrote fifty, and when you owed one hundred measures of wheat you wrote fourscore? Yes, they answer, but why does that bring us under obligation to you? The steward answers, You are in my power; no one but myself knows of your dishonesty, and should I inform upon you you would be sorely punished and your reputation be lost. I have nothing to lose, I have been put out of the stewardship, my standing among men is gone. In order not to be punished and lose your good names you must take me into your homes and support me; I hold your secret. Now let us remember that the lord of the steward did not commend him for the dishonesty that seemed to fill his very being, but for his wisdom, saying "he had done wisely." In the Savior's command to his disciples to make to themselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, he did not mean for them to imitate the wickedness of the unfaithful and dishonest steward, but that they should "be as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves," making to themselves lasting friends. The word "yourselves" should be emphasized in reading this text, much depends upon it. As the steward knew he was to be put out of the stewardship and must make provision against the day of failure, hence made friends who would take him into their homes when cast out, so do you, said the Savior to the apostles. They were to be gentle, kind, longsuffering, honest, harmless and pure in all their dealings with men. Such a life would manifest that they had been with Jesus and learned of him. The term, "the mammon of unrighteousness," should also be read with special emphasis, in order to connect things previously said. Unrighteous men, through the wisdom of the steward, had become his lasting friends, and as failure was ahead of the apostles, in a certain sense, they would need friends to receive them "into everlasting habitations."

We are aware that the word "mammon" is generally taken to mean money, or riches, and it has been suggested often that the Savior meant for the apostles to lay by all they could against the day of need, but this idea seems rather strange when they were cut off from every avenue to wealth and strictly commanded to take no thought for to-morrow, but let to-morrow take thought for the things of itself. When Jesus said, No man can serve God and mammon, he meant, as it seems to us, that no man can serve God and unrighteousness at the same time. Paul in his letter to the church at Rome said they were once servants of sin, yielding their members unto unrighteousness, but that they had obeyed the gospel and become the servants of God. This shows the impossibility of serving

two masters. The Gentiles were in the eyes of the Jews and according to the law, though not under it, a "mammon of unrighteousness," living in idolatry and sin of every conceivable kind, yet God knew the heathen, had chosen their inheritance and would justify them through faith. The cutting off of the Jews, their failure as a nation, was couched in the three little words, "when ye fail." That people had been for centuries blessed of the Lord, but as a figure, or pattern, were soon to have the kingdom taken from them and given to another nation that would bring forth the fruits thereof in their season. Therefore as the church of God with all her branches was to be established among the Gentiles, the apostles should dwell with them and be faithful in all their stewardship of the manifold grace of God. When Paul and others preached in the synagogue the gospel of God they and their testimony were rejected, and they said, It was needful that the gospel first be preached unto you, but seeing that ye will not hear it, and deem yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles and they will hear us—receive us into everlasting habitations. The making of friends among the different nations was not a mere work upon their part, but wrought through the operation of the Spirit, God working in the apostles love, gentleness, kindness and power and ability to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and working in the hearts of the Gentiles to receive the apostles and their testimony of Jesus, making both "wise unto salvation." When the Lord appeared unto Cornelius and prepared him to receive Peter and the gospel, he also appeared unto Peter, giving him the vision through which he was taught God's mercy and purpose toward the Gentiles, and also assured him of the friendship he should find in Cornelius. It seems to us that the real import of the text is as follows: Make to yourselves friends of the Gentiles, that, when the Jewish nation fails, they may receive you in love and fellowship into the dwelling-places of God. As suggested already, the time had not yet come when they should mingle with all nations, nor did it come until after the resurrection of Jesus. Had he meant riches by the term, "friends of the mammon of unrighteousness," it hardly seems that he would have said, "that they may receive you into everlasting habitations," when riches perish with the using, and neither can they purchase anything "everlasting."

We hope brother Hartsough may consider what we say in the light of truth. We are always glad to give such views as we have, and it is right for every man to think for himself and ask God for wisdom and understanding. K.

FIRST VOLUME OF EDITORIALS EXHAUSTED.

As our supply of the first volume of Editorials is exhausted, we will be unable to fill any more orders for them, but have quite a number of the second volume left, which we are closing out at seventy-five cents each. As neither of these volumes was electrotyped, we will not be able to supply either volume after what is left of the second volume is disposed of. Address all orders to

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On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

1 PETER V. 5; ROMANS XII. 10.

"LIKEWISE, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder: yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."

"Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another."

The former is an apostolic admonition to the elders who were and are among the scattered people of God; the latter is addressed more generally to all the saints, irrespective of the position they may any of them hold in the church of God. The two passages, considered together, show us that the apostles have given exhortations, instructions and admonitions to all, whether elders or private members of the church of God. The apostles are by the authority of Christ seated upon twelve thrones, to judge the twelve tribes of Israel, and being divinely qualified for the very responsible and important position to which Christ has elevated them, their judgment and decisions on every point of doctrine, rule of order and exposition of every precept of the law of Christ, the establishment of every ordinance belonging to the house of God, together with all the relative duties and privileges devolving on or belonging to the saints, regulating their deportment in the church, and all their intercourse with the world, is accurately considered, authoritatively decided and unalterably established, never to be amended, improved nor repealed so long as this world shall stand. By the special command of the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, our Savior, they are commissioned to teach the disciples of Christ of all subsequent ages to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded them, and to prevent the possibility of the slightest failure, from forgetfulness or any other cause, the Holy Ghost is sent down from heaven, like a rushing mighty wind, to qualify them perfectly by its unerring inspiration, and to bring to their remembrance all the instructions which Christ has given them. Without the possibility of committing an error in their official administration of judgment, all they have bound on earth is bound in heaven, and all they have loosed on earth is loosed in heaven. In every decision they have made they have spoken as the Holy Ghost has given them utterance, God himself has spoken by them, and from their decisions there is no appeal. None may claim that they are disciples of Christ who are not governed by the decisions of the apostles in all matters of faith and practice, nor can any church, or branch of the church of Christ, be known as such, where Christ does not sit upon the throne of his glory, and his apostles with him, upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (See Matt. xix. 28; Luke xxii. 30; Isa. xxxii. 1.) Wherever Christ is recognized upon his mediatorial throne, his apostles must also be recognized as his authorized judges and exponents of his laws. Our obedience to Christ is the test of our discipleship, and if we reject his apostles we also reject him, and therefore cannot be his disciples or his church. Peter not only claims to be an apostle, a judge, enthroned in judgment with all the authority of heaven and earth to establish his inspired decisions on every point, but he claims to be also an elder. An elder, in a gospel sense of the word, means a pastor, or one who is authorized to preside over and to feed the flock or church of God. This was at least a part of Peter's work, for Christ had specially commanded him to feed his sheep and to feed his

lambs. (John xv. 16, 17.) He was the more eminently qualified to hold that relation in the church from having been a witness of the sufferings of Christ. He was with him in his betrayal, when arrested, at court where he was tried and condemned to die; was with him in the garden, a witness of his agony, and from his mentioning this in our text we infer that the elders of the church, while they feed the flock, are qualified by the Spirit to be valid witnesses of the sufferings, death and resurrection of Christ. Peter was also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed, as resulting from the sufferings and death of Christ. The prophets had testified of his sufferings and of his glory, and Christ said, Ought not Christ to suffer, &c., and then to enter into his glory? Paul testifieth that, He was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. Peter was a partaker of that glory, and so are all who have risen with him, and with him sit together in the heavenly places. The work of elders generally, who are not apostles, is clearly defined in Paul's valedictory to the elders of Ephesus, Acts xx. 17–38, but more especially in verse twenty-eight: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." The pastoral labors of an elder belong to the church, and not to the world. Not, however, to every community who may call themselves or be by others called a church, or the church, but they stand related to and are the servants of "the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." As there is but one church of that description to be found in heaven or earth, the labor of the elder is restricted to that church alone. He has no commission or authority to feed the world, or any of the queens or concubines which are recognized by the world as churches, for the food which they are to deal out to the church of God cannot suit the appetite of any but the children of the living God. They being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, are qualified to receive and feed upon the sincere milk of the word.

The pastoral nature of the work of the elders is fully expressed in the exhortation of Peter, who, being himself an elder, had perfect understanding of the duties involved in the calling. He exhorts them thus: "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof." Observe he directs his epistle to the elect which were scattered as strangers throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, and this special exhortation is to the elders which were among these scattered saints, and they are exhorted to feed the flock of God which was among them, and to take the oversight of them; that is, as watchmen, not as lords over God's heritage, but as faithful watchmen; to warn, admonish, exhort, teach and administer the word and ordinances according to the instructions and examples given them by the apostles, and this they must do from pure motives, not for the gratification of a covetous disposition, but of a ready mind, and as examples to the flock, and as in this work they sustain to the flock of God the relationship of undershepherds, they are encouraged that they shall be approved and remembered by the chief Shepherd when he shall come.

From Peter's exhortation to the elders which are among the flock of God, and

Christ's charge to Peter, (John xxi. 16, 17,) also from Paul's charge to the elders of Ephesus (Acts xx. 28), we unavoidably infer that the pastoral work of the elders is very definitely and clearly stated: to feed the flock of God, the sheep and lambs of Christ. No authority, expressed or implied, is given to provide a flock, or to increase the flock, but to attend to the flock which the chief Shepherd has gathered with his arm, and which he carries in his bosom, (Isaiah xi. 2,) and to take the oversight of them, as shepherds, whose business is to look after their welfare, vigilantly watching for their peace, comfort and safety, and ready to give the alarm at the approach of their invading foes, their principal business being to see that they are well fed on good and wholesome pasturage. "Not by constraint." In the spiritual application of our figure, how unfit for the pastoral duties is he whose heart is not in the work, who does not delight to mingle freely with the flock, who must be induced by filthy lucre, or some worldly inducement appealing to his selfish, carnal nature. "Neither as being lords over God's heritage." Instead of being lord's, God's ministers are servants of Christ, and by his will servants of his church. "Ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." Looking not to men for a reward, but to the chief Shepherd, who has the hearts of all men under his control, and will see that they shall be provided for here, and when the chief Shepherd shall appear they shall receive a crown of glory, which fadeth not away, or, as Paul says, "a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."—2 Tim. iv. 8.

Having thus briefly noticed the apostolic exhortation to the elders which are among the flock of God, we pass to notice the relative duties enjoined by the same unquestionable authority on all the other members of the Lord's flock.

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder." This submission is, in like manner, as the word "likewise," means. There is a reciprocity in the submission of pastor and people, of elders and younger. Whether we consider the elder as a pastor, or only a senior in church membership and experience, the submission must be mutual and reciprocal, for while the ministers of Christ are vested with authority to "preach the word," and to "teach with all authority," according to that Word, so that when they preach and teach according to the Word every member is solemnly required to submit to the instruction, and no member of the church has the right to disregard the preaching or instruction; so, on the other hand, while the elders preach, the church sits in judgment, and are authorized to investigate and decide whether they preach and teach according to the Word, for if they do not it is because there is no light in them. Know ye not that the saints shall judge angels? or messengers. Elders, whether by age or position in the church, are under the authority of the church, and must be in submission to the authority which Christ has invested her with, and this extends not only to the doctrine they may preach, but to their walk and deportment in the church, and in their intercourse with mankind, for all are under the supervision of the church. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ," and God has set his King upon his holy hill,

Zion. There Jesus, by his Spirit, sits in judgment, and arraigns all his subjects at his bar in Zion. That there is a marked deference to be paid to pastors and to senior brethren there can be no doubt; divine instructions are clear on this point. Read 1 Timothy v. 1, 17, 18. Here, while the apostle commands double honor to the elders, in both applications of the term, and especially to those elders which labor in Word and doctrine, he adds a most solemn charge before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, to observe these things without partiality. As all the members of the body of Christ are equally precious, and all to be recognized in their appropriate places or gifts, as it has pleased God to set them in the church, the honor or distinction of honor due to age or gifts is not to be observed in a manner disparaging to all the other members of the body. The injunction, or command, of the apostle to the younger is applicable to all in the church who are not elders, either by age or vocation, and none are left at liberty to disregard, disrespect or disobey the instructions, admonitions or teachings of the elders, except where the elders evidently depart from the law and order of Christ as settled by the apostles. Thus while the elders are required to be kind and gentle, and in submission to the authority of Christ in his church, as servants and not lords, all the members who are permitted to receive their services are in turn bound to appreciate their labor and be in submission to them.

(To be continued.)

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

E. M. Miller has changed his address from Maynardville, Tenn., Route 4, to Crosbyton, Texas, Box 195.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Frank G. Scott.)

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Harford Church, Harford County, Maryland, May 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1914, to the churches composing the same.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—As the time for another session of our association is drawing near, and as is our custom, you will expect something in the way of a Circular Letter; so we tender to you this, our annual epistle, as a token of love and appreciation of the high vocation to which we humbly hope we have been called, to follow him who loved us and gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Many times we feel to doubt and fear that we are not of that number that Jesus came to redeem, but we know that the foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his; and the Scriptures firmly declare that the Lord has a people in every kindred, tongue and nation. Then, dear brethren and sisters, as professed followers of Christ, and, as we humbly hope, children of God, the Father of our blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, how careful we ought to be of our walk and conversation. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." This is the language of the blessed Savior, and how careful we should be to manifest this love. Jesus says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you." John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." God is love, and we love him because he first loved us; then it behoove

us to love those who are begotten of God. "He that loveth his brother, abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes."—1 John ii. 10, 11. Therefore, brethren, may we pray for the peace of Zion, that love may abound, and that the Spirit of the Lord may guide us in all truth, that we may see eye to eye, and all speak the same thing; for where the Spirit of the Lord is, there love must dwell in the hearts of his people. Paul says, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Then, brethren, may we be enabled to live after the Spirit, and manifest our love one to the other, and adorn our profession with a well ordered walk and a godly conversation, and manifest our zeal by putting on the whole armor of God, and work out with fear and trembling that which is wellpleasing in the sight of our blessed Lord to work in us; for it is the Lord that worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and may his divine presence be in our midst during our meeting, control us in all our deliberations, give utterance to his servants and prayerful hearts to his children, that his name may be glorified and our souls divinely benefited, and may there be a sweetness emanating from the "garden inclosed" that is full of joy unspeakable, and that peace, which passeth understanding, be ours to enjoy, is our prayer, for Jesus' sake.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

(Written by Elder B. E. Cubbage.)

The Delaware Association, in session with the Salem Church, Philadelphia, Pa., May 27th, 28th and 29th, 1914, to the churches and associations with which we correspond sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In addressing you in this Circular Letter the one great aim and purpose is to set forth in humble boldness the truth as it is manifest in Christ Jesus our Lord, and to so present the excellency of that truth and the excellency of its Author that the churches whose messengers we are shall in one accord, and in circular, or never-ending, bonds of fellowship commune and covenant together, in church relation met, to praise God from whom all blessings flow.

We are met together in associated meeting, many messengers and several churches, led, we trust, of the Spirit of Christ our head, in the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace. Ye are many members, yet one body, with one head, even Christ our Lord. To set forth, therefore, in this one epistle the several testimonies of the many members, made one in Christ, is our desire and purpose, and by the grace and divine favor of God shall we covenant to speak and testify of the things of the kingdom of God's dear Son, and of the merciful dealings of our heavenly Father with us, both individually and collectively. It is by the grace of God that we are what we are. It is all of grace and not of works, lest any man should boast. When boasting is excluded, and when discord is displaced by concord, and "love in every action glows," the grace of God is manifest to his people, Israel, by the gift of his dear Son, who by his presence enables his people to be of one mind and one heart. We believe in the teaching of our spiritual Law-giver; all his doctrines

and graces are precious to us, and as often as we, in church relation, do the things that love and obedience indite in our hearts, we do it in remembrance of him. The love of God in the heart draws us and our feet run after him. Therefore, how shall we testify of the truth, save to testify of our longing and hungering and thirsting after Jesus and his love? He is the truth, and as our advocate with the Father we, in him, are children that will not lie. The obedience of Christ is the obedience of them that are in Christ at his coming. When God gave his only begotten Son he gave all things in one. He made a house, the house of God, a house not made by hands, eternal in the heavens. In the visible church, also the house of God, his people dwell by faith, seeing as through a glass darkly, and in hope and fear and trembling sing the praises of their risen Lord. When Christ came in the flesh he had no abiding city; there was no house; the Son of man had not where to lay his head; men were not of one accord with him; his kingdom was not of this world. We may determine from created things that God is everywhere present, but God dwells in but one place, namely, where he gathers his people together, the chosen in Christ, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, to dwell with Christ at the right hand of God, where there is no discord, where perfect love and oneness are made by the presence of the spirit of devotion to the Father. The earnest of that spirit of devotion is found in Jesus. The hungry, thirsty, longing child of God longs for the home and home relations of the house of God. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." The Comforter comes. "My grace is sufficient for thee." Our eyes turned Zionward have beheld this man of Galilee. But when the Comforter administers comfort we look, and him whom our eyes rested upon in the flesh while yet in time is gone, and our hearts follow. Where? He is risen. The Masterbuilder of the house of God has made a dwelling-place for his chosen family by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from under the law. The beauties of the house of God, therefore, and the perfection of the habitation where Christ dwells, and all the tributes of love of the truth and devotion to the kind, loving and merciful God that the heart of one taught in the school of Christ can give, all testify that the love of God shed abroad in the hearts of his people is that which strengthens, keeps, comforts and sustains his people, and when we can in love patiently abide God's own time, way and manner all his dealings with us are blessings, and we do praise him from whom all blessings flow. Amen.

B. F. COULTER, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

NOTICE.

DEAR EDITOR:—Please give notice in your valuable paper, the SIGNS, that the Old School or Primitive Baptists have recently organized a church in the town of Williamson, W. Va., called Williamson Church, and the time of holding our regular meetings is on the fourth Saturday and following Sunday in each month. We would be glad to have our preaching brethren of the Old School Predestinarian stamp when passing this way on the N. & W. R. R. stop and preach for us, if only for a night. When convenient to stop write Elder Lee Adkins, Williamson, W. Va.

Your weak servant,

W. J. MAY, Mod.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

My dear wife, **Emily J. Ker,** departed this life at 2:45 o'clock a. m., Monday, May 25th, 1914, aged 46 years, 9 months and 16 days. She had been in failing health for almost two years, and the last year of her life was one of intense suffering. She was hopeful to the last, though doctors and specialists gave us no encouragement from the first. The patience manifested in her affliction was far beyond anything we ever witnessed, and while anxious to recover, she often said if it were the Lord's will to take her it would be all right. We were married May 26th, 1886, and two children were the fruit of the union: Mrs. Louisa Remley, of East Orange, N. J., and Wm. Stewart Ker, of Middletown, N. Y. She was a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. S. Marvel, of Delmar, Del. In June, 1894, she was baptized by Elder A. B. Francis in the fellowship of Little Creek Church, Sussex Co., Del. In 1898 she united by letter with the Middletown and Wallkill Church, and remained a faithful member to the end. It seems more sad that she should pass away on the birthday of our daughter, an occasion always so full of joy to her, and just twenty-eight years to a day from the time she was dressed to be married she was dressed to be buried. In all my ministry she never said stay when duty called me from home, and on my return I always found her at the station to meet me or at home when I arrived; a good, faithful wife and loving mother. She is survived by her husband (the writer), two children, two grandchildren, her father and mother, six sisters and two brothers.

The funeral services were held from the home, and were conducted by Elders John McConnell and H. H. Lefferts, who spoke to our comfort. The interment was in the family plot in the New Vernon Cemetery. The home seems desolate without her, but for her it is far better. May the Lord comfort our hearts.

H. C. KER.

Stephen P. Timmons was born in Worcester Co., Md., April 16th, 1837, lived to the age of 76 years, 7 months and 15 days in the same county and entered into his eternal rest Dec. 1st, 1913. He was married in early life to Elizabeth Bethard, who preceded him to the better country a little over one year. They were both true and faithful members of the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church. Brother Timmons was baptized by the late Elder T. M. Poulson nearly forty years ago, and well did he show his faith by his works. His place at meeting was seldom vacant, and when such occurred all knew that it was for reasons beyond his control. He loved the truth, and did not want any varnish on it, either. He leaves no children, but Mrs. Ella Hastings was as a daughter to him and mourns him as for a father. It is by her request this is written, as a tribute of respect to his memory.

Elder John G. Eubanks conducted a funeral service at his late residence, speaking comfortingly to the mourning friends. After the service his mortal remains were buried in the cemetery near Libertytown to await the summons that shall awake all those who sleep that blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep.

A. B. FRANCIS.

Delmar, Del., June 2, 1914.

Archie G. McIntyre, of Dutton, Ontario, Canada, died at his home April 24th, 1914, in the 62nd year of his age. Death came very suddenly, as he was sick only a few hours. He was working in the field when he was suddenly stricken, but was able to get to the house without assistance. A hurried call was sent for a doctor and everything that medical aid could do was done to relieve his intense suffering, but nothing had the desired effect. He passed peacefully away at 7:30 the following morning, being sick less than twenty-four hours. Mr. McIntyre seemed to have had a presentiment of death for some time previous to his departure, feeling sure that he was soon to be taken from his family. When he came into the house from the field suffering with excruciating pain he told his wife that this had come to take him away. He had for some time been deeply exercised upon spiritual things; he was a lover of the truth, a kind and loving husband and a devoted father, a man of sterling qualities, loved and respected by all who knew him, and was a firm believer in salvation by grace. His only hope of salvation was in Jesus, the Savior of sinners, as he often said that he felt to be the chief of sinners. Just before the end came he fervently prayed the Lord to have mercy on him, and that he would comfort and sustain his family after he was taken. Truly he left a bright evidence of a good hope through grace to the comfort of his sorrowing family. Mr. McIntyre leaves a loving wife, two sons and one daughter, beside a large circle of friends to mourn their loss.

The funeral was held from his late residence near Dutton, and the large attendance showed the high esteem in which he was held. The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the mourning friends, using for a text Rev. xx. 11-15. Burial was in the Dutton Cemetery.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Richard John Woodworth was born March 3rd, 1826, came to Hancock Co., Ill., with his parents when a small boy; he served in the Mexican war in 1846. He was united in marriage to Adaline Haws Oct. 30th, 1851. To that union ten children were born, only two of whom survive, a son, Ira, of Grand Junction, Colo., and a daughter, Anna Zumwalt. The wife of his early manhood still survives, with the two children mentioned, nine grandchildren and

six great-grandchildren. Brother Woodworth united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Spring Creek about twenty-eight years ago. He died in the Soldiers' Home in Quincy, Ill., April 23rd, 1914. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, and was always faithful to attend his meeting when able. His remains were brought to the old home, where the writer tried to speak words of comfort to the relatives and friends from 1 Peter ii. 7: "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious." After which the remains were laid to rest to await the resurrection. C. C. MELTON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Sarah F. Gandey, N. J., $1.00; Jas. R. Crutcher, Tenn., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Lord willing, the yearly meeting of the Old School Baptist Church of Canada will be held in the meetinghouse in the township of Euphemia, Lambton Co., Ontario, seven miles from Alvinston Station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1914, and continuing two days. Brethren of our own faith are cordially invited to meet with us.

ARCHIBALD McALPINE, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

"IN PLACES OF DRAWING WATER."

(Judges v. 11.)

By Frederick W. Keene.

Allegorical Narratives for the instruction and comfort of Babes in Grace.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 82. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1914. NO. 13.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PINSONFORK, Ky., May 28, 1914.

DEAR EDITOR:—I left home on the 7th of this month for a short visit among the Baptists in Henry, Shelby and Anderson counties, Ky., and was blest to meet all the appointments they had arranged for me, and the meetings were wonderfully interesting to me. Elder P. W. Sawin met me at the first appointment, which was the second Saturday and Sunday (9th and 10th) at Cane Run Church, Henry Co., Ky., and stayed with me all the time while I was there. I returned home on the 19th and found all well. Elder Sawin is a precious brother indeed, a wonderful preacher, an exemplary, upright and orderly servant of the living God. I have no remembrance of ever having visited sounder and more upright and precious brethren, sisters and friends than the Old School Baptists of Kentucky. I was treated very kindly at all their homes where I visited, and wherever I met with any of them. I have them in kind and loving remembrance, and shall have, I hope, while memory lasts May God's blessings remain with and upon them and theirs. Elder Sawin requested me to write an article on the narrative of Sampson, as recorded in the book of Judges, thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth chapters, and send it to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication, and now, with your permission, I will comply as best I can, and shall expect that you will correct mistakes, and strike out unnecessary words and phrases.

This peculiar narrative, from its beginning to the close, has very striking similarity to the birth and life of Christ during his sojourn on earth; in fact, to my mind he was a type of Christ, and by the sufferings of Sampson for his wife, whom he loved so well, we are taught something of the eternal love of Christ and his sufferings for his bride, in whom he delighted, but in this feeble effort I feel in great need of light from the Lord, who is the everlasting light of his people. The peculiar incidents in relation to the birth of Sampson have a wonderful similarity to the birth of Christ, and the cause which led Sampson to manifest and exert his superhuman strength was of the Lord. (Judges xiv. 4.) While the natural eye of Sampson could and did see a woman of the daughters of the Philistines that pleased him well, the omniscient eye of

God could and did see a woman of the progeny of Adam whom he loved with an eternal love, set up from everlasting in the person of his dear Son, in whom was his delight, for she pleased him well; and because of the great love wherewith he loved her he followed her down in the transgression, under the law, to redeem her from under the law, she being ten thousand talents in debt, with not a farthing to pay on that dreadful debt, which demanded the life of the transgressor; and this same Jesus who was and is the life and surety of this woman, the church, laid down his life to the just demands of the law of divine justice, and it was satisfied by his death. What an unspeakable mystery; what an ocean of love is manifested in the Lord Jesus Christ, the love-wonder of heaven. The earthy Adam, who was the figure of him that was to come (Christ), followed his bride, his loved one, in the transgression, under the law, for the great love, which was natural love, wherewith he loved her, typifying Christ following his bride in the transgression for the eternal love wherewith he loved her, which is incomprehensible, unspeakable and full of glory.

I have thought that the narrative of Jephthah, where he vowed (covenanted) to the Lord, pointed to the same event. He said to his daughter, "Thou hast brought me very low."—Judges xi. 35. Speaking in this sense, Sampson's wife brought him very low, brought him to suffer all these things and die for her sake. What wondrous love! A riddle is a mysterious secret; no one knows anything about it, only the one with whom it originates. All others who ever know anything about this profound mystery (riddle) know it by revelation, and the only one who ever could or ever did reveal this profound secret is the Originator, the one who caused it to exist. Hence Sampson, for the sake of his wife, whom he loved, made known to her, and to her alone, this hidden mystery, or riddle, which led to the fulfillment of God's purpose in the destruction of the Philistines, the common enemy of the Lord's people. Paul would say in speaking of the spiritual significance of this heavenly and eternal mystery, "To the intent [God's design] that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known, by the church, the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Eph. iii. 10, 11. As I cannot get down into the marrow and fatness in these wonderful things experimentally, like dear Elder Sawin and many others do, I will leave this sweetness found in the carcass of the lion for those who understand it much better than I do, for it has seemed to me, lo, these many years, and does even now while I am writing, that if I have a gift at all, it is mostly, if not altogether, a surface work, in which calling I would be glad to abide, though not satisfied. By the inconceivable wisdom and stratagem of Sampson in catching the three hundred foxes, and so arranging them and sending them out that they burned up the standing corn and the shocks, and also of the vineyards and olives of the Philistines, his enemies, I say, by this phase of this wonderful type, leads our mind to the infinite wisdom of God in calling, qualifying and sending his servants to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ with such power and heavenly love that it burns up all the shoddy, trashy and unscriptural doctrine of men, for our God (whom we preach) is a consuming fire. Sampson caught the foxes, and turned

them tail to tail, and put a firebrand in the midst between two tails, and when he had set the brands on fire he let them go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burned up their standing corn and their shocks. This method of sending out these foxes, which to me is very significant, turned their faces in opposite directions, showing that they all come from one common center, the hand of God, as were the twelve oxen that stood under the molten sea which was cast in the clay ground of Jordan. This wonderful sea stood upon these twelve oxen, three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the west, and three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east; and the sea was set above upon them, and all their hinder parts were inward; (1 Kings vii. 25,) as is shown by the foxes, all coming from the same source, the hand of the omnipotent God, all facing the four points, going into all the world, preaching the gospel of the grace of God. These firebrands represent to me God's method of sending his servants to preach the gospel to every creature; that is, by persecution. How very different from the world sending their preachers.

Binding Sampson with the two new cords at the rock Etam, and his carrying off the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, bar and all, at midnight, carrying them up to the top of a hill before Hebron, and the seven green withs, and the ropes that never were occupied, &c., all represent the futile efforts that the powers of the world manifested through wicked and deceitful men to destroy Jesus before his hour came, the appointment of his Father, but they could not. Where the seven locks of Sampson's head were so woven with the web and fastened with the pin that he went away with the pin of the beam, and with the web, represents, to my mind, Christ bearing our sins, which were so interwoven and fastened by covenant obligations that he carried and bore in his own body on the tree the entire web of all the sins and guilt of his chosen bride, the election of grace. This wonderful figure so amply concurs with the bright and lively type which was exemplified in the deliverance of Isaac from under the stroke of the knife, just ready to be slain in one moment, had it not been for the prearrangement and predetermination of God, who had the ram verily foreordained, and at the right place in the right time, fastened in the thicket by the horns. Our guilt wrapt about his head, as the weeds wrapt about Jonah's head, also prefigured all these representing Christ, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but manifest in these last times for you who by him do believe in God, &c. Now after all these miraculous deliverances, then in this last and seventh struggle he told his wife all his heart, for she pressed him daily with her words, and urged him, so that his soul was vexed unto death. He told her that there never had come a razor on his head, for he had been a Nazarite from his mother's womb. "If I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man;" and Delilah, whom he loved, made him sleep upon her knees until the lords of the Philistines shaved the seven locks of his head, and his strength went from him, and the Philistines took him and put out his two eyes, and made sport of him, when they had taken him from the prison for that purpose. "He was taken from prison and from judgment."—Isaiah liii. 8. The seven locks of Sampson's head represent, to my mind, the seven attributes or di-

vine communications of God, and when these were removed from Sampson his strength was gone; he then was weak like any other man, and had no more power than any other man to withstand the power and death; so our dear Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ, when the divine nature withdrew from the human form, that he might die the victim to the law, had no more power to resist death than any other man, but gave up the ghost, and cried, "It is finished." O, what wondrous and unspeakable love faith beholds in this wonderful type. Sampson for the great love wherewith he loved Delilah laid down his life for her, told her all his heart, and laid his head upon her knees to die for her sake. "What wondrous love is this!" So Jesus, the love-wonder of heaven, for the great love wherewith he loved his bride, laid down his life for her. Hence, the birth and miraculous life of Sampson, which was a life of hardships and sufferings, and at the end he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, and all for the love that he had for Delilah, the one that pleased him well. All this was but a faint representation of the substance, the Lord Jesus Christ, and his wonderful love and mercy, in giving his life for his bride, that he might redeem her from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Therefore, this wonderful narrative, with many others of like import, a few of which I have briefly named, all represent the great mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world (not by the world), received up into glory.

W. J. MAY.

OTTAWA, Kansas, May 4, 1914.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I have read and reread this letter, and to me it seems beautiful, and I have felt impressed to send it to you to do with as you think best.

I shall greatly miss dear Elder Chick's editorials, but have much enjoyed yours of late, especially the one on the text, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

With love and sympathy for you all, I am a sister, I hope,

ANNA McKINNEY.

WHEELING, W. Va., January 31, 1914.

DEAR SISTER ANNA:—Your precious letter came this Saturday morning, and I have read it with much pleasure and satisfaction, and I want to say (while I have it in my mind) that I am made to feel how little the style of your writing matters, of how little moment it is to us that your lines are not always straight, or that the letters are at times a little uneven; it is the sweet truth they convey that matters to our hungry souls. You tell the sweet story in a way that makes us feel the earnest of it. In this respect I believe our God gives us your message just as your dear, honest heart delivers it, in sincerity and in truth and in much heartfelt tribulations. Whatever our outward tribulations are, the inward is more, the struggles against grieving the Holy Spirit, the feeble desires after righteousness, or for a closer walk with God. I say feeble desires, for I am often grieving because there is not the powerful earnest in mine that I want. There are times (and O how I wish they were more frequent) when the desire in me is intense, when my whole heart, soul and body are one fervent cry after holiness and all the divine attributes. O to be clothed with

our house from above, and O for the flesh and blood of our blessed Jesus to eat and to drink; I have much longed for this. Like our beloved Paul, I would have the thorn removed from my flesh: this messenger of Satan to buffet us, lest we be exalted above measure. Our blessed Lord has revealed some of his glories to us; that is, in our hearts. He has spoken to you about your dear child's health, and brought it to pass, and could we number his tender mercies to us if we were to try? The very fact that he did not leave you in ignorance of his laws, his precepts and his statutes is the greatest mercy of all. My heart melts in gratitude to his dear holy name for this sweet gift to my dear sister in him. O to think of our relationship being with the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, or the Comforter. This brings it down to the human family, or to His part of the human family. When you say that through much tribulation you were brought into the knowledge that salvation is of the Lord, you give clear testimony to the truth of God's word, for he says, They came up through much tribulation and have washed their garments and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. This is your seal of salvation, that you will have nothing to do with the daughters of Babylon. Like one of our saints of whom I read, after the Lord had opened his understanding, so that he knew salvation was by grace, and grace alone, he went into a church in England, where he had gone before, and where they have many ceremonies, but he said the people looked at him narrowly when he failed to go there with his performance; the most he could do on this occasion was to "sit in the tent and look on." The Lord had taught him, and in the light of divine truth he could see how foolish all this outward performance was. My sheep hear my voice and shall follow me; a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him.

Speaking of your little girls not knowing anything about Sunday School or Arminian preaching, this I consider a very brave step in you, for not many mothers would brave being thought peculiar and being in heart ostracized from those about them; I feel sure you are right, and I love you for it. No, dear sister, we have learned by experience that we cannot deliver ourselves from evil. I, too, have seen my works perish day by day, yet I will keep looking to myself for some good; I cannot help it. I strive against it, but it is always there, self, self, self, works, works, works; afraid that if I leave off trying I shall lose all promptings after heavenly things; afraid lest I become settled on my lees; afraid some sin will creep in unawares and take my poor susceptible heart by storm. I forget the storm that came down on Galilee when the Godman was asleep in the vessel, or these sweet words, If God be for us, who can be against us? He has promised that he will never leave us nor forsake us.

"Trust him for salvation,
O why should we grieve?
There's no condemnation
To them that believe."

The Scripture you speak of as recorded in Luke, first chapter, beginning at the sixty-eighth verse, has been applied to your mind as the walls of salvation. Surely it excludes all works from the whole plan. I would be very glad if I could enter into the rest that remaineth to the people of God. It seems to be unbelief and a casting away of our confidence that keeps us out of his rest, unless we have entered in and do not know it. There is rest in that we know we are saved by grace

alone, and in knowing that Christ is the righteousness of his bride. When we come to the end of our feeble works we often find comfort in the thought that it is not we that stand before the Father pleading our cause for his mercy's sake, but his own dear Son. He is there for our justification and all that his own precious name insures to us, and, my dear sister, we will never know what these "all things" insure to his bride until we have passed over the river of time. I can in spirit seem to see you walking softly before the Lord and watching his dear hand in providence and in grace. This is a better feast than your neighbors know; I mean such as are helping God save the world; they are rich and increased in goods. Do you crave their riches? O no, I hear you say, but there are riches that you do crave, they are the riches that do not take themselves wings and fly away, they are the riches of God's grace, and you truly say that you know that unless you are kept by the power of God you will do anything any one else will. Herein you have great cause for rejoicing, for you know that you are kept by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time; you know that you are patiently waiting for the time of his coming.

I have a little comfort to tell you about: one morning, perhaps a month ago, I awoke, and as I searched my mind for some heavenly theme I found nothing but a chaos of worldly thoughts; I felt lost and undone and helpless, then directly I was trying to knock, remembering that he said, Knock and it shall be opened unto you; then just for one brief moment I saw, as it were, a great phalanx of people, as if they stood as a solid army. They were all alike in stature, and stood entirely still, and as I gazed I knew that they were helpless sinners before God, all under the curse of the law. A great pity and love filled my heart for them, and at once I was reminded of the love and pity that caused the Son of God to die for them. I was awake when this scene was enacted in my mind, and I felt comforted by it for a little while, but directly I was trying to work out my own salvation, and, dear sister Annie, I do hope it is God that is working in us; after all, it is not our works to long and cry after righteousness. This reminds me of what you ask about being judged for every idle word. I am truly glad that you spoke of it, for I used to be fearful about it. There was a hymn sung by the Methodists which used to make me quake with fear:

> "And must I be to judgment brought,
> And answer in that day
> For every vain and idle thought,
> And every word I say?"

This was an alarming thought to me, until, as I hope, the dear Master showed me the meaning of it, even as I experienced it in my heart. It is one and the same as grieving the Holy Spirit, whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption. You know Peter said, If judgment begin at the house of God, what shall the ungodly do? I think this judgment is right in our hearts: the Holy Spirit reproves us for every idle word and thought. He is the discerner of our thoughts, and, dear sister, that judgment which is pronounced against even an idle thought is by the Judge of the whole earth. How often we wonder that God suffers us to live; we think our backslidings are beyond his forgiveness, then our Joseph turns aside to weep, and a still small voice says in our hearts, I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities I will remember against them no more forever; or perhaps this word comes,

I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee; or maybe no word of encouragement comes, then we are all undone, and mope and mourn and chatter to ourselves, and I am ashamed to say that I have often felt rebellious, and ready to reply against God because I had been suffered to sin. Usually when I have come into such thoughts I have been reminded that God will not give his glory to another, at least to poor earth worms. He gives this law, or judgment, against sin, that our mouths may be stopped and the whole world become guilty before him. Dear sister, I have been much concerned of late about the exhortations to repentance. I become mixed in these things, for our Savior preached repentance, and John the Baptist preached it, but we read that faith and repentance are gifts of God. I think I have heard it explained that this repentance was the same as turning from. How often they said, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Again, Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish.

I have been thinking of you for several days, but thought I had written to you last. I saw and read Elder Hall's letter to you, and thought it was good. I still hear from brother Lomax occasionally, but find that I cannot write as often as I used to, for my mind is too weak, and often I cannot read because of nervous weakness, but my health has been better than I had ever hoped; I have been able to be about and attend to the light part of the work since some time in November. Mr. Pultz is about as well as usual. Write whenever you feel disposed, for your letters are always a source of comfort to me. May the lord bless you and your loved ones.

Your unworthy sister,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

HAMPTON, Iowa, June 4, 1914.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—It has been some time since I have written anything for the SIGNS, and if the Lord will give the spirit of right understanding of his inspired writers I will try to give some of my views on a Scripture you will find recorded in Mark xvi. 15, 16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned."

Those who are accustomed to reading their Bibles know that these words were spoken by our Lord to his apostles when he was about to leave them and ascend to heaven. He is a very suitable character indeed to send men to preach the gospel, as all power in heaven and on earth is given into his hand. He is infinite in wisdom and goodness, being God manifest in the flesh, and so is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent and immutable, the creator and preserver of all things; he knew therefore whom to send and where to send them. But I design to speak more particularly on the characters addressed in the text, their call and duty. He does not say to the church, Send the gospel, but to the individual whom he calls to preach, as preaching the gospel is to preach Jesus, and him crucified, for there is no other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved. We believe he is the great Head of the church, and calls those born of the Spirit; never calls the unregenerated man. Paul says: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Christ Jesus is a stumbling-block, and is foolishness to all unregenerate persons,

and as much so to those who have been brought to the feet of Gamaliel, educated in a theological seminary, as to the most illiterate. It is written that he was in the world and the world knew him not, and the world was made by him, and the world will never know him; as he said, his kingdom is not of this world. Relative to the calling of those whom the Lord has designed to preach his gospel, we are informed in Hebrews v. 4, that "no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." In the days of his flesh he said to Peter and others, And I will make you fishers of men, and in the language of the text, Go ye. He now calls by his Spirit, and that in so plain and powerful a manner that they can understand and obey. There is nothing too hard for the Almighty; he can as easily call one of his children to preach and give him a message to deliver as to call a sinner out of darkness into his marvelous light, set him in all array before him and enable him to see the justice of God in his everlasting banishment from the glory of the Lord's presence, and witness to him a pardon of his sins, giving to him the Spirit of adoption, whereby he will cry, Abba, Father. Says Paul, Necessity is laid upon me; woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel. Jeremiah said, His word is in my heart as a burning fire shut in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay. Jonah resisted as long as he could, but found not much rest until he preached the gospel that God bade him. Much is said of preparing men to preach, by sending them to theological schools, but I consider it only antiscriptural and unnecessary. We cannot believe that one whom God has called to preach the gospel can shut himself up in such a school for three or four years; they who in ancient times were called to such work could hardly tarry five days. Some may say that perhaps he was already educated, and no need remained of his going to a theological school to prepare to preach, but I ask, Where did he study theology as it is taught in these days? If a learned man wishes to become a preacher he must go to the learned "D. D.'s" and spend a few months at least in the study of theology before he engages in the work. I think such schools are unnecessary, otherwise the Lord would have required them in his Word, but there is neither precept nor example for them, but ability to preach the gospel (besides natural gifts) comes directly from and through the Spirit. Hence says Paul, I neither received it of man, nor was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. (Gal. i. 12.) Some will say that the apostles lived in a day of miracles. True, but it was no more a miracle to regenerate a sinner and call him, and call him to preach the gospel, than it is at the present time. Those who have the privilege of these schools not only differ much in opinion, as do others, but they seem to know the least. I am acquainted with several right here in this city who were not born when I settled here, who have graduated from these schools, and I have found them with no doctrine. I have also noticed a lack of meekness in their theologies, which is evidence against them. Christ said, Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart. The duty of men called to preach the gospel is to preach the gospel. It has been said by antichrist ministers at certain times and places that if we had the right sort of preaching we could have a revival. I believe in revivals, but not of that kind. David said, Lord, revive us. The Lord

must be the leader. With reference to preaching the gospel to every creature, we understand the commission to embrace the Gentiles as well as the Jews, extending to all nations, all grades, all classes of men, and he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Believing is here meant, not a historical or speculative belief, but a believer through grace, (Acts xviii. 27; Eph. i. 8,) the faith of God's elect, which works by love and produces good works, yea, such works as are required by the gospel of Christ. This faith is also called the faith of Jesus Christ, as he is the author and finisher of it, and he is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. (Romans x. 4.) So we are not justified on condition of our obedience, but by faith in Christ; not for faith, but by virtue of the righteousness which faith receives. As it is written, his name shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness. This faith we observe produces obedience in Christ; not only a godly life in general, but submission to the ordinances of his gospel and the discipline of his house. Hence those who profess faith in Christ, but do not show it by their works, are to be rejected. Saith the apostle James, Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. (James ii. 18.)

"He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved." Our Savior instituted the ordinance of baptism, which is not only calculated to separate between his church and the world, and to be a sign of our death to sin and of the resurrection to newness of life, but by it we acknowledge the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. The Jews said to the people that Christ did not rise from the dead, but his disciples stole him away. The doctrine of the resurrection prevailed, but they presumed to say he had no body, or he did not come in the flesh, (2 John 7,) which was doubtless calculated, if possible, to strike a death blow at the doctrine of the resurrection. But it was a vain thing for the people in primitive times to profess faith in Christ and refuse to be baptized, and it would have been so to this day had no other gospel been preached except Christ's gospel. (Luke xviii. 30.) Baptism is the first ordinance in the house of God, the Lord's supper the second. The supper was administered to those who had been baptized, and those only, (John iii. 22, 26; Mark xiv. 17, 22, 23,) and we therefore have no authority to administer it to any others but such as have professed faith in Christ and been buried in his name in the liquid grave, agreeable to Rom. vi. 4; Col ii. 12 The table is the Lord's, and we are instructed, both by precept and example, to whom to administer it, notwithstanding many find fault because we Primitive or Old School Baptists cannot hold open communion. How will they charge the blame on us when they confess us to be scripturally baptized, and we cannot so regard them? We are charged with holding baptism as a saving ordinance, but all who know the sentiments of the Baptists know that we do not baptize any until we have evidence that they are saved and called. The last clause of the text reads, "He that believeth not, shall be damned." Why should any person, either young or old, be baptized in the name of Christ who does not believe on him?

Yours in gospel bonds,

E. A. NORTON.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., June, 1914.

DEAR EDITOR:—I am inclosing two good letters from sister Attie Curtis, written several years ago, as her letters are always read with interest and comfort, bringing cheer and sunshine to many poor, weary, burdened hearts. Her name has not appeared in the SIGNS for a long time, and I am wondering if she is not dwelling for the most of the time down in Lodebar; if so, will she not tell us of the barren, desolate country? for many dwell there most of the time, yet the mercies of the Lord endure forever.

P. W. SAWIN.

LAWRENCE, Mass., Jan. 21, 1902.

ELDER P. W. SAWIN—DEAR BROTHER:—I was very glad when I came home to find your good letter waiting for me, and thought when I read it I would answer at once, but I have not seemed to be able to until now. It is not because you have not been thought of, nor because of less love and fellowship felt in my heart for you, but I could not seem to do it. One day I took my pen, feeling sure I was going to have a chat with you, when brother Vail came into my mind in such a way I knew I could write to no one but him. As I finished his letter brother Durand appeared, and I wrote to him. I hope you have known something of this in your own experience, and then you will understand me fully.

I had a very pleasant visit in Maine, and stayed much longer than I expected, and did not get home until nearly Christmas. I enjoyed the associations, and meetings at my home church. The preaching is just the same as all you ministering brethren proclaimed at Hopewell last spring. I never grow weary of listening to the gospel, "the power of God unto salvation." I do not always rest in the assurance that I am included among his people, but there is something so cheering and comforting in hearing all power, wisdom and knowledge ascribed unto God that I just rejoice in the joyful sound and feel that whatever God does is right and well. He cannot possibly err, or be unkind. His ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts. He has blessed me all the days of my life, and I desire to always be found speaking and writing of his great goodness to a sinner like me. I surely know I am just such a sinner as needs a Savior like Jesus Christ, one mighty to save; there is salvation in no other name but Jesus. When God's chosen and prepared ministers declare these precious truths in my hearing I forget myself, and am often made to sweetly rejoice in the consolation of the gospel which they are so ably setting forth. The bread is broken just right for them to give to the children so they can eat it and be strengthened. The flesh and blood of Jesus is meat and drink to those who have had the true Light shine in their hearts, and Jesus has been revealed unto them. No other name so precious, no other name to be exalted so high.

"Jesus, the name that calms our fears,
And bids our sorrows cease;
'Tis music to our ravished ears,
'Tis life, and health, and peace."

It is just as true to-day as when Jesus said it, "Without me ye can do nothing." I feel glad sometimes that I am so wholly dependent upon God for all things. It is in him we live, move and have our being. He has set our bounds, and we cannot pass them. Our times are all in his hand, and he guides us with his eye. He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. In the Lord have I righteousness and strength, so it

is always sure. If it were in myself that righteousness and strength were to be found, I should be a failure indeed. But not one of God's little ones will fail or perish, for they are a part of the body of Christ, and can never be separated from him. In his death and resurrection they were still with him, so you hear them sing, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" They know the sting of death is sin, "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." There is no boasting among his little ones, all are less than the least, nothing, less than nothing and vanity. I do feel glad, as you say, to dwell among just such a people, and do desire that my heart will be filled with love to God and his people, that I may feel as Ruth: Entreat me not to leave thee. It rejoices my heart for the saints to express love and sweet fellowship for me, and although I know I am not worthy of it, yet I desire it, and prize it highly. I can surely tell them that my worthiness is in Christ, not in my flesh. It pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell in Jesus.

I was sorry you were not well after you returned home. My health has been good, which is a great blessing, and my sister is well. It seems to me sometimes that I have the most reason to praise and bless God for all his goodness, mercy and loving-kindness. I am now looking forward to leaving home a few weeks before the associations begin, and meet with some of the churches at their regular meetings, and then attend the Delaware, Delaware River and Warwick associations, and know I shall have this privilege if it is the Lord's will. I feel it will be a pleasure to meet you again. I do hope sister Sawin is well, and that you are able to go in and out before the people, declaring only the unsearchable riches of Christ, knowing nothing among them save Jesus Christ and him crucified. You may remember me to all of like precious faith whom you meet. I will write some to sister Goldie and inclose with this. I hope you will write again, and that this letter will be proof that I want the correspondence to continue. I hope we shall meet again face to face, and we shall if it is the Lord's will. My sister joins me in love to you all. I am well satisfied with your letter, and had no difficulty in reading it, and hope I understood it. It was of Christ and his work of redemption, which I hope you will find in this. I should be very glad to have sister Sawin write to me, also would like her photograph to go with yours. I hope to have mine ready to send before long.

May God bless and comfort you all, and make us realize that the everlasting arms are underneath us, is the desire of your unworthy sister in hope,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

LAWRENCE, Mass., Jan. 21, 1902.

SISTER GOLDIE:—I was glad you wrote me, for in this way we become better acquainted. I was away over three months, or your letter would have been answered before this. It takes me some time to get settled down after I return, and get my many letters answered. I did not have my mail sent to me, as there is so little time when visiting to spend in writing. I have not left yours until the last by a good many. I was sorry you could not meet Elder Vail, and I am always sorry when he cannot come to Maine. Sister Vail came one time with him, and we all loved her much. I hope his family are all well. I hope, too, that

your mother has fully recovered, and that you are all enjoying one another. The sad changes come to all of us, and it is well when we are made to enjoy each day as it passes. The future is all known to our God, and his grace is sufficient for us. If we had no darkness to travel through we should not appreciate the light, and when we can remember that he hath led us, and brought us into darkness, but not into light, we shall realize that it is for our good and he is still with us. The darkness and the light are both alike to him. We cannot flee from his presence. I know we cannot rest in any of the promises of God unless our minds are stayed on him. We cannot do one good deed or think one good thought. No good thing will ever be found dwelling in our flesh, but all we need is treasured up in Jesus. He is all in all to us, a present help in time of trouble, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Our God leads us in the right way, and instructs us. All of his children are taught of him, and their peace is great. The peace of God passeth all understanding. Jesus says, Peace I leave with you, my peace give I unto you. It is something the world cannot give or take away.

I would like to hear your father preach again, and hope it will be the Lord's will for me to attend three associations this coming spring. Sister Ruth Keene has been buried in baptism and has a home with the people; she is fourteen years old. I presume you read her experience in the SIGNS. We are having quite cold weather for Massachusetts, but is better than the extreme heat. I hope you will write again; it is good to speak often one to another of the exercises of our mind. Do you have far to go to your place of meeting? I can hear no gospel in this city, so I remain quietly at home. Sometimes Elder Keene comes to Woburn, Mass., thirty miles from here, and I go. That is the only Old School Baptist Church in this State.

I must now close, hoping you are all in usual health, and that I shall hear from you again. May God lead your mind into the truth as it is in Jesus and make us love one another, is the desire of your loving sister in hope,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

KELLER, Texas, May 6, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Last Friday the sad intelligence of the death of Elder F. A. Chick reached me through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for May 1st, 1914, which melancholy information caused my poor heart to throb with emotion of sorrow and grief. He was a faithful minister, an efficient editor and expounder of the word of God, in meekness manifesting the sweet spirit of peace, of christian virtue, in deep humility and steadfastness in the faith of God's elect. I often corresponded with Elder Chick, asking his views on certain portions of the Bible, and his answers to the questions propounded were fully satisfactory, affording me great relief of mind and consolation of soul, and I therefore felt to appreciate the precious favor, and to take courage and press toward the mark of the prize. The Almighty gave him to comfort his poor, afflicted people in preaching the gospel of peace, and publishing the good news of salvation by grace and glad tidings of great joy. O how keenly we feel this dispensation of divine Providence. Elder Chick filled a

long and eventful period in the ministry, but is gone from the evil to come. Our dear brother, like the apostle Paul, fought a good fight, finished his course and kept the faith, and received the crown of everlasting righteousness, and though he be dead, yet speaketh, and his labors of love and devotion will still follow him, like his fellow-helpers preceding him, to wit, Elders Gilbert Beebe, Wm. L. Beebe, Benton Jenkins and our precious brother, Benton L. Beebe; all have been called up higher, and freed from the buffeting waves of time's ocean to the final rest and glorified state in heaven.

Now, in conclusion I would say, the memory of dear Elder Chick will long live with the writer, and I herein extend my deepest sympathy to the family of our dear departed brother, and pray the special blessings of our adorable Savior to richly dwell with them to brighten their prospects in sweet anticipation of a glorious beyond; also to dear Elder Ker and the publishers, who surely feel lonely under the rod of this sad affliction, in common with all the Old School Baptists everywhere throughout our country, and even foreign lands. But the Lord in his appointed time is able to raise up another witness to stand with Elder Ker and to take the place of dear Elder Chick on the editorial staff in the publication of the SIGNS. We all loved and held him in high esteem. I mourn, and repeat my sympathy for the bereaved family, the church at Hopewell and all the household of faith. The name of Elder Chick, like Elder Gilbert Beebe, will go down in history and be perpetuated to future generations. O Lord, reconcile us all to thy will, and unto thee be all the glory, both now and forever.

Yours in gospel bonds and tribulation,

ASA HOWARD.

CONESVILLE, N. Y.

DEAR BROTHER:—I received your epistle of love in due time, stating that you had read brother Leonard's and my letters. I am glad if there was anything in them that gave them favor in your sight. It is sometimes with us like Paul's feeling of appreciation: when he saw the brethren coming to meet him he thanked God and took courage. Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. I read in Jer. xxix. 10, 11: "For thus saith the Lord [of hosts], That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." How good to have such a friend, who loves at all times. Good when he gives, inexpressibly good; nor less when he denies, and crosses from his sovereign hand the blessings in disguise. For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. Then there must be a needs be for all we suffer, to bring us by a way we know not. How cheering the thought! It is painful at present, but it will cease before long. O then how pleasant the conqueror's song.

Yes, after the seventy years the old saints returned to their homes with tears of joy, and could then sing, The Lord hath done great things for his people, whereof we are glad. So we, too, feel, as said in Lam. ii. 2, He hath brought me into darkness, but not into light. It is said, It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, and while walking in this darkness we are apt to murmur and complain, like the children of Israel did at

the Red Sea; and again they murmured. (Num. xxi. Read the whole chapter.) As soon as the people confessed they had sinned against the Lord, then Moses prayed for the people, and the Lord said, "Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live." Isaiah tells us also how to do when in darkness, and says, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God."—Isaiah l. 10. You will see this is to the one that heareth and obeyeth, and if he obeyeth, then he must trust also, and feel content as the servant of Elisha did, saying, Alas, master, how shall we do? Read 2 Kings vi. 15-19. And Gehazi obeyed the voice of his servant and stayed upon his God. Read 2 Kings v., and see the assurances the Lord gave unto his people, strengthening them. How much we need to hear the voice behind us saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, and say unto them of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you. How good to feel like the psalmist: The Lord is on our side, I will not fear what man can do unto me. See what a variety of help the children have when they are trusting in the Lord, and David perhaps more than any other; he at one time said, Not only by my God I have run through a troop, and by my God have I leaped over a wall. Yet the Lord was with David wheresoever he went. I do not think he was with him any more in one respect than he is with the weakest of his people, but he was like Paul, a chosen vessel unto him, and he said of Paul, And I will shew him how much he must suffer for my sake. He, like his Savior, had not where to lay his head, but when these sweet assurances came then how delighted he was, once rejoicing before the Lord with all his might, then again down in the valley sinking down with woe, and asking, Why art thou so far off from my roaring? then, as when fleeing in fear of his son, and with bare head and feet, weeping as he went, but said, Know ye not that I am king of Israel?

Pardon this imperfect letter.

D. S. ELLIOTT.

MUIRKIRK, Ont., April 19, 1914.

DEAR ELDER KER:—Inclosed you will find a letter written by a dear young sister, Miss Belle Maddock, who was baptized in Lobo last October by our pastor, Elder J. B. Slauson. We have not asked her consent, but think she will not object to having it published in the SIGNS, if in your judgment you think that it would be enjoyed by the readers of our family paper. Accept our tender love and sympathy. Kindly remember us also to sister Ker in her affliction.

Your brother and sister, we hope,
(MR. AND MRS.) D. M. GILLIS.

FLINT, Mich., Feb. 16, 1914.

MR. AND MRS. D. M. GILLIS—DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER:—The word of God declares that it lieth not in man that walketh to direct his steps, and also that our ways are ordered of the Lord. How much I planned and looked forward to meeting you, with the rest of God's dear children, at the Duart meeting, but it seems it was not in the wise providence of God that I should. He alone knows why he willed it so. How often my mind reverts to the meeting last year,

and what a blessing I received, and how I should praise his holy name that I was permitted to attend all the meetings last year, and was fed so bountifully from his great storehouse, and seemed to bask all the time in the shadow of his presence. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." I was so hungry, and the dear Lord supplied all my needs. It appears to me now that I have been brought back to waste and barren places, with only a glimpse of brightness now and then, but it seems to be the way the Lord leads his children, if we are his.

I was glad to get your very dear letter, which was a great comfort. I did not reply sooner, expecting to see you at the meeting. I am glad it has pleased the Lord to send Elder Slauson to us, for I feel he is a true, humble servant of Christ, and I hope his coming may be blessed of the Lord, both to his own and the people's good, and to the honor and glory of God. When we are made to realize that he looks on us poor, depraved, polluted creatures with the least degree of love and pity, how our hearts burn within us and cry for more of the love that binds his children together. If it were not for the love that has been implanted within I could not have the feeling I have for you. My dear brother and sister, I often think of you just to be an unbroken link in that great chain that binds the hearts of all believers.

I had a letter from my sister, Mrs. Maddock, saying Elder Slauson was at the meeting, but said nothing about any other elder being there, and she also told me of the death of your brother, Mr. Dan Gillis. If I could drop a word of sympathy or comfort I would gladly do so, but words seem so empty. There is only one source from which comfort springs, and I commend you all to Him; he alone can heal and bind up the broken-hearted. I can tell you from personal experience that if it were not for the presence and sustaining power of God given me when my dear brother John was called from this life I would have been unable to stand it as I did; I could see God's hand through all of it.

Hoping that it may please God to bestow his richest blessing on you both, I am your very unworthy sister,

BELLE MADDOCK.

TORONTO, Ont., March 17, 1914.

DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD:—Your letter written to my sister, Mrs. Jones, and forwarded to me, arrived here last Saturday, and was read with deep interest. As I eagerly scanned the pages I could but discern the Spirit of Christ manifested in it all, that is, if I am any judge and have been given any discernment in the things pertaining to God's kingdom. I assure you, dear sister, if you only knew what comfort it gave me to read it you would feel amply repaid for your effort. I have had it in my mind and wanted to write to you many times since our last sweet visit, now nearly two years ago, but have been in such a dull and lifeless state of mind I have felt it useless to undertake to write on spiritual things, yet have no desire to write on other things. Cares of this world seem to have encompassed mo about, seem to have robbed me of time to serve in the better things. Jesus plainly said, Ye cannot serve God and mammon. I remember of reading after Elder Chick on these words, and I certainly find he spoke the truth concerning them. Unbelievers serve only mammon, but how often the child of God tries to serve both, but it is impossible to serve both at the

same time. I have very little interest in the world, in fact the things of time and sense are for the greater part burdensome to me, but duty seems to demand a portion of responsibility toward my family. But, dear mother in Israel, why this dull and lifeless frame? I would ask your prayers in my behalf. I would, but cannot, pray; at least it seems there is no unction of the Spirit. The Bible for the greater part has remained a sealed book since coming here, no lively exercises of mind, yet I would not have you think I am without hope. No, it abides with me and I live in it. It has remained firm through all my various trials and temptations, and I want to praise the dear Lord for [illegible] I is a[illegible] [illegible]ugh God's mercy that I am no consum[illegible] Blessed is the man to whom [illegible]e Lor[illegible] imp[illegible]eth not iniquity. His mercy endureth forever. I do need mercy extended to me every day, yea, every hour, of my life. I am so vile, so full of sin. When a vessel is full it cannot contain more. I believe it just as Elder Ker made it so clear in the las[illegible] SIGNS. The children of God have both an evil and good treasure, and each is made manifest. Such struggling this causes that words fail to express. That article of Elder Ker's was heart-searching. No doubt he is passing through deep waters.

I felt as you wrote about Elder Chick's editorial on Paul's last letter. The dear man's work is no doubt nearing the end. I would love to take him by the hand once more and tell him what a blessing his writings have been to me. What a wonderful work to be engaged in. It has seemed to me that a life such as his, as well as some others, would be worth living. But we know they, too, are called to pass through many conflicts or they could be of no service to us poor, weak, helpless mortals.

Now lest I weary you I must close soon. I called one afternoon about two weeks ago to see Mrs. Kennedy; she was well and we had a nice little visit. I go quite often to see Mrs. May and daughter, Mrs. Mortimer. She is a daughter of the late Elder Knifton, and is a thorough Old Baptist I am glad to say, and is good company. The SIGNS, too, is great company, and I feel I could never do without it. But we shall never be satisfied until we awake with Christ's likeness, then we shall see him as he is and be like him.

I cannot say whether I can get away to the May meeting or not, but I long to go and God can open the way if it is his will. May I submit. Write me if your heart feels inclined. I received a most comforting letter from sister Pultz not long ago.

With love from your unworthy sister in Christ,

(MRS.) W. C. YOUNG

SHERIDAN, W. Va., June 7, 1914.

DEAR EDITOR AND PUBLISHERS:—I know it is time for me to renew my subscription to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which to me is a source of much satisfaction, as the writers all speak solid Bible truth, and sympathize with the afflicted and distressed. I am so glad we can speak often one to another through our dear paper, which has sustained so great a loss in the death of one of its editors. When I received my SIGNS for May 1st and saw it draped in mourning, and turned to page 283 and saw "Death of Elder F. A. Chick," how my poor heart did seem to sink and my eyes filled with tears, so I had to lay the paper down after reading what Elder Ker and the publishers said of him, and ever since when I look on the lines of mourning I

think of our great loss. Dear brethren and sisters who read the SIGNS, and also you, dear ministers of God, let us all pray as the eleven apostles did, that God, who knows the hearts of all men, may choose another to assist brother Ker, and help and encourage and cheer him in his loneliness and his great bereavement. I would like to write and express what I desire to, but my poor short-mindedness will not suffer me to do so. I can only say, The Lord is at hand. "Be careful for nothing [of a worldly nature, as I understand it]; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thankgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." Now when I look in brother R. H. Pittman's book and see both editors pictures looking so well, how very sad I feel to think one is taken from the shores of time and the other left alone to labor in the Master's vineyard. Farewell.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

PINSONFORK, Ky., May 6, 1914.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I herewith inclose a short letter from brother W. B. Ely, of Knoxville, Tenn., which I hope you will publish in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if you judge it worthy a place in its columns. It is quite short, but to me wonderfully comprehensive, for in it a stranger in the flesh, but dear brother, has ascribed all power in and over all things in heaven and earth, and in the seas and land, to Him who created all things, visible and invisible, and by him they all consist; that is, they all continue fixed, answering his eternal design in and for creating them. May the Lord so wonderfully bless us all to thus ascribe greatness to his blessed name.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

W. J. MAY.

KNOXVILLE, Tenn., May 3, 1914.

DEAR ELDER:—After a long silence I again attempt to write you a few lines, feeling that I am too unworthy and sinful to address you, a beloved and highly esteemed elder, one that I have never seen in the flesh, yet love devotedly, and as I believe my mind and pen, as well as everything we can call to mind in heaven and earth, the sea and all deep places, are in the hand of the omnipotent Sovereign, who is eternal, all-wise and all-powerful, he may and will direct this letter to the intent he designed before the highest part of the dust of the earth was formed or before there were any fountains abounding with water. I have often thought of you when about my daily occupations, and with a heart full of love for you, and would wonder if we should ever meet while in this vile body of flesh. I am now occupied as groceryman on a small scale, and the God of all flesh has prospered my way so far. I realize my business is in his hand, for he is the supreme Head over all.

Hoping to hear from you soon, I will say adieu for this time.

With love to you and your family and all absoluters, an old sinner,

W. B. ELY.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., June 16, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—It has been a long and sorrowful time waiting and watching by the sick bed, tenderly seeking in all possible ways to mitigate the suffering of the loved one, and at the same time pressed down with the care of work that must be done; anxious also as you have been during this long season of weariness and grief concerning your brother editor, our dear brother Chick. It certainly has been a sad trial for you. Your brethren far and near have had you

in their hearts, and their sympathies have gone out to you, and you have surely had their prayers for your welfare, and that sustaining grace may be given you. The dear wife has gone home to rest forever in unspeakable felicity. For you and the dear children there are left sorrow and loneliness for a little while, but for her eternal joy. You now turn to your work and find added grief; not only desolation in your home, but also in your field of work. I trust that you may feel the dear Lord saying unto you, My grace is sufficient for thee. It undoubtedly has seemed impossible for you to do the same work, and likely an added quantity, with your brother gone, but the promise is still a living word: As thy day thy strength shall be. Brother Chick was in many respects a wonderful man. He was persistent, patient and enduring; he was faithful to what he felt as duty, and it was easy and pleasant for one who loved the truth to dwell together with him in unity. If there was a difference on any point it was pleasant to talk over the difference with him, for he would not quarrel. It was my privilege to be much with him for over forty-five years. You, my brother, were much with him since you entered the ministry, and more since you entered upon your editorial work.

I want to say now to you that I believe you are well qualified for the especially arduous and responsible work in which you are engaged. You have had much experience since you began this work, and must have learned much. I know that there are a great variety of responsibilities resting upon an editor, though I have never been engaged in it, nor have I felt any inclination or ability for that work in myself, except in the preparing and publishing of some books. My best wishes are for you. If you find it necessary to have another with you I hope the Lord will fully supply your need. I feel a deep sympathy for the publishers. Remember me to them in love.

Your brother in love and fellowship,
SILAS H. DURAND.

[WE much appreciate the above kind letter, and feel both helped and encouraged by it. We all recognize brother Durand as a father in the gospel, and his words of comfort and judgment mean much to us. May he be comforted and strengthened in his own soul.—K.]

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder John McConnell.)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Ebenezer Baptist Church of New York City, June 10th, 11th and 12th, 1914, to the churches within her bounds, sends love in the Lord.

"Behold, we count them happy which endure."—James v. 11.

In the Old and New Testaments the word "behold" occurs over twelve hundred times. When used as an exclamation it invariably calls attention to a matter of great importance; something is being declared of amazing interest, the understanding of which is beyond the wisdom of man. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. No man knoweth the things of God, but the Spirit of God; they must be spiritually discerned, and the apostle is speaking now as never man spake; his understanding is in him a wellspring of life and joy and peace. There is no life in the letter. The letter is called law, a ministration of death. No mercy is written in that, and therefore nothing of long

suffering or endurance. But the apostle is being shown God's covenant of grace, and of how salvation is come to them which endure. He is in the Spirit a new creature; old things are passed away, all things are become new. In thinking upon the multitude of God's mercies, he counts the longsuffering of God salvation, and exclaims, "Behold, we count them happy which endure." The natural mind cannot glory in tribulation, or believe that the kingdom of God is within those who endure temptation, and that "the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him," is received when he is tried. When Jesus said, "He that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved;" "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you," James did not understand how these things could be. But when the day of Pentecost had come, the Spirit of understanding was given him to know that the words Jesus spake are spirit and are life. Now he rejoices "in hope of the glory of God," and desires to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery of God manifest in the flesh. "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." The way of life, wherein salvation is manifest, is not in a feeling sense of having overcome the world, but rather in passing the time of our sojourning here in fear. Tribulation in the world, confession to being strangers and pilgrims on the earth, is the living testimony of all to whom it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." The patience and the faith of the saints have in them no confidence, or rejoicing in anything the heart of man can conceive. Our confidence is "knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord, (for we walk by faith, not by sight)."

"It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again," and in the power of an endless life the members of his body are presented faultless and blameless before God in love. He who suffered was God manifest in the flesh, and his person, majesty, Godhead, justice, goodness and righteousness, being every way infinite and eternal, made all the results sure and unchangeable. The effects of this finished and complete work of Christ are confirmed unto the heirs of promise by two immutable things: the counsel and oath of God. They extend to all time, before and after his death on the cross; they extend to all his children in all ages, to their sins and every obstacle between God and them. Unless Christ was truly God and truly man in one person, unless his righteousness was absolutely perfect, unless his sufferings strictly and really atoned for sin, and God testifies his acceptance of all the work of Christ by raising him from the dead, our hope of eternal life is vain; and further, after the work is accepted of God we can never be benefited by it without an effectual way of its application to us, with a preparation of heart to enjoy it, such as was evident on the day of Pentecost. There is comfort in believing God's work is perfect, that "It became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings," that in this world he triumphed over death, hell and the grave; that his life is the life of his people, and because he is our life, "as

he is, so are we in this world."—1 John iv 17. It seems like any sound mind could understand that all the world is guilty before God, and that by deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight, for we know that all law, natural or spiritual, commands obedience and forbids iniquity, and sets forth the penalty for transgression, for where there is no penalty there is no law. We know that no law can confer a reward or bestow grace; it exacts obedience. When obedience is rendered the law is satisfied and the doer takes, not as of reward, nor as of grace, but of right, whatever the law proposes as the condition of obedience. For disobedience the penalty must be inflicted. It is not possible, therefore, for any law to save a transgressor, nor to reward the obedient. The righteousness which results from blamelessness as touching the law, was due from us, and while we live we owe this obedience, and though all our past sins be blotted out, we owe it still, and as sinners are incapable of rendering it. This debt of obedience Christ has discharged, and obtained for us by his obedience that righteousness the law required. He put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, thereby reconciling us unto God, "for he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." The obedience and the sufferings of Christ were constant and inseparable throughout his life, for the act of suffering was an act of obedience, and every act of obedience was a humiliation in respect to his infinite being. Great and marvelous are the love, mercy and condescension of Christ, the Holy One, in rendering obedience, satisfying the law in our nature, making himself of no reputation; though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich, for there was no other way in which he could reconcile us unto God and become our righteousness but by his obedience unto death. How mysterious that the only perfect life ever lived on earth should have been a continual experience of humiliation and suffering, to terminate in a shameful death. The mind of man utterly fails to comprehend the wisdom and righteousness of God's determinate counsel not to spare his only begotten Son, notwithstanding he possessed the highest degree of human excellence. But the word of the Lord endureth forever ("all flesh is grass"), and the word made flesh is living testimony that "all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field."

We often deplore the skepticism, unbelief and resentment of some against the righteousness of God's dealing with men, but all that has ever been uttered or written against the wisdom and goodness of God is not worthy to be so much as once thought of when placed by the side of the unbelief and enmity the true believer has overcome. Satan does not reveal his strength to willing followers. The spirit of man never approaches the agonizing doubts, fears and questions which cause heart and flesh to fail. If growth in grace could be distinctly recorded it would show nothing more clearly than the utter insignificance, hollowness and ignorance of those who have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof. The great battles fought and victories won in the patience, or endurance, of the saints, are in the warfare of flesh and Spirit, and we are persuaded it is a mistake to presume we might gain anything, in the power and distinctness of a christian experience, could we avoid these conflicts, and it is as great an error to suppose that the gospel of Jesus

Christ can be commended to any one by attempts to lower the terms of this warfare, on one side or the other, or both sides. The declarative glory of God is the very end of salvation, and whoever has any understanding of the way in which God saves sinners is correspondingly wise to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead. This knowledge of God can only be attained to through the effectual work of the Spirit of grace; without the appearing of the grace of God there is no knowledge of him or of salvation. No chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but who ever heard that enduring the burden of sin ever led such an heavy laden soul into fulfilling the lusts of the flesh? The mercy of God flows from his goodness and grace, and grace and mercy alike have reference to sin; one regards our unworthiness, and the other regards the misery which that unworthiness produces. Only as sin is removed by grace can the misery produced by sin be relieved by mercy. Mercy could not remove the misery without removing the cause of it. The mercy we receive is, in its very nature, just so much goodness which we do not deserve. Christ hath not only loved us, but hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savor. He who was the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his person, and who upheld all things by the word of his power, before he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high had first, by himself, purged our sins, for the very object of his coming into the world, and the very will of God which he came to execute, was that we might be sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all. In his sufferings, by the sacrifice of himself, he made perfect satisfaction to the justice of God, thus procuring us the forgiveness of our sins, and by fulfilling the law he procured for us righteousness, both of which are necessary for our justification. So that for Christ's sake our sins are forgiven and our persons and services are accepted as righteous in the sight of God. Christ obeys for us and suffers for us. He redeemed us from the curse of the law by being made a curse for us. He gave his life a ransom for us. He is our propitiation, our reconciliation, our redemption, our healing, our peace and our Savior. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." It is good to be afflicted, to sorrow after a godly manner, for such sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of. It is given unto you in the behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. The fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death, is the blessedness of knowing him, whom to know is life eternal. Enduring temptation, hardness, affliction and sorrow, the opposition of all earthly powers, is the way of life as it is in Christ Jesus, and "he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

"Behold, we count them happy which endure." Paul's determination was not to know anything among the brethren, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified, and confidently he says, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in

Christ Jesus our Lord." The Spirit itself bore witness with his spirit that he was a joint-heir with Christ, and to be glorified with him he must needs suffer with him. His testimony of oneness with Christ is, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." You who believe grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, to you he is precious. If God be for us, who can be against us? "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Surely it is an afflicted and poor people who think upon and trust in the name of the Lord; the beauty of holiness is altogether lovely and desirable, and they long to be conformed to the image of God's dear Son, the Holy One; of such is the kingdom of heaven. It is given unto them to know the mystery of godliness, and in the multitude of God's mercy they dwell in his house, and in his fear do they worship toward the temple of his holiness. (Psalms v. 7.) "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places."—Deut. xxxiii. 29.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
JOHN McCONNELL, Clerk.

(Written by Elder B. F. Coulter.)

The Delaware River Association, in session with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., June 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1914, to the several churches of which it is composed, greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—In sending you this, our annual Circular Letter, we desire your welfare in the Lord. Peace and joy reign in our midst.

The object of a Circular Letter is not necessarily to take up a portion of Scripture and attempt to expound it, but more particularly to set forth the fullness of the doctrine of Christ which we advocate and which we preach. The word of God, which is written in our heart, embraces all the doctrine of faith and practice, in which the saints live and move and have their being. The church throughout all ages, from the day of Pentecost, has "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and of prayers," and has contended for the faith once delivered unto the saints. We believe that the religion of Jesus Christ, the wisdom and understanding and knowledge of God, come to us only by revelation. The Spirit takes of the things of Jesus and reveals unto us the things of his kingdom, and his kingdom is not of this world. We are associated together for the worship of God, and not for the purpose of making laws and rules by which the churches are to be governed, or usurping authority over them. Thus our associations are not conducted in opposition to the teachings of the Scriptures. The Scriptures are a testimony of that perfect word which is written in our heart. We know that the word of God is true when it comes to us as a testimony and as a faithful witness in the work of grace which we experience day by day. We cannot by searching find out God, but love and grace and the faith of God are freely bestowed upon us from on high. The love of God being shed abroad in our hearts brings about a living exercise in our life, and we love God because faith points out the way of salvation through Jesus

Christ our Lord. We look into the perfect law of liberty and behold Christ as the Alpha and Omega of all our hope, in which liberty we rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. Our conversation is in heaven, from whence we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ."

J. M. FENTON, Moderator.
DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Harford Church, Harford County, Maryland, May, 1914, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—We are having a pleasant meeting. Our Lord has seen fit to give us good weather and kind friends, who are caring for us in their homes. There has been no famine in the land of bread and water, we have had full and plenty; neither has there been a famine of preaching the word of God. Our ministers have preached no new doctrine to us, but the glorious gospel of the Son of God, pointing to him, the fairest of ten thousand and the One altogether lovely, knowing no other save Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, in Baltimore, next year, at the usual time, where we hope to meet you again.

May the Lord watch over us, and guide us, and keep us faithful, is our prayer for Jesus' sake.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Moderator.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

The Delaware Association, now in session with the Salem Church, to the sister associations and churches with which we correspond, greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—The time is at hand, and again the manifestation of the abundant mercies of the glorious Lord has been revealed unto us. Your messengers and messages have come to us laden with sweet expressions of that oneness that dwells alone in the house of our God. The preaching has been good, all of one accord, Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Bryn Zion Church, at Clayton, Delaware, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday after the fourth Sunday in May, 1915, where and when we hope to receive your messengers and messages again.

B. F. COULTER, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

FIRST VOLUME OF EDITORIALS EXHAUSTED.

As our supply of the first volume of Editorials is exhausted, we will be unable to fill any more orders for them, but have quite a number of the second volume left, which we are closing out at seventy-five cents each. As neither of these volumes was electrotyped, we will not be able to supply either volume after what is left of the second volume is disposed of. Address all orders to

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1914.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ANNOUNCEMENT.

It is with great pleasure that we announce to our readers and subscribers generally that Elder H. H. Lefferts, of Leesburg, Va., has consented to have his name added to the editorial staff of the Signs of the Times, and with this number begins his labors as an editor. We do not feel that he needs any introduction, as his writings have appeared in the Signs from time to time for some years, yet it is due him in this announcement that we say he is all that we could desire in a man for the place. He is in the very height of manhood, both physically and mentally, being thirty-five years old. He was born of Old School Baptist parents; his father, now deceased, was a deacon of the Southampton Church, of which Elder S. H. Durand has been pastor for many years. Elder Lefferts united with this church when about twenty-three years old, and at once the gift to preach was discovered. He was very soon ordained, and after a short time was called to the care of the Warwick Church, N. Y., where he remained three years, when he accepted a call to the Virginia churches formerly served by Elder E. V. White. He now is pastor of five or six churches, and beloved by all who know him. His ability as an expounder of God's Word is recognized by all the churches of our correspondence, and we know that this announcement will make many glad hearts, and not one more so than our own. We did not feel that we could bear the burden "alone," and are very glad to have Elder Lefferts as our associate and companion in the editorial work. He will continue, of course, his home in Leesburg, Va., and we shall endeavor to look after the office work and write as often as is possible. Again we say, we are glad for our readers, as well as for ourself, that Elder Lefferts has consented to accept the position made vacant by the death of our dear and faithful brother, Elder Chick, the memory of whom will long live in the minds of the readers of the Signs. K.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

We have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the Signs of the Times will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

SALUTATORY.

VERY much to our surprise, the publishers and editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES have insisted that we assume the duties and responsibilities of associate editor of the above named paper. Inscrutable indeed it is to us why their minds should revert in our direction when in search of some one to serve them in this capacity, for of all the ministering brethren within the range of our acquaintance surely we are the least qualified in every way for such a place as that of editor of such a substantial periodical as is the SIGNS. However, during all of our life in the Old School Baptist Church since our baptism in December, 1900, at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., by the late Elder F. A. Chick, we seem never to have been able to set ourself against the wishes of our brethren when expressed with definite emphasis. When the church at Southampton in the spring of 1903 declared that in their opinion we were called to the ministry, and thereupon called for our ordination, we could do nothing but submit, though had the church at that time had respect to our own personal feelings in the matter they would have immediately dropped it. Well-nigh all the evidence that we have ever had of a call to the ministry has been in the manner in which our ministry has been received by those among whom our lot has been cast, rather than in any special exercises of mind to which we have been subjected. We do not mean to say that we have had no exercises of mind whatever with reference to our being called to the ministry, but it seems to us they would have been negligible without the affirmative testimony of the churches where our labor has been allotted us. For the reason, therefore, that the church has demanded and called for our service, and not because we felt we had any great service to render, we have endeavored since our ordination to preach the gospel of the Son of God with such ability as he has been pleased to afford us at the times of his appointment and in the places of his guidance. And now comes to us the strongly expressed request of those in charge of the SIGNS that we undertake, in conjunction with Elder Ker, the editorial work of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We dare not be obstinate and refuse, though we wonder very seriously what they have ever seen in us to make them think we can perform such work. It is in much trepidation that we agree to assume with them the care and labor of issuing this oldest and highly appreciated paper of the Old School Baptists, which has and still does afford comfort to many otherwise deprived of gospel privileges, and we agree to do this fully realizing our great limitations, and that nothing but superhuman intelligence and wisdom can fit one to faithfully discharge such arduous duties. The SIGNS from the time of its first publication has been remarkable for its cleanliness—its freedom from controversy and from false doctrine. The present publishers and editor desire to maintain it so, and with this aspiration we are in most hearty accord. The SIGNS has never been a hobby-rider, but has always endeavored to accord equal emphasis to all phases of the doctrine and of the experience of the people of God. The gospel is so full of such an infinite variety of harmonious truths that a man's limitations alone get him into a rut, and not the narrowness of the gospel. Therefore in our editorial work our limitations will be plainly manifest to all who read our writings, and there will appear from time to time our failure to treat satisfactorily upon all

texts submitted to us with request for our views. We can only submit such views as we have, and many requests must perforce remain uncomplied with for lack of knowledge to answer them. Only with such ability as the Lord is pleased to give us can we promise to serve the readers of the SIGNS, for we have no reserve capacity of our own to draw upon. That which the Lord has freely given us we are disposed to hand on to you, no more, no less. To preserve the SIGNS free from error and from the fallibility of men requires the everlasting vigilance of the Holy Spirit, and nothing short of it. In former days the SIGNS has had to meet and combat outspoken and visible forms of error and false doctrine, but never before in the history of the Baptists in America has the insinuation of evil and falsehood been so secret and subtle as now. Such a situation demands clear and bold presentation of the truth, with great plainness of speech. When we think of the warriors of God who have since 1832 labored in editing the SIGNS in defense of the truth, we seem to ourself to be but a mere stripling beside them, but rejoice that David's God still reigns and rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and that he will ever unerringly direct the simplicity of truth to the fatality of all that arrays itself against the little flock, to whom is given the kingdom of heaven. To all the readers of the SIGNS we would say, we need your charity and forbearance, and the encouragement of your prayers to help us forward in our work. Remember that we are by nature but a weak, erring man, in constant need of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ to make us of any value whatever to those who love the truth, and only with that measure of divine grace which God in his mercy grants us do we promise to serve you. With the sincere desire that the relations of the editors and publishers of the SIGNS with each other and with the readers of the paper be mutually helpful and comforting to all concerned, we desire to subscribe ourself,

Yours to serve in the obedience of the gospel, H. H. LEFFERTS.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

1 PETER V. 5; ROMANS XII. 10.

"LIKEWISE, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder: yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."

"Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another."

(Concluded from page 379.)

"Yea, all of you be subject one to another." The church of God is one body, having one spirit, even as her members are called in one hope of their calling. The movement of the body in obedience to the dictation of its spirit requires that there shall be harmony in all the members which make up the fullness of the body. To attain this harmony no member can be independent of its fellow-members, but all must be subject one to another, and all subject to the spirit by which the whole is governed, otherwise there will be schisms in the body paralyzing all its actions. If, for instance, the eye refuses to see for the body, there being no other member that can perform that service for the body, or if the ear refuses to hear, or the tongue to express the sentiments of the body, or if the hand refuses to labor, the foot to walk, the body cannot travel. As a whole, all the members must obey the head, and each member be in subjection to the body. If in labor one hand refuses to act in harmony

with the other, the one builds, the other throws down, nothing is gained. The one foot, in obeying the spirit, would move Zionward, the other inclines toward Babylon, and will not be in submission, the whole body must be in confusion, and the spirit which directs to Zion is disobeyed until the unyielding and offending foot or hand be cut off, or the offending eye be plucked out. As in the natural body, so in the church, all the members of the body are members one of another. The hand can do nothing without the co-operation of the arm, and the arm must have the co-operation of all the body, and this co-operation and harmony require that all the members shall be in submission one to another. A morose, haughty, selfish disposition in any of the members would involve all the body in perplexity, and therefore that spirit is forbidden, and the opposite is enjoined on all: "Be clothed with humility." Clothing not only shields and protects the body and members from the cold, and so contributes to the health and comfort of the body, but covers and conceals its deformity. The whole church, and all her members being clothed with humility, allows no manifestations of arrogance or want of unanimity to appear, and this seems to be the design of the figure in our text. "For God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." No higher incentive can be known or felt by an humble child of God than to enjoy his divine approval. A proud, lofty or haughty carriage, especially when detected in a child of God, is sure to meet the marked disapprobation of our heavenly Father. His rod will find them out, but he giveth grace or favor, beauty and support to the humble.

"Blest are the humble souls who see
Their emptiness and poverty;
Treasures of grace to them are given,
And crowns of joy laid up in heaven."

The other text proposed for consideration, Romans xii. 10, presents the same admonition, only in other words: "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another." Both are addressed to the children of God, who, being born of God and led by his Spirit, are a spiritual brotherhood, but being also in the flesh, which is born of the flesh, are liable to be led by the corruptions of their fleshy nature to a selfish and unlovely course, in which there is danger of biting and devouring one another. Were it not that they have a law in their members warring against the law of their mind, and bringing them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members, they would not need these admonitions with which the Scriptures abound, but in their present condition they need to give the more earnest heed to them, lest they fall out by the way. The ardent desire of Paul for the well-being of the saints seemed to enlist his whole soul, and in the most pathetic and imploring manner he said: "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, [What a striking appeal!] that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." This sacrifice of our bodies includes all our worldly interests, wealth, honor, fame, ease, or life itself, if need be, and all must be laid upon the altar, all surrendered and submitted to God to be disposed of as he shall direct, allowing nothing of a worldly nature to divert us from that course which we are called to pursue as the followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God. This living sacrifice requires that we shall not be conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of our mind, that we may prove what is that good and acceptable and

perfect will of God; not indulging in vain conceit, or cherishing exalted views of ourselves, but regarding our standing in the body of Christ, as members of Christ, and as members in him one of another, each member having its appropriate gift and measure of faith for the benefit of all the body. "Let love be without dissimulation." Let it not be feigned, or in hypocritical pretence, but the honest, sincere and unfeigned outgushing of holy affection which comes welling up from the depth of the heart where God has shed abroad his love. "Abhor that which is evil." Those who love God supremely, and by virtue of his love in their hearts love his word, his people, his ordinances and all that God approves, do not, as some seem to suppose, therefore necessarily love everything. If they love truth, they hate error; if they love holiness, they hate sin; if they love God, they hate mammon, for God's love is discriminating. If we love the world, the love of the Father is not in us, and just as far as we love that which is good we will hate and abhor that which is evil.

"Be kindly affectioned one to another." As the possession of christian love in our hearts to all the fraternity of the saints is the distinguishing and infallible evidence that we have passed from death unto life, are born of God and belong to the brotherhood of the saints, it is therefore clearly established that all who are born of God do possess an undying affection for all the saints. But the peculiarity of the words of this admonition seems to imply something more than that the principle of love or of affection shall exist in our hearts. To be affectioned, as we understand, means not only that we love, but that we should show our love; and to be kindly affectioned means that our spiritual affection shall rule and control our actions, and that our affections shall be seen in acts of kindness, sympathy and devotion to those whom we love in the Lord. That brother who sees his brother in need, and shuts up the bowels of compassion, saying, Be warm, or be clothed, without ministering to his necessities, is not kindly affectioned towards him. How dwelleth the love of God in that man? Not the priest, nor the Levite, but the good Samaritan, was kindly affectioned towards the man who had fallen among thieves, yet his might only have been a natural affection, still it was manifested by at least neighborly kindness. The kind of affection enjoined on the saints in our text is more than neighborly, for the admonition is, "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love." By that love in which our fraternal relationship is founded. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." If love is thus displayed in our sonship, and our being the sons of God makes us brethren, then our sonship shows that God was kindly affectioned towards us. "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ," &c. To be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, is to be so governed by that filial, fraternal, spiritual and divine love which God has bestowed on us that in all our deportment our actions should be marked with kindness to all our Father's children. No unkind, ungenerous, unfeeling or reproachful word or action can result from the love of God in our hearts. The kindly affectioned brother loves with a pure heart fervently, can bear a brother's burdens, share his sorrows, seek his comfort, sympathize in his afflictions, weep when he weeps and

participate in his joys, will not watch for his halting, nor exult in his downfall, nor make him an offender for a word.

"Love suffers long with patient eye,
Nor is provoked in haste;
She lets the present injury die,
And long forgets the past.

When free from envy, scorn and pride,
Our wishes all above,
Each can his brother's failings hide,
And show a brother's love."

"Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above,
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

"In honor preferring one another." The christian who is kindly affectioned to his brethren is not ambitious to monopolize the honors which distinguish some above others. It is a remarkable and a distinguishing trait in the children of God that each esteems others better than himself. The young convert in the fullness of the love of God newly shed abroad in his heart says, O how gladly would I mingle with the dear people of God if I were worthy. The lovely ordinance of baptism, how joyfully would I lay my poor, sinful body in the watery grave where Jesus laid, if I were worthy. The old travelers in our King's highway are often heard to say, If I had such a gift as my brethren and sisters have how I would delight to improve it. They sometimes think all their brethren are far before them in all that is excellent, and themselves less than the least of all saints. Unaspiring after preterment, in honor preferring one another. A minister is to be called to the work, but O, not I. Ah, Lord God, I cannot speak, for I am a child. (Jer. i. 6.) Is a deacon to be set apart to the work, every other brother seems better qualified than I. Now, while we hold that each member should be subject one to another, and abide the decision of the church as to where their place shall be, we still hold that it is a heaven-granted right each one saint may claim, in honor, to prefer one another. O that this spirit may prevail in all the church of God, and then what jealousies would have to die; what fires of hell would be quenched; what strife and bitterness would be banished from our borders. What is more lovely in nature, in families and in communities, than a kind and affectionate regard for the welfare and happiness of each other? a sight but too seldom witnessed. But in the church of God, the pillar and ground of truth, it is superlatively glorious, and as delightful as it is beautiful; especially so when all around in the world and in antichristian communities all is hatred, malice, wrath, strife, seditions, envies, murders and every abomination. Then how beautiful for situation is Mount Zion, in the sides of the north; the city of the great King!

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 1, 1866.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Ben Franklin Peters was born in Orange County, Ind., May 27th, 1832, and died at his home in Temple, Okla., May 7th, 1914, making his stay on earth 81 years, 11 months and 10 days. It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write this obituary. I have known brother Peters most of the time since he has been in Oklahoma, and to know him was to love him. He was married to Miss Phebea Keith, Feb. 28th, 1855. To that union were born five children, three girls and two boys, all of whom survive him. Sister Peters is very sick at this time. Brother Peters was a kind and affectionate husband, a loving father and a christian man, much devoted to the cause of Christ, and was well informed, as many of his dear friends know. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church at the age of twenty-three, and lived a devoted member for nearly sixty years, more than the average life. He moved from Indiana to Iowa in 1856. His membership was with the church in Iowa, where he joined nearly sixty years ago. He moved to Oklahoma in 1907, where he lived until his death. May the dear Lord bless and comfort dear sister Peters in her bereavement, and help her to be resigned to his holy will, and bless the dear children and grandchil-

dren. May they be prepared to cross over the valley and shadow of death fearing no evil, and meet their beloved father and grandfather in the sweet by and by, together with all the redeemed of the Lord.

The unworthy writer conducted the funeral services at the home of the deceased May 8th, after which the remains were laid to rest in the Temple Cemetery to await the resurrection morn, when the dead in Christ shall be raised and fashioned like unto His glorious body. M. G. JOHNSON.

Miss Susan Joanna Welling, youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Welling, departed this life May 11th, 1914, (in the house in which she was born Jan. 25th, 1839) aged 75 years. She had lived in several other places in and around Warwick. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Warwick Church by Elder Wm. L. Beebe, Sept. 30th, 1883, and remained a devoted and faithful member until called home. She had enjoyed good health until several weeks before her death, when she suffered from la grippe, but seemed to be much better and was up about her work until two or three hours before the end, when she was stricken with heart trouble. Her death was a sad shock to her many friends. In disposition she was cheerful, always trying to make others happy. The church has sustained a great loss in her death, but for her it is far better. She is survived by one sister: Mrs. Mary E. Kolyer, who is a member of the Warwick Church, and owing to the death of sister Welling has gone to make her home with her son in Summit, N. J. We shall all miss the kind, hospitable home, and deeply sympathize with sister Kolyer in her great loss.

The funeral services were held from the home, and were conducted by her pastor, the writer, and were largely attended. Interment took place in the Warwick Cemetery.

May the Lord help us all to bear our burdens and prepare us to rest from our labors and trials at last.

K.

Clifton Dance, the subject of this memoir, was the son of E. Scott and Susan R. Dance, and was born Feb. 9th, 1880, and died April 18th, 1914. Clifton was not a member of the church, but was strictly a moral young man and highly esteemed by all who knew him. He was employed by the Washington & Baltimore Electric Railway as conductor, and on April 18th was caught under a car and so badly crushed that he died in a few hours. He leaves a widow and two little boys, father, mother, one sister and four brothers, with a host of friends, to mourn his absence. His wife being a Methodist, a Methodist preacher had charge of his funeral, but the writer was present and made some remarks. The presence of many friends and the abundance of flowers bore witness to the popularity of the deceased. May the God of all grace bless and sustain each and all of the bereaved ones, and comfort them in the thought that their loved one shall arise at the last day with the glorified likeness of Jesus our Lord.

Written at the request of his sorrowing mother, our dear sister, Susan R. Dance.

In loving sympathy,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

MEMORIALS.

The Baltimore Association, in session with the Harford Church, desires to express their sorrow and felt sense of loss in the death of their dear brother and former pastor of some of their churches, **Elder F. A. Chick.** As a man, Elder Chick was one worthy of the very highest regard of every one. As a servant of God and the churches, he was one worthy of and enjoyed the fullest fellowship and best love of all his brethren. As an association we miss him, and feel that our loss is great, but his gain is greater. We desire to bow in submission to the God of all grace, knowing that he doeth all things well. We desire to thank him for the gift of so precious a brother for so many years, sound in the faith, clear in his expressions, able in his presentations of the simple gospel of Christ. We esteemed him highly in love for the works' sake. We desire to extend our heartfelt sympathy to our dear sister Chick, his children and the churches of his care in their bereavement, praying the blessings of the Lord upon them. May they be comforted in the blessed doctrine of the resurrection so ably and so earnestly preached by their loved one while he lived. May the Lord give us others as faithful and true.

ALSO,

Elder T. M. Poulson. As a frequent visitor to our association he had endeared himself to us as a true minister of Jesus Christ, and we extend our sympathy to the churches of his care, and trust that the Lord will supply their need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Moderator.

FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

(DELAWARE ASSOCIATION.)

As an association, we extend our sincere sympathy to the families and churches of those able, gifted and faithful ministers of the gospel, **Elder Thomas M. Poulson,** of Virginia, and **Elder Forris A. Chick,** of New Jersey, who have been called away from their labors on earth into the fullness of the joys of their Lord during the year that has intervened since the last session of this association. In Elder Chick, not only his family and the churches of his pastorate, but all the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, from ocean to ocean, and from the Dominion of Canada to

the Gulf of Mexico, who for nearly half a century have been cheered and comforted by his writings, and especially for the last twenty years, through his editorials as senior editor of that periodical, feel a sense of personal loss in his decease, but all feel that he filled up the full measure of the gift that was so abundantly bestowed on him, and can say of his work, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." Both of these able and fearless soldiers of the cross have attended most of the sessions of this association for more than forty years, and we sorely miss their able ministry and faithful counsel at our meetings. May the Lord reconcile us to his all-wise decrees, and raise up other able and faithful men to continue the work of the harvest, and may he also administer the blessed consolations of his word to the sorely bereaved families and brethren. Amen.

B. F. COULTER, Moderator.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, June 3rd, 1914, at the residence of Dugal Walker, in Rodney, Ont., Canada, Durand Campbell, of Duart, Ont., Canada, and Elizabeth Janes Vines, of Rodney.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 82. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1914. NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ST. THOMAS, Ontario.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—Having had some thoughts upon the words found in Proverbs v. 15, I will now endeavor to put them on paper for your consideration, and should you think them suitable for a place in the SIGNS you are at liberty to publish them. The words which have been on my mind are as follows: "Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well."

In considering this Scripture I will first call attention to the strange woman in verses three and four of the same chapter. Wisdom is here describing a certain character, and is warning her son to beware of her instruction and her deception: "For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: but her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two edged sword. Her feet go down to death, her steps take hold on hell." The spirit that animates this strange woman is the spirit of deception, which has its origin in the old serpent, and was manifested in the garden of Eden when the serpent beguiled our mother Eve. The serpent was more subtile than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made, and he said unto the woman, "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" In Gen. iii. 4, 5, the serpent said unto the woman: "Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." To have one's eyes opened, and to be as gods to know good and evil, was to be desired, and the fruit being pleasing to the sight and desired to make one wise, his words appealed to her natural pride, with which we are all tainted. To become as a god was to become famous among men, and to be held in high esteem, to be looked up to as a ruler, naturally would be desired by any of the offspring of Adam. The smooth words of the serpent took root in the nature of our mother Eve and brought forth fruit, and the fruit of deception still is to be found in the nature of all Adam's race. The words of deception are smooth and oily, and often are spoken by the spirit of the strange woman to puff up or deceive the children of God. For instance, when a poor serv-

ant of the Lord is blessed with sweet liberty in preaching the gospel to the comfort of his children, Satan takes advantage of his pride and says to him, You preached a wonderful sermon today. His words are smooth, and taking root in his nature bring forth fruit: pride and vanity, and also nurture that seed sown by the cunning craftiness of the deceiver, and those who listen sometimes forget to look beyond the watchman, and they give all praise and glory to man. O let us beware of the spirit of this strange woman and her smooth words. O that we may heed the warning of Wisdom given here. Her feet go down to death, her steps take hold on hell.

"Drink waters out of thine own cistern." The preacher has been exalted and filled with pride, as have also those who heard him. Now it is needful for him to drink waters from his own cistern of humiliation. The same poor and dependent servant of God has now no liberty in preaching, shut up in his mind, the Scriptures are sealed to him, his tongue becomes stammering, his words awkward, he is drinking the bitter waters from his own cistern, or experience of humiliation. O how needful to drink these bitter and painful waters, that we be humbled and brought low, that all praise and glory be given to the Lord, who opens and none can shut, and shuts and none can open. It is needful that we are often brought to know where our strength lies, and that we keep in remembrance that the preparation of the heart and answer of the tongue are of the Lord. To see others brought down low in the valley of humiliation is not so painful for us as to have that experience for ourselves. In all the phases of christian experience there must be a personal application of the Spirit. For instance, to repeat the prayer of the poor publican: "God be merciful to me a sinner," is one thing, and to feel it in its fullness, to feel in need of mercy, and that only the mercy of God can reach such poor, needy sinners as we know ourselves to be, is altogether another thing. One is drinking water from the anguish of a broken heart, calling upon the Lord for mercy, and the other would be only form, what we might justly term drawing from broken cisterns which hold no water. We must have the water of consolation applied to our own troubled souls; that which consoled others, although being of the same Spirit of grace, will do us no good until it is applied to our own soul's experience. The blood of the lamb was sprinkled on the doorpost of every Israelite, so must every sinner feel the sprinkling of the blood of our adorable Redeemer in his own conscience. We must have the witness within, the longing of our own souls must be satisfied in order that we rejoice in the things of the kingdom of God; we must experience them for ourselves. The strange woman with her smooth mouth and plausible words will often lead astray the children of the Lord. With her cunning and winning manners she entices us to take some part in the pleasure of the world, and paves the way that our conscience will become seared as with a hot iron, until we see no harm in any worldly pleasure. A picnic is no harm, says the strange woman with her smooth and oily mouth; just come out for a day, it will do you good, and see some simple and harmless games played; certainly there is no harm in watching a ball game or seeing a horse race, and ere we are aware we are in her net, and are off with the strange woman to feed upon such unwholesome food. It is no food to our poor, famishing souls, but it feeds that nature of ours. O let

us beware, take heed, her feet go down to death, her steps take hold on hell. We may drink water from our own cisterns in such experience and know the very truth of the words of the apostle: "For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."—Gal. vi. 8. If we have listened to the words of the strange woman, and have partaken of her fruits, we have gone with her upon the broad road; let us ask ourselves, Are we letting our light so shine before men that they may see our good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven?

Just here comes into my mind a scene in a garden of long ago; it was not a garden that flourished with worldly pleasures, but quite the reverse—a garden of the most intense suffering. We saw the most lovely character that our eyes ever beheld kneeling upon the ground beneath a great and mighty burden, which wrung from the anguish of his heart a fervent prayer: "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."—Luke xxii. 42–44. O stop, dear child of God, and listen to the fervent prayer of this most lovely character. What does all his suffering mean? Is he sweating those great drops of blood for me, and I so forgetful of him, having listened to the smooth words of the strange woman, I who once felt that this dear Jesus suffered for me and bore my sins in his own body on that eventful night, yet I so forgetful of his love and mercy to me, a poor sinner, that I should ever be captivated by the plausible and enticing words of the strange woman, and be led by her into worldly pleasures? O Lord, keep us from the snares of this deceiver. O that we may drink water from our own cistern, and learn in such experience that the way of the transgressor is hard. Truly God is not mocked, for that which we sow we shall also reap. The words that come to others, bringing to them peace and quietness, stilling the tempest in their souls, will not bring peace and quietness to us until they are spoken directly to us. We must drink of the waters of salvation and feel the healing influence of them in our own souls. Jesus must be a personal Savior to each subject of his grace, we must feel the forgiveness of our sins in order that we may know Jesus as our Savior. In this we drink from our own cistern, or experience, and running waters out of our own well. It appears to me that those running waters are the promises of God which come to every child of God, bringing the sweetness they contain, and, being running waters, they find their way to every needy soul in every quarter of the globe, east, west, north and south, and they flow out to and into every nation, kindred and tongue where the Lord's poor and afflicted people are. Running waters, as promises of God, began before time, when God chose his people in Christ Jesus. There and then centered in him all the promises of God, for all the promises are yea and amen in Christ Jesus. Jesus stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world in the eternal purpose of God, and this promise is sure to the chosen of God through all time. Jesus as the Lamb of God is the spotless Lamb offered up for the sins of his people, and by this one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.

A promise was made to Abraham: "That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore: and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies: and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed: because thou hast obeyed my voice."—Gen. xxii. 17, 18. This promise, not to the seeds as of many, but to the one seed, and that seed is Christ, in whom all the nations of the earth are blessed, has been and is being fulfilled whenever and wherever a child of God is brought from nature's darkness and translated into his marvelous light as he experiences that sweet hope and rest in the forgiveness of his sins. This is drinking running water out of our own well, or experience. Jesus said, And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end. This promise of the blessed Lord was not confined to his apostles alone, but is broad and takes in every vessel of God's love and mercy, and every object of his love drinks from his or her own well as the felt presence of their Savior is manifested in their souls, dispersing the clouds of darkness, binding up their broken hearts, pouring in the oil and the wine to heal the wound that sin has made. He is with us alway, even in the most distressing hour; he is there to soothe our sorrows. Prisons will palaces prove if Jesus will dwell with us there. The fulfillment of all the promises of God to his people through Jesus Christ our Lord will be completed and fulfilled when he shall come the second time without sin unto salvation, when he shall descend with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall be raised first; then we that live and remain shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, to be caught up in the air with the Lord, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. This we cannot drink of here in time, but we have the earnest of it, so when it shall be fulfilled we shall see him as he is and be like him; then shall we be satisfied.

J. B. SLAUSON.

MATTHEW XVI. 18, 19.

"I SAY also unto thee, That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

It has been requested that I write such views as I have upon this text, and also upon the following verse, which reads as follows: "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven."

The first expression, which is found in the eighteenth verse, has been thought by some to mean that God would build his church upon Peter, and that he was the rock spoken of, but this is far from the true meaning, if I understand the Savior's expression, for this would conflict with many other Scriptures. The apostle Paul in his letter to the Corinthian brethren gave them to plainly understand that other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Also it would conflict with the Lord's word in Isaiah xxviii. 16, which reads: "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation," and if Peter was the rock upon which Christ was to build his church, then another foundation than that which is laid would be introduced, and this also would be in contradiction to what the apostle Peter himself declared in 1 Peter ii. 6–8, for he said: "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a

chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense." The apostle Paul in Romans ix. 32, 33, said: "Wherefore? Because they [Jews] sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; as it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." This stone that was laid in Zion was a stumblingstone to the Jews, and it has been a stumbling to those who would undertake to prove that Christ was going to build his church upon Peter, for Peter himself refutes such an interpretation in 1 Peter ii. 6-8; also the apostle Paul in his letter to the Ephesian brethren told them that now they were no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens of the saints and of the household of God, and were built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord, for he says they are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit, and Christ said to the Jews, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders (Jews) rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? and that this was the stone that is set at nought of you builders, and it is marvelous in our eyes. Hence we would not for a moment have Christ's meaning of the text to infer that Peter was the rock or foundation upon which Christ would build his church, for if so, then another foundation would be laid other than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul said, "According to the grace of God given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." The apostle said to his brethren, Ye as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Hence this great building is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, in whom all this wonderful building is so fitly framed together; yes, fitly framed together. How complete is this building! As lively stones they are built up a spiritual house. What a wonderful building is this church that is built upon this rock; how wonderful must be its structure: fitly framed together, builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit, fitted together by joints and bands which every joint supplieth, a building of God, a house not made with hands. Every house is built by some man, but he that built all things is God; so let us look at this mighty structure, let us walk about Zion and mark well her bulwarks, and consider her

palaces, that we may tell the towers thereof; this Zion, the city of our solemnities, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, or one of the cords be broken; for the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein goeth no galley with oars, or gallant ships pass by. "And upon this rock I will build my church." "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation," and other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ; hence we must conclude that Christ himself was the rock upon which he would build his church, and thou art Peter; and now Peter understands these things, that upon this rock, Christ Jesus, I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall never, no, never, prevail against it, for it is built upon myself. I am a stone, a tried stone, a precious stone, a sure foundation, a chief corner stone; I am the head stone of the corner, I am the stone that was set at nought of you builders, which is made the head of the corner. Paul said, We preach Christ and him crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness, but unto them that are called, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

The nineteenth verse reads: "I will give unto thee [Peter] the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." The pope of Rome, it is said, claims to be the successor of Peter, and that the keys of the kingdom of heaven also descended unto him; at least this has been affirmed by some, yet I do not know if this is claimed by the pope. Also that the pope has the power to bind and loose as Peter had. The point I wish to dwell upon is, what were the keys of the kingkom of heaven? I have understood from many scriptural references that the kingdom of heaven Christ had reference to was the kingdom of heaven that Christ and his apostles came preaching was then at hand, which was ushered in with many infallible proofs, such as the raising of the dead, healing the sick, cleansing the lepers and casting out devils, opening the eyes of the blind, unstopping the ears of the deaf, causing the lame to walk and the healing of all manner of diseases; these were the many proofs of the power of Christ and his kingdom, and this kingdom I understand to be none other than the church that Christ built upon that rock, Christ Jesus, for when Israel journeyed in the wilderness they were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and ate of that spiritual food and drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ. While to Peter was given the keys of the kingdom of heaven (or church), yet we do not understand that to Peter was given anything more than the other disciples, for in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, where Christ is instructing all his disciples how to deal with an erring brother, he says, If he shall neglect to hear thee, tell it unto the church, but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen and a publican. He then adds, "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." We also read in John xx. 21–23, where he ap-

peared unto his disciples in the evening, after he arose from the dead, and had shewed them his hands and side, he said, "Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed upon them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." Therefore the keys of the kingdom given unto Peter were no more than those given to the others, and had the same meaning, which was the power to bind or loose in the churches, and is simply the authority given them from heaven to maintain the order and discipline of the house of God, as in the case of the apostle Paul when he instructed the Corinthian brethren to set their house in order, by delivering that one who had married his father's wife over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of Jesus Christ. In another case he said he had delivered Philetus and Alexander over to Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme, and the apostle Peter in pronouncing judgment against Ananias, and Sapphira his wife, who had kept back part of the price of their land, and also the seven churches of Asia were instructed to set their house in order. There had false doctrines crept in among them, and must be put away; and in one church that woman, Jezebel, was seducing God's servants, and she must be put out, and whatsoever the church binds on earth, the same stands bound in heaven; therefore the keys of the kingdom of heaven are the power to bind or loose by the church, which is to maintain the order and doctrine of the church, and brethren learn an act of a church when prompted by the Spirit of God is binding on earth and in heaven. There has no one any right to lord it over God's heritage, and there seems to be no delegated power on earth that is higher than the church, and her ruling and decisions are bound to be respected, for what she binds on earth stands recorded, or bound, in heaven.

NEWTON PETERS.

OUR SPIRIT.

"THE Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."—Rom. viii. 16.

The Holy Spirit, or Holy Ghost, beareth witness, testifies to the same truth that our spirit testifies to, viz., "That we are the children of God." This fact being established in the mouth of two important witnesses, becomes a certainty that we are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." There seems to be no doubt among believers about the meaning of the words: "the Spirit," "the Holy Spirit," "the Spirit of God," though no man can define the word Spirit in any way, but we just confess that the word means God, but there is a doubt among believers about what the words "our spirit" mean in the Scripture cited above. If we take the position that "our spirit" here means our fleshly, natural spirit, how then can it know anything of the Spirit of God, believing as we do, that natural things are naturally discerned, and that spiritual things are spiritually discerned? I hope I am not wrong when I say that I believe there can be found among the children of men both spirits: a natural spirit that accompanies the flesh, and a heavenly spirit that testifies of Jesus and of the powers of the world to come. It is not in accordance with Baptist teaching to say that our natural spirit bears witness with the Holy Ghost, or that the Spirit of

our God bears witness with our natural, fleshly spirit. We cannot tell what a spirit is, but we know that a spirit hath not flesh and bones. None can worship God only those who worship him in spirit and in truth. The hour now is, "when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."—John iv. 23, 24. The spirit in which we worship God is given us of God, or else it would be impossible for us to worship him. Why should we oppose the thought that God gives us a new spirit in the kingdom of grace, when Paul expressly says that he is the Father of spirits? A holy writer of old declares that the Lord said he would give the outcasts of Israel a new spirit. (Ezek. xi. 19; xxxvi. 26.) It is only by and with this new spirit that we can know and worship God. They who have been sanctified (set apart) by God the Father "are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Enough Scripture has been cited to show that no natural spirit of man can worship God; that the new spirit must come from God, and that in this spirit God's people worship him. I have observed the order of the Scriptures in writing the word "spirit," whether in a small or large "S," that we may not have any conflict on that ground, for sometimes the size of a letter may mean a world's difference from that of another. If the man of God in his journey through this world had only the natural spirit of man to lead him, why then does the apostle John in writing to the "beloved" say, Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God? From this it seems in early days that there were many false prophets gone out into the world. "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God [that is, every spirit that has come from God]: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God."—1 John iv. 1–3. One spirit is called the Spirit of Christ, the other the spirit of antichrist. One the Spirit of truth, the other the spirit of error. It seems that all of the spiritual household of God who comprehend the deep mysteries connected with the salvation of sinners must do so through the spirit given unto them. That disciples of Jesus may at times be led by a different spirit is shown in Luke ix. 55, where Jesus rebuked his disciples for manifesting carnal desires, and said unto them, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. This spirit that the disciples manifested did not comprehend any wisdom from God. They did not serve the Lord in that spirit, or else Jesus would not have rebuked them. Those who serve the Lord do so "in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." Ministers of the new covenant are made able ministers through the Spirit, and not through the "letter" or forms of old time. This "ministration of the spirit" is glorious, though natural eyes cannot see the glory or the natural spirit comprehend it. Something real is imparted to man before he becomes a believer in the riches of God's grace. If this were not true, how could he come up from the grave which all men have fallen in, except in "newness of spirit"? I think the "newness of spirit" is "the earnest of the Spirit," which Paul speaks about in 2 Cor. i. 22, and v. 5. Earnest is something real; it is not mythical or lacking in real substance. Earnest is a

pledge given of a promise made which seals the recipient in the bundle of grace which contains all the promises of God in Christ Jesus the Lord, making him secure, without the shadow of a doubt, to the end, or final fulfillment of the stipulations embraced in the real pledge given, though centuries roll between the time of the giving of the pledge and the time of the redemption of it. The earnest so well secures the full crop that the gates of hell, the devil and all his angels cannot prevail against it. It is in the old way, made known unto Abraham by promise, and confirmed by the oath of God; these are two immutable things: first, God's promise that is unchangeable, and second, his oath in his own name, puts an end to all strife, so that any warfare that may be waged against this way shall never prosper. All opposition to the crowning of God's saints is decreed to come to naught. Again, to try to illustrate the meaning of "the earnest of the Spirit," I might say that earnest means an advance payment that secures the fulfillment of the promise in the time to come. Then the child of God in his believing state has received the gift called by the apostle "the earnest of the Spirit," "the first fruits of the Spirit," and more nearly expressed to our understanding in 2 Cor. iv. God hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. This shining in our hearts is a treasure, a given treasure, a heavenly treasure, the germ of immortality, or an advance manifestation of eternal life. Paul to Titus calls this treasure, "In hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began." "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."—2 Cor. iv. 7. God put this treasure in earthen vessels, man did not do it, hence the power is all of God; all excellence is of God; we did nothing to bring God down, unless it be our vile sinning, which sent us to the bottom of that horrible pit and miry clay from which it was impossible to extricate ourselves. "Our spirit" is the evidence of things not seen, and is itself in evidence that we are the children of God; but it does not stand alone, the Spirit of God confirms and is with it. The spirit of man rejects all testimony relating to the power of the Spirit in the quickening and in the confirming of sinners in the faith of God's elect.

This is at the disposal of the editors of the SIGNS.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., May 12, 1914.

NEW YORK, N. Y., June 6, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have just read your article on the word "Alone," and as you express the hope that the brethren and sisters will continue to write I feel impressed to contribute, as it were, my mite to the columns of the SIGNS. While all the readers of the SIGNS will greatly miss Elder Chick's writings, his departure will be more keenly felt by you because of the additional burdens placed upon your shoulders. Had this been all, you could no doubt have borne up valiantly beneath the load, but, for reasons better known unto the Lord, he has seen fit to touch you more deeply in taking away your dearest and most helpful helpmate, thus magnifying a hundredfold your already state of loneliness. But, dear brother, in this hour when you have so many reasons to feel alone, at home and abroad, I recall that our blessed Jesus had similar experiences. He was

heard to say on one occasion, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Again, he gave vent to the anguish of his soul in the words, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" When one is brought into the place where the very heartstrings of his inmost soul are made to vibrate with the echo of such cords as these, it seems to me there should be consolation in the fact that Jesus traveled the same road, and that just so sure that one is made a partaker of his sorrows and sufferings, even that sure will he partake of his joys. They must tread the winepress alone, and of all the people there can be none with them. The Lord's way is to bring his people one by one, to lead them into paths they have not seen and ways hitherto unknown, that they may not trust in man or the arm of flesh, but that they may look to him alone for deliverance.

If I may attempt to write upon a quotation of Scripture, I would like to offer some thoughts on the language of the psalmist in the seventy-seventh Psalm, the latter portion of the thirteenth verse: "Who is so great a God as our God?" This question can only be answered in the negative, for surely there is no likeness to our God in the heavens above or the earth beneath. Now I do not understand that we are taught this only by reading the Scriptures. No, we must have the witness within. If the only evidences we have of God's mighty power, his infinite wisdom, his never-ending mercy and eternal, unchangeable love was the testimony found in the Bible, it seems to me we would have a sandy foundation upon which to build our hope of salvation, but, thanks be unto God, we have something more vital, more personal than that. It is not sufficient for us to read that David felt there was no God so great as our God, but our own life must be a true witness to the fact that he is the God that worketh wonders. I started to say "a" God that worketh wonders, but he is "the" God, the only God. It must be an individual matter with us. To us his name must be Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Prince of Peace, the Everlasting Father. He must be known unto us as the one who hath delivered our feet from the pit of miry clay, the one who hath placed our feet upon the rock, even that rock upon which Jesus declared he would build his church and the gates of hell should not prevail against it. But how is he to be made flesh unto us, and how are we to know that he has taken upon himself the likeness of sinful flesh and dwells among us? It seems to me that the experience of the psalmist as related in this Psalm must be the experience of every child of God. The writer begins by saying, "I cried unto God with my voice; even unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me." Let us bring it home. Have we ever known what it was to cry unto God? Was there not a time with us when we felt to be outcasts in the land of Assyria, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world? We sank into what seemed to us the very belly of hell, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched, realizing that we had no right to even dare hope for mercy. As the psalmist continues: "My sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted. I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed and I was so troubled that I could not speak. Then did we inquire, Will the Lord cast off for ever?

Is his mercy clean gone for ever, and hath he forgotten to be gracious?" Dear brother, it seems to me that we must be brought into these places before we can be delivered from them. Christ must suffer the ignominious death on the cross of Calvary before he is raised in glory. But when we have gone down into the depths, where there is no standing, where there seems no eye to pity, no arm to save, and yet at God's own time be made to realize that his everlasting arm is underneath, that he is still the unchangeable God, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning, and that he will ever keep his promise never to leave nor forsake his people, we must confess that there is great comfort in resting upon his firm decrees and sweet promises. He says, I will be with thee in the sixth trouble, and in the seventh I will not forsake thee, and as we review our deliverances in the past and behold the wonders he hath wrought in our own lives, that the way we thought was unto death has been the way of life, and the many times as we have journeyed that we have seen the dead raised up, the lame to leap as an hart, the blind receive their sight, the deaf ears unstopped and the stammering tongue let loose to speak the praise of our God, and even when storms are at their worst and we feel we must sink and perish, to behold him riding upon the angry billows that would swallow us up and saying, Be not afraid, it is I, like one of old we feel to say, It is enough. His disciples did not recognize him until he had made himself known unto them, neither do we understand his ways and judgments until he gives us eyes of faith to look beyond the things that are seen to those which are not seen and behold him as the Captain of our salvation, then we are renewed and can say, He is at the helm of this great ship and will pilot us safely home. He came to save that which was lost, and sometimes I have thought it a wonderful blessing to be made to feel lost, not knowing which way to turn, but standing still and waiting on the Lord; then when he comes and takes us by the hand and leads us to his banqueting-house, where there is a feast of fat things and wine well refined, how can we refuse to join with the psalmist in saying, "Who is so great a God as our God?"

In conclusion, I want to repeat that it is not enough for us to know that he preserved Moses in a most wonderful way when his little life was being sought by King Pharaoh; that he wrought wonders before the eyes of the Israelites in bringing them up out of Egypt and leading them through the wilderness, causing living waters to gush out of their flinty rock trials; that he should lock the jaws of the lions when Daniel was cast into their den; that the flames could not kindle upon the three Hebrew children when they were cast into the furnace heated seven times hot; that he should strike Saul down at the time and in the manner that he did; that he should send an earthquake to loosen the bands and open the gates of the prison in which Peter was bound while the disciples prayed without; no, I say this is not enough, the true witness must be able to say, I have seen, I have tasted and handled, and know for myself, and not another; then it is when such an one can read the experiences of the prophets, apostles and all Bible writers, or the children born of that kingdom eternal in the heavens, not made with the hands of man, but who are the workmanship created in Christ Jesus before the world began, and there is something within saying, Amen to it all, and can see their life clearly described by the writer or the

speaker, then are they comforted and built up together on that most holy faith. We are brought together as one, and are testifying with one of old that, Other things did Jesus, the which if they were told the world itself could not contain the books that it would take to describe the greatness of our God and the wonders of his grace in saving poor, wretched sinners. It seems to me we can only receive the Scriptures to our comfort in the measure that we see our lives set forth and the promises made applicable to us. We must find our life written in that Book of books. This is the evidence that is worth while, and the only kind that the God who gave his only begotten Son as an offering for his chosen people will consider. I feel that I would love above all else to set forth the greatness of our God, but the words at my command utterly fail me, and for fear I will weary my readers, if this finds its way to the columns of the SIGNS, I will submit.

In much love, I am your unworthy brother,

R. LESTER DODSON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., June 5, 1914.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER: —I feel like expressing a few thoughts in your good paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I do enjoy reading the messages from the brethren, many of whose faces I have never seen, but to read their experiences draws me near to them, and I am sure they are all taught of the Lord. Paul said to Timothy, Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things. If the Lord does not give us understanding we can never have it. He speaks and it is done; he says to the troubled waves, Be still, and there is a calm. Jesus taught as man never taught, and did wonderful things, such as healing the sick, making the blind see, the lame walk, healing the woman who had an issue of blood for twelve years, cleansing the leprous, but men say it was a "myth," like dividing the Red Sea so the ransomed of the Lord could pass through dry shod, which the Egyptians endeavored to do and were all drowned. He said, All power is given me, power to lay down my life and power to take it again, all for the sake of his dear people. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." The Lord's people are a peculiar people, chosen out of every kindred and nation; many are called, but few are chosen; not many mighty, not many wise, but the poor of this world, poor in spirit, but rich in mercy. He says, I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins will I remember no more. The words of the psalmist seem sweet to me. He said, "My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord." He also said, Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord, forever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? How long shall mine enemy be exalted over me? I waited patiently for the Lord, and he heard my cry, he set my feet upon a rock, he established my goings. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory for thy mercy and thy truth's sake. His mercy endureth forever. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace. The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord; he is their strength in time of trouble. The Lord knows all his people: They shall be my people, and I

will be their God. He calls them his sheep: My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me, and I give them eternal life, and none shall perish. Feed my sheep; feed my lambs. He speaks of his chosen people: You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you. If you abide in me I abide in you. I am the true vine, my Father is the husbandman. All branches that bear not fruit are cast aside and burned; all branches that bear fruit he purgeth, that they may bear more fruit. The branches cannot bear fruit without the vine. Jesus said, Greater love hath no man than to lay down his life for his friends. There is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother; he died and rose again for our justification, that we might be redeemed of the Lord, one with him. He came not to do his own will, but the will of his Father that sent him. He died on the cross that his people might be saved. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and was led as a lamb to the slaughter, not a word from his lips. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and blessing. Without him we are helpless. All things we have, or ever can have, come through him. The fields are his, the cattle on the thousand hills are his. In him we live, move and have our being. A merciful and gracious God, a God of truth, without iniquity, just and right is he, our Lord, our salvation. He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. He searcheth the hearts of men, he knoweth them that are his. Oft it causes anxious thought, Am I his, or am I not? I feel to be the least among the brethren, as prone to err as the sparks are to fly upward; when I would do good, evil is present with me; the good that I would I do not, and evil thoughts are continually suggesting things that I ought not to do. The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; one contrary to the other. Miserable, fleshly thoughts drive away good and pure thoughts; an outcast, an outsider, but I trust he who rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth will save his people from their sins. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. "We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." We can trust him. I am not ashamed to own my Lord, nor to defend his cause. Why should I be ashamed, when I know by my experience that he is all and in all to me, our God, and there is none beside him? He has promised never to leave or forsake one of his children. Let them be ever so small they are all alike to him, and he takes them in his arms and carries them in his bosom; they shall all know him, from the least to the greatest. They "spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as

a man spareth his own son that serveth him." He will discern between the wicked and the righteous, between them that serveth him and them that serveth him not. We are told not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is. Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst. I have attended several of those meetings when there were but two or three beside the pastor, and they were sweet to me, the same gospel truths proclaimed as if the house had been full of people. We greatly miss our dear pastor, Elder Chick, who was a man with a sweet disposition, a lovely character, without spot or blemish, always seeming the same way. I often wished I could be like him. I never heard him speak illy of any one. He was a good husband, a good father, a good neighbor; such men must be missed, and his memory will not be forgotten. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be his name. We sorrow not as those who have no hope. The Lord said, Be of good courage, I will strengthen you all, ye that hope in the Lord. What shall I render unto the Lord for all the benefits he has bestowed upon me? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the Lord. Be strong in the Lord. What faith and confidence to say, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake." "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil." "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." We love to sing the sweet words, Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown him Lord of all. Salvation is of the Lord; in no other way is there any salvation. The adulterated salvation that men are claiming is a myth. We must crown him Lord of all. His crown cannot be divided; if so, it would be an empty crown. We believe that every hair of our head is numbered. Thus far shall you go, and no farther. Be still and know that I am God, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, our God. Jacob was the lot of his inheritance; he found him in a waste howling wilderness, kept him as the apple of his eye, led him about and instructed him. As the eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, taketh them and beareth them, so the Lord alone led Jacob, and there was no strange God with him; and that is the way he leads all his children, and not one shall be lost.

I have written more than I intended at the start, but there seems to be no stopping-place for God's sweet words and promises, they are from everlasting to everlasting. I feel to say with Ruth, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee. Where thou goest will I go, and where thou lodgest there will I lodge; where thou diest there will I die, and there will I be buried.

From a poor, trembling brother in a precious hope,

D. L. BLACKWELL.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., June 26, 1914.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—In reading your very touching editorial, "Alone," I was prompted to write you a few lines at once, telling you how my very being was stirred at your words, but a hesitancy prevented me, which I always realize when attempting to write anything which I think may appear in your columns. But as the impression still remains, I am yielding, remembering the sweet enjoyment I have found in this way, of forming an acquaintance with some dear kindred in this sacred relationship. Your article was so full and so real that one could not help realizing your deep sorrow and great loss, which I am sure has reached many sympathizing hearts, for in the vast number who read the SIGNS there must be many who feel "alone," but not many doubly bereaved at the same time. You have lost your life companion, the mother of your dear children, making your home desolate, also your brother editor, leaving you without help in such an important work, but He who has promised to comfort all that mourn will surely fulfill his promise and give help in every time of need. How many will miss the comforting words and faithful ministry of dear Elder Chick, but none like his own beloved and now sorely bereaved household. How painful in the dear home, now so lonely, to see the vacant chair, and to hear the dear voice no more, and how bitter to realize that its affectionate tones are silent. When I read his last editorial my heart trembled, for it seemed that, like Paul, he was saying farewell to all on earth, and that he fully realized he was soon to leave these fading scenes, but with the full assurance of entering a home where there is no more pain or sorrow, but joy unspeakable and full of glory. I have been reading over again the last few numbers of the SIGNS, beginning with the February number, which contains the last writing of Elder Chick, and surely this and every article is worthy of being read over and over. In the first, "Great is the mystery of godliness," we see some of this mystery unfolded in the clear language of one of the Lord's dear servants. The next is the rich experience of Elder Tharp, which I doubt not has enabled him to comfort many downcast souls. Then comes the sweet letter from sister Wright, of California, which it seems to me could not be read without the deepest emotion. Surely she has long possessed "the pen of a ready writer." Each communication in this and the following numbers seems to have a clearer meaning than when I first read it. Some of them appear to be written out of my own heart. What wondrous love is this, causing those who have never met in this life to be drawn together in such sweet companionship and heavenly union. Some far, far away, separated by high mountains and broad rivers rolling between, and many across the wide, wide sea and in distant islands, yet as one of these takes up a paper and reads how some poor soul who was hungering and thirsting after righteousness and has been filled from the great Fountain of eternal love, which is better than wine, then does the heart reach out in fellowship for that one, however far away.

I notice that sister Harriet Larue has entered into rest. It is many years since I last met this beloved sister, but there was a time in the past when I was favored to enjoy her companionship for a season, and ever since I have had great esteem for her, and she has been dear to my heart. In the same number is the

obituary of sister Hannah Jenkins, whom I also dearly loved. I have had many spiritual letters traced by her dear hand. How lonely and empty the world appears when loved ones are taken from us. It seems that they grow dearer as the years pass, and how sweet when they sometimes come to us in dreams which bring afresh the years that are gone and the hallowed scenes of the past. But O how good when the mind is permitted to search out and contemplate the unspeakable joy into which our dear ones have entered and the peace which is beyond all understanding. I cannot tell how lonely is our dear home since our beloved Clarice is with us no more. We miss her dear presence all the time, for she was a sweet reliance, even when she could not leave her room.

"But we know she has gone where her forehead is starred
With the beauty that dwelt in her soul;
Where the light of her loveliness cannot be marred,
Nor her heart be flung back from its goal."

With love to all our dear kindred, from an unworthy sister,

BESSIE DURAND.

CLAREMONT, Cal., May 19, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been asked to give my understanding of Luke x. 21, also some other questions that I can, as far as is expedient, answer in the body of this letter. Hoping that you can give room for it I am submitting it to you.

"In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

This and other language of nearly the same wording in other places in the gospels, is Christ's language after showing how impossible it is for those to whom the truth has not been revealed to have any conception of the workings of Christ in doing the Father's will. In verses just before this he says that it will be more tolerable for Sodom than the cities that would not under the then present conditions receive the gospel, for if the mighty works that he and they were then doing had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have long ago repented in sackcloth and ashes, and hear him tell them that they should not rejoice that they can do these wonders, but that they rather should rejoice that their names were written in heaven, explaining in verse twenty-two, "All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him." "He turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: for I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things that ye hear, and have not heard them." Speaking of prophets and kings, let us go back to that old patriarch, Job, who was so afflicted, and see what he has to say in the twenty-eighth chapter. After telling how all natural things have signs whereby they may be detected, that gold and silver lie in veins, and speaking of natural wisdom generally, then he says, "There is a path that no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen: the lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it." This is the path that all of God's chosen ones tread, and praise be to God, it is so hidden from those who would defile it that the eye of the fowl, the ravenous fowls, nor the most keen-scented of

animals can even suspect it; no, only the babes to whom the Son hath revealed it can know it. O how beautifully he keeps it hidden from those who would buy it or procure it in any other way than by the grace of God. "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me." Yes, and it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. Yes, God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform, and after we receive so much comfort from these sweet promises we are brought to where Paul said, O who shall deliver me from the body of this death? and called himself the chief of sinners, and said that he died daily. Then we want to sing that dear old hymn, "'Tis a point I long to know," &c. This is the all-important question, and it brings us to where he told his disciples to not rejoice over the power that they had had given them, but rather rejoice that their names were written in heaven. O, if we could be sure at all times that our names are written there; yet when we receive that hope, however small it may be, we learn that it is more to be desired than all earthly attainments, and though we often have to go back to where we first felt to know him, we can get comfort from the fact that after we have once found them, we love the brethren. Why do we love them? Because they have found the way that we hope we have found, and when they tell of their travels through nature to the very path that can only be shown to those who have had the leadings of God's hand, we recognize them as fellow-travelers, and know them to be worthy the name they hold.

But why should I be writing to those who know more of those paths than I can ever hope to know? Yes, I, who have been a castaway from all those that I loved, I who have suffered that which as a rule incapacitates a person for ever attaining anything of consequence. But thanks be to God, whose presence I have been made to feel with that all-conquering trust, and which I was given power to express when every man's hand seemed to be against me, he has seen fit to fulfill that which seemed to me to be a promise, restoring to me all that was dear and sacred, and making it possible to attain more than I had ever hoped to attain. Yea, he has restored to me all that I had and more. Let God be praised and man abased. In the language of the prophet Isaiah, Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?

I used to wonder, when my father and mother would go so far every month, he to preach the gospel and she to listen with rapt attention to the words as they fell from his lips, if I should ever see the time when I would so love to go, and that if I should have such a dear, attentive, motherly companion to go with me. Since the time that I could see that picture in my mind's eye I have been sorely tried; surely I have been afflicted, but I feel that such great afflictions are all that would bring me to this path, if so be that I do know anything about these truths that are revealed only to babes. But in truth can I say that I have experienced, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him," and whom can I praise for this blessed trust? None other than Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who saves to the uttermost. Yea, none other can do anything for such a rebel as I. It must be some power that cannot be turned aside, some power if needs be can move earth, heaven and hell, that he whose name is written in heaven may not be lost. O if I only had the assurance that my name is written there I would

know that all the darts of Satan, let him buffet me as he might, I would at the last triumph over him, through the power of Jesus' blood that was shed on Calvary as a ransom for all those whom the Father gave him before the foundation of the earth was laid. O how blest we should feel ourselves to be for that wee, small spark of hope that our sins are forgiven; even the hope that I sometimes feel to have is worth millions of years of suffering. But to return. Yes, I would wonder if ever I should be so situated, and now, when by the grace of his sovereign love and mercy, by permission of my dear brethren, I am permitted in my stammering way try to tell of some of these truths that I know are only for babes to know, and look into the faces of dear, kind brethren, whose presence I feel so unworthy of, and to see the weeping eyes of that dear one whom God has seen fit to bring to me as a companion in my afflictions, I am made to declare, God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. O how good he has been to me. How can I ever repay him for his loving-kindness? It is impossible. If it were possible that I might live for a million years without committing sin, the sins already committed would doom me to eternal punishment. Only by his taking upon himself my sin can I be pardoned; this is the only way of escape, and now my prayer is, that when I am called to depart this life that he may give me the restful assurance it was my lot to experience about nine years ago. If when I am to go I can experience that trustfulness that I then felt I will have no fear but that my name is written there. But since that time I am often found trying to hope that I have a hope. But we read that on one occasion a man said, Lord, I believe, and with the next breath he said, Lord, help my unbelief. So we have some comfort in the thought that doubts and fears are common among his people. May God's little ones be comforted everywhere.

Your little brother, if one at all,

OLIVER P. SPEIRS.

HAMPTON, Iowa, Feb. 19, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I inclose a letter from C. J. Johnson, as it was very comforting to me, and I would like to see it published in the SIGNS. He is not a member of the church, as he has always felt too unworthy. He was left an orphan, and is now about forty-five years of age. I have known him since he was a little child.

I have just read the SIGNS of the 15th inst., and every number seems to get better, and I could not get along without it. I read it to my wife, as she cannot see to read.

I hope that your dear wife is improving. I am improving slowly, but am still very weak in body.

Yours in gospel bonds,

E. A. NORTON.

NORA SPRINGS, Iowa, Feb. 7, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER NORTON:—Is it possible that I have ever tasted of the Lord's graciousness? Sometimes I am made to feel that I have tasted a few crumbs from the Master's table, which gives me a little hope of eternal life, but, Elder Norton, I am not worthy of anything, let alone a taste of his love and redeeming grace, and I am glad that this life and implantation of divine nature cannot be bartered or given away; but even if it could, we would not give it for all earthly pleasures, for all earthly things must come to naught, but the love of the Lord endureth forever. The Lord's will

be done, whether I am his or not, for having all power in heaven and in earth, and working all things after the counsel of his own will and for the purpose of his own glory, he never can fail in his work, for it is a finished work from the beginning. Man's will was not consulted in the creation, neither was it in the redemption, for the Scriptures say that he created us all subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope; so now, Elder Norton, after being given a hope through the grace and love of the Redeemer, how can we keep from praising him? We cannot, for he has said that the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain. I am trying to show that all things are working according to the plan of the Creator, and he created man subject to vanity, so when he was left to himself he ran right after natural things and transgressed the law of God, "Thou shalt not," and now we must suffer the penalty (death) which is pronounced upon every sinner. But thanks be to the Redeemer, who hath given us a hope through his everlasting love and grace, for in him was the only way of our salvation; in fact he is our only salvation, and now we can praise his name forever and ever. But if we had never transgressed his holy law there would have been no need for a Redeemer, nor a cause to praise him for our redemption. Elder Norton, I am glad that things are just as they are, and that he works all things after the counsel of his own will and for the purpose of his own glory, and also that all things shall praise him, even the wrath of man. I am also glad that he works all things for our good, for the good of them that are called according to his purpose. I am also glad that he said he had finished the work the Father gave him to do, and that he did not leave it for puny flesh to finish.

Now I will close, with love to you both, and to all the true children of grace. I am not worthy to even think of his name, let alone to be one of his children, but I would not give my little hope for all the world, because it is not left in my hands to give. All the folks are well as far as I know, and I am feeling better than I deserve.

JOSHUA JOHNSON.

CLEARMONT, Mo., May 10, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—My mother, Mrs. Hannah P. McClure, my sister, Mrs. Emma B. Holbrook, and the writer just arrived home from Maryville, Mo., where we had been in attendance at the monthly meeting, or association meeting, of the Old School Baptists of Nodaway County, Missouri, and can report a most enjoyable time indeed. The meeting was held at brother and sister W. A. Cox's home, on South Main Street. Both brother and sister Cox did everything in their power to make things pleasant for the visiting brethren and sisters, and I can vouch for each one visiting there that they certainly succeeded in their endeavor, and I must say that the two daughters, Misses Nettie and Nellie, contributed no little in making things pleasant. Brother and sister Henry Foster entertained quite a number very pleasantly on Saturday and Sunday night, brother Samuel Hostetter and wife, brother Levi Moffet, Elder C. C. Moore and the writer were partakers of their hospitality. Unfortunately sister Emma Holbrook, sister Hannah McClure and myself had to leave before the evening session. We heard three very instructive good old time Bible sermons by Elder Moore, and they had the old time ring,

and brought me back in memory fifty years, when I, with my mother, attended the meetings of the Old School Baptists at Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, where we used to listen to brethren Roland, Simmons and James Gilmore, also brother McCarty, and now to-day, after fifty years, I again in the providence of God have the pleasure of hearing the same good old Bible doctrine preached once more. Hallelujah! Praise his name, who ordereth all things just right and as seemeth best in his sight. In my fifty years of wandering far from mother and sister he has continually been with me, gently leading, guiding, reproving, chastening and keeping me, and in all my lifetime there have been no more pleasant and profitable times than those spent in listening to Elder Moore and others at this meeting.

Now, brother, Ker, if there is anything in this you do not think worth publishing all will be right with me.

Yours for the faith once delivered unto the saints,

C. L. POWNALL.

SHELBYVILLE, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITOR AND PUBLISHERS:—I am pleased to note in the last number of the SIGNS (July 1st) you have selected, or chosen, our esteemed young brother and Elder, H. H. Lefferts, to assist in the editorial department of the SIGNS. I have been asked quite often since the death of our beloved brother, Elder F. A. Chick, who would likely be chosen, and my mind would always center upon the one chosen. I sincerely hope and pray he may be given the spirit of wisdom and love that characterized the life and labor of the late senior editor. It has seemed to me that there never was a time when a greater steadfastness in the faith and doctrine was needful, yet to speak the truth in love, but in the fear of the Lord. No doubt the SIGNS has always filled an important place since its first appearance, but it seems to me it was never more needed than now, when the love of many waxes cold, and the denial of the doctrinal principles upon which it was founded. It then stood alone as the only advocate of Bible doctrine, meeting the isms of the day. The elders and messengers at Black Rock representing the Baptists generally were agreed upon the prospectus of the coming paper, that the principles set forth were according to the Bible, the only standard for our rule and practice. As has been well said, no one can fill Elder Chick's place, he alone could do that, but he was a pattern of good things, bearing about him the marks of the dying of the Lord Jesus. Paul said, Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Christ. Somehow we see Christ the real model and pattern, or we yet look beyond the man. When I see such lives I long to be found walking like them, having them for example. I am not writing these things with the vain thought that I am possessor of them, but because I so desire them and have so admired them in the conduct of the SIGNS, and feel assured, as has been expressed by the now senior editor, that it will continue. May the labors of the editors and publishers be abundantly blessed, to the mutual faith and good of all the dear household of faith. May the editors in their labors of love be made strong in the power and spirit of Israel's God. The position they occupy is one of trust, of great responsibility in judging what should or should not go in the columns of the paper, and right here allow me to suggest to all the dear writers and readers of the SIGNS that you will save the editors and publishers much trouble and embar-

rassment if you keep your personal and church troubles at home, and your subscription promptly paid up.

From one who hopes he prefers Jerusalem above his chief joy, yet who is the least of all, in gospel bonds,

P. W. SAWIN.

DAISY, Tenn., May 16, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Since my return to this place I have been in much darkness, the darkness that is felt, and I have been cast down, but not destroyed, and now I am grieved to hear of the death of Elder Chick. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints, and faith takes hold of the fact that the Lord can yet supply Zion's needs. But how? I cannot tell; only by the working of that power by the which He is able to subdue all things unto himself. So then can he not turn this bereavement to our good? We at a distance shall read his writings and shall see his face no more, and those who have been associated with him will no doubt feel to bear up under their great loss, and all, both far and near, can but feel grieved, as they will miss from time to time his letters and editorials, while his family, the brethren and sisters, the readers and friends of the SIGNS, will miss the writings of a gifted though meek and humble writer, whose writings have been blessed to the comfort and instruction of the Lord's people for many years. But now he hath finished his course, his race is run; how applicable seem the lines of the sacred bard, who said,

"Servant of God, well done;
Rest from thy loved employ;
The battle fought, the victory won,
Enter thy Master's joy.

The pains of death are past,
Labor and sorrow cease,
And life's long warfare closed at last,
His soul is found in peace.

Soldier of Christ, well done;
Peace be thy new employ,
And while eternal ages run,
Rest in thy Savior's joy."

These lines are submitted in love by one who had learned to love him for the truth's sake, which is in us and shall be in us forever. May the Lord reconcile us to his providential dealings, and show his hand.

"Too wise to be mistaken He,
Too good to be unkind."

In sorrow, yet in the comfort of hope, I remain your brother in the common faith,

T. D. WALKER.

MACOMB, Ill.

DEAR EDITOR AND PUBLISHERS:—My heart goes out in love and sympathy to you in the loss of dear Elder Chick. O how we will miss his comforting editorials. May the Lord greatly strengthen dear Elder Ker in the great burden laid on him as editor. His writings are always edifying and comforting. May God sustain him in the loss of his dear wife. Surely he has a double portion to drink. May he feel that his heavenly Father hath done it, and it must be right.

Dear brother Ker, I am too weak and sinful to write to comfort, and so will close. These things are too deep, too great for my understanding. "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." All we poor, weak creatures can do is to bear it for Christ's sake, and say, "Thy will be done." Your editorial, "Alone," was touching, and brought the tears. I feel that all will be satisfied with you as editor.

With love and sympathy, your most unworthy sister,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1914.

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Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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MATTHEW V. 3.

"BLESSED are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Gracious the words, but seldom do they come home to the tried and weary children of God. All the words of Jesus are full of mercy, love and encouragement, and man must live by every word that proceedeth out of his mouth. Just a little while before he uttered the words of our text he had sanctioned the preaching and work of John the Baptist by being baptized by him, and after his temptations in the wilderness began to preach the same doctrine, using at times the identical words, thus showing by what power and authority John preached repentance in the wilderness of Judea and baptized in the river Jordan. Not only was John to comfort the people by preaching to them the coming and work of the long expected Messiah, but the blessed Jesus began his ministry in the flesh by declaring comfort, hope and encouragement to the comfortless, helpless and weary pilgrims. Many in that day knew well that by the deeds of the law no flesh could be justified in the sight of God, hence felt without hope and without God in the world. And none can imagine their sorrow of soul because of sin, nor the rejoicing of heart because of the blessed words of comfort of Jesus, except as they have experienced the same. Not only did he speak comfortingly to the disciples in the mount, but instructed them concerning himself and things of grace. We have often associated this scene with the giving of the law from Mt. Sinai. The same God who spoke with an audible voice from Mt. Sinai, when the earth trembled and the people feared and quaked, now sat down with his chosen disciples in the mount and gave them a spiritual law by which their lives in his kingdom should be governed to the praise of his grace. At Mt. Sinai there were fire, smoke and tempest, a time of fearfulness, but in the mount with Jesus there were peace, comfort and joy. Having to deliver the things given him of the Father to the chosen out of the world, he called them unto him and opened his mouth and taught them. Just how to reconcile this particular, exclusive and discriminating work of the blessed Son of God with the popular idea of the day: that he wants to speak to all men and persuade them to become the sons of God, is so far beyond our ability that we shall not make the attempt, nor can the ablest advocates of such doctrine reconcile grace and works. Now as we approach the text the beautiful picture of Jesus and his disciples seated together, secluded, as it were, from the world in every sense, and Jesus talking to them of eternal things and things of earthly blessedness, presents itself. How glorious the picture! "The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." Yes, God with men in the mount, and let us with all our powers remember that it was God who uttered the

gracious words of our text—words everlastingly true, sure, ever abiding, spirit and life: "Blessed are the poor in spirit." Yet the saints of the Lord are prone to feel that their greatest blessing here below is to be made happy and to rejoice in him, to feel rich in his righteousness; but, dear brethren, very little is said of such an experience in the Scriptures, even of Jesus and the apostles. Much more poverty of spirit, longing for his appearance, hungering after righteousness, thirsting after the waters of salvation, has been the condition of the saints in all ages of the world, and the Scriptures abound with evidences that such will be the case to the end. The path of the just lies along this road, and our assurances of acceptance in the Beloved are found in this way cast up for the redeemed of the Lord to walk in. "I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." This means that the afflicted and poor people shall abide, continue, and shall always trust in the name of the Lord. Then "blessed are the poor in spirit;" yes, such poverty is one of the greatest blessings bestowed upon the children of God. Nothing, absolutely nothing of their own to present to him, no price in their hands have they to bring, all their righteousness is as filthy rags, all their wisdom is folly, all their strength weakness, blind, halt, lame on both feet. Poor in spirit, a blessed condition, through which we are brought to trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon our God. In this experience the sons and daughters of the Lord are brought into fellowship with Jesus, who said by David, "I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me." Again, "I am a worm, and no man." No subject of grace ever felt more keenly the poverty and humiliations of the flesh than did the incarnate Son of God. With all its weaknesses and depravities he was fully acquainted, and cried out in anguish of soul with groaning, in that he feared. Now, while this life of poverty of spirit, leanness of soul, is distressing, it brings to the heirs of glory the assurance that the kingdom of heaven is theirs; yes, the King in his beauty, the kingdom with all its glory and authority, the temple with all its holy ordinances, all belong to the poor in spirit. On the side of riches these believers, though poor, are the richest of all heirs of earth and heaven. Having Christ they have all things; through his blood they are kings and priests unto God and the Father, and though cast down are not destroyed, though forsaken, not alone, but live and shall continue to live in him whom to know is eternal life. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." K.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

We have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the Signs of the Times will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

JOHN XVII. 1-3.

"THESE words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee; as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

Remarkable it is, indeed, that intelligent men reading the Scriptures have continued to miscall the language in the sixth chapter of Matthew, from the ninth to the thirteenth verses, the Lord's prayer, when it is nothing of the sort. That language was addressed to the disciples by the Savior in the mount when he had intentionally withdrawn himself from the multitude to give instruction to his chosen few, intended for their ears and hearts alone. The intelligence and wisdom of man never appear so absurdly foolish as when applied to the unraveling of the mysteries of inspiration which God has from the beginning purposely hidden from human powers of research; but the foolishness of human efforts in this direction is never realized except by those who, becoming as little children in entering the kingdom of heaven, are given the discernment of the Spirit. The seventeenth chapter of John records one of the true prayers of the Lord Jesus. It is the intimate communion of the holy Son with the divine Father, the effectual, fervent prayer of the righteous man, and as such prevails with God, so that not the slightest remnant of a doubt can prevail in our minds but that everything asked of the Father by his Son in this, as well as in every other instance, will most surely come to pass if it has not already done so. Having eaten of the last supper in company with his disciples in the city of Jerusalem, Jesus left the city, and crossing the brook Cedron, soon came, as had often been his wont, to the garden called Gethsemane. His twelve were with him, and, John says, entered the garden with him, but after entering the garden, it is apparent from the records of Matthew and Mark that they proceeded not far before Jesus commanded nine of them to tarry, sitting while he went beyond them in company with Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, James and John. Finally he came to a point where even these three could not farther go, so they tarried also, and Luke is responsible for the statement that Jesus advanced a stone's cast beyond. In accomplishing the work for which Jesus came into the flesh, it became him to sound depths of tribulation and woe into which none of the elect shall ever come. It is very true that no sorrow is, or ever shall be, like unto the sorrow of the Son of God. All of the elect are called to taste of his grief to enable them to fellowship his sufferings, but more than taste will never be dealt to them. The everlasting arms are ever underneath them, for he was lower than each and all. But the prayer recorded by John in the seventeenth chapter of his narrative is not the prayer of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, as many suppose. The Gethsemane prayers, so far as we have any record of them, are found in Matthew xxvi., Mark xiv. and in Luke xxii. This prayer recorded in John, seventeenth chapter, was uttered by the Savior at some time previous to his entering the garden, just where and when is not positively known. It may have been in the supper-room or on the way from the city to the gate of the garden on the side of Mt. Olive, but the where and when of it is not so important as the how and what of it, which we shall now proceed to consider.

The first verse of our text strikes the keynote of the whole prayer, which is in-

fused throughout with a desire for glory and glorification for himself, the Redeemer, all given him of the Father in the covenant of election before time began. Note with care that Jesus here disclaims any ability to glorify God, only as he himself is glorified of God. "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." Since the only perfect man that ever trod this earth felt the necessity of being glorified of the Fathther before he could glorify him in return, how can any one of earth's sinful creatures ever dare to say or feel they can glorify God in and of themselves? Surely any one so presumptuous is blind indeed, to say the least. The fullness of glorification, like all other fullness treasured for the people of God, is in Christ Jesus, "for in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," and as glory is an attribute of the Godhead, its fullness, too, must be in him, and no man can ever glorify God only as he is made a partaker of the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Jesus was never satisfied with this world, all the time he was here in the flesh he was continually crying out for the living God. This sinful world was no abiding place for him; he had not where to lay his head; he was a pilgrim and a stranger. Despised and rejected of men, misunderstood even by his disciples, forsaken of God in the hell of Golgotha, he was alone indeed. One thing he desired, one thing his soul sought after, and that was to be with the Father in that glory which he had with him before the world was. The spirit of prophecy, which is the testimony of Jesus, using the psalm-singer David as a mouthpiece, says, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." Does this not exactly express with conciseness the seventeenth chapter of John? Jesus here in the world was clothed in the likeness of sinful flesh, he had the image of the transgressor, and was not satisfied therewith, neither would he be satisfied until he had arisen from the dead and ascended on high, no more to wear the image of fallen man, but the image of the invisible God, as Paul says in Colossians i. 15. Then he should see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied. It took glory, and nothing short of it, to satisfy him, and never will an heir of glory be satisfied with anything short of that same glory, whether it be revealed here and now in measure only, or hereafter in fullness, for the Spirit of Christ in the hearts of his subjects begets aspirations that are the fellowship of the days of his humiliation endured during his sojourn in the world.

To us it appears that the basis upon which the Savior makes this plea to be glorified of the Father, is as the Father has given the Son power over all flesh. This absolute control over all things which is bestowed upon him affords the plea for his desire to be glorified of God. The attitude of the true disciple of Christ toward any blessing he hopes to receive is as this attitude of Jesus: hoping for more blessing because of blessing already received, desiring strength because strength has previously in a measure been given. Like begets like. After so much mercy past, the believer is encouraged to hope he will not be left to sink in trouble and despair at the last. The purpose for which the Son of God is given power over all flesh is that he shall give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. It will be clearly noted here that the reception of eternal life by all the chosen of God hinges not upon their violation or effort, but upon

the omnipotence of God manifested in the work of Christ. This same omnipotence is also the life and authority of all gospel preaching, for when Jesus, after his resurrection, told his disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, he prefaced his command to them with these words, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore." This preeminence and sovereignty of the risen, victorious Son of God makes effectual the preaching of the gospel, and allows of not the least failure in bringing all the elect of God into the enjoyment of eternal life. In this connection we associate the gospel and eternal life, not for a moment to imply that the preaching can or does impart life, but simply to show that the same divine sovereignty dominates them both. When the word here declares that Jesus is given power over all flesh, it means as it says, "all flesh," and not merely over some, or over part of the flesh. Paul, in the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians, tells us there is one flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. Over all these Jesus has dominant sovereignty in order to give eternal life to the children of promise. Had he not had power over the flesh of the whale, as well as over the flesh of Jonah, the prophet would not have reached the destination God meant for him. He had power over the flesh of birds to compel the ravens to feed Elijah during the drought in Israel. He had power over the flesh of the ass to compel him to rebuke the madness of the prophet Balaam that bestrode him, and also the flesh of the false prophet he controlled so that in spite of his greed for gold he could not curse Israel to satisfy their enemies. Last, but not least, he controls the flesh of his own people, so that in his own time and way every doubt, fear, questioning and every rebellious thought and principle is quelled to give ascendancy to the spiritual life. Over the flesh of beasts, birds, fishes, men and devils, the anointed Son of God holds supreme sway, that he shall make effectual to all the chosen seed eternal life, which was given them in him before the foundation of the world. All things in creation, providence and grace are in his hand. It must be so, for if there should be one thing, however slight, in all the universe above, around or underneath, that is not subject to the authority of God, what assurance could we have but that that very uncontrolled thing might intervene to unseat some child of God from his right to an inheritance with the saints in light? Perish the thought! He works all things after the counsel of his own will, and works them together, too, for the good of those called according to his purpose. He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? Upon this infinite ability of the Son to accomplish the will of the Father rests the everlasting security and safety of every one of the chosen people of God.

What is eternal life? Jesus says here it is the knowledge of the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom God has sent. Life cannot be defined, only in terms of what it does, of how it acts. To say that life is independent of its manifestation is impossible. The knowledge that there is but one true and living God, and that Jesus Christ, sent into the world for the redemption of sinners, is his only begotten Son, is eternal life. Any knowledge short of this is not life in the eternal sense. This knowledge cannot be im-

parted by man to man, it must come by the revelation of the Holy Spirit in the individual experience of each one of the elect. It takes faith to say that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, and at the same time to acknowledge one's self to be the chief of sinners. No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. When Peter confessed to Jesus, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," Jesus replied, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Therefore this knowledge, nothing more, nothing less, imparted to the subjects of grace, is eternal life. The life is not one thing, and the knowledge something different; the life is the knowledge and the knowledge is the life. Where such knowledge of God and his Son exists there must of necessity be life eternal, and where the life is, this knowledge will also inevitably be found.

These remarks, which are not intended as exhaustive at all, we now leave with our readers, in the hope they may stir up your pure minds to think upon these things. L.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Ebenezer Church, in New York City, June 10th, 11th and 12th, 1914, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond sends love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We are glad to report a pleasant and profitable meeting. The preaching has been excellent, with power and in demonstration of the Spirit. Peace and joy have filled our hearts, and we have felt to say with one of old, Lord, it is good to be here. We have gladly received your messengers and Minutes, and desire a continuance of your correspondence.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Warwick Church, at Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., to begin Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1915, when and where we shall hope to meet you and receive your Minutes again. Until then farewell.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
JOHN McCONNELL, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, June 24th, 1914, at the home of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Edward A. Priest, Trenton, N. J., Harry K. Nolan and Eleanor Priest, both of Trenton, N. J.

By the same, in the Old School Baptist meeting-house in Salisbury, Md., June 30th, 1914, Edward James Pollock, of Des Moines, Iowa, and Ida Hall Taylor, of Salisbury, Md.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, It has pleased Almighty God, our heavenly Father, to remove from his field of labor in the sheepfold of the saints our dearly beloved brother, **Elder F. A. Chick,** therefore be it

RESOLVED, That while we, the churches composing the Warwick Old School Baptist Association, mourn our great loss in being no longer blessed with his services in the ministry, we desire to acknowledge the goodness of our God in the bestowal of such wondrous grace upon our departed brother, whereby he was so eminently fitted to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ to the comfort of the Lord's dear people.

RESOLVED, That in the walk and conversation of our departed brother was clearly manifested the Spirit of the Master whom he served; that he was in very truth a servant of the Lord, and as such heeded the admonition of the apostle to Timothy: And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all, patient.

RESOLVED, That we deeply sympathize with the churches of his charge, praying that the Lord will keep them in his especial care, and in his own appointed time give them an earthly shepherd whose love for them shall equal that of the devoted servant whose loss they mourn.

RESOLVED, That these resolutions form part of, and be published with, the Minutes of this Association.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
JOHN McCONNELL, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **Roxana Nethaway Barner,** wife of Hiram Barner, died June 3rd, 1914, aged 69 years, 8 months and 23 days. She was born in Schoharie, N. Y., Sept. 11th, 1844. For the past year or so sister Barner had been in failing health, and it was thought best to have her placed in Binghamton State Hospital, where she remained until her death. Her sufferings were intense, but were endured with patience and fortitude as only the Lord can give. She was one who felt herself to be less than the least of all saints, and I remember her face at our meetings as one deeply interested, and anxious to have some evidence of her acceptance in the Beloved. Three years ago last October she united with the Old School Baptist Church at Schoharie, and was baptized by the writer of this notice. We all had felt that blessed tie and bond of fellowship for her, and when she asked for a home among us we but acknowledged the work of the Lord. She was a faithful member as well as a devoted wife and mother in the fullest sense; her thoughts were ever for their welfare. She was married to Hiram Barner Nov. 3rd, 1860, and was the mother of three children. Her husband, one daughter, one sister and one brother survive her. All feel their loss in their relationship of earthly ties, but realize she has entered fully into that blessed and eternal relationship that God has provided for all that have joint-heirship with Christ.

Funeral services were conducted by Deacon Geo. Miers, and brother Everett Kinney. She had requested the words in Psalms xxiii. 4, to be used. Her remains were then consigned to mother earth.

J. M. FENTON.

MY dear wife, **Catherine H. Norton,** departed this life Sunday morning, June 14th, 1914, aged 71 years, 10 months and 5 days. While she had been in feeble health for a long time, she seemed to be as well as usual during the past year, and was able to be about more than usual. We had just returned from a week's visit with friends in the country. She enjoyed her visit, although tired when we arrived home. She prepared our supper and ate very heartily. I went uptown for some provisions for over Sunday, and was away about one hour. We retired about half-past nine o'clock, and she rested well all night. About six o'clock we awoke from our slumbers, and I said to her, "Is it not time to get up?" She said, "No, as it is Sunday morning let us rest." She turned over on her left side and was soon asleep. I had hardly gotten to sleep when she turned over. About half-past seven I awoke and spoke to her twice, but received no answer. I then raised the window blind; she was dead, though her body was still warm. No one can tell what a shock it was to us all. We telephoned for our family physician, who stated that death was caused from rheumatism of the heart, with which she had been troubled all her life, and had suffered terribly at times, being almost helpless for weeks. She was born in New Harmony, Ind., August 9th, 1842. We were united in marriage August 15th, 1865, at Platteville, Wis., and to this union were born seven children, two sons and five daughters. All of our children that are living were present at the funeral: George I., of Salt Lake City, Utah, Andrew J., of Traer, Iowa, Mrs. H. J. Haring and Mrs. G. A. Fink, of this city, besides eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. She united with the Old School Baptist Church called Mt. Pleasant, in Lafayette Co., Wis., August 24th, 1874, and was baptized by Elder Wm. A. Thompson, and lived a faithful and devoted member until death.

The funeral services were held Wednesday, June 17th, from the home, 310 N. Vine St., Hampton, Iowa, and were conducted by Elder Robert Keeton, of Grimwell, Iowa, a large congregation of relatives and friends being present. Interment was in the Hampton Cemetery. We mourn not as those without hope.

Pray for me, dear brethren and sisters, that our covenant-keeping God may give me sustaining grace to bear this sad bereavement.

E. A. NORTON.

A. M. Doan was born in McNary County, Tenn., June 2nd, 1835, and died at his home in Palo Pinto County, Texas, June 2nd, 1914, being exactly 79 years old. He was the youngest of a family of twelve children. He lived for years in Mississippi. August 20th, 1865, he was married to Miss Maggie Deshazo. To that union there were added five children, four boys and one girl, only three of whom are yet living: John, Joseph and Jasper, all of whom were at home when the father passed away. Brother Doan joined the Providence Primitive Baptist Church at a session of the old Brazos River Association some twenty years ago, and was baptized by Elder D. W. Russell. The writer of these lines had known A. M. Doan for sixteen years, having met him for the first time at Palo Pinto, Texas, during a general meeting. His interest in the doctrine and general welfare of the church was very warm, and he was ever ready to do whatever the cause seemed to demand, and he proved his faith by his deeds. He was free and liberal in keeping up the expenses of the church. He was a good friend to our weary worn ministers. For some time he and sister Doan were members of Ebenezer Church, organized in Fortune Bend, on the Brazos River. When the church started at Palo Pinto town they both placed their membership there, and afterwards at Little Vine, near Lucille, where it remained until death. A. M. Doan was a soldier in the Confederate army, belonging to the 9th Mississippi Regiment, Company G, I think, enlisting under

Captain Rawlins. He was with Lee at the surrender, and I think was once under Pemberton. In his latter years brother Doan had been in feeble health, and gave much of his time to reading. He enjoyed talking on the Bible and the outlook of the times. He and I enjoyed many hours talking over these things. I have been his pastor almost ever since I knew him. He was very prompt to attend his meetings, and rarely ever failed. He was good to talk to and encourage the young lambs around the fold. He died as he desired, very easy. Peace be to his ashes, while the inner man, who can never perish, rests with Jesus.

The funeral services were held from his residence June 3rd, and were conducted by the writer. Interment in Laqueen Cemetery.

J. H. FISHER.

Hannah M. Montgomery Hedden was born near Clay Village, Shelby Co., Ky., Nov. 28th, 1833, died at the home of brother and sister Ransdell, at Caledonia, Mo., Feb. 15th, 1914. She was married to Carter M. Blanton in 1854, who died in 1862. To them were born one son and four daughters, two of whom survive her: sister Ransdell, of Caledonia, Mo., and Mrs. Kate Ford, of Kansas City, Mo. She was married to Abram Hedden in 1866, who survived her only three weeks. Sister Hedden united with the Beech Creek Church, in Shelby Co., Ky., in 1868, and lived a faithful and devoted member, ever ready to entertain the household of faith, given to hospitality. For several years she had been a great sufferer from rheumatic trouble, much of the time almost helpless, but bore it all with patience and becoming resignation. She was a reader of the SIGNS, and loved the doctrine it proclaims. Her faith and hope were in the Lord God. Brother Ransdell writes: The end was peaceful, and she has entered into the full fruition of that blessed hope beyond, and away from the sufferings of this life. What a happy exchange! May we not sweetly sing, "I would not live alway"?

ALSO,

Abram Hedden was born near Harrisonville, Shelby Co., Ky., May 12th, 1825, died at Caledonia, Mo., March 11th, 1914, in his 89th year. He was married to Miss Montgomery in 1845, who died in 1865. He was married to Hannah M. Blanton in 1866. Brother Hedden united with the Beech Creek Church early in life, a membership of more than seventy years; he was clerk of the church for many years. All of his life, except the last five years, was spent in Shelby County. The infirmities of age made it necessary for them to give up housekeeping, and they went to Missouri, where they were kindly cared for by brother and sister Ransdell. Brother Hedden had become quite enfeebled with age, but his faith and hope changed not, becoming stronger as the years went by, and as the full ripe sheaf ready to be gathered into the garner were these two followers of the Lamb. O that blessed doctrine of grace that each can so sweetly and assuringly sing, "That saved a wretch like me." May the dear Lord comfort the heart of each mourning one. To live is Christ, to die is gain. May each of us be given grace to live, and in the end grace to die, and to the all-wise God be glory forever.

P. W. SAWIN.

Deacon Ezekiel C. Meredith died at the home of Thos. C. McGinnis, near Wyoming, Del., March 12th, 1914, after a short illness, aged 76 years. He was the last to go of the four sons of Elder Peter Meredith, being a brother to Elder Whiteley W. Meredith. Brother Ezekiel made his home with his brother, Peter Meredith, at Petersburg, Del., for many years. He was a man of wonderful physique and strong mind, very gentle and kind. His chief delight was in serving others. He was never married; was baptized by Elder E. Rittenhouse. He was always present when the brethren met, and in his faithfulness one can well say our Lord gave us a pattern to follow in remembrance of the well ordered life of one of God's humble and faithful believers. He filled the office of deacon faithfully, and esteemed others greater than himself. He was a good counsellor, sound in the doctrine of God our Savior. Shortly before his death he moved from the place of his birth, Petersburg, Del. When asked about it he replied that he was not looking for a place to live, but for a place to die. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

The writer conducted the funeral service at Cow Marsh meetinghouse, speaking from the Scripture, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy lord. Interment in Cow Marsh Cemetery.

ALSO,

Sister **Letitia Gruwell** died Feb. 26th, 1914, in Wilmington, Del, at the age of 71 years. Having never married, she made her home with her brother, Deacon John C. Gruwell, until his death. She was baptized by Elder E. Rittenhouse and united with the Cow Marsh Church July 25th, 1875. She lived one of the most consistent and faithful lives in the church the writer has ever been permitted to witness. While she was very quiet and gentle in personality, she was deeply experienced, and ever found by the brethren to be one of excellent judgment in church matters, guided by the Spirit of her Lord and Master. She was truly a servant in the flesh, ministering kindness and love, and a servant in the Spirit, serving her risen Redeemer. The last two or more years of her life her health was very poor, and she suffered greatly. While we miss her face so much in the congregation of the saints, yet for her it is all gain.

The funeral, conducted by the writer, was held at Cow Marsh meetinghouse, and interment made in the cemetery adjoining.

B. E. CUBBAGE.

Sallie Jane Ellen Figgs departed this life May 30th, 1914, at the age of 13 years, 8 months and 5 days. She was a very bright girl, of a loving disposition, manifesting itself more and more in the last days of her stay on earth. When I would say, "Sallie, take your medicine; don't you want to stay with mamma?" she would reply, "Mamma, if I am to get well I will, if not, I won't." I never saw one so patient, never complaining in the least; only by her looks could we tell that she was suffering. She seemed to be searching for something, searching the Scriptures, and showed me that she had been with Jesus and had learned of him. She confessed to me her faith and hope, and I am comforted in the hope that she is far better off than she could ever be in this world of sin and sorrow. Her disease was of the lungs and bronchial tubes, involving the heart and kidneys. I am sad and lonely at the loss of my youngest child, who was a great comfort to me. Our little home seems very desolate, but we want to be in submission to the divine will.

I have largely copied the above from a letter written by Mrs. Figgs, and will add that I attended the funeral on June 1st, endeavoring to comfort the sorrowing parents, sister and other relatives by presenting the precious doctrine of the resurrection of the dead unto eternal life and glory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

A. B. FRANCIS.

Mrs. Mary Hale, our beloved sister, fell asleep in Jesus Dec. 19th, 1913. Sister Hale joined the Primitive Baptist Church known as the University Street Church, and was baptized in full fellowship by our beloved pastor, Elder J. K. Womack. She was a very dear sister in the Lord, always filling her seat when not providentially hindered. She loved the cause that she espoused, and stood firm upon God's decrees, purposes, doctrine and teachings, and tried as much as was in her to befriend and be charitable to all, especially the household of faith. She was never known to turn any one away who was in distress; she had been a great help to the needy. We shall miss her greatly, but hope our loss is her eternal gain.

By her request the funeral service was held at the church to which she belonged, conducted by Elders J. K. Womack and Geo. M. Hite, a large concourse of relatives and friends being present on the occasion. Interment was in Mt. Olivet Cemetery. May God in his mercy bless her bereaved children and reconcile them to his will, is my prayer.

O. B. HICKERSON.

APPOINTMENTS.

An all day meeting is appointed to be held at the meetinghouse in Halcottsville, N. Y., Sunday, July 26th, 1914. Also an evening meeting in Kingston on Monday, July 27th, 1914. Elder B. F. Coulter is expected to be present at both meetings.

B. F. COULTER.

MEETINGS.

The Regular Predestinarian Baptist Association, Siloam, of Oregon and Washington, will meet on Friday, August 7th, 1914, continuing the two following days, at Nesika, Lewis Co., Wash., with the Sulphur Creek Church. A cordial invitation is given to all. Those coming by rail will leave Tacoma, Wash., on the Tacoma Eastern R. R., Thursday, August 6th, where they will be met and conveyed to place of meeting.

SONORA A. HESS, Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

Claremont, Cal.

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SYLVESTER HASSELL.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

THE ATONEMENT MADE BY CHRIST.

Is it particular and special for the elect only? I affirm that it is.

Position First: The atonement that Christ made on the cross was special, particular, and perfect for the elect only, was vicarious and in and for his people, insomuch that he purchased for them everlasting redemption. To redeem them from the curse of the law, he must pay to divine justice all that it demanded of them, for they were under the law, and it demanded full satisfaction, and for him to do this he must bear their sins, and for him to do so, they were laid upon him.

Proof First: "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." This was plainly taught in the legal dispensation in the case of Aaron laying his hands on the heads of the two goats to be offered in the yearly sacrifice. When the goats were brought to the door of the tabernacle the high priest laid his hands on the heads of the sacrifice, and confessed the sin of Israel. One goat was condemned to die, and the other sent by a fit man into the wilderness (an uninhabited land) and turned loose to be seen no more. This was the scapegoat bearing the sin of Israel away into a land uninhabited, and the other was slain, and his blood was caught in a vessel and borne by the priest into the holy place in the tabernacle, and by it an atonement was made for the Israelites for that year, thus typifying the work of Christ in our redemption by his blood.

Proof Second: "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."—1 Peter ii. 24. The above two very pointed texts are positive proofs of the fact that God, the Father, laid on Jesus Christ, his Son, the sin and guilt of his people. Here is mercy and grace bestowed on the church before the world was, for Peter says of Christ, "Who verily was foreordained before the foun-

dation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him from the dead." He was made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. (2 Corinthians.) Christ being made our surety, all the iniquity of his people was laid on him and he became our sinbearer, for Peter declares he bore our sins in his own body on the tree. Isaiah declares God laid them upon him. Again Peter declares, The Just suffered for the unjust. Now upon what principle could he have suffered if the guilt of his bride were not laid upon him? There was no cause in him for suffering. He was pure, and holy, and spotless, and never was guile found in his lips, yet he suffered, the Just for the unjust. In speaking of his own death he says, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" Nothing short of meeting the demands of the law could be satisfactory, and until every jot and tittle of the law be fulfilled there could be no redemption from its power; but the apostle says, Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. Upon what basis except by the imputation of the sin of his people, and upon what principle could he suffer for another? Justice and mercy met together in him, and righteousness and peace kissed each other, redemption was complete. To deny that the sin of his people was imputed to him must of necessity deny that he suffered, and to deny he suffered must deny his death, and to deny his death must deny his resurrection, in all of which the Scriptures abound with proof. In all this justice and mercy are both fully displayed. Justice in punishing sin, and mercy is abundantly shown in the salvation of the sinner. Grace did not reign in the salvation of sinners at the expense of divine justice. Justice must be satisfied and the claims of a violated law met, and sin punished. If, then, sin be punished in our Surety, justice is satisfied, mercy exalted and the sinner redeemed. Can it be a fact that the atonement was a kind of provisional atonement, and yet the death of Christ an absolute death? What foundation can there be for conditionalism, if the death and sufferings of Christ were absolute? Is God unjust? Did he lay the sin of all the race of men on his Son, and then afterward punish millions of them after Christ paid their debt to the law? Mr. John Wesley wrote for an article of faith, and recorded it in the Methodist discipline as follows: "That sacrifice once offered for sin is that perfect redemption, propitiation and satisfaction for all the sin of the whole world, both original and actual, and beside it there is no sacrifice for sin." If so be that he is right, justice could demand no more, and no man could tell upon what pinciple God in justice could punish any sinner. Now that Jesus Christ did redeem some sinners, and that with a perfect redemption, the Scriptures abundantly teach. But now hath he appeared once in the end of the world to put sin away by the sacrifice of himself. (Heb. ix. 26.) In the end of the Jewish world he appeared to put sin away. In this he was not only a sinbearer, but the scapegoat to bear the sins of his people, and to bear them away. God will remember them no more against them forever. Now we have proven by Isaiah that the Lord God laid them on Christ, and also by Peter, that carried them to the tree of the cross, and there by the sacrifice of himself he must have put them away, for Paul in Hebrews says he came to do that, and if he failed they must be

there yet; but he did not fail, for the prophet said he should not. Again, Paul says, Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, and redeemed us from all iniquity; there remains nothing to condemn. Here then is Mr. Wesley's perfect redemption, yet not for the whole world, but for those his Father had given him. It also is perfect propitiation and satisfaction to divine justice. God the Father appointed the sacrifice, and sent Him into the world, and accepted the sacrifice, in whom he was well pleased, and before he was born of the virgin Mary he sent his angel to bear the word, saying, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." It should be remembered they were his people whom he should save, and they were his before he came, and if he did what God sent him to do he saved them when he died for them. Paul quoting from David said, "A body hast thou prepared me." "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Now all this shows most positively that Christ put away sins and perfected his people forever. How could it be conditional, when Christ perfected them forever, and brought in everlasting redemption for them? It could not be everlasting redemption if some of them must be lost. Christ said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Again, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." Peter in Acts says, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." They are all to be called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to God's purpose and grace, given them in Christ before the world began. Now if the doctrine of imputation of sin and guilt to Christ be denied, the doctrine of imputed righteousness to the sinner must also be denied; but Paul and David both believed in the imputation of righteousness to the sinner, for he said, "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." So, then, Christ covered their sins by his blood, and gave them his blessed righteousness, by which they stand justified before his Father, as our London brethren said hundreds of years ago, and which has been believed by the Baptists in every age, and will be believed as long as time shall last.

J. M. PERKINS.

MAYFIELD, Ky.

CANNON, Del., April 21, 1914.

DEAR ELDER H. C. KER, AND PUBLISHERS:—My mind is peculiarly exercised to-day, and it seems I must write you a letter. Last Sunday I was at Little Creek Church, or meetinghouse, to attend the yearly meeting, and heard Elder Francis announce the death of Elder Chick, or it seems to me it is better to say he fell asleep in Jesus. It is useless

for me to mention his sterling qualities, for all who knew him know he was a man after God's own heart. Something is putting these words in my mind, I do believe. I have been somewhat sad since I heard of the Elder's departure, but this afternoon I have a peculiar mind. The words which the late President Garfield uttered when President Lincoln was assassinated came into my mind, and then came another thought which I will mention later, if the Lord will. The words which the late president used were these: "The nation mourns, God reigns and the government at Washington still lives." Now follows the thought that came to me: Now this sentence, it seems to me, is the same the Lord's people feel at this time. One whom the church loved dearly has been called home. I am impressed to use just these words: The church is mourning, and they have a right to mourn, they know they will not again have the pleasure of reading his cheering messages in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and they are wondering who can fill his place. It does not seem that any one can, but I enjoy Elder Ker's editorials, and, dear brother, if I am not mistaken, (and I surely hope I am not) I do sympathize with you now. I wish I could see you and talk with you, though I am nothing. But I will now tell what the thought was which came into my mind after I thought of the utterance from the late president: The church mourns, God reigns and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES still lives. I am made to believe the Lord will qualify some one to take Elder Chick's place. "The Lord reigneth." These words have been much in my mind for several weeks past, and they seem to become more beautiful and full of meaning. It does seem to me that in them we have presented the comforting thought that the Lord does reign, and that nothing is by chance, that the Lord is ruling in the earth and in the heavens also, that he has set his bow in the cloud as a token of the covenant which he made between himself and the earth. The Lord laid the foundations of the earth, he created the sun, moon and stars and gave them a command, and they obey him; he has made a place for the waters, and the waters remain in their destined place; he has made a way for the lightning and the thunder, and they answer to him, Here we are. Can we not add that they go where they are sent? This is encouraging to me now. I remember a few years ago I would almost tremble when I considered how great was the Lord and how insignificant I was, and I still feel small. But can we not rejoice when we are made to feel the Lord reigneth? Suppose we consider these words further, if we are given the ability to do so. The sentence means that the Lord has declared the end from the beginning, and to declare a thing means certainty; it means that something must come to pass; especially is this so in regard to the great I AM; the Lord has been bringing to pass what he has declared in the beginning, and he will continue to do so. "The Lord reigneth." Some one might say, Well, if the Lord has predestinated everything, what is the use of preaching? What is the use to have meetings? If any are to be saved they will be saved anyway. I will answer, that preaching the gospel is a part of his predestination; this has to be done, and it will be done by whomsoever called. Again, I say, "The Lord reigneth," and man is doing what he is called to do. Sometimes we hear men say, I have changed my mind. This is a mistake, the mind changes the man; that is, a man does what his mind leads him to do,

and there is a power over a man's mind. Our minds may prompt us to do certain things, but if this is not in accord with the higher mind, which is the Lord, we will be prevented; "the Lord reigneth."

I feel like considering the words, If one is to be saved he will be saved anyway, regardless of what he does. I have often heard this remark, and I am aware that this is charged to the Old School Baptists. I feel as though I must defend the Baptists in this charge, yet I am aware that a dead man has no feeling, and a man who is void of understanding cannot be made to understand, except by the operation of the Holy Spirit upon him. If a man is to be saved he will be saved, this I believe to be true. I do not see how I can believe anything else, for to say that something will be, and then say it will not be, is contradictory, and is a manifestation of ignorance. Now I will take up the last part of the sentence: "regardless of what he does." I hope I will be given knowledge upon this subject, for it is one upon which much has been written. The one who has been taught of the Lord does regard what he does; that is, when he does wrong he is sorry, and he is almost continually loathing himself. I am a sinner, I am deceived and I have deceived the church. This makes it still worse; this character is not saying, The Lord predestinated this act, I could not help it, I will be saved anyway, and go on and do the same act, or a worse one, over again; no, but let me tell what he does say:

> "'Tis a point I long to know,
> (Oft it causes anxious thought,)
> Do I love the Lord or no?
> Am I his, or am I not?"

This character is in trouble when he uses these words, and he says, I wish I could do right, but I am such a sinner I am ashamed to go to meeting; I will get in the corner where I will not be noticed. A dear sister last Sunday, one whom I had never met before, came to me and said she wanted to speak to me, but was unworthy, and burst into tears, and I almost cried myself, (who can be more unworthy than I?) but I recovered myself, and tried to tell her that the unworthy feeling was proof that she was a child of God, that none but the Lord's people ever feel that way. Who ever heard of one with these feelings robbing banks, or setting houses on fire, or holding up trains and robbing mail cars, &c.? These people are the salt of the earth, they are the Lord's witnesses, and when they are all gathered unto himself then I believe a change will take place in this old world. There is a crown of righteousness laid up for these afflicted people, and the work of Christ will not be done until they obtain that crown, then all the redeemed will sing songs of praise to the Lamb that was slain, and is worthy to receive honor, power and glory. May he teach us to love one another, and to abstain from all appearance of evil, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

A. T. BENSON.

HEBRON, Va., Sept. 22, 1860.

DEAR SISTER AMBLER:—Hearing of the death of your old and staunch friend and neighbor, I feel like complying with your request in giving what may be called a letter of friendship, if not of comfort; I hope you will at least take the will for the deed. You will no doubt take consolation from the fact of her having lived a life not only moral and upright, but that of a christian in walk and conversation, as near perhaps as a sinful mortal could come up to. You perhaps are trembling on the precipice, fearing to make the leap, lest it be not the call of

the great and all-wise Disposer of the mortal life of the children of grace to take them to his arms, where the enemy of all good can never more affright their souls with the grim monster, death, nor even with sickness or pain of either mind or body. O, sister Ambler, we all have to leave this tenement of clay; may we be prepared by the only power that can work a life of faith and holy obedience to the will of all good, giving unto Christ the honor of all our good deeds, and feeling ourselves to be nothing but unprofitable servants, for what have we that we have not received? and if we have nothing but what we have received, why boast of anything we have? O that we may be kept humble and in our right place, not giving heed to these, those or the other spirits which are abroad in the land like frogs, deceiving the people of which may you and I not be of the number, but of that number who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb that stood as slain from the foundation of the world; and when the grim monster, death, stares us in the face may we with all that happy throng rise with songs in our mouths, saying, Not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy name, be all the praise, honor and glory forever and forever, Amen. But O, sister Ambler, I hear very little preaching out here that feeds my hungry soul. If I had not had the SIGNS sent on to me I would have starved ere this, but my friends are making arrangements for me to go to my own preaching oftener. Having laid up in store a large quantity of food on my way out here, I keep chewing over the old cud, and getting a taste now and then which prevents my losing my appetite and relish for some more of the strong food, and that of the same kind. I feasted truly at Baltimore, at Wilmington, at Hopewell and at Middletown, and then, not being satisfied, I went on to the Pennsylvania yearly meeting, and then on to the Chemung Association; not being yet satisfied, I proceeded on across to the western New York conference, gleaning something at every station and heaping it up in anticipation of the famine I have here experienced. I then bent my course to Buffalo, and from there, on to Niagara Falls. There, what grand, what magnificent scenery to the eye! What soul-stirring music to the ear! How deep, to the reflecting mind, is the power that can control that mighty rush of waters, first falling, as it were, down two or three pairs of steps, then boiling and foaming and mounting into the air, and finally pitching down in sublime fury, bidding defiance to everything that dares to swim on its waters above. Then the wire bridge two miles below, but in view, and suspended over the deep but still boiling water that looks more like loaf-sugar and cream than water, was a grandeur I had never witnessed before. The work of art and the work of nature, both together are worth a trip across the world. It was the most sublime sermon I ever heard, and I was loath to leave it. Leaving Buffalo next morning I was three days traveling among total strangers, but met with kindness at every step, for which I cannot be too grateful. The railroads are a great accomodation for ladies, and I feel very willing to encourage them. The Lord is able to protect us here and there and everywhere. Having landed here, I find a numerous circle of relatives and other acquaintances that treat me as a fellow-mortal bound to leave these shores of infirm existence. Though most of them are of the do and live system, I have the pleasure of finding some of the live and do, with whom I can take sweet counsel. Remember

me to sisters Bradshaw, Whaley, Blincoe, and all others who may inquire after me, and when time shall be no more with any of us, may each of us reach that home where there will be no separation, but where each will receive a heart welcome to joys without end, amen. This is a very productive country and those who have large families to provide for would do better here than there.

Your friend,

ELEANOR GULLATT.

[THE above letter was written back in 1860, by sister Gullatt, who was a member of the New Valley Church. It is a voice out of the past, and may be of interest to some of our readers. This letter was found among some old papers of an old friend of sister Gullatt.—ED.]

CERULEAN, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITORS:—If the Lord will so direct, I will offer a few thoughts upon 2 Corinthians i. 10, which reads as follows: "Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us." "Deliver," to free, as from danger or bondage.—Webster. It would seem to me that there is as much contained in the above Scripture as could be found elsewhere in as few words. I often think that I know nothing as I ought to know, yet it is sometimes a comfort to search the Scriptures, and when I can experimentally find comfort by so doing I am strengthened in hope, hence by faith lay hold of the things set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. If I know anything of the meaning or the teaching of the text, it began with Adam in the garden and will be more fully known in the resurrection. Paul here speaks of three deliverances, yet it is done by One, and for One. (Matt. i. 21.) Is it not the experience of every child of grace that the work of redemption is of the Lord, and that the law of the Spirit of life in Christ hath made him free from the law of sin and death? The second deliverance spoken of in the text, when felt in the heart enables him by faith given to look both backward and forward to Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, hence they rejoice in him and have no confidence in the flesh, but are rather made to say, as did Peter, they are kept by the power of God. It seems to me that the two first deliverances are confirmed by Paul as absolutely true, then upon that, and that only, is the trust of any one fixed: trust, confidence, hope. If there is any true basis upon which trust for future deliverance is fixed it must be upon experimental knowledge given. Paul said, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." Here hope of eternal life is based upon the promise, but the promise is not based upon hope. All of God's promises are yea (yes), there are no conditions in them, it is the very opposite. To know in all things the promise is yea, and it is unto you and your children, and to all afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call, being even as many, no more.

There has been much said about conditional time salvation. If deliverance does not mean to save, I am at a loss to know just what it does mean. If it means to save, then what part of salvation is left out in the text above mentioned: who hath delivered and doth deliver? Paul's trust was that He would yet deliver. It seems to me that salvation in all its parts, so to speak, is included in the text, yet conditionalists say that by their obedience they obtain blessings, and by disobedience they fail to re-

ceive them. If that be true, then is not the reward reckoned of works or debt? So also is faith. This reasoning denies the text, denies the free gifts of God. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"—Rom. viii. 32. There is no charge laid to the elect; they are more than conquerors through him that loved them. If we speak of natural blessings, as the rain and the snow, they come down from above and water the earth and make it bring forth and bud, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater. Jesus taught his disciples to pray, saying, "Give us this day our daily bread." So the little children hunger, they want bread, they feel too poor to buy it, and at times almost ashamed to ask for it, yet in secret they beg the Giver of every good gift to give it. They have been taught of God, and have learned that it cannot be bought, but it is freely given. In eating they learn that it is food sweet to their taste, they feel their poverty and learn experimentally that there is but one storehouse where this bread may be had, and that it is a blessing which was treasured in heavenly places in Christ before the foundation of the world. There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. That being true, it would seem to me that if salvation were conditional Jesus was a conditional Savior, and the above text used is conditional, and the ninth verse of the first chapter of second Timothy is altogether wrong, and Paul should not have said that it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and God's prophet ought to have known that his ways were his own, and that he could walk and direct his steps as he pleased. Why did Paul say, "For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I"? Again, "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." Why all this? Why not obey and get the blessings? My opinion is that the blessing always brings the obedience, and that obedience never brings the blessing, that obedience is the fruit or effect of the blessing. I am speaking of spiritual things; obedience without the Spirit is nothing but formality.

You are at liberty to do with this as you think best.

As ever yours,

D. R. TURNER.

REFLECTIONS.

THE scoffers of all ages in their assumed wisdom have denied the being of God, because he is a Spirit, the invisible God, whom no man hath seen or can see with mortal eyes, but in this ignorance of God they but declare the blindness of their hearts. There are many material things that are invisible to the sight of our natural eyes: the odors of the flowers, the fever germs in the air, these, though invisible to human sight, the proud and the wicked admit their existence. Man in his fallen, corrupt state does not wish to admit of the being of a higher one than himself, and if, in his vain, disturbed imagination, he admits of the being of a higher, mightier, a superior being or superior beings, they all in his highest conception of such are only devils. Through fear, or carnal selfishness, man will worship them, make sacrifices to them; he will afflict himself to avert their displeasure or gain their favor. False gods are not adored, reverenced, loved, delighted in. But the atheist, in his wicked rejection of God, in his puny at-

tempts to blot out of existence the Creator, is without excuse. "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."—Romans i. 20. "Invisible things," "clearly seen." All creation is indelibly stamped with Jehovah the Creator's attributes, even his eternal power and Godhead. All that arrogant self-styled higher criticism, all the atheistical fallacies of evolution, all the blind hatred in the heart of man, cannot obliterate from creation his unerasible seal which God has stamped upon all things that in the beginning he created and made. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist."—Col. i. 16, 17. But O, dear children of God, since the time that God illuminated us, (Heb. x. 32,) shined in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, the works of our God have been magnified in our eyes, and in innumerable things we have seen God's eternal power and Godhead. In the Lord's universal providence there are fields for both solemn, gracious and comforting reflections, and I would believe,

"Thy ways, O Lord, with wise design,
Are framed upon thy throne above,
And every dark and bending line
Meets in the centre of thy love."

God's tender mercies are over all his works, and as we muse upon these our souls are excited to praise and adoration, and when we are called into deep and painful cogitations over the afflictions, the sore trials that are our heritage, when we see our cherished hopes all blasted, and we are in straits, and buffeted with varied adversities, even then God is gracious; he can quiet our fears, quell our rebellions, sustain our souls in the deeps. He draws near, opens our ears to discipline, gives us gracious, comforting instruction, thus sweetening our cup, and we are able to say, "Thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities."—Psalms xxxi. 7. Yes, it is in adversities that we are brought into soul-intimacy with our God. In our conflicts and trials we find cisterns to be broken and creatures all fail to sustain us and extricate us from our woes, but God, our God, is our present help in time of trouble. The very conflicts, trials and vexations that are measured out to us are appointed by the Lord for our ultimate good, that we may therein be brought more and more to know our God. And who are we that know him? Unworthy, sinful worms of the dust. Let me quote the language of a child of God in great tribulation: "Mine enemies chased me sore, like a bird, without cause. They have cut off my life in the dungeon, and cast a stone upon me. Waters flowed over mine head; then said I, I am cut off. I called upon thy name, O Lord, out of the low dungeon. Thou hast heard my voice; hide not thine ear at my breathing, at my cry. Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee: thou saidst, Fear not. O Lord, thou hast pleaded the causes of my soul; thou hast redeemed my life."—Lam. iii. 52–58. O such dreadful experiences are the testing places of a man's religion, and only that religion that is of God, with which a man's soul is wrought by the gracious power of the Holy Ghost, will sustain in the deeps and buoy him up in hope and

trust in God. Job exclaimed, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

"He shews us in his providence
Where all our safety lies,
And in affliction's gracious school
He makes his people wise."

Not only in our early experience, but all along the way amidst our conflicts with self and sin, the world and its cares and Satan, it is so needful to know our God and to be succored and upheld by him. Who is like unto him? (Micah vii. 18.) He exerciseth judgment and righteousness, and abounds in loving-kindness unto all that fear him. (Jer. ix. 24.) Surely it is thus that we know the Lord, and our hearts are moved by his own sacred, gracious operations within us to worship him in spirit and in truth.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., July 8, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have been thinking much of you of late, and always with the desire to write to you, but knowing that I could not put my feelings on paper, kept silent; but yesterday when the SIGNS came my heart was stirred deeply, and I have been impressed since then to tell you why. As that little volume brings us sorrow as well as joy, I will write of the latter first. The joy is the sweetest ever known, and the sorrow falls as beneficially as the dew from heaven; we emerge from it refreshed and strengthened. Though we miss and mourn our loved ones, we would not call them back to this sinful world; neither do we feel like murmuring or complaining, for the will of the Lord has been done, and as we pray, so must we comfort ourselves. I was sorry for you when your wife's life went out, and I prayed that God would give you strength to endure and grace to believe that it was well with her soul, and that in some way it might work for you an exceeding weight of glory. But not since the death of my dear mother have I had such a sorrow, such a subdued, helpless feeling as that occasioned by the death of brother Chick. It was forty-four years ago this spring that I first met him in Baltimore, at the hall where he preached, and no sermon that I had heard before or since ever gave me so much comfort and joy. I wanted to tell to the world what a dear Savior I had found, but my lips refused to utter a word. I could only kneel at their feet, and after being questioned did manage to say, These people are my people, and their God my God. But it was not His will that I should be received at that time, and brother Chick did not see his way clear to do so, yet the sorrow, the gentleness and the christian love which he bestowed upon me will be a sweet memory as long as life lasts. A few weeks from that time I left for the far west, and but for his comforting, cheering letters my life would have been one of darkness. He advised, reproved, exhorted, pointing to Jesus as the author and finisher of my faith. All these years we have corresponded, and never having lived where I had the privilege of hearing preaching, or of meeting with any of those who believed as I did, you can readily understand what his letters meant to me, for I was not a subscriber to the SIGNS then. My great grief was my inability to reply to them as I desired, but once he wrote, "It is easy to write to you, you always give me something to answer," and I was satisfied. I never ceased to hope that I would meet the Primitive Baptists once more, and in 1890 the way was opened for me to go to Virginia to see my mother, and soon after arriving there I met Elder Badger, and

the following Saturday went to hear him preach. The story is soon told, I was baptized the next morning. All were so good to me, they made my littleness, my nothingness, stand out more clearly than ever before, but I was happy. Their faces shone as the Master's, and it made me happy to look at them. The time for parting came, and there was a triple sorrow: I must leave my kindred in Christ, must leave my dear old mother, and I had not seen brother Chick, he who was my elder brother, my friend, in the days of midnight darkness. But in 1911 I was again privileged to visit Virginia. I arrived there Monday, and Wednesday was on my way to the association at Bethlehem. It seemed a solemn, beautiful place as I walked up the aisle, and once more the faces of the brethren shone with a brightness above the sun. I lost sight of the world, as it were, and was happier than I had been since I was baptized, and as if that was not enough for me, my cousin, and sister in the Lord, (who was with me) said, "There is Elder Chick." The meeting was an earnest of our inheritance in heaven, and such beautiful sermons as I heard him preach. Such a profitable evening as we, with many others, spent at Mr. George Johnson's. But the end came, and we went our several ways. My mother had died years before, and my greatest trouble was that my beloved pastor was so feeble. He was on my mind much of the time. It was not long though before I heard of brother Chick's illness; he was younger than I, and I hoped for a speedy recovery. Later I read that he was better, then sister Badger wrote me that they feared the worst. At last the family paper came with the black lines upon it, and I knew that he whom all of us loved was dead, and the blow crushed me. When I rallied I felt that it was well with his soul, that God was still merciful, but the question arose, How can we spare him? Since then I have thought of you, of your loneliness at home, and of your responsibility in connection with the SIGNS, and have wished so fervently that some one who was well qualified could be found to assist you in your labors, and right here is where the joy comes in that I wrote of at the beginning, one of the joys, for when I found that brother Lefferts was to be the man, my heart was full, and I thanked the Giver of all good gifts. I know your burden will be lighter, and I believe that all the readers of the paper will be well pleased. I pray that you may work together in love, and that you may be blessed abundantly. I was so delighted that I must write to tell you so. I would say further, that you will have my love and my prayers, and may He who feeds the ravens watch over and care for you as long as you are permitted to remain here; after that you will see him and be like him. I have met brother Lefferts and heard him speak; a gifted man, if I may judge. I would love to meet you in the flesh, but better still, may we meet beyond the river, where there is no sickness or death.

This is only a scrawl, but written by one who sympathizes with and who loves all of God's people. I ask no reply; there are others who may need you more.

From your far away sister,

(MRS.) M. E. WRIGHT.

[WE much appreciate the above kind and thoughtful letter, and thank our sister Wright for her gracious words.—K.]

WILLIAMSON, W. Va., June 21, 1914.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I have been thinking of writing you for some time, and as I notice that it is about time for me to send in my subscription, you will please find inclosed check for two dollars to pay for the good old SIGNS another year.

Dear brother, I cannot express how much I regret the death of our beloved brother, Elder F. A. Chick. I have always enjoyed his writing very much, and have often said that if there was any difference between what he wrote and what I believed I could not distinguish it, and I had hoped to live to see him face to face, but the dear Lord has everything arranged; not partly, but wholly fixed and settled, and no power can change it, for there is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God, therefore he carries out his will and design in all things, and man in his best estate is vanity. Dear brother, if I am not deceived in myself I am one poor old sinner who believes in the absolute predestination of all things, not a part of things, as called with us good and bad, for with the Lord there is no good and bad. I sometimes tell the people who say they believe in the predestination of all good things, that I do not object to that, for it is just what I believe: that God predestinated all good things, for there are no bad things with him. God made all things, and pronounced them all good, and qualified the terms, and said, very good, but with us, and what we mean, it is all right when we say good and bad, and to look at it from a natural point of view it would and does look bad to say that we could not have been saved without the devil; to the carnal mind it looks bad, but to the spiritual mind it looks good, for we know that without the devil we would not have been here, much less have been saved; so we do believe that Christ had just as much choice for Judas as he did for any one of the other eleven disciples, and could not have been betrayed by any one else; and he made choice of him for this selfsame purpose, and then said it would have been better for that man if he had never been born, but to this end was I (Christ) born, and for this purpose came I into the world. So if Christ was born for Judas to betray, Judas must have been born to betray him. To the carnal mind this looks bad, but is good, and very good for poor sinners, or, in other words, for the church. So all things work together for good to them that love God, not part of them, but all of them. We see that old Jacob thought all these things were against him, but was shown that they were all for his good. Dear brother, I know I love the Lord in some way, but most of the time it seems to me that I am in such gross darkness that I am afraid it is not that pure love. They that dwell in God dwell in love, for God is love, and if you love the brethren you may know that you have passed from death unto life. I know I love the brethren and sisters whom I have seen, and I love the brethren and sisters I have not seen in the flesh, for your experience is my experience, yet I am in doubt and fear every day of my life, fearing this is not that pure love. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and we hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell from whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of God. If any one knows he is a subject of God's grace he knows more than I do, still I have a little hope that I am, but to say I know it I cannot; but if I am, it is only through the grace of God. Paul said, It is by the grace of God I am what I am, and this is my condition.

Dear brother, I have only been a reader of the SIGNS for about eighteen months, and a subscriber about one year, but I would not do without it for anything I can think of. I am always glad to get it, and have always received it very promptly. It advocates the doctrine I love and have always believed. I have heard brethren and sisters say that they at one time hated this doctrine, but I never did, but always loved it, and I thank God that I did, for if I am a Baptist now I have always been one, but the manifestation only took place with me about eight years ago. I believed it then, but did not understand it as I hope I do now. I am thirty-eight years old, and have had my name on the church book for a little over six years. I was baptized by Elder W. J. May, and have been trying in my weakness to preach for six years. As you know, we have a new church here in this city, and we would be glad to have any of the readers of the SIGNS come and see us, and if any of them should be passing through this city to stop off, if only for a little while. I would be glad to have them call at my store on Third Avenue, just a short distance from the depot. If any of the preaching brethren could visit us we would be glad. If they cannot get here at our regular meeting time we would be glad to have them at any time, if it were only for one night. Just drop us a card, and we will do the rest, and they need not be afraid if they should ever stop to preach just what the SIGNS advocates.

Dear brother, I hope to meet you face to face in the near future, but if I do not, I hope to meet you in that glorious country where we will not need the light of the sun, moon or stars, for the great I AM is the light of that glorious country. I would not exchange the little hope I have for ten thousand worlds like this, although it seems very small at times with me, and I am made to cry out, O wretched man that I am, and made to wonder that if I am what I hope I am, why I am so tormented with sin and Satan, and to ask God to deliver me from the evils of this world, and to keep me in the way and not leave me, and to remove the thorn of sin from me. But he told the apostle, My grace is sufficient. I am glad that God's grace is sufficient for the whole family of God. I am glad that if I am not one of this family, that God has a family which he has redeemed unto himself, and that the redeemed of God shall be brought by a way they knew not. If I go to everlasting punishment God is as just as if he had saved me in his glorious kingdom. Praise his blessed name forever and ever. If he has not saved me in that glorious covenant he has done wonderful things for me, for he brought me into this world and has kept and fed me until the present day. I desire the prayers of all who read this.

Your unworthy brother, in hope of eternal life,

LEE ADKINS.

NASHVILLE, Tennessee.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER: —I read your good editorial, giving your thoughts in answer to sister Loyd, of Los Angeles, Cal., and would like your views on the deliverance of the children of Israel from bondage, which I understand is a true type in traveling from nature to grace. First they were in the gall of bitterness, traveling through the wilderness of sin and sorrow and temptation, and in distress. When it pleased God to reveal himself to them the command was given to them to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. The waters were

divided and they passed through the wilderness into Canaan, it being a place of rest. In like manner the Lord brings them in a way they knew not, and this is the way every one is born of God, which is God's direct plan of deliverance, and when he begins a good work he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, he being the Captain of our salvation. As this was God's way in the seas, it is also God's way in bringing many sons and daughters unto himself. Moses did not know beforehand the mighty works that God would show forth in the deliverance of the children of Israel, nor in what path he would take them. But God's purposes, power and wisdom are above all powers in bringing his chosen in a way they knew not. So is every one that is born of God. It was not possible that Moses or any other creature could know the time of deliverance, but when the time came it pleased God to show forth his power and wisdom, which had never entered into the finite mind as to what way they would be delivered. As God's ways are not man's ways, so he brought his Israel through dry shod into the promised land for a place of rest. In like manner it appears to me it is typical in bringing poor, penitent sinners in a way they knew not. As you have rightly said, the psalmist said that his footsteps were not his own. The Lord leads his people to walk in his footsteps, and not in their own way. But what great deliverance and rejoicing with his chosen, and to the praise of Almighty God, in giving the songs of deliverance from sin and death into that bright mansion of glory and rest. What a glorious thought! Dear brother, you have spoken very feelingly with reference to the trials which we are to pass through, and I have experienced it on account of being prostrated by the excessive heat, having no power to exercise. How good it is that all of our trials, sickness, suffering, sorrow and crosses are not ministered by the devil, nor do they come by chance. It was presented to me very vividly that I was in the hand of God, and I felt to be reconciled to his will, and felt not to complain of suffering. Our blessed Savior passed through suffering and opened not his mouth, and we poor worms of the dust should be reconciled to his will in all things. "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."—Job xiii. 15. God knoweth all things. "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."—Psalms xxiii. 4, 6. It was given Isaiah to prophesy to the comfort of the redeemed of the Lord, and was a consoling message to the poor and afflicted little ones who had the love shed abroad in their hearts, and we, too, have been blessed by the indwelling of his love, that we fear no evil. Isaiah proclaimed: "When thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flames kindle upon thee." Yes, brother, the blessed children of the kingdom are to pass through the deep waters and fiery trials and persecutions while in the flesh, but though poor and afflicted, yet they trust in him. Christ is our glorious, conquering King, and through his sufferings and death he made all things perfect, and supplies our every need. The poor and afflicted ere long will join the celestial throng, then all suffering will cease. What a glorious hope!

May God bless you, my brother, is my prayer. O. B. HICKERSON.

WADDY, Ky., May 14, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending you a letter from Elder C. K. Haines to be published in the SIGNS, for I think it is good.

How keenly we feel the loss of our beloved senior editor, Elder F. A. Chick. He was a man among men. May the Lord strengthen the living ones, that the dear old SIGNS be published, for it is a great comfort to me, as I cannot hear preaching as often as I would like.

A sinner,

TILITHA V. OWENS.

LAKELAND, Fla., May 8, 1914.

DEAR SISTER OWENS:—Your kind and welcome letter received, and we were glad to hear from you. While I do not remember just where we met, at what church or association, yet I always love to hear from the faithful. The household of faith, elect people, chosen of God, kept as the apple of his eye, are witnesses against the world of unrighteousness. God has reserved to himself witnesses in every age of the world to confess and testify to the truth, and it is not optional with them whether they testify or not, but they are made to do it, and to suffer for his name. Suffering is the legacy God has left to his afflicted and poor people, and they are made to trust in him; they are the people God formed for himself. The blessings of God are the sufferings of Christ in you the hope of glory. Those who think they are blessed for their obedience do not know anything about grace or hope. All of God's elect bear about in their body the afflictions of the Lord, for they are bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, chosen unto this affliction in Christ before the foundation of the world. He is their head and they are members of his body, and if the Head suffered, so do the members. Christ was a man of sorrow, so are his members. If the Head conquered death and hell, and rose victorious over it all, the members will also, by the same power. In the mind and purpose of God all this was determined before the foundation of the world. Then began the grand and glorious work in the creation of man after his own image, and never will stop until he has finished his work by regenerating this same man and conforming him to the likeness of himself. Man shall bear his image, see him as he is and be like him: pure and holy. This is all God's work, and no flesh can please God, for all live after the flesh, and none can mortify the deeds of the body, except through the Spirit, which is Christ in you the hope of glory. It is Christ's obedience that makes you righteous in God's sight, for Christ has forever perfected them that were chosen in him by God the Father. God did preserve them in Christ, and then called them with an holy calling, and no natural ear ever heard the call; the calling is done with a still small voice, and no natural ear ever heard anything still. It is not only absurd, but ignorant, to say God blesses one for or because of his obedience; pure love is the only incentive that ever moved any one to obey God. A man who will not do right unless rewarded will do wrong as quickly for reward.

Well, dear sister, the sad news of our dear brother Chick's death has shocked me with alarm, for the compromising spirit is in the land, and in the church, for some will rise and preach sound doctrine, but show a spirit to compromise with Ashdod and talk time salvation, and if one rises up to warn or caution they are ready to brand him as an agitator, or as possessing a dominating spirit, but dear

brother Chick was not so; he was patient and long-suffering, but firm; yes, I loved him for the truth's sake.

Dear sister, I am sorry to say we will not come north until fall; I may visit some of the churches there if they desire me to do so. Write again, and tell me where you live and where we met. Love to all the faithful in the Lord. If you wish you may send this to the SIGNS.

Your servant, C. K. HAINES.

ATLANTIC, N. C., June 19, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—In the last SIGNS I learned of the departure of sister Ker. It is often said that troubles do not come to us single-handed. This appears to be true of you at this time. The death of dear Elder Chick and that of sister Ker came so near together, yet I have no doubt you feel that the Lord is able to sustain you through it all, and I hope that he has given you strength to feel that he will sustain you. How great a God is our God. In all the earth he does wonders; men behold them and do not know them. How blind is poor, proud, boastful man. His breath is in his nostrils, and there is nothing that he can do. He cannot live one moment, nor make one hair white or black. However much he may wish to die he must live on until God says, Go, and then however much he fights against going he cannot stay one moment. Does it not appear that the knowledge of this would be sufficient to teach men their nothingness? and yet it will not; they still go on boasting. Surely man must be cut off in his wickedness and be left without excuse. How good and merciful is the Lord to come to his people in the tenderness of his love and show them his salvation. It is wonderful that he shows them how sinful they are, and his divine justice in cutting them off. What mourning there is in the heart at the sight of all this sinfulness; not all of it can be borne at once. I well remember the day in which the Lord sent deliverance to my poor heart. It appeared to me that all my sins were opened before me, and that I saw the awful consequences of them, but since that day I have been made to see my mistake, for there has been in me a continual development of sin to this day; not only of the sins which I daily commit, but of things that were in my early life, which I had not looked upon as being so sinful, these have come up as sins before and against God. Thus I stand convicted every day, and convinced of the justice of the Lord in all his judgments against vile man. I do not believe that there was ever anything lost, not even a thought, however mean it was, it is a matter of record and it is required. Man has not the least excuse before the holy God. Death is a just visitation from him to man, because man is the transgressor. God has not compelled him to go the way he has gone. The fact that God has a purpose in his going that way, and that he will fill up the measure of His purpose in man, is no excuse for man to hide behind. He may try to take shelter there, but the God of justice will find him and unshelter him. It is nothing more that the figleaf apron which man made for himself at the first; as soon as the sun of God's divine justice shines upon it it will wither away and expose man's nakedness. How foolish he then appears that he was trusting in so flimsy a shelter. If man does not see this while he is here he must see it hereafter, for every knee must bow before his divine justice. How good and merciful is the Lord to us that he gives us to see this while we are yet in the world, and to give us repentance from ourselves to

him, and make us hunger after his righteousness. Surely we are taught that there is no other righteousness that can stand before the just and holy God, nor save us from the eye of him who never commits an error. What an awful thing it is to fall into his hands of holiness and justice. When we can feel that he has taken away all our sins we are sure to see Jesus, the mighty Redeemer, to see him in his death for poor, sinful man. What a sacrifice! I have often wondered how some of our brethren can content themselves with the idea of substitution when they have been made to feel that the work of the Lord in every part was and yet is a most wonderful sacrifice. This sacrifice was ordained, or appointed, before man ever sinned, and therefore before the offering was actually made it had the same power up to the appointed time that it had after that time had arrived and the sacrifice was actually made and accepted and the Priest taken up to glory. Therefore we who live to-day have no more interest in the blood of the Lord than had Adam and Abel, and all the host of the little ones who went before the sacrifice was actually made. Therefore we have the assurance of the wonderful confidence that divine justice had in our dear Redeemer. Then to see that he measured up to that confidence in every particular, so that there was not a jot nor tittle of anything which was left to his divine care that was not in every sense fully accomplished, should be enough to cause every little child of grace to fully trust him. Surely it is enough when we are cut off from all confidence in our ability. That we have to be, and the Lord knows just when and how to do it. We are taught that vain is the help of man. If we put confidence in him we are most sadly disappointed. We must look to the Lord for the blessings he gives us in ministers and in his other children. All their help as well as ours must come from him. It is in him that we look for the resurrection of the dead, and hope to be made partakers of that resurrection. Indeed, we are now made partakers of it, for it is that which is being taught in us in all our deliverances from ourselves and from the world. How good to have this continually working in us, so that it is ever kept before us. If we go down in deep places and roll in trouble and sorrow, it is only unto this God of the living that we cry for deliverance. That is because of the fact that he has ever heard us in times of need and come to our relief, thus manifesting his continual watchcare over us. This watchcare does not end with this life; no, he continues our God even though we lie in the grave. We are no more helpless there, nor are we any more passive than when we live here. In life and in death we are his, and his Fatherly care over us is the same. The sleeping dust is as much his as the living, walking man, and the living, walking man can do no more towards his life from the dead than can the sleeping dust. All quickening power is by the Spirit of the Lord, and all power to keep us alive is the same. Therefore the saint while he lives in this world is as dependent on the Lord to keep him as he was that he should raise him by his Spirit into divine life, and in all no more dependent, but just the same as he is that the Lord shall, at his appointed time, change this mortal into his immortality, this natural into the spiritual, this corruptible into incorruption. All this is his to do as he will, and in the time that he has appointed. We do not know the day of the Lord that he has appointed to accom-

plish all his mighty works, but he will accomplish them in the time and way that pleases him and that shall fully glorify him and cause all his heavenly host to praise him in strains that none can even think while here. O, my dear brother, the thought of these great and unspeakable things makes my heart rejoice to that extent that all fear of death flees away and the future has no dread for me. What a glorious Lord is our God! Now I am living in this blessed hope. I do not believe that I shall be disappointed. There is no disappointment in hope in the Lord Jesus, and I have none in any other. It is a hope that I could not get, though I tried with all my power, therefore it was the Lord who gave it to me. For forty-one years he has kept me in this hope, and I do believe with all my soul and body and spirit that he will keep me unto the end, and deliver me in his glory fully justified with the Father. This is all the hope I have, and have no confidence in the flesh for time or for eternity.

The Lord bless you, my brother, and keep you in his love and fear, that you may be able by him to spend your life to his honor and praise. I pray that he may so bless the SIGNS that it may continue to be a comfort to his people, and bring joy to the household of his saints.

Your little brother in humble hope,

L. H. HARDY.

HARDING, W. Va., June 22, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have read your editorial "Alone," in the SIGNS, and feel a profound sympathy for you in the loss of Elder Chick. As a reader of the paper, I feel deeply the loss of its senior editor, for his editorials were very comforting, his language plain, yet always pleasant. He was firmly established in the doctrine and order of God's house, and well qualified to counsel and instruct those who needed help. As time passed on his writing became deeper and more profound, and his vision became clearer as he neared the end of his journey on earth, and he impressed upon his readers the need of sound doctrine and faithfulness in their lives. At the beginning of each volume his New Year's address was deeply interesting, and of great comfort and encouragement to the children of God, for there he told us his daily experience, his unworthiness and inability to do anything without God's help. These things seemed to bring him very near to us, and we were comforted in the thought that though we esteemed him so highly for the truth's sake, and believed him to be a faithful servant of God, yet he felt his weakness and need of God's help as we do, which caused us to hope that we were traveling the same road. The poet said,

> "Ye are traveling home to God
> In the way our fathers trod;
> They are happy now, and ye
> Soon their happiness shall see."

Dear brother, how true it is that God has given to each man different gifts, and while we feel so deeply the loss of Elder Chick, we desire to be reconciled to God's will, believing that his work was done, and that God has need of such a gift as yours, and such other as he shall in his own good time send to help you in upholding our dear family paper. Knowing your duty as you do, and feeling the responsibility that rests upon you in your editorial work, I feel sure God will give you strength to pass through every trial, and enable you to comfort the readers of the dear paper. May you be comforted with the same comfort wherewith you comfort them.

I was sorry to note the death of your dear wife, and sympathize with you in your sad bereavement. When everything goes well with us and we have our loved ones all around us it seems easy to say, God's will be done, but I have learned by experience in sad trials and bereavements that nothing but the grace of God can enable us to say from the depths of our sad hearts, Thy will, not ours, be done. What a mercy it is to give us this grace. How it softens our rebellious hearts, and teaches that God knows what is best. May his grace be sufficient for you in this sad time, enabling you to look to him for all things, and may he give you abundantly of the riches of his glory to uphold his cause and feed and comfort his people for Jesus' sake, is the prayer of one whose only hope is in salvation by grace,

(MRS.) E. E. WORKMAN.

STEVENS POTTERY, Ga., June 4, 1914.

MY DEAR BROTHER KER:—Language could not tell you how my heart goes out to you in your double affliction: in the loss of your precious wife, and in that of dear, gentle Elder Chick, and you aptly expressed it in your last editorial when you said, "Alone." But amid circumstances so trying remember that the loving Father in days of old, as well as now, brought his chosen prophets, lawgiver and apostles through fiery afflictions, and we have been told by one of the latter, in speaking to the comfort of the brethren, that the trial of their faith was more precious than gold. The same love that afflicts has promised to heal. "Sorrow endureth for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Yes, the night is on, but the morning will dawn, and the glorious Sun of Righteousness will rise with healing in his wings. For you especially, whom God has called to speak comfortably to Jerusalem, and to tell her that her warfare is accomplished, will he provide strength. Do you not remember how the great apostle, Paul, was made to glory in tribulation, and to exclaim that our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory? Time would fail me to tell of so many rich and sure promises that are for the comfort of God's people, but the dearest truth of all is where we are told that the Captain of our salvation was made perfect through suffering. We remember how the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man had not where to lay his head. We remember how when he was reviled he reviled not again. We see the sweat as great drops of blood, because of the sins of his people, when the disciples could not watch with him one hour. We remember how they all forsook him in the crucial hour, when he must bear alone the sins of his bride, must tread the winepress of the wrath of God alone, ("For this cause came I unto this hour.") and even the sun refused to look upon the awful scene; we hear his anguished cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Never a scene and suffering like that. He, who was one with the Father, must be forsaken of him, though he knew no sin in himself, and pay the fearful price of redemption, with the presence of God withdrawn, and "alone." Ah, dear brother, we must have fellowship with that suffering, but thanks be to God, we are assured by him who triumphed in his resurrection, I will never leave nor forsake you. He stood "alone" and worked out for us, who look for his second appearing, an eternal inheritance. In contemplating his suffering for us, his glorious victory over death, hell and the

grave, and that in his ascension he sat down forever at the right hand of God, and ever liveth to make intercession for us, let us say with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Sorrows are our portion here, but we know the journey will soon be over. Tribulations thicken toward the end of the pilgrimage. My husband fell at my side about nineteen months ago, and I was left childless and "alone." In about ten days my loved brother was taken, and it has been blow after blow since then, but God gave us the grace to rejoice that we are accounted worthy to suffer for his sake. I fear I am not worthy even to suffer so for him. I used to write you from Covington, Ga., but am here temporarily. May God comfort you and your dear family, and to each I offer my truest sympathy, and pray that the peaceable fruits of righteousness may be yielded in all your lives. May God, who is rich in mercy, bless the taking away of dear Elder Chick to the good of his sorrowing family, and may they rejoice that God loaned them such a gift, and try to walk in his footsteps. May he indeed send a glorious helper to you in your arduous labors, and may all our sorrow be turned into joy. May he strengthen you indeed. That he may likewise comfort Elder Durand and his sorrowing family in the loss of his noble wife, whom I had the pleasure of meeting once only, is my prayer. Again, dear brother, God comfort and strengthen you.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) MITTIE DAVIS ROBERTS.

[SUCH letters as the above confirm the strongest and comfort the feeblest of God's children.

"How strange is the course that a christian must steer!
How perplexed is the path he must tread!
The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
And his life he receives from the dead."

We are glad sister Roberts felt to write us, and thank her for the kindness.—K.]

ST. THOMAS, Ont., July 1, 1914.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I am sending a letter written by Daniel McIntyre, whose obituary was published in the June 1st number; his widow requested me to send it to the SIGNS.

We are all well, and are still contented here in our new home. Our June meeting just passed was a very pleasant meeting, and was well attended. Elders Silas Durand and G. L. Weaver were with us at this meeting. I hope that the Lord will be in our midst and keep us humble and bind our hearts together in love. I often think of you in your lonely condition, and my prayer for you is that the dear Lord will give you strength to bear up under the burden that is laid upon you.

With love to you, I am unworthily yours, J. B. SLAUSON.

ALDBOROUGH, Ont., May 22, 1884.

DEAR ELDER WM. POLLARD:—I have been meditating about becoming a member of the church, therefore concluded to write you the feelings of my mind. In early youth I was desirous of becoming a christian, but I formed the idea at that time, from hearing our Baptists preach, that I would hear a voice telling me that my sins were forgiven. I attended meetings, hoping and praying to hear those words, but while at meeting one Sunday there was no minister to preach for us, as our old Elder was getting feeble, and I was wondering if the church was going to end for want of a minister, when the words, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me to preach glad tidings, came with such

power into my mind that I turned to the wall to shed tears; but still I expected to hear that audible voice that would tell me my sins were forgiven. I kept on for years expecting to hear it, and one night while attending my sister, who was dying, I was asking the Lord in my heart what I must do to be saved, and the words, Give me thine heart, came to me with such power that I started and looked surprised. I felt some relief, but still I was expecting to hear that voice, so one day I concluded to go and hear the Mormons, as I was told they spoke with unknown tongues, but as I was crossing a field on my way I felt a heavy sensation, and the words, You have Moses and the prophets, and they are all you will get, came to me with such power that I could not believe the Mormons. Still I did not understand my situation until I was taken very sick, when I commenced to look back and see they were the Lord's sayings that were coming with his Spirit into my mind, and whenever I commence to doubt about the christian state I am always taken back to what came to me at my sister's dying bed. Recently I was wondering if the Lord would allow me to fall away after giving me some understanding, when the words, His breath kindleth coals, came to me with great force. I therefore submit these feelings of my mind to your consideration for you to let me know at some convenient time what you think of them. The most comfort I ever received was from hearing you while preaching say that the Lord never asked any to give their heart to him except his own people. I need not tell you of my feelings and troubled state of mind while all this was going on, for you know that yourself. I have wished to have a private talk with you of late, but not finding an opportunity thought to address you this letter so you might have time to think about the subject until we do meet.

Still looking to the Lord for something more of comfort and consolation, I am yours in faith and hope,

D. McINTYRE.

FAYETTE, Ala., June 22, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find a letter from brother Wilson Brock, which I think worthy of a place in the SIGNS. I had the pleasure of baptizing this dear brother, and I feel sure that if we both live I will have the greater pleasure of hearing him preach the unsearchable riches of Christ; in fact, he has been exercising in public. Now, brethren, examine the letter, and publish if you think best; if not, all will be well.

G. W. BERRY.

COVIN, Ala., April 19, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER BERRY:—As I am alone this evening, will try to pen you a few of my thoughts. I had desired to meet you all at Hopewell to-day, but will just acknowledge that I let my work keep me away, and before twelve o'clock Saturday I felt that I had yielded to the prince and power of the air, and still feel I should have gone to meeting yesterday; but the time has gone, never to be recalled, and the thought arises, What causes me to have a desire to go to meeting? I have come to the conclusion it must be that manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, for if I did not love the brethren, and the gospel of Christ, why would I have a desire to go among them? I trust, if not deceived, that the Father hath bestowed his love upon me, and with loving-kindness hath drawn me to the fold. There is a passage of Scripture, John xiv. 15, which reads this way: "If ye love me, keep my command-

ments." This came to me as a rebuke seemingly, and if it is the Lord's will, I will now tell you in my rambling way why it was a rebuke to me, and please answer and tell me whether I am correct or not, or tell me whether the Scripture holds good the mentioned rebuke in the case. First, I want to say in regard to the text, that I understand a child will have to be born before it can receive a command, but if a child is born of love (or God, for God is love), then it may receive a command. Now what are the commandments here spoken of? Are they the commandments of men? Nay, verily, but I will tell what I have been taught they are. As Paul said on one occasion that he was not taught it of men, neither was I, for if I know anything about what the blessed Savior here had reference to I have been taught in experience, or revelation, whichever you wish to call it. First, I want to say that the first command I ever received was before I offered myself to the church, and I was trying to get some one to baptize me without going before the church. I tried three preachers and they all refused, and this language came to me with much force: Go home, and tell thy friends how great things the Lord hath done for thee. That was a command to me, and I was not satisfied until I had obeyed it. Since that time I have felt I was in debt to the church and did not have one farthing to pay. About six months ago this Scripture came to me when I was at my work: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God," and I have been first up and then down from that time until just a few days ago, when I came to the conclusion that I would not let any one know my feelings about this, but when this Scripture came to me, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," I was in the fiery furnace, and it seemed I could not say anything but, Lord, help me to do whatsoever thou commandest me, and then the tempter came and said to me, How can you comfort his little ones? I am ready to say I cannot, for I am so prone to sin. How could I speak comfortably to Jerusalem and be so contaminated with sin? This is the way I am spending my life now; sometimes I am lifted up, as it were, and soar, then I am in the valley of despair; so please pray for me, that I may find rest to my soul, for I know I cannot do anything of myself, but the prayers of a righteous man availeth much. Pray that I may not be utterly consumed, that He will extend mercy to poor me, and that some sweet day he will lift me up out of the furnace, and then there will be no smell of fire on my garments.

We are all well. Give my love to one and all.

Your brother, in much tribulation,

WILSON BROCK.

ERRATA.

In the July 15th Signs, in the editorial of Elder Lefferts, the word "and" is omitted before the word "all" at the beginning of the third line from top, first column, page 441. The word "violation" in last line of second column, page 441, should be "volition." The word "that" at the end of ninth line from the bottom of second column, page 442, should be "what."

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1914.

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EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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2 CORINTHIANS IV. 6.

"GOD, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

The apostle in this weighty letter is preaching the gospel by contrasting works and grace. He speaks of the things of the law as the "letter," and says the letter killeth; then declares the things of grace are spirit, and that the spirit giveth life. Hence, "If the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory." The contrast between "letter" and "spirit," between the glory of the old covenant and that of the new, is very great, and in all the writings of the New Testament there is found nothing more clear with reference to the weakness and passing away of the law and the power of grace and the steadfastness of the glory of the spirit. The glory of the law was in the ministration of death because of sin, and the glory of the Lord was only a reflection, or shadow, seen by the Israelites, in the face of Moses, yet so glorious was it that they could not steadfastly look upon it, hence Moses had to wear a vail over his face. This signifies the hiding, or covering, of the spirit of the law during that dispensation. The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. This gives us an idea of the language of Moses: Secret things belong to God, but revealed things belong to us and to our children, that we do all the words of this law. All deeds and ceremonies of the law were revealed and commanded to be observed by the seed of Abraham, but the things of grace and truth, which came by Jesus Christ, were secret during the entire legal dispensation, and Paul declares that when Moses (law) is read the vail is still upon their hearts even unto this day. That is, those who now, as then, expect to be justified by works are still looking upon the shadow, only seeing the reflection, not having seen Christ as the end of the law for righteousness—the Ransom by whom we draw nigh unto God. But to those born of God the vail is done away, forever removed in Christ. "Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech." This does not mean harsh language, abuse of others, but we speak boldly and confidently of things heavenly and divine. Such things are no longer vailed, hid, from the family of God. Therefore having entered the glory, spirit, of the new testament, we speak plainly of things revealed by the Spirit of God. We no longer look to Moses and Elias, we no longer hope to be justified by works, but look to the Lamb of God, who took away the sins of his people. He is our Lawgiver, Priest and King. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of

darkness, hath shined in our hearts." Here we are reminded of God's power and Godhead. Yes, the same mighty Creator who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts, still manifesting his omnipotence. The darkness of the beginning cannot more than compare with the blackness of the heart of man, "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it?" But there is a difference between commanding the light to shine out of darkness and God himself shining in the hearts of men. This brings the God of our salvation near unto us, yea, even into our hearts. He is the light that shineth in darkness, giving his witnesses the understanding of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Not in the face of Moses, who only reflected the glory of God, but without a vail between the house of God today sees, and understands, the glory of God. Language is inadequate to describe the benefits and glory of the children of light. What a heavenly blessing to see Jesus crowned with glory and honor, the fulfiller of every jot and tittle of the law, the crucified and risen Savior, the Shepherd of the sheep! How utterly impossible for the wisdom and knowledge of the world to enter into the things of God. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit, which Spirit is none other than the indwelling presence of God, giving the light of the knowledge of his own glory in the face of his Son, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. This ministry the apostles received: to preach perfect freedom from sin through the offering of Jesus Christ once for all. So free are the children of God from the curse of the law that they stand before him without fault and blameless, as though sin had never entered the world, nor death by sin. If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. Inasmuch as the ministers of the new testament have received this ministry and experienced mercy, they should faint not, but renounce the hidden things of dishonesty, not walk in craftiness, nor handle the word of God deceitfully, commending themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. The church of Christ has never needed more than now a faithful ministry. The hearts of many have waxed cold; the deceitfulness of riches has taken possession of not a few; broad-mindedness is being advocated and approved; the doctrine of God is being neglected and popularity courted. Anything of this sort is "sin" after having received the knowledge of the truth, and the ways of Zion mourn now because of the desire and attempts to be like other people the same as in the days of old. The Lord then gave the Israelites their desire, but sent leanness into their souls. What can be compared with the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ? What are all things here below when compared with the liberty in Christ Jesus? We well know that the discouragements of the gospel ministry are many, but not more, nor as severe, as those of the apostles' day. "The god of this world" is blinding the minds of men and women just as he did hundreds of years ago, and his work will continue, but while God the Father continues to shine in the hearts of even a few of Adam's race let us faint not, but boldly declare the gospel which is hid to them that are lost. K.

REWARDS.

THE subject is exceedingly broad, and in the limits of an article such as this simply a few aspects can be noted. Among our people, the expression is frequently encountered that "the reward is in doing a thing, not for doing it." We have wondered if this is so, and if the Scriptures will bear out such an assertion. This is our reason for bringing this matter to the attention of our readers at this time. Because the field is exceeding broad, we shall for the present confine ourself to the matter as treated in the New Testament, and will notice the passage therein where the word "reward" first occurs. This is in Matthew v. 12: "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." The first of this quotation, without doing any violence to the original meaning, might be freely rendered thus: Blessed are you when men revile and persecute you, and, on my account, falsely allege every kind of evil against you. Just any kind of vilification and persecution is not a mark of blessing. The crown of blessing rests only in that kind of ill-treatment which bears two essential features: it must be on account of or for the sake of Christ; and the evil allegations must be false. If the evil things men hurl at the saints be true, it is a shame, and not a blessing. If the persecution be the penalty of our wrongdoing it cannot be laid to the account of Christ, for, in that case, we suffer our just deserts, and not innocently because of him. Hear the confirming words of Peter in this matter: "But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; * * * having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing." And still again from the same authority: "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye. * * * But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed." Granted, then, that the persecution is for Christ's sake, and that the evil accusations are false, it is a blessing of God to share in such. Such are and ever have been marks of the true church militant. They are the penalty of nonconformity. The law of the Spirit forbids conformity to the world on the part of the church, and commands transformation by the renewing of her mind. To be fixedly resolute not to conform to the traditions of men and their religions, is to be spiritually energetic. Dead fish go with the current, live fish struggle against it. Jesus would not conform himself to Judaism, so the thorns and sop of vinegar were his. But is that all that was his? No. "Great is your reward in heaven." The promise of eternal felicity after awhile to the penniless, tattered beggar wandering the streets of To-day, does not do him much good. It may excite his imagination, but it leaves his stomach empty and hollow. The Arminian religions have always done a brisk trade in futures. They barter starry crowns and reserved seats in heaven to any one who will, in exchange, give his heart to Christ and accept his overtures of mercy, and the poor dupes of the

specious seduction wake up to find themselves deluded, and disgustedly slide back into the mire of immorality from which they were plucked in the fond hope that emotionalism is stability, and mere sentiment reality. Thus do the modern revivalists from time to time stir the stagnant pool of carnal religion, raising the miasma of dead works and the stench of braggart egotism. Of the internal soul-evidences of christianity they know nothing; of experimental religion they are woefully ignorant. Who has intended this blindness? The very almighty Being who, in mercy, has given his elect all the insight they possess into eternal verities. Blindness and sight, both are at the disposition of the one God, according to the good pleasure of his will. No flesh dare glory before him. All boasting is excluded, save on the part of him who glories in the cross. Salvation is of grace, not of works. Please note it says: "Great is your reward in heaven," not, Great shall be your reward in heaven. Whenever the Lord promises his people anything, he invariably gives them an earnest or foretaste thereof as an evidence of his immutable and infinite good faith. This becomes the ground of their hope and confidence in him. From this they never permanently slide back, though Satan does all he can to encompass their ruin. This reward is not altogether something to be realized in the future, when the stress of life is over, it is a living, potent force, still and small in its operation, but mightily effective in its results. The inspired Isaiah declares heaven is God's throne. The throne is the residence of the honor, glory, power and authority of the King who sits thereon. From it emanate the inflexible decrees of omnipotence. Now if the reward is in heaven, and heaven is the throne of God, and the throne is the seat of divine honor and authority, it must follow (if comparing spiritual things with spiritual means anything) that the reward of the afflicted militant body of Jesus is in having the assurance that the authority, honor, glory and wisdom of God are present in her members now as she walks the path of faith and lives the life of it. Jesus said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." It is the militant flock he here addresses. It is, and always has been, a little flock, as compared with the many of antichrist. The kingdom of heaven is the gift to the little, to the despised, the persecuted and the falsely maligned. The kingdom of heaven is that kingdom which acknowledges in heart and spirit, by faith and love, the inalienable right of her glorious Lord to do with her, each and all, as seems to him right and best. This kingdom is the very present reward that more than amply repays for all the wounds sustained for the sake of the King. The gospel kingdom of the risen, victorious Christ, with all its new covenant blessings, gifts and privileges, is, by divine pleasure, the possession of the afflicted, tempest-tossed Zion, and when enjoying these things she easily faces a frowning world and smiles at the storm of persecution waged against her. In this heaven, this new heaven, this gospel heaven wherein dwells righteousness, is the reward of the suffering church. Also, the fellowship included in this matter is not to be overlooked. "For so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." That which the church now endures is the fellowship of all that she has suffered before. Surely there is reward in this. The consciousness that our lot is the lot common to all the chosen seed, and to

the incarnate Word as well, should certainly encourage us to press forward, and it does. There is great reward in fellowship. Bear ye one another's burdens in love, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

The word "reward" in the New Testament, and its variations, such as "rewards," "rewarded," "rewardeth," are never followed directly by the preposition "for," and we have searched in vain the written word to find any place where God promises to reward men with good because of labor or service which they have voluntarily instituted and carried on of themselves. The principles of human nature will never incite one to serve God acceptably, but, on the contrary, will lead a man as far from God as it is possible to go. Without faith it is impossible to please God. Such faith does not arise out of the earth, but descends from above into the hearts of men; it is the gift of God. God is a Spirit. Those who serve him must do so in spirit and in truth. He is not to be served or worshipped in the oldness of the letter, nor with lip service in rituals, litanies and ceremonials. He dwells not in temples made with hands, neither is worshipped with men's hands. Inasmuch, then, as all such service is hateful in his sight, why say or expect that such exertions should deserve good at the hands of the Lord? To believe that men can of themselves in nature perform certain acts that will require God to reward them, is to believe that the creature can bring the Creator in debt to him. Only a ridiculously bloated self-conceit could accept such a preposterous conclusion. The gospel is full of obedience, but not such as can be generated in humanity's powerhouse. In the obedience of the gospel, the flesh profits nothing. The gospel embodies Christ and his obedience alone. All his virtues are the gift of the Father to those in the Son; his obedience is made to become their obedience. The grace of obedience must be and is imparted to the disciple of truth before he can render acceptable service unto the living God. In being thus made obedient there is great reward, not only in the very act of obedience, but because of it as well. "Thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly." Prayer is a secret, a closet-matter. When one is truly praying, it never occurs to him to parade it before men; even his own natural mind will not be conscious of the prayer. We cannot appoint our times of prayer or decide of ourselves what to pray for. This, our ignorance, is our infirmity. The Spirit of intercession breathed into us is our ordained helper in this extremity. The reward of such secret intercession is an open one, visible to all the household of faith. A life of prayerfulness begets a walk of carefulness. Those who are favored to commune much in secret with their Lord bear the aroma of such intercourse in their daily walk and conversation. Paul tells us how the saints are obedient when he says that the working out of their salvation by them is because God works in them to will and to do of his good pleasure. No man can perform good works, only as the Holy Spirit works in him the ability thereunto. Works are the effect of salvation, not salvation the effect of works. Keeping this distinction clearly before us, it may be said that the rewards of the people of God are twofold. The obedience springing from the divinely derived ability is a reward, and the result of the obedience is a reward. "Every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor." This, in 1 Cor. iii. 8, is spoken of

the ministry. Paul says that in his labors it was not he that labored, but the grace of God that was with him. If the labors of a called servant of God be of grace, the fruit shall not be hidden: it will be seen in the soundness and steadfastness of the churches among whom his lot is cast. If the grace of a wise master-builder be his portion, his preaching will be clear and discriminating; those who hear will not be left in uncertainty as to the meaning of the message he brings. Not only will truth be divided from error, but the word of truth itself will be divided. There must be great reward to any man who can thus proclaim the living truth. He cannot be paid for it, but there would be recompense in it. When one can feel in his own soul the power and glory of the gospel he preaches, the reward is surely in it, not for it. But, on the other hand, there is a reward following upon such service. He gets himself a place in the hearts and fellowship of his hearers, of which he cannot be cheated. The ministry of his gift will reflect itself in the steadfastness and chasteness of the church or churches of his care long after he, as a man, is dead and gone. The influence of Paul's ministry is felt in the church even in this century; he is dead, yet speaks. His inspired testimonies endear him to the hearts of all lovers of the truth of whatever century.

But to revert to the passage in 1 Cor. iii. 8, if the labors of the servant of God be actuated by anything short of grace, if self-seeking and vainglory creep in, if he is confused in his mind as to what is and what is not truth, if his understanding of Scripture be clouded, all this, too, will reflect itself in the condition and standing of those to whom he ministers. If the shepherd be slothful and indifferent the sheep will likely manifest something of the same sort. Safety lies in fearfulness and trembling, in being made alive to weakness and infirmity. The warrior conscious of the points of weakness will seek reinforcements to buttress him there. Unless grace strengthens to the keeping of the body in subjection, the haughty spirit that goeth before a fall will surely ensnare. In keeping the judgments of God there is great reward. Every one in Zion appears before God; all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; there they receive the things done in the body, whether they be good or whether they be evil. Blessed is the man retaining the counsel of these judgments. In so doing he has great reward. He strays not beyond the confines of the holy city. God is his portion forever.

We stated at the beginning that the subject of "rewards" is an exceeding broad one; there is no end to it, but there is a limit to us, so we leave it. L.

MEMORIALS.

We, the messengers and brethren composing the Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, express here our sense of great loss and our mourning on account of the death of our dear brother, **Elder F. A. Chick,** who passed away April 14th, 1914. He was held in the highest esteem and dearly loved by us. He was faithful as a minister of the gospel, as a pastor and as an expounder of the Scriptures, preaching and in writing. We miss him greatly, and feel his death to be a cause of great grief to us. He was helpful to us all, and in his life and among his brethren as an example. We would be submissive to the Lord's will, who, we know, doeth all things well. We deeply sympathize with his wife, our dear sister, and his children in their great bereavement. May the Lord continue to support them. We also here express our sense of great loss in the death of three of our deacons, brethren **J. Monroe Willard,** of the Southampton Church, **William A. Simmons** and **Johnson T. Blackwell,** of Hopewell Church. They were all dear to us, and most highly esteemed.

J. M. FENTON, Moderator.

D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at Leesburg, Va., June 3rd, 1914, Thomas F. Cogle and Miss Ocal Eliza Talton, both of Loudoun Co., Va.

By the same, at his home, Leesburg, Va., July 18th, 1914, Joseph P. Evans, of Dennison, Ohio, and Mrs. Jennie Beavers, of Loudoun Co., Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Ella H. Rowe, the subject of this memoir, was born Feb. 14th, 1862, the daughter of Isaac and Emily Harrison, of Washington County, N. C., and was married to the writer Feb. 16th, 1881, to which union were born seven children, one dying in infancy. The other six are: Alvis S., Ada I., (now Mrs. Cahill) John I., William H., Francis B. and Charles A. Rowe, all of whom are grown and survive her. She was taken sick on Friday, June 5th, and we called our family doctor, who, after two or three examinations, pronounced her disease pneumonia. We employed a trained nurse, and all that loving hearts and hands could do was done for her, but all to no avail, the Lord saw fit to take her, and so at 12:15 a. m. June 17th, she passed from the loving embrace of husband and children to the more perfect love and embrace of her dear Savior, who had several years ago given her a sweet hope in him as her salvation. My dear wife was not a professor of religion at the time of our marriage, but was from the first loving, kind and true, well fitted to be the wife of one who preached the gospel of the Son of God, which I had been trying to do for about four and one-half years. Not long after we began housekeeping by ourselves, one night after we had been singing some hymns, which we often did, she remarked to me: "I have been familiar with these hymns all my life; we children at home used to sing them for mother. I did not then think of their meaning, but now as I sing them I see that the words mean something." As time went on she manifested more or less concern, until one evening in the winter of 1883, I was reading the Bible; she had put our first child, then about one year old, to bed, then came and took a seat near me. I noticed that she looked serious, but said nothing to her. Presently she suddenly threw herself back in her chair and screamed at the top of her voice. It so shocked me that I threw my Bible on the floor and took hold of her, asking repeatedly what was the matter. After some time she spoke, saying, "O, I am so sinful." This utterance gave me much relief, because I knew that He who had given her to feel the awful truth would one day give her hope in him as her deliverer from the bondage of sin, which he did in that very moment of her extreme agony, for she told me that the great burden she had carried for some time left in the same moment in which she cried out, and she never felt it again as she had felt it before. On Saturday before the third Sunday in May, 1893, she, with some others, offered herself to the church at Marrattook, Washington Co., N. C., and was gladly received for baptism. Her brother, Elder N. H. Harrison, was pastor of the church, but he very kindly offered me the privilege of baptizing her, saying, "I baptized my wife, and it was a great pleasure, and I wish to grant you the same privilege;" and so it was my privilege and great pleasure the next morning to baptize my dear wife in the fellowship of the church of God, and now in the midst of the greatest sorrow I have ever known it is a great pleasure to say that to the end she proved true to her church, to her husband and to her children. I can think of no duty that devolved upon her in which she did not prove faithful. She was a lovely character, and as it was our lot to move several times and to live for a longer or shorter time in several places, she also frequently went with me to meetings from home, and I do not believe I exaggerate when I say that no one met her that did not like her, and those who knew her best loved her most.

We buried her in the cemetery at old Black Rock Church, Baltimore Co., Md., on the 19th day of June. We do not doubt that for her it is far better, but O how sad and lonely the home and the world seem without her. My poor heart swells and aches until my eyes overflow with tears, and in these I find relief only for a moment, but I can truly say that I sorrow not as those who have no hope. I believe that her soul, or spirit, now rests with Jesus in paradise. (Luke xxiii. 43; 2 Cor. v. 8.) I also believe that that same natural body that now sleeps in the cemetery at Black Rock is asleep in Jesus, and that he will watch over and preserve it until he shall come again the second time without sin unto salvation, and then he will call it, with all the rest of his redeemed who sleep in the dust, to arise spiritual bodies to live with him forever. (2 Thess. iv. 13-18.)

She did not talk much during her last illness, as the doctor and nurse both said it was against her to do so. We all insisted that she keep quiet, and she never murmured, but often said, "All right, all right," and near the end one of her daughters heard her say something about the ordination of God.

May God Almighty bless us, the sorrowing husband and children, also her many brethren, sisters and friends who mourn with us. May we follow the good example of our dear departed one, and when that day of glorious resurrection shall come may it be our happy lot also to come forth in the image of our glorified Savior, to dwell together in and with him where the pain of parting shall never come.

Her ever loving, but now sorrowing husband,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

Note—I wish to say to my many brethren, sisters and friends who have written us letters of sympathy

in our trouble, that as there are nearly a hundred of them I cannot write to each individually, and therefore ask all of them to accept this as our answer and acknowledgment, and feel assured of our appreciation of the nice things said to us about our loved one now gone. Pray for us.

Yours in sorrow, JOSHUA T. ROWE.

OUR beloved sister, **Mattie E. Parker,** was born Jan. 30th, 1867, departed this life April 26th, 1914, aged 47 years, 2 months and 26 days. She professed a hope in Jesus when she was about sixteen years of age, and joined the Primitive Baptist Church at about the age of seventeen years, being baptized by our beloved Elder Y. J. Harvill. August 26th, 1885, she was married to Mr. F. G. Harvill. To that union were born five children. March 12th, 1898, sister Mattie was deprived of her husband by the sad death of Mr. Harvill, but she bore her grief with patience possessed only by God's saints, giving up her loved one and the father of her children, feeling that God knew best. Nov. 22nd, 1899, she was married to Mr. A. J. Parker. To that union were born two children. Death is a sad thing to think of from a standpoint of no hope, but to those who look for Him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation. God had everlasting love for his precious elect, and decreed that death should not hold them. The promise is sweet to us when we part with those who depart this life, leaving such assurances of their hope in Jesus as did our dear sister Mattie Parker. Death is the gate to endless joy, and is between us and heaven, our eternal home. The Father has placed it on the way, and is there to guide us through it, nor can it destroy his children, for he has conquered death and hell and delivered those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Sister Parker's children, friends, brethren and sisters mourn their loss, but we have the blessed assurance that our loss is her eternal gain. While she was in this life she was a sweet companion and a dear mother, and loved the company of her brethren and sisters, and was ever ready to comfort those around her. Her hope of eternal glory was her staff through life, and on which she leaned in the hour of death. We would say to her children, Do not be discouraged, mother is at rest, where the surgeon's knife is left behind and pain cannot enter; and to her host of friends, We beg you to be reconciled to this, the dispensation of God's holy will, and may you, too, one sweet day enjoy the blessings she now enjoys. To the church of North Nashville, You have lost a faithful member, but as she passed from us she passed into the church at God's right hand, the new Jerusalem. May we have God's grace to enable us to see the bright side of this, God's will being done, and take courage as we press toward the mark of the prize of the high calling as it is in Jesus.

Now unto God our Father, who is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the excellency of his glory, the only wise God our Savior, be glory, dominion, majesty and power forever. Amen. A. L. STANSELL.

Approved by church in conference.

Margaret Ellen Wilkins was born Dec. 3rd, 1849, and died March 11th, 1914, making her age 65 years, 3 months and 8 days. She had suffered for nearly a year, but bore her suffering patiently. All was done for her that loving hands could do, but the Lord called her home. She had often said that she was ready to go. She had been a devoted member of the Primitive Baptist Church for forty-one years, and will be greatly missed. She left to mourn her departure her husband and seven children, as follows: Mrs. G. D. Pace, Mrs. Dick Mason, Mrs. W. A. Goad, Mrs. E. W. Tinsley, Henry, George and John Wilkins, also a brother, Tom Brookshier, a sister, Mrs. Tom Emery, and a host of relatives and friends. She had been a resident of Graves County sixty-five years.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder J. M. Perkins. Weep not, father and children, for we know that dear grandmother is at rest. God knows best in all things. It is a consolation to know that our heavenly Father looks with compassion upon us, and will fold in the arms of his love all those who trust in him. It was hard to give her up, but her sufferings are ended, and she has left this world of sin and sorrow for the bright home above. May it be our happy lot to meet her there, where there is no more sickness, pain or death.

Her granddaughter,

ADELLE PACE.

APPOINTMENTS.

Elder D. M. Vail will preach at the home of Mr. Hasbrouck, 62 Vanburen St., Kingston, N. Y., Friday night before the third Sunday in August, and at Olive and Hurley Sunday following (third Sunday).

MEETINGS.

THE Regular Predestinarian Baptist Association, Siloam, of Oregon and Washington, will meet on Friday, August 7th, 1914, continuing the two following days, at Nesika, Lewis Co., Wash., with the Sulphur Creek Church. A cordial invitation is given to all. Those coming by rail will leave Tacoma, Wash., on the Tacoma Eastern R. R., Thursday, August 6th, where they will be met and conveyed to place of meeting.

SONORA A. HESS, Clerk.

THE Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet with Providence Church, near Plano, Appanoose Co., Iowa, on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1914, and continue three days. Trains will be met at Plano. All are invited.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator.
H. C. CATE, Clerk.

THE Schoharie Old School Baptist Church has appointed a three days meeting to be held Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 25th, 26th and 27th, 1914. A cordial invitation is extended to all. Those coming by rail will be met. Those coming to Howes Cave will be met by Deacon Miers, those to Schoharie by brother E. R. Kinney.

GEO. A. MIERS, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 82. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1914. NO. 16.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JAMES II. 18.

"YEA, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works."

DEAR BRETHREN:—I desire to write some of my thoughts on this subject as seems to me to be presented in the above words. It seems to me that there never has been a time when it was more necessary to heed these words than at this present time. It seems that conditions now are very similar to what they were when James wrote this epistle to his brethren. It seems these brethren were trying to justify themselves for their cruelty one toward another. The same sorrowful conditions exist to-day wherever dear brethren are engaged in their carnal wars and fightings. Now, dear brethren, these things ought not so to be. They were wrong when James wrote this epistle, and are evidently equally wrong to-day.

The words of our text and connections indicate that James' brethren were claiming to believe one thing and their works were different. James' idea was they ought to show their faith by their works, instead of doing as they were doing. Dear brethren, this is a severe test, yet O how much better it would be for all of us if we first would examine ourselves and see whether we are shewing our faith by our works before we are engaged in war with our brethren, to the extent they are now raging in some places over controverted points of doctrine. Of course, the words of our text will apply to all carnal warfare. But I desire to notice more especially some of the fighting now going on over the subject of what is termed conditional time salvation, on one hand, and absolute predestination of all things on the other hand. I desire to try to show that neither side shows their faith by their works on either side of these controverted points of doctrine I believe that the great majority of God's dear people are honest in their beliefs; but we all know there must be inconsistency somewhere, to say the least. I claim each side is equally alike inconsistent; that is, both sides fail to shew their faith by their works, which if they do, then the right thing for each to do would be to do as James admonished his brethren when he said, Confess your faults one to another, that ye may be healed. Now, let us reason together,

The healing here evidently refers to time, and not eternity. Primitive Baptists do not believe that men can perform any works which will heal them for eternity. Now here is where the controversy starts over the subject of conditional time salvation, as it seems to me; that is, each side fails to shew their faith by their works. If all the dear brethren who say they believe in conditional time salvation would show by their works that they truly believed this doctrine, there evidently could be no just grounds for any one denying it. I believe there is a salvation in time, or that pertains to time, and that God's dear people do receive reward here in time, but the solemn question with me is, Have I ever shown my faith by my works? I know I have not done so all the time, but the question that now concerns me is, Have I done so any of the time? to my shame and sorrow. I have been induced to take sides in these cruel wars, where fighting and killing were going on, and I have no knowledge of any person being saved because of the war then raging. Dear brethren, that is not God's way of saving his people, either for time or eternity. The grace of God, and grace alone through faith, will enable God's dear people to show their faith by their works. We all are taught of God alike (if we are taught at all) to know that without Christ we can do nothing. We all know that when we are in darkness we have no ability in and of ourselves to get out of it. We are taught these things in our experience, and the Scriptures teach the same, therefore there is no room for controversy on that subject if we go not beyond what the Scriptures teach, and we ourselves have been taught of God. I feel that we all know these are facts, as far as we have been taught of God, therefore, if we fall out by the way, it will be over something that we are not taught of God. To illustrate, if we do not have the ability in and of ourselves to remove the dark cloud when we are in darkness, and all alike are dependent upon an independent God for every good and perfect gift that cometh down from the Father of lights, (James i. 17,) and if we also have been taught of God to know these truths, then any person who knows these things is very inconsistent to teach in such a way as to be understood to contradict his own experience, let alone to contradict the word of God. Evidently much confusion does exist because of misunderstanding of what each believes, but that is not always the case. We sometimes say things that are directly opposite to what we have been taught of God in our experience, and yet many of us are honest, I think. It is those who are honest that we have any hope at all of getting to confess their faults one to another. If we are not honest, we will not do such a thing as to confess that fact. Now, dear brethren, all who desire peace should be very careful to speak so as to be understood, and at the same time speak in accordance with their own experience, and especially in accord with the Scriptures, then those who are wilfully dividing the church of Christ will be made manifest, and the blame can be laid where it belongs, and the rest can live together in peace and sweet fellowship if guided by the Spirit of God. Now let us make an illustration. Suppose I teach my brethren everywhere I go that I believe in conditional time salvation, and that God's people have the ability in and of themselves to have a blessing whenever they want it, and at the same time declare nonfellowship for my dear brethren

who say that they do not believe that doctrine, what would my works show in such a case? In the first place, the doctrine is not in accord with our experience; in the second place, such a course would not save any one; and in the third place, we have no Scripture example given where Paul, or any other apostle, ever took such a course to try to save any one. My dear brethren, if I am right and my brethren are wrong, if I love them I will not declare nonfellowship for them, but I will go to them in love and try to show them wherein they are wrong, I will try to save them from the error of their way; this I could not do if I had declared nonfellowship for them. Paul said, "To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." Paul was trying to save some. Let all notice his reason for doing so. He said, "And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you." Read 1 Corinthians ix. 22, 23. We all know that Paul could not have said what he did and at the same time declare nonfellowship for his weak brethren. He could not have declared nonfellowship for his weak brethren and then said, "And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you."

I verily believe in salvation for time. Paul evidently had reference to time when he said, "I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." But the question with me is, Do I know the right means to pursue? Paul evidently meant all right or lawful means, but he did not mean unlawful means. It is the unlawful means that kill, and the lawful means save, if any are saved; but unlawful means never saved any child of God. This I think all who desire peace will agree to. They know this is true, they also must know that there are many unlawful ways resorted to, or else conditions would not be as they now are. Now, if we know these things and yet lack wisdom, James would say, "Ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering." This evidently is the secret of the whole matter; that is, we have not been asking in faith, we have been wavering. We all know that brethren do not see alike on any controverted point of doctrine; that of itself proves there is a lack of wisdom somewhere, otherwise there would be no controversy, unless it be wilful on the part of those engaged in the controversy, as stated before. I believe the great majority of God's dear people are honest, but our honesty does not save us from the bad effects of warring and fighting with the intent to kill, as is done in many cases. James said to his brethren, "Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, and yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." Evidently conditions are no better now than they were when James wrote his epistle to his brethren. The wars are still raging, whole churches are nonfellowshipped without any reserve because of some claimed unsoundness on the part of those nonfellowshipped. Dear brethren, James did not advocate such a course against his warring brethren. O, why should we declare nonfellowship for a church of Christ? You see that means death, if the end desired is accomplished. But it is not always accomplished, some men and some churches have lived regardless of their being nonfellowshipped

by their brethren. Christ is the life and light of his people, and man cannot change it. O how inconsistent we are when we do as James' brethren were doing. They were commended for believing that there is one God, but they were sharply rebuked for not showing their faith by their works. If we truly believe there is but one God, the Father, by whom are all things, and we in him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him, (1 Cor. viii. 6,) our duty is to show our faith by our works. This we know James' brethren were not doing. James said, "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?" We see that James believed in works, but he did not believe in works that were contrary to faith. James' brethren believed that there is one God, but their works did not harmonize with their faith. James continued, "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." We know that James did not mean to be understood that his brethren were justified for their works. His whole letter goes to prove that he was condemning his brethren for their works. James' brethren were lacking in works that showed that their faith was in God; they were trusting in an arm of flesh; their works made manifest that they were living after the flesh. Abraham's works showed that his faith was in God. Abraham had no other way of showing that his faith was in God except by his works. This same rule holds good, yet we have no other way of showing our faith in God except by our works. If we do use the phrase, "conditional time salvation," we surely ought to be very careful in stating the conditions to be performed on our part, so as to be rightly understood. If I know one thing about this subject I certainly know that faith in God is essential, and I hope I know that is a gift of God, therefore I have no ability in and of myself to bestow these good gifts upon others or upon myself. I am a poor, dependent creature, and O how far short I have come of showing my faith by my works. Here, dear brethren, is the trouble, we trust to the flesh instead of God; our works betray us. Christ said, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." Evidently these words are yet binding on all who hope in Christ. I think all will agree to that. Now let us reason together. We all know that if James' brethren were professing to love one another, their works did not go to prove it. Dear brethren, you who hope in Christ, what do our works show when we are engaged in carnal warfare, in wars that kill instead of save? O is that the ground of our hope in Christ? Is our hope no more abiding than our works would indicate when we are fighting our brethren to kill, instead of trying to save them? If we love one another as Christ loved us we will not count our own lives dear unto ourselves; if need be we will lay down our lives for our brethren; to thus do is Christlike. James said, "If ye fulfill the royal law, according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well." James' brethren were not fulfilling the royal law, they were fighting and killing each other instead. Christ's law is royal. He is our King, he is our Lawgiver. Shall we claim to be keeping his law, the royal law, and at the same time engaged in warring and fighting our brethren even unto death? James continues by making different

illustrations, laboring to show his brethren wherein they had erred from the truth. He said, "Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law." These brethren had killed, therefore they were transgressors of the law of Christ. Another thing we all should observe: James said, concerning his brethren, they were not only fighting and killing each other, but they also had condemned and killed the just. Read James v. 6. Here we see one class represented as the just. Those just ones made no resistance against death, they were Christlike; they evidently showed their faith by their works, which was the cause of their being put to death. Evidently either faction of those who were engaged in war one with another was as bitter toward those just ones who made no resistance when condemned and put to death, as they were toward each other; that is, those engaged in war one with another would as soon kill one not thus engaged in war as one who was engaged in war. They wanted all to take sides in their carnal warfare, and those who would not thus do were condemned and put to death because they were just in the sight of God concerning these cruel wars. I believe there are those yet who are just in the sight of God that are not guilty of these cruel wars, and yet I believe there are those who are so bitterly engaged in war one with another that if they had it in their power they would condemn and kill the last one of the just. There is no difference in the factions as to that both sides alike are guilty; they are fighting to kill. Dear brethren, can we afford to continue in these cruel wars? Can we do these things? Think of it. Are we showing our faith in God by our works? We all claim to love God, do our works show that we love him? Our believing in conditional time salvation or absolute predestination of all things will not save us unless we put into practice lawful means instead of unlawful. We certainly must be blind to our own interest to be engaged in warring and killing each other.

James said, "For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy." Another thing to observe here is that James was not teaching his brethren that any man, or set of men, would inflict this judgment upon those who shewed no mercy. It is a sorrowful fact that those engaged in carnal wars and fighting act as though God had appointed them to be judges of his law, rather than doers of his law. James rebuked his brethren for thus doing. O, shall we profit by James' words when he said, "Speak not evil one of another, brethren"? James here has reference to those engaged in fighting each other. He continues, "He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge." He then says, "There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou, that judgest another?" These brethren were not only judging one another, but they were condemning and killing the just; they were occupying the place of their Lawgiver; they passed their sentence and then killed. They killed both the just and the unjust alike. They made no distinction between the just and the unjust. They wanted to fight, and they wanted to fight everybody who would not fight as they fought, yet they professed to love God while they were occupying the place of their Lawgiver. Dear brethren, if such warfare was wrong when James wrote his epistle, it is wrong yet. O how

inconsistent we are when we say that we believe in conditional time salvation and yet engage in war that kills the just with the guilty. The guilty must be killed, regardless of how many innocent there are who shall be killed with them. The mote must be pulled out of our brother's eye, regardless of consequences. Whatever may be said against the works of one faction may also be said of every other faction engaged in unlawful works.

Submitted in love.

JOSEPH FORD.

SENECA, Kansas.

WHAT ABOUT THE HEATHEN?

THE apostle Paul said in the third chapter of his letter to the Galatian brethren, eighth verse: "The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." One would think from the efforts made by missionaries in their great attempts to instil their traditions in those they term the heathen, that God had been very dilatory about the salvation of them, and that he had allowed millions to perish because he did not have the nineteenth century educational ministry and its theological schools for fitting men and women as missionaries, and millions of money collected to fit them out for foreign fields, that they might take up the work that God had so long neglected. One must form just such conclusions as these from the missionary spirit that seems to pervade the minds of men, for if the heathen have had no knowledge of God except as it is carried to them by men, then God has certainly been very careless and unconcerned about their salvation. If one will stop to think and properly consider he will see that the world from Adam to Moses did not have any Bible, neither did it have any educated ministry nor theological seminaries to instil traditions in men, that they might instil them in others. This long period of time was about two thousand, five hundred years, and thousands of people were brought into the world and passed out during that time, and if, as our missionaries teach, they had no man to teach them, they were all lost. When the books of Moses were written the Jews alone had those books, and in them was no promise made to any but the Jews; so during the fifteen hundred years of the Jewish covenant the world in general still had no Bible, and no Sunday schools, nor theological seminaries, nor missionary boards, nor any mode of travel by railroads, trolley cars or steamboats, neither had they the telegraph, telephone, wireless telegraphy, aeroplanes nor automobiles during that whole four thousand year period, and since Christ came and took the kingdom from the Jews and gave it to those born of the Spirit of God, both Jews and Gentiles, the world has been much the same until within the last three hundred years, and the majority of the world in all ages for six thousand years has not had any of the nineteenth century civilization, and it is only within the last one hundred and fifty years that most of the theological training of men for the ministry has existed, and the question is now, If this kind of religion is right, how has God gotten along these six thousand years without this great school of men? and if it is necessary now that these great schools of men should take the work of the salvation of men upon them, why has it not been necessary during all these six thousand years? It seems to me it is like locking the stable after the horse has

been stolen, for if, according to the best figures we can command, not ten per cent. of the human family ever heard any of these educated ministers, nor saw a Bible, nor attended Sunday schools, nor attended any great revivals, I say, if ninety per cent. of the human family who never had the privilege of these nineteenth century opportunities for salvation are lost, and that simply because they never were converted to these late dogmas, then it must certainly be attributed to God's slackness in allowing the world to lie in darkness for thousands of years, and that even now in this nineteenth century there are eight hundred million people who do not believe in the christian religion, and have traditions, or religion of their own, that suit them better than that sent out from theological seminaries. But the people of God are not willing to ascribe any slackness or carelessness to our God, for the apostle Paul said that God would justify the heathen through faith, and that he preached it to Abraham, and declared that in Abraham all nations should be blessed. Men who believe that salvation is obtained by works, and teach the same, of course naturally conclude that as the heathen never did those works to obtain salvation, they (the heathen) are lost, and this would most certainly be true if the salvation of men depended upon their own good works, and to take this view of it would compel us to say we believe ninety per cent. of the human family have been lost. Let us turn this over in our minds as often as we will, there is only the one answer, and that is, ninety per cent. lost. But one may say it is the duty of these nineteenth century theological missionary boards to take up the matter now and offer their plan of salvation to the world, and if they reject it then it is their own fault. But this plan will offer no solution to the ninety per cent. of humanity that have lived and passed out of the world without this offer, or chance of accepting, and such invitations as this leave a very dark picture for the ninety per cent., and it also presents a very dark picture for the eight hundred million now living who do not accept the religion as taught by these nineteenth century theologians. Now, since this nineteenth century missionary plan of salvation presents such a dark and fearful picture, and acknowledges the damnation of ninety per cent. of the human family, can we not find something in the Scriptures of divine truth that will reveal a brighter hope? We will turn to the apostle and get his inspiration about the salvation of the heathen, and see if we cannot find something to dispel this awful picture. He says, "The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." Nearly two thousand years before Christ's advent into this world it was preached unto Abraham that in him should all the nations be blessed, and the promise to Abraham that he should be the heir of the world the apostle declared was not to him and his seed only, but to us also who believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. The apostle seemed to be very well aware that if the salvation of men depended upon their works it would mean a very dark proposition, and that all mankind would be lost, just as the doctrine of salvation by works would leave it. But he inspires us with new hope, new light, a better plan, a plan through which God has all through these six thousand years of heathen darkness been saving mankind.

The apostle says, "If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God." Here he informs us that if Abraham should undertake to be justified by works he could not come before God to glory. Again, the apostle informs us that Abraham believed what God promised him, and it was accounted to him for righteousness, that Abraham's belief counted more than all his works towards his righteousness. The apostle says that the heathen are justified through faith, hence do not need the doctrine of works taught them, and we judge that as Paul taught very plainly that salvation is all by God's grace, not of works, that He has been saving the heathen all through these six thousand years. The apostle told his Ephesian brethren that God had quickened them who had been dead in trespasses and sins, and walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience, among whom we all had our conversation in the world, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Those Gentile brethren had been heathen, they had neither part nor lot with the Jews, and were called by the Jews unclean people. But there had come a great change in them, they had been quickened by God's Spirit, and at a time when they were fulfilling the desires of the flesh and mind; and what does the apostle attribute as the cause of their quickening? He says it was because of God's love for them while they were dead in their sins, while they were still heathen, for he says, God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us when we were dead in our sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. O, does God love the heathen when dead in their sins? No one can read the apostle's declaration in this epistle without learning that he does. This also agrees with this same apostle's declaration where he said, It is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us. Here again we have the blessed assurance that God does bless and save the heathen by his mercy. "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring." The Savior here had allusion to the sheep he had in the heathen, or Gentile, world. Paul to Timothy said, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Therefore we must conclude that the ninety per cent. of mankind are not lost because they have not subscribed to the doctrine of works, for here we see that the great apostle to the heathen declares they are saved and called with an holy calling, yes, an holy calling, not according to their works, for if so, then all must be lost, but they were saved and called according to God's purpose and grace, given them in Christ Jesus before the world began; hence these heathen brethren were known of God before time, and were saved and called according to his own purpose and grace. Then God arranged for the salvation of all his people among the heathen before the world began, even if they never saw or heard any of the nineteenth century missionaries, and God did preach before the gospel unto Abraham that in his seed all the nations shall be blessed. The heathen are justified by faith, and our great apostle says faith is the gift of God, and Jesus is the author and finisher of our

faith. Hence the command Christ gave to his apostles to go into all the world and preach the gospel, and he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned. He that believeth on the Son of God is born of God, and he that believeth on the Son of God is justified from all things, from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses. Hence faith, or belief, is the ground upon which brethren are justified. Then the heathen that God gave faith, for faith is the gift of God, were just as much heirs of salvation as any of God's children, and if Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith he could give it to the heathen as well as to us. Paul says as many as are under the works of the law are under the curse, and if righteousness be of the law, or works, then Christ is dead in vain. Christ came into this sinful world to save sinners, and if we could prove our salvation rested on our good works, then indeed Christ died in vain; and if the doctrines and teachings of the nineteenth century theologians, seminaries and missionary boards be true, then all Christ did was in vain. It is too late now for men to try to help God save the world; if he has not been doing this himself for six thousand years, mankind is lost.

NEWTON PETERS.

PORTLAND, Indiana.

BENTON, Ky., July 7, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I herewith send you a letter I received some time ago from Elder J. M. Perkins, and would like to see it published in the SIGNS if you indorse it, which I think you will, and will say the time he speaks of in his letter to visit me on my birthday he was blessed with the privilege of filling the appointment, for which I was thankful to have him with me on that day. There were about one hundred friends, neighbors and brethren, who took dinner with me, it being my eighty-first birthday, and being very feeble, not able to go to my meeting, it was surely a feast to me.

My dear brother, though I am a stranger to you in the flesh, I hope we are not in the Spirit, and feel to deeply sympathize with you in your bereavements in the loss of your editorial help, but most of all your dear companion, but the Lord is able to comfort you and hold up your hands and stay your grief, and I hope he will, and illumine your mind, and enable you to bring out things "new and old" from his inspired word, and believing all things work together for good to those who love the Lord, who are the called according to his purpose, I am a poor old sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all.

In much affliction,

R. J. HILL.

MAYFIELD, Ky., May 12, 1914.

ESTEEMED BROTHER:—Your kind letter was received some time ago, and was gladly read, and with pleasure. I must confess to you my negligence, or rather my busy time, for not answering before now. Our Union passed off lovely and peaceably, but our churches were not all represented. I have been almost prostrated with "la grippe" for several days, but am some better to-day. Lillian and Tommy were at the Union, and she notified me of your birthday celebration the fourth Sunday in June, and I promised her to come to your house at that time if not providentially hindered. I will come to Little Cypress on Saturday morning before the fourth Sunday, and shall expect some one to meet me.

Well, brother Hill, I am sometimes up

and sometimes down, but down the longer. I feel sensible of the fact that I have nothing to rely on but what the Lord has done for me, if indeed he has done anything. The older I grow, and the more I see of this world, the more I am confirmed in the doctrine of grace. My growth has been to grow out of self, and I hope I know what Paul meant when he said "We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." It is our complaint that we are of so little account and can see no good in ourselves. Without God's teaching men can see good in themselves, and feel they can and do do good, but when grace shines in the heart it discovers our depraved nature and we see our nothingness; this I have come to believe is God's way of humbling his children and bringing them to feel and know that every necessary qualification for the enjoyment of a better world must come from the hand of the Lord. Peter said, "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness." Paul said, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" I have come to the belief that no one will ever know what these things mean until he or she gets to them in their life, and have to live the life. It cannot be taught by men, but God must be the teacher, and we must live the very life described, and when we do we mourn because of it, therefore "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." Could we realize this we would cease to mourn, but God has so fixed it that we are so sensible of our unworthiness and unprofitableness that we just keep on mourning under the load. In this I believe God's children are bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus Christ. This I believe is suffering with him. Now the apostle says, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." Christ suffered for sin, and we suffer because of our sinful nature, and feel sensible of our sins, but our sins can never be atoned for by such suffering as we may render, but as Jesus was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, so we must follow in his footsteps. While all the above is the truth in the life of God's children in this world, yet they are most apt to take the very evidences as things against themselves. We need patience, but just the way we get that is the way we do not want it, for tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and that drives us to Jesus. Now in all this David comes in and helps us when he said, Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation. How helpless we are; we are beggars, and have to rely on God's everlasting bounty.

Brother Hill, you can make appointments for me Saturday and Sunday as you think best, and if the Lord will, I will try to be there.

With best wishes and fellowship for you and sister Hill, I am your poor dependent brother in the Lord, I hope,

J. M. PERKINS.

MACOMB, Ill., July 1, 1914.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I am sending a letter received from Elder P. W. Sawin, of Kentucky. This letter was received some time ago, but I have not been at home or I should have sent it sooner, yet I feel a hesitancy in sending it, because of the allusion to my poor writings. I am fearful that he is mistaken in me, for I am the weakest of the weak and the poorest of the poor, yet I do appreciate

the precious letters I receive from my dear brethren and sisters, and as he has sent my letter to the SIGNS, though it was not written for publication, I will do the same with his, hoping all may enjoy it as I have done.

Yours most unworthily,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Jan. 19, 1914.

DEAR SISTER RUNKLE:—I have many times when reading your good letters in the SIGNS thought to write you, and as many times failed, but when I opened the SIGNS to-day, and in looking through it first to see who had written, among the numerous and excellent writers I saw your name, and said to myself, If the Lord will, I will surely try to write to her. It may be presumption in me, but the desire is there. As I was reading your letter the desire deepened as you so clearly described the way in which I have been traveling these many years, and while I freely confess my unworthiness of your companionship, yet I could but feel that we were companions in the afflictions of the gospel, and as I read along I was wondering if you remembered a poor weakling who visited your father's home; I think it was in the summer of 1885 or 1886. I remember you well, and where you lived, and I can never forget the kindness shown me there. I was a stranger, and ye took me in; sick, and ye ministered unto me. We had just suffered the loss of all things in this world, and I was a physical wreck, so that your loving-kindness to a poor unworthy worm was to me more than I could ever tell. Your dear father and I were together for two weeks or more, attending meetings, and I yet feel that he was a dear father in Israel to me, so tender, loving and kind; but as you say, how swiftly the time goes by, and we are numbered with the old. I was then but little past forty, now I have passed my seventieth year, since January 2nd. How strange it is we get no better; how wonderfully different our life is to what we thought it would be. With us there seems to be nothing fixed or settled; that is, we only know what to-day is, but know not the morrow. We cannot judge of the morrow by to-day, for we know not what a day may bring forth.

> "Blind unbelief is sure to err,
> And scan his work in vain."

There is one thing I think we do know more about, and that is the depravity of the heart, and of the merciful loving-kindness of our God, yet we cannot fathom either the depth of the one or the height of the other. The growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus is to feel daily the deceitfulness and depravity of all that constituted the makeup of the first Adam, and then to feel that all that is needful for this life and that which is to come is ours in Jesus, or that he is our righteousness, our all. It seems to me that in the measure we grow out of self we grow up in him, but O this mighty self, how hard to yield, to give up. I often get to where I wonder if there is anything but self in me, yet I am not satisfied with this life, I want a better life, of which I have hope. All that I desire or wish for is in Jesus. Is he mine and am I his? If he is, why am I thus? Why this cold and lifeless frame? To whom shall we go? There is none other name under heaven given whereby we must be saved, neither is there salvation in any other.

What a blessed medium of correspondence is the SIGNS, that we should hear from these afflicted and poor ones who can only trust in the name of the Lord.

You say on page 43, "Dear ones of our Father's household, is it ever thus with you?" My heart responds, O, am I one of the Father's household? Can you include one like me, a poor, halting, lame and maimed one? Let me be what I am, an outcast, at least I could sweetly respond from my heart, Here is my hand in token of love and fellowship for all such poor dependent ones, for I have been along the way, and think I know of the things whereof you speak, but feel I have not the gift with tongue or pen to describe them as you and others do. As you say again, O to be better, to be more like Christ, submissive to his will; yea, that is the desire, to be done with the body of this flesh, to see him as he is and be like him; I shall not be satisfied until then. I have many times drank deeply of the cup of sorrow since I was at your home, but the dear Lord has remembered me and mine in his great mercy, and therefore I have much to be thankful for, but am just a sojourner, still in hope and expectation waiting for the blessed appearing of the great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body and fashion it like unto his glorious body. The end of this mortal life cannot be far off.

I ask a special remembrance to your dear aged mother. I remember her as well, as a dear mother in Israel to me while at her hospitable home. May the dear Lord remember her in his tender love and mercy.

Now, dear sister, I have written you on the impulse of the moment, and it seems to me, as do all my productions, so lacking and empty that I cannot understand how any one can desire me to write. I do often desire that I might impart some spiritual gift, but how to do it is the trouble with me. Kindly accept this as a token of love and fellowship in the gospel, and I hope you will write for the SIGNS more frequently. I was just thinking the past week that we had had nothing from your pen for some time. Pardon this intrusion upon your time and patience. May grace, mercy and peace through our Lord Jesus be with you.

In gospel bonds,

P. W. SAWIN.

THE SAINTS' PILGRIMAGE JOURNEY.

NEITHER words nor tongue can give expression to all that befalls the individual saint in his momentous journey from nature to grace, and then from the time that journey is completed to the setting of the sun of his gospel day. The route tortuous, the way unknown, hidden pitfalls in the pathway, dangers seen and unseen, the untrained child ofttimes thinking himself rich and increased with goods, says, I am in need of nothing, and knoweth not that he is wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. Like one of old, who, sitting down at the closing in of his fitful, feverish journey, says, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith," he is looking back over all the way the Lord God has led him, and with both awe and delight he wonders in amazement at the love and tender forbearance of his gracious Redeemer toward him. In retrospect he sees himself before his journey begins, filled with the delights which the world affords, no thought or desire for anything beside the treasures of earth with its follies, and then he remembers in those days the religion of the world got hold upon him, and it puffed him up to greater creature works; humility had no part in his active career; in

sweeping declarations he said, All men are sinners, yet he knew not the plague of his own heart. But at a certain and appointed time of the Lord an Angel (the Holy Spirit) came into the habitation of his soul and set at naught the traders in earthly merchandise, overturned the tables of the money-changers. That was a black and terrible night, the Spirit of divine grace took the reins of his heart and mind and exercised him unto the wisdom and knowledge from above, by which he beheld himself a vile sinner, hateful to himself, and deceitful above all things; he recognized in himself the sentence of death, with the sword of divine justice hanging over him. Where now was his pride and vainglory? With one of old could he say, I am a worm, and no man; my guilty soul cries out in shame. The bright clouds in his earthly sky have become black and lowering; like the children of Israel in Egyptian bondage, whose burdens became so heavy that they were made willing to follow Moses to liberty, so this poor sinner groaned under the burden of the knowledge of his sins, turned away from the old haunts of sin, loathing them, when he heard a voice behind him saying, This is the way, walk ye in it. The wages of sin he found to be death, and he desired them no more; he was no more a servant of sin, but a servant of righteousness, with a fervent desire for holiness. He learned the name of Jesus, that it was the only name under heaven whereby he must be saved. His faith was in Jesus, his hope was founded upon the rock Jesus Christ; all his dependence was in him who was able to save him from death. The bolts of the prison door of the law which had held him were loosed by the obedience of his new and gracious Master, who shed his precious blood that he might live and enter into the glorious liberty of the gospel. How wonderful, then, was the grace of God which appeared unto him, teaching him that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, he should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ. In him mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring up out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven. Yea, the Lord shall give that which is good, and our land shall yield her increase; righteousness shall go before him, and shall set him in the way of his steps. He now rejoiceth that he is counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake. "For the Lord God is a sun and shield [unto him]: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Where now are the chains that held him in satanic bondage? Who can measure the height and depth of the love that hath clothed him with the majesty of heaven? He feedeth upon the choicest fruits of the garden of grace; the damp and shivering mists of the past night have been swept away by the bright shining of the Sun of Righteousness with healing in his wings; watchmen stand at the gates and upon the walls of Zion guarding him from the enemies that are crying for his soul; because of the weakness of his flesh he oft-times falls by the way, and he trembles with fear and with shame, but as in the days of old, the Lord raises up for him a Deliverer, and he goes on his way rejoicing, glorifying God and traveling in the strength of him who hath delivered him He hath set a seal upon him, he knoweth him by name, he keepeth him in the way,

his paths are paths of peace. May we be of those who are the sheep of his pasture; may we dwell in his house all the days of our life, and behold his wondrous beauty, and serve him with reverence and godly fear. B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

EL CAMPO, Texas, July 6, 1914.

ELDER W. J. MAY—DEAR BROTHER:—I have just read your little letter in the SIGNS of July 1st, and it ran in my mind to write you a few lines concerning the last sentence in your letter: "Yours in hope of eternal life." Now, brother May, as you are an old preacher I will ask you to write to the SIGNS and explain what eternal life is, and where this life is to be had, and when it is to be had, for I have heard many preachers and people quote this, but never heard any one explain it and prove it by the Scriptures. Who is subject to this life? Also prove this by the Scriptures. Probably there are others who would like to know this. If you write to me I will be the only one to be benefited by it. Please write and explain this life, for I hope that we are brothers in this same life.

P. E. DAHLSTEDT.

PINSONFORK, Ky., July 10, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I herein inclose a short letter I have just received from brother P. E. Dahlstedt, of El Campo, Texas, in which you will see he has asked me to write through the SIGNS and explain what eternal life is, and where it is to be had, and when it is to be had, and prove it by the Scriptures; also who are the subjects of this eternal life, and prove it by the Scriptures. I hate to pass the good brother's request by unnoticed, as I do not know his motive in the matter, for there is no subject of greater magnitude that we can think of than that of eternal life, and no subject that there is less need of an explanation from such uninspired creatures as we are, for the Scriptures are so emphatically clear and plain that it looks as if all may run that read, or, in other words, all that can be known about it is plainly taught in the Scriptures, hence in my few suggestions for the special benefit of my strange brother I can do nothing more than refer to some few of the many wonderful declarations of eternal truth, and in replying to the first of the brother's group of questions will say that eternal life is the gift of God. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."—Romans vi. 23. In fact, Christ is the eternal life himself, as Paul would say, "When Christ, who is our life [eternal life], shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."—Col. iii. 4. "For the life [Christ] was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us."—1 John i. 2. "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life [eternal life] is in his Son He that hath the Son, hath life [eternal life]; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life."—1 John v. 11, 12, hath not eternal life. Therefore Christ, the eternal Son of God, is the eternal life of his people, Israel, and is the gift of God to them. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John iii. 16. "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."—Titus i. 2. So this eternal life is hid with Christ in God, and is Christ in

you the hope of glory, the eternal and spiritual life of his people, even the eternity of Israel, their Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. We do not feel to say that we can obtain this eternal life, for it is the gift of God, through Christ Jesus.

As to the time when this eternal life is to be had or realized, it is just simply when it pleases Him who is the only one that can give life to anything, let it be natural or spiritual, for time or eternity, and this life is through his Son Jesus Christ, for the Father hath given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him, for as many as were ordained to eternal life believed; therefore the subjects of this eternal life are all the election of grace, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, all the promised seed. "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life," &c.—John vi. 54. Now here is a plain manifestation of the subjects of eternal life. They do not eat the flesh of the Son of man in order to obtain eternal life, but because they have eternal life, and this eating and drinking is the evidence of the eternal life of which they are possessed. I do not think we can or do have eternal life in possession, but it has us in possession, it is the stronger man. God's people follow Christ, and he gives unto them eternal life. If we do not follow Christ we are not the subjects of eternal life, for the subjects of eternal life follow the Lamb of God.

Now I do not feel like saying anything more on this plain and unmystified subject, "eternal life," for eternal life explains itself, and all that can be known about it, or where and how it can be had, is clearly taught in the Scriptures. Eternal life has neither beginning nor end, and is given or communicated through the eternal Spirit to all the heirs of promise in God's own time and way, and as *prima facie* evidence of this wonderful life in the heart of these elect vessels of mercy they in their walk and conversation deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. This life does not teach its subjects to try to live this way, but it teaches them to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world. My sheep follow me, and I give unto them eternal life.

W. J. MAY.

HERNDON, Va., June 21, 1914.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—Ever since I heard the sad news of your dear wife's death I have had a strong desire to write to you, but have put off writing until now. I believe I have told you in some of my former letters of losing a companion and four children by death. This sad stroke came to me more than twenty years ago, but it is fresh in my memory to this day, and I shall never forget it until the day of my death. I thought I should die then under the heavy stroke, but the good Lord would have it otherwise, and has let me live to this present moment, but for what purpose I know not. At that sad time of my life, when my dear companion passed away, I received many letters from brethren and friends expressing deep, heartfelt sympathy for me, but their letters of great sympathy gave me but little comfort; they could not reach my case. I felt to be all alone in the world, and that my natural life had been taken from me. My home was not my home, for the joy was taken from me, and I felt that I must die, but I did not. I think, my dear brother, that I am prepared to enter into

your troubled heart and weep with you in this sad time of your life. We are told in the Scriptures to weep with those who weep and rejoice with them that rejoice. I think that I can both weep and rejoice with you. I can truthfully weep with you, for I am satisfied that I know the bitter cup you have been made to drink of, and I can truthfully rejoice with you in the hope that your dear one has gone home, to die no more; yes, to die no more. O what a blessed hope, to know that when this house of clay is dissolved we have a building of God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. I have been weeping all these many years past for myself, and expect to weep as long as I remain in this earthly house, but for the dear ones of my family who passed away twenty years or more ago I weep not, for I hope their spirits are at rest in the bosom of Jesus, their great Redeemer. I do hope, dear brother, that the good Lord will comfort your heart, and enable you to go on in the good work of publishing the SIGNS, and continue to write for it, for I enjoy reading your editorials. Dear Elder Chick is sadly missed. I do hope that the publishers will take courage and go on in the good work of publishing the dear old SIGNS, with the happy belief that the good Lord will raise up another one to take Elder Chick's place to help you out on the editorial staff.

I have written you this imperfect letter because I believe I love you in the Spirit of Jesus. I hope I have loved you with pure, spiritual love from the first time I ever heard you preach. I know you feel lonely and sad, and God alone can give you comfort. I feel lonely and sad the most of my time, for but few of my kinfolks in the flesh are left on earth to mourn and weep with me. I often think of the words of the poet:

"A pilgrim stranger here I roam,
From place to place I'm driven;
My friends are gone, and I'm in gloom,
The earth is all a lonely tomb;
I have no home but heaven."

I must close, and hope you will excuse me for the liberty I have taken in writing this letter to you. I will say again that I hope the good Lord will comfort your heart and all who mourn in Zion, as well as those who mourn the sad loss of their dear ones in the flesh.

Your brother, I hope,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

[THANK you, brother Oliver.—K.]

WHEELING, W. Va., Dec. 19, 1913.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending this good letter from Elder J. W. McClanahan, as it has been of comfort to me, and if you think best you may give it room in our good SIGNS OF THE TIMES. This dear man of God (which I truly feel that he is) has favored me with three or four visits. Only those who are so isolated from the company of the saints can realize what his visits are to me. His dear words of wisdom so carefully weighed and so earnestly conveyed clearly prove that he does not ignorantly declare these sacred truths unto us. May the Lord richly bless him for his kindness to the least of all.

Unworthily,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

LANHAM, W. Va., Nov. 29, 1913.

DEAR SISTER:—I received your good letter a few days ago, and was truly glad to hear from you. I am always pleased to receive letters from those who have learned in the school of grace that salvation is of the Lord from start to finish. I feel that every stroke of your pen mani-

fested that knowledge and wisdom which none can have but those who have been led by the hand of Omnipotence. This is the highway where the lion's whelp has never trod, nor the vulture's eye seen; none but the redeemed of the Lord have knowledge of this way of holiness, Christ the way, the truth and the life.

I was well pleased with my visit at your house, and was also pleased to meet the brother and hear him speak of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, although he did not express himself on all points of doctrine which have been discussed among the Baptists from time to time for many years. It seems that many good brethren have become fearful of predestination of all things that come to pass, whether good or bad; then from such a state of fearfulness they begin to set bounds, or limit the Holy One of Israel, by saying that only good things were predestinated by God, and that evil things spring up in and of themselves, without any purpose of God in them. They fail to see the purpose of God carried out in the case of Joseph's brethren selling him on account of his dreams. Their act was a wicked act. They meant it for evil, and Joseph told them so, but that God meant it for good, to the saving of much people alive. Also in the crucifixion of Christ, wicked men acted wickedly and gratified their wicked desire, crucifying the Son of God. Surely this was done according to God's foreknowledge and determinate counsel. They meant it for evil, but God meant it for good, in saving his elect children from their sins. Jesus told them that he could pray to his Father and he would bid twelve legions of angels to defend him. But it was expedient that One should die, that all of his elect perish not. He must die for our offences and be raised again on the third day for our justification, hence there is therefore no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. It seems possible that God's children may follow the leading or prompting of the flesh, and in so doing sow to the flesh, and in such a course reap corruption. In such sowing there are divisions and dissensions in the churches, for such preaching pleases the natural ear and carnal mind. "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

I must close for this time. Please cast the mantle of charity over this letter.

I remain your unworthy brother,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

DODD CITY, Ark., June 21, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—As it is time for me to pay for the balance of the year, inclosed find money order for one dollar, as I do not want to do without the SIGNS as long as I can pay for it, for it gives me much comfort when I read the able editorials and the good letters from our brethren and sisters, so ably setting forth the true doctrine and order of the church of God, which I have been trying to set forth in my feeble way for about thirty years; it makes me hope that I have been taught in the same school with them. When I first began to try to preach there was no other minister of our order in these parts who was preaching, and I felt so little and weak that it seemed too much for poor me, but when we got a little association organized, and got in correspondence with others, and I began to hear others from different States preaching the same doctrine and contending for the same order I was trying to set

forth, it gave me comfort and encouragement to go on and preach Jesus, the way, the truth and the life, the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. The doctrine of salvation by grace through the merits of Jesus is the only way that can reach condemned sinners.

Brother Ker, I think I can sympathize with you in the loss of both your dear companion and Elder Chick, your brother editor. We all shall miss his editorials and his wise counsel, but the same God that has given all the editors still reigns, and is able to give others just as well qualified. I am glad that the Old Baptists are not like other denominations, and have to depend on some board, synod or council for preaching. Jesus said, Pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his harvest, so let us look to him for an editor, and the churches of his care for a pastor. There are a great many things we cannot understand, and this is one of them: why he gives us such peculiar gifts, which seem to us the most precious, and we do not see how we can get along without them, then take them from us and we are left desolate. But such is his will, and he doeth all things well.

Dear brother Ker, the reason I say I can sympathize with you in your bereavement is that I have passed through the same, and I have lately had to give up the nearest and dearest brother minister I ever labored with. He joined the church of which I was pastor, and it was made known to me when I baptized him that he would be a gospel preacher. He moved to Oklahoma after he began talking in public, and a year ago I helped ordain him, and he was the most humble and able gift I ever heard preach. But the Lord gave, and he hath taken him away, but blessed be his name, he is able to give others as gifted if it is his will. I want to send love to the editor, publishers, writers and readers of the SIGNS.

Do with this as you wish, and believe me affectionately your brother in gospel bonds and in tribulation,

WM. J. CASEY.

REESE, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I inclose a good letter from Elder E. W. J. Adams, which contains good news from a far country. I have known brother Adams for several years, and have been very pleasantly associated with him, and have heard him preach Jesus with great power and demonstration of the Spirit. He is a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, as are all the saints of God, yet he at times is made to rise above all trials and conflicts and rejoice in the crucified and risen Redeemer, which exceeds all other joys. He, like all of the chosen of God, has to complain, as did Paul, that when he would do good, evil is present with him, and how to perform that which is good he finds not; the good he would do he does not, and the evil he would not he does; but he and all the saints cry out and say, We thank God through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ that he hath given us the victory over those things, although we are made to cry out with Paul, Who shall deliver us from the body of this death? I have had this good letter some time, as I received it in December, and was sick and have delayed sending it, but the delay will not destroy the sweetness of it. I would be glad if brother Adams' mind led him to write often for publication, but think he, like myself, and I believe all others of God's children, finds so much imperfection in self that he fears it would not be of any

comfort to God's children. On this account we often fail to do what we feel we would like to do.

Brethren, do with this as you think best. Brother Adams gave me authority to send it to you. We are commanded to comfort each other with the comfort wherewith we are comforted, and I was indeed comforted in reading this.

I remain as ever, your little brother in hope of a better life,

M. L. LILES.

PINELAND, Texas, Dec. 12, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER LILES:—I will try this morning to write you a few lines, although I have nothing to tell you, only such things as befall the sons of men here on this sin-cursed earth, especially the children of the most high God. Trials and tribulations await the man who will live godly in this present world, who is surrounded by people who all the time are going to, and can, do better, but are all the time doing works which persecute the saints of God, and publicly deny the work of God in the salvation of his people, which he completed in the death of his dear Son when he died upon the cross of Calvary. This is all the hope I have to-day.

I surely enjoyed your exposition of the travail of Joseph and his brethren. This great narrative covers the travail of God's people from Abel to the end of time, O so plainly. It sets forth that man was not made able to stand. God showed Abraham the land of Canaan, that his seed after him should inherit, but told him that they should go into bondage and serve there under the mighty hand of Pharaoh, and afterward he would deliver them from bondage. If it had not been that way the Scriptures could not be true. Who sent the seven years of plenty? God sent it. What for? That Joseph might prepare food for Israel in Egypt. Did he do it? Yes. Who sent the famine? God. Did it cost Israel anything to live? Not one cent, but it cost the Egyptians all they possessed, and then they were all destroyed. Who did it? God Almighty. Thanks be to his holy name for all his benefits toward me in preparing grace for me in his dear Son before the world began, and when the great famine began with me he began to feed me, and I feel to-day he has plenty in store for all his children, and will feed them with that hidden manna while they sojourn here, and finally when he is done showing his mighty power in them here he will land them on the banks of sweet deliverance, where they can sing that new song that none can sing but those who were redeemed from the earth.

I will now close for the present, and my prayer is that the Lord may bless and care for you.

Your little brother in tribulation,

E. W. J. ADAMS.

CLEVELAND, Ohio, July 4, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—By request of some of the brethren in Ontario I send you a short sketch of my visit among them this June, at the Ekfrid quarterly meeting. Meeting with an accident at home, which made me unable to work at my trade (carpenter), I felt impressed to visit the brethren of Canada, and leaving home June 25th by boat I arrived at St. Thomas the following morning, and was met by Elder J. B. Slauson, who took me to his home in St. Thomas, Ontario. It was our first meeting, and our conversation at once was on the things of the kingdom of our Lord, and as far as I could see my visit with him and family was one long

to be remembered. Friday evening quite a number of the brethren gathered, and I tried to speak to them with the ability that God gave me. Next morning we left for the Ekfrid meeting, where I had the pleasure of meeting for the first time Elder Silas H. Durand. The meeting Saturday, Sunday and Monday was a season of much enjoyment to me. An appointment was made for Elder Durand at London Monday evening, when we heard a very able discourse from him. Tuesday I spoke to the brethren at Dunwich at 3 o'clock, and from there was taken to the home of sister Lilly, in Dutton, where we were very pleasantly entertained until evening, when I took the train for Pt. Stanley and boat for Cleveland, arriving home Wednesday morning, July 1st. Now that I am back at home, in the hustle and jostle of a busy city, my visit seems almost like a long, pleasant dream and a sudden awakening, and I wish to thank our heavenly Father for his wonderful mercy, protection and liberty, and the brethren for their hospitality toward me, a poor sinner. May the Lord bless them.

Brother Ker, I am glad to hear that you have a brother editor. We have felt since our dear brother Chick was taken from us that the Lord had some one in mind, and we have wondered who it was, and are glad to know it is Elder Lefferts, and we hope the Lord will sustain you, that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES may still cry, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." The time is now when we need plain, straight talk about the doctrine and order of God's house, for there are so many isms among us, so many trying to become popular, underestimating the power of Almighty God, to draw away disciples after them, and we have always looked to the SIGNS as a paper whose editors shunned not to declare unto us the whole counsel of God, and may God by his omnipotent power, eternal wisdom and perfect love guide and protect you against the lo heres and lo theres for the comfort of his people and the glory of his name. Amen.

GEO. L. WEAVER.

ALEXANDER, Texas, May 20, 1914.

DEAR EDITOR:—As I want to subscribe for the SIGNS I will write a few lines, and if you should think them worth inserting in its columns, do so, if not, all is well. I have read the SIGNS furnished me by a kind brother for several years, but have never taken it, and I certainly enjoy reading the good, spiritual letters from the brethren and sisters from most every part of the United States. They seem to write of things that become sound doctrine, and write the truth in love. I do much appreciate a charitable disposition among God's people, and I think our church papers should exclude questions that tend to strife. Our constant aim should be for a closer walk with God, and to let all things be done decently and in order. I believe the SIGNS is standing in the old paths and asking for the good old way. Its writers seem to believe in a God who never has or never will make a mistake, a God who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. There are but few of the old faith in these parts, but God will never leave himself without a witness. I believe his eternal truth will be preached as long as time lasts; as long as I am given natural life I wish to prove worthy, and see his saints in full prosperity; while in life, where the Old School Baptists are I want to be; if not deceived in old wicked self, their God is my God. I do much love to hear a God preached or

written about that can and does do things without the help of poor, puny man. I want to live with a people in church capacity who worship a God who makes his people sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. He, Jesus, draws his children with cords of love, and makes them willing and obedient, working in them both to will and to do. My people shall (not may be so) be a willing people in the day of my power. So I cannot believe that our obedience is optional. Some say we must act before God will act, but Jesus says, "No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him," so I must believe what the blessed Lord has said, rather than what man says. I know we should do those things that are required of us, whether in season or out of season, for should we do all that is required at our hands we have only done our "reasonable service."

I regret very much to hear of brother Chick's death, but he finished his work, and has laid down to rest in Jesus. I hope some other able defender of the truth will be found who will help brother Ker edit the SIGNS.

I am, as ever, a poor sinner saved in time and eternity by God's grace, if saved at all,

J. W. CAUDLE.

MAUD, Okla., May 10, 1914.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS:—Were I gifted with the pen of a ready writer, I would like to write in the way of comfort to the dear family of our beloved brother, Elder Chick, in their bereavement, but I feel I am too weak and unprofitable to comfort any of God's dear children. Our dearly beloved brother has gone to be with Jesus, which is far better. He fought a good fight and kept the faith, but we grieve that we shall see his face and read from his pen no more. I read his writings in our dear family paper when I felt to be an enemy of the Old School Baptists, but some way in reading I felt a nearness to him, being drawn by his kind, loving way of addressing his brethren. That was years before I had any love for the people of God, and after I received a hope, and saw, as in a vision, that the Old Baptists were the church of God, I always enjoyed his writings, and would always, on receiving the SIGNS, look through the paper for his name and read what he had written first; so his departure will leave a vacancy with me which I cannot express; but we must be reconciled to the will of Him who doeth all things well. It is God that giveth, and it is God that taketh away, and blessed be the name of the Lord. I hope and pray, dear ones, that the Lord will give the spirit of reconciliation, that each can say, Thy will be done. In him we live, move and have our being, and when done with this world may it be said of us that we finished our course and kept the faith, and are ready to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. While the dear fathers in Israel die, yet they live in the hearts of those left, and we who have been blessed with the privilege of reading the SIGNS will miss the sweet counsel of its dear senior editor, but realize that the Giver of all good gifts is able to raise up another, and we hope that the editors will be supplied with grace to still comfort the household of faith with the comfort wherewith they have been comforted.

Dear ones, I do not feel that what I have written will be of any encouragement, but felt that I wanted to express my sympathy. I would like to see more of sister Bonnie Chick's writings in the SIGNS, as I always enjoy them very much. Dear brethren and sisters, write on; it is so cheering to hear from those of like precious faith.

From the least of all, unworthily,

ELLA DAVIS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1914.

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EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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LUKE IX. 62.

"No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

When Jesus was on earth he called men as soldiers of the cross and pressed them into service. The Father determined beforehand how many, who they should be and where they could be found. Hence Jesus walked by the sea and called from the fishermen's boats Peter, James and John. Not one of them offered the slightest excuse, nor manifested the slightest rebellion, but followed him, feeling in their souls the power of his word. When he desired others they were in the right place at the right time, and he continued to call and send forth until the entire number was made up. Those men left homes, their wives and children to serve in the kingdom of God, and not one ever turned back. One said when called, Let me first go and bury my father, but Jesus answered, Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. The request was very reasonable, and that one felt it very important, yet his hand was put to the plough and he must not look back. In this is presented the greatness of the work, the glory of the kingdom, the importance of the gospel and the power in the word "go." Men dead in sin can bury dead bodies, but they cannot preach the kingdom of God. No man taketh this honor unto himself, save he that is called, as was Aaron. We have often thought of the apostles in their early ministry, going from place to place and from house to house saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand, and, Peace be unto this house, whenever they discovered the Son of Peace there. It to them must have been most wonderful, and in great measure incomprehensible, nevertheless they obeyed the Captain of their army and served in his strength. No price was agreed upon for their service, nothing was ever said about such a thing except the question asked: We have left all and followed thee, what shall we have therefore? And Jesus answered, Ye that have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in his glory, ye shall also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. How many of the carnal wise today would want to serve for such reward? Gold and silver seem the only incentive, and thousands are hungering more after money than after righteousness, and hence are seeking it first, rather than the kingdom of God. The needs of the apostles were supplied, and the promise: Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world, is as good and sure to those called now and pressed into service. We cannot think that the love of money ever prompted a man of God to preach the gospel of Christ. Love to him and his cause, and the power felt in his own soul, move him to leave father and mother, wife and children, to "go and preach the kingdom of God."

In reading the few preceding verses to our text it will be seen that a certain man came to Jesus and said, "Lord, I

will follow thee." He would be called "a volunteer," and while thousands of such have been accepted by our government from time to time, no such thing was ever known in the kingdom of God. Hence Jesus told him, as is recorded in another place, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. This settled the matter in the mind of the volunteer, and we never hear of him again. Those who volunteer service in any army do so with selfish motives, sometimes for the actual pay, sometimes because of failure in every other direction, and sometimes hoping to attain unto some honorable rank. Were it known to them that nothing but poverty and distress would ever attend their lives, not one would volunteer to serve. Such was the life of the apostles, and such has been the life of all ministers of Jesus Christ. Doubtless the man who said, Lord, I will follow thee, was ambitious, expecting to be benefited in different directions, but when assured that Jesus was poorer than foxes and birds, and that no gain could be reached by becoming a disciple, it required very little time for him to decide not to follow the "Lord." To follow him means "the loss of all things," sorrow, cross, temptation, burden-bearing and everything that goes to make up a life of woe. It has not seemed to us that poverty alone is suggested in the expression: Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but no place of rest as well. And this does not mean that Jesus had no bed upon which to rest his often weary body, but until the work given him of the Father was accomplished there could be no rest for him—no discharge in that war.

The figure of a man ploughing is very striking, and easily understood by all of experience along that line. A man engaged in such work has his work before him, and is not expected to look back; if he does he may be fit for some other place on the farm, but is not fit for the plough. So it would be with a disciple or minister of Jesus, having put their hand to the plough, "and looking back, is not fit for the kingdom of God." This means that the business of the kingdom is first of all things, and that the King demands undivided service. Not even the burying of dead relatives was allowed by the Savior, and the same faithfulness is required to-day, not only of those called to preach, but those called to be disciples, followers of Jesus. All churches expect the minister to be present at each appointment, and such excuses as having company, getting in hay, digging potatoes or visiting friends would not be accepted at all by the churches of his care, but he is expected to accept all such excuses from the members. If faithfulness is to be reckoned at all, the pastor has a right to expect each member present at every appointment, as well as the members to expect the pastor. So many things in this day occupy the attention of the people of God—so much looking back. Jesus on one occasion reminded his disciples of Lot's wife, the example of her looking back. She received commandment when leaving Sodom not to look back, but she, remembering her children and all her earthly possessions, did look, and immediately became a pillar of salt. Some have said, O, she was salt, and associate her with "the salt of the earth." We would not dare say she was not saved, because there are good reasons for believing she was, but we feel safe in saying she was "not fit for the kingdom of God," and will ever be a monument of disobedience

for the children of God to behold. "Remember Lot's wife." The "looking back" of the Lord's people is not always in forsaking the doctrine, denying the faith and becoming subjects of exclusion, but in longing for the leeks and onions of the land of bondage, in looking to gold as the god of deliverance, &c., and while in the kingdom we are not fit for it when in such condition. The unfitness for the kingdom of God is most always known better by those who realize it in their own souls than by any one else. The man who knows what he really is by nature is ready to confess his unworthiness and unclean heart, and feels that the kingdom of God would be absolutely pure without his presence. But Paul said, In every great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but some of wood and some of earth, some to honor and some to dishonor. Such was the condition then, and such continues to this day. May we all watch and be sober and hope to the end. K.

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ENTERTAINING STRANGERS.

SISTER M. A. Winner, of Ashville, Ohio, asks for views on Hebrews xiii. 2, desiring to know who are these strangers and angels, and how should they be entertained. This Scripture reads as follows: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." The letter to the Hebrews was not intended for the Jews as a nation, but for those Jews who had, by the grace of God, been brought unto the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. The gospel was first preached to the Jews. Those who heard it on the day of Pentecost, as recorded in Acts ii., were all Jews. We have no reason to think there was a single Gentile in the audience of Peter on that day. It was ordained that the gospel should be preached in all the world for a witness, beginning at Jerusalem. This was done. Many of the Jews who heard the gospel preached on the day of Pentecost believed it with all their heart, and were given understanding that Judaism had come to an end through the fulfillment by Christ of the whole purpose of the law. However there was the danger ever present of Jewish professed believers lapsing back into Judaism, and some came to hold a strange mingling of Judaism and christianity, as is shown in Acts xxi. 18–24. Thus the purpose of the letter to the Hebrews seems to be twofold: to confirm gracious Jews in their gospel position in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free, and to warn against legal entanglements and ensnaring Judaism. The one word throughout the epistle which might be said to furnish a key to it all, is "better;" contrasting the things of the law with the "better" things of Christ, setting forth him who is "better" than angels, the "better" covenant, "better" priesthood,

"better" sacrifice, "better" rest, and so on. The date of the letter is, without a doubt, previous to the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem and the ceasing of the Jewish nationality. This is evident from the eleventh verse of the tenth chapter of the letter itself. Thus, being written before the dispersion of the Jews throughout the world by the Romans, the Gentiles still stood to them as "strangers," though this strangerhood had in reality been abolished in the cross of Christ, for he had taken down the middle wall of partition that stood between Israel and these "stranger" Gentiles during old covenant or legal times, and had by the death of his cross made of these twain one new man. Thus the command in our text is for the Jew possessing gospel standing in Christ to "be not forgetful to entertain strangers," for some of these Gentiles might turn out to be "angels;" that is, these Jewish brethren in being courteous, gentle, kind and hospitable to the Gentile "stranger" would doubtless find from time to time that they were "unawares," being not conscious of it, "entertaining" a brother or sister in the Lord Jesus Christ. This was most certain to be the case, for Jesus had said that the kingdom should cease from national Israel and be given unto a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." These are the words of Paul, showing the coming to pass of the declaration of Jesus, in Matthew xxi. 43. Thus it was not at all necessary for the Jews in grace, who are especially borne in mind by the writer of Hebrews, to any longer regard the Gentiles as dogs and heathen, as was the case when the Mosaic covenant was in full sway, but to bear in mind that in the gospel dispensation, having its dawning in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, the influence of grace was among the Gentiles and likely to spring forth into fruitfulness at any moment and in the most unexpected places. To entertain these strangers meant to manifest courtesy and hospitality toward them. It did not mean to welcome them to the ordinances and privileges of the gospel church, without being persuaded they were subjects of grace. Looking back to the patterns of gospel things in the legal rites and ceremonies of the old covenant, we find the "stranger" is often mentioned. Israel of old was commanded not to vex or oppress the "strangers" within their gates; the gleanings of the harvests and vineyards were to be left for them and for the poor, and in Deut. x. 19, it says, "Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt." This loving the stranger manifested itself in relieving his necessities, giving him food and raiment, and in dealing justly and fairly with him. On the other hand, no stranger except of the seed of Aaron dared offer incense before the Lord; no stranger or sojourner could eat of the holy things of the Israelites; and the stranger that presumed to come nigh the tabernacle or nigh the priest's office was put to death. The hospitality and kindness toward the stranger enjoined upon Israel of old did not allow of any meddling with the holy things, the gifts of God peculiar to those of the circumcision alone. But in Exodus xiii. 48, 49, the stranger, in case he had desire to eat of the passover with those of Israel, must, with all the males belonging to him, be circumcised. He then became one with those of the circumcision, no

more a stranger, but as one at home, and possessed an inalienable right to eat of the passover. "One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you." Leaving now the type and coming over to the antitype in the order and practice of the new testament church, we find the apostles enjoin upon the brethren hospitality, kindness, courtesy, patience, forbearance and kindred qualities toward the strangers: those who are not professedly with the church in like faith, hope and love. This does not for one moment mean that the church is to be slack and slovenly in keeping her house, and admit just any one and everybody to eat with her of her holy things or partake with her in the observance of her solemn ordinances and privileges. In order to this latter welcoming, there must be perfect accord of heart and soul, unity of calling, hope, faith and baptism. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" But when a stranger gives evidence that he has been born again, that he has been made to realize his sinful condition, that he has been given a good hope through grace; in other words, when it is made to appear that he has been circumcised of the Spirit in the heart, instead of outwardly in the flesh, then he is no longer to be treated as a stranger and held at arm's length, because his alienation from the spiritual commonwealth of regenerate Israel is obliterated in his being a new creature in Christ Jesus; it becomes his privilege to come in and sup with the church of her holy things; it is his inalienable right so to do. Inasmuch as the church never knows what moment an instance of this kind will crop up, she is commanded to not forget to entertain strangers, for in so doing there have been, and will be again, instances of entertaining "angels," the Lord's little ones, "unawares." The Old School Baptists have often been accused of being a selfish, clannish sort of people by "strangers" who have dropped in at their meetings and gone away without having been spoken to by the pastor or by any of the members present. This oversight is simply due to thoughtlessness. To speak to strangers courteously and kindly is such a little thing, it takes so little time, and it goes so far with many, that it ought to be done. One who drops in at our meetings to-day through curiosity simply may come next time through awakened interest. We can never foresee these things. God alone knows them. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal: The Lord knoweth them that are his." Three men appeared to Abraham as he sat in his tent door in the heat of the day. To him they were strangers, but he entertained them, fetched water and washed their feet, bade them rest beneath the tree, killed a calf and dressed it with butter and milk and sat it before them. Unconsciously he was entertaining the Lord, and before these men left him they had left with Sarah and himself a wondrous thing: a promise of a son to be given as from the dead. Two men came to Lot in Sodom, but they were angels as well. They came to destroy the wicked city. Lot took them in and entertained them for the night. When the city was destroyed, Lot was not destroyed with it; he owed his safety to the presence of the angels with him.

Numerous instances of this kind are found throughout the Book, but we will notice but one more. The two disciples that walked to Emmaus after the death of Jesus were sad of heart, beset with unbelief and fear. A stranger joined them and journeyed with them, but their eyes were holden that they could not recognize him. He began at Moses and all the prophets and opened unto them the Scriptures. When they reached their journey's end, as night drew on, the two besought the stranger to enter and tarry with them. He did so, and as he sat at meat with them and broke the bread they knew him and instantly he was gone. They had entertained the "angel" of the new covenant "unawares." Jesus said to those on his right hand, "I was a stranger, and ye took me in." Those whom he addressed were not aware they had ever done so. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." When Jesus manifests himself for the first time in the heart's experience of a sinner, the sinner does not know what ails him. He has strange thoughts, strange feelings, strange longings: he is entertaining an "angel," the true character of whom he is to later understand. We were ourselves once strangers in the land of Egypt, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel. It behooves the people of God, therefore, to be kind to strangers. Our own soul's experience dictates this entertainment. The grace of God which has appeared to all men, bringing salvation, teaches these principles of right living by engraving them in the heart and imprinting them in the mind, writing them in the inward parts. Love is the foundation of it all, "the fountain whence all true obedience flows." "Let brotherly love continue." L.

EASTER.

SISTER N. S. Stevens, of Daisy, Arkansas, wants to know about Easter: is it the day Christ rose from the grave? Why is it not the same day of the month and the same month of the year, like Christmas?

Easter is mentioned but once in the Bible, in Acts xii. 4. Herod Agrippa the First, father of the Agrippa before whom Paul later made his stirring defense, as told in Acts xxvi., stretched forth his hands to vex the church of God, killed James, the brother of John, seized Peter and cast him into prison. It being the time of the feast of unleavened bread when Peter was arrested, Herod, though not a Jew himself, was politician enough to know that the Jews would not care to enter into judgment with Peter during their festive season, so kept him in confinement, intending to bring him forth after Easter, or after the passover week of unleavened bread. The word here translated Easter is, in the original Greek, *Pascha*, and literally means the passover, not having any reference whatever to the resurrection of Christ from the dead. The Jewish passover was eaten on the fourteenth day of the first month of the Jewish year, and, for seven days therefrom, was the feast of unleavened bread. Roughly speaking, this corresponds to our month of April. When Christ ate of the passover with his disciples on the evening of the day before his crucifixion, that day must have been the fourteenth day of the first Jewish month, therefore the date of his resurrection would be the first day of the week next following. In other words, Christ rose from the dead on the 17th of *Abib*, or *Nisan*, as it was renamed after the captivity. This is most certainly a fixed date, the same as was the date of his

birth, and not a movable date, as the date of Easter now is as observed by the so-called christian sects of the world. This observance of Easter by the religions of the world as at present engaged in under the pretense of celebrating the resurrection of Christ, is but one of the many glaring inconsistencies of error. The Council of Nice, a Catholic body of over 1500 delegates, called together by the Roman emperor Constantine in the year 325, decreed that Easter should always be observed on the first Sunday following the full moon happening upon or next after the 21st of March. Thus Easter must fall not earlier than March 22nd and not later than April 25th. The Catholics instituted this glaring error, and the Protestant daughters of the "scarlet woman" have helped her to perpetuate it. How can any one be so deluded as to believe that a day which moves about from year to year, as does Easter, can be the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead? This latter event is as fixed and immovable in the history of the church just as certainly as his birth is fixed and immovable. The date of Jesus' birth is said to have been the 25th of December, but no human being has ever been able to prove that even this date is correct. The word "Easter" itself is derived from the Anglo-Saxon, and is taken from the name of the old Saxon goddess Ostara, or Eastre, who represented the morning, or east, and the opening year, or spring. This pagan deity flourished in the imaginations of men about the same time that the Council of Nice bound its dictum upon their intellects. Thus, summing up the whole matter, what do we find? That Easter, as currently observed, is a mass of Judaism, Catholicism, paganism, of falsehood and superstition, with not a vestige of real true gospel virtue in it anywhere. For the gospel church of our Lord Jesus Christ to set apart days, or weeks, or months, or years, to commemorate anything which the Head of the church has not definitely enjoined, is to follow after men and their traditions; it is to become entangled again with the yoke of bondage, which never could justify the ungodly. The truth of God as in Christ Jesus is in its very nature eternal and spiritual, and cannot be limited to this or that duration of time. Read Paul's letter to the Galatians. "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you." "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This miracle of the new birth wrought in the experience of the children of God, and not the 25th of December, is the living memorial of the birth of Christ, written by the finger of God. In Ephesians, first chapter, we read, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know * * * what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead." Belief in Christ is effected by the experimental operation of the same mighty power that brought again the Lord Jesus from the dead. This miracle, and not Easter, is the Spirit's commemoration of the resurrection of the great Shepherd of the sheep, and of his victory over death, hell and the grave. "Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?" Amen. L.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., June 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1914, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond sendeth greeting and love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the kind providence of the everlasting and all-wise God of Israel we have once more been permitted to meet as an association. Your messengers have come to us bearing the glad tidings of salvation by grace through our Lord Jesus Christ, coming in humility of the spirit, which is the only true worship of our creator God. We are glad to state there has been no dissenting voice, but all has been peace and quiet in the Lord.

Our next session is appointed to be held with Southampton Church, Bucks Co., Pa., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the first Sunday in June, 1915, when and where we hope to again meet and receive your ministers and messengers.

J. M. FENTON, Moderator.
D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, Elder H. C. Ker will preach in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in this month (August 30th). All friends are cordially invited.

L. B. FORD.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at his home, 1910 N. Twenty-second St., Philadelphia, Pa., July 3rd, 1914, S. Kurtz Hingley and Miss Lillie M. Stout, both of Philadelphia, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

D. F. Allen, of Camden, Texas, died April 24th, 1913. He was born in Alabama Oct. 8th, 1850, making his stay on earth 62 years, 6 months and 16 days. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church in 1896, at Big Springs, in Smith Co., Texas, near Garden Valley. He died of kidney trouble. He was the father of nine children, six of whom survive him. He was a kind and loving husband and father, and a faithful member of the church, and loved by every one. His widow also survives him, and a host of relatives and friends mourn their loss, but not as those who have no hope. We feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

Written by his widow,

(MRS.) M. F. ALLEN.

LEONARD, Texas.

POETRY.

FATHER, HOLD MY HAND.

"FOR I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee."—Isa. xli. 13.

When heavy clouds o'erspread my sky,
And on the path I travel by
There falls no cheering ray of light,
And I must walk by faith, not sight,
Then, Father, hold my hand.

I will not fear the darkest night,
The darkness shall be as the light;
No phantom terrors shall alarm,
I know I cannot suffer harm
If thou wilt hold my hand.

Though heavily my burden press,
I will not love and trust thee less.
When steeper grows my weary way,
Help me to follow and obey,
And closer hold my hand.

Or if some time the sun should shine,
And brighter, happier days be mine;
If I with joy should lift my head,
And smile to find the shadows fled,
Still, Father, hold my hand.

Hold thou my right hand all the way,
Be thou my comfort, help and stay,
And when my journey all is past,
O lead me safely home at last,
Holding my Father's hand.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

O. F. Ballard, N. Y., $1.00; Elder J. M. Fenton, Pa., $2.00.

APPOINTMENTS.

Elder D. M. Vail will preach at the home of Mr. Hasbrouck, 62 Vanburen St., Kingston, N. Y., Friday night before the third Sunday in August, and at Olive and Hurley Sunday following (third Sunday).

MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting of the Bryn Zion Church will be held on the third Sunday in August and Saturday afternoon before (August 15th and 16th, 1914). Brethren and friends are invited to meet with us. Trains will be met at Clayton Saturday morning.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Pastor.

THE Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet with Providence Church, near Plano, Appanoose Co., Iowa, on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1914, and continue three days. Trains will be met at Plano. All are invited.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator.
H. C. CATE, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Rock Springs Church, situated in Pennsylvania, is appointed for the fourth Sunday, and Saturday preceding, in August, 1914, commencing on Saturday, August 22nd, at 2 p. m. Those coming by rail will take trains at Philadelphia at 7:20 a. m. and at Baltimore at 8 a. m. for Perryville, over P. B. &. W. R. R. to connect with train on Port Deposit & Columbia R. R. at 9 a. m. for Conowingo, Md., arriving there at 9:27, where they will be met and cared for on Saturday morning. A cordial invitation is extended to those who wish to meet with us.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Clovesville Old School Baptist Church has appointed her yearly meeting to be held, the Lord willing, the first Saturday and Sunday in September, (5th and 6th) 1914. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus to meet with us, especially brethren in the ministry of our faith and order. Trains will be met at Fleischmanns station Saturday, first day of meeting.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Jefferson, N. Y., will hold its yearly meeting, the Lord willing, on the third Sunday, and Saturday before, in September, (19th and 20th) 1914. Those coming by train to Stamford will be met on Friday before on the 11 o'clock a. m. train. We extend an invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, especially brethren in the ministry of our faith.

G. E. MEAD, Church Clerk.

THE Schoharie Old School Baptist Church has appointed a three days meeting to be held Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 25th, 26th and 27th, 1914. A cordial invitation is extended to all. Those coming by rail will be met. Those coming to Howes Cave will be met by Deacon Miers, those to Schoharie by brother E. R. Kinney.

GEO. A. MIERS, Church Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Cow Marsh Church will be held on the fourth Sunday and Saturday afternoon before in September, (27th and 28th) 1914. Brethren and friends are invited to meet with us. Trains scheduled to stop at Viola, Del., will be met there Saturday morning.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Pastor.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held with Second Roxbury and Middletown churches, at Halcottville, N. Y., on the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (7th and 8th) 1914. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

JAMES AVERY, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

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HERSMAN, Brown Co., Ill.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

We have on hand the Old School Baptist Hymn and Tune Book, both shape note and round note, 70 cents for single book, sent by mail postpaid; six dollars a dozen, sent by express at cost of purchaser. Send orders to Elder Silas H. Durand, Southampton, Pa., or to Elder P. G. Lester, Floyd, Va.

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SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILLIAMSTON, N. C.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 82. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1914. NO. 17.

POETRY.

PRAYER.

OUR Father who in heaven art,
  Hallowed be thy name;
O spring thou up within our heart,
  And take away our shame.

Thy kingdom come, O Lord, we pray;
  Establish here thy throne;
And may we each from day to day
  Thy love and power own.

We pray, O Lord, thy will be done,
  As in heaven, so in earth;
If thou hast work in us begun,
  Reveal our second birth.

Give us each day our daily bread;
  Our debts, O Lord, forgive;
As thou didst raise Christ from the dead,
  May we believe and live.

Grant we forgive our debtors, too,
  If forgiven we would be;
Thy faith, O Lord, in us renew,
  And draw us nigh to thee.

Do not us in temptation lead,
  Deliver us, we pray;
Because thy help we daily need,
  To shun our evil way.

Thy kingdom, Lord, we own is thine,
  Thy power is supreme;
Thy glory shall forever shine
  In those thou didst redeem.

Thou didst thy Son's life freely give
  For all whom thou didst love;
Christ died, arose, that they might live,
  To dwell with him above.

O reconcile us to thy will;
  Teach us how we should pray;
Thy purposes in us fulfill
  In thy most holy way.

We ask it in the Savior's name,
  Who died and rose again;
To-day and yesterday the same,
  For evermore. Amen.

W. S. CUBBAGE.

FAITH.

I DWELL in a dreary desert,
  In a region of despair,
Where songs of joy are silent,
  And sadness burdens the air.

So dark are the deep recesses,
  I tremble 'mid doubt and fear,
Alone so weary and helpless,
  With not a companion near.

O why are the herbs so bitter?
  And why must I walk this way?
I long for a land of plenty,
  I sigh for the signs of day.

But perhaps I have lost the anchor,
  Perhaps it was never mine,
And the heart must go on aching
  For the fruitage of the vine.

Yet although hope may be blighted,
  Though the shadows deeper fall,
I know that supreme and changeless
  The Lord rules over all.

A READER OF THE "SIGNS."

CORRESPONDENCE.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., August 5, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—After mailing you a letter yesterday I received the inclosed excellent letter from my brother, and forward it to you, that it may be read by each one mentioned. It is rich in the graces of the Spirit of wisdom which cometh from above, and I am sure many will read it with comfort and consolation in their weary pilgrimage, as well as our household.

Unworthily yours, in hope of a blessed immortality, P. W. SAWIN.

MATTOON, Ill., July 20, 1914.

ELDER P. W. SAWIN AND FAMILY—MY DEAR PEOPLE:—Your letter was received some two weeks since, and read with sorrow of heart, as the particulars of the sudden and tragic removal from the family circle of a beloved son, devoted husband and a kind, affectionate father were unfolded. My desire was to write you at once, but many things came in my way to prevent. One thing especially stood more prominently in my way than all others, and that still persists in rising up before me, that is my utter helplessness to say or write anything to comfort you all in such a trying hour as this. On Goldie especially does the calamity fall with distressing weight. As I have often said, and now repeat, it is hard to comprehend, or even understand in the minutest sense, the heavy afflictions that befall us when dear and loved ones are suddenly snatched from us. But "God's ways are in the deep;" no human mind, however well fortified with worldly wisdom, can lift the vail and disclose the deep, unfathomable mysteries that are hidden in the Lord's dealings with his helpless and dependent children. The Lord alone can declare his strength and unfold his purposes to his suffering people who look to him in the hour of need. It is true they have an unction from the Holy One and know all things, and they view the land that is afar off, but can only see in part and know in part, only seeing as through a glass darkly. The depths of both the wisdom and knowledge of God are unfathomable. His judgments are unsearchable and his ways past finding out. Only as he reveals himself to his children along the way do they remember the years of the right hand of the Most High. I said the Lord's ways are in the sea—in the deep. It is no marvel that his children should be led down into the deep also. They see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep, and as they go down into the depths "their soul is melted because of trouble." Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. This enables them to say, "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?" The heart becomes his sanctuary. His way is in the heart, he writes his law there. God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in the heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. He works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Thus we are enabled to recognize his matchless sovereignty and bow to the sceptre of his righteousness, which is the sceptre of his kingdom. They (his children) have learned something of the bitterness of the cup the Savior drank when he bore our sins, our cruel sins, in his own body, and put them away by the sacrifice of himself. We learn, too, something of the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ when we are be-

ing led through the deep rolling waves of affliction and sorrow, such as you now are witnessing. If my experience has ever taught me anything, it has taught me this. I have thought much of you all since the dark clouds of sorrow sent their heart-crushing shadows across the threshold of your happy home, and my heart's desire and prayer to God is that you may be able to say with David, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." The weakness of the flesh stands in our way sometimes, but blest with faith as David was at that moment, the flesh is overcome, and victory through our Lord Jesus Christ is ours. Then we find we are not alone in our sufferings; others suffer with us and for us.

It has only been a brief season since our dearly beloved and faithful brother, Elder Durand, was called upon to part with his dearest and best earthly friend, companion and helpmate, she whose very soul was aglow with the express image of the Sun of Righteousness, whom she delighted in life to serve, went out to return no more to that home where she had so long ministered, not only to her own immediate family, but to hundreds of the household of faith, kindred in Christ, who sought shelter under the family roof. We can all sympathize with our aged brother in his irreparable loss, but sympathy does not restore the joyous light and sunshine that her presence reflected in the home circle. God alone can supply this, and give his servant strength and courage to contend, as he has always so earnestly contended, for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and finish his course, and say in the rapturous moment, as did Paul just before his departure hence, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

Then a little later came the sorrowful news that our dear brother and faithful yokefellow, Elder F. A. Chick, had been called up higher to that haven of peace and rest that he had for so many years delighted to talk and write about. In this instance not only was a dear family bereft of a head, and a bright home made cheerless and desolate, but the church and brethren everywhere throughout the United States and Canada, where he traveled and preached, and where the SIGNS OF THE TIMES circulates, have suffered a loss that no one can supply but He who called, qualified and sent brother Chick forth to labor in his vineyard. His was a wonderful talent; it was a gift from the wonderful Counsellor, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. That he made good use of the talent not one of the household of faith can doubt for a single moment. The glad tidings of salvation that he so earnestly and ably declared from the pulpit and with his pen, which was the pen of a ready writer, brought joy, comfort and peace to thousands of the scattered flock who rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. But, my brother, the Lord will not suffer his faithfulness to fail, for he has made abundant provision for the afflicted, "whose hope still hovering around his word, will light on some sweet promise there, some sure support against despair." Therefore "rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory

shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." I became acquainted with Elder Chick in 1874, soon after he became pastor of the Baltimore and Black Rock churches, and met him a number of times in the seven following years. The spirit of inspiration seemed always to prevail in both his preaching and writing. Surely the church, or family of God, mourns the loss of a clear, exemplary man, an able and devoted minister and a capable and gifted editor.

Then our dear brother Ker's double loss, so to speak, is still fresh in my mind. My very heart and soul were drawn out in sympathy for the doubly afflicted brother. The loss of Elder Chick from the editorial staff of the SIGNS was a blow in no ordinary meaning of the term. Then when his beloved bosom companion was taken away from him the blow became a crushing one to our faithful co-laborer in the Master's vineyard. The burden of his sorrow was very heavy. No wonder that he felt the deep meaning of "alone." But then Israel shall dwell in safety alone, and the dear Savior trod the wine-press alone. Brother Ker was alone, yet not alone. Though no human help or sympathy could remove the sorrow-laden clouds, yet the Lord maketh the clouds his chariot, and is nigh unto his servants in their deepest distress. Brother Ker knows, as all God's children know, that their sufficiency is of God, yea, and his strength is made perfect in weakness. When the Lord said to Paul, My grace is sufficient for thee, it applies to every kind of trouble that comes in the pathway of the saints, however soul-crushing or dreadful it may be. My heart's desire and prayer to God is that the Lord will continue to strengthen and direct our brother in his editorial work, as he has in the past, and give him, in the person of brother Lefferts, an associate on the editorial staff of the good old SIGNS, and thus, by the help of God, hold the paper up to its present high standard of usefulness to the scattered flock—the standard that it has always borne since it was founded by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe.

I have only mentioned these sad incidents in connection with that of your own household. The distress and sufferings of others, perhaps, do not make it any easier for us to bear our own. None of us is able to walk alone in the midst of the storm. The same Lord that provides for one provides for all, and his faithfulness never fails. If you flee to him as your refuge, having nowhere else to go, there you will find all the weary, heavy laden who have found naught but failure in all human helps and props. The Lord makes no wound so deep but what he can heal it, no cloud so dark but what he can cause the light to break through it, no storm so furious that it cannot be hushed by the magic words, "Peace, be still." He is an effective covert from the tempest; he is the comforting and comfortable shadow of a great rock in a sun-blistered and weary land. Surely the Lord God is a great God; there is none like unto him.

As you will see, I commenced this letter some time ago, but have been called from it time and again, and I had made up my mind to toss it into the wastebasket, until I received your second letter day before yesterday, so to-day, having added a little more to it, I will send it for you to make such use of as you please.

Your brother in hope,

JOHN G. SAWIN.

WAVERLY, Pa., July 31, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—You will find inclosed two letters, both good, one from brother Conner, the other from sister Young.

I arrived home safely from Middletown, and found all in usual health, for which I desire to be thankful, but do not know that I am, but I know that I am a strange creature.

Yours as ever, with love,

D. M. VAIL.

TORONTO, Ontario, June 9, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER:—I am glad to know you still retain us in your thoughts, and have expressed a desire to see us. We would gladly visit Brantford, but do not much hope to at present. Mrs. May and Mortimer, my intimate Baptist friends, have scarlet fever in their home. We had talked some of going before this epidemic struck their home. I had the sweet privilege of attending the May meeting, and can say it was a season of refreshing to my soul. I had been dwelling for a long time in a dry and thirsty land, where no water was. I felt the gold had become dim, yet I continued to hope in God's mercy. Surely his mercy never faileth; it endureth forever. As I left home for the meeting I wondered if such a vile, unworthy, lifeless and indifferent creature would be granted to eat of the crumbs that would fall from the Master's table. It had seemed for a long time of no use to try to pray, but as I was traveling on the train there seemed an ardent prayer poured forth that the Lord would be with me and give me understanding, and that he would be my mouth to speak words of wisdom. I did so want to strive for the things which make for peace.

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Elder Durand preached from these words at the meeting, and the word spoken was very timely. He is a dear old father, looking after the good of the flock. I heard Elder Slauson well, especially from a text he chose from Revelation iv. 6, to the end. It was full of good things for me. On my way home I visited my sister at Melbourne, and Uncle George at Appin, and then at St. Thomas I spent about half a day at Elder Slauson's home. I enjoyed my visit with them very much. I do feel a nearness to Elder Slauson as one of the tried and tempest-tossed, and as one who manifests the Spirit of Christ in meekness, fear and humility. I remained over night with my uncle and aunt at Woodstock. Uncle is very low-spirited, but I trust the Lord will give him grace, and reconcile him to all things. These words came with comfort: "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice." Dear brother, may the Lord enable you to rejoice in this thought. For from whence cometh wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts? The Lord is in one mind, and none can turn him, but not so with us. How did Christ learn obedience? Though a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered. So must we, but we are a stiffnecked, rebellious people, so much of the time not wanting this man (Jesus) to rule over us; but thank God, we are at times brought to stand still and see the salvation of God.

Dear brother, I have written more than I expected, and must close. Kindly remember me to all at Brooke. I hope you will have one of those love visits among them, and that you may have sweet liberty of soul. Love to your dear wife and the rest of your family. I trust

all are well. Would love to see you. Let me hear if you receive this missive.

From your sister in a precious hope,
(MRS.) W. C. YOUNG.

HOPEWELL, N. J., July 25, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—I have only a few moments to write before going to our Saturday meeting. I have been at home to-day, as it has been raining, and have been reading a little book called the "Bank of Faith," the trials of a child of God. How many are the trials of God's people! It seems to me that if some of God's people of to-day had their trials and sorrows in book form, it would read as the Bible. Is it not a precious truth that they are his children? As for myself, I dare not include my name. The question comes to me, Am I his, or am I not? It is all in the hand of God. I will write of his power and give him all praise. He in the beginning said, Let there be light, and there was light. The knowledge of God, and his wonderful works and ways, how wonderful it is. Who can make the light of day, or who can make the darkness of night? These are the works of him who can make a blind man see the things of God. All things come from the Father of lights; he speaks and it is done. He brings the beggar from the dunghill, goes down into the depths and brings him up into his marvelous light and knowledge of Jesus Christ. Christ, and he alone, knows how to perform this work; he alone was down below fallen man, born in a stable and laid in a manger, then step by step he trod beside fallen man. He knows each and every saint's peculiar case, knows each pain and groan, goes with them from the cradle to the grave, then they dwell with him, and shall be like him. He will wipe away all their tears; no more pain, no more sorrow; all will be perfect in him. Here below we in nature soon fade and die, and it seems sometimes we have almost perished; we do not seem to have any life. When there is a drought in nature all things seem almost dried up, but thanks be to God, there is a root left to tell of his marvelous ways. The rain comes, and the life is manifested, things spring forth and grow, and it comes from above, not here below. Man's ways all fail, and he has to be made to know he is an utter failure, and has to fall hard; not once, but many times. "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?"

Sunday morning.—Yesterday we had a good meeting. Elder John McConnell preached for us, and his sermon seemed for me, as he spoke of things that have been on my mind for some time. I will not attempt to tell what he said, for I always fear to tell what any one has said, as I probably would not get it right. I often think of Matthew, Mark and Luke; each one spoke, but did not use each and every word that the other did, but pointed to the same Godhead.

I had a visit from Elder Alexander and a letter from Elder Lefferts. I felt glad he was called to be one of the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He is a strong and fearless preacher, and I just feel he is one of mine, and my heart goes out in love and fellowship toward him. May God give to him and to you sweet messages of his love to deliver to his little ones from time to time, as is his will. You will be tried on all points, but God will prevail. I often think of God's commands: "Behold" and "Beware," as he sent them forth to preach the word. They must be acquainted with all manner of troubles, but be harmless as doves

and as wise as serpents. So they must walk along with the serpent in the beginning, to be acquainted with his every design. They must know something of wolves, know their ways, and sometimes can keep clear of them, but not always. Sometimes things come creeping into the church that look like lambs, but turn out to be roaring lions.

Now I have written along as my mind has been led, and I find my letter is a little lengthy. I often think of you and all the family of God. May God's blessings rest upon you and yours and all the little children, for that is all we are, little ones.

Hoping to be a brother,

GEORGE M. CONNER.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., June, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose two letters for publication in the SIGNS, if you think best, one from our aged sister Brewster, the other from brother A. T. Benson, both of whose names are quite familiar to the readers of the SIGNS.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

ONEONTA, N. Y., March 22, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—I see that you are a little mistaken in my age; I was born May 22nd, 1827, and so am in my eighty-seventh year. No, I do not write myself, my eyes have failed so much in the last year I have to get others to write for me. My son, who lives here in the place, comes every Sunday and writes for me, and my daughter here reads to me. My failing eyesight is a great trial to me. I am not confined to the bed, but mostly to my room. I have not been called upon as yet to suffer severe pain, but know not what is in the future. I have been thinking much this morning of the words, Take up your cross and follow me, or you cannot be my disciple. I have felt at times a strong desire to do so, but the flesh is weak, and we know it is a path of tribulation cast up, which no vulture's eye has seen, nor gallant ship passed thereby, but the dear path to his abode lies through this horrid land. Lord, we would keep the heavenly road, and run at thy command. I go mourning along because I cannot feel these things more powerfully, more fervently and more in the Spirit, and seldom feel any abiding evidence, but feel my vileness and poverty, and am wondering, as Elder Vail once said, who I am, and what I am, and where I am. I have no enjoyment in the things of this world, but is it the experience of a long life that has taught me this? I often fear so. I think with me the evil days have come and the years have drawn nigh when I can say I have no pleasure in them. I have lately had your book, "Trials of Job," read to me again. I feel that the Lord impressed you to write it. I believe it is truly the experience of the Lord's people here on earth, but I hardly dare count myself one of them, yet in my greatest trials I can never feel to give up, and hope sometimes that underneath are the everlasting arms. I have felt sometimes that the Lord was near, a lifting up out of this mire and clay, and my feet placed on the solid rock for a short time, and felt all was peace.

> "The Lord can clear the darkest skies,
> Can give us day for night;
> Make drops of sacred sorrow rise
> To rivers of delight."

But is my sorrow sacred? How much I question this, but I am a poor, trembling, halting, doubting creature, and perhaps ought not to burden you, but to the dear children I must speak, if to any one, and

we are told to cast not our pearls before swine. But are these my pearls? I hope you will pardon me for so soon trespassing on your patience. I fear that it is asking too much to hope some time to hear from you again. I feel too unworthy to ask it, yet it may be my last request.

I will close this with christian love to you all. From one of the weakest and poorest, if one at all,

LUCINDA B. BREWSTER.

CANNON, Del., April 17, 1914.

DEAR ELDER DURAND:—I have read your short letter in the SIGNS for April 15th with much interest and comfort. You mention when one is enjoying spiritual comfort that he will declare that trials and afflictions are a necessary part of christian experience, and the next day these trials and afflictions will come upon him, and he will at once conclude he is not a child of God. Now surely you know how to teach; you know by experience what the Lord's people have to suffer, and we who are younger drink the words of the aged fathers as a thirsty man would a drink of cold water. I read the SIGNS eagerly, to see if I can find one who feels as I do. It seems my experience is different from any one else (if I have any at all), but sometimes I am greatly comforted by reading after some one who tells my feelings. I have not done much writing lately, have been in great darkness of mind, though there have been some seasons of rejoicing. I am wondering what I am, and it is hard to know. It seems I am being tempted at this time severely, and I cannot just understand why this is so, but I get a little comfort from the thought that Jesus was tempted. I cannot tell the different ways in which I am tempted, but there seems to be something which is helping me bear up under these temptations; there are some excellent promises being made to me, but I cannot just feel they are from the Lord; I am hoping they are; if they are, then I need not fear. It seems I am just as a school boy learning the alphabet. This is a homely illustration, but it is just my feelings. I only know a little in regard to spiritual things. I think sometimes I will stop writing and talking, that it is all a delusion, but I can stop the wind from blowing just as easily; it does seem that there is an irresistible power at work, and this power is greater than all other powers combined, yet we cannot see the Being who is in possession of the power, but there is power in the word which is spoken. Sometimes a word seems spoken to us, and we wonder why such a word is spoken; we do not hear the word with our natural ears, and because of this we say, I fear this word is not of the Lord; if I could only hear it spoken then I would believe, or if I could see something unusual, then I would believe. I have tried to keep certain thoughts out of my mind recently; as a kind of test, I would resolve that I would read the newspapers and keep my mind on worldly things, and be merry, as I used to be, then if any passages of Scripture should come into my mind I would believe the Lord was leading me by his Spirit, and I have found myself in deep thought upon some portions of Scripture. I will mention some of them. "The Lord reigneth." "Jesus began to preach." "How can these things be?" "And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" This last Scripture I tried to speak from at Broad Creek, Feb. 3rd last, when Elder Francis was away to attend a funeral. This was

a severe trial for me, but strange to say, I had but little fear. I wonder yet how I was sustained; the Lord must have been near or I never could have stood up. I had never spoken in prayer before in public, and I cannot tell you what a trial it was to me. Before I reached the meetinghouse I expected my older brothers would be there, and they were, and it came to me I should not attempt to speak before them, for I am the youngest in my father's family, and I remembered the case of David. But when I got to the meetinghouse something spoke with power, and said, Be of good courage, and my timid feeling left me, and it seemed my mouth was opened and my tongue loosed, and I did seem to enjoy speaking, especially in prayer. It seemed that I did not have to think what to say, the words were in my heart and my mouth spoke them, and I seemed to have some liberty in speaking from the Scripture for about twenty-five minutes, when suddenly I had no more words to speak, and told them that I had said all that was given me, that we would sing some good old songs, which we did, and I did enjoy the meeting, and all seemed to enjoy it, but I just talked, I did not feel that I was preaching. I feel like mentioning this fact. I am just willing to do the little things to assist in whatever way I can. I do not want to go beyond what the Lord would have me do, because I know the words that are spoken when the Lord is not in them are empty.

I did not know I had written so much until I just looked over the sheets, so I will stop lest I weary you. I only intended to say a few words and tell you your article comforted me.

Yours in hope,

A. T. BENSON.

THE LORD PROVIDES.

"I HAVE been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."—Psalms xxxvii. 25.

This is the individual experience of David, the servant of the Lord. His words in this Psalm set forth his trust in the Lord for all things needful in time and in eternity. He exhorts the saints not to fret because the wicked seem to prosper in this world. He is told not to be envious against the workers of iniquity. David assigns the reason why he should forbear from envy when the wicked seem to prosper: "For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb." From David's viewpoint it is all-important to the children of God to trust in the Lord. "Delight thyself also in the Lord." He seems to mean from this that the child of God should find delight in submitting himself to the reverses of providence that seem to be against him. It is a self-sacrifice to the natural mind to "commit thy way unto the Lord." Again and again, here and elsewhere, David says, "Trust in the Lord." Do we always heed his words? In our journey through life are our minds resting on these words, and are our actions showing absolute trust in Him? To offset future providential reverses, are we planning some scheme to outflank the way of the Lord when reverses come? Do we do as the prodigal son, join ourselves to a citizen, or citizens, of our country for relief in famine instead of looking to the Lord? It seems to me that the noblest work of man on earth is to praise the Lord. We know that man is helpless in this work; but the Lord does sometimes fill his soul with praises, and this holy desire and willingness to praise the Lord ought to move his tongue, feet and hands to show forth the praises of God, who calls him

out of darkness into his marvelous light. Men often say in tempting a child of God, Do not wait for Providence to bless you with a competency, just give us a little money regularly and we will provide largely for your future. David, the servant of God, says, "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him." Which man shall we take heed to, the man of the world or the man of God? It seems an easy matter for a true believer to decide, but do all believers follow David's instructions, to trust in the Lord, and wait until "he shall bring forth the righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday"? The child of God often falls into the error so prevalent among men, like this: God is so slow, it will not do to wait so long, and maybe it is by my own energy that I must succeed in this life at last. Now, I may use the words of David at the head of this letter: "I have been young, and now am old," which is personally true. To-day I wish to speak of material things, for I believe that in the twenty-fifth verse, as above, David meant material things primarily. A spiritual interpretation of the text no doubt will hold good. David was in this world, and he had need of earthly things, principal of which was bread. All saints have been, or will be, in this world, for surely a saint is a sinner sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ and called with an holy calling. During their stay in the flesh, or this world, they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, or until deliverance. This must cover all their time in this world. Does God provide essentials for the maintenance of the natural lives of his saints? Who will answer no? None, I think. Then let us live as though the Lord knew all our needs without our fretting when the parasites come to our doors representing secret orders and insurance companies, holding out wonderful inducements that guarantee a future harvest for a small investment. Bear in mind the words of an inspired apostle: "But my God shall supply all your needs, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."—Phil. iv. 19. Giving does not impoverish the Lord, nor does withholding from giving enrich him, for the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof, so that he weighs the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance, and measures the sea in the hollow of his hand; he also takes up the isles as a very little thing. "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters."—Psalms xxiii. 1, 2. David here shows his confidence in the full provision of the Lord by showing how he rests in the midst of abundance, lying down in green pastures (or tender grass), and of being slowly led, as it were, by still waters, or waters of quietness. These words indicate a trust and a waiting upon the great Shepherd for all his needs, making him to feel like seeking none other to supply his need. David, knowing that the Lord was his Shepherd, could say in his old age that he had not seen the righteous forsaken. "The righteous" in this connection could not mean any other than those who believe that God is supreme, above all gods, who are enabled to trust in the Lord for all things. Do not God's saints embrace the words of Job in his adversity? "What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" The righteous may be forsaken, but David had not seen him forsaken nor his seed begging bread. "His seed" here no doubt means the "holy seed," or chosen gene-

ration, peculiar people who believe on the holy name of the Lord. This "holy seed" may be cast down, in distress, in darkness through poverty, crying for mercy, yet they are not forgotten by the Lord, hence not forsaken. Hear the Lord in his dealings with his "chosen." "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." The "small moment" that the face of the Lord is hid from us may seem to us months, or years, yet with the Lord it is but a moment, "for the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever." The care and the keeping of the saints by the Lord evidently embrace the times of their lives on earth, and the very minutest detail of their sustenance, or else could Jehovah know their times of dissolution? I have been a great sinner all my life, yet the Lord has blessed me with life, bread and many comforts, all of which I am unworthy. Then grace from first to last is my only plea.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., Aug. 2, 1914.

FAIRMONT, W. Va., March 9, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will try to write once more to our dear old paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. You will find the passage of Scripture which I will try to write about in Mark xvi. 15, 16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." Now I do not expect to more than touch upon this grand subject, but I awoke last night with this on my mind, so I am trying to relieve my mind by writing. In the first place, we ought to be very careful in writing upon Bible subjects, because it is the written word of God.

"And he said unto them." This was Christ himself speaking to his disciples, and not to the world.

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." This is the work of Christ, and not the work of man. He did not tell them to send, but to go and preach the gospel; not a gospel, but the gospel, to every creature. We find in this a broader command. "Go ye into all the world;" not restricted to the Jews alone, but go to all nations. The time was at hand for his gospel to be preached to every creature. God has a people among all nations, as the blessed Savior said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring." There the middle wall of partition that separated the Jews and other nations was broken down by Jesus Christ. There is one Shepherd, and one fold; go preach my gospel to them. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Paul said, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." In Acts xvi. 6, 7, they "were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, after they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not." Here we have two places where they, the apostles, were not allowed to preach. Go preach my gospel to every creature, all nations; not just to the Jews alone, but to every one where I send you, and lo, I am with you. Again,

Take not the children's bread and give it to dogs. Christ is the bread of life, he gave his life for the sheep; he died for them that they might live. "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." It is his sheep that believe in him. "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; [not may be, but shall be saved,] and he that believeth not, shall be damned." "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved." Faith is the gift of God; faith is the fruit of the Spirit. "And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith." "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith." He that believeth must first have the Spirit, for faith is the fruit of the Spirit. The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin, and not water baptism; water baptism is for a purpose. "The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."—1 Peter iii. 21. It saves us from a guilty conscience, and from the stripes of the chastening rod, the answer of a good conscience toward God. The eight souls who were in the ark were saved by water from the deluge, not from everlasting torment, but saved from being drowned. We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. Preach the gospel, for it is the power of God. "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty." They are to preach Christ, and him crucified, the way, the truth and the life, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. They were commanded to preach the gospel, not the acts of the creature; it is to be done in the name of Christ, that he is the one who was exalted a Prince and a Savior to give repentance and the remission of sins. It is the work of the Lord to give repentance as well as the forgiveness of sins. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, so he is already born before he believes. "He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life." So we see that it is only his sheep who hear his voice, and they follow him. Preach the gospel, it will feed my sheep and lambs; tell them that Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners, and to call them to repentance, and that he suffered for them; that he bore their sins in his own body when he suffered and died on the tree; that he perfected them forever that are sanctified; he gives to them eternal life, and they shall never perish. When he begins a good work within you he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, and as many as are ordained to eternal life believe; yes, ordained to eternal life. They must then receive it, or be brought into the enjoyment of it, being created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God before ordained that we should walk in them. Go preach the gospel to all nations, to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. The unbeliever is damned. He that hath the

Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life; those who have not the Spirit of Christ are none of his. The Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

Your unworthy brother,

JAMES W. LINN.

"FEED MY SHEEP."

WHEN the Savior told the apostles to feed his sheep he did not tell them to make sheep, but to feed them. The Savior said, My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me; a stranger they will not follow. Sheep are different from any other animal. You can put the feed in the rack for a horse or cow, but sheep cannot reach it, and would starve. The popular preaching of to-day is in a rack out of reach of the sheep. "Feed my sheep;" bring it down and hand it to them. Sheep are very particular about their eating; they pick about and eat what suits them; it must be clean. When a feeder comes along he cannot deceive the sheep, they know the voice; he must feed them on that Bread which cometh down from heaven, which if a man eat he shall never hunger. When I hear the popular preaching of to-day I come away hungry. It may suit the world, for the world loves its own. The passage of Scripture which says, Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life, in the popular way of thinking is that we must make the start in coming. The Savior said, Ye will not come because ye are not of my sheep; so it was not the sheep he was talking to. I believe when he cried out on the cross, It is finished, and gave up the ghost, there was nothing for the sinner to do. I am glad it is that way, for if we poor worms of the dust had any part to do, there would be none saved. I do not believe we find the Lord, but he finds us. He found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness; that is where he finds us all. I know he found me one night playing the violin for a dance right in the middle of a set, so I called for another to take my place and left the room and walked around the yard and cried, and asked the Lord to have mercy on me. I went thirty years or more with that hope before I joined the church, for I was afraid I would bring reproach on the cause. I feel that I have now done my duty in going home to my friends. That is where the sheep are commanded to go, so if there are any who are halting between two opinions, I advise you to take up your cross and follow the Savior. I do not believe you always have to have a preacher in order to be fed; the poor sheep are fed by those who write for the Old Baptist periodicals. This is the way the sheep are fed who cannot get to meeting, or have gotten old and deaf like myself. It is a great comfort to me to read after those who write for our papers. I will say to the writers, Write on, you do not know when you are feeding the sheep.

Now, brethren editors, do with this as you think best. I will be seventy-six years old August 31st.

Your brother,

W. H. CHILTON.

CAMPBELLSBURG, Ky., July 30, 1914.

AVONDALE, Ala., Aug. 4, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—As I have not said anything through the SIGNS for some time, I feel like speaking once more, as it is a hard matter for me to keep silent when so many good things are being said, so many things for the weary, hungry soul to feast upon.

Since the death of Elder Chick I have often felt that I wanted to say something

about that, but many others have spoken my own sentiments. I now desire to refer to a statement in the SIGNS from some one (from your pen if I mistake not) in reference to Elder Chick's life, and that is, that he was never angry but once in his life, and that when he was a small boy. My dear brother, when I read this I was filled with emotion, and I burst into tears, and said, What a life; why I have been angry a thousand times, and I have been overwhelmed with a cloud of doubts and fears, and my only consolation was, and is, that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners: of whom I am chief," and that "he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." Would to God that I could look back upon such a blameless life as that of brother Chick, but alas, I cannot. I realize more and more every day I live the deceitfulness, depravity and wickedness of my own heart and nature. In my case the blood of Christ will have to cover a multitude of sins.

The last few numbers of the SIGNS have been unusually interesting to me. I find more solid food there than in any other of the four or five papers that I read. Brother Ker, I enjoyed your article in the August 1st SIGNS better than anything I have ever read from your pen. I am sorry to see divisions over predestination, and in some instances declarations of nonfellowship. The only difference I can see between Baptists on this subject is as to the extent of predestination. All Old Baptists, whether limited or unlimited, believe in predestination, and all have the same experience, viz., salvation by grace, and I claim them all as Baptists. True, I sometimes hear too much said about time and eternal salvation, and often notice that some contend that the sinner is passive in regeneration, but active in obedience. I accept both their statements, but the truth of the matter is that the Lord acts first, and the reason those who are born of God are active in obedience is simply because it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. From this standpoint they work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. One of old said, "Thou also hast wrought all our works in us." Jesus said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work," and his children do the same, and the word says, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved," hence it is not necessary to over-persuade people to join the church; they are sure to come home in the Lord's time, but of course I believe in proper encouragement. I am in bad condition physically, and have been for some time, and almost lost the use of myself, suffering with heart trouble, kidney trouble, &c., and I feel that I have about finished my course. I am still trying to work as a shoe cobbler. Can sit down and mend shoes, but can stand up but little, and seldom get out from home among the brethren. I try to preach here in Avondale every fourth Sunday. Last Saturday and Sunday I was favored of the Lord to visit a church about forty-five miles from home, near Columbiana, Alabama. Elder S. S. Crumpton has the care of this church. I was heartily received, and spoke three or four times. The church communed and washed each other's feet, and I witnessed the baptism of five persons Sunday morning by Elder Crumpton. Two joined on Saturday, and three at the water Sunday morning. They came several miles prepared to go into the water, some of them dating their hope back as far as fifteen years. There

was no excitement and no undue solicitation to unite with the church, but mostly doctrinal preaching. We had some good warm exhortations. My text on Saturday was, "My kingdom is not of this world."

Here I will close. As ever, in hope and fellowship through Christ,

H. J. REDD.

[WE are sorry to hear of the poor health of our dear brother Redd, and sincerely hope the Lord may restore him and bless him to the comfort of many. It is good to hear such reports as he has given of the excellent meeting when five were baptized.—K.]

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—As it is again drawing near time for meeting, and I am still unable to meet with you, I will try and talk with you by letter and tell you how I feel. How very wonderful is the love of Jesus, that reflects from him in his chosen ones, and causes their hearts to become one with each other, and with him who hath loved us and given himself for us. "God is love." Yes, we know it when he is near us, when his presence is felt in our hearts, and we are filled with love to him and to his people everywhere, but let his presence be for a moment withdrawn, and how cold we become, and with our sins rising like mountains before us, and our hearts but leaden lumps, how difficult it is then to realize that "God is love." With one's heart too hard even to ache, incapable of one good thought, feeling destitute of even one spark of divine love, how like reprobates we feel, and how like a God of revenge we feel the dear Savior has need to be, instead of a God of love, who gave his precious blood for us that we might be saved from those very sins that are so hateful and cling to us like the fangs of a loathsome and dangerous reptile. There are times in my darkness that I do feel to hunger and thirst after the living waters. Just such a condition of mind do I feel myself to be in to-day, and it is impossible for me to say anything that would even interest you while feeling so. Like the psalmist, I am shut up; I cannot come forth; shut in a prison of darkness and doubt, bound with the fetters of sin; until a strong hand opens the doors, and loosens the cords that bind me, I cannot come forth. We can never drink that awful cup he drank to the bitter dregs when in the garden of Gethsemane, we cannot tread the wine-press alone as did he, but we in a measure must drink from the same cup, must taste the same bitter dregs; in short, must pass through great tribulations before we enter the portals of eternal day, to go no more out forever, but to reign with Christ in endless glory; world without end. I so miss mingling with the church members; if I only were able to be with them.

I have not been feeling as well of late, the pain is very severe at times.

Your unworthy sister,

FRANCES MABEL TRYON.

CASTLE ROCK, Wash., July 4, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Through the goodness and mercy of our covenant-keeping God, once more I, an old sinner, am blessed with the privilege of renewing my subscription to our dear family paper, and for the money order inclosed please give me credit. I now lack a few days of being threescore years, and have had the great pleasure of reading after all the editors of the SIGNS. I have read our paper for the past forty years, and am made to rejoice to see its faith-

fulness in contending for the Bible doctrine of the predestination of all things. Now, if it is not asking too much of you, I would like to see the prospectus published once more in our dear old paper. There are a great many here on this coast who declare the SIGNS has only in the last twenty years commenced agitating the doctrine of the predestination of all things, and they are not slow in denouncing it as heresy, and they do not want it mentioned in the churches, and as brother G. O. Walker, of Walker, Oregon, says on page 617 of October 15th, 1913, SIGNS, From time to time reports come of strife and divisions in various sections of the country, and we naturally wonder about the cause. Further on he declares, Well meaning brethren sit silently by and allow more assuming brethren to teach for doctrine the commandments of men. I have been a member of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church of Jesus Christ called New Hope, constituted in the year 1865, in Washington County, Oregon, for thirty-nine years next December, and can say of her that she has stood aloof from all these entanglements and taken no part with them. It makes my heart feel sad that dear Elder Chick is with us no more, still we mourn not as those who are without hope, for we feel that our loss is his eternal gain, as we know it is better to be with Jesus, where there is no more parting, pain or sorrow. O blessed hope of the redeemed of the Lord, for he (Jesus) has declared, Because I live, ye shall live also.

Hoping and praying that the good Lord will guard, guide and lead his own in the way he would have them go, and that he will reconcile each and every one to his divine will and purpose in all things for Jesus' sake, I remain, as ever, an old sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all, J. K. BOYD.

VIRGINIA, Ill., Nov. 28, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—There have been for some time portions of Scripture on my mind, and I find no way to get rid of my impressions only by writing my views. John vi. 38, 39: "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." This is the language of Jesus. We must find out who was given to him. Psalms ii. 8: "Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance." Now we have found who were given him. Did the Father give all the heathen for an inheritance? if so will he save all of the heathen? No, just as many as the Father gave him. Deut. xxxii. 9: "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." "Lot of his inheritance;" that is, all the Father gave him. Now we will see if we can find out what the word "Jacob" means. Isaiah xliv. 1: "Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant, and Israel, whom I have chosen." Then the words "Jacob" and "Israel" mean chosen. Ephesians i. 4: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." Well, will any of the heathen that the Father gave him be lost? No. John vi. 37: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Matthew i. 21: "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." These people are the heathen the Father gave him. Then it is useless to send missionaries to the nations so-called heathen. If it is necessary to have missionaries for the salvation of sinners, what will become of

them that died before the missionary system was inaugurated? The system was organized in 1602. The first missionary society was inaugurated by Pope Gregory, fifteenth pope. Of course they contend that God wants to save the entire human family. If he does, what hinders him? John xvii. 2: "As thou [the Father] hast given him [the Son] power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." Any more? No. Just that many, and no more. John xvii. 9: "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me: for they are thine." Then if he wants to save the world why did he not pray for the world? for he says, I know thou hearest me always. The Father always answers the Son's prayers.

I will close. If you think there is anything in this epistle and desire to publish it you may do so, if not, all right.

JOEL HUGHETT.

TILBURY, Ontario.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—In looking over some old letters I found this one from brother Case, and if you think it suitable for the readers of the SIGNS please publish it.

S. A. McCOLL.

LONDON, Ontario.

MRS. S. A. McCOLL—DEAR SISTER:—I hope that this will find you well. I feel very sad at times that I have so little, if any, mind to write to any one. I sometimes feel free to talk with the children of God when I meet them, but to write to them seems like drawing water out of a dry well, there is so much to try the heart and to perplex the mind, and every inch of the way must be tried over and over again, and the result is that we die daily, and the longer I live the more I feel that my life is but a wandering journey, and, like Israel of old, I wander in a solitary way, and O how solitary I am; most of my life is solitary in that I am the chief of sinners, and to be the chief of sinners is to be foremost in all that pertains to sin. But one of old cried out in the fullness of his soul, O give thanks unto the Lord. Surely he had something to give thanks for, because he tells us that he, with all the redeemed, was redeemed from that sad place and condition where you and I are most of our time. The Lord is good. Is there any one to question his goodness? No, not among the redeemed. Why? For his mercy endureth forever. O what abounding mercy then that saves a wretch like me. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy, and that enemy was and is too strong for us; he was the strong man armed that kept his house; but glory and honor to God, the stronger came, and he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. Yes, he hath gathered them out of the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south; then think, dear sister, for a moment of how terrible that scattering was that took such an almighty hand to gather again. Do you ever get lost now? Are you ever at a loss to know what you are or where you are? I am often there. It is not a pleasant place, but that is where the redeemed are found, and gathered from, for they wander in the wilderness. O, says my soul, can it be that they, the dear redeemed, have and do wander in that terrible wilderness that I am often in? In fact, I dare not say I am ever out of it, for this wilderness we travel round to

reach the city of our God in a solitary way. They found no city to dwell in. No, Jesus alone is the dwelling-place of his saints, and there, and there alone, do we find rest to our souls. Hungry and thirsty their souls fainted in them, then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses, and he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation. O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men, for he satisfieth the longing soul and filleth the hungry soul with goodness. If you read Psalms cvii. 1-9, you will see that David says the Lord is good, and in the ninth verse he declares that he fills the hungry soul with goodness. Then the hungry soul must be filled with God himself, for he alone is good; yes, Christ in you the hope of glory.

Your brother in hope,

R. CASE.

HAMPTON, Iowa, July 27, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I will drop you a line this warm morning. I read the dear old SIGNS with my dear wife's obituary, and there is one mistake: it should have been four sons and three daughters, instead of five daughters and two sons. I suppose it was my mistake, and if you feel like it you may correct it. O how lonely I feel; it seems I cannot be reconciled to my dear wife's sudden death. I know the Lord doeth all things well, and is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. I feel that I do not want to live any longer, but desire to depart hence. It may be wrong to grieve as I do, and I pray the Lord to give me grace to bear up. I am in feeble health. My children are good to me, but they do not realize their loss as I do, yet, my dear brother, I do feel thankful I am not left, like many, destitute; I have enough to keep me comfortable, I hope, while I remain in this tabernacle of clay. We were so comfortable, only her health was not the best, and mine no better, but we were company for each other in our old age.

Now with many tears rolling down my wan cheeks I will close. May the God of all grace sustain you in your great loss, comfort and give you sustaining grace.

I have received many letters of condolence from brethren, sisters and friends wherever we were known, and many from those we never met in this life. When you feel like it write me. I received your letter, which was a great comfort, as also were all the letters I have received.

Yours in great tribulation,

E. A. NORTON.

LA GRANDE, Oregon.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The first session of the Corresponding Meeting of the Primitive Baptists of Oregon, Washington and Idaho met with the Big Spring Church, at Elgin, Oregon, July 10th, 11th and 12th, 1914. The plan for this yearly meeting was adopted at Touchet, Washington, in November, 1913, and its purpose is to take the place of the association, except to hold no jurisdiction over the individual affairs of the different churches. The meetings are arranged by invitation and appointment, and the moderator and clerk of the church with which it is held preside over it. Correspondence and visitors from any churches of this faith and order are invited. At this meeting four churches were represented by correspondence and four others by visitors. A general gospel feast was enjoyed by all interested persons in attendance.

The next meeting will be held with the Coast Fork Church, Drain, Oregon, beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in July, 1915, at which time any visiting brethren or ministers will be welcome. C. W. BOND.

A CORRECTION.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES AND ITS READERS AND ALL PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS EVERYWHERE:—I wish to make the following notice of correction through these columns and all other Primitive Baptist papers that will copy. That while a member and pastor of Mount Moriah Church, in Webster Parish, Louisiana, I did, in the heat of human passion, over the discussion of "conditional time salvation" and absolute predestination draw up a resolution nonfellowshipping those who believed and advocated unlimited predestination. Since that time the Lord, I hope, has shown me I was wrong in drawing up such a resolution and offering it to the church, which adopted it, and I feel I owe this correction on my part to all Primitive Baptists, and hope the editors will give it space.

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,
J. F. PIERCE.

LAUREL, MISS., Jan. 7, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is through the goodness of God that I am spared to see a few days in another year, for which I hope I am thankful. God has been merciful to me during my past life, and when looking back I can see nothing but a corruptible life, and the God of heaven has spared me even through my wickedness. O how much I ought to thank him for his loving-kindness to me. We are still in peace here in our church at Palestine. Our pastor, Elder L. F. Easley, is still preaching for us, and we feel that God has given us a great gift in an undershepherd. He has been very kind to us, not shunning to declare the whole counsel of God. I want to tell you that I think the last SIGNS seems to be one of the best. All are good, but it seems that some numbers are better than others. Sometimes I think it is the condition our minds are in. When it pleases the Lord to give us light to see those things the brethren and sisters write about, then it is that we can see and rejoice in them; so I hope the Lord will still enable the writers to keep on writing, as it is a great feast of fat things to the hungry soul.

You will please find check, which place to my credit for another year, as I cannot see how I can get along without the SIGNS. I wish you all a prosperous new year, and hope that the God of heaven and earth, the keeper and controller of all things, may bless you all, and enable you to still contend for the principles and doctrine as you have done in the past. May you be spared and enabled to go on in the future. Remember me and mine at the throne of grace.

Your unworthy brother, I hope,
T. J. KNIGHT.

PLAINFIELD, N. J., Jan., 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—I see my subscription is past due; please excuse delay. I hope I may be enabled to take the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as long as I live, for it is all the preaching I have. Although living in the beautiful city of Plainfield, of twenty thousand inhabitants, and thirty-four places of worship, I do not know that there is one person of my belief. I have taken the SIGNS forty years, and see no difference in it. If I pick up a back number, no matter how far back, it is the same, and tells the story saved by grace. I enjoy reading Elder Chick's editorials,

also Elder Ker's. I feel a deep sympathy for Elder Ker, and Mrs. Ker in her affliction. Hope to hear of her recovery.

Very respectfully,

SARAH A. CASE.

CLARINDA, Iowa, Dec. 18, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will send in my remittance for another year's subscription to the SIGNS, as it is all the preaching I get this winter, as we live so far apart that we cannot get together when the weather is bad, and we expected it would be bad when we would want to meet, so we concluded we would not try to meet any this winter. It seems a long time to wait, but we hope to meet when the Lord is willing, and we will hope and wait for the time to come when we can meet and greet each other again.

SARAH I. LAUB.

THE PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

DEVOTED exclusively to the Baptist cause—maintaining invioably the following scriptural sentiments:

1st. The extensive sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfection of the great Jehovah—the revelation which God has given of himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one."—1 John v. 8.

2nd. The absolute predestination of all things.

3rd. Eternal and unconditional election.

4th. The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

5th. That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

6th. The sovereign irresistible and (in all cases) effectual work of the Holy Ghost in quickening and regenerating the elect of God.

7th. The final perseverance and eternal happiness of all the sons of God by grace.

8th. The resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.

9th. That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers; that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the Scriptures are the only rule of faith and practice to the saints of God.

10th. That there is no connection between Church and State, and as touching the proposition of a marriage between them, the Hon. R. M. Johnson, in his report on the Sabbath Mail question, has amply revealed our faith.

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary societies, Theological seminaries, Sabbath School unions, &c., &c., waging war with the mother Arminianism and her entire brood of institutions.

Plan.—The paper will be divided in two parts, viz.:

1st. Jesus Christ set forth.

2nd. Antichrist exposed.

[THE foregoing prospectus of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is published by request of brother J. K. Boyd, of Castle Rock, Wash., who gives his reason for asking in his communication on page 528.—ED.]

WANTED.

IF any one has a first volume of Editorials to sell write J. L. Jones, Mortonsville, Woodford Co., Ky.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, Elder H. C. Ker will preach in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in this month (August 30th). All friends are cordially invited.

L. B. FORD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1914.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

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Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ONE HOUSE—MANY MANSIONS.

SISTER S. A. Culey, of Warren, Ohio, requests our views on John xiv. 1, 2, desiring to know what is meant by the "mansions" and by the expression of Jesus: "If it were not so, I would have told you." These verses read thus: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." This fourteenth chapter of John is closely connected with the thirteenth, and unless one notices carefully the closing verses of the thirteenth chapter he cannot but miss much of the beauty and fitness of the opening words of the fourteenth. The division of the Bible into chapters was devised by man for his own convenience, and very often these divisions break into the theme of a discourse and interrupt its continuity. If one will read the latter part of the thirteenth chapter and the first of the fourteenth as though there were no chapter-division, he may at once see much that never occurred to him before. Peter said he was willing to lay down his life for Jesus, which proved his zeal, but proved also that Peter was then ignorant of his own insufficiency and shortcomings. Jesus replied to him, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice." However much this may be calculated to alarm the disciples, Jesus follows up his prophecy of Peter's failure with, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." Luke records this somewhat differently, but the same in substance: "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Peter himself was to fail in order to realize the weakness of his flesh, but through the intercession of this "priest after the order of Melchisedec," the faith of Peter should not fail. No matter how weak in the flesh God's people are, nor how much failure they realize in themselves, there is no failure of their faith, hence their security. It is by the power of God through faith that they are kept unto salvation. This faith is not theirs to take up or lay down at will, but is the gift of God to them, and of this gift to his people God never repents; that is, he never takes it away from one within whom he ever implants it. Jesus tells Peter and the others with him that they believe in God and now commands them to also believe in him; that believing not only in God, but also in the God made flesh, Jesus, their troubled heart will find peace. To confirm this, read the twenty-seventh verse of this same chapter. The peace that passeth all understanding is the gift of Jesus to his afflicted people, and when given it delivers their troubled heart from the fear of man, the flesh, and from the fear of death, the banishment and separation from God. There is a period in the experience of every subject of grace when he believes in God, but has no view of Jesus. This is when under the law, convicted of sin before a just and holy God, but, as yet, with no re-

lief from his burden, with no hope of salvation in Christ. Such an one believes in God. He believes God to be almighty, great, good, just and infinitely holy. As for God being love and full of mercy, able to justify the ungodly, the stricken sinner sees not how such could be. He realizes the austerity of God, and that he is perfect in knowledge, power and justice, but the kindlier side of Deity, his compassionate attributes, he does not see or realize. Consequently his heart is sore troubled, with no relief in sight, with no possible way of escape open for one who feels deserving of the vengeance of an outraged law, even though its penalty involves his being sent to hell. The position of Peter and the other disciples at the time the words of our text were spoken, was much the same as that of one experimentally under the law. Being under the law, the victory of Christ was not actually accomplished, and was not understood by them. They loved him without knowing why they did so, without comprehending his true character, not understanding the necessity for his humiliation, sufferings and death. They had a kind of hope in him, but it did not become a "lively hope" until after his resurrection from the dead and the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost. When the command of Jesus is trumpeted in the soul, saying, "Believe also in me," then darkness and sorrow flee away, hope springs up and the tongue breaks forth in singing. To be brought to believe in Jesus, is to believe with all the heart that he is the Way through which the mercy, loving-kindness, compassion and salvation of the just, holy and almighty God come personally to the poor, wretched, miserable sinner at the end of the earth. To be told when he felt so sure of himself that within so short a time he would deny Jesus three times, was enough to make Peter feel that should he do so he would deserve to be forever excluded from the presence of God without mercy; but the assurance of Jesus is that even though the fall of Peter be realized, it should not be permanent, nor prevent his salvation for, "Believe also in me," he says, which assures the disciples that though weak in themselves, he is their salvation and will eternally be their security, the assurance of their preservation unto final glory.

"In my Father's house," that is, in the church, are many "mansions," or dwellings, places of residence for those who are saved in the Lord. We know from the Scriptures that the church is the residence of God, the place where he in Spirit dwells, the habitation of his honor and glory. However, from the reading of our text and from the context in which it is found, we do not think that Jesus is meaning to present in this instance that the church is the residence of God, though that is absolutely true, but he is saying that in the church are many mansions, or dwellings, places where the inhabitants of the city themselves live, and that he is going away through suffering and death to prepare one of these places for Peter, even though Peter is to deny him. The denial of Peter will not at all change the attitude of Jesus toward him, nor the love of Jesus for him, nor his purpose concerning him. "If it were not so, I would have told you." That is, If I had changed my mind about you, Peter, I would have told you. If Peter's failure in himself had operated to defeat the purpose of God in regard to him, Jesus would have apprised him of that fact. If by his denial of Jesus he had forfeited his mansion, or place in the church, the Head of the church would have told him

so. These are not mansions in the skies, of which the Bible says nothing, but mansions in the Father's house, the church, of which the Scriptures say much. The works of God as Creator are seen in the material creation of the whole universe, and of the worlds upon worlds it contains. The material world may be said to be the house of the Creator, but it is not the house of the Fatherhood. God as Father is revealed in the church. The church is the house of the Fatherhood of God, the place of those born of the Spirit, made partakers of the divine nature. The mansions in the church are the places in which the members of the body live. Each has his own place prepared for him, and no other one can fill each place than the one for whom it is fitted. The members are placed in the body as it pleases the Head of the church. The members themselves are not consulted in this matter, are not asked to choose the place they would like assigned to them. Jesus designates the mansions of Peter and the eleven in Matthew xix. 28, where he declares that in the regeneration, by which he does not here mean the new birth, but that in the new order of things following after the resurrection of Christ from the dead and from the establishment in the earth of the spiritual kingdom of God, or gospel church, these twelve that followed him in the days of his humiliation, were, in the Father's house, to occupy thrones of judgment. The apostolic gift and office was to be the mansion of each of the twelve in the gospel church. None ever filled these places or lived in these mansions but those twelve who were promised them and prepared for them. These same apostles are apostles now. There never will be any more apostles. Though they as men are gone, their judgment and authority still preside in the gospel church in all matters touching its doctrine, faith and practice. After being promised a throne of judgment, then to be told that he would deny Christ three times, was liable to cause Peter to question, not only the purpose of God concerning him, but also his own fitness for the place. But any question as to the immutability of God is quieted when Jesus declares the mansion to still be there, despite Peter's weakness, and that if his frailty had deterred God from his purpose Jesus would have told him. That which prepared these mansions or dwelling-places for the people of God, was the going away of Jesus into death and his ascension to glory. The Comforter would not come except he go away. Except by the death and resurrection of Jesus, the work of the Comforter in taking the things of Jesus and showing them unto us, and in leading us in the way of all truth, could not be accomplished. The death and resurrection of Jesus, his going away, are the groundwork supporting the whole fabric of the church, the rock upon which every mansion in it is solidly built. Every gift, office, place or position occupied by each and every member of the church of Christ receives its power and efficiency from the fact that Jesus died, arose and ascended at the right hand of the majesty on high. They are evidences that the resurrection is an assured reality. The gifts and offices in the church are many. Some named in the Scriptures are apostles, evangelists, pastors, teachers, deacons, miracles, healings, helps, governments and diversities of tongues. No two have the same gift; no one can fill the other's place; each has his own mansion fitted for him, and he for it, by the going away of Jesus; that is, by his departure from

earth for glory, because had not the corn of wheat fallen into the ground and died it should have dwelt alone. When any member of the church of Christ is enabled to enjoy his or her mansion, or place in it, he can truly say it is the only life worth living, that all else is dung and dross. L.

A WONDERFUL SWORD.

SISTER Mary Hill Terry, of Oak Lane, Philadelphia, Pa., asks some thoughts from us on the words: "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." These exact words occur twice in the seventh chapter of Judges, and nowhere else, but the doctrine involved in them occurs throughout the Bible, from the first of Genesis to the last of Revelation. Gideon was of a poor family in Manasseh, and was the least in his father's house. Him the Lord chose to be the savior of Israel from the Midianites. In his advance against the foe he began with thirty-two thousand men, but by siftings which God applied to this host they became reduced to three hundred before God would allow Gideon to lead them against the enemy. These Gideon divided into three companies of one hundred each. He provided them all with strange weapons: a trumpet, an empty pitcher and lamps in the pitchers. Gideon led them all, saying, "When I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be, that as I do, so shall ye do." So, following their leader, the time came when they broke their pitchers, lifted aloft their lamps, blew their trumpets and cried, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." Gideon is a type of Christ. The fact that the multitude with him was reduced from thirty-two thousand to three hundred before attacking the enemy, shows that the leadership of Christ against all that arrays itself contrary to truth is always manifested in connection with a remnant according to the election of grace. The visible church is never through all the ages other than a little flock, and never comprehends within itself the whole of spiritual Israel. There are always some of the Lord's people in every age who are never called into membership in the visible church. Were all the subjects of grace to be brought into the church here on earth, there would be the danger of trusting in numbers and forgetting that their dependence is in the Lord, just as Israel might have done had they gone thirty-two thousand strong against the Midianites. That the visibility of the church always has been in a little flock is shown by Gideon's division of the three hundred into three companies of one hundred each, representing the three great dispensations in the travel of the church: from Adam to Moses, from Moses to Christ, and the present or gospel era. In each and all of these great periods of time the remnant according to grace has never had but the one and the same leader, the spiritual Gideon, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. As he commands them to do, so they do. All of them, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, looked to him and testified of him; they saw eye to eye. Gideon's origin was poor and lowly, being the least of the poorest in Israel. Jesus was curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth, he was born of a woman, and she not a queen of earth, but a poor peasant woman of Judea. Jesus in the earth suffered poverty and misery, pain and woe, the depths of which no one of his people can experience. The blasts of the trumpets sickened the hearts of the enemy with fear. Jesus in the wilderness being tempted of the devil, always answered him with the word of God: It is written

thus and so. The visible church, though always a remnant, has always demanded a "Thus saith the Lord" to substantiate any and every thing that claims to be truth. This word of God is the trumpet that divides and tears into sects the armies of the aliens. Not believing the Scriptures, and not being able to gainsay or disprove them, they try to wrest them to their own ends. The empty pitcher is an empty earthen vessel; in it is the secret or hidden light. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." This treasure is, "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Jesus, the man, was an earthen vessel, and an empty one; that is, the world, sin and the devil, had no part in him. There was no guile in him. In this earthen vessel was a wonderful light: the fullness of the Godhead bodily. All that can be seen or known of God in grace is manifested in Jesus: God in the flesh. Through suffering, crucifixion and death, this earthen vessel, the man Jesus, became broken, for he says, "This is my body, which is broken for you." Only through the breaking of this earthen vessel could the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shine in the hearts of the elect of God in all the earth. As earth's sun was setting when he bowed his head and gave up the ghost, so heaven's glorious morning dawned in the hearts of the church when the Son of glory rose from the dead. The breaking of the pitcher and the freeing of the light, the death of Jesus and the consequent glory of his resurrection, are the sword of the Lord by which he triumphs over the world, the flesh and the devil. God-given faith in this wonderful victory implanted in the soul of the feeblest child of grace gives him the victory that overcomes the world. This is the secret of how the Lord can take a worm and thresh a mountain. The weapons of the army of heaven are not carnal, but spiritual; they appear foolish and absurd to the world, but, through God, are mighty to the pulling down of strongholds. While we do not know exactly what was in the mind of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe when he placed these words, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," at the front of the SIGNS, we do think no more fitting expression could have been selected for the motto of our family paper, because Elder Beebe, in his publication, desired to know among the brethren nothing but "Jesus Christ, and him crucified," and strongly emphasized "Thus saith the Lord." Here are the trumpet, the broken pitcher, the exalted light, all a very effective weapon when wielded at the dictation of the antitypical Gideon, with which to slay error and defend the flock of God. "The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

L.

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EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE CHURCH OF GOD, WHAT IS IT?

How indefinite and vague is the popular idea of the church of the living God, and how various are the applications of the word "church" in the parlance of the learned and unlearned theologians of the present times. A building erected for the convenience and accommodation of religious convocations, by almost universal consent is called a church, and by that name with great ceremony is frequently consecrated and with much parade given to the Lord. A church made of wood, or of bricks and mortar, so consecrated, is by many regarded as a most holy place. Others with scarcely less absurdity apply the term to all religious organizations, as the Catholic church, the Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian or Mormon church, and these, with very many other religious bodies, are very generally regarded as churches of God, but of different denominations, alike entitled to be known as churches of God, and all in their different ways real worshipers of God, and alike acceptable to him. But the Scriptures of truth can only recognize the church of God as one body, having but one head, built upon one rock, by but one builder. The inspired apostle Paul said, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Will this apostolic description of the church of God apply to all the discordant and conflicting organizations which claim the name but deny all the essential characteristics which divine inspiration has shown to be indispensable to the church of God? Do all these towering piles of brick or lumber which men call churches stand vitally united to Christ as their head? Have all the various denominations alluded to above kept the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace? Have they all but one Lord, one faith and one baptism? Are they all one body, having but one Spirit, and do they all even profess to be called in one hope of their calling? They certainly do not. If then these great popular denominations when weighed in the balance are found wanting, and when tried by the Scriptures are rejected, does it not become us, who profess to be Old School or Primitive Baptists, most carefully to examine in the light of divine revelation whether we possess the marks by which the holy Scriptures identify the church of God? When the rising Savior brought the immortality of his church to light, when he had vanquished death and finished transgression, made an end of sin, having obtained eternal redemption for all his members, he ascended up on high, went to his Father, and our Father, to receive the kingdom which the Father had appointed him, and his coronation as King of righteousness and Priest to the most high God; he was raised up far above all principalities and powers, and all thrones and dominions were made subject to him, and he was given to be Head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. In evidence of all this he sent the Spirit down, as he had told his disciples he would, which came like a rushing mighty wind, immersing all who, obedient to his command, were in the house, and recognizing them as the only body vitalized by his Spirit and baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. On this occasion the church appeared in the first disclosure of her gospel organization, and was ex-

pressly recognized as the church, unto which God continued to add such as should be saved. The constituents of the church of Christ are, first, our Lord Jesus Christ himself, as the Head, the King and only and blessed Potentate, the Prophet and Priest, the Way, the Truth and the Life, in whom is vested exclusively all legislative power. Second, the apostles of the Lamb, seated, by the special command of Christ, on twelve thrones of judgment, not of legislation, immediately inspired by the Holy Ghost to rule in judgment, as infallible expounders of the laws, ordinances, doctrine and order of their Sovereign. Next to the apostles are evangelists, pastors and teachers. These are solemnly required to recognize and be governed by the laws of Christ the King, as laid down and expounded by the enthroned apostles, with express instructions to be governed by the laws and institutions of Christ, without presuming under any circumstance to alter, revise, add to or diminish from the decisions made and recorded by the apostles. Deacons, exhorters, helps and every gift as found in the apostolic rules, are to be recognized precisely as it has pleased God to distribute them among the members of Christ's body for the profit and benefit of all the church. All the members which the church has power to recognize must come in by the door; all who would climb up some other way are thieves and robbers, who come in only to steal, to kill and to destroy. As all the laws of the church of Christ are immutable and irrevocable, the same rule which was observed on the day of Pentecost for admitting to fellowship is in force throughout all ages in Christ's church, and any community claiming to be his church that does not recognize it is an harlot, and not the church of God. This declaration may seem uncharitable, but let those who fear God beware how they controvert it. We hold, first, that Christ has no church in earth or heaven over which he does not positively preside. Second, there is no church existing over which Christ presides except where his apostles rule in judgment. For he himself has said, "When the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory [his mediatorial throne is the throne of his glory], ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." We know that the apostles are not here now in the flesh, nor is the Savior now here in the flesh, for henceforth know we them no more in the flesh. But all their doctrine, order and decisions are here in every church or branch of the church where Christ presides as the King, for Christ has further said that whosoever rejects his apostles rejects him also. They cannot be separated in the organization of his kingdom or church. Now, then, let the laws of Christ, embracing all the doctrine which he established, as settled forever by the decisions of the holy apostles, as left on record in the New Testament, be regarded as the infallible standard or test by which the church of Christ is identified, and it must follow that all who are deficient in these essential and indispensable points are weighed in the balance and found wanting. This cannot be the case with the church of Christ, for she is the ground and pillar of the truth. She is the perfection of beauty; she is the workmanship of God, and all his work is perfect. It therefore follows inevitably that all who profess to be the church of Christ, and reject him, his apostles, his doctrine, his ordinances or his government, are base impostors. In view of these well-defined principles let us look

well to the order established by the apostles for the reception of members into church fellowship and membership. Of those who were received on and about the day of Pentecost it is written that the Spirit was poured out in a most astonishing manner, in fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, by virtue of which many heard the preaching of the apostles, so that they were pricked in their heart and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Thus quickened by the Spirit and made to feel and know their lost and helpless condition, their minds were directed to the apostles for instruction, and when the way of life and salvation was opened to their understanding, and the word applied to them by the Holy Ghost, they gladly received the word. A wonderful change was wrought in them, insomuch that the word, which had no attraction, and of the spirit and power of which they had always been so profoundly ignorant before, now seemed to them as apples of gold in pictures of silver; as words of life, peace and comfort to their hearts. The apostles' doctrine, which so recently they could ridicule and reject with scorn, was more to be desired than all the glories of the world. Without reluctance now they gladly received the word; it was perfectly adapted to their renewed state, for now being born again of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, they desired the sincere milk of the word, that they might grow thereby. Hitherto they had despised and hated the apostles and their doctrine, but now by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit, which God had poured upon them, they not only received, but gladly received, the word, and according to the word as preached to them by the apostles they were baptized and added to the church; that is, they were brought manifestly into the fellowship of the apostles and the apostolic church. And they continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine; having gladly received it, they continued to be perfectly satisfied with it. The record given that they continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine, implies that they encountered opposition, which they certainly did, for it was a time of severe persecution; but so deeply were they rooted and grounded in the truth, that neither the bitterness of cruel persecution nor the specious allurements of new doctrines zealously promulgated by Judaizing or other teachers, could shake their confidence in the apostles' doctrine. The apostles' doctrine and the apostles' fellowship are so joined together that they cannot be separated. If steadfast in the one, we are equally so in both. But if we depart from the one we cease to enjoy the other. In departing from the apostles' doctrine we may secure the fellowship of the world, or of antichrist, but we cannot depart from their instruction and still retain their fellowship.

Thus, quickened by the Holy Ghost, recipients of the doctrine of the apostles, baptized on profession of faith in obedience to the command of Christ, fully recognizing Christ as the Head over all things to his church, and the apostles as divinely authorized and qualified exponents of all the laws, order, ordinances and doctrine of his kingdom, we have described the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, built upon the foundation of the apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief corner-stone. And being thus steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, they will be steadfast also in prayers, and in breaking of bread, and

they may confidently expect the Lord will add to them such as shall be saved. How very different in all respects is the church of the firstborn from those humanly constructed religious organizations which have become so numerous and diversified in these times. However much they may differ from each other in some characteristic peculiarities, they are all alike in adopting the spirit of the proposition of the seven women who "shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach."—Isa. iv. 1. They dislike to be called anti-christian, or false churches, as that would be too humiliating, but to live on every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God by no means suits their taste. They have no relish for the apostles' doctrine, nor do they desire their fellowship; they desire rather to make a figure in the world and be at liberty to believe whatever doctrine they please, conform to such rites and ceremonies as they please, get religion when they please, of whatever kind or quality they please, keep it as long as they please and lay it aside or exchange it when they please. Such churches, as they presumptuously call themselves churches, are fond of receiving such members as will find themselves, having self-righteousness enough to live upon and only desiring to have a name to live while they are dead. For them the apostles' doctrine is quite too stale, it is behind the age of progression in which we live, it is too slow, it waits for God to add to his church such as shall be saved, while their plan is to add themselves such as shall not be saved, or such as give no evidence that they shall be saved.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 15, 1866.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. John Ferguson, widow of John Ferguson, died at her home in West Lorne, Ontario, Canada, March 8th, 1914, in the 71st year of her age. Sister Ferguson was received in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada thirty-six years ago. Her daily walk and conversation were such as becomes one who professes hope in our blessed Lord. She was a woman of sterling qualities, and her life was brilliant with uprightness and integrity. She was loved and respected by all who knew her. Sister Ferguson was a great sufferer, but she was given grace and strength as her day, and never murmured or complained because the way was hard and her sufferings great. She passed peacefully away at the home of her daughter in West Lorne. Sister Ferguson had requested some time before her death that Elder H. C. Ker preach her funeral sermon, but he was unable to come at the time of her death, and there being no Baptist minister in Canada, Elder W. I. Carnell was sent for and conducted the services, which were held at the home of her daughter. Sister Ferguson leaves, beside the church, six children and many other relatives to mourn their loss. May the grace of the covenant-keeping God comfort all who mourn the loss of so noble a woman.

Written by request. J. B. SLAUSON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. N. A. Simmons, Ala., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Conference will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at North Berwick, York Co., Maine, on Sept. 4th, 5th and 6th, 1914. We will gladly welcome all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

THE Clovesville Old School Baptist Church has appointed her yearly meeting to be held, the Lord willing, the first Saturday and Sunday in September, (5th and 6th) 1914. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus to meet with us, especially brethren in the ministry of our faith and order. Trains will be met at Fleischmanns station Saturday, first day of meeting.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Whitefield, Maine, to commence on Friday before

the second Monday in September, (11th) 1914, and continue the two following days. All lovers of God's eternal truth are cordially invited to meet with us. Those coming by rail will come via Wiscasset and change there for Whitefield.

J. E. HUBBARD, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Jefferson, N. Y., will hold its yearly meeting, the Lord willing, on the third Sunday, and Saturday before, in September, (19th and 20th) 1914. Those coming by train to Stamford will be met on Friday before on the 11 o'clock a. m. train. We extend an invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, especially brethren in the ministry of our faith.

G. E. MEAD, Church Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Olive and Hurley Church, in Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday following the third Sunday in September, (23rd and 24th) 1914. Trains will be met at Ashokan Tuesday afternoon, Sept. 22nd, also Wednesday morning. Places will be provided for all visitors. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us, especially ministers.

ORVILLE WINCHELL, Deacon.

THE Schoharie Old School Baptist Church has appointed a three days meeting to be held Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 25th, 26th and 27th, 1914. A cordial invitation is extended to all. Those coming by rail will be met. Those coming to Howes Cave will be met by Deacon Miers, those to Schoharie by brother E. R. Kinney.

GEO. A. MIERS, Church Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Cow Marsh Church will be held on the fourth Sunday and Saturday afternoon before in September, (27th and 28th) 1914. Brethren and friends are invited to meet with us. Trains scheduled to stop at Viola, Del., will be met there Saturday morning.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Pastor.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held with Second Roxbury and Middletown churches, at Halcottville, N. Y., on the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (7th and 8th) 1914. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

JAMES AVERY, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Sidling Hill, Fulton Co., Pa., Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 9th, 10th and 11th, 1914. The place of meeting is about eighteen miles from the stations, Hancock, Md., on the Western Maryland R. R., and Hancock, W. Va., on the Baltimore & Ohio R. R. The brethren will be glad to meet any train on either of these roads on Thursday before the meeting if any that anticipate going will drop a card beforehand to brother Dennis Mellott, Plum Run, Pa., or brother Jefferson C. Mellott, Needmore, Pa. Trains will not be met unless such notification is sent in advance. We are anxious that any of our ministering brethren and any other brethren or friends who feel it in their hearts to meet with us will come at this time, and we shall be glad to do all in our power for their comfort and convenience.

DENNIS MELLOTT, Church Clerk.

THE church at Snow Hill, Md., will hold its all day yearly meeting on Sunday, October 11th, 1914. A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

B. F. COULTER.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

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(Judges v. 11.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 82. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1914. NO. 18.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PSALMS CVI. 37-39.

"YEA, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood. Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions."

This in part is a description of the base ingratitude and abominable wickedness of the children of Israel, a people who had been very highly favored of the Lord, far more than had any other nation on the earth. They had been chosen and called out, separated unto the service of the true and living God, and taught of him, and he had rooted out their enemies before them and given them possession of the land of their enemies; hence their conduct is an expression of base ingratitude. But this is as good as corrupt, depraved human nature can do. Conditions, customs, forms and names of things are constantly undergoing changes, but principles never change. Israel's God is the very same to-day that he ever has been, for he is without variableness, or the shadow of turning. So is human nature the very same to-day that it was in the morning of time. The calling out and separation of ancient Israel to the worship of God did not destroy that nature nor eradicate (and if we may judge from their general course of conduct, did not even impair) a single principle of that nature. For a season, from time to time they were by the overruling power of God restrained and held back from the abominable excesses of those idolatrous nations round them, and often by the moving, indwelling power of the Holy Spirit through their inspired prophets they were constrained to give utterance to the most wonderful and sublime expressions of praise and adoration. So the spiritual Israelite, ("For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart," &c.—Rom. ii. 28, 29.) though quickened by divine life and received up from a state of death in trespasses and sin, and by the operation of the Spirit in his heart is called out, taught of God and separated to the worship of the true and living God, yet retains his Adamic nature unimpaired, though subdued and restrained by the indwelling grace of God, and is thereby from time to time con-

strained to render expressions of truthful praise and adoration to Him to whom all praise is due. "The love of Christ constraineth us," and we "are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." Idolatry, false systems of worship, systems founded on erroneous ideas of God, deifying men, or attributes of human nature, have always appealed to fallen, depraved human nature, while the worship of the true God, according to inspired guidance and directions, has no charms for it. Men have always turned to the false and away from the true, except when the Lord has called them by the power and inward work of the Spirit, and they must be kept by that same power, or they will turn again to the weak and beggarly elements of the world. These truths are clearly demonstrated in the history of the Israelites and in the lives and experiences of all the worshiping people of God in other times as well. The apostle Paul declares that, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."—Rom. xv. 4. After reference to some of the disobedience, and its consequences, of the children of Israel, the same apostle says to his Corinthian brethren: "Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them," &c. "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."—1 Cor. x. 6, 7, 11. Many things and events transpiring under the old covenant seem to present in allegorical form things of the same nature in this day and time. Those things that the laws given through Moses to Israel for her government forbade, were not things that were repulsive to the tastes and feelings of the people; instead of this, many of them were things wellpleasing to the flesh. Those systems of worship which belonged to those nations round about Israel, which were purely their own inventions, seemingly often possessed more attractions for the Israelites than their own God-given system. Those false systems all possessed a plurality of gods, some greater, some less, but all more or less governed in their conduct towards their devotees by the conduct of their devotees towards them. In fact, those gods moved when and as their worshipers moved, and when their worshipers were quiet and still, then they were quiet and still. Just so is the imaginary gods of the men-invented systems of our day. The priests of those idolatrous systems of ancient days (as it has ever been in all ages of the world) were the teachers and keepers of their religion. What the people knew about it was learned through the priests and their co-workers and teachers, and by these they were taught to hold in high reverence the gods, and, no doubt, the priests, and all that pertained to their system of religion. Thus the priests taught them the nature of the sacrifices and offerings required by the gods, both as to appeasing their wrath and securing and maintaining their favor. The purpose and end of all men-made systems of religion, so far as the priesthood is concerned, are well illustrated by the story of Bel and the dragon in the apocrypha, especially the part referring to Bel. The peace and prosperity of the worshipers of those false gods depended on their keeping their gods well pleased, and quickly pacifying them when they became angry. The priests of course

were ever on hand to tell them how to do those things. It was purely a conditional system, wherein the worshipers were entitled to the credit, just as it is really with all conditional systems; all such systems promise great rewards for great sacrifices. I am not informed what the god of the Amorites, Molech, promised his worshipers for causing their children to pass through the fire to him, but the inducement was sufficient to cause the children of Israel to try the experiment, although they had been given many demonstrations of the wisdom, power and universal dominion over all the elements of nature, including fire, wind and water, of Israel's God. They certainly had had lessons enough, if the natural man could receive the spiritual truths of God's word, to teach them that there was only one true and living God, and that all the flattering promises of Molech were a delusion. So spiritual Israel, "sanctified" (set apart) by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ and called, are taught of God in a personal experience to know that "there is none other name [save that of Jesus] under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." That he was made "to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." That "of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." The only Savior and Redeemer, "who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us." Those are the true believers in Jesus Christ, having been born of God, and such constitute the true church of the true and living God, or of such is the visible church of Christ constituted, who have been baptized in the fellowship of those "that have obtained like precious faith," and who by this expression of their faith in Christ are doubly set apart, so to speak, to the worship of the only true and living God. In addition to all this, they have the written word corroborating the witness within, setting forth the gracious promises of God, together with the exhortations, admonitions and warnings of the Savior and the inspired apostles, with the help of the different gifts in the house of God, with which they may be blessed from time to time, and yet by reason of the elements of Adam abiding within, i. e., fleshly lusts, covetousness, pride and vanity, aspirations for worldly honors, applause and wealth, they are still susceptible to temptation. There is still something in Adam nature that the flattering overtures of the "gods" appeal to, hence Israel may, even in our day, go a whoring after the gods of other nations, or after their own inventions. Let the ancient god, Molech, and his worship stand before our mind's eye for a little while as an allegory, representing the chief god of the great majority of our race to-day. Of course he is not a real, but only an imaginary god. He is represented as being a mighty god, but subject to creature influences, hence changeable. He is represented as having a purpose, or will, but is somewhat dependent upon circumstances for its fulfillment, for its execution. He is considered in a wishful attitude, with many rewards as inducements for the service of his devotees on the one hand, and threats of punishment for refusals on the other. Those whose business it is to teach for him and about him say that there are great and numerous rewards, temporal and spiritual, offered and given here in this world for serving him, and finally salvation from a burning hell, and a happy home in heaven. Many

of them think and teach that in the heaven he offers and gives to those who accept and worship him here, there are degrees, differing in honor and glory in proportion to the service rendered here in this world. If all this be true, then it is indeed a thing much to be desired to gain his favor and live a devoted servant. Then, if it be not true, there is considerable inducement (to the flesh) to serve him anyway. He is a very popular god; he carries in his great train of followers the rich, the learned, the noble, the rulers, religiously, socially and politically. With him there are inducements of honor, wealth, affluence, trade-work a plenty, and good pay. O, is it not all worth passing through the fire? Who, that is ambitious for the future social and financial welfare of his children, is not willing they should suffer some, passing through the fire to Molech? On the other hand, ignore this great Molech, and the teaching of his priesthood, refuse to worship him, ignore and spurn his proffered rewards for service, and you will find yourself numbered with a small, poor, ignorant, narrow, contracted class (so considered), and therefore to a great extent ostracized by the world. For "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." In all systems of idolatry (and a false conception of God in the imagination is as much an idol as one made of gold, silver or brass) those who do the most receive the greatest rewards. Those who control the most in the way of means have the requisite qualifications for doing most; hence the wealthy, who have been, or can be, taught the requirements of the gods, expending their wealth wisely, according to the teaching of the priesthood of the system, receive the greater reward. Information (educational training) as to the nature, doctrines and demands of the gods, with the various intricacies of their system of religion, may be considered a part of the wealth that figures in the matter. Religion (the essential, in the popular mind, preparatory to escape hell and gain heaven) is considered a science that must be taught and learned by human beings to human beings; hence they "teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord." Almost all the schools, great and small, are thoroughly imbued with the spirit of religion (not the spirit of grace, however), and almost all our educational facilities are manipulated to the end that the world may be more religious; and put your child through the machine in whatever way you may, so as to obtain what most people call a good education, and more times than not he or she comes out a fit subject to enter some religious mercantile institution called a church. This is especially so where the schools patronized are of a denominational character, or are dominated by such influences, and it seems that in our day most of them are more or less under such influence. They tell us that to educate is to decrease crime, and if conducted along proper lines will secure for us and our children the greater good here ("religion") and heaven hereafter. Judging from the seeming great increase in crime, and especially the proportion and nature of it among the "higher ups" in religious circles, this is a great mistake, or else they have greatly missed "the right lines" in educating. Some tell us that "the children are an asset of the state," and some seem to think that they are an asset of the church, and hence many are easily taught that they may justly shift the responsibilities that devolve upon them as parents to the

state and to the church. When the public mind is sufficiently trained along this line they become prepared to indorse compulsory measures to this end. All this of course is contrary to the plain teachings of the inspired record, which the world professes to greatly reverence, for there we are clearly taught that there are duties and responsibilities resting upon parents towards children which they are not authorized to shirk or transfer. In seeking the "greatest good," satisfaction, happiness, the wisdom of this world (which God has made foolish) in this case, as in all their doctrine and works and teachings, reverses God's established order of things. In an attempt through years of mental strain to reach the mark ambition and pride in parents have set for them, and custom through false teaching has made necessary, many children are proven inadequate, physically or mentally, or both, and hence fallen in the vain attempt to reach the god through the fire. There are some, no doubt, who know the truth (that eternal truth of God which is and always has been the very opposite of error or falsehood) who now look back over their efforts in rearing up children with thoughts of self-reproach, as they think of the vain and foolish pride that they themselves have helped to develop, and which has led their child, or children, far away in practice from the truth, and into that element and sphere of living where they are but little satisfaction to them. On the other hand, I have in mind as I pen these lines a few who know the truth, and who in the sphere they are called are trying to live according to the truth, whose worldly means have always been limited, and so have been compelled to rear up their offspring to work, and with few advantages as to school facilities, yet well educated in industry and frugality. The children settled down around the old home, and taking interest in the church meetings are a real comfort to their parents. How good it is to be content with such things as we have, and such surroundings and environments as in the providence of God are ours. If poor in this world's goods we may be sometimes possessed with a complaining spirit, thinking it hard that we cannot have those advantages that we see others around us enjoying, and give to our children those advantages (as we are wont to call them) that the children of our neighbors have; but I believe from experience and observation that it is more often that what are considered adverse conditions and circumstances are accompanied in the end by more real comfort and satisfaction than reverse conditions. How often have we seen it the case that brethren who had means, and spent it freely to put their children high up in professional and social life, to see at last those same children ashamed of the church to which their parents belonged, and seemingly ashamed of their parents for their "ignorance and fogyism." Thus it has seemed to me as I have thought of these things that some of Israel to-day are guilty of "causing their children to pass through the fire to Molech." I am well aware that no effort of ours, nor of any man, or set of men, can make children of God of our children, or any one else as to that matter; still we are admonished by the inspired apostle Paul to bring up our children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."—Eph. vi. 4. And Solomon tells us to train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. When we turn him over to some one else to "train up" he most invariably goes the way we would not have him go.

These thoughts have been penned down by piecemeal, so to speak, and are not expressed just as I would like, but I have decided to submit them to the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Publish or cast aside, dear editors, as your better judgment may dictate, and all will be right with me. If published the readers will know I make no claims to infallibility.

With love and best wishes to all the household of faith, I hope I am your brother, H. B. JONES.

WINNSBORO, Texas, Aug. 15, 1914.

DAYTON, Ohio, Aug. 9, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Having just finished reading the SIGNS of August 1st, I feel impressed to write you some of my thoughts on spiritual matters, therefore I trust you will bear with me if I do not prove interesting in what I shall write, for I am only a poor sinner, saved, if saved at all, by the grace of God and his dear loving-kindness, which he so freely bestows upon poor worms of the dust. "Faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of all is charity," says the apostle, therefore I trust you will throw the mantle of charity over all my imperfections, and may God's dear love flow richly into your hearts, and may you all by faith look upon the Babe of Bethlehem as the great Messiah, and recognize in him your Savior and Redeemer, and with one of old say, Mine eyes have seen thy salvation. Is it any wonder, dear friends, that those wise men of the east after many weary days of travel were exceeding glad when they saw the star, and that they laid their rich treasures at the feet of this wondrous child? How it chastens my soul to trace the footsteps of this dear one, meek and lowly in heart, born in a stable, his childhood spent in poverty and want; in his manhood scoffed at, derided and called a gluttonous man and a winebibber, and later on mocked, spit upon, crowned with thorns and forced to carry the heavy cross. See him, too, in the garden of Gethsemane, sweating as it were great drops of blood, in anguish deeper than human tongue ever could utter, crying, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass," yet in holy submission saying, Thy will, not mine, be done; and then upon the cruel cross nails driven through the tender hands, thorns piercing the dear, beloved forehead, suffering all those long hours, and then saying, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Then at the very last to say, "It is finished." Would it not melt a heart of stone? What was it he had finished? The work his Father gave him to do: the saving of his people from their sins by giving his life for them. "O for such love let rocks and hills their lasting silence break." Wonderful indeed, is it not, dear ones, love that would make such a sacrifice? But wonderful, most wonderful, does it seem when we apply it to ourselves. When we read that Jesus, whose name is called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, suffered all this to redeem poor sinners, and to feel that we who seem as nothing in his sight should have an interest in his blood, should be partakers of so glorious an inheritance, it all exceeds our comprehension, and seems wonderful beyond expression. O the blessedness of his love; surely it is Jesus who speaks, "Peace, be still," when pain and sorrow beat so heavily upon my frail bark. Most truly can we say that life is not what we desire it to be; all seems turmoil and confusion here. But did not Jesus say, In the world ye shall have

tribulation, but in me peace? and how precious his peace when it comes flowing into the soul. To-day the goodness of God seems so sweetly made manifest, and Jesus seems so near, so precious to my soul, and there seems to be so much love and unity I think between God's people and himself, that my soul seems sweetly uplifted, and my heart goes out in praise to his name, and in love to God's people everywhere. Strait and narrow is the way of pleasantness and the path of peace. Walking in this way only can the wayfaring one find peace, for this is to walk in Christ. I am the way, saith Christ. "In the world ye shall have tribulation," I again repeat, but in him we have peace. When we take his yoke, dear christian friends, we find it easy, and when we bow to his burden we find it light. When pride is subdued, and we become as little children, it is indeed a sweet entrance into the kingdom. How sweet and precious are these words to me: Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. These words have been a great source of comfort to me many times when bowed down by affliction, and all along the long, toilsome journey of this changeful life has been forgotten in the joy of my Lord, the joy as well as the sorrow all the way. They come to us in many ways, sometimes in a pleasant dream, as when the prophet saw a returning of his people from their captivity, and said, I awaked, and my sleep was sweet unto me. So I, too, have had the most precious dreams. The most perfect enchantment comes to me in them, such as I know not in my wakeful hours. Some grief will be explained by a dream which turns it into perfect joy, so that I can truly say, I awaked, and my sleep was sweet unto me. Dear friends, these remembrances follow me as cheering tokens as I go wearily on. I have also had troublous dreams, so that, like the wife of Pilate, I can say, I have suffered many things because of dreams. Among the many changes that come to us is that of friends, and the first we remember are the longest retained in mind, yet they are often the first with whom we are called to part. The estrangement, or death, of the earliest playmate of childhood may leave a lifelong impression, and as friend after friend departs we soon learn the truth that, "There is no union here of hearts that finds not here an end." How sad we are when they are estranged, and when from those who were our first chosen companions we begin to drift apart, and when at last we sometimes have to leave on the way brothers and sisters, the nearest of earthly ties, and forsake them in a gospel sense, walking no more with them in spiritual worship or communion, we prove this truth: that we shall receive an hundredfold more in this present life (many more brethren and sisters in the church), with persecutions and in the world to come life everlasting. So we are not left comfortless, as regards companionship in spiritual travel, yet often we feel friendless and alone. But when we meet with the dear children of God, his chosen ones, some will tell us that they are in the same mind, and we no more feel alone. We thought they were surrounded by many dear and pleasant friends, while we were shunned and felt uncared for, but when this is unfolded we learn that they thought the same of us, and we had been halting at the same place, but knew it not. When we meet those who love the Lord in truth, and we have that same love in our own hearts, then we take counsel together. The dear Savior could say to his chosen ones, Come

ye yourselves apart into a desert place and rest awhile. When the poor, trembling child of God is blessed with the light and sunshine of the Sun of Righteousness he is the tender plant which the blessed summer sunshine makes to flourish and grow, but when the blessed Lord withdraws his presence from him, and to the children of God whom the Lord has shone upon with heavenly light, is there any light of the sun, moon or stars, or any artificial light, that can compare with the glorious Sun of Righteousness which has shone upon them in the past? To-day I have been very happy, thinking of God's goodness and mercy to me. I am all alone, save the occasional presence of the dear Redeemer. I grope at times in darkness, but not in unbelief, and I earnestly pray for the dear Master to guide me safely to that haven of rest prepared for the people of God when my time comes to go hence. If my name is enrolled in the Lamb's book of life I trust that I may appear with the likeness of the dear Savior and shall be satisfied.

I will close my communication, as I have given my thoughts in quite a rambling way, and if this does not meet your approbation, dear editors, just cast it aside, and I will not feel hurt by your doing so.

Sincerely your friend, and, I hope, sister in Christ,

(MRS.) LIDIA KELLER.

North Berwick, Maine.

Dear Sister in the Lord:—Your letter was very welcome, because it contains those things that belong to the household of God. I feel well assured in my heart that there is a sacred bond that unites all the household of God one to another. Sometimes they do not quite understand one another, the "boys and girls playing in the streets" of Jerusalem are not able to enter into, to understand all the reasons why the old man does not play with them, and why he has "his staff in his hand for very age."—Zech. viii. 4, 5. The light-hearted believers with the rugged glow on their cheeks may wonder, and be full of surmisings when they see others with woebegone countenances, with tearstained faces, who walk tremblingly with sighs and moans; and their inquiry may be, Why look ye so sadly to-day? I well remember how, when first I tasted that the Lord is gracious, I read in the Bible of the straits and sore troubles, and the darkness and bitter lamentations of some of the saints of God, and I could not understand it. Very much that I read in the Scriptures was above me in glorious heights, or in depths of woe, in dismal, dark, low dungeons such as then I had had no experience of, and this much of the experience of the saints of God declared in the Scriptures was an enigma to me. Nevertheless, "as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ." "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it." —1 Cor. xii. 12, 26, 27. This being very blessedly fulfilled among those who are Christ's, constitutes the sacred helpfulness and comfort that are found in the fellowship and communion of Christ's body, the church. But there are some things of which you write, dear sister, that some of the household are not prepared to understand. They cannot commune with your soul in these experiences, because they have not yet been led into those trying dispensations, they have not been laid "in the lowest pit, in darkness, in

the deeps."—Psalms lxxxviii. 6. Indeed it is only a rare one of even the most sorely tried and tempted children of God that is called upon by God to enter deeply into the dreadful, wonderful and, I will also say, divinely gracious experiences of Heman which he has declared in this eighty-eighth Psalm. As I read this Psalm I say within me, I think I know something of that, but in another verse I feel, Surely here are depths that are deeper than I know. There is one who knows all the woes of the righteous, who has fathomed all their sorrows, and who went for their sakes into abysmal deeps of suffering, agonies and darkness beneath them all, and that one is our covenant head Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God.

But coming to our own experiences in things pertaining to God, for in both solemn and gracious ways we have to do with God, (Heb. iv. 13.,) and whether it be in griefs, or in joys, whether it be with a hard, stony heart, or with a broken and contrite heart, or with singing and making melody in our hearts, we are found with our God, all is a divinely hallowed life, a path where only the called and taught of the Lord are pilgrims. I will not just now enter upon a description of the darkness, woes, griefs, the rough and dismal desolations known in the waste howling wilderness. (I think I have had a considerable portion of such things, but I can also declare that God in the exceeding riches of his grace has abounded unto me, refreshing, strengthening and bringing me on my way by "the sure mercies of David.") But in all our straits we are both driven and drawn to seek our God, to fall before him, to put our mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope, and we are surely taught that all our help must come from God. No matter what may have been our wretchedness, burdens, darkness; whether from the humbling knowledge of the depravity of our fleshly nature, or the assults of Satan, or from afflictions and adversities of any kind, eventually amidst them all we shall be brought before our God. "I poured out my complaint before him: I shewed before him my trouble."—Psalms cxlii. 2. O there are consolations indeed to be found at the mercy-seat of our God. Our heart's entreaty will often be that we may be indulged to live in communion with the Lord, to walk humbly with our God. Then all is well, and it is ours to find that word to be true: "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be."—Deut. xxxiii. 25. King Hezekiah exclaimed, "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live." Our path, some of the time, is through the waters, and through the fires, (Isaiah xliii. 2,) through much tribulation, (Acts xiv. 22,) but the Lord is with his own, and I trust he has been with us, and will be with us to the end. The apostle speaks of "Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer."—Rom. xii. 12. This is sacred counsel, and is blessedly so with us by the power of the Holy Ghost. But ah! when we are far off, and have wandered away from the throne of grace, are we then patient in tribulation? Though it is to our shame, it must be confessed that in trials and conflicts and crosses we are far from being good, but peevishness, self-pity, hardness, yes, murmurings and horrid rebellions, are to be found in us, and all this increases our trouble. O who can save us but our God?

One time, some years ago, as I was feeling sorely depressed over my inward sinfulness, and also sighing over the in-

constancy of my devotion to our Lord Jesus Christ, there came with sacred meaning into my mind the words, "I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and was called a transgressor from the womb."—Isaiah xlviii. 8. Instantly my heart was broken and contrite before the Lord, my eyes were filled with tears, and my heart throbbed with love, with grief, with entreaties at God's feet. (The world, carnal professors of Christ's name, hypocrites, cannot understand this.) I knew that I was a vile transgressor; I knew I had dealt treacherously; I knew I had been drawn aside from the Lord; I knew that my backslidings in heart had been many; that I had wretchedly wandered away from Jesus. I had more than once as a lost sheep "stumbled upon the dark mountains," and yet, knowing me to be a sinner, knowing that I would deal very treacherously, he loved me in Christ Jesus, and blessed me with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in him. The Lord was determined to save me. He gave his dear Son to die, to make atonement for my sins, and he hath called me, "a base thing," to know Jesus Christ, and he hath not cast me away, though I am a sinful worm; but he pardoneth my iniquities, he freely loves me and he will bring me at last unto himself to glory, holy and without blame before him in love. Many such thoughts passed through my mind, and my soul was satiated with blessedness, and I was filled with grateful praises because of his wonderful grace to a poor sinner like me. Did I say to myself, Inasmuch as the Lord knew all about my treacherous, sinful nature, and that I would deal very treacherously, therefore I need not trouble myself any more over the matter? Ah, no, but I felt such shame and sorrow over my sinfulness, I loathed myself, and I prayed to the Lord for pardon. I prayed to our gracious God for abounding grace, I prayed to him to keep me from deceits and the treachery of my vile nature, that he would give me more and more grace to crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts, and that I might cleave to the precious Lord Jesus Christ with full purpose of heart. O I have very frequently found that the forgiveness, kindness, smiles, kisses of the Savior humble me, and inflame my soul with love; yes, such tokens from the Lord beget in me sighs, longings; yes, earnest longings that I might be able to love our dear Savior, that I might praise him, that I might show forth his praise in my daily conversation, that I might glorify him in my body and spirit, which are his. Well, dear sister, in all the straits, darkness, troubles, that have been, and are yet in measure your portion, what have you done, what can you do? Look within, and you are still a poor, wretched, sinful being. There is nothing to comfort us, nothing to lift the gloom, nothing of brightness and loveliness in our Adamic nature, all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.

"My nature discloses to view
More vileness than I can declare,
And were not the promises true,
I'm sure I should sink in despair.

But Jesus, my Savior and King,
My constant protector will be;
And led by the Spirit, I sing,
He saved a sinner like me."

Dear sister, the one essential thing for us poor, sin-plagued, buffeted ones to do is to be looking unto Jesus, to consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest we be wearied and faint in our minds. (Heb. xii. 2, 3.) O to be looking unto Jesus, our great High Priest, to be looking to the Lamb of God for sinners slain, who hath redeemed

us to God by his blood. O Jesus, let me know thee mine, the Lamb in the midst of the throne, and let a poor, sinful, thirsty one drink of the river of the water of life flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb. (Rev. xxii. 1.)

"A single smile from Jesus given
Will lift a drooping soul to heaven."

I am your brother in Jesus,

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RUSSELLVILLE, Ky., Aug. 15, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—If you will bear with my weakness, I will try, with the help of the Lord, as I humbly trust, to write you of the wonderful works of Jesus among the children of men. Like David, I feel this morning that my times are all in his hand, and that without him I can do nothing, and am less than nothing, and vanity. I try to worship the God in whom, I am confident, is all power, both in heaven and in earth, and none can stay his hand, or say, Why doeth thou thus? I believe him to be no respecter of persons, but in every kindred, tongue and people he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, the same is accepted with him, and none others. He speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." He made this beautiful world, and then made man and placed him in it, and he himself controls and governs all things that he created, and will rule, notwithstanding what men or devils may do or say, and I am glad I am permitted to live with a people who are willing and anxious to give him all the glory for it. There are those who believe that God made the world and peopled it, but after he did this he gave the government over into their hands, and they are carrying it on as pleases themselves. Brethren, I believe that here lies the difference between Old School Baptists and the Arminian portion of the world to-day. They have about ruled Christ out, or divided the glory; but I thank God that I am identified with the people who give to God all glory. He has said he will not suffer his glory to depart from him, but reserves it unto himself, right where it belongs. This is all very encouraging, and I think, if not deceived, that I have the witness within testifying to the truth of it. We cannot by searching find out God. I have tried to do so, but had to give it up; but I thank him that at times I have learned something about him from experience, and by revelation, for I believe that Jesus takes of the things of the Father and reveals them unto his little ones. God is a Spirit, and seeketh such to worship him as do worship in spirit and in truth. There is but one thing that constitutes a man a child of God, and that is the Spirit of God in the heart. He must be born again, born from above and have God's Spirit, before he can be of His family, and this is the work of God alone, for it is not by works of righteousness which we have done, or can do, but according to his mercy and grace given us before the world began. God says he loved his people with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness he draws them unto him. He said to the unbelieving Jews, Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life; and again he says, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Brethren, this forever sets aside free moral agency, and voluntary obedience, in the service of our God. Jesus said, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." "De-

claring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." It is his pleasure to save his people with an everlasting salvation, without the loss of one.

Now if the Lord will, I desire to say something about the good works of God's children, for I verily believe there is something for them to do, by the guidance of God's Spirit, in order to worship him in an acceptable manner. We are admonished to "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." In letting this light shine we prove to the world, and to one another, that there is reality in the religion of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We are also told not to quench the Holy Spirit. This to my mind means that when we are exercised by God's Spirit, and feel like glorifying God for what we hope he has done for us in the pardon of our sins, we should speak out, and let our brethren know of our rejoicing and confidence in the Lord. This seems, in a measure, bearing one another's burdens, and in so doing fulfills the law of Christ. It is said, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it." I am persuaded that it is just as applicable to us who fear the Lord, as it was then. Paul said to the Philippian brethren, "As ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Let us not forget that it is God working in us all the time that enables us to work out what he has worked in us. We may say we have faith in God, but how can we prove it to others unless we show it by our works? James says, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." Yes, my brethren, I do believe in good works here on earth for the children of God. We are admonished to not forsake "the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is." "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." All this, to my mind, comes under the head of good works. I believe in religion that gets the sinner, and not the sinner the religion; and after it has been given to him I like to see him talk it, walk it and act in this life as though he felt it in the soul; not only at his church meetings, but at home or abroad, by day or in the darkest hour of the night, and thus prove that there is reality in it.

Perhaps I have written enough, and more than will be profitable to the household of faith. May the Lord bless the truth, and save us in his kingdom above, is my prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen. Do with this, dear editors, as seems right to you, and believe me one who hopes he loves God's people and his church and kingdom here in this world.

A poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all, J. B. JONES.

OTTAWA, Kansas, Aug. 18, 1914.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—I have often thought of writing to you again, but each time have given up in despair, feeling I could write nothing worth your time reading. Last Sunday I read again your first editorial with the desire to write and tell you that I know by experience every word you wrote is the truth. There is nothing I rejoice more in than the sovereignty of God. If I did not believe that all power in heaven and earth is his I would be without hope; but I do believe it with all my heart, therefore I desire to look to him for help every moment of my journey through life. Sometimes when life's burdens seem heavier than I can bear, it is a comfort to think that all my times are in his hand, all events at his command. He speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast. We would not of ourselves choose the way he leads. The psalmist says, "He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness. Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron." I hope I know what the psalmist was talking about. Once, after having passed through the deep, I was shown such wonders that my heart was filled with praise to God for his goodness, love and mercy, when these words came with much power: I have many things to show you, but you cannot bear them yet. David said, "I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live." When we are brought to the place where we must acknowledge our transgressions, and our sins are ever before us, then how sweet are the words of Paul: "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love." I hope your editorial on "Entertaining Strangers" is as good to the sister who asked you to write as it is to me. The last SIGNS filled my heart with an indescribable peace, to think that I could read and understand the deep things it contained. I do not think any of the things dear Elder Ker enumerates could keep me away from the assemblies of the saints now. I trust I have not suffered so much in vain.

Saturday and Sunday you will preach at Mill Creek, I suppose. How I long to be there, too, for I feel sure you will at no time shun to declare the whole counsel of God. What a blessing to not be ashamed of the gospel of Christ. Once, while wondering why I had to suffer so much, this answer came: "The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

Remember me to each one at Mill Creek, and pray for me, if you can, that my faith fail not.

With much love, your unworthy sister,

ANNA McKINNEY.

WAVERLY, Pa., Aug. 11, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The inclosed letter from Elder Hardy is good; dispose of it as you think proper.

Yours as ever,

D. M. VAIL.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Aug. 4, 1914.

MY DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—I am glad the Lord gave you a little word by me, who am less than nothing, and vanity. While I know this to be true, yet it makes me rejoice when the Lord has spoken by me and one little one has been made to rejoice. There could be no joy or comfort in any unless there were kindred spirits. It is in the kinship we have with the Lord that makes us rejoice in him. In this the people of God are separated from the world. The world loves its own; they are not the Lord's and are not of him; they hate his way, and his word with his work. It is not in man to love humility. When one is humbled all out of himself and swallowed up as was Jonah, he is near to know his own vanity, and to learn of the Lord that he is good. When we find two of the same mind in these things they give evidence of the same parents and tutors. They speak the same language, and praise the Lord. What we have seen with our eyes, heard with our ears and handled with our hands of the word of the Lord is what we must declare to others, that they may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. This is a sweet and unbroken chain of fellowship from the Godhead on through the whole body. How sure and how safe in the Lord are the little ones in Christ Jesus our Lord. When one of these members is truly in the Spirit of the Lord he sees nothing in which to trust but Jesus; he is head. That member knows that he is nothing, and that all his standing (if he has any) is in Jesus Christ. The more one sees of the fullness of our Lord, the more he sees of his own vanity and wretchedness. I am often made to fear to say this, because I do see so much evil in myself. It appears to me that any of my brethren can see much more of the fullness of the Lord than myself. We live by hope. Hope is for the things yet to come. We see these things by faith. That we have if it be in ever so little a portion. Faith given by our Lord is pure, even though it be very little. It never fails to look away from self, nothing there, but to see all in Jesus when it pierces through the vail into blessed hope. There our High Priest waits triumphantly, and intercedes for those to whom he has given grace in the redemption. Thus we are given to hope in the sure fulfillment of all that he has said that he would do, both in time and in the world to come. The Lord bless us to trust him.

In love and hope,

L. H. HARDY.

SILVERTON, Texas, Aug. 14, 1914.

DEAR ELDER KER, AND THE BEREAVED ONES IN ZION:—For more than two months I have been wanting to write and tell you how deeply I share in your grief, but it seemed I just could not. Language fails me. Had I the pen of a ready writer perhaps I could express at least a part of my heartfelt sympathy, but alas, I find I am wanting. I have sorrowed greatly over the loss of dear Elder Chick; his writings were such a comfort to me. May God in his goodness and mercy give his sorrowing family grace to bear their great loss, and may he sustain you, brother Ker, and cause you to realize that you are not "alone," for he has promised never to leave nor forsake his little ones. He is ever near to heal the broken-hearted and to bind up their wounds. Yea, bless his holy name. Grieve not, bereaved ones, for the loss of your dear companions, they have only gone on a little before; soon, very soon, we will all be called to follow,

and O how happy we shall be, united with Christ in God, no more sorrow, no more tears. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men. Little children scattered abroad, hold up your heads and press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things that are before. May God supply all your needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

I was exceedingly glad, and rejoiced much when I learned that brother Lefferts was chosen, not to fill brother Chick's place, but to a work his own. May God bless him in his labors, and enable him to speak comfortably to Jerusalem, and to defend the doctrine in meekness and love at all times, and may you, brother Ker, find in him the companionship you experienced in dear brother Chick. While he is younger in years, you are of one age in Christ. May the giver of every good and perfect gift bless you both in your work, and comfort you in time of trouble, is my sincere prayer for Christ's sake.

I herewith send money order for two dollars to pay for our family paper another year. I feel that I could not do without it, as it is almost all the preaching I have to comfort me in my loneliness. The two last numbers have been especially dear to me. I much enjoyed sister Bessie's and sister Wright's letters, for they express so fully what I wanted to write.

With much christian love for you and the household of faith, I remain your sister in hope,

LYDIA C. RAY.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky.

DEAR EDITORS:—I submit the inclosed letter to your better judgment, or that portion of general interest to the readers of the SIGNS. P. W. SAWIN.

MATTOON, Ill., June 11, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER:—Your letter of May 19th came duly to hand, and now that I am not feeling able to be out in the hot sun, with the mercury hovering about 100° in the shade, I will try to write you a few lines. First of all, we are about as well as most people while this scorching weather is on, and should be thankful that we are spared at all, while thousands and tens of thousands are in so much worse condition than we are. I am glad to know that Elder May was with you, and trust his preaching was not in vain in the Lord. He seems to be a zealous advocate for the truth, the whole truth, and nothing else but the truth. I gather this idea from his communications in the SIGNS, for I never heard him preach. His text at Little Flock: "Tell my father of all my glory in Egypt," was and is a very broad and fertile subject if seen in the light of the spirit that so beautifully reveals the wonders of God's redeeming grace to the poor and needy, who are seeking water and there is none. The hidden manna is brought to light, so that they who hunger and thirst after righteousness are filled. Joseph's life in Egypt, from beginning to end, is full of interest, as revealing the matchless love and power of God in the preservation and deliverance of Israel from bondage, beautifully typifying the redemption and deliverance of spiritual Israel from under the curse of the law by our spiritual Joseph, who met and satisfied stern justice in our behalf. All this no doubt was pointed out by

Elder May far better than I can tell it, so I will just leave it there.

You ask why I do not write for the SIGNS. I commence, now and then, to write something for publication, but when I have written an installment, and then begin to compare it with what others write, my effort looks so disjointed and crude that I am moved to cast it aside as being unfit for publication in the SIGNS, even though the publishers might see fit to do so. My unworthiness and inability stand out very conspicuously in every move and act when I try to labor in the ministry, which causes me to feel that after all I have run in vain and without the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

June 14th.—As you will see, I began this on the 11th, but before I finished something came up to stop me, so now I will try to finish same and mail to you. I was glad to have sister Bolton's letter. I would write to her if I could, but I cannot write much, and what I do write must be to the children and yourself and brother Marion. This I want to try to do while I live and am able. Writing did not use to be a strain on me, but it is now.

Love to Goldie and family, and Vola, as well as your two selves. Write when you can.

As ever, your brother,

JOHN G. SAWIN.

FLEMINGTON, N. J.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—As it is not my privilege to meet with the saints this beautiful Sunday morning, I feel moved to write a few lines, even though I am altogether unworthy to write of spiritual things, and without Him I can do nothing. We are told in the Scriptures that those who feared the Lord spoke often one to another, and a book of remembrance was written for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name. I hope that I love and fear him, yet it is with no confidence in the flesh, for no good thing dwelleth in me. As I muse on the past an incident of my experience comes to mind that I had many years ago, before I thought I would ever become an Old Baptist. As I believe it was of the Lord, and that he should not be robbed of his glory, I will relate it; perhaps I have done so before to a few, but never to the SIGNS. The incident to which I refer came to me in the form of a letter from dear Elder Vail, whom I had not met. The letter stated that he would visit my home, having to pass that way to and from his appointments. Having seen my name in the SIGNS, to which I had written asking some questions of dear Elder Chick, and thinking I was an Old Baptist, he felt moved to stop off and see me, if it was convenient to me. I was by no means an Old Baptist yet, and his letter was a disagreeable surprise, so I decided it was not at all convenient for him to do so. My mind was in a state of turmoil, and I argued with myself (or some one else, the evil one, I expect) that he was a stranger, and that I wanted no Old School Baptist preacher to visit me. When thinking how to word my answer to his letter and not give offence, the words came to me like a flash: "Use hospitality one to another, without grudging." Well, I argued, I do not grudge him the hospitality, but he is a stranger and an Old Baptist; but before I could send my reply the words flashed into my mind, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." I could bring up nothing against this, and bade him come. He came, and I found through

him the first comfort I ever had. He expounded the Scriptures, and gave me angels' food, which was sweet to my taste. I felt how gracious was the Lord in sending him to this poor, unworthy one. I could but acknowledge he was an "angel" indeed. Elder Vail will know of this for the first time when he reads it in the SIGNS, because I was ashamed of my part of it, and never told him. It was not personal at all, and would have been the same had it been any other Old School Baptist preacher. I hope he will forgive me, and if I know him I think he will. I have heard him preach many comforting sermons, yet nothing like the first one, for it eased my burden, and I found in him a sinner like myself, and what a comfort to know one is not alone in the wilderness of sin. From that visit I date my hope, if indeed I have one. How different my life has been to what I hoped, for I thought to do much work for the Lord, but not one thing have I to boast of as having done for the Lord. I am a beggar at mercy's door, and when I realize what I am the wonder is that I have a hope at all. Simply to his cross I cling, and even that is by his will. I greatly fear that I am not one of Zion's travelers at all, but an impostor. Did I not believe in his almighty power to save to the uttermost, I would indeed have no hope, yet something holds me, and I cannot give up.

"Jesus paid it all,
All to him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow."

It seems I am led on by his hand, notwithstanding all my sinfulness. I go the way marked out; whether it is the right way or not I go that way. I try to change things sometimes, but I do not change them, they remain as he ordained them, and I must acknowledge that he doeth all things well, even though it is against the flesh.

I desire to say a word to my brethren and sisters at Hopewell, whose sorrow and loneliness I share because of our dear pastor's departure, whose presence we miss so much. It seems strange to me when I go there not to see him standing in his accustomed place expounding the word of God. We are left without an undershepherd just now, but the great Shepherd of all promised that where two or three are gathered together in his name he would be in the midst. Personally, the loss of dear Elder Chick is great. He always wrote such comforting letters to me, knowing I could hear but little preaching. I miss him.

Unworthily,

MARY ELIZABETH FISHER.

TIAWAH, Okla., July 6, 1914.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—I have been thinking much of your great trial of affliction which you recently have been called to pass through. I have greatly desired to write to you, and if it were possible give you a word of sympathy and encouragement, but it has seemed that anything I could say would fall far short in the way of comfort to you. It does seem that the Lord has compassed you around with circumstances that are leading you on the "narrow way," and teaching you of the plenitude of his grace for every trial that is awaiting you in this life. With other readers of the SIGNS I fully concur that the Lord has qualified you now to be its senior editor. I appreciate the choice of an assistant in the person of Elder H. H. Lefferts, and know that both of you will feel the high responsibility in your editorial work, having in view the fact of "coming down the line" after such a champion for the

truth as Elder Gilbert Beebe. For sixty years the SIGNS has been my choice out of all religious periodicals. My desire is that it may continue to stand fast in the doctrine of God's elect.

All yours, in hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

[BOTH Elder Lefferts and ourself appreciate brother Beeman's words of encouragement.—K.]

AVONDALE, Ala., Sept. 2, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—One week ago this morning I was again stricken with something like paralysis in my left side, and in a few moments rendered helpless. Friends brought me home in a vehicle, and carried me to my bed, where I have been ever since, not able to stand on my feet or walk a step. I can sit up a little on the side of the bed, and am doing this writing on my lap as best I can. I am suffering greatly, and rest but little, and what the final result will be God alone knows. I find it hard to be reconciled to my afflictions. I read what you said about my afflictions in the SIGNS, and I said, Well, brother Ker's hopes and wishes for me cannot heal me, but they do comfort me. I wish I could write more, but must stop. Please insert this in the SIGNS, and oblige your brother,

H. J. REDD.

[WE are indeed sorry to hear of the affliction of brother Redd, and sincerely hope it may be the will of the great Physician to again restore him to health.—ED.]

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., Aug. 31, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Will you kindly write R. V. Edwards, Delchamps, Ala., and tell him whether or not there are any of our churches near Mobile, Ala., in Mobile County? Brother Edwards and family have moved to that point, and are deeply troubled over having to give up their meetings at Pratt City, Ala., and I told them that you could no doubt advise them if there were any churches down there. Please see if there are any members also in that portion of the country, and let them get in touch with them.

I am fifty-one years of age, and have read the SIGNS for nearly twenty years, and my parents read it or subscribed for it as far back as forty years ago. I dearly love every copy, and feel very near all the writers. Brother Chick's death was indeed a sad blow to all lovers of the truth, of those who read his writings.

Yours in the faith,

H. M. PITTS.

[The above letter was received, and if there are any members in the section named they will please communicate with brother Edwards, at Delchamps, Ala.—ED.]

KALIDA, Ohio, Aug. 28, 1914.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—Can you tell me of any Baptists in or around New Castle, Pa., or in any part of northwestern Pennsylvania? I am going to Warren, Ohio, to teach in the high school this year, and am hoping that I will find some of our people not too far away. I will be glad, too, if you can give me the address of some one in Cleveland, Ohio, who will know about the meetings there, for it will be convenient for me to attend there.

Yours in hope,

EMMA E. ROWER.

[BRETHREN and sisters in the above named localities will please communicate with our sister.—K.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1914.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ACTS XVII. 29, 30.

"FORASMUCH then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent."

The apostles were scattered in different parts of the world, in their day, for the purpose of preaching the gospel to all nations. In some places they were received gladly as the servants of God, but more often affliction and persecution were their lot, which was to show them that the servant is not greater than his Lord. The leadings of the Spirit were marvelous in those days. Often the apostles would determine to visit some special place or country, and the Spirit would direct them into some other field where the ground had been prepared for the reception of the word. In the case before us Paul found himself in this strange place, Athens, and while he waited for Silas and Timotheus his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. The Lord worked in him a desire that at least some of that city might know the truth that had so wonderfully comforted and strengthened him; hence he disputed with the Jews in the synagogue and with devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him. To all these he preached Jesus and his resurrection from the dead, and through his preaching the way was opened for him to reach higher classes of men. They, hearing of him, and of the "strange things" set forth by him, desired to hear him, but seemed to have, at that time, little respect for him, the philosophers of the Epicureans and of the Stoics saying, "What will this babbler say?" Others said, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached Jesus, and the resurrection. The matter of respect, however, did not trouble Paul in the least. To glorify God and magnify his grace seemed his one desire, and he having been a persecutor of the saints of God, and receiving the assurance from the Lord that he should suffer for his name's sake, expected nothing else but hardship, and nothing turned him away from the service and worship of Jesus. The city being given wholly to idolatry, many thought Paul a setter forth of strange gods, or idols unknown to them, because he preached Jesus and the resurrection. They supposed that Jesus was the name of one god, and the resurrection the name of another, and being anxious to learn about these new things Paul was brought before the noble and great men of the city, that he might explain to them what his preaching meant; and as he stood in the midst of Mars' hill his boldness was discovered, for with rebuke and insult he began his great and wonderful sermon, saying, "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious." Under ordinary circumstances this would have ended any man's explanation of his position or views, but the Lord had brought Paul to that place and hour for the defence of his everlasting truth, and

on the other hand had brought the learned and great to hear it, hence no offence was taken at his boldness. Paul had witnessed some of their devotions, and noticed an altar with the inscription, "To the unknown God," and these words he used as a text, and began by saying, "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." In the inscription was confession of an incomprehensible God, and that altar was erected unto him. We have sometimes felt fellowship with them, in that we are frank to confess God is unknown to us, so far as grasping his infinite Being and attributes is concerned. He is so high and so deep and so infinitely glorious that even "the earnest of the Spirit" fails to understand him and trace his path in the sea. Often no language is more expressive of our feeling toward God than the words, "The unknown God." There seems something very strange about this, for Paul said the whole city was given to idolatry, yet he declares "the unknown God" is the God of glory, creation and mercy, and further that those addressed worshiped him ignorantly. The worship of God, even though "ignorantly," is not the worship of an idol, hence it seems that God had worshipers at Athens, reckoned as heathen, who needed to be instructed in righteousness, and Paul was there for that purpose. And he said, The unknown God, whom ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." In this is shown the difference between the living, unknown God, and the gods of gold, silver, brass and wood. All these needed the help of man, their maker, to set them up and take them down, carry them from one place to another, &c. Those gods had feet, but could not walk, eyes, but could not see, ears, but could not hear, mouths, but could not speak, nor could they, dead themselves, give life and breath. But "the unknown God" could do all these things, and all these things were necessary to be done for man, the creature of God. The same "unknown God" made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation. This shows that by nature all men are alike, and that God intended that they should dwell upon the face of the earth, and also that the bounds of their habitation were set, and not one can ever pass the mark set for him. Another purpose of "the unknown God" in the creation of men is that they should seek after him and find him, though he be not far from every one of us; for in him we live and move and have our being. Even the poets of Athens said, "We are also his offspring." Here Paul took advantage of the expression of the learned to make the everlasting point: If we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. Nothing void of life can have offspring, hence if the men of Athens said, We are God's offspring, they should not associate "the unknown God" with gods of gold, silver and such like. It would seem that by this time the philosophers and Stoics were beginning to find out what the "babbler" would say.

"The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men

every where to repent." This part of the text shows that there was a time of ignorance of God and his eternal purpose, and that he suffered it, or winked at it; but now that Christ had come, accomplished the work of salvation, risen from the dead and ascended to the right hand of God, all men, or all nations, everywhere were commanded to repent; that is, turn away from the worship of gods of gold, silver, stone, &c., to worship the "Lord of heaven and earth." The command of God is not wooing, persuading sinners to give their hearts to the Lord, but there is power in his word; he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. Therefore wherever the Lord begins a good work in man he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Repentance and the forgiveness of sins are given to Israel, or, in other words, to all the family of God. Certain men clave unto Paul and believed; thus is shown the working of God with them, and every one that felt the influence of "the unknown God" believed on him and his blessed Son, whom Paul had preached, and his resurrection. Because I live, ye shall live also.

May each subject of divine grace have this blessed assurance of life eternal through Christ, the Head of the church.

K.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

A LOOK AROUND.

IT is well-nigh impossible for one to live in and pass through this lower world and not take notice, to some extent, of things going on about him. We feel impressed at this writing, rather than to present our views on some portion of Scripture, to look around and call attention to a few things being taught and practiced by the world that cannot fail to be of meaning to us who profess to be, and hope that we are, the church of the living God. Nothing ever transpires in either creation, providence or grace but bears some relation, direct or remote, to the welfare and good, immediate or ultimate, of those called according to the purpose of God unto eternal life. It is not necessary to be able to explain or understand how "all things work together for good" in order to believe it. Faith lays hold on all things of the Spirit which to the reason and intellect are inexplicable. We do with all our heart assuredly believe that everything that ever was made, everything that has ever existed, does now or ever will exist, is for the glory of God through Jesus Christ the Lord, and for the good of his people. Nothing however slight, however good or evil in our judgment it may be, ever occurs in the lives of men or histories of nations but fulfills the predestined purpose of Jehovah from before all worlds began. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Inspiration here assures us that not only were all things made by the Word, the Son of God, but they were also made for him, not against him, and that

all these things consist by him. This matter of consistency shows that God did not in the beginning wind up the universe and start it going, somewhat as a child might do a mechanical toy, and is now simply letting it run down of itself, merely letting it spend the momentum of its initial impulse. No, but he sees to it that all these things of diverse propensities originally created and made by him do "consist," that is, they "stand together" in accomplishing the purpose for which he designed them. Nothing can fly off at a tangent, or mix up so as to clog the wheels of something else, but each thing, however rebellious or contrary it may be of itself, and each thing, however good and excellent it may be, must bend to a common center. The omnipotence of God is the all-dominating force that compels all things to converge to a final goal: his declarative glory and the good of his people. "Every dark and bending line meets in the center of his love."

With this introduction we shall proceed with our looking around, and even in those things which we shall criticise, which the testimony of the Scriptures shall lead us to condemn as being contrary to truth, we shall always remember the purpose of God, from before the beginning, is being fulfilled. First, as illustrating a doctrine which is being preached and contended for everywhere in the world, we note this from a recent New York paper: "The teachings of christianity look to the ultimate gathering together of all mankind in one great human brotherhood." This doctrine of the "brotherhood of man" is rapidly intoxicating the whole world, but all nations and individuals are woefully far behind in putting it into practice. The brotherhood of man is not taught anywhere in the Scripture. All men are dead in Adam, born in sin, shapen in iniquity and come forth from the womb speaking lies. The brotherhood of man consists only in being brothers in Adam, in sin, error and death. But those who contend for this doctrine say the whole of mankind is verging toward a unity of immortality, of peace and love. According to them, everybody is a child of God, and God is everybody's Father. How can this be when Jesus said exclusively to his chosen disciples after he had withdrawn himself from the multitude into a mountain apart, "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven"? To none but his called disciples did Jesus give authority to claim God as their Father. No man can teach another to say, "Our Father." To teach our little children at our knees to pray, "Our Father," is to make hypocrites of them. The true church of the Christ will not, cannot, take the name of the Lord their God in vain. They cannot take it in vain, because it is their right to take it, it belongs to them, they are called unto it, begotten of God. The world cannot take the name of God as Father; it is not given unto the world. Only by the indwelling of the Spirit of adoption, of sonship, can any man say, "Abba, Father." In order to become the sons of God there must be a birth, and that according to the will of God, of the Spirit, and not of the flesh. Being born of him, made partakers of the divine nature, they have right to claim God as their Father, they lie not in so doing. God is the Creator of all men, he is not the Father of all men. The words "Creator" and "Father" have a very different meaning. True, Peter does say, "Love the brotherhood," but it is a far cry to say that by that he means, love

the world. Peter expressly addresses the brotherhood as the "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." The brotherhood exists, therefore, only between those embraced in the covenant of election, sanctified through the Spirit, and sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ. This "brotherhood of man" meets with the approval of the world, because no one nowadays but a subject of grace believes in the total depravity of human nature, that "the whole world lieth in wickedness," that "the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores." On the other hand, all but avowed infidels do believe that in every individual there is a spark of immortality, that every man has an immortal soul. This is not true. He (Christ) "only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see." No man has eternal life, immortality, only as it is the gift of God through Christ to him. All men are dead, born dead, live in death, pass away in death, unless quickened by the Spirit of God and raised from their death in Adam to life in Christ by the power of his resurrection. But while on every side men loudly proclaim this bewitching phrase, "the brotherhood of man," they come far short of showing their faith by their works. The record of their daily deeds attests their selfishness and greed, not their unworldliness and brotherly love. It is as though God mocks the thoughts of their hearts in bringing into manifest confusion their counsels and deliberations. Many have been led to think, by the way people on every side have been talking, that the era of peace and good-will was literally about to dawn, that the nations of the earth were about to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks, were about to consign their vast and ingenious engines of warfare to the junk-heap, and to depend upon the "justice inherent in the breast of every man," as they say, to settle all their disputes, when, lo, from the kingdoms oversea come the peal of drums, the roll of artillery, the thunder of cannon, as these so-called "brothers" fly at each other's throats, thirsting for each other's blood, in the most terrible conflict of nations the world has ever seen. What, now, about the brotherhood of man? Surely God brings to naught the cogitations of the wise. All goes to show that man by nature is in league with the devil, and never will be anything else unless delivered from captivity to the "prince of the power of the air" by the grace of God in Jesus Christ the Lord. Christ, and he alone, can burst asunder the prison doors of hell, can break dungeon chains of innate depravity and corruption, thus freeing the prisoner from the law of sin and death, ushering him into the unspeakable glories of redemption and justification, and making a new man of him. Not alone from Europe comes the voice of upheaval, but in our own America disturbing elements are at work. Are they the forces of construction or destruction? God only knows. Labor is jealously safeguarding its rights against capital, capital seeks to intrench itself against the multiplying demands of labor. Now and then burst forth in volcanoes of unable-to-be-suppressed feeling, riots, strikes and the like. Do they betoken a larger conflagration drawing steadily nigh?

Old time religious convictions are being swept away. We speak here not with reference to the true church, but with regard to the world. Only a few generations ago America had a "form of godliness," even though she lacked the spirit of it. This "outward piety" served as a moral restraint, if nothing more. The popular "higher criticism" of this, our day, spreading from our colleges, universities and seats of learning, has permeated all conditions and ranks of society, unseating men's confidence in the inspiration of the Scriptures and in the reality of a future existence, turning the miracles of Jesus into mere fables and myths, denying his virgin birth and his vicarious atonement. Such teachings, coming from men whom we have been accustomed to hold in respect, have torn the form of piety from those whose immorality was restrained by it. Men unblushingly avow their infidelity and skepticism, getting for it the applause of the crowd. The marvelous discoveries and inventions of science during the past two decades have turned the people's heads, and now everything, even the sayings and doings of the blessed Jesus, must be subjected to the scientific test, and are rejected as fit only for children and childish minds if they do not stand the test. Surely America is a land without God in the world as much as any other. The flaunting of wealth and luxury, its public parade on the part of the rich, arouse discontent and a desire to emulate in the breasts of the poor. The increased cost of living makes continually more irksome and unbearable the tendency on the part of many to live beyond their means in order to keep in the race, as, for example, note those now running automobiles who a year or so ago could hardly keep a horse. The prevalence of divorce striking at the very root and seclusion of the home, books and magazines featuring articles that tear the veil of reticence from matters that our mothers and grandmothers were wont to conceal with becoming modesty, what effect, think you, is all this to have on the generation coming up? From the lowest to the highest ranks of our citizenship discontent, uneasiness, even if not rebellion, are plainly in evidence. What is the meaning of it all? Education nowadays busying itself with frills, foibles, and nonessentials, laying stress on knowledge and industrial training to the utter neglect of principle and nobility of character, awakening in the hearts of the young ideals impracticable of accomplishment, making them dissatisfied with their lot in life, causing them to regard as old fogies and know-nothings all that went before them; what, indeed, is the harvest to be? "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" The fruit will assuredly sooner or later make manifest the character of the tree that bears it. And, yet, we are told the world is growing better. We prefer to believe thus: "In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." The depravity that was in Adam by nature is becoming daily more and more evident. Sometimes we are asked, Are not men worse to-day than they used to be? We answer: By nature, no; in outward manifestation, yes. Man's nature is to-day the same as when it was created; nothing has been added to it or taken from

it since then. He is but acting out what is in him, and his actions show how horrible his corruption has been all the time, even though at times restrained. The acorn is the oak tree in embryo. All that ever shall be in the mighty oak lies dormant and undeveloped in the seed. The succession of the seasons, the sun, the rain and the soil, put nothing into the tree that was not in the acorn; they but develop and cause to expand all the latent possibilities of the seed. So the onward march of the centuries, the rise and fall of nations, and all that we include in the expression, "the providence of God," cause man to unfold himself and show what is in him, but they add no new principle to him, nor take any old away. We have to confess that in looking around at the scenes being enacted about us, there is next to nothing to be found calculated to cheer the hearts of those who hope in the "rest that remaineth." But it ought to make us glad, brethren, that this world is not our home, that here we have no continuing city, but seek one to come. How grateful must we feel that God in his mercy has not assigned us our portion here below, as he has evidently countless others; but that he has reserved for us an inheritance incorruptible and that fadeth not away. True, if one looks intelligently and understandingly at the events that are current in the world, it will doubtless alarm the heart of his flesh, but be his hope and trust in the Lord he cannot but rejoice that God, his God, is reigning and ruling everywhere, bending all things to the accomplishment of his inflexible purpose. We are glad we do believe that God has to do, not simply with all "good" things, but with all "evil" things as well. There are not two gods, one having power over all good, the other having power over all evil. No, there is just one God, and he is true and living. He is the Father of all the brethren of our Lord Jesus Christ, and is above all, and through all, and in them all. God and Satan are not two self-existent and coexisting powers. God alone is self-existing, self-sufficing, comprehending all things in his glorious attributes. The devil, who is he? Is he a throne, a dominion, a principality or a power? We cannot fail to classify him under one of these heads, and, if so, he must be a creature of God, subservient to his will. Not one step can he take, not one act can he perform, except it be the purpose of God that he should do so. He can have no power over the church, the people of God, to hurt or harm them, except it be given him of their Father. How glorious, how comforting, how soul-satisfying is the knowledge to the child of God that his Savior and Redeemer is supreme; that nothing can ever pluck the redeemed out of the Father's hand; that Christ has put all things under his feet, and holds the keys of death and of hell; that when he opens, no man can shut, and when he shuts, none can open. Were we not assured by the God-given faith that is in us that all things are in his hands, that nothing escapes his all-seeing eye, that not the feeblest lamb strays beyond his protecting care, where would our hope and comfort be? There is one great comfort in looking around, and that is, we are made to see where our fellowship and love are; that they are not for the "vanity fair" in vogue all about us, but that the breathings of our spirit reach out for the unseen, the eternal verities of God. Now, dear readers, we commend all of you who love him in sincerity and in truth, to the constant care and keeping of him who alone is "able

to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." To him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. N. Bartlett.)

The Tygarts Valley River Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists, now in session with the Little Bethel Church, Barbour County, West Virginia, to the churches of which she is composed, and to all of like precious faith, sendeth christian salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Through the goodness and mercy of God we are again permitted to meet together in this, another association, for the purpose of worshiping God and to hear from you through your letters and messengers concerning your welfare, order and faithfulness. And O how pleasant thus to meet together, and mingle our voices together in praise to God, and hear the word of God preached unto us by faithful God-sent and God-qualified ministers. We want to address you on the subject of Faithfulness. May the Lord bless you and keep you faithful. There have been a few faithful men and women in all time past, and there will continue to be a faithful few while time shall last. But the way of faithfulness is a narrow path, and only a few walk therein. In the days of the apostles, when the day of Pentecost was fully come, and they were all with one accord in one place, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost, Peter preached to those assembled, Jesus, that he was the Christ. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized. * * * And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."—Acts ii. 41, 42. Notice they continued steadfast, they were faithful; faithful in doctrine, faithful in order and faithful in the worship of God. They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine. No other doctrine would do for them, it must be the apostles' doctrine. The apostles' doctrine was the doctrine of election and predestination, salvation by grace. That is the doctrine you were first constituted on, the doctrine that God taught you in your experience of grace, the doctrine our forefathers preached unto us; contend earnestly for it, for it is the faith once delivered unto the saints. Be faithful in this doctrine, and be not carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy." These are the latter times, and many are teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, and giving heed to doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy. This has become so general that we would inquire, "Will ye also go away?" But the few answer, "To whom shall we go? thou [Christ] hast the words of eternal life." But not only continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, but also in the apostles' fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. Be faithful in the order of God's house, fellowship only those who are faithful in the apostles' doctrine, and with these faithful ones continue steadfast in fellowship and in communion and worship. Come out from the world, "Be ye separate," have no fellowship for their works of darkness. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fel-

lowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" But the fellowship of the saints, how precious it is to the faithful few; having been spiritually generated by the same heavenly Father, born of the same Spirit and having the Spirit of God in them, from which emanates all that blessed fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, and having one Lord, one faith, one baptism. With their hearts full of love one towards another, how precious is the fellowship and the communion of God's people, the faithful few. Those faithful ones were faithful in the worship of God; they met together for that purpose; they sang praise to God; they preached the glorious gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; they prayed to God for his mercy, his grace and his blessings. They were told not to neglect the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is. For the love of God's sake, for your sake and the church's sake, and for the sake of the cause and the truth, do not neglect the assembling of yourselves together for the worship of God. Be faithful in this. "Love one another with a pure heart fervently;" be kind and affectionate one towards another; live together in peace and in fellowship. Now, finally, dear brethren, be faithful in all things, in your daily walk and conversation, in your dealings with all be truthful, honest, sober and righteous, and as God has told us, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." The Lord will say unto his good and faithful servant, Well done; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

J. B. CROSS, Moderator.

J. N. BARTLETT, Clerk.

IN NEED OF COPY.

AT this season of the year we understand that most all our writers are busy in one way or another, and we feel it necessary to call attention to the importance of their remembrance of the SIGNS, as we have less copy at this season than any other of the year. We thank you all kindly for your assistance in this way in the past, and hope you will write as often as you can.

Just now we have very little copy on hand, and if any feel impressed to write for publication, or have any good letters they think would be of general interest to our readers, we would be very glad to have them send them on.—ED.

NOTICE.

As we were about to go to press, and too late for publication in this number, we received the obituary notice of our dear sister, Susie C. F. Guernsey, of Otego, N. Y., which will be published in our next issue.—ED.

APPOINTMENTS.

PROVIDENCE permitting, I hope to visit places of meeting as follows: Jefferson, N. Y., Sept. 19th and 20th; Roxbury, N. Y., Sept. 21st, 10:30 a. m.; Vega, N. Y., Sept. 21st, 2 p. m.; Halcottville, N. Y., Sept. 21st, 7:30 p. m.; Union Grove, N. Y., Sept. 22nd, 10:30 a. m.; brother Faulkner's, Sept. 22nd, 7:30 p. m.; Olive and Hurley, N. Y., Sept. 23rd and 24th; Schoharie, N. Y., Sept. 25th, 26th and 27th.

J. M. FENTON.

NOTHING preventing, I expect to be with the church at Union Grove, N. Y., Sunday, Sept. 20th; Vega, N. Y., Monday, 21st; Roxbury village, Tuesday, 22nd; Roxbury Association, Ashokan, 23rd and 24th.

D. M. VAIL.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, in Delmar, Md., August 24th, 1914, Wilmer F. Townsend and Mrs. Bertha E. Perdue, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Bella May McTaggart Carmichael, beloved wife of Charles M. T. Carmichael, died at her home in Lobo township, Ontario, Canada, May 1st, 1914, in the 33rd year of her age, after a short but painful illness. The cold and icy hand of death relieved her of her intense suffering, and she fell asleep, as we have good reason to hope, in the sweet embrace of our kind and loving Savior. It had been my privilege to meet Mrs. Carmichael several times while visiting in Canada, and I cannot speak too highly of her sterling qualities, her kind and genial manner. She was loved and respected by all who knew her. Mrs. Carmichael never made a profession of religion, but we have reason to hope that she was a child of God, one who loved to hear the name of Jesus exalted above every other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. We have at different times seen the tears course down her sweet face all radiant with heavenly light, which seemed to shine in her soul and light up her very countenance as she sat under the preaching of the gospel. Just eleven months from the day she was dressed to be married to her dear and sorrowing husband she was dressed to be laid at rest, from which there is no awakening until the last great trump shall sound.

Her funeral was held from her home in Lobo township, and was largely attended by friends and relatives, showing the high esteem in which she was held. The writer tried to speak to the comfort of the friends and relatives from the words found in Romans viii. 16, 17. Interment was in the Poplar Hill Cemetery.

May the grace of our covenant-keeping God sustain the dear and bereaved husband in his great sorrow and affliction; and the poor aged mother, may she be reconciled to the will of Him who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. May each and all bow in humble submission to the divine will of our heavenly King, is my earnest prayer.

J. B. SLAUSON.

OUR beloved sister, **Manervia J. Chaney,** was born Nov. 20th, 1846, departed this life July 28th, 1914. She was married to brother W. H. Chaney, May 18th, 1875. Her maiden name was Gilbreath. When but a small girl her father with his family moved from Arkansas to Texas, where she was reared to womanhood. She united with Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church in July, 1900, and remained a loving and devoted member until the end. About two years before her death she was deprived of meeting with the church regularly because of her afflictions, but she never forgot the time, and rejoiced to know that the church remained in peace, and that the Lord continued to draw them together. The doctrine of salvation by grace and grace only, the sovereignty of God over all creatures and things, was her theme and delight. God blessed sister Chaney with a wonderful measure of patience; she was mild, and manifested much forbearance and tenderness when suffering terrible pain from cancer of the breast. Although her suffering seemed almost unbearable, she was never heard to murmur or complain. Her friends were numbered by her acquaintances; to know her was to love her. Sister Chaney felt her unworthiness, claiming nothing in her own merits, trusting alone in the merit and sufficiency of the dear Lord. Such evidence as she left makes us to say without the shadow of a doubt, "She has gone from the evil to come." She leaves her husband, two brothers, one sister and three stepdaughters, beside many friends and distant relatives, to mourn their loss. To the husband and stepdaughters, to whom the loss is greatest, I would say, Your dear companion and mother is not dead, but sleepeth. The consoling promise of Jesus is, he will come again. May the God of all grace enable you to look beyond the grave unto his coming.

In the presence of a large congregation of relatives and friends, the writer, with Elders Hardin and Driver, tried to speak words of comfort to the sorrowing ones, after which her remains were tenderly laid to rest in the Clairette Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection morn, and to awake with his likeness and be satisfied.

S. N. STEPHENS.

Lucinda Ashbrook Palmer was born near Reynoldsburg, Franklin Co., Ohio, Oct. 22nd, 1824, and departed this life August 10th, 1914, aged 89 years, 9 months and 18 days. She was married to Joel Palmer March 30th, 1847. To them were born nine children, six sons and three daughters, and at the time of father's death, nine years ago, were all living; since then one son has passed away. Mother was born again in 1852, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church at Reynoldsburg the same year, and remained steadfast in the faith all through the years of her earthly pilgrimage. Her trust was ever in the sure mercies of God in Christ for life and salvation, and to be at the meetings of the church, there to hear the preaching of the gospel in its purity, was always a great pleasure to her, and our home at Maplehurst Farm was ever a home for the church. She dearly loved to read the SIGNS, and was a firm believer in the doctrine of election, predestination and salvation by grace. She was a kind and loving wife and mother, and loved her family with a deep devotion, and literally gave her life for them, and though we mourn that mother is no more, we feel that it was not death for her to die, but life eternal. Mother had been quite feeble and almost totally blind for the last few years. She came to live with me soon after the death of my

dear husband, Elder Frank McGlade, four years ago. What a blessing she has been in our home through all these sad days. She needed constant care, and was as helpless as a babe, yet I found it a pleasure to care for her, she was so kind and gentle, never a word of faultfinding passed from her lips. Truly she was a dear mother in Israel.

At her request, her body was taken to the old home, "Maplehurst," where a son lives, and where the funeral took place August 12th. Elder John Struble, her pastor, preached, as she desired, from 2 Timothy iv. 7, 8: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." Afterward we tenderly laid her away beside the dear father in the cemetery at Pataskala, Ohio.

Written by her loving daughter,

(MRS.) FRANK McGLADE.

Samuel Maccoll, of Dutton, Elgin Co., Ontario, departed this life on Thursday, August 6th, at his home, in his 83rd year. He was born in Elgin Co. Nov. 6th, 1831, and lived all his life in that neighborhood, where he was widely known and respected. While a good part of his time was devoted to farming, he took for many years active interest in educational matters, and was at the time of his death clerk of the County Court. His life was one of unselfish devotion to others, and that in a quiet and unassuming way. Although from his early years a strong advocate of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, and blessed with a bright experience of its reality in his own soul, he did not feel that he had sufficient assurance to ask a place in the church, and so was never baptized. Notwithstanding this, none could be more faithful in attending the meetings of the Lord's people or in receiving them into his house. He is survived by one sister, Mrs. Flora Shaw, now in her ninety-second year.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder W. I. Carnell, and were largely attended.

GILBERT McCOLL.

Jabez Beard, of Southside, W. Va., was born Feb. 26th, 1829, and died at his home April 26th, 1914, aged 85 years and 2 months. In early life he professed a precious hope, which attended him to the end. He became a Baptist, being baptized by Elder Neely Greenlee in the autumn of 1860, with my father, who was married to his sister, my mother, now living at the age of eighty-seven in Mason City, Nebr. For many years he was clerk of Enon Church. By removals and death this church long since ceased to exist as a body, but brother Beard and his faithful wife continued to hold aloft the Lord's banner until the white-haired veteran was called to his reward. For many years brother Beard attended his association representing a church the members of which existed only in memory, but he seemed to think it a gracious privilege to keep the campfire burning, dying at his post, like the faithful soldier that he was. When a mere boy, having no hope and without God in the world, the writer has stood shoulder to shoulder with this brother in Baptist meetings at the Enon meetinghouse on Little Sixteen, and the hymns we sang in those days long gone by ring in my ears and restore many pleasant memories of my uncle who has passed over before me. His deft hand led me over many of the rough places in life's highway, and I can scarcely become reconciled to this loss to me. He is survived by a widow, with whom he lived for nearly sixty years, and six children, four of his children having gone on before.

May the Lord sustain his bereaved widow, children and host of brethren and friends. We ask it for Christ's sake and in his name.

J. M. AMSBERRY.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Jefferson, N. Y., will hold its yearly meeting, the Lord willing, on the third Sunday, and Saturday before, in September, (19th and 20th) 1914. Those coming by train to Stamford will be met on Friday before on the 11 o'clock a. m. train. We extend an invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, especially brethren in the ministry of our faith.

G. E. MEAD, Church Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Olive and Hurley Church, in Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday following the third Sunday in September, (23rd and 24th) 1914. Trains will be met at Ashokan Tuesday afternoon, Sept. 22nd, also Wednesday morning. Places will be provided for all visitors. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us, especially ministers.

ORVILLE WINCHELL, Deacon.

THE Schoharie Old School Baptist Church has appointed a three days meeting to be held Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 25th, 26th and 27th, 1914. A cordial invitation is extended to all. Those coming by rail will be met. Those coming to Howes Cave will be met by Deacon Miers, those to Schoharie by brother E. R. Kinney.

GEO. A. MIERS, Church Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Cow Marsh Church will be held on the fourth Sunday and Saturday afternoon before in September, (27th and 28th) 1914. Brethren

and friends are invited to meet with us. Trains scheduled to stop at Viola, Del., will be met there Saturday morning.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Pastor.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Church has appointed her yearly meeting to be held, the Lord willing, the first Saturday and Sunday in October, (4th and 5th) 1914. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus to meet with us. FLETCHER MACKEY, Church Clerk.

THE Abbington Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting to be held on Wednesday and Thursday, October 7th and 8th, 1914. A cordial invitation is extended to all. Those coming on D. & H. and O. & W. railroads will come to Olyphant, Pa. Those coming on D., L. & W. R. R. will come to Clarks Summit, Pa. Those expecting to attend the meeting are requested to write to G. W. Goodrich, Olyphant, R. D., Pa. Arrangements will be made to meet them Tuesday afternoon.

G. W. GOODRICH, Church Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held with Second Roxbury and Middletown churches, at Halcottville, N. Y., on the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (7th and 8th) 1914. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. JAMES AVERY, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Sidling Hill, Fulton Co., Pa., Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 9th, 10th and 11th, 1914. The place of meeting is about eighteen miles from the stations, Hancock, Md., on the Western Maryland R. R., and Hancock, W. Va., on the Baltimore & Ohio R. R. The brethren will be glad to meet any train on either of these roads on Thursday before the meeting if any that anticipate going will drop a card beforehand to brother Dennis Mellott, Plum Run, Pa., or brother Jefferson C. Mellott, Needmore, Pa. Trains will not be met unless such notification is sent in advance. We are anxious that any of our ministering brethren and any other brethren or friends who feel it in their hearts to meet with us will come at this time, and we shall be glad to do all in our power for their comfort and convenience.

DENNIS MELLOTT, Church Clerk.

THE church at Snow Hill, Md., will hold its all day yearly meeting on Sunday, October 11th, 1914. A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. B. F. COULTER.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with Mt. Zion Church, near Aldie, Loudoun Co., Va., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 14th, 15th and 16th, 1914. Trains will be met on Tuesday before the meeting. It is requested of those coming to the meeting by rail that ten take train leaving Union Station, Washington, D. C., via Southern Ry. at 3:35 p. m. to The Plains, Va. All others will come to Leesburg, Va., via W. & O. D. Ry. on train leaving 36th and M Sts., Washington, D. C., at 4:30 p. m. We cordially invite ministering brethren of our faith and order, and all lovers of the truth, to meet with us.

I. H. THOMAS, Church Clerk.

THE Mt. Enon Association of Primitive Baptists of south Florida will hold their meeting with the church called Salem, two miles south of Dover, on the A. C. L. R. R., Nov. 6th, 7th and 8th, 1914. All lovers of Bible truth are invited, especially ministering brethren of our faith and order. For further information address me.

C. K. HAINES.

LAKELAND, Fla.

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THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

We have on hand the Old School Baptist Hymn and Tune Book, both shape note and round note, 70 cents for single book, sent by mail postpaid; six dollars a dozen, sent by express at cost of purchaser. Send orders to Elder Silas H. Durand, Southampton, Pa., or to Elder P. G. Lester, Floyd, Va.

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SYLVESTER HASSELL.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 82. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1914. NO. 19.

POETRY.

THE HOPE OF HEAVEN.

THE hope of heaven's a precious treasure,
The richest boon that sinners crave,
For it affords unfading pleasure,
The hope of heaven beyond the grave.
This hope has been my stay and comfort
Through many a dark and gloomy hour;
The world can never take it from me,
Since it is wrought by God's own power.

Though sorrow, death and woe surround me,
And all about is filled with gloom,
My mind is peaceful, calm and even,
I have a home beyond the tomb.
Strong ties by death long since were riven,
And those I love I see no more;
Resignedly I wait from heaven
The summons to the other shore.

When friends are few and earth alluring,
And through temptations I'm cast down,
My way is dark and nothing cheering,
The hope of heaven still cheers me on.
Though prospects fade and friends are failing,
And all seems cheerless on the road,
Although the power of hell assail me,
I'll hope for heaven and trust in God.

Then as I pass through death's dark valley,
A light shall shine along my way;
His rod and staff shall then support me,
He'll bring me safe to endless day.
Until that hour still let me cherish
The hope of heaven and its joy,
Well grounded on my Savior's merits,
Whose praises shall my tongue employ.

TRUST.

THE way that leads to Zion's city sometimes
Seems dark and drear;
Ofttimes I lose the hand that leads me on,
And then I fear.
But as I blindly stagger on the road,
Faith takes my hand,
And bids me, trusting, onward go to
The Immanuel's land.

Sometimes his face in sorrow hides
He from me,
Then all is dark and drear,
No light I see;
But humble, contrite, kneeling in the dust,
My sins confess,
There learn in deep humility to know
That God knows best.

Confused by strife and conflicts long,
The Master's plan
I cannot always see, but blindly grope
To feel his hand;
And as I once more feel his care
And blessed love,
I meekly follow as he leads me on
To joys above.

Life's problems, hard to learn and understand,
Are wrought with pain;
When he bids me enter Zion's gates I'll see
Them all made plain;
And in the strength he gives me here
Through Christ the Son,
Resigned, I'll murmur low, "Thy will, not mine,
O Lord, be done."

JOSEPHINE DRAKE BODINE.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, Sept. 3, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am sending you some thoughts on the ninetieth Psalm for publication in the SIGNS, if you think best. I hope to write upon the rest of the Psalm soon, if the Lord will. During the past year, and, indeed, since my wife passed away, I have found it very difficult to write. When a subject has been laid upon my mind with power I have not felt inclined to express my thoughts concerning it in writing. When I have attempted to write it has seemed as though I were forcing myself to the work, and I could not feel the enjoyment in it which I have generally felt when writing upon experimental things. My first article written for the SIGNS was published in March, 1864, before I had become a member of the Old School Baptist Church. From that time to this I have written much, and have had much comfort in the work, though I have had a great deal of serious and painful questioning as to the benefit to the churches and brethren of what I have written. I must acknowledge, however, and at my present great age I may be allowed to mention, that brethren far and near have been very kind in expressing to me their fellowship for what I have written, and their comfort enjoyed in reading it, both in my correspondence and in the books I have published. These books, "The Trial of Job," "Meditations on Portions of the Word," the Mary Parker book and "Songs in the Night," were all disposed of right soon, and I had reason to regret that I had not published much larger editions of each of them. Most that I have written has been published in the SIGNS, which is, if I am not mistaken, the oldest religious periodical in the world. Its principles are the same now as those advocated in the first number. It has been all the time under the care and direction of those, as editors, who were truly able ministers of the new testament. I am glad that this may be said of our dear brother Lefferts, who has been called into this very important field of gospel labor, in the place of our dear brother Chick. I am sure he feels deeply the responsibility of this position, and when I first knew of brother Chick's death my mind turned to brother Lefferts, as you know, as one who has the needed gifts. I feel that the Lord will direct and uphold both you and him, and also the publishers, in editing and publishing this periodical, which many years ago I named "our family paper."

At my last visit to brother Chick, not long before he passed away, he, lying in bed, called my attention to a sheet of typewritten manuscript lying on the table, and a sheet, half written, in the typewriter, which he asked me to take out of the typewriter and to read it all. It was evidently written in great weakness, and on that account I could hardly read it. He said it was on the subject of Paul's thorn in the flesh. He had thought he might be able to write it, but after the effort of writing that much his strength failed and he gave up. He said he intended to speak of David and Abraham and Noah, and others of the holy men of old who were troubled with thorns in the flesh. He was quite animated and affected while speaking of it. I miss brother Chick very much, as I know, also, that you and others do.

I am here, eighteen hundred miles from home, with Edith and Gilbert. The hay fever does not trouble me here. Mildred and I expect to return home in a

little over a week. Love to you and yours.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

THE NINETIETH PSALM.

NOT distinctly a psalm, but a prayer, and that not the prayer of an ordinary man, but "a prayer of Moses, the man of God." This must be carefully observed, in order that many peculiar expressions in the Psalm may be understood. In this prayer Moses tells the trials, the experiences, the afflictions, the desires, of the Lord's people while under the law. Some of these peculiar expressions would not be true of those who have been given a good hope of life and salvation through Jesus Christ. The gospel character could not truthfully say, All of our days are passed away in God's wrath, but Moses could say it for all who are feeling the just condemnation of his holy law.

This wonderful prayer begins with the declaration of a glorious truth which underlies and comprehends all the reasons for true, spiritual prayer: "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations." Not only in all generations in time, but "before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." No language could more fully and clearly declare the blessed truth that the Lord has ever been, is now, and will ever be, in time and in eternity, the dwelling place of his people. It seems to be the especial intention of the inspired writer to establish this glorious truth, upon which so much depends, for all spiritual blessings which the church receives in time are given according as God hath chosen his people in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world. (Eph. i. 3, 4.)

Those who have been given divine life have a desire for that spiritual dwelling place, and for all the things that belong to it, even while their flesh is still sinful, and while they feel the condemnation of the law. In the Lord's manifested people the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, causing those who have eternal life to desire the things of God. So at the beginning of this all-comprehensive prayer this truth is expressed in unmistakable terms.

All true prayer is prophetic, and will surely be answered. The Lord does not pour the spirit of grace and supplication upon his people in vain. Notwithstanding the opposition of the flesh, the Lord's will and purpose will be accomplished. Now a wonderful thing is declared concerning the Lord's work, which our natural mind will be ready to dispute: "Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men." The power and province of God are here referred to by Moses as that which inspires true prayer. There must be a knowledge by faith of those things which are the subjects of our desires and petitions before we can pray for them. No one can truly ask for anything he does not want. There must be a revelation in the soul of the things of the Spirit before one can pray for them. Elijah must have been given knowledge of God's purpose to bring upon the nation of Israel the terrible judgment of drought, and he must have been made to earnestly desire it before he could have earnestly prayed for it. "Every one that asketh receiveth." But the prayer must be according to the will of God. The Lord desires holiness, purity, the destruction of evil works, the fulfillment of all righteousness. His Spirit in his people causes them to desire the same. The fear of the Lord is to

hate evil. That holy principle in the hearts of his people causes them to hate evil, and to desire its destruction. The works of the flesh are all evil, and shall be destroyed. They shall perish like the grass. They are all as filthy rags. They all do fade as a leaf. The Lord alone can make any man see and know this. He only can turn his people to destruction, by causing them to see and know in their own hearts the sure destruction of all hope of righteousness by the works of the law. The natural man is satisfied with his own righteousness until he is turned thus to its destruction. He is turned from all his vain hopes and all worldly ambitions and desires for worldly exaltation, and sees sure destruction awaiting him, until the Lord reveals to him Jesus as the way of salvation, and says to him with power, "Return, ye children of men."

"For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night." How wonderful to think of the Lord as having all these thousand years before him, while generations have been coming and going, and men have lived and suffered and died, and nations have arisen and have been destroyed, and histories have been made and forgotten; with the Lord all this thousand of busy, throbbing years have been but as yesterday, when it is past, and are now but "as a watch in the night." Only one watch in all this thousand years, while men and nations have been watching and waiting, and that one watch not yet begun, for it is still yesterday. It is too great a subject for me to think about, much less expound.

"Thou carriest them away as with a flood." As though an overwhelming flood had carried away the years, with all that pertains to them. Only destruction and desolation left. But the Lord's will has been done with the thousand years that are gone. "They are as a sleep;" a sleep filled with dreams so varied, so full of things, so great, so widespread, so full of activity, full of people moving to and fro; but in an instant the sleep is ended, and we reach out to grasp some of the broken dreams that filled the half hour's sleep, but they are gone; not one thing left. So all the thousand years in God's sight are as a sleep. Also they are like the grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth and groweth up, in the evening it is cut down and withereth. "For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled."

It is the flood of years we are considering, but also, and particularly, the people of God, whom these years concern. We think of the passing of time, and of the changes of seasons, and of the failure of all earthly things to endure, and of how quickly they pass away; and then how good it is to reflect that all the things of time and eternity are ever before the Lord, "our dwelling place," as one eternal now, for he inhabiteth eternity. And so this prayer of Moses comes to the time when the people of God are brought sensibly under the law of sin and death, and are made to feel the wrath of God against sin, and to know his anger which consumes them. Moses tells them in this wonderful prayer to the Lord the cause of all their trouble: "Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance." When the light of God's countenance is turned upon one, and the heart is laid open before him, nothing can be hidden from his sight. It is then that all our days are passed away in God's wrath, and we spend our years as a tale that is told.

This, as I have already said, is true only of the Lord's people who have been brought to see themselves as justly condemned, and who have not yet known the way of salvation through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. At that time the poor soul sees nothing to live for but to await the execution of God's just anger against sin; for the story of his life seems ended, the tale is told.

"The days of our years are threescore years and ten: and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow: for it is soon cut off, and we fly away." Why this particular number of years is named as the measure of man's life I do not know. I have thought it may have been given to express the extreme limit of time when a man could hope to do effective work no more; when he could expect to carry out no ambitious purposes for himself or others. This appears more likely to have been the mind of the Spirit by the possible years to fourscore by reason of strength. The result of all the years given to man under the law, whether more or less, is "labor and sorrow." Man's work in natural things is labor and success, labor and joy. One man begins to build, and reasonably expects to succeed. If he fails, another follows and finishes the work. But in the work of salvation a man always fails. No man can possibly make himself righteous by any work of his own, nor can he possibly procure salvation for another. With the sinner this work is always a failure; with him the years, even if fourscore, are always "labor and sorrow." The years are soon gone, the labor is soon cut off, and we fly away. Again and again during the years in which this fruitless labor goes on, our minds are returning to our sad condition, and going over the ground to see if there can possibly be found any way in which our sins can be put away, any way in which justice can be done and we become righteous and pure and holy. And Moses still in his prayer for us repeats in wonderful language the grounds of our condemnation: "Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath."

We are told that "the fear of the Lord is to hate evil," and the Lord says of his people, "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." In proportion as that holy and divine principle of reverential fear of the Lord is in the heart, in such proportion we know the power of God's anger against sin. But while we feel the power and justice of God's anger against sin, there is an exalted comfort in the very feeling of hatred against sin, and of love for holiness in our hearts. It is an unspeakable blessing to have that holy spirit of the fear of God in our hearts, which characterizes all of this sweet and beautiful prayer, even though it causes us to write bitter things against ourselves.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Sept., 1914.

LONDON, Ont., Aug. 31, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Inclosed find two letters of the late and beloved Elder Chick, which have been of much comfort time and again to me, and as I reread them to-day I felt that they might be of comfort to others. He was much beloved, but he is gone to be with Jesus. Christian love to you. May God be very near to you.

Your sister, I hope,

FLORA J. SINCLAIR.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Dec. 27, 1909.

DEAR SISTER SINCLAIR:—I received the pretty card some two days ago, and I feel like trying to express my appreciation of your kind remembrance of us at this Christmas time. We do prize the expression of interest in us, and of friendship for us, conveyed in this manner. We all join in wishing for you and yours every blessing that the favor of kind Providence has in store for you during this coming year.

Yesterday afternoon I spoke to a few whom the inclemency of the weather permitted to gather together for worship, from the words in Luke second chapter and eleventh verse. Some thoughts that were very pleasant to me I tried to present briefly. They are somewhat in my mind now as I am writing, and I feel like putting them down here for you to read, as a sort of Christmas gift to you. First, it is not known by any living man now, just what day was the birthday of the blessed Savior, but that matters not. Still more, it is better that it is not known, lest men should worship the day, and regard it as more sacred than other days. It does matter, more than all things else, that Christ was born one day in Bethlehem of Judea. Without his birth of the virgin there could have been no salvation for sinners. Without his birth as a human child, afterwards growing in wisdom and stature, there could have been no familiar friend for us, who need such a Friend in all our daily conflicts and trials. It is all-important that Jesus was once born, but it matters little what day he was born. Happy are we indeed if we know that unto us such a Savior is born. If this be so, all days are Christmas days to us. The manger does not now exist, and the exact spot where it stood is not known. This is well also, lest the manger, and the spot where it stood, should come to be the objects of worship and reverence, as was the brazen serpent which good King Josiah destroyed, saying of it, Nehushta, which means, It is a piece of brass. It is not important that we should have the manger, or know the exact spot where Jesus was born, but it is important that he should be born somewhere on earth, and the only thing that made it needful that he should be born in Bethlehem was that it was so declared hundreds of years before by the prophets. Angels heralded his birth to the humble shepherds with a vision and a voice from heaven. None others have ever seen or heard as did the shepherds. No doubt there were scattered all over Palestine other shepherds watching their flocks, as were these, but to none save these was this vision given, and after delivering their message the angelic host returned to the heaven from whence it came. But while angels have not thus appeared to any save these shepherds, the message which they brought is still heralded forth: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." This is still the gospel message. First, the glory of God, above all angels and all powers in heaven or in earth, then peace, peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ by faith, and then, good will toward men. This sums up the one cause of salvation, the effects of this salvation in the hearts of all who believe, and last, the fruit which appears toward others, "good will." I think that I was enabled to speak things which were to me most precious, and that I spoke to some who knew these things for themselves. Wherever this gospel message comes to any hearts, there is Christmastide indeed, there is the birth and the indwelling of the living Christ indeed. His

finished work was to the glory of God in the highest, it wrought peace in the hearts of men, and out of that has sprung up good will toward all.

Let this be, dear sister, my Christmas card to you and yours. We are all in usual health now, except some colds. I trust that you and yours are well. Remember me to all your family, and to all who may inquire for me.

I remain your brother in the hope of the gospel,

F. A. CHICK.

HOPEWELL, N. J. Jan. 6, 1912.

DEAR SISTER SINCLAIR:—I was both surprised and glad when your letter came to me yesterday, and I feel like writing you, at least a few lines, in reply this morning. When I was in Canada last October I was much disappointed that I did not see you. The meetings all around where I went were most pleasant to me, and I think they were to some others also. Time is winging us away very fast, as it seems in these my later years. Often I find myself looking back, and again I find myself looking forward, and more and more I look forward to that which is beyond this world. I think that in some ways the things below grow less and less with me, while the things that are beyond, and which fill eternity, are more with me than they used to be. We learn by experience, if we learn at all (and I am sure that your experience has been like mine) this one thing at least, viz., that this world fades and the other world grows brighter. Just now the words of David have occurred to me: Then shall I be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness. Certainly David was not satisfied. Much had been given him, and the Lord had greatly blessed him with temporal blessings; his was an exalted name, great power was his, wealth he had at his command, the highest worldly ambition that ever could have been his had been gratified, and, more than all these earthly blessings, he had much of communion with that God who had called him and whom he loved. He was a man after God's own heart, and inspired to write things that should express the mind and will of God, and also the desires of all spiritual men in all ages. All this had been given him, and was his, yet he was not as yet satisfied, but looking forward, and remembering the promises of God, he said, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." Nothing here below can fully satisfy the man born of God. The closest communion which may be vouchsafed to him with the Father and the Son does not measure up to his large desire, the flesh hinders his most solemn enjoyments, the flesh mars his closest communion with God. This the believer realizes, and so is not satisfied. But how wonderful is that assurance which sometimes is felt, even in these low grounds, that one day it shall be otherwise. Then, when I awake with thy likeness, shall I be satisfied. What will it be to be satisfied? Who can tell? Never again to know one thought that is contrary to God's will. Never again to have a question about his ways, but to be one, altogether one, in heart and mind with him. What will it be to never again have one sinful thought, never again to know disappointment or sorrow? There shall be no tears there to wipe away, nor sighing, nor any crying, nor any dying. The warfare between the flesh and the Spirit shall never be waged again, for there the flesh is put away, and the Spirit reigns alone. But while I am thinking of the future I also remember that for

the present time and present life the blessed Lord has promised that as our days our strength shall be. The blessed Lord walks in and with his people. This is what keeps them from being overwhelmed along the way by its trials and burdens. This, my dear sister, you have found to be true. The dear Lord has allotted to you and to me each our share of trials and victories, and grace has been promised unto victory, and the victory often is that we are strengthened to bear the burdens. Deliverance from the burdens is not often promised, but such deliverance as enables us to bear them is often promised, and always given as we have need. During this past year I think that I have proved that his grace is sufficient for me and mine, and your burdens have been made easier than you could have thought. With the added burdens has come the added strength. What a strong Savior we have. But how could we prove his strength without heavy burdens for him to carry?

Now, dear sister, I wish for you much of happiness, both for the things of this life and for the things that are eternal, during this new year. May God bless you and yours. Write me again.

I remain as ever, your brother in the hope of Christ,

F. A. CHICK.

PORTLAND, Ind., Sept. 6, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—I inclose a couple of letters from two very old, feeble veterans of the cross, who, while they feel the infirmity of age, yet are strong in the things of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, showing that the longer we are in this warfare the brighter the hope seems to grow, and they realize the other shore is just a little way off, they seem to be getting nearer and nearer, and the things of this world seem to fade away as the other shore seems nearer.

N. PETERS.

NASHVILLE, Tennessee.

ELDER NEWTON PETERS—BELOVED BROTHER:—Your excellent letter was received, and read with comfort; it was instructive in reminding us of God's plan of salvation, and of the fall of man, and the position he occupies relative to his children, and the relation that exists between Christ and his people, also how wonderfully he has manifested that relationship in appearing to them. When he appears to them they must feel as Saul felt on his way to Damascus. He was a great persecutor, but suddenly a great light shone round about him; a light from heaven. He fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Trembling and astonished he said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Saul was as a ravenous beast seeking whom he might devour, feeling that he was doing God service, which was only fleshly worship, denying the power of God, claiming he had a work to perform; but it pleased God to show him his inability to do good, and that all fleshly works are nothing but filthy rags in his sight. All must feel like Paul, and exclaim, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" The law of sin is in warfare against the law of God. The natural mind, which is desiring and seeking the honor of men, is not of God. My brother, when man is shown his inability to do good, and his weakness and helplessness, and when it pleases God to reveal himself unto him and give him a heart to rejoice in his wondrous love and forgiveness, a great mystery is shown: God's plan of choosing a people before the foun-

dation of the world. But these are some of the secret things of God, and no one has right to ask, What doest thou? The psalmist in cxxxix. 14, says, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well." I feel that I am mostly in the dark, and would rather be absent from the body and be present with the Lord. I feel to hope that I am a member of the body of Christ. Our seasons of joy are short in the brightness of his love, and we see as through a glass darkly, yet trust it is the work of grace that gives us a foretaste of his love, and we must wait his time for refreshing seasons, as there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven. In every purpose there is a time and judgment, therefore the misery of man is great, for he knoweth not that which shall be, for who can tell him? What wisdom, what wonderful love God hath shown to his favored ones; he takes up his abode with them, and nourishes them, and builds them up on their most holy faith, and none shall be able to pluck them out of the Father's hand. God's people are called strangers in a strange land; this world is not their home. Their life is hid with Christ in God; they have no continuing city here, but seek one to come. The Lord's people are the only ones that shall enter therein. They must enter through the door of the sheepfold. Christ is the vine, and members of his body the branches, and bring forth much fruit, being established in the true faith, having no confidence in the flesh. The bride, the Lamb's wife, was chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and in continuance fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. God's house is a restful habitation for the poor in spirit. The material that God has chosen and put into his structure will stand, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. How wonderful it is that man's wisdom cannot understand the building; their buildings are not upon a sure foundation, and are only worldly inventions. The true building cannot be moved, as it is builded upon the solid Rock, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. Worldly religionists build upon their good works—a sandy foundation. God's true servants will go forward proclaiming, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." The true doctrine of God will stand when all others fail. God had a use for every piece of timber he selected for his building, giving different gifts to be edifying to the church, and their being knit together enables them to see eye to eye in unity of the Spirit. Peter was commanded to feed the lambs and sheep. This applies to the true servants God has called and qualified at this present time to strengthen and comfort the weak and feeble ones who feel cast down, living in doubts and fears, like myself, desiring to know the truth as it is in Jesus. The Scriptures are food to the hungry soul. God is our lawgiver. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; his kingdom is pure. Dear brother, it is a little here and a little there, and we trust the good Lord has given us a good hope, that our faith fail not. I trust that God is directing my mind in such a way that it may be of consolation and comfort to you. My way has been rough, and I feel at times a stranger to grace, and feel to ask God, if it be his will, to give me true conception of his love, knowing that of myself I am not able to enter into that building prepared for them that love him. May God bless you, my dear brother, and give you strength and will to go forward and preach his everlasting gospel

to sinners saved by grace. When it is well with you remember me at the throne of grace.

Your brother in hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

JULIAN, Cal., Aug. 24, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER PETERS:—After reading your good letter in the SIGNS, I feel like taking you by the hand, for you have written my thoughts and my belief much plainer than I can express them. Although strangers in the flesh, I hope we are brethren in Christ. I have seen several of your good letters in the SIGNS, and presume you have seen some of mine, so we should not be strangers. Your style of writing suits me so well that I cannot help thinking of the command to love your brother as yourself. Yes, you write as I believe: that we cannot uphold truth without exposing error. I do not believe in fighting unless we have the Lord on our side. I do believe it is the duty of God's people to hold to the doctrine preached by Christ and his apostles. Paul said in many places, Be bold. He also said that any man who preached other doctrine than Christ and him crucified, let him be accursed. Again he said, Woe is me if I preach not the gospel. If it is a "woe" for Paul not to preach the gospel, is it not for any other man? Dear brother, let us be careful to preach no other doctrine than that laid down in the Scriptures. I feel that there will be a great many woes to be accounted for by many who call themselves preachers. I do not see how they can all preach Christ's doctrine, when there are so many, and all preach a different doctrine, when there is only one true and living Christ, and he is the church. I am not scholar enough to cipher out how there can be so many different so-called churches, all claiming to preach Christ and his doctrine, from the same book. Can you tell me how it can be done? As I said before, I have had no schooling above the sixth class common school education, so you must excuse my mistakes; they are of the head, not of the heart. Now, dear brother, I am past the sere and yellow leaf of autumn, and through the chilly blasts of winter, and am almost through the hot waves of my ninety-fourth summer. I am writing without glasses, but with a pencil, on account of my heavy hand. I am quite feeble, only just able to be around a little, and do nothing but read and write to pass the time. My wife passed away over four years ago. I have been an Old School Baptist for seventy-five years, but a member of the church only eleven years. I had a hope for over sixty years before I took up my cross to follow Christ, and I was traveling in the wilderness of sin all that time, thinking to get better, but all the time getting worse. At last my burden became very heavy, and every time I would see water I wanted to be baptized. I found the church of my choice in Lain County, Oregon, and on the Saturday before the second Sunday in August, I offered myself to the church, and was received, and baptized on Sunday, in the Will River, where there was "much water."

Dear brother, if I have written anything in this not in accord with the word of God, I pray to be pardoned.

Yours in hope,

S. S. MILLER.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., August 26, 1914.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—Submitted herewith are a few thoughts as recorded in the nineteenth chapter of Luke, relative to the experience of Zacchæus, the publican. After the subjection of national

Israel by the Romans, the emperor chose native Jews as collectors of tribute, and they were men familiar with the manners and customs of their people, as to their ability to pay the taxes levied upon them. The publicans were given the discretion as to the amount each one should pay, and to this amount he added his own fee. The practice reeked with corruption and extortion, so that the Jews decreed that any man who accepted this office of tax-gatherer should be thrust out of the synagogue, and this is why the question was asked our Savior, as to whether it was lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar or no, for the Jews tempting him would have an occasion to thrust him out of the synagogue should he answer this question in the affirmative. But his manner of reply, as usual, was of more force than a simple yes or no, for he gave the reason and the proof that it was lawful to render unto Cæsar that which belonged to him. The publican of the narrative which we have in mind now was more than a peer among his fellows, being chief of them. In this world's goods he was rich, but his desires were not satisfied, for he had heard of one Jesus, who was going about doing good, healing the sick, cleansing the lepers, restoring the sight of the blind and raising the dead to life again. He desired to see him, who he was, but he "could not for the press, because he was little of stature." The multitude of those following Jesus was in his way, as the flesh is always in the way, and the whole environment of the occasion was such that no act or invention of his could place him in a position to see the object of his desire. This bears out the declaration that none by searching can find out God, that we cannot go to him, that he must discover his people, and that as a Shepherd he must seek his sheep and call them by name. Zacchæus being foiled in the attempt to see who he was, while upon the earth, made an effort to rise above it, by climbing up in a sycamore tree, but his efforts availed nothing; in fact, he was farther from his object than before, for as "he ran before" he was going away from that which he desired to attain. This proves how futile and how useless any effort which we may make is in gaining the attention and favor of the Almighty. To see Jesus face to face, to know him, is life eternal, and this life does not accrue from poor finite worms of the dust. Zacchæus may have desired with all his heart to see Jesus, to know him; he might run before him for one mile, or for one million miles, and never have accomplished the one and only desire of his heart that we know anything about, only to find himself as far, or farther, away than when he began, for it is not by works of righteousness that we have done, it is by grace we are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Jesus came where he was after all his efforts and inventions to behold him were exhausted, and called this publican by name, without any ceremony or introduction whatever, for known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world. He anticipates every thought and intent of the heart, and the favor which came to Zacchæus that day was among the treasures which were secured in Christ before time began. It is written that he is above our thoughts as high as the heavens are above the earth, that no flesh shall glory in his presence, so that it was in keeping with this thought that he should command Zacchæus to come down, where, being a man little of stature, he was little and below the Savior. In passing,

allow me to call your attention to the sycamore tree. This tree is a beautiful, ornamental giant, with widespreading branches, one likely to attract the attention of a passerby, and Zacchæus might have chosen it for the reason that if one passing, especially the one in whom he was most interested, should pause to admire the tree, his desire to see Jesus would be satisfied. The ancient Egyptians utilized the wood of this tree in the manufacture of mummy cases, on account of its durability, beautiful grain and color. The heathen Egyptians in their idolatrous worship believed that the departed spirit of a man would return to the earth some time in the future and require this body of flesh to dwell in the second time, and they concocted a preparation to preserve the body indefinitely. Many of these are still in evidence, but the mode by which they were mummified was lost about the time of the coming of our Savior, a very proper period for it to occur, for he taught that all flesh is grass, and that man is like water spilled upon the ground, and that the flesh profiteth nothing. This publican attempted to hold out his good works as a favorable introduction, but there was no account of them taken at all, as far as the Scriptures indicate. He was not favored for having restored fourfold that which he might have taken by unlawful acquisition; it was no credit to him anyway, for the Roman law decreed that this should be done. This publican is a very fitting example, and shows that it is beyond the effort of man, with all his wealth, power or greatness, to become acquainted with the things that pertain to life eternal, which are as high above man and his thoughts as the heavens are higher than the earth. This little publican, with all his wealth and position, with all his efforts and good work, never could have gained the favor of the Lord had he not come where the publican was.

Yours in friendship, love and truth,

EVERETT R. KINNEY.

SOME THINGS THAT WE KNOW, AND SOME THINGS THAT WE DO NOT KNOW.

"WE know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."—1 John iii. 14. Who are "the brethren"? They are they who worship God in spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. They who have the spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. They who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them. They who believe that Jesus is the Savior of sinners. They who feel that they are all their lifetime subject to bondage. They whom the Lord has separated from the world, so that they feel that they are "killed all the day long." (Psalms xliv. 22; Romans viii. 36; 1 Cor. xv. 31; 2 Cor. iv. 10.) They who are troubled on every side, yet not distressed, who are perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted, but not forsaken, cast down, but not destroyed. These are they who groan, being burdened, earnestly desiring something better than what they have in this life. We know that we love "the brethren" who are thus situated in this world. Are we not in sympathy with the afflicted brethren? We know that we are, because we feel some of the same afflictions. We know that if in this life only we have hope in God we are the most miserable of all men. We know that we are sinners; we know that this natural mind must decay; that this fleshly heart shall perish; that our feet must cease their walks to the house of God; that our

hands shall fail from giving drink to the thirsty; that our tongues shall be stilled in death. We know not what we shall be. We know not that there shall remain with us signs of the recognition of friends or saints in the world to come. We know not what our souls are, nor what our spirits are. We know not that our souls and spirits shall retain the memories of our days on this earth in the world to come. We do know that when our Eternal Life appears for us we shall appear with him in glory. We know that when we shall awake with the likeness of the Redeemer we shall be satisfied, even if we have lost the knowledge and recognition of earthly friends. We know that when we shall have put on immortality we shall be in the image of God. We believe and hope for some things that the Spirit teaches us are in the great storehouse on high, because having Christ, our Elder Brother, our Associate, and with him we shall have all things. Just what those things are like we know not, but faith as a "still small voice" whispers, Be still and know that I am God, who changeth not. How different it is with us than with the worldly-minded. We have spiritual knowledge, they have not. Our knowledge is sweetened by the beauties of holiness appearing on the mountains of Zion. The world cannot even see the holy mountain, much less the beauty displayed there by God's holiness. We know that the unholy religion of this vain world shall perish with those who constantly believe in its deceptive teachings. We know that there is nothing enduring about the self-righteousness of men, that the best of it is filthy rags and an abomination unto the Lord Jehovah; that no man can of himself produce perfect righteousness that will in the slightest degree appeal to the justice of God, and that the only perfect righteousness that justifies the sinner is the righteousness of the Lord Jesus, the righteousness of God by faith, which is imputed to him, because he is included in the covenant of mercy made for him before the foundation of the world. This perfect righteousness belongs to the inheritance of the saints, and it is sure to come to every heir, and it is so well secured that nothing can ever occur to defeat its delivery to every vessel of mercy in ample time for his full justification and perfect standing before God. Knowing as we do, after feeling the plague of our sinful hearts, that these essential truths are established in our hearts to the praise and glory of his grace, let us take courage, as though we are "renewed day by day," considering well what we do not know as well as that we do know, for now we see through a glass, darkly. May we by the grace of the Lord Jesus feel that we are abundantly blessed above what we are able to ask for or worthy to receive from the King of kings.

In the midst of the disappointments of this life are these thoughts submitted to the discretion of the editors of the SIGNS.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., August 29, 1914.

RICHMOND, Maine, April 18, 1914.

MY DEAR BONNIE:—I have had you with me in my thoughts almost every moment since your note, telling me of your father's ill turn; and all of you since your notice of his having entered into rest. I have been with you as I have gone about my work, and wished that I might have had the one sad pleasure of being with you when all that was mortal of our dear one was laid away. My

mind has gone back fifty years, nearly or quite, to the first time I can remember seeing your father. Your grandfather Williams was school agent, as the office of employing a teacher was called in those days, in my home district. I expect it was on a Saturday afternoon that your father arrived, and that we children had been told the new teacher was coming, and I was much excited. I do not remember his being driven home from the station, as I think he was, but my first remembrance of him is that he called me by name, and asked if I would not bring my book and show him how well I could read. I hastened to find my primer, and stood by his side. I recall reading my little words but indifferently, and of thinking that the teacher must think I was a stupid child, but when I ended he put his arm about me and drew me closer, and said that I had read very well. I was won at once to think him both a friend and teacher. I know that I grew to love him, for when a few years later he married your mother and took her away from us I felt no resentment, as I should have done if I had not, for I dearly loved my two grown sisters, and thought them, as I do now, two of the best sisters in all the world. Those years flew by very happily. Your father and mother came to visit the old home, and we younger ones thought our sister's children just the best of all, and cried when, association over, your father took them all to, what seemed to us, far off Maryland. How patient and kind and good every one was to me all through my happy childhood years. Such precious memories do I have. One comes to me as I write. You may know that I was brought up, as you have been, in a Baptist home, where on Sunday mornings father read and prayed, with his family gathered about. Mother, beside this regular time of family devotion, often when events that either saddened or gladdened the lives of our little household, gathered her children with a low spoken word or two, and read her Bible, and prayed before us. This was one of the times, when the time had come for your father and mother to go away, that she would say to your father, "Forris, I would like for you to read for us this morning." How quiet it all was. How solemnly the words fell from his lips, and how good his prayer! It made us, if I may speak of my own impressions as of those of all, feel that God was there, that God was omnipotent, that no harm could befall us since he cared and watched over us, and comforted by the hope of once more in the future seeing each other as in the past, we took up, happy and cheerful, our every day life.

I have written you, Bonnie dear, of days long past. You know that death and sorrow came to the home of which I have been speaking, as it must to all, yet in the sorrow, as in the joy, God was good. He has upheld me and kept me from despair. He has not suffered me to deny that the God who had for so many years blessed my life with the companionship of such parents, brothers and sisters, had not also the right to take them to himself at his good pleasure, and it is so much to praise him for, for left to myself, what impious thoughts might have been mine. In all these years my brother had always been the same, kind, loving and true. I had so hoped to see him again. I think, too, I felt that he was so much needed among us that he must get better, that we could not spare him yet. I hope to hear from you soon, and some of the particulars, and may we all

feel as he told you a little before his death, "God knows what is best."

In sorrow and love, your aunt,

ANGIE THOMAS.

[THE above good letter was written by sister Angie Thomas to her niece, sister Bonnie Chick, and we know will be much appreciated by our readers—ED.]

LAKIN, Kansas, Sept. 9, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am taking the liberty of sending the inclosed letter to do with as you think best. I have tried in my imperfect way to write to Sardis Bethlehem Church once a year, where my membership was before I left Missouri. They gave me my letter, but I have never felt as if I could place it in any other church, though I loved all of them, but felt too unworthy to do that. I have been asked to do so, and it was not because I did not love them all. Since I left Sardis I have occasionally let them hear from me. "I'm not ashamed to own my Lord." Brother Russell's letter is good, and cheered me on my way as words of encouragement. I do not hear any preaching here, but the SIGNS is a comfort, and as long as I am able I want to take it. I cannot make you understand all I feel for you in your recent trials, and dear Elder Chick's family. I pray each one of you may be especially blessed and led into all peace, which the world can never give. When it is well with you remember me at the throne of grace.

Yours in love and hope,

(MRS.) M. H. CHANCELLOR.

WINDSOR, Mo., August 24, 1914.

MRS. M. H. CHANCELLOR—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I received your dear letter in due time, and it was read at our July meeting. You must pardon me for not answering sooner. I have been sick for the last two months, and was not able to be at meeting. The church ordered the clerk to answer your letter, and I expected brother Harris to write, and he expected me to, so neither one did. My dear sister, your letter was encouraging to us, to know you think of us here at Sardis, and the same God called you from nature's darkness into his glorious light that we hope has called us to worship in the same glorious kingdom of God. We have a good many members away from us, and if they ever think of us or the dear old church, so dear to us all, we do not know it, as they never do as you and a few others who write us. We are often in gloom and darkness, and made to feel the need of the light of the divine light. Our righteousness is as filthy rags. We are so ignorant of the knowledge of divine light we are made to ask of him who is the Giver of our liberty. Often we feel the weakness of the flesh and need the support of his everlasting arms, and if we are not supported by him and sustained by his everlasting grace we are lost; if left to our own strength we know we are lost. But, dear sister, it is encouraging to know that we have a Friend that sticketh closer to us than a brother. What a Friend we have in Jesus; one that has borne our sins in his own body and paid the great debt we owed.

Elder J. C. Jones, of St. Joseph, was with us yesterday and the day before, and preached with much liberty and encouraged us. He surely is one of God's chosen ones to stand on the walls of Zion and declare the everlasting gospel. We would be glad for him to come again declaring the same glad tidings, and would have been glad if you could have been here to rejoice with us. We want you to come and see us when you can, and write

us as often as you can, as it encourages us so much to know that some of God's little ones think of us, and when it goes well with you remember us at the throne of grace. We hope and pray you may be supported by his everlasting arms and his glorious grace.

J. W. RUSSELL, Clerk.

WHEELING, W. Va., Aug. 1, 1913.

DEAR EDITORS:—I send you a letter from a dear brother in Texas. I wrote this dear, humble brother a long letter. I did rejoice with him in his vision. We have corresponded since 1907. I have never met him in the flesh, but in mind and spirit I have found much comfort in his precious letters. He requests that I will not give his name, claiming that he is but a vile sinner, not worthy of a name among the Lord's people. He dearly loves the SIGNS, and in it, and in his Bible, he finds his sweetest meat and drink. He has the gift of seeing visions which are a great prop to his faith, and afford him many seasons of deep meditation. It is in these things that our fellowship has been closely welded together, and in the strong and unwavering faith that embraces God's absolute power over and in all creation. I have copied this part of his letter, and will submit it to your good judgment.

Your unworthy sister, in hope,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

EMERY, Texas, June 19, 1913.

MY DEAR KIND FRIEND:—This morning I feel impressed to write you and tell you of a dream, or night vision, which has caused me much wonder. Suddenly there was before me a large flock of sheep, and as I looked upon them I saw them divide. A great number of them turned to the left and advanced out into an open field, and the other part came straight toward me a little further, and turned to the right and went out into another field, and as they went into the seeming gap a small number of them seemed to become frightened and hastened back to the flock on the left hand field. The few that turned back were nearly all young sheep, or lambs rather, they might have been six or eight months old. There were maybe not more than one or two older in front to lead the younger ones, and as I saw them hastening toward the flock in the left hand field I said, There go more of them. Now, dear saint, if the Lord will, I want to tell about their beautiful wool, which seemed to be only about two inches in length, and it was very clean and white, as if it had been dipped one time in pure indigo blue, and not having the least speck of soil about it. O how I did love the beautiful appearance of it. But as for the wool of those that turned to the left hand field at first it is not given me to describe, further than to say that it was all white. There was not one black one in either flock. I would be glad indeed if I could show you a true picture of the beautiful wool, or coats, of those which I believe to be the true flock of God. I am quite sure if it be the work of God it would be marvelous in your eyes, and you would rejoice with me. The thought of their beauty fills my old heart with love and joy. It was such a great flock of fine sheep. Now, dear saint, after you receive this I hope to get a letter from you, and know what you think of it.

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1914.

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JOHN VI. 44; JOHN XII. 32.

THESE Scriptures read as follows: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." The first may seem narrow in its application, while the second may seem exceedingly broad. There is connection between all Scripture, both that of the Old Testament and that of the New, and often the subjects of grace are given understanding of some portion of the word by comparing it with some other. The text in the sixth chapter of John is full of marrow and fatness, as is also the one in the twelfth chapter, the doctrine of Jesus being set forth. The Jews had been with Jesus the day before the words in the sixth chapter were spoken by him, had seen the miracle of feeding the five thousand with five barley loaves and two small fishes; they had gone over the sea because they expected him to be there, but his preaching did not suit them. Jesus told them that they sought him, not because of the miracles, but because they had eaten of the loaves and were filled. This shows that they did not recognize in him the Godhead—the Savior of the world, and that their discipleship was for worldly gain rather than the glory of God. The wonderful miracle did not cause them to believe, but did create in them greater amazement. That man, lowly in heart and meek in spirit, had miraculous power; even the dead lived again at his word. But when he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven, whereof if a man eat he shall never die, they marveled more than ever, and said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?" Really their astonishment is not to be wondered at. Had any of us lived in that day and had known Jesus as a boy, as a man, a carpenter, then witnessed his mighty power and influence, we would have not only marveled at his works, but would have doubted his statement that he was the Son of God. To us this very thing shows the impossibility of man, in nature, to believe that Jesus is the very Son of God. When the Jews asked him, What shall we do to work the works of God? he replied, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. Paul, in speaking of his faith in Jesus, said he believed by the working of the mighty power of God which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead; hence the work of God that he believed on him whom God sent into the world to save sinners, and it required the same power to cause Paul, a dead sinner, to believe that Jesus was the Christ, that it did to raise Christ from the dead. How few believe this doctrine to-day, how few in the days of Jesus in the flesh; only twelve men in a company of five thousand believed him to be the true bread of life which came down from heaven. When the Jews murmured among them-

selves at these sayings of Jesus he said, Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him. He meant by this that they need not be specially concerned about him and his doctrine, inasmuch as he and his doctrine were for a special purpose and people, and such would be made manifest by the Father in due time by drawing men unto him. The drawing did not mean force, as a train of cars is drawn by the locomotive, but in being taught of him, according to the Scriptures, they would be drawn to Jesus in love, reverence and fear. Every one therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto him, and him that cometh he will in no wise cast out. The Father reveals the Son in his love, mercy and power to save. This is teaching the sinner of Jesus, and feeling his absolute necessity, his need of just such a Savior, he is drawn to him, and pleads in the language of the publican, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. The cry is heard, the oil and the wine poured in, the wounds bound up and he finds himself in possession of the secret of the Lord, the Lord having shown him his covenant. Those Jews had been with Jesus on several occasions, had followed him across the sea, were then listening to his voice and asking him questions, but not one of them had "come" to him in the sense of knowing him and his power to save. When he said, Except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood ye have no life in you, they were offended, and said, These are hard sayings, who can hear them? Who can understand such things? Who will listen to such things when they come from a man whose father and mother we know? Then they, the professed disciples, turned and followed him no more. Then Jesus addressed the twelve apostles and asked, Will ye also be offended? Will ye also go away? And Peter answered, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of God. All men then who professed to be the disciples of Jesus were not, neither are they now, but twelve among a multitude were true believers, and perhaps about the same average now will be found. The very words which were hard sayings and turned the Jews away were to the apostles the words of eternal life. Just such preaching to-day turns men away from their manifested discipleship; they will not hear Jesus exalted a Prince and a Savior to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins, but there are a few now in the world who love the doctrine of grace, the free, unmerited favor of God, and know that without such favor they must forever perish. Hence the work of the Father in drawing men and women to Jesus is still going on, and will until time shall be no more; then when time and time things pass away, this truth of God will stand to his honor and glory, and his taught, called, redeemed and justified children will join in the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the Lamb: Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." This Jesus said, signifying what death he should die. In the purpose and plan of the Father he must die upon the accursed tree, he must be numbered with the transgressors. The manner of his death

was as sure as the place and time of his birth. Every word and every step of the blessed Son of God was ordained of the Father; all the work given him to finish was done by him, no more, no less.

In many of his sermons to his disciples he had intimated that the Jews were not the only people of God's love and choice, and that mercy and grace should be extended to them. This text is only another of those sayings. In the lifting up of the Son of man the middle wall of partition, which had always separated the Jews and Gentiles, was removed, and the secret of God, hid from the beginning of the world, was revealed to his holy apostles, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs through the gospel. Therefore, instead of the covenant of God and the sure mercies of David being confined to the Jews, "all men," both Jews and Gentiles, were drawn by the Lord Jesus Christ, the Godhead, to the Savior of sinners. And now, as in the case of the first text, when no man could come to Jesus except the Father draw him, no man, Jew or Gentile, can come to the Lamb of God, who took away the sin of the world, except he be drawn by him who loved us and gave himself for us. This does away with the old and familiar error, "Whosoever will may come." But when the Spirit and the bride say, "Come," there is a coming to the water of life, an entering in through the gates into the city, a keeping of the commandments of God, a supping with him and he with them, a walking in newness of life and at last triumphant death, through faith, to live forever with the Lord and the Lamb.

The above article is written at the request of brother G. W. Townsend, of Gainesville, Ga. K.

THE SABBATH.

During the past eighty years, and a little more, articles on this subject have from time to time appeared in the columns of the Signs, so that, at first thought, it might be supposed the matter had been thoroughly covered, but it may not be amiss for us to add our little mite, with the hope of presenting to our readers a few points which they perhaps have not before thought of along this line. No single text or subject involved in the Bible can ever be exhausted by mortal man, no matter how much he may preach and write about it. A single individual may very easily say all he has to say upon any one subject, but even then there remain vast unsounded depths he has not touched nor dreamed of. Around this matter of the Sabbath have clung from ancient times many conflicting and peculiar notions, customs and authorities. Some of these let us glance at. It cannot be wrong to call attention to error when the motive is to contrast it with the truth. Christ often did so in his discourses, and the apostles after him in their preaching and writing. After dwelling upon what we believe to be the false side of the matter, we shall hope to bring all to the touchstone of truth, that we may put it all to proof, holding fast the good. After all, it is not what we say or believe upon this or any other subject, but what the Bible says, that stands. Any man's unsupported opinions amount to very little. What God Almighty through the operation of his Holy Spirit in the writing of the Scriptures, and in the experience of his children, has left on record must be the man of our counsel. "Let God be true, but every man a liar." "If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." "If any man preach any other gospel un-

to you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." We find it generally regarded among men that the sabbath is one of the days of the week, a day of twenty-four hours, as any other literal day, a day wherein as much labor as possible must be restricted and the time devoted to church-going, teaching and reading the Bible, and the like. The great mass of humanity, to all appearances, actually believes that Sunday, or the Sabbath, is really better than any other day of the week, and that God is really better worshipped and served then than at any other time. Any higher, holier, more spiritual concept of the sabbath than this seems not to ever have entered the consciousness of the vast majority of men, notwithstanding what Christ and the prophets and the apostles say about it in words of easy reading. Man is naturally a worshipping creature; all the nations of the world, civilized and uncivilized, are instinctively religious. This religion, inherent in all men by nature, is as much carnal, sensual and devilish as any other principle of his fallen nature. The so-called christians of the world are not alone in their worship of a god; they do not in this respect outrun the most degraded races of men, and, furthermore, the god which most people talk about and worship, a god that cannot get along without the help of man, who cannot save them without their consent, and who, in all his acts, must have the cooperation of humanity to carry out his purpose, has no more real existence than the veriest pagan deity that the imaginations of men have conjured up, and those who worship such a god are as much sunk in heathenism as the rankest cannibal that bows to a stick or a stone. There is not the slightest difference, in fact, between an imagined god and one carved from marble or hewn from a tree. It is not to be wondered at, then, that in the worship of this imaginary god, who needs the help of man, many practices have arisen having no other authority for their observance than what is imagined or handed down as tradition from one generation to another. Such customs must not be confounded with the teachings of the Scriptures and the order of the gospel church of the Lord Jesus Christ, both of which are chaste, pure and unadulterated with the teachings and ideas of men, as is clearly seen by the elect when the Comforter takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto them. The observance of a sabbath, or rest-day, is not confined to what is called the christian world. Mohammedans observe Friday, Jews Saturday, and many others Sunday, as a sabbath or day of rest. Apart from all religious sanction, the physical and mental needs of men require certain periods of rest in which to recuperate, thus, among all the various races of men, ancient and modern, days have been set aside for this purpose. It is but natural, too, that most races of men should claim what they consider divine authority for its observance. That portion of mankind that professes to be christian claims as authority for observing a sabbath day the commandment in the Mosaic law which reads, "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work." But if this be our authority for keeping the sabbath, why not keep the seventh instead of the first day of the week, as is now generally done? Has any one right to thus modify the law which God gave to Israel by the hand of Moses? In so doing, is not that one as truly a transgressor as if he had broken every commandment of it? "Who-

soever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." The law knows no mercy, revision or amendment at the hands of men. It is inexorable in all its demands, and will compromise its justice to suit none. It is no respecter of persons. We mean the law of God, not that of men. Well, if it be conceded that Saturday should be kept, and not Sunday, are we sure that our present Saturday is the old seventh day of the law? Does anybody know? Can anybody tell? Do we know, can we prove that our present seven-day week begins and ends as did the week of the old covenant? The Jewish year had 354 days, ours has 365. The calendar we use is of ancient Roman, not Jewish origin. The Romans originally counted 304 days, divided into ten months, as a year. In this way they got so far behind the sun and moon that Julius Cæsar decreed the year 46 B. C. should have 445 days in order to catch up. Again, in 1582, ten days were dropped from the year to make it come out right, and again, in 1752, the same thing was done. Now, with all this juggling of the calendar, who knows but what the weeks have gotten mixed as well? Strong is the probability that they have. Confronted with this obstacle, the learned Doctor C. I. Scofield gets around it by saying that it does not make any difference what day of the week we observe as the sabbath, just so we devote one-seventh of our time to the Lord. Just here the learned man runs against the first and greatest commandment of the whole law, which says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." To do this would require all the time, not one-seventh of it. But, turning from this for the moment, Arminians claim that the seventh day sabbath of the Jews is not exacted of christians now, but that we must keep the first day of the week, or Sunday, as the sabbath. To prove this they take refuge in inferences drawn from the New Testament, but are not able to cite any definite command from the teachings of Christ and the apostles to the effect that the first day should be thus kept. The sabbath of the old covenant was enjoined by strict and positive command, it was not left to be inferred. If Jesus had intended his disciples in this new day to observe the first day of the week particularly, would he have left it to be inferred? would he not have definitely enjoined it as he did the communion and baptism? It is true the Head of the church rose from the tomb the first day of the week, but he never spoke of it as an example for any one else to follow, nor as a matter to be celebrated every Sunday simply. True, that same evening of that same first day he appeared in assembly with his disciples, Thomas being absent, but, again, he spoke nothing to signify that his appearance would be confined to first days. On the other hand, after eight days had past he appeared again, Thomas being then with them. This was not the first day of the week, since it was eight days after the first appearance in the first assembly. The descent of the Holy Ghost at the day of Pentecost was on the first day of the week, since Pentecost always came on the first day of the week after seven sabbaths from the time of the passover. But in nothing that was preached or said on that day by any one of which we have any record was there given command to the church of Jesus to remember Sunday, the first day, to keep it holy. In Acts xx. 7, we read that on one occasion on the first day of the week the disciples came together to break bread

and Paul preached. This has given rise in the minds of some to the thought that the apostles usually held their meetings on the first day of the week, but such was not the case. It was a daily matter with them, not a one-seventh-of-the-time matter. Acts ii. 46, tells us that "they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." Members were added to the church every day, not simply one day. Acts v. 42, assures us that "daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." Acts xvi. 5, declares churches were established in the faith, and increased in numbers daily. It is said of Paul in Acts xvii. 17, that he disputed in the synagogues with the Jews, and with devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him. He did not have to have a fine church-building to do his preaching in, nor confine his ministry to one day of the week. Also, in the school of Tyrannus, at Ephesus, Paul spoke daily. Surely we have deduced enough evidence to prove that the gospel church of the Lord Jesus does not confine its worship and the exercise of its gifts to any one day of the week, and it has always been significant of Old School Baptists and their preachers that they have always been, and still are, as ready to get together for a meeting any day of the week as well as Sunday. We have known our brethren often to lay aside all business and labor to assemble for a meeting on Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday, or any other day, just as well as on a Sunday.

But now we have dwelt so long on the subject of the sabbath from the standpoint of formality and custom, that we desire to come at the real heart of the matter. When the woman at the well in Samaria asked Jesus whether it was better to worship in Jerusalem or in the mountains of Samaria, he told her neither, but that they who worship God must worship him in spirit and in truth. This declaration of Jesus gloriously and triumphantly sounds the death knell of all legalism, of all rituals and religious forms, laying bare the great heart of truth. Not who we are, nor where we are, matters so much as the spirit and the truth in us. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty," liberty from all the things of the law, from its curse and condemnation, death, hell and sin. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The truth is Jesus. Those who, through grace, know him are the Lord's freemen. Their slavery is abolished. There is but one place where the law has ever been kept, and that is in Jesus Christ. He fulfilled the law in every jot and tittle, and no man ever did it but he. The sabbath was a part of the law. He must have kept it. If there is one slightest part of the law which Jesus did not keep, and which it devolves upon man to keep, there can be no hope for any sinner the world over. The obedience of Christ may as well not have covered any of the law as not to have covered it all, for if he left undone one thing we are lost. The whole law pointed to Christ. While the Jews thought they had eternal life in the keeping of it, really all the time it was in effect it was testifying of Jesus, of his sufferings and the glory that should follow. The sabbath in the Mosaic covenant was given to Israel by God as a sign, a figure, not a substance. It was a sign of a finished creation and of Israel's deliverance from Egypt. In Exodus xx. 11, it is given as a sign of the finished creation: "For in six days the Lord made

heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." In Deut. v. 15, the sabbath is given as a sign of their sanctification, of their deliverance and separateness from Egypt: "Remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day." Now add to this the saying of Jesus himself in Mark ii. 27, 28, and we have the kernel of the whole matter: "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath." Jesus is Lord of the sabbath. In other words, the sabbath is his, it belongs to him, he fulfills its meaning and brings to light its full substance. The sabbath ended the week of labor; came after all, not part, of the work was done. So Jesus is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Called to him by effectual grace, they, the laboring and heavy laden, come. All their work under the law is done. Their guilty conscience having found no peace in it all, each one sinks helpless, crying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." To such Jesus is the end, the purpose, the fulfillment of the law. He is their Sabbath-day. Entering into him, they never go back under the law again. All the work is done. They rest from their labors as God did from his. In Jesus the spiritual creation of God is finished, their redemption perfect, their justification complete, their resurrection secured. Jesus is also their sanctification, their separateness from the world and all it contains. In this, too, he fulfills and is the Sabbath. The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in them who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Whatever typical righteousness there was in the old Jewish sabbath day is fulfilled by the Spirit in the Lord's people, and they do not fulfill it themselves in keeping Sunday as the sabbath. This matter of the sabbath is a very serious, solemn, spiritual, continual matter, not to be confounded with customs and usages of men. Isaiah, by faith, looking upon the gospel church and the finished work of Jesus, said, "From one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord." Thus we see from abundant Scriptures that the assembling of all flesh, Gentiles as well as Jews, to worship before the Lord is not confined to one day of the week, but is from "one sabbath to another," all the time, perpetual, everlasting. Jesus' explanation of the sabbath caused the Jews to regard him as a sabbath-breaker. Old School Baptists' explanation of it has often caused them to be regarded in the same light by the world. We should rejoice to be found in the same lot with him. He suffered without the gate. Let us go forth unto him without the camp, outside legalism and all its forms and shadows, bearing his reproach. The church in its gospel character is under grace, not law. We are not by this, saying that our people should not respect the laws of the land which enjoin the observance of Sunday as a day of rest from business and everyday labor. We must respect the powers that be, must live law-abiding, respectable lives in the sight of all men, so far as in us lies. But while observing Sunday as a day of rest we do it as unto men, not as unto God, not recognizing that such observance gives us any favor or merit whatever in the sight of God. Our law in the State of

Virginia reads thus: "If any person be found on the sabbath day laboring at his trade, or calling, or employ his servants or apprentices in labor or other business, household or other work of necessity or charity excepted, he is guilty of a misdemeanor, and on conviction he must be fined not less than five dollars for each offense." We presume other States have much the same law. Old School Baptists, as citizens of their respective commonwealths, are bound by apostolic order to live within the law of the land. However, we emphasize in conclusion, in so keeping the sabbath, or Sunday, we do it as unto men, not as unto the Lord.

L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder Frederick W. Keene.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Conference, assembled with the church at North Berwick, York County, Maine, September 4th, 5th and 6th, 1914, to the churches composing the associations with which we correspond.

BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—We wish you all joy and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ. The nations of Europe are engaged in war. Who that gives this matter any thought but must be appalled at its dreadfulness, its horrors, the untold miseries visited upon these proud nations. The Lord God omnipotent reigneth, and not without cause are the nations thus being chastened by the Almighty. What the end will be is only known and will only be determined by Jehovah our God. He gives unto the saints the power to say, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." O beloved brethren, how pleasant it is to turn from all this madness, cruelty and bloodshed among the nations to consider him who is the Prince of Peace, (Isaiah ix. 6,) to contemplate his kingdom, which is not of this world, where we shall see the officers to be peace and the exactors righteousness; for the kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. When the Prince was made flesh and came forth of the womb of the virgin Mary, she wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, and a multitude of the heavenly host were found praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Jesus was seen of angels. (1 Tim. ii. 16.) As sinners of Adam's race the way of peace we know not; we are at war with God, not subject to his law; man's carnal mind is enmity against God. We are alienated from the life of God, strangers, enemies to God by wicked works. Such is the condition of all mankind by nature, and we are children of wrath, under the curse of God in his law, which we have transgressed. But this is the language of the gospel of peace: "While we were yet sinners Christ died for us." O what a subject we are now launched upon in this revelation of Christ Jesus. All this was in the eternal purpose which God the Father purposed in him, for the testimony of the gospel is that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, and not imputing their trespasses unto them. God in the everlasting covenant of peace laid our iniquities upon our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the covenant Head and Husband and Savior of his people. He was "set up from everlasting," "whose goings

forth have been from of old, from everlasting."—Micah v. 2. Surely all these purposes and transactions of the Lord are in everlasting love, in the exceeding riches of his grace. It is so pleasant to the soul to trace the source of all that Christ is unto his people, and to behold it all proceeding from the counsel of Jehovah's will, in his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. (2 Tim. i. 9.)

"A monument of grace,
A sinner saved by blood,
The streams of love I trace
Up to their fountain God,
And in his sacred bosom see
Eternal thoughts of love to me."

And if we are partakers of the benefit of the sacrifice of Christ for our sins, and are reconciled unto God by his blood, what favored sinners we are, how blessed, what gratitude we owe to the God of our salvation! If then all mankind by nature are enemies of God, what can such vile transgressors do to bring about peace between them and the Almighty Holy One who inhabiteth eternity? We all must have been forever doomed to eternal separation from God under the curse of the law. But thus the glorious gospel speaks: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." "Jesus delivered us from the wrath to come." "The chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven; and you, that were some time alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblamable and unreprovable in his sight. Who can contemplate a more blessed and gloriously exalted portion than this for a vile transgressor? and all of it wrought for us and in us in the kindness and love of God our Savior. Jesus shall save his people from their sins, and in everlasting love God laid our sins on Christ, the Surety of the new covenant, and the dear Lamb of God gave himself for us an offering, and a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savor; his sacred, precious blood hath redeemed us from all iniquity, from the curse of the law and unto our God.

"Dear, dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved, to sin no more."

Our peace with God flows from the triumphs of our Emmanuel, and it was through his unparalleled sufferings, by the shedding of his blood, that he was victorious. In his cross he triumphed over principalities and powers; he conquered sin and Satan, death and hell; he died for our offences and rose again for our justification. He magnified the law and made it honorable; he hath ransomed, with his own blood, his people from the power of the grave, and redeemed them from death, and he ascended to glory; yes, he has entered into heaven itself, with his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption for us. O so comforting it is for poor sinners, by faith, wrought in them by the Holy Ghost, to see Jesus, the Captain of their salvation, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor. What Christ has done for his people to make reconciliation for their sins, they are so led that they feel they have need to have this declared in their hearts by the Spirit of truth, that hope and assurance may be theirs that they are justified by Christ's blood and have peace with God through

him. For we joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we receive the atonement. A poor, guilty, perishing sinner can have no joy in God, only through Jesus and his precious atoning sacrifice. Therefore in calling his elect unto the fellowship of Jesus Christ they are taught of their God, and thus they come to me, saith Jesus. (John vi. 45.) All thy children, O Zion, shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. This divine instruction convinces them of sin, shows them their lost estate, and moves them to seek mercy and reconciliation of God, their Creator. They learn that it is beyond all their endeavors to make their peace with God. With men this is impossible. But the eternal God in his everlasting love was in Christ reconciling his chosen people unto himself, and we have already traced this reconciliation which was wrought for them by the atoning sacrifice of the Lamb of God. By the operations of God's grace our enmity is subdued, and we are inclined to seek the face of the Lord. He teaches us that we are wretched transgressors; he puts his Spirit within us and gives us a heart to know him. O, then we yearn to know him, to know him as our God, our sin-pardoning God; and sin-afflicted, law-condemned, self-condemned, broken and contrite in heart, we cry, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. The glad tidings of peace with God can only be preached in the name of Jesus Christ; he is Lord of all; and it is the grace of God alone that brings, that guides the feet of poor sinners in the way of peace. (Luke ii. 79.) The Holy Spirit brought us, dear brethren, to Christ crucified, and there our sin-burdened hearts were instructed that the chastisement of our peace was upon him. Jesus made peace by the blood of his cross, and our hearts believed in him; we received the atonement. This is sacredly experimental, for the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, so takes of the things of Christ and assures us that for us Jesus died, and by his gracious, mighty power working in us we believe in Jesus with all the heart. In these sacred moments there is no part of our heart for any one else, or anything to reconcile us unto God.

> "Nothing in my hand I bring,
> Simply to thy cross I cling."

All our trust is in the dear Lamb of God, in him we have the knowledge of salvation by the remission of our sins. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. O sweet tranquillity, blessed peace in the conscience, there is no condemnation to them which are in him. The terrors of law and of God with us can have nothing to do, our Savior's obedience and blood hide all our transgressions from view. All accusations are hushed, they are overcome by the blood of the Lamb. (Rev. xii. 11.) The blood of Christ speaks (Heb. xii. 24,) our pardon, justification and redemption, and we have peace with God. Dear brethren, we have tasted this blessedness, and how often it is needful for us poor sinners to taste again and again that the Lord is gracious. There are many aspects in which we are given to know Jesus as the Prince of Peace, for as we journey to the better country there are times of turmoil, conflicts are encountered; there are invasions of our pleasant land by the enemy. The children of Zion are at times tossed with tempest and not comforted. But when the enemy shall come in like a flood the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him. (Isaiah lix. 19.) For it is written, "And this man [the

Prince of Peace, Christ the Lord] shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land; and when he shall tread in our palaces."—Micah v. 5. The Lord our God will in due time appear to the help of his afflicted ones. He will turn back the flood, the proud waves shall be stayed, the vile intruders shall be cast out and banished from our palaces, for Jesus' standard is lifted up, and upon it is inscribed, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, I have redeemed thee, thou art mine. The Lion of the tribe of Judah prevails in our behalf to put to flight all the enemies of our souls. Our sins, our iniquities, the gates of hell, our fears and sorrows, are all subdued, and we are consoled and in rest when Jesus is near. He maketh peace in our borders, and fillest thee, O Zion, with the finest of wheat. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked; the way of peace they know not. But how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth. (Isaiah lii. 7.) All our hope is in the glad tidings of Christ. His felt presence in the soul, every revelation given us by the Comforter calms our fears, quells every disturbance that the world, the flesh and the devil may create, and we find that declaration so blessedly true, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." And if we are the subjects of the Prince of Peace, his indwelling Spirit will teach us to follow after peace, to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Tale-bearers, hypocrites, teachers of errors, do not belong to the Prince of Peace, they are Christ's enemies, and are ever hurtful among the family of God. "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." All such have the Spirit of the Prince of Peace and walk in his laws. They are not found turning aside to crooked ways, they are not for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness, they are not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but they walk, and are constantly seeking grace to walk humbly with their God; they seek to follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. Blessed are the peacemakers, they walk in the truth, in wisdom's ways, whose ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace; their feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. O how beautiful are thy feet with such shoes, O daughter of the God of peace, and spouse of Jesus Christ, the lovely Prince of Peace! Great peace have they that love thy law, O Christ, and nothing shall offend them.

We submit these thoughts unto you all, beloved of God, who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

FREDERICK W. KEENE, Mod.
JOSEPH F. HALL, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

M. Hockenbury, N. J., $1.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, Sept. 16th, 1914, at the home of the bride's parents, Kearneysville, W. Va., Ira Clarence Thompson, of Herndon, Va., and Miss Laura Titus Miller.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Warren White was born in Anderson Co., Ky., August 16th, 1873, and died in Shelbyville, Ky., June 16th, 1914. He was engaged in removing from a car some crates of doors when they fell upon him, crushing his head against the side of the car, killing him instantly. Mr. White came to Shelbyville when quite a young man, and in matters of business entered actively into the warfare of life. His stock in trade consisted in a hardy specimen of young manhood, an honest, willing heart, an industrious, active turn of mind and ready hands, with which he took hold, and with untiring energy, backed by an indomitable will, forged ahead and built up a reputation which took hold upon the confidence of the people and opened to him opportunities through which he was steadily building up a home for himself and his little family. Some years ago Mr. White was united in marriage with Miss Goldie Sawin, daughter of Elder P. W. and sister Sawin, and of this union there was born unto them one son, Ira, who, together with the dear mother, survives. He is also survived by one sister, Mrs. Ora Mosely. When but a youth he became a member of the "Christian Church," but for years had not been in accord with much of the doctrine of that denomination, and had not identified himself with them, but had been for some time evincing quite a warm interest in the welfare of our people. He fully shared with sister White the great pleasure it gave them to entertain the brethren. It had been but a few weeks since Elder Sawin and I had preached the gospel in their happy home, seemingly to their mutual comfort and delight. Our dear sister White is favored with many comforting assurances that it is well with him. May the Lord seal them to her heart, and keep her and the little boy in his love and in his bosom.

Upon being apprised at my home by wire of the sad event, together with the request to come, although I had but two hours to get the next outgoing hack, and to drive twenty-two miles to catch the train, in twenty-three hours I had made the run of five hundred miles, and was with the sorrowing friends. I was not aware of the character of his death until I arrived upon the scene, but as I sped on my way through the mountains of the Virginias and Kentucky I was favored of the Lord to muse upon his goodness and mercy, and the wonderful character of his salvation, how that it is a finished work, and the text, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling," came into my mind, and I was much exercised upon the thought that, let come what might, neither life nor death, things present nor things to come, nothing could separate the redeemed of the Lord from his love nor effect their failure to come unto him. So when I learned of the sudden passing away of my good friend Mr. White, I felt to speak in connection with the text, and to magnify the grace of God in the thought that salvation is sure to all the seed, and in hope that it was therefore sure to Warren White. May the Lord comfort the hearts of the bereaved in these thoughts.

P. G. LESTER.

Mrs. Susie C. F. Guernsey, of Otego, Otsego Co., N. Y., was born Feb. 14th, 1850, and died Sept. 3rd, 1914. She was the daughter of George Morrell and Christiana Taylor French. She was baptized by Elder W. J. Tharp, Sept. 7th, 1873, uniting with the Old School Baptist Church in the village of Otego, N. Y., of which she was a faithful, devoted member to the end of her days upon earth. She leaves one sister, Mrs. D. W. Studwell, of Stamford, Conn., and four children which she had taken to care for and raise, and she was a mother to them; they, with many relatives and friends, and the church, will sadly miss her. She filled her place, did what she could and is now with her dear Savior, is like him, and satisfied. What more can any one desire or expect? The dear Lord bless those she had a mother's care over, and all the mourning ones, with reconciled minds and spirits to his divine will, is my prayer.

Services were held at the home Monday, Sept. 7th. It was the request of the deceased that there should be no display of any nature, no flowers and no sermon, but a hymn and a chapter read and prayer made, and this constituted all of the services. The writer of this notice read hymn No. 15 (Beebe's collection), the eighth chapter of Romans, and tried to speak in prayer, after which her body was taken to the Bundy burying-ground and laid away.

In connection with this we would like to have the following published, which was taken from the paper published in Otego village.

D. M. VAIL.

OTEGO, Sept. 3.—To-day, about 11:30, occurred the death of Mrs. Susan C. F. Guernsey, at her home in this village, resulting from heart trouble, of which she had been afflicted for many years. Mrs. Guernsey was born in this town Feb. 14th, 1850, her parents being George M. and Christiana Taylor French, and her life had been passed in this village and town. In her early life she taught school for a time, and after her marriage resided on a farm, moving into this village about thirty-five years ago. She was a woman well versed in the affairs of the times, and her general knowledge of affairs made her an interesting person to converse with on any subject. Her home was always ideal in hospitality and neatness, and those who entered were made to feel a most cordial welcome. Kindness and affection seemed to predominate in her life, and, having no children of her own, she had mothered four, who have been

given the comforts of a model home. Her death will be mourned by many friends and relatives. She had been sick for some time, but seemed to be improved until about a week ago, when she had a relapse, and the end came sooner than was expected by close friends.

THE Little Flock Church, St. Joseph, Mo., is called to mourn the loss of an aged and faithful member, brother **Samuel David Senor,** who was born in Boone Co., Mo., near Columbia, July 1st, 1834, and died August 27th, 1914, being 80 years, 1 month and 26 days of age. He was stricken with paralysis while out in the yard the morning of his death, and passed away in a few hours without regaining consciousness. He had been frail for some time, but little difference had been noticed in his health of late. Brother Senor was married to Miss Priscilla Willyord Oct. 25th, 1863, who died July 3rd, 1905. She was a member of Little Flock Church. Four children were born of this marriage, one child dying in infancy. Those living are Dr. S. D. Senor, Mrs. Stella Wilson and Miss Ethel V. Senor, of St. Joseph, brother Senor making his home with his two daughters at the time of his death. Brother Senor united with the Primitive Baptists early in life, placing his membership with the Little Flock Church, St. Joseph, Mo., in October, 1887, and remained faithful to his obligations in this church until death, attending all the services when his health permitted, and sustaining the church in every way that he could. But a short time before his death he talked to the church, relating his experience and feelings toward the church, expressing his firm belief in the doctrines of the church, and his hope in the resurrection, in which subject he had been much interested of late years. He said that if the dead did not rise then Jesus was not risen, and all his hope hung upon the death of Jesus which he had accomplished, and his triumphant resurrection. He was a devoted reader of the Bible, and after hearing a sermon would usually encourage the preacher by quoting many passages to support the arguments made in the discourse. He loved to talk on Bible subjects, and had no patience with those theories of religion which had no place for the regeneration of sinners by the power of the Holy Spirit. His spiritual-mindedness made him a good example for the younger members to pattern after. He served during the late Civil war in the 13th Kansas regiment.

The funeral service was conducted at the home by the writer of this notice and Elder J. C. Jones, at which all the members of the church who could do so were present, among whom he was loved as an humble follower of Jesus.

WALTER CASH.

MEETINGS.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Church has appointed her yearly meeting to be held, the Lord willing, the first Saturday and Sunday in October, (4th and 5th) 1914. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus to meet with us. FLETCHER MACKEY, Church Clerk.

THE Abbington Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting to be held on Wednesday and Thursday, October 7th and 8th, 1914. A cordial invitation is extended to all. Those coming on D. & H. and O. & W. railroads will come to Olyphant, Pa. Those coming on D., L. & W. R. R. will come to Clarks Summit, Pa. Those expecting to attend the meeting are requested to write to G. W. Goodrich, Olyphant, R. D., Pa. Arrangements will be made to meet them Tuesday afternoon.

G. W. GOODRICH, Church Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held with Second Roxbury and Middletown churches, at Halcottville, N. Y., on the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, (7th and 8th) 1914. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. JAMES AVERY, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Sidling Hill, Fulton Co., Pa., Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 9th, 10th and 11th, 1914. The place of meeting is about eighteen miles from the stations, Hancock, Md., on the Western Maryland R. R., and Hancock, W. Va., on the Baltimore & Ohio R. R. The brethren will be glad to meet any train on either of these roads on Thursday before the meeting if any that anticipate going will drop a card beforehand to brother Dennis Mellott, Plum Run, Pa., or brother Jefferson C. Mellott, Needmore, Pa. Trains will not be met unless such notification is sent in advance. We are anxious that any of our ministering brethren and any other brethren or friends who feel it in their hearts to meet with us will come at this time, and we shall be glad to do all in our power for their comfort and convenience.

DENNIS MELLOTT, Church Clerk.

THE Soldier Creek Association of Old School Baptists will convene with the Soldier Creek Church, seven miles southwest of Benton, Marshall Co., Ky., on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 9th, 10th and 11th, 1914. Benton is on the N. C. & St. L. R. R. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend, especially the ministering brethren. Any one wishing further information may write

T. S. CHESTER.

KIRKSEY, Ky., R. 1.

THE church of Gilboa has appointed October 10th and 11th, 1914, on which to hold their yearly meeting, and extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, especially ministering brethren. D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

THE church at Snow Hill, Md., will hold its all day yearly meeting on Sunday, October 11th, 1914. A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. B. F. COULTER.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with Mt. Zion Church, near Aldie, Loudoun Co., Va., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 14th, 15th and 16th, 1914. Trains will be met on Tuesday before the meeting. It is requested of those coming to the meeting by rail that ten take train leaving Union Station, Washington, D. C., via Southern Ry. at 3:35 p. m. to The Plains, Va. All others will come to Leesburg, Va., via W. & O. D. Ry. on train leaving 36th and M Sts., Washington, D. C., at 4:30 p. m. We cordially invite ministering brethren of our faith and order, and all lovers of the truth, to meet with us.

I. H. THOMAS, Church Clerk.

THE Welsh Tract Church has appointed a two days meeting to begin on Saturday, October 17th, 1914, at 10 o'clock a. m. The friends coming from Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore will come via B. & O. R. R. to Newark, Del. Trains leave Philadelphia (24th and Chestnut Sts.) at 7:50 a. m., and Baltimore (Mt. Royal Station) at 8 a. m. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend, and we hope to have some of the ministering brethren with us who may be on their way to the Salisbury Association.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE Salisbury Association is appointed to meet with the church at Messongoes, Accomac Co., Va., Wednesday, October 21st, 1914, to continue three days. We cordially invite all who love the truth to meet with us, especially those who minister in word and doctrine. Those coming from the north will take the Norfolk Express, that leaves Broad St., Philadelphia, at 10 o'clock a. m. on Tuesday, the 20th. Take tickets for Hallwood, Va. Those coming from Delmar and south of that point can take train leaving Delmar at 6:50 a. m. Wednesday, also stopping at Hallwood, and be in good time for the meeting. Those coming from the south can take boat from Portsmouth at 8, and Norfolk at 8:40, train from Cape Charles, on N. Y. P. & N. R. R., 11:30 a. m., arriving at Hallwood 12:44 p. m., also on Tuesday, 20th. We will gladly welcome all friends of the cause, and do all we can to make them comfortable. J. F. BYRD, Clerk.

THE Mt. Enon Association of Primitive Baptists of south Florida will hold their meeting with the church called Salem, two miles south of Dover, on the A. C. L. R. R., Nov. 6th, 7th and 8th, 1914. All lovers of Bible truth are invited, especially ministering brethren of our faith and order. For further information address me.

C. K. HAINES.

LAKELAND, Fla.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

HYMN BOOKS.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 82. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1914. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CLEVELAND, Ohio, Sept. 19, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose two letters for your consideration, and if you think proper you may publish them, and if they do any one else as much good as they did us when we received them it will not be in vain.

The little company in Cleveland is in a hopeful condition. Brother Weaver is a good shepherd for the flock, and the Lord has made him a comfort to us.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,
CYRUS CROSS.

LEBANON, Ohio, Feb. 8, 1903.

DEAR SISTER CROSS:—Yesterday afternoon and this morning we held meetings in the large, old brick church-house, with small attendance, mostly sisters, as the church is a "little flock," yet it is their Father's good pleasure to give his kingdom to the little flock of the good Shepherd, who laid down his precious life for the sheep. Is it any wonder, then, the good pleasure of his loving Father to give them the kingdom, since his Son loved them, and gave himself for them? No, but the wonder would be if it were not his good pleasure to thus freely give them all things with his Son. This remark leads me to tell you of the subjects spoken upon yesterday. I read Romans v., then spoke on verses 8, 9, 10. The subject was specially the love of God to his people, commended toward them in the death of Christ, while they were yet in their sins. It was shown that for the everlasting Father, whose love for his darling and only Son was infinite, to sacrifice his lovely Lamb for ungodly and unloving sinners, was the hardest and most difficult part in all the wonderful work and way of salvation, and that if anything had been too hard for the Lord, or impossible with God, this would have been the one impossibility. With men it is impossible, for no loving parent could sacrifice a well beloved son for his enemies. God could far easier have sacrificed the whole universe, all worlds and men and angels, and have created other worlds and peopled them, but that would never have taken away our sins, nor reconciled us to God, nor saved us from the curse of the law and from death. Christ, his anointed, spotless, guileless and loving Son, must die. He did die, not because his holy Father was dis-

pleased in him; O no, but because "God is love," and loved his sinful and perishing people, even as he loved his darling Son. Therefore, God the Father, in his infinite and changeless perfections, verily foreordained his altogether lovely and holy child Jesus before the foundation of the world, or the creation of his people in Adam, their earthly head and life, that in the fullness of time he should be manifested in the flesh, the near kinsman and very brother of all his people, and as their atoning High Priest unto God offer up himself in sacrifice as the spotless Lamb of God, and by the infinite price of his own precious blood, his holy life in the flesh, redeem unto God all the countless people of the Father's love. God's love was sufficient in its infinite omnipotence to make this sacrifice; and his unresisting, suffering and obedient Son, meekly went forth as a lamb to the slaughter, even bearing his own cross, because he loved his Father and his people, and delighted to do the will of God. O amazing love that could make this sacrifice! It surpasses angelic and finite thought. None but God could do this, and he only because he is infinite in love and omnipotent in power, as also changeless and eternal in his all-comprehensive purpose. O is it not most surprising and wonderful to contemplate? Paul shows what this infinite gift and sacrifice and commendation of the Father's love has accomplished and secures to all for whom Christ died, in the strong words of his overcoming faith in God and Christ, saying, "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." Being freely justified by his blood and his grace, there is no foe or power that can ever condemn the covenant people of God's everlasting love. The tenth verse amplifies and glorifies this prime truth in the gospel of salvation, saying, "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." How very plain and simple, so that the babes in the Father's kingdom can see it and rejoice in it, yet how divinely wonderful, challenging the highest praise of prophets and apostles, saints and angels. Atoned for, redeemed, justified by his blood, salvation is ours, salvation from the law and its curse and wrath, salvation full and free and forever. Yea, the death of the redeeming Son of God slew all the power of all the foes of God, made peace by the blood of his cross, and is so infinite in its merit and power that it overcomes and removes the enmity of all his redeemed, conquers and reconciles them unto God as his dear and loving children by the invincible and resistless power of his all-conquering love in their hearts. This done, they now cry, Abba, Father, and in heart and spirit say, "Thy will be done." Reconciliation, then, is the evidence and assurance of our personal salvation, salvation from sin and guilt, weakness and ungodliness, enmity and death, salvation now, henceforth and forever, full and personal salvation. "We shall be saved by his life." We ourselves shall be saved. This is all we need, all we desire, all we can receive. This, all this, began in death, but ends in life. Strange, is it not? We must die in order to live. Atonement or reconciliation to God by death, salvation unto him by life, by the life of his Son. The world does not understand it, cannot believe nor receive it. The reason is, it discredits and repudiates their works, for they hold that our works must come in and obtain, somewhere in our salvation, and it will never do to ignore the value and merit of

good works in our salvation. Baptists even are carried away with this way that seemeth right unto man, and insist upon it, to the extent of confusion and division among themselves, that certainly salvation is conditional, in some sort or part, and does depend upon our works of obedience. But all this is the doctrine and way of the world, for the way of God's love is the death and the life of Christ. For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him.

To-day, after reading the first chapter of Philippians, the sixth verse was spoken upon with the ability that the Lord gave me. It was first shown that the confidence of Paul, which amounted to divine fullness and assurance, was not in himself, nor in the church, to whom he wrote, but in the faithfulness and immutability and omnipotent power of God, who had begun the good work of righteousness and salvation in them, working in them their repentance and faith, love and obedience, making them perfect in Christ Jesus, and making them sweetly willing and obedient in the day of their Lord's power. It was shown that the life of Jesus is made manifest in their mortal bodies and flesh, that they are made to die with Christ unto sin, and also to live with him unto righteousness and unto God. Special attention was called to the clear and strong truth of the text, that God is good, and to the words of his Son, "None is good, save one, that is God;" that he himself by his Spirit and reigning grace not only begins the good work of salvation in his people, but he carries it on, performs it, and will finish it. It was shown that the Lord's work alone is a perfect work, but that all our works are very imperfect and faulty, that sin and fleshly infirmity is mixed with all we do, and that the eminent gospel prophet Isaiah confessed that we are all as an unclean thing, and that all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. Some of the many objections to the truth of the text that our entire righteousness and salvation, with all goodness and good works in the saved, are the good work of God performed in us, were spoken of, such as that this doctrine means an unwilling and arbitrary power on our part, in which we are but indifferent and idle spectators, as passive as stones, or as lifeless machines, having no heartfelt desire for righteousness, no sweet emotion of love toward God, no springing in our souls of faith and hope in Christ, no mourning over our sins and sinful weakness, no hungering and thirsting after righteousness and no panting after the true and living God, as the hart panteth after the waterbrooks. So far from these stale objections against the sovereign power and grace of God in all the work and way of salvation, as he begins his good work and performs it in his people, being the true tendency and effect of this perfect work of the Lord in his saints, it was shown that the very opposite is the blessed truth, for when the Lord begins his good work of salvation from their sins in his redeemed, quickened and newborn people, then carries it on and performs it in them, they are made to realize and deeply feel its power, and all their quickened powers are actively enlisted and fervently engaged in the mighty work that is going on in them, until they are most willingly brought into the perfect obedience and finished righteousness of Christ, who of God is made unto them wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, and they are made the righteousness of God in his Son. Texts were given in confirmation of the doctrine of the text, which shows that we work out,

or manifest our salvation, for the grand and sufficient underlying cause, that it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure; that we give thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet, or prepared us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; that all this good work of God in his saints is unto the end that they should show forth the praise of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. Paul's strong words were quoted, giving his reason for saying, "Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." The experience of salvation by his grace was mentioned, showing that when the Lord begins and performs his good work in us, his life and light in us reveal in and to us our sins and all the latent or hidden evils of our lives in the flesh, so that there rises up in our hearts an irrepressible godly sorrow for sin, which worketh repentance unto salvation, therefore we were led to turn unto the Lord our God, and call upon him to be merciful to us sinners. We then lost confidence in the flesh, and in self-loathing turned away from all our own works to the perfect work of the Lord. So all goodness in us, and good works done by us, are those heavenly fruits of the Spirit of God wrought in us by himself. No other work is good. The blessed consummation of this good work of God was touched upon, and the day of the full revelation of Jesus Christ, when he shall come in his glory, and bring all his saints with him. It was shown that he hath chosen his people in the furnace of affliction, in which heated furnace he will refine and purify them as the burnished gold, and so in the fiery trials of the Lord's servant Job, which were not for his destruction, but for his salvation, and that of God, his faith in God moved him to say, "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." So the fires of God's holiness shall burn up and consume all the alloy and dross of his people, all their own works, which are not good, for he will perform his good work in them until the day of the Lord Jesus in the full revelation of his life and righteousness in us, in the power and glory of his resurrection, when we shall be perfectly conformed to his heavenly image, unto which God hath predestinated all his chosen and blessed people, and they shall be like his glorified Son, and shall appear with him in glory. Unto this end Paul prayed, saying, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."

Pardon me, dear sister, for writing all this. As the subject was dwelling in my mind, and knowing your situation at your home, with our dear brother Secor upon the bed of bodily suffering and languishing, while dear brother Cross and yourself are anxiously nursing him, it occurred to me that these views, though feebly set forth, of the love of God, and his good work in his dear dying Son, and in all his people whom he loved and chose and blessed in his Son, might be made a little comfort to you three in your present trial and affliction.

Your sad, yet comforting, letter came

yesterday, and we were thankful to hear, thankful especially that our suffering brother is so reconciled and peaceful in Christ Jesus, his resurrection and his life. God hath given him this perfect peace. It is the life of Christ made manifest in his mortal flesh; yea, the Lord's sufficient grace, and his strength made perfect in our languishing brother's weakness. Yes, it is true, "Jesus can make a dying bed feel soft as downy pillows are." We tenderly sympathize with you all, dear friends and kindred, yet feeling that you are all blessed, because of the presence and power and love of the Lord with you, who is conforming you to the image of his dear Son, who himself was made perfect through suffering. The close of the chapter in which the text was to-day says, "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." How good and blessed are both of these: to believe on him, and to suffer for his sake. So be comforted in all your tribulations. O may it be the good pleasure of the Father to restore brother Secor, that he may still help you all who through grace have believed in Jesus, yet let us meekly accept the touching words of our precious Elder Brother, in the fearful night of his deepest anguish, when he knew that his sorrow was unto death, saying, "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done." The Comforter, even the Spirit of truth, abide with you all. Farewell.

Our love not only to your own household, but also to all the church and friends of Jesus, who meet with you, and with whom we met. Next Sunday will be your meeting again, the second one since we were with you. How time speeds away. May it be to you all a good meeting. If the Lord is present with you it will be. We shall be anxious to hear soon again, if you can write.

As ever, your poor and most unworthy brother, saved by the Lord,

D. BARTLEY.

LEBANON, Ohio, Feb. 26, 1903.

DEAR SISTER AND BROTHER CROSS:—Your most welcome, yet sorrowful, letter of the 24th came to-day, and every word of it touched my heart with tender sorrow and sympathy, and I feel to be bereaved with you all, yet we know that the dear departed brother is far better with Christ than to be left longer in the suffering body of flesh, and we are all comforted in knowing that he was so entirely reconciled, trustful and peaceful, and also in the fact that you had taken him to your comfortable home, where his closing days were made as pleasant as possible. We feel truly thankful for this favor to him. Now he is infinitely blessed. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." "Even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." In these divine assurances our brother trusted and fell asleep, to awake with the likeness of the risen and glorified firstborn Brother from the dead, and be satisfied. This is the bliss that the infinite love and omnipotent power of the blessed Father will bestow upon him, and all who die in the Lord. Therefore Paul wrote for our comfort, saying, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others, which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." O that will be the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ,

who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity. How this should comfort or console us in our lonely sorrow, my dear friends, and yet I myself am afflicted and desolate in heart and spirit, and deeply realize that I am not at home in the world, nor satisfied, but am a pilgrim and a stranger, destitute, poor and not comforted. The forty-second and forty-third Psalms are the language of my soul most the time, and I read them to give expression to my plaintive cries to God. But I should not speak of myself in this time of sorrow, and you will pardon me, please, and pray for me. Dear sister Barker wrote us very feelingly, just after the funeral, and a few days ago dear brother Purris sent us a good letter. He is a true brother. As I have often thought of it since the peaceful sleep of our dear departed, dear brother and sister, how touchingly I was affected and impressed by the devotion and spiritual-mindedness and conversations of brother Secor from the first, and on until my leave-taking, which was so remarkable and wonderful, for he was filled to overflowing with the Spirit of adoption and the love of God in his heart, as you know. I now wonder that I did not, even then, perceive that he was a sheaf ripe for the heavenly harvest, and that he would be with us but a little while. Indeed, this feeling, or fear, would then steal upon me, but it was not in my thought that that blessed Sunday and night at your home would be his last meeting on earth. We could scarcely have borne it had we known it then, and I am thankful now that we did not suspect it. For his dear sake O how thankful I feel that he had the comfort and joy of hearing brother Cross talk to us all so freely and comfortingly. The Lord knew it all then, just how it would be, and in his love he thus favored his tried and purified servant, whom he was about to call home to himself. How peculiarly suitable and touching and precious it all looks to me now, and how solemn and sacred and heavenly was the place. The Lord was there. Unbidden tears fill my eyes as it all comes back to me, while I write of it to you both, who were deeply interested witnesses to the Lord's presence and partakers of his grace, and of the comfort of his love. Just such a gracious and precious meeting and visitation from the Lord will never again be given us, my precious kindred in Christ, and therefore it seems the more blessed and heavenly to me. My wife just now said to me, that the Lord sent me there, as surely as he ever sent me anywhere, and I said, Yes. Truly the Lord is good, and he doeth all things well. So, dear, sorrowing kindred, let us be humbled under the mighty hand of God, and not repine while we weep, for yet a little while and our God will lift us up, and his hand of love will wipe away our tears, then to us shall be fulfilled his faithful promise: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." O how blessed we shall all be then. The Comforter, the Spirit of truth, abide with you all now, and give you peace. You surely have my heartfelt sympathies, for I am a partaker of your sorrow, and feel bereft with you all. No one was ever more tenderly endeared to my heart in so short a time as was our chastened and delicate brother Secor. How infinitely blessed and glorified shall we all be, dear sister and brother, when with him and all the redeemed we shall meet the Lord in the air, and ever be with the Lord.

Now bidding you be of good comfort, in love, farewell.

D. BARTLEY.

KELLER, Texas, Sept. 3, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—If you have space, please publish in the SIGNS the inclosed letters, written by our beloved brother, Elder J. B. Bowden, of Falls City, Texas. The brother's short visit to the church here at Keller made a favorable impression. He is an orderly walking brother, and devoted to the cause of Bible doctrine. I read his letters with much comfort and interest, and feel they will be interesting to the readers of the SIGNS.

In gospel bonds, affectionately,

ASA HOWARD.

FALLS CITY, Texas, August 8, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER HOWARD:—As I have reached home, will write you a short letter, that you all may know I reached here safely. Well, brother Howard, I have thought pleasantly of the trip to your country, and I enjoyed the visit exceedingly, and shall long remember the faces of those dear brethren and sisters I met while on my trip. I felt a reign of sweet fellowship for the churches, both at Mineral Wells and at Keller. They seem to be well established in the doctrine of God our Savior, neither turning to the right nor left. I had had a desire to see them for a long time, and if we never meet again in this time world, may it be God's holy will to bring us all to reign with him who said, That where I am, there ye shall be also. I have had but little experience in the short time I have been wondering in mind of the beauties of the kingdom, but you, dear brother, have had forty or more years, and no doubt you have spent many restless hours, as well as many days of joy, in meditation upon the sweet rest that is the hope of the children of God. Jesus is your life, light and salvation. We have both traveled through dark places, amidst the howling of wolves, where dangers of many hurtful things surrounded us, but as David said, "He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me: for there were many with me."—Psalms lv. 18. Yes, many are the fightings, foes within and foes without; the flesh against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, storms of persecution and thunders of Sinai. The soul that sinneth it shall die. Then your cry is, O Lord, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Then O the sweetness of the words of Paul: I thank God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, the lawful captives shall be delivered. (Isaiah xlix. 24.) O how we sometimes long to be delivered from this vain world of sin; but just rest assured that He who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, and all the things which seem to be against us are included in the "all things" which work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

I will refrain from writing further. Hoping to be remembered by all the church at Keller, and at every dispensation of God's providence to be reconciled, I am your brother,

J. B. BOWDEN.

FALLS CITY, Texas, Sept. 5, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER HOWARD:—Your very kind and comforting letter just received, and read with comfort both by wife and me. I am always glad to read a line from the faithful in Christ, and yours came in a time of darkness, as well as loneliness. I am sometimes made to wonder if there is any one like me, so much of my time cast down, and, as one of old said, persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; (2 Cor. iv.

9,) fightings within and without, first one thing and then another, marring my peace. Trials of cruel mockings and scourgings, the flesh and all of its stale contents continually harass me in tempting me to be ungrateful to the Lord for his benefits. The older I grow the more firmly I grow in love and fellowship of the doctrine of grace, through trials and great tribulations, through evil as well as good report doth his hand lead. As the poet has truly said, Where he leads me I will follow. Yes, I will follow, for he only hath the words of eternal life; then unto whom shall we go? We have been made to suck oil out of the flinty rock. The holy oil that you were anointed with was from the horn, not as Saul, out of a vial (breakable) of oil, but like as David was, chosen of God in Christ before the world began, (Eph. i. 4,) that you should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. This, brother Howard, should give us great consolation, seeing that God is without change, neither the least shadow of turning, hence ye sons of Jacob are not consumed; every son of God in Christ is an Israelite, in whom is no guile, because of the great work of redemption wrought by Christ, the only one who had the right of redemption, because of prior ownership. Then how vain and presumptuous it is for men to boast of the power of redemption from sin by the deeds of the law. Any one who has a clear mind ought to know better than to so speak of regenerating a vile sinner, thus redeeming him from the power of death, when the doctrine of redemption means prior ownership. We need only to read a little of the law on redemption, recorded in the book of Leviticus, Deut. xxxii. 5–8, and Luke i. 68, which reads: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people." Christ came to pay the debt of his sheep by the sacrifice of himself, and we find that the Father accepted the offering. There never was a man before Christ came, nor ever shall be, who had the right to redeem Israel (God's chosen). Not only did Israel sin by transgressing the Mosaic law, but all men were originally sinners, in consequence of Adam's sin, or else there would be no such thing as original sin in the Gentile race, for the law of Moses never extended to the Gentile world. But sin reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression. We, the chosen of God out of the Gentile race, (Acts xv. 14,) are as great sinners in consequence of Adam's sin as Israel, for by the disobedience of one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death has passed (not going to pass) upon all men, for all have sinned. So as all sinned in Adam, we are all guilty. Therefore all the children of God were in bondage to the law, but Jesus came, according to God's prearranged purpose, to redeem the whole election of grace from the bondage of corruption. Jesus is the High Priest, King and Lord of lords.

Well, brother Howard, pardon me for such scattering remarks, and write me when you have a mind to. Remember me to the brethren and sisters at Keller, and elsewhere, who may inquire after me.

Your brother in gospel bonds,

J. B. BOWDEN.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Sept. 19, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—Since your first article as associate editor of the SIGNS appeared I have, from time to time, desired to write to you. As I read that article I was made to rejoice in believing that in the casting of the lot God was the disposer thereof, and had caused it to fall upon you, whom he had qualified and called to do, not another's work, but a work peculiarly your own. I do not feel that I can say anything to your comfort, but if to express my approval and appreciation of the wonderful gift the Lord has bestowed upon you will be of any encouragement, I do not think that I should withhold this cup of cold water in his name. I believe all of God's dear people need the manifest fellowship of each other, and that they should speak often one to another of their doubts and their fears, their comforts and their joys, their trials and their afflictions, their deliverances and their healings, their downsittings and their uprisings; in so doing they are built up together on their most holy faith, and are encouraged to press forward as good soldiers toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Dear brother, I have received much comfort from your editorial in the September 15th issue. As you have looked around your eyes have beheld marvelous things. The natural eye cannot see things in the light which you have seen them. It takes the skillful eye of the trained sculptor to see in the mass of granite the beautiful figure which lies buried there. It seems to me you have seen a great light, and can therefore behold the wonders of God in all his creation. The psalmist declares that, "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." Does this not include everything? But the blind man does not see it; it takes the eye of faith, which is the gift of God, to penetrate through the letter of the law and discern the promises of goodness and mercy to all whose trust is in the Lord. Paul while under the law verily thought he was serving God in persecuting the saints, but after he had been killed to the law, and had seen a light brighter than the noonday sun, then it was that he saw things unlawful to utter. Even with his enlightened eye he was unable to describe fully all the wonders which came before him. What an utter failure we sometimes make in attempting to set forth the goodness of God in saving poor, wretched, undone, hell-deserving sinners. The child of God feels as did one of old when he said, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."

I am drifting away from what I set out to do, which was to tell you of some of the things you mentioned that came to me in a most comforting way. When you said "that everything that ever was made, everything that ever has existed, does now or ever will exist, is for the glory of God through Jesus Christ the Lord, and for the good of his people," and that "nothing however slight, however good or evil in our judgment it may be, ever occurs in the lives of men or histories of nations but fulfills the predestined purpose of Jehovah from before all worlds began," I had to add, Amen. Surely everything is just as God would have it, else it would not be as it is, for

he doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and doeth all his pleasure, and none can thwart or hinder the accomplishing of his purposes. I like to feel that he is the God of my life, my whole life, and that nothing can be taken from or added thereto. We feel that there are some things we would gladly give the whole world, if we possessed it, even life itself, to eradicate them from the record we have made, at the same time we confess we must believe that they have their place in our life. There is a time and purpose for everything. Disappointments, temptations and afflictions all have their place and were ordered by his wise decree. God's people in every walk of life have their own peculiar trials, but be they reverses in business, hard taskmasters or undesirable associates, it matters not, the Lord rules and controls all events. The minds of wicked men are made subject to his mighty power. In the past we have had reason to believe that the minds of our superiors have been used for the accomplishing of his purpose concerning us. I simply mention these things to show, as I believe, that they all form some part of that wonderful chain. Were we to eliminate a single link, be it ever so small, the whole chain would go to pieces; so then it takes them all to make the work complete, and God will own no other. It must be a finished work, lacking nothing. When one comes preaching this doctrine to me I receive it with joy, and my heart goes out in love and fellowship for that one. It is not something new, but simply confirms me in what I already know to be the truth. The apostle speaks of it as stirring up the pure mind by way of remembrance. We know these things, but we do not know that we know them until they have been brought home to us. The preaching of the gospel is to them that perish foolishness, but unto them that are saved it is the power of God and the wisdom of God. Our brethren do not preach to make believers, but to separate those that believe from them that believe not, and it seems to me, dear brother, that their preaching does separate; it puts the sheep on the right and the goats on the left; it locates the sheep and the lambs, and feeds and comforts them by declaring their God reigns and has triumphed over every foe, and that they will be brought forth more than conquerors through him that loved them and gave himself for them.

In conclusion, let me add that I indorse what you say about immortality. If it be true that there is a spark of immortality in every individual, and that some are not God's people, then it seems to me that the devil would be eternal; but I cannot believe that there is anything eternal outside of God and his people. Christ, in speaking of his sheep, said, I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. Then, to my mind, the sheep only have eternal life abiding in them. I have sometimes said that I believed heaven and hell were made for the same characters, and that the only way to heaven was through hell. Hell is the place where God refines his sons and daughters; there is where they are taught that "salvation is of the Lord;" and I want to say that if the way the devil harasses me can be considered a criterion, he makes an excellent devil. When God finished his work of creation he pronounced everything he had made "good," and not only good, but "very good," and it seems to me that this is as clearly set forth in the lion as in the lamb. Some of these things I now see

differently from what I once did, and I feel that it has been due to the way I have been led, rather than adhering to local customs or superstitions. If I know my heart, my desire is to know the truth about these matters. Pardon this long, rambling letter.

Yours in hope,

R. LESTER DODSON.

HERNDON, Va., Sept. 20, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I feel somewhat impressed this morning to write you a few lines, telling you that your sermon last Sunday at old Frying Pan has left a lingering ray of hope for me in my downcast state of mind. If I shall be enabled to write you anything at all, it will be of my past experience, when the candle of the Lord shined upon my head, and when, by his light, I walked through darkness. If you remember, you preached from the words recorded in the book of Ecclesiastes, twelfth chapter, first verse, which reads: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not," &c. Please excuse me for saying, "If you remember," for I surely do believe you remember your text, but I am so forgetful myself that I think oftentimes others might be just as forgetful as I find myself to be. I often hear a text quoted, and think I will remember it for a long time, but a few minutes afterward it vanishes from my mind. But must I, can I, forget to remember the great Creator in the days of my youth? It did seem strange to me the day you preached from those words referred to above that you, a young man in years, could go away back to my first experience and tell me so much of the way the Lord leads his children. It has been thirty years since I united with the Old School Baptist Church. You were then only a little boy of few summers, but you are able now to trace my footsteps even from that time, thirty years ago, up to the present time of my pilgrimage on this earth. Do you wonder, then, at my saying I thought, or think, it strange that you could tell me more about my travel in life than I thought any man could know of me? I said, I thought it strange, yet it is not strange, for I think the word says that He will never leave his people without a witness, and that his people shall all be taught to know the Lord, from the least to the greatest. Paul speaks of a cloud of witnesses. A witness is one that must testify to the truth, and nothing but the truth, if he be a witness at all. He must testify to the things he has seen and heard, and I believe, if I am not mistaken, that it is written that a witness must also taste and handle of the word of God, not deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, &c. What a high calling it is for one to be enabled to come before the Lord's little ones testifying of the power of God to the children of men. The apostle has said, "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." Thus one so called is both a witness and a servant: a witness of God standing on the walls of Zion preaching the acceptable year of the Lord, proclaiming liberty to the captives, setting the prisoners free. Jesus, our great Captain, sets his people free from all condemnation of sin, hell and the grave, and has brought us into his everlasting kingdom, which hath no end. When this promise is assured to us we feel like singing a song of Zion, but alas, we find that we are still living in a strange land, and cannot sing the Lord's song, but we still remember Zion and our Creator in the days of our youth.

How could those dear captives remember Zion if they had never been in Zion? How could his people remember their Creator in the days of their youth if they had never known the Lord? How could Job say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," if he had not known his Redeemer? Dear brother, I am old now, and you are a young man, but God has raised you up for the selfsame purpose, to comfort both old and young in this late age of the world. Should you continue to live in this wilderness country as long as I have lived, battling with sin, the flesh and the devil, and have sin mixed with all you do and say, and should you live, as I have stated above, to reach the number of my years (sixty-six), and have the same conflicts, toils, strife, downsittings and but few uprisings, I cannot help but think you will then have more cause than you now have to cry out in the language of Job: "O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me." The months he speaks of might have been many years for all we know, but he speaks of it as "months past." Job, in his language already quoted, tells us of the bright spots in his life, and he also tells of his great sorrows and afflictions. It was in the time of his great afflictions that he used the words, O that I were as in months past, as I was in the days of my youth. The fifth and sixth verses of the twenty-ninth chapter of Job fit my case to the letter, so to speak, for he, Job, speaks of the time when the Almighty was yet with him, when his children were about him, when he washed his steps with butter, and the rock poured him out rivers, yes, rivers (not one river, but rivers) of oil, showing the fullness of God in the Rock, Christ Jesus, in the salvation of sinners saved by grace. As it is written, Christ is "head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." When Jesus fed the great multitude with five loaves and two small fishes, it is stated that they took up twelve baskets of fragments left after the great feast, showing the power of the Almighty treasured up in the person Christ Jesus. The name, Almighty, means all-powerful. Jesus said that all power was given into his hands. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Can we limit God's power? No, for he has all power, both in heaven and in earth, and no one can say unto him, What doest thou?

But I must bring this letter to a close, for I have written too much already. Your editorial in the SIGNS, headed, "A Look Around," gave me much comfort, and caused me to desire to write you, but I feel that my days for letter-writing are far spent, especially on spiritual things. I am barren of spiritual knowledge, and I think you know it. Some of my brethren and sisters request me to still continue to write for the SIGNS, our dear family paper, but I feel that my day is far spent for that, and I am left alone, as a sparrow upon the housetop. Pray for me when it is well with you.

Your poor, weak brother, if one at all,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

DAYTON, Ohio, Sept. 19, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I wish to address the dear household of faith, who to me are the dearest people on earth. "We all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." "For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." "In the

morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth." How truly we prove this tale so, dear ones, as we go wearily along. We are taught it by seeing others falling by the way, for but few of those who started with us are left to walk with us now, and some who are older than we still remain as witnesses of the unchangeable purposes of him with whom are the issues of life. Dear household of faith, our very weakness, both spiritually and naturally, so long as we are still sustained, is to the praise of him who is the strength of Israel. How often we feel to say, "My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." All things pertaining to the child of God must be traced back to the fountain of infinite strength, wisdom and love. When we so well remember all the way we have been brought through what indeed has been a great and dark wilderness, we can truly say the Lord has led and kept us all along life's journey. Our very weakness has called for protection, strength and guidance, has it not? and we have lacked nothing. Our God has suffered no man to do his children wrong. Yea, he reproved kings for their sakes: Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm. And who is he that will harm you if ye be followers of that which is good? How supremely happy I feel to know that the inhabitants of that glorious land shall no more say, "I am sick." Neither can they die any more. Sickness and sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more. That beautiful city has no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God lightens it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. This precious light will drive away all darkness, and no cloud of darkness shall ever come between God's chosen and the light of that blessed abode. Forever they shall dwell in the light which none can of themselves approach unto. Is not this sublime to contemplate? God only hath immortality dwelling in that light. We are assured, are we not, that "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ"? Dwelling in him we also dwell in this glorious and enchanted light. O, when a gleam or ray of that heavenly light comes to us here we may close our eyes and by that inward light see and enjoy sweet communion with Him who is invisible, and again our eyes may be open to discern the beauties of this world, and yet darkness reign within. But then there will come a time when these earthly objects and scenes shall attract our eyes no more, for they will pass away like morning mist before the rising sun, and we will cease from the toilsome journey of this sorrowful life and go to that home above to be forever with our Lord and blessed Master. How glad and rejoiced I feel to know there is but one Being, the one only true and everlasting God, the everlasting King, who is under no law. He, the eternal God, the blessed and only Potentate, is the Holy One inhabiting eternity, and his will, his wise counsel, his purpose, his wisdom so infinite and immutable, declare his eternity. He is King of kings and Lord of lords, and all these little, these finite kings and their thrones and crowns and reigning are in his power; they are every one of them subject to the great King, and through eternity ever will be under law to the great Jehovah Jesus Christ, the blessed and only Potentate. O that the Lord will direct those who are groping in

darkness in the way of truth and righteousness; but I fully realize none save God can unstop the deaf ears and open the blind eyes. I have a little hope, dear friends, that when I am done with this world I have a home not made with hands. How anxiously do I look forward to the coming of our Lord, to the blessed time when the very same dear compassionate, loving Jesus whom the disciples said ascended into heaven, and whom the angels said would come again, and who himself said, Where I am, there ye shall be also, will with his own dear voice call me to that sinless land, to be with him and all the redeemed for evermore. How we here often yearn for the society of the saints, for the companionship of those we hold most dear, when our longing cannot be gratified because an insurmountable space lies between and separates us, but on yonder bright shore there will be no intervening space, nor anything to interrupt or mar the sweet fellowship of kindred souls. O may we all by the power of his grace, by the indwelling and guidance of his Holy Spirit, be made meet to dwell with him and all the Israel of God in glory. This truly and earnestly is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

I fear I have written too lengthily, as I usually do, but if there is anything in my epistle that may meet the approval of the loved ones I shall be glad, for all that will be of the Father, but all the refuse cast aside. The dear Savior says in his word that he will comfort the doubting ones and bring his own to the church according to his good pleasure, and how implicitly can we rely on his precious promises.

With love to all the household of faith, I am, as ever, unworthily your sister in hope, (MRS.) LIDA KELLER.

ST. THOMAS, Ont., Sept. 15, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am sending two letters for publication, if you feel to give them space in our valuable paper. The one of sister Hasbrouck's was written some time ago, but the truth remains the same; it never grows old. This leaves us all well.

Hoping to meet you at the Roxbury Association, I am your brother in gospel bonds,

J. B. SLAUSON.

BOICEVILLE, N. Y., Jan. 14, 1909.

ELDER SLAUSON—DEAR FRIEND:—Your very kind letter was received, and I must admit it was a surprise to me, and the thought came to me while reading it, Why, I have no experience to write, while at other times I have felt I must tell some one how I trust the Lord has led me along these many years, feeling myself to be a poor sinner in his sight. When but a child I used to love to hear the Old Baptists talk, and many times would I steal away to read the SIGNS, as I did not want any one to see me read it. As I grew older, I began to feel that I was very wicked, and if I should die I would surely be lost. When I would read the Bible it was a sealed book, and I would try to pray, but all I could say was, Lord, save me, and have mercy upon me. When I was sixteen years old I went to Michigan and began going out to parties with young people, and for a time my trouble left me. After about two years I returned to Olive, and while there my trouble returned. I felt as if there was no one like me. My daily prayer was for God to have mercy upon me, but I could not see how he could save such a wretch as I. Well, I remember one meeting day when Elder Hewitt was to preach. I wanted to go, but did not

think I could, as the lady I was staying with was quite sick, and could not be left alone; but before meeting time uncle and auntie came, and auntie told me to get ready and go and she would stay with Mrs. Saunders. I went, and it seemed as if Elder Hewitt preached his sermon to me. I wondered how he knew my feelings, for he told them all along better than I could have told them. After a week or two I went to a Methodist prayer meeting, and the first one who spoke began to tell how long it had been since he began to serve the Lord, and what great things he was doing for the Lord. The thought came to me, Why, I never did anything for the Lord, how can I expect to be saved? I must say right here, I felt that there was nothing I could do, and if I were ever saved, it must be the mercy of God that could save such a poor sinner as I felt myself to be. In a short time I went back to Michigan, still groping in darkness. I went out with the young people, sometimes thinking I never would go again. The people I was staying with would often say to me, What is the matter? but I could not tell them. One day, well I remember the time, everything looked so dark to me I could not work, I went in to dinner, but could not eat. After sitting awhile at the table the Savior appeared to me on the cross. The darkness was gone, and O how bright everything looked to me. I felt that my sins were forgiven, that the blessed Jesus died for my sins, and for a time everything looked bright. Since then I have been stumbling along, sometimes on the mountain top and sometimes away down in the valley, feeling many, yes, many times, that perhaps I was mistaken in it all. Other times my hope is very strong and bright, and I would not exchange it for worlds like this. This morning I awoke with these words on my mind:

"The Lord my shepherd is,
My wants are well supplied;
Since he is mine, and I am his,
What shall I want beside?"

I have tried to tell you as best I can a little of how I have been led. The hymn 1091 (Beebe's collection) describes my feelings better than I can tell them to any one.

From a poor sinner,

(MRS.) J. H. HASBROUCK.

VEGA, N. Y., Aug. 30, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER SLAUSON:—I will now try and write you a few lines in answer to your letter we received some time ago. We were very glad to hear from you, and hope that this finds you all in good health. I suppose you are having lots of good meetings out there. We are yet going along about the same. We have our church meetings the first Sunday in each month, and have a meeting such as the Lord provides. It seems very sad to me to go there every time without our dear pastor, whom I love dearly, but the Lord knows best, and works all things after the counsel of his own will; he speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast, and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God and are called according to his purpose and grace. We know that when he calls a sinner that sinner lives, because he calls him with a holy calling. God, who is rich in mercy, calls him by his grace. Paul said, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast," and I feel that if I am what I profess to be, it is by the free, unmerited grace of God, for I certainly do feel that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. I do not live as I would like to, my walk is not as I de-

sire it should be, therefore I go mourning all the day long. But I must remember that by the deeds of the law no man is justified. It seems as if I am in prison, but Jesus is able to free me; he can cleanse the vilest sinner's guilt, and soften hearts of stone. Sometimes it seems as if I have a hope, and then again it seems almost gone. I cannot think a good thought nor do a good deed; sin is mixed with all I do or say, and unless Jesus bore my sins in his own body on the tree I am none of his. Still I do hope and trust that I have had, and do have, some evidences, although they seem small, that cause me to hope in the mercy of the blessed Lord. I know that there was a time when I desired the things of the world a great deal more than I do now, and when I desired them it did not trouble me; but now I desire them more than I wish I did, and it causes me to mourn. I do desire to live an upright life, have a well ordered walk and a godly conversation as far as within me lies, but I fully realize that I come far short of it, because I have a heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, but in that wretched heart of mine is the prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner." I love the brethren with a love above that for all other people, but I feel that they are a great deal better than I am. Still I have a great desire to meet with them, and look for the time of our meeting to come, and I hope that the dear Lord will give us strength, and hope his strong arm will be underneath us and enable us to keep up our meetings. Elder D. M. Vail was at our meetinghouse and preached for us on August 14th, and thence to Roxbury, and so by the way of Olive and Kingston, and we expect him here again on Monday after the third Sunday in September. The association will soon be here.

You wrote me, asking me to write the Circular Letter, but you said that if I did not feel as if I could you would write it, so I will say that I do not feel that I can.

I will close, hoping to hear from you soon. When it is well with you pray for me.

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

AMASA.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., Sept. 20, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I feel, since reading the last SIGNS (Sept. 15th), that I would like to say a few words to you all once more before I go hence and be no more. I am in such a poor state of health, and at my age, which is seventy years to-day, Sept. 20th, I cannot expect to stay here much longer, neither do I wish to, for I am very tired of this poor wicked world; I am tired of everything.

I would like to say a word to all the dear sisters who wrote such cheering letters in this number of the SIGNS. Sister L. Keller, your good letter was read with many tears and thanks to God. The pen picture you drew of our dear, adorable Savior is true, and the strait and narrow way marked out by him is for all his people to walk in while traveling life's rugged road. How very precious it is to find here and there a pilgrim traveler in word and thought.

Sister M. E. Fisher, your good letter I must say brought up remembrances to my mind of the past, and it comes to my mind that as Jesus walked by the sea of Galilee he told Simon and Andrew to "come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." Now, dear sister, do you not feel assured that God sent brother Vail on a fishing tour when he visited you and expounded to you the Scriptures and gave you angels' food? Yes, he was a messenger sent from God

to minister food to his poor starved lambs? Now I will tell you of an incident similar to that of yours in the early sixties, when the cruel war was beginning to rage. A poor, tired stranger called at my father's house to stay all night. He called for the Bible at bedtime and read the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah and sang, "Did Christ over sinners weep?" then prayed. O the great, the solemn impression all this made on me I have never been able to express in words or by pen, but have tried many times. Three long years I mourned over my sins, then came peace to my soul, and peace in our land. My father accidentally met the dear man of God referred to, and he promised to come again to his house. He did come, and preached Jesus the way, the truth and the life, and that same day (May 5th, 1867,) he, that dear stranger referred to, Elder Jehu Byrnside, baptized me. I am now the only surviving one of that dear little old church, "The Olivet," but am longing and waiting for my release to come.

I hope the dear editors and readers will accept this as a love token.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., August 20, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Lately I have been living among the prophets, my mind dwelling upon many of the words of prophecy. Just now I am impressed to write something concerning Ezekiel xxxiv. 31, which reads: "And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God." While the Lord's people are men and women (the posterity of Adam), yet they (unless they have the Spirit of Christ) know nothing, desire nothing, understand nothing of the things which belong to the kingdom of God. Their thoughts are thoughts of the world and its belongings, for they belong to the world, the world is their dwelling-place, and all their desires are to be found in it. Wisdom saith, "He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart: so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end." The prophets were men of like passions as we, yet by the work of God they were made prophets, they were made holy men. God gave unto them the spirit of prophecy, and they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Therefore our communion is with God through the prophets, for the children of the kingdom have the same Spirit which was given to the prophets, therefore faith answers to faith in the communion of the Holy Ghost. "But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed," and while the Spirit works in the heart of the flock of God, faith is not revealed until the law is fulfilled and its sentence removed, which revelation is Jesus Christ being made known unto us by the working of the Holy Spirit within us. It is then that we are enabled to read the inspired words as declared by the prophets understandingly. For "Even unto this day [the day of Jesus Christ], when Moses [the law] is read, the vail is upon their heart. Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away." We were in bondage under the law (darkness) until the finished work of our gracious Redeemer was made clear to our faith. "Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." And how wonderful is the transformation, the light hath shined in the darkness, and "we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of

the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." Thus do we with joy and gladness eat and drink at the Lord's table, and hold sweet communion with the prophets in the Spirit of the Lord, taking hold of the declaration of our God in the words, "And ye my flock." Having the mind of Christ, we can justly claim to be the flock of God, the flock of his pasture, wherein we lie down in perfect peace, yet continually remembering that we "are men," and with our flesh we serve the law of sin, but where sin abounds grace doth much more abound. How beautifully and wonderfully has God imprinted his holy name in our hearts in the closing words of my text: "And I am your God, saith the Lord God." How secure and safe is the little flock whom Jesus feeds. Words are too feeble to express the sweetness of the power of an endless life, but it fills our life with light and hope, and we are the passive recipients of God's wondrous love.

Your brother in hope of life eternal,
B. F. COULTER.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Sept. 14, 1914.

DEAR SISTER:—I promised to write you of some of my wanderings in a foreign land, where everything seemed to be thought of and worshiped but the great God of heaven. I started from this home in company with my daughter in September, to visit another daughter, who is a nurse, and had been living in Spokane, Wash., four years. We had a delightful trip over much variegated country, through rocky mountains, some covered with snow, while we were suffering with heat, miles and miles of plains, then vast forests of white pine trees, with beautiful rivers and lakes, lifting my thoughts to the great God, who alone could do all this wonderful work. After three days and nights of continued traveling we came to the rocky, picturesque State of Washington, and soon to the beautiful city of Spokane, of one hundred thousand inhabitants, built on many hills and surrounded by mountains. It was very different from my native land, and I felt very much a stranger, far from home and my church people. I had much time to read my Bible and compare it with the native land of our blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. On the street where I was staying the fences, or walls, were made of natural rocks in their native roughness; sometimes one as tall as the house would be imbedded there, and they would leave it for part of the wall. The dwellings are built on a natural rock foundation, and porches have rough rocks for columns. Near where we lived was a very high wall, with an excavation inclosed by a door. I passed it often in my rambles, and often thought of the tomb in the rock of our blessed Savior, and in mind I could see the weeping Mary sitting by the open door the morning of the resurrection. Christ is compared to a rock, and the church is built on a rock. "Upon this rock I will build my church." This wonderful rocky land, with mountains covered with snow, seemed to lead me, or my thoughts, closer to the great Jehovah; I felt so small and insignificant in his august presence that I could but tremble and feel like a worm, as old Jacob did. God made him to "suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock." Can I dare say, God is my Father and "the rock of my salvation"? O lead me to the rock that is higher than I. In first Corinthians we read that the children of Israel "drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them:

and that Rock was Christ." The Lord told Moses to take his rod and go stand on the rock Horeb. "Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink." There have been times in my life when I hope I have tasted of this spiritual drink when resting under a gospel feast. I starved for six months in the western land of poverty and Arminians, and finally a preacher came from Deer Park and a little band of Nazarenes were assembled together, and were revived as rain revives the new mown grass. The text the servant chose was, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance," &c. We sang the hymn, "Hungry, and faint, and poor, behold us, Lord, again," &c. I told an old sister there that a woman in the apartment where we lived, who had come from an Old Baptist Church in Tennessee, said: "Sisters Johnson and Beck had better come and join our church on Monroe St., where we have good meetings every Sunday, and for Sunday School and Mission meeting we have ice cream and cake." Sister Johnson said: "Go home and tell her we have better food than that here; food I fear she has never tasted. I would rather stay with the little flock." These nine members have bought a lot, and want to build a meetinghouse against winter weather.

Now I am back in my old home, and met with my dear old church last Sunday, where I have been enrolled for fifty-four years. Our pastor preached from the subject, "Hope," taken from 1 Cor. xv. He told how many times hope is in the New Testament, how we rest in hope, and hope that is seen is not hope, and how Paul spoke of his hope. A man once came to him and said, If I only hoped for heaven I would go to some other church, where I could be sure of an entrance to that good home. I could write much more, but time forbids.

I am grieved that Elder Ker lost his dear wife. That was a heartsome sermon he wrote on "Alone." I am glad he has a good man to help him edit the SIGNS. May God prosper them.

LINA W. BECK.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Sept. 30, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I note that in the last issue of the SIGNS you state that you are short of copy, and desire that the brethren would write. The editorials and letters published in the SIGNS have so often been a blessing to me that I feel the deepest interest in the welfare of the paper as a means of communication among our scattered brethren. I believe the way in which it has been sustained and kept true to the principles of our faith is a good evidence that the Lord has blessed the work. It is with hesitation though that I write for publication, for fear lest my intention might be misunderstood, or that brethren might be led to believe that I think more of myself than is right. I realize how devoid of understanding I am, and often it seems presumptuous to speak of things I know so little about. There is hardly a verse in the Scriptures that I can quote correctly from memory, and I fear my mind often goes at random, so I need that my brethren would bear charitably with me and reject anything that is not according to the word of God. The words, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine," are on my mind this morning. I know they were spoken to Timothy, and apply directly to the work of the ministry, but indirectly I feel all

of us can profitably consider their import. Paul has in the preceding verses been exposing the grievous enemies that are assailing the church of God, and in this verse admonishes Timothy to take heed, first as to himself, and secondly to the doctrine he receives and teaches. How important it is that we should watch ourselves, the example we set for our brethren, lest our carelessness should lead one that is weak out of the way. Satan is ever at hand to take advantage of every weak point. He does not appear in the form we often imagine; he may be as pleasant and fair to behold as an angel of light, and always carries the Bible under his arm. Every temptation he laid upon our Lord was backed by Scripture, and so it is in our day. There are no sweeter truths in the Scriptures than those pertaining to the perfections of God, his omnipotence, foreknowledge, predestination and electing love. With great joy we rejoice to know that salvation is of the Lord. But while these perfections are true of God they are not true of us. We have neither omnipotence nor foreknowledge. We cannot predestinate events, nor can we elect ourselves to eternal life. It is not for us to say, Let us do evil that good may come. We need rather to stand in fear and trembling lest God's wrath come upon us according to our deserts. How then should any man argue as some do: Let us continue in sin that grace may abound? The first work of the Spirit within the soul is to cause abhorrence of sin and a desire for righteousness. If the law of God is not written in our hearts, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, then we are not free from the law through the blood of Christ. No man that can take pleasure in a sinful life and justify himself in his course has any right to claim the liberty with which Christ has made us free. License and not liberty is what such an one desires, and that does not become a child of God. Beware of any one who comes perverting the Scriptures. If an angel from heaven preach any other doctrine than that set forth by the inspired apostles, let him be accursed; receive him not into your house, nor bid him God speed. We are to love all men, and not let hatred or malice rest within us, but let us beware lest in seeming charity we have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. No man can love God and fellowship Satan. Any sympathy for devils is misplaced, so is fancied charity toward his agents. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life.

Dear brother, if you think what I have written will injure the least of God's little ones, do not publish it. We are all sinners, and a sinner who has felt the weight of sin and longs for holiness is very dear to me, and I would not willingly add anything to his affliction. It is for God to direct our thoughts.

Affectionately, your brother,

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1914.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REMEMBER THY CREATOR.

MRS. Rachel White, of Southampton, Pa., asked us a long time ago to write on the words, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them," found in Ecclesiastes, last chapter, first verse. We have not meant to slight her request, but our mind has not been led to take up the subject, so could not do it. Even now we feel we know very little about the real import of the text, but such as we have we freely give. We have never felt that the book of Ecclesiastes was as intensely spiritual as some other portions of the written word, but that it has a spiritual significance we have not the slightest doubt. Generally believed to have been written by Solomon as the first words of the book indicate, "The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem," the keynote of the entire twelve chapters is struck in the opening language, "Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labor which he taketh under the sun?" Thus does the preacher announce at the outset his text, and all that follows is an opening up of all contained in those few words. The word "vanity" in Ecclesiastes means much more than merely foolish pride; it expresses the hollow emptiness of all life apart from God. To be born, to toil, to suffer, to experience some fleeting joy, to leave it all, to die, such is the sum total of all mortal existence. Nowhere else in the Old Testament is there such stress laid on the uselessness of all human effort, such emphatic assertion of the vanity of the attempts of man to dignify his existence. Seldom does the writer strike a cheerful note, and only now and then does a glimpse of gospel truth shine through the preacher's view of things as he portrays them from the viewpoint of the law, for the book of Ecclesiastes certainly expresses the experience of one under the law who realizes his exceeding sinfulness, his extreme emptiness of all good, the utter uselessness of all his efforts. A person in a state of nature, unconvicted, uncondemned, cannot look out upon life as does Solomon here. "Remember now thy Creator" is often addressed to young people by worldly religionists to impress them to "get religion," to "join some church" while they are young. It is generally believed that in youth impressions are more easily and more lastingly made than in later years, and, therefore, the time to come out on "the Lord's side" is while one is young. There is no such thing in reality as one's getting religion, either in youth or age. Religion is a vital force or principle sent from God through the Lord Jesus that gets hold of sinners in the work of salvation, and they have not the least to do with getting hold of it. Besides, the infirmities of age make it no harder for the Holy Ghost to do its work, any more than the impressionable period of youth makes it at all easier. The idea that the Spirit of God

cannot work its will in a sinner at one time as well as another, or that the attitude of the sinner is a help or hindrance to that work, involves the idea that God is not omnipotent, that he is limited in his power, and cannot accomplish his will without our help. Such doctrine will not stand the test of the inspired record, and will not do for those who desire and love the truth. There is no comfort in it. We believe that "Remember now thy Creator" realizes its fullest and completest fulfillment in the life on earth of Jesus. He said the Scriptures testified of him, and this text is included in the law and the prophets to which he had reference. Jesus, in all his life and sufferings, confessed it to be his meat and drink to do the will of the Father, and to finish his work. Everything he did and said was in remembrance of him who sent him into the world to ransom the church from sin and death. Jesus loved and served God with his whole heart, mind and strength; he was entirely consecrated to him, entirely swallowed up in devotion to him. No one of us can ever remember the Creator of ourselves. Only through Christ, who did it himself, can such righteousness be fulfilled in us, and when this work of Christ is manifested in our experience, then is the time of love, of youth; then the winter is gone, the rain is over, spring is at hand, the birds sing. Then, in the day of one's spiritual youth, when one first receives hope in the mercy of God, is the Creator remembered. Not yet have the evil days come, not yet the years in which we have no pleasure, not yet is the grasshopper become a burden, nor yet the daughters of music brought low and the mourners going about the streets. In one's spiritual youth, in the days of our first love, when the very face of nature seemed rejoicing with us in praise to God, we could not believe that we ever should grieve, that we would ever be the victim of unbelief, doubt and faithlessness. When the Lord brought the Israelites up out of the Red Sea to witness the destruction of their enemies behind them, it was easy to sing then in the days of their youth, The Lord "hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." Also, it was not hard to praise him when under Joshua's leadership they came up from the Jordan into the promised land. O those were glorious days when the Lord went before them in battle and did all their fighting for them, giving them victory over all opposition, and finally, rest. But how dark the picture later on when Israel grew cold and neglectful toward her God, unmindful of her blessings, forsaking her privileges in Zion and went a-whoring after the gods and ways of the heathen, rearing temples to Baal in their groves and on the summits of their high places. Surely now the evil days have come upon her, days when she needs to be stirred up to remember the Creator in the days of her youth, to remember how it was with her in days agone. None but the great Preacher of all preachers, the one supreme Ecclesiast, by his Holy Spirit can awaken and stir up her love and cause her to be ashamed for all her ways. Now, in the evil days, days when she does not feel like singing, when even the littlest thing is a burden, she looks back to the days of her youth, and says with Job, "O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness; as I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle." Even Solomon himself was not exempt from this falling

away. When he ascended the throne in his youth he wanted not wealth, honor, fame or glory, but just wisdom that he might rule Israel justly, wisely and well. In the days of his youth wisdom seemed the principal thing, therefore he desired to get wisdom. But, alas, his declining years tell a different tale. "And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and went not fully after the Lord, as did David his father." May it not be that Solomon had himself in mind then, as well as the apostasy of others, when he said, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth"? If he was a child of God, which we thoroughly believe he was, he could not help but look back to the days of his youth now when the evil days had overtaken him. Indeed, brethren, if we had not our youth to look back to, the time of our first love, when we first received a hope, what would become of us? But for that hope we would not have the slightest glimmer to light us through the darkness, and would sink in despair. From our observation, it appears to us there is a general coldness and indifference enwrapping the visible church at this present time all over the country, and we are by no means exempt from it ourself. May the good Lord in his mercy stir up our pure minds to remember our Creator in the days of our youth, and stir us up to return to the first works such as were before these evil days came, in which we have no pleasure. L.

JOHN VI. 7; XIII. 27.

BROTHER A. L. Holden, of Durham, N. C., writes us as follows: "Will you please give your views in answer to a question suggested from the following Scripture, to wit: 'Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?' —John vi. 70; also, 'And after the sop, Satan entered into him.'—John xiii. 27? The words 'Satan' and 'devil' in the Scriptures appear as synonymous. If so, there also appears a dormant principle in the creature, devil, that the entrance of Satan brought to light; hence, the question: What principle dormant in the one was brought to light upon the entrance of the other?"

While we do not believe in splitting hairs, or laying stress on fine distinctions that amount to nothing, we scarcely think the words "devil" and "Satan" in the above two passages noted by brother Holden are fully synonymous; it seems to us there is a shade of difference worth our while to note. It is true that in many places where these two words occur they do mean one and the same thing, but not here. In those Scriptures where the word "devil" is preceded by the definite article "the" it means the same as Satan. Where the word "devil" is preceded by "a" it does not denote as full a measure of wickedness as would be involved in the expression, "the devil," which would embrace the whole of Satan and all his arts. Had Jesus told Judas that he was "the devil," we should have been compelled to believe that he was no less than Satan himself. But, by his saying that he was "a devil," we know that Judas instead of being the entire embodiment of evil, was but one of many that falsely accuse the truth. The word "devil" is *diabolo* in the Greek, and literally means an accuser, an opposer. All

men by nature are in opposition to righteousness, thus are opposers; hence, diabolical, therefore devilish. Every man in a state of nature is a devil, but every man is not "the devil." It would take the whole of that portion of the world that is unregenerate and out of Christ to make up the sum and substance of the devil. In 1 John v. 19, "the whole world lieth in wickedness," and the marginal reading is, "The whole world lieth in the wicked one."

But the particular question of brother Holden is, What principle dormant in Judas, a devil, was brought to light upon the entrance of Satan after the giving of the sop to him by Jesus? This principle was money lust, the greed for gold. It has wrecked many a life and marred many a fair profession of faith in Christ. "The love of money is the root of all evil." Money is all right in its place; it is the love of it that does the damage. Sadly has the fine gold of a believer's walk and conversation ofttimes been dimmed and sullied by this diabolical love of money simply for money's sake. Mixed with this excitement of his passion for gold, which had since his becoming a disciple lain dormant in Judas, but now, by the entrance of Satan into him, was roused into activity, we doubt not there was mixed jealousy. This must have been so, because Jesus openly exposed his traitor in the presence of all his disciples, and, no doubt, it fired Judas with a determination to get back at him, to be revenged for having been openly exposed, and, as some men might say, insulted. Jealousy, greed, revenge, what a mixture is here, a very devil surely. These devils, or evil spirits, adversaries of our peace, diabolical as they are, are in the flesh of us all. Grace, and grace alone, can keep these in subjection. The new man of the Spirit, created in righteousness and true holiness, alone is able to keep the body in subjection. Not one of us have anything to boast of over Judas, therefore let us put our hands over our mouths and leave him to his God. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

L.

ATTENTION.

We much regret that we are compelled to call many of our subscribers' attention to the fact that their subscriptions are in arrears, and request them to please make what effort they can toward sending us the amounts due us, which, as a rule, do not amount to much individually, but taken together amount to a great deal and mean much to us. A small effort on the part of each one who is behind with his or her subscription would mean much to us, and would make our work of issuing the Signs twice each month much easier. We receive many letters from brethren and sisters saying they cannot pay what they owe because they have to pay the doctor, grocer, baker, &c., to which we feel to ask, Are we not just as much entitled to what is due us as are the merchants, &c., to whom they may be indebted? It takes money, and much of it, to publish a paper like the Signs, and as our obligations have to be met when due, we feel it is not fair to ask us to go without what is rightfully our own in order that they may pay some debt of much more recent date.

We are not addressing this to our subscribers who are only a few months in arrears, but to those who are over a year behind with their subscriptions, and hope they will not be offended, but look at it in the light of any other business obligation, and do what they can for us. There

are some who are not in a position to always keep their subscriptions paid up to date, but who eventually pay us, and to such we are always willing to continue the paper and await their convenience, but it is rather discouraging to have a subscriber let the paper come on for a year or more after the time paid for has expired, and then to receive word from the postmaster at the post-office to which it has been going that the paper is not taken out of the post-office, still we receive many such notices in the course of a year. If any do not wish the paper continued after their subscription has expired, and will drop us a card to that effect, it will be discontinued, but if they do not take this little trouble to notify us they surely should see to it that we do not lose through their neglect, for we never send the paper just for the sake of running up a bill.

A short time ago we sent notices to many, stating that their subscriptions were in arrears, and asking if they wished the paper still continued to them, and have received answers from but a very small portion of those so notified.

We are very sorry to have to mention the subject of money in the columns of the SIGNS, but this failing to send on what is due on subscriptions is a matter of great importance to us, and we are compelled to do it. We would also call attention to the fact that nearly everything used in publishing a paper has advanced in price, but the subscription price still remains the same.

We wish to speak of one more thing before closing, and that is, that the "contributions to aid in sending the SIGNS to the poor of the flock" are falling off, although the number to whom we are sending the paper free is steadily increasing, which means a heavy burden for us to carry, but we gladly send it to all we can who want it, but are not able to send it to all. Some of the letters we receive are indeed sad, and only a few days ago we received a letter from a dear brother, and a subscriber of the SIGNS, stating he was not able to pay for his paper, and would have to ask us to discontinue it, as he had had in his family three cases of scarlet fever and three of typhoid fever, and that now his young son was down with typhoid fever; he also said he had buried three of his loved ones since February last. Needless to say, his paper was continued, for he said it had been a great comfort to him and to his companion in their affliction.

We hope our subscribers will not be offended at this plain statement, but will look at it in a fair way, and do what they can toward paying up their arrears, thereby helping us bear the burden of publishing the SIGNS.

If any are now receiving the paper who are not at present able to pay for it, but hope to be able to do so in the future, and will advise us of that fact, we will gladly continue it to them, as we would much rather send the paper and wait a reasonable length of time for the pay than to take their names off our list.

Hoping this will be received in the right light, we remain yours to serve,

J. E. BEEBE & CO.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us mnch trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. B. Slauson.)

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, Ashokan, N. Y., September 23rd and 24th, 1914, to the several churches of which this association is composed sends christian salutation in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year is numbered with the past, and it has brought with it marked changes, both in nature and in grace. Some who were privileged to meet with us at our last session have gone to their long home, from whence no traveler ever returns. The cold and icy hand of death with its unrelenting grasp has entered some of our homes and taken from among us those who were dear to us. Such changes as these are common to all nations, kindreds and tongues. While the grace of God changes not, yet its manifestation is being brought to view in those who are exercised by its saving power. While we mourn the loss of those who have gone on before, yet we would desire to bow in humble submission to the will of Zion's King, who doeth all things well. May one and all be given grace to be still and know that he is God, working all things after the counsel of his own will.

In writing this, our annual epistle of love, for the consideration of our brethren, we wish to call your attention to the words found in Matthew i. 21: "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." The language of our text is declarative in its construction, and, being spoken by an angel dispatched from heaven by the Lord himself, comes from the source of infinite wisdom and power. The same power that dispatched the angel from the throne of glory to Joseph in a dream is able to fulfill all that is contained in this most glorious declaration, by bringing into manifestation the infinite wisdom and love of God in the birth of his only Son, to be made a sacrifice for sin. In considering this most glorious and sublime declaration, spoken by an angel from the very courts of heaven, will lead our minds into the most blissful theme that has ever interested the poor and afflicted children of God. In the dispatching of the angel, or messenger, to Joseph, the wisdom and foreknowledge of God shine forth from his eternal mind, embracing this most glorious event that was about to be brought into manifestation, the birth of his Son, as well as all events that have taken place, or ever will take place while time shall last. Each and every event that has come to pass is bringing into manifestation the eternal, unchangeable will of Jehovah, who before time began declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my good pleasure. Again the same immutable and glorious Being speaks forth from the very throne of heaven, saying by inspiration, As I have thought, so shall it come to pass. Embraced in the same eternal mind Jesus stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and he who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast, when the fullness of time came sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. Infinite wisdom, that laid the foundations of the earth, and spoke into existence a world and all created things, had also selected from among women the mother of our blessed Lord. Mary was as much the mother of our blessed Lord

in God's eternal mind before time began as when she brought forth her firstborn son and laid him in swaddling clothes in the lowly manger in Bethlehem, showing that there is no such thing as time with God. He is the great I AM THAT I AM, his glorious abode has always, and will forever be, that blessed eternal now. Thou shalt bring forth a son, are the positive words of the angel to Mary, dispatched from the throne of heaven. Men, devils and angels, with all their combined power, could not overthrow or hinder in the slightest degree the accomplishment of God's word in the bringing forth of his Son; neither can all the combined powers of darkness overthrow or prevent the accomplishment of the glorious mission of Zion's King. The origin of the name of our blessed Redeemer was in the eternal mind of the Father, whose name (Jesus) implies Savior, in divine harmony with the most glorious work that ever was laid upon one that is mighty to save. The infinite Jehovah, who rules all things, both in heaven and earth, and who knows no shadow of turning, chose in covenant of love before time began the subjects of his grace, who, according to his sovereign will, should be saved with an everlasting salvation, world without end, by the shedding of the blood of the only Son of his bosom.

"Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people." Let us inquire into the gift of the Father to the Son. The recipients of God's grace were given to the Son in covenant of love before time, by heaven's greatest authority. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me," are the most solemn and blessed words of our adorable Redeemer, and who on earth, in heaven or hell shall question the perfect right of the sovereign God in the most sacred gift of his people to the only Son of his bosom? And not only are his people given to him in that most sacred covenant of love, but are his by purchased right, being bought with his own precious blood, which was the price of redemption paid by our most gracious Redeemer on the cross of Calvary. Hence we are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with his own precious blood. The most sacred and solemn mission of our blessed Lord, leaving the courts of heaven and coming to these low grounds of sin and sorrow in his incarnation, was to save his people from their sins. This work he was fully qualified to do to the perfect satisfaction of his Father, by offering up himself without spot unto God on the cruel cross of Calvary, bearing our sins in his own body on the cross, thus fully and perfectly satisfying the demands of a divine law, which was violated by our first parents in the garden of Eden when they took of the forbidden fruit and did eat. This law, known as the law of sin and death, was fully satisfied by the one perfect offering on the cross of Calvary. By this one transgression of God's most holy law the whole race of Adam was brought under its condemnation, for, says the apostle, "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." All were in the loins of Adam when he transgressed God's law, therefore what was passed upon Adam was passed upon all that were in him, and God's chosen people are sinners of Adam's race. Hence the fall, and the necessity of redemption, for sin is the transgression of the law, and death the penalty for transgression, therefore being saved from sin we are also saved from death. (Romans viii. 12.) "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are

in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Hence, being saved from sin, death becomes a conquered foe, its unrelenting grasp is loosed on those who were held in its mighty power, its venomous sting loses its poisoning influence, the most solemn tomb is robbed of its victim when the Captain of our salvation rises from its mighty grasp in the very appointed time of the Father and unfurls the banner of victory inscribed thereon, salvation through his glorious name. This wonderful and most glorious victory over sin, death and hell by this mighty Warrior, who fought the battle alone, and of the people there was none to help, is brought manifestly into the life and experience of every heaven-born soul when they feel the raging power of sin threatening their very destruction and separating them from God and the joys of the world to come, to the regions of eternal darkness, misery and woe. But in the most distressing hour, when all is chaos, the gracious Lord appears with healing in his wings, banishing all our fears and causing the troubled waters of our souls to become peaceful, and pours into our sinful hearts the sweet influence of his most Holy Spirit. Thus being quickened by the holy and life-giving Spirit of God, we now feel the power of saving grace being shed abroad in our souls, and where sin abounded now grace does much more abound. The strong man is bound, and the stronger than he now holds the palace. The goods are now in his possession, the victory won, the prisoner released from the prison; he goes forth free from all the powers of darkness. His tongue is now loosed to sing the song of Zion, his heart is filled with the love of God, and all praise given to the ever-blessed name of Jesus, the Savior of sinners.

ORVILLE WINCHELL, Moderator.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, It has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst by death our dear beloved sister, **Ella H. Rowe,** the wife of our dear pastor, Elder Joshua T. Rowe, words are inadequate to express our sorrow and grief in her demise. We can truly say none knew her but to love her, none named her but to praise. There is a vacancy in the church and in our homes that no one can fill. She always seemed so amiable, bright and cheerful, so ready to lend a helping hand wherever she could. As a minister's wife we do not feel she could be excelled—a real helpmate. O how we will all miss her in every vicissitude of life, so hard to part with our loved ones, and she had endeared herself so much to us all; but we know we must bow to our dear Lord's will, who can never make a mistake, and we know all the affliction he puts upon us is for our good and his glory. Our dear sister was a faithful member of the church, always in her seat when possible to be there, and looking out for the comfort of others, but we feel assured she is at rest for evermore, and our hearts go out in sympathy and love to our dear pastor and children. May God reconcile them and us to his will, is our prayer for Jesus' sake.

M. E. JOHNSON,
J. E. ALESHIRE, } For the Church.
H. C. CAINES,

THE foregoing memorial was prepared at the request of the Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore city. It was read to them in conference assembled, by the committee named above, and the church approved same and requested its publication. I wish to say that it is a source of much comfort to me that the church of her membership feels to say such nice things about my dear wife, all of which I know to be true. I wish to say further that I do not know how I omitted to mention her funeral in writing her obituary, lately published. Elder John G. Eubanks, of Newark, Del., preached on the occasion, much to our satisfaction, from parts of the fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians. We very much appreciated his coming to us on the sad occasion, and hope that neither he nor any one will think that it was intentionally omitted in the obituary.

Her sorrowing husband,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

James Long, our dear father, was taken from us by death August 21st, 1914, which filled our hearts with sorrow, but we rejoice in the Lord for the bright hope he left us of a life beyond this vale of tears. He was born Feb. 10th, 1845, and about 1862 went into the war between the States; he was a Confederate soldier, under General N. B. Forest. In the year 1886 he was married to Mrs. Sarah J. Knipper, a widow with two children, and to that union was born one son (the writer). About twenty years ago he united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Little Hatchie, Chester Co., Tenn., and lived a devoted member until 1908, when he was excluded on the charge of believing in absolute predestination, or the doctrine which the SIGNS advocates. He was a dear lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and was always ready to defend what he thought was the truth. In the year 1904 his wife died, and in 1906 he was again married, to Mrs. Susan A. Phillips, who survives him. He was always a strong, healthy man until two years ago, when he began to grow weaker and weaker until his death. His disease was a peculiar one. He seemed to be ready to go at any time the Lord should call him, and he told me about two days before he died that he did not have long to stay here, and I asked him if he was willing to go, and he said yes, and said, "I am still an Old Predestinarian Baptist, and think that doctrine will do to die by." We grieve not as some who have no hope. "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!" was one of his favorite hymns.

His remains were laid to rest in Mount Carmel Cemetery, near Finger, Tenn., to await the resurrection morning, when we all shall meet our God in the air and shall see him as he is and be like him. Elder S. E. Reid talked a little at the grave, which was very comforting. A large gathering of friends and relatives was present. May the Lord give us grace, and comfort us in our bereaved state, and guide us until death, and crown us in that upper and better kingdom. DALTON LONG.

FINGER, Tenn.

Sarah L. Hoagland departed this life Jan. 6th, 1914, at the home of her son-in-law, John E. Jones, Hopewell, N. J., in the same house of her birth. Her husband, Jacob H. Hoagland, preceded her to the grave twenty-three years. She was baptized by the late Elder Wm. J. Purington and became a member of the Old School Baptist Church of Hopewell about thirty years ago. Mother was firm in the doctrine of predestination, salvation by grace and grace alone. Many times she said to us when passing through deep waters of affliction, of which she passed through many, as she lived to see seven of her children, besides her husband, borne to the grave, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." It was always a pleasure to her to attend meeting, and she was seldom absent if it was possible for her to attend, and we believe she died in the hope of a glorious resurrection in Christ Jesus our Lord. She left a large number of descendants to mourn their loss. Four children, as follows: William, Joseph, Mrs. H. A. Hubbard and Mrs. Nelson Smith, all residing in Hopewell, N. J. Thirty-four grandchildren and six great-grandchildren survive her. Sarah M. Hoagland was the daughter of Moses and Eliza Trueheart, making her a granddaughter of "Friday," who tradition teaches was a slave brought from Africa, and was owned by a Mr. Hart, who was a preacher, and owing to "Friday's" honesty, and faithfulness to his master, was called Friday True. Having won the complete confidence and affection of his master, Hart was added, thus the name of Trueheart. Mother was born in Hopewell, N. J., and was in her 74th year at the time of her death.

HER CHILDREN.

Sarah Castleberry died at her home in Plymouth, Ill., Monday, Sept. 14th, at the age of 72 years. She was a daughter of David and Elizabeth Beall, and was born in Hancock Co., Ill., Sept. 9th, 1842. She was married to Jerry Castleberry in 1865, who died about eighteen years ago, leaving her with but little of this world's goods, which made her life a heavy burden to bear. Her lot was cast among the sick and afflicted and hardships of this world, but she was always ready and willing to do everything that her kind hands found to do. She was a member of Providence Church, in Hancock Co., Ill., for forty years. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace and the absolute sovereignty of God, and remained steadfast and unmovable until the end. Many times in her last days we had talked over these things. How glad we feel that she was still faithful in all things, and we feel that she was of the good and excellent of the earth. But she bade adieu to the perplexing things of time and had given in all her testimony to the truth that she had been made the recipient of, and which she held so dear, until the sands of life had all run out and the frail garments of mortality removed by the gentle touch of her Lord. She leaves to mourn their loss two sisters and four brothers and many relatives and friends, but the dear old church will miss her most. She said she felt that it would be a great relief to enter into that rest which remaineth for the people of God. She said she was not afraid to die, but was ready and willing, for He doeth all things well.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder L. E. Frazee, pastor of her church, whom she highly esteemed for the truth's sake, after which she was laid to rest in the Irwin Cemetery, there to await the resurrection, when she shall awake with His likeness and be satisfied.

Written in much weakness by her unworthy aunt,

BELLE FRAZEE.

Mrs. Matilda T. Templeman died Dec. 4th, 1912, aged 70 years. She was visiting her sons in Richmond, Va., and was stricken with apoplexy about 8 o'clock on the morning of the 4th, and remained unconscious until the end, which came about 6 o'clock in the evening of the same day, and on Saturday, Dec. 7th, her mortal remains were carried to the old family burying-ground and laid beside her husband, Mr. George B. Templeman, who died Feb. 22nd, 1896, at their home, eight miles west of Warrenton, Va. She was the mother of thirteen children, one dying in infancy, the rest living: Mrs. R. L. Templeman, Ruby, Va., Mrs. Howard Middleton, Sterling, Va., S. H. and H. W., Richmond, Va., Wm. H. and J. W., Atlanta, Ga., T. E., Geo. N., R. N., L. W. and Misses Delia and Jessie, of New Orleans, La. She was baptized the first Sunday in July, 1865, by Elder Robert C. Leachman, at Goose Creek, but the greater portion of her life her membership was with the Upper Broad Run Church, in Fauquier Co., Va.

Her daughter,

(MRS.) HOWARD MIDDLETON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. J. H. Rockafellow, N. Y., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with Mt. Zion Church, near Aldie, Loudoun Co., Va., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 14th, 15th and 16th, 1914. Trains will be met on Tuesday before the meeting. It is requested of those coming to the meeting by rail that ten take train leaving Union Station, Washington, D. C., via Southern Ry. at 3:35 p. m. to The Plains, Va. All others will come to Leesburg, Va., via W. & O. D. Ry. on train leaving 36th and M Sts., Washington, D. C., at 4:30 p. m. We cordially invite ministering brethren of our faith and order, and all lovers of the truth, to meet with us.

I. H. THOMAS, Church Clerk.

THE Welsh Tract Church has appointed a two days meeting to begin on Saturday, October 17th, 1914, at 10 o'clock a. m. The friends coming from Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore will come via B. & O. R. R. to Newark, Del. Trains leave Philadelphia (24th and Chestnut Sts.) at 7:50 a. m., and Baltimore (Mt. Royal Station) at 8 a. m. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend, and we hope to have some of the ministering brethren with us who may be on their way to the Salisbury Association.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE Salisbury Association is appointed to meet with the church at Messongoes, Accomac Co., Va., Wednesday, October 21st, 1914, to continue three days. We cordially invite all who love the truth to meet with us, especially those who minister in word and doctrine. Those coming from the north will take the Norfolk Express, that leaves Broad St., Philadelphia, at 10 o'clock a. m. on Tuesday, the 20th. Take tickets for Hallwood, Va. Those coming from Delmar and south of that point can take train leaving Delmar at 6:50 a. m. Wednesday, also stopping at Hallwood, and be in good time for the meeting. Those coming from the south can take boat from Portsmouth at 8, and Norfolk at 8:40, train from Cape Charles, on N. Y. P. & N. R. R., 11:30 a. m., arriving at Hallwood 12:44 p. m., also on Tuesday, 20th. We will gladly welcome all friends of the cause, and do all we can to make them comfortable.

J. F. BYRD, Clerk.

THE Mt. Enon Association of Primitive Baptists of south Florida will hold their meeting with the church called Salem, two miles south of Dover, on the A. C. L. R. R., Nov. 6th, 7th and 8th, 1914. All lovers of Bible truth are invited, especially ministering brethren of our faith and order. For further information address me.

C. K. HAINES.

LAKELAND, Fla.

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JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Liberty Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, of Los Angeles, Cal., meets every first and third Sunday in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., at 42nd and Moneta Ave., and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal.

W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor.

C. B. RICE, Clerk.

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DEAR BRETHREN:—My little Sunday School booklet, I am thankful to say, found favor with its readers, but the supply was not equal to the demand, and many remittances for it had to be returned. This has prompted me to put in pamphlet form the article, "Salvation Alone Through Christ the Lord."

I well know the simplicity and the lack of scholarship and system of this weak effort, as if trying to dip out the sea with a cup; but should not all whose hope of heaven is in this dear doctrine emulate the woman who washed Jesus' feet, and of whom he said, "She hath done what she could"? May not the humblest help somewhat to stay up the hands of our dear ministers, as Moses' hands were held up when they were heavy in the battle? There never was such a battle as the warfare of those who are now trying to maintain the doctrine named. It began at Christ's birth, when the kings and rulers of earth stood up against him. They would, if they could, have destroyed his mission by destroying him.

This last pamphlet will be much larger than the Sunday School book, and, with postage, will cost nearly three times as much. Written (unpretending as it is) under much pain of body, it is now cheerfully priced with the expectation of loss, viz.: 15 cents per copy; two copies for 25 cents, or by the dollar's worth, at 10 cents per copy. Will the dear brethren who favor me with orders please remit in coin, if possible, or post-office money order? I wish I could send a word of thanks to each friend who orders a book, but the wrapping, mailing, recording sales, with the explanations incident to such a work, will consume my mite of strength while I am spared to do it.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 82. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1914. NO. 21.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE NINETIETH PSALM.

(Continued from page 581.)

"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." This is the beginning of the form of supplication in this wonderful "prayer of Moses, the man of God." Hitherto he has made statements of truth concerning the Lord and his work, and the effect of his law upon the hearts of his people when applied to them by the Holy Spirit, causing them to see and feel their sinfulness and their just condemnation. Now the form of prayer and supplication begins. Those who have known the power of God's anger against sin have felt the love and fear of God in their hearts. They hate evil and love holiness, and hunger and thirst after righteousness. They desire to be pure and holy, but sin has already taken possession of them, so that they cannot do the things that they would. The fault seems always to be in their works, which are not good enough, and they try to do better, and so to turn the wrath of God away from them; and now they call upon the Lord to help them in this work, to help them to become righteous. They feel that if they made better use of their time they could do better, and they ask the Lord to teach them to so number their days, to so realize the value of them, and how short they are, even in the longest life, that they may apply their hearts unto wisdom, and so may accomplish more in their efforts to become holy; and this desire and prayer of their hearts will be answered, but it will be in a way not known to them at present, nor by their own works, but by the work of Jesus, and to his glory.

"Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants." Moses is still speaking in prayer, but is talking to the faith of the Lord's people, and pleading with him for them that he would be pleased to return from his anger against sin, and whether he could not repent, or change from his purpose to punish sin in his servants. This supplication in their behalf is most earnest, for faith has given Moses an assurance that opens up to him the dawning of the gospel day, when Jesus should be exalted that he might have mercy upon the Lord's servants, and that mercy might rejoice against judgment. (James ii. 13.) Every pro-

vision of the law, and every gospel declaration and promise found in the law and in the prophets and the psalms, has precious reference to the unspeakable blessings of the gospel dispensation. So to the sorrowful soul who has been suffering from the wrath of God, in which his days are passed away because he sees no way in which the just demands of the law can be satisfied and the sinner saved, there is a sweet feeling of submission and comfort in the inspired words of this prayer: "O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days." It is to that faith which is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," that the man of God speaks, and by that faith the Lord's people hear and feel the goodness of spiritual things, and know the spiritual satisfaction that is in them.

This gladness which the Lord puts into the hearts of his people is more than the time when their corn and their wine increased. Nothing in this world can be like it. It is most solemn and pure, and fully satisfies our inmost desires, whatever of deepest affliction we may have. Whatever of pain and sorrow, it will not interfere with this work of the Lord. He makes us glad, and who can make trouble? This gladness is set over against our sorrows, so that in both we rejoice. "Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil." Now we are seeing that every twinge of pain was necessary, and will work for our good. Every experience of tribulation has worked some patience, some endurance. We now can pray that sorrow may be turned into joy. Darkness is made light before us, and crooked things straight. What wonderful assurance is here, what boldness of faith, that we should be able to pray that all our weary days of affliction and our long years of bitter pain and sorrow shall be turned into joy and gladness.

"Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children." The works of the sinner cannot remove the sin. He can do no more toward that work in a thousand years than in one day. The more he sees and feels the nature of sin, and the just condemnation of the sinner, the more clearly he sees that by the works of the law no flesh can be justified in God's sight. All the preceding part of this prayer, so solemnly expressed, enlarges upon the sad condition of the sinner, and tells the desires of the redeemed soul for the mercy of the Lord, which will cause him to rejoice and be glad all his days. It is only by the Lord's work that this wonderful change can be brought about. All the holy men of old desired to see this work, but it was hid from those ages and generations. The prophets desired and searched diligently to know what, and what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. Now there is a special desire that the Lord's work may appear, since the work of man has utterly failed. "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."—Romans v. 19. Jesus obeyed the law for all of his people, being delivered for their offences and raised up for their justification. The law can bring no charge against them, for their debt is fully paid, and herein appears the Lord's glory unto the children of the prophets. The bold challenge can now be sent forth to all the enemies of the dear redeemed of the

Lord: "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" The Lord's work is not seen by the natural eye, nor understood by the natural mind. It is known only by revelation, and that revelation is only to babes, to those who have been born of God. This glorious work of Jesus appears unto the Lord's servants. It is made known to their faith. It appears in their experience, silencing all the charges that may be brought against them, and causing them to rejoice and be glad all their days, even according to the days wherein the Lord has afflicted them, and made them to see evil under the law.

"And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." Throughout all of this sweet and glorious prayer of Moses there is something so unspeakably glorious and sublime that my soul has trembled at the thought of venturing to write about it. But here I find something that now appears more transcendent, more heavenly, than any preceding expression, causing me to question seriously whether I ought to have undertaken to write upon a subject so glorious, so far beyond my feeble powers of comprehension, as this expression, "The beauty of the Lord." How often I have had those wonderful words in my mind, and tasted their sweetness, and tried to think of their meaning, and wondered if I had ever had any of that precious meaning in my soul. To those who under the law were enabled to look upon Zion, the Lord said by the prophet, "Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off."—Isaiah xxxiii. 17–20. This Zion is called "the perfection of beauty," for out of her God hath shined. (Psalms l. 2.) She is also spoken of as "beautiful for situation," and "the joy of the whole earth." This, then, presents the beauty of the Lord. His work in the church is perfect, and the beauty of all that work is unspeakable. When the Lord builds up Zion he appears in his glory. (Psalms cii. 10.) All of the order and ordinances and doctrine of the church are perfect, and just such as are most lovely and pleasing to the most exalted intelligence and spiritual desire of the divine nature. All of the work required to be done by those who were under the legal covenant was required to be perfect. Every offering must be without blemish; also the priest who made the offering; and all the ordinances of divine service, and everything that pertained to that worldly sanctuary, must be without fault. These "patterns of things in the heavens" must show the absolute perfection that would appear in the glorious realities when the spiritual substance should appear. When the work in the first covenant was done, as required by the Lord's servants, it was all natural, but these natural things pointed to the spiritual things belonging to the church in her spiritual perfection and beauty. Then, when that church appeared in her gospel meaning, the work of those servants was established upon them. That was what Moses prayed for. And now, under the glorious gospel dispensation, it is the desire of the Lord's servants that their work may be established upon them; that all the work of our hands in attending to the order of the church may be so truly and faithfully done that our souls may experience the spiritual power and precious reality of the things which are not seen, which are eternal. (2 Cor. iv. 18.) When the members of a church are dwelling together in unity, walking in the order and ordinances of the Lord, and holding fast the form of sound words which they have heard from the apostles,

then the beauty of the Lord is upon them. Out of Zion, out of that church, God shines. He appears only in Zion. Those who are united in such a church are as happily situated and as signally favored and blessed as a people can be in this world of sin and sorrow.

"The church of God is fair." All that presents her as the perfection of beauty is the Lord's work. Every ordinance, every gift, every grace, and all the experience of grace and salvation seen and known in this glorious church, are God's work. He shines out of all, and so presents his own perfect beauty in her. One thing every saint desires of the Lord, and that they seek after, to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of their life, that they may behold the beauty of the Lord and inquire in his temple; that they may be always inquiring of him, always communing with him, always looking upon Zion, always beholding the beauty of the Lord, as it appears in his wonderful works, which he has established upon his people in the gospel of his Son.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Oct. 1, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In my article on the ninetieth Psalm, published in the SIGNS of October 1st, page 579, quoting the second verse of that Psalm, I intended to inclose the word "art" in brackets, to call attention of the readers to the fact that it is a supplied word, and not in the original language. I believe the true meaning of the text is only expressed when that word is omitted. The correct reading of the English requires the omission of that word. I think the correct reading would be to repeat the first sentence of the Psalm after the word "God": Thou, God, hast been our dwelling place. I submit this to you.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Aug. 3, 1914.

MRS. A. J. BOLTON—DEAR SISTER:—Your letter of May 4th received in due time, and I assure you was appreciated, and I was encouraged in your kind and assuring message of love and fellowship in the gospel. It always seems strange to me that any one should enjoy my poor writings or preaching. It must be true that babes and sucklings do lisp the blessed name of Jesus. Many things have prevented an earlier answer. First, a barren mind; second, many cares; third, there came like a thunderbolt from a clear sky, the tragic death of our dear son-in-law. O how mysterious are the ways of Providence; truly his way is past finding out, his footsteps in the deep cannot be traced by poor mortals.

You ask me to write some thoughts on James v. 14, 15, 20, for publication in the SIGNS. The fourteenth and fifteenth read, "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." Such as I have give I unto you. First, I want to say the Scriptures were given by the inspiration of God, and for the children of God, and the children of God are manifestly those who are born of God and made partakers of the divine nature, therefore can comprehend divine things. Man in his carnal, depraved nature does not and cannot know or understand the things of the Spirit. Paul says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. Now let us consider this Scrip-

ture in this light, in the spirit of wisdom from above. There were many signs and wonders that followed the labors of the apostles that do not appear in the labors of the servants of God now or after the apostles; that is, in a literal manifestation, but I think there is a spiritual application. Then, again, all rests upon the prayer of faith. Jesus said, Ask and ye shall receive. "If ye ask anything in my name, I will do it."—John xiv. 14. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."—John xv. 7. "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us."—1 John v. 14. Here we have the solution and secret of the whole matter: if ye ask according to the will of God. All forms and words are not prayer, or God will not hear, in that he will not answer. It is the motive that prompts, or the spirit of wisdom that guides, as we approach the mercy-seat. There were those who stood upon the street corner to be heard of men (a vain show). But when ye pray enter thy closet, and after this manner pray ye: "Our Father," &c. First, one must have the right (being born of God) to call him Father. Second, to come in his name, (If ye shall ask anything in my name.) Third, according to the will of God. Everything outside of this is sheer mockery, as the noise of a phonograph or the chatter of the parrot; no child or being has, or ever will be taught how to pray. Jesus taught his disciples to pray, and it is always of necessity, (a child may imitate a cry, but the real cry comes because of pain) and with groans which cannot be uttered. The poet said,

> "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
> Unuttered or expressed."

Oozing out like water. It is always trials, sorrows and afflictions which cause us to approach unto our ever-blessed and holy Father, and in this the dear saints of God are brought into the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ, for if ye suffer with him ye shall also be glorified with him. Now a loved one may be sick and we be given the prayer of faith for that one, and the prayer of faith save him; that dear one is raised up, is spared, the prayer answered, but the purpose of God is not changed, for he is of one mind and none can turn him. I am (saith he) God, and change not, &c. I now call to mind what a dear sister told me. Her beloved husband was sick, apparently unto death, scarcely a spark of life, when she felt to throw herself upon the mercy of the dear Lord in the extremity of the case, and pray as she never prayed before, that if it be his will he might be spared to her, but in the deepest sense according to his will, as Jesus prayed, if this cup may pass. There came to her a sweet response of assurance, and they both yet live to testify of the mercy of the Lord. Some years ago when in a distant State, I was called to see a dear friend, a good man, but one who never manifestly experienced his acceptance in the forgiveness of his sins. He was very ill, and nearing the end of this mortal life. He was in the darkest gloom, in the very belly of hell, with every ray of hope cut off, in utter despair, his pleadings were indescribable, truly with groanings which cannot be uttered. He desired I should read a chapter and pray for him. I think I read the one hundred and seventh Psalm, in much weakness tried to pray, to approach the real mercy-seat. While engaged in prayer I was given the blessed assurance that the dear Lord would appear in his love and mercy before this mortal life ended, that at eveningtide it should be

light; and the end was peaceful; he departed this life in the fullness of a triumphant victory over sin, through the merits of Jesus' blood, who hath saved us and called us, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. I have often said every prayer is answered, but not every form of words, for "ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts."—James iv. 3. For we know not what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, and the Spirit itself maketh intercession according to the will of God. (Rom. viii. 26, 27.) Our fleshly, carnal, depraved nature often prompts us to such a form that we may seek vainglory, but he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently (truly) seek him.

Regarding James v. 19, 20: "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him," &c. One cannot leave a place or principle without having been there or possessing that principle, faith or doctrine. The Galatian brethren (or some of them) erred from the faith and steadfastness in the doctrine of grace, bewildered by false teachers teaching false doctrines, deluding them with the false idea again that except they be circumcised and keep the law they could not be saved. Paul says, O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you? &c. They were the dear saints of God, the election of grace, and Paul in his faithful labors of love shows them their errors, or converts them from their errors in the which if they had continued fellowship would have been broken, as they would have become dead to the church. There is church fellowship from which the saints of God do become separated and dead to. I now have in mind unruly, disorderly walking members, who that for the cause sake had to be excluded, yet I believe them to be the children of God, given over to the corrupt emotions of the flesh. Said Paul, If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; this is the death referred to. If once in Christ, there can be no separation. The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord, but it is true they are given over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. (1 Cor. v. 5.) Now then, "Let him know, that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." The word "convert" is never used in the Bible with regard to the quickening of them that are dead in sin, or prior to regeneration or new birth; for, "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." The words I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life. This is the work of God; no creature power or work enters into it; salvation is of the Lord, says the word, and we believe it. What he does is done forever. "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven."

"My trials and sorrows, my conflicts and cares,
The spirit of prayer, and the answer of prayers,
The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will."

What a blessed assurance! May we ever realize that what he appoints is best, and may he cause us to submissively drink of the river of his pleasure. May he ever keep us, and guide us in the way, that we may abide unto the end, fulfilling his divine purpose to his glory.

Dear sister, as you request I will submit

these rambling thoughts to the editors of the SIGNS. I do not know the thought specially in your mind, and may not have touched upon it, but have just written as my mind seemed to be led; I hope it may be of the Lord; if so, it will be beneficial to some weary one like myself. If blest to your comfort, or to that of any one, thank the Lord for it.

In fond remembrance of your visit at our home last year, and of our spiritual joys, with abiding fellowship in the Lord, I am, I trust, yours in Christ,

P. W. SAWIN.

CANNON, Del., Sept. 30, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing you the experience of sister Gertie W. Truitt, of Snow Hill, Md. It was my privilege to see Elder B. F. Coulter bury her in the liquid grave, thus following the example set centuries ago by the meek and lowly Jesus. I hope I will never forget that beautiful expression on her face as she came out of the water. I also had the pleasure of seeing Elder Coulter baptize another one previous to this, this was Beulah Truitt, daughter of Deacon John H. Truitt. She also showed the same devotion to the cause of the great Shepherd, her face was also aglow with heavenly radiance. The Lord is bringing his people one by one, and on these occasions we feel to say, It is good to be here. I would like to see this experience published if it meets your approval, if not, return to me. The text which Elder Coulter used in January, to which our sister in her letter refers, I think is Ruth i. 14, 15, which reads, "And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law, but Ruth clave unto her. And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods; return thou after thy sister in law."

With best wishes for the success of the SIGNS, I am yours in hope,

A. T. BENSON.

SNOW HILL, Md., Sept. 23, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER:—You asked me to write my experience, and in my weak and feeble way I will try to. I cannot tell great things that the Lord has done for me, like some of the dear Lord's children can, but feel that he gave me just enough evidence now and then to supply my need. It has been sixteen years since this strange and lonely feeling first crept upon me, and it was at this time I heard the first sermon I ever understood, and it was preached by Elder Rittenhouse, in Salisbury, Md. I did not get there in time to hear the text, but the subject was on experience, and I thought it was the sweetest subject I ever had heard at that time, as it was the first one I understood, and this put me to wondering why he should preach like that, for I thought no one else ever preached that way. I went along in this way a long time. I would go to hear other preachers, but thought they preached differently. I could not understand what all this meant; some sermons were sweet to me and some were not, but I soon began to realize that the fault was in me, not in the preacher, and this caused me much trouble at times. I would go to meeting and think, These people look different from other people, and the love that I had for them caused me to have no love for other denominations, and then I would ask myself, Why is it that I have such a peculiar feeling towards these people, as I had not for any other people? This feeling began to grow greater and greater, for it seemed to me they were the only people I could love. But this made me sad, for I felt that they were so much better than I; I

was so simple and wicked that it often caused me much trouble, for I thought this was not the feeling of a christian. But I dearly loved the truth they preached, and would often feel that the dear Lord was near me in times of need. I went on in this way up to four years ago, when baptism came into my mind, and then I thought, This is an awful thing for a poor filthy creature like me to think of, and I would think, I will not let anything so sacred cross a mind so corrupt as mine. But could not help it, for I felt this was the right way, and I was hungering and thirsting after righteousness all the time, and felt that baptism was a duty that every child of God should perform. But I felt I was too unworthy to mingle with the dear children of God, and this caused me great trouble at times, and then I would think that God had all power, and I hoped he would have mercy on me. Last January Elder Coulter preached a sermon just to outsiders, as he stated; the subject was on Ruth and Naomi and another one who was a sister-in-law to Ruth (Orpah). She had gone from the church of God. It seemed that every word was for me, and it crushed the life almost out of me, for I saw that I was one of the most corrupt beings that ever was, and it caused me to bow my head in grief, and to look to God alone for mercy. After this I was in darkness and wandering of mind much of the time, and then I would think, Is this the Lord leading me by his Spirit into knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus? This went on, and it seemed I was in deep distress, and my burden was so great that I could not see anything in store for me but death, and this awful feeling was with me and brought me down very low. It seemed I was tossed hither and thither, and O the sleepless and weeping nights I went through, and would think it was near an end with me, as death seemed to stare me in the face all the time. One night I dreamed that I was dead, and I helped to dress my dear husband and children to go to my burial, and just at that moment I thought life came into my body, and it awoke me, and I could not understand this, and did not know what it meant, but deeper thoughts came in mind, and my burden was almost unbearable. It seemed to me any one as corrupt as I could never see the kingdom of heaven, and surely I was a poor prisoner. You know Paul called himself a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and this then would cause me to wonder if I were a child of God. I thought I did know a little of the experience of the children of Israel as they stood at the Red Sea, with the enemy behind and the sea in front, and I felt like saying, To whom shall we go but to Christ, who said, I am the way, and the truth, and the life; neither is there salvation in any other? and then these thoughts came to me, that I could not go out in the world, for I would feel so condemned. Not that I felt better than the world, but I knew that they knew nothing of my feelings, and I could not talk to them. Even when my neighbors would drop in it seemed I felt glad when they would go; not that I had anything against them, but I had a longing to be with the Lord's children, and them alone. One of my comforts was that I constantly wanted to read the Bible, or SIGNS, and reading I could not stop, for it seemed more precious than gold, and O this thirsting and hungering after righteousness; I thought that must belong to the people of God. This feeling was with me all the time. I wanted to know that I was one of the dear Lord's children, but could

not see that I was, or even think that his dear children could have any fellowship for such a sinful and wicked person as I, for I had to go mourning and begging for mercy all the time, and I felt the need of the grace of God all the day long, and tried to ask him in my feeble way, Is this the way the Lord's dear children have to be taught to love and serve him? But darkness and wandering of mind seemed to be my doom until June 28th last. When I went to bed that night it seemed to me this death which I have mentioned was right upon me, and I asked my dear husband to bid me good-bye, for I did not think I ever could live to see another day dawn. I could not go to sleep until almost day, when I got in a doze, and when I awoke it seemed that everything was changed, and I felt happy, and was afraid to get up, but instantly the words came to me, Arise, and go thy way; and I arose and dressed and went out in the open, and a more beautiful scene I never saw, for it seemed everything was praising God; even the fields and grass and the trees all were a beautiful picture to me, and I felt quiet and calm, and wanted to look up in the heavens and give praise to God for all of this calm and rest which had come to me. I was in this calm condition up to the second Sunday in July, when there was service in our church, and there was baptism after service, and it was one of the most beautiful sights I ever saw, and I thought, O how I wish it were I. That night Elder Coulter came to my place, and after supper he spoke to me about becoming a candidate for baptism in September, which was our quarterly meeting, and his words seemed to crush me down very low, for I feared he was deceived in me, and I thought this was committing a greater sin than ever, and the words he spoke gave me greater and deeper impressions than ever. I did not sleep at all that night, and it came to me in this way, that such a poor, weak, unworthy creature as I could not claim this blessed relationship to the people I loved and esteemed so highly. This caused me to fear I was going to make a false attempt, but I surely hoped not, but I was so weak, ignorant and helpless that I was made to wonder and exclaim, What am I, that God's dear children should feel constrained to have any fellowship for me? I could not understand, but thought, Surely if so it must be God directing them, and then I tried to pray if I were a hypocrite, and deceived in it all, that the dear Lord would make it manifest to me before the September meeting, and calm the doubts and fears that were with me. But in much weakness I tried to think that there must be some ground for hope, and I not altogether alone, for I did hope that I was one of the dear Lord's little ones. But doubts and fears would arise with such power that I had to go mourning day by day over my sinful and depraved heart, and my constant cry was that I might become a christian; then the thought was, What does it mean to be a christian? Why, to be like Christ, to be pure and undefiled, separate from sinners, to be meek and kind. I thought a life like this must be full of joy and gladness, and I felt I knew nothing of such a life. I thought this life belonged to Christ and his people, and this would be my first evidence that I was born of God, but instead of bringing the joy I thought, I was placed under heavy burdens and much sadness; the burden seemed so heavy I wondered if I would not sink beneath its weight. On Saturday night before the second Sunday in August all had gone to bed, and

all nature was quiet and calm, but O the great burden that was on my heart. I sat up until one o'clock that night, for I felt afraid to go to bed, I felt that something terrible was going to happen, but finally I went and I became cold, and trembled, but could not speak; my husband awoke, and asked me what was the matter. He said, Are you sick? do you want the doctor? and the first words I was able to utter were, Lord, have mercy on this poor sinner or I shall surely die; and he said, You are not going to die, it is the Lord's work in you; I have been expecting it for some time. It was in this night of agony that I think the Lord made his great love manifest more clearly to me. But before this these words would be constantly in my mind, Shew me the way, O Lord, and decide this doubtful case, and it was at this moment that I hope the case was decided, and he showed me his precious love and power, and the words came, It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy, and with these words came others: The Spirit and the bride say, come, and I felt that I could willingly give up all and follow him, and then I longed to be buried in baptism, and felt that I could not wait until the next meeting. The next day after this night there was preaching at Snow Hill. I went, and thought that Elder Coulter preached the grandest sermon I ever heard. He spoke of the golden candlesticks, and of the church, and after service I wondered how the members could ever leave the place of worship without saying, Unto him who hath washed us in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, unto his name be honor, glory, dominion, majesty and power, both now and forever. After this I felt calm and quiet part of the time, but so many doubts and fears came I thought I could never go before such a dear body of people, for they looked so sacred to me that I was afraid that if the dear Lord gave me strength to go I would wander off and be a disgrace to the cause. But I did go, and was received, and why, I cannot tell or understand, for I was so weak and ignorant in spiritual things, and felt too unworthy to be one of them. After I was received I felt a sweet peace of mind, and as I looked at the dear ones sitting around they seemed like angels to me around God's great throne. In time past I thought I did not want many people to see me baptized, but when the time came the water and everything seemed so beautiful that I did not care if there had been ten thousand, for this day was a sweet day of peace and joy to me. After I came out of the water the dear children of God seemed more precious to me then ever before, and all were very kind to me. I did not feel I deserved it, for I can truly say in my flesh there dwelleth no good thing, but I feel that in him is the perfection and beauty of these things. I often wish I could have lived when Christ was on earth, and could have touched the hem of his garment, yet I can but say, Glory to God in the highest, for surely he is not slack concerning his promises.

I hope you will pardon all I have written amiss, for I have written so lengthily, and feel that the half has not been told of his love and tender mercy and power to save, for strength is in the Lord, Jehovah is eternal. I feel to hope the church will be willing to put up and bear with me in my weakness. I do not mean that I want to go against their will. This is my feeble travel for the past sixteen years.

Your poor, weak and unworthy sister, if one at all,

GERTIE W. TRUITT.

ST. THOMAS, Ontario.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—With the help of the Lord I will write some of my thoughts upon the Scripture found in Romans viii. 31, 32, for your consideration, and if you think it suitable for a place in the SIGNS you are at liberty to publish it. The Scripture reads as follows: "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" The apostle by divine inspiration has couched in this most wonderful chapter those blessed truths of redemption, effectual calling, justification and glorification of his saints, which truths have been assailed by the enemy of the truth through past ages, and will still be assailed with the same unrelenting enmity in all ages to come. In looking around we fail to see with all the efforts of men, and with all their inventions, such as Sunday Schools, Tract societies, Missionary boards, protracted meetings, &c., that they have ever prevailed upon the enemy to the truth, or have ever made any advancement in christianizing the world, which we hear from those "D. D.'s" and "LL. D.'s," whose god is their belly. Were it not for the love of the mighty dollar how many volunteers would we find in this great army of workers? But let us look around and consider; let us ask ourselves the solemn questions, Does not sin abound on every hand? Is not the reveling of the man of sin appalling?" Are we not living in perilous times? Do we not see the falling away spoken of by the apostle? In the face of the fulfillment of all these Scriptures shall we look forward with longing hopes and expectations that the truth will be less assailed by the mighty monster of human wisdom? As we look around we find that in our public schools, seminaries and colleges the teachers of to-day are poisoning the young minds with infidelity, trying to overthrow the power of God, and holding up before the young people that the larger part of the Bible is but a myth. And not only in our schools from the professors of learning do we find this mighty monster of infidelity being revealed, but those "D. D.'s" and "LL. D.'s" are sounding forth from the four quarters of the globe each Sunday morning and evening those "damnable heresies," which have their origin in the garden of human wisdom and are nurtured by the power of darkness, whose spirit has always assailed the truth, speaking great swelling words against the truth and the followers of Zion's King. But the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. "What shall we then say to these things?" Let God be true and every man false, although the glorious truth is everywhere spoken against by the learned professors, yea, and some of our own faith have raised their voices against the doctrine of predestination of all things and blending their voices with those blasphemers, saying this would make God the author of sin. But to the Scriptures we must look for guidance in the consideration of this subject. The Scriptures plainly declare that he (God) declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What house will ye build me? saith the Lord, and where is the place of my rest? As I have thought, so shall it come to pass, saith the Lord. He doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the in-

habitants of the earth, and who can stay the hand of God? O man, how short is his arm, how finite his mind, how weak his strength compared with that Power that created worlds and upholds all things by his omnipotent power. What shall we say to these things? Shall we place our hand over our mouth and say that these most solemn truths of predestination, election, effectual calling, glorification, justification and the resurrection of the dead are to be believed, but are not to be preached, because they are assailed by the enemy, or that they have become unpopular, or that some weak in faith cannot grasp them? God forbid. But may the true and called servants of God proclaim these most precious truths undaunted by the enemy with all fervency and zeal, to the praise of his great name. In the days of the apostles men rose up against the preaching of the apostles with a determination to crush it to the earth, laying hands on them and casting them in prison, persecuting them in divers ways, but none of those things moved them. Bold as lions, yet harmless as lambs, they continued to unfurl the glorious banner of the doctrine of God our Savior. Prisons did palaces prove when Jesus dwelt with them there.

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" The saints of God in all ages have experienced the opposition to the truth, feeling that many things were against them, and no doubt have sometimes felt that all things were against them, as Elijah the prophet, when he felt that he was left alone and they sought his life, and all Israel had bowed down to the image of Baal. No doubt Joseph felt the way was hard, and all things against him, that even his brethren had risen against him, with determination that they would not have him to rule over them. How often the Israelites complained and murmured against Moses, their leader, because there was no water to be found in the wilderness, nor was there bread to be found there. How often we have felt that many things were against us, often feeling our own conscience against us, the upheaving of evil thoughts, causing us to fear and tremble; the darkness of mind, the coldness of heart, all these we experience as against us, and often our own words and deeds seem against us. Truly did Paul experience the perils by day and by night, on land and on sea, and among false brethren, and how often we have felt that our brethren were against us, sometimes justly and sometimes unjustly. But the conclusion of the whole matter rests upon the blessed thought that if God is for us none can be against us. How true that our sins were against us, separating us from God and consigning us to darkness, misery and woe. Death with all its terrors stood boldly against us, the grave with its unrelenting grasp held its victims, until the Conqueror of all enemies and enmity came from the throne of God to deliver his people from the hands of the opposing foe, satisfied the law's demands, burst the bonds of death asunder and rose from the cold and icy hand of death to justify his people. What shall we then say? If God is for us, who can be against us? For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all

things?" O the amazing gift of God! Had we the command of our frame and feelings, that we could enter into the infinite love of God, as brought into manifestation in the gift of his Son a sacrifice for sin, the Son of his own bosom, that infinite Jehovah should spare not his own Son from the suffering of his soul, from the temptation of the wilderness, from the agonies of Gethsemane, from being mocked and spit upon, from the travail of his soul in the deepest agony upon the cross. Can it be possible that the purpose of God in the gift of his Son for the redemption of his people after all his suffering and death and glorious resurrection shall fail to accomplish that which God intended? Is it possible that any of God's purposes can be hindered or completely overthrown by all the combined powers of darkness? If so, we have no foundation for our hope, we have no abiding city, the seal of the foundation becomes broken and we stand in jeopardy every hour. Again, shall any or all of those things spoken of in the experience of God's people separate them from his love or tear them from his bosom? God forbid. He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, that he might be able to succor us. Such a great High Priest can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, for in all points he was tempted like unto us. Here flows the river of consolation to every heaven-born soul, through the ever-blessed name of Jesus, which calms all our fears. O the wondrous love of God, that he should deliver up his only Son to such unspeakable suffering for poor, unworthy worms as we. Jesus came to do the will of his Father, and to finish the work that he gave him to do. His work was before him, his eyes set heavenward, the command was continually forward. Through floods and flames of the wrath of man our Captain marches on to victory. For the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Having conquered the enemy and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, how shall he not also freely give us all things? For all things are his, both in heaven and in earth, and we are Christ's, and Christ is God's. The "all" implies all that the saints of God are heirs to through Jesus Christ our Lord. The conflicts and trials are given to us by him, for says the Scriprure, If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him. How can we eat his flesh and drink his blood without knowledge of his suffering. The joy of salvation loses sweetness when there is no feeling or suffering in that blessed condition of a sinner saved by grace. But as the good Samaritan pours the oil and wine into the wound that sin has made the sweet influence of that healing balm is felt in our poor sinful hearts, for where sin abounded grace does much more abound. He gives us the victory over the evils of our hearts by the indwelling of his Holy Spirit, which is stronger than the strong man. All can truly testify to the truth that if left to ourselves we are prey to the indwelling sins, and will follow the dictations of our own carnal minds. All the heavenly gifts are given to us freely by him in whom the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily. Every good gift and every perfect gift comes down from the Father of lights. All the fruits of his ever-blessed Spirit are freely given to us with him, such as love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Such fruits as these never grew on nature's

vine, and O that the sweet influence of these heavenly fruits may abound in us to the praise of his ever-blessed name. He gave us his ever-blessed presence in the dark and trying hours to disperse the darkness and calm our fears. He gave us the victory over death, hell and the grave. He gives us the sweet communion of his Holy Spirit, bringing to us the exceeding great and precious promises contained in his word. He gave to his poor and afflicted people that most precious gift of eternal life, and the glories of that eternal world, and all that we have here of the enjoyments of his heavenly blessings, and all the fullness of that inheritance of the saints of God, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and may all praise be given to him to whom praise is due.

J. B. SLAUSON.

PINSONFORK, Ky., Oct. 3, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending you this letter from our dear young brother, T. J. Robinson, of Alka, Ky., which I hope you will publish in the SIGNS. I do not remember of meeting him but twice, and to me his appearance is good, and his conversation interesting, and it rather seems to me that he is a reader of the SIGNS, but I am not sure about this; however he is a firm believer in the doctrine the SIGNS advocates, so if you publish it, I take the responsibility. I have not asked permission of brother Robinson to send his letter to you, but I feel sure it will be right with him.

Yours in hope of eternal life through Christ Jesus,

W. J. MAY.

ALKA, Ky., Sept. 28, 1914.

DEAR ELDER MAY:—Your esteemed epistle of the 23rd inst. at hand, and noted with much pleasure. I trust that God will direct my poor feeble mind in the attempt to answer. I am often desirous to get out of nature, believing that God is worshiped in spirit.

I greatly enjoyed, and believe I could witness within, the beautiful conversation I had with you. To talk with you was my principal motive in going there, and I was fully satisfied and strengthened, for which I thank God. Dear Elder May, pardon me, but it is not often that I am permitted to meet with those who comfort as you do, and I feel that I can, at least in part, realize what a great gift that God has given his church in you. Indeed it is astonishing to see God's people heaping to themselves teachers, and measuring themselves by themselves. Dear brother, I may be wrong, but as I see it, most, if not all, the diseases set up in the Bible are found in the house of Israel, and God hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. I believe that God's people are yet being given into the hands of Satan for the reason that they learn to not blaspheme, and when it is that they behead you and me do we not know that it is Israelites doing the work prompted by the captor? We should ask God to lay it not to their charge, for they know not what they do. This, I think, is done in the land of the living, for the dead know not anything, and God is working out his will among men. I believe that God in his infinite wisdom, before the world began, purposed whatsoever came to pass, and that his high and sovereign will, which was recorded in heaven before time began, is done in all things, and, though it is often hard for me to realize, contains nothing but mercy to Israel, and works for her welfare. This leads this weak mind of mine to believe

that there is nothing visible or invisible but that is either directly or indirectly beneficial to Israel, the bride of the Lamb of God. Why, dear brother, let me say to you in love, that I think I see a great difference in debating and in preaching the gospel. In one it seems that the brethren desire to triumph over their brethren by dealing out death to them through the carnal mind, while in the other the brother not only desires to live, but out of a pure heart desires that all his beloved brethren live with him. In one we see envy and strife, in the other the peaceable fruits of the spirit of liberty, against which there is no law. The gospel makes alive by deliverance. I believe that all things work together for good to the called according to his purpose, but sometimes it is hard for me to realize it, yet I know one must be in heaven to read the will recorded there, and thanks be to the God of Israel, our enemies cannot get behind that will. We are just as safe while in "hell" as elsewhere, but cannot realize it, or be satisfied while there. I have concluded that it takes a live subject to occupy hell, the place where Jonah was, and that it was made for the benefit of God's people, but I often fear to affirm anything, for I can see myself only a child, and yet rejoice in the Scripture that saith, They shall all be taught of God. To my mind the Scripture following applies to God's elect: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." I am often made to mourn over the garments of God's people tainted with the world and worldly things, trailed in the dust, and yet see them all better than wretched me. It seems I have not the ability to retain knowledge as I would, but often, thanks be unto God, many things are brought to my remembrance, and I am afraid to offer offence to a child of the kingdom of heaven, and have decided that if I cannot speak well of a brother to not speak of him at all. God's children are precious in his sight, and are kept as the apple of his eye, and God forbid that I offend one of them.

Since I received your good letter I believe God hath, at least on one occasion, opened the door to the green pastures of his love to the soul of the unworthy writer, and there is no enemy there, and the light of the sun is not needed. When I speak of "enemy" I speak of that which is of my own household, the old prison-house, with its terrors which so often overwhelm me. Dear brother, I am often afflicted with blindness, and cannot see as I wish to, so when it goes well with you remember poor me. I am the poor, afflicted and needy sinner, and while I try to walk in a way that is well-pleasing in his sight, I often find myself engaged in things that I hate, and have tried to ask God for ability to walk more uprightly before him.

I fear this letter is growing too lengthy, and perhaps not interesting. I hope it may be, or rather is, God's will for me to meet you soon again, for I esteem you a faithful old soldier whom the Bridegroom hath given one of the highest seats at the feast, and hope that you, who are strong and wise, may throw the mantle of charity over my many imperfections.

The next Union Association will be held, the Lord willing, with my home church, the Grassy Creek Church, Pike Co., Ky., and I hope that God may give you a mind to visit us then. May God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ rest his many blessings upon you and your family, and safely pilot you on through the pilgrimage of this trying life unto the path of glory, is the heartfelt desire of your weak brother in hope,

T. J. ROBINSON.

HAMPTON, Iowa., Sept. 26, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—As I am feeling lonely I will drop you a few lines and send the money for the dear old SIGNS. I could not get along without it, for it is a great comfort to me in my lonely hours to read the articles written by our brethren and sisters, and the editorials by yourself and brother Lefferts, especially his article in the SIGNS, "A Look Around." I think I never read an editorial that I so much enjoyed (not barring yours), and I thank God that the Lord has sent you so able an assistant. How often I have thought and feared the dear old SIGNS would go down. How many discouragements it has passed through since Elder Gilbert Beebe established it, eighty-two years ago, but the Lord has never forsaken the editors; when one has been called to his reward another has taken his place. Dear Elder Chick was so able in all his articles. Many of our brethren thought his place could never be filled, for he was so humble and possessed such a forgiving spirit; like Moses of old, so meek. I feel that the Lord has sent one to take his place, and one who has ably filled it so far. My dear brother, I feel to realize how your feelings were when you were all alone, and the trial you had to pass through in the loss of your dear wife soon after the death of brother Chick, but God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform. I do feel to rejoice and praise his holy name for his benefits toward us poor, unworthy beings, and that his promises are sure, and he will never forsake his chosen people. In all their afflictions he was afflicted; yet how often we get down in the "Slough of Despond," so many doubts and fears, and ask ourselves, Am I his, or am I not? and feel forsaken by all our earthly friends. Remember Jesus was forsaken when he cried out on Calvary's cross, My God, why hast thou forsaken me? How often do we forget his mercies extended toward us. He never entirely forsakes us, yet he withdraws his presence from us to show us that we are not our own keepers, that without him we can do nothing. Now, all our dear brethren in Christ everywhere, especially the writers of the SIGNS, write on; do not forget the dear editors when at the throne of grace, that our covenant-keeping God overlook their infirmities, and throw the mantle of charity over them, for they are men, and do not claim infallibility. May God guide them and give them grace, and sustain them in the publication of our dear family paper, the SIGNS.

I will close this poor letter. I have written as my mind led me. Remember a poor, lonely old man, who soon may be called to that heavenly home where we will ever be with the Lord. I have received many letters from brethren, sisters and friends in sympathy with my great loss, and I do appreciate the good things said of the loved one that has gone, and as I cannot write to all, I make this as an acknowledgment.

Yours in great sorrow,

E. A. NORTON.

TOUCHET, Wash., Sept. 16, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If one who fears His name should claim so sacred a relation. I have just received the 15th of September number of the SIGNS, and it was filled with such wholesome food it seemed I must tell the dear ones who contribute to its columns something of my feelings. It will be impossible to mention each separately, all were good; but in the editorial of Elder Lefferts the great principle, or chief corner-stone, on which all hope for a poor sinner rests, is

so fully brought out I could but think of the declaration of the old prophet when calling the attention of Israel, by saying, "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." I thought and felt how true was that prophecy here in this desert land in which we now travel. O how cool and refreshing is a sup of cold water from the Fountain of life. How sweet to feel the shelter of this sovereign Rock. All who feel thus can sing, "Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee." Dear ones, how good it is when we look around and see spiritual wickedness in all its various forms, to feel that all things are working together for good to them who are called to take shelter under this sovereign Rock. We look around, and we are not only made to blush, but the blood seems to run cold in our veins, and we are made to wonder how these things can work for our good. If you notice, Paul says all things work together. If we only had the wisdom and power to connect all things there would be no mystery; we would not wonder at anything; but the natural man is not able to comprehend the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned. If Israel (Jacob), a type of the called of God, had known that the absence of Joseph and the giving up of Benjamin were working for his good he would not have grieved, but not being able to see the great purpose of God, could and did weep. To-day when we look around, and see the abominations that are going on, we would faint by the way if faith did not lead us to this great Rock of shelter. But the Comforter which Jesus promised of the Father, does take the things of his and show them to us, but these things do not make us equal with him in knowledge, that we can look into the future and tell what the end of any or all events will be, but it shows us the truth of the words of inspiration, as Paul declares, that we only see in part and know in part, and if this was all it showed us we of all men would be most miserable; but it shows us that we shall see Him as he is, and be like him. It shows us that we are kept by the power of God; it shows us that although we are called to walk through the valley and shadow of death we shall fear no evil, for the King is reigning in righteousness, and he is a covert for the ones to whom all things are working together for good. How blessed is that faith that opens up to our vision that sovereign Rock upon this blessed evidence. Hope looms up, and the subjects under this glorious King can and do sing that he is the Rock, and his work is perfect, and they, being his workmanship, created in him before the foundation of the world, when they look around, say, I will fear no evil, for where he begins the work he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Then, dear ones, seeing we have received a kingdom that cannot be moved, let us with godly reverence be subject one to the other, and dwell lovingly together in this desert land, in the blessed assurance that all which God has promised shall be ours.

This poor, imperfect expression has been written at different times, here in the store, amidst the bustle of life.

Yours in a percious hope,

J. T. BARNES.

FREESTONE, Texas, August 5, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—My mind has been drawn out of late on the great conflicts of the church, her fiery trials, her seeming coldness, her lack of zeal, her slackness of discipline and her seemingly man-fearing spirit. I fear that we are too ready to make compromises, and that we are not at all times valiant for the truth. We seem to fear men, we are faint-hearted, we forget that the same God rules to-day that ruled in the days when the Hebrew children were cast into the fiery furnace; they came out without the smell of fire upon their garments. I once heard one brother tell another that he thought it best for him not to visit a certain church in his own association, because a certain excluded member of another association was to be there at this particular time, and it would likely cause trouble, yet this member who was told not to visit that church was a member in good standing in his home church, and was also a deacon, and it caused a feeling of sadness to surround my heart. I hope the time will never come when it will be best for God's little children to forsake the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is. Let us meet together; let us draw the bow at a venture and leave the result with God. Ananias feared to meet Saul, but when the Spirit told him, Behold, he prayeth, could meet him and call him "brother Saul." Our weakness causes us to fear men, but our God is able to make us bold as a lion, and to strip us of a man-fearing or man-pleasing spirit, and cause us to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints, in meekness instructing those who oppose themselves, peradventure God will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness.

May God sustain the editors of the SIGNS to continue its publication to the comfort of his children and in defence of the glorious gospel of the Son of God.

Unworthily yours in a precious hope of immortality beyond this vale of tears,

W. O. BEENE.

ELIZABETH, N. J., July 23, 1914.

TO MY DEARLY BELOVED ONES IN MY HOME CHURCH:—Our dear departed pastor, Elder Chick, once said that if we could not meet with the church we should write, and while I feel I have nothing special to communicate, still I desire to be a witness, testifying of the wonderful love of the Father of all our mercies. I do feel to be grateful for the knowledge of his love, for the light to understand, in some measure, the depth of his love, the power of his strength, for indeed I can truly state that my strength is as nothing when I see how he keeps me, leads me, guards, guides and directs my every footstep. Is it not lovely to have such a Guide when in and of ourselves we fail? To me at times the thought that I am the recipient of such a love is overwhelming, and I want to chant it all the day long. I would like to be with you, but am detained here with a convalescent husband, who has been very, very ill, but now gaining strength daily. I am glad to learn Elder McConnell is to be there, and I am sorry not to get the crumb he always has for me. He is another precious gift, and I hope he may realize a blessing as he ministers unto you. In my mind's eye I bear you all in remembrance, and as sister Mary said, "What a lovely place to be in!" May God keep me in the way, that I may walk worthy of a place among you. Although our pastor has passed on, his exemplary life lives with me, helping me, and may you also, as I feel you do, share in the wisdom and judgment of his example. A beautiful character to follow after.

With love to one and all, your sister,

RHODA L. COOPER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1914.

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ISAIAH XL. 10, 11.

"BEHOLD, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."

In the first verse of this wonderful chapter the Lord commands his servants to comfort his people by declaring certain things unto them. The cry of the afflicted, the poor and the needy had always been, God deliver us; in mercy remember thy people, and here is comfort for them. It has seemed to us that beginning with the fortieth chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah we have gospel messages, gospel promises, and the work of redemption presented, and the church brought to view as complete in her living Head, although now and then there are shadows. Jerusalem in the first verse of the fortieth chapter is called upon to rejoice in her Lord because of his great work in fighting her battle against death and delivering her from its power. The weakness, the vanity of man is presented by comparing him in all his glory with the flower of the grass. To those born again this gives increased hope in the Lord, because all know with Paul that no good thing dwells in the flesh, and with Solomon they agree that all is vanity. But while these things are true of the flesh, Jerusalem is given the blessed assurance that the Word of the Lord endureth forever, and by the gospel this Word is preached unto them. Hence our text is a testimony of the Word, the Lamb of God. The record is, "The Lord God will come with strong hand." This gives glory to Christ, who is equal with the Father. "I and my Father are one." The Godhead dwells bodily in him. His name is called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. It was therefore the Lord God who came with strong hand, traveling in the greatness of his strength, mighty to save. Of the people there was none with him, no eye to pity, no hand to help, so his own arm brought salvation to the ends of the earth. Yes, his arm ruled for him, and shall rule until time shall be no more. Men are sometimes called "rulers," but their rule is limited to certain dominions; they are finite, and often make mistakes in judgment, through which destruction is brought upon those over whom they rule. But "the Lord God" rules in heaven above and in the earth beneath; heaven is his throne and the earth his footstool. His dominion embraces all worlds and all beings. Kings and monarchs are subject to him. Not only so, but the smallest insect, that has to be seen through a magnifying glass, and dies in a few hours of old age, is also ruled by Him. Yes, the very hairs of your head are all numbered, and not one shall fall without his purpose.

When he came his reward was with him, yes, in the very work he did. How often he said to the disciples, My meat and my drink is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

Again, I delight to do thy will, O God. In this he was the example of all the children of God. They never think of God rewarding them hereafter for their good works here. If they minister to the body of Christ (one another) the reward is in the very act of kindness, let it be what it may. In all the obedience rendered to the blessed commandments of God is the answer of a good conscience toward him, therefore our reward is with us and in the work, instead of for it, otherwise it would be reckoned of debt. When man is given to rightly behold himself he will then understand how impossible it is to bring the God of mercy and grace into his debt; will more fully grasp the import of Jesus' words: Ten thousand talents in debt, and not one farthing to pay.

The work of Jesus was before him in the sense that the eternal purpose of God was accomplished in his death and resurrection. All other works performed by him were minor compared with that of redemption and justification, and this was the work, or will, of the Father which he delighted in. In this he abolished death and brought life and immortality to light. Having done this merciful and gracious work for his chosen, it is now his work to feed his flock like a shepherd. "One flock and one Shepherd." The flock belongs to Christ, and he is their Shepherd. To him they look for food—pure, nourishing food. Some need milk, others need strong meat. Sometimes in meditating upon this subject the sheep and lambs lose sight entirely of the ministers of the great Shepherd, and rejoice in Paul's statement: Having Him we have all things, and with the poet they sing:

"I say he's my meat and my drink,
My life, my strength and my store,
My shepherd, my husband, my friend,
My Savior from sin and from thrall,
My hope from beginning to end,
My portion, my Lord and my all."

He never has delegated man to gather his lambs, but does that work with his own arm (power), saying to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth. Once gathered they enter the fold forever, with believers enrolled, with believers to live and to die. In times of weakness, danger and fear he carries them in his bosom; yes, tenderly, lovingly and safely he carries them to the haven of rest. He gently leads those that are with young. This means those not yet made manifest. These are sheep with life within, and not one of them is forgotten of him. He led in this way Saul of Tarsus, watching over him, bringing him to the place where the life should be made manifest, and when he called him he told him, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks," showing that God had been dealing with him before the day of his conversion. Having such a Shepherd, all our enemies shall be destroyed, and having such a great Physician, all our diseases shall be healed, and having such a Savior, all the sheep shall be safely gathered into the upper and better kingdom, and shall go no more out forever. K.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

JOHN XIV. 6, 18, 19.

MISS Nettie Cooper, of Mansfield, Ga., requests us to write on the sixth, eighteenth and nineteenth verses of the fourteenth chapter of John. Any one of these verses involves matter enough to occupy us for the length of a long article, but we forbear out of consideration for the patience of our readers, and will try to present simply a few thoughts along the line of each of the passages asked for. John xiv. 6, reads: "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." Jesus is here particularly addressing Thomas. In the fourth verse Jesus had told the disciples: "Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know," but Thomas had replied, saying that they did not know where he was going, nor did they know the way. To this Jesus insisted that the way, the truth and the life were none other than he, Jesus, himself, so that if Thomas knew Jesus he must be acquainted with the way. There is such a thing as the children of God knowing things and not knowing that they know them. Thomas knew the way, but was not aware that he knew it. One may have an experience of grace and not know that he has it. Not until the Preacher, Jesus, opens up the spiritual understanding, do the subjects of grace know where they stand. This is the function of preaching: to tell God's people the things they know, but do not know that they know; not to tell them that which they do not know. When Jesus spoke of his going from them, and of the way of that going, Thomas thought he must mean something altogether different from anything he knew about, but Jesus assured him he was speaking no new thing, that even this Thomas knew, though he was not aware of it. We are so apt to think that the doctrine and Jesus are distinct and separate things; that the experience and Jesus are distinct; that hope and Jesus are distinct; that faith and Jesus are distinct; and so on. The doctrine is Jesus. Abstruse dogmas and articles of a creed are not doctrine. The experience is the life of Christ manifested in the mortal flesh of his people. Christ is the hope of glory. Our imagination runs away with us at times, and we picture Jesus as away off in space, somewhere in a place called heaven, and his people as down here on earth. Christ and his people cannot be separated in any such fashion. Where the one is, there is the other. "Know ye not that the kingdom of heaven is within you?" So Thomas thought the way and Jesus must be two different things; so Mary thought the resurrection and Jesus were distinct and separate; but Jesus told Thomas, "I am the way," and to Mary he said, "I am the resurrection." "The way," not a way. The word "the" shows that the way, the truth and the life, are definite things, that there are not several of them, not more than one, but just one way, one truth, one life. These things cannot be twisted and wrenched about to suit the whims of mortals, they will not be accommodated to the "say sos" and "think sos" of men, but those whom God chooses out of the world are, through grace, reconciled to this one way, one truth, one life: Jesus. Often one hears worldly professors say it does not make any difference what church one belongs to, as they are all aiming for the same place anyway. There is no "anyway" to get to heaven; there is just one way, the way of the cross of Christ, through his death, his resurrection and his merits alone. Furthermore, no one yet ever attained the presence of God by aiming

for it. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Never by works of their own can mortals enter heaven. The headstone shall be brought forth with shoutings of, "Grace, grace unto it." The highway of holiness, the way of salvation, Jesus, no fowl knoweth, the vulture's eye sees it not, the lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor fierce lion passed by it. The vulture is a carrion-bird, he feeds on dead things, has no appetite nor craving for living things. His eye, while said to be the keenest of all birds, is ever on the watch for death. No wonder the vulture never sees Jesus, the way of salvation, for he is the living way; there is no death, no separation from God, in him. The natural man is a vulture. He feeds on death, and is himself dead in sin. The natural man cannot discover the way into the presence of God. Neither the whelp of the lion nor the lion himself comes into this way. No matter how strong a man may be, no matter how resolute and determined, he cannot storm the heights of heaven and take them by main force. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." One thing let there be everlastingly fixed in us the conviction that Jesus is the truth, and there is absolutely no truth apart from him. Not in philosophy, not in logic, not in science, only in Jesus is the living, eternal truth. He came into the world to bear witness of the truth, and his testimony is faithful and true. All that disputes him is a lie. In coming into the flesh to bear the burden of his people's guilt, he showed in his deeds that man was everlastingly unable to save himself. The dreadful load of their guilt which he bore was testimony to the truth of their entire depravity and corruption; their guilt deserved death and he must pay the penalty. The shedding of his blood, his death and resurrection, brought salvation and justification to light. Any one who denies these things, the total depravity of man and the sole efficacy of Christ's work, let him be angel, human or devil, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. And, also, He is the life. There in him only is the never-ending, undying life, the eternal life. Immortality is in him. We have said before, and we say it again, that there is not a spark of anything in man by nature that can outlast death, that can endure forever. Man is mortal, every bit of him. Only in Jesus is the life eternal, the life that death cannot interrupt, nor even touch. This Jesus is the very life of the church. It is he insures her immortality and eternal blessedness. We could quote any number of passages to prove that Christ is the way, the truth, the life, but to do so would lengthen out this article intolerably. If interested, the time of our readers could not be more profitably spent than in hunting out these Scriptures for themselves. "No man," he says, "cometh unto the Father, but by me." Could anything be more plain? Is there any Scripture that less needs exposition to the spiritually-minded? No words of ours could make this statement of Jesus more plain than it is as he says it. Notice, please, he says, "Cometh unto the Father," not cometh unto God. No sinner of Adam's race can come into relationship with God as son unto a father, except by Jesus Christ. All the elect are predestinated unto the adoption of children unto God, and that adoption comes but one way, and that by Jesus Christ. No man is ever a child or a son of God, and God is the Father of no man, except by and through Jesus Christ. Through Christ,

the only begotten Son of God, comes into the hearts of the elect the Spirit of adoption or sonship, and when it does thus come, they say, "Abba, Father." Thus is power given them to become the sons of God. The way into the Fatherhood of God, therefore, is through Jesus.

"I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." This is the only place in the Bible where the word, "comfortless," occurs. The word in the Greek is *orphanos*, and means "orphans." To be an orphan is to be without one or both parents, parentless, bereaved. Jesus says, therefore, I will not leave you as orphans, without father or mother, bereaved, and immediately follows this with: "I will come to you." His coming to them is to cancel their bereavement, is to end their parentless condition. David says, "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." When every earthly prop is gone, the spider's web of creature works, an ineffectual covering, the refuge of lies swept away, all confidence in an arm of flesh destroyed, then the appearing of Jesus as the messenger of the new covenant in his blood ends the bereavement of the convicted sinner and makes good the promise: "A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation." During the three days that Jesus lay in the tomb the disciples were truly orphaned, the church was widowed. By the death of Christ she was free from the law, her former husband; but her new husband, Christ, had not yet arisen from the dead and discovered himself unto her. However, he promises not to leave his disciples in such a state of orphanage or widowhood, but will again come to them, and when Christ, who is their life, shall appear, they shall also appear with him in glory. No more thence are they widows and orphans, but married unto him and take his name: "The Lord our righteousness," and by adoption are the children of God. "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." The appearing of Jesus, no matter when it comes or how, is all that is needed to satisfy every longing of the quickened soul. To realize the presence of Jesus here or hereafter, in this world or in the world to come, is to be in heaven. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." Comfort to the full is in his appearing. "In thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

"Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also." It was only as a man among men that the world ever did behold him. His chosen ones saw him by faith as the incarnate Son of God, but to the world he did not so appear. His true personality was withheld from the gross perceptions of natural men, and it was only for a little while that the world knew him and saw him as one man among many, and when that "little while" was ended he departed, nevermore to come again as he came then. "The world seeth me no more." No more forever will Jesus come humiliated, bruised, persecuted, forsaken, the bearer of sins, as he came then. His coming the second time is without sin unto salvation, not a sacrifice for sin, not wearing the image of the transgressor, nor the badge of mortality. "But ye see me." Yes, the called and chosen of God do always behold him, for to them is he revealed.

Their faith always embraces him. "When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." They shall see him, and seeing him, shall be like him. He appeared to them after his resurrection, and, bestowing upon them the gift of the Holy Ghost, received them up into the gospel heavens by the power of his resurrection, thus making them sharers in his victory over death, hell and sin. So did he fulfill his promise unto them: "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." In his light they were given to see light. Spiritual understanding comes only by the operation of the power of his resurrection. "Because I live, ye shall live also." This is the only guarantee whereby there can be life for any of the elect in the presence of God. This word cuts like a sword. It excludes everything of the flesh and of the natural man. Solely because Christ lives, and for no other reason, is there life for the church. The church can perish no less than the Godhead. The life of one is the life of the other. God himself must as soon cease to be as that one, even the feeblest of his fold, fall and die. Our welfare is not furthered by our goodness nor hindered by our wickedness. The eternal life of God is the perseverance of the saints and their final preservation unto glory.

L.

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Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Deacon W. A. Thompson.)

The Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, convened with the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, October 14th, 15th and 16th, 1914, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—According to former custom, we send you our annual epistle of love and fellowship. Through the goodness and mercy of God we are still spared a name, and rejoice that union and fellowship still exist among the churches. We desire to exhort you to be watchful over each other in the spirit of humility and brotherly love. Paul writes to the Colossian brethren: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving." Let us not be found having our own righteousness, but be clothed with the righteousness of him who has redeemed, washed and cleansed us with his own blood. Self-examination is safe and profitable. By it we are called to our first exercises, when we were quickened from death to life and to behold the kingdom of heaven, and given knowledge of sin and God's power. You were made to call upon him for mercy, and made to hope in his righteousness with childlike simplicity, to know God and to do his will. To you he was all in all; to follow him and walk in his ordinances was your chief desire; you searched his word with delight; your meditations upon heaven and heavenly things were sweet. You then felt to say with David, "For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house

of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Your hope and trust were all in him. How easy it was to get to the meetings of the church, while a feeling of love and forbearance for the brotherhood filled your mind. To hear God's name extolled and exalted was your rejoicing. If you so received Christ Jesus the Lord, should you not so continue to walk in him? Brethren, let us not be found doubting his word. Have you not been taught in your experience to know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose? Has his word not been fulfilled? Has he not given grace equal to your day? You cannot experience one more conflict or trial than he endured for you. "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them." Then it is not possible that you will have to experience one more trial than he has endured for you. Christ said to his disciples, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." For his bride's, the church's, sake he endured all things, and suffered all things, even death. By his atonement he freed you from under the power of sin and death, and raised you up together to sit in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Has not the church been to you an heavenly place? May we so strive to walk as we have received him and have been taught of him. Though many of our numbers, by infirmity and age, have nearly completed their labors, and others gone to their rest, and their places not at present filled, the great Shepherd has not forgotten the fold. To forget her would be to forget himself. As you have trusted in him and have been taught by him, see that ye be found walking in him, forgetting not the assembling of yourselves together, striving to comfort one another with the comfort wherewith you yourselves have been comforted of him. Be watchful over one another for good, for in such things God is well pleased. Whatever you do, let it be in the Master's name and in his strength, being careful not to be found walking in your own wisdom and strength. All our works should be in the same spirit in which we received Christ Jesus, in patience and humility. Christ told his disciples, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." This is true even now. You are surrounded, as they, with "lo heres" and "lo theres;" false christs and false doctrines are looming up on every hand. Go not after them; receive them not into your houses (churches) nor bid them Godspeed. Follow no man only as he follows Christ. Walk as you have been taught, or have received Christ. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Let our walk be as becometh the profession we have made. Go to him for wisdom, to his word for instruction. "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord of hosts. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Our hearts have been made to rejoice in the coming of your ministers, messengers and letters into our midst. Our meeting has been marked by quietness and peace, an entire absence of strife for the mastery. The preaching has been in the power of God and with the demonstration of the Spirit. The hospitality of the brethren has been cordial and wholehearted, and received by those entertained with appreciation and thankfulness. The next session of this Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Ebenezer Church, to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1915. At that time those of us who are left shall expect to once more be favored with visits from your ministers and messengers, and to receive your letters. Until then, brethren, farewell.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
S. B. PAXSON, Clerk.

(Written by Elder J. C. Mellott.)

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Sideling Hill Church, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, October 9th, 10th and 11th, 1914, to the churches composing the same sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Feeling but little able to give expression to the "exceeding great and precious promises" of God, it is with much hesitancy that we address you in this, our annual Circular Letter. We trust that our desire, which is for your peace and welfare in the Lord and the exaltation and praise of our dear Redeemer, may be sweetly realized in our midst.

Jesus, in speaking of his sheep, said: "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." The work of grace in the heart must be of God. We must be born from above. All that we do acceptably must beyond question be the work of God. Lord, "thou hast wrought all our works in us." The man who is born again is spoken of as a new creature, and will manifest that which the new life brings with it. He is brought into the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ and the power of his resurrection, and the life which he now lives in the flesh he lives by the faith of the Son of God. It shall be our aim and desire to describe the life of God within the heart. When God hath shined in our hearts and given to us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, we know that the excellency of the power is of God, and not of us. Men differ in their opinions. A work of grace in the heart wrought by the Spirit of God enlightens our understanding and opens our eyes and we behold a complete change. One who has been wrought upon by carnal means, made a profession of religion based upon the do and live system, and has never been wrought upon by the Spirit of God, will necessarily differ from those who have been created anew in Christ Jesus. It is the life or power of God within that makes and maintains this difference.

Now let us examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith. We profess to be Jews inwardly, children of God, born of the Spirit and followers of Jesus. We believe that we, being spiritually dead, were quickened by the Spirit of God and raised out of our death in sin into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Our hope lies only in the promise of God, in Jesus. He has accomplished our warfare, paid our debt, pardoned our iniquities and set us free, and by his Spirit has revealed this truth in us, making it a living reality. Thus by the work of the

Spirit within we follow him through the perfect work of salvation and know that it is all of the Lord. All that we have we have received of him. Let us not boast then as though we received it not. We receive all that he gives, because his giving is in accord with his will and purpose which must be done. He could well say, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." Paul, in view of the fact that God is for us, asks the question, "Who can be against us?" And since he spared not his own Son, "How shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" We are given faith, without which it is impossible to please God. Convicted sinners under the law cannot understand how God can save them, but, when given faith, the impossible at once becomes a reality, the lepers are cleansed, the eyes of the blind are opened, the deaf hear, the lame walk and the poor have the gospel preached to them. Salvation by grace through faith, and that not of yourselves, is now their theme. On the other hand, when left to themselves and human judgment prevails, they say, It cannot be that we are embraced in the covenant of grace and among the redeemed, for all evidence is against us. Our frames and feelings are now trusted in. The power of unbelief and the influence of imagination are now at work. In what way can they guide us? God's truth is not suspended upon our emotions. He changes not, while our frames and feelings ebb and flow. Hath he purposed, and will he not also bring it to pass? Our weakness cannot defeat his purpose, nor can our power fulfill it. God's own power fulfills his purpose. Look therefore away from self, put no confidence in the arm of flesh, look unto him whose arm is not shortened that he cannot save, put all your trust in him, set no store in feelings, then you can say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

We will close with the following:

"Could we our woes with truth divide—
The sterling and ideal,
What crowds would stand on fancy's side—
How few upon the real."

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
J. C. MELLOTT, Clerk.

(Written by B. F. Buster.)

To the Elders and messengers of the Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, and the churches they represent, and to all who love our Lord, with whom we correspond.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—As another year has passed with its blessings, we have been blessed again to meet in an associate capacity, through the kind providence of God, so my prayer to God is that we meet in his name and pray with and for one another that we may be the happy recipients of his grace. In my weakness I will try to speak on the subject of God's love to poor, fallen man. God is love. Very dear brethren, it seems as if this expression was made when the children of God were walking in all the holy commandments, when they had pure motives in view, pure love one for the other. Love is the fulfilling of the law, and we are commanded to love one another with a pure heart fervently, and God supreme. I would to God we could fully realize what great love God had for us when he so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believed on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. I now call to mind when that dear Savior hung on the cross, when that compassionate eye looked down on poor, fallen man,

who was standing with the spear in his hand to pierce his side, while Jesus was asking the Father to have mercy on them. O that God would give us an eye single to his glory, to examine our hearts this day to see whether we be in the faith. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."—1 John iii. 1. Again, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer."—1 John iii. 14, 15. So now, dear brethren, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth, for if we expect God to commend his love toward us we must love one another with a pure heart fervently. God help us so to speak, so to act, so to walk, having conversation in godly fear. Even so, amen.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator.
H. C. CATE, Clerk.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, Sept. 11th, 12th and 13th, 1914, to the sister associations with which we correspond sends greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more we present to you our annual Circular Letter, and in so doing we desire to write you in wisdom, meekness and truth, also in fellowship and love, for we know that the whole church of God is to walk in the same road in tribulation, sometimes mourning because of an absent God, and sometimes rejoicing in the perfect work of a crucified and risen Redeemer. We read that faith is the substance of things hoped for. Now, dear brethren, since faith is the gift of God, and faith produces works, we feel to give praise to God because we can come to you in love, desiring to share with you in all your joys and sorrows. Our experience has been like David's, as recorded in the book of Psalms. When the works of faith reveal to us patience, then we feel to say, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea," and by faith we find shelter and rest in him. Then again we feel that Satan desires to sift us as wheat, then we find ourselves crying, "Give ear to my prayer, O God; and hide not thyself from my supplication;" but faith produces patience, and by that patience we still cry to God, believing that he will again show his smiling face, and as God is the author of faith, and his work is not in vain, we are again made to sing praises to his name. This God-given faith is without repentance, therefore he does not take his faith from us, consequently we walk by faith, and not by sight. This faith produces a hope not in our works, but in the complete work of the crucified Savior. We hope in the glory of God. God's glory is made manifest in his Son, the one in whom by faith we have hope. God has prepared his own sacrifice, for he makes his arm bare, that no flesh shall glory in his presence; he brings upon us a broken spirit. "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise," and by faith we are not ashamed of his sacrifices, for we know that all his works are done in righteousness. Knowing that he is the author and finisher of our faith, we can but give glory to his great and holy name.

G. R. TEDFORD, Moderator.
J. E. HUBBARD, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Roxbury Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, September 23rd and 24th, 1914, to the sister associations and churches with which we correspond, greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN CHRIST:—The time is at hand when we are once more privileged to meet in an associate capacity, where we feel to say we have had a great feast of the glorious truths once delivered unto the saints. Your messengers and messages have come to us with sweet expressions of that oneness that dwells in the house of the Lord.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the First Roxbury Church, at Vega, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday after the third Sunday in September, 1915, when and where we shall hope to meet you and receive your Minutes again. Until that time farewell.

ORVILLE WINCHELL, Moderator.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Sideling Hill Church, Fulton Co., Pa., October 9th, 10th and 11th, 1914, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond sendeth greeting and love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—As another year has passed away, so we send our letter of correspondence to the sister associations with which we are in christian fellowship. The messengers of our Association report peace and harmony, each one giving God all the glory, and not man, for his wonderful works to the children of men. Our preachers have come to us with sound doctrine and have preached the word in all fullness of the gospel, proclaiming salvation by grace only, which is music to the poor sinner's ears.

Our next association will convene with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1915, where we hope to meet your messengers again.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
J. C. MELLOTT, Clerk.

NOTICE.

CANNON, Del., Oct. 26, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have decided to change locations, and would prefer Pennsylvania as my new location, or where the climate is dry and a high elevation. My reason for making the change is because I have a catarrhal affection, and this climate is much against me, as I am near the two bays and the air is very damp. I would like to be convenient to some Old School Baptist Church.

A. T. BENSON.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

APPOINTMENTS.

NOTHING preventing, by request of the churches of Roxbury Association I will be at Roxbury yellow meetinghouse Sunday, Nov. 16th, 10:30 a. m.; Vega, Monday, 17th, 11 a. m.; brother Faulkner's, Monday evening, 7:30 p. m.; Union Grove, Tuesday, 18th, 11 a. m.; Ashokan, Wednesday, 19th, 3:30 p. m.; Kingston, Wednesday evening, 8. p. m.

D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Benj. F. Dennison, Del., $2 00; Attie A. Curtis, Maine, $2.00; Sarah Gandy, N J, $2 00; Wm. Darby, Md., $1.00; Mrs. A. E. Tucker, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Okla., $2.00; John K. Yerkes, D. C., $1.00; Olivia M. Hellings, N. J., $1.00; D. S. Elliott, N. Y., $2.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

May Bateman Corneil, daughter of John C. and Ann Bateman, was born in Caradoc, Ont., Canada, Feb. 13th, 1850, died at her home in Ekfrid, Ontario, Jan. 19th, 1914, in the 64th year of her age. She was married to Philip C. Corneil, of Ekfrid, Ontario, Dec. 6th, 1882, and to that union were born two sons, Harry and William P. Harry, the eldest, died when a child in his third year. Mrs. Corneil never made any profession of religion, although she was a firm believer in the doctrine of God our Savior, but always felt too unworthy to ask a place among the Lord's people. When about seventeen years of age she experienced a hope in her blessed Savior under the preaching of Elder Thomas McColl, and her experience was like a chain, link by link, line upon line and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. During all those years she pondered the sweet promises of her blessed Lord in her heart, fearing to speak to any one lest she might deceive them. As the end drew near she felt to speak to her friends of that precious hope she had for many years. The 999th hymn (Beebe's collection) was a great comfort to her, and she would often repeat a portion of it. Mrs. Corneil was reconciled to her affliction, feeling that it was all right, bearing all without a murmur, and always appeared bright and cheerful. As the end approached she said to those by her bedside: "There is no more earthly bread for me, I am feasting upon the heavenly manna, which has been the food of my soul for forty years." Mrs. Corneil was a woman of marked integrity, loved and respected by all who knew her. It was my blessed privilege to visit her a few days before she passed from earth, and well do I remember the sweet smile upon her face as she took my hand, saying, "I have a prayer for your welfare here in Canada, and hope that the Lord will bless your labors." That was the last time I ever saw her alive. The dear Lord called her from the tender embrace of her many earthly friends, unto himself, as we have many evidences that she fell asleep in her blessed Savior. She leaves to mourn their loss, her devoted husband, one son, William P. Corneil, and six sisters: Mrs. E. L. Crouch, Mrs. Thos. Durdle, Mrs. N. G. Blue and Mrs. George Smith, of Ontario, and Mrs. J. L. Young and Miss Jennie A. Bateman, of New York.

Her funeral was held at her late residence, conducted by the writer, and was largely attended by her many friends and relatives.

May He who is able to heal the broken-hearted be and abide with all who mourn their loss.

ALSO,

Deacon Archie McGugan departed this life at his home in Lobo, Ont., Canada, Sept. 22nd, 1914, in the 68th year of his age. Brother McGugan's health had been failing for about three years, although he was able to attend to his business, looking after his farm. About two years ago last April he had a very serious attack of heart disease, but regained his health to a degree and enjoyed fairly good health until about the first of May, when the disease made its appearance again, from which he never recovered. At times he would seem to improve, but only for a short period. On July 30th he suffered a stroke of paralysis, paralyzing his throat, resulting in the loss of speech, from which he never recovered so as to be able to converse with his many friends who came to visit him. Brother McGugan was held in high esteem by all who knew him. He possessed the sterling qualities of honesty and integrity, faithful in discharging his duties among his fellow-men. For a number of years he was a member of the county council, which speaks well of his standing in the community in which he resided. He was married to Christina Campbell in the year 1875, and to that union were born six children, four sons and two daughters, all of whom are still living. Brother McGugan's home was always open to his brethren, whom he delighted to entertain. He was untiring in his efforts to make all comfortable, and always gave them a hearty welcome. Many can testify to the pleasant visits at his home. Brother McGugan was a believer for a number of years before uniting with the church. In the year of 1901 it pleased the dear Lord to gather him into the fold, being received in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada August 17th. He was baptized by Elder W. I. Carnell, and proved by word and deed a blessing to the church, walking carefully and prayerfully before the Lord, seeking the welfare of his brethren and adorning himself with a well ordered life and a godly conversation. Soon after he became a member the church saw that the Giver of every good and perfect gift had bestowed upon him the gift of deacon, to which office he was appointed at the regular quarterly meeting at Ekfrid June 25th, 1904, which office he filled to the satisfaction of his brethren in visiting the sick, ministering to those in need and seeking the welfare of the church. We feel that in his death the church has lost a good and substantial member. While his death has cast a gloom over the church, our hearts' desire is to be reconciled to the will of God, who doeth all things well. His pleasant home is sad and lonely without his presence, but what is our loss is his eternal gain. Our hearts go out in deepest sympathy to our dear bereaved sister and the children, who have been bereft of so kind and loving a husband and father. May they be reconciled to the most holy will of our heavenly Father by the presence of his Spirit and everlasting arms bearing them up in this their deep affliction. Many words of comfort did our dear brother speak to his sorrowing family to cheer their sad and sorrowing hearts, always saying, Let the Lord's will be done,

that it was all right, being reconciled to his most holy will.

His funeral was held at his late residence in Lobo village, conducted by the writer, after which all that was mortal was laid to rest in the Campbell Cemetery at Caradoc.

May the blessing of Almighty God rest upon all who mourn. J. B. SLAUSON.

Captain Lemuel A. Buck died Oct. 4th, 1914, aged 62 years. My husband was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone. Mr. Thompson spoke at the funeral. He leaves to mourn his widow and two children, Bertha and William Buck, also two sisters, Mrs. Cook, of Dorchester, N. B., and Mrs. Hurd, of Hartford, Conn. My husband was born in Dorchester, New Brunswick.

MARY M. BUCK.

MEETINGS.

THE Mt. Enon Association of Primitive Baptists of south Florida will hold their meeting with the church called Salem, two miles south of Dover, on the A. C. L. R. R., Nov. 6th, 7th and 8th, 1914. All lovers of Bible truth are invited, especially ministering brethren of our faith and order. For further information address me.

C. K. HAINES.

LAKELAND, Fla.

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JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 82. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1914. NO. 22.

POETRY.

THE CHURCH.

THE church's one foundation
Is Jesus Christ her Lord;
She is his new creation
By water and the word;
From heaven he came and sought her
To be his holy bride;
With his own blood he bought her,
And for her life he died.

Elect from every nation,
Yet one o'er all the earth,
Her charter of salvation
One Lord, one faith, one birth;
One holy Name she blesses,
Partakes one holy food,
And to one hope she presses,
With every grace endued.

Though with a scornful wonder
Men see her sore oppressed,
By schisms rent asunder,
By heresies distressed,
Yet saints their watch are keeping,
Their cry goes up, "How long?"
And soon the night of weeping
Shall be the morn of song.

'Mid toil and tribulation,
And tumult of her war,
She waits the consummation
Of peace forevermore;
Till with the vision glorious
Her longing eyes are blest,
And the great church victorious
Shall be the church at rest.

Yet she on earth hath union
With God, the Three in One,
And mystic sweet communion
With those whose rest is won.
O happy ones and holy!
Lord, give us grace that we,
Like them, the meek and lowly,
On high may dwell with Thee.

SAMUEL J. STONE.

YEARNINGS.

THE veil of our flesh so oft intervening,
The things of our God but obscurely we see;
As through a glass darkly we look on his glories,
But soon face to face with Emmanuel we'll be.

Like one that's outside of the palace I wander,
Yet at times, through the lattice, the King I have seen;
The King in his beauty—O such ravishing glimpses,
That my heart ever since taken captive has been.

As one veiled aside, after him I am pining;
Such a dreary waste desert is all unto me,
When Jesus, most lovely, my hope, my salvation,
Is absent, and I his dear face cannot see.

The glimpses which even to me have been given
Of the lovely Redeemer—such compassion I've seen,
My heart's drawn toward him, I'm yearning and hoping
To live 'neath his smiles, and have no veil between.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JEREMIAH X. 23.

"O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

The passing (on the twenty-seventh day of May) of the fifty-eighth anniversary of my pilgrimage in this vale of sorrow, affliction and disappointment, has been the occasion of some reflections, in which the above quotation has been more or less associated. I have been thinking of what I am and have been; what I believe, and why; what I might have been, but am not, and have not been, and why. If my intelligence and understanding had existed, and I had been consulted and given a choice, how different would it all have been, especially when my heart is filled with unbelief, and I am unreconciled to my lot.

I was born in the County of Bibb, State of Georgia, May 27th, 1856. My parents bore the name Jones, and were poor people, but respectable. I was of the masculine gender, so they christened me Henry Benjamin. I happened to be of dark complexion, dark hair and grayish blue eyes. I started on life's journey with a disposition and temperament as peculiarly my own as was my complexion and the color of my hair. There is much about this temperament and disposition I never liked, as it has given me much trouble through life. There was also given me a certain peculiar tone of voice and expression of countenance. I was brought up under certain conditions, surrounded with certain environments, and physically grew to be about five and one-half feet tall, and to weigh about one hundred and fifty pounds. I have never yet learned how to "add one cubit to my stature or to make one hair white or black." I have ever possessed an inclination of mind to charge up to my surroundings, associates in childhood, and their influence, all my failures to reach my ideals morally, and to credit my mother, first, and then others, as to what there is good as to morals. Now, kind reader, I have not written all this about myself to bring myself to your notice, but to call attention to the few of many things (yea, there are hundreds and thousands of them) that go to make up the being I am, over which I had no control, and with which I had nothing to do, and I am only one out of hundreds of millions of like beings that exist on the earth to-day, to say nothing of the hundreds of millions of each successive generation back through the annals of time. Has any one of these millions had more control over things, conditions and environments in their case, than I had in my case? Certainly not. Then why should one poor "can't help it" call another a "can't help it," with intent to reproach? All of us are, at least in many respects, "can't help its." But this epithet was coined, and is only one of many to reproach those who believe in and contend for God's absolute purpose in all things, and that he works all things after the counsel of his own will, and that the salvation of poor sinners is accomplished only by the sovereign grace of God, and that according to the counsel of his own will. But the question of the gainsayer, "Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" need not surprise us, nor does it concern us, so much as to know whether what we believe is the truth. The Bible, the inspired and infallible record of truth, is our standard; to its language we appeal "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die."—Eccl. iii. 1, 2. Job affirms in interroga-

tory form that there is an appointed time to man upon earth, and his days also are like the days of an hireling. (Job. vii. 1.) Job further says, "Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringeth me into judgment with thee? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one. Seeing his days are determined, and the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass. Turn from him, that he may rest, till he shall accomplish, as an hireling, his day."—Job. xiv. 1-6. Again Job says, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps." —Prov. xvi. 9. "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will." —Prov. xxi. 1. "There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless, the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand."—Prov. xix. 21. The Lord "hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."—Acts xvii. 26. The above quotations are a few of the many which go to prove that man is the Lord's creature. He made him for a purpose, as he did every other creature, and so each one has a certain place to fill, a time to be born and a time to die. But "man's heart deviseth his way," and as long as the devices of his heart carry him in the way the Lord has designed and appointed he is permitted to follow those devices, but where the Lord has designed otherwise, all the devices of his heart come to naught, otherwise how could the prophet say, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps"? Man in his natural state is as dead to the spiritual sphere in which the "quickened," the "born again," live and move as one corporeally dead is dead to the natural sphere, lest man boasts his wisdom and ability even to grasp the spiritual. And so it is, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." We are told that "the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."—Rom. viii. 7, and that "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14. No wonder then that man in his alienated condition puts darkness for light, and bitter for sweet, and although God's word declares that there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God, yet they say, Man does, or can understand; he does or can seek after God, and that it is in man that walketh to direct his steps. If it is blind carnality in man that causes him thus to reverse the word of God, it must be the carnal nature in the subject of grace that causes him to contend that it is at least partly in the believer to direct his steps, that great spiritual blessings or rewards are his upon conditions of obedience, which he has ability in himself to perform or leave undone. If this last idea be a correct one, then it is in some men, at least, (believers) who walk to direct their steps, and the assertion of the prophet cannot be true. If the spiritual blessings of the believer are hinged upon contingencies, that is, if they are given as rewards for obedience, then they come as matters of debt, and are not of grace at

all; they are simply the wages of an hireling. But our experience confirms to us the testimony of the Scriptures, and we have to believe with the prophet that, "The way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," and that "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God," and so we take pleasure in singing with Doddridge,

"Grace taught my soul to pray,
And pardoning love to know;
'Twas grace that kept me to this day,
And will not let me go.

Grace all the work shall crown
Through everlasting days:
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

H. B. JONES.

WINNSBORO, Texas, Aug., 1914.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Oct. 15, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER:—I have a desire to write upon spiritual things, trusting that the Lord has revealed to me the true church of the living God. In consulting the language of Christ with Peter, in the sixteenth chapter of Matthew, we find that Peter was given to know Jesus by the indwelling of God's Spirit, for Peter confessed, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," and Jesus said unto him, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Nothing but the indwelling of the Spirit of God can ever show where the true church stands, for it is a spiritual house, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Please notice the sixty-third chapter of Isaiah. In going forth to proclaim the revealed will of God, Isaiah says, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." There is no power above Christ. He has trodden the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with him. He had no need of their help, for the power of God gave him all power, both in heaven and in earth. He came to do his Father's will, which he did, and cried out, "It is finished." When the capstone of his building is laid, then time shall be no more. So, dear brother, these are serious thoughts to meditate upon. We doubt and fear lest we have not known the true church of God. At times we feel we have truly been taught of God, yet while here in the flesh, often are cast down. I have now been confined to my room for six months, able to get around but little, yet I feel to thank God that, through his love and mercy, he has drawn me closer to the feet of Jesus, has given me his faith and established my goings. I feel to know that I have nothing of myself to offer that would be acceptable unto him.

Now, dear brother, what I have written I hope is in keeping with the Scriptures, as, I trust, the Lord has shown them to me. If, in your better judgment, you feel this to be worthy or not of a place in the SIGNS, all will be well with me. Remember a poor sinner saved by the grace of God.

Your brother in hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

RALEIGH, N. C., Oct. 15, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER:—I, too, have been looking around and contrasting the teaching of the world with that of God's servants. Some months ago there was a "Peace Conference" held here. I heard a prominent man say that we were soon to have peace, the whole world brought to Christ in this century. I immediately

thought of what God told Job's friends: "Ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath." Do you suppose they can see the folly of such teaching when they read of the cruel war by christian (?) nations? Would it not seem that now the Missionaries are needed in Europe more than in Japan and China, if they are needed at all? I have thought much recently of the Bible as containing everything that the church needs for all ages. What about the new things the world is filled with for the hope of salvation? Who is to make any record of them? They are not written in the book. No other Bible will ever be written. Men are continually changing, so are their methods. How good it is to know that whatsoever things were written, were for our comfort. If God has put his law in our minds and written it in the heart, there is no room for the other law, that is the same old law of sin and death. I trust we have already had our fill of that. How selfish do we appear to the other churches. A preacher said to me not long ago, "It does seem hurtful to me to think you will not come to hear me preach when I think so much of you." I replied, "I think too much of you to let anything come between us, and just as surely as I heard you preach your doctrine there would be a separation." I can think of Daniel and how selfish he must have appeared to many of his friends when he chose the lions' den rather than worship any but the true and living God. To us, he was but standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made him free. Had he done otherwise, he would have but entangled himself with the yoke of bondage. I can imagine no greater yoke than being unequally yoked with unbelievers. If to live with the true church means persecution, trials and afflictions, we can but say we have no choice to make. It is made for us. May you live many years to speak of the glory of his kingdom and to talk of his power, thereby encouraging all the little ones to press forward and to hope to the end.

Most sincerely yours,

PATTIE WOODARD ANDERSON.

TRENTON, N. J., Oct. 18, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER:—I enjoyed the meetings at Southampton very much, and now, while completely shut in, I often go over again the happy scenes of other days, the meetings I could in earlier years attend. They were the happiest seasons of my life, for they often carried me back to the days of my first love.

"How sweet their memory still!
But now I find an aching void,
The world can never fill."

It has been a long time now since I have heard preaching, as I am not only confined to my room, but to my chair day and night, so have much time for reflection when not in too much pain. I sleep but little, so there are many weary hours to be whiled away in the nighttime when all is quiet. I used to try to get my mind fixed on spiritual things, and would try to think of sermons I had heard, of the Scriptures, of hymns, or my early experience, but even when free from pain it seemed my mind could not rise above natural, worldly matters, so I became much cast down, not doubtful exactly, for I felt I had been given reason to hope in the mercy of my Savior. I could not doubt his word, but I was such a little one. If at all in the building, I must be one of the very smallest stones, and often overlooked by the great Architect who was daily pouring out blessings upon me, who am one of the most unworthy. So time dragged wearily away for many weeks, but one night, while sitting alone

as usual and in not much if any pain, there seemed to come the most peaceful, calm, submissive feeling over me, which I cannot describe. I was so happy my eyes filled to overflowing. I felt my Savior was with me, had been with me and I knew it not. O the peace that passeth understanding! I had not a cross, a wish nor a care, but was like one carried on the billows of the wave. There was no jar or discord, no fear or turmoil, for the everlasting arms of Jehovah were underneath. I could not fear, but rested in peace. He was giving me the oil of joy for mourning, and for my heaviness the garment of praise. Praise! How can I ever praise my Redeemer as I ought for the countless blessings heaped upon me, a poor worm of the dust? The great peace that came to me so unexpectedly that night in the lone darkness has followed me more or less ever since. My cup is often filled to overflowing with the goodness, mercy and love of my gracious Redeemer, who, I feel, has watched over my family and myself all through my long life of over eighty years.

With love to all the dear ones, your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) M. R. LAWSHE.

[THE foregoing letter from brother Hickerson, also the extracts from letters of sisters Anderson and Lawshe, we think will be received with interest, so we give them to our readers.—ED.]

JULIAN, Cal., Sept. 18, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I see in the SIGNS just received that you are requesting the brethren to write some of their thoughts for the paper. I will in my weakness write a few words on the way I was brought from darkness into light, and from death unto life. The first light that made me to see my sinfulness was in the year 1840. It was at the funeral of a cousin of mine; there a light shone upon me, telling me what a great sinner I was, and I thought the next funeral would be mine. The next thought was, What shall I do to be saved? The thought of dying in my sins was an awful thing to me. I was used to hearing Baptist preaching, but thought I was not ready to become a christian, and that there was plenty of time. But the time had come that my blind eyes were opened, and I could see where I stood. I tried to pray, but my prayers went no higher than my head, and things went from bad to worse until I found that I could do nothing, and I thought I was doomed to die in my sins. I thought I would make one more effort, I would throw myself at the feet of Jesus and say, Lord, save, I perish. This was on a Sunday, when I I was walking by the side of my father's farm on the public highway, thinking that this was the last effort I would make. I had often heard the Old Baptists preach that it is by grace we are saved, and not by anything that we can do of ourselves; it is all with the Lord, so if it is his will to send me to the pit it is all right and just. Then it seemed to me that a light shone unto me brighter than the noonday sun, and I climbed up on the fence where there was a flax patch in bloom in the field, and I thought I never saw such a pretty sight in all my life. Everything looked so light that I could rise and fly, and I felt that I could praise God all the days of my life. I think it was the next Sunday that I went to hear an Old Baptist preach, and I thought he preached the whole sermon to me, it suited my case so well. All went well with me until the tempter came with the same old story that he told to mother Eve; so I did not go to the church, for I thought

I might be deceived and might deceive the church, so I would wait awhile to get better. I drifted off into the desert of sin, and for sixty long years I traveled the broad road of sin, thinking to get better, but all the time getting worse, until my burden became so heavy that I could stand up under it no longer. Every time I saw water I longed to be baptized. I traveled all the way from Phœnix, Arizona, to Lane County, Oregon, where I found the church of my choice: the Coast Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, and the first opportunity I had I offered myself to the church and was received on Saturday before the second Sunday in August, 1903, and was baptized in the full fellowship of that church, by Elder W. M. Girard, in the broad Willamette River, where there was much water. I remained with my church one year, and being old, my age and my circumstances called me away to Julian, Cal., where I now live with my son. Am in my ninety-fourth year, and read and write without the use of glasses. Now I am over twelve hundred miles from my church, and have seen but one brother of our faith since I left it. I am a hundred miles from the nearest church, and all the preaching that I have of our faith is the SIGNS. The dear publishers placed me on the free list. Were it not for their kindness I would be without preaching. I report to my church every month regularly. I deem it the duty of every true member to report or attend meetings unless providentially hindered. The dear ones who do attend would feel more that the brethren had not forgotten the house of God.

Dear brethren, I appreciate the way the SIGNS is conducted and enjoy the doctrine it teaches, believing it to be the true doctrine that Christ and the apostles preached and taught. I had a brother who wrote for the SIGNS eighty years ago, Abraham Miller, Jr.

Dear brethren, I am writing more than I intended; I fear I will weary you, my writing is so poor. I have to write with a pencil. I have but little education, as you can see by my writing. My education in school did not exceed a sixth grade. What little I know I have learned by common observation. I hope I have learned a few lessons in Christ's school. When I write or think I have to ask of God to give me light, for without light we can do nothing. If we undertake to lead the blind we will all fall into the ditch together. Dear brethren, if we lack light we must ask of God, and he will give liberally.

Dear brethren and friends, I would like to say a few words on the subject of christian duty, but time and space will hardly admit. I would like to impress it upon the little ones of God who have been brought from darkness to light not to live as I did and neglect duty, thinking to get better, and all the time getting worse. O, my dear friends, if you are hungering after righteousness take up your cross and follow Christ, he will give you rest.

Dear editors, if you think this worth looking over and can use it, please correct and publish if you think it will interest any of God's little ones scattered abroad. If you do not think it worth a place in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, cast it aside and it will be all right with me. I feel that I am too old and weak to write anything worth publishing. I do not know why it is that God has suffered me to live as long as I have.

I remain a poor, worn out sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all.

S. S. MILLER.

THE DEALINGS OF THE LORD.

"My soul with various tempests tossed,
Her hopes o'erturned, and projects crossed,
Sees every day new straits attend,
And wonders where the scene will end."

When people are in prosperity and are at ease the tried pathway of the child of God, as set forth in this verse, can be but little understood. Carnal religionists and hypocrites, who are strangers to "the path of life," are also strangers to the trials that are peculiar to the chosen of God. What multitudes of professors of Christ's name there are who have no heartfelt knowledge of Jesus Christ. Just the mere outward profession, just a round of bodily exercise, or just an assent to points of doctrine; or they may be very zealous contenders for what they esteem to be Bible truth, but they have no heartfelt knowledge of Jesus Christ. They have never known what it is to be of a humble and contrite heart, to tremble at God's word. He has not spoken to them, and they have never poured out their hearts in sighs and supplications at the mercy-seat of God. They are dead in trespasses and sins, for they know not God, the Father, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.

Believers in Jesus Christ are sharers in common in the ills that afflict mankind, but in these ills they are exercised in a way before and unto their God that the world knows nothing of. Then there are those dispensations of Jehovah's providence which none but the elect know, for the Lord trieth the righteous, and no others are thus dealt with. All their afflictions are in everlasting love; it is in infinite wisdom they are subjected to discipline, to corrections, chastenings, to reproofs, rebukes, fires and floods, all for their ultimate good. The rest of mankind are not dealt with in this manner. There have been seasons when my heart has said:

"Dear Lord, though bitter is the cup
Thy gracious hand deals out to me,
I cheerfully would drink it up;
That cannot hurt which comes from thee.

Dash it with thy unchanging love,
Let not a drop of wrath be there;
The saints, forever blest above,
Were often most afflicted here.

From Jesus, thy incarnate Son,
I'll learn obedience to thy will,
And humbly kiss the chastening rod,
When its severest strokes I feel."

The sovereignty of God is very manifest even in his dealings as our heavenly Father. Some of his dear children are given a much larger portion of afflictions, or they are called to endure much sorer conflicts than others; but if their sufferings abound, their consolations abound by Christ Jesus. Of Saul of Tarsus God said, "I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."—Acts ix. 16. All trouble is hardening, and we become impatient, and murmur, and if self-pity gets us in its grip this much increases our trouble. The one blessed thing in trouble is to find the Holy Spirit's operations in the soul bringing us in lowliness of heart to seek the face of our God. How kind is that voice that says, "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."—Psalms l. 15. "In trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them."—Isaiah xxvi. 16. When our troubles constrain us to show them before our God this is proof they are working for our good. "It is good for me to draw near to God."—Psalms lxxiii. 28. Here at the footstool of our God we not only pray for relief and for grace to sustain us in our distresses; not only do we cry for strength to be able to stand in the conflict, but for mercy, that God will

pardon our fretfulness, hush our murmurings. O we long for the nearness, and tokens of love from the Lord, that he will speak a kind, assuring word to us; we cry unto him that he will not be unto us as a stranger in the land, but that we may have his presence in the fires, and that he will still give us a heart to cleave to him. Our unbelief, our fears, the insinuations of the devil, would wrench us away from our covenant God. But God, who performs his good work in us until the day of Jesus Christ, moves us in our distresses to cling to him, who is the only hope and rock of our salvation. In these times of our souls' adversities unfeigned faith and our love unfeigned live; much that is spurious, much that is dross, is burned up in fiery trials, and when we say,

"All my trust on thee is stayed,
All my help from thee I bring;
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of thy wing,"

they are not idle words, but the very experience of the child of God who flees unto Christ for refuge. O the Lord chastens his people, but ever for their profit, that they may be partakers of his holiness. He wounds, and his hands make whole; he healeth the broken in heart and bindeth up their wounds; he brings us low and humbled in his sight, but he will lift us up, and lift up upon us the light of his countenance. Truly he will be with us in all our straits and know our souls in adversity. He discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death, and he verily will rebuke the devourer for thy sake, ye weak and fearful children of God. He makes believers know the riches of his grace and the wonders of his love in the deeps of their afflictions, and when they are weakness, and God seeth that we have no might against the powers that oppress us, he moves us to cry unto himself for succor and consolation. Thus he so graciously makes the power of Christ to rest upon us, and out of weakness we become strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Our Lord Jesus Christ is not a mere arrangement of doctrines, not a system of philosophical teachings that men may gather out of the Bible, and in which men may esteem themselves wise, and sport themselves in their self-acquired speculations, but our Lord Jesus Christ is, he has very being, and they that are his have been brought to him, having been taught of the Father. (John vi. 45.) They have been apprehended of Christ Jesus. (Phil. iii. 12.) He has a gracious, almighty, loving hold of them, and he will not give them up, neither shall any power pluck them out of his hand. They have been called unto fellowship with God's dear Son, and in this fellowship he shews them the Father, they joy in God through him, and have access into the mercy of God, and have peace with God. By our dear Savior we have received the atonement, and thus, though poor and base and vile, we believe in Christ with all the heart. O thus to know the Father, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, is life eternal. His flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed. Have we not proved that Christ often captivates our thoughts, calls forth our trust, engrosses our affections, inspires our souls with hope? His blood and righteousness, his sacrifice for our sins and his high priesthood in the heavens, where he appeareth in the presence of God for us, give courage and joy to us poor, sinful worms, and we say, O guide me with thy counsel, dear Savior, and afterward receive me to glory. "Christ liveth in me;" yes, it is Christ in us the

hope of glory, for God hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus.

"Soon shall the cup of glory wash down earth's bitterest foes;
Soon shall the desert briar break into Eden's Rose;
The curse shall change to blessing, the name on earth that's banned,
Be graven on the White Stone in Emmanuel's land."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

DUNCAN, Okla., Sept. 14, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—Once more I will pen a few words in my weak way in giving thanks to the contributors of our dear paper, that has so freely come to me twice a month. Many thanks to you, children of God, for such a present to one who is the least of all saints. May the dear Lord remember his children everywhere who have comforted me with the words of his blessings in my declining days. Bless the Lord for all his benefits to me; it is too high, I cannot attain unto it; but to the Lord give praise, for his mercy endureth forever; he is from everlasting to everlasting, he fills immensity, he rides upon the storm. Lo, these are parts of his ways, and who can know him? At his rebuke my soul sinks within me, and as one alone I cry and chatter, and mourn as the dove. "O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee; for thou art mine, I have redeemed thee, I trod the winepress alone for thee. "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?" "My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved; and be thou like a roe, a young hart, upon the mountains of Bether." "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest part of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great the sum of them!" O dear friends and companions in this low ground of sorrow, how great the sum of the Lord's mercies to me, and all the dear saints of God, the Rock of our salvation, for salvation is of the Lord. Now, my dear friends, these passages of Scripture I have written came to me with power, yes, came faster than I could write them down, and I am left blank. O was it the Spirit of Jesus that filled my mind with these words? Blessed be his name, for he is my salvation for time and eternity.

Now, dear brethren and sisters, I ask you in the name of our Father to pray for me, and will you respond to me in the love of Jesus? If my writing is done in vainglory do not publish it, if not written in the Spirit of Christ.

I send you a letter written to me by a young minister. I would like for you to give it a place in our paper; I want to share it with the saints, as it has been a feast to me in a weary land. May the Lord uphold him, and all his dear children everywhere, by the word of his power, is my prayer.

Unworthily yours,

NANCY CREEL.

FLETCHER, Okla., May 17, 1914.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—Once more with a deep realization of my weakness, I will try to offer a few of my rambling thoughts on the merits of our crucified Savior, though I am sure you are far my superior in knowledge of all that pertains to godliness. First, let me say that your letter was a great comfort to me; it contained that which was wholesome, and set forth only the things that becometh sound doctrine, and to God's children they are sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. But, dear sister, the thought springs up within my breast, What right has one so sinful as I am to claim an interest in the love of the merciful God? Was it because I had done anything that brought God under obligation to receive me as an heir of that inheritance which is incorruptible and fadeth not away? No, a thousand times no. The heirs of that inheritance are kept by the power of God through faith (not because of) unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. (1 Peter i. 5.) Let us go back and hear what Peter says about these heirs: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy [not our works] hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."—1 Peter i. 2, 3. Yes, Peter says they are the elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience. So instead of our obedience gaining us acceptance with God, it is proof that we are already accepted of him. Obedience is the fruit of the Spirit. Dear sister, we are not accepted with the Father on the merits of our good works, but we are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that we should shew forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. (1 Peter ii. 9.) Called to be saints. (Romans i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 2.) Chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. (Eph. i. 4.) So you see it is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but of his mercy he hath saved us. It ever has been the will of the Father to visit his people with salvation, but he has never looked to the arm of flesh for its accomplishment, for he is too wise to make mistakes. Ah, there was one that he could rely on, and that one was his own dear Son, who took all the sins of his people upon himself, and stepped between them and the wrath of the sin-avenging God. Yes, he came under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. O wonderful thought! O blessed Savior! that left his heavenly throne and came down to a sin-cursed world to suffer untold agony, yea, to suffer the terrible death of the cross for the salvation of his people. Dear sister, he is the Captain of our salvation; he hath blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us; he took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross, (Col. ii. 14,) and if our salvation was not made sure, then we are yet without hope and without God in the world; but if he came for our salvation it is sure, for he said, "It is finished," and we can say with Paul, Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, (1 Cor. xv. 57,) and with the poet we can say:

"'Tis finished! so the Savior cried,
And meekly bowed his head and died;

"Tis finished—yes, the race is run,
The battle fought, the victory won."

Pardon me for writing you such a long letter; I wish it were better. Let me hear from you as soon as you can conveniently write, and if not too much, I ask an interest in your prayers.

Your unworthy brother,

I. D. MOODY.

NEW WINE IN OLD BOTTLES.

"No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new; for he saith, The old is better."—Luke v. 39.

The Savior in hearing the scribes and Pharisees murmur against the disciples, saying, "Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?" said unto them, "They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." The scribes and Pharisees felt too much exalted to be found eating with publicans and sinners, and called them an unclean people, a people of unwashed hands, which we have understood to mean that the Pharisees carried out the formality of washing their hands before they ate, as this was one of their established customs, and if they washed not, they ate not; the Jewish forms separated them from those who did not observe them, and they said to the disciples, Why does your Master eat with publicans and sinners? These same scribes and Pharisees asked Christ himself another question that issued from the same Jewish or pharisaical idea, and that was: "Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees, but thine eat and drink?" Here it would seem as though they could not yet understand Christ's mission into the world, for they wanted to know why Christ's disciples did not conform to all the forms and rituals of the old covenant; they even said the disciples of John fasted often and prayed. We are to understand that during the ministry of John many of the customs of the Jews were still carried out, even by the disciples. The feast of unleavened bread was observed by Christ and his disciples at the last supper, just before he was betrayed, for as yet the old covenant was still standing in part, and its forms were partially observed by those who had been converted from the Jews. These brethren seemed to still be zealous of the law, and could not at once give up all their forms and customs. Even the apostle Paul withstood Peter to his face, because when there was none but the Gentile brethren present he would partake freely with them, but when he saw some of the Jewish brethren come from Jerusalem, or from James, who was the first bishop at Jerusalem, Peter seemed to fear he would be censured for eating with the Gentiles, and therefore he withdrew, fearing them which were of the Jews. Likewise Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation, and hence rebuked Peter for living after the manner of the Gentiles in the absence of the Jews, and then refusing to do so in the presence of the Jews, so that there was great contention between the apostle of the Gentiles and the apostle of the Jews about circumcision, and Paul and Barnabas and some of the brethren at Antioch were sent up to Jerusalem to talk the matter over with the apostles, about having the converted brethren of the Gentiles to not observe the customs of the Jews, and at that conference the apostles of the Jews decided that those Gentile brethren who had been brought into the fold of Christ need not observe the Jewish forms and customs, only they would not have the Gentile brethren to

eat meat that had been sacrificed unto idols. But those contentions so common between the Gentile brethren and the Jewish brethren only show what an awful hold the Jewish traditions had upon the Jews, and they verily believed that Christ when he did come was going to deliver the Jewish kingdom from under the Roman kingdom, as at that time Judea was a province under Rome and had to pay tribute to Cæsar. That is, I mean these Jewish brethren believed this, and said unto Christ: "Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Hence if the twelve apostles had their minds so terribly befogged with Jewish traditions, is it any wonder that those scribes and Pharisees marveled that the disciples of Christ did not conform to the customs of the old covenant? Christ's answer to this question was, "Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days." Christ was the bridegroom, and his bride could not fast and mourn and lament for him when he was with them, but after he had left them then could they fast and mourn. And to silence the scribes and Pharisees he spake a parable unto them by saying: "No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old: if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old." The Savior meant that it would not do to take the things of the gospel kingdom and attach them to the things of the old legal kingdom, as that would make a rent, as the things of the gospel kingdom did in no way agree with the things of the old kingdom, and hence could not be part of the old and part of the new. The old legal kingdom was a kingdom of works, and the gospel kingdom is a kingdom of grace, and hence it must be works or grace, and not both. If works, then it is no more of grace, and if grace, then it is no more of works. Also the Savior said, "No man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the old bottles and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish." Meaning if he were to set up the gospel kingdom upon the old legal kingdom it would break the old kingdom, and the things of the gospel kingdom would all be spilled out and lost. Hence, in order that both the bottles and the new wine be preserved, the things of the gospel kingdom must be put in new bottles. It takes the new creatures in Christ to retain the things of the gospel kingdom, for wherever the things of the gospel fell on any of the old legal people there was a great breaking of the bottles. The apostle Paul had a great breaking of this kind. The Savior said, "No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new; for he saith, The old is better." Meaning that those who had imbibed of the things of the old legal kingdom did not want the things of the gospel kingdom, for they said the things of the old are better, as the apostle said to those who had drunk of the things of the old kingdom. He told them that it was necessary that the gospel of the new kingdom should first be preached unto them, but seeing ye reject it, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. And when the Gentiles heard these things they were glad, and as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed. In all of the things which Christ set forth in this sermon there is one thing that stands out more prominent than anything else, and that is, that forms and ceremonies had but little weight with the Master.

He could eat with publicans and sinners as well as those who felt too much exalted to do so. He understood that those who found fault with him were not the sick that needed a Physician, and he made it plain that he did not come to call those scribes and Pharisees, but sinners, to repentance, and that instead of using the old legal kingdom of the land of Judea as his kingdom, he made a new covenant and wrote his laws in the hearts and minds of the subjects of this new kingdom, and no man can see or enter that kingdom except he be born again. Therefore it is those born of the Spirit that constitute the new bottles which the new wine is put into. The Spirit of God is poured into those born of the Spirit, and hence both are preserved. The Father seeketh such to worship him as worship in spirit and in truth.

NEWTON PETERS.

PORTLAND, Indiana.

FAYETTEVILLE, Ga., Oct. 20, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have for a long while had a desire to write for the SIGNS, but feel my inability very much. I like the SIGNS better than any paper I ever read, but I cannot read it much, on account of weak eyes. I have many times felt, when reading a good piece, a desire to write, but my mind is so blank, and my writing so insignificant compared with that of others, and thinking you had plenty of good letters ahead all the time, I feared mine would be in the way. If I have an experience of grace, it is so little, or made up of so many little incidents, I have never tried to tell it in full. If I were ever born again it was in a way I did not know. Before I knew anything about God's dealings with his people I loved to read experiences. The writers would tell of feeling they were sinners. I did not know what sin and sinners were, but I learned, and am still learning. When a boy I looked forward to the time when I would be a good boy, but that time has never come. As I did not get good, I thought that when I became a man I would do better, but I have lived nearly half man's allotted time, and I think sometimes I am the vilest sinner living. I also looked forward to better times financially, but it seems that there is no prosperity for me. God has been pleased to show me, I hope, the vanity of riches and trusting in them, and the sweetness and comfort of trusting in the dear Savior. If he had let me prosper in this world's goods I feel sure I would have gone astray, and perhaps would have ignored the cries of the poor; but I know a little about being poor, and I know what I possess is given me by the Giver of every good and perfect gift, and it is not mine, but all things belong to Him. He does not give me anything to use selfishly. I feel that I have no right to claim the things in my possession as mine to do with as I please, for the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord. Paul said, Having food and raiment, be therewith content, so when we have more than we actually need it is our duty to divide with the poor, and we should divide what we do need sometimes. God has brought my greatest expectations and desires of a worldly kind to naught, but I have one great desire which I hope he has given me, and I would not give it for the greatest wealth and honor this world can furnish, and that desire is to live to his honor, praise and glory, and when done with this life to praise him in eternity. I hope to live in fellowship with his people the balance of this life, and hope I will never be deprived of the

privilege of mingling with them. My life has not been one of outbreaking wickedness, but I feel sometimes that the wicked are better than I. I have much to be thankful for, and nothing to complain about, but I forget God's goodness to me, and complain about very trifling matters. I am made to wonder at his mysterious ways; it is impossible to tell my feelings and thoughts. I think of his goodness at night when I cannot sleep; I awake in amazement at his wonderful knowledge and mighty power. I think of the great storms, floods, wars, &c., that destroy so many lives, many good people, but I am spared to live in peace. I have thought a great deal about the horrible death of our Savior and how it compares with the death of his obedient followers. It was as horrible as wicked devices could make it, forsaken by his followers, and Father, completely forsaken. No human being ever died in a worse condition. He dreaded it, and prayed that if it were the Father's will to let the cup pass, but wanted the Father's will to be done. What a contrast. The humble christian looks forward to death as the gate of endless joy, and when the time draws close, says, Come, welcome death. When the pangs of death seize him he rejoices, for the blessed Savior is with him and makes his dying bed as soft as downy pillows are, and he can lean his head on His breast and breathe his life out sweetly there. Dear children of God, think of what he has done for us, and what we owe him. We have nothing to pay him, so all we can do is to try to live as he lived. How did he live? For the good of others and his Father's glory. Then if we follow him we must live a good example before others; let our light shine. We cannot do this by living for self. We must visit and help the sick, poor and needy. When Christ finished the work his Father gave him to do he had no more business on earth, and must needs go hence "to prepare a place for you, * * * that where I am, there ye may be also," and when he works out his righteous will with us on earth, when we finish the work assigned us, we, too, must follow him in death and the grave; and as there was no power to keep him there, there is no power that can keep us there; then the happiness that will be ours is worth more than the suffering and waiting in this world. O how I wish I could live worthy of my calling, which I know is higher than all earthly callings, if it is of God.

May God bless and keep his dear people, is my prayer. Pray for me and my loved ones, and if this is worth anything give God the glory.

Unworthily,

GEORGE. W. JACKSON.

ISAIAH I. 9.

"EXCEPT the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah."

The prophet in this chapter tells the Jews, the people of Israel and Jerusalem, of their awful sin and depravity, and uses the words at the head of this article. We know what a remnant is: a small portion left. It has been the case all through the ages, that it is the choice of election of the Lord Jehovah that his people are saved; for he hath "mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Lot and his family were the small remnant saved out of Sodom and Gomorrah. Noah and his family were the small remnant saved of all the millions destroyed by the flood. It is God's right to choose and save his people, for he laid help upon his beloved Son,

our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who is mighty, and able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him. Their coming unto God by him is the glorious highway, for he leads them in this way, and none of the fallen sons of Adam would chose this way of their own volition. The vulture's eye hath not seen it nor the fierce lion passed thereby. None walk in this way but the redeemed, whom our Lord and Savior came to save from their sins. He forever put away their sins when he offered himself without spot on the tree of the cross, and in obedience to his Father's will drank the cup in the terrible agony of the garden of Gethsemane. "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away; and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth." But in his death and glorious resurrection he forever destroyed all his foes, and hence put them under his feet, and the Father hath given him a name which is above every name, both in heaven and in earth, that every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess to God. He rules over all the nations of the earth, putting down some, and setting up others, according to his will, and none can stay his hand. We now have the awful spectacle of the slaughter of the vast multitude of Mystery, Babylon the Great, The Mother of Harlots, slaying each other from no other motive save greed and lust for power. John in Revelation tells us that the various beasts that should arise would eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. (Rev. xvii. 16.) We have the awful spectacle now of millions who have received the mark of the beast slaughtering each other, and it is evident that the end is drawing near. Wars, and rumors of wars, and people being lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, evil men waxing worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. But his people look for the coming of the Lord of heaven and earth the second time, without sin unto salvation, to take his bride home, and to destroy all his enemies, for Babylon is ripe for destruction, as they would exalt themselves above all that is called God, and are certain to be thrust down to hell. There shall be much wailing, for they shall be made "desolate and naked."

Yours in hope,

WM. F. SLOAN.

LEXINGTON, Ky., Sept. 19, 1914.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 2, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—By the request of Mrs. Rosalina C. Pratt, I am sending to the SIGNS a notice of the departure of her mother, Mrs. Sarah J. Clark, of Stony Creek, Conn. She left these fading scenes, entering into rest, October 8th, in the eighty-first year of her age, leaving one daughter and one granddaughter. Her daughter says: "Could you have followed the details of my mother's last two years you would almost welcome the news that she has passed from a quiet, natural slumber into the final deeper sleep. Her nurse, who slept in her room, ministered to her needs about eleven o'clock, and arose to give her the usual nourishment at five, but found her beyond earthly needs. The doctor said she never knew the ending, as it came so peacefully. Mother enjoyed your last letter to her, and I was to reply at her dictation as soon as she was able to express herself, but that time never came. Her trouble was both mental and physical, sometimes clear and bright, with intervals of cloud and illusions, and suffering from heart trouble. She enjoyed the

SIGNS until the last. For her funeral she only expressed two things: not to have it in the big church in Plantsville, but in the cemetery chapel which she had given funds to erect in the village; also to her nurse she expressed her wish as to dress. This left me to decide on the minister. Deference to her faith would have led me to send for one of her choice, but all I had known were gone except your brother, who would have been my first choice. But I recalled your letters as to his growing feebleness; this added to the necessity of practically two funeral services, one here where she had lived for thirty years, and one in Plantsville, where her relatives and old time friends were. Added to this, the one gone could not listen to whatever comfort was derived from the service, so there was but one consistent choice, and you will be prepared to hear me say that the first Reader of the Christian Scientists of New Haven conducted the service, which was considered beautiful and impressive, simplicity being the keynote."

Sister Clark experienced a hope in Christ in 1864, and her desire was to find the true church. An aunt who was a Primitive Baptist recommended her to attend the association which was in Warwick that year, which she did, and after hearing the preaching she was satisfied it was just what she desired, and she was filled with rejoicing. On Friday, the last day of the association, she came before the church and was received, and baptized by Elder Gilbert Beebe. My brother, Elder S. H. Durand, was at the same association for the same purpose, and was received and baptized at Middletown the following Sunday. This was the beginning of our very pleasant acquaintance with this beloved sister, whose walk and conversation proved her to be a true follower of Jesus. The church was her dearly loved home until the last. It is a pleasure to recall my visits with her in her delightful home, and to hear from her lips how the Lord had led her from darkness to light and filled her soul with praise to his holy name. Also her visits in our home were very much enjoyed by us all.

In tender sympathy for her dear ones left, unworthily,

BESSIE DURAND.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Oct. 23, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have just been looking over the second volume of the editorials of Elder Gilbert Beebe, the founder of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and for many years its able editor, and a strong defender of the faith once delivered unto the saints. I find an article beginning on page 695, in answer to Elder George R. Hoge, on the resurrection, which appears to me to be the truth as it is so perfectly set forth in the Old and New Testaments. Please reproduce the above cited editorial, and Elder Hoge's letter, with this request, in the SIGNS for November 1st or 15th, and you will much oblige myself and others of your subscribers and readers.

Your brother in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

(*See editorial on page 694.*)

NOTICE.

IF nothing in providence prevents, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday (29th) in this month. All are cordially invited to meet with us.

L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, MASS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1914.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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JEREMIAH XVIII. 1-4.

"THE word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it."

This is the word of the Lord. Coming through the prophet makes it not a whit less the word of God. At sundry times and in divers manners God, in time past, spake unto the fathers by the prophets, but the word thus spoken was of God none the less, even though it fell from the lips of fallible men. Worms of the dust were called and ordained of God to prophesy in his name, and their limitations as men, and sinful men at that, in no way affected the infallible inspiration that gripped them. God's using a sinful man to convey his message to sinful men in no way detracts from the authority and truth of the word. God in such cases accompanies the word with such spiritual demonstration and conviction to the hearts intended for it that they cannot gainsay it nor refute the ordination of the One by whom it is sent. Herein is a man's ministry proved, in that his message (gift) makes room for itself in hearts themselves gifted with insight and understanding. One's feelings regarding his own ministry can never be the final test by which to judge the nature and usefulness of that ministry. It is quite certain that had Jeremiah gone according to his own feelings and judgment he never would have been a prophet. He tried to prevail upon the Lord to let him off, but found that when God sets his hand to a thing there is no turning back. If one is called to preach or prophesy he will be given a message to deliver, and his delivery of that message is proof of his calling, regardless of what his own thought in the matter may be. Jeremiah's ministry made him exceedingly unpopular with the people, for what he said was anything but smooth to the ears it fell upon. Jeremiah was in Judah, and the tribe of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem were his auditors, though the whole nation of Israel was involved in his predictions. Jeremiah preached prior to the Babylonian captivity. After Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive "all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour," leaving none, "save the poorest sort of the people of the land," Jeremiah was left behind in Jerusalem with these "poorest sort," this "remnant," another proof that God in his people's extremity, leaves "not himself without witness." The sign of the potter's house was given of the Lord through the prophet Jeremiah to Judah and Israel before the transpiring of the Babylonian captivity. Its primary signification is to that event and to the restoration following after seventy years in Babylon. The Almighty emphasizes his right in this eighteenth chapter of Jeremiah to do with his people and with the nations of the earth as it pleases him; to make and to mar, to renew and to spoil, to cast down and to raise up, to kill and

to make alive. They are as clay in the hand of the potter, and he their Potter. The command of the Lord to Jeremiah involved three things: "arise," "go," "hear." Some people think if a man is called to preach he can preach any time or all the time, just whenever he is of a mind to make an appointment or when others make an appointment for him. Our appointments amount to nothing except "if the Lord will." Although a servant of God may have preached five hundred sermons, yet for his five hundred first he will need quickening ("arise"), sending ("go"), understanding ("hear"), the same as for the first sermon he ever preached. Preaching is one thing in which man never becomes expert, self-sufficient. He is no more able to "eat of the sinew which shrank" at the last than at the first. So Jeremiah, though a prophet for many years, and though he had already delivered many messages to this national people, still for this particular message, as well as for each previous one, as well as for each subsequent one, he needed to be stirred with spiritual life, to be told, "Arise." The very power and spirit of the arising of the Lord, the power of the resurrection, is in the preaching of the gospel. If it is the gospel preached Jesus is in it, and Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life." When one is called to preach, is bidden "arise," he is not left to seek his own work, to hew out his own path, to go as he lists, but is directed ("go") not promiscuously, but to a definite place. In this instance, with Jeremiah, it was "the potter's house." In what is said above we do not mean to be understood as saying that Jeremiah was a gospel preacher. His standing was legal, his position under the law, but certainly the gospel was veiled in his predictions. The fullness of his utterances looked forward to the "regeneration," the dispensation of the gospel. Not only, then, must the servant of God be called, qualified and sent by the Spirit of the Lord, but for each message he brings must be made to "hear," to understand. He cannot store up the hearings, the understandings, of the past to do him for to-day. This lesson of the potter's house must, in its own order and time, be given the prophet. It was the very thing needed by that people then, not sooner nor later. Thus the prophet could not have had it sooner nor later. He might perhaps have talked about it upon occasions afterward, but never again did he tell the thing itself as he told it then. We may talk about sermons we have preached, or tried to, but no servant of God ever succeeded in preaching the same sermon twice. Recalling the words of a sermon is not preaching it over. There is a power in every true gospel sermon that evades all recollection. So the Lord told Jeremiah "arise," "go," "hear," and he "went" and "beheld." The potter's house: one of several in that eastern country where the potters engaged in their work, the making of vessels out of clay. The clay, when dug, was trodden by men's feet, so as to form a paste (Isaiah xli. 25), then placed by the potter on the wheel beside which he sat, and shaped by him with his hands; after this it was smoothed, coated with a glaze, and burnt in a furnace. In this sign of the potter's house the only part of manufacture called attention to is the making of the vessel on the wheels, therefore that is the only feature of the work of pottery that will engage us in this article. These potters' houses in those days very likely were the scene of many marrings and spoilings, as well as of many finished productions of art and beauty. Doubtless

many broken shreds lay scattered around, as well as many completed vessels, of honor and dishonor, in finished array. Jeremiah beheld the potter making a vessel on his wheels, and the vessel he wrought was marred in the hand of the potter as Jeremiah watched. He further beheld that the potter took this same marred clay (not other clay) and made it again another vessel, a satisfactory one. After seeing all this Jeremiah heard God's declaration that he (God) had a perfect right to do with Judah and with Israel and with the nations as it pleased him; to do with mortals as this potter had done with clay. After all, what is man in the hand of the Almighty but clay in the hand of the potter? "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" Dare man reply against God, or summon him to appear before the bar of human reason? "Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" God Almighty is the great Potter, and we but the clay in his hands. This material world, the universe and all it contains, is the house of the great Potter, and the cycle of the centuries, the succession of ages, the march of dispensations, are the wheels upon which are being wrought a wonderful work: the salvation of the elect and the declaration of the Potter's glory and honor and power. In this work there is a marring and a making again, both taking place "in," not out, of the potter's hand. The vessel did not slip or fall out of the potter's hand and then mar, but spoiled while in the hand of the potter. The clay was just as much in the potter's hand when it marred as it was afterward when renewed to his liking. This all primarily applies, as the context reads, to Judah and Israel, God's national people legally. Israel had been chosen of the Lord from among all the nations of the earth, while still in the loins of Abraham. To Abraham, by promise, was given Isaac whom he (Abraham) received as from the dead, not according to nature, but contrary thereto, from the deadness of Sarah's womb. To Isaac was born Jacob; to Jacob, the twelve patriarchs; to the twelve patriarchs, the twelve tribes of Israel. Israel, God brought out of Egypt, and led them about by the hand of Moses forty years through the wilderness. Moses dead upon Mt. Nebo, Joshua was placed at their head and led them through Jordan to the promised land of Canaan. Here the Lord went before them in battle, subdued their enemies and eventually gave them rest and peace. Naturally one would think Israel would endeavor to make some adequate return unto the Lord for all his goodness and kindness toward them, but they did not; instead they went a-whoring after sensual things and devilish, after the ways and gods of the Gentiles. This first vessel, national Israel, marred in the making. It brought forth "wild grapes," the fruit of the flesh, not of the Spirit. The history of national Israel proved the failure of the flesh to attain godliness, its inability to live at all right in the sight of God, or to serve him acceptably. It was demonstrated that God could not be reached nor his favor procured through the deeds of the law, through burnt offerings, ceremonies, forms, feasts nor fasts. But, bear in mind, this failure, this marring of the first vessel, national Israel, was no accident, no mere happen-so. It all transpired with the vessel still in the hand of the Potter. In all of it God's purpose and design were being accomplished. The utter failure of Adam must in all its

enormity be revealed before the success of Christ can be at all appreciated. After the depravity and wretchedness of the natural man are fully displayed in the elect nation of the old covenant, the Jews, in the new covenant, the gospel, is brought to light a people fashioned after God's own heart, a spiritual people, who, out of the fullness of the Godhead in Christ Jesus, receive grace for grace. They realize very well that God cannot be served in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the spirit. Therefore in this gracious dispensation of this gospel day is given them grace that they serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear. God is a Spirit, and has begotten unto himself a spiritual people, who worship him in spirit and in truth. This new vessel pleases the Potter. It is so because Christ is in them, and Christ is the only man that ever did please God as a man. But this new vessel is fashioned out of the same clay that was marred in the first instance. It is the sinner that is saved, not some ethereal part of him, and it is the redeemed sinner that, by grace, serves God acceptably in Christ Jesus. "Except a man be born again," Jesus said. The vessel marred in the first instance is fashioned again an acceptable vessel, and both the marring and the acceptability are in His hands; both accomplished his purpose and predestined plan. Adam, the first man, was formed of dust, a vessel of clay. He fell in transgression. It was not accident that he did so. "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world." Adam was one of God's works, so God must have known all about him when he made him. Nothing that Adam subsequently did but was known unto God beforehand. Therefore Adam's transgression, his sin, death, ruin, and that of all his posterity, was in the hand of the Potter; all comprehended in the infinite plan, purpose, knowledge and wisdom of Almighty God, and this same vessel marred in the first instance, was made again another vessel, and in it there was no failure. In Christ there is no failure, he pleases the Potter in all he does and says. This second vessel was formed in the womb of the virgin, conceived of the Holy Ghost, and the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily in him. "And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Every one of the elect is first in Adam, then in Christ; first marred, then made "accepted in the beloved;" first lost, then saved; first a sinner, then a saint. One part of their lives is as much in the hand of the Potter as any other. They are sown in corruption (Adam), raised in incorruption (Christ); sown in dishonor, raised in glory; sown in weakness, raised in power; sown a natural body, raised a spiritual body. "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

Written at the request of sister M. R. Lawshe, of Trenton, N. J.

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EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

BROTHER BEEBE:—There are three or four designing men in middle Tennessee, who have created considerable excitement on the subject of a non-resurrection. They have charged the Richland Association with denying the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead.

I have been a member of this association for the last eighteen years, and I know that it believes the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and of a general judgment. It denies the resurrection of flesh and blood, and contends for the resurrection of Jesus Christ and all his saints, spiritual, in his likeness, as John says. (1 John iii. 2.) I send you a copy of faith in all the leading principles of the gospel, as it presents an abstract of our principles.

GEORGE R. HOGE.

NEW VERNON, N. Y., Nov. 1, 1846.

It has been, and still is, our desire, so far as possible, to avoid unprofitable agitation of subjects which in our judgment have a stronger tendency to excite discussion than to edify, comfort and instruct the people of God, and although we consider the resurrection of the dead inferior in importance to no part of the gospel of God our Savior, we have feared that the manner in which some brethren have seemed disposed to discuss it is calculated to gender strife and discord, rather than to result in the peace of Zion and the glory of God.

The letter of Elder Hoge, which will be found above, states that the Richland Association of Tennessee has been misrepresented on the subject, and asks the privilege of explaining the real sentiments of that association. He has also sent us a copy of the Minutes of the association, containing an "abstract" of their doctrinal sentiments, in which they say, item 10: "We believe in the resurrection of the dead, and a general judgment." This expression undefined, we presume would be satisfactory, but as brother Hoge adds, "It denies the resurrection of flesh and blood," we conclude that the most of our readers will consider such denial as equivalent to a denial of the resurrection altogether, and a justification of those who have so charged that association. We will not attempt to define what is intended by their profession of faith in the resurrection, nor of their repudiation of its application to flesh and blood, or what our brethren of Richland believe will be raised up at the last day, whether soul, body or spirit. If they only intend to say that all the relationship between the saints and Adam, or human nature, ceases with the death of these mortal bodies, and that the resurrection shall bring them forth as a production of the quickening Spirit of God, in the same manner that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, we see no cause for controversy, for such we presume to be the general view held by Old School Baptists on the subject. But if such be their intention, we think they have not been sufficiently clear in defining their position.

By the reference made to 1 John iii. 2, we are inclined to believe our brethren hold with us that the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord Jesus Christ is an exemplification of the manner and nature of the final resurrection of the bodies of the saints. In his resurrection he became the firstfruits of them that slept, consequently the certain pledge that all his people shall in like manner be raised up in that hour in which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and come forth, they that have done good to the resurrection of life eternal, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation.

Many idle and vain speculations have been resorted to by multitudes at sundry times, in attempting a philosophical so-

lution of the resurrection of the dead, but all philosophy must forever fail when applied to the things of the Spirit of God, as we Old School Baptists hold the things of the Spirit to be known only by revelation, not by science; rules therefore which will apply to natural things cannot apply to spiritual things. To us it seems quite inexpedient to say that flesh and blood will not arise, as many would be led from that expression to suppose that the identity of the bodies of the saints in the resurrection was denied, which must be equivalent to a denial of the resurrection altogether. For if the bodies of the saints are raised from the dead at all, there must necessarily be a preservation of identity; and if the bodies of the saints are not to be raised up, what is to be raised? Not the soul, or spiritual man, for that cannot die, cannot be committed to the grave; and in the resurrection, all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth to the resurrection of life eternal, or of damnation. There can be no two ways of understanding Romans viii. 11. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. The term "mortal" cannot apply to our spiritual life, as that is in no sense mortal, nor can it apply to any other part of us than that which came under the sentence, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Some have said that flesh and blood shall not arise, but flesh and bones shall arise, and this view they have attempted to sustain, first, because it is written that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."—1 Corinthians xv. 50; and second, because that Jesus had shed all his blood when he was crucified, and it is supposed that his risen body contained no blood. These two, we presume, are the strongest arguments used by the advocates of the theory. But let us examine them. Does Paul say that flesh and blood shall not be raised up? or that they shall not after the resurrection inherit the kingdom of God? By no means. Let it be remembered Paul speaks in the present tense: "cannot;" and for the same reason that corruption cannot inherit incorruption. The kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom, and our flesh and blood in their present state, and relation to Adam, and to the law, are corrupt, depraved, diseased, mortal and natural. But in the text our brother has referred to, (1 John iii. 2,) we are assured that when Christ shall appear, we shall be like him, &c.; and Paul in the text quoted, (Rom. viii. 11,) has told us how: "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies." If then we can know how Christ's body, in which he suffered death, was raised up, we shall also know how our mortal bodies shall arise. And of his resurrection we can trace a few very important particulars, and first, we observe, though he was put to death in the flesh, he was quickened by the Spirit. When put to death in the flesh, we understand that his relation to the law, which he assumed by being made of a woman, was finished. He died as the Son of man, as the Son of David, as the issue of Judah, being put to death in the flesh, but he was quickened by the Spirit, or begotten from the dead, so that in his resurrection his body arose from the dead as the immediate production of the Spirit, and was thus declared to be the Son of God with power. "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee," is applied to the

resurrection of his body from the dead, and not to his birth of the virgin Mary. So to be like him, the same quickening Spirit that now dwells in the saints, by which they were regenerated, and which raised from the dead the crucified body of Jesus, shall also, that is, in like manner, quicken our mortal bodies; in which quickening the saints shall arise, so far as relates to the bodies, in a new relationship. As in the resurrection of Christ his risen body stood no longer related to the fleshly stock of Abraham, Judah or David, so in the resurrection the saints shall be released from all relationship to those who are now their kindred after the flesh; not to be known in the resurrection as Gentiles or Jews, as male or female, as married or as given in marriage, as parents or as children, but simply as the sons of God. The notion of some that parents are waiting now in heaven to embrace their children, husbands, wives, &c., is altogether unwarranted by the faith and testimony of the gospel. The immediate relationship which we stand in to each other here belongs only to our time state, but all that relationship must be dissolved. We shall be begotten from the dead immediately by the Spirit, as independently of our present carnal relationship as though we had never sustained such relation to Adam. In the resurrection of Christ the identity of the body was preserved. "I am he that was dead, and am alive," &c. That Jesus whom John saw in his risen and glorified body was the same that had been dead. The identity must have been preserved to fulfill the Scriptures. His flesh should not see corruption; and what he had given as a sign of his Messiahship: Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. The sign also of the prophet Jonah must have failed if the same body which suffered on the cross had not arisen from the dead. His Godhead did not die, nor could his soul cease to exist, his Mediatorial headship of his church could not expire. But it was that wherein he was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, &c., and that which died arose from the dead. So when the saints are called hence their spiritual life which they received in regeneration does not die, their quickened souls do not die, but their bodies, even their mortal bodies, die, and those same bodies shall arise in like manner as the identical body of our Lord Jesus Christ which had been crucified did arise bearing the prints of the nails and the place of the spear. A further definition of the identity to us seems superfluous. To talk of the particles of the flesh, the composition of the bones, to philosophize upon the subject, is as extravagant as to attempt to harmonize natural philosophy with any other part of divine revelation. We admit that all the blood was drained from the veins of the body of Jesus, but that is no evidence that his risen body contained no blood, for the fact is quite as apparent that all the life of Jesus was taken from his body, and who will argue that his risen body contained no life? Such vain speculations serve only to gender strife and contention, and to divert the mind from a spiritual to a carnal train of thinking.

While thus we contend that the identity of the bodies of the saints shall be preserved, even as we have proved that the identity of Christ's body was preserved, we also hold, and firmly believe, that the change which the apostle speaks of in 1 Cor. xv. shall also be gloriously realized by all the saints. The body in its present state is mortal, or subject to disease and death, but it shall be perfectly

freed in the resurrection from mortality; this will be a glorious change, but this is not all: the body in its time state is weak, it is sown in weakness, but it shall be raised in power; now it is corrupt, but it shall be raised in an incorruptible state, and death shall be swallowed up in victory. It is now in a state of dishonor, but it shall be robed in immortal honor; it is now a natural, earthy, Adamic body, but in the resurrection it shall be a spiritual, heavenly body, standing in the same relation to Christ as it now stands to the old Adam. That law which remands our bodies to the dust has dominion over our mortal bodies so long as they remain this side of the resurrection of the dead, but when they shall be raised up from their graves they shall be free from the power and dominion of that law. For the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

We have much more to say upon this interesting subject when opportunity shall serve. We have offered the above remarks, not to provoke controversy, but because there are, as we have strong reasons to fear, many dear brethren whom we love in the Lord who seem to indulge a sort of speculating spirit on the subject; we desire not to kill or wound them, but if possible to admonish them in the spirit of the gospel.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by J. L. Hastings.)

The Elders and messengers composing the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Messongoes Church, Accomac County, Virginia, October 21st, 22nd and 23rd, 1914, to the several churches whose messengers we are send christian salutation.

Dear Brethren in the Lord:—As it is our custom to address you through a Circular Letter, we will attempt to write a little about that wonderful subject: the love of God toward his chosen people, 1 John iii. 14: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." There is no subject of more vital interest to the hungry poor than this. We have death and life and the love of God set forth in this. We are told in God's written word that "God is love," and that he loved us with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness will he draw us.

Let us consider first what is meant by passing from death unto life. There is much said in the Scriptures about the resurrection of the dead, and with what body they will come. Space will not allow us to enter into this subject now, but will say we sincerely believe in the resurrection of the dead. Rest assured they will be raised a spiritual body; this vile body will be fashioned like unto His own glorious body. We do not understand that John was speaking of passing from this mortal state to life and immortality beyond the grave; there is another death that God's dear people pass from: we are told they were dead in trespasses and sin, they were under the curse of the law, not even able to keep one point of the law; they have broken every command-

ment of the law of God, and are made to say with Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"—Romans vii. 24. Paul said, "For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died."—Romans vii. 9. Yes, we were alive to the world, to the things of nature, feeling that we had nothing to fear, not knowing in the true sense of the word what sin is, for we had not known the law and the commandments, but when it pleased God in his love and mercy to call us by his grace, then came the commandment, saying, Arise, follow me. Then it was our sins were laid open before us, and we were made to say, The commandment came, and I died. Yes, dead to the law, dead to all the things of the world, lying on the ground, as it were, like dead men. But what is the next thing we know? It is the touch of the finger of our blessed Savior, saying, Arise, follow me. Then for the first time we are made to say with Jacob, Surely the Lord was in this place, and I knew it not. We are alive now, no more under that law of sin and death, but under that perfect law of liberty, born in that gospel kingdom. Christ having come in the likeness of sinful flesh, condemned sin in the flesh. He came as our great High Priest, paid the debt for his people and brought them forth from that death under the law to live in that new or gospel day, passing from the state of nature's darkness into God's marvelous light. We feel to praise him for his goodness and mercy in saving poor sinners like we feel ourselves to be. Thus we are made to exclaim with the poet, What wondrous love is this, O my soul! We are made to love the dear Savior, to love the church, to love all for whom Christ died. Solomon said, "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned."—Song of Solomon viii. 7. What vital unity exists with Christ and the church! We are told, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Brethren, may we ever be kept in his love, walking in the light of his countenance.

We will leave these thoughts for your consideration. May the God of love, who has purged us from dead works to serve the living God, keep us in his fear. Amen.

A. B. FRANCIS, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

The Pocatalico Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the West Fork Church, Calhoun Co., W. Va., Sept. 18th, 19th and 20th, 1914, to the churches composing her body, and the associations with which she corresponds, sendeth salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is a custom for some one of our association to write a Circular Letter, and this being conferred on me by our last association, I will make the attempt, hoping the good Lord may so take possession of my mind that what I write will be in harmony with the word of truth, knowing this will go before many of my brethren and sisters in the Lord who are better qualified than myself, should this letter be received by this association. I will give my understanding of the Scripture you will find in Romans v. 1, 6: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." We un-

derstand that these Scriptures, with all others of the inspired word of God, belong to the bride, the Lamb's wife, and are for her, and to her, that she through patience and comfort might have hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us, by which we have access to the throne of grace, by which we draw nigh unto God, being justified by faith. So the just live by faith, and faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. So in due time Christ died for the ungodly, and the church, being his by gift, was sunk in sin and death by her federal head, to wit, Adam, who was of the earth earthy, and could never rise above her fountain-head. So by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, and by the obedience of one Man many shall be made righteous. I understand the Scriptures to teach the many that were made sinners by Adam's disobedience were the same many who were made righteous by the obedience of the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven, a quickening Spirit; these being the bride, the Lamb's wife; these being vessels of mercy which God had before prepared unto his glory; these were children of wrath, even as others, by nature, all sunk in sin and death by the disobedience of Adam. So Adam was, and always has been, disobedient to the just, holy law, so there must be a sinless obedience rendered unto death to satisfy the just demands of a violated law. So the search was made in heaven, in the earth, even under the earth, and there was none found worthy to take the book and loose the seals thereof but the Lion of the tribe of Juda, which is Christ Jesus the Lord, who died on the Roman cross for his bride, forever satisfying the just demands of the law. He by that one offering hath forever perfected them that are sanctified, so the church of Jesus Christ is no more under the law of sin and death, but under grace, which is God's everlasting love, and upon this love hangs the law and the prophets; so the church loves God, because he first loved her.

Now may the love of God keep us bound together in the bonds of love and fellowship, earnestly contending for that precious faith once delivered unto the saints, is the prayer of one, if saved at all, saved by God's rich, reigning grace.

Yours in gospel bonds,

G. B. McCLANAHAN.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, Sept. 11th, 12th and 13th, 1914, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond sends christian greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have had a very pleasant, and, we hope, profitable season. Only one preacher, Elder Frederick W. Keene, could meet with us, but the Lord was indeed gracious to him, and his mouth was filled with the unsearchable riches of the gospel of Christ. We have been glad to receive your messengers and Minutes, and wish for a continuance of your correspondence.

Our next meeting is appointed to be held with the South Gardiner Church, on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1915, when and where we hope to receive your messages of love and fellowship.

G. R. TEDFORD, Moderator.

J. E. HUBBARD, Clerk.

CHURCH ORGANIZATION.

LOS ANGELES, Cal., March 8, 1914.

ACCORDING to previous arrangements, the following Elders and deacons of sister churches met for the purpose of assisting in organizing a Primitive Baptist Church: S. B. Moffitt, W. T. Henderson, G. M. Fetter, H. Wire, M. L. Jackson, G. E. Dundas, J. W. Carter and Y. Bogart.

A presbytery was formed by choosing Elder S. B. Moffitt moderator and L. W. Rippeto clerk.

After reading the constitution and examining letters of applicants, who were: L. W. Rippeto, Claudie L. Batterton, Lillie P. Grooms, of Goshen Church, Boone Co., Mo., J. L. Penticost, Arthula Penticost, of Fort Worth, Texas, Levi H. Rice, Lillie M. Rice, Ott O. Rice, of Round Prairie, Dallas Co., Mo., the presbytery pronounced them a legally organized church of Jesus Christ.

By motion and second, such church, duly organized, was hereby recommended to all lovers of truth everywhere. Motion carried.

Moved and seconded, that we cause these proceedings to be published in our Baptist papers, and we appoint L. W. Rippeto to write same. Motion carried.

After preaching by Elder Moffitt, the doors of the church were opened for the reception of members. Lewis Lippert, Mary Lippert, M. D. Groshong, Senora Groshong, M. C. Brown, Lucy Brown, W. T. Henderson, C. B. Rice, Jane A. Williams and Rosa Alford came forward and were received by relation, by an unanimous voice of the church now in session.

We sang a hymn, gave each other the right hand of fellowship and were dismissed by Elder Henderson.

Done and signed by order of the church.

S. B. MOFFITT, Moderator.

L. W. RIPPETO, Clerk.

The church was organized with eight members, and to-day we have thirty members, all in peace and sweet fellowship, with a good outlook for many more, for which we feel thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. L. W. R.

CONSTITUTION.

Forasmuch as Almighty God, by his grace, has been pleased to call us out of darkness into his marvelous light, we whose names are subscribed hereunto, believing the time has come to organize a regularly constituted Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, composed of properly baptized believers of our faith and order, to this end we hereby proclaim that we have this day, March 8th, 1914, perfected such an organization, to be known as Liberty Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Church of Los Angeles, California. To all lovers of truth who may be sojourning in reach of our meetings, and who can conscientiously subscribe to the following declarations of faith, we extend an earnest invitation "to come and go with us, for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel."

ARTICLES OF FAITH.

1. We believe that the Scriptures comprising the Old and New Testaments, as given in what is known as the King James' translation, are of divine authority, and are to be taken as the only rule of faith and practice.

2. We believe in one God, and that the Father, Son or Word and the Holy Ghost are one God, eternal, immutable, infinite in wisdom, power, justice, holiness, mercy and truth.

3. We believe that in the transgression of Adam he fell under the condemnation of God's holy law, and that all his posterity were corrupted in him, and so are condemned in sin, and have neither will nor power to deliver themselves from this state and condemnation.

4. We believe that God chose a definite number of particular persons of the fallen posterity of Adam in Christ, before the foundation of the world, to salvation. The reason for this choice is wholly of grace, and is unconditional on the part of the creature.

5. We believe that God has predestinated the elect unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will.

6. We believe that the Lord Jesus, who was set up from everlasting to be the Mediator between God and men, did, in the fullness of time, really and truly take upon himself a human body and nature, sin excepted, and in that body he suffered, bled and died as the surety of the elect, and for no others.

7. We believe that Christ hath obtained eternal redemption for the elect, his life, suffering, blood and death constituting a full and complete atonement for their sins, and that this is the only ground of justification before God.

8. We believe that being born again is not the act of man, nor does it result from what he may believe or do; but it is the work of God, who gives eternal life, thus quickening the sinner, which causes him to confess his sin and to feel the need of a Savior.

9. We believe that none born again will fall away so as to be lost, but that they will persevere through grace to glory.

10. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, both of the just (elect) and the unjust, and the unjust shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.

11. We believe that the gospel is to be preached in all the world as a statement of the truth and as a witness of Jesus, for the comfort and instruction of regenerated men and women, but deny that it is to offer grace to the unregenerate, or that it asserts there is an obligation resting upon the unregenerate to believe that Jesus is their Savior.

12. We believe that good works, obedience to the commands of God, are well-pleasing in his sight, and should be maintained in the church; but they are to be considered only as evidence of a gracious state, and are not a condition of salvation.

13. We believe that baptism and the Lord's supper are ordinances appointed by Christ for the church, and they are to be administered only by those who are clothed with authority of the church, having been regularly ordained.

14. We believe that baptism is by immersion in water, and is to be administered to believers only, and who give evidence of having been regenerated.

15. We believe that the Lord's supper should be observed in the church until the coming of Jesus at the end of the world, and that unleavened bread and wine should be used, of which none are to be invited to partake but members of the church and of other churches of like faith and order.

16. We believe that those who give proof that they are called of God to the ministry, by edifying the church in that exercise, should be ordained by a presbytery and set apart to that work.

17. We believe that the church should choose members of its body who have the proper qualifications for the office of deacon, who are to receive and disburse the funds of the church. They should be set apart for that work by ordination.

18. We believe that washing the saints' feet is an example of Jesus Christ to be observed by the church. The adoption or rejection of this article is not made a basis of fellowship.

Signed,

L. W. RIPPETO,
CLAUDIE L. BATTERTON,
LILLIE P. GROOMS,
J. L. PENTICOST,
ARTHULA PENTICOST,
LEVI H. RICE,
LILLIE M. RICE,
OTT O. RICE.

APPOINTMENTS.

NOTHING preventing, by request of the churches of Roxbury Association I will be at Roxbury yellow meetinghouse Sunday, Nov. 15th, 10:30 a. m.; Vega, Monday, 16th, 11 a. m.; brother Faulkner's, Monday evening, 7:30 p. m.; Union Grove, Tuesday, 17th, 11 a. m.; Ashokan, Wednesday, 18th, 3:30 p. m.; Kingston, Wednesday evening, 8. p. m.; Slate Hill, 22nd, 10:30 a. m.; Middletown, 3 p m.

D. M. VAIL.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at his home, Leesburg, Va., Oct. 27th, 1914, John J. McCoy, of State Road, New Castle Co., Del., and Miss Bertie L. Runner, of Wrightsdale, Lancaster Co., Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

David Zeh was born in the village of Seward, N. Y., August 8th, 1854, and died Oct. 13th, 1914, at the same place. He was blessed of God with a good hope through grace in early life, which hope sustained him in all his travel until the end. The ordinance of baptism was not clear to him, that is, the necessity of one following their Savior into the watery grave, until about the fall of 1911, and then at our meeting he asked the judgment of the church by giving a reason of the hope that was within him, and was received, and on October 15th, 1911, he was led by the writer down into the water, buried, and raised again to walk in newness of life, and in full fellowship with the Schoharie Old School Baptist Church. This fellowship he ever maintained by a godly walk and well ordered conversation. His desire was ever for the welfare of the church, and his presence in our midst was as a sweet savor of Christ. He was married to sister Helen Thorn some time later, and was a loving and kind husband, and their home was open to their kindred in Christ and friends who loved the truth as it is in Jesus. We have held meetings there, and could say that the Savior had been in our midst. Brother David was a man of excellent character, and lived in the fullest sense what he professed. The assembly of the saints was his delight, and he loved to sing the songs of Zion; it seemed as though the hymns were meat and drink to his soul. I do not feel to say that we sorrow that the Lord has taken him, for this is what we live for and die for, and is the final consummation of our hope. We would rather rejoice that God has given us such bright evidence of his wondrous work of grace in the heart of our dear brother. I shall miss his face, but not his fellowship and regard I have for him in Christ. This I count as a treasure laid up in heaven, where moth and rust do not corrupt. Brother David suffered greatly in his last illness, but never murmured or complained, but prayed, "Lord, help in this hour of need."

Funeral services conducted by the writer.

J. M. FENTON.

Margaret Thompson, our dear sister, departed this life August 10th, 1914, after five weeks of severe suffering, at the home of a friend, near Middleburg, Va. She bore her suffering with patience, and her desire was to go home and be with Jesus. The writer was with her one week before she died, and she said she was waiting to go. She was baptized by Elder Badger in 1887, in the fellowship of Ebenezer Church. She was 73 years of age, and had lived a consistent member until death. The writer was called to conduct the service at the grave, after which her body was laid in Ebenezer Cemetery, waiting the will and purpose of God concerning his people.

F. E. ROBEY.

M. J. Stout was born near Hopewell, N. J., Feb. 27th, 1833, and died Sept. 7th, 1914. He was sick only a few months with the infirmities of old age. He seemed to be spiritually blessed, and his mind was on the church, desiring the welfare of each and every one, and always glad when the brethren and sisters visited him, taking an active interest in all matters pertaining to the church. He would take a text and explain its meaning, and close with the expression, When we awake with the likeness of Christ we shall be satisfied. He was baptized by Elder Hartwell the fourth Sunday in August, 1853, with eleven others; all have passed away but one. He was a deacon for a number of years, filling the office well. When Elder Chick was sick he endeavored to speak, and expounded the Scriptures in a very interesting manner. The Lord had given him a wonderful gift, and he will be greatly missed.

The funeral services were held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse. Elder Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., spoke from the words: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." He preached with power and assurance that "the Lord knoweth them that are his," and where he is brother Stout is also.

David J. Northam was born Jan. 9th, 1840, and died at his home in New Church, Va., August 3rd, 1914, aged 74 years. He was married to Miss Eugenia C. Godwin, March 4th, 1874. To that union was born one daughter, who died in infancy. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Messongoes, Accomac Co., Va., thirteen years ago, by Elder T. M. Poulson. He was firm in his belief, and was held in high esteem, not only by the church, but his neighbors as well. We did not have a funeral service, as we could not get a minister of his faith. He served four years in the Civil war under Gen. Robert E. Lee. His health had been failing for more than a year, and he underwent two severe operations in the hope of regaining his health, but he steadily failed, and the last week had a stroke of paralysis and was helpless the rest of the time, but had his mind perfectly and told me to take care of his SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and said he was very happy. He is gone from us, and the vacant place can never be filled. While I am very lonely, I know the dear Lord knows best, and I trust will be my support and comfort until I have lived out my number of days, and shall, I hope, go to be as he, forever with the Lord. HIS WIFE.

Robert Secor died at his home in the town of Olive, N. Y., August 9th, 1914, aged 71 years and 4 days. He was a son of Isaac and Phœbe Secor; was born in the township of Olive and spent most of his life there. At the age of twenty-six he married Anna C. Stewart. His wife and two sons, Edwin M. and John J., survive him. In October, 1868, he was received in the fellowship of the Olive and Hurley Church, and baptized Nov. 8th, by Elder J. N. Badger, who also married him. Brother Secor was a man of few words, but well established in the doctrine of God our Savior, and enjoyed having his brethren and friends visit his home. His health had been very poor for years, but he was seldom absent from the meetings.

His funeral service, held in the Olive and Hurley meetinghouse, was largely attended. The writer tried to exalt the name of Jesus in the salvation of poor lost sinners. May comfort be ministered to the family. K.

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JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 82. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1914. NO. 23.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ROMANS VIII. 29.

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."

There are at this time, and I suppose have always been, many people who daily deny the above quotation, both in act and word, failing to give or allow the God of heaven and earth the right or power they take themselves, for man's mind naturally determines first the act that he is about to do. I cannot recall the time when I did not believe this Scripture; even before I knew it was Scripture I in my inmost being believed this doctrine, and I myself hated it with a perfect hatred, and charged God with being unjust, for in the foreknowledge of God I was barred from eternal rest, and realized his power over me. It seems strange that well educated and intelligent human beings would deny this truth, but they will, for they do not see the truth in it, and it is not by man's wisdom that the truth is found. Men have searched far and near, and delved into the depths of secrecy to find some tangible evidence of the personality of God, and to find out what manner of being he is, but with all the energy of intelligent minds they have come no nearer the truth of the matter than had they never sought for these things, and the truth of this, or no other Scripture, can be proven to the natural man (for man must be made spiritual before he can have an understanding of spiritual things), and I thank God through Jesus Christ that it cannot, but that he gives this evidence of the truth to whom he will, withholding it from the wise and prudent and revealing it unto babes, not permitting the wisdom of man to gain entrance to the great truth of the greatness of him that fills space with his being, but giving unto others of less importance in the eyes of the world to know him and the power and wisdom of him who did foreknow all things whatsoever have or will transpire. Men to-day, even in this late day of advanced civilization, which is filled with scientists and mighty men of knowledge, do not know, cannot testify of anything which they have not seen with the eye of their learning, and with all this searching and studying, proving and comparing, they have not found out, nor do they know, that God is God, but know God only to the height which they have at-

tained in their wisdom, and that height does not exceed the top of their heads. There are people though, by the mercy of that God whom they serve, that have a more lofty conception of the Creator of the universe, and believe in and worship that Power that by a word of command spake this great earth into existence, creating it out of nothing; therefore he is the Creator, the only one, and that before he created this world back in the eternity of his mind did know what he was about to do, and the outcome of it all, and that there is not one thing ever has or ever will take place that he in his wisdom did not see and foreknow would take place at the time and place allotted for it from before the beginning. That he had a purpose in all things whatsoever he would do, creating Adam for a purpose, and the purpose in Adam will not be completed until the last one is dead and the last heaven-born soul at home in glory; in fact, it will not really be completed then, for all eternity will be filled with praise to him who did all these things. This is a question to me that is above argument, and it is entirely useless to argue on it, for, as I have tried to say, it cannot be proven by natural things to natural man. Everything I see proves it to me, and the fact that many deny it is proof that God is God, and man has no conception of the greatness of him; it is proof of that great and supreme power and wisdom that exceeds man's wisdom in distance as east and west. Men not having been dealt with by that power cannot believe in it, and those who have cannot believe anything else. It is an undebatable fact to me that God did foreknow his people, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isaiah xlvi. 10. We cannot grasp these things except by divine wisdom, and it is no small matter when this truth is revealed to one, for it is in his purpose that he does it. Secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law. This wisdom is revealed to us for a purpose; wisdom is not bestowed on man in vain, but his purpose shall be fulfilled in all He does. Now of those whom he foreknew there is something else concerning them: he did also predestinate them to certain things; that is, he determined before time that they should be, and do certain things; determined a work and a place for each and every one, a road for each to travel and a certain kind of a road for each one; he knew and determined the trials they should meet by the way, what doubts and fears should arise in them, and how it is that they were hemmed in on all sides at the Red Sea, and also how it was that they were delivered. This great plan is so great and so sure, and the wisdom of God is so far-reaching, his eye so farseeing, that there is not, nor ever can be, any change of his plans, and it is absolutely true that we cannot escape any of the trials that are in our way, for if it were impossible for Christ to escape the sufferings of death on the cross, how hardly shall we expect to escape the thorns by the way? He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and he in his agony in Gethsemane prayed that if it be possible that this cup pass from me, but if not, not my will, but thine be done. It was just as absolutely impossible for him to escape the life and death he was to live and die as it is for us to escape the things which are predestinated for us,

and it is as impossible for us to escape the things set for us as it is for a stone to fall upward when loosed from the hand, for there is a law that is eternal and sure that must be obeyed, for it is absolutely impossible for God to change his eternal plan. His word has gone out of his mouth, and shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish that which he pleases, and prosper whereunto he sent it; that is why they who are the called according to his purpose worship him in sincerity and speak his name in reverence and are filled with amazement, love and adoration at even the thought of his name, and cannot take his name lightly in their lips, but their whole being trembles when he is mentioned, and they know their path is marked out for them, and that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, and they know they are sure of all things whatsoever he in his wisdom has planned for them, and they are predestinated or he determined before time that they be conformed to the image of his Son. It is useless to try to tell of all the things he predestinated for them, or even to begin to enumerate them, for all things which have taken place, or will take place, are the fulfillment of the eternally dictated plan. The fact that things and events happen as they do is sufficient proof or evidence that they were to take place exactly as they did, and if they were not to have happened or taken place as they did, pray tell me how it was to have been. Some say that Adam was able to stand but liable to fall, but the fact that he fell is sufficient evidence that he was unable to stand. There is no power in heaven, earth or hell able to change the plan of man coming into existence, falling in sin, whereby all his children are sinners from time of conception; then in the process and development of nature Christ being born of the virgin Mary, living and suffering as he did, and delivering those whom the Father gave him from the bondage of sin to light and liberty and eternal rest, sharing with him the glory he had with the Father before the world began. Some say, If you believe that, why pray? The prayer is a part of it. I pray through necessity, and that necessity was seen in me from the beginning, and the sufficiency of the righteousness of Christ was also seen in all who were predestinated to be conformed to his image, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren, the elder brother, the one looked up to, conformed to his image, made like him, made like him as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, despised and cast off, forsaken of earthly friends and of God, having no place to lay his head. We find no place to rest here, for our work is not yet accomplished. There is a work going on in us that causes an unrest. The birds of the air have nests, the foxes have holes; natural things, or things that are natural, have rest here, but that one who is conformed to the image of his Son finds that travail of soul, that labor, and no place to rest, no place to lay his head. The Head of the church had no place to rest, and how can the body rest when there is no rest for the head? Forsaken, left alone, tried and tempted with the same temptations with which he was tempted, therefore we have fellowship for his suffering, and he is able to help us, for he trod the road before; being of our flesh, he knows the infirmities of the flesh. He is the firstborn among many brethren, a tender relationship, children of the same Father. He bore, as we do, the image of Adam, and as he bears the image of the heavenly, so shall we also bear the image

of the heavenly, and be accepted of the Father through him. These things are declared by him who knows no change nor shadow of a turning, by him who cannot lie, and I believed these things always, feeling sure that all things were fixed and certain, but could not love the doctrine, for I had not received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father, but now through his mercy I have hope of salvation by the eternal righteousness of Christ, therefore I rejoice in the sure foundation in the God of purpose and wisdom, whose wisdom is not to be compared with that of man, whose power cannot be measured, whose mercy endureth forever. To him, and him only, who hath given us this knowledge through Christ Jesus, be all honor and glory, both now and forever. Amen.

F. SELBY FISHER.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Oct 3, 1898.

DEAR FRIEND AND SISTER:—I am glad when I find any one firm in the faith of the elect of God. The Lord has shown you great things, and of this I am glad, as well as you. It is a very frequent thought with me, when I learn of some one who has been brought to know and to love the truth as it is in Jesus, Here is another one with whom I shall hope to live at the right hand of God to all eternity. What a wonderful thing it is to look upon one of our fellow-men, and to think that we are destined to live always, and to be like our Lord, because we shall see him as he is. The greatest wonder of all seems to me to be that I have a hope that this shall be my happy lot. I think that I do enjoy the fellowship and companionship of the people of God, and love the sanctuary where they meet for worship, and I think I do have a deep feeling of pity and sympathy for those who are deprived of such privileges. I think of you as you dwell so much alone, so far as those who love the truth are concerned. It seems very clear that the work with you is the work of God and not of man. This work has gone on in your heart quietly, yet effectually, and it has brought you to love the things which you did not once love. Surely it is his work. Let the praise be all his. His people say that his name is exalted. They praise not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. This you are anxious to do with all your heart. In this experience is the fellowship of saints. What we have seen and heard we declare unto you that you may have fellowship with us.

Oct. 14, 1899.—I, who see so many of the dear friends and see them so often, do have a feeling of deep sympathy for those who, like you, are largely cut off from such association. I know a little of such loneliness, for in my early life I was without the privileges of the sanctuary, and without the association of those whom I believed to be the children of God. I recall that I used to hear my mother speak of the younger years of her life when she would attend, perhaps, an association, and at night, where a dozen or more would spend the night, the conversation, until a late hour, would be concerning mutual experience, and the talk would be a great joy to her. I often used to wonder if such privileges would ever be mine, and I thought it would be almost like heaven on earth. I used also often to wonder whether I should ever grow tired of such things as I did of most things in this natural life, should it be my lot to have many such privileges. Where my mother enjoyed one such favored time I have had the privilege of a hundred, and now I can say that they

have not grown old or stale, and I find just as much delight in the house of God and among his worshippers as I ever did. I recall, too, that in those early years when I did get to mingle with the people of God for a season, it would seem like death to me to part from them. I did not expect to see another Old School Baptist for months, and the time seemed long to look forward to. Now I go from company to company of believers, and I cannot therefore feel so sad as I used to do at parting, but I do not believe that my love is any the less. I recall that in my early years this very love to God's people was about the only evidence I had that I was born again. With delight, yet with trembling, I used to repeat these words, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I did think that I did love the children of God as I did not love any other people, and this was the anchor of my hope. I had a hope, and as an old brother in Virginia used to say, I had a nail upon which to hang my hope, and that nail was my love for the brethren. Sometimes it seems that I can see but little else now as an evidence that I am saved in the Lord. Nothing is so precious and nothing binds the hearts of people together, as a common interest in the things of the Spirit. As we sit and tell of all the way in which we are being led we find fellow-pilgrims, and our hearts are knit together in ties of a common experience and of a common hope and of a common desire. Thus we come to recognize the children of him whom we love, and, therefore, we love them also. Thus our hope is strengthened, our obedience is helped, our gloomy doubts and fears are scattered for the time, at least, and we go on our way strengthened, with renewed hope and joy.

I do not feel as though I had much to write you about to-day. I am not very fruitful in mind, it seems to me. The springs of my life, spiritually, run low to-day. I would be glad if an angel would descend into the waters and trouble them within me. I would be glad if they would rush out in warm love to God, to his truth and people, and in fervent desires for the blessing of God upon all his vineyard, and in abounding hope through the power of the Holy Ghost. I do feel that it is something hopeful not to be satisfied with my present attainments and surroundings, or with the cold affections that possess me so much of the time. There is so much in Christ to write or speak about, but how little these things move me much of the time. I can but feel that I am a great sinner, but what a great Savior we have. One result of hearing other brethren preach is, that it makes me feel as though I cannot preach at all, yet I do hope that I have been called to the work, for surely there is no pleasure like the pleasure of setting forth Christ and his salvation. It is a burden, and I do not feel sufficient for it, but it is joy greater than words can express when the Lord gives light and liberty of thought and utterance.

The more you write to me the more I am convinced you are being led in the right way of the Lord. All his leading tends to humble self and exalt the Redeemer. This is the result of the experience which has been yours. You feel more and more unworthy, and Jesus and his grace are more and more exalted. The things of earth fade with the using, but the more Jesus is ours and the more he blesses us, the sweeter and more lovely he grows. Through just such experience as yours we are led into more and more appreciation of his blessed name. This I

know has been the way that you have been led. This is the right way in which the Lord leads his people, that they may go to a city of habitation. I have found comfort, at times, in remembering that the dear Lord has said to his people that he will be a little sanctuary to them in every place where they may be scattered. May the same truth be a comfort to you living where you do, alone, so far as the company of the redeemed is concerned. The Lord is your portion and your heritage forever.

Jan. 17, 1900.—John said in one of his epistles that he rejoiced in the soul-prosperity of those to whom he was writing. I believe that I am always glad to hear of the prosperity of any of my kindred in Christ in temporal things, but I am especially glad to know how it is with them in spiritual things. These are the things of most importance to those who believe. To grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ is more than to grow in riches, wisdom or strength after a worldly fashion. I could but be much interested in the account which you gave of the old lady whom you saw in Flemington. How often have I heard the same things said by those who do not know or understand the workings of indwelling grace. When men speak in the way to which you referred in the conversation of your aged friend it only shows there is no real heart-work there, but only a sort of slavish fear which leads to a profession of religion because of the hope of heaven or the fear of punishment; take away these and the profession would soon fail. But where grace reigns in the soul it reigns unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. It produces holy desires and much self-loathing, because these holy desires come so far short of fulfillment in the outward life, and in the inward motives which control us. O how much better is that free, willing obedience which grace produces than is any obedience which has as its incentive some outward reward or fear of loss. I have heard it said (and I subscribe to it with all my heart) that the christian is such a man that if there were no heaven to gain or hell to shun he still would serve God for the love of the service. It is in his heart to serve God. We sometimes say that use is second nature. Well, grace is second nature indeed. Those who possess it do things from love of them, and not from slavish fear which has torment. The fear of the Lord (the true fear, that is) is to hate evil. How earnestly do they who hate a thing seek to depart from it; how earnestly do they who love a thing seek for it. But it may be that the old friend has more grace in her heart than her head is aware of. Perhaps she is wiser in heart than in the head. You will know what I mean. I have said to you, and to others, many times that there is great reward in keeping the commandments. The word says this. But still it is not for the reward that is in the act that you desire to come (to be baptized), but that you may thus testify what the Lord has done for you, and so glorify him and the grace that has saved you. If we seek our own happiness or favor alone, we shall neither find the happiness that we seek nor shall we glorify God, but if we seek the glory of God, we shall both glorify him and find happiness for ourselves. O how good it is to tell what great things he has done for us. It is a good thing to sing praises to the Lord, to give thanks to the Most High.

There was a note of praise and gladness in your letter that did me good.

Feb. 7, 1901.—I have heard it said that

if several stringed instruments are together in a room, all attuned to the same pitch, if one is touched, all the rest will respond to the vibration of the one touched. I do not know about that, but I do know that when one whose heart is touched with the Spirit of God speaks, all who have that experience find a response within themselves to what is said. I have at all times been able to respond to what you have written and said to me concerning the grace of God and your need of that grace. When you said at the beginning of your letter that you had nothing new to write, but the same old threadbare story, and that there was much sameness in your writing, I could but respond in my mind: I am glad that it is the same old story all the time, but not threadbare by any means. It is good to tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love, as the song has it. Just so far as we narrate the daily travel of our mind in the truth, just so far are we speaking the things that will comfort and instruct. In one way there may be sameness, but yet there will be no two days alike. Israel journeyed forty years in the wilderness, it was a wilderness all the time, and I suppose all the way it had the general features of a wilderness, but they never crossed their path nor rested twice at the same place. Perhaps they thought often, All this is dreary, and there is no variety, but there was a going on all the time to the city of habitation. You are going on all the time. To-day you are not where you were yesterday. The work of self-effacement and of the increase of the glory of God in your soul's travel is deepening. This is true, even though you cannot see it so. Keep on, my dear sister, speaking of what you feel. It may be all dark, but it will not be the same place in the darkness. It may be all light, but it will not be the same place of light. Our heavenly Father attends to all that, and he leads us on. Let us tell what we have, and not strive to tell something that we have not which we think would be better. What we have is always the best for us, and that which just now will most glorify God through us.

I could write of many things which you have said, but this was what seemed to come to me most as I read your letter again just now. Perhaps it may be a right word for you; perhaps it is meant as a right word for me; that is, perhaps I am the one that needed it rather than you. I will send it as the one thing that just now comes to me with comfort and encouragement. I am often oppressed with the feeling that my testimony, whether in the pulpit or out of it, is all dry sameness, and I am just now comforted by what has occurred to me. Your complaint is the open door to my consolation. May it prove to be also to your comfort.

Aug. 9, 1901.—I am always glad to read of the daily travel of those who love God and who are journeying along the pilgrim way. I recall that once, many years since, the words found in the one hundred and nineteenth Psalm: "Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage," came with great force to me. I can now only say about it that I thought of the pilgrims, then how David was a singing pilgrim, then of the subject of his songs: the statutes of the Lord. How much is involved in all these three things. A pilgrim declares that he is seeking a country and cannot tarry long here. He declares that this world is not his home, but that he is seeking a home to come, and a singing pilgrim is one who has good hope of reaching that country,

and counts it so good a country that as he thinks of it he is glad. He recognizes that though he sojourns here he is not at home here, but is a citizen of the heavenly, and subject to the statutes of that country. These statutes are so pleasant to him that he makes them the subject of his songs. Now all these things I am persuaded, my dear sister, are true of you. You would no doubt say that you are rather a weeping than a singing pilgrim, and yet when you do sing is it not of the statutes of the Lord? Can you find anything else worth singing about? When you think upon them do they not make you feel like singing? Nay more, when you think of yourself and of the unfitness and unlikeness to that which is good that you feel and confess daily, do you not all the more, because of this experience, feel like singing of the statutes of the Lord? David said also: O how I love thy law. Again he said: "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them." What we love we sing about, do we not? Because we love the law of God we abhor ourselves, because we are so unlike the law which we love. So, after all, it is true with all the going on our way mourning we do sing, and in the Lord rejoice all the day. Thus are fulfilled the words of Paul: As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing. How many things the believer has to be sorry for, but how many things he has to rejoice over. Was not Paul rejoicing greatly when he said: Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift?

But I did not sit down to sermonize, and do not want to do so. The thought of your pilgrimage set me to thinking in this way. You fear that you are in that condition which the Lord dislikes more than all others, viz., lukewarmness. Well, I have no doubt that you are unlike the lukewarm in one important thing at least, viz., that those who are lukewarm never know it, never care about it, nor complain of it. A complaining condition may not be a very pleasant condition, but it is better than lukewarmness. One is not dead who feels cold. When there is no consciousness of cold, then one is near to death. It grieves you that you can go on for days and not think of the country to which you journey. I have been grieved many times that way. Why cannot I retain these things more constantly in my mind? Why does the world that now is, occupy so large a place with me? It is nothing substantial, and I know that it is so. Moreover, I know that the other world is substantial and has substantial joys. Why must my affection cling so much to the country that is to be burned up? I am like you much. If this does not comfort you, I know not what to say that can; that is, if indeed you can believe that I am a child of God. I do not want to say the Lord has placed me in this frame of mind, but I can say that he alone can lift me out of it. You say that if it were in your power you would be wholly alive to God. What are you saying in this but what Paul said: "I would, but cannot," I would do good but evil is present with me? One comforting thing he said: If then when I would do good, evil is present, it is no more I that do evil, but sin that dwelleth in me. Yet even at the end of this narrative of conflict he said, I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Then the victory is sure in Jesus. How sore the conflict is, but how gracious the victory when it is given to us. Is it not an evidence that you have been taught to know the Lord in truth when you can count these things precious at all? How could you so desire that your dear daugh-

ter and other friends might know these things if you had not known them for yourself? No one can truly say that Jesus is anything but by the Holy Ghost. No one can mourn his absence but those who know him as he is. How true it is that when he withdraws himself from those who know him they may sleep, but their hearts wake. The moment he puts his hand in at the lattice they know it, and their hearts move to him, and the seeking heart leads to the asking and knocking, seeking with all the power of the soul. Seeking by night upon her bed led the spouse to seek directly in the streets of the city. The heart that seeks him soon leads that one to go among his people, and into the city that acknowledges allegiance to him. Because you loved him and desired him you were led at last to come to the house of his abode. How many things you have in your favor.

I have not written as I expected. Perhaps it is just as well.

Dec. 7, 1904.—The (Lord's) supper is an ordinance which in itself preaches better than any words of mine can do. Our Lord gave it, and he blesses it to his people in a peculiar way. The blessing does not always come in a sense of gladness and confidence. Indeed, one may be very sorrowful and full of solemn questioning at that time. There will be, if we rightly understand what we are doing, a solemn sense of unfitness in ourselves, but with that we shall be brought to remember that all our fitness is in him, and that we do not come to the table to declare our own worth, but rather our lack of worth, and so, on the other hand, to declare his merit, in which we alone can hope. "This do in remembrance of me." In this sentence the whole meaning of the ordinance, and, in fact, of all ordinances and all service, is summed up. The more we feel unworthy the better prepared are we to do this in remembrance of him. None but a sinner can remember thus a Savior. None but the unworthy can remember his worthiness. The best preparation of heart, then, that we can have to come to the table, is to feel our need of him, and this means to feel unworthy. Feeling unworthy, we shall not eat and drink unworthily, but feeling worthy, we shall eat and drink unworthily.

My feelings are in full accord with what you said regarding sister Harriet Shepherd (deceased). She was a woman of truly spiritual mind. Her conversation was of the things of the kingdom at all times, and her conversation, in the larger sense in which it is used in the Scriptures, was also in heaven. How often when I remember such ones do I wish that I could be of a heavenly mind, as are they. I do love heavenly-mindedness, even though I have not attained unto it. One day my hope is to be with and like my Lord, with all his redeemed, but it is so good to honor the holy name of the blessed Lord while we live. The exhortation is very sweet to me: "Glorify God in your body and your spirit which [the body as well as the spirit] are his." We are the Lord's, what heavenly news is this, and being the Lord's; it is but seemly and right that we should devote them to his glory.

I was glad of the narration of experience of brother C. It seemed to me like the old-fashioned narratives which I used to hear with such interest when a boy. I recall that I would get back into the corner and leave my play at any time to hear such conversation, though I did not want to be noticed myself. How differently, in some ways, the Lord leads his children. I always desired such con-

versation, and you thought it tiresome and tedious. But how wonderfully does grace shine out in your experience. How clear is the evidence that you have passed from death unto life. There is no such change to be told in my way of traveling, yet I do hope, because I feel that I do love these things of which we now speak.

I saw Elder Conklin (deceased) but two or three times, and heard him speak but three times in all, I think. He seemed to me as one speaking from the very borders of the eternal world. I was at his home twice while he lived, and felt that it was good to be there, indeed. May God bless you in all things, is my prayer.

I remain as ever, your brother in Christ,

F. A. CHICK.

[THE foregoing are portions of letters written by our dear departed brother, Elder F. A. Chick, to sister Mary Fisher, and as we think they will be received with interest by our readers we gladly publish them.—ED.]

NEW YORK, N. Y., Oct. 17, 1914.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I read in the SIGNS of September 15th a notice entitled, "In need of copy." How I longed to respond, and had I been as gifted as some, should have ventured to send in my mite at once. As that was impossible, I began to wonder if among the letters I prize most highly there might be one which would give to others as much comfort as it had given me, and found the two which I inclose, written to me some years ago, as you will see, by our beloved Elder Coulter. I still feel as I did at their reception, that it was a remarkable and most kindly act for a man of his ability and in his position to spend his valuable time and talents in writing such long and precious letters to one from whom he could expect no returns of like value, but the "cup" he gave was eagerly and thankfully received, and I only wish I were as capable of bestowing as refreshing a draught upon other poor thirsting souls. Such letters never grow old, but are precious as long as they can be read, telling as they do the same dear old story of Jesus and his love. This reminds me what "little children" we are if we know his love, and he loves the weak and trembling, helpless and hopeless, those who are sick and sorrowing. Like little children gathered in the kind, strong arms of a parent, who cease their sobbing and crying as they snuggle comfortably to his bosom, listening to the old, old story, which they have heard repeated again and again, but which they love so much to hear, and are soothed and quieted until the heavy eyelids droop and they quietly slip away into the restful, peaceful, happy land of dreams, so our heavenly Father puts those strong, loving "everlasting arms" about his little ones and soothes and comforts them to rest and peace, whispering to their troubled hearts the same dear old story (ever new) which they already so well know, of his love, his faithfulness, his mercy and forgiveness, and how precious they are in his sight. Surely his name is "Wonderful," "The everlasting Father," the "Prince of Peace," and our hearts should be overflowing with gratitude for his unceasing mercies, but how far short we come. I often wonder if I know anything of his love, but I do know there is a little flickering hope forever in my heart, a great longing for something which this world is unable to give, a most sincere love for those whom I consider his dear children, and I feel thankful indeed that I am able to believe that "The Lord knoweth them that are his,"

and I constantly desire that he will help my unbelief and make me to know and serve and love him better. The christian's life seems like a great school where there are hard lessons to learn, many perplexing questions to answer and many, so many, to ask. I seem such a dull scholar, always ready to ask, Lord, why must this or that be done? Why is it I must be tempted and tortured by these doubts and fears? Why art thou so slow in showing thy face and warming this poor cold heart of mine? I get restless and uneasy and long to be dismissed, that I may go home, where I know there is light and warmth and love and freedom from pain and care, and where there are no more temptations nor snares.

I am thankful that you have been given such able assistance in the publishing of the SIGNS. May you be strengthened and instructed and encouraged in the publishing of the blessed truths it contains for many years to come, and may the same Hand that guides you now bless all his dear children and gather them home at last to enjoy the glory of his presence in all its fullness without a veil between.

I did not intend to take so much of your valuable time when I commenced writing, and therefore must beg your pardon for doing so, but from the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh.

Yours, through the love of Christ,

ADELA JONES.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Sept. 12, 1890.

DEAR SISTER JONES:—A sister kindly permitted us to read the letter she received from you. My wife read it several times, and enjoyed it so much that she now insists that I write to you, hoping thereby that she might also some day receive a letter from you, so you will please consider this letter as coming from us both, and if in your heart you can feel it worthy an answer we will be glad indeed. We feel, dear sister, that such letters as yours are to the wayfaring children of our heavenly King as precious seed sown, yielding their fruits in due season (the peaceable fruits of righteousness). They are joyful tidings to the poor, because they are the outpouring of a heart filled with the sweet love of our dear Savior, and O how richly we are blessed when we do have his exceeding precious love shed abroad in our hearts. None can fathom the depth or height or breadth of Jesus' matchless love to the people of his choice, neither can any comprehend the love of the Father for his only begotten and dearly beloved Son. Through the riches of his boundless grace we are given (by the light which has shined in our hearts) the knowledge of the glory of the Father in the face of our dear Redeemer, and as you well know, dear sister, it is only through the righteousness of Christ that we are enabled to look upon the Father, for we could not, dare not, look upon the glorious dazzling brightness of his face while living in this polluted tenement of clay. You remember the psalmist, in praising God for his omniscient providences, said, Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; I cannot attain unto it. Daily I think we realize this in our experience, especially when the troublous waves of affliction and temptation have cast us down upon the merciless rocks and shoals of the sinfulness of this world, and the loving hand of the precious Savior has lifted us up and delivered us out of them all. This reminds me that in our sister's letter you requested that I should say something on some words of Scripture which have lately been upon your mind: "Lead us not into tempta-

tion." I would hardly dare say to you all that is in my mind on this deep and mysterious subject, lest I should darken counsel by words without knowledge, and now as your pure mind is exercised on the subject you will no doubt be led sweetly into a satisfactory contemplation of the truth. Just as much as is clear in my mind I will gladly give you, hoping you may obtain a little food for wider thought. I hope I am thankful to my dear heavenly Father that he has restrained me from writing to my brethren in a way that will advance theories the result of carnal reasoning, and my prayer is that whatever I may write, either for publication or privately to the saints, may be through an impression directed by the Spirit of truth. I feel impressed to write to you, therefore I write. It appears that your mind is pervaded with a fear that you might charge God unjustly when you even think that he leads his dear children into temptation, and now my heart's desire is that the Lord will direct my pen, that such impression may be removed. In order to contemplate any of the words used by our Savior in the form of prayer given to the disciples, and saying, "After this manner therefore pray ye," it is well that we understand something of what true prayer is, for only those who have been brought out of darkness into God's marvelous light can know that there never has been, nor ever can be, a prayer offered acceptable to the Lord by one who is heart-whole; true prayer can only come from a crushed, broken heart and a contrite spirit. The supplicant having nothing, utterly prostrate, asks for that which he or she is in dire and dreadful need, with a deep sense of unworthiness, destitution and dependence, with a sure knowledge of the only source whence help cometh, and an abiding faith that it is only through the merits and righteousness of our Intercessor, Christ Jesus, that we dare ask at all. It seems to me at this moment that there are only two forms of worship that the children of light can offer to their Lord and Master: first prayer, then praise. When prayer is in the heart we may be well convinced that praise is there also. You remember the beautiful words of the psalmist where he asks a question, saying, What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? and answers it, saying, I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. Indeed, what else has the poor, needy child to render except the cup of salvation, which has been given him by that same glorious Lord who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and who declared, Ask and ye shall receive? Now, dear sister, when one is in the condition of a poor, trembling, needy, perishing sinner, asking for the one thing needful, there is not in that crushed, broken heart a thought, a murmur or a charge of God being unjust, but his whole heart's desire is that he may follow the Lord all the days of his life, to behold his beauty and inquire in his temple, and knowing by sad and bitter experience his utter weakness and inability to resist temptation, he humbly asks his Father to lead him not into temptation, for the whole absorbing desire of that heart is that he may walk uprightly before him, and also worthily.

Now, as to whether God does lead his children into temptation, I will just offer a few thoughts for your consideration. You said truly in your letter that we never can get beyond the everlasting arms, and also you spoke sweetly of his promise, I will never leave thee nor for-

sake thee. The sweet singer of Israel said, Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? &c. (Psalms cxxxix.) Now the pleasing thought that I want you to consider is, that he never leads us anywhere where he is not himself present, for he never leaves us, and we never suffer temptation or affliction but he suffers also, for in all our afflictions he was afflicted. He found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness, and he led him about and instructed him. As you well know, it is in the nighttime of our experience, when assailed by divers temptations and sore afflictions, that we receive instruction. Night unto night sheweth knowledge, and when he also leadeth us out into the bright sunshine, day unto day uttereth speech. How necessary one is to the other, and how consoling that he leadeth us all through our journey, and instructeth us. As I said before, the desire and prayer of our heart is that we be led not into temptation, but in the same prayer we also breathe, Thy kingdom come, thy will be done. Another quotation and I must close, lest I weary you. "For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death." The guide, being always present, always leads, for that is the office of the guide. O that I had the substance of that beautiful prayer more constantly in my heart, as I feel sure you have. You have many cares, and with them a precious Lord to sustain you.

We will be delighted to hear from you. My wife sends christian love.

Your very unworthy brother,

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

DEAR SISTER JONES:—Your gladly welcomed letter of February 19th has been received and read with real pleasure by myself and wife, also by several of our dear brethren and sisters besides. We Old School Baptists in Philadelphia do not consider that we are justified in withholding from each other the rich grains of the golden harvest which come to us as sweet messages of Christ's dear love out of the plenteous fields of our spiritual Boaz. In this way we share each other's joys as well as sorrows, and so bear each other's burdens. Your letter was rich in the sweet experience which is common to all the saints, and also rich as you touched upon the precious doctrine of God our Savior. I can imagine how your heart was filled with adoration and praise when you wrote the words, What a blest people God's people are. What is sweeter, deeper and more lasting than the love of Christ? Did you ever think, dear sister, that words written out of the overflowing abundance of the heart are illuminated by the force and power of the emotion actuating them, and when they are sent to and reach the heart that is filled with the same sweet song it is also thrilled with the same emotion and love? How wonderfully true it is, God works in a mysterious way in the hearts of his people. The manifestation of his love toward us always (I think) astonishes us, because it comes from a source the least expected. You remember Paul prayed three times that the thorn might be removed from his flesh, and the prayer was answered in a very different way than he expected, for God in a few simple words (but attended with power), My grace is sufficient for thee, gave him such strong assurance that he was able (by that grace) to withstand the messengers of Satan which did buffet him, and so the thorn was removed without his present knowledge, and in a sense that was difficult for him to readily understand.

Again I will quote from your letter: "The Bible speaks of teachers, apostles, &c., but I do not see any subject designated to ask questions." Perhaps not, and I may tell you I cannot think at this moment of any characters in the Bible who did not ask questions, except perhaps righteous Noah and faithful Abraham. Indeed, I feel that it is highly commendable in the saints of God to encourage an inquiring mind. But, as you say, it is easier to ask than to answer questions, although I sometimes find it very hard to ask for the information I desire. Really the first step of importance to be taken in the matter of seeking information is to approach unto the Source of all knowledge. You remember that Solomon (as an humble child) went out in the field and asked the Lord, not for riches and honor, but that he might be given wisdom and knowledge to rule the people, Israel, in his father David's stead. Then, secondly, to those whom we feel have been led deeper into the wonderful mystery of the gospel we little ones may go, always depending upon the Lord that he may give them the wisdom and knowledge to so instruct us according to our desire. Now, dear sister, if you only could know how little and weak I am in Christ's kingdom, the very least of all the saints, and less than the least, if indeed one at all, you would not ask of me to give you gospel light, who are so favored with that light from above, but as it is our plain christian duty to use all the ability with which we are blessed of God to comfort, enlighten and sustain each other, I will as much as in me is endeavor to answer the questions you have asked me. As we read from the beginning of the eleventh chapter of Isaiah, which being on your mind you have of course read carefully, we can understand something of the manner by which this beautiful figure of peace and harmony was accomplished, and by whom. The prophet is here foretelling the coming of the peaceable kingdom of the branch out of the root of Jesse, how that the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, &c., and righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins. He foretold the coming of a King who should reign in righteousness. Now having the girdle of righteousness about his loins, having wisdom, and understanding, and counsel, and might, and the fear of the Lord, well could he say, when he came to his own, In the world ye shall have tribulation, in me peace. Your understanding of the spiritual application of that reign of peace, my sister, is strictly in accord with my understanding of it: that that kingdom is already set up in the hearts of his people, that all other kingdoms have been broken down, that King Jesus reigns supreme, and blessed peace exists. The apostle declares, Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? Where his Spirit dwells there is peace. In this spiritual or gospel kingdom is represented the two natures in each individual inhabitant. Although Christ has died for us, and our sins are washed away in the blood of the Lamb of God, and are remembered against us no more forever, yet when we enter the holy mountain of the Lord we must necessarily carry with us these vile bodies in which we are sometimes tenants. The Adamic nature not being changed, only clothed upon, represents still all the works of the flesh, of which the wolf, the leopard, the bear and the lion in our chapter are figures, each one representing its own peculiar characteristic in the evil propensities of our flesh. The spiritual

nature manifests and represents the fruits of the Spirit, of which the lamb, &c., are figures, and these are enmity the one to the other, literally and also spiritually. But our chapter tells us they lie down together in the kingdom of peace, and how? You remember our Savior said, When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace; but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted. Jesus hath overcome the world, and by his appearing hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. The victory is won, the stronger man has come, the strong man is overcome and bound, but not destroyed, the Adamic or carnal nature is subdued and in subjection. The wild animal propensities in us are not changed, but are overcome and conquered by the stronger power. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. Yes, none can enter this peaceful kingdom except they become as a little child, and, no matter how strong and fierce they were outside, a little child shall lead them, and they gladly and joyfully follow; and the cow and the bear shall feed, and their young ones shall lie down together. No strife now, for Jesus reigns, and is exalted as a Prince and a Savior. And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. This to me is a beautiful picture of the patience, forbearance, mildness and peaceful qualifications of the children of grace (the inhabitants of beloved Zion). Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat; we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day. (Rom. iv. 13.) Whereas in the times past we would have resented every persecution, now, like the patient ox, we eat the straw of tribulation, suffering all things for Christ's sake, thereby receiving the blessing. For Christ has said, Blessed are ye when men revile you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake: rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven.

I hope in this I have not darkened counsel by words without knowledge, also that out of the many pages you find a little crumb of comfort and enlightenment. My wife joins me in christian love to yourself and husband.

Hoping you will again favor us, I am your unworthy brother,

B. F. COULTER.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., Oct. 20, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I inclose a letter I received from sister Effie Edwards, of Delchamps, Ala. The papers of which she speaks have reference to a number of copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. You can see what she has to say, and I desire that her letter be published, that all who know something of the dealings of the Lord can read and get some comfort. I will not comment on this letter, but I do indorse every word of it.

Yours in much weakness and doubts,

H. M. PITTS.

DELCHAMPS, Ala., Sept. 28, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER PITTS:—I believe the good Lord surely directed your mind to send those papers, and they never could have come at a better time. I felt so utterly alone, and so friendless and Godforsaken, that I was getting to be positively rebellious, and felt in my very soul that no one had ever passed through such

fiery trials, and that my troubles were greater than I could bear, and I had almost given up what little hope I had, and felt that surely if I was a child of God I could not have such feelings and such thoughts. Did you ever feel that way? A few days ago I felt much cast down and tried to pray, and also tried to think of what great sin I had done that I should be punished so, and it seemed to me my heart would break, and the thought came to me very plainly, When you have been tried sufficiently you will come forth as gold, and I felt so happy and thankful for awhile that I just wanted to praise Him aloud, and I felt reconciled for just a little while; then it will come again with double force, and I find myself asking him, Why? Another time when I tried to pray that if it were the Lord's will that I should suffer so, that he would reconcile me to it, and show me where it was best, the words came to me, What I do thou knowest not now, but shall know hereafter. Do you think that a child of God would have such thoughts as I have, and be so unsubmissive? It is so easy when everything goes on all right and we have our friends and loved ones with us, and are surrounded by every comfort, to say, "Thy will be done," but it takes the grace of God to make us submissive when everything goes wrong, and I have not the grace. I would be glad to know if any one claiming to be a child of God has ever felt that way.

I do not know why I should be writing this to you, but it seems that no one understands my feelings, and I do not think you will, for I do not think you have ever been that low down.

Yours in a sweet hope,

EFFIE EDWARDS.

WEISER, Idaho, Oct. 4, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have felt all day an impression to write you, with the felt knowledge that I could not write that which would be of benefit or profit to you, or any one else, so here I am trying to pass away a few lonely moments by writing you. Dear brother, I know it has never been my lot to pass through, or, I had better say, be in such gloom and doubts as I am now in, and have been for two months, and never before in life have I felt so hard-hearted and stubborn. It does not seem to make any difference which way I turn, I find an opposing something that seems to say, Not for you. In times that are past my mourning has somewhat comforted me, for, "Blessed are they that mourn;" but at this time there is a query, Do I mourn? O yes, I know the promise is sure to the children, but am I one? O the felt darkness. It seems that I surely have never known mercy, for they who have never known the Savior cannot be worse. A few nights ago I was trying to pray, and I began to try to enumerate what I needed. My brother, I could not go through with my little petition; I felt to need so much, everything, everything. I had not one thing in my possession, unless it might be a desire for these things. I needed wisdom, strength, patience, humbleness, faith, everything that is good or to be desired, so I just had to end by begging the Lord to be merciful to me, a poor sinner. At our last meeting, one week ago, I just had to tell the brethren I could not even try to preach. Surely there is no one like me. It seems I surely am deceived, and, worse yet, I have deceived the brethren. It seems I have run without being sent. I cannot tonight think of a single effort to preach that could be rightly called preaching.

It all seems as a distant dream, without any foundation, and I a poor deceived wretch, yet the Lord has wonderfully blessed me, or else I would have been taken from the earth long ago. I know that if my hope is real, and I am of that number whose names are written in the book of life, I shall yet see good days, and eat honey in the honeycomb, and drink at the fount, for when God promises a thing he does it; he never tried to do a thing, no, never. He speaks, and it is done; commands, and it stands fast.

Oct. 20.—You will see it has been quite a long time since I commenced this, and I became so disgusted with myself before that I just stopped, and may do so this time. Our three days meeting is past. We expected Elder Mayfield, of Elgin, and Elder Bond, of La Grande, Oreg. Elder Mayfield had other and older arrangements, and could not come, and Elder Bond was not well, so the three days work fell upon Elder Turnidge and me. I had been, and was still, so in the dark that I just dreaded the time. But the time came, and I tried to preach each day, and felt that it was good to be there. Surely, dear brother, when we can feel that the promises are all sure and momentarily they are ours. This must be an evidence that we have an interest in them. Surely when we get up feeling so weak and lonely it must be the good Lord is our strength, or we would stay in that weak condition. I thought we had a splendid meeting every time we met for the three days, and I was made to again hope in him who has said, I will never leave nor forsake thee. There are no words to describe the depth of the valley of darkness and despair one can get in, nor can one describe the joy and certainity of a hope revived, but it is pleasant to have one's cup filled to overflowing in the presence of their enemies, and to get a glimpse of their foundation, that it really is, and has been, the solid Rock. There are surely but few who get so terribly low and despondent as I, for there must be but very few who are so weak and sinful.

We are about as usual. My wife is no better, continues in bed, not able to be raised up even. I had her go to a hospital, and the best doctor I could get told me to take her home, for she was too weak to stand an operation, and that was all that would do her any good. This forces me again to give my case into the hands of the great Physician, to do as seemeth good in his sight.

Yours in hope,

T. E. ATTEBERRY.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., Nov. 10, 1914.

TO THE CHURCH AT BETHLEHEM, BELOVED EDITORS, AND BRETHREN EVERYWHERE:—If I could write as some do, my pen would never be idle; if I could talk as some do, my tongue would never be still; yet too much of anything may be worse than not enough, and my exile, and lack of expression, both in writing and speaking, may be for your good. Away down in my heart though there is a feeling for you that never sleeps, only as I do, and it is one of love and longing. I have never had the privilege of being useful or helpful; the best I have ever done for you is to love you in a mysterious manner; the worst I have ever done is to claim you as brethren, for I am not worthy of a place among you. But what am I to do? This world is not my home; I cast around, and about, for something on which to feed, something to satisfy the craving of soul and spirit, but all in vain. I make good resolutions, only to break them, and to find myself worse than be-

fore. Nothing that I can say, do or think improves my condition. I try to recall the pleasures once indulged in, and which were sweet to me, but they come up in shadowy forms, and I find that they perished with the using, therefore I am not of the world. So again I entreat you to bear with my weakness, to cover my sins with a mantle of love, even as he has covered yours, and to continue to number me among you, for without it the way would be very lonely. It is true that there are times when I forget that the dear Lord was ever gracious to me, and wonder why there is so much unrest. I try to remember the delight experienced when I first believed that God for Christ's sake had pardoned my sins, but the time and place seem far distant. Again, there is a calm, a blissfulness, as if I realized the full intent, purpose and power of the merciful God, and the love for him and his people swells my heart until I bring forth the royal diadem, and crown him Lord of all. It is then that I find plenty on which to feed, and which satisfies every longing; I feel that he has blotted out my iniquities, that he has forgiven my sins, that I am one of the blessed of the Lord, and I think I will never doubt, or be sorrowful again, but all of you know that it is not in man to control his thoughts or to direct his steps, so we go stumbling on, and will continue to do so until that perfect day. You have never had a trial that I have not had a similar one, never had a joy that I have not experienced, never had a brighter hope, nor a deeper despair, so where else shall I go for comfort, except to him who made it possible for us to be comforted? Who else tells of the truth and the way but our great first Teacher, and those who have been taught by him? Who loves us so unstintedly as he who gave his life for us, that because he lived we should live also? And who are so ready but the subjects of his grace to give him all the praise, and to be so willing to be counted as nothing, and less than nothing, for his sake? Brethren, beloved of the Lord, children of the King, your knowledge of the greatness of God, and of your own littleness, coupled with the precious promises of the risen Redeemer, should cause you to rejoice with joy unspeakable, and I want to be with you, to mingle my rejoicing with yours, to listen to the songs of salvation by grace, those that tell us we shall see him face to face, and be like him; those which cause the tears of penitence to flow, and our hearts to throb in unison.

I read many comforting letters in the SIGNS; letters written by those who are on high ground, and by those who believe they are yet in the miry clay. Each one fulfills its mission; each one declares the glory of God. There is nothing dreadful in being brought so low, because,

> "The more his glories strike your eyes,
> The humbler you shall lie;
> Thus, while you sink, your joys shall rise,
> Unmeasurably high."

Again, chastenings are necessary for us, and there are none worse than the withdrawal of his presence. When he is with us we can endure all things; prisons seem palaces, and even the thought of death loses its sting. So many wonderful provisions are made for his children, so much to give them strength and courage, that of a truth we can exclaim, Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty, mighty Lord. O, that all within me might bless and praise his holy name! O that I may always be able to tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love, of that love which saved a wretch like me. Saved, did I say? Grant, O God, to pardon anything in me that would appear presuming and boast-

ful, but because thou hast promised to save just such, because thou hast taught me to love and trust thee, I forget my unworthiness, and draw nigh with confidence, exclaiming, Abba, Father. Thou art God, without variableness or shadow of turning, and as thou hast spoken, so shall it come to pass.

I read of the Mt. Zion Association, then laid the paper down with emotions of mingled joy and sadness, and was much pleased that you were once more permitted to assemble yourselves to honor and glorify His holy name, and I hope that each one felt that it was good to be there. It saddened me to know that I was in the outer court, debarred from such high privileges. I remembered all the faces of those with whom I met in Virginia three years ago, the happy time I had with them, and I asked that the same blessing would attend you, and the same God watch over you, even one in your midst. And dear brother Chick, what a tower of strength he was to each one, and how we all loved him; but he has gone to his reward, has left us for only the breath of a day. You do not exactly know how favored you are in having the companionship of one another; you cannot miss the company of the brethren until separated from them, never know the loneliness of a solitary sheep in a desert land, until you have been so situated. But God has not forgotten to be gracious, and I sorrow not as those who have no hope, for I thank him every day that things are as well with me, believing that he knows very well where the stray sheep is, and that when he comes to make up his jewels not one shall be left out.

If I have written amiss, I request that you will not publish it; if it contains a single crumb that will be relished by those of like faith, I offer it in love and meekness. If I have grown in grace and knowledge it has caused me to esteem each of you better than myself, and to cause me to walk very humbly as I journey toward the goal.

When I wrote before I came to the conclusion that it would be my last attempt, but a few weeks ago there came a call for copy, and there was a call from within for me to add my mite, so I wrote all but the concluding lines. However, when I looked it over I thought it a very poor attempt, and laid it aside. To-day there is an inclination to send it, and I have yielded. With Paul, I have written according to the power which the Lord has given me, and would exhort you as he did his brethren: "Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you." "To the end that he may stablish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints."

From your unworthy sister,

MARY E. WRIGHT.

PUYALLUP, Wash., Nov. 2, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—Your editorial on "Remember thy Creator" has done me so much good that I must write to you and thank you for writing it, but perhaps I should rather thank God for his gift of yourself to the church and the inspiration given you in producing the same, for surely the hand of the Lord directed your pen when you were writing the same. My dear brother, your letter makes me feel very near to you as you bring to mind my own experience, when you say, "Indeed, brethren, if we had not our youth to look back to, the time of our first love when we first received a hope, what would become of us? But for that hope we would not have the

slightest glimmer to light us through the darkness, and would sink in despair." But, blessed be God, we have that hope an anchor of the soul, and will never forget the time nor the place when the light shone round about us above the brightness of the sun at noonday and our burden was taken from us, and we were made to rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, and have never felt the weight of that burden again. It is nearly sixty years since that event took place with your unworthy brother. At that time I felt I never could do anything but spend my days in praise to God for his great deliverance and mercy to me, but O how sadly I was mistaken. I soon found myself like the children of Israel after their passage through the Red Sea: in the wilderness of sin, and O what a miserable sinner I have been. But the apostle Paul comes to my relief when he says, "He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ," and I cannot doubt or dispute the fact that he did begin that work in this poor sinner.

Dear brother, your residence being at Leesburg also makes me feel a nearness to you. My wife was born at Prospect Hill, near the North Fork Church, where Elder Gilmore used to preach. Her mother, whose name was Frances Davis, was a member of that church. Her father's name was Benjamin Rust. The family moved from there to Ritchie County (which is now West Virginia) at the beginning of the war. My wife relates one circumstance in connection with Elder Gilmore: that he never held a service that he did not have that glorious old hymn sung beginning, "Come, thou Fount of every blessing." We are now living in Puyallup, Wash., in the northwest corner of the United States. There are a few Old School Baptists living in these parts. Elder G. E. Mayfield, whose name appears occasionally in the SIGNS, lives in northeast Oregon. Elders Hess and Barnes live in eastern Washington. Elder Shields, who lives at Leber, Wash., preaches at my house once a month, and there are a number of others whose names I cannot call now. Our membership in this country is few, but if you should ever feel inclined to visit this most favored part of the United States we would give you a royal welcome.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

J. H. McDONALD.

FORDYCE, Ark., Nov. 17, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—I wish to announce through the SIGNS that I am permanently engaged in the real estate business, and have several nice tracts of both improved and unimproved lands. Some of this land has timber on it that has never been cut, and whole tracts, and some of it has just part timbered and the balance in cultivatable lands and pastures. These tracts of land are situated within easy reach of five Old School Baptist Churches, and where there are sufficient schools, good water and generally very healthy. These lands can be purchased from $5.00 up for the unimproved lands and from $10.00 up for the improved. If there is any one desiring to change locations and come south, where the climate is milder and the winters shorter, we would like to get in correspondence with you. We believe that many of our people could better their conditions by coming and getting some of this land while it is cheap, besides we want more Old Baptists, and believe we have a home to invite you to. Any one interested will please address me, and I will give you full particulars.

In hope of eternal life through goodness and mercy alone, I am, very truly,

V. R. HARRIS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1914.

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Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
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LOVE—OBEDIENCE.

"LOVE is the fountain, whence
All true obedience flows;
The christian serves the God he loves,
And loves the God he knows."

What a vast field for thought and consideration is couched in the above verse! Often in reading such hymns we wonder how the writers must have felt when, undoubtedly, under such influence of the Holy Spirit. Preaching, praise and prayer are embraced in the songs of Zion, hence their writers were made to love God and to know his power to save. Each vessel of mercy is prepared to honor and glorify God as it hath pleased him, he working in them to will and to do. All men are not prophets nor apostles; all men are not pastors and teachers, nor are all evangelists; all men are not poets, nor have all men the gift of prayer, nor of healing, nor can all the children of God sing, but the whole body, the church, has every gift necessary to the praise and glory of God and for the edifying of the body of Christ until time is no more. These are among the spiritual blessings in heavenly places; these are the talents given by the Master of the house, and all who have them are required to use them well while He is in the far country. We know of no gift in the church which does not increase in the exercise thereof, therefore let none be buried in the earth.

Love is the fountain whence every blessing flows, and so deep is it that with all our powers we utterly fail to fathom its depth, yet what a mercy to feel it at times shed abroad in our poor, sinful hearts; yes, the very love of God. While "there is nothing impossible with God," were it not that he is "Love" we cannot conceive how he could love such rebels as we all are by nature. We often think the truth that he does not love men because they are sinners, should be emphasized. He hates sin, and cannot look upon iniquity; then how is it that he loves sinners? might be asked. In this way: He loved the fallen sons of Adam, in Christ, before the foundation of the world, and their transgression and death by sin had no effect upon his great love wherewith he loved them. Their absolute need of him, because of sin, did not increase his love for them, but caused the manifestation of his love in the gift of his Son to die in order that they might live. In the gift of Christ all other gifts were embraced, and are brought into manifestation in due time. In this explanation of why God loves sinners is presented the faithfulness of Him who promised eternal life before the world began. Not one promise has he ever broken, nor will he ever, because he cannot deny himself. Men quickened into divine life love God, because he first loved them, and with the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them. Natural love and affection are in nowise acceptable to God; all such belong to earth, and are only a part of the Adamic nature, which in every sense passes away, being of the earthy man. How foolish, then, to try to teach men, women and children

to love God and one another. "As touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you; for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." Hence the poet shows forth his love to the Father and brethren in his poetry, the minister in his ministry, the singer in his songs and the man of prayer in his prayers. Others manifest their love in assembling themselves together for the worship of God. Paul called upon his brethren to show forth their love by presenting their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto him. Paul lived just such a life himself, counting all things but dung, that he might win Christ. He coveted no man's gold and silver, but his own hands ministered unto his necessities, and died in honor to the worthy name of Jesus Christ. Other incentive than "love" to obey the righteous law of God could never be acceptable to him. Thousands in the world today are making vain attempts at obedience through fear of eternal torment, and were not this horrible punishment constantly before them there would be no thought of obedience to the law of the Lord. This slavish fear is, however, among the all things that work together for the good of them that love God, as it has a tendency to morality, making better men than they would otherwise be. Yet with all their morality there is most positively no service or worship of God by them. Often the tender minds of children are so wrought upon by the horrible picture of hell, with its lake of fire and brimstone, that many wakeful nights are spent, and if, through weariness, sleep overtakes them, the most dreadful nightmares torment them. O how different the teachings of grace, love and mercy! How comforting, how soothing, how pleasant the dreams of free grace; how refreshing the calm sleep under its influence; how peaceful the waking to behold the glory of God in the forgiveness of sins. By these things the church discerns "between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not." Then again many are endeavoring to serve the Lord in order to bring him into their debt, so that they, in their vain imaginations, can demand entrance into heaven. All such as say, We have done many wonderful works in thy name, shall be turned away with the abiding words of the great Judge, Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you. O how blessed to become as a little child —helpless, dependent upon the Lord for life, walk and being, for "in him we live, move and have our being." Still further, many who profess faith in the Giver of every good and perfect gift, claim that spiritual blessings are conditional upon the part of the saints of God, and are laboring to that end, viz., to obtain the blessings. Along this line we have sometimes wondered how a natural father would manage, with reference to laying up in store comforts and blessings for his children, if he did not know beforehand how much obedience, and by whom, it would be rendered to his will, or law, regulating the members of his family. If only a few comforts and blessings were stored and much obedience rendered, there would be a scarcity of blessings. On the other hand, if he stored many blessings and little obedience was rendered, there would be a surplus, or more blessings than needed. Would not the result be exactly the same with the heavenly Father if spiritual blessings are conditional? But, says the brother laboring for the blessings, we admit and also believe that God foreknew just how

many blessings would be needed, or necessary, for his children while here below. Now if it be true that God did foreknow exactly how many blessings would be necessary for his children, does it not follow that all spiritual blessings in heavenly places were given in Christ before the world began, and that not one son or daughter will ever be short one blessing? If this be true, every blessing flows from him because of his predestinated mercy and purpose in this direction. Hence all the obedience of the whole family can never add one blessing to the foreknown number, nor will all the disobedience of the family ever make the number one less. Therefore it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is our example in this doctrine. No man ever suffered as he did; no man ever felt the weight of sin as did he, nor did ever one of the Lord's children suffer the darkness and fear that he did, yet obedient in all things, even unto the death of the cross. All his obedience did not bring for him one more spiritual blessing than the Father had in store for him. If such were the case with him, why should any one now think that by certain obedience to the law of Christ he will receive blessings he would not otherwise receive? This doctrine of fixed blessings to and for the children of God does not in any sense license them to live as they list, nor could any one with the grace of God in the heart so live, neither could any give the slightest encouragement to crucify the Son of God afresh and trample under foot the blood of the new testament as an unholy thing. "To fear God and keep his commandments is the whole duty of man;" not for reward, but for the love he bears to the God of his salvation. "If ye love me keep my commandments;" "and his commandments are not grievous." All the law and the prophets are hinged upon "love." To deal justly, love mercy and walk humbly is to keep the law of God, and salvation for time and eternity is of him through Jesus Christ our Lord. K.

ISAIAH VII. 14–16.

"BEHOLD, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings."

Last fall, walking along a street in Harrisburg, Pa., we came in sudden contact with one of those open-air street meetings in full sway on the curb, being addressed by a young man, a common product of our present-day so-called enlightenment, who was trying to speak from the above text, and telling his hearers that it was not inspired, and that the Lord never said any such thing. He proved it by saying that such a far off event as the birth of Christ could have been no "sign" to Ahaz, for Ahaz lived and died several hundred years before the birth of the Savior, and therefore such a sign could have had no meaning for him. How many were deceived by that young man that night, or how many were stirred to go home, get their Bibles and look it up for themselves, we cannot say, but any one who does look up and read this text can but see that the inferences drawn by the youngster were glaringly false. The "sign" of the virgin and her child was not given to King Ahaz, but to the "house of David." Ahaz did not want any sign, and would not ask God for any, as is plainly said in verse twelve. Ahaz was perhaps the

wickedest king Judah ever had, and such as he are not disposed while running riot in sin to turn to the Lord for a sign. The natural, sinful man is not hungering after anything in God's power to give. Thus the Lord goes over the head of this wicked ruler and gives the sign unto the "house of David," the tribe of Judah. It is fraught with significance only to those who then, and for several centuries to come, were in faith looking and hungering for his appearing. The house of David meant particularly the tribes of Judah, for after the death of Solomon the throne of David and the succession of David's line were kept within that tribe, since ten tribes seceded from the authority of Solomon's son, Rehoboam, and went off under the leadership of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, and were henceforth styled "Israel." Judah stood firm and faithful to the kingship of Rehoboam, Solomon's son, the lawful and rightful heir to the Davidic throne. The credit of this steadfastness belongs not to Judah, for it was the word of the Lord that kept her in her place, since God had said, "And unto his [Solomon's] son will I give one tribe, that David my servant may have a light alway before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen me to put my name there." Ten under Jeroboam and one under Rehoboam make eleven, but there were twelve tribes of Israel at the first, were there not? which one have we not accounted for? It is little Benjamin. As Judah took Benjamin in his care and keeping when they went down to Egypt to bring corn, (Genesis xliii.) it would seem that Judah exercised a sort of watchcare over him ever afterward, for in the general defection under Jeroboam Benjamin is annexed to Judah under fidelity to Rehoboam: "When Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin." There is this wonderful distinction to be kept in mind between the rival kingdoms of Israel and Judah following upon the death of Solomon and up until the going into the Babylonian captivity; that whereas the crown in Israel shifted about from one family to another, never staying in any one family for very long, the crown in Judah continued evermore in one family (David's) with but very slight interruptions. The reason of this was not that the kings of Judah were better than those of Israel, but Judah had the blessing in the cluster which Israel did not. The kings of Judah were the ancestors of Jesus, whose right it was, when he should come, to sit upon David's throne. Thus the providence of God continually watched over the throne of Judah and kept the line of succession intact, while no such special care was exercised toward the throne of Israel, so that the crown among those ten tribes was tossed about as though it were subject to their ever-changing moods. This split between Judah and Israel lasted up until the captivity of Nebuchadnezzar. After the seventy years in Babylon, and the restoration to their own land under Cyrus, we do not read of this division being continued. It may take some such calamity as that to bring about a healing of the present divisions of Old School Baptists: an obliteration of personal and small differences by the overshadowing of some gigantic tribulation; who knows? After the coming out of Babylon with Zerubbabel they were first a dependency of the Persian empire, then of the Grecian, then of the Roman, but each of these monarchies allowed the Jews the privilege of being governed by men from among themselves, and this continued down to

the death of Herod, in the lifetime of Jesus, thus fulfilling Genesis xlix. 10: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh [the securely prosperous Christ] come." Thus the sign spoken of in Isaiah vii. 14, was to the Davidic succession, and had no reference at all to wicked King Ahaz. "A virgin shall conceive, and bear a son." Had Judah still been an independent nationality at the time of Jesus' birth Joseph would have had a clear right to sit upon the throne of David. Jesus was both legally and after the flesh descended from David. According to the genealogy which Luke gives, Mary was a descendant of Nathan, David's son. According to Matthew, Joseph was a descendant of Solomon. To be sure, Jesus was not Joseph's natural son, but according to Jewish law he was none the less Joseph's legal heir, for he was the lawful son of Joseph's lawful wife, conceived while she was legally espoused to him. Be it remembered that by Jewish law a child did not have to be a man's natural child in order to be that one's lawful heir. According to the law of Moses, there were cases where a man would raise up seed unto his brother, would build up his brother's house. The Holy Ghost built up Joseph's house. This child's name is to be called Jesus, Jehovah-Savior, or Immanuel, which means, "God with us." This child of virgin birth, conceived by the Holy Ghost, is not alone God, nor yet alone man, but both God and man. "The tabernacle of God is with men." The fullness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily. The Word made flesh. Butter and honey are the sustenance of this child, to the end that he shall know to choose the good and refuse the evil. Looking at the language literally, it might signify that Jesus was born and reared in frugality, that he led a simple life, poor and lowly. Though King of kings and Lord of lords, the luxury and dazzle, pomp and show that usually attend the courts of monarchs, were alien to him. His glory, power, and his kingdom spiritual, real and eternal, are too fine and excellent for the gross, thickened perception of natural men. But we will have to look at the butter and honey other than literally to know how they enabled him to choose the good and refuse the evil. Simply living a plain, frugal life and eating plain diet never yet taught one the difference between good and evil. It is evident that couched in this butter and honey are deeper and more wonderful things than appear on the surface. The wicked and hypocrite shall not see the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter. So, from the written word of God, we know that the honey and butter are things that the unquickened, unrepentant wicked shall never even see, let alone eat. It forms the delectable food of the righteous. "I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey: I have drunk my wine with my milk," says the bridegroom, Jesus, the one of whom David speaks: "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace." God made Jacob suck honey out of the flinty rock, and fed him with "butter of kine, and milk of sheep." Prominently among the provisions brought to David when he pitched his camp in Gilead were butter and honey. Job says that in his youth he washed his steps with butter. Butter was the cleansing of his way. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word." This does not mean that a young man by reading the Bible and heeding it can cleanse his way. It means that one young in

grace who cannot but heed the word ingrafted in his soul does cleanse his way. The entering of the Word into our lives renews our youth as the eagle's, releases from the burden of sin and condemnation, anchoring us unto the "inheritance incorruptible" by a lively hope. "Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." The entering of the Word cleanses the way of the spiritually young. The road, then, seems easy, the path firm and good. Thus wisdom unto salvation, which is the matter revealed in the "young man" by the living Word, is the "butter" that cleanses the way, washes the steps. Now as to the "honey," the eyes of Jonathan were enlightened when he ate of the honey from the end of the rod, and Psalms xix. says, The commandment of the Lord enlightens the eyes. As the eating of honey, so is the knowledge of wisdom unto the soul. It is good not to eat honey when one is seeking to glorify himself, lest he have to vomit it. (See Proverbs xxv.) Self aggrandizement and the knowledge of divine wisdom will not mix any more than oil and water. This is why a truly called minister of the gospel cannot be puffed up. He must have the knowledge of wisdom in order to preach (he is not a preacher if he has it not), and this prevents his using his gift to his own ends. As sure as he tried to do so, and succeeded, he would be compelled to vomit the "honey" and lose his gift. So it seems the butter and honey are wisdom and knowledge. These were the sustenance of Immanuel. He was filled with the knowledge and wisdom of the Highest. "Wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation." "Wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee," said the Lord to Solomon, and so, in a figure, to Christ, the spiritual Solomon. The Preacher says, "My heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge."—Eccl. i. 16. "God giveth to a man that is good in his sight [Jesus], wisdom, and knowledge." The people, astonished at the speech of Jesus, asked, "Whence hath this man this wisdom?" Luke tells that "The child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him." And further, "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." Thus it would seem not only that Jesus was filled with knowledge and wisdom, but that there was an increase or growth in these things such as would be signified by his eating the butter and honey, since eating is a process of nature in attaining growth and development. This knowledge and wisdom were his, that he should know to choose the good and refuse the evil. Not that he should know the difference between good and evil, not that he should know to tell the truth and not to lie, to love and not to hate, to think good thoughts and not bad ones. His very divine nature made it impossible for him to sin, either in thought, imaginings or deeds. But the wisdom and knowledge given him of the Father enabled him to choose between the sheep and the goats, between the elect and the wicked, between those that were in him from the foundation of the world and those who were not. It is in this sense that the butter and honey eaten by him, the knowledge and wisdom in which he grew and increased, enabled him to make manifest and effective the covenant of election sealed by the Father from the beginning, calling out and apart from the world the church, and saving it with an everlasting salvation. When we speak of the elect as "good," and of the nonelect as "evil," we do not

mean for a moment that there was any difference in them by nature. In Adam they are all alike wicked. But the elect had a standing in Christ before the foundation of the world that the wicked never had, and in that they were thus associated in the covenant in him, they were good in the sight of the Father for Christ's sake. Their decreed connection and relationship with Christ eternally was all the goodness the elect had, otherwise, in Adam they were vile and corrupt as any that are never saved. He is the good Shepherd, he knew and knows his sheep, calls them by name and they follow him. There is no danger of his passing by even the least of the sheep. No need to sing, "Pass me not, O gentle Savior." To those on his left hand, he says, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Not the slightest danger that any of the sheep will ever hear those words banishing them from the presence of God. This separation of the wheat from the chaff, of the precious from the vile, is accomplished through the knowledge and wisdom of the Highest, as it abode in the Immanuel, is because he ate "butter and honey." The last words of our text fix the date as to when this ability shall be Immanuel's to choose the good and refuse the evil: "The land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings." At the time this sign was given unto Judah, Syria and Israel had entered into a conspiracy to get the throne away from the Davidic family. For this reason, if for no other, Judah abhorred both Syria and Israel. But before the child (Immanuel) shall know to choose the good and refuse the evil the kingdoms of both Israel and Syria shall cease. This was literally fulfilled, for both Syria and Israel lost their separate nationality and became dependencies, first of Persia, then of Greece, then of Rome. Perhaps it will be said that this was also true of Judah, and so it was, but all the time that Judah was a tributary of each of the world powers in its turn each succeeding monarch appointed his governors of Judea from the tribe of Judah. To Syria and Israel were shown no such distinction. These governors were not of the Davidic line, it is true, but they were Judeans and that was something.

Written at the request of brother A. L. Holden, of Durham, N. C.

L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Sallie A. Marvel, wife of Wm. S. Marvel, died at her home in the village of Delmar, Del., Oct. 25th, 1914, of Bright's disease, aged 70 years and 3 days. She was born, reared, married, raised a large family, always lived and finally departed this life in Sussex Co., Del., all within a few miles of her birthplace. She was married to brother Marvel a little over forty-eight years ago, in the month of April, 1866. She was the mother of ten children, eight of whom survive: Mrs. Ida Peters, of Philadelphia, Pa.; Mrs. Laura Renniger, Mrs. Agnes Matthews and Wm. S. Marvel, Jr., of Delmar, Del.; Mrs. Clara Mahoney, of Darby, Pa.; Mrs. Fannie Cubbage, wife of Elder B. E. Cubbage, of Wyoming, Del.; Mrs. Blanche Jefferson, of Chestertown, Md., and Lester Marvel, of Waycross, Ga. Mrs. Emily Ker, wife of Elder H. C. Ker, of Middletown, N. Y., died in May last, and one died in infancy. Sister Marvel was baptized by Elder E. Rittenhouse, and became a member of the church at Little Creek, in this county, about thirty-four years ago, and continued a faithful and devoted member of the same until called to the church triumphant, to enter into the full enjoyment of the blessed and glorious inheritance for which she hoped. She was steadfast and unwavering in her faith, and though not one to talk much of her experience and hope, she lived her faith, and we are well assured that the King has said to her "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." She has gone to her reward, to dwell forever in the arms of the heavenly Lover.

The mortal remains, after a funeral service at the home, conducted by the writer, were on the 28th borne to the grave by her six sons-in-law: Elder H. C. Ker, H. Renniger, C. Mahoney, Elder B. E. Cub-

bage, C. Matthews and N. Jefferson, and there committed to the earth in the hope of the resurrection of the dead.

Our dear brother Marvel is left in his old age very lonely and sad, for truly their lives blended together in loving companionship, stronger as the years passed by, and he feels sorely the loss of a devoted wife, and the children a devoted mother, but they have this to their comfort: that they are not left in their sorrow without hope; they believe Jesus died and rose again and now reigns in glory, and that when he shall appear (at his second coming, without sin unto salvation) she shall also appear with him. May this blessed expectation comfort them in their affliction. I realize a personal loss in this dispensation, as during the twenty-five years of my pastorate here sister Marvel had been a dear friend and helper.

ALSO,

Mrs. Miranda S. Plummer departed this life at her late residence in Laurel, Sussex Co., Del., on Sunday, Oct. 25th, 1914, from ailments incident to old age. She had just entered the 86th year of her age. She was the widow of Hudson D. Plummer, who preceded her to the grave several years. They both were members of the Broad Creek Old School Baptist Church, having been baptized in early life, and both were alike faithful, showing their faith by their works. Sister Plummer was uncompromising in all that pertained to the doctrine of the Bible and the order of the house of God. She loved the brethren, and was never happier than when entertaining them in her home; her door was always open to them, and a hearty welcome always awaited their coming. I have been pastor of the Broad Creek Church more than twenty-five years, and always found her "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." She leaves two sons and five daughters, several grandchildren, beside other relatives, and the church, to mourn, but not as those who have no hope.

Funeral services were held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse at Broad Creek on Tuesday, 27th, at the close of which the mortal remains were laid beside her husband, in the cemetery near by, to await the coming of the blessed Lord the second time without sin unto salvation.

ALSO,

Samuel W. Kenny departed this life at his late home in Wicomico Co., Md., Oct. 5th, 1914. Brother Kenny was an invalid for the last six or seven years, suffering more than he could tell, from chronic rheumatism, by which he was drawn almost double, the disease affecting his spine; but he bore all his suffering in the most humble manner, submissive to the will of his divine Master, even esteeming it a privilege to suffer for his sake. The disease that was the cause of death was dysentery, from which he suffered about ten days, though all that the doctor and the loving hands of wife and daughters could do was done for him; the time of his departure was at hand, Jesus called and the dear saint must go. He was born March 22nd, 1859, and married to Martha Calloway May 31st, 1879. Besides the widow he is survived by seven children, five daughters and two sons, three grandchildren, mother, two brothers and two sisters, but in the midst of their sorrow they have the assurance that all is well with him, that he has passed over to the other shore to be forever with the Lord. I had the privilege of baptizing brother Kenny, and also his wife, about twenty-three years ago, and he lived a consistent and faithful member of the Little Creek Church to the day of his death. I never knew one who seemed to live nearer to his God. Like Enoch, I feel we can say "he walked with God." Could I only have such evidence that I am a child of God as I saw in him, I think my gloomy doubts would remove and my dark forebodings be chased away as the gloomy shades of night before the rising dawn, but "Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar."

The funeral service was held at his home on the 7th, after which we committed the body to its last resting-place, there to lie until God shall call it hence at the last trump unto a glorious resurrection, changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of the risen and exalted Savior. May the dear bereaved ones be enabled to take comfort in this hope.

Thus within the space of three weeks we have been called to the sorrowful duty of paying the last tribute to three most excellent and devoted members of the churches I serve as pastor. My prayer to God is that he will build the waste places and yet cause the desert to be a fruitful field.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., Nov. 24, 1914.

Miss Kate V. Beebe, who for many years was a faithful teacher in the Warwick schools, died on Sunday, July 19th, 1914, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Rounsavell, with whom she had been living for the past year. She had been ill since last fall, and for the past three months had been confined to her bed, suffering from a complication of diseases. Miss Beebe was born in Middletown, N. Y., Sept. 19th, 1849, a daughter of the late Elder Wm. L. Beebe and Ellen Welsh. Her early days were spent in Georgia, and in the schools of that state she began her career as a teacher at the age of sixteen years. She afterwards taught in various places in this country, and for a short time in Canada, before coming to this village in 1889, where she remained for twenty-one years, resigning in 1910 because of ill health. Miss Beebe was a modest little woman, whose character will long be remembered by her many surviving pupils. Her ideals as a teacher were high; not for herself, but for those for whom her untiring efforts

were given. She loved and took a personal interest in all her pupils. She lived to help them do well in life, and followed them so long as she could after they passed out of her room. Whenever a pupil in after years did well she would note it, pass compliments and congratulations and find great satisfaction in the comment: "That is one of my boys (or girls), and I used to like him so much; I am sure he will do well." She always tried to inspire her pupils with high ideals and pure ambitions. She was ever a faithful guide for the children. After leaving this village she lived with her sisters in Ridgetown and Muirkirk, Ontario. Last August she returned to this village, and since that time had made her home with Mrs. Rounsavell. She is survived by one sister, Mrs. James C. Macdonald, of Ridgetown, Ontario; also by three haff-sisters: Mrs. Samuel Macdonald, of Fernie, B. C., Mrs. John W. Clark, of Muirkirk, Ontario, and Mrs. S. B. Paxson, of Leesburg, Va.

The funeral services were held at the late residence, in charge of Elder H. C. Ker. Interment was in the cemetery at New Vernon, N. Y.

[THE above is a clipping from one of the Warwick papers, and speaks well of sister "Kate," by which name she was familiarly known, yet it would be hard to speak of all her good and noble qualities. She was one of the most unselfish creatures of the Lord's hand, ever striving in thought, word and deed to assist others and to make them happy. Dec. 7th, 1872, she was baptized by her father, Elder Wm. L. Beebe, in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church, and for some years had been a faithful member of the Warwick Church, of which her father was pastor many years. She was strong in the faith, and loved the doctrine of grace in its purity, and all who knew her loved her for her steadfastness to her convictions and her mild and gentle disposition. During her last illness she was tenderly and lovingly ministered to by our dear sister Rounsavell, whose house was her home and in which she died. The funeral services were held in the Warwick Old School Baptist meetinghouse and were largely attended. The writer tried to speak to the comfort of those present, using the words, "saved by grace," which had been much in her mind during her last days. She was buried by the side of her father in the New Vernon Cemetery. We all miss her beyond expression, but know for her to die was gain. May the Lord reconcile us all to his will.—K.]

W. L. Banks was born to Joseph and Mary Banks Jan. 30th, 1832. His parents were Methodists, and he joined that denomination when young, but "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform," and he was led out from his kindred and friends by the same God that led Abraham and all those chosen in Christ before the world was. He was a quiet, peaceable, kind and obedient boy. He and some boy friends went one night to the home of Jesse Hubbard to hear a "Hardshell" preach, and there met the latter's daughter, Miss M. E. Hubbard, whom he married October 23rd, 1859. He enlisted in the Confederate army under Captain Mashborn, Company C, 53rd Georgia Regiment, May 1st, 1862. He and grandmother joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Raimah, June 9th, 1867, and were baptized by Elder Johnson Pate, who also officiated at their wedding. He was chosen deacon April 12th, 1873, and was to have been ordained May 9th, but for some reason not stated in the minutes it was deferred, and he was ordained April 10th, 1875, by Elders E. Webb (the name looks like Webb) and R. M. Pate. Three boys and eight girls were born to them; two daughters died in infancy and the oldest son about the age of twenty. Two sons and three daughters lived to see him laid away, namely: Mrs. N. E. Jackson, Mrs. L. A. Caldwell, Mrs. Bulah Banks, Jesse W. and Stephen S. Banks. Two of these are members of the Primitive Baptist Church, and we believe the others have a sweet hope of meeting each other and those gone before on that bright and happy shore to part no more. Grandpa talked, believed and lived honesty; was a firm believer in the doctrine, faith and practice of Christ and him crucified and salvation by grace, as taught by Christ and the apostles. He was persecuted and many hard things were said of him on account of his firmness, and most of it was from those we hope are children of God. His home was a pleasant place to be at, and it was a pleasure to have his brethren make it their home when they came to meeting or were traveling. I never knew him to miss being at meeting unless providentially hindered. He loved the church and enjoyed going to meetings and associations where the truth was preached in its purity. He suffered a great deal several months before his death, and the church held her meetings at his home a few times when he was unable to be out. He died Sept. 22nd, 1911, and was buried the next day in the Banks burying-ground, near his home. Deacon A. M. Keith and brother J. W. Park, of Newnan, Ga., conducted the funeral service, which was comforting to the bereaved ones. His widow, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, one brother, one sister and a host of relatives and friends mourn their loss, but our loss is his eternal gain. God had worked out his righteous will with him on earth, and called him home to fill the place Christ went to prepare for him. He felt that all would be well with him after death. How sweet to commend loved ones to God's keeping and fall sweetly asleep in Jesus' arms, to awake where there is no death, sorrow nor parting, but one beautiful everlasting day of happiness and love near Jesus, our blessed Redeemer, whose praise we hope to sing through all eternity. He was raised in Fayette County, and

lived near his boyhood home nearly all his life. As our earthly ties are loosed on earth and bound in heaven they draw our minds and love away from earth to heaven. Grandma is very lonely, and we would comfort her if we could, but will say to all, God knows best, and what he does is right. He has promised to comfort the needy, lonely and sorrowing ones who put their trust in him.

His grandson, GEO. W. JACKSON.

FAYETTEVILLE, Ga.

THE little Bethlehem Church, near Manassas, Va., is called to mourn the death of a dear and faithful member, brother **George W. Johnson,** born Oct. 22nd, 1845, died August 28th, 1914. He was the son of Col. Joseph Johnson and Emily Wheatley, and was born and raised near his late home. He was baptized by Elder J. N. Badger Dec. 7th, 1887, uniting with the Bethlehem Church, where he remained a consistent and faithful member to the end of his life. Truly a good man has fallen asleep, and how sweet is that "haven of rest." He had been in failing health and suffered much for several years; in fact, all through his life he was never well. As son, husband, father and brother he was faithful in all his duties; faithful to his church as deacon, true in his watchcare over his pastor, and ever untiring in his devotion to the cause he loved. I have felt to envy him that zeal and warmth he manifested through all his walks of life. Amid trials and afflictions (and they were many) he kept the faith, and quietly sank down in the arms of his blessed Savior. He leaves a loving, devoted companion, three sons, two daughters, one brother and two sisters, with many relatives and friends, besides this church, all feeling his place cannot be filled. Our loss is great, but God is just. My pen fails to note the great worth and excellent qualities of our departed brother. May He who gave, who has also taken away, reconcile and sustain with great grace all the bereaved and comfort his lonely companion.

Elder Vaughn preached the funeral sermon to a large gathering, after which he was laid in the cemetery near his home. M. C. BADGER.

Samantha V. Knight McGee, daughter of Thurston Knight, was born near Pleasureville, Ky., May 29th, 1843, and in early life came with her father's family to Missouri, and located in Clay County. January 24th, 1865, she was married to J. C. Elliott, with whom she lived a happy, devoted life. Five sons were born to them, of whom four are living, viz.: James K., of Snyder, Okla., Clifton, Shelby and Clay, of Clinton Co., Mo. With her husband she united with the Old School Baptist Church called Pleasant Hill, and truly she adorned her profession by an orderly walk and godly conversation. Her husband died March 13th, 1910, and three years later she was again married, to J. W. McGee, of St. Joseph, Mo., with whom she lived a consecrated christian life until her death, which occurred Sept. 14th, 1914, aged 71 years, 3 months and 18 days. She was a great sufferer the last few months of her life, but was perfectly resigned and patient, and sweetly confided her trust in Him whom she believed would never forsake her. Her care and thought concerning the household of faith were beautiful indeed, and she often expressed the desire that they might be comforted and sustained by the hope that was so precious to her. She leaves, beside her husband and children, four sisters and many relatives and friends to mourn her departure.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder W. T. Brown, of Richmond, Mo., and her remains were laid to rest in the Pleasant Hill Cemetery (adjoining the church of which she was a member) to await the resurrection, when she shall arise by the power of Him who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, and so shall ever be with the Lord. NELIA M. STARTZMAN.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at his residence, 52 Forest Ave., St. Thomas, Ontario, Canada, Nov. 7th, 1914, Archie D. Leitch and Miss Minnie Campbell, both of Dunwich, Ontario.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Nelia M. Startzman, Mo., $1.00; John Oliver, Va., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE next quarterly meeting of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada will be held at Duart, on the third Sunday, and Saturday before, in January, having been changed from the first Sunday in February to the above named date.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Liberty Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, of Los Angeles, Cal., meets every first and third Sunday in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., at 42nd and Moneta Ave., and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal.

W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor.

C. B. RICE, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 82. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1914. NO. 24.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., Sept. 17, 1914.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—Having a desire always to share the joy which I receive through the Comforter, which Christ, our Savior, promised to send, and which, if my poor sinful heart deceives me not, I have many times felt, I desire to relieve the burden of my mind, which impresses me to write on the final perseverance of the saints, who were predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ according to the good pleasure of his will, and called with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which he purposed in himself before the world was, who are the elect according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father, unto whom he has manifested his power and glory in these latter times by his Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord, which he has freely bestowed upon us, changing us from the dead and lifeless beings we were by nature into lively stones which are builded together and cemented with love, a spiritual house which now possesses those precious jewels embraced in the fullness of God's love, showing forth the indwelling Spirit of our meek and lowly Jesus by manifesting the fruits which are the proofmarks by which they are known; for by their fruits ye shall know them, and against such there is no law, for they have been redeemed from under the curse of the law, which is death, and have been made alive by the precious blood of Christ, and now are we in him who of God is made unto us righteousness, sanctification and redemption. No maybe about it, but a positive, Are in him, and this is God's work, not man's. He is the head and they are the body, members in particular, and God placed each one in the body as it pleased him. Then will he set some of them in the wrong place, or, as some say, let some of them fall away and be lost, when he gave his darling only begotten Son for them? No, O no, that would be absurd, for Christ's body would be incomplete if the least member was lacking; but it is not, and now they are new creatures, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God had before ordained that they should walk in them. Then where is our boasted strength? Where is our honor and glory? We never had any coming to us, even if we could live a righteous

and holy life, for thine is the power and the glory, both now and forever, but ours is the joy. This is the people with whom God made the new covenant, the house of Israel and the house of Judah, recorded in Ezekiel and in Heb. viii. 8, 9. For, finding fault with them, he saith, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord." The first covenant being a temporal covenant, for the government of a temporal people, promising only temporal blessings, shows it to be a type of the everlasting covenant, as Adam was a type of Christ. The first law was of the earth earthy, but it was a shadow of good things to come, just as the children of Israel were a type of the bride, the Lamb's wife, for had they been the true children of God Christ would not have called some of them the children of the devil, as in John viii. 44, and there would have been no place for the Gentiles to come in, for God has only one family, but his promises are sure to all the seed, or family, as the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, God knoweth them that are his. This new covenant is a spiritual covenant, and is for the government of spiritual Israel, or the children of the living God, and is different, inasmuch as it is written in the fleshly tables of the heart instead of on tables of stone, and is put in the mind so that they need no teacher, for they all shall know Him, from the least to the greatest. "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Yet in the face of these facts, some claim that Christ is wooing and beseeching his children to turn to him and seek salvation, but some of them will not come. Now does not this limit God's knowledge? for why would he woo them if he knew they would not come? No, their names are written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. Yea, they are engraven in his hands, and are kept by the power of God through faith, ready to be revealed in the last time. The Jews denied that Jesus was the Son of God, and rejected him as the Savior, but were very zealous in keeping their law, supposing their salvation depended upon keeping the law, and they were children of Israel; but by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight. He came unto his own, and his own received him not, but as many as did receive him to them gave he power to become the sons of God. Did he give them power to become sons of God because they received him, or was it because he gave them power to become sons of God that they received him? Rom. viii. 14: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." These are the ones who received him. John i. 13: "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." So we see they were already children of God before they received Christ. Life always precedes action, and a birth is simply being delivered from darkness and concealment, or bondage, into light and liberty, so we must conclude that the child was alive before it was born. Now in regard to those who fall away and cease from the outward form of worship, I will quote Heb. x. 38, 39: "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of

them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." 1 John ii. 19: "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us," for if they had been of us they no doubt would have continued with us. By their fruit ye shall know them; either make the tree good, and the fruit will be good, or else make it corrupt and the fruit will be corrupt, for a good tree cannot bear corrupt fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bear good fruit; and "they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place." Now Jesus, speaking to the twelve, said, "But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him," for Jesus, answering them, said, "Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" John xiii. 18–21: "I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. * * * When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me." Yes, positively "shall," not may. Can we realize how we would feel going about in company with a man whom we knew was to betray us to death? Could we calmly go about with him doing good to him? But he was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, that we through his death might have eternal life. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." It seems plain to me that these are the same certain characters spoken of in Jude who crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Now the lesson I get from this, is, we should not put our trust in man, for cursed is man that trusteth in man, or maketh flesh his arm. Also Jer. ix. 4: Take ye heed every one of his neighbor, and trust ye not in any brother; that is, we should always have a thus saith the Lord for everything we receive as law or gospel, and take no man's theory unless it is backed by the Scripture, the man of our counsel. The elect are the redeemed of the Lord, the body of Christ, a complete body, without one member lacking or one too many, for he is the head and they are his body, and members in particular, and God hath placed each one in the body as it hath pleased him. They are those whom Christ came to redeem, and, says Christ, Thine they were, and thou gavest them me. Is not this sufficient assurance that not one, even the weakest, will be lost eternally? "Then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him." He is faithful in all his promises, in chastisement as well as in blessings. The characters under consideration are those who are born of God, whether they are Jews or Greeks, for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. Lo, I come, in the

volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God. Who can dispute this assertion? Does not Christ teach both by precept and example that he came to do the will of his Father? John vi. 38: "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Now God's will must be his pleasure, and he has said he declared the end from the beginning, and that he would do all his pleasure. Christ says, All that the Father giveth me shall come to me (not may come, but shall come), and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. "And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." The Jews murmured at him, and said, "Is not this Jesus, the Son of Joseph whose father and mother we know?" Then Jesus said, "Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." This is surely enough proof that the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, God knoweth them that are his. The question is, Was the blood of Christ efficacious? Surely it was. The whole debt was paid, and if it did not free all that were lost, it did not free any; but when he cried, "It is finished," he surely secured eternal salvation for every one that the Father gave him, and that is the whole body of Christ. But, say some, we must do our part. How can a dead man exercise any of the senses given to him? The dead know not anything; neither can those dead to spiritual things know anything spiritually, for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. It would be just as easy for a dead man to raise himself to life, a blind man to open his blind eyes or a deaf man to unstop his deaf ears. Yes, if the Ethiopian could change his skin, or the leopard his spots, then might they that are accustomed to do evil learn to do well, for man in his best estate is less than nothing and vanity. Can it be possible that such a poor, helpless creature as this could aid in his own, or any one else's salvation from total depravity to a holy and righteous condition? What then says Paul in Rom. iii. 9–12? "Are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin: as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; their is none that doeth good, no, not one." Then passing on to the eighteenth verse: "There is no fear of God before their eyes." These are the Jews, the children of Israel, and the type of the children of the living God. Then where is our boasting? It is excluded, and that by the gift of eternal life, for the Lord is God, and beside him there is no Savior; he is the head and foundation of all wisdom and power. The man who lays his plans and works to them, and accomplishes his aims, is counted a wise man; but the farmer who acts without any plans is sure to make a failure, while

he who is wise, plans what crops will pay best, and in proportion to his wisdom he succeeds. Every one of a sound mind has some aim in life, some object to attain; in fact, we are all predestinarians without knowledge sufficient to accomplish all our plans. Then dare we claim that God, who is all-wise, acts with less wisdom than man, whose wisdom is foolishness to God? God forbid. Can we, dare we, suppose that in the great work of salvation in the giving his precious and only begotten Son to die for the redemption of his people that he had no fixed or foreknown purpose to which he was working? We cannot, we dare not, harbor the blasphemous thought, yet this is the conclusion of the Arminian world, and when pressed for an explanation they take refuge in conditional decrees and the idea of God being a changeable being, implying a doubtful mind concerning his children, when he says, I am God, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. Could we trust in a God who had not the end of our destination fixed from the beginning, with wisdom and power sufficient to accomplish all his plans? No, we could have no anchor to our soul which we could feel was both sure and steadfast, reaching to that within the vail, whither Christ hath for us entered. One of the writers said our names were written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world; now how could this be if he has to wait to see what we will do, if it is as one told me a short time ago? She said Jesus had gone and prepared a place for her, and if she was faithful to the end she would occupy it, but if not, then some one else would occupy it. We have a very comforting advantage over the Arminians, for we are not left in doubt on this point. 2 Tim. i. 9: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Eph. iii. 11: "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." It was God's purpose to save some of every nation, people and tongue; those whom he predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, (no chance about it,) he redeemed by the blood of his dear Son. Did he do it? Most assuredly, and our faith and hope are in God and his dear Son, our Savior. In this certainty of the redemption of all for whom Christ died lies the happiness of his people. Acts ii. 23: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." There is the eternal purpose of God carried out, thus securing heaven and immortal glory for his children. What a glorious thought; how this causes us to shout praises to his matchless name. O wondrous love, who can fathom it? No wonder praise sits silent on our tongues when we try to fathom the depths of God's unbounded love and mercy. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. A perfect Savior, and a perfect salvation. Perfect from beginning to end, and if we stop short of ascribing unconditional absolute efficacy of the atonement we raze the foundation of all of heaven's purposes, promises and designs. What is our hope? Paul says, Titus ii. 13, 14, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus

Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Did he do it? We find the answer in Gal. iii. 13: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." But, she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. This is God's will and purpose, will he accomplish it? Does this mean eternal salvation, or just ability to save provided the people will do their part? Eph. v. 25-27: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." He says of his church, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." With God there is neither variableness nor shadow of turning, and what his soul desireth even that he doeth. He shall see the travail of his soul and be satisfied. He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and it is sure and certain that all the ransomed of the Lord shall return to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. O poor sinsick soul, can you not remember when you went sighing all the day, and your nights were spent in weeping? You felt there was no help or hope for you, for you had exhausted all your strength in trying to live in an acceptable way, and found the more you strove the worse you got, until you had at last given up in utter despair, and now you were only waiting, expecting to be banished, but still all the time calling on the Lord for mercy. O how you loved him; and was he not bringing you by a way you knew not, leading you in paths you had not known? Yes, drawing you with those cords of love which know no failure. Where were all your good works on which you had depended so much? They had become as filthy rags, and you a poor helpless beggar, with your sins weighing you down to the very gates of hell, and when you had given up all for lost, in an unexpected way and moment that peace that floweth like a river flowed over you, washing all your sins away. Then how you did rejoice, and all creation seemed to be praising God. Then it was we came to Zion, the city of our solemnities, with songs and everlasting joy upon our heads; then sorrow and sighing did flee away. O precious Savior, our resurrection and our life, he is now the chiefest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely.

I want to thank the dear editors for sending me the SIGNS free, for I do enjoy reading it much. It is like a cool spring in a desert land. I wish I could write to the comfort of the only people I love like the other writers who write for the SIGNS, but my writing seems dry and lifeless, just like I am, but I do love you all.

A poor old sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

DAVIS BURCH.

MARK V. 19.

"Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."

I have felt for some years that I would be glad to leave on record some things which I sometimes hope have been the Lord's dealings with me. I will say that I cannot recall the time when I did not believe that the Lord was all-wise and all-powerful, and that he knew the end from the beginning, so it is not hard for me to believe in the predestination of all things. From my earliest recollection I had serious thoughts concerning my future state. It seemed to me I fully realized that if I were to die in my sinful condition I would be forever debarred from the presence of the Lord, and from all that is good. When any one would die, or was sick in the neighborhood, this would also give me great distress of mind. Of course when I was being raised I had playmates, as most boys have, and we would pass a great deal of our time playing games, and it often seemed to me that if they had been so minded they could have easily detected the trouble I was in. Often when we would be through and an opportunity would present itself I would resort to some lonely place, there to weep and mourn on account of the guilty distance that I seemed to be from the Lord. I will say just here that I was raised under the Arminian system, and have been surrounded by Arminianism all my life. I have heard three Old Baptist sermons preached during my natural life, which is sixty-five years. It has now been twenty-five years since I heard the last one. At the age of fifteen years there was a Missionary Baptist meeting going on near our place, and I was told that it was my duty to repent of my sins, join the church and obey the Lord in his holy commandments, and all would be well with me, so when they made a way for the reception of members I offered myself, and I think five others followed. They asked us if we believed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God; we told them we did. This was all the evidence they required of us. They took us to the creek and baptized us, but I found no relief in this. After my baptism I felt ashamed to see any one, even my own folks. I felt that I had mocked God, and had even done despite to the Spirit of grace, and labored for quite awhile under the delusion that I had sinned against the Holy Ghost. O the deep anguish of soul no tongue can ever tell, nor pen describe. In my eighteenth year I became acquainted with a lovely girl, and she promised to be my companion through life, which promise she has faithfully kept until this day. In the course of time there was a darling babe born to us, which I thought was the most lovable child that I had ever seen. She was the joy of my heart. She was spoken of by our neighbors as being peculiar, and that we would not raise her. At the age of about eight months it pleased the Lord to take her from our fond embrace. This seemed to be more than I could bear. I felt that all was well with her, but the thought that I never would be permitted to meet her in the future seemed to me more than I could endure. I had been trying to do something all my life which would bring God under obligation to save me, but here I found that all my means were exhausted. I felt that I had come to the end of the earth, and that nothing but the mercy of God could ever reach my case, and felt that I was justly condemned. I threw myself across the bed, and when I came to myself and was turning from off my pillow everything I saw seemed to be praising God, my bur-

den was gone, and I felt light and free. I walked out into the yard, and all nature seemed to be praising God; the fields and hills were praising him, and the trees were clapping their glad hands. I remained in this peaceful state of mind for about two months. When I would be going about in the neighborhood and be about to meet some one I would say to myself, When I come where they are they certainly will be praising God. At the expiration of this time my way did not seem so bright, and gradually grew darker until I was led far into the wilderness. Always at a time unexpected by me light has sprung up in my soul. Then I gladly remember the promise that they that wait upon the Lord shall mount up with wings as eagles.

I have been reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES about eighteen months, and must say that I have received a great deal of comfort from it. I never received one number without reading it through several times, for this is all the preaching I get. I have learned to love many of its able contributors. It seems hard for me to give up Elder Chick. I never saw his face, but I certainly did love this great and gifted man of God, and his writings have been feasts to my soul. I have never read anything from his pen that I dissented from in the least. Let us all bow in humble submission to the will of God. I have often wondered why my lot has been cast thus. There is no one in all my acquaintance that I know anything of who is of the Old School Baptist faith, and if it had not been for the sustaining grace of God I should have long ago been swallowed up.

I submit this to your judgment, to use any or all of it as you may think best. If it is published, and any one of my faith should feel inclined to drop me a few lines of encouragement, I certainly would appreciate the favor.

Since writing the above I have thought several times that I would not send it, for I know that it is like the writer, very imperfect.

Yours in the warmest of love,

P. L. SAVAGE.

MOSS, Tenn., August, 1914.

THE MANHOOD OF GOD.

As this subject has been on my mind of late, I will send a few of my thoughts on it to the editors of the SIGNS. Whether they are of the Spirit of truth, or of the sinful flesh, it is hard for me to tell, as my carnal mind is so deceitful, and seems to predominate most of the time. If I ever have had one good thought, it is all of grace, so I will leave it to the editors to publish or not, and all will be right with me, as this must be their privilege in conducting a publication like the SIGNS.

The subject at the head of this communication is the greatest and grandest mystery ever contemplated by men or angels, as it is said in holy writ that angels desired to look into it how that holy child Jesus when in the womb of the blessed virgin was God being made manifest in the flesh as both God and man, and the blessed Mary still be a virgin. Truly great and marvelous are God's works, and this holy thing destined to be in the purpose of God the Father, the Mediator of the new covenant, and was with the church in the wilderness (of the old covenant) in Moses and the holy prophets, who stood in God's stead. The children of Israel said, Let not God speak to us, lest we die. This is what all poor sinners say when given a view of their sinful hearts and the holiness and majesty of God. This man Christ Jesus

is brought to view as proceeding from the Father as the Mediator between God and men, as their Advocate, and speaks to them as Elihu did to poor Job, as a man whose majesty does not make us afraid, and who prepares us to receive instruction out of the whirlwind of his majesty, as the eternal God and absolute Sovereign of the universe, working all things after the counsel of his own will. Job sees God's ways in the whirlwind, who, when as the eternal and unlimited Sovereign of the universe spake to Job out of the whirlwind of his majesty concerning his creation, including the stars and constellations, was brought to see himself as a poor, vile worm of the dust, and the need of a Mediator, the man Christ Jesus, with all power. This is the effect it has on all God's children when born again of God's Spirit, and we must always remember that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and it searches all things, even the deep things of God, and does not rail on God for doing as he pleases and electing some to eternal life and hardening others. How I love this word when spoken by the great God, the blessing, even life for evermore. God commands the light; he commands the darkness, too, for God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give his elect light and the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The church has never been without this God-man as the Mediator, not in bodily form, but in Spirit, in Moses and the prophets; she could not rest a moment without him. See how Moses stood between God and the children of Israel when God told Moses to step aside that he might destroy them in a moment. This is where the man Christ Jesus comes to view as being equal with the Father, for in him all fullness dwells, for he is the image of the invisible God; so the great God can speak as a man. Joshua, as a representative of this man, commanded the mighty sun to stand still, and God hearkened to his voice for the salvation of his people and the destruction of their enemies, and what are poor, sinful rebels going to do about it? He doeth as he pleases in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, whether we like it or not, so I have no evidence that one has been made reconciled to the ways of God the Father by the blood of Christ, the everlasting covenant, who still says if he does this or that, or does not do this or that, he is unjust, and is the author of sin, and if he made the devil and Satan for his own glory and purpose he is the author of wickedness. Away with such blasphemy and replying against God. I love to be like Job, and say, Behold, I am vile, I will lay my hand on my mouth. See Job xl.; please read the whole chapter. But God can speak as a man under the name of Lord Jesus. This man is now at the right hand of the Majesty on high, making intercession for poor sinners. His people could not exist a moment without his intercession. God speaking as a man accounts for such expressions as this in holy writ: It repented the Lord that he had made man, and it grieved him at his heart, and as coming down to see what the children of men were doing, building the tower of Babel and concerning Nineveh and many other places. So we cannot limit the Holy One, even to speaking as a man, for he is both God and man, but his attributes are equal, his all-predestinating power is equal to his knowledge or any other attribute, and I want to bow at his feet and be reconciled to his government and love his laws, both in spiritual and natural

things, for he is before all, and fills immensity of space, and dwells in his elect when born again, and his laws are written in their hearts, so they love his laws and delight in his government after the inner man, not in the flesh, for there is no good thing in that.

I have written with the best material I had, and, dear editors, it is left to you.

DAVID TITMUS.

CEMENT CITY, Michigan.

A DESCRIPTION OF GOD'S PEOPLE.

"HEARKEN, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?"—James ii. 5.

The subject of the poor in spirit has been on my mind for some time, and the more I meditate on it the more comfort I realize from it. For men to realize a benefit from any Scripture they must feel its force in their own life; they must live the life that is described by the writer. So often do we find ourselves murmuring about the very evidences given in the Bible of God's children while in this world. Feeling poor in spirit, and deep heartfelt sense of our sinful state, is an evidence of our election. This poverty does not consist in a lack of worldly goods, but in a felt need of righteousness; and feeling this need every one hungers and thirsts for righteousness. The Savior's words then are, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Again, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." None but the poor have the gospel preached unto them; the rich in good works do not need it, neither have they any use for it; but the poor are needy and in want, and every crumb is a sweet morsel, and when Jesus with all his fullness is preached to them it is just what they need. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all [all his chosen ones], how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Everything we need is found in Jesus, and what a glorious thought, Christ is made unto us "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." If we could do the things we would, and feel as we wish, and see ourselves as we desire to, we would not be carrying the Bible evidences of election. It is a great blessing to feel our poverty and our own sinful state; without such a sense of feeling we never would mourn, for real mourning comes from down deep in the heart, and I dare say we would not mourn if we could help it, but a deep felt sense of our depraved nature makes us sigh and mourn, and, like Paul, often ask, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" All the children have been killed to the love of sin and cannot endure what they see in themselves, and for that reason they are made to hate the life they live in the flesh. They can see no good in self, but their imperfections rise before them as mountains, which cause them to feel so poor and worthless that indeed they are entirely cut off from boasting, and have nothing of which to boast. They are continually confessing their sins, hence the apostle says, If we confess our sins, he is faithful to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Yet all this is attended with deep sorrow of heart, and makes them feel poor and worthless. It is a grand blessing to be enabled to see one's own imperfections; a sense of our own wrongs so humiliates us that we feel there is no good in us, and makes us beg for mercy, sensible of our sins, and continually confessing our unworthiness, pleading like the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner." In the case of the Pharisee and

the publican is the contrast drawn; one could boast of what he had done, and even despise the other. This man was was not poor, but rich in his own estimation, and had plenty of self-righteousness. Here is the one of whom Jesus said, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." Also, here is the rich man that fared sumptuously every day, but poor Lazarus was a beggar, whose body was covered with sores. O, how often God's humble ones feel they are covered all over with the putrifying sores of sin, and are made to beg for mercy like the poor publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner." When God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, we feel all undone, and see ourselves as unholy, and a mass of sin and corruption; we are then made to feel our nothingness before God. O how poor and needy we do feel! It is light that makes manifest what is in us, and never do we know what we are until the light shines in and discovers to us the corruption and depravity of our hearts. From that time forward we hate what we see in ourselves, and are made to mourn because we can see nothing good. We cannot thank God that we are not as others, but we earnestly covet what we think we see in others, and groan because our lives are so barren and unprofitable. We so earnestly desire to be pure in thought and act that we promise and make vows to God that we will do better (and we feel that we will), but to our great grief and sorrow we break our vows and promises until we feel we have lied to God, and even to our own consciences, and by our utter failures we lose all confidence in ourselves. O in what anguish of soul are we made to depend alone on the Lord. O how little and humble we become; poor in spirit, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and yet cannot attain unto it. Such an one is coming to walk in the strait gate while he has thought that strait and narrow way is a direct line, and seeing his miserable failure to walk in it he fears he has missed the whole thing, and caught only the shadow. He finds himself in a strait sure enough. He must learn how poor and dependent he is. How great is his sorrow! Then let the children take courage in that they feel poor and needy, and have no righteousness of their own to plead, for if they could feel as they wish they would not be described in God's holy book; but the book is their looking-glass, their mirror, to reflect their life in this world. The one who feels poor is blessed, for it is God's blessing on him that enables him to see his nothingness, for that, and that only, makes us to know and appreciate grace. Those who do not see how poor they are do not see or feel the need of grace, neither do they need Jesus, for they are rich as they want to be. These are they who will say, Lord, Lord, open unto us, for we have eaten and drunk in thy name, and in thy name done many wonderful works. The answer will be, Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, for I never knew you; I have not known you as the church, my bride, my spouse. My Spirit has not caused you to bear any fruit to the honor of my Father. "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm," but "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord." Now the poor have to trust in the Lord, for they can trust in nothing else. "And the poor have the gospel preached to them." Those who preach the gospel

preach Jesus, and Jesus is the feast of the soul, therefore those who eat his flesh and drink his blood dwell in him, and he in them, for unless we eat his flesh and drink his blood we have no life in us. The poor must be fed, and the Lord said to Peter, Feed my sheep, feed my lambs. Peter had nothing to feed them with, except to preach to them Jesus, for there is none other salvation but Jesus. The builders do set him at naught; they deny the Lord that bought them (bought them as he bought the field for the pearl that was in it). When the angel smote Jacob on the thigh the sinew shrank and he became a cripple and had to go leaning upon a staff the remainder of his days; it truly was a blessing in disguise. So, dear one, when the Lord took away all you had you had to lean on Jesus, and look alone to him for all your needs. How precious to the poor hungering and thirsting soul is Jesus, for God hath made him to be everything to them they need.

Dear editors, the above is submitted for your consideration, and you can give it space in the SIGNS if you think best.

Yours, as one who feels that he has nothing but the righteousness of Christ to lean on,

J. M. PERKINS.

VENICE, Sept. 23, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—We received the inclosed letter from our aged and beloved sister, Lucinda B. Brewster, some time ago, and now send it to you to dispose of as your better judgment dictates.

My husband wishes to be remembered to you, and joins me in this.

Your little sister,

BERTHA BOES.

ONEONTA, N. Y., May 10, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER BOES:—It has been a long time since I heard from you, and hope you are as well as when I last heard. I am no different, gradually failing I can see. I desire to be thankful that it is as well with me as it is. I am not confined to the bed as yet, but lie down a great deal through the day; all my infirmities are here felt, and I expect they always will be. My failing eyesight has been a great trial to me; I have to keep away from the bright light, but hope that it may last me, so that I can wait upon myself, but the Lord only knows what is in store for me. I truly feel tired of this vain world, and feel the years have drawn nigh when I can say that I have no pleasure in them, and it is only when I can say I have some enjoyment in spiritual things, and feel the dear Savior is near, and feel the love of God is shed abroad in my heart, as I hope, that I can feel to say, One day within the place where my dear Lord has been, is better than ten thousand days of pleasurable sin. Dear brother and sister, I know that you agree with me in these things, and hope you are enjoying these spiritual riches which only come from our heavenly Father, when we feel to be cut loose from the world, and the stronger than he binds the strong man, and we feel that peace which passes understanding, and he gives us the oil of joy for mourning and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Dear child of God, as Elder William Beebe used to say; with what a heavenly look he would look around upon the poor outcasts who felt to be at the ends of the earth, and dared only to say, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. I often think how little we know, and in this earthly house cannot imagine the joys that are prepared for them that love him and are upheld by his almighty power, and are revealed to babes by the streams which make glad the city of our

God; but I am more often in the valley of the shadow of death, and wonder who and what I am, and where I am, for in my flesh dwelleth no good thing. But I feel a longing and hoping that I am not deceived, and while Satan's roar is so loud, and he tries to frighten me from hearing that still small voice, I sometimes hope that with the mind I serve the law of Christ, for with the spouse I can say, I will arise and go out into the streets of the city and look for my Beloved, but I often find him not; but sometimes ere I am aware he kisses me with the kisses of his mouth, for his love is better than wine.

I do not know why I write you this, for you know these things better than I, but I feel a love and fellowship for the Lord's dear people everywhere, and as it is written, They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and thought upon his name. How I wish I could see you, but I cannot, and hear you talk of his goodness and speak of his power. His blessings and mercies are unnumbered, and yet we feel that our trials are so great we cannot endure them. He says he has left here a poor and an afflicted people, yet the dear path to thine abode lies through this horrid land.

I hope you will be able to answer this, as I have a strong desire to hear from you. My son writes for me; I cannot see to read or write. How we shall miss Elder Chick's good editorials and writings.

With christian love and fellowship, I am your afflicted sister in hope,

L. B. BREWSTER.

MATTHEW XXII. 13.

"THEN said the king to his servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away."

Jesus was speaking to a mixed multitude, some of whom were watching every sentence to entangle him or to find some contradiction in his talk, while others were watching yet more earnestly to know the truth, if there was truth, in what they had been taught and hoped of spiritual joys. Are they true, or are they fancies? How often the question comes up and we want another assurance. While we are talking of Scripture, and of spiritual things, all is well, then in a little while we ask again, Is there any sure foundation under my profession? Jesus speaks to them a parable that will bring all the arguments to one question: Are the garments in which I will appear such that the King will allow me to sit with the guests? How many have longed to know if they would receive a heavenly welcome when they appear among the saints. Some have said that this man that was bound represents a sinner bound under conviction; that is, a repentant sinner. But God's servants were never told to bind such, but rather to open the prison to them that were bound, and there can hardly be any question as to the representative character of the king, the son and the marriage scene. But who are those guests? And what, and of what material are those garments that give them an undisputed right to be witnesses in that most exclusive company in all the kingdom, and to partake of the best feast that could be prepared for their entertainment and nourishment, to be not only honored guests, but to help make the occasion worthy of so noble a bridegroom? These are the questions that put to silence both priest and Pharisees learned in the letter of both law and

history. There were some of those to whom Jesus spoke who understood the parable, and saw its fullness and beauty. The servants were nowhere instructed to furnish clothing for those they brought in. In the first instance they went to those who were in comfortable circumstances; they had garments, and often estates, and wives. Neither wedding nor feast seemed worthy the attention of these people, the Jewish nation. But the servants were sent out again. They had not thought at first of finding suitable guests for such an occasion among the lowly, the lame and the outcasts. The fact that such persons would have no suitable clothes, nor be able to purchase any, would at once present itself to the mind of the average servant, yet on that very thing Jesus makes the test of their fitness to the king's guests; that is, in what raiment they appear when the king looks upon them. The clothing is brought to view many times as typical of one's nationality, rank, office, wealth and religion, so in this case it simply means having on Christ's righteousness. There is a simplicity about this garment, there is also a deep mystery, for their own clothes are unfit, and will not hide them, and they have no money that will purchase such as they need. They came then in the name of the king's son, wishing to see him honored whom they loved; they tell simply the truth; they are as outcasts from popular religion; they are lame, so they needed the servants' help to come; and more than all else, they had no raiment to appear in; yet they love the saints and hope in God's mercy, through the pardoning blood of Jesus Christ. They talk of the beauty of the saints, of the worship, of the ordinances, but never of their own comeliness. It is the strait and narrow way, and in some cases it seems a very long way, and they are blind, and need to be told again and again that they are near. The servants were commanded to bring them in. The wedding is the marriage of Christ and the church, the feast is the gospel, the servants are the ministers, and their preaching of their own experience, and that of all the saints of old, shows to each as in a glass, or as face answers to face in water, whether they have the same kind of garments on as the other guests have. These are all to be cared for, first by the servants, then if any are present who have only their own garments, be they ever so good, as made of earthly material, or purchased in an earthly market, that same word, like a two-edged sword, cuts them off, or binds them and casts them out. There is no food there that they can eat; the gospel will not puff their pride. But while it is bringing in the poor, the halt and blind, it binds to helplessness the self-righteous, although they seem to be doing great works for the kingdom. When the feast is going on the speaker can often see who is eating of the fatlings while they render praise and honor to the King who has made the feast and gathered his guests out of all nations. The meekness and lowliness of Jesus, and the truth that he spoke, bound the Pharisees and thrust them out from the wedding ceremony, with all its joys, while others of many nations have come in to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom. The gathering is still going on. The work of the servants is bringing tidings of the well prepared feast to all who are hungry, yet who feel that they have no worthiness in which to appear, but when the King looks upon them all is changed. David says, "Her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought

unto the King in raiment of needlework." —Psalms xlv. 14. Wonderful dress, that gives beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning and is a garment of praise. In all its simplicity it is so wonderfully wrought that it cannot be counterfeited, for our King created the light, and is light, so that no deception can ever pass unnoticed; therefore all deceivers and pretenders are cut off and consigned to outer darkness.

A. E. RITTENHOUSE.

STOCKTON, N. J., Oct. 30, 1914.

ELDER KER:—Below you will find a copy of a letter written to me by brother Horace Lefferts more than seven years past; I would like to have it published in the SIGNS when convenient.

MARY HOCKENBURY.

WARWICK, N. Y., July 28, 1907.

DEAR SISTER HOCKENBURY:—Your letter has remained unanswered too long, and I know I have not treated you right in not writing before. Your letter came as a surprise to me, but I was very glad to get it. It was a sweet and unexpected expression of love and fellowship from one whom I have more confidence in as a subject of God's grace than in myself. I know not why your mind should have been directed to write to me, but like all of the manifestations of love I have ever received from the Lord's people, I am very undeserving of it all. Truly the Lord has blessed me far above anything I have ever deserved. Were he to deal with us according as we deserve, we never should have been brought to know the power of his grace, never should have been enabled to believe in him, or never should have had his love shed abroad in our hearts. In the midst of deserved wrath he hath remembered mercy. All hope we have as ours in the word of Jesus comes to us as an unmerited blessing, who are sinners of a fallen race. Whatever affliction, trial or loss is sent upon us here is not sent to them who fear the Lord as a judgment, but these chastisements are the evidences of sonship, for "if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." These trials are to remind us that this world is not our home, and that here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come. Were it not for tribulation we would love and cling to the things of the world more than we should. Both crosses and losses remind us that we must not and cannot love the world, but that we are crucified to the world and the world to us. They wean us from the things of time and sense and cause us to depend more on grace than our works. They show us that flesh is weak, and that we are only strong to suffer all things by the indwelling of his Spirit which strengthens us, so that his strength is made perfect in our weakness. As Paul, we bear about in our bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifest in our mortal flesh.

Next Sunday, if the Lord will, I expect to be with the Kingwood Church, and I wish that I might see you there. I trust the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ may abide with you to the supplying of all needs, as he knoweth them, to the praise of this glory and to your promotion in the things of the Spirit.

Yours in the love of truth,

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

FARMINGTON, Ill., Oct. 1, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I want to send you my subscription for the dear old SIGNS for 1915. I have been a subscriber for sixty years, and a reader ten years before that. I feel that I would like to give the readers a little history of my early life. The first sermon I ever heard was by Jesse Ash; later, Elder Furr, later on, Housel, Rittenhouse, Barton, Trott, dear Elder Beebe, Thos. P. Dudley, Conklin and J. F. Johnson. In 1857 I went west, and in 1858 was married, and we have raised a family of eight children, who are all married but one, and the Lord has been gracious to us, for they all belong to the dear Old Baptists but two. They are all located here, for which I feel thankful. I have wept much for the loss of dear Elder Chick, but the good Lord rules and reigns in heaven and earth. I also am near the end of my journey, and feel with the apostle that, according to the grace given, I have kept the faith without wavering.

Dear brother, I do not feel that this is worth giving a place in the SIGNS; do with it as you think best. I have been sorely afflicted for some time. Am but a poor worm of the dust.

Yours with love,

E. D. VARNES.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., Oct. 10, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Again I wish to thank you, and all connected with the SIGNS, for your great kindness in sending the paper so long. I often feel that I ought not to be a burden longer, and then I feel, How could I do without it, as I do not get to meeting any more? I have no one to accompany me, and am too nervous to venture alone. I have not been to the Ebenezer Church since they moved to the Bronx. I wanted much to attend the last association, but could not. I am glad you have an associate editor, as you were left "alone" by Elder Chick's death. The editorials are my sermons, I turn to them and read them first of all. I hear the members of the Middletown Church are nearly all gone the way of all living.

Again I heartily thank you for the SIGNS.

Your sister, I hope,

H. A. WINFIELD.

SWOFFORD, Wash., Sept. 10, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Inclosed please find money order for two dollars to continue my subscription to the SIGNS. I have neglected sending the money until I should offer an apology. The rush of other business is my excuse. I am endeavoring to earn my bread by the sweat of my brow. I am located where the term "Predestinarian Baptist" is seldom heard, although we have a few churches here. The term "Predestinarian Baptist" is not specially liked by all, while others acknowledge it and are proud of it. I sometimes feel that I need the company of the tried and true children of the Most High, but my unworthiness is too conspicuous to make me even congenial company for a people so highly favored. God knows my real need, and will apply the necessary comfort at his own good time. Let all the earth praise the Lord.

Yours in hope,

E. D. OVERSTREET.

CONESVILLE, N. Y., Oct. 12, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am in receipt of an epistle of love from sister C. M. Howard to the church, and as I received it too late to read to the members, I feel it might be wise for you to publish it, as many of the brethren will not meet for a long time. I have not her consent, but feel all will be right if you feel to publish it.

I remain as ever, your unworthy friend and brother, I hope,

D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

STAMFORD, N. Y., Oct. 7, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I have taken my pen to address a few lines to you who know the joyful sound. My home is with you, but I feel to be a poor unworthy creature, but still cling to the abiding hope that I am included in the finished work of our Savior on the cross, but I am so imperfect and sinful I feel a desire to know what I am. Am I his, or am I not? Have I ever tasted of the good word of God and the powers of the world to come? If a child I am one of the least of the flock, but desire to be made worthy to walk in their footsteps and to rest with them beside the Shepherd's tent. We are dependent upon God for every blessing, both spiritual and temporal. I remember the times of our meetings: the association this week and the yearly meeting next Saturday and Sunday. My condition is such that I am not able to be with you, but my prayer is, Lord, be with thy people everywhere to bless, sustain and keep them, as we cannot keep ourselves. According to age and infirmities, my time may not be long here, as I am seventy-eight years old, but it will all be right, the Lord knows best. May we be fully reconciled to his will in all things. My hope is that I may be ever found in that strait and narrow way that leadeth to life everlasting. Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom, and to his name be all praise forever and ever.

Yours in hope, C. M. HOWARD.

STEVENS POTTERY, Ga., Aug. 5, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—Yours of August 1st received, and I am grateful if my letter in the SIGNS found a response in the souls of God's dear children. I can indeed feel to sympathize with the afflicted among them, especially, because in the furnace, heated seven times its wonted heat, it has pleased God to call me to walk of late. I often wonder if the flames will be allowed to consume me, or will one like unto the Son of God walk with me there? Will I, dear brother, come out some time, either on the shores of time or in the celestial city, without even the smell of fire upon my garments?

I am very grateful that God has given Elder Lefferts for a comforter and helper to Elder Ker, for he is, in my opinion, a wonderful gift, and I believe all who have heard him declare the glad tidings of great joy will thankfully hail him to the editorial staff of the SIGNS, believing that he is sent of our God for the comfort and upbuilding of Zion. I notice in the SIGNS of August 1st where you have appointments to preach at Kingston, N. Y., and Olive and Hurley. I so long to hear more gospel preaching. I had hoped to go up to the Baltimore, Delaware and Delaware River associations, but sickness of my loved ones prevented me from doing so. Mine has to be a closet service mainly. May God strengthen you in comforting Zion and also in encouraging the dear little lambs that have never found this fold, that they may be led in the footsteps of the flock and find comfort in the Shepherd of their souls.

Pray, dear brother, that God may turn my sorrow into joy and lead me through my afflictions, so that I may not falter nor miss the way of obedience, nor be barren and useless in the Master's service.

Your sister in hope of a blessed inheritance.

(MRS.) MITTIE DAVIS ROBERTS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1914.

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Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MINISTERING GIFTS.

PREACHING is not the only spiritual gift bestowed within the church to serve and edify it. Ten gifts are named in the New Testament that are designed for the comfort and instruction of the body of Christ; these are apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, miracles, healings, helps, governments, tongues. Each of these depends for its quality and exercise not upon the native ability of the individual upon whom it is bestowed, but upon the grace attending the measure of the gift of Christ in each member. But thirteen apostles are mentioned: the twelve to the Jews and the one, Paul, to the Gentiles. We believe there will never be any more apostles. They were men raised up and peculiarly gifted to a certain end: the setting in order of the church organization of the gospel dispensation. To them were given the keys of the kingdom of heaven. This does not signify that they decided who should and who should not enter the kingdom of God, but they unlocked to the church certain principles of doctrine, of practice, of ordinances and of privileges, which they enjoined to be observed and contended for by the faithful in Christ Jesus. Also, they locked to the church or forbade the practice and advocating of certain other principles and practices. No man since their day has the right to add to, or take from, any other principles and practices which they did not enjoin, and still profess to be a preacher of the gospel and a servant of the household of faith. Should any man arise in this, or any other age, commanding to be observed and believed doctrines and procedures foreign to that of the apostolic order, "let him be accursed." See Galatians i. 8, 9. The new testament prophet is not a foreteller, a forecaster of events to come, but one who forth tells or brings forth out of the Scriptures, and out of the experience of the believer, that which edifies, exhorts and comforts. See 1 Cor. xiv. 3. The Scriptures are not exactly clear as to just what is the work and gift of an evangelist. The word evangelist literally signifies a "good angel or messenger," therefore the bearer of good or glad tidings. An example of an evangelist is given us in Acts xxi. 8, in Philip of Cæsarea. This Philip was one of the seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, who were appointed to look after the "business," the temporal concern, of the church in Jerusalem. It is generally supposed that these men were the first deacons, though the word "deacon" does not occur in Acts vi. It is certain, however, that they were not regarded as set apart to the ministry, but to "business," yet this fact did not prevent Philip's being an evangelist. If these men were deacons, then the work of an evangelist can be as well done by a deacon as by a preacher; that is, the gift of an evangelist would not necessarily have to be that of a pastor or teacher. We judge that in preaching to the eunuch on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza, Philip was doing the work of an evangelist. Therefore we

conclude that the special gift of an evangelist is manifested in a disposition to search out the isolated and lonely ones, the destitute and inquiring ones, and declare the glad tidings of the blessed name of Jesus unto them. This Philip did to the eunuch. Such work may be laid upon a deacon by the impression of the Spirit as well as upon a pastor. A pastoral gift is something apart from a preaching gift. An able preacher is not always a good pastor, and an able pastor does not always make a good preacher. The word "pastor" signifies "shepherd." A pastor is not content to simply preach to his flock, but feels impressed to live among them and with them, to partake with them of such things as they have; he feels inclined to visit them in their homes and everyday life, and thus to have the oversight of them. Anything that causes or brings them grief and sadness saddens him; that which lightens and rejoices them also lifts him up. The sick in body or soul, the poor and needy, those sorely tried, are his peculiar burden, ever in his heart and mind. A teacher is an expounder of the Scriptures. A preacher may preach a good sermon to the comfort and edification of his hearers and yet not expound his text, not tell what it means. A teacher may tell what a text means and yet not especially comfort them, though he will not fail to instruct them. The gifts of miracles and of tongues, we believe, were in exercise in the apostolic church, and we know of no instance where they are being exercised in the church to-day. The apostles performed miracles on the bodies of believers by the same power that Jesus did the same works while here in the flesh. Peter and John healed a lame man, as is told in Acts iii. Peter raised Tabitha to life, as in Acts ix. Handkerchiefs and aprons from Paul's body healed the sick and cast out evil spirits, as in Acts xix. This gift to perform literal miracles is not given the church at the present time, so far as we have any knowledge. Miracles, and plenty of them, are transpiring on every hand, but they are not physical, as in the days of the apostle, so we believe. The gift given unlearned men to speak in other than their native tongues was bestowed upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost. There were in that congregation Jews out of every nation under heaven, all speaking different languages, but they heard the gospel that day each in his native tongue. This was the gift of tongues bestowed upon those who preached the gospel, which enabled them to declare the truth in the native languages of their hearers of different nationalities without having to learn those languages for themselves. Even in the church of that day diversities of tongues were not exercised unless an interpreter were present. No one could be edified unless he could understand what was being said. It is our belief that the gifts of miracles and of tongues are extinct in the church of the present day. Of course we might spiritualize these things and make them applicable to us now, but we do not care to do that in this article. It would cause us to digress into such a large field that we might not get back to our subject. The gifts of healings are manifested in effecting reconciliation between brethren who have fallen out with each other, in restoring those who walk disorderly, and in expounding the way of God more perfectly to those weak on some point, as did Aquila and Priscilla to Apollos. Helps are manifested in various ways, but always by the same Spirit as all these other gifts we have mentioned. There are those

members we hear spoken of as being "such a help to the church." They may be a "help" financially if sufficiently blessed in this world's goods; they may be a "help" in their hospitality if given to keeping open house for the entertainment of their brethren. Then there are those who "help" the church with their clearness of vision, their sound and wise advice and counsel in troublous times, their discernment between right and wrong methods of procedure in attending to church business or in administering discipline. In every church of our faith and order there are always those who attend all the meetings with constant regularity and promptness; the pastor can always count on these being present, be the weather and conditions what they may; these are a help to the church, and certainly a help to him whose lot it is to labor among them in word and doctrine. Many times they uphold his weak hands and confirm his feeble knees when the tempter is well-nigh too much for him. Then there is the gift of government. Not all pastors and preachers are good disciplinarians. Discipline is a special gift, and falls under the head of government. Discipline hinges on love, as does all church order. The church where love and fellowship abound is the orderly church, and the good disciplinarian is he whose discipline is rarely seen on the surface, but is felt in the hearts and souls of his hearers. The disciplinarian is never a boss, a dictator. There is no room for such in the new testament church. None of these gifts mentioned are lords over God's heritage, they dominate not the faith of the hearers. Paul said, "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." Even the apostles counted themselves the servants of the church, not its lords and leaders. Leadership is all right for the world, but it will not endure in the church. Humility and not ambition must stamp the sincerity of the man of God. The religious world about us, as always, is ridden to death with priestcraft. We want none of it in the church. "He that is greatest among you, shall be your servant." Whoever goes about aiming to straighten out church difficulties usually makes matters worse. One truly gifted to govern is rarely conscious of his ability, and does his most effective work innocently and unconsciously. In thinking of these various gifts in the church, let it be borne in mind that whatever gift is bestowed upon each member of the church (and there is none but has some gift), it is the gift that exercises the member, and not the member that exercises the gift. The spiritual ability which is of grace, and which is a measure of Christ, we call a "gift," yet not only is this spiritual ability a gift, but the man himself is also a gift to the church. The Holy Ghost gave Paul to the church, and also endued him with an apostolic gift to serve the church, so both the man and his ability were gifts to the church. All these gifts are bestowed, not to wander about at random, but are sent into certain fields prescribed by the Head of the church, Christ. Sometimes the direct leading of the Spirit will show a man where his gift must go; at other times certain things in providence will so come to pass as to bring the gift and field of labor in conjunction with each other. Sometimes a man may try to exercise his gift where the Spirit will not let him, and failure results. Paul wanted to preach in Asia once, but the Holy Ghost forbade it; he tried to go to Bithynia once, but the same Spirit hindered. He was called to Macedonia

a place he had not intended going. The circumstance of his arrest and imprisonment ultimately led to his preaching the gospel in Rome. Certain it is that the Lord never calls a man to preach but he always has something for that man to preach, and somebody for him to preach to. The Lord does nothing by halves. When he begins a work, he finishes it. He does not give one of his people any gift whatsoever and they have to advertise it; eyes and ears are given to discern it. Usually the church discerns the gift before the subject himself is aware that he has it. The evidence that one is called to preach is that he preaches; that one is called to help is that he helps; that one is called to heal is that he heals. No matter what one may say or profess to be, it is by his fruits he must be known. The court of the Lord, before which all these gifts are judged, is the church. The saints shall judge angels. The church sees that this or that man has a gift to preach or to teach or to be a pastor, and so ordains him. She sees that this or that man is qualified for the deaconship, and so sets him apart. The man himself has nothing to do with it save to abide by the judgment of the church, and so serve in the capacity and with the ability given him of the Spirit. Happy are we if we can do so willingly, and if against our will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto us. The same gift is not intended to feed and comfort all alike. We are given a great diversity of gifts in the church to suit the diversity of experience found in the church. What comforts and instructs one may not do so to another. For this reason no one can tell a man where he ought to go or to whom he ought to preach. The stars are in the right hand of Him who is in the midst of the church, and he moves them about from place to place as it pleases him. Jesus Christ, who has ascended up on high to give these gifts, knows fully the character of each gift, and knows fully the character of those for whom it is intended, and he will in his own time and way bring the two together. Bringing the field to the laborer and the laborer to the field is not a matter of formality, but of vitality, and the relation of pastor to flock, or of any gift to its place, is a relationship that is as real and as vital as any other relationship which is ours while here on earth. The calling of a pastor by a church is never a matter to be conducted as a political campaign. Electioneering is entirely out of place, and ill consists with the spirituality of the church and of the matter at issue. A church in need of a pastor, deacon or other gift, does well to consider the matter carefully and prayerfully. Watch the leading of the hand of the Lord and the direction of his Spirit; they will never guide wrong. Our own schemes invariably lead astray. Uzza reaped death in trying to steady the ark, so do we always die when we try to do the Lord's work or help him in it. The works of the flesh involve death, the works of the Spirit are life and peace. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

Written at the request of one, a brother in the ministry, who wishes his name withheld.

L.

CLOSE OF VOLUME EIGHTY-TWO.

WITH this number volume eighty-two of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES closes, and we are reminded again of the sure mercies of David. How good it is to remember that the promises of the Lord are yea and amen to his glory by Jesus Christ. When the year began we were all distressed because of the illness of dear brother Chick and that of our companion, not knowing that either brother Chick or ourself would be able to attend to our duties in connection with the SIGNS, and grave fears were felt by all connected with its publication. But the Lord knew what was in store for us, and while he has greatly afflicted us in the taking away of Elder Chick and our dear wife, he has also blessed us to continue the SIGNS to the comfort of his people, and, we trust, to his own glory. The year, however, has been one of unusual hardship in many ways, money has been scarce and our burdens heavy. Many of our writers have grown old and are less inclined to write for publication, and only a few new writers have been added to our number, yet we know the arm of the Lord is not shortened, and he who caused the first number to be published and sent forth is able to continue the publication as long as it pleases him to do so. Here we must leave the result. We feel especially blessed in the gift of Elder Lefferts to take up the work of writing left off by Elder Chick. He is a clear and able writer, and each one from whom we have heard both enjoys and indorses his writings. He being young in years, the readers of the SIGNS have reason to hope that they shall have the pleasure of reading his editorials many years.

Again we thank our subscribers for their kindness and forbearance, and we sincerely hope that we may all be more and more united in love and fellowship during the years that are to come. We much appreciate the help of those who have written for the SIGNS during the year, and hope that they, together with many others, may continue to write during the next year. Financially the SIGNS is in about the same condition as for several years, and our subscription list remains also about the same.

Now with love and best wishes we say farewell for 1914.

K.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session at the Messongoes Old School Baptist Church, in Accomac County, Virginia, October 21st, 22nd and 23rd, 1914, to all those with whom we correspond sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have once more been allowed the blessed privilege of meeting again as an association at this time, and have been blessed with perfect weather, a goodly number in attendance. We are glad to receive your messengers and messages of love and fellowship. The preaching has all been in perfect accord with the teachings of Christ: salvation by grace, and not of ourselves. We trust we are thankful to the Father, the giver of every good and perfect gift, for all blessings bestowed at this time.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Forest Grove Church, Wicomico Co., Md., beginning Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1915, at which time and place we hope to again meet you and receive your messengers

and messages and continue our correspondence.

A. B. FRANCIS, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

MEMORIALS.

SINCE the last session of the Salisbury Association the Lord has seen fit to remove from the scene of his labors in this part of his vineyard our beloved brother, **Elder Thomas M. Poulson.** He had attained the ripe age of nearly eighty-three years, having been a member of the Messongoes Church over sixty-one years, and a faithful pastor of that church more than forty-four years, and of the churches of Indiantown and Nassaongo forty-two years, and of Snow Hill from the time of its constitution, about thirty-six years, and had also served other churches for a short time. He was a faithful minister, an able expounder of the word, and a truly faithful and devoted pastor. He was sound in the faith, and contended earnestly for the same. He was particularly clear and strong on the doctrine of the resurrection, believing the resurrection of our bodies from the dead essential to the consummation of the purpose of God in sending his only begotten and well beloved Son into the world to save his people from their sins. As an association we tender our sincere sympathy to his family and the churches of his late charge, praying for them that they may be reconciled to the will of the Lord, and that he will supply all their need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

We will also take this occasion to express the great loss we feel, in common with all Old School Baptists of the United States and Canada, in the death of the senior editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, **Elder Forris A. Chick,** of the Delaware River Association, and pastor of the church in Hopewell, N. J. Elder Chick was a visitor to this association, and to the churches composing it, for more than forty years, and was highly esteemed by all as an able, faithful gospel minister, one unusually gifted, both as a preacher and writer, and it was indeed a day of mourning in all our homes when the sad news was broken to us, "Elder Chick is no more." We wish to extend our sincere condolences to his family, and to the churches of his late charge, and the thousands of readers of the SIGNS who have been comforted by his writings, both before and since he became its editor. Truly his labors were abundant, and he in a very marked degree showed the spirit of his divine Master. May we be moved by the Spirit to pray the Lord of the harvest to call into the harvest others as able and faithful to go forth proclaiming salvation of the Lord.

Written by Elder A. B. Francis, at the request of the Salisbury Association, to be printed with the Minutes of the association.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon E. D. Varnes was born in Mifflin, Pa., Aug. 9th, 1834, came to Illinois in 1857, was married to Jane B. Kepner in 1858, died at his home in Farmington, Ill., Nov. 21st, 1914. He was blessed with ten children, two of whom preceded him to the great beyond. Those living are: William and Doty, of Trivola, Ill.; Jennie Thurston, of Columbus Junction, Iowa; Stewart, of Bancroft, Wis.; Elizabeth Meeker, of Greeley, Colo.; Ella Prior, of Carthage, Ill., and Albert. Brother Varnes united with the Fountain Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists in 1860, his membership being there at the time of his death. He lived to adorn the profession that he made, as every one who was acquainted with him can testify. He was an indulgent father in raising his eight children, who are an honor to him. He lived to see six of his children follow him in uniting with the Baptist Church. Brother Varnes was a man of peace, and manifested that spirit among his brethren, but he was fearless in contending for salvation by grace, and stood aloof from the various isms that have sprung up among the Baptists, ever ready to counsel with his brethren. Being acquainted with him for more than forty years, I can truthfully say that where his advice was followed, peace and fellowship prevailed. He was fearless in reproving where he saw it was needed. Truly it can be said of him, A father in Israel has fallen. Brother Varnes will be missed in the associations he was accustomed to attend. He was moderator of the Spoon River Association for about twelve years, and during that time peace prevailed. He was a constant reader of the SIGNS from the time he united with the church, and while for the last year or two he could not read, he still took the paper and had his wife read it to him.

The funeral was held at his residence Tuesday, Nov. 24th, conducted by the writer, assisted by Mr. Welch, using as a text Luke xviii. 7, which brother Varnes selected two years ago as the one he wished me to use, which I did, talking to a large concourse of people, after which his remains were laid to rest in Oak Ridge Cemetery to await the call of God to arise in the likeness of his Redeemer.

S. H. HUMPHREY.

Deacon William M. Hart, of Cammal, Pa., was born Oct. 14th, 1840, and died Nov. 23rd, 1914. He was a member of the Cammal Old School Baptist Church at the time of his death, was formerly a member at Brookdale, Pa., where he entertained his kindred in Christ many times, holding two and three days meetings at his home. Brother Hart was sound in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and not of the creature, and was a member of the church about forty-five years. He loved the doctrine of the sover-

eignty of God and the immutability of his purposes, and would confess himself a poor sinner, and if saved it would all be the mercy of the Lord. About three years ago he went to Cammal, Pa., from Brookdale Church, and united at Cammal, Pa., and was greatly beloved by all the members. He was united in marriage to sister Jane Stradley, also a member at Cammal, and their lives were devoted to their church, and both would partake of the blessings of the gospel in the use of hymns, psalms and the Scriptures with one heart and one mind; but the earthly tie must be severed. May the Lord give those who mourn to say, "Thy will be done." Brother Hart leaves with us the sweet memory of a well ordered life and follower of the Savior.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer on Friday, Nov. 27th, 1914, at Cammal Old School Baptist meetinghouse.

ALSO,

Rebecca Shepherd, a member of the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church, died Oct. 31st, 1914, aged 94 years, 6 months and 9 days. She was baptized Sept. 22nd, 1867, by the late Elder Gabriel Conklin, and was a faithful member in the church. Of late years she was confined to her home in Sergeantsville, N. J. I visited her there, and had meetings for her comfort. She was always glad to have a visit from the brethren and kindred in Christ, and enjoyed conversation upon things of the kingdom, proving the perfect work of God in the subjects of his love and mercy.

Services were conducted by the writer.

J. M. FENTON.

SISTER **Maria Garrison,** of Nashville, Tenn., was born June 13th, 1824, and died Nov. 22nd, 1914, having lived to the advanced age of 90 years, 5 months and 9 days. She joined the Old School Baptist Church about sixty-three years ago, and at the time of her death held membership with the University Street Primitive Baptist Church, of Nashville, Tenn. She understood and loved the doctrine of grace and God's sovereignty, as advocated by the Old School Baptists.

By request the writer attended the funeral, reading Eccl. xii. 1-7, Psalms xxiii. and 2 Tim. iv. 6-8, and attempted to speak a few words of truth and consolation to the bereaved family and friends. Sister Garrison was buried Nov. 25th, at 2 p. m.

Brother O. B. Hickerson was requested by sister Garrison a few years ago to write her obituary, but being very low in sickness himself, he requested me to write it. I desire to say that sister Garrison felt the spirit of the admonition, not to forsake the assembling of yourselves together, and made whatever sacrifice was necessary to be at her church meetings.

GEO. M. HITE.

J. E. Frazier was born in Lee County, Ala., Jan. 11th, 1872, and died Oct. 27th, 1914, aged 42 years, 9 months and 16 days. He was married to Miss Sallie A. Lee, March 24th, 1898. To that union were born five children; his wife and one child survive him. He received a hope in Christ about two years before he was married, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church, and remained firm in his belief, and was held in high esteem, not only by the church, but by his neighbors as well. My dear companion left me to go to his work at the mill, where he and three other men were killed. O, it is so hard to have to give him up, but the good Lord knows best. He was a great lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We believe he is at rest. He was good and kind to all. He has gone from us, and his vacant place can never be filled. I am very lonely, but feel the dear Lord knows best, and I trust will be my support and comfort until I have lived out my number of days, and shall, I hope, go to be, as he, forever with the Lord. All his trust was in his dear Savior, and he always said that not one thing could be done without the good Lord was with him.

The funeral service was held at the church, conducted by Elder G. W. C. Wise.

His sad and lonely widow,

S. A. FRAZIER.

BROTHER **Levi Drake** died Nov. 24th, 1914, aged 71 years. He had been a resident of Steuben County, N. Y., a great many years. He united with the Old School Baptist Church at Ingleside, N. Y., forty-seven or forty-eight years ago, and was baptized by Elder Thorp. He had been in failing health for some years, suffering very much at times. Brother Levi was well established in the faith of the gospel of Christ the Savior, and very much devoted to the church. He leaves to mourn his absence two sons, two daughters and other relatives, with the church, of which he had been a member so many years. God bless the dear children with grace to sustain and support them in their sorrow.

The funeral was held Saturday, Nov. 28th, at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse, the writer speaking to the large congregation assembled of the salvation found alone in the Lord Jesus Christ.

D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $5.00; J. W. Knifton, Ontario, $2.00; Mrs. J. W. Parker, Ill., $2.00; No name, W. Va., $1.00; H. J. O'Bannon, Va., $1.00; Elder T. R. Pittman, Kansas, $1.00; Mrs. Sarah Hawk, Ind., $1.00; J. C. Nelson, Ky., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE next quarterly meeting of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada will be held at Duart, on the third Sunday, and Saturday before, in January, having been changed from the first Sunday in February to the above named date.

J. B. SLAUSON.

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THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Liberty Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, of Los Angeles, Cal., meets every first and third Sunday in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., at 42nd and Moneta Ave., and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal.

W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor.

C. B. RICE, Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

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(Judges v. 11.)

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D. W. OWENS.

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SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILLIAMSTON, N. C.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

JEREMIAH XXXII. 40, 41.

"And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart, and with my whole soul."

This is the covenant that God hath made with his chosen in Christ Jesus their Lord, the head of the church. It is very comforting and altogether satisfying to the heirs of promise. David said, "This is all my salvation, and all my desire."—2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Just at the present that which is a stay and consolation to my soul are the words of the Lord, I will not turn away from them to do them good; I will rejoice over them to do them good. How inconsolable would be our condition if it were otherwise, for all the days of our pilgrimage "streams of mercy never ceasing" are so essential for our comfort, sustenance and continuance in our journey. It hath pleased our God very abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel. His delight in his chosen people has been from of old, from everlasting, and he is without variableness, or shadow of turning. The thoughts of his heart stand fast through all generations. So the apostle Paul writes, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."—Phil. i. 6. God's good work begun in his people is altogether distinct from that which is of men, of self. There are those who make a profession of Christ's name, who, like Herod when he heard John the Baptist, "did many things, and heard him gladly."—Mark vi. 20. As Simon Magus, they believe, but have no part in the gospel of Christ, but are held in the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity. (Acts viii. 23.) There are those who with the mouth show much love to the doctrine of Christ and to his people, and sit in the congregation as the people of God, but God is not deceived by their pretentions. (Ezek. xxxiii. 31, 32.) Out of some goeth the evil spirit for a season, the house is swept and garnished, for a time everything looks pretty, but the evil spirit returns with seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and dwells there, and the last state of that man is worse than the first. (Matt. xii. 43-45.) Carnal professors, like the stony ground hearers, spring up

quickly, and to our superficial observation give promise of bringing forth fruit unto perfection; they hear the word, and anon with joy receive it; they endure for a while; they have no root; they are not rooted and grounded in Christ, they wither away, they are dried up, and are as trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots. (Matt. xiii. 5, 6; Jude 12.) But with those who are the seed of Christ it is otherwise, for the Lord hath put his fear in their hearts. The word Christ speaks unto them is a well of living water springing up into everlasting life. They are not offended, but "His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." —Psalms i. 2, 3. When the Comforter assures our hearts of the covenant, immutable promises of God we can without presumption, in comfortable assurance, say, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." When the Lord called us by his grace, and began his good work in us, truly it was in the exceeding riches of his grace toward us. That grace did much more abound than all our sins and unworthiness. The Lord put his fear in our hearts, and thus begun his good work in us. This fear of the Lord is a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death. The sacred energy moves us to hate evil, arrogancy and every false way. But O, what troubles the heirs of promise endure, for they feel they are ruined, hell-deserving sinners, under the curse of the law, and apprehensive of the everlasting, righteous displeasure of the most high God, they are burdened indeed. But God gives them increased knowledge of himself, and thus inclines them to cry to him for the pardon of their sins. By God's good work in them, that does them good, they are brought to the mercy-seat humble and contrite in heart, trembling at his word. But he does not turn away from them, he does not spurn away from his throne these wretched, base transgressors. No, Christ saith, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." The Lord goes on doing them good, performing his good work in them. He reveals Jesus Christ in us. We think about Jesus the crucified One, we are drawn unto him, to his sacrifice for sin upon the cross, and we begin to know the Lamb of God. "I will rejoice over them to do them good." He feeds poor sinners with the forgiveness of their sins, he healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their dreadful wounds with Emmanuel's precious blood. We contemplate the gracious fact that we are justified from all our offences by grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. God gives, and we receive in faith, with all affection, the atonement, and thus we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. O is not this doing a poor sinner good? In this manner God began to perform his good work in us. He shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of his glories in the face of Jesus Christ. O in thy dear loving face, O Savior, immortal loveliness ever shines. Here we behold the beauty of the Lord, and Christ the Sun of Righteousness sheds forth upon poor perishing sinners, who fear the name of the Lord, the healing, comforting, strengthening, yes, ravishing beauty of the Lord, in streams of forgiveness and salvation,

bringing forth in us joy and peace, prayer and sweet gratitude to his dear and holy name. If in these divine realities the Lord did us good in the days of our youth, in our first espousals to the Savior, has it all since then been suspended? Have the fires burned down, and gone out? Does the Lord withdraw, hide himself, and no more reveal his loving, inspiring, healing, sin-pardoning face? Are there no farther experiences, deeper, higher, more enlarged of his covenant loving-kindness? There are indeed, for he saith, I will not turn away from them to do them good, and they shall not depart from me. I will rejoice over them to do them good, and this is so true in the life of every true believer in Jesus Christ. Review the lives of the redeemed of the Lord as portrayed in the Scriptures, and there we see how often renewed, how unfailing were the sure mercies of the everlasting covenant; and have not the statutes of our God been our songs in the house of our pilgrimage? His word has not failed, God has been true, his faithfulness reacheth unto the heavens; amidst our conflicts and trials, temptations and weakness; notwithstanding our baseness, sinfulness and backslidings how rich in mercy Christ has been. Even our very chastenings have been love's stripes. The rod is in our heavenly Father's hand, who saith, As many as I love I rebuke and chasten. He chastens us for our profit. (Heb. xii. 10.) We are taught to know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. "I will rejoice over them to do them good." Not grudgingly, but "I will love them freely," saith the Lord. He delighteth in mercy, he will abundantly pardon. He hath prepared of his goodness for the poor. David calls God "My goodness, and my fortress; my high tower, and my deliverer; my shield, and he in whom I trust."—Psalms cxliv. 2. O Zion's pilgrims, look over the way which thus far you have come, and can any one of you say, The Lord has turned away from me to do me good? Not one. Our peevish, unbelieving, cast down souls may have said, My God has forgotten and forsaken me, but it was all untrue. In our adversities and conflicts, and under sore chastisements we may have said, "Will the Lord cast off forever? and will he be favorable no more? * * * Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" But all this was the language of our poor sick souls, compassed with infirmities. (Psalms lxxvii.) Our God is faithful that promised, and when the pathway was in the weary land he was unto us the shadow of a great Rock, and rivers of water in a dry place. He gave us to drink of the brook in the way, and he was the lifter up of our head. We have found Christ's flesh to be meat indeed, and his blood to be drink indeed, to be the sustenance of our life, that we poor, vile sinners may live before God. How often we have looked unto him, and were lightened, and our faces were not ashamed. O Jesus has often replenished our weary souls, and filled our hungry souls with his goodness. Our youth many times has been renewed like the eagles, and thus renewed in strength we have run in the path of life; we run through all adversities and conflicts, and we have walked with our God by faith, and we were then not weary and faint, for he quieted our fears, put strength in us, and made us of good cheer, saying, "Fear thou not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my

righteousness." Yes, child of God, muse upon the years that are past, and in thy musings this will surely appear: thy God hath not cast thee off; he has ever been mindful of thee, he has ceaselessly done thee good, poor sinner. Blessed art thou to trust in him. Let us not believe the devil's lies, nor the ministers of Satan, who pretend to be the ministers of Christ; let us not believe the lies that an evil heart of unbelief in us would utter, for all these liars lie against the everlasting covenant of God's grace, that is ordered in all things and sure. All the goodness of the Lord promised therein is sure to all the seed. All voices that insinuate that our God is changeable, neglectful, that he forsakes the work of his hands, are false. O ye tried, fearful, trembling souls, "Thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places."—Deut. xxxiii. 29.

"The work which his goodness began
The arm of his strength will complete;
His promise is yea, and amen,
And never was forfeited yet.
Things future, nor things that are now,
Not all things below nor above,
Can make him his purpose forego,
Or sever my soul from his love."

And if we are those who fear the Lord we shall find, even unto gray hairs and to old age, though the outward man perisheth, the inward man is renewed day by day. Christ nourishes and cherishes every member of his body, the church. Many crumbs of mercy are ours, and we have comforting, sacred, yes, delightful, moments when Jesus, our beloved, comes in to us, and sups with us, and we with him. (Rev. iii. 20.) He comes into his garden, and his voice is heavenly music, saying, "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey: I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." O the constancy of Jesus Christ our dear Redeemer! Though we are often faithless, wretchedly forgetful, wandering away from him, backsliding, yet he abideth faithful, for when we were apprehended of him, when he drew us unto himself, and we embraced him as our dear loving Savior, this was the language of his heart unto us: "I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies: I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the Lord."—Hosea ii. 19, 20. Surely we are beginning to know Jesus Christ. Let me know thee more and more. As it is Jehovah's divine power that giveth his people all things that pertain unto life and godliness through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue, all our needs shall surely be supplied according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. "I will not turn away from them to do them good."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

MACOMB, Ill., December, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have just finished reading the last number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and realize that my subscription expires with this issue, so I inclose the money, for I do not want to read one number at your expense. I have been a subscriber for twenty-eight years, and have been enabled to always pay in advance, and try to be thankful that I have been so blessed, for sometimes I was sore pressed to get it. I could not conscientiously do otherwise, for I consider it a just debt, and is due you, and should not be neglected if possible. The SIGNS is ever a welcome visitor at my home, and well worth the price, and I

feel I would be negligent of a sacred duty to withhold that which rightfully belongs to the publishers, and embarrass them financially. We should bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. Each one by helping a little would in the aggregate amount to a large sum. Dear brethren, let us show our appreciation by paying our subscription, thereby holding up the hands of the editors and publishers, and also have an answer of a clear conscience for having done right and our bounden duty.

Dear brethren Ker and Lefferts, I have just read the editorials in the December 1st number of the SIGNS, and they were both good and comforting, and I feel that we, as Old School Baptists, should be thankful for such able gifts to the cause. I believe also, that for this very cause you were raised up to fill the position you now occupy. I believe God is the God of purpose, and while he has seen fit to remove from our midst our beloved brother and editor, Elder F. A. Chick, whom we all loved, and whose writings were so comforting to God's people, and while he will be sadly missed, yet he filled the measure of his days; he finished his course; he rests from his labors. While we are sad, we should not feel despondent, for God is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." In him is no "variableness, neither shadow of turning," his arm is not shortened, his power is unlimited, he is just as able to call and qualify men to preach the gospel, to feed and comfort his children, as in times past. While it is his will and purpose to call Elder Chick from the position as editor of the SIGNS, his mantle, it seems, has fallen upon you, dear brethren, not by chance, but by the unerring purpose of the wise God, who makes no mistakes. You are called, not to fill another's place, but a place of your own, marked out for you, and by the grace of God you shall stand as valiant for the truth as those gone before. May you be endued with wisdom from on high, and be enabled to cry aloud and spare not, warring against spiritual wickedness in high places. We are jealous of the doctrine of the Old School Baptists, which is the doctrine of the Bible, set forth in the columns of the SIGNS, and may you ever contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and may our dear paper continue just as it is now, filled with sweet messages from dear brethren and sisters, and every one so lovely and comforting. I would not have one thing changed. May God bless you, dear editors, and enable you to go on speaking comfortably to Jerusalem; may you be encouraged, fed and comforted with the same comfort wherewith you have comforted others.

Dear brethren, have I said anything amiss? If I have forgive me, and never let it appear in the paper. I am such a poor, weak creature, so prone to sin and so apt to make mistakes, I feel I need correction oftener than any one, but I have such a love for God's people, I hope, I would not do anything to cause offence. "By this [says Christ] shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." But if we find fault, say hard things of each other, or write things that will cause offense, do we show forth the love of God? This is so unkind, so unbrotherly. If we love not our brother whom we have seen, how can we love God whom we have not seen? He who loveth God loveth his brother also. "See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." So the love of God should rule our every thought and action toward our brethren and sisters. But,

"Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?

O so much of the time I am in doubt, and cannot answer in the affirmative.

"I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

But I have a little hope which sometimes appears bright for a moment. Praise is then on my lips, and I can sing with confidence, Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless and praise his holy name. "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul." "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." But these blessed moments of peace and rest do not stay with me long, soon darkness falls and I am again in the warfare. There is nothing that brings one so low as for our Savior to hide his smiling face. How utterly alone, how helpless, how little and unworthy we feel. How precious to our poor souls to know that all our times are in the hand of the great and wise God, as well as the kind and merciful Savior. He leads us into darkness as well as into light. He will not leave nor forsake his children, but will guide and keep them through this life, and at last take them home to dwell with him, where there is no more sickness, sorrow, pain or death, where they shall see his face and be satisfied.

Dear ones of the household of faith, write on for our comfort, for you do not know how much you help and encourage weak ones like myself. I hope you will cast the mantle of charity over this imperfect epistle, for I realize that I cannot write as you all do, but I have a desire to cast in my mite, and testify to God's goodness to a poor sinner, for it is by his grace I am what I am, saved by grace, if saved at all, and all praise and honor to his name ever more.

Wishing all a happy Christmas and glad New Year, and with love unfeigned, I remain your most unworthy sister,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

JAMES IV. 17.

"To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

A child desired to know what this text meant, and at the home of her parents I endeavored to present such views as were given me. James, the servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, is addressing the twelve tribes scattered abroad. Thus we see who are addressed and who addresses them. We will consider first the apostle James and his authority for this epistle. James was one of the Lord's chosen apostles, and what he writes is as a prince ruling in judgment in the kingdom of heaven. This he received by divine authority of him who rules in heaven and in earth, therefore his declarations, as well as the rest of the apostles, are sanctioned and approved of him who placed him there. His letter is to the twelve tribes scattered abroad, and embraces the household of faith in every kindred, tribe, tongue and nation. The words "brethren" and "brother" are used continuously in his epistle, so the apostle does not address the unregenerate and those who have not received like precious faith. The Lord's people are given wisdom and understanding, so they may receive the commandments and exhortations combined in the New Testament. "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

We will next consider sin. What is sin? Sin is the transgression of the law. One must be under a law before he can be a transgressor of the law, for where no

law is, there is no transgression. So the subjects of God's love and mercy are addressed by the apostle, and they, and they only, are subjects who do transgress this particular law. None but those chosen in Christ from the foundation of the world are subject to the law of Christ or are under law to Christ. Let us consider the image or man made after the likeness of Christ. Adam received a commandment (law) from God and transgressed, so that death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. We find the woman gives evidence of a knowledge of what God has said; although she had not as yet been made, she received the law in Adam. Eve is the mother of all living, of the earth earthy, and as we have borne the image of the earthy, so shall we also bear the image of the heavenly. Adam is the figure of Him who was to come. We see Christ Jesus as head over the church, which is his body, the bride, the Lamb's wife, and she the mother of all living, and as in him, and receiving in him of his divine attributes and likeness, being bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. We in him delight to do the will of God and keep his commandments, so that in due time they as their Head have the law written in the heart and in the mind, and God is their God and they are his people. Christ spake by the psalmist concerning himself: "I delight to do thy will, O my God." "I love thy law." "Thy law is the truth." "Thy law is light." "Out of Zion shall go forth the law." I came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill it. The law is just, holy and good; the law is spiritual; the strength of sin is the law. Christ came to redeem them that were under the law, and did so by his obedience unto death upon the cross, and cried, "It is finished," and by his resurrection arose for their justification, so that the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made them free from the law of sin and under law to Christ. Paul says, As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous. As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. Here he speaks of the church, the bride, but does not infer that all of Adam's race are not dead, for by Adam's transgression all are born in sin and shapen in iniquity, and dead in trespasses and in sin, being in him, and receiving of him in his disobedience of the law God gave him, so that death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. The apostle, speaking to the church, says, We were children of wrath even as others, and by nature dead in trespasses and in sin; the dead know not anything. Paul said he was alive once without the law (law of God in Christ to him), but when the commandment came, sin revived and he died. This law written in the heart and in the mind was to bring him to Christ, and Christ came to redeem them that were under the law, and none others, so that by one man's obedience many shall be made righteous—quickened by his Spirit and made alive unto God, and are under law to Christ, so that to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin. If we know we should visit some desolate and afflicted one, and do it not, to us it is sin. If a brother trespass against another and he does not go to him alone and tell him his fault, he sins. If we know to not forsake the assembling of the saints, and do forsake them, it is sin. If we know to speak a word in season, and do it not, it is sin. I might go on at length, but it is not necessary. Jesus says, If ye love me keep my command-

ments. The commandments of Christ and the apostles are full and complete in the New Testament as to what governs the church as a body and members as individuals. Under law to Christ means something, and transgression of the law means something, and God is no respecter of persons; therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

J. M. FENTON.

TOTAL DEPRAVITY AND FREEDOM OF THE WILL.

THE doctrine of total depravity and the opposed doctrine of freedom of the will have been on my mind for some time, and I shall presume to write some things concerning them, knowing that unless guided by the Spirit of truth what I say will not be of profit to the readers of the SIGNS. These things may not be profitable to discuss, but sometimes truth is made more evident when compared and contrasted with error.

"The doctrine of God our Savior" is spoken of as but one doctrine in the Scriptures, as, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain," while the doctrines of men and "doctrines of devils" are usually spoken of in the plural, as, "teaching for doctrines, the commandments of men." Therefore a plurality of doctrines implies false doctrines. Doctrines that are utterly opposed are evidences that one is false, and both may be false. In speaking of total depravity and freedom of the will it is evident, then, that at best "doctrines" must be false, because the Bible doctrine is but one doctrine; they are utterly opposed. The word "depravity" is not a Bible term, and technically is not the best word to use, but when prefixed by the word "total" is used to express the same meaning as the Bible terms, "dead in trespasses and in sins." Of the words, total depravity, total is the more objectionable to believers in freedom of the will, because all admit some degree of depravity, but will not admit it is "total." Total depravity is used by one class of believers to express their belief concerning the condition of mankind by nature since the transgression in the garden of Eden. Another class express their belief of the same by the freedom of the will. The condition of mankind in a state of nature, and as to how that condition was brought about, is treated upon in the first part of the Old Testament Scriptures, and throughout them and the New Testament Scriptures man is spoken of in accordance with his condition after the fall, unless wrought upon by the Holy Spirit in regeneration. It is very important, then, that we correctly interpret man's condition, because if we go wrong in this we are sure to go wrong throughout the entire Scriptures. Does the account of the fall of man warrant the use of the term, total depravity, to describe his condition since the fall? One of the stronger proofs of total depravity is the denial by the natural man of the plain and positive statements of man's condition in nature as recorded in the second chapter of Genesis, in which God declared that "in the day that thou eatest thereof [the forbidden fruit] thou shalt surely die," and the acceptance of the contradiction of that statement by the serpent in the third chapter. It could not be stated more plainly by God nor more positively denied by Satan, and yet the natural man accepts the denial by the serpent in preference to the positive statement by God. Surely he must be totally depraved and blinded by the god of this world. Adam not only died to the state of innocency in the day that he partook of the forbidden fruit, but also

corporeally, in the sense that he had the sentence of death within him, which was fully executed later. Adam is continuing to die. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." The apostle here is treating of corporeal death and the resurrection. "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." —James i. 15. Lust conceived and brought forth sin in the garden of Eden, and when sin was finished it brought forth corporeal death. By the total depravity of man is indicated the necessity of regeneration and the new birth, and because the new birth is declared to be a positive necessity—"Ye must be born again," it is positive proof that total depravity is true. The will can have no part in the change from nature to grace, if the change be worthy to be termed being "born again." Up to the time of birth in nature the subject born has not been consulted, nor has it taken any active or willful part, but was entirely passive. Just so in the quickened spiritual birth. "Of his own will begat he us." "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." The whole conversation of Nicodemus with Jesus was but the manifestation of his depraved condition and lack of knowledge of the necessity of the new birth. Further, the substitution of the freedom of the will for the necessity of the new birth is opposed to the teaching of the Scriptures, in that it makes salvation dependent upon the choice of man, who is dead in trespasses and in sins. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you," is the language of the Savior. "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts." "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." The teaching of the Scriptures is that God does the willing, and works in his people of his good pleasure. "I will be to them a God and they shall be to me a people." "Thy people shall be a willing people in the day of thy power." Freewillism is the equivalent of salvation by works, and there is no mixing of works and grace. "If by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." Salvation by works depends upon the will of man to choose salvation, his ability to hold out faithful, and his destiny depends upon how well he has succeeded. The question is often asked by those who do not believe in total depravity, if we do not believe every one has a chance to be saved? The answer is, There is no chance for any one to be saved; all who are ever saved are saved without a chance. The mission of the Savior was "to seek and to save that which was lost," not to give a chance to be saved. Then they will ask, How can God be just without giving every one an opportunity to be saved? Paul anticipated and answered this question by saying, "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."—Romans ix. 13–16.

One other condition is urged, and that is, every person is sufficiently awakened to choose salvation if he will. This condition implies "standing room" between spiritual life and death, or it implies a sufficient amount of spiritual or eternal life to choose salvation, and if one fails to make the choice, that amount of spiritual or eternal life must perish. These fallacies are too glaring to require further comment. But let us turn from the false doctrine of the freedom of the will and salvation by works to the soul-satisfying doctrine of salvation by grace through the quickening and regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit. Let us hear David's experience of these things; probably the greatest experience ever told in so few words: "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." It requires the light of the Holy Spirit to shine in the heart to manifest the depravity of it. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Those in whose hearts this light has truly shined, desire to give all the glory of their salvation to God. To all such the promises of God are sweet and precious when applied by the Holy Spirit. They shall suffer persecution and have tribulation in this life, but of them it may be said, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

Dear brother Ker, the foregoing is at your disposal. It is much like the writer, lacking in spirituality and edification. I trust you will not allow it to crowd out more edifying communications. I have been hearing some modern missionism in our town, which may serve as an excuse for making the attempt to write.

Yours in christian fellowship,

G. C. JORDAN.

BENTONVILLE, Ark., Feb. 24, 1914.

ELGIN, Oregon, Nov. 25, 1914.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I am sending you an article from Elder John Stipp, written in 1888, and would like to have it published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES if it meets with your approval. I believe it will be of general interest to our people. Elder Stipp was one of the ablest ministers I ever heard preach. He was a profound scriptorian, and if there are any of our churches that use "leavened bread" in their communion they should give the old brother's reasons why they should not use leavened bread in their communion some thought.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

SCIO, Oregon, Sept. 22, 1888.

DEAR BROTHER D. H. GOBLE:—I will offer a few thoughts on the communion of the Lord's supper, concerning the quality of bread proper to be used on that most solemn occasion. I did not know until very recently that there was discrepancy on that subject. I was born and reared in the state of Virginia. My parents were what were then called Regular Predestinarian Baptists, and I was frequently present and witnessed the manner of their communion, and they invariably broke and partook of unleavened bread. In 1832 I moved to Illinois, and June 2nd, 1836, was baptized in the fellowship of Danville Church of Old School

Baptists. They also invariably partook of unleavened bread at the communion of the Lord's supper. In the summer of 1848 I emigrated to Oregon, where I have lived for the last forty years, and I never saw leavened bread used at the Lord's supper here, and I cannot find a Baptist here who ever saw leavened bread used at the communion anywhere, but it appears that there are churches that use leavened bread at the supper. I think it contrary to gospel order, and I will give my reasons from Scripture testimony why I think so. Now Christ instituted his own supper on that memorable night in which he was betrayed as a memorial of his agonizing suffering which was in a few moments to follow. Now if we can ascertain what quality of bread Christ used on that occasion, that is the quality of bread we should use, and not use something else instead. We read that Christ was made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. When he came under the law he became responsible for the fulfillment of the law, both for himself and for all the heirs of promise, hence we hear him saying, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Christ alone was able to fulfill the law, so then he is both the lawmaker and the lawfulfiller, but not the lawbreaker. But if he used leavened bread on that mournful occasion he was a lawbreaker, consequently a sinner, for sin is the transgression of the law, which I will show hereafter. We must remember that Christ met with the twelve apostles in a large upper room, furnished, i. e., made ready for the express purpose of eating the passover with his disciples, for he says, "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." Now the question is, Did Christ eat the passover with his disciples with leavened bread, and thus violate that law which he himself gave, and thus become a transgressor? O no, by no means; far be it from him to do so. This is the law concerning the passover: "Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel. * * * And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever. In that first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land. Ye shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread." Now this is the law of God, and Christ is God, and dare presumptuous man, who is but dust, say that Christ transgressed this? which surely he did if he ate leavened bread at the passover supper, or even suffered it to be in the house, and he could not have broken leavened bread at his last supper unless it had been in the house. Seeing then that Christ did break unleavened bread on that memorable night, what right have we to change the pattern given us by the Lawgiver himself? We would have the same right to change the ordinance of baptism from

the immersion of believers in Christ in water to the sprinkling of unconscious babes and call it baptism. It appears to my mind that Paul also forbade the use of leavened bread in the feast of the Lord's supper, and commended unleavened bread. Leaven is used throughout the Scriptures as an emblem of all manner of wickedness, deceit and hypocrisy. Paul, in speaking of the incestuous persons, says, "Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump [church]? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast [the Lord's supper], not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." Again, "Ye did run well; who did hinder you [or drive you back—margin], that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."—Gal. v. 7-9. The apostle says, "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened." How were they unleavened? They became unleavened through the sacrificial offering of Christ, their passover, who by that one sacrifice hath put away forever all their sins, or leaven. Thus was their old leaven purged out and they were made a new lump, unleavened, as the apostle says, and of whom it is further said, "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins [or leaven], sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."—Heb. i. 3. The apostle further says, "I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, being many, are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread."—1 Cor. x. 15-17. Now here the apostle says that Christ and all his chosen, elect people compose that one bread, and it is unleavened, for the apostle says it is. As ye are unleavened, I repeat, if the body, as the apostle says, is unleavened, is not the head of that body also unleavened? Can we say that Christ was leavened? I dare not. Leaven does not belong to Christ, it is the property of antichrist. When we put leaven into it we adulterate that bread with alloy. Christ speaks of himself as a corn of wheat falling into the ground and dying. Was that corn of wheat leavened? Was it not the pure, unadulterated corn of wheat, in whose germ was hid the eternal life of all the heirs of promise? Then, seeing that the body, substance or antitype is unleavened, should not the type or emblem be also unleavened in order to rightly represent it? I think it surely should. Paul says, "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." I have shown from Paul's writings that leaven was set forth

in the Scriptures as a figure of all manner of wickedness. I will now take the testimony of Christ himself for further evidence of that fact. "And when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread. Then said Jesus unto them, Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees."—Matt. xvi. 5, 6. Verses 11 and 12: "How is it that ye do not understand, that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." In the fourth verse he said they were a wicked and adulterous generation. "And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the leaven of Herod."—Mark viii. 15. "In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trod one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy."—Luke xii. 1. Now, seeing that leaven is used by an apostle to set forth the wickedness of the incestuous person, also malice and wickedness, and also by Christ himself to set forth the pernicious of the Pharisees and Sadducees and the extremely wicked actions of Herod, and as an emblem of hypocrisy, can it be proper or right to use it in commemoration of so tremendous, unspeakable suffering and dying groans of God's dear Son? Surely it cannot; still there are those whom I esteem as being far my superiors in knowledge and understanding who use it. It has been urged by those who used leavened bread that it does not matter about the type, so that the substance or spirit is right. If that idea be correct, then we might use pouring or sprinkling for baptism. But it is all-important that we have a proper understanding of the type, and act accordingly.

The foregoing was written by the urgent request of many brethren. Just as it is I send to you; you can dispose of it as you see proper. This day I am eighty-one years, ten months and twelve days old. Time has been when I could write without making so many mistakes, but those days have passed away, never to return. I am asked to write often, but while writing the foregoing a sentence of importance would occur to my mind, but before I could write it it would be gone, and I could not recall it. I often think I ought to stop trying to preach, as my mind and memory have become greatly impaired, yet the brethren urge me to continue, but death will soon sign my release.

Yours unworthily,

JOHN STIPP.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Dec. 8, 1914.

DEAR ELDER H. C. KER:—You may be surprised to receive a letter from me, but ever since I heard of the death of your wife, six months ago, I have had an inclination to write to you, as having passed through a similar trial, I am much better able to sympathize with you than those who have never experienced such tribulation. I do not wish to rebel against my God, but it is difficult at times to say, O Lord, thy will, not mine, be done. It has been three years this date since my dear wife was taken from me, yet I miss her now as much as ever; but I cannot wish her back, I have the blessed assurance that she is far better off than I. Dear brother, I am not com-

petent to write you the kind of a letter that I desire, for I have not control of language to express my feelings, so I will have to write just as my mind is led; you know I have no control of it, I can only look to the Lord for guidance, and I hope and pray that he will guide my thoughts and lead me in the proper channel. I am very well aware that there is no good in me (that is, in my flesh), I am as prone to wander from the path of rectitude as the sparks are to fly upward, and I know by past and sad experience that I have many times (I am sorry to say) wandered far and wide from the path of justice; but such is the effect of carnality. I feel thankful (but not as thankful as I should) that the good Lord has led me thus far along the shores of time; he has guided, guarded and protected me for over threescore years and ten; many times the very things that I craved and he deprived me of, proved to be a blessing, which proves to me that we do not know what is best for us. O how can I thank him enough (I know I cannot) for the many rich blessings he bestows upon me day after day, and for the many times that he has led me around the various pitfalls that lie in my pathway, in safety? Although he has led me down deep into the valley of affliction, his rich grace has always carried me through that which has proved to be for my good and his own glory, and I rejoice and praise him for his goodness and kindness toward me. When I look back over my past life, what is it? What good is it? What has it been? All vanity; it appears to be made up of sin and transgression all the way through; I can see nothing to boast of, it is full of blunders all the way, from beginning to end, and I wonder at times what I am spared for. I believe God has a design in it, yet I cannot conceive what it is, and he does not intend that I shall until he sees fit to reveal it to me. God plans and carries out his plans, and none can hinder; I do not wish to, it would be of no avail if I did, neither can I assist him in his work. There are many who think they can, and are trying very hard all the time, and they boast of the great work they are performing, but I do not despise them, they should be pitied; they know no better; they are doing the best they know how; they can do no more, and we should not expect any more, so let them go on, for God has a purpose in them, the same as all events that he controls; they will go just as far as he designs them to go, and no farther, for their bounds are set, and they cannot go beyond them.

Would it not be better that I look within my ownself, instead of looking out into the world, for there is much to engage my attention there? I find my greatest enemy in my ownself; I find a great conflict raging within, and if it were not for that little hope (I say little, because it becomes very small at times, and yet it is very strong) what would I do? Thanks be to God, it clings to me, and holds me, I do not have the power to hold it; the anchor holds the ship, not the ship the anchor. How true and beautiful are the words of Cowper:

> "God moves in a mysterious way
> His wonders to perform;
> He plants his footsteps in the sea,
> And rides upon the storm."

But these things are too glorious for me to attain unto, not that I do not wish to, but I fear they are not for me. I often think of one of Newton's poems:

> "'Tis a point I long to know;
> (Oft it causes anxious thought,)
> Do I love the Lord or no?
> Am I his, or am I not?"

Could I but have the blessed assurance that I am one of his chosen few I think I

would be one of the happiest mortals on earth, but if it depended upon me to obtain the least of his rich blessings, I could never hope to obtain a single one, and would at once give up in despair. But here is where that hope springs up and buoys us up and tells us they are not obtained in that way, but that they are the gifts of God; not because we merit and are worthy to receive them, but according to his goodness and mercy are they so bountifully showered upon us. He ordained it to be so, and I feel thankful that things are arranged as they are by an all-wise God, and not by such insignificant mortals as we are. What utter failure it would be if we had the arranging of them. There would be greater war than there is now going on in Europe, and that is certainly terrible enough. But it is vain to think of such a state of things; let us look in another direction.

But I fear I am wandering too far from what is profitable. Dear brother, I do not know whether or not I have written anything that will interest you; there is so much carnality in everything I say, think and do, that it makes me feel ashamed of myself, yet how can I help it? It is in me, and seems to crop out at times unawares. I feel thankful that others cannot see me as I see myself, for if they did I do not know how they could show as much friendship toward me as they do. Possibly I am deceived; it may be they do not feel as friendly toward me as they appear, and I cannot blame them, for I know I am a vile and sinful mortal, and I hope you and they will spread the mantle of charity over all my shortcomings, as they are many. I crave your prayers when you approach the throne of grace. One thing I know: I love the household of faith, and love to mingle in their company, which strengthens my hope and buoys me up, and wipes away the tears. Mine is a very rough road to travel, but there is no turning back, I must go on. It is God's sustaining grace that supports us on the way; and I realize that I am nearing the end of my journey, and have not much farther to travel, when I hope to receive full fruition of all that I have been hoping for these many years.

I fear I will weary you, and think I had better draw this letter to a close, as it is becoming somewhat lengthy, not that the subject is exhausted, as it is inexhaustible, it has no limit.

In much fear and trembling, I am your unworthy friend,

C. S. FETTER.

ELKMONT, Ala., October, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—I must write and thank you, and tell you how much I appreciate the Bible you sent me for the three new subscribers I sent you. The Bible suits me well, as our Bible was so heavy I could not hold it to read, since I have been sick so much. I have been suffering with dropsy for about five years, not able to do anything most of the time, or not even able to be up. It seems to me that my days on earth now are all of grief, sorrow and affliction. The last two years have been doubly sad to us, as our dear daughter, an only child, was stricken with that fatal and dread disease, consumption. She lingered about fifteen months. O how hard it is to see our loved ones suffer and not be able to do anything to help them. After all that prayers, loving hands, doctors, nurses and kind friends could do, on the night of Jan. 17th, 1914, the death angel came and took her sweet spirit from her mortal body. It seemed to me more than I

could bear, but the Lord God, who is our only deliverer and burden-bearer, has sustained me by his grace, which he bestows upon all his children. She was not a member of the church here, but I do hope and believe she was one of the church of Christ. I think I have evidence enough to believe it, for she was always kindhearted and generous, and bore her sickness with more patience than any one I ever saw. She was always cheerful, and told me often that she never would get well, but she was not afraid to die, and if it were not for leaving us to grieve, she was willing to go. She said she knew that she could not save herself, for the good book tells us we have got to become as little children before we can enter the kingdom of heaven. I once heard her say, As long as a sinner thinks he can save himself by his obedience he does not need a Savior. Three years ago the doctors said I could live but a short time, and she went out in the garden and prayed that if I never could get better to take me out of my suffering, for she felt she could give me up easier than she could see me suffer, and she said it seemed to her as if something told her, You will go first; and so it is. She must have been praying in the right spirit, for the Bible tells us that God does not hear sinners, and at the last she seemed to be perfectly submissive to his will, and told me it was all right or it would not be that way. We read in the word of God, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." I believe she was pure in heart. If she had lived she would be twenty-seven years old to-day, October 18th. It is nine months to-day since she was buried. O how desolate is our home without her, and how I miss her loving hands and sweet voice around my bed. She was devoted to us, and it was her delight to wait on me when I was sick. It is so hard to think we can never see her sweet face again. I dreamed one night I heard her play one of the pieces I so often heard her play on her piano, and it seemed real, but when I awoke it was all a dream. I wish I could dream often of her, as it is sweet to be with her in visions. If it were not for the hope and consolation I have of her being at rest, I do not see how I could live. I never can forget her dying words when she said, Jesus, come and take me. I hope her prayer was answered, and she is with him in mansions of glory to-day. The funeral service was conducted at our home on Sunday evening by Mr. Copeland, the Presbyterian pastor here for several years, and her remains were followed by a large number of relatives and friends and laid to rest by the side of her sweet little sister, who was buried fourteen years ago last April, in the cemetery near old Antioch Primitive Baptist Church, of which I am a member, and of which I did think I would say something when I started to write, but, like all the rest of Old Baptists, had to tell what was on my mind first. When I read sister White's letter from Texas, in one of the January numbers of the SIGNS, about her daughter's death last November, I wanted to tell her she was not alone in trouble, and I knew how to sympathize with her. We had to give both of our children up, and all we can do is to be submissive to Him who doeth all things well, after the counsel of his own will. We have a precious little orphan girl, eight years old, who is much company for us. We took her over two years ago to be with Tera when I was gone. I hope the Lord will help us to raise her in the right way as long as we live.

Our church is in a sad condition, as

there are only a few members, and without an undershepherd. For the past year we have sometimes had preaching by visiting brethren. We had preaching the second Sunday in this month. There were not many present, but I believe the Lord was with us, and that is enough, when we can feel his presence, but it is often the other way with me, my hope almost vanishes, and I am made to wonder if I am deceived. I am one alone, or seem to be; O, is there any one like me? Then again I read of the children of Israel, how they doubted and feared, and how the Lord protected them, and I rejoice that we have the same God; may we trust him. I am like his disciples were when the multitude that followed him said, This is a hard saying, who can hear it? and turned back. He asked his disciples if they would also go, and they said, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. I have no confidence in the flesh, so that hope is all I have. Paul tells us that we walk by faith, and not by sight. I wish I could write as I can see and hope I understand. When I read or hear others testify to the truth that is in God's word I am made to rejoice. Preaching was once all alike to me, but it is quite different now. I believe in salvation by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves. That is why I like to read the SIGNS, for it advocates the doctrine our Savior taught. When I look back to the days of my youth, when I first received a hope, I could not believe that I ever should grieve and be troubled by doubts and fears, but I am made to say with Job, O that I were as in months past, when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head. Then my children were with me, but now the evil days are upon me, and I am cast down and afflicted and made to mourn, but though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. Our Savior learned obedience by the things he suffered, and should not we?

I wish some of the writers of the SIGNS would give their views upon Gal. v. 27.

I have written this in weakness of body and mind, and it is for you to do with as you please. I enjoy reading all the editorials and letters in the SIGNS, for they tell my experience better than I can. I do not know any of you in the flesh, but when I read you do not seem like strangers to me. I love the Old Baptists with a different love, but I love my neighbors and friends, and wish I were as good naturally as they are.

I must close, for I feel that I have already wearied you, but I do not think now that I will ever be able to write again, as I grow weaker every day. I feel that if I did not have one of the best husbands in the world I could not have lived this long. Pray for me that I may endure what the Lord puts upon me. I have felt oftentimes in my life that his presence was with me, and without him I am nothing. I joined the Old Baptists and was baptized on the 27th day of October, 1894, and have lived within a half mile of the meetinghouse since, and go every time I am able when there is preaching.

I am a poor, afflicted sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all,

DELLA JAMES.

XENIA, Ohio.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you something from the pen of Elder Weaver, of Galion, Ohio, which I desire to have published in the SIGNS.

Yours affectionately,

ELIZABETH BUCKWALTER.

POWER AT THE THRONE.

(REVELATION XX. 11.)

THERE is a golden thread that runs through true religion in the world, which can be traced back through the prophets, seers and sages in the world's history; through the lives of all men and women who have been endowed with the Spirit of God. This thread of gold, of truly great and lasting powers, binding, as we may say, souls of earth to the world eternal, is often spoken of as the tie that binds our hearts in christian love. All that they have ever done or attained to has been done in full accordance with law. Everything is first worked out in the unseen before it is manifested in the seen, in the ideal before it is realized in the real, in the spiritual before it shows forth in the material. In speaking of these great powers and forces we must use them in their order, and use great care and not get the effect before the cause, or action before life, and place the realms of the unseen as the realms of cause, and the realms of the seen as the realms of effect. The nature of the effect is always determined and conditioned by the nature of the cause. If there is an individual life, there must of necessity be an infinite source of life from which it comes; if there is wisdom, there must be a storehouse of wisdom from whence it springs. The same is true of peace, power, heat, light and all other things. There is, then, the spirit of infinite life and power back of all, which is the source of all. This infinite power is creating, working and ruling through the agency of great immutable laws and forces that run through the universe that surrounds us on every side. Every act of our everyday life is governed by the same great laws and forces; every flower that grows by the wayside springs up, blooms and fades, painted by the great laws of nature, far above Solomon and all his glory. Every snowflake that floats between heaven and earth, forms, falls and melts. Conditions come upon us which we cannot avoid; our dear friends are taken from us, kingdoms rise and fall, the sparrow has protection, the hairs of the head cannot fall, the proud waves of the sea are stayed, the leopard has his spots, the Ethiopian his skin, the beautiful heavens above us are filled with stars which twinkle, and the world for six thousand years has stood the test of time, and with all our knowledge and attainments we still look upon them as the poet of years ago, and say, "Twinkle, twinkle, little star, how I wonder what you are." The great canopy studded with diamonds was meted out with a span, and if this be true, and we know that it is, there must of necessity be a force behind it all greater than the things which are made—a controlling factor, a ruling force, to keep in motion and to execute the laws. The power which is to us life and all things, the power that rules supreme in heaven and earth, the cause of all causes, which can be ascribed to none but God, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the all-wise Jehovah, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, the eternal God, the Power at the throne. Did you ever stop to think how dependent we are? How long could we live if it depended upon ourselves? This great machine of ourselves (I call it great because it is, for man is wonderfully made) was ushered first into this world without his consent, made up of flesh and bones, joints, veins and nerves, with the breath of life, a living soul, supplied with energy, free air to breathe, water to drink, food to eat and a mission to fulfill, depending entirely every moment of life upon God,

the Creator of all things, and it is not surprising to find a people who are led into some of these deep mysteries to sing, "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!" &c. Another thing we must take into consideration when speaking on this subject is, there is nothing impossible with God, and when he commands it stands fast, and when he speaks it is done. O how great and unsearchable are thy judgments, and thy ways past finding out. How far above the reason of natural man are thy precepts, and what a glorious plan of salvation thou hast ordained for poor, fallen man. When we view our God high and lifted up, and his train filling the temple, there is no power in us, we are undone; as a lifeless wretch we fall prostrate before the Power at the throne, for we have nowhere else to go, and we ask of him, Dear Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. Why should we fear? Why should we mourn when we have the evidence that this God is our God, and we are brought to the realization of the fact that he has said by the apostle Paul that all things work together for good? It cannot be otherwise, dear friends, for God is at the helm and guides the ship, and the precious hope which he has given you as an anchor of the soul is sure and steadfast, reaching to that within the veil. Here was what I had in mind when I called it the golden thread, the invisible tie that binds our hearts in christian love, the cause which opens up our hearts to him, and we love him and his people because he first loved us. The psalmist could say, Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou, O God, art my guide and my guard. What great power is the power at the throne! None higher, none equal, for there is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God. When we have finished our testimony, when our warfare is over and death steps in and separates life from the body, and they place our bodies in the grave, there no one can help but God. Sin is finished and paid in full; the wages is death; what claim have we? Here it is once more we speak of the golden thread; the hope which God has given us does not stop in the grave, or death, it is that which God has given, and the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Grace conquers all, and the same will commands, and they who are in the graves shall come forth. Again the power at the throne, the cause. A mighty change shall be wrought in us: from natural to spiritual, corruption to incorruption, mortal to immortality, and we shall dwell with this same One, and be like him, and forever rest and praise him from whom all blessings flow. Amen.

G. WEAVER.

ATTENTION!

SOME time ago we sent bills to many of our subscribers who were in arrears with their subscriptions, and requested them to at least let us know whether or not they were receiving the paper, and if they were receiving it, if they wished us to continue sending it to them at the address to which it was then going, but so far we have received answers from but a very small portion of those to whom the bills were sent, and so of course we do not know that they are receiving the paper, and if we do not hear from them by January 15th, 1915, we will take their names off our list.

If there are any to whom bills were sent who wish the paper continued who are not at present able to pay for it, but who expect to be able to do so in the future, will write us to that effect we will gladly continue their paper, for we do not wish to take the SIGNS from those who want to read it, neither do we wish to force it upon those who do not want it, so please let us hear from you at once.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1915.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

It was the custom of dear brother Chick for many years to write for January 1st number of the Signs what he called a "New Year's Greeting," in which he reviewed the past and expressed hope for the future. Now that he has gone to his last reward it falls upon us to address our subscribers, readers and writers in this way, but as we begin we fully understand that our effort will fall far short of his good work along this line. To do the best we can is all that can be expected, and we feel sure that our brethren will deal charitably with us.

At the beginning of each new year all connected with the publication of the Signs are filled with more or less anxiety with reference to its welfare during the year, not knowing what is in store for us. When the Signs was the only paper of its kind published in the United States conditions in every particular were different. Old School Baptists then were reckoned Old School Baptists wherever located, and were united in love and doctrine and enjoyed the full fellowship of the gospel. There are about thirty other publications among our denomination, each having a circulation particularly in its own territory, and the circulation of the Signs is not more than one-half that of years ago. There has been no change in any point of doctrine advocated by the Signs since its first issue, nor is there the slightest prospect of such a thing. It has all these years contended earnestly for every point of gospel truth, with the desire to honor the worthy name of our blessed Savior, and we feel sure that while the editors and managers of the Signs have always desired to meet the approval of all brethren, there has never been the slightest fear of man before their eyes in doing what they have felt to be their duty, and we all sincerely hope that faithfulness in us will continue to the end of our mortal pilgrimage, as has been the case with those who have preceded us. Love should prompt every duty of faithfulness to the household of God, and whenever anything other than love prompts, discord and division will result. Love will work forbearance, patience and longsuffering, but pride and highmindedness will work destruction and death. Hence it is necessary to try the spirits, that we all may know by what spirit a man is prompted in whatever course he takes.

Lately we have received several letters expressing satisfaction and comfort received through the editorial of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, upon the subject of the resurrection of the dead, republished in November 15th number. Hearty indorsement of the same article is expressed by those who have written. We all feel glad when the brethren are comforted and helped in any way, hence are glad we republished the editorial. In one or two of the letters received, however, there are unkind expressions with reference to good brethren who do not express themselves upon the subject of the resurrection as the writers do, and we

are very sorry to know that such expressions could be written by those who have the love of God in them. Because a man does not exactly agree with another is no reason why we should say hard things of the other, branding him as "a heretic and not entitled to the name Old School Baptist." All such is unkind, unbrotherly and unwarranted by the Scriptures. With reference to the subject of the resurrection there has always been differences of opinion, even in the days of the Savior and apostles, yet in their day, by them no unkind expressions were used nor declarations of nonfellowship. Some of the church at Corinth went so far as to say, "There is no resurrection of the dead," yet Paul called them brethren and wrote lovingly to them, always using the pronouns "we" and "us." Here the difference between the belief of those brethren and Paul should be emphasized; some said, "no resurrection;" Paul believed firmly and most positively in the resurrection, saying without it all is vain and naught; yet notwithstanding this wide difference he never called them names nor said they were not entitled to the name, "children of God." If a brother is in error it is the duty of those who are spiritual in his own church to save him rather than kill him, even in the minds of those who would otherwise love him. All things should be done by love. Let us indorse all of Elder Beebe's editorial above mentioned, even the spirit in which it was written. While some men at that time in middle Tennessee were denying the resurrection of the dead, as others thought, Elder Beebe did not call them names and say they were not entitled to the name Old School Baptist, but rather spoke kindly of them as good brethren, and had no desire to wound them, but would admonish them. Again we say, if we indorse the doctrine of that editorial let us also indorse and love the spirit in which it was written. The columns of the SIGNS have always been open to brethren to express their views upon all doctrinal subjects without reserve. Such is the case now, and doubtless will ever be, but several years ago the editors and managers decided that no controversy should be admitted on any subject, especially that of the resurrection of the dead, which is a mystery no man understands, nor will he until he appears at the right hand of God with the image of Jesus Christ, the firstfruits. Yet it is the privilege of brethren to express themselves as freely on this subject or any other as they wish, but let it be remembered once for all that no unkind expressions regarding a brother or brethren shall appear. This is just as fair for one as the other, and since all are treated alike, no one has right to complain. We desire that the SIGNS be what it was originally intended for, viz., a medium of correspondence of love and fellowship, and not a weapon of war to wound and kill one another. If a man is a heretic the church of his membership should deal with him. Pastors who err from the truth and preach false doctrine are accountable only to the churches of their membership and care. But while the churches, judges of sound doctrine, are satisfied with their pastors no mortal has right to interfere. All Old Baptist preachers do not believe in "absolute predestination of all things;" all do not believe in the doctrine of "eternal vital unity," which are points of doctrine believed and adopted by Old School Baptists at Black Rock, Md., in 1832. Could it not be said just as well of those who do not believe nor preach these points of doctrine that they are not entitled to the

name Old School Baptist? God forbid that we say such a thing if they believe fully in salvation by grace through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. This, to us, is the all-essential point of doctrine, and if brethren are agreed on this one point all other points are in a sense minor, being embraced in the great and grand doctrine of salvation by the grace of God.

We have now about occupied our space for one article, and yet have said but little of the past year and of our hope for the year before us. Our mind was led as we have written, and we hope that it may be blessed to the comfort and benefit of all who may read it. We ask the forbearance and kindness of our subscribers during the year. We shall all do all we can to make the SIGNS pleasant and profitable. We hope that all may be blessed with health and prosperity, but should affliction come, may the everlasting arms be manifest underneath to uphold in the day of trouble. May peace abound within the borders of Jerusalem, and each one say, Our feet shall stand within thy gates. K.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

PROVERBS XX. 27.

"THE spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly."

The spirit of man is that by which a man knows the things of a man, not that by which he knows or ever can know the things of God. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." The spirit of man explores the realm of the natural, the Spirit of God reveals the domain of the spiritual. The Spirit of God can descend into the natural man, the spirit of man cannot ascend into the spiritual world to discover for himself the mysteries of God. The bounds of man's habitation are set, he cannot pass them. . He is to inhabit the earth, multiply his kind and replenish it. God said to man when he made him, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Here is announced by God himself the bounds of man's domain. The earth is his to subdue, and to him is given dominion over every living thing that moves upon the earth, that flies in the air, that swims in the seas. Man cannot overstep these bounds, he cannot transcend the realm of the natural and invade and take by force the realm of the spiritual, he cannot storm the heights of heaven nor lay siege to the unassailable province of the Spirit. Except God condescend to man, except the heavens bow down to earth, except "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven," man must forever remain an exile from the glory of his Maker, a stranger to the street of gold and to the way of the gates of pearl. In our text the spirit of man is declared to be the candle of the

Lord. Yes, but for what purpose? To search all the inward parts of the belly. Further than this, the spirit of man, this candle, cannot search. This candle can never bring to light aught that is godly and divine. This candle lights up "all the inward parts of the belly," that is, all that is carnal, earthly, sensual and devilish. Therefore ever since the day that God made him, the spirit of man that dwells in him by nature has impelled him forward to the achievement of his destiny, the exploration of all that is natural and earthly, the subjugation of the forces of nature, the dominating of all that lives and moves upon the earth. Man could no more resist this vital force that hurls him forward to his end than he could reverse the stars in their orbits, than he could turn back time in its flight. All the discoveries of science which have led to the harnessing of natural forces to serve the purposes of man, all the digging down into the bowels of the earth to bring up his money and his fuel to warm his body, all his compassing of land and sea to seek new lands, new fame and new treasure, all his making of wings to let him fly in the air, all his construction of machines to annihilate space and distances, all these things, and many, many more are the activities of the spirit of man searching all the inward parts of the belly. We stand aghast at the daring of this creature, man, and wonder what he will find to do next. Is there anything he has not dared to do? What has moved him to do it? The spirit of man in him, the candle will leave no nook or cranny of the pit unexplored, but will search all (not part) of the things of the belly. The mystery of iniquity doth already work, and will continue so to do until there be a full revelation of the man of sin. Thus this candle will keep on shining until all the capabilities of the natural man shall have been fully and completely developed. Two great mysteries have been being unfolded since the world began: the one of iniquity, the other of godliness. The fullness of the second cannot come until the fullness of the first be manifest. When the Spirit of God turns its blaze within the man it discovers to him his iniquity, convicts him of sin, and brings him to confess himself a guilty and undone wretch before the throne of the just and holy God. But when this other candle, the spirit of man, searches the inward parts, it leads to no such humiliation and contrition, but contrariwise, causes man to say, Behold, what a god am I. And yet this spirit of man is the Lord's candle. Not a candle with which the Lord makes known man's guilt and sin to the man himself, but a candle which brings to light all the innate and natural powers and principles of man, to the end that man shall follow out these things in him to accomplish the destiny set before him: "Thou shalt have dominion." This natural spirit or life in man is not the candle of the devil, but that of the Lord, for the Lord controls and turns hither and thither the motions of man's natural life as well as he directs the work of his own glorious and eternal Spirit. Natural life, which ends at the deathbed, was the gift of God to Adam in the beginning when he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul. This life thus breathed into him was not spiritual, but natural life. This natural, vital force given from God is the candle that lights the earthly course of men unto the achievement of all their desires and ambitions, lighting up "all the inward parts of the belly."

Written at the request of brother William Mellott, of Chicora, Pa. L.

VITAL UNITY.

"THY neck is like the tower of David, builded for an armory."—Sol. Song iv. 4.

Here the bridegroom speaks. In a figure it is the speech of Christ to his church. The neck is the junction of the head and body. Through it flows all the vitality of the head to the members of the body; through it is administered the knowledge, wisdom and government of the head to the body. Severed from the head the body dies. The head gives identity to the body. Should we in our travels come upon a headless, naked body, we should not be able to tell whose body it was, could not tell its identity until we had found the head. "The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory," "gave him [Christ] to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." "Speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Therefore we need not cite further Scripture to prove that Christ is the head of his church, and that she is his body. The life of the one is the life of the other. This is the armory, the defense of the church, the fact that she is vitally united with her living Lord, and receives from him his eternal and invincible Spirit. Here are all the weapons of her spiritual warfare needed in her struggle with the world, the flesh and the devil. The mighty men of all ages (those whose might was in a living, God-given faith) always have proved their strength to have been, not in themselves, but in this armory, this unity, this oneness, with their Lord and Savior. Herein is the source of pure and undefiled religion. A very popular and conspicuous lecturer of the present day recently said: "Religion is that attitude which man assumes toward God." If that be so, then religion has its rise from the earth, not from heaven. It would mean, were that so, that the body could join itself on to the head. The Scriptures reverse the process, however. God, the Father, decreed his Son, Jesus Christ, the head of the church, before the world began and chose in him every member of his body. "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." In this covenant of election made before the world began by the almighty God, taking counsel with and in his own threeoneness, Christ stood as the head and surety of each and all his members. Their life is hid with Christ in God, and always has been so hid, even before the world was. On account of this wonderful relationship which Christ bore to his people from eternity it behooved him to suffer for them when they became bankrupt in Adam, condemned in sin, held captive by the law which they had outraged through their disobedience. Thus, in the work of redemption, Christ comes not as a substitute for his people, but the rightful owner of the strayed sheep, the head and surety of his church, to pay the debt which she is without a farthing to pay. It always seems to us to belittle the true character of Christ to call him a substitute. Besides, the Scriptures nowhere use the word "substitute" in connection with the work of redemption. Further, the Arminian religions now, and always, do and have preached Christ a

substitute for the sinner. Even the laws of men will not recognize the convicting and sentencing of an innocent person in substitution for the one guilty. The law of God demands the punishment and death of the guilty, "the soul that sinneth," not the death of the innocent. Jesus was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man. "Verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." The Jews thought they alone were Abraham's seed, but it was declared in their hearing that "God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Then, the true seed of Abraham are not those who can boast their flesh and blood descent from him, but are all those that are Christ's, all that the Father chose in the Son before time began. These Christ took on him. He took not on him angels. It means more than that he simply took their sins on him. He took them, themselves, on him. He bore and carried them (not merely their sins) all the days of old. They were in him before the world was made, in him when a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, in him when he finished on the cross the work given him of the Father to do, in him when in the tomb, in him when he arose from the dead, in him when he ascended to glory. There never has been a time when Christ has not been the life, the head, the surety, the husband of his people. "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." Here Christ prays for the evident manifestation of that living, eternal oneness which had existed between him and the church from eternity, but which was part of that hid wisdom of God kept secret from the foundation of the world. It is gloriously true that Jesus in his own person as a man was without sin. He was not a sinner on his own account. He had no sins of his own to atone for. Otherwise, he could not have been the Savior of sinners. But when the law put him to death, it was not taking vengeance on a substitute, but, as Paul says, "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." All the debt of the church was his debt, though he himself had no debts. The law of God demanded the death of the guilty, and the guilty died when Jesus died. He was not himself guilty, yet the guilt of his people was recognized as his guilt in the eyes of the law. "He was made sin for us." The words "to be" are written in italics, and are supplied words. The wonderful significance of the work of Christ cannot be appreciated without an insight into the eternal life unity which has always existed between Christ and his people. Adam was not a substitute for Eve; she was bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, and Adam was the figure of him that was to come. When Eve sinned it was Adam's flesh and blood that did it, though he in his own person had not actually sinned as yet. It did not require Adam's own act to make him guilty. Had he never taken the forbidden fruit himself, he still would have been guilty in the guilt of Eve. There is a life unity here between Adam and Eve that means much. The very fact that the church is the body of Christ, that he is her life, that she is of his flesh and of his bones, requires him to answer for her guilt. Her breaches of the law are his breaches of the law. In his death,

therefore, the guilty pays the penalty, though Jesus himself was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. The church's bulwark of defense is in this neck of unity with her Lord and Husband. In union with him she is ever above condemnation. Manifested in Adam, and in relation with him, she is guilty of sin and condemned to die. But she was chosen in Christ before she was manifest in Adam, and herein lies her safety, for the glory, strength and honor of the spiritual man must inevitably prevail over the dishonor, weakness and corruption of the natural man. As water seeks to rise to the level of its source, so this living water in the hearts of the subjects of God's grace seeks to rise to its source and fountain, the throne of God and the Lamb. Thus Jesus lifted up, raises all his people unto him. The hungerings and thirstings of the soul longing for righteousness, the prayers for mercy and salvation, are the springings up of this living water unto everlasting life, the experimental evidences of the eternal vital unity of Christ and the church. When he says, "Seek ye my face," her heart replies, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek."

Written at the request of sister Susie Miller, of Kearneysville, West Virginia.

L.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

AFTER January 1st, 1915, Elder J. B. Slauson's address will be 118 Forest Ave., St. Thomas, Ontario, Canada, instead of 52 Forest Ave.

Elder J. B. Bowden has changed his address from Falls City, Texas, to Mt. Vernon Texas, Route 1.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by J. H. Bevier.)

The Elders and messengers of the Lexington Association, now in session with the Second Church of Roxbury, at Halcottsville, Delaware Co., N. Y., October 7th and 8th, 1914, to one and all, greeting.

"Hail, ye sighing sons of sorrow,
View with me the autumnal gloom,
Learn from thence your fate to-morrow—
Dead perhaps, laid in the tomb.
See all nature fading, dying,
Silent all things seem to mourn,
Life from vegetation flying,
Brings to mind the mouldering urn."

All hail! all power in heaven and in earth is given into my hands. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." They that look shall be saved. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Paul, in addressing the Ephesian brethren, said, "Grace be to you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in himself, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Esteeming each other better than ourselves we fulfill the law of Christ, each and every soul, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. Yes, love one another, do good to them that despitefully use you, being followers of him who is meek and lowly, and to all them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. He will be their God, and they shall be his people, which are his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. He hath put all things under his feet. Jesus, the mighty God, the

everlasting Father, the Prince of peace, gave himself to be head over all things to the church; he came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, that in the dispensation of the fullness of time he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved. The God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, that he might present us an holy nation, a royal priesthood, unblamable, unreprovable in his sight, called with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his purpose and grace. He is able to save all them that come unto God by him, having purchased our redemption with his own blood; we are not our own, but are bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ. He told us, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace. Comfort one another with these words, for they are the words of our Redeemer, spoken with power and demonstration of the Holy Spirit. Wherefore stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not carried about with every wind of doctrine; be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for your labor is not in vain in the Lord. Without all contradiction, the lesser is blessed of the greater, for the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, by the which we draw nigh unto God, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, who is the High Priest of our profession, who gave gifts unto men, teachers after his own heart, who shall teach as other men never taught, guided by his unerring counsel through all time allotted to us in this life, and in that which is to be when time and time things with us are no more. They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest, and they shall come with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, crying, Worthy is the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, for they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country, and truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out they might have had opportunity to have returned, but now they desire a better country; that is, an heavenly, wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city, which is the city that John saw coming down from God out of heaven, as a bride adorned for her husband, and the inhabitants of that city are the people of God, chosen of him and precious, who worship the Lord, who in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as is now revealed unto us by his Holy Spirit. We are partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel, who were not a people, but now are the people of God, having made known unto us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in himself, for by grace we are saved, through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, for we are his workmanship,

created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them, that he might reconcile both; that is, both Jew and Gentile, unto God in one body by the cross. God giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not. For the hope set before us in the gospel, and the strength given us, we trust we write what is termed a Circular Letter, and as God is not slack concerning his promises, as some men count slackness, and will reward according to the promise, we hope he will pardon error and forgive wherein we have trespassed. We read the way of the transgressor is hard, but God, who is rich in mercy, will forgive according as he hath chosen us in him, and if chosen we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with his Son, Jesus Christ the righteous, in whom all shall appear at his coming. With power and great glory will he appear to all them that look for him, and we shall appear with him in glory, for we shall see him as he is, and be like him, and we shall see him for ourselves and not another. Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, for she hath received at the Lord's hand double for all her sins. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption, be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

JOHN CLARK, Moderator.
JAMES AVERY, Clerk.
O. F. BALLARD, Assistant Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The churches composing the Lexington Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Middletown and Second Roxbury Churches, at Halcottsville, N. Y., Oct. 7th and 8th, 1914, to the churches and associations with which we correspond send christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—It is through the providence of the all-wise God that we have been gathered together once more in an associate capacity to praise God, to whom we desire to ascribe all honor, praise and dominion. We feel that our coming together has been in love and fellowship, and the servants have come to us laden with the precious truth of the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, in whom we hope we have access to the Father, the Creator of all things, who rules all things after the counsel of his own will. We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that he came into the world to save his elect or chosen children, and when he cried out on the cross, It is finished, the salvation of his people was complete, the elect of God the Father, chosen in him before the foundation of the world. We believe the Scriptures are the word of God, and the apostles wrote as they were moved by the divine Spirit, and are addressed to the spiritual family, and applicable to them only, and are known to them only as they are revealed to them by the Spirit of divine truth, which takes of the things of Jesus and shows them to us. Our hearts have been made to rejoice, and we have felt that it is good to be here. We have been built up on our most holy faith, which is the gift of God. We feel that it is good to assemble ourselves often together and to speak often one to another in the name of our Lord and Savior

Jesus Christ, exhorting one another to steadfastness, that we be not carried about by every wind of doctrine, but that we be established in the truth as it has been set forth during this association by the servants of our God.

Our next session is appointed to be held with Jefferson Old School Baptist Church, Jefferson, Schoharie County, New York, at the usual time: the first Wednesday and Thursday of October, 1915, where we hope to meet your messengers and receive your messages of love and fellowship as in times past.

Now, dear brethren, farewell, and may the peace and love of God the Father be with you, is our prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen.

JOHN CLARK, Moderator.
JAMES AVERY, Clerk.
O. F. BALLARD, Assistant Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder J. N. Badger died at his home, Manassas, Va., Dec. 23rd, 1914. A suitable obituary will appear later.—ED.

Sarah Elmendorf Bishop, wife of Jacob Bishop, deceased, was born Jan. 8th, 1837, died Dec. 21st, 1914, at Ashokan, N. Y. She was given a good hope through grace for many years, but never felt herself worthy to ask a place in the church. Her home was a place for Old School Baptists to visit, and she loved to entertain them and have them talk upon the things of the kingdom and the way of salvation as it is alone in the Lord Jesus Christ. It was my blessed privilege to visit her home last September, during the Roxbury Association, and her mind was exercised upon the words spoken by the Savior, and while she was not able to attend the meeting, we had the presence of the Lord in our midst in her home. July 29th, 1883, her son, Virgil, sixteen years old, was drowned, and her great concern was whether he was one of the Lord's chosen. This was constantly upon her mind, and in due time the Lord revealed to her her boy clothed with the righteousness of Christ, pure and white, and her mind was ever satisfied after that. "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform," showing that he is not confined to any particular time, way or place to make known the sure mercies of David to his people. For some time past she seemed to realize that her departure was at hand, and the hymns, "O land of rest, for thee I sigh," and, "The day is past and gone," were with her. She made arrangements for her funeral, and who should speak, and her daughter Senith saw that her desires were complied with. Services were held Dec. 24th in the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist meetinghouse, and attended by a number of sorrowing friends. Her daughter Senith will miss her greatly, as she lived with and cared for her until the last, doing all that loving hands could do, but the Lord has taken her, and may the grace of God be sufficient to all the bereaved.

Services were conducted by the writer, and burial was in Merrihews Cemetery.

J. M. FENTON.

Peter C. Frasher died July 4th, 1914, at his home in Petersburg, Kent Co., Del., at the age of 83 years. At an early age he was married to Mary Ann Meredith, of Wilmington, Del., and engaged in the mercantile business in Petersburg. He was one of the few men who never changed his location of home or business in a long and useful life. He reared a family of children, all of whom survive him. His wife died just a few years ago. Four children: Edgar R., of Wilmington, Del., Harry C., of Viola, Del., Mrs. Llewellyn Gruwell, of Wilmington, Del., and Miss Edith Frasher, who lived with her father. Few men have lived such a life in a community as he did. He was a respected and esteemed citizen, neighbor and friend, who had grown to be almost a patriarch in the community. He loved the Old School Baptist cause, and attended the Cow Marsh Church all his life. His life was a testimony of a child of God, but he never united with the church, but died in possession of a precious hope of a blessed immortality beyond the grave.

The funeral, which was conducted by the writer, was held in Cow Marsh meetinghouse, and interment was in the cemetery adjoining, by the side of all his brothers, save one, Alex C. Frasher, who also survives him. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of the saints. B. E. CUBBAGE.

WYOMING, Del., Dec. 12, 1914.

Mrs. Annie Stout, wife of Ira Stout, who lived a short distance from Hopewell, N. J., died Nov. 18th. She was an honored member of the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church for several years, and was baptized by Elder Chick, whom she held in high esteem. A few days before she was stricken with paralysis she conversed freely on her spiritual warfare, and one of her remarks was: "I cannot forget my first experience, when the Lord appeared to me as my Savior. He was so good to me." It seemed to be wonderful to her that she had been brought from darkness to light and liberty in the gospel. She at-

tended the meetings whenever she could, and was a good listener, but while she only knew in part, she now knows Christ as he is and is like him, and occupies the place designed for her, singing praises to his holy name. She leaves one son and an afflicted husband, who has been afflicted with paralysis for many years. He is helpless, but cheerful, knowing that his suffering is for his eternal good.

Elder Bogardus preached the funeral sermon, and was greatly appreciated. "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

M. B. Tiebout, N. Y., $24.00; Mrs. M. Beardsley, Ind., $1.00; J. A. Tandy, Okla., $1.00; Elder J. M. Fenton, Pa., $2.00; Mrs. M. M. Rounsavel, N. Y., $2.00; Mrs. Thos. Jamieson, Canada, $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE next quarterly meeting of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada will be held at Duart, on the third Sunday, and Saturday before, in January, having been changed from the first Sunday in February to the above named date.

J. B. SLAUSON.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Liberty Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, of Los Angeles, Cal., meets every first and third Sunday in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., at 42nd and Moneta Ave., and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal.

W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor.

C. B. RICE, Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

"IN PLACES OF DRAWING WATER."

(Judges v. 11.)

By Frederick W. Keene.

Allegorical Narratives for the instruction and comfort of Babes in Grace.

Neatly bound in Cloth 50 cents per copy, or Five copies for $2.00. Postpaid.

Can be had from this office, or from Elder Frederick W. Keene, North Berwick, Maine.

"SHOULD CHILDREN OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS ATTEND SUNDAY SCHOOL?"

I have remaining about fifty copies of "Should Children of Primitive Baptists Attend Sunday School?" in board covers at 40 cents per copy. The limp covers are all sold. This binding is substantial and attractive, and every Primitive Baptist should have a copy in their home. The cost to me has been every cent I am asking for the book. My time and labor have been freely given to the cause. Please send all orders to me at the address given below.

D. W. OWENS.

HERSMAN, Brown Co., Ill.

SALVATION ALONE THROUGH CHRIST THE LORD.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please let me ask that your readers will no longer send orders to the undersigned for the little pamphlet, "Salvation Alone Through Christ the Lord," but to our dear brethren, Elder Sylvester Hassell, Williamston, N. C., and to Elder R. W. Thompson, Greenfield, Ind. The state of my health makes it necessary for me to do this. I am surprised and thankful that so many copies of the little work have been called for, showing that its title, at least, is the key-note of our dear people.

Through the Father's mercy (I think it was) I was able to complete the treatise in a second part of like size, which the dear brethren named will also distribute. A word from me in regard to them would be quite out of place: their names are written in heaven. The present time seems almost bewildering. The dear Lord help each one listen for the midnight cry, "The Bridegroom cometh."

With love and fellowship to all who love the Lord, a brother poor and needy,

S. B. LUCKETT.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Indiana.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at 5 cents per copy. Address,

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THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

The ninth (the most important) chapter of my Church History revised and brought down to date. Scripture truth about the church, as stated by the greatest scholars of the world, and by the ablest Primitive Baptist ministers. Sixty closely printed octavo pages. The Church History, now out of print, was written and published to disseminate the truth, and was sold for two thousand dollars less than the cost, but through the kind appeals of Elders J. R. Respess, Wm. L. Beebe and P. D. Gold, in *The Gospel Messenger*, SIGNS OF THE TIMES and *Zion's Landmark*, this debt was paid by members and friends. The present volume, The Apostolic Church, will be sold at cost, or given to those wishing it and not able to buy it. Postpaid, ten cents a copy, or twelve copies for one dollar.

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILLIAMSTON, N. C.

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These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Our assortment of small books embraces:

Cloth Binding, per copy, 75 cents; per dozen, $6.00.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 83. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1915. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 4, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I send you two letters from Elder W. J. May, one dated May 1st, 1911, the other May 19th, 1912. I think when I received them I intended to send them to you, but have neglected it. I submit them to you for publication in the SIGNS if you think best.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

JOHN VIII. 10, 11.

"WOMAN, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST JESUS:—One who has labored in word and doctrine, lo, these many years, to the comfort and encouragement of the household of faith. It has been on my mind occasionally almost twelve months to write you on the above portion of Scripture, but have labored and wearied a great deal of the time to pass it off, but it still lingers in my mind, and I have decided this morning to try to relieve my mind, in some degree at least, by writing you. I shall not presume to comment at large on this wonderful text, but to briefly state some of the leading features as they have, and do, occur to my mind, together with the immediate cause, so far as I know, of my writing you, and yet it will make this letter very lengthy, and I am afraid wearisome. A little over twelve months ago I used this Scripture as a text, and preached from it as best I could, and I realized a good degree of liberty, as I thought, and so far as I could see or learn from the brethren they all seemed to accept the views set forth, and enjoyed the preaching. This was at my home church. But some months after this, at another church, I was speaking something in regard to the justly condemned state of the Lord's chosen people, and their wonderful deliverance through Christ, and mentioned some of the principal points in this same Scripture as I had used them, or spoke of them, when at my home church, and one brother preacher seemed to be greatly offended, and, so far as I could see, but few, if any, accepted or believed the views that I presented on the subject, or enjoyed the preaching. Therefore I have been much troubled about it more or less

ever since, and have wanted to write you, and see if you think my views are wrong. I have been careful ever since not to mention any views touching it, for I have had some fears at times that perhaps my views were not right, although they remain with me to-day the very same. Now before I had ever realized any light on this text, or was concerned particularly about it any way, I heard two of our good preachers preach from the stand that this woman was as clear of the charge as clear could be; they both said that the Jews told a lie of her. One of them said she was as clear and clean as a piece of white paper. But while I could in no wise understand it in the light in which they presented it, yet I was not much concerned about it, and was not at all interested in it, and it was perhaps two years or more after I heard this view of the two brethren that I was visiting one of the churches which I have not the care of, and had preached on Saturday, with some other brethren, and on Sunday morning just before I arose from bed this Scripture rushed into my mind very unexpectedly, with the principal views that I will try to express, which are the same that I set forth, both when they were accepted and when they were rejected. This was the first time my mind had ever been interested about this Scripture, although I never mentioned anything about it for six months or more.

Brother Durand, I have about decided that I shall never meet you again in this world, and I have all confidence in your faithfulness toward me, therefore I write the more freely. I will now briefly state the leading features of this text as they came to my mind that Sunday morning, and as near as I can how I presented them in the stand, and if you are blest to receive and read them, and think over them, I hope you wlll write me at your earliest convenience, as you cannot fail to see that I have had a long and wearisome time over the matter, for I do not want to burden any one, and I never have talked to any one on the subject, not even in private conversation, since I saw the brother was offended. There is no doubt in my mind but this was a literal transaction, but does have a wonderful spiritual significance, and that this woman was as guilty as guilty could be. If I could be convinced that this woman was not guilty of the charge brought against her, and according to the law deserved death, but that the Jews had just falsely accused her, I should at once be bound to believe that the church or the chosen people of God were not guilty of the transgression, or by nature children of wrath even as others. (Eph. ii. 3.) But the Scripture says, they "brought unto him [Jesus] a woman taken in adultery, in the very act." The motive the scribes and Pharisees had in bringing the woman to Jesus with this charge against her was that they might get an accusation against Jesus, not to falsely accuse her, but they were seeking the advantage of Jesus, thinking to get an accusation against him touching the law. There is not the slightest intimation given in the narrative that the justly condemned criminal made any defence, or denied the charge, or resisted in any way whatever, for why worth the while? knowing within herself that she was verily guilty, and justly accused, standing before a just Judge, and the penalty death, even stoned to death, and a sufficiency of witnesses present to criminate her. Hence, the poor justly condemned criminal could expect nothing but death, but "When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman,

where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." The accusers all "went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst," in the midst of joy which is unspeakable and full of glory, which was communicated to her very heart and soul by the precious words of Jesus: "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." At times it has seemed as clear to me as the sun at noonday that this in its spiritual significance represents the church of God, or, in other words, all the election of grace under the just condemnation of sin and death, and is manifested so vividly in our experience when we are arraigned before the high and holy Tribunal in our awful and justly condemned state of sin and death. Well do I remember one Wednesday evening, nearly fifty years ago, after I had been sorely troubled for two years or over about my lost and ruined state, sometimes realizing a morsel of hope, and then again sinking in despair almost. It fell on a day, one Wednesday, that darkness covered the face of the deep of my inmost soul, and all was without form and void, to be brought in the presence of the awful Judge of the quick and the dead, to hear the dreadful sentence, "Depart from me," &c. But at the moment, when I expected nothing but death, was life and peace; when, if I am not deceived, I realized the life-giving words, Son, thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee. I knew they were many indeed, but until that evening I never knew that they were forgiven in Christ, and that he bore them in his own body on the tree.

The expressions, "eldest" and "last," are both in the superlative degree; nothing can be older than the eldest nor later than the last. Hence nothing can arise to separate the Lord's chosen and redeemed people from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, and when God reveals his Son in the heart of a poor, justly condemned criminal, who is arraigned at the awful tribunal of the Judge of all the earth, whose eyes are too pure to behold iniquity, and who cannot look upon sin, all the accusers and every accusation are gone out, and nothing but joy, peace and everlasting consolation and good hope through grace appear, as when Joseph made himself known to his brethren, who stood trembling, no doubt, with a deep, heartfelt sense of their guilt, which they had been caused to humbly confess. Joseph cried, "Cause every man to go out from me." Hence everything else vanishes away before the Sun of Righteousness when he arises with healing in his wings; and not only so, dear Elder Durand, but it seems plain to me that here in the time state of the church, in an organized sense, the visible body of Christ, that the accusers have been going out from us from the days of Abel, leaving the church of God standing alone with Jesus. "Upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir."—Psalms xlv. 9. And when the Lord our God shall have served his righteous self according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began, and magnified his grace in the salvation of all the elect vessels of mercy, which comprise the complete body of Christ, the church, this elect lady, together with her Head and Husband, will enjoy heaven, with all that heaven is or means. Everything else will be gone forever and forever.

W. J. MAY.

PINSONFORK, Ky., May 1, 1911.

PINSONFORK, Ky., May 19, 1912.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—HIGHLY ESTEEMED ELDER IN ISRAEL:—I am at home, and have been wanting to write you for two or three weeks, but have not decided to do so until now. I have suffered untold misery of feeling and burden of heart in regard to writing to you and others, and also writing for publication, and have been made to wonder how it was that I ever was drawn into that channel. But being wearied with the impression of writing you a few lines in regard to your views which I read in a recent number of the SIGNS, concerning the argument of those three miserable comforters that Job had to contend with, I was wonderfully pleased and built up in my feelings in reading your article in that number of the SIGNS, as is the case with me generally in all your writings which I have read. But there is something a little peculiar about this, which I thought I would mention, and that is, on the same day the SIGNS came to hand, or the day before, I do not remember which just now, my mind was exercised on this Scripture, and those three friends of Job, and what they and their arguments represent to us experimentally, and some things occurred to my mind about them which I never had thought of before, and they seem so plain and impressive that I am so far bound to receive and hold them as being correct, and it is wonderfully consoling to me, and I was glad when I read your views on the subject. Now the way this wonderful revelation came to my mind was, and is, that these three contenders with the Lord's servant Job represent to us the carnal reasoning and argument of our depraved or human nature against our hope in Christ. It is so plain to me in my experience and daily exercises of mind that I can but believe it. These suggestions come to me almost daily: that it is impossible for any one who is born of the Spirit of God to be as sinful as I am, and as Eliphaz said to Job, "Behold, thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands, * * * and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees. But now is it come upon thee," &c. This stiff and heated argument between the old and the new man sometimes almost drives me to despair. It comes forcibly to me this way: Surely you are, and have been all the while, a poor deceived man, for if you were a subject of grace, and the Lord had called you to proclaim his wonderful name, you would be more meek, more humble, more upright and more spiritually minded; but you know such an one as you are is not called of God to preach the gospel, but now it is come upon you. You have deceived some of the Lord's people; some of them have confidence in you, and have enjoyed your preaching, and have entrusted the care of the churches to you. But now where did you ever know any to perish unless they were guilty? you are surely wrong. I have thought that by the number three, all using the same line of argument, we might understand that the same suggestions are hurled against God's people in the three dispensations, or throughout all time; that our experience is the same like experience of the Lord's people in every age of the world; that no temptation has taken us but such as is common to men, that is, to men of God.

Now, brother Durand, I cannot ask you to waste your precious time in writing me, but I would love to know what you think of these things.

Yours in trials sore,

W. J. MAY.

OUR GOD IS SUPREME.

WHILE a greater war is being fought than was ever recorded in history, and no doubt more wanton butchery of human beings than ever existed at one time since men learned to write history of the doings of nations, I am led to think more seriously than ever of the great Sovereign of the skies, seas and all deep places. I ask myself, Is God, the Father of the Lord Jesus, at the helm? If he is there, and, as it were, directing every bomb-shell, is it by his permissive decree or otherwise? As men view the power behind men and nations in their wicked acts, they call the power the permission of God. Even taking this view of God's power, shall we say that God has a permissive will as well as a will of decree? In the light of Scripture how dare we say that God has two wills? It seems that some men attempt to make apology for the Lord in allowing the wicked to act out the villainy that exists in their hearts. God is of one mind, and none can turn him; he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. Why will men persist in saying that God has two wills? It is certainly inconsistent with Scripture teaching for men to view the supreme Ruler through darkness. If we believe that he declared the end from the beginning, and that he declared from ancient times the things not yet done, saying that his counsel shall stand, and that he will do all his pleasure, why will we say that war, one of the great scourges of the human race, is only by God's permission, as though the time of its occurrence and its appointment were not before known by him? How can any great event like war, or any small event like the killing of a gnat, escape the power or the decree of the supreme Ruler of all worlds? If there be the slightest possibility of one solitary event which fills the measure of all things being overlooked or neglected by Jehovah, then he would cease to possess eternal wisdom. That the true God, the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, possesses eternal wisdom, we must admit, or be unbelievers in the Son of God. If some brethren use the word "absolute" in connection with God's predestination to make their views more emphatic, positive and far-reaching, must we tell those brethren that their choice of the word "absolute" is offensive, and that it leads brethren to charge God with folly? In giving our views of Scripture we ought to be free to make choice of such words that best convey our thoughts. Solomon, to whom God gave wisdom lavishly, studied out words that would best express that wisdom. In our efforts to simplify the teaching of the Scriptures it is presumable that we must use modern words to best express our thoughts about certain passages of Scripture, or certain points of doctrine established by the reading of many portions of the word of inspiration. With or without the use of the word "absolute" we do not change the very simple language of the wise man in Proverbs xvi. 4: "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." This is not an interrogation, as though the wise man was in doubt, but is a positive declaration. Criticise this saying as we may, we cannot destroy its meaning. Point out the main thing expressed in it and we magnify the great power of God. The force of this verse seems to be the last part of it, for after saying that the Lord hath made all things for himself, the colon preceding the last clause of the sentence seems to point out the important knowledge which to men is hard to be understood: "Yea, even the wicked

for the day of evil." To the minds of men that are supposed to be trained to all acts of kindness, and possessing a forgiving spirit towards their enemies, the literal meaning of this Scripture is obnoxious. On the ground of human reason they cannot receive the word of inspiration that God hath made the wicked for the day of evil. To-day, this year, the lesson stands before all civilized nations of the earth. Is not this the day of evil? When human blood flows as streams in the wilderness, is not that day the day of evil? That men infused with the spirit of Satan work out the purpose of God, cannot be overthrown by any arguments that can be produced, for the wrath of man shall praise God, the remainder of wrath he will restrain. Just so much wrath shall be produced by the power of men as is needed, and no more. Man's wrath is limited. We may question God's right in controlling men as we do about many other things, but it is plainly evident that what God does is right, because God does it. No sovereign unlike Jehovah can ever satisfy a poor, helpless sinner; his helplessness appeals to the mercy of a God who does as he pleases, and who is fully able to do as he pleases. He knows the destiny of all men, so that no decree shall ever fail. All the ways that men take have bulwarks of hedges on either side, and none can pass over the bounds which Jehovah has set. To many people a God of so much power is a tyrant, and bitter hatred swells their hearts against a God of all power. He is offensive to their tastes, through their fear in trusting a God of power; they cannot be reconciled with the hope of mercy through a God of all power. Those opposers of truth would much rather claim that man has more power than God in the saving of sinners. This is evidenced wherever antichrist is set up. A stereotyped saying has gone the rounds for years to my certain knowledge: "The Lord will save you now if you will just let him." Their view of God is that man has power over God to let him do certain things. How horrible the thought to every quickened sinner!

I inclose a money order to pay on my subscription to the SIGNS. I desire that the circulation of the SIGNS might be extended among the old order of Baptists, but it does not seem that there is any prospect of getting permanent readers in this part of the State. I have hundreds, maybe thousands, of old copies of the SIGNS; most of them are well preserved, and I have been thinking about disposing of a great many of them, so that they will be useful, instructive and comforting to many of the Lord's people who are isolated from places where the name of the Savior of sinners is preached. These saints of God whose minds are "cast down" no doubt are the same as those the prophet spoke about in Zeph. iii. 12: "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." To get some of these old copies into the hands of these dear saints it will require but a small amount in postage, and perhaps introduce the SIGNS into neighborhoods where it is known only through hearsay, and that kind of a report is often misrepresentative. I now have in my mind a precious sister who cordially indorses the strong and comforting doctrine advocated through the SIGNS, but who never read the paper, and maybe never has seen a copy. My mind was called to something like this last October while attending an association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists in eastern Texas. At the close of the first day's meeting

Elder V. R. Harris, of Fordyce, Ark., called the attention of the congregation to the fact that he had in his hands ready for free distribution a number of old copies of the SIGNS, at the same time stating that he thought it to be the oldest and best paper found among Primitive Baptists, and urging all the brethren who were able, to be subscribers. He also consistently stated that where he had stowed away many copies the mice were destroying them, and it occurred to him that he would take them to associations and meetings and distribute them among brethren who are not subscribers. As the old copies are always "new," because they set forth the truth as it is in Jesus, they supply the tables of the saints in the wilderness with feasts of fat things, the best wine, for it is wine on the lees, and that well refined. Old wine comes off the "lees," or settlings, which is the very best wine, such as Jesus made at the feast. Modern reformers lately said: Shame, that Jesus would make the vile stuff at the feast in Cana!

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla.

WHEELING, W. Va.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending sister McKinney's letter, although it was not intended for publication. I read it several times, and it has proved so comforting and interesting each time that I feel it will be of interest to others, yet I leave it to you to decide. I also am sending a letter from brother C. S. Fetter, of Philadelphia, Pa. I feel that we are blessed with competent judges in the editors and publishers of our dear good SIGNS.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

OTTAWA, Kansas, Sept. 11, 1911.

MY PRECIOUS SISTER:—You are so continually in my mind that I am going to begin a letter to you, although my work is urgent, but perhaps I can write at intervals as time will permit. I have had a desire to write to you for some time, but when I would think of making the attempt I would feel so completely shut up that it always ended in my turning to the Bible or SIGNS for comfort. I wish I could tell you how my heart has been filled with love and praise to God for the past ten days for his goodness and mercy. In reading your letter in the last SIGNS, every word seemed to be entering my heart, and when I came to what you said of me, though unworthy, I did feel very glad, and while thinking about it these words came as expressive of my feelings: I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me. How truly you spoke when you said I read every word in the SIGNS. Yes, and sometimes again and again. It has been a great comfort to me in my loneliness, and it has been God's way of bringing me to meet with his people in this part of the country. I wrote you about my visit to brother and sister Pittman in May. How I do love them, I hope mostly for the Lord's sake. Brother Pittman is one of the most humble ministers I ever met, and firm in the doctrine that is so dear to my heart, that God has all power in heaven and in earth. I have come to the place that I must be still and know that he is God. His will controls mine. I must wait upon him, and O it is so good to look to him I want no other refuge; I want no other Savior. May he ever be to me the chiefest among ten thousand and the One altogether lovely. I hope I love him and his people. One week ago last Thursday afternoon I got up out of bed, got ready, and Friday

morning, with my two little girls, started to an association at Iola, sixty miles away. For two weeks I had been in deep trouble; I can only compare it to a battle between a fervent desire to meet with God's people for the purpose (I fondly hope) of worshiping him and duty at home. Twice I was taken down sick, and my husband was not well, the children delicate, and not being used to exposure, I was fearful of the consequence for them. The thought would come, God is able to take care of them. Elder Ker's words were often in my mind: If we forsake the assembling of ourselves together, we commit a wilful sin. Then the thought would come: Does He require this at your hands? probably followed by, If you do not forsake all and follow me you are not worthy of me. Everything worked against me, then I would say, This is evidence enough, why cannot I give it up? At once the convincing argument would come: If you only go when all things are made easy and sure you have made no sacrifice; any one could do the same. I was in deep waters. I cannot tell you all in a letter. I begged God fervently for some little assurance, but I had to go without it. When I bade my husband good-bye at the depot something seemed to say, This is the last time you will ever see him, yet I went on; I could not turn back. Standing in the crowded car I was reminded of my dream the night before, and I trembled for fear of a wreck, then in my distress I cried unto the Lord, and he heard me. Now I can say, Surely my help is in the Lord, who made heaven and earth. He hath done great things for me, whereof I am glad. He cared for me tenderly, and brought us home safely. I truly felt it was good to be there. Had it not been for sister Pittman, who watched over me as a tender mother does a thoughtless child, I would have forgotten to partake of natural food. Several times I thought of sister Georgie England's letter published in the SIGNS, and I was afraid I was not behaving myself becomingly. My heart was too full, I could not keep still, I wanted to tell of this wonderful God who works and none can hinder. There came asking for membership in the little church two by letter and one by experience. The meeting was held in a little grove just outside Elder Pittman's yard. We were all together all the time at his home, and had preaching day and night. I think there were nine ministers present. When I got off the train in Ottawa my husband was there to meet me, and he handed me your card. I was so sorry you had been sick while attending the association, but I feel sure God was in it, and in some way it was for your good and his glory. I was comforted with the assurance that you still loved me. How I would hate to have to give you up. Some time back, when I was so low down I felt that I could not live any longer, I was sure to get a long letter from you or brother Scates, then I would feel to thank God and take courage. I do not dare to ask why God has done these things, but I want to rejoice that he has done what seemed good in his sight. The second day after my return home my little girl was taken sick and it was necessary to call a physician, and as he was preparing the medicine, he said, Give the medicine and trust in the Lord. I said, That is what I believe. He said, You must be a Christian Scientist. I said, No. Then you must believe in predestination. I said, I most assuredly do. He said that if he believed God had predestinated some to be saved and some to be lost, without giving them a chance, and he

was one of the lost, he boasted of what he would say to Him. I asked him if he were not afraid to say such things. He said, No. He said if he knew he was lost he would begin at once and have the biggest time while he lived here. I told him he would not if he felt like I did. How plainly I saw then that if I knew I was lost what agony I would be in. It is hope that keeps me alive. Does not that prove what the Lord says: They have no fear of God in their hearts? There are some among us who cannot accept this doctrine in its fullness. The next day after my return home I could not work, so took up my Bible and opened at Isaiah, and as I read on through the book I could but wonder how one could read from that prophet alone and not be established in God's firm decrees. It seems to me the apostle Paul settled that when he besought the Lord thrice that the thorn in the flesh might be removed, but it was not God's will. The answer was, My grace is sufficient for thee. The Son of God said to those who were about to kill him, Think ye not that I could call upon my Father, and he would send me ten legions of angels? but how then would the Scripture be fulfilled? Was not that predestination? It seems so to me. I find that in all things I am blind, ignorant and helpless; my hope is alone in the Lord, that he will lead me in the way I should go; he must undertake for me; I have neither the wisdom nor power to do anything without him. About three years ago, when in such deep distress about Ruth, all efforts to help her proved futile. I left nothing undone that I could do. I watched her constantly, and wept and prayed that some of the physicians might do her good. One morning as I went about with a heavy heart, after a severe spell, she was just able to sit up, these words came with such power that I have ever since felt that I heard them: After you have done all you can, and fail, how you will love that One who does this for you. He has shown me so many times and in so many ways that not one thing, but all things, are in his hands, that I fear to hide it; I must confess it. There was a promise I hoped to me all those years that she would live. Fear would say, He will not do it, then instantly the promise would be renewed with much power: Yes, but he will. Then for awhile I would not doubt. It is now more than a year since she had one of those spells, and I feel to say that the Lord has done it. Her sickness, too, I believe was fixed by the eternal God, and could not be changed.

I will be very glad to hear from you soon if you feel that you can write to me.

With much love,

ANNA McKINNEY.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

MRS. FLORENCE PULTZ—HIGHLY ESTEEMED FRIEND:—I am not privileged to call you sister (as I feel inclined to do), as I am not a member of the visible church here below, but I have a deep interest in its welfare, and hope that I am one of God's chosen vessels of mercy. While I was surprised to receive a letter from you, I nevertheless rejoiced in its reception. I did not feel as if there was anything in my letter that was interesting to any one, and it was with much reluctance that I sent it after I had written it, and I was more surprised when I received your letter to think that a person so much my superior in spiritual things should find a single crumb of comfort in it, and if you, or any one else, did find anything that corresponded to your own experience, I claim no credit or glory, as I wrote as it was given to me, I hope, by the heav-

enly Spirit. I am at present writing just as my mind is led, and I see already I am writing quite differently than I expected to when I began, but I will continue to follow the lead of my mind. I am inclined to believe that it is possible to deceive the very elect, God's chosen people, as I suppose I have deceived you, but I hope you will pardon the innocent deception however, as it was unintentional. You mistook me for a female member of the church of the Primitive Baptists, but I suppose that is of minor consequence, so long as we both advocate the same great principle of truth. I stated in the beginning I hoped I was one of God's chosen vessels of mercy, but whether I am one or not there is one thing I do know, that is, I love the brethren (if you will allow me to use the expression), and to mingle with them, and be in their company, and hear them praise God from whom all blessings flow. I am writing to an entire stranger, and it may appear to be presumptuous in me, but I have taken the privilege, as you asked me to do so if I felt inclined. After receiving your letter I did have an inclination to write, as I thought you were deceived in me, and I fear yet you will still be deceived in me, even after receiving this letter, as I feel if you could see me as I see myself you could not have written such a letter to me as you did, nor could you have fellowship for me. While I say you are an entire stranger, you do not appear such to me, as I have seen your name in the SIGNS very frequently, and have read your letters with much interest. Only March 1st last your precious letter appeared, in which you refer to being upon the Rock of salvation. It is certainly a safe place to be. That word has been upon my mind much of late. I will not attempt to tell you how many times it occurs in the Bible; I can mention only a few. Jonah says, "Salvation is of the Lord." This we can testify to by our own experience, as did Jonah. Again, David says, "Salvation belongeth unto the Lord." Can we deny it? I know your answer before you tell me. Again let us hear David: "My soul shall be joyful in the Lord: it shall rejoice in his salvation." Have you not passed through the same experience, my dear friend? Have you not been made to rejoice in days past? I say "made" with emphasis, not of your own free will, but by the will of your heavenly Father; you had no control over it. David says in another place, "Vain is the help of man," also, "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help." David again, in extolling his Lord and Master, says, "It is he that giveth salvation unto kings." Again he says, "He will beautify the meek with salvation." Has it not come to you in this way? I have no doubt that it has. Now let us go to Isaiah, and hear what he has to say: "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." I have no doubt you have done likewise. In another place he says, "We will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." I believe you know what this means, you have learned it through pleasant experiences. He further says, "Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." He has a wise purpose in this, as well as in all other of his decrees. He also says, "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation." Mark you, he says "shall;" that is a very strong word. He does not say "may," it cannot be made any stronger. Again he says, "All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." Here is another of his "shalls," the Bible is full of them. Here

is another of Isaiah's beautiful expressions: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation," &c. I imagine I hear you say that is sweet language, and that he has clothed you thus. It is a garment to be proud of, it cannot be surpassed in splendor.

Now I will call you to follow me over to Jeremiah; in Lamentations we find this language, "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." Right here I would like to ask, Do we always quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord? Do we not very often get very impatient and try to hasten it, when we know we can do nothing in the matter? But that is our disposition; it is mine, at least. I am never satisfied long at a time. I am of a fretful disposition, always wanting things different from what they are. O what a blessed thing a contented mind is.

But I feel like going back to David again, where he says, "Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation." In another place he says, "He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence." Job says, "He also shall be my salvation."

I will now go over to the New Testament, for a few quotations. Luke says, "And all flesh shall see the salvation of God." He also says, "For mine eyes have seen thy salvation." In the Acts we find these words recorded, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." I know you can say amen to that.

I fear I will weary you with such a long letter, but I have a little leisure time and thought I could spend some of it in answering your letter. I have not told you anything about myself, as I feel to be of so little consequence that it appears to be too insignificant for me to say much about myself. I have been married, but lost my wife Dec. 8th, 1911. We had nine children, eight of whom are living; all are married except two. I do not wish to boast, but will say that I do not think any man could have eight more kind and lovely children, not a jar is heard among them. It has been our custom for the last fifteen years for all the children and grandchildren to come home on Thanksgiving day, and none will let anything but sickness hinder them from coming, and it is one happy gathering. We now number forty all told, (one great-grandchild.) I feel thankful that I am blessed with such a happy family. My mother was a member of the church, but my father was not, but was as strong an advocate of their principles as any of the members; my dear wife was also a member. I have one son and a son-in-law who are members. The entire family have a very great respect for our religion, and some of them, although not members, do not like to hear the doctrine advocated by the Primitive or Old School Baptists opposed; they love and believe that kind of doctrine. Do I not have just cause to be thankful? I know I am not as thankful as I should be for the many rich blessings that are continually bestowed upon me. I am a very ungrateful being; I do not get my just dues, or I would be banished from off God's footstool.

I must close. I hope you will pardon my intrusion.

Your unworthy friend,

C. S. FETTER.

FORT SCOTT, Kansas, Dec. 22, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—As it is about time to send in my renewal subscription to the SIGNS, so inclosed you will find post-office order for two dollars for the year 1915. The paper is the same good old SIGNS it has ever been since I became interested in it. The publishers are certainly to be complimented for the mechanical correctness of it; an error of a single letter is seldom seen, which cannot be said of some other publications, but that which is of much greater importance is the truth which it contains.

I am taking the liberty of sending you for publication some extracts of letters I have received from sister Pittman. I feel sure her change of feelings in regard to what is the truth is the same every heir of promise has experienced, and will be a comfort to others. She is the wife of our beloved brother, Elder T. R. Pittman, of Havana, Kansas. I feel sure she will excuse the liberty I have taken, for she at one time sent one of my poor letters to them away back in Pennsylvania to read. They are dear, good brethren, "whom to know is to love."

Brother Ker, I feel that you are fortunate in having the assistance of brother Lefferts. He is making a good start and with that "ever present help" will be a blessing to all lovers of truth.

Yours in hope and fellowship,

M. B. WEEDON.

HAVANA, Kansas.

DEAR BROTHER WEEDON:—Mr. Pittman has been writing to you several evenings, and now he asks me to write a few lines. In this we are much alike, slow to commence a letter, and when we get started find no stopping-place. We were glad to receive your letter, are always glad to hear from you. We were very sorry to hear of Mrs. Nelson's accident. When you first wrote us about it I thought I would write to her, but many hindrances came in the way and I did not get it done. I am very glad she is improving, and hope she will be all right soon; give her and her family our love and best wishes.

I received a letter from sister McKinney a few weeks ago, and she inclosed a letter from sister Andress, written soon after she returned from the Turkey Creek Association, telling a great deal about it.

You say you hope we are not sick, because you have not heard from us for so long. We are quite well. The dear Lord has indeed blessed us with the best of health. I often feel to say, Surely his goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, of which I feel very unworthy. O, how glad I am that salvation is of the Lord, if it were not I would have no hope. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." I hope that I prefer Zion above my chief joy. Although I feel so very poor and helpless, and sometimes fear I am destitute of gratitude, usually I live in such an easy, contented manner that sometimes it frightens me; yet the sweetness of that happy hour when Jesus said, Thy sins are all forgiven, has never left me, but once (for a day or two), and that was a few months after I rejoiced in the Savior's love, and O how miserable I was then; I cried, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? In reading an article in the precious SIGNS this love and joy and mercy were again restored to my broken heart. I learned the lesson, "Be still, and know that I am God," and I trust that he will never leave nor forsake me. Ever since that time I have found much pleasure in reading the SIGNS. Mr. Pittman was

taking it when we were married, but there was nothing in it then to interest me; I cared nothing about it; every paper was, to me, just like the one before, and was really tiresome. I never read it, but he sometimes read it to me. Thank God, when the mystery was revealed to me I could write the same things, and I have no desire now to write or speak anything else. How well I remember the first Baptist sermon I ever heard with the hearing ear and understanding heart; the sweet peace and contentment I then enjoyed when they took me into their fellowship is fresh in my mind. How sweet it was, and is, to be, "no more a stranger or a guest, but like a child at home." I loved them very dearly and still love them. This is Christmas eve; most of the villagers are out having a gay time at "the church," around the Christmas tree. Of course we do not believe in it. I used to take part in all those things, such as Christmas and Easter exercises, festivals, Sunday Schools, sang in their choirs, &c., and thought it was right (I was not then a member), but the dear Lord opened my blind eyes, and step by step taught me that it was all wrong, and took away all my desire to enter into it. "By grace are ye saved."

Write to us again.

Unworthily, your sister in hope,

MARY PITTMAN.

HERNDON, Va., Nov., 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In sending my remittance this time I feel a desire to pen you a few lines, merely to mention a few thoughts I have in regard to the dear old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. One thought is, and a wonder, too, to me, that some of your subscribers are behind in paying their subscriptions to the paper. If I could meet face to face with every dear brother and sister who is behind in their payment I would just like to say this to them, not in a hurtful spirit, but in a brotherly way of kindness, Jesus has said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments;" therefore I would say to the dear brethren who love our dear old family paper, Let us keep the commandment of this love we have for it, and pay up in full, for we shall never get another medium like it if we let it go down. But God works, and no man can hinder, and we have every reason to believe that he will still continue the work of having the paper published for the great comfort and edification of his dear people who are scattered all over our land. My heart went out to that dear aged brother, S. S. Miller, whose letter appeared in the November 15th number of the SIGNS, telling of his long time in the desert and the broad road of sin he traveled for sixty long years. I said my heart went out to him, and so it did, and I felt at the time of reading his letter that I would like to write to him and tell him his letter touched a tender cord in my heart, but I could not and did not write to him, knowing my weakness in letter-writing. Still in reading brother Miller's letter I had a subject come up before me of the bride spoken of in the Song of songs, which I have no doubt were brother Miller's feelings while traveling in the desert land: "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?" No doubt brother Miller did cry out in the same language in substance as that quoted above while traveling in the desert and in a barren land, for I do believe it is the cry of every subject of God's grace, and the satisfaction of this cry is to be di-

rected to the Shepherd's tent, which is the church, where we find rest from our long journey and are fed beside the Shepherd's tent, the church, and rest at high noon in the shade of the tent, which is called the Shepherd's tent, the great Shepherd of the sheep and lambs of his green pastures. Yes, one said of old, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." I well remember when but a mere boy working in my grandfather's fields I would often long for noon to come, so I could have one hour's rest, which he gave to all who worked for him in the hot summer weather. We were all fed before we rested, and O the rest, how it did revive us; and in like manner it is so with the poor footsore traveler when he is directed and goes to the Shepherd's tent for rest, and he does find rest, for Jesus says, Ye shall find rest, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light. But our great Husband, the Shepherd of his sheep, must first direct the way to the Shepherd's tent. He says to his bride, "If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents." I have no doubt but what brother Miller can say now that he has found both food and rest since coming to the tent, the church of the true and living God, the Savior of sinners of Adam's fallen race. The subject I have hinted at is too high, I cannot attain unto it, but it is rich to meditate upon when we are enabled to view it from a spiritual standpoint.

I must now close, wishing the SIGNS much success, and much love to every one who writes for the dear old paper, and also to the publishers and editors.

Your brother in a faint hope,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

COVINGTON, Ga., Dec. 8, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As I am inclosing you a remittance for the renewal of my subscription for the SIGNS, I feel inclined to try to write you a few lines, which are entirely at your disposal; not that I feel capable of edifying or instructing any one in matters pertaining to God and his kingdom, but often after reading the editorials, letters and communications from the different ones scattered far and wide over the country, and frequently strangers in the flesh, I am led to believe that these scattered ones are, in one sense at least, no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God. So, brother Ker, when I heard of the death of your dear companion, and also the death of dear brother Chick, I felt that I could fully appreciate your heartbroken and lonely condition, for I, too, had but recently been called upon to pass through the severest trial of my life. One year ago last August we lost our only son, a young man twenty-five years of age, the joy and sunshine of our home; always kind, unselfish and affectionate, he had many friends and no enemies. He died after a short illness, after undergoing an operation at a sanitarium in Atlanta, Ga. I have lost father, mother, brothers, sisters and two children in infancy. All of these were hard to bear, but these bereavements came along with the passing of years, and I was younger then, and looked forward with some hope to the future. But how different now, the future, so far as this life is concerned, looks dark and dreary to me. I find I am looking backward, living in the past, as it were, and yet I know that God in his infinite wisdom is working all things after the counsel of his own will, but the trouble is, his purposes and will do not

always conform to the wishes of our finite ignorance, nor harmonize with our self-conceited will. Nevertheless God's predestinated purposes prevail, and our little plans and preconceived opinions vanish as the morning vapor before the rising sun. I do not know what God's purpose and will concerning me may be, but I know I am a poor, weak, ignorant and helpless sinner, and if ever saved it will be a sinner saved by grace. I find in the Scriptures many sweet and precious promises to the children of God, but the trouble is, do they apply to me? Am I a beneficiary in this rich provision of grace? If so, it is by his righteousness, and if I ever stand justified it is in the righteousness of Christ. This is my only hope, and the only source of consolation. You remember when Lazarus was dead, and many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary to comfort them concerning their brother (and no doubt they did the best they knew how), yet with all of their condolence and sympathy it failed to bring peace and reconciliation to the broken hearts of Martha and Mary, but when Jesus came he spoke peace to their troubled souls. So it is with us, until Jesus comes there is no peace or comfort. Notwithstanding we may have the kind sympathy of our friends and all the help that this world can give, yet it is Christ alone can give peace and reconciliation to his holy will, and turn our sorrow into joy.

Now, dear brethren, in conclusion I wish to say that in all the trials, sorrows, disappointments and afflictions I have been called to undergo I feel that God is working them all as he sees best, and humbly hope and trust that they are all in mercy sent. Yes, I firmly believe that he works all things after the counsel of his own will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, whether it be the downfall of a nation or the falling of a sparrow; whether it be sickness or health, poverty or plenty, joy or sorrow, life or death, they must and do work together for the good of his children and for his declarative glory and everlasting praise.

May God in his mercy sustain brother Lefferts and yourself, and enable you to rightly wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon.

Your unworthy brother,

EDWARD HEARD.

WINNSBORO, Texas, Dec. 17, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am inclosing you a letter received some time ago from sister Joie E. Woods, which you may use in the SIGNS if you think it suitable. I have her consent to send it, and I think it has the right ring. It was comforting and encouraging to me, and I feel that it will be to others.

Yours in bonds,

H. B. JONES.

GRACETON, Texas, Sept., 1914.

ELDER H. B. JONES:—I feel that it is a great mercy indeed if I really have a right to address you at all, and especially as a brother. Husband and the children and I were talking of the church this evening after supper, and were talking of the heathen, and the missionary business, and so my mind was led again to the time when I hope and believe that Jesus appeared to my waiting soul as the One altogether lovely and as the only Savior of sinners. What a comfort it would be to be able to express the glory of that hour, and some degree of its glory shone in my heart as I lay on my bed. I love to remember how light, free and pure I felt, all sins taken away. I felt

as pure and fair as though they had never been. O, dear brother, I am so happy to feel that this same almighty One is able to keep me to the end. There, so many years ago, when a child, he revealed to me that he knew and loved me before I was born; that he kept the law for me, died for me, paid all my debt, bore all my sins and put them away forever, so that I was safe, away back before I was born, but only revealed it to me then. Dear brother, at that time I did not know there was a people preaching such a Savior. I wanted to tell every one of the glorious salvation that was completed for us, so sure and eternal. I know you love to tell it sometimes, and if it can comfort you to know that your sermon on Sunday at Fellowship helped such as I to "be still" and wait patiently for Him, I am glad to tell you that it seemed to strengthen my feeble knees. I had been feeling very lame and halt, even doubting what was truth. Some say they never doubt what is truth, only doubt their part in it, but I confess that I am tempted at times to doubt the truth, and God himself. O what a wicked, weak worm I am to even limit the only wise God, who, I hope, has ever upheld me, guided my feet, led me about and instructed me. For sometimes I ask myself, If God did not give me that knowledge (a thing I had not heard of), what did cause me to think and feel the same things you talk about? And when I did finally meet with the dear Old Baptists there was another joy I never could tell. How beautiful they looked, and how I loved them, so unlike all others; my people, their God my God. O happy day, O holy ground, a heavenly place in Christ. Here I heard Elder George Tusing, of Columbus, Ohio, (he is now dead) preach from this Scripture: "By two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is for us entered," and now maketh intercession for us according to the will of God. What a glorious truth to preach, and how blessed are the hungry ones who know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. They go from strength to strength, they mount up with wings as eagles, and like I hope I have been of late, "They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end." But in his own time he brings them into their desired haven. Then he commands us to return unto our rest, and if it is not ours how could we enter into it? Thanks be to God, there remaineth a rest to the people of God, and we must be weary before we can enjoy it. Surely he leads in wisdom's way.

"Thy ways, O Lord, with wise design,
Are framed upon thy throne above,
And every dark and bending line
Meets in the center of thy love.

My favored soul shall meekly learn
To lay her reason at thy throne;
Too weak thy secrets to discern,
I'll trust thee for my guide alone."

Your sister, I hope,

JOIE E. WOODS.

FAIRMONT, W. Va., Dec. 15, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will write to let you know that I want to renew my subscription, and I thought I would write a few lines for the paper, but what shall I write about? I have thought upon the portion of Scripture found in Ephesians ii. 10: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works,

which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Now let me call attention to this fact, that the apostle Paul was writing to the saints at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ, not to the ungodly, and he says to them in his writing, "For we are his workmanship [not our own], created in Christ Jesus." What, is this the way we get into Christ? Yes, this is the way, Paul says, and I believe it is so, and Paul believed it and testified to it also. Well, then we cannot by doing good get in Christ Jesus, O no. We did not get into this world by doing good, much less into Christ. Good work comes in after being created in Christ. When we were born into this world we were natural, carnal. "The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies."—Psalms lviii. 3. There is none good, no, not one; there is none righteous, none that seeketh God, no, not one. Then we are carnally minded, and are corrupt from the crown of our head to the soles of our feet, no goodness or soundness in us. Then how can we do good, when it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps? It was necessary to be created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Good works are in Christ, not in the creature, no, not at all, because there is none good, no, not one. Now, after we are made new creatures, born again, created in Christ, quickened, made alive, Christ in us the hope of glory, then we are in a condition to walk in good works. Well, why are we now in such condition? Because we are led by the Spirit of Christ, and that will produce good fruits, which we did not labor for. But we were before ordained to walk in them, which God before ordained that we should walk in them. This word "we" means God's saints, the faithful in Christ Jesus, as Paul says in the first verse of this epistle to the Ephesians. So this is not for alien sinners outside of Christ, for all goodness and all righteousness are of him; every good and perfect gift is from above, comes from God, so, as Paul says again, boasting is excluded, and he also said, By the grace of God I am what I am. Why, Paul, do you believe that way and say so now? It is because I was taught it. Well, how were you taught it? It was by the revelation of Jesus Christ; he called me when I was carnally minded, when I was in an unrighteous state, when I was not seeking after God, and quickened me, gave me life that is not natural, but eternal, and now his love constraineth me to serve him, to walk in good works, because he chose me unto this; as Christ says, I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake; he shall be a witness for me, he must be led by the Spirit. He was not before arrested by grace turned to serve God, so we hear him saying to the saints, and to the faithful in Christ, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." As Christ said to his disciples, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." So this agrees with Paul in the text: "Which God before ordained that we should walk in them."

Much more could be written, but I will close, hoping this is written in love for God's children and love for God.

JAMES W. LINN.

JUSTUS, Pa.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The inclosed letter from sister Carrie Eaton, of Waverly, N. Y., was read at our covenant meeting last month, and the brethren requested that it be sent to the SIGNS for publication, if you think it would be of interest.

Your brother in hope,

G. W. GOODRICH.

WAVERLY, N. Y., Oct. 3, 1914.

TO THE CHURCH AT JUSTUS, PA.—DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—If one so sinful and unworthy as I can claim such a blessed relationship. Although strangers in the flesh, I love you all dearly for the truth's sake, as well as for the love and forbearance you have shown me through all the years of seeming indifference since I first had a home with you. But, dear brethren, if you only knew what a comfort it has been to poor unworthy me all these years to know that I had a home with the people of God, you would freely overlook that seeming coldness and indifference. I have thought of you all as a church many times, and would have been glad of the blessed privilege of meeting with you, and seeing your dear faces, but the dear Lord has willed it otherwise. The Lord is good, and much better to me than all my fears. His promises are yea and amen to them that believe. Cowper says that God is love, and changes not, nor knows the shadow of turning. Doubts and fears will creep in to mar our peace. How oft the words of the poets come to our minds: "'Tis a point I long to know," &c. And, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear." I well remember that in my earliest childhood I loved that blessed name, and wished that I could have been one of those little ones whom he laid his dear hand on to bless them. How my heart went out in love and pity when I read of his sufferings, not knowing then that I would be called in after years to walk in his footsteps, and I find it is poor stumbling at the best. He says, I am the way, the truth and the life. Dear kindred, are we not all trying to walk in that way? Our dearly beloved Elder Vail was with us last month. We look forward to his coming with comfort, as he always comes laden with sweet messages of love from the Lord's storehouse.

Will you please read or sing hymn number 1052? which has been of great comfort to me.

May the Lord shower his richest blessings on you all, is the wish of your unworthy sister, saved by grace if saved at all,

CARRIE EATON.

RANDOLPH, Mo., Dec. 13, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—

"A few more days on earth to spend,
And all my toils and cares shall end."

Yes, according to nature it can be only a short time until I must go the way of all the earth, as in two months I will be in my eighty-seventh year. I have been taking the SIGNS for over fifty years, and am not willing to give it up as long as I can see to read, and it continues to contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints, therefore I send you a money order to renew for another year, although I may not live until this reaches you, for we are all passing away like a short winter day. I am here surrounded by all kinds of doctrine that men and devils can get up, but none of these things turn me to the right nor the left; I want a "thus saith the Lord" to walk by. I do not know of any other in Clay County who takes the SIGNS. It is too hard; too much truth; too many "hard sayings" in it. Few can stand them, but they are

what I love, and I am willing to live and die contending for the truth.

Finally, brethren, live in peace, and may the God of all peace be with you. Endure hardness as good soldiers.

A lone traveler,

RICHARD WALLER.

MANASSAS, Va., Dec. 5, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—On reading your editorial in the SIGNS of December 1st, I was so stirred in my mind with the sweet thought of my love and fellowship for you that I felt at once I must write a line to express that fellowship. To me that article was as "silver threads among the gold." It seemed I could see that line of David running through our first parents in the garden of Eden, on through Moses at the burning bush, and when he was standing before Pharaoh, Egypt's king, on through the twelve tribes, through David himself, through all the prophets, through all the first dispensation, down to the fulfillment of the Scriptures. All of it if written out would take volumes, and then the half would remain untold. I can but thank God with heart and soul that he has given his poor and despised people such an editor of our family paper, as it is called by that very small remnant in these United States now remaining within the bounds of this vast continent, extending from ocean to ocean, and from Gulf to Dominion line. [Here the letter breaks off. It was not signed, but sister Badger sent it to me, as it was written for me.—L.]

J. N. BADGER.

[THE foregoing is a copy of a letter written me by Elder Badger, not long before he was paralyzed. Coming as it does from almost the borders of the eternal world, I can but appreciate it, and think perhaps some of our readers would enjoy reading it.—L.]

(See obituary on page 59.)

HARRISONVILLE, Pa., Dec. 1, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The time has arrived to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, so inclosed you will find money for same, as I do not feel like doing without it in my declining years, for I get out to preach or hear preaching but very little any more. I think both the correspondence and editorials have been very rich, contending for Bible truth. There is surely no change with God, who declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure; so we worship a God who knows no change, for he says, I am God, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. Again he says, According as he hath chosen his people in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. Again, Whom he did foreknow, them did he predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren; and whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified; so the whole work of salvation is in his hand, from beginning to end. All this idea of a conditional salvation, based on the do and live system, is contrary to Bible doctrine; but we are told that evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse to the end of time, deceiving and being deceived, and many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. But our God reigns and does all his will in heaven and in earth.

Do not publish this at the expense of better reading.

Yours to serve,

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1915.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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CHARITY.

IN the SIGNS for December 15th we tried to present some thoughts on the nature and function of the various gifts placed in the church by the wise Master-builder for the comfort and edification of the body of Christ. No presentation of that subject would be complete without saying something of Charity. Paul in the close of the twelfth chapter of first Corinthians, after having enumerated the various gifts, says, "Yet shew I unto you a more excellent way." He then continues in the thirteenth chapter to expound the best of all gifts, charity. Charity is the life, beauty and effectiveness of all ministry in the church of God. Without it one is as "sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." The word in the original Greek which is translated charity in the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians is the same word which is translated "love" in Galatians v. 22: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace," and is translated "love" instead of "charity" in other places in the New Testament. Therefore we conclude that love and charity are one and the same thing. King James the First, of England, in 1604, acting on a motion made by John Reynolds, a Puritan, in Hampton Court Conference, and adopted by that body, appointed fifty-four scholars and clergymen to assemble and translate the Scriptures into the English tongue. Forty-seven of those appointed served in making this new translation, which was completed in 1611, and henceforth known as the "Authorized Version." This version still remains the most popular with English speaking people, while very persistent efforts are being made to supersede it with a much more recent "Revised Version." It is true that the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments, were written by inspiration of God, and contained no errors as originally given to holy men of old, but in making the various translations that have been made since the Scriptures were thus given by inspiration of God, such translations were made by fallible men, for whom inspiration was not claimed. We would not dare say that the forty-seven men who assembled in King James' time to translate the Scriptures into English were inspired men. On the other hand, it is to be supposed that they made mistakes, though it was not their intention to do so, as they labored diligently to have everything as correct as possible. Why these forty-seven men saw fit to translate the Greek word *agapen* as charity in some places and as love in others, we do not know, but as both charity and love are one and the same word in the original tongue, it is not worth while for us to try to discriminate between them, and try to make charity mean something that love does not. To our mind, it would not a whit change the meaning of the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians if the word "love" were read in every place where "charity" is used. Nor must we confuse charity as scripturally used with charity as it is used in a common sense by the

world at large to-day. People nowadays speak of charity as something external, visible, tangible, while in the Scriptures it is an inward grace-born virtue of the heart. The outward act of benevolence in giving to alleviate the hard lot of the less fortunate of mankind is usually regarded as charity, but not so in the Scriptures. According to Paul, a man might bestow all his goods to feed the poor, and be by the world therefore called a charitable man, yet charity be wholly lacking in the act and in the sight of God. God looks upon the heart, and his judgment is according to what omniscience sees therein, while man hesitates not to call a man a christian if his outward life is all right. Just so the outer surface is clean, it matters not if the interior is full of dead men's bones, so says men's judgment. If the heart be pure, it matters not if the outside be in rags, so says God's judgment. Since it is the judgment of God that concerns his people, we can afford to pass the other by with scant notice. The way in which society is constructed makes poverty necessary. "The poor ye have always with you." It has been said that man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn. In the struggle for existence the fittest survives, the weak go to the wall. As long as man's nature continues to be so supremely selfish as it has ever since man was made, some are bound to accumulate more than their share of ease and riches, while paupers and beggars will continue to be a by-product of so-called civilization. It frequently occurs that those who have achieved success in life by gouging out the existence of their fellow-men, seek a truce with their conscience by handing out a dole to the poor, and expect therefore to be called charitable benefactors of the race. The truth is they are but giving back to those they have robbed a mere pittance of the living taken from them. Why call this charity? If a man robs me of a hundred dollars, and then puts a ten-dollar bill on the collection plate next Sunday, does that atone for his treatment of me? Not until he comes to me and makes restitution of all he has deprived me can he make it right. So the increase of two cents a gallon on oil all over the country cannot be squared by the donation of a pipe organ to some big city church later on. The endowment of a public library by a steel magnate cannot amend for the hundreds of arms and legs and eyes and lives lost in laying the foundation for that magnate's wealth. Why call all such things charity? They are all a hideous travesty of the truth. They are all but crumbs flung to the masses by the princes to keep the crowd from pressing too hard upon their masters. Jesus laid the axe to the root of the tree that time that a rich young ruler came who had great possessions, yet who professed to have kept the law. Jesus told him, "One thing thou lackest." That one thing was love, or charity. All obedience is but disobedience without love. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Had the young ruler really loved his neighbor as himself, could he have had great possessions? Had such love really actuated him, he could have had not a moment's rest so long as he possessed one farthing more than his neighbor. The fact that he had great possessions showed his obedience to the law to have been but formal, literal. It bespoke an entire absence of the knowledge of the spirituality of the law. Self-love, not love for the neighbor, was his guiding star. If the real charity of Christ was in a millionaire's heart to-day, and ruling him to the exclusion of all

else, he would be a poor man to-morrow, for he could not rest in peace until he had descended to the level of the poorest and the weakest. To prove this we have but to point you to Jesus. He was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, yet he made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant, was made in the likeness of men. Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Here is charity in all its length and breadth and height. God, though the earth is his and the fullness thereof, became a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and had not where to lay his head. Did not he descend to the level of the poorest and the weakest of all his people? Yes, he went even lower than they, he was numbered with the transgressors, and made his grave with the wicked in his death. Is not this charity in all its glory? The source of all our charity is Christ. There can be no charity in the hearts of men only as it is engendered there by the Holy Spirit. Jesus laid down his life for his people. This laying down his life applies not only to his final death upon the cross, but all the way along through his life. He was continually laying down his life for their sake. The grace of God in the hearts of his people constrains them to serve one another, to lay down their lives for one another. Paul laid down his life for the church. He counted all the former things as dung and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. He was crucified to the world and the world was crucified to him. He died daily. Here was a continual laying down of his life. Peter was told that when he should become old another would take him and bind him and carry him whither he would not. He, too, laid down his life for his brethren. Jesus calls his servants from the daily walks of life to his service, and no matter how bright the prospects before them they do his bidding and lay down their lives for the brethren. To spend and be spent in the Master's service, without thought of reward or recompence, is the acme of true charity. We asked one who professes to be a preacher the other day, how long he thought the ministers of various creeds would keep on preaching if their salaries should be taken from them. He replied, "Not long, and I, for one, if I cannot make a living preaching, will leave it and go into something else." Surely not much laying down one's life for the brethren here, not much real charity, yet this same man is strenuous in sending sums to foreign missions; being charitable to the heathen, he calls it. Paul lays great stress on the importance of charity. No gift for the comfort and edification of the people of God is valuable without it. Though one speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, it is an empty sound. It lacks force and directness. One might have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, might even have the faith to remove mountains, still if charity be lacking he is nothing. One might give his substance to the poor, and his body to be burned, but without charity it profits nothing. Paul lists sixteen characteristics of charity or love: long-suffering, kindness, lack of envy, not boasting, not puffed up, decency, unselfishness, patience, right thinking, abhorring iniquity, rejoicing in truth, "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things," and never fails, and at the close of this thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians, concludes by saying, "Now abideth faith, hope, charity,

these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Why is charity the greatest of the three? Is it because it lives longer than either faith or hope? That may be part of charity's greatness, but it is not all of it. Faith and hope end with this time state, but charity (love) continues on through all eternity. At the close of the believer's mortal life faith is lost in sight, and hope is swallowed up in fruition, but charity never fails. The greatness of charity consists not alone in that it is longer lived than either faith or hope, but also in that it is the very energy, the very life-blood of both faith and hope. Faith without love, hope without love, are dead things. Love is the vitality of all the gifts and graces of the Spirit. Love is the cement that compacts faith and hope. It is the knitting that binds all believers' hearts together. We once heard a man say that he believed the doctrine that the Old School Baptists preached, and hoped in the mercy of God. This same man lived not far from an Old Baptist Church where there was regular preaching, and very seldom went to hear it. What was the matter with him? He lacked charity. His faith and hope may have been of the right sort, but charity, or love, being absent, he was of no value to the church, he profited nothing. Had charity been his it would have immediately energized his faith and hope and his steps would have immediately turned Zionward. He could not have helped it, he would have shown his faith by his works. Love is the fount of all good works. We might say that a man with faith and hope present and charity absent is like an electric light with the current turned off. The wire is there and the lamp is there, but no light is radiated. Just the moment the key is turned, however, the whole room is lighted from that same wire and lamp, owing to the energy transmitted through it. So one might have the proper faith and the good hope through grace, yet both lie dormant in inactivity until electrified by that love that passes knowledge, that current of eternal vitality which streams from the Head of life through all the members of the body at some stage in the existence of each of them. Herein, then, it seems to us the preeminence of charity lies: in that it gives faith and hope their meaning and substance, transforming them from inactive principles into flaming guiding stars of a spirit-filled life. Charity submerges the interest of the individual in the benefit of the whole, it compels the esteeming of others better than ourselves. It will not compromise with error, for it rejoices not in iniquity; it will not make a brother an offender for a word, for it thinketh no evil. Charity makes one strong to bear the infirmities of the weak. It receives into its fellowship him that is weak in the faith, but not to doubtful disputations. If smitten on one cheek, charity turns the other also. When reviled, it reviles not again, returns not railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing. It glories in infirmity, that the power of Christ may rest upon one. It suffers long, and even then does not get out of patience or become angry, but is kind. What a lofty ideal is before that believer who truly desires to be charitable. It is a goal worth striving for, but only grace can strengthen for the race. May the Lord accomplish in us all this charity that is so excellent, that our gifts may be enlivened by it, that the fragrance thereof may delight the worshippers in his holy city.

L.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

JOHN XV. 6.

"If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

To the appeal for our views on this text, made by sister Force in our last number, we promised to respond in the present issue. The instructions of our divine Lord and Master, his admonitions and words of encouragement to his disciples, are frequently expressed in figures and parables, selected and employed by his infinite wisdom, and most graciously adapted to our finite minds and very limited capacities, yet although the most familiar things in nature are used to illustrate spiritual things, unto none but the saints is it given to know the things of the kingdom of Christ, and to all others all the instructions of our Lord are but parables, or dark and mysterious sayings, which they can by no means comprehend. Hence will-worshipers and Arminians generally profess to find in the beautiful figure of the vine and its branches only an implied threat of damnation to the children of God, to be used as a scourge to lash them to vigilance from fear of falling from grace and sinking down to the perdition of the ungodly. But the child of God, taught by the Spirit to understand the true design of this cluster of figures, is thoroughly convinced that so far from sustaining the doctrine of free-will, human power or creature merit, its application tears them all up, root and branch, and that the idol of human agency in procuring the salvation which is in Christ Jesus must fall before it as Dagon fell before the ark of God. In the connection of our text Jesus says, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman," &c. The eternal deity of Christ, his independent, self-existent Godhead, abstractly considered, is incomparable. Unto whom shall we liken him? We are forbidden to make any image, picture or comparison, but Christ in his mediatorial glory is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person, and is therefore the image of the invisible God, or Godhead. God is therefore never visible to men in the flesh, only as he is revealed in the person of his Son. In the Son of God dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, or embodied, and in that embodiment he is revealed to the faith of the children of God. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our [the saints] hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." They, therefore, and they alone who have seen the Son, have seen the Father also, for he is in the Father and the Father is in him; he and his Father are one. So also as the one Mediator between God and men he is one with the church, and every one who has seen his church has seen Christ, for his church is one with him, even as he is one with the Father. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." That kingdom which is invisible to all who are not born again is the body of Christ, and the fullness of Christ, and in his church dwells all the fullness of Christ bodily, or embodied, even as the fullness of the Godhead is embodied in him. Now the vine and the branches are in our figure Christ and his members, and his Father is the husbandman, having the full charge, care and culture of it, and he says, "Sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine. I the Lord do keep it: I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day."—Isaiah xxvii. 2, 3. It is very evident then

that the vine in our figure signifies Christ in his Mediatorial identity with his church. The same figure is applied by the Holy Ghost both to Christ and his church. David, Solomon, Isaiah and others, speaking by the Holy Ghost, call the church a vine, having tender grapes, &c. But the church cannot be found out of Christ, nor, we bless God, can Christ be found out of the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. Then when Christ says, I am the true vine, we understand that he is the true vine, including all his branches. The same as expressed in a figure of similar import used by Paul: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ." So also is the true Vine. National Israel was the typical vine which God brought out of Egypt, but Christ is the true, antitypical vine, and his members are the branches of Christ, and are so identified as to bear his name.

Now, having thus far dwelt upon the figure of the vine and branches, and its application, we will pass on to notice that its introduction by our Lord in this fifteenth chapter of John was for a practical application, principally to impress the more forcibly his admonitions on those members of himself whom he recognizes as the branches of the Vine. Having promised that the vine is Christ in his mystical body, the church, and the branches of the vine are the members of Christ, being members of his body, members of his church and members one of another, he says to his members, the branches, "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." For a branch to abide in the vine it must be identified with it, as a part of it, deriving all its vitality and vigor from the parent vine. The figure is full of instruction. We all know that a branch cut off or separated from the vine must wither and cease to bear fruit. What is it then to abide in Christ and bear fruit? and what is it for a branch to abide not in the vine, be cut off, wither, be gathered of men and cast into the fire and be burned? To abide in Christ implies a restriction to certain limits, which are not to be transcended, all beyond which is forbidden ground. As he is the vine, our vitality and fruitfulness depend upon our abiding in him. To all the members of his body, the church, her exact boundaries are immutably staked out. Not one of her stakes shall ever be removed, not one of her cords shall ever be broken; they mark and define the curtains of our habitation in Christ, beyond which they may not go; they measure to us the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ. To exceed these stakes which God has set is to depart from Christ as our abiding-place. These stakes, cords or measurements are designed to signify the laws, ordinances, doctrine, examples, precepts, admonitions and instructions which are found in the New Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Hence in the connection Jesus explains to his disciples what it is to abide in him, thus: "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." This and other explanatory expressions of our Lord in the same chapter very clearly show in what sense he speaks of his members abiding in him as the true vine. We cannot be thrown out of or cut off from our election in him, which was before the foundation of the world, for that would be to overthrow the sover-

eign, immutable and eternal choice, purpose and predestination of God, for "whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." A failure of this would disarrange and indeed destroy the divine government, but a separation from his mystical body, the church, or vine, may be effected by disobedience to his commands, departure from his doctrine, or by a rejection of his words, or by disorderly deportment. To keep, or abide, in his commandments is to abide in his love. So abiding we shall observe all things whatsoever he hath commanded us. Without his instruction or authority we will turn neither to the right hand nor to the left. To abide in him, in his word, his house, his church, his laws and ordinances, mean that we remain permanently in them, not as visitors or occasional guests, but permanently settled and established in them. Ruth was admonished to abide in the field of Boaz, close by the reapers, which signified that she was to glean in no other field. It is said of antichrist that "her feet abide not in her house."—Prov. vii. 11. But the abiding branch or member will say, "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem."—Psalms cxxii. 2. They "that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."—Psalms xci. 1. To go beyond the word of the Lord, to do what he has not commanded, or to leave undone what he has commanded, is to depart from him. To embrace doctrine which he has not taught, or to repudiate doctrine which he has taught in his word, is a departure from him in the sense of our figure. If we abide in him, that is, in his word, in his love, in his doctrine, then he also abideth in us; that is, his word abides permanently in us, his love abides in our hearts, as the life and sap of the vine abides in and invigorates the branches; so when his members go not out of his word, but keep within the precincts which environ his kingdom, then he, in his word, laws, love, life and healthful presence, by all the fruits of his Holy Spirit, dwells in us, as the sap of the vine flows to all the branches, fructifying and invigorating them. As Christ and his word, his Spirit, his truth and grace, are inseparable, if they abide in us it is because he abides in us, but if they abide not in us, then neither does he, in this sense, abide in us. The branch, whether we apply the term to a single christian or to a branch of the kingdom of Christ (for it can apply to none other), that abides in Christ, and Christ in him, or her, the same bringeth forth much fruit. "Herein," says Christ, "is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." The fruits of this abiding union with Christ, the true vine, are the legitimate fruits of the vine, which are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, &c., against which there is no law; and these are the true clusters of the true vine, very unlike the vine of Sodom and of the fields of Gomorrah, whose grapes are gall and whose clusters are bitter, the wine of which is the poison of dragons and the cruel venom of asps, (Deut. xxxii. 32, 33,) as we have painfully witnessed during the last four or five years. But these fruits of the true vine, borne by the branches which abide in Christ, are fruits which are unto holiness, whereby the Father, the Husbandman of the vine, is declaratively glorified. The love abounding in all the abiding branches is the love of God, shed abroad in them through Christ the vine. Their faith is the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved them

and given himself for them; their peace is from God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ; their joy is in the Holy Ghost. So their gentleness, goodness, meekness and all their fruits are of God, for "Their righteousness is of me saith the Lord." None of these grapes can be gathered from thorns or thistles, nor can the christian bear them, only so far as he abides in the vine. The people of Israel, married to Moses, brought forth fruit gendering to bondage, but being now dead to the law by the body of Christ, the true vine, they are lawfully married to him that is risen from the dead, that they may bring forth fruits unto God.

(To be continued.)

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by L. C. Deshong.)

The Mt. Enon Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the church at Salem, to the churches of which she is composed sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has pleased Almighty God, who rules and superrules, and works all things after the counsel of his own will, to spare us to meet in another association in peace and love. We have much to be thankful for, and for which to praise our God, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift. The churches report peace and love, with some ingathering of members and addition to our association.

In conclusion, may Almighty God be with us all to guide and to keep in the way of truth, that all that we do may be done in honor to his name, is our prayer for Christ's sake. Amen.

C. K. HAINES, Moderator.

J. H. MILES, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Sept. 22nd, 1914, at the residence of Mr. James M. Holloway, Delmar, Md., William H. Aydelotte and Annie M. Matthews, both of Delmar.

By the same, Dec. 23rd, 1914, near Delmar, Del., John T. Layfield and Mary E. Hearn.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Joseph N. Badger died Dec. 23rd, 1914, at his home in Manassas, Prince William Co., Va., after an illness of two weeks following a stroke of paralysis. He had been in very frail health for a number of years. He was born in Anson, Maine, March 21st, 1838. His parents were Elder John A. and Rebecca Badger. He was married to Helen M. Hinkley, at Brunswick, Maine, April 13th, 1861. She died March 27th, 1882, leaving four children, three sons and one daughter. One son, Harry H., has since died, Aug. 25th, 1913. The other children: Herbert J., of New Jersey, Gilbert J., of Rome, Ga., and Miss Helen R. Badger, of Philadelphia, survive their father. Elder Badger was married to Margaret C. Hunton, May 7th, 1884, who, with the three children mentioned above, and one sister, Mrs. Sarah Curtis, of Brunswick, Maine, are left to mourn their loss. Elder Badger was baptized at Jay, Maine, in October, 1864, and was ordained to the gospel ministry in August, 1869, at Warwick, N. Y., where he served the church as pastor for eight years before moving to Virginia in the spring of 1876. The Elders sitting in council at the time of his ordination were Gilbert Beebe, Philander Hartwell, Wilson Housel, W. J. Purington and John A. Badger, his father. For thirty-eight years he had lived in Virginia, serving churches in Loudoun, Prince William and Fauquier counties, in the bounds of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting. At the time of his death he was pastor of three churches: Ebenezer, Mt. Zion and Bethlehem, but owing to his failing health for the past three years had been unable to fill his appointments; nevertheless his churches steadily refused to consider calling another pastor so long as he lived, even though he could not actively serve them. They were devoted to him and he to them. From the local paper printed in Manassas we cull the following: "The death of Mr. Badger removes from this community a citizen widely known in both this county and Loudoun. Elder Badger was a man faithful to his religious principles, of sound judgment in all affairs, and one of highest reputation in this section of the state." In addition to serving the churches named above, he was for some years pastor of the Salem Church, in Philadelphia, until the ordination of Elder B. F. Coulter placed him in care of that church and so relieved Elder Badger of that charge. Elder Badger was re-

garded by all his brethren of the eastern United States a sound and able minister of the gospel of Christ. He emphasized in his ministry the doctrines of free and sovereign grace, the mercy of God to his people lost in sin, and the full and complete atonement made by the Lord Jesus Christ for all the sins of his people in his death and resurrection. He fully believed and preached the doctrines of eternal vital unity and absolute predestination of all things. His gift was deeply experimental, and few of his brethren in the ministry could get down into and put into words those travails of soul that usually defy utterance and explanation as could he. His like will never be seen on earth again, for while we hope his churches will not be left destitute, but that a pastor of God's own choosing will be raised up in due time to labor among them, it will not be Elder Badger. No gift or member in the church can fill another's place; each stands in his own place and accomplishes his own work appointed him from above. Brother Badger's work is done; no one but himself could have done it; it needs no one to round it out or finish it. Now the churches that he served are waiting and watching for the coming of the next in order to begin, carry on and finish the work allotted him of the Lord, in their midst. May they be given patience to be still and know that the Lord is God.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder C. W. Vaughn, in the Mt. Zion meetinghouse near Aldie, Va. Interment in the burial-ground adjacent. Text used at these last services was 2 Timothy iv. 7.

May the Lord comfort the widow, our sister Badger, the bereft children and the churches who have sustained the loss of their pastor. May they all be given grace to bow in submission to his holy will and look unto him for the supplying of all their needs. L.

Isabel Miller Hogeland, wife of Frank Hogeland, Jr., departed this life at her home in Southampton, Pa., Nov. 13th, 1914. Her death was sudden and very unexpected, as she was in her usual health and had not complained of any trouble. When found in her room she had probably been dead a half hour. The doctor, who was there very soon, pronounced it heart failure. She was born August 9th, 1876, in Locktown, N. J., where her father and mother, John and Anna Risler, are still living. She was their only child. She was married June 16th, 1896. She leaves four children: Frances, Newlin, Isabel and Elizabeth. What an unspeakably sad and sorrowful loss to them, and to their dear father. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, N. J., in September, 1895, by Elder Balas Bundy, and her name has continued with that church, but their home has been for several years with Mr. Hogeland's father, brother Elias Hogeland, of Southampton. She was a faithful and devoted member of the church, and held in the highest and most affectionate esteem by the church and all her wide circle of relatives and friends. No words of mine could tell how great the loss and how deep the sorrow caused by this sad bereavement, and especially to the immediate family and household, and to the many widely scattered relatives. The deepest sympathy is felt for all. We miss our dear sister from day to day, for it was good to meet her with her pleasant face and cheerful manner. May the Lord have in especial remembrance all of the dear mourning ones who are most deeply afflicted and made to feel most especially lonely by this sad dispensation of his providence, and may he give each of them such comfort as he only can give.

At the funeral on Tuesday there was an unusually large concourse of people, who manifested that they were all mourners and true sympathizers. By request of our bereaved friend I read for a text Deut. xxxii. 1-3, and tried to "publish the name of the Lord," preaching the gospel of his grace. Elder J. M. Fenton spoke in prayer and made some comforting remarks. Elder A. B. Francis, an uncle of the deceased sister, was present, but took no part in the exercises. SILAS H. DURAND.

Elder Griffith Miles Fetter was born near Southampton, Pa., Dec. 4th, 1849, died at Raton, N. M., Sept. 27th, 1914. In young manhood brother Fetter experienced a hope in Christ, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Southampton, by Elder Wm. J. Purington. Soon after this he was liberated to exercise his gift in the gospel ministry among the eastern churches. May 31st, 1890, he was married to Elizabeth B. Garrison, of Hopewell, N. J., who lived only a brief time after marriage and preceded our dear brother to the great beyond. Failing health compelled his removal to the west some thirty-five years ago, and he finally located at Raton, N. M., which had been his home nearly all of the time until his death. About August, 1895, at the home of J. B. Dawson, near the present town of Dawson, N. M., a Primitive Baptist Church called Shiloh was constituted, brother Fetter becoming one of its charter members. At the same time a presbytery was formed and brother Fetter was set apart to the full work of the gospel ministry, and was immediately called to the pastoral care of that church, and continued to serve in that capacity until removal and death among its membership compelled its dissolution one year ago last August. Elder Fetter then brought his letter and was received in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church called Bethel, at Lamar, Colo. Our dear brother has entered into the reward of bliss God hath prepared for all who love him. Our hearts ache and bleed, but still we rejoice when we reflect that he has entered into rest.

DEAR BRETHREN:—By request I send you for publication in the SIGNS this notice of the death of our dear brother, Elder G. M. Fetter, prepared by his niece, sister Marguerite Fetter. I will add that brother Fetter was very highly esteemed and dearly loved by the brethren of the church at Southampton, in whose fellowship he was baptized, and by all who knew him. He was an able minister of the new testament, very clear and discriminating in doctrine, and forcible in presenting the experience of grace. I was acquainted with him for more than fifty years, and cannot speak too highly of his character as a man and of the merit of his work in the ministry. On the occasion of his last visit to us, about three years ago, his preaching appeared to me to be with unusual power. For a number of years he was a teacher in the Hopewell Female Seminary in Hopewell, N. J. He is survived by his brother, John Fetter, who, with his wife and two children, Marguerite and Harry, lives at Southampton. This loss of one so dear to them is a great affliction.

SILAS H. DURAND.

William H. Nosler was born in Greencastle, Ind., Jan. 14th, 1840, departed this life at Coquille, Coos Co., Oregon, Dec. 3rd, 1914, aged 74 years, 10 months and 19 days. When a boy he moved with his parents to Des Moines, Iowa. May 9th, 1864, he was married to Esther Rittgers. To that union were born ten children. He served in the Union Army throughout the war. With his wife and two elder children he moved to Coos County, Oregon, in 1871. The mother died Nov. 15th, 1887, and he was married to Amanda Simmons August 2nd, 1894. To that union one son, William H. Jr., was born. His widow, six sons and four daughters and a host of relatives, brethren and friends mourn his absence. The county paper has this to say of him: "We have to record the death of a man who had so much to do with the christening and building of this city (Coquille) that he certainly deserves to be called its godfather, if not its father, Hon. Wm. H. Nosler. He had been about as usual until a week before his death, when he staggered and fell on the street and gradually succumbed. Beside being a useful citizen at home he served his county in the State Legislature in 1899 and 1900."

I have been requested by his widow and daughter to prepare a sketch for his church paper. They remarked that he was a loving and worthy father and husband, always patient, and the same can be heartily said of him as a brother and neighbor. After seeking the true church many years he and his wife were baptized by Elder C. F. Morningstar in the fellowship of the Coast Fork Church, at Drain, Oregon, the second Sunday in October, 1908, and in May, 1909, he was licensed by that church to preach wherever the Lord opened a door for him. At that time and for some time afterward they lived in Eugene, Oregon, but failing health took him back to his children in Coos County. He ever warmly cherished and diligently sought for the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, and that subject mostly occupied his conversation and writing.

Being away from Baptist people the funeral services were conducted by J. E. Walbeck, of the Methodists. The text was very befitting: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." May all the bereaved mourn not as those without hope, for our vile body shall be changed and fashioned like Jesus' glorious body.

G. O. WALKER.

Mrs. Adaline Florance died at the home of her son, Mr. A. R. Florance, near Alexander, Va., Oct. 30th, 1914, of the infirmities incident to old age. She was born in Fauquier County, Va., in August, 1828, making her age 86 years and about 2 months. Her maiden name was Florance, and in the year 1855 she was married to Robert H. Florance, who died in the year 1876. There were three children born of that union, two of whom are yet living. I have not been able to get the date of her baptism, or by whom, but I know that she had been a very true and faithful member of the Upper Broad Run Church, in Fauquier County, Va., for something like forty years. I had known sister Florance from my early childhood, her mother and mine being members of the same church and very intimate friends before I was born. She was a noble specimen of true womanhood, possessing in an eminent degree those qualities which make up the dutiful daughter, the faithful wife, the devoted mother and firm friend, and as a member of the church she shone forth with that brightness that reflected the image of Him who refines his people as gold is refined; and truly she was tried as gold and came forth as the pure gold that is fully tried by fire. "The memory of the just is blessed."

May the Lord comfort the two surviving sons and the one remaining brother, and may the vacant place in the church be filled by others as true and faithful as was our dear departed sister.

A. B. FRANCIS.

James Allison Fields, son of John and Mary Fields, was born near Jamestown, Greene Co., Ohio, May 14th, 1832, and departed this life Dec. 30th, 1914, aged 82 years, 7 months and 16 days. He was the seventh of a family of eight children, two of whom are living: John, of Jamestown, and Mrs. Sallie Wilson, of Sabina, Ohio. Jan. 4th, 1855, he was united in marriage with Polly Lawrence, who died in September, 1893. To that union were born six children, two of whom died in infancy, and Mrs. Henry Sprowle died Jan. 30th, 1908. Those living are Mrs. Harvey King, with whom he had made his home for the past few years, William, of Port William, and Milo, of near Wilmington. In 1895 he united with

the Old School Baptist Church of Waynesville, Ohio, and lived a consistent christian life to the time of his death. In October, 1895, he was united in marriage to Mrs. Mary Neff, who survives him, and who was a comfort to him in his declining years. Beside the wife and three children he is survived by eight grandchildren, five great-grandchildren and a host of friends, who are left to mourn the loss of a faithful husband, a devoted father and a kind neighbor. Mr. Fields was of a quiet disposition, genial and kind to all, always making new friends. He had been suffering from muscular rheumatism and neuralgia for about two weeks. All was done that loving hands could do to relieve his suffering and restore him to health, but God in his infinite wisdom saw fit to take him home. We bow in silent submission to the will of him who doeth all things well.

The widow and children express their heartfelt thanks to the neighbors and friends for their kindness during the sickness and after the death of their beloved husband and father.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Eliza Hutchens, Nebr., $1.00; Lavina Morgan, Mo., $1.00; C. Stevens, Ark., $1.00; E. H. Fulkerson, Mo., $2 00; Mrs. John Pettit, N. Y., $3.00; Mrs. W. B. Sproul, N. Y., $2.00; Mrs. W. H. Stout, N. J., $1.00; Simeon Hiltabrand, Ill., $2.40; C. H. Vandyke, Ill., $2.00; J. C. Clark, Maine, $1.00; E. H. Drake, N. J., $.50; J. D. Lake, W. Va., $1.00; Joseph F. Hall, Maine, $3.00.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER J. A. Campbell has changed his address from Chillicothe, Texas, to Knox City, Texas.

MEETINGS.

THE next quarterly meeting of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada will be held at Duart, on the third Sunday, and Saturday before, in January, having been changed from the first Sunday in February to the above named date.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Liberty Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, of Los Angeles, Cal., meets every first and third Sunday in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., at 42nd and Moneta Ave., and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal.

W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor.

C. B. RICE, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 83. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1915. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ROMANS VIII. 1.

"THERE is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

DEAR EDITORS:—Having to send in my remittance for 1915, I will send you this article, giving some of my thoughts on the above Scripture. I have learned recently that I am not in accord with the views of some of my brethren, and as I know I am so liable to be wrong, I am quite willing that all my brethren know my views on any portion of God's word, and if mistaken in them, for them to show me the right way.

I will ask the question, Why is there no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus? Is it because they walk not after the flesh? or is it because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made them free from the law of sin and death? The apostle begins this chapter with the words, "There is, therefore," which would seem to mean some reason. Now what is that reason? If the freedom from condemnation is because of the walk, it would be "the reward," while condemnation would in this sense rest on all the disobedient. I do not believe the freedom from condemnation is the result of obedience, but rather as explained by Paul in the second verse: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Here, to my mind, the apostle gives the cause: "hath made me free," and the walk after the Spirit is the result, and I believe this freedom is common to all who are born of the Spirit, and not just to the faithful ones, for those born of the Spirit are dead to sin, and cannot live (walk) therein. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." The same language is used here as in the first verse: "Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." But does all that Christ did, as here said by the apostle, depend upon those who walk? "God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us," provided we walk after the Spirit; that certainly is the way

provided. The freedom from condemnation depends on our walk, but the truth, to my mind, is, the walk is the result of being in Christ Jesus, the law of the Spirit of life in him making his people free from the law of sin and death, so that the walk really depends upon this freedom, and is the result of it, as the apostle shows: "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh." Can they who are after the flesh do otherwise than mind the things of the flesh? They have no other life than the life of the flesh, which is a carnal, sinful life, so they do mind the things of the flesh, and Paul says, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." On the other hand, Paul says, "For they that are after the Spirit do mind the things of the Spirit," and of such he says, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit [so they walk, live, after the Spirit], if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." Certainly none will deny that all who are "born of God" have his Spirit dwelling in them, and if so, as many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God, and the leading by God's Spirit is manifested only in those who walk after the Spirit, so we call a led character a blessed character. We would not say even he was led in order to be blessed, we would rather say he was blessed, therefore led. So they that walk after the Spirit do so because they are "blessed characters," and have been delivered from the curse of the law, so manifest by their walk that they have been "called to be saints." So I say again, Would God send his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and condemn sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in his people, and then leave it to their will or choice? No, it seems to me he did this for them because it could not be done in any other way. Suppose we say that the freedom from condemnation depended on the walk of God's people, how would it have been with Paul? He says, "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me." I believe even Paul could not claim freedom from condemnation on the ground of what he did, and so would we not all utterly fail if our works or walk would be the ground of our hope for deliverance? Are we not made to often say with Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" It is such a burden, it is such a load, we feel we are not able to walk, much less run, in the way of holiness. The new covenant blessings are not on a yea and nay foundation. "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people," and all the blessings of this new covenant are treasured up for this people that God hath "formed for himself." As the apostle says, "Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." Nor do I believe a single blessing treasured up for them in Christ Jesus shall fail to be received, because these blessings are not offered on conditions. No, these spiritual blessings are said to be in Christ Jesus, and certainly he fulfilled all the requirements of divine justice in the behalf of his people, so that the apostle says, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all [all the election of grace], how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Blessed truth: how shall he not with him freely give us all things? Not a thing given separate from Christ, and not a blessing offered on conditions;

every blessing received comes through Christ. If he is worthy, so are his people, for they are made accepted in him. He is their righteousness, sanctification and redemption. How shall he not with him also freely give us all things? There can be no failure then, for Christ is not a failure. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." Would there not be much ground for laying charges to God's elect if their blessings were measured out to them according to their own works? Would not the "accuser of the brethren" point the finger at every child of God and say he failed here and he failed there? and does not our own conscience tell us we are by nature a failure? But as "the election of God" stand in Christ, their Head and Surety, there is no failure, as Paul says, Ye are complete in him, who is Head over all things to the church, which is his body, and every blessing that comes to them is "for Christ's sake," supplying all their need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. They need wisdom, they need righteousness, they need sanctification, they need redemption, but Christ is all to them and for them; he is made so by God the Father. Now hear what Paul says: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us." Now I will quote the text: "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, [provided] who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." What a damper that proviso would be to our hope! It is like meeting a poor cast down sinner mourning over his sins, and saying to him, Be of good courage; heaven is yours, provided you are not a sinner. But rather I would say to those "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," This is a statement of your condition in Christ, that you are in Christ, and have been made free from the law of sin and death. As I would say to the poor sinner who is mourning over his sins, Be of good cheer, for "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." For the one does not walk in order to be free, nor does the other mourn in order to be blessed, but in each case the blessing has gone before the walk, and the mourning is but the fruit. Paul tells us, "The law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God." Now if the law covenant made nothing perfect, then why should we take the promises of that law covenant and try to apply them to the subjects of the new covenant? That is doing what the Savior said we should not do: putting new wine into old bottles, or a piece of new cloth upon an old garment. The promises of that old covenant were all conditional, and God said they broke that covenant, and all who are Bible readers know God's wrath was continually poured out on those under that covenant. But in the new covenant there is not an "if," but, I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. If God will not remember sin against his people, it is because he has remembered every one of them and laid them on his darling Son, and made his soul an offering for them, and now think you he would withhold one spiritual blessing from one of his loved children for a sin he had laid

on and punished his beloved Son for? O never, no, never. So let us sing:

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word;
What more can he say than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

Dear brother Ker, I have so little confidence in myself, and my ability to do anything good, that I do not want a system of salvation that depends on me in the least. I certainly do believe in good works, but all good and acceptable works performed by God's people are because he gives strength and the will to do. The salvation that is all by grace, both for time and eternity, suits a poor old helpless sinner like me. I am so weak and helpless that I have to say with David, Draw me, and I will run after thee; hold thou me up, and I shall stand. To Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, be glory now and for evermore. Amen.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

ELGIN, Oregon, Jan. 1, 1915.

PORTLAND, Ind., 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—Sister Wellman, of Rodney, Ontario, requested that I write upon Matthew xxi. 42, which reads as follows: "Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?"

The circumstances under which these words were spoken seem to give us some idea of their meaning. The Savior spoke a parable to the Jews, or legal builders, and said: "There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country; and when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But, last of all, he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him." After the Savior had thus said this figure, or parable, unto these legal builders, or Jews, he further asked them: "When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?" And these legal builders, or Jews, said unto him, "He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard to other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons." Then it was he declared unto them the text. Sister Wellman desires my views upon the stone the builders rejected, which is become the head of the corner. This parable, if I have any understanding, was spoken against the Jews, the legal builders of the first covenant, as were many of the other parables spoken by him who was to take away the first that he might establish the second. The Savior asked them: "Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner." This Scripture the Savior alluded to is in Psalms cxviii. 22, and Isaiah xxviii. 16. Isaiah said, "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation:

and he that believeth shall not make haste." Thus Zion was to be the recipient of this wonderful stone, and the Savior in asking them if they had ever read this Scripture also said unto them, "The kingdom of God [heaven] shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." "And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them." Hence the vineyard in this parable was the covenant and promises God made with Abraham and his seed and the law of Moses. The householder that planted this vineyard was God, and this vineyard was the vine he took out of Egypt and planted in a goodly land. This goodly land seems to be the land of Canaan. The servants sent when the time of the fruit drew near were the prophets whom Israel killed, and stoned, and beat; and when the time came he sent unto them his only Son, saying they would reverence him when they perceived he was the heir, and if they slew him they could seize upon his inheritance. This was when Christ came in the flesh and spake this parable unto them, and they knew from the parable, or figure, that he had spoken of them, for they had done all these things except kill the Son, and he had told them they would do that. In answer to his question as to what the lord of the vineyard would do unto those husbandmen, they pronounced their punishment, saying unto him, "He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons." This was just what Christ meant when he said unto them, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." The Savior in this parable was telling them figuratively how God had made a covenant with them and called it his vineyard, or rather he called the legal church or kingdom his vineyard. He had let it out to them, and commanded them to worship him, and have no other god, and when he sent his servants, the prophets, unto them, crying unto them to keep the ordinances Moses gave them, and continually warned them against their evil ways, then they filled the figure in the parable, and beat some, and killed some, and stoned some. This was the same people that the Savior meant: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." And he said unto them, "Your house is left unto you desolate." The time of these expressions, and the occasion of them, was when Christ came to take away the first kingdom and establish the second (gospel kingdom), and these judgments that these Pharisees said would befall those wicked husbandmen were now to be fulfilled, and those Jews themselves were to suffer the very things they had spoken. They had simply passed judgment on themselves, and the Savior said to them, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof," meaning that God would forsake the Jewish temple, people and country, and miserably destroy those wicked husbandmen that he had given the legal vineyard to. This destruction of those wicked husbandmen had reference to that great destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in the year A. D. 70, when six hundred thousand Jews perished, and others were scattered among the many nations, and have never had a

kingdom of their own, and if I understand it they never will. The stone the builders rejected was Christ. The Jews thought by rejecting him, crucifying him, the inheritance would be theirs; but when he arose from the dead, having gotten the victory over death and the grave, he became the head of the corner, the chief corner stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord, the old legal city, Jerusalem, being destroyed, not one stone left upon another. The temple being destroyed, it was necessary that the spiritual temple and city be built, and it should be built upon a tried stone, a sure foundation stone, upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus himself being the chief corner stone. During all those fifteen hundred years or more the legal kingdom was standing it was a constant type, or figure, of the spiritual or gospel kingdom, and the time had now come for the taking away of the first that the second be established, for it was prophesied by Daniel that in the days of these (Cæsar's) kings the God of heaven should set up a kingdom which should never be destroyed, and this is what the Savior meant in these figures or parables. The time was now ripe for the dissolution of the first; all the stones must be thrown down, the husbandmen destroyed, and this Stone that the builders rejected (Christ) become the chief corner stone of the new, or gospel temple. He was not only the foundation stone, but also the capstone of the building. This building is the same that the apostle Paul spoke about in Ephesians, when he said Christ "led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." "From whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Christ is made head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. This stone which the builders rejected is become the headstone, the Head over all things to the church. The kingdom of God was taken from those legal builders and given to the gospel builders. The legal builders rejected Christ, and he became the Head of the gospel church. Paul said, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word. That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Hence the body of Christ, the church of Christ, is the building of which he is made the headstone of the corner. Christ is the head of the church. The church is builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit; they are God's building; they are God's husbandry; they as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable unto Jesus Christ our Lord. Hence the great meaning of our text is the whole story of the Jews rejecting Christ, and of God rejecting the people of the legal Jerusalem, and the legal temple, and the erection of the gospel temple, and spirit-

ual Jerusalem, Christ as the headstone or King of this spiritual kingdom. The forerunner, John, said unto those wicked husbandmen, Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father, for God is able of these stones to raise up seed unto Abraham. For the Father seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth. This particular time when Christ spoke of the things in our text, was the time that the kingdom of heaven was to be like ten virgins that took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom. Five were wise and five were foolish. The five foolish virgins seemed to be the legal virgins, and the five wise virgins seemed the gospel virgins. The lamps of the foolish that went out seemed to be the lamp of Moses, as Israel was at that time given a spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, and hearts that they should not understand, so that when in that awful night of legal darkness the Bridegroom came, all these virgins arose and trimmed their lamps; the legal lamps went out, but the gospel lights burned bright, and those whose lamps had oil (grace) went in to the marriage supper of the Lamb, and the door was shut. It has seemed to me the door was never shut, only unto all legalism. When once the Master of the house is risen and hath shut the door, and they begin to knock, then he will say, I never knew you. This was said to the Pharisees. The elect were first called out from among the Pharisees by the preaching of Christ and the apostles, and the rest were blinded, the lamps went out and the door shut, and the declaration, saying, Depart, I never knew you.

Thus I have set forth what I have understood to be the meaning of the text. Another thing the Savior said in this connection I wish to notice is, "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." It has seemed to me that those who fall on this stone are those who fall upon Christ. When a poor, trembling, doubting saint, who has found there is nothing good about him, has tried with all his powers to do good and keep the commandments of God, and found by sad experience that when he would do good, evil is present with him, and he hears it declared, There is none that doeth good, and all his former righteousness turned to filthy rags, and he seems to lose, as it were, his first religion, and every prop he had trusted in for salvation proved false, then there is a great fall, and he is made to cry, Lord, save, I perish; then it is he is made to see and realize the Lord's arms are underneath, and he has fallen upon Christ, and in this fall he is all broken to pieces; the fallow ground of the heart is deeply broken up. A broken heart and a contrite spirit are the Lord's offering, and when we are made to realize that Christ is all our righteousness and all our salvation and all our redemption, and has taken us up out of the horrible pit and placed our feet upon a rock, and we learn Christ is that rock, a tried stone, a sure foundation stone, and that upon this rock the church was built, and hence to fall on this stone is to have all we had formerly trusted in broken up. As the eagle stirreth up her nest and fluttereth over her young, even so the Lord led Jacob. The eagle in teaching her young to fly begins to pull the nest from under them to let them fall, and darts under them and takes them on her wings. That is the way the Lord led Jacob; and when our old nest of carnal security is pulled from under us, and every prop and stick we have

been trusting in fails, and we have nothing of our own to hold to, then it is we get a great fall; and when we land upon that rock, Christ Jesus, and realize what awful sinners we are, and what wonderful things our Rock has done for us, then it is we are all broken to pieces. It has seemed that it is the poor, afflicted people of God who fall upon this stone and are broken, and remain broken, so far as anything good in themselves is concerned. But on whomsoever this stone shall fall upon it will grind them to powder. Here is another side, another condition. Jesus spake this to those Pharisees whom he said should be miserably destroyed and their vineyard given to others. This was spoken to those unto whom he said, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to another nation bringing the fruits thereof. This was spoken to those to whom he said, Your house is left unto you desolate. This was spoken to those he said should be cast out into outer darkness; those Christ referred to when he approached toward Jerusalem, and when he beheld the city he wept over it and said, If thou hadst known, in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thee, for the days shall come upon thee that an enemy shall cast a trench about thee and keep thee in on every side, and lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee, because thou knowest not the time of thy visitation. This, I understand, had reference to the Roman army casting a trench around Jerusalem and keeping in the Jews on every side, and laid the city even with the ground, with all their children within. This is what I think the Savior meant when he said, On whomsoever this stone shall fall it will grind them to powder. This certainly was fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem with the Jews.

I trust sister Wellman will glean something from what I have written, as well as all who may read this, provided it is the true rendering of the text.

N. PETERS.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Jan. 4, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—With the letter I wrote you this morning I am inclosing three letters received from members I baptized just one year ago. You will note that I have cut out as much personal reference to myself as is possible, and wish I could have left it all out without hurting the expressed spirit of the writers. If you think they are good copy for the SIGNS you may publish them. I have not obtained the consent of the writers to have them published, but as they never criticise or resent anything I do I am not fearful of hurting them.

Brother George Ruston, whom you will remember having met here, was licensed yesterday by the Ebenezer Church to preach, wherever a door is open, the unsearchable riches of Christ. His gift is a blessing to us, and we are confident the Lord has ordained him with the tongue of the learned to speak a word in season to them that are weary. His wife (Esther) whom you have also met, is of no less comfort and profit to us. There is a possibility that they may soon have to reside in Zanesville, Ohio. I am not acquainted with our order of Baptists in that locality. If you know of any churches or brethren in that vicinity, let me know. Sister Grimes was baptized last January, and is, as her letter plainly indicates, earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

Remember me in love to all who know

me, or rather, to all of your people whom I have met, for they are all lovable.

Your brother in hope of life in Jesus,
JOHN McCONNELL.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Nov. 9, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER McCONNELL:—I can heartily reciprocate your expressions of love and fellowship, and if George were here I know he would join me. How often we talk over the blessings we enjoy from our contact with all you dear ones in the church. We can but feel that the lines are indeed fallen to us in pleasant places. How little I thought when I left England with, I must admit, a sad heart at leaving so many dear ones behind, that the future held so many mercies for me. "Behind a frowning providence, He hides a smiling face." I feel I would like you to know what a comfort your preaching is to me. I always shrink from speaking, but George says I do wrong in not telling you, as he says it is the only encouragement you can have. A number of Sundays ago I went to meeting in a wretched state of mind, everything seemed wrong, and I just hated myself for having such evil feelings, and yet was quite unable to change anything. I felt so hard and cold, I wondered how I could get into such a state if indeed I were a child of God. The second hymn seemed to suit me all through, and when we got to the last verse it seemed the very expression of my heart, and I felt broken right down, all my hard feelings seemed melted away, and in their place a great feeling of thankfulness to God for his mercy, and a sense of my utter unworthiness of such goodness to one so prone to wander as I am. The verse which touched me so much was,

"For sure of all the plants that share
The notice of my Father's eye,
None proves less grateful to his care,
Nor yields him meaner fruit than I."

I felt that was just my condition, and yet I have a sweet hope which abides with me that he will not cast me off. When you started speaking after the hymn, it was as though you were the bearer of a message just for me. It seemed to make me feel more and more how unfit I was to be one with you, and yet such happiness came with it to feel that I knew and could enter into the things of which you were speaking. You often speak of God's people being given the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, and it seemed to find an echo in my heart. I do hope I know something of what that means. What a mercy to be taught the language of Canaan. The fellowship of God's people seems worth more than life itself. At last church meeting it was good to listen to different ones, to know they suffer in the same way, and are perplexed and tried by the many things they have to meet with, and yet all feeling their only hope is in that Savior who died to save just such poor sinners as we feel ourselves to be. George read aloud Elder Lefferts' article from the last SIGNS, and it seemed wonderfully good to both of us. What an inexplicable drawing there is towards one who ministers of the things of God. It binds so closely, this wonderful tie of the love of God. Elder Ker's articles often seem so good to me; I have been quite stirred by many of them. There is no doubt in one's mind of a man being sent from God when he really ministers to one's case, except that at times I have such hateful thoughts as to wonder if we are all wrong together. The heart is indeed deceitful and desperately wicked. I have to realize that more and more; but God is faithful, who will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will with the temptation also make a way

to escape, that we may be able to bear it. It is useless for me to try to express my feelings in regard to the church. Ruth's words, "Entreat me not to leave thee," &c., come from my very heart.

Forgive me if I have done wrong in writing such a rambling letter to you, my pen has run away with me. I doubt much if I ought to send it, but will let it go. I have written very hurriedly.

Best love from your unworthy sister in hope,

ESTHER RUSTON.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Nov. 15, 1914.

DEAR ELDER MCCONNELL:—I have thought of you very much this evening, and although I am a poor writer I do not feel like going to bed before I write a little to you. Many times your preaching has been comforting to me, and I just feel to-night that none have more cause to thank God for it than I, for many times I have been at the ends of the earth, having no way to turn, and you have been led just my way, making me to feel one with his people, extolling him for his love for placing me (so unworthy) among them, and at such times how dear they all have been to me. This is not my experience only, but that of many others, who can say with me that the things you are led to speak about come to pass in our experience, causing us to give glory to God and have peace toward all men. You were feeling very low in mind, as well as weak in body to-day, and I do desire to be guided aright so that I may write to your comfort. My desire is continually for your good, that God will comfort you with the same things wherewith we are comforted by your preaching. "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform," and he has always reserved the right to train his own prophets, and many of them confessed his ways mysterious. Ezekiel had to eat the roll, a roll of lamentations and woe, and when the Spirit lifted him up he said, "I went in bitterness." How merciful it is of God to lead his servants in such a way that they can comfort others who get in very low places; and we may be sure he never causes one to sink too low for his mighty power to raise him up, and when he does lift him up he can praise Him for it. We can all say, "My Jesus has done all things well."

I hope you will soon feel better, and that sister McConnell will be with us again next Sunday. Now, with much love, I remain your unworthy brother,

GEORGE RUSTON.

WHITE PLAINS, N. Y., Dec. 30, 1914.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I trust, if not deceived, that I have a desire to write you, as I will not be blessed with the privilege of meeting with you next Sunday, Jan. 3rd. I want to try in my weak and ignorant way to speak of the many joys and sorrows I have experienced since being received in the sweet fellowship of the church. It is a sweet memory. I will never be able to tell the joy that filled my poor heart on that happy afternoon, one year ago next Sunday, Jan. 3rd. I have wanted to express it many times, but find it impossible, but my heart has been comforted from time to time while sitting under the sound of our dear pastor's preaching, and hearing him tell the great mysteries which none but the helpless can understand. Again, I have been greatly comforted in hearing the dear brethren and sisters tell of their changes. Sometimes it seems too wonderful for me to be blessed with the hope of being called one with that happy people. At times I feel beyond question that their

joy is mine, and their sorrow I share, but when new trials come I am in darkness for awhile, but after the storm is passed there is thanksgiving in my heart for the trial which seemed so hard to bear. I know I have no confidence in the flesh, and there is always a longing with me to live righteously in this world of sin and woe, but the more I desire to live godly the more wicked and unholy I feel, and wonder if there is any one like me. Dear ones, it is truly my feeling that you could easily do without me as a member, but I cannot live without you all. I need your words of comfort; nowhere could I find what my poor thirsty soul craves but with the Old School Baptists, to whom Jesus is all and in all. I am sure the Lord will ever continue to bless and sustain all his poor helpless children, and all their strength will be from above.

I beg an interest in your prayers, that I may be kept humble while here on earth I stay. I wish I could tell you all about the changes I have passed through for almost a year. In your fellowship, which is my delight, I have read and reread this hymn. It seems to express my feelings better than I can:

"People of the living God,
I have sought the world around,
Paths of sin and sorrow trod,
Peace and comfort nowhere found.

Now to you my spirit turns,
Turns a fugitive unblest;
Brethren, where your altar burns,
O receive me into rest.

Lonely I no longer roam
Like the cloud, the wind, the wave,
Where you dwell shall be my home,
Where you die shall be my grave.

Mine the God whom you adore,
Your Redeemer shall be mine;
Earth can fill my soul no more,
Every idol I resign."

With love to you all, I will close. May the Lord bless our dear pastor to proclaim his Redeemer for the comfort of you dear ones.

In bonds of love,

MELISSA GRIMES.

COLMAR, Ky.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have had a mind for two years to write a letter for our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and have written two or three, but when I read them they were so imperfect I consigned them to the waste-basket for fear they would crowd out better material, but now while you are short of copy it may be that you can use some poor material. If I could write like some of the brethren, it seems as if I might write oftener than they do, but the Lord alone knows, but sometimes it seems as if some of the good brethren know things that must come to pass. This fact has been brought to my mind by the departure of our beloved Elder F. A. Chick, and the selection of Elder Lefferts to fill the place. It was a foregone conclusion in the minds of many, weeks before the selection was made, that Elder Lefferts was the man that would be selected. Soon after the departure of the beloved editor I made the statement that Elder Lefferts would be selected to fill the vacancy. I am not sorry that the selection was made, but in fact I can join thousands of voices over our land in saying that God's will was done, and we are glad, for we believe he is one of the few of Israel who has been faithful over a few things, and has been made ruler over many things, and entered into the joy of his Lord. He has seen the passing away of the world (the legal world) which is the first heaven, and the ushering in of the next world, which is the second heaven, wherein dwelleth righteousness. In the Bible we have two worlds, ages or dispensations spoken of: the legal dispensation, or Israel after the flesh, and the grace dispensation of Israel after the Spirit. We also have two tabernacles: one made with hands, and one made

without hands. We also have two heavens elucidated: the first and the second. The Lord Jesus Christ was manifested in the first of these, and on this plain of existence he fought his battles, obediently entered death and hell, arose a conquering King over the flesh of Israel and all it contains, and with all the glory of his Father he entered the second plain of existence, which he prepared by his obedience, suffering, death and resurrection, for the dwelling-place of all that the Father hath given him. This dwelling-place, or kingdom, is here in time. It is Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the general assembly and church of the firstborn, and the kingdom which was prepared from the foundation of the world, which the Son of man in his glory says, Come, ye blessed of my Father, and inherit, because ye have done so and so. This kingdom, or second heaven, is fully described in the Bible, but the heaven of heavens is not described. Jesus Christ was born into the first, or legal, heaven, where the Israel of God existed. The natural man could not exist on this plain without first undergoing a change, and this change made him an Israelite under the law; so then, the first birth of Jesus Christ does not represent the natural birth of the human family. Therefore Jesus Christ never lived on the plain of existence of the natural world of mankind. He never addressed himself to that class of people, because he was on a higher plain of existence. The Primitive Baptists are the only people who follow the example given by Jesus Christ, in refusing to preach Christ to the natural man. It is impossible for the minister of God to reach the natural man with the gospel. Jesus Christ did not go to him, and where Christ did not go his disciples cannot. Man must be brought out of nature's quarry by the working of the Spirit of God before he can be reached by the gospel. The Bible properly belongs to the Israel of God. It is addressed to them, and to no one else. Its exhortations, admonitions, commandments and statutes are to them. I hear some say, Where does the Gentile get in? He gets in by a change of heart wrought by the Spirit of God, which makes him an Israelite under law to Christ. All Israel are law subjects by the first birth (this is not the natural birth). Christ's first birth made him a law subject, and before he could enter his kingdom and rest from sin he had to be born again, this time from the dead. The only way that Israel can pass from the first, or legal heaven, from the first tabernacle, from striving against sin, to the kingdom of God, or second heaven, to the second tabernacle, or the one made without hands, and to the place of rest, is to crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts. The apostle Paul in his letter to the Galatian brethren said this: "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." He also said, That as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Also the Spirit, through the apostle John, to the churches of Asia said, "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." Then the whole duty of the Israel of God is to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, as Christ hath commanded us. Christ said to Nicodemus, an Israelite, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he can-

not enter the kingdom of God. Nicodemus is an example of all Israelites, he is not an example of a Gentile or a natural man. So it was Nicodemus' duty to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness. We need more men in the field today exhorting Israel to their duty. Christ was obedient and spent his life in teaching and warning the Israel of God of the great danger of disobedience and rebellion. He is the chief foundation stone. The apostles, the pillars, came along in the same line of obedience, crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts, and spent their lives in teaching and trying to save Israel. Well, then is it not our duty to build upon this foundation with the same kind of material? Have we been doing it? If every issue of the SIGNS could be filled like the Aug. 15th issue, especially the article written by brother Joseph Ford, and the two editorials written by editors Lefferts and Ker, surely a great many of Israel would hear the command, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. I do not think I ever read an article that gave me more joy than the one written by brother Ford. My heart beat with joy to know that the Lord had a true minister on the western plains contending for the truth, one who was not afraid to exhort the brethren to their duty. We would be glad had he a mind to write oftener than he does. Brother Ford believes in a time salvation and a time damnation, but he believes there is no salvation aside from the merit of the Lord Jesus Christ. To these things we say, Amen. There is no worth or merit in man to redeem himself from a single transgression. This being true, how can any one believe in conditional salvation? We believe with the apostle, that if we live after the flesh we shall die, but if we through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body we shall live. The Israel of God is judged in time. Every man shall receive according to the deeds done in the body. The apostle said, "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" Died without mercy! Note the expression. And yet they were Israelites. An Israelite need not think that he can go on in disobedience and escape the judgments of God. The national Israelites did not escape, for after God had redeemed them from Egypt, and saved them from the hand of them that hated them, and enabled them to drink water from the rock, and oil from the flinty rock, and fed them with manna from on high, yet they put not their trust in him, and rebelled against him, and for this disobedience God destroyed them in the wilderness. So in like manner a great number of Israelites to-day are destroyed in the wilderness of their flesh. None but Israel is judged by the law of Israel. We know that if it were God's plan or purpose he could reserve the whole of Israel from worshipping Baal as well as a remnant, but that is not his predestined plan. He has purposed within himself to suffer the majority of Israel to walk in their own ways, and at the same time reserved or given to his Son the right to judge them according to deeds done in the body, that he might show to them the depravity of man and the justice and holiness of God, and to manifest unto his remnant the exceeding greatness of his mercy. This remnant is the very elect, the bride,

the Lamb's wife, that follows the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

Yours in hope of the salvation of all Israel,

L. D. HOSKINS.

MELBOURNE, Ont., Nov. 25, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER FENTON:—You have been in my mind a great deal since the Lobo meeting. My husband and I regretted very much that we could not be there, but are glad to know that it was a good meeting. We have seen some who were there, and they said that your preaching was with power and with comfort. I am glad, dear brother, that you were given liberty to proclaim the everlasting gospel, and trust it was sweet to your own soul. My mind often goes back to the last time you were here in Ekfrid; your visit was precious to me. I was favored with a hearing ear and an understanding heart (if not deceived) to understand something of the precious truths you were enabled to unfold. Your text was, The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory. I did feel to an extent to see the glory of those wonderful heavens, and if indeed I did, what an unspeakable blessing to poor, unworthy, sinful me. I always tremble and fear to claim to be a recipient of the blessings bestowed upon the elect of God. I never address one of the dear saints as brother or sister but the question arises, Have you the right to claim that blessed relationship? And the question seems unanswerable; but I surely have a love for them I have not for the world, and I do love the dear Redeemer—love to hear his name exalted above every other name. Yes, far, far above every other, and I cannot help hoping it is of the Lord. O, dear brother, I do sometimes feel to say, "O for a thousand tongues to sing the dear Redeemer's praise." I have been wonderfully favored under the preaching of the gospel for some time. I think I never shall forget the sweet times I had a year ago. First, your sermon, then a little later on Elder Coulter came, then Elder Slauson, then Elder Sawin and then Elder Vail. Each one came laden with good things, O so good, and such a lovely variety, and I was favored to feast, to wonder and admire. Elder Vail seemed to be full to overflowing, the words seemed to pour from his lips as he spoke of the wonders of God's grace and of the wonderful love of the dear Redeemer. It seemed to me he could hardly contain himself until he started to preach, and I listened enraptured. It seemed as though I must cry out in praise to God, and the words of the psalmist came to my mind: "O come, let us sing unto the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation." When I got home I took the Bible and found it, and the whole of the Psalm seemed most beautiful to me. Ah, dear brother, is it not all wonderful, the love of the dear Savior to poor, sinful creatures? I have been favored to meditate on the character he bears. O how much he is to us. He is the way, the truth and the life, our shield, our hiding-place, our meat and our drink, our life, our salvation, our all, a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. How glad I am it says "closer," for brothers and sisters may fail, something may arise to turn away their love from us, for they are but human, but our Jesus is also the mighty God, he knows not only our thoughts, but our intents. I well remember the first time I met Elder Ker, when you and he came to Elder Durand's, and were conversing on Saturday evening. He spoke of that, quoting

that Scripture, and O how good and comforting it was to me. It was indeed a pleasant evening. There is nothing in the world to compare with the sweet feeling we sometimes experience from these visits, "with sweetest emotions our souls do overflow." How good it is to know that He knows our intents, our inmost desires. There was a time when the thought that the great God knew my thoughts, and that his eye was always on me, was a source of terror, but now I am glad that he knows all about me, and I do not need to tell him anything. Yes, he knows that I desire to live as becomes one of his dear children, and he knows how I grieve because I do not, and how sick I often feel of self and sin. Dear brother, we sometimes feel a little lonely now that we do not see the faces or hear the voices of the dear ministers who used to visit us, but we are very glad to have our regular meetings, and we do feel to thank God for sending dear Elder Slauson to us. He comes to us every month, and always seems to have something new. Not that he tells us anything we did not know, but as Elder Lefferts says, "things we did not know we knew." I feel that the Lord is blessing his ministry to us, and my prayer is that He will be with him to uphold him in all his trials, and knit us together in love and sweet fellowship. We sometimes do not see any of our faith to talk with for some time, but the dear old SIGNS comes to us regularly, and it is truly welcome. How good our God is to us. When one editor is taken away he gives us another to fill the place. When dear Elder Chick passed away my thoughts turned to Elder Lefferts, but I had no idea whether he would be the one or not. My husband and I enjoy his editorials very much. The last one we thought especially good, and we have felt to read it again and again, and to say, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow;" and then there are so many sweet letters from the dear household of faith my heart's affections go out to them, and they all come from different parts of the country speaking the language of Zion, and singing the same sweet song. If I could write as they do, I would like to tell them how I feel, but if I could perhaps I should become proud. The Lord knows what is best for each one of us.

Well, this letter is growing lengthy, so I will close. I felt a desire to write you, and trust it is not all of the flesh. Four years ago I was in Brantford, and had not heard preaching for a time, when Elder Coulter came there and preached, and while listening to him I seemed to be lifted above the earth and earthly things, and such love flowed out to him, and after he had gone I still felt a great love for him, and I began to wonder if it was of the flesh, when these words came with sweet comfort and power: He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. Dear brother Fenton, I do feel that it is because I know that you always love to converse on the precious things of the kingdom of our God that I felt a desire to tell to you a little in my poor way. I hope this finds you all well.

With much love to yourself and sister Fenton, in which my husband joins, your sister, I trust, in a precious hope,

BERTHA ARDIES.

WAVERLY, Pa., Dec. 31, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Sister Sarah Johnson handed the inclosed letter to me to send to the SIGNS, and if you see fit you may publish it; it is real christian experience I think.

I just desire to write a few lines; do as you see fit with them. I am still trying to serve eight churches as pastor, and attend five others as supply. They are poorly served, but I am glad to say that there is no trouble or confusion over any point of Bible doctrine, or anything else to my knowledge, among them. I invite any of the ministering brethren to come and see for themselves, and preach for them. You would be cared for grandly. There were but few additions the past year. The churches I am serving as pastor are in no association, but the five that I am supplying all are. I am well acquainted with the churches of the Delaware River, Warwick and Roxbury associations, and those who serve them as pastors, and I have no knowledge of any trouble over any point of doctrine between these churches and their pastors, but am sorry to hear of trouble in some other associations over the subject of the resurrection, which is a profound mystery, but believed by all of the manifest subjects of God's salvation, also trouble over some minor points. Elder Ker expressed my mind clearly concerning those who differ on those certain subjects, in the SIGNS of January 1st, 1915: harsh and offensive criticism should be avoided by all God-fearing, loving people. Nothing is gained by calling names, and it is a very poor way of letting brotherly love continue.

I am glad we have two able and gifted brethren as editors to conduct that department of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. They are able and gifted with the pen, as well as in the pulpit, and are sound and clear in doctrine, the churches they serve being their judges. No other tribunal can judge God's ministers, and before their judgment they stand or fall. I am much pleased with the many sweet and comforting communications of the dear ones published in the SIGNS; in this way they are speaking often one with another, and in this way comforting one another with the comfort wherewith they themselves are comforted of the Lord. Brethren, keep on writing. If I had the gift in writing that you have, you would hear from me often, but I have no gift in that line, and I know it, and my knowing it has been a great blessing to the readers of the SIGNS. Methinks I hear some one saying, What are you doing now? I am stopping. Farewell to you all. God bless, comfort, sustain and support you all by his rich, sovereign, abounding grace, is my prayer for all the election of grace. Amen.

I am, as ever,

D. M. VAIL.

MR. MYERS:—You have manifested a desire on several occasions to know something of my views and feelings on religious matters, and you gave me an invitation to attend the next church meeting. I feel that it would be doing injustice to one of those who above all others I love if I did not give you some satisfaction by way of reply. I have had many reflections on experimental religion for the last fifteen years, during which time I have had seasons of joy and sorrow. When I was quite young I thought on religion and made many resolves to work my way to heaven, which I thought I could do any time I set myself about it, but all my efforts ended in failure. I heard people talk about religious experience, but I knew not what it meant, and I fully believed that if I was saved it must be by my own works, yet I thought I would be on the watch, and if I experienced anything of a religious nature I would understand it from

the start. But in the midst of these vain reflections as I grew older I began to view the subject in a different light, and found I was not capable of performing the deeds I depended so much upon. My inmost thoughts were sinful, and everything in and about me rested entirely on a sinful foundation. I began also to have an attachment for those I thought sorrowful like myself. I went on in this way for some time, when I began to think whether it might not be possible that my feelings were something like those of a christian; I had heard them speak of having doubts, but their doubts I thought were not real, while mine were real ones. I knew that I loved christians, but I feared it was not the right kind of love. I thought I was not troubled as deeply about my sinful nature as I ought to be, and wished for more trouble. If there is anything of a christian experience about this, it came to me in a way I had not known, and these feelings of mine were such as I had never had the least idea of before, and I thought I was on the watch, as I said before, that I might know if I experienced anything of religion, yet I had no idea of this being anything of the kind at first, nor can I say yet that it was. One thing in particular I was troubled about: I feared that I had learned these things from my parents and other Old School Baptists I had been brought up among. Thus I went on, sometimes doubting and other times believing, until I was at the association at Harbourton. There had been preaching through the day, and the question was raised toward night whether it would be best to have any more preaching that day, when some one said there might be three-quarters of an hour yet employed in preaching, when Elder J. F. Johnson arose and commenced speaking from the text, I will write my law in their hearts, and I will be to them a God and they shall be to me a people, &c. Everything he said seemed to clear the difficulties out of my way, until at last he came to the very point I was troubled the most about. He said they would fear they had learned these things of their parents, &c. This I supposed no one but myself had ever been troubled about, and to hear it from a preacher of the gospel, with other things that I was concerned about, one after another, giving evidences of being born again, I felt for the time being that there was no longer room for me to doubt. I felt as though I could rise up before the congregation and declare that I knew these things were so. It seemed to me that Elder Johnson knew all my feelings, and was talking directly to me, and I loved him greatly, because I thought he understood my feelings better than any one else, and with him I loved every one that I thought had a love for such things, and I felt then, as I have at times since, to say with the poet:

"My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this,
And sit and sing herself away
To everlasting bliss."

Then again I became swallowed up in the vanities of the world, and became cold and indifferent, and feared that I had never known any change, and that all was a delusion in my case. I think I love the Old Baptists much, but whether it is ever my destiny and privilege to become a member of the church I cannot tell. I can say truly, I do not wish to unite with any others; they are the people I love, and my wish is to keep within their bounds, and it may perhaps be better for me, at least for the present, to stay outside than to unite with them, even if they were disposed to receive me,

for there are so many departing from the truth in these times, ministers and others, I, too, might make a false profession, and thus become a stumbling-block and a reproach to the cause, and this I desire never to do. This I wish to leave with Him who knows best, hoping and believing I shall be led aright.

"Lord, decide the doubtful case,
Thou who art thy people's sun,
Shine upon this work of grace,
If indeed it is begun."

From your sincere friend,

STACY RISLER.

[THE foregoing letter was written by Stacy Risler to Cornelius Myers about ten years ago.—ED.]

FORDYCE, Ark., Dec. 29, 1914.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am inclosing you a short letter just received from Elder F. P. Chandler, of Paris, Tenn. I have Elder Chandler's consent to have it published in our dear, good paper, and am submitting same to your judgment. To me this letter is so expressive of Bible truth, and so concurrent with what I have tried to express to the dear brother, that it has been to me a source of spiritual stimulation, and, seeing it as I do, I feel that others will be blessed to see and rejoice in the truth as set forth by brother Chandler. The doctrine as taught by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, reflects to his great name's honor and glory, and this is what is contained in this short letter. In Him all the fullness dwells. All spiritual blessings must and do come according to His abundant mercy, and we confidentially believe that all who have been made to feel sin abounding in them, and also the justice of the condemnation of God's righteous law, freely admit that they were justly condemned, and that they could not offer any protest against it, and therefore are bound to confess that in all that has ever been done for them goodness and mercy have abounded. They, like Peter, break forth in praises to His great name, that it is according to God's divine power that he hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness. Yes, life and godliness come as a free and unmerited gift, and that from a divine source, therefore we are bound to give thanks unto God always for you, brethren, who from the beginning chose you unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. Yes, we were chosen unto it, and when we were chosen we had privileges given us, and all of these mighty and wonderful works of God's mighty power in us absolutely brought us to the belief of the truth.

Submitting these matters for your consideration and better judgment, I am, yours, trusting in mercy alone for life beyond this sin-cursed world,

V. R. HARRIS.

PARIS, Tenn., Dec. 20, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER HARRIS:—Your welcome letter came duly to hand, which I enjoyed reading very much, because it expresses the truth taught in the Scriptures, and taught under the ministration of the Holy Ghost in the daily experience of all who have learned that justification of sinners is only through the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Your remark that "strictly speaking there is but one preacher, and that is Christ Jesus the Lord, and without him there is no preaching that will honor him," is a blessed truth; it is not the gospel of Christ without him, and this truth makes it a blessing to his people, and it is not a blessing to them without it. His promise is, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of

the world," and this distinguishes it from those who preach themselves their own wisdom, righteousness and strength. They who preach the gospel of Christ must preach in his name, and all salvation and blessing in his name, both for time and eternity. All spiritual blessings were given us in Christ before the world began, and given according to the good pleasure of his will. We love to hear those preach or write who are filled with the fullness of Christ, and such by grace have been emptied of all that is of self, of all earthly good, and room made for Jesus to reign in the heart, for where he reigns he puts down all enemies under his feet, self is abased and God glorified. No self-exalted man ever gives glory to the God of heaven. When so favored, how sweet it is to think on the good things which God hath prepared for them that love him, yet wonder of wonders, that my thoughts are so often gone astray, and, like one alone I seem to be, O is there any one like me? O those terrible doubts and fears and tremblings! I have labored hard for over thirty years to overcome sin, and to be a better man, but I am a sinner still; I am no better than in former years. So each victory over temtaion and sin is because he succors me, if not the most deceived creature on earth. Jesus, and him crucified, is all my hope for myself, for the church, which he hath purchased with his own blood. His promises to his people are the sure mercies of David. Mercy they need, for mercy they cry. The Lord hears their cry and answers from heaven, and their every need supplies. He knows all their needs, and he raises up the prayer in their hearts to cry for the very things he himself has promised to give. So it is to him that they pray with groans that cannot be uttered, and according to his will he with Him also freely gives us all things. Amen.

I am well acquainted with Elders Hatcher and Boaz; both of them are held in high esteem by Old School Baptists here. They have suffered many things for the truth's sake. I am glad you hope to come to see us next fall. We are a few poor folks, but love the visits of all who believe the doctrine you do. I trust we are one people. I have not met your sister at Selmer. I passed that place on train once, but did not stop off, but I would be glad to see her. I do not think that there are many Old Baptists in that part of the country.

I hope you will write again soon.

Yours in hope,

F. P. CHANDLER.

VEGA, N. Y., Jan. 4, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a letter written by Elder J. B. Slauson to the First Church of Roxbury, which, if you see fit, we would like to have published in the SIGNS.

V. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

ST. THOMAS, Ont., Sept. 1, 1914.

TO THE FIRST CHURCH OF ROXBURY—DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—While it has been the providence of God to remove me from among you to another field of labor, I am often with you in mind and spirit. I have often asked the question why I should have been separated from you, but we know that our ways are not the Lord's ways. Man may devise his way, but his steps are ordered of the Lord. Could I have had my own way I would have been with you still, but I was made willing in the day of his power to lay down my labors among you, yet it was very painful indeed. But the Lord's will be done. You, as a church, as well as I,

have learned in this experience of separation that the Lord will provide, and that we cannot look to man, for how weak is the arm of flesh. Except the Lord build the house, the laborers labor in vain, and except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain; and also, the Lord has fulfilled his promises to you, that he would never leave nor forsake his people; each and every need he will supply. We may want many things, but we may not need them. Could we always be given wisdom from the Lord to ask for just such things as we need, we many times would shrink from asking for anything, for often it is needful that we have darkness of mind and anguish of soul, that we be driven to the Lord in prayer. I have often felt the words of the poet coming into my very soul:

"O for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame,
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb."

Then, again, can we be so highly favored with such an heavenly privilege without passing through some trials and temptations? Certainly not, for trials make the promise sweet. If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him, and without suffering in our soul we cannot rejoice in him who is able to, and does, allay our sufferings. He, the blessed Potentate of the Father, can only quench the fiery darts of the enemy, and bid our sorrow cease. O what a blessed and faithful Sovereign we have, who is not forgetful of his people, and who has never withheld any of his mercies from them. But how forgetful we are of him who died that we might live, and who lives and intercedes for us. My heart rejoices to see your labors as a church in keeping up your meetings, and showing your faith by your works, that where two or three are gathered together in his name, there he is in the midst, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. I trust you have been blessed in your meetings by the presence of the Spirit of the Lord, enabling you to speak to each other in comforting words of the things of the kingdom, which are very precious to your souls, and also in talking of your various trials through this wilderness of ours, but being led by the Captain of our salvation safely over all the dangerous places, to a safe and abiding haven, where the weary traveler may lie in safety and rest his weary soul upon the protecting arm of Jehovah. This, no doubt, you have found to be very sweet and comforting from time to time as you by the kind blessing of Providence have been able to meet, and while we are thus separated we will pray for each other, and trust in the Lord, desiring to bow in humble submission to the will of the King of Zion, who holds the stars in his right hand and appoints to each of us our field of labor. Truly the Lord in building his church has never asked counsel of man, but selects his own material for his own glorious house, and places each stone therein according to his infinite wisdom, and each stone is fitted by the perfect work of the Holy Spirit for the place the Lord has designed it. As I reflect upon the past, it brings to my mind many seasons of the sweetest joy, as we met together to sing and pray. Truly I can say, How lovely are the courts of Zion. O how good and how pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity.

"When each can feel a brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part,
When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart."

If such seasons of joy are but a foretaste of the stream, what must the fountain be? My earnest prayer for you is, that you may still dwell together in that sweet

peace which has been ours to enjoy all the years of my labors among you. Many of you have been brought into the fold under my ministry, and you are still in my heart as my children in the Lord, and as a father loveth the children of his own bosom, so I have you in my heart, and feel to make mention of you in my prayers, that the dear Lord will bless you and guide you in the paths of peace for his name's sake. I trust that you as a church will put forth your united strength in keeping up the meetings and the association for which your forefathers labored so earnestly, and I will give you such assistance as it is possible for me to give. Now unto him that washed us in his own blood and made us kings and priests unto God, be power, praise, majesty and dominion, both now and forever.

J. B. SLAUSON.

HAMPSTEAD, Md., Dec., 1914.

DEAR ELDER KER:—As our dear brother Chick is no more with us I feel that it is my duty to write you and thank editors, correspondents, contributors (who aid in sending the family paper to the poor of the flock), publishers, and all who have contributed to my comfort and pleasure in this way. Gladly would I be the donor instead of the recipient, but I know it is not only right to say, Thy will be done, but to feel it within, and if a branch am just in the right place, and hope through his mercies I am growing in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In sorrow for our dear departed ones I forgot for a time my own anxieties, and have again been given a more trustful spirit. I have not the gift to express my feelings, but do so much enjoy reading my sentiments expressed as they are in sister Durand's letter of June 26th; it is just what I desire to say. As sister Wright says, Elder Chick through all his sorrow never forgot to write me words of comfort. After he placed me in the liquid grave, he wrote me, Write me all your joys and sorrows, and if I cannot help you I can point you to Jesus; and as you know such was his life. Dear sister Rowe, whom I had learned to love, passed over so quickly. I feel that you and my esteemed pastor can truly sympathize with each other. But what a blessed thought: We sorrow not as those who have no hope. Since I came home in November sisters Kelly have been here once; Emma seems much the same, but mother has not recovered her strength; the brother is as usual. You published that your contributions have lessened, and if you feel the burden is too heavy just drop my name. I appreciate the past, and again thank you all. God grant that we may all be sustained in every trying hour. Through the kindness of sisters Kelly I had a pleasant visit with them the first of June, and also the pleasure of meeting with the church.

Yours in sympathy and gratitude,

GEORGIA D. ENGLAND.

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1915.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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GALATIANS IV. 27.

"For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband."

At the request of sister James we shall now attempt to present some thoughts upon the above text, and hope that she as well as others may be given a lead of mind, at least, concerning the wonders of God contained in such deep and important sayings of his written word. The apostles were constantly referring to and quoting from the prophets, thus showing their connection with gospel things and assuring the brethren that God moved them, holy men, to write for the comfort, hope and faith of the spiritual or church of the firstborn. Paul said, That which was written aforetime was written for our learning, that through patience and comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope. Peter said, "Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into." These two quotations are sufficient to establish the fact that the prophecies have direct connection with gospel truth, and that the children of God, angels, desire to know and understand them. The New Testament would be without meaning were it not for the Old, and the Old Testament would have no force except fulfilled in the New. Therefore it is necessary for ministers to study to show themselves approved unto God, workmen who need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. The law is not gospel, nor is the gospel law, but both are absolutely necessary in preaching the truth as it is in Jesus, that the entire word of God be presented. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." By the gospel, the power of God, is the justification of the sinner.

The apostle in this fourth chapter of Galatians is writing gospel truth by contrast, and says, "It is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman as by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, which answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." The bondmaid, the mother of Ishmael, was a figure of the old covenant, showing that all of that covenant were in bondage, not only to sin, but to the law, bound by its fetters with no way of escape in and of themselves. It is an understood fact that a bondwoman cannot bring forth free children. Her own bondage establishes the bondage of all her children. It is seldom mentioned, but that this figure exist Abraham had to have a son by the bondmaid, and that the gospel or freedom be

preached by figure it was also necessary that he have a son by Sarah the freewoman. Though Ishmael was as much Abraham's son as was Isaac, he could not, because the son of a bondwoman, be heir of Abraham's possessions. Therefore Sarah said, Send the bondmaid out with her son, for her son shall not be heir with my son. This was then, even in that age of the world, the declaration of the new covenant, or freewoman, to the old covenant, or bondwoman, with her children. These two women and their children could not live in the same house; separation was necessary then in figure, and the same wide separation exists today; the great gulf fixed between those of legal worship and gospel subjects who are in Abraham's bosom, the children of promise. In Paul's day old Jerusalem was in bondage with her children, and many more were the children of that desolate woman than those of the freewoman, or gospel church, called "new Jerusalem," "the mother of us all." All false worshipers are the children of bondage; their eyes are closed, that they see not the kingdom of God; their ears are deaf, that they hear not God's word; their hearts are hardened, that they seek not the righteousness of God; being ignorant thereof they go about establishing their own righteousness. The children of God, born in Zion of his Spirit, are very few indeed when compared with those of desolation, blindness, bondage and ignorance, yet while the world stands there will be a few here and there scattered over all the earth who know God as their Father, Christ Jesus as their Redeemer and trust in his name. At the time of the flood Noah and his family, "eight souls," represented the election of grace. Afterward Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were the chosen and called of God; to them he showed mercy and made promise. Then Moses, Aaron and Joshua, as lawgiver, priest and guide, were the chosen of God. After them came judges, kings and prophets, who filled their respective places as representatives of the faithful, or men of faith, of God. After these came John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, alone with the secret of the Lord, preaching repentance and forgiveness of sins. Few, very few, compared with the masses of Israel, were made manifest as the election of grace. Then Jesus came and called the twelve apostles as his ministers and servants of all the hosts of the Israelites. To them gave he commandment to preach the kingdom of God, to heal the sick and cast out devils. In that upper room with them he instituted the ordinance of the Lord's supper. At one time when he preached the doctrine of discriminating grace five thousand children of the bondwoman were offended and turned from him, but there were twelve men, children of the freewoman, who said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, and hath the words of eternal life. Well indeed did Paul say, Many more children hath the bondwoman than the freewoman. Yes, even unto this day such is the case, and will doubtless continue until time is no more. What a blessed thing it is to hope and at times to be assured that we are the children of the freewoman, the church of God, the children of promise, as was Isaac, and are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ! K.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

We have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

LITTLENESS IN CHRIST.

IF I have anything to boast of it is littleness in Christ. Will you some time write on the above?

IVORY H. FORD.

BERWICK, Maine, Dec. 28, 1914.

We are not sure that we exactly understand what our brother means by "littleness in Christ," nor do we know along just what line he wishes us to write, but will offer some thoughts on what we think he means, and leave them for the consideration of our readers. Looking at the matter from one standpoint, there is no such thing as "littleness in Christ." Christ as the anointed of God, is full of all that is vast and infinite, eternal and lofty. Christ abounds in love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. None of these are little things, but on the contrary are so great and high that with all our striving our nature can never attain to them. There is nothing little about the doctrine and truth of Christ. It is so deeply spiritual that mortal minds can never grasp it. Still further, the people that are in Christ are not little, they are kings and priests unto God, sons and heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, and yet Paul does speak in 1 Cor. iii. 1, of "babes in Christ." Thus there is another side to this matter which does present a "littleness in Christ." All those who are in Christ Jesus and who have his Spirit in them, do feel to be little, very little in Christ; the revelation of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ brings to light their utter unworthiness to any benefit in his mercy. The operation of the Spirit within reveals all manner of sin and uncleanness in their flesh and carnal nature, causing them to hate their own life, and to hunger and thirst after righteousness. So those who are in Christ never see any littleness in him, but always in themselves. They feel to be nothing, less than nothing and vanity; he appears to them to be all in all. A wonderful sufficiency they see to be in him; a woeful lack of merit in themselves. Nothing scant about the spiritual blessings stored up for them in him, but an awful poverty and leanness blasts the whole of their own desert flesh. So while there is nothing little in Christ himself, but all is gloriously eternal and infinite, his Spirit in the subjects of his grace causes them to see nothing but littleness, emptiness and vanity in themselves. The more the grace of God is active in one, the more insignificant will he feel himself to be in the eyes of God and before his brethren. Humility unfeigned is a fruit of the Spirit, and what is more abhorrent to the spiritual mind than a humility that is put on, being feigned, not real? A "voluntary humility" which is produced according to the will of the creature is to be abhorred the same as any other fruit of the flesh. Grace works so that its subjects are made humble in spite of their own resistance and stubbornness. It bends their stiff necks to take the yoke of meekness and lowliness in spite of themselves. The deeper one is led in the things of the Spirit, the less he thinks he knows and the worse he feels himself to be. There is a sense in which knowledge increases sorrow, for the more we know of heavenly things the more contemptible we appear to ourselves. Paul was an apostle, and the ability given him in matters of doctrine and order was wonderful, but he himself said, "I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am." Again, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach

among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." So we see that there is indeed a keen sense of littleness experienced by those who are in Christ Jesus. The appearing of Jesus always brings with it a sense of our unworthiness. When Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up, and his train filling the temple, he said, "Woe is me! I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." Job had heard of the Lord with the hearing of the ear, but when he saw him for himself and not for another, he said, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." The increase of spiritual knowledge is the decrease of human excellency. "I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ." But self is such a subtle and cunning foe of our spiritual peace and welfare that it will intrude upon us unawares at the most unexpected times and in the most unexpected places. For instance, one may even get puffed up over his littleness, may even get proud that he is little; littleness then ceases to be a virtue. A conscious humility is almost as bad as a voluntary one. Our brother Ford says in his request to us that he "boasts" of his "littleness in Christ." We do not know the nature of his boasting, but hope the good Lord will preserve us all, together with our brother, from boasting in anything save the cross of Christ Jesus our Lord. Even one's littleness is not a safe thing to glory in. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." "If any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know."

L.

TEMPERANCE.

"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."—Proverbs xvi. 32.

Biblical temperance is self-control. Self cannot control self; flesh cannot deny flesh. Two things are essential to the following of Jesus: denial of self, and taking up the cross. How are these accomplished? By the activity of the will to follow him. What will? Not the will of the natural man, certainly, for that will never wills to do anything that is becoming in the sight of God. Only by that will of which Paul says, "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure," can one have any desire or inclination to follow Jesus. The activity of that will in the people of God brings about self-denial and cross-bearing. The mastery of self is temperance, in the scriptural sense. One slow to anger is better than the mighty. Who is slow to anger? God is. He is "slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy." Better is he, therefore, than the mighty, than all the world is accustomed to speak or think of as mighty or great. How much better? No tongue can tell. The beauty of God so far transcends all that men call fine and great, it is indescribable. He that rules his own spirit is better than he that taketh a city. Napoleon took cities, but could not hold himself in check; he was ruled by his own vices though an expert in war. We simply use him as an example. Restraining one's self in one direction in order to gratify one's desire in another is not temperance. Restraining one's sensualities in order to be of fine tissue mentally, the world calls fine, but it is not temperance. One's mind is as carnal as one's senses. The whole man is corrupt, there is no soundness in him at all. Temperance means the control of self at all

points, the entire keeping of the body under. Lord, who is sufficient for this? Nowhere is temperance fully exemplified but in the Lord Jesus Christ; he never lost control of self, never got angry, never was ruled by impotent rage. Even when he made a scourge of small cords, and drove the moneychangers from the temple, it is not written of him that he was angry; he was blinded by passion at no time. Though tempted in all points like as his people are, yet he was without sin; he could know, and did know, what it means for us to be angry, was tempted in this point as in all others, but sinned not in it. When smitten on one cheek he turned the other; being reviled, he reviled not again. He called not down the vengeance of heaven upon those who so cruelly treated him, but said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Here in the fullness of Christ Jesus is the very acme, the perfection, of self-control. The Christ of God embodied temperance among the infinity of his virtues. He is better than he that taketh a city. The world lauds its conquerors, but he who sought to gain the mastery over self was crowned with thorns. So it will ever be. The world's applause will never ring in the ears of those who fight the fight that is good, upon the battleground of the Spirit against the flesh, but they shall all be brought off more than conquerors through him that hath loved them and given himself for them. The victory of God is theirs.

> "'Tis his love his people raises
> Over self to reign as kings."

This kingship of self-control, the majesty of temperance, is by the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Only through grace can there be accomplished in us that ruling of one's own spirit, the perfection of which is seen in Jesus. Paul kept his body in subjection, but confessed, "By the grace of God I am what I am," and he had that fear that after he had preached to others, he himself might be a castaway; not cast away from God, but away from the love and fellowship of the brethren. Who of the Lord's people does not have the same fear, conscious that only by grace can one live to the glory of God and the furtherance of the cause of truth? So, as we said at the beginning, self cannot control self, flesh cannot deny flesh. The preeminence of grace is the secret of self-control. L.

BEING HAPPY.

"HAPPY is that people, whose God is the Lord."—Psalms cxliv. 15. "Behold, we count them happy which endure."—James v. 11.

With the much-mouthed greeting, "Happy New Year," ringing in our ears, we wonder what it all means. What is happiness, anyway? Most people mean simply that they hope we will have a good time all the year, one continual round of jollity and easy-going, with the least resistance and difficulty possible. Would that be happiness? True happiness is in being, not in feeling. To feel good, jolly, merry and buoyant is not to be happy in the real sense. Such happiness is but froth, or foam, with nothing solid, real or substantial about it. True happiness is a principle of being, not a feeling of ecstasy. Often we hear people say that if they but had this or that they would be happy; and when they get the object they want they are no nearer being happy than they were while in pursuit of that object. The truth is that happiness springs from within, not from without; it is not what a man has around him outside himself that brings happiness, but what a man

has within himself. "Happy is that people, whose God is the Lord." He who has Christ within him the hope of glory, is truly happy, We do not mean that he will feel ecstatic; he may feel cast down and alone. We are not thinking of feelings in this matter of happiness, but of principles. The people whose God is the Lord, have the only true and living God as their object of adoration, are ruled and swayed by his dominion. Can there be a happier, a more blessed condition conceivable, let the frames and feelings be what they may? The word "happy" in the Scriptures means blessed. Jesus was a happy man, but there is no record that he ever laughed, or even felt like it; he rejoiced in spirit once, but rejoicing in spirit and laughing are two entirely different things; he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, but he was blessed. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." That man was Jesus. That people chosen out from among all nations by God, and who have God for their Lord, can never be moved from the solid base, the rock of ages, upon which they are founded. The banner over them is infinite love, their life is hid with Christ in God. Happy is the people that is in such a case, no matter how they feel. Their feelings have nothing to do with the blessedness of their estate, though their comfort may in a measure arise from sometimes feeling the everlasting arms underneath. But even then it is not a fleshly exaltation that does any good, but an apprehension by faith of the rock beneath them. "We count them happy which endure." What do they endure? Afflictions, crosses, losses, the contradictions of sinners against themselves, the line of confusion, stones of emptiness, being persecuted for righteousness' sake. Are people thus tried, happy? Indeed, they are the happiest, the most blessed of all people on this earth, for in all those hard things which they endure is the life of their spirit; by those things they live. Those who have the abundant life are truly happy; the life that is so abundant that death and hell cannot quench it. This abundant life is eternal in Christ Jesus, given the elect in him before the world began. This it is that quickens their mortal bodies and makes them debtors, not to the flesh to live after the flesh, but causes them to mortify the deeds of the body, thus living after the Spirit. So, "we count them happy which endure." The endurance of hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ makes full proof of their discipleship. These things make evident their sonship, for whom the Lord loves he chastens, and scourges every son that he receives. Certainly anything that gives us an assurance of our acceptance in the Beloved must be counted as blessed, as happy. L.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. T. V. Richardson, Md., $8.00; L. O. Garrott, Ky., $2.00; Mrs. B. R. Cannon, Ill., $1.00; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $2.00; J. L. Thompson, Del., $2.00; Mrs. J. H. Dickson, N. Y., $1.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Dec. 30th, 1914, at the residence of the bride, near Salisbury, Md., Horace E. Mitchell and Edna M. Reddish, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

By the same, Jan. 6th, 1915, at the residence of Mr. Ananias Hastings, near Gumboro, Del., John S. Benson and Mrs. Augusta C. Hearn, both of Sussex Co., Del.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

W. F. Steelman was born in Kern Co., Ill., and moved to Missouri at the age of seventeen years. He was united in marriage to Olive Maxwell Dec. 24th, 1895. To that union were born two daughters, both of whom are married, and two sons, who are living with their mother. The two daughters live near their mother, which is indeed a comfort at this time. Brother Steelman's health being very poorly in Missouri, a few years ago he came to California, and after staying long enough to know that his health would be very much better he returned to Missouri and brought his family to Rialto, Cal., where they now reside. Nov. 9th, 1914, while at his daily task (teaming), he was stricken, and about noon was found unconscious. Medical aid was summoned, but nothing could be done, the time had come when he must go hence, and early in the afternoon his spirit took its flight to the keeping of God who gave it. Brother Steelman became a member of the Primitive Baptist Church Nov. 20th, 1913. With letters of dismission from Little Northfork Church of Missouri brother and sister Steelman offered their membership to the Little Flock Church, at Riverside, Cal., March 16th, 1913, and were received in full fellowship, where they continued to hold their membership until his death, and where she is still a member. He was always in attendance when his health permitted him to be there, and was held in the highest esteem by all the brethren; and not only the brethren, but the vast concourse of friends and neighbors testified that all who knew him loved him. May the mercy of God rest upon his widow and fatherless children, is the prayer of one altogether unfit to speak of such things.

The services were conducted by other than his chosen brethren, but an invitation was extended to the writer to say a few words, it being the desire of the sister that one of the brethren whom he loved so well should say a few words. In much weakness I spoke a few words, after which the brethren sang a hymn as a tribute to his memory. His body was laid to rest in the Rialto cemetery, where many brethren, friends and neighbors were gathered, telling better than words in what esteem he was held by those who knew him.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS.

SINCE it has pleased God in his infinite wisdom to call from our midst our dearly beloved brother, W. F. Steelman, leaving to mourn his departure our dear sister, Olive Steelman, and their family of sorrowing ones; and since it has been our custom in times past when death has called at our door to record some token of remembrance of the dead, and sympathy for those left to mourn, it is so ordered that the Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, extend to these bereaved ones our sincere sympathy in this their sad hour, and express a desire that God, who is full of mercy and who is too good to be unkind, may bountifully bless them and comfort them with the sweet promises that are so sure and steadfast; the promises that he and he alone can give, and when spoken are never revoked. Yes, may he bless them with the faith that brings grace unto salvation.

It is further ordered that a copy of these articles be recorded in the church book, as a token of the love and esteem in which we deem him worthy. Also that a copy be presented to the sorrowing family, and also copies be sent to our papers for publication.

Done by order of the church, in session this 15th day of November, 1914.

W. D. BALL, Moderator.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

L. V. Yates, wife of Elder B. H. Yates, died at her home near Pomona, Ripley Co., Mo., Jan. 12th, 1915, where she had lived for the past seventeen years. She leaves to mourn their loss a husband and four children: Albert J., of Poplar Bluff, Mo., Fannie Hall, of Pomona, Mo., Mollie Gibson, of Neeleyville, Mo., and Azlee Vandove, of Pomona, Mo., with whom she lived until her death; also Oscar Sweezy, an adopted son, of Pomona, Mo. She also leaves thirteen grandchildren, three great-grandchildren and a host of loving friends. She was born March 29th, 1840, in the state of Virginia, and came to Dickson County, Tenn., when a small child. Her maiden name was Pistol. She knew nothing much of her relatives. She was married to B. H. Yates Oct. 2nd, 1860, and died Jan. 12th, 1915, making her stay on earth 74 years, 9 months and 13 days. Death was due to a broken hip, caused from a fall Jan. 5th, 1915, from which she suffered intense pain, which she bore with patience. She was conscious until the last moment, and seemed glad to go. She professed a hope in Christ in the year 1858, in which she remained steadfast until God in his infinite wisdom saw fit to remove her from us. We mourn in the flesh, but rejoice in spirit, for we know it is God's will being done. She joined Brush Creek Church, in Graves Co., Ky., in 1881, and removed her membership to New Hope Church, in Ripley Co., Mo., in the year 1898, of which she remained a member until death. She was a loving wife and mother, kind and loving at all times, and always ready to help and comfort those she found in distress. She never missed a meeting when opportunity afforded as long as she lived, and enjoyed the fellowship of the brethren and sisters. She was dearly loved by all who knew her. We mourn for her, but rejoice that God has left with us a dear, kind and loving father, who is seventy-two years old, and we know God will

soon call him to join our dear mother, where there is no more pain. She was laid to rest Jan. 13th, in the New Hope Cemetery, to await the glorious resurrection morn, when God shall call all his children home, where we hope and trust, if it be God's will, we can all unite with the family of God in the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world for those who love him.

Her son, ALBERT J. YATES.

Helen B. Blackwell, beloved wife of brother David L. Blackwell, of Hopewell, N. J., departed this life on Thursday, Jan. 14th, 1915, aged 81 years. She was born April 7th, 1834, and was baptized about fifty-one years ago. She sang in the choir of the Hopewell Church (sometimes leading it) for many years. Her faithful christian life was a great comfort to her husband, and their home was a place of peace where God was glorified. Six children were born unto them, two have passed away. The four now living are: Mrs. Annie D. Moore, William D. Blackwell, Mrs. Francina B. Hill and Mrs. Sarah S. Boyce; also seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild survive. Three weeks ago sister Blackwell fell and fractured her hip. She did not show signs of severe suffering, but quietly and peacefully passed away.

By request of her husband, the writer spoke from Psalms lxxiii. 24, 25, after which she was laid away in the Hopewell cemetery. May the Lord comfort the bereaved family. B. F. COULTER.

BROTHER **Y. J. Killebrew,** the subject of this notice, was born in Tennessee Sept. 5th, 1820, and died Dec. 20th, 1914, making his age 94 years, 3 months and 15 days. He was married to Paulina Ridgeway in early life, and to them were born eleven children, five boys and six girls; three of the boys and one girl died when small, the others are grown and married. He professed a good hope in Jesus and was baptized in the fellowship of old Walnut Fork Church of the Primitive Baptist faith and order on the fourth Sunday in September, 1844, by Elder Reuben Ross, and lived an orderly member until death. I first met him in 1859, at the old Buffalo Association, when I was only ten years old, and was intimately acquainted with him since 1866, and he had been a member of Little Hope Church, of which I am the unworthy pastor, for about fifteen years. He had been deaf for twenty-five years or more, and could not see to read for about the same length of time, but he never forgot the Scriptures, and could quote chapter after chapter almost verbatim, and not only the letter, but the spiritual import of them. While his mind grew weak in natural things in his old age, his spiritual faculties seemed strong. He had almost lost his natural mind, but still quoted Scripture. He died near McLoud, Okla. His daughter, Mrs. Almedia Cochran, and her son Baxter, brought him back to Boone County and buried him beside his dear companion, who preceded him to the grave some sixteen years. I went to his daughter's, Mrs. Emma Carter, and tried to preach a funeral discourse, after which his remains were laid beside his wife's, there to remain until the resurrection morning, when they, together with all the blood-washed throng, will come forth with the likeness of their Redeemer, to sing praises to him forever and ever. May the good Lord administer comfort to his children, grandchildren and many friends, together with the church where his membership was, is the prayer of the unworthy writer. WM. J. CASEY.

Rebecca Ann James was born in Hamilton County, Tenn., Jan. 12th, 1845, and departed this life Oct. 6th, 1914, aged 69 years, 8 months and 25 days. She had suffered more or less many years with a lingering disease of the kidneys, and her sufferings became more intense during her last days on earth. She moved with her parents to Arkansas when quite young. Her maiden name was Smith. She was married to the writer Jan. 2nd, 1870. To this union were born four children, three sons and one daughter. Two sons, with their afflicted father, two daughters-in-law and six grandchildren are left to mourn their loss. She was received in the fellowship of the Little Hope Church of Old School or Primitive Baptists, in Boone County, Ark., September, 1899, and was baptized by her pastor, Elder Wm. J. Casey. She was a faithful and consistent member as long as she was with us, a kind and devoted wife and mother, and greatly enjoyed the visits of the brethren and sisters. She delighted in reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and was a close reader of her favorite paper many years.

Her funeral was conducted by Deacon Jesse N. Casey, who spoke words of comfort to a large concourse of relatives and friends, after which she was lowered in the grave. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

WM. H. JAMES.

As brother James has sent the obituary of his dear wife to me to examine and add to if I desire, I will say she related one of the best experiences I ever heard when she joined the church, and was one of the best scriptorians I ever knew for a woman, and had been led into deep divine revelation, and was a strong believer in the doctrine of predestination as advocated in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Her seat in the church was never vacant when she was able to attend, and she was ever ready to visit the sick and minister to their wants. She is greatly missed in the church, but our loss is her eternal gain.

Her pastor, WM. J. CASEY.

E. G. Tinsley, of Odell, Texas, was born October 1st, 1860, died at his home in Wilbarger County, Texas, near Odell, Dec. 28th, 1914. He was a member of Bethel Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church for some eight years, having joined that church, with his wife, by letter. He is survived by his wife and eight children. Sixteen years ago he presented himself to Lindale Church, in east Texas, and was received and baptized. The writer of this notice had known brother Tinsley for some ten years, and can say that he was a plain, unassuming man, never having much to say to any one, but seemed to have a good understanding of the doctrine of God our Savior and of church discipline. He stood firm against all the late innovations, and of some in Texas who have declared nonfellowship for the doctrine of God's predestination and sovereign control of all things. He and sister Tinsley have always stood with the predestinarian side. He was regular in attendance to his meetings, and was ever willing to help bear the burdens that were necessary to keep up the church meetings. Three weeks before his death he fell off his wagon and received a hurt from which he never fully recovered. He expressed himself as willing to go. He was conscious until near the last.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at his residence, and burial was in Odell cemetery.

J. H. FISHER.

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JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

"THE SWEETNESS OF A MAN'S FRIEND."

"OINTMENT and perfume rejoice the heart; so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel."—Prov. xxvii. 9.

"Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart." Yes, and in the sacred typical sense read Exod. xxx. 22–38. There we have an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compounded after the art of the apothecary. This was for the anointing of Aaron, the tabernacle and its furnishings. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum; these sweet spices, with frankincense: of each shall there be of like weight: and thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, tempered together, pure and holy: and thou shalt beat some of it very small, and put of it before the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation, where I will meet with thee: it shall be unto you most holy. And as for the perfume which thou shalt make, ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof: it shall be unto thee holy for the Lord. Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people." This is all sacredly peculiar to Christ and the church. It rejoiceth the heart to behold Christ Jesus our High Priest, who appears in the presence of God for us. Upon his head the precious ointment was poured, flowing down to the skirts of his garments; he is consecrated for evermore. His vestments shed odors around. In all his acts he wrought in behalf of his body, the church, in his sacrifice, the shedding of his blood for the remission of our sins, in his victory over the grave, and in his ascension to glory entering within the vail, and there making intercession for us, what a sacred fragrance there is in it all to the believer; so reviving to our spirits. "Because of the savor of thy good ointments, thy name [O Christ] is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee." Our Lord Jesus Christ was consecrated, on Jesus was poured the oil of holy ointment. "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord." He was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows. (Psalms xlv. 7.) And not only in his

priesthood is Christ Jesus unto us an offering and a sacrifice, an odor so fragrant, but in his characters of Prophet and of King and Husband of his people all his garments smell of myrrh and aloes and cassia out of the ivory palaces whereby he and all his retinue are made glad. His graces, his acts, his sufferings, his exploits, in all his relations unto his people, declare him to be the Anointed, the Lord's Christ, and our beloved Savior sheds forth upon his companions his graces, puts his Spirit within them, gives them the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. So the ointment and the perfume of Christ rejoice our hearts, our heads lack no ointment. Jesus is our repository of all blessedness, our box of precious ointment of spikenard, very costly, of infinite value to poor, lost sinners, and his fragrance fills all the house of God.

"Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart." Truly this is so in us when the Spirit of truth takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto us. The savor of his good ointments is so well known by poor, sin-sick souls. Our sins have wounded us, they are offensive and corrupt, Satan has wounded us with fiery darts, the holy law of God which we have broken has smitten us, and beneath our wounds we feel oppressed, discouraged, ready to perish, and in our wretchedness we feel the whole head is sick and the whole heart faint. But when Jesus comes, when he is revealed, when Christ crucified is evidently set forth, and our hearts go forth to him, then his power to save we prove. He binds up with his good ointments our dreadful wounds, and the sweetsmelling savor of his sacrifice, of his precious, atoning blood, cheers the poor sinner's drooping, fainting heart. He comes into the humble and contrite heart, and with his precious ointments revives the spirit of the humble and revives the heart of his contrite ones. The good ointments of the cross of Christ, compounded by the divine art of our spiritual Apothecary, compounded in the obedience, sufferings and blood of the crucified Lamb of God, cleanse and heal all our dreadful wounds. This is the balm of the sin-wounded conscience, the solace of the contrite heart. With his stripes we are healed. Christ's ointments and perfume rejoice the heart. Love, mercy and grace are compounded in his "good ointments," (Solomon's Song i. 3,) and forgiveness and salvation and sweet friendship with God are the healing balm to our broken hearts. "A broken and a contrite heart thou wilt not despise." How sacredly wonderful it is that a poor, vile transgressor should be thus dealt with by the Almighty, the high and holy One that inhabiteth eternity. This is grace indeed, the grace that comes unto us by Jesus Christ, a man's Friend. Once this Friend was quite unknown, we were not born into the world his friends. Ah no, we entered this world alienated, by nature strangers, and were enemies to God. We were far apart, far off from God, and though some vague ideas may have occasionally been ours concerning the Savior, he was undesired, we had no felt need of him, therefore we had no relish for the friendship of Christ. The friendship of the world was sought, enjoyed, and sufficed us. But Christ Jesus made us his friends by his transforming power, by such unparalleled acts of friendship, by such comforting revelations of himself. By such tender, melting, soothing words in his gospel to our hearts Christ apprehended us. "I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."—Phil. iii.

12. He took hold of us, and moved our hearts, put our hearts all in a glow of desire for himself, that we might know him, and call him, my Savior, my Beloved, my Friend; the Friend of a sorrowful, helpless, unworthy sinner. Did not our hearts burn within us when Jesus, a man's friend, first talked with us in his gospel by the way? He told us of his wonderful, glorious deeds of love, of his sufferings and agonies, the ignominy, the curse he endured to save us from our sins, to redeem us from the wrath to come, the curse of the law, from death, hell and the grave. When Jesus is so revealed in us our indifference is at an end. Just a glimpse, just one tone of his voice, just a word of the glad tidings of the glorious gospel of the blessed God to our circumcised ears, just for a moment shewing himself through the lattice, and in our souls ever after there will be springing up yearnings for Jesus, a man's friend. Some who may read what I pen concerning Christ, a man's friend, have known him but a little while, and to you he is precious. Others have known him many years, and our hearts say, He sticketh closer than a brother. So many have been the tokens of his friendship our lives have been times without number sweetened by our sweet Friend. How shall we begin to tell how his friendship and hearty counsel have rejoiced our hearts? Heady, highminded, the self-sufficient religionists may inwardly sneer at the intimate relations of Christ and the church, and such sacred language as that in Solomon's Song is utterly meaningless to them. Though with their lips they profess to honor him, saying, Lord, Lord, yet Christ never revealed himself to them, and their hearts are far from him. They profess that they know Jesus, but in works they deny him. They are of the world, love the world, and the things of the world, and the world loves them. Their companions are the ungodly. Who are your intimate companions? With feigned faith they profess Christ as their Savior, but you never can learn what have been, and what are still their dealings with him; how that they know him, or rather are known of him. They are never sin-sick, ready to perish, never broken and contrite in heart, they never shed a tear at his dear feet over their iniquities. They never hungered and thirsted after righteousness. They never fled to the crucified Savior for refuge. The cry never came from their hearts,

> "Foul, I to the fountain fly,
> Wash me, Savior, or I die."

They are without God, and without Christ in the world. But through the covenant kindness of Jehovah the members of Christ's body are verily intimate with him. From him all the body by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered, and knit together increaseth with the increase of God. Christ nourishes and cherishes the church, he sups with them, and they with him. There are peculiarly blessed moments when he brings them into his banqueting-house, his banner over them is love, his left hand is under their head, and his right hand doth embrace them, and thus in all holy intimacy the Savior and the believing sinner eat at the same table, and while the King sitteth at his table, my spikenard, saith the church, sendeth forth the smell thereof. This is an odor such as the world has never smelled, but it is, as the offering and sacrifice of Christ, of a sweetsmelling savor unto the God of our salvation. The blessedness of Christ's friendship surpasses all things, and is the one sweetening thing in the house of our

pilgrimage. It is not always so with me. Sometimes Jesus is as a stranger in the land, or as a wayfaring man, and I have little or no intercourse with him. He hideth himself, I am turned aside, the cloud has come betwixt us, I am veiled aside from his presence, and I am then a wretched wanderer, a sinful worm, desolate, ah, perhaps worse, I am as a vile, hardened criminal, cast off, a vagabond in the earth. At other times, though the cares, temptations and conflicts are unabated, there are sweet moments of his manifest friendship to a poor sinner. Yes, sometimes for days and weeks together, especially so if my soul's straits are exhausting, and burdens many casting me down, then much I pray to God, much I pour out my soul to Jesus, much I commune with him, and his nearness and hearty counsel, his words of eternal life, support me, and declare how truly sweet is the sweetness of Jesus, a man's friend. A few days ago I wandered vexed, wearied, unhappy (I cannot tell you the causes of all this), Jesus met me, he came into my thoughts, and it was unto my spirit as though he said, Why look ye so sadly to-day? O, it was not many moments before my heart was saying, I am vile, so foolish and ignorant, I am weak. The Lord knows I am a wretched sinner, and these cares and vexations are too much for me. I am so lacking in the graces of the Spirit it is no wonder I am cast down, and I am worried, unbelieving and desolate. Jesus came into my thoughts, yes, but it was to make me ashamed, it was humbling. I felt unworthy for him to be in my thoughts. I felt, I am so mean, it is unbecoming of such a wretched worm to entertain a thought concerning Jesus, a man's friend. I feel rebuked, for my conscience tells me I have not sought him; my prayers, if they can be called prayers, have been unbelieving prayers, distrustful, without faith, cold, formal, heartless; how ashamed I feel. I have gone astray, I have forgotten his love, his endearments to me, a sinner, in times past, I have forgotten that he is my sanctuary, my resting-places have been in him, where in times past I have been privileged to unbosom my temptations and tell him all my woes, and he never cast me out, but supported me, showed me mercy, and held me up to endure the tribulations of my pilgrimage. His rebukes enter into and wound the soul. Blessed wounds! Faithful are the wounds of Jesus our friend. They make the heart humble, troubled, tender. I have said, Let him come and have mercy upon a base fool. How wrong, how stupid, have been my surmisings. What a fool I am to be listening to my own unbelieving imaginations, or to the insinuating deceits of the devil. Ah, though I am sinful, tossed and plagued with thoughts, and tried under the burdens of daily providences, yet surely Christ, who is without variableness or shadow of turning, is mine, my God, my Father, my Friend, my Savior, my All. Hold me, O beloved Friend, with thy right hand, and guide me with thy counsel. Unless held up by thy counsel, unless thy heavenly teaching is constantly mine, how soon I go astray, I stumble, the enemy impedes my way and I wander bereft of gospel mercies; but one gentle pressure of the hand, one kind rebuke or one kind, assuring word from the mouth of the dear Savior and all is again well.

Ah, me, I'm ne'er so well
As when I on my best Beloved lean,
And then I'm never ill.
Crosses and trials all are right,
And pain is sweet, and troubles light,
When Christ my soul doth fill.

The Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. (Exod. xxxiii. 11.) And Abraham was called the friend of God. (Isaiah xli. 8.) And Christ saith, "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends: for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."—John xv. 15. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, declares him unto his friends. Christ saith unto the Father, "Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee: for I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them." Therefore that hearty counsel of our Lord Jesus Christ, that comes from the very heart of God, and that so heartens the hearts of his friends, is as ointment and perfume rejoicing the heart. The mouth of our Beloved is most sweet, his lips like lilies, dropping sweetsmelling myrrh. No lips can speak like thine, O friend of sinners, thou hast the words of eternal life. How often Jesus speaks of the Father, of his good pleasure, his will, his love, his commandments, all in relation unto poor, perishing sinners. He saith, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Then if we are Christ's we shall ultimately inherit all this glory and blessedness. O to hear that voice of thine saying, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Christ Jesus, a man's friend, has the tongue of the learned; he is the fullness of the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory, and he knows how to speak a word in season to them that are weary. (Isaiah l. 4.) Listen to the hearty counsel, the sweetness of a man's Friend: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." The queen of Sheba came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon. She communed with him of all that was in her heart, and Solomon told her all her questions; there was not anything hid from the king which he told her not. But in Christ, our Beloved and Friend, we have one infinitely greater than Solomon. Have you communed with Jesus, poor sinner, of all that is in thine heart? It was Christ, a man's friend, that Job yearned after when he exclaimed, "O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat! I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments. I would know the words which he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me. Will he plead against me with his great power? No; but he would put strength in me. There the righteous might dispute with him; so should I be delivered for ever from my judge." Multitudes of sinners called unto the sacred friendship of Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, have found it so. Do you know this Friend? Though you know all others, if you are a stranger to Jesus thou art wretched, thou art friendless indeed, for all other friends and their friendships are less than nothing, and vanity, when weighed in the balances with Christ, a man's friend. They vanish, they die, their friendship comes to an end. They are all powerless to afford us help and consolation in things pertaining to God and to eternity. They have in these matters no true and

hearty counsel to put heart in us. Christ is the Wonderful Counselor. (Isaiah ix. 6.) Yes, empty all earth's friendships and sweetness into one cup, and then one drop from the Fountain of the water of life is more precious, and far sweeter than all. Who can estimate how favored is that sinner who has Jesus for his friend? He loveth at all times, and sticketh closer than a brother. The psalmist, speaking of earthly friends, says, They stood aloof from my sore, no man would know me. But Christ is the unfailing Friend, the same yesterday, today and forever, and he is infinitely wise and almighty. O we shall be more than conquerors through him that loved us. What though our foes be many and mighty, our Redeemer is strong, and he will thoroughly plead our cause. (Jer. l. 34.) Our almighty One is more than a match for them all. They are confounded, they are crushed, their fury is quenched, they fade away when Jesus, our friend, the Lamb of God, appears for our relief and salvation; his atoning sacrifice and justifying righteousness are our salvation. But, O the amiability and sweetness of Christ, our friend, are most sacredly known when we poor sinners are in intimacy with him in Gethsemane, and on Calvary's cross, for he laid down his life for us. This is to know him in his humiliation, all for the sake of his friends; and then also how sweet, how joyous, it is to sit with him in the heavenlies, to see Jesus, our friend, crowned with glory and honor, and we are in his hand a diadem of beauty. If you, a poor, vile sinner, are led by the Holy Spirit to Gethsemane's garden, and to Calvary's mount, and there muse upon and hold communion with Jesus, thy soul shall know something of the unspeakable sweetness of the sinner's Friend, and surely thy heart will be so drawn out to him, so knit to him in faith and hope and love, you will say, This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, dear unto me as my own soul. (Deut. xiii. 6.) "The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David; and Jonathan loved him as his own soul."—1 Sam. xviii. 1. O beloved Redeemer, as I muse upon thee in thy humiliation, my heart is stirred with love, with grief, and I rejoice also, with trembling. O sweetest Friend, that fairest face of thine, so marred with woes and griefs, that I might be made the perfection of beauty, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy, without blame before thee in love. The shame and spitting are thine, the kisses of thy mouth are mine. Agony, bloody sweat and travail of soul were thine, the birth into thy kingdom and glory mine. The curse was thine, the blessing mine. The cup of wrath was thine, the cup of blessing mine. The wormwood and the gall were thine, gospel honey and sweetness mine. Thou wast bruised and wounded, that healing and immortal health should be mine. Thou gavest thy back to the smiters, but mercy so sweet is mine. Death for our sakes was thine, eternal life is mine. On thy dear head they thrust a crown of thorns, I shall be crowned with a crown of life and glory that fadeth not away. Christ died to redeem us; what could he do more? Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. O inestimable, unexampled love! While we were yet enemies Christ died for us. Believers in Christ have found how essential in their lives is Jesus Christ, their friend. When God's providences have been trying, when the storms and conflicts have assailed, yes, in our backslidings, when we have appeared to be the

very prey of our inward depravities, and all was wretchedness, his friendship was unabated, he did not turn away from us. Faithful were the wounds of our Friend, and we were humbled (many times it has been so) and confessed to our sweet Friend, I know that in faithfulness thou hast afflicted me; and his counsel, the doctrine of his lips, has ever been our consolation, strength and salvation. Our friendship to him? Ah! it has been poor, wavering, not worth mentioning, and yet, though weak is the effort of my heart, and my warmest thought toward him cold, I think and speak thus of him:

"With him sweet converse I maintain,
Great as he is I dare be free;
Tell him all my grief and pain,
And he reveals his love to me.

Some cordial from his word he brings,
Whene'er my feeble spirit faints;
At once my soul revives and sings,
And yields no more to sad complaints.

I pity all that worldlings talk
Of pleasures that will quickly end,
Be this my choice, O Lord, to walk
With thee, my guide, my guard, my friend."

As we draw near our journey's end, and our souls are in departing, what then? He will be our guide even unto death, and death shall not separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, and in heaven we shall dwell forever with our fairest, dearest, sweetest Friend. We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

BREWERS, Ky., Jan. 11, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I inclose two letters which I have read and reread with much interest, so I pass them on to you for publication in the SIGNS, if you think worthy of space in its columns; if not, all is well.

Your brother in hope,

J. C. CHESTER.

DECEMBER 7, 1914.

MY VERY DEAR BROTHER:—After so long a time I will try to write you a few lines as I promised when last we met. I have been sorely tried, both in body and mind, since I saw you. I am yet very feeble, but feeling some better. I felt I wanted to talk to you awhile on spiritual things; not that I feel able to edify or comfort, but to relieve my mind of many thoughts I have meditated on since talking with you and brother Jenkins at your place. The text was quoted, I think here, that "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant." A secret is something we understand not to be communicated to another, but the secret of the Lord is not like any other secret that may be told, but against the charge or command of a second person. This secret of the Lord, I do not think anywhere in the Scriptures we are commanded not to tell. I understand this secret of the Lord is something received by a child of God that cannot be told, which includes all the way the Lord has led him. Dear brother, can you tell all this way? He has led you in a way you did not know, can you tell all the ups and downs of this way? the hopes and fears, doubts and conflicts, temptations, unbelief and temption coming in from every source, until you find yourself almost gone, yet a spark of hope still glitters in the distance, and you are made to cry out, Though I fall, I shall rise again; and his words, I will never leave nor forsake thee, may come with power to your poor soul.

Dear brother, I have just tried to hint at some of the evidences of this secret, and it is with them that fear him. This is not slavish fear, as of a tyrant, but the fear of One whom you love and whom you desire to obey, insomuch

you will not receive a frown of disapproval, and here is our great conflict: we cannot do the things we would, and the things we would not, those we do, and "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Rom. vii. 24.) This is our only escape, but is sure if applied to us, but, my brother, the great trouble with me is, "Do I love the Lord or no, am I his, or am I not?" And, "Lord, it is my chief complaint that my love is weak and faint." And now, "He will shew them his covenant." Jer. xxxi. 33: "After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them." Also, Heb. viii. 10, and he will shew them his covenant. In Psalms xxv. 14, again is he the secret of the Lord. No one understands this covenant but those who have this secret. This experimental secret shows them that this secret is not taught or imparted by man, but by the direct and immediate influence of the Holy Spirit. Those who are going about claiming to help the Lord have not been shown his covenant; if they had they would not arrogate to themselves such a high and exalted position, for they shall not teach every man his neighbor, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know him, from the least to the greatest of them.

Dear brother, there is more in this than I could ever be able to tell. I have just written along as my mind led me, not knowing whether it will interest you or not. I hope I have not erred from the truth.

We are still looking for that visit, and hope you may be able to make it. My wife joins me in love to you both. Write me something to cheer me up in my feeble and afflicted condition.

Your brother in hope,

R. J. HILL.

MAYFIELD, Ky., Dec. 9, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER CHESTER:—Your good letter of a few days ago received. I have for a long time argued that the virtue of an act did not consist in the amount of what was done, but in the design of the doer. Hence the poor widow's mite counted largely because of the motive that prompted her. In like manner with regard to acts of obedience or service rendered, if the motive which prompts us is of a selfish character, it is not only a sin, but also without faith; and we learn from the apostle that whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Therefore all conditionalism of every grade is falsehood, and prompted by Satan, or delusion. Any one doing things that he may in turn receive blessings for is endeavoring to serve self, and not rendering any service to God. All such are not bringing forth fruit unto Christ. Now except the Husband of the bride works in us by his Spirit, we shall not bring forth any fruit to his honor. See what he said to those on the left hand, when they said, We have eaten and drunk in thy name, and in thy name done many wonderful works. Then said he, Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, for I never knew you. Now when Adam knew his wife she conceived and brought forth a son; so when Christ, the husband in the Holy Spirit, knows his bride, or church, or any one of them, they bring forth fruit to

his honor. So we get the meaning of the term, "I never knew you." Now for a bride to claim to bear fruit without the aid of the bridegroom is to admit that she is guilty of adultery; therefore he said to those on the left, Depart, ye workers of iniquity. Christ had not worked in them "to will and to do," hence they were seeking selfish ends. Now see how ugly conditional time salvation looks when viewed from a Bible standpoint. It has nothing but selfish ends in view, for if no hope of reward, no service would be rendered. In proof of the fact that whatever is acceptable is of God, Jesus said, Without me ye can do nothing. What a close line must be drawn to discern between the two principles; though the outward works may be the same, yet the motives may differ as widely as the poles.

As I am shut in to-day, and cannot go to Kansas on account of the weather, I thought to drop you a few lines, and have written as it occurred to my mind. I know it is a close thing for me to decide what motive moves me in many of my attempts; sometimes I fear it is of a selfish character, or even from force of habit, but I am convinced of one thing, and that is, we never move, except as moved upon, but the thing that I cannot decide is, what is the moving power?

I submit the above for your consideration.

Our love and fellowship to you and yours and to the dear children of God everywhere.

Your poor, unworthy brother,

J. M. PERKINS.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Dec. 13, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—For a long time (think I can safely say all of three years), I have been in such a state of judging sermons, remarks or writings until I have grown fairly desperate; would lose a whole sermon because of a few words; would lose a lot of pleasure on account of some one's remarks or doings. Thus have these years gone by with me in a sad, distressed state, hungering for enjoyment. I have earnestly desired I might be given strength to stop being critical, in a measure at least, and once more it has pleased the Father of all mercies to let me enjoy the good things, and to overlook, in a measure, the things that have been so very annoying to me. None but those who have passed through such an experience can know the suffering, hungering and lamenting that accompanies such a condition of mind: to sit under the sound of preaching and not have a thing come to you, but continually judging it, which is, I am sure, of the flesh, for I cannot see anything spiritual about it. Of late I have been made to think of the great difference between the judgment of the Lord and the judgment of man. The Lord told Samuel: "The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." I have tried to keep this in mind, for it is so true. Let one do something of which another does not approve, and how it will seem to settle the feelings of the one against the other. But the Lord looketh on the heart, has mercy and love for them, and strengthens them on their way. Like Matthew, Mark, Luke and John: all telling about one thing, yet each having his different manner of telling it. So, in this day, we should have charity, and not find fault so much. If it is not given to all to see things just alike, if they have the spirit of the matter in their hearts, should we not feel to be charitable towards them, desiring the Lord to show them aright, not judge them ourselves,

and go speak to others about them, thus harming the trust others may have in them? I do sincerely desire for myself that I can be this way, trusting in the Father of all mercies for it all. I want to say that I enjoyed your editorial on "Remember thy Creator." It has given me enjoyment. I never thought of its meaning in the way you wrote of it, but there has been a great comfort to me in it. I have looked back to the days of my youth, and have received comfort. It seemed that I had all faith and trust then, no doubts or fears, knew nothing of the great monster unbelief, but alas, how far I have strayed from that time, so that the calling attention to it, as your editorial did, made me remember so many things. Then comes the promise: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," telling us that as our day so shall our strength be, and we have known it to be so, for we would not have had strength to carry us through trials but from him. This indifference, or sort of coldness, troubles me much. I have felt it, and have seen it in others, and how I do wish it removed, and in God's own time it will be. It does seem to be destroying fellowship, brotherly love, causing contentions, and making a very little thing an excuse for not assembling with the brethren. It is certainly sad, and it does seem that such things ought not thus to be. O that these fleshly passions and lusts would not have such dominion. They do destroy good friendship, warring against the soul, cause darkness of mind, and this unruly member (the tongue) to do so much evil, such backbitings and slanderings. It seems these things are common, but how destroying to brotherly love, and how far it leads one from the true fold, and how hard to come back and gather up the broken ends, thus making a knot. While there have been cases where a knot has tied two more closely together than they were before, yet more often it causes a division. If the Father ties the knot it will run smoothly, but if man ties it he fully shows his lack of skill in the spiritual sense. All knots tied by nature are apt to come undone; if tied by grace, they stay tied. Many sad things we have to look at day by day, yet the saddest part is for us if we fall ourselves. We are prone to the things of the flesh, to selfishness, esteeming ourselves and our feelings above the brethren and their feelings. The word says, "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." We should be slow to speak, slow to wrath, for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Another great evil I feel to speak of with the other things I have mentioned, is this respect of persons. I have seen it to my sorrow, and at times among those one would think would show better examples. If one has the grace of God in his heart, and has professed it, is that one to be shunned and another held up who may not walk as orderly? Does not in such cases, the natural passions overrule the spiritual relation? These things ought not to be so, but they are, and I expect they will be. I can speak for myself, that I do not follow the rules of brotherly love closely enough, do not walk closely in the footsteps of Christ. If we all could follow the wise counsel in the Scriptures, how much less of strife, of contentions and of envyings there would be, and a closer walk with God instead.

"O for a heart to praise my God,
A heart from sin set free,
A heart that's sprinkled with the blood
So freely shed for me.

O for an humble, contrite heart,
Believing, true and clean,

Which neither life nor death can part
From Him that dwells within."

I had no intention of writing lengthily, so please pardon it, and have charity. I have had these things pent up so long, have just let them out. May God bless you in all your sojourn, is my sincere wish.

With much love,

MARY HILL TERRY.

LUKE XVII. 17.

"WERE there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?"

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been requested again and again to write through the SIGNS on the above passage of Scripture, but a deep, heartfelt sense of my weakness and incapability to write on this mysterious subject has been the cause of my not writing sooner. The request having been made twelve months ago, perhaps, and repeated at different times, I have concluded at last to suggest a few thoughts, and hope they may be blest of the Lord, to some degree at least, to the comfort of the special querist of Batavia, Ohio, and also others, as the Lord may direct.

This is a very comprehensive question, and also very significant, and seems to me is developing much in these last days. The Scripture relative to these ten men is clear and to the point, that all were alike afflicted with that dreadful disease, leprosy (sin), and all far off alike, all in the same condition, and they all cried alike to Jesus for mercy, and he told them all to do the one and the selfsame thing: "Go shew yourselves unto the priest. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were [all alike] cleansed," but only one of them turned back and glorified God with a loud voice. It is a settled point as to the one who returned and glorified God. To my mind, at least, he represents the remnant of Israel, God's chosen and redeemed people. "For though thy people Israel be as the sands of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return." A remnant is a very small number of the sum total, one out of ten in this instance, or one-tenth; but I would not be understood to mean that it is just one out of ten, or just one-tenth of all the election of grace, or of all the redeemed family of our God, as we count numbers, that return and come to Zion, and glorify God here on earth in the gospel kingdom, but merely a remnant of them, the very elect, this special remnant. (Isaiah x. 22.) Isaiah speaks of the return of this same remnant as a tenth, saying, "But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it [the tenth] shall return, and shall be eaten: as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves, so the holy seed [Christ] shall be the substance thereof."—Isaiah vi. 13. So it seems clear from the text, and also from the general tenor of the Scriptures, that but a very small remnant of the entire election of grace ever returns to the gospel church and glorifies God, doctrinally and practically, by showing forth his praises, and it seems to me that this remnant is the identical people whom God formed for himself, to show forth his praise, and that they do show forth every tribute of praise that he requires of them, and that he prepared them for, and without this purposed and divine preparation none can show forth his praise, and with it none can fail; but all Israel shall be saved in the Lord, but none can be saved out of the Lord.

"But where are the nine?" It has seemed to me that they are yet going on to the priests and offering the gift that Moses (the law) commanded, for a testi-

mony unto them (Matt. viii. 4; Luke v. 14,) for they were all cleansed while on their way, before they came to the priests, and this one turned back, and fell down on his face at the feet of Jesus, giving glory, honor and thanks unto his blessed name; but the inference is that the nine went on to worship according to the law of carnal commandments, the prototype of a numerous host of God's chosen and redeemed people. I mean by this that redemption that delivered all the elect family out of the hands, or power of the law and divine justice, yet not redeemed from the traditions of the fathers, or from their own works, for all who have ceased from their own works have entered into this glorious and remaining gospel rest, and this very small remnant who alone have entered into this rest are in that strait and narrow way which leads to life, or rest, for in this gospel rest is life and peace. This is simply living after the Spirit; but all those who have not ceased from their own works have not entered into this rest; in fact, they have no rest day or night, therefore have no remaining rest, but are traveling the broad road that leads to destruction in this life. This is simply living after the flesh. Israel are scattered sheep, they have "wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill [worldly institutions]: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth," but yet they were sheep all the same, poor wandering ones. Yet notwithstanding all the wanderings and ramblings of the Lord's chosen and redeemed people, it has pleased God, for his own name's promise, to reserve the small remnant, whom the one man, the tenth character mentioned in the text at the head of this article, represents to my mind. We say it pleased God to keep this afflicted and poor remnant from bowing the knee to the image of Baal. Were they not kept back by the purpose and love of God from bowing the knee to this gigantic image, they would all bow, as do all those whom the nine represent. Again, where are the nine? We say, in the language of the prophet, they are scattered sheep, or scattered people, even in every mountain and every hill, where they have wandered in this dark day of delusion. I would not be understood to mean that all of this remnant have a name and place in the visibility of the gospel church, but doubtless many have ceased from their own works who have no membership in the church here on earth.

I must close, although the one-tenth has not been hinted at in this short article, but I hope it will be some comfort to my dear friend and brother.

Dear editors, if you decide to publish this, please correct mistakes, and make better connections where necessary.

As ever, your weak brother,

W. J. MAY.

PINSONFORK, Ky., Jan. 14, 1915.

HERNDON, Va., Dec. 15, 1914.

ELDER H. H. LEFFERTS—MY DEAR PASTOR:—It has been impressed on my mind for more than a week to write some of the Lord's dealings with my soul. I believe he had a purpose in leading me around before showing me the right way. I suffered for two months, or more, praying with all the earnestness of my being, but instead of my prayers relieving me I grew worse. It seemed the distance grew greater between God and my soul, yet I prayed; so distressed was I that I could hardly do my work; it just seemed that my heart would break, but alone in tears one day (I shall never forget it), when I was feeding my turkeys, Jesus came, and strange as it may seem to others, all that

feeling of distress was taken away. That was the first time I ever knew real joy. It seemed everything was singing and clapping its hands with joy; I was made to feel it was the presence of the Lord Jesus. O how happy I was then, though not fully realizing the truth as I trust I do now. It was then I was made to know I could not be saved by my good works, because there was no goodness in me, for the good I would do, I did not. I believe the Lord did not intend for me to hear a satisfying sermon preached until I heard you in February last winter. That one sermon did me more good than all the preaching I had ever heard before. When they gathered at the water the day that sister C. was baptized, I said to a friend, I never could be an Old Baptist, because I never could go into the water like that; but before she came out, I never can forget the feeling that came over me. I just felt that I would like to go in and be baptized. I had such a choking at my heart I felt it would burst. Elder Fenton, who was at that meeting, came and asked me if I were a member of the church. I said no, and he quoted some Scripture to me, but the words are gone. Such distress my mind and soul had to travel in until last June, when it pleased the good Lord to reveal himself to me. I know if I am saved it will be by grace, and grace alone. I cannot have one good thought except when the Lord is present with me and when my mind is made to meditate upon his goodness toward a poor sinner like me. At times I feel very unworthy of being in the church with his people, but if I did not have a home with them I know I would be one of the most miserable creatures here below. I feel to know it is a heaven below when we are permitted to meet together. One thing I know: I love the Old Baptists better than any other people, because they preach salvation by grace and not of works. I am glad when the Lord draws my mind from self and makes me to meditate on heavenly things. I cannot write or express my mind as I wish. Whenever I am alone I am continually talking to the church, or writing to the SIGNS in my mind, and have a great desire to talk, but when I am with the brethren my mind is all confusion, I am dumb, and afraid of my own voice. If I do say anything I feel it is foolishly said, but I do love to hear them talk on heavenly things.

I will close, as I am afraid this will weary your mind to read. Do as you please with it, and it will be all right with me, but please cast over it the mantle of charity.

From a sister, I hope,

(MRS.) LOTTIE A. DAVIS.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., Nov. 13, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—In much weakness, and with a trembling hand, I will now attempt to write a few lines for our much beloved paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and send in our remittance for another year, which will be due in a few days, and we do not want to miss a number and I want to read it as long as I can see to read. My eyes are failing very fast, and my general health all run down, and I feel that the time of my departure is near at hand. The chastening rod has been laid heavily upon me in the last two or three years, but I do not wish to murmur or complain, believing that our light affliction here worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. I am much of the time in darkness that can almost be felt, and then again I am lifted up far above it all, as I was at our last meeting, the first Sunday

in November, after one of Elder L. E. Frazee's (our pastor) good sermons, and the door was opened for membership, and two willing subjects came forward asking a home with us, and were gladly received for baptism, then I felt to sing with one of the poets, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow," and yet I wonder sometimes if I am mistaken in it all. But my mind goes back to that bright and golden morning when I arose, as I hope, a newborn babe in Christ, and saw him sitting by my bed after I had offered up my feeble petition to him to let me see him that awful dark night, if that was what was the matter, as some had told me it was, for I did not know, and I wanted to know so badly, and when I saw him I said, Is this Christ? and he smiled, but did not say anything that I heard. But O the brightness that shone around made me feel like praising him; all else seemed to be praising his holy name, and I felt that I would never see any more trouble, and that I could go to the church and tell those good people what my Lord had done for poor, unworthy me, but before meeting time came the heavy billows were rolling over me again and I could not go. I went on that way for five years, hoping and trusting that I could see my way clear, but I seemed to grow worse all the time. Then I thought, I can but perish if I go, I am resolved to try, as the poet says, and the following August I went, and was gladly received, and baptized in the fellowship of the dear old Providence Church, and have never regretted the step I took.

Dear brethren, I am inclosing a good letter from our highly esteemed brother, C. M. Weaver, and also a few verses that he composed, which we wish to see printed in our dear family paper, the SIGNS. While I do not feel deserving of the praise he has given me, yet it encourages me to go on. My eyesight is failing, and I do not expect to write many more letters for publication, and this may be the last I shall write.

I hope you will excuse the length of this letter, and correct all mistakes if you print it, begging you to be the judges. We like to read your editorials, and hope God will be with you in publishing the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which I have read from my youth, and still want to read.

From your unworthy sister,

BELLE FRAZEE.

COMMERCE, MO.

DEAR SISTER FRAZEE:—I am inclosing you a poem I composed, and which was inspired by the closing lines of your letter to me, viz., "May the God of all grace be with you, and lead you in the strait and narrow way." I sing those verses to the tune of "There is a period known to God." I sang them in one of our churches recently, and explained how I came to compose them. Also on Sunday I tried to preach from the text, "Lead me and guide me," which also was impressed upon my mind by the words in your letter. While I was telling my audience of your good letter, and how it had inspired me to compose those verses, and also to use the above text, tears filled the eyes of many, and they seemed to rejoice while I was trying to preach of how our Shepherd leads his flock, and takes care of them. I felt his holy presence with me, and I could but believe that he had blessed your words to the comfort of myself and those who heard the word and received it gladly. May God bless you, my dear old sister.

Yours in hope,

C. M. WEAVER.

"HE LEADETH ME."

He leadeth me, my Shepherd kind,
Where pastures green my soul doth find,
And when the nights grow dark and cold,
He gives me shelter in his fold.

He leadeth me in paths of peace,
And makes my bitter crying cease;
Though wolves may howl and storms may blow,
Where'er he leads I safely go.

He leadeth me when troubles roll
Like billows o'er my burdened soul,
And tunes my heart his praise to sing,
He is my Shepherd, Priest and King.

Kind Shepherd, lead me every day,
And keep me in the narrow way;
O let me hear thy gentle voice
That makes thy trembling sheep rejoice.

Lead gently on while life shall last,
And when death's cold and chilly blast
Shall silence all my grief and pain,
Lead me to rise and live again.

And when, dear Savior, thou shalt come
To take thy ransomed people home,
O let me enter with the blest
Into thy everlasting rest.

C. M. WEAVER.

CHARLESTON, W. Va., Dec. 11, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—I inclose a letter from Elder P. W. Sawin which I received a few days ago, and I think it will be welcomed by you for publication. I had craved to meet him and hear him preach, and I was blessed with that privilege last September, at the Mates Creek Association, Pike Co., Ky. He is meek and humble, yet bold in defence of the glorious gospel of the Son of God. I had learned to love him, with all the rest who write for the SIGNS, for the steadfastness in the apostolic doctrine.

While we miss dear Elder Chick, we feel the Lord has given us a noble brother to stand with you, dear Elder Ker, in the great work of editing the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Yours in fellowship,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Dec. 7, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER McCLANAHAN:—I now take my pen to try and answer your kind letter of October last. I have often had it in mind to write you, even before it was our precious privilege to meet at Mates Creek Association, but the lack of some spiritual gift to impart as often prevented, and even at this time I am prompted more from a sense of duty than the ability to do. It was a sweet privilege indeed to meet you face to face, with the many precious brethren and friends in the churches, and at the association. It was indeed comforting, encouraging and strengthening, as confirming our faith, to find such a body of real, genuine Predestinarian Baptists rooted and grounded in the truth, with not a dissenting voice or word. Everywhere there seemed to be life spiritually, in the several churches and places I visited in the two weeks previous to the association, and especially was it so at the church at Williamson, West Va. My visit as a whole was pleasant, but it seemed to me that in my feeble effort to declare the glorious gospel of the blessed Son of God there was such a visible coming short that it sometimes seems to me it would have been better for me to have remained at home; but the manifest love and forbearance of the brethren kept me on the way until I filled all my appointments as best I could. Since my return I have been much cast down, in darkness and gloom, and in thinking over my visit in east Kentucky and West Virginia it seems to me it was an imposition upon the good brethren; a deception; that I was not what I appeared to be to them. This has troubled me at times, yet at times I have been dead to all sensibility. I think sometimes, my dear brother, that I am the

strangest creature on earth, there is none like me, and sometimes I am glad it is so; then again I am glad to find the companionship of some dear, tried soul cast down in the deep mire, where there is no standing. In the SIGNS of December 1st, sister Effie Edwards found me; also Elder Chick's letter found a sweet response, as did sister Wright's, and Elder Coulter's letters written so long ago. Something more than a year ago my mind was led to the eleventh chapter of Isaiah, or that part referred to in the letter. I was glad to know he presented the same view. I had heard another view of it. The wild beasts of my own depraved nature are the worst and most to be dreaded that I know of or fear. How strange is the life of a christian. How different from that which we thought when our pilgrimage began. I vainly thought I would get stronger and less dependent, better acquainted with myself, and know my needs; but the past few weeks have proven more clearly that I am absolutely nothing, and know nothing; do not know how to pray or what to pray for. Yes, I did know I was a poor, needy creature, lacking everything, and was fretful, murmuring and complaining, rebellious, faithless and unbelieving. If I could have found a fleshly arm, or a carnal security, evidently I would have turned to it; but no, there was none; every refuge was a refuge of lies. Now can you conceive in your mind such a state of desperation? I thought of Paul's voyage at sea, where there were neither sun, moon nor stars, and was comforted. I was encouraged and made hopeful, for Paul was a true servant of the Most High, and if it were needful for him, was it not also for me? Our blessed Master was put to death in the flesh, so must we be crucified with him, dying daily, so, being enabled to see the hand of God in it all, I was enabled to approach the mercy-seat and find grace to help in time of need; and since I have felt a calm waiting upon Him who doeth all things well. How good that the dear Lord has left a record of the trials and conflicts of the patriarchs and servants of old, written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope; Paul's as well as that of Jonah, that away down the line of time, a poor heart like mine would be comforted by their sufferings and afflictions. Is it presuming too much to hope that some dear one may be comforted in the trial of our faith? A few days ago I read as a text Matt. viii. 11, and felt some comfort and liberty of soul in talking of the wonderful faith of those faithful, old, tried servants. I did feel I was with them in that wonderful God-given faith, and their God was my God. How good it is to be lifted above time, self and sense and see a little of the beauties in the gospel heavens. To see the divine perfection of the holy God working all the intricate things after the counsel of his own will, working together for good, as Paul says, to them that love God and are called. But the momentous question is, Do I really and truly love God? If not deceived, I do desire to love, honor and obey Him, who, as I hope, loved me and gave himself for me.

My precious brother, I have rambled on and on, and have not written at all as I had thought to do, and it seems to me that little can be of interest to you, who have been blest with a mind to comprehend and declare so much greater things. I want to say again, I am, I hope, thankful to the Lord that I was favored to meet you and hear you proclaim the wonderful works of our God, that found a

sweet response in my poor heart. I think we have one Lord, one faith, one baptism. I hope you will pardon this poor, long drawn-out letter. It is written in the spirit of love, if not in the spirit of wisdom. Should I be spared, and the Lord will, I would be glad to visit your association next year. I did think for a time I never would go out from home again as a preacher, but I now feel that I am a stranger and sojourner with thee.

With abiding love and fellowship for you in Christ,

P. W. SAWIN.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Dec. 30, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find a letter which I received from sister Sarah F. Reed, and which she desires published in the SIGNS.

Your brother in hope,

J. C. MELLOTT.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Dec. 7, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER MELLOTT:—I would like to tell you how much I enjoyed your sermon yesterday, but it seemed so wonderful to me that I cannot tell it. I feel so glad to be given, as I hope, an understanding of the truth when I hear it preached, and am one who cannot get along without preaching. I was brought up to go to meeting, and I listened intently, for I wanted to hear all, and could tell much of what I heard. I was a very busy little body, and would do much to worry my dear mother. I would make vows at night that I would be good the next day, but the next night would come and I would go to bed thinking that there must be something in me which I could not control. Then it appeared to me that there was One looking at me from above, seeing all I did, and I was getting worse all the time. I learned to read when about five years old, and a little later could read in the Testament. I would hide this away and read where no one could see me. I had a great desire to have an education, but as I was not strong my father thought it best not to send me away to school. I would cry about this when I was in bed, but I did not want mother to see me, so I covered up my head. One night as I lay crying a voice said to me, Do not cry any more, I will give you knowledge more than all earthly knowledge, and stand by you to the end. I did not cry about this again. I uncovered my head and looked around, but could see no one. I felt that it was the Lord's voice, but the tempter told me that there was nothing in it, and that I was only deceiving myself. I grew up trying to cast it off, for I thought I was such a great sinner that the Lord would never take any notice of me. I was begging all the time for the Lord to begin a work of grace in my heart. I was so troubled that I could neither sleep nor eat, but kept on begging. Elder Robert C. Leachman, who was a great preacher to me, was preaching from the words, "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him," when I first felt a little hope that the Lord had begun the work of grace in my heart. I was about seventeen years old when I heard this sermon, and from that time on I felt drawn to the church. When about nineteen years old I went before the church, for I could not stay away longer, and was received. I was baptized the fourth Sunday in May, 1860, by Elder P. Hartwell, and that was the happiest day I had ever known. I have never been sorry from that day to this,

but I do feel very unworthy, but am indeed glad that I am one with them. One year ago last November I was staying with dear friends for the winter, and was taken very sick, and kept getting worse all the time. The morning of the third day I said to the dear one who was caring for me, O I am so cold. She put some warm thing by me and went to get some more. While she was gone I felt I was sinking down, and I still felt very cold. I thought, This is not going to sleep, it may be the sleep of death. I cried, O Lord, have mercy; thy will be done; when I went into a state of semi-consciousness. The first I remember I came to a beautiful way, and I thought, Have I ever been in this way before? I felt very weak and was only a little child. The path was so narrow and straight that I thought, How can I walk it? I went on, and it was dark, but I looked and there were some bright spots along the way. All the time I was afraid I would step out of the path, for it was very narrow. As I walked I began to go down. I came to a rock and sat down. I saw a large place and there were gates all around it. I thought, Have I come to the end of everything? I cried, Lord, help. Then I seemed to be gone. The first that I remember was being held up high by strong arms, and being told to look. I saw a large lake of fire in great commotion. Then I had a great desire to see the one who was holding me up, but a voice said, No man shall see my face and live. Then I was taken up higher and stood on my feet. I said, Where have I been? The same voice said, You have seen the gates of hell, but not for you. There is a place prepared for you, but not just now. I came to consciousness, and it seemed wonderful to me, and still is, for the feeling of wonder never left me.

After hearing you preach Sunday I felt a strong desire to write this to you. I have felt that I would like to send this experience to the SIGNS, but want you to use your judgment in regard to doing so. If you think best not to, all will be right with me.

Your sister, in bonds of christian love and fellowship,

SARAH F. REED.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., June 27, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I was thinking of you last night while in bed, and writing to you in my mind upon the goodness of God and of his tender mercies toward us poor mortals, and feel at times without hope and without God in this world of misery, and no one to care for us, but feel to thank God, who hath given us the mind to be thankful for his wonderful blessings, even down to old age. I have passed through such bereavements as you have, but the dear Lord heals my earthly sorrows by giving me a kind companion to comfort me in my afflictions, and I hope I feel thankful to God for his protection I have been blessed with in this, our natural life, and also in praising and glorifying his matchless name, as I trust he has given me of his spiritual life, which was a wonderful change wrought in me, if not deceived, and trust that I have been fed of the crumbs that fell from the Master's table, which strengthen the inner man. God has chosen his servants and qualified them to stand firm upon the Rock, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone, and to preach his everlasting gospel to poor sinners, and they that hear shall live. No one can hear until they are quickened into life, only by God's Spirit dwelling in them. Such ones are

God's chosen ones in Christ before the foundation of the world. God has sent his servants out to preach to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, which are scattered all over the world. We feel to rejoice that it pleased God to send one of his servants to preach his gospel; though a stranger in the flesh, I trust not in the Spirit. He was well received, and we all bade him Godspeed. His name is J. W. Linn, of Fairmont, W. Va. He is young in the cause, but a firm believer in God's absolute purpose in all things. He appears to feel insufficient for the work the Lord has called him to, but feels that God is his sufficiency in all things, and not man. Job's miserable comforters taught good works, which were not able to save them. The Pharisees taught such religion as is now in the world, and is nothing but chaff sown to the wind, and returneth not again.

Dear brother Ker, I have, through the help of God, tried to give you the true conception of his will, and trust he has given me that blissful hope through grace, and trust at the consummation of all things that we all shall meet in heaven. If this article is acceptable to your mind I would be glad to have it published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and when it is well with you remember a poor sinner, saved by grace if saved at all.

Your brother in hope of immortality,

O. B. HICKERSON.

(See obituary on page 125.)

HAVILAND, Kan., Dec. 20, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—I take pleasure in sending you a new subscriber for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as a New Year's greeting, for which I inclose my check. Accept my sincere thanks for sending me the SIGNS, and my very best wishes for its success in the future, and I pray the blessing of the Lord upon you in conducting it. I feel that the SIGNS sustained a great loss in the death of Elder Chick, but that it has been repaired to it readers, in a great measure at least, by the addition of Elder Lefferts to the editorial staff. His writings are clear, sound and very gratifying to me. I have thought of writing him and expressing my appreciation of his writings, but have, through press of time, neglected to do so. I also have had some impression of mind to write an article for the SIGNS, but have not done so.

Will you please change my address from Wellsford, Kansas, to Havilan d Kansas, R. 2?

Yours in humble hope,

J. R. HARDY.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1915.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

BREAD, LEAVENED OR UNLEAVENED?

HAVING been asked by several lately to give our view with reference to which kind of bread should be used at the Lord's supper, we feel willing to suggest a few thoughts for the consideration of our brethren generally. First, we want to state that it is not our intention to antagonize the views of any who may see the matter in a different light, but merely respond to the wishes of those who have asked us to write upon the subject. No one can be more willing that every man be fully persuaded in his own mind regarding such things than we are. All men since the apostles are fallible, and not one has ever lived since their day who has made no mistakes in interpreting the Scriptures; hence the church is not justified in thinking the view of any man infallibly correct. "To the law and to the testimony" we all must go for infallible truth. Good brethren have been separated and churches rent asunder because all could not agree upon some statement or other made by some preacher when perhaps the Scriptures would not have substantiated the statement at all. Human nature is very proud, and dislikes very much to lay down, as wrong, any idea held and advanced. A hard matter to say, I am wrong, you are right. Truth and error entered the world at about the same time; error, however preceded truth a little when Cain offered unto God of the fruits of the ground. Error has been error ever since, and can never be truth. Truth has ever been truth, and can never be error. We fully believe that most men, especially Old Baptists, are sincere in their convictions, and do not mean to suggest error even in writing or preaching, though we all often do it. Therefore this or that should never be accepted because some man said so, but the people of God should in this age, as in the days of Paul, search the Scriptures to know if this or that presented is truth.

Now with reference to the bread that should be used, some brethren are fully convinced that unleavened is the kind, and give their reasons why. Others are just as fully convinced that leavened bread is the kind, or answers the purpose as well. So far as we are personally concerned, in our view it makes no difference, but we think whatever kind is used should be whole until broken by the one administering the supper. He took the bread and blessed it and broke it; why should not this part of the pattern be observed? The idea that because Jesus used unleavened bread the church should use the same now is based upon legal principles, even though dear brethren do not so see it. It is true that unleavened bread was used at the passover supper in Egypt, and that the Israelites were commanded to use that kind of bread throughout their generations at that supper, but we should not forget that that was law, and because it was law that such should be done, Jesus, who came to fulfill the law in every jot and tittle, used unleavened bread at the passover supper which

he ate with his disciples. Surely he would have been a transgressor of the law rather than its fulfiller had he used any other kind. But inasmuch as he obeyed that point of the law, fulfilling it for his people, the church is under no more obligation to use unleavened bread because the law said so, and because such was the case under the law, than it is to observe any other point of the law. If one point or commandment must be kept, then we are bound to keep the whole law, and if this be done Christ shall profit us nothing. The idea of substitution along this line is, we think, wrong, and shall give our reasons for thinking so. Some dear brethren who believe that unleavened bread should be used, say that if the kind of bread can be changed from that originally used by the Savior, then we could as well substitute sprinkling for immersion. Baptism was not a commandment of the law, and sprinkling as practiced now was never heard of during that dispensation, nor did Jesus or the apostles ever give commandment to sprinkle any one, either child or adult. The law and the prophets were until John the Baptist, hence John was sent of God to preach and to baptize by immersion in the river Jordan. His preaching and baptism were the beginning of a new order of things not known in the law. Therefore the baptism of John being of God, Jesus being immersed by him and giving his apostles commandment to baptize in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, settles forever that immersion is the proper and only mode of baptism, hence there can be no substitution for it. But inasmuch as the law said use unleavened bread, and that Jesus fulfilled that commandment, the church is not obligated to use that kind of bread any more than it is obligated to observe the passover feast as the Jews did in remembrance of their deliverance from Egypt. Jesus is our Passover, Pascal Lamb; it is his flesh we eat and his blood we drink, because we have life in us. The bread and the wine show forth his death until he comes to receive his ransomed children home. They, in partaking of them, keep the church in remembrance of his sufferings and death, and preach to the faith of the church not only his unending love and everlasting faithfulness, but that without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sins. It has seemed to us for a long time that in eating of the bread and in drinking of the wine we should lose sight of literal things and by faith behold the Bread of life which came down from heaven, broken for sin, and the blood of the Lamb of God, which took away the sin of the world, made peace between God and sinners, bringing them that were afar off nigh unto God, yea, so nigh that now as priests unto God they can seek him and find him, because he is near, and call upon him in the day of trouble, and he hears them because he is their Father. Again, in partaking of the Lord's supper the church is always reminded of its deliverance from the house of bondage, from sin and from death, through the breaking of the body of Jesus Christ. He said, This is my body which is broken for you; and of the wine he said, This is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for the remission of sins. As oft as ye do it, do it in remembrance of me.

We have now given our view upon the subject, and hope that all who may read our suggestions will consider them well. Try them by the Scriptures before accepting them as correct, and be it remembered that what we have said is with the kindest feeling and in full fellowship for those who do not agree with us on the subject.

K.

REVELATION IV.

DEAR BROTHER:—MY mind has been much exercised on the fourth chapter of Revelation, especially the four and twenty elders and the four beasts; who and what are they, and why are they called beasts? They seem to be praising God. If you feel like it, I would like you to write on that subject.

LUCINDA BREWSTER.

ONEONTA, N. Y.

"After this I looked." The chapter previous to this closes with the message to Laodicea, in which is found the declaration: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock." Thus, at the beginning of this fourth chapter, John says, "After this I looked, and behold, a door was opened in heaven." This "door" is the "new and living way" into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, "which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh." This "door" presents the redeeming work of Jesus in leading his people out from the legal fold into the true fold, out from under the law into the gospel. Jesus was "lifted up" to do this work, and having done so, lifts up all his people unto himself. Thus, after the opening of the door, a "trumpet" is heard calling, "Come up hither." This call evidently presents connection with 1 Thess. iv. 14–17: "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. * * * The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." In the verses just quoted are presented the door (Jesus died and rose again), the trumpet, calling to "Come up hither," and "immediately I was in the spirit." Somehow we feel there is an amazing and wonderful connection between this experience of John's and the Scripture quoted above from 1 Thess. iv. It is difficult to find words to convey the sense of it all, but perhaps our readers can grasp something of it without more detail on our part. After being lifted up at the command of the trumpet, which followed the opening of the door, the apostle John proceeds to tell what he saw in that higher world of the Spirit. "A throne was set in heaven." This is the seat of kingly power and authority, of sovereign dominion and administration. "At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord." "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." Jerusalem and Zion are figurative expressions, meaning the church. The church is the throne which John saw "set in heaven." He also saw One who sat on the throne. Looking back to the twenty-first verse of the third chapter of Revelation, we see, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne." None can occupy the throne, the ruling seat in the church, in conjunction with the Father but the overcoming Jesus, the one who overcame sin, death and hell, hath put all enemies under his feet, and is set down with the Father in that glory which he had with him before the earth was. He that sat in the throne was like a "jasper and sardine stone." A jasper is clear as crystal. The Godhead that occupies the throne is clear in all its attributes. Not a stain, blemish, spot, wrinkle or anything short of absolute clearness rests upon all the character of God and Christ. Not a cloud obscures their brightness. A sardine stone is red. This One in the throne is red in his vesture, cometh with dyed garments from Bozrah. He triumphed in his own blood over all his foes, ascended the throne a glorious victor after all the cruel woe of

his passion on Calvary and the cross. Round about the throne was a rainbow. After the flood in the days of Noah, God set his bow in the cloud as token of the covenant which he made with the earth. According to this covenant, God promised that the waters should no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. This rainbow which John saw encircling the church, or throne, is the covenant which God has made concerning his people, "ordered in all things and sure." In this covenant Jesus is the propitiation for all the sins of his people, and the waters of God's eternal judgments shall never be piled up as a flood to overwhelm them. The church shall never be brought into condemnation again. This encircling rainbow-covenant insures her eternal inheritance at the right hand of the Majesty on high. This rainbow was "in sight like unto an emerald." An emerald is green. Green signifies ever-living, never-perishing. This covenant is an everlasting, eternal covenant, one which will never know change, amendment or deviation. God will never repent himself concerning this covenant which he has made. "Round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold." These elders are the apostles and prophets. The word "elders" is so used in Hebrews xi. 2. Of course, we know there were more apostles and prophets then twenty-four, but all the prophets that ministered under the old covenant were to the twelve tribes of Israel, and there were twelve apostles sent to the twelve tribes to preach the gospel. Looking at the number of the apostles and prophets as they represented the tribes of Israel in their ministry, it would make twenty-four. These elders were round about the church, or throne. This does not mean that they were no part of the church, but emphasizes more particularly their office as watchmen upon the walls of Zion. They walked about Zion, went round about her, told the towers thereof, marked well her bulwarks, considered her palaces and told it to the generation following, leaving their inspired messages on record for the church of God in all ages. They were faithful watchmen, never luring the inhabitants into false ease and security, but always warning them of evil within and without, and ever adoring their God and Lord. These "elders" were clothed in white raiment. They received their "good report" by faith, and this faith was counted unto them for righteousness, even as it was counted unto Abraham, and this righteousness which is of God by faith was their clothing of white raiment. On their heads were crowns of gold. The crown of life is this crown of gold. Eternal life through Jesus Christ their Lord was their divine gift. This life is imperishable as the gold which represents it. All the prophets and all the apostles have long since ceased to live and preach in this lower world, but their ministry is not dead, it lives in the doctrine and experience of every heaven-born child. The truth is vigorous with the eternal life of God and cannot die. This truth they preached and this was their crown of gold. "Out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices." The coming of Jesus is like the lightning which "cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west." This, his coming which quickens the sinner into life, is followed by thunderings of his mighty power, by the "terrible things in righteousness" by which he answers the

prayers of his saints. The voices are heard coming up out of all the nations, kindreds, tribes and tongues of earth, among which are to be found the redeemed family of God. These things all come from the dwelling of the power and authority of God, which is the throne. Nowhere but in the church is seen the lightning of his coming, the thunderings of his mighty power, the voices which acclaim with one united heart and soul and mind the praises of their divine Sovereign. "There were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God." This does not mean that there are seven, and seven only, Spirits of God, but it means that the Spirit of God is such that it is perfectly omniscient of all that goes on anywhere at all times and in all places. There is nothing hid, or that can be hid, from the penetrating gaze of the Spirit of God. It searches heaven and earth and all deep places. The inmost and uttermost secrecies of man's corrupt nature are fully known to the Spirit. Also, the mind of God, the mysterious deeps of his profound wisdom and knowledge, are likewise known to the Spirit. Those who approach the throne are searched through and through by this Spirit, all their dross is consumed, their idols shattered, they are made to realize that "our God is a consuming fire." No merit of theirs lives. "And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal." Referring ahead to the fifteenth chapter of Revelation, we find again this sea of glass mingled with fire. In this fourth chapter nothing is said about its being mingled with fire, neither is there said anything about anybody being on this sea of glass, but in the fifteenth chapter the redeemed hosts of the Lord are seen standing on this sea of glass "having the harps of God." Thus it would seem evident that the incidents narrated between the fourth and fifteenth chapters of this book bring to pass the mingling of fire with the sea of glass, and also its becoming the standing-ground of the redeemed of the Lord. It is not fitting in this article to presume to take up step by step the events from the fourth to the fifteenth chapter that lead up to this glorious consummation, even if we had the ability to do so, which we certainly have not. Suffice it to say that in these eleven intervening chapters there is given us in highly wrought figures the development of the beast of antichrist and the triumph of the Lord with his people "over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name." Thus, passing through and coming up out of great tribulation, the church is brought to stand upon this sea of glass. In the fourth chapter this sea of glass is shown before the throne, but is at that time unoccupied as yet. The foundation of the church was prepared before of old, from everlasting, ages before the redeemed actually came to stand upon it. Before it became their standing-ground in very fact, every principle of it had to be tested by fire, proven in the furnace of affliction. Thus, when the redeemed are seen as coming to stand upon this amazing sea, it is mingled with fire. It is not mingled with fire when John first sees it, or before the redeemed are actually brought to stand there. This is a wonderful platform, varying widely from the platforms or creeds of worldly religionists. Every plank in this platform was devised by God Almighty in himself before the world began. It is not the work of earthly counsels, synods, presbyteries or popes. This faith, or doctrine of God our Savior, was "once delivered unto the

saints," and we reap our highest joy in being enabled to contend for it unwaveringly. Paul shunned not to declare unto the churches the whole counsel of God; that is, there was no principle of it that he was ashamed of, or that he failed to preach. All points of this doctrine are found in their purity in the life and teachings of Jesus, for it is called the truth as it is in Jesus. It was preached by the apostles in all the world, beginning at Jerusalem. Some of the cardinal principles that compose this platform, or "sea of glass," are election, predestination, redemption alone by the blood of Jesus, justification alone by his resurrection from the dead, sanctification alone by the sprinkling of clean water, which is the Holy Ghost, the final preservation of the saints unto glory, and the resurrection of the dead. These are only some of the infinities of the infinite "sea of glass." There is not a single principle of the gospel but has had its martyrs, not a principle but has been tried in the fire, not a principle but has had its genuineness tested to the utmost. The "sea" thus becomes mingled with fire before it becomes the actual standing-ground of the church. Every subject of grace comes into the knowledge of all points of the doctrine only through great tribulation, only through the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, through being buried with him in baptism. We do not mean water-baptism, but the baptism with fire and with the Holy Ghost. Every principle of the doctrine of Jesus has had its battles to fight against the carnalities of the human mind, against the shafts of reason, against the stubbornness and opposition of man's fallen and depraved nature. This sea was like unto crystal; that is, it was not muddy or cloudy or obscure, but clear. As the One who sat in the throne was clear as jasper, so the doctrine of which he is the author is clear as crystal. Men in all ages have sought to muddy the streams of divine revelation, have sought to obscure and cloud the teachings of divine inspiration. Some time ago we heard a brother say, "That sermon was good, but it was so deep I could not see through or understand it." Depth does not cloud or make obscure. We have seen clear and deep bodies of water in which we could plainly see the pebbles lying upon the bottom, though many fathoms down. If we preach so that we make the truth obscure, the trouble is with the mud, and not that it is deep. The gospel platform of the church is clear as crystal, so simple that the "babe in Christ" can understand. As we are given faith to look into this glass we are changed from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord; that is, we are translated from darkness to light, from the law to the gospel, from works to grace.

Now this brings us to the beasts. The fact that the word "beasts" is used seems to bother our sister Brewster. If we refer back to the first part of the book of Ezekiel, we find that prophet experiencing a vision very similar to this of John's. Ezekiel does not call these beings "beasts," but "living creatures." "Living creatures" is what is meant here in Revelation, though the translators use the word "beasts." John saw four living creatures. They were round about the throne and within it. They had eyes before and behind, and within their wings. It is not said that they had any eyes at the sides, therefore we affirm they did not look sideways, that is, to the right or left. Each of the living creatures had six wings. One of the creatures was like a lion, the second like a calf, or, as the

original word more clearly signifies, like an ox; the third was like a man, and the fourth like a flying eagle. These four living creatures represent the gospel ministry. After his resurrection Jesus sent his disciples forth to preach the gospel into all the world to every creature. The gospel was to be preached in all the world for a witness, beginning at Jerusalem. Thus the fact that John saw four creatures, instead of more or less, would signify the four corners of the globe, north, east, south and west, that the gospel is preached, or will be before time is done, in every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue under heaven. "There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." These four creatures were seen within and round about the throne. The gospel ministry is within the church, no matter if it is to go to the uttermost parts of the earth. It never gets outside the church, it is always to the living and not to the dead. The fact that it is round about the throne, or church, means that it, like the four and twenty elders, has a function as watchman to perform, to warn those within of the dangers without, whence they have escaped by the blood of Jesus, which is the sole center and theme of the gospel. These four creatures had eyes before and behind, and within their wings. The gospel ministry looks forward unto the full and complete consummation of all the plan and purpose of God, it looks forward unto the rest that remains for the people of God, it looks forward unto Jesus, the author and finisher of the faith. The gospel ministry looks back, or behind, to the covenant of election made by God the Father in the Son before time began, it looks back to the predestinating purpose of God, according to which all the redeemed are to realize the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto the Father. The gospel ministry has no side eyes, it does not turn to the right or left to make itself acceptable or palatable to the unbelieving world. As Ezekiel says of these living creatures, they went "straight forward," "they turned not when they went." The gospel ministry is nothing if not straight forward. It does not look sideways. They also had eyes within their wings. The gospel ministry is introspective, it looks within, it searches the hearts of the children of God, it tries their reins, it pricks them in their desires. The gospel minister is always looking within to know what manner of man he is, and those who hear his ministry also look within to find the spirit that beareth witness with his spirit that they are the children of God. These creatures had each six wings, so that when flying these wings hid their bodies. So the gospel ministry is hid when it is doing its ministering, and only Christ is seen. When the gospel is preached with the power and the unction of the Spirit, the preacher is lost sight of. The apostles preached not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, so their wings hid them. One of these creatures was like a lion, so the gospel ministry is bold and fearless; it has dared to face death thousands of times, not fearing men, who only can slay the body, but rather God, who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell. The gospel ministry is accountable only unto God, and recks not what man can do unto it. Another of these creatures was like a calf or ox. Ox is the word that should be used here. So the gospel ministry is patient, meek and long-suffering, like the ox. Like the ox, it is accustomed to the yoke; not the yoke of men, but bears the

yoke of Jesus, who was meek and lowly in heart. The gospel ministry is a burden-bearer like the ox. Like the ox, it is a laborer. It labors in word and in doctrine, the burden of the word is laid upon it. However, the yoke is easy and the burden is light, and the gospel ministry finds rest to their soul in bearing this yoke. The difficulty is not in preaching, but in trying to preach; not in bearing the yoke, but in trying not to bear it, in kicking against it. If we could only be submissive to this yoke when laid upon us, we would not find one-hundredth of the trouble that we do in being obstinate and wanting to have our own way. Another of these living creatures was like a man. Thus the gospel ministry is composed of men. Men of the same weaknesses as other men, and of like passions, are called to this great work. Paul realized how weak and sinful as a man he was, even though called to the ministry, and so sought to keep himself out of sight, to cover his body with his wings, when ministering to the people of God. The last living creature was like a flying eagle. The eagle is noted for its extraordinary powers of vision. So the wonderful things that the gospel ministry sees in the Scriptures surpasses the intellects of men to elucidate. The vision of the ministry, like the eagle, is clear-eyed and deep. Also naturalists tell us that an eagle flying holds its course lofty and high and towards the zenith of the heavens, or toward the sun at its highest point. So the gospel ministry soars aloft in the infinite space of God's infinite truth, and steers toward the ascendant Sun of Righteousness with unerring aim. It preaches Jesus Christ, and him crucified, the lifted up or resurrected Sun, or Son, the Son of God at his zenith, in the height of his victory over sin, death, hell and the grave. These four living creatures which represent the gospel ministry say, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." They give all the glory and all the power and all the honor to God, and him alone, forever and ever. "They rest not day and night." They declare three holies, they sing him glorious in his Fatherhood, glorious in his Sonship, and glorious in his eternal Spirit. The same God which was before all worlds began is the same God that is now. The same God that was, and is, is the same God that is to come. The immutability of the eternal God, and all his attributes, is the fundamental essence of the gospel ministry. When those beasts give honor and glory and thanks to him that sat on the throne, the four and twenty elders are in full accord with them, and cast their crowns before the throne. Thus the prophets and the apostles and the whole gospel ministry are declaring one theme, and all are of one accord in ascribing all honor and glory to God and his Christ forever. The elders cast their crowns before the throne. These holy men of old spake not of their own wills, but as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Their testimony was a living testimony, because it proceeded from divine inspiration. This was their crown of gold, and though they, as men, are long ago dead, their testimony still lives. This, their crown, they cast at his feet, because they very well knew and felt that it was not of themselves they did these things, but that it was all of God and his Spirit. These living creatures and these elders worship the One in the throne, because of creation. This is told us in the last verse of the fourth chapter. They worship because they are so overwhelmingly filled with the consciousness

that the Lord has created all things and has created them all for his own pleasure. In the fifth chapter, ninth verse, we see them worshipping because of redemption. In the last verse of the same chapter we find them joining in the general adoration of the Lamb as King. In the nineteenth chapter, fourth verse, we find them worshipping because of judgment. Thus to sum up the adoration of the prophets, apostles and the gospel ministry, we find it flowing out of creation, redemption, the Kingship of the Lamb and the righteous judgments of God.

L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Hannah Jane Butler, of Sanford, Maine, died Dec. 31st, 1914, aged 87 years, 2 months and 12 days. Her husband died in 1893. Our dear sister united with the church at North Berwick, Maine, and was baptized by Elder William Quint Oct. 21st, 1888. She was of lowly mind, a gracious, God-fearing woman, who ever loved to listen to conversation upon the covenant transactions of God in behalf of and in his dealings with his people. Her last illness was of but few days, and most of that time she was unable to communicate with any who were around her dying bed. But with her we know that in the dissolution of the body (as with all the saints in death) she was held in the arms of the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

At her funeral the writer preached from the words, "He hath done all things well."—Mark vii. 37. Her body was laid away in the dust of the earth in the Sanford cemetery, there to await the resurrection at the last day, when the Lord shall descend from heaven with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

ALSO,

Joshua F. Staples, of North Berwick, Maine, departed this life Jan. 6th, 1915, aged 74 years, 2 months and 22 days. The deceased was married to Ann Augusta Abbott, July 1st, 1872, who survives him. In 1894 he professed his hope of eternal salvation in the Lord Jesus, and was baptized by the writer August 12th. His wife, our sister Augusta, was baptized the same day. The last two years of his earthly sojourn his health perceptibly failed, especially during the last six months. He was not fit to do much work on account of the state of his heart, but he persisted in doing what he thought he could. He knew, however, that his days were few, and expressed himself to his wife as willing to go if he were only fit to die. On the day of his death he had been to the barn, and came in announcing to his wife that he had an ill turn in the barn and had fallen. His wife advised him to go and lie down on the bed; he did so, and was dead in about three minutes. He leaves his wife, one married son and a granddaughter.

At the funeral the writer preached from the words, "Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."—Eccl. xii. 6, 7. The body was buried in the home family cemetery to await the hour that is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation. (John v. 28, 29.)

ALSO,

Mrs. Ruth Chadbourn, of Springvale, Maine, died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Mary Bartlett, Jan. 9th, 1915, aged 91 years, 9 months and 23 days. Our sister united with the church at North Berwick, and was baptized by Elder Philander Hartwell when she was about eighteen years of age. She was married Nov. 24th, 1857. Her husband died April 14th, 1888. They had two children, a son and daughter; the son died July 4th, 1889. During all her long pilgrimage our sister was steadfast in the faith, holding fast the name of Jesus Christ. Unto the end she was a true companion in the things of Christ, a mother in Israel, ever extolling the grace of the God of our salvation. One day, about ten years ago, as she was telling some things of her experience, I wrote the following from her lips, but she knew it not: "When a child I went to live in the family of Deacon Samuel Staples, and the rest of the family always called me sister. The deacon was a man of God, and prayed in the midst of his family for them all, and mentioned me as 'our adopted daughter.' One day father Staples prayed as usual, and afterward brother Josiah and I were discussing father's prayers. I asked Josiah, 'What do all his prayers amount to? what good do they do? I am sure we are not such sinners as he makes us out to be.' We both concluded his prayers were no use whatever, and we also both of us boldly proclaimed to each

other that we were as good as any of the members of the church. Many years later, when the Lord had called us by his grace, brother Josiah and I talked over these speeches of ours over father's prayers, and we then could see what foolish, ignorant, self-righteous wretches we had been. One day while standing on the hearth, with a milk pail on my arm, and just about to go out to do the milking, I felt the burden of my sins come upon me, and while I was milking I felt to be such a guilty sinner that I was praying all the time to God for mercy. I returned to the house in great distress in my soul, and was sorely burdened with my sins for many months. I feared Satan would come and take me away, for the Lord was giving me over to him. I wept day and night, and could hardly eat anything. I went to meeting, but could find no relief. There was a place where I used to go to pray. One day I went there, and while praying saw Satan. I was greatly distressed, and felt, I am his, given up by the Lord to him. Elder Hartwell would often visit our home and talk with father Staples, and I listened attentively to all they said. At length one day I talked with Elder Hartwell about my terrible condition, and he spoke very kindly to me. One Sunday in meeting the gospel came to my soul with power; all my burden was gone, my sins were all forgiven, my name was in the Lamb's book of life. But soon after this trouble came, and I was weeping in meeting and a dear sister asked me why I was weeping. I told her the troubles of my soul, and she replied, 'We have all traveled this same road.' But hope returned, and I was received by the church and baptized. Often since then I have asked myself, Am I born again? Am I his, or am I not? Then I am led to look back to the Lord's former loving-kindness, and my precious hope springs up again."

She was favored of the Lord to hold her rejoicing in Christ Jesus steadfast unto the end, often speaking of the good hope she had, and longing for the time to come when she would be with her precious Savior in glory.

At her funeral I preached from the words, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Savior Jesus Christ." Her mortal body was laid away in the Springvale Cemetery to await the resurrection of the just, when God that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in us. FREDERICK W. KEENE.

Deacon Moses Mellott, of the Fairview Old School Baptist Church, Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa., died at his home near Plum Run, Pa., Dec. 24th, 1914, aged 71 years, 11 months and 7 days. He was born in Belfast township, Fulton Co., Jan. 17th, 1843, and lived all his life, with the exception of about six months, in that same county. Six months of his life was spent in the state of West Virginia. July 9th, 1870, he was married to Sarah Catherine Clevenger, who is now left a widow to mourn her loss. To that union was born one child, which died when a little more than two years old. Brother Mellott came before the Old School Baptist Church at Needmore on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in December, 1872, related his experience of grace and was received as a candidate for baptism. He received the ordinance of baptism at the hands of his pastor, Elder Thomas Rose, and during the forty-two years of his life in the church he lived an orderly and exemplary life, marked by an humble walk and a meek and quiet spirit. He was a man of peace, never of strife, and earnestly desired the peace and prosperity of Zion. Our brother loved and rejoiced in salvation by free and unmerited grace through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of sinners. His last illness was called pneumonia, and lasted but a very few days, the end coming suddenly. The widow, sister Mellott, is now left to continue the remainder of life's journey alone, so far as earthly companionship goes, but we hope she will realize the companionship of Jesus in the Spirit in such measure as will comfort and sustain her in this afflictive trial. May she be given strength to submit to the inevitable, to be reconciled to the will of God concerning her and our brother who has gone before her.

Our brother's funeral took place on Dec. 26th. Interment in the Sideling Hill Cemetery. The writer of this notice was sent for to conduct the last services, but owing to having another funeral the same day was unable to be present. L.

Oscar B. Hickerson was born in Virginia, July 13th, 1833, and departed this life Dec. 7th, 1914, at his home in Nashville, Tenn. Brother Hickerson joined the Thumb Run Church, Fauquier Co., Va., in 1860, and was baptized by Elder Clark. He moved to Tennessee in 1862, and joined the church on University St., Nashville, about twenty years ago, by letter. He was an ardent admirer of the SIGNS and the doctrine it contends for, which he thought to be the truth as set forth in the Scriptures. He had been afflicted for several years with cancer of the face, and was unable to do any physical labor, so he spent most of the time reading his Bible, and was ever ready to speak in defence of the truth. The writer of this sketch was with him during his last days on earth, and he earnestly contended for salvation by grace until the last. He was always in his place at meeting while able to attend, as was his devoted wife, who was always with him, and they were usually the first ones there. He is survived by his widow and two daughters, Mrs. D. Bush, of Nashville, Tenn., and Mrs. Fannie K. Brown, of San Antonio, Texas, and one son, J. B. L. Hickerson, of Seattle, Wash.

The funeral services were conducted by our beloved pastor, Elder J. K. Womack, assisted by Elder George M. Hite. May the Lord remember his widow and children, and may they ever trust him as their husband and father did. May the Lord remember the church of which he was a member, and while his place cannot be filled in the church, may the Lord add others to us that will be as faithful and as firm in the faith as he was. While we all shall miss him here, we believe he has entered into that rest which is reserved for them that were given to the Son in the covenant. W. B. CHILTON.

Mrs. Sarah L. Archer entered into rest Dec. 7th, 1912, at her home, five miles east of Mt. Calm, Limestone Co., Texas. She was born May 25th, 1838, at Ft. Houston, Anderson Co., moving to Limestone County Jan. 5th, 1854, and was numbered among the early settlers of that county. Her age was 74 years and twenty-six days. She was married to John H. Archer Oct. 22nd, 1874. She was an old Primitive Baptist, and her house was a home for Old Baptists. Many will remember her kind hospitality; she always enjoyed having the brethren and sisters with her. She was a kind and faithful wife and mother, a true friend and a faithful christian. She was the mother of six children, all of whom preceded her in death. She had been in poor health for two years, although suffering from no special disease, just a decline of her vital forces.

A very impressive funeral service was held at the residence, conducted by Mr. Cardwell, of Corsicana. She was laid to rest in old Mt. Antioch Cemetery, near Mt. Calm, to await the resurrection morn.

ALSO,

John H. Archer was born in Henry County, Ga., August 2nd, 1830, died at his home, five miles east of Mt. Calm, Limestone Co., Texas, Nov. 13th, 1914, aged 84 years, 4 months and 11 days. He was one of the oldest settlers of Limestone County. Mr. Archer was married to Miss C. A. Lemons, August 30th, 1853. To that union eight children were born, four of whom preceded him to the land eternal. His first wife died Jan. 10th, 1871, and October 22nd, 1874, he was married to Mrs. Sarah A. Anglin, near Mt. Calm, where they lived happy and contented. Mr. Archer was an old Confederate soldier, and was loved by all who knew him. He was honest, kind and honorable, a true husband, a kind and loving father. He had been in declining health for two years, and was almost blind. He was a Primitive Baptist in belief, and his house was a home for Old Baptists. Many will remember his kind hospitality, having spent many happy hours with him. Just before he died he told his daughter Bettie he was very happy, and shouted praises to the Lord.

The funeral service was conducted at the grave by brother Cornelius. He was then laid to rest in the old Mt. Calm Cemetery, by the side of the wife of his youth, there to await the resurrection morn.

(MRS.) JENNIE HUGHES.

William T. Hall was born in Accomac Co., Va., Sept. 13th, 1854, died Dec. 9th, 1914, aged 60 years, 2 months and 27 days. He was the eldest son of Thomas and Esther Hall, both of whom were natives of the same county. He professed a hope when about nineteen years of age, and joined the Methodists, but could not be satisfied to remain with them. About that time he went to live with an uncle who was an Old School Baptist, and began going to meeting with him, and heard his own experience set forth. In September, 1880, he and his father related the dealings of the Lord with them and were received, and baptized by Elder T. M. Poulson in the fellowship of the church at Messongoes, Accomac Co., Va., continuing a steadfast and faithful member until his death, always filling his seat unless providentially hindered. In the year 1887 he was married to Miss Tabitha Byrd, who survives him, with their son, Andrew Hall. He was sick but a few days, with pneumonia. The doctor thought best for him to be taken to the hospital, but he died before reaching there. His remains were taken from Salisbury, where he died, to the home of his brother, R. J. Hall, where a funeral service was held by Elder A. B. Francis, of Delmar, Del., Dec. 11th, after which they were laid in Greenwood Cemetery, near Temperanceville, Va., near his home, where rests his father, mother and other relatives who preceded him to the grave, there to await the trumpet's sound, when all that sleep in Jesus shall come forth unto everlasting life. He was one of twelve children who lived to grow up, and the first to go, thus leaving to mourn, beside his wife and son, five brothers and six sisters, all of whom live within a few miles of the old homestead. R. J. HALL.

I will simply add to what his brother has written that I have been personally acquainted with brother "Billy" from the time of his baptism, and can say of him that in all his walk he showed that he had been with Jesus and learned of him. He was a very humble, unpretentious man, but true and faithful, and highly respected in the community where his life was spent. He will be greatly missed at Messongoes. A. B. FRANCIS.

C. J. Johnson was born in Plymouth, Cerro Gordo Co., Iowa, Nov. 19th, 1866, died at Denver, Colo., Dec. 7th, 1914, aged 48 years and 18 days. The cause of his death was acute gastritis, he living but a few hours after he was taken sick. He had been a great sufferer with stomach trouble for several years. He was not a member of the church, but experienced a hope in Christ several years ago, and was a sound

advocate of the Old School Baptist doctrine, having great light upon the Scriptures. He was laid to rest in the Fairmont Cemetery at Denver, Colo., Dec. 10th, 1914. The Masons and Odd Fellows, of which he was a member, took charge of his funeral. We shall miss him, but our loss is his eternal gain. His troubles and sufferings and pain are ended. He was a nephew of the writer, and had made his home with us for several years. Pray for us, that God may give us grace to bear our sad affliction.

(MRS.) ALMIRA ROBERTS.

I had known brother Johnson many years, and can testify that he was firmly established in the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS. He was at my home last February, and wrote me soon afterward, and his article was published in the SIGNS, page 434, No. 14, volume 82. May the God of all grace comfort sister Roberts and all his relatives left to mourn. He was the last of his father's family.

E. A. NORTON.

Franklin G. Helvey was born in Bland County, Va., Nov. 29th, 1832, and departed this life at Princeton, Mercer Co., W. Va., Dec. 21st, 1914, aged 82 years and 22 days. He was united in marriage to Miss Nancy Bird about the year 1852. To that union were born three children, two dying in infancy and one living, Mrs. Lizzie Reid, of Princeton, W. Va., with whom he was staying when he was called to a better home. He served in the Confederate army for about four years during the civil war. His wife preceded him to the great beyond eighteen years. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church when a girl, and remained a faithful member until her death. Brother Helvey united with the church about fourteen years ago, and was baptized by Elder J. C. Hurst. He was a faithful member, always attending services when he was able to go. He was a lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and believed in the doctrine it advocates. He was loved and respected by all who knew him. He suffered for some time before he died. All was done that loving hands could do to relieve his suffering and restore him to health, but God in his infinite wisdom saw fit to call him to a home not made with hands, where we hope by the grace of God to meet our dear brother and grandfather. While we miss him, we do not mourn as those without hope. May the Lord sustain and keep us and guide our wayward steps in this world of sin and sorrow to a world without end.

The funeral services will be conducted in the spring, by Elders J. C. Hurst and G. A. Reid.

(MRS.) R. G. AKERS.

APPOINTMENTS.

NOTHING preventing, I expect to be at Kingston, N. Y., Saturday, Feb. 27th, meeting at 7:45 p. m.; Ashokan, Sunday, 28th, 11 a. m.; Union Grove, March 1st, 11 a. m.; brother Morris Faulkner's, same evening, 7:45; sister O'Connor's, Kelley Corners, Tuesday, 2nd, 7:45 p. m.; Vega, Wednesday, 3rd, 11 a. m.; Roxbury, Thursday, 4th, 11 a. m.

D. M. VAIL.

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W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor.
C. B. RICE, Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 83. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1915. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE LAW AND GRACE.

It has been on my mind for several months to try to show the difference in some of the details between the law of Moses and the grace of the Lord Jesus. I dare not use the expression: The law against grace, as this would signify a conflict, or a disorder in the arrangement of the mighty God of Israel. Paul would say, "What shall we say then? is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, "Thou shalt not covet."—Romans vii. 7. He also said, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law."—Rom. iii. 31. It was not the work of Jesus to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill and establish all the dark sayings of old. That he was fully equipped to accomplish all that was prophesied of him, no believer can doubt, for if one claiming to believe in Jesus should doubt his ability to do the work which he came to do, then such one cannot be a believer in Jesus. Perhaps one cause for my mind dwelling upon this subject is the opposition that has been exerted against taking the full scope of the language of the apostle when he says, "Ye are not under the law, but under grace."—Rom. vi. 14. From this Scripture, and several others teaching the same lesson, Bible Baptists have emphasized the fact, as well established by Jesus, that the law of Moses is subservient to the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."—John i. 17. In this sentence it seems to believers that grace and truth are more important to them than the law of Moses. In using the Scripture: "The law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things,"—Heb. x. 1, and, "Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ,"—Col. ii. 17, may have more direct reference to the ceremonial law than to the law of the commandments. However, when the law is spoken of without any limitations it seems to include the very first part of it as well as the latter part. In the preaching of Jesus many references are made to the law and of the keeping of it. First of all, attention is directed to the ten commandments. In Matthew xxii. 36, it is recorded that a lawyer asked Jesus, say-

ing, "Which is the great commandment in the law?" It seems from this inquiry that the commandments of the law were widely discussed by all of the Jewish nation, and these commandments were understood to be of vital importance. Jesus' answer settles for all time and in all nations of the earth the quandary about the vital principle contained in the law of Moses. His answer is a text of perfect truth: "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment, and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." In these words of Jesus it is made plain that if the two great commandments are kept, then all the law and prophets are fulfilled. The words, "all the law," would embrace the ten commandments, as well as the law contained in ordinances. That the ten commandments were only written upon tables of stone, it seems evident, and placed in the holy ark of the covenant, yet it seems certain that many copies of the ten commandments were written in books for the use of the children of Israel. Any one of these copies was called: "The book of the law."—Neh. viii. 9. The fact of reading out of the book of the law the command to keep the sabbath is proof that all of the ten commandments were written there. That it was the custom of the Jews in the days of Jesus' preaching, and that of the apostles, to read the law and the prophets in the synagogues every sabbath day, (Luke iv. 16; Acts xiii. 15, 27; xv. 21,) is well established. There is no wonder about the Jewish people looking to the law for justification, for it seemed to be the main thing in their service every sabbath day. Opposing their creed was like touching the apple of their eye. Their wrath arose every time Jesus or the apostles spoke of more essential things than the keeping of the law as carnal commandments. I want to notice before I am done that "the law is holy, and just, and good," also that "the law is spiritual." Also that the greater part of the ten commandments are carnal commandments. Now that no man can keep all the law in and of himself, for he is blind to all spiritual knowledge, is proof that the law can never justify him. "And by him, all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."—Acts xiii. 39. "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."—Rom. iii. 28. "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets."—Rom. iii. 20, 21. "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, * * * for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."—Gal. ii. 16. "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident."—Gal. iii. 11. We see that perfect and perpetual obedience is exacted by the law. (Deut. xxvii. 26; Jer. xi. 3.) "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."—James ii. 10. That life does not come through the law, or any commandment that a man can obey, is positive scriptural evidence. If otherwise, why then must Christ come into the world? "If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."—Gal. ii. 21. "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should

have been by the law."—Gal. iii. 21. "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law." —Gal. v. 4.

Now, going back to the words of Jesus in regard to the great commandment of the law, I assert that the great commandment is kept by believers in the Lord Jesus through the Spirit, for, "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." The second command in importance is fulfilled by spiritual men and women, just like the first: through Christ in them the hope of glory.

The law is holy. Why? Because it emanated from God, who is holy. It could not be otherwise, for it was written on tables of stone by the mighty finger of God. Paul says, "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good."—Rom. vii. 12. And, "The law is good."—1 Tim. i. 8; Psalms xix. 8; cxix. 138. Paul also said, "The law is spiritual." Some brethren in enlarging upon these words of Paul seem to be mystified, and conclude that Paul was referring to "the law" spoken of in the eighth chapter of Romans, viz.: "The law of the Spirit of life." We know that a law that gives life must of necessity be a spiritual law, without recourse to any argument whatever. I wish to notice all the commandments of the decalogue which were written upon tables of stone as recorded in Exodus xx. First, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Is this a carnal commandment? I think not, for no carnal man can keep it. Jesus says it means: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." No man in himself can so love God; he must be born of the Spirit, and thus be a spiritual man before the love of God flows through his soul. Eternal love, great love, must permeate his being before he can feel the power of the First Great Commandment; God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. I assert that the first commandment is a spiritual commandment. The second commandment, as it is recorded in Exodus xx., reads: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments." This second commandment forbids the making of any god, whether it be a graven image, or likeness of anything seen or known. If the first commandment is kept the second will not be broken. Yet it is a carnal commandment, for a carnal man can keep from setting up images and from practicing what is called idolatry. A man may be an idol-worshipper at heart, though his hands may not be guilty of forming clay, iron or wood into some tangible shape that he may fall down and worship it. Third, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." This is a carnal commandment, and relates to the speech of the tongue, and carnal men are supposed to be able to keep from swearing. This is copied into the law codes of many States to apprehend violent men, but I believe that thousands of very pious preachers transgress this command when they call themselves

and one another by God's holy name: "Reverend." We meet such men every day. Fourth, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy." It further instructs how to keep the day holy. This is a carnal commandment, and it has entered into the carnal code of laws of most States and civilized nations. All the laws relating to Sunday as a sabbath day were derived from the Jewish sabbath, though it be not the identical day of the week. It did not require a man to be spiritual to keep the sabbath as it was kept by Israel. Fifth, "Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy day may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." This is a carnal command, and carnal men and women are supposed to be able to keep it. Sixth, "Thou shalt not kill." This is also a carnal commandment. Because of the fact that believers in the Lord Jesus are under grace does not annul the force of this command upon the lawless and disobedient. But no genuine believer in the Lord Jesus as his Savior has any desire or inclination to kill when the fruit of the Spirit is manifest, viz., love, joy, peace, &c., but he is above the dominion of the law. Seventh, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." Another carnal command. Eighth, "Thou shalt not steal." Also a carnal command. Ninth, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." This does not require a man to be spiritual to be a keeper of it. Severe penalties are attached to this law for its breaking in all civilized nations. The tenth and last commandment is of great importance, though it is usually passed over as the least of any of the commandments. It reads, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's." This is the law regarding covetousness, and not with respect to the actions of the hands, feet or body. It means the lust of the mind. No State or nation dare incorporate this into their code of laws. Among men it is not supposed that a law can be so framed to reach the thoughts of mortals, and punish men for evil thoughts. In this last commandment, and second in importance of the whole decalogue, God has reserved to himself the right to judge man's thoughts. Can a carnal man keep from lusting? If he can, then he is able to love his neighbor as himself, and thus fulfill all the law of Moses, for love is the fulfilling of the law. Paul said, "I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." No carnal man can keep the tenth commandment, hence it is a spiritual commandment. None but spiritual children do keep this commandment in connection with the first and great commandment, and that is all through the Lord Jesus. Every soul who falls on the Rock is broken, and he learns his weakness in even attempting to keep the first commandment, which says to him, "Love God supremely." Even the last and little command speaks in thunder tones, "Abstain from fleshly lusts." How wonderful that the first and last commands in the decalogue embrace the whole law written upon tables of stone. If these two are firmly written upon the hearts of God's people, what need for the church to put on record against her members that they take not the name of God in vain, or to keep the sabbath, or not to kill, nor to commit adultery, nor to steal, nor to bear false witness? for having the two great commandments through Jesus their Lord and High Priest, all the lesser ones stand between the first and the last. Jesus is there, viz., in the first and the

last. On these two hang all the law and the prophets. It is evident that Jesus meant the last command when he said the second, for the second in the order of writing does not mention the neighbor at all. There is a spiritual meaning to "neighbor" as it was used by Jesus in his interpretation of the last command. Ordinarily neighbor means one living close by, yet one may be close and still in the sense of neighbor, far away, as illustrated by Jesus in the parable of the good Samaritan. The Jew who fell among thieves lived nearer the priest and the Levite than he did to the Samaritan, and before his fall among thieves perhaps had a hatred for all Samaritans. The spiritual import of the question, "And who is my neighbor?" is well set forth by our Lord in his parable showing the helpless condition of the "certain man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho." The answer to Jesus' question: "Which now of these three, thinkest thou was neighbor unto him that fell among thieves?" is doubtless correct and well approved by the Lord, viz., "He that shewed mercy on him." We all, like sheep, have gone astray, but the Lord is merciful to us, for the God of high heaven "hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Our Neighbor is the Sure Mercies of David, the Bright and Morning Star, he is the Judge of our minds, our consciences. He magnifies the law to our minds, it is then honorable, so that we do not desire to reject him, or, as it were, "hide our faces from him," and now we love him as we love our own souls. Thus the whole law is fulfilled in us by the Spirit of his grace. The wondrous power of the Mediator along the line of mind and conscience is set forth in Hebrews, fourth chapter, as the Word of God. It "is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." The power of the word of God thoroughly sifts our very being, getting at the very bottom of our souls, life or spirit. Who can resist such supernatural power? Not one. He has power over all flesh to give eternal life to as many creatures as the Father gave him. In his love and in his pity he redeemed them, then will he not freely forgive them all their vileness? Will he not come to them in the power of his grace, and say, Blessed art thou, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven? Having Christ as their Lord and Master they have all things, even the keys of the kingdom, judgment of what the law and the prophets teach. They are secure in this power, being protected by powerful walls and bulwarks, so that no weapon that is formed against them shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against them in judgment they shall condemn. They have this power by heirship, and their righteousness is of the Lord himself.

As ever, in hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., Jan. 20, 1915.

MT. VERNON, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I have not written any for the dear old SIGNS for so long, I will now try, although I am so unworthy for the task I fear I may write much that will be of no comfort to the household of faith.

Last night I had a dream that I will pen down. I know that the world does not believe in dreams, but we find that God's children have from time to time been warned in dreams, been made to know the truth in visions, or dreams. Jacob had a dream while on his way to Padan-aram, and was instructed by the angel that descended on the ladder that the land whereon he lay was given to him. (Gen. xxviii. 13.) Joseph dreamed a dream, and his brethren hated him for his dreams, and called him "the dreamer." God informed Abimelech in a dream that Sarah was the wife of Abraham. (Gen. xx. 3.) I could go at length of unnecessary search in the Old Testament, but a few instances in both Old and New will suffice. The Lord spoke to Moses and said, "Hear now my words: "If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream."—Num. xii. 6. Also the Lord appeared unto Joseph in a dream, and said, "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."—Matt. i. 20, 21. Also he appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him to take the young child and his mother and flee into Egypt, &c. This wonderful dream sent his Son into Egypt, in direct fulfillment of prophecy, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: "Out of Egypt have I called my son," &c.

Now I will relate the dream. Last night I dreamed that I was at meeting back in Kentucky, near Fulton, and old Elder R. H. Boaz was one of the preachers there, and brother Boaz asked me to preach, and that on predestination, and gave me as a text Romans viii. 29; but I told him that surely the Lord would give me a text, and about that time there was a text handed me, worded like this: "And here shall thy proud waves be stayed." I will try as near as possible to pen down the words as I dreamed them. Dear brother Boaz, you are aware of one fact, by a long chain of experience, that man is altogether vanity, and cannot command a text of Scripture at his own option, but the Lord will demand of his servants to preach the preaching that he bids. Now by reference to Job xxxviii. 11, we find that God challenged Job to answer him in regard to his decrees, and spoke to Job thus: "And brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." The raging sea has its bounds; the waves may roll high and dash its dirt and foam like clouds of the sky, but when they come to their bounds they can go no further. I have been on the banks of the bay near the Gulf of Mexico, and have seen the great waves as they would beat against the shore, yet this great body of water was held in check by a gradual incline bank that would seem impossible to check the great rolling waves, but ah, when they reached the bounds not one inch past could they go, but would break to pieces when they reached the boundary line, thus far, and no farther. So in the eternal and unalterable decree of the great God, the bounds and habitation of the people cannot exceed that of the waves of the sea,

for hitherto shalt thou go, and no further. Before the foundation of the earth was laid, before the dust of the highest hills was formed, before the mountains were brought forth, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. I have purposed, and who can disannul? I am God, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise up against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. (Isaiah liv. 17.) Every purpose is established by counsel, and every act of Joseph from the beautiful days of his dreaming was predestinated of God; nothing of the whole trip to Egypt from Canaan but was embraced in his everlasting purpose; the casting into prison, the dreams of the chief baker and the butler, and the forgetfulness of the butler, were no accident or happen so, (Gen. xl. 23,) but according to God's eternal decree; and O, dear brethren, who among you can take courage for one moment in the thought that God is so mutable that events must happen or come to pass before he could know them? Here is the ground of consolation and comfort which will be found in the text brother Boaz handed me. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he [Jesus] might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."—Romans viii. 29, 30. In our experience we are taught, first, our helplessness, our dependence, &c., for God knew every one before time began, for whom he did foreknow, seeing according to his foreknowledge their predestination, their calling, their justification and glorification, hence elected them to salvation by divine grace, according to the good pleasure of his will, and that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, (Eph. i. 5,) not for some foreseen good in us, for in sin did my mother conceive me, (Psalms li. 5,) not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, (Titus iii. 56,) but did this to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved. (Eph. i. 6.) Should we attempt to procure eternal life by works of any kind, we would at once go beyond the bounds that God said, Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further, for we are bound in the original chain of darkness brought about by the disobedience of Adam. (Romans v. 12.) "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one [not many] shall many be made righteous."—Romans v. 19. Yet we hear some say man could have kept the law, thus preventing the entrance of sin into the world. But listen: "Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."—Romans v. 20.

Thus I only awoke to find I had dreamed, yet I believe the doctrinal sentiment herein expressed is the truth. I found that I was at home in Karnes Co., Texas, and not at Fulton, Ky., though I would very much rejoice to meet with Elder Boaz and the brotherhood at Boaz

chapel, and to-day (the third Sunday) would I rejoice exceedingly to meet the dear brethren and friends who meet at old south Mt. Zion, in Graves Co., Ky., where I was raised to manhood, and have heard Elders R. H. Boaz and A. J. Luther preach the unsearchable riches of Christ according to God's eternal and unchangeable decree. They have stood firm in the grand old doctrine of salvation by grace amidst all the storms and floods of ungodly men.

Brethren editors, if this meets your approval use it, and if not cast aside, and all is well.

Affectionately your brother in bonds,
J. B. BOWDEN.

HAVILAND, Kans., Jan. 16, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—By your permission I now beg to present a thought in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as to who had the power to forgive sins. "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thine house." —Matt. ix. 6. Now Matthew and other New Testament writers record many cases of healing, and all were strictly by the power of God through Christ; but the scribes and Pharisees called it blasphemy. "And behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." That is the way to worship God, saying, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," not, If I will help. "And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed." "The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it." This man never offered to help the Lord do his work of healing, for he felt unworthy that the Lord should come into his house, much less to him for help, but he explained that he was a man under authority; that is, his government was over him, and that he had soldiers under him. This seems to be his idea of Christ, that God was over him, and that those evil spirits, or sicknesses, were under Christ's power, and if he shall say, Go, they will go, and if he say, Come, they come. What does Christ say of such faith? "Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." Who are they now that claim that Christ has all power over sickness and evil spirits, and that he says, Go, and they go, and when he says, Come, they come, or that he says to a man, Do this, and he doeth it? They were few then, and they are few now. "When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." So you see it is Christ himself that takes our infirmities, and who bears our sicknesses. But some will contend that he would not if we did not bring them to him. But this Book says these things happened, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, so it is not because we come to him, or that we bring our friends. I do not doubt but God heals many now in body and spirit as independently as while Christ was here in the

flesh. But it was very necessary to have them brought by friends at that time, and that they come to Christ in the flesh, so that all men might see the power of God in his Son, that they might know that the Son of man had power on earth to forgive sins. Those brought were not helped in their sickness by the bringing, for they were still sick, or lame, or blind, after being brought, so it was not man's power that helped in the healing, but the object was that men should see who had all the power to forgive sins. Those who brought others to Christ in the flesh could see as well as the afflicted that they needed a physician, and they were healed by Christ himself, and we hear of none of those people claiming any of the honor; hence we should not until we have power to forgive sins. We should not blaspheme, Christ is not divided. "So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters." We are not told here that these two men possessed of these devils ever asked that they be cast out, but the devils asked permission to go into the herd of swine, and Jesus said unto the devils, Go, and they went. They acknowledged his authority. He gave them his word, and they obeyed. But what effect did it have on other men? The herders fled, and the people of the city came out and besought him to depart out of their coasts. But as we follow on in the book of Matthew we find many places where the almighty power of God was manifest in Christ, and man's help is not found. "And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord." They did not say, Yea, if we will help, or if we will accept, or if we will get faith, but they believed the Lord was able of himself. That is what we believe now. "Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. And their eyes were opened." Yes, it was according to their faith, for their faith as expressed was that Christ was able without the help of men to do this thing, so he did it with his own touch. "As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil. And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marveled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel." This dumb man was brought by others, but that was not helping Christ to heal him, but, as I said before, was done that people could see with their natural eyes that the man was dumb, and that they could hear him speak. If Christ should have healed all those people privately, or without so many knowing who was healed, and when, then the gainsayer could have disputed, but Christ would make just so many as public examples for our good, as he did the raising of Lazarus from the dead. He was glad for our sakes that he was not there when Lazarus died, that we may believe, and so am I, for his many friends could see him brought forth, and believed in Christ as the resurrection. In many things he has helped our unbelief.

E. G. WEBB.

TO SUBSCRIBERS OF THE "ADVOCATE OF TRUTH."

I WISH to say a few words of explanation to the subscribers of the *Advocate of Truth* through the SIGNS.

While I was living at Wichita Falls, Texas, last year, my health failed, and I was forced to give up the publication of the *Advocate of Truth*, so in June I arranged with Elder A. H. Williamson, of Elba, Ala., to take charge of the *Advocate* and continue its publication. He was delayed in getting out the first issue, and as I was forced to give up the paper without an opportunity of announcing the change of management before turning it over to brother Williamson, I received numbers of inquiries about the cause of the paper not reaching the subscribers. These inquiries have continued to come, although a few issues of the paper have been sent out. Some of these inquiries I have answered, but many of them I could not reply to by letter. Doubtless some have thought me indifferent to their inquiries, and perhaps have censured me for not replying. The first issue of the paper sent out by brother Williamson contained an explanation from me, and an announcement of the change of management, but it seemed that a number failed to receive the paper. Brother Williamson having suspended the publication of the *Advocate*, I feel that I am indebted to my subscribers for what they have paid in advance, so I have made arrangements with the management of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES by which all of my paid in advance subscribers will receive as many copies of the SIGNS as are due them of the *Advocate*. I feel that this arrangement will meet the approval of the *Advocate* subscribers, as the publication of that paper has been suspended.

I know of no other paper that I would prefer to see in the homes of the *Advocate* subscribers. The SIGNS is the oldest, most neatly printed and most ably edited periodical now published by the Old School Baptists. It has contended for the discriminating doctrine of salvation wholly by grace, and the sovereign purpose of God in all things, together with the other great principles of the faith of the church which have distinguished her from the institutions of men in the past ages since it was started more than eighty years ago. These principles have been contended for by the *Advocate* for the past thirteen years, and I believe are loved and held sacred by its readers. I trust before the time for which you are entitled to receive the SIGNS has expired you will give additional evidence of your love for these blessed principles by renewing your subscription to the SIGNS, and have it continue to come into your homes.

A number of the subscribers whose names I have turned over to the SIGNS paid their first subscriptions to the *Advocate* before the first issue was published, and have never been delinquent. I hope as many of you as become permanent subscribers to the SIGNS will be equally punctual with it, because this is what makes it possible for a periodical to continue its publication.

For the information of those who may feel concerned, I will say that during the past six months my health has improved considerably, for which I hope I am thankful to the Giver of all good. I shall write occasionally for the SIGNS, if the Lord wills.

My present address is Haviland, Kans., R. 3. A line either through the SIGNS or by private mail from any of my old subscribers will be appreciated.

Yours in humble hope,

J. R. HARDY.

By request of brother J. R. Hardy we have taken over his list of subscribers for the *Advocate of Truth*, and will furnish them with the same number of copies of the Signs of the Times as they were entitled to of the *Advocate*, and hope this arrangement will prove satisfactory to brother Hardy's subscribers, and that they will be well pleased with the Signs and become permanent subscribers of it.

While the *Advocate* was only published once a month, and the subscription price was one dollar a year, it must be borne in mind that the Signs is issued twice each month, and its subscription price is two dollars a year, so of course no one could expect to receive the Signs for the same length of time as they would have received the *Advocate*, as they would then be getting twice as many numbers as they paid for the *Advocate*.

The arrangement we have made with brother Hardy is this: where a subscriber is paid say six months in advance for the *Advocate*, he will receive six consecutive numbers of the Signs, &c., which seems a very fair arrangement.

In cases where parties have been subscribers of both papers, we will extend their time on our list so that they will receive as many additional copies of the Signs as they were entitled to of the *Advocate*.

We much appreciate brother Hardy's words of commendation for the Signs, and hope our new readers may have the same opinion of the paper.

We were indeed sorry to hear of brother Hardy's poor state of health, but very glad to know he is feeling improved, and hope it may be the Lord's will to ere long restore his health again.

Brother Hardy has promised to write occasionally for the columns of the Signs, and we feel sure his articles will be read with pleasure by all his old subscribers, as well as by the regular Signs subscribers.

When an *Advocate* subscriber has received the number of copies of the Signs he or she is entitled to, we will send a notice to that effect, and sincerely hope that by that time they will have become such good friends of the Signs they will want the paper continued to them, and will become permanent subscribers of ours. If you should feel that two dollars is more than you wish to pay at one time, just renew for six months for one dollar, and then you will receive as many papers as you would have received of the *Advocate* for the same price.

Hoping this new arrangement may prove satisfactory to all concerned, and that there may be a new and lasting friendship cemented between the *Advocate* subscribers and this paper, we remain yours to serve,

J. E. BEEBE & CO.

Southampton, Pa., Dec. 16, 1914.

My Dear Sister:—Since your letter came the other day I have felt like writing you. I do not want to tire you, but as I have not felt disposed much toward letter writing of late I am led to hope that this desire is not altogether of the flesh. It was good to read your letter. I know you would not feel satisfied with it yourself, but there is often great comfort experienced in the fellowship of sufferings. I, too, know nothing more encouraging than to see our brethren walking worthy of their high calling. John said he knew no greater joy. The Spirit of our Master manifested in his children bears precious fruit. Still we need not expect to find occasion for glorying before the world, for those things that are well-pleasing in the sight of God are de-

spised as dishonorable and contemptible in the eyes of men. You know Jesus was designated a wine-bibber and gluttonous, a friend of publicans and sinners. We know this was spoken by his enemies, yet it was partly true. He indeed was and is a friend of publicans and sinners, he partook of wine and food in contrast to the formal fasting of the Pharisees. While he was the greatest enemy sin has ever known, his love abounded toward sinners. The despised publicans, who made their living at the expense of their own people, the Jews, traitors to their own nation through greed for Roman gold, heard him gladly. The poor and rejected outcasts of humanity found in him a haven of refuge. In the eleventh of John we read concerning Mary, (one whom the Pharisee would not have so much as touch him for fear of pollution) that Jesus loved her. To her was he first revealed after his resurrection. She was a sinner before men, yet he loved her, and in his sight, whose eyes cannot look upon iniquity, she was pure and holy. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. It is not so much the committing of sin that is the chief trouble. Our offences from our birth might be blotted out and we would remain the same. Holiness and righteousness are terms applied to God, and so far as we fall short of his perfections we are unholy and sinful. It is the state of man that counts. His works are evidence of his state. A tree being evil is manifest by evil fruit. The fruit does not make the tree corrupt, but shows that it is corrupt. That is what causes my questioning and anxiety. Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into rest, any of us should seem to come short of it. That is my fear. I know God is able to do his will, but is it his will to save me? Where are the evidences, marks of grace? Dear sister, they are not in anything I have done. My only hope is in what God has done. He has had mercy upon me, has answered my cry in times past, therefore I must trust in him. I get so disgusted with myself. I know that most worldly enjoyments have no attraction for me. There are a few that have, and I find them a constant snare. I am glad he has preserved me so far from such open sin as would give those without, cause to reproach the church, still I have to grieve over the example I am to the ones who know me best. I am afraid of my actions leading them into wrongdoing. Many times I have had to plead that my sin might be visited on myself, and not cause another to suffer. We know so little. When we do anything, no matter how high the motive, we can look into it and see evil there. God knows our poor hearts. We may feel bitterly some imperfection that is not sinful in the eyes of God, but rather a burden we must bear. Again, we may do evil, fully believing we are doing God service. But let no child of God wilfully do wrong that good may come of it. That form of "predestination" is of the devil. I would be glad to be able to speak with that heavenly unction which would find an answer in your heart, but I fear to look for anything so high and holy. I am just a common, sinful man, and I love to hear another who has found this state a burden speak of those hopes and fears which are our common heritage. What is faith? Is it confidence in the flesh? No, that cannot be. It must apply to God. Have we confidence in God? Do we believe he is merciful and gracious? Are we sure of his power and righteousness? I think you can answer, Yes.

That is true faith. Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief. It is not something to be performed of our own volition, we must experience it for ourselves. It is only what we have seen and handled that we can bear testimony to. I can remember those days of darkness, and the bright release through an overwhelming sense of God's love and forgiveness. I can look back to many answers to prayer, many times when the name of the Lord was precious in my heart. I feel just as sinful as ever, but I know I do not have to attain to the favor of God through my works. O what a relief it was to feel the power of God. He can not only order my actions, but my very inmost thoughts. Job expresses this very clearly. (Job ix.) Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. Does that reach us? I hope we can truly say it does. I feel anxious that these truths may come sweetly home to you, not as words from me, but with the power of the Spirit, the Comforter of God's children. May he abide with you.

Forgive any wrong in what I have written. Truly I do not desire any glory. I can only boast in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that only at such times as I feel the power of his presence.

With christian love, I am, I hope, your brother,

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

XENIA, Ohio, Aug. 2, 1914.

ELDER H. C. KER:—Having been given several copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES some weeks ago, I have been much impressed to write you, if God wills, some of the things I firmly believe the Scriptures set forth, and should you see fit to publish, do so, with the understanding that the writer is willing that all the responsibility rest upon himself. First, I am a firm believer in all the doctrinal points set forth in the SIGNS by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and so ably contended for by such brethren as Elders J. F. Johnson, Samuel Trott, Leachman, Wilson Thompson and John Biggs, men who never knew or heard of compromising truth with error. I now desire to set forth, not what men say they do or do not make a test in fellowship, but what God Almighty has decreed shall ever be a test in fellowship, whenever and wherever set forth in the wisdom and power of God. First, that our Lord Jesus Christ existed in his mediatorial person as the head and life of his church from the ancients of eternity, and that he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. Second, in the scriptural doctrine of eternal and personal election, that there is an eternal, vital and indissoluble union between Christ and the church, that the church is his body, his flesh and his bones, that all their spiritual life is hid with Christ in God. Third, the total depravity of human nature, the recovery entirely of the sovereign, free and unmerited grace of God in Christ Jesus our Lord; the atonement made alone by our Lord Jesus Christ was full and complete, exclusive for the heirs of promise, that the Scriptures do show forth the predestinating power of God (absolute) in every sense of the word. This, together with one more vital point of doctrine, the new birth, showing forth that the poor, tried, afflicted child of God, born of the Spirit, must carry with it while sojourning here in its earthly house a body of sin and death. Flesh is born of the flesh, and is flesh; the one the new man created in righteousness and true holiness, the other the old man, the field which the Lord purchased with his own blood, and is the man corrupt in all of his deeds, which

seed in every particular will remain corrupt until the last vessel of mercy has finished its mortal pilgrimage here, then time will be no more; and so every vessel of mercy that ever has been, is now, or ever will be, is sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which seal all the powers of earth and hell can never break, but he will triumphantly bring them forth unto the day of adoption, which is the morning of the resurrection; for says Paul, For our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall (not has) change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. These things, as well as others which I desire to mention, I pray God, if his will, to ever deliver me from trying to trim or strangle in order to seek love. First, that the Lord fulfilled natural feet washing, and is now spiritual. Second, that the hymning of tunes come directly from the body of Christ, from the heart and in understanding and not from a select few called a choir, who of some themselves, for fear they will cripple a note, are absent from the mind of Christ. Third, that the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ is forbidden in any way, I care not how, to before arrange any stipulated sum for the services rendered his brethren in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, the pillar and ground of truth. I believe God predetermined in the ancients of eternity every penny that I ever shall receive.

I feel to refrain from writing more now. I know God has firmly decreed whether you shall or shall not publish this, and I desire to pray that not my will, but his will, be done. I have often wondered if brethren have ever thought much upon the grave responsibility resting upon an editor who desires to walk in the fear and admonition of the Lord, for with so much coming before him, surely he gets in doubt what to do and not to do, and no doubt at times all is darkness before him.

Yours in hope of a blessed immortality beyond this world of sin and strife,

W. A. FERGUSON.

PLAINFIELD, N. J.

DEAR EDITORS:—While renewing my subscription I thought I would tell you some of the Lord's dealings with me. I thought I was quite a good girl; I remembered the sabbath day, to keep it holy, and was morally good, but in later years I was convinced there was very little good in me. As years rolled along, while lying on a sick bed these words came with force to my mind: The confines of hell. I thought nothing of it, and it soon went out of my mind, only to return again, with no more thought than before, until it was repeated several times. Then I began to think that if I should die that would be my portion—the confines of hell. Then I began to make promises to the Lord that if he would restore me to health I would sin no more. My health was partially restored, but I was weak and ailing. Then it occurred to me I was going to die; that thought followed me, and I thought I had not long to live, I must soon go; but where would I go? These distressing words followed me, so I concluded to visit my home and talk with father and mother, and perhaps the thought would leave me. I learned later that my mother told other members of the family not to tell me how badly I looked, as I was worried about myself. I might have been very happy there, but the thought of dying clung to me, and I came home with the same heavy heart. Some time after

that there was an entertainment which I attended. They threw on the canvas Christ in the garden. O how that struck my heart, to see his agony, all for sinners, and I was one of them. Then I remembered how my dear father and mother used to sing so sweetly the verses composed on "Christ in the garden." I then asked father to copy them for me, which he did when in his seventy-fifth year. I have shed many tears over them. In a short time a series of meetings were started near me, which I attended, as I felt so sad at heart I thought I might find some comfort there; but however soft my heart was, it would harden in the meetings, as I did not believe in their method, but at home my heart would melt and the tears would flow. In the morning I would find my pillow wet. I told no one of my feelings, but imagined my friends shunned me, knowing how sinful I was. One night my husband asked me what my prospects would be if I should die. I told him I would go to a just God, and he would do what was right with me. One night I dreamed I was in a field, with grain high above my head. I thought I would go a distance from the fence, where no one would see me, and pray. As I knelt all I could say was, God, have mercy on me, a sinner. The thought I was going to die never left me. I had several dreams; one was that I was dead, and friends were standing around, and another that I had not long to live. All added to my misery. I could not eat or sleep, and would leave my work and read the Bible to find comfort, but I could find nothing but condemnation. One evening my burden was so great I thought I must die, when all at once it left me. What a great relief! I was so happy I thought I never would worry or have any more trouble. In the morning as I looked out of my window all was bright, everything seemed to be praising God. I wondered what I had been doing all my life that I had not realized the goodness of God, and my past life seemed a blank. I had been blind, my eyes had been opened, and I could see the light of the world is Jesus. I was repeating hymns and singing; I could say with the poet, "Jesus all the day long was my joy and my song." Wherever I could find the name of Jesus I would take the time to read it. I came across an old SIGNS, and how eagerly it was perused. The writers told my feelings better than I could myself. My mother used to say, "I will put this package in a SIGNS, maybe some day you will read it." That some day had come, and at the first opportunity I subscribed for it, and have had it in my home forty years. I want to keep it as long as I live. I have a kind feeling for the editors and writers, although strangers. Write on, and when in prayer remember a sinner saved by grace.

(MRS.) SARAH A. CASE.

SAN MARCOS, Texas, Dec. 12, 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN:—How sweet it is to meet with the children of God! I have often thought they had a peculiar look, but they look good. We do not have regular meeting here, and O how lonely it is sometimes. We had one preacher who lived in Falls City, but I think he is gone now. I hope the good Lord will send us one once in a while at least. They have preaching here in town (San Marcos), but it is no pleasure to go and hear something that you do not believe.

If you will have patience with me I will try to tell you some of the troubles I had. When about twenty years of age I became much troubled, and did not know what was the matter. I was restless, and

many times I left the house and went to the field where my father and brother were, and sometimes I would think I was going to die. I went on in this condition for several years, and in 1901 I think I saw what a sinner I was, and so one night after I went to bed a great change came. I fell asleep and awoke, and it seemed that I was in paradise. I was awake, but still I knew nothing, but I was happy, and all at once I said, This is the same old body, but when I arose next morning everything seemed to be bright and happy. I wanted to tell my husband, but would think, O it is nothing; but it never entirely left me. I would get the SIGNS and read the experiences, and try to find one to fit my case, and would find some that were so good that I would think mine was all false. I went on for several days after the Lord appeared to me, I hope, and got way down in the valley, where all was dark and gloomy for several days, when one morning it got so dark I felt I would die, and I fell down and tried to pray. I do not know what I said, only I begged the Lord to help me, and I began to want to unite with the Old School Baptist Church. We then lived in Lockhart, Caldwell County, and had preaching at Martindale. I went on for two or three years, when we moved to Wilson County and lived there awhile. My husband and I and brother Bowden and some others came to Martindale in 1911, I believe, and on Saturday I offered myself to the church and was received. It was a wonderful thing to think of, that God would pick up such an unworthy sinner as I was, but I loved the people and wanted to live with them. I could not talk, and could not tell what little I did know. On Sunday following I was baptized by brother Bowden, and was very happy; I felt I had done my duty. Something like two years before this I took my clothes and went with the intention of being baptized, but one of my sisters went forward and was received, and I thought she was so much better than I was that I did not go; but the right time had not come, I thought I was ready, but God was not. Many times I awoke in the night and wrote my experience; not that I had anything much to tell like some I read after, but it was that I thought perhaps some of the brethren or sisters were not satisfied, and I would write and tell what little I knew. My prayer is that all the brethren and sisters everywhere love and comfort each other and have meeting when it is possible, and not go off after the world, for it is sad to see any of the dear saints go off after worldly things.

I feel I could write much more, but will close by wishing you all a happy new year.

As ever, your sister, I hope, saved by grace if saved at all,

(MRS.) NANNIE CULPEPPER.

LONDON, Ont., Dec. 11, 1910.

MR. AND MRS. A. J. BLACK—DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER:—I write to you to tell you that although we have neither written nor gone to see you in your long sickness, suffering and pain, yet we have not forgotten you, and if we could be of any use to you we would visit you. We have very often made inquiries of many brethren, and have been informed of your state and condition, and have been made glad to learn that you are very composed and reconciled in your mind, and what a mercy it is to feel in our souls by the power of God that he doeth all things well, that he is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. When we look about us

and see and hear of the hundreds and thousands who suffer and are afflicted for years, and who, as far as we can see, are without God and without hope in the world, we feel to say in our inmost souls, Why is it thus with me? Why has He manifested his lifegiving power in me, the chief of sinners, giving me to taste, yea, drink, of that ocean of love that is in Jesus, to rejoice in his everlasting salvation, and put my trust in him for time and eternity? Have you not often felt to say with beloved Peter, To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life? What an exalted knowledge had Peter of that one whose name is Jesus, that he is the Son of the living God, that he had the words of eternal life; and such knowledge was wonderful to David and many other men of that day, and in these last days hath he spoken unto us by his Son; yes, to just such poor sinners as you and I are, giving us to know that he (God) hath appointed him (Jesus) to be heir of all things, that by him and for him he made the world, that his name is the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

Lest my letter should weary you, I will just ask you to look back along the way that Jesus has led you and ask yourself, Has the dear Lord not been good to me? I feel that your answer will be, Yes, he has been unspeakably good to me above all my fears, and he has proven to me time and again that he is not only able to save, but that he does save and deliver and keep me every day and hour of my life. If it be his holy will, may he spare you long to your dear wife, family and brethren, but if it is God's will to take you to himself, may he (as I believe he will) give you dying grace, that you may feel that his everlasting arms are under and about you, and that your experience will be that death, which puts an end to life, shall put an end to sin, and O what a mercy that will be, to be rid of sin. Then shall you see and hear and know all that you desired to here below, and every power find sweet employ in that eternal world of joy. This is our prayer for you, dear brother and sister Black. Give our united love to sister Campbell and all inquiring friends, and if you, dear brother or sister, receive any comfort or help from this poor letter, to God alone be the praise.

My wife joins me in love to you both.

Your brother in hope,

R. CASE.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan. 15, 1915.

DEAR ELDER KER:—Kindly publish the inclosed letter, as sister Durand was a precious gift to the church, and is greatly missed by me.

J. M. FENTON.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 3, 1912.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—You were more kind and thoughtful of me than I of you, so far as actions are an indication. Perhaps being sick so long has made me slothful. I am sure I appreciated your good letter for itself, and also because it was to me. I have been very far removed from comfort during a great part of my illness, but I am glad to say I do not feel such deep distress at this time. I thought I knew that I was utterly weak and helpless, but such weakness I had never experienced before. I knew then, as perhaps I never quite realized before, that only a Savior who had all power could ever help in a case like mine. I was reading Isaiah where the Lord promises to take out of the hand of his people "the cup of trembling," and it seemed good to me. I do not think I ever really knew what fear is until this late experi-

ence. I believe the Lord will fulfill all his promises concerning his people, and at times this is altogether satisfying. But my faith is too weak to fully appropriate the preciousness of this truth and enjoy it at this time as I have in the past.

It was a great pleasure and comfort when Elder Vail told of his deliverance from his terrible trials. I am sure he is equipped now as he never has been before to speak comfortably to Jerusalem. I surely never heard him before as he preached here that night, although I have always liked him very much indeed, and esteemed him highly for his work's sake. I often find it in my heart to desire of the Lord that he may guide and direct you in your going out and coming in. You say, "Who is sufficient for these things?" and I answer, No one in all the world. The sufficiency is all of God, and the more the earthen vessel realizes this the emptier of self it is, the more it will be filled with "treasure;" and when I pray that you may realize this more and more every day, I am not asking for you ease and comfort I know. Ease and comfort are what our souls desire for self and loved ones, but faith at times enables us to ask for whatever the Lord in mercy sees best to give. This is the prayer I desire to make for myself without fear, but I falter at times, remembering the wormwood and the gall, and dreading to taste them again. My faith seems very small. I so need its increase.

I thank you for your birthday wishes, and mine to you are fully as strong and hearty. You have twenty years to walk before you are as old as I am, and every day of it if you live you will have to acknowledge the Lord's mercy. May he indeed be very near you to keep you from falling, is my prayer.

Affectionately your sister,

CLARICE E. DURAND.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Dec. 15, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—While feeling a deep sense of unworthiness and unfitness for the task, yet I feel a desire to write some of my thoughts for our paper, the SIGNS. While I have many things to be thankful for, yet I sometimes get so low down, spiritually, that I am made to doubt whether or not the Lord has blessed me with a hope, yet I know that things are not with me like they once were, for the perishable things of this world become more abominable to me every day of my life, and I can see nothing but sin and imperfection in me, and if indeed I am numbered with God's little humble poor here on earth it is purely an act of mercy, and not for any good thing that I have done. I know that I do enjoy meeting with my brethren, and I do get so filled with spiritual food sometimes that I can hardly keep from speaking out and praising His holy name, and tears of joy will flow from my eyes, and even then I am made to doubt. My membership is with University Street Church, this place. I, together with my wife, joined here by letter, having been members of Bethlehem Church, Bedford Co., this State, and these brethren are good, sound Baptists, strong in the faith once delivered unto the saints, and the grand doctrine of God's eternal purpose and decrees, ascribing all praise and honor to his holy name for the salvation of his people. Two of our oldest members have passed on recently: sister Garritson, a strong sister in the faith, and brother O. B. Hickerson, who fed us with his good letters in the SIGNS, as well as always filling his place in the church. We will miss him much. We depended on him to start our songs, for he was a good singer and loved the old songs of Zion. He leaves his devoted wife alone, and yet she is not alone, for the Lord is

a Father to the widow. She is a devoted member of our church, and a lover of God's eternal truth. She will feel lonely without him, yet she can look forward to the time when there will be no separation, and no more tears to shed, for our Lord has done all these things for his people: shed his own precious blood, and took on himself our sins and bore them for us, and put them away, satisfying divine justice for us with his own precious life. Yes, it is through what Jesus did for us that we can hope for that inheritance in that heavenly home.

Now, brethren, what I have written is, I trust, in the spirit of humility, and while I realize the fact that there is nothing good in this flesh, the Lord can direct our thoughts above the perishable things of this vain world, and unless directed by that Spirit, what we have to say will not be of comfort to any one; so act in this matter as you feel directed, and if this is never published you will never hear a murmur from me. Farewell.

A sinner saved by grace, if at all,

W. B. CHILTON.

AVONDALE, Ala., Jan. 19, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have just finished reading the SIGNS for Jan. 15th, which was unusually interesting to me, and notwithstanding my sore and continued afflictions I feel that I must say a few words, if possible. I have now been confined to my room five months, from what doctors call "hardening of the arteries," and stomach and kidney troubles. I have to do my sleeping in a chair, as I cannot lie in bed, and am barely able to walk around the room a little with the aid of a stick, and what I have and am suffering is indescribable, and sometimes it seems more than I can possibly bear, but I am trying to still trust in the Lord for life and salvation. I have but little use of any part of my left side. I want to say that my neighbors have been good to me, and several brethren and sisters have visited me, and have helped me to some extent, in a financial way, which I feel to hope I have appreciated. There are only three of us in the family now: my wife, baby girl and myself. My wife is almost broken down, having so much to do. There is much suffering and destitution in this part of the country.

I want to say that I still believe in the principles as advocated in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if I know what I believe; those principles are the only ones that are worth anything to me in my afflictions, doubts and fears. Elder W. J. May expressed my feelings exactly in one of his letters to Elder Durand. I feel that my whole life has been a total failure; I fear that I have been deceived in it all. I can only hope that my sins have all been washed away by the blood of Jesus, and that the grace of God has saved me.

I would be glad to have letters from any who feel like writing to me, but cannot promise to answer them. Several years ago I received letters from brethren B. F. Coulter, S. H. Durand and many others. They may have forgotten me, but I have not forgotten them. It is a comfort to me to receive letters of love and sympathy from those I love in the truth. Dear brethren, one and all, remember me in your petitions, and write me if you feel like it.

I must now close, as I am already wearied.

As ever, your brother, I hope, in Christ,

H. J. REDD.

[WE are glad to hear again from our dear brother Redd, but sorry for his affliction, and hope the brethren will write him and comfort him in his sore trials. Being members one of another, we should bear each other's burdens.—K.]

GALION, Ohio, Jan. 15, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I will try and write you a few lines to let you know how we are all getting along. We took my wife to the hospital one week ago today, and they operated on her for gallstones and an abscess, and she is doing well, and we have hope she will be well again. We know that it all rests with the Lord. O if I could be thankful to him for all his benefits, for he surely has been merciful to this poor sinner. I have felt some of what Job did, in the past two or three weeks, when he said, The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord; but the trouble with me is I cannot tell whether it is of the Spirit or on account of the hardness of my heart I feel that way. I know I cannot feel as I would, neither do I the things I would, and it gives me some consolation to know that the apostle Paul felt that way sometimes, for he said, I see a law that when I would do good, evil is present with me. He had a law in his members that was continually warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin in his members. How often it seems I am brought into captivity to this law and can see no evidence of the other law in me; all seems vain and wild, but the apostle was so burdened on account of this law of sin that he was made to cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" We are glad that Paul did not leave it here, but in the ninth verse he goes on: "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself [this same Paul] serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." So here we see the two natures in the one man, so that we cannot do the things that we would.

Well, dear brother, I did not expect to write, only to let you know how my wife is, so will stop. If you think this fit for a place in our family paper, you may publish it, but if not, consign it to the wastebasket, and it will be all satisfactory to me.

Your unworthy brother in tribulation,

C. E. JACKSON.

BERWICK, Mo., Feb. 1, 1915.

BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I do feel to be little, very little in Christ, and I feel my utter unworthiness to any benefit in his mercy. I never see any littleness in Christ, but always in myself: "poverty and leanness blast the whole of my desert flesh," emptiness and vanity in myself. If I could see you face to face I could perhaps tell you how low I feel. It is true that I, in myself, know very little. I hope I am humble. If it is not asking too much, will you explain to the readers of the SIGNS what I mean?

Yours truly,

IVORY H. FORD.

[THE above letter to me was called forth by my editorial in the SIGNS of February 1st, on "Littleness in Christ," written by me at brother Ford's request. The brother fears his request has been misunderstood, and wishes the readers of the SIGNS to know that he did not for one moment believe that there is any littleness in Christ, so to speak, but that the littleness is the experience in themselves of those who are in Christ. This is what I thought our brother meant when I answered his request. I am sure that all our readers taught by the Spirit of the Lord, and who have the operation of that Spirit in themselves, can very well understand what brother Ford means, and have sweet fellowship for him, and all others who realize keenly their utter unworthiness to even a little of the vast infinitude in Christ Jesus.—L.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1915.

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EDITORS:
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REVELATION XXII. 17.

"AND the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst, come: and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely."

We have heard it said by Arminians that the above is one text which Old Baptists cannot use, that it clashes with the doctrine of salvation as we see it, inasmuch as we believe salvation to be a work which God himself plans and carries on to execution and fulfillment. The Arminians teach that the sinner must himself make the first move, take the first step, if he wishes to be saved; that the Lord invites man to come to him, but it is man's own work to do the coming; that the Lord calls, but his call need not be heeded except the sinner chooses to heed it. The text quoted above from Revelation is called by the nominally religous an invitation, a gospel invitation, but Paul says the gospel is the power of God unto the believer's salvation; how then can there be invitations in the gospel? The power of God does not invite, it commands. It does not degrade itself to beg and beseech at the court of man's free-will; it speaks the instant doing and commands immediate establishment of all it purposes to do or wishes done. There is no text in all the Bible that more firmly settles Old Baptist experience and doctrine than this in Revelation xxii. 17. If there is in all the Bible a single Scripture of which we, as a people, fear the interpretation lest it unseat our faith, then we had better give over hoping we are the church of God on earth. If we are of those who wrest the Scriptures to suit selfish ends, and to further personal advantage, we stamp ourselves as hypocrites grossly deluded. There are religious denominations who accept certain portions of the Bible and reject others: a preacher recently advised his hearers not to read Paul, as it would confuse them if they did. If the Old Baptists are compelled to exercise a censorship of the Scriptures, to prune, garble, amend and destroy them in order to secure their continuance as a religious body among men, the sooner we cease to be, the better. The entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation is one united, harmonious and consistent body of truth, with no contradiction or confusion existing between any of its parts; and, so far as we know, the Old School Baptists are the only people on earth who hold fast the Scriptures in their entirety, resting them with the Holy Ghost to interpret when and where and how he pleases.

"The Spirit and the bride say, Come." It is usually supposed that this "Come" is addressed by the Spirit and the bride to the world, inviting sinners everywhere to come to Christ. Arminians delight in picturing the church as a woman with arms outstretched welcoming the whole world to her embraces. This seems to us to present the church as a lewd woman willing, for a price, to let anybody love her. It is not presenting the church as the chaste virgin of Christ, separate from the world, a holy vessel sanctified to the use of her adored Lord and heavenly

Husband. A virtuous woman loyal to her husband is not seen making overtures to other men; the church of Jesus, secure in his love, is not seeking the embrace of the world, but the church of antichrist lures its mongrel thousands into her incestuous lap by means of social clubs, penny lunches, gymnasium classes, men's clubs, kindergartens, penny savings banks, children's story hours, sewing schools, manual training classes, &c., housed under her roof, managed by her "clergy" and laity, and financed by her people. The "come" of the Spirit and the bride, however, is not addressed to the unregenerate world, as will be evident from a reading of the context. "Behold, I come quickly," says Jesus, who sends his angel to his church to bear testimony of his appearing. The response of her heart to him is: "Come." Suppose a husband should be a long time absent from his loving and faithful wife, and suppose he should by his messenger send her word of his imminent coming, what would be her reply to him? Would it not be, "Come?" Would not every fibre of her being pulsate with joy at the announced coming of her absent lord? Thus, it is in the expression: "The Spirit and the bride say, Come;" it is not to the world she says "come," but the Spirit and the bride say, "Come" to him for whose coming she longs and hungrily waits, and who has just announced by his messenger that he is coming, and that quickly. All through the law and prophecies the Spirit said, "Come." It did not tell the world to come, but cried to heaven, "Lord Jesus, come quickly." Every commandment and every sacrifice of the law, every utterance of prophecy, and every type and figure of the old covenant, said, "Come." They all testified by and through the Spirit of his coming—the coming of Jesus. But we need not go so far back to find this Spirit that says to Jesus, "Come," for the doctrine of the gospel church of this dispensation, every principle of it, says, "Come," all looks unto his coming "without sin, unto salvation." The ordinances, as well as the doctrine of the church say, "Come." Baptism, the Lord's supper, the laying on of hands, all look to and receive their meaning from the coming of Jesus. There could be no substance in any of these things without the appearing of Jesus; all by and through the Spirit, say, "Come." Not only the Spirit, but the bride, which is the church, says, "Come." The prayer and desire of every member of the church, of every one of the redeemed, is for Jesus to come to, and in them, for, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." The church is not interested in seeing the world flock to her, but is vitally concerned in having Jesus come and take up his abode in her. This is her earnest prayer.

"Let him that heareth say, Come." None hear the glad tidings of Jesus' sent angel but the spiritually alive: those who have been quickened of the Holy Spirit and made alive unto God. These have the ears of the new man and hear the glad word that Jesus is coming: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." Every one that so hears this news from a far country with his spiritual ears, cannot help but respond, Lord Jesus, come and make me to appear as them that love thee, and whom thou lovest with an everlasting love.

"Let him that is athirst, come." It is not to be overlooked that this little word, "let" is conspicuous in the first of Genesis and the last of Revelation. It is not an inviting word, but a word of com-

mand from the King of all kings and the Lord of all lords. When God said, "Let there be light," it was not an invitation to light to make itself manifest, but it was the command of omnipotence, and "there was light," without any question about it. All the power of God is housed up in that word "let," and light had to be. It could not be otherwise. God is not grown any weaker in the last of Revelation than he was in the first of Genesis, and the word "let" is as much fraught with omnipotence when he says, "Let him that is athirst, come," as when he said, "Let there be light," and the thirsty sinner has no more to do with the coming than had light to do with bringing itself into manifestation. The command is accompanied with ability to obey. The word of God is not a matter of printers' ink committed to paper, but is spirit and life, is quick (living) and powerful (full of power). Thus, when the Word is made flesh, and is addressed to the soul thirsting for righteousness, saying, Let him come, the soul can no more resist that coming than it could withstand the power of God in creation. When God says, "let," every opposition, every stumbling-block, every excuse, is taken out of the path of the thirsty, and they throng forward to the Fountain of life.

"Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." We have heard it said that the Bible says that whosoever will, may come. This is not so. No such language is in the Bible that we have ever been able to find. "Whosoever will." It is not every one that has this "will" to take of the water of life. The natural man, or he that is in a state of nature, dead in sin, has not this will, no appetite for God's free gift. These things of God are foolishness to the natural man, beyond his discernment. How, then, can he have a will to possess them? The will to partake of the water of life belongs only to him that is athirst for it; and only he is thirsty who is quickened by the Spirit, thus a partaker of divine life. Natural life desires natural things to satisfy its longing, spiritual life craves eternal life to quench its thirst. Natural life and the carnal will do not, cannot, reach out for spiritual things; neither do spiritual life and the divine will reach down for carnal things. It is plain that in order to have this will to drink of the water of life, one must be born from above, of an incorruptible seed, by the Word of God. Being so born, one finds this new life accompanied with a strong will to drink of the water of life. Having such a will, there is no reason why such an one should not eat of living bread and drink of living water. God's "let" takes every obstacle to the water of life out of the path of him in whom God has wrought that will to do of his own good pleasure. As the magnet draws unto itself the steel, so the living water powerfully attracts the heaven-born will of the quickened sinner to partake of it, free by the blood of Jesus to all his people, not at all conditioned on their works, fitness or obedience.

Written at the request of our inquiring friend, Mr. Horace F. Kelly, of Hampstead, Md. L.

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EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

JOHN XV. 6.

"If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

(Continued from page 59.)

The very same acts performed by any others than the children of God would neither develop fruits of the true Vine nor could they glorify God. Who hath required these things at the hands of those who are not branches of the true Vine? It is not keeping the commandments of Christ for unbelievers to be baptized; for those who know not God to profess religion; for those whom he has not authorized to preach, even if they should preach the truth, nor are any of the laws of the kingdom of Christ enjoined on the ungodly. The obedience of the saints is the obedience of faith, and without faith it is impossible to please God, and all men have not faith. The son of the bondwoman was but a slave, although begotten by Abraham, nor could he ever be an heir with the son of the freewoman. Fruits produced by christians are not fruits of the Spirit, unless they are fruits of vital union with the living Vine. They are but the fruits of the flesh, if produced independently of the true Vine, and against all the fruits of the flesh there is law. The law is as weak through the flesh to produce fruits unto God as Abraham was weak through Hagar to fulfill the promise of God that Sarah should have a son. Christians sometimes make powerful efforts to do something for the Lord, but if they do what he has not commanded, their doings cannot be accepted of God, or if they do even what he has commanded, and do it from any other spirit or influence than that which comes to them through the Vine, it is unavailing. For instance, Christ has commanded his children to pray, but how often do they ask and receive not, because they ask amiss? This they are sure to do if they breathe forth any other than the aspirations of the Spirit in their prayer; they ask only for things that they may consume them on their carnal lusts, and God, in great mercy to them, refuses to grant them their desires. But when the healing virtue of the Vine inspires them, they ask only for such things as God has in store for them. The Spirit, through the Vine, maketh intercession for them according to the will of God, and then their prayers ascend like holy incense before the Lord. To abide in Christ, the true Vine, is, then, first, to abide in his Spirit; and this requires that they be born of the Spirit, because "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The saints in abiding in that Spirit must crucify the old man with his deeds, and be governed by, and walk in the Spirit, and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. Second, they must abide in his love, for no other than that love which God has shed abroad in them will do. To abide in his love requires that they shall put from them the affections as well as the lusts of the flesh, and if they walk in the love of God they will love God supremely, and his people, his word, his service and all that is approved of God himself and lovely in his estimation. Third, to abide in Christ as the true Vine is to abide in his word. He said, when lifting up his eyes to heaven, and addressing the Father, I have given them thy word, and they have received it, and the world has hated them, &c. "Sanctify them through thy

truth: thy word is truth." Fourth, they in abiding in his word abide in his truth, because the word is truth. All who depart from his word depart also from the truth, and abide not in the Vine. Fifth, they must abide in his law, that law which he hath written in their hearts, cheerfully obeying his precepts, and submitting to its authority in all things. Sixth, they must abide in his doctrine, as stated and expounded by the holy apostles, for the primitive disciples continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer. They must abide in fellowship with the Vine, strictly conforming to the rule which he has given for their doctrine and practice in all things.

Now, "If any man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch." A nominal membership, or connection with the Vine, is not sufficient to secure a permanent abode in the church of Christ, the true Vine. In that typical vine which the Lord brought out of Egypt, and planted, and made a hedge around it, and built a wine-press for it, &c., a fleshly qualification conforming to the law of a carnal commandment, and a strict performance of the ordinances in a worldly sanctuary would secure an abode, but in the true vine the order and discipline which Christ has established will detect, not only those who are only foxes who seek to spoil the vine, but it will also exclude from fellowship and membership all such as depart from the laws and institutions of Christ, and abide not in him. Those foxes are cast forth, or "taken" as foxes that spoil the vine, but those who are cast forth as branches must mean those who have stood identified with the vine itself; and is not this clearly the case, that these branches, or churches, or members, who have had the confidence and fellowship of the saints, when they depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils, who refuse to be governed by the laws of the kingdom, or oppose the doctrine of Christ, or walk after the flesh, and not after the Spirit, abiding not in the vine, but going astray from the footsteps of Christ's flock, are in the due order of the house of God cast forth as branches? And do they not wither? That verdure and beauty which they once exhibited consumes away like a moth, and all that seemed lovely in them fades out, and they, being no more in harmony and fellowship with the people of God, are expelled from communion and fellowship, and from membership in the organized church.

"And men gather them," &c. As men gather and burn the withered offcasts of a vine, so there are those in the world who watch for the halting of the professed followers of Christ, that they may gather them to feed the flame of their carnal passions, and, if possible, to use them as fuel to increase the fire of persecution against the church of God. The dry and withered trimmings of a vine will make a sudden blaze, a glaring light, and produce a momentary heat, but all soon dies out, leaving the withered, charred branches, blacker and more unlike the verdant parent vine than ever. So we have often seen the backsliding members of the church, when lured from the pathway of holiness, departing from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, when by the faithful application of the discipline of the church excluded from the fellowship of orderly christians and separated from the vine, cast forth and withered, and men do gather them, for they look for the sympathy of the world, and there are those who will join them in their bitterness

against the church of God, and for a time the lurid flame burns fiercely against the church and people of God, and like the crackling noise of burning thorns utter their malicious but incoherent maledictions against the faithful defenders of the truth of God. Those who have been cut off from the fellowship of the saints for their transgressions of the laws of Christ, have frequently, for a season, manifested more bitterness against the vine from which they have been cut off, than those have been wont to show into whose hands they have fallen, and by the accession which they make to the ever-burning fire of persecution, the furnace is, for a moment, made perhaps one seven times hotter than it is wont to be heated.

But there is another sense in which those who abide not in Christ, in the sense explained in this figure, who by departing from his instructions, his laws, institutions, doctrine, examples, and from the communion and fellowship of his saints, are gathered and cast into the fire. God's children are not allowed to go into transgression unrebuked. When cast forth and withered, as excluded branches from the parent vine, they suffer the burning fire of divine disapprobation. They are cast into a place of discomfort and unrest, where the worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched, in which their beauty is consumed as a moth, and their comeliness becomes as ashes to them. How indescribably distressing must be the condition of a branch of the true vine, a child of God who has tasted of the heavenly gift, and of the joys of the world to come, who has enjoyed the companionship of dear loving brethren and sisters, who has shared with them all the privileges of the house of God, to be cut off from the vine, cast forth from fellowship, gathered up like a withered branch, joined to a citizen of a foreign country, far from his father's house, in wretchedness and famine of soul, reduced to such extreme want that he fain would fill himself with that which only the swine can eat. Practical illustrations of this part of our Lord's parable are not unfrequent, when those who have enjoyed the privileges of the church of God have become disaffected, have grown cold in their appreciation of the society of the saints, cease to prefer Jerusalem above their chief joy, and allured by some sensual bait from the doctrine, practice or order of the house of God, become indifferent to the confidence and fellowship of their brethren, reject their counsel, spurn their admonitions and shun their company. In their wanderings from the footsteps of the flock they become charmed with some gilded illusion which seems to promise them present gratification, they are taken in the fowler's snare, and soon become wedded to some idol. They follow the leadings of their carnal mind, until alienated in their feelings and affections from their fellow-branches of the vine, bid defiance to the authority of Christ in his church and madly throw off all restraint, assume to be independent of the church, or vine, in which they had once seemed verdant and fruitful. The commands of Christ are disobeyed, and his authority disregarded, until the discipline of the church demands their expulsion from the vine, or church. Now withered, barren of those fruits of the Spirit in which they once seemed to abound, they are like the salt which has lost its savory qualities, becoming filthy, thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast forth, and trodden under foot of men. In this condition men gather them. Men of the world of antichrist, who feel malicious towards the

vine, hail with fiendish gusto their apostacy from the faith and order of the gospel, and give them a warm reception. The powers of darkness exult in the momentary seeming triumph. But how soon the stolen waters grow bitter, the allurement fades, the promised gratification is not realized. The truant child begins to be in trouble, the easy down-hill road from Jerusalem to Jericho is infested with thieves, and cruel, merciless robbers are on the alert; the way of the transgressor is hard, the robbers strip him and wound him, and leave him half dead. The cup of promised pleasure is dashed. A famine has overtaken him, a storm has arisen, and his soul now vainly yearns within him for the tender sympathy of loving brethren, and, like Esau, he seeks repentance, and a restoration of birthright blessings before despised and unappreciated.

> "I die with hunger here, he cries,
> I starve in foreign lands."

The society, and the element into which the prodigal has fallen is a burning furnace, and a devouring flame to every true branch of the vine when separated from the fellowship and communion of the saints of God.

We know that the heirs of immortality cannot be so separated from Christ, or from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, as to cease to be children of God and joint-heirs with Christ; all that being secured in Christ, independently of their good or bad works. Our abiding in Christ as our Savior, our Surety, our Everlasting Father, and as our Advocate with the Father, is secured beyond the possibility of a failure. But to abide in him as the "True Vine," of which his Father is the husbandman, is to abide in him as the embodiment of the true gospel church, in his laws, ordinances, order and communion. "He that keepeth his commandments, dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given."—1 John iii. 24. "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love."—John xv. 10. "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." For the child of God to abide in the flesh, is to abide in death; for "the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., April, 1866.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Joshua T. Rowe, at his residence, Nov. 26th, 1914, Watson G. Nash and Miss Laura Eugenia Ensor, both of Baltimore Co., Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

John McLean, of Brooke, died at his home July 23rd, 1914, after a long and painful illness. He was born in Appin, Ontario, July 14th, 1857, his parents being Hector McLean and Flora McNeill. He was one of a family of ten children. His parents moved to Brooke township, Ontario, when Mr. McLean was a boy. His father died when he was only five years of age, leaving his mother with a large family to provide for. The dear Lord, who promised to be the widow's God, watched over Mrs. McLean and her family, and she was spared to see them grow up to manhood and womanhood, although the angel of death has removed from the shores of time all but one son, Alex. D., who now resides on the old homestead. In the year 1893 Mr. McLean was married to Sarah A. Black, of Rodney, Ontario. Mr. and Mrs. McLean started on life's journey full of vigor and strength on the farm on which Mr. McLean died. As they journeyed through life hand in hand the blessings of the Lord shone upon them in prospering them in temporal things, and also revealing unto them his most precious truth. Mr. McLean was a firm believer and a close adherent to the Old School Baptist Church of Canada, never attending any other meetings, as he would often say that there was no food for his soul except where Jesus was preached as the Savior of sinners. Some two years ago, on his way home from the Ekfrid meeting, he visited the cemetery where his father, mother and other of his near relatives were buried, and he was heard to say as he

stood by the graves of those he loved, "Better, far better;" and when asked if he were not happy he replied, "Yes, but they are happier than I." It was my sweet privilege to visit Mr. McLean at his bedside, and my heart was overwhelmed with joy to hear him speak of the goodness and mercy of God to him, a poor sinner. He passed peacefully away July 23rd, in his 58th year, leaving his dear and devoted wife to travel life's journey alone, there having been no children born to them. Mr. McLean leaves, beside his wife, one brother and other relatives to mourn their loss.

His funeral was held from his late residence, conducted by the writer, after which he was laid to rest in the Alvinston Cemetery. May the choicest blessings of kind heaven rest upon his dear sorrowing companion, is my earnest prayer.

ALSO,

Mrs. May Galbraith, wife of Malcolm Galbraith, of Ekfrid, Ontario, passed away at her home in Ekfrid July 13th, 1914, in the 75th year of her age, after a long and severe illness. Mrs. Galbraith was a firm believer in the doctrine of God our Savior, having experienced a hope in her blessed Savior some thirty years ago, at the time of the death of her brother, being reconciled to the ways of the Lord in removing from the family circle her brother, and also feeling the goodness and mercy of God in the forgiveness of her sins. Mrs. Galbraith never united with the church, always feeling her unworthiness, yet her walk through life spoke of the indwelling of that higher and nobler life found only in those taught of God. Her hospitable home was always open to her church friends, whom she delighted to entertain. Her lifelong residence was Ekfrid, being born in the same neighborhood in which she lived and died, and was loved and respected by her many friends.

Her funeral was held from the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Ekfrid, conducted by the writer, and was largely attended by friends and relatives. Interment in the church cemetery. Mrs. Galbraith leaves her dear and aged companion, Malcolm Galbraith, seven sons and one daughter to mourn their loss. May the comfort that the Lord alone can give rest upon all who mourn the loss of so good and noble a woman, is my earnest prayer.

ALSO,

Daniel Duncan McAlpine died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. L. H. Sylvester, in Kalamazoo, Mich., Dec. 26th, 1914. Mr. McAlpine had been in his usual health until a few days before his death. He complained of a soreness in his side for a few days, but thinking that it was nothing serious gave it no special attention, feeling that it would soon pass away. On the night of his death he took supper with the family and retired at an early hour. Before retiring for the night he went into the bathroom to take his usual bath, and his daughter, being anxious about him, called to him, asking if he needed anything, and when she received no response to her call she became alarmed, and fearing that something might have happened to her father, hastened to the bathroom and found him lying on the floor. A physician was hastily summoned, and upon his arrival found that life was extinct. His death was caused by neuralgia of the heart. Brother McAlpine moved to Michigan about thirty years ago, and for a number of years had resided in Kalamazoo. Before moving to Michigan he lived in Lobo, Ontario. He was born in Iona, Ontario, August 23rd, 1838, making his stay on earth 76 years, 4 months and 3 days. His loving companion preceded him about three years. Since the death of his wife he had lived with his daughter, at whose home his death occurred. Brother McAlpine experienced a hope in his blessed Savior nearly forty years ago, but for many years made no profession of religion. Like one of old, he kept and pondered these things in his own heart, feeling too unworthy to ask for a home among the Lord's dear people; but as time rolled on, the impression of following his blessed Lord in sweet obedience to his commandments grew upon him, until by grace he was enabled to come before the church, telling what great things he hoped the Lord had done for his soul. Brother McAlpine united with the Old School Baptist Church of Cement City, Mich., about sixteen years ago, and adorned his life with a well ordered walk and a godly conversation, walking carefully and prayerfully before the Lord and his fellow-men. It was my sweet privilege to meet brother McAlpine last summer during his visit in Canada, and found him to be a very spiritually-minded brother. The things of this world had lost their sweetness to him, and the precious things of the kingdom of our God were uppermost in his mind. During his stay here he was blessed to meet several times with us in our meetings, which he esteemed a blessed privilege. He was a man highly esteemed by all who knew him for his uprightness, integrity and purity of character. He leaves to mourn their loss one daughter, one son, two brothers and two sisters. May God comfort them.

Written by request of the children.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Edward C. Ensor was born July 28th, 1832, was married to Miss Phœbe Dance Dec. 22nd, 1864, and died Feb. 5th, 1915. His widow and five children, three daughters and two sons, survive him, and while they mourn their loss, they have every reason to feel that for him it is far better. Mr. Ensor never united with the church, but was for many years a strong believer in the doctrine of grace, as preached by the Primitive Baptists, and died in the triumph of faith. He was born and raised in Baltimore Co., Md., but several years ago moved with his family to

Frederick Co., Md., where he lived an honored citizen to the day of his death.

His funeral was attended by the writer Feb. 8th, speaking for a short time from John xiv. 1-12. May God comfort the aged widow and children in this, to them, sad providence, as no other can comfort, and may the faith which sustained their loved one be their strength and stay through life and in death. Look forward, dear friends, and trust in the sweet and sure promise of the Father of lights, that the mortal shall put on immortality. May God bless you.

ALSO,

Mrs. Ella Darby, the subject of this notice, was a granddaughter of the late Elder Samuel Trott, of Virginia. I do not know the date of her birth, marriage or baptism, but she was baptized in the fellowship of Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., several years ago, by the late Elder F. A. Chick, and remained a consistent and beloved member to the day of her death, May 9th, 1914. The writer attended her funeral on the 11th, speaking of the steadfast faith of our dear sister, I trust to the glory of Jesus' name, who at his second coming will call her sleeping dust to arise in his own glorified image, to live with him forever.

ALSO,

Thomas Howard Poteet, the subject of this notice, was for many years an attendant at the meetings of the Harford Church, Harford Co., Md., and although he never united with the church, he was strong in the faith and died in its full triumph, telling his daughter to send for the writer to attend his funeral, and to tell me that Jesus appeared to him twenty-five years ago and told him all was well with him, and that of late such heavenly beauties had been shown him as to assure him he would soon depart. He was in his 84th year, and was willing to go.

I attended his funeral Jan. 6th, 1915, at Harford meetinghouse, speaking of the blessed promise that the mortal must put on immortality. May the Lord bless the sorrowing ones.

ALSO,

Mrs. Jennie Hastings James was born in Sussex Co., Del., Sept. 17th, 1873, and went with her parents to Dorchester Co., Md., where she grew to womanhood and was married to John W. James Oct. 25th, 1892. To that union three children were born, two of whom survive her. The second child died in infancy. The eldest is a nurse in the hospital at Cambridge, Md., the youngest a student in the Samuel Ready School in Baltimore, Md. Her husband died several years ago, I do not know the date. Sister James was baptized by the writer in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, June 14th, 1903, and much loved by us all. Her manner of life showed that her heart was sincere. She had a good voice, and took delight in singing the songs of Zion. She was taken with lung trouble, and after a few years of suffering, which she bore with sweet christian fortitude, spending her time (after becoming unable to do her housework) reading her Bible and the SIGNS, she passed away, Oct. 5th, 1914, expressing her willingness to depart and be with Jesus.

Her pastor being in the south attending some associations, her funeral was attended by Elder W. S. Alexander. I do not know his text. We sorrow for the loss of dear sister James, but not as those who have no hope, for believing that Jesus died and rose again, we believe that God will bring her with him. May God bless the dear daughters with all necessary blessings of earth, and with the precious faith of their dear departed mother, is the desire of her loving pastor and their friend.

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

William B. Hockenberry was born Oct. 16th, 1824, died Sept. 2nd, 1914. He was married to Catherine Chamberlain Sept. 24th, 1854, and they were blessed with five children. Mr. Hockenberry was a faithful attendant at the meetings at Locktown, N. J., and was given a good hope through grace, but never united with the church. His meeting with us signified that he had no use for the modern religionists of the world or their doctrine, so by their fruits they are known.

Funeral services were held at Locktown, N. J., conducted by the writer, before a large number who had assembled to pay their last respects. Burial in the cemetery at the same place.

ALSO,

Mrs. Henrietta Elizabeth Cook, wife of Walter K. Cook and daughter of George and Eleanor Savidge, departed this life Feb. 1st, 1915. She was born Jan. 20th, 1887. Dec. 25th, 1911, she was married to Walter K. Cook, and had a home furnished and prepared at 225 South Cecil St., West Philadelphia, Pa., with every prospect of a happy married life and all blessings pertaining thereto. On Feb. 1st the Lord blessed them with the gift of an infant daughter, crowning their union with the greatest joy of earthly possessions that can be bestowed to those joined in wedlock. The mother inquired after the child, and was told it was perfect and a little girl. Her rejoicing was for a very short period, for in about two hours the Lord had taken the mother to himself, to a home and house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Mrs. Cook was not a member of the church, but her faith, trust and hope were in the Lord, and she was comforted in what is declared by the Old School Baptists. She attended the association held in Philadelphia last spring, and expressed her mind as in accord with the gospel preached.

Elder B. F. Coulter held services at the home of the husband Feb. 3rd, in the evening. Services were

concluded Thursday, Feb. 4th, at Hopewell, N. J., in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse, where the writer spoke from the words, The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. There were many sorrowing relatives and friends present. Surely God's ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts. May he who is the Giver of every good and perfect gift reconcile all to his most holy will, and may they realize the depths of the words, "Be still and know that I am God."

J. M. FENTON.

Chauncey C. Dolson, a well-known resident of Warwick, N. Y., met his death Tuesday, Dec. 8th, 1914, while taking a friend to his home through the storm. Mr. Kithcart, a fellow-employee of the Horton brothers, asked Mr. Dolson to drive with him to his home on the Ridge above Dublin, so that he might bring the horse back to the village. Just before they arrived at the house Mr. Dolson was taken suddenly ill, and as soon as they arrived at the house a physician was sent for, but before his arrival Mr. Dolson was dead. The cause of death is supposed to have been apoplexy. Chauncey Commodore Dolson was a native of Warwick, where he was born July 1st, 1860, a son of the late Jessaniah and Sussanna Ten-Eyck. All of his life had been spent in Warwick, except for a short period when he was a resident of Newark and New York city. For some time past he had been employed by the late F. M. Horton and by his estate. May 26th, 1885, Mr. Dolson was married to Virginia Walderford, a native of Baltimore, who survives him with an adopted son, Charles. Mr. Dolson is also survived by eight brothers and three sisters, as follows: Daniel, Wisner, Isaac and Mrs. Phœbe Horton, of Warwick; William, of Pleasant Valley, N. Y.; Corris, of Hopewell Junction, N. Y.; Charles, of Waverly, Pa.; George and Mrs. Mary E. Hyatt, of Bayonne, N. J.; Ira, of Newark, N. J.; Mrs. Rachel Bowen, of Beacon, N. Y. Mr. Dolson was a member of Tuxedo Tribe, No. 332, I. O. R. M., and of the Carpenters' Union of Warwick.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder H. C. Ker, Saturday afternoon at 1:30 o'clock, in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse, where Mr. Dolson attended. The interment was in Warwick Cemetery, with services by the Red Men.

Lucinda Jackson Bloomfield was born in Indiana, August 6th, 1841, and died Jan. 26th, 1915, aged 73 years, 5 months and 20 days. She came to Illinois with her parents at an early age, settling on land near North Henderson, where she grew to womanhood. April 24th, 1859, she was united in marriage to Joseph H. Bloomfield. The result of this union was eight children, four of whom preceded her in death. The living are Mrs. Alice Peterson, of Newport, Nebr., Mrs. Henrietta McBride, of Richland, Nebr., Mrs. Daisy Carter, of Cameron, and Mrs. Lelia Eley, of Bardolph. She also leaves her aged husband, three brothers, three sisters, fifteen grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and many other relatives and friends. Mrs. Bloomfield was an energetic woman, a faithful wife, a good mother and a kind neighbor. She took great pride in her home, and was always ready and willing to extend a helping hand when needed.

Funeral services were conducted at the residence by Elder S. H. Humphrey, and attended by a large concourse of friends and neighbors. Burial was in the Baptist cemetery south of Rio.

Robert T. Hantze was born near Berlin, Germany, Dec. 20th, 1848, died Feb. 4th, 1915, aged 66 years, 1 month and 14 days. He came to America with his parents in 1851, settling in Baltimore, Md., moving to Chicago, Ill., about the time of the Civil war, and later to Milwaukee, Wis. He was united in marriage in 1874, to Miss Mary C. Lawless, in Morgan Co., Ill., coming immediately to Nodaway Co., Mo., where he had since resided, with the exception of two years spent in Kansas. He retired from active business in 1905, moving to Maryville, Mo. He united with the Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Church known as the Three Forks of Nodaway, about thirty-three years ago, living a faithful christian life. He leaves to mourn his departure a wife, four sons, William, George and Charles, of Nodaway County, James, of South Dakota, one daughter, Mrs. Lily Yates, of near Burlington Junction, Mo., one brother and three sisters, beside a host of friends.

The funeral services were conducted at the home by Elder Calvin C. Moore, of Clarkesdale, Mo. He used for a text the words, "It is finished." It was a sermon of power, and was well suited to the occasion. We deeply mourn his departure, but our loss is his eternal gain. We also sympathize with sister Hantze in her bereavement.

LEVI B. MOFFITT.

Thomas Foucht was born in Broughton Hollow, Tioga Co., Pa., April 4th, 1843, died in Hornell, N. Y., December, 1915. He was the son of Daniel and Margaret Foucht. He was married April 3rd, 1880. Both he and his wife were baptized by the writer at Cherry Flats, Pa., in July, 1887. Later on they moved their membership to the Old School Baptist Church at Cammal, Pa., of which he remained a consistent, worthy member until called to his heavenly home. A good, kind husband, father and citizen has gone, never to return. He leaves to mourn his absence dear sister Foucht, one son and two daughters, with other relatives and friends. He lived and died in the triumph of living faith in Jesus Christ his Savior. May God in and by his great mercy and grace be with and comfort the dear, sad mourning ones left behind, is the prayer of the unworthy writer.

D. M. VAIL.

APPOINTMENTS.

NOTHING preventing, I expect to be at Kingston, N. Y., Saturday, Feb. 27th, meeting at 7:45 p. m.; Ashokan, Sunday, 28th, 11 a. m.; Union Grove, March 1st, 11 a. m.; brother Morris Faulkner's, same evening, 7:45; sister O'Connor's, Kelly Corners, Tuesday, 2nd, 7:45 p. m.; Vega, Wednesday, 3rd, 11 a. m.; Roxbury, Thursday, 4th, 11 a. m.

Sunday, March 21st, Union Grove, N. Y., 11 a. m., evening at brother Faulkner's, 7:50; Monday, 22nd, Kelly Corners, N. Y., 7:30 p. m.; Tuesday, 23rd, Vega, N. Y., 11 a. m.; Wednesday, 24th, Roxbury, N. Y., 11 a. m.; Thursday, 25th, Ashokan, N. Y., 1:30 p. m.; Thursday evening, Kingston, 7:50.

D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Richard Waller, Mo., $.50; H. C. Woodward, Mo., $2.00; J. C. Chester, Ky., $3.00; H. M. Johnson, N. J., $2.00; E. M. Kuehne, N. J., $1.00; Mrs. M. J. Miller, Ill., $2.00.

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C. B. RICE, Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 83. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1915. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DEUTERONOMY XXXIII. 29.

"HAPPY art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places."

I am not so presumptuous, dear editors and readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as to think I can do justice to a theme so sublime as is embraced in the text quoted at the head of this article, for it seems to me as I see it this evening, that no tongue or pen of mortal, or even of angel, could do that. But being, as I humbly hope, a partaker of the good things that the gracious God from time to time gives to his beloved little ones, as they are spread before the family, as a table richly provided with sound and delicious edibles, through the columns of the SIGNS, I feel desirous to divide with you, as best the Lord may enable me, some of the good things I am hoping our gracious heavenly Father hath given me. I say "divide," but would gladly give them all to you, for I know that if they are given of the Lord I should even then have none the less for myself. How wonderfully blessed is Israel, that people the Lord many times through the Bible calls "my people." Their God who inspired this language and stands back of all the promises of holy writ is omnipotent and immutable. All the promises to them are covenant promises, and that covenant is confirmed by the oath of Jehovah, and therefore can never fail. He alone is eternal, the only Creator, the sole owner, sovereign governor of all things in the heavens, in earth and in hell. If these things are not clearly and certainly taught in the Scriptures, then is nothing clearly and certainly taught there. It is also clearly taught in the Scriptures that it was the purpose of the Father to exalt the name of his Son Jesus Christ "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."—Eph. i. 21. And to this end "were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the

beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence."—Col. i. 16–18. Again, it is clearly taught that whatever is Christ's is also his people's, for they "were chosen in him before the foundation of the world," and blessed with all spiritual blessings in him according to this choice, (Eph. i. 3, 4,) and are "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ."—Rom. viii. 17. Now to blessed Israel it is said, "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."—1 Cor. iii. 21–23. O blessed people, your enemies both within and without tell you that these things are not the truth, and it is only now and then, a little here and a little there, that you can comprehend the wonderful meaning. "And thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places." The glorious fact that "all things" were created and exist for Christ, your Head and Husband, and for you, his bride, in him, is as sure to dawn upon your astonished vision in your heavenly Father's own good time, as Jehovah is able to comply with his oath. O why should you doubt this?

"What more can he say than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."—Rom. viii. 28. Your God is also omniscient and omnipresent; also, "God is love." From the ancients of eternity the remotest events of time, though transpiring in the darkest midnight hour, were as clear to his ever-present and all-seeing eye as when or after they have taken place. "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."—Heb. iv. 13. "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee."—Psalms cxxxix. 7–12. The thought of eternal omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence and immutability, is repulsive to the carnal mind, therefore men teach doctrines and practices inconsistent with those Scriptures, and thus tell you these things are not true, and if you contend for them they will call you heretics, fatalists, antinomians, ignoramuses, &c., and no wonder you will sometimes feel inclined to be ashamed of the doctrine, and feel within the workings of a spirit of compromise to which some have all along yielded. But, "And thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee." "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." Though there be gods many and lords many, (1 Cor. viii. 5, 6,) what god is like unto thy God? or what savior like unto thy Savior? The gods of other nations are but temporary affairs; they are only what their worshipers make them, and have only what their worshipers give them, and move only as their worshipers move them. Israel's God is almighty, eternal, immutable, infinitely rich; all things are his, subject to no influence.

He "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." The saviors of other nations, (i. e., those they claim and present as saviors) are poor makeshifts at best; they cannot save the subject without his cooperation, and though he (their savior) is willing and anxious to save, he must wait and depend upon the subject's will. Israel's Savior has all power in heaven and earth, and holds in his hand the keys of death and hell. His riches are unsearchable, his wisdom immeasurable, his love, mercy and compassion boundless. He is our heavenly Father's great treasure-house; in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. God the Father loved him and he dwelt in glory with the Father before the world was. He also loved his people in him; he gave them in covenant to the Son, and the Son to them, and so the bride in covenant was betrothed to the Son. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me," says the Son. He was made "to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Because God the Father loved his Son, and his people in him, he made Jesus all these things unto them; and because Jesus loved his Father and his people, he laid aside the glory that he had with the Father for the time, so to speak, and became a suffering man under the law to do the will of his Father, that he should save his people by the sacrifice of himself, and redeem them, by answering every demand of the law for them, and so he "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Because of all this, mercy and pardon for all their sins came to his people; yea, more: quickening life, a knowledge and abhorrence of sin, and repentance, too; for they had sinned and fallen, had strayed upon forbidden premises, and had become the lawful captives of another. Two things were necessary, in order that the term "redemption" be a consistent one, as applying to the work Jesus did for his people: first, they must have been his before they went astray; second, they must have gone astray. "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved)." Yes, they had so far fallen as to be dead in sins, therefore could not even have a desire to be saved, not even knowing they were lost. But still the Lord loved them, and was rich in mercy towards them. Because he first loved them, and shed abroad his love in their hearts, they now love him. (1 John iv. 19; Rom. v. 5.) This great and wonderful and mysterious love of God in Christ Jesus for this blessed people is set forth in holy writ in such terms that we could ask no greater proof. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? * * * For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor

any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Rom. viii. 32–39. No matter what period of time in the world they may live, nor what their country, or nationality, or what their standing among men, socially or otherwise, or what their condition in any sense, they must be precious in the sight of the Lord. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."—Psalms xxxiv. 7. He sent his angel and shut the mouths of the lions when Daniel was cast into the den of lions, and delivered him. His presence saved them when the three Hebrew children were cast into the burning, fiery furnace, and the fire did them no harm. In the dark hours of the night, when the little boat carrying the disciples was being tossed to and fro by contrary winds and rolling waves, "in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea." When they saw him walking on the water, they were troubled and cried out with fear. But Jesus said, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." So they were saved. In all those dark, troublous hours of the night Jesus knew their whereabouts and danger. Though they knew it not, he was near them. When Peter was shut up in prison by Herod, on the night before Herod intended the next day to bring him forth to the people, and no doubt to death, Peter bound with two chains and sleeping between two soldiers, and the prison keepers before the door, "Behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison," and Peter was delivered from the prison and out of the hand of Herod, and restored to the church. In like manner Paul and Silas were shut up in prison for their testimony of Jesus. "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed." And thus the Lord was with them, and saved them out of the hands of their enemies. Many other cases as prominent as those cited might be presented to show that "the Lord is not slack concerning his promises, as some men count slackness," but saves his people, and is a very present help in time of trouble. Each one of his little ones is precious in his sight. So dear are all his "little ones" to Jesus that we hear him saying, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea. Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!"—Matt. xviii. 6, 7. With such a strong and powerful, ever-mindful and ever-present protector and keeper, "Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." Thy beauty and thy safety, thy security, though perfect, is not to be seen by the eye of the carnal mind. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." Although, according to the gracious promise, (Zech. xiii. 1,) a fountain is opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness, in which these blessed people are washed and cleansed, and their filthy garments taken away,

and they are given a change of raiment, (Zech. iii. 3, 4,) so they can say, "He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness,"—Isa. lxi. 10, and the Bridegroom admiringly beholding his bride can say, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee."—Song of Solomon iv. 7. And, "The King's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework."—Psalms xlv. 13, 14, yet all this beauty, this glory, is hid from the natural vision of men; even the saints cannot behold it, and rejoice in it, though it be theirs, except as the Lord opens its beauties to the eye of faith. Then beholding "their enemies are found liars unto them, and they tread upon their high places." In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace, says Jesus. We must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of God, says Paul. But when Jesus is revealed to our faith the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely, we are enabled to rejoice in tribulations; we mount above our troubles, and our enemies are found liars unto us, and we tread upon their high places. Our Jesus is present with us, and we are absent from the body (self). What though then we be poor, and afflicted, and tempted, and tried, and sick, and burdened with the reproaches of the enemy, suddenly we have become rich, or rather the fact that we are rich in Jesus is revealed to and in us. "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places."

In love and fellowship,

H. B. JONES.

WINNSBORO, Tex., Jan., 1915.

THINGS HID FROM THE WISE AND PRUDENT.

(Matt. xi. 25.)

HAVE "these things" been hidden from me? That is very important for me to know. I feel so greatly lacking in wisdom and prudence that I might well be compared to a babe—utterly helpless. But is this sense of helplessness which I feel true humbleness of mind on account of a felt poverty of spirit, or is it only a natural desire for worldly knowledge and wisdom? I have some hope that I am included among those of whom the dear Savior speaks when he says, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." "These things" are the things pertaining to the work of salvation in all of its parts. In Luke x. 21, it is said that Jesus "rejoiced in spirit," the only time he is said in the New Testament to have rejoiced; and this was in spirit, not in the flesh. And that which caused him to rejoice in spirit, and give thanks to the Father, was the very doctrine which the carnal mind hates: the doctrine of election. "The carnal mind is enmity against God."—Romans viii. 7. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14.

It was in the wisdom of God that the world did not know him by wisdom. (1 Cor. i. 21.) It was in the highest wisdom of the eternal God that these things were hid from the wisdom and prudence of the natural man. They cannot be studied out and learned by the application of the greatest mental powers. The natural understanding cannot receive the knowledge of them. It is only by revelation

that they can be known by any man. "God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." By that Spirit alone can we know the things that are freely given to us of God. (1 Cor. ii. 10–12.)

How wonderful that the dear Savior should have rejoiced especially, and that he should have thanked the Father because these things were hid from the wise and prudent and were revealed unto babes. But it is clear that this was done in infinite love to his dear people, and that there comes a time in the experience of each of them when they will know that this is also a special cause for praise and thanksgiving to God from them. If these spiritual blessings were to be received by us upon conditions to be performed by us, and to be contended for against those who are strong and wise, then what should we do when sickness and weakness and poverty of spirit come upon us, and we become as a little, helpless babe? If salvation came by the works of the law, then we must lie down and die. The weakest must go to the wall, if it were with spiritual things as it is with things of the world.

But how different is the receiving of knowledge by revelation from the receiving of it as the result of labor and searching. No man hath seen God at any time; but the Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath revealed him. We do not have a work to do in order to have that revelation, but there is a preparation for it which we know nothing of until it is done. The preparation for it is the new birth, a little babe. A strong man finds himself as helpless as that babe on account of sin. In his soul he finds himself struggling, moving about, crying, trying to get up. "The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." There is no one that can help in this matter. The little babe cannot help itself; it does not know what to do but cry. It can get nothing to eat until the time comes that its lips touch the breasts of Zion's consolations. Then it may be long before the babe knows that this is indeed the fountain from whence its true food is to be received.

All this knowledge comes by revelation. As the child grows spiritually it finds things to wonder at from day to day. It can be told nothing of real spiritual benefit except what it has first experienced. Then the preaching and the exercise of other gifts of the dear Savior will be needed, and will be received as the Lord in his providence and grace gives them, and thus the child of God will "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

How good we at times feel it to be that the dear Lord has used the word "babes" in this sweet teaching, thus keeping the arms of his love reached out to us as to babes, all the way through our mortal pilgrimage; for no matter how deeply and widely any one may be engaged in the work attending the exercise of gifts, many are the times when he is a very little babe in his experience, and needs greatly the comfort of the Lord's precious promise: "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem." It was when standing with his disciples and other men of strength and ability that Jesus expressed this prayer to the Father, and talked of them as babes. This means that he never leaves his people dependent upon themselves for any spiritual or natural blessing. They do at times feel grown up and able to take care of themselves, but he has prepared a goodly sup-

ply for them of trials, afflictions and tribulations, which he brings upon them most surely in such times of need, and so preserves them in true and heartfelt humility.

"Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." This is the only reason that ever can be truly given for anything which the Lord does. The only criterion by which to judge of what it was right for the Lord to do is what he has done. People have sometimes said of the doctrine of election and predestination, It cannot be true, for the Lord would not do that way. But the question for us is as to what the Lord has done, not what we think he ought to have done. It is what seemed good in his sight. What do the Scriptures say he did? That is what it was infinitely right and wise for him to do. And the only criterion by which to judge what is right for a man to do is what the Lord commanded him to do. We cannot judge of the Lord's ways and thoughts by our own, for his ways and thoughts are higher than ours, as the heavens are higher than the earth. (Isaiah lv. 9.) "He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment." Of anything which the Lord has done it is enough for us to say, So it seemed good in his sight. Often we have found rebellion in our poor, carnal minds, and a disposition to say, "Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?"—Romans ix. 19. We may reply that no one has ever successfully resisted his will; but the apostle does not argue the question with us, but rebukes the rebellious thought in our hearts, and says: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"—Romans ix. 20.

There is a preparation of heart necessary for the knowledge and reception of all the truth of God, and how we rejoice at times and thank God that he, who is infinitely wise and merciful, does his will in heaven and earth and in all deep places, and that there is none to stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou? Our salvation is in that infinite power which is in his kind and loving hands, and we cannot but rejoice and give thanks unto God when we can say, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."

"All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." How very little I know, if anything, concerning this mysterious and wonderful relationship of Father and Son and Holy Spirit. The Father alone knows the Son, and that knowledge consists in the delivery unto the Son of all "these things" of the gospel. No gospel blessing, no gospel knowledge, comes to any of the sons of men except through the Son. The Son is the Word. Through him are communicated to the elect all the purpose of love and mercy which the Father purposed in himself before the world began. All spiritual blessings are now in the Son, in the Word, and are given unto the dear people of God by this "Word," which was made flesh and dwelt among us.

No man knoweth the Father, but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. The revelation of the Father by the Son is not a scientific or philosophical subject we are considering, which opens to us its treasures of knowledge as we study it, but it is a spiritual subject which is only known by the revelation of

the Father through the Son. We can only receive and understand it by that faith which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. An apostle says, "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." This is the revelation of the Father by the Son, and is an experience. This is a filial relationship felt in the soul at times. I hope I have known it, and that I have had the exercise of it in my heart. Concerning this experience I hope to write in addition to what I have written here, if the Lord will. If I write what will be of any real value to the Lord's people it will be by especial grace, through especial faith.

I want to say here that I feel glad and thankful for the literary and spiritual excellence of the SIGNS which has been maintained by you, brother Ker, and brother Lefferts. I think both the editorials and the communications have been of a valuable and superior character. This is very gratifying to me.

I hope and pray that brotherly love may be continued throughout all of our churches, and that gospel fellowship may be maintained by all of them.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb., 1915.

FRENCHTOWN, N. J., Feb. 15, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—For a long time I have had a desire to write to you and the dear readers of the SIGNS, but have hesitated, fearing to take up your time without profit. Only the fact that you have invited correspondence gives me courage at this time. I am not actuated by any desire to see my name in print, but I hope by a desire to offer some encouragement to those from whom I have received comfort from time to time. It is written that "they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and a book of remembrance was written;" so in this day a book of remembrance is written in our hearts. How often a word in season stirs up our pure minds and causes us to rejoice, and to walk together in heavenly places. After we become disheartened over our utter inability to rise above the flesh, abhorring our lives, feeling so alone in our sins, and almost doubting that we have any part in the plan of salvation, and then some dear brother or sister is given the right word, and they pass it along to us, for a time we are comforted. Such was the case when on your last visit to us you spoke of the sinners and hypocrites in Zion. That was for me. I often feel myself a hypocrite, but never before was it presented to me that such are found in Zion. Truly all things written aforetime were for our learning, but it is as necessary now as ever for the Spirit to take of the things of Jesus and shew them unto us. It seems that I cannot take any portion of the Scriptures and gain comfort by the literal reading of it; always there must be that spiritual application of it which enables me to claim it in my experience. When I first heard the "joyful sound" the most wonderful thing about it was, that the same story I had been listening to all my life with my natural ears without comprehension now was full of truth and life. Truly the flesh profiteth nothing; it is the Spirit that quickeneth. I was born blind, and entirely ignorant of my condition. When I first felt the working of that mighty power that raised Jesus from the dead, I was made to realize that my salvation rested with him alone, and to declare that whereas I once was blind then I saw,

and that it was this same Jesus that had opened my eyes and brought me forth from the condition of death. Since that time I have never ceased to rejoice that these things come by revelation. But I have to mourn continually on account of my shortcomings. It surely takes the power of God to save one like me.

Brother Ker, I have felt sorry over the feeling manifested regarding certain things, but since reading your New Year's greeting and brother Lefferts' editorial on charity, and the many excellent articles in the SIGNS, all expressing love, and pleading for forbearance and patience, I am encouraged to hope that we may all be enabled to bury our differences, and look unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith. I trust that love may remain uppermost in our hearts, and that we all may be patient and forgiving, and not heady or highminded. We may not all be able to understand the Scriptures alike, but we all do believe in Jesus, who said, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." What more can we ask? If we have life, we are safe; all differences will be blotted out; everything that grieves us will be separated from us. What should cause us the most apprehension is whether we have any part in the first resurrection; whether we are able to give a reason for the hope that is within us; whether we indeed have been brought nigh by the blood of Christ. The church is our judge. If we bear witness that salvation is by grace, it must be because we have experienced that by grace we are saved. If we bear witness to the new birth, it must be that we manifest a love for the brethren. We are risen with Christ and have entered into newness of life. The new commandment is to love one another. God will carry out all his plans. Let us love one another with pure hearts, for

"He's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

Dear brother, it is very cheering to see communications coming in from lovers of the truth, expressing fellowship for you and brother Lefferts. Sister Johnson, who, as you know, lives near me, and with whom I have many pleasant seasons, joins me in well wishes for you and all the household of faith. May both you and brother Lefferts be given grace and strength unto your day.

Your sister, I hope,

(MRS.) JOS. S. GILBERT.

PROVERBS XVIII. 10.

"THE name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe."

What is in a name? The name of him who possesses it embraces all the life of a man, his character, his acts, his thoughts, his ambitions, his peculiarities and his environments; all of these specify his individuality. There are many John Smiths in the world, but each one is a John Smith in himself, and separate from all other John Smiths, in that his individual characteristics are entirely alone his peculiar and particular possession. Although man stands highest in the work of God's creation, and is "the figure of him that was to come," for he was made in the image of God and after his likeness, yet he was weak, and could not withstand the temptations that were placed before him. This was God's way, and it was pleasing in his sight. He designed and decreed that the man should enter into temptation, by and through which he should manifest his inability to stand, that by reason of his weakness sin should enter into the world, and death by sin.

The result of man's disobedience (for God commanded that he should not eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and he did eat) was that the whole world lieth in wickedness. God did not create in the man any provision by which he could extricate himself from the penalty of his death. His desires and affections were all wrapt up in the tendency of his carnal mind; his mind and his heart were only evil, and that continually. He was in the world, the world loved its own, and he loved the world; there was no desire in his heart to be saved from the evil of the world. God designed however that salvation should come through a higher and a mighty source. Those whom he elected to be saved were chosen in eternity before the creation of man, even in his only begotten and dearly beloved Son. His name (the name of Jesus) embraces all the power and might of the Godhead. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Therefore the name of the Lord is a strong tower to all who come unto God by him. The angel which came unto Joseph said, "Thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." In his incarnation he was the Son of God and the Son of man. He was born King. The prophet Isaiah, calling by prophecy to the church as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, said, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Jesus himself said, "For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind." The fullness of the Godhead bodily, his wisdom, his lowliness, his suffering, his words and mighty acts while incarnate, his death and his resurrection, are all embraced in the wonderful name of Jesus. He took upon him the flesh of sinful men, yet he was without sin, that he might suffer and die, and rise from the dead for their justification.

"The name of the Lord is a strong tower." Towers in the days of old were built for strength, for refuge and for safety in times of war; stored within the stronghold were munitions of warfare for those who fought for the safety of the city. Christ, in setting forth the graces of the church said (in the Song of Solomon), "Thy neck is like the tower of David, builded for an armory, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men." There is no trial or conflict which the chosen of God are called to encounter but provision is made within the strength of the tower of our Lord to bring to nought every enemy of the cross of Christ. He has brought them into knowledge of his wonderful power and goodness and love, that they tremble at his word, and trust in his name; they have tasted that the Lord is gracious and of long and tender forbearance toward them. Their feet being shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, their footsteps being directed to the holy city (their strong tower), they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint.

"The righteous runneth into it, and is safe." Being justified by the imputed righteousness of Christ, his bride is righteous because Christ is righteous, therefore

she has holy and righteous desires. Christ abideth in her and she in him. When the cunning Satan attempts to work his seducing wiles upon her she realizes his power of darkness, and with fear and trembling she runneth into the strong tower of His love and mercy "and is safe." He holdeth out to her the golden sceptre of his power and authority over sin, and she is reminded that where sin abounds, grace doth much more abound. She realizes, too, that all power is of God. When God says, Thus far shalt thou go, the power of Satan has reached its limit. When the children are beset with enemies, and they are ready to give up, and to say with David, "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul," and as David ran away from his enemy, so also the righteous runneth unto Jesus (the strong tower) and is safe. How restful is the place of safety in Christ Jesus.

May we all be found running in the right direction, that we may rest from our labors as God did from his.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

JANUARY 12, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have just finished reading the last number of the SIGNS, Jan. 1st, and have had a feast, besides being aroused to my duty of canceling my indebtedness. The first writer, Elder Keene, always satisfies me with his pen dipped in the oil of loving-kindness. I could not stop until I had reread it, to get all the marrow and fatness out. Praise is comely on the lips of this brother, for he always praises the Lord and humbles the poor creature. I am glad he wrote from that text in Jeremiah. It was a sermon for me, a poor shut-in from going to meet in the assembly of the saints in winter, when cold and stormy. I often fear I do not have a just title to worship with God's chosen ones. Last year I was in Spokane, Wash., away from my home church, a city of 100,000 inhabitants, and I a stranger, not knowing one of my faith. I wrote to sister Sonora Hess; she and Elder Mayfield and Elder Eaton wrote to me, and directed me to a little company who knew the joyful sound, and preached salvation by grace, and were glad to welcome even this poor stranger into their fold. How sweet and heavenly is the sight when those who love the Lord, in one another's peace unite, and so fulfill his word. I was glad to find in the text, "But I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." I was a very small girl when this fear of evil (sin) made me quake and tremble. Then I began to know the meaning of the twenty-third Psalm: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." I often find comfort in reading the Scripture, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom." "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." All these fit my case, and I remember well the year 1857, when Jesus seemed to say to me, I came to die for sinners, and sinning was my chief complaint. That one day all my distress seemed ended. If I lived to be old as I am now, I would spend my days praising God for thinking of this poor worm. "Jesus all the day long was my joy and my song." But how am I now? As sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. I am nothing, yet I love the people that love to talk of Jesus and his love, and still cry for mercy. I love the dear old SIGNS, and hope I will have it as long as I live, as I love it. I love that sister, Sarah E. Runkle, for stirring us up to remember

our just duty. I never met her, but have heard her father, Elder Vanmeter, preach several heartsome sermons. That article on total depravity is good. I have lived all my life among people that want every one to have a chance, and when I say I need something better than a chance, something sure, they look very sorry for such a God-forsaken worm. The text, "These are they which come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," is a strong prop to poor needy sinners. I am glad Elder Mayfield sent that letter from the valiant soldier, Elder John Stipp. Very good. The New Year's Greeting was extra good, but sometimes it is painful to write so plainly and truthfully. They are all good in this number, but I cannot mention all the precious names. May God continue to fill the vessels from his unwasting fullness.

Your poor, old trembling sister,

LINA W. BECK.

INDEPENDENCE, Mo., Dec. 6, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—Fleeting time will soon number nineteen fourteen with the past, and my paid up time for this dear paper goes out with the year, but I hope not my love for the doctrine the paper advocates. If not deceived, that is dearer to me as the pleasures of this life fade or are lost altogether. This gloomy Sunday I have finished reading December 1st number of the SIGNS, and have also read part in several back numbers. As I read each writer seemed to touch a sympathetic cord in my old heart; especially was that true of the editorial "Alone." If it does not take too much of your valuable time and space, I would like to ask the dear brethren and sisters who read the SIGNS, what the paper is worth to them. Can the value be counted by dollars and cents? I suppose few have the money at any time to do as they would wish. The writer is one that never had, but I feel I have more than I deserve, or make the use of that I should, but shall we not make at least a little sacrifice for others, and more so when the little is due them? I hope no one will feel this is a stone cast, for surely many other offences lay at my own door, and at all times I feel more like laying my hand on my mouth, exclaiming, Guilty, than I do like taking others by the throat. But surely if I love the blessed Master I ought to love those who proclaim his truth from the walls of Zion and from the housetop (is this pulpit and press?) that many other wanderers like ourselves may receive a strengthening crumb as they walk and are sad, for many of the weary ones feel they are left in the midst of the valley which was (and is yet) full of dry bones, and that the sheep are being scattered in this cloudy and dark day. I would gladly speak a word of encouragement to all connected with the publication of the dear SIGNS, but is it not enough to feel that God's strong arm will be their stay? I will say to editors and readers of the SIGNS, cast the mantle of charity over these few rambling thoughts. If they find the waste-basket, no one will be harmed or disappointed.

LAVINIA MORGAN.

BOWDOINHAM, Maine, Jan. 29, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have a letter from our pastor, Elder Z. M. Beal, which we would like to see published in the SIGNS, as his people would like to read it. I have read the SIGNS about fifty years. My father took it when I was quite young.

(MRS.) LORENZO D. MINOTT.

TOPSHAM, Maine, Jan. 19, 1915.

SISTER MINOTT:—I received your letter to-day, and was made to feel glad that you remembered us. We have not had a word from any of the members of the little company of the Bowdoinham Church before, this winter. I suppose that they are cumbered with their own cares. I do not doubt but that they think of us two old sinners, but we are getting old and feeble, yet e'en down to old age all his people shall prove, his sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love. What a wonderful love this is; who can comprehend it? It is without bottom, brim or shore, and lost in Deity. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard the things that God hath prepared for them that love him, but he hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit, the Spirit that searches the deep things of God. Sister Minott, the natural man cannot see the deep things of God. We read that in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, and the earth was void and without form, and darkness was upon the face of the deep (God); and God said, Let there be light, and there was light (natural light). After Adam's transgression his natural eyes were opened, and he saw that he was naked, and he was afraid, and he tried to hide himself and cover his nakedness. How ignorant he was of that eternal God whose eyes see all things, and nothing can be hid from him. This is a very little of what is seen in the generation of Adam, but there is another generation which is the generation of Jesus, and who shall declare his generation? There is none who can declare it except those to whom it is revealed. By the Spirit of God the generation of Jesus is a spiritual generation; their life, their meat and drink are all spiritual. Jesus said to his disciples, In my Father's house are many mansions; and God's little ones are the inhabitants of those mansions, namely, mansions of joy, of peace, of glory, of love, of salvation, of forgiveness, tenderheartedness, hope, faith, and we might go on to name those mansions, they are all in the house of God, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

But I must stop, as I am too weak and nervous to write. I have been sick and in the house for over a month with catarrhal bronchitis, nerves all in a trembling condition. I have had Dr. Palmer to see me six times, but do not feel that I am much if any better. I do not know how it will end, but God knows. Phebe is very poorly in health, but she keeps about the house most of the time. We are both poorly in health, and feel lonely at times, but it must be all right, for it is God's way, and he cannot be wrong.

A few more words. I read what you wrote about going to hear Mr.—, but I do not know as I understood what you wrote; do not know but you might have enjoyed his talk, but I know that sheep divide the hoof and chew the cud, also swine divide the hoof, but they do not chew the cud, and they like to wallow in the mire, it is their element. David has said, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters," &c., and we believe that David knew these things that the Lord, his shepherd, would do for him, and that he was able also to do for all those that trusted in him, and walked before him as David walked in the house of his Lord.

Now I must say good-by. Tell Lorenzo that he has my sincere sympathy in the death of his brother; it was God's way, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Now may he who called Abraham alone and blessed him, bless you both.

Z. M. BEAL.

2 CORINTHIANS V. 1.

"For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Paul, writing to the church of God at Corinth, was given to comfort them with the things whereof he himself was comforted of God. He called their attention to Moses and his house, also that God hath shined in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and we have this treasure in earthen vessels, but while the outer man perishes, the inner man is renewed day by day. We look not at the things seen, but things not seen. The rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic covenant, the tabernacle and all pertaining thereto were seen, and even gospel ordinances are seen and are temporal. Now if all these be dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. It is the one house eternal in the heavens. It existed in the eternal mind and purpose of God, and is made manifest to his people through Jesus Christ. Abel offered unto God in this house of faith eternal in the heavens. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were clothed upon by this house eternal in the heavens. Abraham saw the day of the Lord and rejoiced in it. Had the apostle said eternal in the heaven, it would have meant very different, and would have agreed to our imaginations, but the plural "heavens" declares that this house is of God, was eternal in the legal, prophetical and this the last dispensation: the gospel heaven. Paul was given to take up the old dispensation and show the types and shadows of better things in the gospel, and how the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was the fulfillment and entering into of the things that God had prepared for them that love him. The Mosaic tabernacle was dissolved, the gospel ordinances may be dissolved, our earthly house of this tabernacle may be dissolved, but nevertheless that house not made with hands is eternal, and shall never be dissolved. In this earthly house we groan, being burdened; not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. This was the desire of the apostle, who knew the weakness of the flesh, what it was to say harsh things and to show his earthy nature. He tells us to avoid jesting and foolish talking. This is being unclothed; to not keep under the body is to be unclothed. Our desire to not be unclothed, but clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, is to desire the garments of salvation: brotherly love, charity, forbearance, forgiveness, faith, hope, much assurance in the Holy Ghost; these are in the house not made with hands. How different from a mere empty ceremony, void of life and comfort from God. J. M. FENTON.

Benton, Ky., Jan. 7, 1915.

Dear Brethren Editors:—I herewith send you a letter I received some days ago from brother J. C. Chester, in answer to a letter I wrote him, giving him my views on Psalms xxv. 14, and on which he enlarged and added much more, and made it more beautiful and expressive of the true christian's experience and warfare while pilgrims here in this low ground of sin and sorrow.

Dear brother Ker, I am well pleased with your helpmate in editing the Signs; his writings are able and edifying, sound and instructing to one who is seeking for the truth. I do hope the brethren will hold up your hands in editing the Signs, and contribute to it financially, and heed

your admonition to those in arrears. May the Lord put it in their hearts to do so.

Your brother in hope,

R. J. HILL.

BREWERS, Ky., Dec. 25, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER HILL:—While our adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour, I was wont to steal away to some quiet retreat and reread your good letter of some days ago, and after so doing, and meditating on some of the beauties suggested therein, I felt that I should acknowledge receipt of the same. The latter clause of Matt. xi. 27, seems to link in with your suggestions on Psalms xxv. 14: "The secrets of the Lord." "And no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." It may be plainly seen by reading this entire chapter that those wicked Jews and Pharisees knew nothing of the secrets of the Lord. Hear Jesus' language in verse 25: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." And why has he done all this?" "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." When the Lord by Jesus Christ manifests himself by his love and mercy to one of us weak worms of the dust, then it is we learn of his secrets and become a branch of the true Vine, and from that time on through all the dangers seen and unseen we wander through the wilderness, ever leaning upon the Staff of life, as did Jacob of old after he had wrestled all night with a man. The things revealed to the poor child by the Father is what makes one fear him, and creates a hungering and a thirsting for righteousness. This the world does not know, for it is hid from the wise and prudent, and by searching it cannot be found out. In this revelation "we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Then it is we learn of the Father, and begin to hunger and thirst for righteousness, such as have received the revelations of God's secrets and are created in Christ Jesus. Paul would say, We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Peter admonished such as had received the secrets of the Lord to beware lest they also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from their own steadfastness, and admonished them to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name."—Mal. iii. 16.

Lest this should weary you I will close. Remember me and mine when at the throne of grace. Write again to your weak brother in hope of a better life.

J. C. CHESTER.

CERULEAN, Kentucky.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If this meets with your approval you will please publish so that my brethren may know of our sad condition.

"The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow: for it is soon cut off, and we fly away." This text calls to my mind at this time that

my race is wellnigh run, as I have just entered into my seventieth year. I was born and raised in a Baptist family, my father and mother and my grandparents on both sides being Primitive Baptists. My father's house was a home for the Baptists, and when but a little boy I was made glad by their coming. Just why I do not know, but one thing I do know, I thought they were the best people on earth, but I do not know why I thought so. It was my delight to stay around and hear them talk of the goodness of the Lord, of his mercy and grace, yet I could not understand why they claimed to be so unworthy and undeserving. My father taught, or at least told me, to be truthful and moral, and to have the good will of all people. When the Civil War broke out my elder brothers went, leaving me at home with my father. It seemed that father became very fond of talking to me and telling me how to conduct myself, but he never told me how to get religion. About the close of the year 1863 I became very much concerned about my condition. I did not know why, only I thought that I was going to die, and that I would be lost if I died in the condition I was in. This troubled me very much, until the 10th of March, 1866, then I was delivered from my trouble, and made to rejoice in the Lord. I joined the Primitive Baptist Church in January, 1867, where I still have a name, though unworthy, but O how I love them. I have been trying to preach for them for thirty-five years. My efforts have been poor, yet at home and abroad wherever I have gone my preaching has been such as not to cause any strife or division among our people. I have been kindly treated, and for this I feel very grateful. Our association stood firm in the doctrine of grace while the conditional time craze was making its inroads among other associations. But, as stated above, I know that I will soon be called away from time and time things, and if there is any future state beyond, I then in some way or some sense will know more fully of it. The greatest pleasure to me is hope; I cannot get above or below it, it is my anchor. We sometimes want something better, yet at the same time we would not exchange it for this world and all things in it. The reason given why we love God is because he first loved us. If I serve God it is because of love to him, and not fear of the devil. I feel that there is a way of escape, that way is Jesus.

But I will hasten this letter to a close. I read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; it comes with sweet messages. We felt to mourn the loss of dear brother Chick. We, like many, thought his place could not be filled, but the dear Lord looked on us, as he did on Thomas, and made us cry, My Lord and my God, when he showed his power in the person of brother H. H. Lefferts. Surely God has blessed him with divine revelation.

I will now say that my object in writing this is, first, to relieve my feelings, and, if published, to let my brethren abroad know that the hand of affliction still rests on us. My dear wife remains in a helpless condition, and has been so for twenty-one months, and nothing in sight for the better. If this is read, may we have your sympathy.

In much sorrow,

D. R. TURNER.

PSALMS XIX. 1.

"THE heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handywork."

There have been times in my life when my mind has been led out in natural comparison; that is, taking natural things that we see around us and proving by them that there is a God, and that God is perfect, and in perfect harmony with all things earthly and heavenly. To those only who have been led in their experience to think seriously on the subject of their salvation, and have been taught their sinfulness, will this comparison have any weight; the world will pass it by unconcerned, and perhaps call it foolishness, for men are not different to-day than they were in Christ's time, and they doubted his sayings, who spoke as never man spake. The same cause will to-day produce the same effect; God is perfect. Our minds are too small to rightly grasp the meaning of perfection; only as we are shown by revelation can we catch a glimpse of this wonderful word which belongs to God. Now I do not mean that when we gaze into the heavens we are looking at perfection, but at the work of a perfect being in spreading above us a canopy studded with jewels, the stars, sun and moon far above us for lights, signs and for seasons, entirely out of the reach of human hands; a wonderful sight our natural eyes behold. Our natural bodies are warmed by the sun; when darkness is over the earth the moon sheds a mellow light to guide the weary traveler home, and when we contemplate upon these great mysteries, for surely they are mysterious to us, we cannot tell how, but we know they exist. Like every one born of the Spirit, we cannot tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth; but I know that whereas I was once blind, I now see. We see it, we wonder at it. Our astronomers tell us that in the year 1915 there will be a certain number of eclipses. The movement of these heavenly bodies is so exact that by figures they can determine when one body will reach, or pass, or throw its shadow before another to cause an eclipse. It will be visible in the northern portion of the United States at a certain hour, showing that the earth moves exactly in order to be turned the right way at the time. Is there not perfection here at work? Is the system not perfect in its way? Does it not declare the glory of God? All who have had anything to do with fast running machinery, especially woodworking machinery, know that unless your cutting heads, which run say thirty-five hundred revolutions per minute, are balanced perfectly (a natural term used to denote very good), they will not stand the strain, and will break. Now then, there is a movement of the earth, also the heavenly bodies, and it is necessary that they be balanced; if, as science tells us, the earth's surface goes at the rate of twenty-five thousand miles every twenty-four hours, there must be an unseen regulation to keep it in balance. By observation we know a common pin will change the balance of a cylinder, a man will change the balance of the earth, and people are continually running to and fro, seemingly without a mission, but in fact according to the will of the eternal God, shewing to him his handywork. There cannot be an effect without a cause. There is nothing in this great handywork of God running at random, controlled by another power, for there is but one, there is but one head to the great house, but many servants, and if we do our work willingly we are obedient servants, but if against our will we perform it, we are servants just the same,

but unwilling. In all well regulated institutions of men there is one head. Countries and kingdoms, imperfect as we are, yet we show forth the likeness in a way of the spiritual Head, and the handywork of God never did nor never will disappoint him, for he hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, meted out the heavens with a span, comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in the balance. Is it not a complete work? Does it not declare his glory, and does it not shew his handywork? We might go on and on comparing natural things in nature, and speak of the lily in the forest, the sparrow, the hairs of our heads, the crystals of the frost, the different causes, but this will suffice for the present. I have tried for eighteen years to preach this doctrine among God's people, trying to show forth his glory in all things, even the little things which the world calls foolishness, but to me it establishes me more firmly in the doctrine of God's perfection, and establishes a sure way for the salvation for God's chosen people.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

CLEVELAND, Ohio.

NEWCASTLE, Ky., Feb. 15, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am writing to have my address changed, and also to send in my subscription, and I have a desire to say a few words, if the Lord will direct my pen, for without him I can do nothing. I have never written anything for publication, and I have great fear that I cannot write anything worthy of notice, or that would be of any comfort to any of God's dear children.

I have never had any dislike for Old Baptist people, but from early childhood I have loved them. This may be only natural, as my parents were of Old Baptist belief; but even when a child I used to say, I am an Old "Hardshell," but I did not then know the first principles of that, to me, precious doctrine. It seemed to be the mind of all the friends of my youth that as soon as they grew up they must join some denomination, and they did not all wait to grow up; then they would go to the first dance, and take part in that. Such things always seemed inconsistent to me. While I had no great convictions that I was a sinner, yet I felt that I was not fit to join the church, but would wait until I became good, and that time has never come; but the time came when I felt I could stay away no longer, and yet I knew I was no more worthy than I had ever been. I would look around upon the faces of others, and think, O if I were only as good as they. When I offered myself to them I could do nothing but weep. I had no wonderful dream to tell, but only a sweet feeling of peace, and I have often wondered how they could see their way clear to receive me, and to treat me so kindly. I felt that I loved them, but how could they love me? I truly thought my troubles were all over, but O the tormenting doubts and fears that will arise, for

> "When I turn my eyes within,
> All is dark and vain and wild;
> Filled with unbelief and sin,
> Can I deem myself a child?"

Yet I have some most precious moments, when I feel a desire to praise God with my whole heart. O the depth of his wonderful love and mercy who can understand? It is so good to know that he holds everything in His own hand, and that he rules all things after the counsel of his own will. I am glad it is not left to the creature, for then surely we all must perish. The precious promises found in his word are full of comfort, but O how I have

longed for some more perfect assurance that I have been taught by the only Teacher. Have I learned of him, or have I only learned from the preaching I have heard? for sometimes it seemed they were preaching for my especial benefit. I do so long to be able to read my title clear; but that which is seen is not hope. One thing that gives me much comfort is, we know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren; and if I know myself, I do love them, I hope, for the truth's sake. I miss dear Elder Chick greatly. His writings were a great comfort to me, but I think we have a wonderful gift in Elder Lefferts. His article on "A look around" was good, and in the last number of the SIGNS the way he explained the four beasts was truly wonderful. I think if ever my heart went out in sympathy to any one, that one was Elder Ker. His was a sore trial indeed; but the same one that wounds the heart is able to heal the wounds. May his holy Spirit be with you in all your afflictions to comfort and strengthen. He has promised never to leave nor forsake, and his promises are true.

Well, if there are any of the marks of grace in this poorly written letter I cannot see them, but they are at your disposal; do what you think best, and it will be all right with me, but please do not crowd out better matter.

I would like some time to have your views on Deut. xxii. 11: "Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woolen and linen together."

One more favor and I will stop; that is, an interest in your prayers when at the throne of grace, for if saved at all it is by the grace of God.

Your sister in a precious hope,

ADDIE CHANDLER.

VERNON, Texas, Jan. 24, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—I must confess that I have been tardy in my remittance for subscription to our old family paper, but I beg you to forgive as negligence; procrastination is the thief of time. I have thought from time to time that I would remit, but so many cares and duties rush in and take charge of my mind that I forget, not because of an intent to do so, but because of so many pressing and cumbersome things pertaining to this life, of which I have but little control. But, dear brethren editors and correspondents of the SIGNS, we receive through the columns of our dear family paper many good sermons which are feasts to us, and then, too, the many good and comforting experiences which appear from the little ones of the Lord's flock make it all the more precious and indispensable to us. Dear brethren, we feel that in the person of our old departed brother, Elder Gilbert Beebe, was manifested in a measure the wisdom and riches of God, that the Lord through him, as he did through Moses, to Israel, or to the elect of God, led, guided and directed him; and now that his work on earth has been completed, and he called home to his reward, that others have been called upon to assume this work. I have yet as an humble reader not been able to detect any change in the principles laid down in his prospectus, and may it be, if it is God's will, that the present young editor, Elder Lefferts, be guided by the same Spirit, turning neither to the right nor to the left, but preach through his editorials a full and complete gospel, salvation by grace, eternal and unconditional election of all the saints, and the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. We feel sure that the arm of the Lord is not shortened that he cannot save, and that he worketh

all things after the counsel of his own will. Dear readers and correspondents, pray for poor me, that whither you go, there I may be also, that your God be my God, and that we may all in one ceaseless strain of heavenly music praise his holy name forever and ever.

I remain, I trust, your sister, though in unworthiness,

(MRS.) W. S. BOURLAND.

HAVANA, Kansas, Dec. 9, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—The remittance inclosed to renew my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is my fifty-second annual one. From boyhood to old age the paper has promptly made its semi-monthly appearance. One peculiarity about it is, I never missed a copy in all those fifty-two years. I believe that the records of your office will show I always paid in advance. I have often regretted that that is not the case of all your subscribers. Your continuous policy of not admitting advertising confines your income necessary to bear the expense of publication exclusively upon your paid subscription list. Subscribers should personally look at it in that light, and govern themselves accordingly. The SIGNS became very near and dear to me when I was yet in my teens, when sin became exceeding sinful to me, feeling that I was without God and without hope in the world of my flesh. In 1856, when father moved with the family from the old log house into the new one, he left on the shelves of the old house several rolls of the SIGNS, and in my distress I turned to them, and became deeply interested in them, more especially in the experience and travel of the writers. Well do I remember how eagerly I read those letters. They wrote about the same trouble that then beset my varied thoughts. They would lead me along in the same pathway, until the time of great deliverance came; that was all dark to me, and the curtain I could not lift to behold the peace of mind they described. When I was nineteen I trust the dark curtain was moved away by the merciful power of Him who said, Come unto me, all that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Jesus reveals himself to his elect because he loves them with an everlasting love, and with loving-kindness draws them. Upon the rock of revelation Christ builds his church, and the gates of hell or confusion cannot prevail against it.

Your brother in hope,

T. R. PITTMAN.

CANADA, Ky., Feb. 2, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I read the SIGNS last evening for Feb. 1st, and it is filled with good things from the great inexhaustible storehouse of our Father and our God, and it was indeed a feast to me. The "Fragments," by dear brother Durand are good, but the letter from John F. Oliver, on the prodigal son, and your remarks, were especially good to me at this particular time. Truly brother Oliver is a gifted man, and he was blessed to at least comfort me in this letter, and I feel sure his letter will comfort many others; if I know what is comforting, soul-cheering and edifying to God's humble poor, such a letter indeed is. My heart was softened, and tears began to break forth when I read your words, "Surely no mortal can get lower in the pit of darkness, despair, doubt, fear and temptation than we are most all the time." I was low down in darkness and despair, almost ready to give up.

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know."

I felt to be alone. Surely there is no one like me. Can any one feel as empty and poor as I, so sinful and unclean? It was comforting to know that I had company even in the dark and dreary valley of despair, but while reading your letter there was an awakening, there was a time of the singing of birds, and I felt to say with David, He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, He leadeth me beside the still waters, He restoreth my soul. Indeed, the most of my time I am barren, and O how I am troubled. I often in reviewing my ministerial career feel that I can see nothing but failure on my part, and even when I have the best liberty I see much that I cannot tell; words seem too weak to express the beauty I see, and then I feel that what I have said is altogether unprofitable, and to say I am weak does not describe my utter helplessness. Others who can and have by the Spirit's power preached Jesus to the poor and afflicted children of God also say they are weak, but can it be possible that others feel as I do? O is there any one like me?

Now I must close. There are many things, brother Ker, I would like to speak of to you, but cannot now, but I may some time, the Lord willing. I am such a poor writer, so illiterate, that I am ashamed to write. I would write more than I do if it were not for this feeling of ignorance and shame.

Yours in sorrow,

G. B. BIRD.

DOVER, Florida, Nov. 11, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is in my mind this morning to write a few things concerning our Lord and Savior. Jesus said to Peter, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die." Now, dear brethren, we are as likely to misunderstand and to misapply Jesus' words to-day as the disciples were in that day. I have heard able ministers in preaching say that Jesus himself did not claim to be good, and quote the Scripture where the man went to Jesus and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? Jesus did not claim that he was not good, but he told the man that there was none good, but one, and as I understand it he was, or is that one. Jesus knew that the man did not believe him to be the Christ, the Holy One of Israel, the Savior, but he looked upon him as he did other men, he was like all men in a state of nature, wanting to know what he could or should do, and when Jesus told him what to do, he claimed to have done all these things from his youth. Poor, deceived man, there are many in his condition to-day.

My dear brethren, I will close for this time. There are other Scriptures, according to my understanding, that are misunderstood, as the one under consideration.

Your brother in Christ, as I hope,

L. C. DESHONG.

MARENGO, Ohio, January, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It is again my duty to send my remittance, that you may continue to send our much loved paper, which most surely advocates the precious truth loved by all true lovers of the doctrine of God our Savior. I have enjoyed and been comforted in reading both the editorials and the communications from the brethren, and often feel a desire to also bear testimony to the same gracious truths, if I only possessed

the gift of expressing my thoughts. The precious doctrine of God is so deeply spiritual that my poor mortal mind cannot attain to it, yet somehow ofttimes I find myself feasting upon these things which are to me so precious, so beautiful, yet so divine, so infinite and eternal. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound," the gospel truth as it is in Jesus. This has been a great comfort to me at times, for if the gospel did not come to us in power, and found no lodgment within us, we would not enjoy it, nor have any assurance that we have been born again, for "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Truly indeed then we should be grateful if we possess any spiritual discernment at all; little as we feel it to be, it is God-given, and we are very highly favored of him. O may he ever give us grace to praise and glorify him forever.

With love to all the dear household of faith, I remain yours unworthily,

BELLE GORSUCH.

BALTIMORE, Md., Jan. 17, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have been wanting to write you since I read your New Year's Greeting, for I admire the spirit in which it was written. I also enjoyed the editorial of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, both what he said about the resurrection and the spirit in which it was written, for the Bible teaches both the resurrection of the body and that we should be meek and lowly in spirit, and not to lord it over God's heritage. I also think the Scripture teaches God's predestination of all things just as strongly, yet I know some very dear brethren who cannot see it that way, but I dare not say I will not fellowship them, yet I feel that both points of doctrine are plainly set forth in the word of God, and to deny either is to confuse the children of God our Savior. The apostle says that all Scripture was given by inspiration, and is profitable for instruction and reproof, that the man of God be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Contentions do not edify the body of Christ, the church, but rather confuse and distress. Such things appear to come from the carnal mind, and the apostle says the carnal mind, or natural man, receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. I often feel that the children of God are carnally minded, and the apostle says to be carnally minded is death. If our ministering brethren be led by their carnal mind into the path of error, and say hard things of each other, how distressing to the lambs that Jesus told his disciples to feed. May we be able to say with David, How good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.

Brother Ker, I have not written as I intended, but have put down the thoughts that came to me. If I send this, I hope you will throw the mantle of charity over it, for it is like the writer, very imperfect.

From one who hopes in "a better resurrection,"

L. C. GODWIN.

ARENA, N. Y.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I wish to say a few words, as I am writing to renew my subscription. Like most of our brethren and sisters who have written, I feel that we as a denomination have been greatly afflicted in the death of dear Elder Chick, of whom I feel to say, he had few equals and no superiors. He was so gifted to

explain the deep things of the Scriptures, and so kind and patient with the multitude of inquirers, it was wonderful. When his article appeared in Feb. 15th last year, the subject, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness," &c., I was deeply impressed that earth could not keep him much longer; his writings seemed like an inspiration, and savored of that celestial city whose builder and maker is God. It was hard to give him up. How much grace is needed to say, "Thy will be done." Nor would we forget dear Elder Ker in his sore affliction; our hearts went out in sympathy to him, and when he wrote "Alone" we felt we understood something of his bereavement, and could only pray that the great Shepherd would be his stay and staff, and guide him all his journey through. Right here in turning over the leaves in life's album I feel it is well to say with Paul, Forgetting the things that are behind. Not forgetting our loved ones gone before, by no means, we leave them with their Lord, but forgetting the things that are behind, let us press forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ. While we live, we live for the living, for whether we live or die we are the Lord's.

We are very thankful that Elder Lefferts was chosen to assist on the editorial staff; we know him to be a gifted young man, and an able minister of the new testament.

With kind wishes for the welfare and prosperity of each one of you, I remain your unworthy sister,

J. H. DICKSON.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., Jan. 1, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—Having just received the SIGNS for January 1st, 1915, it brought to my mind that another year had passed, therefore I am in debt, so will send my subscription, as I feel that I cannot do without the dear old SIGNS. I have enjoyed it for over fifty years, and it grows dearer as the years go by. I feel the last one more than pays for the whole year. I feel to thank our Father for putting it in the mind of brother Mayfield to send the letter of Elder Stipp to the SIGNS that it may be read by all Old Baptists. Although my mind has never been exercised much upon the bread or the wine, I have thought much of what kind of wine ought to be used; I have felt that it ought to be made of the grapes of the vineyard, or the wild grapes, still I have never felt that I was one who ought to try to tell what wine ought to be used. I am well pleased with what Elder Stipp's letter tells us, and would be glad if he had written of the wine also, for I have often wished I could have the views of some one on the wine. I do not feel capable of telling what has been on my mind in regard to those things, but I do feel we ought to follow the example of Him who said, This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. O how wonderful to be one of the number thus addressed. Can it be that I am one? I see nothing in myself that would in any way give me a hope, still I have hope that through the blood of Christ I am one who has been washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb.

Dear brother Ker, I feel to say that I just enjoyed your New Year's Greeting, and may we all heed the admonition, not only as regards the editorials, but in all things, as children of one family.

Wishing you a happy new year, and that the Lord will be with you in your labors, I am your sister in hope,

HELEN KINNEY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1915.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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ROMANS X. 13.

"WHOSOEVER shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Paul in his letter to the church at Rome quoted the above text from the Old Testament. It is really wonderful when one is by the Spirit given to behold gospel declarations and promises in the messages of God sent by the prophets to the faithful in Israel. The writer of Hebrews says, God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son. While it was a most wonderful and remarkable thing that God was manifest in the flesh and spake as never man spake, yet we should never forget the truth that all the prophets said was by the Spirit of the Most High, and therefore as true and gracious as the words of the incarnate Son. It has long been a comforting thought to us that God is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever, even though ages have changed, conditions remained not the same and worlds (peoples) have gone from the earth forever. Not only is God the same, but his eternal purpose has never changed, his word is everlasting and the salvation of his afflicted and poor people as secure and sure as the immutability of Him who promised eternal life before the world was. Another comforting thought is expressed by the poet:

"He needs no creature, power or skill
His finished work to mend,
But works his own eternal will
As wisdom did intend."

If the slightest thing depended upon man in his salvation, not one could be saved. In writing the above lines our mind has gone back to a sermon we heard preached years ago by Elder William Grafton, now at rest. His text was, "To God the only wise," and after taking up the natural creation with all its glory and wonder, including the sun, moon and stars, he said: "But what is all this when compared with the plan of salvation, purposed, decreed and accomplished by our merciful Lord?" We thought at the time that we had never heard such a sermon, and it still lives in our memory as a gracious message from God the Father, and perhaps no one sermon we ever heard more confirmed our faith in the omnipotence of the Lord of lords and King of kings.

Thus far in writing we have endeavored to lead the minds of our readers into the wonders of "the name of the Lord," which name is above every name in earth and heaven, neither is there salvation in any other. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower." Before any man can call upon the name of the Lord he must know that name, not by sound, not in spelling, not in writing, not in reading, but in power to save to the uttermost. Such knowledge does not spring out of the ground, nor is it taught in the schools of men; it is not acquired by reading the Bible, nor strict attention to Sunday School lessons; has never been carried to heathen lands by missionaries; has never been imparted to children by their parents; has never reached the heart of one sinner through the songs of Moody and

Sankey, nor through the efforts of noted revivalists. There is but one channel through which this knowledge comes, and to establish this assertion we give here the words of the only begotten Son of God: "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." The knowledge of God comes, therefore, direct through the Son, and to preach or sing anything contrary to this is blasphemy. We have often wondered at the apparent ignorance of learned men when they assert that any mortal can become a child of God at any time according to their free will. If the relation of children comes in any other way except through birth we have never heard of it. Through the law of adoption a child can become a legal heir of another man or woman, but there is no law that can make the adopted child other than the son or daughter of his or her own parents, bone of their bones and flesh of their flesh. Jesus says this of his children, hence they are children by birth, born again, born from above, born of the Spirit. All these children are taught of the Lord, and great is their peace. They, being subjects of the new covenant, do not teach every man his neighbor, saying, Know the Lord, nor is every man their "brother." Of all the men in the world we have but one brother, naturally, because he is the only one living beside ourself born in the family. Spiritually we hope we have many brethren, because of the heavenly birth in the family of God. Paul said, If children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. If not children, then not heirs, hence the birth of the Spirit is absolutely necessary to heirship.

Having now tried to establish the fact that no man can call upon the name of the Lord except he knows the power of that name, we shall call attention to a few of old who called upon His name and were saved. Abel called upon the name of the Lord in offering the lamb, and in his faith was saved. Enoch by faith called upon the name of the Lord and was saved (translated), not seeing death. Noah called upon the name of the Lord and was saved in the ark. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob called upon the name of the Lord and were saved, and now sit down in the kingdom of God. Daniel when in the den of lions called upon the name of the Lord and was saved. The three Hebrew children called upon the Lord and were saved from the burning fiery furnace. Many other men of faith in ancient times might be mentioned as having called upon the name of the Lord, but those above named are sufficient to show their faith in God and their knowledge of him in his power to save.

One special thing in our text we desire to call attention to is that "whosoever" calleth upon the name of the Lord, regardless of age, station in life or nationality, shall be saved. Sometimes it is said that death-bed repentance is not the right kind—that men should begin to serve the Lord when young, so that they might be the means of bringing others to God. We have known some repentances late in life to be questioned as genuine, but we know of no repentance more genuine than that of the thief on the cross. The truth of the text is that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. It may be in childhood, middle life or old age; it may be years before death or it may be with the last breath, the result is the same, it means salvation. We think the Scriptures will bear us out in saying that to call upon

the great and mighty name of the Lord, in faith and in truth, is a complete demonstration of salvation already. No man can call upon the name of the Lord except he be first saved. Jesus himself called upon the name of the Lord, and was heard in that he feared. Time and space will not allow the mention of all the poor, miserable characters who called upon Jesus for help when he sojourned on the earth: blind men, lepers, halt, maimed, possessed of evil spirits, &c., but all who called upon him were heard and saved. The name of the Lord is the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, the Lord our righteousness, the Holy One, the Savior, the Redeemer, Priest, Husband, King and Friend. To call upon him is to know him in each of his names, and to worship him in spirit and in truth.

In conclusion, we will call attention to the fact that under the old covenant none but an Israelite, the Lord's chosen, could call upon the name of the Lord—none had access to God through the high priest except Israelites, but now the middle wall of partition which separated Jew and Gentile having been removed by our blessed Savior, and of the twain one new man made, thus making peace, any man, Jew or Gentile, who has been born of God, can call upon him and is and shall be saved. K.

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THE ABUNDANT LIFE.

"I AM come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."—John x. 10.

A world of importance is in those words: "I am." Jesus says, "Before Abraham was, I am." His name is I AM. The coming of the I AM in the flesh is the giving to the sheep life from the dead, and is the only way the sheep can ever live unto God. It is not enough to know that Jesus came in his own flesh as a man among men nearly two thousand years ago. The belief in that historical fact will not give spiritual life, but this same Jesus that once walked the shores of Galilee must come now as a present principle in the flesh of the subjects of his grace. When he thus comes by and in the Spirit to the sheep, he manifests himself to them as their life, and quickens them into spiritual life from their deadness in sins. In this way Jesus is still in the world, and will be so long as a single elect vessel of mercy remains in this time state. The Word made flesh is not a past event, but a very potent force and active principle in the life of his church to-day. The personal coming of Jesus in the Spirit to each one of his people individually is all that can give them life after that same Spirit. Natural life proceeds from a natural source: Adam the fleshly head of the human race. Spiritual life proceeds from a spiritual source: Christ the head of the election of grace. "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." Human efforts, means or agencies can never give a spark of spiritual life. Could they have done so, it would not have been necessary for Jesus to have come and to have endured all that he did that he might give the sheep life. If man can do what Jesus went through so much fire and blood to do, why need there have been such hum-

bling of himself on the part of the Mighty God, the great I AM? Every time that so much as a word is breathed in praise to man for the least thing in the way of salvation, just that often is God's holy name blasphemed.

But passing on with our text, we note that Jesus says, "I am come that they." Who are the "they"? It is very hard for us to read a single verse of holy writ and not see the doctrine of election staring us in the face. This word "they" preaches election, because it refers to the sheep of which Jesus, the good Shepherd, has just been speaking in the preceding verses of this chapter. He does not say the whole world, everybody, might have life through his coming, but "they," the sheep. It is evident that the "sheep" do not include the whole race of Adam, for in the twenty-sixth verse of this same chapter Jesus says, "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." It is not our province to say who are and who are not the sheep. Man has not marked them, but God has, and that before the foundation of the world. "The Lord knoweth them that are his." But we do know that there were then, and that there are now, those who do not believe in Jesus, and the reason they do not believe in him is because they are not his sheep. Were they his sheep they would be found believing in him. Belief is a mark of election; it does not make one elect, but shows he is elect. The language of Jesus in John vi. 33, does not contradict what we here have said. "The bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." The word "world" here does not mean all of Adam's race, but means that the giving of life is not confined by national boundaries, that the sheep of God are scattered everywhere, and are among the Gentiles as well as among Israel of old. God has a people in all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues, the church is thus world-wide. It is so, because Jesus came down from heaven, the bread of life, to give life unto the "world." "Other sheep [Gentiles] I have, which are not of this [Jewish] fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."

Passing on with our subject, the coming of Jesus, we see, is not simply to give life to the sheep, but "that they might have it more abundantly." There must be a difference between "life" and "abundant life." We do not mean that there is any difference in the nature or quality of the life, but certainly a difference in the quantity or measure of that life. An abundance of anything means more and more of that same thing, not something different added to the original When Jesus healed the blind man outside the city of Bethsaida, he touched that man's eyes twice. After the first touch the man said, "I see men as trees, walking." After the second touch he "saw every man clearly." The first touch brought vision, but not clear discrimination; the second touch brought clearness to the vision already given. The difference here was not in the quality of the vision, but in its measure, or abundance. So with life and abundant life, the difference is one of measure, or fullness. Tracing the path of the just from righteous Abel down to the apostles and the early church, we note a growth in the abundance of the spiritual life as the ages and dispensations succeed each other. As a fruit tree approaches its prime, its fruit yields more abundantly. From the biblical record given us, we see an increase in the number of the people of God

manifested from age to age. Before the flood the names of the chosen ones left on record are but few. After the flood, and until the deliverance from Egypt, there are more comparatively than before. From then until the opening of the gospel dispensation the records of the Lord's people and their doings and sayings become more and more plentiful, until, as John says in the Revelation, the number that were sealed out of the twelve tribes were a hundred and forty and four thousand. Then coming down into the gospel dispensation and taking a faith survey of the church from the apostles until now, there is manifested life in abundance, for John also says in the Revelation that the number sealed from among the Gentiles was a multitude that no man could number. So during the three years (patriarchal, legal and prophetic) preceding this gospel year the fruit of the tree of life was not manifested in such abundance as during the gospel year or dispensation. Therefore, in saying that he came to give life, and to give it abundantly, Jesus was speaking in connection with the bringing in of the Gentiles unto new covenant relationship in him. The middle wall of partition between the Jew and Gentile would be broken down, and a new man fashioned of the twain, and as he came to save his people among the Jews, and to give them life, even so would he save his "other sheep" not of the Jews, and inasmuch as they were more numerous than those of the Jewish fold, it must follow there would be life in greater abundance. All the apples off a tree together contain more life than any single apple. Even so a "multitude that no man can number" contains more life than an "hundred and forty and four thousand." But there is another aspect to this abundant life which we certainly must not overlook. The prophets who lived before the coming of the Savior, and who looked by faith to his coming, were moved by the Holy Ghost to speak and to write as they did, but as they did so they did not understand the full import of what they spoke or wrote; they could not interpret their own records. Law and prophecy were without interpretation until Jesus came. The book of prophecy "written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals," could not be opened by man, but the Lion of the tribe of Judah, Jesus Christ, prevailed to open the book and loose the seven seals. None of the sayings of old, therefore, were known in their full significance to the inspired men that wrote them. This interpretation was reserved unto us of the gospel dispensation, that "they without us should not be made perfect." The apostles were given to understand things kept secret from the foundation of the world and certainly hidden from their brethren the prophets. Apostolic understanding and interpretation exceed legal types and shadows and prophetic declarations, but remember the difference is not one of kind, but of measure or abundance. The prophet Joel wrote of the coming of the day of the Lord, and described that day, but he did not and could not explain what he wrote. It was reserved for Peter on the day of Pentecost to be given understanding of this matter to set it forth. Joel had the same spiritual life that was in Peter, but he did not have it in the measure that Peter had it, not as abundantly. For this reason Jesus told his disciples while with them here on earth that it was expedient for them that he go away; that unless he went away the Comforter would not come. The coming of the Comforter was essential to the abundant life of the church, it was

essential to the leading of the people of God into all truth and to bringing them into remembrance of all things that Jesus had told them. The things that Jesus taught his disciples while here on earth with them were not understood by them until after his resurrection from the dead, and the bestowing of the power from on high which took place when Pentecost had fully come. The abundant life clears the vision and grants clear discrimination. We can scarcely realize that the man Peter, who so boldly declares the truth at Pentecost in the presence of that immense congregation of Jews out of every nation under heaven, is the same man that but a few weeks before denied Jesus with oaths and bitterness when a woman asked him if he knew the Galilæan. Clothed upon with abundant life, Peter loses sight of self and self-interest and boldly and fearlessly declares the truth as it is in Jesus. When Jesus called him to feed the sheep and the lambs of his fold, Peter wondered what John was to be given to do. Perhaps Peter felt that a heavy yoke was being laid on him, and that John was to have an easy time of it. It is natural that the nature of every one called to preach should feel it a galling yoke, but as Jesus then told Peter: "When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not." So does the abundant life of the Spirit crucify this flesh of Peter's and carry him into fields where his own natural will and inclinations would never have led him, and the life must indeed be abundant to overcome all the obstinacy and rebellion of this old carnal nature. We can scarcely realize that the Paul who so ably and fearlessly defends the truth in his preaching and writing is the same man that once bitterly hated that truth and sought to kill those who believed it. He is another shining example of what abundant life can do. Abundant life clutched John Bunyan from the gutter, a besotted wretch, and set him in the pulpit to preach Jesus Christ, and him crucified. Afterward that same abundant life illuminated the soul of Bunyan in the sombre Bedford jail, and reflected itself in the pages of Pilgrim's Progress. We might go on and multiply instances of this abundant life indefinitely, but a few more will suffice. An unbaptized believer has not the spiritual life in the same abundance that one has who is baptized. The answer of a good conscience towards God is a measure of spiritual life that one has not who is not baptized. Very often one who loves the church, and believes the doctrine of Jesus, shrinks from baptism on account of his or her unworthiness, or other stumbling-blocks that appear to them insurmountably in their pathway. It takes life to climb mountains, and the bigger the mountain the more life is needed. We have seen rocks, and huge ones, that have been rent by the roots of trees. So powerful and insistent is life that death and opposition must sooner or later give way before it. It takes a certain measure of the gift of Christ, a certain abundance of life, to enable one to put aside his unworthiness and other seeming lack of qualifications for church membership and thus submit himself to the judgment of his brethren. Also, in the church there is a great variety of ministering gifts, each possessing its own measure, and all relying for their value and effectiveness on the abundant life which accompanies the appearing of Jesus at all times. This abundant life of the Spirit lays these gifts on the altar of service, sinking personal welfare and ambition in the benefit of the body, the church.

Written at the request of Elder H. B. Jones, of Winnsboro, Texas. L.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, Feb. 17th, 1915, at the residence of the bride's parents, Bothwell, Ontario, Canada, William Ross Walker, of Florence, Ontario, and Lucy Isabel MacLean, of Bothwell.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at his residence, 1910 N. 22nd St., Philadelphia, Pa., Thursday, Feb. 4th, 1915, William R. Wilson, of Wilmington, Del., and Miss Helen R. Badger, of Philadelphia, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Frances Paddack, sister of C. A. Paddack, of Eaton, and wife of the late Harvey Paddack, died last Sunday morning in the home of her daughter, Mrs. Stanley Hart, in Jackson township, near Campbellstown, following a brief illness from a complication of diseases, aged 61 years. Besides the daughter in whose home she passed away, Mrs. Paddack leaves two daughters, Mrs. E. R. Churchill and Mrs. W. S. Gaar, of Richmond, Ind. Born in Preble County, Mrs. Paddack passed her life as a resident within its borders. Her maiden name was Paddack. Her husband, who died a number of years ago, was one among the best known farmers in the county. He at one time bore distinction of being the most extensive land owner in the county. Mrs. Paddack's death took place upon the old Paddack homestead farm, one among the finest estates in the county.

Funeral services were conducted Tuesday forenoon at 10:30 o'clock, in the home, by Elder P. W. Sawin, of Shelbyville, Ky., after which the body was buried in State Line Cemetery, southwest of Campbellstown.

To the above clipping I will add that our dear sister in the faith of the gospel was received in the fellowship of the old Mill Creek Church several years ago, and baptized by Elder H. M. Curry. She was steadfast in the doctrine of her profession—none more firm or better established. For some years she felt she was not living as near the cross as she desired; that is, she could not feel the power of the gospel or truth in Christ. In our correspondence she would speak of this, but I was informed by an old friend that during the forepart of last summer, while in the hospital, the dear Lord appeared to her most wonderfully in his beauty and glory; her heart was filled to overflowing, and during the remainder of her days she enjoyed that freedom of soul and spirit so long desired in conversing on spiritual, heavenly things. How true, In thy presence is fullness of joy. She was a beloved follower of the dear Redeemer. The church, the community and the dear family feel the loss. We wish for each member the ever-abiding presence of the Lord, with every needed grace and blessing for this life and that which is to come. P. W. SAWIN.

Mrs. Sarah Conklin, widow of John E. Conklin, died in Warwick, N. Y., Dec. 31st, 1914, aged 86 years. Sister Conklin had been feeble for several years, and among other afflictions was nearly blind, which was a source of great grief to her, as it prevented her from her former and long enjoyment of reading the Bible, hymn-book and SIGNS; these were her delight. She was the oldest member of the Warwick Old School Baptist Church, both from a standpoint of years and membership. She continued to attend meetings even after she was too feeble to walk to the meetinghouse, being taken there in a carriage. No one could love the truth more than did she—it was her meat and drink, and while the outer man perished day by day, she never lost interest nor enjoyment in the things of Zion. It was our privilege to visit her often, and always she would ask that we read the Scriptures and speak in prayer. When the final summons came she, through faith, calmly and peacefully fell asleep in Jesus to awake with his likeness, no more frail in body, blind no longer, but to live in the glorified body like unto his own, to see him face to face. She is survived by one daughter: Mrs. Albert H. Drew, of Warwick, N. Y., two grandchildren and one great-grandson, together with one sister: Mrs. Mary Furman, of Warwick, N. Y.

The funeral service was held from the home of her daughter, Jan. 3rd, 1915, where the writer tried to preach Jesus and the resurrection to the comfort and consolation of the living. Interment was in the family plot in the Warwick Cemetery. K.

Rachel Norton Lackey, daughter of Elder A. D. and Jane Norton, was born in Crawford County, Ill., June 28th, 1844, departed this life Jan. 21st, 1915, aged 70 years, 6 months and 28 days. She was united in marriage to Adam Lackey, Sept. 5th, 1861. To that union thirteen children were born, five of whom preceded her to the other world. Those left to mourn their loss are Joseph, Carl, Ross, James, Edgar, William, Mrs. B. Smith and Mrs. Beatrice Montgomery, all of whom have families and reside in the vicinity; also one sister, Mrs. Eliza Kent, eighteen grandchildren and a host of friends in Crawford and Lawrence counties. The subject of this sketch spent her entire married life of over fifty-three years on the old homestead in Russell township. She always proved her worth in all times of need. She was charitable, never turning away the hungry and destitute nor refusing rest for the weary. She united with the Old School Baptist Church called Canaan April 11th, 1896, and was baptized by her pastor, Elder Archie Brown, and lived a faithful member until death. For more than a year she was confined to her room from the dread malady, paralysis, which finally caused her death. Mother is gone, a family is broken; no more in the family council of home will her

voice be heard, but we read that their deeds live after them, and though gone she did not live in vain, and we by remembering her wise counsel and good advice may live to be better men and women.

Funeral services were held at East Pinkstaff at 11 a. m., Jan. 24th, conducted by Elder A. F. Watkins, of Lisbon, Ind.

I will add to the above obituary, which I received by mail to send to the SIGNS for publication, that she was a first cousin of mine. The only one of her father's family left is Mrs. Eliza Kent, of Birds, Ill., on my father's side. I visited her last December. Her whole theme was spiritual things, and she requested me to sing the old-fashioned hymns. When I bade her farewell she said, "Cousin, we hope to meet in a better world than this." With many tears we parted, never to meet again in this world. She had strong, abiding faith in the doctrine of the Old School Baptists, and told me she had no fear of death, but longed to depart and be with her blessed Lord, a poor sinner saved by grace alone, no merit of her own. May the God of all grace sustain our dear brother and the children left behind, is the humble prayer of the writer. E. A. NORTON.

HAMPTON, Iowa.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, I expect to be with the Woburn Church, Woburn, Mass., the first Sunday in April. Services at the usual hours.

H. C. KER.

APPOINTMENTS.

Sunday, March 21st, Union Grove, N. Y., 11 a. m., evening at brother Faulkner's, 7:50; Monday, 22nd, Kelly Corners, N. Y., 7:30 p. m.; Tuesday, 23rd, Vega, N. Y., 11 a. m.; Wednesday, 24th, Roxbury, N. Y., 11 a. m.; Thursday, 25th, Ashokan, N. Y., 1:30 p. m.; Thursday evening, Kingston, 7:50.

D. M. VAIL.

MEETINGS.

Liberty Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, of Los Angeles, Cal., meets every first and third Sunday in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., at 42nd and Moneta Ave., and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal.

W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor.

C. B. RICE, Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 83. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1915. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"ADOPTION."

(Ephesians i. 5.)

"NEAR unto him."—Psalms cxlviii. 14. "Nigh unto them."—Deut. iv. 7. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"—Romans xi. 33. This may be said of all the sacred discoveries of our God in the gospel of Christ. The disparity between Jehovah the Creator and the sinful creature man is infinite; therefore the purpose of God to have an elect company of human beings near unto him is full of unspeakable blessedness, and in fulfillment of this counsel of his will all the glories of God are declared in their immortal splendor. If we have eyes to see, then in the works of God in creation, in his providence and government of all things, many of the glories of God are to be seen. But the fullest revelation of the attributes of God is in the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. Such unfathomable, sacred and glorious things are declared in the Scriptures that it is with much difficulty, and only with sacred reverence, that we must speak of them. Look at the following Scripture: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."—Eph. i. 3, 4. This is a wonderful and glorious subject. Before God gave them being in creation in the first man Adam, so infinite is his wisdom, in the counsel of his own will, that he comprehended in the creation of Adam all the offspring that should proceed from him to the end of time, and in everlasting love, in the infinite deeps of his sovereignty, he elected his people unto himself in Christ Jesus. For in Jehovah's decree of election he comprehended therein, in the fullness of time, the incarnation of his dear Son, and Christ Jesus, the seed of the woman taken into inseparable oneness with the Word, the eternal Son of God was thus beholden, comprehended, set up from everlasting, the Head of the elect of mankind, and they given unto him, given spiritual, eternal life in him, blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in him, are

thus associated with him; they, in the counsel of Jehovah's will, were from everlasting the people of our Lord Jesus Christ, the church of the Firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. As the Son of God took unto himself in unspeakable nearness our nature, when he took upon him the seed of Abraham and was made flesh, dwelt among us full of grace and truth, so we in Christ are near to God; nearer we cannot be. In him we are loved, (Romans viii. 38,) in him we are chosen, (Eph. i. 4,) in him blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, in him we are predestinated unto the adoption of children, and in him we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. If then we are to know that we are embraced in this people so near to and so well beloved of God, it will ever be as we are found in vital, experimental nearness to Jesus Christ. Those who are thus united with Christ are one spirit with him. "Ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." O the blessedness! There are many aspects in which it is to be seen how near his people are to him, and how nigh he is to them. Let us then consider their adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto the Father.

Christ in his eternal Godhead is one with the Father and the Holy Ghost, and in his being the dear and only begotten Son of God he is equal with the Father. "I and my Father are one." Our Lord Jesus Christ therefore in his Godhead, in his nature, is the natural Son of God, and that holy manhood, which was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and which he took upon him into union with himself, and in which he bears the human name Jesus, is in consequence of this ineffable union called the Son of God. (Luke i. 35.) "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." It is by Christ that we are brought unto the adoption of children unto the Father, for it is as we are joined to Christ, the Son of God, it is by what he hath done for us, and by what is wrought in his people, and in how we shall be wrought in the resurrection at the last day, that the predestination of the elect unto the adoption of children shall come unto its glorious consummation, and all the adopted ones shall know the immortal blessedness, the glorious liberty and eternal inheritance of the children of God. There is so much to be done that sinful human beings should be holy and without blame before God in love, that they should be meet for this exaltation, for such intimate blessedness. The elect of God are the offspring of the first man Adam, and in this relationship they are of the earth, earthy. Looked upon thus they bear the image of the earthy. As created in Adam the Lord pronounced him "very good." God made man upright, but he hath sought out many inventions. But the elect and the nonelect alike fell in Adam into sin. "O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity."—Hosea xiv. 1. When Adam plunged into transgression he plunged all the unborn human race into the abyss of corruption; and now, behold mankind. They are in alienation, enmity against God, enemies to him by wicked works, dead to God in trespasses and sins, under the curse of the law. This abject direful estate into which the elect descended by transgression in Adam was not unforeseen by him whose understanding is infinite, (Psalms cxlvii. 5,) but God in his determinate

counsel and foreknowledge, in the everlasting covenant that was made with Christ, whose goings have been from of old, from everlasting, (Micah v. 2,) provided for their redemption from this low estate. The Lamb of God was verily foreordained before the foundation of the world. (1 Peter i. 20.) This decreed provision for their redemption was all in God's everlasting love, in his purpose and grace given us in Christ before the foundation of the world; all embraced in the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory. Therefore when the decreed time, the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. (Gal. iv. 4, 5.) "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." The law had its claims against us, and all those holy and just demands against the chosen of God as transgressors must be satisfied, the law magnified and made honorable before we could be released from its condemnation and curse. Christ therefore came to ransom his people, in enduring the curse; he suffered the just for the unjust, to bring us to God. He came to fulfill the law, to become the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. "Forasmuch then as the children [according to their preadoption by Jesus Christ unto the Father] are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Christ gave himself for the church an offering and a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savor. What it cost him no tongue can tell. He came delighting to do the will of the Father; he came determined to save them from their sins. He began the glorious and mighty work traveling in the greatness of his strength, mighty to save; he turned not away back, repentance was hid from his eyes, he set his face like a flint unto the accomplishment of the redemption of his bride (such the elect are unto him), he gave his back to the smiters, his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; he hid not his face from shame and spitting, yea, he poured out his soul unto death, he was numbered with the transgressors, he bare the sin of many and made intercession for transgressors. How willing was Jesus to die! "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes."

"Mystery of redemption this—
All my sins on Christ were laid;
My offence was reckoned his;
He the great atonement made."

So wonderful, so sacred and comforting is all this to a poor, sin-distressed soul, apprehensive of the wrath to come, yet yearning for forgiveness of his sins, sighing, longing for reconciliation with God. Our Lord Jesus Christ gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, and this testimony in the heart, by the power of the Holy Ghost, is what is so desired and so essential for the comfort and hope of a vile transgressor.

This brings us to the consideration of other aspects in which the chosen are afore prepared unto the glory of their adoption by Jesus Christ unto God. "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." As creatures the elect are of the family of Adam. Even as viewed in Adam, as he came

from the creative, forming hand of God, the disparity between the creature and the Creator was immeasurable, but when they are viewed in their sins, so vile, unholy, wicked enemies of God, O the infinite gulf between them and God! Who and what can close this dreadful abyss and bring them nigh to the Holy One that inhabiteth eternity, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love? The translation therefore of the elect from their abject estate in the first Adam unto adoption into the house of Christ, the last Adam, the Lord from heaven, is a sacred, wonderful and divine work, which I desire now to trace, as testified of in the Scriptures and known even now, in part, by those who are born of God. The apostle speaks of "giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son."—Col. i. 12, 13. The subjects of this kingdom are brethren, it comprises "the whole family," and when fully manifested not the least one will be missing, for Christ shall bring all of the "many sons unto glory" in the joy of his heart, saying, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me."—Heb. ii. 10–13.

Christ is the Son over his own house, whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. In John i. 12, 13, some of the steps are described in which the elect are brought, even while in this world, unto an earnest of the sacred blessedness of the relationship unto God of children. Here is the declaration of the word of God: "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." They had no power, no right inherent in themselves, to constitute themselves the sons of God. They were in their being as the children of Adam utterly alien from God, strangers and foreigners altogether averse to enter, and without any power to become the household of God. They could not thrust themselves upon God and force him to adopt them; O no. So utter is the separation between them and God, their condition is such that the elect, as viewed in Adam, are by nature the children of wrath even as others, and are destitute of both will and power to become the sons of God. But we read, To them gave he power, the right, the unspeakable privilege. To whom gave he this power? To those who were born of God, who believe in and receive our Lord Jesus Christ. They were born of the will of God, which is the essential preparedness, capacitating them to believe in and to receive Christ. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." What is it to be born of God? Jesus Christ said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," and this being born again is described as being born of water and of the Spirit. (John iii. 3–6.) In Titus iii. 5, it is declared in other language: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." And in Ephesians v. 25–27: "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it: [that is, 'Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor,'—Eph. v. 2, our propitiation, our sin-atoning sacrifice,] that he might [this

was to be the fruit of his giving himself a sacrifice for our sins. This shall I say, gave Christ, the Husband, Redeemer, the right. This was the order of the counsel of God in the everlasting covenant.] sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word. That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Though the language of the Holy Ghost in these Scriptures is varied, it all relates to the subject of the chosen of God being born of God, and thus bringing them into the household of God. The apostle Peter speaks of the elect being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, (1 Peter i. 23,) and also in James i. 18, it is declared that the Father of lights (with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning) of his will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures. That statement, "Of his own will begat he us," is very satisfying, because it blessedly discovers to us the heart, the determinate counsel of God our Father. For, having of the good pleasure of his will predestined his chosen unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, so of his own will, not of the will of the flesh, not of the will of man, but of his own good pleasure he will bring them unto himself in sacred nearness, fitted for the unspeakable glory of the adoption. They therefore are begotten of him by the word of truth, they are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. The vital experience of this is known only by the taught of God. "Being born of incorruptible seed." This is the life of Christ put forth in the soul, and that life is a sacred quickening, transforming power, as the Scriptures teach, and as our own experiences verify. We are "begotten," "born," (brought forth) "translated," "transformed," "renewed." These things are not fictions, they are not philosophical speculations, but divine realities, wrought by divine power in the souls of those whom God hath predestinated unto the adoption of children. The seed or life of Christ, of which the chosen of God are begotten, is that which God promised and gave us in his Son before the world began. Our life is hid with Christ in God. If then we who in times past were dead in our sins are now quickened, partakers of this life, what is wrought to give true, manifest evidence that we are such? Am I born again? As the seed of which we are begotten is incorruptible, so what is wrought, put forth by this seed, is incorruptible, and liveth and abideth forever. In this the children of God are manifested. God in the new covenant saith, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh."—Ezek. xxxvi. 26. When his Spirit is put within a poor sinner that one is then begotten, born, brought forth of God, and the effects that are wrought in us by this divine transformation declare this to be so. We are new creatures, with a new heart and a new spirit, and all things are become new; that is, all things that we now with this heart and spirit have to do with are now become new, they are now unto us vital, incorruptible. In times past in our ignorance and alienation we thought all things pertaining to God and to Christ and his kingdom to be of small account, but now they live, they are precious,

sought after, and we live unto and in them. All this is but little understood in the early experiences of quickened sinners, but God, still performing his good work in them, brings forth in them toward himself and the gospel of Christ that which shows them to be of God, the workmanship of his grace. "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." The new-born soul experiences trouble; we are alarmed, for our sins become a burden, and the condemnation of the holy, almighty God in the law is as the shadow of death overwhelming us. Yes, we have fears of the wrath to come, we see no way of deliverance for a vile transgressor, and with the Deliverer Jesus Christ we are not yet intimate. (1 Thess. i. 10.) We become alive to the dreadful fact that in our whole Adamic life we are corrupt, sinful beings, and this corruption of our nature is now bitter bondage. We loathe ourselves, and in our abasement and bitterness of soul we sigh, we are contrite in heart, and sometimes with strong cries we exclaim, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" As a further token that we are begotten of God we reach forth for that which is pure and incorruptible, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and we find our creature righteousness to be no food at all, it is not bread. Again, it is written, "Every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God."—1 John iv. 7.

But before proceeding further there is a matter of sacred interest I wish to present for your contemplation. When the Scriptures speak of believers being "begotten of God," this must not be confounded with the oft repeated declaration that our Lord Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God. (John i. 18.) The Son of God, who in his incarnation, in his sufferings, obedience and doctrine declares the Father is from eternity and to eternity in the bosom of the Father, in actual subsistence, the only begotten Son of God; he is the Son of the Father in truth and love, the eternal Son of God, who with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one Jehovah, inhabiteth eternity. "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."—1 John v. 7. Therefore Christ speaks of the glory which he had with the Father before the world was. (John xvii. 5.) This none of the adopted children of God could do. "Before the world was." Then as yet there were none of them in actual being, they were not yet created, and Christ in this language unto his Father did not use it in relation to his holy manhood, for that only had being when conceived by the Holy Ghost and was taken into union with the Son of God in the womb of the virgin Mary. But God sent forth his Son, God gave his only begotten Son, God hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, (Heb. i. 2, 3,) and when he bringeth his first begotten into the world, born of the virgin, made in the likeness of men, laid a babe in the manger, he saith, Let all the angels of God worship him; and then when thus contemplated in fashion as a man, how sublime and what comfort is in the declaration of the Holy Ghost, "Unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom: thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."—Heb. i. 8, 9. "Thy fellows." This is what I am endeavoring to present. Christ in his Godhead is the fel-

low of the Lord of hosts, and the man, Jesus, taken into inseparable union with the Son of God in that glorious and incomprehensible union (to finite minds such), is spoken of by Jehovah the Father as the man that is my fellow. (Zech. xiii. 7.) The holy child Jesus hath this preeminence, and we his fellows, (Psalms xlv. 7,) made such by adoption, by being joined unto him by the Spirit of Christ sent forth in our hearts, for God hath called us unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. We are thus Jesus' companions, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son (incarnate) Jesus Christ our Lord. In those transactions of our God, bringing us unto the adoption of children, there are a number of most sacred and gracious features, all of which are wrought of God, and bring us so near to him that we are no longer aliens, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Some of the steps we have already traced. Now the apostle declares the experimental channel of our relationship unto God as children, saying, We are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. This is a very comforting stage in the experience of the quickened sinner; for our faith is of the operation of God, giving us hope and repose as we are so taught and wrought by the Holy Spirit to trust in the dear Redeemer. Being led and taught of the Lord we were shown that we were guilty, perishing sinners, and that there was no help in ourselves. We were ready to perish, and no creature arm could save us from our sins and the wrath to come. But in due time, the Lord's own time to be gracious to us, how lifting up, how gracious, how hope began to grow as we were led to think upon Jesus. The gospel of Christ became to us good news indeed, we were drawn to Jesus, the crucified Savior, our sin-wounded hearts yearned after him, and there were fervent entreaties in our souls that mercy, pardon and salvation might be bestowed upon us wretched, unworthy, law-condemned, self-condemned sinners. We were taught to know the Lamb of God, who put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself, and his robe of perfect obedience unto and upon us in our believing in him was felt to be our glorious dress. Thus we have hope that the blood and righteousness of Christ brings us with all acceptance before our God. In our trust and hope and love in Jesus we are brought very near to God, and we hope he is nigh to us. Our souls are sometimes saying, Surely God hath loved me, a poor, vile sinner, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life. We love God, our heavenly Father, Hallowed be thy name, and Jesus is trusted in and is dear to us, unfeignedly loved by us poor sinners, and in these realms of love hope springs up within us that we are the children of God, and in our hearts we are saying, Heavenly Father. This is according to the order of things provided in the everlasting covenant. So it is written, "And because ye are sons [by pre-adoption], God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."—Gal. v. 6, 7. Thus we cry, Abba, Father. (Romans viii. 15.) Jesus taught his disciples, saying, "When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name," and his Spirit sent forth in our hearts enables us to draw night to God in this affectionate

relationship. These are precious moments, for there are times when it is not so with me. I am under such burdening unworthiness I feel to loathe myself because of inward iniquities, or I am so carnal, so hardened in heart, so barren in soul of all spiritual emotions, that it looks like hypocrisy to speak in prayer to God and call him Father. I feel to be as an outcast, outside the household of God, and that it would be a shame to intrude myself among the family of God. So at such times when I have attempted to pray in private, in my family, or in the public worship of God, I have not dared to use the words, "Our Father." Yet strange as it may appear, all the while I knew I was restraining myself, restraining my heart, for down deep in my heart I longed to cry, Father. O, my heart ached to say, Father. O, if I could only say unto God, My Father, all would be well. And when does this liberty come? It comes again and again when Jesus our Savior appears in his love and blood and tender sin-pardoning grace to my soul.

"But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the host of nations? And I said, Thou shalt call me, My Father; and shall not turn away from me."—Jer. iii. 19. There is another feature in our gospel intimacy with Christ that I wish to touch upon, for it very blessedly declares our sonship unto our Father who is in heaven. Jesus said in one of his gospel teaching parables, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son."—Matt. xxii. 2. In many places in the Scriptures the oneness of Christ and the church is set forth in this "great mystery" of heavenly wedlock. "I speak [saith the apostle Paul] concerning Christ and the church."—Eph. v. 32. He writes in 2 Cor. xi. 2, "I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin unto Christ." And again we read, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."—Rev. xix. 7, 8. In the covenant of eternal wedlock Christ, the Head of the church, thus in all heavenly affection speaks: "I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies: I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the Lord."—Hosea ii. 19, 20. When the incarnate Son of God so reveals himself to his own, showing to poor sinners how in his life and sufferings and death, resurrection and ascension to glory for their sakes he hath so loved us, we are then indeed allured to the Lamb of God, and we become joined unto him in faith and love, and to be joined to Christ is to be one Spirit with him. If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his. If we are truly united to Jesus Christ our souls will be actuated toward the great God and our Savior in faith and hope and love, and as we increase in our knowledge of the Son of God we shall experience his divine power moving us in delighted obedience to the commandments of our heavenly Father, Hallowed be thy name. The church is lovingly subject unto Christ. (Eph. v. 24.) Our husband is our Lord, and we worship him. (Psalms xlv. 11.) Christ's delights are with his people, and he calleth them

Hephzibah. (Isaiah lxii. 4.) Our beloved Savior greatly desireth the beauty of his ransomed ones. He is the Lord our righteousness, (Jer. xxiii. 6,) and of his people, the bride of Christ, it is written, "This is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our righteousness."—Jer. xxxiii. 16. (Jehovah recordeth his name in Jerusalem, his people, and they are unto him and he unto them in all the grace and glories of his name in which he declares himself unto them.) And Christ is well pleased with that excellency that is wrought, and put forth in the soul, by the Spirit's operations, that righteousness in the heart, holy aspirations, that love and faith, prayer and praise, those heavenly ornaments of a meek and quiet spirit which in his sight are of great price.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom believers are espoused, is even he that is raised from the dead. (Rom. vii. 4.) He is our King as well as Husband, Redeemer upon the holy hill of Zion, and it is said unto his people concerning him, "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."—Psalms ii. 12. In this heavenly counsel we come unto the Son, (John vi. 45,) and this counsel of God is that we should, (and by the operations of God's grace we shall, we do, live) in all sweet, affectionate reconciliation unto the Father, by the Son, by whom we receive the atonement, and that we are in true allegiance to him, our Husband and King, who once was slain for us, but liveth again, and is in glory, crowned with glory and honor. (Heb. ii. 9.) "Kiss the Son." Yes, in faith and love I would kiss his pierced hands, his feet and his sacred head once wounded, crowned with thorns. Show me, O Savior, thy hands and thy feet, that I may know thee mine, crucified for my sins, and let me also in faith and love ascend and see thee enthroned upon the holy hill of Zion. "Kiss the Son." What a heavenly privilege for a sinner. His cheeks are as beds of spices, as sweet flowers, and may I, a poor, vile sinner, love thee, kiss thee, O fairest Redeemer? O "let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine." Grace is poured into his lips, his lips are like lilies dropping sweet-smelling myrrh, his mouth is most sweet. O the moving of his lips would assuage all my griefs. A kind word from thee, O Savior, is all I ask. How oft after thee my heart has yearned when I have wandered alone, as one that is turned aside from the flocks of thy companions, as a wretched outcast I have been, yet I have sighed for thee, and this has been the language of my heart, "O that thou wert as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother! when I should find thee without, I would kiss thee; yea, I should not be despised. I would lead thee, and bring thee into my mother's house, who would instruct me: I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate."—Solomon's Song viii. 1, 2. In the union of Christ and the church our adoption is in its highest aspect revealed, for the wife of the Son is the adopted daughter of the Father. And thus the Father with all tenderness of counsel speaks to the bride of Christ, "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him."—Psalms xlv. 10, 11. In receiving the adoption of children we are redeemed and translated from the one family into another. O, in what degra-

dation and dishonor we are found in the first Adam. We are in Adam a ruined race, in our sins, and under the curse of God's law, and not all the resources of all the race of Adam are sufficient for a ransom for even one of mankind from sin and death and the damnation of hell. The translation therefore of the chosen of God from the family of the first Adam, and their adoption in the house of Jesus Christ, the last Adam, the Lord from heaven, is an act of the exceeding riches of Jehovah's grace. There is another important item pertaining to our hope that we are the children of God that we must not overlook: you will find it in Heb. xii. 5, 11: "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." All these things which we have considered are aspects and developments of the counsel of God to bring to actual consummation the adoption of his chosen ones of Adam's race, and all our present experiences of being gathered unto Jesus Christ, (John xi. 52,) and our fellowship with him, are but foretastes, the earnests of the blessedness to which we are ordained of God. The language of Christ's gospel in 1 John iii. 1–3, is very instructive and comforting: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." It is very manifest in many ways that we are not yet wholly conformed to the image of God's dear Son. We are now in the world which was made for man, and our bodies are so constituted to live upon the things of the earth. For these mortal bodies we need meat and drink and sleep, and are only capacitated for the earth. They are natural bodies, fitted only for this natural world and natural things. But our bodies are Christ's as well as our souls. "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?" —1 Cor. vi. 15, and they are bought with the price of Jesus' precious blood, and are ordained to such a spiritual condition to be fitted for heaven, and for Christ. They are to be changed, and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. We are sealed unto the day of redemption, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. (Eph. i. 14; iv. 30.) We are predestinated to be glorified together with Christ, with whom we are joint-heirs, therefore the apostle saith, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope; because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."—Rom. viii. 18–23. Now the body is for the

Lord, and the Lord for the body. (1 Cor. vi. 13.) The body is now earthy, mortal, corruptible, natural, and it is to be destroyed, to be laid low in its dissolution, in death. But in the resurrection at the last day God shall quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in us, for "God hath both raised up the Lord [Jesus Christ], and will also raise up us by his own power." He "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body," a spiritual body, in glory and honor and power. Our bodies shall then have put on immortality and incorruption; we shall bear the image of Christ, the heavenly One, and thus our body and spirit, which are his, are for him, and he for us to all eternity. God hath thus predestinated us, Christ and the church, one for another, he for the church, and the church for him. I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine. The church is adorned for her Husband. The many sons, Christ's companions, his fellows, redeemed unto God by his blood, are glorified, conformed to his image and brought unto glory. "It is done." The adoption consummated, then shall be ours in all its fullness and immortal blessedness that kingdom prepared for us from the foundation of the world, that inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away. "I will be his God, and he shall be my son."—Rev. xxi. 7.

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NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

SENECA, Kansas, Feb. 6, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As I am writing you on business, I thought I also would send you copy of a letter dated Nov. 23rd, 1856, written by brother P. J. Burruss, and published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES Feb. 2nd, 1857, on the subject of brotherly love, and if it meets your approval I would like to see it republished, as it seems to me the words of Paul to his brethren: Let brotherly love continue, are as necessary now as when he wrote to his Hebrew brethren, and also it seems to me brother Burruss made as strong arguments for thus doing as any person I ever read after; not that I indorse the discrepancies that he speaks of, but that I do indorse the way he has marked out to deal with such and similar discrepancies. I feel to thus do would be apostolic in practice, if I rightly understand him, and the Scriptures also.

Yours in hope,

JOSEPH FORD.

PLATTE COUNTY, Mo., Nov. 23, 1856.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—My mind has been exercised recently more than usual upon the subject of brotherly love, and I have concluded to communicate to you some of my thoughts on that subject, and if you think they will be advantageous to the Zion of God you can give them place in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if not, commit them to the flames, and my feelings will not be disturbed. I will base my views on that subject on the exhortation of the apostle to the Hebrew brethren, "Let brotherly love continue." —Heb. xiii. 1. We presume brotherly love did exist, or it could not have continued. The exhortation resolves itself into three parts. First, what is necessary in order to the existence of brotherly love? Second, the course to be pursued to maintain it. Third, the reasons why it should be maintained. We will attend to each of these propositions as we may have light and liberty. It is not indispensably necessary in order to the existence of brotherly love among God's people that all should be of the same natural temperament. This in the very nature

of things is impossible, for in the work of regeneration the flesh is not changed, and as men and women are born into the natural world with different natural dispositions they will follow them to the grave, but in the morning of the resurrection they will, if they are the children of God, be delivered from these bodies of sin and death through Jesus Christ our Lord, for the body is sown a natural body, but it is raised a spiritual body, &c. But it is the duty of christians to mortify the evil propensities of their natures, to put off the old man with his deeds, and to put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and holiness, not to let sin reign in their mortal bodies, that they should obey it in the lust thereof. The exhortation to brotherly love does not make it obligatory upon the heavenly family to love each other in the same proportion. They love most where they see the image of Christ shine the most brilliantly in deportment. As children of natural parentage should not fall out with each other on account of disparity in natural temperament, so children of heavenly parentage should not fall out with each other on that account. Joseph, observing a diversity of dispositions among his brethren, on their taking leave of him to return to their father's house, gave them this seasonable advice: See that ye fall not out by the way. Again, in order to the existence of brotherly love it is not indispensably necessary that they should all see alike in every minutia in relation to the plan of salvation. While men are of different make and complexion of mind they will view things in a different light, and to break their bones in order to inform their judgments would be as unreasonable as to set them again by an argument. Every error in the head does not destroy the being of faith in the heart. They may be muddy in the head, but right in the heart. It is with the heart, and not with the head, that man believeth unto righteousness. I am not prepared to say how far those professing christianity may differ in the sentiment on the subject of religion and yet brotherly love exist and be continued, but I will say that when persons give satisfactory evidence that they are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, we should love them as christians. I will briefly note some of the discrepancies that prevail in religious sentiment among those claiming to be Old School Baptists, which I think should not disturb brotherly love. There are some brethren who believe in the doctrine of election, predestination and the eternal love of God to his people, that the number is definite, cannot be added to nor diminished, that they were chosen in Christ before the world began, that grace was given them in him before time, while there are others who believe in the doctrine of eternal union and justification, that when Christ was set up his people were set up in him, or, in other words, chosen in him, that they existed in him as a unit in eternity and in time by supernatural process of regeneration. They are made manifest as Adam's family, existed in him prior to the time that they were developed by the ordinary course of generation. I think that this difference, which some consider to be more in their form of expression than in reality, should not prevent the existence of brotherly love among brethren. There are other differences that I might name, but forbear lest I spin out this communication to too great length. I will close my remarks on this proposition by saying that when persons professing the religion of

the Lord Jesus Christ believe in the Godhead, the total depravity of the human family by nature, and that they are destitute both of will and ability to extricate themselves from the awful dilemma in which sin has placed them, either in part or in whole, that it is not by works of righteousness which they can do, but according to his mercy he saves them, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, and they give satisfactory evidence that they have passed from death unto life, having realized the power of Christ's resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death, and have been brought to see the justice of God in their condemnation, and having been enabled to rejoice in Christ as the only name given under heaven among men whereby they must be saved, putting no confidence in the flesh, and then walk correspondingly with the christian character, these persons are worthy of the love of the heavenly family, because they are begotten of God, and if we love Him that begat we love them also that are begotten of Him. These are the persons who are exhorted to love one another as brethren in the Lord by the pen of inspiration, and the exhortation is based upon the ground that they are born again, that love should not be disturbed on account of any little discrepancy that may exist on the doctrinal matters.

I come to notice the second proposition drawn from the exhortation of the apostle: the course to be pursued in order to maintain brotherly love. There are but two causes that disturb brotherly love among the children of God, and these are difference of sentiments on the subject of religion, and unchristian conduct. I will attempt briefly to show how brethren should act toward each other under these circumstances. When brethren misrepresent each other's views on the subject of religion, and draw false conclusions from the writer's or speaker's language, which were not intended to be conveyed, and thereby endeavor to supplant a brother, which has been too apparent in the distracted borders of Zion, it is wounding to the cause of the blessed Redeemer, and these things ought not so to be. It is the duty of God's people to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, but not madly. They should do it in the spirit of the gospel, which is love. Brethren differing upon the subject of religion instead of adopting the course above specified, should inquire of each other in language which becomes the gospel of Christ, whether they intended to convey such an idea by such an expression, and after having understood each other correctly to labor in a christian spirit to set their erring brethren right. The apostle James says, "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." If the difference consists more in form of expression than in matter, the apostle Paul exhorts them not to strive about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. Again says the apostle, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." All christians are liable to do wrong as well as think wrong, and they all stand more in need of their heavenly Father's forgiveness than any of their offending brethren do of theirs, and his readiness to forgive them all should strongly induce them to

forgive one another, and they all hope to be forgiven of God, and their forgiving their brethren is made one of the expressed conditions of their receiving forgiveness of him. We pray for forgiveness on no other terms when we say, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those that trespass against us," and our Lord explains that petition of his in this sense: "If," says he, "ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." The Savior has given us a rule by which we should be governed in our conduct toward our offending brethren. Says he, "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault [not the world] between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." Brotherly love is thereby maintained, whereas if the offended brother were to publish to the world the fault of his offending brother, with a view to sink him in the estimation of his brethren, as like begets its like, the same spirit in all probability would take possession of the offending, and the contrary would be the result, and the expression of the great apostle to the Gentiles be verified: "If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." We are commanded to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ, forbearing one another and forgiving one another. "If any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."

Lastly, I will assign some reasons why brotherly love should continue. Christ has commanded it. A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. We may trifle with the commands of an usurper, but shall we dare trifle with the commands of our supreme Lord and heavenly King? By this, says he, shall all know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. The example of Christ should induce God's people to love one another. Says the apostle John, Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. Paul says, "Scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." We are commanded to love even our enemies. (Matt. v. 44.) Not so as to countenance their wicked conduct, but to forgive their injuries. Christians are children of the same family, they have all one Father, they should therefore love as brethren among brethren. There is ofttimes a dissimilitude of conditions and circumstances, some weaker and some stronger, some have better capacities than others, some of better temper, others more knowledge, but that which does or should unite them all in affection, is that they all have one Father, as they are, all of them, children of their Father which is in heaven, and are taught to acknowledge and address him as such. This filial relation wherein they stand to him should remind them of the fraternal relation wherein they stand to one another, and the mutual love it requires. They are all members of the same body. "For as we have many members in our body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." Members of the same body should love each other. They are fellow-sufferers, and the voice is, Love one another. They

are heirs to the same inheritance, which is incorruptible, undefiled and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them. They are traveling to the same home. Heaven is the destined home of all God's dear children, and heaven knows nothing of those jarring discords and feuds that infest this vale of tears; there perfect love and friendship reign through all eternity among the glorified saints. Amen.

Yours with kind regards,

P. J. BURRUSS.

ELGIN, Ore., Feb. 8, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am sending you two letters. I have not asked the writers for this privilege, for I feel that the letters are my property, and I feel I would like to share them with my brethren and sisters. What a blessed thought to me, that our interest is one and the same, members one of another, and so what is of interest to one is of interest to all. Let him that hath ears to hear, hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. If I could remove from the letters the personal reference to myself I would do so, but I will make due allowance, as the brethren do not know me.

We believe the lot fell on the right man as a co-laborer with you, in the person of brother Lefferts, and feel that our family paper is in good hands.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

HAVILAND, Kans., Jan. 31, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER MAYFIELD:—I have just received the February 1st issue of the SIGNS, and have read and reread your communication in it on the text in Romans viii. 1, and I note that you say your views differ from those of some of your brethren in regard to the meaning of the text. I feel a desire to express to you my hearty approval and indorsement of your exposition of the text, and although we are strangers in the flesh, and live a great distance apart, I am taking the liberty of addressing a few lines to you in regard to your article. It has seemed to me to be a safe rule in understanding and interpreting any portion of the word to see to it that our understanding of it does not conflict with any other plain statement of Scripture, and is in accord with those truths which the children of God have been made to understand and acknowledge in their daily experiences. Whatever conflicts with either of these may be assented to by the mind, but cannot find a responsive chord in the hearts of those who have been made to drink deep at the fountain of experience. Your interpretation of the apostle's language is in keeping with the doctrine of grace, and our being made complete in Christ, who is the head of the body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all, is in hearty accord with the apostle's arguments in the preceding chapters of his letter to the church and brethren at Rome. He has laid the foundation by a multiplicity of invincible arguments in the preceding chapters for his "therefore" in the language you wrote upon. He argues their justification by grace "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," whom God set forth a satisfaction for their sins. It is impossible to condemn a justified character. If the redemption that is in Christ Jesus is sufficient to justify, and if God is satisfied with what he set forth for the propitiation for sins, then there can be no condemnation to such characters. In the fourth chapter the apostle argues freedom from condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus upon the ground that their sins had been imputed to Christ, and his righteousness

had been imputed to them. By virtue of the eternal life unity or oneness existing between Christ and his people, his bride, her sins became his sins, and his righteousness became hers. Just as the obligation incurred by the wife is charged to the husband, and all that the husband possesses is hers by virtue of their union, so did Christ become responsible for the obligation of his bride, and the riches of his grace became hers. As Christ is looked to by the Father for the payment of the debt of his people, and as it is both unjust and unlawful to enforce two collections of one debt, or to condemn one for a debt that has been settled, the apostle argues that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. In the fifth chapter the apostle tells of the exceeding depths to which the Lord's people had fallen into sin, and the exceeding heights to which they had been raised by the righteousness which is in Christ; then in the sixth and seventh chapters traces them down into death, and that they came up with him from under the law and its curse in his resurrection, and then shows their freedom from the law and their liberty in Christ Jesus. Then looking back at all of these reasons for their perfect and complete redemption and justification, the apostle is prepared to affirm, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," and then proceeds to sum up in the following language: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death," which I understand comprehends the gist of all his previous arguments. The words, "Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," found in the first verse of this chapter, are not in the original text, but are supplied by the translators. The original text reads, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus; for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." This is exactly in harmony with my understanding of the meaning of the text, and with your analysis of it. Why should we desire to have our condemnation hinge upon our walk anyhow? If it should, we would, as you observe in your article, like Israel under the law, be under the sentence of condemnation all the time. If our condemnation depends upon our walk our justification depends upon our walk also, and instead of being justified freely through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, the apostle should have said, Being justified conditionally upon the merit of our walk. This kind of promise, I am persuaded, would offer poor comfort to the trembling prisoners of hope who have many times tried the full strength of every form of conditionalism, and proven it a miserable failure, a curse instead of a blessing. David had tried it, for he said, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." Jonah tried it, found himself in the belly of hell, and said, "I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord." Peter tried it, but needed converting from its delusive snares, after which Jesus told him to strengthen his brethren, and this he did when he declared, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." If teaching that there is no salvation outside of Christ strengthens the brethren, then teaching that there is a salvation depending upon our walk as christians weakens the brethren, and this may account for there being so many weakly and

sickly ones now among the people of God. It takes the abounding grace of God to save as poor and needy a sinner as I am, whether that salvation is manifested in the deliverance from the bondage of the law and its curse, or whether it is deliverance from the temptations and pitfalls of Satan, or the vain imaginations of my own proud and sinful heart. I feel to say with the poet:

"Grace all the work shall crown
Through everlasting days;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

Dear brother Mayfield, I did not intend to write so lengthily when I began, and perhaps I have written more than will be read with interest by you. I only intended to express my appreciation and indorsement of your article in the SIGNS, to let you know that there is at least one who feels to be in accord with your views on the Scripture treated.

Begging your pardon if I have intruded on your time or patience, I desire to be esteemed your brother in humble hope,

J. R. HARDY.

HAVILAND, Kans., Jan. 31, 1915.

ELDER G. E. MAYFIELD:—I feel to say dear brother in hope, and that is my excuse (if I have any) for writing you today, and when I tell you that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been a regular visitor at our house for several years you will not think yourself so much a stranger to us, though we have never met face to face. It would be vain and unfair to eulogize you or your efforts in the ministry and your writings in our religious papers. I surely believe those gifts are from heaven, as was John's baptism, and if I could so express it, it would be to the praise of His glorious grace. True, we have enjoyed many articles from your pen, and heard you well spoken of as a minister of Christ's gospel, but if this be true, God has given you this grace for us, and it is ours as well as yours; you are the earthen vessel which has received it, as the waterpots received the wine at the wedding feast, and if this is the best wine, the vessel gets no honor to itself, but is there only to serve others. We are all clay in the Potter's hand, and the vessel which is marred in his hand is in a good position to be made into another vessel, as seems good to the Potter to make it, and rather than boast of your great works and help you to feel to say, We have cast out devils in thy name and in thy name done many wonderful works, I would suggest that you were of the nation dead in trespasses and in sin, having no hope and without God in the world; of those who were born blind, deaf and dumb, lame on both feet, destitute, feeling rich but had nothing, claimed that you could see, therefore your sin remained, a leper and a pharisee of the Pharisees, but now are ye clean through the word of Christ, healed, taken from the tomb, clothed upon and in your right mind. Who can claim honor for all this? He that is whole needs no physician. If you could do this you needed no cleansing fountain, no balm of Gilead. But some way I feel that you would rather join me, and all others of like precious faith, in ascribing all honor and praise to him who sits upon the throne of grace, and has compassion on whom he will have compassion, and whom he will he hardeneth. What would we poor mortals do with our thanks if there were no one worthy to receive them? But do you not know that the thanks and praises of those saved by grace must seek a most worthy Savior? Salvation by works seeks no God of mercy, no, not even of justice, for if they are justly condemned, and can get out by good works, they have beaten justice. He who seeks salvation by works, seeks to defraud rather than meet justice, for if they are lost in sin justice condemns, and they can never get out until justice is satisfied, and I feel sure no one can enter heaven while justice says, You cannot enter.

But, brother Mayfield, I did want to tell

you that you spoke my views in the last SIGNS OF THE TIMES, Feb. 1st. I also know there are different views on that passage. But if we do not receive all the grace stored in Christ for us, who will? or what good will this grace do any one for whom it is not prepared? I should as soon think heaven was prepared for some who would never enjoy it, and heaven below is Jesus to know. Heaven above is our Savior's love. But the Bible is open to all who have joy in reading it, and I have no desire to take it away from any one. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." The thanks and prayers, as well as the shouts and songs of the sinner saved by grace, must seek a God of all power in heaven and in earth, also a God of mercy and free grace, for when man sinned he became a servant of Satan. Then the earth was cursed for man's sake, and should bring forth thorns and thistles, and be subject to floods and drouths, and we find that everything is against man, both in heaven and on earth, except the mercy of God, that was promised Eve in the coming of Christ, and that is all the hope we have yet. So if our God did not have all power and all mercy, both in heaven and earth, Satan being stronger than we, and more subtle than any beast of the field, and the whole earth cursed and set against us, we would be destroyed at once, and even in heaven we could not be safe except in God's almighty arms. I enjoy hearing the free grace gospel preached better than anything I ever heard; no other sound is so melodious to me.

I have received several good letters from Elder T. E. Atteberry. I have never met him, but he seems to have a heavy burden of afflictions, and is a good writer, one bound up in God's mercies, rich in faith, yet poor in spirit.

You may have met my brother, M. N. Webb, near Weiser, Idaho. His wife is a Baptist.

I cannot agree with Elder Ker in counting that Agar has more children than Sarah. Paul says there are the two covenants, and so does brother Ker. Which one of the two is the greater covenant? The first covenant was with the circumcision in the flesh, which only meant the national Jews. The second covenant was with the circumcised in heart, all the redeemed in Christ. Therefore Sarah had good cause to rejoice. The whole world is not embraced in either covenant, yet some of all nations are in the spiritual covenant. Sarah was the desolate, the one rejected for a short season. She had given her husband to the bondwoman, so the other had the husband, and why should Sarah rejoice, if the other was to excel? It was the joy of women in those days to excel in children, and Paul tells us that Sarah is Jerusalem above, which is the mother of us all, and the other woman was Mount Sinai, and in bondage with her children. Then the question is, Which one of God's covenants covered the most children? One was with the sons of Jacob, and the other with the sons of Israel. I claim that there are many more circumcised in heart than ever were circumcised in the Jewish nation, hence Sarah represented the greater number in this allegory.

Elder Joel Hardy is now our supply minister, and we feel blessed with his services.

Excuse my lack of prudence in breaking in on you.

E. G. WEBB.

[WE are sorry brother Webb disagrees with our views presented in our article written at the request of sister James, concerning the children of the desolate woman, but as long as Paul continues to say that Agar represented the desolate woman, Jerusalem of old, in bondage with her children, and that the barren woman was represented by Sarah the freewoman, and more are the children of the desolate than those of the freewoman, who has a Husband, we shall be compelled to accept it.—K.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1915.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

"RELIGIOUS WORKS."

THE people of my town think me a very hardened sinner (and I do not deny the charge) because I do not join some one of their many churches and take part in all their religious works. They tell me I need Jesus in my home on my children's account, if not for my own, and it is all left with me, and that the children of unregenerate parents do not stand as much in God's favor as those of christian parents. If you ever have the time and inclination, I would like to have your views of the subject through the SIGNS. It would be very much appreciated by yours unworthily,

IGNORAMUS.

DARDANELLE, Arkansas.

Scanning the above inquiry, we are reminded of what Paul wrote to the Philippians: "And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God." The fact that the Lord's people are not afraid of their enemies, and cannot be scared or browbeaten into making a profession they do not feel or for which they have no sympathy, causes the worldly religionists to regard the true follower of Christ as a "very hardened sinner." This is their judgment of such an one as does not go hand in hand with them in "some one of their many churches and take part in all their religious works." This lack of agreement on the part of any one with the various forms of religion extant in the world is an evidence to them of perdition, or that that one is irrevocably lost from God. But to the one who thus differs from all about him, such inability to coincide with every wind of doctrine is an evidence of stability in that one and only salvation which is of God through Christ. It is the nature of most of us to want to be well thought of, to have numerous friends and to mingle socially with those about us who are temperamentally congenial. One does not care to be regarded as eccentric or queer. There is nothing in being queer simply for queer's sake, but if oddity springs from being on the side of a principle infinitely above the comprehension of human minds, then it is worth while to be odd, and the Lord's people must to the end of time remain distinct from the world, and to the world they will always appear from a religious standpoint as being very queer and hardened sinners. It goes very much against the grain to have to live in a community where one is a social outcast because of one's religious views, but it would be infinitely worse for a child of God to endeavor to fall in with, and bid Godspeed, to something he knows is a lie. In that case one's conscience would not fail to lash him with stripes that would be torment indeed. The Bible shows from beginning to end that the people of God have ever been more or less unpopular to those about them. The great head of the church himself, Jesus, was a very unpopular man to the generation of his day. The world of that day had its own ideas as to what was right and wrong, and woe to the man or woman who dared think or act for themselves in nonconformity to the ideas of those around them. This Jesus was impelled to do because he is truth itself, and all else is a lie. A few believed his doctrine then, and as far as the manifest church is concerned, a few

believe it now. Just as the world hated him, so he has assured his people the world will hate them. He is not of the world, therefore they are not of the world, and the world loves only that which is its own. Our inquiring friend is right in not joining any one of the "many churches" about her, and in not engaging in their "religious works," so long as she does not believe the doctrines they preach, and does not accord with the things practiced by them. Time was when the various denominations of the world were themselves sticklers for this or that doctrine, this or that practice, but nowadays we hear of union meetings, at which they seem to sink all denominational differences, and tell people to join any church just so it is some church. Much talk is heard about all the different denominations coming together and uniting to make one huge body. Should such a state of affairs ever arise, the Old School Baptists can then expect trouble certainly. The quarrels between the various creeds and organizations of the world have prevented any one body from gaining the ascendancy and imposing its dogmas on the rest, therefore this contention among men has enabled the church of God to dwell quietly and peaceably, worshipping God under her own vine and fig tree. This is one of the ways in which the Lord causes even the wrath of man to praise him. We are old-fashioned enough to believe that woman's place, especially a mother's place, is in her home caring for her children. This done faithfully and conscientiously will consume all her time and attention, and she will have no time to march the streets for suffrage, to preside at clubs or pink teas, to struggle for prizes at card parties, or to run weekly and almost nightly to Epworth leagues, Christian (?) Endeavors, church fairs, festivals, suppers, W. C. T. U's, and what not. It is deplorable in this day and time to see how many women feel that the walls of home are too confining, the duties of home too slavish. The unrest that seems to fill the mothers of to-day, the ambition for larger scope, the desire for publicity and a false sort of independence, are all signs of degeneracy and do not augur well for the next generation. That much of this dissatisfaction on the part of women with their homes finds vent in running to various affairs of the different so-called churches does not make it any the less deplorable. Doing such things in the name of religion, makes a mockery of religion, and the act itself a thousandfold more awful. Any mother that does as these Dardanelle people want our friend to do, would have to neglect her home and children to a greater or less extent; and we do not have to go away to Arkansas to find many who are doing this very thing while their children either run the streets or inflict themselves on the neighbors. A mother serves best in the place for which God has designed her: the queen of the family circle. Any stepping aside from her lawful place detracts from her dignity, and inflicts untold sorrow and failure upon all who look for her motherly ministrations. All God's people are his servants, but all these servants of his do not serve in the same place. For instance, all are not called to preach, or all are not to be deacons. Thus, the godly mother that conscientiously devotes her time and attention to the loving care of her household is as well serving the Lord in her sphere as the preacher in his sphere. Our friend is told that she needs Jesus in her home on her children's account, and that it is all left with her; that is, it is left with her as to whether Jesus comes

into her home or not. Who is the judge of what we need? Do we ourselves know what we need? If not, does any man outside ourselves know what we need? Paul says, "My God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." This supply God prepared before the foundation of the world, when he chose his people in Christ, predestinated them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself according to the good pleasure of his will, blessed them there with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. The blessings were all prepared before time began to meet all the needs God's people would ever be subject to, therefore if there is a home in Dardanelle, or elsewhere, that now needs Jesus, that need was known of God before time began, and the blessing prepared for it to be manifested in due time. None of us know what we need only as the Spirit of God searches our hearts and discovers that need to us, then out of that felt need we cry for satisfaction, only to find that our prayers were answered before we uttered them; all answered before time began. If Jesus is needed in any place, he knows it now, and knew it long ago, and all the power or resistance of men can never keep him from supplying that need. The ignorance of the mother to the fact that some one or all of her children need Jesus, will certainly not keep him from entering that home and sealing unto redemption the heir of glory there found. We know of several instances where subjects of grace have been brought to light in families where the parents were ignorant of the Spirit's work in the heart of their child. Had they been aware of it they could not have helped it along nor hindered it. When one of a family is thus taken: "Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? who will say unto him, What doest thou?" And again, "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Now, if mercy be the fruit of God's will, as the inspired record says it is, it certainly cannot be dependent upon a mother's will, nor upon any one else's will. Thus it is not left with any mother as to whether or not Jesus enters that home. Lastly, it is asserted to our friend that "the children of unregenerate parents do not stand as much in God's favor as those of christian parents." Will some one please tell us who were the parents of the thief on the cross, and what did they have to do with Jesus telling him, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise"? We never heard of this man's parents, nor anything that they ever did to gain him the favor of Jesus. Also, who were the parents of Mary Magdalene? How did they help her to gain the forgiveness of sins at Jesus' hands? Also, who were the parents of Saul of Tarsus? They certainly were not christians from any biblical record we have ever seen. Strange it is, if parents have so much influence in gaining God's favor for their children, that the Bible should be full of so many instances where the parents are not mentioned, or if they are, are not manifested as subjects of grace in many cases. The relations of father, mother and child are fleshly and blood relationships. It is declared that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." No one can inherit the kingdom of God on the basis of earthly or flesh and blood kinships. The Jews thought they were the children of Abraham in God's sight, because they were the fleshly descendants of Abraham, but John the Baptist told them, "God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." Af-

terwards the Jews were cut off, and the kingdom given to the Gentiles. If it were true that children of christian parents are more in God's favor than those of unregenerate parents, then it would follow that the Jews, who were the literal posterity of Abraham, would have been preferred to the Gentiles in the sight of God; but the reverse of this is the truth, so it would appear that flesh and blood, or parentage, have nothing to do with these solemn matters. God is no respecter of persons, so he does not look to see who our parents are when he chooses to save us. He does not need any blue book to inform him of the decency of our parentage, for often has he saved the bastard and the outcast and passed by the aristocrat and well bred. How much soever we love our children and earnestly desire their spiritual welfare, we cannot so much as raise our little finger to bring their salvation about. If saved they are to be, then saved they were in Christ from before the world began. It is forbidden in the new covenant to teach every man his neighbor to know the Lord, and what God forbids cannot be done. We might insist on our children reading the Bible, we could not thereby impart to them the way of salvation, that must come by divine revelation of the Holy Ghost in their own souls, utterly and entirely independent of any effort on the part of men. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Finally, let us impress it on the minds of our readers that, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." The church is never entirely free from persecution, though in different ages the persecution takes a different form. True, our enemies do not nowadays burn us at the stake, stretch us on the rack, nor throw us to the lions, neither can they lock us in prison, break up our church meetings, nor impose forcibly their creeds on us, but there are so many sly and subtle ways in which they let their opposition be felt, that life sometimes becomes well-nigh intolerable owing to the social ostracism that is put in force against the unpopular belief in salvation by grace and grace alone. If we will not attend their churches, help them to maintain their Sunday Schools, contribute to their missions, we are made to feel that we are socially not acceptable in the community, and are accorded the plane of low grade citizenship. Many a slur and gibe and jest is given for our benefit, and nicknames based on one's peculiar religious views gain currency from mouth to mouth. Perhaps a person of not too fine sensibilities would not mind these things, but to most of us, we think, they are hard to bear. However, when we can be exercised by a living faith to realize that what we suffer is only a part of what the Savior suffered it somewhat lightens our load, and we are made to remember, "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." It makes us ashamed of ourselves when we try to avoid enduring hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. May he give us grace to quit ourselves like men and be strong. We hope our friend away out in Arkansas will continue to turn a deaf ear to the pleas and wiles of anti-christian wails and lures, unless her mind should be so changed that she should find herself agreeing with and believing in what they practice and teach. We feel to hope that it is the work of grace in her heart that has opened her understanding to discern their falsehoods, and may the help of the Lord against the mighty enable her to stand firm against all opposition to the truth of God as it is in Christ Jesus. L.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE CHERUBIM AND THE MERCY-SEAT.

MR. BEEBE:—Please give your views of the cherubim and the mercy-seat, as set forth in Exodus xxv. What do they represent or teach? Your compliance with this request will oblige

HANNAH MILLER.

PENN YAN, N. Y., Dec. 28, 1865.

That the tabernacle, the ark, and all thereunto pertaining, were designed to typify the spiritual things of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, as they are more clearly elucidated in the gospel of the Son of God, we presume will not be controverted or doubted by those who know and love the truth. But it is not always our privilege to comprehend their exact signification and application to the things which they are designed to represent. The cherubim and the mercy-seat were very essential parts of or accompaniments to the ark of the testimony which is described in this chapter; the ark would be incomplete without them. There is a divine beauty in the subject far beyond what we can express. The inspired apostle speaks of the figures of the old dispensation as patterns of the things in heaven; that is, as patterns of the things which are found in the spiritual Jerusalem, the gospel church. Something must therefore be found in the gospel church answering to the figurative import of every Old Testament figure. The tabernacle, which God commanded Moses to make, was a portable building, or tent, designed to contain the ark and the holy or consecrated furniture which he commanded to be placed within its curtains. A most solemn charge was given to Moses, to "Look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount." It was designed for a sanctuary in which God would commune with Israel through their high priest. We will not now stop to comment upon the tabernacle, but devote this article more particularly to the inquiries made concerning the cherubim and the mercy-seat. The subject of inquiry is thus stated in the chapter referred to: "And thou shalt make a mercy seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. And thou shalt make two cherubim of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat. And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end; even of the mercy seat shall ye make the cherubim on the two ends thereof. And the cherubim shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubim be. And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there will I meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel."—Exodus xxv. 17–22.

In following the order of our subject, the mercy-seat should first be considered, and then the cherubim which surmount the mercy-seat.

First. The mercy-seat. How significant and imposing the name! There were no provisions of mercy found in the law of commandments. Justice with an even hand brandished a flaming sword, and he that despised Moses' law died without mercy. But in the new covenant mercy has prepared her seat. I will be merciful

to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. (Heb. viii. 12.) In the economy of grace, mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. (Psalms lxxxv. 10.) This seat and centre of the mercy of God is the only place where righteousness and peace can embrace each other and establish everlasting peace in righteousness, or without infringing the stern demands of divine justice. It could not be done on any other seat or basis than that of the atonement made for the transgressions of the people of God by our Lord Jesus Christ. For him and all his members, in view of his perfect work, God has said, Mercy shall be built up forever. "My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven."—Psalms lxxxix. 28, 29. That the mercy-seat in our text is designed to represent the atonement, seems clear to us from the following considerations, viz.: The ark of the testimony which it was to cover, and in which the testimony was held, with the rod of the priesthood, the golden pot of manna, &c., is evidently applied to the gospel church. (Heb. ix.) This ark, though made of wood, which was chosen and ordained of God for the purpose, was overlaid within and without with pure gold, and thereby rendered imperishable and beautiful, and in no other place is the testimony of God's truth preserved inviolate; nowhere else can the delicious gospel manna on which God's spiritual Israel are fed be found but in the gospel church, and it is only there the fruitful rod of the priesthood is kept. The ark was definite in its exact measurement: two cubits and a half long and one cubit and a half broad. The mercy-seat in measurement exactly corresponding, shows the atonement for the church ample, but without superfluence. The mercy-seat as exactly covered the ark as does the atonement of Christ cover the church.

The mercy-seat was required to be made of pure gold. Gold is emblematic of righteousness, and the atonement to answer the design contemplated required to be immaculately pure and in all respects perfect. The atonements under the ceremonial law, by the blood of bulls, goats and other victims, could make nothing perfect. The church is redeemed, not with corruptible things, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. (1 Peter i. 18.) Could the divine law have found the smallest particle of alloy, dross or defection in Christ, or in his propitiatory work, then would his work have failed to secure the salvation of his people. But as the pure gold will pass the fiery ordeal of the crucible without loss, so the glorious High Priest of our profession was able to endure the scrutiny of the omniscient eye, was justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world and received up into glory.

The atonement answers to the figurative import of the mercy-seat, as showing the "new and living way" of our access unto God, which is consecrated for us through the vail, which is his flesh. Christ took on him the seed of Abraham, and the God of glory laid on him the iniquity of us all—of all the seed of Abraham, for if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Here upon the basis of his perfect atonement the seat of reconciliation, acceptance and communion is established through our High Priest. "And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon

the ark." The atonement of Christ cannot fail of being applied to the church of Christ. It is the covering for the church, when God communes with her through her most holy Mediator, the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. It is above the church, and what they never could have attained in any other way, but it is a perfect covering and a safe protection. "And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel." It is by the atonement that the saints are dead unto the old Sinai covenant, and married to Him that is risen from the dead. Hence through, or by virtue of the atonement, they are brought under law to Christ, instead of Moses, and on this mercy-seat communion with God is secured through our Lord Jesus Christ, and by his Spirit his law is written in our hearts and recorded in our minds.

It is the pure gold of the atonement that overlays the ark, or church, within and without. Her internal joy, peace, love, fellowship, devotion and worship are by an application of Christ and his atonement to his church and people. On no other basis could we approach unto God. His terror would make us afraid, and his frowning justice would stop our mouths, but for the atonement which completely shields and covers us, but in this atonement we come boldly to the throne to ask for mercy, and find grace to help us in every time of need. But our limits admonish us that we must pass to the other general division of our subject.

Second. The two cherubim. The name cherubim is the plural of cherub. When but one it is called cherub, and if two or more they are called cherubim, which signifies an angel, or angels, but all angels are not designated cherub or cherubim. The word "angel" has a variety of applications in the Scriptures. Sometimes it is applied to God's messengers who are sent to preach his gospel, sometimes to the spirit of a man, and sometimes to the spiritual life of christians which always behold the face of God; sometimes it is used to signify those heavenly intelligences in glory, such as bore the message of the incarnation to the shepherds in Jewry, and several other applications are found in the Scriptures. But cherubim and seraphim express to us those mediums through which the presence of God, in some of his perfections, is set forth, as the angel of his presence which saved his people in all their afflictions. The two cherubim which stand upon the mercy-seat we have thought were intended to represent to us the two testaments. Their position, the old and new testaments, or covenants, and all revelation of God to men, are based upon the great purpose of salvation by grace which centres in the atonement, as the cherubim of our text are in the mercy-seat. So stand the two testaments. The first testament takes its position as early as the application of the atoning blood and justifying righteousness was made effectual in the salvation of Abel and Enoch, and its wings are extended forward, signifying in all the prophets, and typifying in all the ritual of the law, the coming of the Messiah, his sufferings and the glory that should follow. As early as the time when man was driven out of paradise, the cherubim and the flaming sword were placed to keep the way of the tree of life, and prevent Arminians from helping themselves to the fruits of that tree,

The word of God communicated through the law, like a flaming sword, turned every way, intercepting all human agencies in their futile efforts to procure life and immortality independently of that atonement or mercy-seat which their wings covered. There they are still found meeting the workmongrel tribes of the earth at every point with the declaration, Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins, no mercy-seat, no atonement, no salvation in any other name or way.

The angel of the divine presence was in his holy law, but so far as his church was concerned it stood as a cherub on the end of the mercy-seat, testifying of Christ, and by all its types, shadows and predictions testifying that he should come as it was written of him in the volume of the book, to do the will of God. The wings of this cherub were lifted over the mercy-seat, or atonement, and from the one end of the mercy-seat extending to its centre, even as the law and the prophets were until John; but they could extend no further, for here at the centre were they to meet the wings of the other cherub. Their faces were made to look one to another, the law demanding, the gospel cancelling all its demands, the one predicting, the other responding; so they faced each other, and saw eye to eye in the day of atonement, when God brought again Zion. The law and the gospel face each other and meet harmoniously in the priesthood which intervenes. Their faces, while they were looking to each other, were at the same time both looking to the redemption which is by the atonement. All that the law demanded concerning the church it looked to Christ in the gospel to perform, while the gospel cherub from the other extremity of the church, or mercy-seat, looked into the face of the old testament for the pattern of the things in heaven, so that all that was written in the law and in the prophets and in the psalms concerning Christ should be fulfilled. All the jots and tittles of the one were promptly met and paid by the other. The new testament with wings uplifted from the centre of the mercy-seat, to its termination, in the full, complete and everlasting salvation of the church of God, meets the wings of the other cherub, at the centre of the mercy-seat. The law and the prophets were until John, since that period the gospel is preached. Thus both cherubim met and centered in Christ, our High Priest, whose advent was between them, yet covered by their wings. Between these two cherubim the God of glory sent his Son into the world. The Word was made flesh, and came, as in the volume of the book it was written of him, to occupy this gracious mercy-seat. After the order of Melchisedec, as priest unto the Most High God and King of righteousness, he put his priestly garments on. Between the two dispensations his priestly offering was made, when he offered himself without spot unto God. True to his word, the eternal Godhead bowed his heavens and came down, and at the centre of the mercy-seat met the great High Priest of his spiritual Israel between the cherubim, and was manifest in the flesh. God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, Christ was in the Father, and the Father was in Christ. Heaven and earth were brought together. Justice from the utmost throne of heaven was there, and smiling mercy was prepared to greet, embrace and kiss that Justice whose stern demands were inexorable, but at the mercy-seat completely liquidated; and at the mercy-seat Justice as fully demands the salvation of all for

whom this mercy-seat is a covering, as it demands the execution of the sentence of the law on all whose sins are not covered, and whose transgressions are not removed. Here at the mercy-seat, where righteousness and peace have kissed each other, God has established his dwelling, and the inspired psalmist prays in the spirit: "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock: thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth. Before Ephraim, and Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up thy strength, and come and save us. Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved."—Psalms lxxx. 1–3. Again the holy psalmist testifieth of the power and majesty of God, and of his infinite condescension. "He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly; yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies."—Psalms xviii. 9–11. Observe his wonderful advent to our world. Upon the old testament cherub was he borne; his descent from heaven was predicted by all the prophets, and witnessed by the law. On the wings of the wind (an emblem of his Spirit which was in his word) he did fly, riding on the heavens in our help, and in his excellency on the sky. Yet in the darkness of the legal dispensation he fixed his secret place, and around about him his pavilion were dark waters and thick darkness. But at the brightness that was before him, beaming with inexpressible radiance in the face of Jesus Christ, the dark, dreary, portending darkness of Sinai passed, amidst the tempest of hailstones and coals of fire which spent their utmost fury upon his dear Son. Then were the channels of water seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered; at the rebuke of the Lord, at the blast of the breath of his nostrils, "He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters."

In conclusion, for we must close this article, if we are right in regard to the figurative import of the ark, the mercy-seat and the cherubim, may the sound of their wings be heard by all the people of God, as in Ezekiel's vision, (Ezek. x. 5,) even to the outer court of his holy temple, as the voice of the almighty God when he speaketh. If we are right, in our application of the cherubim's wings, they mean the testimony of the Scriptures, in which the voice of the almighty God is uttered. May it be ours to hearken to the things which are spoken in the Scriptures, and sheltered under these wings of the cherubim, having a "Thus saith the Lord" for our protection, we may sit securely and hurl defiance to all the enemies of God and truth.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 15, 1866.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, I expect to be with the Woburn Church, Woburn, Mass., the first Sunday in April. Services at the usual hours.

H. C. KER.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

B. S. PATE has changed his address from Dayton, Wash., to Fairview, Oregon.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Hepsy A. Groves, widow of Deacon W. W. Groves, of Ingleside, Steuben Co., N. Y., died March 4th, 1915. They were married July 27th, 1852. Her maiden name was Riker. Six children, three girls and three boys, all married, are left to mourn the loss of a good, faithful mother. I believe there are four grandchildren. She was baptized, I think, by Elder A. St. John about thirty-eight years ago, I have not the dates. She united with the Old School Baptist Church at Ingleside, N. Y., when the place was called Rikers Hollow. She was sound in the faith of God's elect, which embraces every principle of Bible doctrine, a loving and faithful sister in Christ. She is now in the full enjoyment of that which she hoped for. She was living alone at the time of her death, near one of her sons, Harry Groves. She seemed as well as usual that night; a neighbor who called, left her apparently all right about 11 o'clock. The next morning she was found on the floor cold and lifeless. The writer spoke to a large congregation, after which the remains were taken to the cemetery near by. May God comfort all of the dear, sad mourning ones for Jesus' sake.

D. M. VAIL.

SISTER **Ella Skinner** departed this life at her late home, Twenty-ninth and Franklin Sts., N. E., Washington, D. C., March 9th, 1915. She was a member of the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church, Fairfax Co., Va., having been baptized there about the year 1896, by the late Elder E. V. White. She lived a consistent member of that church, faithful to its doctrine and practice to the time of her death, but for the last few years had not been able to attend her meetings, owing to affliction in her home and to her own bad health, which finally culminated in dropsy, causing her death. Sister Skinner was a daughter of the late George W. Williams and Mary Ellen Devaull, and was born in Loudoun Co., Va., March 27th, 1850. She is survived by one sister, Mrs. Hattie L. Poole, of Herndon, Va., and by three brothers: George A. Williams, of Herndon, Va., Armstead Williams, of Washington, D. C., and a third brother who now lives in Alberta Province, Canada. Feb. 13th, 1866, she was married to James P. Skinner, also of Loudoun Co., Va. Mr. Skinner survives our sister, and while not a member of the visible church, is a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace and the absolute sovereignty of Jehovah. He is almost totally blind now, so that we feel especially solicitous for his comfort and support through the grace of Jesus, that he may be enabled to bear his manifold afflictions. Two children, one son and one daughter, Roland and Carrie, blessed the marriage of sister Skinner, and both of these survive their mother. May the Lord be with the children as well as with the father in the great loss they have sustained, and though they mourn, may it be for themselves, and not for her. She longed to die and to be released from her suffering and diseased body, that she might rest with Christ. Her earnest prayer for release was granted her in God's own good time, and she fell quietly asleep, so that none could scarcely say when the breath left her.

It was the request of sister Skinner in her last moments that her pastor, the writer of this notice, be sent for to conduct her funeral, and it was the pleasure of her family to see to it that her requests were in every way fulfilled to the letter. The funeral services were held from her late home, using the words: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Interment took place in Congressional Cemetery. Into the hands of a just and holy God we commit the mourning ones, with full assurance that the Judge of all the earth will do right. L.

Mrs. Thomas G. Harris was born in Marshall Co., Ill., March 29th, 1841, and died on Monday, Jan. 18th, 1915, in the 74th year of her age. Her maiden name was Lucinda B. Douglas. When a small child she moved with her parents to Iowa, where they lived a few years, returning to Illinois after the death of her father. Here she grew to womanhood, and on Sept. 9th, 1858, she was united in marriage to Thomas G. Harris, to whom she was a loving and faithful companion for fifty-six years. When the Civil war broke out the husband offered his services for his country, enlisting in the 77th Illinois Volunteers, and serving to the end of the war. In October, 1884, Mr. and Mrs. Harris went west, and were among the very first of Dawes County pioneers to brave the dangers and undergo the hardships of frontier life. Two children were born to them, both of whom were at the bedside of the mother when she passed away; they are Mrs. Clara J. McDerby, of Crawford, and Mrs. Eleanor Getchell, of Cambria, Wyo. She also leaves besides the husband, six grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren. On Sept. 9th, 1908, while living at Fort Robinson, Mr. and Mrs. Harris celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. A large number of friends, who had known and prized them for years, gathered together to show their esteem and to congratulate them on their long and useful wedded life. Mrs. Harris was a loving mother and a faithful and devoted wife. In her early life she professed hope in God, and ever sought to exemplify in her daily life her faith and trust in him. In later years she united with the Baptist Church at Battle Creek, Nebr. It may be truthfully said of her, "The memory of the just is blessed."

I had known sister Harris for nearly forty years, and can truthfully say that to know her was to love her, and while I feel to sympathize with our dear brother, I cannot mourn for her, knowing that she is much better off than we who are left. She has only gone on a little before. One thing is sure, she is taken from the evil to come, and I would say to the dear sorrowing ones, Mourn not for her, but lift up your bowed down heads, for your redemption is nigh. Only a few more trials, a few more beating storms, and our frail barks will break, and we, too, will be released from sin and be wafted home to God to see our adorable Redeemer and be like him, world without end. PHEBE WAGGONER.

Pearl Skinner, daughter of brother and sister L. E Skinner, died on the morning of July 6th, aged 12 years, 11 months and 20 days. She suffered for twenty days with that dread disease, typhoid fever, but bore her suffering without a murmur. The great God, who rules among the inhabitants of men and doeth all things after the counsel of his own will, saw fit to take from us this precious one for some purpose unknown to us. Just a few seconds before she breathed her last a bright, sweet smile came over her face. She will be greatly missed at home, at school, and by her associates, but we feel to thank the great God, who doeth all things well, that we have the sweet assurance that our loss is her eternal gain. Sunday before she died was our regular fourth Sunday meeting, and this precious one, very weak and feeble, begged her father to go on to his meeting and discharge his duty as a faithful minister of God. It has been my sweet privilege for a number of years to visit the home of the deceased, and always found her to be an obedient and affectionate child. She leaves her father, mother, one sister and six brothers to mourn their loss.

Funeral services were conducted at the home of her parents by Elder I. D. Moody, and her body laid to rest in the Cement Cemetery to await the resurrection morn. NANNIE LANDERS.

Dora Louise Adams, daughter of James and Bessie Adams, was born July 12th, 1911, and departed this life Sept. 6th, 1914, making a short stay upon earth. While we feel deeply grieved to give up this sweet little treasure, yet it is the Master's will, and we should be willing to submit, believing as we do that our loss is her eternal gain, for God doeth all things best. This little child was a remarkable child for her age, very bright intellectually. Death separates us here, but we shall be united in one body where there is no more parting, pain or death, but where all is peace and love, and will all join in the sweet song of redeeming grace. To the bereaved I will say, Grieve not as those who have no hope, for we shall all who are in Christ meet again.

Her mortal remains were interred in Friendship Cemetery on Monday, Sept. 7th, after an effort to offer some words of comfort to the bereaved in the presence of a large and sorrowing company of relatives and friends from Matt. xviii. 2, 3.

J. H. RICKS.

Elizabeth Hines was born in Attala Co., Miss., June 7th, 1837, and departed this life May 27th, 1914. She joined the Primitive Baptists at old Lebanon Church on Saturday before the first Sunday in August, 1876, and lived a faithful member until death. She was deprived of church privileges for about four years on account of ill health, but her seat was never vacant unless providentially hindered. The writer knew her for thirty-four years, and to me she was a dear mother indeed, as well as to all her children. She was always ready to visit and care for the sick. As a neighbor, none could excel her. In short, to know her was to love her. She leaves five children, twenty-three grandchildren and twenty-eight great-grandchildren to mourn their loss. Her husband and six children preceded her to the grave. She was the faithful wife of S. A. Hines, who departed this life July 5th, 1912. She lived in her old home over fifty years, but lived with her children the last three years. All was done that could be for her, but death claimed her. We feel that she is at rest with her Savior. Her sufferings were great, but she bore them with great fortitude. The writer visited her last winter, and she seemed to enjoy my coming very much, but I felt it was the last look on her dear face. Weep not, children, for your mother, for your loss is her gain. (MRS.) M. F. HINES.

Rachel Vancleve Dunham Williams, daughter of James and Catharine Dunham, was born Nov. 23rd, 1825, near Lebanon, Ohio, and fell asleep in the early morning of March 2nd, 1915, on the anniversary of her wedding day, aged 89 years, 3 months and 6 days. She was united in marriage to Lewis D. Williams March 2nd, 1847. Eight children were the issue of that union, three of whom, together with her husband, preceded her to the eternal world. She had often spoken in later years of meeting and talking with father in dreams, but she would say, "He always slips away from me; I suppose it is because my time is not yet come." She was a dear and precious mother, a true and faithful friend, as many besides her immediate family can testify. Her hands were ever stretched forth to the poor and needy. She united with the Bethany Church at an early age, but for many years she had been a firm believer in the Primitive Baptist faith—salvation by grace, and grace alone, yet she never became identified with the church, but attended their meetings whenever and wherever she could, until deafness prevented her from hearing the preached gospel. Since then she

received great comfort in reading her SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Her eyes were opened to a clear vision of the "highway cast up," where the redeemed of the Lord walk, and her faith was strong in Christ her Redeemer, who alone is able to keep his redeemed in that true and living way. She leaves her two daughters (whose home was with her) lonely indeed. We will all miss her love and companionship, but God, who is able to comfort those who mourn, has taken her home. May he help us all to say, Thy will be done.

Her funeral was held at her home in Lebanon March 5th. The services were conducted by Elder W. I. Carnell, of the West Baptist Church of Lebanon. She was buried beside our father and her two little sons in the family plot in Lebanon Cemetery, there to await the glorious resurrection to life and immortality.

Her daughter, EVA MORRIS.

Phebe J. Brome was born Dec. 15th, 1831, near Monticello, N. Y., died Feb. 15th, 1915. She was a daughter of Miner and Mary Comstock Benedict. Was married to Philip C. Brome in 1850. To them were born five children, of whom two survive, a son and a daughter. She united with the Old School Baptists in her early twenties. She never seemed to doubt their being the true church, but very often doubted that she was one, yet her faith in God remained firm to the end. The doctrine of foreordination and predestination was a source of constant comfort to her. She enjoyed reading the SIGNS many years, as it was nearly all the preaching she had, being somewhat isolated from her kindred in Christ. I think one of her strongest evidences that she had passed from death unto life was that she loved the brethren. Amid the many trials and bereavements which she was called to pass through she was often blessed with the sweet spirit of submission. Having had her for a constant companion nearly all my life, I cannot express what a loss I feel her death to be to me. She was one of the kindest, self-sacrificing of mothers, and I rejoice in the hope that my loss is her eternal gain. God in infinite wisdom gave me a wonderful mother, and has seen fit to take her to himself, and I greatly desire that he will enable me to say, "Thy will be done."

The funeral was held at her late home in Ellenville, N. Y., Elder H. C. Ker officiating, using as a text James iv. 14, speaking words of encouragement and comfort.

HER DAUGHTER.

Sarah A. Weller Spires, daughter of Thomas J. and Eliza A. Weller, was born Dec. 26th, 1837, in Macoupin Co., Ill., and departed this life Feb. 4th, 1915, at her home in Waverly, Ill., aged 77 years, 1 month and 9 days. June 9th, 1859, she was united in marriage to John R. Spires, of Morgan Co., Ill., and to that union were born four children, one son and three daughters, the son, Thomas J., having preceded her in death. She leaves to mourn their loss her husband and three daughters, namely, Mrs. C. W. Taylor and Mrs. Wm. Walls, of Waverly, and Mrs. C. A. Sinclair, of Litchfield, also nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, two brothers and two sisters, besides a host of other relatives and friends. April 30th, 1870, she united with the Primitive Baptist Church at the head of Apple Creek, and lived a consistent member until the time of her death. Mr. and Mrs. Spires began housekeeping west of Franklin, living there until the spring of 1867, then moved to their farm in the southwest corner of Sangamon County until the fall of 1907, then moved to Waverly.

Funeral services were conducted at the Primitive Baptist Church in Waverly Sunday, Feb. 7th, at 1 o'clock p. m., by Elder G. W. Murray, of Winchester, in the presence of a large company gathered to sympathize with the bereaved family. The text used on the sad occasion was Philippians i. 21: "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Interment was made in East Cemetery.

In her death the church has lost a true and devoted member, the husband a faithful companion, the children a loving and indulgent mother, and the friends a true neighbor; but may we look through our tears and see the justice of God in taking her from us to dwell with him forever and forever.

Mrs. Mary E. Murphy, daughter of William H. and Lydia Crawford, died at Wilmington, Del., Feb. 11th, 1915, aged 78 years. She lived most of her time in Newark, Del., but also resided in Wilmington. At both these places she attended the Old School Baptist meetings. She never made a public profession, but was a firm believer in the doctrine of God our Savior. Funeral services were held at London Tract, conducted by the writer. Interment in the adjoining cemetery. May the comfort which the Lord alone can give rest upon all who are left to mourn her departure, is my earnest prayer.

J. C. MELLOTT.

MEETINGS.

THE First Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, of Hopewell, Mercer Co., N. J., will hold a two days meeting on Friday and Saturday, April 23rd and 24th, 1915, in celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of the organization of the church. All lovers of the truth, and especially the ministering brethren of our faith and order, are invited to be with us at that time.

Done by order of the church.

D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

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W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor.

C. B. RICE, Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 83. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1915. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE LABORING AND HEAVY LADEN.

"COME unto me, all ye that labor and are heaven laden, and I will give you rest."—Matt. xi. 28.

The work on hand must be done; much depends upon its accomplishment. I fully realize the importance of it, but I also am sure of my ability to do and complete the work by the given time, therefore I am not troubled or burdened by it, but am rather animated and pleased as I enter upon the labor, enjoying the work itself, and enjoying the confident assurance of its fulfillment when required. I am laboring, but am not heavy laden. To those who are well, and strong, and energetic, work is pleasant. It is good to have both the mind and body actively engaged, and a man of this character will of choice work hard, and to the limit of his strength, even though it is not required that he should do so. And though he may find it necessary to urge himself forward, he is not heavy laden. He is able to use his utmost strength, and to do all that is required each day, and so to keep even with the work as it is called for, and is still not heavy laden.

But should this man lose the use of some member of his body, leaving him able to do only half a day's work in a day, while a full day's work is still absolutely necessary and required, he will soon find himself crushed down under a burden of unfinished work. Struggle as he will, and as he must, the burden still increases, until he is rendered utterly helpless.

In the religious world all men seem to be engaged in the service of some god, with the feeling that they must do something to please him in order that they may be happy after death. It seems to be the common sentiment of natural men that they must do some work in order to obtain salvation. If grace is thought necessary to that work, the thought of the natural mind is that grace is to show us what to do and how to do it. But something must be done by the man in order to his salvation; that is the universal belief of all men. It seems also to be unquestioned that the man is able to do that something, whatever it may be. And when one has done that work, and has thus obtained that salvation in his own estimation, he is very likely to be so well assured of his ability that he believes he can be the means of saving

others. In the Lord's own good time he will teach his own dear people the truth concerning their salvation, and it will be in such a way that they can say of the dear Savior, He teacheth as never man taught. It is written in the Psalms, "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee."—Psalms lxv. 4. This is where the Lord begins in the salvation of his people. He chooses them, but this choice was before the foundation of the world, and all spiritual blessings were given them in Christ according to that eternal choice. Now he calls them, and causes them to approach unto him. (Eph. i. 4.)

It is this choice, and the manner of it, and the experience of it, and all the incidents attending it, that I love to dwell upon. It is so wonderful, so deep, so great, and yet so simple, and so like the crying and the laughing and the prattle of a little babe. Until there is a new, spiritual birth there are no such experiences and exercises of mind, for there is no life until then. Until there is divine life there is no hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Until then there is no preparation in their hearts for the sweet call of the dear Savior, who says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." These chosen ones are the babes unto whom the Lord reveals these things of the gospel, and unto whom the Son reveals the Father. When one is quickened by divine life then he begins to work in earnest, in order to gain salvation. Soon he finds himself failing here and there in his work. He cannot find anything perfect in whatever he does. His best works do not satisfy his conscience, they get poorer and more faulty every day. His prayers do not suit him, they seem only a chattering noise. This poor soul seems to himself to be getting farther away from the Lord every day. Instead of that, however, he is getting farther away from himself, farther from any hope in himself, and nearer to the Lord. This is the way that the Lord causes his chosen to approach unto him. They work until they are at the end of the earth before they see the salvation of God. (Isaiah lii. 10.)

Now they labor and are heavy laden. Not one thing have they been able to do to lighten the burden of their sins, or to discover any way in which they can be saved from them. And now Jesus calls them, and in that call describes them: "laboring and heavy laden." They cannot stop working any more than a man in the waves can stop struggling. They hear no voice with the natural ear, they see no man, but in the dear Savior's own good time they are at rest. They may see their sins yet, but the power has gone from them. They are at peace, yet cannot tell why. They cannot understand it, for the peace of God "passeth all understanding." The light of the sun gets to us before we can see the sun. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." It may be some time before we know that Jesus has given us that sweet command, that holy call; long before we know that he has called us to himself. We do not know it because some man or angel has told us. We know it because we have felt the power of that rest, the power of that sweet, spiritual voice. He himself has told us the holy secret, and we have felt the power of that wonderful voice in our souls, saying, "It is I." And when another in preaching or speaking proclaims the name and power of Jesus we

understand and know that this is Jesus, because we have felt his power. The preacher tells us our own experience; he is our witness.

Jesus did not say, If you will come unto me I will give you rest. He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness does not use that form of speech; he does not invite; he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. We were very tired, worn out with labor, when he called us. We did not, perhaps, at the time think it was Jesus, but the communication was with power. There was no resisting power in our hearts to stand against the power of Jesus' words, "Come unto me." Before we knew he had called, we were there, at his feet, in the bosom of his love, in the palace of the great King. All the infinite blessings of the Father were ours, though we knew it not, when the Son thus revealed the Father unto us, and the Holy Spirit took of the things of Jesus and showed them unto us.

O how much was shown to us in that wonderful time! How could a babe understand such great and marvelous things? Some of us have been hearing most wonderful things out of that first revelation of Jesus ever since that time. It is the power of that life, which is in the babe as well as in the greatest prophet.

No, not an invitation. That would not be consistent with the infinite character and holy prerogatives of Jesus, our Savior and King. In our experience we do not find anything which the dear Savior says to us that we feel we are to take into our minds, and look over, as an invitation, and decide whether we will accept it or not. These wonderful things are taught us in our souls; through them we grow up into Jesus. The mystery is, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." That mystery was hid from past ages, as it is now revealed unto his people. They grow from within, like the palm tree.

And still our thoughts go on, over and over again, and always finding something new. Jesus has told of the revelation of these precious things to babes, while they are hid from worldly wisdom, and no reason for it except that it seemed good in the sight of the Father, and of the revelation of the Father by the Son to whomsoever he will. And now we have been considering the most wonderful way in which this revelation is made. For this is that sweet and holy revelation of the Father, when the dear Savior said, "Come unto me," to all that were laboring and heavy laden. We took no journey, we did not start out east or west, we did not reach upward toward heaven or go searching into the depths, as we had done many times before, but right by us, in our hearts, there was the dear Savior, and the Father was there. We felt his presence, yet not in the natural way of thinking. His love was in our souls. The power of the Father was there, and yet we were not afraid, but could throw ourselves at his feet and leave our all with him. How little we knew then, and yet as we look over the sacred ground after more than fifty years, how much we knew. How soon the Bible began to talk to us.

We can understand in a measure the spiritual meaning and power of the things we felt at that time, and how it was that we came to Jesus from the ends of the earth. The words, though familiar to me, appeared wonderfully new: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." The thought in my mind was, Perhaps I am one of those for whom Jesus died. It had the force of certainty, and was as though the sun rose at mid-

night, and for the first time in my life I could feel and know true gladness. More than fifty years have passed since then, but I feel something of that power and gladness in those wonderful words today, though greatly tempered by the sorrows and tribulations I have come through.

Now as I look back I can at times see evidences that Jesus at that time said to my soul, "Come unto me," "and I will give you rest," so that I felt the power of them, though they were not in my mind just at that time. I had labored up to the last moment, trying to find out what I could do to obtain salvation, and had given up the hope that I could do anything. Then, unexpectedly, I was at rest and full of gladness, with the words I have mentioned on my mind, and their power in my heart. It was some days before the words of my text, "Come unto me," &c., were given to me, but when they were brought to my mind, and were with me nearly all of one night, I felt that I knew them. The sunshine must be upon us before we can know there is a sun. In his light only can we see light. So by the words of the dear Savior, the Sun of Righteousness, alone can we know him, and be assured that he has risen upon us. Who would take a candle, or any earthly light, by which to see the sun and show him to others? We delight in the sweet words of the psalmist: "For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light."—Psalms xxxvi. 9.

What different kinds of burdens we have borne in our journey so far; what various kinds of trouble and affliction we have been brought through. How many times we have said, This sorrow is too heavy to be borne, I must certainly fail. But whenever any of the Lord's dear children have come to the end of the earth, laboring and heavy laden, they shall each and all of them find the Lord's promise equal to the occasion, and will never fail them. He said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden." He said it once for all, and it will not fail to reach every one of them just at the right time. He did not say you that are "weary." Better than that. A weary man may lie down and rest. But these are all laboring, hard at work; no time to rest even for a moment; always laboring, and still heavy laden; burdened in body and mind and heart, and borne down with grief and sorrow and tribulation. To these afflicted ones, to all of them, without one exception, the dear Savior says, "Come." He who said, "Let there be light," says, "Come." He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness has shined in the heart of every laboring and heavy laden one, saying, "Come." He in whose hand is the king's heart, to turn whithersoever he will, as the rivers of water, has said, and still always says: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March, 1915.

PORTLAND, Indiana.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have a letter from an aged and afflicted brother, in which he has requested that I write such thoughts as I have upon the sixteenth chapter of Genesis. I do not know what is in the mind of the brother, only from the wording of his letter and some expressions I do not understand. Well do I know that I cannot write upon this chapter in an instructive way, except as the Lord may enable, as there are many things to consider in the fifteenth, sixteenth, seven-

teenth and eighteenth chapters of Genesis; they contain many things pertaining to the Abrahamic covenant, or rather the covenant God made with Abraham, and we will have to give the New Testament explanation of this Abrahamic covenant if we rightly divide the word of truth.

In the fifteenth chapter we have the promise God made to Abraham that his seed should be as numerous as the stars of heaven, and that he would give the land of Canaan for their inheritance, and also told how his seed should sojourn in a strange land, and be afflicted four hundred years, and afterwards they should come out with great substance, and that nation to whom they should be in bondage God would judge. The sixteenth chapter treats upon the manner of Ishmael and Isaac's birth, of how Sarah gave Hagar, her maid, to Abraham to wife, and afterward how Hagar fled from the face of Sarah, and how the Lord met her. In the seventeenth chapter we see the manner of Isaac's birth, and the manner of covenant God would make with him. The apostle Paul has given us some explanations along these lines which are better than anything I might offer upon this beginning of the first covenant. He says Hagar and Sarah represented the two covenants; Hagar represented Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to or is figurative of Jerusalem, which is in bondage with her children. Paul meant that Hagar and her bondchildren answered to the condition of the Jews in Paul's day, which were in bondage to the law, and that Sarah and her children represented the new Jerusalem. One was a type of old Jerusalem, and the other a type of the new Jerusalem, and as Hagar and her bondchildren were cast out, and her children could not be heirs with the children of the freewoman, even so all those who were holding to the old Jerusalem or first covenant promises in Paul's day could not be heirs to the new Jerusalem. The apostle in calling the Jews the bondchildren, and saying the Scripture says to cast out the bondwoman and her son, meant that as Hagar's son was cast out from being heir with Sarah's son, even so would God cast out all those Jews that Hagar and her bondson typified. Both Ishmael and Isaac were Abraham's seed, yet Ishmael's mother was a bondmaid, and hence in these two boys we see the doctrine of election set forth. Ishmael was typical, or figurative, of the people of the first or legal covenant, and Isaac was typical of the people of the new or gospel covenant. I know some have thought these two boys represented the inner and outer man in one man, but the apostle Paul has very plainly shown that they represented the people of the two covenants, and stand squarely as representatives of the legal and gospel covenants, and Hagar and Sarah were figurative of the covenants. Hagar was the old Jerusalem and Sarah the new Jerusalem figuratively. Paul says he that was born of the bondwoman was born after the flesh, but he of the freewoman was by promise, which things are an allegory, for these are the two covenants. The inspired apostle did not handle this matter only as representing the two covenants, and each of those boys represented the people of the two covenants. Paul said that we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise, but as then, he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now, for in Paul's day the people that Ishmael typified were persecuting the people of the gospel covenant. This is Paul's explanation. I have never understood Paul to handle these

two women and these two boys as representing two different spirits within one person. Paul's explanation should be final.

Then we come to Isaac's two sons, Jacob and Esau. They were twin brothers, and Paul in the ninth chapter of Romans likens them unto two vessels made from the same lump of clay, one to honor and the other to dishonor, just to suit the potter. God was the potter, and Jacob and Esau the vessels, both made from the same lump, one just as good as the other while in the hands of the Potter; for the children not being yet born, neither having done any good or evil, but that the purpose of God according to election might stand, he saith, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. Here in these twin boys we have a different figure. Paul tells us that Ishmael and Isaac represented the people of the two covenants. He also has said that Jacob and Esau represented the elect and nonelect; one God hates and the other he loves; and we do not see anything said by this inspired apostle that these two boys represented two spirits or two natures in one person, but the elect and the nonelect, these were representative men. I have understood that when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans in the year A. D. 70, that then the bondwoman and her son were cast out, and also when the gospel of the kingdom began to be preached. Then as Paul preached we preach Christ and him crucified; to the Jews it was a stumblingblock, and to the Greeks it was foolishness, but to them that were called, both Jews and Greeks, it was Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Hence Jacob represented the called of Jesus Christ, and Esau represented the nonelect, or those who are not called. They represent two manner of peoples, for so said the angel unto Rebecca, they represent men. Now both Jacob and Esau were sinners, and they both represent sinners; one represented elect sinners and the other the nonelect sinners; one represented the sinners Christ came to save, and the other represented the sinners Christ did not come to save. Paul saith, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" Then he says, "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?" For "the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." The apostle here in this chapter has so very ably set forth the doctrine of election, and that it matters not what men may do to bring God under obligations to them, as men sometimes put it, yet the apostle says it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy, and he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. The apostle here would have us to know that it matters not how much one runs, or how much one wills, God has compassion on whom he will, and that he hardens whomsoever he will. Hence Jacob was typical of as many as the Lord our God shall call. We only see in these twin boys the elect and the nonelect, the believer and the disbeliever, the children of wrath and the children of mercy. I do not see how they represent two natures in one person, but two manner of peoples, and both manner of peoples are sinners, but one

manner of these sinners is elected, and the others are the vessels of wrath. Paul in treating upon this subject says, Gal. iii.: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Here Christ is called the seed of Abraham. "And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed of God in Christ, the law, that was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise." Here the apostle is speaking something for our comfort; he means that God gave, or confirmed, a covenant with Abraham, and gave him a promise that his seed should inherit Canaan, hence Abraham's seed were the children of this promise. The promise was that they should inherit Canaan, and Paul says the law that was given by Moses four hundred and thirty years after he had promised Canaan to Abraham's seed could not disannul the promise. Paul means that the seed of Abraham could not be cheated out of their promised inheritance, even if they did not live up to the law, for we see that Moses told the seed of Abraham before they passed over Jordan that it was not because of any righteousness of their own, or uprightness of their hearts, that they were going in to possess the promised Canaan, but because of the promise God made to Abraham. Hence the promised inheritance of the first covenant people was not obtained by works, but by promise, for Moses told them they were the wickedest of all people. Hence sinners inherited the promise, but no Ishmaelite could inherit any of the land of Canaan, yet the seed of Abraham who did inherit were just as wicked as the Ishmaelites. Hence these were both representative sinners, and as the seed of Abraham represented the children of the new covenant, and they were sinners, then it must be expected that the children of the new covenant are sinners; and as it was not by works of righteousness by which the seed of Abraham inherited Canaan, even so the apostle Paul says that it is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved; and as the legal inheritance typified the gospel inheritance, and the legal was by promise, so is the gospel; it is not by works, but by grace; and as the legal people had to be chastened for their disobedience, even so the gospel people have to be chastened for disobedience; and as the Lord would renew his covenant with legal Israel after he had chastened them, even so will he renew his favor to spiritual Israel after he has chastened; and as it was sinners who had to be chastened under the legal dispensation, even so sinners are chastened in the gospel kingdom. One thing we should keep before us in elucidating this subject is, that Isaac and Ishmael were both sinners, and both represent sinners, and Jacob and Esau were both sinners, and both represent sinners, one the elect sinner, and the other the nonelect sinner. The apostle Paul has thus handled these things, and we should follow after him.

Your servant,

NEWTON PETERS.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March 2, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose a letter from brother F. Selby Fisher, which I submit to your judgment for publication in the SIGNS.

Yours in fellowship,

B. F. COULTER.

SALISBURY, Md., Feb. 25, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER COULTER:—With reference to your letter of Feb. 18th, in which you say you would be pleased to read something in the SIGNS over my signature, and that I have the pen of a ready writer, I must say that I am surprised at such a request from you, knowing the weakness of the flesh (my flesh) as I do. I have never felt that I had any liberty as a writer, or anything in fact. I have written several times in the last seven or eight years for publication, not that I felt I could do it, but many of the times the thing fastened upon me and would not let me go until I had made the attempt. I have not written as much in the last two or three years as formerly, and I regret that I could not, but God rules all things, and I am one of the all things that compose the makeup of creation, and I know that when he wills to do a thing he does it, even to the lifting up of a beggar, or the pulling down of a kingdom.

My mind has had some food in meditating on the weakness of the flesh of late; knowing my own weakness I rejoice in it, being convinced that the flesh must be pulled down that the Spirit may abound more perfectly; and in connection with my meditations my mind has been led to a passage of Scripture, John xi. 35: "Jesus wept." Now this short passage of Scripture is noted specially by modern religionists as being the shortest verse in the Bible, forgetting possibly that this arrangement of the Scriptures is the production of man, and simply, I suppose, for the convenience of man for reference and easy finding of certain portions of the Bible. Modern religionists begin very early to teach the children the Bible, by picking out things of natural interest, such as the shortest verse, the longest, the first, the last, the middle, &c., how many words, how many letters, and various other things do they go into detail of the formation or compilation of the Bible, the same as I figure the cost of production, freight charges, &c., on a certain manufactured article. Now there is no religion in all this teaching, absolutely none, but merely a problem in mathematics; but my mind was not drawn to this Scripture because of the shortness of the verse, nor by the position it occupies in the Bible, but from the fact that it is the expression, placed on record, of a fact, of a thing that did really occur, and for our special benefit and comfort. Our view of Jesus is above, we see him above us in our imaginations of him, and also in our relation to him; he is our Mediator, also our Elder Brother, one of the same family, we with him are of the same parentage, born from above, he being the firstborn of many brethren. On that memorable occasion in which connection these words were written, when Lazarus had been dead four days, Jesus came to Bethany, which was the home of Lazarus, and on coming and meeting Mary and Martha, as well as many of the Jews who were there to comfort these two lonely sisters because of their brother's death, Jesus saw the expression of grief by Mary and the Jews, he also wept. Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him. There was that expression of tender sympathy manifested when Jesus wept; it was the man Jesus that wept, not the eternal Godhead; it was the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief that wept. That inseparable union between Jesus and his people is manifested in this, that when they are in trouble he is also troubled; seeing them weep, he also weeps with them, bearing their troubles in his own body; and while we view him high

and lifted up, as Isaiah expresses it, and as we also express it, he is also down beneath the lowest, with a heart so tender and full of compassion that to be in the midst of weeping he also weeps—a tender, sympathizing Jesus, and while he reigns, it is not with harshness and spurning his subjects, but he is a fellow-man with them in all the sufferings of his people, and the suffering ones are his, and the marks of suffering identify us with that multitude that no man can number, and they are those for whom he suffered, entering into the weakness of the flesh with them, knowing it all, being tempted in all points like we are, yet without sin, though he felt our sins and bore them in his own body on the tree; he knows our needs, and how to help us in the hour of temptation, and by the things he suffered our sufferings are made lighter, and, as Paul says, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. In our grief he grieves with us, and in dying he is the antidote. The blessed Jesus that wept with Mary is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, descending from heaven and taking on that body of flesh, becoming one with his people, weeping, groaning in spirit, tasting death and feeling the pangs of hell. David expresses it, The pangs of hell gat hold on me. And again, Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell. This was that same Jesus talking in David that wept with Mary and Martha over their brother Lazarus, and what a blessed thing it is to realize that it is he who is our great and only sympathizer, having been afflicted the same as we, therefore we have no new complaint to make known to him. You know, as a physician, that there are new ailments continually springing up, which are strange to the profession, and you know also that if you have had a disease you more thoroughly understand the suffering of your patient, but if some new symptom manifests itself it requires study, and often experimenting on the part of the physician, before he can effect a cure. Not so with our great Physician, for he has had all the sufferings and complaints of the sin-sick soul; knowing the symptoms perfectly he knows at once our ailment, he also knows and applies the remedy as we are able to stand it. A sick person has no idea of the kind of medicine or food, or how much of either he should have for his own good, but thinks he knows. Once when I was coming out of a very severe spell of scarlet fever, I wanted a whole steak, a loaf of bread, a quart of milk, and other things in proportion, except medicine. My physician said, No, you cannot have them, you can have three glasses of milk each day for one week, nothing more. I told him I would starve to death. He laughed, and the twenty-one glasses of milk was all I had to eat for a week. He knew my needs, and let me have as I needed, but did not fill my wants, and I will say here that my wants and needs are as far apart now as they were then. The blessed Jesus, having suffered all of our ailments, knows the cure also, and administers it, together with such food and in such quantities as our depleted system can stand. Paul, I think, says in one place that he withheld strong words, or doctrine, from certain of the brethren, because they were not able to stand it. We have no new complaint to bring to Jesus; we think it new and unheard of; I did, do yet sometimes, but it is a mistake, nothing new to him. When he cried, "It is finished," he completed his course, gaining his knowledge of the extremity of man in the weakness of his flesh, experiencing our sufferings, thereby becoming familiar with the

extreme suffering of the child of God when he is brought to the point in his travel that he is forsaken by all, even God himself having forsaken him. I rejoice and thank God that these two words which convey that fact were left on record: "Jesus wept."

Brother Coulter, I am sure by this time you have changed your mind about my having the pen of a ready writer, but this is yours for the reading, and if there is any good thing in it, may God, if it is his will, bless it to your comfort, and not you only, but to all who may read it, and unto him who hath done great things for us be all honor and glory, both now and in that world where those who now weep shall reap in joy. Amen. Kindly remember me to those of your household, and to all who love His appearing.

I am, I trust, your brother in these things,

F. SELBY FISHER.

MANASSAS, Va., Feb. 25, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have copied a penciled narrative of my dear husband's "call to the ministry," which was written some years back, and laid away, and I thought I would send it to you for publication, as many who have long known and loved him may be interested in what has been written. His conflicts and trials were many, but God's unfailing grace proved sufficient, and bore him safely through.

Your sister in affliction,

M. C. BADGER.

ALDIE, Va., July, 1877.

DEAR EDITORS:—The gloomy doubts that arise in my mind of late, the trembling of the very foundations, as it were, beneath me, lead me at this time to recall and transcribe the leadings of my mind, my impressions and emotions concerning the work of the gospel ministry. I have been solicited several times by brethren to write my experience in regard to that important matter, but have refrained hitherto for as good reason that I can now give. I am inclined to write now not so much for the perusal of others as for a searching inquiry I would fain make into the history of my travel, and the motives and promptings of my mind and heart, which led me to open my mouth and try to preach the everlasting gospel. My baptism, and a short time subsequent thereto, mark an epoch in my experience that I feel assured I can never forget. After long years of weary wandering I had reached home at last. My peace seemed abiding, and it did indeed "flow like a river," and I did not realize that anything could disturb me. But this was not to last. "If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands ever so clean; yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me." The first disturber of my peace was a passage of Scripture which was applied to me with all the force of a personal address: "Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, he shall find so doing." I think to-day I could mark the very spot where I was when arrested by these words. I did not know how that Scripture could have any application to me, but that it did concern me somewhat I had no doubt. Immediately I became anxious and troubled, my sweet peace and satisfaction vanished like a dream, and I was led to a searching examination of myself that was not comforting. I began to fear I was deceived and had deceived the church. But these words, "Blessed is that servant," &c., kept ringing in my ears. For several days I was in this frame of mind, a feeling of condemnation following me, as

though there was some obligation I owed to my God and my brethren, some duty I was shirking. I was then a member of the little church in North Jay, Maine. We held our meetings in a schoolhouse, and sometimes at the house of one of the members. We were as cordially hated by the world as the Lord's people are in any place in my knowledge. But that little band was too good and too pure to have such an one as I among them, still my desire was to be with them, and if the Lord would make me of any use how glad I would be. Several days after my mind was thus disturbed I was at work shingling the roof of a building; my hands were busy, my mind busier. Of a sudden, I think it was the first sudden display of God's power in my experience, the heavens seemed opened to me. The wonderful plan of redemption opened with a depth and beauty that I never had before witnessed. The Scriptures, passage after passage, came, until my soul seemed like the prophet Isaiah when he beheld the glory of the Lord in the temple. It was then and there for the first time the command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel," was addressed to me. It came as a personal address, and with power and authority. My reply to these words was, I cannot. I had always looked upon the ministry as the highest and most sacred calling a man could engage in, and the thought of my engaging in it seemed the height of presumption. But the word of truth at this time was so beautiful and so precious that my heart was ready, but my utter emptiness for the work created in me the feeling that I could not do it. So soon as the answer, "I cannot," came into my mind, immediately the words, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," followed, and for a length of time objection after objection came, and I would grasp at them like one under whom the very foundations were giving way, only to be answered by the Scriptures which came to me with a fullness and a flood of light like nothing I had ever witnessed before. It would take a long time to write, even if I could, what passed through my mind in a very short time. My feelings were intensely wrought upon, I could not go on with my work; such was the upheaval of my whole being, that I really did not know what had come upon me. After awhile these feelings wore off, and O the bitter things I did write against myself. To think for a moment that I could ever preach. I settled into a state of despondency and gloom, I felt I was nothing but a hypocrite. I attended meetings regularly, and as is the custom in that country among the Baptists, took part in them, but said nothing about the exercises I had in regard to preaching. When my hard heart would soften again and a little light dawn that deep conviction would return, the strife would be renewed, until one time I concluded to go to a dear "mother in Israel" and relate my trouble, hoping through her counsel to get relief. Her reply to my story was, "Brother Joseph, the path of duty is the path of safety." They seemed words of inspiration, and they have followed me with increasing significance ever since, but they did not help me then. About the same time I wrote to my father, who had been in the ministry for years, and his reply settled my mind, for the time, perfectly. He wrote, "There are other gifts in the church besides the ministry, each profitable in its place; perhaps you have been backward in filling your place when called upon," &c., and closed with the advice not to preach if I could help it. I was

now satisfied, a great load seemed lifted from my heart. I tried to banish all thought of preaching, and fill my place in the church to the best of my ability, though I avoided speaking as much as I could, but I went down in deep darkness and distress of mind. My hope seemed almost gone, God seemed to withdraw himself and let "all the angry powers of hell assail my soul in every part." For months I was in this condition; it seemed there was not a viler creature on the earth than I. Once more would the Lord appear, and his love soften my heart, and break it and give me a contrite spirit. Again was his word found sweeter than honey in the honeycomb. But as sure as the light returned, so sure that old command to "preach my gospel" would ring through my soul, and the fierce conflict was renewed. I do not want to be understood that I was opposed to the idea of preaching because the work was distasteful, on the contrary, were I called of God and qualified for the work, could I be fitted to speak to the dear saints of the most high God of those glorious things pertaining to his kingdom, I would not exchange places with a mortal upon his footstool. "Heralds of the cross," ministering angels, sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation. No, it was the excellency of the calling and the unspeakable preciousness of the truth that made me recoil upon myself and fight with myself and my convictions, believing those convictions were the workings of my own flesh. My feeling was then, and has been ever since, that I would rather preach the gospel, if I could, than do anything else under heaven, but I had a perfect horror of running before I was sent.

But to proceed. Up to the time of which I write I had a comfortable home for my little family, but I lost my health, and to such an extent I could do but very little work. Two years and a half after my first exercises in regard to preaching we removed to Brunswick, Maine, where I was raised. An opportunity for business was offered me by one who had just opened a new house in the mercantile line and wanted a partner, and I embraced the offer, and for a time everything worked smoothly, and I was not particularly disturbed about anything, until an unlooked for calamity overtook me. I tried to struggle on, but accumulating misfortunes met me on every hand. My mind was again filled with the inexorable word, my heart was almost broken, and in the midst of distress, somehow I went to the church and told them all. I threw myself into their hands, to do with, as far as my gifts were concerned, as they saw fit. I received a license to speak wherever a door in providence was opened. I had no liberty often, and indeed I had a wretched time. I think I tried two or three times and quit, satisfied I was mistaken in the whole thing, and that the church had made a mistake in giving me a license. I reasoned that if the Lord had called me to the work of the ministry he would not have suffered me to go stripped of home and means for a livelihood for my family. My first duty was to provide for them, and to retrieve my lost fortunes. I had the Scriptures to convince me I was right. "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." I acted upon my convictions, and for many months the struggle was a desperate one; indeed I thought I was forsaken of God and man. A very few times for twelve months, perhaps, I tried to preach. Solicitations and expostulations of breth-

ren could not move me, I was wicked and rebellious, temporally everything turned to ashes in my hands, every effort I could make, instead of bettering my condition, made it worse, and sunk me more and more in debt. Being naturally of a proud and independent spirit, this humiliation was crushing. For several months I was engaged in traveling as agent. At one time I went into the house of a lady, and while engaged in explaining to her the use of the article, my mind was caught away and I was preaching with might and main to the brethren, and when I came to myself I stood staring at her, and she at me. I turned and left the house, and I assure you I wept bitter tears. My natural temperament was averse to receiving anything like charity, but all of this had to be crushed out of me. I was brought to a stand when I had given all up, and in my heart felt a willingness to go forward in the path of duty. The Lord took me up very unexpectedly, and mysteriously to me my ordination was called for. Though I have many times and often felt the brethren made a mistake in setting me apart to the work, and felt I could not undertake it, I have not dared to turn back. Though my preaching is dry and barren, and, to my mind, to the last extent unprofitable, so long as the brethren say, "Go on," I try to obey, however learning obedience, I trust, in the things which I suffer. So I am trying to preach and trying to quit. I have received from time to time assurances of the favor of God, and that I really was about my Master's business, and it seemed I never could doubt again, but again I go from those heights of joy and sweet satisfaction into the valley and shadow of death. There is so much of self and so little of Christ in my preaching that I cannot think of it without trembling.

But I will close this somewhat prolix, and, I fear, uninteresting narrative, by signing myself, your companion in tribulation,

J. N. BADGER.

GOLCONDA, Ill., Feb. 20, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—Having read with much interest brother Mayfield's article on Romans viii. 1, I felt that I wanted to say something in regard to condemnation, and the walk of God's children, and hence I began to pen some of my thoughts concerning the same. But there are so many things connected therewith, so many Scriptures touching upon condemnation, and the walk of God's people through this world of sin and sorrow, that I cannot tell where to begin, what I desire to say to make it at all connective. It were better, in all probability, for me to lay aside my pen, which I have several times already done, but here I am again trying to find the end of the string, that I might be able to unwind a few rounds of the ball. Paul begins the chapter (Romans viii.) by a conclusion arrived at from something already stated. He then, it seems, gives another conclusion as to why he so concludes, in the following language: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." It is said by some that every affirmative has its negative, either expressed or understood. Whether or not this is true, I believe an affirmation may be made without thought of a negative allusion. When Paul said, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," I do not believe that he meant to leave the impres-

sion that there is some condemnation, at least, to those in Christ who walk after the flesh. "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" If the life that God's children live in the flesh, is by the faith of the Son of God, (Gal. ii. 20,) if they are dead to sin, (Rom. vi. 2,) if Jesus bore their sins in his own body, (1 Peter ii. 24,) if God will remember their sins no more, (Heb. viii. 12,) I cannot see how there can be any condemnation to them. But does not the child of God sin even after he has been regenerated, or born again? one might suggest. I reply by saying no, which I immediately modify by saying yes. I say no, because the Bible says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin."--1 John iii. 9. I say yes, because, "there is not a just man, * * * that sinneth not."—Eccl. vii. 20; because God will, if they forsake his laws, visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes (Psalms lxxxix. 32,) because, if they are not chastised they are bastards and not sons. (Heb. xii. 5–8.) The manner of life of the children of God in this world, both before and after regeneration, is portrayed by Paul, which he designates as a walk. Prior to the new birth they walked according to the course of this world. (Eph. ii. 2.) In regeneration his people receive a principle, or nature, in direct opposition to their fleshly nature, and since they (in regeneration) do not lose their fleshly nature their walk from then on through life is a warfare. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh."—Gal. v. 17. This hinders them from doing the things that they would, and makes them to do the things they would not. (Rom. vii. 15.) Now whether or not they were, prior to being born again, able of their own accord to walk according to the course of this world, and to fulfill the desires of the flesh and of the mind, it is not in them after regeneration to direct their steps. David says that "the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord."—Psalms xxxvii. 23. David also says, "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness." But, says the poor child, I am surely not walking in the paths of righteousness, not led by the Spirit of God, for I am troubled on every hand, cast down, doing the things I hate and would not; my love for the Savior is so slack, my faith is so weak, doubts and fears will arise, trials and temptations beset me. Dear child, these afflictions are as so many evidences that you are being led by the Spirit of the Lord in the path of righteousness, which is rough and dark at times, to be sure, but for a wise purpose.

"When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace all sufficient shall be thy supply;
The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design
Thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine."

Listen to what Peter says, and how kindly he addresses you: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings."—1 Peter iv. 12, 13. You should not conclude that because you are at times led into darkness, where you are liable to stumble and even fall, that you have been forsaken by your heavenly Father; his everlasting arms are underneath, nor will he suffer you to be tempted above that you are able. (1 Cor. x. 13.)

"When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow;
For I will be with thee thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress."

If the chastening rod is laid on it is for your profit, that you might be partakers of his holiness, (Heb. xii. 10,) and though it be grievous at the time of infliction, it will afterwards yield the peaceable fruit

of righteousness. (verse 11.) Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where he was tempted forty days of the devil, (Luke iv. 1, 2,) it pleased the Lord to bruise him, and put him to grief; he was oppressed, afflicted, despised of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, was wounded for the transgressions of his people, was bruised for their iniquities, and by his stripes they are healed. (Isaiah liii.) These are some of the things he suffered, and Paul says that Jesus learned obedience by the things he suffered, (Heb. v. 8,) that he was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, (Heb. ii. 9,) and that he became obedient unto death. (Phil. ii. 8.) Jesus said of himself, Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and enter into his glory? Also, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day. (Luke xxiv.) Now, since he has suffered, and since he can be touched with the infirmities of his people, being in all points tempted as they are, yet without sin, he is able to succor them that are tempted. (Heb. ii. 18; iii. 15.)

In conclusion, I will say to the poor trembling children, Hold up your heads, there is no condemnation to you, Jesus has suffered. Your tribulations, fiery trials and sufferings are doubtless for the purpose of teaching you lessons in obedience. It is through much tribulation you must enter the kingdom of God. (Acts xiv. 22.) The road you must pass over may be rough, and though you may have to go through many dark and thorny places, God's everlasting arms are underneath, nor will he suffer you to be tempted above that you are able. Remember your life is hid with Christ in God (a secure place indeed) and in order to find it you must pass through death's dark door. Then in the resurrection morn you will be raised with Christ's likeness, see him as he is, and be satisfied.

Your unworthy brother, in much tribulation,

THOMAS J. CARR.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, August 6, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER WESLEY:—Your letter and Ruth's came last evening. I felt a deep interest in your letter regarding your interest in Jesus Christ. I was for years after the experience of pardoning grace awaiting a revelation of Jesus Christ. I thought it must come in some spectacular way, even as the Jews of old. But we are told, The kingdom of God is within you, it does not come by observation or outward show. If I am not deceived, I have learned, here a little, there a little, something of the true meaning of the Mediator, Daysman and High Priest, Jesus Christ our Lord. He said to Philip, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me?" No man can know the Father save through the Son. He is God with us. God was made flesh and dwelt among us. The tabernacle of God is with men. When the light of the covenant of God's grace shone so sweetly in my heart, bringing forgiveness of sin and joy and peace to my soul, I felt it was from God; I knew but one God. His person as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit was not revealed to my knowledge. I had read of Jesus Christ, and believed in a natural way perhaps that he had lived and died for his people, and rose from the dead for their justification, but I did not understand the fullness of Him who is God eternal and no less. If I mentioned his name in my prayers it was without understanding, but I prayed unto God that he would reveal his Son to me.

Little by little I feel it has come, until the words, Have I been such a long time with you and you have not known me? were sweetly sealed home to my heart. The one who had been healed by Jesus said, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." So would I say. Dear brother, we cannot know the Father save in the person of the Son; he is God with us. Do not mistake, there is only one God. The Creator of all things is the same God who made the covenant with Abraham, the same God who took on him the tabernacle of flesh and dwelt with men, who is the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, triune, inseparable. But we cannot see the Father save through our Daysman. Could you approach the burning sun? How then shall man come unto God, who is holy, undefiled, infinite in goodness? There is no way save the one appointed of God, the gate of heaven, the way of life, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, God with us. This subject seems so deep, too deep for me to write on, but if only you can see what I mean, that there is only one God, and one Mediator between God and man, who is God himself in the person of the Son. That is the essential of our faith as I know it. That is what differentiates between the faith of God's elect and the faith of antichrist. They have a form of godliness, but deny the power of the Godhead. They deny the Godhead of Jesus Christ; that is antichrist. Mark well the difference. If Jesus Christ is your God and Savior, then you believe in him; if he is not, then you have no knowledge of him.

I would add a few lines as to the realization of the love in our hearts towards our Lord and Savior. Do you not feel at times that longing to fall down before him, to lie at his feet and worship him in love? Would you not feel to be safe there? Does not your heart burn when he says, Behold my hands and my feet? O, it is when our Beloved is gone and we cannot find him that we mourn. His love is what we pine for. The more faith we have in him the less we can have in ourselves, the darker the hour of waiting seems, and the brighter the approach of day. "Lord, I believe, thy power I own." May he give us understanding and grace to bear it.

I trust I have not wearied you with this letter or multiplied words without wisdom. May God himself be your guide and teacher. Give my love to sister Ruth.

I inclose a letter which I should have forwarded before. Edith joins me in love.

Affectionately,

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

REESE, Texas, July 8, 1914.

ELDER H. C. KER:—While reading some in the SIGNS this morning I read Elder Durand's letter of sympathy and love to you, and it renewed the feeling within myself to write a few lines in that way. While I do not feel worthy or able, will say the Lord is able to do all things whatsoever he pleases, so I feel somewhat inclined to write, leaving the result with the Lord. Brother Ker, I remember two or three articles you wrote about your cold and barren condition, that you were shut up and could not come forth, and when reading them I remember talking to my wife, and telling her that I believed God was preparing you for some great work, but we could not tell of course what it could be. Yes, believing what Paul said, that God works all things together for good to them that love the Lord, who are called according to his purpose. It is through much tribulation we

enter the kingdom, so we feel that God had a wise purpose in shutting you in. Ah yes, how deep the water of affliction must be with you, my dear brother, the responsibilities of such a work must be great. The great loss of Elder Chick, fellow-laborer in editorial work of such a great medium of correspondence of the household of faith, then together with that trial and sorrow, your long endurance of sad afflictions of one who was nearer and dearer than all else, to you, my fellow-laborer in the afflictions of the gospel of the Son of God, was the loss of your dear companion, of which I feel I know something. I have had the sore trial twice in my life, so I feel that I can express my feelings of sorrow and sympathy for you, and will say, The Lord bless you, my brother, and uphold you in all sore trials, and enable you to carry on the great work he has called you to, feeling assured that brother Lefferts will be of great relief and help in this work.

Dear brother, I have not written as I thought when I began, but as my mind has been directed. If you feel this to be a word of encouragement to you, thank the Lord for it; it is of some relief to me, as I have thought to write you ever since the death of sister Ker.

Praying the richest of God's blessings on you and your family, we are your little brother and sister,

MR. & MRS. M. L. LILES.

CORNING, Ark., Nov. 15, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will now try in my feeble manner to write you a few lines in acknowledgment of my appreciation of your favor in sending me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, our much appreciated family paper, for so long a time as a delinquent, but my circumstances and condition have been such that it was out of my power to renew until now, and now for only six months, as I am in a very hard place and do not see much chance for me to keep up my subscription in the future, as much as I desire to do so. I get much comfort from the columns of the SIGNS, and I would not give it up only as compelled, so I will say to you dear brethren, that when my time of subscription expires again, if you do not hear from me please discontinue, and forgive me all my blunders and failures, for I am a poor, sin-cursed, sin-tossed worm, yet sometimes I want to tell my trials in life to the household of faith, even to the house of Jacob. Yet I am afraid if they knew all, they would not be pleased with me, but would frown and say, Go away, your voice is a strange one to us; it is like the crying of one in outer darkness; go away, we do not want to hear from you. O I want to go back to my home church at Mud Creek, in Fulton Co., Ky., to see if peradventure the members there would or could welcome me after so long an absence, rambling in the waste howling wilderness. But I am not able financially, and am afraid of the consequences. I am afraid I have said too much already. If this should be a source of worry to you, forgive me. I think that if it were not for my fear and shame I would write to some of the brethren at Mud Creek. I do love them all very much, but I fear they cannot love such a sinner as I am.

I see that I have gone on too far in my simple and rambling way. This is not written for publication, nor in desire that it should be published, but you are at liberty to do with it as you think best.

Farewell. I love you all, in spite of all my unworthiness.

As ever, your most unworthy brother, if one at all.

R. C. SMITH.

TRIBUTE OF RESPECT.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please permit me through the SIGNS to give an expression on the death of the late Elder G. M. Fetter. I recently received this sad information through a letter written me by sister Dawson, of Ocean Park, Cal., and it was a shock to me, and sank deep into my poor heart with a grief words can never describe. It is sad to think we shall see each other's face no more on earth, nor mingle together in worship and praise to the Lord God of Israel, whom he rejoiced to glorify in his walk and godly conversation among his brethren in the church here below. About eighteen years ago I met our dear brother at his home in the city of Raton, New Mexico, for the first time, and can say of a verity I never enjoyed sweeter association with a more God-loving, sincere, faithful brother, whose praise for the gospel's sake was known among all his brethren, and was of good report of them without. His home, with the sisters Boggs, (now deceased) was a welcome place to any of his brethren who might pass that way. On my first visit, in company with our dear departed brother Elder A. D. Bourland, we were preaching and holding meetings some three weeks of that summer. Afterwards, in October of the same year, the writer and Elder Bourland were called back there for the purpose of constituting a church, which was done at the home of brother J. B. Dawson, on the Vermejo River, some forty miles from Raton, deeper in the mountain region, where the blessed Lord manifested his divine presence on that memorable occasion. Here by the authority of the church our dear brother, Elder Fetter, was ordained. The writer and Elder A. D. Bourland composed the presbytery that laid hands upon him, and I believe it was all under the direction of the Spirit of the most high God. Many times I met him afterward, and it was always with the same gladness. Here I must mention one incident. When brother Fetter was called upon to give a reason of his hope and call to preach the gospel, he arose calmly and began in detail before the church and a large gathering of neighbors and friends to narrate his experimental exercises, and continued for nearly one hour, and in his features the very image of Christ shone with such resplendent beauty and solemnity that it made a lasting impression upon all who heard him. The rocks, mountains and evergreens seemed to be praising God, from whom all blessings flow. It will long remain with me in unqualified remembrance until I, too, am called to lay my armor by, when I hope to meet our precious brother and all the elect family of God in the spirit land of eternal peace, where parting will be no more and all tears wiped from our eyes.

Yours affectionately in gospel bonds,

ASA HOWARD.

ROANOKE, Texas, Feb. 9, 1915.

WOODSTOCK, Ontario.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I inclose a letter we received from our dear young sister, Eliza McDonald, and as a short time ago you were asking for correspondence for the SIGNS, I thought perhaps you might publish this letter. It was read by us with comfort and satisfaction.

Unworthily, in sorrow,

R. SCATES.

APPIN, Ont., Jan. 25, 1915.

MR. ROBERT SCATES—DEAR BROTHER:—Many, many letters I have written to you in my mind, but I find it hard to express my thoughts on paper. We were much pleased to receive your letter when

I was so sick, and it was surely kind of you to remember me, but I am afraid you esteem me far too highly. Indeed, I feel I am not at all worthy of the love and esteem which the brethren show me, and feel sure if they knew me as I am they could not tolerate me. I find my flesh is very weak and prone to evil, even as the sparks to fly upward. O that the Lord would lead me and guide me and keep me. I often wonder if it is right that I should be in the church, but can say, "There my best friends, my kindred, dwell, there God my Savior reigns." During my sickness I was made to lie still most of the time. I did not feel I was going to die, although the doctor and nurse would sometimes wonder if I could stand it long. I suffered severely part of the time, but know that my suffering was nothing in comparison to what the Savior suffered, or what many of his children have to endure. During my sickness I was made to realize that no matter how intense the pain or agony of the body is, it is nothing to that inward groaning and suffering of the soul under the burden of the consciousness of the indwelling sin, when the long days and nights pass, and we cry again and again, Lord, save, I perish. When that constant agony goes on and on and we wonder where it will end, feeling that though our souls were sent to hell his righteous law approves it well, yet longing for peace and rest, and when he does speak peace to our troubled souls what a relief. It is the peace of God that passeth understanding, and the reason we cannot understand it is because it is of God, and his ways are above our ways and his thoughts above our thoughts. It is high, I cannot attain unto it, the psalmist says. O how true we poor creatures cannot understand the ways of God, but we know he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, and that he works all things after the counsel of his own will. I know that I will not suffer one pain too much, and that although we cannot see the way, God knows what is for our good and for his own glory.

Aunt Lish was over to the Duart meeting and enjoyed it very much. She said the Elders had good liberty, and to her it was very pleasant. It is wonderful how well mother keeps, though not strong, but better than she has been for a long time, and she did appreciate your kind remembrance of her and enjoyed your letter. I am now gaining all the time. Over three months seems a long time to be sick, but how I have longed that God would grant me sweet submission to his will. Some days the clouds seem very heavy and dark, and doubts and fears assail. I know that God has his chosen people, and not one of them shall be lost, and his truth is sweet to me, but I want something more: I long to know if the promises are for me. I know they are for his people, but I fear to claim them, for it seems to me his children could not go so far astray as I do, and I feel I have so little understanding of the Scriptures; but while here we shall never be fully satisfied, for we live by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope, and we long for the time when hope shall be swallowed up in fruition, victory and glory, for we shall be satisfied when we awake with his likeness, and shall see him as he is, and be like him.

Now I hope we will hear from you again soon, though I know I do not deserve your good letters, for I cannot answer as I would like, but I am glad to receive them and know you think of poor, unworthy me. Hope you and sister Scates are keeping well. We all join in love to you both.

Unworthily,

ELIZA McDONALD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1915.

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1 JOHN II. 1, 2.

"My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

In reading the first chapter of this letter we understand the apostle is writing things that he and the other apostles had seen, had heard and had handled of the Word of life, and he tells us that that life was manifested and that he had seen it. This eternal life manifested was Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He is spoken of in the Scriptures as the Word, in another place as the Mediator between God and man, in another place the Redeemer of sinners, another place the King of kings and Lord of lords, another place the faithful and true witness and the eternal life of the people of God. A special thing with reference to this is that this record is absolutely true, hence eternal life is not only Jesus Christ, but in him and with him for all his people, not only in this age of the world, but from the beginning of the world to the end of the same. You remember in the tenth chapter of John he said, My sheep hear my voice, and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, and then the good Shepherd giveth his life, or himself, for the sheep, which commandment he received of his Father. We understand by the word "commandment" that it was God's purpose and God's law embraced in the covenant, made and ordered in all things and sure: that Jesus, the good Shepherd of the sheep, and their eternal life, should give himself for the flock, and in doing so he delivered them from death and brought in life and eternal righteousness, which are called, "the new and living way." The apostle tells us that why he wrote this letter to these brethren was that they, the brethren, might have fellowship with the apostles, and their fellowship was with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. There is fellowship in the gospel, fellowship in experience and fellowship with God and with his Son Jesus Christ, and the word "fellowship" means equality, oneness, &c. Jesus is spoken of in the Scriptures as God's fellow, the Father speaking of him in this way, "He is my fellow," and the children of God are spoken of as the fellows of Christ; this means that the Son is equal with the Father, and it also means that his children are equal with his only begotten Son, hence are not only heirs of God, but joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. Wherever fellowship exists, there is unity and oneness. It matters not from what standpoint it is, whether it be intellectually, whether it be politically, socially or religiously. It is impossible therefore for men to be fellows except where fellowship exists, and this fellowship spoken of by the apostle is with God and with his Son Jesus Christ. We are told that the early church continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship; had they not continued in the doctrine they could not have continued in the fellowship, for to be steadfast in faith means to continue in the fellowship of the apostles

in oneness of mind, heart and soul, seeing eye to eye, hoping in the same things, rejoicing in the same things, believing the same things, and it was for this reason then that the apostle wrote this letter. The same thought is expressed by Paul in his letter to the church at Rome when he said, "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; that is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me." The doctrine preached by Paul was the doctrine that God had taught the church at Rome, that they might be mutually comforted together by that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit, and for this cause we present this doctrine now that we may have fellowship one with another. If we have seen the Word of life, it is because it has been manifested to us in or through revelation. If we have seen his wonderful works to the children of men in the spiritual creation, it is because we are a part of that creation and are bound to believe the doctrine of God in every part and particular.

The message received by the apostles from God the Father, and delivered unto the church, was "that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." This embraces God's infinite knowledge of all things, past, present and future. Known unto him are all his works from the beginning, and there are no works but of him. That his spiritual family should have knowledge of him and his Son Jesus Christ he shineth in their hearts to give them the light, knowledge, understanding, of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Then if the children say they have fellowship with God, knowing him and his plan of salvation, and walk in darkness (ignorance), they lie and do not the truth, or in other words, walk not in the commandments of God. But if they walk in the light, as he is the light, they have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. This was a special fault of some of those brethren, who were Jews, thinking because they were the children of Abraham they were without sin, in the sense of condemnation. But Paul puts all men in the same class so far as sin and death are concerned. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Still further, some of the brethren thought they had not sinned because they had not committed overt acts condemned by the law. To them John said, "If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." There is not a just man that liveth and sinneth not. God looked down from heaven to see if there were any good, and there was none good, no, not one. Hence the relationship to Abraham did not make the Jews clean, or justified before God. It requires the blood of Jesus Christ to cleanse us from all sin. Saul of Tarsus did not know he was a sinner, or that he had sinned, until God shined in his heart to give him the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. In this revelation he was taught also the spirit of the law, through the knowledge of the law he was shown the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and ever afterward confessed that he was the chief of sinners. The indwelling of God's Word always has this effect, hence no man born of God should say he is without sin, nor that he sins not.

It seems to us that without this first chapter the text under consideration would be hard to understand, therefore

we have called attention to some of the things as leading up to the text. The apostle addresses the brethren here as "little children," not in age or stature according to nature, but in the school of Christ, needing instruction in righteousness, needing reproof and correction as well, that they sin not in erring from the faith once delivered unto the saints, first of all, then in any other way that might bring reproach upon the cause. Yet remembering that the thought of foolishness is sin, and how impossible it is to live without sin, he said, "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Yes, he is our faithful advocate, knowing perfectly all our sins and shortcomings, our wanderings and backslidings, as well as our sorrow and mourning because of our sins, and is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He pleads for us, and his righteousness and obedience to the law of God are seen, and not our sins. O what mercy that we should have a righteous Advocate, and that he is heard always of the Father. Yes, no law can now be transgressed that will again bring us into condemnation; the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death. Nothing above nor beneath shall separate the heirs of glory from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. If then heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, all shall be well as we journey on here below, all shall be well in the resurrection and all shall be glory in heaven with the glorified image of Jesus. He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world. The word "propitiation" here means atonement, or atoning sacrifice, and from a literal view one might think the apostle was preaching universal salvation, for if Jesus did atone for the sins of the whole world, meaning the entire globe, then, of course, all men are saved, as the sacrifice was complete and glorious, once for all. But John did not mean anything of that kind. He was writing exclusively to the Jewish brethren, and was instructing them in the doctrine of God and in that secret hid from the beginning of the world, but revealed to the apostles, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs with the Jews through the gospel; that is, the gospel, the message of salvation, declared salvation to all nations through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. The Jews had always thought themselves superior to the Gentiles as pertaining to things of God, and had reason to feel that way, in a sense, as God had dealt graciously with them, and in former ages had taken little notice of other nations, but John would have them know that Christ must needs die for the remission of sins, and that he died not only for the sins of the apostles and other Jews, who had been called by grace, but that he died for the sins of the whole world nationally. Having a people in every nation, kindred, tongue and people, he died for them all. It required the redemption that was in Christ Jesus to save and cleanse Abraham that it did any of his seed, all were under the same curse. By the one offering he perfected forever all them, the whole world, that are sanctified. Election is Bible doctrine, and no Scripture contradicts that truth, and when properly understood by the light or knowledge of God's Spirit all Scriptures will be seen in perfect harmony.

K.

JOHN III. 17.

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

This text is a part of the many important things Jesus said to Nicodemus, who came to him by night asking questions and making declarations relative to the being and character of Jesus, that despised Nazarene. The text above quoted must not be separated from the seventh verse: "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." If so, its real import will be missed, and we labor under wrong interpretation. Jesus would not say at one moment, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," and the next moment say any man can be saved if he will. Whatever is said of this seventeenth verse, let us always remember that Jesus said, "Ye must be born again," and as we were passive in our first birth, so are we in our spiritual birth. It is blessedly true that God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but rather that the world, through him, might be saved. The world (all men) was condemned by sin through the disobedience of Adam. For by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one, even Christ, shall many be made righteous. Man is to blame for his own condemnation, not God, as in tracing sin to its origin we find man responsible for sin and death. On the other hand, in tracing salvation to its origin we find that it began and shall end with God, the Alpha and Omega. Therefore man being condemned by his own transgression of God's law, dead in trespasses and in sin, and it being God's purpose and according to his grace, given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, that the objects of his love should live unto him, he sent his Son into the world, or, in other words, to dwell with men, (the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us) that through him the world (men of all nations) might be saved. It was the only way that a sinner could be saved. The blood of goats and calves had utterly failed to take away sin. The law had failed to make the comers thereunto perfect. Therefore John the Baptist said of Jesus, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," meaning the sins of men. He being the way, and the truth, and the life, no man can come unto God but by him. "Through him," and him only, therefore, can the world (men) be saved. The word "world" here means the same as in 1 John ii. 1, 2, above written upon. "All men," or men of every nation under heaven, are meant by the word "world." Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost. Inasmuch therefore as God had a people in every nation, kindred and tongue under heaven, and all were lost through sin, he sent his Son into the world that all his people, among all nations, might be saved.

These two articles are written at the request of a friend who is anxious to know the true import of the texts used. We hope that she, as well as others, may glean at least a little from what we have endeavored to present. K.

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Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

GENESIS VI. 6.

"AND it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart."

Does God repent? It is stated at least fifteen times in the Old Testament that he does repent. That being so, one should be careful to not contradict the Scriptures. Also, a sincere inquirer after truth will not be satisfied with an explanation that explains away a direct scriptural declaration, that seeks to evade a direct answer to the question: Does God repent? It is worthy of note that the act of repenting is not attributed to God anywhere in the New Testament, but is an Old Testament expression, though this fact does not make the fifteen expressions of repentance on the part of God contained in the Old Testament any the less important and worthy of explanation should the Spirit of all truth see fit to lead us into it. Without such leading it would not be worth while to attempt it. Granted that God does repent, does he repent in the same sense as the sinner repents? Does the word, "repentance," applied to God have the same significance as when applied to the sinner? It seems folly to even think of such a question, to say nothing of asking it. Of course, the word "repentance" cannot possibly have the same significance applied to God as it does when applied to the sinner. There seems to be a prevalent idea that repentance carries with it the thought of being sorry for what one has done, but being sorry for a thing and repenting for a thing are two different states of mind. To repent of a thing, of an act, thought or word, is to turn away from that thing, or act, or thought, or word, and to avoid the repetition of it. One may be sorry that he has acted wrongly, or thought or spoken evilly, yet through inherent weakness not turn away from those things, and do them over and over again. In this case there is sorrow but no repentance. There are also different kinds of sorrow. "The sorrow of the world worketh death." "Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of." Godly sorrow for sin is the work of the Holy Ghost in the souls of the heirs of glory, showing them the exceeding sinfulness of their fallen nature and its utter depravity, causing them to mourn on account thereof. This godly sorrow, when it has fully done its work, makes the subject of grace to so abhor himself, and all within him, that he becomes sick to the very center of his being on account of his sins, so that he mightily desires to get rid of his corruption and to have no more to do with it, to be entangled no more therein. When this sorrow for sin reaches this limit, one is compelled by his very sores and bruises to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." This brings the sinner to the feet of the Savior, who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, and in this wonderful Savior, "God manifest in the flesh," the great sinner finds his repentance. Let it not be thought for a moment that there is any repentance for any of us except in Christ Jesus. Repentance being not the sorrow for sin, but the effectual turning away from and ceasing from sin, cannot be anywhere but through and by Christ Jesus. If the Spirit of truth did nothing more than show one his sinful condition, causing him to mourn on account of it, there could be no repentance for the sinner, because he would continue to repeat his sins, even though sorry that he did so. The sinner would be too weak to, of himself, abstain from sin, even though made to feel it and to hate it. But after godly sorrow for sin has done its work in re-

vealing one's total depravity, one is led by the Spirit to the fruit of that sorrow, which is the repentance given in Christ, and by him to all who hunger for it, realizing the weakness and sinfulness of one's nature. Therefore, we must not confuse the sorrow with the repentance, nor the latter with the former. They are distinct from each other though related to each other. The repentance is the effectual turning away from sin, and not the being sorry for it. Thus, it does not signify that because God "repented that he had made man," that he was sorry he had done so, or that he desired he had willed it otherwise. Does the fact that God repented that he had made man, signify that he had changed his mind or plan from what it originally was? Certainly not. If there is here in Genesis vi. 6, and in the other fourteen places where God is said to have repented, any indication that there was a change in the mind of God, then these fifteen texts must certainly contradict scores of others which declare God to be of one mind and incapable of even a shadow of a turn. Such contradiction, if such there existed, would throw the whole Bible into a mass of confusion, and render it wholly an unreliable record. Such an outcome can never be. The Bible does not anywhere contradict itself. Its apparent variance, or discord in certain places, is but "harmony misunderstood." The discrepancy lies in the intellect of men, who, in all ages, have tried to study out Scripture mysteries, and have been foiled in the attempt, but being unwilling to acknowledge their own confusion and bewilderment have charged the Bible with inaccuracy to conceal their own ignorance. We do not believe there ever has lived the mortal man who was able to explain the whole Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and no commentary aiming to interpret the entire Bible can possibly be accurate, no matter by what learned light it may have been written. Certainly that man would be overly ambitious that would confidently essay upon such an undertaking as writing an exposition of all Scripture. Since no man, therefore, is a reservoir or depositary of the whole truth, how can we so confidently say there are no contradictions in the Bible anywhere? Because, we remember when in our own experience there were times when we confidently believed the Bible to have been the work of shrewd and cunning men, and we verily believed we could put our finger on scores of texts that were at variance with each other, but during the last nineteen years since we received a hope in the mercy of God, as we humbly trust, there have been cleared up to our understanding and to our entire satisfaction some of these very texts which we at one time thought contradicted each other. The fact that the Holy Ghost has proved its abundant sufficiency to make "crooked things straight" in some of these instances to which we have witnessed makes us confident that same Spirit is amply able to clear up any and all difficulties did it but see fit to do so. God is of one mind and none can turn him. If, then, the exceeding sinfulness of men before the flood did cause God to repent, in the sense that he turned from his original purpose, then sinful men must have turned him, and the Scripture would not be true which declares that none can turn him. Far sooner than to involve ourselves in any such conclusion as that, we believe the fact that God repented that he had made man does not at all mean that there was any change in the mind of God, or that he swerved in the least from his original ordained plan concerning the

universe and the salvation of his people. No, whatever it means, it cannot mean that. When God drove Adam and Eve from the garden he pronounced woe upon the man and the woman, but alleviated their doom when he clothed them with coats of skin, and when he said, "I will put enmity between thee [the serpent] and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Here, in the beginning of sin, God declares the end of sin: "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." If, therefore, the end was clear and certain in the mind of God from the beginning, it must certainly come to pass as he foreknew it would, for an uncertainty cannot be certainly foreknown and positively declared. If, therefore, man before the flood became more wicked than God at first thought he would, and if this waxing worse in sin caused God to turn from his intended purpose, then the end which he declared from the beginning will never come to pass, because the unexpected turn of events which disclosed man's exceeding sinfulness must have upset the whole divine arrangement. Now, is any one who reveres the name of God and has the fear of God in his heart willing to concede such a conclusion? We cannot think that such an one lives who could believe God to be such an opportunist, swayed by circumstances. Though God repented that he had made man, it does not mean that God was sorry that he had made man, that he wished he had made him differently, or that God was disappointed in the way man had turned out. But as repentance signifies the turning away from the thing repented of, so here it means that God turned away from the men which he had made, that he became unfavorable towards them. Up until this time the race of mankind had been multiplying rapidly and serenely under favorable circumstances, unhindered by the providence of God; the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair, and sought them in marriage; the Sethites married the Cainites, and God rebuked them not. Seemingly God was smiling upon all that was going on, for there was no evidence of his disapproval since the murder of Abel. Now, however, comes a turn in the events of man's history. Mind you, not a turn in the mind of God, nor in his plans, nor in his purpose, but in his providential dealings with men. Hitherto his providences had been favorable to men, to just and unjust alike, now comes a change in his providential dealings with them. The change in providence does not involve the slightest change in the predestination of God. By providence here, we mean those acts of God by which he administers the affairs of the world. These providential things are various, involving sickness and health, poverty and wealth, famine and plenty, war and peace, flood and fire, life and death. In these various ways God deals with men, but while these things are various, it is most certainly the God of one mind who deals them out to the world according to his predestined plan and purpose. Up until the time of the flood, and since the slaying of Abel, God's providential dealing with men had been such that men had waxed fat and bold and sinful, becoming worse and worse, but now comes a reversal of these providential things and a blasting of the whole structure reared by sin and wickedness, with the exception of the eight souls secured in the ark. Herein is where God repented that he had made man. That,

whereas he had been favorable to the increase of the race of men upon the earth, and providentially blessed them, now he turns away from men and begins to manifest his utter hatred of their iniquity. Man was God's work, God created him and knew all about him when he made him. Nothing in all the depths of man's nature was hidden at all from the divine mind. Further, God surrounded man with all the necessary environments to call forth the capacities of his being. Having done so, the wickedness and depravity of man's nature rapidly unfolded. That being consummated, God makes known his righteousness and his hatred of sin, by repenting, or turning away from the man that he had made. This repenting was manifest in his working providentially to the detriment of man, whereas before he had been working providentially in man's favor. But in the foreknowledge of God, before the foundation of the world, was included both the providences in man's favor and the providences to work against man, so that when God repented that he made man, and began to work woe upon the race of men, he was but carrying out his predestined plan and accomplishing his own sovereign and immutable will. We have but to consider our own individual experience to see that sometimes it is daylight with us and sometimes night; sometimes we rejoice, at others we are sad; now we are well, then again we are sick. What shall we say to this? Shall we say that because God sees fit to send us bitterness instead of sweet, that therefore he has changed his plan and negatived his original purpose concerning us? Certainly not. All our times are in his hands, just as much when we die as when we live. Because he in his providence sees fit to kill us instead of to make us alive is no sign of alteration with him. Both the death and life, and all that they involve, were alike known before to him, and unalterably arranged by him. So God's creation of man, and his afterwards repenting of the making of man in his turning away from man, and working against him instead of for him, all was included in his predestined plan, and came about in his own way in his own time. Let us take a simple illustration from among the affairs of men which may feebly exemplify this truth. Railroad trains move from point to point in accordance with orders issued from the train despatcher's office. Let us suppose that engine forty-one is ordered to proceed fifty miles west, then return twenty-five miles east, then go ten miles west again, then return to original starting point. An outsider not initiated in the affairs of railroads, and looking on at this engine going forward, then back, then forward again, and finally all the way back, and seeing not the reason in the train despatcher's mind for all this shifting about, might argue that the despatcher did not understand his business; but what a short-sighted conclusion that would be on the part of the onlooker, for in the mind of the man at the despatch-key lay hidden a reason why he wanted this engine to go forward, then back, then forward, then back again; and all the goings forward and the goings back were planned and intended by the despatcher when the engine first started out. So in the mind of God, he originally planned and intended to now work in man's favor and then to work against him; thus this repentance on the part of God does never mean any change or alteration in his eternal mind or purpose, but the very repentance itself was a part of his foreknown and predestinated plan according

to which he designed to administrate the affairs of the universe to accomplish the salvation of his elect and to declare his own glory. But our text in Genesis vi. 6, further says, "It grieved him at his heart." God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and hates sin. Any display or manifestation of sin is repugnant to the holiness of God; he always condemns it and punishes it. He was not grieved because that he had made man in that he wished he had not made him, but grieved at the sins of man, yet he knew that man would sin, and that terrible ruin and death would be the consequences of sin. Still, when that death and ruin were in sight and manifested it grieved him. Sin is so entirely opposed to the righteousness of God, and the righteousness of God to sin, that whenever the stench of the one is in evidence, the savor of the other appears all the more excellent. So the waxing worse and worse on the part of men caused to appear the grief in the heart of God on account of that sin. Whereas a sinner mourns for his own sins, God grieves for the sins of others. The grief of man is usually a sign of his impotency and helplessness. When we come face to face with pain which we cannot help or avoid we grieve. If we could help it or avoid it we would not grieve, for according to our makeup, there would be no cause to grieve. But not so with God. There is nothing he cannot help or avoid if he wants to. Sin could not have entered into the world had he not wanted it to do so, had he not had a purpose in its doing so. Nevertheless, though God is omnipotent, and does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and could at any time eradicate sin if he chose to do so, still he designs its being in the world for his own purpose and glory, yet is he grieved at every manifestation of sin and iniquity. Now, if any one can explain why an omnipotent being is grieved by that which he could wipe out at a word, in the twinkling of an eye, he can explain the character of God. That we cannot do, and did not even start out to do. It would be folly and daring the heavens to attempt it. We have simply stated the character of God as we believe it to be. We cannot explain it. It is a mystery. Faith alone can comprehend the slightest portion of it.

Written at the request of Mary E. Lake, of Hurricane, West Virginia.

L.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at his home, Leesburg, Va., April 5th, 1915, Joseph C. Starr, of Foreman, Bedford Co., Pa., and Miss Matilda T. Middleton, of Willard, Loudoun Co., Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Mary Rittenhouse Lawshe was born June 11th, 1834, and departed this life Tuesday, March 9th, 1915, at the home of her oldest son, Wilford R. Lawshe, in Trenton, N. J. She was the youngest of six children. Her father, Alanson Rittenhouse, married Mary Sebold, both of German or Dutch ancestry, living near Locktown, N. J. He was a deacon in the Old School Baptist Church. Mary was left an orphan at the age of ten, and made her home with her sister, Hannah Brewer. While at a school for young ladies she was baptized in the fellowship of the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church, by Elder Gabriel Conklin, on Sunday, Feb. 29th, 1852. It was a very cold winter, and they had to cut the ice in order to baptize. She was married to Levi Lawshe in October, 1853. They had children as follows: Wilford R., Annetta (died at nine years), Merritt R. (died at twenty years), P. Hartwell (died at twenty years), Ira M., Mary (died in infancy), David, Elizabeth and Allison R., five children living. They moved several times as he changed his business, from farming to keeping store, then working in lumber in the south. He was at times successful, but lost two or three fortunes. There were great trials, sickness and the death of the two sons, and a very serious illness of sister Lawshe herself, who was thought to be beyond help, but she was given through it all a confiding trust in

the Lord. They returned to Stockton in 1882, and to keeping store, with some success. In 1884 he bought a grocery store in Trenton, and in 1887 all the family were there together and were very successful. In 1889 Mr. Lawshe died, leaving the family better provided for than they had ever been before.

Here I will quote from a very interesting account of the family, written me by Wilford R. Lawshe: "Father's aim had been to provide well for his family, but so many losses came all along, until the last, when rather unexpectedly a living was assured. After his death the family kept together in a way, leaving the whole estate for mother and the younger ones to live on, and so it has been ever since. They were educated and started, leaving mother to live on the income of the estate. Soon after father's death mother began having meetings at her house in Trenton, and, as you remember, you were the first one to preach there. This was, perhaps, in the winter of 1889-90. For the last twenty-five years mother had the opportunity of attending the Old School Baptist meetings often, and while she was naturally a hard worker, the burdens were not so heavy as earlier in life, and we were all very glad of this. Her children were all called 'good children,' but I feel for my part there were so many things I ought to have done that I did not do that I do not like to think of it. As you know, mother was firm and strong in her religious views; nothing could shake her belief in Almighty God and the Savior. If she had doubts at times, they did not find much outward expression, and during her long and painful illness she seemed prepared to take all that came. Mother's age lacked two days of being 80 years and 9 months."

Sister Lawshe's older brother was Elder Ephraim Rittenhouse, whose name is familiar to the readers of the SIGNS, as one who wrote much for publication, and was one of the most interesting and valuable of writers. I first met sister Lawshe in Delaware, in October, 1864, and have held her in high and affectionate esteem from that day until her departure, and her memory is very pleasant to me. She was certainly a most devoted, faithful and loving christian. Her love embraced all who love the truth. I will not attempt to dwell upon her excellencies as a member of the church, and as devoted to the interests of the cause of truth, for I cannot give adequate expression to what I feel. Well may her son Wilford say her children were what are called "good children." With such a mother they could not well be otherwise. I have seen them often, as well as her, during her long and painful illness, and it seems to me there could be no more loving devotion and careful attention on the part of both mother and children. The tender care was not only given and experienced in the house of the oldest brother, where the suffering mother lay, but by them all. Our dear sister endured very much pain at times, but those who were by her most continually said they never heard her utter one complaining word. She enjoyed the calls of brethren and ministers, which she could receive almost to the last. At my last visit to her she expressed to me what she had already said some time before to her people, that as I was the minister whom she had known longest, she would like to have me present on the occasion of her funeral. She named three hymns to be read: Nos. 627, 1247 and 784 (Beebe's collection).

I will here allude to the time referred to by Wilford when she first expressed a desire to have preaching at her house. She and sister Ruth Holcome wrote me that there had never, to their knowledge, been an Old Baptist sermon preached in Trenton, and as they were well acquainted with me they asked me to make an appointment. There was an unexpectedly large company. From that time for a number of years meetings were kept up, and she always took especial interest in them. Up to a short time before her departure she read the letters which came to her and wrote in reply.

The funeral was on Thursday, March 11th, from the house, and there was a large attendance of dear brethren and friends, to whom I preached with the ability that God giveth, the unsearchable riches of Christ.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Elijah James Truitt was born March 15th, 1829, in Worcester Co., Md., and died March 25th, 1914, within a short distance of his birthplace (now Wicomico Co., Md.,) having spent his long life of 85 years and 10 days in the same locality. He was twice married, first to Lucretia Morris, by whom he had three daughters, only one of whom, Mrs. Rosina Layfield, survives. His first wife died in 1857. Fourteen years later, in 1871, he married Mary Ann Wimbrow, who bore him three children: Mrs. Sarah M. Brittingham, Geo. W. and John K. Truitt, all of whom are living, all of Wicomico Co., Md. His second wife, who was a firm believer in the doctrine held by the Old School Baptists, died Nov. 15th, 1907. His first and chief pleasure on earth was going to meeting to hear the gospel proclaimed, and mingling with the brethren. Although never having made a public profession of his faith and becoming a member of the visible church, yet I believe his name is written in the Lamb's book of life. He followed the footsteps of the flock, and their food and drink was his food and drink. The writer heard him relate his experience just after the loss of his last wife, and he said he had his clothes ready to be baptized on one occasion several years before that, but did not offer himself to the church because of a deep sense of unworthiness, thinking that perhaps it was better that he should not connect himself with the church. He also spoke of other good things which I do not recall now.

Elder A. B. Francis preached his funeral in the Old Baptist meetinghouse in Salisbury March 27th, much to the comfort of the sorrowing children and other relatives, by all of whom he was greatly beloved, after which his body was laid to rest in Parsons' Cemetery to await the sound of the trumpet and the voice of the archangel.

His niece, MAUD TRUITT LAWS.

I will add to the above that I was well acquainted with Mr. Truitt, having known him for more than thirty years, and can truly say that I believe him to be a subject of the saving grace of God. As a man he was honorable and upright, highly respected in the community in which he had spent his long and useful life. He was very fond of the society of the Old School Baptists, loved the preaching and the conversation. He enjoyed unusually good health until within a few days before his death. We miss him greatly at Indiantown and Forest Grove, where he was a regular attendant on the worship of the living God. A. B. FRANCIS.

Mrs. Ella Nicoll, beloved wife of Thomas Nicoll, 824 Preston St., Philadelphia, Pa., died suddenly at her home Feb. 15th, 1915, aged 66 years, 9 months and 18 days. Sister Nicoll was baptized by Elder Thomas Barton in the fellowship of the Welsh Tract Church, New Castle Co., Del., August 7th, 1868. About twelve years ago she removed her membership to the Salem Church, in Philadelphia, where she remained a faithful member until her death.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer on Wednesday evening, Feb. 17th, at the home of her husband. Her remains were laid away in the Bethel Cemetery, near Elkton, Md., after words of comfort spoken by Elder J. G. Eubanks.

B. F. COULTER.

Elizabeth G. Jeffers Scott was born in New Castle, Henry Co., Ky., May 10th, 1838, departed this life at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Carl Reipke, at Windom, Minn., Feb. 18th, 1915. She was the daughter of Elder Robert and Nancy Jeffers. She was united in marriage to Christopher C. Scott on Thanksgiving day, at Warren, Ill., in 1855. To that union were born eight children, four of whom preceded her to the other world. Her husband died in the year 1901, since which time she had resided with her daughter, Mrs. Carl Reipke. She is survived by four children: Mrs. Charles Miner, of Walnut Grove, Minn., Mrs. Carl Reipke, of Windom, Edgar, of Grove City, and Christopher C., of Minneapolis, Minn., who were all present at the time of her death. Besides these there are eleven grandchildren and one great-granddaughter to mourn her death. Her last sickness was the weakening of the vital organs until the end came peacefully. She was a member of the Baptist Church, with neverfailing faith in her Master. She was the last of her father's family, an aunt of the writer. Her early married life was spent in Wisconsin, and later in Iowa and Minnesota, where she had since resided.

Her funeral was held at the home of Carl Reipke Thursday, Feb. 18th, at 2 p. m., her pastor officiating. She was laid to rest beside her husband in the city cemetery to await the resurrection morn. May the God of all grace comfort those who are left behind to mourn their loss, is the humble prayer of the writer.

E. A. NORTON.

Catharine Mellott, wife of Elder Ahimaaz Mellott, died of pneumonia at the home of her daughter and son-in-law, Milton Decker, Dec. 21st, 1914, after a great deal of suffering, aged 76 years, 7 months and 17 days. We lived a married life of fifty-nine years, lacking about one month. To this union were born eleven children, six boys and five girls. One boy and two girls died when small, the others are still living, together with forty-eight grandchildren and thirty-six great-grandchildren. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Sideling Hill about fifty years ago, by Elder Joseph Correll, where she lived an orderly life all those years. She leaves one sister and three brothers, with myself, to mourn their loss, which is her eternal gain.

The funeral sermon was preached by Elder C. L. Funk, from Psalms xvii. 15. Owing to my not being able to go to the funeral the services were held at the house where she died, also had preaching at the meetinghouse. Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth; they cease from their labors and their works do follow them.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

Bathsheba Denniston Miller, wife of Michael Miller, of Cammal, Pa., was born March 27th, 1845, and died March 23rd, 1915. She leaves her husband, three sons and two daughters to mourn their loss. Sister Miller was brought to see herself a sinner before God, and saw no way of salvation except through the mercy of God by Jesus Christ, and as the Old School Baptists are the only people who preach salvation by grace, she was eventually brought to seek a place with them. She was received by the church at Cammal, Pa., and baptized by Elder D. M. Vail, their pastor. How good and blessed it is to live and die with those of like precious faith. Sister Miller was always glad to have some one to converse with on the eternal things of the kingdom, and though departed she leaves a sweet remembrance of her faith and walk as a subject of grace.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer, and her remains buried in the lot adjoining the meetinghouse at Cammal. Thus one by one we bury our dead out of our sight. We are in the hope of the resurrection of the dead.

J. M. FENTON.

Charles M. Cator, son of Hiram and Fanny Cator, of Lew Beach, Ulster Co., N. Y., was born Jan. 23rd, 1898, and died March 14th, 1915, after a short illness of quick consumption. He never made a profession by uniting with the church, but his mother feels the comforting assurance that he is with Jesus, from evidence he left. His mother and two brothers, with other relatives, are left behind to mourn for one they loved. May the good Lord comfort all of the sad, mourning ones for Jesus' sake.

The funeral was held at the residence March 17th, the writer officiating. Burial in Lew Beach Cemetery. D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Decatur Mouser, Ohio, $2.00; Thos. A. Ardies, Ont., $2.00; A Friend, N. J., $5.00.

MEETINGS.

THE First Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, of Hopewell, Mercer Co., N. J., will hold a two days meeting on Friday and Saturday, April 23rd and 24th, 1915, in celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of the organization of the church. All lovers of the truth, and especially the ministering brethren of our faith and order, are invited to be with us at that time.

Done by order of the church.

D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

MEETINGS of the church at Schoharie, N. Y., which have been held at the home of sister Kinney in the village during the winter, will be resumed at the meetinghouse on the hill at the regular time, fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, in April (24th and 25th).

GEORGE A. MIERS, Church Clerk.

THE next session of the Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, Baltimore city, Md., to begin on Wednesday, May 19th, 1915, and continue three days. This association believes in the doctrine of predestination, election, effectual calling, the future resurrection of the dead and the general judgment, and invites all of like precious faith to meet with us at the time and place above mentioned. Those who come to the city on Tuesday p. m. will go to the meetinghouse, Madison St., east of Calvert St., which will be open from 2 to 6 p. m., where friends will be met and cared for. Those coming Wednesday a. m. go direct to the meetinghouse from Union Station, Pennsylvania R. R., take any car going south on Charles St. and get off at Calvert and Madison Sts. From Camden Station, B. & O. R. R., take car marked St. Paul St. and get off at same place. From Mt. Royal Station, B. & O. R. R., walk two blocks east to Charles St. and go as directed from Union Station.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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Liberty Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, of Los Angeles, Cal., meets every first and third Sunday in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., at 42nd and Moneta Ave., and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal.

W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor.

C. B. RICE, Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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We are still publishing the Old School Baptist Hymn and Tune Book, both shape note and round note, 70 cents for single copy, $6.50 a dozen, transportation prepaid. Send orders to Elder Silas H. Durand, Southampton, Pa., or to Elder P. G. Lester, Floyd, Va.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 83. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1915. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ISAIAH LXVI. 5-9.

"HEAR the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word; your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed. A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the Lord that rendereth recompence to his enemies. Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God."

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have a request from brother F. W. Peck, of Naples, Texas, for my views on the above language, in the SIGNS, and by your permission I will attempt to comply. It would be a pleasure indeed to respond to such requests from my brethren and sisters, if I could feel that in doing so I was imparting to the household of faith some spiritual comfort, and that I had been given the right conception of the subject treated, but it is with a sensibleness of my need of being taught that I enter upon an undertaking of this kind. These are some of the sublime words of one of the "holy men of God," who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The infinite mind of Jehovah, and his eternal counsel, which he purposed to bring to fulfillment in time, were unfolded to his holy prophets, or they were given sufficient knowledge of them, that they uttered many dark sayings which they were not given a clear conception of, but which have been fulfilled in Zion, and afford sweetness to her children, when revealed to their understanding, that is beyond expression and is most glorious. This language was spoken to the trembling prisoners of hope, whose hearts had been fixed by faith upon the Lord, who felt that there was none other to whom they could go for help in their distress. They "trembled at his word," not because they dreaded the consequences of coming short of keeping all it required, but because they reverenced it, and delighted to do it. They viewed the perfection of the law of the Lord in such contrast to their inperfection and inability that they could but fear and tremble as they counted up all his abounding mercies which he graciously conferred upon them. Those of the class just described, who are spoken of in the fifth verse, were among the Jews,

They had come in the name of the Lord and prophesied to their brethren of the coming of Christ, had warned them of the judgments of God which would surely be visited upon them for their ungodliness in turning from his law and his ordinances. They had come in the name of the Lord, and at his bidding, but had been rejected by their brethren, the legal authorities at Jerusalem, who put many of them to death, and professed to glorify God in so doing; but the Lord comforts his faithful ones with the promise that he will soon appear to their joy and to the shame of their opposers. This, I think, had reference to the coming of Christ as the sin-bearer and Redeemer of his chosen people, for it was said of him, "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Again, "Now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire." The legal night was doomed, and when the Sun of Righteousness arose with healing in his wings the gospel day burst forth with such brilliancy and splendor that all the recesses of hypocrisy, covetousness and oppression were searched out to the shame of the scribes, the Pharisees and the lawyers who sat in Moses' seat and gave legal counsel to the Jewish nation. But to those who were persecuted, reviled and all manner of evil said against them for Christ's sake, it was said, "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven." In the city of Jerusalem and from the temple the Lord had continued to speak to all the congregation of Israel in the law, which was read every sabbath, and in the temple service. In the offerings and sacrifices, and in the ministrations of the priestly offices, the Lord spoke in types and shadows of the great High Priest, the Lamb of God provided as a sacrifice for the sins of his people. This was "a voice of noise," which was heard only by those who by faith looked not at the things which are seen (the temporal or ceremonial service), but at the things which are not seen (those eternal provisions of grace in Christ Jesus the antitype). This testimony of the law and the temple service was amplified by the testimony of the prophets, who spoke as the Spirit gave them utterance. God spoke in their hearts with that "still small voice," and declared unto them the glorious appearing of Christ, and sent them to make known this good news to his chosen people, and in full assurance of faith they declared his testimony. The apostle in referring to this testimony declares that, "All Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." The seventh verse declares the coming of this Deliverer out of Zion. This "man child," Christ Jesus, was delivered before Zion travailed, before there was any pain. Human words are inadequate to express the trancendent glory and beauty that here rises before us. Of this blessed man child it is said, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Zion did not travail, neither was she in pain until Christ came, for he came bearing all her pain, and by his glorious coming she is freed from it, and her travail is made a period of delight, though one of patient waiting with hope and pleasing anticipations.

It is due that I say here, as this seventh verse intimates, pain does come to Zion, but it did not attend the coming of Christ in his work of redemption. The sufferings of God's people, individually or collectively, are not for the expiation of their sins; this Jesus did when "he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us," but by them they enter into the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, having the promise that, if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him. So Zion's travail begun after Christ was taken from the earth and entered the court of glory as her Intercessor. The children of the bridechamber could not fast, said Jesus, while the Bridegroom was with them.

The eighth verse calls attention to a great mystery, a strange, a wonderful occurrence, one never before seen or heard of: the earth made to bring forth in one day, a whole nation born at once. Certainly no such event as this has ever been recorded in the past history of the human race, and will never be in the future. This is one of those divine events which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, but God hath revealed it unto us by his Spirit. Let us counsel this infallible witness for evidence concerning this sublime event. In that "counsel of peace" between the Father and Son, Christ was set up as the Head of the church and the Husband of his bride. In that blessed relationship subsists a bond of union which constitutes Christ and his chosen bride one. That indissoluble relationship made all her obligations under the law his, and all of his obedience and righteousness hers. In obedience to the demands of justice, which rested against him by virtue of this relationship, Christ was made in the form of sinful man, made under the law, where his bride was, to redeem her from the law's demands, and from its curse. In this work he represented his bride; where demand was made for her perfect obedience, he rendered it; where demand was made of her to answer the penalty of a violated law by death, he died. All of this was placed to her credit, and the account of transgression, so far as the bride of Christ was concerned, was balanced and settled forever. In view of this adjustment and liquidation of all the debts of the bride, the apostle asks the question, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" saying, "It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?" Again he says, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Here is the oneness of Christ and his church that has existed as far back as eternal life existed. In obedience to the law Christ went down into death and satisfied the claim of death, so it could not hold him nor his bride, so when he arose all of his redeemed people came up with him, raised above the law and its curse; it can have no more dominion over them.

Now listen to the apostle Paul again: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, * * * and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Here it is declared that we are quickened together and raised up together with Christ. Yes, ye trembling prisoners of hope, your complete deliverance has been obtained, your everlasting emancipation from bondage under the law has been wrought, and you given liberty in Christ Jesus. You are no more to groan under

the severe bondage of your former "schoolmaster," the law, which kept you shut up to that faith which has now been revealed through Christ, but you are now to look into the perfect law of liberty and continue therein, where you behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. John was shown this glorious sight while on the isle of Patmos, and he declared it a wonder. He said, "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." This was the redeemed bride of Christ which had come up with him from death and from under the law, which was typified by the moon being under her feet, and she was robed in the righteousness of Christ, which is more dazzling in brilliancy than the natural sun. So the earth was made to bring forth in a day and the whole nation, whose God is the Lord, was born at once. This is enough to bring joy to those who tremble at God's word, and bring shame and confusion to their oppressors.

When Christ had kept the law, and suffered its penalty for his bride, divine justice was satisfied; but he would not stop here, he had won the battle and gained the glorious victory, he now must come forth wearing the victor's crown. So he says, "Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth?" Yes, he came forth a mighty conqueror over death and the grave. He is the firstborn from the dead. His coming forth insures the coming up from the grave of all those he represented in his resurrection, for he became the firstfruits of them that slept, and as the firstfruits are, so shall all the harvest be. It shall be raised incorruptible, immortal and most glorious.

I submit these thoughts to your judgment, brethren editors, and, if published, to the consideration of brother Peck, and any others who may read them.

In gospel bonds,

J. R. HARDY.

HAVILAND, Kansas.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan. 19, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is with great reluctance that I attempt to address you, for it appears to be too presumptuous for one of such insignificant understanding as I possess to write to you, but after seeing the letter I wrote to Mrs. Florence Pultz last March appear in the SIGNS, (which surprised me greatly, as I did not expect it,) I feel as if an explanation should be forthcoming from me, therefore I have inclosed a letter she wrote to me, which prompted me to write to her. I will not comment upon it, as I do not consider it necessary, but will let the letter speak for itself, as I consider it does very admirably. I do not propose to write a long letter at this time. If you consider it advisable to insert this letter of hers, and my explanation, you are at liberty to do so.

From a lonely mortal,

C. S. FETTER.

WHEELING, W. Va., March 20, 1914.

C. S. FETTER—DEAR LOVER OF THE TRUTH:—I ask your pardon for this intrusion. I do not know whether you are a brother or a sister, but hope we are partakers in that kingdom where there is neither male nor female, but all one in Christ Jesus. I have just read your good letter in the SIGNS of March 15th, 1914, where you speak of "wandering thoughts," and that they are continually roving, and your not being able to control them. As I read your words I could fully sympathize with you in this, and again, when your mind does settle down nothing af-

fords you such great pleasure as to meditate upon those things which are controlled by the heavenly Spirit. Your words express my condition exactly, and where you go on and say that you can scarcely think a good thought, and if you do, evil ones immediately follow and destroy what good ones you had, and you feel worse than before, dear saint, you could not have described my case better. Now I do not feel that I have anything further to say, I am perfectly barren at present, but I dare say that you have often experienced this condition, too. The blessed Master will thus make us know from whence cometh our help, and will thus make his works praise him. When we are emptied entirely, that we are as one dumb before him, and are prone upon the ground, with our faces in the dust, usually it is then that he has compassion on us and suffers his holy angel to bring a coal of fire from off his altar, and touches our heart and tongue with it; then we begin to rise a little, and ere we are aware our spirit is revived in us, and we are trying to tell of his goodness and mercy. We tell a little, but can only hint at what this live coal has kindled in our hearts, but there comes an assurance that "Jesus knows," and we are so glad that he knows our thoughts afar off. He knew them before they were in our mind; then we are so glad to be nothing, and to know that he is all in all. Although you are over threescore and ten, you yet find sin mixed with all you do. I said the same to one of my neighbors a few days ago, and I saw she showed great surprise. I believe she thought that I professed godliness. I have noticed that the poor soul seeks my company oftener, and she tells me more of her trials and troubles. Our blessed Master came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, and O how we feel to love him for calling us poor sinners to repent and be sorry that we have sinned, and do sin against him with almost every breath, and O how we feel to love and adore him for keeping us from outbreaking sin. Satan can taunt and tempt and suggest, but God's mercy over us forbids him to go farther than this. I do not rejoice in my standing in the church and before the nations, but I am melted entirely down by the sense of God's love in this. He has said, I will put (or write) my name there. Such an one shall be called by my name. Again he says, Touch not mine anointed. Even our enemies cannot harm us. If one says hard things about us, it does not seem to touch us. No, we feel secure from outside enemies. It is like firing shells against an iron wall. We can say, and do say, Their talk or abuse cannot hurt me. I feel as if I were inclosed in an impenetrable armor and shield, and I have a feeling that no outside crusade can touch me. In these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us and gave himself for us a sweet smelling savor unto the Lord. But the inside foes are what we fear. It does seem at times that Satan's work only serves to keep us at the foot of the cross, and thus God causes the wrath of man (that man of sin) to praise him, and the remainder he will restrain. Trials surely bring us to his feet, lay us low and keep us there. I notice you say you are the only one left of your parents' five children. Now I am the only one left of my parents' four children. Father, mother and three sisters have passed over Jordan, and I have every reason to hope that they are among the redeemed; they all died in the faith. I will be sixty-three the 5th of November. I, like you, often have to

wonder why I am left. I truly feel that I was the least one of our family. My health is very frail, yet I am strengthened to go along and attend the duties of the household every day. My husband, who is nearly three years older than I, is still able to work every day as recording clerk at the Pennsylvania freight office. If it were physical labor he could not do it, as he is far from being robust.

Now I will close. As I have written a consciousness comes to me that I have read after you before, but I cannot be certain of anything. I think I know, but am not sure about it. My mind is so that I have to go along as smoothly and quietly as possible. I do not even burden it by trying to remember; in fact, I just cannot control my memory, and I am too weak to force anything on my mind. I try to feel that nothing matters, and try to rest it all with the Lord, even to putting me in remembrance of little things about temporal things. I have come to the place where I have to trust him for all things, and O how I long to fully realize that in him I live, move and have my being. Sometimes in order to try to entertain my worldly friends I will try to laugh at their jokes, or maybe I will go so far as to tell an old time joke myself, not because I want to, something in me rebels terribly against it, but I do it to please them, but O how ashamed I feel after it is out of my mouth, and how condemned I feel. I never was given to joking, but once in a while one will come up in my mind, and I will endeavor to please my guest by telling it. I love the sweet admonitions, and one is that we avoid foolish jesting, which is not seemly. Surely the dear Master marks out the road for us, and when we step out of it we pierce ourselves through with many thorns.

I will close for fear I will tire you with this my first letter. May the dear Lord go before and prepare me a place in your heart. He is your parlor guest. I know he occupies the largest and best room in your heart, and you are careful and troubled about many things in wanting to entertain him, wanting the guest-chamber lovely for his reception. We always try to do this, but how feeble our effort, and how short and puny our arm. The same high and holy arm that brought salvation has to make ready the guest-chamber and spread the feast. O how good it is to know that he is everywhere, and that he is the existence of all things; that is, that without him nothing was made that is made. I often look about me, and begin to search if there is anything that had not God for its beginning, but how soon my poor feeble mind wearies. I cannot (as the poet says) glance a thought half way to God. I often feel to plead earnestly that he would make me know his power in all things. I think this would keep me happily entertained. But I hope the time is drawing nigh that we shall have a full and free knowledge of all his power and glorious loveliness. If in this life only we have hope, we are of all men and women most miserable. I believe at that time we will see him as he is, and be like him. May the Lord ever be your meat and your drink. Write if you feel so disposed.

I am your unworthy sister in hope,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., March 11, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I just feel like asking you to help me bear my burden this morning, and why I do not know, but trust you will bear with me. One by one those dearest to me are called home, and with great force there comes to me the

plaintive word used by brother Ker, "Alone." During the sad, dark days of my early life I was fortunate enough to meet Elder Chick a couple of times in Baltimore, and he was my comforter and adviser. I may have told you this before, but if I should repeat it every week I could not make clear to you what he was to me. He told me of the wonderful things in the Bible in a way that made my heart beat faster, and my soul rejoiced as he explained. I was but a babe in Christ then, and I did not understand the way I was being led. There was a continuation of my love for him and his interest in me until the Lord saw fit to take him to himself in glory. He knew me, knew my sins and my weaknesses, but would write to me, "The Lord has wonderfully blessed you." I wondered then, as I do yet, how any one could see any good in me, when, if God did love me, it was because I was such a needy, helpless sinner. As I have said previously, it must have been a reflected light in which they saw me, and it must be so at this time, for I am no better now than then. Indeed, my best times and my brightest days are when I remember my Creator in the days of my youth. But during the past fifteen years there was another who knew and loved me for His name's sake, and who wrote so freely of his hopes and fears, so tenderly of God's mercies, and so earnestly of His eternal plans and purposes, that my heart went out to him as it had to brother Chick, and he, too, seemed an elder brother, a friend. It was he to whom I told the story of Jesus and his love, and though told with a stammering tongue, I had the happy privilege of being baptized by him, causing a nearness which I am not able to express. I met him ten years later, and had the pleasure of spending several days in his home, the remembrance of which is very sweet to me. And his gentle, patient wife! many of you know her, and will not be surprised that my visit there was so delightful. The only thing to detract from my stay was this query, ever in my mind, Am I worthy to remain beneath this roof? I felt my leanness, my poverty, as much as when away back here in California, but I saw something in those dear people which held me spellbound. I wrote to him a few days before Christmas, once more expressing love and fellowship for himself and wife, and I wish he could have had it read to him before his eyes were closed in death. The world would have laughed at that effort of mine; many of the brethren might have thought it lacked interest, but brother Badger would have appreciated it. He is gone, yet when I received the notice I could smile through my tears, being assured that his ministry had ceased, and believing with all my soul that no brighter jewel had ever been added to the saints in glory. But I do feel "alone." I know that God is everywhere, that he came into my life and soul when I was not seeking him, that he gave me the hope that I am a joint-heir of the inheritance of the saints. He puts me in daily remembrance of him, and sometimes there is no doubt, no fear. But I long for the company of his people, my brethren. I need their love so much that I am willing to submit to their reproof. I need the uplift their presence would give me, yet would be satisfied to sit at their feet declaring myself the least of all. I need to walk and to talk with them, that they may keep my feet in the way, lest I wander into forbidden paths, and to explain that which I feel is right, but do not clearly comprehend; knowing though that his will is done in earth as it is in heaven,

I try to be still and murmur not. Sometimes I believe it is all for the best, for I might not go to him as I am constrained to do now that I feel my loneliness so keenly. It may not be the right thing to do to inflict the foregoing upon you, but I have written of the only two preachers who knew me, the only two with whom I ever held sweet converse, and they regarded me, notwithstanding all. I was looking over some of brother Badger's letters to-day, and as a portion of one bears on the subject of my isolation, will copy it. "My dear sister, I can but envy you the strong and assured faith which your letters always breathe; you are amply compensated for being separated from the people of God whom you love, in the earnest love and faith which keep you alive to his mercy and goodness to you. It is better to be alive and suffer than to be dead with no feeling.

'More the treacherous calm I dread,
Than billows bursting o'er my head.'

You are alive, and can even see and feel your sins and transgressions, which is better than to be insensible to everything, lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, only fit to be spewed out of His mouth. Of course it is a great privilege to meet with the brethren, and to hear the gospel preached, but that is not the first thing. 'Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.' That sound is not that of the preacher's voice either; that sound makes no noise, it is a still, small voice, and your ears are blest, for they hear it. I am always glad when I receive one of your letters, not only for the assurance of your loving remembrance of me, nor of the love you so plainly show for the cause and people of your God and of his truth, but for the wonderful work of that God, wrought in you by his holy Spirit. It is well to ask whence comes this wisdom from one so isolated all her life from even one who seems to have any knowledge of experimental goodness, far removed from the hearing of preaching by mortal lips. I have a sister who is situated similar to you, and she puts me to shame, as you do, by her faith and knowledge of divine things. I envy you both the power of the love of God shed abroad so abundantly in your hearts. You have no one to ask for light, knowledge or instruction, though the way of life and salvation is abundant and clear to you. Where are the Sunday Schools, the means and the influences which in our day are so necessary in converting sinners, in saving souls and in teaching the religion of Christ? You have the Bible, but even that is not the teacher of God's children. They are taught the same things to-day, and no other than when there was no Bible. It is a wonderful help and comfort, but never the original teacher. 'All thy children shall be taught of the Lord,' but the Bible is a glorious witness, like the preaching of the gospel. All that one really can know of that book he must first have written upon his own heart and mind by the Spirit of God. The Bible is a record of God's word, so it can be nothing to one who does not have that word written and engraved upon his heart. 'I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people,' are the terms of the everlasting covenant. I have a valuable estate given me, a record of its metes and bounds, and of the general and particular description of it. The record, or deed, is not the estate, nor any part of it, but it is that to which I must look as to my evidence of owner-

ship. The Bible is such a record of the family of God, and their inheritance. They find their names written there in characters of living light. The wonders and beauties and riches of their inheritance are there recorded by infinite wisdom and goodness. In a sense, it is a book of life to them, and the banner over them is the love of God. Surely, my dear sister, it is a good thing to be driven by our needs to search the Scriptures; they have not eternal life, but 'they testify of me,' says Jesus. That is what I say, so, my sister, I must thank God for you." I could not send the whole letter because it contains things said of me of which I am not worthy.

I have written at some length, but only a fractional part has been told of the many comforting and interesting things he wrote. I hope some situated as I may find something in this to cheer them in their loneliness, and when they feel it in their hearts, to put it on paper, that he who is weary may read it. My love goes out to all God's household, and I want them to understand, after reading all that the dear brother has said of me, that I feel my needs, myself being the least of all. May the God of all grace be your Teacher, and may your inheritance be eternal life through Jesus Christ our Savior.

In the love and fear of the Lord, your sister,

MARY E. WRIGHT.

ST. THOMAS, Ont., Jan. 22, 1915.

DEAR ELDER KER:—Inclosed please find two dollars for the SIGNS for 1915. I have been ill from an accident (broken arm), and amuse myself as best I can reading, &c. I was turning over some old letters in my desk when the thought came to me, that as you were asking some time ago for "copy," perhaps others might enjoy reading some of them, as my dear husband and I did when they came to us. You can leave out anything personal, or of no profit. Any you do not publish I would like back again. I am thankful you have Elder Lefferts to help you.

Hoping you and yours are all well, I am (MRS.) A. J. BLACK.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Feb. 17, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER BLACK:—It has been in my mind to write you ever since my return from Ontario, but I found many things demanding my attention upon my return, and so have not found time to write, until a few moments this morning. I reached Buffalo at half past six, after leaving you all at the depot at St. Thomas, and left there at eight o'clock, and reached New York at eight the next morning, and home at ten twenty and found all my family well. I had no delay on the way at all. That afternoon I attended a funeral in the village, and the next day attended the funeral of the brother whose death I was informed of while with you. As it was uncertain whether I should reach home before Tuesday evening some time, Elder Durand had been sent for to attend the first funeral, and he remained also to the funeral of brother Hill the next day, and spent the night with me. It was very pleasant and gratifying to me to have him with me at both funerals. Last Monday I had another funeral to attend here in the village. Last Wednesday I went ten miles to attend a wedding. Beside this, I have had an editorial to write, and many letters to different ones, and have done some visiting, and have had some company, so that my time has been well filled up. Brother Hill's death was a great shock to

this community. He died without a moment's warning, in the presence of some of the men who worked in the shop with him, and made no moan or sign after he fell. The other funerals were not those of members.

I have been living over again the incidents of my visit with you all. Not one unpleasant thing took place to mar my visit, except that I always feel so entirely unworthy of all the kindness of the dear ones of the Father's kingdom. From the moment I entered your door and met your cordial welcome I was at home. I cannot begin to enumerate the pleasant memories which I have of my whole visit. I fell in love with the brethren I met all through. Their conversation was spiritual and edifying. My own mind was in an unusually cheerful frame, and I did not feel so cold as I do sometimes. I had much to bless and praise God for. I feel, dear brother, that I am under great obligations to you and your dear companion for all your kindness to me. I should be more than glad to be able to return some of the attention and kindness which you both showed to me. I wish to be remembered to all your family whom I met, and to all the dear ones in St. Thomas with whom I became acquainted. There are no people in the world like the people of God. I believe that I do love them for Christ's sake. I hope that I am willing to spend and be spent for them, yet how unworthy to minister to them in any way. I well remember the first time any one ever told me that I had said a word to their comfort and strength. I felt in my heart to say, Who am I that so great a blessing should be given me as to give even a cup of cold water to a disciple? I felt to have been more blessed than the one who had received the comfort spoken of. I think I realized that in this sense also it is more blessed to give than to receive. This feeling has remained with me ever since. I had some testimonials that my visit with the brethren in Canada was from the Lord. I am glad to think so, even though I wonder and am humbled because of it.

I cannot write to you what I would like to this morning. You will know that I have not forgotten you, and that I did much appreciate your kindness to me. I would be glad to write to all whom I met, and who became dear to me, but shall not have the time to do so. Say for me all that I cannot say to any of the brethren whom you may meet. May God bless you and yours, is my prayer for Jesus' sake. When it is well with you remember me.

I remain your brother in the hope of the gospel,

FORRIS A. CHICK.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Oct. 21, 1906.

MR. AND MRS. A. J. BLACK—DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER:—It has been my desire to write you ere this time. It has not been procrastination that has caused the delay, and it has not been through any thoughtlessness toward you that I have delayed. It seems to me that I have never had quite so much crowded on my mind and hands as I have had since my return from Canada, but I will try to write at least a few lines this afternoon before starting for the Salisbury Association to-morrow morning. I have often thought of your kindness in being up so much of the night that I left St. Thomas. I got off at two fifty-five and slept a good part of the way to Buffalo, so that the time seemed short on the train. I reached home at eleven o'clock that night. I was delayed an hour in

Trenton, two hours in Buffalo and an hour in Philadelphia. How swiftly six hundred miles can be covered in these days, for it is within a mile or two of that from St. Thomas to my home. I found all well, for which I felt that I ought to be thankful to the Giver of all good. I was glad at the preaching of Elder Sawin, especially his second sermon. It seemed rich and most appropriate to me. I was glad at the warm greetings of all the dear brethren to myself personally, but while glad at this, I was troubled at the deep sense of unfitness which I felt all the time, and with it came again and again the fear that one day I might fall into sin and grieve the friends of the Lord who were so kind to me. I have never felt so much afraid that my brethren would do wrong as I have lest I should do wrong myself. These many years it has been my conviction that others could not really injure me, but that I could injure myself. If I sin the penalty is mine. If we live after the flesh we shall die. Others may seek to do me wrong, but what is the wrong done to me compared with the wrong which they have done their own souls? It seems to me that it was just because this is true that the blessed Savior and the first martyr Stephen prayed so earnestly that their enemies might be forgiven. Wrong was done to Stephen, but most of all, they who decreed his death, and consented to it, had wronged themselves, because they had sinned against God. So David confessed in that wonderful fifty-first Psalm: "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." He had indeed grievously wronged his faithful captain and his wife, but all else was swallowed up in the thought, I have sinned against God. Because of these views of the matter I have felt to continually ask to be kept from sinning against God, sure that if kept from that I shall also be kept from injury to my fellow-man, and especially the household of faith.

But I must close for the present time. May the dear Lord be with you, and with all the church in Canada in all their trials and sorrows. I would be glad could I speak to the consolation of all who love the Lord in sincerity and in truth. I shall be glad to have a letter from you both at any time.

I remain your brother in the precious hope of life eternal,

F. A. CHICK.

HOPEWELL, N. J., August 18, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER BLACK:—I have been wishing to write you ever since my return from Canada, but have been hindered until now by various causes. I think I told you when at your home that Mrs. Chick was in Maryland while I was with you. I went down there last Monday, and have just to-day returned with her to our home. I am glad to say that we are all about as well as usual, though somewhat tired from our trip. I fully expected to see you again before leaving Canada, but, as you know, did not. I was through St. Thomas twice, but with no time to spare either time. My whole visit was pleasant to me, and I hope not without some pleasure to the friends where I went. I was favored with some liberty of mind and feeling at times in preaching the word of God. This is much to be desired at all times, but, as is the case with others, I am not at all times favored that way. You both have been in my mind much since I was at your home. I have hoped that you, brother Black, were being spared much suffering of body, and that, on the other

hand, the blessed Lord had been pleased to give you comfort of mind through the consolations of the blessed gospel, which sets before us our only good hope, either for grace to live by here, or for life everlasting beyond. We all need these consolations at all times, but more especially when sickness and suffering come to us, and when anxiety of mind cannot be avoided. The Lord has promised good to his people, and he will not fail in his word. I remember how many words of faith and hope I have heard from the lips of you both in past years. That faith which is sufficient for one trial will prove itself sufficient for all trials. The poet has well said, "His love in times past forbids us to think that he'll leave us at last in sorrow to sink." Our mortal powers must fail sooner or later, but his grace will not fail, and it will always be true that "as thy days, so shall thy strength be." I am only here speaking of the things that you both know and are well assured of. But how different and how much more blessed it is to find these things out for ourselves in the only way in which we can come to know anything really, viz., by coming to need them, and then to have them supplied to us. I find myself, as I grow older, thinking more of the future, and of the blessed hope set before us in the Bible. We have not attained, and are not perfect yet, but we shall be perfect one day. We have not yet attained to the resurrection, though we do know, as we trust, something of the power of it. How glorious will be that day when we shall rise from the dead and be changed and be like the blessed Lord, seeing him as he is. I think of the words of David from time to time: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." Again, I think of John's language: "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him." But "now are we the sons of God." Yes, now, even though we are so poor and weak and sinful in heart and life. How wonderful that such poor sinners should now be the sons of God. This means that he loves us and cares for us, and will not suffer us to depart from him at last. It is the resurrection of the dead that the Scriptures promise. That which dies shall rise again. No amount of human reasoning could ever attain to this assurance, but it is the promise of the Lord for us, and God is able to keep us, and all that we have committed to his hand, and to raise it up again at the last day. This glorious hope is my anchor when I think of death and the grave. I shall rise again from the grave and from death.

But I must close now. I wanted you to know that I thought of you with love and sympathy, but have not felt that I could write very much that could do you good. But the blessed Lord can comfort, and he will. I trust that all is as well with you as when I was there.

I remain your brother in the hope of the gospel, F. A. CHICK.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Jan. 19, 1911.

DEAR SISTER BLACK:—The SIGNS of January 15th brought to me, for the first time, the news of the death of brother Black. I could not say that I was surprised, but I can say that I am very sad as I think of him, and our great loss. I

had received no word from any one concerning him since I was at your home in July and August last. As I read the obituary in the SIGNS a flood of recollections poured through my mind with relation to him and his dear family, and my visits at your home. All those recollections are pleasant to me now; yet recollections such as these, though pleasant, bring with them sadness to think that these relations are now broken, never on earth to be renewed. I can never forget the first time I came to your home. It was the first house I ever entered in Canada. I have felt at home everywhere I have been since then in Canada, but have never felt more so anywhere than I did that evening when he and you all welcomed me, a stranger, as you did, and the pleasant hours of that evening and the next day have never left my memory. I just now said to my wife that I knew of no one in Canada who came nearer to me than brother Black has done. His words and deeds toward me have been always most kind, and then he loved the same truth that I love. I can but think how much I shall miss him if I ever visit that section again. But I can but think of the hope that belongs to the christian, which hope we feel sure our dear brother is now enjoying the full fruition of. How many times I have heard him speak of that hope. Then when the end of time shall come we have the promise of a glorious change. I sometimes think sweetly of that abode where there is no sickness, nor sorrow, nor any sighing, nor any dying. Then shall I be satisfied, when I awake, with His likeness. I know that brother Black often looked back over the way in which he had been led, and also that he looked forward to the glory that shall be revealed in all the saints, with hope for himself also. But I can tell you none of these things that you do not already know, and I doubt not that they are a comfort to you in your bereavement. One of the sad things in the association of loving friends, and in all the relationships of this life, is that some day there must be a rending of them asunder by death, and the more we love the sadder is the hour of parting. But there are provided by the blessed Creator and Preserver of men compensations all along the way. He will not have us to be too highly elated with joy, nor too much overwhelmed with sorrow, and so while earthly delights are tempered by the thought that they must end, the sad hour of parting is also tempered with the hope of the eternal meeting and rejoicing beyond the grave. You, my dear sister, have this hope for yourself. I know that the children, one and all, must feel their father's death very much. How glad and proud he was of his children. I could but take notice of that whenever I was with you and their names were mentioned. I feel a deep sympathy with them in all their loss. I hope that you will convey this to them, and also say to his sisters that I remember them with hope and prayer, that they may find consolation through the peace of God ministered unto them. Mrs. Chick joins me in kind sympathy, although you and she are strangers. We know that loneliness for many, many hours to come must be yours, but may the blessed Lord be with you and give you to realize his beloved presence.

I remain your brother in the hope of the gospel,

F. A. CHICK.

PSALMS VIII. 1, 2.

"O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength."

DEAR EDITORS:—Some months ago I had some impression of mind to write on the above language, especially on the words, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength." I sat down at that time and wrote a letter of some length, but became ashamed of it and cast it aside, thinking at the same time that I would never again attempt to write on such deep things as David declares in the eighth Psalm. Now the impression to write on the same has come back to me with double force, and to relieve my mind of the heavy burden I make another effort to write, although I feel too weak and helpless to think of such a thing. If I should be enabled to write anything comforting to the children of God, surely then it will be written in the spirit of a poor, little, helpless babe that depends entirely on the strength of God, for David says, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength." Of all of God's creation we can find none so helpless and weak as the newborn babe in nature. The brutes of the field and the fowls of the air can all raise their heads when a few hours old, but the little babe cannot; all that it can do is to cry, and this is the cry of sin, for sin dwells in its members, for Paul said, "I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing," and David said, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Yes, all men are born in sin, and the great question with me is, Have I been born a babe of Christ, and made to lean and rest on his everlasting arm for strength and support, and made to lisp his holy name as that of a babe in Christ Jesus? David speaks of such in his beautiful Psalm: "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength." And Jesus said, "Have ye never read [referring to the Old Testament Scriptures], Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?" This gives the dear little babes both strength and perfect praise to their heavenly King, for Jesus is their King, he is to them the chiefest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely, and for this reason he is worthy of praise. Well might David say, O that men could, or would, praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men. Yes, children of men, for God's poor and afflicted people are all children, even babes, little children, very weak in themselves, but made strong in the Lord; they must be made weak before they can be made strong, for Paul said, "When I am weak, then am I strong," and David said, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength." O what a feast of fat things for the little babes in Christ. They feast on his words, for he tells them to fear not: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." O yes, we feast on the Word which was made flesh and dwelt among his people, but now dwells with them in spirit, even in the hearts of his little children, and in the hearts of babes. Paul speaks of them as newborn babes. "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby; if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." O how strange these things I am trying to write about would appear to the worldly wise, for they are hidden from them and revealed unto babes. Tell a wise man of the world that he would have to become

a fool in order to become wise he could not believe such a thing; more than likely would tell you that you were a fool for believing such a thing; yes, they would rather call it "trash" than anything else. But to settle this matter we must prove it by holy writ, and we will now hear what a servant of God says about it: "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty," &c.—1 Cor. i. 27. Showing that the wisdom of God is foolishness unto the world, and the wisdom of the world is foolishness unto God, for the world by wisdom knows not God, but the wisdom of God is revealed unto babes, and Jesus thanked his Father that it was so. "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." O I often think, Can I ever be assured that I have received that wisdom from above, which is revealed unto babes? John said, "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven." Yes, it must come as a revelation from God to babes, then we can lisp his holy name with the tongue of a babe. "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength." David begins this Psalm with the words, "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" Not on all the earth, but in the earth, even in the hearts of babes, although they be grown up men and women, it is God's will in the heart. "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Dear readers, the things I have been trying to write about seem to condemn me, for

"When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark and vain and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?"

For the good that I would, I do not, and the evil which I would not, that I do, and I am brought into captivity to the law of sin which dwells in my members. God's children will never, while here in the flesh, stop crying out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" neither will they ever, while here in the flesh, stop praising God for his goodness to the children of men. Even little babes are made to praise his holy name. "Praise the Lord; for the Lord is good: sing praises unto his name; for it is pleasant." —Psalms cxxxv. 3. Well might David say, "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength."

But I must now close, for I find the subject too deep for me; it is too high, I cannot reach it; too deep, I cannot fathom it. I have written things that I did not think of when I began, and left out things I had thought of. I am a strange creature; even in letter-writing I seem to miss the substance, and can only grasp at the shadow.

Dear brother Ker, just look this over, and if you can publish it in the SIGNS, do so, if not, cast it into the wastebasket and all will be well with me. You know that I have no gift for writing, and I often wonder why I should attempt such a thing as to write on any text of Scripture. I was somewhat surprised when I read Elder G. B. Bird's letter in March 15th number of the SIGNS, saying he thought I was truly a gifted man. I suppose he meant gifted in writing, but I would like to say to him I am not. I

feel to be the least of God's creation, and can say with him, I feel to be alone; surely there is no one like me, even in writing. I go in by and forbidden paths, prone to sin as the sparks to fly upward, and sin is mixed with all I do and say. I hoped some years ago I should grow better, but, sad to say, I have grown worse. "Worse and worse myself I see, yet the Lord remembers me." Yes, he remembers me as dust, for I am nothing but dust.

Your brother in a faint hope,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

HERNDON, Va., March 22, 1915.

CLAREMONT, Cal., Feb. 22, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I must tell you of the blessings that the dear Lord is sending down upon us poor creatures here in this part of his vineyard. At our meeting yesterday, after hearing what some of we weak vessels had to say relating to the mercy of God in saving poor and needy sinners who labor and are heavy laden, a Mr. W. R. Loony, a brother of our dear sister Periman, came, asking a home with us. After telling of the wonderful things the Lord had done for him, we could but marvel at His wonderful works. It was indeed pleasant to welcome him home, lone pilgrim that he was, traveling alone, nowhere to go, could find none who believed as he did, or knew the truth as he had been taught it, none whom he could call brother, none who offered anything in accord with his belief, until he was impressed to see one who told him where to find his people. Two months ago he was at our meeting, but seemed, so far as we could see, to take no special interest in the meeting, but we have found that he has suffered in silence and could also rejoice in silence. So surprised indeed we were when he took occasion to mention how he had been blessed with a feast of spiritual food, and felt to know that we were his people, and though a stranger to us he would make bold to ask a home with us. After becoming acquainted with his history we could but marvel at the power of God manifested to this dear brother. Yes, it was indeed good news from a far country, even from the wilderness. But the Lord will bring them home, every one. Not every one may have the especial privilege of having a "lovely band" to tell it to, and to be received with open arms, but He knows them all, and will raise them up at the last day; not one shall be left out; every one the Father gave him. Yes, and they will all give honor and glory to him, and him alone, not giving themselves one grain of credit, but all, all to him. He was by regular order elected as member of Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of southern California, awaiting baptism, which we hope can be arranged soon. Then at the afternoon service, after speaking by myself and others, this same brother was asked if he would say a few words. He responded by telling how he had been fed on the good things, that it was indeed a feast to him. He took occasion to mention how thorough God was in all that he did, and finished by repeating the first stanza of "All hail the power of Jesus' name." After he resumed his seat the hymn was sung for his sake, and we hope to the glory of God, during which another came forward, one who had been attending our meetings for a number of years, and whose departed wife was a member with us, and whom we had thought was living out of duty: Robert Edwards. He told how he loved the brethren and the doctrine, how he had been with it almost all his life, and had

found by experience that if saved at all it must be by the truth as he had learned it from this dear people, and that if the brethren would have him as one who loved them and the doctrine for a member he could stay away no longer. He was received by regular form, and also awaits baptism. This makes three candidates awaiting the Lord's own good pleasure to supply the person to perform the service, which we have all confidence he will soon provide. We are widely scattered, our membership covering sixty miles in length of territory, and it is as much as we feel that we can do to attend our meetings (which we do not neglect), and we cannot have ministers only as it pleases God to send them, which he has always done in every time of urgent need. Looking back over the obstacles that have been in our path since it was put into our minds to organize a church here that would be a home for any of those who had been led in ways they knew not, and had hope that their sins were forgiven them, not for any good that they had done, but through the mercy of One who loved them even when they were in the depths of sin, how filled with hope we are that it was of God's own hand planting, and that it will prosper by his blessing. We can but "praise God, from whom all blessings flow." Our sister church, Liberty, at Los Angeles, is also having good meetings, for which we are glad indeed, but as their meetings are on the same date as our own, it is not often we can attend. Only when their meetings are at brother Dawson's, at Ocean Park, can we do so without neglecting our own. May God bless them abundantly, is our prayer.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS.

ATLANTIC, N. C., March 29, 1915.

MISS MILDRED DURAND—DEAR SISTER:—Your card came to-day, and we were glad to hear from you. We are sorry for the afflictions of your dear father. I had the pleurisy when I was ten years old, but have not forgotten it. I hope that he is better, and that he will soon be well again. I know they missed him at Salisbury.

It is hard for us to see that afflictions are a grace of the Spirit, but it must be so. The Lord said that we should have them in this world; but it is good to feel that in all our afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saves us. If we were not afflicted would we know to fellowship him in his afflictions? However these bodily afflictions are not to be compared with the afflictions which we feel in the heart. I believe these make the heart better. If they do, are they not good for us? David had these, and he said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." Thus it appears that his afflictions taught him a lesson in grace that he would not have learned in any other condition. Is not this so sometimes in natural afflictions? Are we not brought in them to realize how little, weak and sinful we are? Does not God sometimes make use of these as his chastening rod? and if so, do we not here receive an evidence that we would not receive anywhere else? He chastens every son he receiveth, and if any one is without chastisement he is a bastard, and not a son. Now, therefore, chastening is an evidence that we are sons. The wicked are not so. They may have the same bodily troubles and never feel that it is an affliction from the Lord. Are they ever made to glorify God in their bodies and spirits? The saints are, and it is thus that they are shown that

they are separate from the world that lieth in wickedness and are clothed in their self-righteousness. How then can we part from our afflictions? They are a part of our inheritance. If we can spare one part we will spare the whole inheritance. No, let us have that which is promised us here, and that which is to come also. If we never feel the winnowing how shall we know if there is any wheat? and if no wheat, no bread. Then the wheat has to pass between the upper and nether millstone and be crushed into fine flour, for "bread corn is bruised." Then there is a kneading process, and the fire, all to come on that bread before it is really bread fit to eat. Is it not thus that our dear Lord suffered for us? and if he thus suffered shall we not suffer also in our measure? But, after all, our afflictions are light. Our old man murmurs and complains heavily sometimes, because he is not willing to bear the cross for one moment. Sometimes he asks this question in me, If Christ suffered all these things for me, why is it that I have to suffer them now? This has made me stumble sometimes, and if it had not been that he holdeth me by my right hand I should have fallen long before this day. Will this old man cheat me out of my inheritance? He would if he could. He would if I had to manage him, for he is so subtle, such a good fellow, and loves me so well until he gets me just where he can make sport of me, and then he uses all the sarcasm he can, until I am ashamed of myself, and am made to hate myself because I have listened to his teaching. Were it not for the Lord and his holy arm which is ever underneath, I would have been destroyed long before this day. I have been troubled with his company since I was four years old, but I have become convinced that there is One who has, and will, overcome him. I know that I cannot, for he has surely beaten me out. Also I know that it is not in the power of man to help me. Therefore all my help must come from the same source from which my first deliverance came. The same hand that brought me must lead me. I cannot trust any other, and none of us could trust him unless he had delivered us in himself. It is in his deliverance that we are delivered by him, for all he did he did for his people. Therefore they are saved by him. Glorious salvation. Blessed Lord.

I hope that brother Durand will soon be at his ministry again, and that you may all receive a blessing in his affliction. My wife continues to be troubled with her sore rheumatism. Pearl and I are well.

With much love to you all, I am, I hope, your brother in the Lord,

L. H. HARDY.

ROANOKE, Va., Jan. 28, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Find inclosed a check for two dollars for the dear old SIGNS another year. I am sorry I have been so late in sending the money, but financial affairs have not been good for awhile. I get much comfort from reading the SIGNS, for I do not get to attend preaching very often. We have a good church here in Roanoke; Elder J. C. Hurst is our pastor, and a God-called minister, if I understand anything concerning the word of God; he preaches to the comfort of the household of faith. While you all are strangers in the flesh, at times I feel to know you and the dear writers of the SIGNS. I enjoy all the writings much, especially the editorials, for they seem like listening to a good sermon. May the God of mercy bless and keep you both in the strait and narrow way.

Your sister, saved by grace if saved at all, (MRS.) R. G. AKERS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1915.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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REVELATION XXII. 1, 2.

"AND he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

Our views on the above text were asked for several months ago, but we have not until now felt that we could write upon it. Even now we do not know that what we shall write will be satisfactory to our inquirer, but can give only such views as we have, leaving the issue with him who works all things after the counsel of his own will.

He who shewed this river to John, was one of the seven angels "which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues." Also, this angel had a golden reed with which he measured the city of God, its gates and its wall. John could only see these wonderful things as they were shown to him. He could not of himself see these things for himself, but was wholly dependent upon revelation. True, John was a called and ordained apostle of the Lamb, but this fact did not make him any the less dependent upon the Holy Spirit of God for all his instruction. In this revelation recorded in the last chapter of the book called Revelation, John sees the life of the holy city (the new Jerusalem) as a river pure and clear coming forth from the throne of God and of the Lamb. Wherever this river flows in its course, there is spiritual, eternal life; wherever it does not flow, naught but death prevails. This living water is all that makes the difference between life and death, fruitfulness and desolation. Naturally speaking, all life naturally would cease upon this earth very soon if all water was to disappear from the earth. In the western part of the United States are vast tracts of barren deserts where no rain ever falls, where no rivers pass nor dews descend, and where deathly silence of desolation ever reigns. In some instances man has devised a way to get water into these regions by means of irrigation, and where this has been done green verdure and fruitful fields abound. It is the coming of the water has wrought the wondrous transformation. Also, it is well known that the valley of the Nile River, in Egypt, would be utterly barren were it not for the fact that the Nile overflows its banks every year, watering the valley on either side for many miles. Upon this yearly overflow has depended for centuries the fertility of that region. Where the last drop of the overflow ends, the first grain of sand of the Nubian desert begins. The water compels the desert sands to come only so far, and no farther. It is wonderfully appropriate that the Spirit of divine truth throughout the Bible frequently uses the natural element of water to signify the life of the church, and the work of the Holy Spirit. All that makes the difference between the saved and the unsaved, the elect and the nonelect, is water, living water, the water of eternal and spiritual life. Where this water flows in its course as it proceeds from the throne of God and of the Lamb,

and unto whomsoever it is directed by the authority of him that sits in the throne, there is to be manifested spiritual and eternal life. Wherever this water does not go, is not directed, there death never-ending prevails. Thus spiritual life is wholly dependent upon the water of this living river, and upon the divine authority that sends it forth, and which directs its course. Those reached by this river are no better by nature than those not reached, therefore salvation is not by works. It is a mercy that any are saved, and that not all are left in death to perish forever. The course and direction which this living water takes depends alone upon the enthroned power of God and of the Lamb, and not in the least upon any merit in the creature, nor upon his will, for he is dead until this water reaches him. It is significant that the Scripture here combines the words "God" and "Lamb" When we think of God, we think of all that is awe-inspiring: of great power, infinite wisdom, unerring judgment, boundless truth, and such other great and high qualities. When we think of Lamb, we think of the crucified, of obedience, of meekness, gentleness, love, compassion and mercy: such qualities as seem to mitigate the awful dignity of God to poor, fallen man. Were God simply great, wise and just, he could not have any inclination to condescend to our low estate, but because he is the Lamb as well as God he pities our destitution, and his bowels of mercy move with compassion toward those who have not the slightest claim upon so great and holy a Being. Thus, when we are told that eternal life as a pure, clear river proceeds from God and the Lamb, we know that it comes not only directed by the omnipotence and infinite wisdom of God, but as well from his mercy, love and pity. It flows out of the crucified One, from the riven side of Christ, out of the clefts of the Rock of the ages. The tree of life is "in the midst of the street of it and on either side of the river." What is meant by "the street of it"? In the chapter just before this, we have a full and minute description of the holy city of God, the new Jerusalem, which came down "from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband," and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. In the midst of this street of the city (not the street of the river) was the tree of life. The city of God has but one street, though the Arminian heaven is said to have golden streets, more than one street, no telling how many. However, the new Jerusalem, which is from above, and which is the mother of all the spiritually born, has one street, one only, and that street is pure gold, not golden. That which is golden may be more or less mixed with alloy. It takes very little gold to make a thing pass as golden. But that which is pure gold, as this one street is said to be, cannot have the least admixture of alloy. This one street of pure gold is the one way in which all the inhabitants of the city, the people of God, walk. Here they all meet and mingle, interchanging expressions of mutual love and fellowship, greeting one another with the holy kiss, saluting their brethren with heavenly greetings. This is the way all the holy prophets went, herein walked the apostles and the primitive church, here now walk all that believe in the Lord Jesus Christ with all their heart, and that hope in his mercy. This street is faith. "The just shall live by his faith." "For we walk by faith, not by sight." The faith of God's people is the same in all ages. It is pure gold, because it is the gift of God,

and not obtainable by man by any exercise of his own. It is pure gold, too, because it has successfully endured all the fiery trials to which God's people have ever been subjected in all ages. In the midst of this faith (street) is the tree of life, Jesus Christ. He was in the midst of Abel's faith, of Noah's, of Abraham's, of the faith of the whole cloud of witnesses which ever encompasses the child of God. Our faith finds its entire satisfaction and aim in Jesus Christ, faith embraces him and him only, his blessed character, life, work, death, resurrection and ascension to glory, as well as his coming again, not as a sacrifice for sin, but unto salvation. There is nothing else in the midst of the faith of the new Jerusalem but the fullness of the Godhead in Christ Jesus. Also, the tree of life is on either side of the river of life. This shows the situation, not only of Jesus, who is the tree of life, but also of the church of Jesus, which through him lives forever. Her days are as the days of this tree, so it is no accident that the Scripture uses the pronoun "her" when it says, "and yielded her fruit every month." We used to wonder why it said "her fruit" instead of "his fruit," but it is because of the vital oneness of Christ and his church that it so says "her fruit." His fruit is her fruit. She has her fruitfulness of him. She bears whatever he quickens her to bear. Therefore, the tree of life, Jesus, as well as his church, being on either side of the river, it is nourished and sustained by the water of this living stream. This tree of life is on both sides, on the law side as well as on the gospel side. Jesus and his people are seen throughout the Old Testament in the times that were legal, as well as throughout the New Testament in the times that are gospel. This tree is ever-living, therefore is ever-fruitful, because the river along which it is planted is ever-flowing, never ceasing, never abating its volume nor the force of its current. We are reminded of the words in first Psalms: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." This Psalm seems to us to describe the character not of David, but of Christ. We have frequently noticed in the summer time, when we occasionally have long, dry spells, that the leaves on many trees will wither with the heat, curl up and fall off, but along the banks of rivers, brooks and other streams, the trees will be more vigorous and green and show no sign of suffering from the drought. The roots of those trees so favorably situated are constantly fed by water from the stream, so that they are better able to stand the season of little rain. Thus Christ is planted alongside the river of the water of life, and the drought and and famine and pestilence, peril and desolation and sword, affect his life and fruitfulness not at all. When we look back and consider all the ups and downs through which this old earth has passed since it was first created, then consider the tree of life that has maintained its perennial bloom throughout it all, we wonder indeed at the marvelous life-sustaining property of this river of the water of life. The world has been visited over and over again with famine, pestilence, wars, earthquakes, fires, and various upheavals and destructions of various

kinds; nations have arisen, matured, declined and fallen, becoming no more than a word upon the pages of history; generations have come and gone, manners, customs and languages have arisen, been modified and have passed into extinction. Through it all Christ and his church, the tree of life, have remained ever the same. All that has passed upon the scene of the world's activity since the ball first began to revolve has abated not the least the life, vigor or fruitfulness of the tree of life. This is all because this tree is planted not by the stream of time, but along the river of eternity. When Jesus was here on earth nothing daunted him. Whether his preaching met with belief or unbelief, whether his works were understood and appreciated, or whether they were ascribed by some to the prince of darkness, never influenced him at all, but he maintained unswervingly his determination to do the will of the Father, and to finish his work. Jesus met with love and hatred, with rejoicing and bitterness, with thanks and curses; he was mocked, spit upon and crowned with thorns, nailed to the cross and pierced in the side, but none of these things moved him. Why not? Because he had meat to eat the world knew nothing of, and he drank of living water hidden from finite perception. A table was prepared before him in the presence of his enemies, which supplied his every need so that famine could not assail him. He was planted on either side of the river of life, so drought did not wither his leaf, nor end his fruitfulness. This tree yields her fruit every month; that is, at all seasons and in all times. No one period of the world's history is more favorable to the fruitfulness of this tree than any other period. There never has been a time since Abel offered a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, when the church has ceased to exist. The tree of life has been, and still is, bearing her fruit. Yielding her fruit every month shows that Jesus Christ manifests himself and his church in cold and heat, winter and summer, seedtime and harvest, day and night, all the time. In the days of the apostles Rome tried to stamp out the church by persecution, and one would naturally suppose this an unfavorable time for the growth of the church, but not so. The more the church was persecuted the more it grew. Some historian noting this fact goes so far as to say that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. Nor is the time in which we are now living, when the laws of the land protect all shades of religious belief or unbelief, any more favorable than those bloody times to the growth of the church. The truth of the matter is, that the existence and growth of the church does never depend upon external circumstances, but upon the internal springing up of the gift of God, the water which he gives, unto everlasting life. The old prophet Elijah thought that when Ahab and Jezebel should accomplish his ruin, the church would die with him, but hidden from the knowledge of the prophet were seven thousand men reserved of the Lord who had not bowed the knee to Baal. So we see that the tree of life yields her fruit every month, in all times and seasons of the world's history, and in all the various shades of christian experience. There is said to be twelve manner of fruits. While the fruit is all of Christ, it is not all the same manner of fruit. There are diverse operations of the Spirit, but all the same Spirit. The fruit of Christ are not all Jews, not all are of national Israel. Some of his fruit are Gentiles, some are Romans, some are Greeks, some Ephesians, some Corinthians, some bond, some

free, some Scythian. His people are drawn unto him from the east, the west, the north, the south. Some come in through the north gates of the city, some through the south gates, some through the east gates and some through the west gates. But every several gate was a pearl, so no matter from whence they came, through what diverse experiences and out of what various tribulations, they all come through the gate of pearl, for there is, after all, but one way into the city, and that the way of Jesus' blood and righteousness. Also, there were twelve apostles. These were fruits of the tree of life. All of them preached the same doctrine, but no two preached it alike. Each had his own manner of declaring it. And we emphasize the fact that the manner of the fruit, as well as the fruit itself, is all of Jesus Christ. We have many God-called ministers of God among the Old Baptists to-day, but we will venture to say that no two of them preach the gospel exactly alike. They all preach the same truth, but each has his own manner of doing it, each his own gift. We should not demand that our brethren in the ministry see things exactly as we do, that they should use our phraseology to clothe their views. Sister Clarice Durand once said or wrote to us that our being in the strait and narrow way did not necessarily make us narrow minded. She meant by that that a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ could maintain his own views of Scripture without compelling others to bow down to those views, or without demanding that his views be accepted as the articles of their faith. It is narrow mindedness to demand that all our brethren square themselves by our rule and level. "Let brotherly love continue," and in order to this, charity must abound. These various manner of fruits, all of the same tree of life, the one Jesus, are all being yielded in their season, so that there is fruit-bearing all the time. Even in the cold winter time, when we feel that we are cold and indifferent to the things of the Spirit, even then fruit is being yielded. If this were not so, why would one know that he is cold and barren? A dead person does not know he is cold. Therefore, the very fact that we sometimes get into cold states, and know it, that very consciousness of coldness is a fruit of the living tree. So sometimes it is prayer, sometimes praise, sometimes thanksgiving, sometimes sorrowing, sometimes bearing burdens, and again being delivered. But various as are the manners of these fruits, they are all yielded by the same tree, and are yielded in all seasons of our experience to suit the seasonal need.

The last clause of our text is: "The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." These leaves are the promises made of God in Christ Jesus to his people, which he chose in him before the world began. Leaves on a tree show that winter is passed, that the dormant state is ended and that the time of fruit will soon appear. Leaves prophesy fruit. All during the legal dispensation there were numerous types and shadows, which all prophesied the fruitfulness of the gospel when Christ should fulfill all those prophetic things. The leaves of the law portended the fruit of the gospel. So the leaves of the tree of life are the promises which God has made to his people in Christ Jesus. These heal the nations. They heal not simply the people of God among the Jews, but all nations, his people scattered abroad among all the kindreds of the earth. These leaves of the tree, or promises in Christ Jesus, are far

too numerous for us to enumerate them all, but we must call attention to a few. Let us take the promise which God made to Abraham: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Here is veiled the truth that Christ is the seed of Isaac, which was the seed of Abraham, and that in Christ all nations (Gentiles as well as Jews) should be blessed. All nations, according to this promise, are to benefit in the salvation which is by grace through Jesus Christ. We see how this one leaf of the tree of life, or this one promise made to Abraham and fulfilled in Jesus Christ, heals the nations, for according to it redemption is come among all the kindreds of the earth. So likewise the Scriptures are filled with these leaves, or promises, which God has made to his people in Christ Jesus. These promises are the basis of our hope and trust in him. The very hope of eternal life which God has put in the hearts of his spiritual heirs, this hope is itself a promise. We make a great mistake if we think our hope is the fullness of our inheritance. It is but the earnest of it. Some day, at his appearing, Jesus will bring the hope of his people to a glorious fruition. Then will we know as we are known and see as we are seen. In the meantime does not this hope save us from the wounds which sin has made, does it not heal the nations? Paul says we are saved by hope. This hope is a promise of better things to come, and like all other promises made to us in Christ, it is a leaf of the tree of life. Paul was greatly dismayed when the thorn entered his flesh. He asked thrice that it be removed. It was not removed, but God promised him, "My grace is sufficient for thee." It was this promise that healed Paul throughout his long and faithful ministry: the sufficiency of grace. This made him equal to all his adversities, enabled him to triumph over all his enemies and made him able to say at last that he had fought a good fight and kept the faith. All these promises, or leaves of the tree of life, are yea and amen in Christ Jesus, to the glory of God by him, and God is not slack concerning his promises as some men count slackness. The thing he has promised, that will he do. He changes not. In his promise and his oath he has given the heirs of glory a strong consolation through two immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lie.

Written at the request of sister V. A. Edward, of Burden, Kansas, L.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ROMANS V. 12, 18, 19.

ELDER BEEBE:—I have been a reader of your paper for the last few years, and am pleased with it. I would like to have your views on Romans v. 12, 18, 19. By giving them you will oblige

Yours respectfully,

JOHN W. FERGUSON.

MILTON, Iowa, March 4, 1866.

The Scriptures referred to read thus: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

These Scriptures have often been so perverted by those who neither know nor love the truth as to perplex the minds of some of the children of God. Universalists and Arminians exultingly repeat them as insuperable obstacles in the way of establishing the doctrine of election and sovereign grace, and scoffing skeptics and infidels use them to prove a want of

harmony in the testimony of the Bible. It would seem unaccountably strange to find Paul, in these passages of his testimony, laboring to prove that what he had, in the eighth and ninth chapters of this same epistle, and in his epistle to the Ephesians, first and second chapters, positively asserted, was not true, but such would be the case if these Scriptures were justly liable to the constructions which the Arminians are anxious to establish. To prove their unscriptural dogma of general provision and offered salvation, they blindly seize these passages without observing that they are as fatal to their cherished heresy as are all other portions of the word. If the words "all" and "all men" in these passages are to have the universal application they are so eager to establish, they would prove quite too much for their purpose. Instead of leaving the matter of justification to be brought about by the will or works of men, it would establish the justification and salvation of all mankind quite as independently of the volition, instrumentalities and works of men as does that doctrine of the Bible which they desire to refute; and if Universalists can satisfy their own minds, and even succeed in perplexing the minds of others in regard to the true import of these Scriptures, their delusions would not change the truth nor better their condition. It could make them neither wiser nor safer, while to those who know the truth it would give fearful evidence that these perverters of the word were among those to whom God has sent strong delusion that they may believe a lie, that they all may be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness.

In replying to our correspondent, who asks for our views on these passages, whether we shall clearly, truly and fully elucidate them or not will not alter their true import and scriptural meaning, therefore our views will give no just ground of assurance or comfort to those who live in darkness and unbelief. As a safe maxim for us to adopt and observe, we should accept as true that the Scriptures, being inspired by the Holy Ghost, must be in perfect harmony, whether we can understand them or not. Any interpretation therefore which conflicts with other portions of the whole volume of the divine testimony must be wrong, and if we can persuade ourselves to believe such interpretations it only shows that we are permitted to believe a lie.

In the discussion of our subjects, and in giving our views on the passages proposed, it will be necessary to observe the grand theme of our apostle in the whole connection, that he is stating and demonstrating the doctrine of the redemption, and free, full and everlasting justification of all the people of God through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and not by the good works which are or were found in them who are justified. (See chapter iii. 24.) And of this justification he says that He whom God has set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, that he, and not ourselves, is the justifier; that he, in his righteousness, as declared by the apostle, is just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus, and in such a way as to effectually exclude boasting; not by the law of works, but by the law of faith. And summing up, he draws the conclusion "that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law."

In illustrating this doctrine of justification by the faith of the Son of God, the apostle brings to view the two distinct headships of the natural and the spiritual creations; the one a natural, the other a

spiritual man; the first of the earth earthy, and the head and embodiment of all his posterity as such; the second Adam, he says, 1 Cor. xv., is the Lord from heaven. The one was made a living soul, and the natural progenitor of all living souls as his natural descendants; the other is a "quickening spirit," and the life and immortality of all who are born of God. In the same chapter, which contains the passages under consideration and is inseparably connected with our subject, he says that Adam is the figure of him that was to come, and in pointing out the analogy, disparity and the figure to that which it represents has employed the passages on which our views are required. Observe when the term "man" is applied to Christ, except when applied to his incarnation, it is in speaking of his mediatorial character as the man Christ Jesus, the man which is the fellow of the Lord of hosts, and is designed to identify the Head, body and all the members of the church of God. It is in this mediatorial sense that he is called the "second Adam," for in his eternal Godhead he is the Lord from heaven, in which character he can be resembled by no figure, for nothing in earth or heaven can or may be compared to him. Then as the second Adam there are points of analogy to which the apostle calls our attention, and at the same time carefully instructing us of those points of disparity wherein the figure is not applicable.

In the creation of man God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." God is represented by no image but by him alone who is the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person. Christ is the only image of the invisible God, and the making of Adam in "our image" was the making him the type of Christ, who is that image; and Paul, as we have seen, sets that matter at rest by declaring in our context that he is the image of him that was to come, and Christ is him that was to come. Adam was not like the invisible God in infinity, self-existence, independence, spirituality or immutability, but he was clearly a type of Christ as the progenitive or seminal head of a progeny and the embodiment of a race, and in many other particulars which we will not now trace. As the seminal head and progenitor of mankind, all the tribes of the earth were created in him, and were all embodied in him when he offended. He comprehended all the race of human beings which were created in him, and he was personally the whole human race before any of his sons or daughters were developed. Thus Adam and all his born or unborn seed or members are called "man," and are embodied in the one man. It was thus, as a unit, the offence of one man was committed by us. "Wherefore, as by one man [embracing all his posterity] sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." This declaration was made some four thousand years after the offence was committed, and all that had been born in that time had sinned, and all who have been born since this declaration was written by Paul, and all who are yet unborn, sinned. It takes them all to make this one man. They are this identical one man by whom the offence was committed. And so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Those who are yet to be born have sinned. So death passed. When God said to Adam, he said to us in Adam, and to us as Adam, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," death in its irrevocable sentence then and there passed

on all the kindreds of the earth. The dreadful reality is upon us. Our belief or disbelief cannot alter the fact. We cannot parley or argue to the contrary with death. From the decree by which death has passed on us there is no available appeal.

Passing now from the consideration of the twelfth, we come to the eighteenth and nineteenth verses: "Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation [or death passed, for that was the judgment which came to condemnation in this case]; even so [or exactly so, after this similitude, according to the true import of this figure,] by the righteousness of one [which one, he says in verse seventeen, is Christ,] the free gift [not offer or sale] came upon all men unto justification of life." Now how must this be, to have the thing prefigured agree precisely with its figure? Why it seems to us more difficult to pervert than to understand, that as all the human family were in Adam, and were Adam, in committing the offence and receiving the judgment or sentence of death, so all the spiritual family in heaven and earth were in the second, spiritual and antitypical Adam when he performed that righteousness of obedience by which the free gift came upon them all unto justification of life. The grounds of relationship and identity by which Christ and his members are vitally and legally connected are twofold. First, as their spiritual progenitor they have and do exist in him, as the human family existed and do still exist in the earthy Adam, and have so existed in him as long as he has held the mediatorial office, which we understand to be from everlasting, or ever the earth was. And secondly, in his having assumed their nature and law place, by taking on him the seed of Abraham, being made flesh, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

1. As the "second Adam" and the "Lord from heaven," his church existed in him from the beginning, just as Adam's wife and posterity existed in him from his beginning. Hence we read that God has blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." "Sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." The vitality of this relationship is that eternal life which John says was with the Father, and was manifested. Jesus says, "I give unto them [his sheep] eternal life, and they shall never perish." This imperishable and eternal life is the gift of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." And his Son is eternal life. "He is the way, and the truth, and the life;" he "is the resurrection and the life." "He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life." This life is manifested by a new and spiritual birth. Christ is the spiritual progenitor of all his members, as the earthly Adam was the natural progenitor of his posterity. But no progenitor can develop life that is not in him. Our very existence in the flesh proves that God gave us natural life in

the natural Adam, and our possession of spiritual life demonstrates that God gave us spiritual life in Christ before the world began. By virtue of this we are in due time "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." As this eternal life cannot be separated from Christ, it is hid with him in God, and Christ liveth in us. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his; but as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. "A chosen generation." A seed that shall serve him, and that shall be counted to the Lord for a generation. As in the book of the generations of Adam God called their name Adam in the day when they were created, (Gen. v. 2,) so in "the book of the generation of Jesus Christ," (Matt. i. 1,) "all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." When none of them had been brought into manifestation, and when none but the omniscient eye of God could see them. (Psalms cxxxix. 15, 16.) And as all the natural seed of the first Adam constitute but the body and fullness of the man Adam, so all the seed of Christ are but the fullness of Christ's body. For God hath given him to be the head over all things to his church, which is his body, and the fullness of him which filleth all in all. (Eph. i. 22, 23.)

2. As the law which Christ's members had transgressed, and from which they required to be redeemed, was given them in their earthly or Adamic standing, to redeem them required that Christ should be made flesh and dwell among them—that he should come under the same law. Hence we are informed that "He was made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law." In doing this we read, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage."—Heb. ii. 14. In this chapter the first Adam is referred to as the type or figure of him that was to come. We see not all things put under the earthly Adam, "but we see Jesus, who was made [in his incarnation] a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor: that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." Here again cavilers harp upon the words "every man," as in our text they play upon the words "all men." But every man of whom? He is brought to view as the second Adam, representing his own chosen generation and royal priesthood, not representing all the seed of the first Adam. He is the captain of the salvation of every man that is saved by him. But there can be no captain of the salvation of such as are not saved. A captain always represents a definite company, and when he says every man it is understood every man of his company or command, but not every man in the world. Besides, these are more clearly and unmistakably designated as being one with him, by whom they are sanctified, and his sufferings were to bring sons, not aliens, to glory. He took part of that same flesh

and blood which his children were partakers of, and to deliver them. Instead of taking on him the seed of the first Adam, he took on him the seed of Abraham, which is comparatively a small part of the seed of Adam, but it embraces as many as the Father has given him, and he has given his word that they shall all come unto him, and he will raise them up again at the last day, and as their captain he will bring them all to glory. "For he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." And who are they? Not the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Who then are Christ's? As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God, and if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his. Who then have the Spirit of Christ? Only they who are born of the Spirit, for, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Well, Christ took on him the seed of Abraham, as thus defined, them that were his, his sons, his seed, his sanctified or set apart, his members, his body, over which he presides as the head in all things; those for whom he, by the grace of God, has tasted death, and whom, being made perfect through sufferings, he will bring to glory.

"Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation." All being in him, all are guilty, for judgment cannot righteously pass to the condemnation of the innocent, therefore the passage of this judgment from the infallibly just and holy Judge is proof sufficient of their guilt, and the certainty that all die is positive proof that all have sinned. "Even so by the righteousness of one [or, as the margin reads, by one righteousness] the free gift came upon all men." That is, all his seed, all whom he had taken upon him, all whose iniquities were laid on him. As Adam, by the offence, plunged head and body, all his seed or members, into condemnation and death, even so Christ, identified with all his body, seed or members, which he took on him, and of whom he was the Progenitor, High Priest, Captain of salvation, has raised up, and through him as their living head the free gift, which is eternal life, has come to justification of life, for the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord, even as the wages of sin is death through our earthly head. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners." As a unit, Adam and all his posterity by a single offence were made sinners, guilty and subject to the judgment of condemnation and death, so as a unit Christ and all his posterity or seed, by his righteous obedience, were made righteous. His blood cleansed them from guilt, took away their sins, for he was delivered for their offences and was raised for their justification.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 1, 1866.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER H. E. Purris has changed his address from Attica, Ohio, to Bloomville, Ohio.

S. N. Stephens has changed his address from De Leon, Texas, to 1809 Congress Ave., Austin, Texas.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

"The Church at Schoharie," N. Y., $1.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Susan Stewart Turner died March 25th, 1915, after being an invalid for about two years. It is with a sad heart and a deep sense of my unworthiness that I attempt, at the request of my dear uncle, to write an account of Aunt Sue's death. She was born in Campbell Co., Ga., Jan. 16th, 1844, and moved with her parents to Trigg Co., Ky., about the year 1852. She was united in marriage with Elder D. R. Turner, June 13th, 1867. To that union were born four children, three of whom survive her. She united with the Muddy Fork Primitive Baptist Church at Cerulean Springs, Ky., in 1871, and lived a true and consistent member until death. She was stricken with pneumonia a few days before her death, which came without apparent suffering, after being unconscious for about forty-eight hours. She was cheerful, enjoying the company of her friends and resigned to her fate. She requested that the hymns "Amazing grace" and "How firm a foundation" be sung at her funeral, which tells the true story of her faith as much as could be written in volumes. Dear Uncle Dave, who is our pastor at Muddy Fork, and who is known by many who will read this, was a faithful, kind and loving husband, and has borne up well under the strain of long afflictions to himself and dear wife. We hope he will be spared many years yet, that he may guide us by his love and advice, and be able to feed the little flock who still meet with the old church which was established one hundred and ten years ago. According to my observation of thirty years, he is contending earnestly for the things upon which the church was founded. We feel very weak, and often try to draw ourselves away, only to find that we are drawn closer to the dear old doctrine which has been handed down to us from Jesus Christ and the apostles. We would comfort our dear uncle if we could while he lives, for dear Aunt Sue has only gone before, and has the comfort and protection of the dear Savior, and we will meet, I hope, an unbroken family around the throne of God, where there will be no more parting. Through death is the only gateway to the heavenly home, and for old people who are afflicted is to pass through and be young forever. May it be our happy lot, but it seems too much for unworthy me.

T. O. TURNER.

Mrs. Susan Emma McCoun was born unto Benedict and Lucy Farmer, at Farmdale, Ky., April 1st, 1850, and departed this life at the same place March 12th, 1915. Brother and sister Farmer, so long and favorably known by our people, preceded her to that better estate and heavenly a few years ago, from whom as parents and with whom as children of God she inherited precious qualities, which gave her like distinction with them in the confidence, esteem and friendship of her acquaintances, and in the love, fellowship and appreciation of the brethren and sisters whose privilege it was to have known her. She is survived by two brothers, B. T. Farmer, of Huntington, W. Va., and W. S. Farmer, of Frankfort, Ky. Three sisters, Ophelia, Bettie Kate, Florence and a little babe preceded her to, we hope, the paradise of God. She was married by the late Elder John F. Johnson to J. T. McCoun, Nov. 25th, 1869. Of this union there were born two children, Ernest and Lucy C. Ernest departed this life several years ago, survived by his wife and two children, Bullett and Elizabeth. Lucy and her husband, Mr. A. C. Morris, together with her father, occupy the Farmdale homestead. Brother and sister McCoun joined the church the fourth Saturday in November, 1886, and were baptized by the writer, and together they walked truly and faithfully in the doctrine, order and ordinances of the church until sore affliction deprived our dear sister of the blessed privilege which she enjoyed of meeting with the saints in the house of the Lord. Having known brother and sister McCoun so long, and witnessed how intimately they portrayed in all the relations of life the principles of the law by which "they twain are one flesh," and how beautifully, quietly and peacefully they maintained the walk of life for man and wife, I feel that the subject is only half considered when I speak of her otherwise than as related to and connected with him. They impressed me as having married in the Lord. A good wife is of the Lord. I think of sister McCoun as a good woman, and a true and faithful wife, a helpmeet indeed. She was actively, constantly and thoroughly enlisted in all that in any way involved the interest and welfare of her husband. She readily joined hands with him in taking hold for the support and happiness of the household. Like her good mother before her, she sought to make her home a resting-place. Her welcome was without pretension, her hospitality was liberal, and her entertainment made her friends feel and enjoy homelike comforts. In her manners she was simple, unassuming and frank. She made her friends by making herself friendly. The lack of profusion and yet the sufficiency in richness, quality and quantity of the floral offerings seemed as though divinely designed to attest the character and measure of the esteem in which she was held by the very large and most respectable audience of neighbors and friends attendant upon the services of God in her memory. In her convictions of the truth of the doctrine of the grace of God she was clear, decided and firm. As I speak of her in these more pleasing respects, as we feel more readily to do of those whom we love, I am sure she would not have me intimate in the slightest degree that she did not realize day by day the need of the sufficiency of the grace of God, and that the strength of her hope was not in the blessed assurance

of a sinner saved by grace. For many long months our dear sister was a great sufferer, but while her afflictions were severe, the grace given her was exceedingly great. All that the best medical skill could suggest was done for her relief, but to no avail, but the grace of God did much for her, and prevailed in great patience and in a calm and abiding reconciliation to the dispensation of the divine mind. In contemplation of her departure, and with remarkable composure and deliberation, she gave in minute detail her wishes concerning her burial and the services, and at the appointed time for her to depart and be with Christ she was gathered into the bosom of his infinite love, and thus she sleeps in Jesus. "He giveth his beloved sleep." I love to dwell upon the virtue of the grace-given character that so beautifully adorned this beloved sister. How utterly indescribable are the gifts of grace and the graces of the gifts of the God of grace, and how precious the gift of grace to say, The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord. May the bereaved husband and daughter be richly favored with the gifts of this grace, together with all who mourn because she is not, for the Lord has taken her.

Elder P. W. Sawin and myself were requested to join the sorrowing ones in the hour of their sore bereavement, to which we responded, and held services to God in the doctrine of grace at the old Farmdale homestead, from which she was buried with her beloved dead in the beautiful city of the dead at Frankfort.

P. G. LESTER.

MEETINGS.

THE First Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, of Hopewell, Mercer Co., N. J., will hold a two days meeting on Friday and Saturday, April 23rd and 24th, 1915, in celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of the organization of the church. All lovers of the truth, and especially the ministering brethren of our faith and order, are invited to be with us at that time.

Done by order of the church.

D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

MEETINGS of the church at Schoharie, N. Y., which have been held at the home of sister Kinney in the village during the winter, will be resumed at the meetinghouse on the hill at the regular time, fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, in April (24th and 25th).

GEORGE A. MIERS, Church Clerk.

THE next session of the Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, Baltimore city, Md., to begin on Wednesday, May 19th, 1915, and continue three days. This association believes in the doctrine of predestination, election, effectual calling, the future resurrection of the dead and the general judgment, and invites all of like precious faith to meet with us at the time and place above mentioned. Those who come to the city on Tuesday p. m. will go to the meetinghouse, Madison St., east of Calvert St., which will be open from 2 to 6 p. m., where friends will be met and cared for. Those coming Wednesday a. m. go direct to the meetinghouse from Union Station, Pennsylvania R. R., take any car going south on Charles St. and get off at Calvert and Madison Sts., From Camden Station, B. & O. R. R., take car marked St. Paul St. and get off at same place. From Mt. Royal Station, B. & O. R. R., walk two blocks east to Charles St. and go as directed from Union Station.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Bryn Zion Church, at Clayton, Delaware, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday after the fourth Sunday in May (26th, 27th and 28th), 1915.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Southampton Church, at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the first Sunday in June (2nd, 3rd and 4th), 1915.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Warwick Church, at Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (9th, 10th and 11th), 1915.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Liberty Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, of Los Angeles, Cal., meets every first and third Sunday in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., at 42nd and Moneta Ave., and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal.

W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor.

C. B. RICE, Clerk.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 83. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1915. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE GOSPEL YOKE.

"TAKE my yoke upon you, and learn of me."—Matt. xi. 29.

The dear Savior gives this sweet command to all those whom he has already called to come out from under the law of sin and death, where they had been engaged in ceaseless but unsuccessful labor. All they who labor under the legal yoke are still heavy laden, for no man can do the work which the law requires; it is therefore a hard bondage to those who are under it. Now they have experienced the dear Savior's holy call, and have come unto him, but do not know how it was done. They are resting in Jesus, but do not know why. The law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ has made them free from the law of sin and death, but it is a wonderful mystery to them, which he only can explain to them.

The mind of this subject of grace is now drawn with divine power to things of the gospel. They find a beauty and a holy interest in the Scriptures of truth. They find the burden of condemnation gone, and in the Lord's own time they are given to realize a most precious and solemn hope that Jesus died for their sins, and so satisfied the law for them. Now they love the church and kingdom of God. The themes of salvation, and grace, the love of God, and the way of righteousness, and all kindred subjects, which were formerly tedious and disagreeable to them, are now most sweet and delightful to their souls. In their hearts Jesus is now saying to them, "Take my yoke upon you." He does not talk and give commands as men do. He speaks to the heart. He puts the desire for gospel blessings in their souls. He writes the things which he will have them to know and to desire, not with ink, not on tables of stone, but with the Spirit of the living God on the fleshly tables of their heart.

"And learn of me." Up to this time the Lord's people have been learning of the world, and trying to gather knowledge from worldly sources. Religious things have hitherto been settled in their minds according to the thoughts and dictates of worldly wisdom. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." How blessed it is to learn of Jesus. How dif-

ferent he is from all worldly teachers. How different the manner of teaching, and how very different the things that are taught by him. The whole of this spiritual teaching is strongly opposed by the wisdom of the world. But the mind in which the dear Savior is teaching his thoughts and ways, which are infinitely higher than ours, leads us to desire to be alone with Jesus, and with the few that love him, rather than with all the richest, the wisest and the most exalted people that can be found in this world.

"For I am meek and lowly in heart." How wonderful this is: "meek and lowly." No one of all the race of men can truly say this of himself but Jesus. My pen almost shrinks back, and refuses to touch the paper, in trying to say anything as to the deep meaning of these two words. They belong to Jesus alone, and to those who are one with him. Having all the inexpressible excellencies that are in these two words, and yet not claiming or asking one thing for himself, but doing everything for others, suffering everything, bearing everything for others, meek and lowly. He "went about doing good" all the time. Think of the numberless phrases, words, expressions, sentences, in all the Bible, in which this most wonderful characteristic of the dear Son of God is presented: "meek and lowly in heart."

And this is given, this glorious characteristic of Jesus, as the reason why his people should take his yoke upon them. I have realized in my own soul that by nature I have not the least of that peculiar quality, but the opposite, and yet I have sometimes felt my admiration of the dear Savior, in this respect, to so include this very grace of the Highest, as that I could see that, with other of his unspeakable graces, within my own soul, as something belonging to me, though "less than the least of all saints," in Jesus. Only in Jesus can any grace of the Spirit be seen in any such sinner as I.

Those who are yoked together must be alike. An ox and an ass must not be yoked together under the law, and the servants of Christ must not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. (2 Cor. vi. 14.) When Jesus calls his people to take his yoke upon them they become one with him, as working in that gospel field. Not that they are working with him, as two men may work together, but they are working in him. That is a most wonderful union. "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." How can two walk or work together except they be agreed? He is in the midst of his people who have taken his yoke upon them, individually, and as the church of the living God. What close and sacred responsibilities there are resting upon the Lord's dear people on account of this precious yoke, which they have taken upon them. How carefully and anxiously they question themselves as to that yoke of Jesus, and as to whether it is manifest as upon them. Jesus said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."

When exercised by this meek and lowly Spirit of Christ all of the children of God do feel what is expressed in the twenty-seventh Psalm: "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." Jesus was given the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord, and all heavenly graces, (Isaiah xi. 2,) not for

himself, but for his people, in the work of salvation, which he had wrought for them and in them, that they might learn of him, as the only true and lasting source of heavenly knowledge and understanding. He ascended upon high and received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. (Psalms lxviii.) These gifts he gave unto his people, and in the exercise of these gospel gifts they take his yoke upon them and are learning of him.

The legal yoke was hard and a great and sorrowful burden to bear. The gospel shows that yoke broken and removed when Jesus died for our sins and rose again for our justification. But the Lord's people when brought into the knowledge and liberty of the gospel have so high an estimate of the glorious gospel duties, and blessings, and privileges, and so great a sense of their own unworthiness, and inability, and great lack of wisdom, that they are very likely to shrink back when called upon by the church to exercise the gifts which the church recognizes in them. So when exercised by a desire to be baptized, they always feel that this cannot be the duty of those so sinful, weak and unworthy as they feel themselves to be. When the call to preach the gospel is felt in the heart they are most sure to feel that the Lord would not call such a worm of the dust to preach the gospel. But the Lord never calls in vain. With a tender regard for their doubts as to whether so holy a work can be for them to do, he says to them, "For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

In the keeping of the dear Savior's commands there is great reward. In, not for, keeping them. Those who take the Savior's yoke upon them do nothing in that line with a view to some reward which they expect to receive for the work. The life and Spirit of Jesus in their souls is leading them. If they had such expectations of reward how disappointed they would be, for the life of a true and faithful minister of the gospel is sure to be a life of trial more or less severe. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." In his own soul what afflictions, what stumblings, what falls, what sorrows, and the hardest of trials to bear are those which he can never tell, except as they are made known by prayer and supplication to Jesus. Nevertheless those who have experienced the taking of this yoke of Jesus upon them do find rest to their souls, for that yoke is easy, and his burden is light.

Notwithstanding all the worldly trials and all the soul afflictions "there's something secret sweetens all." Voices expressing joy and praise and thanksgiving have been heard through prison windows, unspeakable blessings have been experienced under the sharpest persecutions, and under the fiercest assaults of the devil the soul has been made so sweetly to rejoice that those who wait upon the Lord have been enabled to renew their strength, to mount up with wings as eagles, to run and not be weary, to walk in all the ways and ordinances of the Lord and not faint. (Isaiah xl. 31.)

Ruth had no desire to return with Orpha to her own people and her father's house, but looked with a longing desire toward the land and people and God of Naomi; so the Lord's people are given an inextinguishable desire to dwell and work in the gospel fields and among the Lord's dear people. Boaz said to Ruth, "The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust." But what reward

could she desire who was doing what she rather do than anything else in the world? When the yoke upon us takes us into fields of work which suit us exactly, and fill our souls with delight, that yoke often seems most harsh and disagreeable, and the work very wearisome, but how different it is when the love of Christ constraineth us in the work. When the love of God is felt in the soul we can desire nothing more; then everything attending the gospel yoke is easy, and every burden we may be called upon to bear is light. How dear and good and kind it is of the precious Savior to say such delightful words to us in our loneliness, and sorrow, and great unworthiness, and thus take us so close to his heart in his tender compassion.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April, 1915.

P. S.—In the SIGNS of March 15th and April 15th are published two former articles on this subject. S. H. D.

FLOYD, Va., April 14, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I want to say to brother Mayfield that I have read his thoughts on Romans viii. 1, with much comfort. I have believed it that way for years, but have not been able to get my hearers to all see the spiritual experimental import of the subject as he has set it forth. It may be that I have been clearer in my understanding of the subject matter than I have been in my presentation to the minds of the brethren. It has seemed so clear to my mind that I have wondered why all who are taught in spiritual things do not see it as I do, especially those whom the Lord has put into the ministry; but my wondering has not affected the fact that such seems to be the case, and I find myself rather consoling myself in the thought that I hear brethren, in whose call to the work of the ministry I have full confidence, present views on this or that Scripture which do not accord with my understanding, and I revert to the fact that each has his calling wherein he was called, wherein he should abide, and, it may be, instead of our complying strictly with that injunction by earnestly setting forth our respective convictions of the truth, we break through into the calling of others and merely give our views, which may or may not comfort with the experimental convictions of the truth of the text. I have thought it is likely that not every one, if any, is led into the experimental truths of each and every principle of divine declaration, but that the great cloud of witnesses proclaim the whole truth fully, and the church hears it and believes. We have gifts differing in some sense or other, but all of the same Spirit, and all to profit withal. Again, I have thought that we are not as careful many times as we ought to be in determining the meaning of words as they stand related to other words entering into the makeup of a sentence in which a certain principle of truth is presented. For instance, the words "flesh" and "spirit," as used in the text. The law and the gospel are reflected in these words respectively, as much as to say, There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the law, as of a carnal commandment, but after grace, as of a power of an endless life. The law has nothing but remembrance of sin, and consequent condemnation unto death, while grace has nothing but righteousness and justification unto life. In the law covenant the Lord remembered their sins, whereas in the covenant of grace he says, I will behold no spot in thee. Thou art fair, my love. Thou art

undefiled. As under the law we are sinners, and the very workings of sin in our carnal nature insures its wages; whereas, as we are under grace, it is God that worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. If the walk of the children of God is well-pleasing in his sight, who shall lay anything to their charge? The children of God being perfect in Christ Jesus, wanting nothing, their walk after that which made them so is as evidently conclusive as is the saying, "Because I live, ye shall live also." The man that is in Christ is a new creature, a living creature, a perfect creature, a responsive, active, never-failing creature. In the sense in which the people of God are of him they are his children, and as they are his children they are in Christ, and as they are in Christ they are perfect, and as they are perfect they are governed by the perfect law of liberty, according to which it is said, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." To them thus free there is no condemnation, and their citizenship is consequent upon this condition. Their conversation is in heaven and their walk is thitherward. Their condition is not consequent upon their walk, but their walk is consequent upon their condition. The children of God are twofold in their character, and consequently twofold in their condition and twofold in their conduct, and unless one believes something like this is true of them he is not ready to believe how they are subject to the reproofs, rebukes and exhortations of the gospel discipline if they are perfect and walk uprightly and unerringly in the way of the Spirit. Their service of God in the condition of which we speak as indicated in the text is in Spirit, or is spiritual. In this condition they serve in the fulfillment of the law in the same spirit and sense in which Christ fulfilled it. The righteousness of the law in its righteous fulfillment in the life and service of Christ is fulfilled in them, which is evidenced by the fact that they walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh. Christ said that he came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it, and yet in his doing so we have no account of his doing anything in a visible, tangible, literal sense, as Moses was required to do to observe and keep it. It is true he was circumcised, but not as of the volition of his own will, but of the will of Him who made his children the circumcision which worship him in spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. In the revelation of that which is implied by the seal of circumcision the chosen of God are separated unto him, and unto the worship of his great name, to the praise of the glory of his grace, and henceforth their praise is not of men, but of God, because their confidence is in him, their salvation is of him, and their praise is to him. In the revelation of salvation it appears so evidently and assuredly by grace there can be no confidence in the flesh. No qualifications nor conditions can possibly arise in the contemplation of this blessed truth of salvation by grace. The taught of God learn of him and come to Jesus and sit together in heavenly places in Christ, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God, and being found in the love of God and in the fellowship of the saints they have their fruit unto holiness, and the end is everlasting life. This is a condition perfect in Christ. We mean something like this when we say, "Once in grace always in grace." While the children of God are revealed thus to our faith in the divine sense, they are also manifested as men and women, composing the membership of the church visible as

a body of believers in Christ, who have covenanted in the fellowship of one another to live together in the holy ordinances of the church, the pillar and ground of the truth, which is to them, as it were, a kind of school of grace, in which they are exercised in an experimental sense as to what it is to be a sinner and what are the functions and virtues of redemption and the forgiveness of sin, and are made to grow in grace and in the knowledge of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and as such are subject to the discipline of the church and of the rules governing its order. In this condition they are sinners saved by grace, hoping to attain unto a better estate, and being creatures of God made subject to vanity, they learn obedience by the things which they suffer; and while they thus learn to the acknowledging of salvation by grace, yet they are not always found walking in the order and ordinances of the house of God; and as they examine themselves as to whether they are in the faith they find much for which they need to be reproved, rebuked and exhorted with all long-suffering and doctrine, and in their best estate they feel to freely confess that they have not attained to a degree and manner of life commensurate with that of the fathers, but in the grace which made them great they hope one day to sit down with them in the kingdom of God, and in the blessed and final appearing of Jesus appear with him and them in glory.

In what I might be permitted to suggest as a kind of division of the word of truth, there is still another sense in which the citizenship of the people of God may be regarded for consideration, and that is in an every day matter of course, practical, devotional sense. When one comes into the church he finds it established in its organization, order and ordinances, together with its rules of discipline, decorum, customs and practices, and having covenanted with the church in all these respects, he should feel that he is expected of the church to observe and maintain them by his presence and co-operation, and he should feel that he ought to live in all reasonable respects and consistency in accord with the brethren, and it would seem superfluous to say that he should desire to observe and do these things even as the brethren do. For instance, he should feel it incumbent upon him to attend the meetings of the church and participate in the services consequent upon her assemblages. Why should he not do the things in which he has covenanted with his brethren? There are no lions in the way. And if such a thing should be likely, he may not determine the fact until he comes up with the lion, and even then he should not fail or come short unless the lion should prove more than a match for him. It is true there is a saying, "If the Lord will," but he should first prove the Lord, if he will. With the Lord, "If he will," operates both ways. I will do this or that, if the Lord will. I will stay at home, or I will go to meeting, if the Lord will. He should not only be ready, if the Lord will, to participate in every good work as the church understands should be observed and done, but he should be ready and willing to communicate in all gospel respects, to remember the poor, the sick, the afflicted and distressed, and in every other respect where he may use his substance in supplying the temporal needs of the saints. He should be ready to say, "If the Lord will," I will communicate to my pastor, and should follow up the thought and determine what the will of the Lord is in the matter, for it always goes before.

"Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things." There are many things, literal in themselves, which enter into a gospel maintenance of the visibly organized church, which to do and observe do not require that one should necessarily be guided by the spirit of truth, and yet one professing love to God and to his people would appear to sustain a very questionable relation to the church who is not found in harmony with his brethren in all reasonable respects. There is a literal aspect of the church in its maintenance, its worshipful characteristics and devotional exercises which is much in common with so-called churches for which no special spiritual features are claimed, in which I can see no reason why the faithfulness of the adherents to the true church should not be equal, if not greater than all others, simply because we believe salvation is by grace. We as a church and people are in a class entirely by ourselves. Our faith is not known of men, our religion is not listed in the religious marts of the world, our good works are so heavily discounted we are not expected to get to heaven by them, in which we heartily concur, and yet there is not a religious denomination in all the world of which a greater degree and higher order of moral and religious rectitude is required than there is of the Primitive or Old School Baptists, and we readily and fully concur in this, because we believe that the grace of God, which bringeth salvation, has appeared unto us, and has taught us "That, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ."

I have written more than I thought, all of which is submitted to the disposition of your better judgment.

Yours in hope,

P. G. LESTER.

EPHESIANS I. 5.

"HAVING predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

Adoption means to take a child from one family and place it in another. There is no known law by which a man can adopt his own child. In every instance it must be from another family. Now instead of God being the universal Father in the sense of relationship, he is only the Father in the sense of Creator. In this sense he stands in the same relation to all created things. Now as man is only a creature, and is of the earth earthy and natural, I can see no relationship existing between the Creator and creature further than man is only a creature of God. In this sense all Adam's posterity is on an equality, and by nature the children of wrath. When God gave Adam natural life it was for him and his posterity, and that life is never changed from natural to spiritual, it is for this world only. If we had not received that life we had not been one of Adam's family. Then to argue universal fatherhood in the sense of relationship, leaves no room for adoption, or the new birth either, yet both are fully taught in the Scriptures. It is evidently taught in the Scriptures that God from all eternity purposed to bring about, and unto himself, a family of children, and that this family of children should be from Adam's family, hence chosen unto this end in Christ Jesus before the world was brought forth, or ever time began. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ," and that God should be their Father, and that they should be his

children through Jesus Christ. Now "children" implies the closest relationship I know of. In nature the son has the same life with the father and mother, and no closer relationship can exist. A man may adopt an alien child into his family, but he cannot impart to it another life than that which it had from its own father and mother, which it received by being born of them; it does not by virtue of its adoption become related as kinsman. It retains its life-image and relation to its natural parents, though it may be adopted into another family; neither can the adopter impart to it the image of his family. The very "we" that have borne the image of the earthy family must bear the image of the heavenly family. We must lose the image of the earthy, and gain the image of the heavenly. The losing the image of the earthy is no more contingent or conditional than gaining the image of the heavenly. The losing of the image of the earthy was as much decreed as the gaining of the image of the heavenly. "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." By what means do we lose the image of the earthy? By means of death. I must believe that death itself was as much appointed as one of the links in the chain of events for the accomplishment of God's divine purpose in this matter, as I must believe that the resurrection from the dead was an appointment. For me to believe that a part of God's purposes were positively decreed, and another part hinged on contingencies, is something I cannot for one moment entertain.

Now in the new birth we believe the Adam sinner receives another life which he never had before, though this life is eternal and always existed, which never had beginning nor can ever end, because it is eternal, and having received that eternal life, which is God's gift through Jesus Christ, each member becomes one with him in Spirit and relationship. So long as we retain the natural life we are yet connected with the natural man, and therefore never freed from him until death. "For as in Adam all die." There is no way of losing the image of the earthy man but by means of death, which is a part of God's way of adoption to place it in the heavenly family. Paul says, "We ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." This will be completed in the resurrection. Seeing then, that it is through death that we are to lose the image of the first man, and gain the image of the second man, shall we vainly suppose that the very means through which we are to gain the heavenly image were suspended upon contingencies? Was it by the disobedience of one man that sin entered into the world, and death by sin? If so, was the link of adoption suspended on chance? If, then, death be one of the links in the chain, and was uncertain or contingent, may not we conclude that all that followed it was equally uncertain? But God purposed from eternity to resurrect the dead as much as he purposed to save sinners, and as the resurrection is a part of God's way to bring the heirs of promise into his family, we must believe that every link in the proposition was as certainly fixed by his decree as any one of them. In losing the image of the earthy, what do we lose? We lose the life, nature and every tie that binds us to nature. All relationship that belongs to the Adamic family is destroyed by death. In this we lose it all. No fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, or parents or children in the resurrection. All this relationship is lost when

death returns us to the mother earth. Now as we have borne the image of the earthy here in this life and in this world, we shall bear the image of the heavenly in the world to come. The first man was of the earth earthy, and natural, mortal and sinful, the second is spiritual and immortal. Paul says, "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." Then wonderful is the work of our God that he should destroy the very nature and image of the first family, and give to these adopted children the life, nature and image of his own Son, and through him bring them as close to himself as Jesus is. The very life of Jesus is their life, and God hath loved them as he loved his own Son, and makes them one with him.

Dear editors, I submit the above for your consideration, and if thought fit for the paper you can use it. My writing seems to me like my preaching, when done, worthless.

Yours in hope through the merits of Jesus,

J. M. PERKINS.

ATLANTIC, North Carolina.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—In reading over the SIGNS for April 15th, my mind was specially interested in the letter of Elder Newton Peters, which to me was specially good. While reading it I could but think of the great contrast between Esau and Jacob and Jacob and Israel. Brother Peters beautifully tells us of Ishmael and Esau, and their representations of the nonelect. I have often heard brethren represent them differently, but I could never get it any other way than as brother Peters has written it. Then Isaac represents all who have been made to laugh because of the precious promises of the Lord in them, as Sarah was made to laugh because of the promise of the Lord that she should bring forth a son in her old age, a son in whom was the promise of God, and in whom all the world should be blessed. Not in Isaac, but in his seed, even Christ the Lord. Abraham was also made to laugh because of the thing that was impossible in nature by reason of his and Sarah's age, but which the Lord had assured him he would surely bring to pass. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. Thus faith in the promises of God, and not in the ability of man, prevailed, and God was pleased. He was able to do all he had said to Abraham. He is able to do all he has said to his children, however impossible it may appear in nature. As Abraham and Sarah laughed for the joy of the promise, and their faith that he who had promised was able to do what he said, even so all the elect may laugh because the Lord is able to keep them, however weak they are in themselves. Their strength must be destroyed before they are ever given to feel the strength of the Lord in keeping them. As long as there is any strength in themselves they have their eye on that, and their confidence in it, but when they are altogether cut off from self and the promise of the Lord comes they laugh for joy, because there is One who never dies nor waxes old. Jacob was the chosen of the Lord. He and Esau were in the womb together, one as good by nature as the other; neither had done good nor evil; nothing could be charged against one nor credited to the other; they were as one in that sense, but God had made choice, and that choice must stand forever, regardless

of the oppositions of men, and all their evil judgments against the high and holy One. His way is just and equal, man's ways are evil and unjust. Even he will sit in judgment against God. He shows that he has not the reverence of Satan. The Lord Jesus condemned Satan in all his ways, and he never charged God with injustice, nor brought a railing accusation against him, even though he knew that his doom was fixed and the seal of God set upon it, that there was neither repentance nor salvation for him. O vain man, how shall he escape the torments of the damned? But in this man, Jacob, are two men. Not so in Ishmael nor in Esau. At first there is but one manifested in Jacob, and he an evil one. He is a supplanter from the beginning. There was a struggling in the womb between him and his brother, and when he is born he has hold of his brother's heel. Therefore he is named Jacob, or one who trippeth up the heel of another. He begins his life as a transgressor. He is a sinner from the womb all the days of his life. He at no time claims goodness, nor asks for the things which he has merited. When he grows older he takes his brother's birthright, and later his blessing. In nature and the then prevailing law they belonged to Esau. From these standpoints Esau expected those things, but God had purposed differently. The purposes of God must prevail, and did prevail. Esau did not get the birthright nor the blessing. He was wicked in despising his birthright and he sold it for a mess of pottage. Though he was swift in hunting, and an expert with his bow and in taking venison to please his father, he could not get the blessing. God had blessed Jacob, and he must be blessed. These things, with all the love and blessings of God on Jacob, and those who are represented in him, will bring down on them the hatred of the world of Esaus and Ishmaels as that did the hatred of Esau on Jacob. He then determined to kill him. The world would kill the Jacobs of to-day if it were in their power, and they will one day kill as many of them as the hand of God will allow them to kill.

Later in life there was another development of the care of God over Jacob. He was Jacob still. He never lost that evil nature, and it had new developments, too. As the blessings of God began to turn from the natural to the spiritual and a new name was given him, he found more trouble with himself than he had found before. Before he was disturbed in that way he had no trouble to go as other men went, he was an active shepherd and herdsman, the wolf, the bear or the lion did not move him with fear, he kept the sheep and killed the enemy, but when this new blessing came he became lame. The same hand that brought the blessing brought the lameness also. Neither of them were of Jacob's choosing. He seemed to be satisfied with his name and his activity. Now he is altogether a changed man. Instead of a supplanter he becomes a prevailer—a prevailer with God and with men, a prince; he is the son of a King, such a King as there was not in all the earth, and yet he is lame and must go leaning on his staff all the remainder of his days here. His name is now Israel. From now on Jacob and Israel must go together. The two are very distinct in their lives and natures, and yet they cannot be separated from one another. Jacob is yet Jacob, and he shows it by always being discontented; nothing pleases him, he sees evil in everything. His very nature is evil and therefore he looks at everything as evil. He shudders now at the news that his brother

is coming to meet him. The great escort with which his brother is intending to welcome him is an army of death to him. He fears him and his army. The little ones and the flocks will be destroyed. He does not see one promise of the Lord, nor does he remember one time that the Lord has been good to him. All, all are forgotten in the fear that his brother will now carry out his threat. He has forgotten the faith of his mother, that Jacob must go to the house of her brethren until the wrath of Esau is appeased. She saw that that day would come and spoke of it. Jacob does not remember it. Evil was all he saw, and he could remember no more. But now Jacob was to see how little he knew of the hand of God that should lead him all the days of his life and protect him from all his enemies. Esau came, and all his host with him, but he did not hurt Jacob. God was there and he could not hurt him. He showed no desire to hurt him. He said, "I have enough," and would not have anything at Jacob's hand. After Esau was gone Israel rejoiced that God had given him to see the face of his brother and meet him in peace, and that he had preserved him. Jacob was always trying to look ahead to see what was going to be and the evil that was going to befall him. He was never satisfied with the things of the Lord. Israel was always rejoicing in the prevailing power of him who had called him and kept him, he saw nothing but the wonderful power of the Lord in all his life. God had delivered him out of the hands of Laban, of Esau and of the wrestling angel and brought him the blessed glory of the salvation of God. God was his Father, and he saw it. He feared nothing, but trusted for all. He was full of faith, and believed all that the Lord had said. He saw that he was able to keep him. All that he had done was a demonstration of his power to do. One of these, Jacob, was all that any man could see. Israel was an inner man who was altogether hid from man. God knew of his existence, for it was he who put him there. He did not put him there to die, nor in any other way to be destroyed, but to be kept alive to show the power of God. Jacob could not destroy him, even with all his murmuring and distrustfulness. He could not lead Israel to disbelieve the word that had saved him. Indeed, Israel was the life of Jacob, to the end that he should be saved. Jacob must be swallowed up altogether, but not by an enemy. No, he must be changed to love and trust God. He must be altogether Israel. He realized that the time of his death had come, and he gathered up his feet into his bed and gave up the ghost; but he, being dead, yet speaketh to all who have been brought to trust the living God in Israel. The people of God to-day know by experience these two men. One is an old man, he is corrupt with his deeds. The other is a new man, which after God is created in righteousness, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that they should walk in them. He is born of an incorruptible Seed which liveth and abideth forever. As the Seed liveth, so shall he that is born of that Seed live also. That seed is Christ the Lord. He is with the Father, and liveth with him in the light of his glory. All his works for us and in us are to prepare us to see him as he is and be like him, and to dwell with him. He comes to us in all our Jacobish ways and delivers us. These deliverances Jacob does not realize. He can do nothing but murmur. Israel has the promise of God. He said, "It is expedient for you that I go away:

for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him." This Comforter when he come was to bring all things to remembrance whatsoever Jesus had said, and to take of the things of his and show them to us. For this reason we cannot remember the things of God until they are brought to our memory by the Holy Spirit. The things of God are given to us forever, but they serve us manifestly as the Holy Spirit of God brings them to our remembrance. When we are thus brought to remember them we readily see the follies of Jacob, the old man, and in this way we are made to hate even our own life for his sake. Thus Jacob is being destroyed in us, and we learn more with each visitation that we are dependent on the Lord to keep us and to bless us. Nothing of all this salvation is left in our hands, but all kept by the Lord and with him. As we need it he gives it to us. It may be in sorrow or in pain, it may be in the saddest disappointments, and even the sorest bereavements. We must be altogether cut off from the things of this world, and be given to trust the living Lord. Jacob must be overcome and Israel must prevail. The strong man is only bound now, he must be destroyed; the stronger must have all the victory and the spoils, all are his. Those who trust otherwise will find that all they are looking for will give them disappointment and loss. Those who are so cut off from self that they have nothing to trust but the living Lord will find that in him is life for evermore, and salvation from themselves and all the world with its desires, temptations, losses, crosses, embarrassment and everything that would in any way lead them from God and happiness in him. This is the happy expectation of all Israel, and they shall be saved with an everlasting salvation, world without end. Amen, Lord Jesus.

In the blessed hope of life everlasting, I am your brother,

L. H. HARDY.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Jan. 5, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As we enter upon the new year we look back over the one just past and measure up each event. Many will feel that sorrow, afflictions and deep groanings have greatly predominated; many have drank deeply of the cup of sorrow, each one's trials have been peculiar to himself, and hard to reconcile with himself and feel the will of the Lord be done. How often we have wondered, Has the Lord anything to do with these things? or, Could it not have been averted or turned aside? The dear Redeemer said, In the world ye shall have tribulation. Our blessed Master, comprehending all things, knew well what was best suited to the good of each one of his dear blood-bought little ones, therefore it seems it was fixed, ordained and appointed that it should be just that way. He knew well our depraved nature, the vanity of our hearts, and how easily we are puffed up with the leaven of unrighteousness, the works of the flesh, our own good deeds, credit to ourselves and earned blessings; so it seemed good and wise in the great disposer of all things that the dear elect of God, and chosen heirs of salvation, should be chosen in the furnace of affliction. Dear ones of the Master's fold, these are the real evidences of your heirship. If there had been no sea of Galilee, no ship upon it and no storm, the dear disciples could not have known the power of his ever-blessed words, but all were there appointed of God for that specific purpose. In order to demonstrate a certain prin-

ciple of faith and doctrine there was a doubting Thomas, absent when the dear risen Savior first appeared manifest to his disciples. So it seems to me that all these little intricate things are in the fixed purpose of our God, working to the end designed by him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. When I can see and feel it this way there is rest and peace in the Lord. The past year with me has been one of deep trials and anxieties of mind, with a cold, lifeless, rebellious heart. But one thing I know, there is but one deliverer, God, and he is my only hope; will he deliver, or must I sink down at last? It is said in the Scriptures, They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Sion, which cannot be moved. I pray for that faith, that real trust, that real waiting upon him, that which is of necessity. How easy it is to recognize all these blessed evidences in others as they are manifested, but not in ourselves. How sweetly and comfortingly we read these blessed evidences in the pages of life's book of others, while our own seem but a blurred or faintly written page. O that we could always remember the pattern, Jesus, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. We want to be like him, our example; if so, we must suffer with him. "O may his meekness be my guide, the pattern I pursue." May our faces be turned forward, forgetting the things that are behind, and we by faith press on in hope of a blessed immortality. What the new year holds for each of us will be made manifest as the days go by. May our faith be strengthened to lean upon his gracious promise, As thy day thy strength shall be. It has been true in the years past, it will be also in the years to come, for he is not slack concerning his promises.

I sincerely hope the dear, good writers will continue to fill the columns of the SIGNS as in the past, bringing cheer and comfort to our poor hearts, causing us to hope on. I sincerely hope all will feel in their hearts to write in kindness and love; no sarcasm, harsh or unkind words will ever avail or accomplish good, either in writing, preaching or conversing; it is of the flesh, of Satan, the evil one, chargeable to us, revealing our depraved nature (I speak from experience), and will bring deep sorrow to our own hearts. It is right to contend for the old landmarks, but it must be done in meekness, love and fear. Said the apostle, The servant must not strive, but be gentle, in meekness, &c. May the Lord remember us all in his mercy, to keep us in the way of peace and love. With all our conflicts and cares we have much to be thankful for.

My dear wife is much better than for many months, and I feel assured of her full recovery. Should we be spared until April 27th we shall have traveled life's journey together for fifty years—a true helpmeet indeed. How blessed to have such to share all the burdens and sorrows of this life. The privations and self-sacrifices that a poor preacher's faithful wife must make for the cause none can know but those who have traveled the road. My deepest sympathies go out toward them. Many are their lonely, trying hours. May the blessings of the Lord rest upon each one to comfort them in their loneliness and privations. We hope and pray the new year may bring greater prosperity to the SIGNS. The two past years, from a financial standpoint, have been depressing, from a failure of crops over a large area of the country. Many of its readers have been hard pressed for funds, but as sister

Runkle writes, I would rather sacrifice something else than do without the SIGNS. I have always found it much easier to keep even each year. It does seem but a small matter for each one to write you to whom you have sent statements, and I cannot understand why any one professing to be a Baptist, having grace in the heart, would neglect to do so. I have all sympathy for the poor, I have been all along the way, but a poor man can be just as honest as one with plenty. His hope of heaven does not depend upon what he does, but he wants to do right because it is right in the sight and fear of the Lord.

I have not written at all as I had thought, and much more, but I submit it to the editors.

I also inclose a letter from our beloved brother and fellow-laborer, Elder J. W. McClanahan, of West Virginia, which I believe will be read with interest. It was my privilege to meet this dear brother last fall in West Virginia and east Kentucky, and hear him preach the everlasting gospel, and there was no uncertain sound.

With love unfeigned to all of like precious faith, from the least of all,

P. W. SAWIN.

CHARLESTON, W. Va., Dec. 14, 1914.

ELDER P. W. SAWIN—HIGHLY ESTEEMED BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I received your good letter a few days ago, which I read and reread with delight, hoping that you might be spared and blessed with health to visit us when our next session of the Pocatalico Association convenes. We are not great in number, just a remnant according to the election of grace, but we are standing fast in the doctrine taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles, preaching the doctrine of unlimited predestination, election alone by the grace of God, and effectual calling of all that God the Father gave the Son in covenant contract before the world began. Upon these hinges the eternal destiny of the saints must hang, for whom he did foreknow (in the covenant) them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son; moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified. The apostle continues by saying, What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? Paul is speaking of the redemption of the chosen in Christ, the elect family, being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. The children of the covenant were subjects of redemption only, for they were the sons by gift. All thine are mine, and mine are thine. Jesus spoke these words that we might know that the right of redemption was in him. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me. All (the children of the covenant) that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me; and this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all (elect family) which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. My dear brother, how cheering is the thought of such a perfect work by the God-man, Mediator, who stepped in our law place and satisfied its every demand. It is said that God's people are a peculiar people, and surely they are, for they desire to know that they have been redeemed by the blood of Christ, and that they are children of God, and when this mortal life shall cease that

heaven is to be their home; then if one comes claiming to know all this we cannot fellowship such an one, for we have not so learned in the school of grace to have perfect knowledge, for we cannot know and hope both, so we must live by hope.

When I sat down to write you a few lines this morning it was on my mind to write what I think the seven locks of Samson's head woven in the web prefigured. Samson is a type of Christ, who is head over all things to the church. The seven locks of Samson's head are typical of the seven churches which John so beautifully addressed in Asia. The number seven being a complete number, is for all time, and is applicable to the churches of like precious faith among every nation, tongue and people. Woven in the web, is to fairly show the standing of God's people under the old covenant, all being completely woven in the web of transgression by the disobedience of Adam, and were by nature children of wrath, even as others. In their standing in Adam they are black; they are dead in trespasses and in sin, and cut off from all hope of attaining to righteousness by the deeds of the law, therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in God's sight, as all have become guilty before him. The locks of Samson's head cut off, represent God's people cut off from all hope under the old covenant. Howbeit the hair began to grow out again, representing the children of God of which Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, shall sit upon thrones, these being the chosen in Christ. Now, standing in the grace covenant, ordered in all things and sure, they are new creatures in Christ by regeneration; old things have passed away, behold, all things have become new. They now worship no more in the oldness of the letter, but in newness of spirit. The seven locks of Samson's head, to my mind, represent God's people in their ordinary generation, and under the covenant that was found faulty. The hair began to grow out again, representing the chosen in Christ by regeneration having passed from legal service, or law righteousness, to the glorious gospel of the Son of God, the antitype whom Samson so beautifully typified, and are now under the grace covenant, growing in spiritual knowledge of Christ, who is head over all things to the church. Jesus said that not a hair of your head shall perish. Again, Even the very hairs of your head (Christ) are all numbered. God's chosen people, no more, no less.

I am almost ashamed to send you this poor, imperfect letter, but feeling that you will cast the mantle of charity over my imperfections, I will send it to you to dispose of as you may think best.

I remain your brother in gospel bonds,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

LEBANON, Kans., Dec. 28, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel a desire to tell the writers, both editors and correspondents, that their communications are a very great comfort to me, as I am living alone, and this winter I am denied the privilege of meeting with the brethren and sisters in church capacity, for we are so scattered we cannot get together in bad weather. It is forty miles to our place of meeting, and for some of the members it is over one hundred miles for them to travel. But I would not wish to complain of my lot, as many brethren and sisters are where they cannot be at their meetings for months, and even for years.

I especially enjoyed reading Elder Chick's letters, I believe in Dec. 1st number, and there were others in the same number. Then in the December 15th number the letter written by brother Davis Burch was comforting to me. Brother Burch visited me at my home in Kansas some twenty years ago. But all of them are good reading, and when one begins to speak of special letters he knows not where to stop, for they are all good as long as they give God all the praise for the salvation of his people, without the help of poor, helpless men and women. "Which of you, by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?" Men cannot add to their height, how can they bring about the spiritual birth? It is impossible. But the question often comes up in my mind, Do I have any part or lot in His great salvation? Am I his, or am I not? I find myself much of the time out of that strait and narrow way; often I do that which I would not, and often I leave undone that which I should do, then if I could be enabled to use Paul's language and say (of a truth), It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me, it seems it would be a great comfort to me; but I fear this would be presumptuous, so I must stumble along a few more days, or years at most, and then leave the shores of this time world and go hence (and I still have a small hope,) to that eternal home of love, joy and praise to our God.

Yours in hope,

W. S. AYDELOTT.

WAVERLY, Pa., Nov. 12, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—You will find a letter inclosed from dear old sister Thurston. I think it is excellent, and it may be some one else might enjoy it, but use your own mind about publishing it. The SIGNS is most excellent. The editorials and communications generally are grand. I am more than pleased that you have Elder Lefferts with you. He is surely a Daniel, and can read the handwriting on the wall and interpret the dream spiritually to my comfort. I am perfectly suited with the editorials of both editors so far, and feel to bid you Godspeed. Cry aloud and spare not. In that day (gospel day) the great trumpet (gospel trumpet) shall be blown, and they shall come (not may come) which are ready to perish in the land of Assyria (bondage) and the outcasts in the land of Egypt (darkness or bondage); they shall come and worship the Lord in his holy mount at Jerusalem. Please write an editorial on this text some time.

Yours as ever, D. M. VAIL.

COLUMBUS JUNCTION, Iowa, June 28, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—I have a desire to answer your letter at this time. I was somewhat surprised when I received it, and if you received a crumb of comfort from mine give God all the glory, to whom all glory belongs. I am growing old, and my days are few and evil, but O I do love the dear old SIGNS, as there are so many good communications from the children of God in each number, and how I do try to thank the Lord for raising them up to be witnesses of his dear Son, who gave himself for our sins. He said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." "Behold, O God, our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed. For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." You spoke of your unworthiness. I think if we could see worthiness in ourselves we would not please the Lord. Did not

the Pharisee tell the truth when he said, I am not as other men; I pray twice a day, and fast often? The poor publican smote upon his breast and could not even look up to heaven; but the Lord said this poor man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. Do we not hear such talk as this on all sides of us? "Bow down thine ear, O Lord, hear me; for I am poor and needy." Yes, our help must all come from the Lord, we can do nothing of ourselves; but Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God."

I should have written you sooner, but have been very nervous, and am yet, but felt that I must just write a few lines. It may be the last, for I was seventy-five years old in May. My husband died three years ago, and I long to go home and be at rest.

"O land of rest, for thee I sigh!
When will the moment come,
When I shall lay my armor by,
And dwell with Christ at home?"

I do not dread death, it is only the shadow that frightens the soul. O happy thought, that I shall be free from sin and sorrow, pain and death through all eternity, there to praise his holy name and give glory to Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Your sister in hope of the resurrection,
REBECCA RINER THURSTON.

TRENTON, New Jersey.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I found this letter from sister Jenkins, and it contains a complete sermon, so will send it to you to do as you please with it. I have copied it for your convenience. It is old, but new.

Your unworthy sister,
(MRS.) JOHN HOUGH.

MIDDLETOWN, New York.

DEAR SISTER HOUGH:—My mind of late has been in a constant worry over some of His providences. If I am a redeemed subject of the Lord's mercy and grace, it has caused much serious thought. It has been no little cross to think of the change I have felt to make. I wish to do nothing hastily, but hope the Lord's guiding hand is leading and directing me in this as well as all the events of my life. This was our happy home nearly thirty years, where much of our lives were spent in receiving and ministering to many of the wants of the dear saints, who, I hope, ever found a glad welcome awaiting them in our quiet, restful home, and when these seasons are brought to mind, with their most pleasant associations, my poor aching heart feels a sadness you have never realized, and may the dear Lord in his goodness and loving protection keep you from tasting the experience, the bitterness of what the cup contains. I must believe that our God is a God of providence as well as of grace, and his purposes will all be accomplished in a way and manner that is for our best good and his own glory, although trials and temptations may come, bringing many sorrows, but the dear Lord knows what is needful, and will not give one more pain than is necessary for his little ones to suffer, and while he will not remove the trials that are to try them, he in his love and mercy will make a way of escape, that they may be enabled to bear them. His promise is, "My grace is sufficient for thee," and what a tower of strength. Those sweet, precious words have come to me when passing through deep affliction, but the truth of the promise has never failed, and I feel the assurance mine that it never will, and I hope I do bless his dear name, for his tender

mercies to me have truly been great. It rejoices my poor sinful heart to think our God is of one mind and changes not, and his promises are just as faithful and sure to us now as when they were spoken to the apostles while they were here on earth, and were left on record to bring comfort and joy to the heart of the dear tried saint.

The Lord has given us a precious gift in Elder Ker. Last Sunday he spoke to my comfort, also to many others. Of late I have been greatly grieved that I cannot retain more of the preached word. I hear, but bring nothing home, can recall no word of comfort as in former days, when a gospel sermon would nourish me for days. I ate it, it fed and built me up in the order of the Lord's house, and how sweet and precious was the food. There was then instruction and comfort in the truth preached, and I often wonder now why this change; surely it cannot be I am more in love with the world and its vanities, for I have felt lately in sympathy with the poet as he expressed it:

"I would not live alway,
I ask not to stay,
Where storm after storm
Rises dark o'er the way."

When you spoke of Elder Durand's text, in regard to the famine, I thought when reading some of your remarks that I hoped I knew something of what is meant in a spiritual sense to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and feel that I had a desire given to ask in much humbleness of soul, O, give me this day daily bread. All my little strength is gone; my supply must come alone by thee, who is the only source and fountain of all our comforts and joys in that heavenly kingdom wherein dwells righteousness and peace forever. It rejoices my heart to know that this rich and glorious food cannot be bought with such corruptible things as silver and gold, but is safely treasured up in the storehouse of our God, to nourish and feed the poor of the flock, who can plead no goodness of their own in the sight of the just and holy God, who has freely bestowed the rich gift of his love and grace to them through the blood and righteousness of their gracious and ever-living Redeemer, and O may we ever be found giving praise and honor unto his adorable name through time to eternity for the great love he has made manifest to us (as we hope) in so sacred and glorious a gift as that of his dear beloved Son, that we poor trembling sinners might live. When I can realize what a claim this is for one so sinful and distrustful as I am, it makes me fear lest I am trying to take and grasp a blessing that rightfully belongs to another more worthy of the sweet and gracious promise. I am truly glad this promise was left on record: "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."

Elder Ker spoke from Zech. viii. 3-6, and I wish you could have heard him. He said many good things. How beautifully he spoke of the old men and women dwelling in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age, and its meaning; also the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof, &c. He spoke of the aged as fathers and mothers in Israel, and the streets of the city or the Lord's house here in its militant state, but in the celestial or heavenly city there is only one street, and in that glorious city there are no old men and women, neither boys nor girls, but all are of one age, all given the one spirit, and not a diversity of spirits, therefore all are of the same age, and what a sweet oneness was presented to my mind of Christ

and his church, and his members being one with him. I cannot do him justice; he truly had great liberty given him. It was a sweet, sacred place listening to such a discourse. The whole body came up before me, no separation from those that had gone before; the one spirit unites us all while they were more happy, but not more secure.

CELINDA J. JENKINS.

TRENTON, N. J., Feb. 24, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Inclosed find a good letter from brother Lefferts, do with it as you see fit. I feel thankful that God has given us two such good editors; may you both be blessed for the comfort of his people.

Yours in fellowship,

OLIVIA NORRIS HELLINGS.

LEESBURG, Va., Feb. 20, 1915.

DEAR SISTER HELLINGS:—Your letter of the 14th is received, and were it not for kind words such as yours, and such sincere expressions of fellowship, I could not feel to go on in the arduous duty of writing for the SIGNS. I never used to feel that I had any gift for writing, and have never been much of a letter-writer until since I have been put on the staff of the SIGNS. If any one had told me a year ago that I to-day would be writing articles regularly for all of you to read, I would have said it was impossible. Even when Elder Ker and the publishers insisted that I take the place of associate editor, upon the death of Elder Chick, I told them I felt wholly unqualified, and that they would soon find they had picked the wrong man for such a place. I go along from day to day and from week to week thinking that they will soon find me out and ask me to resign, and I feel very willing to do so whenever they say the word. If you and others have ever been benefited by anything I have written, you know where all the praise belongs without my telling you, but it seems strange and mysterious to me that God should ever make use of me to feed his beloved sheep. Surely the Lord's ways are not ours. You speak very tenderly and lovingly of the ministry of Elder Purington. That is the way my parents always felt about him. He baptized both of them at Southampton in the year 1876, and he was very dear to them. I never remember to have ever seen or heard him. The twenty-third Psalm, of which you mention a part, is one of the most wonderful portions of Scripture in the whole Bible. My mother said that when she came out from among the New School Baptists and joined the Old School she met with much opposition and unkindness on the part of some of her own family, many of whom were members of the New School. They literally became her enemies when they found her determined to leave them religiously. At that time this portion of the twenty-third Psalm was much with her: "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." She felt that, like the Savior, she had meat to eat and bread to eat and water to drink that the world, even her own blood kin, her enemies knew nothing of. Scriptures, when they come home to us in this experimental way, do us wonderful good in a way. I see that in your letter you ask me to write on this subject. I may do so some time if my mind is ever led that way. I have several requests for articles on various texts and subjects, but, you know, I have no control over my own mind when it comes to writing on Scriptures, any more than when I try to preach about them, and am wholly dependent on the Lord to direct me as he sees fit. I only hope I may be kept from running before I am

sent, from expressing a view upon something that I know nothing about. I want to thank you very much for your kind letter just received. The goodness and fellowship of the brethren make me feel that I would love to serve them far better than I do. May the Lord preserve and guide you by his omnipotent grace, is my desire.

Yours in love of the truth,

H. H. LEFFERTS.

St. Joseph, Mo.

Dear Editors:—I herewith inclose three dollars to pay my subscription. I am sorry you had to wait so long for your pay, but am glad I can pay now, and if I live to the end of this payment I trust I may be able to renew, as I would regret very much not to get the Signs of the Times, which is so much comfort to me, a poor pilgrim here in this world of trials and tribulations. I am now nearly seventy-one years old, and I think of Jacob, the man that God loved before he was born. O that I could have strength and ability to say something that would comfort others as they have comforted me, but my health is very poor, and I have not been able to do anything for nearly a year. Sometimes I can walk around a little, but am little better, if any. The Lord knows, and I try to be reconciled to his will, but fall so far short of feeling thankful for all the blessings I have received in the long journey through this wilderness that I do not know what to say or how to say it. I think of Ezekiel: Can these dry bones live? Lord God, thou knowest. Sometimes I think of Jacob leaning on his staff, looking at the wagons coming after him and the little ones, and he exclaimed, It is enough. In like manner I, even I, feel to say it is enough. The Lord said, I leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, that shall trust in the name of the Lord. I am so poor that I do not know what to say, and often wonder if I really desire to say anything, as I am so destitute, and wonder if there is any one like me. I would give everything on earth if I could say one word or think one thought that would be acceptable with the God of all power and mercy.

I did not expect to try to write this much, but confess I do not know myself. I have great fellowship with the editors of the Signs and those who contribute to its columns.

Your brother, I humbly hope,

J. L. MINTER.

Avondale, Ala., April 27, 1915.

Dear Brethren:—Please say through the Signs, that in response to my notice of my afflictions in the Signs some time back I received between ten and twenty letters from brethren and sisters in various States, and some of them containing money, about sixteen dollars in all, I think, all of which I hope I appreciated with a thankful heart. I replied to most of these letters by postal, but could not reply to all. I am no better at this writing, but worse, I think. I can scarcely walk at all. Cannot lie on a bed to sleep, but have to sleep on an old chair. I am never easy, nor still, but a few moments at a time, unless I am asleep, and have to change positions every few minutes, both night and day. My daughter was at work, but is now laid off, so we have very little income. I am living a miserable, suffering, restless life, but have some few comforting moments from the promises of God. One has been, The eternal God is thy refuge. Another is, With God all things are possible. I wish I could write some of my exercises of mind, but I am too weak and nervous to attempt it, and have written this in great pain.

H. J. REDD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1915.

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EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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MATTHEW XVI. 24.

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

This language of Jesus was addressed to the disciples after Peter had rebuked him for saying he must suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed at Jerusalem. It seems that Peter had more to say than any of the disciples during the time Jesus was with them, not that he was naturally more forward, but some one of them had these things to say that precious truth and important lessons be taught them, and the lot fell upon Peter. He, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the purpose of God in Christ, said he should not suffer and be killed at Jerusalem, but Jesus rebuked him, calling him Satan, and commanded him to get behind him. This same command was given Satan in the wilderness for the same reason: that nothing should prevent the service of Jesus to the will of God. When before Pilate he said, I could even now call upon my Father and he would send legions of angels that I be not delivered unto the Jews, but then how could the Scriptures be fulfilled? It being the determinate counsel and according to the foreknowledge of God that he suffer and die, Satan with all his powers could not prevent it, nor could all the followers of Jesus stand in the way. Therefore, having come to give his life a ransom for his people, he would not "save his life," but rather offer it up, or lay it down, to save men from death. He denied himself when he left the heights above to come to earth and take upon himself the form of a servant; he humbled himself and became obedient even unto death. In all his life as a man he was humble, meek and lowly; was never boastful like Peter, never proud and scornful, nor ever other than the servant of his Father and brethren. He went about doing good, never evil in word, thought or deed. Therefore to the disciples he said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Herein is presented the doctrine of godliness, which means self-denial, and of self this is an utter impossibility. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," nor is it in self to deny self. Man by nature is exceedingly proud, and as boastful now as in the days of old when one said, Come see what great things I can do. To preach the inability of man to perform wonders and choose between good and evil is nothing short of foolishness to him who boasts that every man is a free moral agent.

Peter was honest and sincere when he said Jesus should not suffer and die at Jerusalem. He verily thought he could prevent it and would surely do so, but little did he know his own weakness and inability to perform the things he would. He had not as yet denied self, had not come to the place to know that without Jesus he could do nothing. Pilate could have had no power whatever against Jesus had it not been given him from above. Here is presented the sovereignty of God. Not only does he rule in heaven,

but among the inhabitants of the earth. He puts men up and pulls men down of all classes and nations, and while men verily believe that of themselves they are great, they are only being prepared and counseled of God to do what he would have them do. The man who says God cannot save a city without his help has not as yet denied self, hence is not a follower of Jesus, notwithstanding all his religious zeal. To deny self is "the cross" to be taken up. Man naturally loves the world and the things thereof; he naturally is inclined to gratify the lusts of the flesh and the pride of the eye, but to follow such inclinations means death to any child of God; we mean experimentally. Paul said to the church at Rome, Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God. This means a living death, ever crucifying the old man (flesh) with his affections and lusts. It means never to gratify the natural inclinations and propensities of the nature derived from Adam. Who is the man that of himself can do this? Not one in all the earth can be found. Yet this very thing is necessary in order that any of us be followers of Jesus. A man might gain many things, have all the pleasure and satisfaction this world can afford, but what is he profited if he lose his own soul? Another writer asks, What is a man advantaged if he gain the whole world and lose himself, or become a castaway? Here we understand what is meant by the word "soul" used by Matthew. None but a child of God can do this, for none know the exceeding sinfulness of sin except those born of God; these are the only ones who can lose themselves or become castaways. Considering, therefore, the great value of the house of God, the fellowship of saints, the confidence of the brethren, and most of all, the approval of God in one's conscience, what is the world with all its pleasure and satisfaction? Consider the life one must live to lay up treasures in heaven (church), and on the other hand what a slight step aside from the path of righteousness will forfeit all gained by him in all the years of self-denial—taking up his cross daily and following Jesus. Then what is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose himself?

To follow Jesus means that all fleshly desires, ambitions and aspirations be swallowed up in the will of God; that to do his will be our meat and drink. Life here seems too short to be spent other than to the praise and glory of God. If we profess faith in Christ Jesus it means that our backs are turned on the world and that we are seeking a city whose maker and builder is God. Yes, the very life of God's children is not excepted in their service to him. If one saves his life, that is, if he spares and protects his life at the sacrifice of the cause of Christ, he shall lose it, as "every branch that bringeth not forth fruit is cut off and cast into the fire." But if one lays down his life for the brethren or church he shall find it; in other words, live in the confidence and fellowship of the saints of God. All of the apostles sacrificed their lives in the service and for the cause of Christ. All were put to death, except John, for their faith and steadfastness in the precious doctrine of the Son of God. They saved not their lives—made no resistance, but rather willingly yielded, Paul saying, I am now ready to be offered; I have finished my course, I have kept the faith and have fought a good fight. Not one denied the faith, not one turned from the ways of God, no, not even in the face of death. All gave up their lives in triumphant faith to find life

eternal in the presence of God and the Lamb. So to follow Jesus means to be hated by the religious world, to be cut off from society, our names cast out as evil; to be reckoned as old fogies, behind the times, utterly ignored by all who claim to know God and are working for him in the salvation of sinners. Yes, even those of one's household are sometimes his or her foes. Husbands and wives are separated in this sense; children think their parents fools, and have not the slightest respect for their brethren in Christ when visiting their homes. All these things help to make up the cross we all have to take up if we follow Jesus, for such was his life. Before closing we want to say that both "the will" and "to do" in taking up the cross is of God. If therefore any man has the "will," he performs the service because the Lord says, "Let him," this being as much a command of God now as when he said in the beginning, "Let there be light," and light was.

We have written the above by request, and hope it may help in some little measure the one who asked us to write, as well as other readers of the SIGNS.

K.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

"WALK ABOUT ZION."

ELDER H. H. LEFFERTS—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I have been sick several days, and yesterday on awaking after a slight doze, these words came to me most forcibly: "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof."—Psalms xlviii. 12. The first clause is what especially impressed me, and lingers with me yet. I would be glad indeed if you felt like writing on the subject and have it published in the SIGNS. Hope the Lord will so direct you.

Yours unworthily,

NANNIE EDWARDS.

LA GRANGE, Georgia.

Zion was King David's city. The spiritual Zion, the church of God, is the city of King Jesus, the spiritual David. Zion was never fully and entirely delivered out of the hands of the Jebusites until King David's reign; the spiritual Zion, the church, was never delivered out of the hands of the devil until the successful and victorious outcome of the life and sufferings of King Jesus. David was not the man whom his fellow-Israelites would have chosen to reign over them, he was not Jesse's choice, nor the choice of any of his brethren; he was not Samuel's choice, certainly not Saul's choice. But being the chosen one of God, nothing could keep David out of the throne of Israel, and therein he finally sat, having triumphed over all his enemies. Jesus is not the man whom men naturally would choose as their leader, certainly not as their king. The nation of Israel cried against him, saying, "We will not have this man to rule over us." Even his own disciples, left to their own choice, would never have chosen him. He said to them, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Yet being the elect servant of God, and upheld by omnipotence, he, the spiritual David, triumphed over all the enemies of righteousness, and is set down in the throne of the church at the right hand of God. David of old owed his success to the fact that God was

with him, Jesus owed his success to the fact that he was God incarnate. Neither of them owed any man anything. Now, we need not think that Zion owed her attraction, her beauty, to the fact that she possessed a physical or outward splendor that dazzled the world. There can be no doubt that many cities of ancient times outranked Zion in material splendor. Rome and Athens surpassed Zion in outward splendor. Zion could not compare with them in magnificent buildings, luxurious living and works of art which remain even to this day the wonder of the world. No, not for any of these things was Zion noted. Her beauty was not in these. Her beauty rested mainly in the fact that she was the city of God, of the king whom God had chosen and exalted alone. Herein was observed the service of God as prescribed in the law of Moses; here were the priests ordained to their office by the ordinance of God. Here were the altars, and here the sacrifices were made. Here the solemn feasts of God were kept, his holy days observed, his fasts proclaimed. Outwardly, and to alien eyes, Zion might appear humble and mean as compared with the lavish magnificence of many heathen cities, but to the eyes of those that loved her, to the devoted Israelite, no city could compare with this, the Zion of God. So with the spiritual Zion, the church of Jesus Christ, her beauty is not outward or physical, but inward or spiritual. The church to worldly eyes has no attractions. Jesus, the head of the church, was not attractive to the world, how then can his body be? If he had no form, no comeliness, no beauty that men should desire him, is it then strange that the church should have no beauty with which to attract the world? Why should the body expect to possess an attractiveness which the head has not? Scattered over the entire world may be found many magnificent edifices called cathedrals, churches and so forth. No money has been spared in their erection, art has exhausted itself in furnishing their interiors. These do catch men, they attract the intellect and spur the imagination. But God is not there. Know ye not that the Almighty dwelleth not in temples made with hands, neither is worshipped with men's hands? The church has none of these attractions. Her beauty is one of soul, of heart, of mind; a beauty of the Spirit, of faith, hope and love. These things mean nothing to worldlings, but to the spiritually-minded, to the spiritually-circumcised in heart, they make Zion to appear the perfection of beauty. Those gifted with spiritual discernment see God shining out of her. We do not think the Spirit of truth in the forty-eighth Psalm is directing natural people to "walk about Zion." There would be no particular benefit to be derived by asking natural or worldly people to look at the Zion of God. They could not see it if they did look. All that would appear to them would be the merely literal part of it all. A dead man cannot walk. One dead in trespasses and in sins, never having been quickened into divine life, cannot see Zion, cannot see the church. Therefore, the command is directed to the spiritually alive to "walk about Zion." Only these would enjoy such a walk. They only could appreciate the beauties of the elect city of God. In walking about Zion, there are four particular things which the Spirit emphasizes as being especially significant. The situation of the city, as in verse two, we find the expression, "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King." The Zion of David was so

favorably situated naturally, protected by mountains and deep ravines, that it made it a difficult city for an enemy to take. It was a city well fitted to withstand severe attacks and long sieges. When Nebuchadnezzar came against it he reserved Zion, or Jerusalem, for his last assault, and it was only after subduing all the country round about Jerusalem that he finally overcame the city itself at the cost of a long siege, and would not have been able to do it then only that it was the purpose of God already made known by the prophets in Judah and Israel again and again that Jerusalem should go into captivity. This, and not any weakness in her barricades, is the real secret of Zion's defeat at the hands at Babylon—it was the will of God, and really it was God's will, and not Nebuchadnezzar's strategy, that overcame Zion's defenses. Rome tantalized this city for seventeen years, from 53 to 70 A. D., before she finally overcame it and dispersed its citizens throughout the world. The favorable situation of the Zion of David fittingly typifies the situation of the Zion of Jesus, with this essential difference: whereas the enemies of David's Zion had hard work to take it, yet they did at times succeed, nevertheless the gates of hell shall never prevail against the Zion of Jesus. The situation of the church is upon the rock Christ Jesus; not upon rocks, as being many, but upon the Rock, which is one. Also, she is called "Mount" Zion. A mount is an elevation above the surrounding country. Thus it is that the church is elevated by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, above the world. She is risen with Christ. How then can her enemies get at her, when she is raised infinitely above them, immune from all their fiery darts and cunning craftiness? Zion is situated in the election which God made in Christ before the world began. Could anything be more safe or more beautiful? God's predestination wraps her about and pervades her being. His adoption of children by Christ Jesus unto himself makes her manifestly his. Therefore, located in election, in predestination, in effectual calling, justified by Christ's resurrection and glorified in his second coming, well might the psalmist say, "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion." The church is the "joy of the whole earth," because she is the rejoicing of every heaven-born soul throughout the world, wherever God has his people, in every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue. She is "on the sides of the north," or as Isaiah says, "in the sides of the north." The word "north" is the Hebrew word *tsaphon*, meaning hidden, or unknown. So Zion's situation is not so much in that corner of the earth called north as it is in the secret or hidden things of God. She is situated in a mystery, something that is hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. The Lord knows them that are his, but no one else can point them out. They are hidden to him, but not from him. The situation of the church is assuredly wonderful and beautiful when one has been given faith to survey it. Again, in this Psalm the writer emphasizes the towers, saying, "Tell the towers thereof." History tells us that there were sixty towers upon the walls of Zion, David's city. Into these towers the watchmen climbed to survey the outlying country, as well as to survey all that lay within the walls, so that they were enabled to give the cry of alarm whenever they saw anything that threatened danger to the inhabitants. Not only did they alarm the city in case of danger, but cried, "All's well," when

no danger threatened. It was as much their duty to cry comfortable things to the city as to cry warnings when warnings were needed; but it would have been a traitor indeed that would have continued to cry, "Peace, peace," when he very well knew there was no peace. So, on the walls of Zion, spiritually, Jesus places his watchmen in the towers to keep the inhabitants advised as to the state of things. These watchmen say to them, Your iniquity is pardoned, your warfare is accomplished, you have received at the Lord's hand double for all your sins, and they also say, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." These watchmen must be elevated above the level of the people in order to thus encourage and warn them; they cannot fulfill their office as watchmen so long as they are not in the towers. In other words, one must see things from the viewpoint of faith, and not from the viewpoint of one's own mind or reason, if he is to minister to the people of God. It is when the servant of God ascends, or is caught up into the tower of faith, that he is able to benefit the inhabitants. We have heard it said that one cannot preach to the comfort of the Lord's people unless he be tried and tempest-tossed as they are, unless he lives on a level with them. We do not dispute this, but it is just as essential that he be able to look at all these trials and tossings from the standpoint of faith that he be thereby able to interpret them and fit them into the exposition of the truth rightly divided. The mere recital of trials and afflictions is not preaching, but showing what these things mean and wherein they accord with the revelation of Christ in the testimony of the Scriptures, is preaching. Therefore, the watchmen must ascend into the tower of faith, or of hope, or of love, and must get above the heads, that is, above the intelligence of men, if his ministry is to be vitalized with power to the edification and instruction as well as to the admonition of the church.

A third thing emphasized in this forty-eighth Psalm with reference to Zion is, "Mark ye well her bulwarks." The bulwarks of the church are the wills and the shalls of Jehovah, which cannot be altered nor gainsaid. The Lord says, They shall do this, I will do that, I will not do this, They shall not do that. I will be their God, they shall be my people. These declarations of the mighty God, who is of one mind and none can turn him, who is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, are the bulwarks which make the church impregnable to all the assaults of the devil. The salvation of God, which is by grace through his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the great wall of the church. This wall reaches from the deepest depths to the highest heights. It goes down to, through hell, and below it, so that the devil cannot undermine it. It goes up into the heights of heaven, so that the highest intelligence or greatest power and skill of man cannot scale it. It is so compactly cemented, or welded, together that no breach can be made through it. This is the salvation which Jesus finished and perfected, and which is by grace, and not of works. This salvation is founded and embraced in the impregnable wills and shalls of God, the mighty bulwarks of the Zion of God.

A fourth thing which the psalmist notes about Zion is, "Consider her palaces." Now, a palace is the residence of royalty, the home of a king. This Zion of God is truly unique, for in it are no huts, no

hovels, no slums, no filth, but all palaces. Each palace is a sinner of Adam's fallen race who has been redeemed and made clean in the blood of the Lamb, and having been translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's Son is a residence of the King. Jesus lives in that one, there his honor and glory dwell. When the Lord comes with ten thousand of his saints he comes to be admired in all them that believe. Here is where we see Jesus and admire him: in our brethren. Each member of the body of Christ, or of the church, is a palace, for each one is the abode of the Spirit of Christ. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" These palaces in Zion are worth considering, for you may talk all you please about the wonders of nature, about the miracles of the changing seasons, and so on, but above all the wonders on the land, in the sea, or in the air, there is no miracle to compare with that of a sinner saved by grace. It is the continual amazing wonder of the angels of God, and the unceasing theme of the songs of the redeemed throughout all eternity. These palaces are God's "workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

Lastly, the psalmist concludes his "walk about Zion" with this: "That ye may tell it to the generation following." Mind you, the word "generation" is singular, not plural. There are many generations of men, but only one generation of Jesus Christ. It is the generation of Jesus Christ that is to be told these things, and not the generations of men. This generation of Jesus Christ, which runs like a thread of gold through all the ages, has always been, and is now, following the truth, following Zion. It does not mean to tell these things to the generations coming after or following us, but to the one generation of God, which is ever following, not men, but the truth as it is in Jesus. These have an ear and an understanding to hear these things, and to them they are to be told. The one inquiring the way to Zion says, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon." Such inquirer shows evidence by her very ability to inquire, that she is of the generation of Jesus Christ. To this one following comes the answer: "If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents."

L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Sarah Potts Lefferts departed this life at the home of her son, Henry T. Lefferts, in Nutley, N. J., April 15th, 1915, of arteritis. She was born Dec. 25th, 1842, in the vicinity of Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa. She was a daughter of Elizabeth Potts and John Leedom, being one of ten children, four girls and six boys, one girl and two boys dying in infancy. She is survived by one brother, George M. Leedom, of Trenton, N. J., and one sister, Mrs. Mary Tomlinson, of Wilmington, Del., both of whom are members of the Southampton Baptist Church. She was married to George W. Lefferts, at Southampton, Jan. 1st, 1862. They had three sons and one daughter. The eldest son, Howard L., died in 1898, in Philadelphia, leaving a widow and two children, who still survive him. Two sons, Henry T. Lefferts, of Nutley, N. J., and Elder Horace H. Lefferts, of Leesburg, Va., and one daughter, Mrs. Edward F. Rounds, of Warwick, N. Y., survive their mother. She also has ten grandchildren living. She was baptized, together with her husband, by Elder Wm. J. Purington, at Southampton, in 1876. She had been received several years before into the New School Baptist Church at Davisville, but lost all fellowship for that body, and was led to see that her immersion with them was not gospel baptism. She was for many years a member at Southampton, until her daughter moved to Warwick, N. Y., when she went to make her home with her, and took her letter to the Warwick Church, where she was a member at the time of her death.

During all the many years of her membership at Southampton she was held in the highest and most affectionate esteem, not only by the church, but by all who knew her. To the church she was so dear, and was so helpful, and so valuable, and so depended on, that it was with great sorrow and sense of loss that we parted with her when she went to Warwick, at the same time knowing that there was no real separation. While we knew that she had a very special love for this, her home church, we also knew that she had a strong and deep love for the church, wherever it might be located. One of her specially favorite hymns was, "I love thy kingdom, Lord," &c. She was a member when I began serving this church, over thirty years ago, and I could not tell how helpful she was to me. She could but seek first the things of the church and kingdom of God, for they were first in her soul. She loved to be in the meetings of the church, and enjoyed being about the meetinghouse, doing anything she could for the church and brethren. She was remarkably clear and strong in doctrine, and she loved to sing, but wanted to sing only the hymns that expressed the plain, sweet truth of God. We loved to hear her sweet voice singing songs of praise in our meetings, and far more the sweet, spiritual voice telling of the wonders of God in his dealings with her. She was truly a mother in Israel, a support and strength to all of the church. She said she had such a happy time in her mind all through her last illness. The presence of the Lord had been sweetly manifested to her in several ways. Many hymns and portions of Scripture had been comfortingly with her. She asked that the words, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" be used at the funeral, and she mentioned a day or two before she passed away the verse commencing, "Jesus can make a dying bed feel soft as downy pillows are." She said she had often read and sung that hymn, but now in her last illness had come to experience the full truth of it. She passed away quietly, as one falling asleep.

The funeral service was conducted in Nutley on Friday, April 16th, by Elder John McConnell, of New York, and in the Methodist meetinghouse of Somerton, Pa., Saturday morning, April 17th, by her pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, of Middletown, N. Y., who preached from the text she had wanted used: 1 Cor. xv. 55-57, greatly to the comfort of the hearers, followed briefly by myself, her former pastor. The immediate relatives are deep mourners, and so indeed are all the church and friends, but also we have reason to praise the Lord with thankfulness for such a life, and such a manifestation of grace, and such a triumphant departure. Burial in Wm. Pane Cemetery, Somerton, Pa.

I have prepared this notice by the request of the bereaved family. I mourn with them, and rejoice with them, and pray the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ may be with them, and especially with our dear brother Horace, supporting him in his work and labor of love.

SILAS H. DURAND.

William David Layton departed this life at the home of his son, Lee R. Layton, in Des Moines, Iowa, Dec. 18th, 1914. He was born Oct. 3rd, 1835, in Danville, Ill., being 79 years old at the time of his death. He was married to Miss Semtisa Bailey, at Monroe, Wis., in 1855. By that union five children were born. His wife died many years ago. Those left to mourn their loss are Lee R. Layton, of Des Moines, Iowa, Alonzo H., of Denver, Colo., Mrs. Charles Cline, of Plattsmouth, Nebr., and Mrs. Nora Hackenbury, of Cedar Creek, Nebr., also several grandchildren. He enlisted July 15th, 1864, Co. G, 31st Wis. Infantry. He moved to Hampton, Iowa, in 1875, and later to Des Moines, and made his home with his son. He united with Honey Creek Church of Old School Baptists during the sixties, at Monroe, Wis., and was baptized by Elder John Butler. He united with the West Fork Church by letter in November, 1875, and died in the faith.

His remains were brought here. Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. S. Coffin in the Memorial Hall, and interment was in the Hampton Cemetery.

ALSO,

Henry D. Brown departed this life March 7th, 1915, at his home in Hampton, Iowa, aged 72 years, 9 months and 3 days. He had been in feeble health for a number of years, but was able to be around town the early part of the winter, when he was taken sick, and for nearly three months was mostly confined to his bed, his death resulting from a complication of diseases. He was born in the town of Wayne, Lafayette Co., Wis., June 4th, 1842, where he lived until arriving at man's estate. He served nearly four years during the civil war in Co. D, 12th Illinois Cavalry. August 3rd, 1865, he was united in marriage to Miss Nancy L. Norton. By that union six children were born, three of whom died in infancy. He leaves to mourn their loss a devoted wife and three children: Caryle D., of Omaha, Nebr., Mrs. F. J. Balwin, of Hay Springs, Nebr., and Mrs. B. E. Ray, of Hampton, Iowa, also eight grandchildren. Deceased became a resident of Hampton, Iowa, in 1869, where he had since resided, with the exception of five years spent in Nebraska, during which time he followed the avocation of a farmer, salesman and carpenter. He united with the West Fork Church of Old School Baptists in July, 1879, and was baptized by Elder E. H. Gillett, and died in the faith. He was also an active member of the Hampton G. A. R.

The funeral was conducted by Dr. Dewitt Clinton from the home, and interment took place in the

Hampton Cemetery. Deceased was a brother-in-law of the writer, and was a kind husband and father and a good neighbor, respected by all who knew him. May the God of grace sustain the mother and children, is the humble prayer of the writer.

E. A. NORTON.

Fannie M. Muir was born in Delaware Co., N. Y., April 17th, 1848, and died July 13th, 1912, aged 64 years, 2 months and 26 days. She was the daughter of David and Mary A. Scudder. On Feb. 10th, 1874, she was united in marriage to Henry D. Muir, of Andes, N. Y., who departed this life Sept. 27th, 1910. One daughter, Mrs. Edwin S. Bennett, of Painted Post, survives, also five sisters and three brothers, as follows: Mrs. C. F. Stull, Mrs. Augustus Vermilya, Mrs. F. E. Owen, Mrs. C. P. Spalding, Mrs. F. G. Newell, Gilbert D. Scudder, of Coopers, N. Y., Monroe Scudder, of Painted Post, and Nelson Scudder, of this place. Mrs. Muir was a member of the United Evangelical denomination, of Grover, Pa., having confessed her faith in God in early womanhood.

The funeral service was conducted at her late home in Grover on Monday afternoon at 2 o'clock, by Mr. H. D. Hill.

William Henry Weeks, of Gardiner, Maine, departed this life April 10th, 1915, aged 65 years and 14 days. He was united in marriage to Abigal Peacock Dec. 30th, 1882. His wife, sister Abbie, died May 24th, 1913. They had one son born to them, who survives them to mourn his loss. Our brother professed his hope in Jesus Christ for salvation and united with the church at South Gardiner, Maine. He was baptized by Elder Z. M. Beal Sept. 19th, 1896. Our dear brother, who was well known in the city where he lived, and the surrounding country, will be much missed, and the little company composing the church of which he was a member will greatly miss him. He loved to hear the gospel preached, and was never absent from the assemblies of the church of God, and in every practical way in his power he declared his attachment to the Zion of our God. He was particularly sympathetic and kindly in heart to all who were in any trouble, and tried in word and acts to cheer up their lives. How often we have heard him tell how his soul was encouraged and comforted and made to rejoice in his first hearing the gospel preached by Elder Hiram Campbell. Our brother about seven weeks before his death was stricken with paralysis, and this increased until he was altogether helpless, but he retained his faculties until the end. He knew he would not recover from the stroke, and was resigned to the will of our heavenly Father.

At his funeral the writer preached from the words: "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness."—Isaiah lvii. 1, 2. His body rests in the cemetery beside the remains of his beloved wife, there to await the resurrection of the just at the last day, when the Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ, shall descend from heaven with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

Mary Margaret Coons Morgan was born in Johnson Co., Ind., Jan. 12th, 1841, and emigrated with her parents to Iowa in 1853. She was married to Levi J. Morgan Feb. 27th, 1862. To that union six children were born, two dying in infancy. Three daughters and one son remain, all married: Frances E. Emberson, Henry N. Morgan, Phebe J. Maddox and Ida A. Maddox. She was also foster mother of an adopted son, Herman R. Morgan. With her husband she moved to Kansas in 1873. She received a hope in the Lord Jesus and was baptized in the fellowship of Liberty Predestinarian Baptist Church by Elder Joseph Brown on the second Sunday in November, 1883. With her husband she moved to Oklahoma in the spring of 1895, united with Ebenezer Church, now in Alfalfa County, December, 1901, and died in Ingersoll, Okla., April 8th, 1915. Besides her sorrowing husband, brother L. J. Morgan, and her children, she leaves twenty grandchildren and fourteen great-grandchildren. The writer of this notice had been acquainted with sister Morgan for more than fourteen years, and can bear testimony of her sterling qualities as wife, mother, friend and believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. In saying this I do not mean to imitate the sayings of those who contribute praise to the dead, but to mention real worth demonstrated in all her family of children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. As a proof of the love and esteem her memory is held sacred, all who know her adopted son feel certain that no outward sign exists in the family gatherings to show that he is not a born son. Our sister was a great sufferer, supposed to be afflicted with cancer of the liver. I reached her bedside, after traveling two hundred miles, about thirty-six hours before she died. When not under the influence of opiates she was sensible of her surroundings, firm in the doctrine of the grace of God. She called for me and expressed her confidence in her Savior. In her great suffering she said the Lord was merciful. I asked her if she desired me to pray with her, and she said yes. I then petitioned the Lord in her behalf, which seemed to cheer her last hours.

On April 10th I used as a text, "Be still and know that I am God," to a very attentive audience, after which her body was lowered in the tomb to sleep until Jesus comes. J. F. BEEMAN.

Elder Mitchel L. Jackson departed this life March 31st, 1915, aged 79 years. He had been a member of Little Cedar Primitive Baptist Church of Nora Springs, Iowa, for about forty years, and pastor of the same twenty-three years. Prior to taking up the cross of the ministry he lost five dear children, the last one to go receiving his promise to preach the gospel of Christ in discharge of his duty, which he did in a loving and faithful way. Feb. 22nd, 1904, his wife passed away. In 1905 he was married to sister Ellen A. Bishop, who is left to mourn, with his church and three grandchildren. For the last three years he resided in Glendale, Cal. His remains were laid in Forest Lawn Cemetery at his request. The writer was with him in his last hours, and heard him proclaim salvation by grace. Let me say to his kinsmen in the flesh and in Christ, he was perfectly resigned to his death, or sleep in Jesus, let us say with Jesus. He is not dead, but lives in Christ our Savior, who has by his death conquered death, that is, by his resurrection from the tomb. Our loss is his gain, for he looked for an house that has foundations, whose maker and builder is God. His sorrows are over, nor would we wish him back, but may we with David say, By the grace of God we can go to him, where parting is no more.

Submitted in love and much fear.

W. T. HENDERSON.

Mrs. M. Ida Vermilya died Oct. 11th, 1914, of dropsy and heart trouble. She had been a great sufferer for the past thirty-three years, but was never heard to murmur, always of a cheerful disposition, believing that "He doeth all things well." She united with the Disciple denomination at Grover in her early girlhood, but later, at the age of twenty-one, she with her husband united with the Baptists at the same place. She was the eldest daughter of D. W. and Martha Webster, of Beech Flats, her mother having died in 1895 and her father in the spring of 1914. The greater part of her life was spent in Grover until the last few years, when she lived in Towanda and Mansfield. She died at the age of 63 years, 7 months and 13 days. She leaves to mourn their loss her husband, Geo. W. Vermilya, and one daughter, Mrs. Geo. W. Hager. Truly we can say our loss is her gain.

The funeral was held at the home at Powers Corners, Tuesday, Oct. 13th, at 10 o'clock. Mr. F. E. Eden, the Baptist minister of Mansfield, officiated, taking his text from the ninetieth Psalm. Singing by Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Robbins. She was laid at rest in the Turner Cemetery, between Canton and Grover.

MEETINGS.

THE next session of the Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, Baltimore city, Md., to begin on Wednesday, May 19th, 1915, and continue three days. This association believes in the doctrine of predestination, election, effectual calling, the future resurrection of the dead and the general judgment, and invites all of like precious faith to meet with us at the time and place above mentioned. Those who come to the city on Tuesday p. m. will go to the meetinghouse, Madison St., east of Calvert St., which will be open from 2 to 6 p. m., where friends will be met and cared for. Those coming Wednesday a. m. go direct to the meetinghouse from Union Station, Pennsylvania R. R., take any car going south on Charles St. and get off at Calvert and Madison Sts., From Camden Station, B. & O. R. R., take car marked St. Paul St. and get off at same place. From Mt. Royal Station, B. & O. R. R., walk two blocks east to Charles St. and go as directed from Union Station.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Delaware Association will be held with the Bryn Zion Church, near Kenton, Kent Co., Del., on May 26th, 27th and 28th, 1915. A cordial invitation to all of our faith and order is herewith extended; ministering brethren are invited to come. All trains from both north and south arriving at Clayton, Del., any time after noon on Tuesday, May 25th, will be met. The evening trains also will be met and friends directed to places of entertainment. Any coming other than as above inquire for the home of James D. Wright, in Clayton, Del.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Moderator.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Southampton Church, at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the first Sunday in June (2nd, 3rd and 4th), 1915.

Those coming to the Delaware River Association from the north will take the train at New Hope, on the Reading Railroad, for Ivyland, Tuesday afternoon, June 2nd, where they will be met and cared for. Inquire for Wm. Hobensack. Those coming from the south and east will take the train at Reading Terminal, Philadelphia, at 4:23 Tuesday afternoon and come to Southampton, where they will be met. SILAS H. DURAND.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Warwick Church, at Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (9th, 10th and 11th), 1915.

THE Bethel Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will hold their regular annual three days meeting commencing on Friday 10 a. m. before the third Sunday in June (18th), 1915. Stop off at Albany, take Lebanon branch, stop at Tallman. Several trains daily. Lovers of truth invited.

A. HORNER, Church Clerk.

WATERLOO, Oregon.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Liberty Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, of Los Angeles, Cal., meets every first and third Sunday in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., at 42nd and Moneta Ave., and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal.

W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor.

C. B. RICE, Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 83. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1915. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HABAKKUK II. 2, 3.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been requested by brother J. J. Clark, of Lambert, Okla., to give my views on the above Scripture through the SIGNS. I have written to him that I did not feel I had any light on the texts cited, but since writing to him I have been reading two or three chapters of Habakkuk, and though the vision spoken of in the texts is not clear to my mind, I thought that I had some suggestions on the context in the first and second chapters which might lead his mind, as well as others, to the fact that this Scripture sets forth the independence and omnipotence of God as touching all creatures and things that ever existed, that now exist, or that shall ever exist. The burden of Habakkuk seems to be the violence of the wicked. He complains unto the Lord of his burden, and as though the Lord would not hear. He cried unto the Lord to be delivered from seeing that violence, and from being entangled in the consequences of it. Wrong judgment, too, was used to favor the schemes of the wicked, which gave them advantage over the righteous. It seems the Lord answered the prophet that those among the heathen called "ye" (I suppose some scattered "strangers" looking for better days) shall wonder marvelously, because in their days the Lord shall work a work which they shall not believe, though it be told them. I suppose the mere telling has no effect on their belief, or that will make them believe. This accords with other testimonies that reading or hearing read the testimony of the word of God, or telling publicly what the Scriptures say, by ministers, will not give faith, nor cause dead sinners to believe on the Son of God. For the written word to be effective, some evidence, positive evidence, tangible to their understanding, must come to them before they can believe these marvelous things, or wonder-working of the Lord Jehovah. It seems clear that the Lord in speaking of his marvelous work among the nations gives his reason for this remnant to wonder at his power. He says: "For, lo, I will raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwelling places that are not theirs." In olden time the Chaldeans were a nation of power. This may de-

note any powerful nation of its day that goes forth to conquer. This power is represented as "terrible and dreadful." Their great speed is remarkable, horses swifter than the leopards, more fierce than the evening wolves, and "they shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat." This may prefigure the kind of warfare in the present age. The swift horses today are their motors, submarines and torpedoes. Their flying machines are like the eagle in his hasty flight after his prey. What is their coming for? "All for violence." What shall they gather up? "The captivity as the sand." This would imply that the captives shall be numerous, like sand. It appears that they shall be complete conquerors, for "they shall scoff at the kings, and the princes shall be a scorn unto them." This great power having boasted of himself and of his own power, shall have his mind changed, so that he shall be an offender, perhaps greater than ever, from the fact that he is now claiming his great power over the nations as coming from his god. Now that god of his is no better than the one he has made out of wood, stone or metal. It may be a god of his own imagery, or of his own imagination, dead to all emotions, exertions or instincts. Here is greater violence than in the destruction of nations: to attribute his power to inanimate matter, or to superstitious thoughts, idolatry. The prophet now speaks to God, viewing, as it were, this great king or power of earth, who is the full essence of wickedness: "Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die." We are preserved, for far above this great nation, or earthly power, is the supreme God in whom the prophet trusted. Hear again the everlasting truth from the lips of the prophet in his prayer to God: "O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction." Is it possible that the almighty God has ordained the wicked for judgment? This does not accord with the teaching of men. Human reason dictates that this would make God the author of sin: to say that God in any way whatever ordained the wicked to be, whether for their own judgment, or for to bring judgment against God's people. This also is in the burden which the prophet did see. It accords with other prophecy going before, as, "That thou shouldest be to lay waste fenced cities into ruinous heaps." These things in olden time were for the judgment of God's people, and for their correction. The things which seemed to be against them were for them. The wicked were God's sword for the correction of the chosen people. The prophet complains before the Lord, contrasting the minor sins of Israel against the greater sins of the heathen, wondering why the Lord cannot look upon iniquity in Israel, yet he looketh upon the heathen who deal treacherously, and "holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man who is more righteous than he? And makest men as the fishes of the sea, as the creeping things, that have no ruler over them? They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag: therefore they rejoice and are glad. Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous." The net and the drag of the wicked are their instruments to get gain, so that they bring their worship at the feet of these in sacrifice and burnt offerings. Again the prophet brings complaint by asking

the Lord, "Shall they therefore empty their net, and not spare continually to slay the nations?" The prophet in waiting for an answer from the Lord says, "I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and I will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved." The prophet had been so inquisitive that he expected to be reproved for his audacity in questioning God for dealing so liberally with the wicked.

Coming now to the text on which my brother wants my views: chapter two, second and third verses, which read: "The Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." Writing the vision upon tables is like making indentures in rock, even the flinty rock, and implies the plainness and the durability of the writing, as well as the certainty that the vision will be fulfilled. The writing is so clear and plain that there is no excuse for a passerby to omit reading of it, though he be on a run while passing. What that vision testifies to is not made known by the prophet. The vision extends to future time, a set time, "an appointed time," by the Lord. It shall be clearly manifested at the end, for then "it shall speak, and not lie." This shows that it is firmly established, like all the absolute decrees of Almighty God. "Though it tarry, wait for it." To mortals many of the providences of God seem to tarry, slow coming, and the many pleasant changes that they are expecting come too slow for their patience. Those who are anxiously looking for the appearing of the Lord in his providence or in his grace are commanded to "wait." Waiting is one of the characteristics of God's people, and the command to "wait" is addressed only to those who know the "joyful sound." If there be any who claim an interest in the mercy of the Lord, and do not have a feeling sense to wait patiently for the Lord, then such ones are not fully equipped in the grace of the Lord Jesus. The Lord's people everywhere in the Scriptures are set forth as a waiting people. None can fully trust in the Lord without feeling that they must wait the pleasure of the Lord to bring relief. They cannot exercise faith at pleasure, but must wait for the God-given faith to exercise them. Jacob said, "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord."—Gen. xlix. 18. David said, "Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed." And, "On thee do I wait all the day."—Psalms xxv. 3, 5. "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord."—Psalms xxvii. 14. "Our soul waiteth for the Lord; he is our help and our shield."—Psalms xxxiii. 20. And, "I will wait on thy name; for it is good before the saints."—Psalms lii. 9. "Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation." And, "My soul, wait thou only upon God: for my expectation is from him."—Psalms lxii. 1, 5. They that wait on the Lord are they who trust in the Lord; they shall be strong, yea, strong in the faith of God's elect. "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary, and they shall walk, and not faint."—Isaiah xl. 31. Having cited a number of Scriptures showing the trust of God's people in waiting on the Lord and for the Lord, I have not exhausted the testimony on that point, but

very many more places speak of the greatness of being able to wait on the Lord for salvation and all the blessings of this life. In direct opposition to this vast array of testimony the self-conceited Arminian says, It will not do to wait for the Lord to save you, for if you wait for him you never will be saved. O vile men, the Lord shall have you in derision, and your wrath shall praise him, and the wrath that you would still further bring out shall be restrained. God is not slack concerning his promise as some men count slackness. He is not willing that any of his elect shall perish, but, on the other hand, he is willing that every elect vessel of mercy shall be saved from destruction. The scope of all the saints embraces the "times" which are in the Father's hand. The elect is developed in all ages of this natural world, hence the Lord knows all things that are necessary to come to pass, that "all fullness" may dwell in the preserved and redeemed Zion. This agrees with prophecy that the Almighty did not only see all things before the world was that shall come to pass, but declared the end from the beginning, and declared from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Reading so much about the greatness of our God, can we, dare we deny the omnipotence of the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ?

In speaking further of the vision, it is not clear to my mind that the speaking of it (for the vision shall speak) means anything as touching the conditions and positions of the nations of the earth, though it does point to a certain age of the world, as it "is yet for an appointed time." That may mean all the gospel day. That it has an end, and that end shall be in the gospel day, seems certain, for, "But at the end it shall speak, and not lie." I am so ignorant as to believe that the gospel day is the last dispensation appointed for the children of men, and that it shall suddenly come to an end. This is not dreadful for the saints to consider, for when He who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory. It is also certain that then we which are alive and remain after the resurrection of the saints, shall be changed in a moment, and be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

The fourth verse seems to be connected with the subject, and begins with, "Behold," meaning, give attention, look at the important things which this vision teaches: "His soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith." It seems to call attention to the importance of self-righteousness standing on one side and the righteousness of God by faith on the other side. The apostle, in discussing the way of salvation, says that boasting is excluded by the law of faith. This law of faith stands to the very opposite of the law of works. He does not cite his own judgment alone upon this very important doctrine, but refers to the testimony of the prophets that he is right, saying, "As it is written, The just shall live by faith." —Romans i. 17. He also refers to the same testimony in Gal. iii. 10, and Heb. x. 38. Those that believe in the Lord Jesus know that faith is the gift of God, but unbelievers talk much about faith, and are just as unbelieving in regard to the coming of faith as they are in all

things pertaining to the kingdom of grace.

It seems at the conclusion of my efforts to show something profitable on the Scripture mentioned that I have failed. I admit that much spoken of seems dark and obscure. I leave this at your disposal.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., March 14, 1915.

MATTHEW XIX. 28.

"AND Jesus said unto them [the apostles], Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

These words were in answer to Peter's question as to what they were to receive for following him, forsaking all else. The apostles believed in God, believed what the Scriptures declared, for the New Testament had not been written; they were looking for the King who should reign in righteousness. Andrew, an apostle, found Simon Peter, his brother, and saith unto him, "We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ." Not only the apostles, but the woman at Jacob's well, gave testimony that she also looked for the coming of Christ, who is the Messias, and he would tell them all things. Herod, the king, when he heard of the birth of the King of the Jews, sent wise men to search the young child and come and tell him where he was. All goes to prove that there is in the world a belief somewhat of what the Scriptures declare. Even the natural men believe the Bible, and what is recorded as a matter of history, but it was a vastly different kind of belief that the apostles had. Jesus spake to them, and his words were spirit and life to them; there was power in his words to them that permeated and filled their whole being. Never man spake as Jesus spake. The apostles asked the Savior many questions; they were questions that arose in their minds because of the things he told them as they followed him. It seems to me I have seen the apostles following him around and listening to his words. Two of his disciples heard John the Baptist declare that Jesus was the Lamb of God, and they followed Jesus. The day following Jesus found Philip, and Philip findeth Nathaniel, and said unto him, We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write. It seems that these men followed Jesus by the same faith that his people follow him to-day, because there was a drawing power that moved them to follow him. In the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew we have there recorded the sayings of Jesus to the disciples concerning the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem, and they asked him, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and the end of the world?" His answer embraces the twenty-fourth and the twenty-fifth chapters, which tell of his coming and the end of the world. There are those in the world to-day who believe this as Herod believed, that Jesus was King of the Jews, for if Herod had not believed that Jesus was King of the Jews, he never would have sought so earnestly to slay him, and in his zeal he gave orders to slay every male child two years old and under that was in Bethlehem, and all the coasts thereof. So a mere declaration that we believe because it is in the Bible would not constitute a true believer wrought upon by the Holy Ghost, for it is the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, that takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us. Jesus spake these things

unto his disciples, and said unto them, "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: and ye [the apostles] shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning."

Now to the text. "Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory." "Ye which have followed me," were the apostles. There were twelve present with Jesus at the passover supper; Judas Iscariot betrayed the Savior and fell by transgression. After the resurrection of Jesus the eleven were assembled together and Jesus commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which ye have heard of me. The apostles asked him, "Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you," &c., and "while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner." A cloud received him out of their sight, and on the day of Pentecost, when the disciples were all with one accord in one place (at Jerusalem), there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. This same Jesus had come in like manner (not form) as he had gone from them, and the knowledge of the restoration of the kingdom unto Israel was known by the apostles then, that they had not entered into before; all were filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. It was upon this occasion the disciples were to begin their judging the twelve tribes of Israel, and to sit upon twelve thrones; Jesus was now sitting in the throne of his glory. There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one.

"Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration." The word "regenerate" means re, again, *genero*, to create; *genus*, both, so we understand that regeneration means what regenerate implies in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in his glory. The regeneration that was manifested on the day of Pentecost as spoken of, added unto them (the apostles) about three thousand souls, and from that day until the present the Lord has added unto the church such as should be saved. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." Christ the firstfruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. The apostles then realized what the appearing of Jesus meant, although they had asked the Savior before his ascension, "Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" And Jesus replied, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons." Paul said to the Thessalonians, fifth chapter, "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly well that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night," &c. The work of regeneration was wonderfully manifested on the day of Pentecost, and also

Peter and John preaching; (Acts iv. 32) they were praying, and the place where they were assembled was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. Jesus was sitting on the throne of his glory and the apostles upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Peter's preaching to the house of Cornelius manifested a continuation of the regeneration; so on down through the ages until the present time. The church regards Jesus as sitting in the throne of his glory, and the apostles as princes ruling in judgment, giving unto Israel all needed instruction as to gospel order, faith, practice and government for the church. We believe that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, has established his throne, or kingdom, upon the earth, that the apostles are upon their thrones with him, and we love his appearing.

J. M. FENTON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Feb. 5, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I inclose to you a few lines for publication in the SIGNS, our family paper, but not to crowd out other matter. I do enjoy reading the sweet messages that cheer us and make us go on our way rejoicing. I wish you could visit us. Elder Vaughn is with us twice a month, and we have been well supplied. Elder Vail was here last Sunday, and Elder Coulter is expected next Sunday. Elder Fenton had a funeral in our meetinghouse yesterday, a granddaughter of brother Reuben Savidge. Since I saw you I have passed through the same loss of my dear wife and companion. She fell about the 20th of January and broke her hip, and never recovered from it. I feel to be reconciled, and could not wish her back under the circumstances, helpless, and no prospects of her walking again. The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken, blessed be the name of the Lord. Your case was different, your wife being much younger. I know it is a great trial for you and Elder Rowe. I have thought much about you both, but we know the Lord's ways are not our ways. It is hard to part with our loved ones, but we know it is the way of mankind. This world is not our home. "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles. To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. I am the Lord; that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." How often I feel to be the least among the brethren, prone to err as the sparks are to fly upward, wholly dependent on the God of heaven, the only source we can look to for help in time of trouble. I leave in the midst of thee a poor and afflicted people. The Lord's portion is his people, chosen out of every kindred

and nation. I have been mingling with those people for many years, and many who were there at the time I came with them have been called away to be with Him, which is far better, for there will be no more sorrow, pain, crosses or losses, but everlasting bliss. I often think of poor old Job's trials, but he could not be shaken in his faith. The words he uttered were all in praise of the Lord; he had no praise or faith in man. He said, "Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God. But ye are forgers of lies, ye are all physicians of no value. O that ye would altogether hold your peace! and it should be your wisdom." The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty, he will save his people from their sins. He cutteth out rivers among the rocks, and his eye seeth every precious thing. We love to praise him for all his wonderful works. He turns the rivers of waters as the hearts of men are turned. He speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. Yea, though I walk through the valley or shadow of death, I will fear no evil; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Who knoweth the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor? We are not ashamed to own our Lord; he is all and in all to us. In him we live, move and have our being. What can we do without him? As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that love him. Unto us a child was born, unto us a Son was given. His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the Prince of Peace. Who can thwart his plans, or say, What doest thou? Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, raised from the dead, carried up into glory. Whom have we in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that we desire beside thee. I feel that I can say with Paul, By the grace of God I am what I am. By the grace of God are we saved; not of works, lest any man should boast. Boasting is excluded. We preach Jesus Christ and him crucified, to the Greeks foolishness, to the Jews a stumblingblock. He said to his Corinthian brethren, "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." The thing that we contend for how sweet, how true, how lovely. We love the children of God, for God is love, and we love him because he first loved us. We love our children, our grandchildren, and it is right that we should love; but how often we see brothers of one family disagree. Natural love is not lasting, but that spiritual love which binds us together into such a strong chain that it cannot be broken is worth more than all the world to us; that love which is higher, broader, stronger than any other love. We do love the brethren, because they are dead with us to the world. We have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. What great love he had for us, to lay down his life, suffering the cruel death on the cross, all for the sake of the dear children of his choice. John said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the

servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: * * * for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." We love to praise him for all his wonderful works, crown him Lord of all, and say, Thy will be done, not mine. He is merciful and gracious, and will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy. Did he not have mercy upon the poor thief on the cross when he said, This day shalt thou be with me in paradise? How can man deny his power to save? If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. We are subjects of his grace, his wisdom; his eye is ever alert, and he knows our every movement.

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!"

He bringeth the blind by a way they knew not, he leadeth them in paths they have not trod. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. How good it is, brethren, that we can meditate on these things both night and day. The psalmist said, My meditation shall be sweet; I will be glad in the Lord. There is nothing that we can meditate on that will comfort and strengthen us like this word of meditation: the name of Jesus. The fear of the Lord is to hate evil. I hate evil thoughts, but I have them continually, crowding out good thoughts. Blessed is the man that puts his trust in the Lord. The psalmist speaks encouraging words; he says, Be of good cheer, I will strengthen you, all ye that hope in the Lord. Be strong in the Lord, his ways are great and high above all other ways. He reigns, he must reign until all things are put under his feet. Not a sparrow shall fall to the ground without the Father. All the Father giveth me shall come to me, and he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. He died; did he die for me, such a poor worm of the dust? If I am his I know he died for me, but the doubts and fears lest I am not numbered with the dear saints often cause me anxious thoughts, but I am glad I can truly say that I love him because he first loved me.

I wish to say to the many brethren and friends who sympathized with me in my late bereavement in the loss of my wife, my dear companion for fifty-seven years, that I appreciate their kindness, and thank them. I feel that my loss is her gain, and that I should be reconciled to His will, and sorrow not as those who have no hope. That hope is worth more than mountains of gold. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. I do not look upon death as I used to. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of the saints. Dear brethren and friends, the things I have said are my meat and my drink, my all and in all. May the grace of God be with you, and keep you as the apple of

his eye, that no harm shall befall you, is my prayer.

From an unworthy brother in a precious hope,

D. L. BLACKWELL.

CANNON, Del., March 24, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—If you can have the time and patience to bear with me, I will write another letter for the SIGNS, but if you think I am too plain, or use superfluous language, then do not publish my letter, as I do not want to hurt the paper. There are two reasons why I feel like writing: one is, I have been asked why I have not written lately, and the other is, I am somewhat burdened in mind. The words of the poet have been in my mind most all this morning:

"But O of rebellion beware,
Rebellion that hardens the breast,
Lest God in his anger should swear
That we should not enter his rest."

The facts in my case are, I am of a rebellious nature. I have said in my mind and in my actions, I will not write any more letters, nor talk any more in public, for it is all a delusion of the mind anyway.

I will now speak of temptation. One asks me, Have you been tempted? I answer, Yes, and severely, too. I am going to tell you how I have been tempted. There has been, and is yet, a mind within which has spoken the following: Can you not see that your writings are not appreciated? Can you not see that you cannot command language sufficient to express your feelings? Why burden the people with your letters, especially the editors of the SIGNS, for they have no time to be bothered with your superfluous matter? and I seemed to think and know this was all true, and I said, I am done writing and talking, and I am ashamed because I have manifested my ignorance before the world. Another thing which disturbs me is, I am no profit, the world would be better off without me, and I sometimes think I would be better off out of this world, for the longer I live in it the worse it looks to me. Sin and deception are manifested everywhere (except in the chosen people), yet it is claimed a tidal wave of religion is sweeping the country. Well, I hope better days are coming, but it seems to me that men's hearts are not yet cleansed, for some will profess christianity, and yet their deeds are inconsistent with true christianity, and because of this fact those who would do the right thing are hindered, because they have to deal with professed christianity. I think some one asks me, What do you call true christianity? Well, I will try and explain. The first requisite is, Do unto others as you would have them do unto you, and this very nearly, if not quite, covers the ground. What is contained in this question? Well, there is much. If every man could do this, we would have a desirable world to live in; there would be no backbiting, no lawsuits, no foolish arguing before the courts, no divorce cases, no navies to keep up. Were this the case there would be no war in Europe to-day. But people are not living this way, and why? Because there is an evil influence in the world. What is that evil influence? Is it not because of the presence of the devil in the world? I know this sounds plain, but I just want to be plain enough to be understood; and if it is because of his presence, how then can all people be kind to each other? They cannot, because he is the governor of some men and they are under his Satanic influence, and they will remain in that state unless they can see their error. Now comes up the question as to how they are to be made to see their error. We have

institutions to-day which are training men to preach to these deluded souls, that they may flee from the wrath to come, and many have been sent out for this purpose, and I am not going to abuse them either, for I believe there are a great many conscientious men in this work. It is not for me to abuse them, for I like an honest-hearted man, though he may differ with me. Some one asks, Do you believe in this way of sending preachers out? I answer, It is the way this class is to be sent, or the Lord could have ordered it otherwise, but I do not believe it is the way for another class to be sent. When Jesus was here in the world he had power to call men to preach, and the power to qualify them, and there were no theological seminaries for his students, he himself was their instructor, and they spake as they were given power by him. When he called they came, and they asked no questions as to what they should eat or wear, but they were fed and clothed, and he is able (Jesus is able) to clothe them to-day, as in days past. Another temptation has arisen in my mind, or rather an inquiry. This inquiry is, What is the truth? If I shall write or speak, what should I write or speak? It is a serious question with me. I should present the truth, or say or write nothing. And again, what is truth? We have various doctrines in this age of the world, some say all men will be saved anyway. This is universalism. Others say all men will be saved if they will accept Christ, if not they will be lost, that man is a free moral agent. This is Methodism. That man can reject or accept according to his own discretion. But there are others who say men are already saved or lost. This is called hardshellism, and this doctrine is assailed as being obnoxious and disgusting. But we will now consider which of these doctrines comes the nearest conforming to the teachings of the Scripture, and I expect in dealing with this subject I shall be compelled to speak plainly, I cannot see how to avoid it. If the Scripture teaches anything it is that the Lord hath chosen his own people to be heirs of glory. There is one other thing evident, and that is, one man cannot make another man sorry for his sin. If this were true, then there would be no need for the interposition of the Holy Ghost; but, my friends, there is need for the power of the Holy Ghost to teach us. We need its power, but it does not need ours. The fact is, we have no power except as it is given us. But now some one says, Prove your argument, and I agree it is the right thing to do, for what a man cannot prove he had better not say, so I will offer a proof that the Lord is the one who controls and changes the natural man, and that man is subordinate to him. First, who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor? declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Again, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." It would take up unnecessary space to continue these quotations, but it could be done almost *ad infinitum.*

Now we must certainly consider this last quotation, we cannot pass it by. Notice the first: "Eye hath not seen." What is it our natural eyes have not seen? Why, we have not seen the power and glory of God manifested. A man in

his natural state cannot reverence the beautiful things of nature until his eyes are opened to behold such beauty. The natural ear cannot hear the beautiful strains of music as they come from a new creature in Christ Jesus. The natural man can witness the ordinance of baptism and never be impressed with the beautiful solemnity of such an ordinance, but may be disposed to laugh at it, and say that a little water poured on the head is just as good, but it is not. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart." But how can the word enter the heart? It is a mystery how, but it does it, and it accomplishes a wonderful work when it enters there. The blind man could not tell how Jesus opened his eyes, but his great joy was he did it; and so with the newborn soul, he cannot tell what went with his burden, but he knows it is gone. We do not know how the Lord creates, but we do know he does. We do not know how a bird can sing so beautifully, but we know it can. I am speaking naturally now, but now let us grasp the truth of the matter if we can, and say God has done all these things by his mighty power. But how many of us are like doubting Thomas, even forgetting the Lord at times, and begin to make aprons of fig leaves to hide our sin. But we cannot hide our transgressions, and perhaps we get like the children of Israel, and worship a golden calf. We cannot say Jesus is the Christ but by the Holy Ghost. It is the work of the Holy Ghost to teach us, and if it does not teach us we know nothing of God.

Well, I have written enough. Some day we shall not write any more, but we will see the King in his beauty and be satisfied. This is our hope and expectation.

A. T. BENSON.

WHEELING, W. Va., March 28, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing two letters, sister McKinney's and sister Young's, which were very comforting to me, and while reading them I felt a great desire that every Old School Baptist in the land should share them with me. I have never met either of these sisters (in the flesh), yet they seem very near and dear to me. Surely this love passeth knowledge; it is something we cannot explain, any more than we can explain why God would send His only begotten Son into the world to die for sinners, and I believe every child of God feels to say with Paul, Of whom I am chief. The SIGNS holds a very warm place in my heart. I think it the best Baptist paper in the United States, and the price of it is very reasonable. The print is so good, and I never saw a paper with fewer mistakes, and what is best of all, it is free from argumentive debates. Elder Lefferts fills our beloved Elder Chick's place so well I feel thankful that the lot fell to him. I have often thought (with pleasure) that while we all were wondering who would take Elder Chick's place God had already chosen and qualified Elder Lefferts for this work, and it seems sweet to me that the Lord's choice was our choice. Our hearts were made so tenderly receptive in this matter that many of us received the news with meltings of heart and tears. And dear, faithful Elder Ker, I think we were all drawn closer (if such could be) to him in his sad bereavement, to see him struggling along in his editorial work with this heavy burden resting upon him. We had to wonder at such faithful endurance and fortitude. When he wrote his editorial under the word "Alone," the one word "Alone" set our tears flowing, for we had by the eye of faith seen him carry-

ing his heavy cross. My heart is full as I speak of these things.

Your unworthy sister,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

[WE feel very grateful to sister Pultz for her kind words regarding our efforts and faithfulness as an editor of the SIGNS, and we assure her of Elder Lefferts' appreciation of expressions regarding him.—K.]

TORONTO, Ontario, February, 1915.

DEAR SISTER PULTZ:—After so long a time I will endeavor to write you a few lines. In looking up your last letter I find a year has passed since receiving it, and I hope you have not concluded that I have come to love you any the less from my long silence. No indeed, like sister McKinney, I would hate to give you up. Your letters have been a source of much comfort to me, and now the question is presented to my mind, Is this your motive in writing, that you may receive something in return? God alone knows my motive. He knows us altogether. I have often had it in my mind to write you when about the house at work, but failed to get any farther; in fact, it seemed useless to make the attempt in hope of imparting anything of spiritual exercises, for I have felt to be in a dull and lifeless frame of mind, void of understanding, and completely shut up. Now, as I undertake, I feel my inability keenly to write anything of profit to one who has been so deeply taught in the school of Christ, but I deem it a duty, as well as a privilege, to communicate in this way of our joys and sorrows. I realize that if it pleases the dear Lord to come to our relief he can give us of the goodness of his house, for a good man bringeth forth good things; he has the storehouse of wisdom and knowledge. I feel that I can tell so little of what I have experienced in the last year that I hardly know how to begin. It has been one of deep trials in many ways, yet I have much I should be thankful for, the Lord having blessed me with good health in a general way. Of course I am not what one would call very strong and robust, but am always about and able to work. But a wounded spirit who can bear? The language of my heart is often expressed in these words: "Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there?" Ah, dear sister, while I do not expect a smooth path in this world, or one of ease and comfort, yet I am continually seeking to better my condition, and I know way down in my heart the promise is only to the suffering: If ye suffer with him ye shall also reign with him. If ye will live godly in Christ Jesus ye must suffer persecution. In the world ye shall have tribulation. But it is my natural inclinations that trouble me so. Paul said to the Colossian brethren, "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above," and Christ has commanded that we seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; but it is the other way with me the greater part of the time, so if we sow to the flesh we shall of the flesh reap corruption. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. But, dear sister, if any fruit be produced it is because God worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. "From me is thy fruit found." The branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine. It seems to me, dear sister, that I can the more fully understand these things since being placed in such trying circumstances. I have tried with all my might to extricate myself, feeling that it should and must be different, that I had more than I could endure and that I would not have

this Man to reign over me, but the old man found to his shame and confusion that he must submit. How weak the flesh is, and yet how it strives for the mastery. Dear sister, tell me, has such vile rebellion ever raged in your breast? How I groaned, being burdened, and would conclude the Lord is surely angry at me for something I have done; but will he not shew mercy, and at once appear for my relief? How I was made to cry and beg for him to remember me with the favor that he bearest unto his people and to visit me with his salvation. These are also David's words: I waited patiently for the Lord. I do have to cry mightily to the dear Lord for that precious fruit of the Spirit (patience). In great distress of mind from attacks of the enemy these words thrust through my mind, Hunted as a partridge in the mountains. I found out afterwards they were David's words when Saul was seeking his life, and he feared he would fall by his (Saul's) hand; and did not Job express the same thing when he said, "Thou huntest me as a fierce lion"? The devil is always busy, going about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, but I rejoice to know that God still rules and reigns over all things.

"Not a single shaft can hit
Till the God of love sees fit."

I will cite you a hymn (No. 957, Beebe's collection) which you may read. It is very descriptive of the conflicts I have been experiencing. It is when we come to the end of the earth, or to the end of all creature help, that we cry unto God in sincerity, for we truly need grace and help in such times. Out of the belly of hell cried I. I would be thinking, Have I become a hardened wretch, or what is the matter with me? what am I to do? O, that I could say as in former trials, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." I wanted to trust him for his grace and kind providence, but he did seem so far away, and I had so little intercourse with him. I tried to seek him in prayer, but fear they were formal and lifeless, not mixed with faith, for if we ask and receive not it is because we ask amiss, that we might consume it upon our lusts. O how close it comes sometimes. The flesh and the Spirit. I cannot forget his past favors of love and mercy, but I yearn now for a special blessing from his hand, that he might turn unto me and shew me a token for good, that they which hate me may see it and be ashamed. But how unworthy I feel of the least of his blessings. I am so vile, ignorant and foolish, while he is too pure and holy to look upon iniquity. But blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity.

I must now bring this already lengthy letter to a close. I feel I have written much, but have conveyed little of these wonderful dealings of the Lord. Words fall short of expression. Now, dear sister, I would ask an interest in your prayers. I trust this will find you in your usual health at least. I will be delighted to receive a letter from you when you find it convenient to write.

Your sister in hope of a better life,
(MRS.) W. C. YOUNG.

OTTAWA, Kans., March 3, 1915.

DEAR SISTER PULTZ:—It seems a long time since I heard from you. I have been wanting to write to you. I thought I had much to tell you, but when I would think of beginning a letter everything would leave me, and I would immediately feel too barren and desolate to make the attempt, though longing for one of your, to me, precious letters. How I have missed

the little white-winged messengers. I do not think they ever failed in bringing to me, as I felt, special spiritual messages. I could not help feeling the Lord was sending me comfort through you, often assuring me that his promises to me would not fail by the very words you wrote. Time and again I would be anxious to tell you of the wonders I hoped were being revealed to me, but could not do it, then perhaps in the very next letter you would tell me all I wanted you to know. The very secrets of my heart, as I thought, I found would not have been new to you, for had you not learned the same lessons?

I began this letter last night, but my mind soon became confused and I had to give up writing. The children have the whooping cough, our house is small, and we must all be together all the time, and I find it hard to write unless everything is quiet. This morning I was thinking of the adoption of natural children, when the thought came that if I am a child of God it is by adoption, bought with a price, that price Jesus' blood. Then I remembered the morning before I wrote Elder Durand my first letter; as I was going over it in my mind, of one part I said, I will not tell that, when the words, Keep not back part of the purchase price, came with so much power and so unexpectedly that I was in great fear lest I be like Ananias, and be struck dead. Shortly before this, I think it was, the Lord had, I hope, revealed himself to me as being all-powerful, all-wise and merciful, the only Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ the righteous. I opened the Bible at these words, of Isaiah lv. 1, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price." Dear sister, read the whole chapter before you finish my letter. Right then I either heard the words, or saw them in the Bible; I have showed you these things that you might tell of it. I have read the Bible through since then, and have also used the concordance in trying to find those words, but have never been able to find them. Ever since, though unworthy to even take his name upon my lips, I have wanted to say of him only what he has said of himself. He is the only true God and Savior, all others are idols. When they, the children of Israel, were still under the law, it was God who led them by the hand of Moses, and not Moses, as they often thought. He led them forty years in the wilderness; he humbled them and suffered them to hunger, fed them with manna, which they knew not, neither did their fathers know, that he might make them know that man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live. He led them through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought; where there was no water; he brought them forth water out of the rock of flint. He says he did all these things that he might humble them, that he might prove them to do them good at the latter end, and they say in their hearts, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth. "But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant, which he sware unto their fathers." Understand, he says that the Lord thy God giveth thee not

this good land to possess it because of thy righteousness, for thou art a stiff-necked people. Knowing in my heart and by experience that this is truth, I must say, Praise God, from whom all blessings flow. It is of his mercy we are not consumed. Dear sister, I do not know that you will see this as I do, but it all seems plain to me. This God in whom I have been made to trust is a safe refuge, a present help in time of trouble. The words of King Asa, as he went to battle against a great host, are often brought to my mind: Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power; help us, O Lord our God, for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this great multitude. This is often my experience; cares and trials of all kinds are on every side, and had I not the Lord to lean upon I would long ago have sunk to rise no more.

"Thou who knowest all my weakness,
Thou who knowest all my care,
While I plead each precious promise,
Hear, O hear, and answer prayer."

Those words, though part of an Arminian hymn, seem to express my feelings this morning. I hope you are well and enjoying the presence of the Savior, for that is better than all else.

How do you like our new editor of the SIGNS? I am delighted, for he is very gifted, I think, and I believe will always be a bold defender of the truth, something much needed in these times. I miss dear Elder Durand's "Fragments." I shudder to think how much we will miss him when his pen is silent forever.

Forgive all you may see amiss in this letter, and write to me as soon as you can.

Your loving sister,

ANNA McKINNEY.

FAIRMONT, W. Va., Jan. 23, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will, by request, write again to our paper, the SIGNS, as I am not able to do much. We find much contained in the word of God. Romans ix. 9–13: ("For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Genesis xxv. 23: "And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger." Look at the positive shalls in this verse, and then look at the purpose of God in Romans ix. 11. Now these two brothers were twins, yet God loved the one and hated the other, even before they were born. "Neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." How can any man take the ground and say that it depends upon the acts or doings of man whether God will love him and save him, when the apostle firmly declares that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy, and then again when this text says that it was before the children were born, and before they had either one done any good or evil? The legalist cannot say that it was because Jacob was good that God loved him, neither can he say it was on account of Esau doing evil that God hated him, because the children were not born, neither had done any good or evil, but it was on this account: that the purpose of God might stand, and that ac-

cording to election; not of works, but of him that calleth. Then it is not of works, but of him that calleth, lest any man should boast. It is because of election that God gave to his Son in the covenant of grace before the world began. No wonder it was before they were born, and had done neither good nor evil. In Gen. xxv. 23, it says, "Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels." One a righteous nation, and the other a wicked nation; a holy nation, represented by Jacob, and an unholy nation, represented by Esau, for his name was called Edom. Against this people God has indignation forever, but God loved Jacob and his name afterward was called Israel. Gen. xxviii. 14: "Thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." So we need not be uneasy about the poor heathen; this is going to reach all nations, all the seed of Jacob, the seed which in spirit is Christ and the church, which God loved before they were born, before they had done any good, so it is of him that calleth. Christ came to call sinners to repentance, and it is Jacob and his seed that the Lord blessed who are sinners. When he blesses them, calls them, then they see that they are sinners. So he came to call this people which are represented in Jacob; but Esau represents the wicked, the self-righteous with Ishmael, who shall not be heir with Isaac, the righteous nation that dwelleth in Jacob; they are two manner of people, they worship different, they believe different, they act different, and they are separated, a chosen nation, a peculiar people, while the other people mock and persecute them. Ishmael mocked Isaac. The one manner of people have their origin in Christ, the other in Satan. As Christ says, Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of him ye will do. The one manner of people have love to God and for his ways and his people; the other manner of people have malice, hatred, envy and pride. Why all this difference? It is because God loved Jacob and the holy nation before they had done any good or evil. Why did not God love Esau? It was not because he had done any evil. What is the reason? I will give you this reason: the Savior thanked his heavenly Father that he had hid these things from the wise and prudent but revealed them unto babes, even because it seemed good in his sight; so Jacob he loved but Esau he hated before the children were born, neither having done any good or evil. No wonder that the publican and harlots went into the kingdom before the scribes and Pharisees, because they repented at the preaching of John. One might say it was because God foresaw what we would do, but listen to what God says: I will have mercy on them, not for their sake, but for my sake, even for my mercy's sake. So you see that it is not because he foresaw good in Jacob, because from the crown of our heads to the soles of our feet there is no soundness in us; hence being unclean, no goodness in us, how could we do good, or how could God foresee good works in us? It is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but of his mercy and grace, which were given us in Christ before the world began.

Yours, JAMES W. LINN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., May 11, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Will you kindly allow me space in your columns to acknowledge the receipt of the many

precious letters on our fiftieth wedding anniversary (April 27th)? It seems impossible to write each one separately. More than one hundred and thirty-five were received, coming from Manitoba, Canada, to North Carolina, and from New York to California, all breathing the real spirit of love and good wishes in the Lord, with many substantial tokens of an interest in our temporal welfare, for which they will accept our grateful, heartfelt thanks to the Lord and to them. We feel utterly unworthy of such tokens. About one hundred and twenty-five were present during the day, giving some expressions in word, all of which were much appreciated. I felt I was blessed with kind, dear friends, but so many and so true was utterly foreign to my thought. We have felt to take courage, feeling there was yet something to live for if the dear Lord would make us a blessing to them. The Lord be praised for all, and his gracious blessings upon all.

I had not thought to write again so soon, and hope you will bear with me. When I received the December 15th number for last year and saw the number of times my name appeared, it was with deep regret, and I resolved it should not be so again. I only write this time from a sense of duty, a loving duty, to acknowledge the same and our gratitude.

Wishing for you all prosperity of soul, I am, I hope, yours in Christ,

P. W. SAWIN.

[THE following appeared in one of brother Sawin's local papers.—ED.]

ELDER and Mrs. P. W. Sawin will celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of their marriage at their home on the Eminence pike, one-half mile north of this city, on Tuesday, April 27th. Elder Sawin is the eighth generation of Robert Sawin, of Boxford, Suffolk Co., England, who died in 1651. His son, John Sawin, came to New England and settled at Watertown, Mass., and was admitted a freeman May 26th, 1652. Elder Peter Waldo Sawin was one of eleven children born to James Harvey Sawin and Caroline Harvey, in Bartholomew County, Ind., and was born March 1st, 1844. Peter Sawin united with the Primitive Baptist Church in Shelby County, Ind., in his fifteenth year; his wife, Cordelia, in her nineteenth year. He began preaching in his eighteenth year, and to October, 1914, in his seventy-first year, having been preaching more than fifty years. Traveled by rail more than one hundred and fifty thousand miles in twenty-three States and Canada, and by private conveyance more than fifty thousand miles. He was married to Cordelia Emerald Tipton at Stockton (now Loxa), Coles Co., Ill., April 27th, 1865, by his brother, Elder J. G. Sawin. Cordelia Emerald Tipton was the daughter of Thomas Tipton and Julia Ann Tunis, and was born in Shannon, Muskingum Co., Ohio, Feb. 23rd, 1849. The couple were the parents of five children, four girls and one boy, only three of whom are still living: Ira Libertus Sawin, of Indianapolis, Ind., Mrs. Ina Goldie White, widow of Warren H. White, and Miss Vola May Sawin, who reside with their parents. There is one grandson in the family, Ira Hughes White, son of Mrs. W. H. White, aged six and one-half years. Elder and Mrs. P. W. Sawin removed to Shelby County, Ky., from Dayton, Ohio, in 1900, and the Elder now has active charge of two churches, one at Campbellsburg and the other at Turners Station, besides supplying at Little Flock, in Anderson County, and in this city when called upon. Among the guests expected will be Elder J. G. Sawin, of Mattoon, Ill., brother of Peter Sawin, and the minister who performed the wedding ceremony fifty years ago.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1915.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SECRET SOCIETIES.

A SISTER in the church, who is also a reader and subscriber of the SIGNS, has asked our opinion of secret societies, and whether members of such organizations should be received into our churches so long as they continue to affiliate therewith. In considering questions of this character we are not at all interested in what people of the world do, whether they join secret organizations or let them alone. We are simply concerned with the question as to whether it is right for an Old School Baptist to belong to them. We have known, and still know, many of our people who formerly belonged to one or more secret orders, and left these bodies of their own will, without being asked by the churches of their membership to do so. These brethren became convinced in their own minds that they could not consistently belong to these orders and at the same time hold fellowship with the church of God. There is no doubt but that the information these brethren could give, having been on the inside, would be more weighty than our own can be, since it is derived mostly from the outside, as we have never personally been a member of any secret organization at any time in our life. When we were some eighteen or twenty years younger than at present, and just starting out in life to make our own livelihood, pressure was brought to bear at frequent intervals by our friends and associates to get us to join one or more of these orders. Almost invariably we were told in those days that it was almost impossible for a young man to get ahead in the world unless he was backed and supported by the influence of some secret society. We were told that the days when a man's merit or worth demanded attention were past, and that now influential "pull" was what got young men to the front in nearly every trade or profession. In those days all such arguments, instead of scaring us and making us anxious to affiliate with some secret body, only made us wonder if such statements were really so, and we dared to launch forward into the untried future without being bolstered up by any such secret aid. As a result we can boldly affirm there are plenty of jobs in the world to be had by the young man that is not afraid to work and is not too particular about what the work is. The reason many out of work cry "hard times" is because they want a gentleman's job and very few hours of it at that. The fellow that is willing to go at it in his shirt sleeves and with all the vim that is in him will never be found sitting around idle; he is in demand all the time. Secret societies may do very well for such as have not enough backbone of their own to stand alone, and require the merit of others to help them along, but secret societies can never much help, and certainly cannot much hinder, the man who has energy and ambition and the courage to stick to whatever he undertakes. Personally, ever since we arrived at the age of our majority, we have been burdened with too much work, and have never had

to lament not having enough. In all situations we have ever held in the business world, not once were we ever asked the question by our employers as to whether we belonged to this or that secret order, and never were we made to promise to join them as a condition of our obtaining employment; neither was our lack of membership in these bodies ever used against us to prevent our promotion to better positions. From our own experience, therefore, we have to say that secret societies have never played any figure whatever in our life, and we have never had to reckon with them in order to get along in the world and make a living. This, notwithstanding that we have been associated more or less with secret order men in business for the past fifteen or seventeen years. The objection to all forms of secret orders, from the standpoint of Old School Baptists, is twofold: they are oath-bound, and they are more or less connected with some form of religious ceremony. The fact that they are oath-bound makes their members sworn to keep the secrets of the order from all outsiders. Now, it may be that these secrets are not worth telling anyway, but the principle of the thing is bad for a child of God. To be sworn to keep secrets that he dare not divulge to his own flesh and blood, and also that he dare not tell the church, is repulsive to us. We repeat, the secrets may not be worth the telling, but the principle is wrong. When one comes to the church for membership, he should not wish to keep anything back from the brethren. Ananias and Sapphira made some reservations from their brethren and died for it. Of course the brethren are not going to pry into one's private affairs, but the candidate for baptism should not care if they did. If a member of the church belongs to a secret order he is sworn to keep the affairs of that order a secret, thus making a part of his life entirely shut to, or hid away, from his brethren, which they dare not look into, and which he dare not divulge to them. The life of a member of the church should be like an open book, capable of being read by all of one's brethren if they care to look into it. If one is harboring something in his life that he is ashamed for his brethren to know, or which he has sworn not to tell them, the sooner he gets rid of that thing the better, the better for his own peace of mind and for the welfare of the church. There should be no dirt lurking around in the corners of our churches. If the church is a good housekeeper, chaste unto Christ, no dirt will be tolerated. As to the taking of oaths, Christ says in Matthew, fifth chapter, "Swear not at all: neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil." We read in Matthew xxvi. 63, that "Jesus held his peace" when the high priest tried his hardest to get him to swear that he was the Christ, Son of God. If Jesus would not take an oath as to his sonship when his own life was at stake, it is hardly worth while for his followers to take oaths in order to live in favor with men, to obtain bread to eat or work to do. Paul says in second Corinthians ii. 17: "We are not as many, which corrupt the word of God." By "corrupt the word of God" is meant to make a trade of it. We do certainly make trade of the word of God when we take oaths by it in order

to advance ourselves in the world, to better our financial condition. Also, in first Thess. ii. 5, we find, "Neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness." Desire for worldly riches and promotion is covetousness. To simply covet is bad enough, but to "cloke" that covetousness in an oath taken in the Lord's name would seem worse. Thousands would never join secret orders were it not for the beneficial features financially which belong to most all of them, that is, the sick benefits and the death benefits. Therefore if a child of God belonged to these organizations, it would generally be one of his reasons that he desired or coveted these monetary benefits. To achieve that which he covets, he takes an oath in the name of the Lord, he wears a "cloke of covetousness" to hide his bodily wants. Could anything be more awful? And all this in face of the truth that God has guaranteed to supply all the needs of his people by Christ Jesus. The doctrine of the devil has been opposed to the doctrine of God ever since the serpent preached it to Eve in the garden of Eden. God had said, "Thou shalt surely die," but the serpent said, "Ye shall not surely die." It seemed right to Eve to believe the devil rather than God, which proves, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." The nature of man always prefers a lie rather than the truth. Now God has said he will take care of his people, and will supply all their needs; our coward flesh says he will not do this, that he will forget or forsake us, therefore let us join some secret order and trust in the help of man. Our depraved nature inclines us to a confederation with our fellows in sin in order to supply our needs, rather than to trust in the Almighty God. But the time must come in the experience of every child of God when he will find that no such association or confederacy can save him; the staff of Egypt leaned upon will pierce his hand. "Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread."—Isaiah viii. 12, 13. Some one said some time ago in our hearing that they believed that God gave us our spiritual blessings, but that we had to obtain our temporal blessings for ourselves. The Scriptures give us no warrant for any such discrimination. The breath of life which we breathe constantly into our lungs is as much a provision of God as the eternal life in Christ Jesus. The clothes that we now wear on our bodies are as much his provision as the robe of Christ's righteousness. The bread and meat that feed these bodies he provides as well as the manna that feeds our souls. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights."—James i. 17. The good gifts are the temporal and the perfect gifts are the spiritual. If one is a child of God he has the guarantee that the Almighty will provide for all his needs. Such an one needs no confederacy oath-bound with men to enable him to get through this life. All that such an one needs is to employ the powers of body and mind which God has given him, in the faithful discharge of duties as they come to hand day by day. "I have been young, and now am I old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

The second objection to secret societies, from the standpoint of Old School Bap-

tists, is that their meetings are conducted with more or less connection with some religious (?) ceremony. This religious portion of the lodge meeting may be short or it may be long, but the principle is the same. Even if nothing but a prayer is offered in the lodge meeting, that would be enough to condemn it. Why pray for what the Lord in the Scriptures has given us no warrant to pray for? These prayers are often read out of a book, or committed to memory beforehand, and the prayer is often delivered in the meeting by one who is godless in his everyday deportment before men. Further, the prayer asks God to bless the lodge, and to help in the bringing about of its aims and purposes. We know of no place in Scripture where we have a right to pray for any to be blessed but those whom it is God's will to bless. It has gotten so customary these days to mix the Lord's name in everything that goes on that many treat the name of the Lord with light familiarity and without reverence. No child of God can conscientiously consent to the mixing of religion with all sorts of meetings and organizations of men. The name of the Lord is very sacred to him, not to be taken but with fear and trembling. How can he call these lodge members "brethren," when they do not regard these things in the light he does, and when they can so use the things of God commonly which are so special to and revered by himself? Fellowship cannot be where there is not equality. How can a child of God be on an equal footing with those who read prayers, or commit them to memory, or who sing untrue songs, and who ask the Lord to bless an organization for which he has given no sanction in his written word? We have had members of lodges tell us that if a person belonged to this or that order, and lived up to his oath and the principles of the order, he would not need belong to any church. In other words, works, and not grace, are at the root of every secret society, as at the root of every Arminian sect; how then can a child of God whose whole faith is bound up in grace, and not works, call those "brethren" who subsist by works, and not grace? Out of their own lips lodge members have confessed that their lodge takes, with many of them, the place of the church. Let us then take them at their word and so judge them. Let us rank them with the Arminian churches, since they count themselves equal with those churches, and discard the whole of them. If a member of an Arminian sect should ask for baptism into membership with the Old School Baptists, he would have to convince the church that he was thoroughly severed from such Arminian affiliation before the church would receive him. We see no reason why members of lodges should not also be cleared from all lodge affiliations before being received by us likewise. The principle is the same in the one case as in the other. If one feels that the people of God are his "brethren," he cannot also feel that those in a lodge are his "brethren." He cannot at the same time be in fellowship with two such widely different bodies that hold such widely divergent aims and purposes. We have known of a few instances where members of lodges have been received into Old Baptist churches without being asked to give up their lodges, and in every case it has given offence to the church, and marred the peace of the whole. This, of itself, is sufficient reason for not encouraging such practice. "When ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ." We should be willing

to lay down any practice that is an offence to the church when it does not accord with the word of God. It entails some personal loss at times to enable us to lay aside that which offends, but the pain of sacrifice should never weigh against the performance of that which is right. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world." A living sacrifice is painful. Be not surprised therefore if your flesh quivers and bleeds when these sacrifices are made. When one has been paying in his dues regularly to a lodge for several years in the hope of some day reaping the benefit, and knows that if he stops his dues he loses the whole of all he has paid in, as well as all he expected later on to reap, it is not to be wondered at that that one should shrink from making such a sacrifice. "If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell."—Matt. v. 30. This Scripture does not have any reference to excluding members from the church. We cannot amputate members from the body of Christ, and no member of that body ever perishes. But if that which is my right hand offends my brethren, it must offend me. If that right hand happens to be a lodge upon which I am depending for support in the hour of need, no matter if it be my right hand and it is hard to do without it, yet it must be cut off, because it is an offence to the church, and therefore an offence to me, inasmuch as it offends those I love. It is better that this member (the lodge) perish than that I be kept away from the church and from baptism and so live with hell in my bosom the rest of my days. Now, as we said at the beginning, we have never been in any lodge, and cannot speak from inside knowledge, but what we have seen as a looker-on is enough to convince us the church of God does not need any such assistance to supply the needs of its members, and approving of membership among our brethren in the various orders of the day would be certain to demoralize the order and peace of the church. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing."

L.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

WHAT ARE THE RELIABLE EVIDENCES THAT WE HAVE PASSED FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE?

PERHAPS there is no subject in which the feeble, fearful, trembling, tempted and doubting children of God feel a greater interest than to know what are the scriptural evidences of being in a quickened and regenerated state, as there can be no subject in which they feel so much concerned. One brother writes that he would be in despair if it were not for one bright spot in his life, alluding to the time when Christ was first revealed to him as his Savior, but recalling to mind his happy frame on that occasion, his hope is frequently revived. In reflecting on this remark we have felt inclined to inquire, Can it be possible that the brother has never had but one reliable evidence in his long life that he is a subject of saving grace? We know that it is very natural for us to revert to our first experience when doubts and fears assail our faith and hope in God. We do not object to this calling to mind God's for-

mer loving-kindness unto us as evidences of his saving grace. Jeremiah remembered the time of the wormwood and the gall, from which God had graciously delivered him, and his hope was thereby revived, but is it right to overlook all other evidences, and rely only on the first displays of God's love and mercy to us? To such exclusive reliance we object, because it underrates and overlooks the daily experience of the saints, which although in many instances they may not be as vivid and satisfactory to us as the first, are equally important and reliable, and should therefore be as fully appreciated, not only for the comfort of the saints, but also for the praise of the glory of God, because it tends to a repudiation of all subsequent evidences as being less conclusive and reliable, or worthless. How many have hung down their heads despairingly because their first experiences were not so distinctly marked as those of others of whom they have heard or read, and although they can keep even pace with others in every subsequent step of their religious travel, are all their lifetime in bondage, through fear that they have started wrong, and therefore all subsequent experience has been but a delusion. It may be that the general practice of our churches in the examination of applicants for baptism and membership has been faulty in making the first exercises of the candidate far more important than other exercises. While we love to hear related the more wonderful displays of God's power and grace in bringing sinners to a knowledge of the truth, we should also listen very attentively to "the still small voice," which has whispered peace and salvation to the trembling ones. According to our own observation for more than fifty years in the church of Christ, those who have been the most fearful and trembling have proved the most watchful and prayerful among the followers of Christ. Some have made us doubt the genuineness of their evidences, by the extravagant marvelousness of what they have related, while others who could scarcely say they had a hope have showed such evident marks of the spirit of humility, self-abasement and fear of being a disparagement to the church that they have taken every step with the greatest fear and trembling, have given us the more satisfactory evidence of the work of grace wrought in their hearts by the finger of God. But we need not advert to observation, nor to feelings of satisfaction, for we have a more sure word of prophecy or instruction, to which we do well to take heed. The Scriptures of truth do not leave us uninformed as to the heaven stamped and sealed evidences of a quickened state. Let us examine some of them. The case of Philip and the eunuch, (Acts viii. 26–39), is in point. Here is an application for the ordinance, and the great question, What doth hinder me to be baptized? is asked. The man of God, who was full of the Holy Ghost, is amply qualified to decide this matter, which concerns all others as well as the eunuch. How does Philip settle this question? Whatever impediment might be in the way to hinder the eunuch is still in the way of all others, and whatever qualifications entitled him to the privilege, are equally applicable to all others who possess them. Philip did not say, If you can distinctly call to mind your first religious exercises, if you saw the flaming gulf open to receive you, and all your sins were distinctly presented to your terror-stricken soul, if you were held in that distressing state a certain length of time, and can distinctly tell how you felt, and what you thought during this

time of bitter anguish of your soul, and if you know just when and where and how you were delivered, and how you felt at that time, and if you do not now feel too unworthy to be numbered with the saints. These were not the questions proposed nor the prerequisites demanded. If they had been it would have debarred thousands of the precious children of God from that holy ordinance, and perhaps the eunuch himself would have been rejected. But observe, the only question was as to the then present state of the eunuch, and not a question was asked in regard to his former exercises of mind. "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." Shall any one now dare impose any other requisite than that which the Holy Ghost through Philip then required? That which applied to one equally applies to every subject of grace. But let it be remembered that the question implied more than a formal profession of belief. It is not enough that the natural judgment or understanding should assent to the truth, for it is with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. This belief must come from the heart, not the head, for the law of Christ is written in the hearts of the children of God. A new heart is given them, for the old heart is destitute of the faith of the Son of God, and a new spirit is put within them, for their faith is the fruit of the Spirit; if, therefore, the candidate believes with all his heart it is an infallible testimony that he has received this new heart, and a new spirit is given him. Now, according to this example, we insist that the church and the administrator should be satisfied that the candidate has passed from death unto life, is born again, and has that full belief in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, which can only result from the faith of Jesus Christ dwelling in his heart. There are many who without any change of heart, without any love to God, or knowledge of their own lost and helpless condition, with no saving knowledge of God, of Christ, of the way of salvation, may say, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and speaking after the manner of men, they do; that is, they have a traditional belief, knowing no reason why they should disbelieve what they have read or heard others say, but in the case of the eunuch there were strong circumstantial evidences that God had wrought this faith in his heart. His mind was directed to the Scriptures, he is found reading the book of the prophet Isaiah, he is buried in deep thought, he is earnest to understand the Scriptures, he has a thirst for a knowledge of him of whom the prophet wrote, and although a man of high standing and in great authority, he had a childlike humility, and desired that some one of clearer understanding in divine things should guide him. The minister of Christ is gladly received into his chariot; he has a hearing ear and an understanding heart, and as he hears of Jesus, as preached by Philip, in his heart receives the testimony, gladly receives the word, and most unwaveringly believes that this Jesus is the Son of God, of whom the prophet testified. Another evidence of his heavenly birth is given in his desire to take on him the yoke of Jesus, to follow him in the ordinance of baptism. Absorbed in thought as he heard of Jesus, and transported with new light upon the subject and theme of prophecy, and attentively listening to the preaching of Jesus by Philip though he was at that time, he did not pass the baptismal waters unnoticed. "See, here is water." Never be-

fore had water presented such attraction to his eyes. Wonder, ye heavens, what heavenly beauty his faith discovers in that water; the footprints of his Savior, the bright example for all his children, are seen. Did water ever before seem so lovely? The Savior's high command, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," is applied with power. O what a joyful privilege it would be, he may have thought, if I were worthy to follow Jesus in that delightful ordinance. Nay, I cannot be denied, unworthy though I am. Thou man of God, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Indeed, we know of no authority in the Scriptures for attaching more importance to past than to present evidences of our having passed from death unto life. The apostle John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Not because our first evidences were so clear, or strongly marked; not because we have acted so well our part; not because our natures have become better than they were before, nor because we feel that we are now unworthy of a place in the house of God and communion with his saints, but simply because we love them and desire to be with them. Paul says, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." The test is not laid on what is past, but what is present. If we are led by the Spirit of God it will lead us to Jesus, to his work, to his laws, his ordinances and to his people. It will make us feel that we are very, very unworthy of his favor, and to admire and gaze and wonder at the manner of love which God hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God.

Another present and reliable evidence that we are the children of God, is that "God dealeth with you as with sons." "If ye endure chastening," then have ye the evidence. "But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." How many present evidences are found in the Scriptures of our sonship and heirship as sons of God and heirs of glory, and who shall tell us that any one or all of these are less reliable than the first that we ever received? We would by no means depreciate or undervalue the first evidences which were given us in our new birth, for without that birth we should be forever destitute of all the other evidences, but if we cannot find in our first experience the extraordinary exercises that some others can, we are fully warranted in relying on those which our God has seen proper to give us. If because we cannot tell when, where or under what circumstances we were born into the natural world, would we be reasonable in concluding that we never were born? The very fact that we are now alive is sufficient evidence that there was a time when be began to live. If to-day we love God, it is because he first loved us, and if we ever have loved him the evidence is the same, for we could not possibly love him from any other cause.

There is one other evidence we will name, and that is, if we are involved in the christian warfare, then have we the same evidence of a heavenly birth that Paul had. Until we were born of God the whole current of our nature ran in one way, our element was sin, it was sweet to our taste, and we drank it as the ox drinketh water. There can be no war where there is but one party. In the Shulamite we see as it were the company of two armies. So in every christian is seen two opposite, determined, hostile parties. The one is born of the flesh, and is flesh, and he held his palace in peace,

without opposition, until another party came to occupy the same house, or person. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. These are opposite one to the other, for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and so terribly does the battle sometimes rage that we cannot do the things we would. All who are born of God, but no others, will so long as they are here in the flesh find a law in their fleshly members warring against the law of their mind, which will at times bring them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members. All the doubts and unbelief that ever assailed or troubled a christian in regard to his interest in Christ arises from his fleshly nature. Doubts, fears and temptations, unbelief and desponding fears, are the artillery of the flesh and of Satan, planted against the law of their mind, but however the faith of God's people may be stormed, faith shall most assuredly triumph ultimately, for God giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Dead fish will float down with the current; only the living fish will stem the tide. Those who never have any conflict can never know the joys of victory. Those who have no temptations cannot appreciate deliverance, and those who have no clouds must live in a very dry pasture.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 15, 1866.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, I expect to be with the Woburn Church, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in May (31st). Services at the usual hours.

H. C. KER.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Mary J. Dickey, daughter of John F. and Mary F. Hilton, died at her home near Lockney, Texas, March 17th, 1915. She was born near Aurora, Mo., Nov. 23rd, 1876, and moved with her parents to Texas, who settled near Hillsboro in 1882, where she grew up and received a good education. She was married to Joseph S. Dickey Nov. 23rd, 1904. To that union were born three children, two boys and one girl. They moved to west Texas and settled near Lockney in 1909, where they were making a good start in life, but alas, how soon were their hopes blasted by the death of dear Mary. She never made a public profession, but was a firm believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine and order.

The remains were shipped back to Hillsboro and the funeral services were held at the residence of Mrs. Sarah McClung, a sister of the deceased, conducted by the writer March 21st. She was buried in the new cemetery, beside her father, who was laid to rest there in 1902. Dear Mary leaves an aged mother, one sister, two brothers and a devoted husband and three little children to mourn their loss, but we mourn not as those without hope, for we believe she is at rest with her dear Savior. She was pleasant in life and beautiful in death. May God comfort all who mourn.

W. L. ROGERS.

SISTER **Harriett H. Williams,** wife of Deacon S. H. Williams and daughter of the late Elder G. W. and Lucinda McDonald, was born in Madison County, Miss., Feb. 17th, 1843, departed this life at her home near Coleman, Texas, March 29th, 1915, making her stay on earth 72 years, 1 month and 13 days. Sister Williams was married to S. H. Williams, in Bell County, Texas, Jan. 6th, 1866, Elder Wm. Thomas officiating. To that union were born seven children, three boys and four girls, the boys dying in infancy. Those of her immediate family left to mourn her sad demise are the aged father, Mrs. M. Wood, Mrs. W. T. Smith, Mrs. W. S. Copeland and Miss Drue Williams. Sister Williams had been in failing health for some time, but she bore her suffering with that fortitude characteristic of a christian. She was laid to rest March 31st, in the White Chapel Cemetery, there to await the resurrection. A large concourse of sorrowing relatives and friends were present to pay tribute to the worth of this good woman. Truly it can be said, A mother in Israel has fallen.

Sister Williams professed a hope in Jesus in her early womanhood, and united with Little Flock Church of the Primitive Baptist faith in Bell County, Texas, and was baptized by the late Elder Wm. Thomas in 1877. Brother and sister Williams moved from Bell County to Coleman County, Texas, in 1881, and united by letter with Hords Creek Church in December, 1896, where she remained until her death.

Sister Williams numbered her friends by her acquaintances; possessed of an affectionate disposition, which no one can possess except those who know Jesus, whom to know is life eternal. She was always kind and charitable, with a true devotion to her King, and died as she lived, in the full triumph of a living faith in the efficacy of the atoning blood of Jesus for life and salvation. All was done for her that physicians and loved ones could do, but to no avail. The husband has lost a faithful wife, the children a kind and affectionate mother, and the community a neighbor in deed and in truth. Dear brother Williams, a few more winters' storms and you will be called to follow on. By faith you can see the beckoning hand of Jesus on the other side of death. Soon he will say, Child, your Father calls, come home. To her sorrowing children it is hard to give up a mother so good and kind. Try to emulate her life. Mother has gone before; she is done with suffering. To the bereaved ones we will say in the language of Paul: For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Written by request.

JOHN R. HAVENS.

Mrs. Sarah Catherine Mellott, our sister in Christ, and widow of Deacon Moses Mellott, whose obituary appeared in the SIGNS for February 15th, departed this life at her home near Plum Run, Fulton Co., Pa., April 8th, 1915. She was born June 16th, 1849, near McConnellsburg, Fulton Co., Pa., and was the daughter of John and Julia Ann Clevenger, being the youngest of fifteen children. Of this large family but one sister is left surviving: Mrs. Annie Wise, of Illinois. Sister Sarah Catherine was married to Moses Mellott July 9th, 1870. To that union one child was born, which died in infancy. The parents of our deceased sister were of some Arminian persuasion religiously, and she as a young girl was naturally associated with Arminians and reared under their teachings. As a result of such training, and not as following upon any convictions of her own, she joined in her girlhood a sect called Winebrennarians, who are an offshoot of the German Reformers and practice immersion. After her marriage to brother Moses Mellott she first came in contact with the Old School Baptists, and very soon realized that these were the people after her own heart. Having been brought to realize her exceeding sinfulness by nature, and having by grace been given a hope of salvation through the merit and righteousness of Jesus, she was so constrained by love to cast in her lot with the Primitive Baptists that she could not resist, and so united with the church called Fairview, at Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa., in March, 1876, being baptized by the late Elder Thomas Rose. Our sister dearly loved the doctrine of God's free and sovereign grace, and was steadfast to the last in her faith in the omnipotence of God and in his infinite ability to conduct all things after his own counsel. She was a living proof of the fact that one's natural parentage does not insure one's continuance in error forever, and that the gift of eternal life in Jesus is not influenced by whether one's parents are in the path of the just or not. The religious convictions of her maturer years were so utterly at variance with those of her youth that one is confirmed in the belief that surely the Lord is the teacher of his children, and not man.

Our sister was buried in the beautiful cemetery at Sideling Hill, by the side of her husband, who had preceded her to the grave but a short while. Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the meetinghouse at Needmore, using as a text the words: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." May the Lord comfort the mourning ones.

ALSO,

William F. McKimmy died May 9th, 1915, at his home near Lovettsville, Va., after four months illness of heart trouble. He was the son of John McKimmy and Sarah Thornton, born March 4th, 1844, and lived all his days in Loudoun County. Nov. 11th, 1873, he was married to Miss Isabel Beamer. To that union were born eight children, six daughters and two sons, all of whom, together with their mother, survive their father; also brother McKimmy is survived by three sisters and two brothers, one sister being a member with him of the Old School Baptist Church. Brother McKimmy had been attending the Old School Baptist meetings for many years, but more and more regularly and with increasing zeal as he drew near his end. Some years ago he was convicted of sin, and saw himself a guilty sinner before a just and holy God. At that time he was in much distress of mind, and felt that there could be no salvation for such a sinner as he. At that time the question asked Paul and Silas by the Philippian jailer came into his heart with great force: "What must I do to be saved?" Like a flash came the answer: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." With these words applied by the Spirit to his sin-burdened soul, his burden of condemnation was removed, and he experienced the forgiveness of sins at the hands of Jesus. In this way he was given a good hope through grace, a hope that was truly an anchor of his soul, a hope that grew brighter as the end of mortality drew nigh, a hope that has now realized its fruition in the presence of the Lord in glory. It was my privilege to baptize

brother McKimmy in the fellowship of the New Valley Church Sept. 21st, 1913. Though he was not permitted to live long with us in the church militant after coming among us, he was enabled by grace to maintain a well ordered life and conversation up to the time of his departure from earth. He was thoroughly alive to his obligations as a member of the church, loved his meetings with his brethren, rejoiced in the doctrine of God our Savior, and was devoted to the welfare of the church. He was a friend to the poor and needy, a neighbor not in word, but in deed. Many are they that will miss his helping hand, but it was not his custom to let one hand know what the other did. He did his alms not to be seen of men. The family of our beloved brother was a unit in love and devotion to him. All that loving hands and hearts could do to ease his pain and to make his last days on earth comfortable, was done without stint or thought of self. May the Lord comfort the sorrowing widow in her loneliness, strengthen the bereft children to share their mother's grief, and may the Spirit of God console them as only he can.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer from our brother's late home, using as a text Eph. ii. 8-10. Burial in Union Cemetery at Lovettsville.

L.

William C. Calloway, an old resident of Wicomico County, Md., departed this life Jan. 27th, 1914, in the 83rd year of his age. He was born within a few miles of the spot where the town of Delmar now stands, and spent the whole of his long life in that vicinity.

ALSO,

Mrs. Leah Calloway, his wife, was called into the better life March 11th, 1915, aged 80 years. They were married in the year 1854, thus had lived together about sixty years. Her maiden name was Hastings. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptists at Little Creek, Sussex Co., Del., many years ago, and continued a steadfast and faithful member to the end. When able she dearly loved to meet in the assemblies of the saints, but for some years she was afflicted in a way that she was unable to take the ride. This worthy old couple lived and died in the esteem of all who knew them, and left behind them a blessed memory. They are survived in their immediate family by one son, Isaac M. Calloway, one daughter, Mrs. Martha Kenney, twenty grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. I attended both funerals, and tried to speak to the comfort of the bereaved.

ALSO,

John Shockley, for thirty-six years a faithful and worthy member of the church at Nassaongo, Wicomico Co., Md., entered into his eternal rest May 9th, 1915. He was born Jan. 25th, 1835, making his age 80 years, 3 months and 15 days. He was twice married, his first wife dying while young, leaving one daughter, also deceased. His second wife was Mrs. Elizabeth Perdue, by whom he has three children surviving, one son and two daughters. There are also one stepson and several grandchildren. Sister Shockley, who survives him, is also an esteemed member of the same church. They were both baptized by the late Elder T. M. Poulson, she in 1878 and he in 1879. Brother Shockley was highly esteemed by all his brethren, and was worthy of their esteem for his steadfastness in the truth and spiritual mindedness and faithfulness. His seat in the meetings was never vacant unless providentially hindered. He delighted in meeting with his brethren and conversing on spiritual things.

His funeral was held at Forest Grove on the 11th, when the writer tried to comfort the bereaved wife and children, using for a text 1 Cor. xv. 44. Burial in Forest Grove Cemetery.

A. B. FRANCIS.

Elizabeth Robertson Reed was born Sept. 12th, 1831, near Henderson, Knox Co., Ill., and died April 20th, 1915, aged 83 years, 7 months and 8 days. Her father, Daniel Robertson, was the first white settler of Knox County, settling in 1828, and mother was the first white girl born in this county, which is now the heart of the noble State of Illinois. Mother knew the hardships of pioneer life. She used the spinning-wheel and loom, spun and wove flax and wool, wove and sewed all by hand. In their home, the humble cabin, she was married to Isaac D. Reed, May 25th, 1854, and to them were born seven children: Mrs. Mary J. Jordan, of Winterset, Iowa, Daniel W., who died at three years of age, J. F. Reed, of Cambridge, Ill., G. T., of Sumner, Nebr., I. R., near Cambridge, near which place mother had lived for over forty years, until last winter, when she was taken sick. My only sister, Mrs. W. J. Price, of Earlham, went there, and as soon as she could brought her home with her. She rallied for a time, but infirmities of age were wearing out her mortal strength. She would repeat Scripture and hymns, and requested that no flowers be used. It was the Lord's will, and blessed be his holy name, she said. Alexander, a third son, died at nineteen years of age, in 1880 (I believe). My sister and family did all that could be done for her. She was kind and patient, and every one who knew mother loved her. She was baptized by Elder John Roberts, a visiting preacher, in 1860, in the fellowship of Henderson Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, Knox Co., Ill., at that time nearly extinct. After her uniting with them, others came, until it became a strong church. Her membership was with that church at the time of her death. During the life of the Red Oak Church she was a member there, but after it went down she went back to Henderson.

Elder B. F. Butler, of Loveland, Iowa, was telegraphed for, he having known and lived in the same church with her so long in Illinois. The despatches were laid over at Council Bluffs, which he did not receive in time to come or let us know he could not get here, so a Friend, a Quaker minister, officiated, after which Mr. and Mrs. Price accompanied the remains to Rio, Ill., where they were met by the other children and friends and laid beside my father, who died in 1871, in the churchyard at Henderson Church.

A sorrowing daughter,

(MRS.) F. M. JORDAN.

William D. Owen, son of Fred E. and Nancy M. Owen, died at Manchester, N. Y., aged 37 years and 9 days. The subject of this notice was killed while working in the railroad yards. He was found lying beside the track after a fast freight had passed, and was carried to the office while still living. Those who were near him said he lived about an hour, but only spoke a word or two once. The dear form was not disfigured, but hurt inwardly. He leaves to mourn their loss a wife and six children, three boys and three girls, the eldest a boy of twelve, and the youngest born a month after the father's death, father, mother, one sister, Mrs. E. H. Anderson, of Dover, N. J., one brother, David, of Shortsville, N. Y., also a host of relatives and friends. He and his wife were members with the Methodists, and he was never so happy as when attending the meetings and singing the songs of praise to the dear Redeemer. We mourn not as those who have no hope, but feel that our great loss is his eternal gain, and that he has abundant entrance into that within the veil; but O how hard we find it to be reconciled to this dispensation of Providence.

NANCY M. OWEN.

MEETINGS.

THE Delaware Association will be held with the Bryn Zion Church, near Kenton, Kent Co., Del., on May 26th, 27th and 28th, 1915. A cordial invitation to all of our faith and order is herewith extended; ministering brethren are invited to come. All trains from both north and south arriving at Clayton, Del., any time after noon on Tuesday, May 25th, will be met. The evening trains also will be met and friends directed to places of entertainment. Any coming other than as above inquire for the home of James D. Wright, in Clayton, Del.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Moderator.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Southampton Church, at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the first Sunday in June (2nd, 3rd and 4th), 1915.

Those coming to the Delaware River Association from the north will take the train at New Hope, on the Reading Railroad, for Ivyland, Tuesday afternoon, June 2nd, where they will be met and cared for. Inquire for Wm. Hobensack. Those coming from the south and east will take the train at Reading Terminal, Philadelphia, at 4:23 Tuesday afternoon and come to Southampton, where they will be met.

SILAS H. DURAND.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Middleburg has appointed her yearly meeting to be held on the first Saturday and Sunday in June (5th and 6th), 1915. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth, and especially ministers of our faith and order, to meet with us.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Warwick Church, at Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (9th, 10th and 11th), 1915.

Those coming from and by way of New York will take train leaving West Twenty-third St. at 1:55 p. m. the day before the meeting. This train leaves Jersey City at 2:20 p. m. Those coming from the north and west will arrange to be in Middletown in time to take 4:09 p. m. train also the day before the meeting. All get tickets for Warwick, where trains will be met and friends cared for. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

ISAAC S. BAIRD, Church Clerk.

THE Bethel Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will hold their regular annual three days meeting commencing on Friday 10 a. m. before the third Sunday in June (18th), 1915. Stop off at Albany, take Lebanon branch, stop at Tallman. Several trains daily. Lovers of truth invited.

A. HORNER, Church Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 83. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1915. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE IRON GATE.

"WHEN they were past the first and second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city, which opened to them of his own accord; and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him."—Acts xii. 10.

The saints of God, though sinners of Adam's race, are the best people that have ever lived upon the earth, yet how evil spoken of and persecuted they have been. Saith the apostle Paul, "We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." That professor of the name of Christ who in his behavior is conformed to the world may get along smoothly enough, for the world loves its own. Many have a religious mouth, but their lives are according to the course of this world; they flow with the tide, and the world does not hate them. Cain slew his brother Abel. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you."—1 John iii. 13. Some of the dear saints of God were "tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, morever, of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth."—Hebrews xi. 35-38. This is a terrible indictment against the world that God's saints should be so shamefully entreated. And shall not God avenge his own elect which cry unto him day and night? "Herod the king stretched forth his hands, to vex certain of the church. And he killed James the brother of John with the sword. And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.) And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers, to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people." It is written, "He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye."—Zech. ii. 8. So tenderly beloved are God's chosen unto himself. He that offends, causes grief to his saints, has touched God in the tenderest spot. "Saul, Saul, why persecutest

thou me?"—Acts ix. 4. O Saul of Tarsus, thou wast as a wild, savage beast, exceeding mad; thy fierce, hot breath was breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the saints. Thou wast a blasphemer of Jesus' dear name; thou wert injurious, a bloody persecutor, yet thou didst obtain mercy! O what exceeding riches of grace is shown in thee! This is wondrous love indeed. This is Jehovah's grace to sinners, of whom I am chief. "Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him." I love this picture, my heart is instructed and comforted as I contemplate it. Peter is in prison, in chains, soldiers guard him, walls and gates separate him from the brethren. They cannot see him, or minister unto him. What will they do? Their enemies are powerful and many. The church loves Peter, he languishes in prison, their hearts are troubled for him. They can have no power in Herod's court. They are too despised to have influence there. They are too poor to purchase his freedom. They cannot with battering-rams and weapons of war rescue him, and they know Herod killed James with the sword. What will they do? They do very blessedly. They plead in his behalf before the Majesty in the heavens. They come before the throne and spread before God all the distress they are in. Instant, earnest prayer was made without ceasing of the church of God for him. Dear children of God, how blessed is that heart that we have to pray one for another. This is the one God-given heart. (Jer. xxxii. 39.) I will call it the heart of the household of God, in which we are taught of God to love one another, in which we look with all desire for the welfare of another. It is a burden-bearing heart, a forgiving heart, a heart that prays for one another. This is the new covenant heart of the household of God. Have you this heart? He that is destitute of this heart knows not God. "He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love." The church prayed without ceasing unto God. They prayed for comforting, sustaining grace to be given to Peter, and that, if it were God's will, he might be delivered from his bloody persecutors. The Jews are all in expectation of witnessing Peter's execution on the morrow. O sinful man! How cruel, desperately wicked is thy heart. "And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains; and the keepers before the door kept the prison." Peter was sleeping; he did not know what should be on the morrow, whether it should be his to glorify God by life or by death. It was not in his determination. Herod intended his death. Peter was sleeping. Many of the church were gathered together praying to God. The Lord stood by Peter and he could say, My times are in God's hand. Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains. So the Lord giveth his beloved sleep. Many a tried child of God has been given rest and quietness amidst sore troubles. We have felt we were imprisoned, walled in with trials, shut in by the iron gate, held in chains, and we could not come forth; but God by his gracious power can give us in the midst of our adversities repose, resignation and trust; we pillow our heads upon God-given thoughts of the unchanging love, the precious promises, the faithfulness, the wisdom, the omnipotence of the Lord, and that all things are in the hand of our heavenly Father, and we rest. "Peter was sleeping." The Lord was not sleeping, for he that keepeth Israel

neither slumbers nor sleeps, he is not wearied; there is no searching of his understanding. Though Herod the wicked has purposed the death of Peter, and though the wicked Jews are in expectation of the wicked spectacle, "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?"—Lam. iii. 37. The counsel of the Lord it shall stand, and his purpose is to deliver Peter from the power of Herod and disappoint the sinful expectations of the people. "And behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison; and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands." The ministry of the angels of God, so often narrated in the Scriptures, is very sacred. The elect angels are ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation, the elect of mankind. The prison is illuminated with supernatural light, and there we see Peter sleeping in chains between two soldiers. Walls and gates, keepers and soldiers, have not been able to hinder the entrance of this heavenly visitor. Who or what shall frustrate Omnipotence? He smote Peter upon the side, and raised him up. This was a loving stroke to awaken him, not to the dismal darkness of his dungeon, but to the radiance of heavenly light, to the presence of an angel of light from God. One of old exclaimed (and the same voice in our days is sometimes heard), "I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night." His kind, heavenly voice smote, knocked and awakened her heart. O such knocking is wonderful. We know his voice, no one can speak like Jesus. He awakens our dull, sleepy, sleeping hearts. The angel raised up Peter, and his chains fell off from his hands. Peter's guards, to whom he was chained, were not awakened and raised up by the angel; there lie the sleeping soldiers. The Lord raiseth up those that are bowed down. The children of God know what it is to be cast down, to fall down, and there is none to help. Faint, weary, wounded, in a desert land, because of sin, of the fiery darts of the devil, because of trials, and also because of what we have to acknowledge are the chastenings of our heavenly Father. But when the Lord says, Arise, how cheering and strengthening is his voice in the soul. The gospel of Christ in the sacred comfort of it is spirit and life; we are raised up, and our bonds are loosed. "And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals: and so he did." The Lord told the children of Israel thus to eat the passover: "With your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste; it is the Lord's passover."—Ex. xii. 11. They were in all readiness to march forth from Egyptian bondage, and Peter is to be in all preparedness for his exodus from prison. "Gird thyself." Children of God, we have need to be girded for our journey to the better country, to the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. God has not left us unprovided, for this is the instruction given us, we are to have our "loins girt about with truth."—Eph. vi. 14. There could be no better girdle for us poor sinners than this God-provided girdle. The precious truth of Christ's gospel is so supporting and strengthening. So the apostle Peter, having spoken of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, says, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope

to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."—1 Peter i. 13. Thus we are girded with strength for the journey, or for the battle, and we hope to the end. "Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals." Peter's feet are to be shod, and the feet of believers in Christ must be shod. If thy way be rough and thorny, then "thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be."—Deut. xxxiii. 25. And whether it be such shoes as we wear in the palace of the King, when in all admiration it is said, "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter,"—Solomon's Song vii. 1, or whether it be shoes fit for our pilgrimage, to stand in the battle, to tread the lion and the adder under our feet, all that comprises our shoes, suited for every condition, is found in this, "Having your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace."—Eph. vi. 15. Christ's gospel known in our hearts prepares us, enables us to walk circumspectly, to walk in love to God, and to Jesus Christ, and all who love our Lord Jesus Christ, to walk humbly with our God, to run in God's highway of holiness, and not grow weary, to walk and not faint. With our gospel shoes our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem, and our feet shall stand upon the necks of our enemies, and we shall in holy triumph tread upon their high places. O, it is with such shoes that we shall stand with the Lamb upon Mount Zion, having his Father's name written upon our foreheads. (Rev. xiv. 1.) "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."—Rom. xvi. 20. "Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals: and so he did." Peter was obedient. All new covenant obedience is God-wrought, springing from God's gracious operations in a sinner's heart. "Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."—Rom. vi. 17. And it is written in Psalms cx., "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth." It is so blessed that God worketh in his people both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Does not your heart say, Let me be formed for thyself to show forth thy praise; I will run in the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart? And the angel said unto Peter, "Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me." All this was that he should be in all readiness to go forth from the prison. And what garment shall a poor, guilty sinner wear when the Lord shall grant him deliverance from his guilt and shame, and the curse of the law? He shall be clothed by faith, (wrought by the operations of God in his soul) in the garments of salvation and robe of Christ's righteousness, which is unto and upon all that believe. (Isaiah lxi. 10.) Thus arrayed by faith in Christ crucified there is no condemnation. Christ has died for our sins, and has risen again for our justification. O sinner, how blessed thou art to be dealt with in such a way.

> "Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
> My beauty are, my glorious dress;
> Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
> With joy shall I lift up my head."

"And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision." A miracle has been wrought, so while Peter follows the angel he walks as one in a dream, or rather as though he were simply looking upon moving pictures of these transactions. That was a sacred experience of the disciples when Jesus after his resurrection appeared in their midst; they at first "believed not

for joy, and wondered."—Luke xxiv. 41. In Psalms cxxvi. 1, 2, it is recorded: "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing." Peter with the angel pursues his way to freedom. Are there none to challenge their steps? When the tribes of Israel marched out of Egypt on the passover night not a dog moved his tongue. (Exod. xi. 7.) The four quaternions of soldiers, to whom Herod had delivered Peter to keep, are asleep; they are powerless, they cannot detain in prison the one that God will deliver. So Peter and the angel pass the first and second ward, and there before them is the iron gate that leadeth into the city, and it is closed and shuts them in. Who has the key? who shall unbar this massive gate and open it for their exodus? The angel of the Lord and Peter hold on their way, and when they came to the iron gate it opened to them of his own accord. We do not read that they had to wait a moment. The God of Peter's deliverance timed the opening of the iron gate. That gate was in accord with the apostle's deliverance, for God wrought in it, his omnipotence moved it to open of his own accord. There was no grating complaint of its hinges, no hesitation. God suffered the hands of wicked men to close that iron gate upon Peter, and shut him in; but no human hands were called upon to open it for Peter's freedom. "And they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him. And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews." It is all true, not a mere vision; the apostle Peter is free, and he knows that God has released him from prison and rescued him from the power of Herod. The time for Peter to die was not to be on the morrow, as Herod had decreed, but it was to be at the time and manner spoken of by Jesus: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God."—John xxi. 18, 19. The apostle Peter made his way to the house where the church were praying to God for him. Their prayers were answered, and we may be sure that it was a sacredly blessed time with them all that night; much love and praise were in their hearts to the Lord. Read the continuation of this narrative in the twelfth chapter of Acts. There are times in the experience of the children of God during their sojourn in the world when they find they are as those imprisoned, and cannot come forth; the iron gate shuts them in. Some indeed of the chosen of God, as the prophet Jeremiah, have known what it is to be both temporally and spiritually in "the low dungeon," (Lam. iii. 55,) but the dismal deeps set forth in this chapter are only known by a very few; and if the language is used by us to tell our own experiences it is only in a relative manner that it is lawful for us to do so. For instance, Heman, the Ezrahite, in Psalms lxxxviii. 6, 8, exclaims, "Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps. Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves. Selah. Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me: thou hast

made me an abomination unto them: I am shut up, and I cannot come forth." If there are deeps in tribulation that only a few of God's people have gone down into, so there are heights of ecstatic blessedness, of "visions and revelations of the Lord," that a few only know. The apostle Paul's labors and sorrows for Christ's sake exceeded all that other apostles were called to endure; so his consolations abounded by Christ. His visions and revelations of the Lord when he was caught up to the third heaven were more than others were given to experience. The Lord is graciously sovereign in his dealings with his blood-bought people, and in his infinite wisdom, and for his own glory, he allots unto each one such trials, temptations and sorrows, and such comforts and blessedness, as seemeth good in his sight. Joseph was cast into prison, his feet were hurt with fetters, he was laid in iron, until the time that the word came, the word of the Lord tried him. (Psalms cv. 17–20.) His brethren, when they planned his destruction, said, "And we shall see what will become of his dreams." Ah, Joseph when in prison was in his spirit in a furnace of trial because of his dreams: "The word of the Lord tried him." Pharaoh's butler and baker go forth of the prison, the one to honor and the other to dishonor, but Joseph remains in prison, the iron gate of false accusation shuts him in. He protests, I have done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon. (Gen. xl. 15.) He cannot unbar the iron gate. But the time came for his release: "the king sent and loosed him." The King of kings, to fulfill his own counsels, moved this king "to let him go free," and when we see Joseph standing before Pharaoh arrayed in a vesture of fine linen, and a gold chain about his neck, who shall then lay anything to his charge? One word from the king, the iron gate opens, and Joseph is free. The Lord said to the church in Smyrna, "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

"No foe can annoy me, or friend give a smile,
Unless he permit, or constrain;
Though Satan may tempt, and false brethren revile,
My God will his purpose explain."

Child of God, doubtless you know something of the iron gate that shuts you in, and makes you as a prisoner debarred from the privileges of Zion. Sometimes what appears at first sight a small matter grows into a formidable iron gate that we are not able to move on its hinges or burst asunder. Cares and afflictions encompass us and are as a prison to the soul. If the Lord hides his face from us then we are troubled, and the iron gate hinders us in the enjoyment of our citizenship. Instead of freedom to walk in the courts of the Lord's house, our best portion while shut in by the iron gate is to be in the court of the prison; and there is quite a difference. And when in prison all we have is prison fare, and prison garments. This Jehoiachin knew for thirty-seven years. (2 Kings xxv. 27–30.) The rebellious fugitive Jonah found himself a prisoner in the belly of the whale. That fish was "prepared" to swallow Jonah. A miracle was wrought in his imprisonment, and by a miracle he was set free. "Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly, and said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice." And that fish, Jonah's living prison, piloted by the God of Jonah's salvation,

swam for the shore and vomited out Jonah upon the dry land; because the Lord spake unto the fish. Now, dear child of God, no matter what may be the iron gate that shuts you in, if the Lord speaks to it then it will open of its own accord for your freedom. An arm of flesh, the help of man, are all vain in your case. This perhaps you have already learned, and if you have not you certainly will. God shutteth, and no man openeth; and openeth, and no man shutteth. But you say, I have been in prison so long, my chastenings continue; I own I deserve them, and my soul sometimes cries, Let not the pit swallow me up. Temptations, conflicts, adversities inclose my ways as hewn stone, I sigh and languish, moan and pray, but there is the iron gate still shut, and I am in chains, in the bondage of corruption. O wretched one that I am! who shall deliver me from the bondage of this death? I have tried to break down the gate, but it is iron, too massive for my feeble hands to move, too formidable for me to break through. I could be patient under these trying providences, I could endure these straits, and put to flight the taunting adversary, I would laugh at all trials, and all the enemies of my soul, all walls and iron gates, if Jesus would only visit me with his love and smile upon a sinful worm. But ah, I am base, unworthy, vile, distrustful, a murmurer, sometimes a very rebel, with hard thoughts of God and of Jesus; O, I am a wretched sinner, no wonder I am hedged in, and the iron gate will not open; and though I am discouraged and often cast down, yet I cannot leave off praying for mercy. O when, O Christ, wilt thou visit me, and bring my soul out of prison that I may praise thy name?

In God's sacred purpose the prayers of the church made without ceasing for Peter were the key to open the iron gate. God hears the groanings of his prisoners, and Jesus Christ is their almighty Friend; and every iron gate will open when he shall say, "Ephphatha, that is, Be opened." "For he has broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder."—Psalms cvii. 16. Remember that when Peter and the angel of the Lord were come unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city it opened to them of his own accord.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

GENESIS III. 12.

"AND the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat."

This is the answer of Adam to the question asked him, "Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?" I wish to offer a few thoughts on the language of Adam. Notice what is said of the creation of Adam: "Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam." Eve was not created separate from Adam, nor was she given life or the law separate from Adam. She was made of a rib taken from Adam, and when brought to him he said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman." The Scripture, speaking of the relation of husband and wife, says, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." Now if I understand Paul here, he lets us know he uses the relation of husband and wife to show the relation of Christ and the church. So we are told Christ loved the church, the bride, and gave himself for it. Then we have this thought before us: that it

was not in order to get himself a bride that Christ died, but because she was his bride. "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." In the transgression Adam was not deceived. But Paul says, "The woman being deceived, was in the transgression." Adam did not violate the law in taking the forbidden fruit from the tree, but he took it at the hands of his wife. But to my mind, as I will try to show, this was not necessary for him to do to become a transgressor of the law. The woman given to be with him, bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, gave unto him, and by her act he was involved; for they (two) were one flesh, and it was not necessary that Adam should take the fruit from the tree in order to be a transgressor with his wife, nor was Adam ever separated from his wife by her transgression, nor was it necessary for him to take the fruit from the tree to be with her. It was not his great love, as I have heard brethren say, that caused him to follow her into the transgression; there was no such thing as following here. No sooner had Eve partaken of the forbidden fruit than was Adam involved. If a wife should contract a debt the husband would be involved just when the debt was contracted; it would not be necessary for the husband to go and contract the same debt in order to become involved. Now let us here not forget that this first Adam was the figure of Him, the second Adam, that was to come. If the first Adam was separated from his wife until he partook of the fruit, or became a transgressor in order to be with his wife, then, too, was the second Adam separated from his wife or bride until he became a transgressor of the law so as to be under the law with his bride. Now I do not like that idea at all. I know Christ was made to be sin for his people, but I do not believe he was ever separated from her, and then in order to be with her he, too, must transgress the law. We know he was legally and lawfully held by the law, or he could not be held responsible for the sin of his bride; there is but the one way, and that to my mind is a union and oneness of life. To my view a volunteer or substitute could not answer divine justice. No law based on justice can punish an innocent one for a guilty one. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." The idea generally held by the world is that God so loved the world that he sent his Son to die for sin, and those who accept the conditions or offers of mercy will be saved. But such a system could save no one, for the reason that no one is capable or able to accept and perform such conditions, for the dead cannot act in order to obtain life. I do not believe the word "substitute" sets forth the true relation of Christ and the bride. I know in the time of our Civil War what a substitute meant. If a man was drafted into the service, if able he could hire a substitute, but the substitute need be no better than the man who hired him. There was in this a great deal more than the Arminian will allow, for he who obtained a substitute to take his place did not have to go to war. But we must needs have a better way than this, that God might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife, was loved and chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, the covenant Head and Husband, and he made to be head over all things to the church, which is his body. The apostle says, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and

without blame before him in love." Here we have God's purpose concerning this people thus loved and chosen, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. Not that they always were an holy, spiritual seed; no, I believe these people said to be predestinated to be conformed to the image of Jesus are poor, defiled sinners of Adam's race, but given to Christ as his bride in covenant before the world was, and he is her legal and lawful Husband, her Head and Surety, the responsible one who must pay the debt; and just because of this union it was written of him, And thus it behooved him to suffer and to die, for there never was and never will be a sin put away without the shedding of blood. "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins." We are here given to see that sin must be punished. So the Son of God, the Surety, the Husband, was made of the seed of David, made of a woman, made under the law, for he must not take the nature of angels, in that he could not suffer, but he who was the life of his bride must be in union with her in the flesh. As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also must take part of the same, for it became him in all things to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. Behold, I and the children whom thou gavest me. The woman that thou gavest to be with me gave unto me; I took it at her hands and must drink the bitter cup. For thus it must be, for it is written of me, Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God. O how blind is human reason. See the poor disciples; when Christ was crucified their fond hope was dead. We thought it was he that should redeem Israel, but now this is the third day since these things were done. How sad and disconsolate they were, and when the Savior appeared unto them and asked them the cause of their sorrow they felt he certainly must be a stranger in Jerusalem, or else he would have known of their sorrow; and when they told him he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? What must have been their wonder when he began at Moses and all the prophets and expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. Then they could see the very things that had taken place in the crucifixion of their Lord were written of him. Well could they say one to the other, Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures? I fancy that these poor disciples wondered how they could have been so stupid and blind as not to understand that the very things done were written of him. But his disciples to-day are just as blind and slow to understand as were the disciples who were with Jesus. We may think it would not be so with us had we such evidence as they had, but I believe we have just the same. While they had his presence, that did not enable them to know him; none could believe but those to whom it was given, and then he must open their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and so must he now open our understanding, that we, too, understand the Scriptures.

Well might the apostle say, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one

jot or tittle of the law shall fail until all be fulfilled. And now, justice satisfied, the law fulfilled, shall he not triumph over all the powers of darkness? Shall he not see his seed and of the travail of his soul and be satisfied? God hath given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him. Here we should note the fact that the characters to receive eternal life do not possess it until it is given to them. Another thing to my mind is also shown: that it is the sons and daughters of Adam whom the Son of God was given power to give life to who were by nature the children of wrath, dead in trespasses and in sins. This shows the helpless, undone, ruined condition of the objects of God's love. Thus we are given to see that all those who shall be the recipients of his mercy must receive it alone on the basis of grace. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." He who hath saved his people from their sins did so before he called them; he first paid all the debt that sent them to prison. So the old prophet says, "The redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion." So we see the ransomed do not return in order to be redeemed, but because they are redeemed. All who have understanding know this is necessary; before the prisoner can be released the debt must be paid, and this being true, justice says the prisoner shall go free. By the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water (no life). Jesus bare the sins of his people and put them away by the sacrifice of himself. Not as an experiment, to see what could be done by giving the sinner a chance to save himself by accepting offered mercies. What advantage to the dead would it be to offer them life, saying, If you will accept this proposition I will make you alive? But suppose the person was alive, and we should offer him a favor that was repugnant to his nature, could we expect him to accept it? The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be. Men love darkness rather than light. And ye will not come unto me that ye might have life. This is the sad condition of all of Adam's race, all dead in sin. We clearly see no salvation except by grace. So saved and called, not according to works, all the sins of the bride, the Lamb's wife, put away, and not a thing to prevent or hinder mercy being extended to the objects of God's love. For he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy. As the Father raiseth the dead, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. Only the raised up and quickened sinner realizes himself to be helpless, lost and undone, and as Jesus came to save sinners, he will teach them whom he calls to know the need of a Savior. No other way or plan could reach the sinner's case.

Dear brother Ker, I have penned these thoughts as I had the mind and time. I do not know that I have made myself clearly understood, but I will submit them first to you, and then if you think they will be of any benefit to the readers of the SIGNS you may publish them; if not, all will be right with me.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

ELGIN, Oregon, Jan. 10, 1915.

DUTTON, Ont., Jan. 27, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have been feasting on the good things we had at the Duart meeting. How sorry I would have been to have missed that meeting. I always feel there are some things said at each meeting that we miss if we are not there to receive the "handfuls of purpose" that are let fall us. No one else can give them to us the same. Surely it was a feast of fat things, of wine on the lees well refined. I certainly hope you will be spared to again visit us if the Lord will. We were truly glad to both see and hear all the dear servants of God that have come to us from time to time when we were left without a pastor to go in and out before us. In the Lord's own time and way he was pleased to send us one of his most humble servants to serve us, for which we are truly thankful, I hope and trust, after so long waiting and begging the Lord to supply our great need. I am glad the Lord knows all things and does his will "in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" He does not consult the minds or wills of men as to what would be best to do or when to do it. More and more I am convinced in my own mind that we as his children know not what is best for us, as we heard so sweetly at the February meeting. We are naturally after the big things, that is our mind about things; but our dear Savior takes the small things and gives thanks, blesses and feeds his disciples with the few loaves and fishes. His storehouse is never exhausted, he keeps handing it out through his dear servants. It was so at our last meeting in Lobo, as well as at Duart. His storehouse is inexhaustible. O how good the dear Lord is to poor, vile, sinful creatures, that he never forgets us, although we so often forget him. O to be privileged to meet and assemble with the dear people of God to worship him in spirit and in truth is, I feel, a privilege not to think lightly of. The day is coming, and not far away with some of us at least, that we will not be able to meet and worship in the house of God as we once did. I feel that will be a very solemn time to me, I often think of it. It is the only comfort I have had since I was received in the church, and I know I am speaking for many others, for I have heard them say so many times. I missed the February meeting last year owing to the sickness of my niece, who died shortly afterward. The dear sisters were telling me as best they could about the meeting, but it was not to me the same as if I were there to hear for myself. I always feel sorry when any of the Lord's children are kept away through sickness or any trifling thing. They do not know what they miss, but I do not know that I need worry about any one else. They are all in the hands of God; he makes us what we are, and gives us minds and wills to serve him as it pleases him. We know by experience, I hope, that our steps are all ordered of the Lord, and nothing comes by chance, therefore we may rest assured that he makes no mistakes, though we make many. It says in Scripture: "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Surely we have known something of that by painful experience, for it seems to me that is the only way we can know anything of the path that leads to life and glory. We cannot learn these things out of books or from one another. It is the Lord that teaches us. To be led by the Spirit of God means a great deal, for "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the

sons of God." How often we question whether we are led by the Spirit of God or by some other spirit, for the "flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh," so we cannot do the things we would. How unsearchable are the ways of the Lord! We cannot by searching find out God. He separates us from all the things we once loved. I once heard Elder Ker say that when the Lord separated him from the world he never had a desire to go back into those things again. I felt I could say the same, and I am glad of it. I hate the garment spotted by the flesh. The Lord leads us about and instructs us, a little here and a little there. I enjoyed the piece in the last SIGNS on "Charity." Nothing is right without love, our religion is nothing without love, for "every one that loveth, is born of God." How can we say we love the Lord if we hate our brother? It cannot be. We are looking forward to our next Sunday meeting, the second of February, when our dear pastor will be with us again. We cannot praise the Lord enough for sending us such a gift. His preaching is very plain to those that have an ear to hear and a heart to understand, so I feel we are richly blessed of the Lord, and my prayer is for his welfare among us, even if it is through much tribulation. None of us learn much on the top of the mountains. I know that what little I know of the path that "no fowl knoweth," I have learned in the furnace of affliction, and I look back now and bless and praise the Lord that he counted me worthy to suffer for his name's sake. As many as he loves he rebukes and chastens. These painful afflictions are blessings from a loving Father's hand. How could I know his love and mercy to me if he did not try me in the furnace and consume some of the dross and pride in my heart? The dear Lord has his way of refining us and making us meet for his kingdom above, where all is love. I rebelled against his hand when things were not as I thought they ought to be, but I see clearly now he was accomplishing his will with me; bless his holy name. We lack understanding of God's ways in his dealings with us. Surely we know but little of his wisdom, and our wisdom is foolishness in his sight; so what are we but nothing at all? and Christ is all in all. O that I could know more and more of his ways and works. It is my desire that I learn of him who is meek and lowly in heart. I feel ashamed of myself many, many times, and am glad that no one knows me as God knows me. Now I am talking to you as to a friend, and feel, after all, I have said nothing to profit, but I hope you will pardon all you see amiss, and cast the mantle of love over all my mistakes and imperfections, for they are many. Please excuse this long letter, for my mind has run on at great length. I wish I could get some subscribers for the SIGNS. I hope what I have written is in love.

"Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

Your little, unworthy sister in sorrow and affliction,

(MRS.) THOS. E. LILLY.

KINGSTON, N. Y., Dec. 20, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—As the time for renewal for the SIGNS has arrived, you will please find inclosed two dollars, for which kindly send to my present address, as we expect to be here for the winter. If you should come to this part of the country we would be more than glad to have you come and see us. I am not very well, and get very low and dis-

couraged. The other night, while sleep was denied me, I was feeling very anxious, and these words came with some force to me: Be not afraid, it is I. O how sweet it is to feel that in every condition he is with us, even when the tempest of life is raging its highest, and we cannot discover a landmark or footprint, to hear the still small voice in the midst of the storm, and be made to feel that he can calm the tempest, he can quench the fire, and fill the empty with bread, and set the captives free. What have we to fear with such a protector as our all-wise God, who is able to do all things, and is faithful to perform all his promises? When we lose sight of these things, and clouds intervene, when the sun breaks through how it does seem that all old things have passed away and all things have become new. Even our weak bodies seem to have taken on new life and strength, and I feel to say with the psalmist, Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, praise his holy name for his wonderful works among the children of men. We can see his works in everything; the seasons, cold and heat are all controlled by him, and although the nations of the earth are in terrible commotion, it is all directed by his all-wise decree, and I do not believe it can go one step farther than he sees fit. Their bounds are set just as much as the sea's, and it is written, When they cry, Peace, peace, then sudden destruction cometh. We are near the opening of a new year, and little know what it may hold in store for us, but this I do feel sure of, it is all controlled by One who is able to rule, and whatever comes will be for the good of his people and his own glory. Afflictions are not at all pleasant, and sometimes I rebel, but I am usually brought to where I feel to kiss the rod, and say, Father, thou knowest what is best for me, and I know not where I would go only for his constraining love and mercy. I do hope to always be kept humble at his feet, although the way may be beset with thorns and briars. I feel this beautiful morning to give thanks to his great name that I have had sustaining grace sufficient to this day, and trust he will not leave or forsake me after so much mercy past, for I feel I need more and more every day of my life, as this sinful heart is no better than in times past.

Now I will close, as I have written more than I expected, and feel it is too poor an effort to take up your valuable time.

With best wishes to you and all for a happy new year, I remain sincerely your little sister, if one at all,

(MRS.) G. H. FAULKNER.

PINSONFORK, Ky., April 14, 1915.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—I have been wanting to write you ever since I read your first editorial in our medium of correspondence, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. In fact, I have commenced writing you two or three times, but my weakness and incapability to write loomed up in such miserable deformity that I cast them aside, yet as the impression still lingers in my mind I have decided to make another effort, considering that all cannot be strong, neither are all weak, but God hath set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased him; therefore the strong cannot do without the weak, neither can the weak do without the strong, for there is no schism in the body, because the whole body is "fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of

every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."—Eph. iv. 16. So with this fact before me this morning I am writing you with a feeling sense rather that it is my bounden duty to the cause of my dear Redeemer for his name's praise for such wonderful gifts in this dark day of delusion. I have thought often of late what an encouragement it is to the publishers, editors and readers of the SIGNS that God is still sustaining them in publishing the dear old paper, which columns have made glad the hearts of many of the disconsolate children of God who dwell in homes isolated from the Old School Baptists; and not only those who are far away from the meetings and preaching of our Baptists and from their church privileges, but also the hearts of all who read them with an understanding of the blessed truth set forth in the writings of the contributors, especially the editorials. My dear brother, I cannot do justice to my feelings without saying to you in this short letter that I do not remember of ever reading from the pen of any one that I enjoyed more than I have your writings in the SIGNS. Your views are so clear and forcible that the gainsayer cannot resist them, for they are verily scriptural. It does seem clear to my mind that the Lord raised up the dear servant, the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and put it into his heart to set forth the sacred principles set forth in the prospectus of the SIGNS in the year 1832, if I am not mistaken, and which have been strictly adhered to and published by the editors and writers until to-day, the space of eighty-three years. Well might we say, How wonderful are these things! I would be glad to express my feelings to you and Elder Ker, and also to many others, in a better way, but I cannot. I am glad in my heart that God has so wonderfully blessed his poor children, even dust-worms of the earth.

As my mind has been much exercised of late on some things recorded in the twelfth chapter of Revelation, especially the seventeenth verse, I would be glad if you or some other one of the brethren would write through the SIGNS on this last verse especially. The main points with me are: are all the woman's seed the children of God? and if so, how is it that the dragon is making war with only the remnant of her seed, or only with part of the family of God?

Hoping to hear from you, or some one else, through the SIGNS on the Scripture above named, I am, as ever, a poor wanderer and sojourner, as all our fathers were, W. J. MAY.

[THE Scripture concerning which Elder May asks for views through our columns reads as follows: "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." If any one of the many readers and contributors of the SIGNS has any revelation as to the meaning of this passage, and feels to write upon it, we shall be glad to publish same in this paper to comply with the request of brother May. As for ourself, we feel the subject is too big a one for us.—L.]

TOUCHET, Wash., April 29, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have felt like writing to you ever since you became connected with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but a felt sense of my inability to express my feelings to my brethren as I wish has kept me silent many times, and I make this attempt with this same feeling, but it seems after reading your editorial in the last SIGNS on the wonderful

revelation to John I can but believe you were given the same evidence that John was given, and it did encourage me. As I could see so much beauty in it, I felt maybe the same blessed angel showed it to me. I certainly have experienced something of the lonely isle this last year. It seemed the billows were over me; it seemed to me to be the darkest night I ever was called to pass through. I have tried to fill all my appointments, but it was with the greatest distress of soul. Last Saturday was our regular day of meeting. All my soul could do or say was, Lord, what shall I do? I went to the house of worship with nothing else on my mind but, Lord, what will I do? Some of the sisters made a selection of two hymns, and it seemed to me that the sentiment of both came into my soul with much power. The answer to my petition which I had been trying to put before the throne of grace all the morning was: "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught." Peter then came to me as my spokesman, and told the Lord how useless it would be, for he, with the rest of his comrades, had toiled all night and had caught nothing, and to make another attempt was useless. Dear brother, how true was this of me. "Nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net." No doubt my surprise was as great as Peter's, or greater, for the net when let down was soon so full I could not get to shore, and all I could do was to beckon the brethren for help. Now, my dear brother, there are three grand truths in this narrative which have given me much comfort this week, and your article so assisted me in drawing my draught of fish toward the shore that I felt I wanted you to know it. The first thought in this text is, How feeble is the help of man in all his labors to obtain the food the soul needs and craves. It proves the fact that all our works in that direction in and of ourselves are works of darkness. The second thought is, that Jesus is light, and in him is no darkness at all. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life," and this fact is demonstrated in this case as well as in all others. Notwithstanding all our failures, when Jesus speaks power and life come with it. Notwithstanding our past failures, we know how true, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." He speaks and it is done. The third and great truth is, the work of the Lord shall prosper in his hand, and no one to whom the word of the Lord comes as it did to Peter can deny its power. Moses' last testimony was: "He is the Rock, his work is perfect." So when we launch out into the great deep of sorrows and tribulations and let the net down, we begin to gather in the fishes of heaven such as the precious promises of God have prepared. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Those who mourn shall be comforted, and those who suffer with him shall also reign with him. So, dear brother, before we get far we are calling to the brethren to join us in praising the Lord, for our nets are so full we could never get to shore were it not for the help of our brethren. Herein is manifest that mutual love which characterizes the true church of God. We could no more reach the shore without the help of our brethren than a bird could fly with one wing. How needful it is that we love one another and watch over one another for good, for my joy is yours, my success is yours, my reaching the shore is your reaching the shore. May love and fellowship flow in Zion.

Dear brother, I have not written as I

expected when I started. I felt, as a reader of the SIGNS, to let you know how thankful I am that the Lord has raised up one to help brother Ker in the work.

Yours in love,

J. T. BARNES.

TEHUACANA, Texas, Sept. 27, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—We are admonished not to neglect the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, and we are also admonished to speak often one to another. I am isolated from my brethren, and am situated so that I hardly ever get to see any one to talk with about the love, merciful kindness and longsuffering of God toward his chosen people, whom he chose before time began. He chose them in the furnace of affliction, and at times the affliction is so great that it seems he has forsaken them, is clean gone from them, and they have to grope in the dark; but their heavenly Father is near them, and is protecting them when they know it not. If we were never afflicted we would never appreciate good health, and if we knew nothing of the darkness we would not know what light is. Just so about the sweet and the bitter; we have got to experience both to know what each is. I am living in the midst of a very religious people, who are very much interested concerning the salvation of the sinner, and instead of crying unto Jerusalem that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins, they cry to the poor sinner and tell him that he has to fight hard to obtain his eternal salvation, and then work hard to keep it; but Paul tells the Ephesians, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Now if God created us unto good works, and ordained that we should walk in them, what have we got to do to bring about these good works to bring God under obligation to save us? They also tell the sinner that if he will do a great round of duty works that God will love him in return, but I read that he first loved us, and then we love him because of that love.

I will bring this imperfect letter to a close, asking you to pass all of my imperfections by. May God bless us according to his will with every needed blessing.

JOSEPH H. BOZEMAN.

PRESCOTT, Ariz., Dec. 9, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—As it is about time for me to renew my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I inclose money order for two dollars. I feel that I cannot do without the good letters and editorials, as they are all the preaching I have, and they come to me as good news from a far country, a feast of fat things.

Dear brother, I have felt impressed ever since hearing of your sad bereavement, and also of our dear editor's death, to offer my heartfelt sympathy, but feeling my inability to write anything comforting I have kept silent, but the desire is with me still. It seems that His hand is heavy sometimes. I, too, have felt the stroke, and can truly say, Alone, alone. It is hard to say, Thy will be done, when loved ones are called hence and we feel all alone, bereft of those who were dearer than life to us; but we sorrow not as those who have no hope. Though we miss the dear ones everywhere, we feel

that He who doeth all things well hath called them to that better inheritance, where the heirs of the kingdom shall meet and praise his holy name through all eternity. But O, can one so sinful as I claim a part in that blest inheritance? If I could write and express my feelings as the dear sisters do I would ask no greater gift. O how my heart responds to the good letters I have just read in the last number, December 1st. Sister Mary E. Wright's words touch a responsive chord in my heart, where she wrote: "You never know the loneliness of a solitary sheep in a desert land until you have been so situated. But God has not forgotten to be gracious, and I thank him every day that it is as well with me, believing that he knows where the stray sheep is, and that not one shall be left out."

I have already written more than I intended, and I fear more than will be worth your valuable time to read. This poor, imperfect letter has been written at different times, and to me seems as nothing, and less than nothing. Please pardon the poor effort of a wayworn sinner.

Trusting alone in the Lord,

HARRIET UNDERWOOD.

JOHNSTOWN, Pa., April 10, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I will try to write you a few lines to-day. I have been thinking about writing often, but felt unable to write anything profitable, and do not feel as if I can write anything now. I hope this will find you all in good health. You do not know how hungry I get for Old Baptist preaching. Mother sent me a bundle of the SIGNS, and I get wonderful comfort out of them. Last evening I passed a corner where a Salvation Army man was talking, and I heard him say that the Lord does not compel a man to be converted, that he can do so of his own will. That was enough for me. I have been wondering ever since where in the Bible that man found his doctrine, for the Lord's people were virtually redeemed before the world was. They were chosen out of every nation, tongue and tribe, and shall come unto the Lord as he wills it, not as man wills it. O what love God must have had for his people, to give his only begotten Son to suffer death for their sins. When I was home and going to school every morning we used to read a portion of Scripture. I would read it over, but could see nothing in it; it was just the same as any other book; but now when I read them they open up to me. Sometimes when I have been through sore trials and have felt like giving up the fight, I would sit down and read a portion of the Scriptures, and O what wonderful peace it would bring to my soul. God watches over us with the tenderest care, as a mother watches over her children. He guides our footsteps, knows our thoughts. When we are disobedient he lets us go so far, then he chastens us. We get puffed up, get to worshiping other gods, but we can only go so far.

I am still working at the same place, and do not have a path of roses to tread by any means. I would liked to have been down for the March meeting. At times I could fill pages with the things I would like to write about, and at other times my mind is a blank.

From one who, by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, hopes in the resurrection,

ELMER MELLOTT.

[JOHNSTOWN, Pa., is one of the towns which Billy Sunday is said to have cleaned up, but from the experience of our young brother in that city, as stated above, there is still plenty of improvement to be desired, especially in the way of clean doctrine. We doubt if Billy could help much in that direction.—L.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1915.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

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1 TIMOTHY V. 24, 25.

"SOME men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after. Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid."

In this chapter the apostle is giving Timothy directions with reference to things in the house of God, foreseeing many hurtful and disgraceful things sure to be made manifest therein. Paul's greatest desire was for the welfare and peace of Zion, and he made every sacrifice to that end. He never tried to please men, nor did he shun to declare the whole counsel of God. Timothy being his son in the gospel, he instructed him and exhorted him to be faithful in every sense to the church of God, rebuke when necessary, commend when merited, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. The aged should be entreated as fathers and mothers, and nothing should be done by partiality. Transgression should be dealt with regardless of age or station in life, the rich and the poor treated alike. No man has privilege over another in the house of God. All are subjects of the kingdom, and bound by the laws of the King; hence no one is excused of wrongdoing because he is an Elder, deacon or otherwise. The house must be kept clean, or the stench of the filth will keep even members of the family away, to say nothing of those seeking "the perfection of beauty out of which God shines." The view given babes in Christ of the church is glorious to behold; surely no term could be more appropriate than "the perfection of beauty." There all is love, joy and peace; no evil, no hatred, no malice, no guile. It is the body of Christ, the Son of God, seen—a glorious body, not having spot, wrinkle or any such thing. O how the very being of one is thrilled and filled when the view is given, but O how sorrowful afterward to know that sin is being committed by those washed in the blood of the Lamb. How the heart sinks within when one discovers that Satan is still "among the sons of God." To lay hands suddenly upon any man is forbidden; every man should be proven correct in deportment, in all transactions of life, sincere and faithful in every sense of the word, before receiving him into the church. One disorderly character can do the church more harm than fifty upright, sincere and godly men can do it good, for the reason that the world is looking for and rejoicing in the slightest reproach among the Old Baptists. Then how careful all churches should be in the reception of members. If a man's sins are open beforehand they go before to judgment; that is, he is judged by or according to his sins or walk in life. If a man has the drink habit he is not a fit subject for membership until he lives without drink long enough to fully satisfy the church that the appetite has been overcome by the grace of God. If a man has the name of an unfair dealer in business he should not be received until his character has been redeemed among those of his community. If a man is profane he is not a suitable subject for baptism at the hands

of a servant of God. If a man is quick to anger and unruly the church is better off without him, even though he have an experience of grace. All such things, open in a man's life, should prevent his reception in the church; and on the other hand, if a man's sins are hid and follow, or are found out afterward, he should be dealt with by the church according to the law of Zion for the transgression, whatever it may be. If an old man, the church should not think, O well, he will not live long, and it would be too bad to exclude him as he is ready to step into the grave, but deal speedily with him, as though he had years before him. If a young man, the church should not say, O, he is young, and has many things to learn, and the temptations of life are greater for him now than they will be later in life. If the man be an Elder and pastor, and his life is not correct, he should receive the same condemnation that any other member should. If a deacon transgresses the laws of God he, whether rich or poor, should be dealt with. "Do nothing by partiality." The house of God is no place now, as it was not in Paul's day, for iniquity, and surely iniquity should not be covered or tolerated by the faithful in Christ Jesus.

"Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid." Here the apostle sets forth the other side of the question. Good works here mean uprightness of life, showing the tree has been made good, hence the fruit is good. How often such men and women are seen and known—those who would be ornaments in the church, yet they do not always ask a place. Not a question would be necessary, because the church in this or that place has full fellowship already for them. Other characters are backward, very unassuming, would not, could not demonstrate their feelings, yet have as much love for the church and are as deeply interested as those above mentioned. With the first they continue the same in good works and charity after their reception as before, and where these good works are in others they will be made manifest afterward. Such ones often become very active in the church. Good works will show themselves where the Spirit of God reigns, and by their fruits ye shall know them.

This is written by request, and we have done the best we can, and leave it with the readers of the SIGNS. K.

HEBREWS VII. 1–3.

"FOR this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually."

The writer of this most wonderful letter called Hebrews establishes the priesthood of the Son of God, its order and character; how it differed from the priesthood of Aaron and its likeness to the priesthood of Melchisedec. The Old Testament abounds with types and shadows of better things that were to come, of which Christ is the body. This is where the Old Testament Scriptures are of vital importance to the household of faith. All these things having been fulfilled in Christ, are infallible witnesses that Jesus is the Son of God. Of all types, or likenesses of Christ, Melchisedec was the most perfect, therefore Christ is called, of God, a "priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." The priesthood of Aaron could not in some respects typify the

priesthood of Christ. That priesthood was after a carnal commandment. Those priests were made without an oath, and by reason of death continued not. But Melchisedec "was made like unto the Son of God," "King of righteousness," "King of Salem, which is, King of peace; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life." This is one of the great mysteries of the Bible, as no such character can be traced or found out. Faith only lays hold of the matter and believes that in some mysterious way his origin was of God, to the end that there should be a priest after whose order Christ should be made. Abraham when met by Melchisedec recognized his own inferiority to him, even though God had called Abraham, blessed him and given him the promises. To that most wonderful and mysterious man Abraham gave one-tenth of the spoils taken when the kings were slaughtered; even Levi paid tithes to Melchisedec, being in the loins of his father Abraham when Melchisedec met him. Perhaps it is worthy of note that Abraham did not seek Melchisedec, but Melchisedec met him. So neither did the blessed in the promise to Abraham seek Christ, but he met them in the law and under the law as the High Priest of God and of our profession.

It would not be lawful to say we have no record of Melchisedec's birth or parentage, for the reason that the Scriptures declare he had none. No speculation whatever can be indulged in this mystery, nor is anything ever accomplished in speculating in any hidden thing of God. Let us now examine the likeness, or type. Jesus as man was without father, and as God was without mother, as the Prince of Peace was without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life. Therefore his is an endless priesthood—after the order of an endless life—a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. Thus by the oath of God he ever liveth to make intercession for the saints. Under the old covenant the high priest entered in once a year into the holy of holies with blood to offer first for his own sin, then for the sins of the people, and there was a remembrance of sins again at the end of the year; but Jesus entered into heaven itself, having by his own blood obtained eternal redemption for us. Then how much better the latter covenant than the first. How superior the ever-living priesthood; how much better the blood of Jesus Christ than that of goats and calves. How much better the tabernacle that shall not be taken down, nor one of her stakes removed, nor one of her cords broken, than the one of old which perished. How much better the worship thereof in spirit and in truth, singing with heart and voice, making melody unto the Lord. How far Christ exceeds Melchisedec in glory, being the Son of God. Unto him all the tithes of the storehouse must be brought—no reserve, no tenth part thereof. To him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that he is Lord to the glory of God. Such an High Priest became us, holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners; a merciful High Priest, understanding all our weaknesses, and is touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

We have written this also by request, and have been as brief and pointed as possible, hoping to be understood.

K.

PREDESTINATION.

BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I would like to have your views on absolute predestination of all things. If you think it will do no harm, you may answer through the SIGNS if you have time, and if not, all will be right with me.

Your brother, I hope.

J. J. OKES.

PENHOOK, Va.

Harsh things have been said of those who believe the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things. These harsh things have arisen from misconception of views held by those who believe this doctrine. This doctrine was boldly advocated by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and was one of the several points of the Old School Baptist faith named in the original prospectus of the SIGNS, and for which this paper has always stood as an exponent. Naturally, therefore, it would seem out of order for one to accept a place on the editorial staff of such a paper were he not in full sympathy with all points of doctrine for which the paper stands. On our part, we can say that we believe with all our heart in the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things. Our boyhood and youth, and all our years since being a member of the church, have been spent among those who believe and preach this doctrine, and we have never heard it advocated as a cloak for sin, nor as excusing the sinner in his sins. It has never been preached by any one in our hearing so as to make one shudder with horror, but always as the rock of God's salvation of his people, and as the security of their well-being here and hereafter. It has been charged against those who believe and preach this doctrine that they make God the author of sin. The advocacy of this doctrine, when rightly understood, does no such thing. Sin is the transgression of law. Where there is no law, there can be no transgression. God is under no law, is accountable to no one; being under no law, cannot transgress law, cannot therefore sin, hence is not the author of sin. Whatsoever God does is right, because he does it. We have no right to measure the Almighty by human standards of judgment. We are expressly told that the thoughts and ways of God are not the thoughts and ways of men, but are higher than men as the heavens are higher than the earth. How then can men judge the Lord? How possibly do so with adequate justice and wisdom? "Thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest." "But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth." Men call the taking of human life by men, murder; they do not call it murder when God does it. When the Almighty through the activities of the forces of nature causes many human lives to be lost, as in earthquakes, tornadoes, electrical storms, &c., no rational being thinks of charging God with murder. The breath of human life was God's gift in the beginning, therefore in the taking it when and where he pleases he takes but what is his own, and cannot hence be charged with murder or theft. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." But when a nation in the process of warring with another nation torpedoes the enemy's vessel, sending hundreds of lives to death, men call it wholesale murder. See the difference. When God takes human lives it cannot be murder, for he is above all law, cannot transgress law, does not therefore sin, cannot commit murder; but when man does these things it is wicked, sinful and wrong, and merits swift judgment and condemnation. And even though God wills that men should do these things, which he does, it still

does not thereby make God chargeable with it, nor relieve men from their accountability to him for it. God willed the death of Jesus, and the manner of it, but held the Jewish nation accountable for it. Absolute predestination of all things does not make God, cannot make God the author of sin; it does not relieve the guilty sinner of his guilt, nor make him any the less accountable to his Maker. To human reason, predestination and man's accountability do not harmonize; to faith, they accord perfectly. It has been claimed by some that the use of the word "absolute" is not necessary to be used in speaking of predestination, and that it is not a Bible word. Very true, and if the doctrine of predestination had never been expressed as being any other than absolute, the use of the word "absolute" would indeed be superfluous. But the tendency on the part of some to limit the Holy One of Israel, and to set bounds to his predestination, has made it necessary to use the word "absolute" to emphasize the predestination of God as extending to all things, and not only some things. Had limited predestination never been heard of, it would not be necessary to bring forward the word "absolute" to offset it. For ourself, we rarely use the word "absolute" in speaking or writing on predestination, for our brethren know very well where we stand and what we believe concerning it, so that it is not necessary. Elder Beebe has been accused of originating the phrase, "absolute predestination of all things." This is an error. We find this same expression over and over again in Toplady's translation of Zanchius, and Toplady lived and died before Elder Beebe was born. Toplady lived contemporary with John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, and much that Toplady wrote was to show up the error of Wesley's teachings; therefore Toplady used the word "absolute" to emphasize the Bible sort of predestination as against the weak Arminian sort of predestination as taught by Wesley. For the same reason, Elder Beebe's ministry was being fulfilled at the time of the split between the Bible Baptists and New Schoolism, and he used the word "absolute" to let people know he did not believe the flimsy sort of predestination claimed by the New Lights. It has been said that the use of this word "absolute" has been responsible for much of the division among Old School Baptists. We do not believe this, but that, on the other hand, the limiting of the predestination has given rise to the confusion, just as any attempt to limit God in any of his dealings with men will always alienate lovers of the truth from those that oppose it. Also, it is claimed that the word "predestination" is never used in the Scriptures but in reference to the people of God and their salvation. As to that the word "predestination" is not in the Bible at all, and the words "predestinate" and "predestinated" are found only in the eighth chapter of Romans and in the first chapter of Ephesians. But it is not the word that counts; what the word means is everything. The meaning involved in the word "predestination" is found all through the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, its doctrine interwoven with everything the Scriptures teach. We mean by the phrase, "absolute predestination of all things," that all things, both what men call good and that which they call evil, were determined beforehand of the Lord, and come to pass in accordance with his will to the fulfillment of his decreed purpose and end, and that anything, either good or evil, which God has not willed, and which he does not want, certainly cannot come to

pass. The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain. If there is any of man's wrath which, if released, would not praise God, or which would tend to defeat the purpose of God, rest assured that measure of wrath will never find a vent. Though Paul does not use the words "absolute predestination" in the first chapter of Colossians, he preached it there stronger than any man has preached it since: "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Could anything be stronger? Even the devil himself is a creature of God. For whether he be visible or invisible, a personal devil or merely the spirit of evil; whether he be in heaven or in earth; whether he be a throne, a dominion, a principality or a power, God made him, and made him for himself, that is, to suit his own ends and purposes. In that sense, even the devil is "good" in God's sight; not good in the divine or godly sense, but good for the purpose for which God intended him and for which God uses him. We classify things as being good or evil, but do we know what is really good and what is really evil? Unless we could from some high pinnacle of omniscience view creation's dawn and its final wind-up, could we be qualified to sit in judgment on any of time's events, condemning this as evil and approving that as good? The trouble with us is we are too entirely short-sighted, prone to jump to conclusions, prone to isolate a given event from all that precedes or follows it, and hastily to say, It is good, or it is bad. Nothing is either good or bad of itself; it is the thing or spirit with which it is associated, the company it keeps, that gives it its true character as being either truly good or wholly evil. Men living at the time that Joseph was sold into Egypt by his brethren, and judging that act by moral standards, would unhesitatingly condemn it as wrong. So it was wrong from the standpoint of Joseph's brethren, for their motive was an evil one, but God meant this very thing for good, "to save much people alive." God's purpose in this transaction was a righteous one; the purpose of Joseph's brethren in that same act was wicked. Therefore, the fact that God "meant" it, or determined it, did not at all make him the author of the sin, nor relieve the brethren from their guilt in it, even though God designed the act to have taken place exactly as it did. The poet Milton and many others of the world's lights say that Satan is a fallen angel, that he was once in paradise, but fell from it or lost his first estate. Jude does say that there were angels that kept not their first estate, but he does not mean any such thing as this theology of Milton. Satan never was in paradise. He was always crooked. God did not make him straight at first and then he got crooked himself afterward. "His hand hath formed the crooked serpent." He was made that way, never was straight. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."—John viii. 44. Sometimes we hear men say that God would not do this or that, that he does not do thus and so; or if God should do this or that he would not be just. Now, what do we know about what God has done,

does or will do only as the Scriptures record the revelation of God's will in the past and yet to come? Man can never be judge of what God will do or of what he has done. We must take the Scriptures every time in matters of this sort, and if man's wisdom contradicts, "Let God be true, but every man a liar." God called Moses to go to Pharaoh to bring forth his people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt, and then hardened Pharaoh from obeying him. Was that right? It certainly was if God chose to do it that way. Was Pharaoh guilty before God on account of the hardening? He certainly was, and deserved the death which ultimately fell to his lot. We have only to know that God does a thing to know that it is right. We have only to know that God punishes a man to know that that man is guilty. And even though that man's guilt was before determined of God, and brought about in the way of God's providence, the man is still a sinner and worthy of all the punishment that God metes out to him. The Lord told Shimei to curse David, and Shimei afterward died for it. He could not escape the consequence of his sin even though God told him to do it. It must be that even David himself knew that God had ordered he be cursed by Shimei, for David said: "So let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so?" But his faith looked beyond the present evil to the ultimate good: It may be "that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day." Morality revolts at the thought of David's putting Uriah in the forefront of the battle to insure his death, so that he (David) should have Uriah's wife for his own use. But this is the way Solomon had to be born. He could be born no other way; David, and not Uriah, must be his father; that one woman, and no other, must be his mother. We say it could be no other way, for it was no other way, and could it have been some other way it would not have been this way. Nothing can be otherwise than it has been, nor could it have been, for it was not God's will to have it otherwise. Sufficient reason why it could not be otherwise. "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" How much, then, and what takes place among the inhabitants of the earth that is not according to God's will? Nothing. "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turneth it whithersoever he will."—Prov. xxi. 1. If the hearts of kings, why not the hearts of other men? The Lord moved David to number Judah and Israel, and afterward condemned him for it. See 2 Samuel twenty-fourth chapter. Was it right for David to number the people? It was right for David to do whatever God told him to do. Did he sin in so doing? He most certainly did, as he afterward acknowledged: "I have sinned greatly in that I have done." Neither did he charge God with his guilt either in word or in thought. It was God's will that King Ahab of Israel should fall at the hands of the Syrians, and to accomplish this the Lord sent a lying spirit into the mouths of Ahab's prophets, so that by their lies they should persuade Ahab to proceed in battle against the Syrians. Thus was his destruction accomplished. Was this right? It certainly was, because God did it. Whatsoever he does is right. But it would be wrong for me to lie even to deceive my enemy, and even if in the pur-

pose of God I should do so he would be perfectly just in calling me to account for it. God held the hand of the heathen king Cyrus and prospered him in battle against Babylon to deliver the Israelites from captivity. But how came they into captivity? As a consequence of their disobedience, of course. But was their disobedience an accident? The prophets in Israel and Judah had warned them again and again of their guilt, and called on them to repent, lest the captivity come upon them. But was there at any time a doubt as to whether they would repent or not? Certainly not, for their hearts were hardened, that they should not hear or understand. Who hardened them? The Lord. He has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Therefore, though the Lord hardened them from heeding the warnings of the prophets, did that make them any the less deserving of the ensuing captivity? Certainly not. And when God's will was accomplished in Babylon, he turned it over to Cyrus, that his people should be restored to their own land. Thus is proven how that the Lord forms light and creates darkness, makes peace and creates evil. (Isaiah xlv. 7.) He creates the wicked for the day of evil, as when he before determined the crucifixion of Christ and ordained the wicked hands that did it. Nevertheless, he held them guilty and punished them. Does God bring people into the world with the design that they shall perish without salvation? See Romans ix. 22, 23: "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory?" The vessels of wrath were fitted to destruction, were made to be destroyed. Again: "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." Also Jude says: "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men." From the abundance of scriptural evidence we have cited (and much more could be deduced), we must conclude that both the elect and nonelect are in God's hands, and each go to the place before prepared for them; that both good and evil come from the same omnipotent hand; that neither is subject to chance nor subject to the whim, will or fancy of man. Just as there is nothing either good or ill but has its place in the plan and purpose of God from before the foundation of the world, so there is nothing too big or nothing too little to be comprehended by him. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing [one-fourth cent]? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father." Now, when a sparrow, which is worth only one-eighth of a cent to man, cannot fall on the ground without the Father being concerned in it, we must admit that the providence and divine arrangement of the Almighty does certainly include even those things which we might consider to be of small importance or of no account at all. For our part, we can say with one Young: "There is not a fly but has had infinite wisdom concerned, not only in its structure, but in its destination." And with Toplady we agree: "Not a dust flies in a beaten road, but God raiseth it, conducts its uncertain motion, and, by his particular care conveys it to the certain place he had before appointed for it." We agree that the predestination of God is

concerned only with those things that concern (in some way however remotely) the welfare of his people and the declaration of his glory. But how much is there that transpires in the world that is not in some way or other connected with the welfare of the elect, and with the glory of God? We believe that all the events that ever transpire in time are in some way links in the chain of God's predestination to accomplish the good of his children and the declaring of his glory. If all things were created by him and for him, it must be so.

This subject is not done, nor ever will be if we should write on forever and forever, but we desist.

L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. T. Rowe.)

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Ebenezer Church, Baltimore city, to the churches composing the same, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED:—In this our Circular Letter we feel to call your attention to Jeremiah sixth chapter and a part of the sixteenth verse, which reads as follows: "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." National Israel sought out many ways, and often turned aside from the good old paths of the Lord, and the Lord judged them and brought them back, sometimes slaying those who caused Israel to sin. There is no way so good and safe for the Lord's dear people as the way he has mapped out for them. Israel was made to feel the awful truth of the word of the Lord, that, Thy sins have separated between thee and thy God. This is also true in the gospel. When the church of God goes astray she suffers the judgment of her God. When in the apostle's day some said, I am of Paul, others of Apollos, &c., Paul said they were carnal, and walked as men. Men should have no power over the faith of the children of God. Men go wrong, but the word of God never. Then let God be true, and every man a liar. Dear brethren, we should not walk in the ways of men, even though they be of ourselves, for men of your own selves shall arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Let us follow men only as they follow Christ, but stand in the ways, and see their vanity and falsehood, and be all the time asking for the old paths, the true doctrine of Christ and his apostles who said: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." These few words contain the full gospel of Jesus our Lord, who foreknew, predestinated, called, justified and glorified them. A glorified sinner is a saved sinner, and a sinner is a son or daughter of Adam, a man born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God. Man is composed of soul, body and spirit, and though sentenced to return to dust, he shall arise in the image of our glorified Lord and Savior to praise him who redeemed us out of every nation, kindred or tongue, and all this is according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. These truths of our God are the old paths the fathers trod, and in them is the good way of peace and gospel comfort, and following this way we find rest from the vain and speculative ways of men who, left to themselves, are restless as the wind. Dear brethren, we feel that we are both asking for and walking in the old paths,

believing and loving the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, who taught that the elect of God are predestinated unto eternal life through the blood of the Lamb of God, who gave himself for them. He died the death justly due to them. He was delivered for their offences and was raised again for their justification. We believe that just as the man Christ Jesus died and rose again, so all his redeemed shall come up from the dead, soul, spirit and body, in the image of their glorified Lord. We are sorry that there are some among our people who of late have been denying this glorious doctrine of our God, and also declaring the annihilation of the wicked. Our Lord taught that there is a heaven for those who are redeemed by the blood of Christ, and that its joys are eternal. He also taught that there is a hell for those who die in their sins, and that its punishment is everlasting. It is the man that goes to heaven and enjoys its glory. It is the man that goes to hell and suffers its misery. The beloved disciple John tells us that he that abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ hath both the Father and the Son, and then he says in his second epistle, tenth and eleventh verses: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds." Now, dear ones, the doctrine of Christ is of vastly more importance to us than men. Then let us reject all who do not bring this dear old doctrine of Jesus our Savior, which doctrine is ever new. If he be labeled Primitive or Old School Baptist, he is all the more dangerous to you if he bring not the true doctrine of the Bible, the word of God. We understand that to refuse to take part with, or to allow those who bring not this doctrine to take part with us in the worship of our God, is what John means by his saying, "Receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." If we take part with such, we are untrue to our Lord, who requires our whole soul, mind and strength in his service. Do we desire that peace that Jesus alone can give? Then cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils. Take the yoke of Christ and learn of him, and ye shall find rest to your souls. There is no possibility of going contrary to Bible teaching without going wrong. Then let us read the Bible, not seeking to twist it around to our notions, but with earnest, prayerful hearts that we may understand its true teaching, and walk and talk accordingly. How beautiful are the feet of him who preaches the gospel of peace. His feet are shod with gospel grace, and he makes a plain track easy to follow, for he follows Christ. But how deformed the feet and shuffling the track of those who mix truth and falsehood. They cover their own track so that it is difficult to follow them, and every time the child of God tries he gets into trouble. We feel that as an association we are standing fast in the doctrine of God our Savior, and pray that our God, upon whom we are entirely dependent, will lead us safely on to the end of our journey, and may he deliver his people everywhere from error, and to his blessed and holy name be everlasting praise through Jesus Christ his Son.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Moderator.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

A. F. Jones, Ga., $2.00; James H. Wilson, Maine, $1.00; L. J. Ross, N. Y., $1.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Bagely Anderson, son of Robert and Nancy Anderson, was born in New Jersey, Oct. 18th, 1828, died May 14th, 1915, aged 86 years, 7 months and 25 days. He was united in marriage to Elizabeth C. Hall in the year 1862. To that union were born nine children, four girls and five sons. Two sons and two daughters died in infancy, and one son, John, died two years ago last October. He leaves to mourn his demise his aged and faithful companion, two daughters, two sons, one brother, twenty grandchildren and five great-grandchildren, besides other distant relatives and friends. He settled in Adams County, Ind., sixty-two years ago, when that county was a dense forest, much as the Red Man had left it. He bought a tract of heavy timbered land, where by his industry and economy started to make a home for himself and family. Wild deer and turkey abounded plentifully in the country at that time, and furnished delicious food for those who could bring them down with their trusty rifles. This man and his faithful companion suffered the privations of pioneer life, but accepted the arduous task with cheerful hearts, and helped to bring a country from a wild wilderness into a prosperous farming country of fine homes and fertile fields. They contributed their share toward the upbuild of the country, and the history of this country could not be written without writing a part of the lives of these early pioneers. Early in their married life their house became the home of many of the Baptists of eastern Indiana and western Ohio. Father Anderson himself never united with the church, but was a good entertainer of the brethren. Sister Anderson was one of the members of the old Bluffton Church, and is now the only living member of that church. Elder Joseph Williams was for many years pastor of that church, also Elder Meredith. Wm. Pine was also a member, and was set apart as licentiate to use his gift in the church. The writer has visited at his home and heard him declare the unsearchable riches of Christ. Sister Anderson has been deprived of attending Baptist meetings for many years, as there is no church of that order near her, yet the Lord has not forsaken her, but has blessed her with his Spirit, so that she has said she was not alone. It has been my privilege to hold services at her home occasionally for a number of years, and feel she is reconciled in her great loss. This aged sister had the misfortune to fall and break her hip and dislocate it at the same time over a year ago, and can only walk a little with crutches. She has been confined to her bed some three or four weeks with a serious case of lumbago, therefore the funeral was held at the residence. She endured this great ordeal with christian fortitude. Her great meekness and humbleness make one feel that she is guided by that gentle spirit that all of God's children are blessed with. Father Anderson's hospitable home was shared by many of the brethren, who could attest to his hospitality. His charity was commended by all who knew him. The apostle said, Now abideth faith, hope and charity, but the greatest of these is charity, and this was one of the possessions of this good man.

The funeral was conducted by the writer.

NEWTON PETERS.

John R. Spires was born October 13th, 1835, near Franklin, and departed this life April 2nd, 1915, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Wm. Walls, five miles south of Waverly, Ill., aged 79 years, 5 months and 20 days. On the fourth Sunday in September, 1857, he united with the Primitive Baptist Church on the Mauvaisterre (called Sulphur Springs Church), until 1867, at which time he moved to his farm, in the southwest corner of Sangamon County, and he then transferred his membership to the Head of Apple Creek Church, where he remained a faithful, humble and devoted member until death. He was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church fifty-seven years and six months, having been ordained as deacon of said church in 1868, and served as clerk of the Concord Association about forty years. June 9th, 1859, he was united in marriage to Sarah A. Weller, of Macoupin County, and to that union were born four children, one son and three daughters. His son, Thomas J., preceded him in death several years; his wife preceded him in death only fifty-seven days. Mr. Spires is survived by three daughters: Mrs. C. W. Taylor and Mrs. Wm. Walls, of Waverly, and Mrs. C. A. Sinclair, of Litchfield; also nine grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, one brother, Harvey Spires, of Franklin, besides a host of other relatives and friends. Mr. Spires lived in Talkington township, Sangamon Co., from the spring of 1867 until the fall of 1907, when he moved to Waverly. During the forty years he lived on his farm he was a useful citizen in many ways. He taught school for twenty years, and never applied for the position. He was elected supervisor of his township, and reelected until he served four years. He served as assessor for seven years, township treasurer for a number of years and justice of the peace. Having known Mr. Spires for thirty-four years, will say to his grandchildren, Try to make as good and useful citizens as he was. In his death the church has lost a true and devoted member, although during his last days he did not get to meet with the church as often as he wished, but remained firm in the faith of the Primitive Baptist Church. He was beloved by his neighbors and all who knew him. Thus we lose an indulgent father, a good citizen and a faithful christian gentleman.

Funeral services were conducted in the Primitive Baptist meetinghouse in Waverly, Monday, April 5th,

at 11 a. m., by Elder G. W. Murray, of Winchester, in the presence of a large company of friends and relatives, preaching from the text, "If a man die, shall he live again?"

Abram H. Smith was born in Gratiot, Ohio, in August, 1840, died in LaGrange, Ind., April 9th, 1915. That is the brief announcement, yet between those widely separated dates lies a life story that is to the saddened writer of these lines the story of one of the bravest and best fathers that seven boys and girls were ever blessed with. In October, 1861, he was married to Mary E. Dumm. In the fall of 1864 he came with his family to Noble County, Ind., where he worked like all the pioneers of that day to hew a home out of the forest. For almost fifty years he journeyed with the sweetheart of his youth and reared a family of seven to manhood and womanhood. The mother was gathered home in June, 1911. The seven children were all able to be with their father in his last sickness, and the sons carried him on the last sad journey to the tomb. Elder George A. Bretz spoke comfortingly to us from the eighth chapter of Romans, after which we laid the dear father beside our beloved mother in the beautiful Ligonier Cemetery. He had been a lover of the Old School Baptists always, and had belonged with them about forty years. He had taken the SIGNS almost ever since I can remember, and sent it to me for Christmas last year. The sweet story of grace and his Bible and SIGNS were his chief joys. Our home was always a home for the brethren, and he entertained by the score. Many readers of this will remember "Pappy Smith" and his big home and heart. But it is over, and he has gone home. May the dear Lord he loved and hoped in through life, and found great comfort and consolation in the hour of death, be with us.

EMMA SMITH COLE.

Mrs. Katherine Reese was born Feb. 27th, 1859, departed this life May 13th, 1915, making her stay on earth 54 years, 2 months and 14 days. She was married to Mr. G. R. Reese August 12th, 1881. To that union were born eight children, three of whom preceded her to the grave. She professed a hope in Christ in August, 1898, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church at Pilot Grove, Texas, and lived a consistent christian until it pleased God in his wisdom to take her from the walks of men and women of the earth. She was sick thirteen weeks of cancer, and lingered for many days in much pain, but she bore it all with patience. We would say to the sorrowing husband and children, Weep not for her as for one who died without hope, for she died in a gracious hope of seeing Him in his beauty and love and being like him. She is quietly resting in the love of Jesus, her Elder Brother and Savior. Only a few more days on earth for many of us, then we shall lie down in the cold embrace of death to await the call of the Master. The long sleep of death will only be a small moment, as far as time and time things are concerned, then the awaking will be glorious to the redeemed host.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral service, and used as a text Psalms xc. 1, 2, in the presence of many sorrowing relatives and friends, after which the remains were laid to rest in the Gray Rock Cemetery, there to await the sound of the last trumpet, when Jesus shall descend from heaven with all his holy angels, with the voice of the archangel, and the dead in Christ shall awake with his likeness and be like him and be perfectly satisfied.

Written by request. J. B. BOWDEN.

Mary Orchard Zavitz, widow of Samuel N. Zavitz, died at her home in Brooke township, Ontario, Canada, Monday, March 29th, 1915, aged 67 years 9 months and 9 days. Our mother was born in Devonshire, England, and came to Canada over forty years ago. She was married to her late husband a few years after coming to Canada, settling on the farm where she resided until her death. Her husband died about fifteen years ago. To them were born six children: Mrs. Reuben Benstead, of Aberfeldy, Ont., Arthur, of Waterford, Ont., Mrs. Louis Douglas, of Metcalf township, Ont., Edith, Flossie and Ernest at home. She had been ailing for about two years and a half, but had been about as usual until a few days before her death. The doctor was called in Saturday, March 27th, who said she was suffering from bronchial pneumonia. Death relieved her of her sufferings on Monday morning, March 29th. Our mother was given a hope in the mercy of God about fourteen years ago. Previous to that time she had been a great worker among the Missionary Baptists, but after God opened her eyes and she was made to see herself a poor, miserable sinner she had no desire to worship with that people, and because of this she was persecuted in many ways for the truth's sake, and made many enemies when she would speak of the things which had been shown and taught her by the power of God, but she never had any desire to go back and make her home with them, but always loved to meet with those who love the doctrine of salvation by grace, and her home was always open to receive any of God's servants and hear them preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. She was made to know the deceitfulness of her own heart in a very marked way, and was made to abhor herself and repent in dust and ashes. Many times she would say that in her flesh dwelt no good thing, but she had a good hope that when she would awake with His likeness she would be satisfied. She was received in the fellowship of the Beulah Church, Canada, and baptized by Elder D. M. Vail in the year 1910.

Elder J. B. Slauson preached to our comfort at her home, and her remains were laid at rest in the Alvinston Cemetery. While we are lonely without her, yet we rejoice and are comforted to know that she is with Christ, which is far better.

ONE OF THE FAMILY.

W. C. Ayers was born October 15th, 1856, near Haley, Bedford Co., Tenn. He joined the church at Bethlehem, Bedford Co., Tenn., the second Sunday in September, 1881, and was baptized the same day by Elder J. E. Frost. He slipped and fell on his front porch Jan. 25th, 1915, and broke his neck, dying almost instantly in the presence of his wife and youngest daughter. O how we miss brother Ayers at his home and in his place at meeting, which was always filled unless providentially hindered. His home was always open to the Baptists, and he did not fail to let them know that they were welcome to his home at all times, where his faithful wife and daughters were ever ready to make everything pleasant for them; but he has crossed over the river, and while we shall never see his face on earth again, we have a hope that we shall meet him on the sunny banks of the new Jerusalem after we are done with the trials of earth. His life was such that it will ever be pleasant to think of the many pleasant days we have spent in the old church at Bethlehem and at his home with him and his dear family. He leaves to mourn their loss his widow, two daughters and one son: Mrs. Bertie Hickerson and Miss Elizabeth Ayers, of Haley, and William Ayers, Jr., of Shelbyville, also his home church, Bethlehem, and a host of friends. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and was ever ready to stand in defence of the truth. The writer knew him from childhood, and to know him was to love him. Dear, sorrowing widow and children, husband and father has only gone on before to that home prepared for all the elect of God before the world was. May the richest blessings of the Lord be yours to sustain you here, and when you are done with the perishable things of this world prepare you for that inheritance which fadeth not away, eternal in the heavens.

W. B. CHILTON.

SISTER **Nancy Angeline Dodd McCoy** was born in Hancock County, Ill., May 18th, 1836, and passed away at the home of her daughter, Mrs. I. C. Wristen, in Dighton, Kansas, April 3rd, 1915, aged 78 years, 10 months and 15 days. She was married to Hiram McCoy in 1857, and they made their home in Illinois until her husband was killed by a horse falling upon him March 8th, 1864. To that union four children were born, three of whom are living: I. U. and H. B. McCoy and Mrs. I. C. Wristen, all residents of that community. She is also survived by two sisters: Mrs. Mary Rigg, of Hamilton, Ill., and Mrs. Rebecca Michaels, of Lacygne, Kansas; there are also seventeen grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. After the death of her husband Mrs. McCoy kept her children together and did her best to be both father and mother to them, and no one who knows the sincere affection and almost reverential esteem in which she was held by those children can doubt that her efforts in that respect were especially successful. In 1886 she went with her dear little family and settled in Blaine township, where she resided until her death. Hers was the complete life of loving service. She was a faithful member of the Predestinarian Baptist Church at Providence since 1866, and never wavered in her belief that salvation is by grace, and often wrote to the church of her love for them, and was highly esteemed by all the members there. We are sorry to lose such a faithful and lifelong member of our dear little church. She was faithful in her work on earth, as in her duty to her God. She came back home, as she called it, last fall, and went to the graveyards where her father and mother and her husband and sister were buried and had their tombstones all fixed up, and then came here and stayed all night, and said to me, "I have done what I could, and am now ready to go back. I do not expect that you and I will ever meet on earth again, and if we do not, I want you to write an obituary notice and send it to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which I have always read, and hope that my dear children will read when I have gone to my reward." We had known each other from childhood, and were greatly attached to one another. Thus ends the beautiful life of one of God's true and tried servants.

BELLE FRAZEE.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER W. E. Brush has changed his address from Rector, Ark., to Benton, Ill.

MEETINGS.

THE Bethel Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will hold their regular annual three days meeting commencing on Friday 10 a. m. before the third Sunday in June (18th), 1915. Stop off at Albany, take Lebanon branch, stop at Tallman. Several trains daily. Lovers of truth invited.

A. HORNER, Church Clerk.
WATERLOO, Oregon.

Liberty Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, of Los Angeles, Cal., meets every first and third Sunday in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., at 42nd and Moneta Ave., and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal.

W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor.
C. B. RICE, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 83. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1915. NO. 13.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FRAGMENTS.

Is an important message any more or less important because of the manner in which it is delivered? If the message is brought to us accompanied by sound of sweetest music to the natural ear, is it any sweeter or more valuable to our souls on that account? The manner in which the gospel is preached does not affect its power, though our feelings may be greatly affected toward the one who delivers the message in an unbecoming manner. It is not the tones of music or sounds of eloquence falling upon the ear which those want who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, but the message of love and peace and good will to men. It is this which fills with delight the heart of the quickened sinner. The hungry soul wants the word of which the psalmist speaks: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." No man can produce hunger in himself at will, nor can any one provide for himself that which will satisfy a hunger for righteousness. Only the blessing of God which caused that hunger can supply that which will satisfy it. No one can be taught by man how to sing and make melody in his heart unto the Lord; but when the grace of God is felt with divine power, then the melody of the holy message is already there, singing in the soul, however common the language in which it was spoken, and the soul rejoices in the melody.

I HAVE often felt sorry for those whom the Lord puts into the ministry, counting them faithful, while I am glad for the church in whose service they are called, for she needs those faithful men, and the Lord counts only such as his workmanship. He causes all of his ministers to be true and tried and faithful. But I sympathize deeply with them, for I know something of what they must suffer. It is not an easy thing for one to "learn to preach," as it is for the world's preachers. They cannot learn their lessons "by heart," like a schoolboy. But the Lord's ministers are learning all the time, and have to go over and over, again and again, the same old lessons, which seem to be still new. They have to go over the things through many a dark day and many a stormy night. They must keep

getting new things through new experiences of tribulation and sorrow, to tell to the people, and then they find that the new things are as old as the oldest experience of grace. The path of the Lord's servants lies along by things that are all the time "both new and old." How often we try to get away from our lessons, to get away from the hard learning, feeling sure that this new trial that seems to be coming upon us will surely make us unable to preach at all any more, it is so dark and direful in appearance. But we must go through the fire and through the darkness, for so the dear Lord has said. No one on earth can help us here; no one can tell us or show us how to preach. The best preacher that ever lived on earth, except Jesus, if he were with us all the time, could not give us one successful lesson in this worderful work of preaching the gospel. Each one must learn his own lessons, and each must do his own preaching. He must by himself take from the Lord's treasurehouse all the things that belong to him, both new and old. No one can hand him one thing that will be of any use to him in his work; he must receive it for himself, as the gift of Jesus to the church through him, and made known it as his by the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

"BEHOLD, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."—Psalms li. 5. The psalmist did not present this fact as an excuse in any way for a depraved nature, or as in any degree a palliation of the evil of sinful acts. He did not say, I inherited a sinful disposition, and committed sins before I knew what sin was, and therefore I ought not to be blamed as one who knew he was doing wrong, nor punished for iniquities committed in ignorance. The natural man will reason this way, but not the man who has been quickened by divine life. The psalmist was not seeking to avoid blame by tracing his life back before his birth, but his spiritual mind does not seek an excuse for sin, but acknowledges the justice of his condemnation. The convicted sinner acknowledges the Lord's right to desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden parts to know wisdom. In order that we may learn this true wisdom in the hidden parts of the soul the wickedness of our nature must be seen and felt by us in the sight of God, that he may be just when he speaks and clear when he judges. (Psalms li. 4.)

"FOR the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth."—Rom. ix. 17. (Exodus ix. 16.) All that took place in the history of Pharaoh must have been according to God's eternal purpose, which he purposed in himself before the world began. Every purpose of God must be like himself, eternal, and must be infinitely wise and holy, and for the best good of his people and for the honor and glory of his most holy name.

I will read again from the inspired Scriptures of truth: "For it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favor, but that he might destroy them."—Joshua xi. 20. What we want is to know what the Bible teaches. We can only understand it so far as the Lord shall be pleased to give us understanding. We are carefully told that those who crucified the Savior with wicked hands did what God's hand and

counsel determined before to be done. (Acts iv. 28.) We know that the Lord does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and that he has an infinitely wise and holy and gracious purpose in everything that takes place, but too deep for us to understand. He hates sin with a perfect hatred, and it cannot be thought that he regards it in his predestination in the same way that he regards holiness; yet sin is in the world, which could not have been the case if the Lord had not so purposed. He must have purposed all things after the counsel of his own will, as is plainly declared in the Scriptures of truth. Things which are wicked in them that do them are clearly shown to be embraced in the purpose of God, who declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done. (Isaiah xlvi. 10, 11.) Concerning such things the apostle tells us plainly what the natural man will say: "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" I acknowledge that this is what I have felt at times. But the apostle does not undertake to explain or reason with us upon this deep mystery, but rebukes the opposition of our carnal minds: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"

I do not want to be found replying against God. He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." I am thankful to be among those who are crying for mercy, for I need it all the time.

What a terrible thing it would be if our God were limited in any sense, or in any degree. When war's tumults are abroad in the earth, and wicked men are filling the world with crime and misery and desolation and mourning, how restful it is to remember that our God has all power in heaven and in earth; that he doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; that he maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth, (Psalms xlvi. 7,) and that when he will he can cause this terrible conflict to come to an end, and can at any time cause sorrowing souls to rejoice in the peace of God, and to break forth into singing the Lord's song of peace on earth and good will to men. How good it is to trust in the God of purpose and power and grace. "He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth." The gospel presents this work finished in the experience of every heaven-born soul.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May, 1915.

FAIRMONT, W. Va., March 8, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will write some of my views on Prov. xxi. 1: "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turneth it whithersoever he will." This Scripture proves that God is a sovereign, and has all power over his creation. Now let us notice man. God made him upright, but he has sought out many inventions. After the fall let us notice the condition of his heart; it is deceitful, and desperately wicked, and who can know it? It is in a state that man cannot serve God nor choose the right way, for it is so deceitful, yet his heart is in the Lord's hand, even the king's heart, and while he may rage and boast of his will power, yet the Lord turneth it whithersoever he will. Dear brethren and sisters, did you ever take thought about this portion of God's word and notice

how plainly it teaches the sovereignty of God in working all things after his own will? He is God, he is the Lord Almighty, he rules both in heaven and in the earth. Then if the king's heart is in his hand, who has some authority, and he turns it whithersoever he will, why do puny, sinful men boast of their will power, and say, We can do as we please? Can the water turn its course? If so, then can mortal man. While the king may have some authority, yet his heart is in the hand of the Lord, and he turns it whithersoever he will. Look at King Pharaoh, how he was turned about; he first was willing to let the people go, and then was not willing, so you see his heart was in the hand of the Lord to turn it about whithersoever he would; and also King Nebuchadnezzar wanted all the people to worship his golden image. Did they do as he willed? O no, there were three Hebrews who would not obey his bidding. Why would they not? Well, it was because God had taught them to fear and worship him, and he turned Nebuchadnezzar's heart to do them good instead of hurt; his rage or fury was turned away when he saw one like unto the Son of man, or of God. He was made to praise God, for the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder he will restrain. Then again, there was Saul of Tarsus, he had letters of authority in his pockets, but what account were they when the Lord turned his heart whithersoever he would? I wonder where his will power was then. I expect he felt as helpless as I have myself. So boasting is excluded, God is sovereign, he does his will, and man's will is changed. Paul thought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus, but did he do all he intended? O no, he could not go beyond the praise of God in his wrath, and the remainder was restrained, turned away from Paul; he was turned about, his heart was in the hand of the Lord, and he took away his stony heart, and gave him a new heart, one that loved God and loved his children, and then he was made willing to preach Jesus; instead of destroying and wasting the church, he preached Christ Jesus the only way of salvation. So the king's heart is in his hand, and he turns it whithersoever he will, yet people are so blinded by the god of this world that they cannot see the power and holiness of God, and think that God's purpose or plan was overthrown by Satan in the garden of Eden when he beguiled Eve, but not so, for God's plan was to save sinners from the beginning of time, for he chose his people in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Eph. iii. 11.) What was it he purposed to do in Christ? He purposed to save sinners. When did he purpose to save them? Was it a limited purpose or was it not? It was his eternal purpose. Christ stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. What was he slain for? It was for the sins of his people. For my people was he stricken, that he might give his life an offering for sin. So while all the kings and rulers of earth may rage against Christ and his plan of salvation, yet their hearts are in his hand, so that he will turn them as he will, for he will check their rage, their wrath will praise God and the remainder he will restrain, for there is none that can keep alive his own soul, so how can they do as they will or as they please? No man in nature has any desire to serve God in sincerity and in truth, because they all are carnally-minded, and they

cannot serve God, for their carnal mind is emnity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So let the war rage, God has the control, for the powers that be are ordained of God. Christ said there should be wars and rumors of war, and they must come to pass. Evil is in men, and they are inclined to do wickedly, and "the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand," yet the king's heart is in His hand, and he turneth it whithersoever he will. God has fixed it so that the rivers must flow the downward course, and who can turn them and cause them to flow an upward course? God is able to send an abundance of rain and to cause the rivers to overflow their banks and take another course, but it is a downward course. So with the wicked, those who shall not understand, God often turns their plans, or overthrows their plans, for the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder he restrains, yet they shall do wickedly, and shall not understand, but the wise shall understand, because God has made them wise by his grace and by writing his laws in their hearts and putting them in their minds, and this is why they do understand. Man's heart is evil, and that continually, and his course is a downward course, and when he turns his course from one thing to another it is always a downward course; although he makes a profession of religion, and may claim to be a christian, yet he is only in the broad road that leads to death. Not so with the wise, when God puts his laws in their inward parts, creates them in Christ Jesus, they are new creatures, then all has become new, old things are passed away, and behold all has become new. They then see and understand that Christ is the way, and not the old way, the law or covenant of works, but Christ the new and living way. Like Paul, the eminent apostle, he saw the old way which he thought to be ordained unto life was ordained unto death, that he was carnal, sold under sin, and sin was in him, that the best he could do would not take him the upward course, but led him downward, the way of death, down to hell itself. Christ is the new and living way, for Christ is the way, the truth and the life; he sets up kingdoms and tears down kingdoms, and sets the basest of men over them; when they are going against that which is to his praise he restrains their wrath, turns the king's heart whithersoever he will. Let us then take courage and trust in God for his will and protection; he is the governor of his kingdom, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against it, so let us rest in his strength under his banner, which is love, wonderful love, and it is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. "Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart." Whose children are they in this text, in 2 Corinthians iii. 3? They are Christ's children. How was it written in their hearts? for we can plainly see that it was not written on tables of stone. Not with ink, but it was written with the Spirit of the living God in fleshly tables of the heart. Can this be the minister who is the penman? I think not, God is the penman, and when he wrote the law on the tables of stone he gave them to Moses. "And the Lord delivered unto me two tables of stone, written with the finger of God."—Deut. ix. 10 (Exodus xxxi. 18; xxiv. 12.) So we see this writing was not left to Moses to write, but God

even did it in the first covenant, so he does it in the second covenant, and this is how it is done, it is done by the Spirit of the living God, God does it by his Spirit in fleshly tables of the heart. We might look at it this way: God the penman, the Spirit his pen, the table the heart. Where is the work of man in it at all? But here comes in now the duty of the gospel minister: after God calls him by his grace, and qualifies him to preach Jesus Christ to his children, telling them what the Lord has done for them in calling them to repentance and writing his law in their hearts and putting it in their minds. Preach the gospel, not the doctrines and commandments of men, but the doctrine of God our Savior, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Tell them that Christ died to save sinners, and he alone, without the help of man, that he beheld, and of the people there was none to help him, and that it was his own arm that brought salvation unto him, and that his righteousness sustained him; this is what they are to do, instead of preaching for the purpose that thereby they might be saved, if they will only accept the easy terms of the gospel, and be saved if they will hold out faithful until death. God works all things after the counsel of his own will, not after the counsel of our wills, for his ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts, for even the king's heart is in his hand, as the rivers of water he turneth it whithersoever he will. The rivers of water are under his control, in his hand, they rush at his command. When he sends the dashing showers upon the earth and they run into the rivers, it is all at his command, so what is a king? He cannot pass his bounds and limitations, for Paul said to the people at Mars' Hill that the bounds and habitations of the children of men are set, and that the Lord hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation. The proud waves can go so far, and there they are stayed; so, proud, vain man, you can go so far, and no farther, God is sovereign, he rules in the army of heaven and among the children of men. Look at King Herod in his rage and fury, and yet under the pretence of worship, but when he found he was mocked of the wise men he sent and destroyed the children under a certain age. What for? To catch Christ, the young Savior, but he only fulfilled prophecy. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, In Ramah was a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they were not. Look at this as you will his wrath only fulfilled prophecy, and that to God's praise, he could not go beyond the praise of God. This prophecy must be fulfilled, so it was, and God made a way for Joseph and Mary and our dear Savior Jesus Christ to escape, and this fulfilled prophecy again. Matt. ii. 2: "And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene." Poor old Herod, that wicked king, could not go beyond his limit. Listen what saith the Lord: "Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border."—Jer. xxxi. 16, 17. The wicked

may kill the body of his saints, but that is all they can do, and God permits this to be done with some of his saints, but it is to his praise and glory. "There is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border," the purchased redemption border, where Christ purchased for them a resting-place, a home in heaven. "They shall come again from the land of the enemy." The enemy cannot hold them, for Christ freed them from eternal death, and he will raise them from death and they shall live in his sight and behold his glory, which he had with the Father before the world began. When Christ Jesus rose from the dead his children arose with him. "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Let this be as it may, whether he brings them with him from the land of the enemy at his resurrection, or brings them at the day of the resurrection of the saints, or when, let this suffice us, God will do all things well, for he is God and changes not, he will save all his believing children, and he will save all that the Father gave him, and that number is composed of infants and also of adults, and they are all saved by the grace of God, without works on their part, but saved in Christ Jesus before the world began, which God purposed in Christ with an eternal purpose, so how firm it is. No wonder that the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord; no wonder he turns it whithersoever he will. May God bless us with his heavenly blessings.

I will say also I received a good letter from Elder L. D. Seals, of Vanleer, Tenn., asking me to come and visit their churches out there.

JAMES W. LINN.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 26, 1915.

DEAR KINDRED IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—While reading this letter from a beloved sister far away, I was prompted to share it with others who love the same blessed truth. The experience of her childhood especially did I think would be read with sweet and tender interest by those who are left of her friends and loved ones. So, after writing to her, I have just received a hesitating consent for her letter to appear in the SIGNS, that messenger which is such a blessing to the scattered ones who cannot speak "face to face." How many of these are shut in by affliction, being often depressed and lonely, and what a comfort in unfolding the SIGNS to read the language of the heart expressed by another. This is truly "soul companionship."

Unworthily, your sister,

BESSIE DURAND.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Dec. 14, 1914.

MISS BESSIE DURAND—MY PRECIOUS SISTER:—Your last letter of October 8th is still unanswered on paper, but has been in mind on my bed in the still hours of the night several times. Last night was one night I talked with you and we held sweet counsel together. I have not been very well since I came home, and tremble so much (like my dear old father did at my age) I often say I will stop trying to use my pen, I fear to bother such smooth writers as you and several of my New Jersey cousins.

"Approach, my soul, the mercy-seat,
Where Jesus answers prayer;
There humbly fall beneath his feet,
For none can perish there."

I am glad I learned so many precious hymns in my youth, for they soothe me when I am cast down and fearful. "Jesus, thou art the sinner's friend, as

such I look to thee," and, "Jesus, lover of my soul, let me to thy bosom fly," are my constant companions. I love the composers, and have often wished to meet and take them by the hand and tell them how their words have comforted me. Elder Keene's writings are very interesting to me in that way. I would love to hear him preach, but think I never shall. I have been highly favored in hearing much good preaching, and can remember certain heartsome sermons I heard many years ago. When I was ten years old father and mother went to an association in company with Elder Vancleave, his first wife and their children, taking me along to help take care of my brother Walter, then three months old. Three hundred people stayed at the house where we were. It was in August. The man of that home had a wood fire out in the yard, boiling potatoes to feed those people. I sat there with my sleeping babe to keep him warm. That Baptist brother would sing a new hymn he had just learned:

"O for a glance of heavenly day
To take this stubborn stone away,
To thaw with beams of love divine
This heart, this stubborn heart of mine."

I thought, That writer is describing my heart of stone. The different churches would come up to hear that man sing while he boiled several kettles full of potatoes, and I learned the whole hymn while listening. The verse,

"The rocks can rend, the earth can quake,
The seas do roar, the mountain shake,
Of feeling all things show some sign,
But this unfeeling heart of mine,"

followed me for days. My experience, if I have one, comes through many hymns.

"O the Lamb, the loving Lamb,
The Lamb on Calvary,
The Lamb that was slain, but lives again
To intercede for me,"

was very sweet to me at one time. For many of my childhood years I had seasons of being burdened with my cruel sins. When I was eighteen years old, on my way to school in New Jersey, after a restless night of troubling, I was standing under a tree; the sun shone brightly and the words, "Jesus died for sinners," came to me, and I knew I was a sinner and felt powerless to help myself. I had tried my prayers, they were powerless. I could say, "Here, Lord, I give myself away, 'tis all that I can do." Then I was very anxious to sing, "What wondrous love is this." That was a bright morning without clouds, but I could not sing aloud until evening, locked up in my room alone at my grandfather's. I think I have told you this before. A little of this was printed in the SIGNS in 1854, the year I united with the dear old church where my parents and grandmother then belonged, and my sister Susan joined many years afterward.

I have had a refreshing nap. How good the Lord is to let me take rest. A neighbor across our street, not as old as I, cannot sew or knit nor go upstairs, walks with crutches, cannot hold her book to read, and I never heard her complain. I feel very guilty in comparison. I am glad you told me about the new babe born in your house; such a sweet comfort sent to you. "A babe in the house is a well-spring of pleasure." I wish I could see it. Will they stay all winter with you? We are having our first heavy snowstorm. The autumn has been warm, dry and pleasant. The first Sunday in this month the Stovers took me in their auto to our church, where we had our communion, a sweet season. When I first joined the church and felt so little and unworthy, I felt it would be very wrong to put the precious bread in my sinful mouth, but they sang the hymn:

"Great God, from thee there's naught concealed,
Thou seest my inward frame."

The whole hymn is touching, especially the third stanza:

"But since my Savior stands between
In garments dyed in blood,
'Tis he, instead of me, is seen,
When I approach to God."

Since I know that hymn I go forward with comfort, leaning on my Savior. I talked with you in the night, and now tried to put my thoughts down. If you were my neighbor what good talks we could have together. I very often wish to ask about mysteries I find in my Bible, and talk of the comfort there is in the SIGNS. The last letter of Elder Chick's was very good. I agree where he said, I never hated the Old Baptists, as some of our writers say. I always loved this peculiar people. I find this letter is full of imperfections, but you will cast the mantle of charity over all, knowing I love you. I must mention two more hymns:

"How sweet and heavenly is the sight,
When those who love the Lord
In one another's peace unite,
And thus fulfill his word."

This was the first hymn Elder Durand read on his first visit to our church. My precious mother enjoyed that time so much; she often spoke of the refreshing. The next time he came, at our breakfast table he repeated: "My business lays at wisdom's gate, where needy sinners come," &c. I had never heard it before; now we sing it very often.

Give my love to your two nieces and to your brother. How is his health now? I am reading "The trials of Job" now. Dear old Job was a perfect type. Your brother must have had many sleepless nights while writing that book.

Write to me for Christmas cheer if you can. God bless you.

Your trembling sister,

LINA W. BECK.

DAYTON, Ohio, Jan. 17, 1915.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—If I may presume to address you thus. There is with me again a desire to write, but what to write I know not, and surely if the Spirit says, Write, it will also tell me what to transmit. But this is what makes me fearful, for I do not know whether this desire is of the Spirit or the flesh, and I know, my dear kindred, that if it be of the flesh it will be of no use to any of God's dear people, and when I write, converse or commune in any way I earnestly desire that it may be of some comfort or edification to those of like precious faith, otherwise I feel that what I may say or communicate will be in vain. Dear friends, my greatest desire and pleasure is in going to meeting and hearing the gospel preached in its simplicity and purity and mingling with those whom I hope God for Christ's sake has washed in the blood of the Lamb and made purer than any earthly thing can ever be. Whether I am included in that precious number God alone knows, but I know that he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, and I want to say truly, Thy will, O God, be done. How I desire and wish to live and walk as becometh a child of grace, but unless the dear Master holds me up I cannot, for without him we can do nothing. May we say of a truth, dear friends, as did dear old Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him," and, Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Well, another year has come and gone to join those of the past, and yet my unprofitable life is spared to enjoy a little of what light, life and christian fellowship there are to be seen in this cold and sinful world among men. I am glad to know that brotherly love to-day is the

same as it was when Jesus was here teaching the people. You know that Jesus told his disciples that the world hated him because he was not of the world, and that the world would hate them of his chosen also, yet how rejoiced I feel that he also said, In me peace. O dear christian friends, when we love each other with spiritual love for Jesus' sake that alone should make us rejoice and desire to do God's will and obey his commands. How very lonely I feel at times on account of having no dear Old Baptist friends in our city of nearly two hundred thousand inhabitants to come and visit me and converse with me about eternal things which pertain to our souls most solemn interest, which pertain to our eternal salvation. How pleasant it is to meet with those we fellowship as christians, to talk about our hopes, our conflicts, our joys and sorrows, those things which belong to our hope in Jesus. How refreshed we feel when in the society of those we love, who feel so weak and helpless without the love and grace of God to support us through life's journey, and how gracious it is to me when I find a believer who is traveling the same spiritual highway that I hope I am, so that we can see eye to eye, believing in the same glorious salvation that embraces poor, lost sinners, to talk of the love and mercy of our adorable Lord, who sent his Son to die on Calvary's cross for his elect, whom he chose in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. O how very wonderful the grace that would cause God the Father to give his own Son to die for enemies. Truly, as the poet sings, Grace all the work shall crown; it lays in heaven the topmost stone, and well deserves the praise. When I think of myself, dear christian friends, as one who hopes in God's mercy, I feel utterly unworthy of such love and mercy, for I am a poor, wretched sinner, and do not grow any better; I still have the same carnal nature to contend with, but our God is rich in mercy, and O how precious, if it were not so we could have no hope. Some of the dear ones are nearing the end of life's journey, and the sun of their lives is setting, and the shadows are lengthening, but if the blessed Jesus is theirs, if the atonement which he made cleansed them from all sin, it will indeed be well with them, will it not? At this time many Arminian churches in our city, or in fact all of them, are arranging to have a great evangelistic campaign as soon as the tabernacle is completed where the great meetings are to be held, which is to seat five thousand people, and many of the ministers are donning overalls and assisting in the work, while great crowds stand around and watch the erection of the building. O how thankful we should be to God that he has in love and mercy shown us that all power is of him. But these things are hid from them, they cannot see, they cannot know except taught of the Father. All must be taught of him, the great and only true Teacher; if he draws them to him they shall come to him, and he will not cast them out. We are fed upon the bread that does not perish, but is everlasting life. Jesus says, I am that bread, and he that eateth of my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life. He dwelleth in us, he in the Father and we in him. What a wonderful blessing from the Lord when given us from the inmost recesses of our hearts to say, as did John the Baptist, He must increase, but I must decrease. How good to feel that we are the friends of the Bridegroom. It is sure that with all the

disciples of the Lord there is that spirit which is glad to decrease that Jesus increase. O how very deplorable to me that I cannot meet as often as I desire with those of like faith and belief. O that I should not murmur; O to be able to stand still and see the salvation of God. I feel that what I may write will give little comfort to God's chosen, and that it is purely selfish to unburden my own mind. I feel, too, that having the distinction or name among the dear Old School Baptists, and to be banished from the dear home circle because of it, is indeed a sad experience. The outward show, the well filled swine's trough and kindred traits, so conspicuous in the house of the strange woman, is no compensation for the absence of those who believe in and preach Jesus Christ, who hath saved his people from their sins. True, the Lord is ever near, and it is a priceless comfort to know this, yet I am so liable to be mistaken, and often ask myself whether I am not deceived and guilty of deception. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," and I fully apprehend that this love is of God, who is love.

Now may the sweet blessings of God's grace be with each and all of us to guide us through the weary and many changes that meet us by the way, is truly the sincere prayer of your unworthy sister in hope, LIDA KELLER.

MT. VERNON, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It has been quite a long while since I have written anything for the dear old SIGNS. I will now try as best I can. To-day (Jan. 22nd) finds me housed in on account of the weather and la grippe. My health is never very good. I have often thought how thankful ought people be who are blessed with perfect health and plenty of this world's goods, but it seems the greater the earthly blessings the more ungrateful they are. I know that I have been given a greater degree of earthly blessings than I have been thankful for. I have been afflicted a good portion of the last fifteen years, but believe that the Lord has a grand purpose in all my afflictions, and hope to be reconciled to his providential dealings. Sometimes I think if I were given good health and plenty of this world's goods I would soon get beside myself and become the more ungrateful. The longer I live the more I realize my proneness to evil, and the greater I see the total depravity of the human family. The talented man can never see or know anything about his depraved nature until he has been born again, and that heart of stone has been taken away and a heart of flesh given. I do not believe the new birth destroys the nature, as we still bear the image of Adam so long as we live here in the flesh. (I had no thought of branching out on the subject of the new birth when I began, for I am aware of some dissension among the dear saints on the new birth, but what I write is not for controversy.) The only way to get out of Adam is to die. The subject of the new birth is one of the grandest subjects of the New Testament. Jesus is the first one who taught the doctrine of the new birth, and it would seem by reading John iii. 3-5, that Jesus was explaining to Nicodemus the real necessity of being born again (or from above), and to take the third verse as it reads in a literal way would seem to teach that man is born twice, or again as at first: "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom

of God." To this Nicodemus answered: "How can a man be born when he is old?" thus showing he only had a literal view of the matter. Then comes a more complete answer: "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Nicodemus, like all others of the human family, could not see anything in such doctrine as Jesus preached, because of blindness. Paul said, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14. Man in his nature is only natural, and natural things are as far as he is capacitated to understand. As no fountain can flow above its head, so the natural man can only go to the extent of natural knowledge, and the spiritual birth comes from above and alone from God. Nicodemus marveled, as all men marvel, at the works of God. Jesus told him, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."—John iii. 6. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."—John i. 11-13. Here is enough testimony to forever set aside free agency or human contrivances, because if a man could bring about his own birth it would be by the will of the flesh, and then he would know how it came about; but Jesus said, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." So if men in any way whatever do a single act that will effect a change of heart, they could know just how they came in possession of the spiritual birth. Peter had a view of the new birth when writing to the elect of God scattered throughout the five provinces, as he said, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."—1 Peter i. 23. Truly one born of the Spirit knows not whence it came, but one thing about it, he has lost all interest in worldly pleasure. The ways of Zion he once could see no beauty in are lovely to him now after this change of mind or heart; he loves the ways of Zion, and no earthly charms hold to him the inducements they once held, and all he can say in regard to his knowledge is, "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!" &c. O how sweet to the poor child of grace is the sound of the gospel of the Son of God, when one is so blessed with an ear to hear, and how sweet are the sacred moments when one of the tried and true servants of the Lord is given liberty of speech and light of understanding to preach Christ as our complete Savior. In such preaching no grounds are left for strife. Confusion and dissension never come through the Spirit, they come through the lust of the flesh. The greatest strife or confusion that ever bothers me is that of my own reasoning, the flesh against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh. This, dear brethren, is one mark of identity, as the strong man has been bound by the stronger, thus causing trouble.

It would take too much room in the SIGNS to write all my thoughts, so I will close.

Your brother in hope,

J. B. BOWDEN.

CAVE CITY, Ky., Jan. 15, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a communication from Elder P. W. Sawin, of Shelbyville, Ky., which I would like to see published in the SIGNS.

Dear brethren, please accept my sincere gratitude for the time you have been sending the paper to me, free of charge. I am now residing with my only living daughter, Mrs. Allie Davis, as I am unable to keep house since the death of dear Blanche. The few brethren are widely separated, which makes the SIGNS with us doubly welcome. I have only had the sweet privilege of listening to one sermon since the funeral of my dear Blanche.

Dear Allie unites with me in christian love.

LAURA M. BAIRD.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Jan. 6, 1915.

MRS. LAURA M. BAIRD:—I have had it in mind for some time to write you, but many things prevented, most of all a dark, barren mind, so I have written but little in the past few months. I really do not know who passed the last letter, that though does not make any difference, if our minds are exercised to write, or we have our dear ones in mind. The old year is past—gone, with its full store of whatever it contained for us emptied or poured out; to us, and many more, it held the full cup of sorrow, of which we drank deeply, yet all was measured out to us in wisdom by a kind, loving Father, and in some mysterious way is for good, but poor depraved mortals like we are often, through the weakness of the flesh, found murmuring and complaining, not reconciled to His way. How true, as said the apostle, we only know in part; clothed with mortality we only see the present, just now, but known unto God are all his works. What a great and wonderful God is our God; there is none like him, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done. What a comfort, how wonderfully blessed, to feel that this God is our God forever, and to rest our all in him, to know he has all power over men and devils, and has safeguarded his dear children in all the way. O how infinitely blessed when we can sweetly confidingly rest our weary, tempest-tossed souls upon the dear bosom of his love and feel the dear embrace of his tender, loving arms. I sometimes wonder if I really know this. I fondly hope I do. The dark, tempestuous night, when there was no beacon light, when there were neither sun, moon nor stars, I think I oft have felt in the last few months, when there was none to deliver or could save except he of whom it is said, Even the winds and waves obey his commands. It is difficult to feel in such a tempest that it is for good, indeed we cannot until he speaks peace to our soul, then what a change is wrought; immediately we are at peace, resting in the light and sunshine of his presence. I know from the revealed word (and I hope by experience) that there is not a place or condition that surrounds his dear children but that the Redeemer is with them. If I make my bed in hell thou art with me there. He was with his dear disciples in that fearful storm on the sea, with Daniel in the lion's den, with the three Hebrew children in the furnace. Where can I go from his presence or from his Spirit? O dear aged and afflicted sister and pilgrim, again I say how infinitely blessed are we if this God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Daniel and the three Hebrew children, yea, the God of the whole earth, the Creator and Disposer of all events and times, is our God. My soul is lifted up with re-

joicing as I think of this great and mighty One, who remembers a dust worm like me, and takes notice of me, that should hold me in the right hand of his power, to save me, a rebel worm, blackened and sin-stained with the blackness of hell. Will he leave me now? No, this God is our God; he will be our God even unto death. Held in the right hand of his power. None can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? How often we forget him, but his eye is ever upon and his tender care over his dear loved ones; they are kept as the apple of his eye. He will gather his lambs in his arms and carry them in his bosom. O blessed, tender, loving care! Well might the old prophet sing, Happy art thou, O Israel. Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord? My soul shall be joyful in my God.

Dear sister, together with the household of faith, whose hope the Lord is, when I took my pen to write I was utterly barren, and felt, What can I write of cheer and interest to your fruitful mind? I trust the Lord has led my mind out into these blsssed things of the Spirit, and my own soul has been comforted to feel his divine care is over us and will provide, and guide in his own right way, and here I would raise an Ebenezer to his praise.

"O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be."

I trust this may find you reasonably well. As a dear, aged pilgrim, sister and mother in Israel, we wish for you the full assurance of that living faith and hope in your declining years that as the curtains or shadows of night gather around you may be favored of the Lord to look beyond by faith and see the beauties and glories of that blessed haven of rest, where none shall say, I am sick; to read your title clear to mansions in the skies, and bid farewell to every fear, and wipe your weeping eyes. The Lord bless and comfort you and yours, present and absent, and accept this as a token of love and fellowship in the Lord and in gospel bonds. May you be favored to glean some crumbs.

My family is reasonably well. Mrs. Sawin is much better, for which I desire to be grateful unto the Lord.

P. W. SAWIN.

LONDON, Ont., March 28, 1915.

ELDER H. H. LEFFERTS—DEAR BROTHER:—No doubt you will be surprised at receiving a letter from me. Ever since the Duart meeting I have been impressed in mind to write you, and would hesitate time and again. My utter inability to write to one so much above me in the things of the kingdom of God made me sink and feel so little in self. To-day I read again from what you preached about at the Duart meeting: "And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town," and so on. (Mark viii. 22-26.) I have not as yet forgotten or lost the sweetness of that sermon. He saw men as trees walking. It was beautiful. At first when God begins his work in our souls, it is sometimes a long time ere we know what is the real cause of our sickness, and there is no sickness to be compared with it. I felt my inability to relieve myself of my great burden, and went for years crushed under a load of guilt and sin, and felt undone forever, justly banished from his presence. Some would tell me to put my trust and hope in Jesus. I would try and try, but no rest. My grief was so great that I could not work. All my associates, so dear to me before, I did not want to see them. My life was so changed, the things I once

loved I hated, and I would plead with the Lord to have mercy on my soul, but felt, I am lost forever. I could not go back to town (the world). How sweet that was to me as you preached. I did not want to go back. No, I was like John Bunyan, with a great burden on my back fleeing to the celestial city, no turning back. Father or mother, sister or brother could not comfort me. O no, my grief was too great, and, like you preached, Jesus had to touch my eyes again before I could see clearly. Hope was given and my burden removed. The springtime had come, the singing of birds, and the voice of the turtle was heard in the land. Jesus sent the healed man away to his house (the church) saying: "Neither go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town." I feel to know what this all means. We who are born of the Spirit do not want to go back into the world; it is no comfort, but sorrow. If we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption.

I did not intend writing this way, but just had to pen these words to you to-day. The words came with much sweetness to me: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength," &c.—Isaiah xl. 31. I felt I was waiting upon the Lord in thought, meditating upon his word, eating of the sweet bread of life. This world has lost its sweetness to me. If I can be where my brethren are, there is my joy. How kindly dear brother Durand spoke to you and dear brother Ker of your articles in the SIGNS. It must be a help to hear that from the dear faithful soldiers of the cross. Our beloved pastor was very ill for two weeks, but is better. I hope the Lord will spare him to us long in Canada.

With much christian love to you and yours, your sister in hope,

FLORA J. SINCLAIR.

GASHLAND, Missouri.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed a money order for the renewal of my subscription to the dear old SIGNS, which I read first in my girlhood days at the home of my dear parents (Thurston and M. A. Knight), who are now, I trust, basking in the smiles of our dear Redeemer. As soon as I became a member of the dear Old Baptist Church in Liberty, Ky., in July, 1873, I wrote my father that I wanted the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which soon arrived. I enjoyed it while I remained there, which was until December, 1882, when with six daughters we returned to Missouri. In October, 1883, the seventh daughter was born in my dear father's house. In 1910 brother J. C. Eliott, an Old Baptist, died, first husband of sister S. V. Magee, whose obituary was recently published. July 10th, 1910, my precious old father passed away, and August 18th, 1910, my dear husband died of Bright's disease. All his sisters, one brother, father, mother and grandparents on his mother's side were Primitive Baptists. My husband, R. E. Hamilton, was one in belief. I heard him relate his experience to Elder Bija Anderson, of Estill County, Ky., who admonished him to go to his friends and tell what great things the Lord had done for him. He made answer that he was too unworthy, and could not cease from sin, that when he would do good, evil was present with him, and that when he got angry he would swear, so he thought he was not fit to join the church. But the last years of his life we lived near Goshen Church, St. Clair County, where my membership is. He died at our home in Harpers Prairie, and we brought his remains to Barry Cemetery, Clay Co., Mo., and if it is God's will I wish to be placed by his side when I pass

away. We have two daughters living in this county: Mrs. G. C. and Mrs. A. D. Martin. I make my home with A. D. Martin, Route 1, Gashland, Mo. I heard Elder Durand the fall I was married, in 1871, when he preached in this county. Sister Rosina spent one week with us in Kansas City, Mo., while he and father visited churches. Sister Rosina and I corresponded for a number of years, and afterward through the dear old SIGNS. I dearly love to read Elder Durand's writings, as well as many others too numerous to mention. Sister M. J. Mundy and I are all the Primitive Baptist daughters now left on this earth of T. and M. A. Knight.

Do as you please about publishing this in the paper.

Unworthily,

U. T. K. HAMILTON.

SMITHSHIRE, Illinois.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is time for me to send my annual remittance for the SIGNS, and I feel it my duty to speak a word of encouragement to you in your work. Indeed, I have felt so for a long time, but have neglected it partly because of pressing worldly duties and partly because I have felt unable to say anything adequate to the afflictions through which you have been called to pass. Elder Chick had so endeared himself to me by his personal letters that his passing seemed almost like that of one of my own household, and I could scarcely imagine what it would mean to those who mingled with him intimately in publishing the paper and in the home. Then my heart ached afresh at the loss of sister Ker, as I tried to realize what this and the increased responsibility as editor of the SIGNS would be to Elder Ker, and I sincerely wished I could say something to let you know I had fellowship with your sorrow, but no words came to me, my mind seemed barren of all save pain. Then sister Wright in the far west wrote so beautifully and said what I had felt, and many others have sent you sweet and comforting messages, so that I feel there is no need for me to speak, except for my own sake, to discharge a duty I have for some time felt. As we go along we learn more and more that all true service is quite as much a blessing to the servant as to those served. I trust you realize daily this reward in your large service to poor, erring and scattered Israel. The Israel of to-day, or the church, surely has been stricken and given into the hands of the enemy. Organizations among whom the pure gospel is preached are far apart, and true believers are scarce. What a comfort your work is to them, and how great must even your present reward be in this service of love. While all the lonely and scattered ones have grieved with you in your grief, we now feel comforted and thankful in that the SIGNS still lives and still carries to us the same sweet old story of salvation by grace. Our faith in the power and mercy and loving care of our God is also increased through these providences, sad as they have been, and we remember afresh his promise to be with us, and especially with those who are to preach his gospel: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Your sister in hope,

GRACE VEECH SMITH.

NORTH BATTLEFORD, Canada, July 22, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—Another year has rolled away, so I must pen a line or two, as my health will not allow me to travel. I am taking a doctor's treatment. Patience will get its perfect work. God has given me patience, and taught me to be still, resting in the clefts of the Rock (Christ Jesus). He alone is the polisher, and his image is seen in each one. When the kingdom of God is within us we know each other. You all are my companions in the way, the only church. I feel we are one in Christ. Natural men cannot understand the things of the Spirit: salvation by grace. Though in the world, we are not of it. Every number I receive of the SIGNS is so full of manna my cup runs over with joy. I was going to write, but am brought to silence. The SIGNS shows plainly the power of God in Christ and the Holy Ghost, bringing all things to remembrance, God's word fulfilled. I often wondered what the signs of the times meant, spiritually, but O how beautifully it was expounded. Elder Silas Durand told me of the wonderful truth. To me, self is the only Arminian. Each one of the writers truly gives evidence of being buried with Him in baptism. The power of the word of God made flesh. To show that we have been washed by that Word is necessary to baptism.

I could write and write, but the half will never be told. A word to the bereaved ones. Why unconsolable, as those who have no hope?

(MRS.) K. FINLAYSON.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Baltimore Church, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has pleased our heavenly Father that we should meet once more, we believe for the purpose of praising his great and holy name. Those who came, with whom we are in immediate correspondence, their preaching was in demonstration of the Spirit and with power. How good it is when the whole counsel of God is declared in the preached word. We are commanded by the apostle to shun it not; yes, there is danger in varying one degree. Behold how great a fire a little spark kindleth, and how hard it is to check when once beyond our control. God grant that all of the members of the precious body of his dear Son might strive together, and by so doing keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. What a ghastly sight it would be to our natural eyes to behold an earthly brother going about the streets of our city with his body partly dismembered, and what a terrible thing it would be if we should be found guilty of having taken part in this dismemberment. Love ye one another, and so fulfill the law of Christ. It has been good to have met and mingled together with your messengers once more; they have brought glad tidings of good cheer, and our hearts have been made to rejoice.

Our next session is to be held with the church at Black Rock, Baltimore County, Md., May, 1916, where we hope to meet again your messengers in peace and harmony. May the God of all grace rest and abide with us all, is our prayer for Jesus' sake.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Moderator.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

The Delaware Association, now in session with the Bryn Zion Church, to the sister associations and churches with which we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED:—We are favored of the Lord with a good attendance from sister associations and churches, and the blessings of divine grace have been handed out to us from our God through the ministry and by social intercourse. We have received your messengers and messages with gladness of heart. We feel that God has been glorified in our coming together, therefore the end has been accomplished for which this meeting is now recorded as one of the events of the past, with many other such events in which God's glory has been the first thought in the hearts of the Lord's dear people.

The next session of this association will be held (if the Lord will) with the Welsh Tract Church, New Castle County, Delaware, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 25th, 26th and 27th, 1916, where and when we hope to receive your messengers and messages again.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Southampton Church, at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., June 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1915, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting and love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the tender mercy and kind providence of the God of heaven and earth we have met as an association. Your messengers have come to us bearing the messages of that one truth, the gospel of peace, which is proclaimed through the operation of the Spirit of the Son of God. Their expressions have been in a meek and quiet spirit, which we feel is the exercise of the worship of our God, and having this manifestation our hearts yearn for the time to come when they will meet with us in another session of our association.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the First Hopewell Church, Mercer Co., N. J., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the first Sunday in June, 1916, where we hope to again meet and receive all your ministers and messengers.

S. H. DURAND, Moderator.
WM. HOBENSACK, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., June 9th, 10th and 11th, 1915, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond sends love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—This session of our association has been one of pleasantness and peace, which is not unusual with us. The Lord has given us, lo, these many years, to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and to his great name be honor and praise. We have gladly received your messengers and Minutes; through them we have been strengthened and comforted.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the New Vernon Church, New Vernon, N. Y., to begin Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1916, when and where we shall hope to again receive your messengers and Minutes, thus continuing correspondence with you. Until then farewell.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1915.

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JUSTIFICATION.

JUSTIFICATION is that gracious act of God by which the sinner is justly free from all blame and censure in the sight of God, justly free from the penalty of all his sins, without spot, wrinkle or any such thing in the sight of the just and holy God. Redemption and justification are not the same. Redemption is the act of paying the purchase price to buy back that which has transgressed the law. The church of God, being made partakers of flesh and blood in Adam, transgressed God's holy law. The penalty of this transgression was death. Jesus, the head of the church, paid this debt, this redemption price, in the laying down of his life and the shedding of his blood. The death of Jesus redeemed his people, it did not justify them. The resurrection of Christ is the justification of his people. Having died for their sins, to pay the penalty thereof, he is raised from the dead for their justification, to place them in an unblamable standing before the throne of God. "We believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." —Romans iv. 24, 25.

"Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."—Romans iii. 24. Here justification is spoken of as being by grace. This does not contradict the truth that justification is by the resurrection of Christ, but shows that God raised his Son from the dead, not because of anything in his people that compelled him to do it, not because of any merit or worth in them, but solely upon the basis of the free and unmerited grace of God himself. It was the design of God from eternity to make his elect people a present, or gift of the benefits to flow from the death and resurrection of his Son. In this way justification is by grace, it comes to the sinner wholly undeserved, by the raising of Christ from the dead. Also, this Scripture in Romans iii. 24, speaks of the justification coming through the redemption. While justification and redemption are separate acts, they are closely related, and the justification is an outflowing of the redemption. In other words, Christ had to die before he could be resurrected, his resurrection issues forth from death, thus the justification of the church, which is by his resurrection from the dead, comes through the redemption.

"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."—Romans iii. 28. In this Scripture justification is spoken of as being by faith. This is not a different justification than that which is by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, but the justification which is by the resurrection of Jesus Christ furnishes a foundation for the justification which is by faith. Justification by faith is the experimental knowledge of the justification which is by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. What benefit to the people of God would all the operations of God be were they never to be experienced by any of the people of God? All that God has done

through Christ for his people is brought to their knowledge by faith, which is the gift of God. Faith brings to the believer the knowledge that Christ has risen from the dead, and that he has thereby justified him before the face of God in love. We might say that we were justified 2000 years ago, when Christ arose from the dead, but we never can know anything about it until faith brings that knowledge, or news, home to us. In this way we are justified by faith; not that faith actually does the justifying, but faith tells us how that justification was done: by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Just so, all the holy men of old who lived on earth before the coming of Christ in the flesh were not actually justified until Christ arose from the dead, but by the faith which God gave them they looked forward to the accomplishment of all the perfect work of Christ, so that their faith viewed the resurrection of Christ as a thing already completed, therefore they, too, were justified by his resurrection from the dead and were apprised of that fact through faith, thus were justified by faith which lay hold on the resurrection of Christ ahead of them.

"Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith."—Romans iii. 30. By "the circumcision" is meant Israel of old; by "uncircumcision" is meant the Gentiles. God had a people among the Jews, and he has a people among the Gentiles. Since God is one God, he does not save his people by two plans of salvation, but one; he does not justify them by two modes, but one. Whether one is a Jew or a Gentile, if they be one of God's elect, they are all justified the one way, by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. "Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference."—Romans iii. 22. Here we see there is no difference as to the mode of justification, whether one is a Jew or a Gentile. All are saved by grace, and all are justified by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and all have this good news communicated to them by the faith which is the gift of God. This excludes all boasting, so that if we glory, let us glory in the Lord. Whether one is justified by faith or through faith, it is all the same, for the justification which faith brings to our experimental knowledge has its roots in the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

Written at the request of brother Buford Oldham, of Owensville, Indiana.

L.

MARK VIII. 35.

"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it."

In the verse preceding this, Jesus tells his disciples: "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." No man naturally can ever have the will to follow Jesus, that will must be begotten in him by the operation of the Spirit of God. When that will to follow Jesus is begotten in one, it leads to the next step: self-denial. Self cannot deny self; it takes a higher power than one's self to enable him to deny self. So, when the will is given to follow Jesus, it leads to the denial of one's reason, one's natural faith, one's fleshly inclinations and appetites, one's old religion; in fact, to the denial of the old man at every point. Thus there follows as the result of such denial the taking up of the cross. We are crucified with Christ. Self-denial, in the sense that the will of the Spirit in one brings it about, is being crucified with

Christ. Being a disciple of Christ is not at all pleasant to one's fleshly nature, it is a continual life of the cross. The people of God belong to him, he has bought them with a price, not of silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, having chosen them in him before the world began. It is not to be expected, therefore, that God's people can live to themselves. They are not their own, but God's, hence must live the life that he wants them to. His will will be accomplished in them whether they want it that way or not. In trying to save their lives, God's people find that they lose their lives. That is, in trying to lay our plans to accomplish our own natural and selfish ends, in making arrangements to carry out our own designs and to live our own lives, we are continually reaping disappointment, all the time finding that God's predestination overrules our weak determinations. Thus in trying to save our lives, in trying to make them work out as we want them to, we all the time lose our lives, find that we cannot do the things our nature inclines us to do. On the other hand, when we are made willing to lose our life for Christ's sake and the gospel's, willing to be God Almighty's anything or nothing, just as he wills it, we find our life in the better sense of the word; that is, we find a higher and holier joy and sense of well doing in the sphere of the Spirit that earthly men are alien to. Those who, for Christ's sake, have been called to lay down their lives for the gospel, thus losing their lives, have been attended by such provisions of God unsought for and unearned, that it amounts to the finding of their lives in a far better and fuller sense of living.

Requested by J. M. David, Danielsville, Ga. L.

ACTS IX. 7; XXII. 9.

"AND the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man." "And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me."

It might seem at first reading that the two Scriptures above contradict each other, since in the first it says the men with Saul heard a voice, while in the second it says the men "heard not the voice of him that spake to me." However, when we look at these Scriptures carefully there is no contradiction at all. As Saul journeyed from Jerusalem to Damascus bearing letters from the high priest authorizing him to bind men and women of the faith of Jesus and bring them captive to Jerusalem, he was accompanied by other men (we do not know how many). As they journeyed, suddenly at midday a light beyond the brightness of the sun shone round about Saul and the men that were with him. Saul says the men that were with him saw indeed the light. In the sense that this light shone round about them, we do not doubt but that these men did see it, but as this light shone within the heart and soul of Saul, no one saw it but himself. This light shining in him must have revealed his guilty state before a just and holy God; this light shining round about the men that were with him did not reveal to them that they were sinners. The light shining round about one will never bring this revelation, it must shine in and within the soul of the sinner in order to reveal that one's guilty state. Thus, it seems to us there is a sense in which those traveling companions of Saul did not see this light that Saul saw. He saw it, not only as round about him, but felt the full blaze of its revealing power in himself, while the men with him saw it only as round about them, with no mani-

festation of the light shining within themselves. Along the same line, the men with Saul did hear "a voice." Please note the Scripture does not say they heard "the" voice, but Saul heard "the" voice. Saul says these men did not hear the voice that spake to him. This is true, for while those men heard "a" voice, some kind of a sound, they certainly did not hear the voice that Saul did, which said unto him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Paul does not say that these men heard nothing at all, he admits that they did hear a voice, but says, "They heard not the voice of him that spake to me." It was Jesus that spoke to Saul, and it was the voice of Jesus that he heard. The men who were with Saul, while they heard a voice, certainly did not hear the voice of Jesus. When we take the Scripture in Acts ix. and compare it with Acts xxii. carefully, we see there is no contradiction.

Written at the request of J. W. Barnes, of Terrell, Tennessee. L.

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CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder B. F. Coulter.)

The Delaware Association, in session with the Bryn Zion Church, Kent County, Delaware, May 26th, 27th and 28th, 1915, to the churches and associations with which we correspond, sends greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—The Association, in addressing you this annual letter, is pleased to communicate good tidings of peace and prosperity within our midst. We therefore ask your faithful and careful consideration of Romans xiv. 17: "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." The pleasures and all that is embraced in meat and drink belong to the world, which is dead in trespasses and in sins. The kingdom of God is invisible to the natural eye, and also to the natural mind, neither is there any desire in the natural heart for the things of the kingdom of God. In the one death reigns, in the other "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." As in the case of the rich man and Lazarus, Abraham said, "And beside this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence." The world desireth the things of the world, and the children of the kingdom are turned in their hearts to the precious things of the kingdom. The apostle in this Scripture first tells us what the kingdom of God is not. Scripture tells us that we were shapen in iniquity, and in sin did our mother conceive us, therefore is our flesh sin, our heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, our mind confined to the knowledge of the things of our earthly nature only. The pleasures and follies of the

world are our meat and drink, unbelief reigns supreme in our minds and in our hearts. Selfishness, pride, envy and hatred are a part of our very being, and are made manifest in all our daily walk of this life. These things are what the kingdom of God is not. Then we are told what the kingdom of God is, that it is "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." In this kingdom the Spirit (the Holy Ghost) takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us. He shows us that Jesus is our all and in us all, his love fills every heart, his righteousness is our righteousness, for it is imputed unto us through his atonement. Therefore his kingdom is righteousness, for the King and his chosen compose the kingdom. The kingdom is righteousness, because Christ is altogether righteous, he is all glorious within. In ourselves, that is, in our flesh, we have no righteousness, no holiness. The earthly house of our tabernacle is a thing of time, it becomes dissolved and becomes a thing of the past, but blessed be our Lord, he has built another house and placed it within this earthly house, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Then righteousness and peace and joy fill the soul, and the light of faith points you to the kingdom, saying, "The kingdom of God is within you." The stronger man has entered the palace of the strong man, bound him and spoiled his goods, so that he is no more a master, but a servant. Sin continues to abound, but grace doth much more abound, the face is turned toward the holy city, for a voice from behind has said, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Now all this conflict and soul experience is because "the kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." When Jesus was about to depart from his disciples to prepare a place for them, he said, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I said unto you." The Holy Ghost giveth us confirmation of instruction in righteousness through the Scriptures. The blessedness of peace and joy in the Holy Ghost is ours because the kingdom of God is within us. It is the Holy Ghost that speaketh in the saints, therefore do we speak thereby, for the evil of the heart has been subdued by the power of grace. When we pray acceptably, we pray in the Holy Ghost. The apostle Jude says, "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost." The kingdom of God, the habitation of the saints, the temple of God set up in the heart, and the indwelling of the Spirit, is that which worketh mightily in you, making manifest in the heart "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," which is the kingdom.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

(Written by brother George M. Conner.)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Pa., June 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1915, to the brethren of this and other associations with which we correspond, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN in a precious truth, as in Christ Jesus, one that we worship in truth and in spirit:—It has been handed down to my lot to write a Circular letter, but I feel to be the least of all the saints of God, if one at all, but hope to write some words of comfort. It may not be of comfort to all, but if it is to some poor worm of the dust, my cup is

filled. It is a pleasure to me to give a crumb to a hungry soul, for from them I get my meat and drink, from that river that flows from the throne of God, that flows on and on, so pure and gentle, it flows as pure and clear as crystal. Many times have I thought to write this Letter, but have been so barren of spiritual things, not a crumb in sight, but at this time, if it is the will of God to give me words to write, I will obey, and give to his dear children words that I hope he will fill my mouth with. A portion of Scripture will be found in the first chapter of Job, sixth verse, that reads like this: "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them." Now as it draws near to the time of an association we all hope to present ourselves before the Lord in meekness and gentleness, being kind to one another in love and fellowship, trying to bear one another's burdens; but Satan will come also, to try to tell his ways, and will be very close at hand at all times, and will say as he said in the garden of Eden, Ye shall not surely die. But, my dear brethren, do you remember what the Lord said to his apostles? "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." This a child has to contend with in this world here below, he goes step by step, learning from God, his Master, who corrects him with a firm hand, but so gentle and so kind. He carries the little lambs in his bosom, he falls among wolves, a child of God, but to learn what wolves are. They are not more nor less than the devil, and serpents, ready to devour whom he sees. In this chapter of Job, the trials of poor Job, this servant of God, look how he was tried upon all points; Satan was there, and the Lord said unto Satan, "Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord." In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

I have penned a few trials of God's children, they are like poor Job, and have been made to cry out, I know my Redeemer liveth. With all our trials we have been made to rejoice in his name, for it is working out some good thing for us. The reason I tell you this is because I have had trials of my own, been with the wolves, the serpents, been with the world, and I hope by the grace of God to be wise, or know something of the serpents, or that old fellow that is called the devil, for I think he dwells in this earthen vessel as the Lord sees fit to drive him out or bid him come, as is said in Matthew xii. 28: "But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you." How strange is the course a christian must live, but through it all he can sing with the poet:

> "How can I sink with such a prop
> As my eternal God,
> Who bears the earth's huge pillars up,
> And spreads the heavens abroad?"

I feel that I can say as Hezekiah, "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live." If this is spiritual food, I cannot call one out by name or add to the number, all is with the Lord; it seems to me like writing to one big family of God. May God's blessings rest upon all his family, to lead those by the way, the living way. My loving remembrance remains for Southampton, as I often think of my first visit to that association, only a few years ago. It was the first that I ever attended, and if it is the Lord's will may I return from this one singing his praises. Isaiah

xxxviii. 19: "The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth."

I will now close. May God bless you all with love and fellowship. Strive to keep peace, and if we differ on the doctrine, may our mouths be closed. Without we may talk in love and sweet fellowship. I hope this is written by the blessing of God.

S. H. DURAND, Moderator.
WM. HOBENSACK, Clerk.

(Written by brother George Ruston.)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Warwick Baptist Church of Warwick, N. Y., June 9th, 10th, and 11th, 1915, to the churches within her bounds, sends love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In our Circular Letter we would call your attention to the following words of Jesus: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."—John x. 27. The desire of all tried souls in Zion is to read their title clear, to find out really whether they are the sheep of God's pasture or not, and they are continually questioning if their experience is God's work in their soul, or their own foolish imagination. Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." And again, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." For this wonderful person to be the giver of eternal life, proves that he is more than man and none other than God himself. The prophet Isaiah says, "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." In the text before us he says, "My sheep," indicating that he has a choice, a chosen and particular people. These were chosen in him from eternity, out of every nation, kindred and tongue. To his disciples he said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." They were not chosen because they were the most moral, or the most virtuous among men, for it is the confession of all God's children that they were conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity. Of these chosen ones it is said, "My sheep hear my voice." With this voice there is almighty power. It is the voice of the Lord Jehovah, the same that said, "Let there be light: and there was light." John said, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men." "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." His disciples said, "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!" It was the voice of this person that raised the dead, healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, opened the eyes of the blind and unstopped the ears of the deaf. His voice shall not be heard in the street, yet those who are in their graves hear it, and hearing it live, therefore we can readily conclude that such a voice is more than human. If it were only human it could not (though very powerful) rise above the level of humanity, for "that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Jesus said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." It is necessary for the Lord Jesus as God Almighty to breathe into his people the breath of life. It is written, "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit,"

and when his word is spoken to those dead in sin there is a change. In some it is perhaps imperceptible for years, with others it is like a voice of thunder threatening punishment for sins committed. In all cases the same spirit applies the word, but there are diversities of operation. With the word, life has been implanted in their souls, and that life as light is showing them their past life and present condition. They may try to stifle this voice, for every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved, (John iii. 20,) but the word is powerful and will assert itself. It is continually applied to their souls, until they are grieved over their sinfulness, and are made to hate the life they are living. When they try to live better they find sin coming up where they least expect it, plunging them again into the ditch, so that their own clothes abhor them. (Job ix. 31.) Such characters, like living children, cry, being troubled, and finding no helper, they conclude that no man cares for their souls. Like the Philippian jailer they cry, "What must I do to be saved?" In such a condition they are convinced, little by little, that they cannot save themselves, and that their condemnation is just. By bitter experience they are taught that there is a God who brings every deed done in the body into judgment. They hear of others who have approached this great God with their case and have been forgiven, and something says within them, Why not you? But they are conscious that their case is worse than others, so feel themselves lost. To such the gospel trumpet is blown, Jesus the great Shepherd is proclaimed as the one who can forgive sins, bind up the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to the captives and open the prison to them that are bound. The poor souls feel it to be like good news from a far country, and with the hearing comes a desire that this same Jesus would but look upon them, would but speak the word, that they might be made whole. With their burden pressing they cry to him to pity, and be merciful to them. They hear that he came to seek and to save that which was lost, and that he is mighty to save; they believe he is able to save them, but is he willing? They read that all that came unto him sick he healed, never turning any away. His ear is not heavy that it cannot hear, and in his own good time he is known of them, their burden is gone and they are free. He gives them beauty for ashes, puts a new song in their mouths, and they are filled with gladness, thanksgiving and praise, for while the Bridegroom is with them they rejoice. They have heard his voice and he is known of them. His goodness in appearing for their help when no other helper could be found has made him very precious to them. Now they can feelingly sing, "Christ is my life, my joy, my care, my blessed hope, my heavenly prize." The Sun of Righteousness has arisen with healing in his wings. (Mal. iv. 2.) He has become to them an everlasting light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. They have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and are filled with amazement at the thought that he should have taken pity upon them in such a condition. When they, naked and self-condemned, were looking for wrath he forgave their sins and clothed them, and now they feel that eternity will not be any too long to sing the praises of such a Redeemer. Unconsciously they are singing the song of the redeemed. Jesus to them now is a living Savior, in whose favor is life. He has become their hope, both sure and

steadfast. They can now say, My beloved is mine, and I am his. It is now their happiness to tell to others what he has done for them, and to their surprise they find that none understand their language but those who have been led in a similar path, a people of like precious faith. To these they come telling what God has done for them, and there is joy, joy always when God's children hear of the coming of Jesus, for joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance. (Luke xv. 7.) "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." These souls now realizing that the Lord is their Shepherd, desire to be led by him, to do his commandments, hearkening unto his voice. They have known the way of transgressors to be hard, and have tasted that the Lord is gracious, consequently their desire is that they should be led in the right way. Jesus to such characters is the way, and the door through which they go in and out and find pasture. The Bible to them is now a wonderful book, filled with the testimonies of the faithful, and in reading they are not backward in understanding that they have been led by the same Spirit; prophets and apostles all testifying that God chose, kept and sustained them, and that he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. They see clearly that Jesus was the desire of the saints in all ages, and find themselves in an innumerable company, Jesus being the chiefest amongst them, and the altogether lovely. While they are favored with such views nothing could be more pleasant, but it is their Lord's will that they shall not continue long in such a state. As his meat was to do the will of the Father that sent him, so their meat will be found in obedience to his will. He said to his disciples, "Follow me," and they left all and followed him. On entering upon his ministry he went to John the Baptist and was baptized in Jordan. The Spirit of God descended upon him in the form of a dove, and a voice said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." It is the desire of those taught by him to follow him whithersoever he goeth. Seeing that Jesus humbled himself to be baptized of John, and in doing so had the testimony that he pleased God, so they would follow him, ever conscious that they are unworthy of a name and a home with his dear people, and knowing that they love them and desire their fellowship. When it pleases their Lord to hide himself, to teach them that they still have a body of sin, and are in a world full of allurements, very soon they find themselves in a wilderness, being tempted of the devil, and having hearts that are deceitful and desperately wicked, they are not slow to follow his suggestions, and in doing so are defiled. When they are shown how they have strayed, they loathe themselves, and long for their Shepherd to appear. Such experience works in them a carefulness, and a continual fear of themselves. At other times when temptations assail they say, like one of old, How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? and can pray, Keep me from sin lest it grieve me. The consciousness of their own weakness makes them willing to take the lowest place, to be servant of all. David says, "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." They are often left to travel alone in darkness that can be felt, writing many bitter things against themselves, thinking that if they really were Christ's sheep they would have a continual happiness, but it is

God's will that they follow their Shepherd, who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. They must be tried as gold is tried, and refined as silver is refined. At times this is very painful to the flesh, but the Spirit of Christ within says, "Not my will, but thine, be done," desiring that God will search them and try them and see if there be any wicked way in them, and lead them in the way everlasting. Such souls are not only following their Shepherd, but his Spirit, as the light of life, is in them, guiding them into all truth, for he said, "Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Savior. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them: and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." They take the spoiling of their goods joyfully, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, (Hebrews xii. 26,) his Spirit working in them to will and to do of his good pleasure. If it is their lot to be reviled, they revile not again, and fearing themselves they cry, Lord, keep me, help me, and deliver me. They learn obedience by the things which they suffer, and in His obedience they obtain eternal salvation, of which their Shepherd is the author.

In conclusion, we would pray that the great Shepherd of the sheep will ever be near us, giving us gracious tokens that we are his choice and causing us to hear his voice and follow him.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Geo. L. Weaver, June 3rd, 1915, at the residence of the bride's mother, 3259 West 98th St., Cleveland, Ohio, Cyrus Cross and Jennie M. Gwynn, both of Cleveland.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Esther M. Niles, of South Gardiner, Maine, was born Feb. 27th, 1845, and departed this life to be with Christ, which is far better, May 11th, 1915, aged 70 years, 2 months and 12 days. She was married May 29th, 1870, to John Niles, who died July 8th, 1902. Our departed sister and her husband were both members of the church at Bowdoinham, Maine, and were baptized between forty and fifty years ago by Elder Hiram Campbell. Our sister was truly one who feared the Lord, and was of a lowly and gracious heart. She was firm in her attachment to the doctrine of God our Savior, and all her expectation of eternal salvation and of eternal glory in Christ Jesus she felt must flow to her, a vile transgressor, from the sovereign grace of God. She loved the company of the saints, esteeming herself to be a poor, unworthy one, whose only hope was in the Savior, Christ the Lamb of God for sinners slain. The little flock, the church at South Gardiner, will miss her in their assemblies for the worship of God. The meetinghouse was near her home, and she was ever there at their times of meeting. During her last sickness our sister was called to endure very much suffering, but she was well and kindly cared for by her daughter-in-law and her sons. The Lord has taken her to himself from this world of burdens, afflictions and pain. The earthly house is dissolved, and her ransomed spirit, we believe, has been received by the Lord Jesus to himself in glory. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." Our sister left three sons, who mourn their loss of a true mother.

At her funeral the writer preached from the words: "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."—Titus ii. 13, 14. Her body was laid away in the grave beside the remains of her departed husband, to await the resurrection at the last day, when they shall come forth from their sleep in the dust of the earth immortal, spiritual, incorruptible, fashioned like unto the glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

ALSO,

Mrs. Ada Ann Chadbourn, of North Berwick, Maine, died May 25th, 1915, aged 82 years, 10 months and 18 days. She was married Feb. 11th, 1854, to Reuben C. Chadbourn. Her husband, brother Chadbourn, departed this life Jan. 22nd, 1912. Our beloved sister when a young woman was brought by the Holy Spirit to a knowledge of her condition as a poor, perishing sinner, and in the Lord's own good time she was given faith to look to the crucified

Lamb of God as her hope of reconciliation with God. Her rejoicing in hope of the glory of God was in our precious Redeemer, Jesus Christ. She professed her hope in the Savior, and was received in the fellowship of the church at "Oak Woods," North Berwick, August 2nd, 1857, and was baptized by Elder William Quint. During all the long period of her membership in the church her interest in the welfare of Zion was unabated. Even during the years when, through infirmities, she could only occasionally assemble with the church, her heart went out for the peace and prosperity of the children of God. Our sister was well known, and respected by her neighbors and friends. She was kindly in her ways, and to the last of her days took an interest in young people and children, and her great-grandchildren will not forget the lively pleasure she took in their needlework, drawings and other handiwork. For a number of years she was in failing health, but had the kind and patient ministrations of those about her. In the last few months her health and strength declined more rapidly, and in her increased feebleness she became confined to her bed. Whenever I visited her I found her cheerful, and much gratified with conversation upon the things of the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. She took much pleasure in listening to the singing of precious hymns of the gospel of Christ. The last time I visited her, not many days before she died, I sat by her bedside and talked of the sovereign kindness and love of God our Savior. She expressed her delight to hear such things, and said she loved that preaching which gave all the honor and glory to God. She then said she would like me to read a chapter in the Bible and speak in prayer. Through the riches of God's mercy she ran with continuance the race set before believers in the gospel. She has finished her course, she kept the faith. Truly our departed sister will be missed by us all. We sometimes sigh over the removal from our midst of those whom we love in the truth, but the Lord is gathering home, out of this world of wickedness, affliction, conflicts and pain his loved and ransomed children to himself. Our Father, who art in heaven, thy will be done. There survive her an elder sister, sister Abbie Clark, of North Berwick, Maine, and a younger brother, Osbourn Clark, of Wells, Maine. Her daughter, sister Marcia Allen, and grandchildren, Mr. Roscoe Allen and sister, Mrs. Rosie Hobbs, and three great-grandchildren, children of sister Rosie Hobbs.

At her funeral the writer preached from 2 Timothy iv. 6–8. Her remains were buried in the Sanford Cemetery, beside the body of her departed husband, until the Lord Jesus shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. FREDERICK W. KEENE.

Elder J. L. B. Darnall was born in Marshall Co., Ky., Feb. 16th, 1842, died Feb. 7th, 1915, making his stay on earth 72 years, 11 months and 21 days. When the war broke out between the States he enlisted in the Confederate army under Capt. Crit Edwards, 3rd Kentucky Infantry, and served about three years. He was in many hard battles, but escaped without a wound. He was married to Miranda Edwards in 1859, at the age of seventeen. To them were born twelve children, six of whom are now living. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Rough Creek, Marshall Co., Ky., in September, 1880, and was baptized by Elder W. D. Poiner. He was liberated to preach (date not known), but was ordained to the full work of the ministry at Soldier Creek Church, Marshall Co., Ky., in January, 1885, by a presbytery composed of the following named Elders: T. F. Harrison, moderator, J. M. Perkins, clerk, F. P. Chandler, J. V. Kirkland, W. D. Poiner and D. Davis. His wife died in 1888. He then came to Trigg County in 1888 and was married to Mattie A. Adkins. To them were born seven children, six of whom are living. He joined Dry Creek Church, and was called to the care of it, together with three other churches, and served them faithfully. He was moderator of the Little River Association for eighteen years. He was held in high esteem by the Baptists, both at home and abroad. He was firm in his convictions, yet unassuming in disposition. He was a firm believer in the sovereignty of God and in the absolute predestination of all things; salvation by grace and grace alone through the Lord Jesus Christ was his meat and his drink. His health began to fail about two years before death came, yet his faith and hope seemed to grow strong in the Lord. He was poor in this world's goods, but rich in hope of immortality, eternal life. His name will live long in fond memory of the Baptists. We feel sure that God only can fill brother Darnall's place. He left three brothers: N. J., Ben and "Wat" Darnall, wife and children to mourn their loss.

The funeral was held at his home church, Dry Creek, in the presence of a large concourse of people. The writer tried to speak to the comfort of the living, from Romans iv. 25; followed by Elder L. D. Seals, who spoke with power from the words of Jesus: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.

May it be the good pleasure of the dear Lord to comfort those who mourn. Amen.

D. R. TURNER.

Miss Eliza McDonald, our dear sister in Christ, was called from the trials of this life into sweet rest April 25th, 1915, in the 27th year of her age. Sister Eliza (as she was commonly called) suffered a long and painful illness. She was taken ill on the third Sunday in October last, and from that time never saw a well day, and very few days that she was free from pain. Her illness seemed to baffle the best medical skill that could possibly be secured, and on April 19th she underwent an operation in the Victoria Hospital in London, Ont. Everything that kind and loving hands could do was done, but her time had come to leave this world of sorrow and care to enter into the sweet and full consummation of her hope. Sister Eliza was received by the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada at the quarterly meeting held in Duart February, 1913, and was baptized at the next quarterly meeting at Dunwich in May, 1913, by Elder H. C. Ker. Sister Eliza's experience was a very bright one. On the night of her deliverance, at Deacon Gillis', in Muirkirk, it was my privilege to be gathered with the company that night at their hospitable home, and I can truly say it was a time long to be remembered. Our dear departed sister was filled to overflowing with the indwelling of the Spirit of her blessed Lord, which caused her to sing and praise his most blessed name all night long, and often would she say, Can you not watch with me a single hour? The words, Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon thee, so filled her soul to overflowing that she could no longer ponder the blessed assurance of the sweet hope which she had for a number of years in her own bosom. Sister Eliza had a sweet gift, and many have been comforted by her good and comforting letters which have appeared in the SIGNS from time to time. But her pen is laid down, never to be taken up again; her work is done, and we can truly say it was well done. She died a most triumphant death, speaking words of comfort to her grief-stricken parents, who were continually at her bedside. A few minutes before she passed away she repeated these words: "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." All fear of death was taken from her, and she sweetly fell asleep in her blessed Savior at 3 a. m. Sunday morning, April 25th.

Her funeral was held from her home in Appin, and the large concourse of people that gathered to pay their last tribute of respect spoke louder than words of the high esteem in which she was held. The writer tried to speak to the comfort of the grief-stricken family from Malachi iii. 17. She leaves to mourn their loss her father and mother, two brothers and two sisters, beside the church and a large circle of relatives and friends. May the grace of God sustain our aged sister and her husband in this their deepest affliction. J. B. SLAUSON.

Sister and Mr. McDonald wish to extend their heartfelt thanks to all those who so kindly remembered them in this their most sad affliction with letters of sympathy and words of comfort, and as it is quite impossible for them to reply personally to all who so kindly remembered them, they take this means of expressing their appreciation of the kind and loving remembrances.

Written by request. J. B. S.

Deacon Russel S. Scroggin died at his home Monday, Nov. 9th, 1914. He was born in Gallatin Co., Ill., Jan. 14th, 1823, and was 91 years, 9 months and 25 days old at the time of his death. He was the son of Garter and Phebe Scroggin. He was twice married, first to Elizabeth Lucus, March 25th, 1845. To that union were born five children, three sons and two daughters: Mrs. Armind Curtis, Charles and Russel preceded him in death; H. M. Scroggin and Anga Curtis are left to mourn the loss of a kind and indulgent father, together with many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He was a member of the Old School Baptist Church called Lake Fork, which he joined the first Sunday in June, 1883, and was baptized by Elder James Ring, pastor of that church. He was soon chosen deacon of that church. He loved to hear the gospel preached, and was never absent from his home church when in session. The things of this world had lost their sweetness to him, and the precious things of the kingdom of our God were uppermost in his mind. He loved to meet with the brethren and talk with them on the subject of salvation by grace. His second marriage was with the widow of George Y. Stipp, who is left to mourn the absence of a dear, kind husband. They were both firm believers in the doctrine held by the Old School Baptists. His first and chief pleasure on earth was in going to meeting and hearing the gospel proclaimed, and mingling with the brethren and sisters in singing praises to God, his favorite hymn being, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord," &c. But he is gone. May the God of all grace comfort those left to mourn their loss, is the humble prayer of the writer.

Funeral services were held at his home in Mount Pulaski, Ill., Wednesday, Nov. 11th, conducted by Elder George W. Inyard, of Olney, Ill. Interment in Steenbergin Cemetery, by the side of his beloved dead, to await the resurrection of the just.

ELIZABETH SCROGGIN.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please allow me to say in your valuable paper that I have a few copies of Benedict's "FIFTY YEARS AMONG THE BAPTISTS," which I am offering at $1.00 per copy, postage paid. Every one knows what this book is worth to the student of Baptist history. Send all orders to

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 83. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1915. NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SENECA, Kans., April 3, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I will now attempt to write, using for a text the words recorded in Philippians iii. 20, 21: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." I realize this subject is too big for me; yes, I know that much, I think, therefore my desire is that if it is God's will, he may give me light and liberty to write in such a way as to give him all the glory. This morning the word "conversation" in the text came to me with more force and meaning than ever before. O what a great subject in these few words, "For our conversation is in heaven." Paul had just been speaking concerning those whose conversation was not in heaven, but upon earthly things. He said, "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an example. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ; whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly; and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)" Then come the words of our text, "For our conversation is in heaven," &c. As much as to say, We do not do that way, we do not mind earthly things, our conversation is in heaven. Yes, that is what Paul means to teach. Here, if I have a true conception of what he is teaching, we observe this church was one of the few exceptions about obeying what they had been taught. Paul said to them, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed," &c. There were very few churches, even in the days of Paul, that it could be truthfully said of them that they had always obeyed. Also we might mention the seven churches of Asia. Comparatively speaking, there were but few that had not sinned to the extent that they were told to repent, with threats of penalties to be inflicted if they did not. Their conversation was not in heaven, their work showed that many of them were minding earthly things, instead of having their conversation in heaven and on heavenly things. The psalmist David said, "The wicked plotteth

against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth."—Psalms xxxvii. 12. Also read verse fourteen: "The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation." Here we see who it is that persecutes, and also who it is that is persecuted. It evidently has always been the same way; that is, all whose conversation is upright or in heaven will suffer persecution. James taught the same as David taught. James said to his brethren, "Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you." It is easy to see whose conversation is upright or in heaven in that case mentioned by James. We all know that it was the just who were put to death by the unjust. Those who were thus guilty were minding earthly things instead of having their conversation in heaven; they were living after the flesh, not living after the Spirit. Paul said to the Galatians, "For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it."—Gal. i. 13. Paul's conversation at that time was not in heaven when he was persecuting the church of God and wasting it. Philippians i. 27, reads thus: "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ; that, whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel." O what a glorious sight this would be to see all of God's people thus living, but, as stated before, very few live that way. Our conversation betrays the works of the flesh. If the conversation of all of God's people was upright, one thing evidently would be true, and that is, God's people would not persecute each other; they would only be persecuted by those who never knew God, instead of persecuting each other. O that we all could remember that those whose conversation is in heaven are never persecutors, while in that condition, but that it is always those whose conversation is not in heaven who are persecutors. I do not think that there is one exception in the Scriptures given to this rule; that is, there is not a case recorded where any whose conversation was in heaven were at the same time persecutors of the church of God and wasted it. On the other hand, there is much Scripture to prove that God's people when not in that condition are persecutors, and that they not only persecute, condemn and kill the just, but that they also will fight and kill each other, as James said of his brethren. He first asks this question, "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?"—James iv. 1. James then tells them why this is. He said, "Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God." O what a rebuke this was to the brethren. It is yet true that whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

Now I will try to notice the words of our text. "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ." From this we learn that the Lord Jesus Christ will come from heaven. Many other

Scriptures teach the same. Read Acts i. 11, the latter clause: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." One thing we should observe here in the connection is, he was taken up and a cloud received him out of their sight. Therefore if he comes in like manner as he was seen going into heaven, he will come in a cloud, and to this agree the words of Paul, 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." O what a glorious meeting that will be, when all are together in the cloud with the Lord, and the grandeur of it all is, "and so shall we ever be with the Lord," never to be out of the cloud any more. "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." In this time life we have a foretaste of these things, so to speak, but we do not remain there any great length of time at once; sometimes only momentarily, and sometimes days, or even weeks; even if it were a whole lifetime here on earth, O what would that be compared with eternity? Paul said, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Now I do not know of any other way taught in the Scriptures whereby mortal man can attain unto these things even in this life, only when they are raised up and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ. Our own experience teaches us these things, as well as the Scriptures, and yet with all that O how prone we are to look to self instead of to God for our every need. O that we all could remember the words of our text: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ." Paul was admonishing his brethren to live as though they expected to see that day, and so they did if indeed they were the objects of God's mercy. That day is sure to come. Our hope embraces that very thought, it reaches beyond this life, in our first experience, in our first love, when we were raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; our conversation then was above, our cup was running over with joy and praise to God for his wonderful love to us. Now Paul said, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."—Col. iii. 1–4. Paul was admonishing those brethren to keep right on the way they were started. That is, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." Evidently no mortal man was ever instrumental in raising himself up with Christ. Remember Paul said, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." Man did not have anything to do in quickening himself, and yet he is quickened together with Christ. "(By grace ye are saved.)" God does the quickening, God also does the raising of us up

together with Christ, and makes us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. "That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." Then Paul sums up the whole matter in these words: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." That doctrine is taught in our experience, as well as all through the Scriptures, and yet many of the churches in Paul's time were bewitched, or seduced, to that extent that Paul said to the church of Galatia, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ." Just so it was with the church at Corinth. Paul said, "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" So we see there were those even in Paul's day who also denied that the dead are raised. Paul hinges his whole argument on that one fact: Christ is risen from the dead, and is the firstfruits of them that slept. Otherwise, "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." He also said, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." O let us all ask ourselves the question, Is our life being spent in such a way that we in truth can say, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable"? Let us ask these questions: Was Paul living like the world was living? Was his conversation like it once was? Was he minding earthly things? Was that what made him say, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable"? O no, we know better than that. We know Paul all the time was admonishing his brethren not to live like the world. To live as Paul lived causes persecution and opposition, not only by the world, but by the professed followers of Christ, even those who have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." Evidently God's people are the only people that ever have a zeal of God. But the more of this kind of zeal without knowledge we have, the greater persecutors we will be. At least that evidently is the way it was in Paul's day. He said, "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth? They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them. But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you." Here we see the difference between the churches of Galatia and the church at Philippi. The one had always obeyed, both in Paul's presence and also in his absence. On the other hand, the churches of Galatia had obeyed when Paul was with them, but were disobeying in his absence. Therefore Paul said, "But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you." The trouble with those brethren was they were following man instead of God; that is, their teachers were teaching in such a way as to give man at least part of the glory. Paul tells the brethren plainly their object for thus teaching. He said, "As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ."

No man in the state of nature was afraid of being persecuted for the cause of Christ, and an unbeliever in Christ has no zeal of God, therefore is not afraid of being persecuted for the cross of Christ. And the strangest part of all is that if their doctrine were true the last one of these teachers would be lost, as Paul shows, Gal. vi. 13: "For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh." Paul also said to those brethren, "And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offense of the cross ceased." This proves or shows what Paul meant when he said, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Paul asked those brethren, "Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain." This showed that those brethren had suffered from those who had opposed the doctrine of salvation by grace. Paul said to them, "Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first: and my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected, but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. Where is the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me." It was while those brethren were in that condition that they suffered so many things; it was then that their hope was in Christ. O what a sorrowful change had come over them. They seemed willing to give up their hope and follow teachers that would hinge their eternal destiny on the keeping of the law of Moses, rather than on what Christ had done for them. Paul had not changed or quit preaching the gospel, and he asked them, "Where is then the blessedness ye spake of?" "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" No wonder he said, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another." There was no gospel in it. Just so it is to-day; there is no gospel in the doctrine that our eternal destiny is hinged upon what man must do, instead of what Christ has done. Also there is no gospel in the nonresurrection doctrine. If that doctrine is true, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and our faith is also vain. It seems to me there is no doctrine more vain and unreasonable than to claim our conversation is in heaven and at the same time deny that we ourselves will be in heaven. O why should our conversation be in heaven and at the same time we not expect to be there ourselves? O how vain! Christ either did what he was sent into the world to do, or else he did not do what he came to do. Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."—John vi. 37–39. Now it remains yet to be proven that these words of Jesus will not be fulfilled, not only while living here in time, but also at the last day, when the dead shall be raised. Evidently that is what Jesus meant in the above words, "raise it up again at the last day." Verse forty says, "And I will raise him up at the last day." Paul taught the same also in 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25.

He there is speaking of the end of time, as we speak of time things. It is then that death will be destroyed. It is then that the words of our text will be literally fulfilled; that is, our vile body shall be changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. It is then that the mystery mentioned by Paul will be a reality: "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." O what a glorious day, a grand reality of that hoped for. Then we with David will be satisfied. He said, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."—Psalms xvii. 15. This hope will do to live by, yes, and it will also do to die by. O may our conversation be in heaven now, and we hope it will be in the life to come.

Yours in hope of a glorious resurrection,
JOSEPH FORD.

MONTGOMERY, Ala., Dec. 14, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have just been restudying some old and familiar Scriptures upon which condition salvationists, Arminians and the like of them have built their theology and so-called churches all through the gospel age. Result: I am more than ever, if it be possible, convinced that their foundation Scriptures have been wholly misunderstood and misapplied by them. I desire to give the sons and daughters of God who may read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES what I think is the true meaning of some of these same Scriptures.

First, Hebrews ii. 9: "He by the grace of God should taste death for every man." Of course this Scripture is one of their main props for teaching that any and every one can, if he wills so to do, accept or reject Christ. And they claim it was written expressly to settle the doctrine of free agency, and should, they say, forever hush the mouths of the nonconditionalists. Well, let us see. What was the apostle writing about when he used this expression, "Taste death for every man"? Answer: suffering. Again, what was the purpose or intent of such suffering? Answer: "To make the captain of their [the sons of God] salvation perfect through [just such] sufferings." Now these two questions and answers are to be found right in the heart of verses nine and ten of Hebrews, second chapter. It seems to me that only the spiritually blind can fail to see the real object of this text and context thereunto. In my judgment I see in this phase of the "sufferings" of the cross, the suffering for the "unjust," the children of the devil, (John viii. 44,) the crowning excruciation of the drama of the universe.

Second, 1 Timothy ii. 4: "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." Again we ask, What was the apostle writing about, and what was the object, intent or purpose of this text and context? We must start at the very beginning of this letter to Timothy to gather the full meaning of these words. Paul was exhorting Timothy, together with the brethren or the churches, to pray for the kings and rulers and all subjects of Cæsar's kingdom, that the civil law and order might be maintained and "saved" from anarchy and ruin and destruction, and all for the purpose that God's people might be able to lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty; for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God

our Savior, "who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." Paul was impressing upon Timothy the "truth" about the law of the land, the civil law, its objects and civic virtues. The land was full of strife-stirrers, aiming at the overthrow of all law. Besides, "some" of God's people, led off by Satan, young converts, wholly unqualified and unprepared to preach "sound doctrine," were "desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm." They were preaching or "teaching" that the law of the realm was made for the righteous as much as it was for the lawless and disobedient sinners. This was all bad or false "teaching;" and so we find the apostle saying, We know "that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust." And so the true word is that insofar as it lay in the potentiality of "sound" teaching by God's preachers, "all men" God will have to be saved from anarchy, and to a due and proper allegiance to the laws of the country and obedience unto the kings and all rulers over them. Hence the exhortation was given to pray for kings and all their sinful subjects, that God might guide them and restrain them along the way of peace and order.

Third, John xii. 32: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Now the blind teachers and blind leaders of mighty Babylon, with her thousands of "mighty men," "men of renown," have always tortured this text into a meaning never contemplated by the great Teacher. Its real meaning is clearly stated in the following verse: "This he said, signifying what death he should die." The attention of "all men" of all ages will be called to the great event of great events, his death upon the cross. It has no reference to the salvation of the world, for God chose all his people in Christ Jesus long before the foundation of the world was laid. God also "predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." Before the final doom is pronounced upon the world of crucifiers, their every knee shall bow and their every tongue shall confess that God is "just" to them, as well as the "justifier" of all his dear children. Yes, indeed, the eyes of all the sinful world, from Cain to the last, will be drawn unto Christ, whom they murdered on that cross. They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and shall wail because of me.

I have selected these three passages (as out of many others, which the leaders of the blind go about the earth, for hire, preaching on and asking the children of Satan to do the impossible, the unthinkable thing of accepting Christ,) that God's people may in some sort be comforted by beholding the exceeding foolishness of all such worldly preaching of the worldly wise.

Dearly beloved brethren in the Lord, know always that our Father knew his children from before the beginning, and will keep us throughout all the infinite ages to come in unspeakable joy and glory and happiness, world without end. Amen.

GEORGE W. TOWNSEND.

HEBREWS IV.

THIS chapter is relied on by some teachers of sabbath keeping to prove that the seventh day is still enjoined upon believers to keep it holy as the ancient Jews did. Truly it does set forth the keeping of the antitypical sabbath, the real sabbath for all true believers in Christ. Notice the rest spoken of as God's rest, "my rest," and "his rest." As these Jewish believers whom Paul is addressing were dull of hearing, it seemed difficult for him to speak of the many things necessary so that they could comprehend the difference between the law and ordinances given by the hand of Moses, and the dispensation of the Lord Jesus Christ. These Jews well knew that the commandment to keep the sabbath day holy was given to their fathers in the law of Moses, but did not know it to be typical until they had been taught by Paul. He seemed anxious for them to consider the high value of Jesus and his house contrasted with the dispensation of Moses. Though Moses was a faithful servant in his house, bearing testimony of the things which should follow and of the Prophet that should rise like unto himself, whom Israel should hear, yet Moses represented the shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of those things. This of itself is evidence of the superiority of the coming Prophet to Moses. It seems evident that in Moses' day the promised land of Canaan was to be a literal rest for the children of Israel who came out of Egypt, and to them in prospect it was to be God's rest for them. Paul says that those who fell in the wilderness for their sins were cut off from entering into God's rest, or entering the land of Canaan, which was typical of the gospel rest. This rest cannot mean eternity, for Paul speaks of it in the present tense: "For we which have believed do enter into rest."—Verse 3. Although God's works were finished from the foundation of the world, and he rested on the seventh day, and hundreds of years after gave the law to Israel, and in that law a command to keep the sabbath holy, yet he afterwards spoke of another day, and as Paul said, limited a certain day. This day is the antitypical sabbath day, or gospel day. It is the day of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad."—John viii. 56. This is that day of rest which all true believers enter. None but believers can enter it. Paul's proof of this is in verse eight: "For if Jesus [Joshua] had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day." From Paul's argument to those "dull of hearing" it seems certain that the sabbath day was a real rest from work, and also figurative twofold of rest: first of that rest beyond Jordan's flood in the land of Canaan, and second, of the "another day," or gospel day. This is the rest that remained after the resurrection of Christ. This rest cannot be entered except through belief. It ought to seem plain to Bible readers that Canaan cannot typify heaven or eternal glory, though many teachers have tried to make it appear that way. The Israelites after passing into Canaan were subject to war, pestilence, famine and many other troubles. Now the gospel rest is a bright assurance of faith, that by the promise of the eternal God the recipients of the faith of God's elect have a good hope through grace of eternal life, which God promised before the world began. All who have this good hope have entered into God's rest, and have ceased from their works as God did from his works. The typical day of

the real sabbath, or rest spoken of by David, is the old Jewish sabbath day, which required a complete rest from work. If any labor was done on the sabbath day then it was broken, and subjected the violator to be punished with the sentence which God had prescribed. What a sore penalty for violating the law of the sabbath. As the children of Israel journeyed in the wilderness, and were promised a fruitful land beyond Jordan where milk and honey flowed, we often wonder why the Lord kept them there in the barren wilderness forty years, when the land of promise was not far away. Paul tells us it was because of unbelief that they were not permitted to enter into God's rest. Certainly it was a fearful lack of faith in the mighty hand of God for Aaron and the majority of the children of Israel to make a calf of gold and fall down and worship it with lies in their mouths, saying, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."—Exodus xxxii. 4. Those Israelites were unbelievers in the mercy of God in regard to temporal things, hence they were not counted worthy to cross the flood of Jordan and enter into the temporal rest promised unto Israel. Not all who came out of Egypt by Moses provoked the Lord and were slain in the wilderness, but a remnant was kept from idolatry and crossed over to the land of Canaan with Joshua and Caleb. Paul's forceful argument, containing self-evident facts, in the eighth verse, proves that the rest in Canaan was not perfect. The Israelites in anticipation of possessing the land of Canaan looked for temporal rest and enjoyment. This was partially realized. History shows that their disobedience against God's commandments caused wars and turmoils. After Joshua's day God limited a certain day, speaking of it through David, saying, "To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Because if Joshua had given them rest then would God not afterward have spoken of another day. This certain day was typified by the seventh day, or sabbath, under the law dispensation. This day is the new covenant day of promise. In that day a fountain was to be opened in the house of David. This fountain ever existed, but was never opened until the birth of the King of kings. This day of God's rest, and the day of rest for all true believers in Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, was to be like its type, the sabbath day, a day in which all believers should rest from their works as God did from his in the creation of all worlds. This sets forth the faith or belief of all believers in Christ, viz., salvation through the grace of God in Christ Jesus. What is the conclusion of the whole matter? It is unlawful under the new covenant for any man to obtain salvation by the deeds of the law, for by the deeds of the law shall no man be justified. How then shall a man be justified? By the law of faith, which is the grace of God to man given. Of that day of rest which remains to the people of God David says, This is the day the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it. This cannot be the common sabbath that all Israel knew as a rest day, but a spiritual high day, when a King should reign in righteousness, and princes rule in judgment. As Jesus rested in the tomb on the Jewish sabbath day after he had accomplished all the work of redemption, so all true believers cease from all self-righteous works, and obtain the gift of eternal life in the great Sabbath of rest. Let all the saints praise him for the benefits they receive from him in this day, and for the wisdom which enables them to see this day.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla.

PEACE, CONTRASTED WITH WAR.

"PEACE I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you," &c.—John xiv. 27.

This is the Savior's language to his disciples while he was with them before his resurrection and ascension to the Father, with the assured promise of the Holy Ghost, whom he would send in the Father's name to abide with them forever, who should teach them all things and bring all things to their remembrance whatsoever he said unto them; therefore his word is eternally settled in the heavens. Peace means calmness, tranquillity and harmony. War is the very reverse —an armed contest, carrying with it terror, devastation and desolation. When the Lord God of Israel gives peace to his church or the land the war element with all its commotion is as silent as the grave. War is a dark picture, producing disturbance, confusion, alienation and death itself; even not infrequently in the militant kingdom as well as among the nations of the earth, it is a great calamity. The inspired prophet Isaiah, speaking of the birth of Christ and the pouring out of his judgments, says, "For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire." "Therefore the Lord shall set up the adversaries of Rezin against him, and join his enemies together."—Isaiah ix. 5, 11. The whole connection of this prophecy is significant of the true battle Warrior and the shed blood of the Messiah, with all the fury of the law upon him, as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, bearing the sins and reproaches of his poor, insolvent children, setting the lawful captive free, enduring the cross, and all the vindictiveness of the law was laid upon him. Here is the humanity of Christ, his garments rolled in blood, the burning and fuel of fire, calling for full satisfaction, which never could be appeased except through the imputed righteousness of Christ, that legally bound him as the Redeemer of all the heirs of promise. (Heb. i. 2, 3; Matt. i. 21; Rom. i. 3, 4.) Our breaches of the law are his, and his obedience ours; his presence gives joy and peace to the flock of slaughter, (Rom. viii. 36,) keeps the feet of his saints, watches over the sheep of his pasture, imparts light and understanding to them, keeping their hearts and minds through all the shifting scenes and circumstances of this time state, as their King and gracious Deliverer, teaching them that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. (Titus ii. 12.) He revealed himself to the elect lady, the holy seed in type, through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, chosen of God and made partakers of the covenant ordered in all things and sure, predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, and thus secured to himself a glorious inheritance, without spot or wrinkle, and cleansed from all pollution, receiving the seal of the atonement as heirs and joint-heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom we have redemption, even the forgiveness of sin. His blood was manifested as a fountain of living waters in the house of David for sin and uncleanness. O what solid joy, in anticipation of that rest which remains to the people of God in the realms of endless day, freed from the sorrows and vexations of this mortal life, to live eternally with Jesus. "There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest."—Job iii. 17. From the days of the two firstborn, Cain and Abel, unto the present, the church in

her visible organization has suffered persecution at the hand of her assailant, the vicious dragon, the beasts, the false prophets. The old mother of harlots and abominations of the earth sendeth forth her emissaries to blind and engulf the children of men by her sorceries and her witchcraft; because all the world wondered after the beast, and all the antichristian delusions in the affairs of false religion have been, and do yet, make war with the saints, the church of the living God. (Dan. vii. 27; Rev. xvii. 6.) Jesus said to his disciples, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world."—John xvi. 33. Destroying the principality and power of darkness, for he (Christ) must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. Therefore in the furnace of affliction the Lord gives peace and security to his bride; the little flock he purchased with his own blood shall endure as the sun before him.

War is terrible in its nature and consequence, which has come down through the past ages and events of the world's history, nations and governments crumbling back to dust, as God determined in his purpose from the ancient of days, for the removal of creature man, by all the various methods he employs to accomplish that object, either by famine, or peril, or sword, disease, earthquakes, wars and rumors of war; then the gloomy clouds of adversity spread their blighting contagion over the vast domains of earth and seas. These reflections are both serious and depressing to those taught in the school of Christ, who are concerned and give attention to the reading of holy writ and the fulfillment of the predictions of our Lord, who declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. (Isaiah xlvi. 10.) The Lord is King, and there is none like him. The Deliverer, who shall come out of Zion, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob, purifies the heart and purges away the dross of his church, giving her peace and comfort in the gospel, as a flowing stream, a fountain sealed up. She is made white and tried, and as the true gold, sustains no loss, and the more she is tried in the crucible of persecution the brighter she (like the pure gold) shines unto the perfect day. "He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure. Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty: they [the sheep or elect of God] shall behold the land that is very far off."—Isaiah xxxiii. 16, 17. The Lord makes his people, or body, the church, able to withstand all the fiery darts of the wicked. The Lord by the prophet Isaiah gave renewed comfort and assurance to his people, the Israelites, that notwithstanding opposition, conflicts and temptations which confronted them in all their journey, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." O blessed hope, O glorious hour; saved from sin our souls shall soar through the precious blood of Jesus to the resurrection of the dead, the life and salvation of all the seed of promise embraced in the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure.

War in a temporal sense among earthly

powers is dreadful and destructive, fostering strife and extinction of those so engaged, and doubtless such revolutions are caused by false religion and religious fanaticism seeking to dominate the world and to debauch society by cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. However, the fountain of iniquity is bound by a demarkation line, and can only bruise the heel, to torture, to kill with sword and with hunger and death and with the beasts of earth, the pale horse that John saw in his vision when the fourth seal was opened, that death and hell followed with him. (Rev. vi. 8.) But the church of God shall survive the sea of fire and wreck of worlds, and ultimately anchor safely in the haven of eternal peace. In our pilgrimage we walk by faith, not by sight, in hope of the resurrection, to wit, the redemption of our body. The whole retinue of the grace covenant will be in glory land, there to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Death is swallowed up in victory in the resurrection of the saints, the boasting grave is vanquished forever; then we, the entombed and multiplied millions, shall be made immortal, and shall see Christ as he is and be like him. So we, the ransomed of the Lord, as disciples ought to love one another with a pure heart fervently, which believers are admonished to exemplify in their walk and conversation, and not to be conformed to this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of the mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God, (Romans xii. 2,) to set our affections upon things above, and not on things on the earth. Therefore in the Spirit and power of the Holy Ghost we can render unto God acceptable service, live in humble obedience to the precepts and commandments of our Lord, suffer for his sake, extol him as the Prince and Savior of Israel, her Advocate, who reigns in righteousness and true holiness. He leads, and feeds his children on the sincere milk of the gospel, building them up in spiritual knowledge and justifying faith, to trust him implicitly and have no confidence in the flesh. And those who have hope that the Lord has pardoned their sins, and are outside of the church, may be constrained by the love of God to deny themselves by walking in obedience—following our Lord in baptism, to rise in newness of life, to mingle with the saints in the holy worship of the Lord of life and glory. Listen to the word of the Lord: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary, and they shall walk, and not faint." Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Dear editors, by request of brethren who are warm friends and subscribers of the SIGNS I have thus written, giving the above interpretation, and it is now at your disposal. The Lord bless you all.

Affectionately,

ASA HOWARD.

KELLER, Texas.

GALION, Ohio, Dec. 20, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have just finished reading the last number of the dear old SIGNS, and am wonderfully encouraged, and have received much comfort in reading the editorials and many good letters, all of which I feel to be unworthy. I have been impressed to try and write a few lines several times since dear brother Chick's death, and just as

many times have put it off, feeling my weakness, and that it would be better for me to keep silent; but last night the desire came again to write, and I am trying to do so. How we all miss dear brother Chick, and you most of all, but we know our loss is his eternal gain, and may we, with all the bereaved ones, be enabled by the Spirit to bow in humble submission and say, Thy will be done, for we know he doeth all things well. I had wondered who would be the one to take up the work Elder Chick left off. I never doubted that the Lord had a man prepared for the work, and I was glad when I saw Elder Lefferts' name mentioned in the SIGNS as the one. I have always enjoyed reading after him and yourself, as well as all the writers in the SIGNS, and have often felt that I would like to drop you all a word of encouragement, but have always feared lest I should only darken counsel, so would put it off. I have been thinking of a passage of Scripture found in Matt. xi. 5: "And the poor have the gospel preached to them." The thought that occurred to me is, Who are the poor here spoken of? Surely not the poor in this world's goods, for the Savior said, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Now to my mind we find this parable explained in the prayer of the publican and the Pharisee. The one was rich, having all that heart could wish; he even thanked God he was not as other men, he was rich, filled with his own righteousness. Here is one who is not sick, has no need of a physician. The Master says, The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. Now we will leave this rich man, filled with his good works and self-righteousness, and look at the other, the poor one, who had nothing. He could not so much as raise his eyes toward heaven, but smote upon his breast and said, "God be merciful to me a sinner." This poor fellow had nothing. Here is one who is sick, one who needs a physician, one who knows if the Lord does not have mercy upon him he is lost. Now we will look at the first one again. We remember that Lazarus was laid at the rich man's gate full of sores, and the dogs came and licked his sores. First we notice these were dogs, not sheep, neither shepherds, and second, they ate the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. The Scriptures speak of the greedy dogs that can never have enough. These to my mind represent the servants or ministers of antichrist; they licked the sores of the poor beggar. I believe whenever these greedy dogs find one of the Lord's poor children begging for mercy they will lick his sores or cry, Peace, peace, when there is no peace; they will lick the sores, tell him that he can save himself, that the Lord made a way possible for their salvation, but they must accept or they will be lost, and it is of him that willeth and of him that runneth, and they bind up the hurt of my people slightly, crying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace. So with poor old Job, when God so sorely afflicted him, and the three miserable dogs tried to comfort him and to bind up his hurt, and blasphemed the God of heaven and chided poor Job, he said, "Miserable comforters are ye all;" and even when Job's wife said, "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die," he said, "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" And he said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." This is where the poor in

spirit have their trust, and the Lord says, Blessed are they, for theirs is the kingdom. So we see that it is not possible for a rich man to enter into the kingdom, for says the Savior again, Except ye be converted and become as a little child ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven. So, then, his children are all poor and entirely dependent upon him. They are not looking for justice, for they know that would be their eternal destruction, for we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God, and like the poor, sick beggar and the poor publican we cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." One of the apostles said Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. May we all be made to see and feel that the Lord will never leave one of these little ones who is poor in spirit, but where he has begun a good work he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

May the Lord still be pleased to uphold both the editors and publishers of the SIGNS in the future as in the past, to the glory of his name and to the comfort of his church, which is his body, is the prayer of a poor sinner and a brother, I hope, though unworthy,

C. E. JACKSON.

HAVANA, Kansas.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I was pleased with your "New Year's Greeting." It breathed forth a pure spirit of love and unity among the saints of God. These differences of opinion with the Baptists upon some minor subjects of Scripture should not be a source of unkind reflection. There are some Scriptures which have caused varied explanations. What is man, his origin and destiny? have been themes of considerably wide divergence of thought. I am aware that I entertain some views which differ from many of my brethren, but not with an unkind feeling. "Let brotherly love continue" is a good rule to follow. Your remarks upon that subject are worthy of commendation. Your reference to Elder Gilbert Beebe's article upon the subject of the resurrection was read with deep interest. I have read the editorial in the second volume of the Editorials. I quote: "So when the saints are called hence their spiritual life, which they received in regeneration, does not die." This meets my entire approval, for the spiritual life received in regeneration is Christ within the hope of glory, and by that Spirit believers seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life. These they do not possess in this mortal life, but receive them in the life to come, when mortality shall put on immortality. The Spirit of Christ in the quickened one controls his spiritual actions. "Quickened souls" I feel mean only quickened people. Some distinctive part of man is not quickened, but the whole man, and that quickening assures him that he shall live again in the spirit world. There are about five different meanings to the word "soul" in the Scriptures. The Adamic man has but two primary forces: first, the material body, second, the power that gives life and activity to the body, breathed into the clay body by its Creator. Man by sin forfeited that life, and man was appointed to die, and when the judgment of death falls upon man that life ceases, for it is that which dies, and the body is remanded to the state occupied before life—dust. In the condemnation passed upon Adam entailing all his posterity, there was not a ray of hope offered that he should live again. Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return, was final, and it has never been

modified except through a new and living way. The promise of that way was given to Abraham and his seed. All the seed of Adam were by nature the children of wrath. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved.)" Thus Christ abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." He makes himself known to the sanctified ones by putting his laws into their hearts and writing them in their minds. He assures them that they shall live again. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." I will raise them up at the last day. Every quickened one must yield up his mortal body to death, but goes down to death supplied with that God-given faith which gives him a strong hope that when Christ, who is his life, shall appear, then he shall also appear with him in glory. That same Spirit which quickened him in his regeneration will be the only Spirit that will quicken his mortal body when Christ shall come again the second time without sin unto salvation. Then will be the time of redemption from the power of the grave. Every quickened soul will exclaim, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Every redeemed soul, or saint, will with fullness of joy exclaim, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

In conclusion, I hold that the natural body of the saint must go down to death in its entirety until Jesus shall come the second time to awake it from sleep, to meet the Lord in the air and be forever with the Lord, immortal, eternal. Our life is hid with Christ in God until Christ shall come again.

Your brother,

T. R. PITTMAN.

LANHAM, W. Va.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have two letters, one from Mrs. Otha Pennington, of Corliss, W. Va., the other from brother C. M. Bird, and both of them ring right to me. Mrs. Otha Pennington seems to be convinced that she is not at home with the Ashdods, therefore would be pleased to be baptized in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

ST. ALBANS, W. Va.

DEAR BROTHER McCLANAHAN:—While feeling sad this evening, and thinking of the many good meetings I have been blessed to attend, you came into my mind, and now I am writing, having no other way to converse with you, and am reviewing my past experience all the way in which, as I hope, the good Lord has led me these sixty-one years of my natural life, and about thirty-eight years of what I sometimes hope spiritual life, which seems to me has been very unprofitable, and if there were no other source to look to I would be of all beings most miserable; but bless the Lord, he hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities, for as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. Brother McClanahan, in my shut-in condition, owing to poor health and coldness of the weather, I often think of you, and wonder if you, too, are shut in and have not the privilege of meeting with God's dear people, speaking

words of comfort to them, speaking out of the abundance of the heart, speaking to the destitute, to the afflicted and poor. You know the Lord says, I will also leave in midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. There is no other name given under heaven whereby we must be saved. No wonder the prophet Isaiah could say, Sing, O heavens, and be joyful, O earth, and break forth into singing, O mountains, for the Lord comforteth his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted. Again, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. "For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." But I feel to say, as the poet, "Great mystery, I cannot tell why," &c.

I have not heard from any of you since the association. Write me at your earliest convenience. I have not written as I thought, but it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

From a poor sinner,

C. M. BIRD.

CORLISS, W. Va.

DEAR ELDER MCCLANAHAN:—I feel my unworthiness in addressing you thus, for I have so often scoffed at you and the doctrine you preach, but I believe God in his mercy has opened my eyes to the truth at last, and now, whether I am one of his or not, I believe he will do all his pleasure, and he does not need the help of man. Perhaps you know that I have been a member with the Missionary Baptists, but some time ago they sent me word that they had put my name on the back list. This does not trouble me at all, for I hope my name has been written in the book of life, which has no back list, and if it is God's will for me to ever get where there is an Old Baptist Church, and they think me worthy, I am going to join them.

I wish to thank you and all the dear people who so kindly sent us money to leave Cincinnati when Willard was so sick. Such noble deeds to such an unworthy one as myself seem beyond my understanding. Willard, of course, is your brother, and I believe a christian, but I am such a sinful piece of clay it does not seem possible for any of God's dear children to even think of me. It is useless for me to express in words how I feel toward you and all the dear people down there, but I hope God will bless you all and let us all live to meet again. I am a stranger to all but you and brother George, but I hope I am only a stranger in the flesh.

I am very sorry for you in the loss of your eye, and know you must suffer a great deal. I hope God will be with you in your afflictions, and I believe he will, for I do believe you are one of his dear children, and his promise is to never forsake his own.

From one of the least, if one at all,

OTHA PENNINGTON.

CLARKS, Nebr., Dec. 5, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel that I would like to talk a little to-night to my Father's children scattered over this world of sin and sorrow. We are a scattered few indeed, and all have our trials and conflicts, yet our dear Redeemer has promised never to leave nor forsake us, and his promises are as firm as his throne, and if one of them was to fail the whole plan of salvation might just as easily fail. He says, As I have purposed, so shall it stand, and the wills and shalls of Jehovah

are as firm as the Rock on which his church is built, and that Rock is Christ, and when he can be dragged from his throne, then, and not until then, can any of those for whom Christ died be lost. If they are engraven on his hands how could he forget them? I think that engraving is the prints of the nails. Yes, dear ones, we shall all know him, and he will know us, for known unto God are all his ways before his works of old. I believe that all for whom Christ died are just as safe as though they were praising God around that throne which John saw, where they had no need of the sun nor the moon to give light in that beautiful city, for the Lord God and the Lamb are the light thereof. John describes it as a city of pure gold, and the center of attraction was the lovely Redeemer, whose eyes were as a flaming fire and his feet as fine brass. O is it possible that such a vile sinner as I shall find such things in store when done with sin and all these troublesome times are over? To think that these joys shall be mine seems too much. When I look at self I can see nothing but a fountain of corruption. I mourn on account of sin; I am as the pelican in the wilderness, or as the sparrow upon the housetop.. But there is a people spoken of in the Scriptures who wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted and tormented. I sometimes hope I am of that blessed number.

Dec. 20th.—I will try and finish my letter this gloomy Sunday morning. It is snowing hard, and all nature seems in harmony with my feelings, dark, cold and gloomy indeed. I have been thinking this morning about the Father's children, and O how I would love to clasp glad hands with each and every one of them, and hear them tell of their joys and sorrows, their hopes and fears, but alas, they are far away, and we are here alone, as far as spiritual company is concerned. We went to York, Nebr., to the yearly meeting last October, which was the first time we had been blessed with the privilege of meeting with God's people for nearly four years, and I assure you it was a feast to our hungry souls. It seems hard after so much of our time spent in the Master's vineyard to be entirely shut off from meeting and worshiping with the people we love above all others. Of course we love our natural kindred, but there is a different feeling or kind of love which binds christians together—a love that floods cannot drown nor flames destroy. O, my soul is amazed, and I wonder at the love that brought our adorable Redeemer down from his Father's glory to die for man, the most sinful of God's creation, for while we were yet enemies Christ died for us. Then is it not enough for all our trials, conflicts, pain and suffering to have a small hope that when done with time things we have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens? Dear children of God, lift up your bowed heads, for our redemption draweth nigh. Only a few more days of suffering, a few more lonesome hours, a few more beating storms against these frail barks of ours and we will be done with suffering, and if we are what we profess to be will hear the welcome words, Child, your Father calls, come home.

I see that our time has expired for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and will send our remittance, as we do not want to do without it, it is about all the preaching we get.

Now, brethren editors, if you see anything in this not right, cast it aside, for right is all that will do any of us good,

either in this world or that which is to come. I would just say to our many friends and brethren in Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas and Nebraska, as well as those in the far west, we often think of you all. We are able to be up and around, for which we try to be thankful.

Your little sister, I hope,

PHEBE WAGGONER.

BENSON, Ariz., May 23, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter which I greatly enjoyed, and think others might, too. I am far from home and my own church, and such letters are of great comfort to me. I only know of one Old Baptist beside myself in the State, and have never met her.

Please do as you think best with this letter, and omit anything amiss.

Your sister in hope,

ALTHA DRAKE.

EWING, N. J., April 14, 1915.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—You have surely been much on my mind of late, and I hope it is the Lord's will that we may one day have you with us again well and strong. I surely miss you at the meetings, for I always felt sure you loved to be there. Sunday we had a sweet meeting, led by brethren Bond and Van Noy. When an invitation was given for any one who would like any particular hymn sung to mention it, Elvie asked for "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord." All seemed to join heartily in this, and I told her after meeting that I felt it to be such a good hymn. She said she liked it much, and that it was Altha's favorite, and she was thinking of you when she asked to have it sung. You know how apt I am to make mistakes, but I hope I can say I feel there is one thing I have been led to see no mistake in, and that is, when from hating I was caused to love the Old School Baptists, and I trust that though the vilest of them all, I do know the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and though I often wonder how they can have fellowship for such an one, yet I feel that if they felt they must exclude me I must still be like Ruth with Naomi, and run after them and beg that they please hinder me not from following after them, for I feel that they are the people of the living God, and they desire to give him all the glory. How different are all the others! How terrible it seems when we think of how they are working, and so feel that they are earning their way. When we work and earn a thing we do not need to praise any one for it, but when a gift is bestowed freely how our hearts swell with gratitude to the one who has bestowed it upon us. If they have earned their way, what have they to praise and glorify the blessed Redeemer for? But when one sees how utterly dependent he is upon God for all, that he cannot do one thing, and feels himself utterly lost and undone, then when the blessed Lord reveals himself to that one, and tells him that salvation by grace is a free gift to the poor, wretched sinner, who was sinking in despair, then is there not everything to praise him for? How wonderful at times this seems to me, when I feel that I can lay hold upon the promise that because he lives I shall live also, and one day shall see him as he is, and when the wonder of this free salvation, the gift of God, not given for anything we ever did or ever can do, lest man should boast, it is just so wonderful that I cannot grasp with my poor finite mind the wonder and greatness of it. Then again, when I view myself such a vile sinner I just

feel that it cannot be for me, and doubts and fears again creep in and destroy my peace. I wonder how you can have fellowship for me, knowing me as well as you do, yet you have ever been kind to me. I was glad to get your postal, and am ashamed to be so long in answering, but I have been busy, and have such a barren mind it seems that what comes from my pen can be of no use to any one. I must surely seem like a great hypocrite to you, but I hope that I have been made to see the sin and folly in many of the things I once indulged in. I hope the Lord is leading me, and that he will give me strength to shun those things. Surely I look back with deep regret on the many times when, because of pleasures, I would absent myself from the Saturday evening meetings. I think of the dances, and occasionally the theatres, which I used to frequent and indulge in, and this time of sorrow and gloom through which I am now passing is richly deserved. I sometimes wonder if there will ever be any more peace or joy on earth for me. I know that the words of the hymn are true: "And though my soul were sent to hell, thy righteous law approves it well." I can only hope in his mercy, and at times I grow hopeful, even in suffering, for we are told that whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. Sometimes I grow hopeful, and feel that if I were not his child he would not make me suffer for my sins, as I feel that I am doing now. Truly I abhor myself. What would I not give to undo the past frivolous, wasted life? I do long to be different, but seem to grow worse all the time. O why cannot I be different?

Well, I think I have written a strange letter to one who is in poor health, but I cannot write differently, it seems. I can only tell you I miss you, and I do hope we may have you back with us well and strong again. What a lovely people these Old Baptists are. How wonderful that I am called an Old Baptist, and may I truly be one. I remember when I heard the name with scorn, and felt it a disgrace even, but may I never cease to feel thankful that I know the difference now. I know you have many to write to, so will not ask you to write to me, for there are many nearer who have a stronger claim, but I leave you to judge whether I would not be glad to hear from you. All are well here.

I will close with much love and best wishes for a speedy recovery.

Your little sister, I hope, in Christ,

KATIE A. VAN NOY.

LEESBURG, Va., Sept. 10, 1914.

MRS. LOTTIE A. DAVIS—DEAR SISTER:—I was very glad to get your good letter, and that you were impressed to write a stranger in the flesh; it touched my poor heart to think the dear Lord had given me such a place in the heart of dear ones. When my son told me that you had come out from another denomination my heart went out to you. I always have a different feeling for those who have been captives in Babylon, for I myself was a captive there twenty-one years, and part of that time chafing under bondage, but it pleased the Lord to come to my relief, and O when I had a view of the true church how lovely she looked. Truly she is the perfection of beauty out of which God hath shined, the city of our solemnities. Truly the Lord is good to give us a home among his dear people. You say you could hardly wait to be taken down into the baptismal waters; it was just that way with me, I could hardly wait for my feet to touch the water's

edge, it all seemed so wonderful to me. I had impressions when a mere child of myself as a sinner, and wanted to be a christian; I thought all that said Lord, Lord, were all right; I was ensnared. I believe the Lord had a purpose in leading me around, and at last brought me out, like yourself, with a high hand and outstretched arm, and led us in a way we knew not; blessed be his holy name. I was so impressed to go to his people and tell them what great things the Lord had done for me that I felt the very stones would cry out if I did not go and tell them.

"I love thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of thine abode;
The church our blessed Redeemer saved
With his own precious blood.

I love thy church, O God,
Her walls before thee stand
Dear as the apple of thine eye,
And graven on thy hand."

My dear sister, I think this is the language of your heart as well as mine.

Now I must bring this to a close or you may weary of reading. I had expected to be in New York by this time, but on account of little Sarah's being sick I am here yet and may see you again, if the Lord will. Until then, farewell.

In sweet fellowship, your unworthy sister,

SARAH P. LEFFERTS.

WARWICK, N. Y., Jan. 20, 1915.

MRS. LOTTIE A. DAVIS—DEAR SISTER:—When I received your good letter, about Christmas time, I did not think it would so long await a reply. I was sick then, hardly able to be about the house, but tried to keep up because it was "Merry Christmas," and I did not want to cast a shadow over the happy faces around me. I have not felt able to do letter-writing, but yours has been on my mind so much that I do want to try to reply, but what I shall write I know not, but hope the dear Lord will give me something. As I read your letter over it brings to my mind the littleness I felt when in company with the Lord's people; they looked so good and so heavenly that I felt and hoped I some day might be like them, but, my dear sister, I have never been able to see myself as I saw them, and see them now, but I do hope as I bear now the image of the earthy I may also bear the image of the heavenly when I shall see my Savior face to face. Now, my sister, I think I know just how you feel when you listen to the gospel being preached; I felt that I did not want to go from the sound of it, and the Book says, Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound, and we do know it is true, do we not? When we were in Babylon we did not hear the sound, and now what manner of people ought we to be since he has been so gracious unto us in giving us a hope in his mercy and liberating us from Babylonish captivity to praise our God within the gates of Zion. O that we might love him more and serve him better. How sweet to feed in green pastures and to lie down beside still waters. He restoreth my soul, my cup runneth over. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." I am sure the language of the psalmist has been your desire, as he says, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." My dear sister, may it be your chief delight to meet with the Lord's people whenever they meet for worship; may it be your happy privilege to do so; it is in so doing that you

encourage your pastor, you hold up his hands and strengthen him for the work he has to perform in going in and out before you, breaking the bread, &c.

Cast over this poor letter the mantle of charity. I am not feeling at all well, and my hand is unsteady. I will be glad to hear from you whenever you may feel to send me a line. It is my joy to spend and be spent for the Lord's people. When it is well with thee, remember me.

Your unworthy sister in sweet fellowship,

SARAH P. LEFFERTS.

HAVILAND, Kansas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing you a good letter from brother Martin, which I think would make good reading in the SIGNS. It is at your disposal.

J. R. HARDY.

MAY, Texas, April 7, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER HARDY:—I was truly glad to get another letter from you, and to learn that you had not forgotten me, a poor, afflicted castaway. I cannot command words that would adequately express my appreciation of your expressions of sympathy and heartfelt interest for truth and righteousness, for these, if we are in possession of them, are of far more value to us than all the worldly riches and pleasures that could be bestowed upon us. I realize my own imperfection and shortcoming perhaps more than any one else, yet my greatest desire is to see our beloved Zion once more united in the strongest bonds of brotherly love and fellowship, that she may travail and bring forth sons and daughters to the glory, honor and praise of Him who gave himself for her that he might redeem her from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works. If the apostle's injunction to let brotherly love continue had been heeded, surely we would not have been in the sad and deplorable condition we are now in, but the question arises, How can we let brotherly love continue? To my understanding this is a personal matter with each and every one of us, if indeed we are what we hope we are, and if I am not mistaken the best and safest way to do this is by an orderly walk and godly conversation. The injunction does not come to you, my brother, to let your brotherly love continue toward me, but it is to you to let my brotherly love continue toward you, and it comes to me to let your brotherly love continue toward me, and I do not believe I can do that only by an orderly walk and godly conversation. I do not believe that either you or I have the power to create true, genuine brotherly love within us for each other, neither do I believe that you could destroy your brotherly love for me. In the first place, you would have no desire to do so if you could, and it would be grievous to you if I were to destroy it, which I think I would do if I were to persist in a disorderly walk and unchristian conduct, so if I want to retain your brotherly love I must do it by conducting myself in such a way as to retain your confidence. If I can so live as to retain your confidence your brotherly love and fellowship for me will never be lacking. O may the Lord in his goodness and mercy give me sufficient grace that I may so live, then it would be of but little concern as to what the adversaries might do or say. It has been my greatest fear that I would do or say something that would destroy or weaken the confidence of my brethren. My desire is to walk in that strait and narrow way which leadeth unto life, but if left alone I am sure I will never find it, for it is a path

which no fowl knoweth and the vulture's eye hath not seen, nor the lion's whelps trodden, neither has the fierce lion passed by it.

But I must close, as I am hardly able to be up. I hope you will pardon my intrusion on your time and patience. I hope you are all well. I would be glad to hear from you any time you have a mind to write me.

Your little brother, I hope,

J. W. MARTIN.

STOCKDALE, Texas, May 31, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter to you that was written by my dear father. I asked him to write his travels from nature to grace for the benefit of his children, grandchildren and others who may read it. I love to read experiences of the old landmarks, of their failures and shortcomings, for it gives me courage; as long as we are in this old body we will fail, but Christ will never fail; his wills and shalls will never be broken. My only hope is hinged on his power and resurrection, knowing he doeth all things well.

A few more words about my dear parents. What a good example they have set, how honest, truthful and humble, always at the feet of their brethren, never giving any trouble, but contending for the Lord's faith, not taking sides with their children, or any one who was in the wrong. I want my brethren to tell me when I am in the wrong, do not keep me in ignorance.

Dear friends, write on for the SIGNS when you feel moved by the right spirit, for the benefit of poor invalids, like myself, who are not able to go to meeting.

Thanking you and my dear Savior for the past writings, your sister in bonds,

(MRS.) M. S. HAWK.

SAN MARCOS, Texas, May 29, 1915.

I HAVE been requested by several to write a sketch of my life as a church member. I was born in Grundy Co., Tenn., May 6th, 1839, and was left motherless when five months old, and was raised by my grandparents. January 29th, 1860, I married Sallie Ann Tate. Five years later I was very much troubled about my future state. I read the Bible to try to find some comfort, but it seemed to condemn me. I grew worse all the time. One night I lay down across the bed, I thought for the last time. It seemed I could feel myself sinking down to torment, and all my cries were for God to have mercy on a lost sinner. How long I was in that state I do not know, but unexpectedly to me my burden was gone and it seemed that everything was praising the Lord Jesus, and he all the day long was my joy and my song. In a few days I began to think I was mistaken, that I had caught the shadow and missed the substance. I went on in this way for some time, examining myself to try to be certain if there were any change in me, and I am not satisfied yet. I told my wife my feelings, and she was pleased. She had had an experience of grace for some time. The next summer, in 1866, we went to Sulphur Springs Church, Warren Co., Tenn., and were received, and baptized the next day by brother Gilbert Moffet. There were five churches around from the different associations about there, and organized the Collins River Association for convenience, and brother Moffet was our pastor. In 1869 we constituted a church, and I was set apart for ordination to the deaconship, which I never felt worthy of, but the church is the judge.

I am leaving off some things I would like to have on record, but it will make

it too long and wearisome. We came to Texas in 1882, and our letters lay in our trunks two years before we found any of our faith. We put our letters in Bethlehem Church, Caldwell Co., in the San Marcos Association. The Creator, Upholder and Disposer of all things saw fit to take my wife home Nov. 25th, 1889. No person can tell the loss of a good christian companion except through experience.

If there is nothing in this to be of help, I hope it will not be a stumbling-block.

I will give a little account of my family's standing. I have seen eight of my children, one daughter-in-law, three sons-in-law, one grandson and three granddaughters join the Predestinarian Baptist Church. I am in my seventy-sixth year, and this is a great consolation to me in my declining days. I would like to write some things of the love and mercy of the all-wise God in saving his bride from her sins. Bless his holy name forever.

With love to all friends,

M. V. DYKES.

LAMBERT, Oklahoma, March 31, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I will try and write you a line or two, as I am sending you a postal order for two dollars to pay my subscription for another year, as the time is up that I have paid for, and I do not want to be without the dear old paper, for it has been a great comfort to me, as we have no more Old Baptist preaching here in this part of the country, and I do love to read the letters and editorials. I think the two editorials in the last number were very good, and I hope the good Lord will bless and keep you both a long time, that you may write for the edification and comfort of the poor scattered ones. I do love to read the letters of the brethren and sisters who write for the dear old paper. There are but few who write for the paper that I have ever known here in the flesh, but I have a hope that I do know them in their writings, for they tell my experience better than I can tell it for myself. It is said that we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. May God bless the editors and writers of the SIGNS, and all others who know the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, is my prayer.

A poor sinner, in hope of eternal life,

JAMES J. CLARK.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, I expect to be with the Woburn Church, Woburn, Mass., the fourth Sunday in this month (July 25th). Meeting at the usual hours.

H. C. KER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Elder J. M. Fenton, Pa., $2.00.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1915.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JOHN X. 12, 13.

"BUT he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep."

The Savior in this chapter, as well as in many others, was speaking by natural figures easily understood. This was a most forceful way to present his everlasting doctrine of love and faithfulness to the people of his choice. The figure of sheep was used in ancient times to represent the people of God, and the figure has ever been very striking. No beast needs care and protection more than sheep, and none learn to love their masters more readily, but strangers they will not follow, because they know not the voice of strangers. The man who is hired to be a shepherd has not, cannot have, the same interest in and love for the sheep that their real owner has, therefore Jesus uses this figure to show that all the interest an hireling has is the fleece or pay for his work. As long as everything goes nicely and no danger is seen the hireling will be on hand, and will be thinking of his hire more than the sheep; but when the wolf, the enemy of sheep, comes, the hireling flees, because he is an hireling and loves not the sheep. The sheep then being left without protection are killed, others wounded and others scattered. On the other hand, men who are shepherds of their own flocks put themselves between the sheep and the enemy, risking and sometimes losing their lives in the salvation of their sheep. This is done from a twofold standpoint: first, love for the sheep, second, the value of the flock. Jesus in this chapter is showing that all who came before him were thieves and robbers, not caring for the sheep, but looked to their own interests. The sheep did not hear them, because they knew not the voice of strangers. There were many who came before Christ claiming to be sent from God, and many, not sheep, followed them, but they died, their works came to naught, and their followers were deceived and disappointed. But when Jesus, the good Shepherd, came, his sheep heard his voice and knew him; yes, knew him as the Redeemer of Israel. His love for the sheep and their worth to him caused him to put himself between the arch-enemy, death, and the flock. He gave his life for them, arose from the dead for their justification, and ever liveth to intercede for them in the presence of God. How good that all the sheep of his pasture can say:

"The Lord my Shepherd is,
I shall be well supplied;
Since he is mine, and I am his,
What can I want beside?"

Where the Spirit of the good Shepherd dwells in men called to feed his sheep there will be love for the flock above all else in this life, so that a man will forsake father and mother, wife and children, houses and lands, for their service and welfare, and with Paul say, I am willing to spend and be spent for you; I seek you, not yours, or in other words, gold and silver. How many in the world

to-day who profess to be the servants of God would labor six days in the week on the farm or in an office and serve churches on Sunday where the people were too poor to pay their carfare or horse hire, much less give them ten dollars for their work? All about us in all our land we see men striving to benefit themselves at the expense of what they call churches. This is not the spirit of the good Shepherd, but "the hireling," who careth not for the sheep.

Written by request. K.

ISAIAH IX. 8.

"THE Lord sent a word into Jacob, and it hath lighted upon Israel."

In this chapter and just preceding the text we have the promise of the gift of the Son of God, the child born; then the mighty and glorious names by which he is now called. Taking these things into consideration we understand the prophet to have been speaking of gospel things when he penned the words of our text. It is true, however, that when we speak or write of Jacob we must of necessity go back into the old covenant to find this man with his peculiar characteristics; the law period was his day. Hence to correctly get at our text we must consider Jacob before we can have a clear view of Israel. When we say Jacob we do not mean the brother of Esau as an individual, but the nation known as the Israelites. The life of Jacob and all his characteristics were in all his seed or children; all were represented in the name "Jacob." Under the law the Lord dealt with them as with one man, but what he did for them was temporal, literal, because they were a natural people—all were Jacob. The law and the prophets, the priesthood, the oracles, the temple, the sacrifices and offerings thereof, all composed the word sent into Jacob. In all those things there was spirit, but unknown to Jacob or national Israel. So blinded were they that they could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses; they could not see beyond the surface nor look into the things God had prepared for them that love him. Revealed things belonged to them, that they might do all the works of the law, but secret things belonged unto God. Therefore Jacob had and lived in the types and shadows of the law, but Israel lives in and has the very image and substance of those things. Israel being "the children of promise," the new creation, the spiritual house of God, the "word" sent into Jacob has lighted upon him, that is, found a resting-place, being understood. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Yes, the secret things of God not seen by the eye of Jacob, nor heard by his ear, nor ever entered into his heart, are now known and felt by Israel. Moses is not Israel's lawgiver, Aaron is not Israel's priest, but Christ is the Lawgiver and Priest, and his "word" lives in the heart, soul and very being of Israel. All that was literal to Jacob is spiritual to Israel. Paul as an example had both experiences; first all was "letter" to him, but afterwards all was "spirit." First he was Saul, afterwards Paul.

We have now given our opinion of the matter, and leave it for the consideration of the one who requested us to write on the subject, together with all our readers.

K.

ZECHARIAH IV. 2, 3.

DEAR BROTHER:—Will you please give your views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on Zech. iv. 2, 3? "I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof; and two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof." By complying with this request you will confer a great favor upon one who hopes and desires to know the truth.

With best wishes for the household of faith, your little brother, I hope,

AMOS RICHARDSON.

BONO, Texas.

Zechariah and Haggai were prophets to the remnant of the Jews that returned to Jerusalem from Babylon after the seventy years captivity. Ezra and Nehemiah mention both of these prophets as having been among those who returned from captivity. Nehemiah also names Zechariah as having been one of the priests. It is quite probable that Zechariah was born in Babylon during captivity. But be that as it may, we are certain he was one of those holy men of old who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and his prophetic utterances promised three important things: the deliverance of the Jews from Babylon and their restoration to the land of Canaan, the rebuilding of the temple, and the coming of the Messiah, or Christ. Like most prophecies of the Old Testament, this of Zechariah has two applications: a literal and a spiritual one. The literal meaning was of primary importance to the Jews of that day; the spiritual meaning is of primary importance to the spiritual Jews of this day. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."—Romans xv. 4. We will first try to look at the literal meaning of Zech. iv. 2, 3, and its import to the Jewish nation of that long ago time. Let it be known, therefore, that this vision of the candlestick and the olive trees came to Zechariah when the Jews were as yet in captivity, for we are given the date of this vision as having been the twenty-fourth day of Sebat, in the second year of the reign of Darius over Babylon, and the Jews did not return from captivity until the reign of Darius' successor, Cyrus. To a right understanding of this vision, it is necessary to read the third chapter in connection with the fourth, and to consider them as being connected. Doing this, it cannot be stretching the meaning to say that primarily the vision held in it a promise to the Jews of their deliverance from the seventy years exile and of the rebuilding of their demolished and despoiled temple at Jerusalem. Mention is made in the third chapter of Joshua the high priest, and in the fourth chapter of Zerubbabel the builder. These are the two olive trees that supply the candlestick with oil. The candlestick stands for the commonwealth of Israel, which in all its branches and tribes was subject to the leadership and authority of Joshua and Zerubbabel, who were supposed to look after the welfare of the people in all things: Joshua being their minister in religious affairs, Zerubbabel their governor politically and civilly. Now let us turn from the literal to the spiritual meaning of the text and see what value there is in this fragment of Jewish history to the people of spiritual Israel in this gospel day. If Israel of old be a type of Israel anew in Christ, and the candlestick literally signifies the commonwealth of Israel then in national existence, it must follow that spiritually the candlestick represents the church, and we do not believe that any of our brethren will fall out with us on this point. Then it must follow that both Joshua and Zerubbabel are

types of Christ, for it would never do to say for one moment that the church receives her oil or holy unction from any but Christ, who is head over all things to his church, "the fullness of him that filleth all in all." John in the first chapter of Revelation tells of having seen one "like unto the Son of man" in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; in other words, he saw Christ in the midst of his church. Zechariah spiritually saw much the same, but he expresses it as having been one candlestick with seven lamps on top of a single bowl, which was supplied with oil from the two olive trees. While each of these olive trees literally stood for two distinct men: Joshua and Zerubbabel, in the antitype these two trees are swallowed up in the one Christ, but presenting Christ in two distinct phases: one his priesthood, the other his kinship. There is no such thing in all the Scriptures as a perfect type of Christ, even as the shadow of a tree is never a perfect figure of a tree. The most that a shadow does is to outline the tree, it cannot picture it in detail. Thus, in the Old Testament we very often find one man representing Christ in a certain aspect, another man showing him in another phase, a third another, and so on. One would be compelled to consider all the types of the Old Testament together in order to come at anything like an exhaustive type of Christ, and then even the half would not be told. So we see in this vision of Zechariah that Joshua shows forth the priesthood of Christ, and Zerubbabel figures him as king. From these two olive trees of the priesthood and kinship of Christ come the golden oil that supplies the light and life of the candlestick or church. Going back to the third chapter, let us consider Joshua as Jesus. He is first seen as standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. So Jesus was led up into the wilderness straightway after his baptism to be tempted of the devil. Satan tried to resist the Lord. However, the Lord rebuked him; Jesus brought not a railing accusation against his tempter, but flayed him with the sword of the Lord, the word of God: "It is written." Joshua was seen in the vision of Zechariah as being clothed in filthy garments until the Lord commanded his filthy garments to be taken away and that he be clothed with change of raiment. So Jesus was made sin for us. Though he was in nowise a sinner himself, but holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, yet he was before the judgment-seat of God answerable for his people's guilt, their sins were imputed unto him, and so he was made sin for us, though he knew no sin. Here in the flesh he wore these filthy garments, in the sense that he bore all the guilt and condemnation of his elect. The iniquity of his bride was his iniquity, his righteousness is hers. Here, in the world, he bore our likeness, the image of the earthy. But, having arisen from the dead and ascended unto the Father, he is glorified with the image of God. He hath awakened in the likeness of God and is satisfied. "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more [after the flesh]."—2 Cor. v. 16. Christ "is the image of the invisible God."—Col. i. 15. Jesus, the great High Priest of the church, having purged away the sins of his people in the shedding of his blood, his filthy garments are gone and he is clothed in change of raiment: his resurrection glory, the same that he had with the Father before the world was. "Let them set a fair mitre upon his head." This mitre signifies his

bishopric and priestly office. It is his glory and honor. We see Jesus "crowned with glory and honor."—Hebrews ii. 9. There was a stone laid before Joshua, upon it were seven eyes, it was engraved by the Lord, and the iniquity of the land was removed in one day. The stone is the foundation which can never be removed, and especially shows that this Priest is one who does his work perfectly, so that its validity never ceases. By the one offering of himself Jesus perfected forever them that are sanctified. The redemption of the church is perfect and complete, a stone or rock that cannot be moved or upset. Seven eyes are upon this stone. This shows perfection of vision, omniscience, the all-seeing God, which ever beholds the efficacious atonement of the spiritual Joshua, Christ, so that he instead of the sinner is seen, and omniscience beholds no spot, wrinkle or any such thing in the body of Christ, the church. "Behold, I have graven thee [the church] upon the palms of my hands."—Isaiah xlix. 16. The Lord has engraved this graving in the stone, and the iniquity of the land was removed in one day: the day when Jesus died, the day when our great Melchisedec, the spiritual Joshua, offered himself without spot to God, a living sacrifice, to atone for all the guilt of his people. This olive tree, or tree of oil, of the priesthood of Christ, one of the anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth, flows through all the candlestick, the church. The oil that was poured upon the head of Aaron ran down over his beard, even to the skirts of his garments. No part of his body was missed in that holy anointing. So no member of Christ's body but is with him anointed a priest unto God. All receive the golden oil out of the tree of the oil of his eternal priesthood, the intercession that is after the order of Melchisedec, after the power of an endless life. Now let us turn from Joshua to Zerubbabel, the other olive tree, the kinship of Christ. The word Zerubbabel means "destroyer of confusion." Christ destroys confusion by bringing order out of chaos, making crooked things straight, darkness light and rough places plain. Zerubbabel led the Jews out of captivity, restored them to the land of promise, laid the foundation of the temple, or house, and also finished that house. All this was "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." These words just quoted are given to Zechariah by the Lord as the keynote of the candlestick. The church in its deliverance from captivity to the world, the flesh and the devil, and in its upbuilding through the Spirit for the habitation of God, is not the work of human might nor earthly power, but the fruit of the Spirit of the living God. Jesus, the King, leads his people forth from sin's captivity into the glorious liberty of the children of God, builds them up living stones in his spiritual house. He sets his house in order, its government is upon his shoulder. Her doctrine, faith, order and ordinances all proceed from this spiritual Zerubbabel, this destroyer of confusion, this Prince of Peace, who is King in Zion. The golden oil of this olive tree of the kinship of Jesus permeates all the candlestick in all its branches so that every member of Christ's body is with him anointed a king unto God. "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."—Rev. i. 5, 6.

L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Miss Mary Frances Pridmore, or "Cousin Mollie," as she was affectionately called by all who knew her, died June 11th, 1915, at the home of brother W. F. Norman, near Purcellville, Loudoun Co., Va., after a short illness of pneumonia. She was born in Prince William Co., Va., in 1843, and at her death was aged 72 years, 3 months and 24 days. She was the daughter of Benjamin and Elizabeth Pridmore, both of Prince William County. At the tender age of five years she went to live with the Norman family, and remained with them all the rest of her life. Hers was a life spent for others, one of self-denial for the sake of others, always thinking of others and of what she could do for them. She never made a public profession of religion, but was a firm believer in predestination and a friend of the Old School Baptists. She was one of those secret or hidden ones of the Lord which he has scattered everywhere about the world, and whom he has never seen fit to manifest openly as members of the church militant. Brother Norman asked her on her deathbed if she were afraid to die. She answered him with a calm and quiet look, and softly said, "O no." She requested that the hymn beginning, "Just as I am without one plea," be sung at her funeral. "Cousin Mollie" is survived by three sisters and one brother: Mrs. Emma Mannuel, of Prince William County, Mrs. Gertie Low, of Manassas, Va., Mrs. Anne Lynn, of Washington, and Levis Pridmore, of Oregon. However, she will be missed and mourned by none so much as the Norman family, with whom she had lived so many years and to whom she was as dear as one of their very own. She was never one to travel about much or go from home. Those with whom she was associated day after day in the home life knew and appreciated the valuable traits of her unselfish character.

The funeral services were conducted from the home of brother W. F. Norman by brother F. E. Robey, of the Ebenezer Church, using as a text, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." Her body was laid to rest in the burial-ground at Ebenezer.

Written at the request of brother W. F. Norman.

L.

Sarah Dorcas Hodges Ramey was born in Surry County, N. C., Dec. 6th, 1837, and died at her home, eight miles south of Gardner, Kansas, June 10th, 1915, aged 77 years, 6 months and 4 days. She was married to Samuel P. Ramey Dec. 15th, 1856. To that union were born eight children, one dying in infancy, and Albert Augustus in 1910. The living children were all present at her funeral. She with her husband moved to Missouri in 1858, and removed to Kansas in 1861, settling near Lawrence. About three years later they moved to Miami County, and in 1869 they bought the farm where they made their home the remainder of their lives. Her husband preceded her in death about ten years. Since then she and her youngest daughter, Miss Violet, made their home at the old homestead. She, with her husband, was baptized in the fellowship of Gilead Primitive Baptist Church in November, 1870. Her faith in her Savior was exemplified by a meek, humble and consistent life, and trust in the promises in the testimony of Him who had revealed to her the power and glory of his kingdom. She was of a very quiet and reserved disposition, yet firm in expression and kind in her relation and associations with her family and neighbors. She was an example to the church, and it can be truthfully said of her that she did not speak in church, but asked of her husband at home, and her mind was richly stored with spiritual knowledge. She had been confined to her bed only about one month, and did not suffer intensely, but quietly and peacefully fell asleep in the triumph of living faith. She had requested that the writer be sent for to conduct her funeral service, which I tried to do at the home Sunday, June 13th, using as a text 2 Cor. x. 12–14, and singing hymns 175, 167 and 280, after which burial was made in the Antioch Cemetery. She leaves besides her six children eleven grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, one sister and many other relatives and friends, who deeply feel their loss, but their loss is her gain. May the God of all mercy give them faith to trust in his name, and keep his people in humble hope of the resurrection from the grave.

W. L. HALL.

Martha Strobeck was called from this world of sorrow to a higher life June 15th. She was greatly beloved by a large circle of friends, and her death has caused the deepest sorrow, not only in her home, but in the church and community. Her kind ministries for the welfare of others made her a friend to all who knew her. She united with the Old School Baptist Church at Schoharie, N. Y., in 1874, from which time she had been a dearly beloved sister. Elder Bundy (her pastor at that time) baptized her. Her only theme was salvation by grace, and grace alone, nothing left to be done. Jesus being the Redeemer of his children, she trusted and leaned on his everlasting arm. His arm was underneath at the last moment, when no earthly friends could help. She dearly loved this doctrine, it was her meat and drink. She was twice married. Her last husband departed this life in 1893, since which time she had lived with her sister, Lucy J. Borst, and husband, brother Dow V. Borst, Seward, N. Y. For twenty years they had lived together, enjoying the peace that Jesus left when he said, My peace I give unto you (meaning those whom he came to save). Our dear sister was willing to depart and be with her

Savior. Her illness was very short, only twenty-four hours, and when she left us a sweet smile came on her dear face for a lasting remembrance. O, we miss her more and more each day, yet how could we wish her back? Her work was nobly done here.

Elder John Clark spoke at her funeral from these words: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."—1 Cor. xv. 19. He spoke very comfortingly to all. She was laid to rest in Cobleskill Cemetery, beside her first husband. She had no children, but was truly a mother to her nephews in her sister's home. Had she lived until July 5th she would have been 75 years old. The day before she died she was very active, not complaining at all, working in her flowers, which were her delight at all times. May God be with us and comfort us, is the prayer of her sister,

LUCY J. BORST.

I send you the inclosed, and will add that sister Strobeck was a faithful and devoted sister, and was present whenever possible with the assembly of the saints in their worship of God in church relationship. This we prize very highly in this day and age. She leaves upon record a true and faithful life to her church and Lord and Savior. May the Lord comfort those who mourn their loss.

J. M. FENTON.

Oscar C. Benson was born August 5th, 1890, near Delmar, Del., and departed this life May 17th, 1915, making his stay on earth 24 years, 9 months and 12 days. He never united with the visible church, but from his walk and conversation we have reason to believe he was numbered among those whom Christ came to save. All that was mortal was laid to rest in the family plot at Little Creek, Sussex Co., Del., May 19th, 1915, there to await the voice of the archangel, for we believe that the Lord himself shall descend with a shout, and that the dead in Christ shall be raised to dwell in his presence throughout an unending eternity.

A. T. BENSON.

James Renfroe, son of Ernest and Nettie Renfroe, was born in Woodlawn, Ala., July 15th, 1903, died in Birmingham, Ala., Feb. 6th, 1915, aged 11 years, 5 months and 22 days. James while out playing on his roller skates the afternoon of Feb. 6th, 1915, was struck by an auto truck, fracturing his skull in two places. His unconscious form was rushed to the hospital, and all that medical skill could do was done for the dear boy, but he never regained consciousness, and at 10:30 o'clock the same evening he passed away, leaving a heartbroken father and mother, two younger brothers, Thomas and Clyde, besides a host of other relatives and friends to mourn their loss. James was a dear, affectionate child, and loved by all who knew him.

On account of his mother's grief the funeral was held at Shaw's Undertaking Parlors Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock. The remains were laid at rest in Woodlawn Cemetery. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord. May the dear Lord bless and comfort the bereaved parents, is my prayer.

His grandmother,

MOLLIE RENFROE SEID.

POETRY.

WHY NOT FOR ME?

GIVE me that faith undying,
Fadeless in the heart to dwell,
With its soft notes sweetly sighing
For its fondest hope to tell,
That Christ Jesus, the mighty Redeemer,
Who suffered on dark Calvary,
Was crucified to save poor sinners;
Why not, then, why not for me?

Then I would ask no other,
Time would not bring it decay;
Though bright the scenes round may gather,
Soon they will all fade away;
But that hope of the Savior's eternal,
It dwells e'er in eternity;
O, he died to save all poor sinners,
Why not, then, why not for me?

Though buried oft in sorrow,
Trusting still a brighter day,
That may dawn but on the morrow,
When all doubts shall pass away;
For then Christ in his mercy reveals that
From sin and from sorrow you're free;
O, he died to save all poor sinners,
Why not, then, why not for me?

I'll bid you adieu, loved ones,
Not long with you can I stay,
The years are so swiftly passing,
Soon they will call me away;
So breathe then not a sigh for my absence,
For God in his mercy decreed
That his Son should die for poor sinners;
Why not, then, why not for me?

Walk not round my bed weeping,
Shed not a tear on my grave;
The Savior was once there sleeping,
All his beloved ones to save;
For God in his great wisdom decreed it,
That his Son the Savior should be;
O, he died to save all poor sinners,
Why not, then, why not for me?

HENRY J. O'BANNON.

MEETINGS.

THE New Hope Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will hold her thirty-fourth annual session at Elm Ridge Church, at Elmo, Texas, seven miles east of Terrell, Texas, on the T. P. R. R., beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in August. Those coming by rail will get off at Elmo, Texas. All Old School Baptists are invited.

S. M. DICKENS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

Liberty Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, of Los Angeles, Cal., meets every first and third Sunday in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., at 42nd and Moneta Ave., and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal.

W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor.
C. B. RICE, Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

NEW ARRANGEMENT.

We are still publishing the Old School Baptist Hymn and Tune Book, both shape note and round note, 70 cents for single copy, $6.50 a dozen, transportation prepaid. Send orders to Elder Silas H. Durand, Southampton, Pa., or to Elder P. G. Lester, Floyd, Va.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,
PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 83. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1915. NO. 15.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"A GREAT MYSTERY."

(Ephesians v. 32.)

"I SPEAK concerning Christ and the church," which is the body of Christ, "the fullness of him that filleth all in all." Strictly viewed there are but two mysteries: the mystery of godliness and the mystery of iniquity, and each of them is a great mystery, so much so that neither of them can be searched out by earthly wisdom nor understood except by the revelation of God. Even Solomon, the wise king, a mighty man of God, when contemplating those profound mysteries said, They are too wonderful for me. (Prov. xxx. 18.) Hence we need not marvel that such poor dust worms as we are quake and tremble when the voice of our heavenly Master penetrates our inmost being, saying, "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught."—Luke v. 4. The word "mystery" means a deep, profound secret, as was Samson's riddle; no one could find it out, no one knew one iota about it but himself, hence he, and he alone, could reveal it; no one else even knew that there was such a thing existing until he made known to them the existence of this great mystery, and then unfolded the secret to his wife, which was a link in the chain of events that led up to the hour and power of darkness, when he made his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death, saying, "Let me die with the Philistines."—Judges xvi. 30. The Old Testament Scriptures abound with types and shadows, of which Christ is the substance, the embodiment of this great mystery, Christ and his body, the church, which was shadowed forth, or typified in the morning of time, in the person of Adam, with Eve in his side, being one with him, bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, for they were both one in the day when God created man (Adam) in the likeness of himself. (Gen. v. 1.) Male and female created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam in the day they were created; not just called the man Adam after Eve was taken from his side, but in the day that God created them he called their name Adam, hence they were both one in their creation; therefore in the order of existence Eve was as old as her husband, the body as old as the head, but in the order of manifestation the head was first, is the

older, but in the order of existence the head is no older than the foot. "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." Even the application of the blood of the typical lamb by the priest demonstrated the eternal vital unity of Christ and his church, which is his body, members in particular. "And the priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass offering, and the priest shall put it [the blood] upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot."—Lev. xiv. 14. Although the great toe on the foot is the extreme member of the body, and the last member manifested, it is as old in the order of existence as the ear or thumb, and was marked with the blood of the covenant at the same time, and grace given to every one of them marked with the blood of the covenant, as is so clearly shown by the application of the oil made by the same priest. Not so much as one drop of blood or oil was put upon any of the members on the left side, but all on the right side; neither was there a drop of either the blood or the oil put on any one except him who was to be cleansed, therefore we can clearly see that the salvation of all the election of grace, which comprises the mystical body of Christ, is an absolute certainty, but "not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9. "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the Savior of the body," the object of his eternal and unchangeable love, for "he that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church." This gives us the idea clearly that Christ never did hate the church, for she is bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, for we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones, and as the church of God has two standings, one in Christ and one in Adam, one an eternal existence, has neither beginning nor ending, the other is earthy, had its beginning in Adam, therefore is of short duration. In existence their standing in Christ was first, was from everlasting, or ever the earth was, but in manifestation their standing first was earthy. While it is verily true that all the elect vessels of God's eternal love existed in Christ, their covenant head and life, from everlasting, they all had an earthly existence in the created Adam, and were by nature the children of wrath even as others, who never had an existence in Christ. This portion of the Adamic progeny is known as the non-elect. While all the Adamic progeny, or the human family, have their natural life and earthly existence in the first Adam, none but the elect, the Lamb's wife, has existence in Christ. "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church," which is his body and fullness, manifested a city whose builder and maker is God; and this wonderful city always has, is now, and shall forever be, absolutely square, for the angel of God measured the city with a golden reed, and when measured by the angel it was found to be perfectly square. The word "square," as applied to this mysterious building, means honest, upright, fair and beautiful, the joy of the whole earth, beautiful for situation, the city of the great King. It was not measured in order to see if it was square, or in order to adjust it providing it was found wanting, but to demonstrate the fact that it

was absolutely square, having no schism in it, neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing, but complete in Christ, who is the head of all principality and power. This is in very deed a wonderful city, which has no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the Lamb is the light of this glorious city, which is pure gold, like unto clear glass, wherein dwelleth righteousness, even the righteousness of God, all legalism excluded, no law righteousness or creature goodness allowed in this golden city, no place found for them in this heavenly Jerusalem before God, the Judge of quick and dead, who sitteth on the great white throne, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them in this new or gospel heaven. The old legal heaven and earth passed away with a great noise when "the stars of heaven [the legal heaven] fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven [legal heaven] departed as a scroll when it is rolled together: and every mountain and island were moved out of their places."—Rev. vi. 13, 14. "Seeing then that all these shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness."

Dear brethren editors, I am sending you this manuscript in rather an awkward and badly written way, as I did not intend at all to send it anywhere for publication when I commenced writing it, but my mind was musing somewhat on this wonderful subject, and I was just sitting around writing occasionally such thoughts as came to my mind, or at least some of them, until I wrote to considerable length, as you will see, and it has lain here for several weeks, and I looked over it to-day and have concluded to send it to you to dispose of as you deem best. W. J. MAY.

PINSONFORK, Ky.

HERNDON, Va., June, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am musing over the following written words, recorded in Luke ii. 10: "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy." These words were spoken by the angel of the Lord to the shepherds who were keeping watch over their flock by night. Yes, notice, flock, not flocks, for good shepherds only keep and watch over their own flock, one flock, and they are mindful of their flock in the nighttime as well as the daytime. Hence we see that it was in the nighttime when the shepherds had the good tidings brought to them by the angel of the Lord, yet the angel said, This day, and the angel said, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy. * * * For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord," and the angel gave them the sign, telling them where they should find the Babe, the Savior, the Son of the true and ever-living God. These good tidings were so startling at first to the shepherds that they felt sore afraid, but the angel said to them, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." I imagine the shepherds felt something like Jacob did when he awoke out of his sleep and saw the ladder reaching from earth to heaven, with the angels of God ascending and descending on it. Jacob said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." And the angel said, Ye

shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. Yes, lying in a manger, with the beasts of the stall, a very lowly place indeed for the darling babe to lie in, yet there was no room in the inn for him, so he was found with the beasts of the stall.

"Cold on his cradle the dewdrops are shining,
Low lies his head with the beasts of the stall;
Angels adore him, in slumbers reclining,
Wise men and shepherds before him do fall."

Now we see the shepherds making haste to see the babe, the Christ, the Son of the only true and living God, their Savior, and fall down at his feet and worship. "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." The word "behold" is used a great many times in holy writ. "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy." John said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." This is he of whom the angel spake when he said, For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord, and this is he of whom the prophet Isaiah spake when he said, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace," &c. —Isaiah ix. 6. This same child, Jesus, was born in the mind of God from the foundation of the world, and the old prophet testified of it when he said, "Unto us a child is born." Jesus has always been God, and now he comes to his people God manifest in the flesh, for he said, I and my Father are one; when ye see me ye see the Father also. Dear children of God, have you ever thought about it, Christ in you the hope of glory? Then you have Christ manifested in the flesh. Jesus has said, I in you and you in me, Christ manifested in the flesh, for the Lord hath shined in your hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. No wonder then that the angel said to the shepherds, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." His elect people, chosen in him before the foundation of the world and made holy and without blame before him in love. Yes, the holy child Jesus was born in a stable with the beasts of the stall, born of the virgin Mary, made under the law, that he might redeem his people from under the curse of the law, that he might present them to his Father without spot, blemish or any such thing. Then, dear children of God, the angel made no mistake when he said, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy." Yes, the greatest joy that has ever come to the children of men, a Savior of his people, which is Christ the Lord. O, I see so much sweetness in the expression, but cannot grasp it now: "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy." Behold, old things have passed away, and, behold, all things have become new, a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness; for he is our righteousness, sanctification and redemption, the chiefest among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely. O could we but praise him as we ought; O could we speak the matchless worth, as the poet expresses it:

"O could I speak the matchless worth,
O could I sound the glories forth
That in my Savior shine,
I'd soar and touch the heavenly strings,
And vie with Gabriel while he sings
In notes that are divine."

The old prophet Isaiah said, "Arise,

shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." "And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."—Isaiah lx. 1, 3. Here we see that the coming of Christ hath made peace, with the Jews and with the Gentiles, and brought them together as one new man, so making peace. The apostle said, For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, so making peace. Hence the apostle goes on in his argument in Ephesians ii. 19, and says, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." O then what a sure foundation we now see in the darling babe, Christ Jesus, born in a stable, for there was no room in the inn for him. No wonder then that the shepherds went with haste to see the babe, Christ the Lord their Savior, lying in a manger, for it is stated, And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger; and when they saw him their hearts were filled with joy, great joy, as the angel had told them, and they fell down and worshiped him, feeling in their hearts to cry out, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. This great event, dear child of God, is worth more to us than all the gold of the whole earth, for no joy so great has ever come to the children of God as the Savior of his people, which is Christ the Lord. Joyful news, dear children of God, to you and me, for the angel said, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. O, can we fathom the depths of God's great wisdom in this one mercy, a dear, harmless babe to suffer, bleed and die for the sins of his people of Adam's fallen race? Yes, and each one can say with Paul, the chief of sinners, for Paul said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

Dear children of God, I feel too sinful to write upon this all-important subject, but how can I help it while I am now musing upon it? O, am I dreaming, or is it a reality that I see Jesus, that darling little, harmless babe, my only salvation, my all and in all, my Rock and only hiding-place? Glorious thought, can I claim him as mine? The bride says, "My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies." O could we but shake off our doubts and fears, and take courage and assurance in the angel's words: "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy. * * * For unto you is born this day [a never ending day], in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."

Dear brother Ker, I submit this letter to your good judgment, and if you can put it together so it can be read with understanding or any degree of comfort to a poor little child of God, you may publish it in the SIGNS, but if not, just cast it into the wastebasket, and all will be well with me.

July 3rd.—I commenced the foregoing before attending the Warwick Association, and laid it aside, thinking at the time it would not be worth your attention, but since attending that glorious meeting (to me) I have made up my mind to send it to you to do with as seems best in your judgment. Our visit

to the Warwick Association will be remembered by me as long as I live, for it brought back sweet memories of my past life in the days of my youth, and in the days of my first love in mingling with the dear saints of God. The preaching was good to me, and I felt to hear and know the joyful sound. I met face to face many dear brethren and sisters whom I had never seen before, and many of them touched a tender chord in my poor heart by telling me to continue to write for the dear old SIGNS, and they told me they had been comforted in reading my letters. O wonder of wonders, I thought, when they told me so, and I also thought, Can it be possible that I have ever been able to comfort one of God's children by my faltering pen? But having their sweet confidence in the matter, I felt to say with David, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." O what a sweet dwelling-place to dwell in is the house of the Lord, with his dear people. Behold, says one of old, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. Love and unity did seem to me to abound throughout the whole time of your meeting, and I was glad to see it. Before I left home I wondered why dear brother Lefferts insisted on my going with him to your meeting, but I now see the "why;" it was to comfort the heart of one poor downcast sinner, and that was me. Brother Lefferts conducted the business part of our journey all the way through, and looked after us, and we looked after him, too, for he was our guide, and truly our undershepherd.

I would like to tell more about our pleasant visit, but must close, as I have written too much already, but before closing I wish to mention that my wife and I stayed with dear sister Bradner every night during the time of the meeting, and she gave us such a hearty welcome we will remember her kindness as long as we live, and we do hope that she and many of the brethren and sisters of Warwick, and other sister churches, will visit our Corresponding Meeting of Virginia this coming fall.

With love and sweet fellowship for the household of God, I beg to remain your poor, little brother,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

REVELATION XII. 17.

"AND the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

This is the same woman that is spoken of in the first verse of this same chapter, which was the wonder that appeared in heaven; that is, the gospel heaven: Mary the mother of Jesus, the church, which is his mother and his sister. Satan began his great line of offense, hurling accusations at Christ and persecuting his church, as soon as the church began to be set up. Saul of Tarsus brought accusations and trouble against those whom he found preaching Christ, and so on down to the present has the dragon pursued and persecuted the church. The dragon is ever present at the time of, or shortly after, the birth of one born into this kingdom, the children of this woman, to devour this child and torment it, but as Christ by the power of God was able to withstand the wiles of the devil, so are they that are his by his power protected. They are tormented, but not consumed, and God, who is rich in mercy and long-suffering to usward, prepared a place in the wilderness for this woman, the church, where she is fed. "Therefore, behold, I will allure

her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her."—Hosea ii. 14. Whenever Satan is thwarted in his purpose he is wroth, and seeks out a new line of attack, it being his purpose and mission to torment this woman and her children, the church, which is composed of the subjects of God's love and mercy, all being members of that body, whether manifested openly or not. He persecutes this woman, but God is with her, giving her "two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time," a definite period determined and known only by God, unknown by man. Now that she is flown into the wilderness the dragon casts a flood of water out of his mouth after the woman, that she might be carried away by the flood, but the earth is kind to the woman, she shall not be destroyed, God hath so decreed. The earth opened her mouth and swallowed the flood. We might say here that the opening of the earth is the popular and fashionable or false churches of men, which open up to receive the flood of water (errors and delusions) that would carry away the church into confusion were it not for the kindness of the earth in having this opening to receive the flood of trouble to keep it out of the church. False worship and doctrines of men have their place in the earth, and are designed for a special purpose, and are a help to the church, in the fact that they are an opening to receive the worldly religionists; it is their place, man naturally being a worshipper of something, and his doctrines and practices coming out of the dragon's mouth. The dragon being unable to carry away the church by this flood, "went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." All the seed of this woman, all the children of this holy union, are free born children. She has but one husband, who is Christ, who was never married to another. "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." —Solomon's Song iv. 7. The remnant of her seed are those who are yet in the flesh. Being a remnant, they are necessarily a part of the whole body; all warped and woven together at one time by the decree of God before the world was; but those who are in the flesh are the remnant, that which is left. They are the only ones that the dragon can make war with; these keep the commandments of God; they love one another, they declare salvation is of the Lord, the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. These have the testimony of Jesus. He testified that the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost; the remnant testifies of the same. He testifies that he is the very Christ, the Son of God, the Savior of sinners, that he is come in the flesh, our flesh, and his works testify of him. The remnant declares the same. His testimony was that he was tempted of the devil, that he was persecuted. The remnant has this same testimony. His testimony and that of the remnant agree, therefore we know he is the way and the life of the remnant. Satan seeks to, and does, falsely accuse this remnant of not being the seed of the woman, children of holy conception and birth, of not being born again, born into the kingdom of light, of not being legal heirs, but bastards, children of fornication. By the wisdom and power of God the remnant stoutly denies these accusations, for it receives chastisement, whereof all the people of God are partakers; thus have they evidence that

they are not bastards, but legitimate heirs. This is the testimony the remnant has of Jesus Christ: all testify of the same.

Jesus was the man child the dragon sought to devour, mentioned in the first part of this chapter. This literally took place at the time of the birth of Jesus. Herod sought his life when he heard of him, and to be sure of devouring him the decree went forth that all male children under two years old should be killed, but he was caught up unto God and to his throne. Joseph being warned in a dream carried the child Jesus into Egypt to safety. That was the dragon that was after him then, and so on through time the Lord's people have been followed and persecuted. At times this persecution has been literal. In the present time the laws of the land permit us to worship as we wish. In this respect the church has rest, but the remnant is still subject to sharp conflicts with the dragon, the warfare goes on in trial and temptation. It is the same old dragon, but in different guise. He was in the form of Catholicism once, when men were not allowed to hold or to express views differing from those who assumed the spiritual direction of the consciences of men. Anything that disputes or denies the sovereignty, omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence of God Almighty, that refutes the total depravity and helplessness of all men by nature, that treads under foot the perfect and complete efficacy of the blood of Christ for the salvation of the election of God, that denies the justice of God in all his ways, the perfection of his decrees, the resurrection of the dead and the final preservation of the saints in glory, may be properly classed as belonging to the dragon. It is only the dragon that persecutes, and only the seed of this woman who are persecuted, and it is but the remnant of her seed that he can get at to make war with. While they do not feel so, yet they are as safe as those who have gone on before. The dragon cannot take their life. It, eternal life, is the gift of God, it cannot be bartered or sold, it is a safe inheritance. The church has his promise, and he that promised is faithful. He has given her this hope which she holds so dear and prizes so highly. The dragon makes war with this remnant, seeking to break the will of God and to destroy this small portion of the family of God. Those who have gone on before are freed from this warfare, but those who are yet in the flesh are in the war with the dragon, but are kept by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

Yours in hope,

F. SELBY FISHER.

[THE above is submitted by brother Fisher, responding to Elder May's request in the SIGNS of June 15th for views on Rev. xii. 17.—L.]

NEW HOLLAND, Ohio, Dec. 20, 1890.

MR. AND MRS. ARCHIE BLACK—DEAR FRIENDS:—Your very pleasant letters, with their helpful contents, came duly to hand. I know not how to express my thanks, for I feel so unworthy to be the recipient of such generous kindness, especially from those who have never seen me in my great suffering, and who know so little about its severity. Yesterday was Christmas, and snow commenced falling at early dawn and did not cease during the whole day. It kept away all callers, and in my sick room it was indeed a quiet day. If it is really the anniversary of our Savior's birth, I often wonder why it is spent so much in festivity, hilarity and the indulgence of the

natural passions. Why should it not above all days be spent in spiritual devotions, in prayer and sober and prayerful self-examination and meditations? There is always a doubt in my mind as to the truth and certainty of its being the time of Jesus' birth, but as tradition has set this day apart it is always a time to me of sober and chastened thought. What a rich and blessed gift to poor, perishing sinners was the gift of God's dear and only Son, to be the propitiation for our sins. Truly it was good tidings of great joy. How it must have gladdened the hearts of those wise men from the east when they saw the beautiful shining star of Bethlehem, and knew that the promised Messiah was indeed come to redeem his people, to save them from their sins. No wonder that the poor, aged prophet, who had longed and watched with anxious yearning for this event, cried out, Let now thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, and that the aged prophetess Anna took the blessed babe in her arms and rejoiced with such ecstatic joy. When we poor sinners are brought to feel the need of the Savior's love, the need of being washed in his blood, when this blessed star appears to us as our Savior and Redeemer, are not we, too, made to rejoice with exceeding joy? Do not we also feel to say, Mine eyes have seen thy salvation, and we care not how soon our summons comes calling us to a better and a sinless shore?

But I cannot dwell longer upon this soul-reviving theme. Your dear letters found me unusually ill. I would have sooner tendered you my thanks had I not been too ill. I hope, dear Mrs. Black, you and your husband may not forget me, and that you may write to me again. May the dear Lord bless and reward you for your gift to me, and enable you to feel the sweetness of giving.

Hoping the holiday season may bring many rich blessings to you both, and asking to be remembered to all the household of faith at your place, I am unworthily your friend and sister,

MARY PARKER.

KINCARDINE, Ont., Oct. 15, 1895.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER BLACK:—If one so sinful, so vile throughout, can claim such a sweet, solemn and glorious relationship to those who are bought with the precious blood of Jesus. I have desired to write to you for some time, and now that I have commenced I am ready to give up, from a feeling of unworthiness to write to a child of God, and it seems to be utterly useless for me to attempt to write anything that shall be of comfort to a child of God, or that shall be to the praise of God, for often when I write I am troubled with doubts and fears, and the questions come, How do you know that what you write is the truth of God? How do you know that yours is a gracious experience? and I look at my life of unfruitfulness, and within at a desperately wicked heart, and I am ready to faint. O what strange creatures we are, at least I feel that I am, for if I enjoy the truth, and am favored to walk, even for a few moments, about Zion, and tell the towers thereof, I am troubled, fearing that surely I am mistaken, that I must be wrong to think that God has had mercy on me or I would not remain so vile and unfruitful, so full of all that is bad, so void of all that is good. Then again, when all is dark and vain, and hope seems almost gone, I am in trouble, so it is trouble and sorrow all the time, only when and while I see Jesus, and I do humbly hope and believe that the dear Savior of sinners

favored me to-day in giving me to behold by the eye of faith him who is crowned with glory and honor. I was reading in an old number of the SIGNS at the time an article by old Elder Hassell, and it seemed to me that Jesus was everywhere. O to feel, dear brother and sister, that this glorious salvation, this everlasting love, is ours. Nothing breaks my heart, nothing weans me from the world, nothing drives away unbelief like a faith's view of Jesus. These things you well know, dear brother and sister, for yourselves.

I hope this will find you both, and your dear family, well. I was sorry to leave St. Thomas on such short notice. I like my work here very much, but we are very lonely, as we have no one to speak to on the things that concern us most. They are all, as far as I know, of the do and live order. We have the SIGNS, and other good books, the Bible and hymn-book, which we enjoy.

My sister-in-law, Mrs. Campbell, tells me you were at the meeting. I hope there was good preaching. I would like to have been there. Please let me know all particulars. I wrote to your sister, Mrs. Campbell, a couple of weeks ago. Give my best wishes and christian love to all inquirers. My wife joins in sending love to you all. May the love and mercy of God be with you both, also all who love our Lord Jesus in your locality, is the desire of your brother in the truth,

R. CASE.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., April 30, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER BLACK:—The card showing Talbot street, and announcing the coming of the photographs, arrived safely a few mornings ago, which was of course a pleasant announcement, and we looked forward with pleasure and expectation to their coming, and yesterday at noon when I came in to dinner you were both sitting at my plate, so I had a feast. How natural and how good they looked, calling to my remembrance my pleasant visits at your hospitable home, and how I came to love you both for the truth's sake and for your own sakes. How wonderful is the love of God that fills the hearts of his chosen people and causes them to love one another with pure hearts fervently. It brings the answer of faith to faith in each loving heart, it subdues the evil passions of the flesh, and manifests a clean heart, because the love of God is in it. It was wondrous love that opened the heavens, sending the Lord of life and glory into the region of sin, that he by his perfect obedience might present his beloved before the throne of his Father's glory a chaste and lovely bride. It is also wonderful that "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." There was no waiting on his part until we should make ourselves better by our own works, which no man can do, or ever has done. The system of creature works is all of the creature, while the whole economy of grace is all of God, which worketh in the heart of the creature, creating him anew, old things pass away and all things become new. Nothing save the love of God as manifested in the work of grace can cause a man to hate his own life and to abhor himself and repent in dust and ashes; it constrains us to shun evil communications, and to avoid even the appearance of evil, for in it we are called unto good works, that we may show forth praise unto Him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Since the February meeting I have thought much of you all in Canada, and

of the grace of God that binds you all together in love. How plainly the Lord's hand is manifest in keeping you together as he has called you through deep waters, that his glory might shine in you more brightly because of affliction and tribulation. I have not heard from Elder Ker since his last visit to you. I trust the Lord blessed him to speak and you to hear to the mutual comfort of all. Such meetings are oases in the desert of this life, wherein we obtain a glimpse of the ecstatic and eternal glory that awaits us when we have fulfilled our appointed days here upon the earth.

Please let me thank you for the photographs. My family were all pleased with the faces. If you have not one of my pictures, and would like one, and will let me know, I will be pleased to send you one, and one of my wife, if she has any on hand. Please accept our christian love, and let us hear from you when you feel impressed to write.

Affectionately, your unworthy brother,
B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 20, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER BLACK:—My mind has been with you both very much since my last visit to you in October. You have been passing through affliction, and the kind of natural affliction which often causes stout hearts to falter, but in your case you have a strong fortress to protect you and a loving hand to guide, and living grace to sustain you. When we have learned how strong and powerful is our God, then we learn how weak and helpless we are, and how much we need the loving ministrations of him who is able to care for us and to keep us from falling by the wayside. There is no affliction or tribulation which may overtake us but that he is able to deliver us. How often we would drop down discouraged and heartsick were it not that the loving, helping hand of our Elder Brother steals into ours, and we go on our way in perfect confidence, having no fear of the enemies round about us. When we are walking in darkness, and see no light, filled with unbelief and sin, wretched and miserable, not knowing which way to turn, and we are ready to faint, we hear a voice from behind us, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, and when we have turned how wonderful is the sight, light has sprung up, the darkness has fled away, because Christ, our Light, has appeared. As the Captain of our salvation he conquers every foe, and we are free. Who knows what heaven is, except the tried and troubled children of our heavenly King? Heaven can only be where Jesus is, for in him alone is peace and rest. The world knows him not, therefore they have no heavenly joys. "'Tis a heaven below the Redeemer to know." The joys of heaven which we experience are glimpses and foretastes of that which we shall know hereafter. The blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth us from all sin, prepares us to breathe the pure atmosphere of God's love. As we search for the evidences of our part in the spiritual inheritance we are apt to dig into the furrows and ruts of our carnal nature, and when we have gotten about to our wits' end, then the Spirit leads us into heavenly places in Christ, and takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us. How unsearchable are the works of the Spirit in our heart.

Dear brother and sister, loved ones in Christ, I am anxious to know of your welfare. If you have a few minutes to spare I would be glad to have a line from you. My wife joins me in love to you.

We are all in usual health. May grace, mercy and peace abide in you.

Affectionately,

B. F. COULTER.

[THE foregoing letters were sent to us for publication by sister Black, of Canada, and though written years ago, we feel they will prove of interest to our readers, and so we publish them.—ED.]

1 JOHN III. 1.

"BEHOLD, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have had some very pleasant meditations of late on the above text, and by your permission will pen some of my thoughts for the readers of the SIGNS. John was "that disciple whom Jesus loved." He was the especially beloved of his Master. Five times in his own letter (John) he refers to himself as the "disciple whom Jesus loved." He was favored, with Peter and James, more than others, at the transfiguration, and again, with them, he went with Jesus farther than others to his place of agony in the garden, and he leaned on Jesus' breast at the last supper. He wrote of love and said, Love is of God. This is true, both naturally and spiritually. It is the highest and best attribute of man in nature, and his greatest blessing in Christ. Without the attribute of love every other attribute would be of no avail, and the race would become extinct. Love is that attribute which moves the creature to acts of kindness toward his fellow-being, and makes his own offspring safe in his care, and holds in restraint his baser principles. But the love of God shed abroad in the heart is incomparably greater than that given to him in creation. Natural love fails and is overcome of wrath, resulting in war and general destruction and disorganization, as at present, but the love of God never fails, it does, and will always, triumph. It is because of this love that he hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. The manner of this love is wonderful indeed, embracing us even when we were dead in sins, and by it we were redeemed from hell, and from the power of Satan, translated into the kingdom of God, and "have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father," having become the children of God and joint-heirs with Christ to all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. O what a wonderful manner of love it is. It purifies our hearts, it purges our conscience by the blood of Christ from dead works to serve the living God. Through the Mediator it lifts us above the law, and from under all its demands and the corruption of sin. This sonship is not a thing in prospect, but, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." Not merely heirs by bequest or appointment, but heirs because we are sons born in the house of God. We experience this relation through the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, and we cry, "Abba, Father," with a feeling sense of life relation. We worship him, not because the law demands it, but because we love him, and we love him because he first loved us and shed abroad his love in our hearts. We worship not in the oldness of the letter, but in newness of the spirit. It is this love shed abroad in our hearts that enables us to love one another. God has so purged our conscience by love that we are able to know and appreciate God and godliness, so that when we see Jesus

manifest in our brethren and sisters love goes out from us to them freely and irresistibly; and so it is with all christian obedience, it is the result of a desire of the heart prompted by love rather than by the thunderings of law reinforced by fear of punishment. How wonderfully superior is this new covenant of love to the old covenant of law. Those under the old covenant of law hate the things that the law requires and love the things the law forbids, hence obedience is irksome, and if rendered at all it is only in the letter, whereas in the new covenant of love, obedience is the delight of the heart, doing the very things that we desire to do, and is, therefore, done in the spirit. Well did Paul say, "Now abideth faith, hope, charity [love], these three; but the greatest of these is charity [love]." It precedes all else except he in whom it eternally dwells, and will remain when all else has failed. It pervades the christian character, and will manifest itself in every person who has received it, and like the leaven in the three measures of meal, transforms our whole soul, body and spirit into that one spiritual lump which is in the likeness of Christ. O my Father in heaven, give me this love and I know that all else is mine. O give me this love which consecrates, purifies, humbles, yet exalts and glorifies every one who receives it, and will finally transform him into such a high and holy state that he may with fitness, honor and justice enter thy presence in the kingdom prepared for thy children from the foundation of the world.

With love, I trust, for God and his people, and hope of soon entering into the full joy of these things, I am your brother in affliction,

W. N. THARP.

LIBERTY, Ind., June 20, 1915.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., June 15, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send this letter, written to my sister Bessie, to you, for publication in the SIGNS, if you think best. The exercises of mind expressed in it will, I think, be of special interest to the readers of the SIGNS. I submit it to your judgment.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

OTTAWA, Kansas, May 15, 1915.

MISS BESSIE DURAND—DEAR SISTER:—Every day since your card arrived I have hoped to write to you, and now, if you will excuse pencil, I will write, when I can find a spare moment. On account of drouth and sickness we have not been able to keep out of debt on the farm, and I find it necessary to do what I can to help. I am trying to raise all the chickens I can, and have now over eight hundred. The housework and the chickens take almost every moment of my time, but not my thoughts, for they often go out to you and dear Elder Durand, and many others whom I hope I love for the truth's sake, though unworthy even to think of them. Dear sister, I do know, and am sure, that I deserve nothing but the wrath of God, for I see every day that in my flesh there dwells no good thing. How often I must be asking him to keep me humble, meek and mild. Many perplexing things arise in raising a family. I want my children to be good in every way, yet I know they are in the Lord's hands, just as I am. I often read the SIGNS to them and tell them what I believe is the truth. Sometimes the thought comes, What does all this amount to? the Lord alone can teach them. A few weeks ago, after having read some from the SIGNS to the family, the same thought was presented, but this time was

followed by these words: Your labor is not in vain in the Lord. I was comforted and encouraged more than I can tell you. How I wish I could see you, for there is much I would like to say to you, and many questions I could ask. I feel so alone and ignorant of what is right in many things.

Lately I had a dream that I am not able to forget, and I will relate it to you. Our house is old, and not very large, and I have always been much afraid in a storm. In my dream I thought we had added a large room. We were in the midst of a storm, but I felt very safe in this new part. I said to my family, How glad I am that we have this new part, for it will strengthen the whole building. Instantly I felt the new part rising up, being torn loose from the old building, and was completely demolished, and everything destroyed but the family. My first thought was that I had been trusting in human means, and this dream was sent as a warning.

I was so sorry to hear of dear Elder Durand's illness, and hope he is again in his usual health. I much enjoyed his last letters in the SIGNS. I think I know something about being "weary and heavy laden." I once thought the Lord had been so good to me I wanted to live perfect as nearly as possible, and for several years I tried with all my might, yet instead of getting better I grew worse all the time. I was condemned if I entertained a neighbor, if I picked up a newspaper, if I reproved the children, besides thousands of worse things, until I felt ready to sink under the burden, when one morning these words came in answer to my cry of distress: Which we nor our fathers were able to bear. I used to think, Why has the Lord forsaken me? Now I feel that every comfort or blessing he sends is in mercy given, for I know I do not deserve the least favor at his hand. How comforting to me to have Elder Durand say, "I am such a sinner." Of course I know he is not a sinner like me, as I think of him he has no fault, nor have I any doubt that he is a true servant of the Lord; then is it very wrong of me to be glad that he is a sinner? I believe I wrote to your brother once or twice of being so troubled for fear I did not love the Savior. "Ye believe in God, believe also in me," worried me much. Always when desiring to weep over his sufferings tears were denied me. This caused me much sorrow until these words came: Weep not for me, but for yourselves and your children. The tears came quickly then, there was so much to weep for. The dear Savior said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." I was helped for a time after this, but soon the old longing came back to know that I loved Jesus. One day last winter, when sorrowing on this account, these words came to me as a personal assurance: "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me?" I was very happy and much relieved. I saw I could not do what I had been trying to do: make of one Lord two. A few weeks afterwards the same fear returned, but was immediately followed by the same words. I have not been troubled over it since.

What a lovely writer Elder Lefferts is. His last editorial, "Walk about Zion, mark well her bulwarks," was beautiful to me. I read it several times with fast beating heart. I feel sure that the Old School Baptist doctrine and the church are dearer to me than all else in the world, and that it is the plain teaching of the Bible, though despised and reject-

ed by the world, and I could but be glad he wrote about it. I think of the many filled meetinghouses within easy driving distance, yet I have no desire to go to them, but if a true servant of the Lord was to preach in a cave I feel that I could walk ten miles to hear him. I could make any sacrifice to hear Elder Lefferts preach such sermons as he writes in the SIGNS. The tears are almost blinding me as I write. I agree with Elder Vail that he is a Daniel, and can read and interpret the handwriting on the wall. As I read that sermon I compared it with the love I have for my children. Other girls may be beautiful and attractive, but they could not take the place of my two little girls in my heart and affection.

I have been a long time writing this letter, and now am ashamed to send it, but am anxious to have another letter from you, so will let it go, trusting you will overlook all errors, and I know there are many. Love and best wishes for all of your dear household.

Affectionately,

ANNA McKINNEY.

HOPE, Ark., Jan. 11, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am very thankful to you for sending me the January 1st number of the SIGNS, as my subscription had expired with 1914. I was trying to get some new subscribers, is the reason I did not send in my remittance. I secured one, my niece, of Warrensburg, Mo. She is an Old School Baptist, but had never taken the SIGNS, while I have been a reader of it sixty-five years, though not always a regular subscriber. It is all the true preaching I get, as for three years I have been afflicted with a paralytic stroke, and not able to go to the associations, and there is no regular Baptist Church near me. I will be seventy-four years old the 29th of this month, so I feel I have but a few more years at most to stay until I shall be called to face the great Judge to give an account for the deeds done in the body, and were it not for the love of God, wherewith he loved us and gave his only begotten Son to save us, woe would be that judgment. But Jesus' cleansing blood cleanseth us from all sin; though they be as crimson, he can wash them white as snow. God's grace is sufficient.

Again I thank you for the kindness in sending me the January 1st number, for I do not wish to miss one number of the dear old SIGNS. Each one comes laden with the glorious truth as was once given to the saints, and the many, many dear ones tell of being led by His mighty hand in ways they knew not; their feet have been taken from the mire and clay and have been placed on a sure foundation, the Rock Christ Jesus, both sure and steadfast. I am the Rock, says Jesus. O what a comfort the dear old SIGNS seems to me as a medium through which we are drawn nigh to the teachings of Jesus as our only Savior, as the only one able to save. I am the way, the only way, walk ye in it. This is the teaching of Jesus. We must be taught of the Lord, each and all in the same school. I read and see by the writers in the SIGNS that all have been taught in the same school by the same great Teacher, and all tell the same old, old story of Jesus and his love. By grace ye are saved. O how much better the writers can tell it than I, yet I hope I have been led by the same mighty and everlasting arm of God. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." I am down in the dark valley beneath a load of sin, seemingly

enough to crush me. I awake at night in my lonely room feeling I am in the slough of despond, forsaken and alone, that Jesus has withdrawn himself entirely from me, and I am made to weep and cry to him for mercy to me, a great sinner. Then often in that dark midnight hour Jesus seems very near me, saying, Fear not, I am with thee alway, even unto the end of the world. With this blessed assurance I am made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Then again I am in the slough of despond, and all is darkness and gloom, and I almost give up in despair, and am made to feel I am totally deceived, that it is all a myth. Then again I am made to rejoice in the Savior's love, and am made to feel and know I have been born again, as I know I love the brethren, the people of God, for such I believe the Old Primitive Baptists to be, the true worshipers of God.

Dear editors, or some of the writers for the SIGNS, I would like an explanation of two verses of Scripture of which I hear a great many different versions. They are Matt. xxvii. 5, and Acts i. 18.

Please excuse all errors, and throw the mantle of charity over all. I ask the prayers of God's people.

A poor old sinner, saved by God's free grace if saved at all,

W. T. McQUEARY.

STAUNTON, Okla., April 16, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—Again I pen a line in much weakness, fear and trembling, but I want to speak of the goodness, mercy and love the dear Lord has bestowed upon me, a poor worm of the dust of the earth. Blessed be his holy name, for he has given grace and faith in him whom to know is life everlasting. This is my hope, and with patience I wait for it. The time is coming fast when I shall be called away from this time world. I am just waiting to hear my dear Savior say, Come home, child, and inherit the kingdom prepared for you. In my Father's house are many mansions, if it were not so I would have told you; I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am there you may be also. My dearly loved brethren and sisters, the thought of such blessing sometimes creates in me joy unspeakable. Yes, when I am happy in him December is as pleasant as May. When I feel that my Savior is near all is peace, and if he has begun a good work in me I know he will carry it on until Jesus appears to make up his jewels. O, my dear kindred, this is the great question with me, Am I his, or am I not? I can say with the poet,

"Mixtures of joy and sorrow,
I daily do pass through."

Sometimes I am in the valley and sinking down with woe, sometimes I am exalted and on eagles' wings I fly, rising above Mount Pisgah. The thoughts of such amazing bliss should constant joy create. When Jesus dwells with us we spring up in ecstasy at his holy name, and we can say with old Job, I know my Redeemer liveth, for he has visited me from on high; he is my surety, my all in all; he will never leave nor forsake me if I am his, for he has given me grace through Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is my righteousness.

Now, brother Ker, I send this to you, and you can do with it as you deem best. My faith is too weak to feed the children of God; I only write because I love them. I know I am not worthy to be called a child of God, but I long to walk in the footprints of Jesus.

Will you please send my paper to this place, Staunton, Okla.? as my husband

became so feeble that I had to go and stay with my daughter to help take care of him. He is eighty-two years old. The SIGNS is a great comfort to me, and is all the preaching I get. I live ninety miles from my church; I long to meet with them, but it is not the Lord's will.

Now I will close, asking you to remember me in your prayers. May the Lord still uphold you, editors and ministers, by his love to feed his people, for surely you have been feeding them.

I send this to you, that you may know my post-office. Many thanks for the paper. My love to all the dear children of God, in whose hand they dwell.

NANCY CREEL.

PALESTINE, Texas, April 4, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I was reading this lonely Sunday it called me back many years, when I was in the gall of bitterness, and was sitting under the voice of Elder Ben Parker, and thought I was as good as any one; but alas, instead of Joseph being put into the pit, I went in, and O the trials I underwent for almost a year. That was in July, 1878, and in April, after I felt the Lord showed his smiling face to me I could say,

"The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures,
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures."

Those were precious words to me. Saturday and Sunday following were their regular meeting days, but I would not go, for I felt that I wanted Uncle John W. Owen, mother's brother, to baptize me. I tried to go about my daily work, but could not, for I wanted to go to meeting, and at ten o'clock Uncle John and my father, with several others, came up and asked if I were going. I said, No, I cannot go now. Uncle Dave Owen said, Stay at home and get sick. So they all went and left me alone, my husband was in the field. No one knows what a day I passed through, but Uncle John promised to come back in June, which he did, and after preaching I tried to tell them something of what the Lord had done for me, and they received me, and next day, June 23rd, 1879, I was baptized in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church, where my membership still remains, and I have been cast down or feasting ever since. Sometimes I cannot see how they can let me stay with so lovely a people as I see them, and I so vile. But sometimes grace seems sufficient if I were called to die, for sometimes when I am listening to what I believe to be the gospel I am made to rejoice in that love that is unspeakable and full of glory. One year ago to-day I heard brother J. R. Hardy preach near Anson, Texas, and it seems to-day I can almost hear him, for if I ever heard what I believe in its fullness it was then, for I have feasted many, many times in the dead hour of the night on what he said. O may it be the Lord's will that I may live to hear him again. I was very glad to see in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that his health was improving. I was sorry when the *Advocate of Truth* was discontinued, but glad brother Hardy was so kind to have it arranged that through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we can yet feast on the good letters that appear in that paper, for I believe that Primitive Baptists are alike all over the world. I hope I will not miss a copy, for I want to renew before my subscription is out. We have not been blessed with a pastor for some time, and all the preaching I now get is through the SIGNS. I am afflicted, and have to walk on crutches, not able to get out in bad weather, so I have to content myself reading my Bible and paper. There are many good writers. I have

just read brother Fred. W. Keene's article in April 1st number, and it was a feast to my hungry soul, as was brother J. R. Hardy's, and O so many others.

Remember a lonely sister when at the throne of grace, if a sister at all,

SARAH E. COOK.

WASHINGTON, D. C., July 9, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I inclose brother Mellott's letter for publication. I was at Harford the third Sunday in June. Am now on my way to Ebenezer Church for Saturday and Sunday.

With best regards to all, yours in best of bonds,

J. M. FENTON.

HARRISONVILLE, Pa., June 29, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER FENTON:—On my return home from being among my children I found your welcome letter, and was surely glad to hear from you. I have tried to fill two appointments since the May meeting, one at my daughter's and one at Hortontown. On Sunday night after the May meeting I went to bed at my brother-in-law's expecting to visit among the brethren and friends a couple of weeks; not getting up in the morning they discovered there was something wrong, and they notified my friends, and got an automobile to take me home. About ten or eleven o'clock I came to myself and knew where I was. I have had two spells since, but I do not suffer much pain, just a nervous weakness, but the Lord has blessed me with a host of friends who visit me, and my mind is dead to the world, and I can preach to them, and it is surely a comfort to me, and they enjoy it, so the time passes away, and it does not seem so long. I am perfectly reconciled to God's will, for I know his will is done in all things, and whatever he has in store for me he will perform, for there is not one thing that he has purposed that can ever fail, for he works all things after the counsel of his own will, none daring to say unto him, What doest thou? There is great speculation in the world as to what we shall be in that world up yonder, but that gives me no trouble, for it is all fixed and settled with God, and it will be all right. The Lord has seemed to be wonderfully precious to me during all my affliction.

I hope you will get to Springfield as often as you can, for they are very near to me. The Lord's will be done. Let me hear from you while I am here.

Your unworthy brother,

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., June 27, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I desire to say a few words to you, and to your many writers and readers. My last paper, June 15th, tells me on its slip that my subscription expired with that number, and I want to be prompt in sending in my little mite to let you know how I appreciate your messages of love and truth. How near you all come to my lonely heart, and I would gladly greet you with a fond embrace and would gladly entertain any of you at my humble, quiet home, as I have done in time past, but no one comes this way any more. I have heard it said that wherever God has sheep he will send shepherds to feed them. Well, they have been here and hunted, and found so few they have concluded that God's people are all gathered home where storms never come. As for me, poor, unworthy me, I am standing on Jordan's stormy bank waiting to cross over. I was so near last winter that I gave directions about my burial, but it was the will of the Lord to

restore me to my usual health and permit me to return home and enjoy my quiet life and give me strength to work as usual, for which I never can praise his holy name enough. I desire and try to praise him continually for all his mercies to me, but it will take eternity to render all the praise that is justly due the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. I want to mention one of the personal incidents of my life, which occurred March 4th, present year. While trying to work, and having much to do, I did not want to do anything except praise my God with my soul, mind and strength, which I did continually day and night when awake, while peace like a deep river flowed through my soul and I was animated, both body and soul, to think I had been so near death's door and been permitted to come back to my old quiet home and usual health for a purpose best known to him who orders all things after the counsel of his own will.

Write on, dear brethren and sisters.

Farewell.

E. JOHNSON.

NESIKA, Wash., Dec. 6, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I want to ask you to forgive me for my negligence; yes, it is nothing else but neglect in not sending my remittance before. O if this were the only thing that I have neglected I would feel quite happy, but this is only a sample of my neglect in performing my duty. Alas, I am like Martha, careful and troubled about many things of the cares of this life, which cause me to often fear that I have been deceived these many years. I often fear that I have never known the good Lord in the free pardon of my sins. The SIGNS comes to my home regularly, laden, as I believe, with the glorious gospel of the ever-blessed Son of God. I have often made the remark to the brethren that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is the soundest and best paper that is published in the United States. It holds forth the sovereignty of God and the predestination of all things, which doctrine I love, if I am not deceived in myself, because it gives God all honor and glory and abases puny man. I love the good old hymn:

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see."

Yes, surely this amazing grace is wonderful to think of, and the mercy of God which he shows towards his children. O how unthankful we are, and how we fail to honor and glorify him in our daily walk. I was sorry to see the account of dear Elder Chick leaving us, but I believe that our loss is his great gain. I enjoyed reading his writings very much, but I greatly enjoy Elder Ker's, and all the rest of the writings in the paper.

Dear brethren, I will close by asking you again to pardon me for my neglect.

Your little brother in hope of a better life,

F. L. RIFFE.

DRAIN, Oregon, May 2, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—Through the tender mercies of my heavenly Father my poor, unprofitable life has been spared so far, but I feel it falls far short of what a christian life ought to be. I have had so many things in the last few years to try my faith in God that I sometimes think I have no part in the finished work of my Savior. I feel that there is no one on earth who feels alone and cast down like I do. I have no confidence in the flesh, even in myself, and those I have trusted as my dearest friends on earth have left poisonous stings which almost kill, yet I

feel at times that the Lord has been my help and support. Where else can we go except to him who is able and mighty to save to the uttermost all who fear and call upon him? O why do I not trust him more? O why do I get so low in spirit? Why do I shrink and fear at the conflicts I have to pass through? It is like two armies arrayed against each other; Satan says one thing and the Spirit says another. It is not given me to answer these questions, but I want to trust in the true and living God, yet I cannot, only as he sees fit to give me grace and strength from his bountiful storehouse. O we poor, complaining mortals. I know the Lord is able to do all things, and has suffered and died that his family might have eternal life, but the question with me is, Am I one of that number? If I am I do not feel I deserve it, according to the flesh, yet I hope in his mercy to a poor sinner; if saved at all it is through his precious blood, which he shed on Calvary for his people. I get many words of comfort from the SIGNS, as many of the writers tell my feelings better than I am able to express them. Jesus said he left a poor and afflicted people, but he promised to be with them even unto the end. If it were not for the promises he left for our comfort we would sink in despair.

There will be a three days meeting held at my house July 23rd and 24th, and I hope all who can come will do so. I hope the Lord will be with us. I do not expect to have things fixed for them as my natural inclinations would have, but will do the best we can, and welcome all lovers of the truth. O that the Lord would revive us, and cause us to rejoice in his holy name.

I fear you will get weary of reading my poor letter, so will say no more. May our heavenly Father be with each and every one of his children through this vale of tears, and hoping to meet you all in that upper and better world, is the prayer of a poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

(MRS.) S. MORNINGSTAR.

BALTIMORE, Md., Feb. 7, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As it is time to renew my subscription, and, in fact, past time, inclosed find check for two dollars for another year, and if you are still short of communications may it please the Lord to direct my pen to write something that will edify the church and extol the name of Jesus, the only name under heaven given among men whereby sinners must be saved, and, blessed thought, they are saved with an everlasting salvation, and he did not come to save any except sinners, for the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick, or those who cannot save themselves. I think sometimes that if I could write like some of the brethren and sisters I would never tire, but I cannot. I cannot think a good thought without Jesus, but with him we can do all things. I think I can truly say with Paul, In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing. How true that is to the household of faith, but not to others, and when we are made to feel it how we mourn and weep, and desire that things were different with us, but that is when we are worshiping God in spirit and in truth, for Jesus says, Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted; they that mourn on account of their sins, not on account of the sins of others. I often feel to thank God that I have not the responsibility resting on me that some claim, the means of saving other men's souls, when I know so well I cannot save

my own, or cannot make one hair of my own head either white or black, but have to depend entirely upon the Lord for my salvation, both for time and eternity; and I am glad that the arm of the Lord is not shortened, and that he can still save sinners.

Do not let this crowd out better matter, or if it is not in accord with the truth throw it into the wastebasket and it will be all right with me.

From a poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

L. C. GODWIN.

PARIS, Ill., Jan. 14, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I am sending some renewals I will just say a word of commendation for the dear old SIGNS. I cannot remember when it did not lie on my father's table in my childhood days, and was considered by the children almost as sacred as the Bible, and never did we think of using it for any purpose, or tearing or disfiguring it, and it has lain on my own table in my home all these years since I have had a home of my own, and I hope to be able to continue it. There is so much in it that cheers and comforts a poor, needy, sinful creature, such as I feel myself to be. It seems to me sometimes that I am committing a great sin to be placing myself among those who have a hope in the Savior, when I have not a thing to base that minute hope upon but my feeling of unworthiness and sin. As I grow older I seem to get more foolish, and murmur at the dealings of Providence when they are not what I wish them to be, yet I do not want to feel so, I want to be trustful and thankful all the time, but I cannot. I wonder if any one is like me. I do things and think things which I do not want to do and think. I wish that I might write something for publication that would be of comfort to some one, but I am one of the most ignorant and unworthy, and cannot even think a good thought. If it is not asking too much, I should like to be remembered at the throne of grace.

Yours in a little hope, and the least of all,

(MRS.) DANIEL SHIELDS.

ELDORADO, Ark., January 25, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel a desire to thank you for the New Year's gift you gave me the first of January, 1914. I received the first number of January, 1915, and enjoyed reading it very much. Brother Davis' article on the final preservation of the saints, and P. L. Savage's experience, and David Titmus' article on the manhood of God, J. M. Perkins' on the poor in spirit, and brother A. E. Rittenhouse on the lame and halt. Silas H. Durand's article on page ninety, continued from page 581, is very comforting to God's humble poor. Effie Edwards' about her doubts and fears, in December 1st number, 1914, page 720, all of these, and hundreds of other articles and letters in the twenty-four copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES I have sewed together in book form to keep. I appreciate the gift, for all the preaching I have is in the SIGNS. I hope you will forgive me for not writing and thanking you for your kindness. If you continue sending the SIGNS I have told my folks when I die to have it stopped. I will be seventy-seven the first day of May.

I remain your little brother in a sweet hope of eternal life through Christ our Lord,

T. G. WELCH.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1915.

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EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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EZEKIEL XIV. 22, 23.

"YET, behold, therein shall be left a remnant that shall be brought forth, both sons and daughters: behold, they shall come forth unto you, and ye shall see their way and their doings: and ye shall be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, even concerning all that I have brought upon it. And they shall comfort you, when ye see their ways and their doings: and ye shall know that I have not done without cause all that I have done in it, saith the Lord."

Ezekiel and Daniel were contemporary prophets, and prophesied unto Israel in Babylon during the seventy years captivity there. Though Israel had forsaken the Lord he had not forsaken them, and his voice was heard among them while exiled in a strange land, through the two prophets mentioned above. God at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, and during the exile in Babylon; these were Ezekiel and Daniel. Throughout several chapters here in the book of Ezekiel, including this fourteenth one, the Lord by the prophet is reiterating to the captive Israelites the many transgressions committed by them previous to their captivity, and because of which the captivity had come upon them. The triumph of Nebuchadnezzar over them, and his bringing them as slaves to Babylon, was not a matter of chance, but the just penalty of Israel's sins. The Lord reproves his people, convincing them of sin, thus showing them that their punishment is the just reward of their wickedness, teaching them that the wages of sin is death. He brings them in such a way, to such a consciousness of their guilt before him, that not one dare reply against him, but with hand over mouth are dumb, confessing their judgment is just. We must remember in reading the book of Ezekiel that the prophet is speaking of things which had occurred in the past, previous to their bringing to Babylon, in the present tense, as though they were actually occurring at the time he writes of them. The prophet is by the river Chebar, in Chaldea, as these visions are given him, but in spirit he is carried back to Jerusalem, and to the time previous to the exile, and is shown in detail the repeated transgressions of Israel, for which cause this calamity which they were now suffering had come upon them. Turning back to the twelfth verse of this same chapter, and reading on from that point, we see that because the land had sinned against God by transgressing grievously, therefore the staff of bread was broken and famine ensued. Four sore judgments were visited upon Jerusalem for their iniquities: the sword, the famine, the noisome beast and the pestilence. Thus were man and beast cut off from the land. Four times we are told in this chapter that the three men, Noah, Daniel and Job, even were they in the land, could deliver naught but themselves by their righteousness. The righteousness of these three men could not avail to save Jerusalem from the penalty of her sins. Noah, Daniel and Job were justified by faith; that is, though they were sinners by nature, yet to them was given by God that gift of faith by which they looked unto Jesus as being their

perfect and complete Savior from all condemnation. This faith of theirs, being theirs by divine gift, embraced the life, sufferings, death and resurrection of Christ. They viewed him by faith as their justification before God, thus were justified by faith. This was the righteousness of Noah, Daniel and Job, but it could not avail to deliver any but themselves. These three men could not impart the faith which they had to any one else, they could not make Jesus to others what he was to them, therefore they could not by their righteousness deliver others from punishment for sin. Jesus is the only Savior of sinners, he has no substitutes, nor are there any to whom he delegates his power to save. If Noah and Daniel and Job had been in Jerusalem at the time of her sore apostasy and transgression, and had they self-constituted themselves missionaries to show Israel her sins and to win her to repentance, all their efforts would have availed nothing, as we are four times told in this fourteenth chapter: "Though these three men were in it, as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters, but they only shall be delivered themselves." Since the days of Ezekiel man's nature has not changed, the plan of salvation has not changed, God himself has not changed. It is just as impossible now as ever for any one, even though he may be a subject of the salvation of Jesus, to save others from sin through his instrumentality. We hear much of missionaries, and of the work of saving souls, but all that is brought forth is wind: boasting and vainglorying. No real salvation is ever accomplished through the instrumentality of human beings, be they ever so righteous; Jesus is the only Savior, and no one shall ever be able to share that prerogative with him or to rob him of that crown. His is the only name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. But God is rich in mercy. In the midst of deserved wrath he is merciful. Had Jerusalem been treated at the hand of God as she abundantly deserved she would have been carried away root and branch and cast away forever. So would every one of us who now believes in Jesus and hopes in his grace. Had God dealt with us strictly in accord with our sins, he would have provided no Daysman, but would have left us to perish in our blood and guilt. Why he did not choose to do this with us will ever remain a mystery. We can only say that it was his good pleasure to reveal his abundant mercy in the midst of the wrath we so richly deserved. "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." So here, in this instance of punishing Israel for their sins by sending them into captivity, he manifests his tenderness, even as he smites them with the rod: "Yet, behold, therein shall be left a remnant." When Nebuchadnezzar took them captive to Babylon he left a remnant in the land, the feeble, aged and infirm. He took away their princes, their youths, their strength and all the flower and glory of Israel. But in the midst of this land, shaved with a razor that was hired, was left a poor and afflicted people, who, of necessity, called upon the name of the Lord. This remnant was not left behind because they deserved better treatment than the others who were carried away, not because they were less sinful than the others, but simply because it was the will of God that David (Jesus) should have a light alway before the Lord in

Jerusalem, the visibility of the church must not be lost. This remnant left in Jerusalem at the time of the general carrying away into Babylon prefigures the gospel church in its visible manifestation as at present in this gospel dispensation. The visible church is always a little flock as compared with numbers of the Lord's people who are entangled in the slavery of Babylon and never openly manifested as members of the church here in the world. This gospel remnant is weak in numbers, a poor and afflicted people, as was the Jewish remnant of old. Their sole trust is in the Lord, he is their help in trouble, their refuge in adversity. If we were sufficiently enlightened in the Spirit to have a full view of the whole church of God we should see a host that no man can number whom God has set apart for himself out of all nations, kindreds, tribes and tongues under the heavens; but many of these while in the flesh are never delivered from Babylon, never brought into the membership and fellowship of the church here in the world, being entangled in the false doctrines and institutions of men, ensnared in the allurements of antichrist. But those who by the grace of God are brought to behold this gospel remnant, the church militant, are comforted when they see their way and their doings, and must confess that all that God has done in dealing with his people he has not done without a cause. Like the queen of Sheba, who came to prove Solomon with hard questions, when she saw him and the glory of his house, she said the half had not been told her, and there was no more spirit of questioning remaining in her. So do we when we see the church of our spiritual Solomon in its gospel beauty receive comfort in observing the way and the doings of this remnant. L.

MATTHEW II. 23.

"AND he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene."

The steps of Jesus were all ordained of God. It was not in him as a man to direct his own steps. His way was inclosed with hewn stones, the hewn stones of prophecy, which fitted closely and tightly together, so that there was no possible way to climb over them or through them and thus escape their fulfillment. All that Moses wrote in the law, and all that the prophets wrote, was fulfilled in and by Christ Jesus. These were of that cup that could not pass away except he drink it. So long as one iota or one small thing of the law and of the prophets remained unfulfilled, just so long legalism could not end, just so long gospel realities could not be established. Jesus was born in Bethlehem, fulfilling Micah v. 2. Herod sought the child's life, and proclaimed an edit which slew all the children of two years old and under, fulfilling Jeremiah xxxi. 15. Joseph was directed in a dream to take Jesus and Mary and flee into Egypt to escape this slaughter of Herod's, fulfilling Hosea xi. 1. When Herod was dead, again an angel instructed Joseph in a dream to leave Egypt and return to his own land. Arriving there, again in a dream he was warned to turn aside into Galilee, so came and dwelt in Nazareth to fulfill the prophecy: "He shall be called a Nazarene." Nazareth was an unimportant hill town of Galilee, and even the Galilæans doubted if any good thing could come out of such a place. It was a regular butt of a place alongside the smart, new cities of Capernaum and Tiberias. This town, Nazareth, is not at all mentioned in the Old Testament, and nowhere in all the prophets do we find any refer-

ence to Nazareth, or any prediction literally that Jesus shall come out of Nazareth, or that he shall be called a Nazarene. This is rather amazing at first glance, when we see that Matthew so definitely states the language of prophecy as quoted in our text. Yet, while there is no prophecy that reads exactly as Matthew says it does, there is abundance of testimony in the Old Testament to prove that Jesus, when he should come in the flesh, should make his dwelling with the lowly and the outcast, with the forsaken and destitute. The prophets, especially Isaiah, predict Jesus as being of no attraction to natural people, as being unpopular and of no reputation. Nazareth was all this among the cities of Judea: disreputable and insignificant. Matthew does not mean that the prophets literally said, "Out of Nazareth," but that Jesus was to come out of obscurity, wretchedness and disrepute. He was to be a root out of dry ground, with no form or comeliness, with no beauty that any should desire him. Nazareth signified all this, and was the only city in all Judea that would so fittingly shelter the prophet that was without honor in his own country. She suckled a prophet and did not know it, nor did her neighboring cities, villages and countryside believe that anything worth while could ever arise out of so lowly a place. Turning back in the Old Testament to the sixth chapter of Numbers, we find that a Nazarite was a person separated unto the service of God. This separation was outwardly signified by the long hair and beard which were never cut, and by the abstention from all wines and liquors. It is significant that before the disciples were first called christians at Antioch they were known as Nazarenes, because they followed Jesus who came out of Nazareth, was therefore a Nazarene, and was also a Nazarite unto God. Jesus was wholly separated unto the service and will of God from his conception. In word, thought and deed he was truly a Nazarite. In the type, a Nazarite never cut his hair or beard, so Jesus the antitype was never touched by any polished tool of men to trim him up, to make him presentable to the world. He was not contaminated with any education or refinement or culture that men could give him, no polished razor or shears ever touched his beard or hair. Nowadays the Arminians think a young man must go through college to get polished up before he can go forth to preach. Such men are not Nazarites. The Nazarites of God, those whom he separates by a holy calling unto his own use and service, never need to be polished by men, to have their hair and beard trimmed, for God is their teacher and is their preparation for this service in his vineyard. They drink no wine or liquors; that is, they are separated from all worldly pleasures, from all that stimulates and inebriates the people of the world; they are clothed and in their right mind at the foot of the cross. It is our thought that Matthew does not mean that there is actually some passage of Scripture in the prophets which literally says, "He shall be called a Nazarene," but that the substance of all prophecy declares the Nazaritehood of Jesus, his separateness unto God, and the lowliness and humility which characterized prominently the whole life of Jesus in the flesh. The church of God in the world to-day is the spiritual Nazareth, and while the grandeur of the carnal world passes her contemptuously by, still she harbors the very Christ nevertheless. He is in her and she cannot be moved. God is in the midst of her and she is all-glorious within.

Her garments are of wrought gold. She is the perfection of beauty, for God in her is the light shining out of her.

Both of the above were written at the request of sister Anna McKinney, of Ottawa, Kansas. L.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

2 CORINTHIANS V. 21.

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

The apostle in the connection of this text is treating upon the subject of the complete redemption of the people of God from the curse and dominion of the law, the guilt and punishment of sin, by the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. That all for whom Christ died were sinners against God, transgressors of his righteous law, and by nature children of wrath even as others, is fully demonstrated, for if they were not sinners no expiation of sin would be required on their behalf. This apostle informs us (Romans iv. 24, 25,) that Jesus the Lord was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification, and in our context, verses fourteen and fifteen, he says, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." Our views on this subject, which we believe are warranted by the Scriptures, are that the immaculate Son of God, who was delivered for our offences, was holy, harmless, separate from sinners and higher than the heavens, the Lamb without spot or blemish, who knew no sin in his nature or in his works. Shining in all the brightness of his Father's glory was the express image of the invisible God, and he was and is the Lord from heaven, and filled with all the fullness of the eternal Godhead. All the infinite perfections of the eternal Deity were embodied in him. He was one with the Father, and he was in the Father, and the Father was in him. In his eternal identity with his Father he knew no sin. His will was and is the will of the Father, and that will is the supreme standard of holiness, according to which God worketh all things. On his unsullied purity and absolute holiness all holy beings love to contemplate; angels adore, saints extol and devils tremble before him. If he had known sin, as attaching impurity to himself, it must have disqualified him for the great work of our redemption.

"For he that could for sins atone,
Must have no blemish of his own."

All the victims required to be slain under the ceremonial law, and indeed all that were offered from the foundation of the world, as typical of Christ, our sacrifice, including that of Abel, were required to be without blemish, to show that we, the church of God, are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without spot or blemish, as set forth from the foundation of the world, pointing to that one offering wherein he through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, and by which he hath obtained eternal redemption for us. This holy and spotless Lamb was made sin for us. How? By himself coming under that law of which he was the author and superior, and which his members in their Adamic nature had transgressed. "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made

under the law, to redeem them [his members] that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." In thus coming under the law he took on him the seed of Abraham. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels [for angels were not in the nature of those to be redeemed, or to receive the adoption of children]; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." That is as explained by Paul to the Galatians. If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. In taking on him this seed he took on him all their transgressions. "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities."—Isaiah liii. 4–11. Thus he was made sin, or, if we include the supplied words of our text, he was made to be sin for us. He was not made to sin, or to do that which was sinful, but in taking on him our nature he took on him our infirmities—was made like unto his brethren. (Heb. ii. 17.)

Much has been said and written in modern times of the immaculate conception of the Messiah, as though his design had been only to take on him the seed of Abraham, and not their sins, but the very object, or design, was to bear the sins of his people in his own body. Embodied in the seed of Abraham, which body was prepared for him, with that seed he stood identified as its life, and he was recognized by the law and justice of God as being responsible for their sins. Should a capital offence be committed by a man's hand, would not the life of the body of which that hand is a member be held in law and justice for the offence? In the typical illustration of this sublime subject the priest confessed the sins of Israel over the head of the scapegoat, and it was said their sins were laid upon the head of the scapegoat and borne away. It is in this way we understand that Jesus was made sin for us. And he was made a curse for us, as it is written in the law, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Mere substitution could not meet the demands of the law. To condemn and punish the innocent, or to

justify the guilty, were alike forbidden by the law which Christ came to fulfill, yet the head, being identified with its body, may be held for the transgressions of the body. The right of Christ to redeem his people, as the one nearest of kin to them, and holding, by virtue of higher claim, a right of property in the seed of Abraham before they were partakers of flesh and blood, and before they had sinned, rests on their spiritual existence in him, anterior to their becoming partakers of flesh and blood, but his qualifications to redeem them with his blood required that he should take part of the same flesh and blood in which they had offended, that he might be recognized as being under the same law by which they were condemned. Hence he was made flesh and dwelt among them, with them identified as the head with its body, the life of the body prepared for him. He was made sin. See him whom the heavens adored arraigned before the bar of justice, now in the form of sinful flesh, with all the iniquities of all his members found on him, not merely by imputation, as some suppose, but by actual identity of head and body. He has taken on him that body, that seed, and in that body crushed with the mighty weight of all the sins, which with the body he assumed, the law with unabating fury pours on him the wrath that was due to the sins which were laid on him. An arbitrary act of imputation could not suffice. He is made sin, or made to be sin for us. For whom? For the seed of Abraham, for his body, his bride, his sheep, his seed, his members, and for them only. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Romans viii. 3, 4.

But we pass to consider the great purpose or design of this wonderful condescension and unparalleled humiliation of the Son of God. We are told in the sacred word that God sent his Son to redeem them that were under the law, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, to save his people from their sins, to redeem them unto God. But justification as well as redemption is contemplated in our text. Merely the putting away of their sins would not secure to them the righteousness of God, it could only restore to them their original innocency in which they stood in Adam before sin entered. Hence to make the redeemed seed the righteousness of God himself required that the same relationship should exist between Christ and his members which we have found to be indispensable for their redemption. Theological speculators talk of justification before God in a variety of ways. Some look for justification by the deeds of the law, or by the righteousness of their own works, but God has informed us that in that way no flesh shall be justified in his sight. As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse. Others speak of the righteousness which Christ wrought out by his active and passive obedience to the law. This was indispensable in our redemption from sin. "By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." So far as legal righteousness is considered, it is secured by the obedience which Christ has rendered to all the jots and tittles of the holy law. This legal righteousness redeems and saves us from wrath and condemnation, but does it

qualify us for communion with God, for fellowship with the Spirit and for an inheritance with the saints in light? Our text contemplates a higher order of righteousness than the mere satisfaction rendered to the law for our transgressions: "That we might be made the righteousness of God." Much more than an acquital from guilt and condemnation is required to bring us to God and prepare us to stand before him in the perfection of his nature. God has told us by the mouth of Daniel that Christ should not only finish transgression and make an end of sins, and make reconciliation for iniquity, but also bring in everlasting righteousness. To work out is one thing, but to bring in is quite another. Without the former the latter would be impossible. It was indispensably necessary that Christ should redeem us from sin and death and hell, but having so redeemed us it is no less indispensable that we be made the righteousness of God and partakers of the divine nature. We are therefore assured that Christ is of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. This is the name wherewith he shall be called, "The Lord our righteousness." For their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. So then as Christ was made to be sin for us, in the putting away of our sins, and as he was made sin by taking on him the seed of Abraham, so the seed of Abraham are made the righteousness of God in him who is the righteousness of God. Christ is our life, and he is the true God, and eternal life. We are in him, and he is in us, that all his members should be made perfect in one, that the world may know that God hath sent him, and that he hath loved us even as he hath loved him.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., July 1, 1866.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

William Phineas Thomas died July 8th, 1915, at his home near Watson, Loudoun Co., Va., aged 69 years and 8 months. For four months he had been steadily declining in health, and at first he strove hard against his disease, thinking something might be done for his relief, but he found that doctors and medicine could do nothing, and that death was only a matter of time. Realizing that the end was inevitable, and that soon, he became submissive as a lamb, and bore his pain without a murmur, brave to the end, resigning all to God's holy will. It was extremely hard for his dear family to see him waste away day by day and not be able to do anything for him, but all that love and devotion, kindness and care could do for him was done, and without stint or thought of self. In his faint, weak voice the last few weeks he would often say, "God's will be done." He also asked several times to have the fourteenth chapter of John read to him, and seemed to get much comfort from it. He told his nurse just a short time before he died that he would go soon to be with the Lord forever. The sweet spirit that animated our dear friend, Mr. Thomas, during the last of his sojourn here is an assurance to us who loved him that he passed from earth in the faith of Jesus and is embraced in the victory of Christ that overcometh death. Several years ago he united with the New School Baptists, but left them long since, and became a regular attendant at the meetings of the Old School Baptists, though he never joined these latter, always affirming that he was not fit to be in the church, that his experience of grace was not a satisfactory one to himself. He first received a hope in the salvation of Jesus, or "saw the light," as he expressed it, in the latter part of March, 1882, when Elder E. V. White preached the funeral of Elder Badger's first wife. He dated his experience from that sermon. In the second year of the Civil War he joined the Confederate Army and was in Company A, 43rd Battalion, fighting bravely with Moseby for two years. He loved, after the war, to meet with his old comrades and talk over reminiscences of the battlefield. On Dec. 19th, 1877, he was married to Miss Sallie Riticor, our sister in Christ, who survives Mr. Thomas, together with seven children, four sons and three daughters: Clarence R., of Charlottesville, Va.; Charles W., Dr. John G., Henry Phineas, Mabel E., Susie R. and Sarah Margaret, also four grandchildren. Besides the immediate family, there survive him three sisters and two brothers.

The funeral services were held in the Mt. Zion meetinghouse, the writer reading the fourteenth chapter of John. May the gracious God of all comfort and consolation reconcile the bereaved ones to his holy will.

L.

Mary F. Peck, wife of Wm. J. Peck, died June 29th, 1915, at the General Hospital in Rochester, N. Y., following an operation. She had been in poor health for some time, and an operation seemed inevitable. She was recovering from the first when it was found necessary to perform a second. This also was passed safely, when her heart failed and she died suddenly. She was the daughter of the late Richard and Elizabeth Brice. After the death of her father, her mother, having married Mr. Candler, was known to many Old School Baptists as sister Elizabeth Candler, of Seneca Falls, N. Y., one of the tried and faithful ones. In early life Mary was married to Wm. J. Peck, and had since resided in Seneca Falls, N. Y. Her life was one of love and kindness to those about her. The thought and consideration she had for others, and the sunshine radiating from her own sweet character, endeared her to all. Some years ago she became troubled over her soul's condition and the future. She tried many and various plans of salvation, but all failed, and there seemed to be only her mother's faith and her mother's people for her. August 21st, 1904, she went before the Caroline Church and related the experience of her lost and hopeless condition and her deliverance and faith. She was received by the church and baptized by Elder C. Bogardus. The church is saddened over its loss, and extends love and sympathy to her devoted family, who left no wish ungratified or want unattended that was in their power to bestow on her. She is survived by her husband, one son, Richard J. Peck, and one grandchild, also one brother, Charles Brice, of Seneca Falls, N. Y., and two sisters, Mrs. Caleb Brown, of Clyde, N. Y., and Mrs. Amelia Southwick, of Rochester, N. Y.

The funeral was largely attended at her home, her pastor, Elder Bogardus, officiating.

Written by request.

BERTHA BOGARDUS BEARD.

ERRATA.

On page 444 of last issue, second column, fifth line from the top, the word "kinship" should have been kingship; also in the same column, tenth line from the bottom, the same mistake occurs again.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Charles Schade, N. Y., $1.00.

POETRY.

IF.

If Christ is mine, and I am his,
What can I need beside?
Distress or poverty were bliss,
Would he with me abide.

If in the Father's house a place
Has been prepared for me,
There I shall see him face to face,
Where many mansions be.

If I felt sure I had a place,
If only at his feet,
'Twere joy for such abounding grace
As e'en the lowest seat.

If he had said, The good and great
Alone I came to save,
The words, alas, had sealed my fate,
His grace I could not crave.

If he had said, I'll do a part,
But you must do the rest,
Naught can I do, this wretched heart
Is only sin at best.

If in the resurrection morn
The Judge shall bid me come,
A chosen one ere earth was born,
I must for joy be dumb.

But if the dreadful words, Depart,
Your works I never knew,
He utters, then this sinful heart
Must own them justly due.

ABBIE G. CLARK.

North Berwick, Maine.

MEETINGS.

The New Hope Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will hold her thirty-fourth annual session at Elm Ridge Church, at Elmo, Texas, seven miles east of Terrell, Texas, on the T. P. R. R., beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in August. Those coming by rail will get off at Elmo, Texas. All Old School Baptists are invited.

S. M. DICKENS.

The Hazel Creek Association of Predestinarian Baptists will meet with Spring Creek Church, near Stahl, Adair Co., Mo., on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1915, in her sixty-first annual session, and continue three days. The east bound train on the Q. O. & K. C. will be met at Novinger and Stahl on Tuesday, August 24th. Train due at Novinger 10:41 a. m., and Stahl at 11 a. m. Will meet the same train on Wednesday, 25th, at Stahl. Will meet the I. & St. L. from the north at Novinger

on Tuesday, August 24th. Train due at 11:30 a. m. We extend a cordial invitation to our friends to meet with us.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator.
H. C. CATE, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the First Church of Roxbury, at Vega, N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday following the third Sunday in September (22nd and 23rd), 1915. Trains will be met at Roxbury Tuesday afternoon, Sept. 21st. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

A. J. SLAUSON.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

Liberty Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, of Los Angeles, Cal., meets every first and third Sunday in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., at 42nd and Moneta Ave., and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal.

W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor.
C. B. RICE, Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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This little memorial book is now ready for sale. It embraces a period of about one hundred years. In connection with a brief account of my father's early life, his christian experience, his long ministry of nearly seventy years, it contains some history of Mt. Olive Primitive Baptist Church and Tygart's Valley River Association. In addition there is a short appendix dedicated to the memory of my mother.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,
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[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 83. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1915. NO. 16.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PINSONFORK, Ky., July 12, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I here inclose a wonderful letter, which I received from Elder L. D. Hoskins, of Colmar, Ky., which I hope will meet your approbation, so that it may appear in the dear old SIGNS, our medium of correspondence, which has been, lo, these many years, so richly laden with such wholesome doctrine and consoling communications from the many writers. If every Baptist in the world could be so wonderfully blest of the Lord to read this deep, heart-searching article written by dear Elder Hoskins, and be blest of the Lord to realize in heart and soul, to walk humbly before God, and to abstain from all appearance of evil, remembering that if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, &c., I should be so glad. It is wonderful to me in my eightieth year.

With love to all the flock,

W. J. MAY.

COLMAR, Ky., June 30, 1915.

DEAR ELDER MAY:—A few days since, I received yours of June 11th, and words fail to express the inspiration I received while reading the precious words of your letter. I feel thankful to the good Shepherd of the flock for blessing my communication in the SIGNS of Feb. 1st, present volume, to your edification. My efforts are so poor that unless attended by the Spirit of God they would fail to comfort any one. So your words of approbation strengthened my weak hands and confirmed my feeble knees. I believe every sentence of your letter; it touches on the deep mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, which but few of the Israel of God are able to handle, and which but few of the Israel of God are able to see and believe. Elder Ker's editorial in the SIGNS for Feb. 1st, present volume, sets forth this line of doctrine. Your article in the SIGNS for Feb. 15th, present volume, advocates the same doctrine. All the types, shadows and figures of the old testament teach the same doctrine. Christ and the apostles taught the same, and the same doctrine is taught to-day by the true ministers of God. The late Elder Gilbert Beebe's editorial reprinted in the SIGNS,

commencing on page fifty-six of present volume, teaches the same doctrine. Time and space forbid mentioning the numerous advocates of this particular point of doctrine. Now I did not mean to convey the idea that a minister who does not teach this particular point of doctrine is not a true minister of God, for there are but few called to work in this field, as it is true in regard to all other fields for service. There are many old and young servants of the cross who cannot feast upon this point of doctrine, nevertheless I love them and have christian fellowship for them, for I know that while my eyes may be opened to see Christ in this point of doctrine that darkness may be intervening between my vision and Christ in some other point of doctrine that other good brethren see and rejoice in; but O may we have grace from God sufficient to live in obedience to the great command of our Master, Love one another as I have loved you. If we could always do this, we would always be found abiding in the vine (Christ), and we would never be cast forth as a withered branch into the fire and burned, which means destruction in this time state; but instead of being able to rejoice in the fact that all the Israel of God abide in the true Vine, we find ourselves sometimes in the condition of the old prophet Jeremiah when he exclaimed, O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people.

I feel that you have asked the wrong one to write upon the line of thought presented in your letter to me. I wish that I were half as able to write on that line as you are. Surely one like myself, so much of the time stumbling along in darkness, being led astray by the allurements of this world, struggling against the waves of infidelity, and at times almost carried away with them, and right on the verge of denying any reality in religion, even now I feel as a brand plucked from the burning, cannot be entrusted with the glorious truth of the Son of God; but if I be blessed with a travel of mind, I shall give you some of my ideas on this point of doctrine.

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it."—Matthew vii. 13, 14. I take the above text from which to write on the line you requested. In discussing this subject I do not mean to take under consideration any people but the Israel of God. In order to understand the true application of any passage of Scripture, we must know the speaker, or writer, the persons addressed, and the dispensation in which it was spoken or written. The above Scripture was spoken by Jesus Christ in his sermon on the mount to a congregation of Israel, and while the old dispensation was in force. One of the many things that Christ made plain in his sermon on the mount was the contrast between the obedient and the disobedient, the reward in obedience and the punishment for disobedience. Now, all Primitive Baptists believe and teach that national Israel was a figure, or type, of spiritual Israel. All national Israel stood upon one plane of existence, and that plane of existence was the first heaven, and upon this plane of existence all Israelites are accountable to God for the deeds done in the body. Christ upon this plane of existence taught Israel the only way to ascend to the second heaven, which is the kingdom

of God, and is joy, righteousness and peace in the Holy Ghost; he also showed them another way along which they could go. The way to the second heaven is a strait way, and not a straight way. If you remember, the stairway that led from the first chamber to the second chamber in the temple that Solomon built was not a straight stairway, but a winding one. In order to ascend a winding stairway without stumbling or falling you must have sufficient light and keep your eyes open. A strait way means a close, narrow, painful and difficult way. This strait way means this, Take up your cross and follow me. What does it mean to take up your cross? It means you are going to crucify some one. When we obey the command, Take up your cross and follow me, we crucify the old man with his deeds. Christ denied or put off the flesh, or old man, at every crook and turn of the road, and finally was crucified on Mount Calvary, put to death, and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. If we travel the narrow way and enter in at the strait gate, we must obey what Christ taught in his sermon on the mount, for in the closing remarks of that wonderful sermon he makes this illustration: "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock: and every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it." This plainly teaches the Israelites that in obedience from love for obedience there is life, which is joy, peace and righteousness in the Holy Ghost, and that in continual disobedience, or wilful disobedience, there is death, which is separation in this time state from the fruits of the Spirit. The Israelites who seek, knock and ask aright are given grace sufficient to keep the commandments of God and abide in the testimony of Jesus Christ; they have life, eternal life, and that in abundance, during their pilgrimage in this time state. Christ upon one occasion said, I am come that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly. We should bear this fact in mind, that Christ never came to make Israelites, but to save Israelites, to rule Israelites, to teach Israelites, to feed Israelites and to judge Israelites. They of Israel that are rebellious, that are disobedient, that are lovers of self and this world, and keep not the commandments of God, and have not the testimony of Jesus Christ, are journeying in that broad way that leads to destruction in time. I do not believe that an Israelite will ever be resurrected from the literal grave and punished eternally, for I believe that when time is no more and that when Jesus Christ delivers up the kingdom to the Father and becomes subject to him who hath put all things under his feet, not a single Israelite will be found missing in that third heaven, because I believe as the apostle Paul hoped, that the unjust of Israel that travel the broad way to destruction in this time state will be resurrected, clothed with incorruption, clothed with immortality; so I hope you will not understand me as believing that an Israelite may be destroyed eternally. This entering into destruction, or death, is not eternal destruction, neither is the entering into life eternal, enter-

ing into the third heaven; this destruction means the casting into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth; the entering into life means entering into the peace, joy and knowledge of our Lord and our King here in time. I believe the Bible teaches the eternal salvation of all Israel, and a time salvation for only a remnant of Israel. From a time and an eternal point of view, all Israel were weighed in the scales and found lacking. "All we [Israel], like sheep, have gone astray." "Every man at his best state is altogether vanity." Therefore there is no salvation for any one, for time or eternity, outside of the merit of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Scriptures teach us that every word or fact must be established by at least two witnesses. All the Scriptures have been, or are, doubly established. We claim and teach that we are living in the gospel dispensation, which has been set forth by two figurative dispensations: the age, or dispensation before the flood, and the Jewish, or legal dispensation. God has by his work, or dealings with his people in these typical dispensations, manifested unto us his work or dealings with spiritual Israel in this gospel dispensation. I shall now give attention to the first of these typical dispensations. Before the end of the Jewish dispensation the Lord used natural, or literal, things to represent spiritual things. So the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. This man was wholly and entirely composed of the elements of the earth, and the entering into his nostrils of the breath of life, which all living things possess, made him a living soul. This living soul was earthly, natural and a mortal man, yet at the same time he was the figure of Jesus Christ. Now we must look at Adam, not from a natural point of view, but from a spiritual viewpoint, because he was the representative of a spiritual man. Adam was made upright naturally, just as every spiritual man is made, as all testify in their first experience, there is a space of time with them that the sky is clear, the sun shines brightly, there is not an enemy in view to mar their peace. They are placed as Adam was in a beautiful garden, a sinless state of existence, which the Spirit says abide in. The garden of Eden was a natural or literal garden, having in it literal trees that were pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil; and a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from thence it parted, and came into four heads. The garden of Eden, although a natural garden, was a type of the kingdom of heaven. Scientists have searched for the garden of Eden, but have failed to find it, and they never will find it, because it represents the spiritual state of existence. No natural man, while in his natural state, will ever see the kingdom of heaven. Adam was given the law, not before he was placed in the garden, but afterwards; it was after he beheld the beautiful trees of the garden, after perhaps he had drunk of the sparkling and refreshing water of that beautiful river that became parted into four heads, which represent the four gospels. Eve being in Adam at that time received the law in him in the garden of Eden, after that she was made of one of his ribs, a helpmeet for Adam. Adam said concerning Eve, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." So Eve had a standing in Adam, on the same plane of existence. Eve, although in

that beautiful garden in a sinless state of existence, was not to live free from temptation; the temptation came, she was enticed and she partook of the forbidden fruit, and did eat and gave unto her husband, and he did eat, and the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. "And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden." Where are the natural beings, that were not being used as types, that have experienced things like these? They are not to be found. But all of Adam's and Eve's experiences are similar to the experiences of the children of God. For some years it has been impossible for me to believe that the dealings of the Lord God with Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden represent any of his dealings with the natural world of mankind, because in type, or figure, they were upon a spiritual plane of existence; in other words, in a spiritual kingdom or world; and the whole antediluvian world in a sense represented the spiritual world of mankind in the time state. Therefore by the disobedience of one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death has passed upon all, for that all have sinned. God brought national Israel out of Egypt (darkness), redeemed them from their enemies and saved them from the hand of him that hated them, baptized them unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, destroyed all their enemies in the sea (blood of Christ), and enabled them to sing this song unto the Lord: I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. "The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my Father is God, and I will exalt him," &c. Now all Israel were brought out of Egypt, not one destroyed there; there was no law given them in Egypt. As they took their journey into the wilderness they all ate the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink, for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. When Moses came down from Mount Sinai the children of Israel had made them a god of gold and were worshipping it; then Moses said unto the people, "Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin. And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, O, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book." After this Israel committed fornication, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. They tempted Christ, and were destroyed of serpents. Korah, Abiram and Dathan rebelled against Moses, and the earth opened up her mouth and swallowed them up into the pit with all that appertained unto them. Paul said these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world (legal world) are come. Wherefore let him who thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. The Bible teaches us that God made a choice

out of Israel. Psalms lxxviii. 67, 68: "Moreover he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim; but chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion, which he loved." Elijah made intercession to God against Israel, saying, "Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life." But God answered him thus: "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal." Here we see that God chose a remnant of national Israel unto salvation, and Paul said in his time there was a remnant according to the election of grace. The Lord hath said, The iniquities of the children of Israel hath kindled a fire in mine anger, and it shall burn unto the lowest hell (the deepest or most complete destruction). In all the ages of time God has sent his servants to warn his people. The instances are too numerous for me to mention, but a great many of the brotherhood would do well to reread the thirty-third chapter of Ezekiel.

This letter is growing too lengthy, and yet it seems that I have not even hinted at the subject.

I will now pass on to the coming of Jesus Christ, in whose coming and work we see the fulfillment of the types and shadows which preceded him. "Thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel." "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." National Israel, of whom and among whom Christ came, represented all the Israel of God. Israel lived on a plane of existence nearer to God than the Gentiles, or natural world of mankind. Christ's first appearance was upon this plane of existence, and upon this plane of existence we have a world of mankind, the world that God so loved, the world from whom the Lamb took the sin, the Adamic sin, the world that sin entered into, the world whose sins Christ is the propitiation, the world from whom Christ chose his bride. Christ came in the interest of Israel, and nobody else. After Christ's baptism he fasted forty days and nights in the wilderness. This fasting produced weakness and emaciation, so the tempter thought this hour of weakness was his opportune time, therefore he approached this great Champion of Israel, and there alone in that wilderness, while all his natural powers were almost consumed, he fought a wonderful battle and won a glorious victory. It is while we are weak in the flesh that we do our best fighting. The only weapons of warfare which Jesus Christ used were three quotations from the law of Moses, and the Israel of God was under the law of Moses, therefore this proves to us that Christ came only in the interest of Israel; and not only a part of it, but the whole of it, for all Israel were under the law, and Jesus Christ satisfied the demands of the law, for God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. Jesus Christ is Lord and King of all Israel; he is not only Lord, but he is also King; as Lord he washed the whole of national Israel in type with his blood in the Red Sea, and as King he destroyed them when they rebelled and were disobedient. The disobedient of national Israel were put to death, were cast into hell. What is true

in the type or shadow, must also be true in the antitype, or object that casts the shadow. There were scribes and Pharisees of national Israel, and Christ said unto them, Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? All the people that are represented by the characters that are embraced in the parables that Christ spake are the Israel of God. Christ chose a few, a remnant of Israel, to be his bride, and these few were given him by the Father, and he said unto them, Ye are not of the world (Israel after the flesh), but I have chosen you out of the world. Ten lepers were cleansed; one returned to honor Christ who cleansed them; the nine went on and honored the priest. It was true then, it is true to-day, the one that returned was a component part of the bride; and this bride, or church, was chosen out of Israel in Christ before the foundation of the world, for Jesus Christ had come and made this choice manifest before John, the revelator, saw the passing away of the first heaven and the first earth, and the bringing in of the second heaven and the second earth where there is no sea. Christ in speaking unto the churches of Asia by the apostle John says, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; he that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."

Many instances found in the Bible could be mentioned of the destruction of great numbers of Israel for sin and unbelief, but it is not expedient in this letter. To my understanding no other point of doctrine is more elaborately taught in the Bible than this one, and many of the Israel of God have cried, Peace, peace, when sudden destruction came upon them. There is no heavenly peace for Israel in walking in the broad way, or after the flesh.

Dear Elder May, I must bring my letter to a close, as it is much too long already, and yet I have only touched upon it, here and there. The subject is so vast it would take volumes to do it justice. I hope some one who has the true light and understanding on the subject will write on the text you requested brother Lefferts in the last issue of the SIGNS. That subject will carry them into deep water. I believe all the seed of the woman are the people of God, but yet only a remnant of her seed walk in that strait and narrow way.

It makes me feel sad to think that you have almost finished your course. It blinds my eyes with tears, for great is the loss when such noble soldiers of the cross as you are taken from the field of battle. We give you up as we give up our fathers.

Yours in much tribulation,

L. D. HOSKINS.

MACOMB, Ill., July 13, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a communication lately received from Elder S. Ketchum, of Kansas City, Mo. He was once the beloved pastor of our church here in Illinois, and we still hold him and family in loving remembrance. As will be seen, he wrote a part of his letter years ago, and addressed it to the SIGNS, but for some reason did not send it. Lately in writing to me he sent it, think-

ing it might prove of some comfort. He also wrote the additional interesting letter, which I would much like to see in our dear paper, for I am sure it will interest and comfort many of his old friends, and all who may read it, as all the household of faith should share their mutual joys, and be blessed with the same comfort and built up in the same precious faith.

With love to all who love our Lord Jesus, I hope I am your sister,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have for a long time thought I would write and submit to your judgment a short account of the reasons why I am a Primitive Baptist, and why for twenty-six years I have been trying to preach Christ and him crucified as the only way of life and salvation. I have had very many grievous doubts as to the reality of a genuine call to the ministry of the Word in my case. I have never heard of but one case similar to my own; that is that of Elder Hubbell, recently published in the SIGNS, and that has caused me to determine to send you this sketch. Like him, my experience and exercises of mind on the subject of preaching were so closely connected that I shall be obliged to recount both, in part at least. My parents were members of the Primitive Baptist Church, but never lived near the place of meetings, so it was very seldom I attended their meetings, and do not remember of ever being present at a business meeting of the church until I united with them at the age of thirty years. I suppose my life to the age of twenty-five was quite similar to that of other boys and young men, likely neither better nor worse, but I distinctly remember thinking I intended some time in the future to become a christian, and that I should be a good one, one that others could well afford to pattern after. I could easily imagine myself already much better than many I was acquainted with, and thought, What will I be when I go about it in earnest? In the fall of 1865 I attended a select party, given in honor of one of the returned soldiers of the Civil War, and if I could have selected the company and arranged the entire programme it would not have been more to my taste. But in the midst of the dancing, when the company was the gayest and the music the softest and sweetest, something like a very dark cloud came over me, and my enjoyment was all gone, and I felt unfit for human society, and was glad when I could leave the house and go home. This was the beginning of deep trouble that at times threatened to overwhelm me and swallow me up. During this trouble, which lasted almost a year, I was in such deep distress at times that I neither felt like eating nor sleeping, and often burst into tears before my young companion. Many mornings my pillow would be wet with the bitter tears from my weepings through the night. I felt that I could imagine how a criminal would feel under sentence of death. Awaiting the time for unsheathing of the sword of divine justice, not one word of murmuring or complaint could I utter. Now comes the strangest part of my story. While in this condition not one ray of hope or one beam of light had yet entered my dark understanding; I was in the very gall of bitterness, and despair had well-nigh overwhelmed me. This strange question was put to me as if by some one near me, yet out of sight: If your life is spared and your sins are pardoned will you go and preach the gospel? Before I could have time to think or

realize what I was saying I answered, Yes. Then when I had time to reflect and began to realize what that promise meant I was terribly distressed. O why was I guilty of such presumption? Ignorant, illiterate, not one single qualification to fill such a sacred office, now I had added to my already guilty conscience another and, if possible, more heinous offence. How could I ever expect the God of justice to pardon my sins? Surely there was no door of hope, and this only increased my pain. I searched the Bible in vain for one single promise; judgment had been rendered and there was no appeal, yet I found myself often in my musings face to face with congregations of weeping and sorrowing people, trying to expound to them the words of life. Then when I detected myself in this frame of mind bitter reproaches would follow, accompanied by promises that I would never suffer myself to be found anticipating such impossible things again. In this frame of mind, with a wasted body and a shattered nervous system, on the verge of despair, I passed my days and nights in sorrow and sadness, until, as near as I can remember, about the first of August, 1866. I found it necessary to work in the harvest field a greater part of the nights, and near the hour of midnight, after having, as I fully believed, looked upon the face of the setting sun for the last time as it sank in a haze of mourning beyond the western horizon, and everything seemed shaded in gloom, my sad feelings seemed to become intensified, as if to remind me that the time was upon me and could be delayed no longer. With a terrible foreboding, as of a close approach of some awful calamity, I bent down to pick up a sheaf of wheat, in the act of binding it, and when I raised up O what a sight was presented to my enraptured vision. Everything was now praising God, and such a flood of light and happiness I think is not often granted to sinners here below. Promises that I had read only in letter rushed into my mind until I was perfectly overwhelmed, and I stood in wonder and amazement, and forgot for a time that I was an inhabitant of earth. Now I felt that I could tell what a dear and blessed Savior I had found, and what great things he had done for me. In this frame of mind I started to the house to tell my wife, who had tried in vain to comfort me in my distress, but before I could get there something said, "See thou tell no man," so I slipped quietly to my bed and slept the most quiet, restful sleep I had had for months. The next day was Sunday; a most glorious quiet was spread like a sheet over all nature; everything animate and inanimate was contributing to the praise of God. To say I was happy conveys a very imperfect idea of that boundless spirit of tranquillity which possessed me, and I could think of nothing but the divine compassion and mercy of that Being whose vengeance I had feared so long. Being very tired, I laid down on my bed to get some much needed rest, and whether I slept or not I never knew. There appeared to my enraptured vision a sight I shall not soon forget: the figure of Jesus Christ suspended on the cross, with nails and spikes and pierced side and bowed head. I felt sure that my sins, my cruel sins, had put him there, had caused his sufferings and death, but how glad I was that I was a sinner and that he died for me. My wife spoke to me, saying, "What has come over you? you have been preaching for an hour." O what a shock this was to me. I was so filled with gratitude to God for his mercy

I could not hold my peace, but I could not bear such a thought as my talk being called preaching. Now I began to feel that I wanted a home with christian people, and attended meetings of several different orders, hoping to find somewhere a people with whom I could live in sweet fellowship; but my quest was a vain one, I found no one that seemed to me to have any acquaintance with the sufferings of my Lord and Master; if they had, neither their preaching nor conversation gave any evidence of it, so I began to conclude that I had been basely deluded and deceived, and tried to make myself believe that religion was nothing but a snare and a pit, the vain imagination of a disordered or diseased brain. About this time, while on a visit to my parents, I attended meeting at the Sandy Creek meetinghouse, in Caledonia. Elder Chenowith preached, and I had never heard such preaching before; his whole discourse seemed to be directed at me. I wept like a child, not because I wanted to, but because my heart was melted; the fountain of tears was opened, and came unbidden to betray the terrible emotions arising from the conflict within. I now searched the Bible, and read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and soon became convinced that if I were anything religiously I was a Primitive Baptist. Still I had many conflicts with points of doctrine, and it was a long time before I could be reconciled to accept the doctrine of the Bible, so contrary was it to my preconceived opinions. But finally, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, it came to me that God is true, though all of the traditions and selfish opinions of men should prove to be false. On or about the last day of July, 1869, there came to our neighborhood two Old School Baptist ministers, together with several lay members, and held meetings at our schoolhouse, for the purpose of giving an opportunity to some persons supposed to have a desire to unite with the church located twenty-five miles distant. But while I felt there were others who should avail themselves of that opportunity, it was not thought of for one moment by me that I would be one of them. But when the opportunity was given I found myself among others giving my hand to the minister, and with six others was baptized the next day. In the constitution of Barren Grove Church, in November following, the church liberated me, to my deep sorrow, to exercise a supposed gift within the bounds of the church, and in June, 1873, I was ordained to the full functions of the ministry. For several years my attempts to preach were designed on my part to prove to the church that they had made a grievous mistake, and now, after over forty years in the work, at times I feel not at all sure that they were not mistaken. Nevertheless I have at times felt that the Lord was very near, and now my remnant of days I desire to spend in his praise who died my poor soul to redeem.

My dear sister Runkle, I am sending you a manuscript found among some old papers. I cannot give you the date, because my memory might be faulty. Evidently I had expected to continue writing, and I can only surmise what my intentions were, but I have felt that I might add a few incidents in my life which have come into it since that time.

In the early part of my ministry I had indulged the (vain) hope that there would come a time when there would be a genuine revival of real religion among the Old School Baptist churches of the entire length and breadth of the country

that would raise (to me) that dear sect to a higher plane or standard among men, but now after more than forty years in the service, and at the age of seventy-five years, I have arrived at the deliberate conclusion that God's ways are not man's ways; man may propose, but God is the doer of all the things which endure. In these later days men add to organizations instituted by men thousands of proselytes. All of these organizations can trace their origin to some date far and away this side of the date of the establishment of the kingdom (church) set up as predicted by God's called and inspired prophets, and in due time, the time appointed (ordained) of the Father sent his messenger before his face to prepare his way, to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God, whereby the Dayspring from on high hath visited us to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the ways of peace; and the child grew and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts until the day of his showing unto Israel, when he appeared at the appointed place. For this is he of whom it is written, "Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee." In those days came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. His mission was to make ready a people prepared of the Lord. Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. Why the necessity of Jesus' baptism? He was given of God to be head of the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. But it became him in fulfilling all righteousness to set the example for his children to follow in his footsteps, and by submitting to this ordinance when the Spirit descended in bodily shape like a dove his act received the approval of high heaven, settling forever beyond all controversy in the minds of his children the form and significance of the ordinance of baptism. Why, then, O why should his blessed children, blessed with a good, sweet hope in the mercy of this Savior of sinners, halt and allow the pride of life to bar them from the sweet fellowship and happiness that is sure to follow obedience to the commands of our Elder Brother, who said, He that would be my disciple, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me? Then again it causes my heart to ache, while the bitter tears fill my eyes, to think of the unseemly spectacle of those who have tasted of the good word of God, and the power of the world to come, allowing some trifling matter to be magnified from a molehill to a mountain, causing them to become separated, and where the fruits of the Spirit once abounded, joy flowed from eye to eye and love from heart to heart, nothing appears but the rank weeds, briars, thorns and thistles, and even that green-eyed monster, the cruelest demon that ever came from the bottomless pit, jealousy, finds a place. I am fully persuaded, both by experience and observation, that the most exalted position any poor sinner ever attained to on this earth is to be clothed with Christ's righteousness, having his right mind (the mind of Christ) and at the feet of his brethren, as well as at the feet of Christ. So there is more real joy in one day in the house of the Lord than a thousand spent in pursuit of worldly pleasures, thus verifying the words of the psalmist: "For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper

in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." We often think of Elijah's intercession against Israel, and God's answer to him: "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal," and Paul's assurance that in his day there was a remnant according to the election of grace. Can we say as Paul did for his time, over eighteen hundred years ago, Is there still reserved unto God by his grace a remnant? When I think of worldwide war, the terrible destruction of life, the awful sufferings of the innocent millions of human beings, to say nothing of war's waste, added to the spiritual wickedness in high places, I feel like asking, Is there still a remnant according to the election of grace, with undefiled garments, still persisting in their refusal to bow to the golden image or worship Baal?

You are, no doubt, aware of our move from Chester, Nebr., to Kansas City, Mo. While we still hold our Nebraska brethren and sisters in love and fellowship, as we were over sixty miles from the church at York, and two of Nebraska's best ministers live in the town near the church, we felt that our services were not needed there, and as two of our sons were located in this city, we would be near them here, and would be better situated here as to church privileges, we decided to make the change. The church in the city has a membership of about seventy-five, and holds services every Sunday. Also there are at least twelve churches within reach by train or interburban in from one to three hours ride, and although I have never asked the Baptists of these churches what they think of us, we are feeling more and more drawn to them, and are often reminded of Ruth's words to Naomi.

SMITH KETCHUM.

PSALMS CVII. 8.

"O THAT men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!"

This language is found four times in the one hundred and seventh Psalm, and each time it is preceded by an account of a remarkable manifestation of God's mighty power in delivering the redeemed out of the hand of their enemies, and out of their distresses. The word "men" here is in italics, which shows that it has been supplied by the translators, but there cannot be any question that the characters referred to are living characters, that they have been born again, born from above, born not of a corruptible, but of an incorruptible Seed, which liveth and abideth forever. The psalmist is not calling upon natural men, as such, to praise the Lord, for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." In reading the Scriptures we should be very careful to observe closely their connections, in order that we may better determine who the characters are that are being addressed, as well as the condition which they are in. Some people would have us believe that they (the Scriptures) are sufficiently elastic to embrace every one of Adam's race; that salvation is brought within the reach of every living soul, to accept or reject, as seemeth good unto the creature, and even some of God's people are inclined to accept the sweet and reject the bitter, to regard such Scriptures as promise life as belonging to the children of the heavenly King, while those that set forth the penalties of wickedness, that declare the "soul that sinneth, it shall die," &c., as well as many others, they regard as belonging solely to the non-elect, the unregenerate, those nations

which have never known God. My understanding is that the Scriptures are the written will and testament of God concerning his people. Paul in his second epistle to Timothy plainly states that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." So then, we see that they are for the man of God and that they are for reproof and correction, as well as being profitable for doctrine and instruction in righteousness. The same God that said unto Isaiah, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins," also commands his servants to "cry aloud, spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins." The subjects of a king are the only ones to disobey his commands, for they are the only ones who are amenable to his laws and statutes; and so the Lord, speaking by the mouth of David, here is calling upon live men, those who have been quickened and made alive by the operation of the Holy Ghost, to give thanks unto him and to praise him for his wonderful works to the children of men. I do not mean to infer here that natural men and women are not subjects or creatures of God's own making, for the world is his and the fullness thereof, but he has a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, and these are his subjects in a spiritual sense, and these are the characters that are under consideration by this writer, for he begins the Psalm by saying, "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever." Who is it that knows the Lord is good and that his mercy endureth forever? Surely not the man who has never realized that his own heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; that from the sole of the foot even unto the top of the head there is no soundness in him, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; that by nature he was conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity, being wholly unclean, and that God is holy and of purer eyes than to look upon sin; this one has had no occasion to know anything about the goodness and mercy of God, and the psalmist does not ask such an one to give thanks unto the Lord, but he says, "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy; and gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south," from the four corners of the earth, and the uttermost parts of the sea, those who have been wandering in the wilderness in a solitary way, hungering and thirsting after righteousness until their souls have fainted within them, until heart and flesh have failed, and they feel themselves to be sinking into the deservedly bottomless pit, where there is no eye to pity, no arm to save; but as they are going down their souls cry out within them, Save, Lord, I perish; have mercy upon me, a poor, hell-deserving sinner, and similar cries, and the Lord hears them, for the cries of a broken heart and a contrite spirit he will not despise, and he delivers them out of the horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and sets their feet upon the rock by giving them a sweet hope through grace in Christ Jesus the Lord. He enables them to "look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence

ye are digged," and as they realize that it is because of his mercy he saves them and does such wonderful things for them, they are made to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, that the Lord has triumphed gloriously, the horse and the rider hath he cast into the sea, and they feel if they should hold their peace and not praise him who has done all things for their souls, that the very stones would cry out in adoration and exultation of that name which is above every name, the name of Jesus, for before him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that he is Lord to the glory of God.

Brother Ker, I have hesitated to send this, hoping to have something better, but I can only offer what the Lord sees fit to give; of myself I can do nothing. There is a great deal more I would like to say, but feeling that what I write is of little, if any, value to the household of faith, and for fear of crowding out better matter, should you decide to publish it, will leave off here, and abide by your better judgment.

Yours in bonds of love,

R. LESTER DODSON.

PORTLAND, Ind., May 15, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—I see in the last SIGNS that Elder May has asked Elder Lefferts to write upon Revelation xii. 7. I wish Elder Lefferts had written upon these things, for I feel what he has written upon the book of Revelation has been very instructive. The book of Revelation is seemingly prophetic, and many events to take place among the nations of the earth seem to be meant by expressions, and God's people with their many tribulations and triumphs seem to be foretold in Revelation. The book of Daniel and the book of Revelation seem to be in some ways similar, or rather John's prophecies seem to begin where Daniel's left off. Daniel's prophecy regarding the beast with ten horns seems to be the dragon spoken of by John, and both appear to be foretelling the evil workings of pagan Rome under the Cæsars, and the little horn of Daniel appears to be the ten horned beast of John that the dragon gave his power to, and no earthly power seems to fit that prophecy but papal Rome. The first great persecution against the church was from pagan Rome, which seemed to rule the world at the time of Christ and his apostles, as foretold by Daniel, that, In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed; but this kingdom should break in pieces all other kingdoms. This kingdom Christ came to set up, and he is to rule until he puts all enemies under his feet; for unto him every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess, and the last enemy is death. The twelfth chapter of Revelation, which brother May wishes views upon, begins: "There appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." The woman here spoken of seems to be the church of Jesus Christ, the bride, the Lamb's wife, that John saw coming down out of heaven. The heaven that this great wonder appeared in seems to be the legal heaven. It certainly was a great wonder on the day of Pentecost, when there was a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, that filled all the house. This was the appearing of that woman so wonderful. The legal heavens were then in existence, and such an appearance on the day of Pentecost made the appearance of this woman or church a

great wonder. This woman was clothed with the sun, which appears to be Christ as a sun that shineth in his strength to protect her; and the moon was under her feet. The moon here seems to be the law. She is raised above the law, for Paul says, The law hath no more dominion over you. Christ blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which was against her, nailing it to the cross. This woman, or church, had a crown of twelve stars upon her head. Christ is her head, and the twelve apostles seem to be the twelve stars, as we see in the forepart of Revelation regarding the seven churches of Asia with her seven candlesticks and the seven angels. The interpretation is, the candlesticks are the churches and the seven angels, or stars, are the seven angels which seem to be of the said churches, hence we thus conclude the twelve stars in the crown of this woman, or church, would mean the twelve apostles of the church. "And she being with child cried travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered." This woman that so cried was the church, and the man child she brought forth was Christ. "And there appeared another wonder in heaven: and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads." This dragon, as I have said, can be but the only great enemy of the church when this man child was born. The dragon was pagan Rome, that inaugurated the ten great heathen Roman persecutions against the church. The first persecution this dragon started was when the apostles Paul and Peter were put to death, and the second persecution was when John was banished to the isle of Patmos and saw these wonderful visions I am now writing about. This dragon's seven heads seem to be his seven seats of power, and his ten horns mean his ten kingdoms he rules over, for horns in prophecy mean kings, and pagan Rome had ten kings, or ten kingdoms with kings ruling over them. "And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth." This seems to have reference to the destruction of some of the apostles, for stars seem to mean apostles, and this dragon stood before the woman, or church, which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. This seems to mean Herod's efforts to destroy Christ after the wise men of the east had inquired of Herod, "Where is he that is born king of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east." Herod claimed to be king of the Jews, and he could not bear the thought of one being born king of the Jews that would supersede him, hence he stood before the woman ready to devour her child as soon as it was born. "And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne." This seems to have reference to Christ's ascension to heaven to sit at the right hand of God, where he is given all power in heaven and earth until he puts all enemies under his feet. "And the woman [or church] fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and three score days." The church being spiritual, is hid from the wise and prudent; the world by wisdom knew not God. No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son revealeth him. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit. Therefore the true

church of God has been hid from the world; she is hid in the wilderness from the face of the dragon. He has tried his ingenuity to find this woman, but she hath a place prepared of God, and they (the apostles) shall feed her there a thousand, two hundred and threescore (1,260) days. The apostle Peter was one called to feed God's sheep and lambs, and so is every God-called minister. She has a place prepared of God. This place seems to be the place Christ had reference to when he said, I go to prepare a place for you. This place is a place where his people worship him in spirit; a place of broad rivers and streams, that the world knows nothing of. The ministers of Christ have been feeding her in her prepared place ever since she fled into the wilderness. Some of our brethren who have written upon these things think this wilderness place has reference to the secret places where God's people met to worship in the dark days of the great persecution from this Roman beast, or dragon, and they claim this wilderness prepared place has been fulfilled in the long hidden condition of the Waldenses, a people hidden for six hundred years in the Piedmont valley of France, away from papal or Catholic Rome, but finally were discovered by the old Catholic Church and driven out of the secret place God had hidden them. Many of our brethren have claimed these people were Baptists in worship and practice; but this time of the church's suffering seems to be when the beast reigned that the dragon or pagan Rome gave his power to. Of this I will speak later, if I am given liberty. Brother May wants some explanation upon the seventh verse, which reads: "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels." As this dragon was in power when Christ came, I understand John to mean Michael was Christ, for in the eleventh verse John says, "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony." The heaven where this war was fought appears to be the old legal heaven, for Christ was here when that old legal heaven was yet in force; and the dragon was cast out of the old legal heaven into the earth, for the legal heaven was taken away, the first heaven was taken away and the kingdom of heaven was set up. When the legal heaven was taken away there was no place found in heaven for this old serpent, he was cast out among the inhabitants of the earth. Paul in his letter to the Hebrews says the children partook of flesh and blood, and he took part of the same, that he might destroy him that had power over death, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Hence this great war in heaven when Michael fought against this old Roman dragon was the great victory of Christ over Satan for his people. John said he heard a voice saying in heaven (gospel heaven), "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night." And they overcame this great enemy by the blood of the Lamb. Wherefore rejoice, ye heavens (gospel heavens), and ye that dwell in them. "And when the dragon saw that he was cast out unto the earth, he persecuted the woman [or church] which brought forth the man child." This seems to have reference to the persecution the church suffered at the hands of old pagan Rome in the ten heathen Roman persecutions against the church.

These persecutions all took place during the first three hundred years of the church's existence, and the church finally overthrew pagan Rome about the time Constantine came on the throne, for he professed christianity and put down all Roman rulers, and for a short season placed christian rulers over all official positions; but this only lasted a short time, for the ten horned beast John saw come up must now have its place. It arose out of the sea. Waters in prophecy seem to mean people. So this ten horned and seven headed beast arose out of the people, and the dragon gave the beast his seat of authority, and all the world wondered after the beast. Here John seems to have an eye on the rise of Catholic Rome, which came up in the fifth century. Constantine seems to begin to prepare the way for this beast, and the ten horns of this beast would seem to mean the ten Roman kings that ruled the ten Roman kingdoms so long, the full one thousand, two hundred and sixty days. Elder Beebe seemed to share much of this view of this beast. Also Elder Trott, who wrote so much in former years upon the prophecies, seemed to hold the old Catholic Church as the ten horned beast, and pagan Rome as the dragon. If these things are facts, as most Protestant theologians agree, then much might be written upon this Catholic or papal beast, but my letter is now growing lengthy. The present great European war seems to be something in which God will further wound the great enemy of the truth, and will in some way bring about some event for the benefit of his people. Belgium was a strong Catholic nation, and so was Austria, and both have fared hard in this war. Mexico is strongly Catholic, and they are in a precarious position, and many priests and nuns have had to flee that country, and while I do not pretend to know what God has in mind, yet we stand still and watch how matters are going.

I will now close, hoping brother May can glean something from this. I do not feel able to step into brother Lefferts' place on this request, but submit my limited views to the brethren.

NEWTON PETERS.

BENTON, Ky., July 15, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I herewith inclose a letter I received some time ago from brother J. C. Chester, who is clerk of our Soldier Creek Association, and thinking the Baptists of other localities like to hear of the manner and usages of Baptists generally, thought it might be of interest to all of like precious faith. He also gives some scriptural thoughts which are worth much to me, and I would like to see them published in the SIGNS, if you so judge. I hope the brethren will sustain the SIGNS, that the Lord will so prompt them, for without him we can do nothing.

Your weak brother in hope,

R. J. HILL.

BREWERS, Ky., May 23, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER HILL:—It is in much weakness that I attempt to address you again, knowing that of myself I cannot write to the comfort of any one. I have thought for some days, and more especially to-day, of Paul's language to the Colossians: "Though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit," and while trying in my stammering way to converse with you, dear brother, I feel that our hopes, our aims, are one, as are our comforts and our cares.

I wish to say something of the nature of the meetings I have attended of late.

On last second Saturday and Sunday brethren Jenkins and Oliver were with us. Brother Oliver did most of the preaching on Saturday, text Dan. ii. 44, speaking with power and demonstration on God's building the temple, and that he was not only the builder, but preserver of the material of his kingdom. On Sunday his theme was, "I am determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified," speaking with good liberty; then brother Jenkins spoke for a few minutes. The church then with much feeling partook of the supper, and I think to some extent each one present felt the force of the language, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup," and I have thought much of late about this examination, thinking it means a daily examination. Then came that part of the worship which is very sacred to me, though the world makes sport of it: feet washing, realizing my nonfitness to even get down at the feet of one of God's humble saints. Could we be at the feet of our brethren we would not feel like boasting of our good works. Our order was beheld by some outsiders with much solemnity and the very best of behavior. I was permitted to attend our first union meeting at Providence, which was pleasant indeed. There were more preaching brethren than usual, with reasonable attendance; all of the churches were represented but Frost Chapel. All of our home preachers were present. The visiting preachers were J. W. Linn, of West Va., J. F. Prince, now of Fulton, Ky., F. P. Chandler, A. J. Luther. Brother Perkins preached the introductory, and in his opening remarks said he thought introductory sermons should set forth some of the doctrinal points, which he very ably and interestingly did from the following text in Heb. x. 14: "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," and it seemed from the very beginning that all of the speakers gave no uncertain sound. Jesus was the Captain of the entire force, and all their efforts showed that the church was founded on that sure foundation, the Rock, Christ Jesus, and not partly on the Rock and partly on the sand (creature effort) as some put it. The preaching and singing in the homes was very interesting and soul-cheering.

Dear brother Hill, my mind fastened on the Scripture in Col. iii. 3: "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God," and I wish that I might be with you just now to talk with you about the things contained therein. Paul is speaking to the brethren at Colosse, but it seems that it might be applied to the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife, the redeemed of the Lord out of every nation, kindred, people and tongue, and I was thinking of the difference in being dead to sin and dead in sin. I understand those addressed here are dead to sin, have been washed in the blood of the Lamb, cannot thrive any longer in sin, and can see the exceeding sinfulness of sin; their life is hid with Christ in God. This life is not hid to them that have obtained like precious faith in the merciful God, but hid to the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes, who ever desire that sincere milk of the word which comes to the humble poor, not by the will of man, but by Him who speaks and it is done, commands and everything stands fast. None has reason or right to say, What or why doest thou? Dear brother, there is much in this which I cannot express. I hope you may be able to enlarge on it to me, and let charity hide all errors and weakness in this poor attempt. I hope you and family are well. Love to all.

Your brother in much weakness,

J. C. CHESTER.

DAVISTON, Ala., Jan. 8, 1915.

ESTEEMED EDITORS:—I wrote brother Lefferts a letter through the SIGNS last October, but I have received no reply to it, neither have I seen it published. Why I make mention of this letter is because I spoke to you concerning my indebtedness to the SIGNS. I love your dear paper, and deeply fellowship its doctrine. I received a copy yesterday evening, and it found me in the depths of solitude (spiritually), but before I put it down it seemed that my burden was lighter, and I could see a few rays of light in my darkness that has so deeply overshadowed me of late. I do earnestly desire to be a true follower of our blessed Master, but I am not satisfied with what I am, my desire goes one way and I another.

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know."

I often find myself seeking to know more of my blessed Savior, and pleading for wisdom to understand his righteous words, and I feel to hope that God has blessed me a few times with the spirit of understanding, but for the last few months it seems that my heavenly joys are all imprisoned, and the keys of heavenly light are turned against me. But if it is God's will to withhold his presence, it is for my good and his pleasure, for God worketh all things according to his own will and pleasure. Sometimes I feel that I do so badly that God has surely cast me out into outer darkness. If I have ever been visited with the sweet presence of Jesus it was when I have been on the dark side of the wilderness and low in the valley of sin, doubts and fears, cast down and almost destroyed. I feel sometimes that surely no one feels as I do. I go to meeting and the brethren and sisters all look good and happy and I love them, but O what am I? I feel that if I am worthy of a seat among them it ought to be a back seat, and I hope I have always been at the feet of the church, for I have never felt like any portion of my church. God commands us to live at the feet of our brethren, and I know I feel that I will be the last to be recognized as a child of God on that day when Christ shall come to judge the world in righteousness and gather his jewels home where these old Adam sins cannot enter and disturb the heavenly rest that awaits the child of God.

Brother Ker, I cannot pay for my paper now, and I do not know when I can pay. I am poor, but I cannot help it, and I am not ashamed to own it. I find a consolation in being poor, for Christ said many comforting words to the poor. He was poor, but thank God he was not poor and weak in power. It is in his love and power that my hope and joy are stayed.

Remember me as one in hope of being chosen among the elect of God.

EVA PRICE.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—As time goes on I see and realize more fully my imperfections and my dependence upon the all-wise and merciful Savior, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. I daily feel my nothingness and sinfulness, and wonder what the brethren see in me to cause them to have fellowship for me, a poor, hell-deserving worm of the dust. I have felt for some time that I would like to write and tell the dear saints of some of the dealings of the Lord with this poor, unworthy worm of the dust, but fear that I can never say anything that would be of comfort to any of the Lord's dear little ones. When I try to write I cannot have any peace of mind on account of this doubt-

ing heart of mine, and often put off writing until a more favorable season, then when the favorable season comes, as I think, I try to use it in writing in my poor, weak way to some one of the dear Lord's little ones, then destroy what I write, fearing that I may deceive some of the dear Savior's favored few. I do not want to deceive any of my brethren, and am made to cry out of the depths of heart:

"O for a glance of heavenly day,
To take this stubborn stone away,
And thaw with beams of love divine,
This heart, this frozen heart of mine.

The rocks can rend, the earth can quake,
The seas can roar, the mountains shake;
Of feeling all things show some sign
But this unfeeling heart of mine."

When I examine myself I find more stupidity in this sin-polluted heart of mine than I could ever have thought could be in the heart of any poor, wretched, unworthy, miserable worm of the dust. "A beggar poor at mercy's door, lies such a wretch as I." This poor, unworthy beggar is

MARY MIDDLETON.

[THE obituary of this sister will be found on page 509. This letter was found among some papers after sister Middleton's death, and as it is presumably intended for the household of faith, we herewith publish it.—ED.]

FORT CHADBOURNE, Texas, May 16, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have just finished reading the SIGNS of May 15th, and have greatly enjoyed the many good letters of correspondents and editors, and there seems to be no uncertain sound; all of the same mind and the same judgment; in fact, goodness from a far country, goodness from, as I hope, my brethren and sisters in Christ. I have never seen one of you, perfect strangers in the flesh, but I hope one in the Lord. I cannot speak of one letter being better than another, but I surely commend Elder Sawin where he says God's children ought to be gentle in their preaching, writing and conversation. God's children are exhorted to contend for the faith, not angrily, but they should speak the truth in love. If God's servants speak the truth in love they are not courting the friendship of the world, for the religious world hates the truth, but for the preacher to preach the truth in severity would not make any one believe it. We do not have to get angry in order to oppose error; be gentle and kind, but firm in the faith, not wavering. On this beautiful May Sunday the religious world is busy in the Sunday School. This is children's day, great pomp and splendor is exhibited, and they claim they are doing much for the cause of Christ; but not so, they can neither make one hair white nor black, cannot add one inch to their stature. But I have no desire to try to hinder them in their great pomp and splendor; I have no control of other people, but I hope by the help of the Lord to endeavor to bring our own (not other people's children) up in the admonition of the Lord, in teaching them what is worldly right for them to do, to be truthful and honest in all things. I do humbly hope I have been made to hate those things that are of the world. Some are of the world, so speak they of the world, and the world hears and applauds them, but God's humble poor are told to not go after those vain and foolish things; we should not sit in the seat of the scornful. We all know the average religionist looks with scorn at the doctrine and order of the Old Baptists, but none of these things will move the steadfast. When our blessed Lord was here in this time world he was not counted worthy of the best society, and

so it is with his little children; while in this world they must suffer persecution.

I must close, as I cannot write in a way to edify any one. The SIGNS is all the preaching wife and I have, and I just wanted to write and tell the good brethren and sisters to keep on telling of the goodness of God in the salvation of his people. I also wanted to send a mite on my subscription. May God be glorified.

J. W. CAUDLE.

BELINGTON, W. Va., May 1, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—You will find inclosed two dollars for the dear old SIGNS another year, as my time has expired. It is with great reluctance that I attempt to address you in my unworthiness, for I feel to be the least of God's children, if one at all, but I have read some of your good editorials with comfort. I love to read the good letters in the SIGNS by the dear brethren and sisters. Although they are strangers in the flesh, yet there seems to be a nearness that draws them to me when I read their good letters, which causes me to love them and wish I could express my feelings as they do, but I am too unworthy, I have not that gift, and feel to be one alone, and almost forsaken at times, yet I have a hope which I would not exchange for this world, could I make it mine by doing so.

Elder Ker (I do not feel worthy to call you brother), I want to write a few words in regard to a dear old sister who has been a member of our church for forty-five or fifty years. She is old and feeble, and is in her eighty-fifth year. Her financial circumstances are bad, and she has a hard time to get along, but she supports herself by hard work. She lives about four miles from the church, and has no way to go but to walk, but she is at church meeting when she is able to get there. She desires to have the SIGNS to read, but is not able to pay for it. If you feel you can help her this way it would be a great pleasure to her and a comfort to me for her sake. I will give you her address, and if you feel you can help her, all right; it is Mrs. Rachel Phillips, R. 1, Montrose, W. Va.

(MRS.) E. P. PHILLIPS.

[WE will send the SIGNS to sister Phillips, and hope it may prove of comfort to her.—ED.]

DRAIN, Oregon, July 17, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—I promised our dear Elder Mayfield to write a short sketch of our three days meeting held at my house the 1st inst. While I do not feel able to comply with his request, yet I do not think it proper or right to shrink from duty. There was a large attendance, and all expressed themselves as glad that they were here. Everything was harmonious, without jar or discord. Elders Mayfield, Pate, Horner, Reeves (from Iowa), Moffett, besides G. O. Walker, my son-in-law, and my son Charles all spoke to our comfort, giving no uncertain sound, they all having been taught in the same school, Christ being their schoolmaster. O how good for brethren to dwell together in peace and fellowship one with another. I was like Martha of old: burdened myself with the cares of this life, trying to make all comfortable and welcome. I have often wondered whether Martha ever enjoyed spiritual blessings like her sister Mary or not. I am so worldly minded, and often fear I have no part in the eternal salvation of Christ and his chosen people. O how can we get rid of our sinful actions and thoughts? But I am wandering from what I started to write. I hope all the brethren and

sisters who were here will come again, also all lovers of the truth (if I know anything about the truth) will not pass us by. I hope we are meek and lowly in heart. We have many afflictions, and ask an interest in all your prayers. We will praise God for all that is past and trust him for all that is to come. We hope for many more such meetings. We were loath to part with the loved ones, perhaps for the last time with some on this earth, but we have hope that we shall meet in a better world where parting will be no more, where we can sing perfect and everlasting praises to our dear Redeemer, who has done so much for us.

Your little sister, saved by grace, if saved at all,

S. MORNINGSTAR.

JERSEY SHORE, Pa., March 23, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars, for which please send me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I am not a member of the church, but I believe that God in his infinite wisdom predestinated all things. It is a great comfort to feel that he declared the end from the beginning. I believe that I have been made to know that salvation is of the Lord, and that Christ made himself known to me in his own time and way, and it was he who gave me a heart to love this doctrine. I realize my unworthiness and weakness, and cannot do one good thing of myself, and have been made to know it is all of grace. I feel sure that the Lord will not take away the love he has bestowed upon me, for he changes not. He said, I lay down my life for my sheep, and, I know my sheep, and they know my voice. I am condemned for believing as I do, but I believe it is better to trust in God than to have confidence in man. I am accused of being ignorant, but the accusers are promised their reward, for God says it were better for them if they had a millstone tied about their necks and were drowned in the sea. I feel assured that God controls everything, and that Christ will bring every one the Father gave him home to glory.

If you think this to be in harmony with God's word you may publish it.

ROSE OSTRANDER.

MCHENRY, Ky. Feb. 9, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I will try in my weak way to write you a few lines to let you know I am still living, and to thank you for your kindness in sending me the paper, which is of much comfort to me, as I never hear any preaching, never as much as see any one of our faith; none in this community, as far as I know. There is plenty of so-called preaching within hearing distance, but it is not food to me. The SIGNS comes to me promptly twice a month, and I generally read it through before I sleep, and I enjoy it much, and O how I wish I could take every writer by the hand and bid them Godspeed, for I believe just what they do. I was much grieved at the death of brother Chick, but I feel that the Lord has given us one who will fill his place. The editorials are always comforting and good. Brother Ford's and brother Keene's letters, also several more I could mention are all good, and when I read them I can hardly decide which is the best, they alone are worth the price of the paper. I am nearly seventy-eight years old, and have been shut in all winter with a severe cough; the Lord knows whether I will live to write you again, but if I live I will, and if not my daughters will notify you. I ask an interest in the prayers of all who may read this.

From a poor old sinner, saved by grace if saved at all,

MARY PAYNE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1915.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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LUKE XXI. 33.

"HEAVEN and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away."

This passage of Scripture shows the absolute certainty of the words of Jesus coming to pass. The difference between God's words and those of man is infinite, God foreknowing, predestinating all things, man knowing not one moment ahead of him, hence nothing purposed or planned by him is certain to come to pass. The children of God in all ages of the world have taken great comfort in the immutability of Him who rules and reigns both in heaven and earth, without whom not a sparrow can fall to the ground. Having this faith in God they trust in him. On the other hand, knowing the frailty and uncertainty of man, whose breath is in his nostrils, they have no confidence in him. How impossible therefore for the sons and daughters of God to trust in man or make flesh their arm. God has never failed in anything, nor in any sense; whatever he has begun has been and is being accomplished. Man has failed in everything and in every sense; yet how prone the unlearned and ignorant of God's infinite character and being to trust in man, even for salvation —eternal life. How good, dearly beloved, that we have been translated out of darkness into the marvelous light of God our Savior, and are become the children of light. May we all shew forth his praise who hath called us unto glory and virtue. To believe his "words," to trust his grace, is praise to his holy name. When Jesus was in the world, as a man, his words were not credited as truth, his doctrine was blasphemed and his works said to be of the devil. He was neither known nor understood by men, therefore to them was not the Christ. It is no more a marvel that he was not believed on then than it is now in this "enlightened age of the world," since it is only by divine revelation that any man can say that Jesus is the Lord. But then, as now, few beheld him as the Word made flesh and hoped in his mercy. He gave his disciples many signs by which they should know when the approach of the end drew near. Those signs were not given to the world or to unbelievers. The disciples were commanded to watch for the signs. This special point should be carefully considered, in order that the "signs" be not brought over into this age, or dispensation, and the import of the "words" of Jesus utterly lost. It has been understood by some great men that the signs given were to indicate the end of this material world, when time and time things are no more, and while we claim no superior knowledge of or understanding in God's written word to that of our brethren, we think we can prove by the Scriptures that such "signs" have no reference whatever to the end of the material world. Of late in different writings we have noticed references to the expressions: "Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars, * * * for nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom," as referring to the present condition of affairs, and then the state-

ment that it is prophesied that such things must be before the end comes, meaning, we suppose, that the end of the world is near at hand. We should not forget that the apostle says of Jesus that, "Once in the end of the world he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." The world here mentioned cannot possibly mean this material globe, which stands the same now after two thousand years, but that age, dispensation, or legal covenant. It was the legal world, or dispensation, he referred to when he said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away." The old heaven and the old earth, John says, fled away from the presence of Him who sat upon the great white throne, and there was no place found for them. Inasmuch as that age was ended, the law fulfilled, justice satisfied, all types and shadows done away in Christ, the destruction of Jerusalem accomplished, that world ceased to be. Then John saw the new heaven and the new earth coming down from God. This is the new covenant founded upon better promises than the legal heaven and earth could give. In this is found a new and living way, everlasting righteousness, and peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Now to prove that the "signs" given the disciples were to manifest the end of the legal dispensation we call attention to what Jesus said to them after the "signs" had been enumerated: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." Wars and rumors of wars, pestilences, earthquakes, the rise of false prophets, the waxing cold of the love of many, the preaching of the gospel in all the world for a witness unto all nations, the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel, &c., all took place before the end of that "world" (dispensation), and the destruction of Jerusalem, together with the temple and all its forms, rites and ceremonies. All of those things literally took place, hence that heaven and earth passed away exactly as Jesus said it should. But he said, "My words shall not pass away," which means that they are abiding, being "spirit and life." Not one word the Lord has ever spoken has passed away or come to naught. In the beginning his word to Adam was law, steadfast, forever. Adam disobeyed and died, but God's word stood fast. The promise God made to the sinner, The Seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head, was sure, could not pass away, but was fulfilled in the coming of Christ. His doctrine, his blessed promises, his spiritual law and his intercession, all are his words to and for the house built upon the rock. His doctrine is "everlasting," his promises "are yea and amen," his law "divine" and his intercession effectual. All this is proven in the experience of the people of God. The soul that sins dies, as God said it should; there is no escape, that certain fearful looking for and fiery indignation is visited upon every transgressor in Israel, and the word of the Lord: "Be sure your sin will find you out," is just as positive today as when spoken thousands of years ago. Yes, "every idle word" must be given account of in this day of judgment. Then, as Peter said, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness. But if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. Yes, these words are as certain as those of condemnation spoken by the Lord. He will be merciful to our unrighteousness, and will wash us in the blood of the Lamb. O that we could speak the matchless worth; O that we could sound the glories forth that in our Savior shine! But language is inadequate, therefore we stop here with humble prayer for the peace and welfare of Zion. K.

EXODUS XXXIII. 21–23.

"AND the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: and I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts; but my face shall not be seen."

Singular it is that every one whom the Lord calls to his service in any capacity whatsoever feels an opposition to that call within himself, struggles against the leadings of the Spirit, and endeavors to frustrate the effectuality of the call by using his lack of qualifications as an excuse to get out of what the Lord has put upon him to do. It is a bad sign to see a man anxious to serve the Lord and assured of his calling and ability to do so. Whatever work the Lord calls a man to perform, that work will appear to the one called as demanding such high integrity of soul, such abundance of grace, such earnestness of spirit, that he will certainly approach his ministry in much fear and trembling. The man Moses was no exception to this rule. He felt extremely unfit to undertake the leadership of Israel through the wilderness. Reading the chapters which precede our text above, Moses had been called up into Mt. Sinai to receive the law written on tables of stone. This law he was commanded to deliver unto the people of his charge, but what was his dismay upon coming down out of the mount to see that the Israelites had already broken the law before he had made known its conditions to them; had made a calf of their Egyptian borrowed ornaments and were dancing about it, ascribing their salvation from Egypt unto it. Moses realized that he was in the midst of an extremely perverse and rebellious people, "set on mischief," and he knew keenly that no ordinary mortal could ever be successfully their leader. From his acquaintance with his brethren, and his knowledge of their wayward nature, and knowing, too, that he himself was as full of sin as any of them, Moses realized his utter inequality for the work before him. He drew back, resisted and murmured against the dispensation of God which was being meted out to him. The Lord said to Moses, Bring up this people. This was not enough to satisfy Moses, he wanted to know whom the Lord would send with him. The Lord told him, "I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight." Even this did not satisfy Moses, he said, "If I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee." Not being satisfied with the assurance that the Lord knew him, he must know the Lord for himself. The Lord told him, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest;" and Moses replied, "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence." Moses realized that without the presence of the Lord with him it meant but disaster sure and certain for himself and all the people with him. The man here signifies his utter lack of all confidence in himself. Notwithstanding this lack of confidence, however, he is continually wanting to walk by sight and not satisfied to walk by faith. Moses said, "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory." What a bold request for any mortal to make. The Lord tells him it is impossible for any man to see God and live. "Thou canst not see my face." There is no such thing as a child of God being able to walk by sight in this world. They must go by faith. No flesh could endure for a moment to see the glory of God face to face. There must be a hiding of this glory, a shutting it within a veil, so long as we are in the flesh. All through the ministry of Moses this glory

of God is seen veiled. Then, in answer to Moses' desire to see the glory of God, the Lord makes known to him the only way in which he can be given a sight of this glory. This is the subject-matter of our text quoted at the beginning of this article. The Lord always answers the prayers of his people, but never as they expect he will. This is the case with Moses here. The Lord designs Moses shall see the glory of God, but it will be in such a way as Moses never imagined.

"And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me." There is a right hand and a left hand. Those on the left hand see not the glory of God, except it be in their damnation; but the right hand is the place of acceptance, here sits the Beloved, the Christ risen from the dead, the One in whom all the people of God are accepted. Moses is one of these accepted in the Beloved. For Moses, Jesus stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. The faith of Moses looked to the life, death, suffering and resurrection of Christ as the ground or "rock" upon which he hoped for acceptance with God. "Thou shalt stand upon a rock." Any one not in the place of divine favor at the right hand of God, and not standing upon the rock of the complete atonement of Christ, can never see the glory of God. This must be the standpoint of all who hope and pray for the glory of God. This, God assures Moses, is his position: Christ is the foundation and the acceptability of Moses. Moses was Israel's lawgiver, his ministry was of the law and legal things, in types and shadows of the better things of Christ to come. The whole law is founded upon Christ, the rock of God is its standing ground. If we try to look at the law as something in man's power to obey it becomes sinking sand, lacking permanence and stability, but when we are given faith to regard the law as testifying of Jesus, we see then the rock of Moses, and as the acceptability of Moses was in that he had a place by the Lord, in that he was accepted in Christ, and not for his own sake, so the acceptability of the whole law is in the obedience which Christ rendered unto it. No efforts on the part of any mortal to obey the law of himself and for himself will ever be accepted with God. Only that obedience which Jesus rendered is pleasing and satisfying to Jehovah. Having our standing in this Beloved of God we are safe, and this is the standing of Moses, as well as of all the church. From his position, and upon this rock, he is well situated to behold the glory of God. Every commandment and ordinance of the Mosaic law looks unto the glory of God in Christ Jesus.

"While my glory passeth by, I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by." The glory of God is not a part of God, but is God himself, it is the sum total of all the attributes of Jehovah. Looking ahead into the thirty-fourth chapter, and the sixth verse, we see that when the Lord passed by there was this proclamation: "The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgressions and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." Here is the glory of God passing by: it is his mercy, grace, longsuffering, goodness, truth, forgiveness of sins, and last, but by no means least, justice. All these others are not at the expense of justice, for he will "by no means clear the guilty." The Lord is merciful to the unrighteousness of his people, because he visited the punishment, which justice demanded, up-

on Jesus the Lamb of God. Where was Moses when this vision of glory passed by? He was in the clift of the rock and the hand of God was over him. Now, in the fifth verse of the thirty-fourth chapter we see, "The Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there." Thus, it seems that the hand of God which covers Moses and shields him from being overcome with the dazzling fullness of the glory, is this cloud. The Lord rides in clouds, he maketh them his chariot. These clouds are the dispensations of the hand of God which he makes disposition of to suit his own will and purpose. Moses was put into a clift of the rock; that is, he was put into the wounds of Jesus, being called into fellowship of the sufferings of Christ. Holy men of old testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and of the glory that should follow. They testified of these sufferings of Jesus out of the fellowship of these sufferings which they were called upon to endure themselves. Every child of God must know by experience the fellowship of Christ's sufferings in order to be made conformable to his death, thus to know the power of his resurrection and to be made alive with him to walk in newness of life. Moses was not exempt by any means from this lot. As the sufferings of Christ were all on account of sin, not his own sins, but those of his people, so Moses suffered on account of sin, and especially the sins of the people of whom he was leader. As Jesus endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, so Moses again and again was plagued with the gainsayings of Israel against him while journeying through the wilderness. More than once they accused Moses of being to blame for their misery and for bringing them away from the flesh-pots of Egypt only to die, as they thought, in the wilderness. All this was God's putting Moses into the clift of the rock, into the wounds of Jesus, bringing him to know the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ. All the time that Moses was passing through these sore trials, which were the testimony of Jesus to us reserved for a later dispensation, he did not realize that the glory of God was being revealed, was passing by, for the hand of God was over him. The fiery trial, (the cloud) hid the glory from his sight, but this fiery trial was God's hand. All the temptations and trials, all the losses and crosses of the Lord's people, are appointed unto them. They do not happen so, they are not "some strange thing." God's hand disposes the lot of his people; he appoints them the bread of tears and the waters of adversity as well as the garment of praise and the oil of joy. "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yielded the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." —Hebrews xii. 11. This peaceable fruit of righteousness is yielded when the Lord takes away his hand and his back parts are seen. When the Lord delivers his people from their enemies, and they tread their high places, then their enemies are discovered liars unto them, then the saved look back and see where the Lord has been, they see his back parts. The glory of God was with Moses in all his ministry; it was with him in the law which he delivered to Israel; it was with him in the tabernacle which he set up; it was with him in Aaron's priesthood; it was with him in every ordinance and in every sacrifice which he observed, in every feast he celebrated and in every fast he kept. But the hand of God being over him, his ministry being carried out in sore trials and sufferings, the glory

of it all was hid from him, only as he by faith could from time to time see through the veil darkly. One needs to be in the clift of the rock to learn anything of the goodness, mercy, love and justice of God, for only through great tribulation do any ever enter the kingdom of God; but at the time these sore things are being experienced, one does not realize that the glory of God is in it all, because the dispensation which the hand of God brings to such an one hides all his glory from view. When, however, the Lord removes his hand light breaks in upon the weary dwelling, and the captive of the cross exclaims, "The Lord is in this place and I knew it not." The back parts of the Lord are then seen. We see where he has been, not where he is. Can you tell right at this very moment of your life where the Lord is, and what is your attitude toward him right now, and what his bearing to you? Indeed you cannot, but later you may be able to look back and trace his steps in circumstances where you do not dream he is at present. The walk of the child of God, being a walk of faith, it becomes extremely difficult, if not altogether impossible, for one to diagnose his present state of experience. You can better tell what has been than what is. If you could tell exactly where you now are, how far you have come, and how far yet to go, would you not be walking by sight instead of by faith? Would you not in that case heap to yourself assurances of an alien from God, instead of evidences of your acceptance in the Beloved? We are convinced that the glory of God is involved in all that befalls the people of God, but we shall not fully understand this until that which is perfect is come. Then that which is in part shall be done away. Then, no longer shall we see as through a glass darkly, but face to face, seeing as we are seen, knowing as we are known. We do not have a tear too many or a joy too few. All are necessary and all are inevitable. All are for the good of them that love God and the called according to his purpose, and all for the declaration, the making known, of the glory of God.

By request of brother George Conner, Hopewell, N. J.

L.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, July 28th, 1915, at the home of the bride's father, near Floris, Fairfax Co., Va., Charles Walter Norman, of Unison, Loudoun Co., Va., and Miss Inez Elizabeth Long.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

James T. Sutphen was born Feb. 2nd, 1846, and departed this life June 3rd, 1915, making his stay on earth 69 years, 4 months and 1 day. He was the son of Isaiah and Mary Sutphen. He was married to Miss Martha V. Reed, Oct. 27th, 1869. To them were born seven children, two sons and five daughters; one son preceded him to the tomb; one son and five daughters, together with their mother, survive him. We cannot give expression to the faith that was exercised in him only as his works testified, which were manifested with a sincere expression, both in word and charitable exercise. His declarations left to his family concerning the faith we feel will be of comfort to the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which are as follows:

"I would like my funeral services to be held at the meetinghouse of the First Baptist Church of Hopewell, N. J., and in the event of no pastor would like one of the same faith and order. I would like the following hymns read in the order named: 1033, 466 and 1252, all of Beebe's collection. I would like as a text for some remarks John iii. 8: 'The wind bloweth where it listeth,' &c. You can see by this that I have a love and fondness for Hopewell, for the reason it was there I spent many happy years, and it was there that I found friendship and love for many near and dear to me, although a number have been called away. It was there, if I know anything of His truth, love, grace and majesty, it was made known to me many years ago, I hope and trust, by his Spirit. To each and all the last goodby. JAMES T. SUTPHEN."

These expressions will express more than any one could write of him, and I trust that the grace of God

will surround and keep all those who were near and dear to him, and enable them to proclaim the faith as it is by the grace of God, as did our friend in his declarations.

His funeral was conducted by the writer before a large assembly, which testified of the high esteem in which he was held. Words cannot express the depth of sorrow which is felt in the loss of those so precious, but God is a husband to the widow and a Father to the fatherless. May the God of all grace enable us by his Spirit to say, Thy will be done. Amen. C. W. VAUGHN.

Mary Fanny Middleton, our sister in Christ, wife of Howard Middleton, of near Sterling, Loudoun Co., Va., died at her home July 8th, 1915. She had been in poor health ever since she was a small child, but declined more rapidly since August of last year until in April of this year she suffered paralysis, from which she never fully recovered. She was the daughter of the late George B. and Matilda T. Templeman, of Fauquier County, Va., and was born March 13th, 1867. The late Elder J. N. Badger baptized her in the fellowship of the Upper Broad Run Church, in Fauquier County, August 16th, 1885. She remained a member of that body until May 12th, 1912, when she moved her membership to Frying Pan Church, in Fairfax County, much nearer her home. She was married May 25th, 1866, and was the mother of ten children, two dying in infancy, eight surviving their mother: four daughters, Mrs. Joseph C. Starr, of Bedford County, Pa., Misses Susan A., Elizabeth G. and Delia F.; and four sons, George L., Edward H., Floyd T. and Thomas R. She also leaves three sisters and eight brothers, her death being the first break in her father and mother's family. Sister Middleton will be greatly missed by all of the Frying Pan Church, for she was one who always filled her place in the meetings unless absolutely unable to be there, being present many times when it seemed her physical strength was far short of qualifying her to be present. Her walk as a member of the church was characterized by humility and that spirit which esteems others better than one's self. She had no confidence at all in her flesh, and clung with all the might of her faith to the merits of Jesus, in whom was all her hope of salvation now and forever. She loved to see peace reigning in the church and charity being manifested among the members. Anything that savored of dissension or disorder worried and burdened her.

Quite a large gathering of relatives, brethren and friends joined in the procession from the late home of our sister to the burial place at the Mt. Zion meetinghouse, in Loudoun County. Services were held in the meetinghouse, reading the one hundred and third Psalm and speaking from the first five verses. May the Spirit of the Lord comfort our friend, Mr. Middleton, the husband of our sister, and reconcile him as well as all the dear children to the holy and sovereign will of God. These trials are hard to bear, but they come not by accident or chance; they are the appointment of a righteous God unto a righteous end. Leave us not, O Lord, to murmur at these dispensations, but teach us submission to the chastenings of thy rod. L.

Mrs. Malinda Leonard, widow of Peter Leonard, died July 27th, 1915, aged 91 years, 6 months and 10 days. Her maiden name was Morse. She leaves five children, two grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, one sister and many friends to mourn for one that was dearly loved by them. Her son, Appleton, and daughter, Mary, were constant attendants, ministering to her every need as far as possible. The three lived together in their home in Otego, N. Y. All that loving hearts and hands could do was done, but her appointed time had come to go to her eternal home to dwell forever with the Lord eternally with his glorious likeness. She never united with the church, but was a strong believer in the doctrine of the Bible as set forth by the Old School Baptist ministers, having no interest in any others. She certainly knew the grace of God in truth. Her house was a home for all who loved the truth, the son and daughter being of the same mind, loving the same truth and people. Meeting has been held at their house the first Sunday in each month at 4 p. m. for years, as she was not able to attend at the meeting-house. All of her children are lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus. May the dear Lord bless them with his rich, consoling grace in this dispensation of his providence, is the prayer of the writer.

I was called to speak at the funeral, which was held at their home in Otego Friday, July 30th. Many neighbors, relatives and friends were present. The Scripture used on the occasion was Ephesians ii. 8-10. Burial in the Bundy burying-ground in Otego. D. M. VAIL.

Mrs. Amanda Wynn, wife of G. W. Wynn, departed this life at her home in Burleson, Texas, May 16th, 1915. She was born near Stephenson, Ala., Sept. 29th, 1849, and was the daughter of Nias and Anna Allen. She was married to G. W. Wynn July 4th, 1869. To that union were born five children, two boys and three girls; of the five, only two daughters survive. One lived some distance away, and could not be with her dear mother when she passed away. Nias Allen was my mother's first cousin, and Anna Allen, whose maiden name was Anna Matthews, was my father's half sister. Uncle Nias gave his noble life to the cause of the south in the great battle of Franklin, Tenn., in 1864. Aunt Anna did not survive her husband many years, but lived to see all of her children grown men and women. The subject

of this notice emigrated with her husband to Texas in 1880, and passed through many trials and tribulations in the death of a dear brother, Wilson Allen, in the prime of life, and an only son, who had grown up to promising manhood, also other loved ones of the family and near relatives. Cousin Amanda received a good hope through grace thirty years ago, which enabled her to bear her great suffering of internal cancer for ten months, nine of which she was unable to stand alone or walk a step. The writer had the sad pleasure of hearing her express her hope in the mercy and grace of God, and that her desire for many years had been to unite with the Old School Baptists, but she never made a public profession of her faith in Christ. All was done for her that physicians and a loving, faithful husband and other loved ones could do. The husband has lost a faithful wife, her sorrowing daughters a kind and affectionate mother, and the community a good friend and neighbor.

By request the writer spoke at the funeral in the meetinghouse called Bethesda to a large congregation of relatives, neighbors and friends, after which the remains were laid to rest in the beautiful cemetery near by. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." W. L. ROGERS.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

S. N. STEPHENS has changed his address from 505 East 11th St. to 309 East 16th St., Austin, Texas.

MEETINGS.

THE New Hope Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will hold her thirty-fourth annual session at Elm Ridge Church, at Elmo, Texas, seven miles east of Terrell, Texas, on the T. P. R. R., beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in August. Those coming by rail will get off at Elmo, Texas. All Old School Baptists are invited.

S. M. DICKENS.

THE Hazel Creek Association of Predestinarian Baptists will meet with Spring Creek Church, near Stahl, Adair Co., Mo., on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1915, in her sixty-first annual session, and continue three days. The east bound train on the Q. O. & K. C. will be met at Novinger and Stahl on Tuesday, August 24th. Train due at Novinger 10:41 a. m., and Stahl at 11 a. m. Will meet the same train on Wednesday, 25th, at Stahl. Will meet the I. & St. L. from the north at Novinger on Tuesday, August 24th. Train due at 11:30 a. m. We extend a cordial invitation to our friends to meet with us.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator.
H. C. CATE, Clerk.

THE Clovesville Old School Baptist Church has appointed a yearly or two days meeting to be held on the first Saturday and Sunday in September (4th and 5th), 1915. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, especially brethren in the ministry of our faith and order. Trains will be met at Fleischmanns station the first day of the meeting.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the First Church of Roxbury, at Vega, N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday following the third Sunday in September (22nd and 23rd), 1915. Trains will be met at Roxbury Tuesday afternoon, Sept. 21st. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

A. J. SLAUSON.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

Liberty Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, of Los Angeles, Cal., meets every first and third Sunday in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., at 42nd and Moneta Ave., and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal.

W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor.
C. B. RICE, Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE of JOSHUA S. CORDER.

This little memorial book is now ready for sale. It embraces a period of about one hundred years. In connection with a brief account of my father's early life, his christian experience, his long ministry of nearly seventy years, it contains some history of Mt. Olive Primitive Baptist Church and Tygart's Valley River Association. In addition there is a short appendix dedicated to the memory of my mother.

The book comprises 152 pages, is neatly bound in cloth, and contains a picture of my father.

Price $1.00. Postpaid.

Please give name and post office address plainly written, and send all orders to me.

SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Our assortment of small books embraces:

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 83. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1915. NO. 17.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PROSPECT PARK, WHITE PLAINS, N. Y., April, 1915.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—During the years that have passed since I have been identified with the church of Christ a desire to testify to what I hope to be the Lord's dealings in bringing me from nature's darkness to a knowledge of his grace and truth has been in my heart many times. Now, after forty-five years of travel on that wonderful journey, while I question the wisdom of so doing, I am so strongly impressed to write you that I dare not do otherwise. Knowing as I do that charity (love) dwells in the hearts of the children of God, I feel assured that my dear kindred in Christ will not too severely criticise what I may write. I hope that God by his Spirit will guide my pen, and that what I hope to be a gracious experience will prove in harmony with the experience of others. All of the Lord's people are taught that salvation is of him. There may be many forms of expression employed, and circumstances in providence differ, but, like Jacob of old, all are led about and instructed. All speak the language understood alone by the citizens of Zion, the city of David; all give the evidence that they have been with Jesus and learned of him. In early childhood I had many thoughts about the great Power that brought this world into existence, and controls the great universe. I loved to go alone and watch the setting sun as it disappeared from sight in the distant horizon. The great beauty of the afterglow filled me with wonder and awe. I felt to be an atom in the great world in which I lived. I longed to know more of this great power (God). My parents were New School Baptists and had a good experience of grace, and adorned the profession made by a godly walk. Memory takes me back to the time when as a family we would be together for evening prayer. While kneeling and listening to my father's petition (which seemed sacred and dear to me) I longed to have what I felt he possessed, but I knew not how to attain thereunto. As I grew into womanhood I had a class in Sunday School and attended preaching sessions regularly. Often I would be cast down when many of my young companions would unite with the denomination and I could not do so; I felt that I must experience some change of heart before I took so solemn a step.

I was married at an early age, and went to live near Waverly, N. Y. My husband's parents were members of the Waverly Old School Baptist Church, such membership numbering about sixty. Elder St. John was their pastor. I would go with the family to the meetings, and became very fond of the people, however I despised the doctrine preached. I felt that such preaching made God responsible for all sin, and man therefore an irresponsible machine. I knew I was not living a christian life, yet did not know how to be a christian, for somehow I felt that I had not attained unto what others had who were members of the church. Three years later my husband engaged in business in New York city, and we took up our abode there. I was very lonely, a stranger in a large city. I did not attend any of the large places of preaching alone, but occasionally my husband would accompany me to hear "Dr." McArthur, who at that time was pastor of the New School Baptists. My husband was not a member of the Old School Baptist Church, but a firm believer in the doctrine preached by them. I felt condemned for not attending church, as I had always been accustomed so to do, and it gave me trouble of mind. In the fall of 1868 my husband was stricken with typhoid fever, and at times his life was despaired of. I felt that his life was in the Lord's hands, and this great trouble was sent me for my disobedience in church matters. In my distress I went by myself, fell on my knees, and made a promise to God that if he would restore my husband to health I would live a christian life. In this I was truly sincere, for I began to feel that there was no other course to pursue than to join the church and do the best I could to be a christian. After a long and severe struggle my husband was restored to health. I attended meetings occasionally, but did not enter the membership of any. At this time many of our relatives and friends came to live in the city, and in their company I attended theatres and entered into and enjoyed the pleasures of the world. The promise I had made to the Lord however was ever with me. I would have stated seasons when I would kneel alone and ask the Lord to help me. I read my Bible every day, and began to think I was leading a christian life. I certainly was trying to do what I thought was right, but I did not join the church, and felt that this was one of the duties I had left undone, and this gave me much trouble. In the spring of 1869 my husband's mother and her sister, Mrs. Prudence Horton, of Middletown, N. Y., came to visit us. Both were members of the Old School Baptist Church. Sunday came, and it fell to my lot to take them to the Old School Baptist Church in the city, whose meetinghouse was on West Thirty-sixth street. Strange to relate, I had never thought of locating it before that day. While we were seated I looked around and saw so few present that I wondered why they had wished me to take them there, when there were so many large places in the city where good music was to be heard and enjoyed, and, as I thought, good preaching. There seemed to be an absence of everything that would attract a congregation. An elderly man conducted the services. I supposed him to be the pastor, and wondered why he did not go into the pulpit. I afterwards learned he was a Mr. Van Wart, one of the deacons of the church. Little did I then know how well I would come both to know and love him as a father in Israel. After singing of a hymn, and prayer. by one of the members, Deacon

Van Wart read a chapter in the Bible, and then related some of his experience in connection with his coming to the church, and his exercises and travel after he became a member. While he was thus speaking a pall seemed to envelop me. I felt covered with the mantle of sin and darkness. The thought came to me quickly, You think you are a christian, but you are a justly condemned sinner in the sight of the holy God. At the close of the meeting I wanted to get away and be alone. I felt that others could not help seeing me as I now saw myself. When we returned home things about me seemed changed. I did not find the former joy in living. The promise I had made when on my knees, to lead a christian life, seemed ever before me, and I now realized how far short I had come of it. Feeling the awful plight I was in, with no power to change my condition, I trembled. I could not pray, for I dared not ask for mercy. I began to lose interest in my home, and my husband, noticing my failing health, planned for my going home with his mother, hoping the country air would prove beneficial. Personally, I had no interest in leaving home, but prepared to do as was thought best. I seemed to be bent like a willow by a terrible weight; everything seemed dark and gloomy; death and decay marked everything I saw; I felt I could not live much longer, and then the question came, How can you stand and be judged by the just and holy God? That great and awful judgment day that had been to me a terror all my life now confronted me. Trembling I arose and went to my room (feeling it to be the last time) and fell upon my bed. This prayer (I do not know if uttered or unexpressed) came from my very heart: O God, be merciful to me, a sinner. Then came these words spoken unto my soul, as convincingly as if I heard them with my natural ear: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." It seemed that the words spoken were near, and filled my whole being. I felt it was the voice of my Redeemer, and my soul was filled with love and peace beyond my understanding. That great and awful judgment day disappeared from my view. My whole theme was Jesus and his love. Surely a song I never could sing before (a new song) was put in my mouth, even praise to my God. Before I arose from my bed my husband came to me and asked if I were ill? I answered, No, bring a chair and sit beside me, I want to tell you what great things the Lord has done for me. I told him how I had suffered on account of sin in me, and how the Lord had spoken peace and pardon to my soul; what a great and wonderful Savior he was. When I had told him all, I said, I have got to be an Old School Baptist. He replied, No, you have not, I will go with you where you find a church that suits you. I said, I have tried all my life to do by works of creature righteousness what I now believe the dear Lord has done for me; he has forgiven and taken away this great burden of sin, and has caused me to rest in his love. It is all of grace. I am filled with praise to his dear name. A quiet peace seemed to take possession of me for a few days, a peace that passeth understanding. I felt like one walking in a dream. The day was set for me to go to my mother-in-law's home, but in a week I became ill of what proved to be typhoid fever. I was very low, and delirious much of the time. After the fever left me, and I began to convalesce, being still very weak, my bed was moved in front of a window to allow me to get the

air, as the weather was extremely warm. Looking out I saw a strip of clear sky, and these words came to me, God is Love, God is everywhere, and my deliverance from sin seemed to pass before me. I seemed to mount on the wings of God's love. In the weakness of the flesh I talked to every one that came to see me on the one subject of Jesus and his love, and my family feared I was losing my mind on the subject of religion. As I became stronger I could control my tongue, but the beautiful theme of salvation by grace alone was uppermost in my mind. I now believe, if I know anything of the doctrine of God my Savior, it was taught me while on my bed recovering from that illness, where no human voice had any part in it. That judgment day which had always been such a terror to me was revealed to me in a much different way. I think I know now by deep experience something of God's dealings with his people in the way of judgment, and I am often brought to that bar of justice and made to know, in a measure at least, that there is therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, he having satisfied all the demands of justice when he laid down his life on Calvary to redeem his chosen people.

But to continue. I seemed to see the church complete in Christ, not one member left out. The Scriptures opened to my mind in a way I never thought of before. As my strength returned I was anxious to hear preaching. I went to different places fully expecting to hear the doctrine of grace proclaimed (thinking that when in the past I had attended such places the doctrine might have been preached, and I in my ignorance had not been able to understand it), but the preaching did not comfort me, so much was said about the works of the creature, so little of the grace of God. Later I went with my husband to visit his parents, who were residing in Waverly, N. Y. I went with them again to hear Elder St. John preach, and it seemed that he told me all I had passed through in my experience, and preached the same Jesus that appeared for my salvation. At the close of the meeting I said to mother, "How differently Elder St. John preaches from what he did when I last heard him." She replied, "No, my dear, it is you who have changed. Now you know the joyful sound he preaches." There was to be baptism after meeting, and Elder St. John, noticing my earnest attention to his preaching (I presume he had been told something of my experience), came down from the pulpit and asked me if I would like to tell the church my experience, and if received, be baptized with the others that day. My thoughts went back to the little company I had met that Sunday morning at the Ebenezer Church in New York city. All were strangers in the flesh, but my desire was to meet with them again. On my return home I went to the church. Elder Thorp was their pastor. My practice was to sit near the entrance, and as soon as the meeting closed I would depart. I did enjoy the preaching. One sermon is still in my memory with lasting comfort. I know my natural mind could neither know nor feel the blessings of faith that were mine to enjoy and feed upon that Sunday afternoon. The text was 2 Peter, first chapter, nineteenth verse: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts." I felt that if I had stood upon the banks of the river Jordan, a witness of the baptism of

Christ, and heard the voice saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, my faith could not be more confirmed. From that day my mind was fixed upon baptism. I wanted to follow the Lord in all his commandments, and as I read that he went down into the water and was baptized, and his command to his disciples was, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," this command seemed so important to me I longed to follow in his footsteps as an obedient child. In about six months after I felt the Lord had forgiven me all my sins and given me a hope in his salvation, I went to the church, as I had been doing for some time, not knowing that it was their church meeting day. When I found it was, I remained, and an opportunity was given for any to unite with the church by letter from a sister church or by experience, and before I was aware of what I was doing I was telling them what I had passed through in my experience, and how I had been drawn to them in fellowship and love in the truth. I told them I would like to be numbered with them, but wanted them to deal honestly and justly with me, for it would be no kindness to me to receive me unless they felt they had the evidence that it was the Lord's work with me. My husband was with me, and said I told but a small portion of what I had told him at my bedside the day I was relieved of my burden of sin. I was received by unanimous vote, and the day was set for my baptism. The next Sunday at a special church meeting another candidate came before the church, and after relating her experience was received for baptism and membership. On June 5th, 1870, we were baptized in the North River, at the foot of Seventy-second St. The day was beautifully clear and calm, a day I shall never forget, for I was blessed with a feeling sense of a strong arm leading me; wisdom not mine guiding me. As I arose from the water I felt that my troubles were all over, and was made to drink the wine of astonishment as he brought me to his banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love. In my early experience I recall no great conflicts. I was given the faith of a child, receiving the promises of the Lord as mine. I knew very little of the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit. My wilderness journey began shortly after my baptism; temptations and fears, coupled with the full knowledge that my old nature was not changed, caused me to know something of the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, a warfare from which there is no discharge until life's journey is completed. As I look backward and see the lengthening shadows stealing far behind, and muse on the years that are past, the words of the prophet come forcibly to my mind: "Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me." Recalling this language of Jeremiah I have hope that it is of the Lord's mercy I am not consumed, because his compassion faileth not. How gracious and merciful is our precious Savior! Memory recalls seasons when I have passed through trials so severe, sorrows so great, faith so weak, hope so dim, that I have felt forsaken and alone, still I have never been left to perish by the wayside. In times of great need the dear Lord has appeared for my deliverance, making a way of escape by giving me grace and strength to endure. At other times, when feeling the burden of my sinful nature, and filled with doubts

and fears, there has come some sweet and precious promise, reassuring me that I, too, had passed under the rod and am numbered with the redeemed, included in that everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure. At such seasons I have experienced the giving of beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Nearing the end of this long journey, I find that I am just as prone to wander in by and forbidden paths as when I first began. Sin is mixed with all I do; I am unable to do the things I would. Such being the sad case, I fully realize the truth of the words of my dear Savior, Without me ye can do nothing. All the years of my walk with the church I have had the blessing of her watchcare, which truly is a great mercy. I also count it a great blessing that for many years it proved the privilege of both my husband and myself to entertain in our home many of the Elders and members of the church. It is a pleasant memory to recall. Many have gone from the shores of time to their heavenly rest; many remain whom I hope to meet and visit with again before we are called to join that innumerable host gone before. I now live with my daughter and family about twenty-two miles from New York city, and am still blessed with the great privilege of attending the meetings of my home church. Elder John McConnell is my pastor, under whose preaching the church is enjoying the consolations of the gospel. He presents the same truth that brought me to the church forty-five years ago, and it seems to grow more precious to me as the years go by.

I have written to relieve my mind, and if the editors of our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, find anything amiss in what I have penned, my wish is that they withhold its publication, for I love the paper too well to have its pages marred in any way.

In conclusion, I will say that I humbly hope and pray that the dear Lord will guard and guide my ways, so that I may continue in your love and fellowship, of which I feel to be very unworthy.

In christian love and fellowship, a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

SARAH E. SLAWSON.

WHEELING, W. Va.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending two letters, Elder Keene's and Elder Hardy's. They have been a source of much comfort to me; I have read and reread them several times, and greatly desired to share them with the readers of the good SIGNS, but I have been in a depressed and bewildered state. I have been brought to realize fully that I am entirely helpless and undone, with no power in me to better my condition. I know of but one expression that fully expresses what I feel, and that is, "Stand still." This I feel obliged to do. I seem to be waiting and wondering feebly what the dear Master has in store for me. The question arises, Is it death stealing upon me and benumbing all my faculties? My natural and spiritual perception is so feeble, impressions are so shadowy and dim and soon flit away. I have been surprised to find some determination about temporal duties. I am more careful and cumbered, and my comprehension and order, in domestic affairs, broader than ever before. I seem to see the goodness and mercy of our Lord in this, as such duties are increased by the addition of several more members in our family. I hope the dear Master is fitting my back for the extra burden he has in providence laid upon it. I have taken this means to

explain my condition so that the dear saints with whom I have corresponded will bear with me if I fail to commune with them as in former times.

I am in much love your unworthy sister,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, Dec. 27, 1913.

MRS. FLORENCE PULTZ—DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD:—"As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man."—Prov. xxvii. 19. This is never more true than among the children of God, for God, in the new covenant, hath said, "I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever."—Jer. xxxii. 39. All the experiences wrought in us by the Holy Spirit are portrayed in the word of God. I look sometimes into the heart of this and that saint, Abraham, Samuel, David, Jeremiah, and many others, and I see my own heart, I feel a very intimacy with them, I say I know them, they are my people, I walk with them, lie down in sorrow with them, our hearts throb in unison. "I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts."—Psalms cxix. 63. I have a few times imagined, in deep soul distresses, that no one was like me in this peculiar trial. I now recall one of these times: I was in the deeps indeed, so immersed in sorrows, so distracted with the fiery darts of the wicked, through the prolonging of these "hard things," "the fight of afflictions," and sinful insinuations; I was often distracted. I sometimes could not eat my natural food, and I feared I should go insane. I mentally scanned the lives of all the saints recorded in the Scriptures. I recalled all that I had read and had known of others, but none of them could I see had known such a complication of trials and griefs as were mine. I felt as an outcast, and yet my sighs and tears were unto God without ceasing. I was becoming weaker, and it appeared to me with less and less hope of relief every day, and the taunting thrusts of the enemy became more and more cruel. I remember I walked out from the house, and wandered here and there alone, that I might groan and weep alone, unseen. While in this condition a few words of the holy Scriptures came into my mind; I said to myself, They were spoken concerning Jesus. They so exactly described my condition I said to myself, The Savior knows, and instantly it was as if the dear Savior was at my very side, in all loving, comforting companionship, and I said unto Jesus, Was it to bring me into fellowship with thee that these sore providences and these soul distresses are mine? O such sacred, comforting meditations then were mine. I thought upon the varied griefs of our Redeemer, my heart communed with him; he prepared the table, spread the feast, and I supped with him, and he with me. (Rev. iii. 20.) Awhile ago, this day, I had been reading newspapers, books, but though the natural mind was entertained, perhaps some natural knowledge increased, yet it was all as a wilderness, I turned from it all, I sighed for something better, I was weary and faint. The Bible was before me on the table; I thought, That contains the record of what my soul fainteth with longings for. I opened it, and the first words that I saw and read were: "But the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."—John iv. 14. In the twinkling of an eye my soul was greatly moved, my eyes filled with tears; I said, O Jesus, thou art all I want, thou fountain of living waters, let my famished, fainting heart drink of thee,

give me the water of life. I read no more for awhile, for Jesus himself was streams in the desert to me. He poured unto my soul discoveries of himself, sweet, reviving thoughts were mine of what he is unto his people, and what he is unto me, and I did "drink of the river of his pleasures."—Psalms xxxvi. 8. O Christ, he is the fountain, the deep, sweet well of love.

"Jesus, thy praise my soul would sing,
From whom my every blessing springs,
Taught by thy grace, I feel and see,
Dear Lord, my springs are all in thee."

Christ nourishes and cherishes his church, and without this we droop, we are faint, we are discouraged, we are overcome by the burdens of life, and under the temptations of sin and Satan we are in all adversity. Sometimes I sigh and inquire:

"O when will the tempest subside,
The storm of affliction be o'er?
The sea shattered bark safe arrive,
Where billows can toss it no more?"

And sometimes

"I long for that haven of rest,
Where pleasures unfading remain;
Where troubles shall never molest,
Nor Satan e'er harass again.

There, with my Beloved and Friend,
Who covered my soul from each wave,
I'll praise him in songs without end,
For he is almighty to save."

Well, dear sister our pathway is known unto our God, who shall guide us with his counsel and afterward receive us to glory; and though it be through the deep waters and rivers, and through the fire, I, he saith, will be with thee. (Isaiah xliii. 2.) But I am sometimes in soul distresses so exhausting (my strength is small. Prov. xxiv. 10.) I am tried with corruptions within. Satan hurls insinuations into my mind; it is night, the way is rough, vexations attend me, do what I will, until I am about distracted, overwhelmed, sunk down; self-pity swallows me up, I am ready to die. But this I have proved, O many times, it is wonderful, so sacred, so blessed, and my heart with eagerness shall tell it. Though I am foolish, weak, despairing, fretful, murmuring, wrapped in obscurity, my spirit overwhelmed, and I know not where or what or who I am, yet He holdeth me by my right hand. (Psalms lxxiii. 23.) My hand in his, not his in mine. His almighty, loving, redeeming hand, mine tiny and feeble; he does not, he will not, let me go, he ever has hold of me, though at times I know it not. "None shall pluck them out of mine hand." "When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knowest my path."—Psalms cxlii. 3. And, shall I tell it? Yes, I will, in my own way, as it is in truth unto me. There is a gentle pressure of his hand, there are words spoken to my poor, sinful, distracted soul; I feel, My God hath hold of me, his hold says he loves me, his power, his love, hold me unto himself. In the doctrine of Christ he tells me the thoughts that he thinks concerning me, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give me an expected end. My poor, weak heart is revived, and I am saying, How precious are thy thoughts unto me. My tiny hand of faith and childlike love has hold of, cleaves to the Lord, held in the hand of his omnipotent love. I believe the love that God hath to us. (1 John iv. 16.) There are thoughts springing up in my soul because his speech distils as the dew upon me, and I find these thoughts upon his name, my meditations upon the works of his hand, to be inspiring, comforting, strengthening; I find my confidence, that awhile ago appeared shattered, to be lying in ruins, built up, and ere ever I am aware I am on my feet again, raised up and held up by our God, and I am singing, "I am persuaded." You know and have sung the song inspired by the Holy

Ghost and written by the apostle Paul. (Rom. viii. 38, 39.) Thus by my God I walk through darkness, I am able to endure afflictions, I am sustained and carried through temptations, and I am strengthened to withstand in the evil day, for Christ girdeth my soul to the conflict, and I am more than conqueror. Sweet, so cheering, strengthening is thy love, O Savior of sinners; let me believe in thee, and ever be looking unto thee.

May this be your portion, is my prayer unto God for you.

I am your brother in Jesus,

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

ATLANTIC, N. C., April 9, 1914.

DEAR SISTER PULTZ:—Your card came to-day and brought me a word of comfort. I often wonder if any other people can be like God's children. None of us want others to be shut up in darkness and full of trouble, but when we find ourselves there we love to know that others have the same experience. I have often thought of John the Baptist—the evidences he had that Jesus was the beloved Son of God, and then how he doubted when he was in prison. It was a miserable feeling to be left in so dark a place as to forget his past evidences, bright as they were. But such was his experience, and he sent messengers to the Lord and asked, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" I am glad of his experience, for I am so often in prison and so full of doubtings, with a desire to know if my hope is a good one or if I must look for another. To find companionship and fellowship in John's experience is of much comfort to me. Then the answer of our Lord to him is so sweet: "Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see." John had heard and seen them, he was now cast into prison and must soon glorify God in his death, but the blessed works he had seen and heard continued; the kingdom of heaven would not cease. John must decrease, but the Lord in his blessed cause must increase. The work of John had ended, but that of Jesus was from everlasting to everlasting. Light was given to the blind, the deaf heard, the prisoners were set free, the hungry fed, the poor had the gospel preached unto them, and there was nothing in the Lord Jesus at which one might reasonably be offended. What tidings! How rich and full, but the very thing the poor must have. As it was then, so it is now. Did you ever think of the fact that the gospel was never preached outside of the kingdom of heaven? that no one ever heard that blessed sound but a citizen inside those sacred walls? While literally it is preached among all nations, yet it is a spiritual truth that it is not preached outside of the kingdom. Therefore if any are given to hear and "know the joyful sound," it is a sure evidence that a blessing has been given them from the Lord and they are in the city and are citizens of that heavenly country. If one is given to mourn because of his sins he has the evidence of life. If he hungers after the bread of heaven he has received the blessing. The kingdom is given to such as these. The Lord was anointed to preach the gospel to the poor. Peter could deny the Lord, but could not sell him. Judas, the devil, could not deny him, for he never knew him. The children of God possess him. He is theirs, and they are his, yet they cannot sell him. He is formed in the heart the hope of glory. That hope they often deny, but would not sell it for thousands of worlds full of the richest treasures. They say, It is so little, yet it is greater than all things else.

It is their life now, and they look forward in it by faith and see that blessed world of glory into which the Forerunner has entered for them, and into which they by him shall enter at his appointed time. A little hope? Yes, that is all they claim. But what a blessed assurance! The promise is given by him who cannot lie. He is ever faithful to every word he has said, and none can thwart his purpose to perform what he has begun. The devil, death and hell have exhausted their powers, and have been fully overcome by him who won the victory. That victory he gives to the poor and the needy. The weak he supports and carries the little ones in his bosom. The lambs that have fallen by the way are the special objects of his care. Can there be failure in such a Shepherd? If so, it will be when he undertakes for me, for I am the most unworthy of the flock, if indeed I am of the flock at all. My faith lies in the fact that he never fails. He shall not fail nor be discouraged until he brings forth judgment unto victory. Blessed word; full assurance to all his people that their salvation in him is complete.

Dear sister, the Lord bless you and all his little children with a full flow of his love and tender mercies, that you may ever be found in him to honor, praise and glorify him in your bodies and in your spirits, which are his.

Yours in a good hope through his grace,

L. H. HARDY.

FAIRMONT, W. Va., March 20, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will try to write again, but it may be that you are getting tired of reading my writings. Well, if you are, just pass them over, for I am at times tired of myself, and feel so unworthy, and that if others knew me as I know myself it would be no wonder if they were tired of my writings, and tired of me in every way, and that they could not fellowship me at all. Still I feel like saying with Ruth, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee. I often wonder what I would do if it were not for the fellowship of the Primitive Baptists, the church of Christ. Primitive is first, and those who are not primitive are second, and are not the church of Christ, for Christ Jesus built his church, and he is the head of the church, and we are bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. There are some of his saints who are not numbered with the Primitive Baptist Church, for it is written, Come out of Babylon, my people, and be not partakers of her sins. Babylon is not the church of Christ, nor Egypt the land of Canaan. God brought his chosen people out of Egypt, yet before he brought them out some of them died, and some of them were killed in Egypt, for example, Exodus ii. 11: "And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, one of his brethren." Genesis l. 24: "And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die; and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land." So some of God's children die before they come into the visible church, and some are killed in war and other ways before they know what the church of Christ is, but that does not keep them from being numbered with the invisible church of Christ. A great number of the children of Israel never lived in the land of Canaan, yet they were the children of Israel. I understand that in Isaac thy seed shall be called, for they are not all Israel that are of Israel, neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children,

but in Isaac shall thy seed be called; that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of promise are counted for the seed. (Romans ix. 7, 8.) As there were some of the children of Israel who entered into Canaan, and some did not, so with God's children; some of them enter into the visible church, and some do not; but all God's children shall enter heaven. Now notice that the children of Israel after they entered Canaan had war, and so it is with God's children to-day; after they enter into the gospel church they have the warfare; but when the children of Israel, the true seed, die, they shall enter heaven above, where war is no more, where the uncircumcised shall not come, for no unclean thing shall enter there. So when God's children die in this our day, which is the gospel day, they shall enter heaven also. Now there were in the land of Canaan all those blessings, those good things which God had promised to give them, and they did not have to labor for them—a land of rest. There were the pomegranate and the pleasant fruits; they had not labored for them, yet there were some wars. So with God's children to-day; some of them enter into the gospel church, where the blessings are, and neither did they toil and labor for those blessings, but Christ placed them there for the visible church; but all of God's children shall enjoy the blessings of heaven, where all is joy and love; not one of the little ones shall fail to enter heaven. When God led Israel through the Red Sea they were able to sing this song unto the Lord: The Lord hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. So in this our day, when God delivers his children from bondage, from the power of Satan into the kingdom of his dear Son, then they sing a new song, even praise to God; yet it is not always so with them, for troubles come, and many troubles are between them and entering into the visible church. With Israel of old there were many troubles between them and the land of Canaan. Now if Jordan represented death, and the land of Canaan represented heaven, then would there not be enemies in heaven as well as in Canaan? Numbers xxxiii. 51, 52: "Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye are passed over Jordan into the land of Canaan; then ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy all their pictures, and destroy all their molten images, and quite pluck down all their high places." Verse 55: "But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell." Now if Canaan represented heaven, then surely there will be trouble in heaven, and surely there is something for God's people to drive out of heaven. Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, spoke of the thorn in the flesh, 2 Cor. xii. 7: "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure." This did not make Paul a child of Satan, no, not at all; neither did it cast the children out of the land of Canaan. So shall all Israel be saved with an everlasting salvation in the Lord. Then again, there were more inhabitants in Canaan than the children of Israel, but in heaven there will be none but saints, none but the true

Israel. Here in the church there are some who are not driven out, and they vex the children of God; they are as thorns in their sides. Let us see why the children of Israel were a favored people. Was it because they were a good people? I think not. We, and all nations, were made of one blood; we are of Adam's posterity; we all were born in sin; there is none good, no, not one; none righteous, no, not one; all have gone astray; so it cannot be upon this ground that God favored them, O no, but God made a special choice of them, not because they were the greatest, for they were few. "And it came to pass, in process of time, that the king of Egypt died; and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God, by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob." "And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived. And Israel said, It is enough: Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die."—Gen. xlv. 27, 28. Now you can see that Jacob is Israel, and here are his children, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. God appeared to Abraham, and said unto him, Get thee out from thy kindred and thy people, and I will make a great nation of thee. Then he told him that in his seed all the kindred of the earth should be blessed, and told him his seed should sojourn in a strange land and be evil entreated for four hundred years, and then he would bring them out. So God chose them for his people because it seemed good in his sight to do so, and this is the reason of their bondage, for they shall be evil entreated for four hundred years, and this cruel treatment caused their cry; and God heard their cry, because he had told Abraham that he would bring them out of their bondage, and that he would judge that nation, and so he did, and destroyed them, but saved the children of Israel, although Pharaoh confessed that he had sinned. Exodus ix. 27: "And Pharaoh sent, and called for Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, I have sinned this time: the Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked;" yet the Lord destroyed him. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and whom I will I harden. Pharaoh could not turn God to cause him to save him by confessing that he had sinned, and that the Lord was righteous, and that he and his people were wicked, because God had already said that he should be cut off from the earth. "For now I will stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth."—Exodus ix. 15. Pharaoh and his people were children of Adam as well as we, for Eve was the mother of all living; so the children of Israel confessed that they had sinned, but God made a difference between them and Pharaoh; God made the choice, as the Savior said, Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and there is a difference in confession of sins; there is a natural repentance, a natural confession, and there is godly sorrow. Exodus xi. 7: "But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast, that ye may know how that the Lord doth put a

difference between the Egyptians and Israel."

I hope what I have written is in defence of the truth.

Yours, JAMES W. LINN.

JOHN X. 9.

"I AM the door: by me if any man shall enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."

These are the words of Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep. He came to save his people, who are denominated sheep. I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, that there be one fold and one Shepherd. I am glad that Jesus, the blessed and only Potentate, the Lord of lords and King of kings, has not left the work of bringing his sheep to the fold in the hands of man, for the building, the church of God, is wholly in the hand of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; the immovable rock of the immediate revelation of the Father. All that have heard and learned of the Father cometh unto Jesus; none others have the will or the desire to come; for Jesus is the way, the truth and the life; Jesus is the life of all that live. "Nothing in myself I am, all I have is in the Lamb," is the cry of every heaven-born soul. The law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. None come unto Jesus except those who are drawn by the Father's love. I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. They realize that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. For I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not, and lead them in paths that they have not trod; I will not forsake them. They are given to know that salvation is of the Lord, and vain is the help of man. As the gentle rain cometh down from heaven, so the Holy Spirit teaches them by the still small voice. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb and as showers upon the grass. By the quickening power of the blessed Comforter they enter by the door. Jesus is the door and the way, and the wayfaring man shall not err therein. If we have not the Spirit of Christ we are none of his. This is the life that cannot sin, for his seed remaineth in him. The good seed is the Word of God. Jesus is the good tree, that cannot bring forth corrupt fruit. Hence the warfare, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. For that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. So the cry ascends from our hearts to the Lord for mercy and for his sustaining grace, to lead us in the right way and keep us from evil. We shall find pasture. He leadeth us by the still waters and maketh us to lie down in green pastures; he restoreth our souls. This was the experience of the sweet singer of Israel. Every provision is made by Christ, and all things are freely given. Eat, O friends, eat abundantly; buy wine and milk without money and without price, are the cheering words of the good Shepherd. They are brought into the goodly land, not for any merit on their part, but by the strong hand and the outstretched arm of Jehovah, because he has favor unto them; the Lord knows his sheep. "We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days, in times of old. * * *

because thou hadst a favor unto them." Even so Jesus saves his people; they are highly favored by being included in the covenant of grace, and were given to the Son by the Father. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me. Not for any worth on their part, for they are naught; Jesus is all and in all, and a present help in time of need. Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance—as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity. Nothing impure or unholy can ever enter in and become a part of the church of God; only those whose sins Jesus atoned for on the cross and removed them far off into the land of forgetfulness. They shall be my people, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more forever. (Heb. viii. 12, 13.) Jesus paid every debt for his people by the sacrifice of himself, being made sin for them. By him if any man enter in, he shall be saved; no uncertainty about it. Jesus saves to the uttermost all that come unto God by him.

"Thy flock, thine own peculiar care,
Though now they seem to roam uneyed,
Are led, or driven, only where
They best and safest may abide.

They neither know nor trace the way,
But trusting to thy piercing eye,
None of their feet to ruin stray,
Nor shall the weakest fail or die."

As the work of Jesus is perfect, and his church stands perfect and complete in him, so there is no way possible for the cunning and malice of Satan to ever sever one of his members from the love and union in Christ, their living Redeemer, who arose triumphant over all the powers of darkness and ever lives to intercede for them, who shall reign in Zion, his enemies being made his footstool. The Father has given him a name which is above every name, and will put down all rule and all authority, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself. His is an everlasting kingdom, and will stand forever; a kingdom which shall never decay while time sweeps earthly thrones away. Here the weary find rest.

"Far from the world, O Lord, I flee,
From strife and tumult far;
From scenes where Satan wages still
His most successful war.

The calm retreat, the silent shade,
With prayer and praise agree,
And seem by thy sweet bounty made
For those who follow thee."

When we are brought to his banqueting-house we sit down under his shadow with great delight, and his banner over us is love, and his fruit is sweet to our taste. Surely a day in the courts of the Lord is better than ten thousand days of pleasurable sin; for his voice is sweet, and calms all our fears. When the apostle looked on the cripple who was laid at the beautiful gate, and perceived that he had faith to be healed, he bade him stand up. Through faith in the name of Jesus he leaped and sang for joy, shouting praise to God. So every quickened soul cries, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory; for thou art worthy to receive praise, glory, majesty and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Yours in hope,

WM. F. SLOAN.

LEXINGTON, Ky.

SILVERTON, Texas, July 19, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—I note that my subscription is a little over due, and herewith inclose money order for the SIGNS another year. I have been a subscriber almost continuously since 1870, and want to take it as long as I live. I receive much comfort from reading the editorials and letters from the dear brethren and

sisters scattered abroad. It is like a cup of cold water to a thirsty soul in a desert land to read a good letter from one I have met on my visits to the different churches scattered over the United States, and O how gladly would I meet with them again. I realize that it cannot be, but O, loved ones, it will only be a short time until we will meet in that better world, where there will be no more weeping, no more sorrow, no more persecution and trials, but one eternal song of praise to the great I AM. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Dear brethren, we have so much to be thankful for. Why cannot we lay aside all grievances and come together worshiping the Holy One of Israel, who gave his life for us? Freely gave it, that he might redeem to himself a peculiar people, who should show forth his praise. In what way do they praise him? By being zealous of good works, instant in season and out of season; by doing all things without murmurings and disputings; by letting brotherly love continue; by abstaining from every appearance of evil; by walking worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called; by abhorring that which is evil and cleaving to that which is good; by recompensing to no man evil for evil; providing things honest in the sight of all men; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation; distributing to the necessities of the saints, given to hospitality; presenting their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God; by endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; redeeming the time, because the days are evil. These are just a few of the ways in which his people can show forth his praise. We are admonished to walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Only a short time ago I was worrying over some of the evils of the day, when, as it were, a voice spoke the Savior's language to Peter to my soul, making a deep impression: "What is that to thee? Follow thou me." Yes, why should I be fretting over the evil ways of others? It is my business to follow the Savior, but how to follow him I seem to know not, for when I would do good, evil is present, and it just seems I can do nothing right, the burden of unbelief grows so heavy. Surely if I were a child of God I could follow in his footsteps a part of the time at least. The questions keep coming up with great force, How can I follow him? What is it to follow him? O how I grieve because I cannot follow my Savior. If we do all things for his glory we are following him. We follow him by trusting his word. But O, it does seem that I have so little faith, so little trust in his word. Come, all ye that fear the Lord, and tell me, is it so with you, or am I one alone? O that I could rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him. To the only wise God our Savior be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever.

Yours in hope,

LYDIA C. RAY.

COLMAR, Ky., July 18, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a communication from Elder W. J. May, of Pinsonfork, Ky., which I would like to see published in the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I think it is in harmony with the teaching of all the Scriptures. The doctrine that is set forth in this communication is taught by the types and shadows of the Old Testament, and by Jesus Christ and the apostles in the New Testament. If all Israel were in accord

with the doctrine advocated in Elder May's letter, then they would be very mindful of the greatest one word command of our Master: "Watch." Adam was commanded to watch in the words, Dress and keep the garden clean. Eve received this command while yet in Adam, and after Eve was made and brought unto Adam he said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." Eve had just as close a union with Adam as any Israelite has ever had with Jesus Christ, but notwithstanding this union with her husband, and the eating of the fruit of the garden, and the joy, peace and righteousness that accompanies a sinless life, the tempter was permitted admittance into her presence and to consult with her in regard to the result of disobeying the law she had received in her husband; and after hearing the argument of the tempter she partook of the forbidden fruit, transgressed the law of the kingdom and brought the sentence of death upon her, and now she is denied, or separated, from those things that were life to her before the transgression, and the reverse is meted out to her, which is trouble, sorrow and dying. National Israel experienced things similar to Eve; they were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink, but yet for disobedience the great majority of them fell in the wilderness. Are we (spiritual Israel) any better than Eve was? Are we more able to stand than she was? Are we from a point of obedience to the law of Christ any better than national Israel was? No, in no sense are we better. Then may we look for the same things to occur in this gospel dispensation as occurred in the typical dispensations. So let us all join with our Savior and exclaim to all of Israel, "Watch." Our beloved Elder May, according to his statement in this letter, has lived as a natural man, or a Gentile, twenty-nine years, and as an Israelite fifty years. He has died unto sin once, and since that death he has been living unto God. He has been greatly blessed of God, and has proven himself to be one of the very elect, one of the remnant that dies no more, but will soon fall asleep in full triumph of living faith and be gathered unto his people. He has long since been beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and has been and is living and reigning with Christ, which is the first resurrection. A very few of the Israelites of God enjoy this plain of existence. My prayer is that we all may be continually asking, What will the Lord have me to do?

Yours with a desire to live more perfectly, L. D. HOSKINS.

PINSONFORK, Ky., June 11, 1915.

DEAR ELDER HOSKINS:—I feel I must write you a few words and tell you as best I can how I rejoiced in my heart when I read your article in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for February 1st, present volume, and am yet rejoicing when reading it, which is often, and I have written twice in the past to send to you, but it seemed so imperfect that I laid it in the fire and thought I would never make the effort again, but I cannot be content without expressing my heartfelt thanks to Israel's God for such wonderful gifts. I do not remember of ever reading a communication from the pen of any one that I enjoyed more than the one I have mentioned above, especially on that line of thought; in fact, I have heard but little said along that line, and I, like you, brother Hoskins, have often thought, and

am yet thinking, that if I could write like the other brethren I would write much oftener, although I have been writing some for publication thirty years or over, but during all these many years I have burned up many more articles than I have sent to the press, and it is one of the mysterious problems that I have never been able to solve, how it is and why it is that that lo these many years I have had a desire to write for publication and a desire not to write; also a desire to preach and a desire not to preach; hence it has been one continual struggle with me for fifty years, and is even now, although I have passed the seventy-ninth milepost of my sojourn in these low grounds of sin and sorrow, and the contention is so strong that more or less I daily cry, O wretched man that I am! What shall I do to do right? I never have, neither shall I ever attain to that state in this world that I have been trying to reach all the days of my pilgrimage, but have fallen so infinitely short that I often fear I am and have been mistaken all the while; but some few times I am made to rejoice in God my Savior and in the wonderful things that he has wrought in the hearts of his poor children, which are unspeakable and full of glory. There is no doubt in my mind but that a large majority of the Israel of God are walking in their own ways, or, in other words, are worshiping the beast and his image, and have and are receiving his mark upon their foreheads and in their hands, while the remnant, the very elect, the reserved ones, the bride, the Lamb's wife, have been, and are yet, kept back by the power and Spirit of their God, and for his eternal purpose, in and of them, from all these things, as is so clearly taught in the Scriptures, of which I will mention one or two points, and first will notice Revelation xx. 4, where those are so minutely described who had not worshiped the mongrel beast nor his image, nor had ever received the mark of the beast in their foreheads or in their hands, and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. "But the rest of dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection."—Verse 5. Now to me, the rest of the dead mentioned here were those of God's people who had worshiped the beast and his image and had received his mark in their foreheads and in their hands, and who loved their lives unto the death. Mark the expression: it was their own life that they loved unto the death; that is, living after the flesh. While the text (Rev. xii. 11,) does not directly say that those characters loved their lives unto the death, the inference is as clear as the sun at noonday that they did, and are in the same like condition now; for the very elect, those whom God reserves, or keeps back from bowing the knee to the image of Baal, overcome the accuser of the brethren by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives unto the death, they did not live after the flesh. But this large majority count it pleasure to riot in the daytime. Death is the deprivation of life, and all of God's elect, or chosen people, who live after the flesh, walking in their own way, the broad way that leadeth to destruction, are deprived of that life which the few (the very elect) who walk in that strait and narrow way enjoy. In fact, walking in the broad and narrow way is just simply living after the flesh or the Spirit. All these things are here in the time state of God's people, and have no allusion to others, and so far as I am concerned I cannot for the life of me ap-

ply the second death except to the second life, the deprivation of this life of spiritual enjoyment here in this second heaven, wherein dwelleth righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, where this special remnant hears the imperative voice of the great Shepherd and Bishop of their souls: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom [gospel kingdom] prepared for you from the foundation of the world,"—Matt. xxv. 34, while many of the Israel of God are going on in the broad way and through the wide gate to their destruction in this life. This death is the death of all deaths to those of God's people. If this is not the second death I do not know anything about the second death as mentioned in the Scriptures.

Brother Hoskins, I feel that I must ask your forbearance, and also your correction. I hope you will write soon, for I am, and shall continue to be, no doubt, anxious to hear from you on this line of thought.

Yours in tribulation,

W. J. MAY.

TIAWAH, Okla., Aug. 14, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Permit me to say through the SIGNS, to the readers of the same, and especially to some dear brethren and sisters who have written to me, that I have been sorely afflicted for the last three weeks with an affection of my left hand. This has been a constant drain upon my physical strength and a prey upon my mind, and I have been compelled to abandon much of my correspondence, so the saints who have favored me with their precious letters will accept this explanation for my silence. I feel that I have been humbled under the mighty hand of God in this great affliction of my hand. Never, in any time of my life has such an affliction visited me. While I was suffering day and night, and sleep had fled for days, old faithful Job came to my mind. His answer to his wife in the form of a question certainly contained the answer to his question: "What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips."—Job ii. 10. I felt surely that we must receive evil at the hand of God, or what we call evil, just as certain as we receive good at his hand. Standing on this basic rock, i. e., that good and evil come from God, may not God's people say so and not sin with their lips? Instead of charging sin against the saints of the Most High for speaking as Job did, their words shall be recorded as words of praise to the mighty God of Jacob, who rideth on the wings of the wind, who giveth to his saints such things as they need, whether those things be good or evil; he alone has the disposing of all things. Our God is supreme, above all worlds and all heavens; let us worship him.

Yours in hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

LAUREL, Miss., Dec. 22, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Through the goodness of our all-wise God I am yet spared for some purpose only known to him, and as the year is about to come to a close I feel to thank God for his goodness to me. He has blessed me in many ways all through my life down to the present time. We held our last meeting for this year at our church, Palestine, last Sunday. We had our regular preacher, Elder L. F. Easley, with us. He has agreed to preach for us another year, if the Lord will, and we feel thankful that we have such a gifted preacher. We es-

teem him as one of the best, though we know it is not of himself, but of God, who giveth the light and understanding. We are in peace, and the Lord has added three members to our church at Palestine this year.

Wishing you all a happy Christmas and prosperous new year, also hoping that God will bless you to still keep the SIGNS going, and enable the editors to keep on contending for the doctrine and principle of the gospel which the SIGNS has always contended for, I remain your very unworthy brother, if one at all,

THOS. J. KNIGHT.

FRENCHTOWN, N. J., Feb. 9, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find two dollars to aid in sending the SIGNS to the poor of the flock. I would feel sorry to hear that any lover of the truth was denied the privilege of reading the precious messages the SIGNS contains from dear brethren whom our heavenly Father hath bestowed the gift of writing to the comfort of many humble and doubting ones. I hope the contributions may be sufficient, that the publishers may not suffer loss, and as I trust the editors, publishers and correspondents have been led by the unerring Hand in days that are past, it inspires me to feel he will still guide them in the truth to feed and establish the weak and doubting ones. This is the desire of the unworthy writer and sister,

H. M. JOHNSON.

PORTLAND, Ind., August 18, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I want to say to you that my heart is sad this morning. I have just received the news that Elder Newton Peters is very poorly. The doctor says he cannot recover; he may live six months, and he may die within a month. He had a stroke of paralysis and has softening of the brain. It grieves me so that I cannot go to see him. He is the last male member that meets with the church here besides myself. I say, O Lord, is there anything in prayer? If it be thy will, spare my brother a few more years.

Yours in love,

J. M. LAMBURN.

SUMMERVILLE, Oregon, April 19, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Wife and I have just returned from Elgin, where we attended the Baptist meeting, and were pleasantly entertained at the hospitable home of Elder and sister G. E. Mayfield. For thirty-seven years this church has been in comparative peace under the pastoral care of brother Mayfield. Some twenty persons hold their membership there, but they are pretty well scattered, so that only about ten are near enough to attend regularly. They have a good, substantial church-house, hymn-books and all things needed for the convenience of those who gather there for worship. Elder C. W. Bond, of La Grande, was also present, as were several other brethren from a distance, whose names I cannot now recall. Regular meetings of the Elgin Church are held on the first and third Sundays of each month, and on the Saturday previous to the third Sunday. Elder Bond preaches in La Grande on the second Sunday for the convenience of several members of the Elgin Church who live there. These brethren are sound Baptists, earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and our visit among them was one that I shall long remember.

In a precious hope of salvation by grace, I am your unworthy brother,

J. M. AMSBERRY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1915.

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EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
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QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

CAN a quickened, regenerated child of God in and of himself do or not do certain things: duties, we will say, that are required of him, such as coming forward and telling the church what great things the Lord has done for him? He often feels a desire to come, but feels a sense of unworthiness and does not come.

A child of God can do nothing in the way of gospel obedience without the grace of God accompanying him and qualifying him unto that obedience. The old covenant which God gave Israel by Moses was full of conditions for Israel to perform. In that covenant the Lord said, I will if you will. But they did not do the things required in the law, and so failed of reaping any of the benefits it promised. The law was all right, it was just and holy, but they were too weak to keep it. The experience of national Israel under that covenant proved conclusively that no flesh could ever be justified by the deeds of the law, and that that legal altar could never make the comers thereunto perfect. The new or gospel covenant which comes by Jesus Christ says, I will and you shall. The wills and shalls of Jehovah are the bulwark of this covenant of the Spirit, and guarantees the everlasting security of all that it enfolds in its embrace. The people of God shall be willing in the day of his power, and this gospel day is the day of his power. Christ is risen and become the firstfruits of them that slept; both Jew and Gentile are quickened together with Christ, therefore the power of his resurrection is in the church now in the world, thus making this dispensation the day of his power and creating thereby for himself this willing people. Now this people obey him, not in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the spirit. In other words, gospel obedience abounds not in forms, ceremonies, rituals, holy days, feasts and fasts, as did the old covenant service, but is of the Spirit, through the grace that is in our Lord Jesus Christ. We are living in the day of grace, and we can only serve him by grace in this day of grace. "Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace."—John i. 16. That is, in Christ is stored all grace for all the requirements of grace. Whatever grace requires the child of God to perform, grace is ministered to the child of God through and by Christ unto the performance of the thing required. Somehow we do not like the word "duty" used in speaking of these things which the gospel commands. We do not think the apostles liked this word any better than we do, for in all the writings of the apostles the word "duty" occurs but once, and then used by Paul in Romans xv. 27, in saying that inasmuch as the Gentiles had been made partakers of the Jews' spiritual things, it was the duty of the Gentile brethren to minister to the temporal needs of their Jewish brethren. This is the only occurrence of the word "duty" in all the writings of all the apostles. In all his preaching Jesus used the word "duty" but once, so we conclude it was not a favorite expression with him. He says, "When ye shall have done all those things which are com-

manded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do."—Luke xvii. 10. Now, if the requirements of the gospel are left with us to do or not do as we please, and if we please to do them of ourselves, and succeed in doing them, are we then unprofitable servants? Certainly not, for having done them of our own will, we would have a right to take some credit to ourselves for having done them, and to that extent would be profitable instead of unprofitable servants. On the other hand, if all our obedience is of grace, and that grace is through Christ, then having fulfilled all his commands, we have not ourselves to thank, but him alone, and are thus unprofitable in the matter so far as our own strength and ability are concerned, for these latter had no part in it at all. Jesus said, "I can of mine own self do nothing."—John v. 30. If he, the holy man of God, humbly confessed his inability to do anything of himself, is it worth while for us, who are so much lower than he in every respect, to claim that we have any strength which Jesus did not have? Is not such a claim an effort to raise ourselves above the Nazarene? Further, Jesus said, "Without me ye can do nothing."—John xv. 5. Could anything be more conclusive? Listen to what Paul says to the church at Philippi: "As ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Paul here tells the brethren how their obedience has always been, that it has never been of their pleasure, or by their own will, but that their will to do has been the effect of God working in them according to his pleasure, to bring out in their fear and trembling the manifestation of the salvation which he has revealed in them. The obedience of the quickened, regenerated child of God is always brought about just this way, by the Lord working in him the will to do according to His own pleasure. Grace is not ours to control, the Spirit is not ours to reach out and grasp, but the grace and the Spirit control and exercise the child of God in his obedience. Left to ourselves, we will never do anything else but disobey; led by the Spirit, we shall do naught but obey. It is our fault if we disobey; it is all to the praise of the glory of his grace if we obey. The Lord will lead his people in such a way and so exercise them by his Spirit that they shall positively have no other gods before him; they shall not in the slightest measure ever be able to say, I could have done worse, but I chose to do better. Jesus must and will be all in all.

Now, as to one's being baptized, that is a very solemn matter between one's self and God. Three requisites are essential to gospel baptism: a proper mode, a proper subject and a proper administrator. The proper, and only proper mode of baptism as taught in the Bible, is the immersion in, and emersion out, of water; the only proper subject for baptism is a believer that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; the proper administrator of the ordinance is a man called and qualified of God to preach the gospel, not one called by men, qualified by a college and sent with the authority of a diploma. For the reason that the only proper subject for baptism is one who believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and believes it with all his heart, and since it is necessary that one be brought to this fulness and wholeness of belief before he can be baptized, we doubt seriously the wisdom of urging or coaxing one to be baptized, and

even question the wisdom of talking to them overmuch upon the subject. No one is more delighted than ourself to see members added to the church by baptism, and we hope we are always ready with such ability as we have to answer the inquiries of such as are seeking the truth and a home among the people of God, but we have not, nor ever will, persuaded one to join the church. They must be fully persuaded in their own mind. As long as one's unworthiness and unfitness is an effectual barrier to one's coming to the church, just so long is that one not a believer with his whole heart, for so long as he is looking for and expecting some perfection or goodness in himself, just that far he is detracting from the wholeness of Christ as his complete fitness and worthiness. Mind you, we say, so long as his unworthiness is an effectual barrier, for when that one does finally come to the church, he will still feel his unworthiness, but it will no longer be effectual in preventing his baptism. The Lord knows better than we do when one is fit and ready to be baptized, and for that reason we are entirely content to let him add his own to the church as he will, without any help or interference on our part. It is a dreadful thing to bury a person alive. Let us be sure they are dead before we bury (baptize) them. They must be wholly dead to the law, dead to all the pleasures of sin, dead to all confidence in the flesh. When wheat ceases to take nourishment from the earth, it is ready to be reaped. It will spoil if reaped earlier. We have known serious trouble to arise in churches from the reception of persons who showed afterward that they were not wholly dead in the senses we have above mentioned. Better keep five out that ought to be in, than get one in that ought to be out. The Lord calls one to baptism as he calls one by grace originally from darkness to light, or as he calls one to preach. If one is to be baptized the Lord will so impress that matter upon the conscience of the believer that struggle as he will he cannot shake it off. That one will be miserable, he will have no rest or peace of mind until he is baptized. On the other hand, we have known men and women who attended Old Baptist meetings for years, and showed by their regularity in attendance that they esteemed and respected the truth, yet they never seemed to have had the slightest impression regarding baptism, and seemed to be satisfied to stay all their lives outside the church. What right would we have to tell such as these it is their duty to be baptized? Dare we impress that matter where the Lord himself has not impressed it? It is not the privilege of any believer to be baptized until he believes with the whole heart, and when he does thus believe he will be baptized; nothing can prevent it. When that time is with each individual, the Lord knows, we do not. It evidently is not the purpose of God that all his children should be members of the militant church. If it were his purpose the Old Baptists would outnumber any denomination on the earth, and we would be the headiest of the heady in our pride. Many are called by grace unto a knowledge of the truth and a hope in the mercy of God, few only are chosen to be members of the militant church and outspoken witnesses of the theme of the cross. The visible church, as we sometimes call it, is merely a little light shining midst the whole world that lieth in darkness, a remnant according to the election of grace. It takes grace to enable one to follow his Lord and Savior through baptism, and when this grace is given obedience will

follow as certainly as day succeeds upon night.

Can we quench the Spirit? We infer from this question of our inquirer that he refers to the language of Paul in 1 Thess. v. 19: "Quench not the Spirit." If the children of God in reading the Bible would always be careful to note the connections in which Scriptures occur much confusion might be spared them. Much mischief is sometimes wrought by wresting a text out of its proper setting. Let us note carefully the context of this Scripture, "Quench not the Spirit." The previous verse says, "In every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." Now, what is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning us? The succeeding verses answer the question. The will of God in Christ Jesus (not in the flesh) is that we shall "quench not the Spirit," that we shall "despise not prophesyings," that we shall "prove all things; hold fast that which is good," that we shall "abstain from all appearance of evil," and that the very God of peace shall sanctify us wholly. In other words, the nineteenth to the twenty-third verses are an explanation of what the will of God is in Christ concerning us, and for this reason we thank God in every one of these things, or thank him that he has made these things his will on our behalf in Christ, and that he has not left them to us to do or not do in our flesh. In the latter case, we never would have done them at all. Then the twenty-fourth verse clinches the matter so tight that no Arminian can pry it loose: "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." The same God that was faithful according to his promise in calling us, and who swerved not from his purpose because of our infidelity to him, this God "will do it." That is, he will see to it that we do not quench the Spirit, and that we will not do anything else forbidden, and that we will do all he commands. This will of God is done in Christ, and as this Christ-contained, Christ-fulfilled will abounds in the believer, we see him maintaining a godly walk and conversation. These things are not written for the natural man at all, but for the man who is in Christ a new creature. Paul is not laying these things down as exhortations for the church to obey or not as they will, but is comforting the church with an explanation of what God's will is concerning them, that this will is fulfilled in Christ, and that his will shall be done, for God is faithful.

The Scripture says, Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together. Can we do or not do as we choose in regard to this? If a member of the church loses interest in the meetings, and does not attend, and is carried away with the things of the world, can he by taking thought turn from one to the other? The command to forsake not the assembling of ourselves is found in Hebrews x. 25, and occurs in a most wonderful setting of Scripture. The command is prefaced with a delineation of the eternal priesthood of Christ, of his atoning sacrifice, the distinction between the old and the new covenant; and now, says the writer, having "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus," "having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near." Draw near with what? "With a true heart, in full assurance of faith." What is this true heart? Is our natural heart a true heart? No. Christ in you the hope of glory, he is your heart of hearts, the true heart. With this true heart, having your hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, having your bodies washed with pure water, holding fast the

profession of your faith unwaveringly, considering your brethren in love and unto good works, "not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." Now, from the reading of the context it would appear there is great foundation for this assembling of ourselves together. The Spirit here commands this assembling on account of the priceless treasures belonging to the people of God, which are here enumerated as a preface to the command to forsake it not. Is it not true that when we are alive to these gifts which God has given us that we never think of staying away from meeting? Is it not true that the stirring up of the pure mind when the Spirit brings these things to our mind creates a desire to be with those of like precious faith? On the other hand, is it not true that when we lose sight of what great things the Lord has done for us we become careless of our privileges in Zion? There is such a thing as sleep, and the child of God sometimes gets into that indifference to spiritual things comparable to sleep. In that state he may stay away from the brethren, or if he does not, his attendance will be merely perfunctory and formal. Can one arouse himself out of this sleep? Just as well ask, Can a man keep alive his own soul? It is our fault if we neglect our privileges, but it is not to our credit if we are granted repentance and come back to the fold. If we are given the mind to attend the meetings of the brethren it is the Spirit gives us that mind, that wakes us out of sleep, and to God all the glory belongs, but left to ourselves we slip back into the old rut. Slipping back, we will feel condemned in our conscience, and will not charge God with it, even though we know and fully believe that all our times are in his hand and come and go at his command. If a member of the church stays away from the meetings it is right that the pastor and the brethren should visit that one and that they should talk to him of the things of the kingdom. Indeed, they are not doing right unless they do this; but let it be remembered, all the talking and visiting will never accomplish a grain of good unless the Lord by his Spirit awakens that one out of sleep and makes him conscious of his neglect and quickens him to run the way of the Lord's commands. Under the old dispensation God called the prophets to call Israel to repentance, and to warn them of certain consequences if they did not repent. What did they accomplish? Certainly Israel did not repent, no matter how earnestly and faithfully the prophets urged repentance. This showed that preaching never could make one repent; it takes an internal operation of the Spirit to bring that about. So now, a pastor may warn his flock of the evils of their nature, of the consequences of sin, and remind them of their blessings from God and of his mercy and goodness toward them; he may exhort them to right living, &c., but without the enforcement of the unction of the Spirit his words will carry no weight or conviction to those sitting under the sound of his voice. All this depends entirely on God's will and predestination. I may know I am doing wrong, my course may be a source of grief and burden to me, I may be crying out in my soul for help and strength to turn away from all the evil I see in myself, yet until the Savior that repentance grants, no real relief, no sure cure can I find.

Paul admonished the Ephesian brethren against jesting and foolish talking. Can we by our own will refrain from doing so? Can we really direct our steps in some instances? Can we by taking thought add to

our stature a little? We are not all naturally constituted alike, not all have the same temperament, the same disposition. Some are naturally given to jesting and foolish talking, and it has often been our observation that those who have this disposition hate it more than anybody else and are annoyed by it more than anybody else. We speak only of the people of God. They know, without being told by the preacher, or without reading it in the Bible, that these things are not becoming to the child of God. How do they know it? Because the grace of God, which is in them, and which has appeared to them bringing salvation, teaches them that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. (Titus ii. 12.) The grace of God teaches us how we should live, it teaches the denial of lusts and ungodliness. The preacher cannot teach us how to live, the Bible even cannot teach us how to live; that is, the mere reading of it will not so teach us. The Lord alone is the teacher of all his people, and he teaches them by the indwelling of his grace. When they do wrong they know it without being told by an outsider. If the grace of God does not teach a man or woman to live right in the sight of God nothing else under heaven can. We cannot change our natural dispositions; even the grace of God does not do that, but grace does and will subdue the old man of our nature, and will imbue us with the life of Christ, so that we shall walk in his steps and manifest the fruits of his Spirit. When this is the case, and not until then, there will be no jesting nor foolish talking. No man by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature. He cannot make one hair black or white. It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

It seems to be the idea of some that a christian can do or not do certain things, and if he does them he will be blessed, and if he fails to do them he will be chastised. There is such a thing as obedience, and there is such a thing as disobedience. Just to be let alone of God, to be unrestrained by grace, is all we need to be in a state of disobedience. God does not need to make us disobey, for it is our nature to do that, and our nature to do nothing but that, therefore when faith is not in exercise, when grace does not subdue, we are in disobedience. This is due to the weakness of our flesh and is, therefore, our fault. On the other hand, obedience is always due to the activity of faith, to the exercise of the Spirit, the power of grace. Christ is our obedience before God. His obedience is our obedience, we obey because he obeys. As he measures out to us the grace of obedience we obey, otherwise we disobey altogether. Disobedience does bring chastisement, that is true, but disobedience is not an accident, not a matter of chance; the will of God concerns our disobedience and the purpose of God is accomplished in it. This is one of the ways that God has of teaching his people their absolute dependence upon him, and that without him they can do nothing. "O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear? Return for thy servants' sake, the tribes of thine inheritance."—Isaiah lxiii. 17. Would they ever have desired his return had they never known what it was to mourn an absent God, and to realize their errors? Did the fact that they believed their erring and their hardening to be of God make them any the less desirous of the Lord's return, or any the more careless on that account? True, there is a blessing in obedience, not for it. Obedi-

ence is its own reward, for obedience is a measure of the gift of Christ, and to have any measure of Christ, be it ever so small, is to be blessed to that extent. To hold out rewards as an inducement to obedience, and to threaten disobedience with punishment to deter one therefrom, is a return to legal principles, and is to parallel the teachings of the religious world of the day. The apostles in all their writings never promised any rewards for obedience, always presenting obedience as flowing from the power of grace and as being a reward in itself. What makes people think that an obedient child of God escapes chastisement? The Bible presents no proof of such a thing. It is certain that if a single one of us escapes chastisement, be we obedient or disobedient, that certain it is that that one is a bastard and not a son. The Lord chastens all, not some, that he loves, and chastens every son that he receives, none being exempt. L.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

1 CORINTHIANS IX. 14.

MUCH has been said and written on the subject embraced in the text proposed for consideration, and it is doubtful whether we can elucidate the subject more clearly than others who have failed to give perfect satisfaction; still, as our brethren have a right to whatever views we have on all portions of the sacred Scriptures, we will not withhold such as we have.

"Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." Everything which the Lord has ordained in his church is binding on all his disciples, and if we, like Zacharias and Elizabeth, would walk in all the ordinances of the Lord blamelessly, this ordinance should with every other occupy our serious attention. Neither the propriety nor the utility of anything which the Lord has ordained can be questioned. It is enough for those who love and fear the Lord to know that he has instituted, decreed, commanded or ordained whatever service we are required to perform, and it is equally as binding on us to reject all rites, ceremonies, institutions or traditions in regard to our religious course which he has not enjoined on us by his example or express command. Christ instructed his apostles when he authorized them to preach, to teach those whom they baptized "to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you;" and lest any jot or tittle of what he had commanded the apostles should escape their recollection, he sent the Holy Spirit to bring all things to their remembrance. Nothing, therefore, is to be either added to or diminished from what the apostles have enjoined upon the saints. Among other institutions to be observed by divine command is that of the preaching of the gospel. Reserving to himself exclusively the sole right to call into the work whom he will, and qualify them with whatever amount of gifts he pleases, and direct to the field of labor he designs them for, he has given them command to preach, not a gospel, but the gospel, and woe to them if they preach not the gospel of Christ. As to what they shall eat or drink, or wherewithal they shall be clothed, they are directed, so far as they are concerned, to leave that all to him. Their heavenly Father knoweth that they need these things, and he has promised to supply them; if they observe his directions, and seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all these things shall be added unto them. But in the provisions

of this institution he has ordained and established a law in his kingdom equally binding on those of his children who receive the spiritual benefits of their ministerial labor, which, so far as they are led by his word and Spirit, they have neither the right nor disposition to disobey or neglect. On this point we understand the apostle to be treating in the text and its connection. There are, however, two senses of the word in which we understand that God has ordained that they who preach his gospel should live of the gospel. First, though not in the immediate application of these words of the apostle, they who preach the gospel must themselves be partakers of it, and in a spiritual sense must feed and grow upon the same food with which they are to feed the flock of God. None are qualified for the work who do not themselves live upon the gospel. But in the immediate application of the words under consideration we understand him to mean, second, that they are to be released from the cares and distractions of the world by the liberality of their brethren who partake of their spiritual things. The whole scope of his arguments on the subject shows that so he designed to be understood. The ordination, or law, to this effect may be deduced from the following indisputable premises. First, that all who were admitted into the fellowship of the primitive church brought all their earthly possessions and laid them at the apostles' feet, to be appropriated according to the laws of Christ, as laid down and expounded by the apostles. As all who were admitted to fellowship and membership in the church of Christ were required to recognize Christ as their Lord and Master, and to consider themselves not their own, but bought with a price, so all that they are and all they possess is by them regarded as belonging to Christ, while they, as his servants or stewards, are solemnly bound to appropriate all as he by his apostles directs. "Neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own."—Acts iv. 32. We do not understand that those who believe are required to transfer the title of their earthly possessions now to any who may claim to be successors of the apostles, but still while as stewards of such possessions, holding the charge of all they possess, and themselves amenable for their stewardship to Christ their Lord, they are to consider all as really lying at the feet of the apostles, and that they have no right to use aught of what they possess in any way forbidden by the apostles, or to fail to use all as the apostles have directed. Among other appropriations required of the saints by the laws of Christ, as expounded by the apostles, each is required according as he has been prospered of the Lord, or put in possession of property, to minister to the necessities of the destitute, to divide with those who have need. None among the primitive saints lacked; they had all things in common. The spirit of this rule is as binding now on them that believe as it was on the day of Pentecost, although a change of circumstances in the providence of God may render it inexpedient that the saints should sell their lands, or other property, or transfer their titles to others, but as was afterwards the order in the apostolic churches, each as a steward of God was permitted to hold the possession, but always subject to such drafts as his Lord and Master should make for it, or any part of it, either to relieve the pressing necessities of the destitute, or to meet any other apostolic demand for any other purpose.

If the foregoing views are correct, and our premises be admitted, there can be no great difficulty in arriving at a correct understanding of what is said by the apostle in our text in regard to what God has ordained or the law that Christ has enacted in his church in regard to the support of those whom he has called to devote themselves wholly to the ministry of the gospel. Seven men of honest report, and full of the Holy Ghost, were set apart by the apostles to supervise the distribution of what had been laid at the apostles' feet, as dictated by the apostles, and also for the purpose of relieving the apostles from such worldly cares as hindered them in the ministration of the word. Here, if we mistake not, we find authority for relieving the ministers of the word from the cares of the world in providing for a temporal support, so far at least as such cares hinder them from the full discharge of their ministerial labors. Where the churches or the saints require the entire time and abilities of the ministers, and their whole time is occupied in serving the churches, in feeding the flock of God, does not the Spirit of Christ in us, as well as the plain letter of the word, teach us that they should share of our temporal things? We cannot deny this without repudiating what the apostle tells us that God has ordained. Read the connection of the text under consideration: "Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also? For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" Now all this reasoning is too clear to admit of misconstruction. It is clearly an ordinance of God that those who are blessed with the consolations of the gospel ministry should, as God has prospered them, contribute to the temporal support of those who labor in the gospel ministry, and we have far greater cause to pity than to envy those who feel reluctant to perform cheerfully the duty which is thus enjoined by divine authority on them. Indeed, so far as our personal experience is concerned, it has been regarded by the brethren who have sustained us more in the light of a blessed privilege than of duty. Liberal souls devise liberal things. It has been our case for almost fifty years to have our lot among kind-hearted brethren and sisters, who have never required to be reminded of their duty in regard to this matter; more ready to lavish expressions of kindness on us than we were to think ourself deserving of them. We have never yet seen the day when we have doubted that if our necessity required it our brethren would divide their last loaf with us, and do it with the utmost cheerfulness.

Before we dismiss this subject we will say that the backwardness of brethren complained of in some sections of the country we have thought justly chargeable, at least to some extent, to an unwarrantable manner of some of our ministers in treating the subject. We have heard some preachers in warning the churches against greedy wolves, who would devour the flock, and who make

merchandise of the saints, preach as though they regarded it as wicked and sinful to do anything in sustaining the ministry by pecuniary assistance, or if they did, it must be when reduced to actual distress or suffering, and then upon the principle on which they contribute to the poor. We do not so understand the apostles' admonitions. Ministers of Christ, whose time and service are devoted to the churches, are not paupers, they are entitled to your liberality for their services bestowed on you. You are not willing to be considered as receiving their gifts and labors as paupers. You know the gifts belong to the church, and the ministers themselves are only stewards of them, as you are, on the other hand, stewards of those temporal gifts which you are commanded to impart to them. They have the same undoubted right to a support from your abundance of temporal possessions that you have to their labors in feeding and otherwise ministering to your spiritual wants. They have no right to withhold their labors; there is a woe resting on them if they preach not the gospel, and so there is a woe resting on those who receive their labors if they withhold from them that support which they are entitled to in return.

Another error on the part of ministers has sometimes been betrayed. We allude to a fretful, distrusting spirit, impatiently scolding and complaining of neglect. This is disheartening and discouraging to those on whom the censure is cast; we have never known such a course to produce any good effects. We would sooner suffer want and deprivation of the comforts which others enjoy than to wring them from the reluctant hands of those who can feel no pleasure in supplying them. Nothing is so well calculated to make the saints feel liberal as to feed them well with the sincere milk of the word. Let them see that the minister has their comfort and edification in view, and to promote these he counts not his own life dear unto himself, and if this will not awaken in them a kind and liberal feeling we may conclude that nothing short of the special power of the Spirit will. While the apostles with divine authority have laid before us what the Lord hath ordained on the subject, the reciprocal duties of ministers and the saints, Paul claimed the privilege of waiving his own undoubted right to the contributions to which he was justly entitled. He dreaded, and so should we, to be burdensome to the saints, and would rather forego his own comforts, privileges and rights than to impair or imperil his usefulness in the ministry. God will certainly sustain his own ministers as long as he has work for them, even when they are sent as lambs in the midst of wolves. Let us then rest on the assurance that our heavenly Father knoweth what we need and the hearts of all are in his hands.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., August 15, 1866.

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CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mary J. Ege, N. J., $2.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Lucretia J. Marteney Thompson was born near Elkins, W. Va., Nov. 24th, 1834, and died at Philippi, W. Va., Jan. 4th, 1915. When she was two years old her father, William Marteney, moved to what is now the county of Barbour, where she spent the rest of her long and useful life. In May, 1857, she was united in marriage with William C. Thompson, and thereafter made her home at Philippi and in the immediate vicinity thereof. To that union were born three children, two of whom died in early childhood. She was baptized in the fellowship of Mt. Olive Primitive Baptist Church May 24th, 1874. For a little more than two years before her death, owing to an accident with which she met, she was a cripple. During that time, as well as years before, she had the faithful and loving care not only of her husband, but also that of their daughter and her husband, Mr. R. J. Dunham. Of the large family into which she was born she is survived by only one sister, Mrs. Ellen Ward, living near Philippi, W. Va.

ALSO,

William C. Thompson, son of Elder Henry Thompson, and a descendant of one of the oldest families of Barbour County, was born at Morgantown, Va., (now West Virginia) Jan. 18th, 1833, and died at Philippi April 22nd, 1915. Coming to the county of Barbour at an early age, his life was practically spent therein. Jan. 26th, 1869, he became a member of the Mt. Olive Primitive Baptist Church. During the following month he was elected clerk of the church, and was chosen deacon thereof in February, 1873, and proved himself unswerving in his attachment. In the death of Mr. and Mrs. Thompson, the one following so closely upon the other, the people of Philippi have lost the last unbroken family connected with its earlier history. For almose threescore years they as husband and wife shared in the life of the town and of the community. During all that time the town has had in it none who has lived a life more blameless than theirs. Besides his daughter, Mrs. R. J. Dunham, Mr. Thompson is survived by two brothers and one sister: Hamilton G. Thompson, of Bristol, W. Va., Hezekiah J. Thompson and Mrs. Jane R. Wilson, of Philippi, W. Va. They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided.

A friend, ROBT. M. STRICKLER.

Goldsborough Shockley died at his home near Snow Hill, Md., July 31st, 1915, aged 45 years, 3 months and 17 days. His disease was typhoid fever. He was the youngest son of William J. and sister Mary E. Shockley. He was married Feb. 22nd, 1893, to Miss Elnora Mumford. Two daughters were born to them, Nellie and Willie Shockley. Besides his wife and two daughters, father and mother, one sister and one brother survive him: Mrs. Emory Disharoon, of Salisbury, Md., and Arthur Shockley, of Newark, Md. Mr. Shockley was a highly esteemed and respected citizen of Worcester County, Md., an industrious and energetic farmer. His excellent natural qualities made him many friends in his community. Although he was not a member of the Old School Baptist Church, he faithfully attended the meetings of the church, and was firm in the doctrine of salvation by grace. In conversation with him the writer had satisfactory evidence that he knew and loved the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

Funeral services were held in the Snow Hill meetinghouse, the writer speaking from 1st Corinthians xv. 24-27. He was laid away in the new cemetery of the M. P. denomination in Snow Hill.

B. F. COULTER.

MEETINGS.

THE Clovesville Old School Baptist Church has appointed a yearly or two days meeting to be held on the first Saturday and Sunday in September (4th and 5th), 1915. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, especially brethren in the ministry of our faith and order. Trains will be met at Fleischmanns station the first day of the meeting.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the South Gardiner Church, at South Gardiner, Maine, to begin on Friday before the second Monday in September, and continue three days. Those coming by rail will get off at South Gardiner. It would be well to write to brother Walter Weeks, Gardiner, Route 14, or sister Emma D. Lowell, Richmond, Maine, Route 1, telling them the train you are coming on.

J. E. HUBBARD, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the First Church of Roxbury, at Vega, N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday following the third Sunday in September (22nd and 23rd), 1915. Trains will be met at Roxbury Tuesday afternoon, Sept. 21st. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

A. J. SLAUSON.

THE yearly meeting of the Cow Marsh Church will be held on the fourth Sunday in September, 1915, and Saturday afternoon before. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends to meet with us. Trains will be met Saturday morning at Viola station.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Pastor.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Jefferson Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, October 6th and 7th, 1915. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, especially brethren in the ministry. Those coming to Stamford will be met on Tuesday, the 5th, noon train.

G. E. MEAD, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church of Jesus Christ called New Hope, situated in Washington County, Oregon, (by request of sister H. C. Wilke, of 979 Vancouver Ave., Portland, Oregon,) if not providentially hindered will convene at her home on Saturday before the second Sunday in October, 1915, for conference. All members of the church are kindly requested to be present, and all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus are cordially invited to meet with us. J. K. BOYD, Moderator.

THE Juniata Association is appointed to be held with the Springfield Church, near Three Springs, Pa., on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 8th, 9th and 10th, 1915. Train leaves Mt. Union, Pa., at 4:45 p. m. for Three Springs Thursday before. We hope a good number will be present.

J. M. FENTON, Pastor.

MOSES MELLOTT, Clerk.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting will meet, the Lord willing, with the Ebenezer Church, Loudoun Co., Va., on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1915, and continue three days. Trains will be met at Bluemont on Tuesday before the meeting, and all visitors taken care of. Those coming by rail take green electric car marked Georgetown, outside of Union station, Washington, D. C., and go to the end of the line, where they will transfer to the cars of Washington & Old Dominion R. R., which will bring them to Bluemont. The cars for Bluemont leave at 2 p. m., subject to change in schedule, at 36th and M Sts., Georgetown, D. C. Those who can come in their own conveyances will be appreciated, as there are only a few of us to meet trains. Ministering and other brethren of our faith and order and all lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

F. E. ROBEY, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

EZEKIEL XXXIX. 28.

"HAVE left none of them any more there."

The Lord was rich in mercy unto typical Israel. How often he wrought in their behalf for his own name's sake. Not according to the covenant he made with them at Mount Sinai, but purely in new covenant sovereign grace. He sent them into captivity among the heathen for their good, (Jeremiah xxiv. 5; Heb. xii. 10,) and there they were to bear their shame. (Ezek. xxxii. 26.) But he turned again their captivity, and brought them out of all the places where they were scattered in the cloudy and dark day. He left none of them any more there, but caused them to come with singing unto Zion, and sorrow and sighing fled away. And thus in marvelous grace Jehovah speaks, "Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel." When God ransomed his people from Egypt they came forth young and old, sons and daughters and flocks. There was not an hoof left behind. (Exod. x. 9-26.) Go through the land of Egypt, look among the brickyards, where with cruel bondage, in exhausting labors they served their taskmasters; search the fields, the cities, the prisons and dungeons throughout the land, there is not an Israelite in all Egypt. The I AM, their Redeemer, hath left none of them any more there. When David pursued after the Amalekites to recover his own, he first inquired of the Lord, saying, "Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them? And he answered him, Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all." And "David recovered all." —1 Samuel xxx. 19. And thus speaks our precious Christ, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."—John x. 27, 28. "How think ye? If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should

perish."—Matt. xviii. 12–14. The work of Christ our Redeemer is so complete that ultimately all his redeemed ones shall dwell with him in heaven, in eternal glory. The church in him is predestinated unto the adoption of children, and to be conformed to his image, and in him we are ordained to an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us.

"Since Christ is my head, this with joy I remember,
His body, to which with affection I glow,
Although I'm the most insignificant member,
Can't be full without me, ah never, O no!"

Christ's precious blood hath ransomed all his people from their sins. He gave himself an offering and a sacrifice for a sweet-smelling savor unto the Father, and thereby to wash them from all their sins, to present them without fault before the throne of God. None of them shall be left in their sins, none of them shall be left under the curse of the law, none of them left in the power of the devil, none of them left in death, or in the grave, they all shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Having died for them, in the dispensation of the fullness of times they are all called unto the grace of Christ, unto sacred and comforting fellowship with the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord, and moved by the Spirit of Christ in them, they journey in their faith to the heavenly country. Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city. We are looking for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Our citizenship is there, our names are written in heaven, and surely our gracious and glorious God shall guide us with his counsel, and afterward receive us to glory. Look at the difficulties in their pilgrimage, the hindrances, the powers to overcome, the battles to be fought. The apostle describes them, saying, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." —Rom. viii. 35–39. The righteous shall hold on his way, upheld by God's gracious, omnipotent hand. No matter how sore and deep the troubles of the saints, God will bring them up again from the depths of the sea. In that day when he counteth up the people none of them will be missing.

"His love in times past forbids us to think
He will leave us at last in trouble to sink,
Each sweet Ebenezer we have in review,
Confirms his good pleasure to help us quite through."

Look into all the deeps, and up out of all tribulation they shall come; the Lord will not leave any of them there. Search through all the dark mountains of sin, of unbelief, none shall be left to perish there. Go down into the abyss of the doctrine of devils, the deep mire of damnable heresies, and it will be found at last that God, our God, hath not left any of them any more there, for it is written, They shall all be taught of God. The Spirit of truth shall guide them into all truth, and they shall enter the city above. Out of all the fires he will pluck them, through all the deep waters he will bring them; he will redeem them from all evil, and out of the hand of the terrible. Search Egypt, Assyria and Babylon, and

though the people of God were once bondmen, outcasts, and captives ready to perish, God hath left none of them any more there. Sin, death and the grave shall celebrate no victory over God's elect, for Christ has the keys of death and hell, and in the last day he will call forth his redeemed to the resurrection of life. Search all hell, descend into the bottomless pit, search all the dungeons of the lowest hell, and not one shall be found there that hath the Father's name in his forehead. Once I, a vile sinner, felt I must surely sink into the lowest abysmal depths of perdition, such I feared must verily be my just doom; but in sovereign, ineffable grace, through the blood of Christ's covenant he brought up my soul from corruption, he cast all my sins behind his back, and I felt amidst my adoring, wonder and praises to his name that he had delivered my soul from the lowest hell. The prisoners, his prisoners, his blood-ransomed people, are sent forth out of the pit wherein is no water. God hath left none of them any more there. O thou precious Christ, how gracious are thy words; thou sayest, "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."—John vi. 39, 40, 44, 54. O, it is our everlasting consolation to believe that Jesus our Lord himself "shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."—1 Thess. iv. 16–18. "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. xv. 51–57. O, in that day all the ransomed church of God will bear the image of the heavenly: we shall, in our whole spirit and soul and body, be holy and without blame before him in love; we shall be with our glorified Savior in glory, and we shall be like him, and we shall see him as he is, and every one that hath this hope in his heart purifieth himself even as he is pure.

"Triumphantly glorious our Head has ascended,
O'er death and the grave, all their power laying low,
This gains us a rising, when time shall be ended,
Death no more shall hold us, ah never, O no!"

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

WALKER, Oregon, July 29, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I read your articles about secret orders and absolute predestination with very much pleasure, because you contend earnestly for the blessed doctrine of the word. Every good and every perfect gift proceedeth and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness or shadow of turning; hence he is safe to trust for salvation from creation throughout time and eternity; and indeed there is nothing else to trust, for we are predestinated according to the good pleasure of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

I note your request for any one having a revelation on Rev. xii. 17. I do not know whether I have or not, but some things I have read and some things I have received in meditation seem quite clear to me on that subject. You and brother Ker may dispose of it as you think best.

About 255 A. D. there was a sharp contention over a people who had denounced the christian religion and sworn allegiance to the pagan form of worship, and then when the persecution abated they flocked back to the church. But Novation contended for the doctrine of Christ: If any come unto you and bring not this doctrine (of Christ) receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed, (2 John 10, 11,) and required them to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Cornelius made the popular plea to receive all who would come, and so many unbelievers were received and walked after the flesh, and not after the Spirit, that Novation and the orderly walking brethren found it necessary to withdraw from every brother that walked disorderly, and thus there was war in heaven (the church), and the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world, was cast out into the earth and his angels with him, and he and his or her descendants are called by the followers of Christ "the world," and have well deserved the name to this day. From Cain and Abel there has ever been and ever will be until the last flesh is changed a warfare between the flesh and the Spirit; one with the weapons of a carnal warfare, and the other with the sword of the Spirit and the shield of faith, whereby you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the devil. What a wonderful warfare, and what a wonderful Captain of our salvation, who was obedient even unto death, and was not in the least conquered by the last terrible enemy of our peace of mind; and we find many of whom the world was not worthy followed: the apostles, Stephen, Fox, Justin Marty and thousands of others who feared not what man could do unto them, but loved not their lives even unto death. All this did not just happen, for known unto God are all his works from the beginning. And working all things after the counsel of his own will, we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called. I will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able to bear, but with every temptation I will also make a way of escape. Blessed promise of victory, even if it is in release from the body of this death. The church is built on the everlasting Rock of ages, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against it, although she has been assailed by raging torrents and direful tempests from within and without. When the woman (the church, verse 6) fled into the place prepared of God for her, the valleys of the Alps, called Piedmont, and were called

Novations, to be nourished there a thousand, two hundred and threescore days (verse 15), a time, and times, and half a time, and escaped the flood the dragon sent after her, it was then, as ever afterward, a remnant of the true family was drawn after the false doctrine (verse 4), and his tail (the prophet that teaches lies, he is the tail, Isaiah ix. 15,) drew one third part of the stars of heaven after him. There were many left scattered about in the land, many of whom were afterward beheaded for the testimony of Christ; they were the salt of the earth, and they kept his commandments and had the testimony of Jesus and sealed it with their blood. Read carefully Revelation twelfth chapter. These are the people that were in the earth and swallowed up the flood of persecution during the dark ages, when the rulers of darkness of this world persecuted so mercilessly. The church fled to the wilderness and was called Novations, Donatist, Paterines, Waldenses, &c., and the beast, knowing he had but a short time, waged a deadly warfare against the remainder of her seed, so that millions of harmless people who would not resort to the weapons of a carnal warfare either for defence or spread of the gospel were martyred. She was hid twelve hundred and sixty years, a time, and times, and half a time, which also equal forty and two months, the time the beast remained until the reformation, when it received the deadly wound which was afterward healed. And the church fled into the wilderness after the beast was cast out, and she was also driven from her abiding place in the Alps a few years after the beast received the deadly wound, by the French and English Protestants. Now let us read carefully Revelation thirteenth chapter. The second beast was Protestantism. Then in Revelation seventeenth chapter John was shown a summing up of what went before and the judgment of the great whore. I am not historian enough to follow the governments and kings, but I believe God has given me to see what is here revealed of the spirit of iniquity that dominated the horns and kingdoms and the powers of darkness, the federations of spiritual wickedness in high places called churches. In verse sixteen he saw the daughters of Rome turn with fury on the mother, proving they were animated by the same spirit; and the elders among us of to-day well remember hearing the mother of harlots vehemently attacked from her daughters' pulpits; but to-day it is not so. In verse seventeen John saw by faith what we see literally: the great church confederation move, and also giving all the power back. Four or five years ago I read in my daily paper that "the greatest religious gathering ever known was being held at Edinburgh; that for many months they had been gathering in three thousand official and three thousand unofficial delegates—the master religious minds of the world to the world's missionary conference. Every branch of Protestantism, from the ritualist part of the church of England to the Quaker meeting, is represented, and nothing will be allowed to enter into the deliberations of the conference which is bias or contrary to the Roman Catholic faith." Having only the natural mind, they cannot discern and unite on the spiritual truths of God's word, for the natural mind is enmity against God, is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Hence the rapid growth of higher critics, rationalism, which denies the virgin birth of Christ, the miracles, the resurrection, and everything else that human wisdom cannot find a natural rea-

son for; it is the spirit of antichrist. "Dr." Aked, who was the president of the church confederation move in San Francisco, publicly said that Jesus was not born of a virgin, that is, he was not the Son of God; and a few of the stars of heaven who were drawn into Babylon by her tail (false teachers) said, We will not have such a leader, but when it was discussed and voted "Dr." Aked still remained the head by the choice of the majority. This union of hypocrisy compassing sea and land to make one proselyte more the child of hell than themselves, is fulfilling the type set in the tower of Babel, and a careful reading of chapter eighteen will reveal that she is doomed to the same fate—a terrible confusion of tongues and faces. Peter also warned his brethren. (2 Peter ii.) O, my dear brethren, every form of worship that is not truly indited by the spirit of faith and trust in God is false and idolatrous, and is included in this confederation christian civic congress, including all worldly organization. Then it is now the time of the voice from heaven (the church) crying, Come out of her, my people, that ye partake not of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues; for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquity. O precious saints of the most high God, cry aloud and spare not. Paul says, Knowing the terror of the Lord we persuade men. (2 Cor. v. 10, 11.) For every one must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or evil.

Myers, author of the general history used in Oregon high schools a few years ago, tells on page 300 of Constantine's struggle for the Roman throne. He came to victory after seeing a heavenly vision in the sky when he was praying to the sun god. It was a christian cross, and under it he read, "In this sign conquer," and he was victorious, his legions fighting under that standard. He says: "This act of Constantine constitutes a turning point in Roman history, and especially the christian church. Christianity had come into the world a religion of peace and good will. The master had commanded them to put up the sword and forbid its use, either in the spread or defence of the new faith." For three centuries now his followers had followed literally this injunction of the founder of the church. Now in a moment all this was changed; the most sacred emblem of the new faith was made a battle standard, and into the new religion was infused the military spirit of the imperial government that had made that ensign of the state. From that time a martial spirit has animated the religion of the Prince of Peace. This infusion into the church of the military spirit of Rome was one of the most important consequences of the espousal of the christian cause by the emperor Constantine. This history, I believe, is correct, except that instead of the church of Christ absorbing a worldly military spirit at this time, it delivered itself of the worldly spirit that had crept in; and while they called themselves christians to take away their reproach, they thrived on their own bread—bloodshed, malice, carnage, &c., and wore their own apparel, and had no resemblance, excepting fictitiously, to the bride of Him who said positively, He that taketh the sword shall perish with the sword. Peter beautifully points to the great Head, the Captain of our salvation. For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for

us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously. Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, as though some strange thing happened unto you, but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye. These things, says our Elder Brother, Husband, Friend, I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them. No weapon formed against thee shall prosper. There is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. More precious in the eyes of the Lord is the trial of your faith than of fine gold."

"The flames shall not hurt thee, I only design
Thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine.

The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no, never, no, never forsake."

I will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able to bear. What blessed encouragement for all whose way seems dark, drear and doubtful. Jesus paid it all, all to him I owe.

G. O. WALKER.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Aug. 6, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am not a subscriber for the SIGNS, but I stay at a place where it comes twice a month, and I read it every chance I get, and find comfort and consolation in it. If you will allow me a little space for this time I will try to write a little of those things that constantly weigh heavily on my mind.

First, I want to say that I never know just what I am going to say. I will try and write whatever the Lord is pleased to give me. I will just write as my mind opens up. That is the way I have to talk, and it is the way that I have to write, so let us let the bucket down into the well and see what can be brought up. It now seems that if anything it will be mud and slush. But it is God that brings a clean thing out of an unclean, and that according to his will and purpose. I believe in a God of purpose, and I think from the way you write that you do. Now let us see if our belief will bear searching out. If it will not, then it is very certain that it will not stand the test of the fiery day that is to come. We read, "For our God is a consuming fire." What is the connection where this language is found? It is the language of the apostle Paul to the Hebrews, twelfth chapter, twenty-ninth verse. Before he speaks to them in the words of the text he says, "Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." Then he adds, "For our God is a consuming fire." Now we can see the reason why Paul calls their attention to the fact that they must have grace to serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. Why? Because he is a consuming fire. All the worship that we do without sovereign, rich and reigning grace is wood, hay and stubble, which is consumed by the fire of God's wrath against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. This, then, is a good reason why we must have grace. If we cannot worship God without his grace,

then I would like to know how it is possible for us to serve him without his grace. Paul lets the church here know that they have received a kingdom, or, as I understand it, have gotten into a kingdom, or the kingdom within them, and this kingdom cannot be moved. If it cannot be moved, then it is certain that it is a safe place to be in. If the kingdom cannot be moved, then it is certain that the subjects of this kingdom are secure. Let us bear in mind that it is a kingdom wherein grace abounds. Who can say that this kingdom is not the kingdom? It is found in the hearts of God's children. Do we not read, "The kingdom of God is within you"? If so, what other kingdom is spoken of in the Bible but the kingdom of God that the church had received? Now in the twenty-fifth verse of this chapter the apostle says, "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven." The one that is referred to that spake on earth was Abel, or the blood of Abel. This was back in the beginning of time, when Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous (or that his offering was right), God testifying of his gift (offering), and by it he being dead yet speaketh. This cost Abel his blood, typifying the blood of Jesus Christ. Now we are sure that Abel was a man of grace. Paul tells us that Abel made his offering by faith. By faith, or because of faith, it was acceptable when Cain's was not. We read again, "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." Then, what else is faith, being the gift of God, but grace? These two abiding principles make the salvation of the church of Christ sure and certain. How? Because it is all of His sovereign power and just right to give it to all freely through Jesus Christ, and inasmuch as he does his will and none can hinder, that makes it sure and certain to all the promised seed. At the time that Abel made his offering God then and there showed that his grace was discriminating. He gave Abel grace to make his offering in an acceptable way, as well as the offering itself being acceptable, for it was the offering that set forth in type the Lord Jesus Christ. In those days, and up until the birth of the holy Son of God, the typical church was worshipping under shadows, the law itself being a shadow of good things to come. This very thing, of law service, is the reason why they refused the grace principle manifested in his offering. Where there is nothing but serving God under the law there is no grace service, and that is what the apostle means by saying that they refused him that spake on earth, and by this they were often in great distress, because of their inability to serve God under the law; hence the punishment, for that is what the law demands of all those who violate it. At this age the church was in a kingdom that could be shaken, and was to be removed. The thunderings of that mountain that "could not be touched," shook this kingdom from top to bottom as it poured forth as it "burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard, entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more." This was the mighty shaking that was to remove this kingdom. This was the voice of God in his wrath against sin and all who sensibly feel that by the deeds of the

law no flesh shall be justified in his sight. All legalists refuse the principle of grace; they refuse to be saved by it, claiming that God only gives grace for works, instead of works because of grace. Those who have read and understood from a personal experience the sufferings of God's people under the law know full well that they did not escape the just punishment of the law (that is, I mean in this life). So now the apostle says, How shall not we escape if we refuse him that spake from heaven? He who spake from heaven was the great King of kings, and his kingdom is a kingdom of grace, and not of works; his kingdom is a kingdom of free, unmerited favor, independent of the act of the creature, hence it is all of grace, and not of works in any sense, and all Old Baptists who have refused the grace way, either for time or eternity, will not escape; they will be brought by reason of great suffering to know that all other ways but the way of grace is and will be shaken down to rise no more. I believe that Old Baptists as a people have received into their hearts and souls a kingdom that cannot be moved, hence we must have grace; we have found out by experience that we cannot get along without it. Then, as Paul says, let us have it; do not let us have our own efforts, they will utterly fail us; we will be found Cain-worshippers instead of Abel-worshippers. Did not Cain's effort to serve God fail him? He and his offering were not acceptable. If our offering is not acceptable, then it is certain that we are not. I feel that I know this from a deep past experience with self, the flesh and the devil, and now I must have grace. David said, "God will give grace and glory." Just will do it, without let or hindrance. O I am glad it is so. I need it so badly. My daily prayer is, Remember me with the favors that thou bearest to thy people, and visit me with thy salvation. All the Bible characters desired the salvation of God, they prayed for it and begged for it, sometimes on the mountain top, sometimes in the valley, wherever they were they cried unto God for his salvation. What else is that but Jesus? God has never yet, nor ever will, be pleased with any other offering for time or for eternity. When you tell me that I must act here in time independent of the grace of God you kill me, you ruin me. But it is not so, I must have grace, God says that he will give it, and I believe it, hence I am hoping in his tender mercy through Jesus Christ. What would I, a poor sinner, do without hope in God's mercy? I would be lost forever from the presence of the just and holy God. Paul says, He is the God of all grace. Then we cannot get it anywhere else only from him, and he will supply all our needs according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ. So this is a wonderful kingdom, it cannot be moved by any power seen or unseen, neither can the subjects of this kingdom be moved. Those who feel to know from experience that "our God is a consuming fire," love the doctrine and principles of this kingdom.

Well, I will close. Excuse me.

Yours in hope of the mercy of God,

C. M. HOOD.

STANTON, Okla., March 8, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have just read the March 15th number of the SIGNS, and O the joy and love that filled my soul while I read; I was made to say, Praise the Lord, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and made us sit together. My dear kindred, in reading the good

messages in our paper I was almost persuaded I was sitting at the King's table with them, supping with them, as did the apostles with the dear Savior. I cannot tell the comfort I derive from our good paper; it falls to me in pleasant places. The doctrine advocated by the dear writers is food for me here in this lonely world; it is the only preaching I have. When they tell of meeting together and singing praises to the Lord how I long to be with them, unworthy as I feel to be, for I am fully aware that if the dear children of God knew me as I know myself they would have no fellowship for me; but my love is too strong for it to be broken by the world; it is, I hope, not of the earth. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren, and if I am not deceived I do love my brethren who preach on the housetop the doctrine that was once delivered unto the saints, giving glory to the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the one who has all power in heaven and earth. His name is Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. O precious hope, that he saved me. He is my Morning Star. I love to talk and meditate upon the love and mercy of the Lord to me, a poor sinner, but how little I feel. I am made to say daily, Be merciful to me, for thou knowest me altogether, dear Lord; remember me in mercy, Jesus; thou art the sinner's friend, and as such I look to thee; in the bowels of thy love, O Lord, remember me. Dear friends, the Lord is love, and his mercy endureth forever to poor sinners like me.

My dear brethren and sisters in hope of a better life beyond the grave, I will close, as I write but to thank all for their good communications. My address is Stanton, Carter Co., Okla.; please address me at this place.

I will send another letter from our young brother, I. D. Moody, and if you deem it worthy a place you may publish it. Write on, dear brethren and sisters. If I could write as you all do it would give me much comfort to do so, but I am so blind, naturally and spiritually, and am a poor old sinner, saved by grace alone.

My dear brethren in the Lord, farewell.

Yours unworthily,

NANCY CREEL.

FLETCHER, Okla., Jan. 24, 1914.

MRS. NANCY CREEL—DEAR SISTER:—My mind seems exercised about your welfare, and the remembrance comes up before me that I have not written you as I promised to do, so I will make the attempt, trusting that the Lord will direct my mind. The reason that I have not written sooner is not because I have forgotten you, for I think of you often, but to speak plainly, dear sister, it is quite a task for one so sinful as I know myself to be to attempt to write of the goodness of our God to those I know can tell these things so much better than I can. Often I feel so cast down and so wretched that I am made to exclaim, as did the poet, "I am so vile, so prone to sin, I fear that I'm not born again." Often I say, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I am also made to exclaim, Lord, save, I perish. It seems that I am left in darkness until I am almost ready to faint by the way, then through the tender mercies of our God the Sun of Righteousness arises with healing in his wings and causes me to go forth and grow up as a calf of the stall; then can I say, as did the apostle Paul, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the

flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."—Romans viii. 1, 2.

I will try and finish this letter. I was forced to stop writing Sunday night, on account of the oil burning out of our lamp, and ever since then the trouble has been in me. I have felt so deprived of the oil of God's love that I have feared to write, but I have just read your letter in the SIGNS, and it was so God-glorifying and soul-cheering that I just want to tell you it was a sweet message to me, although it brings sadness to my heart to learn of your afflictions, and my prayer is that God will restore you to health, if it be according to his holy will, and that it may yet be according to his will to continue to use you to the comfort of his people, as I am sure that he has in the past; but, dear sister, should he not see fit to grant these desires, should we not humbly submit to his will, knowing that he is an all-wise God and makes no mistakes? It is declared that his knowledge is perfect, and it is also written that whatsoever his soul desireth even that he also doeth, and I believe that he only desires and does that which is for our good and his glory. I know the Arminians say if that be true there is no need of prayer. Well, let us see if it is true. Job says, "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth."—Job xxiii. 13. So we see the difference in praying to a God that is in one mind, and one that will go according to our desires. Such a god would be no protector at all, and our destruction would be sure. A little child often cries and pleads for things that if it were to get would mean certain death to it, and if its father did not know the danger in these things, and would give them to it just because it asked for them, we see at once what the end would be. Just so with the children of God; within themselves they are just as ignorant as a little child as to what is best for them, and are just as sure to ask for things to their destruction as is the child, and if God answered according to their desires the result would be the same as with the little child. Paul said, "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."—Romans viii. 26, 27. If what we ask for is not indited by the Spirit God will not give it to us, for it would only be to our hurt and against his will. This we are often guilty of. James says, "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts."—James iv. 3. Dear sister, let us take courage, for our God will not give us our blind desires, but he is our protector, and will only do that which is for our good, for all things work together for good to them that love him, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Is it not wonderful that such sinners as we have hope through Christ Jesus that this great God has remembered us in mercy? "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

Your unworthy brother,

I. D. MOODY.

ENSLEY, Ala., March 4, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find a check for two dollars, for which I wish to become a subscriber for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which I dearly love to read.

The inclosed letter from brother Pitts is at the disposal of the editors. After reading it several times I thought how wonderfully good it was, and how I would like to see it in the SIGNS. It seemed like a sermon to my soul. I greatly enjoyed the explanation on the Sabbath, which I did not fully understand before, and had never read it in the SIGNS until brother Pitts sent me a copy a few weeks ago.

Unworthily yours in precious hope,
(MRS.) P. A. POWERS.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., Feb. 15, 1915.

DEAR SISTER POWERS:—I have a little spare time at present, and as you have been in my mind I will spend this time in a little talk by letter, which is the best I can do, as it seems next to impossible to visit you all as I would like. The subject of the attitude of the people of God toward the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is one of vast interest, but it only interests his people; in fact, no others can understand anything about it; they cannot even discuss the subject intelligently. Your child could not understand me, nor my child you; that is, in the way of relationship, matters which pertain to your household, things which pertain to your family, would be foreign to my children, or to the children of your neighbors. So it is with God's children, his promises, his injunctions, his commands, are to his people, those who were embraced in his covenant, the covenant of grace. There are people, you know, who cannot understand this subject of grace, they want to modify its efficacy, that is, mix it with works, and this, you know, will not do. They cannot understand it; they will tell you they, too, believe in salvation by grace, but they want to go a little further, and add something more, when God very plainly says that we are saved by grace, and that not of ourselves; that is, grace is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works. How plain that is, lest any man should boast. They are boasting to-day, you hear them boasting, I hear them, even hear my own children telling what is being done at their Sunday Schools and in the church, where they have such fine times singing and playing, &c. Tell them something about grace, and it is a language they cannot comprehend. Well, if we will only stop and silently think, think deeply and earnestly, the present popular custom of keeping a day holy to the Lord and calling it the "Sabbath," is nothing more or less than one form of works; it is some little effort on the part of the people, whereby they claim to be honoring and serving God, when in all truth and earnestness there is nothing to it. There is a rest for the people of God, of which the world knows nothing, but the children of God understand this to their hearts' delight, and they try to honor him every day of their lives, though they know that they fall far short of honoring him as they desire to. You will find people who will tell you flatly that they honor and serve him all the time, that they know they are at peace with him, but you cannot find an Old Baptist who will make any such remark; they have nothing surer than a little spark of hope, which they cling to with tenacity, counting themselves as nothing, and less than nothing, if it be possible. You will find people who claim that they pay tithes to the Lord, they fast, they

keep the holy days, they pray, &c., just like they did in olden times, and we know how their paying tithes, praying three times a day, keeping holy days, &c., were accepted by the Lord, while there were those who did not have enough courage to let their eyes look upward, but struck themselves on their breasts, where there was an aching heart, and cried for mercy: Be merciful to me, a sinner. O, my dear sister, this is a beautiful subject. This life is not our place of abode, it is only a short journey, full of all kinds of doubts, fears, disappointments, sickness, death and everything to make the heart sad, but O what a precious season it is when we can be blessed with his presence, if only for a fleeting, short moment; it takes us far away from the transient things of this world and permits us to get a short, sweet glimpse into that place, somewhere, we know not just where, but it must be around the throne of God; at any rate there is sweetness in the thought, and how comforting it is when we realize that we are kept by the power of God, to be revealed at the last day; he will reveal things to us which are now kept from us. Remember we cannot expect to get in possession of the things which are kept in store only for those who have been changed from mortality to immortality. Mortal eyes could not stand to look upon the things intended for the immortal, and our God only reveals, unfolds to us as we grow in grace and as we near the end of this life. Just as you did with your little babes; you would not give them strong food, it was not the kind they required. You would not read books to your baby, it could not understand them, it has to grow in stature. This is the way I understand these things, in a short talk. I know you understand them better than I do. I merely mention a few random thoughts.

I am glad you appreciated the copy of the SIGNS I mailed you, and I wish you would subscribe for it. Every copy is good, and there is nothing published in that paper but what is good for all God's chosen ones; other people would not appreciate it. Now, understand me, my sister, I do not profess to be one of God's people; no, no, I shudder at the idea of such a profession, but I know that I love them. I love no other; the dear songs of Zion are sweet to my ears, the doctrine I hear from our pulpit I love dearly, and I think I believe it, and I will say that I hope I have a little spark of kinship with his people. I believe I understand what salvation by grace means. I know I am glad to think that there is a way for a human being to be saved eternally, independent of his own good works, for I am quite sure that if it were not that way, with my present understanding of it, I would feel very doubtful; in fact, I confess there is much doubt with me now as to whether or not I am one of those John spoke of having seen; that mulitude he could not number, but I live by hope.

With much love to you all, yours in hope, H. M. PITTS.

MARGARETVILLE, N. Y., July 26, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending you this letter from a dear sister, which if you think best you can publish. I was greatly comforted last week while hearing a sermon proclaimed by our dear brother, Elder D. M. Vail, who came laden with the good old news of peace on earth, good will toward men; it was precious, and brought to mind the precious ointment poured upon the head of our Savior, which was to be told as a memorial. Once the words, She hath done what she could, came to me very forcibly be-

fore I united with the church, but I thought that I was too unworthy; how could I ever ask a home with that dear people, those whom I loved for the truth's sake? That sermon also reminded me of the precious ointment poured upon Aaron's head, which was likened to the unity of the brethren. Behold, how good it is, and how pleasant, for brethren to dwell together in unity. Our Savior said, Blessed are the peacemakers. How sweet, how lovely, is the sight when those who love the Lord in one another's peace delight, and thus fulfill his word. Perhaps when we first united with the church, when our joy was full, we loved all our brethren. O for such love let rocks and hills their lasting silence break. These lines often come into my mind. The love of Jesus is precious.

"Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

We love him because he first loved us.

I miss Elder Chick's editorials, but am glad that we yet have good editors. I greatly enjoyed the Circular Letter written by brother George Conner, as well as the others. I feel that this, like the writer, is very imperfect, but I had an inclination to write; perhaps it will be all right for the wastebasket, which will suit me just as well.

From a weak and erring one,

PHEBE J. FAULKNER.

DAVENPORT, N. Y., July 17, 1915.

MY DEAR SISTER:—I was very glad to hear from you, and am glad that meditations of your mind are so comforting, when in a measure you are so shut in from the world, but that has its advantages; you do not perhaps get so perplexed and wrought up over all the worldly isms of the day, and your mind is left more free to consider sacred things and meditate on the mercies and blessings of the wonder-working God. With me, I am here and there among my children, and mingle with all sorts of people, and hear much about the religion of the day, with all their societies and machinery for getting up big money-making revivals to fill their churches and coffers, and sometimes I presume that I am a mystery to them, that I do not favor or get more enthusiastic over their schemes and societies for building up the church, but I have not so learned Christ. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: * * * neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," and unless the Spirit takes of the things of God and shows them unto us we cannot even desire Christ. He is as a root out of dry ground to us. Christ said to Nicodemus, Ye must be born again, and it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. By grace are ye saved, not of works, and grace and works will no more mix than oil and water. Sometimes when I am with my own people, as I love to call the dear Old Baptists, I feel so unworthy and so ignorant of spiritual things, and that perhaps I savor so much of the things of the world, I wonder how they can fellowship me, and think if they saw me as I see myself they could not, yet God in his great mercy has enabled me to hope, and though at times it seems exceeding small, I have never entirely lost sight of it, and I feel to say with the poet,

"His love in times past forbids me to think
He will leave me at last in sorrow to sink."

Yet I cannot live as near to God as I would like, not so much in the Spirit, and have to spend a great deal of my time in the valley of humility and mourn an absent Lord. I do a great deal of question-

ing, and wondering why things have to be thus and so. Like Martha, I am troubled about many things, so the long and short of it is I have to say, Just as I am, though tossed about with many conflicts, many doubts, fightings within and fears without, O Lamb of God, I come. Our heavenly Father knoweth them that are his, and he makes no mistakes. He knoweth my weakness and shortcomings and every desire of my heart, and though nations may rage and war, kingdoms and empires fall and be wiped out, he has a purpose in it all, and can restrain it when that purpose is served, and that is where the quieting thought comes in, when I can sit down for a quiet hour with my Bible or the SIGNS. Not long ago, perhaps the June 1st or May 15th number, seemed particularly good. Elder Lefferts' on secret societies, and some other articles particularly interesting to me.

You speak of my writing for the SIGNS. Some years ago I did write occasionally, and sometimes yet I feel like writing and telling the dear editors and contributors to our dear family paper how much comfort I derive from their writings, and to say to them that I sorrow with them in their sorrow, and am interested and sympathize with them in all their varied trials and experiences on their pilgrimage journey, but my writings always seem so unworthy a place in our dear paper I forbear, and sometimes the thought comes to me, If I ever had a talent, I have kept it so obscure, wrapped up, as it were, in a napkin, it has been taken from me, and that is why I have no more liberty in writing or talking. Be that as it may, I am making this too long, for I am getting tired. With love and best wishes for your comfort, both temporal and spiritual, I will close. Affectionately,

HARRIET N. HARKNESS.

ATLANTIC, N. C., July 15, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—I have just been reading "Fragments," in July 1st SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I felt that the loaves and fishes had been broken, the multitude fed, and some fragments had been gathered up and put in store for me, even me. I was hungry. I have been practically out of business of every sort since June 19th. I was preparing to go to my appointment at Kingston, N. C., when I was bitten by a very poisonous spider. I know very few things which passed that day, but my sufferings were terrible, and I have been in very poor health ever since then. I have filled only two appointments since, and that was with a very great effort. My voice is very weak and trembling and my nervous system much shattered. I am hungry, my soul is longing for something; it is altogether out of my reach. I want to be with and speak to my brethren in the name of the Lord, and yet I have nothing to give them; I am in a desert place. My heart seems to be a wilderness of confusion and my soul is in labor for deliverance. In reading this morning one of the baskets seemed to be opened for a little while, and you may be sure that one so hungry as I had to take a little and eat. The morsel was sweet. I did not feel that I was intruding, for these things are for the children, and such I hope I am, though one of the least and most unworthy of all the family. When the blessed Lord commanded that the fragments be gathered up, that nothing be lost, what purpose did he have in them but for continual food for the little ones? Shall not the least of all eat? Though I do not feel to grow and get strong, yet it is given to me to eat each time as a weakling, and in this way I live by Him who giveth the fragments. The food is his

and the children are his. Father providing for his household. Glorious thought! they shall never perish. The food is the food of eternal life, and he who eats shall never die. Of men, who feeds? Only they who have received the commandment, Feed my lambs, feed my sheep. Did he, Peter, have anything to give them? Did you have anything to give? If one had said to you, Give unto me of your oil, you would have said, Not so, lest there be not enough for you and me. But you have fed one of the most unworthy. Do you know it? No, you were not thinking of the one nor the place where the one or the many who would be given to eat were. You had the baskets, the fragments were there and you were in debt to those of us who were hungry. You must give them to us, though you did not know who we were, nor our condition. He who filled the twelve baskets after feeding the five thousand men and the women and the children knew the purpose for which these baskets were filled and kept in store. Has not that old food spoiled, become wormy, stale and unfit to eat? Has the Preserver gotten old and careless about the things of his house, and the food which the children shall eat? Do they need that there should be new food prepared each day, and prepared in such way as we or some other one shall think to be the best? Ah, such thoughts! The food of heaven, the gospel of grace, the body of our Jesus, who was crucified for us, who took away our sins, who washed us in his own blood, who keeps us alive and looking to him from the ends of the earth, and so hungering for this food that we grow so faint that none can hear but his quick ear, which is ever open to the cry of the poor and the needy, here is the strength of the children. They are made strong in weakness, rich in poverty, faithful in failure, to trust in him when confidence is gone. Thus they see the resurrected Lord, and are given a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Not a hope that they shall reign on his right hand or on his left in a kingdom here, but a lively hope in the eternal inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. O glorious hope! As a basket is opened and we are given a fragment, it is an earnest of that blessed inheritance. It enlivens us in hope, strengthens us in faith, points to Jesus, the forerunner within the vail, and there the little one is anchored. O how safe these moorings are. The powers of hell tried in vain to shake them; Satan and his emissaries are to-day crying from one end of the earth to the other and telling the people of the danger of a failure in this old, old way, but it would be a poor fragment, not from the baskets of the Lord, not of his providing, and not fit food for the children. God forbid that we should even try to find any such thing there, it would be "death in the pot." The Lord ever gives us fragments from the food he has stored. It is food which he has stored, both new and old. It gives new life to the soul, and we look away to Jesus.

The Lord bless you continually, and all yours.

Your brother in that blessed hope,

L. H. HARDY.

DELMAR, Del., July 18, 1915.

DEAR ELDER DURAND:—Having a desire to share the joys which I receive through the Comforter which Christ the dear Savior promised to send to the

church, also being requested by kind friends, I tremblingly make the attempt to write.

When quite young I had serious thoughts concerning my future state. It seemed I fully realized if I were to die in my sinful condition I would be forever lost. I saw the whole world condemned without a Savior, and my mind was turned to reading the Scriptures, and though I did not know why, I thought that if I had lived in the days when Christ was on earth, and I might have but touched the hem of his garment, I would have been saved. This was about the year 1874. My father and mother were not then members of the church, but we all went to Baptist meetings. After awhile I heard as I did not before, for I found they could tell my thoughts and feelings; they seemed to know all I knew, and more. My prayer was, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. I remember one time when I went to meeting I heard them singing while I was yet in the yard, and I thought it the sweetest singing I had ever heard. After that I was hungering and thirsting after righteousness. This gave me some assurance that I was one of God's chosen ones. Also the words, Abba, Father, came in my mind, and I was then as full of praise to God as I was before full of sin; where sin abounded grace did much more abound. I wanted every one to praise him. These words of the poet describe my feelings:

"In my soul was felt the power
Of his sweet, refreshing grace,
Richest streams of love and mercy,
Only perfect resting-place.

On the wings of faith I hovered,
Filled with peace no tongue could tell,
For my spirit in that region
Longed to bid this world farewell."

I thought then I could not live free from sin, yet longed to, for I felt I had rather die than sin against the One so lovely.

Yours with kind regards,

SARAH E. H. TAYLOR.

[THE foregoing letters were sent to us by Elder Durand for publication, and we gladly give them space in the SIGNS.—ED.]

GARDEN CITY, MO., July 26, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am requested by our pastor, Elder Teague, to send one of my poor efforts in writing to the SIGNS for publication, if your judgment sees fit to do so. Surely no one seems less qualified to do this than my poor, weak, unworthy self, but on account of his request I feel it is a duty upon me to do so. O how weak is duty in the service of God; just that weak it is not service at all. O to be clothed with higher and purer motives than duty. When I received brother Teague's letter, requesting me to please send my letter to the SIGNS, which he thought perfectly plain on the subject of death, how I began to look at self, only to sink deeper and deeper in nothingness, nothing in me, could not do that, and amidst afflictions, both of body and mind, I wrote him I did not think I could. How I feel the need of guidance. I am not ashamed to own my Lord, or to write of his wondrous love to his poor and afflicted people, but O how ashamed of my poor efforts; sin is mixed with all I do. I truly feel to know that only as I am prepared by his Spirit can I write anything in praise to his holy name and of comfort to his precious people. As I see them, and myself so sinful, worldly-minded and every other mark but that of good, I have hope all my goodness is imputed, so often am I beset with the sin of unbelief, until it is hope against hope. Though

he slay me, yet must I trust him. Where else can I go? I can go to my loved ones for many things, but there is none who can heal the sinsick soul but Jesus. O how often I have had to learn it over that he is the Bread of life.

I will share a letter from sister Prime, of Adrian, Mo., and a song composed by our pastor, Elder W. L. Hall, yokefellow with Elder J. A. Teague, with the dear ones of like precious faith, if in your better judgment you see fit to publish them. I feel many who know sister Prime will read her letter with interest, also brother Hall's song. I have not their consent, but feel they have more of the abundant life than myself in the service of their Lord and Master, and that it will be well with them. May the Lord still be with you, dear brethren, giving you light to rightly divide the word of truth, for the edifying and comfort of your own souls and of his dear people, and to his praise and glory. I have never met either of you in the flesh, but have often been comforted by your editorials, and feel to hope we are joined in Spirit. May you and all who read my imperfect letters and find anything amiss have charity, and pray for me that I be led of the Spirit, and not of this weak, sinful flesh.

I remain, as ever, the least, if one at all,

LAURA ESSIE ODELL.

ADRIAN, Mo., March 5, 1913.

MRS. C. C. ODELL—VERY DEAR SISTER:—I received your kind letter, and assure you I was more than glad to hear from you once more, but much surprised to hear you had moved so far away from the church, for you are like myself, not in very good health, consequently it makes it hard for one to attend meetings so far distant, but we can only pray God to give us health and strength to overcome all difficulties. I feel sometimes that there is no one so lonely as myself, away off down here in this town, where there is no one of the Primitive Baptist faith and order, no one that I can talk to who sees eye to eye and speaks the same things. You speak, dear sister, of being in the dark, and low down in spirit, and you ask if I ever feel so. Bless your soul, I am often down in the valley of darkness; but happy thought, our blessed Redeemer will not leave us there to grovel in darkness, but he has promised to be with us, and, my dear sister, the darkest hour is just before the dawn of day, and sometimes when we feel to be so lonely and down in the valley of darkness, as the eagle stirreth up her nest, and beareth away her young, so the Lord reaches down and with his everlasting arms beneath lifts us up and causes us to soar away above our troubles. Then it is that we can rejoice in our Savior's love, and praise him for what he has done for us. O that we had language to express our love and gratitude and thankfulness to our blessed Master for what he has done for poor, mortals. He has been our guide through life, and brought us through many dangers, seen and unseen, and spared our unprofitable lives to the present time. I say, dear sister, we have not language to express our love for such a blessed Redeemer; for what is man, or the son of man, that God should be mindful of him? O, we are such shortsighted, weak worms of the dust, and do so many things we should not do, and leave undone so many things we should do, that it grieves our hearts to feel that we cannot serve our Master more perfectly; but, dear sister, we realize that if there were no sorrows we would have no joys, and, blessed thought, the good Lord says his grace is sufficient for

us; so let us lift up our drooping heads and put our trust in God, whose ever-watchful eye is over us, and his guiding hand will be with us until the end.

May God's blessings be with you and your little family, is my prayer. Give my love and kind regards to your husband, for I have felt interested in him for some time, feeling that he has love for the people of God. O that he may be able to go forward in discharge of his duty, for I feel that he knows his Savior's love, and be baptized, to rise to walk in newness of life. May the Lord be praised. How sweet it is when one can take their companion by the hand and walk through the journey of life in spiritual sweet communion; it brings joy unspeakable.

You ask if I am going to our next meeting, which is so close at hand, but as usual, the outlook is against me at present, as I am just getting over a severe spell of sore throat, and the weather is so unsettled that I fear I shall not be able to go. If you are blessed with the privilege of going, give my love and best wishes to one and all of the dear brethren and sisters, and keep a share for yourself and family.

As ever, your sister in hope of a better life beyond this,

MARY E. PRIME.

O LORD, prepare my praise for me
In songs of sweetest melody;
While on earth let thy joys be mine,
In thy kingdom the praise be thine.

O Lord, prepare my heart to pray
For thy rich grace, yes, day by day;
O may I thy sweet love implore;
O hear me plead at mercy's door.

O Lord, prepare my eyes to see
That Jesus shed his blood for me;
On Calvary's brow thy groans were heard,
For thou, dear Lord, wast crucified.

O Lord, prepare my mind to read,
And then prepare me, Lord, to heed;
O may I feast upon thy word;
O bless me, help me, gracious Lord.

O Lord, prepare my tongue to tell
Thy wondrous love and power as well;
For thou didst come and suffer shame,
That we might always praise thy name.

O Lord, prepare me for the skies,
And bid my sleeping dust arise.
O may I with the angels praise
Thy holy name in joyful lays.

NESIKA, Wash., July 28, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Find inclosed two dollars to pay for another year's subscription to the SIGNS. I do not want to miss a paper. I much enjoyed Elder Lefferts' editorial in the June 15th number, on the absolute predestination of all things. I merely speak of this because I thought it so good. I enjoy every article that I read; as I have often remarked, I think it the best paper I ever read. I often read one article that I think is well worth the price of the paper for one year. It is often the case when I feel cast down that I read a letter that some brother or sister has written and it cheers me up and comforts me. May the great God bless you and all who are connected with the dear old SIGNS. May he enable you all to continue its publication for the comfort of God's dear children, is my prayer,

F. L. RIFFE.

LAKIN, Kans., Dec. 30, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending in my subscription for another year. I am far away from all my people and the SIGNS is a comfort to me. I am fifty miles from any Old Baptist that I know of, and too old to travel alone. I will be eighty years old the 23rd of next month. Much of my time I am groping in darkness, and feel to say, How long, O Lord? and, Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I have taken the SIGNS since the year after the Civil War ended.

Of course the war left me with nothing, for my husband was a confederate soldier. He got home alive, but much the worse for the war, consequently we had a struggle to live and raise our family. He died forty years ago, and many times I had no money to take the paper, but still it came. I asked them not to send it until I could pay for it, but they continued it, and I was indeed thankful the day I was able to pay them up. I want to take it as long as I live, but that cannot be many years or days more. I am glad we have two editors who are firm to take hold and fill dear Elder Chick's place. May our Father keep them and may his everlasting arms be round about them and all of his Zion everywhere, is the prayer of one of the least,

(MRS.) M. H. CHANCELOR.

ONEONTA, N. Y., Nov. 22. 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription expires the middle of December, I am sending you one dollar to pay for the next six months. I may not read them any longer, but if I do I will send again. I have been very ill, and am feeble yet, and at my advanced age (eighty-seven) cannot expect to be here much longer, and cannot at all times hear them read, but I want to hear them while I live. If I know my own heart, I love the writers and their writings. If His law has been written in my heart and printed in my mind, as I hope it has, what more can I ask? A hope so much divine may trials well endure. I grow no better as I hoped I should, but am the same poor, sinful creature.

As I am not able to dictate, I will close this by sending my love to you all, hoping you will remember me in your prayers.

As ever, your sister in affliction,

LUCINDA B. BREWSTER.

CHAMPAGNOLLE, Ark., March 3, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Owing to ill health and old age, find I am behind with my remittance to our family paper, the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which has been a welcome visitor to the Staple family ever since I can remember, and I hope it is the good Lord's will that I may be able to take and read it so long as it is his will for me to live here in these low grounds of sorrow and affliction. My dear old companion, who was over eighty-four years old, was called home the 20th of last March, and I am still left to fill the all-wise purpose of our heavenly Father, and hope it is for my good and his great glory.

I am glad brother Hardy is improving, and will write for the SIGNS. The Lord be with his afflicted and poor people to own and bless.

Your poor, old, unworthy brother,

JOHN D. STAPLES.

CALL FOR ORDINATION.

WHEREAS, We, the Ebenezer Baptist Church, of New York city, being blessed of the Lord with a gift in brother George Ruston to comfort and edify us in the preaching of a living way of salvation by grace; and

WHEREAS, We are assured that his ministry is likewise approved by all sister churches among whom he has labored, and being confident the Lord hath given him the tongue of the learned, that he should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary; be it therefore

RESOLVED, That we invite the churches of our association and correspondence to have their pastors, deacons and messengers sit with us in council on Tuesday, October 5th, 1915, with a view to ordaining brother Ruston to the full work of the gospel ministry.

Done by unanimous consent of the church at a regular meeting held September 5th, 1915.

JOHN McCONNELL, Moderator.

CYRUS RISLER, JR., Church Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1915.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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ISAIAH LI. 1–3.

"HEARKEN to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him. For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody."

In the last two verses of the preceding chapter the Lord called upon Israel to know who among them feared him and obeyed the voice of his servant. Those who did were represented as those who walked in darkness and had no light. How strange it seems that such has been the condition of the Lord's people in all ages of the world, even to the present day. The Lord's people do fear him, but not as a tyrant; their fear is an holy awe. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; to fear the Lord is to depart from evil and the snares of death. This sort of fear is not known to the world, nor was it known to the larger body of the Israelites. To those who feared the Lord and obeyed the voice of his servant he said, Trust in the name of the Lord and stay yourselves upon your God. How gracious must have been those words of comfort and assurance! Surely the mercy of the Lord endureth forever; his loving-kindness is extended to all who fear and serve him. But now, as then, all who kindle fires and compass themselves about with sparks and walk in the light of their fires shall lie down in sorrow, the condemnation of God being upon them. We have called attention to these preceding verses because they are in immediate connection, and show the class of people addressed and their sorrowful and discouraged condition because of the transgressions and departures of the hosts of Israel. It seems clear that the words of our text were spoken at a time of sore distress, the faithful feeling that the Lord had forsaken them, but as in the days of Elijah, he had reserved unto himself a remnant who followed after righteousness; therefore he said unto them, "Hearken unto me." He had some special blessing to confer upon them in distinction from judgment upon those who had not the fear of the Lord in their hearts, nor regarded the voice of his servant. The faithful were seeking the Lord, in that they followed after righteousness. It seems to us that Jesus addressed the same class when he said, Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. This hungering and thirsting was first felt by Abel when he realized his sinful condition before God, and knowing there could be no remission of sins without the shedding of blood, offered the lamb unto God, and had the answer that he was righteous, thus was filled. No mortal can be conscious of sin without seeking the Lord —hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

It was because of the low estate religiously in Israel that the blessed message of our text was sent to the fearful in heart in days of old, and in the history of

the church there never has been a darker, more discouraging time than now. That iceberg coldness, that utter indifference, no ingathering anywhere to speak of, but rather churches becoming extinct here and there, and the appearance of death upon all things pertaining to the church cause the few left to seek the Lord in prayer, asking if he has forgotten to be gracious and if his mercy is clean gone forever. Whether or not we can apply the text under consideration to the present time, except so far as depression and discouragements are concerned, we know not, yet feeling sure that God lives and reigns, we desire to call attention to the mercies of past ages and to promises made to the household of God. Elijah felt that he was the only true witness of God in the latter part of his life, and he seemed quite willing to die, but the Lord kept him alive and blessed him with the assurance that he was not altogether alone, and in our text he speaks to the faithful, though few, and tells them to look unto the rock whence they were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence they were digged. This was to remind them of the almighty power of God. To our mind this does not signify their condition by nature as sinners, but called their attention to God's mighty work in bringing his people, the Israelites, into manifestation. When the time came that he would have a separate and distinct people from all other nations he did not bring it about in a day, but began by calling Abraham alone and blessing him, giving him the promise of a son, and that he would make his (Abraham's) seed as the stars of heaven and as the sand of the seashore for multitudes. After waiting the Lord's time Isaac was born; to him was born Jacob, and to Jacob the twelve tribes of Israel, a host no man could number. As in hewing rock thousands and tens of thousands of chips fall, so Abraham, the one man, was the father of all the Israelites. Hence look unto him as a manifestation of God's power and be not discouraged. Look also unto Sarah that bare you, the mother of the entire tribes of Israel, and faint not. To further display his mighty power the Lord did not bless Abraham with his son Isaac until he was a hundred years old, his body being dead. (Romans iv. 19.) Sarah was ninety years old, and had been a barren woman all her life, but at that extreme age brought forth her son Isaac. It was in this respect that Abraham received him from the dead in a figure. "Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable." If the Lord could and did such wonderful things by one man, why should Israel have been discouraged because of the low estate and sorrowful condition of that nation when so few were found who feared the Lord and obeyed the voice of his servant? Could he not cause a nation to be born at once? Why forget his power, loving-kindness and faithful promises? But as they were the type, so spiritual Israel forgets the power and wisdom of God and becomes discouraged. To Zion of old the Lord promised comfort in her sad and distressed condition by making bare his arm in their behalf and in their defence, keeping them from fainting by the way. To them he increased might, so that they could mount up with wings as eagles, could run and not be weary. He comforted her waste places in sending the prophets to her with special messages of salvation. We think, however, that the third verse of our text has special reference to the coming of Christ and the work he did.

Referring again to Abraham as the one

man in whose loins were all the Israelites, so in Christ, the one "corn of wheat," were all the children of God, an innumerable company. Looking back now by faith to the great and wonderful work of God in Christ bringing into manifestation all his members when once there was none of them, why should spiritual Israel be discouraged and say the Lord has forgotten his people whom he foreknew in Christ our Lord? He did indeed and in truth visit Zion; he did comfort her with the consolations of the gospel and did build up all her waste places by adding to or bringing in the Gentiles to love, worship and serve him. In this the desert was made like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness were found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody. Knowing this truth, and that God is still able to save and can subdue kingdoms and powers, let us "not give up the ship," but rather hold fast our profession without wavering unto the end, believing Him faithful who promised never to leave nor to forsake his fearful and doubting people who so often walk in darkness and have no light. While the ways of Zion mourn and many seem cold, lifeless and indifferent, the Lord is at the helm, and the ark of salvation shall be safely housed in glory; and as we wait it may be his purpose and grace to give a refreshing shower from his almighty presence, that even the desert of our cold hearts may blossom as the rose, becoming as the garden of the Lord, the winter be over and gone, the flowers appear and the singing of birds be heard. When this takes place then the garden will send forth its fragrance and all shall eat their honey with their honeycomb. Then shall we draw water from the wells of salvation and ascribe greatness unto the name of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Even so let it be. K.

ISAIAH XXVI. 9.

"For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."

Righteousness is the state of being right, the condition of being in harmony with that which is right. God is right, so we believe. We do not believe this because it seems reasonable to us to believe it, but because we cannot do otherwise than believe that God is right always. Those who have in them that faith which is the gift of God cannot but believe that God is right. If God be right, then men are wrong, not wrong sometimes, but always. If there be any man in the earth who is right, it is because God has made him so, because God makes Christ that man's righteousness. It is declared that God's ways and thoughts are as far above men's thoughts and ways as the heavens are above the earth. Man of himself, therefore, can never possibly comprehend the ways and thoughts of God; and the ways and thoughts of God being right, it follows that man of himself can never learn that which is right, or righteousness. All men are conceived in sin, shapen in iniquity and are born speaking lies; there is not one that does right or who can do so according to his natural lights. Not to believe that our human nature is totally depraved, is to believe what is not right. Not to believe what God has recorded in the Bible by the pen of inspiration, is to believe what is not right. Not to believe that in God alone is salvation to the uttermost and forever, that in the arm of omnipotence alone is everlasting strength, is to believe what is not right. There is no middle ground in this matter of right and wrong. A thing is either one or the other: it is either right or wrong. God alone is the judge of the right and of the wrong; if he declares in us experimentally, or in his

inspired Scriptures, that this is right or that is wrong, his judgment is final, no matter what men may say or think. God said to Adam in the garden of Eden, In the day that thou eatest of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt surely die. But Satan came along and contradicted God's word, saying, Thou shalt not die. Which doctrine did man in the garden believe? He believed what the devil said, and ate of the forbidden fruit. Eating it, he brought the judgment of God upon himself, and when that judgment came he learned thereby that God was right and that Satan was wrong. He had to die to learn this, but he learned it nevertheless. Just so ever since that early day: man in a state of fallen nature always believes the devil and all he says, never does he, nor can he, believe in God. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." The way that seems right to the natural man is the devil's way, the way of death. The ways and the truth of God never seem right to the natural man. We speak of these things here to show how impossible it is, and would ever be, for any man to learn righteousness of himself. Water seeks its level, but cannot rise above its source; so man in a state of nature seeks the development of all his capacities, but can never transcend his original fountainhead, old father Adam. Therefore, whether any man shall ever learn righteousness depends entirely upon the will of God to instruct him in that which is right. Man cannot ascend to heaven, but God can and does descend, condescend, to man, and upon this bowing of the heavens and the coming down of the Almighty is based and founded all of our instruction in things divine. It is not possible for any man to teach another to know the Lord, and any effort to do so is futile, because it would contradict the covenant which God has made with his Israel in this gospel dispensation. Read Jeremiah xxxi. 34. Only as the judgments of God are in the earth shall the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.

Now, as to these judgments of God here spoken of, be it remembered that judgment does not always mean condemnation, it may mean approbation. God judges sin in condemning it, he approves of holiness in justifying it. When God sees the church through the atonement of Christ he judges her to be all fair, without a spot in her, but when he viewed her fallen in Adam he condemned and judged her guilty by his holy law. In speaking of these judgments of God it is important to draw a line of distinction: the judgment which is in the earth, that is, in the people of God (for they are the earth), is not given them to atone for their transgressions or to make them pay for their sins. Not the payment for one single sin was ever demanded at the hand of the child of God, Jesus paid every iota of that debt. All that the law demanded in order that it be fulfilled and the penalty exacted fell upon Jesus. Not one little bit of the payment will ever be required at the hands of the elect. God is just, and will not demand the same debt to be paid twice. Jesus paid all the debt, paid it once, and paid it forever. The debt is blotted out and shall not be remembered against the church any more forever. God does not deal with his people after their sins, nor reward them according to their iniquities. Nevertheless, his judgments are felt in the hearts of his people; that is, in the earth. For what purpose? To teach them right things, not to make them atone for their sins. Often one hears people say, and sometimes even

Old Baptists, that this or that affliction is sent on them for a judgment, meaning it is sent to make them pay up for their wickedness. How foolish such a thought. Such a thought or expression as good as says that there are some sins which Jesus did not atone for, and therefore we must pay. Such dishonors our Head and tramples the blood of Christ under foot. Were God to mark iniquity, who should stand? If Jesus atoned for all our sins and has left so much as one sin not atoned for, the punishment which that one sin deserves would cast us out from God's presence forever. To think that a blind eye, a lame foot, or any affliction whatever, can be an adequate payment for sin, is ludicrous in the extreme; it shows that one has not a very complete sense of how horrible and vast sin really is, nor how tremendous the atoning price would have to be. No, no, God does not at all judge his people for the purpose of atonement therefor, but for the purpose of rebuke, correction, chastisement, in short, for their instruction, that they shall learn right things, the things of God. He brings down them that dwell on high, lays low the lofty city to the ground and to the dust. Thus is natural pride, selfishness and ambition debased. Thus is all that exalts itself against God brought to naught. When this is experienced, then "in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee." No one ever waits on the Lord until he can no longer wait on himself. When self is abased then Christ is exalted, then does the one in whom this judgment is wait upon the Lord. These desire him in that night when all other lights fail, when the sun is darkened and the moon turned into blood; their spirit within them seeks the Lord early, as did the three women who approached his tomb very early in the morning because their souls desired him, and seeking him they found him risen from the dead, became eye-witnesses of his resurrection from the dead and assured of his glorious triumph over all his foes. The judgments of God felt in the soul of the believer, in the earth, teach him that man is, at his best estate, altogether vanity; that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, a cage of unclean birds; that from the soul of the foot, even unto the head, there is no soundness in him. When the judgments of God are in the earth the inhabitants of the world do learn that which is right: that man is wholly and entirely a sinner, that God is holy and righteous altogether, that the work of salvation is all of God through Christ Jesus, all of grace, and not of works. No Sunday School, no preacher, no book, can ever teach these things. To be known and to be believed they must be felt and experienced. For that reason, God sends his judgments into the earth, to teach his people (the inhabitants of the world) the things that are right. There is such a thing as experimental religion, though it seems to be a very scarce article and a matter entirely hidden from the knowledge of most people. While there are various denominations of religion among men, and occasionally some of their preachers will hit upon predestination or election for a part of their discourse, who ever heard them preach experience for the fraction of a second? So far as we have ever heard, Old School Baptists are the only people on earth that preach and believe in experimental religion, and it has been our lot to hear about all of the world's different denominations preach. The work of the Holy Spirit operating in the hearts of believers brings about this experience, and this experience is the re-

sult of the judgments of God being in the earth. In this way, and in no other, will any one ever learn right things. This instruction is one of faith, and not of the intellect. The flesh is not profited in any way whatsoever. The carnal mind is ever enmity against God, the natural man never receives this tuition of the Spirit, for it is foolishness unto him. It is not enough that the judgments of God be on the earth, they must be in the earth. What a world of difference there is between those two little words in and on. "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in [not on] earth." No matter what marvelous things God may do around and about man, he will not believe until there is a work, a miracle, wrought in him. We have known men to leave off their wickedness during a thunderstorm, but would resume it immediately afterwards, but when God works true repentance in a man he is done forever living in sin. The terrible war in Europe is an outward proof of the sinfulness and wickedness of men, but this war will not convince any individual man that he is a sinner. Not until there comes war in the inside of a man, when the judgments of God are in (not on) the earth, then will he know what is right, will learn the righteousness of God. The instruction of God is sore indeed, but it is thoroughly done; there is no forgetting the lessons it teaches. Things learned out of books, or from the lips of others, may be forgotten, but those things we live ourselves and which we know for ourselves, and not for another, can never be forgotten. Faith holds them in her grasp even though mind and body fail. We have known several aged brethren whose natural minds failed as age crept upon them, but who could remember distinctly their experience of grace. The spiritual mind knows no infirmity, it outlasts nature, and the instruction of God's judgments in the earth is perfectly done, its lessons unforgettably learned.

Written by request. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder F. W. Keene.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Conference, assembled with the church at North Berwick, York Co., Maine, September 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1915, to the churches composing the associations with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We greet you once more in the name of Christ, desiring your peace and prosperity in the unsearchable riches of the kingdom of Christ our beloved Redeemer.

The whole testimony of the Scriptures of God's covenant faithfulness, and his wonderful and gracious works to the children of men, is full of encouragement, that we might set our hope in God, and cleave to him with full purpose of heart. As the days of our pilgrimage are multiplied we find that comfort and learning which the Scriptures yield, as ministered to us by the Holy Spirit, more and more needed, that we may hold on our way, and lift up our heads as we journey to the better, heavenly country, to the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Some who profess to be wayfaring men never appear to be weary, they seem to be well supplied, they have no lack of anything, and consequently never in sincerity ask God for anything. Prayerless, wayfaring men? But God's chosen people are not such. Zion's pilgrims are a people who have to lean upon Jesus Christ, who need constant supplies, much upholding, they often need strengthening, and so they are often in prayer to God, their heavenly Father. They worship

their God in spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. The experiences of the redeemed of the Lord are very varied. They are all in due time brought to "know me," saith the Lord, from the least even unto the greatest of them. They are called by God's grace unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, and under the gracious operations of the Holy Spirit they are brought to repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. In our trust and hope in the Savior we have a blessedness that the world, fleshly professors and hypocrites, know nothing of. But there are trials, conflicts and afflictions in some measure to be the portion of the children of God in the house of their pilgrimage. Some of the called of God have a much larger share of tribulation than others, and this is all according to the good pleasure of our heavenly Father. He is the Lord of all providences. In the early days of most believers in Christ, the Lamb of God, there is not much sore trouble; the conflicts are light, the way is not very rugged, it is fair sailing, the sea is not tempestuous, and they do not know what it is to reel to and fro, to stagger like a drunken man, and to be at their wits' end. (Psalms cvii. 27.) The young believer knows but little of cloudy days, or dark nights, wherein the beasts of the forests creep forth. The rivers and floods, the fiery furnace, they know of only by report; they have not as yet entered into these experiences. Indeed, some of the family of God all their days have, as compared with others, an easy path. But each one of the beloved and blood-bought children of God has just such experiences in their journey as even so, Father, seemeth good in thy sight. It is written of Israel, "And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt: but God led the people about through the way of the wilderness of the Red sea. And the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt." —Exod. xiii. 17, 18. The tribes of Jacob had wars in the land of promise, and we learn from the third chapter of Judges that some of the young ones had not known all the wars of Canaan, such as their fathers endured under Joshua. The former generation, their fathers, had done the fighting, and they in happy childhood and youth remained in their fenced cities; they had no experience of war; they knew nothing thereof. But temptation, conflicts and trials are to be endured by those who are Christ's, as the days of the years of our lives are numbered out to us, and in these things we learn humbling, bitter things, and we also learn that the Lord is gracious. Jesus is so needful, and so precious to poor, sinful pilgrims. We are taught that in ourselves we are altogether insufficient for the journey, we are weak, and are sometimes "much discouraged because of the way,"—Num. xxi. 4, because of failures, because we are such sinful, distrustful beings, because of the devices and fiery darts of the devil. A thousand things would impede our steps and interfere with our walk with God, and separate us from Jesus, our beloved Savior. O there is a lifting up when we are looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. It is so healing, consoling, strengthening, to be led to muse upon our Redeemer, to ponder in our hearts the travail of his soul in behalf of his church. O to view him in faith and love in Gethsemane, and follow

him to Calvary. There he triumphed over our sins, over the sorrows of death and the pangs of hell. He triumphed over all the powers of darkness, he vanquished sin and Satan, death and hell. He poured out his soul unto death, but he triumphed over the grave, he ascended, and was received up into glory, and reigns on high our Prince and Savior.

"Triumphantly glorious our Head has ascended
O'er death and the grave, all their power laying low;
This gains us a rising when time shall be ended,
Death no more shall hold us; ah never, O no."

In our faith in him we taste, and have the earnest of our victory. They overcame by the blood of the Lamb. (Rev. xii. 11.) Out of weakness we are made strong, and in the name of Jesus we destroy and trample under the feet of our faith every foe. "In all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us."—Rom. viii. 37. We share in the triumphs of our dear Savior. We are in a winning fight, our conquest is sure; for the Captain of our salvation is almighty, and he will bring all the many sons unto glory. Fight the good fight of faith, laying hold on eternal life. Surely our God and Savior will succor us, he will teach us how to war a good warfare, and he will very graciously cover our head in the day of battle, and this is the promise or our God: "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be."—Deut. xxxiii. 25. Having in the gospel of Christ exceeding great and precious promises, which are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus, and unto the glory of God by us, we may well hope to the end for the grace that is brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus. And may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.

FREDERICK W. KEENE, Mod.
JOSEPH F. HALL, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Newton Peters, son of John P. and Ruth Peters, was born in Darke County, Ohio, April 2nd, 1851, and died at his home in Jay County, Ind., Aug. 27th, 1915, aged 64 years, 4 months and 25 days. His boyhood days were spent on a farm near Lightsville, Ohio. He was united in marriage to Rachel A. Light, March 9th, 1871. To that union were born four children: Harry D., Gertrude Peters Myers, Jessie L. and George M., all of whom, with the widow, survive him. Two brothers, George D. Peters, of Zanesville, Ohio, and Henry M. Peters, of Lightsville, Ohio, also survive him. Two sisters, father and mother preceded him in death. At the age of thirty he united with the Primitive Baptist Church, and for the last twenty-five years had been a minister, laboring mostly among the churches in western Ohio and eastern Indiana. He was a natural nurse, and helped many an afflicted family through sickness, and comforted many, as best man could, when the death angel visited their homes. He will be greatly missed by all who were intimately acquainted with him, but our loss is his gain. He was a kind, indulgent husband and father, a good, obliging neighbor and an excellent citizen, often lending a helping hand to those who were in need. He was a sound, faithful and devoted Baptist, ever ready to do what he could, in every way, for the best interest and welfare of his brethren. Brother Peters was a strong and uncompromising believer and advocate of the great doctrine of the predestination of all things, and all the vital principles of the doctrine of Christ. He was a strong, healthy man until a few months before his death, when he became drowsy and sleepy, and in a short time creeping paralysis began its deadly work in him, from which he gradually grew worse until death came to his relief. The writer of this notice was called to his bedside, and talked and prayed with him a few days before the end came.

The funeral was held on Sunday, August 29th, and was one of the largest I ever attended. I used Job xiv. 14, as a text, and sought to glorify God and to comfort those who mourned by preaching to them the resurrection of the dead, which is the only hope of salvation for dying mortals.

Written by request. W. I. CARNELL.

Mrs. Josie E. Gravel was born Jan. 30th, 1883, and departed this life March 8th, 1915, at her home, 13 West Fifty-first St., Bayonne, N. J. She was the daughter of Thomas M. Hyatt and Mary E. Dolson, both of Orange County, N. Y. She was born in Middletown, N. Y., and always made her home there until married to Arthur C. Gravel, of Burlington, Vt., Nov. 15th, 1905, by Elder H. C. Ker, after which she moved to Jersey City, later to Springfield, Mass,

moving back to Bayonne about a year ago. While in Springfield her health began to fail, and she underwent a serious operation for gallstones. One hundred and sixty were taken from her gall-bladder, and she never regained her health after that. The atter part of January, 1915, she contracted the grippe, but was up around the house. From that time on it seemed nothing did her any good. Later bronchial pneumonia set in. She was only confined to her bed five days; she suffered terribly. Under the influence of drugs she slept herself away without warning. She leaves, beside her husband, two children, Helen, aged eight years, and Robert, aged two years and six months, her mother, Mary E. Hyatt, also two sisters, Minnie E. Hyatt, of Pittsburg, Pa., and Nettie E. Brown, of Bayonne, N. J., beside numerous friends, to mourn their loss. She always attended the Old School Baptist Church at Middletown, N. Y., with her mother and sisters, and delighted to be in their company and entertain them at her home. She was mild and gentle in her nature, never caring for gay company. She was a dear, sweet mother.

The funeral was held at her home Thursday evening, March 11th, conducted by Elder H. C. Ker. All that was earthly was laid to rest in Phillipsburgh cemetery, Orange Co., N. Y., by the side of her father, who died Sept. 27th, 1894. He was a veteran of the Civil War, and served three years in Company D, 124th Reg. N. Y. Vol., under the late Captain J. W. Benedict, of Warwick, N. Y.

[THE above obituary was handed us by the heart-broken mother, sister Hyatt, a few days ago, to which we desire to add a few words. Josie was a mere child when we came to Middletown, more than seventeen years ago. She was the youngest child, and the pet of the family. All who knew her were fond of her. We were often in the home, and became very much attached to her, and it was a sorrowful duty to officiate at her funeral. While we never heard her express herself, from her attention to preaching and enjoyment in the company of the Lord's people we are inclined to believe she had a hope of salvation through Christ. May consolation be given the entire family.—K.]

Mrs. Harriet Conklin died May 16th, 1915, at Lakewood, N. J., aged 70 years and 4 months. Sister Conklin was baptized by the late Elder James C. Goble, Oct. 13th, 1861, in the fellowship of the New York Church, and continued a faithful member to the end. Husband and five children mourn the loss of a loving wife and devoted mother. Two surviving sisters are members of this church: sisters Carrie Lane and M. Waterbury.

ALSO,

Mrs. Susie Saunders died July 5th, 1915, at Dobbs Ferry, N. Y., aged 78 years. She was baptized by the late Elder Wm. L. Beebe, July 15th, 1888, in the fellowship of this church. Her chief joy was in attending the assemblies of the saints, and for nearly twenty-seven years she neglected no opportunity to meet with the church. She will be missed by us all. Funeral service July 7th; burial the following day in Greenwood Cemetery.

ALSO,

Lewis D. Cudney died August 14th, 1915, in Brooklyn, N. Y., after a long and painful illness, aged 61 years. He was married to Louise Crantd in Ulster Co., N. Y., March 30, 1875. One daughter (Mrs. Windrum) was born of that union. Mother and daughter survive. The nature of Mr. Cudney's disease required the constant attention of a nurse, and sister Cudney devoted all her time and strength in loving service to him. While Mr. Cudney made no public profession of religion, all his sympathy and affection were for those who love the doctrine of salvation by grace. To his wife he confessed to hope only in the mercy of God, and in that hope he continued to the end.

Services were held August 17th at his late residence in Brooklyn, N. Y., and at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Ashokan, N. Y., the following day. Interment in the Winchell Cemetery. May the God of all grace and comfort be with our sister and all the bereaved ones in this time of sorrow.

JOHN McCONNELL.

Elias Hoagland Demott, son of Willis and Mary Demott, of Granden, Hunterdon Co., N. J., died June 9th, 1915. He was born Nov. 20th, 1899. He, with his brother Newland and two neighbor boys, was fishing in the north branch of the Raritan River, not far from their home. After a time they decided to go in bathing, which they did, near a deep and dangerous hole in the river. None of them could swim. One of the boys, a son of the Presbyterian minister, was carried in some way into deep water and went down. Elias made an effort to save him, making a desperate effort to stem the current, but finally went down to rise no more. His brother Newland and the other boy were powerless to render any assistance. Two broken-hearted families are left; yes, broken-hearted, and none but God Almighty can reconcile, comfort or heal. May each be given the heart and mind to say, The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Elias had never made a profession of religion by uniting with the church, but he gave evidence to his father and mother and others that he had been deeply exercised for some time concerning the salvation of sinners and the resurrection of the dead, asking many questions concerning such things. God has, and may he continue to comfort our dear brother and sister, with their family, by his felt presence, also the dear old grandparents, brother and sister Demott, whom he was with much.

They miss him and mourn for him. May God give all needed grace.

Elder J. M. Fenton and the writer were present and conducted the services, endeavoring to comfort the living. Burial near the home. Father, mother, three brothers, two sisters, with many relatives, are left to mourn on account of this sudden death. How deep and mysterious are God's providences and ways. Truly he moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform, and how often in deep astonishment we stand and ask the reason why. God knows.

D. M. VAIL.

Lizzie P. Sheppard was called from this vale of tears June 5th, 1915. She was the daughter of Charles B. and Permelia L. Hill, and was born in the vicinity of the Second Hopewell Church Dec. 12th, 1867. She was married to D. W. Sheppard Jan. 17th, 1889. To that union were born six children, one dying when only three days old, the oldest named Permelia, second is married, named Lethia Blackwell, third named Emma, fourth their only son, Charles B., and the youngest Alice S. Sheppard. She was from a child a lover of the truth. When quite small mother went to punish her, and she said, "You may punish me as you like, but do not keep me from going to meeting." At that time we had moved in the vicinity of First Hopewell Church. On June 14th, 1896, she offered herself to the church, and was received, and baptized by Elder Chick, and was a firm believer in the truth, very faithful to the church and church duties, always doing her full share for the pastor and the brethren. She was sick three weeks, and passed away peacefully. A short time before she passed away she said, "The Lord God commands that I should speak to my family, beginning with my eldest child and lastly to my dear companion, and what the Lord commands I must obey," and then asked for her children in the order of their age, and astly her husband, giving them each good advice, and soon afterward became unconscious and lived only a short time. What a loss to her family and the church, but as one of the daughters wrote me, her gain. I could not attend her funeral, as I was sick, neither could I grieve for her, for I felt she was so rich, while I so poor on this earth, with my doubts and fears. Her funeral was held in the Hopewell meetinghouse and very largely attended, showing the esteem in which she was held by the brethren and friends. At the house Elder Vaughn read 1st Thess. iv. 13-18. The funeral text was 1st Cor. xv. 41-48. Three hymns were read: 651, 668 and 670. She was a great lover of singing, and often led the singing at meeting. Her remains were laid in the cemetery adjoining the meetinghouse.

As I write this there comes a desire for my faith to be as strong as hers was. What a comfort it would be. May God give comfort to her family and keep them faithful as she was.

MARY HILL TERRY.

MEETINGS.

THE Roxbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the First Church of Roxbury, at Vega, N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday following the third Sunday in September (22nd and 23rd), 1915. Trains will be met at Roxbury Tuesday afternoon, Sept. 21st. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

A. J. SLAUSON.

THE yearly meeting of the Cow Marsh Church will be held on the fourth Sunday in September, 1915, and Saturday afternoon before. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends to meet with us. Trains will be met Saturday morning at Viola station.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Pastor.

THE yearly meeting of the Lexington Old School Baptist Church will be held on the first Saturday and Sunday in October (2nd and 3rd), 1915. Brethren and friends are invited to meet with us, especially brethren in the ministry.

R. W. SANFORD.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Jefferson Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, October 6th and 7th, 1915. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, especially brethren in the ministry. Those coming to Stamford will be met on Tuesday, the 5th, noon train.

G. E. MEAD, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church of Jesus Christ called New Hope, situated in Washington County, Oregon, (by request of sister H. C. Wilke, of 979 Vancouver Ave., Portland, Oregon,) if not providentially hindered will convene at her home on Saturday before the second Sunday in October, 1915, for conference. All members of the church are kindly requested to be present, and all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. K. BOYD, Moderator.

THE Juniata Association is appointed to be held with the Springfield Church, near Three Springs, Pa., on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 8th, 9th and 10th, 1915. Train leaves Mt. Union, Pa., at 4:45 p. m. for Three Springs Thursday before. We hope a good number will be present.

J. M. FENTON, Pastor.

MOSES MELLOTT, Clerk.

AN all day meeting will be held with the Snow Hill Church, Worcester Co., Md., on Sunday, October 10th, 1915. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to be present.

B. F. COULTER.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting will meet, the Lord willing, with the Ebenezer Church, Loudoun Co., Va., on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1915, and continue three days. Trains will be met at Bluemont on Tuesday before the meeting, and all visitors taken care of. Those coming by rail take green electric car marked Georgetown, outside of Union station, Washington, D. C., and go to the end of the line, where they will transfer to the cars of Washington & Old Dominion R. R., which will bring them to Bluemont. The cars for Bluemont leave at 2 p. m., subject to change in schedule, at 36th and M Sts., Georgetown, D. C. Those who can come in their own conveyances will be appreciated, as there are only a few of us to meet trains. Ministering and other brethren of our faith and order and all lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

F. E. ROBEY, Church Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Old School Baptist Church in Wilmington, Del., will commence at 2 o'clock p. m. on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1915, and continue all day Sunday. All lovers of the truth are invited. Meetinghouse 1304 Jefferson St.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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This little memorial book is now ready for sale. It embraces a period of about one hundred years. In connection with a brief account of my father's early life, his christian experience, his long ministry of nearly seventy years, it contains some history of Mt. Olive Primitive Baptist Church and Tygart's Valley River Association. In addition there is a short appendix dedicated to the memory of my mother.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 83. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1915. NO. 19.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE TWO REWARDS.

"Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."—Rom. iv. 4, 5.

The question of rewards, to my mind, involves a very vital principle of the gospel of Christ; and as there is truth and error taught concerning almost, if not entirely, all other principles of the gospel, so we may expect it to be done also concerning this one. It shall be my design and effort in this article to discover the truth of this subject and expose the fallacy of the errors by which unstable souls are so easily lured into the byways of self-righteousness. We shall presently see that not only is it suggested by our text, but taught by many other Scriptures, that there are rewards both for them that serve God and for them that serve him not; but it will also be observed that these rewards are of different kinds, and are based upon entirely different principles, and proceed from opposite causes. This is seen not only from the nature of the reward itself, but from the effect it has upon the recipient of it. Reward is defined as "recompense; something given in return for good or ill." Reward presupposes merit in the one receiving it, and in order that the reward be a just one there must be a just proportion between the merit and the reward; the cause for the reward must be commensurate to the reward itself. Upon these self-evident truths I base the following deductions. No human excellence can merit a divine reward, unless human excellence is the equal of divine favor; and every claim that God rewards those acts that proceed from his creatures, even though they be his quickened children, with spiritual benefits, is but another way of saying that creature goodness is the equal of divine reward. This is the very foundation of Arminianism, and upon this is based the admonition to men and women to render service unto the Lord, that they may thereby merit his divine favor. This has been opposed by the church ever since it made its appearance, though from time to time it has crept in under one form or another, and invariably carries off some of those who have been taught in their experience that it is false and an abomination in the sight of the Lord.

Our text introduces us to two kinds of rewards, one of grace and the other of debt; that is, one reward comes as a bestowal of grace or unmerited favor, so far as the recipient of it is concerned, while the other reward comes as a matter of debt, or compensation for work performed; the latter is a conditional reward, while the former is an unconditional reward, for nothing can be conditional on the part of the beneficiary which is of grace. So far as this subject is concerned which I am now treating, I will say that there are but two sources from whence meritorious acts may arise, one is from human beings, the other is from the divine Being; and keeping in mind that all rewards must maintain a just proportion to the merit in the act rewarded, we next proceed to examine the works emanating from these two sources, that we may be the better able to determine the kind of reward each can hope to receive. Hear the apostle Paul on this subject: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like."—Gal. v. 19–21. Here they are, put your estimate upon them and see what reward you think they would merit. The very best acts that can come from the flesh are said in the Scriptures to be vanity, and all our righteousness, says the prophet, is but filthy rags. In other words, nothing spiritually good can proceed from human beings, therefore they can perform no act that would merit divine reward or spiritual benefits. But there is a reward of iniquity (Acts i. 18), and a reward of unrighteousness (2 Peter ii. 13), and a reward for the self-righteous. (Matthew vi. 2.) All of these are but carnal rewards; however we must not conclude that they are therefore not pleasant or enjoyable ones, for quite to the contrary, they are most pleasing to the flesh and gratifying to the carnal mind, and as a result we often boast of the enjoyment we are receiving from them. How often have you heard the self-righteous boast of the "ease of mind and peace of conscience" they enjoy in consequence of the righteousness they have performed. You will observe that those who receive the reward of unrighteousness are they that count it pleasure to riot in the daytime; and the apostle says they are spots and blemishes (that is, scars and unsightly marks in the church, but not of it), sporting their own deceivings, while they feast with you. These are wise in their own conceit, with that knowledge that puffeth up, but they are destitute of that charity that edifieth the spiritually-minded, who have been taught by sad experience to have no confidence in the flesh. The reward which the pharisee, the self-righteous, receives is a very agreeable reward, for it flatters his pride, magnifies his goodness and exalts his praise, and is a fruitful source of boasting. He at once becomes a physician, and diligently prescribes for others, and like the physicians who prescribed for Job, he tells his patient to acquaint now thyself with God, and be at peace, and thereby good shall come unto thee. (Job xxii. 21.) But he, like Job's miserable comforters, is a physician of no value to one who is in need of spiritual healing. These people who claim that creature goodness merits spiritual rewards just as surely put darkness for light, and light for darkness, and bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter, as do the unquickened and nonprofessing sinners. This is the class of whom Jesus

said, Ye take away the key of knowledge; ye enter not in yourselves, and they that are entering ye hinder. Truly they have their reward, and their reward is in perfect accord, and is the equivalent in every way of the work performed. But the works are the fruits of that wisdom which is earthly, sensual and devilish, and the reward is of the same cast. No wonder then that churches have been rent asunder, the fellowship of saints broken up, and the humble, unassuming, self-loathing, grace-exalting and works-abasing prisoners of hope have been told by these reward seekers to stand there by thyself, for we are more holy than thou; and they feel so little at home in the company of such as boast of their goodness and consequent rewards that they who have no goodness to boast of are quite content to abide alone, and make no effort to intrude themselves into the association of that class.

But I desire the attention of the reader to another reward mentioned in the text, which is the reward of grace. It will be observed that this reward is not reckoned to the one that works for a reward, but to the one that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifies the ungodly. I wish that I could impress this truth upon every one of God's little bewildered children who have been lured away from the truth of the gospel of grace by the conditional time salvation innovation. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." Reader, stop and ask yourself the question, Am I working for a reward? Am I expecting to receive good for doing good? I heard one of the conditional preachers say, "The taters are in the patch, but you will not get any of them if you do not dig for them." This was his idea of the way we obtained the spiritual blessings from God. But our text says if we receive a reward in this way it is not reckoned of grace, but of debt. That is to say, if you work for a blessing, and God bestows it because of your work, he has become your debtor, and is only paying you what he owes you. Do you know, little child of God, this places hope entirely out of the kingdom of grace, and leaves you to rely exclusively on your own works? and then the reward you receive is the same as the hypocrite, the self-righteous receive: the reward of unrighteousness. Verily they have their reward. You may ask, Who is it that receives the reward of grace? and I will give you the apostle's answer: "Him that worketh not [for a reward], but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly." Go to our enemies, ask the conditionalists themselves who it is, where are the people who deny that they work for a reward? and they will point out the Predestinarian Baptists. They are the only people on earth that I know of who do not believe in working for a reward, and who do believe that God justifies the ungodly. All others claim that your good works are what procure for you your reward, and that only the godly can be justified.

But I said the reward must be in proportion to the merit which was being rewarded; and so it is in this case. The reward is of grace, and the merit must be its equivalent, therefore the merit must be as gracious as the reward. Christ wrought out all the righteousness of his people, and it is made theirs by imputation, and that without any consideration on their part. It is all the righteousness they possess, it is all that is acceptable to God. Christ their Redeemer gives them his life and nature, makes it a part of them, and from this divine life arises

spontaneously all their thoughts as well as acts of righteousness in obedience to the dictates of the Spirit of God. There is positively no other source from which good can come. This character is not righteous because he works, but is righteous because Christ has wrought all his works in him. The reward which this one receives is the reward of grace, a reward which is wholly unmerited, so far as any righteous act performed by him is concerned. But Christ's righteousness being accounted as his own, he is therefore entitled to the reward upon the merits of Christ's imputed righteousness, and the righteousness being a perfect righteousness, it merits a perfect reward, which is given to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly.

Now in order that any human being can have any spiritual blessing, any divine reward, he must be in possession of divine goodness and divine merit, because these are the only equivalents of such reward; and as it is impossible for man to produce divine goodness, so it is impossible for man to obtain spiritual blessings or divine rewards upon the merits of his own works. Were we ever so deeply in love with conditional time salvation these facts would forbid advocating it, for it is plain to my mind that it is in direct conflict with every principle of grace, and places the advocate of it in the class that works for reward, and who cannot hope for the grace and mercy of God, but who expect to demand the wages for their labor. I have no objections to the preaching of rewards to the children of God, but it would be well to consider carefully whether the reward preached is one of grace or of debt. The reward of grace is the one that comes to God's children upon the merits of what Christ has done for them, while the reward of debt is what men receive for their own works, and the reward is always like the works, corrupt, and belongs to the earth. The effects of the reward of grace is to call the mind of the recipient away from self, and give an exalted conception of grace; to make him view Christ and his meritorious work and goodness as everything, and to look upon man as corrupt from the sole of the foot even unto the head, with no soundness in him. It empties him of self, and strips him of all confidence in the flesh, and produces in him self-loathing; it makes him cry out, "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King of glory." Such as receive the reward of grace never feel like boasting of their achievements in spiritual things; though they may be enlightened by God's Spirit that they may delve to profound depths in contemplation of the great mystery of godliness, or soar to the loftiest heights in the enjoyment of his peace and in praising his love, yet they must confess that they are no better than they whose damnation is just, and that they have nothing that they did not receive as the free gift of God's grace. But they who work for a reward love to boast of what they have obtained. It fixes their minds upon self. It cannot be the occasion of thanksgiving to God, for they only receive what they work for, and therefore what was their just due. They are not willing to submit themselves to the righteousness of God, and are constantly going about to establish their own righteousness. When they come to preach to you, they have a great deal to say about what man must and can do, and very little about what Christ has done. They are not beggars at the footstool of mercy,

but they are boasters in the citadel of self-righteousness. The effects of these rewards are as different in those who receive them as are the sources from whence they come. Brethren, let us still rejoice that our reward is reckoned to us of grace and not of debt.

J. R. HARDY.

THE SUBSTANCE GIVEN UNTO ALL SAINTS.

SUBSTANCE is that which underlies all outward manifestations, a something that actually exists; not imaginary, not illusive, but real, solid and true. On this base I desire to present thoughts touching the great work of God in and to all the elect, which is a perfect success, and durable as God himself. God is a Spirit, and he cannot be worshipped except in a spiritual way. He gives the spirit whereby his children are enabled to worship him. All true worshippers do worship God in spirit and in truth. (John iv. 23.) If the begetting of children by God himself is not perfect and durable, how then could he call them his children? The children of God are begotten of him. (1 John v. 1.) They are called the sons of God. (John i. 12; Rom. viii. 16; Gal. iii. 26; 2 Peter i. 4; 1 John iii. 1.) Declared to be sons of God. (Gal. iv. 6; Jer. xxxi. 3; Rev. xxi. 7.) Sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. (2 Cor. vi. 18.) Is the work of God's Spirit a promise only as either verbal or written? Does man receive an everlasting, undying principle, or spirit, when the truth of the gospel is revealed unto him? To this some say yes, while others say no. After a man is born of the Spirit of God does he possess a real treasure that cannot die, though he as a creature dies? Assuming that when a man dies all natural wisdom perishes, does the heavenly wisdom which he has received through the Spirit perish, die, vanish away, is it blotted out, or annihilated? After a saint dies a natural death, corporeal death, is there anything left of him except the dust in his grave? Is all the work of God's Spirit in the hearts of living men lost when their bodies die? These are deep questions, and should not have been published if it were not for sentiments published leading to the thought that there is no more that remains, or lives, after the corporeal death of the saint than that which is left after the unbelieving sinner dies. The saints who are manifested as such have an heavenly treasure in their earthly vessels. (2 Cor. iv. 7.) This treasure is Wisdom's light of God's glory right in the face of Jesus Christ. Is this heavenly treasure perishable, like the vessel or body? Who dares to say that it is? Have the saints received a gift of God that the world of mankind cannot receive? Certainly, for here is the great distinguishing difference between believer and unbeliever. This proof is found in 1 Cor. ii. 12. "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God." This Spirit, then, according to Paul, which the saints receive, is a holy spirit. The spirit of the world cannot be a holy spirit. There is a vast difference between the children of men and the children of God. All are sinners of Adam's race, but the children of God have received a treasure from on high that cannot perish, whereas the children of men, who are dead in sins, have no heavenly treasure. In another place Paul calls this "treasure," or "spirit," "the earnest of the Spirit,"—2 Cor. i. 22; v. 5, which agrees with Romans viii. 23, called "the firstfruits of the Spirit." This "earnest of the Spirit" is "that holy Spirit of promise."—Eph. i. 13; iv. 30. Admitting that Paul was not

mistaken in saying, God also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit, which earnest he calls "that holy Spirit of promise," then his meaning is conveyed unto us by the meaning of the word "earnest." Now, earnest means something real, an advanced payment, which is a pledge that great abundance like the earnest shall surely follow. In our way of speaking an earnest given is a real sample of that which is promised. It is not merely a promise to do, but a substance after its kind. When we commonly speak of substance the mind reverts to material things that the natural eye can see. Now, I propose to speak of things that do exist, that cannot be seen by mortal eyes, and I shall call them real things, because they do exist; they are not mythical or imaginary, but substantial things that cannot be moved. These things cannot be seen by mortal eyes, nor heard of by mortal ears, neither can they come into the heart of mortal man from any natural cause. These things exist, and they are "the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." I shall call these things substantial, or a substance of things hoped for, or a substance of the final payment, of the same kind and like the final payment, yet only an advanced minimum compared with the full crop of redemption. Is this "earnest" a "spirit?" and if a spirit, is it a holy spirit? Is the "earnest" a knowledge? and if so, is it everlasting? Is it wisdom? and if so, shall it fade away when the body dies, or the saint dies? If it is earthly wisdom it shall perish, but if it is heavenly wisdom it cannot die. We are assured that it is heavenly wisdom, "an earnest" of our glorious inheritance, which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven, substantial, real, secure. Where God begins a good work he never goes one step backward, but forward until the day of Jesus Christ. The sealing by the Holy Spirit is all the way until the redemption of the purchased possession, advanced payment, or earnest, is issued to every subject of the King of kings, and strange to say, this small payment can neither be spent, lost nor sold. Tongues may cease, prophecies fail, but this gift of eternal life, or eternal life principle, lives on; it is the germ of immortality. This anointing from the sky is not the regeneration of the church; that was done when Jesus arose from the dead. Of this begetting, which was by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, Kent would sing:

> "When from the tomb we see him rise
> Triumphant o'er his foes;
> He bore his members to the skies,
> With Jesus they arose."

But an unction from on high: "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." These "all things" are the things prepared by God for them who love him. This unction means the same as anointing. So John in another place says, "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." John is positive that "my little children," as he calls them, received an anointing, or unction, from the Holy One. Also that it abided in them, so that they needed not for any man to teach them. Men could not teach them the secret of the Lord. That same anointing taught them "all things;" this is true and no false statement. How firmly he clinches his declaration by saying, Ye shall abide in him. I am not one to say that man by nature has an immortal soul, or spirit, but

it seems apparent that the children of God have a spirit imparted to them, as I have stated from Scripture, and we have no authority to say that in the death of the saints it is just like the death of the wicked. If in the death of the wicked there remains nothing but dust, not so in the death of the saints. Some may call this distinction between believer and unbeliever a tradition received through Catholicism, but I have referred to higher authority. No sincere Bible reader can deny the testimony of Jesus in regard to the "little ones" that trust in him: "For I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."—Matt. xviii. 10. "Their angels," that is, the angels of the "little ones" who trust in Jesus, in heaven always behold the face of their Father in heaven. Is this meaningless? Certainly not. He "maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire." The "little ones," angels, are also the Lord's angels, as pertains to the spirits of just men made perfect. The Lord's hand is turned upon the little ones, and their angels, or spirits, in heaven do always behold the face of their Father in heaven. Jesus says, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." In the work of quickening sinners a life principle, or spirit, is given. "It is the spirit that quickeneth; * * * the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." "So the Son quickeneth whom he will." "The spirit giveth life." The body returns to dust, or to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns unto God who gave it. No proof in the Scriptures that God ever gave the spirit of life everlasting to the nonelect, but he does impart the Spirit of adoption unto believers in the Lord Jesus. For "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."—John iii. 6. They receive not the spirit of the world, "but the Spirit which is of God."—1 Cor. ii. 12. This Spirit is "our spirit," which bears witness with the Holy Spirit of God that we are the children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with the Lord Jesus. No man can tell what a spirit is, but we know that a spirit hath not flesh and bones. He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life. We all know that sinners who believe in the Savior as the only name given among men whereby they must be saved, die, and as far as mortal eyes can see appear as other men. The Scriptures speak of the decease of the saints as a sleep. They in a sense sleep in Jesus. Now Jesus says, Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. This cannot have reference to their natural life, because we know that the natural life must cease. Then how are we to understand the Lord? Only in respect to the holy, spiritual, everlasting life imparted to the believer when he is called with an holy calling. The Son hath power over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him. This spirit of eternal life is given to living men and women, and there is a sense in which God's people on earth have two lives, one of earth, the other of heaven. To deny this is to deny much of the teaching of Jesus and the apostles. The saying holds good that though they are dead, yet they live. No man can simplify the gospel. It was a mystery in the days of Paul, and shall be until that which is perfect is come. If we have light, let it shine, but let us be careful that we do not take darkness for light. Now we see through a glass darkly. Not a dark glass, but our manner of seeing is darkly. May we pray that we faint not, and give God all praise and glory.

I have written this article during my present affliction. I have thought much on the subject, since some brethren have taken views in the opposite direction. As near as I could express my views they are the same which I have believed for many years, and I do not think they conflict with anything that has appeared in the SIGNS above my name. It is all left to your judgment about publishing.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., Aug. 31, 1915.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., March 1, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—I hope you will pardon me for bothering you again so soon, but I have been called on to help find one of the lost sheep of Israel for his dear friends here in this dark wilderness of sin and woe, as I feel that W. T. McQueary is, though he is not a member of the visible church here, or was not when I last saw him, which was about two years ago. I will send you his letter to us, and let you publish it in the dear old SIGNS, as his nephew and niece, of Indianapolis, Ind., take the SIGNS, or at least read them, so I will send this letter of his, and when they read it in the SIGNS it may be the means of finding him for them again, and they will know that I have done all I could to help find him for them. He was a commercial traveler for the United Autographic Register Co., Chicago, Ill.; 556–558 West Jackson Blvd. is the address on the envelope his letter to us came in. I hope you will not mind publishing this to help find one of their friends, as it may do. Perhaps some one in reading this may know where he is, and I think his letter will be comforting to any who read it, as it has the right sound.

BELLE FRAZEE.

PEORIA, Ill., Jan. 22, 1911.

MR. S. AND BELLE FRAZEE—DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—It is with great humility that I so address you, as I feel my utter unworthiness to so claim spiritual relationship. To be worthy of this relationship calls for an heirship, or an heir of God. To this I must feel that I have been born again, born of the Spirit of God. If born of this Spirit then I am a son of God and a brother, an heir of his kingdom and joint-heir with the Lord Jesus Christ to this inheritance of immortal glory. I have been made to feel since early in life that God has shed abroad in my heart the spirit of love for the band of brethren composing the Primitive Baptists throughout the land wherever I meet with them; my love of heart goes out to each and every one of this band of worshipers, which I feel is the most lovely band of worshipers on earth, the only band that worship both in spirit and in truth. I visit many so-called churches, many different denominations, but all others seem to me to have the same object in view: to please men and the masses, so as to gain the greater popularity. Each one of the many seems to vie with each other in this vainglorying. As a proof of this I will inclose a clipping from a Chicago paper. It seems they are building a theatre, with gymnasium, dining-room and a room for church service annexed. These so-called church people claim to be followers and worshipers of the meek and lowly Jesus, who, when he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, found them changing money and selling doves. He said, O ye hypocrites, you make my Father's house a den of thieves. He turned over the tables and drove them out. Were he on earth to-day I feel sure there would be many tables overturned.

Dear, kind friends, I thank you from my heart for the many kindnesses I have received from you, and for this kindness in assisting me as to this letter. I was glad to again hear from my nephew. He moved, but failed to write me in time to reach me stating his new address. I wrote him, but it did not reach him, so we lost each other's address. I wrote at once after you told me of the notice in the SIGNS, and told him of you telling me of the notice. This is how they got your name in this connection. He was named for me and Elder Wilson Thompson, both I might say. He was the only child of my youngest sister, who died when he was a babe. She died in the full triumph of faith, saying to mother and brother, "Do not grieve, I am going home to Jesus." She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, and a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. I call to mind the time she related her experience to the church, about fifty-seven years ago, the meeting being held in a beautiful grove by a fine spring in my father's yard. She told of seeing herself a great sinner, and Jesus being her only hope of salvation. I was but two and one-half years younger. I then saw myself to be a great sinner, and without hope in the world. I thought it was but a boyish notion, and tried to throw it off, and I have been trying until this age in life, almost seventy years, feeling I was deceived, knowing my sinfulness, yet at times when having the privilege of hearing salvation by grace so ably and plainly proclaimed, that Jesus is the sinner's friend, and that it was sinners he came to save, though our sins were as scarlet, he could wash them white as snow, at times it was only with strong effort I could retain my seat, but the thought would rush through my mind, I will not bring reproach on the people I love by imposing on them, as some might say, He has read what others have written, heard what others have said, he is only repeating. Well might this be applied as I read of the many being led from darkness into light, for they tell of my travels so much better than I could tell them. This thought often crowds itself into my mind, Why should I not tell the same old story of Jesus and his love? He so loved us that he gave himself to save us. He found us in a waste howling wilderness, in the mire and the clay; he led us in paths we knew not. I hope I have been taught the same lesson. He is the great Teacher who teaches the one way, the way, the truth and the life. They shall all be taught of the Lord. As God changes not, then all his children are taught the same lessons by this same great Teacher.

Dear friend, I am ashamed to send this to so able a writer, but you asked me to write you. I thought of writing you but a few lines in thanks for your kindness to me, but my pen has led me on and on until I fear your patience will be exhausted. I feel I have been writing of things I know not of in truth. I hope you will throw the mantle of charity over one of the very least, if one at all, of Christ's little ones. I ask your prayers and that of all God's people.

I will be in this city the coming week, and hope to hear from you. Give my best wishes to Elder Frazee and the dear friends I met at your meetings.

Yours in bonds of love,

W. T. McQUEARY.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., Aug. 3, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have been thinking of writing a few lines for our dear family paper ever since I read

that good article of Elder Lefferts' on Predestination, and I cannot tell you how much good it did my dear husband and me to read and know that the editors believe as we do, and what we have always believed the SIGNS to teach, and if it is not that way there is nothing in it for us. Now I must tell the sad news of the death of my dear companion the 21st of July. How much I shall miss him in my lonely hours to talk over these blessed truths as we read them from your pens. I have received many letters of consolation and comfort since his death from my dear brethren and sisters of like precious faith. I will send one from sister Runkle, who always writes such good letters. We always find a crumb in them.

Dear brethren, I am so nervous I cannot write more now. Pray for me, that I may be reconciled to His will, is the prayer of your unworthy sister,

BELLE FRAZEE.

MACOMB, Ill., July 24, 1915.

DEAR SISTER FRAZEE:—The card bearing the sad news of the death of your dear husband came to hand yesterday afternoon, and I hasten to write you a few lines, assuring you of my sympathy, love and fellowship in this time of your sorrow and bereavement. It seems so strange to me that a notice of his death was not in either one of the Macomb dailies, so we had not heard of it until the receipt of your card. It was a surprise to me, as the nurse said over the telephone that he was about the same, and that was Wednesday morning, so I did not call Thursday, as I was away all day, and Friday I received the card. I did want to go to the funeral, but it rained last night and this morning until train time, and Mr. Runkle was not well, so I had to give it up, but my heart and affections were with you, and I could understand how sad and heartbroken you are with your dear companion taken away and you left alone to grieve over his departure, and how you will miss his dear presence from your home where you have lived so long. It seems we are never ready to give up our loved ones, no matter how long they have been spared to us, and nothing our friends or kindred in Christ may do, how deeply they may sympathize with us, it all cannot heal the wound, or fill the vacant chair, or bring back the departed one. So, dear sister, while I am thinking of you so much, and do so pity you in your grief and loneliness, yet I feel I can write nothing of comfort or consolation, for O, I am so weak, so incompetent, I feel utterly incapable of writing anything to cheer or encourage you. Of myself I can do nothing, but I hope and try to pray that the One who can comfort will be with you and enable you to lean on his strong arm, for in him is everlasting strength. He gave, and he has taken away, and may you feel to say, Blessed be his holy name. You have always seemed so strong, so brave, (spiritually) that I feel as a little child before its instructor, and I know I can tell you nothing but what you know so much better than I. Dear sister, I believe, and I think you do also, that when a christian dies his spirit or soul returns to God who gave it, there to dwell in paradise with God, and with the souls of just men made perfect, while the body returns to dust, there to await the resurrection, when it shall arise, fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body. Not arise the same mortal, earthly body possessed here, but it shall be changed, it shall arise a spiritual body; this mortal shall put on immortality. It is sown a natural body, it is raised

a spiritual body. The fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians is full of comfort to the poor, trembling, doubting one who is groveling in darkness, filled with sorrow and mourning. The precious doctrine of the resurrection is plainly taught, and is most sweet and comforting to God's dear, tried children. When for only a short moment we get a faint glimpse of some of these glorious truths we feel to say:

"Come joy or come sorrow, the worst may befall,
One moment in glory will make up for it all."

Dear sister, I feel that I have written enough, yet I could write more. When I think of you my mind goes back to some of my dear loved ones gone before. Father, sisters Sue, Mary and Mattie, all dear Old Baptists, and all had such love and respect for you, feeling you to be a bold defender of the faith, ever keeping in the old paths, wherein is the good old way. May you be kept steadfast and unwavering unto the end.

In reading the card I could not keep back the tears, and wondering and questioning why our dear ones are taken from us. I opened the Bible for some words of comfort, and the first words I read were Job xxxiii. 12: "Behold, in this thou art not just: I will answer thee, that God is greater than man. Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters." I felt rebuked, and prayed to be forgiven, and to be reconciled to his holy will. Precious in his sight is the death of his saints, and may you, dear sister, be enabled by divine grace to say, "Thy will be done." You and your husband will long live in the hearts of the dear Baptists for all you have done, and for your faithfulness to the cause.

Monday morning.—I wrote this letter Saturday night, and in reading it over this morning I find I did not write as I wished, but I never write a letter I am satisfied with; but I want you and your children and his children to know of our sympathy and love. Dear brother Frazee will be missed, not only in the home circle, but in your church, and in Salem Association, and wherever he and you were known. But this is God's decree, that, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," and he has also decreed that, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave." So there is a silver lining to the cloud. May you see his hand in this dispensation of his providence and feel that all is well with him. He is at rest, at peace, asleep in Jesus, free from suffering and earth's trials. God does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and no man can say, What doest thou? So his will, not ours, must be done. But O that his will could be mine; for this I pray from day to day. I would like to hear of the funeral, and how he died. If you ever feel like writing to me I would love to hear from you.

Now with much love and sympathy, I am, I hope, your sister,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

CAVE SPRING, Ky., Feb. 14, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed find a letter written by brother J. B. Jones, which I send to the SIGNS for publication that others may rejoice in the same. It is a letter, I think, full of truth and grace from start to finish. In these days there is such a tendency to ignore grace and exalt works and the power of the creature, that we can but rejoice when we see any clear testimony of the grace of God as is brought to bear in this letter. I love it because it sets forth the God of grace and love. "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo here is Christ, or there; be-

lieve it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; inasmuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

Your brother,

E. L. ANDERSON.

RUSSELLVILLE, Ky., Jan. 9, 1914.

ELDER E. L. ANDERSON—MY DEAR BROTHER:—Although I am absent from you in body, I hope I am often with you in spirit, for I am often thinking of you and the little band of brethren and sisters at Lebanon, and long to be with you all, and take some part in the worship of the God who has been so good and kind to us. If I know my own heart, my desire is to worship him at all times in a way that will be acceptable in his sight, but I know we are not sufficient for this in and of ourselves. We must forget self and look to Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith, for he is all in all, and without him we can do nothing, therefore we must look to him for our sufficiency, he being the only mediator between God and man, and if any man sin, he hath an advocate with the Father, even Jesus the righteous. Brother Anderson, I hope you will cast the mantle of charity over my weakness and imperfection, and allow me the privilege of writing to you every once in a while, and express what I feel in regard to the wonderful works of our God among the children of men. I have no one of my faith and order here to whom I can talk about these things. I get very low in spirit at times, and almost ready to give up in despair, for I do so many things unbecoming to a professed believer in Christ, and leave undone so many things I ought to do, and am afraid at times that I have missed the substance of God's love and forgiveness, and have only the shadow, and am still in my sins, and in the bonds of iniquity; but Paul said, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Paul had no confidence in the flesh, and neither have I, and it is encouraging to me to believe as Paul did, and have a like experience. If it were not for the little hope I have, and the blessed promises left on record for our encouragement, I would be miserable, and I am glad that in that, too, I am not the only one who feels that way about it. Paul said, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." He says of our hope, Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth within the vail; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus. But we need not expect to live in this world without doubts, fears and tribulation, if we are the children of God, for it is said that through much tribulation they are to enter the kingdom. Jesus, the captain of our salvation, had all this to endure while on earth for our sake, and it is said of us, that if we are to reign with him, we must suffer with him. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, but "like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth." Dear brother, we have never shown such submission and reconciliation to the Father's will, and we have not strength or ability to endure trials unless God be with us. Paul said when he was weak in the flesh, then was he strong in the Lord; that he could do all things through Christ who strengthened him. This I believe with all my heart, for with Christ all things are possible. He has all power, and has only to speak and it is done, command and it shall stand fast; saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

What a wonderful God we have to worship, and what manner of love hath he bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God. It is too mysterious for our finite minds to contemplate. Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness. When we consider what man is by nature, and what he must be by grace before he can see God, is it not a wonder to our finite minds that he has saved him with an everlasting salvation, to praise him throughout an endless eternity?

"When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise, than when we first begun."

It will always remain a mystery to us why God hardens the heart of some men, and destroys them with everlasting punishment, while he has mercy on others, and saves them with everlasting salvation. It is one of the secret things belonging to God alone, and has never been revealed to men. It is said, "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children for ever." We should be satisfied with that which has been revealed, and not try to pry into secret things. "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? * * * Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" Most assuredly he has. Then let us be still, and know that all power is with the God we profess to worship. If I were asked to give the reason why God has done as he has, I would say it was because he had a purpose in it from the beginning, and it seemed right in his sight, and leave it there. Every good and every perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights, and we are admonished to cast our care on the Lord, for he careth for us, and he pitieth all them that fear him and whose trust is in him. I feel that this embraces me, and am encouraged, for I do fear him with all my heart, and the reason is, I know I am in his hand, to dispose of as seemeth good in his sight, and if he were to send my soul to hell, his righteous law approves it well. He kills, and he makes alive. "I the Lord, do all these things." There is none to deliver out of his hand. O how helpless and dependent we are upon him for all things, both in this life and the one to come. We are kept by his power through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. I am glad it is so, for I know by experience that if we were left to ourselves we would surely fall by the wayside, never to rise. But he has loved us with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness he has drawn us by his Spirit. Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Yes, the Lord has saved his people and called them with an holy calling, not according to works of righteousness which they have done, but according to his mercy and love he had for them before the world began. Yea, it is by grace they are saved, as Paul affirms, through faith, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus before the world began. Brother Anderson, how comforting and encouraging it is to us that we can testify to this truth in our own experience. We have the witness within, and we know that we did not receive it from man, but it was revealed to us by God's holy Spirit. Jesus takes of the things of his Father and shows them to his children by the Spirit, for we cannot by seaching find out God.

I will close, for I do not seem to find a stopping-place. I am a little stronger now, but cannot stand much exercise without breaking down. I want to be submissive to God's will in my sufferings in this life, knowing that he will do all things right, and will not call upon us to endure more than we are able to bear. David said it was good for him to be afflicted. For he said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." May God bless you in the work to which he has called and qualified you, and may you go forth in the power and demonstration of his Spirit, determined to know nothing among his people save Jesus Christ, and him crucified, for this will build them up and strengthen them in their faith in God. May he bless you in basket and store, and may your last days be your best days, devoted to the honor and glory of God's cause and kingdom in this world.

From a poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

J. B. JONES.

WINNSBORO, Texas, Aug. 20, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—This is a rainy day here, and I am closed in, and not at all well, but still I have a mind to try to pen a few lines (if the editors think them worthy of a place) for the dear old SIGNS. I have been a reader of that periodical since the year 1878. It then had correspondents scattered all over the United States, I suppose everywhere there were Baptists of the Primitive faith and order, as well as from Canada. I think its correspondence covers about the same territory at this time. If there has been any change in essentials from what it stood for when I first began to read it I have not been able to detect it. I feel sure it has been all along, and still is, a source of much instruction, comfort and edification to many of our Lord's little ones. I do not doubt that it will find encouragement and support among the Lord's people as long as it stands faithfully by its original principles. Many, very many, of the writers whose names appeared in its columns in those days when I began to read it, and since, have laid their armor by and gone to rest. Many of us whose names are now occasionally appearing are drawing near the end of our pilgrimage, and soon our pens will be laid aside, and our voices silenced. I hope I may never see the time when the columns of the SIGNS are being filled with matter foreign to "the faith once delivered unto the saints." The SIGNS has uniformly stood for the unlimited sovereignty of God over all things, as the sole creator, owner, ruler and final disposer of all things, things visible, and invisible, thrones, dominions, powers, &c., and those who believe and love this doctrine have an avenue through which they can freely express themselves, and read the expressions of others of like precious faith, without the unpleasantness of confusing contradictions from editors or correspondents. It has also stood for the doctrine of the salvation of sinners of Adam's race, wholly and solely by the grace of God, through the one Lord Jesus Christ, the one only and divinely appointed Savior and Redeemer, the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved; that this divinely appointed and sent Savior and Redeemer, in the office of High Priest, made an offering of his own body, a sacrifice for the sins of his people, which made full and complete atonement for all their sins, satisfying every demand of justice against them, so that in being delivered up for (because of) their offences, and raised up again for

(because of) their justification, he has become their wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. So herein is all their salvation and all their desire. The righteous obedience of the Son of God and our Savior to the divine and holy will of his Father in fulfilling the law to a jot and tittle, in suffering the penalty in behalf of the transgressors whom he represented, bearing their sins in his own body, shedding his own precious blood on the cross, suffering the just for the unjust, justifies them in the sight of God. He, as husband of the bride, was the only one to whom divine justice looked for payment of the debt, and he came fully qualified and authorized to settle it. When the last cruel, taunting insult of the enemy, the giving of vinegar at the call of dying thirst, was accomplished, Jesus said, "It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." Then all the requirements of justice were fully met, the debt was forever settled and canceled, his people were justified. I am briefly outlining some special points of doctrine for which I have understood the SIGNS to stand, but I desire here to express my own view of a point that I am unable to say just how the SIGNS has stood in the past. I do not understand that there was anything in all the demands of justice upon our Savior to justify his people that required his resurrection from the tomb, but having done all that justice required, and finished the work of justification, he was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, (1 Cor. vi. 14,) according to the decree and promise of the Father. (Psalms i. 7; Acts xiii. 33–35.)

One of the original doctrinal principles for which the SIGNS has ever stood is the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. There can be no misunderstanding of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe on this point. He scripturally taught that "whom he [the Lord] did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."—Rom. viii. 29. This conformation to the "image of his Son" is evidently consummated in the resurrection of our vile body when it shall be changed and "fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."—Phil. iii. 21. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." If Christ arisen from the dead became "the firstfruits of them that slept," all the other fruits sanctified and secured must come forth from the dead at the appointed time. Dead and gone out of our sight are many of our beloved, but they are not lost to the sight of our heavenly Father. The Scriptures reckon them to be "asleep in Jesus." The term "resurrection" can apply only to the dead. The dead are raised up. It is, "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." So without the resurrection of the dead, and change from mortal to immortal, there could be no victory over death and the grave in the sufferings, death and resurrection of the Lord of glory. Those for whom Jesus suffered and died were saved in a covenant sense before the foundation of the world, but were actually saved when Jesus died and arose again for them. These people are saved in an experimental sense when quickened from a state

of death in trespasses and sins and given hope in Jesus. But the whole purpose of God and the full consummation of that salvation is to be manifested in the final resurrection in that day which God hath appointed at the end of time and of this world, so I understand the holy Scriptures to teach. May the Lord sanctify the truth to our comfort and instruction, and save us from error.

In bonds of sorrow and affliction,

H. B. JONES.

FOREST HILL, Md., August 16, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The inclosed letter, written by my dear father over fifty years ago, and just a few months before his ordination, came into my possession recently, having been found among some of my grandfather's old papers. The letter was written at the home of my mother, near the Tuscarora Church, in Juniata County, Pa. Harford was his home church, situated in Harford County, Md. To this church he soon returned, and was ordained by it, and almost immediately after his ordination was unanimously chosen pastor, in which capacity he continued to serve the Harford Church until his death, a period of almost fifty years. To those who knew my dear father well I feel this letter would be of considerable interest, but perhaps it may not be of sufficient general interest to justify its publication. Use your judgment in the matter, and all will be right.

Yours in love,

JENNIE GRAFTON.

PATTERSON, Pa., Jan. 5, 1858.

DEAR FATHER AND ALL:—I suppose you have been looking for something from us before this, but really I have been in such an unsettled state of mind that I could not write, and as yet I have nothing definite to tell you. I will say, in the first place, that my wife and I are well, though my wife's brother has been quite ill of typhoid fever, but is now improving.

Now, in regard to making my home up here, I have not yet obtained the consent of my mind to stay. Uncle has made me some wonderfully good offers. First, he offered me his farm on the half, but when I told him it would require more capital than I had to commence on such a farm as his, then he offered to let me have it on the third, and he would find everything to farm with, and be at all expense except the hiring of one hand. He would help with expense of harvest and threshing. Since Nathan left uncle has bought another farm, and this day he has made me an offer on that farm which is rather tempting. He will furnish me with a team and allow me all I can make on the farm, giving no share at all, but as yet I dare not accept even this. I have read in the experience of Bunyan how he was sometimes at his wits' end, and such is now the case with me. If I felt greedy after this world there is certainly an opportunity here well worth seizing. I thought when I came to this country that I should be satisfied from the leadings of my own mind as to where we should pitch our tent. My desire is to see the hand of the Lord in the matter, making a plain path for my feet, but as yet my mind is confused, and I see nothing clearly. I do not feel free to stay here, and I am afraid to go back. I often think of the little band of brethren at Harford; they are presented to my mind in various ways; at times I feel as if I had run away from them. I have in much weakness tried several times to preach to the church here, sometimes

having about as much liberty as is common for me, but often very much in the dark.

Elder Rittenhouse was here and filled his appointment. He told me that he wished to visit you at Harford after he gets moved down to Delaware. After he gets settled there he thinks he will have one idle Sunday in each month, and he would like to spend that Sunday with you.

Brother Dance's letter was received here some time ago, and I believe by many of the brethren it was not very much appreciated, as the substance of the letter was a request to the church here not to persuade us to stay, but leave us free to act as we think best; but really the brethren here, while they appear to desire very much that we should settle among them, have not over persuaded us to do so, but feel it is right that I should follow the leadings of my mind in the matter.

As I have no idea that this letter will go out of the family, or be read by any one except those to whom I address it, I will give some reasons that might induce me to remain here for a time at least. I have no desire to leave my native State or my home church for the sake of worldly gain, but I believe that I can get along here with less gift than I could at Harford. If I have any gift at all, it is very limited, and here the congregations are small, none but members attending, and I seem to have less backwardness. Not that I believe the church here would be satisfied with anything short of the truth, but there is a great deal of simplicity about them. I think I discovered in the church at Harford a disposition to push me farther than I feel gifted to go. Most sensibly do I feel the need of the instruction and forbearance of the brethren. Now it has occurred to me that if I should remain here for a while it might be that I would improve some, that is, if the Lord has designed me for the work. It is not that I am ashamed of the doctrine I defend, but I am ashamed of my own ignorance. My views of the Scriptures are very limited, but notwithstanding all the weaknesses and imperfections I discover in myself, I feel a strong desire to go forth and shun not to declare the whole counsel of God, whether men will hear or forbear. I feel that my message is to the people of God. Comfort ye my people, saith your God. That is the extent and object of the gospel. "It shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts of the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem." When the poor outcast views himself without God and without hope in the world, being stripped of all his own righteousness and made to hunger and thirst after divine things, the gospel comes as a balm for every wound, a cordial for his fears, but never until that radical change takes place will any one know anything about spiritual things. There is nothing in the gospel, or the word of God, that is calculated to interest the dead sinner. Such things are hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes.

Well, I must bring my letter to a close. You will no doubt think this a difficult letter to answer, as I have told you nothing definite concerning my plans. Indeed, I have no plans, and it may be some time yet before I shall know what I am to do. Write soon; I am anxious to hear how mother is.

With love to all, I am your son,

WM. GRAFTON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1915.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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RESURRECTION.

"THE faith of God's elect viewing the resurrection, as described by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians xv., your views in connection therewith, on a better resurrection, as in Hebrews xi. 35, and the first resurrection as in Revelation xx. 5, 6, are solicited through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

A brother who lives in Texas sends the above request to us. This is not the first request of this nature we have had, but have deferred complying with any of them until we felt more at liberty to write upon this subject of the resurrection. The brethren, we feel, have a right to such views as we have upon any subject, and such views as we have we hope we are willing to share with the brethren. If any one has sent us a request for views upon any subject with which we have not complied, it is because we have no views to give them. It is not worth while for us to try to write about something that we know nothing about. As to the resurrection, it is a most glorious subject, and one that we love to think and to talk about, always to edification, never for the sake of argument or controversy. As to our having any cast-iron, unbending opinions or views to lay down upon this subject for the consideration of our readers, we have none. It is comforting to walk round about this glorious truth of the resurrection and to survey it in its various aspects, but to plunge into the depths of it and to fathom its mysteries, no mortal ever has done it, nor ever will this side of eternity. So much of the resurrection as we have already experienced, we are thereof a witness and are free to talk about; so much of it as is yet beyond our present experience we know nothing, except as it is set forth in the Bible. Right here we want to say that we positively do believe all that the Bible says upon the subject of the resurrection, but we do not claim to understand it all, nor to be able to explain it all. In speaking or writing of this matter we have wanted to adhere closely to the Scriptures and the scriptural manner of expression. One of the things about Old School Baptists that first drew us to them in our early experience, was that we saw they were the people that adhered strictly to the Scriptures in all matters of doctrine, faith and practice. Thus it has always been our desire to reject anything in the way of doctrine that did not have a "thus saith the Lord" for it. When we endeavor to clothe scriptural truths in phraseology of our own, we very often change the import of a text by using our own modes of expression instead of quoting the exact Scripture language. This often leads to confusion in the minds of the hearers as to just what this or that preacher means upon any given subject. We would like our readers to know just how we feel about this matter of the resurrection, and shall try to be clear in our expression, but if any one reads this expecting to have the "mystery" solved for them, they will be disappointed before they read very far. We deem it is a mistake to think

that nothing is known of the resurrection until after we pass out of this life, that it begins simply with the ending of mortality. If we know nothing of heaven while here in the flesh, what assurance or hope have we that we shall ever hereafter know anything about it? Upon what is our hope based if not upon the earnest of the Spirit, that earnest which the Spirit brings to the subjects of grace of that inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, reserved for the elect of God? It is a heaven below the Redeemer to know, and when the knowledge of Christ and his salvation is revealed to our faith it is a foretaste of glory. It is then that heaven comes down our souls to greet. These revelations which God brings by the Spirit unto his people, afford the basis of their hope. Therefore it seems to us that the hope of heaven is based upon heaven itself, the hope of the resurrection is based upon the resurrection itself. Jesus says, I am the resurrection and the life. This being so, then every manifestation of Jesus in the lives of his people is a manifestation of "the power of the resurrection," and just as we can never know all about Jesus until we see him face to face, without a veil between, just so we shall never know the fullness of the resurrection until then. The life that we now live in the flesh, we live by the faith of the Son of God. This life of the christian being the manifestation of the life of Jesus in his mortal body, then it must follow that God's people, even while in this world, live the life of the resurrection. "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." With what did he quicken them? He quickened them by the Spirit and with the life of Christ. This quickening of the Spirit is the entrance of eternal life. Is not this eternal life the very life of Christ, and is not Christ the resurrection? Then that which quickens those who were dead in sin is the power of the resurrection. If we may be permitted to speak of such things having a beginning, we would say that the resurrection life begins with each individual subject of grace the very moment he is quickened by the Spirit, and from that moment it continues on and on and on through all the travel of the believer, until it is consummated, or shall be consummated, in the full revelation of the infinite glory of God beyond the bounds of mortality. Belief itself is a manifestation of the power of the resurrection. Does not Paul say we believe according to the working of the mighty power which raised Christ from the dead? See Ephesians i. 19, 20. Thus, it takes the same power to make one a believer that it took to raise Christ from the dead. Is not, then, belief an effect of the resurrection power? What did God do with those whom he quickened from the death in sin? He raised them up together and made them sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Are not these heavenly places all the privileges and the blessings of the gospel covenant? It seems so to us. Then to enjoy the gospel in any sense whatever, and to whatever extent, there must be a raising of the subject up from death in sin and from under the curse and dominion of the law of sin, and what is this raising up but a further manifestation of "the first resurrection?" The more we think about this matter the more we feel the impossibility of setting bounds to the resurrection, and saying it begins here and ends there, it includes this or does not include that. The whole life of the believer as a believer and as a manifest child of God is based upon the fact that Christ is risen from the dead, and not only risen himself, but came forth

bringing his sheaves with him; that is, all that the Father gave unto him before the foundation of the world. The head did not rise without the body, but both the head and the body, so Christ rose from the dead with all his church. "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." Had Christ not risen from the dead there never could have been the gospel, the church, faith, hope, love, prayer or praise. All these things have their roots in "the first resurrection," and the very resurrection life maintains them. Peter never could, at the day of Pentecost, or any other time, have interpreted Joel's prophecy and the Psalms of David had he not been partaker of the life of the resurrection. Read the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, and the list there given of all the trials of the people of God. These things they never could have endured except they had that victory that overcometh death. This victory Jesus is, so by faith in him they counted not their lives dear unto themselves. It seems that here must have been a sense, at least, in which mortality was swallowed up of life, since they lost their interest in their mortal lives through the measure of the Christlife given unto them. We have derived great comfort in cloudy days from being able to think that even now Christ is with and within his people, and that having Christ in them, they are already the "children of the resurrection." But we must not lose sight of the fact that there is a future aspect of the resurrection. As regards this futurity of the resurrection we must let the Scriptures bear witness. God has left on record by the pen of inspiration such information concerning what is yet ahead of us as he deemed necessary for us to know, and what God has not disclosed in his written word regarding this matter it is not worth while theorizing or speculating about. We can now know no more about it than the Scriptures declare. "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool! that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." Note how all through this language the Spirit is all the time distinguishing between the earthly and the heavenly, the natural and the spiritual. Never are the two confused or mingled, but always kept separate and distinct. The same "it" that is sown a natural body is raised a spiritual body. Then in the forty-fifth verse we are told what these two bodies are: "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." "The first man is of the earth, earthy [the natural body]: the

second man is the Lord from heaven [the spiritual body]." "And as we have borne the image of the earthy [the first man Adam], we shall also bear the image of the heavenly [the Lord Jesus Christ]." The same "we" that bear the first earthy image shall bear the second heavenly image, but there are two distinct images. "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." No need to cavil over these words, for nothing could be more distinct than the separation made by the Spirit in this fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians between flesh and Spirit. Now comes the mystery which no man on earth can ever explain: "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed," &c. All of this language we do most certainly believe with all our heart, but as Paul did not go on and explain it, neither can we. John says, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." What more can we wish to know than this: that we shall be satisfied, when we awake, with His likeness. Whatever it takes to make up that complete and infinite satisfaction we are assured God will give us. But as to what that spiritual body is, how it looks, how it is made, who knows? We do not, and we do not care for any one to try to tell us. Why try to pry into that which God has not seen fit to disclose? The time is coming when we shall know as we are known and see as we are seen, when that which is in part shall be done away and we shall see face to face. Until then, let us wait. "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Very often brethren in quoting this, say "vile bodies," instead of "vile body." We do not know why they persist in doing this, for the Spirit doubtless used the right word in saying "body" instead of "bodies." "Our vile body," signifying many members, but all one body. Something like it occurs in Ephesians iv. 13: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Notice that the "all," meaning many, are to be conformed to the one end: the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, the perfect man. Nothing is said about their ever becoming perfect men or perfect women, but coming unto the "perfect man." This agrees with Romans viii. 29: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." Here, again, the all or many are to be brought forth in the one image. Again, in Romans viii. 23, we have: "Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Here it is also "our body," not "our bodies," as is so often quoted. It sets forth the many in one, the many members of the one body. As to the "better resurrection" in Hebrews xi. 35, the connection is, "And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection." To be delivered from torture meant that they would have to die again at some later time, and they preferred to have it all over with at once in

hope of that "better" or real resurrection in all its fullness which can never be broken. Lazarus was raised from the dead, but he was simply brought back to natural life, and had to die again at some later day, therefore his resurrection was not unto eternity, and was not spiritual. The "better" resurrection is the resurrection of the spiritual body which Paul talks about in Corinthians, which is unto eternal glory, and which death can never end. Thus, these martyrs for the faith described in Hebrews xi. 35, who were delivered over to be put to death for the truth's sake, did not wish to be delivered from that torture at the hands of men, and thus receive a temporary resurrection, but preferred to depart and be with Christ, which is far "better." As to the "first resurrection" in Rev. xx. 6, this reads, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." Christ was the firstborn from the dead, the first to rise from the dead to die no more. The resurrection of Christ is, therefore, the first resurrection. Those who have part in this resurrection are those who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and for whom he died and rose from the dead. These are risen with Christ and cannot die any more, because he has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Those for whom Christ died cannot die, they have everlasting life. The second death, the death of the mortal body, has no power over them, for while their mortal bodies do die and return to dust, the spirit, or life, cannot die. He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die, but hath everlasting life. When the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, they shall be clothed upon with that building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Two different houses, but the same child of God that now lives in this earthly house shall also dwell in that other house not made with hands, the building of God. "But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him."—Matt. xxii. 31, 32. Thus we see that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, while dead to us as men, are living unto God, and are not really dead at all. All God's people are just this way: none of them die. Christ having risen from the dead, and they being partakers of this "first resurrection," the second, or corporeal death, can have no power over them. L.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

JOHN XIV. 21.

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."

On that solemn and eventful night in which our Lord was betrayed, and but a little while before he suffered on the cross, these words were spoken by him to his disciples. Although pressed in spirit, crushed beneath the ponderous weight of all the sins of his people which were laid on him, groaning in spirit, with his soul exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, and having a baptism to be baptized with, and pressed until it should be accomplished, with all the mighty anguish of his own soul, wringing from him, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground, he did not for a single moment forget the dear objects of his love for

whom he was about to pour out his soul. As with his omniscient glance he comprehended the mighty billows of overwhelming surprise and grief into which they were about to be immersed, when they should see the dearest object of their love rudely torn away from them by a murderous mob, and see him buffeted, insulted, spit upon, and led like a lamb to the slaughter, nailed to the torturing cross, and put to death by wicked hands, when his dying groans should seem to put out the sun, and veil the earth in darkness, rend the rocks, startle the slumbering dead and convulse the universe, knowing, as he did, the willingness of their spirit, but the weakness of their flesh, he gave them words of comfort against that trying hour: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." How seasonable was this admonition. Nothing could be more directly calculated to shake their confidence in him as the Messiah whom they had believed him to be, and make them fear that they had mistaken his true character, than what they were now about to witness. They verily believed that it was he that should redeem Israel, that he possessed almighty power, but now to see the powers of earth and hell appear to prevail against him must certainly try their faith in him as the mighty God and everlasting Father. But though he bows his mighty head in death, his Father's throne in heaven is not more firmly established than his ultimate and complete triumph over sin, death and the grave; nor is he less reliable for their faith and confidence than his eternal Father. As they therefore believe in God, they have his warrant to believe in him. This assurance of faith should shield their trembling heart from trouble. Had they understood and remembered what he had told them, that he should rise again on the third day, and that it was expedient for them that he should suffer, and rise again, they would have been less disconsolate; and it is even so now with the saints, when our faith and confidence is unwavering in Jesus, our heart is protected from trouble. It is only when the surging waves of temptations and trials assault our faith, that cruel doubts and fears prevail against us now. Whenever we believe as firmly in Jesus as our Savior as we believe in the existence and perpetuity of the government of the eternal Father, our joys are unspeakable and full of glory. Truly he was going away, but it was for them. "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Could we but know and understand that our trials are all designed to secure this result, that where Jesus is, there we may be also, how cheerfully could we submit to them all. What trouble would be too great for us to endure, if necessary to secure to us the abiding presence of our dear Redeemer?

We love to trace the whole connection of his words of instruction and consolation recorded in this most interesting chapter, but we designed to dwell at this time more particularly on the text presented at the commencement of this article.

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." In the fifteenth verse he said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," and in this verse he tells us who they are that love him. It is sometimes a point we long to know, whether we love Jesus or not. Our love, if indeed we have any, seems to us so cold and languid that we can

hardly satisfy ourselves that we are the people who are distinguished from all others by this peculiar mark. Let this question be settled, and all will be right with us. We know that all things work together for good to them that love God; and we know that we have passed from death unto life, if we love the brethren; and we are persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. This very important question is settled by our Lord. "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." Observe, first, the commandments of Christ spoken of in this text are not the precepts of Moses, which were given to the carnal seed of Israel, unto whom pertained the covenants, the giving of the law, &c. See Rom. i. 2, and ix. 4, 5. The law of carnal or fleshly commandments was given to them, and they had Moses preached to them every Sabbath day; but they were not thereby characterized as lovers of Christ, for the law made nothing perfect. Nor yet the law under which the human family was created in Adam, for all have fallen and come short of the glory of God; but the commandments of Christ are those which indicate his spiritual dominion as the King of saints, and these embrace all his laws and ordinances which he has enjoined upon his redeemed, called and quickened subjects, as members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. A perfect record of his commandments is found in the New Testament, and a transcript, a perfect duplicate of them, is written in the hearts of his spiritual subjects, embracing all that he requires of them in faith or in practice. To neglect or disobey anything which he has commanded, or to do anything religiously that he has not commanded, is equally perverse and reprehensible.

Second, these commandments of Christ were never given to the world, but to the subjects of this spiritual kingdom, which is not of this world, which is diverse from all the kingdoms of this world, and which he has redeemed from the world. "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples."—Isaiah viii. 16. His commandments require spiritual action, and are totally inapplicable to all such as are not born of the Spirit. "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God [to this law of the Spirit of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord], neither indeed can be." Repentance, faith, spiritual-mindedness, baptism, communion, fellowship with the Father, and with the Son, and with the church of God, are not given to the ungodly. They have never received, and therefore they who hate Christ have not his commandments. As the covenants of the law were placed carefully in the consecrated ark of the testimony, so the laws of Christ are hidden in his church, and in the hearts of his people.

Third. The kingdom of Christ has its well-defined boundaries. "Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion." —Psalms cxiv. 2. No one can so much as see this kingdom except he be born again, and except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. The laws of no prince or potentate extend beyond the bounds of territory over which he presides, while Christ's providential government extends over all beings, all worlds, and all events; his mediatorial government, as the Prince and Savior of his people, is confined to his spiritual sub-

jects, who are known in the Scriptures as a seed (that) shall serve him, and be counted to the Lord for a generation. (Psalms xxii. 30.)

Fourth. In the preaching of Christ and his apostles none of the commandments of Christ were ever addressed indiscriminately to saints and sinners. When the good Shepherd putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and they follow him, and he leadeth them out. He knows his own sheep, and he is known of them. He calleth his own sheep by name, they hear and know his voice, and they follow him, and he giveth them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and none shall pluck them out of his hand. (John x.) When, in the beginning of the gospel, John came from God with a commission to make ready a people prepared for the Lord, some who were not prepared for the Lord came to him for baptism, and although he had commanded those to whom he was sent to "repent and be baptized," he demanded of the Pharisees and Sadducees who had warned them to flee from the wrath to come. They must first demonstrate to him that they were prepared for the Lord; that is, for the kingdom and spiritual government of Christ, by fruits meet for repentance, and think not to say that Abraham was their father. For Pharisees or Sadducees, will-worshipers, or any who were not quickened, to be baptized would be to obey no command of Christ. He has never commanded any but believers who love him to be baptized. It would be sacrilegious for any but believers, whether infants or adults, to be baptized. Philip said to the church, "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest." Let it be observed that the Holy Ghost sent Philip and inspired him to give this very answer to the direct question of the eunuch, "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" That which should hinder the eunuch would hinder any one else, and that which qualified him is a sufficient qualification for any one else: "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest." His profession of faith was plain and clear: "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Enough, Philip is satisfied, the chariot stops, the eunuch is baptized, and then goes on his way rejoicing, and the Spirit caught away Philip to labor elsewhere. Now the eunuch was not required to say, I feel worthy of the ordinance, I am satisfied I shall do honor to my profession, or I have Abraham to my father. He was a believer, which he could not have been if he were not born of God, and being a quickened believer, he had the commandment, he did love Jesus, and it was therefore his happy privilege. But to settle this matter effectually and forever we have only to observe what Jesus says in verse fifteen, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." The commandments of Christ are given only to them that love him, they only have his commandments who love him, and they love him because he first loved them. The commandments of Jesus are not confined to baptism, but all is embraced that he has enjoined on them. But baptism is the first in the order of the commands which are given to believers who love him, and they cannot live one hour after he has revealed his love in their hearts in neglect of the holy ordinances where a door is open for them without involving disobedience His commandments which they have, require them to deny themselves, take up their cross daily and to follow the Lamb, to walk in love and fellowship with those in his church who have obtained like precious faith, and given evidence thereof

by obedience in like manner to Christ. He commands them to be separate from the world, to renounce its vanities, to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, but he commands them to use such weapons as belong to the armor of God, not carnal weapons, for they are forbidden to render evil for evil to any man, but to love their enemies, pray for them who despitefully use and persecute them. The whole code of Jesus' commandments is now upon them, they take his yoke in baptism, and before heaven and earth declare their allegiance to him as their supreme Potentate and King. His vows are upon them, and it becomes their privilege, as it is their duty, to observe all things whatsoever he has commanded them, whatever amount of self-denial it may require, or whatever of persecution it may involve. But one preliminary question is allowed: "If ye love me." This settled, all his commands are imperatively binding on all such. Thus we see that inasmuch as the commands of Christ are restricted to those exclusively who love him, for he will have no subjects in his kingdom but such as love him, therefore he that hath them, and keepeth, or obeyeth them, is really and manifestly him that loveth him, and to all such loving and obedient children the gracious assurance of our text belongs.

"And he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father." This is an assurance and guarantee of the perpetuity of the love of God to all such as bear the description already given. Not by any means as a consequence of their love to Christ, nor to be regarded as a reward of merit, for, first, God's love is eternal, immutable, sovereign and self-moving, beyond the power of any influences that can possibly be brought to bear upon it. Had this not been the case it could never have reached any of the degenerate and guilty sons of men. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved)."—Eph. ii. 4, 5. Second, the love of God the Father was given to the saints, with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, "according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."—Eph. i. 4. And in John xvii. 23, 24: "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me: * * * for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." The positive declaration that God's love to his people was before the foundation of the world forbids the idea that it was ever induced by any influence brought to bear since the foundation of the world. Third, it is of too high and holy a character to be moved by influences necessarily of an inferior order. Besides, if it could have been induced by any agency whatever, it might by the same agency be repelled or wholly withdrawn. One may then inquire, Why is it thus said, "And he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father"? We understand it to be given as a comforting assurance of the perpetuity of the love of the Father to those who are so clearly identified as the members of Christ. As the love of the Father to them is even with, or equal to, his love to Christ, although they may seem to themselves, and to the world, so unworthy of such manner of love as God has bestowed on them, that they should be called his sons, still the world shall know that God

has loved them even as he has loved Christ; and, furthermore, we understand the declaration to embrace the manifestations of his love to them. Many things occur to make us fear that God's mercies are, so far as we are concerned, clean gone forever, and that he will love us and be gracious to us no more. So it appeared to the reasoning capacities of the Jews in regard to our suffering Redeemer on the cross. "He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God." His sufferings were regarded by carnal men as evidence that God did not love him, and so our own carnal reason insinuates to us that if God loved us he would save us from such dreadful temptations as we sometimes endure; but to fortify the disciples for the dreadful trial he assures them that his Father will love them. How inspiring the assurance! What could so well fortify us for sore afflictions, bitter persecutions or strong temptations as the assurance that God will manifest his love to us? If then we have the commandments of Jesus, and are enabled through abounding grace to obey them, such manifestations of the love of the Father are made to us as to revive our faith, confirm our hope and banish our doubts and fears.

"And I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." Even when he rebukes and chastens his people for their disobedience, or for the trial of their faith, he loves them, and in love he scourges them for their good, but the tenderness of his love to them is not so manifest to their understanding as when they have his commandments and walk in obedience to him. The way of the transgressor is hard, but the pathway of the righteous shines brighter and brighter. The experience of all the children of God agrees with this instruction. We cannot expect to enjoy the smiles of our Savior and realize the glowing manifestations of his love flowing into our hearts when we forsake his law and walk not in his judgments, when we break his statutes and keep not his commandments, for then he will, in covenant faithfulness, visit our transgressions with the rod and our iniquity with stripes. He will not only give to his obedient children gracious and cheering manifestations of his love, but he will manifest himself to them. "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." He comes by his Spirit, in his word, and manifests himself as their Prince and Savior, the Captain of their salvation, as their Deliverer, their Protector and their all. In all his relations to them he manifests himself, and in all his offices he reveals himself to them for their comfort, safety and encouragement. It is a blessed thing to have his commandments, to be a subject of his spiritual government, to feel his love shed abroad in our hearts, drawing us to his embrace and inclining us to honor and obey him. Thrice blessed to abide in his love, for he says, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."—John xv. 10.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Sept. 15, 1866.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

A. T. Benson has changed his address from Cannon, Del., to Waverly, Pa.

W. M. Little has changed his address from Gap, Texas, to Gorman, Texas.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Asa Howard, August 28th, 1915, Dudley Wooten and Miss Ruth Elliott, both of Brooklyn Heights Addition, Fort Worth, Texas.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Emma Delaney was born June 19th, 1831, at Chestnut Hill, near Philadelphia. Her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Streeper, were Catholics, but good, moral people. From her early childhood she held no regard for their form of religion, and could not enter into their rites and ceremonies. On March 14th, 1856, she was married to Jesse Willard, oldest son of Deacon James V. Willard, of Southampton. They had one son, Harold. Her husband was drowned in August, 1859. In September she went to make her home with his father, where she was loved by all the family as their own sister. Her gentle, loving ways endeared her to them all. After some months she showed a marked interest in attending the meetings at Southampton. The doctrine presented there, although new to her, was the expression of her own experience. She saw the members as the saints of God, and for a long time desired a home with them, but felt too unworthy to present herself. Encouraged by her great love for the church she did at last offer herself, and was received, being baptized by Elder Harding. In 1872 she was married to Joseph Delaney, who died several years ago. Mrs. Delaney died Jan. 31st, 1915, at the home of her sister, Mrs. Clauder, in Philadelphia, where she enjoyed every comfort. Her death was due to heart affection, incident to her advanced years. This dear sister was held in the highest and most affectionate esteem by the members of this church, and by all the large number of her relatives and acquaintances. For a number of years she was not able to attend the meetings of the church very often, but she enjoyed the meetings and the privileges of the church above all earthly things.

The funeral services were conducted at the Southampton meetinghouse, where I spoke briefly from 1st Corinthians xv. The funeral was largely attended by devoted relatives and friends. Mrs. Delaney is survived by her only son, Harold Willard, of New York city.

ALSO,

By request of Mrs. Margaret Willard Twining, I send you for publication in the SIGNS a notice of the death of her mother, **Mrs. Mary J. Hogeland,** who was born April 6th, 1839. She was one of thirteen children born to Deacon James Willard and wife, of whom ten were daughters. Six were members of Southampton Church, three are still living. She was married to Morris Hogeland Jan. 9th, 1860. They had two daughters and one son, who died in infancy. One daughter died nearly four years ago. Sister Mary was the first to come to the church after I became pastor, and was baptized Dec. 14th, 1884. She had desired the blessed privilege of receiving that sacred ordinance for eighteen years. As she arose in the church meeting it seemed to her, she said, as though an angel carried her forward. She was very deeply exercised in her mind in regard to spiritual things, and she lived a life of faith. Her experiences from day to day were very sweet to listen to, and it was very comforting to talk with her concerning the things of the kingdom of the dear Savior. She had much sickness, and was often very deeply and sorely tried in her mind and in circumstances, but all of her trials she felt were sanctified to her good. She was dearly loved by every member of the church, and by all her wide circle of friends. We greatly miss her. Her love for the church was wonderful. She longed to be at every meeting the last few years of her life. In her last illness she expressed a strong desire to be with the church once more. She lived with her daughter, and had her tender care until her death, which occurred May 18th, 1915. Her youngest sister was with her much of the time. After her long illness she passed away quietly, as one falling asleep. Sister Hogeland is survived by one daughter, four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

The funeral services were conducted at Mrs. Twining's home in Germantown, Pa., by Elder B. F. Coulter, on Saturday morning, May 22nd, and at Churchville Reformed Church in the afternoon by me.

SILAS H. DURAND.

William F. Kennedy was born Feb. 24th, 1851, departed this life Sept. 2nd, 1914, making his stay on earth 63 years, 6 months and 9 days. He was married to Miss Alice Yarbrough Dec. 20th, 1873. To that union were born five children, one son and four daughters; one daughter preceded him to the grave. He professed a hope in Christ and joined the Primitive Baptist Church at old Bethesda, Ouachita Co., Ark., together with his wife, August, 1874, and was baptized by Elder W. M. McDonnell. Their membership remained there until 1891, when they moved to Hempstead County, Ark., and transferred their letters to New Hope Church, where he was ordained as deacon, and served until he moved to Lafayette Co., Ark., and there served as deacon until the day of his death. He was faithful to his church, loyal to his brethren and sisters, always making it a point to be present on each meeting day if possible. The greatest joy of his life was the company of the Old Baptists. His house was their home, and all felt welcome there. He was a true and firm believer in the doctrine of predestination of all things, and salvation by grace. He was a faithful father, gentle and kind. No one can take his place; no one can under-

stand as father did. He was making great preparations for the association, which was to convene with the church at Damascus in October, just a month before he died. He was so glad it was going to be near him, so that he could have the pleasure of taking care of many who had sheltered him at meetings far and near. But it was not God's will for him to be there. His illness was of short duration, only a week. A few minutes before he died he said he felt better, laid down, turned over and breathed his last. His whole life was spent in doing unto others as he would have them do unto him. None knew him but to love him. I well remember when our eldest sister died, in his tears and sorrow he said: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." He was an example to us all, but he has gone and left us to mourn. Mother is getting along in years, and soon will join him to part no more, where sorrow and sighing will be over, and only songs of praise to that great and merciful God who gave the blood of his precious Son for the sins of his people. It is indeed sweet to hope to meet again and never, never part. Pray for us, that we may be enabled to bear our burden and not complain of our sorrow.

He was laid to rest in the Shiloh Church cemetery. Elder J. H. Daniell conducted the funeral services, much to the comfort of the bereaved family and friends. Six brothers survive him, three of whom are members of the Primitive Baptist Church, also one sister.

Written by his daughter, B.

Thomas Milton Shearer was born in Page County, Iowa, Nov. 20th, 1849. His father, brother Joel Shearer, with his family crossed the plains to Oregon in 1864, Milton driving three yoke of cattle all the way across. They settled in Yamhill County for a few years, then moved to near Forest Grove, where in 1871 he was married to Miss Susan J. Flanary. In 1879 he located with his family near Goldendale, Wash., and lived there until 1893, when he, thinking to better his condition, moved to Yakima County and bought a farm near North Yakima, residing there until 1905, when they moved to Puyallup, Wash. Nine children blessed their union, but in 1885 four of them were taken by death, three in less than a week. Five are spared to comfort the dear mother in her sorrow and to mourn the loss of a devoted father. His death was peculiarly sad. He and his wife came to Yakima July 31st to visit their two daughters and their families, sister Josie Mitchell and Mrs. Eunice Byrd and ourselves. He had been especially anxious to visit his brother-in-law, Elder W. J. Hess, who had been ill for several weeks, and spent the first two days with us. After visiting Eunice a few days, and just before leaving for sister Josie's, he called up on the telephone saying when they expected to return to Eunice's and then come here to be at meeting Saturday and Sunday. He was taken ill at sister Josie's August 8th. On the 11th they returned to Mr. Byrd's. They called a doctor, who pronounced his trouble pleurisy, bordering on pneumonia. His condition was not considered critical, and he seemed to be a little better, but suddenly on Saturday evening, August 14th, he began breathing heavily, and in less than fifteen minutes was gone. What a shock to my dear sister and to us all! What a sad home coming! Their three sons, Charles and Orin, of Tacoma, and Glenn, of Puyallup, made arrangements for the funeral at their home in Puyallup and burial in the Tacoma Cemetery. Elder A. Wilson, of Oakville, spoke words of comfort to the sorrowing family, relatives and friends. Our dear brother received a hope in Christ when a young man, and had his wife get his clothes ready for baptism, but when meeting time came a deep sense of unworthiness held him back, and not until March, 1881, did he come to the church, when he with two others were baptized in the fellowship of Pleasant Grove Church by Elder J. A. Bullack, and continued a member until death. Brother Shearer was not loud in his profession, but was strictly honest; the cup of cold water was never withheld, and many homeless wayfarers found a home under his roof during the many years I knew him.

SONORA A. HESS.

Harriet Gammon Bannister, relict of the late James Bannister, passed away in her 89th year. Her life was a path marked with deeds of kindness, and among all her friends she ranked as a woman of sympathy, a kind neighbor, devoted mother and true friend, and withal a woman of heroic mould in bravely meeting the stern requirements and often the disappointments of life. Deceased was born in Hampshire, England, and came to Canada in 1837, shortly after becoming the wife of James Bannister. For sixty-one years she was a resident of this township, of late years making her home with her son, James E. She is survived by five sons and two daughters, namely, Amos and John E., of Forest; George Eli and Charles, of Essex; James E., of Plympton; Mrs. Hugh Willard, of Dorchester, and Mrs. E. Dent, of Alberta.

The funeral took place Sunday, June 11th, at 2 p. m., and was largely attended, H. Elmer Green conducting the service. The pallbearers were the five sons of Mr. J. W. Bell, of Forest.

I feel to add a few words to the above, which appeared in the local paper of Forest, Ontario. While it was not my privilege to be very well acquainted with sister Bannister, having met her but once, and that some three years ago, while here on a visit, I can truly say she was one who loved the truth as it is

in Jesus, and lived and died in full confidence of the faith of God's elect and is at rest. Sister Bannister united with the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada June 27th, 1875, and was baptized by Elder Pollard. I very much regret that I was not able to officiate at her funeral as she requested, but being away from home at the time of her death visiting the friends of the church in Bothwell, they were unable to locate me. May the dear Lord bless all who mourn the loss of our dear, aged sister with that reconciliation which he alone can give.

J. B. SLAUSON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Lydia Thrift, Va., $1 00; Mrs. Laura R. Elgin, Va., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting of the Lexington Old School Baptist Church will be held on the first Saturday and Sunday in October (2nd and 3rd), 1915. Brethren and friends are invited to meet with us, especially brethren in the ministry.

R. W. SANFORD.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Jefferson Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, October 6th and 7th, 1915. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, especially brethren in the ministry. Those coming to Stamford will be met on Tuesday, the 5th, noon train.

G. E. MEAD, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church of Jesus Christ called New Hope, situated in Washington County, Oregon, (by request of sister H. C. Wilke, of 979 Vancouver Ave., Portland, Oregon,) if not providentially hindered will convene at her home on Saturday before the second Sunday in October, 1915, for conference. All members of the church are kindly requested to be present, and all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. K. BOYD, Moderator.

THE Juniata Association is appointed to be held with the Springfield Church, near Three Springs, Pa., on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 8th, 9th and 10th, 1915. Train leaves Mt. Union, Pa., at 4:45 p. m. for Three Springs Thursday before. We hope a goodly number will be present.

J. M. FENTON, Pastor.
MOSES MELLOTT, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Christ of Gilboa have appointed the second Sunday, and Saturday previous, in October, 1915, in which to hold their yearly meeting, and extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus to meet with us, especially ministering brethren.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

AN all day meeting will be held with the Snow Hill Church, Worcester Co., Md., on Sunday, October 10th, 1915. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to be present.

B. F. COULTER.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting will meet, the Lord willing, with the Ebenezer Church, Loudoun Co., Va., on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1915, and continue three days. Trains will be met at Bluemont on Tuesday before the meeting, and all visitors taken care of. Those coming by rail take green electric car marked Georgetown, outside of Union station, Washington, D. C., and go to the end of the line, where they will transfer to the cars of Washington & Old Dominion R. R., which will bring them to Bluemont. The cars for Bluemont leave at 2 p. m., subject to change in schedule, at 36th and M Sts., Georgetown, D. C. Those who can come in their own conveyances will be appreciated, as there are only a few of us to meet trains. Ministering and other brethren of our faith and order and all lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

F. E. ROBEY, Church Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Old School Baptist Church in Wilmington, Del., will commence at 2 o'clock p. m. on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1915, and continue all day Sunday. All lovers of the truth are invited. Meetinghouse 1304 Jefferson St.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Association of Primitive Baptists is appointed to meet with the church at Forest Grove, near Parsonsburg, Wicomico Co., Md., October 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1915. All lovers of the truth, especially those who labor in word and doctrine, are cordially invited to meet with us. Those coming from the north will take the train that leaves Broad St., Philadelphia, at 7:25 a. m. on Tuesday, 19th, come through to Salisbury, changing cars to the B. C. & A. R. R. for Parsonsburg, where they will be met and cared for. Those coming from Baltimore take boat leaving Pier 8, Light St. wharf, at 2:30 p. m. via Claiborne; also all from stations on the B. C. & A. take same train, get tickets for Parsonsburg, arriving there at 8:28 p. m. We hope for a goodly attendance, and assure you of a hearty welcome.

A. B. FRANCIS, Pastor.

THE Primitive Baptist Association of south Florida, called Mt. Enon, will hold their next annual meeting with Bethehem Church, this the forty-fourth annual session, the second Sunday in November, and Friday and Saturday before. All lovers of Bible truth are invited to be with us, especially ministering brethren holding to the doctrine of predestination of all things that come to pass. If any of the brethren or sisters from the north wish to meet with us, please notify me at once, and I will gladly meet you at Lakeland and see that you get to the meeting, the Lord willing. Come and be with us.

C. K. HAINES.

LAKELAND, Fla.

THERE will be a two days meeting at the Old School Baptist Church at Cammal, Pa., Nov. 30th and 31st. We expect Elders J. M. Fenton and D. M. Vail to be with us. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. T. BADGLEY, Church Clerk.

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Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 83. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1915. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE TERROR OF THE LORD.

To one who has been given to rejoice in the Lord, and in the wonders of his love and grace, it seems very strange that such an expression as this could be used concerning him by the inspired apostle. It is hard to understand how one who has felt the sweet love of God in his heart can ever feel afraid of him; and especially that he could ever have terror in thinking of him. But the apostle was inspired to tell all the varied experiences that any of the Lord's people may have, and to set in order all the doctrine and experience of the gospel church, as commanded by the dear Savior. The Scriptures of truth thoroughly furnish the man of God "unto all good works," and no child of God will ever lack any provision in the Bible for his need, in whatever case or circumstance he may be found. The Holy Spirit will surely be with him at the right time, taking of the things of Jesus and showing them to him, and if such an one never saw a Bible his need will be just as surely supplied; all his experiences, whether dark or bright, will be told to him by the Holy Spirit. The apostle implies, here and elsewhere, that a child of God may voluntarily do that which is sinful, and receive punishment for it. We are not told that a christian can transgress the law of Moses, for he is not under that law. But "we are under law to Christ." "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." The apostle in this connection is talking in a wonderfully sweet way of the exercises of the apostles in their suffering and labor which were necessary in their apostolic work. I can hardly refrain from writing somewhat upon the subject of these two, fourth and fifth, chapters of this second letter to the Corinthians, but I wrote upon this portion of the Scriptures several years ago, and now I have on my mind more particularly the ninth and tenth verses of the fifth chapter of 2 Corinthians: "Wherefore we labor, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." This is the judgment-seat of Christ, as set up in the gospel church. He is our

judge, and his word is forever settled in heaven. We may say that this judgment-seat of Christ is set up in the heart of the true believer. In his conscience the judgment is given. Some one has said the believer cannot sin cheaply. In his conscience the decision is rendered, and his punishment begins, and whatever we have done, whether good or bad, we must receive it. Remove the italicized words and the meaning is still clear. If what we have done be bad it will remain with us to worry and distress us. The conscience will hold it to us, and will keep it before us, and the exercise of the mind concerning it will be "according to that we have done, whether good or bad." There can be no rest for the transgressor while that which the conscience does not approve remains with us. We are before the judgment-seat of Christ, and it is of him we must be accepted. When we carefully consider this we can see how necessary the word "terror" is, as used by the apostle in the case of the willful transgressor against the law of Christ.

In the eighty-ninth Psalm it is said by the Father, concerning the establishment of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments: then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. * * * His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me." The punishment of those who are transgressors of the law of Christ, and who are before his throne, as all are who have been born of God, must be sure and fearful, as it is declared it is, but not one of them can ever be lost. The apostle gives his decision concerning the judgment of one: that he shall be delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. (1 Cor. v. 5.) He manifests no uncertainty as to the salvation of that sinner, though his crime was great, but afterward directs the church to forgive him and comfort him, counting his punishment sufficient. (2 Cor. ii. 6.) The conscience that has been made tender in the fear of the Lord will tell the transgressor very soon where the wrong and sin are. If he has been born of God he will feel the sin as quickly as the naked hand would feel the touch of fire. If he has not been born of the Spirit he will feel no trouble on account of sin, he will know nothing of the judgment-seat of Christ. This judgment-seat of Christ, and all these gospel things, are nothing to the natural man, but they are very much to the living soul. If he has done well the answer of the good conscience is his, and is very precious; if he has done bad his punishment is sure, and that is also precious, bringing the poor, heartbroken sinner into the lowest, humblest place, in the dust of self-abasement, and exalting the dear Savior beyond all ability to sufficiently praise and adore his dear and holy name.

The apostle speaks of sinning willfully. Some have thought that all sin is willful. That is so in a sense, but we easily distinguish what is willful in any ordinary thing, from what is not so. Have we never done a thing we knew was wrong? Have we never persisted in the wrong, and do we know nothing of the bitterness of the punishment in our own souls, and our final sorrow and grief on account of our transgression before the dear Savior? It certainly appears here that the apostle is admonishing and exhorting his brethren, and warning them concern-

ing the judgment-seat of Christ, before which we must all appear, now, here, in our daily experience, when we are made manifest, as the apostles were, in the consciences of their brethren, to whom, and of whom they spake. An exhortation is clearly understood here to avoid doing that which is bad, knowing the terror of the Lord. We would far rather be absent from the body in our experience today, and present with the Lord, than to have all that this world can give and be absent from the Lord, to feel him cold and distant from us, and frowning upon us. The apostle makes this clear in writing to the Hebrews: x. 24–31. "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." The apostle had exhorted the brethren to provoke one another unto love and good works, and had named the first and principal good work of the brethren, upon which the works all depend: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." The power and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is what the saints are always looking for "and hastening unto," whenever they are spiritually-minded. They are looking for him, and "unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation."—Heb. ix. 28. To forsake the assembling of ourselves together is a fearful sin. It is a willful sin. Not merely staying away from meeting when some special reason seems to us sufficient to keep us at home (though it may not be really sufficient in the sight of God), but refusing to meet with the brethren. This is what the apostle appears to mark with such fearful emphasis as a great transgression.

The twenty-seventh verse seems to state the mind of one who, after having received the knowledge of the truth, turns away from its precepts and order. There is nothing he can do, no offering he can make, as those could who transgressed the law of Moses, but a fearful looking for of judgment. There appears no possible deliverance for him. The only sacrifice possible has already been made by the Savior, and the judgment rendered; but this transgressor does not think such a thing possible, as that the judgment can be in any way for his deliverance, but only to devour him as an adversary. He does not know yet that the adversaries are in his own sinful nature, and in his deceitful heart, and that they shall be destroyed. This transgressor can see and feel the judgment against him by the law of Moses, and how no mercy could be extended to him by that law. If he despised that law he must die. "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" We might think these three terrible, wicked things could never be done by a child of God, but must certainly designate only a child of the devil. But we remember that these characters have received the knowledge of the truth, have been brought under law to Christ, have been sanctified by the blood of the covenant, and have received the Spirit of grace. None of these things could be true of the natural man. We remember also that in each case vengeance or punishment belongs unto the

Lord; that "the Lord will judge his people." No one can transgress a law he is not under. These, then, according to the statement of the apostle, are children of God, who have transgressed the law of Christ, and the apostle solemnly says, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

"Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy?" The punishment for transgressing Moses' law was death. How could a law punishment that does not inflict death be greater than one which does take the life of the sinner? As the life of a child of God is higher, holier than the natural life, infinitely purer and eternal, so is the punishment of him who possesses that holy, spiritual life sorer than the punishment by natural pain and natural death. "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand." The apostle here and elsewhere dwells upon the importance of good works because of grace, and also because of the terror of the Lord. It is not for fear of physical pain or natural terror, but because of the love of Christ, that he is constrained to reprove, exhort and admonish the brethren. But when the poor, tried soul has been sorely afflicted, the apostle exhorts the brethren to confirm their love toward him, and most affectionately to comfort him. (2 Cor. ii. 7, 8.) The apostle says, "The love of Christ constraineth us." This is true of all the inspired apostles in all their apostolic work. It is also true, in measure, of all who have been born of God, who have the love of God in their souls. That wonderful love of God "passeth knowledge." It is the dearest and most priceless thing that can ever be known by man. "He that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." When once it is known by any one it can never be taken from him. It can never be lost. It is the one holy, satisfying principle that can never be lost. It may appear to be lost for a time, but that can only be in appearance. God is love, and he is unchangeable, "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." It is love that makes it such a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. It is that which causes one to feel "the terror of the Lord." It is unspeakably terrible to one who has felt the love of God in his soul to fear that it is gone from him; that he can feel it no more. While we had it in undisputed exercise in our souls the comfort and joy of it were unspeakable. Now the thought that it has been taken from us brings terrible distress. Whatever form the punishment for our sins may take, it is the love of God, the remembrance of that sweet love, and the thought that it can be ours no more, that makes the punishment so terrible and so full of grief and misery. All the evil propensities of our nature are brought out to our view, and appear like evil beasts and venomous reptiles, to aggravate our distress. These adversaries cannot go beyond their appointed effect upon us. It may be that one has been left to blaspheme, or to disregard the sweet principles of obedience in some special sin, and he may suffer separation from the church. The apostle says, "Whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme." All of the Lord's people will receive at his hands whatever he has in store for them from day to day while they are in this mortal tabernacle, in which they groan. Every stroke that is needed will be given them; every promise that has ever been made in behalf of the poor and needy will be fulfilled. Not one stroke too many shall ever be given to one of them; not one

promise too few. All will be to the declarative glory of God while here, and all shall come up out of all their great tribulation into eternal glory.

"In all their afflictions his glory shall spring,
And the deeper their sorrows the louder they'll sing."

Concerning those on the left hand of the King, and their punishment, I can say nothing descriptive, only repeating the words of the King: "These shall go away into everlasting punishment." They are represented as never having the love of God in their hearts. All who ever knew the love of God, or who ever shall, are on the right hand of the King, who is infinitely just and infinitely loving. Those who have that love once have it from everlasting. However far they may have gone astray, however dark and terrible may have been the judgment rendered at any time against them, and however heavy their sorrows on account of their sins, through Jesus Christ they shall feel the fullness of his love. No one in that everlasting kingdom of love shall feel that he is in the least degree better than another, but each and all shall forever join in singing to the praise of the one blessed name, Jesus.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Sept., 1915.

SNOW HILL, Md., Sept. 15, 1915.

ELDER B. F. COULTER—DEAR PASTOR:—You asked me to sharpen my pen and write another letter for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and it has been pressing very much on my mind since you mentioned it, but my pen needs a great many sharpenings, and I think I am aware that will be your mind before you finish reading this, for I am so weak and ignorant in spiritual things, and destitute of the qualities I so much desire.

Now I will try to tell what I hope to be the dealing of the Lord with me since I united with this dear body of people so precious to me. My baptism numbers just a year last Sunday. I often wish I could always feel like I did that day, for I was overwhelmed with joy, I could not think there were any more trials and tribulations awaiting me. In October, at our all day meeting, Elder J. G. Eubanks was with us, and he came to me to bid me good-bye, and said, My sister, you will never be sorry that you have been baptized, but you will not always feel like you do now; and soon I found his words were true, for the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit soon began. I thought how little we poor creatures know what is in store for us, but I am glad the Lord deals with his people in this way. The first quarterly meeting after my baptism was in December, and we had good preaching on Saturday and Sunday. Your sermon on Sunday did impress me very much. You used the words as a text, "And the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre." I enjoyed it very much, but I felt sad, for I thought if I could know that I had obtained the grace of God as I saw it in Esther it would be joyous and wonderful to think of, but all I can say is, I hope I have the grace of God shed abroad in my heart as I see it in my brethren and sisters. Being so impressed with the sermon, as the emblems were being passed around I felt I could never partake of them, for they seemed too precious to put in a mouth so vile as mine, and instantly a dark cloud enveloped me. No one but those who have experienced these things knows how I felt, for I felt so sinful and desperately wicked that I was afraid I had deceived the brethren

and they did not know me, and great shame came over me, and I felt I would like the floor to open and swallow me up, for I felt so condemned with sin I thought I could never look into their precious faces again. O what a great burden was upon me; I could do nothing but cry for help. But after awhile these words came to me: "He heareth the cry of the destitute, and will not despise their prayer." I felt he had heard and restored a little of the light of the blessed Savior to me, and it was a joy to my soul. We often feel to cling to our dear beloved ones, but to be with Christ is far better. But I had not gotten clear of this great burden altogether; everything seemed to be draped in mourning, and the Father had withdrawn his peaceful presence from me again, and viewed me with an angry countenance, for after once having been blessed with his sweet presence, O how desolate and barren the wilderness seemed to me without him, and the only door of hope given me was "the valley of Achor." This was in January, the fifth Sunday, almost two months of tribulation, when Elder A. B. Francis preached at Indiantown; I was so troubled I felt a great desire to go to preaching, more so because of my trouble. He arose and took his text in Hebrews, ninth chapter, twenty-fourth and twenty-eighth verses. At first he dwelt mostly on the second coming of Christ, and while he was preaching it seemed there came a message through him from God to me, that lifted me up out of the wilderness and above earthly things. O such love that flowed out to him and the dear brethren and sisters, for I felt that I could see Christ in them. I immediately began to wonder if this great love which had just sprung up was spiritual love, or of the flesh, but hoped it was the grace of God shed abroad in the heart, and I hope that God will constantly be with each of his dear people and uphold us in all our trials and temptations. O think of the great and wondrous love of which I have just spoken, is it not a knitting of his people together in a sweet and blessed fellowship? For I realize it takes a great and mighty power to knit and bind their hardened hearts together. O how precious it all seems when the love is dealt out to us through our gracious Master, and I am almost persuaded at times that I do know that this is the way the Lord always brings his people to himself. He makes them know that it is not by works of creature righteousness that they have done, but according to his own purpose and grace given them before the world began. He brings the blind by a way they know not, in his own way and time.

I desire to say to the dear editors, I enjoy your editorials much, and also the letters of the brethren and sisters, and often feel that God has blessed the readers of the SIGNS with good correspondence. The last editorial entirely meets my approval, in regard to receiving candidates for baptism. I feel, as does Elder Lefferts, that if one is brought into the church by persuasion of the wisdom of men, it is far better to keep five of this kind out than to take one in; but if they be believers of the truth and dead to the law, they cannot come in the church, if they have been talked to on the subject, until God's appointed time. This has been my experience. For four years baptism was a constant thought with me, and our dear pastor, Elder T. M. Poulson, talked to me once in a while, as also did other preachers, including Elder F. A. Chick, who told me I was not doing right to stay outside; but, after all, I could not come any sooner, and when I did come I

found a little word of encouragement from you, Elder Coulter, which was a great comfort to me, and I appreciated it very much. Please cast the mantle of charity over my imperfections.

A very unworthy sister,

GERTIE W. TRUITT.

ROMANS IX. 9.

"THEY which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."

After Eve and Adam had sinned, the Lord God said unto the serpent, Genesis iii. 15, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." The seed of the woman meant Christ. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ. * * * For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise."—Gal. iii. 16–18. But God gave to Abraham by promise. "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." —Gal. iii. 6, 7. Abraham believed God four hundred and thirty years before the law was given. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. "Is the law then against the promise of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Now hearing comes before we can exercise faith. The word of God means Spirit word, for God is a Spirit. For the Spirit beareth witness to our faith. "And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha." When Christ, who is the seed, convicts a sinner of his sin that is fulfilling the promise God made to Abraham, and is fulfilling what Christ said to his disciples, "When he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." The first thing a sinner feels after Christ, the seed, appears to him is the sin in the heart. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." The words, "whosoever believeth," do not mean that a sinner can make faith, or make revelation, but mean whosoever believes the revelation that Christ, the seed, makes in him. Revelation is always given before a sinner is required to believe, for all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen unto the glory of God by us. Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God, who hath also sealed us and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts, in whom ye also trusted after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also after that ye believed ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise. The true gospel church requires a confession of faith before taking any one as a member of the visible church of Christ. "And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest," &c. The building of the temple was a type of the church. "And the house, when it was in the building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither

hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron, heard in the house, while it was in building." As the stones were made ready before they were brought thither, so should every one be made ready before joining the church. "For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." Therefore it is needful that all applicants should go through the sufferings of Christ before they join the church. "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. * * * (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth.)" That is, Christ, the seed, never appears to a sinner dead in sin according to his works. No, never. Christ, the seed, appears according to the purpose of God, according to election, &c., and at God's own appointed time. Christ said, in praying for his apostles, They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." The sinner cannot repent until he receives the testimony in the heart, for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy, and the prophecy in olden times came not by the will of man, &c. The children of the flesh should not partake of the Lord's supper, for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. Discerning the Lord's body is discerning the suffering of Christ, the seed, in us. Therefore let as many as suffer with him commit their souls to the keeping of him as unto a faithful Creator. Paul said, I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.

Your brother in hope,

J. J. MOORE.

CYRIL, Oklahoma.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Inclosed I send you a letter written by sister E. M. Keeney, which has been of much comfort to me, and I feel it would also be to others. You can see by the date that it has been written a long time. She is such a spiritually-minded sister, and has such a lowly opinion of herself, that it is both good and profitable to be in her company. Brother Keeney came here and constituted our little church, and stayed with us a while, and then went back north. We all learned to love them so and hated to give them up, though we all believe that the Lord has a purpose in all things he does, and hope to be reconciled to his will.

Do as you think best about publishing the inclosed letter, but as she is now so far away I thought it might be a comfort to others, as it has been to me, and if this dear sister should see it she may write again. I ask an interest in your prayers.

Your little sister,

S. E. ELLIS.

CEMENT, Okla., Oct. 24, 1911.

DEAR SISTER ELLIS:—We had meeting at brother W. T. Moody's Sunday, and he handed me your good letter. We were all glad to get a letter from you,

and also glad that you arrived home safely and found all well. My mind is still on our glorious three days meeting most of the time, but sometimes it comes back to the things of this life, then how sad and troubled I feel. Yes, dear sister, I feel that the Lord has been leading us through this trouble for our good, and to teach us our dependence on our all-wise God, who rules and none can hinder, for if we had no trials to bear we would soon be puffed up and think we could keep ourselves, and would think we were better than our brethren. Dear sister, I do not want to get that way, but I want to be kept humble and ever at my brethren's feet, for I know none of them are as weak and sinful as I know myself to be, for it seems to me that they do not even have the evil thoughts that I do, and which I long to keep from, but, as the Scriptures say, when I would do good, evil is present with me, and it seems that I am all the time walking after the flesh.

The third Sunday we had a good meeting at Rush Springs, and then for a time I could forget this world and its troubles and rejoice in our Savior's love; then again on Sunday last we heard two good sermons and were built up and made to rejoice and know that God is love. Brother I. D. Moody did talk well. I cannot help but feel to sympathize with his dear wife, while I rejoice to hear him, knowing as I do so well the sorrows, trials and disappointments that she must go through, which none but a minister's wife has to bear or knows anything about. We are taught by the Scriptures that we shall not have trials above that we are able to bear, but when I look back over my past life I wonder how I ever lived through it all; but God can do all things, and can enable us to go through with trials that without his sustaining grace would sink us down and overcome us. I am glad to hear of sister Creel, and hope she is well, and that you will both go to Rush Springs next third Sunday.

The brethren and sisters are all well, as far as I know. Dear sister, if I could only write a good letter like you or sister Creel I would love to write, but I write such a poor, rambling letter that I often wonder who will want to read it, but it is the best I can do, and I ask you to cast the mantle of charity over my imperfections, and, if it is not too much trouble, I would love to hear from you. Give our love to sister Creel when you see her, also tell her we would like to hear from her, if it is not asking too much. Tell your son who was here that we appreciated his visit among us, and hope we may meet again some time, if it is the Lord's will. We hope and trust he is a child of God, born of the Spirit, as it seemed that we could see the manifestations of the Spirit of God with him while he was among us.

Hoping and praying that we may meet ere long, and asking an interest in your prayers, I must close, and may God's richest blessings ever be yours, is our prayer.

(MRS.) E. M. KEENEY.

GOIN, Tenn., July 6, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—If you will allow me to address you as a brother in the common faith of God's elect. I have had a mind for a number of years to write you, but have hesitated as to the propriety of doing so, as we are strangers in the flesh, but I hope not in Spirit, and while I do not care as to who knows what I believe, I am not writing for publication. I am just writing you to relieve my mind, and if you see fit to answer me it would be a great pleasure to me to read your thoughts. In the first place, I

will say I am almost sixty-five years old. I have been a member of the Old Baptist Church about forty-eight years, and have been trying to preach for about thirty-five years. I never have been censured for immoral conduct in life by the church. I have been a close examiner of the Scriptures for forty-eight years, and have read most all of the periodicals published throughout the United States, and I look upon the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as the best periodical now published, but I do believe there have been some traditional ideas handed down to us through its columns, such as the real man (the soul) does not die, but goes immediately to heaven or hell, as the case may be; but to the contrary, I believe the soul that sins it shall die, so you see I believe the Adamic man goes into death, and as the dead know not anything, we will be unconscious of our existing until the resurrection, and if there be no resurrection of the dead then are we perished for all time to come. It also teaches Jesus, the Christ, did not die, but only a house, or body, in which he lived while here on earth. Now, dear brother, let me say to you that if Christ did not die and rise again from the dead, you and I are both in our sins, and no hope beyond the grave; but thanks be to God, there was a germ from heaven sent by God, and was called "the word of God," that was eternally with him and penetrated the womb of the virgin Mary, and was flesh, and in its manifestation was called Jesus the Christ of God, who did die on the cross, and was dead until the third day, and rose again from the dead, that such poor sinners as you and I be redeemed from death and raised up, and live in that world beyond the grave. So you can see that I believe in the resurrection in order to live again.

Another idea being taught among our people is, that the nonelect will be raised up and live eternally, and suffer consciously as individuals. This is another idea I am unable to believe. In the first place, I do not believe the Scriptures so teach it, neither can I believe that an individual could suffer consciously eternally without eternal life, and as man has forfeited this life by transgression, and no life promised to any but the elect, I believe "the wages of sin is death." You ask me, Are the nonelect not raised up at the last day? I will say, It appears to me that they will be raised up and dealt with according to individual transaction and go away into the second death. This may be a traditional idea, but I am somewhat in it. So far as the nonelect's destiny is concerned, it gives me mighty little trouble, as I know God will do right in all things whatsoever come to pass, whether I can understand it or not. But now, dear brother, this is what I want to say to you, If any person will prove to my satisfaction by the Scriptures that the soul is an entity that lives on after the death of the body, and goes to heaven with all the consciousness, and rejoices with the angels around the throne of God, from the death of the body to which it belongs, I will mail that person ten dollars; yes, I would give the remainder of natural life here to know that at corporeal death my soul, my thinking faculties, my conscience, would go into heaven, there to enjoy heaven, with all heaven affords. But now while I am made many times to believe that God has given me the Spirit of Christ here in this world as an evidence that I will be resurrected and live in the world to come, I believe that when it is my time to die that the Adamic man will pass into a state of unconsciousness, and the spirit return to God who gave it. If these

thoughts are not taught in the Scriptures, I have read to no profit. I am not taking the SIGNS just now. I would be glad to hear from you some way, by private letter, or else write your views in the SIGNS and send me a copy of the same.

Lest I weary you I will close for this time. May God put it in your heart to answer me.

As ever, your brother through hope of that great resurrection in which it all lies,

P. N. MOYERS.

[AS the SIGNS is open for the views of brethren, when written in the spirit of brotherly love, we give brother Moyers' letter a place. We feel that he is only mistaken in some things published in the SIGNS called by him "traditional." Many of our brethren make no distinction between the "soul" and "the spirit of man," meaning spirit when they use the word "soul." It is true that in most places in the Scriptures where the word "soul" is used the man is meant, but Peter in one of his letters said to the brethren, "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." No doubt brother Moyers knows as well as any one what Peter meant. As to the final punishment of the wicked, there is a divided opinion; both cannot be right, and perhaps both are wrong, as the Lord has revealed very little to man of the hereafter, either of heaven or hell, hence it is well not to be too positive about those things. We hope brother Moyers' letter will be read with interest and in love, so that he may not be made an offender for a word.—K.]

HOPEWELL, N. J., August 20, 1915.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I often feel to pen a few lines for your paper, but fear that I would take space that could be more ably filled by the writings of others.

A Scripture came to my mind this evening which is recorded in the fifteenth chapter of Romans, fourth verse: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." This language was used by the apostle Paul in his epistle to the church at Rome, speaking of the Old Testament Scriptures, which testified of the dealings of God with those of the Spirit before Christ made his advent into the world, and the prophecy which spoke of his coming, which bore record of him that should appear and put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and now in the exercise of spirit which is manifest in the hearts of God's people. The apostles had the true testimony from the Father to know that this was He that was to come, and the works which He did gave them patience and comforted them that they should have hope. The experience of the apostles, and their testimony of him, are for the children of God throughout all ages, and their realizations of the fulfillment of the kingdom of God and his righteousness, of which they were commanded to write, were for the comfort of the children of God now and as long as time shall last. The manifestation of his power which was displayed by him in doing his Father's will, only expressed that he was God manifest in the flesh, for none could do the work which he did but God. Cleansing the leper, casting out devils and raising the dead, express to us that in him doth all fullness dwell, and give us the comfort that he is not only able to quicken a poor sinner dead in trespasses and in sin, but is able to change this vile body, and fashion it like unto his own glorious body, which had no conception of sin in it, but was pure, and we hope

that which we have realized is the work of the Spirit, and the New Testament Scriptures testifying to that which is exercised in our hearts. We have faith in him, and we believe he is able to make us pure, even as he is pure, because it is written that we shall be like him, when faith shall be turned into sight and hope into possession. In that one Spirit are all the members of the bride of Christ exercised, and made one body of worshipers who worship him in spirit and in truth. They can all testify of the same exercise, and I believe Paul realized the working of the Spirit in His people (the church, his body) and the sin which they felt manifest in them (His body, or the members of the household of faith) when he said that Christ shall change our vile body and fashion it like unto his own glorious body. The body is composed of many members, and it takes all the members to compose the perfect bride. We feel that he will do all his pleasure, and will save his own with an everlasting salvation; but the trials and tribulations we daily pass through often cause us to doubt, and fear we are deceived, and the Spirit of his Son which God sends forth into our hearts, which gives us the understanding of the spiritual teachings of the Scriptures, unfolds the glory of God and the salvation of his people, so in his Spirit they are enabled to rejoice in him and have no confidence in the flesh. That hope is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast.

These expressions are what I view is the true source of the expression of the apostle. You can do with them as you feel would be the best for the readers of the SIGNS. Pray for us, and visit us when you can.

I am, as ever, your brother in hope,

C. W. VAUGHN.

MOORES BRIDGE, Ala.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I have been ordering some Bibles and other literature from the Beebe Co., I have a mind to write a few lines to the dear saints scattered throughout the United States and Canada in my awkward and imperfect way, in my appreciation of the many good letters and writings of the dear oldtime people whose spirits and feeling bear witness with my spirit that they are the children of God, as we read that every spirit reflects its likeness. Although I am way down in the sunny south of the old State of Alabama, and many of you are in the cold, snowy country, far away north, yet our doubts, fears and sore trials are the same when we come to stand before the Lord and view ourselves in the light and countenance of the great Jehovah. While we are counted the offscouring of all things by the boasted wisdom of this world, yet I believe you are the salt of the earth, you are the pride of my life and my only real source of joy; you are the people I long for, your conversation is sweet to my weary soul. I am glad to say to you that I believe you have a great High Priest seated at God's right hand who can be touched with the feeling of your infirmities, therefore, as the apostle has taught, let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need, for every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins, who can have compassion on the ignorant and them that are out of the way, for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. "So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee." Who in the

days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared, though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered, and being made perfect he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. Therefore the apostle said, Of whom we have many things to say and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. These are the things that the apostle wrote as the principles of the doctrine of Christ, saying, "Let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment, and this will we do, if God permit." There are not many of the poor, tempest-tossed children of God this good day going back to their first experience, but are trying themselves with their own judgment, as though they were the judges of the whole matter, piercing themselves through with many sorrows, while they should be pressing forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God as it is in Christ Jesus, going on to perfection, not perfection in the flesh, but perfection in the knowledge of salvation through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some of the people of God are inclined to want to go back, but, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak, for God is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labor of love which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered unto saints, and do minister, and we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end, that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. God made promise to Abraham. He made it by oath, and so after Abraham had patiently endured he obtained the promise. "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

Good-by, dear ones, for this time.

D. T. MOORE.

NEW LEXINGTON, Ala., Aug. 15, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have a desire to write a part of my experience, I hope, of grace. While it is very precious to me, I realize my inability to write anything for publication. More than half of my life has been spent as a member with the Methodists. At the age of thirteen years I was deeply impressed with the desire to be a christian, and as I was being raised by good Methodist grandparents, I was taught that I must seek salvation at the mourners' bench. There being a big revival going on at that time, I went up as a mourner. I was told by the christian workers that if I would just make the start the Lord would do his part. While they were singing a good old soul-stirring song I felt that I was ready to lay down everything and do what the Lord would have me do. I offered myself for membership, and was accepted. Then I

was told to work in His vineyard, that I must help save the other poor, lost sinners. O fool that I was, why was I left to travel in darkness and self-conceit so long? For ten years I lived in that state of mind, during which time I went to Texas, and at the age of twenty-three I was married to one of the best men there. He was also a native of Alabama. Though he was not a member of any denomination, he was a strong believer in the predestination of all things. Our views were very different on the subject of religion, though we never had any trouble. I believed what I had been taught at home and in my Sunday-school, and could not see as he did. He often read and explained the Scriptures to me as he understood them. I became dissatisfied, and told my husband I had almost decided there was nothing in any of it. He laughingly told me that if he could not be a whole thing he would not be anything, because I could not believe all of the doctrine that I professed to know. During this time I had many trials, and felt cast down. My husband went away to seek employment, and was gone nearly two months before we met again. This was in the winter of 1913, and it was while in this lonely state I was made to know the comfort and consolation his reading and talking were to my poor, hungry soul. I felt that I was a lost sinner, without God, and all efforts on my part were naught but hypocrisy. I left there in February to join my husband, and felt that the Lord was exceedingly good to us, and that I was too happy to ever know sorrow again, but O, dear reader, you who have met the grim reaper of death, know the dark veil he casts in his path. O grave, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? My joy was turned to sorrow, and my life to deepest mourning, for on June 7th my beloved companion was taken with appendicitis, and died the 13th. While I am deeply grieved over the loss of a kind companion, and my babies are left without the love of a devoted father, I can praise God for the glorious manifestation of his love, in his dying hours. His parting words were, Do not grieve, dear, it is God's will for it to be this way. We will met again. Salvation is of the Lord, and it is free, free. He related an experience of grace he had 1906, but he had never made a public confession. Though I am very lonely, I feel the Lord is good, and that all our afflictions are for some good purpose, and according to his will. I began to feel a desire to live with the good people of the Primitive Baptist Church, but felt I was not worthy, so I kept resisting the strong desire to offer myself for membership, but when meeting day came, the last second Sunday, and Saturday before, I felt a longing to be there, so I got ready and went, without any thought of joining, but when the opportunity was given I felt that I must go, and I was accepted, and baptized on Sunday by Elder S. J. Norris, and received into full membership at Nazareth Church.

"O how happy are they,
Who their Savior obey,
And whose treasures are laid up above;
Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

Please give this room in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES if you think it worthy, if not, do as you think best with it.

Your sister, in hope of life eternal,

(MRS.) J. C. IVY.

OAK LANE, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Sept. 26, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I was looking over some old letters to-day, and came across these of brother Sheppard's, and felt I should send them to you and leave them to your judgment. If you do not wish to use them all, use of them as you wish, and all will be right with me. I am very sorry for brother Sheppard, losing his wife, and he has a daughter in the hospital since July 10th, who is very sick; her father has very little, if any, hope of her recovery. Brother, if you feel you can find time, please write brother Sheppard, for he does certainly need comfort from his brethren. May the Father give you liberty to speak to the comfort and to the edifying of your hearers, and that you, too, can partake of it with comfort to yourself.

Most truly,

MARY HILL TERRY.

GLENMORE, N. J., Dec. 6, 1896.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—Once more I will attempt to write you a few lines concerning better things than this world contains, if the Lord enables me, who is the Giver of all things. He has power over all things; even Satan is controlled by his power. "The Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?" Then again he said, "But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face." Then the messenger came and told Job that his cattle, and his children, and all he had, were destroyed. When he had heard this he arose and rent his mantle and shaved his head and fell down and worshiped God, saying, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly. Then again, when the sons of God came together to present themselves before the Lord, Satan also was present with them; again the Lord said, "Hast thou considered my servant Job?" "And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life. So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils, from the sole of his foot unto his crown." "Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die." Job answered her, saying, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Satan could not destroy the faith Job had in his Lord; he could destroy his cattle and his children and smite him with sore boils, but he could not destroy that faith which God had given him. Satan could go so far and no farther; his bounds were set, there was a stronger power than his; he who created the worlds has all power; he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast; he opens and none can shut, therefore God has power over all things. If I could only feel that humble spirit Job had, and say, Shall we not receive evil as well as good from the hand of the Lord? God has a wise purpose in all he does; when he leads us down into trouble, and sorrow, and sickness, and losses, it is for our good, and we ought to remember that it is from the hand of one who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. I hope it is my prayer that I may see the hand of the Lord in all my troubles, that he may teach me my dependence upon him, that

I may have no confidence in my flesh, and that I may not bring reproach upon his cause.

Now I will close. If you, or any of the dear children of God, receive any comfort from this, remember it is not of me, but of him who is all wisdom and truth, the Giver of all things, both of joy and sorrow.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

D. W. SHEPPARD.

GLENMORE, N. J., Jan. 4, 1897.

DEAR SISTER:—To-day as I was at work these words came to me with much comfort, "And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold, a man full of leprosy; who seeing Jesus, fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Now one who had the leprosy in those olden times was shut up by himself where he could see no one, and could have no company, because if it were contracted it could never be cured. It is just so with a poor child of God when God shows him that he is a sinner; he is so covered with leprosy, or with his sins, there is no one like him; he has no company, he is alone; then he, like the poor leper, will say, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. He put forth his hand and touched him, saying, I will, be thou clean, and immediately the leprosy departed from him. So it was with you when you cried unto him, Lord, save, I perish, and he said unto you, Your sins are all forgiven. Then you felt your sins were all gone, the leprosy had left you, and you could praise God forever. I cannot write this to you as I saw it, but this has been something of my experience, for many times I have been made to cry unto him, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. He has all power in heaven and on earth; he has power to make the leper cry unto him, and has power to make him clean. The same mighty power brought Israel to the Red Sea that brought them through it. He has power to shut, and none can open, and power to open, and none can shut. He leads us beside still waters, and makes us lie down in green pastures. How fresh are those waters and sweet the pasture of the Savior's love to a poor, tempest-tossed child of God when he is hungering and thirsting for the Savior's love. That is where we obtain milk and honey without money and without price. Our Savior paid the debt when he died upon the cross. O if I could praise him as I ought, who died for a poor wretch like me. I often wonder, Can it be so? This I know, he is my only hope of salvation. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. I hope I do love the brethren; nothing will melt me to tears more quickly than to talk with them, yet I do not see how they can love me, poor, miserable wretch that I am.

Your unworthy brother,

D. W. SHEPPARD.

GLENMORE, N. J.

DEAR SISTER:—I thought I would try and write you a few lines, if God will direct my mind. If I could write as thoughts come to my mind when at work or on the road at different times I would be glad, but I cannot write or speak them as I would like to, but if I were satisfied with myself I do not feel that the brethren would be with me. I do not see how they can be anyway, poor, sinful worm of the dust that I am. When I look at their faces I see shining there the face of our Lord and Savior. If I am one of his sheep I am a poor, miserable one in-

deed. The other sheep seem to go along so nicely, and never leave the path, but I am so prone to wander, and am so lame and blind, and stumble so, and get so far behind, that I think I cannot be one of them. I am so prone to trust in my own flesh, and am not thankful enough for the many blessings our heavenly Father has bestowed upon me. What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? Can the Lord be mindful of me, a poor, deceitful worm of the dust? By the grace of God we are what we are, and what sweet consolation that he is able to save to the uttermost one as unworthy as I feel myself to be. I do love to meet with the brethren and sisters; they appear so good and holy in my sight that I feel I have no right to call them brother or sister, but I hope it has been my privilege a few times to be lifted above this sinful flesh of mine and to have a sweet foretaste of that divine love which our Lord gave us through his Son Jesus Christ, and of that sweet home where Jesus dwells, where all will be love and peace. Blessed are the sons of God. If our God has so blessed them through his Son Jesus Christ, surely that blessing will never be taken away from them. He says, I am God, and there is none beside me. How thankful we ought to be that we have an anchor that is both sure and steadfast, an anchor of the soul. The anchor of a ship will not always hold it, it is down below, and when the heavy storms come the waves roll so high they go over the ship and destroy it; but the anchor of a child of God is above, and the harder the storm, the higher the waves roll, the more sure is that anchor, because God gave us his only begotten Son to redeem us from our sins. I will return all unto my Father which he gavest me, not one shall be lost. Surely, then, we have a safe anchor in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. If I have a hold upon that anchor, which I hope I have, it is by the grace of God, and not because of any good deed I have ever done, for in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. By grace are ye saved through faith, which is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.

I will close. If you get a crumb out of this, remember it is in the field of your spiritual Boaz that you are gleaning.

Your unworthy brother in Christ, if one at all,

D. W. SHEPPARD.

ELMER, Okla., Jan. 22, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I send a dollar for the blessed old medium of correspondence that brings gladness and joy to us in a weary land; yes, it brings gladness to our poor, cast down hearts, revives our drooping faith, strengthens our feeble knees and enables us to hold up our heads, which droop so much of the time. It is like a cup of cold water to our thirsty and famishing souls. We are out here away from any church, the nearest eleven miles, and no way to get to it but to walk, so we are deprived of hearing or feasting upon the bread of life, except sometimes when reading from the written word it pleases the good Lord to bless us to talk some from some portion of the word we are reading, to collect some thoughts from it to myself and companion; so when we get the precious old paper we are made to rejoice to hear from the saints all over the United States, all giving honor, power and everything to the God who works all things (not a part of them, but all) after the counsel of his will, who works and none

can hinder, nor has the right to say, Jehovah, what doest thou?

Now, as I see I am making this too lengthy, I will just say to the contributors, Write on, for you never know where the seed you sow may fall and take root downward and spring up and grow and comfort some poor, weary worn traveler in this wilderness land of sin, sorrow and disappointment.

Brother Ker, I will close by asking all of God's humble poor to remember us at the throne of grace. We commend you all to God, and may he guide us all to the end, is our sincere desire.

Brother Ker, if you do not think this will crowd out better matter you can publish it, but it is at your disposal and all will be well with us. If I could write like others I feel I would write often. We feel pleased with your companion in the great work. I feel that the Lord could not have made choice of one who could have filled the place any better. I would like to say something about his able writing, but will not try.

Your little brother and sister in much tribulation,

MR. & MRS. M. L. LILES.

KELLER, Texas, July 22, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Allow me to say through your columns that about the first of May, 1915, I contracted a severe grippe cold, threatening the extinction of this poor, weak, mortal life. I felt that dissolution of my frail being was near at hand, and that my tongue and pen would soon be stilled forever. This accounts for my long silence. However, when all hope of recovery had vanished, and every prospect was blighted, the Lord of hosts, the great Physician in mercy and compassion intervened and raised me up to a normal condition of health, and made me able to again travel and declare his goodness to his afflicted saints, and to proclaim the power and efficacy of Jesus Christ, the balm in Gilead, the Lord our righteousness, and by him taught the sweet lesson that he ever lives to make intercession for us according to the will of the Father, and favors the poor of the flock with his everlasting mercy, bearing them on his arm of love, raising them from the bed of affliction, so the steps they tread and the station they fill were determined and written in the Father's will. Glory to God our sovereign King, who healeth all our diseases, crowns our life with loving-kindness and preserves his chosen in time of famine. O, that I could more and more rejoice in the arm of his everlasting love, to praise and magnify his matchless name to all eternity.

After the dear Lord restored my health, I visited the Old School Baptist Church of Cleburne, Texas, it being their communion meeting, where I felt to realize the glorious presence of the divine Spirit in this holy service. This was on the first Saturday and Sunday of July. Elder W. L. Rogers is the pastor of that church, and is a faithful minister of the new testament, and a supporter of the dear old SIGNS for forty years. The church meets at the private residence of Elder Rogers, a commodious and beautiful place for worship, and his wife is a true mother in Israel, a helpmeet indeed. Their company is indeed pleasant, making it desirable to visit them again. Elder Moreland and brother Preston Staggs, of Ft. Worth, were with me on this occasion. From here I attended two churches in Freestone County, the second and third Sunday, called Union and Zion. Both of these churches are sound in the faith of the true doctrine of God our Savior, standing firm on the rock of gospel liber-

ty, under the care of Elder I. W. Bowers. At both of these churches the Lord was gracious, giving the Holy Spirit with much assurance, filling our hearts with gladness and manifesting his divine presence in the visible signs of additions at both of these churches. Now I desire above all things else to praise God, from whom all blessings flow, to take courage and press on toward the mark for the prize. Brethren, pray for me when at the throne of grace. The Lord God of heaven and earth bless and prosper you abundantly, through his grace and mercy, abounding in the truth more and more, is the prayer of one who I hope loves you for Jesus' sake.

Affectionately yours in gospel bonds,

ASA HOWARD.

CORVALLIS, Oregon, Oct. 8, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—If I am permitted to call you by such a dear name. Nevertheless, from what I have read of your writings I hope we have traveled the same road. But dare I claim such a thing, feeling my weakness? for in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing. I want to tell you what I think of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I think it is the best Baptist paper I know of. I thought I would do without it, but I find I cannot, for I am here in this city alone. There are plenty of workers and castle-builders (which are of no comfort to me), and I find there are many lo heres and lo theres, and they all say and do not. There is no food or comfort for me, so please find inclosed money order for two dollars, for which give me credit on subscription. When all is well remember a poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

Yours in hope,

J. GROSHONG.

ACORN, Mo., Sept. 26, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending in my subscription which expired March 15th, for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for all the preaching I get is through its columns. I have not heard a sermon preached in six years. It is seventy-five or a hundred miles to any church of our faith and order. I would have much enjoyed attending the old Bethel Association, at the Bethel Church, in Kentucky, of which I was the pastor when I lived in Graves County, but I am getting old and feeble and not able to go. The church here is small, only ten members. We do not belong to any association. The youngest member is about forty years old, and I am in my seventy-second year, since last April. I am failing fast, but am perfectly willing to depart from the evils of this natural life, for I know the children of God will be at rest with the blessed Redeemer, their only hope for salvation, both here and in eternity. Glorious thought! that all his children will be forever free from pain and sorrow.

I will close, with the prayer that God's blessing may rest upon the household of faith, and may God bless you all for Christ's sake.

B. H. YATES.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., Sept. 13, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—For the information of those who still inquire after me, please say through the SIGNS that I am still living, but no better. I can neither die nor live without the help of God. My sufferings are great, but I am in the hand of a great God.

In suffering,

H. J. REDD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1915.

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Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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ELECTION.

ELECTION is the sovereign act of God in grace, whereby certain are chosen from among mankind for himself. This choice was made by him in Christ before the foundation of the world, and is not conditioned upon any act of man whatsoever. Whatever human excellence there may be in any man, this does not make him one of the elect of God; whatever human degradation may be one's lot, that does not prevent his being one of the elect. In short, God's election of his people is based solely in his own will and pleasure. His predestination assures the security of all the elect forever. The divine order is: first, foreknowledge; second, election; third, predestination. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father," says Peter. Foreknowledge is thus the fountainhead of election. Whom he did foreknow, them also he did predestinate, says Paul. Elected unto the obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ. Thus predestination secures the election. We suppose there is no point of all the doctrine of God our Savior that so arouses the animosity of the carnal mind as this of election. The human mind revolts at the thought of God's choosing some from among mankind unto salvation and leaving the rest to perish in sin. It staggers at the fact that this election is not made to hang upon man's presumed goodness or obedience. No matter how good and upright a man may try to be, or think he is, this will not influence God one jot in his favor. No matter how depraved and sunken in sin a man may be, this does not prejudice God against him. God's treatment of his people, and his plan for securing them unto himself, is so utterly at variance with man's notions of justice and equity that man will have none of it. Pride must be laid low, self must be abased, our wisdom must become foolishness, our upward strivings vain, and faith must be in active exercise, before one can view God's way of saving sinners with whole-hearted belief. At Thessalonica the enemies of the church called the christians "these that have turned the world upside down." It is even so now, to the world it seems that we put darkness for light and error for truth. The doctrine of Christ is at all points exactly the opposite of what the world teaches, and does turn the world upside down. Christ's preaching the doctrine of election to the people caused them, more than any other one thing that he said, to fall away from following him. It will be remembered that at the time he fed the multitude with the loaves and fishes there were a great many who were following him. The motives in this multitude that caused them to follow him were various. Some followed him out of curiosity, and from no real interest in his preaching, but simply to see the miracles he performed, and to feed on the loaves and fishes; others followed him for the very truth's sake, and because they could not help it, while still others followed him to find an occasion

against him that they might deliver him to the authorities and get him out of the way. At last Jesus put their discipleship to the test by preaching election to them. See John sixth chapter. "There are some of you that believe not," Jesus told them. Afterwards he told them why they did not believe: "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." The fact they were not the elect of God prevented their being believers. "Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him." Jesus knew "from the beginning" of the world who were his sheep, and who were not. "Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." Instead, therefore, of the sinner giving himself to Christ, it is God that gives him to Christ. This God did before the foundation of the world, when he elected them in Christ. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." All that thou hast given me I have kept. "From that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him." They could not endure such teaching, it made them mad. "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" Indeed, the truth of Christ is all a hard saying unto the natural mind. Not until we are given grace to receive this word in ourselves can we believe it and rejoice in it. To-day one of the marks of the true church is that the multitudes of men are not found running after it. Human nature has not changed in the days since Jesus was on the earth, the truth is no more popular now than then. But is it not strange to the spiritual mind how that man will deny to his Creator a prerogative which he claims for himself? The principle of election is written large over the face of nature. We see it in plants and in animals, and it is inherent in the nature of man. Every man is an elector in some sense or other; not a day passes but we make choice of something that appeals to our sense or judgment. Why deny this attribute to the Almighty, therefore? It is in the nature of corn to select certain elements from the soil to insure its growth; it is in the nature of wheat to select certain other elements; what the one selects, the other does not, or if it does, it does not select them in the same proportions. We see two plants growing side by side, one will have red flowers, the other yellow ones. These plants instinctively select from the earth those chemical elements necessary to make the reds and yellows and other colors. The elements in the earth cannot by any means induce the plants or trees to absorb them, but the nature of the growing thing dictates what elements shall and shall not be taken up. What is this but the doctrine of election seen in the vegetable world? We see birds choosing where they shall build their nests: the eagle among the rocky crags, the sparrow in the house-eaves, the thrush in the hedge, the lark among the grass. Here is the principle of selection even among those creatures that have not judgment to reason why they do so. Some principle of their nature dominates their selection. We see cows and sheep grazing, they will not eat just anything that comes to hand, but will pass this by and crop that. The various grasses and weeds in the pasture cannot compel the animals to eat them, but the animal will select that which it likes and which meets its need. These illustrations could be multiplied indefinitely, but enough to show what we mean by the principle of election being dominant even among those beings that are not endowed with man's superiority. Breathes there a man

who has never made a choice of anything? Is there one who is not in some sense an elector? Here a farmer looks abroad over his acres and decides to put corn in this field, wheat in that and to pasture a third. Can the fields themselves dictate to him his choice? No, his own judgment decides how the choice shall fall. The farmer has sheep, cows, hogs, &c., at his disposal, he looks upon them as his property to do with as he pleases. He decides to kill this and to spare that, to sell this and keep the other. Can the sheep or the cow or the hog influence the farmer in his disposal of them? No, he uses his own pleasure with them. Then, if election or selection be a faculty inherent even in men, why should man want to deny to the Almighty that made him this same function of election? Are we not all God's creatures? Has he not a right to do with us as he will? Should we expect to tell him how he shall use us, when we will not brook such interference from that which is lower than ourselves? The vegetable kingdom cannot tell the animal kingdom above it what to eat and what not, but the animal kingdom can and does reach down into the vegetable and take that which it will. The animal kingdom cannot tell man how to dispose of it, but man uses his own pleasure and suits his own ends in dealing with animals. Man cannot reach up to God and induce him to elect this or that one, but the kingdom of heaven does reach down into the world and takes those whom it chooses into itself. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, says Jesus to the twelve. If by faith we do choose the way of life rather than that of death, it is because God's choice of us precedes our choice of him, and we choose him because he first chose us, even as we love him because he first loved us. That man is richly blessed whom God chooses and causes to draw nigh unto him. Mr. Bryan said a few years ago in an address to the Y. M. C. A. in Washington, that religion is that attitude in which a man places himself toward God. This is certainly getting the cart before the horse. True religion is based in God's attitude towards us, not in our attitude toward him. Pure and undefiled religion comes from above, and descends into the hearts of men, lifting them upward unto him. Their lifting up is the effect of God's condescension unto them. As the heavens bow down to earth, so is the kingdom of heaven set up in the earth, so does the doctrine water the inclosed garden of the Lord. The doctrine drops as the rain, and its speech distils as the dew, when heaven draws near to earth. No man has ascended into heaven to bring Christ down, or into the depths to bring Christ up, but the Word is made flesh and dwells among us. Then, and then only, do we see his glory and know verily that he is the Christ of God, being taught it not of men, but by revelation of the Fatherhood of God. The fact that men do read the Bible and do not acknowledge the doctrine of election written therein serves to show how utterly blind they are, for election is seen in every page of the Bible, not only in express declarations, but in types and shadows, and in the manner of God's dealing with mankind. God's election alone distinguished between Cain and Abel. They both had the same parentage, the same environment, the same upbringing, yet there was a difference. The difference was not one of nature, but one of election. Noah and his family were saved in the ark, all the rest of the world were lost. Noah was no different by nature from those that perished, but the election of God

distinguished between him and them. Jacob and Esau were brothers, both born of the same parents, both possessed the same nature, yet God loved Jacob and hated Esau, and that before either of the boys were born, and before either of them had done anything either good or bad. God made this choice of one and the rejection of the other before either of them had been born in order that his purpose according to election might stand, not according to works, but according to the calling of God. God will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy, and will harden whom he will. Man may say, and does say, that this is not just, but man's saying so does not alter the fact of its being so. Whether we believe a thing, or do not believe it, changes nothing. "In thy book all my members were written, * * * when as yet there was none of them." This the psalmist declares with reference to Jesus. All the members of Christ's body were written in the mind and purpose of God and embraced in his election before the foundation of the world, when there was none of them manifested as yet. Those who are now by the operation of the Holy Spirit being brought through grace unto the knowledge of the truth, are those who were chosen unto salvation in eternity. Experimental election is the result of the doctrine of election. This is the way, and the only way, that any point of God's doctrine can be appreciated: not simply in grasping it with the mind as an intellectual concept or theory, but in living it in our lives and having it become part and parcel of our spiritual existence. When election is experienced, then we suck honey out of the rock and oil out of the flinty rock; the hard saying to the natural man becomes the meat of the spiritual man. We have often heard that one man's meat is another man's poison, and it is true that the new man in Christ Jesus would starve if compelled to eat the food of the old or earthy man, and it is just as true that human nature cannot feed on the delectable things of the Spirit. L.

CHURCH NEWS.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, Oct. 4, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—At our church meeting yesterday it was resolved that the following notice be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication, so that our brethren might be informed of our state. This church was organized September 6th, 1914, by seven members belonging to the Strict Baptist Church in England and the Old School Baptist Church in America. Elder Silas H. Durand, of Southampton, Pa., presided. The following articles of faith have been adopted by the church, namely:

We believe in the divine inspiration of the holy Scriptures, and receive them as a gracious revelation of the mind and will of God; (Deut. iv. 2; Psalms xix. 7; Prov. xxx. 5, 6; 2 Peter i. 19–21; Rev. xxii. 18, 19; John v. 39;) and we believe that therein are revealed all the doctrines and truths which we here state. (2 Tim. iii. 15–17.)

1. The existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah, the revelation which God has given of himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one."—1 John v. 7.

2. The absolute predestination of all things.

3. Eternal, unconditional election.

4. The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

5. That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

6. The sovereign, irresistible and in all

cases effectual work of the Holy Spirit in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

7. The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God by grace.

8. The resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.

9. That the privileges and ordinances of the church of Christ belong exclusively to baptized believers; that to the church are given able ministers of the new testament; that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

10. That the justification of God's elect is only by the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ imputed to them, and not of creature works; that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ does not lead his people to licentiousness, but on the contrary is manifested by good works, the fruits of the Spirit within, and while they are freed from the bondage of the Mosaic law, the law of God is written in their hearts, teaching them that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world.

During September, 1915, four new members have been received by the church and baptized by Elder Durand, making our present number eleven, six men and five women. At our church meeting Sept. 26th, 1915, our brother, Jabez C. Smallbone, was ordained to the full work of the ministry, and owing to the exceptional circumstances the following resolution is recorded:

We, the Old School Baptist Church of Winnipeg, Manitoba, believing that the Lord has blessed us with a gift in our brother, Jabez C. Smallbone, to preach the gospel to the edification and comfort of his people, make the following statement. There has never been to our knowledge a gospel minister of our faith and order in this part of the country, except our brother, Elder Silas H. Durand, of Southampton, Pa., who has visited and preached here from time to time since the year 1898, was present with and presided over us when we organized into a church a year ago, and has acted as our pastor since that time. We know of no minister of our faith and order within a distance of about a thousand miles of this place. We are in fellowship with the churches of the Delaware River Association and those in fellowship with her. We have consulted by letter with two other ministers of our faith and order, Elder John McConnell, of New York, N. Y., and Elder H. C. Ker, of Middletown, N. Y., as to the propriety of proceeding with the ordination of our brother, Jabez C. Smallbone, where only one minister is present, and have received a reply from Elder McConnell approving of such action under existing circumstances. Elder Ker was not at home at the time. Be it therefore resolved, that we proceed to the ordination of our brother, Jabez C. Smallbone, to the full work of the gospel ministry, with the responsibilities and privileges appertaining to that office.

Brother Smallbone has been appointed pastor of this church. His address is post-office box 1844, Winnipeg, Manitoba. Our deacon is brother J. B. Chappell, 563 Rosedale Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Your brother in Christ,

G. B. McCOLL, Church Clerk.

SALE OF THE DOLLAR CONCORDANCE DISCONTINUED.

WE have decided to discontinue the sale of the dollar Concordance, and in the future we will only have for sale the one dollar and fifty cent Concordance, as we feel that this book will give much better satisfaction, and is well worth the extra money.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by brother A. C. Kelley.)

The Tygarts Valley River Association of Old School or Primitive Baptists, now in session with the Amnon Church, in Marion County, West Virginia, to the churches of which she is composed, and to all those of a like precious faith, giveth christian greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has always been our custom to greet the churches composing this association by Circular Letter, therefore in this, our annual greeting, we will ask in the words of the apostle Paul to the Corinthians, "Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?" Now it would seem from this language of Paul that though the church at Corinth was faithful to the apostles' doctrine, yet there were false teachers among them,and lest these should charge him with boasting, he shews them that his preaching is by the Spirit of God. For though he says, "Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart," yet he says in speaking of himself, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing, as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves; but they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise. But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us. "For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth." Dearly beloved brethren, if there were false teachers in the time of Christ and the apostles, and the Scriptures tell us there were, yes, even back in the time of the prophets there were false teachers, for Micah the prophet says, They build up "Jerusalem with iniquity. The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money; yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us," how much more, then, are they among us of this day and age of the world. They are springing up, as it were, from a hotbed, all over the land, teaching the people to get religion, and saying, Do this and be saved, or do that, but, dear brethren, beware of them, for they are perverting the gospel of Christ, and teaching lies in hypocrisy. The apostle says, "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." But believe them not, for in vain they do worship God, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. Believe not these made-to-order doctrines of men, for they are dangerous doctrines. Brethren, be not partakers with them, for their works are evil; they love darkness rather than light; but ye are of the light, therefore His word is a lamp unto your feet. Take the word of God for your counselor, and you will not be deceived, for the psalmist says, "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven. Thy faithfulness is unto all generations." For he spake and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast. The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to naught; he maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the Lord standeth

forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance. The entrance of his word giveth light; it giveth understanding. His word is pure, his righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, his law is the truth, his word is true from the beginning, and will be true to the end. Trust alone in his Word. "And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers: and thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." Beware of these false teachers and false doctrines. Do not trust in these doctrines of self-works, or good works, that teach you to do good and get good, and then do good and stay good, for you cannot do anything to save yourself, neither can you do anything that will save your brother, for Christ has finished the work that the Father gave him to do, thereby saving all that the Father gave him. No, no, beloved brethren, you can do nothing of yourselves that will commend you in the sight of God, for the sow that was washed has turned again to her wallowing in the mire. Why, beloved friends, that was only a sow when they washed her, and she still remains a sow, and will come again and again to be washed, and each time she will turn again and wallow in the mire, and get more filthy than she was at first, and if they do not use a better brand of soap than they have yet used she will die a sow. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." For "a mighty man is not delivered by much strength. An horse is a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength." Do not trust in your own good deeds, nor yet in the righteousness of these pharisees for your salvation, for "if any man shall add unto these things [that is, the prophecy of this book], God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." May the Lord bless you and save you. Amen.

J. B. CROSS, Mod.

J. N. BARTLETT, Clerk.

The Pocatalico Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Hopewell Church, Kanawha Co., W. Va, September 17th, 18th and 19th, 1915, to the churches composing her body, and the associations with which she corresponds, sendeth salutation.

MY DEAR BRETHREN:—It has once more, by the order of this association, fallen upon me to write a Circular Letter for your consideration, and if approved by you it will be spread upon the Minutes of this association. The subject upon which I have selected to address you is of importance, and should not be overlooked by those who profess a hope in Christ Jesus. The Scripture I have selected is found in 1 Corinthians ix. 11, and reads thus: "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?"

It is with a degree of fearfulness that I enter upon this subject. I hope none of my brethren will take any offence, for I feel that their pure minds need to be stirred up by way of remembrance of these things. Paul begins his letter to

the Corinthian brethren by saying he was "called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus." So we see this address was to the church, and is applicable to the saints throughout all time. Paul, as a faithful minister, shunned not to declare all the counsel of God in his epistles of love to the church he was addressing. In speaking of the ministry he says, "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." The minister is required to be faithful in discharging his duty, not only in visiting and preaching, but he is to cry aloud and spare not, lift up his voice like a trumpet and show the Lord's people their transgressions and the house of Jacob (church) their sins. The reproof, correction and instruction given by Paul to the Corinthian brethren is equally applicable to the church through all time and in every place. A minister who will not preach without pay for preaching is not worthy of the pastoral care of a church, for such God has not called to take the oversight of his flock. A church in calling a pastor should, we think, be a unit. No minister should take the care of a church knowing there were some of the members opposing him, even if it be but one; also a church that will not minister of their carnal things to the necessity of their pastor is not worthy of a pastor. Paul's instruction to a young minister was to neglect not the gift that is in thee. He must give time and attention to reading his Bible, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth;" for "no man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life." Beside the time given to meditation and study he must be at some expense to prepare himself with conveyance, clothing, &c. The needs of his family are the same as other men; his own clothes and those of his family wear out, his crop will not grow without work, and he, not being able to hire, ofttimes overworks himself to make good his word, for the appointment is out, and the brethren will be expecting him. I know this is a question we are often reluctant to talk about, and yet it is one the Bible speaks of; it is one of interest to the church, to the minister and to his family. The minister wishes to be held as a brother, not a slave to his brethren, and when he has all his own expenses to meet, and family to see to, and yet give a majority of his time to the brethren, he is sensible that they should divide burdens with him. O, my dear brethren, may we be willing to help bear each other's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. It is a pleasure for a God-called minister to wait on the churches, and he could not be content without it, and will go to his task, although it be at his own expense, and although he knows his family has a natural right to his time and labor, yet he should not be neglected because he is a willing servant; the brethren should not conclude he will attend whether they divide burdens with him or not. This is making a slave of him, and not a brother, and it will have a bad effect on his feelings. It seems to me that religion should strengthen moral obligations rather than weaken them. Your duty to your minister does not rest on the same ground that your duty to a pauper rests. You give to paupers when want makes it indispens-

able to them, but you should give to your pastor as you are interested in the same work he is interested in, as a brother, as one willing to divide the burden with him. You do not give to him as a hireling, for he is not a hireling; you should share in common the comforts of life, and in common perform the burdens of life. You should not seek to exalt and enrich him, for this he does not desire at your hands, he only wants to live upon an equality with you. The deacons of a church are supposed to be the proper ones to look after all necessary expenses of the church; it is their duty to remind the brotherhood of what their duty is to their pastor. No minister should be honored by the title of Elder, neither should such an one be called to the pastoral care of a church, who will deny a just and honest debt, and no church should hold a minister or a deacon in fellowship who will take advantage of the homestead law to keep from paying a just and honest debt, for these are two sacred positions which should be well watched by the laity of the churches.

Written with an eye single to the welfare of the churches and to the honor of the cause.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in October (31st). Services at 10:30 a. m. and 2:30 p. m. We shall be glad to welcome any who love the truth. Lunch is always served between services.

L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, MASS.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Christina Parker, wife of James M. Parker, departed this life, we hope to enter into the better life, at her late residence in Wicomico County, Md., August 12th, 1915, at the age of 63 years. She was the eldest daughter of brother Philip Hall, a prominent member and clerk of the Nassaongo Church for many years. She was also a granddaughter of Dr. Lemuel Hall, in his day a prominent physician and minister of the Old School Baptist Church, whose home was in Sussex County, Del. Sister Parker was baptized by Elder David Bartley while on a visit to Maryland about forty-four years ago, and became a member of the church at Nassaongo, of which she continued a faithful member until her death. She was married to James M. Parker about fourteen years ago. She leaves her husband and three sisters: Mrs. Mary Lecates, Mrs. Sarah Taylor and Mrs. Annie Toadvine (all faithful members of the church), eight nephews and nieces, with the church, to mourn, but not without hope.

Her funeral was held at Forest Grove meetinghouse on the 14th, and the mortal body was laid in the cemetery near by to await the sound of the last trump.

ALSO,

Brother **D. Joseph Parsons** entered into everlasting felicity August 26th, 1915, at the residence of his son-in-law, Mr. Jackson Matthews, in Wicomico County, Md., aged 80 years. I believe brother Parsons was baptized at Nassaongo, by Elder T. M. Poulson, and was a member of that church until dismissed by letter, in the year 1886, to join in the constitution of the church at Forest Grove, at which time he was chosen one of the deacons, and continued to serve in that capacity until old age, when at his request he was relieved by the appointment of another to serve in his stead. He was a faithful member and deacon, given to hospitality, kind to the poor, thoughtful and sympathetic for the sick and afflicted and liberal in his donations to any worthy cause. He was married in early life to Mrs. Maria Adkins, by whom he had four children, two of whom, together with his wife, preceded him to the tomb. He is survived by one son, Samuel Parsons, and one daughter, Mrs. Sallie Matthews, several grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. The church also mourns, not for him, but that we shall see his face no more on earth; but we hope for the same blessed and glorious future life in the church triumphant, when death shall have lost its sting and the grave its victory.

The funeral service was held in the home where he died, by the writer, on the 28th. Burial in the family plot on the home farm, by the side of his wife and a daughter who had preceded him, until God shall give to him the full victory obtained by the Captain of our salvation.

ALSO,

Mrs. Catty M. Holloway was called away from these earthly scenes Sept. 7th, 1915, in the 68th year of her age. She was born in Worcester County, Md., Dec. 28th, 1847. Her parents were Elisha and Sallie Holloway. On Dec. 23rd, 1869, she was married to her cousin, Joshua G. Holloway, who died in 1899. She was the mother of nine children, two of whom died in infancy, and one daughter, Dorothea, died in 1898, leaving six to survive their mother: three sons, Elisha C., Daniel C. and Victor, and three daughters, Mrs. Bertha C. Richardson, Nannie G. and Ruth. There are also four grandchildren. Mrs. Holloway never made a public profession, but manifested her love for the Lord's people in many ways. Her house was ever open for their entertainment, and she delighted in having them in her home, never tiring in rendering any service that would add to their comfort. She was a woman of sterling character, and well deserved to be classed with those termed in the Acts as "honorable women." Three of her children are worthy and faithful members of the church. She was ill over two months. The doctor diagnosed her disease as gallstones, but about two weeks before her death she was carried to the Peninsula General Hospital at Salisbury, where an operation was performed, and the surgeon found cancer instead of gallstones. She lingered about fifteen days, dying, as stated above, on the 7th inst.

Funeral services were held at her late residence, near Salisbury, Md., on the 9th, after which she was borne to the grave and laid beside her husband in the old Holloway burial place, eight miles from her late residence. I believe she now sleeps that blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep. "Asleep in Jesus." I feel that I have lost three true friends in those of whom I have here written, and I mourn with the mourners. May the Lord comfort all who mourn.

A. B. FRANCIS.

Mrs. Marcella Dolson, wife of Daniel J. Dolson, died at her home on Friday afternoon, Sept. 3rd, 1915, after many years of suffering. She was the daughter of William H. Thompson and Sarah E. Peterson, and was born in Wheeling, W. Va., April 28th, 1853. She was married to Daniel J. Dolson on Sept. 10th, 1890. Sister Dolson was a member of the Old School Baptist Church the past thirty-five years, being baptized by the late Elder Wm. Pollard. She is survived by her husband and one daughter.

Funeral services were held on Sunday afternoon at her home, her pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, of Middletown, officiating. Interment in Warwick Cemetery.

[THE above obituary was handed us by the daughter of our dear departed sister, and we feel to add a few lines. Sister Dolson was a noble woman in all the walks of life, ever faithful to every duty. She was firm in the faith and grounded in the truth. Her desire for the order of the house was uppermost in her mind, and she loved all who walked in obedience to the laws of God. She had a host of friends, who will miss her, but she is far better off than we who are left to battle with the cares, trials and temptations of life. May the Lord bless the husband and daughter with grace as their day.—K.]

Sister **Hettie Henry Kilgore,** wife of Elder J. C. Kilgore, was born Dec. 6th, 1842, and died Sept. 5th, 1915, aged 72 years and 9 months. She professed a hope in Christ when only thirteen years of age. She was married to J. C. Kilgore May 3rd, 1874, and joined the Primitive Baptists in September, 1889. Sister Kilgore was the mother of four children, one daughter and three sons, all living. They were with her during her last illness, and ministered to her wants. She was confined to her room and bed seven weeks, with what her doctors pronounced cancer of the bowels. All that could be done by a devoted husband, loving children, skilled physicians and kind neighbors was done to relieve her suffering and prolong her life, but God's time had come to take her; he had served his purpose with her, she had suffered enough, having fought the battles that are incident to the christian warfare for sixty years. She certainly could adopt the language of the apostle when he saw his end was near and said, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. She died in the full triumph of a living faith in Christ. Sister Kilgore had all the qualifications of a minister's wife, always ready to make every sacrifice necessary to encourage brother Kilgore to a full discharge of his duty as a minister of the gospel. She had that meek, quiet, humble, patient disposition which characterizes the life of a truly humble child of God. Her home was the home of the Baptists, especially the preachers. Much might be said of this mother in Israel, but perhaps this is enough. That she was held in high esteem, was attested by the many who attended her funeral. They came for miles around to pay their last tribute of love and respect to her whom they so highly esteemed. The unworthy writer tried to speak at the grave to a large congregation words of comfort, speaking on the subject of the resurrection, reading and commenting on the last six verses of the fourth chapter of 1st Thessalonians, after which we consigned her body to the tomb to await the resurrection morn, when it will be raised and brought forth with all the host of God's elect, fashioned and made like the glorious body of Jesus, her Redeemer.

In conclusion, let me say to dear brother Kilgore and children, and all who are thus bereaved, Put your trust in Jesus, cast all your care on him, knowing that he careth for you. May God in his abun-

dant mercy grant to heal your every wound, soothe your every sorrow, quell all your grief, and sweetly reconcile you to his will in all things, is the prayer of your unworthy brother in hope,

W. G. GREEN.

Mrs. Nancy Thompson, whose maiden name was Nancy Clark, was born in Bellmont County, Ohio, Jan. 8th, 1834. When a child she with her parents moved from Ohio to Indiana, later to Illinois, and finally nine years ago to Wichita, Kansas, which continued to be her home until death. She was married to Elder Wm. A. Thompson Dec. 4th, 1851, in the State of Indiana. To that union ten children were born, six sons and four daughters. One son died in infancy; later three grown sons departed this life: Calvin C., aged 55 years, died June 19th, 1910; Craig P., aged 35 years, died Feb. 11th, 1907, and William W. died July 17th, 1915, just one month from the day that mother passed away. Surviving are Mrs. Hattie Hartenbower, of Bloomington, Ill., Mrs. Mary Elder, of Ottawa, Ill., J. F. Thompson, of Rupert, Idaho, G. B. Thompson, of Blackwell, Okla., Viola and Anna Thompson, of Wichita, Kansas. Also surviving are twelve grandchildren and one great-grandchild, and Mrs. Frank Thompson, a niece, of Tiskilwa, Ill., whom the deceased reared in her home. The husband, Elder Wm. A. Thompson, was a Primitive Baptist preacher for forty-nine years of his life. After nearly sixty years of happy wedded life the husband went to his reward Sept. 24th, 1911. The death angel, or rather the eternal life angel, called for the soul of our dear mother at 10:30 p. m., June 17th, 1915. Her age was 81 years, 5 months and 9 days. Our mother was a christian woman, with all included in that term. She was a loving and devoted wife and mother. As a neighbor and friend her equals are few. As a home maker she found special delight, and was ever kindly considerate of others. She was of a quiet, thoughtful and reverent disposition, ever ready to help others whom and whenever she could assist in any way. She dearly loved all the members of her family, as only the best of mothers could. As a christian her faith never wavered, she knew in whom she believed. She was a true helpmeet to her preaching husband during the many years of his gospel ministry. She had a positive hope of the life beyond, and we have every reason to believe her soul is redeemed and present with the Lord. While our home is empty and our hearts breaking with sadness here, we are looking to a place where parting is unknown.

Funeral services were conducted in the home and place of her death, in Wichita, Kansas, G. J. Chapman, of the Christian denomination, officiating. The body was laid to rest in the Wichita cemetery.

VIOLA THOMPSON.

MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting of the Old School Baptist Church in Wilmington, Del., will commence at 2 o'clock p. m. on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1915, and continue all day Sunday. All lovers of the truth are invited. Meetinghouse 1304 Jefferson St.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Association of Primitive Baptists is appointed to meet with the church at Forest Grove, near Parsonsburg, Wicomico Co., Md., October 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1915. All lovers of the truth, especially those who labor in word and doctrine, are cordially invited to meet with us. Those coming from the north will take the train that leaves Broad St., Philadelphia, at 7:25 a. m. on Tuesday, 19th, come through to Salisbury, changing cars to the B. C. & A. R. R. for Parsonsburg, where they will be met and cared for. Those coming from Baltimore take boat leaving Pier 8, Light St. wharf, at 2:30 p. m. via Claiborne; also all from stations on the B. C. & A. take same train, get tickets for Parsonsburg, arriving there at 8:28 p. m. We hope for a goodly attendance, and assure you of a hearty welcome.

A. B. FRANCIS, Pastor.

THERE will be a two days meeting at the Old School Baptist Church at Cammal, Pa., October 30th and 31st. We expect Elders J. M. Fenton and D. M. Vail to be with us. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. T. BADGLEY, Church Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church will be held, the Lord willing, on the first Saturday and Sunday in November (6th and 7th), 1915. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. The trains coming down the U. & D. will be met Friday night and Saturday morning. The morning train from Kingston will be met Saturday morning at Ashokan.

ORVILLE WINCHELL, Deacon.

THE Primitive Baptist Association of south Florida, called Mt. Enon, will hold their next annual meeting with Bethehem Church, this the forty-fourth annual session, the second Sunday in November, and Friday and Saturday before. All lovers of Bible truth are invited to be with us, especially ministering brethren holding to the doctrine of predestination of all things that come to pass. If any of the brethren or sisters from the north wish to meet with us, please notify me at once, and I will gladly meet you at Lakeland and see that you get to the meeting, the Lord willing. Come and be with us.

C. K. HAINES.

LAKELAND, Fla.

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Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Liberty Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, of Los Angeles, Cal., meets every first and third Sunday in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., at 42nd and Moneta Ave., and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal.

W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor.

B. C. RICE, Clerk.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

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[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 83. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1915. NO. 21.

CORRESPONDENCE.

KANSAS CITY, Mo., Oct. 5, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—By request of sister Sarah E. Runkle, of Macomb, Illinois, made some fifteen years ago, I am undertaking to express my views on Matt. xxvii. 6–8, which reads as follows: "And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful to put them in the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day." Zechariah, under the direction of the Spirit of God had said hundreds of years before this event, Zech. xi. 12, 13, "And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter; a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord." The Lord being my helper I will endeavor according to the light that is given me to comply with her request. In the first place, let us consider the prophecy of Zechariah. This would or should settle to the perfect satisfaction of all true believers any doubts as to the foreknowledge and purpose of God concerning this whole matter, and the only hope we have as to a proper understanding of this matter is based upon the question, Has our blessed Master given us a right interpretation of the foregoing passages of his written word? However, I feel sure that there must be some spiritual meaning to them understood only through the salvation of the Spirit of God. We must remember that the thirty pieces of silver were the price of blood, the precious blood of Jesus Christ poured out on the Roman cross for the remission of sins, not only original, but all sins of all were laid on him, and whose names were written in the book of life and foreknown in the covenant of redemption, ordered in all things and sure, and so the potter's field was purchased with the thirty pieces of silver, "weighed for my price." "And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter; a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord." A potter's field is usually a plot of ground set apart entirely

separate from the neatly kept and beautifully ornamented cemetery, where the resting-places of the dead are marked by more or less ornamental monuments, many of them bearing, not only the name, but a record of the noble titles and deeds of those who lie buried there, presenting a beautiful and pleasing sight to the eye of the living, inspiring a desire in their minds for a home in that beautifully kept field of monuments. It would be a very unusual thing to find a wealthy person who would ask his friends to bury him in the potter's field after death. The very thought of such a thing as a rich man in a potter's field! his sanity would be questioned. If you will take a good look over the potter's field you will notice that it is grown over with weeds, briars, thorns and thistles, entirely neglected; moreover, it is used as a dumping-ground for all refuse matter taken from the beautiful field of monuments, with very few if any markings to give any sort of information as to its occupants. Strangers extremely poor, criminals, unchristianed infants, often men and women who for real or supposed infractions of ecclesiastical creeds, or other unpardonable crimes, are denied a sepulchre in so-called consecrated ground. Well, what of it? Is there any kind of a church that presents a parallel to the potter's field? What about the dumping-ground? is there a church whose doctrines as well as practices are looked upon with contempt, and its numbers counted as the offscouring of all things, and are as the speckled bird among birds of finer plumage, who believe and preach the damnable doctrine of predestination and election, salvation by grace, chosen in Christ before the world was? A church without a single progressive institution; no temperance society, Sunday-school, young people's society, or anything whatever to help the Lord save sinners, who refuse to affiliate with all other denominations, narrow, contracted, close communionists, and who even require of candidates for membership fruits meet for repentance, and who would refuse membership to persons bearing certificates certifying conversion by any of our modern evangelists, more than a thousand years behind this progressive age, &c. What qualifications are necessary for a home or resting-place in the potter's field? Let us see if we can locate some of these strangers. Yes, those who have no continuing city, but seek one, whose maker and builder is God. Peter, in writing to them and of them, addresses the "strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience," &c. Surely here is a part of them. But it is to be a home for the poor, and Jesus says, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. The poor have the gospel preached unto them. Poor in spirit and heirs of the kingdom. The strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace, but when a stronger than he shall come upon him and overcome him he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. The strong man is possessed of all the necessary goods, such as freedom of will, ability to come to Christ, good deeds, good resolutions, good intentions; in fact, is rich, is in no way troubled about the future, has his lamp trimmed, and can repent and believe and come to Christ of his own volition at any time that he may be called to account before God, and because of his goods, when he does make a profession of religion he is going to be a model or monumental christian. But

when God begins to reckon with him, and enters into judgment with him, he finds his riches, or securities, in which he trusted are counterfeit, and beside the fact of the total loss of all his goods in which he trusted, he is a criminal against a thrice holy God, condemned by his righteous law, ready to plead guilty before the Judge of the quick and dead, and is ready to say with the poet:

"Lord, should thy judgments grow severe,
I am condemned, but thou art clear.

Should sudden vengeance seize my breath,
I must pronounce thee just in death;
And if my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well.

Yet save a trembling sinner, Lord,
Whose hope, still hovering round thy word,
Would light on some sweet promise there,
Some sure support against despair."

His days are filled with bitterness, wormwood and gall are his affliction and his misery, bitter tears flow unbidden from his eyes by night; surely he is beneath the storm that has ground him to powder, but in a blessed condition, because he is hungering and thirsting after righteousness, is laboring and heavy laden, enduring godly sorrow for sin, which accompanies repentance unto life, and he now fully realizes that cursed is man that trusteth in man and has made flesh his arm, and whose heart is departed from the Lord. But there is glorious news for all such: the blessed Lord has intentions of mercy toward them, so when they realize that their hope can rest on nothing less than Jesus and his righteousness, and all other ground is sinking sand, they are very near the kingdom, with all hope of a home in a monumental field (worldly church) gone, and no suitable home but the potter's field, where none but the poor in spirit and heirs of the kingdom, such as are destitute of good deeds, beggars at the feet of the blessed Master for mercy, riches all gone, ten thousand talents in debt, completely overwhelmed, fit only for the potter's field, and in doubts, many of them, of their fitness to have a home with a people they once looked upon as beneath their notice, utterly unworthy of a home in the potter's field, and not satisfied to live anywhere else.

Your unworthy brother in sorrow, doubtful of his fitness for the potter's field,

SMITH KETCHUM.

BANKS, Ala., Aug. 5, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—A friend and believer in the truth stated to me that he had never understood a certain Scripture, which reads as follows: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves."—Matt. xxiii. 15, and wanted my views, and I gave him such as I have, and I have decided also to give them to the readers of the SIGNS. This is a given view, and I received it not of men, neither is it of this world; if it was, the world would receive it, but they receive it not, neither do they receive Him that sent me to proclaim the truth in his name. He is full of grace and truth, and dwelleth in the light, and there is no darkness in him. He is my wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. He is head over all things to me, and to his church, which he purchased with his own blood, and all power in heaven and earth is in his hand, and he doeth his will in the same, and none can hinder. But from the reading of the thirteenth verse, same chapter, some might think he had been hindered; but not so, this same class of proselyters has shut up the kingdom of heaven against men, for they neither enter themselves nor suffer them that are entering to

go in. In this saying of Jesus the children of antichrist think they have some good doctrine, a strong point in their favor, but not so, it is a strong point in the predestination of all things, for if this state of things had not been purposed it could not exist. They can do nothing along this line except God determined it beforehand; wicked men and devils could do nothing to Jesus and his kingdom except it was purposed of the Father. This does not mean that they have defeated our God and put him to an open shame, but they have made the attempt, and they will do everything that our God said they would do, so they will prevent none entering chosen to gospel obedience, and they shall prevent every one entering not chosen to gospel obedience. Many are called, but few are chosen. Now as to the proselyting of this people, to wit, the scribes and Pharisees, and the children, being twofold more the children of hell than they are, is clearly seen after we have a correct view of what Jesus means by the word "hell." I will have to deal with the word "hell" just a little before I can present my views of the contents of this Scripture. It does not matter what men mean by this word, or what we have been taught to believe about it, we must know what Jesus means or we can never understand the import of this Scripture. It is certain that we must get out of the carnal mind or we can never know the things of the Spirit. It seems that many of God's children are inclined to seek the living among the dead, seeking the truth by the carnal mind, which is an utter failure. The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, yet I find people in this country claiming to be Old School Baptists who claim the carnal mind can obey God, and say that Adam could have kept the law in the garden, and that is to say the carnal mind can obey God, and these so-called Primitive Baptists hold to conditional salvation, and the end of this way I find to be death. Death and hell seem to be twin sisters, hell is the environment of the devil, the carnal mind, or Adam life. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do."—John viii. 44. He is a murderer and the father of lies, and abode not in the truth, his abiding-place is in hell. Hell is where the devil creates his children. Hell and destruction are never full, there is always room for every proselyte they can make, and more. Hell is darkness and ignorance, and heaven is light and wisdom. No one knows anything about heaven or hell but the children of God. Jesus was under no obligation to explain this proselyting to the Pharisees, because he told them what they were doing. To them it was not given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but to the children of light. It should be remembered that the devil does not know he is a devil, nor does a pharisee know that he is a pharisee, so all of the religious powers which constitute antichrist are couched in the two words devil and hell, and it is all in open rebellion against our God and his glory. There are but two spirits, one is of heaven, the other of hell. They are represented by the righteous and unrighteous mammon. Mammon means riches. We see from the language of Jesus that these proselyters are the children of hell themselves, not going to be after this life, but are now, and the children they create are twofold more so than they are, and this seems to be the hidden part to my friend. In order to get this before you as I see it I will use two other passages which seem to throw some light upon the foregoing. "Thou art Peter; and upon this rock will

I build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The gates of hell here represent the churches of antichrist. Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. This seems to be in a practical sense; not that the spirit by which they are led gets any worse in principle, but they grow and improve in this work just as a child of God improves and grows in grace. "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none." Then he taketh unto himself seven other spirits more wicked than he. They had more experience in the works of the devil than he had, he was a beginner. The unclean spirit went out, not cast out by a greater power. He took a notion to cleanse himself, accept God and be saved, but he did not find any rest, and he walked through dry places, did not find any water. They claim they can find the water of life. So he took to himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and returned and found his house swept and garnished. He is dwelling in the same house, but it is swept and garnished. He is deceived, he thinks he is cleaner than he was before the spirit went out; he is a good pharisee now, he thinks he is clean, and better than other men, but he is seven times more wicked than before. When he took to himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself then he joined some of the so-called churches and reached forth his hand in fellowship to all the religion of the world. Seven is a complete number, and represents all of them, and yet it is one spirit. The last state of this man is very much worse than the first; he is seven times more wicked than before the unclean spirit went out; now he is a vile enemy of the truth and a persecutor of the Son of God and his kingdom; now he is seven times more the child of hell than when he begun. So the spirit and government of nonprofessors and unchristianized infidels are much more neutral and less malicious against the church than that of the proselytes and bastards, they are the ones who war against the family of God. Hell is a deep place, and is never full, it is a bottomless pit; the devil is chained in this pit and a seal set upon the door, according to Revelation, showing that the devil can do nothing more than God allows him to do. He and his children cannot get out of this bottomless pit. If we drop a man in a pit he will fall from us until he hits the bottom, and if it has no bottom he continues to fall, and there is no possibility of his ever rising to the one who put him in the pit, he must be arrested by one with power to suspend nature and bring him up. David, I think it was, said, He brought me up out of the pit. How foolish it is for men to claim they can get out of this pit. All of the kingdoms of this world are in this pit; it is a horrible pit; it is hell and destruction. All who are in this pit are wandering from God. Not the tenth generation of a bastard shall enter the kingdom of heaven. These proselyters are all bastards, and instead of getting nearer to God they get further from him. As I have before stated, hell, or this pit, is not known to the world, it is invisible to the carnal mind. A bottomless pit could not exist literally. No vulture's eye has seen this pit; it could see the highway just as easily.

Dear editors, this is submitted for your disposal.

Your brother in hope,

J. E. FINCHER.

GARDEN CITY, Mo., May 23, 1915.

DEAR AUNT:—I received your letter yesterday evening. No, we have not forgotten you all, but, like you, find it hard to get at letter-writing, and put it off from day to day. I am truly thankful for one thing, and that is, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. When Jesus cried, "It is finished," salvation was complete in him; every sin that ever was or ever will be, even in the children not yet born, not having done good or evil, of his chosen people was atoned for. God declared the end from the beginning, and if we cannot see eye to eye may we hope in his mercy and pray for each other. I could not with the right feeling have said to Thelma what you said; I have no knowledge she is born again, born of the Spirit. You remember John the Baptist would baptize only such as brought fruits meet for repentance. There is a world of difference between serving God because we have been drawn by the sweet influence of the Spirit and love, and trying to serve him to escape damnation. God is not mocked, he looks on the heart. She might have had all confidence in what I said, but that would not be trusting God. None can trust God but they that know salvation is of the Lord. Now is come salvation and strength and the kingdom of God and the power of his Christ, and to have talked to her and told her of such a powerful God, to trust him, would have only been mockery of such a wonderful and glorious theme. None of his sheep have to be told by man to trust him, but they trust him because he has given them power to, and they know him, from the least to the greatest, for they all shall be taught of the Lord, and I rest assured that in his own time he will teach her and lead her in the way he would have her go, and I must be still and know he is God. You wrote you did not think any of us knew much about the Bible. It is not anything we can learn by human wisdom; by searching we cannot find out God. Paul was a well educated man in the law, but when it came to him, the knowledge of God and the power of his Christ, when Jesus spoke to him, he was a changed man. I was very thankful to read the Psalms you referred me to. If you read closely you will see it is to them that know the power of his Christ. Do you think any ever call Jesus Shepherd but his sheep? He laid his life down for the sheep, and in the forty-sixth Psalm it is the church that is confident in God. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God will help her, and that right early. She is built upon the Rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her. In the ninety-first Psalm he is still speaking of the same people, or the sheep of his pasture. I never have seen where his blessed promises reach outside of his children, or those he has blessed to find he is their strength, salvation and shield. You said death is only a human experience. Did you ever have an experience that was not a reality? What is death but separation? I do not see anything about it that any should want to deny it. We all know God is from everlasting to everlasting, and in all that are born of his Spirit the spirit never dies; but the natural man does die, and the spirit returns to him who gave it, and the natural man dies, or ceases to live here longer in this time state, and the mortal must put on immortality, changed and fashioned like unto His own glorious body. Probably you would understand me better if I were to say are dead, or cease to live longer in that state, but changed and live in another

state. There is a state when people are dead in trespasses and sin, if I understand, it is by nature, or transgression, dead, or separated from all holiness of God. What was Adam's transgression? "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." You see he still lived several years, yet we still hear God's words, "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," and none of us can of a truth say he did not die. He did die to the state of innocency in which he lived, and was dead in trespasses and sin. God pronounced death upon man. He did not say, If thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die, but, "In the day that thou eatest thereof." Do you not think it was fixed in the Almighty's eye that Adam should eat of the forbidden fruit? I think it was, and rejoice that it was. What is the difference between a god that is all-powerful, and yet cannot keep man from sinning, and a God that is all-powerful and prepares salvation for the sinners? Why did Adam sin? Because he was of the earth earthy; that is, that holy cannot sin. I said I rejoice because I think it was fixed in God's eye, or mind, and I do, and this is why I rejoice: "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." Ephesians ii. 1, says, "And you hath he [Jesus] quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sin." This describes the condition very plainly, what we are by nature and what we are by grace. None of a truth can say, God made me sin. It is their nature to sin. On the other hand, if one ever does one thing good that one must say with Paul, By the grace of God I am what I am. I think Paul heard the Son of God; as he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly there shone round about him a light from heaven, and he no longer persecuted the church of God, but straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. I do not think any one could say with Bible testimony he could preach Christ the Son of God without preaching salvation and the resurrection of the dead. Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of God, and the power of his Christ; and you hath he (Jesus) quickened, made alive from that dead state, to serve the true God, saved from sin and death. When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all." Who are the all? His church, for they are bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. He was put to death in the flesh by wicked hands and quickened by the Spirit. Did God have anything to do with it? I surely rejoice to think he did. I think Jesus spoke of how he could pray and how the angels would come, but the Father's will must be done. Much more, then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him; and not only so, but we also glory in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved him to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and

that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name." How often have we heard it otherwise: If you will be good God will bless you for it; instead of preaching repentance in his name, which always looked to me like trying to put the natural man on through to heaven in his natural state, without being born of the Spirit to enter the spiritual kingdom. There is a blessing in obedience, but not for it. All who are obedient are blessed indeed to be obedient, because it is the work of the Spirit.

Now I want to write of the death some seem to so dread. The wages of sin is death, and if sin is condemned in the flesh the flesh must die. All that is mortal is the head, and if the head lives so must the members, or body. There being a resurrection, surely there must be a death, "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." The first man is of the earth earthy, the second man is the Lord from heaven, and it seems to me that all who are born of the Spirit will feel the two principles, or two natures, the warfare of the flesh against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh. In your letter and in your talk you have often left the impression that if a child of God one would be always rejoicing under his care, love and power. What was the matter with David when he said, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit"? In another place he said, "I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by the reason of the disquietness of my heart. Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee. * * * My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore; and my kinsmen stand afar off." It does seem to me that all who love the Redeemer in Spirit and in truth would groan, being burdened, knowing the good they would they do not, and the evil they would not they do, and knowing that he is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and so the Spirit of him in them that love holiness hates evil, do not think of themselves that they can keep themselves so full of good that there is no room for anything else, but rather that sin is mixed with all they do, and they long to be free from this body of sin which will end at death to them that are redeemed, for the wages of sin is death, and death has no more power over Christ's members than over him. They will cease to live in this time and mortal state, but in the immortal state will be made and fashioned like unto his own glorified body. Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ; all power, praise and glory be his.

I have not time to say much about you saying God has nothing to do with the war, but am sorry to even think you think he has not. The powers that be are ordained of God. I am glad to think he has power over all powers, even death, hell and the grave, and the wicked, too. I do not know of anything that is self-existent but God, and he is the first cause of all causes.

I never thought to write what I have when I sat down. I did not think I would try to answer what you wrote on religion, but you have said and written so often there is no death, and I never before felt to try to express myself on

the subject, and did not know I was going to until I was right at it, and you may see as I do at last. I have been misunderstood, and I may have misunderstood you. I hope I have only written Bible truths, and if I do see anything in the true light it is not for what I have done, but what has been done for me, and I have not anything to boast of over you or any one else. I hope I have not been harsh, or have not written through vainglory, envy or strife, but I just get wrapped up in the precious things, and the more I hope I see the more I love to see. I do not think Christ left the example that if we feel to be reviled to revile again. I hope to be firm in the truth I believe is in Jesus, but not to force it on any one. I am thankful for you that Uncle Will is no worse, yet to depart and be with Christ is far better, and then all ailments will be no more. The more we see in Christ the less we see in this world.

With love and best wishes to one and all of you, from your niece,

LAURA ESSIE ODELL.

WHEELING, W. Va., Sept. 27, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing three letters, one from Elder Keene, which was of great comfort to me. I have read and reread it, and each time I have felt a strong sense of his great kindness in replying to my poor letter in such a kind and gracious manner. I always want to share his letters with all the saints, and I hope he will not mind the liberty I am taking in sending it without asking his permission. The other two letters are from our dear sister Bonnie Chick, and I feel sure that they will find a loving sanction in all hearts that feel the truth contained therein. What she tells of her exercise of mind in the last two years is good news and glad tidings, not that we ever doubted her former experience, but it is good to see one young in years being led so deeply into the things pertaining to godliness. I was eager to know something more of the last hours of her dear honored father, and she has kindly given me some of the particulars, and I feel that what she has told will be interesting to those who loved and honored him so. I desired to send those letters as soon as I had read them, but I was in a dreary state, and on July 13th I was stricken down with congestion of the brain. My life was despaired of for a few days, but it pleased the Lord to raise me up after five weeks confinement to my room. I am now able to work, read and write again, although there is great weakness in my head at times. Were it not that I feel so unworthy I would ask each dear saint with whom I have corresponded to accept this poor little letter as to them individually. I ask your prayers, and would appreciate letters from any who feel to write. I am very lonely for the company of the saints and the preaching of the word.

Your unworthy sister,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

HOPEWELL, N. J., June 11, 1915.

DEAR SISTER PULTZ:—How many, many times you have been on my mind, and during the past year I have started three letters to you. I feel it was fear of being mistaken in the things I wrote that kept me from sending them. I have read and reread the letters you have written me, and not long ago I was reading the two you wrote me about the time of my father's death, and I seemed to enjoy them even more than I ever had before, if possible. I felt that I wanted to write right away and tell you, but each day I

have hesitated. Then I wanted also to tell you how when I read what you wrote to Mr. Fetter about how condemned you felt for telling jokes to please your natural friends that I knew how you felt. Naturally I was of a lively nature, and until recently I did not realize how displeasing these things are in the sight of God, and I had to learn through what seemed bitter suffering for the flesh to endure. For months I walked with a heartache and burden of sin that I felt at times would crush me to the ground. I did not know how to live on in this agony, and yet I feared to die. The only rest I had was when the Lord would mercifully send sleep, but from this I would waken with a shudder at the thought of the suffering I felt was before me. Others thought I was losing my mind, and that I needed life, but something told me that I must seek God, and God only, in this distress, the world looked black to me, and the talking and laughter around me only added to the pain. I longed for some lonely spot far, far away from the life that I saw around me. This was two years ago, and my physical strength has become less and less, but I feel I can say that God has helped me all along the way, and in these dark hours he has showered mercies too numerous to tell upon me. I fear lest I am deceiving when I say the things of the world appear more and more trifling, while I hope there is a desire to learn more of the things pertaining to the kingdom. My family feel anxious about my health, but I can only feel that I am in the hands of the Lord, and that he has a wise purpose in all things. He has done so many wonderful things for me that I long to trust him for the future, and somehow I find there is something that even in the darkest hours keeps me from feeling as desperate as I once did, for I cannot get away from that hope in his mercy. At times I can only cry out in thanks to him whom I hope has caused me to suffer, and when we feel he is near we can only smile at our fears. There are times when the joy is so great that the weariness of the flesh is forgotten, and I know that even though I am weak he is strong, and that his strength is sufficient. We can read and believe these things, but until we have felt them for ourselves how little we know of the greatness of his strength, and until we see ourselves the worst of sinners we cannot feel our unworthiness to receive even the least of his blessings, but, like David, we have to say, I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me. Surely I am made to cry out in wonder often because of his goodness to me, who am so prone to do wrong. Sometimes I feel a hatred for sin, but how often I find myself nourishing some hateful thought or feeling, and trying to think it is only right that I have them. Then when God gives us a taste of the beauties of holiness how differently we feel, and how ugly everything pertaining to self appears.

June 14th.—Sister Pultz, I sometimes find it hard indeed to make up my mind to send letters after I have written them, but I feel that I do want you to know that I often think of you and wish for a letter from you, but I know I do not deserve any. If the Lord's mercy were not so great as the heaven is high above the earth what would become of such a sinful child as I? I have been reading some in Isaiah this morning, and if I am a child of God what wonderful promises are in this book for me. Yesterday I opened the hymn-book to the hymn beginning, "O Zion, afflicted with wave upon wave, whom no man can comfort, whom no man can save," and it seemed to suit my case

well. All our help must come from Him. How prone our natures are to seek help from others, but he will bring his children to a place where he shows them that he alone has all power, both in heaven and earth, and that they must seek him, and him only, in all their troubles. He alone can deliver, and he does deliver, and we are promised that he will always deliver. I think of these words in the sixty-second Psalm: "My soul, wait thou only upon God: for my expectation is from him," and in this same Psalm we are told to trust in him at all times. What a precious gift a hope in his mercy is. We need not fear anything that may come upon us, but O how many times we do fear.

I hope you may feel to write to me again. I feel to be indeed wandering in a wilderness.

Your little sister, in love,

BONNIE A. CHICK.

HOPEWELL, N. J., June 22, 1915.

DEAR SISTER PULTZ:—Your beautiful letter came this morning, and I have read and reread your comforting words. It did indeed make me feel glad when you said you had been thinking about me. I started one letter to you soon after my father's death, but I delved so deeply into the strange experience that I had been passing through that I felt it would take volumes to explain what I had written, so I put the letter away and never felt that I could finish it. For over a year before he died it was as if something told me he would not be here two years. At that time he was apparently well, but in about four months he was operated upon, and in a year from that time he was taken. I have told you something of the agony of mind I endured during this time, but through it all I was reconciled to his death. It just seemed I could see him losing interest in all around him, and I feel that in my experience I could follow him, for surely all pleasure in the things of this world was taken. The doctors for a time told the family that they felt he would recover, but sometimes I would just have to clinch my hands, for I knew he would not get well. He was patient, and never complained, but we could see he suffered. For several days and nights before he died he had hiccoughs much of the time, but his only thought was of not wanting to make us any trouble. He said he had felt a strong desire not to murmur, and surely the Lord granted him this desire. The Friday before he died all knew the end was near. I was out in the yard and the thought was with me that I felt calm then, but how would I be when the end came? The words, You do not need to-morrow's strength to-day, came, and I felt to rest in them. The following Tuesday, at 8:30 p. m., the end came quietly, and I can only say that I felt quiet and resigned. All the time his body lay in the house I felt like singing hymns, and verses of Scripture about death would come, and death was not the trial I once felt it would be. The day of the funeral, before we left the house to go to the meetinghouse, I felt this strength leaving me, and O how I begged that God would not leave me to give way to bitter grief in that hour. The words, I can make drops of sacred sorrow rise to rivers of delight, came with power, and I was kept in a feeling of peace through all. The next morning we had to start for Maryland very early, and it was six o'clock when we put the body in the grave, but there was no dread, for this seemed to be only a resting-place. When your letter came, and you spoke of

having the desire to hear of these things. I felt that I wanted to tell you at once. I was in such trouble and distress from within at the time that it was hard to write, for sometimes the burden was so great and all was so strange and perplexing to me that, as you said in your letter, all I could do was to wonder where the scene would end.

Sister Pultz, I have had it on my mind for some time about how wrong it is for God's children to question anything in the Bible, for we know that all that the Lord does is right, and I feel if we question the righteousness of one thing we question all, and to me it seems like replying against God. I read the first chapter of Acts this afternoon, and I can only say that if we believe that God predestinated all things from the beginning, that this was one of the "all things," and what is sinful man that he dares find fault with the wise decrees of God? But O too often I have to be reminded that I am finding fault with God's plans. This afternoon the way appeared dark and dreary, and yet I had to say, Even though it is thus, God is still merciful. My mind seems burdened with thoughts that I cannot express. How well I know what it is to cry for help in my weakness, and he has ever granted me strength to do the needful things. I remember well one day last summer when mamma was in Maryland; she was there for nine weeks, and I had a family of six much of the time to do for. This one day especially the time came to get dinner, and I felt that I could not stand up. I went into the pantry and leaned against a shelf and begged for strength to get the meal. It was only a few moments before I was singing hymns and all weariness seemed gone. The strength was given when I needed it. How many times since have I found this to be the case. Some time perhaps I can tell you an experience I had the early part of last summer, but I feel I must not write much more to-night.

I know that Aunt Angie would indeed be glad to receive one of your good letters. Hers is rather a lonely life, but God grants her many sweet spiritual thoughts. The address is Mrs. Angie J. Thomas, Richmond, Maine, R. F. D.

Sister Pultz, when you mentioned sending my letter to the SIGNS I could only think that if I could express myself as you do I would not mind, but I always feel so dissatisfied with my letters, and I fear so lest I am mistaken in all, and especially in such a cold frame of mind as I am in to-night. Surely the hours seem long without Him.

I know this is no answer to your good letter, but if the Lord has directed my mind to write he will, I feel, make you to bear with me. I am glad you know the place I am in. May he help you to endure the weakness of body.

Your little sister, I hope,

BONNIE A. CHICK.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, June 25, 1915.

DEAR SISTER PULTZ:—Your letter came yesterday, and interested my heart, for I well know the tried condition that your soul has been passing through. Sore trials, sharp conflicts, weaken our strength in the way, heaviness of the heart maketh it stoop, and only a good word (from the lips of Jesus) maketh it glad. The easy-going professors of Christ's name are no companions for me, and this is so whether they profess Arminian doctrines or Calvinistic doctrines, for I have found that people may give their assent to and contend for Old School Baptist doctrine and be as self-sufficient, at ease and as self-righteous as those whom they despise and

denounce as Arminians. This I have found, that whether we are passing through the floods, or in the furnace of affliction, or whether we are exalted to safety, our feet set upon a rock, and a new song of praise to the Lord in our mouth, in all circumstances we are in need of heavenly supplies that are only ministered to us by the Spirit of Truth, who glorifies Jesus Christ, and takes of the things of our Savior and shows them unto us. However well versed in the teachings of the Scriptures of truth, this only does not suffice the child of God, for the excellency of the power is of God, and for the soul to feed upon, to find strengthening, comforting nourishment in the truth of Christ's gospel, it must ever be according to the exceeding greatness of his power toward us, who believe according to the working of his mighty power. His divine power giveth to his chosen all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue. (2 Peter i. 3.) And this is continuously so all the days of our pilgrimage. Amidst crosses, weighing down burdens of this earthly life, and also the humiliating, bitter conflicts, with indwelling iniquity, and the assaults of the wicked one, how needful it is to have our pure minds stirred up to remembrance of the immutability of our gracious and glorious God, and of the sure mercies of Jehovah's everlasting covenant of grace in Christ Jesus, ordered in all things and sure. (2 Sam. xxiii. 5; Isaiah lv. 3.) The heart, the mind, is then drawn forth to, and exercised in, the sure mercies of the Lord. This is writing the new covenant in us (it is not written upon tables of stone) in the fleshy tables of the heart. Thus the things of Christ are to the heirs of promise vital, experimental realities. Then in our distresses we sigh and moan, and long and cry unto our God for strength, for grace, for mercy. Yes, I find no matter how trying and burdensome may be the providences that are my portion, that I am a sinful being, amidst the sorest straits, and I need our God, who doth abundantly pardon (Isaiah lv. 7,) who delighteth in mercy, (Micah vii. 18,) to be such unto me, rich in mercy, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin.

"What stream is that which sweeps away
My sins, just like a flood?
Nor lets one guilty blemish stay?
'Tis Jesus' precious blood."

O let the Lord command his loving-kindness in the daytime, and his song be with me in the night, and then I am sustained, I am comforted and lifted up in hope that he will bring me through, I shall triumph at last, I shall yet praise him who is the health of my countenance, and my God. Dear sister, the child of God, the true believer in Jesus Christ, has to do with God in times of adversity and of prosperity. The language of the new covenant is, "They shall all know me." "I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God."—Zech. xiii. 9. O how wonderful, rich and free is the kindness and love of God our Savior.

"Pause, my soul, adore and wonder,
Why, O why such love to me?
Grace hath put me in the number
Of the Savior's family.
Hallelujah! thanks, eternal thanks to thee."

Ah, but there are times when we are far, far away from the realms of grateful praise, we are murmuring, we are in rebellion, we feel our trials to be bitter, to overwhelm us, to drink up our spirit, and we ask in our unreconciliation, Why should such things be my portion? Others have an easy path, and we are envious, and are fretful, full of self-pity, and conclude that God dealeth hard with

us, and has no pity for us. But I will not portray the dismal condition of a wretched sinner when under the burden and anguish of sore conflicts and afflictions God hideth his face from us. Why hidest thou thy face in time of trouble? That was a desperate, horrible speech of Jonah's in answer to the Lord's inquiry, "Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? and he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death."—Jonah iv. 9. There have been, and are now, times when the Lord, to fulfill his own wise and holy and gracious purposes, shows to some of his dear people "hard things."—Psalms lx. 3. "Thou feedest them with the bread of tears; and givest them tears to drink in great measure."—Psalms lxxx. 5. Our God, who cares for the ravens, and the sparrows, and not one falleth to the ground without him, surely he will be mindful of us. In number, weight and measure all our trials and conflicts are as he ordains. I would believe they are all in love, and work for our good. O, I have cried out in the darkness in my distractions, when troubles, outward and inward, day after day, month after month, have rolled in unto my soul as wave upon wave to overwhelm me, Hold me unto thyself, let me believe in thee, let me still worship thee, leave me not, and let me not leave thee. Ah, dear sister, what all these cries mean cannot be told to another. God only knows my soul in its adversities, he only knows the meaning of my sighs and longings, my feeble and my fervent cries. This I have found true, and still hope to find true: "As thy days, so shall thy strength be."—Deut. xxxiii. 25.

You speak in your letter of your felt helplessness. This mere fleshly professor of Christ's name can never understand. Just an assent to points of doctrine, a little lip religion, some bodily exercise pertaining to the outward profession of a believer in Christ, and they are in prosperity, religiously, and have more than heart could wish. They are not in trouble and plagued like the children of God. But all true Israelites shall know every man the plague of his own heart. (1 Kings viii. 38.) If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things, and has his cure for all our plagues. Christ crucified is our physician. His atoning sacrifice, his blood shed for the remission of our sins, gives us life and hope, and we overcome the accuser by the blood of the Lamb. (Rev. xii. 11.) Our help is laid upon the mighty One, Jesus Christ our Lord. He is the helper in time of trouble, the help of the helpless, for when he came into the world for our salvation we were without strength, there was none to help, therefore his own arm brought salvation. O Christ, thou art mighty to save. In varied experiences we are as those who are in the straits of the desert land, our resources are taxed to the uttermost, and are found insufficient, we are distressed, we fall down and there is none to help. (Psalms cvii. 12.) O to have a heart to cry unto the Lord in our helplessness. We shall find him ready to save us, very pitiful. This I have often proved, and I feel ashamed that I should ever have a thought contrary to this. O for a believing heart to cleave to the Lord our God. Ah, I know what it is to be so beset with evils, so distracted and cast down that I have foolishly thought, and in my unbelieving heart said, "My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God." But this is the reproving, instructive, gracious voice of the Lord unto such: "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the

earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary, and they shall walk, and not faint."—Isaiah xl. 27–31. Such are the comforting declarations of our God, and forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven. His promises are yea, and amen, and never were forfeited yet. My soul reaches forth to embrace the precious promises of the Lord. When we have come to our journey's end this every one of the redeemed will most gratefully confess: "There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass."—Joshua xxi. 45.

Well, dear sister, I will close my writing. May the Lord sustain, comfort and refresh your soul.

I am your brother, I hope, in Christ's gospel,

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

KELLER, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please permit me to say through our dear old reliable SIGNS that the Trinity River Association has just closed its annual session for this year. One particular feature of the occasion was that Elder J. C. Sikes, of Greenville, Texas, was present, and appointed to occupy the stand on Sunday. He took the following Scripture as a foundation for his subject: "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee,"—Solomon's Song iv. 7, going into all the details and relationship of Christ and the church. It was the most remarkable, weighty and powerful discourse that it has been my good pleasure to listen to for some years. The import of the text was beautifully delineated, bringing therefrom things new and old. He approached the subject with that wisdom and knowledge which God alone gives his servants, which enables them to declare all the counsel of God. The dear brother obviously was attended by the spirit of holy boldness, yet in a simple, plain, unassuming manner, making his preaching all the more glorious, so full of heavenly marrow, of wine on the lees well refined, a feast to the soul of joy and peace beyond this vale of tears. By scriptural testimony he interestingly and incontrovertibly showed the justice of God in all things, portraying in his argument the original depraved state of the church, in bondage, under the law of condemnation. In consequence of sin and by taansgression she (the church) became involved in trespasses and sin, without hope and without God in the world, showing the filthy garments of the church in her alienation from the life of God, in a foreign land, in obscure darkness, covered with the spots of her sins, black as the tents of Kedar, all polluted in the quagmire of sin and rebellion, helpless and depraved, ten thousand talents in debt, and not a farthing to pay; from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it. At this juncture Elder Sikes brought forth the scriptural account of Christ Jesus the Lord as the great sacrificial offering, who by the eternal Spirit gave himself a ransom (price paid) for the redemption of his poor, afflicted bride; the great Antidote sent down from heaven to suffer and to make an atonement for all the sins of his chosen people, as the Mediator and Intercessor of the purchased

possession, unto the praise of his glory; dressed in all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, redeeming her with his own precious blood, clothing her in all the bright habiliments of Christ, the Head of all the seed elect, removing every spot through his righteousness, the everlasting covenant, bearing her sins away by a "fit man," and remembering them no more against her forever. Now she stands justified and fully acquitted in the judgment through the imputed righteousness of Christ, therefore in the presentation of the kingdom he can in all the effulgency and glory of the eternal world say, Here, Father, behold, I and the children whom thou hast given me. Thus a one hour and ten minute sermon held the people spellbound listening to the word of the Lord expounded unto them, so sublime and logical, like apples of gold in pictures of silver, sweeping everything before it that was not in harmony with the teachings of the divine record. Elder Sikes is an humble servant of the Lord God of Israel. In this I have not attempted to write his discourse, only to give a little touch of my feelings and appreciation of the truth of the gospel and the handfuls of purpose and benefit derived from the subject, so comforting and permeating my soul with consolation, which will long live with me in fond remembrance as a glorious oasis. Paul said, "Covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way."

Dear editors, if you can possibly find space to publish this early, so that it may go to the many brethren and patrons of the SIGNS scattered over our country, I will take it as a great favor. The Lord bless you all with his mercy and abounding grace.

Affectionately yours in gospel bonds,
ASA HOWARD.

HAVILAND, Kans., June 4, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am always especially glad when having an opportunity of sending a new subscriber to the SIGNS, and I would be as well pleased to be able to send a good corresponding letter also at this time. That would seem like helping in two ways to make the paper helpful, for good writers and loving readers are both necessary for a religious family paper. I do feel to be a loving reader, but not a lovely one. Why do we love the writings in this paper? Outside of the holy Bible it is about as near a perfect guide in the way of truth as we can expect to ever meet with, and the love of truth is very strong in those who know the joyful sound. The love of truth is much stronger than the love of error. God is love, and Christ said to his disciples, He that is in you is greater than he that is in them (or the world). The true disciples of Christ have always been few in number, and their enemies very numerous indeed, and in seeming prosperity, yet the love of truth in the few has been strong enough to hold them on their way against the mighty and the many. So in this one publication, at least, we can expect many portions of Scripture quoted and expounded in the best way that men can write upon them, and other spiritual subjects presented and discussed in keeping with the word of truth. I do believe it is really the truth that holds the writers and readers together, and we know that truth is stronger than error. God is truth, and he is stronger than all his enemies. Those who resort to error for gain resort to numbers also, but they who depend upon the truth depend upon the one God who is their only salvation. Error may cause many to go against a few, because it seems easy, but the truth brings a few against all the

world, because it is their life, their meat and their drink. Satan by error seems to have caused the destruction of the world, but Christ, who is the way, the truth and the life, has made alive and redeemed from death all his members, and will take them above this world, and keep them from all harm for ever and ever. Error shall perish, but truth will remain. Yes, I do think the truth is the tie that binds our hearts in christian love.

I cannot commend the editors of this paper without a thought toward the readers also, and many other writers, for they seem to be all so well fitted together in one building, and this being the case, one cannot receive honor to himself without wishing the other as much. The foundation of all this honor is Christ the Lord. It is very necessary that our writings and conversation be much on Scripture and our christian experience, for there we find the power of our salvation from the world, and the joy of our salvation for the world to come.

Yours truly,

E. G. WEBB.

THORNTON, Ark., Aug. 8, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is with fear and trembling I ever attempt to write, or take a place in the assemblies of the people of God, more so than common this morning. I have just read the Aug. 15th number of the SIGNS, and the most of it is so gentle and comforting that it stirred all within me in remembrance of my reason for faith and hope in Christ, the way, the truth and the life, that blessedness we sometimes sing. Where is the blessedness I knew when first I saw the Lord? My heart was made to overflow with sorrow on account of all my sins, which made me want to confer with the Lord alone, and to seek a place in a wilderness, where no one could hear my feeble cry but him, as I could not help crying aloud for mercy and forgiveness. I am so ignorant I promised the Lord that if he would forgive the past I would never violate his law again, but I at once learned that my promise had no strength, and saw that it was all of the Lord to teach his people, so I was filled with hunger and thirsting, and thought the time long from one meeting to the next. I still was not satisfied, as I was not sure the Lord had done anything for my soul's salvation. When fourteen years of age I ventured to ask for more evidence. I asked to see a life of all fair lines written for me, and I qualified to live it, but to my sorrow, in a short time I was shown the kind of life laid out for me. I was never to have any children of my own, but my duties and cares were to be no less. I was to have a life of tribulation, joy, sorrow and affliction. This all came to me in the year 1869. The worst trouble of to-day is the divided and scattered Zion of our God. About fifty years ago were the most joyful days of the church in Georgia and Louisiana, where I lived; they had two communions, and washed each other's feet in fellowship and love.

Do with this as you think best.

A poor, unworthy brother,

A. HOLLOWAY.

GIRDLETREE, Md., Sept. 6, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—I do not feel privileged to call you brethren, neither do I feel worthy to do so, as I am not a member of the visible church of God, but I have had a desire to express my feelings to you for some time. I am naturally an Old School Baptist, and was reared in an Old Baptist home. My father was a member of that church as long as he lived, and my grandfather was an Old School

Baptist preacher (the late Elder Lazarus Pruitt), who died before I was born. I have been a reader of the SIGNS for a number of years, though I have been a subscriber only during the past two years. My uncle, P. C. Pruitt, now deceased, took the paper and I read it after he finished with it, and dearly love the doctrine advocated therein. I believe in salvation by grace, and not by works of man.

What I want to say is this: I was baptized by the New School Baptists about fifteen years ago, but I am not satisfied with them, and it is no comfort to me to listen to their preaching. They believe in Sunday-schools, and I do not; they believe in revival meetings, and I do not; they claim that man has a part of the work to do in the saving of his soul, but I do not feel that I can do anything toward saving my soul, neither do I feel that I can assist any one else in saving their soul, it is all with the good Lord. I feel unworthy of the love that has been bestowed upon me by the good Lord. I love the dear Old School Baptists, and one of the dearest places on earth to me is the old meetinghouse where father used to go and take me with him when I was a boy, but preaching is discontinued there since the death of Elder T. M. Poulson. There is an Old School Baptist Church at Snow Hill, Md., and they have preaching by Elder Coulter, of Philadelphia. I attend when it is so I can, but my health is not very good, and I cannot get there very often, but I get much comfort from reading the dear old SIGNS, for I love the doctrine it advocates.

I would be glad if one of the editors would give me a few words of comfort and advice through its columns, if they think it worth the time, if not, all will be well. May the grace of God be with us all.

Yours unworthily,

PARKER PRUITT.

[UNDER the circumstances we would advise the writer to be dismissed from the New School Baptists and unite with the Old School, for the reason their God is his God, and there he will find a home, a place of rest and peace.—K.]

ST. THOMAS, Ont., Feb. 25, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Please find inclosed two dollars for the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES another year. My subscription expired with the February 15th issue, and, like sister Sarah E. Runkle, I feel it a bounden duty to pay in advance. I feel I could not do without the SIGNS, were it double the amount, as the editorials and letters are so comforting. I often wish I could write as others do, for I often read my thoughts and feelings from the pen of another, and now that the dear Lord has seen fit to send us a pastor, we feel we are blessed beyond measure, and pray that his labors among us may be to his and our good and to the glory of Him who doeth all things well.

Your unworthy sister,

EFFIE MALCOLM.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1915.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PARABLE OF THE TALENTS.

(MATTHEW XXV. 14-30.)

THREE parables: that of the ten virgins, of the talents, and of the sheep and the goats, are found in this chapter in Matthew. Each of these parables presents a different point of truth which had its peculiar and literal application to the Israelites of the legal covenant, which covenant yet prevailed, not only over the church, but even over the Savior himself at the time he spoke these parables to his disciples. That these parables have a spiritual application to the Israelites of the gospel covenant, we do not deny, but our chief business now is to ascertain what was Jesus' primary intention in these parables when he spoke them to the men of his day. The twenty-fourth chapter in Matthew, which precedes this of the parables, answers three questions put to Jesus by his disciples: When shall the temple be destroyed? What shall be the sign of thy coming? What the sign of the end of the world? Jesus answers the last of these questions first: The end of the world shall be evidenced by the gospel having been preached in all the world. By the end of the world is meant the end of the Jewish world, age or legal dispensation. That world has come to an end, and before it did the apostles, who had been commanded by Christ to preach the gospel to every creature under heaven, went forth in obedience to that command and completed that work. Paul says in his letter to the Colossians, in the first chapter of that letter, that the gospel was preached to every creature which was under heaven. Colossians is supposed to have been written about the year sixty-four or sixty-five, about the time that the Jewish nationality, world or age, came to an end. As to their first question: the destruction of the temple, that was to be when they should see the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place. This holy place in the temple was the place of the congregation sacred to the assembly of the Jews, and Jews only. By the abomination of desolation, or abominable desolation, was meant the invasion of the Gentiles, the inrushing hosts of the Roman army, who were to sack Jerusalem and destroy its temple. This abomination of desolation took place in the year seventy, and the temple was demolished at that time. Now, as to the second question: What shall be the sign of thy coming? Christ told them the coming of himself in glory should be as lightning which cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west, that the sun should be darkened, that the moon should cease to shine, the stars should fall from heaven and that the powers of heaven should be shaken. Great tribulation was to accompany all this, all the tribes of the earth (the Gentiles) shall see the Son of man coming in his glory and shall mourn because of him, the elect angels shall blow the great trumpet, and there shall be the gathering of the Lord's people from among the Gentiles, from the four winds, from the one end of heaven to the other. Turning

to Acts ii. we find Peter saying on the day of Pentecost that the prophecy of Joel was then being fulfilled: that the sun shall be darkened, the moon turned into blood, &c. Therefore, the coming of the Son of man in his glory to gather his elect from the four winds of heaven (from among the Gentiles), was ushered in at Pentecost, and is still continuing at this present day, and will continue until all of the elect among the Gentiles are gathered. We are convinced that these things are so because Jesus told his disciples, "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." Further, "There be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power."—Mark. ix. 1. All of the above: the end of the world, the coming of the Son of man in glory and the destruction of the temple, while they need not have been taking place all at the same time, must have taken place, in some measure at least, during the lifetime of those to whom the Savior was then speaking. Now, following right after these things in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, and continuing the same theme, though presenting other phases of it, come the three parables in the twenty-fifth chapter. This chapter begins with the words: "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened," &c. "Then" means, at that time. Thus, at the time that the legal age shall end and pass away the kingdom of heaven shall be likened unto ten virgins. By the phrase "kingdom of heaven" is meant, not the gospel church, but the kingdom of Israel, which was legally the kingdom of heaven. "Kingdom of heaven" is a peculiar expression of Matthew, and is used only by him. It means that kingdom in which the heavens rule. Israel was the one nation out of all others under heaven which God had chosen in the loins of Abraham in which to manifest himself especially. For this reason Israel nationally is regarded under the law as the kingdom of heaven. John the Baptist said of Jesus, His fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor. This purging took place among the Jews, or kingdom of heaven, at the time the Jewish world came to an end, Jesus taking out of them his elect among them and scattering the chaff, or burning it with unquenchable fire, that is, dispersing them among the Gentiles of the earth, whither they remain scattered to this day, the fire of their dispersal being unquenchable. In this kingdom of heaven, or national Israel, there were those that were "wise" unto the coming of the Bridegroom, "wise" unto salvation, who had oil (the grace of God) in their lamps. Others lacked this wisdom and were "foolish," had no oil in their lamps. All were virgins, because all were Jews and the Jews legally were "virgin," that is, holy and separate unto God from all the other nations of the earth. The third parable, that of the sheep and the goats, has to do with the coming of the Son of man in glory to gather all nations before him. This parable presents the judgment of the Gentiles, which is going on now, and has been going on ever since the dawn of the gospel age; by his Spirit the Lord of glory is calling his sheep from among all nations of the earth and separating them from the goats upon his left. The second parable in this twenty-fifth chapter, the parable of the talents, shows the difference between him that serves God and him that serves God not. It shows in what true service to God consists. That which makes real service is "faith." "Without faith it is impossible to please him [God]." The one that had

five talents and the servant that had two talents each were "faithful," or full of faith, and this faith received its reward, irrespective of whether the talents were few or many, of whether the ability was much or little. The reward does not depend upon the measure of the ability, nor upon the number of talents possessed, but solely upon "faith." He that is faithful in a few things or over little enjoys the same reward as he that is faithful over much. "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." This reward for faithful service is not opportunity to lay off and rest awhile, but is more work, more responsibility, more cares, a larger field of usefulness. Along with this is "the joy of thy lord," companionship with the lord of the harvest, and fellowship with him in all things, suffering as well as victory. Here "the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods." So Jesus, before he left the disciples and went on that far journey into death and the grave, called his servants, the disciples, and delivered unto them his goods, his doctrine. He sent them first to preach among the Jews, and the Jews only. Having been faithful in this ministry, the time was shortly to come when he would make them ruler over many things, would send them to preach among the Gentiles, thus opening up for them a much larger field of usefulness. When the lord of these servants in the parable returned, or appeared, then was manifested their standing and the character of their service. So the appearing of Jesus invariably makes manifest the character of their service to his servants. They know not what manner of men they are until he appears. Judas Iscariot was called by Jesus to be his disciple and obtained part of the ministry with the other eleven, so Peter said. See Acts i. 17. Nevertheless, as a servant of the Lord he buried his talent in the earth. His talent was swallowed by his sensual money lust and he fell, went to his own place. The other eleven, though their talents varied in number, and though their ability differed in measure, yet they tarried in Jerusalem after the ascension of Christ, and waited for that power which was to endue them from on high. At last the promise came, and when it did it ushered them into the joy of the Lord, opened the door before them into a field of enlarged scope and greater usefulness. The reason that unto one servant was given five talents, and unto another two, is to show us that whether the talents be many or few makes no difference in the reward received, neither does the measure of ability, whether it be much or little; but that which makes all the difference is "faith," that faith which is the gift of God. Lacking faith, the greatest talents and large ability mean but failure in God's sight; while having faith, the fewest talents and the smallest ability are approved of him. The grace of faith it is which glorifies all godly service. The great apostle Paul, notwithstanding his abundance of talents and large ability, was to receive no greater reward for all his ministry than the feeblest of all the flock that looks for the appearing of Jesus. Look at 2 Tim. iv. 8, and see what Paul says about the crown of righteousness he expected to receive in that day of his departure: "Not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." The reward is unto all the faithful in Christ Jesus, regardless of whether their talents be many or few,

their ability much or little. To whom much is given, of him much is expected; to him that is given little, of him is expected less. No one need covet great gifts, for with those gifts always there go great cares and responsibilities; but faith we need all of us desire, for without that essential all our service is vain, whatever the scope of that service be. Paul said to Timothy, Neglect not the gift that is in thee. There must be such a thing as a man's neglecting his gift, or Paul would not have told Timothy not to do it. When a gift, or talent, is neglected it becomes buried. When one allows worldly inducements or considerations to interfere with his ministry, to keep him away from meeting, or from the discharge of any spiritual obligation whatsoever, it is burying the talent. At the appearing of the Lord of the harvest this servant is bound to reap condemnation. From him shall be taken away even that which he hath. Judas' bishopric was taken from him and given to Matthias. So that servant who neglects his ministry, and pursues worldly advantages to the neglect of his gift, will find his field of labor taken from him and given to another. So that to him that hath (faith), to him shall be given the other's neglected field, and he shall have abundance (more than he knows how to get through with). This applies not only to the ministry, but to gospel service in whatever aspect. It applies the same to the deacon that neglects his gift, or to the individual member of the church that neglects his or her place. Those members who stay away from the meetings time after time are themselves the losers. The love, fellowship and companionship of the church which they might have had had they continued faithful, are taken from them and given to those who already have them, so these latter have abundance. To these that are faithful the Lord from time to time appears and makes them to sit at meat with him. To those who bury, or neglect, their talent, when he appears he brings shame and confusion of face, a sensibleness of loss and vanity, true repentance from error. None of these things which we have mentioned argue against the doctrine of predestination. Whatever is to be our lot, that our lot will be. Our steps are marked out, and we walk that way. But, even all that being true, no child of God can excuse his meanness on the ground of predestination. Even though all be predestinated, it will not avail anything when the Lord of the harvest appears, to say, I could not help it. He that sows to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, and predestination, instead of preventing this, only makes the crop sure and certain as the seed that was sown.

Requested by sister Bertha Ardies, of Ekfrid, Ontario. L.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

We have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

NOTICE.

Providence permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in October (31st). Services at 10:30 a. m. and 2:30 p. m. We shall be glad to welcome any who love the truth. Lunch is always served between services.

L. B. FORD.

Melrose Highlands, Mass.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by John J. Secor.)

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the First Roxbury Church, at Vega, N. Y., September 22nd and 23rd, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In offering this our annual Circular Letter we wish to write to the comfort of God's children, while all we have is here and there a glimpse of the Scripture as it pleases God to give unto us, and we can only have what is given us from time to time, and can add nothing or take nothing from that which God has determined. The theme we are trying to embrace in this our Circular Letter is love, and we wish to call your attention to the words found in John xv. 12: "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." This being the commandment of Jesus Christ, it was given as never commandments were given before. The commandment the Lord gave to Moses was the law, which was written in tables of stone, that man had to live up to, and if he failed in one he lost in all, so there had to be a fulfillment of that law so that grace might abound, and the only sacrifice for the law was death, and Jesus being the only one who could lay down his life and take it again, he was put to death by those who knew him not and knew not what they were doing, knew not that they were fulfilling the very thing that he came on earth to do, to answer what the law demanded; and he, being God manifest in the flesh, was able to fulfill every jot and tittle of that law. Now the law being fulfilled that God gave to Moses, Jesus gives a new commandment, a commandment of love. While we find there is natural love as well as christian love, we only find the natural love, and by this death we are made to know that Christ lives and reigns. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Here is the evidence given, the love one for another, and without this love we know not Christ. The psalmist David was brought where he cried for that love of God. He said, Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King and my God, for unto thee will I pray, and that is where every child of God stands to-day, and always will stand, crying for that love that can only be found in Christ, for he said, Love one another, as I have loved you. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." We find in all the records of Christ that wherever he is speaking to his apostles he is always giving them a commandment of love. If thou lovest me feed my lambs; and again he said, If thou lovest me feed my sheep. Therefore our hope is in the love of Jesus Christ our Lord. Where there is a relationship that connects us together by flesh and blood, or by natural connections, that makes us feel one for another, but we find a much greater tie than that of natural love in christian love. If Christ dwells in us we have a love for the church, and the brethren whom we have never seen. It is the love of Christ that is in us that gives us a relationship that we know each other. Even though we may never have met in the flesh, we have met in the heart, for that is all the evidence we have, the love one for another, that dwells in the Father through Christ our Lord, and that love or experience is one that is not sought after by the natural man, it is a complete contradiction to all natural desire. The carnal mind is always, has always and always will be enmity to the things of the spiritual mind. The flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit

against the flesh, and for that reason we have to die to the things that the carnal mind desires.

ORVILLE WINCHELL, Mod.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

(Written by Elder R. W. Sanford.)

The Elders and messengers of the Lexington Association, now in session with the Jefferson Church, at Jefferson, Schoharie Co., New York, Oct. 6th and 7th, 1915, to one and all, greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We think it not out of place to call your attention to a more careful examination of the Scriptures. Jesus in his sermon on the mount taught his disciples the first and great and important lesson, not only how they should walk, but how and what they should pray for, saying, Our Father, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as in heaven. That language implies from the heart contentment, happiness and rest are felt. All our anxieties for the future are gone. Could we always feel that confidence that our heavenly Father had ordered all things that his children experience for his glory and their best good, all these perplexing things that come up in our way from an evil nature, distrustful and doubtful thoughts, that give his children so much trouble while here in the flesh. He who taught that great sermon on the mount, also on another occasion said to them, Ye believe in God, believe also in me. I am here not to do my will, but the will of him that sent me. He also pronounced blessings upon them (his disciples) that cover every condition experienced in this life, not for, but in, doing. If they reviled, condemnation was assured to them. He also forcefully impressed his care by the figure of a natural father over his son. If he should ask bread will he give him a stone? or if a fish, will he give him a serpent? If then ye, being evil, give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to those that ask him. What stronger assurance could be given of his love and care? With all the wisdom of the natural mind we cannot add one cubit to our stature, nor can his children. You are as much his workmanship as the lilies of the field. As we look upon the beauties of the earth's robe of green we see the wonders of the creative power of the infinite hand stamped upon all his works, both animate and inanimate, that God formed worlds by his mighty power, taught them (his disciples) to call him Father, the strongest relation known in nature. Surely we should take heed that we should not do our alms or service before men, if so, we shall come short of the reward of our Father which is in heaven. He came not to do his own will, but the will of him who sent him, and this was his will, that all the Father had given him should come unto him, and he that cometh unto him he would in no wise cast out. On another occasion (see Luke xviii. 9–14), a pharisee and another, a publican, the pharisee prayed thus with himself, thanking God that he was not like other men are, extortioners, &c., or like this publican; the publican dared not so much as lift his eyes toward heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. This man went down to his house justified. We should not fail to bear in mind such is the condition at the present time, multitudes are pleading justification through their own righteousness, and as sure as Christ has said it they will be turned empty away. The day of legalism has gone by, law righteousness is of no avail. In this new

heaven (gospel heaven), wherein righteousness dwells, the Son of God presides over his own kingdom in truth, judgment, mercy and love. He also called their attention to things they well knew: Do men gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles? A tree is known by the fruit it bears. The fruits of the Spirit must come from a spiritual fountain. He also told them, I am the vine, and ye are the branches; except ye abide in the vine ye cannot bear fruit. The branch cannot bear fruit of itself, no more can you, except ye abide in the vine, for every branch that beareth not fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire; the life of the vine is the life of the branches. Does not this teach the life of Christ is the life of every member of his body, the church (or kingdom)? How important it is that our walk and conversation become our profession; our conversation should be yea, yea, and nay, nay, for whatsoever more cometh of evil. Jesting or foolish talking is not profitable, is not convenient, but rather giving of thanks in our manner of life, that we may show what spirit we are of. Self-examination is needful and profitable at all times. Go carefully, brethren, God is not mocked. If we sow to the flesh we shall surely reap corruption, and bring chastisement upon ourselves. Whomsoever God loveth he chasteneth. You know no chastisement is joyous, but grievous, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness in them that are exercised thereby. Even when we were dead in sin he hath quickened us (his children) together with Christ, and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we (his church) should walk in them. (See Ephesians ii. 4–10.)

"Before the day-star knew its place,
Or planets went their round,
The church in bonds of sovereign grace
Were one with Jesus found."

Ye saints, this union can't dissolve,
By which all things are yours;
Long as eternal years revolve,
Or Deity endures."

See hymn 206 (Beebe's collection).

EBER HIX, Moderator.
JAMES AVERY, Clerk.
O. F. BALLARD, Assistant Clerk.

(Written by Elder S. B. Jones.)

To the Elders and messengers of the Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, and the churches they represent, when in session with Spring Creek Church, Adair County, Mo., and to all who love the Lord.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—Through the never-failing mercy of our covenant-keeping God, by whom the bounds of our habitation are appointed unto us, we are enabled to meet again in council. Since we last met another year of time has passed with its many changes that have come to pass. Some of those changes which have come have caused joy and gladness, and some of them sorrow and trouble, so we are reminded of what Job said: "Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble."—Job xiv. 1. We realize the fact that soon all our joys, sorrows and troubles will be things of the past here on earth. O that precious hope which we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus.

Now, very dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, in compliance with the action of the association at her last session, and in accordance also with previous custom, you will expect a Circular Letter attached

to your Minutes, and in accordance with your request at your last association I will try to write one, although I feel it will be in much weakness, both in body and mind, as I will be nearly eighty-seven years old when this is read in the association, if I should live, and for your reflection I will call your attention to a portion of the gospel of Christ as recorded by "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus," which you will find recorded in the second chapter, fourth and fifth verses, of his letter to the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, which reads thus: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved.)" Now Paul was an apostle by the will of God, who is too wise to make any mistakes and too good to do wrong, and has said that he would do all of his will and none could hinder; so God lacks neither wisdom nor power to do all of his will; he speaks and it is done, he shuts and none can open, he opens and none can shut. So, dear brethren, we see that it was the will of God to choose the apostle Paul as one that should preach his gospel here on earth, therefore he (Christ) gave the great command, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."—Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. So we believe that God was with them, as he said he would be, and enabled them to do the mighty works that they did. Let us hear what Paul says about it. He said, "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."—Gal. i. 11, 12. Again he says, "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. iv. 6. Dear brethren, we see that God was with them, so let us receive their word as truth. He has said, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." O, dear brethren and sisters, are you trusting in the Lord, in that one who came to save sinners, in that one whom the angel said should save his people from their sins, or do you trust in an arm of flesh and money? David said, "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth even for ever." So we see that God has a people, and this people have been the objects of his love from the beginning. John said, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." O brethren, think of the greatness of that love, that we should be called the sons of God; our finite mind cannot comprehend the greatness of it. Hear what Paul says: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding

riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." Now, dear reader, the great apostle Paul has told us God's way of saving sinners, and how they are not saved, and if it seems evil to you to trust in God's way, choose which of the ways of men you will, one of the ways of men is just as sure as the other, and all the ways of men make no change in God's way. Jesus says, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."—John xiv. 6. Again, he (Jesus) prayed to the Father, and said, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."—John xvii. 4. Again, he said, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Hear him when he says, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." What was the work the Father gave him to do? Surely it was to save his people from their sins, for it is said that he should save his people from their sins. Hear what Paul says: "But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."—Gal. iv. 4. Dear reader, think what it cost the Son of God to redeem them that were under the law: his dear life, and his last words were, "It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost."—John xix. 30. The demands of the law are now satisfied. Paul says, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."—Romans viii. 2. So we understand that his people are now redeemed from under the curse of the law, and when he arose they were justified; so now they are redeemed and justified, and are kept by the power of God, while the blessed Redeemer has gone to prepare a place for them. He said, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Dear brethren and sisters, are you trusting in such a dear Redeemer? If you are, contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, in love.

Now may grace, mercy and truth be with all the true Israel of God, is my prayer for Christ's sake. Amen.

S. B. JONES, Moderator.

H. C. CATE, Clerk.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

SALE OF THE DOLLAR CONCORDANCE DISCONTINUED.

WE have decided to discontinue the sale of the dollar Concordance, and in the future we will only have for sale the one dollar and fifty cent Concordance, as we feel that this book will give much better satisfaction, and is well worth the extra money.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. J. H. Rockafellow, N. Y., $1.00.

ORDINATIONS.

MINUTES of the council called by the Ebenezer Baptist Church, of New York city, for the purpose of examining brother George Ruston, with a view to ordaining him to the full work of the gospel ministry.

The council convened Tuesday morning, 11 o'clock, October 5th, 1915, in the church building, corner of Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx Borough, New York city.

Singing hymn 924 (Beebe's collection).

Prayer by Elder Charles W. Vaughn, of Hopewell, N. J.

Preaching by Elder H. C. Ker, of Middletown, N. Y., from John xv. 16-18.

Elder H. C. Ker was chosen moderator, and Deacon Cyrus Risler, Jr., clerk.

Churches and ministers invited to meet with the church in council responded as follows:

Middletown and Wallkill—Elder H. C. Ker, pastor; A. Jones.

New Vernon—Elder H. C. Ker, pastor; C. Manning.

Warwick—Elder H. C. Ker, pastor; Isaac Baird, D. Dolson.

Southampton—Elder S. H. Durand, pastor; C. J. Fetter.

Hopewell—Elder C. W. Vaughn, pastor; G. M. Conner.

Kingwood—Elder J. M. Fenton, pastor; E. Rittenhouse, C. Kugler.

Salem (Philadelphia)—A. Barnsley.

South River—Elder S. H. Durand, pastor.

Salisbury—Elder S. H. Durand, pastor.

Schoharie—Elder J. M. Fenton, pastor; G. A. Miers, E. R. Kinney.

Rock Springs—C. J. Rowland.

Justus—Elder D. M. Vail, pastor.

Olive and Hurley—J. J. Secor.

London Tract—M. Galloway, M. Dance.

The Minutes of the regular church meeting, held Sept. 5th, 1915, calling for the assembly of this council, were called for and read.

Moved and seconded that the council proceed to examine the candidate. (Before putting the question the moderator invited all present, members of sister churches of our faith and order, to act with the council.) Question put and carried unanimously.

Brother Ruston then related his experience as a subject of grace, and his exercises respecting the work of the ministry.

The examination proving satisfactory, it was moved and seconded that the council proceed with the ordination. Carried unanimously.

Ordination was then imposed by the laying on of hands by all the ministers present, Elder D. M. Vail speaking in prayer.

A solemn and impressive charge was delivered by Elder S. H. Durand, and the moderator, on behalf of the churches, gave the right hand of fellowship to brother Ruston.

Hymn 613 (Beebe's collection) was sung, and the meeting closed with benediction by Elder George Ruston.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

CYRUS RISLER, JR., Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Nathan Grafton, my dear uncle, departed this life July 24th, 1915, in the 89th year of his age. He was a noble type of man. I would that an abler pen than mine might write a fitting memorial of him. A courtly gentleman of the old school, he possessed rare qualities of mind, which made his society pleasant and profitable. His memory reached far into the past, upon the events of which he loved to dwell, yet he was keenly alive to things of the present, and but few men were better informed on all current topics. While in no sense a politician, yet he was well versed in state affairs, and was frequently solicited by his friends to become a candidate for public office, but he had no aspirations that way, though he did at one time serve a term in the State Legislature, and filled the office most acceptably. It was in the quiet retirement of home life that his character shone forth with the brightest lustre. He was a devoted husband, a kind, indulgent father, a true friend and an upright citizen. Uncle Nathan was baptized in the fellowship of the Harford Church, Harford Co., Md., July 17th, 1858, by Elder E. Rittenhouse, where he continued a faithful and consistent member until his death. His brother William (Elder Wm. Grafton) was baptized at the same time, and these two brothers through all of life's journey continued to be brothers indeed, being very closely knit together by spiritual as well as natural ties. The little church at Harford has sustained a great loss, and while we are comforted by the thought that our loss is his unspeakable gain, yet we are lonely without the fathers in Israel, and we wonder how their places will be filled. His home was always open for entertainment of the brethren, and many who will read this can testify to his hospitality, having been partakers of it. Uncle Nathan had seen much of affliction in his family, but through it all he manifested that calm patience and resignation so characteristic of him. Of his seven children only two survive him. The eldest son at the age of twenty was instantly killed by a runaway team. This was a shock to the mother from which she never fully recovered. Four others have died of lingering disease. His beloved companion, who had been greatly afflicted for a long time, was called home five years ago, but through all these trials and sore bereavements no murmuring word ever escaped his lips. Uncle Nathan had been in his usual health up to last

February, when he took a slight cold, which was followed by a sort of collapse, or sudden giving way of all the vital powers. There was no disease, the doctors said, and he suffered no pain. I saw him many times during his illness, and there was always that look of peace and contentment on his face, which was very wonderful to me. To one who inquired as to his state of mind he replied, "I am in a comfortable frame." In the afternoon of July 24th he passed peacefully away. He leaves to mourn their loss two children: Wm. O., of Aberdeen, Md., and Mrs. Mollie L. Henderson, of Towson, Md., seventeen grandchildren and several great-grandchildren, three brothers and a large number of nieces and nephews, to all of whom he was very dear. May the Lord bless the children and all who mourn.

The funeral took place on the 27th, and the very large gathering of friends and neighbors showed plainly the esteem in which our dear one was held. Elder Eubanks was present and spoke words of comfort, after which the beloved form was laid to rest in the cemetery at Harford, where lie the remains of many of his kindred after the flesh.

One who loved him.

JENNIE GRAFTON.

A. M. Lunsford was born in Hopkins County, Tenn., March 22nd, 1852, and died at his home in Fulton County, Ky., July 22nd, 1915, aged 63 years and 5 months. He was united in marriage to Kate Ann Roper, April 16th, 1879. To that union were born four children: Jessie, J. R. Lunsford, Katie May Areington and Emma McClellan, all of whom, except Jessie Lunsford, who preceded him to the grave, and his widow, survive him. He was a firm believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine and a good friend to old Mud Creek Church, filling his seat regularly. The writer heard him relate his experience, which he dated back to when quite young, and attached his name to the Methodists and was immersed by them, staying with them a few years, when he became dissatisfied and left them. His son and two daughters were with him during his sickness and at the time of his death. He had a beautiful home, and was a devoted husband and a kind and loving father, constantly endeavoring to shield his dear companion and children from sorrow. He was a good, obliging neighbor and an excellent citizen, often lending a helping hand to those who were in need. He will be greatly missed by all who were intimately acquainted with him, but our loss is his eternal gain. He was a sound, faithful and devoted Baptist in the belief of predestination and salvation by grace, with all the vital principles of the doctrine of Christ. Although he never united with the church, feeling too unworthy and unfit, yet his hope was in Jesus, and he left clear evidence of being a heaven-born child.

The funeral services were held at Rush Creek, where he was laid at rest. The funeral was conducted by Elders T. J. Prince and A. J. Luther, who sought to glorify God and comfort the mourning ones by preaching to them the resurrection of the dead, which is the only hope of salvation for dying mortals. May the grace of God sustain the widow and children in all their trials, is the prayer of a friend.

W. A. EDWARDS.

Angus Elliott died at Winnipeg, Manitoba, Sept. 14th, 1915, after a short illness of pneumonia. He was born Dec. 2nd, 1877, in the township of Ekfrid, Middlesex Co., Ontario, being the youngest son of George C. and Jane Elliott. In 1904 he was married to Clara, only daughter of John T. and Sarah Kerr. His mother, one sister and four brothers survive him, and he leaves his wife and two sons to mourn the loss of a loving husband and indulgent father. After marriage they resided in London, Ont., for about seven years, when he was appointed to the position of Superintendent of Agencies for the North American Life Assurance Co., his work covering the territory from Lake Superior to the Rocky Mountains, and necessitating long absences from home, which deprived him of the privilege of being much with his dear ones. His wife and brother were with him during his last hours, the sickness coming very unexpectedly during a short stay in Winnipeg. Whenever his business brought him to this city he regularly attended our meetings, and on this last occasion his mind was so deeply exercised that he came night after night to talk with Elder Durand, who was then visiting here. On Sunday, August 29th, he came before the church and was gladly received, the date of his baptism being set for Sunday, Sept. 12th. His serious illness developed in the meantime, preventing the ordinance, and he passed from this life the following Tuesday, in the hope of life eternal through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Elder Durand spoke to the comfort of the bereaved family and friends in this city, and Elder J. B. Slauson conducted the funeral services at the burial, which took place at his home in Ontario, using as a text John xvi. 22. Hymn No. 668 (Beebe's collection) was sung at the request of his wife.

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

Ross P. Gossage, of Oxly, Mo., died May 28th, 1915, aged 26 years, 4 months and 11 days. He was the son of George W. and Nancy J. Gossage, Predestinarian Baptists of New Hope, Ripley Co., Mo. He professed a hope in Christ at the age of seventeen years, and I have thought lived the most devoted life of any one I ever knew, always praying for grace to keep him nearer to God. He was affected with epilepsy. It is God who has called one more home to rest.

GEO. W. GOSSAGE.

William Jefferson Staton was born in Worcester County, Md., Sept. 2nd, 1861, being the eldest son of Elder Joseph L. and Louisa Staton. He was married July 22nd, 1885, to Martha Townsend. They had one daughter, Mamie. Mr. Staton was a most kind and indulgent husband and father, generous to those who needed help, an excellent citizen, and discharged his duty faithfully in every place that he filled. His was a life spent for others, never a thought for himself. His health had been failing for about four years from Bright's disease, but his industrious disposition caused him to continue perhaps longer than he should in active business, retiring about two years ago. During the last three years he suffered much with heart trouble and difficult breathing, but bore it all patiently and cheerfully, sometimes hopeful, at other times just waiting for the end to come. While not a member of the visible church, he was a lover of the truth and of the brethren, and faithful in attendance at the meetings and in looking after the needs of the church, open-handed. "As ye have done it unto one of the last of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." His greatest pleasure was hearing preaching and reading the Bible and SIGNS. He loved the doctrine and those who preached it, and showed his faith by his works. Mr. Staton died at his home in Salisbury, Md., August 10th, 1915, at the age of 53 years. He is survived by his wife, his daughter, Mrs. Virgil Adkins, and her little baby son, of whom he was very fond. He also leaves one brother, Henry Staton, of Wilmington, Del., and three sisters: Mrs. L. W. Warren, of Berlin, Md., Mrs. Everett Johnson and Mrs. Charles Jarman, of Newark, Del.

The funeral was very largely attended. His acquaintance was very widespread among business men and the church people, and every one who knew him loved him. His place cannot be filled. Elder Francis spoke comfortingly in prayer. I read the twenty-third Psalm and spoke briefly from portions of 1 Cor. xv. The burial was at Nassaongo. The deepest sympathy is felt by the friends and the whole community for our dear bereaved sister in her great sorrow, and for the sorrowing daughter and the other mourning relatives. I have lost a dear and faithful friend.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Rachel M. White, wife of Wm. H. White, of Southampton, Pa., was born August 20th, 1855, and died Sept. 22nd, 1915. She was the daughter of sister Mary Tomlinson and the late Henry Tomlinson. Mrs. White had been in feeble health for ten or eleven years, but she bore all her afflictions patiently, having a good hope through grace in the Savior. She was not a member of the visible organization of the church, but gave every evidence by her conversation that she had been with Jesus, and we believe she is now in the full realization of the blessings of the resurrection of the dead in Jesus Christ. Some time before her departure she was given the words in John xiv. 2: "In my Father's house are many mansions." The writer spoke from these words and conducted the funeral before a large gathering of relatives and friends, who had come to pay their last respects to the deceased. She was heard to say the words, "Take me as I am," just before being gathered, and seemed to be in the very presence of the realms of eternal glory. She leaves a kind and loving husband, two sons, two grandchildren, four sisters and two brothers to mourn their loss. May the Lord give them needed strength and grace. Burial in Churchville Cemetery.

J. M. FENTON.

MEETINGS.

THERE will be a two days meeting at the Old School Baptist Church at Cammal, Pa., October 30th and 31st. We expect Elders J. M. Fenton and D. M. Vail to be with us. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. T. BADGLEY, Church Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church will be held, the Lord willing, on the first Saturday and Sunday in November (6th and 7th), 1915. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. The trains coming down the U. & D. will be met Friday night and Saturday morning. The morning train from Kingston will be met Saturday morning at Ashokan.

ORVILLE WINCHELL, Deacon.

THE Primitive Baptist Association of south Florida, called Mt. Enon, will hold their next annual meeting with Bethehem Church, this the forty-fourth annual session, the second Sunday in November, and Friday and Saturday before. All lovers of Bible truth are invited to be with us, especially ministering brethren holding to the doctrine of predestination of all things that come to pass. If any of the brethren or sisters from the north wish to meet with us, please notify me at once, and I will gladly meet you at Lakeland and see that you get to the meeting, the Lord willing. Come and be with us.

C. K. HAINES.

LAKELAND, Fla.

THE yearly meeting of the Second Church of Roxbury is to be held at Halcottville, N. Y., the third Saturday and Sunday in November (20th and 21st), 1915. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren.

JAMES AVERY.

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Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Liberty Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, of Los Angeles, Cal., meets every first and third Sunday in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., at 42nd and Moneta Ave., and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal.

W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor.
B. C. RICE, Clerk.

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(Judges v. 11.)

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[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 83. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1915. NO. 22.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Sept. 28, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Having to write you on business matters I will inclose a letter from our dear sister, Sarah E. Runkle, for your disposal. I cannot express the comfort of soul it was to me in my oft low down state, and I would be glad to see her name appear in the SIGNS more frequently if she could feel in her mind to write. In her low down feelings she has many companions in tribulation and sorrow, who love to read from her gifted pen.

I want to speak of the September 1st number of the SIGNS. It seemed especially good to me from beginning to end. I do not know that I ever enjoyed a single number more. The experience of sister Slawson seemed wonderful as she traced her exercises over the more than forty-five years. How deep are the teachings of the Spirit's impress, written with an iron pen, which time cannot end and does not erase. I hope she may feel to write again of the wonderful goodness and mercies of the Lord. O how great is the Lord, and his mercies endure forever. Will not each dear aged pilgrim attest to the sacred and solemn truth that

"E'en down to old age all my people shall prove
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love"?

May the dear Lord remember in his great mercy each one of his dear aged ones, to comfort and sustain them until mortality or life shall be swallowed up.

I was favored to attend the Pocatalico Association, of West Virginia, held some ten miles north of Charleston. The association was well attended, and peace and harmony prevailed, and no discordant note was heard in the preaching. They believe in the unlimited power of God, and his absolute control and ruling power, therefore nothing can befall his dear blood-bought little ones (children) that he has not purposed, and all for the lifting of Jesus on high. I felt it was good to meet with those good and true and faithful, humble followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. It is good to find a few (in Sardis) that have not defiled their garments with the doctrines of Balaam. I love to hear the discriminating doctrine of grace in all its fullness, the all-sufficiency of God in the manifestation of his work; nothing in part, or half-way in the manifest work of God will do a poor sinner like me; I need to be watched over and kept every moment. I would live nearer my blessed Lord, more free

from sin and all evil ways if I could, but I know that if left to myself I should fall. I try to pray daily for his care and keeping.

But I am extending this letter too far. Will you kindly allow me to say in answer to the several letters received in the past year or more, that if the Lord will, I hope to attend the associations there next spring? I have desired to see the brethren and friends there once again before I go home. I remember well my first visit, in 1879. I was just a boy, (and have not grown any since) and there are but one or two of the Elders now living of the many I then met; many changes, but the truth and our God, its author, remain the same, and his word is forever settled in heaven.

In hope of a better life,

P. W. SAWIN.

MACOMB, Ill., June 1, 1915.

DEAR ELDER SAWIN:—It has been a long time since the receipt of your good, comforting letter, and so far it remains unanswered. I have made up my mind to try to write something in response, but it is almost with fear and trembling that I attempt to do so. I have had it in my mind many times to write, and as often put it off, feeling so sensibly my ignorance and inability to write to interest or comfort the least one, much less one who is so deeply led and taught in spiritual knowledge as you, one of the chosen and qualified servants of our Lord Jesus Christ, one called to stand as watchman on the walls of Zion, and to comfort the people of God, telling them their warfare is ended, their iniquity is pardoned, and she hath received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. This, my dear brother, you have been doing for over half a century, and no doubt have comforted many poor, weak, trembling ones by preaching, as well as through the medium of the pen. I have read your letters in the SIGNS with much comfort and satisfaction, and when I attempt to write to such an one I feel as nothing, and always hesitate to write. So, dear brother, I trust you will remember my weakness and forgive all amiss.

On reading in the SIGNS, received today, of your fiftieth wedding anniversary, I felt a desire to pen you a line of congratulation. Truly the Lord has been good to you in sparing you so long to each other during all these years of necessitudes of joys and sorrows, tribulations, ups and downs of your eventful life. Your dear wife surely has our love and sympathy. She has been, and is, a minister's wife, and that tells a volume of patience, hardships, loneliness and privations. During all these years she, doubtless, has been a helpmeet indeed. May the blessings of God rest upon her and you, too, dear brother, and may your last days be your best days. I read your letter and sketch of your life and family with much interest. It seems wonderful to me the traveling you have done and the many discourses you and many others of the Old Baptists have preached during a long life in the ministry. It is alone by God's grace his servants are enabled to go forth in his name preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ. It is not for popularity, for the Old School Baptist Church is the most unpopular organization in the world. Not for the money, for they receive no stated salary, as do all other denominations, and they have the promise and assurance that tribulation will attend them in this life, and, as Paul said, knowing that bonds and imprisonment awaited him, yet he went on without wavering, bearing all for Christ's

sake. So, many to-day are faithful ministers of Christ, steadfast, unmovable to the end of their lives. May the Lord keep you thus faithful, and supply your every want, and be the support and stay of yourself and faithful companion until he calls, Child, your Father calls, come home, and then may you rest sweetly in Jesus until the glorious resurrection morn, when you shall awake with his likeness and be satisfied.

But, dear brother, forgive me for writing so much and saying so little. I did not intend writing in this way when I began. I am not well, and have a very poor pen, and I am almost ashamed of this long letter, but I did want to express to you and wife my best wishes and fellowship in the gospel. My father and mother celebrated their "golden wedding" five years before his death, so they were married fifty-five years. Mother is still able to be up most of the time, but is weak, and getting quite feeble. She says she is just waiting and longing for the time of her departure.

Dear brother, if I had anything good to write about myself I would continue this letter to tell you the glad news, but alas, I have nothing to tell, but of my sins and imperfections.

"I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

This is the important question that troubles me from day to day, and concerns me more than all else: I know that Christ died for his people, but am I one of them? How can I find out? What proof, what evidence, have I of a regenerated heart, of being born again? O, I fear I have no evidence that will stand the test. I know we are not saved because of any merit or goodness in ourselves, but through the merits of our precious Redeemer, who came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. He died for those who were without strength, and has mercy for our unrighteousness. This has been of much comfort to me. When I can for a moment forget myself and sins, and think of the perfections of Christ, and of the many precious promises left for his poor, doubting, tempest-tossed children to comfort, cheer and encourage them along life's thorny pathway, I find myself claiming some of these rich provisions as my own, and, if only for a moment, it seems an earnest of the inheritance, and I would not give up or exchange even these short seasons of rest and peace for all this world can give. I do love the children of God, I hope, and love the dear SIGNS and the lovely, precious letters therein, giving God all the glory of our salvation, for not one good thing can I do; it is all of grace, not only our eternal salvation, which was fixed and made secure in the mind of Jehovah before the world was created, written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world, but it is God's grace that saves us day by day, yes, hour by hour. We need him every hour. O, if I only could trust in him, believe in him and love him more. Dear brother, have I any of the marks of a child of God? Could you fellowship such a sinner as I? "Poor, weak and worthless, blind and lame, all unholy, all unclean." I rejoice to hear the gospel preached, and care nothing for the show and style of the great "churches" around me. I cannot believe in the gods they worship, so I do not go to hear them; but Christ, and him crucified, is all my hope.

But forgive me, dear brother, and do not cease writing for the SIGNS. I think both Elders Ker and Lefferts are able writers, and I hope I am thankful for this.

Now, with much love to you both, I am, I trust, your sister,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

WAVERLY, Pa., Aug. 7, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find several good letters; if you think proper you can publish them. I seldom write a letter any more. Occasionally after reading an article from some one that wakes me up a little I drop a card or line and in that way get some very comforting letters. My days of writing are about over, I think, as I do not have a mind to write. I have many requests to write on different subjects, but have no exercise in that direction. I hope all will excuse me. Love to all.

As ever, a worm,

D. M. VAIL.

MAYFIELD, Ky., Feb. 15, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—Your card of indorsement came in due time. It is a source of comfort to have our mutual faith manifested through a medium of correspondence, and to know our understanding of the teachings of Scripture seems identical. Both the Scriptures of divine truth and the laws of nature teach me that man in all his acts and goings forth in this life is a subject of influences, and that the more powerful influence always bends the mind and shapes the will. Now this I have long since seen, that if men were what the world of mankind takes them to be, viz., free moral agents, and possessed of free will, that man would be absolutely free and independent of everything else in the universe. No power or influence could have any effect on men if they were not subjects of influences. It certainly ought to occur to all sensible thinking men that the very moment one is brought under an influence his freedom is lost, and he becomes a subject. How inconsistent the religious world to-day in preaching man's freedom, and yet preach the use of means and instrumentalities. Now, as touching the points I made mention of in my letter to brother Chester and published in the SIGNS, it is clear to my mind that in every case it is the motive that gives merit or demerit to action. God knows the very motives that prompt men's acts. If I do a thing that I may be rewarded for my doing, the motive is selfish. Just here, dear brother, is something too hard for nature. Were it not of faith no act of man could be acceptable to God. All acts not prompted by faith are selfish. An act is not of faith where it has in view the gaining of reward. Faith seeks the glory and honor of Jesus, and not self. Take the words of Jesus, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Self is never denied where a selfish motive prompts to action. Did not Jesus powerfully rebuke this principle when he said of the Pharisees, They love to stand on the corners and in the streets to pray, that they may be seen of men? They received the reward they were after. If a man attempts to worship God that he may receive blessings in return, he is not serving God at all, but self, hence the motive that prompts to action is selfish. Then as the apostle said, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." It must be that faith be the prompting motive, or power, that moves us to all right acts. Now faith is God's gift, and I do not believe that God has ever given a man faith to do a thing and the man did not do it. The faith that God gives is productive of good fruit, and cannot fail, and here in this is God working in them to will and to do of his good pleasure.

I submit the above to you, inasmuch as you have so kindly written me, and now may the God of all mercies keep us in the truth.

Yours in hope through the merits of Christ,

J. M. PERKINS.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., Feb. 17, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—Your letter came last Saturday, and I thought that I would try and write you a few lines and tell you how we appreciate such words of comfort, but I fear what I may say will be of no interest to you. I much prefer to always communicate to my kindred in Christ messages of comfort and edification, and such as would cast sunshine upon the dreary pathway of life, but I realize my poverty of spirit, my ignorance of spiritual things, for I seem to know nothing as I ought to know. I feel to be the least one of my Father's household, if I am indeed a member of that blessed family; but since you seem interested in what I write, I want to tell you that is one thing that lifts up my drooping spirits and causes me to continue to write. Every time I write I receive some kind word from several of my dear kindred in Christ, telling me as you have. Whenever I write, and send it to the editors, I fear and tremble to see it in print until it comes, and then it does not look good to me until some one writes how they have enjoyed it, and then I think if it has been as much as a cup of cold water it has not been in vain. Dear brother, I have been trying in my feeble way to tell of the Lord's dealings with me ever since that memorable day, but the half has not been told. Alas, my cup seems always so bitter and my burden so heavy that I can but be continually pouring out before the Lord and to my fellow-sufferers in Christ the bitter story of a poor, wretched and helpless worm of the dust. He is all I have to trust in; in him we move, live and have our being—a sure prop to support me in all times of need. While mysterious are his ways of providence, and strokes fall heavily upon me, I am yet pleading for his mercy and grace to be not taken away. I know that he sends adversity as well as prosperity.

I will close, thanking you for the little favor. I would love to see you and hear you preach. I love to read your letters in the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. They are all edifying and comforting writers of the SIGNS, and I am always glad when it comes. You must excuse this imperfect letter, for it is like the writer. I am very nervous, can hardly write at all. Write whenever you have a mind to; we are always glad to receive letters from such as you, brother Weaver and all that feel like writing to us. May the Lord keep you established on the rock Christ Jesus, is the prayer of your unworthy sister,

BELLE FRAZEE.

COLMAR, Ky., Feb. 23, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—I received your card some days ago, and I can assure you that your words of approval were strength and consolation to me. Whenever the faithful in Israel indorse my views my faith is made stronger, for then I think I have been instructed in the same school that they have been. Instead of this causing me to feel boastful, it humbles me, and I feel like the little boy when his father takes him on his knees and with a smiling face speaks words of encouragement to him. The door of this schoolhouse cannot be opened with all the wisdom and power of this world. Nothing but faith in the Lord Jesus Christ can open this door, and faith is a fruit of the Spirit of God, and no natural man has this Spirit, either in a dead or living state. The natural man is

wholly and entirely composed of the elements of nature. He is altogether mortal, no immortality belonging to him, nothing in him that can cause him to live eternally. The only way that mortal and timely beings can live eternally is to receive an eternal spirit, or life, and there is but one fountain from which eternal life may be had, and that is Jehovah, the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity. Mortal man's arm is too short to reach into eternity, and the wisdom of this world has proven itself to be foolishness, and God has so judged it. The wisdom of the antediluvian world proved itself foolishness when it mocked and laughed at the preaching of righteous Noah. The wisdom of this world proved itself foolishness when it attempted to build a tower that should reach unto the heaven of heavens. The atoms that compose the mineral kingdom are in continuous motion, but yet it matters not how violent their motion may be, in their sphere or kingdom they must remain until a life seed substance is imbedded within it (the mineral kingdom) by a power belonging to a higher kingdom. This implanted life seed substance takes to itself elements from the mineral kingdom, and by a process peculiar to itself produces a plant of the next higher kingdom, which is the vegetable. As it is with the elements of the mineral kingdom, so it is with the plants of the vegetable kingdom, and man of the animal kingdom. All things must remain in the kingdom in which they were created until a power from above is sent down and carries them up, and if they are not carried upward by a power from above they will never go. So man is powerless to take himself to heaven, let alone any one else. But he is not powerless to deceive the people and get their money. He is a monster when it comes to that. So every man at his best estate is altogether vanity. Christ is foolishness when preached to the natural man. Why? Because he has not faith. Why has he not faith? Because he has not the Spirit of God. Why has he not the Spirit of God? Is he to blame for not having the Spirit of God? Are the elements of the mineral kingdom which are yet confined to their domain to be censured for not being transformed into a beautiful plant of the garden or a giant oak of the forest? If so, then the natural man may be censured for not being formed into an Israelite by the working of the Spirit of God. No man can rise from the natural state to the spiritual state independently of the Spirit of God, and no natural man has the power to take unto himself the Spirit of God. The Gentiles were not under the law of Moses, neither were they required to keep it. The natural man to-day is not an Israelite, therefore he is not required to obey the gospel of Christ, neither is he condemned by it. It is the Israel of God that is justified or condemned by the law of Christ. The obedient are justified and the disobedient are condemned. God requires obedience at the hands of Israel, not that by this obedience they may purchase for themselves a home in the heaven of heavens, but that they may abide in his joy, in his peace, in his love, in his righteousness, and be filled with the majesty of his royal presence, which is a foretaste of the beatitudes of the indescribable home beyond this vale of tears. Brother Vail, my prayer is that all Israel may walk obediently to the commands of God while sojourning in this world of trouble and sorrow, so that they might close their eyes in sleep in full triumph of living faith. But surely I am more disobedient than any one else. My great

fear has been, and is yet, that some day I may commit a crime, the penalty of which is everlasting punishment (imprisonment) or death. Everlasting punishment experimentally means being delivered into the hands of Satan, and remaining in that state as long as you live. Death means that you are cut off from the fruits of the Spirit, past, present and future; an abyss of darkness stands between you and Abraham's bosom (the kingdom of God). Do I hear some one declaring that if you are one of the redeemed of the Lord you will not commit crimes deserving such punishment? Can we allay our fears with such an assurance? No, not if the Old Testament has any significance, for we read in Exodus xv. 13, "Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation." Deut vii. 8, "But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt." Not only did the Lord redeem Israel from the hand of Pharaoh, but he did numerous other things, which you will learn by reading the seventy-eighth Psalm. But no sooner was Moses taken up into the mount than these redeemed people said to Aaron, "Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him." The result of this request was that a molten calf was made and those redeemed people worshipped it. For this crime three thousand men were put to death. Later on, Korah, a great-grandson of the patriarch Levi, gathered together a great number of the children of Israel and rebelled against Aaron and Moses. For this crime the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up and all that appertained to them. Time, space and your good patience forbid me from mentioning numerous other like incidents proving beyond a doubt that the majority of the Israelites are suffered to go in that broad way that leadeth to destruction. "Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." It is Israelites that go in this broad way to destruction here in time. It was true with national Israel (the type), therefore it must be true with spiritual Israel (the antitype). Only a remnant of the redeemed Israel from Eygpt entered into the promised land. Only a remnant of Israel was reserved from bowing the knee to the image of Baal. These were facts in the type, they are facts in the antitype. Dear brother Vail, I fear that a great many of our good brethren have failed to understand that the Bible teaches that God has made a choice for a special purpose out of his chosen people, and has redeemed a remnant of his people to live and reign with his Son in his kingdom here in time. To prove this statement in the type, let us read one of many Scriptures of the kind in the Old Testament, Psalms lxxviii. 67, 68: "Moreover, he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim; but chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion, which he loved." Of all the cities of the land of Canaan, Jerusalem was the choice and dwelling-place of the Lord. Of all the different churches of christendom today, the Primitive Baptist Church is the choice and dwelling-place of the Lord. When the Lord Jesus Christ began his work or mission upon earth he chose out

of Israel material to organize his church; he did not put a single Gentile into his church, neither did he take the whole of Israel and organize a church, but only a remnant of Israel. This remnant was the number the Father had chosen in Christ out of Israel; and when Christ began his mission he made this work of his Father manifest, and this work of his Father is still going onward to-day, that is, the manifesting of it. This remnant is the little flock, the very elect, the bride, the body of Jesus Christ, or, in other words, the church of God.

Dear brother, when I commenced this letter I only intended to acknowledge the receipt of your card, but when I commenced my mind began to travel, and I have penned the thoughts as they came to me. I have not tried to prove all the assertions that I have made, for it would have made this letter of too great length, but yet they are all provable, and at the same time I knew that a hint to the wise is sufficient. After reconsidering what I have written, it seems a waste of time, as I am intending to send it to one that knows these things so much better than I do. Volumes could be written on the different points I have mentioned in this letter. We would be pleased to receive a long letter from you.

Yours in hope of the resurrection,

L. D. HOSKINS.

CLEVELAND, Ohio, Sept. 14, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Sister Rachel Shultz handed me a letter she received from brother Lisbon Stephens, and asked me to look it over and send it to the SIGNS, and I gladly do so, but as it was written with pencil, and read and reread, I will copy it in ink for your convenience.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

DELAWARE, Ohio, Aug. 2, 1915.

DEAR SISTER SHULTZ:—In answer to your good letter I will say I feel the subject you asked me to write on is too deep for me: the subject of the prophet Jeremiah being put in the dungeon, where he sank in the mire. I have thought on the subject some, and at this time I feel willing to write some of my thoughts for you to consider, but unless the Lord wills it so I cannot write to your comfort. You will find the subject in the thirty-eighth chapter of Jeremiah. Read the whole chapter. "Then the king commanded Ebedmelech the Ethiopian, saying, Take from hence thirty men with thee, and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon before he die. So Ebedmelech took the men with him, and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took thence old cast clouts and old rotten rags, and let them down by cords into the dungeon to Jeremiah. And Ebedmelech the Ethiopian said unto Jeremiah, Put now these old cast clouts and rotten rags under thine armholes under the cords. And Jeremiah did so. So they drew up Jeremiah with cords, and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison."

Sister Shultz, it seems to me this subject has about the same meaning as Philip and the eunuch. The eunuch was reading when Philip came to him. The Bible says he began at the same Scripture and preached unto him Jesus. The king told the Ethiopian to take thirty men, the same number as the pieces of silver the Master was betrayed for just before he suffered on the cross and paid the law's demands for the awful condition that all of his people were in and needed deliverance from. The place the prophet was in makes me think of the awful condition poor sinners find them-

selves in when the new covenant is put in their hearts and minds, and manifests sin, and they see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the cords make me think of love, that the Lord draws his people with. "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." His people were chosen in him from the foundation of the world. It seems to me the Old and the New Testament Scriptures show forth that there is a cord of love connecting God and his people, and this love always has been and always will be, it never has been broken, and it never can be broken. Love is stronger than death; as the poet has well said,

"In union with the Lamb,
From condemnation free,
The saints from everlasting were,
And shall forever be."

Josephus in his history says, When they put the prophet in the dungeon he stood and sank in the mire up to his neck. That would be an awful condition to be in. Christ is given to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, and the church, like the prophet, is another body that needed a great, strong, lovely deliverer, one who sees and knows all things, and one unto whom all power in heaven and earth is given, for there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby they must be saved. When he looked down he saw that all had gone out of the way. There is none good, no, not one, so the whole body had sunk under the curse of the law. But bear in mind the head never was corrupted, and God hath placed the members in the body as it hath pleased him. I have heard it preached that the head represents Christ, the body the church, and the neck that joins the head and the body is love, and again, underneath is the everlasting arm, the strong deliverer. Ebedmelech told the king the men had done evil in all they had done to Jeremiah, "and he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is, for there is no more bread in the city." It seems to me there was a secret that all men did not know, so the figure of the head and body, the life, and the secret working of the Spirit are inside. So when the prophet was in the mire it did not take his life that was within. To get to the subject we must consider deeper than the surface, and as the Lord calls his people his sheep, and the sheep chew the cud, it seems to me the cud would represent the secret conversation between Christ and his people. When a sheep is chewing its cud, the body is quiet, then you can see the cud pass down the neck and the chewing stops, then an effort on the part of the body and the cud passes to the head and chewing begins. So he prepares the message, and sends it down through love to his chosen people, and when they feel his love they love him in return. It is through love he comes down into his garden, and when his people feel his presence it is through love they return thanks unto him. It is love that causes him to come down to his people and lead them about and instruct and keep them, and it is through love they confess they are vile and full of sin, and that he is full of grace and truth. If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. Every day there is a passing of the cud from the head to the body and back; every day and hour the Master watches over his people, he watches over them when they eat and when they sleep, and how they walk and what they talk. He watched over the prophet in

the dungeon and sustained and delivered him, watched over his people when they were under the curse of the law, and his own arm brought salvation. It is according to his own purpose that he gives his people the witness within of the forgiveness of their sins and shortcomings, and left the written testimony that they shall be tried as gold is tried, and refined as silver, and that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose, and that he has saved them with an everlasting salvation, and will bring them off more than conquerors. He is the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end, and through love gives them a hope that they shall see him as he is and be like him, and be satisfied.

Dear sister Shultz, I will leave these thoughts for your consideration. I do not know whether or not they will be of comfort to you, as I feel you know so much more than I do about it. I often think of the long road you have traveled with the church, sixty years, and still talk the same glad tidings you did from the beginning, that salvation is of the Lord. I was glad to see you at our yearly meeting, and made happy to know you were able to hear our former pastor, Elder Weaver; it was surely a feast to us all. Cast the mantle of charity over my poor effort in trying to write you.

I am, as ever, your unworthy brother in hope,

L. E. STEPHENS.

DAYTON, Ohio.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It has been some time since I have attempted to write anything for the SIGNS, the paper I so highly prize and anxiously await the arrival of each number, which comes to me laden with the editorials and the many precious letters from God's children scattered throughout the land. So this dark and dismal looking autumnal afternoon I will endeavor to transmit a few thoughts to you through the medium of pen, ink and paper, trusting that the dear Master will instil in my mind what to communicate. I have been meditating to-day upon the words, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." Dear friends, we may have no gift to speak one to another, but if we think upon his name then will we prove the Lord's house, the place where the honor of his name dwelleth. If it be but two or three gathered in his name, even in a cave, as did the persecuted saints of old, he is in the midst of them. If we think upon his name we will testify by our presence that we love and fear the Lord and that we feast upon the word, and thus make known to one another that we do not forget Jerusalem, but she is our chief joy, and so we encourage, strengthen and cheer each other by the way. But who can fully tell, dear friends, of Mount Zion, the city of the great King, whither the redeemed of the Lord go up to worship? We reach it by the King's highway, do we not? So the most gifted by nature are not entitled to walk there, for with all keen perception they cannot even see the way nor know anything about it; but the poor wayfarer, who comes from the end of the earth, though a fool, does not err therein. So when the queen of the south came to hear the wisdom of Solomon and to ask him questions of all that was in her heart she brought with her the best of what-

ever she had as an offering to the king. There were no such spices as the queen of Sheba brought to King Solomon. When she at last entered the great and magnificent temple which Solomon had built, and beheld his wisdom and glory, she was so overpowered with a sense of her own littleness, and the greatness of the king, that there remained no more spirit in her. The incense of her heart came forth in these words: "It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and my eyes had seen it; and, behold, the half was not told me." She communed with him of all that was in her heart, and Solomon told her all her questions. So kind is our great King; he listens to all and holds sweet communion with those who were some time afar off, but are now brought nigh unto him. Solomon gave her all her heart desires, whatsoever she asked. But O how infinitely greater are the riches of Zion's King, are they not? Yet the sacrifice of a broken and contrite spirit he will not despise. This his people, dear friends, bring unto him. He once reproved them that they had brought no sweet cane from a far country. Their desires were not toward him. The sweet incense of a broken spirit given him is as spices, or sweet cane here spoken of, and the communion of the Spirit in return is abundant to all who seek to call upon him in truth. The Lord is near to all such. This is that interchange and communion of heavenly love, joy and peace between the King and his dear people, whom he loves with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness he draws them, and they come to him from all places whither they are scattered abroad. For he hath said that he will take them one of a city and two of a family and bring them to Zion. Many, many times I feel that if I am but one of the coarsest and humblest there it matters not, for the Spirit must be with the humblest one; that beautiful garment, the imputed righteousness of our Lord, placed upon those of us who possess the indwelling Spirit of our God. We must have on this wedding garment of the King, the garment of salvation, when we enter into this blest abode. I often think of those costly arrangements which are "for glory and for beauty," so many golden wreaths and flowers. Why must the curtains be of just such colors? why so costly? why of just such material? why must all be such a marvel of skill and beauty? Yet all these things have a significance, and shadow forth things real, wonderful, beautiful and useful in the church of God. How many of us, like Naomi, feel poor in spirit, and many of us in this day are made to taste and drink the bitter dregs of sorrow and adversity. But Naomi had some true and loyal friends, and as they greeted her when she entered her native city, calling her by her familiar name, she said, "Call me not Naomi, call me Mara [signifying bitterness, or one who weeps]: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me." The tie between this poor, afflicted woman and her daughter Ruth must have now become strong indeed. Here the human and divine love sweetly blend and run together, as two drops of water flowing into one body. Naomi's God was now Ruth's God, and her people Ruth's people. When I read the inspired language of Paul, the eloquent outpourings of Isaiah, the sweet, heavenly music that flowed from the heart of King David, my soul seems to hold sweet communion with them, and I am uplifted by the thought that in the

great beyond we shall be eternal heirs with those exalted spirits, if I am not clinging to a false hope. But how can that hope be false which is centered and stayed on the cross of Christ, when the true language of the soul is:

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling"?

Many times I am so cast down that I cannot even look toward Calvary's mount, and in my heart there is an aching void nothing can fill, and I feel like poor Elijah did, I think, when he told the Lord he alone was left of all the prophets. How I am made to feel the insufficiency of my own efforts, and that it is useless to undertake one step in my own strength; and at no time do I feel more forcibly the truth of the blessed Savior's words, "Without me ye can do nothing," than when I attempt to write to or converse with those "who have been made wise unto salvation." I know that all of the Lord's children feel their weakness, and that when they think of the depth of wisdom and of the knowledge of God they sink into significance in their own sight. My greatest anxiety is to know whether I am one of the Lord's little ones, and whether my name is recorded in the Lamb's book of life. O that I knew God had spoken unto me; I would give worlds to know did I possess them. I trust that my desires are the effect of the love of God which is shed abroad in the heart. It is that which enables me to say, Take everything away, but give me knowledge and the evidence of my acceptance in the Beloved. You know, dear ones, that when the Savior warned his disciples of prophets or false christs that should come, he said, "If it were possible, they would deceive the very elect." But this they could not do, because of his teaching and of their standing in unity with him. Christ could not be deceived, neither can his people when abiding in his love and walking in his commandments. So if all were the elect people of God there would be none to deceive any one. None of the elect can be finally deceived or lost, for the good Shepherd gives them eternal life, and says they shall never perish. Precious and soul-cheering thought! He will send forth his angels to gather his elect from the four winds under heaven. They are the elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. So, dear friends, we see that it embraces all things, and is a sweet and precious truth. The dear Lord's words you know are, Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go forth and bring fruit unto the praise, honor and glory of God. It is his will and pleasure that we, like Mary, choose that good part, to sit at the feet of Jesus, that shall not be taken away from us.

Dear brother Ker, I submit these rambling thoughts, and will leave to your good judgment to say whether what I have written will be of any degree of comfort to the dear children of God, and if you deem it as such you may publish it in the SIGNS, but if not, cast it into the wastebasket and I will not feel hurt in the least.

I beg to remain your unworthy sister in hope of a blessed immortality,

LIDA KELLER.

GREENVILLE, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is, I hope, with the Spirit of our God that I feel to express to you what a feast we had at our association (New Hope), held with the church at Elm Ridge, six miles east of

Terrell, Kaufman Co., Texas, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, August 13th, 14th and 15th. I can say of a truth there was not a discord while in session; peace, union and fellowship abounded throughout the body. I feel that the Giver of all good, the great Head of the church, was in our midst, ruling and reigning to his name's honor and glory and to the good and comfort of his beloved Zion. I feel that I can adopt the language of Isaiah: In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, full of marrow, of wine on the lees, well refined. The gospel was preached in its purity, full of marrow, and was like wine, it made the heart glad and like oil made the face to shine, and love seemed to flow from heart to heart, and because of the love of God shed abroad in their hearts and the grace of God in their poor souls many I believe were made to adopt the language of Mary when she said because of Jesus, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior." One old sister, eighty-three years old, expressed to me the language of old Simeon when he said, Lord, lettest now thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation. .It seemed to me to be one of the sweetest associations I ever attended. We had six visiting Elders, to wit, W. H. Tatum, Mt. Vernon, Texas; J. H. Smith, Grapevine, Texas; E. Palmer, Glen, Texas; J. R. Greathouse, Upton, N. Mex.; A. W. Woods, Harperville, Miss., and W. W. Cockrell, Godley, Texas; also two licensed brethren: J. O. Burgeous, Dallas, Texas, and W. T. Flowers, Grand Saline, Texas. We feel thankful to the Giver of all good for sending them. Dearly beloved of Zion, whose heart the love of God is in, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. It is like oil upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, that descended upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore. I understand this unity of the brethren is a blessing from the Lord, that is why they are in oneness, that is the reason why they see eye to eye and speak the same things. It is of the Lord that fellowship exists, because he gives us love one for another, and where love abounds fellowship abounds, and where fellowship abounds there is oneness or unity, and where unity abounds there is peace. Jesus said, Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, so this is the channel through which he gives or leaves his peace with us, and it is like the ointment that Mary anointed Jesus with, the odor filled the whole house; the peace that Jesus gives fills the whole house (Zion). Dear children of Mt. Zion, let us pray God to give us more grace, that we may serve him acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, that we may honor and glorify his holy name, and in so doing show the love of God in our hearts. In this we may manifest that we are children born of God, born from on high, and if children, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Therefore, being made free from sin, ye have your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life.

Dear editors, this is at your disposal.

Your unworthy brother,

S. M. DICKENS.

COLOSSIANS I. 16.

"For by him were all things created."

Then is he not by creation the author of all things? And surely he had a reason for creating them, and his reason must have been a good one; as all he does is for good, surely he had an object of good in view as a reason for all his works, and the object must be attained or he must suffer loss; but he is to lose nothing, and in all of his undertakings he shall never fail. He also works and none can hinder, moreover his work is perfect, and that which is perfect cannot be improved upon. The object moving him in this work of creation must have been a noble one, one of superior greatness; great, grand, sublime, high and lofty must have been the object of such a wonderful display of wisdom, love and power as was manifested in this great and stupendous work. The great aim, the wonderful design above all others, was his own glory. Lesser objects are admitted, but this is the prime one, and that the object be attained everything created is so united, coupled, linked and knit together in its several parts, and is so skillfully arranged that perfect harmony of action pervades the whole. Hence the absolute certainty of the accomplishment of the design intended by the Contriver; creation and predestination must be equal in extent, or coextensive with each other; that is, everything created must be predestinated to the end that it is sure to accomplish the design in creation, and why may the wrong not be as great in the creation of all things as in the predestination of all things? All things only are predestinated, and they only to the glory of God, or at least that is the prime end to which they are predestinated. Other ends, as before said, are admitted, such as are for the good of his creatures in general, and for his people in particular. The "all things" predestinated are the all things created, and the all things created are the all things that God pronounced very good, so in his estimation he only predestinated things that were very good, nothing bad. Man's estimation of many of the "all things" which in God's estimation are very good are miserably bad. Sin is the transgression of law. The transgression of law is sin, and Adam by the transgression of law brought sin into the world. So Adam by transgression is the author of sin, by which transgression he and all his posterity became sinners, dead sinners. Now let us divide the "all things" about which I have been writing into three classes of things for the better understanding of how God has predestinated all things. The first class of the "all things" are such things as he will do himself. The second class of the "all things" are such things as he will have done, and the third class of the "all things" are such things as he will allow or suffer wicked men to do, being let, or given up, or over to Satan, from whom they get their influence to do wickedly, who unknowingly take the way of God's predestination, as did the murderers of our blessed Lord, the brethren of Joseph in his abduction, or Cyrus in his war against Israel. God does not in any sense of the word prompt, lead or incline man to sin in any way, form or manner; man has only to be left to himself, left without the restraining power of God, and at once he falls, like Adam, into sin; he needs no influence from any other source than his own depravity, by which he drinketh down iniquity as the ox drinketh down the water. That God allowed sin to enter the world is evident, and it is equally evident that he yet allows man

to sin. He does not, no, not in the slightest degree, approve it, sanction it, command it or lead to it, but right the reverse, he disapproves of it, he gives no sanction to it, leads from it, hates and abhors it, and will punish it, yet in some way and for some reason he suffers us to sin every day of our lives, yet his suffering it is no excuse behind which we may retreat or hide. Though I thus write, I know of no one who has done so. O that the dear Lord would gather his people from the four winds of the earth to Zion with songs of joy and gladness of heart and soul, that peace, love and fellowship of all our kindred in Christ might be restored.

Dear brother Lefferts, I will send this letter, but by no means for its value, for it is like me, imperfect. You may or may not give it place in the SIGNS, just as you think best, and all will be right. May the Lord be yours to sustain in every need, is my prayer.

W. M. LITTLE.

GAP, Texas, Sept. 24, 1915.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., Oct. 1, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Herewith I submit a letter from brother R. Lester Dodson. Elder Fenton and several others think it worth printer's ink.

Sincerely,

E. R. KINNEY.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Sept. 22, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KINNEY:—Your very kind letter was received late to-night, and I assure you I appreciate the spirit in which it is written. I am sure that I will be glad to meet with the church at Schoharie, but no doubt it would be more enjoyable to me could I come under different circumstances. For the past few days, particularly, I have felt more or less troubled about it, and wondered whatever possessed you to write to brother McConnell as you did, but while I cannot understand now, I hope some day it will be made plain. O, if I could only know that the Lord is in the matter; surely if he is at the helm the little craft will not meet destruction upon the rocks. In him there is salvation, but to be made to realize this sometimes we have to pass through the belly of hell with Jonah; we have to see all of our plans and ambitions and schemes set at naught, and realize that God has used these very things which we had thought so contrary to him to bring to pass that which has pleased him. But how strange are his ways, and his judgments past finding out! To be sure, man cannot search out God. He moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform, and needs none to counsel him or to advise with him as to what he shall do. He works and none can hinder. Every knee must bow before him and confess him Lord of all, and when these things are brought to pass in our life we are made humble, and are made to praise him for his wonderful works to the children of men.

I expect to leave New York at 6:30 Friday evening, and suppose this will put me at Schoharie at 9:00 a. m., Saturday, the time you mention. It will not be convenient for Mrs. D. to accompany me. Her mother is spending the summer here with us and would be alone without my wife.

I am very glad to learn that you were so fortunate as to be able to attend the Roxbury Association, and that you had with you Elders Slauson, Vail, Lefferts, Ker and Fenton. Am sure you have had a feast of fat things, as these dear brethren usually come to me laden with the bounty of the King's table, and preach

the unsearchable riches of Christ with much power and comfort to my often fainting soul. Surely the Lord is their Shepherd and supplies all their needs; he it is that gives them suitable food for the lambs and sheep. It is truly wonderful to me to meditate upon the ways of the Lord, how he prepares his servants to go and proclaim a prepared message, not by man, however, to a prepared people. It is all of the Lord, therefore why take thought as to what we shall speak, or what we shall eat, or what we shall wear? Sometimes when we are in the Spirit on the Lord's day I believe we do lose sight of all that is earthly, but we are so constituted that if allowed to remain in that condition indefinitely we would become exalted above measure and forget how helpless and dependent we are upon our Lord and Master for even the very air we breathe. Expect to see you soon.

In much love, yours in hope,

R. LESTER DODSON.

DODD CITY, Ark., June 13, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As my time is up, find inclosed one dollar to pay for the balance of the year. I am so thankful for such a medium of correspondence as the SIGNS, for while many papers claiming to be Primitive Baptist are printing church troubles, the good old SIGNS is preaching love and peace. I am well pleased with the editorials and also the correspondence, and often think one article worth the price of a year's subscription. I must speak of the one on the fourth chapter of Revelation, especially the four beasts, or living creatures, and the one on charity, also of the one in the June 15th number on predestination, with many others, all giving God the glory. I often have impressions to write for the SIGNS, but feeling my littleness and inability, and seeing the paper filled with so much better matter than I can write, I feel that I better keep silent. Elder Lefferts' editorials sound more like the writings of old Elder Beebe than any I have read.

I want to make one suggestion in regard to Elder May's inquiry. God's children are nearly always spoken of as a remnant, but there seems to be a remnant of the woman's seed here, and it is truly so that only a remnant will be living at any time, and while thousands have been put to death by the enemy there is still a remnant alive, and will be while time lasts. The earth helped the woman. That must have been when the inquisition was stayed and all people allowed to worship according to the dictates of their conscience. I fear the same spirit is now being manifested in the world, but an all-wise God is ruling. Do with this as you please, and all will be right with me.

Yours in gospel bonds,

WM. J. CASEY.

SIMMS, Texas, Nov. 6, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I am a poor, little, ignorant sister down here in Texas. We are taking the SIGNS, but I have met few of you who write for it. I met brother McColl once when we lived in Alabama, and I also have met brethren Curry and Carnell. I enjoy reading the SIGNS, as every one who writes seems sound in the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ. Sister Elizabeth Johnson wrote me a long letter. I would be glad to receive a letter from any of you, for I am much cast down. Tell me your experiences, for I much enjoy reading them. You do not know how I would enjoy visiting the associations, and I would be glad if some of you preachers could come down here some time and preach for us. I ask the prayers of you all.

Your little sister,

S. E. JOHNSON.

WARRENSBURG, Mo., Oct. 14, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—In the October 1st number of the SIGNS I read a letter written by sister Belle Frazee in regard to W. T. McQueary, also a letter written by him. It is my sad duty to inform the readers of the SIGNS that he was found dead in his bed on the morning of May 19th, 1915. He was making his home with some friends, Mr. and Mrs. A. A. Branch, of Hope, Ark. They wrote the following particulars of his death: He had been to a town in an adjoining county, where he had some business in court, came home, ate his supper and retired. When he did not get up at his usual hour they investigated, and found him dead. The doctor, on being called, decided that he had died while asleep.

"Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep,
From which none ever wake to weep."

He was laid to rest in a choice spot in the Hope Cemetery, May 20th, 1915. As there was no Primitive Baptist minister near, a Missionary Baptist spoke at the grave, and they sang the last song he was ever heard to sing:

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee."

It is sad to think that there was not a relative near to show how dear he was to us all. The kind friends whom he was with told us there were many friends gathered to pay their last respects, and that there were many beautiful flowers strewn over his grave. I feel free to say that while my dear uncle had never united with the church, he was a strong advocate of the Baptist doctrine. All his letters to me were full of Scripture quotations, telling of the precious truths contained therein. Since he has gone from us we feel our loss is his eternal gain, and we know when the time came he could say, Here, Lord, am I. Although this letter is inadequate to do full justice to his memory, I feel it my duty to let the dear Baptist people know he is no more of this earth. May he rest in peace. He was the son of Elder Morgan McQueary, and the last of the immediate family. He leaves one son, James, who resides in Indianapolis, Ind., and there are also a number of nieces and nephews to mourn. He was in the seventy-fifth year of his life. He had always spoken most highly of the SIGNS; it was one of his main comforts, the Bible being first. He has passed to his reward. Though we miss him, we feel we must say, Not my will, O Lord, but thine be done.

From his niece,

(MRS.) J. M. FLANERY.

OTTAWA, Kansas.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—If I am not asking too much of you, will you some time write on the last verse of the thirty-ninth chapter of Jeremiah? The Lord is leading me in a strange way, if I dare hope he is leading me. The words: "But thy life shall be for a prey unto thee: because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the Lord," caused me to fear I might yet have to endure much. With Jacob of old, I know that it is of his mercy that I am not consumed. Whatever he sees fit to send upon me, I am condemned, but he is clear. Somehow I feel that whatever happens in the world comes by his will and is for some purpose. I have learned by painful experience that I can no more change my nature, or the nature of those about me, than an Ethiopian can change his skin, or the leopard his spots. The foolishness of laying up treasure on earth is constantly impressed upon me. It is sure we did not bring anything into this world with us, and we can take nothing out with us. Like the man who planned to tear down his barns and build

greater, this night may our souls be required of us, then whose shall all these things be? It was said by one of old: "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" This I would love to do, but through the weakness of the flesh, I come far short of it.

Pardon this intrusion, and remember me at the throne of grace if you can.

With love in the Lord,

ANNA McKINNEY.

(See editorial reply on page 691.)

MAY 23, 1905.

TO THE OTEGO CHURCH:—I send this as a testimonial of my love and regard for the church at Otego. A christian greeting to the brethren and sisters, if one so little and unworthy as I feel myself to be may thus address you. It will always be a wonder to me how you could ever fellowship one like me, the very least, if one at all, of God's dear children. When the new pastor here called on me recently and asked, "Why not unite with the Baptists here?" I told him, "I dwell among mine own people." He did not recognize it as Scripture. This precious doctrine which I trust I love is unknown here—a foreign tongue to those about me, and I feel my isolation from my kindred in Christ deeply at times, but I am just where the Lord would have me, else I should not be here. It is almost or quite impossible for me to speak of these sacred things, my feelings quite overcome me, so many wonderful thoughts crowd themselves into my mind and heart when trying to talk on this subject; but to-day I can write of these precious truths. One needs to hear the gospel preached, it strengthens and edifies. Those enjoying that blessing can hardly prize it sufficiently. Though trials and troubles beset me, there are times when from the heart I can say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him," but much of my pathway lies in darkness. If my name is written in the Lamb's book of life it is not of any good in me, but, Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.

Your sister, I hope, though very unworthily,

ZILLAH BUNDY WEATHERLY.

(See obituary on page 702.)

CHICORA, Pa., Oct. 3, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find two dollars due as my subscription on the SIGNS. I cannot help expressing my gratification and comfort in reading the SIGNS, as it contains all the preaching I get. I want to mention some of the articles in October 1st number. Brother J. R. Hardy's upon the Two Rewards is grand and glorious, giving all honor and praise to God, the giver of every good and perfect gift. It surely is edifying and comforting to read such writing. Also Elder Lefferts' editorial on the Resurrection. It is surely the truth that we can have nothing spiritual except in Jesus, as Jesus is the way, the truth and the life, and no man cometh unto the Father but by him. I will name brother Beeman's article also as being of comfort. Indeed, all are encouraging and comforting. I do not forget to whom the praise belongs; it is not unto us, but unto the eternal, invisible, immortal, only wise God, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift. To him all praise, honor and thanks be given. Amen.

Your brother, I trust,

WM. H. MELLOTT.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1915.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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JEREMIAH XXXIX. 18.

"FOR I will surely deliver thee, and thou shalt not fall by the sword, but thy life shall be for a prey unto thee: because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the Lord."

The connection in which this text is found is thus: "Now the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah, while he was shut up in the court of the prison, saying, Go and speak to Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring my words upon this city for evil, and not for good; and they shall be accomplished in that day before thee. But I will deliver thee in that day, saith the Lord: and thou shalt not be given into the hand of the men of whom thou art afraid." Much of the history of the Hebrews is recorded in the Bible, yet the Bible is not primarily intended to be a text-book of history. There are some events that transpired in Israelitish history that are not recorded in Scripture, and there are some events recorded in Scripture that are not found in any history written by men. This is all as it should be, because the Bible is a spiritual book, its authorship is spiritual, and it is written only for the spiritual. Paul told Timothy that Scripture is the result of divine inspiration, for the purpose of doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness to the thorough furnishing of the man of God unto all good works. Therefore the Scriptures are not intended for the unbelieving world, but for the people or men of God. Any event in Hebrew history that is fraught with spiritual importance, the Holy Spirit has moved men of old to record. Any other event, though of great significance in the minds of men, the Scriptures do not record, because of lack of eternal import. This is why, in reading profane history, we occasionally come across events touching old Israel that are not found in the Bible. For instance, Josephus, the great Jewish historian, relates incidents and events regarding his race that are not in Scripture. We would not say that Josephus is mistaken, but simply that the Spirit has not left those matters in Scripture, because they are no part of the furnishing of the men of God unto all good works. On the other hand, there are in the Bible many incidents and events recorded that have no value to the ordinary historian and which lack world significance, yet the Spirit has preserved them to us because God's people need them in their perfect furnishing to all good works. For instance, who cares today anything about Ebed-melech, a menial eunuch of King Zedekiah? who cares who he was, or what he did, or what happened to him? He was of no world importance, and whether he lived or died made no difference to the rise and fall of nations. Like a tiny pebble that ripples the stream for a moment, then all is still, so this Ethiopian came and lived and breathed and passed out, and the world recked nothing of his coming or his going. So is it and will it be with many of us. But though he was of no account to the world in its judgment, he is of spiritual value to us who love God and hope

in his mercy. There is that about this eunuch, and what he did and where he went, that we cannot afford to lose sight of, else the Spirit would not have put it in the Bible. Let us come to the text at once: Jeremiah was a prophet of the Highest, against his own will, but by divine calling. Left to himself, this man never would have spoken in the name of the Lord, but the call of God brooks no opposition, the will of God must be done. As a prophet Jeremiah found himself exceedingly unpopular with the people, he was in derision daily, and every one mocked him. This cruel treatment on the part of those to whom he was bidden to speak made Jeremiah feel the Lord had deceived him, so hard was it for him to know that the Lord will call a man to declare his word and then the people not hear him. It seemed to him that if the Lord had called him, the people must hear, and because they did not, he felt he had been deceived in the dealing of the Lord with him. All this caused the prophet to resolve that he would not mention the Lord, nor speak any more in his name. "But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay. For I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side. * * * But the Lord is with me as a mighty terrible one." Thus in spite of persecution and hardness of heart, Jeremiah must hold on his way, must declare the word God has sent him to utter, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. He learned that obedience is a thorny path, oft leading to the wormwood and the gall. Had Jeremiah preached smooth things to the people he would have been acceptable to them, they would have lauded and not derided; but God's ministers cannot speak smooth things, they must declare unto Israel her transgressions and show unto the people their sin. Jeremiah declared to them their evil doings and the sure result thereof: that God would send the Chaldeans against them, and they should be carried away captive. This sort of preaching brought trouble upon the prophet, for the people hated the thought of humiliation through the triumph of the Gentiles whom they despised. The facts of the matter are these: the Israelites abated not a jot; Nebuchadnezzar did come up against them and did take them captive to Babylon, but he did not strip the land clean; he left in the land the poorest sort of the people. Over these inferior ones he placed Zedekiah as king, and to the Chaldean government Zedekiah swore the oath of allegiance. He thus became a tributary of Babylon. The thirty-seventh, thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters of Jeremiah reach from the making of Zedekiah king unto the taking captive of Zedekiah himself eleven years later. Jeremiah was preaching in Jerusalem all of this time. The prophet knew that Zedekiah was not keeping his oath to Nebuchadnezzar; he knew that a revolt against Chaldea was being planned through an alliance with Egypt. Jeremiah had prophetic vision enough to know that this plan would never work, that the treachery of Zedekiah would surely be revealed to Babylon, then would come disaster sure and certain. Of all these things Jeremiah told the king and the people, and they hated him more than ever. They were in no shape to hear the truth, and the policy of an honest man was obnoxious to them. Through the naughtiness of their own hearts the people accused Jeremiah of being partisan with the Chaldeans, and though he attested his innocence again and again his enemies wove

a web of conviction about him until they succeeded in getting him imprisoned. "Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah the son of Hamelech, that was in the court of the prison: and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire; so Jeremiah sunk in the mire." How pitiful is all this. To what depths of sorrow obedience often leads none know but those in whom is the will to do of God's good pleasure. True, disobedience reaps its fruit of condemnation, but obedience by no means purchases immunity from suffering. Now, with Jeremiah in the dungeon, comes the eunuch Ebed-melech upon the scene. As the heart of Joseph of Arimathea, moved with compassion, led him to ask Pilate for the body of Jesus that he might lay it in his new tomb hewn in the virgin rock, so Ebed-melech, moved with compassion for the sufferings of the prophet, led him to seek the clemency of the king. "Now when Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, one of the eunuchs which was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon, the king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin, Ebed-melech went forth out of the king's house, and spake to the king, saying, My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon; and he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is: for there is no more bread in the city. Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Take from hence thirty men with thee, and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon, before he die. So Ebed-melech took the men with him, and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took thence old cast clouts, and old rotten rags, and let them down by cords into the dungeon to Jeremiah. And Ebed-melech the Ethiopian said unto Jeremiah, Put now these old cast clouts and rotten rags under thine armholes under the cords. And Jeremiah did so. So they drew up Jeremiah with cords, and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison." What led this Ethiopian servant to seek to better the low condition of the prophet? What moved him to defend the prophet in the presence of the king, and bid defiance to all his accusers in the words: "These men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet"? Surely there must have been a link of affinity between the spirit of the prophet and the spirit of this poor eunuch, this slave. In all the general apostasy of the land, the prophet at least had one fellow who loved him and who sought his welfare. His preaching had not altogether been in vain, nor is it ever. This eunuch was one whose trust was in the Lord, and servant to the king though he was, yet was he the Lord's freeman. "For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman." The God-given faith of the eunuch manifests itself by its works in seeking the betterment of the prophet, and in pleading his cause before the king's face in a public place: the gate of Benjamin. Faith makes even cowards bold, and dreads not kingly pomp or power. It made this slave of the colored skin to glow with the whiteness of the Christ. The result of all the above was that when Nebuchadnezzar discovered the treachery of Zedekiah, and the contemplated union with Egypt, he came with his army to wreak terrible vengeance upon the remnant in Israel. Thus followed a second captivity eleven years later than the first. "Then the king of

Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes: also the king of Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah. Moreover, he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him with chains, to carry him to Babylon." As this terrible cloud, pent with the wrath of Babylon, spread its gloom and shadow over the land it seemed that none would be spared the impending disaster, but the Lord remembered the eunuch, as he does all his people in all times of need, and sent the prophet with a message to Ebed-melech: "I will deliver thee in that day, saith the Lord: and thou shalt not be given into the hand of the men of whom thou art afraid. For I will surely deliver thee, and thou shalt not fall by the sword, but thy life shall be for a prey unto thee: because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the Lord." What blessed news from heaven. If the Lord be for this eunuch, who can be against him? This chosen one of God is not to fall by the sword, he is not to be given over to his enemies. When the Lord God drove out the man from the garden of Eden, he placed at the east thereof cherubims and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life. This sword it is which in Zech. xiii. 7, is bidden to awake "against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts." "My shepherd," "the man that is my fellow," is none other than Jesus. Against him, the sword (the law) awoke. The law, not of men, but of God, put him to death. For this reason, because Jesus died, the sword is turned away from the elect of God, redeemed in the blood of the Lamb, so that they do not fall by the sword (the law), nor into the hands of their enemies, because Jesus has vanquished all that is against his people. But while this eunuch, representing the people of God spiritually, did not fall by the sword nor by his enemies, yet "thy life shall be for a prey unto thee." He is to be as one hunted. As an eagle or a lion hunts its prey, so this man saved from the sword is yet to be as one who is hunted. Hunted, but never overtaken, sought for, but never found. This is experimentally true of all the Lord's people. Death cannot overtake them, yet they walk in its shadow. Temptation cannot undo them, yet they are tormented by it. Prisons cannot contain them, yet mortality is bound. "Unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live: as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." So the Lord's people, like Ebed-melech, are hunted from place to place until they come to know they are strangers and pilgrims on the earth, having here no continuing city. It was so with Jesus in the world, and it must be so with all of us while in the flesh, if we are what we hope we are. We cannot settle down and take our ease, for no sooner is our nest built than something hunts us from it, and we get up and away. The Lord alone is the refuge of these hunted Ebed-melechs. To them he is a strong tower, a rock of defence, a hiding-place from the wind, a covert from the tempest.

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TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Deacon F. E. Robey.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun Co., Va., October 13th, 14th and 15th, 1915, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends christian love and greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the goodness and mercy of God we have been blessed for many years to address you by Circular Letters, and as we prepare this one we are reminded of the old landmarks of the doctrine of God our Savior. The precious blood of Jesus was shed on Calvary's cross for those that God chose out of every nation, kindred and tongue. These he predestinated before the world was made, as his chosen ones, to be with him in eternity. Is there one of God's children that can deny this? If they can, they must deny that God is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient. Let us examine ourselves by the word of God to see if we are standing on the solid foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. If we are built on this foundation, our God being the builder, the gates of hell cannot prevail against us. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Saul of Tarsus traveled the way that seems right to man, breathing out vengeance against any he found opposing the way that seems right to man, even with authority to put to death any he found believing and worshiping our Lord Jesus Christ. That same spirit which was in Saul of Tarsus during his persecuting career is the same spirit according to which the world now believes and worships. They are spending thousands of dollars trying to prove that the way which seems right unto man is the gospel of Jesus Christ. We thank God there is a remnant which believes in salvation by grace, and not by works of righteousness which they have done. Was Saul a chosen vessel of God when, with murder in his heart, he went on his way to Damascus to put to death those he found not in the way that seemed right to him? He surely was, for the Lord said, "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: for I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." Jesus said, "I came not to send peace, but a sword." This sword is the Word of God. It divides husband and wife, father and son, mother and daughter. It is "sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Israel's God is a God of power. He will save his people from their sins and from the way that seems right to man. He will close the lion's mouth so that not one of God's little ones shall be hurt. God proved his great power in delivering the Hebrew children out of the fiery furnace, whither they had been cast because they would not worship the god set up by the king. God raised up Pharaoh and hardened his heart to prove to his chosen in Egypt under bondage to the king there that he (God) does bring deliverance and salvation by his almighty arm from that strong arm of flesh, which is the law of sin and death. He brought the Israelites to the Red Sea, where they were compelled, like all the children of God, to stand still and see the salvation of God. He will not give his glory to another. He brings his people

by a way they knew not; he works, and no man can hinder. No man can trace his steps, and no man can see God's face and live; we see him only after his glory has passed by. The gospel of the Son of God was not received by the world when he was on earth, because it was not according to the way that seems right to the natural man. This old man cannot receive the things of God, because they are spiritually discerned. Jesus was accused of casting out devils by the prince of devils by those whose way seemed right in their own eyes: that strict religious sect, the Pharisees, that taught for doctrine the commandments of men; and yet these very characters were fulfilling the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God by their wicked works, for God sent them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie, and all be damned who believed not the truth. We believe in the absolute predestination of all things, and in God's foreknowledge of all things. We believe that God has a perfect right to choose one or all of the human family to be with him in eternity, and to serve him on earth as it seems good in his sight. May every child of God feel in his heart that God is just in all things, even in loving Jacob and hating Esau, to show to the chosen in Christ that salvation is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. Every step we take, either in providence or in grace, is ordered of the Lord, and without the Lord we can do nothing. By searching no man can find out God, and no man can teach another to know the Lord. God must and will reveal Jesus to every one whom he gave to the Son, and no man can come to the Father but those the Father gave the Son. The Son was born of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. That was his Father's will, having this seal: that God knows them that are his. He was called Jesus. Why? Because "he shall save his people from their sins." Has he done it? If he has not, he is not entitled to the name "Jesus," and he has not fulfilled the Father's will; and if one of those who were written in the Father's will can be lost, so may all, and we are without hope. But Jesus has fulfilled his Father's will and paid all demands by the sacrifice of himself. He was crucified on the cross with every one that God had given him; he went down into the grave with them and was raised from the dead with them. If he did not, then he did not come forth a perfect body. If any were left out when he paid the debt they are out yet. If any were not with him in the grave they will never be with him when Jesus presents the church, his body, to his Father perfect and without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. We do hope that all those whom God has called to preach his gospel will not shun to declare the whole counsel of God. We must not turn to the right or to the left, but preach Jesus, for he is the way, the truth and the life. There is none other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. We need not fall out about the resurrection, for if we have Jesus we have the resurrection and the life in us. We have tried to pray that God will direct our mind and heart by his Holy Spirit, that we may not write anything that will darken counsel by words without knowledge, but we want to present God as having all power in heaven and in earth. We are but worms of the dust, and know nothing. Jesus loves his children with an everlasting love, and we are unworthy of the love and mercy God bestows upon those

he has called with an holy calling and saved with an everlasting salvation.

Since our Corresponding Meeting met last year at Mt. Zion we have lost one, Elder J. N. Badger, who was dear to many of this body, and who was moderator of this Meeting for many years. We feel sad to have to write that he is gone, but we know that our loss is his eternal gain. The time is coming when we will all go hence to be presented before the throne of Almighty God by his Son. Then we shall sing praise to God from whom all blessings flow, praise to Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Our next session is appointed, the Lord willing, to be held with the Bethlehem Church, Prince William Co., Va., in 1916, to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, when and where we hope to again receive your letters, Minutes and messengers.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
S. B. PAXSON, Clerk.

(Written by A. T. Benson.)

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Forest Grove, Wicomico Co., Md., October 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1915, to the churches whose messengers we are sends christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN:—For a subject we will call your attention to the twentieth and twenty-first verses of the third chapter of Paul's epistle to the Philippians, which read as follows: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

The first thought that occurs to our mind is, How is this Scripture applicable to us? Can we derive any comfort from this Scripture, since this epistle was addressed to the bishops, deacons and brethren at Philippi only? We are glad that Jesus said he would send the Holy Ghost after his ascension to the Father, and our joy is greater because he did what he said he would do: send the Holy Ghost. We are made to believe that the Holy Ghost has alighted upon us, or we would not be so deeply interested in the things pertaining to the everlasting kingdom of God, though we must confess we are nothing. Sometimes we feel we cannot expect to see the King in his beauty, because of our great sin, but we are made to believe that the blood of Jesus Christ does cleanse us from all sin; and right here we want to say we do not want to continue in sin, and are sorry for every sin we have ever committed, and we do feel that we are now at the judgment bar, giving an account for every sin and idle thought with joy, mixed with fear and trembling. We feel to say we will not be judged again when Christ shall come the second time without sin laid upon him, but that we are judged already, and when we read, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment," we are made to believe that the dead and judgment here spoken of pertain to what is felt in the experience of the Lord's dear people. Brethren, do you know anything of this death and judgment? Do you not remember when your sins rose up like mountains before you, and you felt to say with the thief on the cross, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom? But hear the living words of him who now sits upon the throne: "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." The love Jesus had for sinners is amazing, his

grace is wonderful, his love beyond degree. Brethren, is this mind in us? Can we forgive our brother? Are we puffed up with pride? Is it not good for us to examine ourselves? Is our conversation in heaven, from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ? We are persuaded that it is. Sometimes when left to ourselves we begin to make plans, and strive to make a show in the world, but the Holy Ghost shows us that time is fleeting, and that our affections should be upon things above, not on things on the earth; that we are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God, and when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall also appear with him in glory. We do not know now how we shall look, it doth not yet appear, John tells us, but he affirms we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. The apostle from whom we have quoted tells us in verse twenty-one that the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his own glorious body. Brethren, do you believe this? If so, you are in perfect accord with the great apostle. But he was only great as the Lord made him great. Indeed, it was the grace of God in him, he positively affirms. The resurrection of the dead is a great mystery, so are all things a mystery. We feel like dwelling upon this subject a little, not for argument, but rather to comfort. Dear brethren, will you bear with us a little? Is there a resurrection of the body? How shall we answer aright, and are we justifiable in mentioning this subject? We cannot refrain. The New Testament plainly declares that Christ arose from the dead the third day. This same book declares that when Lazarus had been dead four days the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, said, Lazarus, come forth, and he that was dead came forth. Then is there not a power to resurrect, to bestow new and everlasting life? When a sinner is born again, of what is he born? Not of the flesh, but of the Spirit. He feels the creative power of the Lord in his very being here in the flesh, and this gives him hope, and it is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. For what is this new creature in Christ hoping? He is longing to see the day when he shall be changed and fashioned like unto the glorious and adorable Lord, and he realizes that this is accomplished by his mighty power, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself. There is one grand truth we feel to call your attention to, though ye know it: our God is a creative power; he is the origin of this vast creation. Let us all say with one accord, How excellent is his name in all the earth. We should speak often one to another of the goodness and mercy of our covenant-keeping God, and put away foolish talking from us according as he has given unto us the measure of faith. Brethren, there are so many promises in the Scriptures, let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering. Now as this beloved apostle Paul has written unto us, let us give heed to his words, for we believe he spoke by inspiration of God.

We trust we have not written amiss, but trust that the Holy Ghost has led our minds upon heavenly things. We pray that unity of the Spirit may abound, and that we may all be of one mind and all speak the same things, ever looking to Jesus, who shall change our vile body and fashion it like unto his own glorious body, by his mighty power, whereby he is able to subdue all things even unto himself.

A. B. FRANCIS, Moderator.
JOHN H. TRUITT, Clerk.
GEO. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

(Written by Elder H. H. Lefferts.)

The Juniata Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 8th, 9th and 10th, 1915, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is our mind at this time rather than to address you on some doctrinal subject, to write you instead our feelings with reference to these associational meetings. Are they profitable? We believe they are, for the following reasons: they afford an opportunity for brethren living at some distance from each other to get together once a year at least. They give the churches an opportunity to hear different ministering gifts from various sections of the country, many of which they would not otherwise get to know or hear. They serve to keep the churches posted as to each other's condition as to growth or decline, order or disorder. They afford a stimulus to each separate church to so maintain itself as to have the good will and respect of sister churches; and lastly, but not least, they edify, instruct and comfort the people of God to an extent not measurable. Like all blessings, they may be abused. Associations are abused when they are used as a means to subordinate the churches to human authority, when occasion is taken to lord it over the churches. An association is a body of churches which voluntarily associate themselves together for purposes of edification and comfort. The association has no judicial authority over individual churches, but a wholesame effect is sometimes brought to bear upon a disorderly church when it realizes it may be dropped from the correspondence of sister churches unless it sets itself in order. An association has a perfect right to drop a church from its number on account of disorder, but has no right to interfere in the internal affairs of any church, whether that church be disorderly or not. An association is not a board of conciliation to settle differences between brethren, nor can it issue any edict settling disputed points of doctrine. It can array itself on the side of this doctrine or that, but it cannot bind men's consciences to its mandates. We believe the custom of sending letters by the churches to the association is a good thing, but is often overdone. The purpose of a church letter is never to take a text and try to write a sermon upon it, but should be a short, plain, honest statement as to the condition of the church writing the letter, and the truth as to its condition should never be evaded so as to deceive the sister churches of its correspondence. Paul wrote letters to the different churches, and the brethren individually, and as a body, frequently interchanged messages of love and fellowship, even in apostolic days. It is sometimes said that we have no Bible authority for associations. We have as much authority as we need in Hebrews x. 25: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." What is an association but an assembling of brethren together to worship the Lord, and to comfort and edify one another? Of course, if the association is to degenerate into a debating forum and a place for brethren to quarrel and find fault with each other, the sooner it disbands the better, but where love abounds, associations are useful and to be encouraged. When we consider how our forefathers used to travel in much inconvenience and hardness in order to get together, and when we see how highly favored we are to-day to have such

comfortable modes of travel invented for us, it looks as though brethren should get together more easily, in greater numbers, and more often than they do, but such is not the case. Indeed, in many communities the reverse is true. It seems that the love of many is waxing cold, and some sleep; indifference seems to have paralyzed them. This is regrettable, causes much grief to the ministry and to the churches, but is an evidence that we are living in the last time. Back in the sixties and seventies Elders Furr and White came all the way through from Virginia on horseback to serve these churches in the Juniata Association; today we come in carriages, automobiles and railroad trains, yet the number in attendance at our regular meetings is not as large as in bygone days. In surveying the condition of things among the Old School Baptist churches generally, our greatest comfort lies in knowing that our God reigns, and that he will do his will among the inhabitants of the earth as well as in the army of heaven. None can stay his hand, or say unto him, Why doest thou?

J. M. FENTON, Moderator.
MOSES F. STARR, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Lexington Primitive Baptist Association, in session with Jefferson Church, to the associations with which we correspond sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the providence of God we have once more met to praise God for his wonderful goodness and mercy. Now, dear brethren, we want to tell you how pleased we were with the sentiment of your correspondence; it has the right sound. A house divided against itself cannot stand. We feel to adopt your sentiments in full, and that if any come bringing another gospel than that we have received from Christ and his apostles we will not receive them in our house nor bid them Godspeed. O what a terrible thing it is to promulgate error and to lead others astray. We do feel a oneness with you, and desire a continuance of your correspondence. May God bless us all abundantly, is our prayer.

Our next session is to be held with our sister church at Gilboa, Schoharie Co., N. Y., at the usual time, the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, 1916, where we hope to meet your messengers and receive your messages of love and fellowship as in times past.

Now, dear brethren, farewell. May the peace and love of God the Father be with you, is our prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen.

EBER HIX, Moderator.
JAMES AVERY, Clerk.
O. F. BALLARD, Assistant Clerk.

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the First Church of Roxbury, at Vega, Delaware Co., N. Y., to the several associations with which she corresponds sends christian greeting in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—In the providence of Almighty God we are favored with the blessed privilege of meeting again in an association, and to join in praise to Him who doeth all things well. Our hearts have been made glad by the coming of his servants among us, laden with their messages of heavenly food from the Master's table, declaring the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ, giving all power, majesty, honor and glory to him to whom all majesty belongs, speaking to us in no uncertain tones of what the Master has

in his love and in mercy done for his children. Being thus favored and blessed, should we not as good soldiers press onward toward the mark for the prize of our high calling in Christ, looking unto Jesus Christ as the author and finisher of our faith? For there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved.

We have appointed our next session to be held with the Second Church of Roxbury, the Lord willing, on Wednesday and Thursday following the second Sunday in September, 1916, where we hope to meet and greet the dear brethren again. Until then, brethren, fare ye well.

ORVILLE WINCHELL, Moderator.

AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

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CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Wm. Darby, Md., $1.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, Wednesday, Oct. 20th, 1915, at the home of the bride's parents, near Newark, Md., Benjamin A. Johnson, of Salisbury, Md., and Miss Ethel F. Holloway, of Newark, Md.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, Nov. 3rd, 1915, at the home of the bride's parents, Mt. Beulah, near Aldie, Va., Virgil C. Davis, of Alexandria, Va., and Miss Myrtle Gulick.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Mary Ann Amanda Motes, my dear mother, was the eldest child of Mary Ellen and Bartley Darby, and was born in Pike County, Ala., Sept. 24th, 1832. She was united in marriage to W. N. Motes, of Troy, Ala., Nov. 21st, 1848, to which union were born ten children, all attaining to manhood and womanhood, and all yet living except one. Mother departed this life Dec. 9th, 1914, at Emory, Texas, at the advanced age of 82 years, 2 months and 15 days. She was the first person that I ever saw baptized, and though I was very young, yet have been so continually near and closely intimate with her every day deportment and conversation that I may be permitted to say I believe she made a good profession and adorned that profession while she lived. When she was baptized we lived in the town of Elba, Coffee Co., Ala., and she became a member of old "Evergreen" Church in 1858, to the best of my recollection. When father left Elba in 1863 it was to locate his family on a farm, for he had to go into the confederate service. Mother received a letter of dismission from Evergreen Church, but lost it, and hearing that the church went down in time of the war she did not become identified again, but was a firm believer in the primitive faith of salvation by grace alone, having no confidence in the flesh. I think she believed in Jesus as her Savior, not to make her an heir, but because she was one. She was not loud in her profession and pretensions of christian duties and living, but often spoke of her unworthiness and dark seasons. She was a kind and loving mother, faithful to her companion, who preceded her to the grave fifteen years. She did not go about much because of feebleness, but did the most of her housework up to 1914. She was sick only about ten days, and did not complain of any pain. When asked if anything hurt her she would say, "Nothing at all." She was not confined to her bed, could not lie down on account of smothering, but occupied her rocker, from which she was removed to her bed the day before she passed away. The doctors likened her to the wearing out of a machine, and told us she would not suffer much, which was a comfort to us, believing that Jesus tasted death for her, and thus her last moments were like going to sleep, or just passing from sorrow and affliction to a state of peace and rest with Jesus to await the resurrection. We desire to be submissive to his will, trusting that we may be permitted to meet her, not as mother, but as a dear angel of God.

The funeral was conducted by Elder R. E. White, of Alba, Texas, at 2:30 p. m. Dec. 10th, 1914. She was laid in the tomb by the side of her companion in the city cemetery at Emory, Texas.

Written by her eldest son,

M. F. MOTES.

Mrs. Louisa Harmon, whose maiden name was Lamb, was born in Kent, England, April 16th, 1843, and died at her home in Cleveland, Ohio, Oct. 13th, 1915. She was married to Wm. Harmon in 1868. They moved to this country and first settled in New York State, near Otego, where they resided for some time. She received a hope in her Savior, and upon relation of her experience she was received in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at that place, both she and her husband being baptized by their pastor, Elder Silas H. Durand, in November, 1872, where their membership remained until they moved to Cleveland, Ohio, when they brought their letters from Otego Church and were among the first in organizing the Beulah Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church of Cleveland, where their membership still remains. Sister Harmon was very devoted to her church, missing but very few of their meetings during the six years that I have been their pastor, and it was a common saying with us that if brother or sister Harmon were absent they surely must be sick. By the church she will be sadly missed, but assuredly believing that our loss is her gain we bow in humble submission to the will of God, who doeth all things well. May the Lord be merciful to us, and especially the bereaved husband and children who are left to mourn, and enable us all to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

The writer spoke briefly from John xi. 25, 26, to a large number of relatives and friends, after which all that was mortal was laid to rest in the Rock Port Cemetery to await the call of the Master in the resurrection. GEO. L. WEAVER.

Miss Hannah Janet Jenkins (Nettie) was born in Lancaster County, Pa., near the Old School Baptist meetinghouse called Rock Springs, April 16th, 1844, and died in the house where she was born, having lived the 72 years, 5 months and 21 days of her mortal life in the same place, on Oct. 7th, 1915. Her father, David Jenkins, was a member of the church at Rock Springs. Her mother, Hannah J. Jenkins, never made a public profession, but was evidently a gracious woman, and loved the brethren, and her house was a home for the Old School Baptists as long as she lived. In short, that home was a place of entertainment for over one hundred years, where the ministers and brethren were always welcome. Miss Nettie kept up the reputation of the home during the last years, when by the death of the last of her brothers she was left in sole charge, she being the last of a family of eight children, five boys and three girls. As a result of her death the home is now broken up, passing into the hands of others. She leaves two nieces and their families, beside numerous other relatives, to mourn, by all of whom she was held in high esteem. Though she never united with the visible church, she gave abundant evidence that she was one of the Lord's chosen, and we believe that her spirit is in the abode of the blest.

It was my privilege to attend and officiate at her funeral on the 11th. Elder Eubanks, the pastor, having been called away, was unavoidably absent. The very large attendance of neighbors and friends showed the high regard in which she was held by all.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., Oct. 26, 1915.

Zillah Bundy Weatherly, our dear sister, died at her home in West Oneonta, N. Y., Sept. 14th, 1915. She was born in Otego, N. Y., Sept. 11th, 1852, and married to J. Lee Weatherly Sept. 1st, 1875. She experienced a hope in Christ when young, and was baptized by Elder Balas Bundy April 1st, 1880, and ever remained a faithful member of the Otego Church. Though her health was poor for years, and she seldom met with us, still her heart and mind were with us. She is survived by her husband, two sons and two grandchildren. R. TAMSETT.

W. T. Lawson passed from this life August 27th, 1915, at his home in Monticello, Ark. He was born in South Carolina August 2nd, 1844, making his stay on earth 71 years and 25 days. He was a member of the church at Mt. Pisgah, of the New Hope Association, and was firm in the faith. He loved his brethren and proved his faith by his works. He never to my knowledge missed any of his meetings unless providentially hindered. He leaves his wife and nine children, eight boys and one girl, also one brother and one sister to mourn his death. They have lost a faithful husband, father and brother, he has entered that peaceful rest which none can take away. We believe that his body is at rest, awaiting that great morn when Christ shall come with a shout and receive his own to himself, that where he is there they may be also; and we do believe that he is one of that number, for we had great evidence in his daily walk. O how often I have heard him speak of the all-wise and all-powerful God, and that there was no power except it be given of God. He dearly loved the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and the doctrine set forth therein, and was a subscriber a long time. He suffered much in this life, but the morning he passed away he did not seem to suffer very long, only about thirty minutes. He arose that morning seemingly more cheerful than common, went about his morning affairs and seemed to feel better than usual, but when he had made ready to eat breakfast he was taken with an awful pain in his neck, and it seemed to be very severe while it lasted. All that a loving wife and son could do was done. Aid was summoned, but all in vain, death had claimed its own, and dear father looked as if he fallen asleep. Dear brethren, pray for us, that we may be given strength to follow the example he set before us. He leaves a host of

relatives and friends and brethren and sisters in a precious hope to feel their loss.

The funeral was conducted by Elders J. H. Blythe and T. J. Evers. A very large concourse of people attended. The remains were interred in the Gaster Hill Cemetery.

Written by one who loved him for the truth's sake.

PATTIE LAWSON.

MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting of the Second Church of Roxbury is to be held at Halcottville, N. Y., the third Saturday and Sunday in November (20th and 21st), 1915. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren.

JAMES AVERY.

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[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 83. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1915. NO. 23.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PSALMS CVII. 23-25.

"THEY that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof."

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have some impression of mind this beautiful morning to suggest a few thoughts on the above portion of Scripture and send them to you, and you, doubtless, will dispose of them as you deem proper, for I humbly confess that I am not competent to judge of their fitness to be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the wonderful medium of correspondence for the Lord's redeemed children, whom, and whom alone, this wonderful Psalm so experimentally sets forth, of which I hope to be blest with light and liberty to mention some few things that may be beneficial in some way to the household of faith, and this I will do if God permit, otherwise I cannot, for of myself I can do nothing. It is as plain as the sun at noonday that it is the Lord's redeemed family that are wandering in the wilderness in a solitary way (verses 2, 3 and 4), and have been more or less in all ages of the world, as their type, Israel nationally, so clearly shows, and there is one point particularly I much desire that I may be blessed of the Lord to emphasize in my mind, soul and strength, that is, not all of God's children can do business in great waters, therefore cannot see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. They that go down in ships, that do business in great waters, these, and these alone, see the works of the Lord, and those mysterious things of God, those deep things that coucheth beneath. (Deut. xxxiii. 13.) Those whom God for his own purpose and glory hath given grace, and the gift by grace to go down to the sea, and to do business in great waters, these, and these alone, see God's wonders in the deep; these by divine revelation see that it is God who commands and raises the stormy wind which lifteth up the waves thereof; that is to say, all those whom God hath chosen and prepared to do business in great waters, all these in harmony with God's eternal design, and by inspiration of his Spirit, see the hand of God in raising the stormy wind, or God's predestinating hand, or power, and his eternal purpose in all things, while all those of God's dear children whom he did not purpose to do business in great waters, and therefore

did not capacitate to that end, are as good and as precious in God's sight as those whom he made choice of to do business in great waters, and to see that the Scriptures of both Old and New Testaments clearly teach the purpose of God in all things, and his predestinating hand in unchangeably fixing the destiny of all things, even in commanding and raising all those stormy winds. All winds are not stormy, but the result of all is alike good, because of God's purpose, and also his divine control. We read in the narrative of Jonah i. 4, that "the Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken," and yet the result was unspeakably good, just as God had thought to bring to pass, as is the case in every instance of God's divine arrangements. Forasmuch then as there is a large percentage of God's dear children wandering in the wilderness in this world of tribulation and sore trials who are tender-eyed, cannot see the hand of God in raising the stormy winds, cannot understand, and therefore do not believe the doctrine of predestination of all things, nevertheless they are humble-hearted children of God, yet they are wandering in the wilderness in a solitary way, where they can find no city to dwell in, and will wander on and on until it pleases the Lord to bring them out of their distresses, and this he will do in his own time and way, for his mercy and goodness are following them, and will never forsake them, but will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day, for the Lord their God will cause his glorious voice to be heard, and the sweet accents of their loving Savior impressed in their hearts, saying, "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you; and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion: and I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." As to my own personal feelings, I have suffered almost untold miseries for some few years along this line of thought, the manner of taking heed to all the flock, in warning the unruly, comforting the feeble-minded (unwise), supporting the weak (lame), and of being patient toward all men, to all the men of God, or to all the children of God, as herein described in their different capacities, remembering that where much is given much is required. There is a great deal more required of some of the Lord's servants than of others. There is much more required of those who are gifted to do business in great waters than there is of us poor, tender-eyed, weak ones who cannot see afar off. Among the many thoughts I have had along this line, I have a few very peculiar thoughts, that I will mention here, which will bear criticising, and will not break my head, but will be an excellent oil. The Savior said, "Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left."—Luke xvii. 36. The word "men" is supplied, however I sometimes think that there are but two in the field, and they are the flesh and the Spirit. It has seemed to me plain of late years that it is by the influence of these two antagonistic powers that all preaching is done. We may call them "flesh and Spirit," or we may call them "Esau and Jacob." Esau drives, Jacob leads softly. Esau's driving scatters the sheep, especially in a dark and cloudy day. Let us read Ezekiel xxxiv., and pray God for understanding. It is not only made clear in the text at the head of this article that there are some of God's children, yea, many of them, who cannot do business in great waters, but the entire volume bears witness to this wonderful truth, of which I will mention here one notable text to this

point: "But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim [do business in great waters] should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land: and the rest [they who cannot do business in great waters], some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so [in this way] it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land."—Acts xxvii. 43, 44. A wonderful and miraculous deliverance indeed, that through the death and sufferings, life and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ all the redeemed family of our God are saved, yet many of them are, and shall continue to scramble through this wilderness of sin and sorrow, under different circumstances and in different conditions, but through the merits of his broken body and life and resurrection both all those who can do business in great waters, and all those who cannot do business in great waters, and those who can swim, and those who cannot swim, will be happily housed in heaven and immortal glory, and enjoy heaven, with all that heaven affords, forever and forever; therefore, dear brethren, let us not cast away our confidence, which hath great recompence of reward, but let us be sober, vigilant and of good behavior, in meekness, kindness and tenderness leading softly the flock of God, Jacob-like, for many of the flock of God are tender, weak and lame, and if Esau (the flesh) should overdrive them one day they would die, therefore may the Lord bless us to ever remember that many of the Lord's dear children cannot do business in great waters, neither can they all swim, but they will all be happily housed in heaven and immortal glory through Christ.

W. J. MAY.

PINSONFORK, Ky., Oct. 29, 1915.

ST. THOMAS, Ont., Oct. 25, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am sending two letters written by our dear departed sister, Eliza McDonald, and one written to sister Wellman, of Rodney, by Elder Peters. Those written by our dear sister have been a comfort to me, and I hold them as a treasure.

Yours in hope of life eternal,

J. B. SLAUSON.

APPIN, Ont., Feb. 18, 1915.

DEAR ELDER SLAUSON:—I hope you can pardon my long delay in writing you, but feel assured that although I have not written I have surely appreciated the kind letters you have written me during my sickness. I only wish I were more worthy of the love and kindness that the brethren have shown me, not only now in my hour of suffering, but always. I realize daily the sinfulness of my nature, and am often made to feel that if the dear ones in the church but knew me as I am they could not treat me so kindly. But although I am so full of sin, and so prone to evil, yet with Paul I can say, To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. I do not want to be so worldly-minded, and mourn my coldness and indifference, yet I am so helpless to change my frame. My nature is as prone to sin as the sparks are to fly upward, and I know if left to myself I shall surely perish. But what a blessing that we have a great High Priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, who was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin, but he bore our sins in his own body, and went through all the cruel agony of the cross, went down into death that his people might live. O what a glorious Redeemer. In my mind there is no doubt as to his love and his wisdom and his

majesty and his power to save, but what makes me full of doubts and fears is the dread that I may not be one of that number for whom Christ died and rose again. But here we can never be fully satisfied. We live by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for? The things of time all pass away and perish with the using, but the kingdom of God remaineth forever, and it seems that all the little real pleasure that there is in this life is the time we spend in sweet meditation on his word and our minds are lifted from the things of time; when for a little moment our minds are filled with that sweet peace of God that passeth all understanding, and we are made to lie passive in his hands, and know no will but his; and when these moments are so sweet, these little sips from the fountain of his love, what must it be in its ocean's fullness? We cannot contemplate the greatness of his blessed beyond, our poor, finite minds cannot grasp it, but we know that if it is our blessed privilege to awake with his likeness, then shall we be satisfied, for we shall see him as he is, and be like him, freed from all sin and guilt, and, like Jesus, pure and undefiled.

During my severe suffering I was made to lie still and feel that whatever his will concerning me would be, was all right, for he is a God that knoweth the end from the beginning, and all things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to his purpose. But I feel it now a long time since I was taken sick first, and often doubts and fears have filled my heart, and I am made to mourn my waywardness. I am gaining, but it seems to take a long time to get real well, and I find the slightest extra exertion causes severe pain in my side. Yesterday and to-day I have not been quite as well as usual, although much better and up again this evening. I long so that God would grant me a humble and contrite mind, and patience to endure all that he sees fit to send upon me. Pray for me that my faith fail not.

We are hoping you will be able to visit us a week from Saturday if you can, or else on Sunday, if more convenient. Hope you have a good meeting in Duart on Sunday this week. I was glad the quarterly meeting was so pleasant and profitable. We have Aunt Clara Blue and Aunt Tish with us at present, and it seems so nice to have them here. Mother and father are keeping fairly well this winter. The friends over here, as far as we know, are pretty well. Yesterday we had sister McCallum for a couple of hours. Anna has been accepted in the hospital, so will not be home for a while, if she keeps well. I hope you and your family are well. Was sorry you had such a heavy cold, but hope it did not last long. I would be glad to hear from you at any time, but feel so unworthy to receive your good letters, and utterly unable to answer them as they deserve. Please excuse these rambling thoughts. All join in warmest love.

Unworthily,

ELIZA McDONALD.

APPIN, Ont., March 16, 1915.

DEAR ELDER SLAUSON:—I had a letter from sister Lilly, of Dutton, yesterday, and she told me of your illness. I was very sorry to hear about it, but sincerely hope that you will soon be feeling better again. We knew you had a cold while here, but hoped that after reaching your home you would be able to stay in for a few days and it would leave you as the other did. We had not heard that you were not able to attend your appointment

in Lobo. I am sure the congregation would feel disappointed, but not more than their pastor. I hope during your sickness you have been blessed with sweet and peaceful meditations upon the word of God. It is hard to be sick, not so hard, I think, to be real sick and suffering, perfectly prostrate, as just feeling miserable. But the suffering of the body is not to be compared to the suffering of the soul on account of the consciousness of indwelling sin, when we are made to feel that every prop that we had trusted in has gone and we are left alone to perish. But each soul that is born of God must come to that place and realize that if ever saved it is alone by the grace of God, and each day along our journey we have to learn this lesson over and over again. With Paul we must say, I die daily, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. Each day we must realize our utter helplessness to save, and we must decrease, and he increase. We must realize that we are nothing, but he is all in all to his people. O how sweet when disappointments arise and things go contrary to our aims and ambitions to be made to be still and passive in his hands, knowing that God rules all and it is all just as it should be, and it will all be to his honor and glory. Of ourselves we cannot feel that way, only when God grants us the spirit of reconciliation to his holy will. Some days I seem to grow so impatient, I want to be well and strong, I do not want to have to stay quiet. I feel, Surely if I were a child of God I would only be glad in all things to do his bidding, and would never murmur or complain. I know that at the same time there lies deep down in my heart an earnest desire to be made willing to endure all things with a calm and thankful heart. Often, often I am sure that I murmur with blessings in my hand. I have every day so many, many things to be thankful for, but sometimes I wonder if I know what it is to be truly thankful to the Giver of all good gifts for his endless mercies and blessings to me, so unworthy of the least of his care or notice. Every day natural blessings are showered upon me, and what is greater by far is the gift that he has given me in a sweet and precious hope, that hope that is as the anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, that hope that when life, with all its cares, and all its ups and downs, is passed we shall know no more suffering and no more pain, but forever to rest in his love. O that love of God! our poor, frail minds cannot grasp it, only as one little bubble from his mighty ocean, one sip from his fountain quenches our thirsty lips, and what must it be in its fullness? It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when we awake with his likeness, then shall we be satisfied.

But, Elder Slauson, I did not intend to write like this, I just felt sorry when I heard of your sickness, and thought I would drop you a line. Hope you may look with an eye of charity on all I have said amiss, yet I long for you to tell me of my mistakes, for I know they are many. I hope we may soon hear of your recovery, and while you are denied the privilege of attending your meetings and visiting your churches, may you be refreshed in your own soul with showers from his eternal storehouse. I hope that Mrs. Slauson and the boys are well. Our family are all about as usual. The week after you were here I was confined to my bed from Tuesday until Friday, but since then I am gaining again. All join in warmest love to you all.

I am yours unworthily,

ELIZA McDONALD.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 24.

DEAR SISTER WELLMAN:—There are some things I wish to present on this text for your consideration, which reads as follows: "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power." When we contemplate the wonderful subject contained in this chapter, which is a full treatise of the subject of the resurrection of the dead, without which there would be no hope for any one, and also the wonderful things the Savior must do before the end cometh, we see he must put down all rule, all authority and power, and that he must reign until he puts all enemies under his feet, and the very last enemy he must destroy is death, and when all things are put under him then he delivers the kingdom up to God, and then the Son becomes subject to the Father, that God may be all in all. This kingdom the Son delivers up to the Father is the kingdom the Father gave him to rule in. The prophet Daniel in speaking of this kingdom said that in the days of these kings (Roman kings) shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, but that it should break in pieces all other kingdoms, and when Christ came preaching he said, The kingdom of heaven is at hand, and the forerunner John came preaching the kingdom of heaven is at hand, and the twelve apostles were commanded to preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. I understand this is the kingdom Jesus meant when he said to his apostles, I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me a kingdom. This I understand to be the kingdom that Jesus spake to Nicodemus about when he said unto him, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of heaven; and, Except a man be born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven, and when we contemplate that this kingdom was to break in pieces all other kingdoms, and that Christ must reign until all things are put under him, we understand his meaning better where he spake to his disciples after he arose from the dead, and said unto them, All power in heaven and earth is given unto me. Therefore the Father vested the Son with all power in heaven and earth, and he must reign until all things in heaven and earth are put under him, and when there is no more for him to accomplish then cometh the end, when he delivers this kingdom back to the Father, and then the Son becomes subject to the Father, and then God is all in all. Sister, what a glorious time will be the end when our Savior delivers the kingdom up to the Father, when he shall have destroyed the last enemy. What a glorious time when all the dead in Christ shall arise and be presented to the Father, for this kingdom of heaven I understand to be the church that the Son gave his life for that he might present it unto himself a glorious church, not having spot, nor wrinkle, nor any such thing, but holy and without blemish. What must be the heavenly sight when the Son delivers up the kingdom to God, when all are put under his feet, when all the dead in Christ that arise first shall come forth, when millions and millions of the saints that compose the complete body of Christ, who have been sanctified with the washing of water by the word, have been presented unto himself a glorious church. O what a glorious time is awaiting the church of Christ when all is put under him, for then cometh the end, and the kingdom is delivered up to the Father, for he must reign until the last enemy is

destroyed. Who can contemplate the glory of that time when the end cometh, when the work of Christ in redeeming the church and delivering the kingdom to God is finished? What must it be to see all the members of the body of Christ freed of their last enemy, when the world and all things in it are subdued and put under Christ? What must be the sight on that morning of the great resurrection, when the Son has completed his reign over all powers and authority, and delivered the kingdom up to God, that God may be all in all? This great theme should be the time all of God's humble, sin-burdened saints should be longing and looking unto; the joy that awaits them on that morning can hardly be realized, and as we near the time of our departure from this life we look forward to that building of God, that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, when our earthly house shall be dissolved.

Yours in hope,

NEWTON PETERS.

MARIETTA, Ga., Sept. 22, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I thought by the help of the good Lord I would try and write a sketch of my experience from nature to grace, if I have one at all. From early childhood I have had serious thoughts about death and the hereafter. When I was about twenty-four years old I dreamed I was going to die, and some one told me I had only two hours to live. I thought I looked around and saw a crowd of people, and my coffin placed on two chairs. I walked to the door and called to the people out of doors, and told them to come in, for I had just one more hour to live, and I thought my uncle, W. D. Almond, a Primitive Baptist preacher, answered "No, George, you will live a good while yet; you will have to talk some." I did not know he was there until he spoke. I awoke troubled, and thought, What can all this mean? I really thought I was going to die soon, and hope I did die to the love and practice of sin. I hope I then and there saw myself a poor lost sinner in the sight of the just and holy God. I became troubled about my condition, and thought that if I were to die I would be eternally lost, so I began to try to do better, and live a better life, although I knew I had not been as bad as other boys that I knew, and had not participated in the bad habits of others, so I thought that was in my favor, yet it did not keep me from feeling I was a poor, lost and condemned sinner in the sight of the just and holy God. O the trouble I was in, but I tried to keep it to myself. I began to see that others were better than I, and I felt to be a poor, helpless sinner in the sight of God. I would try to pray, but it seemed my prayers did not avail anything; the more I tried to pray, the worse I got. Sometimes I would go for weeks and not be so troubled, and then it would return with renewed force, and O how troubled I would be. When plowing I would select some lonely place, where I thought no one would see me, and try to pray to the good Lord for mercy, and to forgive my sins, and every time something would say to me, The prayer of the wicked is an abomination in the sight of God, and O how it crushed me, for I knew I was a poor, wicked sinner. Every time I would select a spot to pray those same words would seem spoken to me. I did not know it then, but I believe that I prayed while walking between my plow handles. O the tears I shed while begging the Lord to have mercy on me, a poor, helpless sinner, and I felt if I died then I was doomed to eternal punishment, and that

troubled me much. One day while all alone in the field, sorrowfully thinking I was lost forever, it seemed as if I could not live until night, and I started to the house and thought I would tell my wife how I was troubled, hoping she might comfort me. I had not gotten more than half way, when something said to me,

"My blood has bought them, dear the cost;
Not one shall perish, or be lost."

Those words seemed to give me some relief, and I turned and went back to my work. I would try to pray, as I thought, a prayer good and long, but all I could say was, Lord, have mercy upon me, a sinner, and I felt to be worse and meaner than any one else. I went on in this way, trying to pray, feeling that if I should die I would be lost forever. I would conceal my little Testament and read it when by myself, off at work, to see if I could get any comfort out of it. Late in the fall, one night I dreamed I was traveling alone through old fields and woods, and all at once, by myself in the night, I came to a graveyard. I thought I walked up to the side of a grave with a large tombstone over the grave, and came to a standstill looking on the stone. It began moving to one side, and it got far enough for me to see inside, and there was a little babe in a white shroud. I looked on for a moment, and could see it was breathing. I thought I raised my eyes and looked around and at the foot of the grave stood two tall women dressed in long white shrouds. I said to them, This child is alive, and the next thing I knew it was up in their arms, and they all disappeared in the air, and I was left alone. I then awoke, wondering what it all could mean. That fall I bought a little farm on credit, as I wanted a home of my own, and I thought I could pass through my troubles better, but, to my surprise, they grew worse. One evening while plowing alone about a quarter of a mile from any house, trying to pray, it seemed I could not live until night, and I felt to be such a miserable sinner that if I died then I would be eternally lost. So just before night something spoke to me, and said, You go to the eleventh chapter of Deuteronomy and read. It was so plain and distinct that I looked around to see if any one was there, but there was no one. My trouble wore off somewhat, and I longed for night to come, so that I could go to the house and read the eleventh chapter of that book, and when I did, it seemed I could see that it was to the children of God, and I felt to be too great a sinner to be a child of God, yet it seemed to relieve me to some extent. So time rolled on, and it seemed my prayers did not reach higher than my head, and that if my soul were sent to hell God's righteous law approved it well. I had not told any one of my troubles, not even my wife. My brother was living with me at the time, and my troubles grew so great it seemed I could not live until morning. That night after they all went to bed and were asleep, I could not sleep, and went out into the lot and tried to pray, as I thought, for the last time. I asked the good Lord to have mercy on me, and when I got in the lot I just fell against the fence corner, and all I could say was, Lord, have mercy upon me, a poor sinner, and I could not say more, although I wanted to say much more. I went back to the house, feeling that I could not live, and that I was without God and without hope in this world, and if I died torment would be my doom. I went to bed, and some time in the night one of the brightest lights I ever saw appeared over me in my room, and remained

there some little time and then passed away. When I awoke my troubles were gone, then I felt good, and that all was well with me, and I was made to love my Savior and the children of God, and they were the Primitive Baptists. O, I did love those people then, and do yet. Soon I began to have doubts and fears as to whether this was the work of God or not; I feared I was deceived in the whole matter, and often prayed to get the troubles back so I would know how they went, but I never got them back, and I yet have doubts and fears whether I am a child of God or not; I cannot live as a child of God should live. I had a desire to go to the church and tell of my little hope, for I wanted to live with those people, but I was afraid I was deceived, and I did not want to deceive them, and I knew I could not deceive the Lord. The desire increased, and I wanted to be baptized. One morning while all alone in the field picking cotton there began a sermon, it seemed like preaching, and when it was finished I thought it was the best sermon I had ever heard, and this same sermon was repeated about nine o'clock for three mornings in succession, and right then and there I wanted to be baptized. O, I felt so happy after those three sweet sermons while I was all alone in the field. Now I had not told any one of my troubles, but one day I went to town, and my dear old father was there, and we both had to go the same road part of the way home. As he was driving along behind me he said to me: "George, I want you to tell me all about your troubles and travel and your hope." It took me by surprise, for I had never told him anything of it. I answered him and said, "I do not know whether I have a hope or not," but I told him of my travel and of my little hope as best I could, and when I got through he said, "George, the next opportunity you have go and tell it to the church." After I told my father of my little hope, the next morning I arose much troubled because I had told him, for I knew he would tell his brother, Elder W. D. Almand, and I was afraid I was deceived, and I did not want to deceive them, and would have given anything if I had not told my father. The next morning I was troubled the same way, but on Saturday before the second Sunday in November, 1879, I offered myself to the old Rocksprings Church, in Dekalb County, Ga., and they received me, and my wife also, and on the following Sunday was baptized by my dear uncle, Elder W. D. Almand, and have been hobbling along ever since, with many ups and downs, doubts and fears. After about four years the church put it upon me to serve them as clerk, which office I did not feel fit to fill, and after seven years the church called for my ordination to serve as deacon, and I have been trying to serve ever since, but have never felt worthy or fit, but the good brethren and sisters have borne with me, and I want to so conduct myself as to live and die in their love and fellowship, for if I am a child of God at all, I am a poor sinner saved by the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and him alone, for my best works are no more than a robe of filthy rags.

Dear brethren editors, I have written most of this lying on the bed. It is ten years to-day since I was stricken with rheumatism, and I have not had an easy moment since. I lay helpless for nine months, and I have been on crutches and stick since. It has about broken me up, as I was just a poor farmer. I was taking the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at that time, but had to give it up on account of not

being able to pay for it, but it was of much pleasure and comfort to me, and would be now in my suffering and lonely condition, there is so much good preaching in it.

Dear brethren, if you see proper, and it will not crowd out better letters, you can publish this; if not, cast it aside, and all will be well with me. Pray for me when it goes well with you.

Your afflicted brother,

G. W. ALMAND.

[WE deeply sympathize with brother Almand in his affliction, and if the SIGNS is of comfort to him it affords us pleasure to send it.—ED.]

LEESBURG, Va., July 5, 1915.

MY DEAR SISTER:—I will try to tell you my experience, if it is the good Lord's will, and I have any to tell. Without the Lord to guide my pen and direct my thoughts I can do nothing. I was born in 1866, and never went to meeting of any kind until I was about fourteen years old, then I went to everything that went on in the world, and enjoyed all alike; parties were better than the meetings. I had what I thought was a good time, enjoyed all, but the time came when sin revived and I died. I went to Needmore to meeting sometimes. One time mother told me I could go with father and her to meeting, but I told her I did not want to go, as no one went but some old men and old women. She never replied one word to me, but let me stay at home, and I went to the Methodist meeting and had a good time, I thought. Soon I went to live with Mrs. Margaret Morgan, a good Old School Baptist, and went with her to Needmore to meeting. I thought then, just as I hear some people say now, that all denominations preach the same, all preach from the Bible. I could not see any difference until one day I went just as I had many times before, but while Elder Rose was preaching I saw what an awful sinner I was. It seemed the whole church was looking at me. O, how condemned I was. I felt that all things living were better than I, and as soon as meeting was dismissed I went home. I thought I would never go back there to meeting any more, but next meeting I was ready before time to go. I wanted to hear, but I do not remember that I heard. I just felt I was such an awful sinner, for I cannot tell how long, but it was a long time to me. One day Elder Rose was preaching on experience, and told exactly how I felt. The thought came, How does he know how I feel? I knew I had never said a word to any one about my feelings. Then I wondered how I knew how they felt. I was reading the Bible, and came to where it said: "They shall all be taught of God."—John vi. 45. I did believe they had been taught of God, but I did not dare to think I had, and right there I left the matter. I knew they could tell me better how I felt than I could tell it, I loved them as I never had loved them before and wanted to hear them talk of their trials and sorrows. I read the Bible and the SIGNS, but I did not want Mrs. Morgan to see me doing so, except on Sunday. I did not want her to know how I felt. I kept one Bible in the kitchen and another in the front room. When she was in the room I would be in the kitchen, when she was in the kitchen I would be in the room, reading. I spent every moment I could spare in reading the Bible and the SIGNS. All my trouble was gone, and I could not tell where it went. O how I wanted it back; I wanted to know where it went. I had wept so much on account of my sins, I could say, If my soul were sent to

hell, God's righteous law approves it well. There was with me the Scripture: "Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?"—Job iii. 23. Later my troubles came back, and I could not tell how, but O how miserable I was. If ever I cried unto the good Lord it was then. For a long time I could not sleep more than two or three hours of a night. I just got where I felt I could not live, I so bad and God so good. I got to where I could not get any farther; I walked the floor and wept, and was saying, O what shall I do, where shall I go, what will become of me? That was all I could say. Not that I was afraid of hell, or some other bad place, I never thought of anything like that, but I just felt to be such a vile sinner. I got the Bible, went out on the back porch, and the first Scripture my eyes saw was, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"—Acts ii. 37. I could not read any more for some time for knowing there was some one asking the same question I had been. I said, What shall I do? and they had said, What shall we do? I do not think that I have ever gotten so much comfort out of a few words as then. I looked to see what they were commanded to do, and found: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." I could not read any more. That night, reading by moonlight, I felt my sins were gone, everything was different, and I was happy for a little while. I thought I would be baptized if I could, when another thought came: O, they would not have me. I commenced to cry, when it seemed some one spoke to me, and said, You have not asked them yet. I looked around, but could see no one. Then I answered, I am afraid they would not. I wanted to be baptized, but I had never seen any one baptized, and could not know what made me want to be. There were no young people in the Old Baptist Church, and I did not know that they would have young people, but I loved them and wanted to be with them. I believed they were God's peculiar people. I thought I would go and ask and see if they would have me. Elder White was the pastor then, and I thought I would go when there were but a few people present and only one preacher, so that if they would not have me so many would not know it. I got ready and went to the meeting, but when the opportunity was afforded me to go forward I sat like one fastened to the seat, I could not move, so I gave up. I did not think after that that I would ever be able to go forward, but I wanted to, O so much. Whenever I would cross water I would say, Here is water, how I wish I could be baptized. I was reading one day, and found where the eunuch said to Philip Here is water, what d th hinder me to be baptized? I thank the good Lord that at the May meeting, in 1888 (when there was a large crowd, instead of a small one as I had desired) I went and they received me, but I do not know how I got there. The Scripture says, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."—Psalms cx. 3. It was the happiest time of my life. I could sing, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow." I thought my troubles were all over. I could not believe that I ever should grieve, that I ever should suffer again. After a time how disappointed I was. Doubts and fears filled my heart, and I felt like Job, "O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me." But the good Lord has been very good to me. I have had joys and sorrows, been on the

mountains and in the wilderness, but he has been very good to a poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all. Dear sister, it is much comfort now to me where the word says, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." I thank God over and over again that he made me believe it. I cannot write more now.

Your sister,

SADIE TURNER.

CHICAGO, Ill., Nov. 2, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—While lying here in the hospital brother Wesley N. Spitler brought me several copies of the SIGNS. He is a son-in-law of Elder Fred. Keene. In general, I have enjoyed and agreed with all I found in the several numbers, but I can hardly agree with the article of Elder Hoskins' in the SIGNS of August 15th, and let me say if I present views differing from his it is not in any spirit of carping criticism, but to set forth what seems to me to be the true doctrine. He is not a Jew which is one outwardly, but is one inwardly. All of Israel are not of Israel. If these passages mean anything to me they mean this: that fleshly relationship to Abraham counts for naught. I agree with brother Hoskins that the true Israel are those whom the Lord predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son. All are drawn in much the same way; all have about the same experience, and the Scriptures expressly state all shall be taught of the Lord. All shall know me, from the least to the greatest. He shall take of the things of mine and shew them unto you, &c. If this means anything to me, it means just this: that God as a spiritual Father shows no partiality between his children, but deals to one as liberally as to another the measure of faith and grace. This does not mean that there are not different gifts of the Spirit, for there are, but in so far as our ability to serve God acceptably is concerned we are all on the same plane in this time state. Now I agree with Elder Hoskins as to the advisability of walking wisely during our sojourn here, in order to avoid the chastening certain to follow wrongdoing. But how are we going to do it? Paul says, I am the chief of sinners. What I would I do not, and what I would not I do. Dear little ones, when we look at these statements of Paul the apostle and think of his close relationship to God, of the fact that he was given the power of healing, &c., and yet he was a sinner, what shall you and I do? Listen: "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." "Grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." Admitting the child of God will be punished here in time for his departure from the right path, yet if we do walk acceptably it is only the grace of God which enables us to do it. I used to worry about a time salvation, but do not any more. It is God who works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. Ye that fear the Lord, hate evil, and let us pray for grace to serve him. I believe in good works here in time, not merely to escape chastening here in time, but because they are right. None of us can alone maintain good works. David prayed, Uphold me with thy free Spirit, and I will run in the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart, or the works would be merely the effect of a work wrought in the heart. Let us not deceive ourselves, salvation both in time and eternity is of grace alone. I cannot in general believe God will give

to one child more than another, until we rise to the stature of the fullness of Christ. How shall we attain that stature unless it is given to us?

I have written with the utmost charity, and trust I have offended none. The early christians in many cases suffered martyrdom, yet they did not forsake God. If they had had only a temporal reward in view as a reward for right living they would certainly have been discouraged by persecutions, &c., and have turned aside. While it is undoubtedly true that temporal blessings are promised to the obedient child, yet in my judgment it takes more than that to hold one to the path. Christ, our ensample, did not live a sinless life on earth for temporal reward, but for the glory set before him. May the God of peace and grace enable us to look at these things in their true relationship.

I remain your brother in hope,

W. C. COX.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Oct. 24, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—God had in mind a people before the creation of this world. I have a passage of Scripture which has been on my mind for some time, which will be found in Matthew viii. 22, and which reads as follows: "But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead." I have been asked several times why I did not write for the SIGNS. Elder Coulter said to me, "Brother Conner, what is the matter with your right arm?" At first I was afraid that he, being a doctor, had seen something wrong with my arm, but then thought he might have received comfort in something I had written. It has always been mysterious to me how I could comfort one of God's dear ones, but hymn 485 tells my case.

"Hail, sovereign grace, that first began
The scheme to rescue fallen man!
Full, matchless, free, eternal grace,
That gave my soul a hiding-place."

But I do not know where my words will fall; that is one of the mysteries of God, and why should he call me from the dead? This is my hope, but it seems to be covered with earth; not a single spiritual thing; my very walk seems to be natural. But I know I can go so far and not another step than is ordained by my heavenly Father. If I write a word of comfort, it is not I, look beyond man; give God all praise and all glory for raising a poor lump of clay; for what I have must be stored up in an earthen vessel, for what I see in myself is all of earth, and as I look back and see all the way the Lord has led me, I see a dead man away back in my early life, walking after worldly things; dead to all spiritual things, dwelling in the tomb, as the one was out of whom Jesus cast devils; wanting all the time to go and bury the dead. But Jesus saith unto him, "Follow me." This is not spoken to the world or worldly people, but to God's own children. The world does not know what you mean when you say, I heard a voice saying, Follow me, but to every child of God he speaks and they follow him. How well I remember when he spake to me, but I did not want his way, I would rather live with the dead, running after dead things, the devil's ways, for he dwells with the dead in trespasses and in sin. Left to myself I thought I would rather dwell in the tents of wickedness. But there came a time when he spake with power, and this earthen vessel did quake as I sat by one cold in death, the spirit having gone to God who gave it. The words came to me, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. I had lost the dearest friend, and wife,

that a man could wish for. It seemed all was gone, but by the voice of the living God I was strengthened. Little by little he led me, step by step he taught me, though rebellious at times; I did not want his way, but my own, did not see anything in Old School Baptists, thought they were a peculiar people, and so they are, but not as I saw them then. They look altogether different now. I see to-day, not one member, but many. One church, Christ Jesus, but many members. Each member has a place. Some are gifted to speak in meetings of God's mercies, and some to pray before God and men, and others pray in secret. Some watch and are awake, while others sleep. In Paul's letter to the Thessalonians, he says, "Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." "Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him." This was in the church in Paul's day, and is in the church in this day, and I suppose will be as long as there are days. Let brotherly love continue, is my prayer, but this comes from God, not by man. Where Jesus is, there is love, peace and joy. As a writer says in one of our hymns, "'Tis religion that can give sweeter pleasure while we live."

A few more words then I must close. We read in John v. 25, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." This I believe is in each child's experience. I have heard this read and the reader left out and "now is" why I do not know; but the hour is coming when some one will hear his voice from day to day to the end of time, when time shall be no more, and I hope I can look around and say, "and now is." I hope I can say with David in the thirtieth Psalm, "O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit." I often wonder, Is Jesus keeping me alive with his grace? I know to be with Jesus' people in my greatest comfort here below. If this writing falls in the hands of a child of God may he give God all praise and all glory. If this be stubble it will be burned; if good grain, then it will come forth and live. Love to all the household of faith in Christ Jesus.

Hoping that I have a hope to live by and die by,

GEORGE M. CONNER.

KANSAS CITY, MO., NOV., 1915.

DEAR ELDER KER:—Will you be so kind as to allow me to occupy sufficient space in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to express our sincere thanks to the brethren, sisters and friends who were so kind as to call on us on the anniversary of our fifty years of married life, Oct. 12th, 1915, as well as those who were so thoughtful as to send congratulations and regrets? We have received over fifty letters, beside cards, and entertained about eighty relatives, brethren and friends, so to write to each one would require more writing than we feel able to do at this time. I hope we do, as far as we are capable, sincerely thank our heavenly Father for so many loving friends at a time of life when we most of all feel the need of friends that are friends indeed.

I am sending you copies of two letters for publication, if your better judgment tells you to do so. One is written by old sister Dark, the widow of that valiant soldier of the cross, the late Elder S. L. Dark, also one written by the direction and in the name of five sisters, one of them sister Lucinda Vanmeter, widow of Elder I. N. Vanmeter, now past

ninety years of age. I am taking the liberty of sending both of these letters without first obtaining consent of the writers, but feel justified in doing so.

While the affair was not intended by our sons who planned it as a surprise, yet it developed into a very pleasant surprise to us, by, and on account of, the number of the guests, and the valued tokens of love and kindly regards left with us to remind us of the good will of both lifelong as well as new found friends, so let us thank one and all again for the great pleasure that has come to your unworthy brother and sister in a blessed hope in the blessed Savior's love.

S. & M. A. KETCHUM.

MACOMB, Illinois.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER KETCHUM:—I was very glad you had not forgotten me, and as the old sisters were writing I thought I would write some, too, hoping it will find you all well. This leaves me as well as could be expected for one of my age; I will be ninety the last day of this month. We still live in Macomb, and would like to have you and wife visit us.

NANCY DARK.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER KETCHUM:—We whose names appear below wish to extend to you our hearty and sincere congratulations on the event of your golden wedding, on the fiftieth anniversary of your marriage. The little gift we send is a slight testimonial of our regard, esteem and fellowship, that fellowship which has remained unbroken through many years of vicissitudes, and has grown and strengthened as the years have gone by, and we hope will continue with coming years. We remember the many precious hours spent in your company, and the many times we have been comforted while sitting under the sound of the gospel proclaimed by you, dear brother, and the many lessons of instruction we have received from your tongue and pen, and the many fireside talks we have enjoyed with you both are dear to our memory, and will not soon be forgotten. It seems a high favor from our heavenly Father that your lives have been spared to see this time. Fifty years seem a long time when we attempt to look into the future, but when past they appear as a dream, or a watch in the night. Dear brother and sister, may you both enjoy this day, and many days and years to come, and as you go down the western decline may the way be made plain and your path be as a light that shineth brighter and brighter unto the perfect day, and as the outward man perisheth may the inward man be renewed day by day. May your last days be your best days, and so your children shall rise up and call you blessed. May that God who never slumbers and never sleeps be your God to bless, to strengthen, to comfort, to keep, to save, and when hoary hairs shall your temples adorn, like lambs may you still in his bosom be borne. Wishing you all joy and happiness, and with love unfeigned, we remain your devoted kindred in Christ Jesus.

NANCY DARK,
LUCINDA VANMETER,
ZENSORIA VANMETER,
RENA BOWEN,
SARAH E. RUNKLE.

GRANITE FALLS, Wash., Oct. 10, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—A short time ago I received a letter from my brother, Dr. C. E. Beebe, of Woodland, Cal., with a letter inclosed he had found among his papers, written by our dear old father, Elder A. F. Beebe, in the year 1870. He has long since gone to his re-

ward, but though he be dead, yet he speaketh. I have enjoyed reading it so very much that I am sending it on to you to be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if you see fit, as it breathes forth the same blessed truths which are so wonderfully set forth by the many able writers.

With much love to all the household of faith, I am the very least of all,

(MRS.) J. M. HESS.

AUMSVILLE, Oregon, Jan. 8, 1870.

ELDER E. H. BURNAN—DEAR BROTHER:—If one as sinful and imperfect in every way as I feel myself to be may be allowed to use the expression and not do violence to the truth. If by giving a brief sketch of my travels since I professed a hope in Christ would be of comfort, or in any way edify any of the Lord's little ones, I should be fully satisfied in making the attempt.

I was born of the flesh in the year 1815, in Orange County, N. Y., and I trust of the Spirit in the winter of 1857, consequently a complex being in possession of two natures, one natural, sin-defiled and polluted, the other spiritual and divine, one lusting against the other, so that I cannot do the things that I would, hence the warfare. In May of the same year, at the same time and place, in obedience to the divine command, myself, wife and two children followed our blessed Lord down into the liquid stream and were baptized by Elder P. C. Brome, and were received in full fellowship by the church and enjoyed all the privileges of the house of God for about ten months. Long to be remembered were some of those seasons there enjoyed. The Lord, who is rich in mercy, made manifest his almighty power in giving us two of our children (as I humbly trust) with us to walk in newness of life, together with a number of others; all appeared to be of one mind and one heart, sitting under the droppings of his sanctuary, feasting on the shalls and wills of Jehovah and his everlasting and electing love. But in the spring of 1858 we moved to Wisconsin, in Fondulac County, city of Ripon. O what a change! Here we were compassed about by the children of the bondwoman, a number of different sects or denominations all in unison upon the system of works, rejoicing in a fire of their own kindling, perverting the gospel of Christ and turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, preaching Christ as an offered Savior, that he in his life, sufferings, death and resurrection made the way possible for poor sinners to be saved from the wrath of a sin-avenging God. Not one of those despised Nazarenes to converse with; we had no Priscilla, or Aquilla, or Elder Brome, to teach us the way more perfectly, or to defend the cause of God and truth. Aside from God's word, our own experience and, I trust, the teachings of the Holy Spirit in this matter, we were alone, and felt miserable beyond description, a mere babe in Christ, if one at all, unacquainted in a great measure with God's word and its spiritual meaning, not one to converse with (except my own family) without contention, in the midst of the enemies of truth, all preaching a yea and nay gospel. If ever my soul was drawn out in prayer to God for light and understanding, and that he would be a present help in this my time of trouble, it was then; that he would reveal to us the way of salvation, that he would give us strength to stand and withstand the combined force of the enemy, that he would keep us by his own power through faith, that we might not bring reproach upon

his cause, and I trust that his ear was open to our cry. In the fall of 1851 we left for Iowa, and settled in Bremer County. There we found many precious brethren, and by relation united with the Providence Church, and once more through the tender mercy of the all-wise Benefactor could sit together in the house of God in full fellowship of those blessed privileges which we had been denied for nearly three years. In the spring of 1867 we emigrated to the Pacific coast, and in September arrived at my son-in-law's, in Clackamas County, Oregon, being five and one-half months on the road. In all our wanderings the Lord has been our strength and our shield, and has verified his promise, As thy day, so shall thy strength be.

In my stammering way I have tried to tell you of a few of the past events of my life since I by profession have put on Christ. Never since I trust the Lord, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shined in my poor, sinful heart, have I doubted his goodness or power to save to the uttermost. But the questions often arise, Am I one of his redeemed? Am I one for whom he shed his precious blood? If so, why is it that my way is so crooked and my path shrouded in darkness that the enemy seems to get the advantage, and all my natural propensities to do evil rise up against me, and often make me cry out, O wretched man that I am? In every age of the world the Lord has raised up and qualified suitable instructors to give consolation to his Zion, to reclaim the erring, saying, Return, thou backsliding Israel. Notwithstanding I have been such a stumbler ever since I was made to rejoice in God as my Savior, I have never desired to look back, for by experience there is no rest to the weary pilgrim short of the mountain of the Lord's house, which is established on the top of the mountains, to the house of the God of Jacob, the church of the living God. There in obedience to the divine command can the weary pilgrim rest in hope, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ. There we can behold the beauty of the Lord and inquire in his tabernacle. There we can hold communion with our glorious High Priest, who is touched with all the feeling of our infirmities. There, and there alone, need we expect the approbation of the Almighty, and have a conscience void of offence, receive and enjoy those spiritual blessings in Christ, and enjoy the fellowship of God's dear children. Here we are made to wonder and adore the riches of God's grace in the redemption of his people, and by his almighty power the prey has been taken from the mighty, the lawful captive has been delivered. Who is this that cometh from Edom, the land of his enemies, with his garments stained with blood? It is her glorious deliverer, the Lord Jesus Christ.

A. F. BEEBE.

JULIAN, Cal., Nov. 4, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel as though I would like to let my many brethren and correspondents know that my pilgrimage here on earth is drawing near its close. My body and mind, in point of strength, are failing, so this may be the last writing I will do, and if so I leave you all in full faith and hope. The reason for my many correspondents is on account of seeing my name in the SIGNS, as there have been a number of my letters published. I told the deacon of the church that on account of the age of myself and wife we would have to go to our son's in

California, some twelve hundred miles distant, in order for them to take care of us, and he said it was all right to go. I left my membership there in the Coast Fork Church, at Walker, Oregon, and, according to promise, I have through the mails reported to my church every month. As I said before, some of my church letters have been published in the SIGNS. I have tried to do my duty as a faithful church member, as near as light and strength were given me. I have prayed for my seat to be filled by a more worthy member than I am. I have urged the church members living far away to be prompt to report to the household of God; it shows that they have not forgotten their duty and strengthens those who do attend. They are told by the Scriptures that it is a duty as well as a privilege. If we are in Christ, and Christ is in us, we should not forget what he has done for us that no other power could do, although false christs are trying to help do in this day and age.

Dear readers, if my subject is not very well connected please excuse me, for I have to write awhile then rest awhile. I would like to give you a short account of my travels through the desert of sin for sixty long years, but time and space will not permit. It was long before I took up my cross and followed Christ down into the water and was baptized in the full fellowship of the church. Now, dear friends, do not do as I did and neglect a duty, for which I am receiving stripes. Perhaps that is the reason the Lord has spared my life so long. We have to give an account of the deeds done in the body, let them be good or evil. Let us keep our lamps well supplied with oil, trimmed and burning, so we may be ready to meet the Bridegroom at his coming.

Dear editors, please excuse all mistakes, as I do not use glasses and write with a pencil. I am an old man, tottering under the weight of nearly ninety-five years, so if I should write anything to mar the peace of any of God's little ones please excuse me, for it is not of the heart, but of the head. I have written this by piecemeal, on account of feebleness. If you think it worthy of a place in the SIGNS, publish it; if not, all will be right with me.

An old sinner,

S. S. MILLER.

MANASSAS, Va., Feb. 20, 1907.

DEAR SISTER "TENA":—I would like to write you, dear sister, something worth reading in answer to your most experimental letter. I am heartily glad that you, or any one else, could enjoy the letter in the SIGNS which you speak of. I feel well paid for any trouble I may take if any of the Lord's dear and afflicted people get a bit of help or comfort through me in any way. I do not think it is often the case that they do, especially of late years. You complain of your inability to write or talk like many of your brethren. I once thought that that gift was a very important one and much to be desired; I envied those who talked glibly and easily. I still feel, at times, it would be a great privilege indeed to be able to tell what I get a glimpse of as it passes through my mind, still my experience and observation have convinced me that we attach altogether too much importance to the "gift of gab," as it is sometimes called. Our Savior said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father," &c. The "hearing" of his word and the "doing" it are of far more importance

than talk, though we talk like angels. The hearing his word is the receiving it with a glad heart, knowing it is the truth, and longing above everything else to know it is for us, that we have a right to it, that it belongs to us, rejoicing that it is the truth anyway, whether it belongs to us or not. God works this work in us: this work both to will and to do of his good pleasure. A poor soul may be literally dumb, yet he hears the joyful sound. He hears the word, not merely with natural ears of the body, but down in his heart and mind. His thoughts meditate upon it, God's law is in his mind and his heart embraces it; that is, he loves it. His heart burns within him as Jesus communes with him by the way and opens to him the Scriptures. You listen while others are telling perhaps things you know to be so, for you have experienced them yourself. You love to listen, for you hear things you love. Now, dear sister, let me call your attention to a question our Savior asked his disciples on a certain occasion: Which is greater, he that sitteth at meat or he that serveth? Of course he that sitteth at meat is one who is served, and is above the servant. So we see that the talker or writer is, at best, but a servant, while he that heareth and receiveth the word is the honored guest, the one who is served. "My sheep hear my voice," is a sweet truth running all through the Scriptures.

Aug. 19, 1908.—There must be some of the spirit of the good Samaritan in you, as you are so willing to lend a helping hand to the Lord's afflicted people and to minister to their comfort. Such tokens and works are far beyond empty professions and selfish zeal, which are so easy to put on where there is no sacrifice to be made. "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."—Matt. x. 42. These are very sweet and significant words of the Savior.

Sincerely your brother in hope,

J. N. BADGER.

COVINGTON, Ga., Sept. 26, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have read with much interest and satisfaction your editorial in the SIGNS of Sept. 1st in reply to the questions asked. I think they are fully answered, and very satisfactorily to myself, and I trust they may comfort and edify all readers of the SIGNS. If there are any weak or doubting ones, may they be strengthened and built up in that pure and holy faith once delivered unto the saints. That God has predestinated all things from the beginning unto the end, all events, great and small, in time and eternity, is a comforting thought or belief to me. I think I realize that if my salvation depended upon anything good that I could do, or ever have done, I should sink in despair. I often feel to say with Paul that in me, that is, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing. Often the will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. I am getting on now in years, and used to think when I got older that my walk and life would be more Christlike, more what I think a christian's life ought to be, but I find my old nature the same, ever running after the things of the world, often forgetting the mercies and blessings bestowed upon me by a kind and merciful God. The warfare must continue, and I feel sure will continue unto the end of life. Here we are strangers, wanderers, seeking a home or city whose maker and builder is God, and I believe in the fullness of time every child of God, every one

for whom Christ died, will reach that heavenly city.

I will close by thanking you for your kindness, and thanking the Lord that he has given you wisdom and knowledge of the word of God, and trust that you may long be spared to speak and write to the comfort of the dear children of God.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

W. M. HEARD.

LEESBURG, Va., Nov. 8, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER HOWELL:—Just a few moments ago I passed sister Florence Paxson on the street, and she told me that to-morrow you will have been married fifty years. I want to send you my congratulations, although this note will probably reach you a little late, as I did not know of it in time to write sooner. You may have had trials and afflictions during the past fifty years, but you also have had your blessings, and I hope your consciousness of blessing will so abound beyond whatever bitterness you have experienced that all unpleasant things of the past fifty years may be lost sight of in the pleasant recollections that are yours at this time. It is a great blessing that you both have been spared to each other for these many years, though I am sure it seems but a short while to you as you look back over it. I hope you both will be spared to each other yet many years to come. As the Lord has so far given you grace for all your needs, and has never failed, so it is my desire that he will continue to be with you even unto the end of the world. This the Lord has promised to do unto his people, and I am confident you belong to that holy family, so this promise is yours also. He will keep every promise made in Christ to his people, for he is not slack concerning his promises as men are. Mrs. Lefferts joins me in love and very best wishes to you both.

Yours in the fellowship of the truth,

H. H. LEFFERTS.

[PUBLISHED at the request of brother and sister Howell, of Middletown, N. Y. —ED.]

ADRIAN, Mich., Nov., 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I will send you my remittance of two dollars for another year. The dear Lord has seen fit to spare my unprofitable life, but what is in store for me the coming year he alone knows. I am now seventy-eight years old, and if my life is spared another year I want the SIGNS to read, for it is a great comfort to my poor heart. The dear ones tell my feelings much better than I could if I should try.

Dear editors, will one of you give your views on the words, "Many are called, but few are chosen," through the SIGNS, and oblige one who loves the truth as it is in Christ Jesus?

Dear friends, can one who feels to be so great a sinner claim a share in the precious blood of the dear crucified and now risen Savior?

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

LAMIRA CAREY.

NOTICE.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANKS.

As a great many of our subscribers' time expires with the end of the year, we inclose in each paper of this issue a subscription blank as a convenience to them in sending new subscribers, as well as in paying their own subscriptions. Will you please make a special effort to send one or more new subscribers when you renew your own subscription for next year?

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1915.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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1 JOHN III. 14.

"WE know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death."

This text has perhaps been one of the most comforting and assuring of any in the Scriptures to the children of God. When all other evidences seem to fail this often brings hope of their acceptance in the Beloved. Of all things here below, the saints want to know that they are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. The Lord in his infinite wisdom and knowledge moved the apostles now and then to use the expression, "We know." It should not be forgotten that they were writing to the churches—little children, when the words were used. The apostles had wonderful revelations, it is true, but real, certain knowledge of salvation was given the saints in the same measure that the apostles had it, therefore in addressing the churches they sometimes said, "We know." The knowledge of God is not a mere fancy of the mind; to know him is life eternal, and life eternal is not a thing of yesterday and to-day only, but forever and ever. The saints have it now and shall have it hereafter. The knowledge of God, possessed by his children, is of all things most sure, most positive. They may be mistaken in all things pertaining to earth; sight is often defective, hearing is often poor, comprehension is often dull, false reports are often circulated, devils deceive, but there is no mistake with reference to the knowledge of God. He is known by divine revelation, and the powers of darkness cannot prevail against the revelation that he is God and the Savior of the ends of the earth. We know that God rules and reigns in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. We know that none can stay his hand. John when writing this letter knew just as well who were not of God, manifestly, as he did who were of him. They were made manifest by their fruits. Those who did unrighteousness were of the devil, and those who did righteousness were of God. Are not the same marks upon mankind to-day? Shall not the same rule measure all men now? If the saints "know" these things, why do they not "know" that they have passed from death unto life? The death here spoken of means the condition that all the children of God were in through the transgression of Adam, and the "life" means eternal life, which Christ gives to all his sheep. The passing from death unto life can mean nothing short of being made alive from the dead, or the dead raised from the state of death they were in by sin unto life and holiness by the power of God. You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and in sin, and hath raised us up together with Christ. Therefore if ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Now the work of making alive from the dead having been accomplished, the Lord has given his children the infallible proof thereof by shedding abroad in their hearts

his love, that they love each other with pure hearts fervently. This love never produces hatred, malice, envy, evil surmisings; it thinks no ill, never backbites, never murders, never lies. This is strictly in accord with the teachings of the New Testament, but all these things are from time to time manifest in the children of God. If they do not, cannot, emanate from the Spirit of God, what is their source? Let James the apostle answer the question for us: "If ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish." From the above Scripture we understand that such conditions existed in the days of the apostles, and they are as prevalent today. How strange that one subject of grace professing to love another can attempt to murder him! We do not mean that he would desire to shed the blood of his brother, but John says, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." Hatred, malice and envy cause one child of God to speak illy of another, willfully trying to lower him in the estimation of his brethren, and as deplorable as it is this is more often done by ministers than any other class of believers. If some special point of doctrine is not presented exactly as another sees it, immediately war is declared. It is good for us all to observe the independence of the apostles in their writings. Seldom ever does one mention another, but writes what he feels impressed to write. We find no criticism one of another's writings anywhere. It is true as apostles they wrote by inspiration, but they had not the slightest idea that their writings would ever become a part of the Scriptures, and had Paul possessed the spirit that possesses some today he doubtless would have warned the brethren against John and declared nonfellowship for him because he said, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." It will be remembered, however, that Paul made no attempt at such description himself. The difference between brethren on the subject of the resurrection has often reminded us of the difference between an Old School Baptist and an Arminian. The Old Baptist gives his view of redemption and salvation by grace. The Arminian listens attentively, then says, "As far as you go I agree with you, but I believe more than that: I believe that the sinner has something to do." One brother in speaking of the resurrection of the dead confines himself closely to scriptural language, using identically the words of the apostles. Another brother listens or reads and remarks, "That does not go far enough; you have said nothing about the resurrection of our mortal bodies." Beloved brethren, listen: the Scriptures do not say our mortal bodies shall be raised, but they do say, and we all rejoice in it, that "it is sown a natural body [or mortal body, if the term is more pleasing], it is raised a spiritual body." Let us not forget that the body is not raised mortal and changed to spiritual, but raised spiritual; the change takes place before it is raised. Then why contend that the mortal bodies are raised when the Scriptures declare it to be a spiritual body raised? Now when we all know that the Bible puts it exactly this way, why disagree about it? And if Paul, writing by inspiration, stopped right there, why not let us all stop at the same place and wait until the change comes? If "we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," do we not know equally as well that if we love not our "brother" we abide in death? Surely

slander and abuse are not the fruits of love, but are of that spirit which is "sensual, earthly, devilish." Let us not only take heed unto the doctrine, dear brethren, but let us take heed unto ourselves, watch our steps, bridle our tongues and see that our hands are not swift to shed blood. If we think evil of a brother what do we lack? "Charity." If we seek a brother's hurt what do we lack? "Charity." If we become puffed up with pride what do we lack? "Charity." And if we speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, we become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. If we have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though we have all faith, so that we could remove mountains, and have not charity, we are "nothing." Though we should bestow all our goods to feed the poor, and though we were to give our bodies to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth us nothing. How lovely is "charity," how peaceable and how kind. But how destructive the spirit of lordship, envy, malice. May the knowledge that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren, abound, but may we all crucify the flesh and the deeds thereof when moved by that "devilish" principle to hurt or injure our brother for whom Christ died. We have hope toward God that we have manifested our love for the brethren and the doctrine of God our Savior during the twenty years we have tried to serve in the vineyard of the Lord, and never have we been so heartsick and discouraged as during the last year or so. Of late we have not written for the SIGNS, though our duty to do so, because of so much contention and criticism, and if the same spirit continues we shall soon cease to write at all, and more than likely sever our connection with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, other than help with the office work. Life is too short for us to spend it toiling and striving, when nothing seems to be accomplished. War in the church of God over trivial matters and mysteries unknown to men and angels will never be entered by us. We have spent our life earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and shall continue to do so as long as the Lord wills, but to contend for things not yet delivered, not yet seen, not yet wrought, have not yet appeared, as though they had, we cannot consistently, conscientiously nor intelligently do so. We are satisfied, as near as is possible in this life, with the knowledge that "now are we the sons of God." At last all will be well; then we shall know how little we knew here when boasting of unrevealed knowledge.

With love and good will toward the household of faith, K.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

SALE OF THE DOLLAR CONCORDANCE DISCONTINUED.

WE have decided to discontinue the sale of the dollar Concordance, and in the future we will only have for sale the one dollar and fifty cent Concordance, as we feel that this book will give much better satisfaction, and is well worth the extra money.

LUKE X. 3-8.

"Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves. Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way. And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again. And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the laborer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house. And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you."

Jesus, coming back to Capernaum after his trip across Galilee to Gadara, where he had healed the man possessed with devils, raised to life the daughter of Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, and healed the woman who had had an issue of blood twelve years. After these things he called his twelve disciples together and sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick, commanding them to take nothing for their journey, no staff, no scrip, no bread, no money, and but the clothes they had on their backs. After the return of the twelve from this ministry Jesus sent forth other seventy, "two and two," and it is with these that our text has to do. Neither the ministry of the twelve nor of these seventy was to any but the Jews. These were sent forth to preach while Jesus was still here on earth, before his death and resurrection, and so they were commanded to go not in the way of the Gentiles, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. This is different from what Jesus said to the apostles after the resurrection. Then he said, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Before his death the ministry of the truth was to Jews only; after his resurrection it is to all the world, that is, to all nations, to the Gentiles. Jesus said, as a prelude to the sending out of the seventy, that "the harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few." Jesus knew who and where the sheep were without their being manifested, and he knew that there were many hidden away here and there that were groping for the light, who were hungering and thirsting for the truth. This was the harvest he meant, not the fields of wheat and other grain. This harvest that his Spirit knew and saw, was "great," but the laborers, those called to preach the word to these hungry, were few. It seems even in the day of Jesus that those requiring ministration of the truth were more numerous by far than those called and qualified to feed them. We should not be surprised, if the history of the church could be traced from generation to generation since Christ's day, that this disproportion between those to be preached to, and those called to preach, has always existed. In our day we know we are always seeming to be in need of more preachers than we have. It seems the preachers we have are greatly overworked, many having to serve more than one church, and often as many as four or five, and even more churches. If man had his way about it he would have a preacher for every church, but that is not God's way. There is no place in God's plan of things for idleness or ease in the Master's vineyard, no place for surfeit or overfeeding. The relation between the laborers in the vineyard and the vines to be dressed is such that the laborers are busy all the time, and each plant gets just the attention it needs, no more and no less. It is worthy of notice that while Jesus forbade these seventy to take with them any purse, scrip, shoes or food, he did not compel them to go solitarily, but "two and two." He knew they needed companionship with a fellow-laborer, that this society and companionship with one another was more essential to their well-being than mere food or clothing. Going

two and two they could encourage each other, counsel together, commune together, suffer together, fast together and in all things be together, upholding one another in weakness, confirming each other in strength. Jesus always placed spiritual and invisible things far ahead of natural and visible things in importance. How refreshing it is in this twentieth century of crass materialism when we see a man or woman so baptized with the Christ-spirit as to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, counting all else as nothing compared with the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord. When one is so possessed with the Spirit of Christ spiritual and eternal things come first with that one, and everything else is secondary, or not at all, and more than anything, such an one seeks the society and companionship of kindred spirits, and this is right. For some such reason as this, no doubt, Jesus sent the seventy forth "two and two," while prohibiting the taking of any supply of a temporal kind. "Go your ways." By "your ways," was not meant the ways of their choosing and planning, but the ways into which Jesus had called them and commanded them to go, thus making his way their ways, and all their ways combined in his way. "I send you forth as lambs among wolves." What animal is more helpless than a lamb? The young of no animal is so helpless, so at the mercy of all that seeks its hurt, as a little lamb. Jesus here uses the lamb to signify the attitude of his ministers toward their enemies. These whom Jesus sent forth to preach were helpless to take care of themselves, all their care was upon him, he guaranteed their safety. They could not fight, they should not strive. They were helpless and harmless. Those among whom they should go were as "wolves." They would seek to kill this ministry and to stamp out their word. As wolves, their enemies should seek to rend and devour these lambs sent out at the command of the Shepherd to carry his message. Not so much as a little finger could they raise in their own defence against these ravening wolves opposed to God and godliness, but the angel of Jesus' presence was with them and they should be kept from all harm. The business of the God-called minister is to preach the truth, he does not have to fight to establish this truth. The truth was established before he was born. It is his high privilege and calling to declare what the truth is. If the truth commends not itself to the hearer, all the fighting and striving in the world will never convince one of its reality. Mere argument, mere reasoning, never convinced any one of the truth. The truth does its own demonstrating and its own convincing by its spiritual unction in the hearts prepared to receive it; it does never depend upon logic or eloquence or oratory to fulfill its end. "Carry neither purse." They took with them no money. Whatever money they might need would be given them when the occasion demanded. Not that God would hand it down from heaven, but he would move the hearts of men through sympathy, love or compassion to hand his disciples what money he knew they needed. No need for them to worry about this, for when the need came the money would be somehow, somewhere forthcoming. What a pity that some of us have so magnified the importance of money as to think it is all-essential. We have become obsessed with it. Actually one needs very little money if he just thought so. Is it not true that because other people have it, we want it, too? Is it not a shame that we cannot have the

courage to live our own lives according to the strength of our own convictions? Why must we strive to keep up with the other fellow? What do we owe him that we should allow him to set the pace for us? We are very like chameleons, that assume the color of whatever leaf or tree or object they happen to be on, thus sinking their identity in their environment, so escaping notice. But Jesus was never so. He was a nonconformist in every sense of the word. It mattered nothing to him what other people did or said, nor how they lived or what they had, he wanted only a good conscience between him and his God and to do the will of his Father. This, to him, was all-satisfying. O that Christ would energize our dull and leaden lives with the flame and power of the living faith, that we might be more manifest as the men of God and less, far less, as men of the world. "Nor scrip." They took with them no writing, no letters of introduction from this one to that one, to make their path smoother for the flesh. Their ministry was the only introduction they needed to make manifest to their hearers who they were. Their hearers might not know that this man is Smith or Jones, but they would know that this man is sent from God to them. His message would introduce him to them. His gift would make room for him. Other scrip, he needed none and should have none. "Nor shoes." Moses, at the bush, was told to take his shoes from off his feet, for the place whereon he stood was holy ground. Moses then stood in the calling and qualification of God, and must be unshod of the shoes of his own preparation and self-confidence. These seventy whom Jesus sent forth stood on holy ground, the place of the ministry of Jesus, the sanctified ground of the service of God. No man can ever stand so in his own shoes; that is, in his own preparation, wisdom or strength. He must be unshod of these and shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, God's shoes. This makes his feet beautiful upon the mountains, for he comes to publish peace, to comfort Zion, to declare glad tidings. "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter!" "Salute no man by the way;" that is, turn not to the right nor to the left, but go straightway upon the King's business. This business is serious, of infinite importance, and will admit of no deviation. Have you ever known how, in the cities, the men who are runners for the banks go straight from place to place, without stopping to salute any one or to engage any one in conversation? These men dare not stop, for they are entrusted with matters of importance that will admit of no dalliance. Now, if men think financial matters of such great moment, how much more important, think you, is the business of the God of heaven, which is of infinite value? Is it any wonder then he told them not to salute any man, but to go straight upon their business? There must be not the slightest turning aside in this work of the ministry, no rounding of the corners, no smoothing of rough edges, but one must have his face set as a flint against all error and evasion. In their ministry these seventy were not to force their message upon any not wishing to hear it or not capable of receiving it, but to preach to those whom the "son of peace" had prepared to receive it. If they entered into any house and found the "son of peace," the Spirit of Jesus, abiding there, then there they should remain eating and drinking such things as they gave, healing the sick, and saying, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. But into

whatever house or city they entered and met with no responsive work of the Spirit, they were to leave that place at once and not tarry there. It was quite evident that if Christ dwelt not there, there was no room for them there. Where there is no room for truth there is no room for the preacher of truth, and the sooner he gets away from that place the better for him. It is important to note in all this that when Jesus sent these out to preach, the "son of peace" went before them and prepared the way, quickening the dead sinner and opening his heart to receive the word. Without this previous preparation the preaching of the truth will never do any one any good. This preparation of the heart is of the Lord, it is not of men. Man can never enable any one to receive or believe the truth, and when these seventy entered any house and found this preparation of the "son of peace" lacking, they were to leave that place, and shake its dust off their feet as a testimony against them. They were not to resort to any means whatever to force themselves where they were not wanted. For the past hundred years and more the nominal christian world has been sending missionaries to the heathen, but at no point are their doings, much less their teachings, imbued with the Spirit of Christ. If they find the heathen unwilling to accept their teachings, unwilling to renounce their pagan faith, the missionaries resort to ways and means to pry them loose from their paganism and to compel them to accept the creeds of missionism. Is this what Jesus said do? No, if the "son of peace" be not there, leave that place and shake its dust off your feet. What would Americans think if China had conceived the idea of sending missionaries here to convert us all to Confucianism? Would not the Americans have howled with rage at the presumption of the Orientals? Yet, Confucianism is just as dear and just as real and true to the Chinese heart as is the so-called christian religion to many an American's heart. It seems that the missionaries have not known the royal law of Scripture, to love their neighbor as themselves. They do not do to the Orientals as they would wish the Orientals to do to them. All men have a right to liberty of conscience, to their own creeds and superstitions, and the preacher of Jesus has no business meddling with any of them until it appears that the Spirit has prepared one to hear it, then let him preach, and do it with all his might. Peter went down to the house of Cornelius and his preaching introduced him to that Gentile family, but that household had been prepared to receive the preaching before Peter got there. Just the same way Philip preached to the eunuch, and the message Philip sowed dropped effectively into the prepared ground of the eunuch's heart. God's work is joint-work, and there is no hit or miss about it When he sends one out to preach, there is some one somewhere for that one to preach to, and they will not miss getting together. Preaching breath was never spent in vain. No farmer would go out and sow seed in his field without first preparing the seed-bed. Certainly, God Almighty never sends out one bearing gospel truth but what he makes preparation for the reception of that seed, and it is just as idle to talk about men preparing themselves to receive or hear the truth, as it is to talk about a field getting itself ready to be sown while the farmer sits in the house by the fire. One is just as ridiculous as the other. In all this that we have quoted as a text from the tenth chapter of Luke the keynote is absolute

and entire dependence upon the Lord, confidence in him for all temporal as well as spiritual needs. Well, some one says, that might do for that day and time, but it will not do now when the standards of living are much higher than they were then and men's needs are much greater. It is not practical now, so they say, for a minister of the gospel to depend absolutely and entirely upon the Lord for all his food and drink and other necessities of life. Why is it not practical? Does not the same God live and reign now as did then, and is he not just as omnipotent and capable as he was then? Is not the earth his and the fullness thereof, the same now as then? Then, why is it not practical? Let us say to you, It is not a question of practicableness, it is a matter of faith. If men do not trust the Lord to-day for all things, it is because they lack the faith to do so. This faith is the fruit of the Spirit, the gift of God. If you have not got it, you cannot get it. But if the Spirit of God bestows this faith in one, that one will be immersed in the infinite, and he will look to the Lord for all things, counting him abundantly able to supply all his needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Requested. L.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The churches composing the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the church at Forest Grove, Wicomico Co., Md., October 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1915, to the churches and associations with which we correspond send greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In the providence of Almighty God we have been permitted to meet according to appointment in an associational capacity, realizing the goodness of God in sparing our unprofitable lives, giving us the mind and strength to attend this meeting, which has been largely attended by brethren from sister churches and associations, as well as a goodly number of attentive friends. Peace and quietness have reigned throughout the meeting. The preaching has been excellent, both in power and simplicity, by which it is both comforting and edifying, and we feel it is good to be here, realizing this meeting is in the appointment of God, and that he has been in it and blessed it to the comfort of his children here assembled and to his honor and glory, which his ministers here have by his power so ably declared.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the church at Nassaongo, Wicomico Co., Md., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday after the third Sunday in October, 1916, where we hope to meet your messengers and receive your messages of love and fellowship, thereby continuing our correspondence which we prize so highly.

A. B. FRANCIS, Moderator.
JOHN H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder William Isaiah Carnell was born in Carroll County, Tenn., Jan. 19th, 1863, died in Dunwich, Canada, Sept. 18th, 1915, aged 52 years, 7 months and 29 days. Our dear brother received a hope in the righteousness and blood of the dear Savior in 1881, and in the same year began preaching his everlasting gospel. The most of his early ministry was spent in the south, but in later years he began to travel extensively, and the greater part of his ministerial life was devoted entirely to the work whereunto God had called him. About the year 1898 he received a call from the Baptist Church of Canada, and preached for those brethren about eight years. Coming back to the States about the year 1907 he associated himself with Elder C. M. Weaver in editing the *Predestinarian Baptist*, in the columns of which periodical his able writings appeared each month until the paper was merged with the *Spiritual Law Counsel*, in 1913. As a man, Elder Carnell was kind and courteous in manner. He was not given to jesting or to spending his time grasping for the sordid things of life. As a gospel minister, there was none who excelled him in zeal and devotion for the cause of truth. Though kind and courteous in his ministry, he was firm and uncompromising. God favored him with a marvelous gift of speech, and as a teacher of gospel truth there were few his equal. Our dear brother was a predestinarian in the true sense of the word, and for his able defence of this doctrine he received much bitter persecution. The doctrine of the resurrection of the dead was his most absorbing and cherished theme, and he proclaimed it with great power and clearness. He fought a good fight, finished his course and kept the faith. Zion truly mourns the loss of so noble a gift, but God willed it so. He leaves a wife and three children to mourn his death. May God comfort their hearts.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Hutchinson, of Franklin, Ohio, after which kind hands laid our dear brother in the grave near Dutton, Ontario, Canada, to wait until his change comes. These words of testimony fell from his pen as he saw death's shadows thickening: "The rest and sleep will be very sweet, and the waking will be most glorious."

One who dearly loved him.

C. M. WEAVER.

SISTER **Martha E. Laytham,** widow of brother Franklin Laytham, passed away at her home near Mays Lick, Ky., May 10th, 1915, after an illness of but a few months. Sister Laytham was a daughter of the late John Owens, of Mason County, Ky. She is survived by several brothers and sisters and by two daughters: Mrs. Bettie Turner and Miss Jessie Laytham, her husband and daughter, Miss Anna, having preceded her. Both were well known among the brethren. Sister Laytham had been a faithful and true member of the church for forty-four years. She was sound and decided in the faith; she loved the doctrine of salvation by grace, and delighted to honor those who preached it. She manifested a keen and constant interest in the church, and with her dear husband and others of the family went far and near and often to associations and other meetings. She was decided in her convictions of truth and righteousness, and quick to act in the way she determined to be right. She was a woman of much force of character and full of energy, doing with her might that which her hands found to do. In her widowhood she seemed to realize most keenly the loss sustained of that which made her so. Her home, which was also the home of her daughters and son-in-law, brother R. L. Turner, was a welcome resting-place for wayfaring pilgrims and sinners saved by grace, and is and for many years has been such for me. I visited the family during the early part of her illness, and found her apprehensive of the near approach of her departure, and was impressed of her as her dear daughter, sister Turner, so well expresses it: "In all of her sickness and at all times her constant desire was to be both submissive and reconciled to the will of her blessed Master, in whom she had lived and trusted through all the conflicts of this life, and in a most wonderful way he manifested to her his faithfulness to his blessed promises that he would never leave nor forsake those who trust in him."

Elder P. W. Sawin and myself were called, but I was from home and could not attend, but Elder Sawin did, and spoke many sweet words of comfort to the bereaved ones, and in speaking of her death said it was a good time to go to her heavenly home after a long and beautiful life. Her last days were calm, expectant and confiding, and when the final hour came she passed away without a single struggle, only to calmly, peacefully and sweetly fall asleep to awake with the likeness of her blessed and gracious Redeemer.

The request to write in her memory should have been complied with sooner, but I have not felt to be in a frame of mind to do so.

With peaceful thoughts in her memory, I am her servant in hope, P. G. LESTER.

Miss Nema Foster departed this life near Freestone, Texas, Oct. 13th, 1915. She was born Oct. 16th, 1903, therefore lacked three days of being 12 years old. She was the daughter of Mrs. Ida Beene, who was first married to Mr. Foster. To that union were born four children, three girls and one boy. After the death of Mr. Foster she was married again, to our beloved brother W. O. Beene, who was a widower with four children, all boys. To the last

marriage were born four children, making twelve in the family, Miss Nema being the youngest daughter of the Foster children and the first to be taken by death, breaking the chain of this large family record. She was a lovely young girl. The parents write: "She loved our old hymns, and to read the SIGNS." The writer has many times visited the family and witnessed the truthfulness of the above. I have heard Miss Nema and the two other sisters jointly singing our precious old songs, and it would solemnly touch my feelings to hear their youthful voices in sweet accord with tune and words, which meant the praises of God our Savior. At the time Miss Nema was taken violently ill her father and mother were absent from home, attending the Union Old School Baptist Association. When they returned they found their daughter in the throes of death with a third congestive chill, which ended her sweet life. She lived only twelve hours after the parents returned. O what grief to the parents, after enjoying the service of the most high God at the association, and then so soon the unutterable sorrow. But in the midst of this great extremity she gave assurance of a blessed hope, telling the weeping ones around her bed her hope of life beyond this vale of tears. The last word she uttered was "peace. She was ever a dutiful and faithful child, which endeared her to all. I desire to say to the bereaved, Rest in the sweet hope of meeting your dear daughter in the world of eternal peace, and there throughout the ages of eternity realize all the fullness of the last word, "peace." May this word under the blessing of God serve as an evergreen or memento in the hearts of the parents, children and all the weeping friends of the community, to comfort them in their affliction and redound to the glory of God.

Written at the request of the parents, to be sent to the SIGNS. ASA HOWARD.

Mrs. Elizabeth Tharp was born in Putnam County, Ind., Feb. 16th, 1838, died Nov. 16th, 1915. She was the daughter of Elder William Hogen, who died in Kansas in 1869. She was married to Elihu H. Tharp, Nov. 9th, 1854. To that union were born eleven children, three of whom survive her to mourn their loss: Wm. H., F. E. and Mrs. Thomas Whistler. The family moved to Kansas in 1860. Besides the three children she leaves her aged and invalid husband, two brothers, A. J. and Thos. Hogen, Mrs. D. E. Frisby and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was stricken with dropsy of the heart. She told her family that the time of her departure had come, and was graciously made willing to pass away. She was truly a model wife, loving mother and kind and sympathetic friend and neighbor. Better still, she had an abiding faith in God, a hope of immortality through Jesus Christ her Savior. The Scriptures and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES were instructive and comforting to her. She was not a member of the visible church, but was a firm believer in the doctrine of the Bible as understood by the Old School Baptist Church. She died in the hope of eternal life when Christ, who is the life of the saints, shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation from the sleep of death and the power of the grave.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer, who used as a text John xi. 25: "I am the resurrection, and the life," &c.

T. R. PITTMAN.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

IN response to a call for ordained help to constitute a church of Jesus Christ, commonly called Old School or Predestinarian Baptist, Elder A. Wilson, of Little Zion Church, Elder F. L. Riffe, of Sulphur Creek Church, Elder W. H. Shields, of Cowlitz River Church, and Deacon R. J. Yeoman, of Bethel Church, met at the home of brother and sister M. E. Martin, No. 3733 Brooklyn Ave., N. E., Seattle, Wash.

By request Elder Shields introduced services by singing and prayer, after which a presbytery was organized by electing Elder A. Wilson moderator and Deacon R. J. Yeoman clerk.

Letters of those wishing to go into the constitution were called for.

A letter from Burdett Old School Baptist Church of Burdett, N. Y., was presented by sister Marion Patchin, and one from Little Zion Church, of Oakville, Wash., by brother and sister M. E. Martin, which were examined by the presbytery and found to be orthodox.

Articles of faith and rules of decorum, which had been written beforehand, were read and approved by the presbytery and signed by those desiring to go into the constitution of the church.

The presbytery then declared the above named members constituted into a church of gospel faith and order. The hymn, "How firm a foundation," was then sung, while the presbytery and members present extended the right hand of fellowship to the newly constituted church.

The church was then seated in order of business. Members present, sisters Patchin and Martin and brother Martin. Elder A. Wilson, of Oakville, Wash., was chosen moderator. Elder A. Wilson was nominated and unanimously chosen pastor. Brother M. E. Martin was unanimously chosen clerk. After which Elder F. L. Riffe dismissed the church in order by invoking the blessings of Almighty God.

A. WILSON, Moderator.
R. J. YEOMAN, Clerk.
SEATTLE, Wash., Oct. 2, 1915.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, The Head of the church, our Lord Jesus Christ, through the providence of Almighty God, his Father and ours, has seen fit to remove from the scene of his earthly labors and to take home to the church triumphant our dearly beloved brother, **Elder J. N. Badger,** and

WHEREAS, Elder J. N. Badger from 1876 to 1914 served churches in this Corresponding Meeting as pastor faithfully and well to the best of his ability given him of God; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That this Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, in memory of our dear departed brother, Elder J. N. Badger, does hereby attest our sorrow at this bereavement, while desiring to be submissive to the manifest will of God; mourning that the ministry of this able gift of God will no more be heard in our midst to our edification and comfort, though assured that our loss in the church militant is his eternal gain in glory. To the churches served by our brother now destitute of a pastor, and to his lonely and sorrowing companion, our sister Badger, we extend our sincere and heartfelt sympathy. Further, be it

RESOLVED, That this memorial be spread upon our Minutes and a copy sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.

S. B. PAXSON, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Ivory H. Ford, Maine, $1.00; Miss Margaret B. Tiebout, N. Y., $24.00.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

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[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 83. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1915. NO. 24.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

A HIGHLY honorable name! Among the children of men the question has been asked thousands of times: Who are the children of God? and also, whence came they? To answer these questions is an impossibility, only through the Scriptures. Nothing in all nature can even give us a hint of the origin or of the substance of the children of God. In speaking of the children of men, all mortals have a fair conception of the meaning of the words. Men of intelligence can trace their origin to their parents, and then back to three, four or more generations, until the records are lost in the dark mists of time. For thousands of years all men have been just as helpless in forming their opinions about the origin of the "first parents" as the men of to-day. There is no final conclusion of the subject, only in receiving the account given by Moses in his first book of inspiration. Natural men can hardly receive the testimony of Moses, from the fact that he wrote about twenty-five hundred years after the creation of man. In the absence of faith no man can comprehend how Moses could give a history of the creation twenty-five centuries before he wrote of it. Even the children of God are sometimes so wicked that they doubt the record Moses has given of man's origin. Only the faith of God's elect can enable us to believe that God gave Moses the view of the ages that had passed before he was born, and enabled him to write so minutely about creation and all the important men, women and things of the centuries following the creation and the fall of man. The children of men are the children of the flesh. These children of the flesh are not the children of God. (Rom. ix. 8; Luke xvi. 8.) Neither are the children of the wicked one the children of God. (Matt. xiii. 38; Acts xiii. 10; John viii. 44; 1 John iii. 8.) These children of the wicked one are also called the children of disobedience, hence they cannot be the children of God. (Eph. ii. 2; v. 6; Col. iii. 6.) These children of disobedience are children of unbelief, hence they are not called the children of God. The children of God are children of light; they have seen the great light that lighteth every man that cometh into the spiritual world. There is a natural world, and there is a spiritual world. To deny this is controverting the teaching of

Jesus and the apostles. Paul says that the children of God were raised up together with Christ and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Are these "heavenly places" earthly places? No. These children could not have attained so high a calling through the flesh. It is through Christ that "we have obtained an inheritance." (See Eph. i. 11; ii. 6.) The children of God in being manifested as such must be born, and born from above, born of the Spirit. The words of Jesus shall live forever when he says: That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit. As far as human understanding can comprehend in regard to a birth, it is always understood that something is brought forth, and that something is like its progenitor. I know that I may bring down censure from brethren in saying that a new spirit is given us, or manifested in us, in our heavenly birth through the Father of lights. (See Ezek. ii. 10; xxxvi. 26; John iii. 6; Rom. viii. 16; 1 Cor. ii. 12.) This spirit is a holy, heavenly spirit, because it came from God. In this sense Paul teaches: God is the Father of spirits. The children of God worship God in the spirit. They rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. How could they do that without a heavenly spirit given unto them? Never. (See Heb. xii. 9; Phil. iii. 2.) That spirit given from God is an earnest of their inheritance, sealing spirit. (2 Cor. i. 22.) God maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. His ministers, or messengers, are all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. (Heb. i. 7, 14.) Can we interpret the meaning of "ministers" in this passage to mean men? We cannot, for it is the spirit of inheritance. Notice the close connection in the above words: sent forth to minister for them, not to them. Jesus says these angels, or spirits, "do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."—Matt. xviii. 10. Having spoken of the heavenly gift, the spirit from above, giving many references to the Scriptures, these ought to be sufficient proof for any fair minded reader of the testimony of the truth. I want now to speak of the children of God in a sense that the children of men, as the children of the flesh, can never be a clear figure of the children of God. Speaking along the lines of inheritance, by the customs and the laws of tribes and nations for ages, a child could not be an heir to an inheritance without being born to it, or by adoption. If a child be legally adopted into another family it cannot inherit from its own family, seeing that its name is changed by the rules of adoption. By being adopted it loses its birthright as an heir in the family of its natural parents. Not so in regard to a child of God. He receives the spirit of adoption before adoption takes place, and nothing pertaining to his natural inheritance is lost. He is begotten again to an inheritance that is incorruptible, a heavenly inheritance; having received the spirit of inheritance, he loses not his inheritance through the flesh, but inherits from Adam all the seeds of death, and death itself. Now the children of God are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. That birth which manifests them as children is not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but that birth is of God. These children are born again of incorruptible seed by God's living and holy word, which ever lives and ever abides. This heirship can never be transferred or changed into another family as among the families of earth. Adoption in no way affects the solidity of this heirship, only to completely

glorify it. The adoption of the Adam man of God's people will not deprive them of their birthright among the saints of the Most High, but rather establishes them in their full and glorious inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled. That which the child of God receives on earth, in time, is a holy principle, never sinned, existed in the Father before it was given to men, and is a life principle; Jesus calls it eternal life. It is the germ of immortality. It is written: "They shall be called the children of God," and that is because they have obtained an inheritance through Christ. Having received the spirit which is of God, a seal from on high, a treasure in the earthen vessel, hope springs into vivid flashes of heavenly light and views far ahead the adopted sons of a mortal race redeemed by the cleansing blood of the everlasting covenant. Having a heavenly treasure in a vessel of earth does not signify that that vessel is already adopted into the heavenly kingdom, but it does mean that the vessel is predestinated unto a doctrine. The presence of that holy spirit, or treasure, in the vessel does not reclaim it from the sentence of death which by nature it has inherited from its earthly head, but it does take the sting of death away, for it speaks of Jesus blotting out all sins and transgressions that stood against his people. This positive knowledge of the power of the Redeemer reads their title clear to mansions in the skies. This being the realization that sin no more bars them from the company of Jesus and his saints, how then can death sting them? Nothing of all the experience of the saints, while on earth, as pertaining to their choice in Christ, shall be lost when adoption comes to them. In the face of Scriptures referred to, besides many others, how is it possible for death to destroy the unction from on high? The children of God of all the tribes of earth is the only tribe that has been delivered from the consequences of the death penalty, and have received in their innermost parts an advanced payment, a pledge of their future inheritance.

In hope of that immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., Nov. 21, 1915.

1 SAMUEL XV. 22.

"To obey is better than sacrifice."

I have been requested to write, but to write or speak to any purpose a person must have a subject worthy of the attention of those to whom he speaks or writes. It is always pleasant to have an easy subject, but the mind can only grow by exercise, and if we could have the ease we desire we would very soon become altogether unprofitable; yet when a subject is presented to the man with only one talent he is likely to see a view that he is afraid even to try to write out. A young man lately asked me this question: "Granting the doctrine of election, as preached by the Old School Baptists, to be true, how much better is a man off who is included in it, from the standpoint of the natural man?" Whether or not the young man is being led by the Spirit, I do not know. I have heard my father say of Elder Gabriel Conklin that no matter what question was asked him he always considered the matter and gave a serious answer. And surely this was a reasonable question, and one which either the party who asked me to write or I should be expected to answer, since both have long been counted among professors of religion. The same question was uppermost in my mind for several years, and one which I argued over daily with myself. The meal cannot rest easy after the leaven is put into it, even though it

has no knowledge of how the leaven came there; nor can a man of the world rest quietly after he is quickened by the Spirit. I suppose one who is of the earth earthy is at ease, but I am not a judge of his condition. I know the quickened sinner finds no rest in such a state; he cannot go the broad way, and is not sure of any comfort any way he goes; release from his burden comes to be all his desire. Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Surely this belongs to all who long for release from a burdened mind. Many would say that to come to Christ is to join some church, but I think one always comes to Christ first in prayer; not a public prayer for men to hear, but their longing mind cries out for rest and peace. When one finds relief in prayer he will come again, and is daily seeking the Savior and following him. Now the first command to all such is to be baptized in His name; so simple an ordinance, no great duties imposed, no money asked for, no offering to bring. A contrite spirit is what is required, and in many cases that is all the subject has to offer. Obedience to the command of God is better than all the gold of Ophir, and in obedience, and in that only, is peace of mind. This then is wherein we are better off than the world that knows not the love of God, the love of the brethren and sisters, nor the joy that is brought to the mind by gospel preaching. There are worldly sorrows common to all; our faith in God and the opening of his word to our comfort from time to time help to bear our share of worldly sorrow. All our cares, all our labors, are lightened by our spiritual joys. True, trifling earthly pleasures no longer satisfy the mind, for we know real joy; we also know what it is to stand before the judgment-seat and plead guilty. After one has faced these realities how hollow all pretense becomes. The christian's hope is real, his love is real, his sorrow for sin is real, and his deliverance sweet. For those who early in life come to know the Savior's love and have had that trust to lean on through all the trials of life it has been like "a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night," and the "shadow of a great rock in a weary land." We go to God with our trials, we go to him in our sorrows, we praise him when we are blessed to take his promises to ourselves, and we pray when we are downcast and find relief. Who that knows these things would wish to be without them? What christian would exchange the realities for pleasures that vanish as dreams, or that leave a sting behind them? What person of the world would exchange his pleasures for these sacred joys? If such persons there be, then spiritual joys belong to them.

May the young man find a partial answer to his questioning mind, and my friend find an amen in her life to the experiences of mine.

I am sending you my mother's experience, written by herself probably about the year 1858, although there is no date to it. She talked but little at any time, and father once said of her that she said the least of any one he ever heard ask for admission into the church; so little that although they had all confidence in her, it was hard to get evidence to act on, and the most they did get her father, who was a deacon of the church, told them. Although it is but a brief story, it has interest and value in being true, and that the hope which was her stay then was the same all through life and in death. She was baptized by Elder Gabriel Conklin in the fellowship of the

Kingwood Church when about seventeen years old.

Yours with brotherly love,

A. E. RITTENHOUSE.

FROM my earliest remembrance I wished to be a christian, and hoped that I would be some time. I thought if I could not merit my salvation I could do something toward it. I often thought of these things, and resolved at some future time to amend my life and do better. Such impressions gradually increased in my mind, until God in his mercy directed my attention to the necessity of immediately attending to them. I saw the uncertainty of life, and thought that before another week, or it might be a day, I might be beyond hope. I then tried to do better, to do that which was right, but instead of getting better as I thought to do I only saw more clearly my sin and danger. I saw that I could not do a good act or think a good thought, much less do anything to merit my salvation from that eternal ruin which I saw was justly my portion. I had sinned so knowingly and wilfully, and with every advantage of religious instruction, that I thought no one else could ever have been so wicked, nor could I see any way of escaping the condemnation which I saw to be justly my due. God was just, and how could I hope to escape? After some time it came into my mind that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. I thought here might be some hope, for I felt that I was a sinner above all others, and I could with my whole heart join the cry of the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The character of the Savior and his life on earth appeared so beautiful to me that I felt the strongest desire to love him, fear him, put my trust in him and walk in his ways and commandments. Then I was led to see more of the way of salvation, and that through Christ, God was able to save as great a sinner as I was. I saw the promise was, He that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And again, Whoso cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. I tried to pray for grace to believe on him, and to come to him with full confidence in the faithfulness of his promise; to put my trust in him, and him alone, for salvation. Then I felt that I could trust in his mercy, that I could leave my soul in his hands for life or death without fear. I soon saw that my taste and relish were entirely changed. Religious conversation or books which before I disliked I now loved above all others, and when I heard any speak of Christ, of his love, mercy, free grace, or anything belonging to his kingdom, I felt a love and esteem for them and their company. Since then my mind has been much enlightened, I can see much more of the sinfulness of my heart by nature and more of the love and mercy of God. When I feel the love of God shed abroad in my heart it seems impossible that I should ever again doubt or fear; then again my confidence is almost gone, and I feel dark, cold and cast down, I know not why. In view of all these things I think I can say with the prophet: "Therefore I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me."—Micah vii. 7.

HARRIET RITTENHOUSE.

POCA, W. Va., Oct., 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Inclosed you will find two letters to me from Elder W. J. May for publication. In all my travels I find those who love to read his writings. I learned to love brother May long before

I met with him. He is one of our solid predestinarians.

Yours truly,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

PINSONFORK, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER McCLANAHAN:—I cannot command words to express my feelings in regard to my enjoyment with you while we were together at our Association, two weeks since, and how glad I was, and am, that you brethren from Poca were cast among my people, who were so glad of your company, and now I must write you a few lines in regard to the so-called resurrection trouble that brethren brought into our Association. I say, so-called resurrection question, from the fact the trouble is not a matter of the resurrection and nonresurrection, although they call it that, but the question is, when not disguised, How will God's people be when resurrected? With what body do they come? Are they flesh and bones, &c.? So far as I know, there is not a Primitive Baptist living but believes in the resurrection of all God's people, but the greater number of them do not pretend to explain the mystery, which the apostle Paul himself did not do. We try to content ourselves with the teachings of the Scriptures on the subject. As the apostle John said, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."—1 John iii. 2. This explanation is good enough for me, without believing and trying to make others believe that we will be flesh and bones, &c. The apostle has shown here as clearly as the sun at noonday that all who are now the sons of God when the Lord doth appear, shall be like him, not made like him, but be like him when he appears to us who are the sons of God now; but it does not appear to the sons, or children, of God here in their time state what they shall be after death, therefore why should we bother our minds about what we shall be, or how we shall look after we pass out of time? How shall we explain that which has never appeared to us? But there is one thing that ought to concern us greatly, and even daily, and that is, Are we the sons of God now? If we are the sons of God we need not fear the future, for we will be like our dear Savior when he appears. Who can ask more than this? Why are we trying to pry into hidden things, and muttering about that we cannot know, neither ought we to know? God never fails to reveal everything to his children that they ought to know, or that would be for their good to know. The apostle Paul lets us know in his second letter to the church at Corinth, fifth chapter, fourth verse, that mortality will be swallowed up of life. Who can want more? Those precious brethren who are making such a hue and cry for this flesh and bone, &c., child of God in heaven and immortal glory, resort to the language of Christ when he said, "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."—Luke xxiv. 39. They also preach and contend that Christ is in heaven, at the right hand of the Majesty on high, with the hole in his side, and the nail prints in his hands. If this be so, if the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the family, in whom the whole building (family) is complete, is in heaven and immortal glory with that deformity, doubtless every member of his body will be likewise in heaven and immortal glory with every deformity that they were subject to here in this life, and if so, what a heaven of cripples. This is both unscriptural and illogical. The apostle Paul in

his letter to the Philippians wrote as follows: "For our conversation is in heaven [gospel heaven]; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body," &c. Now in this wonderful declaration the apostle qualified each expression relative to the body of Christ and our body by saying "our vile body," and "his glorious body." Brother McClanahan, I cannot believe for one moment that when the apostle used the term "glorious body," that he had allusion to His body as it came out of the sepulchre on that memorable third morning, with the hole in his side and the nail prints in his hands, but his glorious body as seen transfigured before James, Peter and John when his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. This was his glorious body, but the body that rose out of the tomb was his human body, like unto ours, for in that body he ate broiled fish and honeycomb before his disciples, and they were and are witnesses of these things. Christ was charged with being an impostor, crucified and put to death under that accusation, buried in the sepulchre, and a guard placed around lest his disciples should come and steal him away, and the last error be worse than the first; but now, after he was risen from the dead, as he had told them he would, he said, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." This was to demonstrate the fact that he was not an impostor, but that he was the identical Jesus whom they had crucified and slain—handle me, and see for yourselves. So, my dear brother, instead of this proving that God's children will be flesh and bones, &c., in heaven and immortal glory, as these brethren affirm, it proves right to the reverse. May the Lord open the eyes of our understanding. There is no doubt in my mind but that every elect vessel of God's wonderful mercy will be like Jesus when he doth appear, be like his glorious body, white as the light.

Your brother in sore trials,

W. J. MAY.

PINSONFORK, Ky., Feb. 15, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER MCCLANAHAN:—I will now suggest a few thoughts to you, if the Lord will, on the text on which you have requested my views, which is as follows: On the seven locks of Samson's head, woven in the web, also of Delilah, which is recorded in the book of Judges xvi. 13, 14. If I understand you, you want my views of the spiritual significance of these wonderful and mysterious things. All I can do is to simply give such as I have; and in the first place will say that all this was the purpose of the Lord, as shown in chapter fourteen, fourth verse, and was the shadow, or faint representation, that these heavenly things made of themselves; as no shadow can be, unless there is a pre-existing substance to produce it, therefore Samson doubtless was a type of Christ. Delilah must mean something, too, and not only so, but his wife, of the daughters of the Philistines, means something as well. To me she (his wife) represents God's people under the law, the law being the friend she was given to until the time of reformation (change), and he visiting her with a kid represents the offerings in the law dispensation. A riddle is a profound mystery, that no one knows, save the one who propounds it. This to me represents the great mystery of God's eternal design in and of himself, as revealed to his church and people. So with the thought in our minds of Samson

a type of Christ, and Delilah representing the church of God under the just condemnation of the law, &c., I say with this thought in view we see Jesus, our spiritual Samson, the head of the body, the church, going away, the sin-bearing victim, bearing the entire web of all the accumulated sin and guilt of all the election of grace fastened or woven in covenant obligations of eternal love. In fact, the binding with these withs, ropes and cords, &c., denotes the miraculous power of God in bursting asunder and overcoming all the opposing powers of sin and Satan for his bride, his chosen people, and not only so, but it does seem to me that in the course and conduct of Delilah we can see our own personal experience. It is evident that she greatly feared that he did not love her, and daily (we might say) urged him sore to give her unmistakable evidence of his love to her, and when she could not obtain the evidence of his love just in the way she had mapped out, it came (like Naaman) to her, she at once decided that he did not love her, but hated her.

My dear brother, this is my experience, and it does seem to me that we can see the same experience manifested in the bride, the Lamb's wife, in the Song of Solomon, which is as follows: "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave."—Song of Sol. viii. 6. Seal is to make sure. This is our daily experience. How often do we get uneasy and restless, and doubt the Savior's love to us, and our unspoken feelings are demanding plain and unmistakable evidence of God's love to us, and we contrive the way it must come so that we can know that he loves us. No, Delilah could not be more cruel than I am in my carnal nature, which is the Philistines to me, urging to these things. O, is there any one like me? The seven locks of Samson's head represent to me the seven attributes of the Godhead, and in the type, when the seven locks of Samson's head were shaven off, then he was as weak as any other man. So also when Christ was on the cross and the divine nature withdrawn from human nature that he (Jesus) might die a victim to the law, he had no more power to resist death than any other man. All these things Jesus did and suffered, for the great love he had for his bride, told her all his heart, laid his head down on her knees. He had power to lay it down, and he had power to take it again, and to make his grave with the wicked (when he overthrew the house).

Yours to serve,

W. J. MAY.

WINNSBORO, Texas, Nov. 4, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending the inclosed letter from sister Annie Fulcher, of Hillsville, Va., which I think is good matter for the SIGNS. However, it is submitted to your better judgment. I have her consent to send it. Also I have given my consent for her to send my answer to this, which it may be she has already done.

Yours in bonds,

H. B. JONES.

HILLSVILLE, Va., Aug. 22, 1915.

ELDER H. B. JONES—DEAR BROTHER:—Can you forgive me for not answering your letter sooner? I am ashamed that I have waited so long. O I am so imperfect, and do so differently from the way I would love to do. I love your letters, and anxiously await their coming, but I have failed to prove this. I hope you will excuse this long delay and write again

very soon. I often feel that my writing is not interesting to any one, because my mind is not led out in a writing way, but I am unable to bring about this mind. I am a poor, dependent creature, a "can't help it," yet I do not claim this as a cloak for hiding my wrongs, as some are pleased to say. I am full of imperfection, and sin daily, therefore I die daily, yet I am made to believe that God is my deliverer, and that he keeps me as the apple of his eye, not because of anything meritorious on my part, but because of his own good will and pleasure. Why it is so I have no right to question. It is enough for me to feel and realize that I am of the chosen race, without seeking to know why. I sometimes fear that I am mistaken in the whole arrangement, and again, my feelings will lead me to say, I know that my Redeemer liveth. The poet expressed my feelings in the words, "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." I was blessed to hear a wonderful sermon last Sunday, and in the midst of my enjoyment you were presented to my mind, and a feeling of thankfulness and praise to God seemed to fill my soul for the everlasting tie of God's eternal love that bound us together in our common bundle of love as one family, and enabled us to rejoice in spirit, even though we were many, many miles apart; yet the same God rules, and the same Spirit that enables you to speak edifyingly to the chosen few in far away Texas enables our preachers here in Virginia to speak edifyingly unto us, and the same God is glorified both here and there; then what a wonderful teacher. Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty. We know man can only work in one place, and must be blessed with strength to do this. He cannot perform the daily duties required to make a living in this life without the blessings of God, and when he comes to the work of grace he is out. The natural man, according to my understanding, is not, nor ever has been, under consideration. We cannot mix oil and water, neither can we mix carnal things with spiritual things. There were two kingdoms set up in the beginning, the natural kingdom and the spiritual, or kingdom of light and kingdom of darkness. The one opposite the other, yet God is the great ruler of both. The same tree bore the knowledge of good and of evil, yet the one is opposite to the other. So you see opposition is as necessary as anything. We cannot think of anything that does not have its opposite, yet the power that rules over all is one. There are powers ordained of God, but when we speak of God's power it is in the singular, not powers, but power. So there is a line of distinction drawn, and we may hew to the line, but we must not cross over. Our father, speaking of parents, bought a certain boundary or tract of land, and had the line established by the surveyor's compass, and to this line they could clear and cultivate, but should they have crossed over trouble would have ensued. Now we have in our observation the natural kingdom, the earth on which we dwell, and from which we obtain a natural living; we have also in our observation the literal heavens, heavenly kingdom, wherein dwells the planets that are controlled by the God of heaven, ruled and governed by him, and him alone, and so wonderfully has he set in operation the planets of the literal heaven that the ruling of the sun gives us what we call day, and the ruling of the moon night, thus bringing to our observation another opposition. But what I wish to speak of most are the two kingdoms set up in the children of Israel.

I find in myself a mind that leads me after carnal things and into carnal pleasures, so-called. This mind is the carnal mind, which belongs to the natural man, the earthy man, who is born into this world lost; yes, he is in the kingdom of darkness, and the kingdom of darkness is in him, and Satan is the king, and we, being his subjects, willingly obey him. Yes, we are the children of wrath, even as others, but later on, at the time appointed, God calls, "Adam, where art thou?" Fear seizes our being, for guilt and shame have now overtaken us, and we begin to put up excuses and to make fair promises, which we cannot keep. At length we see that all our works have failed and our condition is growing worse and worse. We realize that without the mercy of God we are forever lost, and we beg for his mercy continually, until we feel that all our begging and pleading avail nothing, and we fall helpless, dying, yet pleading for mercy, because we cannot cease to plead. At once, yes, in a moment, and in a way that cannot be described, we feel calm and at peace with everybody, while praises to God for his love and mercy seem to fill our being, and love like a flowing stream flows from our breast; thus we are translated into the kingdom of light, yes, born of the Spirit into the kingdom, where dwell the saints of God, over which he rules as King. We now possess the spiritual mind, which leads us to do the work of the Spirit through Christ, who is our Mediator, and by him we have access to the throne of grace. Here is opposition; thus the warfare of the child of God begins, but his weapons are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds of Satan, who has so long led us about as captives, but grace hath set the captives free, and we are no longer under the law of sin and death, but under grace; hence with the mind I serve the law of God and with my flesh the law of sin; and having both kingdoms set up in our bodies, with the line of distinction drawn, giving to each its bounds, there is no crossing or mixing, because they are set apart by the eternal God, and man with all the wisdom and knowledge he is able to obtain cannot unite or mix the works of the devil and the works of God. We must render unto Cæsar the things that are his, and unto God the things that are his. I would love to tell all I see in this, and how I see it all, everything set apart and moving in its order as God hath appointed, foreknown and predestinated, but I am unable. I feel that as you have an excellent gift from the Father of lights, even though I faintly hint at this most wonderful subject you will understand and will overlook my blindness and bear with my weakness; I feel assured of this. If not deceived, God hath given me understanding of the deep things which he hath enabled you to declare to such an extent that you cannot declare them too hard for me to believe, and it does my soul good to receive your letters, because they set forth what I love so much to hear, and it would be a pleasure indeed to meet you face to face and hear you proclaim those wonderful truths. I know I have written scatteringly, but I could not retain all that entered my mind until I could write it. When my mind is led out it seems to travel very fast, and one beauty is presented, then another and another, until all at once the whole machinery goes together like the closing of a book or the putting out of a light, and I am left blank, nothing but my old self again, and if I try to go on I get all tangled up and do not know anything. I think it best to stop right then, so I will

close and leave this for your consideration, and if I have presented anything the Scripture does not hold good give this to Cæsar, and if all is sound give God the honor. I hope to hear from you again real soon, and may you be kept humble and faithful, and blessed with the spirit to proclaim the wonderful truths to those thus blessed and prepared to receive them, and when dark days shall have come, and you feel downcast, O may you remember that he who hath delivered will yet deliver.

In hope of heaven,

ANNIE FULCHER.

FELTON, Del., Nov. 3, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER NORMAN: —If you are both at leisure, and have nothing else to do, just seat yourselves in a chair and let me talk to you. Perhaps I will not detain you long in what I here will say, so bear with me a little while ere throwing this away. First, let me say to each and all, yourself and family, my wife and I appreciate your hospitality. We came as strangers to your house, with naught at our command to recommend our pilgrimage in your fair mountain land, but notwithstanding that we had no place to lay our head, you took us in and gave to us the needful meat and bed. There is one thing that I greatly prize which far exceeds the rest: that is the love which unto us was plainly manifest. Sometimes it is hard to understand, and oft I wonder why the saints of God should feel that love for such an one as I. But, somehow, love will find response in this poor heart of mine; then I am encouraged, too, because I feel it is divine. We know, says John, that we have passed from death even unto life; for if we love the brethren, then the evidence is life, for God so loved the world, we read, he gave his only Son, who gave his precious life to save his people, every one. Christ Jesus left the glory that he had with God above, came down to earth to do the will of him whose name is love, fulfilled each jot and tittle of the righteous law's demand, to save his people who were held in death's relentless hand. Our Savior, laying down his life, could take it again, so by his resurrection all his people live in him. Now by his death they are set free and dead unto the law, alive to Christ, the paschal Lamb, in whom is found no flaw. By Christ's obedience the law is all fulfilled in him; a new law now his people have delivered unto them; and this command from Jesus comes, the living Word of God, who died for poor lost sinners, and to cleanse them with his blood; as a father to his children, he tells them what to do, saying, Love ye one another, as I, the Lord, love you. The carnal mind cannot grasp it, for such love is beyond our ken: that one should leave the realms of bliss to die for rebel men. Sometimes we feel so fearful that we in the darkness grope; it is then the poet's words will oft revive our sinking hope:

> "Love is the golden chain that binds
> The happy souls above,
> And he's an heir of heaven that finds
> His bosom glow with love."

Now, brother Norman, since we have been to visit you this fall we like to think about the love we found in each and all. Your country is delightful and inspiring to the heart, but the grandeur and the beauty are by far the lesser part. The mountain chain is beautiful and wonderfully grand, but cannot excel the chain that binds the Ebenezer band. The golden chain that binds them is that love of which we sing, but the glory and the honor is due to Christ our King.

Well, I must cease my writing ere I tire you out, my friend, for methinks I

hear you saying, O will this never end? My wife and I thank you for the kindness shown by all; you made our trip so pleasant, it is a pleasure to recall. There are special ones I might name before I drop my pen: your Bessie, Joe and Aggie, and the one we know as Ben; we do not forget that wife of his; in fact, all were so kind I find it is not difficult to bear you all in mind. I think it is best to close and let you rest a spell. With love from both unto you all, we bid you all farewell.

Unworthily yours,

W. S. CUBBAGE.

EPHESIANS V. 22, 25.

"WIVES, submit yourselves unto your husbands." "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."

Dear kindred in Christ, when we can look at these pictures, one in nature and one in Spirit, in the right light, they are beautiful to behold. Husband and wife, those that are true, joined with love, which makes them no longer twain, but one. They love each other better than all others, and they should live as one. Their purpose should be to be faithful to each other, forsaking all others, and desire to do anything that is right and necessary for each other's good and happiness. The husband loves, woos and wins the object of his love, and takes her from a home where she was surrounded with loved ones and was happy and contented to stay there until he drew her with his love and kindness. He, being the head and stronger, must provide for and protect her, and in so doing makes her happy. She, being the weaker one, looks to him for protection, and if she is faithful she keeps her house in order, does the cooking, mends his clothing and is "an helpmeet" indeed, and home is a pleasant place for each one, and their friends enjoy visiting them. The wife is to keep herself neat and nice, and should not make an outward show of extravagance, but should be meek, subject to her husband, obeying him in all things right. There is much contained in the words "husband" and "wife." There are many who are husbands in name only, and wives the same, but the true husband is lover, provider, protector and lawgiver for the family, and the wives of such need not fear to obey in all things. An unfaithful woman is wife only in name, but a wife in the true sense is the most beautiful ornament, flower or adornment of home and family, and her home is not only a place to stay, but to live and be happy; but when she does not do her duty she is a reproach to her husband, and her home is a miserable place.

Now compare a faithful wife and a church that is alive to duty. Christ is a true and faithful husband, and he is all that is contained in the word. He is our Savior, Husband, Lawgiver, Provider, Protector, our all in all. We are ten thousand talents in debt, and have not a farthing to pay. Then how careful and faithful we ought to be to keep our Husband's house clean, nice, beautiful and all that is required of us, so that he will be pleased to dwell with us, but just as sure as we do not keep a clean house he will not be with us all the time. When the flesh is allowed to creep in and cause confusion Christ is not in it, because he does not live in a filthy or disorderly house. A lazy wife does not like to sweep, on account of the dust, but suppose she never swept, what sort of condition would the house be in? So some brethren are afraid to say anything when the church goes wrong, fearing it will cause trouble, but the dust must be removed. How sweet and pleasant when

the church can dwell together in unity and love, and can feel the presence of her spiritual Husband. Then it is a beautiful and happy home, and our visiting brethren can rejoice to be with us. Even the world has respect for people who follow Christ, though they hate the doctrine we advocate. How sad it is to see members of this bride (who ought to be adorned all the time with the true principles of the gospel of our Savior) curse, tell falsehoods, cheat and mix with worldly institutions, thus bringing reproach upon the cause and kingdom of Christ, which is so high above the world and should be kept unspotted. The spirit of pride is getting such a strong hold in the church I fear there is trouble coming. To allow the flesh any part in the service and worship of God is spoiling the beauty of the church, and when we meet in this condition we are alone, Husband gone, but where two or three are gathered in his name he is there. These things are beautiful to think of, but it seems that I cannot write so that it will be interesting, so will close. May God save his dear people. Pray for me, a sinner.

GEORGE W. JACKSON.

FAYETTEVILLE, Ga.

TOUCHET, Washington.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—It has been quite awhile since I have written you, and as I want to send in my remittance for the SIGNS I will try to pen a few thoughts, although it is very hard for me to write on anything that is upon my mind when I am interrupted every few minutes, and such is the case here in the store, but the desire to speak of the riches of divine grace is just as great as if there were no hindrance. My mind has been much exercised of late on the work of grace, and its wonders in power and perfection, and I do not know of any greater display of the wonders of this grace in all the Scriptures than is made manifest in the person of Job. Some seem to think that the calamities of Job were not real, that the devil (Satan) made Job believe a lie. I know that he is not only a liar, but the father of lies, but I believe that Job was, and was the actual possessor of seven sons and three daughters, and all the property spoken of in this narrative, and I believe that the children were killed and the property lost, as stated. If Job's troubles were imaginary, why not the suffering of Jesus and the disciples and ours to-day imaginary? No, dear brethren, the suffering of God's humble poor is real, and the cause of that suffering is real. With the world they act from false and imaginary causes, but not so with the children of God. They who have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, are in their exercise of mind made to experience realities, and not fiction. God's children do not act because they are frightened by Satan, their acts are caused by, or from, a real principle, and that principle is love. All the acts of Job plainly show this principle, for while his children were all grown, and were, with their elder brother, making merry, Job sent and sanctified them, and offered burnt offerings to the number of them all. Now we see Job moved to act, and he does not leave us to guess why he did act, for fear his children had sinned in their hearts against God. Why was he so moved from this cause? He so loved the Lord that it was a grievous thing with Job to sin against Him. He loved the Lord so well he was willing to sacrifice all for his sake. Upon this one principle (love) depends all true obedience or reverence, and from this point we want to

investigate the perfectness of the wonders of grace which grow out of this love. Moses' last testimony before the people he had led so long, in speaking of God, says, He is the Rock, his work is perfect. Now the trying of Job was for the purpose of proving or demonstrating that fact. We see that Job was tried as a proof of this fact. Some say we are blessed for obedience, and chastised for disobedience, and this is one case among the many which disproves such an idea. What did Job do to cause such sore afflictions? Was it wrong to sacrifice and make an offering for his children? This is all we have any account of him doing. "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." We see in this case a glorious display of the power and glory of our covenant-keeping God. There was a time when the sons of God presented themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. There is one thought here I want to emphasize for the benefit of my dear brethren. We often complain when we meet of feeling the presence of Satan. Why is it we so soon discover him? It is because God, who knows all things, reveals him to us, and while we feel him in our devotion, and no power to get away from him, how sweet it is to have God for our defence. He speaks in our behalf, and demands, From whence cometh thou? and Satan says, From going to and fro in the earth and walking up and down in it. The Lord speaks to him of the character of Job, but Satan knows all about him; he had not been ignorant of Job, but the Lord had blessed Job, and had him hedged in with the good things of this world, and he (Satan) certainly had the Arminian idea, that if one is blessed with the things of the world he has something to serve God for, but if adversity overtakes him he has nothing to stimulate him to serve God. If you remember, Job's comforters told him if he would just get to work and acquaint himself with the Lord he would give him gold and silver. Your faith, says Jesus, is more precious than gold, and as gold is tried in the fire, so shall the faith of God's elect be tried, and Job had a knowledge of this fact, for he realized that when he was tried he would come forth as gold, and for this reason Job was suffered to be tried; so the Lord told Satan he could afflict Job, by bringing him to poverty, and not only that, but suffered him to take his children; and in all of this Job sinned not, but instead of his cursing God, see what humility, what reconciliation it wrought in Job, bringing to memory how destitute and poor he was when he came into this world, and how sensibly he realized the fact that his departure would be the same: The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord. O the depth of the riches of the grace and mercy, power and glory of God, who was, and is, and is to come, the only one who inhabits eternity, rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." O my soul, praise the Lord, for in him is all fullness; he is my Rock and my defence. His promises, accompanied by his Spirit, are all I need to conquer all my enemies. A strong man armed keeps his palace, and his goods are in peace, until a stronger than he comes, then the strong man is bound and the goods are

divided. Sin, that has had dominion over us, is now condemned in the flesh, and from this time on through this pilgrimage here on earth there is a struggle or warfare such as is characterized in the experience of Job, and all the prophets and apostles, and demonstrated to us by the Holy Ghost, which he has freely given to us, so we, too, can say with them, We know that when we are tried we shall come forth as gold, for the power of the Most High has spoken it, and his word does not return unto him void, but distils in the heart the precious words of him who says, I will never leave nor forsake thee. He who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not freely give us all things? Now, dear ones, if the things of God through the Holy Spirit are so sweet to us here, what will it be when mortality is swallowed up in immortality?

In hope of this blessed state, I bid you farewell in the Lord.

J. T. BARNES.

HERNDON, Va., Nov. 26, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—It has been my custom for some years when renewing my subscription to the dear old SIGNS to write you a short letter of commendation as to its value and comfort in reading its pages, but at this time I feel more dead than alive, and I am now wondering in my mind, Have I ever been alive to spiritual things and spiritual knowledge? No, I fear not. I feel to be nothing but the old natural man, and the apostle Paul said, The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. I often think that I am nothing more than the old natural man, and then again and again I will think, I am nothing but a worm, and no man. When I feel to be nothing but a worm, then I am brought to the side of dear Elder D. M. Vail, telling him we are two worms together, and we converse together and talk the matter over and tell each other that our days of letter-writing are about over, and he (Elder Vail) tells me that he has had many requests to write on different subjects, but that he has no exercise in that direction. O, it made me feel both sorry and glad to hear him talk so. I felt sorry to think that we should be deprived of the great pleasure of reading his dear letters in the SIGNS, but glad to know that he felt himself to be a worm, for it brought me into sweet fellowship with him and made me feel that we were truly brother worms together, bound up in one bundle of love and fellowship. In reading brother Vail's short, sweet letter in the last number of the SIGNS (November 15th) my mind was led to a portion of Scripture found in Isaiah xli. 14, 15, which reads: "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff." My desire now is to ask dear brother Vail to write a letter for the SIGNS on the above written words, especially on the new sharp threshing instrument, and tell what the threshing instrument signifies. Elder Vail is gifted in the word of God, and I have no doubt, although he feels to be nothing but a worm, could thresh a mountain in a letter he might write on the subject. Paul in Hebrews iv. 12, says, "For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit,

and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

I feel too ignorant to write more, so will close, hoping to hear from Elder Vail soon in regard to my request mentioned in this letter.

Yours in fond fellowship, yet feeling to be nothing but a worm,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

DAYTON, Ohio, Nov. 28, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I again shall attempt to write you, but unless the dear Lord controls my thoughts, I fear what I might write of my own thoughts. I know these would be of little interest to any one, and especially to God's chosen ones, yet I hope our gracious and kind Master will guide me in what I may write. This is Sunday, bright and clear, with the mellow sunlight and mild autumnal, invigorating breezes, which to me, dear friends, make up the blending of the most enjoyable elements in nature, and is of all seasons the most peaceful and delightful. Dear friends, I have felt greatly burdened and cast down in mind, and mourn the absence of my Lord, and many times the weight seems to bear down upon me with almost unbearable force. I ask myself, Why, O why this terrible weight? Jesus is not dead, is not gone, is not changed, and why all this disquiet, this heartache and despondency, which almost dethrone my reason? Is it the hungering and thirsting after righteousness of which the world knows nothing? Is it that there is in my heart an aching void the world can never fill? Do you ever have such sad feelings, dear ones? Surely if you have you can sympathize with a poor, sinful creature like me. Often when feeling cast down and lonely, yet not alone, in my sadness I cry and reach out my poor, helpless hands to Jesus, the dear Redeemer, who soothes my sorrows, heals my wounds, and drives away my fear. But O to look beyond this world, beyond the grave, to that shining shore where we will dwell with Jesus and all the blood-bought throng, where the weary and heavy laden find perfect peace and rest, where the sick are made whole, where the hungry find food and the poor become rich. How often there are times in the experience of the children of God during their sojourn in this sinful world that they find they are as those imprisoned, and cannot come forth, the iron gate shuts them in. Some indeed of the chosen of God, as the prophet Jeremiah, have known what it is to be both temporally and spiritually in the low dungeon. What garment shall a poor, guilty sinner wear when the Lord shall grant him deliverance from his guilt and shame and the curse of the law? They will be clothed with faith, wrought by the work of God in their souls, in the garment of salvation and the robe of Christ's righteousness, which is unto and upon all who believe. Thus arrayed with faith in Christ crucified there is no condemnation. Christ died for our sins and was raised again for our justification. O how blessed then are poor sinners to be dealt with in such a merciful way.

> "Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
> My beauty are, my glorious dress;
> 'Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
> With joy shall I lift up my head."

What a sweet consolation it is to me to know that the Lord of hosts has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Blessed thought, to know that the Lord is King, and there is none like him. The great and kind

deliverer, who will come out of Zion and turn away all unrighteousness. O glorious hour! saved from sin our souls shall soar, through the precious blood of Jesus, to the resurrection of the dead, the life and salvation of all the seed of promise, embraced in the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure. How I long to go home and be at rest. Dear friends, I do not dread death, for it is only the shadow that frightens the soul, and how sweet the thought to know that sooner or later I shall be free from sin, sorrow and death through endless eternity, there to sing songs of praise to my Lord and Master. Dear ones, while our burdens grow heavy with the years that multiply upon us, all will soon be over, and the heartaches will cease, and if our hope does not deceive us we will find rest some day and be satisfied. My hope of this is builded on the righteousness and blood of Christ, my risen Lord, and faith bids me look through the mist of tears to him who liveth and was dead, and he speaks in my heart the comforting promise, I will come again and receive you unto myself.

I will now close, asking an interest in your petitions to God.

I am, as ever, unworthily your sister in hope of a blessed immortality,

LIDA KELLER.

MILAM, Texas, Dec. 3, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—In my weak and feeble way I will try to give my experience of grace. I have belonged to the Missionary Baptists since I was seventeen years old, which was about twenty-seven years ago. The preachers always told us to come out on the Lord's side; that he (the Lord) had made a way for our escape if we would only accept the terms of the gospel; that we had to make a start in the right way, and it was for us to decide to be saved or to be lost; and I was so ignorant that I did not know any better than to believe it. One night I stepped out "on the Lord's side." Of course I did not want to go to that terrible place of torment, punishment, hell, &c., that he told about, when there was nothing to do but to accept terms and live. On my way home I came in contact with a limb of a tree over the road, which scratched my face and knocked off my hat, and I cursed the limb, my hat and all before I knew what I was doing. I asked God to forgive me, and I was all right again, going right on to heaven. The next thing I knew I was off the track again, the harder I tried to stay on the harder it was. I found it was a road that I could not travel, so I tried to find pleasure in the things of the world, but did not enjoy them, although others seemed to do so. So time went on, the preachers preaching that acceptable way, but my imperfections made me know that I could not accept their way, for I had tried it, but only by the help of the sovereign Governor, who rules and superrules all things for the purpose for which he purposed them, could I be saved. Who can change His ways? He can work and none can hinder. He it was that made me know and understand that by grace we are saved, and by grace alone. The word says his throne shall stand for ever and ever, he shall save his people from their sins. Those "shalls" and "wills" are of God, and if his word stands for ever and ever all his people shall be saved. Our hope is in the goodness and mercy of God. Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? "The Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to

righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith." "I say then, hath God cast away his people? God forbid." He hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Elias maketh intercession to God against Israel, and is answered of God: "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal." "There is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works." Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, unto this day.

As I am not capable of writing I will make way for better writers. I see so many good letters in the SIGNS, which paper is a source of pleasure to me, and I feast upon its columns. If you find any marks of grace in this, and see fit to publish it, very well; if not, I shall not think hard of you.

In hope of eternal life, not by my own righteousness, but by Jesus Christ our Lord,

W. H. CONN.

DEAR SISTER:—I am inexpressibly lonely to-day, and I feel moved to write to each of my fellow-travelers whose companionship I so much appreciated while journeying to the associations and being together two weeks. I feel lost without them, and have retired into my shell where I usually live when away from the dear Old Baptists. I have thought many, many times of our delightful sojourn with those dear people of God. How royally they entertained us, giving their best, and making us so welcome. Truly I felt it was "holy ground," and to think of a dear sister thanking us for coming. I felt so unworthy, but yet I cannot help feeling that God's dear people love me a little, notwithstanding my affliction, and this encourages me to go among them, and it is love which draws me to them, and I hope this love flows from the fountain-head, which is God, for we are told that "God is love." I cannot express my thoughts of the things I saw and felt in the Ebenezer meetinghouse, where the saints were eating of the heavenly manna which our God was so graciously feeding to his loved ones, and a few crumbs fell to my lot, and I was glad to see that his servants were also enjoying the food so "sweet to the taste." Is it not a foretaste of heavenly joys? To me the parting was so sad, and I thought how lovely it will be in that home where congregations never break up and sabbaths have no end.

Your loving but unworthy sister,

MARY E. FISHER.

TRENTON, N. J., Nov. 29, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Sister Fisher passed away Nov. 28th, and we shall miss her very much, but we know she felt as the apostle Paul said, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." This letter was received about two weeks ago.

L. HOUGH.

HAMPTON, Iowa, Oct. 27, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I received a letter from sister Almira Roberts, of Denver, Colorado, inquiring if there were any Baptists in Denver, and wanted me to write to the editors of the SIGNS to know if they could inform her. There was a church at Loveland, Colorado, but I do not know the name of the pastor. Will you be so kind as to publish a notice in the paper inquiring for her the name of the pastor at Loveland? She is a pre-

cious sister, separated from her people, and I have been acquainted with her for many years; she was formerly of Nora Springs, Floyd County, Iowa. Her present address is Mrs. Almira Roberts, 51 Ogden Street, Denver, Colorado.

Yours in gospel bonds,

E. A. NORTON.

JOHN V. 25.

"VERILY, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."

There is more than one death, being naturally or corporeally dead, and being dead in sin are two deaths. The death under consideration in this text is the death in sin in which the man is alive naturally, but dead to the enjoyments of God and godliness. The man that is considered here is the man that has not spiritual understanding, knows not the way of righteousness, but the time has come with some when they have heard the voice of the Son of God, and those to whom the voice has come live to the praise and honor of God. These are made able by the Spirit of God to worship him, and to have no confidence in the flesh. A man may say that he knows God, but if he has not been convinced that there is no soundness in himself, then to my mind he cannot say he knows God, for he thinks he can do something to obtain eternal life; but those to whom the Spirit of God has been revealed can truly say, There is nothing I can do. The poor cast down child can look on himself as being nothing, and on God as being everything pertaining to holiness. There is but one thing that is impossible with God, and that is to lie. He is too good to lie, but all men are liars, all men are as grass; they wither away, they are nothing, yea, less than nothing. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." To my mind, the death spoken of here is the death in trespasses and sins. Those who have passed from death unto life are the ones who have tasted the goodness of God, or that have received his Holy Spirit. These shall not come into condemnation, the death in trespasses and sins shall be upon them no more. Not that they will not sin, but they will not be as they were before, they will love God and godliness, and will hate sin; yes, the children of God will sin, but they will not love it. Things they once loved they now hate.

I read many good letters in the SIGNS, and will say, I did enjoy sister Odell's letter to her aunt. Surely she must have a gift of God; I can say I believe she spoke the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

Dear brethren editors, you may use this if you see fit. May God bless Zion everywhere.

A brother in much tribulation,

J. E. YARBOROUGH.

MUNDAY, Texas.

APPOINTMENTS.

IF the Lord will, Elder D. M. Vail will visit brethren and friends as follows:

Schoharie village, Dec. 25th, 2 p. m. and 7:30 p. m.; Schoharie meetinghouse, 26th, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.; Middleburg, 27th; Albany, sister Wolf's, 28th, 1:30 p. m.; Howes Cave, David H. Nethaway's, 28th, 7:30 p. m.; Lutheranville, Loren C. Mead's, 29th, 1:30 p. m.; Jefferson, Austin Foote's, 29th, 7:30 p. m.; Jefferson meetinghouse, 30th, 10:30 a. m.; Charlotteville, Adelbert Mead's, 30th, 1:30 p. m.; Cobleskill, sister Guernsey's, 31st, 10:30 a. m.

EVERETT R. KINNEY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1915.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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PEACE AND GOOD WILL.

"GLORY to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."—Luke ii. 14.

For long years mankind has been looking for and eagerly expecting an era of peace and good will to be ushered in upon earth, an era in which all wars should be abolished and in which all the nations of the earth should dwell together in peace, without rivalries of selfish ambition, an era in which the dealings of mankind with one another should be actuated by love and good will, no one seeking the hurt or disadvantage of another, but striving together for the prosperity and welfare of each and all. This is a fond dream of wretched humanity, a will-o'-the-wisp which idealists have fatuously pursued. The words of our text, found in Luke, and many other similar portions of the Bible, have seemed to these dreamers to establish a basis for those hopes and expectations. The Jews of old erred, not knowing the Scriptures or the power of God; they took the law and prophecies as they literally read, and looked for a literal fulfillment of every word. They looked for Messiah to come and establish a literal kingdom here upon earth, not a kingdom which is not of this world. They looked for this Messiah to come robed in purple and fine linen, and could not see in the swaddling clothes in Bethlehem's manger the spiritual royalty and righteousness of God. They looked for him to come attended by a literal angelic army, and could not see the multitude of the heavenly host, nor hear the singing of the morning stars. They expected the Messiah to adhere rigidly and strictly to the letter of the law, so when he came rendering spiritual obedience, and not regarding the letter, they could not believe but that he was an impostor, a heretic. The real coming of Jesus was a disappointment to the hopes and ambitions of the Jews, thus they would not have this man to rule over them, for they were blinded that they could not see him as he really was: God manifest in the flesh. So is the coming of Jesus in one's experience always a disappointment to the flesh, it blasts our gourds and lays us low. Just as the Jews made the grand mistake of taking the Scriptures literally, so the civilized world to-day, and for centuries, has cheated itself with the fond hope that an era of peace and good will would one day really and literally dawn upon earth. It has not dawned yet, and there is less likelihood now of its dawning than ever before, with half the world steeped in gore and the other half ready to unsheath the sword at any time. The conclusions of so-called christianity recoil like a boomerang upon its own head, and emphasize more clearly than ever that only by revelation from God himself can the truth be really known. That the heavenly host that night on Judea's hills sang the truth, that Jesus did bring peace on earth, that in him is the good will of God to men, we assuredly believe with all our heart, not in a dead literal sense, but in a live spiritual significance which is fraught with comfort to every experienced child of

God. We have long been convinced that the Scriptures of divine truth are not intended to be understood by any but the elect of God. The Bible is written for them, and does not belong to the world. Whenever the world tries to take the Bible for its standard and guide it inevitably makes havoc of its true meaning, and blunders along in the darkness, trying to see that which only the light can reveal. Jesus came to establish peace on earth, but between what and for whom? There is another sense in which he came to bring division or trouble, for he says, Think not that I am come to send peace on the earth, but a sword.

We will not now discuss what this sword is, but turn back to our subject to endeavor to explain the nature of that peace which Jesus is. The psalmist says, Psalms xxxvii. 37, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace." It is evident that the psalmist here means, not himself, but Jesus. Micah says, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. And this man shall be the peace." Jesus himself says, My peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. This testimony out of the mouth of two or three witnesses is enough to prove that Jesus came not only to make peace, but that he is the peace. It is between God and the people of God that Jesus is the peace, not between England and Germany, nor between any other nations of earth. Paul says, "We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." The people of God are not at peace with the world nor with themselves, but are at peace with God through Christ Jesus. A believer in Christ cannot possibly be at peace with the world; not that he will fight the world with the weapons of carnality, but every principle in him as a believer is at antipodes with every principle that is in the world; and he cannot be at peace with himself, for the Spirit of Christ makes him abhor himself in dust and ashes continually. Therefore the coming of Jesus makes a division between the believer and the world, it makes one a warrior against self, but it reconciles the believer to God; between God and him there is no war, but peace. Time was when the elect of God were at enmity against God. That was in Adam. They all died in Adam, became separated from God by wicked works. All the people of God sinned in Adam. Not that they inherited his sin merely, but all actually sinned in him. All were in the loins of Adam when he transgressed, so that each and every one committed the same act that Adam did, and each and every one became a sinner on his own account, not on Adam's account. This condition of sin, of transgression, is one of enmity and rebellion against God, and needs a daysman to set it right. Those who have never been made to see themselves sinners before God cannot realize any necessity for a peace between God and themselves, therefore a disposition to look around for a literal era of peace and good will argues one's lack of knowledge of their own depravity, and that they know of no need for peace except in a realm outside themselves. "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain [Jew and Gentile] one new man, so making peace; and

that he might reconcile both [Jew and Gentile] unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." Thus all of God's people, whether they be of Jews or of Gentiles, are reconciled unto God by the death of Jesus from their former enmity to God in the transgression of Adam in which all actually had part. Also, the enmity between Jew and Gentile is slain by the death of Jesus. This enmity consisted not in any difference between Jew and Gentile in nature, but in the law of commandments contained in ordinances which came by Moses. This Mosaic law was a wall of partition between Jew and Gentile, giving rise to enmity between them. This enmity, as well as the enmity between God and his people, was obliterated in one body, the body of Jesus. This is the peace, the reconciliation, which is an established fact in the lives of the people of God, not a mental aberration in which the so-called religious world is deluded. The good will signified by the angelic host on Judea's plain was not so much a good will that might exist between man and man, nation and nation, as that good will which God bears in Jesus to all his people. From eternity God has loved his people with an everlasting love, and through all time has dealt with them in loving-kindness and tender mercies. This, no one of the elect has ever deserved in or for himself, but it comes on the behalf and for the sake of Jesus. God promised his seed in the loins of Abraham that they should be blessed. God, no matter how his people have dealt with and requited him, has always maintained toward them an attitude of infinite good will. This good will is in Jesus, and he is the way through which it comes into the hearts of the people of God. Those who look for good will to be maintained on earth between all people and all nations grasp the shadow and miss the substance, and this failure arises out of their ignorance of the righteousness of God and the love of God in Christ Jesus. If they knew him in his true and real character they would know the very fatness and marrow of real peace and good will. Glory and peace and good will shot through the message which the multitude of the heavenly host brought the waiting shepherds. This great cloud of witnesses surrounds the people of God, we are come unto the spirits of just men made perfect, and all attest the same: that all glory is unto God in the highest; that Jesus is the peace of God unto his rebel people; that in Jesus is God's good will manifested from heaven to men redeemed. L.

PERSONAL.

JUST for a little I am going to drop the editorial "we" and talk with the readers of the SIGNS more intimately than usual. I hope to be allowed this privilege as we close volume eighty-three, and after eighteen months connection with the paper as associate editor. I cannot express with what fear and trepidation I began this relationship with the paper. I could not believe, and cannot yet, that I am the man for the place. To myself, I lack every qualification essential to editorial work. To be an editor of a paper like the SIGNS calls for patience, charity, depth of insight, both into human nature and into the truth of God, and devotion to the cause of truth. None of these principles do I possess. I feel that I am a mere makeshift until the SIGNS can find some one who can and will fill the place as it ought to be filled. Some of the articles that I have written have been written with ease and pleasure, others have been accomplished only as a hard and trying

task. It is dreadful to have to sit down to write with a barren mind, with cold and lifeless heart. At such times it is like groping along in the dark, not knowing where the next step will land one. Having several churches to serve takes me from home a part of my time, and being engaged also in secular business takes another portion of my time. This has compelled me to do nearly all the editorial writing at night, after the children are tucked in bed, for I cannot write so long as there is any noise or confusion around me. I must have quiet for concentration of thought upon the thing in hand. I have known those who could maintain a continuity of thought in the midst of tumult, and I covet that power of concentration, but have not got it. Often while the readers of the SIGNS are doubtless sleeping in their beds, I am toiling in the wee, small hours of the night, that the next number of the paper you love may contain that which you naturally expect. I have a few requests for views on hand that I have not complied with, and it is because I have no views to give. Some of you may already think that I have written at times when it seemed to you that I did not know what I was writing about; but when I know myself that I do not know anything about a given text, it is better for me to write nothing. This is why some of your requests are still unanswered. For such as I have written, all your thanks are due unto your God, from whom all spiritual knowledge whatever comes. I, nor any other man, am anything to you except so far as the Lord by his grace has made us of some value to one another, therefore to God all the glory belongs. When I began this work eighteen months ago, I could not see how on earth I could ever do it. I think all my trust and dependence has been in the Lord, for there is where I want it to be. Now, as I look forward to the future, I realize very keenly that without the grace of the Lord I can do nothing of any good to the saints. It has been a regret to me all the year that the senior editor, brother Ker, has not written more for the paper. I have had a fear that perhaps the length of my articles was crowding him out. I have asked the publishers if this were so, and they have assured me it was not. As far as I am aware, there exists between myself and the publishers and brother Ker, nothing but the most cordial relations, and I have such confidence in their honesty that if there were a difference between us I feel sure they would apprise me of it without hesitation, and not allow that difference to smoulder into a flame. I must thank the readers of the paper one and all for their kind support, and for the many letters coming from every part of the country assuring me of approval and fellowship. But very little criticism have I had to endure, and even that, I am sure, is for my good. Criticism often compels one to examine himself and his views to make sure whether he is right or wrong. Such criticism, when in love, and not in anger, is a help to me, and if I am not able to bear it, so much the worse for me.

With love and best wishes to all the readers of the SIGNS, and desiring your prayers and cooperation all along the way, I am, I hope, yours in the cause of truth,

L.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

CLOSE OF VOLUME EIGHTY-THREE.

WITH this number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES volume eighty-three closes, and as it has been a long established custom to give our readers a brief statement of the condition of the SIGNS, we again shall give such facts as may be of interest. The year has not differed materially from those of recent date. All have endeavored to make the paper pleasant, correct and profitable, and we feel that our efforts have been appreciated and the views set forth generally accepted. The circulation has continued about the same as last year, and while it does not decrease we shall feel both glad and encouraged. The brethren have been kind in writing for publication, and we thank all who have so kindly contributed in that way. Many have assisted financially in sending the SIGNS to "the poor of the flock," making many happy who are deprived of church privileges, and in their behalf we thank all who have so kindly contributed to that end. Some have paid arrears, thus helping to continue the SIGNS, for which we thank you. We hope all our subscribers may take a renewed interest in the SIGNS during the year 1916, obtaining new subscribers when possible. We also hope that our writers may do as well during the coming year as they have done in 1915. Both Elder Lefferts and ourself thank all our readers for their kind forbearance and words of encouragement during the year.

Wishing you all a pleasant Christmas and happy new year, we say farewell for 1915. K.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

BROTHER W. J. Casey has changed his address from Dodd City, Ark., to Eros, Ark., and wishes his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, at Delmar, Md., June 30th, 1915, Levin A. Sebrease and Hester W. Twilley, both of Wicomico County, Md.

By the same, at his residence, Delmar, Del., Nov. 4th, 1915, Isaac Jones and Martha R. Disharoon, both of Sussex County, Del.

By the same, near Parsonsburg, Md., Nov. 17th, 1915, Edgar Q. Adkins and Bettie E. Holloway, both of Wicomico County, Md.

By the same, near Delmar, Del., Dec. 1st, 1915, Joseph T. Elliott and Lillian T. Calloway, both of Sussex County, Del.

By the same, near Melsons, Md., Dec. 1st, 1915, Colwell W. Layfield and Alice M. Mitchell, both of Wicomico County, Md.

By the same, at Delmar, Md., Dec. 12th, 1915, Samuel E. Benson, of Sussex County, Del., and Fannie E. Smith, of Wicomico County, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon S. G. Frazee was born Feb. 15th, 1842, died in the hospital at Macomb, Ill., July 21st, 1915. He had been a sufferer for several months, and it was deemed necessary for him to undergo an operation, from which he never recovered. He was united in marriage to Eliza Kurry, Sept. 10th, 1886. To that union were born four children: Mary Frances Wintermire, of Plymouth, Ill., Emma Jane Clarry, of Coshocton, Ohio, Ella Kendall, who died in 1895, and David L. Frazee, of Denver, Ill. His wife died in 1886, and after years of loneliness he was united in marriage to Mrs. Isabella Irwin, who ever stood by him in all the conflicts of life. He united with the Predestinarian Baptist Church, in Providence, Ill., in 1890, and a few years later, being found worthy by the church, was ordained deacon, and was also chosen clerk, in which offices he served the church acceptably for many years. He was ever at his post, ready to give a helping hand to all who were in trouble. He was strong in the faith of God's sovereignty, and believed all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose, and this faith enabled him to bear his sufferings as only such faith could, and as the end drew near he expressed his willingness to depart and be with the Lord. He had been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for more than twenty years, and always rejoiced in the doctrine it advocates. His only regret was leaving his aged wife, who had been so faithful for twenty years, and who was by his side, with his two daughters and son, when the end came. They ministered to his every want to the last.

The body was brought to the old church, where

the funeral service was conducted by his humble pastor, the writer, before a very large congregation of sorrowing friends, and then laid to rest in the little cemetery. May God comfort the loved ones left behind. L. E. FRAZEE.

Mrs. Mary E. Fisher, our beloved sister in Christ, died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Harry L. Stout, Flemington, N. J., Nov. 28th, 1915, after a week's illness from a stroke, from which she never regained consciousness. Sister Fisher was the daughter of the late John S. Hockenberry and Sarah Rittenhouse, and was one of eleven children. She is survived by one brother and three sisters: Benj. Hockenberry, Mrs. Amy Kinney, Mrs. Annie Weller and Miss Laura Hockenberry, all of Trenton, N. J. Upwards of fifty years ago she was married to Lemuel Fisher, of Flemington, N. J., who died nine years ago. They had one child, who is now Mrs. Harry L. Stout, of Flemington, N. J., and who survives her mother with husband and two children. I do not know the exact year that sister Fisher was received in the Old School Baptist Church, but think it was about fifteen years ago. She was baptized by the late Elder F. A. Chick, at Hopewell, N. J. She had been a member of another denomination before coming to the Old School Baptists, and tried her very hardest not to be an Old Baptist, but grace overruled her will. Sister Fisher was devoted to the church, and never missed an opportunity to be with her brethren whenever it was possible to do so; not simply attending the meetings of her own home church, but traveling many miles to meet with other churches of our faith and order. She was a familiar figure at our associations from year to year, and was a contributor to the SIGNS. We shall all miss her, but have hope for her that she is at rest in the presence of her beloved Jesus.

The writer was called upon by the daughter, Mrs. Stout, to conduct the funeral services, which took place from her home in Flemington. Text used was Ephesians ii. 8, 9. Interment in Prospect Hill Cemetery. May the Spirit of the Lord comfort all who mourn, and bring us all to know that he doeth all things well. L.

Maria Ellen Redman Ekelberry was born in Delaware County, Ohio, October 23rd, 1845. She was the daughter of Aaron and Drusilla (Dix) Redman. She was united in marriage with Jacob Ekelberry Dec. 24th, 1863. To that union were born four children: Stephen A., of Delaware, Mrs. Joie E. Woods, of Graceton, Texas, Mrs. Bertha Darnell, of Greenville, Texas, and Kittie Marie, deceased. She united with the Marlborough Primitive Baptist Church in the year 1884, and was baptized by Elder L. B. Sherwood. She enjoyed her church privileges when health would permit, and lived a faithful life of devotion to her family and the church which she loved. Disease of affliction was laid upon her in the nature of a cancer, which affliction she bore without murmuring until the angel of death came to her home in Cardington, Ohio, Nov. 1st, 1915, and beckoned her spirit away, aged 70 years and 9 days. She leaves to mourn, her dear husband, three children, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, two sisters, Mrs. Louisa Fleming, of Ashley, and Mrs. Caroline Edelblute, of New York city, with many other relatives and friends. There is a vacant place in the home, a seat vacant in the church, but blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.

After short services at the home on the morning of Nov. 4th the funeral was held at the Marlborough Church at 1 o'clock, conducted by Elder L. B. Hite, at which place burial was made.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

J. C. Nelson, Ky., $1.00; John F. Oliver, Va., $1.00; H. J. O'Bannon, Va., $1.00; Lieut. Col. Knifton, Ont., $2.00; G. W. Horner, Oregon, $1.00; Mrs. Martha Beardsley, Ind., $1.00; Wm. B. Ennist, N. Y., $4.00; Mrs. W. L. Sproul, N. Y., $2.00; Mrs. M. M. Rounsavell, N. Y., $3.00; Wm. Sloan, Ky., $1.00; Mrs. John Pettit, N. Y., $3.00; Richard Waller, Mo., $1.00; Mrs. J. W. Parker, Ill., $2.00.

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SALE OF THE DOLLAR CONCORDANCE DISCONTINUED.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 84. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1916. NO. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JUDGES V. 8.

"THEY chose new gods; then was war in the gates."

The elect of God are the only people to whom it is given to know the only true and living God. It is written, They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord. In order to have this knowledge of the Lord there is life. How shall they that are dead in trespasses and sins ever attain to the knowledge of God? The dead know not anything, and the sinner dead in his sins has no knowledge of the most high God. He is alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in him, because of the blindness of his heart. But to Christ Jesus power is given over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. I will give them an heart to know me. (Jer. xxiv. 7.) The apostle John saith, And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. (1 John v. 20.) Therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God. Beloved of God, have we not some hope, most precious to us, that we are not altogether strangers to what is recorded of his people? The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, in a waste howling wilderness. He led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings, so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him. In the day when first we felt his tender love, his sweet mercy and his great salvation, O what love, what praise, what worship were we constrained to render to our glorious God. Truly there was no strange god with us. Like Manasseh, we knew that the Lord he is God. Shall we continue reading about his people? What is this in Deut. xxxii. 16, 17? They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods; with abominations provoked they him to anger. They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not; to new gods that came newly up, whom your

fathers feared not. Can it be true, dear child of God? O what a shame! O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces. When Israel had been delivered from the house of bondage, at the Red Sea they sang praises to the Lord, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously. But how soon it is said, They tempted the Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us or not? Before long the people gathered themselves unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods which shall go before us. And presently they were dancing before the golden calf. How often did they provoke God in the wilderness! And when the Lord had brought them into the land he had promised to give them, they forsook the Lord and served Baal and Ashtaroth. But the Lord was gracious, for his own name's sake, and delivered them from their woes. He sent them saviors, who saved them out of the hands of their enemies. (Neh. ix. 27.) Yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them. (Judges ii. 17.) Are we not better than they? No, in no wise. "They chose new gods;" so have we been guilty. How often have we found the word most needful to stir up our pure mind by way of remembrance. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. After that we have known God, or rather are known of God, how could it ever be that we have chosen new gods? Is not the Lord of hosts sufficient? Is he not almighty, merciful, gracious, abounding in goodness, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning? Why and how is it that of Israel it is recorded, "They chose new gods"? To typical Israel it was promised that in their obedience to God they should be plentifully blessed in all things pertaining to this life, but if they failed to render to the Lord that obedience which was meet, they should meet with reverses. The Lord would bring upon them a nation of fierce countenance, and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst throughout thy land. Thus the Lord would accomplish his pleasure in chastening his nation, in visiting their transgressions with the rod and their iniquities with stripes. (Deut. xxviii.) How often did this occur, and with spiritual Israel, with those who are Jews inwardly, when first we realized the grace of God, how low, how sinful and utterly helpless we felt ourselves to be! In this time of our distress the Lord answered the cry which the Spirit of Christ Jesus sent forth in our hearts. O, we were moved unto the Lord our God, and Christ was revealed unto us as our tender Shepherd and glorious Deliverer. He led us about, and though the way was rough, and many a sigh and complaint we made, yet we received instruction. Some of it was sweet, reviving our drooping soul, and there were bitter and humbling things we learned. But have we not felt it was all for our good? Who teacheth like him? He revealed his great salvation to us, and we felt that in the crucified Lamb of God was all our hope of eternal life. Christ Jesus was all our desire, and our spirit exclaimed, Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I desire beside thee. We did not halt between two opinions, we had but one, and that was, The Lord he is God. There was no strange god with us. Had the thought been suggested that one day we might choose new gods, how indignant we would have felt, and in all the warmth

of our soul's affection for our dear Lord Jesus we would have said with Peter, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in anywise. Likewise said they all.

"They chose new gods." Does the divine nature, the Spirit of Christ in the saints, move them to choose new gods? O no. It is the carnal, fleshly nature in the people of God, greatly aided by the devil, that is in subtile war with the Spirit of Christ in them, in all the deceit of our desperately wicked heart, suggesting and alluring us into departures from the living God, to serve other gods. How gracious is the counsel of the Holy Ghost, by the pen of the apostle to the Hebrews: Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. This evil heart of unbelief is the foul nest in which all treason and rebellion is hatched and nursed against our God and King and Savior. How silently and cunningly is its vile plotting done! The children of God, in their early experiences, are little aware of the devices of Satan or the deceitfulness of the human heart. Satan is transformed as an angel of light, and is ever ready to insinuate his delusive and hurtful counsels, and our flesh is ever ready to war against the Spirit. The work of the flesh is idolatry. (Gal. v. 20.) What comfort the Lord oftentimes indulges his people in while in prayer and in reading the Scriptures, so that we have longed to be often so engaged. But after a time we began to think and act as though there were some merit in these exercises, and that if these exercises were constantly maintained we should never see want. Some professors may sneer at such things, for they were never babes, foolish or weak. But you poor, simple ones, you have found before you were aware of it that you were looking to your own performances of these things as the fountains to minister to your souls' needs. And though in word we might deny it, yet in fact, in spirit we were saying to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods. (Hosea xiv. 3.) Have you known your fleshly mind to become very religious for a season—to make an inspection of the city in which you dwell, and suggest how we ought to be fortified in readiness for future conflicts? Yes, that we might have very judicious precautions on hand to withstand the onslaughts of error and safeguards against temptations. We became most industrious in preparing our defences, endeavoring to store our minds with certain texts of Scripture, which we thought would repel and overthrow all errors. We endeavored to make a study of this and that doctrine, that we might be able so clearly to present the truth that none of the enemy could stand before us. Now and again we reviewed what we had wrought, and deemed ourselves almost impregnable, and in fancied security we seemed eager for the foe to appear, that we might fire a few shots at him; for, relying upon our accumulated stores of sound doctrine, we presumptuously imagined we were quite prepared to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints and for the defence of the gospel. A head full of texts of Scriptures and unanswerable arguments is not the living God, but some of Israel have made a god of it, a private god; we worshiped our accumulated funds of Scripture knowledge, we became self-sufficient, our dependence upon the ministrations of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, declined; we made and chose a new god, our stored up knowledge, but it proved to be only an idol, and such we have found it to be in adversities. Again, dear children of God,

when we have been in various difficulties, when the enemy has invaded the land, we have been sorely perplexed. We have waited upon God, we have cried unto him for succor and to grant us enlargement. Have we become impatient for deliverance? Then our fleshly mind began to lift up its head, and to insinuate that the Lord was tarrying, that his help was so slow, that a little foreign aid might be of advantage to facilitate deliverance from our embarrassments. If we had a few horses and chariots we should not be far from salvation. We went down to Egypt for help. (Isaiah xxxi. 1.) Herein we did foolishly, (2 Chron. xvi. 9,) resorting to carnal notions, putting our trust in an arm of flesh. We became rebellious, and took counsel, but not of the Lord, and in our vain help thought to experience relief sooner than the Lord seemed willing to grant it to us. We chose new gods. O what a gracious, glorious God is the true God, the God of our salvation. Who is a God like unto thee? that pardoneth iniquity and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage. He retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth in mercy. When the Lord was revealed as such unto us, and we were delivered from the powers of darkness and translated into the kingdom of his dear Son, how we delighted in the law of Jesus Christ, our heavenly King! We were his willing people in the day of his power, our souls yearned to follow his gracious instructions, to run in the way of his commandments, and thus in our grateful obedience show forth the praises of our God and King.

"They chose new gods." We were ensnared to listen to other voices than Christ, our Lawgiver. We might still speak of the church being subject unto Christ, yet the thought would arise, What harm could there be in this or that? It may be we have derived much pleasure in reading the writings of certain gracious men, or we have become so attached to some of the Lord's dear children that our very souls have been knit to them in love. Then our carnal mind might suggest and tell us that what they might write or speak could not be wrong, and we have looked to them as authority. In this way how many have been the customs, usages, rules and traditions which have become gods to us of our own choosing. Though we still profess Christ Jesus, our glorious Redeemer, to be our King, and as his subjects to be subject to his laws alone, yet something would say to us, Would not the doing of this be just as well? and our flesh has responded, It certainly would be more easy, less troublesome. But in vain is it that we think we worship God when we are disobedient to the law of Christ, our precious Savior, that we may keep our own traditions, (Mark vii. 7–9,) which are ever most dear to our carnal minds. The mind of Christ in the elect of God is ever in the most sacred subjection to the law of Zion's King, and the called of God according to this mind in them find in the law of Christ delightful meditation. But the carnal mind is ever at unrest, ever manifesting deep-rooted enmity against the Lord, ever devising inventions, thoughts, imaginations, heresies, and whatsoever is contrary to sound doctrine, some of which are so cunningly fashioned, are so cloaked in pleasing attire, that we have been deceived, and have gone a whoring with our own inventions. (Psalms cvi. 39.) We have been allured by that heart which is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked to suppose that gain is godliness. O what a dreadful

plague unto Israel is this vile, deceitful heart! Truly the child of God has need to come unto God often with prayer and supplication, because of the havoc and miseries experienced from his sinful, deceitful heart. (1 Kings viii. 38.) Gain is godliness. How many suppose it is so. To die is gain. (Phil. i. 21.) How few understand and are in accord with the apostle. To vast multitudes, who only have their portion in this life, to die is to lose all. (Psalms xvii. 14.) As for me, (says David, and my heart is in accord with his) I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness. But how delusive are the thoughts and emotions of the flesh. We would be rich, we have coveted the estate, the prosperity of others. Our desires have gone forth after the smiles of men. Have we not coveted the good opinion and praises of men? We have felt it would be so pleasant, wherever we went, to have the worship of our fellows, and somewhat of the same spirit that was manifested in those who loved to be called Rabbi, who prayed at the corners of the streets, who did their alms in the sight of men, has been manifested in us, and if in any measure our fleshly mind has had its reward, and we have imagined to ourselves that men thought we were something, that on account of our wealth, our gifts, our religious walk, we had gained some notice, we have thought this gain was godliness; we have coveted the honor that cometh from men. Child of God, are you in any degree guilty? What is all this desire of gain but that covetousness which is idolatry? (Col. iii. 5.) The Lord our God is a jealous God, and when we choose new gods these are images of jealousy. (Psalms lxxviii. 58; Ezek. viii. 3–5.) It is sacredly, blessedly true his loving-kindness he will not take from us. He will forgive our iniquities, but he will take vengeance on our inventions. (Psalms xcix. 8.) Our idols he will utterly abolish, and cleanse us from them all; and this humbling but gracious work of God with us is being repeated again and again all our pilgrimage, for we are

> "Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
> Prone to leave the God I love."

"They chose new gods." They ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way. (Judges ii. 19.) "Then was war." The Lord will bring upon his people his army, the Assyrian, the rod of his anger, the palmerworm and canker-worm, blasting and mildew. Prepare ye war against her. For thus hath the Lord said, Hew ye down trees, and cast a mount against Jerusalem. This is the city to be visited. (Jer. vi. 6.) In our idol worship we thought ourselves secure. The new gods cried, Peace, peace, but suddenly war is in our gates. The Lord has given commandment, Take away her battlements, for they are not the Lord's. (Jer. v. 10.) Ah, we had foolishly erected battlements which we thought no enemy could scale; they would prove to be equal to every assault. But what are all our fleshly defences, all our head knowledge of the truth, sound arguments, all our devices, our precautions to prevent the inroads of hellish temptations, the invasions of error? Beloved of God, have you known something of the fierce attacks of infidelity, when every vestige of the doctrine of Christ has been brought into question, and our hope therein assailed? We have run into our towers, have taken refuge in our strongholds. But what availed all our words, all our arguments, all our fleshly knowledge of the letter of the doctrine of Christ? It could not stand before the spirit of infi-

delity, the fierce assaults of the devil. O child of God, thy only salvation is that our gracious, merciful, covenant God shall arise to our help and bring again Christ's gospel into our hearts, not in word only, but in power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. Did you ever hear that dreadful challenge in your soul, How do you know there is a God? What breath was there in any new gods? Could they declare? Could all the religion accumulated by the efforts of the flesh make known and say, Thy God reigneth? Vain was all our confidence in what we esteemed sound arguments, texts of Scripture, our head knowledge of the Bible. The enemy gained ground upon us, wrested from us all our defences, demolished our self-erected towers and battlements. We were filled with dismay, with questionings, tossed to and fro by the enemy, and we found these new gods could not arise and save. Hellish temptations encompassed us, all our safeguards, our fleshly, pious resolutions, were valueless in their resistance to the temptations of the wicked one. Now did the enemy come in like a flood, and we felt ourselves swept along by the incoming billows of evil. "Then was war in the gates." Though we had multiplied horses, and sent down into Egypt for help, and trusted in them because they were many, yet thus saith the jealous Lord God, I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots. (Micah v. 10.) Egypt did help in vain. Ah, when the conflict was sharp, and the battle long, and difficulties multiplied, did we become fretful under our soul-sickness and wounds? Did we forget to trust in the Lord alone? Did we send to King Jareb? (Hosea v. 13.) "Then was war in the gates." The Egyptians and every foreign aid to which we appeal are not God, and this to our sorrow we have proved. Though the wisdom and devices of our fleshly minds cried, Peace, peace, what health could we find? what release from our woes? We found our trust in an arm of flesh to be our shame and confusion. The rod of the Lord's anger smote us, we were broken under his chastening, and in deep humility of soul confessed our shame in departing from the living God. "Then was war in the gates." The Lord shall utter his voice before his army, for his camp is very strong. He sends sore afflictions and trials. He calls for blasting and mildew, and all our pleasant plants are withered. We looked for peace, but thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet and the alarm of war. Destruction upon destruction is cried, the whole land is spoiled, the invasion of the enemy, the world, the flesh and the devil, eat up our pleasant things. O, it is dreadful to find that our heart's vilenesses are as mildew to our joy and peace. The Lord has brought upon us a time of famine. He has commanded the clouds that they rain no rain upon us, (Isaiah vi. 6,) and we are made to feelingly cry out, O what a barren time! my leanness, my leanness! Woe is me. Where are the new gods? Can they arise and save us in the time of our trouble? (Jer. ii. 28.) A time of drought in the soul of a child of God is the time when all the new gods that we have chosen and worshiped are put to the test. Can any of these vanities cause rain? (Jer. xiv. 22.) Do we seek to cisterns that we have hewn out? They are broken, and afford us no supply. Our thoughts had been that we were rich, and increased with goods, and had need of nothing; but now in war, with enemies many, our necessities are deep, and of what utility are all the gods, all creature

doings? The idols have spoken vanity, miserable comforters are they all. (Zech. x. 2.) Of what value is all the wealth of the world, the smiles and worship of men, when our gracious God hideth his face from us, and has brought afflictions to our gates? He will famish all the gods of the earth. (Zeph. ii. 11.) Not all the customs, rules and traditions that we have worshiped are able to bring plenty. We are minished and brought low through oppression, affliction and sorrow. The Lord will plead with his people: Have I been a wilderness unto Israel, a land of darkness? No, dear Lord, thou hast not. O my soul, clothe thee with sackcloth, put thy mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope. In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats. Sometimes the Lord has so chastened us that we have been carried away to Babylon. O what confusion and distress we have experienced! Then we were subdued, then we were mercifully instructed, we mourned our folly in choosing new gods. How we longed once more to dwell in the land of gospel rest. We wept when we remembered Zion, and with Jonah we could exclaim, I am cast out of thy sight, yet will I look again toward thy holy temple. In all the chastenings the kindness and love of our heavenly Father appear. Even when we are in Babylon it is for our good. (Jer. xxiv. 5.) We are weaned from our idols, and become ashamed of our confidences, and mourn over our departures from the Lord. When the Lord our God has dethroned all the new gods, and he seeth that our power is gone, (Deut. xxxii. 36,) will he be favorable no more? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? O no, he abideth faithful, the same gracious, unchanging God, therefore we are not consumed; and when the set time to favor Zion is come, and he saith unto her, Thy God reigneth, then though the heavens have been shut up, and it rained not by the space of three years and six months, thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance when it was weary. Who can stay the bottles of heaven? Who shall prevent the showers of blessing? We have proved his doctrine to drop as the rain, his speech to distil as the dew. The blessed Comforter has taken the things of Jesus our Savior and has again nourished and cherished our souls. We have found that he alone is the fountain of living waters, the source of all pure delight; he alone is our strength. It is the Lord who teacheth our hands to war and our fingers to fight, and we learn that except the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain. O, we have learned, and we still are learning, that peace and righteousness are only found in the old paths, the good way, the footsteps of the flock. All speculations and false doctrines are new gods, lying vanities, and the child of God who for a time has been enticed by them forsakes his own mercies. What improvement can any false gods make upon the gospel of Christ? In walking according to the rule of Christ our King we experience peace and mercy to be our heritage. How prone we are to make gods to ourselves that are not gods, (Jer. xvi. 20,) and should the Lord at any time say, Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone, (Hosea iv. 17,) a sad and woeful time will be experienced by us. But when our gracious, covenant God shall heal our backslidings, then shall we exclaim, What have I any more to do with idols? Asshur shall not save us; we will

not ride upon horses, neither will we say to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods. (Hosea xiv. 3-8.) Are these experiences of soul thus portrayed in some measure yours? You perhaps, dear child of God, are both troubled and comforted, but it all is a pathway untrodden by those who fear not God and love not our Lord Jesus Christ.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

CASEY, Iowa, Oct. 8, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."—1 John i. 8. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin: for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."—1 John iii. 9. The first is of the earth, earthy; born of the first Adam, and like begets like. In nature, from trees to everything that grows out of the earth, all animals, from the least to the greatest, bear after their kind. "And so it is written, The first man Adam, was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." In the next world, when we awake with Christ's likeness, and see him as he is, and as he arose from the grave, and in the presence of over five hundred witnesses, ascended, as he said, to his Father and our Father, and to my God and to your God. (John xx. 17.) The children of God while here in the flesh have two minds: a carnal mind, that is natural, belonging to our fleshly nature, and a spiritual mind. Paul by the authority of God says, "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." "As it is written [alluding to Isaiah], Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? [The natural, fleshly, carnal mind.] Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but by the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world [from the carnal mind], but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given us of God, which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, [Why?] because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 9-16. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."—John vi. 63. Not natural life, but spiritual life. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." Not part flesh and part spirit, nor as some have it, the soul born over again and made spiritual. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is

every one that is born of the Spirit." "But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."—Rom. ii. 28, 29. "For the flesh [the fleshly mind] lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit [spiritual mind] against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."—Gal. v. 17–26. Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things have passed away. "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. [This is the house of many mansions Christ spoke of in the fourteenth chapter of John.] For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. * * * For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life [eternal life]. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, [speaking of the inner man that is born of God and is spirit, not the flesh and blood man,] we are absent from the Lord: for we [that are led by the Spirit] walk by faith, not by sight: [of the outer man,] we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." —2 Cor. v. 1–9. Solomon, speaking of the death of the saints, says that man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets. Then shall the dust return to the earth (as it was before it was formed into man), and the spirit (that is born of the Spirit, the only Spirit that ever came down from heaven, born of God), shall return unto God who gave it. (Eccl. xii. 6.) Lying spirits never came from God, then how can they return to a place they never came from? David said, A seed shall serve him, it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. (Psalms xxii. 30, 31.) Christ said, The good seed are the children of the kingdom. (Matt. xiii. 24–31, 37–44.) Christ said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall (not may if they wish and will consent) hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live (eternally live). Christ said, It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life (eternal life). (John vi. 63.) My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. (John x. 27, 28.) If he had not given them eternal life they would have perished, would they not? Read the second chapter of Ephesians. I believe that all Scripture is given by inspiration, and God always means just what he says. I believe that God inspired the prophets and apostles to write what he told them to write, and Christ said that there must not be anything added to or taken from the book; so let us prove all things in Scripture by Scripture, not by what uninspired men say or write unless they prove what they write by the Scriptures; prove all things by a "thus saith the Lord." For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace, so they that are in the flesh cannot please God, but ye,

(the saints) are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you they are spirit, and they are life. (John vi. 63.) As I said before, from the earthy Adam we get natural life that must die. Adam lived to be nine hundred and thirty years old, Jared lived to be nine hundred and sixty-two, Methuselah nine hundred and sixty-nine, and Noah nine hundred and fifty. These are the oldest that are mentioned in the Scriptures, but they, as are we, were like Adam and had to die. All that are born of the Spirit are born of God, they are Godlike, immortal, eternal and can never die. There is nothing that comes from God but returns to God; the spirit at the death of the body returns to God who gave it.

Yours for God's eternal truth,

R. S. BANKS.

RUSSELLVILLE, Ky., Oct. 17, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I feel impressed to write a few thoughts upon the great plan of salvation, and how I understand sinners are saved. There is no subject that is more calculated to interest and build us up on our faith in God than this, If we can see eye to eye and speak the same of the things embraced in this plan. If I know my poor heart, I desire to praise, magnify and glorify God at all times for his wonderful works to the children of men, and I am fully convinced that I cannot do this unless I am in possession of the Spirit of God to teach me, and take the lead of my mind, for we read that God is a Spirit, and he seeketh such to worship him as do worship in the spirit, and if we have not the Spirit of Christ, we are none of his. This is the truth, and I believe it with all my heart. We read also that salvation is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. This, too, I believe is the truth, and it is encouraging to me to believe it, for, if not deceived, I have the witness within myself, testifying to it, and I am convinced that I did not receive it of man, neither was I taught it of man, but it was revealed to me, and to all of God's dear children, by the Holy Spirit of God. There is another thing I am thoroughly convinced of in my own experience: if we are God's children, and belong to his family, we were born into it, and we had nothing more to do with this birth than we had in being born into our father's family here on earth. I care not what man may think, or what he believes, or how much faith he professes to have, the only thing that will constitute man a child of God and make him an heir of heaven is to be born again, born from above and have the love of God in the soul. This is my experience in regard to it, and it is encouraging to me to believe this way, because I have a "thus saith the Lord" for my belief. Paul also comes in here, testifying to the truth of it in his own experience; hear him on this line of thought: Now abideth faith, hope and charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity. To my mind, charity here signifies love, and unless man has it in the soul he does not belong to God's family. Paul says, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity [or this love], I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." He does not stop at this, but says, "Though I bestow

all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity [or this love], it profiteth me nothing." O, say some, this sets the sinner down on the stool of do nothing, and does not give him any chance for heaven. I would be glad to know that you all had an experimental knowledge in the soul, then I could call you brother, and could give you the right hand of christian fellowship in our travels from nature to grace; but unless you do have an experimental knowledge of the truth in the soul, then it is we will have to separate, for we cannot walk together except we be agreed along this line of things. Paul's way is the way I see it, and it is the way I hope I have experienced it in my soul. Some may say that if what I have written be the truth, the blame rests upon God for man not being saved; and He is unjust. You may see it in that light, but I cannot agree with you. I am not going to say that he is to be blamed or is unjust in anything he does, for if he were to send our souls to hell, I can but say his righteous law approves it well. There is nothing new nor anything old with the God I profess to worship, for known unto him are all his works from the beginning of time, therefore he hath mercy upon whom he will have mercy and whom he will he hardeneth. Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endureth with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? Well, some are ready to say, I believe in giving the sinner a chance to be saved. I have no objection to your belief, but I would rather you would talk to some one else who believes as you do about it. I have no confidence in the chance system of works, especially when it comes to our eternal salvation. I want it secure and hinged upon God's decrees and purposes and his foreknowledge and predestination, then I feel safe about it. I might say, I have had a chance to be a good man, but I know that I am not; there is but one good, and that is God. Again we might say, Our federal head, Adam, had a chance to keep the law, but we know he failed. Now why did he not keep it? He knew what would befall him if he did not, for God told him he should surely die if he did eat. I take the position that he could not, for he had not the ability within himself, hence he fell and involved all his posterity in death and sin, and men have been dying and having trouble ever since, and will continue to do so until the end of time. You see his chance or my chance to be good did not help us. Now I will cite you who believe so much in chance to a portion of God's word, and let you decide whether there was any chance in that, and leave you to ponder it over in your minds. You will find it recorded in Paul's letter to the Romans, ninth chapter, beginning at the eleventh verse and continuing through the sixteenth verse, in fact, I think it would do you no harm to read the entire chapter. I will quote from the eleventh through the sixteenth verse: "(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to

election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." So you see that neither of the children was given a chance to act for himself, neither were they consulted as to what they should do. Please tell me if God was unjust in this, and who the blame rested upon? You dare not say it rested upon God, neither can you say the children were to blame for it, for they were not yet born, neither had done good or evil, but God said that he did it that his purpose according to election might stand, and I believe it this way, not of works, but of him that calleth. If I were asked what I think about it, I would say it was because it seemed right in his sight, and was according to his purpose and foreknowledge before the world began, and leave it there, for it is said that secret things belong to God, and revealed things to us and our children, and I want to be satisfied with what the Lord reveals to me.

Brethren editors, please cast the mantle of charity over my weakness and imperfections, for if I am a child of God's family, I feel to be the least of all. If in your judgment you think it would be profitable to the household of faith publish this, if not, consign it to the waste-basket, and it will be all right.

Your poor and afflicted brother, I hope, in much tribulation,

J. B. JONES.

MT. VERNON, Texas.

TO THE CHURCH OF CHRIST AT MT. OLIVE—DEARLY BELOVED:—I am writing to you this epistle of love through the tender mercy of the covenant-keeping God. I am thus far permitted to remain in the land of the living, a poor, wretched sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all. I shall not try to write much, but only to let you know that I am still trying in weakness to preach Jesus the way, the truth and the life; am still contending for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints. In doing this I hope I have no confidence in the flesh, feeling to realize that there is no good thing dwelling in the flesh, nothing but the divine life revealed in us profiteth. I am glad to believe that I am numbered with the dear saints of God on earth, but O if I only knew that I am truly one of them. We know that all things work together (not separately) for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose, called out from the world to all eternity. Moreover, whom he called he justified, sanctified (set apart) to the adoption of children by Christ to himself according to his own eternal purpose, which he purposed in himself before the foundation of the world, and he predestinated us to the inheritance of glory through Jesus Christ his Son, and he will be everlastingly glorified in us. No weapon that is formed against us (by the devices of Satan) can stand. Jesus is our Mediator, forever seated at the right hand of God, there as our advocate to intercede for us. Satan can never bring any charge against us to the Father but our Advocate is there pleading our cause with, Father, I have redeemed them, I have satisfied the law, therefore, holy Father, keep them in thine own name. O what a wonderful Savior! Jesus was

born a Savior, as the angel said unto the shepherds, Fear not, for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people (covenant people), for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. Here in a stall we see a child is born, a Savior (not a part, but a whole Savior), a Savior from the cradle to the cross, from the cradle to his throne in heaven he redeemed us all the way, including all the election of grace from infancy to old age. O hear him exclaim on the cross, It is finished. All that the offended law demanded was satisfied. He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God and was by wicked hands slain, for the Lord pronounced death at the beginning on the one that transgressed his holy and righteous law, In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die, being the penalty. As by the disobedience of one man sin entered into the world, so death, as the consequence of one man's disobedience, is pronounced upon all that were represented in the one who transgressed: Adam. Then we hear the Lord speaking in the garden: "And I will put enmity between thee [Satan] and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Jesus (the head) is bruised, here his heel (we, the church,) is bruised. The heel represents the lower extremity of the body. Our experience every day feels to be bruised. The Lord spake by his prophet Isaiah, saying, "But he [Jesus] was wounded for our transgressions [our sins], he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was [not going to be] upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Now we see in all this that Satan is bruised under his feet; and when Jesus was delivered in accordance with what God predestinated, he was delivered for our offences and was raised again for our justification. Here we see where justification comes in. Then we have the language of Paul: "Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified." Again, Paul said, "But of him [God] are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Brethren, and all the church, these are some of my reflections. Pray for me and mine.

Hoping that you will cast the mantle of charity over my imperfections, and forgive all you see amiss in me, I am, as I trust, your brother in gospel bonds,

J. B. BOWDEN.

HAVANA, Kansas, Dec. 15, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—In sending my remittance for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES I feel that I want to write you a few thoughts as they may occur. When I read your editorial in the December 1st number I was made both sad and glad. Sad because of your truthful statement of the condition of the Old School Baptists at this time in our country. So very many, forgetting the scriptural admonition to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, follow after those things which cause divisions, contentions and bitterness. The influence of the spirit of love and fellowship seems to be passing into obscurity, under a cloud of discontent. Divisions arise from questions and themes that have no place in the gospel which all profess to believe. I was pleased with your remarks about the resurrection of the saints. The eternal and everlasting destiny of God's people should be the central theme of their faith and hope. As Paul so earnestly declared, If by any means I might attain unto the

resurrection of the dead. That is an important question with every humble believer in Christ. Am I worthy to obtain so great a price? is an anxious thought in his mind. How they shall be raised up from the sleep of death should not be an absorbing query The beloved John settled that question: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; [his great spiritual mind was secure upon that point] and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." He was very sure of that. I was truly pleased in your refutation of the theory, so largely taught, that our mortal bodies shall be raised from the sleep of death. Why will not people follow the plain teachings of the Scriptures upon this subject? Paul termed a man a "fool" that would claim the mortal body shall rise from the dead. "Thou sowest not that body that shall be, * * * but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption,"&c. The grain of wheat is sown and dies, but the germ of life does not die, but is quickened by the natural elements and bringeth forth a body in no way resembling the body planted in the ground. So with the believer in Christ, his natural body dies, and goes into corruption, because it is natural and sinful. The Spirit life manifested in the spiritual birth cannot die, because it is born of God. It is the life that shall quicken the mortal body and raise it up a spiritual body. Paul had that thought in view when he wrote the following words to his Roman brethren: "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."—Rom. viii. 11. So the mortal or natural bodies of the saints shall not rise from the dead, but their spiritual bodies shall. Probably Paul anticipated that there would be much and varied theories advanced, and taught to show how the dead should rise, so wrote, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible [the sleeping dead], and we shall be changed [those who shall be living upon the earth at that time shall also be changed from mortal to immortal]."—1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. "Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we be ever with the Lord." Thus the apostle was given to unfold that much of the mystery of the resurrection. No mortal is able to grasp more. In what form the risen ones shall appear is known only to God. Vain man, why attempt to lift the veil?

T. R. PITTMAN.

DUNKIN, Texas, Oct. 1, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am a stranger to you in the flesh, but I humbly hope not in the Spirit, for I know that known unto God are all his works, so known unto him were all the chosen in Christ before the world began, from the rivers even unto all the ends of the earth. I know that the redeemed in Christ Jesus are scattered throughout the waste howling wilderness, but thanks be to our God, who rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, he knoweth those who are his. Herein is sweet comfort: the old apostle sayeth, The foundation of the Lord standeth sure,

having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. But the great important question with me is, Am I one with them? Can there be found room with that blessed number for one so poor and unworthy, and as helpless a creature as I see myself to be? I came an empty blank into the hands of the great I AM, a poor, helpless, naked beggar, lying at mercy's door, begging to be clothed with that robe of righteousness that only Christ Jesus can give, for he says, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and whom I will I harden, and, Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another vessel unto dishonor? Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? We have no right to murmur, for he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. I believe God to be the God of purpose as well as of mercy, for according to his own purpose and grace, given in Christ Jesus, the bride, the Lamb's wife, was redeemed from under the curse by his own blood.

Beloved in the Lord, pardon me for writing so much in my very weak and stammering way; I did not intend to write so much, but just wanted to speak to you all and beg an interest in your prayers while I am to remain here in this lonely life. I live twenty miles from the church where my membership is, and am hardly ever able to attend, so do not often hear preaching, or even see any of our people, if one so unworthy as I can claim that dear relationship with the blessed kindred in Christ.

I have just been reading some good and precious letters in the dear old SIGNS, and have been feasting with joy unspeakable and full of glory. While I am not a subscriber to the paper, I dearly love it, and the reason I am not a subscriber is because I cannot afford it, if I could I would never do without it, for it is indeed spiritual food and drink to the poor, lonely, tempest-tossed few. I have a few copies that the dear saints have sent to me, and they are as treasures to me, and are always new. I read them and lay them away for a week, and then read them again with renewed interest. The SIGNS is of sweet comfort to the lonely pilgrims in the waste howling wilderness in spiritual Israel. Write on, dear brethren and sisters, and do not get weary, for you are filling the mission your heavenly Father intended you should, and you who are not in the thorny valley know not the comfort you are to the little ones as they are passing through. Comfort ye one another, and so fulfill the law of Christ. The SIGNS is a sweet and solid medium of comfort to Jerusalem, containing thoughts upon Zion, and the Comforter flows among the people of God and they comfort each other with the comfort wherewith they themselves are comforted, just as the Lord our God is pleased to send it.

I now must surely stop, though I would love to write more, for it seems I have just commenced, but when I look at myself and all that I have written in my weak and blundering way, it makes me almost ashamed of myself for writing so much, especially for my first letter, but I hope you will pardon me, for I have today read so many God-honoring letters that my soul is stirred within me, and I wish I could shake hands with you all. The Lord's people think daily, yes, hourly, upon his name, and speak often one to

another of him and his wonderful works to the children of men. May we be found praising Elijah's God.

Your little sister, in lonely afflictions,

JENNIE LOYD.

[As the SIGNS is so much enjoyed by sister Loyd it affords us pleasure to send it to her free of charge.—ED.]

YAWKEY, W. Va., Nov. 19, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I feel my unworthiness to address you as brethren, for this word means more to my understanding than my tongue or pen can express. It has been my desire for a long time to write, but my imperfections in the flesh have made me backward about it, but just now the words come to me: "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." This greater within is Christ, who has all power over the flesh, and I hope it is by his Spirit within that I am given a mind to try to express the feeling of love I hope I have toward all lovers of truth. I love the people who uphold the SIGNS, for I feel it is published in defence of the pure and unadulterated doctrine of Jesus Christ, and is upheld by the Lord himself, for when dear Elder F. A. Chick was called away the mantle was cast upon another, who has filled the place well. I feel that the family of Elder Chick must greatly miss him, and my desire is that the Lord, who has all power, will comfort them. I have no doubt but that he fell asleep in Jesus, from which sleep none ever wake to weep. It gives me a feeling of deep solemnity when I see those older ones at the battle front falling, and I feel it is the duty of the younger ones to treat them with great respect. Remember, young brethren, that while the older ones are passing away at the battle front we are being pressed toward the front of the battle, as they were, by the same God who worketh all things, and it is a great calling to press forward toward the mark of the higher calling, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Although we must suffer tribulation, tribulation worketh experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts. These are they which came up out of great tribulation, having their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. It was not by our works that these robes were made white, but by his blood, which was his life that he gave for the elect, chosen in him before the foundation of the world. All Babylon says God is not a God of choice, but I do not expect any truth from Babylon. God is a God of choice, and it was his choice to make the world and all things that are in the world as they are, and in his choice he created all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. He chose the church in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. Then he said by the mouth of Solomon, My dove, my undefiled, is but one; the choice one of her that bare her; the bride, the Lamb's wife, the church of the living God, in spirit and in truth, which cannot be defiled; and this church, the bride, the Lamb's wife, is not going after others, for she only loves one, the man Christ Jesus. I believe that when he died upon the cross the debt was all paid for the bride that the law demanded, for without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sins. So then it is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his own purpose and grace, given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. I cannot believe in a part way God, for when the Lord made all things he made whole things. He made a way for the water to run into the

seas, and the water runs all the way to the seas. Christ is not a half Savior, but he is a whole Savior, and I am truly glad that he is, for if there were any part for me to do I would fail. I am the corrupt man, the same as the corrupt tree, and cannot bring forth good fruit. I believe that in the end of this time-world all the graves will burst, and the dead shall come forth; so when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Job says, Though after my skin, worms destroy my body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, and I hope to believe the same thing. There is plenty of proof in the Scriptures that the dead shall be raised, and no proof against the dead being raised.

I must close this poorly written letter. I know that I am not an able writer, yet felt impressed to write, but hope I have not written anything contrary to the teaching of the Bible. Do with this letter as you think best.

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

W. C. PENNINGTON.

CORNING, Ark., Oct. 5, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—You will find inclosed check, in payment for one year's subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. My subscription expired the first of last March, but you continued to send it to me, for which I wish to tender you my sincere thanks. Now, brethren, I am in my sixty-ninth year of age, and my right hand and arm is paralyzed. The main cause of my failure to keep my subscription paid up was my inability to labor; I have not been able to do a day's work since last January, and fear I shall never be able to work again. If I had not been blessed in getting a small pension from the State of Arkansas as a confederate veteran I would not have been able to pay up this time. It does seem that I am being chastened severely, but I know my afflictions are light when compared with my sins. I have been a sufferer for more than fifty years, and a sinner for sixty-nine years, yet I have been wonderfully blessed, much more than I am worthy of. I have been deaf for fifty-one years, and am now so deaf that I hear conversation with great difficulty. I have not heard a sermon preached in several years. I have been here for more than twenty-two years, and doubt if there has ever been a true, spiritual, doctrinal sermon preached in this town of about three thousand inhabitants of pretty good moral people, such as are boasted of in this country. They have four so-called churches here. I cannot hear their preaching, but I know they are all founded on works. Well, they all have their own way, which is a strange way to you and me, but I suppose our ways are equally strange to them. Poor, benighted souls! I have been greatly interested of late concerning the types, &c., the antitypes that we read of in the holy Bible, even the type and antitype of national Israel. As I have never heard any one speak or read any writing on the text in Joshua vii. 16–26, I would be glad if brother Ker or brother Lefferts, or some one, would write through the SIGNS, if they feel to do so, and give their views, especially on the antitype of Achan, if you can see or know of an antitype of him and his sins, as I am sometimes made to wonder if I, even I, so little and worthless, shall at last be found the antitype of Achan. I fail to see clearly the antitype of Job

or Jonah in myself. O, could I see myself a child, even one of the least. Brethren Ker and Lefferts, be sure one or both of you write. I consider you both as the qualified servants of the Most High, even the God of our salvation, the God of all things. I am sure you will send me the SIGNS, and I hope I may be able to keep it paid for hereafter.

Unworthily your brother in hope of eternal life,

R. C. SMITH.

LEXINGTON, Ky.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—While reading the inspired record by Matthew, John, Luke and Mark, the fact stands out plain and prominent that of all the vast multitudes that Jesus healed, of the blind, the maimed, the leper, the dumb and the halt, he never said to one of them, Thy merit and thy good works have saved thee, but several times, as when the blind man asked of Jesus as he passed by, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me, Jesus commanded him to be brought unto him, and when he was come near he asked him, "What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? and he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee."—Luke xviii. 41, 42. Even the faith that Jesus gives to his people, for faith is the gift of God, and none of the fallen sons or daughters of Adam have the faith of God's elect until God is graciously pleased to bestow this unspeakable gift upon them. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."—Eph. ii. 8. When Jesus healed the woman who was bowed down and could in no wise lift herself up, whom Jesus healed on the sabbath day, and the Pharisees murmured, and called it the breaking of the sabbath, Jesus said to the hypocrites that they loosed their ox and ass from the stall and led to water on the sabbath day, and ought not the woman be loosed from her bondage, whom Satan hath bound lo these eighteen years? and all his adversaries were ashamed. We have the same class in the world to-day, who are sticklers for keeping the sabbath, who strain at a gnat and swallow a camel, who teach for doctrine the commandments of men, who are drunk with the wine of Babylon, ritualism and formalism, who teach men that the essential thing is to go through the form and then you can go on as you please. The so-called leading denominations in the world to-day are not the church of Jesus Christ, for they keep careful tab on their numbers and their wealth, and their house is a house of merchandise. They are simply a vast collective agency, to collect all the filthy lucre they can persuade the people to give; they are of the world, and speak of the world, and seek to please men, and the world heareth them; all will fall into their net but those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. (Rev. xxi. 27.) For the church of Christ is hid from the wise and prudent, and constitutes that innumerable company redeemed out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people under heaven, whom no man can number; and the command to his people who are in Babylon is, Come out of her, that ye be not partakers of her plagues. The conditional or effort system has been condemned by the Lord Almighty several thousand years ago, even in the day of that eminent patriarch Job, when the Lord commanded his three friends to offer sacrifice, and told Job to pray for them, lest he should destroy them, for they had not spoken that which was right, as his

servant Job had. Surely they are blind leaders of the blind, and will certainly fall into the ditch. So God's people are warned by Jesus to go not after the lo heres and the lo theres, for by their fruits ye shall know them. For the devil is as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; the roaring noise of antichrist is to give his people warning to keep out of the clutches and beware of the wolves in sheep's clothing. For thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation. In the church of Jesus Christ is peace and rest, and steadfast trust in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who hath saved his people with an everlasting salvation.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

WM. F. SLOAN.

INDEPENDENCE, Mo., Dec. 14, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is time to renew my subscription for the SIGNS. I do not want to miss a number as long as I can see to read and can get the money to pay for the paper, for I have read it nearly ever since I could read, and some of my family have been subscribers and it has come to my own home most of the time for forty-six years or more. Twice we gave it up, for no other reason than lack of money to pay for it, but since I am alone it is doubly dear. Last night I finished reading December 1st number, and each letter seemed the best, and the editorials are always good and full of truth, if I know anything about the truth of God. Surely Elder Ker's closing remarks in the last SIGNS brought sadness to my old, sinful heart. The thought came at once, No, he cannot quit the field when he is so much needed. Many times to-day Isaiah xl. 1, has been in my mind: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God," &c. Surely many have received not only a cup of cold water, but a feast of precious crumbs from the Master's table while reading your able editorials. If an ignorant old stranger may be allowed to speak a word of admonition to those whom God has called and placed upon the walls of Zion, I would say, Cry aloud and spare not. These are perilous times, but we have the consoling thought that the Lord will provide. This we poor, forgetful mortals have to learn over and over; at least I find it so. If I am allowed once in a while to sit down with the dear brethren and sisters and partake of the loaves and fishes, soon I am trying to provide for myself again. While I grasp at the few floating straws the chilling winds of disappointment drive them out of my reach. It is then I am made to cry, Lord, cast me not off in the time of old age, forsake me not when my strength faileth. May God's blessing be with all connected with the SIGNS and with all who call upon his name through the coming year, yea, and evermore.

If this is cast aside no one will be disappointed.

LAVINIA MORGAN.

NEW YORK, N. Y., 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed a check, in payment for the SIGNS. We truly have great reason for thanksgiving, as we are so much better off than many at the present time. One of our greatest blessings is being able to go each Sunday to hear the pure, unadulterated truth, and dear Elder McConnell has been greatly blessed in being able to keep the little flock well fed. I presume you know of the baptisms there. How beautiful it is to see His children coming out from the world, willing to take up their cross and bear his yoke, which he says is easy, and

follow him in meek obedience, and his promise is, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. And he adds, But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. He also says, He that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. So I, as do all God's children, rejoice to see strength given to the little ones to acknowledge him before men. In reading the twenty-sixth chapter of Matthew I began to wonder if in not confessing him we, too, are denying him, as poor Peter did. The damsel said to him, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee, but he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest. And when again it was said to him, Surely thou also art one of them, for thy speech betrayeth thee, he again denied his Savior. How often the speech of a stranger assures us that he or she is of them, one who has been with Jesus, one who speaks the same language, and if they have been with him their nonacknowledgment and silence when accused of being with him, or being one of them, is it not the same or similar to Peter's denial?

But I must stop. I hope you will forgive my thus forgetting myself, but you see after reading the chapter my ideas or thoughts have simply run away with me, for from the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh.

I remain, I hope, your sister,

ADELA JONES.

VETO, Ala., Dec. 14, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed please find post-office money order for two dollars, for which continue to send me the highly appreciated SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which is laden with sound doctrine. I have been a reader and subscriber for a little over a year, and cannot express my appreciation of its contents and the comfort derived from the able writers. It is grand, because it advocates the true doctrine of the Bible; it strengthens and edifies those who, like myself, are deprived of hearing the gospel preached. I am often in the vale of tribulations, both in body and mind, but hope these are only blessings in disguise, realizing that all things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to his purpose. I often think of and try to pray in my weakness for the afflicted in mind and body, the widows and orphans, the household of faith (the helpless class) the world over. If it be His will, may he guide, direct, protect and keep us humble and obedient. I will some time write my experience of grace (if I have any) the Lord willing.

I will now close this already too long and imperfect missive. Feeling the need of all spiritual petitions for myself and little family, I ask to be remembered by all when at the throne of grace.

From the least of all,

(MRS.) A. W. HAZLEWOOD.

HOT SPRINGS, Ark., Dec., 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find one dollar for our dear family paper. I am seldom able to go and hear the gospel preached in its purity, for the nearest church of our faith and order is fifteen miles from here, and the only way to get there is to drive, and as I live alone, and am seventy-one years old, I cannot get there often, so it makes the SIGNS still more dear to me, and it is nearly all the preaching I have.

Please insert this in the dear old paper, so my many friends can hear from me again.

MARY F. ADAMS.

PALESTINE, Texas, Nov. 22, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As my subscription is due, find inclosed two dollars to pay for 1916. I am thankful for such a medium of correspondence as the SIGNS; it comes to me laden with the truth as I feel it is in Christ Jesus, and I enjoy reading the many good letters from the brethren and sisters. If I could write such letters as sister Runkle I would write often. Her article in the 15th number was worth the price of the paper to me, as were many others, from north, south, east and west. I feel that I have been blessed this last summer and fall, for I have been given health to go to the Union Association in its seventy-seventh annual session, at Shilo, three miles east of Grapeland, Houston Co., Texas. O we did have a fine meeting; all was love and peace. I never attended a more glorious meeting in my life. The next Union Association will be held with Corinth Church, five miles south of Athens, Henderson Co., Texas, Friday and Saturday before the second Sunday in October, 1916. The Lord willing, I hope to meet the dear brethren and sisters there. Holly Springs Church is here within three miles of me, and is blessed with Elder M. T. Pace as pastor. He comes laden with the fat things of the kingdom. While I am alone, my husband having died four years ago last April, I feel to say, I have been blest with power from on high to bear my deep sorrow. I feel that He doeth all things right, and all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are the called according to his purpose, and we must be still and know he is God.

I just thought I would write a few words, and renew my subscription. I hope all the good writers will continue writing, for it is a feast to me. I have seen but few of them in the flesh, but feel sometimes that we are related in Christ. Brother J. R. Hardy, come again with your good letters, for they are always good to me.

Do as you wish with this, and all will be well with me.

Your little sister in hope,

SARAH E. COOK.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Dec. 9, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—As it is time for me to forward my yearly subscription for the SIGNS, I feel constrained to write and let you know that we appreciate it very much, and have derived both pleasure and profit from reading the excellent editorials by yourself and Elder Lefferts. My wife and I had noticed with regret that you were not writing as you were wont to do, and we were very sorry to see your reasons in your editorial for December 1st. We thought it was very plain, and to the point, and sincerely hope that in the future your work will not be hindered nor your patience exhausted by dear brethren. There are many of God's dear children who eagerly look for each issue of the SIGNS to whom the editorials (along with so much other good matter) are rich food, and perhaps the only preaching they get, and I feel it would be a great pity to deprive those of the benefit just because of the spirit of contention manifested by a few. I have never felt anything but sadness when I have heard brethren contending for what they think is right about the resurrection, and if I have taken part I have felt a loathing of myself for doing so. For some time it has been a great source of comfort to me in the solemn position of speaking to God's dear children to feel that I have only to witness to the things

I have seen, and I do hope my Lord will reveal other things to me and then I can witness to them. There are many things that are mysteries to me. I cannot understand why my brethren have always shown such love for me, and yet I do not know any one so ready to question their love as I, and I am often in such a state of mind that I am led to question my right to be counted with them. When the Lord gives us a view of ourselves by the light of the living Word we do find enough at home, and are made to feel tender towards others.

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

Excuse my writing to you, Elder Ker. I just thought I would like to give a word to encourage you. I think the SIGNS is very well printed, and seldom does one see a misprint. As we shall soon have a new year here, I hope you will find subscribers increased and conditions more favorable. My wife joins me in love.

Your brother in hope,

GEORGE RUSTON.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Dec. 25, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—On this Christmas morning I am reminded of my duty toward those who labor day after day to minister to the needs of others, and among those whose labors are most to be appreciated are those who publish the "glad tidings of great joy" in the dear old SIGNS, which comes to us regularly, bringing encouragement and comfort to those who are "weary and heavy laden" and whose God is the Lord, almighty to save, even unto the uttermost, all those who call upon his name. I know of a truth that I am unworthy of a name and place among his chosen people, but I am sometimes made to hope and trust in his mercy to one even so unworthy as I.

With all good wishes for your well being, temporally as well as spiritually, I am the least, if one at all, of God's children,

JAS. C. BEARD.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., October 8th, 9th and 10th, 1915, to the associations and churches with which we correspond sendeth greeting and love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—As another year has passed away, we send our letter of correspondence to the sister associations with which we are in christian fellowship. The messengers of our association report peace and harmony, each one giving God all the glory, and not man, for his wonderful works to the children of men. Our preachers have come to us with sound doctrine, and have preached the word in all fullness of the gospel, proclaiming salvation by grace only, which is music to the poor sinner's ear.

Our next association will convene with the Fairview Church, Fulton Co., Pa., commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1916, where we hope to meet your messengers again.

J. M. FENTON, Moderator.

MOSES STARR, Clerk.

NOTICE.

As we have received an unusual number of obituary notices recently for publication we have not had room for all of them, and have been compelled to delay the publication of those last received, but will do the best we can, and will publish them as soon as possible.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1916.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We are glad to greet you at this the beginning of the year 1916. With this number the SIGNS enters upon its eighty-fourth volume, the first, hence oldest publication of its kind in the United States. Many have been its blessings from God, whose doctrine has always been advocated through its columns. All its readers have reason to believe that it is sustained by the Lord, who prompted his servants in 1832 to found it, giving it the appropriate name, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The "signs" of God have never been understood and read by worldly minds. The king could not read or understand the handwriting on the wall, but Daniel, of the Hebrew children, could read and interpret it for the king. The coming of Jesus and the works he did were "signs of the times" understood only by those to whom it was given. Those things were hid from the wise and prudent, but revealed unto babes. So also the same doctrine of God set forth in this medium of correspondence is known and loved by those who have the secret of the Lord.

The year 1915 brought with it many changes; death on every hand did its work, many homes have been made desolate, many hearts have been made sad, disappointments of life have overtaken many, cares and burdens have been multiplied, and what 1916 holds in store for us He who rules and reigns only knows. We can but look forward with anxiety and apprehension, as every year brings its changes. Yet we must go on day by day asking for strength and guidance. He who never slumbers nor sleeps has been the stay and refuge of his people in all generations, and as their day so has their strength been.

We acknowledge and confess the great losses sustained by the SIGNS during the eighty-three years of its existence. Editors, writers and correspondents have fallen, and at times the managers have almost felt the foundations shake. Sorrow has been deeply felt by all connected with the publication of the SIGNS, not only in the sufferings and death of their own loved ones, but because of that of the supporters of the SIGNS, until real happiness seems to have taken the wings of the morning. Yet comfort comes from time to time with the words, The Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

Many have been the words of commendation during the past year; very little criticism indeed have any of us had to bear regarding our writings or the general conduct of the SIGNS. The brethren have been kind, forbearing and loyal to us all, and we assure you of our appreciation. When speaking of criticism and unbrotherly acts in our article of December 1st, 1915, we did not mean that either Elder Lefferts, ourself or the publishers had been personally criticised to any great extent, but meant to speak of the general conditions throughout the land among Old School Baptists. Having between

twenty-five and thirty exchanges coming to the office we are perhaps in a position to know what is going on in the different States and localities that is not afforded many readers of the SIGNS. Since that article appeared we have received many letters from different parts of the United States and Canada encouraging us to continue on the editorial staff and to write as often as impressed. We thank each one for their words of comfort and commendation. It is, of course, with the Lord how long we remain in our present position and how often we write; there we all must leave it. We have felt glad to know that the writings of Elder Lefferts have been so universally enjoyed and indorsed. Surely the SIGNS is blessed in having him as an editor, and we all trust that he may be given grace and strength, as the years come and go, to wield the pen of a ready writer. Truth will help poor sinners to hope in the blood of Christ; truth makes them free; truth builds them up on their most holy faith; truth is what we all need, and this Elder Lefferts ably yet humbly declares, both by pen and from the stand.

We ask the forbearance of our many readers during the year; we shall all endeavor to do our best to make the SIGNS pleasant and profitable in every way, shall avoid all controversy and unkind expressions. We also ask all who have contributed to our columns during the year past to write again this year, and those who have not written, as in former times, we ask you to help us by sending on an article now and then.

Let us all pray for the peace of Zion and the upbuilding of the cause of Christ. May he in all things be honored and his grace magnified. K.

"THE VERY ELECT."

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I would be pleased if you would give your views in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on the language of our Savior as recorded in Matt. xxiv. 24, and Mark xiii. 22. What I want to know in particular is, do the words of the Savior, "the very elect" that shall not be deceived, show or prove they are a special favored few taken from among his elect, while the greater numbers of the election of grace are left to be deceived, and led in the broad way to destruction? Matthew reads: "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Mark says, "For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect." Mark says "even" instead of "very" elect, as Matthew does, and I have always thought the Savior meant to teach that none of the election of grace should be deceived to their destruction, for do not the words of the Savior mean this: "If it were possible"? which shows it is not possible to deceive the elect, and the elect include all God's people. I do not believe he has "preferred stock" and "common stock" among his people, and that he saves his "preferred stock" while he lets his "common stock" run at large and go in the broad way to destruction. Now, brother Lefferts, I hope you may have a mind to give us your views on this subject. I have not written this for publication, but just to give you an idea of what I would like for you to notice.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

ELGIN, Oregon.

WE feel that brother Mayfield could write on this subject much better than we can, but as he requests our views he has a right to them, that is, such thoughts as we have upon this subject. This language of Jesus from which our brother quotes in the narratives of Matthew and of Mark relates to the events and signs portending the end of the dispensation then fast drawing to its evening time. All these things spoken of by Jesus were to be fulfilled in the end of the legal dispensation and in the final windup of Jewish nationality. At that time false Christs and false prophets were to arise, showing signs and wonders that would, if possible, deceive the very elect, or even the elect. Let it be noted that the words

"it were" in the phrase, "if it were possible," are written in italics, and thus show that they have been inserted by the translators, and are not in the original Greek manuscript. Thus, the deception of the elect would seem to depend upon the possibility of their being deceived. They would be deceived by these false Christs and false prophets if possible, and the possibility of their being deceived would not depend upon their own acuteness of perception, nor upon the sharpness of their wits, but upon whether they were kept from deception by the grace of God. It would indeed be a bold assertion, unwarranted by Scripture, to say that the elect of God cannot possibly be deceived. They can be deceived as well as any one else if the Spirit of truth by its guiding and teaching does not keep them from it. The whole safety of the elect is in the grace of God, not in any sense in themselves, or in their own astuteness. It is worth while to note that in the narratives, both of Matthew and of Mark, Jesus follows his statement of the danger threatening the elect by saying, "Behold, I have told you before." To be forewarned by such an one as Jesus is to be forearmed. One cannot be deceived by that against which the Son of God has previously warned him. The warnings of Christ in us the hope of glory will prevent deception, and nothing but that can. Without this intuition of the Spirit, this discernment of the spiritual mind, any of us can be deceived. There may be times in our experience when this spiritual discernment is lacking in us, times at least when it is dormant, then is when we are in danger of being deceived. Such an experience when it comes to one is very useful, for it proves that we cannot afford for one instant to have faith relax its hold upon us, else we become entangled in the cunning craftiness of men. But here is a point that must be emphasized, and not lost sight of: no matter how much one of the elect may be deceived and carried away by it, that does not at all affect his salvation in Christ Jesus. Once a child of God always a child of God. They shall never perish, neither shall any (man) pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no (man) is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. (John x. 28, 29.) The salvation of the elect of God is secure through the work of Jesus against the possibility of a single one of them ever being lost. No matter to what lengths they may wander, to what limits they may stray, they cannot be lost nor shall they perish. Philosophy, science and man-made religions may entangle them for awhile, and may deceive them, even though they are the elect, yet God their Father is greater than all philosophy, science, creeds and dogmas, so that nothing, not only no man, but nothing, shall or can ever pluck them out of his hand. But that even God's own people may be deceived at times is evident. Did not some one bewitch the Galatians that they sought again to entangle themselves in the yoke of the Mosaic law? That the "churches of Galatia" were deceived for a time is evident from reading Paul's letter to them, yet we have not a doubt that they were the elect of God, and are sure their salvation was not a whit affected by their being bewitched. Whenever two brethren hold directly opposite and contrary views of some portion of Scripture both cannot be right, one must be mistaken, and to the extent that he is mistaken, provided he is sincere, he is deceived, yet this does not argue at all that both are not children of God and secure in the salvation which Jesus has

wrought for them through his life and death. It is true that the visible organization of the church here in the world does not by any means include all of God's elect. God has a people in every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue under heaven. Not all persons everywhere are God's elect, but that God has his elect among all people everywhere, the Bible does plainly teach. We believe God's people are scattered in all parts of Babylon, they are among all creeds and sects and denominations of men. They are scattered among the Hindus, Mohammedans, Catholics and Protestants. Membership in an Old School Baptist Church is no guarantee that one is a child of God. In all times there have been those who crept in unawares who had no heart-experience of grace, however much they may have had it in the head. There are those, many of them, outside the visible organization of the church who are the elect of God, and there are occasionally those in the membership of this visible organization who have no knowledge of grace, and are not the elect of God. In the third epistle of John we find the apostle writing to a church in which there was a member by the name of Diotrephes. Read what John says about this man: "I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church. Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God." This Diotrephes was doing evil in this church to which John wrote, He that doeth evil hath not seen God; therefore Diotrephes had not seen God, yet Diotrephes was a member of the visible organization of the church. This is by no means the only instance of this kind in the New Testament, but enough to show that simply being a member of an Old School Baptist Church is not a sure passport into the favor of God. There are many of God's elect who never heard of the name Old School Baptist, and do not know what the name represents. Doubtless there are many who never even heard the name "Jesus," but have the substance of Jesus within them, and then, too, there have been occasions when one of the nonelect has crept into the visible church. So, you see, a mere name is no guarantee of safety; the substance of Christ himself in the soul is the very essence of true religion. "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."—1 John ii. 19. This is enough to prove that the visible organization of the church has stood in need of being purged from the days of the apostles until now, and that which made the purging inevitable was the presence in this visible organization of such as God knew did not belong there. Now certainly the brethren must have been deceived when they admitted these into membership with them. They certainly must have thought they saw something in those impostors that caused them to be willing to receive them as members among them. Here was deception of the very elect certainly. But this deception, though it bring numerous ills in its wake, will eventually turn out to be for the good of the church and for the glory of God. It never can

ultimately end in the destruction of a single child of God. Now the question that brother Mayfield asks is: Is "the very elect" a special favored few, taken from among the elect, while the greater numbers of the election of grace are left to be deceived and are led in the broad way to destruction? From what we have already said it will be seen that our answer is, No. "The very elect" means all God's elect, whether in the church militant or not. All, whether in the visible organization or out of it, are possible of deception, unless kept from it by the gift of spiritual discernment. The safety of every one of the elect, wherever they may be, is alone in grace. Mere intellectual ability or sharpened reason, mere human prudence or carefulness, will not guarantee the safety of any child of God against deceit. Sometimes we have heard brethren say that they were not afraid to attend Arminian meetings, for they were not afraid of being contaminated with what they might hear there. Such absolute certainty looks as though one had a lot of confidence in his ability to stand. For ourself, we had rather not play with fire. We might possibly get burnt. When Paul was shipwrecked on the island of Melita, and while he was warming himself by the fire kindled by sticks which his own hand had gathered, a viper came out of the heat and fastened on his hand and he shook it off into the fire and felt no harm; but there is vast difference between our voluntarily taking up a viper and having one fasten itself upon us uninvited. In the latter case one might feel that God would protect him, but we have no right to expect God to ward off the results of our own foolhardiness in voluntarily running into danger. We understand brother Mayfield to want to know if the words, "the very elect," mean that there is a special little number signified which are meant by Jesus, instead of the whole number of the chosen of God. We have not thought that Jesus meant any such thing, but that he meant that even the elect themselves, notwithstanding they are the children of God, are in danger of being deceived by the false Christs and the false prophets that were to arise. Their only safeguard against this evil is in being kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Therefore, "Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation." This watchfulness against deceit is just as necessary to those who are in "the little flock" as to those that are scattered in Babylon. God has no preferred and common stock among his people. First of all, stock, whether common or preferred, is expected to yield dividends to its possessor, and not one of us will ever yield any returns to the Almighty who owns us. After all, we are unprofitable servants. If you had a servant working for you, and you never saw any returns from his service, you would dismiss him as being unprofitable, would you not? Well, just so are we unprofitable servants unto our God, for what can we render unto him that is not already his? The earth is his, and the fullness thereof, so that whatever we might take to give unto him is already his before it is ours. After all our service, have we made God any the richer, have we added anything to him whatever? Certainly not. Then are we unprofitable servants. So we cannot compare any of God's people to preferred or common stock. Then, too, the terms, "common" and "preferred" signify two classes, the one excelling the other. Now, there are no classes in the church. We use the word "church" here in its broadest sense, as

comprising all the people of God, not as simply meaning the visible organization. Among the people of God there are no classes, all are one in Christ. Whatever may be the social distinctions that exist between them in the world, whatever the circumstances of poverty or riches that divide their lot, all are one in Christ. All are alike sinners saved by grace, and no one has any room to boast over any other one. Jesus has no pets, no favorites, he loves them all alike. The wisdom that is from above is without partiality, so says James, and Jesus is the personal embodiment of that wisdom. So the expression, "the very elect," does not simply mean the kernel in the nut, but means the whole family of God, all his people. That many cunning things, many plausible schemes, great and far-sounding professions, are abroad in the land in this our day, is evident to any that watch the signs of the times. That our own mental perspicacity is not sufficient to make us errorproof is also very evident. May the good Lord, therefore, by his grace and by the training of his Spirit, enable us each and all to winnow the chaff from the wheat and to cast the filth away from us, that we be not deceived by the craft and cunning of men that lie in wait to deceive.

L.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder George M. Hite, our pastor, brother and dear friend, was born Dec. 8th, 1858, died Oct. 21st, 1914. He was married Nov. 18th, 1884, to Miss Sue M. Harvill. To that union were born three children. After her death he was again married, July 2nd, 1902, to Miss Stella Harvill, and to that union seven children were given. Elder Hite was baptized Nov. 14th, 1893, by Elder Samuel Kirkland. He was ordained to the ministry July 31st, 1909. The presbytery were Elders B. D. Clark, C. K. Haines, James F. Kinkade, J. W. Womack and C. M. Hood; deacons Calvin Watkins and J. Hunt. Elder Hite, beside being a minister of the gospel, was a physician of some note. At the time of his death he had built up a large practice. He was a faithful husband and father, a good neighbor and a useful citizen. The Primitive Baptists everywhere who knew Elder Hite loved him for the truth's sake. The North Nashville Primitive Baptist Church, of which he was a member and faithful pastor, greatly feels the loss sustained by his death. We all miss him more than we can express in words. He was always present at our meetings, and ever ready to speak in the name of Him who had called him by his grace to preach the gospel of the Son of God. Elder Hite in all of his talks, both in and out of the pulpit, was most instructive. He taught the church as the Lord taught him from the fullness of the truth of God as it is in Jesus. We cannot say too much for the work done in him, as we most humbly believe, by the Spirit of the living God. He knew the truth from experience. The church will ever remember his words of comfort and consolation. Elder Hite did not seek popularity or publicity, but rather chose to dwell isolated from the world and live humbly and lowly, in company with the poor, who sought refuge under the shadow of the great Rock. When we say that we loved Elder Hite because we could see the very image of the dear Lord in him, we will never express our meaning. But now he is gone from us to return no more to earth, and we sensibly realize that our loss is his eternal gain; he has made a happy exchange, and his spirit has gone to God who gave it; his mortal body has been consigned to the tomb, there to await the resurrection call.

The writer at his request spoke at his funeral from the text found in Romans iv. 13: "For the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." With the ability that the Lord gave I tried to show that Elder Hite entertained a good hope through grace, founded on the faith of God's elect, as shown in the father of all the faithful in the experience of Abraham, who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was

spoken, so shall thy seed be. We are fully persuaded that Elder Hite lived and died in this faith, hence we say that our dear brother and fellow-laborer in the gospel of the grace of God died in the full triumph of living faith. I do not want to make this article too long, but feel to say as I write that the half has not been told. He was a reader and lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Often he and I have taken the paper and sat down together and read and rejoiced with great joy, being fed and consoled by the sweet words which fell from the pens of those who contribute to its columns. Let us look away from earth to heaven, by the faith which God alone can give, and view him happy with Christ.

He leaves to mourn his absence his widow and ten children, with the little church, beside a host of friends. We rejoice to know, as we feel that we do, that the widow and children who are old enough to know, know that whatever God does is best, and are fully reconciled to his holy will. God be praised. Amen. CHARLES M. HOOD.

BROTHER **Andrew J. Stout** was born in Hamilton County, Ohio, Nov. 30th, 1828, and died Oct. 8th, 1915. He was married Jan. 19th, 1858, to Mary Blackburn, who preceded him in death Jan. 3rd, 1895. To that union were born five children, two of whom survive him. He was married to Mrs. Elizabeth Oliver, nee Bundy, May 20th, 1902. He leaves to mourn, his companion, two children, John and Ida, four grandchildren, Elmer, Frank and Chester Stout and Edith McCormick, and two great-grandchildren, Warren and Ralph McCormick. Brother Stout was born and lived on the farm where he died. His mind became much concerned on his state as a sinner before God's mercy years ago. He found by trying that he could not satisfy the just and holy law of God, and knowing no other way to escape eternal vengeance he was left a justly condemned sinner, without God and without hope in the world. To his astonishment, one day while either reading or singing the hymn, "Rock of Ages, cleft for me," he came to the sentence, "Thou must save, and thou alone." A little hope sprang up that he could hardly rely on, but could not throw it away. From that time until his death he was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone. It was my privilege to form his acquaintance about twenty-eight years ago, and I ever found in him a true friend indeed. He never made a public profession until last fall. Some two or three times in the last twenty years, he was almost ready to come to the church, but when the time would come his heart would fail him through a sense of unfitness on his part. Last September he wished to follow his Lord in baptism, and it was my privilege to bury him and his only son, John, in the liquid grave. His home for many years had been a home for the Baptists, as many will testify. His teams were at their service at all times. We shall miss him, but our loss is his eternal gain. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to his dear wife, who so faithfully cared for him in his illness; also to each member of his family, who did all in their power to make him comfortable in body and mind.

There was a large attendance at the funeral, which was held at his residence, showing the high regard in which he was held. The writer spoke of the riches of God's grace. JOHN G. EUBANKS.

Mrs. Willard Empey, my beloved sister, of Malahide township, Ontario, died June 6th, 1915. She was the daughter of the late Thomas and Eliza Hamilton, formerly of the township of Ekfrid, Ont. She was born in Ekfrid in 1863, and lived in Ekfrid until 1878, when she moved with her parents to Bayham township, Ont. Dear sister Matilda received a hope in the dear Savior before she was married. She wrote to me and related her experience, and I never will forget how the tears flowed with joy and love when I read it. She was not enabled to unite with the church, but salvation by grace was all in all to her. She selected the text she wished to be preached from at her funeral: "For by grace are ye saved," &c. She also selected the hymns, "Rock of Ages" and "Asleep in Jesus." She told us several times not to mourn for her. She was loved by her neighbors and acquaintances, a friend to help any one in need. Ill health prevented her the last two years from helping others, as she suffered from chronic bronchitis and asthma. She leaves four sisters: Mrs. Lettie Stevens, of Chatham, Ont., Mrs. John Campbell, of Harwich, Ont., Mrs. John McGregor, of Chicago, Ill., and myself.

(MRS.) THOMAS LEATHERDALE.

Mrs. Christina Murray, my dear mother, departed this life October 16th, 1915, at the age of 71 years, 3 months and 4 days. She was sick for three years, and suffered great pain, but was patient to the end. She was a daughter of the late Duncan and Nancy Leitch, a first cousin of sister McWilliams and brother Duncan McAlpine. She received a hope in Christ many years ago. The words which delivered her were: "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."—Heb. viii. 12. She was one of the oldest members of the Covenanted Baptist Church, and was baptized by the late Elder Pollard, whom she dearly loved, and she dearly loved Elder Carnell also. He visited her two weeks before his death. The week she died she said: "O children, I want to go home; I am tired of myself and tired of the world," and sang one verse of the hymn, "Jerusalem, my happy home." She dearly loved all the saints for the work of grace in them. She would say, "The flesh profits nothing."

Many times she would read an article Elder Ker wrote in the SIGNS, and would say, "That is my experience." It was: I muse on the years that are past. At the end she could not speak, as she had a stroke of paralysis, but when my brother said, "O Annie, her pulse has stopped beating," she opened her eyes and closed her mouth and smiled and watched us I believe as long as she could see, then closed her eyes and was gone. It seemed to me like the passing of a shadow, so soon gone forever, but it is her gain. Our father died forty-three years ago, and a sister thirty-five years ago. My brother and I are left alone, and O how we miss our dear mother. She was always young, but not frivolous. She was dearly beloved by every one.

Her funeral was the largest ever attended in the township. Our members came from London, Muirkirk, Duart, Dunwich and Dutton. Elder Slauson spoke from Hebrews viii. 12. She leaves to mourn, one son and one daughter, one sister, Mary McAlpine, of Cass City, Mich., with the church and a host of friends and neighbors.

ANNIE C. MURRAY.

George Swinford was born in Smith County, Texas, Sept. 21st, 1852, and died Nov. 14th, 1915, aged 63 years, 1 month and 24 days. He united with the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church in his young days, and continued faithful in the doctrine until the end, always contending for the faith and the perseverance of the saints, giving God all the praise, power and glory. He often said the bounds of a man's habitation are set, and he cannot go beyond them, believing our days are numbered and our names written in the Lamb's book of life before the world was; that Jesus died for us, and did not die in vain. He was loved by all who knew him, for his kindness, honesty and charity toward his fellow-men, always giving cheer to the sad and bereaved. He visited the writer some months ago, and while here said that when his days were filled he hoped that he could go quickly, and so he did. He awoke about his usual time of getting up, spoke to his loving companion once and never spoke again. She called her son, but his father only breathed a time or two and was gone. The night before retiring he took down the SIGNS and said: "I will get another SIGNS this month, but these seem new to me every time I read them." He then read some in his Bible, and when he went to put them up he sang a part of his favorite old hymn: "How firm a foundation." This was also sung at his funeral. He leaves a loving wife and nine children, all grown, also one brother and a host of friends to mourn their loss. He was laid to rest in the Mill Creek Cemetery at Mill Creek, Okla., where his home was. The bereaved have the sympathy of all who knew him. O, death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? He has gone to meet his God and receive his reward. The Lord's will be done; our loss is his eternal gain.

Written by his brother in a precious hope,

J. R. COX.

BROTHER **Ira Slauson,** son of Hiram Slauson, died at Vega, N. Y., Nov. 18th, 1915, aged 82 years. Since the death of his companion he had made his home with his son-in-law, Mr. Lawrence, being with them most of the time. He was baptized by Elder Isaac Hewit about fifty years ago, uniting with the First Church of Roxbury. He was a faithful, firm Old School Baptist, and loved the brethren, proving it by being with them whenever he could. Pneumonia was the cause of his death, from which he suffered about a week. He leaves one son, three daughters, several grandchildren, one brother, one sister, two or three half-brothers and many near friends and neighbors, with the church, to mourn his absence. Elder John Slauson, of St. Thomas, Ontario, is one of the half-brothers, and Prof. Samuel Slauson, of Connecticut, another half-brother. Brother Ira is with Jesus at rest. May God bless all who mourn with reconciled spirits to his righteous will.

The writer spoke to an attentive congregation at the funeral in Vega meetinghouse the third Sunday in November. Burial in cemetery near the meetinghouse.

D. M. VAIL.

Mrs. Mary E. Waterfill was born June 11th, 1847, and died Sept. 21st, 1914. She united with Little Flock Church the fourth Sunday in June, 1872, and was baptized by Elder J. F. Johnson. We were united in marriage August 27th, 1890, by Elder W. T. Ritter. She joined by letter the Salt River Church, Anderson Co., Ky., the second Saturday in December, 1890. She was a daughter of Josiah and Lucy Martin, who were members of Little Flock Church, Anderson Co., Ky. She leaves to mourn, the writer, three sisters, three brothers and a host of relatives and friends. We hope our loss is her eternal gain. She was loved by all who knew her. She was an affectionate wife and a loving sister.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder P. W. Sawin, and she was laid to rest in old Salt River burying-ground.

Her husband, J. J. WATERFILL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Maria Rees, Ky., $2.00; Mrs. Harriett Underwood, Ky., $2.00; Elder T. R. Pittman, Kansas, $1.00; Thomas A. Ardies, Ontario, $2.00; L. O. Garrott, Ky., $2.00; Lavinia Morgan, Mo., $1.00; Mary A. Barnett, N. B., $1.00; Mrs. J. F. Gray, Texas, $1.00; Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $5.00, given each year in memory of their father, Elder J. D. Hubbell.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Liberty Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, of Los Angeles, Cal., meets every first and third Sunday in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., at 42nd and Moneta Ave., and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal.

W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor.

B. C. RICE, Clerk.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

The First Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, Mercer Co., N. J., has a limited number of pamphlets containing Historical Sketch read at its Two Hundredth Anniversary, and Articles of Faith on which the church is established. The pamphlet also contains a picture of the meetinghouse at Hopewell, a picture of the present pastor, Elder Chas. W. Vaughn, and also of the late pastor, Elder F. A. Chick. Copies can be obtained by sending twenty-five cents, money order or coin, to M. D. Blackwell, Hopewell, New Jersey.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

THE

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DEAR EDITORS:—Please allow me to say in your valuable paper that I have a few copies of Benedict's "FIFTY YEARS AMONG THE BAPTISTS," which I am offering at $1.00 per copy, postage paid. Every one knows what this book is worth to the student of Baptist history. Send all orders to

A. H. RODEN,

GLEN ROSE, Texas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 84. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1916. NO. 2.

POETRY.

BE OF GOOD CHEER.

"IN the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world."—John xvi. 33.

Sinners can never raise their eyes
To God's bright throne above the skies;
Even angels veil their faces there
While they his holiness declare.

No mortal eye could bear to see
The brightness of his majesty,
Yet from that brightness Jesus came
To bear the world's contempt and shame.

Yet not in pomp and pride arrayed,
To rule the world his hand had made—
A stable was his place of birth,
Though he was Lord of heaven and earth.

Rich in eternal glory, he
Chose nothing here but poverty;
Through life his daily work he found
In doing good to all around.

He filled the hungry poor with bread,
But cared not how himself was fed;
The meat and drink he ever loved
Was doing that which God approved.

Such mighty power was in his hand
All nature bowed at his command,
Yet men were found with hearts so hard
They gave his kindness no regard.

And when he did their sins reprove,
They paid him hatred for his love;
With craft and rage from day to day
They sought to take his life away.

They watched him in his daily walk,
And tried to catch him in his talk,
But all his words were found so good
That silent and ashamed they stood.

The great deceiver of mankind
In him no evil thing could find;
By sore temptation pained and tried,
The world and Satan he defied.

Sorrow and suffering well he knew,
But holy patience marked him, too;
Scoffed, hated and reviled by men,
His tongue reviled not again.

And when it came that fearful time
That filled a nation's cup of crime,
When one who ate his bread betrayed,
And wicked hands on him were laid,

Just like a lamb to slaughter led,
He went to let his blood be shed,
Nor opened he his mouth to call
For vengeance on his foes to fall.

Deep sorrow compassed him about,
Hope for a time seemed quite shut out,
When once his heavenly Father's face
Withdrew its wonted smile of grace.

My God, my God, he cried, O why
Hast thou forsaken me? The cry
Told all the grief his spirit bore,
And men reviled and mocked the more.

Yet in that dreadful hour he felt
His heart with love and pity melt;
He marked his mother's look of woe,
Her tears of bitter anguish flow,

And gave her to the tender care
Of One who watched in friendship there,
He listened to the humble cry
Of a repentant sinner nigh,

And spoke sweet promises to cheer
His fainting soul and calm his fear.
The men that wrought his cruel death
He prayed for with his parting breath.

Then, as he bowed his dying head,
He raised his voice aloud and said, 'Tis finished.
His friends, who stood far off from fear,
Again took courage and drew near,

The tear of deepest grief to shed
O'er the loved friend, who now was dead.
Close to the spot there was a cave,
But newly fashioned for a grave.

They laid him there as one asleep,
And turned aside to pray and weep;
A stone did keep the grave secure,
And it was sealed to make it sure.

A guard of soldiers watching stand;
They came at Pilate's own command.
In vain they watch, the mighty stone
Is rolled away, the Lord is gone.

He came to die, but death is o'er;
He lives, he reigns for evermore.
Behold him as on earth again
He shows himself alive to them.

Behold him as his friends draw near,
Their Master's latest charge to hear,
Till rising to the heaven of light,
A cloud receives him out of sight.

Behold him now at God's right hand,
The world is given to his command,
And daily blessings still record
The love of their ascended Lord.

Now he in heaven's bright court alone
Sits on the Mediator's throne,
Sharing with none that glorious name
He won through agony and shame.

And holy angels him confess
God over all, forever blest;
Still to his sacred place of rest
He bids them come when sore distressed.

He will not turn from them his ear;
His children's cries to him are dear,
But sends his love and kingdom down
To cheer their spirit with his own.

He watches over them for good,
And feeds their souls with heavenly food;
Within his arms he gently bears
And soothes their sorrows and their cares.

This was composed and written by my stepfather, M. J. Stout, and he recited it just before he died. I send it to you to do with as you think best.

BERTRAM KINTNER.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THINGS PRESENT.

THIS is one of ten things which the apostle Paul says he is persuaded shall never be able to separate the saints from the love of God. He names them thus: "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus."—Romans viii. 38, 39. I am thinking now of one of these wonderful things in this most wonderful list: "things present," and am asking myself, Is there not a sense in which any one, or all, of these most remarkable things becomes to us "things present"? At whatever point in time or space we begin our contemplation of any one of this striking list of things we find ourselves engaged with "things present." Let us call up our powers of thought, and force our minds to take hold upon any one of these subjects presented to us, and we shall still be dealing with "things present." We cannot get away from this in any direction. It is only through "things present that we can think of anything. By "things present" only can we know of the past or touch the "things to come." One moment only is ours, and that is constantly with us, and yet always flowing by, never away from us. And what is beyond? "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it."—Psalms cxxxix. 6.

What a mystery is memory! By that peculiar power I am looking upon the dear faces of loved ones long gone from me, and listening to pleasant voices long since silent unto me. Memory is bringing unto me things belonging to my

spiritual childhood, youth and manhood, things and people connected with my early spiritual experience, which become sweet "things present" to me.

Just now, sitting here alone, I have been thinking of those who have been with me in the things of the kingdom of God, and have felt a desire to write something of my present condition and exercise of mind to the "brethren scattered abroad," with whom I have been associated and in correspondence for the past fifty-three years. How good and pleasant the thought of them seems to me at this time. I have always had some of those dear, exercised people of God in my mind when writing, as I do when speaking. But now how many are gone home of those I loved to talk with of spiritual things. So many I never knew, except through their letters, but whom I dearly loved. How kind and loving they have all been to me, from the very first of my poor and feeble efforts to preach, wherever I have been with them in all our wide country. I have always felt so unable and unworthy, and as "less than the least of all saints," it has really been very wonderful to me that I should have been made to feel such a kind and sweet reception among the dear kindred in Christ. Now as I meet them, and correspond with them, and try to preach, I feel the absence of so many to whom I have felt so near that I cannot but feel lonely. But wherever I meet with those who "know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge," it seems that I feel at home in a measure with them. But can I write anything that will be profitable or comforting to them? Of late I have written but little; it has seemed to me that I could not write, my mind has not been led that way. I have loved to write when I could feel the presence of the dear Savior. I have not satisfied myself when preaching or writing, but have written out of my own heart, and that is why so many precious responses have come to me. That which comes from the heart will reach the heart.

I am looking back to the bright morning when I wrote to Elder Gilbert Beebe, a few days after he had baptized me, my heart full of gladness and rejoicing. My new life was just begun at that time. I lived that spiritual life, while my hands and my mortal powers were going on in my daily work. But this was only for a time. I seemed to be traveling rapidly in these new and glorious things. I appeared to be one with the people of God, and did not know or understand the new life I was living. If ever I have preached the gospel I must have been preaching then without knowing it. I had no thought of preaching, but was talking of the one thing all the time, when the thought came suddenly to my mind, and I spoke aloud while alone, after having heard a sermon of false doctrine: I must preach. I immediately wrote asking Elder Beebe what this exercise meant. He replied that the church had for some time thought I had a work to do, and were waiting until He would show it to me. It was surprising to me that the Lord would call one so unable and so unworthy as I to so holy a work, and I feel that very deeply to the present time. I have so often felt that I had to say, "I abhor myself." There is much pain and distress in that experience, and it sometimes causes doubt and fear, and yet when brethren have told me of such painful exercises I have been led out in love and fellowship to them.

In those early days I wrote much because I had to write; it was a relief. I cannot but feel lonely as I think of things

past, and the solemn mystery of memory causes them to become "things present" to me. Those who made up my congregations during so many years, and over so wide an extent of country, and especially the faces of those who manifested spiritual love and fellowship, surely it is a blessed and sweet memory that places them among "things present" to me. In memory I see them now, see them before me, and feel that we are one in the unity of the Spirit, and in the love of the dear Savior, in whose presence there is fullness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

When I began to try to preach and serve churches there were few ministers who were over eighty years of age. Elders Thomas Barton, Samuel Trott and I think Thomas McColl are all I can think of now, beside one or two in the far west. There were many who were but little short of that age, who would not have objected to being called old. They seemed to me then much older than I seem to myself now. I will name a few: Elders Gilbert Beebe, Conklin, Hartwell, Rittenhouse, Dudley, Leachman, Grafton and Hassell. But I must not undertake to name them here, for I would be omitting some of the best and sweetest gifts, most dear to the brethren.

How I did love to hear those old and faithful soldiers of the cross preach the gospel, contending earnestly for the faith, and tracing out the exercises and experiences of the people of God. It was very animating and comforting to hear them preach and listen to their conversation, which, both preaching and conversation, was concerning the experience of grace and the beautiful order and ordinances of the gospel church. I am glad to say it is the same to-day by those dear brethren who are laboring among the churches now. I love to think of them; it is a comfort to me to merely write their names as I think of their work and their steadfastness in the truth of the gospel.

Of those who were ordained at the time of my ordination, Dec. 8th, 1864, I do not think of any who are left with us at this time; but of clear minded, true and faithful ministers of the gospel we are favored with a goodly number, and for such gifts we have reason to thank the Lord. The wise man said: "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." To my mind this is true concerning the faithful work of the Elders in the church, the elder among the ministers of the gospel, and of the effect of their faithful work among the brethren and churches over whom they have rule. (Heb. xiii. 7, 17.) Members and ministers do not teach each other in regard to what and how to preach, nor can spiritual knowledge be given on these subjects, yet there is a sense in which the ministers and pastors have the rule over the churches, which is very important. See the last chapter of Hebrews. The churches of this country and of England, about the time of the division in 1832, were favored with most fatherly and profitable gifts, and were trained up in the order of the gospel. Elder Conklin was called among the brethren the "peacemaker." Elder Barton was another most fatherly and quieting and nourishing gift. Elder Trott had great learning (though never displayed), and he was as a little child in simplicity. When I was under great exercise of mind and in deep trouble I went about one hundred and fifty miles to meet him, of whom I had heard, to ask him some "hard questions," and I think the spiritual Solomon answered them. Elder Leachman

was a man of peculiar power in preaching. It seems to me now that I never heard a more powerful man in the pulpit. I would love to write more about these men, because they were "sons of thunder," and also "sons of consolation," and the latest of our ministers and churches show the effect of spiritual training up and instruction in spiritual things.

I count myself as one among the youngest and least of those among whom I am thankful to have a place. We surely have had most excellent examples and training, such as the apostles teach in all their epistles. We also have been favored with a periodical that has most clearly and unwaveringly presented and contended for the doctrine of salvation by grace during all the years of our standing as an organization separate and distinct from the doctrine and order that has not the inspired Scriptures of truth for the guide of their faith and practice. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES has a right to be known as the organ of the Old School Baptist Church, as its publication began about the same time as the separation of the church from all worldly doctrine and organizations. To me it appears that the present editors are following the example of all the former editors, and fully sustaining the gospel character of the SIGNS as it was under the work of the first editor and publisher, Elder Gilbert Beebe, in 1832. It appears to me that their work has been most excellent, and profitable to the churches and brethren, and I earnestly hope the Lord will be pleased to so uphold them that they shall not become disheartened or discouraged. So far I regard every assertion made in the editorial department upon important points of doctrine, order and experience as being fully sustained by the inspired Scriptures of truth. It appears to me that the ordinary way in which the Lord feeds his flock is by the public preaching of the word. But the holy men of old wrote gospel truth to be read in the churches, and this form of administering the word was recognized by the apostles as edifying to the churches and brethren. I desire the welfare and good effect of all periodicals in which the unadulterated truth of the gospel is published.

In the love of the truth, and in the precious hope of the gospel, which was given me fifty-three years ago,

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec., 1915.

GRAYSON, Ky., Sept. 22, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—For some time I have had a desire to write a short article for your, to me, very highly appreciated paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Words fail to express the value of it. I will submit a few thoughts on the subject of the atonement, as I understand the doctrine of the atonement lies at the very center of the gospel; without it there could be no gospel at all. It has been said that unless a man has a right view of the atonement he cannot be right in his view of any other principle of truth. It is sure that he who has a right view of the atonement cannot be far wrong in anything else that pertains to the gospel. As is our view of the atonement, so will be our view of the justice of God, of the righteousness of his law, the condition of man in the sight of God since the fall, and the position of those who are redeemed and have come to believe in Jesus. Regarding many other things, one may not see clearly, and yet their faith in the Lord as their Savior not be affected. There have been, and are now, two views of the atonement of the Lord held among those who profess to believe

in him. These views have been, and are now, opposite to each other, and that fact, from what has been stated above, is apparent. Those who have differed with regard to the atonement have been, and are now, equally far apart with regard to every other principle of truth. Those who have and do believe in a general or indefinite atonement which was, and is, not of itself effectual in saving any one, have not and do not believe in the total depravity and just condemnation of man through the fall of our father Adam. They do not believe in the predestination of God, personal election, effectual calling and the final perseverance of the saints, but they believe that in the matter of salvation the final choice is left to man himself. Hence all that Christ has done amounts to nothing unless the man himself applies the remedy. All this is perfectly consistent with the theory of the atonement referred to above (indefinite). On the other hand, those who believe in a particular atonement have and do believe in the doctrine of predestination, election, total depravity, the just condemnation of all men before God, effectual calling, the final perseverance of the saints, and do not believe that the final choice is in man, but that the whole choice is of the Lord, who did not only provide the atonement, but also confers its benefits upon all who receive it by his own Holy Spirit. All this is perfectly harmonious with the doctrine of a special, definite and effectual atonement. It seems to me that it would be impossible for one who believes that Christ only died to emphasize the anger of God against sin, and not for sinners, to hold to the doctrine of predestination, election, effectual calling by grace, perseverance, and the doctrine of the total depravity of the children of the first Adam. Therefore, seeing so much is involved, it certainly becomes vastly important that we know what the Bible doctrine of the atonement is. While I feel at this time that I can present but a small portion of the testimony, yet if I may make a few suggestions bearing on this all-important matter I humbly trust it may not be entirely profitless.

It seems very clear to me that the glory of God and the comfort and hope of his humble and poor people are involved in the right understanding of this matter. The glory of God is involved because he sent his only begotten Son into the world, that he should die for our sins, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, and as this is the special work upon which our Lord came, the glory of God must be involved in its success. If it should fail in any way the wisdom and power of God would be at once dishonored, but if it be not a failure, then his wisdom and power are magnified. This is for the comfort of the people of God, for if the atonement be indefinite and general, and has accomplished nothing definite for any poor sinner, then no one can rest in security, hence hope must die. Leaving out the portions of Scripture which clearly teach that the atonement was for a special people, and effectual for their redemption, even then there could be no such thing as an indefinite atonement or that which might be called by that name. The word "atonement" could not belong to such doctrine. Atonement simply means bringing together that which has been asunder, an accomplished agreement. It is therefore manifest that any doctrine which does not present man as being completely reconciled to God does not really contain atonement. The apostle Paul speaks of his brethren who believed as having received through Christ

the atonement. If the death of Christ, which is the atonement of his people, did not fully bring us to God in the sense of justification, then it is not an atonement at all. The Scriptures themselves say that we are reconciled to God by the death of his Son. Yes, we are completely reconciled; nothing now stands between us and God in any legal sense. By the atonement all that was between us and God was put away, and we are one with God. If anything remains between us and God the atonement has not been accomplished, and our sins are not atoned for, and we are not redeemed unto God. But the sins of that people were put away, and are remembered against them no more, and they are brought near to God and justified in his sight from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses. Now this view of the atonement presents sure and solid ground for the poor sinner to stand upon; it seals his eternal destiny, and seals it on the side of salvation. This view of the atonement sets forth most clearly that Christ died for individuals, and not for sin in the abstract. There never was, nor can there ever be, a greater absurdity than the theory that Christ made an atonement for sin in the abstract. No such thing was ever heard of in heaven or on earth outside of Arminian theology. If there be an atonement at all it must have been for individuals, or persons; to this all the testimony of the word agrees. The doctrine of atonement, as presented in the types, was personal, the sacrifice was all the time for a people distinguished from all other people; individual offerings were for the person who offered them; national offerings were for all the people of that nation. These offerings in the types were all effectual; the full purpose of the offering was not affected by the state of the mind of the people for whom they were made. No Israelite was ever told that the benefit of the offering to him depended on the application he made of it to himself. When the priest made the offering it accomplished the purpose for which it was made, notwithstanding the state of mind of the people for whom it was made. Surely this is too plain to all who read the Bible to need any further statement. We know that the ram caught in the thicket by the horns was for the personal release of Isaac; so every other sacrifice was personal. If this view of the types is not true, of what value are they as shadows? The antitype is after the same pattern, and it certainly must be that the atonement of Christ was personal, and for his people alone, and did accomplish the salvation of the people of God from their sins. If this be not true, then the types cannot be true, as all typical sacrifices when made according to the law of God were effectual, and accomplished the deliverance of the person or persons for whom they were intended. Isaac was delivered, and all who belonged to national Israel at the time of the great yearly sacrifices were delivered from all their ceremonial uncleanness, and when each individual brought his sin or trespass offering, and it was accepted, he went forth cleansed from all his sin or trespasses. This is certainly the clear testimony of the efficacy of the atonement of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Any other view of the atonement than that it was effectual for all for whom it was made destroys the testimony of the types and makes them valueless as a part of the testimony of inspiration, and we know that the plain testimony of the Scripture declares all that the types pre-

sent. The whole of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah sets forth this truth most clearly. To this the testimony of the angel to Mary agreed: Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. In this testimony both the effectual nature of his work and the doctrine of it being for a special people, are fully declared: they shall be saved from their sins—a definite people, a certain salvation. These two things are certainly taught in this short text. Every portion of the New Testament which treats upon the atonement at all declares the same thing. He gave himself, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. The one thing that separated between us and God was sin. Sin must then be put away, and to this end Christ came in the flesh, and the apostle says he put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. He did not put away his own sin, for he had no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; he was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. To my understanding these Scriptures present all that is testified to in the word. From the testimony of the Scripture one truth surely follows, which is that man cannot atone for his own sins; neither by suffering nor righteous living can he satisfy the demands of divine justice. Living righteously in the future could not atone for the sins of the past. This is so plain that it needs no argument; even if pain, loss or death be considered, neither is it possible that they should avail. It is most emphatically taught that Christ died for us, he gave himself for the unjust. In none of the types did the recipient of the atonement have any part in the work of the atonement, nor in the offering of it; the life of the beast or bird was taken, not his life, and the priest, and not the sinner, offered the blood; so Christ's blood, and not our blood, avails. Christ's work, and not our work, is meritorious, and his intercession, and not our own, avails for us; our only part in the whole matter is to receive. I insist upon the fact that Christ died for us, and not we for ourselves. I would have no quarrel with those who may not care to use the same words I do to express their views, so that they believe the great truth: that in Christ alone is salvation, and not in our own works or suffering. It is evidently true that no one who ever felt his sins forgiven came before the Lord with the thought in his heart that he had helped atone for his own sins. It has long seemed to me that the song of redemption which the dear Lord puts in the mouth of his dear little ones when they first believe, comes as near the testimony of the truth as we can ever attain to in this world.

Dear brethren, it has been a long time since I wrote anything for publication in the SIGNS. A deep felt sense of my own unfitness, and my inability to write to the honor and glory of our blessed and adorable Lord, and to the comfort of his poor and afflicted people, has caused me to be still. I have been in deep darkness most of the time for many months. Above are my views, and as such I humbly submit them to your better judgment. If you think them worthy a place in your valuable paper you may give them space; if not, cast them aside, and all will be well with me.

Yours unworthily, a poor sinner saved by grace,

J. E. THORNBURY.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Dec. 28, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending three of Elder Chick's precious letters, which you may publish in the SIGNS if you wish to do so; two of them, you will see, were written many years ago, and one a short time before his death. In much kindness to you all, I remain yours in hope,

SEMMA E. CORDER.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Aug. 5, 1884.

DEAR SISTER CORDER:—I was made glad by the coming of a letter from you two or three weeks since. This is the first opportunity which has presented itself to pen a reply, and I gladly avail myself of it. You did not think when you wrote of imparting comfort to me, but yet you did strengthen me by your words when you said that my published letters had been blessed to you, and if this reply should do you half as much good I shall be glad indeed. Your narration of past experience and present feelings came very near home to me. If I have any knowledge of christian experience, yours is that of the Lord's people. Your inability to fix dates and times of conviction and deliverance does not affect the substance of your experience. I cannot tell when I began to first feel that I was a sinner. As far back as I can remember anything I can recall that I knew that I was a sinner, and felt my need of a Savior, and my hope in Christ grew gradually up, and, in fact, I cannot tell the first time I felt that I had a hope. But though I cannot tell of times of conviction and deliverance as some are able to do, yet one thing I have known these many years, and that is that I am a sinner against God, and that I must be saved by grace; and I know another thing: that I have a hope in our Lord Jesus Christ that is the most precious thing in all the world to me, and it seems that this in substance is your experience, and I feel drawn deeply to you, though we are strangers. But I feel like speaking for a little about what are real evidences that we are the children of God. The true evidences are not our changing frames and feelings, they change with every wind that blows. It makes no difference what our feelings are, there are some things in the child of God which ever remain the same. One evidence is, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Now this you know at one time as well as another. Whether you are happy or unhappy, whether all is light or dark, you are sure that you love the people of God just the same. Another witness that we are believers is, that we gladly receive the word; and, if there be any difference, the word is more precious to us in our grief and darkness than in our joy. Another evidence that we are saved is that we call upon the name of the Lord, not from the lips alone, but from the heart, and in the hour of depression we call upon him more than in the hour of joy and light. There are other witnesses that abide with us, and I think that as I name them you can see that they are your feelings. You know that you are a sinner, that you are justly condemned, that you cannot help save yourself, that all your trust must be in Jesus, who died and is risen, you hate sin, you love holiness, and desire to be holy, you love the people of God, and love to go where they go, you love to hear Jesus exalted, and when christian experience is preached your heart responds to it, you desire to be numbered with the people of God. Now all these things you have whether it is dark or light with you, and all these things are infallible witnesses that you are a child of God. I

see all these things in your letter, and they make me have fellowship for you.

Now, my dear young sister, I have some advice to offer you. If you have never told your father what you have written to me, go and tell him now. He will understand and sympathize with you. If you feel too timid and weak to talk to him, write what you have written to me and give to him to read, and then go and tell the church what great things the Lord has done for you, and of your desire to be numbered with them; they will not reject you. No church of Christ ever turned back any seeking as Ruth when they came saying, Entreat me not to leave thee or to return from following after thee. It is not good to delay following the Lord. We have both his command and his example to be baptized, and he says, Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness, and, If ye love me keep my commandments. It is not said, If you feel fit, or, if you are sure that you are his, but, if ye love me. Do you so love him that it is in your heart to follow where he goes? Why then delay? There is no advice in the Bible for any one to delay one hour the confession of Christ. My young sister, do not delay.

> "Let nothing felt or feared within
> Thy trembling soul delay;
> From self, from slavish fear and sin,
> My fair one, come away."

I am glad that you felt drawn to write to me, and I hope you will write again. I have met Elder J. S. Corder. Is he your father? If so, give my love to him, if not, give my love to him as a preacher of Jesus Christ.

In fellowship for yourself, I remain your brother in hope,

F. A. CHICK.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Nov. 12, 1884.

DEAR SISTER CORDER:—Your second kind and interesting favor has remained unanswered for some time, owing to long continued absence from home and to having much on my hands when at home. I am now on my way to fill some appointments on the eastern shore of this State, and am stopping at a brother's in Talbot Co., Md., to-day, and I will try this p. m. to write you again. I found your letter full of good news, for it is the best of news to me when I hear from any one that they love the Lord and hate their sins, because I am then sure that the Lord loves them and has given himself for them. Every child of God is an epistle of Christ; that is, he writes his mind and will upon them and within them just as I write my mind and will upon this page. You read this page and learn something concerning me from it, so I read your first and your second letters, and in them I read your mind, your will, your desire, and in that I see the handwriting of God and the mind of Christ, and so I am sure you are one of Christ's epistles, written, not with ink, but with the finger of the living God; not on tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart, and I think that I am glad to read the thoughts of the Lord, thoughts of peace, which he has written upon you, and to see his handwriting. I trust that I love him, and that he is my friend, and you know that we always love to read the epistles of a friend, and so your letter was full of good news to me, because I saw the Master in it. We are strangers, and may never see each other in the flesh, but suffer this expression of fellowship in Christ, and also suffer a word of admonition. The Lord has given you a banner (the banner of love), and what is it for? Mark the Lord says this: that it may be displayed because of the

truth. Then display this banner, manifest your love. Again, the apostle says, With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. You do believe, then be exhorted to make this confession. The life of the christian is not to be one of mere playtime, or of mere idle enjoyment. He has service to render, obedience to God is his duty and desire. Service and enjoyment go hand in hand, they cannot be divorced. It is still true that the willing and obedient eat the good of the land, while the disobedient are beaten with many stripes. To enjoy Christ we must serve him. To serve Christ is to enjoy him. The banner must be displayed, the confession must be made because of the truth, or for the truth's sake. There is, my sister, a cross to bear, but Jesus has first borne it, yea, he has borne all crosses, the whole heavy load fell on him. We have but a little piece of his cross to carry, and he helps us bear even that. The flesh is weak, the world allures, Satan tempts the dear ones who love the Lord, but Jesus is mightier than all, you can safely abide beneath the shadow of him who hung upon the cross. Then, my sister, having such a helper why need you fear or why delay? You find joy among the people of God, then give them joy over you by declaring God's praise for what he has done for you. He has made himself to be your servant in all things, though he is Lord of all, then, my sister, go to him without the camp, bearing his reproach, sharing in his shame, but yet sharing in his great salvation. I would fain encourage you to confess him. Why do you delay? Is it that you are so sinful? I answer, Jesus died. Do you doubt your being a christian? I answer, You love the Lord. May God help you and bless you. Remember me to your father.

In love and fellowship I remain your brother in Christ,

F. A. CHICK.

HOPEWELL, N. J., March 19, 1912.

DEAR SISTER CORDER:—I feel that I must write you again, if only a few lines. After all these years I am glad to hear of your welfare once more. I have read your last letter several times, and have just now read it again, as it has been lying on my desk awaiting an opportunity to be answered. As I have just now read it my mind has been stirred up and my feelings touched deeply, so that tears were near my eyes. It is good for me to read, after so long a time, of your exercises of mind in the coming to you of the letter which I wrote you years ago. It comes to me as bread cast upon the waters, found again after many days. I have been just now seeing in my mind just what you said about your feelings of timidity and your hesitancy about speaking to any one of your feelings regarding the things of the dear Savior. This brought you very near to me, since for many years I could not bring myself to speak to my parents and immediate family about my exercises of mind. As you say, I was not ashamed of Christ, but I was ashamed of myself, and, as near as I can analyze my feelings at that time, they were that I thought no one who knew me well could have any confidence in me as a christian at all. I thought that all with whom I lived knew that I did not live like a christian, and how could they then believe me sincere when I would speak of what was so constantly in my mind? It was a great struggle with me before I could venture to tell my mother any of my thoughts; but when

one night as she and I were alone, all the rest having retired, I ventured hard, and told her, standing beside her chair and just behind her, of the exercises of my mind for some time past, her reply utterly astonished me. After a moment she said, "It is what I have been praying for for years." I could hardly believe my own ears, and yet what a comfort it was, for I believed my mother to be a christian, and that God did hear the prayers of christians, and now he had heard her prayer in my behalf, as I hoped, and it did increase my confidence much. I could, as it seemed to me just now, see you telling your mother, and then I could imagine the thoughts of your father as he stood at the gate, no doubt, as you said, thinking of you, and I could realize the joy of them both over you. Three of my children have come to me in past years and told me of their hope in Christ, and I can judge your father's feelings by my own. I am writing this letter especially to tell you of these things in my own past life. I know how you felt at that time, and I know how your father felt. The church, I am sure, did not need that your father should say what he did about my thoughts concerning you, nevertheless I am glad that he did, and I am glad that you have told me about it. Let us praise and bless God, from whom all blessings flow. I have never forgotten the letter you wrote me long ago, and have often wondered where you were, or if you were living.

Now that I think of it, did you ever know a Miss Stewart, who many years ago lived somewhere in your country, though over in Pennsylvania? Her mother was an Old School Baptist, I think. Perhaps thirty years ago she wrote me quite a number of letters. I forget her first name now. I have often thought that I would like to know once more about her. She was not a member of the church. I do not think there was any church of our order near where she lived.

Now may the dear Lord bless and keep you. I have often felt a great desire to visit West Virginia, but the way has never seemed open for me to do so. Elder Eubanks has often been there I know, and has told me how pleasant those visits were to him.

I remain as ever, your brother in Christ our blessed Lord. F. A. CHICK.

PORTLAND, Ind., Feb. 25, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—I send you a letter I received from sister Lida Keller, of Dayton, Ohio, which I think would make good reading for the SIGNS, if in your judgment you think as I do.

The church is called in the Song of Solomon a garden inclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed, and I have wondered in what way this is so. It is said in the inspired record that the Lord shuts and no man can open, and also that he opens and no man can shut. A garden is expected to hold precious fruits, and yield to the hand of him that prunes and cultivates, and cannot yield suitable fruits without the planting and cultivating by the gardener. This garden is called the Lord's garden, and it was requested in this Song of Solomon that the husbandman come into his garden, and the inquiring one asks, Whither is thy beloved gone? and the answer is that he has gone down into his garden among the beds (churches) of spices, that the fragrance may flow out. It has appeared to me from the reading of this Song that the church, or garden, is always shut unless the Lord comes into his garden, that it is always a closed garden to all others and

yields fragrance from or to no one else. All of the Lord's children feel inclosed, or shut, when they cannot feel the presence of the Lord. The Lord's children always have been as a spring shut up, and praise and prayer can only flow when touched with the love of God. When the Lord comes into his garden to eat his honey with the honeycomb is the time this garden is like a well of living springs, for all hearts well up in song and praise when the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts.

I have written more than I intended. May God's blessing ever be in the garden.

N. PETERS.

DAYTON, Ohio, Feb. 23, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER PETERS:—This cold and stormy winter morning I have concluded to write you, as it has been a long time since I have had the pleasure of being the recipient of one of your very interesting epistles, which to me is as a good gospel sermon in its purity. However, I have the pleasure occasionally of reading a communication of yours in the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which has been sustained for many years by the grace and favor of God. I believe, dear brother Peters, that it is yet contending for the same Bible doctrine the paper was established upon so many years ago, and yet the paper, like all other things whatsoever are, is but the purpose of God; every word that has ever been printed in it was according to God's righteous purpose, and every feeling of joy occasioned by reading the sweet and precious letters by many of God's dear children scattered abroad all over the land is because, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."—Isaiah lv. 11. But all these things show us the wonderful love of God in caring for his children. Truly indeed we have a good Shepherd, who will feed his sheep. I many times have thought that when we are poorest in feelings, and when we are blessed to feel that in us, that is, in our flesh, dwelleth no good thing, and when we feel our weakness the most (when I am weak then am I strong), it is then, and in that state of mind only, that we are, dear brother, worshiping that God who is a Spirit in spirit and in truth. Dear brother Peters, I feel I have much to trouble me, so many trials in this life, and often I am almost ready to despair, but sometimes I can say, The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want, and it is then I can rest in his banqueting-house, where his banner over me is love. What a sweet and serene joy it is to rest in the bosom of his love, where we can be still and know that he is God and beside him there is none other, whom to know is life eternal. O that I could find a more sacred nearness to God, and eat at the table of his love, and drink there the stimulating wine of his consolation. Yet even here in the midst of the filth of this life which is in our corrupt nature, where all the nourishing elements of our perishing bodies are so minutely and definitely known to God in their composition, durations and transformations, he never loses our identity, and we look for a better life, a sweeter joy and a holier condition, having faith in the coming fruittime at God's right hand. There cannot be one failure in the wisdom, will and power of God, for they are more infinitely perfect than our thoughts and wonderings concerning them. He is therefore the author and finisher of our faith. Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn

thee. Sweet and precious words. Elder Peters, how glorious it is to contemplate that we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed; for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality; then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. When the elect are redeemed, regenerated and glorified, crowned with righteousness, with the crown of glory that fadeth not away, shall be received up into glory, what language can describe the everlasting blessedness that shall be the portion of the church of the Firstborn. Our heart's expectation is:

"Forever to behold him shine,
For evermore to call him mine,
And see him still before me,
Forever in his face to gaze,
And meet his full assembled rays,
While all the Godhead he displays,
To all the saints in glory."

O that sweet word, "forever." Then in glorious and precious gratitude and immortal love, in everlasting worship and service we shall dwell with him, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ.

I have written so scatteringly and so lengthily I fear you will find little of interest in my epistle, so will close, hoping at least you will cast the mantle of charity over all my imperfections. If you think my letter worthy a place in the SIGNS, do as you wish with it, and all will be perfectly right with me.

Remember me with christian love to your family, and accept a portion for yourself.

LIDA KELLER.

LAMONTE, MO., Dec. 15, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—As it is about time for my remittance, I wish to express my appreciation of the SIGNS, and of the able, also firm, yet mild way in which it is conducted. Every time death has removed one from the editorial staff we have been brought to fear lest its great ability in defence of the truth would not be maintained, but with great pleasure we have noted no change. The same grand truths have been maintained which were set forth in the prospectus and brought forward by each of the editors up to the present time. I certainly feel to indorse all that has been set forth by both Elder Lefferts and yourself on all points of doctrine. I feel it is not only in perfect accord with the grand principles of doctrine maintained by all consistent Old Baptists, but is true Bible doctrine. Brother Ker, I read your editorial in the last SIGNS with deep interest, and certainly do admire your great earnestness in trying to maintain the truth, yet as far as possible avoid offense. I take great pleasure in your editorials, and hope to see your name oftener in the columns of the SIGNS. I am sure that neither you nor brother Lefferts need any words of approval from me, for your writings speak for themselves, and if any would want back numbers of the SIGNS I have many, that they may see the sentiment is the same. I am aware how impossible it is for one man to either preach or write to please all on all subjects, even among Old Baptists; neither is one man's opinions the standard on all things pertaining to Bible doctrine. It matters not how severe his criticisms may be of others views on certain points, it yet remains a fact, if I am the critic, I am only one man, and might be wrong, and if led by the flesh I am wrong. Hence how ten-

derly I should handle a brother's views if I fail to agree with him on all points of doctrine, for possibly it is I who am wrong. Paul says, For we have the mind of Christ, meaning the church, and we know the mind of Christ does not err, and when led by the Spirit of Christ we do not err, but I so much of the time fear lest I be led by the flesh, and if so, certainly wrong; lest this be so, how careful and prayerful we should be. I remember once, brother Ker, I thought a brother who wrote for the SIGNS wrong in some view, and wrote such to Elder William Beebe; his answer to me was, he certainly knew of none who entertained sweeter views on that subject than the brother considered. This was all private, none knowing it except brother Beebe and myself, and I was satisfied. If I object to a brother's views set forth, either by pulpit or press, then in a brotherly way I may ask of him an explanation, but at no time have I a right to take portions of his views and try to confuse him. This certainly would be not according to Bible admonition, but hurtful to the sweet peace of the church, and to all peace-loving Baptists, also offensive to God, who gave us sacred admonition concerning these matters. I, with many other brethren, have been sorely grieved over the criticisms of a brother's honest views on certain principles of doctrine, without giving the people a chance to see his entire views. God's dear suffering people here in the flesh certainly look forward in faith to a time when this flesh shall by the power of God be cast off, where all differences of opinion, all sorrows and trials, all hurts, all weakness, all corruption, in fact, every bit of mortal imperfection shall be forever, as a useless garment, folded up and laid away; this mortal body shall be brought forth from the grave an immortal body, not surrounded with mortal imperfections, for the sowing is the Adamic or mortal body, but the raising is a changed or spiritual body. Seeing these things be so, shall we not bear with each other's imperfections here? O for a faith, sweet, holy faith, that will cling closer in a dear brother's weakness. O for an earnest, prayerful love that will weep over my dear brother's faults, that will never draw the sword to slay one of God's dear ones; no, no, never, but as dear Jesus has and does, pity and forgive.

A poor, weak sinner, in hope,

J. A. TEAGUE.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Dec. 16, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have felt very much impressed to write you since reading your editorial in the Dec. 1st, 1915, number. It expressed my feelings, and was very much indorsed by our brethren, and is the doctrine I have in weakness tried to set forth for the past twenty years. The doctrine that is set forth in your editorial, together with the exhortation, is good for all our brethren to faithfully consider. I have had quite a feeling to write you for publication what I feel to be the spiritual connection of the words, "Let brotherly love continue," which is the command of Paul, Heb. xiii. 1. The apostle in writing to them was considering the love of God which had been shed abroad in their hearts, which drew them together and enabled them to proclaim of a truth that salvation is of the Lord. In our experience we find the same exercise which has brought us to his banqueting-house, where his banner over us is love. Elders often in their expressions do not so express themselves as to convey the feeling of brotherly love, and then some are offended at the expressions, and instead of a mutual considera-

tion of the truth each strives to sustain his point among the brethren, and causes division, and when the truth is preached they cannot give their attention to what is under consideration, but are constantly looking for some expression to add to the former flame. I hope that our Elders will all heed Paul's admonition, and when they preach, preach Christ with the sincere words of understanding of faith and doctrine, and speak words easily understood by the children of God, and in so doing they will both save themselves and them that hear them. In our manifestations of charity to each other we express the brotherly love we have in our hearts and the love of God which constraineth us to follow him. I hope I have a true love for the brethren, and I do not feel to make a brother an offender for a word nor an act, but look upon him for the manifestation of the brotherly love that is in all of God's people, and when I see that I no longer feel offended, but, knowing the weakness of the flesh and the iniquity of my own nature, I feel to forgive him. It is a wonderful love which enables us to love our enemies and pray for them. If we can treasure up hatred, malice and all manner of evil speakings against our brethren, it is a true testimony that the tree is not putting forth good fruit, and when I find my feelings running in that way I know it is not of the Lord, and I am made to feel I am unclean, and sure there is none so vile as I am. I look upon Zion, and behold her beauty and purity in Christ, and the cleanliness of her garments as they are washed in the precious blood of Jesus, which can cleanse the foulest stain, and know it is of the Lord, and the love for her I cannot express, and I often feel she must be offended in me, and I have brought reproach upon her (my mother). Dear brethren, I know it is not in us to direct our steps, and seeing how often we go astray, and then the brethren bearing with us, can we not bear with them? But there is a spirit in us which is easy to be enticed to think and feel we are important, which is lifted up with pride, then we do not manifest any brotherly love, but walk over and trample under our feet the little children of God, and if they speak of their feelings, say it is all for their good, and all things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to God's purpose, and we never have the feeling to consider the spirit by which those little ones are offended, but the offense has come by us, and we are abased, and they are exalted, and woe is me because of the offense. Offense must needs come, but woe to him by whom the offense cometh. It is through the conception of iniquity that is in us; the woe is pronounced against us, and we are made to feel the destruction in our flesh before we can manifest that true brotherly love.

Dear brother, I have written from the true convictions of my feelings, and that we should not forget that our brethren are just as worthy as any Elder, and their feelings should be considered with tenderness when we speak as a mouthpiece for God, and when we do not feel to be one of the least of all saints, and our brethren more worthy than we, we are not worthy to address them in the name of Jesus, because our conversation would only confuse them, as no brotherly kindness would be manifested, and by the light of grace they are enabled to behold the darkness within us. I feel that it is my duty toward aged Elders to pay them my respects, and listen to them, as they have borne the heat of day and passed through greater experience, and they are

prepared by their experience to give to young Elders good and able advice.

Do with this as you feel best for the peace and comfort of Zion.

I am your brother in tribulation,

C. W. VAUGHN.

FAYETTEVILLE, Ga., Oct. 18, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—The SIGNS, so far as I know, is the oldest Old Baptist paper now being published, and I suppose it has, from the beginning until now, contended for the same gospel principles, and I hope it will never change. It has been the same during the few years I have been taking it. I have never seen any wrangling or fighting in it as in some others, and for these reasons I want to continue to take it as long as I can, though I cannot read it much. Please pardon me, but I am writing this to express some of my thoughts, and for you to see if we agree, and as I have been accused of being rough, and object to the Bible way, I will say that what I write is in good feeling, and not to fight. I suppose you know that those who advocate the principles set forth in the SIGNS are called by some "absoluters," but I do not believe you advocate a "can't help it" doctrine. The "can't help it" people hide behind predestination for an excuse for their sins, but you, I believe, feel accountable to God for your sins. A brother wrote me he saw these words over your signature: "When men and women are brought into the church through a sound and faithful ministry they are established in the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things, and will not therefore tolerate for one moment the idea of 'permissive decrees.' They are also rooted in the truth of salvation by grace, hence when some Ishmaelite comes along preaching 'conditional time salvation' they refuse to receive him into their houses or bid him Godspeed." Sound Old Baptists here believe the same concerning predestination as most of the SIGNS' readers, but have a different form of expressing it. I do not believe you believe in the absolute predestination of all manner of evil in the same way as the good that comes to pass. If God predestinated sin he would be the author of sin. I believe he predestinated all good, and if we must use predestination in connection with sin, he predestinated to allow or permit sin, which is nothing more nor less than permissive decrees, as I understand it. As sin dwells in the human heart, it is by nature ready at any time to do anything it craves when allowed to do so, does not have to be predestinated. Wicked people wanted to kill Christ as soon as they heard he was born, but could not lay hands on him until God's appointed time, and he did not have to predestinate the act, but permitted it. I asked the brother where he found those words, but he only said he saw them over your signature. I do not believe in conditional time salvation as some people preach it. They say our time blessings are stored away for us and we get them by obedience. If this were the case these blessings would be given because we worked for them and God owed us for our works. We might work a million years, but would be the same weak, sinful, dependent creatures, and still owe all our time and service to our Lord and Savior. We can never pay what we owe. He has done for us what we never could do, and now for gratitude and love we are to obey his commands, not to gain rewards, but because it is our duty; not expecting blessings nor deserving them, but feeling that we owe a life of consecration to his service if we should never receive another blessing in time, and when the blessing comes the humble

christian receives it as a gift, not a debt, with rejoicing. The lives we live do not make us christians, but if we are christians we should honor the gift by an "orderly walk and godly conversation," and when we have done all we can we are unprofitable servants, for we have not done more than our duty. If a child of God obtains blessings by obedience, why does He allow them sometimes, and some more than others, to grovel in darkness, sorrow and afflictions so much? It seems that the most obedient sometimes suffer the most. We are taught to not add to nor take from the word of God, under penalty of punishment, then why use the word "absolute" when it is not in the Bible? Predestination itself is strong enough, and the word "absolute" does not make it any stronger than God made it, and I am sure if he had intended for us to have used it he would have had it put on record. Paul said if eating meat made his brother to offend he would eat no more meat, and as "absolute" is offensive to some of God's dear people we should leave it alone. I agree with Elder Chick in volume 81, page 216, I do not believe a person who loves God and wants to obey him will use "absolute predestination of all things" as an excuse for his sins, but I do know such expressions are used to turn people from the SIGNS, and many who have heard of these things, or have read only one article containing such expressions, will not subscribe, but would do so if they knew what the SIGNS advocates, or if "absolute" was left out. We are commanded to not add to, nor take from, the things written in "this book," which I suppose means the Bible. You use the word "absolute," which is not in the Bible. Is this not adding to? Why use it? It is absolutely unnecessary, does not belong there, and is offensive to many sound Old Baptists. Brother Ker, I inclose a stamp for reply as soon as you can, and I want to know if you can tell where those words quoted from over your signature can be found, if you remember having written them. I want to read all the article. My SIGNS are scattered. It was written in Elder Chick's lifetime.

This is for your disposal. Hoping it will not offend, I beg to be remembered at the throne of grace.

Unworthily,

GEORGE W. JACKSON.

(See editorial reply on page 52.)

ST. THOMAS, Ont., Dec. 17, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I read your article in the SIGNS of Dec. 1st with a great deal of sadness and sorrow, and deeply regret that there is a difference of opinion of good and dear brethren on the subject of the resurrection, but from the days of Hymenæus and Philetus there have been differences of opinion upon this most glorious subject, and have from time to time caused considerable discord among the brethren, which has been to no profit. I realize that the position you occupy as an editor of the SIGNS is not a pleasant one, and one in which you have to exercise careful and prayerful judgment in selecting the matter for the SIGNS. No doubt there often comes to you letters which are hard for you to determine the exact thought of the writer, as they may not be clothed in proper language to express clearly the thoughts of the writer, and to arrange such matter for publication is not easy. I feel that you have been faithful in discharging your duties since your first connection with the SIGNS, and have tried to give no offense to any of its writers. Your editorials have been clear and pointed, but not offensive in any way,

Good and dear brethren may differ in their opinions regarding some point of doctrine, but this is no reason why they should use harsh words against one another. To contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints is not to contend for it in hatred and malice, but in love and forbearance, striving to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. The doctrine of the resurrection is a most glorious one, and one that I believe with all my heart, but there is a mystery connected with it that has not been revealed. How I shall appear in the resurrection is with my Father in heaven; to be in the likeness of Jesus will be infinitely enough for a poor sinner like me, and if I understand the teaching of the Scriptures they teach that it does not yet appear what we shall be, but when He who is our life shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. The Scriptures do declare that this mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption, but how this is done is to me a mystery; this I have not yet experienced; the great question with me, and one that causes me to be searching for evidences is, Have I a part in the first resurrection? If so, I am assured by Zion's King that the second death shall have no power. Death and hell are cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death. This is my hope in the blessed Savior, who brought a full and complete salvation to all his children.

Dear brother, I wish to say that your editorials during the last year have been especially good, and many of the Lord's poor, trembling lambs have eaten of the crumbs that have fallen from your pen, so your labors have not been in vain, and although you have been caused to pass through sore trials, yet the Lord has not forsaken you.

"Trials make the promise sweet,
Trials give new life to prayer,
Trials bring me to his feet,
Lay me low, and keep me there."

A blessed place to be, but very painful to the flesh. Write on, dear brother, and may the dear Lord be with you in the coming year as he has been in the past. I feel you have a good and faithful brother to assist you in your arduous labor. Elder Lefferts' writings are full and instructive to the readers of the SIGNS, and may both you and he be given wisdom from on high to still continue the publication of the SIGNS, which finds its way to many of the poor and needy seeking crumbs of mercy and words of encouragement which the pages of the SIGNS abound with, being untarnished by unsound doctrine.

With kindest regards and best wishes for a "Merry Christmas" and a "Happy New Year," I am sincerely yours in brotherly love,

J. B. SLAUSON.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, the fifth Sunday in January (30th). Services at 10:45 a. m. and 2 p. m. All welcome.

L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1916.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REPLY TO BROTHER JACKSON.

THE letter from him, inclosing stamp for reply, and now published in this number of the SIGNS on page 49, was duly received, and the delay in replying thereto has not been neglect, but because we thought it better perhaps, lest in writing we misunderstand each other and brother Jackson become farther separated from us in his feelings. A five minute talk on any subject, where disagreement exists, is better than weeks of writing; however, as we cannot have that opportunity, and as we feel an open reply better than a private letter, we shall endeavor to answer some of his questions and also make some comment upon a few ideas suggested by him.

Before entering into the matter we want to assure brother Jackson of our love and fellowship for him as a subject of divine grace, and that what we may say will be done in the very best of feeling, with desire for mutual understanding and agreement.

First, he says he supposes the SIGNS has from the beginning contended for the same gospel principles. "It has been the same during the few years I have been taking it." We are glad of the statement above that nothing but gospel principles have been published in the SIGNS during the time brother Jackson has been a subscriber. We have dear and aged brethren who have read its pages for more than fifty years who say the same thing, hence in the judgment of a few at least the SIGNS has never published anything contrary to sound doctrine. This is the highest tribute that could be paid the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and we fully appreciate it. Brother Jackson says: "I suppose you know that those who advocate the principles set forth in the SIGNS are called, by some, 'absoluters,' but I do not believe you advocate a 'can't help it' doctrine. The 'can't help it' people hide behind predestination for an excuse for their sins, but you, I believe, feel accountable to God for your sins." Yes, we are aware of the fact that genuine Old School Baptists are called "absoluters," and so far as we are personally concerned we do not object to the term, but so far as hiding behind predestination as an excuse is concerned, we have never known a genuine Old Baptist to do it, and our acquaintance extends throughout the States and Canada. Predestination of all things never licensed a man to sin, nor does it in any sense excuse a man for his sin, and should the most faithful member of any church of our acquaintance fall into temptation and sin, then come to the church saying, "I could not help it," such statement would not be for one moment accepted or credited. Man has ever been accountable to the law of God for his transgressions, regardless of predestination. No, brother Jackson, we do not advocate the doctrine of 'can't help it' as an excuse for sin, but we do most emphatically advocate that the children of God do and have always done thousands of things contrary to their plans, purposes and intents because they could

not help it, God overruling their plans and purposes for their good and his declarative glory. For example, going back over the history of men called to leadership, called to prophesy, called to preach, who ever did any of these things because he wanted to? Hence if not because he wanted to it must have been because "he could not help it." David said, "I will keep my mouth with a bridle, * * * my heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue." The burning within caused him to speak, hence he spake because he could not help it. This is the kind of 'can't help it' doctrine the SIGNS has ever advocated, and we should feel sorry indeed to think it would depart from this principle of Bible doctrine.

Further, brother Jackson says: "A brother wrote me he saw these words over your signature: 'When men and women are brought into the church through a sound and faithful ministry they are established in the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things, and will not therefore tolerate for one moment the idea of permissive decrees. They are also rooted in the truth of salvation by grace, hence if an Ishmaelite comes along preaching conditional time salvation they refuse to receive him into their houses or bid him Godspeed.'" We do not remember whether the above quotation embraces our exact words or not; however, we fully believe the statements therein embraced, and have presented both by pen and from the stand the same things over and over again, if not in the same language. Absolute predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass was one of the principles upon which the SIGNS OF THE TIMES was founded; this can be seen by the prospectus published in 1832. It has ever been advocated by every editor of the paper, though many things take place in the world that none of us understand, nor do we know how they can work for good to them that love God, but we must believe they do if we credit the divine record as being true. David tells us the steps of a man are ordered of the Lord. The word "good" in that text is supplied, showing that it was not in the original manuscript. Jeremiah tells us, It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. The Savior, speaking of lesser things, tells us the very hairs of our head are all numbered; and even though two sparrows are sold for a farthing, not one of them shall fall to the ground without our heavenly Father. These are phases of "absolute predestination" as we believe it. With reference to "conditional time salvation," we are frank to say that we do not believe in salvation at all that is conditional upon the part of the sinner. Salvation is salvation, nothing more, nothing less, and the blessings of grace come to the children of God because of salvation, not because of any obedience or other works rendered by them. Spiritual blessings were given the elect in Christ Jesus according as God had chosen them in him before the foundation of the world. If therefore because, or according, as he had chosen them in Christ, it surely is not because of obedience rendered by the subject of grace. If according to the latter, and much obedience should be rendered, there would be a possibility of a shortage of blessings. On the other hand, if little obedience be rendered there might be a surplus of blessings. Surely all quickened sinners know that God does not work that way. There were exactly enough blessings treasured in Christ for the family of God while sojourning here, and every one of them will be experienced by the household of faith;

not one shall be left over, nor shall there be one short. Certainly sound and faithful churches would not receive, the second time, into their houses, nor bid Godspeed to those who preach unsound doctrine.

Further, brother Jackson says: "If God predestinated sin he would be the author of sin. I believe he predestinated all good, and if we must use predestination in connection with sin, he predestinated to allow or permit sin, which is nothing more or less than permissive decrees, as I understand it. * * * Wicked people wanted to kill Christ as soon as they heard he was born, but could not lay hands on him until God's appointed time, and he did not have to predestinate the act, but permitted it." In tracing sin to its origin all will find that by the transgression of one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin. "Sin is the transgression of the law," hence the sinner is the author of sin. Did God permit Satan to be self-existent, or did the Lord make him? Did the Lord make him upright, and through his own will and doing he became subtle? No, God by his own hand formed the crooked serpent. (Job xxvi. 13.) The Lord did not make him straight and he became crooked, but he made him crooked, and "who can make that straight which the Lord hath made crooked?" Did God choose a people in Christ Jesus unto salvation with any uncertainty about the fall of Adam? By no means; then it follows that sin, and death by sin, were in the plan, and that salvation must come through that link in the chain. Again, Christ, according to the purpose of God the Father, must be the seed of the woman, and had not Adam transgressed the law and brought sin into the world there never could have been any development or multiplication of Adam, human family, hence no Jesus the son of Mary. It will be noticed that we have not used the word "predestination" in what we have just said about sin entering into the world. We have used the words "purpose" and "plan," but who is the man that can make a distinction between God's purpose, plan and predestination? If he purposed it, he planned it, hence without question predestinated it. "Permissive decrees" have no place whatever in the purposes and plans of God, and we think our dear brother Jackson will agree with us, and he can readily see that his own language establishes this assertion. He says, "Wicked people wanted to kill Christ as soon as they heard he was born, but could not lay hands on him until God's appointed time." If wicked people can do wickedly at will, and wanted to kill Christ, why did they not do it? Brother Jackson answers the question very correctly: "They could not until God's appointed time." Then it follows that they could not be wicked in that one thing, at least, until God's predestinated time. Is there any difference, brother Jackson, between "God's appointed time" and his predestinated time? We think not. Surely in this we are agreed. We understand brother Jackson not to deny predestination, but he objects to the word "absolute" in connection with the word predestination, and says as long as it is not in the Bible, why use it when it offends some brethren? The word predestination is not in the Bible either, and as long as it is not why use it? might be asked. We admit that the word "absolute" adds nothing to the strength of the word predestination, but it was used by the Elders and brethren when the division took place in 1832, we think to simply emphasize what sort of predestination

they, as original Baptists, believed in. For this same reason we have used it during our ministry and connection with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. A little further on brother Jackson says, "Why use it (absolute)? It is absolutely unnecessary, does not belong there and is offensive to many sound Baptists." We ask, Why did brother Jackson use the word "absolutely" in connection with the word "unnecessary"? Does it add to the strength of the word "useless," which the word signifies? We imagine he used it in the same sense we stated above: to emphasize the word "unnecessary."

Brother Jackson tells us that God did not have to predestinate the killing, crucifixion, of Christ, but permitted it. What does the Bible say about it? Listen: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Now, if delivered and slain by wicked hands, according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, was it by "permissive decree"? If God had no purpose in the death of Christ his Son, but simply permitted it because wicked men wanted to do it, might not Christ have died a natural death had God not permitted it, hence no salvation, had not wicked men wanted to slay him? God hath created all things, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil; therefore when the day of evil comes the wicked will always be on hand as the sword of the Lord to do his will. Surely all Old School Baptists will admit that the death of Christ was according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, therefore absolutely predestinated of God. Now a most important question, brother Jackson, confronts us all: If God predestinated the death of his Son Jesus Christ, which was the vilest of sins ever committed, and in predestinating was not the author of that sin, could he not with equal glory predestinate all sin and yet not be its author? Those who crucified Christ were held just as accountable to God for that sin as though God had not predestinated, purposed, planned it. They could not hide behind predestination to cover their sin, nor could they say they could not help it, in the sense of giving excuse for their wickedness.

With reference to leaving off the word "absolute" in our writings and preaching, we would have no serious objection to doing so, and especially if it is so objectionable to our brethren, but never can we modify the doctrine of "predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass." It is Bible truth, Bible doctrine, and we shall earnestly, yet lovingly, we hope, contend for it; but be it understood once for all, that neither the SIGNS OF THE TIMES nor the Old School Baptists of our acquaintance excuse a man upon the ground of predestination for his sins, be they what they may. One man might take the life of another, and the act be predestinated of God for some wise purpose known only to himself, yet the church would exclude the man and the law deal with him. Did not Moses slay an Egyptian and hide him in the sand? To what purpose? That he should leave Egypt for forty years, become the herdsman of his father-in-law, and at the appointed, predestinated, time be at the right place where God would speak to him out of the bush that burned with fire yet was not consumed, that Moses might be prepared to lead the children of Israel out of bondage, according to the promise of God made to Abraham four hundred years before. All was unquestionably predestinated of God. Did not David,

king of Israel, put Uriah at the head of the battle that he might be killed, in order that David have Uriah's wife? If the Lord predestinated that David should be the father of Solomon, did he not also predestinate that Uriah's wife should be his mother? If so, how could the birth of Solomon come except through that channel of wickedness? David was held accountable for his sin, and suffered in consequence of it all the rest of his life. Did not the Lord in days of old send lying spirits into men when it fulfilled his purpose and plan? Did he not purpose the wickedness of Peter in his denial of Jesus, to the end that Peter should be prepared to strengthen his brethren? Did he not purpose the training and life of persecution of Saul of Tarsus, to the end that he might magnify his grace in his salvation? Time and space forbid that we continue along this line on the subject of predestination, for really there is no end to the grand theme.

Now in conclusion, we want to say to our dear brother Jackson that we hope he may read and receive what we have written in the same spirit in which we have set forth our views. We have nothing but the very kindest feeling toward him, and would not intentionally hurt his feelings, much less his usefulness among his brethren. We have tried to be as clear as possible and as kind as we know how to be in expression. We now leave the subject for him and all who may read to consider and try with the "thus saith the Lord." K.

SALE OF THE DOLLAR CONCORDANCE DISCONTINUED.

We have decided to discontinue the sale of the dollar Concordance, and in the future we will only have for sale the one dollar and fifty cent Concordance, as we feel that this book will give much better satisfaction, and is well worth the extra money.

FREE WILL.

Man is often spoken of as being a "free moral agent," but Adam was not so, even in the garden before he sinned, though an old English writer speaks of Adam's first estate as being "happiness in his power left free to will, left to his own free will, his will though free yet mutable." Now, was Adam's will free? Remember that freedom of the will carries with it the idea that the will is free of all contingencies and can act independently of everything outside its own self. It is evident that Adam could do nothing but what God knew he would do, and knew it before Adam did it. Otherwise God could not be omniscient; that is, knowing all things. We dare not say this, even if we wanted to, for inspiration says, "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world."—Acts xv. 18. Is not Adam one of God's works? If so, God knew him, all about him, from the beginning of the world. It was therefore certain in God's mind what would be Adam's conduct in the garden. If this was a certainty with God, it could not be an uncertainty with Adam; Adam could not have done otherwise than he did. Yet that does not mean, nor even imply, that Adam's will was directly coerced by the Almighty in order to compel him to sin. He needed no coercion, for the act that he did was just what he pleased to do, but because he pleased to do it does not prove that his will was free. In being pleased to sin he was guided by his own tastes and inclinations, as well as his environment (the nearness of Satan), and to the extent that he was thus influenced by principles inherent in his nature, and by the subtlety of the beguiling serpent, his will most certainly was not free. If Adam's will, then, was not free before the fall, most assuredly it never has been

since in any or all of his thousands and millions of offspring. If Milton had said Adam was left to his own will, he would not have been far wrong, but when he put the word "free" in before "will" he sidestepped the truth entirely. Possibly the prevalent idea of what most men think man to be can be best expressed in the words of Channing: "He is a free being; created to act from a spring in his own breast, to form himself and to decide his own destiny." This gives in condensed form from the pen of a learned man what Arminians as a rule think man to be. We must confess it is flattering to the dignity of man to suppose him to be the arbiter of his own destiny, much more so than to adhere to the old-fashioned Bible statement that man at his best state is altogether vanity, with heart deceitful and desperately wicked. Yet, for ourself, the die has been cast, and we cannot believe other than as the pen of inspiration has recorded it in Scripture. In the providence and plan of God human beings are wonderfully constructed. It almost passes possibility to enumerate all that really does go into the making of a man. Conception, birth, training, education, environment, all and each bring their share into the construction of every person that comes into the world, and the will of each individual is bounded and determined by all these factors that go into the making. Speaking naturally, what one wills to do is in any case determined by his heritage from his ancestry, by the system of upbringing to which he is subjected, by the surroundings and circumstances in the midst of which he is placed. How then can the will be free? There are plenty of men, and learned ones, too, who ridicule and deny the truth that man's will is circumscribed, but though they deny it, they cannot and do not prove it false. It is often said that man has the power to influence his environment, to change his surroundings to accord more with his own ideas. To a certain extent this may be, and is, doubtless, true, but the very dislike of his surroundings causes him to set about rearranging or changing them, so that the action of the environment upon the man causes his reaction against or upon that environment. Action is always equal to reaction, and in the contrary direction. All the progress that man has made in the world is largely the record of his reaction to his environment, and the manner in which this reaction spends itself is largely determined from the temperament, mental and physical, inherited from his ancestors, as well as from the training and education given him after his arrival in the world. These two factors, parentage and education, determine greatly our ideals according to which we will desire to mould our environment. How, in all this, is the will free? If, then, in the sphere of natural things it be proven that man's will is not free, how much less, far less, is man's will free in reference to spiritual things. We are told that an apple falling from the tree falls to the earth in obedience to the law of gravitation, according to which all objects are attracted towards the center of the earth. Thus, though we live on a round ball, and sometimes are walking with our heads hanging down, yet we do not fall off, because this law of gravitation guarantees our sticking fast to mother earth. As the law of gravitation, then, governs the physical world, so the law of sin and the end thereof, death, govern man mentally and morally. Thus, all of man's thoughts and imaginations, his religions and moralities, are of the earth, earthy, and tend downward to the dust in conformity with

the law of sin that governs his natural being. Not one good thought can man ever have, not one right conception of himself or of God, until a stronger principle than the law of sin gets hold of him. This stronger principle is the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."—Romans viii. 2. It is an awful thing to think and to teach that our destiny is in our own hands, and that we are free to choose either heaven or hell as our portion. Think what a fearful responsibility this places upon each of us. What a blessing to be made to know that not a word of such doctrine is true. How comforting to know that the mighty God settled and sealed our end before the beginning began. How comforting to know that what God has settled and sealed cannot be changed. "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." The very expression, "free moral agent," is self-contradictory, for an agent is one who acts for another, and is guided by the wishes and will of his superior. No agent, then, can be free. The very term is ambiguous.

L.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

AGE OF ACCOUNTABILITY.

THESE few thoughts on "free will" and these that we shall essay on accountability, are written at the instance of a friend of the SIGNS, who lives in Arkansas, and who does not wish her identity known. She says, "I wish the SIGNS might be printed weekly," and also, "I hear so much of free moral agency and age of accountability in this part of the world, I wish you would some time in the near future give your views of the matter through the SIGNS. 'You know it is just as essential to know what is not truth as it is to know what is the truth." We believe, too, that it is well to call attention to error in order to emphasize the truth; the contrast of the two throws the striking features of each into bold relief. By the age of accountability, many Arminians mean that a child is not responsible for what it does until it arrives at a certain age, which they denominate the age of responsibility or accountability; if a child dies before it reaches this age it will be saved and go to heaven. If this is so, what a pity we did not all die while we were children. Such a doctrine would almost justify a parent in taking the life of its child to insure the child's eternal happiness. The mere act of growing up into manhood or womanhood would place one in jeopardy eternally if the dogma of accountability be true. Those who advocate this doctrine believe that all infants and little children are innocent, and therefore without sin, that they are not sinners. But David said he was conceived in sin, shapen in iniquity, and came forth from the womb speaking lies. If that be so, and the Bible says it is so, then David came into the world a sinner and stood in need of the sacrificial atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ the very day he first drew breath. But some who

believe the aforesaid doctrine, while they admit the transgression of Adam, and that every child coming into the world is tainted with it, yet they make a distinction between what they call "original" and "actual" sin. That while the child is a sinner by virtue of the original sin of Adam, it is not actually a sinner on its own account, never having actually committed any wrongdoing itself. Parents who will stop to think a moment must confess, if they are honest, that they have seen the motions of sin in extremely young children. Who has not seen them show jealousy of other children? who has not seen them cry with rage and vexation? and who has not seen in manifold ways the appearance of things which we call "cute," perhaps, but which in a person of adult years would be anything but "cute?" The principle is the same whether in a newborn babe or in the hoary-headed man, it is all sin. The infant is not merely a sinner by the original sin of Adam, but is actually a sinner every moment it lives and breathes. We do not like the distinction between "original" and "actual" sin, though many theologians make this difference. It is a distinction without a difference. As we said in a former article not long ago, every one of Adam's posterity was actually, as well as originally, a sinner in him. Every one of us was in the loins of Adam when he fell, and it was our flesh and blood and nature that committed the sinful act; we were as much to blame for it as he was. It was Adam that sinned, and we were Adam, so where is the difference between original and actual sin? But some say that even though the child is a sinner, the Lord does not hold it accountable for its sins until it reaches the age of accountability; that if it dies before it reaches that age it will be saved on the ground that it did not know any better. Now, Saul of Tarsus was not a child when he went about persecuting the saints, but he did not know any better, and verily thought he was doing God service. Did the fact that he, an adult man, did not know any better cause the Lord to hold him therefore not responsible? The Lord called him to account on the way to Damascus and judged him there. Although Saul had been acting sincerely, and to the best of his knowledge, he did not plead that as a reason why the Lord should be merciful to him. The Lord was merciful to him, but it was for Jesus' sake and not for the sake of his not having known any better. We simply bring in this instance of Saul of Tarsus, not because he was a child, for he was a grown man, but to show that no one is ever saved on the ground that they do not know any better. There is no plan of salvation in all the Bible that is founded on any such base as that of our ignorance being a means to it. If that were so, then ignorance would be a virtue and wisdom a vice. In other words, the idea of there being a certain accountable age at which one becomes responsible for his sins, means that a child needs no Christ to save it, as its own innocence is all-sufficient to that end, but that Christ is the atonement for adults only. But Jesus said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God," showing that he is the Christ for all his people, whether they be adults, children or infants. There is but one plan of salvation outlined all through the Scriptures, and that is salvation by grace. It is grace all the way through from first to last, from the very first moment we draw breath in this world until we pass out into the great hereafter. The newborn babe is in need

of the same grace to save it from its sins, as much as the aged sinner needs that same grace for himself. We are sure our readers know of many instances where children of very tender years have been convicted of sin. If there is such a thing as there being a certain age at which one becomes accountable, then the Lord would not call any one to account or convict him of sin before he reached that age. But we know that conviction for sin has been experienced, as we said before, by the very young, and many experienced people cannot remember a time when they did not feel that they were sinners. Both Elders Gilbert and William Beebe were convicted of sin when mere boys, and there are many other instances which our readers will be able to recall within the range of their own acquaintance.

These thoughts upon free will and accountability are not exhaustive at all, but just such as came to us at this time. Much more might be said to the point along the same lines, but we have filled our space, and will desist. L.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Reuben C. Clark, Maine, $1.00; Mrs. T. V. Richardson, Md., $8.00; Miss Emma Birdsall, N. Y., $2.00; Rose Tamsett, N. Y., $2.00; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $2.00; Two Friends, Mo., $5.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Dec. 29th, 1915, at his residence, Delmar, Del., Ephraim R. Whaley, of Laurel, Del., and Rebecca E. Lank, of Delmar.

By the same, Jan. 5th, 1916, at the residence of the bride, near Hebron, Md., Nathaniel O. Austin and Margaret Gertrude Adkins, both of Wicomico County, Md.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, Dec. 25th, 1915, at the home of the bride's father, in Dunwich township, Ontario, Philip H. Schliehauf, of West Lorne, and Janet E. Pollard, of Dunwich.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elizabeth Ann Cook, wife of Deacon John Cook, was born in Union County, Tenn., Dec. 14th, 1834, and died at her home in Pratt County, Kansas, Nov. 11th, 1915, making her long and useful life extend over a period of 80 years, 10 months and 27 days. Her maiden name was Butcher. She was married to John Cook Sept. 8th, 1859. To that union were born eight children, six girls and two boys, five of which survive her, three of the girls having preceded her in death. She lived in Kentucky from 1884 to 1887, and in Stevens County, Kansas, from 1887 to 1896, when she settled in Pratt County, where she resided until death released her from mortal ties. Grandma Cook (as she was familiarly called in the community) professed a good hope in Christ about the year 1867, and united with the Primitive Baptist Church at the head of Dotson Creek, in Tennessee, about the year 1873. The remainder of her life was consistent with her profession, and she remained a faithful and devoted member until her death. Her church was dear to her heart, and when she, with her faithful husband, failed to fill their seats, all knew there was a providential hindrance that compelled their absence. Their home was so blessed by the Prince of Peace that there was never, during all their long married life, a single turbulent wave to disturb their domestic tranquillity, I am told. Both she and her husband enjoyed company, and entertained many of their brethren, sisters and friends in their pleasant home with such a whole-hearted welcome that it made one glad to go and partake of their hospitality. Sister Cook was taken with something like a chill or rigor about a month before she died. This was followed by fever, which so weakened her that, although she improved sufficiently so she was able to walk about in the house some, she never entirely recovered. She realized the end of her earthly pilgrimage was near, and expressed a desire to go. Her devoted husband and children, except one son, who lives in Nebraska and could not come, were by her bedside during her last illness, and they, together with faithful friends, did all that could have been done to make her comfortable. She retained consciousness and knew those who came into her room until almost the last. She did not seem to suffer much pain, but complained of being tired of this world, and would say, "O how I long for that sweet rest!" She would speak of wanting water, and when a glass of water was brought she would say: "No, I want that living water which if one drinks they will never thirst again." About a week before she died she called her devoted husband to her bedside and bade him an affectionate farewell. She told him that she hated to leave him, but she was ready to go, and that it would not be long until he would follow. She continued to grow weaker until the summons

came: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord;" then she sweetly fell asleep in Jesus, that blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved family and a large concourse of friends who gathered at the home as a token of love and respect for the deceased, after which her mortal remains were laid to rest in the cemetery near their home to await the glorious resurrection, when mortality shall be swallowed up of life and our vile bodies shall be raised up from their graves, changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of our glorified Redeemer. Grandma was possessed of so many amiable qualities, and was so noble and true in all the walks of life, that she was almost the idol of her home, and dearly loved by all who knew her. She will be missed in the community, and more in the church, but most of all in the home, where nothing can take the place of mother. Her devoted husband and affectionate children will cherish her memory.

May the Lord, who alone can heal the broken-hearted, give them sustaining grace sufficient for their day and trial.

J. R. HARDY.

Dr. Samuel T. Cubbage died at his late home in Felton, Del., Thursday, April 1st, 1915, at the age of 50 years. Two years prior to his death deep colds and exposure in going to the relief of the sick in his profession robbed him of his health in comparatively early life, and by slow poisoning of the blood progressive pernicious anaemia worked that sad end which no physician can divert. At the German Hospital in Philadelphia his fellow physicians took great interest in his case, but all treatment failed to restore health. He returned to his home and steadily grew worse until the end, when the kind and merciful God answered his prayer for deliverance from suffering and pain in death, the portal of the life beyond the grave. Dr. Cubbage was the son of Benjamin C. and Elizabeth Meredith Cubbage, of the Cow Marsh Church, Kent County, Del. He was twice married, first to Miss Fannie Marvel, of Georgetown, Del., who bore him one daughter, Cecilia, who preceded the mother in death. His second marriage was to Miss Nancy King Grubb, of Cecil County, Md., who bore him two sons, William Jackson and Meredith Grubb, aged ten and six years, all of whom survive him. He is also survived by three brothers and two sisters: Alfred M. and Calvin Cubbage, of Philadelphia, Elder B. E. Cubbage, of Wyoming, Del., and Miss Emily Cubbage and Mrs. Mary C. Hastings, of Felton, Del. He was baptized while traveling in Texas, by Elder Collins of that State. On his return to Philadelphia he united with the Salem Church. In 1900 he moved to Felton and united with the Cow Marsh Church, of which he was a devoted and faithful member and deacon until his death. His life and walk in the church and in the world was an inspiration and a legacy to those who knew him best—a man of strong character and excellent judgment, kind, gentle and faithful. Sometimes because of his faithfulness and frank honesty he was mistaken as overzealous in church matters, but O that more of our dear brethren were filled with the burden and weight of a manifest devotion to the Master's cause that moved him in true and faithful church going and doing. Truly he was a doer of the word as well as a hearer. He was a good gift in the church, sound in doctrine and comforting in experience. His family, feeling they could not give him up, has lost a kind and sacrificing head and brother, the church has lost a useful and loving member, the community has lost a faithful servant of the people; but he has gained the fullness of a knowledge of the things prepared for him by the risen Redeemer. The Scriptures tell us that when we come into that knowledge, to know him as he is, we shall be satisfied.

Elder J. M. Fenton, assisted by Mr. Russell Paynter, of the Presbyterians, preached the comforts of God's promises to us at the funeral, after which interment was made in the Cow Marsh Cemetery.

I have been unable to write this obituary for publication sooner, owing to my weakness. My filial love and devotion for my brother, and my very close relation with him in church matters, almost deprived me of complying with the request of the family to write as I feel.

B. E. CUBBAGE.

Addison C. Beeman, my son, died in Cherokee, Okla., Nov. 25th, 1915. He was born in Sharpsville, Highland Co., Ohio, June 19th, 1870. He was the eldest of ten children, and the first to be taken. He was a healthy boy and a robust man, never having to consult a doctor until his last sickness, which was only of a few days. At the age of twenty he attended Valparaiso College, Ind., and graduated in 1896. He taught school a number of years in that State, and went to Oklahoma in 1901, locating in Carmen, where he became the first mayor of the town. He was in the real estate business there about three years. He was appointed under-sheriff of Woods County under the Territorial laws, and moved to Alva, the county seat, serving in that capacity three years, until Statehood. About that time he was admitted to the bar in all the courts of Oklahoma and the district courts of the United States. In 1907 he moved to Cherokee, the county seat of the new county of Alfalfa, where he opened an office and was highly successful as a lawyer in every way. Business came to him rapidly, and he soon became the foremost lawyer of the county. At the time of

his death he was a member of the Oklahoma State Senate. I shall quote only a short extract from a lengthy article which appeared in a Cherokee paper: "As an attorney, the leader of the local bar, he was all that a lawyer should be, and nothing that he should not be. With as high a regard for the ethics of his profession as any man ever admitted to the bar, Mr. Beeman put the beautiful theories of law into the practical application. His large business came almost entirely from the fact that men had absolute confidence in what he told them, and that he was more likely to honestly advise a man out of a lawsuit rather than trying to advise him into one. So few lawyers of to-day have this virtue that it was singular in Senator Beeman. No set of people will miss him so much as those who trusted him with their business affairs. The splendid reputation he built for himself is a model that any young lawyer can well afford to follow." After he became a teacher in the public schools it seems that he doubted the authenticity of the Scriptures, seeing so much controversy about their teachings and so many false professors of christianity. Later in life he became a reader of the Bible, and often asked me questions about some of the passages of Scripture. Four years ago he joined the "Modern Friends Church," and became a leader in the lecture room. His brethren expressed themselves to me after the funeral as if he was the greatest man they ever knew. He was a man of the common people, humble, sincere and unassuming. His disease was inflammation of the bowels, a forerunner of appendicitis, into which it developed by neglect. On Monday preceding the Thursday on which he died he was in his office, though very unwell. The next day he was unable to be in his office, and called for a doctor. That night a consultation of five doctors decided that only an operation would help, which was done in his home, but his fatal disease had come, and all their skill was of no avail, and in thirty-six hours death came. I live about two hundred miles from where he died. As soon as a telegram came to us of his death, wife, son and I traveled in the night, and arrived there the day before the funeral. A very large concourse of people attended the funeral. He leaves a widow and two girls, Virgil, aged fifteen years, and Macil, aged ten years, father, stepmother, six brothers and three sisters, with many others to mourn.

In sorrow, J. F. BEEMAN.

William H. Grafton, the subject of this notice, was born May 6th, 1853, and was married Nov. 11th, 1875, to Miss Sophia Osborn. He was baptized by the writer of this notice in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore city, Md., April 23rd, 1900. Brother Grafton proved to be a faithful and useful member, and was much beloved by all his brethren and sisters. He always showed his interest in the welfare of the church and pastor. In October, 1910, he had a stroke of paralysis, and while he partially recovered, he never was able to do much work. He was a railroad conductor, and did some light work for the company after his affliction, but for two years prior to his death he could not do anything or be out much. He bore his affliction with great fortitude, and being blessed with one of the most faithful of wives, he had every comfort and pleasure that was possible in his condition. In the early morning of Nov. 25th, 1915, he had another stroke, and was never conscious again that any one knew, and passed away at 10 o'clock p. m. the same day. In the death of brother Grafton the church has lost one of her most faithful and loved members, her pastor one of his dearest brothers and kindest of friends, his widow a kind and loving husband, to whom she proved faithful in all his afflictions, even unto death, his children a kind and loving father, to whom they also were faithful.

His body was taken to the meetinghouse, where he so much loved to go, on Sunday, Nov. 28th, where the writer spoke on the sad occasion to a large congregation from 1 Cor. xv. 20, 21, after which it was laid to rest in Woodlawn Cemetery to await the second personal coming of his Savior, when it shall arise a spiritual body in the image of the glorified Son of God. I will now say to the bereaved wife, children and church, Let this blessed thought comfort you as you grieve over your dear lost one.

ALSO,

Miss Sallie W. Simpson, the subject of this memoir, was born June, 1834, and baptized many years ago by the late Elder W. J. Purington, in the fellowship of the Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., and proved a consistent member to the last. For several years she was not able to attend her church meetings, but remained sound in the faith, and when the Lord called, Child, your Father calls, come home, she was willing to go.

Her funeral was attended by the writer, at the home of Mr. Wm. Benson, in Montgomery County, Md., July 3rd, 1915, and her remains laid in the old family burying-ground to await the call of Jesus when he shall come again.

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

Miss Sarah Sayer, a daughter of the late William A. and Sally Murray Sayer, departed this life Dec. 7th, 1915, after a lingering illness, aged 81 years. Sister Sarah, as we all called her, had been a faithful and devoted member of the Middletown and Wallkill Old School Baptist Church fifty-seven years. She was baptized by Elder Gilbert Beebe, and as the years passed the household of faith grew dearer and dearer to her. Her faithfulness to the church was very marked, it being her first thought. Her acts of kindness were numerous, the poor and needy were

sought and helped by her. She loved the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and often, as she expressed it, had good meetings while reading its pages. Her life was one of self-sacrifice. She had the care of her father and mother in their declining years, and after their death her care and devotion toward an invalid sister were wonderful. Not long after this sister's death her own health began to fail, until at last death relieved her of her sad condition. Surely a good and faithful woman has fallen. She is survived by one sister, Mrs. Emma Halstead, of Unionville, N. Y., also a member of the same church. When we came to Middletown to live there were five sisters and one brother of this fine old family, now only one of them survives.

The writer tried to speak to the glory of God and to the comfort of the friends on the funeral occasion, using the words, Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is staid on thee. Hymn 1256 was read. Interment took place in the family plot at Westtown, N. Y. K.

Sister **Rachael Sperling,** widow of Wm. S. Sperling, was born Feb. 26th, 1826, died July 23rd, 1915, making her stay on earth 89 years, 4 months and 27 days. Her record is that she was a devoted wife and an affectionate mother. She was the mother of thirteen children, four boys and nine girls. One boy and seven girls, together with her husband, preceded her to the tomb, which leaves three boys and two girls to mourn her death, but we should not mourn for her as though she had no hope, as she made a public profession before many witnesses, and was baptized by Elder F. A. Chick. She lived the profession she made by being in duty as much as her health would permit. She was a great sufferer from heart trouble, but bore her affliction with christian fortitude, and after she became confined to her home she delighted to talk of the goodness and mercy of God in the salvation of sinners. I visited her several times, and it was very pleasant to me to have such opportunities. Her devotion was proven by the requests she made of those who visited her to read and speak in prayer. She was often heard begging the Lord to take her home, and we feel she has passed from the tribulations of time into the full realization of her hope. So, dear children and brethren and sisters, weep not, but bless the Lord that he has given such great blessings to poor sinners that they should be able by his grace to leave such manifestations that our loss is her eternal gain, which was spoken of at her funeral, to give glory to God and bless his holy name for his wonderful works to the sons of men.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer, and interment was made in the Hopewell cemetery to await the resurrection of the dead.

C. W. VAUGHN.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Liberty Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, of Los Angeles, Cal., meets every first and third Sunday in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., at 42nd and Moneta Ave., and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal.

W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor.

B. C. RICE, Clerk.

THE

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 84. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1916. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Dec. 26, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I take my pen to write a few lines for publication in the good old SIGNS, about my own age, eighty-three years, I hesitate, as there are so many able writers; I love to read every article in the paper. It is a pleasure and a comfort to me to know that we have such able editors as Elders Ker and Lefferts to proclaim the truth and gospel that we all love to hear about. I often think of the words spoken by Paul to Timothy: "Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things. Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel: wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: if we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself. Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." If we do not consider what he says we never can understand these things. It is all with him from first to last; we poor mortals are weak and unruly members, rebellious creatures, the flesh striving against the Spirit, continually fighting and warring against each other, the flesh lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, one contrary to the other. Paul suffered trouble, even unto bonds, but the word of God was not bound. How anxious he was that the elect should obtain salvation, which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. We read in 1 Timothy vi. 6-8: "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out, and having food and raiment, let us be therewith content." The thought occurs to me: Am I content? So many natural things draw me away from spiritual things, but I am glad I do have the en-

joyment of spiritual things as well as natural. God gives us both, so we ought not to complain or find fault; he is so good to me, I do not see where I could go without him, or rejoice in any other name but Jesus our dear Redeemer, who has done so much for us. He had power to lay down his life and power to take it again. Jesus said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth: but I have called you friends: for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." If God be for us, who can be against us? He spared not his own Son, but gave him up for our sakes. O for such a Savior. I feel that I can almost say with Paul, I can endure all things for the elect's sake. Blessed be his name! There is no other name half so sweet as the name of Jesus. To the name of Jesus every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that he is God. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master in Israel and knowest not these things? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." They have this seal: He knoweth them that are his. Often it causes me anxious thought whether or not I am his. Paul said, By the grace of God I am what I am. If we leave him out where is our hope? Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gate into the city. If any man shall add unto these things God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book, and if any man shall take away from the words of this book, God shall take away his part of the book of life. God is a Spirit; we love to worship him in spirit and in truth. All other kinds of worship are but dross, and never can be acceptable to God. Man must be born again. The Lord thy God is in the midst of thee; he is mighty, and will save his people from their sins. Jacob is

the lot of his inheritance; he kept him as the apple of his eye; so the Lord alone did guide and protect Jacob and made him suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock. That rock was Christ, the God that we love and adore, and love to praise his blessed name. Bring forth the royal diadem and crown him Lord of all. There are no people who crown him Lord of all as do the Old School Baptists. If the crown is divided what do we have but an empty crown? That is no good to any one. He is a merciful God.

We laid away a dear sister to-day, who had been a member with us for many years, and to know her was to love her. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be his name. She was a sister of our brother Leigh, who was clerk of our church for so many years. We miss them as they pass on, but we believe that our loss is their gain. How firm a foundation is laid for the saints of the Lord; a foundation that cannot be shaken like the sandy foundation that goes down as the rain descends and as the winds and floods dash upon it. I think of the words our pastor, Elder Vaughn, spoke from recently: Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful, but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night. The laws men make are so different from God's law, his law is from everlasting to everlasting. We delight in his law; he gives us his law without pay, and it is good to meditate on both day and night; it is like his promises, sure and steadfast. O that men would praise him for his wonderful works to men. How good it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. I enjoyed Elder Lefferts' article, Peace and good will toward men. What rejoicing there would be if peace was declared in Europe. I well remember when peace was declared after our Civil War. How good peace is at home in the family circle. Jesus says, Peace I give unto you. He is our Comforter, our all and in all, never makes mistakes, his promises never fail, though the winds of adversity howl around us, and the storms of persecution burst upon our heads. He is a hiding-place from the winds and a refuge from the storms, no harm shall befall us; if we are his and he is ours nothing shall come between us to harm us in any way or form. He loves his children, and not one shall perish. My sheep hear my voice; they follow me, not one shall be lost; I give unto them eternal life. He says, I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord; I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly who are of thee. The psalmist said, Be of good courage, the Lord will strengthen you, all ye that hope in the Lord, and he also said, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord." The Lord is not slack concerning his promises. How precious are these things to those who believe.

I have written more than I intended at the start, and will close by wishing all the brethren and friends a happy and prosperous new year. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, is my sincere prayer.

From an unworthy brother in a precious hope,

D. L. BLACKWELL.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan. 10, 1916.

DEAR ELDER KER:—About the 17th of last April, when I met you at my cousin's funeral, you asked me to write for the SIGNS, and I have thought a great many times since to comply with your request, but my mind does not seem to get in proper frame to perform such a sacred duty. I say "sacred" with emphasis, for it is certainly a most solemn, sacred duty to undertake (for me at least), and for that reason I hesitate. I am also fully aware of my inability to do justice to this task, and I find my mind is in no better condition now than it has been since you asked me to write, but somehow there seems to be a still small voice which says, Go forth, consequently I go forth with fear and trembling, trusting that the same One who speaks in that voice will guide and direct my thoughts in such a manner as will redound to his glory. If not guided by him, my efforts will prove fruitless, for I realize and know that if I am led by my feeble, carnal mind it will be nothing but carnality from beginning to end, and will be of no interest to the household of faith, who are the ones I so much desire to comfort, if I may be able to, but I fear I will fail. I mentioned in the beginning about the condition of my mind; I will say (with sorrow) that my mind has of late been in a very unsatisfactory condition. It may appear a very strange assertion to make, and I hope I am mistaken in my observations, but it appears to me as if those with whom I meet and mingle do not have the same love and affection for me as once they did, and when they meet me they speak to me, and shake my hand, but not with the same warmth and affection as formerly; they appear to do it out of mere respect, and I imagine I am slighted in many respects; but I cannot blame them for so doing, as I know I am not worthy of their esteem. In fact, if they could see me as I see myself, if they knew what a vile sinner I am, if they knew the sins that I commit daily, and the wicked thoughts that pass through my mind almost constantly, they would shun me entirely, would be justified in so doing; if I thought they did know these things you may rest assured I would not go near them; I would be ashamed to show my face in their presence. As it is, I feel many times like staying away from them, and going elsewhere, but where to go I know not, as there are no other people with whom I can find the real enjoyment and comfort I derive from the association with those whom I believe to be the true children of God; consequently I see no other way, have no other desire, than to trudge along behind (not with), as I feel I would be out of place with them, hoping to be able to gather now and then a few crumbs of comfort by the way, that may be dropped on purpose for me. Although I know I am not deserving of them, yet I crave them, and I relish them, and they certainly do nourish my poor soul, and strengthen and encourage me, they build me up, renew my hope, which at times gets very small and weak, yet it never leaves me entirely; if it did I would of all mortals be the most miserable. I know the good Lord is bestowing upon me daily many very rich blessings, for which I am very negligent in thanking him as I should. I feel to say with the poet:

> "If my soul were sent to hell,
> Thy righteous law approves it well."

That is my just desert. Again the poet says:

> "Where must a weary sinner go,
> But to the sinner's friend?
> He only can relieve my woe
> And bid my sorrows end."

How true are these words. We cannot

go to a single person on earth and tell our troubles; we would be ashamed to go and tell all our misgivings to our nearest and dearest friends; but to the Lord alone we can go, and lay everything bare before him, although he knows them all from beginning to end, before we approach him. We go to him pleading for mercy which he freely gives, although we merit not a single one. How can we praise him enough? We do not, we cannot, at least I know I do not, which causes me at times to mourn bitterly. O what a gracious God we have; why are we so careless and negligent? I feel like falling with my face in the dust, with shame for my negligence. What poor, weak mortals we are; we are unable to stand alone, we need his support constantly; we cannot stand alone one moment; we know not what would become of us if his guiding hand were withdrawn from us for a single instant, we certainly would fall, and great would be the fall. We cannot control our thoughts. I am not controlling my thoughts in writing this, but have written them as they came to me, and if this should contain anything that is of interest to any of the saints of God I can claim no honor or glory for it, it is due to the One who directed my thoughts. I suppose this kind of language may appear strange to the worldly-minded, but the chosen people of God understand, and I imagine I hear them saying, Amen.

Well, we have just entered a new year, and I have made no resolutions; I am afraid to, I fear I would not be able to refrain from breaking them if I did; I would like to if I could keep them, but I feel to ask the good Lord to guide me, and keep me steadfast in the strait and narrow way, which I believe to be the only right way. The God of heaven and earth only can keep me in that path. O how I crave his protection; the older I get the more I crave it.

Dear brother, I do not know whether I have written anything of interest or not. I am not able to write as I would like to; I cannot enter into the subject as I would like, and it seems as if I had just darted here and there, and failed to reach anywhere.

I feel like saying a word in reference to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It commenced coming to my parents' home before I can recollect. I will be seventy-four the 24th of January, and since their death I have been taking it, and these few last years I have read every article in each copy, some with greater interest than others; some were too deep for my dull comprehension; not that I doubted the truth contained therein, but my understanding is too limited for such deep, sublime subjects. I know not why, but in the last copy of the 1915 volume I read every article with greater interest than any ever before, and with better understanding. I seemed to enter into the very sentiment and feeling of the various subjects. I dare not say they were any better than many I have read before, but I suppose I was prepared by the Lord to receive them; it was a great pleasure to read them, and it is a great satisfaction to have such refreshing seasons of God's presence in our souls. When I read them I found very many expressions that I wished I could employ when I come to write, as they express my thoughts so much better and clearer than I am able to do myself; but I suppose I should be content with such gifts as God has given me. It was not his design that I should be possessed of the gift of a ready writer, or I would have it. I have a station here upon earth to fill, and although it be a

very insignificant one, I should try to be content to fill it with such ability as he has given me; but it is so easy to murmur; I find myself doing it much of the time, but when I go too far he checks me, and holds me in restraint, and how ashamed I feel of myself that I should wander so far from that strait and narrow way, and I receive many deserved stripes for my waywardness. I would like to ask right here if any of you who may chance to read this article have such a crooked and ungodly life as I? It appears as though I were a black sheep in the flock, if a sheep at all, or if I am one of the flock, I must be one of the very least.

I do not know what you will do with this poor letter, but do not let it crowd out better matter. I will leave the whole matter to your better judgment. I have endeavored to comply with your request to the best of my ability; while I realize that my ability does not carry much weight with it, you are welcome to such as it is, and all that I have. Like the poor woman when she cast in her mite, it was all she had, what more could she do? So with me, I have done the best I knew, what more could I have done? I hope you will spread the mantle of charity over all my imperfections. If any feel inclined to write to me and tell if they are troubled as I am it will be thankfully received and greatly appreciated, as I need encouragement in my journey through life.

I must close, as I am getting too tedious. With love to all the saints of the true and living God,

C. S. FETTER.

CLAY, La., Jan. 9, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—My subscription was out the 15th of December, and I am not able to renew at present, but hope to be soon, so feel it to be my duty to let you hear from me, as I very much enjoy reading the SIGNS. I hope I love all the poor and afflicted people of God. The most of my time I feel to say, Lord, help me to love thee and thy people everywhere. Lord, enable us to live in peace. I feel to be the least of all, if one at all, and often feel that if the Old Baptists were to exclude me from their fellowship I could not blame them, but I stand back and look on with a wistful eye.

I am sending you a letter from sister Prichard to me, which I enjoyed very much. You may publish it if it meets your approval, if not, all will be well with me.

Yours in hope of a better world than this, J. R. CHANDLER.

CHOUDRANT, La.

ELDER J. R. CHANDLER—DEAR BROTHER:—I will try to tell you my feelings for the last few days. If I am not deceived, I have been permitted to enjoy the sweet presence of the dear Savior, and O how happy I have been. Even now, while I am writing, I seem to know that the blessed Son of God is my Savior indeed, and what love he must have for me, a poor and afflicted worm of the dust, that he should even look upon me in mercy. Dark has been my pathway for the last few months; I felt to be utterly forsaken, and had almost given up in despair, but the darkest hour is just before day, and O the glorious light; surely, brother, there is some reality about it, surely I am not deceived, for it seems I am almost in another world, and I can almost see the image of dear Jesus, bless his holy name. He has promised to never leave nor forsake us, and we know his promises cannot fail, but sometimes my faith gets very weak, and I am made to feel ashamed. Yes, I often feel that I

have deceived the church, and am also deceived in myself, but if I am not, I feel to be a true child of God. To-day while I was at my work, I felt so happy, and perhaps you can tell me better how I felt than I can tell it myself. It seems that I cannot express it in words, but you know what I mean, for I believe you have traveled along the same pathway and know all about it. Right here I am reminded of the poor blind man whose eyes Jesus opened and caused him to see. It seems to me that that applies to every child of God. We are blind to our sinful condition until quickened into life by the mercy of God, and after we have been made alive then our eyes are opened to our awful sinful condition, and we can then cry for mercy, and it takes the same application of the blood of Jesus to save one as it does another, and if that precious blood has been applied to us we are sure of a home in heaven, and Jesus will carry us through safely, there to dwell with him throughout eternity. I am glad that we do not have to stay here always, and that Jesus has prepared a home for us in heaven, where we can praise his holy name forever. O glorious thought, there will be no more sad parting, and no trials and troubles, but all happiness and peace, greater than our minds can grasp, for he only gives us a little foretaste of the happiness that we are to enjoy hereafter.

Well, it seems I could just write on and on, for I see no place to stop, my mind is so full of things I would love to tell. Your letter was a great comfort to me, and I could not help but shed tears to think that the Old Baptists will some day have to give you up, for I believe you have comforted many poor mourners, even myself. When I was going around looking for a place to rest, and was in trouble, you told my feelings so well I thought surely you had experienced the same. I did not know what was the matter with me until I heard you talk, and I believe God used you to point out the way to me, and unto him be all the praise. If I were gifted in writing as you are, I would not mind trying to write, but I cannot tell what I want to, but possibly you will understand some of it. Write when you feel like it, and remember a poor sinner in your prayers.

Your sister, I hope,

LULA PRICHARD.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 4, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—You who are the saints scattered abroad, who walk by faith, and not by sight. What is the hope of your rejoicing? In your solitude and in your destitution you rest in the hope of salvation by grace. In the hours of your meditation you think upon that name which is above every name. When sin appears to you no more a pleasure, but an appalling thing, you abhor yourself, and repent in dust and ashes; in sorrow and anguish you turn every way to avoid the appearance of evil, you groan, being burdened, your feet stand upon slippery places, deep darkness becomes a shroud in your waking hours, and in your night groanings, life becomes a mystery which you cannot fathom, yet all this time the angel of hope hovers about you and has its abode in your heart. You go forward, seeking him whom your soul loveth; he is there, but you find him not. You go backward, searching earnestly; he is there also, but you cannot perceive him. You turn to the right hand, and to the left hand, but alas, your eyes are holden, in agony your heart cries out, O that I might find him whom my soul loveth. Like the passing of a mighty shadow, a ray of light from the Sun of

Righteousness enters into the deepest recesses of your heart. Faith, as a little grain of mustard seed, is sown in the prepared ground of your being, and grows to be a strong and fragrant tree, and you feel a tingling of something sweet and precious following the course of every vein; it reaches the eyelids, and they are lifted up, faith looks forth as the light of a glorious morning, pointing out to you in rainbow brilliancy the kingdom of God's wondrous love, your ears are unstopped, the music from the harp of a thousand strings, harmonious with the songs of Zion, the song of love, the heart trembles with holy awe. "God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand: and there was the hiding of his power. Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet. He stood and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations: and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow." In the new and wonderful light you "see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor: that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." Then you say, This is my Beloved; this is the hope of my rejoicing. Love conquers all, even all the powers of darkness; it is the fountain from which all obedience flows. The love of God passeth all our understanding, but we taste it, we handle it and we live it. Our faith and hope are the outgrowth of it. The exercises of grace by which we are saved through faith unto good works unto holiness and righteousness are because of it. There is one God, the Father of us all. There is none like unto him. The gods of this world are the work of men's hands, they have neither life nor power. "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain [saith the Lord]: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." May grace be multiplied unto all who look for his appearing.

B. F. COULTER.

WARWICK, N. Y., Jan. 6, 1916.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR PASTOR:—I feel like writing you a few lines to try to tell you what a comfort the sermon was to me Sunday morning, also the little talk we had on the way home. I have been wishing I could have a talk with you ever since I lost Chauncey, but never had the opportunity. I used to go to our mother in Israel, sister Lefferts; she was my last prop, and it seemed I was left to stand alone, yet not alone, for I was made to look to the Father of lights, from whence cometh every good and perfect gift, be it joy or sorrow. I do not know what prompted you to speak as you did except the Spirit. Every word of the sermon sank deep into my very soul, for I have been pondering over those things much of late; why every breath has been a prayer, and I have been almost afraid to breathe it. I did not know which way to turn, but was drawn by the very Hand that had placed my feet where I stand to-day, sometimes in the mire so deep with sin, sorrow, troubles and temptations that I needed help to lift me out, which is the love of Christ for his children. I can say he has set my feet upon a rock. Is it too much to claim that?

Brother Ker, why did they have to take "old rotten rags" to lift the prophet out of the pit? I was wishing you would speak of that, too, when you spoke of the

pit. I have thought on that a great deal also. My recent visit made me more settled in my mind than I had been in months, and your speaking to me on the very subject uppermost in my mind was another wonder to me, and helped me to see my way more clearly. When I am brought to think on the past year, who placed me where I am and how I am situated to-day in sorrow, but with blessings on every hand, I feel to say with the poet:

"The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will.

My cross and my crown are both willed by my God,
He swore to his will, and then sealed it with blood;
'Tis proved by the Spirit, the witness within,
'Tis mine to inherit, I'll glory begin."

If all things were predestinated, and I firmly believe they were before the foundation of the world, and if I am in that foundation, Christ, why should I not be crushed? The chief Corner-stone had to tread the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him. I think I know a little something of standing still. I have been brought with Israel to the Red Sea, could not turn to the right or the left, go forward nor backward, and saw a little of the salvation of God, and hope I can say with Israel of old, The Lord hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and the rider hath he thrown into the sea. He it is who brings his children up out of the horrible pit, and I believe he does, both spiritually and temporally, and knows the end from the beginning.

Why I should write this to you is more than I can tell, for I feel very small and ignorant in temporal things, and nothing, and worse than nothing in spiritual things, and must appear very much so to you, who are gifted with the truth as it is in Christ Jesus; but I am only a child talking to its father, for you are a father talking to your children when you feed the flock of God, God's undershepherd. We know the truth, but have to be told it often lest we forget, and we can be told and told and never tire of hearing, because we are drawn with the cords of love from the Fountainhead.

Elder Ker, I did not think of writing so much when I began, but only to tell you of the few words of comfort. This is so full of self I feel I ought not to send it. I feel however that it is good to encourage one another, but we do our duty so seldom, leave it for some one else to do, thinking that what they say and write is so much better than what we could say or write.

I will bring this to a close, hoping you will still do your duty in writing for the dear old SIGNS, for we all (the whole family of God) love to read the editorials, as well as the good writings of the brethren and sisters scattered abroad in this wilderness or low ground of sorrow, just waiting for the appearing of Him who died to save us, and take us unto himself. I feel the Lord will make the fire burn, and give you a ready mind, and strengthen your arm to wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon. I feel somewhat relieved in mind since writing this. I hope it is of the Lord, and just now it brings to mind the words sister Lefferts used many times: Quench not the Spirit.

Now may he who keeps us all, bless us to his own honor and glory, and keep us from falling, and receive us at last unto himself, is my desire.

With love to you and yours, I remain, I hope, your sister in fellowship of the truth,

NETTIE DOLSON.

BALTIMORE, Md., Dec. 26, 1915.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I have had it in my mind to drop you a few lines since reading your editorial in the December 1st SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to try to comfort and strengthen you in your labors as an editor, but realizing my inability to write or speak to the edification of the people of God, I refrained; but being impressed to write to you, I trust the Lord will guide my pen in the right way. Paul says that whosoever will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, so if you speak and write what the Scriptures declare, and your experience tells you is true, then are you fulfilling the law of Christ. The apostle asked the question, Shall we seek to please men or God? I asked that question a few years ago of one who was a Primitive Baptist. He said where God's predestination had been preached the church and congregation had gone down. I asked, Shall we seek to please men or God? He did not have an answer, and turned the conversation. Elder Ker, the question came in my mind some time ago, How do we know the Scriptures are true? and the answer came, Behold, the witness is within you. Now if we testify of the Scriptures such things as we have experienced or that have been revealed to us, we dare go no farther, for fear we present something that is not taught. I have not written as I intended, for I only thought to encourage you. O why can we not pluck the beam out of our own eye? then we could see more clearly how to take the mote out of our brother's eye; but it is not so when we are led by the flesh. We appear to forget that we are of the same family, or that we are of the same body of Christ, the same church. When one is led to persecute a brother because he cannot see in all points of doctrine just as he does, I feel, to say the least, it is unkind. The doctrine that some of the brethren hold forth, that we are made alive now and it is for us to do the will of God and thereby deserve his blessing for being obedient, is not food to me, neither can I find where such doctrine is taught in the Scriptures, but I can say with Paul, In me (that is, in my flesh,) there dwells no good thing, for I feel I am the chief of sinners, and if left to myself I would be worse than Peter, who cursed and swore and said he knew not the man. Brother Ker, Jesus says that he will go before his sheep and they will follow him, and that he will lead them in paths they have not known, and that God, who is greater than all, will hold them in his hand, and no one is able to pluck them out of his hand. Such promises are much comfort to me, for if I know anything of a Savior's love it is not for obedience. I do not feel like criticising those who feel that they can be obedient and that God blesses them for their obedience, but I do not see how they can fellowship me, who can find no way of doing good, but whose feet are always ready to do evil. Yet thanks be to God, Jesus Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. The well need not a physician, but they that are sick, and if I know my own heart I am sick, yes, sick of sin; it appears to be mixed with all I do. I have been comforted very much this year in reading the SIGNS, both the editorials and the many good letters from the brethren and sisters. I would like to be able to write like those who write for the edification of the poor of the flock. The letter from Elder Beeman in January 15th number, the letter from J. R. Hardy on the two rewards, the letter from sister Gertie Truitt, and many others which I do not call to mind

just now, were read with much comfort by me. I trust that the Lord will direct the minds and pens of all those whom he has qualified to keep the SIGNS full of spiritual matter, such as will edify and not confuse those who feel that they cannot walk alone, but need the guiding power of the Lord every day and every hour. I trust that you may be made to feel that God's grace is sufficient for you in all your trials and afflictions as editor, and also as a preacher of the gospel, which is salvation by grace, and grace alone. May it please the Lord to prosper the SIGNS and the publishers and editors for another year, is the earnest desire of one who hopes that he loves the paper and the writers for the truth's sake. Do as you please with this, it will be all right with me.

From a poor sinner who hopes, in spite of his inability to do good, he has love in his heart for the people of God, and desires an interest in their prayers,

L. C. GODWIN.

MOODY, Ark., Sept. 2, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If prompted by any other motive than the constraining love of God, his cause and his people, I am deceived. Paul said, The love of God constraineth us. That there is a great falling away, that there are schisms and division, backbiting and persecution, lying and deceiving spirits growing worse and worse, that there are wars and rumors of war, famine and pestilence and earthquakes, that there are nakedness, peril and sword, and all of these things among God's people, cannot be doubted. But our God says he came not to send peace, but a sword, and we are commanded to fight the good fight of faith and to fulfill the law of Christ. We are to suffer all these things for Christ's sake, with him and for him, for he was made perfect through suffering. But we war not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places. Dear brethren, I often hear this applied to the Arminian pulpit, but to my mind it suits and fits more perfectly those among God's people who, full of subtility, pervert the right way. If in doctrine, so in order, for there is no apostolic succession except apostolic truth, no order but that which God set up, no church but his bride, no truth but Christ, and he alone can make us free, free from all sin, in doctrine and in practice; for he is the head over the church in all things, which is his body, Prophet, Priest and King, Lord of lords and King of kings, blessed for evermore. It is sad to see the state of affairs here, the ranks of Israel torn and scattered by her leaders, who have caused her to err; three separate divisions of people calling themselves Old Baptists, brought about by some of the leaders claiming order when in gross disorder, crying peace, when there is no peace. Now a man that does not lead, and does not try to lead, but looks to God to be led, and rejects all human leaders, is not troubling Israel, but, like old Elijah, is a trouble to the priests of Baal and also to the priests of the groves, of which there were together eight hundred and fifty. In Deuteronomy vii. 7, in speaking to God's people it says: "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people." A few means a small number, fewer means still smaller, and fewest means but one, a number that cannot be reduced any lower and be a unit. God's people are one with Christ, and have but one Christ, one Savior, one God, one hope, one life and resurrection.

God's people see eye to eye and speak one and the same thing: Salvation is of the Lord; not of works, lest any man should boast. Again, when we are made to stand alone, like Noah and like Lot, like Elijah, like Christ, when all props are taken from us, then, and not until then, do we trust in the Lord, for just as long as we feel we have a single prop outside of Christ we lean upon it. But God says, My people shall trust in the Lord. When all else fails us then we cry to our God, whose ear is ever open to our prayers; then we find our Savior the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever, a very present help in trouble, and he says, Because I am God, and change not, ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

Dear brethren, time and space forbid, but I would love to tell you of my travel. Surely I have felt the horn of the beast. Many, many times I have had sore travel, and would almost despair, and would feel, Surely I am mistaken, and have no hope in Jesus, or I would not feel so cast off. I hope I have fought the way of a man, that seemed right unto him. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost, and the holy Scriptures, are the only multitude of counsel I accept, and by them I feel I am upheld, and by them I am persuaded that nothing is able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ, and that we are complete in him. I felt for years a desire to travel, and to go elsewhere to preach among God's people, but I have been kept right here, called on to preach often at times and places where I could not refuse. God has been my helper, and a door has been opened that no man could shut, and I am preaching twice a month. Bless God, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name, for he rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say, What doest thou?

I send one dollar on my subscription to the SIGNS. I am in love with brother Lefferts, and thank our heavenly Father for such gifts to the church and to our old family paper, the SIGNS. For twenty-five years, dear brethren, I have had a premonition and presentiment of this great catastrophe and upheaval now consuming the nations of all Europe and the world. God's word says the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God. Nationally they have all forgotten him.

I fear I weary you, and beg you to cast the mantle of charity over all my efforts, for they are like the writer, feeble.

Trusting all to our God, I am, I hope, with all God's people, one in Christ,

J. P. BAKER.

LIGONIER, Ind., Dec. 26, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—My dear father sent me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for Christmas last year, and it has been a source of great comfort to me, I assure you, and now that the dear father has been called hence I am sending my renewal. You will not send the SIGNS longer to my father, as with him hope has changed to full fruition. Ever since I can remember the SIGNS has been in our home, and both of my parents found much comfort in it. When Elder Chick was called home we wondered how our dear church paper could live, but God is good, and certainly dealt kindly with us when he gave us Elders Ker and Lefferts. They certainly speak the things that comfort God's humble poor, and I find myself so often like John in prison, so that I must be told again and again. How very lenient was our Savior when John was so filled with doubt and unbe-

lief. He did not chide him for unfaithfulness, but restored unto him the joy of His salvation. When the many perplexities of this life seem to almost overwhelm me I am sometimes calmed and quieted by the blessed assurance that my times are in his hand. A sweet resting-place, if it is sealed home to us with much assurance. I am always very glad to see a message from Sarah Runkle. I visited in her father's home in the summer of 1891, and was very kindly treated by dear old Elder Vanmeter and his wife and daughter, Mattie, and then, too, Elder Purris has visited in our home several times, and he was very fond of the Vanmeters. I had a good letter from Lina Beck last year which I have put among my treasures, for it was so full of the sweets of redeeming love. I attended the funeral of dear old sister Sarah Hawk, of Mongo, Ind., last month, and I want in the near future to send you the account of her life, which she had written to be read at her funeral. She was the most remarkable person, in many ways, that I ever knew, and was much more than ordinarily intelligent. She was ninety-two years old, with a mind bright and clear, and ready to talk of the faith she loved to the very last. She was a reader of the SIGNS for many years, and often I noticed she sent her contribution to aid in sending it to the poor. But she has gone to try the realities for which she hoped, and we have great hope that all is well. It is not easy learning to live without those loved ones—to see the dear fathers and mothers in Israel being taken from our midst and no one to take their places, but our Father knows, he knows it all, and I want to be still and know that he is God. Sometimes the outlook is so far from bright that I hardly know how to look up, and again my heart sings so confidently:

"We know not what the future hath
Of marvel or surprise,
Assured alone that, life or death,
His mercy underlies."

I was sorry to read of Elder Ker being so discouraged, but I want him to know that we appreciate his attitude in keeping controversy out of our dear church paper. It is never comforting to read of strife and confusion, for there is so much of that in the world, and it seems good to feel that when the SIGNS comes we can expect to read the things that make for peace, the comfortable and hopeful things, the things which make us feel we are one family, and love and hope and fear the same things. We are so few, and far apart, that we do not try to meet during the winter, but are still trying, in a way, to keep house, and are in peace and love one with another.

With love and hope for the dear cause, and a prayer for a faith that will not shrink, I bid you good-night.

(MRS.) CURTIS COLE.

LEESBURG, Va.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have just answered sister Manning's letter, and it is good. If you think with me you might put it in the SIGNS, but if not, all right. I hope you may have a happy new year—happy in the fear of God.

Affectionately your sister,

MARGARET B. WHITE.

OTISVILLE, N. Y., Sept. 9, 1915.

VERY DEAR SISTER:—Your letter was received, and O how glad I was to hear from you. I do love to get your letters, for you get right down where I am somehow, and speak my inmost thoughts. Dare I say that I am led by the Savior you adore? My life for forty-six years

has been filled with ups and downs, mostly downs, and sometimes so low that I almost doubt the very existence of God. It does me much good to come in contact with some one who is traveling the same way, for misery loves company. I gleaned a lot of comfort from sister Slawson's letter, also from brother L. H. Hardy's, written to sister Pultz. He touched an experience I had forty years since, concerning John's doubts when in prison. At the time I speak of I was low down, and when a loved sister of the New Vernon Church was uplifted, after listening to her beautiful experience I shocked her by saying I did not think I had ever had a revelation from God. I was honest, I meant what I said. The next day I went to my home, and that night, being unable to sleep, the expression I made came in mind, and with it came the words John sent to Christ: Art thou the Christ, or do we look for another? The Savior did not tell John, but said, Go tell John again the blind see, the lame walk, the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. I could say, I am blind, lame and poor, and I know I have the gospel preached to me. Then the question came, What is the gospel? It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Do you believe Jesus is the Son of God? I certainly do. Then if you hear the gospel you have ears to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. Then flesh and blood have not revealed these things unto you, but your Father which is in heaven. I have never dared since that time to say I have had no revelation from God. If I am a child of God I was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and in due time he revealed himself to me as my Savior, and the Savior of sinners, of whom I am chief. This is all my salvation, and it is by the grace of God that I am what I am. As the poet says, Nothing in my hand I bring. I am glad there was a Paul, and that he said what he did: the good he would he did not, but the evil that he would not that he did. O that I could live a life that would honor the profession I have made, but alas, I fear I am but a stumbling-block in the way of others. You speak of hymns coming to your mind. As I grow older I cannot find words to express what I feel, and now all I can say is, O that I might love him more and serve him better who has done such great things for not only me, but the children of men. Read hymn No. 733, that says what I would. I awoke this morning with hymn No. 1265 in my mind; read that.

Well, sister, I have nearly filled my sheet and talked of nothing but myself, such a poor subject, too. I meant to tell you all about the good preaching we had from Elders Ker and Vail, at Slate Hill. There could be no better. I thought I never could forget it; but I find I cannot keep the manna, but we must have this day our daily bread. The last sermon our pastor preached was great. I was so uplifted that I almost forgot what manner of person I was as he dwelt on the fine linen pure and white, which is the righteousness of the saints. His text was Revelation xix. 6–9. He touched upon each verse. It was grand. How I wish he might take the same text again. I know he could not preach the same sermon, but he might say some of the good things.

Please forgive me for writing so much, and when it is well with you remember poor me.

Lovingly yours,

CAROLINE A. MANNING.

HAMPTON, Iowa, Oct. 1, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It has been some time since I have written an article for our dear old paper, the SIGNS. I have been a subscriber off and on something over forty years, also have written many articles for publication, and as today is the fifty-ninth anniversary since I was baptized, I now take a retrospective view since that time of the many trials I have passed through until the present time. Only through the mercy of our covenant-keeping God I am still spared, for what purpose I know not. Many are the crooked paths I have made, and I often wonder how the God of all grace could prolong my natural life. In all these long years I have never regretted that I united with the church; my brethren have borne with my weaknesses, and now in my last days I love them, whether they do me or not. I leave that to them, as they know. Also I have never had any reason to change my belief of the doctrine advocated in and upheld by the dear old SIGNS. More than forty-four years I have been trying in a blundering manner to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ, with much fear and trembling and weakness. Whether I have been of any benefit I leave to my brethren, and I do feel to realize they have bid me Godspeed. I feel thankful for the kindness they have shown toward me. Although some do not agree with me on some doctrinal points, we never fall out over it. It seems that many have caused trouble in the churches on absolute predestination of all things, and make it a test of fellowship; I know of many. I have never been in favor of striving about words, and have tried to avoid it, but I cannot allow the use of the term "limited predestination." I have been accused of making God the author of sin, which no man can prove by the Scriptures of eternal truth, and take a "thus saith the Lord" for it. All things work together for the good of his elect people, and known unto God from the beginning of the world are all his works. He is too wise to err and too good to be unkind.

I think I have said enough, so will change the subject, and will say a few words about my trials and crosses in this long period of years. I have passed through some severe trials in church trouble, and have dwelt, as Paul says, among false brethren. I have met with many losses in my business affairs through poor judgment, but the Lord in his goodness has helped me to pay all my debts. I can say I never cheated any man, but paid the last cent, as is my report without. I have never given cause for any evil report that I know of. I have passed through sore trials in sickness and deaths in my family. The death of four of my children, one killed in a runaway accident, three by sickness, and last of all my life companion was taken suddenly, which was the hardest of all, and I cannot feel reconciled. I have had poor health for many years, been near death's door many times, but am still spared, and am now very feeble, and feel, since the death of my companion, that I want to go, but I know I will live my allotted time here. I am now in my seventy-sixth year, and according to the course of nature will not be here long. That hope I trust I received nearly sixty years ago, although at times it seems very small, I would not give for ten thousand worlds like this. Although at the present time in feeble health, and have not been able to do any manual labor for several years, the Lord has been my trust. I never was afraid to trust him since I hope I received that hope; when suffering severe pains of the

body, he gave me grace to bear it all. Now to all the readers of the dear old SIGNS, and the editors, may the God of all grace keep and bless you with blessings temporal and spiritual. To all my brethren in the ministry, Cry aloud, and spare not; speak comfortably to Jerusalem, cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, her iniquities are pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. I want to say the editorials written by brother Lefferts on the Resurrection and Election were the best, I believe, I ever read. Remember me when at the throne of grace.

Yours in great tribulation, in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,

E. A. NORTON.

OCEAN PARK, Cal., Dec. 30, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending in my remittance, with a few other names, for which I inclose a money order. I feel, if the Lord will be my helper, to say a few words since reading Elder Lefferts' "personal" in the last SIGNS for this year. Self-condemnation belongs to the people of the Lord, their chief delight being to give glory and honor to God, the supreme ruler of all things, who speaks and it stands fast, who binds the broken and contrite heart with the cords of everlasting love, and none dare molest his heritage when his strong arm is round about them. But I am not writing what I intended to. I want to say to Elder Lefferts, that if he knew how many have been comforted by reading his articles since he has been on the editorial staff he would feel to rejoice in the Lord that God had so directed him to write to the comfort and edification of the dear people of our blessed Redeemer. Only last Sunday a dear sister said to me that she wondered, when Elder Chick was called away, who there was to take his place, but since she had read Elder Lefferts' writings she was ready to say the Lord knew. She voiced many others who have expressed themselves the same way, so, dear brother, press on, stand in your lot, for the Lord is with you, and will guide you while he has a work for you to do, and when done with you here will call you to a better world, to sing the song of the blessed in that land from which no traveler returns. I do not know from experience the trials of the editors, but I do know that it is with great hesitation that I ever take my pen to write a word to those I love in the Lord, so what must be the feelings of one who stands as a teacher, as it were, of the children of God, whose views on the Scriptures are read and talked about as to whether they are correct. I must say that I indorse all the writings I have read of both Elder Lefferts and Elder Ker, and if they have made any mistakes I am too simple to see them. I see in the December 1st that Elder Ker is very greatly discouraged, too, and I have thought much about it, and when I read Elder Lefferts' complaint my heart was grieved, and I thought I must write a word to both if it might encourage them by the way. I hope, brother Ker, that God may direct your pen in the future as he has done in the past, for I feel that it was only the Lord who directed you to write such comforting words to his people. I hope you will continue to write, for your writings to me savor of the good things the world knows not of, a feast of fat things, full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined, wherein we are made to rejoice exceedingly and glorify the Lord for his great goodness and tender mercies to the children of men.

Now I have not written anything worth publishing, and you may just hand this

to the two Elders, that they may know there is one trembling sinner who rejoices in their writings. I am old and weak in the flesh, but Jesus is my strength, and I want my joy to be in him. I thought when I was young that when I grew old I would surely be a good old woman, but I find it all a mistake, for I can see nothing in my daily life of which to boast, save in the cross of Christ; there is nothing good in me, in my flesh dwelleth no good thing. Then let me praise God from whom all blessings flow; let all that is within me praise and bless his holy name.

Farewell, and may Israel's God watch over his people. When all is well, remember me and mine.

A poor worm of the dust,

(MRS.) J. B. DAWSON.

WEISER, Idaho, Dec. 15, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have been thinking for a long time I would write you, and have, but it dropped in the fire; now I will try again. I often wonder if my experience is altogether different from others, and if I really am one alone. I sometimes fear that is the case, and I know nothing as I ought to; but sometimes when in this condition I think that some of the disciples of old affirm they had the same things to trouble them. It seems strange to me that a child of God can experience the things he does and yet say he is able to work out his own salvation (of himself). I need nothing to prove to me that I cannot order my walk before the Lord except my past resolutions and failures. I think in this, at least, I am almost like the apostle: "How to perform that which is good I find not," for often I have secretly said, I will surely do thus and so at the first opportunity, but the time came and my promise was broken. Especially is this so about speaking in public. I silently suffered twenty years, and I made promises and broke them. I believe the prophet was right when he said, The heart of man deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps. Yes, I believe life, love and knowledge are given in regeneration, but notwithstanding these truths I am often made to say, Hold me up and I shall stand; lead me and I will follow after thee. If he does not hold me up I shall fall, and if he does not lead me I shall not follow him. But suppose I do stand and do follow him, who is responsible for my doing this? and should not the One who is responsible receive the honor and praise for it? It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. The steps of a righteous man are ordered by the Lord; and the preparation of the heart in man, as well as the answer of the tongue, is of the Lord. I am willing that man should have what there is left. It is our duty to fear him and keep his commandments; if we do this we will be very busy. We are in debt more than we can pay in time or in eternity, for we have no more to pay with now than when we were ten thousand talents in debt, and had nothing. Jesus then paid our debt, and since then has enabled us to work out our own salvation by working in us both to will and to do. "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us."—Isaiah xxvi. 12. If the Lord has ordained peace for us we will enter into that peace, and if he has wrought our works in us, will we perform them, or will God's ordained works come to naught? After he has worked in us both to will and to do, surely the work will be performed, and that at the appointed time, for all his works shall praise him; there is no place left for man to say, See, here I have purposed and have brought it to

pass. I acknowledge I have purposed many times, and almost as many times failed, yet on the spur of the moment I have done similar things. The only way I can account for it is, I purposed and failed, God purposed and did it. These are the times God wrought in us, and he had peace ordained for us all through his goodness and mercy to us. I sometimes feel that this is a slow way, and I would like to get along a little faster, but a few minutes thought shows me that there is outside of God's mercy nothing to trust in but the flesh, and I come back desiring in humbleness to be led again.

Now, brother Ker, I have bothered you enough for this time, so will close by saying there is no improvement in my wife's condition, she suffers more and is weaker. It is nearly four years since she was raised up in bed. I find it very trying, and a little discouraging at times, but the Lord still remembers me, and sometimes I do rejoice in his love, and am forced to trust him more and more, until I expect I will be able to say, By the grace of God I am what I am. Our little church has had a few additions lately. I think five in the last year. We have good meetings, for which we hope we are thankful.

Yours in hope,

T. E. ATTEBERY.

SALISBURY, Md., Dec. 25, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As it is now time for me to send in my remittance, I feel that I would also love to send a word of encouragement, for it has been some time since you last heard from me, and I feel that it is as much your due as the subscription price of the paper each year. I have to acknowledge that I am so remiss in the things I ought to do, and the only excuse I have to offer is that I am poor in spirit as well as poor in purse, yet I have all things, and abound; what a contradiction this is. Yes, my entire life seems to me to be a contradiction all the way through. Sometimes I feel without a doubt to have a knowledge of the truth, and if so, that is of far more value than all of the gold of Ophir. Gold cannot be given in exchange for it, nor is it acquired by all the efforts of men combined; no, it is a choice, rare, free gift, and God only is the giver, and he bestows it freely upon whom he will for Jesus' sake. If this is not the way of it, then I know nothing about it. But there are some things the apostles declare that we do know, and I am glad when I am enabled to receive their testimony. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." There are times when I feel to love them, and the precious truth that our God in his infinite goodness, mercy and power enables them to declare. Yes, my dear Elder Lefferts, I know it is all of God's almighty power that enables you to write such comforting editorials as you have done, with those associated with you now, and those who have gone before. I have felt many times since you became connected with our family paper that I wanted to try and let you know of the comfort and strength your writings have been to me, but I am so slow to do the things I should do. Elder Ker, your editorial in the number for December 1st, 1915, I enjoyed reading, as well as those that have preceded it. I want to hear from you oftener. You have my sympathy in having to endure hardness, but is not this one of the marks of a good soldier? I remember the first time that I ever heard you speak in public was at Delmar, Del.; you spoke only for a few minutes, but it was enough to convince me of your calling, and I have been satisfied about the matter ever since.

If I could only write as others do, I feel sure that I would write often. I love to meditate upon the infinite goodness, mercy and power of our God as it has been made known unto and revealed in me, but how to declare these things I find is not in me to do; that is left for others. All are made to rejoice in the knowledge of the truth, but it is not given to every one to declare it. All are blessed, but some are doubly blessed; just as the Master has seen fit and proper in his infinite wisdom so has he done.

But I must close, as I do not want to weary you. I only wanted to express my heartfelt commendation to all connected with the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the best paper I know of. May God's blessing still rest upon it.

Your little brother,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

CHICAGO, Ill., Jan. 18, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I hand you herewith four dollars, with which to renew my own subscription and that of my sister, Mrs. Daniel Shields, as per blank inclosed. To say that I have enjoyed the SIGNS for many years hardly describes it, as during much of the time the reading of this old tried paper is all the preaching we get. I always sit down and read almost the whole paper before stopping, and look through the advertisements, &c., to find more, that I might not like to overlook, then in a few days reread, and in a few months I look the paper all over, and find the story as sweet as at first. There are sometimes a few things that perhaps I do not see as do the writers, but I realize that I am very imperfect myself, and why should I find fault? When one writes in the spirit of fellowship and love, this is enough for me. Perhaps it may be a little "soft" on my part, my not being too particular. During the year just past many of my dear brethren have passed on to the haven of rest, and we trust are now basking in the smiles of the Savior, and are satisfied. We have lost a number of brethren and sisters of our home church (Paris, Ill., and vicinity), besides those whom I feel to know from their writings in the SIGNS. Elder Newton Peters for one, I feel to miss, as I have enjoyed his writings for many years, although I had never met him.

Elder Frederick Keene visited his daughter and family in Chicago in November, and held services two or three times, but I had the misfortune to be laid up with lumbago during all the time he was here and was unable to get about, which also kept my wife busy waiting upon me, so that we did not get to meet the dear brother. We had counted very much on the visit, and the prospect of enjoying the preaching, but it was ordered otherwise, showing that it is not in man to direct his steps. I have few if any of the marks of an Old Baptist, but I am drawn to them with a tie that I am unable to explain, and my greatest desire is to live with them and to sit at their feet, for if there is a people who manifest the marks by which they are to be known, it is this peculiar sect. I read that if one is born again, born of the Spirit, he shall hate evil, or be killed to the love of sin. I confess that I cannot say that I have been led in this way, and it seems to me at times that perhaps I am an impostor, and if it were not for the love that I have for the brethren I would be compelled to give up. One thing is certain, God knows, and whatsoever he does is right, so may I be given the heart to say, Thy will, not mine, be done.

Wishing all a prosperous new year, and with love to all connected with the SIGNS, I remain, I trust, yours in a precious hope,

M. C. REEVES.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1916.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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SAMSON.

MANY Old Testament characters are mentioned in the New Testament, and some are designated as having been types of Christ, but Samson is not one of these. Not only is he not mentioned anywhere in the New Testament, but he is nowhere scripturally said to be a type of Christ. On the other hand, if he is not a type of Christ, why is he in the Bible at all? The basic principle of the Bible is to present Christ. Jesus himself said the law and the prophets testified of him. (John v. 39.) We do not mean to infer that every character in the Old Testament must be a type of Christ from the very fact that it is in the Bible, but one of two things is certain: either a given character signifies truth or it must present error, and if truth, then that character must in some measure show forth Christ, for there is no real truth except the truth of God as it is in Jesus Christ. Now that Samson was one of those who are designated as "holy men of old," is evident, because he is declared to have been a Nazarite unto God from the womb. This places Samson on the side of truth, so that he must in some measure show forth the image of Jesus, who alone is the embodiment of the whole truth, for every one who is a subject of truth, whether in Old or in New Testament times, is so because of the operation of the Spirit of Christ within them, and thus show forth Christ's image to the extent of the measure of his grace given them. Looking at the matter in this light, we think we are not doing violence to the Scriptures in regarding Samson as a type of Christ, even though he is not expressly so said to be anywhere in the Bible. The circumstances of the times at the birth of Samson and at the birth of Jesus were similar. Samson was born in Israel at a time when Israel was apostate and needed a deliverer: "And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years." At the time of Jesus' birth not only was national Israel steeped in corruption, moral, political and religious, but spiritual Israel, the whole elect family of God, was dead in trespasses and in sin. Samson came into manifestation in a time of Israel's stress and need. Jesus made his appearance in the world at the occasion of the dire necessity of his people. The manner of Samson's conception and birth was contrary to the ordinary course of nature, and so was that of Jesus. An angel of God appeared to the wife of Manoah, and an angel of God appeared to Mary, the mother-to-be of Jesus. The advent of both Samson and Jesus was announced to their respective mothers by a messenger sent from God prior to its actual occurrence. The mother of Samson was barren, as had been Sarah, the mother of Isaac, and while Mary, the mother of Jesus, is not said to have been barren, yet as both Isaac and Samson sprang from the deadness of the womb, and were thus gifts from the dead, according to omnipotent promise, and not according to nature, so they powerfully

signify Christ, who by his resurrection from the dead, or advent from death, is God's supreme gift to his people from death, fulfilling Isaiah's utterance, Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given. When the angel appeared to Manoah and his wife announcing Samson's birth-to-be, Manoah took a kid with a meat offering and offered it upon a rock. As the flame of the sacrifice went up toward heaven from the altar, the angel ascended in the flame. Here is presented incarnation and sacrifice. The way, and the only way, of salvation for a sinner of Adam's race is through God being made manifest in the flesh, which was his incarnation, in the person of Jesus born of Mary, and through the sacrifice which took place when Jesus the incarnate offered himself without spot to God a propitiation for all the sins of all his people. The angel which appeared to the parents of Samson was God's messenger in the appearance of a man, and this ministering spirit incarnate ascended in the flame of the sacrifice to heaven, thus presenting incarnation and sacrifice as the way of man's acceptance with God. Manoah's wife must have felt something of the force of this, for she took it as a token that the Lord would not kill them. If incarnation and sacrifice signified life to her then, how much more does it mean life to us who live in this gospel day. This angel announced three things of Samson: no razor was to come upon his head, he was to be a Nazarite unto God from the womb, he was to begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines. A Nazarite was a man or a woman separated unto the Lord, consecrated to God's service, devoted to his use. Wine is an artificial stimulant, and by his abstention from it, as commanded in the law of Moses, as recorded in Numbers sixth chapter, the Nazarite signified his separation from natural or worldly joy to find all his joy in the Lord. The Nazarite wore long hair and beard, as no razor ever came upon his head. As the long hair was a reproach to men, this signified the Nazarite's willingness to suffer reproach for his devotion to God. Samson the Nazarite, judge of old Israel, is a type of Jesus, the true and real Nazarite. Christ was devoted wholly and solely to the service of God, he was swallowed up in it, it was his meat and drink to do the will of his Father. Christ is the deliverer of all his people from all their enemies, as Samson was partially so of national Israel. As Samson was judge in Israel, so Christ is Judge of all his spiritual Israel. As Samson's head was never profaned by a razor, a polished instrument of man's device, to trim him up to suit the notions of men, so Jesus was never subjected to any education or training of men to instil into him the notions and traditions of men. Jesus came fresh from the habitation of God's throne, and retained the freshness and vigor of eternity throughout all his life and ministry, never being sullied or tarnished by any schooling at the hands of men. Nowadays men think a man cannot preach the gospel without going to a college or seminary to be trimmed up, to be shaved with the razor of theology, but if one is truly a Nazarite unto God he will not be ashamed of his long hair; that is, he will not be deterred from his ministry because of his lack of all the world calls fitness. He will count it a joy to suffer on the behalf of Christ, as Moses esteemed by faith the reproaches of Christ to be worth more than all the riches of Egypt. At the age of twelve Jesus astonished the learned men in the temple at Jerusalem by his ability to interpret the Old Testament. This is a sufficient and everlasting refutation of the

dogma that education helps one to an understanding of the mysteries of God. After the birth of Samson, we read no more of him until he is about ready to take a wife. Then we read that he was not satisfied to take unto himself a wife of his own nation, but desired a woman in Timnath, a woman of the daughters of the Philistines, the enemies of his own kindred people. The parents of Samson could not understand this singular taste on Samson's part, and tried to dissuade him from it, though to no avail. We see here that Samson was not understood by his own flesh and blood, even as Jesus afterward was not understood by Joseph and Mary, or even by his own called and chosen disciples. We are told by Luke that it was the custom of Joseph and Mary every year to go up to Jerusalem at the time of the Passover. It was on one of these visits that Jesus sat in the midst of the learned men in the temple, hearing and asking them questions, while Joseph and Mary had gone a day's journey toward home before they missed him from their company. Returning to the city, they found him in the temple, and Mary said to him, "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing." To this he replied, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Neither Mary nor Joseph understood these words of the child Jesus. Jesus was a mystery to those of his own household. In a measure, Samson also was a mystery to Manoah and his wife; they could not understand his determination to wed a Philistine woman. The Jews, who were of Jesus' own race nationally, could not understand how Gentiles could ever be brought into union with them. But Jesus had other sheep than those among the Jews, and them also he must bring. He loved his people among the Gentiles the same as his people among the Jews, and must be manifestly married to them, too. So Samson's inclination led him to seek a wife among the Gentiles, or Philistines. Now, interposed between Samson and this Gentile wife was a lion in the way, which must be gotten rid of before the union could be effected. So there was a barrier between Jew and Gentile, between Jesus and his Gentile flock, which must be put out of the way before the Gentiles could be brought into new covenant relationship with him. This lion in the way is the handwriting of ordinances which was against the Gentiles, being contrary to them. This handwriting of ordinances was the law given to Moses upon tables of stone, which law no Gentile was ever under, and the benefits and curses of which law no Gentile could ever share. The law of Moses was given to no nation but to that of Israel, all its conditions were contrary to Gentiles, since it excluded them and commanded nonintercourse with them. If Jesus came into the world simply to obey the Mosaic law, then not a single Gentile could ever be saved, for what the law says it says to them that are under the law. The Gentiles were never under that law, for that law never spoke aught to a Gentile. Jesus came to obey and to fulfill the law of God, which is spiritual, while the law of Moses is simply a literal expression or type of that higher and spiritual law which Jesus really obeyed. So in his obedience to that which is highest and holiest, that which was lesser and typical was taken out of the way. Jesus took away this handwriting of ordinances, the law of Moses, nailing it to his cross, so that there is no more barrier between him and his Gentile bride. Thus, Samson in the type was compelled to kill the lion in the path

in order to come at her whom he loved. But after destroying this intercepting foe, and after visiting the woman, he returned to find honey stored in the carcass of the lion. That which was formerly an enemy now becomes a storehouse of sweetness to the victor. So while the ordinances and ceremonies of the legal covenant were against the Gentiles, and furnished a barrier to their new covenant relationship with Christ, yet after their being put out of the way through death, and upon the return of the conqueror, these old things are alive with new meaning and sweetness to the enlightened understanding. Upon the day of Pentecost the Comforter came and unfolded the law and the prophecies, so that it was seen by the apostles that those old things which had been such a severe taskmaster were all testifying of Jesus and of the things he should accomplish. Thus, the very law, the letter whereof killeth, is seen in its spiritual significance to typify Jesus and all his work, thus yielding honey to those who have been brought off more than conquerors through the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

We shall not be able to take up every incident of Samson's life, for fear of being tiresome to our readers, so we pass over the incident of the foxes and firebrands, and come to where the men of Judah, men of his own nation of Israel, arrested and bound him and delivered him into the hands of the Philistines. Here again we see an image of Jesus. As the men of Judah delivered Samson bound into the hands of Philistines, so did the Jews deliver Jesus over to the Gentile power of Rome to be tried and sentenced. Gentiles actually crucified Christ, while it was Jews that made the accusations against him and brought about his arrest. Samson was bound with cords and the Philistines shouted against him. Jesus was nailed to the cross while the people jeered him. Samson was mightily endowed with the Spirit of the Lord, so that his bands fell off him. Jesus, too, was filled with the Spirit, so that he triumphed over all that sought to hold him in thrall. The very death that bound him, he used to overcome death forever. After being freed from his bonds Samson laid about him with the new jawbone of an ass and slew his enemies. He used a weapon that no man would have ever thought of using, and, anyhow, it would have been ineffective in the hands of any other man. With the weapon of weakness and foolishness he overcame the strength and wisdom of his enemies. We think this is typical of what Paul says: "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." These foolish, weak, base and nonexistent things are all comprehended in the jawbone of the ass which Samson used. Christ can thresh a mountain with a worm, just as Samson slew his enemies with the jawbone, for the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. Samson's enemies compassed him in Gaza, but at midnight Samson arose and left the city, taking with him the doors of the city gate, the two posts, bar and all. Midnight is the end of one day and the beginning of another. When Jesus came forth from death he led captivity captive. That is, the very death and hell and grave that had held him captive, he now in turn leads captive to

himself. The very things which bound him in chains he now binds in chains. Thus in escaping from Gaza, Samson brought forth the gate with him, thus leaving the city open to invasion without stronghold or protection. So Jesus destroyed death through death, and imprisoned the devil in chains, the chains which had formerly for a time held Jesus captive.

Passing on now over some intervening incidents, we come to where it was discovered that Samson's strength was in his hair, and that without his locks he was as weak as any other man. Now, as we noted before, the hair was a sign of Samson's Nazaritehood. It was an evidence that he was separated unto the service of God. In this separation, or consecration to God, was his strength. Shorn of this sanctification, or separation, he was no different from other men. Jesus was a man among men, but more than that, he was in unity with God: he and God were one. In this oneness with God lay all his strength. Separate from God, if that were possible, he would be as any other man. Thus Unitarians and others who seek to emphasize that Jesus was merely a man, a good man, and no more, are seeking to strip the hair from our spiritual Samson, Jesus. If they could succeed in this, as they cannot of course, Jesus would be but as any other man, a very ineffectual savior and deliverer. We would say, then, that the hair of Samson stands for eternal vital unity. Herein was the strength of Jesus, in that God and he were one; and herein is the strength of all God's people, in that Christ and they are one. Shorn of his hair, Samson is put, with his eyes out, in the prisonhouse to grind. So Christ was crucified through weakness. He did not die until he gave up the ghost. During his life he was filled with the Holy Ghost. As long as this Holy Ghost remained in him he could not die, but when this Spirit left him he died. Shorn, therefore, of his locks (Spirit) he died. Now, he descends into the prisonhouse (the grave). His eyes are put out. Love is blind. God sees not the transgressions of his people any more. He has blotted them out as a thick cloud from before his face, their sins and their iniquities will he remember no more against them forever. He removes their sins and their iniquities as far from his people as the east is from the west. Thus, God does not see his people as sinners any more, but as righteous and holy altogether in Christ Jesus. In this sense, Samson's eyes were put out. But Samson did not stay in the prisonhouse, for his hair grew again, and with it his strength came back. So Jesus did not stay in the tomb, for his Spirit came unto him again and he arose from the dead. "So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life." This is true not only of Samson, but much more of Jesus. Jesus took from death its sting. If so, he must have taken away sin, for sin is the sting of death. If he took away sin, then he must have taken away the law of sin, for the law is the strength of sin. Also, it is declared that he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. Now, to sum up, Jesus in his death destroyed death, Satan, sin, the law of sin, and the grave. Can it be doubted, then, that the enemies which he slew in his death were more than those he slew in his life?

Now, our readers will notice as they read this that we have passed over several incidents in Samson's life without mention. This we have had to do in order to keep our article within bounds. Much more might be said upon this subject

than we have here written, by some one else and with much greater ability, but such as we have we freely give you. In treating of the types, we have never felt it to be necessary to match every single incident in any particular case with some incident or characteristic in the life of Jesus. Though Samson, or David, or Solomon, is a type of Christ, it does not therefore follow that every identical thing in their lives is typical of Jesus. There is no such thing as a perfect type or figure of Jesus in the whole Bible. Every type has its limitations, it must fall short somewhere in order that Jesus shall maintain the preeminence in this as in everything else.

Written at the request of sister Laura Reed Gooch, of Stem, N. C. L.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

GALATIANS IV. 4, 5.

BROTHER BEEBE:—I have never troubled you for your views on any passage of Scripture, but I will now ask your views on Gal. iv. 4, 5. There we read that Christ was made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. Now I wish to know if the church of God with all the posterity of Adam fell under the law in the same sense spoken of in the text, or whether the apostle is here only speaking of the church of God.

May the Lord spare you long to wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, and may you never shun to declare all the counsel of God, is my prayer.

JACOB RICHARDS, SR.

GRANT CO., Iowa, Sept. 23, 1866.

The words proposed for consideration are: "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." We understand the apostle to be addressing the church of God exclusively. All the epistles are addressed to the people of God, or churches of Christ, and none to the world. As the law and prophets were all given to the people of Israel under the old dispensation, so the ministry of the gospel is exclusively addressed to the spiritual Israel under the gospel dispensation. Neither the church nor the posterity of Adam came under the law by the fall, but all came under its penalty by disobedience of the law under which they were created. If man had not been under the law of God he could not have fallen at all, for sin is the transgression of the law. If Adam and his posterity had been created, as some contend, free agents, to act out unrestrained the freedom of their own will, they could not be condemned for so acting; but the very fact of their falling from a state of innocence into sin, and under condemnation and wrath, proves that they were not free agents, but were held amenable to the law of God under which they existed before their fall. Neither did Christ come under the law by a fall, but was made under the law, by being made flesh, or by his incarnation, by which he was legally identified with his members whom he came to redeem. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." In doing this he was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. It is true that all the human family sinned in Adam and fell under the condemnation of the law of God, but it is not true that Christ identified himself with all mankind in his assumption of flesh, but we are told that he took on him the seed of Abraham, not Adam. Abraham was called out from his kindred, and from all the families of the earth, made the father of the faithful, and his seed, the faithful, were not reckoned in the fleshly descendants of Abraham, for the children of the

flesh, even of Abraham, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. (Romans ix. 8.) "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. iii. 29. In the passage before referred to, in Heb. ii. 14, we learn that the flesh which Christ took on him was the same that his children are partakers of, and of these children he said in verse thirteen of the same chapter, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me." These children, which were the special gift of God to Christ, are partakers of flesh and blood, and he, in being made flesh, took part of the same, and this assumption of their flesh was for the suffering of death, and to bring many sons unto glory.

Let us examine our text: "But when the fullness of the time was come." The fullness of what time? In the context we are told that in this subject the children which God had given to Christ are Abraham's seed, in the true meaning of the type, and that these children, until an appointed time, differed nothing from servants, though joint-heirs with Christ himself, but were under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father. At that appointed time they should attain their majority, become of age. At that time, the fullness of the time appointed of the Father, "God sent forth his Son." In whom was secured their life, their sonship, their relation to God as children, in whom they were chosen, sanctified or set apart, and blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as God hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world. (Eph. i. 3, 4.) That his advent was delayed until the fullness of the time was come, shows that there was a purpose of God going before; that he came as it was written (or decreed) of him in the volume of the book; it was not a mere adventure, experiment or uncertain enterprise, but it was the fulfillment of a promise which God, that cannot lie, had promised before the world began. It could not be hurried on prematurely; the time must be fulfilled, and not a moment lost or wasted. God sent him forth, "made of a woman." Not only in that by a miraculous conception he was born of a virgin, but in full harmony with the declaration of God, as the seed of the woman, that should bruise the serpent's head. The church of God is called a woman, and of her it is said, "For thy Maker is thine husband; The Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called." The name, or title, woman, was given to Eve because of its signification. "She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of the Man." As Adam is the figure of him that was to come, so Eve was a figure of the church. As such Christ has recognized her as bone of his bones and as flesh of his flesh, and as having her origin, her creation and spiritual existence in him before she was ever seen coming down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride prepared for her husband, and she is called woman, to signify that her life and immortality are hidden with Christ in God. To the church the promise was made that a woman shall compass a man, and that out of Sion should come a Deliverer, who should turn away ungodliness from Jacob. (Romans xi. 26.) "And he [Jesus] stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother, and my brethren."—Matt. xii. 49. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder;

and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." From these, with many other Scriptures, we learn that while in Christ all his members are made partakers of the divine nature, (2 Peter i. 4,) so Christ, in being made of a woman, has taken part of the flesh of which his children are partakers, and in our flesh he has taken on him our infirmities, and has so identified himself with his children in their flesh as to be legally held responsible for their offences, and made to bear our griefs, carry our sorrows, be wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities and have the chastisement of our peace laid upon him, so that with his stripes we are healed. (Isaiah liii. 4, 5.) In being made of a woman he was necessarily made under the law that the woman was under. Had he taken on him the nature of angels, that nature would not have brought him under any other than the law which holds dominion over angels, but in becoming the seed of the woman, the church, he becomes a subject of the law which she was under in the flesh of which she was a partaker, for he likewise himself also took part of the same. In doing this he took on him the form of a servant, learned obedience and became obedient unto death. All this was, as our text assures us, "to redeem them that were under the law, that we [the children] might receive the adoption of sons." We, though sons of God, as created and existing in Christ, sons in his sonship, being secured in him as his seed, that should serve him, and be counted to the Lord for a generation, (Psalms xxii. 30,) yet being partakers of flesh and blood, in our relation to the earthly Adam, differed nothing in our fleshly relation from servants, were by nature children of wrath even as others. His advent was to save his people from their sins, and he took part of our flesh, for the suffering of death, that he might bear our sins in his own body on the tree and put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself, being put to death in that flesh and quickened by the spirit of immortality, in which he embodied and represented us in his sonship before the mountains were brought forth or ever the earth was. In this mediatorial work he has been perfectly successful. By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, or set apart, and we are freely justified through the redemption that is in him. Now the impediment is removed, the fullness of the time of our minority has elapsed, and the spirit of adoption is given, and the redeemed are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. No more servants under the law, but as sons in union with the risen Jesus, are we admitted into the family of God and under law to Christ, whom God hath raised from the dead and exalted far above all principalities and powers, and given him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Nov. 1, 1866.

APPOINTMENTS.

GOD willing, I shall speak at Halcottsville, N. Y., on the fourth Sunday in February (27th).

GEORGE RUSTON.

NOTICE.

THE present address of Elder G. W. Almand is 310 Ashby St., Atlanta, Ga., where his correspondents will please address him.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

My mother, **Mrs. Julia A. Fenton,** widow of John C. Fenton, departed this life Dec. 31st, 1915, in her 74th year. She was a daughter of Deacon James V. and Mary Willard, and one of a family of thirteen children, of whom two sisters remain: Mrs. Emily W. Dager and Mrs. Josephine Stout. She was married to John C. Fenton Jan. 26th, 1865, by Elder Daniel Harding. To that union was blessed a family of nine children, of whom six remain. She and father were baptized in the fellowship of Southampton Old School Baptist Church, by the late Elder Wm. J. Purington, in June, 1869, where she was blessed as a member in the love and fellowship of the church. In March, 1913, mother was stricken with paralysis, which impaired her speech to some extent, but brought her very near her Savior.

The funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Silas H. Durand, Sunday, Jan. 2nd, 1916, using as a text Psalms xxiii. 1: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." These words were applied to her comfort some years ago.

I feel impressed to quote a portion of Elder Lester's letter to me: "Yours came duly to hand, announcing the passing away of your dear mother. At once her bright, cheery face looked out from the midst of many years that I have known her, and as I called to mind the many pleasant visits I have had with her, and the beauty of her life and character, I was filled for the moment with sadness as with the one dominant thought that I shall see that face no more; but when I turned to contemplate the ever-blessedness of the blessed forever for all of like precious faith, with her by faith I saw it there and was glad. With her there was for many years but a little between where she was and where she is. As she contemplated the future of eternity she saw it as one with that of the past, and thought of herself in this life as in transit across the narrow space called time, and that as she should enter the future of eternity the former would close in upon her and time and the things of time would be no more, and the reality of her entity would be as though such as passing moments had not been, and that after all to be in Christ is to be like him, the same yesterday, to-day and forever."

J. M. FENTON.

I will add that sister Fenton had been a dearly loved and highly valued member of this church since her baptism, more than thirty years ago. We shall miss her greatly, for she was very dear to us all. Her mind was much upon divine things, and I think we may well say that she sought first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. I cannot give expression to our sorrow, nor fully express our deep sympathy with the bereaved children and other relatives.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Mrs. Sarah J. Hastings departed this life to enter the better country at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Harry W. Perdue, Dec. 22nd, 1915. She was born Jan. 11th, 1846, hence lacked but a few days of having attained the allotted span of the life of man. She was first married Dec. 22nd, 1864, to Mr. Quint Holloway, who died in the year 1880, leaving her a widow with three young children. After twenty years of widowhood she again entered the marriage relation, becoming the wife of Benj. B. Hastings, Nov. 22nd, 1900. She was again left a widow by the death of brother Hastings, May 2nd, 1911, after which and until her decease she made her home with the daughter at whose home she finally passed away, near Snow Hill, Worcester Co., Md. She leaves two children, Mr. Berry Holloway and Mrs. Minnie Perdue, with several grandchildren, to mourn the loss of a dear, true and faithful mother. Sister Hastings was baptized by Elder S. H. Durand in the fellowship of the church at Salisbury, Md., June 4th, 1871. At the constitution of the church at Forest Grove in January, 1886, she obtained a letter of dismission from the Salisbury Church and became one of the constituent members of Forest Grove, continuing a steadfast and faithful member to the end. To say she was highly esteemed by the church of her membership does not express the sentiment she excited in them; in fact she was a dearly beloved sister in Christ, one who manifested that love which was shed abroad in her heart by the Holy Ghost that was evidently given unto her.

The writer attended her funeral at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in the town of Snow Hill Dec. 23rd, when a large congregation of brethren, relatives and sympathizing friends attested their love and esteem for her by their presence. After the service the mortal remains were laid in the cemetery near by to await the second coming of her Lord and Savior, to come the second time without sin unto salvation. May the Lord comfort all who mourn, and may the place made vacant in Forest Grove be filled by others as true and faithful as our dear departed sister.

A. B. FRANCIS.

Flossie Graham Carmichael, wife of Duncan L. Carmichael, passed peacefully away Dec. 6th, 1915, at St. Joseph Hospital, London, Ont., after undergoing a serious operation. Mrs. Carmichael was born July 15th, 1878, making her stay on the shores of time 37 years, 4 months and 11 days. She was married to Duncan L. Carmichael Sept. 30th, 1903, and to that union were born five children, the eldest being a girl of eleven years. Mr. and Mrs. Carmichael moved from Lobo to Port William three years ago, where they have since resided. Mrs. Carmichael had been in failing health for some time, yet her condition was not thought to be serious. Last August she came home to visit her father, Mr. Peter Graham,

whose health has been failing for some time. During Mrs. Carmichael's visit at her father's home she was taken seriously ill, and Nov. 18th was taken to St. Joseph Hospital, where after a few days she underwent a very serious operation, from which she never recovered. She was a brave little creature, and went to the operating room without a tremor. All was done for her that medical skill could do, but the unrelenting grasp of the grave messenger, death, could not be relinquished, and at the appointed time the cold and icy hand of death claimed her mortal frame. Her mind was clear until the very last, and she talked sweetly to the sorrowing friends who were constantly at her bedside to lend a helping hand. She bade her little ones good-by, telling them that mamma must go and leave them. It was my sad privilege to visit her on Sunday evening, and although she was very weak, she spoke very sweetly of her faith in Jesus, the Savior of sinners. On Monday she spoke very comfortingly to her sorrowing husband. Nearly the last words she spoke were, "Jesus, lover of my soul."

Her funeral was held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse at Poplar Hill, and was largely attended, which spoke of the high esteem in which Mrs. Carmichael was held. She leaves, beside her dear husband and little family, her aged father, who is in failing health, a devoted mother, two brothers and one sister. Burial was in the Ivan Cemetery. The writer tried to speak to the comfort of the mourning ones, using for a text 1st Timothy xv. May the Lord watch over and protect her dear little ones and reconcile all to the ways of divine Providence.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Sister **Hannah McClure** was born Feb. 15th, 1837, and departed this life at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Emma Holbrook, near Clearmont, Mo., Dec. 20th, 1915, aged 78 years, 10 months and 5 days. At the age of twenty-four she was baptized by Elder Roland, and joined the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church at Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, where she retained her membership until the year 1875, when she took her letter and moved with her two daughters to Braddyville, Iowa. In February, 1876, she joined the Three Forks Old School Predestinarian Church of Nodaway County, Mo., and remained a steadfast, faithful and consistent member of that body until her death. During the latter years of her life she could not attend all the meetings of the church, but her heart was with the brethren and sisters, and she could say with the apostle Paul, though absent in body she was present in spirit. Many learned to love her for her kindly ministrations in the time of sickness and afflictions, which come upon all sooner or later. It can be truthfully said of her that none knew her but to love her. One son, Carleton L. Pownall, of Altoona, Pa., one daughter, Mrs. Emma Holbrook, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren remain to mourn their loss, but not without hope, for although we have laid her body away to rest, we know that in the morning of the resurrection it shall come forth.

The funeral services were held at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Geo. W. Holbrook, near Clearmont, Mo., where for a number of years she had made her home. The services were conducted by Elder C. C. Moore, of Clarksdale, Mo., the text being of sister McClure's own selection: Rev. vii. 14-16. Elder Moore's talk to the brethren, neighbors and friends was very comforting and appropriate to the time and occasion. During her last sickness sister McClure was at all times cheerful, submissive and reconciled to the will of the blessed Master, in whom she lived and trusted all through life. She spoke calmly of her departure from this life, as many do of a journey from one place to another when in good health and spirits. God had manifested to her his faithfulness to his blessed promise that he will never leave nor forsake those who put their trust in him.

CARLETON L. POWNALL.

George W. Vermilya died Sept. 23rd, 1915, at his home near Mansfield, Pa., of cancer of the stomach. He was born in Middletown, Delaware Co., N. Y., the second son of Edward and Jane Whipple Vermilya, April 11th, 1851. He had been failing in health since the death of his wife, which occurred Oct. 11th, 1914, but had been able to be around most of the time until about two months before his death, when he was compelled to take to his bed, and suffered terribly until the end came. He said he was reconciled to go if it was God's will, and bore his sufferings with christian fortitude. In early youth he with his wife was baptized by Elder S. H. Durand, at that time pastor of the church at Grover, Pa. He resided near Mansfield, near his daughter's, for several years. He was ever a kind and affectionate husband and father, tenderly caring for his invalid wife, who only a short time before his demise was laid to rest.

Mr. F. E. Eden, of the Mansfield Baptist denomination, officiated at the funeral, which was held at the home. Burial in the cemetery near Grover, where his wife, father, mother and only brother, Sherman S. Vermilya, who died in 1902, were laid to rest. He left to mourn their loss one daughter, Mrs. George Hager, and granddaughter, Miss Daisy Hager, and many friends and more distant relatives.

AUGUSTA VERMILYA.

Sister **Hannah M. Johnson,** of Frenchtown, N. J., departed this life Jan. 3rd, 1916, in her 80th year. She was a beloved member of Kingwood Church for forty-seven years, having been baptized by Elder Gilbert Beebe July 2nd, 1868. Her home was ever

open to receive those who loved the Lord and the appearing of our Savior. Many times the meeting for the assembling of ourselves together was held at her home. I visited her a short time before her death, and found her firm in that blessed faith and hope which God had given her through Christ, confident that God would be faithful to his promises. She questioned herself and her own experience, but had no doubt about others being the chosen of God, but of herself she was in doubt. Sister Johnson was blessed with a clear understanding of the Scriptures, and firmly established in the truth in all its attributes as it is in Jesus. In her last hours she said to those present: "What a wonderful God! What a merciful God! He is faithful to his promises." We believe she is now in the paradise of God.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer, who used the words, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." Elder Vail was present and spoke in prayer and read hymns, "Keep silence, all created things," and "How firm a foundation," also made a few remarks. The funeral was largely attended by those who loved her.

J. M. FENTON.

ORDINATIONS.

PURSUANT to a call from Pleasant Grove Church, in Yakima County, Wash., to her sister churches for ordained help and other counsel, the following response was made and composed the presbytery:

Little Zion Church, Oakville, Wash.—Elder A. Wilson.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Wash.—Elder J. T. Barnes.

Spokane Church, Spokane, Wash.—Elder W. T. Eaton.

Pleasant Grove Church—Elder W. J. Hess.

The presbytery organized by choosing Elder A. Wilson moderator.

By request of the presbytery, sister Sonora A. Hess served as clerk.

The candidate, brother A. Cheyne, related his christian experience and call to the ministry, after which, by motion, second and unanimous vote of the council, agreed to proceed with the ordination by the laying on of hands by the presbytery.

Ordination prayer by Elder J. T. Barnes.

Charge by Elder W. T. Eaton.

Moved and seconded, that we have a copy of our proceedings published in two or three of our Baptist papers. Carried.

The moderator appointed Elders Eaton and Barnes to prepare the credentials for Elder A. Cheyne.

A. WILSON, Moderator.

SONORA A. HESS, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Joseph F. Hall, Maine, $3.00; E. M. Kuehne, N. J., $1.00; Mrs. S. D. Harp, Texas, $1.00; W. K. Baird, Iowa, $3.00; C. H. Vandike, Ill., $2.00; Mrs. T. F. Rutledge, Ontario, $1.00; Sarah A. McColl, Ontario, $2.00; J. D. Welburn, Ind., $2.00; Attie A. Curtis, Maine, $1.00.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

The First Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, Mercer Co., N. J., has a limited number of pamphlets containing Historical Sketch read at its Two Hundredth Anniversary, and Articles of Faith on which the church is established. The pamphlet also contains a picture of the meetinghouse at Hopewell, a picture of the present pastor, Elder Chas. W. Vaughn, and also of the late pastor, Elder F. A. Chick. Copies can be obtained by sending twenty-five cents, money order or coin, to M. D. Blackwell, Hopewell, New Jersey.

"IN PLACES OF DRAWING WATER."

(Judges v. 11.)

By Frederick W. Keene.

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A SKETCH OF THE LIFE of JOSHUA S. CORDER.

This little memorial book is now ready for sale. It embraces a period of about one hundred years. In connection with a brief account of my father's early life, his christian experience, his long ministry of nearly seventy years, it contains some history of Mt. Olive Primitive Baptist Church and Tygart's Valley River Association. In addition there is a short appendix dedicated to the memory of my mother.

The book comprises 152 pages, is neatly bound in cloth, and contains a picture of my father.

Price $1.00. Postpaid.

Please give name and post office address plainly written, and send all orders to me.

SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 84. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1916. NO. 4.

POETRY.

PEACE ON EARTH.

PEACE, my peace, I give unto thee;
Not as the world giveth—my gift is free;
In the midst of deep trials 'twill comfort thee,
My peace, sweet peace, which speaks of me.

Peace, my peace, I give unto thee;
When tempests are raging look thou to me;
Though deep are the waters down life's rough sea,
My peace, sweet peace, shall be with thee.

Peace, my peace, I give unto thee;
Though battles rage fiercely on land and sea,
And kingdoms are falling, trust thou in me;
My peace, sweet peace, shall comfort thee.

Peace, my peace, I give unto thee;
In furnace twice heated I'm there with thee;
All the rough, thorny way, following me,
My peace, sweet peace, shall be with thee.

NELLIE H. ARNOLD.

PETALUMA, Cal., Dec. 25, 1915.

THE MORNING "ABIDE WITH ME."

"Abide with us."—Luke xxiv. 29.

ABIDE with me, the day has just begun,
And all is brightness in the rising sun;
Refreshed with sleep, I come once more to thee;
Through every hour, O Lord, abide with me.

If I arise to join the busy throng,
And work with brain or hand the whole day long,
Perchance with people far away from thee,
I will look up and cry, Abide with me.

Or is it unto loneliness I wake,
As far as loved ones can communion make?
Then would I lean more heavily on thee,
And as I lean, would trust thou art with me.

—*Selected.*

A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD.

A MIGHTY Fortress is our God,
A Bulwark never failing;
Our Helper he amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great,
And, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing;
Were not the right man on our side,
The man of God's own choosing.
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is he;
Lord Sabaoth his name,
From age to age the same,
And he must win the battle.

And though this world, with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear, for God hath willed
His truth to triumph through us.
The prince of darkness grim,
We tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure,
For lo, his doom is sure,
One little word shall fell him.

That word above all earthly powers,
No thanks to them, abideth;
The Spirit and the gift are ours
Through him who with us sideth.
Let goods and kindred go,
This mortal life also;
The body they may kill,
God's truth abideth still;
His kingdom is forever.

MARTIN LUTHER.

CORRESPONDENCE.

St. Thomas, Ont., Jan. 5, 1916.

Dear Brethren Editors:—In January 1st number of the Signs brother R. C. Smith requested that Elder Ker or Lefferts, or any one who felt so impressed, write upon the Scripture found in Joshua vii. 16–26, which reads as follows: "So Joshua rose up early in the morning, and brought Israel by their tribes; and the tribe of Judah was taken: and he brought the family of Judah; and he took the family of the Zarhites: and he brought the family of the Zarhites man by man; and Zabdi was taken: and he brought his household man by man; and Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken. And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me. And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done: when I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it. So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent; and, behold, it was hid in his tent, and the silver under it. And they took them out of the midst of the tent, and brought them unto Joshua, and unto all the children of Israel, and laid them out before the Lord. And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of Achor. And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the Lord shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones. And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the Lord turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of Achor, unto this day."

I feel that Elder Ker or Lefferts could write more ably upon this subject than I, but I have no thought of exhausting the subject with my limited views, and there will still be room for brethren Ker, Lefferts or any one else who may feel to write upon the Scripture above quoted. I have felt impressed to write, and such views as I have I freely share with the readers of the Signs, although they may be very limited, but such as the Lord gives I share with our brethren, hoping that I shall be guided by the blessed Spirit of the Lord in writing upon the subject before us.

In the preceding chapter an account of the fall of Jericho is given. The Lord had centuries before promised to Abraham that he would give him, and to his seed, the land that flowed with milk and honey; not only that he would give them this land for a possession, but he would go before his people (Israel) and fight all their battles. This land, a free and unmerited gift to Abraham and to his seed forever, was inhabited by the Canaanites, who were enemies to Israel, therefore in order that the Lord should fulfill his promise to Israel he must go before them and subdue their enemies. The land of Canaan is a type of the gospel dispensation, and before Israel could come into

possession of the promised land their enemies must be driven out, or subdued. Likewise the enemies of the Lord's chosen people must be subdued before we can come into the possession of the riches of sovereign grace and enjoy the blessings of the gospel. The Lord has never willed that any of the blessings bestowed upon his chosen people should be fought for and won by their own strength, for the battle is not ours, but the Lord's. All blessings that await the children of God, as well as those they have already enjoyed, are stored up in Christ. So the Lord went before Israel and fought their battles, and at his command the walls of Jericho fell down flat. Joshua, the leader of Israel, is a type of Jesus. Moses could not lead Israel across the Jordan, for he represents the law, and the law is our schoolmaster unto Christ. The law condemns every transgression, therefore nothing save the power of the Spirit of Christ working in us will bring us unto Christ; no human agencies needed in this most gracious work. After Israel had crossed Jordan they were under the leadership of Joshua. Moses, having filled his mission, the Lord took him, and no man knows of his sepulchre to this day. Israel, being under the leadership of Joshua, received a commandment of the Lord by the mouth of Joshua: "And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it." This commandment Israel received from the Lord by Joshua, they being no longer under Moses, having crossed Jordan and come into the promised land. This type is brought to view in the antitype of the Lord's people, after being brought into the blessings of the gospel and following our blessed Lord in the ordinance of baptism, raised up from the watery grave to walk in newness of life, are commanded to touch not, taste not, handle not things unclean, or the accursed things of time and sense, lest we become contaminated and bring reproach or trouble into the camp (church). The commandment given to Israel by Joshua from the Lord was broken by Achan (whose name signifies trouble), who took of the spoil a goodly Babylonish garment and two hundred shekels of silver, and a gold wedge of fifty shekels weight, then he coveted them, and took them and hid them in the earth in the midst of his tent, and the silver under it. Thus by breaking or disobeying the commandment of the Lord, and bringing a portion of the spoil into his tent, he brought trouble in the camp of Israel. Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Achan not only took of the spoil contrary to the commandment, but there is found in him a spirit of covetousness, which was sure to bring trouble into the camp sooner or later. Achan hid his spoil in his tent until brought to justice, and then made confession of the whole thing. The leaven of Adam's transgression had begun to work, for a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. A little covetousness, a little wrong, too much of the world in the camp of Israel (the church) is sure to spread among the Israelites, and trouble is bound to follow.

Now let us see what followed Achan's transgression. Ai (signifying a heap) was a small city, and Joshua sent spies to spy out the city and to consider its strength. The spies returned, bringing word to Joshua that it was a little city and would need but few of the valiant

men of Israel to conquer it. I have just stated that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. To all human appearance a few men would take Ai; but the ways of the Lord are not ours; as the heavens are above the earth, so are his ways higher than ours and his thoughts above our thoughts. Israel became overconfident in their own ability, and moved against Ai in their own strength, just as Peter when he stood in his own strength said, I will go with thee to prison and to death; although all men forsake thee yet will not I. The Lord now visited Israel with his rod in the defeat of Israel, and slew thirty and six men. When Israel saw the men of Ai pursuing the army of Israel their hearts melted and became as water; thus the Lord brought upon Israel a righteous judgment for their disobedience. Now as to the antitype. Often things of the world look little to us, and especially when standing in our own strength, and we feel that we can overcome them and separate ourselves from them, that we will do this and we will not do that. Are not our best resolutions feeble things? They are no sooner made than they are broken, and when standing in our own strength have we not the Babylonish garment, not only in our tent, but have we not the thing on? How often we forget the admonitions of James: If the Lord wills we will do thus and so. The Babylonish garment is a goodly one, and adorned with many glittering buttons: secret orders, literary societies, and many others too numerous to mention. These glittering buttons of Babylon should never be brought into the camp of Israel (the church); they belong to Babylon, and there they must remain, or trouble is bound to follow. The things of this world, such as secret orders and worldly societies, are all right in their place, they are of the world, and belong to the world, and any who feel to be connected with them have no place in the church of God. My authority is found in 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." The glittering gold and sparkling silver, and the greed for it, has swallowed up and blasted the spiritual enjoyment of many a child of God. The love of money is the root of all evil. Whenever and wherever these evils are found in the church trouble is sure to come, Israel is sure to suffer defeat from Ai, and the whole camp of Israel will be brought into confusion.

I will now look at the gold wedge, and see if I can find its application in the life of the children of God, or the church. First, let us take a little notice of the use of a wedge, and the manner in which it is used. I have often seen an iron wedge used in splitting rocks. The edge of the wedge is inserted into the seam of the rock and gently tapped at first, until the rock begins to give to the pressure of the wedge, then the blows become harder and harder as the rock yields. If hard blows are used first the wedge will bound out. The wedge which Achan brought into the camp of Israel was gold, and all the more likely to deceive and divide. That gold wedge is an instrument which belongs to Babylon, and the devil knows just how to use it. The edge is first inserted into the seam, the weak part of the rock. Achan was the weak vessel, and Satan used that instrument on him. He became a prey to Satan's temptations, and brought trouble into the camp. This

gold wedge is often driven into the camp of Israel by Satan, who is alert and constantly looking for a seam in which to insert it. The thin edge of this gold wedge was first inserted in the church of the Laodiceans in the form of pride, and Satan with his sledgehammer succeeded well in driving this wedge into this church. Pride, among other things, signifies inordinate self-esteem, a sense of one's own worth, resulting in vanity. Satan continued to force the wedge into this church by hard and powerful blows until they were blinded to their real condition. They became in a lukewarm state, which is a very lamentable state for a church to get into, and because of this lukewarm condition the Lord said, "I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." The church of Laodicea is not the only church that has suffered from this monster, pride, during her travel since the coming of our blessed Lord and the establishing of his church here in time. This monster has great power, and unless we are kept, and very watchful, careful and prayerful, we are sure to fall into his powerful grasp. There are instances where a church has become proud of their pastor, and the pastor has been puffed up in self-esteem, and he likewise has become proud of the church of his pastorate, and of his congregation, and all have fallen into the lamentable state of the church of Laodicea. To love a pastor and to be proud of a pastor are two very different things. For a pastor to love the church which he serves, and to be proud of them, are also very different things. Love worketh no ill to its neighbor. When the relationship between pastor and his church is founded upon the principle of love, when his life is their life and their life is his, when his interests are theirs and theirs his, when each is seeking the welfare of Zion and striving to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, there is not much danger of Satan getting in his gold wedge as long as this relationship exists. But if pride creeps in there is great danger that trouble and confusion will soon follow, and the church will be brought through the fire to consume this monster, that she shall know her real condition. "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent [turn from your pride and vanity]." The church at Corinth suffered from this wedge being driven in their midst in the form of carnality, and one said he was of Paul, another of Apollos, and still another of Cephas. Now who is Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, but ministers by whom you believe according as the Lord has given to every man? If all are ministers of the gospel, and all preach the same precious truth, why are some for Paul, and some for Apollos, and others for Cephas? If it is the truth that we want, which feeds and comforts our souls, and all preach the truth, and all walk as becometh servants of the Lord, why are there divisions among them? Why have favorites and pets among the Lord's ministers, if all are preaching sound doctrine? Why not hear Paul as well as Apollos or Cephas? Why can we not hear Jesus, and him crucified, as well from a black man as from a white man, if it contains the precious things of the doctrine of God our Savior? We want to hear a beggar at mercy's door,

hungry for the crumbs that fall from the Master's table, and would not be particular whether they fall from a gold plate or a silver one, or a more humble one of earthen. The poor beggar is seeking, for his soul is starving, and he loves to eat of the crumbs that fall from his Master's table. Why then is the preaching of Paul more sweet than the preaching of Apollos or Cephas? Why are some for Paul, and some for Apollos, and some for Cephas? O, Satan has driven in the wedge of carnality. "For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?" Why is the loving, kind and forbearing spirit fading away among the Lord's people? Is not the wedge of discord being driven by Satan with powerful blows from his sledgehammer into our camp? O Lord, purge out by thy ever-blessed Spirit from our midst the troubles of Achan's disobedience, that we may walk in the light of thy countenance, and save Israel from being cast into the valley of Achor.

Yours in hope,

J. B. SLAUSON.

GALION, Ohio, Dec. 19, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER STEVENS:—Your good and comforting letter was received the 16th inst., and we were, as ever, glad to hear from you. I had a letter from Elder Weaver; he is about well again. I am very glad you enjoyed the meeting Sunday. You say I ought to be glad I have such light and liberty as I had last Sunday. I did not feel to have much of either, and I often wonder why the Lord allows me to try to speak in public. It seems I know so little of spiritual things that surely I must be mistaken, for I fail so miserably in all things required of a minister that it seems surely I must be out of place, yet I know the Lord rules in heaven and earth, and that he can conform all things to his will, and if so be that it is his will to comfort Zion through this poor worm of the dust he can and will do it, and when I hear that one of them has been comforted by my talking I feel like saying, God be thanked, for it is evident that he had a message for that one, for I surely believe the Lord never sends a message without first preparing some one to receive it, and that he never prepares one to receive a message but he prepares one to deliver it, and sends him forth with the same. The Savior told the apostles when he sent them forth as sheep in the midst of wolves, to take no thought of what or how they should speak, for it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of my Father that speaketh in you. The Lord is an unchangeable God, the same yesterday, to-day and forever. He says, I am the Lord, I change not. So the same order exists to-day that existed in the time of the prophets and apostles. The prophets, holy men of old, wrote and spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (the Spirit of God). The apostles spoke as the Spirit gave them utterance, and so to-day it is the Spirit that moves his servants to speak the things the Lord has put in their mouths. He told the old prophet, Thou shalt go to all I send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak; so we see the servant has nothing to do but to go where the Lord sends him, and deliver the words he has put in his mouth, and say, I am but an unprofitable servant.

Now comes the portion of Scripture I tried to talk about Sunday: the first four verses of the sixth chapter of Isaiah. Brother Stevens, I do not expect to go

into these things as deeply as you have in your letter, but there are several points in the balance of the chapter I failed to see Sunday which seem to corroborate the testimony already cited. In the first place, the prophet never saw that he was a man of unclean lips, and dwelt among a people of unclean lips, until he had seen the Lord sitting on his throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple; then he cried, Woe is me, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Just like the prophet, all of his children when they see him high and lifted up are made to say, Woe is me, for I am undone, and, like Jonah, cry, Salvation is of the Lord. When the seraphim had laid the live coal upon his lips, and said, Lo, this has touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away and thy sins purged, then said Isaiah, Here am I, send me. The Lord did not send Isaiah without a message, neither did he allow him any part in framing it, but told him just what to say: Go tell this people, "Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not," &c. Now when this live coal had touched the prophet's lips he said, Here am I, send me, but he did not ask the Lord to let him go, but to send him, so when the Lord sent him he had something to tell. There are many servants in these days who go, or run, but when they get to the place, like the one who asked Joab to let him run and bear tidings to the king, and Joab told him he should not run, seeing he had no tidings, and then he sent Cushi with tidings; but the other wanted to run, so Joab told him to run, and he seemed to be much faster than Cushi, for he outran him and came to the king first, but he had no message, and the king told him to stand aside; but when the messenger, or servant, that Joab sent came, he said, Tidings, my lord the king; and he had something to tell. So with all of the Lord's servants, when he sends them they can tell his children their iniquity is pardoned, and that they have received of the Lord's hand double for all their sins. They always have a message, and the message is for their comfort. Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God, &c., but those who are allowed to run in their own strength are as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. The Lord has declared, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, so there is no danger of his love changing or growing cold, for it is like himself, unchangeable, and he will fulfill all of his promises to her. He has said, I have placed watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, who shall not hold their peace day or night, and he told these to go round about her, and tell the towers thereof, and to consider her palaces, that they might tell it to the generation following, and also that salvation will the Lord God appoint for walls and bulwarks around Zion; he is a wall of fire round about her, and a glory in her midst. So we see the Lord has provided her with everything necessary, and that these things were hid from natural Israel, just as they are from the natural man today. All the seed of Abraham were not the children of God, but the children of promise are accounted for the seed, and just so now, these things are hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. These things to the natural mind seem hard sayings, and the natural mind will try to bring the God of heaven and earth into judgment, and say he is, or would be, an unjust God if he hid these things from one class and revealed them unto another. But Paul, in speaking of this God, says, How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out,

and the Savior, when speaking of these mysterious things, gives us the reason why they are just as they are when he says, Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.

Well, dear brother, I will close. I have penned these thoughts just as they came to me, and I do not know whether they will be of interest to you or not, but it is all I have. I hope this will find you enjoying good health.

With love to you both, and hoping you will write to me again soon, I remain your unworthy servant and brother in hope, C. E. JACKSON.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 5, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending you two letters for publication in the SIGNS if you think best. One is from brother J. W. Black, who was baptized in the fellowship of the Winnipeg Old School Baptist Church, in Winnipeg, Canada, in October, and the other is from sister Esther Ruston. I submit them to your judgment.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Oct. 24, 1915.

MY DEAR MILDRED:—I was very glad to hear from you, and now feel I would like to answer, but am unable to write as I would like; as you say, it is impossible to find expression for our thoughts. I have often been thankful for Scripture and hymns, because they describe my feelings when I am incapable of expressing them myself. I, like yourself, have much I want to say, but lack the power to put it into language. The inclosure of your mother's was much appreciated. George says he would like to read it again, and as you said we need not hurry to return it, we will keep it until George sees you, or we write again. What a sweet, good woman she must have been. I feel I would have been glad to have known her. I was glad you mentioned your uncle's little book. I count that one of my greatest treasures. It seems to me it would be accounted a gem for its poetical merits alone, but to those who have been given to know something of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven the sentiment is full of wonderful beauty. I never even casually glance over "Songs in the Night" but what I feel stirred to the depths of my heart. Two verses which have meant much to me are, "Under the shadow of thy wing," and, "O, there shall be no more of restless sighing," &c., but they are all beautiful, there is such a depth of meaning in them all. The writer was certainly a ministering spirit, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. When your letter came I was in a depressed, downcast condition, and when I read what your mother had written I felt that I was like her, in getting into such an abject state, but in little else that I could see. I had been feeling so for two or three weeks, and instead of getting rid of it, it seemed to increase, until I hardly knew how to endure it. I knew I deserved it, for I had felt my love to God and his people had lost the warmth it formerly had, and although I hated myself for it, yet I seemed quite unable to alter it. For some days these words had been continually in my mind:

"These inward trials I employ,
From sin and self to set thee free,
To break thy schemes of earthly joy,
That thou mayest seek thy all in me."

I could but feel it was so, and yet I felt so far away from the Lord. I did feel, O that I knew where I might find him, but that was as far as I could get. Later on in the evening I felt a great desire that the Lord would appear for me, and it was

so strong it seemed to be forced from my very heart, so that I thought, Can this be real prayer? if so, I know the Lord will answer it, when immediately I experienced such a feeling of relief, and I just felt filled with praise to the Lord for his goodness to me, and many sweet hymns and portions of Scripture flowed into my mind, such as, The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and, He knoweth them that trust in him. I felt how dependent I was on him for everything. I had longed to trust him, but had no power to do so until he appeared, and then I did not have to try, I could not do otherwise. The following verses seem just to express how I felt at that time:

"Ofttimes in sad, unquiet thoughts I languish,
Oppressed with sin and sorrow, strife and care;
Bowed down in spirit with a bitter anguish,
And fearful even to cry out in prayer.

But then, if to thy throne of mercy turning,
I look to thee from life's o'er-darkened ways,
Thou givest me the oil of joy for mourning,
And for my heaviness the voice of praise."

What a merciful High Priest we have that can be touched with a feeling of our infirmities. When I was so cast down I thought a great deal about the sufferings of Christ. It seemed to me that as it is written of him, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; that if we are to have fellowship with him it cannot be an easy path. When I was quite a child I remember while reading, coming to the verse, For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. I was much impressed by it, and I believe it was my desire that it might be given to me to believe on Christ, and that I might be made willing to suffer for his sake. How precious that belief is, only those who have been blessed with a little of it in their souls can know, but O, I find myself shrinking from suffering. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. I find it so continually, yet when things are going easily and smoothly with me I feel that it is not good for me, and dread that I may grow cold and lifeless. I do hope continually that the Lord will teach me all I ought to know, and in his own way; I know he will, if I am one of his children. It is good to be given a spirit of resignation such as you mention has been given to you. I do believe I feel like that at times. That evening when I had such a lift by the way, my mind was in such a state of rebellion, repining because things were denied to me, but when my heart was melted down by God's goodness to me, one so unworthy, I felt I would not have anything altered, that he knew what was best for me. I had been wanting my mother, O so much, and wondering why I had to be separated from her, but I felt that the Lord knew why, and that there must be a reason for it. I do feel that the more earthly props are removed from us so much the more under God's guiding hand we are brought to turn more and more to him, to feel that this world holds nothing satisfying, that the only things worth living for are those pertaining to Christ and his people.

I am afraid this is a rambling letter, but it holds a great deal of love. I do hope we both have been taught by him whom to know is life eternal. I feel to be so unworthy of a place among the children of God, and I know it is all of his wonderful grace if I am his. I do long to see Aunt Bessie, and wonder often if I ever shall. My love to her and your father, and accept the same yourself. From your sister in Christ, I hope,

ESTHER RUSTON.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, Dec. 16, 1915.

DEAR ELDER DURAND:—You have been in my thoughts for a long time, and I intended to write you long before now, but I could find so little in my mind to write about that I would put it off until another time, and now that the Christmas rush is on at the store I have not much time to myself, but am sitting at home alone and felt I must write you a few lines, if only to let you know I am thinking of you, and glad to learn that you are feeling so much better in health now. I think I can say that we all here in the church feel glad and thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift that your health is so much improved, and that you recovered so well from your operation. I had a mind to write you early in the month, after the first Sunday, which is our communion Sunday, and tell you what a lovely meeting we had that day, but as one day after another went by the desire wore off, and I found I had little or no inclination to write. I remember when as a boy I used to go to the quarterly meetings with my father, how I loved to get away in a corner behind some of the old folks and listen to them talk, and I find it is the same now. I have not the gift of writing things of comfort to others, especially the older members of the flock, but I do love to hear them speak of Jesus and his love, and explain the truths which I am so slow to learn. It is only by experience that we learn many deep truths, and I find out as I go on day by day how utterly weak and unable I am to do one thing good; sin is mixed with all I do. The good that I would I do not, and the evil that I would not, that I do. How comforting at times to know that these are the words of Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to know that he felt this way, and he one of the chosen vessels of God. Many times I have a deep feeling of love and union come over me for the church and all God's chosen ones, not only those whom I know, but all who in every tongue, kindred and tribe give thanks unto God for all his goodness and mercy, and look unto him through Jesus Christ for forgiveness and mercy, and do not put any confidence in the arm of flesh, or in anything save Jesus Christ and his finished work of redemption. There is a great bond of unity, even the love of Jesus, that binds them together; whether they be white or black, bond or free, they are one in him and they are all complete in him, and not complete without each one; not one shall be missing in that day when he maketh up his jewels. How comforting to feel quiet after worrying in mind over some distressing thought, by the words, The Lord knoweth them that are his. I have felt so much lately as if I had deceived the church to get in among them; if they knew into what sin I went daily they would turn me out from them. O what rebellion and blasphemy arise in my heart at times, and a desire to know now if I am really one of God's children, instead of waiting patiently on the Lord, and then again doubts will come as to whether I am a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, my mind and actions seem so decidedly opposite to what I long to be. Like Peter, I feel when all is going smoothly that I will be a true follower, but when the testing time comes I find I deny him, and then feel sorry for it afterward. How good it is that the full work of redemption is complete, and that nothing remains for poor fallen man to perform, else every one would sink to the lowest pit. There is none that doeth good, no, not one; none can be justified save in the complete work of Jesus Christ,

and every member of his mystical body was sealed in him in Christ, and chosen in him before the foundation of the world. This the natural man will not and cannot believe, but it is true, and is a comforting truth to those who put their trust in him, and whose hope he is. This hope, though it is small at times, and nearly expires, and the joy that we have through and by reason of it, no man taketh from us; this hope is sure and steadfast, an anchor of the soul, and, as Elder Smallbone said last night at meeting, it is cast within the veil and will hold. An anchor is useless until it is cast.

I did not think when I started I would write at all as I have, but have written on as I was directed in mind, and I hope you will pardon whatever I have said amiss, and correct me. I know you have many others to write to, and I will not feel slighted or hurt if you do not answer me, though I would love to have a few lines from you some time when you feel inclined to write and have no more urgent calls upon you.

Now, hoping that you may be blessed with continued good health and peace and contentment in the hope of Jesus Christ, I must close, wishing you and Mildred a happy Christmas and a joyful new year.

From the least and most unworthy of your brethren, if one at all,

J. W. BLACK.

OTTAWA, Kansas, Jan. 19, 1916.

DEAR ELDER KER:—The SIGNS has just come. The first article read was brother Jackson's letter and your reply, and as I finished I longed to give you my hand and say, I believe with my whole heart just as you do. Paul says the carnal mind is enmity to God, is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be. It seems to me here is a "can't help it" phrase, or doctrine. Who of us who have been brought to know the exceeding sinfulness of sin would not live holy and blameless in the sight of God and man in word, deed and thought if it were possible for us to do so? For years I was distressed day and night, trying to live a consistent Old School Baptist life, according to my standard. It pleased the Lord to bring all my works to naught, to show me there was no soundness in me, that I was nothing but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet, and that it was of his wonderful mercy I was not consumed. I had no rest, I was condemned in everything I did or said, until, I hope, the Lord directed me to the fifteenth chapter of Acts: "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well." One year ago I invited three neighbor families to eat New Year's dinner with us. No sooner had I done so than I began to be troubled, fearing it was wrong in the sight of God. I thought that if they were only Old Baptists how happy I would be. New Year's morning I was up before it was light. I wondered how I would ever get through the day. I said, O this awful burden. The words came distinctly, Which we nor our fathers were able to bear. Immediately the burden was gone. The day was pleasantly spent in social conversation. I believe all who have been taught of the Lord can say with Paul, Pray for us, for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live hon-

estly. My constant prayer is that God will continue to have mercy upon me, forgive my transgressions, and lead me in paths of righteousness for his own name's sake, that he will keep me from idols, and from worshiping the works of my own hands. Job said, If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean, yet thou shalt plunge me into the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me, and so do I ever find it when trying to make myself fit for the Master's kingdom. To lose all confidence in the flesh we must suffer the loss of all things, every attempt at bettering our condition must utterly fail, there cannot be a straw left for us to cling to, all our friends must forsake us, be indifferent to our cries of distress, or be unable to aid us, before we can put our whole trust in the Lord. We must be, figuratively speaking, in the fiery furnace, den of lions and the whale's belly before we can say of a truth, Salvation is of the Lord. If there is one thing left for us to cling to we most surely will grasp it, and say, This is God, it has saved me. I have done a wonderful lot of work in the past, trying to better my condition temporally, with the result that each year finds matters worse, and I am lame, halt and blind, and O so weary of it all. Surely I can say now, All my help must come from thee; there is no if nor and about it, nothing is excepted. Paul was made to suffer great things for Christ's sake. I always feel I am suffering for my sins and that Jesus is the only one who can help me. But if we do not go down into deep waters how can we tell of the wonders of the deep? If we prosper in all our undertakings, how can we say, O Lord, I know that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps? Paul's steps were changed when on the way to Damascus to imprison the saints, after that he grieved because he did the things he would not, and left undone the things he would do. My way for a long time has seemed hedged with hewn stones. If I could have my will, I would be where I could hear the gospel preached every Sunday, as I feel now every day would not be too often. I was very glad to see a letter from dear Elder Durand again. I had been planning to write to learn if they were all well, for it seemed so long since he had written. He seems very near and dear to me.

I must close, lest I weary you. I feel to thank God that we have two such men in control of the SIGNS. I never have seen either of you, but still I love you both, I firmly believe for the truth's sake.

I have written you some of my travels by the way, and if it is not according to christian experience please tell me.

With best wishes,

ANNA McKINNEY.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, Jan. 19, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have read with interest your editorial in the last number of the SIGNS, in reply to brother Jackson, of Georgia. The absolute predestination of all things is one of the doctrines included in the articles of faith of this church, and so I feel anxious to know that it is the truth as delivered unto the saints. The word "absolute," taken from the Latin, means complete, finished, unconditional, and is an excellent word to express this perfection of God. The fact that the translators of the Scriptures expressed this truth in other words is no argument against the truth itself which stands out in the word of God from Genesis to Revelation. He is absolute in all his acts and purposes. Can we limit the Holy One, or bring him to the bar of human judgment? Surely not, for his

ways are not our ways nor his thoughts our thoughts. Let us not think to justify the acts of God in the light of human understanding, which is at best perverse and enmity against God, but rather be still and know that he is God. There is none else, none can stay his hand, nor say unto him, What doest thou? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge? What could be more absolute, unconditional, complete and finished than the work of the Lord our God? Are his purposes of no effect? Surely not, then they must be absolute. Is God unrighteous? Who shall dare to bring him to judgment? If a man takes a life he is a murderer. Can we charge God with sin in destroying countless millions of men, or doing his will with his creatures? Let us rather seek to know, How shall man be just with God? That is what concerns us. There is only one way, the Lord Jesus Christ, the absolute way, the complete and unconditional way prepared of God. Surely it is a way of blood, yet who can charge God with sin, or its authorship? Let us understand what sin is. Is any act sinful in itself? No, the sin is in the thought and intent of man's heart which is enmity against God. It is an inheritance of man. The beasts of the field do not sin, though they do acts of violence and confusion. What consolation is it to one who is defiled and condemned to speak as Job's friends did to him? They thought they were magnifying God, but were they? The Jews had a zeal for God's honor, and so charged the Lord of light and glory with sin in making himself equal with God. How little they understood the power of God. He is greater than the law. He is subject to no law. He is absolute in all his decrees. We read of some who have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof. May we not be numbered among them? We are so apt to think that man's reason is absolute, but with God it is all foolishness. As to those who say, Let us continue in sin that grace may abound, or who charge their sin to their Creator, the answer of Paul in Romans is complete. Their damnation is just. Are we on their account to set aside the glorious truth of salvation by grace? God forbid. Let us then not contend merely for words, either for or against, but let us contend for the eternal truth of the Scriptures, and magnify God, not man.

I trust what I have written is according to the truth. If in your judgment it is not so, or not desirable for any reason, do not publish it.

Your brother in hope of a finished salvation,

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

SALISBURY, Md., Dec. 6, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—If I may so call you. Your article in December 1st SIGNS has been read and reread, and it is of so much comfort and so truthfully set forth and so plain I feel we can all understand it, but in the finishing up it is so sad to think of. I cannot see that anything needs criticism in any of the editorials; I think they are good and are very helpful to one as weak as I feel myself to be. The subject of the resurrection is very plainly set forth. It seems to me the Bible plainly tells enough: we shall be satisfied, when we awake, with his likeness. We shall be satisfied, that is all we need to know. If our blessed Savior had wanted us to understand the great mystery he would have revealed it to the apostles, but I feel that is too great a mystery to ever be revealed in this mortal

life. I pray the dear Lord will give you the same faith to go on and declare the truth in the SIGNS as you have in the past, for it is of much comfort to others. I hope the Spirit will direct you to go on, and you will be made to feel that your toiling is not in vain. I felt when dear Elder Chick was taken, Who can fill his place? but the dear Lord sent one to take the place, and his writings are excellent. I never had the privilege of hearing him preach but once, but do love to read his editorials, for they are so plain and truthful. I always read the editorials first. It is so sad to think that if we are all of one family there should be any trouble. O if we could be more loving toward each other and more agreeable I would feel thankful. It seems sad that we cannot have a pastor to fill dear Elder T. M. Poulson's place. He was such a good shepherd. It will soon be two years since his death, and if we could only have some one to take charge of the four churches he served I think it would be good. Elder Mellott comes once a month and preaches for us, which I hope we are thankful for. It is such a blessing if they are called of God to preach, and we should love to hear all. While our own pastor must feel some nearer to us than others, yet I love to go to hear them all. My membership is at Nassaongo, but I dearly love to go to Salisbury, and feel at home. Elder Durand's preaching is so good I often say his voice sounds like music to me. Why should we prefer one above another? They may have different gifts, but if they are called to preach it all means the same, and as you so beautifully explained, how strange it is, and how sad, for one to speak unkindly of another. I am just waiting and hoping that all four churches can get together and have one pastor to serve them. I fear it is wrong to bother you with this matter, as I am sure you have enough burdens to bear, but I hope you will pardon me for taking the privilege. I have felt many times since the death of your dear wife, and Elder Chick's death, that I would try to write, but felt too weak to say anything that would be of comfort. I guess you will wonder now why I am trying to, but I felt to-day, after reading your editorial again, I must write. O I pray that the God of all good and perfect gifts will keep you in the spirit to write on, as he has done in the past, and may he guide and direct you in your good work, and may you ever feel his guiding hand in time of trouble, for nothing good can be accomplished without his help. I know he has a people, and will supply all their needs at the right time, but sometimes I get so anxious I want things I do not need, and often wish I had some gift that I could write or talk on such sacred things as I hear and read in the SIGNS; but you see I do not need it, or it would be given. I do hope that you and Elder Lefferts will be kept on the editorial staff, for while there are good letters in the SIGNS, we need your writings, too. I am sure it is not pleasant at all times, and you could not do it of yourselves, but with the help of God you can go on, he will give you strength in time of need and help in all your troubles, and of all his people he never leaves nor forsakes one.

I fear I will weary you with this rambling letter, but hope you will bear with my weakness. I hope I will have the privilege of hearing you preach again.

I am your sister in hope of life eternal,

(MRS.) C. F. GORDY.

KELLY, Ky., Dec. 12, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As it is about time to renew my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, you will find inclosed money order for two dollars, for which mail the SIGNS to my address, also two dollars for contribution, that another hungry soul may receive comfort as I do in reading the editorials and many good letters. They come to me as a feast of fat things; the editorials alone are worth the price of the paper. O how I covet the gift of the dear sisters who write for the SIGNS. I have just reread the editorials, and feel in my heart to say amen to the gospel truths therein proclaimed; those precious promises. Then the question arises, Am I one of that blessed number? Can I claim an inheritance in that sacred plan of salvation, saved by grace, the only way under heaven whereby we must be saved? Why, O why, if I am one, is my pain perpetual, and why my wound incurable? "Why should the children of a king go mourning all their days?" I know it is of his mercy that I am not consumed, and whatever he sees fit to send upon me, I am condemned, but he is clear, and though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. To whom else can we go? He has the words of eternal life.

Dear brethren, I am writing to relieve my mind, not expecting to edify or comfort any of the household of faith, although I find comfort in reading the travels of the dear ones, and if I could express my feelings as they do I would ask no greater gift; but when I sit down to write I find that I am shut up and cannot come forth, and am groping in darkness, and feel to say in the language of the poet:

"Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty,
Hold me with thy powerful hand."

I will leave this with the editors.

"My feet have grown weary with walking,
My journey seems dark just before,
I am longing for joys and comforts,
When trials of earth are no more."

I will hear no more preaching this winter, as I am shut in on account of infirmities and old age; am in my seventy-seventh year.

Dear brethren, I would be glad to get subscribers for the SIGNS if I could, but there are none of our belief anywhere near me. The church of which I am a member is fourteen miles distant. Elder E. T. Anderson, our beloved pastor, comes to us laden with the gospel of peace and glad tidings. Elder L. D. Seals was with us last month, and preached a wonderful sermon; we felt that it was good to have him with us.

Now may God bless and keep his dear people, is my prayer. Pray for me, a weary pilgrim, leaning on the everlasting arm.

HARRIET UNDERWOOD.

GRAND SALINE, Texas, Dec. 13, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—Though strangers in the flesh, I am a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and have your blank in this number of December 1st, and would gladly send some new names, but I cannot. As for myself, there is no paper I like so well. It has come regularly to me since brother Hardy put his paper, the *Advocate of Truth*, into your hands, but I am cast off here in this lonely town, where there is no one of our faith to meet with or speak a word of comfort to me, and besides, it has pleased the good Lord for some purpose best known to himself to take my hearing from me, so that I have not been able to hear the glorious gospel preached for nearly twenty years; yet he has been good, and his mercy is so great to poor, unworthy me in many

ways that I feel I can never praise him enough; he has reconciled me to all, and makes me to rejoice often with joy unspeakable. He has given to me renewed sight, that I may read his blessed word, wherein I take great delight, and find much comfort to my poor, weary soul even in this lonely and desert land, as it were, there being no church anywhere near this place that I might sometimes meet with them and shake their loving hands. I am old and feeble, and cannot be here much longer. I will be seventy-three next month, and if it were possible I surely would subscribe for the dear old SIGNS, and would not miss one number while I live, but I am a widow, with only one son, and he is afflicted and has a family of his own. He never looks at my good papers, but is a Mason, and even belongs to other so-called benevolent orders, which all to me are an abomination in the sight of God, yet we know in due time Christ died for the ungodly sinner. I do feel sure in this that he, like Paul did, does it ignorantly, and at the will and purpose of the almighty God he, like Paul, shall come to a knowledge of the truth and turn and worship the true and living God. It has long been my earnest prayer and heart's desire to see that good day come when he might with me rejoice in God my Savior, but I find it with me as Jesus told his disciples in their ignorance; like me they asked if he would at this time restore the kingdom to Israel, but we must all wait, as they, until the fullness of his own good time and purpose to reveal things to us. In many things I have found this true.

As I cannot renew my subscription, if any who may see this have a mind to write me at any time I would take it as a great favor, especially brother Ker. His article in this number I have read over and over, and if I understand it, it seems plain, it is just my own view of the same. I feel sure he might find time to write me a letter once in a while, for it would cheer me up so much, and if we should differ in the least thing I feel sure it will never hurt nor diminish our pure love for each other nor the cause we love so well. We have never met in this life, but the same Spirit is with us all, and in all, which is the earnest of our hope in God our Savior. Let us be good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

I hope I am your sister in a living hope, though unworthy.

SARAH CARTER.

CEMENT, Okla., Jan. 7, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am unable to express my feelings of gratitude toward you for the kindness you have shown me in sending the SIGNS to me as you have. I have closely read the dear old paper, and have received great comfort from its columns. I have to-night finished reading the January 1st number. If I ever read a paper in all my life that is sound in the doctrine of God our Savior it is the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I know that I am unworthy of such tokens of brotherly love and kindness as you have shown me, though I feel to thank God for giving me a home with his people. I am often made to wonder how such a brotherhood of God-loving and God-fearing men and women, so full of godly wisdom, can afford to recognize as a brother one so contaminated with sin as I know I am. Perhaps it is because they do not know me as I know myself; surely if they did things would be different. Sin is mixed with all I do. To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body

of this death? I can see so much in the dear brethren for me to love. It is written that by their fruits ye shall know them. Again, A good tree will bear good fruit. When I am given to look within my own breast, seeing myself as I really am, all looks dark and vain. Man in his very best state is altogether vanity. So it is evident that we must look away from man to find a good tree, or a good vine. Jesus said of himself, I am the vine, and ye are the branches; my Father is the husbandman. For every good deed and word, every act of humble submission and obedience, we are forced from an honest standpoint to ascribe all honor and praise to the Vine, or Tree, and the Husbandman, for we are the branches, and cannot of ourselves bear good fruit. If left to ourselves we would call bitter sweet and sweet bitter; we would never see our depraved nature. In the first Adam there is none good, no, not one; there is none that doeth good, no, not one; there is none that seeketh after God. We are dead in trespasses and sin until made alive by the power and demonstration of the Spirit of God. God does all the saving, all of the making alive. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. Dear brethren, all of my hope is founded on God's mercy; I have no good deeds of my own to look to, for I see my own righteousness as filthy rags. If the obedience of the Son of God has not satisfied the demands of God's holy law for me, then I have no hope. By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. I love to think on the finished work of Jesus. When he said, It is finished, and bowed his head and gave up the ghost, the chosen, elect people of God were rescued from under the law and placed under grace. In due time, yes, at God's appointed time, the Spirit of God visits every one that Jesus died for and reveals unto them that there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby they must be saved. Salvation from start to finish is the gift of God. By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves. Jesus does not try to save any one; he saves every one that the Father gave him, not one more nor one less. He died for our offences and rose again for our justification. If Jesus left one thing for his people to do to inherit eternal life, that much of eternal life is by works, and is not inherited. Paul said, Ye are bought with a price. The cost of this purchase was the blood, the life of the Son of God. Hope founded on this purchase is sure and steadfast, yes, it is as an anchor of the soul, for it entereth into the veil (the body of Christ), the purchase is sure. Jesus so loved the church that he gave his life for her, that he might present her (his church) unto himself, not having spot, or wrinkle, or blemish. The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, past, present and future. Clothed in the righteousness of Christ, she is whole, she is clean.

I have made this article too long already. Brethren, if you see fit to give this poorly written letter room in the SIGNS, all right, I submit it to your judgment. Pray for me, a poor, tempest-tossed traveler in a strange land.

I am, I hope, yours in the faith of the Son of God,

L. E. SKINNER.

IMMORTALITY.

THIS subject has engaged the attention of men in all ages, and is not yet permanently settled by the evidence produced from the best scientific sources. One cause of disagreement among the best thinkers is a misunderstanding of the word. Very many exhaustive articles have been written on psychology. It is generally assumed that if the soul lives after the death of the body that it is immortal. The evidence that science has furnished has not proved that the soul has an interminable existence. Science is forever debarred from penetrating any further than physics. If we turn backward to the pages of history for evidence, it is only a repetition of what modern science has taught. The opinions of men in any age are worth only what is founded on positive evidence. Man may have notions, called beliefs, yet no belief can be established without evidence. This is well known in the simplest affairs of life. According to the investigation of science, man to-day is left in the most profound uncertainty. Tradition cannot furnish proof to relieve the mind of man from this uncertainty. Shall we assume a thing to be true without proof? No person of honest intention can be satisfied without proof. "The immortality of the soul," is an expression which has been circulated for centuries. If we take the Scriptures as being authority on this subject, can this expression be proven to be true? Very many places in the Scriptures "the soul" means a person, as in the first mention of the word, Gen. ii. 7: "And man became a living soul." Also is this meaning of soul used in the following places: Numbers xxxi. 28, "One soul of five hundred." Prov. xix. 15, "And an idle soul shall suffer hunger." Prov. xxvii. 7, "The full soul loatheth an honey-comb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet." Rom. xiii. 1, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers." However, in many other places the word "soul" is used to denote the life principle within man. Nowhere in the Scriptures is it said that the soul is immortal. It does say that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die."—Ezek. xviii. 20. Jesus said, as recorded in Matt. x. 28, "But rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." It is apparent from the last quotations that the soul is susceptible of death. Death means the opposite to life, or the end of life. If the soul of man is life itself, there is a possibility of it being put out. How then can we say, in an absolute sense, that the soul of man is immortal? Immortality means life that cannot be destroyed. Not only life that has no end, but life that is not subject to any authority, life that is altogether independent. The word "immortal," or "immortality," is used but a few times in the Scriptures, and only by the apostle Paul. He, in speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ to Timothy, points it out as being peculiar to Him: "Who only hath immortality." In another place he calls Jesus, "The King eternal, immortal."—1 Tim. i. 17. Where Paul speaks of men aspiring to immortality it is for them in the future, and to be "put on." This would indicate that man in this life state has not immortality. It is only reached through death in the resurrection of the just. In this life it is in prospect and secured by hope in the soul. The culmination of that hope is on the other side of death. This harmonizes with Paul's teaching to Titus, i. 2, "In hope of eternal life," and again in Titus iii. 7, "According to the hope of eternal life." It is evident that Paul meant immortality when he used these words to

Titus, just the same as he meant in Romans ii. 7, "To them who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life."

Dear brethren editors of the SIGNS, the above was written to be published in a paper called *The Open Court*, but the editor returned it saying that his columns were heavily overcrowded. The sentiment expressed does not destroy the idea of a life principle being given the children of God in time which lives on after the earthly body dies, which I have constantly averred for years. All this is at your disposal.

As ever, in hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., Dec. 18, 1915.

DANVERS, Mass., Dec. 5, 1915.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I send this letter written to me by the late dear sister Ada Chadbourn for publication in the SIGNS. The exercises of mind expressed in it will, I think, be read with special interest by many. I submit it to your judgment.

Yours in hope,

MARY E. ROSS.

MY VERY DEAR SISTER:—I was sadly disappointed in not seeing you again ere you returned to your home. Had I been able to ride so far I should surely have come to see you. I feel it was a great blessing that the dear Lord gave me health and strength to attend the meeting each day. Elder Chick is a dear brother and I enjoyed the preaching; it did sound good to hear the love, mercy, wisdom and power of God proclaimed once more. I was reminded of our dear Elder Purington on Sunday p. m. in one of his sermons long ago; his words were sweet and comforting to me, and when he related the trial of a young lady under conviction, I have never forgotten his words nor the expression on his face, and his tear-dimmed eyes when he told what sorrow and anguish of soul she was in. He said she sought a lonely, quiet spot to ask the Lord to have mercy upon her weary, sin-sick soul, and this is what a dear one heard her say: Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon. I have sought him long, but find him not.

"O for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame,
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb."

Once more I must say, Have mercy, Lord, O Lord, forgive my many sins, and save my helpless, sinking soul. He said he could have said to her, Dear child, your sins are all washed away in the blood of the Lamb. I had also, I trust, traveled the road she was in, and shall never forget that rehearsal by him, for it afforded me joy and comfort.

I well remember dear Elder Ker's first visit and sermon here, for I had long been in the depths, and unbelief had me weighed down. I was led to question everything, my own experience, and even that of others; it seemed at times that all I had hoped or trusted in was but a myth, and would surely come to naught. I had no faith to pray, but still found myself asking for that very thing many times, and saying, O, Father of heaven, give light divine, and lead me to the Rock that is higher than I. Let me some gracious token glean that thou art mine, and I am thine.

Well, I only intended to say that his first sermon proved such a blessing to me, the weights were all left behind, and I could run and not be weary, and walk and not faint. I have never since been in such a horrible pit of unbelief, a pit from which I could not deliver myself, and, like

David, I had to wait to be taken out by the blessed Lord through his dear gifted undershepherd. Recently I awoke in the hour of rest and slumber, and the first one who came to my mind was a dear one who styled herself a weak and unprofitable one, and at once my thoughts flew away and I saw her as she used to stand at her post in the dear old churchhouse at Oak Woods, (and those were very golden days to me) as I listened to her voice. O, my dear sister, do not style yourself unprofitable. Those thoughts arose in my mind, and tears unbidden came while I remembered how highly I esteemed the members of that dear church.

It does me good to hear of your little meetings at Woburn, and I thank you for remembering me with the words chosen to speak from, and hymns sung. It is a great pleasure to me, I assure you, dear sister, and my mind and heart go out to you all as I read and try to sing the sweet words of some old hymn, like, as you said of Woodsworth, you call it a sweet old hymn, and indeed it is.

It is mail time, and I must reluctantly say good-bye.

From your loving friend and sister, I hope,

ADA A. CHADBOURN.

LAURELVILLE, Ohio, Dec. 13, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have the pleasure of sending you a new subscriber, sister Amanda Schaal, Laurelville, Ohio. Sister Amanda and her dear mother and sister are very lonely since the good Father last spring in his providence saw fit to take the dear father and husband of the family from this field of action to, we believe, a home of rest and glory. "By their fruits ye shall know them." The tree is not made good because of the fruit that it bears, but the fruit is good, indicating that the tree has previously been made good. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil."—Jeremiah xiii. 23. Nature must first be overcome, and let me say here that the leopard is perfectly satisfied with his spots, for by means of them principally he obtains his prey. But when his spirit is changed, and he wishes to lie down and rest with the kid, then he abhors those spots, and wishes, O so much, that they might be removed. By the same process the wolf shall be made to dwell with the lamb. The body is the same body, but a spirit of love and innocence has superseded the spirit of ferocity, and both leopard and wolf have had implanted in them the spirit of the Lamb, and by this means they are made to dwell together in love, and lie down and rest on His promises that he will provide for them. The high tree is brought down, the low tree exalted, the green tree is dried up and the dry tree flourisheth, all of the Lord. If then we bear fruit, or are adorned with becoming verdure, we, like Paul, can say, By the grace of God I am what I am. We are by nature ravenous beasts, or wild olive trees, and no natural process, or law of nature, can change us; it takes a miracle, and all miracles emanate from God himself.

I wish to say that what I have read of the December 1st SIGNS I have enjoyed very much. I love to read the experiences of grace of God's dear children. May I by this be led to hope that I, too, am a child of God? I often indulge such a hope, but think that if I am a tree I must surely be a barren tree, and not as one planted by the rivers of water mentioned by David in the first Psalm.

I have renewed my subscription this year, and wish all the writers, readers, publishers and friends of the SIGNS a happy new year, and this will be by the grace of God.

Your least brother, if a brother,

GEO. W. HARTSOUGH.

SKETCH OF MRS. C. L. HAWK'S LIFE.

I, Sarah Johnson Wyckoff, daughter of Casper B. and Catherine Wyckoff, was born near White House, Hunterdon Co., N. J., August 4th, 1823, and in 1836 emigrated with my parents to Carroll County, Ohio, then in 1841 moved westward again to Wood County, Ohio, what was then called the Black Swamp. I stayed with my parents there about four years, during which time I became concerned and anxious about church privileges, as there was no church there. Finally getting a call from a woman living in Findlay, Ohio, to work for her, I gladly went, thinking I would then have church privileges, and to my great joy and satisfaction I was led, I firmly believe, by the Spirit of the Lord, into an Old School Baptist family, and a church of that order was near by. Although I had never known anything about the Baptists, I found them to be the very people that I loved and wanted to be with, believing them to be the true church of the true and living God, and the desire of my heart was as with Ruth of old: "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."—Ruth i. 16. Although I felt too unworthy to be with such people, I was received by the church and baptized in the summer of 1845, when I was twenty-two years old. I have never regretted it, for I have always loved that people religiously for the truth they contend for. In 1847 I met and became acquainted with Lewis Hawk, and was married June 3rd, to which union nine children were born, five sons and four daughters; the eldest son, George W., and eldest daughter, Hannah C. Hawk, died in childhood and infancy. William C., Charles F., John L., Eli Zeno, Mary E. Long, Anna S. Dickinson and Sarah E. Wade, four sons and three daughters, survive.

This is poorly written, but I hope you can get some satisfaction out of it.

SARAH J. W. HAWK.

MONGO, Indiana.

The above was written by mother about five years ago, and the family wishes to add that father's death occurred Feb. 22nd, 1907, at the age of eighty-five years, eleven months and six days; that of mother Nov. 25th, 1915, at the age of ninety-two years, three months and twenty-one days. From childhood up to the going out of her life mother was held in the highest degree of love and respect by the families on both sides of their union and in the several communities in which her life was spent. She always had a considerate regard for the welfare of her friends and neighbors, and a deep and tireless love and devotion to her family, being ready at all times and under all circumstances to sacrifice herself in the interest of her children and all dependent upon her for love, care and affection. The following lines marked by her are to be found in her book of Psalms and hymns:

"This languishing head is at rest,
Its thinking and aching are o'er;
This quiet, immovable breast
Is heaved by affliction no more;
This heart is no longer the seat
Of trouble and torturing pain;
It ceases to flutter and beat,
It never shall flutter again."

The funeral was held at the Dunkard Church, on English Prairie, Sunday, Nov. 28th, at noon, Elder Lines, of Lafontaine, Ind., officiating, and the burial was in the cemetery near by.

BOWDOINHAM, Maine.

DEAR EDITORS:—I received this letter from our pastor of the Bowdoinham Church and would like to see it in the SIGNS that I enjoy reading so much.

Your sister, I hope,

ELLA RAYMOND.

BOWDOINHAM, Me., Dec. 15, 1915.

DEAR SISTER RAYMOND:—I feel inclined to write a word to you, as it has been some time since I have heard from any of my people in the faith which is in Christ the Lord. I received the SIGNS that you sent me, and had a feast in reading it over, especially Elder Lefferts' writings. He is a writer after my own heart. I think that his editorials are sound, clear and deep in his illustrations, and it is evident that in his experience deep things have been revealed unto him. I do not think that brother Lefferts would claim to be one of the wise and prudent, for it is not to those that the deep things of God are revealed; they are hid from them; hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is their life, appears unto them in glory, then it is that these babes in Christ worship God in the Spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Christ dwells in their hearts by faith, and being rooted and grounded in love they may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that they might be filled with all the fullness of God. I think, judging by his writings in the SIGNS, that Elder Lefferts has traveled in the highway which is cast up above this world, and the wisdom of this world, but it is the highway and the way spoken of by the prophet Isaiah. (Isaiah xxxv. 8.) I might go on and say more and more, and yet there would be more to tell.

"Eternal power, whose high abode
Becomes the grandeur of a God;
Infinite lengths beyond the bounds,
Where stars revolve their little rounds."

This is a wonderful hymn.

Sister Raymond, when I thought to write to you, I did not purpose to write as I have, but thought to let you know how we were, and wanted to inquire about sister Angie Thomas. We had a letter last week from our daughter in Portland, she said that sister Angie was there in a hospital. We are here at home, getting older and more feeble. Phebe has had a very hard time most all the fall; she has suffered with pains in her back, and cannot walk very well. Rachel has been with us the most of the time during the fall, and is with us now. I do not hear from any of the brethren, therefore do not know how they are, either naturally or spiritually. My health is not very good; I find that I am gradually failing, both in body and mind. If you have time, write me a word. Love to you and yours.

In hope of life in Christ the Lord,

Z. M. BEAL.

WAVERLY, Pa., Jan. 10, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—First, I will answer brother Oliver's request by saying we have two sharp threshing instruments in the editors, Elders Ker and Lefferts, threshing out and separating the wheat from the chaff (truth from error) by the Spirit and power of God Almighty, and it cannot be done any other way. All the writers for the SIGNS are doing very nicely. Brethren, keep on threshing, but in love and humility. Brother Oliver, write some more; glad to see your name, yes, and you, too.

Now a word of encouragement to the

editors. We were once boys, and you know and I know that the tree which bore the most palatable fruit would get the worst pelting with clubs and stones. A word to the wise is sufficient.

I am still going about as usual trying to serve seven churches; am called their pastor at least. Also have appointments in sixteen places where there are no churches. I have baptized but a few, and a number have died. We have had some good meetings when ministers visit us, it does us all good. I think we need some sharp threshing instruments among us. Our congregations are generally small, preaching the same; very discouraging indeed. May God come among us and stir up the dry bones, is our desire. Love to all the household of faith.

Yours as ever,

D. M. VAIL.

PUYALLUP, Wash., Dec. 10, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Your editorial in December 1st issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES makes me feel bad, because I think I can appreciate your feelings, but I regret that you threaten to stop writing for us. O the sorrow it would cause your brethren, who indorse and enjoy your writings. I have never seen anything from your pen contrary to sound doctrine, as I understand it, nor in contradiction to the standard set by Elder Gilbert Beebe, founder of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I have his editorials, and have read them frequently. I have rejoiced that the Lord has raised up men to follow in his footsteps, who caused the trumpet to give no uncertain sound. I was foolish enough some years ago to allow myself to become piqued at the nagging of some preacher, to grasp the opportunity I long had sought to stop trying to preach, for it had always been a severe cross to me, and when making an attempt I always felt glad when the time came to sit down, or nearly always; sometimes I did feel that I had a message, but have often been forced to stand up when all seemed dark to me; yet strange to say, at such times I have had the brethren and sisters say they were comforted and instructed, and at other times I have been enabled to see something of the beauty and glory of God's eternal plan, in which he had included a poor wretch like me. About fifteen years ago I stopped having appointments to preach, buried my talents, hung my harp upon the willows and thought I would take my ease and be free from all turmoil and strife, and now when I would like to take them up again I find that I cannot even resurrect what I had laid down; the talents have been given to others more worthy. But, my dear brother, I sometimes try to take comfort in the thought that I have done all the work the Lord had laid out for me. I sometimes feel that I would rejoice to be able to sound the trumpet again, but fear I never shall. We have been having preaching at my house every month for about two years. Elder W. H. Shields, of Leber, Wash., comes to preach for us, and sometimes we have a congregation of twelve or fifteen. Brother Shields is a sound Old Baptist preacher, if I am any judge. He is a strong indorser of yourself and brother Lefferts, as are all who meet with us. Now, my dear brother, let me beg of you to not stop writing for us through the good old SIGNS; it would cause great sorrow. I believe the Lord will enable you to see that it is better to continue to serve us. I believe he will at last gather all his children around his throne, where they will be too busy ascribing everlasting praise to his name to think of criticising one another.

J. H. McDONALD, M. D.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1916.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office a Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

NEW WINE.

"I WILL not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."—Matt. xxvi. 29.

These words spake Jesus to the twelve as he sat at meat with them in the upper room of that house in the city of Jerusalem, whither the disciples had previously repaired to prepare a place where their Lord and Master might observe the Jewish passover. Here in this same room, after the passover supper was over, Jesus with his own hands instituted a new ordinance, which is usually spoken of as the ordinance of the Lord's supper, and which belongs to the true gospel church in this new gospel dispensation. Some persons have had the idea that the ordinance of the Lord's supper as observed by the gospel church is a continuation of the old Jewish passover, but this is not so. There is no legal rite, sacrifice or observance that is brought over into the gospel dispensation. In this upper room in Jerusalem where the church of Jesus met this night of his betrayal, it may be said that law and gospel met, but they did not mix or mingle. Law and gospel will not mix any more than works and grace, or flesh and spirit. Flesh and spirit may be in the same man, but they will always be distinct and different. So the legal covenant met the gospel in this room in Jerusalem, but they were as distinct and separate as night and day. The gospel is not a new edition of the law, it is not the law renovated and made over, it is an out and out new garment. Law is one thing, the gospel quite another. "No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment; for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse."—Matt. ix. 16. You see, thus, that if the gospel is simply a piece of new cloth used to patch up the old legal covenant, it will end by making a very ineffectual protection, for when it tears away from the old, worn-out law, as it would inevitably do, the rent would be worse than ever. The followers of Jacobus Arminius, who today comprise well-nigh the entire so-called christian world, have, ever since Arminius promulgated his doctrine in the sixteenth century, been trying their hardest to mix grace and works, law with gospel. Thus, Arminians say they believe in salvation by grace, but that the sinner must exercise the faith to get the grace. A salvation that begins in the Spirit and is carried on and ended by the flesh is no salvation. The doctrine which Jesus and his apostles contended for is salvation by grace, first, last and all the way through. No principle of the legal covenant, no observance, feast, fast or holy day which belonged to the Mosaic ritual is carried over into the gospel covenant and enjoined upon christians to observe. The Jewish passover celebrated the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt; the ordinance of the Lord's supper is a memorial of the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ. He himself said, As often as you do this do it in remembrance of me. Therefore, it is not done in memory of Egypt, or of

any event in Jewish history, thus cannot be a continuation of the Jewish passover. Luke himself tells that supper was over, that is, the passover supper was over, when Jesus gave the cup to his disciples saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood which is shed for you. Paul also says he took the cup "when he had supped," and we take Paul to mean here that Jesus had already supped, that is, had already eaten supper (the passover) before he took the cup again and with his own hands instituted the new ordinance of the new dispensation. Now, there are very vital differences between the Mosaic covenant and this covenant which comes in the blood of Jesus Christ. Both covenants are full of conditions, but with this difference, that whereas every condition of the Mosaic covenant devolved upon the Israelites for obedience, every condition of the gospel covenant has been met and everlastingly fulfilled by the Lord Jesus Christ, so that not one single condition is left for man to obey. All the blessings promised the Jews for obedience to the Mosaic covenant, and all the curses threatened them for disobedience, were temporal only. If they walked in the statutes of Moses and remembered all his precepts to do them, they should be blessed in basket and in store; they should have bountiful harvests, fruitful vineyards, they should be free from pestilence, from famine and from the sword of their enemies. On the other hand, if they disobeyed Moses' commands, and walked not in his precepts, they should be cursed with famine, pestilence and war. The blessings promised for obedience and the punishments for disobedience never involved the eternal welfare of the Jews, but always were confined to temporal and national health, peace and prosperity on the one hand, and temporal and national disease, war and poverty on the other hand. We defy any Bible reader or scholar to show us any place in the Mosaic economy where eternal life was ever promised for obedience. That law which came by Moses was for a time only, and had to do with the administration of the national affairs of the Jews. Those who lived under that law, and who, like the scribes and Pharisees, consecrated themselves to it, verily thought they could obtain eternal life thereby. This was their thought as Jesus told them, but instead it was only typical of him and of his gospel kingdom, and was not that very thing itself, any more than a shadow of a tree is the tree itself. Furthermore, while the Mosaic law was all right as far as it went, it was weak through the flesh; that is, no flesh and blood could ever live up to its demands. Human nature is so constituted that it cannot love God with its whole heart, mind and strength, and that is what the law demanded. The whole history of national Israel proved the law a failure so far as mankind being able to keep it; it was not a failure from the standpoint for which God intended it, which was to make room for a new and better covenant. Still further, none but Jews were ever under the Mosaic law, so that if salvation must come by that means, then the case of all Gentiles is hopeless, for none of us were ever under that law. Three reasons there are, therefore, why no Gentile can ever be saved by the Mosaic covenant. First, eternal life is not a condition of that covenant; second, flesh and blood are so constituted as to not be able to keep it; third, that covenant was never delivered to Gentiles, but to Jews only, so that Gentiles cannot claim it as a rule of conduct, any more than a citizen of France can be bound by the constitution of the United States.

What the law says it says to them that are under it, and no Gentile was ever under the regime of Moses. Now, the question comes up, Did not Jesus fulfill the Mosaic law? No, not in the letter; in the spirit and intention of that law, yes. The law was given to Moses by the Almighty, and was not an end in itself, but a transcript or type of the law of God. The law of God, as everything else pertaining to God, is an intangible and incomprehensible thing, and so God in his pleasure is pleased to give us certain tangible things as types or similarities of that which is invisible. National Israel is a type of the church of God, and the law of Moses a type of the law of God, which law Jesus was made under, and which law Jesus fulfilled in every jot and tittle. It must be evident that if Jesus came into the world to fulfill the Mosaic law, then never will any but Jews ever reap the benefits accruing from Jesus' death and resurrection, for none but Jews were ever under that law. But we must go back beyond Moses to find the law under which Jesus came. This law was given to Adam in the garden; this law both Gentiles and Jews were under; this law all the elect of God in Adam transgressed. Thus, Jesus, being made under this law, and obeying it in all its entirety, encompasses the salvation of every one of his elect, whether they be Jews or Gentiles. The new or gospel covenant is radically different from the Mosaic order of things. The gospel promises eternal blessings, and has to do with eternal things. It hinges not upon man's will to obey, as did the Mosaic covenant, but upon the omnipotence of God and the good pleasure of his will. In this new covenant God says, I will, and they shall, not, I will if they will. This better covenant was given the people of God in Christ before the world began, but did not become effectual to the heirs of glory until the death of Jesus Christ. That is why he says, This cup is the new testament in my blood. "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."—Heb. ix. 16, 17. The new will or testament of God Almighty, which he gave his people in his Son before time began, and in which he named all his heirs with all the blessings in his pleasure to bestow upon them, this new testament or covenant necessitated the death of Christ to make it effective, for the will could not be in force except through the death of the testator. Thus, Jesus, who was God in the flesh, had to be made flesh for the suffering of death. Is it any wonder then that he says, This cup is the new testament in my blood? In no other way could this glorious covenant founded in omnipotence be made effectual to all the heirs of glory and bring them to an effectual enjoyment of all its benefits, except through the death and resurrection of God made flesh: the testator. Then, after the death of the testator, nothing remains to be done except to find the heirs and apprise them of the estate falling to their lot. This is the work of the Holy Ghost, the news-bringer of the new covenant. The Holy Ghost searches out the heirs of glory wherever they are dispersed, and brings them to a realization by revelation of the truth as it is in Jesus, and to a knowledge of their joint-heirship with him and of their eternal blessedness in him. This, the preacher, nor the missionary, nor the evangelist, nor the Sunday-school teacher, can do, but the Holy Ghost, the administrator of the estate of the Father, does do.

This Spirit knows the mind of the Father, and searches all deep things, even the deep things of God, such as his eternal purpose and election, so that this Holy Spirit will call not one too few nor one too many to the marriage supper of the Lamb, but all those whose names were written in the book of life before the foundation of the world. We think Jesus had in mind this coming of the Holy Ghost when he said, "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." In all places where the ordinance of the Lord's supper is referred to in the Bible the word "wine" is never mentioned, but always "fruit of the vine." As Moses never mentions wine in connection with the passover, we are at a loss to know whether Jesus did use wine in this supper, or only the unfermented juice of the grape. But, be that as it may, he truly meant he never would again partake of this literal result of grapes crushed, but would, in the kingdom of his Father, drink with his people in a new and living union and communion of his people with himself. The kingdom of the Father means the gospel church. "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Thus, the little flock, the church militant, has the kingdom of the Father within itself. The church is the kingdom where is seen the Fatherhood of the Almighty manifested. In this kingdom, or church, Jesus meets anew with his people. He sups with them and they with him, giving them bread to eat the world knows not of, and that fruit of himself, who is the living and true Vine. What a wonderful, glorious meeting that must have been at Pentecost when the Holy Ghost descended and anointed the apostles with understanding of Scriptures of divine truth, and gave them utterance of the unsearchable riches of Christ. That day Jesus drank anew with the twelve in the kingdom of the Father. He stands at the door and knocks, not of the world, but of the church. Those who hear his voice open unto him, they cannot help it, and he comes in and sups with them and they with him. Until he comes the love of the bride cannot be awakened nor stirred up. Her awakening awaits his divine pleasure, and when his voice knocks she eagerly welcomes him unto her. These are glorious meetings, and the church of God here in the world has had many such visits from her heavenly Lord, when he has given her to drink anew of the "fruit of the vine," he being the Vine himself, and his fruit being sweet to her taste. These visits invigorate, they stimulate, they give life and energy. Flagging courage gives way to persistent steadfastness, bruised feet are healed, aching hearts are soothed, when Jesus meets with his beloved. It is thus he comes as the Administrator of the estate of his Father to find the straying beggar in a foreign land, and to tell him he is a son of the Highest, and that all the property of Omnipotence is his. It is thus that beggars are exalted from the dunghill and made to become the sons of God, to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of the Father. The gospel covenant obliterates all the infirmities of Mephibosheth as he sits at this wonderful table supping of this "fruit of the vine," anew, equal with any of the King's sons.

Requested by brother Rutledge, of Ontario. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder Peter Brown.)

The Mt. Enon Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the church at Bethlehem, to the churches of which she is composed sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has pleased Almighty God, who rules and superrules heaven and earth and the fullness thereof, and works all things after the counsel of his own will, to spare us to meet in another association in peace and love, and we desire to praise his holy name for this and all of his great blessings, for all good and perfect gifts are of him. The churches report peace and love and some ingathering among them.

In conclusion, we humbly trust that the God of all love and mercy will continue his blessings to us and all Israel everywhere, is our prayer for Christ's sake. Amen.

C. K. HAINES, Moderator.
J. H. MILES, Clerk.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

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OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon Thomas H. Estes, our brother and friend, was born near Rutledge, Morgan Co., Ga., Feb. 24th, 1855, and died August 13th, 1915. He was married to Miss Victoria Knight, Dec. 25th, 1879. To that union were given eight children, all living except one, which died in infancy. Brother Estes united with the Primitive Baptist Church of Newton County by an experience of grace August 27th, 1904, and was baptized by our pastor, Elder John F. Almand, the following Sunday. He was ordained deacon July 22nd, 1905, Elders J. F. Almand, J. D. Curtis and R. L. Cook composing the presbytery. He was a faithful husband and father, a good neighbor and a useful citizen. Brother Estes realized that of himself he could do nothing, that every good and perfect gift cometh from the good Lord, in whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning, and that the Lord has all power in heaven and on earth, in the sea and in all deep places. We are fully persuaded that brother Estes lived and died in this faith, hence we say that our dear brother neighbor in the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ died in the full triumph of living faith. His death was a shock to the family and community in general, as he was up and going about. He and his dear wife were riding about to visit some of their friends and the sick the evening before he died. The family were very devoted to one another. Let us look away from earth to heaven by the faith which God alone can give and view him happy with Christ. He leaves to mourn his absence his widow and seven children, three sons-in-law and one daughter-in-law, five children, with the little church at dear old Shoal Creek, besides a host of other relatives and friends. We shall miss him, but our loss is his eternal gain. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to his dear widow and also to each member of his family. We rejoice to know, as we feel that we do, that the widow and children who are old enough to know, know that whatever God does is best, and are fully reconciled to his holy will.

The funeral was conducted by our pastor, Elder L. D. Allen, and there was a large attendance, showing the high esteem in which he was held. May the good Lord guide, guard and direct us for his name's sake.

ALSO,

Mrs. Mary Frances Lowe, whose maiden name was Dodson, was born in Newton County, Ga., June 9th, 1849, and departed this life August 22nd, 1915, aged 66 years, 2 months and 13 days. She was married to John W. Lowe, Dec. 25th, 1881, and to that union were given three sons, Park dying when two years old; Stephen G. Lowe is the only child living. She received a hope in her Savior and on relation of her experience was received in the fellowship of the Old

School Baptist Church at Shoal Creek, Newton Co., Ga., early in life, and her membership remained there until her death. Our dear sister and aunt was very devoted to her church, missing but very few of the meetings when she was well enough to attend. By the church she will be sadly missed, but assuredly believing that our loss is her gain we bow in humble submission to the will of God, who doeth all things well. She leaves to mourn her death her husband, one son, four grandchildren, one sister, one brother and many near relatives and friends. She was sick for several years, but confined to her bed only ten days before her death. She often spoke of dying, and thought it would be a relief to her. She regretted leaving her husband and children, but was finally made willing by the good Lord a few days before she died. May the Lord be merciful to us, and especially the bereaved husband and children who are left to mourn, and enable us all to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

ALSO,

James Marshall Lowe, son of John W. and Mary Frances Lowe, was born Sept. 17th, 1887, and died Oct. 24th, 1915, aged 28 years, 1 month and 6 days. This boy never made an open profession, but we believe he had a hope in the true and living God, who said to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth. I desire to say to the bereaved parents, Rest in the sweet hope of meeting your dear boy in the world of eternal peace, and there throughout the ages of eternity realize all the fullness of the last word, "peace." May this word under the blessing of God serve as an evergreen or memento in the hearts of the parents, children and all the weeping friends of the community, to comfort them in their affliction and redound to the glory of God. WILLIAM G. CARTER.

Mrs. Carrie C. Hitch, wife of George P. Hitch, died at her home, 210 Broad St., Port Norfolk, Va., Monday morning, Dec. 27th, 1915, in the 76th year of her age. Besides her husband she leaves to mourn their loss one sister, Mrs. G. W. Bement, of Lansing, Mich., three brothers: Frank and Gibson Finsthwait, of western Pennsylvania, and F. M. Finsthwait, of Chicago; four daughters: Mrs. S. E. Wiley, Mrs. W. E. German, Mrs. A. V. Pearce, Miss Lorena Hitch, and one son, E. A. Hitch, all of Portsmouth, Va. Mother was a believer in the plan of salvation as preached by the Old School Baptists since our earliest recollection, and before. In the year 1902 she was baptized by Elder A. B. Francis, and united with the church at Broad Creek, Sussex Co., Del., where she held her membership until her death. Since coming to Virginia to live, about twelve years ago, mother always went back home every year to attend the meetings of the churches of her home association, and as the time would draw near for her to go she would talk of little else. I do not think mother was ever so happy as when among her people, the church. The greater part of her long married life, about fifty-three years, she lived near the old Broad Creek Church, Sussex Co., Del., and during this long number of years the Old Baptists and their friends always felt that they were welcome at her home. Mother was the most faithful of wives and the best of mothers. She was always known among her friends and acquaintances as a thoroughly honest woman. I have never known any one who thought so little of self and so much of the needs of others. She always bore her troubles, which were many, as was becoming one of her faith. I have often heard her quote Romans viii. 18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." The short time mother was sick, only four days, she suffered very little pain. Several hours before the end came she suffered no pain at all, and passed away as peacefully as we could have wished, fully trusting in the merits of her crucified and risen Savior, and we have a very satisfying assurance that she is now enjoying that rest which can only come to the redeemed of the Lord. Her death has left a vacant place in our lives which can never be filled, but we hope that we feel thankful that she was spared to us as long as she was, and for the hope we have that she is now at rest.

We carried her body back to the old family burying-ground, near Laurel, Del., where, after the reading of the twenty-third Psalm and the eighth chapter of Romans by Elder A. B. Francis, and a few remarks by the same, we laid her body in the ground, there to await the resurrection, when we have a very satisfying hope that it will be raised and fashioned like unto His glorious body, and she will forever be with her Lord.

Her son, E. A. HITCH.

Elizabeth Tamer McPherson, wife of Deacon H. W. McPherson, was born Feb. 4th, 1863, and departed this life at her home near Denver, Ill., Jan. 5th, 1916, aged 52 years, 11 months and 1 day. She was the sixth child of Benjamin F. and Martha E. Tucker, and was married to H. W. McPherson Sept. 30th, 1883. To that union were born four sons and one daughter: William L., Benjamin L., Frank W., Walter M. and Parthena H. She leaves to mourn their loss, besides her family, four grandchildren, her aged mother, Mrs. Martha E. Tucker, five brothers and four sisters, her father and two sisters having preceded her to the great beyond. She professed a hope in Christ in early childhood, and united with Middle Creek Predestinarian Baptist Church in November, 1888. In February, 1898, she and her husband removed their membership to Smyrna Church,

at Bentley, Ill., where she remained a member until the Master called her home. Sister Tamer, as she was always called, was ever true to her church, always filling her seat when possible, and ever stood in defence of the cause, always, ready to give a reason of the hope that she trusted in until the end. Her home was always a Baptist home indeed, ever open to entertain those she loved so well. She was always ready to take care of the associations each year if possible. Many of the Baptists throughout the country will remember her kind hospitality. But her life's work is over, and she is gone, but not forgotten.

The funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder L. E. Frazee, assisted by Elder Rice Harris and brother C. A. Jones, at the family residence, after which she was laid away in the Harmony Cemetery to await the resurrection morn. Sorrow not, dear ones, as those without hope. May the Lord fill the vacancy with his presence and make us all feel that he doeth all things well. A. C. J.

Anson C. Dewey died at his home, 113 N. Glen Ave., Watkins, N. Y., Jan. 1st, 1916, aged 64 years. His widow writes me as follows: "He had been a great sufferer for eight months, and had an operation last July, thinking it would relieve him, but the disease held him in its grip. Although a great sufferer, his last days spiritually were the best days of his life; he felt the power of God in his heart to overflowing, singing praises to him and saying, The Lord's will, not mine, be done. He was a son of Leander and Eliza Dewey, and was born near Utica, N. Y., Jan. 18th, 1852. He is survived by his widow, one son, two stepsons, three brothers and two sisters, who mourn for one dearly loved."

Brother Dewey was a member of the Old School Baptist Church at Burdett, N. Y. I had been acquainted with him about thirty-five years, and always held him as a brother who was sound in the faith of God's elect. I do not know who baptized him, but think Elder A. St. John did. I visited him twice during his illness. His whole theme while with him was Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Funeral services were held at the home Tuesday, Jan. 4th, at 2 p. m. The writer was present and tried to talk to the friends. The burial took place in Glenwood Cemetery. May God comfort all who mourn. His widow, sister Dewey, is also a member of the Burdett Church.

D. M. VAIL.

Mrs. Henrietta Shockley, widow of William Shockley, of Snow Hill, Md., died at the home of her daughter, in Philadelphia, Pa., Jan. 6th, 1916. She was baptized when eighteen years of age by Elder Warner Staton in the fellowship of the Nassaongo Church, Worcester Co., Md. Sister Shockley was a stanch, clear minded lover of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. She remained a faithful and consistent member of the Nassaongo Church until her death. Services were held in the Snow Hill meetinghouse on Monday, Jan. 10th. The writer spoke from James iv. 14, after which she was laid away in the old family plot near Snow Hill, Md.

B. F. COULTER.

Mrs. Edith McKean died suddenly at the Wainwright home early Thursday evening, August 26th, 1915. She did her usual work during the day, and after the evening work was finished her sister, Miss Margaret Wainwright, asked her if they should have some supper. She replied that she would rather sleep than eat. She had had bad spells with her heart for several years and that afternoon had not felt as well as usual. She sat down in a rocking-chair after her sister wanted her to have supper and in about an hour passed away. During her sick hour her sister said to her, "Edith, I am afraid you are going to leave me alone," to which she replied, "God is good." Neighbors came and carried her to her bed, and in a short time she was with her loved one gone before. Edith Wainwright was born in Milford township May 4th, 1849. In 1867 she was married to T. J. McKean, and resided in Pennsylvania for a time, removing from there to Steuben County, N. Y., for several years, then returned to Pike County, Pa., where they resided until the death of her husband, in March, 1894, since which time she had made her home with her brother John and sister Margaret, where she was always welcome.

Funeral services were conducted by Mr. E. Wolfe, as they could not reach a minister of her own faith. Edith was by choice a member of the Old School Baptist Church, and was faithful to that church to the last. Two sisters mourn her passing away: Miss Margaret J. Wainwright and Mrs. Adaline Vought, of Sparrowbush, N. Y., also a son, R. McKean, of Milford, Pa. ADALINE VOUGHT.

Miss Addie E. Rockafellow, daughter of James H. and Carrie E. (McEwen) Rockafellow, died at the homestead in Beaver Dam on Friday, Oct. 15th, 1915, after a lingering illness of cancer of the stomach. She was born on the homestead where she died. Being of a quiet and home-loving disposition, she mingled but little with the outside world, but possessing a fine character, she made friends of all who knew her. Surviving are her mother and brother, John W. Rockafellow.

The funeral services were held at her home at 1:30 o'clock on Monday, conducted by Elder John McConnell, of New York, interment taking place in the family plot in the Brick Church Cemetery.

J. W. ROCKAFELLOW.

Mrs. Sarah J. W. Hawk was born August 4th, 1823, near White House, N. J., and died Nov. 25th, 1915, aged 92 years, 3 months and 21 days. She was married to C. L. Hawk June 3rd, 1847, and baptized in 1845. A sketch of her life, written by herself, will be found on page 117.

APPOINTMENTS.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Please publish the following appointments and oblige:

Kingston, N. Y., Saturday, March 18th, 8 p. m., 58 Smith Ave.; Ashokan, Sunday, 19th, 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m.; Arena, Tuesday, 21st, 11 a. m.; Kelley Corners, Wednesday, 22nd, 7:45 p. m.; Halcottville, Thursday, 23rd, 7:45 p. m.; Vega, Friday, 24th, 1:30 p. m.; Roxbury village, sister Mead's home, Sunday, 26th, 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m.

D. M. VAIL.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Joseph Ford has changed his address from Seneca, Kansas, to David City, Nebr., R. R. No. 3, where his correspondents will please address him.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. E. R. Churchell, Ind., $2.00; Roy G. Sanders, Ont., $.75; J. C. Chester, Ky., $3.00; Mrs. M. J. Miller, Ill., $2.00; J. S. Moore, Ala., $1.00; J. A. Tandy, Okla., $3.00.

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

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Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Liberty Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, of Los Angeles, Cal., meets every first and third Sunday in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., at 42nd and Moneta Ave., and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal.

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THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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GLEN ROSE, Texas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 84. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1916. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HOW THE LORD WORKS.

(Isaiah xlii. 15, 16.)

In how great a variety of ways, and by what a wonderful variety of illustrations, does the Lord show, throughout all the inspired Scriptures of truth, his salvation of his people. In the portion of his word to which I have referred, the way and experience of salvation are presented and declared in a manner peculiarly clear and sweet to the spiritual mind: "I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools. And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."

This is the beginning of salvation in the experience of the Lord's people. There is first a taking away of every earthly dependence. The mountains and hills represent all the exaltations of human power and excellence of every kind, earthly and religious, upon which we depend to obtain the favor of God. Naturally we are all looking for this favor to what we can do for ourselves, or what others can do for us. When the Lord begins the work of grace in the heart he causes these mountains and hills of fancied human excellence to fail, so that we cannot feed upon them any more. We try to eat the herbs, but in vain; we find no food, no help, in all that we can do. Those mountains and hills have become waste, the herbs all dried up, and we seek in vain for any hope through the works of the law. We are seeing now for the first time that the sinner can do nothing to make himself holy. He cannot put away his sins, he can do nothing but die. When the Lord would send the brethren of Joseph down into Egypt to obtain corn of Joseph, he first called for a famine upon the land and brake the whole staff of bread. (Psalms cv. 16.) So when he will bring his people to Jesus he first causes them to know that there is no merit in anything they can do to satisfy the law. This is very strikingly presented here. All the herbs of human knowledge, upon which they had delightedly fed hitherto, are now gone. The eloquence of speech that had so pleased them before, when used to urge them to

do the things necessary for their salvation, now only appears to them as a tinkling cymbal. The Lord's work is complete. Human wisdom and power and eloquence only seem to aggravate their condition. Heretofore they had believed they could do much to save the souls of many, and they would feel that this power for salvation might well be compared to a wide flowing river. Now they see no river in all the works of men, but just the opposite. What seemed to them as an abundantly flowing river carrying salvation to many, is now not only not in the form of a river, but not even water; not like what we had thought our good works, which had so gratified our pride, but opposite in every respect. Instead of a wide stretch of country, with rich mountains and hills, upon which we could roam and feed, and refreshing rivers, and pools of human wisdom, all of which were ours, we see only barren waste of mountain sides and desolate islands.

Well may we be called blind. We look in vain for the delightful abundance we saw yesterday; no refreshing streams or fountains. Blind indeed must we be, for how can the rich abundance be gone so soon? But the change is not in what we saw, but in us. Another life is ours now by a new spiritual birth; a life holy and pure, which causes us to hunger and thirst after righteousness. What we trusted in and delighted in before cannot satisfy our needs any more. That righteousness was after the flesh, was natural. The righteousness we now require is after the Spirit, it is the righteousness of Christ. The river we delighted in flowed from earthly sources, from springs of human power; the river we now seek flows from the throne of God and the Lamb. It represents to us all the work and power and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is that which makes glad the city of God. But we do not yet know the wonderful work of grace which the Lord has begun in our souls. We only know that what we took pleasure in before we find no comfort in now. These things do not seem the same to us as before. It is as though we were blind. We cannot see any way of salvation from sin in anything that we can do. All human efforts can show us no way in which a sinner can be justified.

But here the Savior finds his people. He found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness—in our wilderness nature. No change in the wilderness, but a great change in us, in our power to see and to feel. The change is with Jacob. When the Sun finds the sinner, that moment the sinner finds the Sun. The wilderness is now found to be waste and howling, because the light of the Sun shows our nature to be dry and desolate, and full of evil propensities, full of sins and iniquities, like wild beasts, howling for their prey. The Lord led Jacob about and instructed him. When Jacob is led about and looks into his own heart by the light of life he sees his nature full of these evil things. When he is led to look away from himself he sees Jesus as the Lord our righteousness, and rejoices in him as the delightful summer land of the gospel.

"And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known." And so it is the blind who are to be brought, and there can be no uncertainty as to who is to bring them from darkness to light. Among men, even men of God, there is sometimes an appearance of question as to how the Lord will bring them. But this can never be known until they have been brought, then it will most surely be known. If any one of

them could ever be made to know beforehand how he is to know this secret, then it would not be true to say, "by a way that they knew not." But when the salvation has been experienced, then how sweet to talk it over. Nothing sweeter or more comforting than to look over the road in company with others who have come over the same road, and to see the same waymarks, and compare the places where they struggled together without knowing that they were so near each other. Nothing in all this world is so good and pleasant as to travel thus in company with those going together, especially when the dear Savior is pleased to draw near and talk with them of these precious things.

"I will make darkness light before them." I remember the thrill in my heart when I first saw and felt the meaning of this. Everything of a true spiritual character seems to have had a tendency to raise up in my heart some questioning as to the spirituality of my hope, and as I could not put darkness away out of my heart I was often tempted to doubt. Then one day I saw that this darkness, this trouble and sore affliction in my heart and life, was not to be put away now, but was to be made light before the Lord's people. "I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight." I was delightfully made to know that the darkness, the trial and of whatever kind, is to be made a candle, is intended to show me necessary things. Instead of taking away the darkness and putting light in its place, the darkness becomes a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. Trouble and affliction are the best of teachers. Darkness makes the clearest and most impressive kind of light. Sometimes there are terrible afflictions and unspeakably sore trials, which seem to spread darkness over and all around us, at times all our life on the earth, which from time to time show us great and glorious spiritual truths, and are thus blessed to us, being made light before us.

The Lord's people are led in paths that they have not known. They are led. It is the blind who are led. They need to be led, they must be led. The paths in which they are led from day to day cannot be known except by the Lord. We often say to ourselves: If I could only know the way beforehand; if I could only arrange my path for to-morrow. And it may be that we try to pray about it, asking the Lord to let us mark out our own path, and have our own way; and now as we look back over the way we have come how thankful we are that the Lord led us in paths that we had not known. The darkness remains darkness in a worldly sense, but it continues to do its work, being made light before us. By the faith of the dear Son of God which is given unto us we see wonderful and blessed things through the darkness which the light of this world would never have shown us, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen (by the natural eye). And so with the crooked things which the dear Savior only can make straight. He only has the power, he only knows the time, and he only has the secret. To mortal sight it is a contradiction to speak of a crooked thing being made straight and remain crooked at the same time, but that is just what the Lord does. It is the crooked thing in nature which the faith of God's afflicted and poor people is made to see straight as they look before them. It is the blind people who are made to see light before them, while in a natural sense they still remain blind. These are "the

blind people that have eyes." "Who is blind, but my servant? * * * Who is blind as he that is perfect?" I am come that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind. (John ix. 39.) It is the blind people that have eyes who see by faith the wonderful things in the gospel. And the best and sweetest of all is, "These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." How unspeakably blessed are they who have such trust; a trust only to be felt by the power of the Holy Spirit; a trust which the Lord only can give. When the outlook is very dark, when the way before us appears very crooked, it appears that we must surely die if we do not have our own way; then how good and pleasant to know that everything is going on quietly in the fulfillment of the dear Savior's purpose, who said, "These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 16, 1916.

REVELATION XXII. 18, 19.

"FOR I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Brother R. T. Hackney, of Pinsonfork, Ky., has requested me to write through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES my views on the above portion of Scripture, and, after considering the matter of complying with his request, I have concluded to suggest a few thoughts on the subject, and send them to you for your disposal, hoping if published they may be blest of the Lord, to some degree at least, to the comfort and encouragement of our dear brother, and also to others who may be interested in this wonderful and interesting subject; and not only so, but that some of our brethren who are favored with so much brighter light than I am may be so interested in this subject that they may write and give their views, for my vision of the Scriptures is very dim, and always has been, and I can give no particular reason for trying to preach and for writing occasionally for our wonderful medium of correspondence, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, than that my mind has been exercised for nearly sixty years in a way that causes me to believe that I am a servant of servants (God's children), and if so God has made me thus, and has caused me, lo, these many years, to realize in my heart that when these servants whom I have been and am called to serve say, Go, I ought to go, and when they say, Stay, I ought to stay, and when they say, Do this, I ought to do it. I ought to obey them to whom I have yielded myself servant to obey. I have often listened with anxiety and interest to the conversation of the precious brethren as to what they deemed the best evidence that God had called a man to preach, and of course I have pondered these things much all these many years, and as to myself, take away one line of evidence and I could not afford to make the first attempt, could not afford to speak in the name of the Lord, and that is the judgment of the church. If these precious servants whom I am serving should intimate to me that they doubted my call being of the Lord our God, I have not enough evidence beside to sustain me or cause me to go, for, taking all the evidence together, I more or less doubt my call being of God every day of my life. With this impression of mind I will offer a few thoughts on the subject on which my views are requested

for the consideration of brother Hackney, and the readers of the SIGNS generally, and they shall be subject to the criticism and correction of any of the brethren who may be favored to see these things in a clearer light than I can, for it is light that makes manifest, and all, I hope, desire to know the truth as it is in Jesus. There is no one included in this text but the children of God, as it is plainly shown in the sixteenth verse of this same chapter, which is in harmony with the entire tenor of the Scriptures: "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches," (but not out of them) having reference to the seven churches in Asia, or the different conditions of the one church, the Zion of our God, the holy city, whose maker and builder is God, and all these things mentioned in the text under consideration are confined to the corporate limits of this holy city, for without are dogs, and sorcerers, &c. "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book," &c. It seems to me that the word "heareth," in this connection means "understandeth," so these perversions are willful, are intentional, and "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." —James iv. 17. The inference here is, to him that knoweth not to do good, and doeth not good, to him it is not sin in the sense of this text. As is said in Matt. v. 19: "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." Not in the heaven of heavens, where there is no difference, where all is like Jesus, seeing him as he is, and enjoying heaven with all that heaven affords, but it is here in this kingdom of God, which is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. (Rom. xiv. 17.) There is one thing we should emphasize in our minds, and that is, that this text does not mean taking away or adding words or letters to the Scriptures, but taking away or adding to the words, that is, taking away or adding to the meaning or right construction, as many are doing, putting truth for error and error for truth, light for darkness and darkness for light, turning things upside down, and the logical conclusion is, if the up side is turned down, the down side is turned up, therefore, "hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee."—Isaiah xiv. 9. This is the antichrist powers made manifest in confusion and disorder. This wresting, extorting and misconstruing the Scriptures intentionally for filthy lucre's sake, and other causes as well, has been going on through the ages past as well as now in this our day, called by the wise and prudent of the present age a great day of progress and enlightenment, but this is a dark day of delusion and deception, and of great falling away. The apostle Peter said, in speaking of his beloved brother Paul's writings, in which he says there are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction. (2 Peter iii. 16.) This destruction has reference to and includes the same destruction that is referred to in the text under consideration, the inevitable result of wresting the true meaning from the words of the prophecy of this book, and handling the words of this book deceitfully. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," —Heb. x. 31; for chastisement, for adding

to or diminishing from his sacred word, for, "Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." —Prov. xxx. 5, 6. All the people under consideration in the text had their part in the book of life, and in the holy city, or their part could not be taken out of them. None of these things have any reference to their standing in Christ, for that cannot be affected in the very least, but those of God's children who have a name, place and part in this holy city, the new Jerusalem, the church of the living God, who sin wilfully after they have received the knowledge of the truth, (See Heb. x. 26–29,) breaking the commandments, misconstruing the Scriptures, adding and diminishing from God's sacred truth, will experience all these sufferings and privations here in their time state, having no more their name and place among the living in Jerusalem, the holy city, therefore this solemn warning given unto us by the angel whom Jesus sent to the churches should be prayerfully heeded by us all; therefore let us turn to and read Deut. iv. 2–4: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you. Your eyes have seen what the Lord did because of Baal-peor: for all the men that followed Baal-peor, the Lord thy God hath destroyed them from among you. But ye that did cleave unto the Lord your God are alive every one of this day." As this is true in the type, it is also absolutely true in the antitype, the spiritual Israelites, all who live after the flesh, going in the broad way, through the wide, counting the blood of the covenant, wherewith they were sanctified, an unholy thing, &c., are destroyed from among the living in Jerusalem, who are enjoying a name and place in the holy city. May God bless us to watch and pray.

W. J. MAY.

SHOCK, Ky., Jan. 26, 1916.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Jan. 8, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I will write some, and submit it to your judgment. I deem it unfair to say that any one who believes in the resurrection of the bodies of the saints believes that the resurrected body is a "dust body." No one believes such a thing. When Christ the Lord lived in the flesh his body was without a doubt like the body of other people, for those who saw him took him to be a man as other men were. He was born of a woman as others are, he lived with and among men as others do, he was crucified as an impostor, he was buried as a man, he arose again the third day. The body that rose was the same body that had been nailed to the cross and that died. He showed the nail prints in his hands and the hole which was made by the spear in his side. Was not the resurrected body the same that lived naturally and wrought miracles, that preached the gospel, rebuked the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the unbelief of the disciples, &c.? All that he did was to demonstrate the great power of God unto his children, and to save them from sin, death and the power of the grave. His body did not see corruption. He said by David, "Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh shall also rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."—Psalms xvi. 10. This language Peter quoted on the day of Pentecost when he was under the full power of the Holy Ghost (Acts ii. 26, 27), and de-

clared that it was the body of Christ that was raised according to that prophecy. The prophet was doubtless speaking of Israel when he said, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise."—Isaiah xxvi. 19. Here the Lord speaks of himself. "My dead body," in the singular, but of the saints, "Thy dead men," in the plural, and declares that they shall arise together with his dead body. Is not this proof positive that as Jesus arose in the same body in which he had lived, even so the saints shall arise in the same bodies in which they live here in this world? "And te graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."—Matt. xxvii. 52, 53. Were these bodies the same bodies of the saints which arose at that time in which those same saints had lived in the flesh? If not, how did the "many" who saw them know them when they saw them? When the Lord said, "Thy dead men shall live," was he speaking of the spiritual or the natural bodies? Is it not the natural body that dies? If so, were not the "dead men" the natural bodies? If so, were not the same bodies which should arise with the body of Christ the same natural bodies which were called, "Thy dead men"? Otherwise how are we to understand language? Is not this the same thing that Paul was presenting when he said, "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you"? —Rom. viii. 11. This is a declaration by the inspired apostle, aud there cannot be any mistake in it. Therefore these "dust bodies," mortal bodies, natural bodies, bodies of weakness that die or are sown, are the same bodies that shall be quickened and shall arise by the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead, which is the selfsame Spirit that dwelleth in all the saints, and by whom they live and are given grace to believe in the Lord Jesus, and to confess him to the glory of God the Father. If we do not believe this testimony it is because we are wrong. This teaching is true.

Now, it is fully proven that these dead bodies, mortal bodies, these very bodies in which we now live, are the very identical bodies that shall arise and meet and see the Lord Jesus and be with him. Let us see a little further: By what power shall this resurrection be? To be sure, by the Spirit of him who raised up our Lord Jesus from the dead, which Spirit he has given to dwell in us for the selfsame purpose. "Together with my dead body shall they arise," is the infallible word of God. The word, "together," is a dear and blessed word. He hath quickened us together, raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ready to be revealed in the last time. Thus the Lord works with us or in us now. This is the earnest of that which waiteth for us of the inheritance kept by the Father. The interest of earnest must be in the same coin, for it comes out by the Holy Spirit, our heavenly Guardian, as that by which we live and move and have our being in Christ Jesus. As he raises us up in spirit from all our sorrows and cares while here, so will he quicken our mortal bodies at his coming. That is when it will be. Until then we wait "for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."—Rom. viii. 23. That is not something we have now already received, or are receiving in our experiences as we go, but it is that

for which we are waiting in hope. This we shall receive when "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."—1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. At that time, and not until then, and, "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality, * * * then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"—1 Cor. xv. 52–55. What about this "dust body"? "This mortal shall have put on immortality." "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."—1 Cor. xv. 42–44. I will add to this the language of the Lord Jesus: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."—John v. 28, 29. This is the plain, simple language that needs not to be misunderstood. Then the disposition that shall be made of both classes is made clear by the Lord himself. In speaking of the first class, he said, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."—Matt. xxv. 34, and to the second class he said, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."—John v. 41.

Much other testimony might be given, but if they believe not this word they will not believe, though One has risen from the dead.

Your brother, I hope, in the hope of the resurrection of the dead at the second personal coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,

L. H. HARDY.

LET BROTHERLY LOVE CONTINUE.

(Hebrews xiii. 1.)

I FEEL a desire to-night to write, but do not know what to write. I worked, then read awhile, thinking of God's goodness and mercy to me, a worthless, sinful worm of the earth, and as I read the above words seemed to be as good a subject as any. But what am I to write concerning it? God only knows, and if it is his will for me to write anything good it will not have been written in vain. I am not a preacher, and am not going to preach a sermon, but I want to mention some thoughts concerning the subject.

In the first place, what is brotherly love? I must here acknowledge it is too much for one so ignorant to do justice to such a grand theme. How beautiful it is to see brethren dwelling together in unity. When a family of children love each other and parents so well they are obedient, self-denying and desire to do for each other's good, it is a beautiful sight, and the parents are wonderfully blessed, and are happy, but it is a miserable family who are pulling against each other, quarreling and fighting all the time. These parents are surely unhappy. As such things in nature are beautiful or ugly, they are more so in spirit. It is an awful sight to see a church, or spiritual

family, in confusion; there is no peace or unity there. Brotherly love! I have thought more about it to-night than ever before. When brethren and sisters esteem others better than themselves, love each other, desire to be as good and cannot do enough for them to show their love, they are letting brotherly love continue. They love to meet and talk of the goodness of their heavenly Father and Savior, who has done so much for them. There are many ways to prove our love. We should go to meeting regularly and early, and talk and sing, instead of joking and making fun. We should greet each other with a warm handshake and kind words, cheer the faint, comfort the sad, give to the needy, &c. We should call each other brother or sister, no matter how unworthy we feel, and we should not get too good in our estimation to do so. Sometimes when a brother goes wrong some one says, Go slow, be easy, or, Do not bother him, he may become offended and brotherly love will cease, but in such cases love is not continuing if we do not try to reclaim him. If we do not try to show him his error it proves we do not love him, but let love continue by going to him in love, humbleness and meekness and try to reclaim him. We should never speak harshly or lightly of one of God's children, for we are all alike in nature, and as sure as one boasts of being better than others he will sooner or later suffer for it. Then when we live for each other's good and God's glory he is pleased, and although the world hates us for Christ's sake, they cannot help but notice our orderly walk and godly conversation and respect, though they hate and revile us.

I have only touched the subject, but hope it will cause some of God's dear ones to think more about the way they live. If those who have written me do not get an answer, please do not be offended. My eyes are very weak, and I cannot answer all.

Pray for a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

GEO. W. JACKSON.

FAYETTEVILLE, Ga., Jan. 24, 1916.

FAYETTEVILLE, Ga., Jan. 30, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—If it is God's will, I wish to pen a few thoughts to you to-night, as I am alone and lonely. I think often (not half as much as I should) of God's goodness to such sinners as I am. How wonderful are his ways and works! They are too high above us in nature for us to comprehend them, and we can understand only when he is pleased to give us understanding, and reveal to us such things that please him and he sees is best for us. Suppose he should give us power to command just such weather as we want, what sort of condition would we be in? I would want it to be fair to-day, one neighbor would want it to rain; one would want cold weather, one warm weather, and so on. Would we not be in an awful condition? But he is too wise to err, and fixed all things according to his own pleasure and will. What he does is right, but humanity often complains, and some are so wicked as to curse at his dealings with them. We ought to be thankful for his wise arrangements of nature, which he alone controls, and the thousands of unmerited blessings showered upon us which we enjoy, though unconsciously sometimes, every moment of our lives. Although all power is in God's hand, and he works all things after the counsel of his own will, we have power through Christ to ask and it shall be given. One night I awoke with the words, "In his

name," on my mind, and I cannot express my feelings. There is more in these words than I can ever tell. Christ told the disciples if they asked the Father for anything in his name it would be given them. These words occur in the Bible many times. We ask in his name and God grants in his name, or for Christ's sake. Our petition never goes direct to God, but must go through Christ, as we in our nature cannot approach him in his purity. Christ, being our Savior and Mediator, must stand between us and the Father, and as we must be cleansed before approaching the throne, so must our petitions be clean, and when presented to the Father by the Son, he, for his Son's sake, according to their covenant which was made before time, answers through him, for as he is pure and we in nature vile, he cannot come in touch with us except through the Mediator. When we ask amiss, or from fleshly emotions, it is not in his name, and cannot reach the Father; but the blessings he has stored in Christ for us are not stored in vain, and never fail to be given to the ones they are intended for. This is a glorious thought, and I do desire, I hope, to live at his feet and in his service, for no harm can befall me when I am so near him. Though we may be persecuted, and even killed for his sake, it is only the flesh that suffers, and it is not any harm compared to eternal joys. The flesh must die, it must suffer, then why should we say being murdered for his sake is any worse than a natural death in peace? I am not free from fear, not brave, and I quake at the thought of the dark future, but I sometimes feel calm and ashamed when I think God has all power, has kept his people from the beginning, and will keep them to the end; how he has kept me, a vile sinner, all these years, for what? It must be for his glory, for he made all things for his own use, and though the wicked do not give him glory, yet he uses them for that purpose. I fear because I cannot subdue my body and keep it humble at Christ's feet. When I do anything that is approved by good people, self rises up for part of the glory, and I know it is wrong, but it is by the grace of God that I am not worse.

Dear children, pray for me. May he bless you all, is my prayer.

GEO. W. JACKSON.

ELGIN, Oregon, Jan. 11, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—The last number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at hand, and your reply to my request read with interest and pleasure. I do most heartily indorse your article, my brother, and I thank you for the interest you have taken in replying to my request. I feel it will do good, and will be profitable at this time. May the dear Lord be with you and bless you in your labors of love.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

HAMILTON, Texas, Jan. 29, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—If I am allowed to address you thus. As I am an old subscriber to the SIGNS, and have read all your writings that have been published in it, I think I can truly say that from your writings I am made to love you for the truth's sake. I know God is love, but I do not know that I love him, yet I hope I do, and if indeed I do, it is because he first loved me. I am sure I never did anything to influence him, for he is not subject to influences by any one or all beings in heaven or in earth, but is of one mind, and none can turn him. So he says, and so I believe, even that his love is from everlasting to everlasting.

He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, without variableness or the shadow of turning. O what a glorious thought to all who are spiritually taught. Indeed he is the rock, and all his works are perfect. Brother Lefferts, I am overcome with so deep a sense of my weakness and nothingness that I am now wondering why I am trying to write to one I have never seen nor ever expect to see in this life. The question is, Can it be love? If so, I am sure you will be charitable to my imperfect way of expressing what I may try to say, and that you will catch my meaning. If love is not my motive, I can only expose my ignorance and make a display of my weakness. If I had the pen of a ready writer I would write often for the dear old SIGNS, but know I have not, therefore do not. But as I am a lover of the glorious truth the editors and writers set forth, it seems that I can hardly refrain from trying to express myself, hoping it may be of some encouragement. Being no scholar, and a poor scribe, I cannot write intelligently, so I seldom make the attempt.

Before closing my scattering, disconnected thoughts, I wish to say that with all the changes of editors I see no change in the doctrine, which encourages my hope that the same God is still at the helm, and I wish the SIGNS continuance as long as God has a purpose in it. I do not think there can be a more vile sinner on earth than I have felt myself to be, and the older I grow the more I know I am a sinner. So if I am a child of God, this is the way I am growing in grace. I find it takes grace each hour I live while pressing on to the goal. Self seems to be the worst enemy I have to contend with. Truly does the poet say, self and pride must be denied. I believe self-hatred is an evidence of love to God, and that grace alone makes the distinction among the human race.

Now my mind reverts to your editorial in regard to "the very elect," in which some one, brother Mayfield I believe, asked your views. I must tell you I have for a long time held a different view, and cannot quite give it up yet, that there is a distinction between the elect and the very elect, the latter meaning the gospel church. This is the way I have been looking at it, but I am not well enough established to say I know my position is correct. I am sure our difference is in love, and if I knew you were wrong I could not question your sincerity, but doubt your judgment, and hope you will allow the same to me. If you will convince me that the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church as a body can be deceived by false prophets to overthrow their faith, I would have to think the gates of hell, or false churches (which I think means the same thing), would prevail against them. We know all the redeemed shall be with him in heaven, and why so many are led astray, I reckon, is because the leaders do cause the people to err, as Christ said. Well, I must say God knows all things, and I know nothing as I ought to know it, yet believing he can make something out of nothing, I am still dragging along between hope and doubt. If so much so poorly said contains a word of comfort or encouragement, may God have the praise, to whom all praise belongs. I cannot ask your precious time to answer this, but I ask your prayers. May you continue steadfast and unmovable in the work of the Lord, inasmuch as your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Unworthily, yours in hope,

W. D. WOOD.

[THE foregoing letters from brethren Mayfield and Wood illustrate how good

brethren may not see exactly alike on a certain subject and still both be in love and fellowship with each other and the people of God. We are glad our article on "the very elect" met brother Mayfield's approval, and appreciate the admirable spirit in which brother Wood takes exception to our views.—L.]

SANTA CRUZ, California, Jan. 29, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I often think of you, and the last sermon I heard you preach at Frying Pan. It was as clear and as convincing as the word of God, for it was his word, and your editorials in the SIGNS comfort and stablish me. The longer I live the more convinced I am that God has a chosen people, that they are those who call themselves Old School or Primitive Baptists, and I am very thankful that I am numbered among them, even though I feel my unworthiness. It is a great trial to me to be so far separated from those who are so near and dear for the truth's sake, but in it, as in all things, I feel that it is for my good, though just how, I am unable to understand. I am glad that we do not know his will concerning us, that we walk by faith instead of sight, and that he rules in earth as he does in heaven. A wonderful, merciful and just ruler! Surely we want no one beside him, for he is all-powerful and we are so sinful and so helpless, can never do a thing to merit his favor, yet we live because he lives, we have fled to him for refuge, his words are ever-present, and what more can he say than he has said? His promises stand like the eternal hills, we are fenced by his immutable shalls and wills, he is our everlasting portion. I am happy in him to-day, but the more of his beauty he discloses the more unprofitable I seem to be; the higher my joys rise, the lower I want to lay my mouth in the dust. Yet some day we shall see him and be like him, and with what body never disturbs me; I class that as one of the mysteries of godliness. I believe in an unconditional salvation, and that embraces absolute predestination. There can be no compromise, since the end was known from the beginning. People and things were not created by chance, nor are there any chances to be taken in the saving of souls. When Jesus said on the cross, "It is finished," the plan of salvation was sealed, the foundation of his people was sure. But I am presuming to write of the things of his kingdom to one who has been taught more deeply, whose life has been more spiritual, whose footsteps have been more in accord with those of the Master, and who may hear in my bleating nothing to remind him of one of the Lord's sheep. But, dear brother, if my cry is weak, if the sound of my voice is uncertain, it is because I am so far from you all; no one to strengthen when I am almost ready to fall; no one to instruct me in the certain sound. O yes, I have the word of God for my comfort and guide, and sometimes I feel his presence, then it is well with me, but when doubts and fears arise I need the cheer and company of his people; I want to look into their faces, to feel the pressure of their hands, to have heart answer to heart and to hear the preached word, that I may be edified and encouraged, that my hope may be renewed. I enjoyed the last number of the SIGNS exceedingly. The first article carried me back to my girlhood days, to the days when I first plead for mercy, and when, even before I had a hope, to sweetness of the going to him overbalanced the uncertainty of the result. It suited me at one time of the day more than any other to go into the nearby woods to call on

him for mercy, and I went with eagerness and delight. But why those days were recalled are owing to these facts: I had heard brother Trott preach up to that time ever since I was a small child, and was as pleased when he visited our home as if he had been a relative. He baptized my mother, and at his funeral I could not get close enough to the casket, the place seemed sacred to me. I wondered why people cried when so good a man died, and I wished I could exchange places with him. Later, I came to know brother Leachman, and I thought him the most wonderful man in my small world. I listened to and believed every word he spoke, both in preaching and in conversation, though I understood nothing of what he was saying. In after years when I was to be married, it was he who performed the ceremony. The memory of these two men is a sweet fragrance unto this day. As time passed, when I understood more clearly, when I hoped that God for Christ's sake had forgiven my sins, I had the great privilege of hearing Elders William and Joseph Purington, Conklin, Hartwell, Chick and Badger; it was then that I knew why I had loved Elders Trott and Leachman so well. Four years ago I had the great privilege of hearing preach the writer of the above mentioned article, something I had desired for nearly forty years, and when the call comes for me I hope I may have the assurance that it will be as well with my soul as I think he must have, not for what he has done, but for what has been done for him. It seemed to me that he was ready for the kingdom, that the purging and the washing had been complete. It was at that same time that I heard you, and I rejoiced that God was raising up such gifted young men to take the place of those hoary hairs and of those who had fallen asleep. You preached with the spirit and the understanding, and my heart was glad. I could ask no greater blessing in life than to be a member of your congregation and to be able to attend every meeting day.

I am not just in the humor to stop writing, but knowing my littleness, that you are a busy man, and that I have no claim on your patience, am going to lay my pen aside. I enjoy the SIGNS, read the editorials with pleasure, and, I hope, profit, never ceasing to pray that He may be mindful of you both, preparing you for your work, and that he will spare you many years to wield your pens in defense of the truth.

Your unworthy sister, through the merit of our crucified and risen Redeemer,

MARY E. WRIGHT.

HOPEWELL, New Jersey.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—For a long time I have felt a desire to once more write you, but have left it until now, not that I have any more to say now, but I have just taken my pen and desire the Lord will direct it, for of myself I could not write of interest or comfort to any one. I am well aware of the weakness of my flesh, and know, too, that I am a weak sinner, and if saved at all I am saved by grace. I have enjoyed the SIGNS very much, and I only want to speak of one article, and that is brother Lefferts' on The age of accountability. He says some can remember when they were convicted when they were young children. If I have ever had any serious thoughts of sin, or of death, it began when not eight years old. Many times I have gone to bed and cried myself to sleep. Sometimes mother would hear me, and come and sit by me. I would try and read the SIGNS with such beau-

tiful poetry in them. Often sister Marianne Murray would write, and often sister Lucy Heckard. Many times I would try to understand the Bible, but if any one came where I was reading the book would be out of sight, for I had such a fear of some one finding me reading. I see others have often spoken of not wanting any one to know they were reading the Scriptures, and I am not to this day able to know why this fear. When I used to try and spell the words out, how could I have the fear of some one if it had not been given me? I have no fear of any seeing me read it now, but, I am sorry to say, I have not as great a desire to read as once I had, and it perplexes me. I have tried to read it more, but the light seems to be gone out when I try, but it is my continued desire to be led and kept as it reads. I of myself cannot do one good thing, neither can I do a spiritual act without right by me stands Satan, and he tells me how good or well I did, and to keep on doing good, and all the pleasure of it goes, and I am left to grieve that Satan keeps so near. I am sure I am as I was meant to be, but how often I am envying some one the good I see them do, and feel glad it pleases the Father to bestow on them such good and kind acts, and continue to desire that it will please him to allow me to do, and to be thankful to him for it. The word says, Be not weary in well doing, and it touches me very close, for I grow weary so soon; but may the Father of mercies keep me, and guard and guide me all my journey through. May I be given faith and strength as my day. I do desire to trust the Father all my journey, but often I find myself as Uzza, who put forth his hand to the cart to steady it, I want to see what I can do, and always have found death to my trying in my own strength to do the works of God. Why cannot I be patient and wait the Father's time? for he neither slumbers nor sleeps, and in his own time does all things, and why cannot I trust him? I look back over my life, and he has always been merciful to me. How he has kept me melts me to tears sometimes, for of my own self where would I have been? I do not dare think where. If I have any pleasure in the Scripture it is in reading in Timothy, Peter, James, Ephesians and Hebrews, most particularly where it gives order, and directs us to do the better things, and why is it that so much of it is not heeded? Why is it, so much confusion, and judging, and hurting the brethren? I am often made to feel, yes, leader, ruler, the word says, Let each esteem others better than themselves, and would it not be well to act it more? The "I" seems so often of too much importance, and often gives much distress. O, that we could be humble and contend for peace, instead of confusion, and dwell together in love and peace. It seems to me sometimes that rumors are not good, for they keep the brethren from being of one mind, but instead they divide, they make one speak wrong of another, and so on, until they destroy or upset the minds of dear ones. O that such things would not be, and that weakness and love would reign more, and I cannot but feel that many who have felt a desire to come and dwell with the brethren would feel different from what they do now. How much better if all were for Christ, instead of some being for Apollos, or for Cephas; Christ is our guide. O that we could do as he taught the disciples.

I have already made this too long, and have not said things that I hoped to say, but if the editors see fit to publish it may all throw the mantle of charity over it.

May God's blessing rest upon all, and be with the sick and afflicted.

Truly,

MARY HILL TERRY.

AZEL, Texas, Jan. 30, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—It is past time for me to send in my subscription to our most precious medium of correspondence, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for the year 1916. I call it ours, because I have been blessed with the privilege of reading its columns for the last few years, and I can say I surely believe the doctrine it sets forth: the predestination of all things, or God's purpose in all things whatsoever come to pass. There are many lo heres and lo theres, but go not after them. Some say, Do not use the word "absolute," because it is not in the Bible. Well, are "permissive decrees" mentioned in the Bible? If so, I have not seen them. Job said, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Paul said, The children not being yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said unto him, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. Now if God purposed this it is sure he predestinated it; so it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. Some tell me that if God predestinated all things, and man does what God foresaw he would do, he cannot help it, God would be unjust. But does it matter what man says or thinks? The truth of everything is of God, for God is truth. Paul said, It is a small thing for him to be judged of any man. Should the Lord's servants try to modify the written word of God? Paul said, The things I would, I do not, and the things I would not, them I do; so we conclude Paul did some things because he could not help it, but he did not try to justify himself by predestination. We hear him say that some affirm that we say, Let us do evil that good may come, whose damnation is just. Then he says, Are we better than they? No, in no wise. We hear one say, God is before all things, and by him all things consist, whether things present or things to come, all things were created by him and for him, and the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder he will restrain. Christ told Pilate that he could have no power at all against him, except it were given from his Father. We hear one say, We have lost none but the son of perdition, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, and that he might go to his own place. Christ told a certain people that they were of their father the devil, and the lusts of him they would do. There are lords many and gods many, but to us there is but one God, and he rules all things. He works his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; whatsoever his soul desireth even that he doeth. This God chose his people in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. The old prophet said, O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. All that was written aforetime was written for our learning, that we through the comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Now it seems that all had faith in the God of all power, and one said to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Paul said, As you are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith and one baptism, and surely the editors and writers of the

SIGNS have contended for this one God and one faith. Why do they contend for this doctrine? Because they cannot see any strength in man to contend with God. Paul said, What am I, that I could withstand God? Christ said to his disciples when some turned back, Wilt thou also go away? Peter said, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. That is the reason all do not turn back. The faith that is given them in Christ shows them that there is no salvation in anything but Christ, and where could they go? for cursed is man that trusteth in man or maketh flesh his arm. But there are some who measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves among themselves, and these would modify the written word of God to suit themselves. But if one comes bringing not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. But if one comes proclaiming the blessed truth: salvation by grace, and sets forth a God of all power, who works all things after the counsel of his own will, we can say that is truth.

Please excuse me for troubling you and imposing my weak thoughts upon you. Inclosed you will find a check, for which please send me the SIGNS another year. I am glad to see every copy, for they furnish me most of the preaching I get, as I am not able to get to our meetings regularly. May the Lord give the editors and writers grace to withstand the fiery darts hurled at them. Fear not, for greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world, for Christ overcame the world. I would love to speak a word of encouragement to you all, but am too weak.

With love to the household of faith, yours unworthily,

A. A. HAMM.

COVINGTON, Ga., Feb. 8, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I am only writing you a short note to call your attention to a slight error in your editorial in the SIGNS of February 1st in regard to Samson. In Hebrews xi. 32, you will notice he is mentioned along with Gideon, David and others. I thought, although it is of small importance, you would prefer to correct it. Now, brother Lefferts, allow me to say I feel to thank God that he has provided us with such able gifts as Elder Ker and yourself. May he sustain and strengthen you by his grace, and enable you to keep the dear old SIGNS at that high and exalted position where it has ever stood.

I am inclosing some lines I wrote about a year ago, and you can use them in the SIGNS if you deem them worthy the space. They were suggested in consequence of the late sad bereavement through which I have passed, and knowing there are many of your readers who have drunk deep of sorrow's cup, I thought they might touch a responsive chord in some crushed and broken heart:

How oft we strive, and strive in vain,
  To win enduring joy,
Yet on we strive and hope to gain
  Pure gold without alloy.

But changes come with passing years,
  And fondest hopes decay;
All earthly joys dissolve in tears,
  Take wings and fly away.

Do what you may, go where you will,
  This world can give no rest;
The aching heart it cannot still,
  Nor soothe the troubled breast.

Till memory fails can we forget
  Those loved ones gone before;
O shades of sorrow and regret,
  Can life afford no more?

Gain the world with all its treasures,
  Its glory and renown,
Drink of all its joys and pleasures,
  And tell me what you've found.

There comes a time that's far or near
For each and every one,
When earthly hopes all disappear,
And are forever gone.

But is there not a better life,
Where sorrows never come;
A life so pure no care or strife
Can e'er becloud that home?

To faith and hope we bid adieu,
On these no more depend;
Eternal life we have in view,
And love that cannot end.

In christian love and fellowship, I hope, your brother in Christ,

EDWARD HEARD.

[WE thank brother Heard for so kindly calling our attention to our misstatement in the fifth line, first column, of our article on "Samson" in the February 1st SIGNS. The thought we had especially in mind was that Samson is nowhere mentioned as being a type of Christ, and we overlooked the fact that he is named as a subject of faith in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. We hope our readers will pardon this slip of our pen.—L.]

BERWICK, Maine, Sept. 20, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I inclose a good letter written me a long time ago by Elder F. A. Chick, which you may think worthy of a place in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I had purposed to meet you at Woburn, your last appointment there, but was prevented, and it is doubtful if I ever get there again.

Sincerely yours,

R. C. CLARK.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Jan. 8, 1893.

DEAR BROTHER CLARK:—I have had it in my heart and mind to write you ever since my return from Maine. I have often thought of your afflictions, and trust that I have felt a deep desire at times that God, the God of all grace, might comfort and help you by manifesting his presence to you. I feel like writing to you to-night, and as I am not sure of your post-office will send it in care of your brother at North Berwick. While I feel drawn to write to you, yet I feel as though I am the very poorest comforter of all the number that profess to be ministers of the cross of Christ, as I think. Thus I have been glad many times that we have one Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father has sent in Jesus' name, and I rejoice that he can take even the weak words of a mortal like me and use them for the comfort of the children of God. In all of comfort, or hope, or help that we may be to each other, to God alone must all praise be rendered, and thus we are kept from trusting in man on the one hand, or glorying in him on the other. Indeed, my dear brother, I do feel a deep sympathy for you in the sore trial that has come upon you that is harder for you to bear than death itself would be. But I have been thinking of this, If poor, erring mortals like us can pity the sorrows of another, and desire to impart strength and comfort, how much more does the pity of the dear Savior, who was tried in all things as we are, and therefore knows how to comfort us, embrace all his loved ones, and he can comfort and help you. We are very weak and impotent, but he is strong, and able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto God by him. I know that you have proved this in the past, and I am sure that you know these things better than I can tell you. Of one thing I am sure, all is in the hand of God, and not a single shaft can hit, except the God of love sees fit. There have been a few times of sore trouble in my life, and at such times I have found my help and comfort and strength to endure in the strong doctrine of the word of God. His sovereignty,

predestination, power, wisdom, omnipotence and omniscience have at such seasons been my help and comfort. Doctrine that in the days of my prosperity had been as the hard and flinty rock to me now became the source of consolation. I could then suck honey out of the rock and oil out of the flinty rock. My brother, may your soul be anchored here in all the days and months of your heartbreaking trial. I know of nothing better to say than the words of the apostle, which though quoted again and again never lose their value and preciousness. We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. "We know," this is the apostle's testimony. How do we know unless it be because we know God and his goodness and love to his people? Having a view of the power and goodness of God, we must know that nothing can harm those whom he loves. I am persuaded, my dear brother, that you know these things, and are established in them. May you also know the comfort of them in your heart. Many things are given us as trial tests of our faith and love, and in these sorrows are our opportunities to exhibit the power of living faith. Thus Job was tried, but in it all the faith that was in him got a noble victory and helped him to say, Shall a man receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall he not receive evil? Again, he said, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. I trust you have known the triumphs of this faith, and that you may continue to know them in all the hours of your sore affliction. I hope the knowledge that I remember you may prove a comfort, even if what I have written does you no good. May God bless and keep you in the joy of his presence.

I remain your brother in a precious hope, F. A. CHICK.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Jan. 4, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I feel so fearful to say brother, for fear I am not a sister. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? This was the cry of the dear Redeemer when on the cross. He knew he was God, and also knew he had to be put to death as the Father had willed it, yet in his sufferings for the sins of all the elect his flesh cried out; he felt to be forsaken of God. So does every heaven-born child of God feel they are forsaken of him at times. Very poor sinners see their heart as a cage of unclean birds, then they cry, Lord, save me, for I am a brother to dragons and a companion to owls. Like the thief on the cross, they cry, Lord, remember me. What did the dear Redeemer say? This day shalt thou be with me in paradise. Think of this promise; O how favored! Paradise of God; saved by his grace; in no other way can poor sinners be saved. To be with him and be like him is the christian's hope when done with this tabernacle of clay, in which we groan, being burdened. But remember the Savior was burdened and heavy laden, pressed as a cart laden under many sheaves. He bore the sins of all the elect, he came to do just what his heavenly Father had for him to do, finished the work and said, It is finished, and gave up the ghost. O how complete in him, a finished salvation, nothing left for mortal man to do. Each one of God's dear children has to fill the place appointed unto them here in this vile world, and walk in the path marked out for them. Sometimes they feel to turn back, for the way seems hard and hedged up. Trials and sorrows seem to crush them, but He says, This is the way, walk ye in it. All the way the Lord did lead Jacob, and there was no strange god with him. But they

cannot at all times feel that God is leading them, and then they cry, Has he forsaken me? Has he forgotten to be gracious? Are his mercies clean gone forever? He never leaves nor forsakes them, but is leading them all the time, though at times the way is dark, and they cannot see; but he makes darkness light and crooked things straight; the Lord doeth all these things. He knows the pitfalls and snares, and will yet deliver; his arm is not shortened, he is God. The thought came to my mind of Revelation, and of what John saw: There appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. A wonder; yes, wonderful, wonderful, a woman, the bride, the Lamb's wife, clothed with the Sun of Righteousness, the law under her feet. The poor children of God do not know they are trying to keep the law until the Sun of Righteousness shines in their hearts, then they are made to see they are saved by grace; not by works, but by grace are ye saved. Where would I have been except for a merciful God? He brought me up out of a horrible pit and miry clay, placed my feet upon a rock and established my goings and put a new song in my mouth; I hope it was the song of the redeemed; then I felt like singing his praises all the time. I get in such a doubtful condition; I feel all this is too wonderful for me. His loving-kindness O how free, for God's little ones, but not for me. Then again I feel, "If I must sing, I'll sing of grace." So I go halting along, like one of old, "lame on both feet." I feel to say the SIGNS is very precious to us, and I hope both you, Elder Ker, and Elder Lefferts, will be strengthened to write and expound the Scriptures as you have in the past, and God be praised. If you feel to do so, please write of what the crown of twelve stars upon her head signifies. A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.

With love and fellowship for all poor sinners,

MARY BREWSTER CONNER.

WAVERLY, Pa., Feb. 3, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I just want to say plainly to you that your editorial in the SIGNS of January 15th, in answer to brother Jackson, did me more good than anything I have ever read on the subject of predestination. I have read it four times, and it does seem to me unanswerable in any way, except to say amen to it. I also enjoyed your editorial of December 1st. I cannot understand why one brother should be so anxious to criticise another brother, even when he quotes Scripture, and correctly, too, to prove his position. I have never heard a sermon in my life, and I have heard a great many in fifty years, but what there would be hundreds of expressions which were not Bible quotations, but nearly every one presented a scriptural truth. It is good to be zealous in a good cause, but I do not feel that stirring up strife is a good cause, even though I may have been the guilty one. I often think how nice it would be to always listen to the brethren without any carnal or fleshly feelings, even if they should say things that we could not harmonize with our way of thinking. But, brother Ker, we are fearfully and wonderfully made, and sometimes you could leave off the letter "e" in my case. It seems so strange that we cannot bear with the infirmities of our brethren when we know that we are full of infirmities of every name and nature.

Brother Ker, God Almighty has absolutely (independently) put you and brother Lefferts where you are, and this is one of God's doings that I am perfectly satisfied with. I would like to see and hear you again very much.

Love to you and your care.

D. M. VAIL.

WESTON, Mich., Jan. 15, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST:—Allow one so unworthy to address you thus. I often feel when reading in the SIGNS that I wish I could write like such an one, but I am not gifted in that way, although, if I know my own heart, I have a hope which I would not exchange for worlds like this. It is now fifty years since I hope the dear Lord heard my cry for mercy, when I was sinking down to the depths of hell. I was made to cry, Show pity, Lord, O Lord, forgive; let a repenting rebel live. All at once my trouble seemed to be gone, and I was made to rejoice in God as my Savior. I thought my trials were over and all my trouble gone, and that joy, peace and pleasure should be my lot, but I have passed through many dark and trying scenes since then, and now I often wonder, Am I his, or am I not? It seems very lonely since the death of my husband, Elder T. J. Wyman, with no meeting to go to. There are only two left of the Fairfield Church, James Wyman and myself. I am writing to send the obituary of Mr. Wyman's mother, whom some of the ministering brethren will remember. I should have written long before, but have been away from home for six months caring for a sick daughter, but the Lord saw fit to raise her up again, for which I am very thankful. May the dear Lord be with the editors of the SIGNS, and still enable them to wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon. Turn to hymn 962, in Beebe's collection, and read, "O for a thousand tongues to sing my dear Redeemer's praise."

If you think this worthy of space print it, if not, cast it aside. When it is well with you, remember me at the throne of grace.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

(MRS.) T. J. WYMAN.

GOLDEN CITY, Missouri, Feb. 12, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have long felt that it was my duty to write a few lines to thank you for your kindness in sending me the dear paper, for I do certainly appreciate it. Often, in the past, I have felt impressed to write to some dear one whose letter in the SIGNS had especially comforted me, but a sense of my unworthiness caused me to postpone it, and they were called away. If it would not be presuming, I would like to say to all the dear ones, I do appreciate your writings very much. Dear Elder Durand, what a shock it gave me when a sister in the church here in the south asked me if I thought he was a sound Baptist. My reply was, that if he is not, I did not know anything about Baptist doctrine. I would say to sister Runkle, I feel thankful that she is gifted to write to the consolation of such feeble, unworthy creatures as I. I have often, when a young girl, heard her dear father preach at the Sandy Creek Association, and still remember his face. I had great respect for him then, but as yet knew nothing of that love that I hope I feel now for all the dear household.

Now, dear ones all, I do not expect to be here much longer, as I am in my seventy-third year, but I hope and trust that the Lord will prepare me for the change. I know I cannot prepare my-

self. I am far away from any church of our faith and order, and never expect to hear preaching again.

I must mention brother J. F. Beeman. His letters have always specially interested and comforted me. There are many others I would like to name, but space forbids.

Dear brethren editors, my sincere desire or prayer is, that if it is the Lord's will you may be spared long to comfort and instruct the poor in spirit, and may he sustain you by his grace, and enable you to bear your burdens. Please remember in your prayers a lonely traveler.

Unworthily, your sister in a precious hope,

(MRS.) C. A. STRATTON.

OTEGO, N. Y., Oct. 21, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have many times thought of writing you since your dear wife was taken from you, and then I would feel that no words of mine could be of comfort to you in your great sorrow, and, too, I am a poor writer, and so the months and years go by and I do not do the things I should, and am continually doing the things I should not. Why is it; can you tell? I think often of you in your sad and lonely life, and so many times think of your pleasant home, and sister Ker and the children in the home when I attended the Warwick Association, at Warwick, in 1908, and stayed all night at your house on my way home. How much of sorrow there is in life. We, too, have had to part with a dear one, and how we all miss sister Susie. It seemed we could not go on without her, but we just had to, though at times I feel ready to give up all, and that I can never endure it. It was a great loss to us. She was so capable and useful in the church and the home, and I am so ignorant and feel my unfitness to do the things that have fallen to my lot; still God reigns, and I would not murmur, but I do desire wisdom and strength to do the right things at all times. We are still at the old home. The church people here are well, and we are in peace one with another, and our dear pastor, Elder Vail, comes to us each first Sunday preaching Jesus as the way of life and salvation to poor sinners, such as I feel myself to be. I have less comfort and enjoyment in spiritual things as the years go by, and very often wonder who I am, and what I am, and if I really know anything of the great and glorious things of the kingdom of God; then my mind always goes back to the year 1895, when, as I hope, I was given a good hope through grace, and I can but feel that was of God, for then Jesus all the day long was my joy and my song. Now I go along in a dull and lifeless way; yes, and often feel to be dead, and wonder what manner of person I am; my life is so different from what a child of God should be, and I cannot do the things I would. I would very much like to hear you proclaim the unsearchable riches of God, as it has been my privilege to do in years that are past. I was sorry not to have been able to attend the Roxbury Association in September, but my work and cares are many since sister Susie left us, and I cannot go much from home. I am glad Elder Lefferts is associated with you in conducting the SIGNS. I, like many others, after Elder Chick was taken, could think of no one else who could fill the place so ably.

I did not think to write so much, but was just going to send a little obituary of one of our number who was called home in September, and also send a copy of a letter sister Weatherly wrote to the church several years ago. If you think best to publish it, or any part of it, you may.

Yours in christian love, from a sinner,

ROSE TAMSETT.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1916.

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EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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ZECHARIAH XIII. 7-9.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Will you please give your views through the SIGNS on the text recorded in Zechariah xiii. 7-9? "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones. And it shall come to pass that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God." Do you understand this to mean God's protecting care over the little ones, as it is the will of the Father that not one of these little ones who believe in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ shall perish?

Yours in hope, WM. F. SLOAN.
LEXINGTON, Ky.

In the first verse of this thirteenth chapter of Zechariah the declaration, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and uncleanness," is found. The expression, "In that day," is often used in the Old Testament Scriptures, and no doubt had reference to the gospel day. For instance the word says, "It shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which are ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts of the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem." Here it seems evident that the trumpet signified the gospel, or glad news to those ready to perish and to the outcasts of Israel. In the days of old at a certain season there was a silver trumpet blown in the camps of Israel. It never gave an uncertain sound, but always the same sound, which was known and understood by the Israelites. It declared liberty to the captives, freedom to those who were bound, and that the debts of those who were in debt were canceled. A beautiful figure of the gospel of the grace of God: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." This is the sound of the gospel trumpet, declaring liberty to the captives, freedom to them. bound by the fetters of sin, and that the debt they owed both law and justice is forever canceled. In Malachi iii. 17, we have the following language: "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." By referring to the first two or three verses of this third chapter of Malachi it will be readily seen that the seventeenth verse, just referred to, declared the work of Christ during his ministry in the flesh and in the Spirit, rather than the end of all things, when the redeemed of the Lord shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. His work in the flesh was to redeem and justify his bride, and beginning with the calling of the apostles, the making up of the jewels began, and has continued until the present hour, and will continue until the last jewel is gathered from among men. Even to-day the church is a royal diadem in

the hand of her God. We have called attention to these two places in the Scriptures where the words, "In that day," are used, to show that the same truth is presented in the first verse of the chapter before us. The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had promised to visit their seed with redemption and salvation, and that in his own way and time. Here in this chapter he renews his promise by saying, In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and uncleanness. It might be asked, If the fountain was opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, how can Gentiles be benefited by it? It seems to us this way: that inasmuch as Christ was of the house of David, and the Gentiles are children of God by adoption in him and have their life standing in him, that they are the children of Abraham and heirs according to the promise. Hence all the children of God, both Jews and Gentiles, are of the house of David and therefore the inhabitants of Jerusalem. All the works of the Lord are known unto him from the beginning, and as sin entered the world there must be an end of sin, a cleansing, a washing, a purifying of his chosen people, and this could be done only in the fountain opened for that special purpose. There seems to be presented a distinction in this first verse between sin and uncleanness, and the fountain was opened for both. Sin must be forever washed away by the one offering, and, as it seems to us, uncleanness, embracing all vile and evil speeches, all ungodly acts, must be purged away in the one fountain while the church sojourns here in the wilderness of sin. This fountain is nothing less than the shed blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God, which "blood can cleanse the foulest stain and can avail for me." The faith of the church has ever been the same in all ages of the world. Abel saw this fountain in his day. The harlot Rahab saw it in her day when she bound the scarlet line in the window, knowing that it meant salvation to her and her house. The dying thief rejoiced to see it as he was paying the just penalty for his crimes, and the poet saw it when he said, May I there, though vile as he, wash all my sins away. When the Lord's appointed time came for the fountain to be opened he called upon the sword to awake and smite his Shepherd. This reminds us of the words of Jesus to Pilate: Thou couldest have no power against me at all except it were given thee from above. How wonderful that the Lord endured sin to reign just so long, then called upon the sword, or offended law, to awake and smite the Shepherd. The sword had slumbered, as it were, from the day of Adam's transgression, a period of thousands of years, but was in no sense dead, and its demands must be met before the guilty could be justified with God. The law did awake with all its fury, demanding the death of the transgressor, and as the sinner could not undo what he had done, the Shepherd took his sins upon himself and was smitten by the sword, or law, thereby fulfilling its demands in every jot and tittle.

We should all remember that the shepherd here spoken of was God's fellow as well as his Shepherd. The term "fellow" means equal. Yes, the Son was equal with the Father, and thought it not robbery, yet made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant and became obedient even unto death. Well can it be said of Jesus that he was God manifest in the flesh, and well could Jesus say, I and my Father are one.

The term, "my Shepherd," signifies that the flock belonged to the Father, and that he appointed the Son overseer or Shepherd. This is in harmony with what Jesus said to the Father: Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, hence he could by right redeem them.

Brother Sloan wants to know if the hand over the little ones means God's protecting care over all his people? To this we answer yes, but in a secondary sense. He will remember that Jesus said, This night all of you shall be offended because of me, and shall forsake me. Peter replied, Though all men forsake thee, yet will I not. But the words of the Lord are ever true, and there must not be one exception when he said, All shall forsake me. Peter was sincere, and verily thought he could do what he had promised, but like all of us failed and denied the Lord of mercy and salvation. When Jesus was betrayed into the hands of wicked men, according to the determinate counsel of God, all the disciples forsook him and fled, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled which said, Smite the Shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones. This, then, is of course the first application of the text. The Lord had called and ordained the apostles to the work of the gospel ministry, and their mission must be accomplished, hence he turned his hand over them, protecting them from death, but delivered Jesus unto death because of his purpose and plan. Nothing could take his life until the appointed time, neither could any take the life of the apostles, witnesses of the Lamb, until their words were heard in all the world by all nations. It is verily true that the hand of the Lord is over all his sheep, and that nothing shall separate them from him, and that no cross, no loss, no burden shall ever overtake them that strength is not given to bear. Faithful is our God to all eternity; bless his holy name.

"And it shall come to pass that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off, and die, but the third shall be left therein." It seems to us that the "land" spoken of here was that portion given Abraham and his seed for a possession. If so, those therein were Jews, hence the cutting off of the two parts signifies the cutting off of the "natural branches of the tame olive tree," or in other words the rejection and overthrow of the Jewish nation as a body, the Lord taking the kingdom from them. As branches separated from a vine or tree wither and die, so the Jews became dead to the "true Vine," and remain spiritually dead to this day, with an exception now and then, in fulfillment of the word of God as embraced in the text. "The third part." This signifies a smaller part, or "remnant according to the election of grace." The church, spiritually, was composed at first of thirteen, the Head and the twelve apostles, but on the day of Pentecost the Lord added three thousand souls, and, as we understand, all Jews. These practically composed the "third part" left in the land, and they were brought through the fire, persecutions, severe trials, losses and crosses for their faith in Jesus and his blood. In such fire they were refined as silver is refined and tried as gold is tried." As the refiner's fire is very hot in order to consume all dross, so the persecutions of the early church were severe to prove and try the faith of "the third part," but the Lord brought them off more than conquerors through Him that loved them and gave himself for them. The expression, They shall call on my name and I will

hear them, is very significant, and Peter expressed the feeling of all saints when he asked Jesus, saying, Lord, unto whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. Such faith and confession the Lord always hears and blesses in saying, "It is my people," and in return they say, "The Lord is my God." All this is true now of the Lord's people experimentally, and will continue the same while time lasts, and they are just as sure to be brought through, not left in, the fire as were the Jews and early church.

We now leave the subject for the consideration of brother Sloan and others who may read our views. K.

I CHRONICLES XVI. 22; PSALMS CV. 15.

"TOUCH not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm."

The ark of God had been sojourning in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite after the fall of Uzza, who had fallen through being smitten of the Lord on account of his having put out his hand to steady the ark when the oxen stumbled. Now David, having subdued the Jebusites, makes Jerusalem the capital of his kingdom, and after having established the seat of his government there, goes down to the house of the Gittite with the elders of Israel and the captains over thousands, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord. This they do, the Levites bearing the ark, with "shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and harps." This, then, is the occasion of David's wonderful psalm of thanksgiving, in which his mind is stirred up to recall all the way the Lord has led his people in all the vicissitudes of their journey from their former humiliation in Egypt to their now exalted and prosperous condition in the land of promise. All this had been in fulfillment of the covenant which God had made with Abraham hundreds of years before, which covenant God had confirmed unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance. This promise God had made to his people when they were but few and were as yet strangers in that land which he covenanted to give them later on. In those days of littleness and feebleness they went from nation to nation, and from one kingdom to another, and he suffered no man to do them wrong, even reproving kings for their sakes. The reason for all this safety in the midst of strangers and strange lands was that God said, "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." When God speaks, it must be done as he says, there is no resisting his will. When he said, "Touch not," they could not be touched, however much their enemies might desire to do them harm. The anointing of the Lord cannot, must not, be despised, and those thus anointed, however mean they may be in their own persons and in the estimation of others, yet they must be respected and let alone, for the Lord will not suffer his anointed to be dealt with as men please. First of all, Christ is the great Anointed of the Father, and if there be any others that are the anointed of God it can only be as they receive their anointing through Christ Jesus. Before the foundation of the world Christ was anointed the great High Priest of our profession; he was appointed from eternity to offer in the fullness of time the great and only sacrifice which could and should take away all the sins of the elect. He stood from the foundation of the world as a lamb slain; not that he was actually slain from the foundation of the world, but that in the

purpose, plan and predestination of God his being slain was all mapped out and virtually accomplished in the mind of Almighty God. He was, therefore, from eternity appointed, set apart, consecrated and, to sum up, anointed with the Holy Spirit of the Godhead unto the great sacrificial and mediatorial work which he should in the course of time come into the world actually to perform. All this being so, the anointed of God could not be touched, nothing could alter, hinder or hasten the work of Christ Jesus. He must come, not too late, and not too soon, but right in the right place and at the right time, to do the work and the will of the Father in the earth. All the schemes of men and devils could not touch this anointed One. His enemies could not endure the directness and the force of the truth which he preached, they took up stones to stone him, they essayed his destruction in various ways, they laid pitfalls for him and fell in them themselves, they attempted to ensnare him, but succeeded only in entangling themselves. All their schemes for his ruin came to nothing, for his hour had not yet come, and until it did come he was as safe in the belly of hell as he would have been if caught up to the throne of his Father. He could not die until his time came; that is, the time appointed of the Father, and when that time did come the intervention of Peter with his sword, and indeed of the whole church, had that been possible, could not have prevented it. But even when his hour had come he could die only in the place and at the time and in the manner decreed by his almighty Father. No farther could the wild waves of wrath encroach upon him than God had intended. It had been said by one of the prophets that not one bone of his body should be broken, and not one bone of his body was broken, though the legs of each of the thieves on either side of him were broken to make them die quicker. Jesus they could not touch, for God had said, "Touch not mine anointed." Of course, this hateful mob had no idea of the doctrine of predestination, and would have derided the thought that they were doing only what God's hand had determined before to be done, that they could not do more and could do no less. But whether they knew it or did not know it, the predestination of God was fulfilled in all they did. Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. This he did. He did not try to save them, he did not merely make their salvation a possible thing, but he successfully accomplished the salvation of all his people perfectly and completely. He finished the work given him of the Father to do. Unto all this he was anointed before the world began, and the Anointed could not be touched; that is, he could not be prevented or helped in this work, or turned aside from it one jot whatsoever. God had sworn by himself, because he could swear by no greater, that Christ should be a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec, after the power of an endless life. He alone can make atonement satisfactorily unto God for all the sins of all his people. Now, to attempt to add to the work of Jesus by some work of our own is to touch the anointed, and this cannot be done. To detract from the work of Jesus, to say that he did not do what he says he did, that all he did amounts to nothing unless men accept, this all is to touch the anointed, and this cannot be done, for God has said, "Touch not," and what God says must stand. It cannot be otherwise than as God says. His word will not return unto him void of fulfillment, it will accomplish that which is God's pleasure,

and always prosper in the thing whereunto he sends it. God is no less effectual in grace than he is in nature, and why men persist in claiming that God needs their help in matters of grace, when he can get along so well without their help in matters of creation, is beyond the spiritual mind to comprehend. If God cannot save a soul without man's help, how did he ever manage to get the world made right and the universe set in motion without some of us there to help him? The whole effort system as preached and believed by the so-called christians of this day is an attempt to touch God's anointed, and to rob him of the diadem which is rightfully his. It will all come to naught, they shall be confounded, shall all be overwhelmed in shame, for God has said, "Touch not mine anointed," and he will avenge his Beloved in his own time and in his own way. However, the word "anointed" applies not only to Christ himself, but to all that are in him. Aaron was a type of Christ, and you remember that when the holy oil was poured upon his head it ran down over his beard and over his garments to even the skirts thereof. No part of the body of the high priest but what shared in this anointing. So with Christ, the antitypical High Priest, there is not a part of his body, not a single member, but what receives the anointing in some measure. All the elect are anointed in and through him, all have an unction of the Holy One, and just as Christ cannot be touched, just as he cannot be robbed of his glory, just as he cannot be hindered or helped in all his work, just so not one of the elect can be robbed of the crown of righteousness laid up for them, cannot be blotted out of the book of life, cannot be prevented from finally persevering unto the inheritance incorruptible and undefiled reserved in heaven for them. On land or on sea, in war or in peace, in sickness or in health, in poverty or in wealth, in hell or in heaven, all and each one of God's people are safe. They are safe at all times and in all places. They live a mystical life, they move in a mystical world, they cannot be touched, none can do them hurt, they cannot suffer harm. We do not mean that God's people do not have their trials and afflictions, these they must have, but even these things cannot touch them; that is, cannot hurt or harm them, but will do them good, for no matter what comes to pass in the lives of God's people it is all for their good and for the glory of God. Everything and all things promote the welfare of God's people. Even when Stephen was being stoned to death it was only his body the stones pelted, they could not touch his life, and every blow from the stones as they were being hurled upon his poor body was but bringing death nearer and nearer to him that he might fly away and be forever at rest in the presence of the Father. The anointed, the real Stephen, his enemies could not touch. They could and they did, indeed, torment his body, but we fear not them which can merely destroy the body, but rejoice that it has been given us to fear God, who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell. We are all strangers in a strange land, this world is not our home, we have here no continuing city, we seek a city whose builder and maker is God. By faith we have caught the gleam of that city's gates of pearl, and press on to follow on to know the Lord, hoping to attain unto the resurrection of the dead and the knowing him without a veil between. In the meantime, as we move about here in this lower world among strange peoples that cannot speak

our language nor comprehend us, we are safe. Just as of old, Israel went from nation to nation, and from one kingdom to another, and God suffered no man to do them wrong, but reproved kings for their sakes, saying, "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm," so now no man or men can do wrong to the church, for she is anointed in Christ Jesus and no wrong can be done her. Whatever comes her way must be right, no matter what it is. It cannot be wrong. All things that the people of God individually or collectively experience cannot do them wrong. It is all right, whatever it is. All is, as we have said, for their good and for the glory of God. We do not see how it is so, nor can we explain how it is so, but we know it is so, for God says it is so, and we believe that what God says is so. We have only to know that God says a thing to know that it is so. Reason wants an explanation, but faith accepts gladly God's word without explanation. God will not stoop to appease our reason, but he will always respond to our faith, for faith never asks but what God is pleased to give. Every one that testifies of Jesus is a prophet, for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. The gospel ministry, the preaching of Jesus, is therefore prophetic according to the scriptural definition of prophecy, for it is the testimony of Jesus. God says, "Do my prophets no harm." The gospel ministry cannot be stamped out, those that preach it cannot be harmed. They will, they must, have trials to endure that would daunt the most courageous, but these things will do them no harm. The life of their spirit will thrive in all these things. Preaching is not an easy task, and the pulpit is no place for a coward. If ever the church needed clear, plain forceful, discriminating setting forth of the truth of God, it is now. This is a soft age, but the truth is just as hard as ever, and it ill becomes us to modify its hardness or smooth it to men's liking. We do not believe that one so anointed to the work of the ministry can hold back part of the truth and rest easy in his conscience. It is not necessary to ridicule publicly what the world believes, it is not necessary to be sarcastic, it is not necessary to be personal in one's remarks, nor to be insulting, but let the trumpet send forth its certain sound, let none be in doubt as to what we mean, whether they hear or whether they forbear. If we have friends, let them be our friends fully aware of our position, and not our friends because they think we are something we are not. Let us be honest, let us be straightforward. Let us not evade the issue for which we are set as witnesses in the midst of a world gone mad with the wealth of mammon and drunken with the wines of Babylon. Let the clear far call of the trumpet of our God sound forth throughout the darkness of this present evil world. You need not fear any harm, you cannot be harmed, for God has said, "Do my prophets no harm." His word guarantees the security of all who prophesy in his name, so go at it with all the might that is in you. "Jesus Christ and him crucified," sound it forth to your last breath. Nothing can hurt you. God says so.

Requested. L.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, Feb. 3rd, 1916, at the home of the bride's brother in Ekfrid township, Ontario, Donald Alpine McCallum and Anna Paterson, both of Ekfrid.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Catherine Slack fell asleep Feb. 2nd, 1916, at her home in Leesburg, Loudoun Co., Va. Had she lived until the 10th day of March she would have been 97 years old. She was born and raised and lived all the days of her long life in Loudoun County. She was the daughter of Peter and Sarah Snider, and the wife of Fenelon Slack, who preceded her to the grave thirty-seven years. She had been the mother of three children, one of whom died in infancy. One son, Mr. Lloyd Slack, and one daughter, our sister "Mittie" Slack, survive their mother. Sister Slack and her daughter were baptized into the membership of the New Valley Old School Baptist Church on the same day, the third Sunday in November, 1891, by the late Elder E. V. White. Sister Slack had been exercised in mind regarding the things of the kingdom of God for at least forty years prior to her coming to the church. It is hard for us to write an adequate notice of the death of this dear sister and to put in words the high esteem and love in which we held her. She was truly a mother in Israel to us. She was endowed with a spiritual mind wonderfully alert in the Scriptures, and few things could be more refreshing than to have a talk with her in the days when her mind was at its keenest, upon the things pertaining to Jesus and his people. About seventeen years ago she sustained a broken hip from a fall, and ever afterward was unable to walk. This necessarily made an active life impossible, but no one ever heard a word of complaint from her lips. She was so gifted that she was always enumerating her blessings, always looking on the bright side of all her afflictions and praising the Lord for his abundant goodness and mercy toward her. At the last, when she was suffering intensely, a sister in the church said to her: "O how I wish I could do something for you," and sister Slack replied calmly and quietly: "Each must bear his own burden." These few words epitomized her whole life. She was never one to inflict her troubles on other people, always bearing them like a good and brave soldier who never knows defeat. She was not afraid to die, for death had lost its sting for her. She often expressed herself as waiting the Lord's summons to call her home, and that there was nothing in the world to hold her any longer. She had many favorite hymns, and had been a great Bible reader, and was blessed with a good memory to retain much of what she read. The hymn beginning, "Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove, with all thy quickening powers," was much with her in those days when she was much exercised about coming to the church, where she hoped to find rest for her soul. Sister Slack will be missed by our church, for while she had not been able to attend the meetings for many years, yet she was where we could often run in to see her, and that privilege is now denied us. She will be keenly and sadly missed by her dear son and daughter, and especially by the latter, sister "Mittie," who was her mother's constant companion for many years, and who took such devoted care of her. May the good Lord in his wonderful satisfying way be the comfort and consolation of all the mourning ones, both in the family and in the church.

The funeral services were held in the home where she had lived so many, many years, and which she loved so well. We sang, "How firm a foundation" and "Asleep in Jesus," and then we tried to speak from the words in Isaiah xliii. 2, 3. At such times we always realize the utter futility of words to express what we feel. There is but One who can heal, and that is the same One who inflicts the rod. May he grant us grace to be submissive to his will in this as in all things else, knowing that he doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. L.

Mrs. Lydia Carpenter Wyman was born in Orleans County, N. Y., Nov. 4th, 1817, and died June 7th, 1915, making her age 97 years, 7 months and 2 days. The life of Grandma Wyman, as she was so familiarly known and lovingly called, had been of more than usual interest, in that it covered nearly a century of time. She was the daughter of Elder James and Katherine Carpenter, and moved to Michigan with her parents when nine years old. At the age of nineteen she was married to Sheldon Wyman. Since her marriage her life had been spent in Weston and vicinity. There were nine children born to them, of whom six survive: James, of Marenisco, Peter of Adrian, Mich., Mrs. C. A. Hickman, of Muncie, Ind., Alonzo, of Tipton, Mich., Mrs. Sarah Mason, of Weston, Mich., and Mrs. J. E. Reynolds, of Jasper, Mich. There are twenty-one grandchildren, thirty-five great-grandchildren and thirteen great-great-grandchildren. Her husband died in 1897. After his death she lived with her son, Elder T. J. Wyman, until his death, then divided her time with her daughters. The accident that ended her long and eventful life was the breaking of her hip at the home of her daughter, Mrs. J. E. Reynolds, where after four weeks of patient suffering she passed quietly to the scenes of a brighter world, and we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. Both she and her husband were members of the Fairfield Church, both being baptized by Elder James Carpenter, the first Old School Baptist minister in Michigan.

Her funeral was largely attended at the Baptist meetinghouse in Weston, and she was laid to rest in the cemetery near by.

Written by her daughter-in-law,

(MRS.) T. J. WYMAN.

Brother **J. E. Berry, Jr.,** was born in Jackson County, Ala., Oct. 11th, 1877, and died Oct. 20th, 1915, aged 38 years and 9 days. He was a son of J. E. and Catherine Berry, who was the daughter of George Maple. She had two uncles who were ministers of the Old School Baptist Church: Elders Corn and Peter Maple. J. E. Berry, Sr., father of the deceased, was the son of Elder Elisha Berry, who was actively engaged in the ministry for fifty one-years. Deceased was married to sister Johnie Downer, and to that union were born eight children, five girls and three boys. Brother Berry became much concerned in regard to his condition. He was a member of the Methodists, but found that he could not satisfy the holy law of God, and while in this trouble and ploughing alone in the field the burden of sin was lifted, a hope sprang up, and he dated from that time his hope in a crucified Savior and became a firm believer in salvation by grace. He was a zealous member of Salem Church, and at our monthly meetings he was always present. The writer baptized him in September, 1914. He was kind and generous and was a lovable brother. While I was trying to tell of the boundless love of God at his funeral the grave that was open to receive the body had no fears to me. Brother Berry had not passed the stone that marks the high place in this life, but becoming weary with his burden pillowed his head thereon and fell into that dreamless sleep which had kissed down his eyelids.

Written by request of his father and wife.

W. W. COCHRAN.

APPOINTMENTS.

PLEASE publish appointments as follows, if not providentially hindered: March 20th, at brother Lake's with the Sycamore Ridge Church, at 11 o'clock; 21st, on Climors Creek, near H. Byrnside's, 11 o'clock; 22nd, at Providence Church, 11 o'clock; 23rd and 24th, at Bethel Church, as they may see proper to arrange; 25th and 26th, at Sarah Church, 11 o'clock each day. We are expecting Elder W. I. Wade and Deacon C. H. Casdorph to be with us at these appointments all the way through. Brother Casdorph and myself will need conveyance from Hurricane to Sarah Church. J. W. McCLANAHAN.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Please publish the following appointments and oblige:

Kingston, N. Y., Saturday, March 18th, 8 p. m., 58 Smith Ave.; Ashokan, Sunday, 19th, 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m.; Arena, Tuesday, 21st, 11 a. m.; Kelley Corners, Wednesday, 22nd, 7:45 p. m.; Halcottville, Thursday, 23rd, 7:45 p. m.; Vega, Friday, 24th, 1:30 p. m.; Roxbury village, sister Mead's home, Sunday, 26th, 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m.

D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

J. P. Fields, Ky., $1.00; Mrs. J. E. Chadwick, Texas, $2.00; Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Okla., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

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IN

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Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Liberty Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, of Los Angeles, Cal., meets every first and third Sunday in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., at 42nd and Moneta Ave., and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal.

W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor.

B. C. RICE, Clerk.

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[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 84. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1916. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HILLSVILLE, Va., Feb. 15, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am forwarding you a letter written by Elder H. B. Jones, of Texas. I consider it too good to keep to myself, therefore I will ask you to please publish it in the SIGNS, that our people (the people of God, we hope) may share with me the truth so wonderfully and ably declared in it. I love the good news from a far country, whose inhabitants are children of light, and this light, being formed by God himself, is of such splendor that mortal tongue cannot, even though it speaks as the spiritual mind directs, describe the beauty thereof in its fullness.

May the tender mercy of God deliver us from evil, and his uniting love draw us together as an unbroken family circle.

ANNIE FULCHER.

WINNSBORO, Texas, Sept. 3, 1915.

DEAR SISTER FULCHER:—Your letter of the 24th ult. received, and I will ask your permission to send it to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication, as I believe it would be of interest and comfort to others. I feel unworthy of the high estimate you place upon my letters. The subject upon which you wrote is a most interesting one, and what you say is fully sustained by Bible teaching, according to my understanding, and is also corroborated by daily observation of the things of nature's kingdom. The apostle Paul in his letter to the church at Rome declared, "The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." I have thought we might very appropriately speak of three great kingdoms as being set up from the beginning: the kingdom of nature, the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of Satan; and then we may think of the great King over all, who has set each one in its proper place, who rules over all, and finally disposes of all after the counsel of his own will. The great purpose, object, secret of all in the mind of the Father, the great first cause, creator, owner, ruler and disposer, was (as is revealed in the Scriptures of truth) the exaltation of the name of his Son and our dear Savior and Redeemer. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or do-

minions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell."—Col. i. 16–19. Man is the only thing in this natural kingdom to which the Creator gave a spiritual law. The man also had his own peculiar laws of life, or nature, given by the Creator; the two laws were the very opposite one of the other. Why the God of heaven and earth saw proper to give to his creature, who was only natural, of the earth earthy, a law so contrary or opposite to the law of his being, is answered only in one way: it was even so, because it seemed good in his sight. We know he could have made the man equal to the law he intended to give him had it been his will to do so, or he could have given him a law perfectly congenial with the law of his being. The proof that it was not his will to do either is that he did not do either, and the proof that his creature man was just such a creature as he intended, and that it was his will to give him just such a law as he did, is that he did it. In regard to his violation of that law and the entrance of sin into the world, it was according to the will of God, or it was contrary to his will, or he had no will or purpose respecting the matter at all. It is to limit the Holy One of Israel, or to charge God with folly, to take either of the above positions except the first, so it is evidently as the apostle Paul said: "Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord."—Romans v. 20, 21. We learn in this connection that by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, and by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death hath passed upon all, for that all have sinned. So it was the first man Adam by whom sin entered into the world, and by his disobedience all his children were made sinners. He being our head and representative naturally, we all sinned in him. This first man Adam we are told is the figure of him (Christ) that was to come. (Romans v. 14.) Again, we are told, 1 Tim. ii. 14, "And Adam was not deceived; but the woman being deceived, [Adam] was in the transgression." The serpent (which was more subtile than any of the beasts of the field which the Lord God had made) was there in the garden and beguiled our mother Eve, and she ate of the forbidden fruit, and she gave to her husband and he did eat. Now I entertain the thought here that Adam was involved from the very second that his wife partook, for they were created one, and their name was called Adam before the rib was taken from the man that was made a woman. After this, Adam said, This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Now I think it first took all this to make this Adam the figure of him that was to come, viz., Jesus Christ. It was love that moved Adam to partake with his wife of this forbidden fruit, but that love was based upon and was the product of a previously existing relationship. So the bride, the Lamb's wife, God's covenant people, had a spiritual

life-standing in Christ before the fall. In covenant relation the bride was betrothed to her Head and Husband, even Jesus, before the world was; Jesus was her Husband. Upon no other hypothesis of reasoning would the term "redemption" apply to the work of Jesus in saving his people, for the very word "redeem" always carries the idea of prior ownership. No man can redeem anything that was not his before it went astray or was lost.

But back to that serpent and his work, who in another place is called that old serpent, the devil. Some Old Baptists seem so afraid of him that they do not like to hear his name mentioned, especially in connection with the works of God, and seem to think he is a kind of self-existent, independent being, that has given the Lord considerable worry since the creation of this world, but to my mind the Scriptures clearly teach that he is a creature of God, fully and perfectly under his control; nor do I believe one word of that notion about his once being an angel of light in the heaven of eternal glory, and was thence cast down into this world and became a devil, lost, as is taught in Milton's "Paradise." That he is a creature is proven by the Scripture already quoted from Col. i. 16, for everything visible or invisible is included in God's creation. Our Savior told the hypocritical Pharisees that he (the devil) was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him, so I take it for granted that he has been a devil from the very beginning of his existence. In the forty-first chapter of Job he is set forth figuratively as Leviathan, and he is described as a wonderful and mighty creature, and the chapter ends by saying, "Upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear. He beholdeth all high things: he is king over all the children of pride." Job tells us, twenty-sixth chapter, thirteenth verse, speaking of some of the works of the Lord, and his mysterious way, "By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent," and the wise man, Solomon, tells us, Eccl. vii. 13, "Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight which he hath made crooked?" No intelligent being ever made anything without a use for it, a place for it to fill, so the great Creator of all things evidently made this old crooked serpent as he did all things else, for a purpose. As Solomon says again, "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."—Prov. xvi. 4. And he that made him can approach unto him, so he says, Isaiah xxvii. 1, "In that day the Lord, with his sore, and great, and strong sword, shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea." After the seduction of our mother Eve, and the fall, we hear the Lord saying to the serpent, "Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field: upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Here the Lord plainly tells us that he put the enmity between the woman and the serpent, and her seed and the seed of the serpent, and tells us what the serpent shall do, and what the seed of the woman (which I understand is Christ) shall do. I am glad to believe that Satan, the serpent, is the Lord's creature, and that He rules and controls

him at all times; believing this, though he continues to hurl his hellish darts, I can confidently sing with the poet:

"Plagues and death around me fly;
Till he bids I cannot die;
Not a single shaft can hit
Till the God of love sees fit."

Like a vicious dog that is fastened with a chain, he will go the full length of his chain, and will do all the harm to the Lord's little ones that he can, but his bounds are fixed; like as the mighty God of Israel hath said to the sea, so I believe he has said to this evil one: Hitherto shalt thou go, but no further, and here shalt thy proud waves be stayed. (Job xxxviii. 11.) If there had not been a serpent, a devil, nor enmity, nor sin, in the world, how could the mighty power of the Captain of our salvation been displayed? Where would have been the song of victory, the song of that mighty redeemed host singing, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hath redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, tongue, people and nation? (Rev. v. 9.) I see in all this arrangement Wisdom's way of hewing out the seven pillars, (Prov. ix. 3,) i. e., in creation, providence and grace the seven divine attributes of Deity are displayed. Long ere the serpent beguiled our mother Eve in the garden, and our earthly head and representative fell, with all his posterity, under the curse of the law, the covenant of redemption was ready, so that when the covenant people of God fell in Adam they fell, as it were, in the lap of mercy, all their sins were laid upon One that was mighty to save. In covenant account he was even then made to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Israel, being in covenant, was justified in Christ; the Lord put this word in the mouth of Balaam: He hath not beheld iniquity, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel. (Numbers xxiii. 21.) David, the sweet psalmist of Israel, was inspired to say, Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, for this is all my salvation and all my desire, although he make it not to grow. Here I understand David is speaking in the Spirit of Christ, of the fixed, sure and certain arrangement for the salvation of all his covenant people. In perfect harmony with the language the apostle Paul breaks forth in praise of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, "according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."—Eph. i. 4. God's covenant people in the world are as a little city besieged by a great king (Satan), who has built great bulwarks against it, yet there was found in it a poor wise man (Jesus), who by his wisdom delivered the little city. (See Eccl. ix. 13–15.) Solomon beheld this wisdom by revelation from afar, and it seemed great unto him, and so with us when we by the eye of faith are enabled to see the great victory of our blessed Redeemer and Savior, as the Captain of our salvation, over the prince of the power of the air, and all the powers of darkness and death. Thus we are prepared to join in with all the blood-washed hosts of the redeemed in anthems of praise to him who through death destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

I must now desist, for I have made

this letter quite too lengthy. Pardon me. I have attempted to follow the wanderings of my mind, and just could not find a stopping-place. May the Lord afford you sustaining and comforting grace to the end of the journey.

Yours in bonds of gospel fellowship,
H. B. JONES.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 22, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I am inclosing some selections from a few of your precious mother's letters, written after she went to Warwick to live, which you are at liberty to insert in the SIGNS if you think best. I received many notes from her while your family lived here. She used to send them by you when you were a boy and brought the milk to us each morning, and to me they were dear, sweet messages, always filled with the theme that was mostly in her thoughts. Though she is so greatly missed, it is a comfort to know she has entered into the fullness of what was to her so dear.

With love to your dear family, I am in sweet fellowship, unworthily your sister,
BESSIE DURAND.

WARWICK, N. Y., March 13, 1911.

MISS BESSIE DURAND—VERY DEAR SISTER:—As I take up your last letter, I see that it was written on the morning that Horace left you, and was on his way to us. O how glad we were to have him with us once more, although only for a short time, but I think his visit was truly appreciated by all who heard him. I think I could see a growth; it seemed to me that the gift had more fully developed in the larger field in which he had been called to labor. He enjoyed his visit with you all, but the time was so short that he could be with you, and the time here seemed short, too. He filled four appointments while here, and the people seemed glad of an opportunity to hear him again, and I felt that he had wonderful liberty, and more fully showed that it was right that the gift (using my own words) should be transplanted into a larger field, and it is good for the church here to have that stirring up that we could not have in any other way. It is said the gift shall make room for itself, and it appears that way. I hope we will appreciate as we should, and not fall back to rest on our lees, and go to sleep, as if there never could be any change. Every time brother Fenton comes among us the more I see a drawing to him. I think yesterday was the best I ever heard him. He seemed truly to be clothed with the Spirit, and many spoke of their enjoyment of the preaching. It was our communion season, and he talked beautifully, and, I think, in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. I feel his visit was profitable to us all, and I hope to himself. The Lord is not unmindful of us, although we get far astray. The text yesterday was, I felt gladness in my heart when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. The words seemed to be right with me all the time. O, have I not had many sweet seasons in being in the assembly of the saints? and how poor and unworthy I feel to have such privileges. Why should I ever feel cold and indifferent as I sometimes do? I thought after Horace went away I never would enjoy again what I had enjoyed, and I wondered why it must be so. But I suppose we needed just such a stirring up. The Lord knows just what we need, and will administer in his own way.

I was very sorry to hear of brother Durand's misfortune to get such a fall, and I hope he is recovering from it. He has been on my mind a great deal of late,

and I feel a great desire to hear him preach again, and hope he can visit the church here some time in the near future, when the weather gets settled and more pleasant. I have been thinking about it a great deal, and hope it will soon come to pass.

I feel this is a poor reply to your dear letter. Remember me to your dear household.

In love and hope,

SARAH P. LEFFERTS.

WARWICK, N. Y., April, 1911.

DEAR SISTER:—I am alone to-day, the little boys are at school, and their mother at the store, and as you are on my mind I would like to tell you some of my thoughts, and wish you could share them with me, but I know I cannot clothe them with words that will convey to your mind the beauty that I have seen in these words, which have been following me for several days: "And the glory that should follow."—1 Peter i. 11. Should follow what? My mind goes back to the beginning of time, yes, even before time was, in the ancients of eternity, when God in his infinite wisdom laid the plan of salvation by grace for many of Adam's race, even before they were created, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit. It seems so wonderful that the whole was consummated in the mind of God before the earth was framed. O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, and the glory that should follow. I see this plan embraces the elect subjects of grace, poor sinners redeemed by the blood of Christ, who is made unto the elect precious, who is their wisdom, sanctification and redemption, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, and shall be with him where he is and behold his glory. Now is not that glory made manifest to his people in glimpses only, all down through the ages to the present time? It seems to me that the child of God could only stand a very small rays of that glory that should follow while in this time state, and what must it be when eternity unfolds the whole to our enraptured vision? But what is the use of my trying to tell it all when I know so little of this great matter? But I wanted to tell you what was in my mind, and I know you will cast the mantle of charity over it all.

I have just heard of the departure of dear sister Allen. How her dear family will miss her, but shall we not all miss her words of comfort? How I would love to be with the church when they lay her body away, but I cannot be there. There are many deaths around here; a funeral is passing now. It all goes to show that life is short, but "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." My mind turns to you all very often.

Your sister in sweet fellowship,

SARAH P. LEFFERTS.

WARWICK, N. Y., April 30, 1912.

BELOVED SISTER:—This is Saturday morning, and I am very busy, but you are in my mind and perhaps you are wanting another letter from me, and it seems I cannot keep my pen from the paper. I have felt like singing all the morning, yet I cannot keep the tears back, for the dream I had last night is

still fresh in my mind. There was a large meeting at Southampton. I saw many of the dear faces, you and brother Will. Brother and sister Durand were sitting at the table by the pulpit, and a beautiful wreath of roses encircled them. O it was so beautiful; it seems there was some unseen power in it that stays with me this morning, and makes me feel that if I ever sat down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob it is now. I cannot express what I feel, the sweet emotions that fill my heart.

I must now lay this aside, as duty is calling me.

A whole hour has passed, and I again take my pen. Yesterday I was down in the depths, my thoughts and feelings could not ascend higher than my own head. Can it be that the Lord has been teaching me that all of my downsittings and uprisings are in the hand of my Redeemer, and that he casts down and lifts up at his will? O if I could praise him as I ought, but I know I cannot do that while this side of eternity. But all his attributes look so lovely to me I see no room for self to boast in such a theme as this; I would crown him Lord of all. A few days ago I felt that he had brought me into darkness, and not into light, and to-day I can say, My cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy hath followed me all the days of my life. If my cup runs over until it reaches you and yours, I feel that the object of this writing will be reached, for I want to share it with you. I can see your faces in my mind as I saw them in my dream. I never could put much confidence in dreams, except when accompanied with power that stays with me.

I had a good letter from Viola Kulp yesterday, my dear niece, you know.

SARAH P. LEFFERTS.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, Jan. 26, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—How unknown to those who know not God are those moments, given to the called of God, of nearness of access unto God. Here the soul pours forth its moans and longings, and adoration, and we are bowed in sacred worship at the throne of his grace. A few hours ago I sat reading the Scriptures, and found the word sweet, and my heart was stirred. Then certain persons came into my mind, my reading was suspended, and my heart went out in prayer to God for them. I mentally viewed their circumstances, burdens, temptations, and trials they were then enduring, and this was the burden of my prayer: Be merciful and gracious unto them, and let all these things work together for their good. As I sat thus in prayer to God my thoughts were turned to myself, and I felt in my heart, O that all things might work together for my good, and in an instant I felt, How can the great and holy God be good to me? How can he who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will ordain that all things shall work together for my good? How can he have a thought toward me? how can he delight in me? In the twinkling of an eye I looked over my whole life, what I have been, all unrighteousness; what I am even now in my Adamic nature. I saw myself utterly unworthy. I saw myself as a very abject, unholy, unclean, vile transgressor, ungodly. O the immeasurable gulf I saw between the Holy One of Israel and me, a sinner! I saw myself base, to be despised, a fit object for the just condemnation of God, meet to be under the curse of the law. I found my heart much moved, so humbled under the sight, the tears came into my eyes, and under the dreadful consciousness of what I am in my vile nature I moaned

and cried unto God, Do not abhor me, cast me not away. Then came with all graciousness the words to my heart, To them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. What! Can a vile, sinful being love the just and holy God? O, I feel I love God, and I love him as revealed in the face of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Love I much? I've much forgiven;
I'm a miracle of grace."

Once I was altogether enmity against God, alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in me, because of the blindness of my heart, but the Lord has, I hope, called me by his grace; he drew me, a wretched, guilty sinner, unto himself, brought me with a broken and contrite heart at his feet, crying for mercy, yearning for reconciliation and salvation. Surely he gave me a heart to know him. (Jer. xxiv. 7.) As it is written, "They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."—Jer. xxxi. 34. And unto me Jesus became precious, and to this day he is most precious to my soul, and I, a poor sinner, love him, yes, I love the dear incarnate Son of God; the Lamb of God, our Savior. "To them who are the called according to his purpose." Called by God's grace, called unto the fellowship of the incarnate Son of God, called to the inheritance of all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, called unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus. I was comforted as the blessedness of the gospel of God's grace was unfolded to my tried soul, and I saw in that moment my acceptance in the beloved Savior, the Head of the church, all according to the eternal purpose, everlasting love, and mercy, and grace in Christ Jesus.

"O! wondrous grace, and mystery profound;
In God's eternal purpose I was found;
His sovereign love, His grace, His deep decree,
In some mysterious way included me."

O these precious, sacred verities came to my heart with comforting power, and I was nourished by the consolations of our Beloved; and was filled with joy and peace in believing,

"Whate'er thou deniest, O give me thy grace;
The Spirit's sure witness and smiles of thy face;
Indulge me with patience to wait at thy throne,
And find even now some sweet foretastes of home."

Thus once more I feel I can say, I have known in my soul the gospel of Christ in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. And as the tribes of Israel of old worshiped God by the shedding of the blood of a lamb in the morning and evening sacrifice, so the spiritual Israel, the true worshipers of God, unto this day draw nigh unto God continually by the one offering of Christ, the Lamb of God. O children of God, the throne at which we worship is the throne of God and the Lamb. The Lamb in the midst of the throne. (Rev. v. 6–14; xxii. 3.) He once was slain, he gave himself an offering and a sacrifice unto God for a sweet smelling savor, to wash away our sins in his precious blood; to obtain eternal redemption for us. But Christ Jesus the Lamb liveth again, he arose from the tomb, and ascended to heaven, and was received up unto glory, and he is set down on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. He is enthroned, he reigns, the Lamb in the midst of the throne, loved, believed in and worshiped by all the blood-washed church of God, the redeemed of the Lord, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing, and every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and

under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshiped him that liveth forever and ever. (Rev. v. 12–14.) My heart is saying, "Amen," too. O the contrast between this scene and that portrayed in the next chapter! And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand? (Rev. vi. 14–17.) O the comfort and delight of my yearning heart is to behold the Lamb in the midst of the throne, by faith to see the Lamb that was slain, and who liveth again, even Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor. For all my expectations of forgiveness, cleansing, righteousness, justification, salvation and of being brought unto glory, is by him. From the throne of God and the Lamb even now, by faith, I blessedly realize there flows unto me the pure river of water of life, clear as crystal. (Rev. xxii. 1.) Here I drink the river of his pleasures. (Psalms xxxvi. 8.)

"I taste, delight succeeds to woe;
I bathe, no waters cleanse me so;
Such joy and purity to share,
I could remain enraptured there."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

THOUGHTS ON PSALMS XXIV. 1–5.

"THE earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."

The psalmist considers the vastness of the work of creation, and all the multitude of people that dwell on the earth. He that created all, to him all belongs, both the earth and the people.

"For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods." How many times it has been under the sea and raised up again we do not know, to establish a firm foundation suitable for the habitation of men. When the fullness of time came man was created, and his posterity has spread over the earth. Humanity had no part in the work of creation, since man was the last part of it, and he has always been, and is even now, rather a destroyer than a creator, both of mineral resources and of life. David saw much both of the evil acts of unregenerate men, and the propensities of his own nature.

"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?" That place where the love of God is first in the minds of the inhabitants, where brethren and sisters in that highest and most dear relationship ever known to mortals here meet to talk of spiritual joys, of the blessings of God to men, of One who died for men who were lost in sin, and brought them to know and love him. These people love to hear the brethren and sisters talk of his love to men, and how he calls them to know him, and his power to save even unworthy sinners. This is a high hill, above the petty cares and trials of natural life, so that sometimes when we are contemplating the joys of spiritual life we forget for a time all our cares and sorrows of the life of the plain below. This holy hill of the Lord, or mount of God's holiness, is the

church, pure and holy, as seen without any of our human errors, where we worship God with pure hearts fervently, not some costly building, for a few may gather in a private house and be blessed with a sense of the Divine presence, and feed on the word as well as in a costly structure where hundreds are met together. The great question before humanity is not the spot on earth, but to whom do these greatest of all blessings that were ever bestowed on mortals belong? Who shall stand in his holy place of all these millions of mortals? "He that hath clean hands." Some men toil in the fields, and their hands become soiled with earth, but I think it is in a different sense that cleanliness of hands is used here. What the mind plans the hands work out, or make manifest. If then the hands work deceit the mind has planned the evil, and it is that which cometh out of a man that defileth him, or shows the true nature of his thoughts. Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. Then again, all men by nature are sinners, so there must be a purging of the source of the thoughts before the hands can be clean from evil deeds. If one has been washed by regeneration of sinful desires, he will have clean hands. If we can get the evidence that one has been washed in the Savior's blood, that fountain that was opened for the house of David for sin and uncleanness, we are not afraid of his soiling the holy place or handling the word of God deceitfully.

"He shall receive the blessing from the Lord." The psalmist does not speak in any doubtful terms of this matter. When they present themselves, they receive the blessing, and notice this blessing is from the God of heaven, and something that no man, set of men, kings nor theologians have any control over, either to command or to hinder. The psalmist is evidently considering those who are called out of this great multitude of men to know the cleansing power of Jesus' blood, for in the sixth verse he says, "This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob." Jacob is a name used to signify the Lord's people. "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot [sum] of his inheritance."—Deut. xxxii. 9. These Scriptures are not written to cut off the little ones, but for the assurance of those who have only a little hope, and that hope is in the sacrifice that Jesus made for such as they are. Who then has clean hands? They who have been washed in Jesus' blood, and no others. No other washing, no other cleansing will do, but when they come to the church professing a hope that they are washed in that fountain, we do not have to ask them for promises of behavior, or question them as to their knowledge of the letter of the Bible, for love is the fulfilling of the whole law, and he whom Christ has cleansed stands justified; it is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? If when we present ourselves before the Lord as his worshipers, the devil comes with an accusation of unclean hands, or unfitness, we plead Christ as our hope, and our advocate at the mercy-seat. These things are spoken for our comfort here that we may rest on sure promises, yet the hope of every one of Jacob's spiritual posterity goes beyond this earth, and all earthly things, all doubts and fears. Having been washed by Jesus' blood, they are also found with oil in their lamps, and will enter in to the wedding feast and the joys of their Lord.

A. E. RITTENHOUSE.

SALISBURY, Maryland.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I am inclosing a copy of a letter written to me by Miss Emma Sheppard, of Hopewell, N. J., which to me is rich in experience, and at the time of receiving it seemed to be just what I needed, it bringing to my mind travels of my own, and refreshing my memory of past seasons of rejoicing, which are now for the most part absent from my cold and lifeless frame. I have not her permission for the publication of this letter, but if in your judgment it will be profitable to the readers of the SIGNS, I do not think she will object, and am willing to take the responsibility on myself.

I wish that I were able to write to you concerning your editorial in the SIGNS for September 15th, but I am unable to frame a letter that would in any way be suitable. I read it, I ate it, I loved it, and would, if it were His will to thaw with beams of love divine this heart, this frozen heart of mine, that I might live again in the sweet communion of his presence. The editorial was so good to me, but all such things to me now are as a match which is struck in the darkness, the glimmer is sweet, for it is light, but it is only a flicker and is gone.

Elder Ker, I hope you will be able to attend the Salisbury Association, and, if possible, can you not arrange to make us a visit at the Salisbury Church? I wish you could, and I have been requested by others here to write to you and ask you if you could come to us some time, and while I know your time is better occupied than by writing to one like me, yet I will appreciate even a short reply to this, for of all the unfit and unprofitable ones ever received in the church I am the worst.

Unworthily yours,

F. SELBY FISHER.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Aug. 2, 1915.

MR. F. SELBY FISHER—MY DEAR FRIEND:—I have tried to answer your letter many times, but words seemed to fail me when I would undertake to do so. I certainly enjoyed your letter very much, and the meeting was indeed wonderful to me, but little did we think how soon our dear one was to part from us. O I do not at times know how to bear it, I do feel so small to take up the duties now put upon me, I am so unfit. My sister Millie is now in the hospital with typhoid fever; she has been very sick, but is improving. Right away after the anniversary meeting a terrible cloud seemed to rest over me, the heavens seemed to be closing in about me, and I was in total darkness, until one day, after mother was taken sick, I was made to throw my arms upward, and exclaim, My God, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, and I cannot begin to tell you the sweet moments I enjoyed. I then sat down to write you, and had the letter partly finished, in which condition it still remains. During the rest of mother's sickness, and at her death, I cannot tell you how I felt, I seemed to be caught up in His arms and was stilled by His love, which reigned supreme during that time, but since then I have been thrown into unutterable despair. I wonder at times if there was ever anything given me to rejoice in; did I ever see a little promise for me that I might some day be saved? Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Is thy mercy clean gone forever? When I think of it I am made to shrink with shame; I am so vile, so prone to sin, that I fear to even look upon his word, and when I do I find no promise there, because I do everything contrary to his word; there surely is no hope for me. I feel sometimes I cannot

mingle with the church again, but when it is so that I can I find myself there, seeking for a faint hope that I might some day be taught of the Lord and know his felt presence within me. During your last visit with us, when you were telling of your experience, I was made to say, Why, it is just the way I feel; I have run away from his company, I have run away from them, though I have felt at times that I would love to dwell in the banqueting-house and enjoy the feast prepared for God's little ones, but that pleasure is not for me, I cannot taste the food. I fear sometimes that I have been carried away by the world to fields of woe, where there is nothing but sorrow and ruin. I at one time had a love for these things, for the brethren and church of God, which I cannot describe, but where is it gone? My heart is cold, I seem to have no feeling, my interest gone in everything; why am I thus? Why this dull and lifeless frame? When I look at my little sister, and think of the care she still needs, I shudder, because I cannot and am not qualified to make her the woman I know our mother wished her to be, but my prayer now is that the Comforter will come again and give me what I need, that I may be able to make her a good companion for father, and a good town citizen. I know He is able to give all that is needful in all things and at all times, and I feel that when his appointed time came he only took his own when he took the sunshine from our home, and I know from the life she lived and led she is far happier than we are. She called us all to her bedside that morning, and when she was talking to me, I asked her if she were happy, and never will forget how she looked and said, Why should I be leaving this world if I am not happy? So I think it is not for us here in the flesh to mourn or wish her back.

August 4th.—I did not finish this, and will try to write some more. Everything seemed so dark and gloomy this morning I could not do my work, I just wandered around, and after a while I walked up to the table on which lay the Bible and opened it at these words, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." The tears flowed like rain, I was humbled, all power seemed to have left me, I loved him, I felt differently than I have ever before, all was light, the clouds dispersed, and these words came to me, Even if I do love him I do not keep his commandments, and I was again sorely troubled, but hope he will yet deliver me and set me free, because I do love his people, and I do love these things, but I know I am nothing but sin, there is nothing but sin in my flesh, and unless he performs a miracle I am utterly lost.

There is nothing in this letter worth sending, but you will know that I think of you often, and I hope to receive an answer some time, for it is often the only comfort I have. You spoke of me as "sister" in your last letter to me; I am not a sister, and do not feel that it can ever be, because I am too vile.

Your unworthy friend,

EMMA SHEPPARD.

CEMENT, Oklahoma.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—If you will permit one so base as I am to thus address you. I have read your articles from the time you became one of the editors of the SIGNS with much interest and great satisfaction, having been fed by your able pen as a ready writer, made so by the mighty power and wisdom of the exalted sovereign God, and have, from the first article that I read from your pen, had a burning desire to write you and inform you how I esteemed you as one of God's humble, true servants, though I have from

time to time excused myself from doing so, feeling sure that a poor, weak, ignorant mind like I possess could hardly hope to write or say anything that could comfort and cheer you or any of God's humble poor. To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. Many times have I in my loneliness almost given up in despair, when the dear old SIGNS would come to my humble abode, and I would run through the pages and columns of this welcome visitor to me and mine, looking for the letter "L," feeling sure there was something there in store for my hungry soul. I always read every communication, every editorial, and am edified by each letter, though there seems to be something in your writings that makes my rebellious heart rejoice. When I read the editorial in which you expressed yourself as feeling discouraged, I said deep down in my heart that you certainly did not realize what comfort your letters of love were to the lambs and sheep of God's heritage, scattered abroad all over the land. From a point of experience it seems that all of God's chosen elect people must pass through dark tunnels and dungeons; Jeremiah, the Lord's prophet, had almost to perish in the mud of an underground dungeon. It is true that God knows how and does lift up his poor, weak servants and causes them to rejoice even in adversity. There are no afflictions, no persecutions, no toils, no prison houses, that can long hold or disquiet his children. He comes to them in fiery furnaces, amid ferocious beasts, on stormy seas, speaking peace, and driving away fear, darkness and gloom. The murky waters of the Red Sea could not long be a hindrance to Israel when God's time came for her to be freed from Egyptian bondage. Pharaoh and his wicked army could only follow them and cause them to fear far enough just to reach the place that God had prepared for Israel's deliverance and their enemies' destruction. All things work together for good to them that love God, &c. I have thought that the sentiment of the words that Moses was given to speak to the children of Israel while standing on the banks of the Red Sea, Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, still rules in the hours of distress and darkness among the people of God. There are with me so many dark valleys to pass through that I am often made to feel I am an intruder among the children of God. Dear brother Lefferts, for nearly twenty years I have been trying in my illiterate, weak way to preach the unsearchable truth of God our Savior, and now in my declining years I feel that instead of growing in faithfulness and submission to God I see more rebellion in myself than ever before. I often cry out, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? While I have a little hope and faith that cling to the atoning blood of the Son of God, yet I still have this sense of wretchedness whenever permitted to try to comfort Zion. God forbid that I should know anything among the children of God but Christ and him crucified.

In conclusion, I must ask you to pardon me for imposing on you as I have with this long letter. Indeed I feel that justice to this would consign it to the flames. I am sending it because I desire you to know that away off here in Oklahoma resides a poor, ignorant sinner who loves you for Jesus' sake. I hope and pray that God will continue to use you in the future as he has in the past for the comfort of Zion.

I am your unworthy brother, I hope, in the faith of Jesus,

L. E. SKINNER.

1 CORINTHIANS XVI. 14.

"LET all your things be done with charity."

The apostle Paul, when writing to the churches or brethren, had the gift to direct, advise, admonish and exhort, and every declaration of the apostles is clothed with apostolic authority. We need not go outside of their instruction to be guided as to our course. Paul has defined charity in his letter to the church of God at Corinth, 1 Cor. xiii. 4–8: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth." It appears that there is a difference between charity and love. We may have charity for some and not have much love for some. When Paul was among false brethren he had charity for them, for the gift of charity was such with the apostle that he rejoiced when Christ was preached, even out of envy by some to add to his bonds. Charity was of such virtue with him that he esteemed it of great value, not only to himself, but to be in exercise by the household of faith, and for this reason he wrote them at Corinth to "let all your things be done with charity." "Charity suffereth long, and is kind." When charity is in exercise we suffer, and endure it patiently, knowing that Jesus suffered in the flesh, and feel kindly toward those who have unintentionally caused us to suffer. "Charity envieth not." What blessedness would abound if we were free from envy. How prone the flesh is to be puffed up, to seek the preeminence, but how different

"When free from envy, scorn and pride,
Our wishes all above,
Each can a brother's failings hide,
And show a brother's love."

If one should not set forth a portion of Scripture as another has declared it, how good it would be to have charity in exercise, and not openly oppose that one, as long as the one has not presented error. Our exposition of the Scriptures is not binding upon the faith and belief of the flock, but for the comfort of the flock, not for argument. If charity were in exercise we would never oppose, but bear all things, believe all things, hope all things, endure all things, and instead of opposing (if charity were in exercise) we would seek the welfare of Zion and go on in our way, considering every one whether they have been with Jesus. How necessary that the older brethren exercise charity (if they have it) toward the younger brethren, and rather be fathers to them than be on the watch for some misstep in their views. So it is something more than love when we examine the blessedness of charity.

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

WEISER, Idaho, Nov. 30, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER E. G. WEBB:—Your request for my experience is hard to fulfill. It is hardly worth relating. Our parents were the same, and you know I am of a positive disposition. I studied science when a young man, and have always to be sure of my position. In this positive way I viewed everything that presented itself to me. Science, politics, business and religion, I supposed were all to be decided on the same basis. So I lived a moral life, thinking I was as good as many who claimed to be christians, thought my chances were as good as many church members (perhaps they were), but I think now that real christians are incomparably better than I was at that time. Later in life I saw myself a

sinner, and tried to pray for relief, but seemed to get worse (but of course I could not). I often resolved to do better, but would fail to keep my promises. I would renew my vows, only to break them again. I often meditated how I could lead a better life, but all my plans failed. My prayers seemed never to reach more than an arm's length. I read the Bible to see how it agreed with science. I saw no trouble there, neither seemed to refute the other, but a pure life was not worked out by arithmetic; science did not solve it. What must I do? It took something positive and definite to satisfy me, so I thought how would I get it? It seemed that all my plans failed, my resources were exhausted, and while lying on the bed waiting for some untried means of relief, it seemed like a soft voice said, Thy sins are forgiven. Relief was instantaneous. My soul was filled with joy. Science and arithmetic combined could not have solved my troubles so readily nor so completely. For a short time all was well, but the time was too short to suit me. Then the thought came, Maybe that was a dream, a delusion or imagination, as I was then lying on the bed. Then I wanted to know for sure that I heard a voice. How could I know? Again I wanted to be positive. I looked about for evidence. I could not figure it out by science or by nature. I now longed for a better life. I began to look about among the different denominations, to see what relief they might give me, but few preachers could explain the workings of my experiences; some made going to the "church" very easy, some seemed to drift away very easily. I tried to make up my mind to go to this "church" or that, but could not quite do it. Then I thought, Why not go to the Baptist? But they were so much at variance of opinion that they were not agreed among themselves. Some seemed more for discipline than for regeneration, and this seemed strange to me. It seemed to me that the church should be made up of all the regenerated persons within its reach. I hesitated, studied, looked and longed. Short Scripture came into my thoughts. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. He that hid his talent in the ground was a wicked servant. I wanted to be baptized, but no place seemed to exactly suit me. I finally asked a traveling preacher to baptize me, without my joining any church, but he would not do it. Then in desperation I reviewed all the denominations in my reach and finally resolved to go to the Primitive Baptists and see if they would let me worship with them, for I could not be satisfied without being baptized. He that is ashamed to confess me before men, the same will I be ashamed to confess before my Father. They seemed to welcome me with the right hand of fellowship and brotherly love. I could not be satisfied in any other place. I am not satisfied now with my hope and experience, as my hope is too weak, my experience is too strange and unusual. I want more evidence, something positive. I cannot walk by sight, and my faith is so weak I am continually in doubt. My constant prayer is for more divine light and help. How can I live a better life without light and help? Some of the promises give me hope. Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you. Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, shall be filled. My wife is the greatest earthly help I could possibly have, but mortal help is not sufficient in my need.

So, by request, here is the strange experience of a strange man.

M. N. WEBB.

FIGSBORO, Va., Jan. 25, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I inclose herewith a letter from Elder M. P. Moran, which was very comforting to me, a message from the Lord's humble poor, and one near to the end of his journey as brother Moran was when he wrote this, his last attempt to write to any one that we know of, which makes us feel that he knew something of the realities of the religion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I feel it will be of comfort to others, and would be glad if you would publish it if it does not crowd out something better.

Yours truly,

JOHN E. BURGESS.

BUFFALO RIDGE, Va., Nov. 25, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER BURGESS:—I was not surprised to get your good letter, for I had been feeling for several days that I was going to hear from you. I have been wanting to write to you all ever since we left Martinsville, Va., but have not been able to write, and am now writing this lying on my back. I cannot lie much on my side, and have not sat up since we have been here, but can raise up in bed to drink. I am very poorly, and realize fully that I cannot be here long. I suffer a great deal. Knowing as I do that there is no possible hope of my recovery, I am anxious for the time to come when I humbly hope I will be done with suffering, trials and tribulations, and go to that city where I expect to meet that precious one who has gone before. O dear ones, you cannot imagine the sorrow it brought to my poor heart, for she was so good and kind. I had often looked into the casket and seen the companions or husbands of others, and tried to sympathize with them, but when I looked down in the casket and saw my own I felt as I never had before. As to her eternal happiness, my mind is easy. I wish I could tell you all of her conversation with me the day before she died, but will tell a little in short. She said she was satisfied that I was not going to live, and could not bear for me to leave her here alone. She said she used to dread death, but now it was no dread; said she did not mind it any more than she did going to sleep, and that if she knew she would die before morning that evening would be the happiest time of her life. She awakened me twice that night, praying the Lord to take her home. Her mind was strong, and next morning she was unusually happy, so I felt her time had come, and the Lord made her willing and anxious to go home. She talked much of the joys of heaven, and said it was a home for the poor. The day we reached here I found my father lying in his coffin; he died a few hours before we got here, and was buried next day. Elders P. G. Lester and L. I. Gilbert preached his funeral in the midst of the largest gathering of people I ever saw at a burial. There are three more Old Baptist preachers here in the mountains on their beds awaiting the summons to come. The Lord is fast calling his poor servants home.

I wish I could write more, but I cannot, as I am so weak and cough so much; had a hemorrhage yesterday. The children are real well, and they wait on me very nicely, and my mother does all she can for me, and the neighbors are good and kind. My brother and two sisters come to see me often. I wish I could have seen you all again before we left Martinsville, but I was so poorly I could not go anywhere.

I must close. I hope the Lord will be with you all while here on earth you stay, and after death may heaven be

your home. I do not think I will ever be able to write you all again, as I am failing fast, each day I see a change, and I hope it will not be long before I can say, Farewell, vain world, I am going home. I want to see Him who loved me, and, I trust, died for me. My hope is that he will meet me at the river, that blessed home prepared for his humble poor. Dear, precious ones, when I am gone, say he was a poor sinner, saved by sovereign grace, if saved at all.

Now, dear ones, farewell. In hope of heaven, your brother,

M. P. MORAN.

FORT CHADBOURNE, Texas, Nov. 28, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription is past due, thought I would send you a mite on same. It seems I could hardly do without the SIGNS, as I live in what I believe to be a gospel desert land, and all the preaching I get is from the pages of your good paper. This beautiful Sunday morning I have been reading the many sweet letters from the brethren and sisters scattered over the United States and Canada, and they all seem to speak or write what I believe to be sound doctrine, seem to be "clothed upon" with heavenly wisdom, with not a jar or discordant note. O if we could only realize that we have passed from death unto life, that ought to suffice us. I hate to hear of dear brethren jangling about questions to no profit. I am so weak, and know nothing about spiritual things as I would love to know, but in this life we only see in part, and know in part, but the rightly taught child of God knows that his or her salvation from first to last comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is neither variableness nor shadow of turning. We also know that God, who is all wisdom, has not, nor ever will, make a mistake. When he made Adam he made just such a being as pleased him to make. I hardly think God made Adam "able to stand but liable to fall," for God knew man would fall, and that fall was according to the purpose of God. Some might say or ask, How do you know about that? Because God in wisdom hath established the world, and has made all things for himself, yea, the wicked for the day of evil. If I could think that God wanted Adam to stand I could not possibly have any hope for a better life than this, for if the devil could defeat the purpose of God once, he could again and again, but such is not the case. I am sure that the Lord has declared, or decreed, the end from the beginning, and from ancient times, saying, My counsel shall stand. I am thankful that God has a people in this day of false doctrine who will not teach for doctrine the commandments of evil men and seducers. I know that if indeed I have been made to taste that the Lord is gracious, he who has begun the work of grace in my poor heart is able and will perform the work until it is finished in the glorious morning of the resurrection, after which we will not see in part and know in part, for that will be taken away, and we will be in the full realization of those things for which we in this life hope. We are now saved by hope, but then hope will be removed. Glorious theme. I am made to ask myself the question, Will I be permitted to know those sweet things in store for the people of God, seeing that I am so vile, so prone to sin? If I had to trust in one good deed that I have, or ever will do, then I am forever without hope, and of all men most miserable, but if Jesus has tasted death for me, all the powers of darkness cannot prevent my entrance into the everlasting companionship of all the

redeemed of the blessed Lord. If a saint at all, I am the very least of all.

Your little brother in a sweet hope that this world cannot give,

J. W. CAUDLE.

BUNA, Texas, Jan. 25, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have just read and reread your reply to brother Jackson in the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES of Jan. 15th, and I want to express to you my hearty indorsement of your article. I have read the SIGNS off and on for over fifty years. If ever I received a hope it was in the year 1861. I received the doctrine then, and it is my meat and drink to-day, which is God's unlimited predestination, his absolute, sovereign rule and government, and he is the disposer of all things. Brother Jackson says "absolute" is not in the Bible. If he will turn to the eighteenth chapter of Jeremiah, and read the heading he will find this: "Under the type of a potter is shewed God's absolute power in disposing of nations." Yes, brother Ker, we have the conditionalist here, too. Some of their preachers were once identified with us, and preached the absolute predestination of all things as strong as you and the SIGNS advocate that doctrine, but departed from it, and now accuse the Predestinarian Baptists of preaching a licentious doctrine, which they know is not true. I have been hearing the Old School Baptists preach all my life, and I am now past seventy-six years of age, and have never heard one of them preach a licentious doctrine, but have always condemned sin wherever found, and the punishment of the same to the full extent of the law, but they that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

In conclusion, I will say to the dear editors and writers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, Write on, for your labor is not in vain in the Lord, but is sweet to the household of faith, as bread cast upon the waters, that shall be gathered after many days. May heaven's blessings be with the editors and the household of faith everywhere is, I trust, the desire of a poor old sinner, saved by grace.

Your little brother, I hope,

AMOS RICHARDSON.

[YOU are right, brother Richardson, the doctrine of absolute predestination is not a licentious doctrine. In London, Ontario, several years ago a dear brother, now dead, was asked one day by his employer if he believed in absolute predestination, and he replied, I most positively do. Then the employer remarked, That doctrine leads to licentiousness. The brother replied, You have known me for a number of years, has it led me to licentiousness? The man answered, No. Addressing his employer again, he asked, Does it lead you to licentiousness? and he said, No. Well, said the brother, who does it lead to licentiousness? There was no reply.—K.]

WARWICK, N. Y., Dec. 6, 1915.

DEAR SISTER HOUGH:—Your letter came yesterday, and I feel too unworthy to write, for I have been careless in a way, and I had hoped I would get to visit you before the winter set in. Every plan has miscarried. I expected to go to my daughter's, and from there to your place. I will not go now until after Christmas. It is a trial to give up to the disappointment, but it will work out something for me to show me that my way is not the one for me to walk in. The Lord's way is not our way, and we are made to realize it and know that all things work for our good and his glory. Elder Ker preached for us yesterday, such a good sermon, on the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, and it was so different from

the general idea people have of it. The rich man was the Jewish nation, and Lazarus the Gentile, and, dear sister, there was great comfort in it all, to feel that we are embraced in it, and I feel Elder Ker can no more stop writing than he can preaching. He has been sick with a cold, and was quite hoarse during his discourse. We feel we are wonderfully blessed in having him with us, and he feels very much at home with the church. Our congregation is improving.

I am planning to go south this winter. I do mind leaving my meetings, for lately I feel I have had an ear to hear, and, I hope, a heart to understand, and have enjoyed them more than in a long time. We all have our burdens to bear, and I feel I am not patient under mine, only as I am made to know that a higher power rules.

Sister Fisher's death was a shock to us all. Precious in his sight is the death of the saints.

I am, I hope, your sister,

ISABELLA BRADNER.

SISTER Bradner was a very worthy sister, and her death is much lamented. We have spent many pleasant days with her in her home.

L. HOUGH.

POCA, W. Va., Feb. 19, 1916.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST, you who write such comforting communications for those who read the SIGNS:—I shall try to speak a word of encouragement to you all as a band of good soldiers, who are hovering around the blood-stained banner of King Jesus, who is our Prophet, Priest and King, wonderful Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. How wonderfully and mysteriously are the children of God led about and instructed by this wonderful Counselor. Indeed it is soul-cheering to see them from all parts who have taken sweet counsel together, and are walking unto the house of God in company. This house is a spiritual structure, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Where there is unity there is strength; the Lord of hosts is the strength of his people. With David they can say, Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me unto glory. We hear this wonderful Counselor saying to those of his choice among every nation, kindred, tongue and people on earth, And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. Not the whole of mankind, but his out of every nation on earth. By the Spirit of inspiration we hear him saying, Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom; I am understanding, I have strength; by me kings reign and princes decree justice. Dear kindred, what a wonderful counselor is the man Christ Jesus. My blessed kindred in a precious hope of life eternal, keep on writing, for I feel to say of a truth that you are clothed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and in your right mind, having the mind of Christ. There is no other people who can go back and gather strength and comfort as spiritual Israel, for all necessary preparations were made for them in eternity; they were chosen in Christ, and grace was given them in Christ before the world began. They were his delight then, and as he is unchangeable, the same yesterday, to-day and forever, they are his delight now, and will be through all time. Doth not wisdom cry, and understanding put forth her voice?

A few more references to quotations of such great wisdom, and I will come to a close. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the deep; when he established

the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of the deep; when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth, then I was by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him. Rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men. (Prov. viii. 27-32.) May God bless you all and prepare you for the future as he has in the past, that your words in the SIGNS may be as apples of gold in pictures of silver to those of like precious faith.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

PORTLAND, Ore., Feb. 9, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have wished for some time to let you and the dear writers of the SIGNS know there is one more who looks with eagerness for the coming of the old family paper. I cannot remember a time when the SIGNS OF THE TIMES was not on my father's reading table. Living in the city, as I do now, all the preaching I get is through that once despised paper, which my father kindly sends to me. I enjoy the editorials very much, and it is good also to read the letters from different ones, and if there is a corner in the dear old paper not already filled, I would like to add another witness. If I believe in the absolute predestination of all things, or no, I have never heard it proclaimed so absolutely that it offended me. When we proclaim God's absolute sovereignty over all things, and predestination of all things, we exclude boasting, and it is the nature of man to boast. Sovereign means royal, possessing supreme dominion, while predestinate is to ordain beforehand by an unchangeable purpose. The Bible tells us God is one, and did the other, and if he changes the smallest purpose who is to say he (God) may not change the whole plan? But he declares he is an unchangeable God, therefore what he did predestinate will surely come to pass. I love to read the different experiences of our writers; some of them come very near, as though they were written for me alone; they often give me life to hope that I, too, may be one of the little flock, but by searching I fail to find sufficient evidence, and my unworthiness consumes me, yet I do love to be in the presence of the Old Baptists. If this is unsound, cast it aside.

A sinner,

CAMILLA WILKES.

ANCHO, New Mexico, Jan. 22, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I thought I would write you and see if you were still publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; if so, I want to subscribe for it. I do not know whether I have the right address or not. I just happened to have an old SIGNS, and a part of the address was torn very badly, so that is why I did not send the money this time. Now if I am correct, please let me know at once, as I want the SIGNS. I have not had a SIGNS to read since 1908, nor have I heard an Old Baptist preach since 1906, so you see that I am getting pretty hungry. I was raised in Panolo County, Texas, was baptized there by Elder Charles Holcomb. I know he is dead, but will you please be so kind as to write me whether brother J. K. Holcomb is still living, and his last address? I know they used to write for the SIGNS. It has been about twenty-nine years since I saw and heard J. K. Holcomb preach. Since I am so far away from any of my old friends and brethren I wander back to childhood days.

Thanking you for all information that I have asked, I am as ever, your sister in Christ, I hope,

MINNIE BELLAMY.

[WE do not know the present address of J. K. Holcomb. If any one who reads the foregoing letter knows his address they will please send it to sister Bellamy. —ED.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1916.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REVELATION XIII. 8.

"AND all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

John saw a beast rise up out of the sea (the peoples of the earth). This beast had seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. This beast was like a leopard, his feet were as of a bear, his mouth as of a lion. This beast received his power from the dragon, also his seat and his authority. We have no doubt but that there was given John here a vision of the rise and development of antichrist, of all nations, societies and organizations that, while perhaps professing godliness, are the deadly enemies of all real religion, of the pure and undefiled religion of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have not the ability to analyze this beast in detail, and to tell exactly what each of the seven heads signified, and each of the ten horns, and so on. It is said that one of these heads was, as it were, wounded to death. We believe this one head that seemed to be thus wounded was the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church, which received such a serious wound at the time of the Protestant reformation in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when Luther, Calvin, John Huss and others revolted against the teachings of Catholicism and the supremacy of the pope. During this period there was a great mental and perhaps spiritual awakening in the minds of many men; learning, which had been confined to the nuns and monks, became more widely diffused among the people, owing to the invention of the art of printing and the translation of the Scriptures into native tongues of the various peoples, instead of being procurable only in Latin or Greek, which had been heretofore the case, so that none but the highly educated had been able to read the Bible up to that time. The result of all this was that Catholicism received a terrible wound, in that the pope lost his temporal power, and became a prisoner, practically, in the Vatican at Rome, which has remained the case ever since. At first it seemed that this wound was deadly, and that Catholicism would never be the power that it had been. Events since have, however, proved that Catholicism is resilient, and has continued to grow by leaps and bounds, so that at the present day there is no telling in what channels and to what extent the ramifications and influence of its power do extend. The whole of the world's thought and religion is tainted with Romanism, either consciously or unconsciously. But we must remember that the beast which John saw had ten heads, so that Catholicism is only one of these heads, it is but a part of the beast, and not the whole beast. The whole beast taken together represents the whole of antichrist, the whole of all that is opposed to the truth of God as it is in Jesus Christ. Protestantism, which in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries revolted against Romanism, is to-day in league with Catholicism, not at all frightened by her doctrines, as it professed to be at that time. The whole world, Cath-

olics and Protestants, too, has gone mad after the beast, all wonder after him and worship him. You do not hear to-day men arguing about the doctrines which this and that denomination stand for. The time was when Presbyterians meant one thing, when Methodists stood for something else, when Episcopalians held themselves aloof and would have nothing to do with either, but now not one person in a hundred who is a member of those denominations could tell intelligently what are the respective tenets of the churches to which they belong. Protestantism has ceased protesting, it has lost its backbone, and is as soft and yielding as a jellyfish. All this makes the steady encroachment of Catholicism upon our cherished liberties so much the easier, and so it will continue to go on and on until too late to remedy it, then look out for the bitterest persecution this planet has ever seen. While men talk and weep about the universal brotherhood of man, the wily beast with his greed and selfishness and cunning is carefully getting the upper hand. The end of it will be that there will not be left a single one but what will worship this beast, except those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. This Lamb, our text says, has been slain from the foundation of the world. Always and ever the Lamb of God, wherever he has seen fit to show himself, has met with the bitterest hatred and persecution. Satan opposed him in the garden of Eden when he enticed Eve to disbelieve what God had told her. Cain hated the Lamb in Abel and slew his brother. The antediluvians opposed Noah, Egypt sought to entrap Moses and keep him her servant forever, the Canaanites cost the Israelites many a hard fight, David had his Saul, Judah had her Babylon, the Jews hated Jesus, and so on and so on. Ever the Lamb of God has been slain from the foundation of the world whenever his sincerity and truth have shown themselves. Thus it will ever be until all prophecy and all Scripture and every word of God have been fulfilled. Our text states it as a certainty that all that dwell upon the earth shall worship error in some form or another, except God's elect, those who are written in the Lamb's book of life. These, and these alone, shall worship the only true and living God in spirit and in truth. It is just as much a certainty that the whole world shall go after the beast as it is that these, the elect, shall cleave unto the Lord. Between the two, the elect and the wicked, is a great gulf which cannot be bridged. It is a fixed gulf, fixed by God's foreknowledge and his predestinated purpose, as well as his electing love. All who have been saved, and all who are still to be experimentally saved, were saved in the mind and purpose of God before time began. This number cannot be added or subtracted by men or devils or angels whatsoever. God alone could change it, and he will not, because, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

Written at the request of Mrs. J. D. Lake, of Hurricane, West Virginia.

L.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

THE MACEDONIAN CRY.

"AND a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us."—Acts xvi. 9.

We do believe there are such things as visions, that there are such things as dreams that have a spiritual value. Not to believe this would be to deny the Scriptures. "In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction."—Job xxxiii. 15, 16. Paul was God's preacher. The Lord alone sought him out, called him by his grace and qualified him to preach the gospel of Jesus. Also, the Lord appointed him his field of labor and put him in it. This was not left optional with Paul, nor with the churches to whom he preached. At times Paul had desires and inclinations to visit places where the Lord would not let him go, also he was compelled of the Lord to go into places where his natural bent would never have led him. We have such a case in this sixteenth chapter of the Acts. Having gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, he would have gone into Asia to preach, but the Holy Ghost forbade him to preach the word of God in Asia. Why, I do not know, and Paul did not know, only God knew, and he did not explain the matter to Paul. God never explains the "why" of anything. After Paul came to Mysia, he tried to go into Bithynia, but again the Spirit did not suffer him to do so. All the way along his pathway was hedged in, as had been that of his Master before him. We may devise our way, but the Lord alone can and does direct our steps. Then it was that Paul had this vision and saw a man who said to him, "Come over into Macedonia, and help us." One way to test whether a preacher has been called of God to preach, or has called himself to, is to watch and see whether he goes against his will into places against his inclination, or whether he follows his own likes and dislikes and the lure of the largest congregations and the largest salaries. Some men proclaim loudly their zeal for the Lord of hosts and their concern for men's souls, but they take great care to be well paid for all the work they do. How long, think you, would such zeal endure should the dollar and its charms be withdrawn? To what kind of help was Paul called into Macedonia? Was he needed over there to help the Lord? Was there something in Macedonia that the Lord could not do without Paul's help? The man whom Paul saw in a vision did not say, Come over into Macedonia and help the Lord, but, "Come over into Macedonia, and help us." Who were the "us"? Was it the case-hardened sinners over there that needed Paul, was it the unregenerate and unrepentant that called to Paul for help? We have only to continue on reading down in this same sixteenth chapter of Acts to learn that God already had a people in Macedonia which he had chosen for himself, whose hearts he had touched, and who, as being already his sheep, needed the preaching of the gospel. Paul did not go into Macedonia and invite a single soul to accept Christ, nor did he persuade a single one to become a christian. His preaching did not procure for God one more child in Macedonia than God already had there. But these in Macedonia who were already the Lord's people and whose hearts already were being exercised by the Spirit needed their joy helped, they needed comforting, they needed instruction "in" and not "for" righteousness. Preaching never instructs any one how to get righteousness, but it instructs in righteousness;

that is, those who are already righteous in the Lord's righteousness. Following Paul in Macedonia, we find him in Philippi, a chief city there. He had not sent the city word of his coming beforehand, he had advertised himself in no way, he had mapped out no plan or itinerary, he had not arranged beforehand with the citizens of the city for a big tabernacle in which to preach, and had not required a previously guaranteed sum before making his advent there. In fact, Paul came into Macedonia unknown and unheralded. None but the Lord and himself knew he was there. Paul went and sat down by the riverside where it was the custom of the people to repair for prayer, and spake to the women that came out there. Now, among these women, was a woman from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple, named Lydia. This woman heard Paul preach. She heard him not only with her natural ears, but with her spiritual ears, with her faith. The reason she thus heard him was because the Lord had already opened her heart, already she worshiped God, otherwise the preaching could not have benefited her, and never can benefit any one only as the Lord opens their hearts. Following this case of Lydia, there was a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination. This maiden followed Paul. Paul did not invite her to follow him, he did not dog her steps, coaxing her to join his church; instead, the woman followed him about listening to his preaching, and said, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. Paul did not tell her how to be saved, or what she must do to be saved, but he, as all gospel preachers do, showed the way of salvation; that is, he preached Jesus the way, the truth and the life. In the case of Lydia and this damsel, neither had been made to believe through Paul's efforts, but, God having wrought by faith in them, they recognized Paul as a servant of God and his preaching as a message sent from that God. Now, the third case in Macedonia was that of the jailer. This man, when he put Paul and Silas in jail and bound their feet in the stocks, rejoiced in doing so, not knowing that these men were the servants of the true God, and that they preached the truth of that God. But during the night this jailer had a revolutionary experience within himself, so that he was prepared to hear the preaching and to receive the message they bore. Paul and Silas had nothing to do with opening this man's heart or his eyes, the Lord alone could and did bring the earthquake that upset all the jailer's calculations and brought him in fear and trembling to the feet of Paul and Silas. This, then, was the kind of help required of Paul in Macedonia. He was not called there to help the Lord save souls, but to preach to those whom the Lord had already selected and saved, to help their joy and comfort them with comfortable words. He was not called there to purify the politics, nor the society of Macedonia, nor to help the prohibition ticket at the next election. If, in this day, these evangelists that run around the country saving souls went into a country to preach, and only three persons responded, and had to suffer arrest to reach one of these, they would give up their ministry as a failure, and go into something else promising better returns, but with the true servants of the Lord there can be no giving up nor backing out. There is no discharge in that war. Their faith is in God, and they abide in the work until the Lord calls them home.

This is written, not by request, but because we have felt like it. L.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

INSTRUCTORS AND FATHERS.

BROTHER BEEBE:—I will renew my request, which I made one year ago, for your views on 1 Cor. iv. 15: "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." By complying with this request you will oblige many who are inquiring after the truth, some of whom seem to be entangled with the means doctrine. It is for their sake that I make the request.

JAMES OSBURN.

LEESVILLE, Iowa, Jan. 1, 1866.

Amidst the numerous applications for our views on various passages of the Scriptures we had overlooked the former request of our beloved brother. Even now we may not be able to satisfy the inquirers after truth, much less stop the mouths of gainsayers who pervert the Scriptures in vainly essaying to torture them into a seeming support of their delusions, but with such ability as the Lord may give we will attempt an elucidation of the text.

By "instructors in Christ," we understand the apostle to mean those teachers in the church which are by the church looked up to for instruction, and are recognized as pastors, teachers and other gifts designed "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."—Eph. iv. 12–16. By "instructors in Christ," we must understand those who are recognized as in his body, which is his church, and of these we are told that Christ, when he ascended up on high, gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers. Now all these gifts are employed for the instruction of the saints, to enlighten their understanding, that they may not only enjoy the comfort of a clear understanding of the truth, but be also protected from the sleight of men, who, like wily means-users, lie in wait to deceive the saints. Of these gifts the church of Christ may have ten thousand, or whatever number God is pleased to supply, and yet of all these there may be but few possessing the peculiar gift or qualification of fathers, as we will presently attempt to show.

If by "instructors" we may be allowed to include all the teachers who find their way into the various organized branches of the christian church, it would swell the disproportion of fathers and instructors to an inconceivable extent, especially in these "last days," wherein many "shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." "For the time will come [yea, it has already come] when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."—1 Tim. iv. 1, 2; 2 Tim. iv. 3, 4. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought

them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."—2 Peter ii. 1–3. Among this description of instructors there are no fathers to be found. "For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."—2 Tim. iii. 6, 7. This sort has been described by our Lord as coming in sheep's clothing, while inwardly they are ravening wolves. We are commanded to beware of them. There are no fathers among them, no parental regard for the welfare of the flock, for they are without even natural affections, truce-breakers (they will violate their most solemn covenants), they are false accusers. Do not forget that this is a prominent trait of the sort spoken of. Moreover, they are incontinent, however sanctimonious they may seem to be, for they are slaves to lust. It is also said of this very sort, They are fierce, like tigers howling for blood, their feet are swift to shed blood, destruction and misery are in their ways, and of the way of peace they are totally ignorant. They are despisers of those that are good. Traitors, however loyal they may profess to be to earthly powers, to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places to which they have professed allegiance, are recreant and defiant; to those into whose confidence they manage to insinuate themselves by false professions and false pretenses they are treacherous. Heady and highminded are special characteristics of this sort. They assume to know more than seven men who can render a reason, and are wise above what is written, and are of the sort to whom Job, in biting sarcasm, would say, No doubt ye are the men, and wisdom will die with you. Highminded, but not in an honorable sense, but lofty and towering in their vain imagination, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, carnal pleasures, ever ready to sell their professed Lord for less than thirty pieces of silver, and to betray him, his cause, his truth or his people with a perfidious kiss. Yet with all these marks branded upon them, like the mark of Cain, they "have a form of godliness." The woolly coat of the sheep, to deceive the flock of God, and to conceal their abominable wickedness. But these painted hypocrites may still be known, notwithstanding their disguise, if their track, especially their back track, be closely examined. Trace these grievous wolves back to their secret lair, and you will find that many a confiding flock has been torn and scattered by them. Wherever they have been entrusted with the pastoral care of a flock, that flock has either been corrupted by them, or it has dwindled away under their instructions, and when detected in their deceitful working, and expelled from fellowship, like the devils of whom we read, when cast out, invariably tear and rend the church or body out of which they are cast, and very generally when so expelled they find some herd of swine ready to receive and hurry with them away to a swift destruction. The apostle certainly was aware that such false teachers would infest the church of God, for he found such in the churches of Galatia, and would that they were cut off, for they troubled and bewitched the saints, and he knew full well that after his de-

parting grievous wolves would come in to the church of Ephesus, not sparing the flock, and with prophetic inspiration he gave warning of their increase in the last days, but still he could only speak of their being in Christ, so far as related to their connection nominally with the church, which is his body. They are not in Christ vitally, or experimentally, nor by having entered into his fold by the door of the sheepfold, but as having climbed up some other way, proving that instead of being fathers, they are thieves and robbers, whose work is to steal, to kill and to devour. But whether the apostle designed to include these false teachers with the ten thousand instructors in the church, whose vital relation to the body of Christ we have no right to question, who, while they have gifts which are useful for instruction, are totally destitute of every qualification to be fathers, we will not say.

If we confine the apostle's meaning to those instructors who are divinely qualified with gifts for instructing the saints, and who are and have been useful as instructors, do we not discover many of them who lack the peculiar traits of fathers in Israel? As a prophet of the Lord, Jonah was a qualified instructor, and has given us instruction by the word of the Lord that "salvation is of the Lord," but Jonah was entirely too impatient, peevish and fretful to discharge the duties of a loving, watchful, provident and careful father. Moses was faithful as a servant, but too austere and severe to feel a fatherly tenderness for erring children. A mere instructor may impress many useful lessons on his pupils with his rod, but parental love and tenderness belong to a father, and the father feels a solicitude for the children which none but fathers can feel. Have we not known in our day preachers who seemed to be remarkably apt to teach, almost inspired to dive deep into the sublime mysteries of the gospel, very clear and sound, and edifying in their elucidation of the more obscure portions of the Scriptures, who in their every other trait of character were entirely unsuited for a pastoral relation to any particular branch of the church? Indeed, it has become proverbial of some instructors, When in the pulpit they never ought to go out, and when out they never ought to go in. Their impetuous rashness, imprudent carriage, unbecoming levity, foolish jesting, uncouth extravagance of language, cold, unsympathetic treatment of brethren, especially when under trials which require the most careful and tender treatment, carelessness in regard to the discipline and order of the church of God, unexemplary habits, high, austere or haughty bearing, rendering themselves unapproachable to the tender, timid lambs, or the opposite extreme of low and reckless familiarity and companionship with those who scoff at sacred things. All, or any of these faults, tend to disqualify for parental usefulness in the house of God. But few, alas, too few of us who hold a position in the ministry, or otherwise as instructors, can say in truth that our usefulness in our holy calling has not, is not, restrained by some or all of these evils. The peculiar qualifications for and characteristics of fathers in the house of God will be more fully considered in connection with what we propose to write on the last part of our text: "For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel," which, for want of room in this number, we must defer until our next.

(To be continued.)

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Cynthia Ann White passed away from earth and earthly scenes at the home of her daughter, Mrs. W. McC. Sauber, 3812 Kanawha St., N. W., Washington, D. C., Feb. 25th, 1916. She was born in Lancaster, Ohio, seventy-seven years ago, and was the widow of brother Levi White, who died a few years ago. She is survived by five sons and three daughters, who greatly mourn their loss. Sister White became a member of the Old School Baptist Church several years ago. She had been a member of the New Valley Church, Loudoun Co., Va., but at the time of her death her name was on the books of the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va., to which place she had moved her membership upon her moving from the old home place near Hughesville to Herndon, Va. Sister White was a solid, reliable Old School Baptist. She loved her brethren devotedly, and was one of the most hospitable of women in her own home. A cheerful welcome always awaited those who crossed her threshold. She believed that salvation is by grace, and grace alone, that God works all things after the counsel of his own will, and had no confidence in her own flesh or in that of any one else. She was one of those dependable characters that, when you left her once, you knew where to find her the next time. She could not be easily influenced against those whom she held dear, nor in favor of those whom she felt it wise to avoid. At the same time, no one needed to fear her judgment, for she was most charitable in her consideration of others' weaknesses and shortcomings. In short, not to multiply words, she was, if a friend at all, a friend at all times, and one who would not fail those she befriended in those times when they most needed friends. We feel that if the grace of God ever imaged itself in a human being, it most certainly did in her. She is at peace and at rest in the presence of her beloved Jesus, we verily believe. May the good Lord in his mercy comfort every aching heart and assuage the grief of those who mourn.

The funeral services were conducted at Herndon, using the twenty-third Psalm. Interment in the Herndon cemetery. L.

Mrs. Sarah E. Opdyke departed this life Dec. 14th, 1915, at her home in Huntingdon Valley, Pa., after an illness of several years. She was the daughter of Joseph and Mary Ann Croasdale, and was born Nov. 17th, 1847, and married to Amos Opdyke August 17th, 1865. They had two children, sons, both of whom died in infancy. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Southampton Baptist Church the second Sunday in June, 1876, by Elder Wm. J. Purington. Seven others were baptized on the same day. Our dear sister was one of the most devoted and faithful members of our church, and is greatly missed by us all. Her conversation truly was in heaven; it was of spiritual things, and when she was not at the appointed meetings of the church we knew there was an unavoidable hindrance in the way. She often was at meeting, riding about four miles, when she really was not able. The church was her home. During her long and painful sickness of heart trouble those who visited her found her spiritually minded. She was dearly loved by all who knew her, and especially by the brethren and friends. It was sweet to hear her talk of the exercises of her mind, and the perfume of the dear name of Jesus seemed to fill the room where we were in conversation with her. Her husband was devoted to her, and gave her every possible attention, driving her to meeting when he had reason to fear that she might at any time pass away. He is left desolate indeed. May the Lord continue to have him in his tender care. There are left a number of dear relatives and friends, who mourn. I was with her, in company with some of the friends, the evening before she passed away, and she expressed herself as ready to go. At her request, I spoke a few words in prayer, as she had always desired on occasion of my visits. On the day of the funeral I was absent, and Elder H. H. Lefferts preached to a large congregation from Psalms lxxxiv. 11. Elder J. M. Fenton also made a few remarks.

I am preparing this notice at the request of sister Elizabeth C. Lefferts, a niece of our dear departed sister. SILAS H. DURAND.

Mrs. Catherine E. Francis, the subject of this memoir, was the daughter of Elder John Hickerson and his wife Mary Ann, and was born Sept. 4th, 1848, and baptized in Alexandria, Va., in 1870, by Elder Purington, in the fellowship of the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church. She was married to Isaac Long, of Alabama, in September, 1874, who died in 1878, and in December, 1880, she was married to W. Hume Francis, who died in 1904. She passed away Dec. 25th, 1915. The writer became acquainted with sister Francis in 1899, when he became the pastor of the church in Alexandria, Va., of which she and her husband were members, and I feel that I never knew a more lovely woman. It was a pleasure indeed to be the pastor of such lovely Baptists as brother and sister Francis. Their home was a haven of rest for all who loved the dear Savior. Sister Francis had a very sweet voice, and always led the singing for us in Alexandria, and after the church in Alexandria disbanded I missed her much, as she and brother Francis moved to Manassas, Va. However, she would make occasional visits to our meetings in Washington, D. C., when I would always ask her to lead the singing for us. Her voice was one that I never forgot, and now as I write about her I fancy I hear that sweet voice singing the praise of the Savior she so dearly loved. She was sound in the faith, and

a lover of peace in the church of Jesus Christ; her walk was always consistent. She bore in her body the marks of the Lord Jesus, and died in the triumph of God-given faith. Her niece, Mrs. Arrington, of Manassas, Va., telegraphed for the writer to attend her funeral, but as the message was not delivered in time I did not get there, which I regret very much. Sister Francis leaves a number of nieces and nephews, several of whom are members of the Old School Baptist Church. Let me say to each of you whom she left that your dear "Aunt Cattie," as you called her, is in the loving embrace of her Savior, and all her trials and afflictions are over, and when Jesus shall come again he will call her sleeping dust (the mortal) to put on immortality, and then she who was so true and lovely in all relations of life, daughter, wife, aunt and member of the church of Jesus Christ, shall see her dear Savior as he is and be like him. Dear ones, you have my sympathy. I, too, sorrow that I shall see her lovely face and hear her sweet voice no more, but I rejoice that that face, sometimes sad because of affliction, will then be wreathed in smiles because of her triumph through Christ, and her voice far sweeter than was possible on earth shouting his everlasting praises. May God bless all who loved her to meet her in heaven.

By request. JOSHUA T. ROWE.

Peter Graham, an aged and respected citizen of Lobo, Ontario, passed away Jan. 15th, 1916, in his 75th year. Mr. Graham had suffered from a long and serious illness, not having enjoyed good health for nearly two years. He bore his affliction without a murmur, feeling reconciled to the Lord's ways. Mr. Graham was not a professor, but we have great reason to believe he was a possessor of the grace of God, having experienced a hope in his blessed Savior many years ago. He was a faithful attendant of the Old School Baptist Church of Lobo, and his willing heart and hands did many deeds of kindness in entertaining the church people, whom he was delighted to have in his home. It was my privilege to visit him many times during his illness, and I have often heard him talk very sweetly upon the precious things of the kingdom of our God. There seemed to be a feeling of regret during his last days that he was never privileged to follow his blessed Lord in the ordinance of baptism, always feeling too unworthy to take such a gracious step.

His funeral was held from his late residence, and was largely attended by the many friends and relatives, showing the high esteem in which Mr. Graham was held, also showing their sympathy for the bereaved family, which has been sorely afflicted, only a few short weeks before having buried a loving daughter, who came to visit her parents and to lend a helping hand during her father's illness, but the Lord took her to himself and left her aged and afflicted father for a few weeks to mourn his loss, when it pleased the Lord of light and glory to call him home. Mr. Graham leaves his lifelong companion, two sons and one daughter, besides a large circle of friends and relatives, to mourn their loss. Burial was in Ivan Cemetery. The writer tried to comfort the mourning ones with such as the Lord was pleased to give, using for a text Ephesians ii. 1. May the Lord graciously bless and comfort the family.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Martha Jane Beard was born July 28th, 1840, and died Jan. 30th, 1916, aged 75 years, 6 months and 2 days. She was married to Jabez Beard Nov. 20th, 1856. To that union were born ten children, four of whom have preceded her to the great beyond, her husband having passed away a little more than a year ago. They were both members of the Primitive Baptist Church called Enon, of the Pocatalico Association, and were held in high esteem by all who knew them. The great loss to the children is but eternal gain to their mother and father.

The writer was called to preach her funeral sermon, and used for a foundation, Blessed and holy are they that have part in the first resurrection. A large congregation of relatives and friends gathered to pay their last tribute of respect to one who had been a mother to all around her.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

Peter Gutshall, of Three Springs, Pa., was born Nov. 9th, 1843, and died Jan. 11th, 1916, aged 72 years, 2 months and 2 days. He loved to attend the Old School Baptist meetings held at the Springfield Church. While not a member, he was a firm believer in the doctrine of God's foreknowledge, predestination, election, effectual calling and salvation by grace from first to last, and passed away in the full realization of that blessed faith, hope and belief in the atonement that Christ wrought for his people. He had no use for the doctrines and commandments of men, and proved this in his last illness. We are glad when the Lord shows us his work in his saints, even if he has not brought them to openly confess him before men and follow him in the liquid grave. We would rather see one steadfast, unmovable and abounding in the work of the Lord than to see one unstable, though he had been baptized. The last time I saw him was at a meeting held last fall. When I bade him good-bye he turned aside to hide the tears, and my heart was knit to him in that holy relationship which is wrought of the Lord. I believe that he as a little child is in the kingdom of God, with the likeness of his Redeemer, and is satisfied.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer, before a large gathering of those who loved him. He leaves a widow, seven sons and five daughters. May the Lord give them the needed comfort for their loss.

J. M. FENTON.

Christina Watkins Gould, my sister, was born May 3rd, 1849, in Mason County, Ill., and departed this life at her home in Woodland township, Fulton Co., Ill., Nov. 15th, 1915, aged 66 years, 6 months and 12 days. She was married to Thomas Gould Oct. 16th, 1867, at Lewistown, Ill. To that union were born ten children. She leaves to mourn their loss a sorrowing husband and eight children, two having preceded her to the fair beyond. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church about thirty years ago, being baptized by Elder Humphrey, and was ever a true and faithful member, always ready to contend for salvation by grace. Her daughter-in-law wrote me that her dear mother bore her suffering with patience through all her long illness (consumption). She had been in failing health for over nine years, but her faith in her Savior was strong, ever looking to the Lord as her comfort and stay.

Funeral services were conducted at Mt. Zion Church by Elder Frazee Nov. 17th. She was buried in the Mt. Zion Cemetery near by. Great is the mystery of godliness.

In sorrow and sadness I write this of my last beloved sister. S. MORNINGSTAR.

Ivan C. H. Young was born Jan. 27th, 1893, and died at the Toronto General Hospital Jan. 30th, 1916, after about two weeks' illness of meningitis, making his stay on earth 23 years and 3 days. He was the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Young, who survive him, as well as one brother and one sister. We have reason to believe he was numbered among those whom Christ came to save. For some months previous to his illness he was given an inquiring mind to search and to know the Scriptures for himself, and not another. We trust the Lord prepared his heart to receive them, and that he has now entered into the joy of the Lord. What a blessed assurance for the family to have, yet our hearts mourn the loss of a dearly loved one.

Elder J. B. Slauson, of St. Thomas, was sent for to attend the funeral, and we have the felt assurance in our hearts that he spoke in demonstration of the Spirit and of power from these words: "And, behold, a greater than Solomon is here."

His mother, (MRS.) W. C. YOUNG.

Elder I. N. Lewis was born in Tennessee Jan. 12th, 1836, and died Jan. 12th, 1916, at his home in Tahoka, Texas, aged 80 years. He began preaching for the Primitive Baptists about forty-four years ago. Brother Lewis' home was a home for the children of God. He leaves a good wife, one son and eight daughters and a host of relatives and friends, who weep for him. However, the writer would say, Weep not for him, for he has gone from the evil to come. A. R. BURKS.

APPOINTMENTS.

PLEASE publish appointments as follows, if not providentially hindered: March 20th, at brother Lake's with the Sycamore Ridge Church, at 11 o'clock; 21st, on Climors Creek, near H. Byrnside's, 11 o'clock; 22nd, at Providence Church, 11 o'clock; 23rd and 24th, at Bethel Church, as they may see proper to arrange; 25th and 26th, at Sarah Church, 11 o'clock each day. We are expecting Elder W. I. Wade and Deacon C. H. Casdorph to be with us at these appointments all the way through. Brother Casdorph and myself will need conveyance from Hurricane to Sarah Church. J. W. McCLANAHAN.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Please publish the following appointments and oblige:

Kingston, N. Y., Saturday, March 18th, 8 p. m. 58 Smith Ave.; Ashokan, Sunday, 19th, 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m.; Arena, Tuesday, 21st, 11 a. m.; Kelley Corners, Wednesday, 22nd, 7:45 p. m.; Halcottville, Thursday, 23rd, 7:45 p. m.; Vega, Friday, 24th, 1:30 p. m.; Roxbury village, sister Mead's home, Sunday, 26th, 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m.

D. M. VAIL.

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JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Liberty Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, of Los Angeles, Cal., meets every first and third Sunday in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., at 42nd and Moneta Ave., and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 84. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1916. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DAVID'S GRIEF FOR ABSALOM.

(2 Samuel xviii. 19-33.)

It seems difficult to account for the peculiarly fierce sorrow of David when the word came to him that Absalom was dead. This son had manifested in his life and conduct, and especially in his treatment of his father, such a despicable disposition, that we cannot see how even the wonderful love of a father could find any place in him to hold on to. Even in the one incident of his wicked life in which he could hardly help showing some nobility of character by avenging his sister's shame, he showed a careful regard for his own safety by waiting two full years. David fully knew the vileness of his son, and yet when this greatest enemy of himself and his throne was dead he gave way to most extravagant expressions of bitter lamentation. It may be that this fact of Absalom's wretched meanness and vileness gave the crowning force to the great grief of his father.

The life of David was full of passionate extremes, in most of which his noble character shines forth. In all of his life, and in every incident, when rightly and fully understood, I have no doubt that he appears as a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is only the faith of God's people which can receive and understand this when it is revealed to that faith by the Holy Spirit.

How we are thrilled when we see David, sent by his father, coming into the presence of his brothers, in the army, who are jealous of him, and afterward coming into the presence of Saul, and saying to him, Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine. Then when Saul, the king, said, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine; thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth, David, who never praised himself, told the simple, thrilling story of how he once saved a lamb out of the mouth of a lion and a bear, and of his assurance that the Lord, who delivered him from those wild beasts, would deliver him out of the hand of this Philistine. Then, by faith, we see David putting off Saul's armor, the flesh, and running into the valley of Elah, into death, and through death destroying death, in a figure.

What sweetness and solemnity there are in the lamentation of David over

Jonathan, whose love for him was "wonderful, passing the love of women," and how tender and full of love and humble contrition are the supplication and abasement before the Lord for the life of the child, if peradventure the Lord would be merciful and spare the child, and the precious words left on record for all time: I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me. And what wonderful submission to God's will in all the prayers of David recorded in various places. What a sweet, soothing and instructive joy it is to read them when we are disturbed and rebellious and fiercely assailed in our minds by storms of trouble. And can it be that this is the same man whom now we find uttering such bitter and extravagant expressions of sorrow because of the death of this unnatural son? There is much in this wonderful narrative to contemplate, and to lead our faith to meditate upon the solemn mystery of gospel things. It is not my purpose to dwell upon these mysteries.

David had lately sinned greatly, and the Lord had put away his sin. Now we find him mourning over the death of his own son, his own flesh and blood. This son, Absalom, was no worse by nature than David, and no better. David was mourning with a peculiar sorrow. He had felt that sorrow, for he had gone down to the lowest hell, and had been brought up again from that terrible depth. Thus he was prepared to be set forth as a type of Jesus in his suffering, death and resurrection, as the Savior of his people. But lately Absalom would have destroyed David and his kingdom. So would David, if left to himself to act out his own sinful nature unrestrained. Who of all the redeemed of the Lord could stand before God acceptably if they must appear before him in the flesh? It is only by the Spirit of Christ dwelling in any one of all the inhabitants of the earth that he can please God. Daily we are mourning the loss of fleshly things, which are as much opposed to our spiritual interests and blessedness as Absalom was opposed to the power and kingdom of David. The destruction of Absalom was absolutely necessary to the salvation of David and his kingdom. If Absalom lived, David and his kingdom must fall. So in the kingdom of God, that which is of the flesh must be destroyed. "We which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." David cried for that which would have been his destruction. When the time came to fight the battle which, it was evident to all concerned, would result in Absalom's downfall, David showed especial anxiety concerning the fate of his son, Absalom, and to the commander of each of the three divisions of his army he said, Deal gently for my sake with the young man, Absalom.

I will say no more here about the manner of Absalom's death, but I want to say something of the way in which the knowledge of it was communicated to his father. The arrangement of his hair had been his pride, and became his destruction. He "rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away." And a certain man told Joab, who said, Why didst thou not smite him, and I would have given thee ten shekels of silver, and a girdle? But the man would not do it for a thousand shekels. He had heard the king tell Joab and all the commanders to beware not to touch the young

man, Absalom. Joab, however, took three darts and thrust them through the heart of Absalom while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak, which ended the life of this unnatural son.

But now comes the solemn work of communicating this news to the king. Every one knew it would be a sad communication to David, and naturally every one would shrink from it. But some are always ready for such exciting work. So at once one of this kind presents himself, and asks the privilege of running to the king with the important and exciting news. Then said Ahimaaz, "Let me now run, and bear the king tidings, how that the Lord hath avenged him of his enemies. And Joab said unto him, Thou shalt not bear tidings this day, but thou shalt bear tidings another day; but this day thou shalt bear no tidings, because the king's son is dead. Then said Joab to Cushi, Go tell the king what thou hast seen. And Cushi bowed himself to Joab, and ran." The fact of his great desire to run with tidings, and the manner of his entering upon the race so anxiously, seem to indicate the reason why Joab had not chosen him to bear the important tidings, which required coolness and care and a forgetfulness of self. Cushi had not asked to run, but had evidently been carefully observing all that had taken place. Joab had not told him to bear tidings, but had simply said, "Go tell the king what thou hast seen." This is what is commanded them that are sent with gospel messages. They are witnesses, and are sent to tell to the Lord's people what they have seen and heard of the Word of life.

It is sometimes the case that brethren in their early exercises of mind feel such a desire to tell of the glorious goodness of God, as they have seen and felt it, that they will get the impression that they are called to preach the gospel. Sometimes they are persistent, as was Ahimaaz, but it is the church, and not the one whose call is the question, who must decide the important matter as to the gifts in the church. The church alone has that important matter in charge. I have known of three in the last fifty years who in old age acknowledged that they had been mistaken in this matter, having felt for many years that they were called to this important work, but knew now that they had been mistaken. They were each of them held in the highest love and esteem as valuable gifts by the church, which, however, never saw in them a gift of prophecy calling for ordination.

The peculiar case of Ahimaaz, as it is related in the Scriptures, warrants us, I think, in believing that a spiritual meaning may be understood by it. Three times he insisted on being given the privilege of bearing tidings to the king. He was not at any time told to carry the tidings, but after Cushi had been sent he said, Howsoever, let me run after Cushi. Joab said to him, Wherefore wilt thou run, seeing thou hast no tidings ready? "But, howsoever, let me run." Then Joab gave up, and said to him, Run. He went by the way of the plain, and easily outran Cushi, who went the direct road, I suppose, as the Lord's ministers do today, "uphill and down." The watchman saw Ahimaaz first, and told David, who said, "He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings." But he had no tidings at all. He had seen a tumult, but knew not what it was. David was right in a sense in saying, He cometh with good tidings, although when the true tidings were told they were such as the king could not call good. Ahimaaz, after telling of the tumult, not knowing any-

thing of the king's son, was bidden to turn aside and stand still.

What terrible grief was this that came to David, and yet the tidings which Cushi brought him were good, very good; salvation was in them, Absalom was dead and David's life and kingdom were saved. The effect upon David as a man and as a father was heartrending, and all of his heart's affection for his son was so crushed that he cried with a sorrow that cannot be fully expressed as he went up to his chamber over the gate, and as he went he said, "O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" And O the joy, the blessing unspeakable, if it were true of Absalom, if it be true of us, as it is true of all the Lord's dear people, if we have experienced that death in the spiritual David, which separates us from all natural relationship and all things of time and sense, and brings us into the joys of God's salvation, and into an exceeding and eternal weight of glory, where there will be no remembrance of sin and sorrow and wickedness and pain and suffering, but sweetest joy and peace and comfort and infinite purity and holiness forever.

Every one of all the election of grace has seen, or will see, that his salvation from sin is not because he is better than any one else, but because he was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and because the dear Son of God died for him and arose for his justification. As David grieved with an unspeakable sorrow because of the sins and wickedness of his son Absalom, so the dear Son of God suffered unspeakable grief and sorrow because of his people's sins and wickedness, which he took on him in taking upon himself the seed of Abraham. If Absalom was one of the Lord's elect people it was not because he was better by nature than King David, or any other man, but because the Lord loved him with an everlasting love and therefore with loving-kindness had drawn him. (Jer. xxxi. 3.) If he was one of the chosen people of God, David, his father, not only mourned for him because he was his son, and because he had manifested such terrible sinfulness, but also mourned for him and suffered unspeakable anguish of soul because of his sins in Adam, for which the dear Savior died. No one in heaven can ever say to any other, I am here because I was a better man than you. Every one of all that company whom no man can number is brought to love holiness, and to hunger unspeakably for righteousness, and every one of that great and holy company will be satisfied with purity and holiness and righteousness in the Lord Jesus Christ, and every one of that immortal and unnumbered company, being rooted and grounded in love, will be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the length, and breadth, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that they may be filled with all the fullness of God.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., February, 1916.

HARDING, W. Va., May 17, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing some letters written me by the late Elder J. S. Corder, which you may publish if you think them worthy a place in your paper. I esteemed him as a father in Israel and a true servant of God. I have received comfort in reading the letters you have published, and think some one may be comforted in reading these.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) E. E. WORKMAN.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., June 14, 1901.

DEAR SISTER WORKMAN:—Dear sister in Christ, the ever-blessed Redeemer of poor, lost and helpless sinners. O how glad we ought to be, and full of thankfulness to God for the gift of his dear Son, the only remedy from the dark and dismal regions of endless woe and misery, where hope and mercy are strangers forever. To those who die in their sins it would have been better for them if they had never been born. We hope in God, we trust in him, we believe in him with all our heart and soul that we have an interest in his Son, not for any good or merit found in us, for we are poor defiled creatures, unfit to come into the presence of such a holy, good and gracious God; but for his own good pleasure and purpose, which he hath purposed in himself before the world was, he gave us to his Son in the covenant of grace, so says the Bible, if we are what we profess to be, and the Son says he will raise us up at the last day. He has all power given to him in heaven and in earth, and holds the keys of death and hell. Glorious thought! when this mortal shall put on immortality and death be swallowed up in victory, a land of rest, a place of peace and joy for evermore. The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad. O how we ought to love him and sing praise to his great name, and not be weary in well doing, for we shall reap in due time if we faint not. Paul said, We are not of them that draw back. He sealed his faith with his blood, looking for a better country, an heavenly. Therefore it is said that God is not ashamed to be called the God of such, for he hath prepared for them a city. O this is enough to cheer us by the way in all our dark and wintry seasons, the promises of the gospel. The ungodly world seems to be carried away at this time with form and fashion, the Bible is but little read, it lies in the dust, as it were, in the streets of Babylon, but the Lord will keep his elect, they are the darlings of his bosom, blessed be his name.

I hear that your father is poorly. Give your father and mother my best love for the truth's sake; they are faithful members in Christ's church. Please write.

Truly yours,

J. S. CORDER.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., April 10, 1902.

DEAR SISTER WORKMAN:—I now seat myself to answer your last letter of March 23rd. I had several letters to answer before yours came, so please excuse. You ask what Paul meant in his letter to the Thessalonians, when he said, Pray without ceasing. He surely meant that it was, and is, the duty of the saints of God to pray all their lifetime for the mercy and help of God in every time of need. Prayer is the breath of want, the soul's sincere desire; it indicates that we are beggars, in a grace sense, and need a helping hand, that gives the honor all to God. If we learn to pray from the brains or language of some one else it is but vain repetition, and highly offensive in the sight of God. The Bible says, "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil."—1 Peter iii. 12. All the powers of darkness cannot prevent the people of God from praying, it is their stronghold in time of trouble; indeed, it is God himself, with God in it. Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees. Jonah prayed out of the belly of hell, and the Lord heard him, and the great fish had to deliver him on the shore. It is said in Acts iv.

31, "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together," &c., showing that the Lord was in their prayer. Thus it is right to pray without ceasing by the will of God.

Dear sister, you desire to know in relation to the meaning of Hebrews i. 14, which reads: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" The verse preceding shows that the intellectual and immaterial beings whom God makes use of as his ministers to execute his orders are meant. The term "angel" signifies messenger, the Archangel is Christ. The angels above that never took flesh and blood, such as Gabriel, &c., were the ones brought to view in the text; they were ministering spirits, sent to minister for the people of God. The preposition "for" means because of the people of God. They came to Abraham, to Gideon, to Manoah and many others too numerous to mention, for the term "angel" is used not less than two hundred and fifty times in the Bible. Ministers of the gospel are called angels in Revelation, messengers of God to comfort his people. O, I cannot write it all. The Lord keep us. We are all well.

Truly yours,

J. S. CORDER.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Dec. 31, 1902.

DEAR SISTER WORKMAN:—Dear sister in the faith of Him who ever liveth to make intercession for his dear afflicted ones, that cost his life and the pouring out of his most precious blood to atone for their great transgressions and heinous offences. How great is his goodness, how great is his mercy to poor, helpless sinners, who deserve the deepest hell for joining league with Satan against heaven in the Adam fall. But Paul says, God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he hath loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by grace ye are saved.

You request in your last letter, Nov. 2nd, that I should give my opinion on the text of Scripture found recorded in Psalms lxxvi. 10: "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." The term "wrath" signifies anger, fury, rage, indignation, and to keep back, or restrain, the remainder of wrath, means that men are allowed to go so far with their wrath, and no farther; their bounds are immutably fixed, and they cannot pass them. As is said to the waves of the ocean, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further, and here shalt thy proud waves be stayed. (Job xxxviii. 11.) To illustrate: Cain was suffered to kill his brother Abel, but not to annihilate his eternal existence. The wrath of Cain was such that he would have destroyed his brother, body, soul and spirit, but his power was limited. The praise of God's great name was brought about by the shedding of Abel's blood, which was a type of Christ, for Paul said, "And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."—Hebrews xii. 24. The wrath of the old ungodly world brought about praise to God's name in saving Noah and his family in the ark, representing Christ and his family in the ark of the covenant of grace. The wrath of Joseph's brethren waxed hot against him, but they were not suffered to destroy him, the remainder of wrath was restrained. "And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry

with yourselves, that you sold me hither; for God did send me before you, to preserve life."—Genesis xlv. 4, 5. Satan, our adversary, had great wrath against Job, but his wrath was suffered to go no further than the destruction of Job's property, Job's life was kept from Satan's power. The case of the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, the wrath of the Jews to kill the Prince of life, went no further than God intended; their will was such as to prevent his resurrection, but they had not power to carry it into effect, their wrath was restrained. Peter said in his first sermon after the resurrection of Christ, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death."—Acts ii. 23, 24. Again he says, "For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."—Acts iv. 27, 28. The wrath of Pharaoh was carried out to the fullest extreme against the people of God, so that he pursued them to his own destruction and the ruin of his army, but the remainder of his wrath was restrained, he was not suffered to destroy them, and it brought praise to God's name, for God said, "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth."—Exodus ix. 16. Jethro said to Moses, after the Hebrews were delivered from the power of Pharaoh, "Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods." Here is praise to the Lord brought about by the wrath of men. The word "wrath" is found in the Bible one hundred and sixty times or places. O, the Bible abounds with such grand instruction in all holy writ. Paul said to Timothy, "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."—2 Tim. iii. 17.

"What more can he say than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

Dear sister, I have given my little view on the text proposed, but it is so large I cannot more than hint at it, that is, the subject, for it is made manifest throughout the holy writings.

I was absent from home when the message came for me to attend the funeral in your father's family. I should have been there had I been at home. I was at the Redstone Association at the time. We had a lovely time there among the dear friends. My respects to your dear husband. How I would love to hear that he had professed a hope in the blessed Savior in the pardon of his sins, and in coming into the true church, worth more than all the riches of the world. We cannot in a grace sense save our dear friends, we can only pray for the Lord to save them by his most gracious will.

Truly yours,

J. S. CORDER.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., March 3, 1904.

DEAR SISTER WORKMAN:—You are one whom I highly esteem for the truth's sake. Your welcome letter of February 4th was duly received, and owing to the cold weather, and my health not being very good, I was afraid to sit very far from the fire, by the window so that I could see how to write. Please excuse the delay. I am now better, my family is well, and I hope these lines will find you all in good health, also your father's family. Brother Joseph Corder's wife is

buried to-day. She was a faithful member of our church, Mt. Olive. Sister Coberly, of Elkins, was buried last Tuesday. Bartlett, my son-in-law, was there. Sister Henderson, of Amnon Church, died the other day; thus we have lost three worthy sisters by death, gone, no doubt, to their heavenly home.

My dear sister, in answer to your question, the older I get the less I think of myself, and the more I see my imperfection. I have no confidence in the flesh; I groan, being burdened with my perfect poverty. I have to lean on the Lord and say, like David in Psalms lxxi. 18: "Now also, when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not," &c. My only hope is in the Lord Jesus Christ. But the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, which I have been trying to preach to the best of my ability for sixty-four years this spring, is the only doctrine that I am perfectly willing to die on; I can stretch myself on this bed and feel assured that the God of the whole earth will do right. I feel comforted, too, in the promises of him who cannot lie, that he will never leave nor forsake his people, that cost his blood and his life. In all my troubles I go to him, and he knows them that put their trust in him, with his righteousness to cover all my imperfections. I get a taste of that sweet wine, sometimes unexpectedly, that lifts my soul into that element of love and thanksgiving to God for the gift of his Son to pay our immense debt of sin, and raise us up and make us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Such as I have felt, O it is enough; blessed be his name.

Respects to Mr. Workman and also your father and mother.

Truly yours,

J. S. CORDER.

GRAHAM, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—The inclosed is the experience of my cousin, who is a son of my father's only sister. According to his letter, he came some one hundred and sixty miles, being delayed by washouts and floods, so that he did not really get to my house until Friday morning, and we went on to church meeting together, where, after I had spoken of the salvation of God, and his sovereign grace above all preachers or organizations to save sinners, and while the church was in conference, this dear young man came forward and related some of the things stated in his letter, and on Saturday afternoon he was baptized by me, on sister Bettie Medlan's place, near her house. This was an occasion of great rejoicing, because of the sweet evidence that the Lord, our only refuge, was in the matter, by his leading and saving grace. Also on Sunday a young brother, Albert Elliott, was received by experience. We feel to thank our God for the evidence that he has not altogether forsaken us, although for a long time we have been feeling such painful leanness and loneliness. But I believe that it is God and not the preacher that builds up the little churches and provides for the existence, state and standing of the Vine, and that as the pillar of fire and cloud was around Israel, and they moved not until the cloud moved, so the beautiful candlestick or bride of Christ is effectually kept, preserved, guided, upheld, strengthened, let down into depths of sorrow, drouth and famine, lifted above the mountains and clouds by omnipotent grace and love, until she is made to certainly praise none other than the true, victorious Bridegroom. She finds Him whom her soul loves, and will not let him go. Her faith in him ties her forever into his unmovable and unshaken embrace,

and she is kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, and reserved to an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away. Jesus uses his servants to wait upon his queen, and they are highly honored to be allowed to serve in the lowest place, yea, even to be a doorkeeper in the house of their God. David said, "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."—Psalms lxxxiv. 10. All the great lodges and clubs that have been instituted, and that contain the best wisdom of great men, are only a mudhole compared to the little church or kingdom of Christ here in the world, for it contains the wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption of Jesus, the great eternal, immortal, invisible Bridegroom, whose union by covenant love and actual grace existed from the times eternal with his bride, his church.

I am sending this for publication in the SIGNS, and want others to enjoy the reading of dear cousin Clarence Turner's experience. The Lord has not left himself without a witness.

With this kind of faith and hope, I remain, as ever, in trials,

J. H. FISHER.

GAINESVILLE, Texas, June 7, 1915.

ELDER J. H. FISHER—DEAR COUSIN:—I will attempt to answer your very kind and most gladly received letter, which arrived some time ago.

I will leave Gainesville, Texas, on Wednesday, June 9th, 1915, as you stated in your letter you would be able to meet me on that day, and that the meeting commenced on Thursday night following, so I will be there, if it is the Lord's will. I have so much to tell you and talk with you about that perhaps it would be best for me to postpone telling you until I have arrived at your house, but will write a few things. Some nine years ago (I think, January 31st, 1906, at the age of seventeen), while engaged in picking cotton for my father, a short distance from my father's house, I hope and believe that my sins were forever pardoned by the all-sufficient grace of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God. For a year, or perhaps two years previous to my regeneration, I had felt to be a condemned sinner before God, but on the afternoon prior to my quickening in the Lord Jesus, my brothers and I had engaged in a little quarrel, (as brothers sometimes do to their shame) whereupon we separated to different parts of the field to gather cotton. When I had gotten settled to my part of the field, and had spent some time thinking of my past life, it seemed to me indeed, that I was really too bad to live; there seemed to be nothing mean and wicked in all of my past life that was not brought to my memory. I felt that I was a fit subject for hell, and that the God of love would only be dealing out righteous justice in sending me there, so utterly condemned did I feel. The tears streamed from my eyes in torrents, it seemed to be growing dark, and that I was beyond all help, when suddenly this thought came to my mind: Jesus Christ can save forever the blackest sinner in the world. The thought seemed to no more than have completed itself in my mind when I distinctly remember calling on the name of the Lord. Then there was a blank in my mind, just how long I do not exactly know, but this I do know, that when my mind returned I was unfastened from my cotton sack, and two or three cotton rows from it. How I got there, or when I got there, I do not know. The best I remember, it was cloudy, and it had seemed previous to this to be

growing dark, but now it was different, the darkness seemed to have been supplanted by light, but it did not seem to have been sunlight, for it was cloudy as I remember. Within a radius of ten feet I had never seen cotton look so bright before, nor have I since, it seemed almost to illuminate with brightness, but only for a moment and it was gone. But, thank God, there was something left in its place, viz., hope, peace, contentment and love, and, I trust, charity, for without it I am nothing. (1 Cor. xiii.) It seemed to me then that if it could have been God's will, that I would have gladly died and gone to heaven. I felt as if I loved every one in the whole world, and it was the easiest thing I had ever done. It seemed that I wanted to embrace and caress both friend and foe alike, and tell them what the Lord had done for me. I can say, and say with truth, that I never felt so free and happy before that time, nor since. I spent the rest of the evening rejoicing as I worked. I felt then that I wanted every one to know of the wonderful blessing I had received, but felt that I wanted to tell my father about it first, and as I was going to the house I had this strange feeling rush through my mind, viz., that I wanted you to baptize me in church fellowship. What church I did not think until some time after. I have often been made to wonder what caused that thought to flash into my mind. Up to that time I had not studied the Bible, nor had I given religion any great concern, and as to the right church I had not thought much about the matter, but still, strange to say, my dear brother, I have never been able to eradicate or erase the impression that I wanted you to baptize me in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

But let me go back to where I digressed. When I arrived at the house from the cottonfield, my father had just received a message to the effect that his brother's wife was dying (Dr. G. W. Turner's wife), whereupon all was excitement and confusion, my father leaving immediately for his brother's home. So in view of the circumstances I told no one of my experience. Of course time went on, my aunt died and was buried, still I had delayed telling any one. I began debating the question as to whether or not I was a saved soul, then I finally decided that I would remain reticent about my experience until I had heard you preach, then I could better decide whether it was a delusion I had experienced or not. But I was doomed to disappointment again, you failed to fill your appointment for some reason; so time went on. A year passed, I went to meetings occasionally, (but not to the Primitive Baptist Church.) Their preaching seemed to be of no help to me, nor food to my soul. Finally I lost all hope, or almost all hope, as to my regeneration. I left home, and railroaded for about three years, when I became absolutely disgusted with the life I was leading. I worked on Sunday and every other day and ceased going to meeting entirely. My father had offered to pay the expense to any school in the State if I would attend, but I had declined the offer. Now all of a sudden I determined I would attend school; but I had not saved my money, and had too much manly pride to ask my father to loan me money, or to help me borrow it, so I worked nearly another year, and tried to save my money. During all this time I felt in some way I was not doing my duty, but did not know just what to do. But all through my dark doubts and unbelief my mind would wander back to my cottonfield experience, and I would be happy and my doubts

would be dispelled for awhile, then I would seem to wander farther than ever. Finally I left the railroad life forever, and left Amarillo, Texas, for Gainesville, Texas. I stayed at home the next winter, and went to Union Hill school, trying to prepare myself to enter college. While I was at home I attended a "Hardshell" meeting at Hickory schoolhouse, and, behold, the joy and peace I received from hearing the true gospel, as it seemed to me to be. In a short time after this I confided all my past experience to my dear father. He seemed to think that the Lord had wonderfully blessed me, and that I was a regenerated person. He talked to me in a way that seemed to do my very soul good. He advised me to read and study the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life. This seemed to open my eyes, so I began to read the Bible for myself, and tried to pray at times. So time rolled on, and I studied hard along educational lines, and succeeded in entering the Denton Normal College without one single condition. I studied diligently the two years I was there, and made my work with some honor. It was while there I heard all kinds of preaching of different denominations, except the Primitive Baptist, and it was while there that I tried to study my Bible some, and it was while there that I was convinced in spite of myself and my environment that all would be saved that Jesus Christ died for, and that without fail, for I believe I found out without prejudice, pro or con, by studying the holy Bible, that man and the preaching are left entirely out of the matter when it comes to eternal redemption of sinners. I have read the Scriptures, and tried in my great weakness to compare my experience with the Bible, and I find, after comparing, that I am compelled to give God all the praise, and nothing to myself or other men. I wish to say, I hope I have a scriptural reason for all my beliefs, and if in my ignorance I have a belief that is not scriptural I will be more than thankful to the dear brother or friend that will kindly show me my error. I would state some of my beliefs and views on the Bible, and give my scriptural reason for such beliefs and views, but for the lack of space and time I will wait until I arrive at your home, then I hope and trust I will hear the true gospel food that I think all true sheep or regenerated souls are anxious to hear.

Dear brother, I wish to say I finished reading your book, giving your reasons for leaving the M. P. C. the second time to-day, and tried to compare it with the Bible, and find that I truly indorse everything you wrote, so far as I understood it. I think it is the Bible truly and sincerely as I understand it, and I hope I do not say this because I wish to be congenial; I trust that I am not that inconsistent with myself and God, for if I differed with you honestly on your book and its comparison with the Bible I would feel it my christian duty (if I were talking or corresponding with you about the matter) to state my views and your errors, or what I thought to be your errors, and give you a scriptural reason for doing so. There is no honest congeniality without it is truly from the heart, so I think.

Father thought of going with me to your home and attending the meeting, but circumstances have arranged things so that it will be impossible for him to attend.

Will close for this time, and will be there Wednesday next.

Your cousin in brotherly love,

CLARENCE E. TURNER.

TOUCHET, Wash., Feb. 22, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The inclosed article is at your disposal. I am no hand to pen my thoughts. I think when I get the SIGNS and read the precious letters from the many brethren that it opens up such a field of thought I feel, Surely I can tell the writers of the same, but when I try it proves a failure. Paul says, Ye are not in the flesh if so be the Spirit of Christ is in you. Faith views things far beyond the sight of natural sight. This is proven in our own experience, for my soul and heart have been comforted by the editors and writers of the SIGNS, and my natural eyes have never seen them, but faith is revealed from faith to faith.

"If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." They that are in the flesh cannot please God. There is no good thing in me (that is, in my flesh). This I say brethren, That flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. The first man (Adam) was of the earth, earthy, and such are all who are of the earth. Where is there any hope for any, as we are all of, or sprang from, this first man? If there had been a law that could have given life, verily righteousness would have been by the law. Then if the law cannot give life, we are hopeless who look to it, and if there is no salvation in the law, where can we go, or where can we look? A fountain cannot rise above its head. The law is the highest pinnacle of nature. I am persuaded to believe that this was the condition of things with John when he saw the book sealed with seven seals, and heaven and earth were searched and none was found able to loose the seals or look thereon. To this place or condition all must come before they can weep with them that weep and rejoice with them that do rejoice. The awful scene which John saw I think is the awful condition in which man by sin is, but what a glorious change when the heavenly voice was heard, Behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed to loose the seals and look thereon. O what joy, it is unspeakable and full of glory. For in that the law was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. This was done that the righteousness of God might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Dear ones, herein is displayed the wonders of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. The apostle to the saints at Rome, after showing the awful condition of man by transgression, brings forward the wonderful work of grace in Jesus and shows that while the letter killeth, the Spirit giveth life. He begins the eighth chapter in the most confirming and comforting way that words can convey: There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Dear brethren, let us by faith look at this wonderful declaration of the apostle's. We see the two principles here brought out: the work of the flesh and the work of the Spirit, and these are contrary one to the other, they are at enmity one with the other. It seems to me that here is where so much confusion gets in among the saints, just as it does about the new birth and the resurrection. Brethren, I think, try to explain the mystery of godliness in this glorious work. The apostle says that without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh. Concerning the resurrection he says, We see through a glass darkly, we see in part and know in

part. It doth not yet appear what we shall be. If it does not yet appear, why try to tell? Would it not be better to do as John did: tell the things we do know and that we have seen with our eyes and handled with our hands of the Word of life? The Master, in regard to the new birth, says, The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell from whence it cometh nor whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit. After regeneration we have the two principles, or, as the apostle has it, the two laws. He says in this same letter to the Romans, I find a law in my members warring against the law of my mind, bringing me into captivity to the law of sin. In the eighth chapter, first verse, which I quoted, he says the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. We have the testimony in another place, If the Son make you free you shall be free indeed; and another says, in speaking of this freedom, that ye shall not be brought into bondage. Then might John rejoice with all the heavenly host at the conquering Jesus, who prevailed over death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Yes, while the flesh is weak, the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus is strong, and the apostle in this same letter in which he brings out the fruits of the flesh and fruits of the Spirit, shows the effect in himself, for he felt the working of sin, which is condemned in the flesh, to be so strong over him he could not do the things he desired. Dear ones, can you not join in, and say you cannot do the things you would like to do? I am daily made to groan within myself on account of my sinful self, and if I hate myself on this account, are not the things of the flesh being mortified? Paul says to be carnally minded is death, and to this I say, Amen, for this reason I die daily; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace, and so it is, for I am often made to sing, How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear. Yes, the Spirit of life in Christ has made me free; then, dear ones, our hope is in Christ Jesus, and he is our hope, he is our all and in all, so there can be no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. With this victory in view the old apostle still goes on in the blessed assurance, predicating his assurance on what God has done for us through Jesus our Lord. He says that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord and are called according to his purpose. We have some in these days, as in the apostle's day, who want to be God's councilmen, and tell what works for good and what does not. If you notice, Paul has no "not" in the matter, neither does he divide man up, and tell what part is born and what is not. He does not say all good things, nor does he say bad things, work for our good, but faith sees God as he is, perfect, and he, being perfect, all his works are perfect, and this is his work, for the foundation of this discourse is the freedom which comes through the Spirit of life that is in Christ Jesus. Then he more fully brings us into the heart of the matter by adding, For whom he foreknew he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. So all things must work to this end, for God works all things after his own counsel. He can work and none can hinder; this being so, he says, Moreover, whom he predestinates he calls, and whom he calls he justifies, and whom he justifies he also glorifies. Now what shall we say to these things, if God be for us, who can be against us? It seems that words could not be more full, and upon the fullness of the work of God the old

apostle sweeps every place of refuge from the one who would fix things for God to save his people in accordance to their plan, and if he did not it would make him the author of sin. He says, I am persuaded that nothing is able to separate us from the love of God. Now, dear ones, I want to say, Lift up the drooping heads, and let the feeble renew their strength, for if God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Yes, we are so burdened here we cannot do the things we would, but the time is coming, and not far hence, when we shall, according to the blessed testimony given in this epistle, put off this old tabernacle, with all its aches and pains, and then our groanings will cease, for I reckon that the sufferings of this present world are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us, for we shall see him as he is, and be like him, and when I awake with his likeness, then shall I be satisfied. Dear brethren Ker and Lefferts, I was well pleased with Elder Keene's article on the "new gods," and your reply, brother Ker, to brother Jackson, and brother Lefferts' article on Samson, I felt I wanted to bless the dear Lord for the gifts. I am well pleased with the SIGNS, and would love to say to all its contributors, God bless you and comfort you, as he through your writings comforts me.

Yours in a precious hope,

J. T. BARNES.

FAIRMONT, W. Va., Jan. 7, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I inclose a letter that I received some time ago from Elder J. M. Perkins, of Mayfield, Ky., which was of interest to me, and I think it will interest the readers of the SIGNS. I was with this dear brother last June, and was well pleased with his preaching. He is an old veteran, an old soldier of the cross, and I think you will be well pleased with the contents of his letter, so if you see fit give it a place in your columns.

Yours in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began,

JAMES W. LINN.

MAYFIELD, Ky., Oct. 14, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER LINN:—Your good letter received just on the eve of my leaving for our association, therefore I had not time to write. Our association was held with the church at Rock Springs, Ill. We had a good meeting. About sixty of us went over, and the railroad company gave us an extra coach, separated us from the Egyptians, and put us in the land of Goshen, and the Lord took good care of us. We had twelve or thirteen preachers with us, and had a fine meeting. I see nowhere to object to anything you said in your letter, it was all good. "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." Why not in some one else? This shows God's divine purpose in the election of these in Isaac typically, and foreshadowing the church in Christ, chosen in him before the world began. It was unbelief in Sarah that prompted her to do what she did, and yet it is very evident that even in her unbelief she did no more than develop God's divine purpose, and set an example that God's people should never undertake to bring about God's promises before the time. If the unbelieving world could effect their purposes they would overturn heaven itself. I am very glad they cannot do it. Sarah did not believe she should bring forth a son, it was contrary to all the course of nature, and so is the birth of every one of God's children to this day, and will ever be. Nature's way

can never bring forth anything but Ishmaelites, and they are mockers, and shall not be heirs with the sons of the freewoman. Jerusalem is the freewoman, and must bring forth every one of the promised heirs. They are all heirs of promise, just as certainly as Isaac was, and cannot be born of a bondwoman. Paul said, "This is an allegory," and it is a true one. All legal theories and conditional systems are based on legal works, and therefore gendereth to bondage. There can never be a lawful child born in this world unless there has been a marriage covenant entered into and agreed upon on the part of the parents even before the conception of the child, and all who deny the covenant in which all the heirs were embraced and promised are bound to confess they are of the bondwoman. Isaac was the only son of his mother, and the promised child, and Sarah answers to Jerusalem, which is above and is free and the mother of all God's children; each one is born at God's appointed time, and the combined powers of earth cannot bring the birth about before God's appointed time. They can bring forth Ishmaelites most any time they get ready, but God's children cannot be born until God's time. In the person of Isaac we see two types. First, the church bound hand and foot on the altar with the sword drawn, yet stayed, and Abraham could not make the fatal stroke, because the ram, the sacrifice, was bound by the horns in the covenant of redemption before the world was, and was in the right place at the right time, and was offered in the place of the children on the sacred altar, and they went free, the very type of redemption. Secondly, when Isaac was grown to manhood, Abraham's servant was sent to take Isaac a wife, was sent to his kindred, and was not allowed to take a wife from among the nations wherein he dwelt, and Rebecca was the one God had appointed to be the bride. Here is the church chosen and sent for and brought to Isaac; did not come herself. No man can come to me except my Father, who sent me, draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day. They have no more will and ability to go to Jesus than Rebecca had to go to Isaac before she received the jewels, for the old servant placed them on her before she was asked if she would go with the man. I wish now to show how Abraham's faith was tried when he offered up Isaac. God had said to Abraham, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." When God could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, and confirmed his promise to Abraham by an oath, and now comes and tells Abraham to take this son and go three days journey in the wilderness and offer him there as a burnt offering. Now if Isaac be killed how shall God's promise be fulfilled? Here was a trial of his faith, not that God did not know what Abraham would do, but to show to us the power of faith. It is said, "By faith he obeyed God," and without faith it is impossible to please him. Again, Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. So it was his faith that moved him to do what God told him to do. I do not remember of a single instance in all the Scriptures where God ever gave a man faith to do a thing and that man did not do what God told him to do. As it is a fact that whatsoever is not of faith is sin, it must be a fact that no man in an attempt to obey God without faith can please him. Faith then, is that which gives an act its virtue, and without faith it is blamable, for it is sin. Faith must be the moving cause in a man, otherwise his acts would be sin and of the flesh. Cain's offering was without faith,

and he and his offering were both rejected. Abraham's faith moved him to do what free will cannot do, for he could not have offered up Isaac save by faith, and that faith was God's gift. Thus we see that faith moves men to do things nothing else can. Abraham's works justified him in a declarative sense, and not from sin and condemnation, but proved him to be a man of God.

I will now close by saying that wife and I have not been well for some time, but we are up. I have been dragging along for six weeks with malarial fever, and am not well yet, but improving some. I have attended four associations this fall, but do not expect to attend another this year, as there is but one more of our correspondence, which I shall not attend, as I am not very well. May this find you and yours well. Write me again when it seems good to you to do so.

Yours in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began,

J. M. PERKINS.

BRUNSWICK, Maine.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It is time I renewed my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and if I could I would gladly write to all the household of faith concerning the things they love, but there seems to be no spiritual exercise of mind. In the darkness and distress of mind where I have been walking so long I have experienced again and again that no good thing can be found dwelling in my flesh, and that Jesus is the only one able to save a sinner like me. He is mighty to save, and has all power in heaven and earth. I need just such a Savior. I cannot rejoice as I once did in the assurance that he is my Savior, and cannot sing the Lord's song in this strange land. Once in awhile a ray of light breaks through the darkness and I have a glimpse of the mercy and love of God, and how unchangeable he is, and though it seems as if I am constantly forgetting the great things he has done for me, and mourning because I cannot do the things that I would, yet he is the same yesterday, today and forever.

"And though I have him oft forgot,
His loving-kindness changes not."

I enjoy reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for the truth is fearlessly and boldly set forth, and I love the doctrine of God our Savior, but it does not come with the power it once did, and enable me to write to a brother or sister. I have felt as if my days of writing were past, but still I know if my mind were led into the truth, that same gladness and joy would spring up and it would be easy to declare the works of the Lord, and my pen could not move fast enough to express all the sweet thoughts of God's salvation, but we are dependent upon our God for this exercise of mind, and it can never spring from the flesh. I am sorry that some of the brethren have been so sure that they were right concerning the resurrection of this body, and were ready to make it a test of fellowship, and set aside those who did not agree with them. This fellowship for God's people was such a sweet experience to me it has always been precious, something so far beyond my reach, so far beyond my control, it has not been easy to speak as if I could withdraw it whenever I pleased. I do not like to hear my brethren speak so lighty of it, for truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. No dissension or discord is ever found in Jesus Christ, and when the name of Jesus is the theme among God's people there is such a fullness in that name that the fruit of the Spirit is manifest. Each one must be

taught of the Lord to know the truth as it is in Jesus. I hope you will be blessed in declaring the truth through the SIGNS, and as long as you are both determined to know nothing among us save Jesus Christ and him crucified, you will be enabled to comfort and strengthen those who love the name of Jesus, and know there is salvation in no other name.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

FAYETTEVILLE, Ga., March 1, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—When I read your reply to my letter in Jan. 15th issue, I saw you did not fully understand me, and I did not know how to express my views, and felt it my duty to write again. I also received some good letters from brethren who kindly tried to point out my mistakes, and I thank you and them for your kindness and forbearance toward me. I received one letter written rather roughly, demanding me to speak up and tell plainly which side I am on, "can't help it" or "can help it." It seems that some of the writers of the SIGNS think I was criticising, and others criticise me, so I owe you all an explanation. I should have written sooner, but have to work, cannot control my mind, and my eyes are weak, so I beg those who have written me not to be offended, for I would answer if I could. As I wrote before, there is not as much difference in belief as there is in our way of expressing it. Having read the good replies, and thinking of these things, I think I can better express myself, but I cannot write without mistakes, and I fear some will still misunderstand me. I want you to know I am not fighting nor finding fault, but I am writing for good, I hope. There has been too much said on this, as well as other subjects, by those who were prompted by the flesh, which always causes trouble, but when brethren can discuss anything in kindness and love, and allow each other their own thoughts, I think it is all right, but when they must quarrel they ought to keep silent, for hidden things belong to God and revealed things to us. (Deut. xxix. 29.) There never was a person so wise as to know spiritual things, except by revelation, and when our brother does not see as we do we should not be offended at him, for we are all imperfect, and if we are right it has not been revealed to him, and we are commanded to bear with the weak. The reason I began this correspondence is this: Last summer I wrote to an editor about some things which I thought were out of order, and mentioned the SIGNS. He answered condemning the SIGNS, and holding up conditional time salvation. I thought until then that the letter was right, but after reading his letter I thought about it a great deal, and began to see it in a new light. If the blessings were laid up for us and left with us to gain or lose by obedience or disobedience, that would prove him to be a God of chance, or of mistakes, but he is too wise to make mistakes, and not one of his works is done in vain, so in a short while I could see that salvation is of the Lord in time and eternity. But I did not believe you believed what he wrote concerning you, although for several years I was almost compelled to believe it at times. I believed God was a God of purpose, had all power, knew all things, and if he saw something was coming to pass against his will he could prevent it, then if he did not want to prevent it he surely must have included it in his predestination. I now see that purpose, appointed time and plan are the same in substance as predestinate. I wrote in a few words

what I meant by "can't help it" doctrine. I do not believe any true child of God will use it as an excuse for sin, neither will those who love our Savior, and want to follow him, be driven away by sound doctrine; that is, absolute predestination, as some people claim. I "can't help" being a sinner, and "can't help" wanting to be a christian. There is no one like me, there is not a person who can think more evil thoughts than occupy my mind at times. Dear children, pray for me. A brother wrote me that "absolute" was used to distinguish from "limited," which was being taught at the time of the division, and while I thought it wrong to use it, because it was not in the Bible, I did not think that "permissive decrees" were there either. I seldom say anything to any one about mistakes, or faults, for when I do I find that I am as much at fault in some ways as they are.

I hope all can understand what I have written, and as your reply covered the ground it is needless for me to add more, so if not out of place, I want to write a few words to the brother who demanded me to speak up, as there may be others who think as he does. Now, dear brother, your letter may have been written in the same spirit as the others, but it does not have that appearance. 1 Tim. v. 1, says, Entreat them (elders) as fathers, and the younger men as brethren. I am not an elder; if in the Spirit at all, I am a very little one, and I have learned by experience to be careful how I approach a brother, for several have become offended at me, and I do not want to be offended at others, even if they are rough. I had no idea of speaking lightly of the "can't help it" people. I try to go slow, but sometimes I speak too quickly, before thinking enough. You say I must be brought to many sorrows before I see this grand truth. All people are not taught alike, some are brought through fiery trials to know salvation is of grace, sometimes we learn in sorrow and sometimes in joy. If I have ever been changed, it was so gradual I did not know it, and so has my life been. I have learned many things through the love, kindness and forbearance of older brethren, and when talking with them I find that many Scriptures mean far different from what I thought, and it is beautiful to think and talk about. Although my past life has had few sorrows, poverty being my worst trouble, I know my cup must be filled, and I dread the future, for I know if I am a child of God I must suffer for my dear Redeemer's sake, but that is all right, but I must also suffer in body, as my health seems to grow weaker as I grow older. I desire a purer love for God and his people, but I fear sometimes I am mistaken. I want to be resigned to his will, and if I must suffer it is according to his purpose, and it is for his honor, and sometimes I can feel to be perfectly willing to take what comes, but my flesh is the same sinner, or worse. I fear sometimes that my writing will deceive the Lord's people, or worry them, and I have neglected many times, as I could not write as I wanted to. Pray for me. Self is my worst enemy.

Unworthily,

GEORGE W. JACKSON.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, Feb. 14, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—It seems long since I had a letter from you. I realize the demands you have on your time, and am glad to read your writings in the SIGNS in lieu of a personal letter. I would be glad to write you often if I only could do so aright, if I could speak of the testimony of Jesus, and give to his

name glory and honor. The cares of life continually surround me, and about the only spiritual thoughts I have is when driven to the throne of grace in deep distress to seek the help of Him who is able to help us in every time of need. I do not deserve his mercies, I sin continually, and continue to ask forgiveness. When he grants me mercies I forget to keep them in mind and praise him. But I cannot live without prayer, it is the one last resort in every perplexity. It is a sacred thing, not to be lightly esteemed, and well I know that we cannot at all times be blessed with the spirit of prayer. It is a precious gift, more rare than costly gems which men seek after; it leads us to the feet of Jesus; blessed place. "Pray without ceasing." I hope the dear Lord may lay my case upon your heart when he gives you the spirit of utterance at his footstool. I need such prayers, that I may be delivered out of evil, and kept from the snare of the adversary.

My thoughts turned this morning to the accountability of man. I have felt for those dear souls who have felt afraid of speaking such words as seemed to them to make God the author of sin. A zeal for the honor of his holy name must be in every child of God, and it is a good mark, though through lack of understanding we may misjudge our brother who has a like zeal for God's glory. I look into my own experience: I should not speak of anything that I have not realized myself, and then only with the confession that I am liable to err in judgment. When I receive chastening for my transgressions I know it is in love, if I am a child of God. He then has a purpose in it all, and I feel a desire to know his will and what he is teaching me. When I go astray, and find myself in strange paths, I know it is my own sinful desires that lead me there, but still I know the Lord is able to keep the feet of his saints, and I desire to see even in this what lesson I have to learn. Do not think I do not feel the weight of sin, and confess my transgression with sorrow, but I cannot deny that God has power to keep me. I am accountable if he holds me accountable. It is not for me to ask the reason why. God's word is final and complete. I dare not call him to account. I cannot justify myself. Jesus said, Father, forgive them, they know not what they do. Stephen prayed, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge, with his dying breath. God's people acknowledge his power to lay sin to their charge, to hold them accountable, whether they can see the reason or not, but they also rejoice in the gracious work of their dear Redeemer. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. He has the right to condemn, to hold man accountable, and he has also the right to justify. Blessed truth. The power and the wisdom and the glory belong to God, not to the creature. These are trying times, times that teach us many lessons, if they are blessed to us in that way. It is God's will or it would not be so. The enemy has no power beyond the limits God has set for him. Jesus is the victorious one. Let us give him glory and praise.

We have had a hard winter, sickness is very prevalent. We are now all well, except Ellen, who is quite sick with a cold. How we need wisdom to care for the little ones God gives us. We feel a responsibility for them, and seem to fail in every way, but again God's overruling power can order the things in which we fail, so that they bring him glory. Edith joins me in love to Ella and yourself and children.

Affectionately, your brother,

GILBERT McCOLL.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., March 1, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been requested several times of late to write for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but I am so nervous, and my eyesight so poor, that I hesitate to try, but would love to comply with the request if I could write anything that would comfort one of God's little ones. I feel that the last SIGNS is the best yet; I have read it over and over, and it is good reading yet, and I feel like giving you a warm grip of the hand on all that you have written, and feel that I voice the sentiment of nearly all the readers in this, and I do hope that you will stay on the editorial staff. I have not been better pleased with the good old SIGNS since Elder Gilbert Beebe died. One who preaches God's everlasting gospel need not expect to suit every one in every particular, even Christ himself did not. When he was preaching in the synagogue at Capernaum that he was the true Bread which came down from heaven many of his disciples when they heard this said, This is a hard saying, who can hear it? and all but twelve turned away and walked no more with him. But he did not tell them to come back, and he would preach something to tickle the ear; no, he kept right on preaching his everlasting gospel, and sent his servants out to preach the same. All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. So keep right on preaching the pure, unadulterated gospel, let it hurt whom it will; shun not to declare all the counsel of God. I often think of what sore trials God's ancient people had to endure for the sake of God and his blessed truths. Poor old Paul was whipped and imprisoned, and finally put to death for his love of the Master and his steadfastness in the faith. He said, Henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. Yes, those marks of persecution and affliction proved that he belonged to Jesus, just as the marks put upon sheep show to what master they belong. These marks that are borne in the lives of a poor trusting and suffering christian may not attract the attention of the sin-steeped world, but show to me that it is the way Jesus our heavenly Master brought his own sheep. He sends the branding-iron of his providence deep into our hearts, and we cry out for help, and his help he ever affords. My grace is sufficient for thee, is the message he gave to suffering Paul, and it is sufficient for all who are chosen in the furnace of affliction, and I feel sure, my dear brethren, that through the long years of your crying unto the Lord you have felt and found this to be true. His past mercies linger in your heart and in your memory to encourage you to lay your every burden at his feet, and to trust him in the midst of the severest storms, and wait upon him when temptations rise, and fear not what we may say or think, for we do not all understand and see things alike. Some (not Old Baptists) think and believe that the wicked will be raised and given another chance to repent, and those who repent at that time will be saved high up in heaven, and those who do not repent will die again, just like they did before. How glad I am that our God is of one mind and none can turn him, nor by searching find him out; he reveals himself to us.

Well, dear brethren editors, and all

who may read this poor, imperfect letter, I have done the best I could. I am in my seventy-sixth year, and very nervous, and my eyesight is very dim. I fear it will not be long that I can write at all, and this may be the last, but we cannot tell. I hope you will pray for me and pardon error. May the good Lord keep you and abide with you, is the prayer of your unworthy sister, if one at all. Do with this as you think best and all will be right.

(MRS.) S. G. FRAZEE.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a little poem which came in a letter from sister Florence Pultz to me. She says, in answer to my request: "In regard to those verses I sent you in my last letter, that I will leave for you to judge of their fitness for the SIGNS. As I read your words my mind went back to the morning I wrote them. When I arose from my bed I was in a strange state. My mind was in a perfect chaos of confusion, so much so that I could not help myself. I looked in the mirror over the mantel and saw what I thought was the signs of death in my face. I was here all alone. I sat in a very exhausted condition in my chair, wondering what I should do. Then the thought came that I should pray, and I tried, with the questioning faith, Would the Lord raise me up again? and although the thought of work was sickening in the extreme, I knew that if I lived I must work, and as I sat there with all this mass of confused thoughts I was much surprised to find them straightened out in rhythmic composition, and I turned to the paper and pencil and wrote them. My mind was turned to you that morning when I thought I might be dying; I felt a desire to commune with you."

To me this experience seemed most touching, so I send it to you, thinking it may be a sweet comfort to some sorrowing one who reads the SIGNS.

Unworthily your sister in hope,

BESSIE DURAND.

OUT OF WEAKNESS MADE STRONG.

What, weary one, and dost thou think
Thy journey to pursue?
Thinkest thou thy God will give thee aid,
That thou mayest up and do?

Death's pallor spreads upon thy face,
Thine eyes doth glassy show,
Thy quivering breath grows weak apace,
Thy heart throbs weak and low.

Answer:

Yea, yea, I know thou sayest true,
These miseries all I feel,
Yet I again will up and trust
The power that turns the wheel.

From day to day I feel no strength,
No power to call my own,
But I'm brought through some way at length,
My hands the work have done.

The ship can't sink while Jesus lays
Asleep upon a pillow;
He will his charge in safety keep,
Though loud may war the billow.

And while he lives, in this frail bark
I smile at these, death's token,
And wend my way from day to day,
My trust in him unbroken.

'Tis sweet to feel my life secure;
Although the bark is driven
'Gainst rocks, and shelves, and sinking sands,
Jesus is still my haven.

FLORENCE PULTZ.

HAMPSTEAD, Md., January, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I hope you will pardon me for my tardiness in thanking you for the pleasure and comfort I have received through reading the SIGNS at your expense; my frail frame causes me to be dilatory. Will you please accept my sincere thanks? and may the blessing be yours. You know we should be humble, but I still need lessons, line upon line, precept upon precept, but by it I hope I

am learning to look away from self and trusting more in the Rock that is higher than I; and although I find myself clinging to the things of this life, I hope I am growing in grace and the knowledge of Jesus Christ, our all-sufficiency. When I am led to meditate upon these great mysteries I leave off just where I began; that is, that I should be thankful for what is given me, and endeavor to use it as best I may, knowing God rules and all is well. You know Christ said to his disciples, In this rejoice, not that the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.

"Father, whate'er of earthly bliss
Thy sovereign will denies,
Accepted at thy throne of grace,
Let this petition rise:

Give me a calm and thankful heart,
From every murmur free;
The blessing of thy grace impart,
And make me live in thee."

Sisters Kelley were here last month to attend the funeral of a relative. As thy day, so shall thy strength be, has surely been verified in their case. It is sad to see our loved ones failing, but we have many sweet promises to comfort us, among them, All things work together for good to them that love the Lord. I seldom receive a letter from those I hope I love in the Lord. I still miss dear brother Chick's annual letter. This makes the SIGNS doubly dear; but you cannot know, cannot understand how it is with us isolated ones, so the more thankful I desire to feel and appreciate the kindness of all. Knowing God is the giver of every good and perfect gift, I hope I feel like David: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

"Awake, my soul, in joyful lays,
And sing thy great Redeemer's praise;
He justly claims a song from me,
His loving-kindness, O how free!"

Though his presence is not always with me, I believe his loving hand leads me, for have I not the witness within?

Love, gratitude and best wishes to all for a prosperous and happy year.

As ever, your sister, I hope, erring, but trusting in our all-sufficient Savior,

GEORGIA ENGLAND.

KANSAS CITY, Kan., Jan. 24, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—If you will allow one so small to address you so. I will say that I read your letter "Personal" in the SIGNS with a deep feeling or interest, and it seemed strange to me that one whom I looked upon as having so much ability should feel his weakness in the work set apart for him to do. In your relation with the SIGNS I can only speak for myself, but I assure you I have enjoyed beyond expression your editorials, and have felt glad the Lord was able to raise up one to so beautifully fill the place vacated by dear Elder Chick, which seemed at the time of our losing him almost impossible. But as John told the Jews upon one occasion, God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. I think he has the same power to-day, and felt he was able to fill Elder Chick's place, and still feel he has done so by your being chosen on the editorial staff. I have been a subscriber to the SIGNS for two years, through the kind benevolence of a friend, and have thought since the paper was sent me that I would write, expressing my gratitude and appreciation for the kindness bestowed on one so unworthy, but my inability has prohibited my doing so. When I read your article expressing your feeling of unfitness for the place, I felt I could not refrain from writing a word of encouragement, for if one as capable as I feel you to be realizes his deficiency and helpless-

ness, is it any wonder one so small as I should feel so? If I could say anything in the way of encouragement I would gladly do so. Take courage and press on, for I assure you many hearts have been made glad, many mysteries cleared away, many minds instructed by the words from your pen. While you speak of laboring under difficulties, it seems hard in a natural way, but "prisons would palaces prove" if Jesus dwells with us there. I believe we are all handicapped to a certain degree, and if God did not come to our rescue poor indeed would be our effort to comfort his children. I have been asked to write for publication, and have tried many times, but as many times have committed it to the flames, for I could not see that I could say anything to redound to the honor and glory of our dear Redeemer, or to comfort his chosen few. I do certainly appreciate the SIGNS, and if I know anything about doctrine, it sets forth the doctrine of God our Savior in its purity, and I hope both Elder Ker and yourself will be spared many, many years to supply material for its pages.

Wishing you a happy and prosperous new year, I am one of the least of God's creatures,

SARAH COLLINS.

MANASSAS, Va., Feb. 24, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—It has been a long, dull winter, with no preaching, and to me it has been inexpressibly sad and lonely, but I have lived to the time when I feel I must accept life as it is, and that means many changes in mine. I know that an unseen power is around and about me, leading me on, ever on, and may I hope for safe keeping through all trials and difficulties? It is a comfort, brother Lefferts, to have you say I have been in your thoughts this winter, knowing your busy mind and my smallness to enter in. I have many times thought I would drop you a line and tell you the comfort your editorials have given me; no especial one, but all, and I do feel especially sorry that you are so crowded with everything as you are. I am glad to hear you are all well, and hope Mrs. Lefferts has entirely recovered her health. Much love to you and Mrs. Lefferts.

Your sister, I hope,

M. C. BADGER.

GEARY, Okla., Feb. 18, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am alone in this barren land, and have not heard a gospel sermon in twenty-eight years. It pleased God to take my companion home to that heavenly country, where there will be no parting. We were received into the Old School Baptist Church called Village Creek, in Fayette County, Indiana, fifty-three years ago last May. I am seventy-three years old, and quite deaf. Elders Ker and Lefferts, I feel sure that if you could feel and realize what joy the SIGNS brings to us old wayfaring pilgrims deprived of meeting brethren or of hearing the gospel, you would feel encouraged. I pray God you may be spared and strengthened by his grace to continue comforting the lonely ones through the SIGNS.

Yours in hope of a blessed immortality through the precious blood of Jesus,

F. W. SPARKS.

VERNON, Texas, R. D. 1.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We met with the sad misfortune last year to have our house and everything burned, including all our books, hence would like to inquire if any one will sell me the first volume of Beebe's Editorials?

(MRS.) W. S. BOURLAND.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1916.

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EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

A LETTER.

OF late we have felt impressed to write in a more personal way than is usual for the editorial columns, and trust our brethren will excuse us this time. It is good to get closer together once in a while than in the usual style of editorial writing. It seems good at times to be spoken directly to. Brethren and sisters, composing the body of our blessed Lord and Savior, are very closely united, and it is good to be reminded of that fact often. "Members one of another;" the unity, or union, is so complete that no one member is independent of another, but instead each member is dependent upon all the other members, and all the other members are dependent upon the one member. The body is perfect, complete, and each member is so placed in the body as to fill its own place, and consequently perform its own function, no other member being able to do its respective labor. The hand cannot perform the duty of the foot, nor the foot the duty of the hand. The eye cannot perform the duty of the ear, nor the ear the work of the eye, and so on. Hence it is good to speak often one to another as the members of Christ, tenderly, lovingly and encouragingly. Each member needs a word now and then of commendation; it helps to revive the drooping spirit, it confirms the weak knees and strengthens the hands that hang down. There is but one body, but many members, one life in all the members. This shows how inseparably all the members are united. Now, as one member of this glorious body, as we humbly hope, we want to speak to the other members in a general way, without calling attention to any special text.

First of all, we want to thank you for your many letters, which brought comfort and encouragement, and to apologize for not replying personally to each one. We have had no intention of neglect of any one, but admit it seems that way. Those well acquainted with the duties and daily labor of an editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES understand how impossible it is to answer personally each letter received. Many letters, however, do not require an answer of that kind, as they are purely business, and when that business is executed all is done that seems necessary. But there are hundreds of letters during the year of a personal nature, some expressing fellowship and love in the Lord, others approving some special letter or editorial, others gently criticising some view presented, others asking for some special text to be written upon, and so on. If together with our other daily duties we could reply to each letter, we would gladly do so, but inasmuch as it is impossible we hope our brethren and sisters will be forbearing, and not misjudge us, and as far as they can accept this as an acknowledgment of the receipt of their letters and an apology for our seeming neglect of them. Not one word of approval ever received by us was unappreciated, and we have always tried to treat as kindness the little rebukes and criticism we have received.

We want to assure all our correspondents of our love for them in Christ Jesus, and freely and frankly say that the church of God is our greatest joy and comfort in this life, and we have felt at times to adopt the language of David when he said, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." What would, what could life be without the fellowship and communion of saints? How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, serving each other gladly, cheerfully and lovingly, just as the members of the body serve each other, without the slightest thought of selfishness. Love is the golden chain that binds the happy souls above, and we have often thought that the children of God here in time are bound to each other in the same way by the same love. When this love is in exercise each can feel his brother's sigh and with him bear a part. What would be the whole world, if it could be gained, without the love of Christ in the heart? How could the children of God endure the crosses, losses and deep afflictions of this life were it not for the grace of God and the love and sympathy of the church? It is said that if one member be hurt the others feel the pain, and if one member rejoices the other members rejoice with him. This is in harmony with Paul's admonition: Rejoice with them that rejoice and weep with them that weep. This again manifests the life of Christ. "Jesus wept," showing his tender pity and love for Mary and Martha, and it has sometimes been impressed upon us that the tears shed then were for all his afflicted and poor people. The tears of his people are said to be so precious to him that they are bottled for the Lord. How near each other in feeling should all the saints live, and how precious should be their communion. Why should there ever be strife and war among the children of one Father? May brotherly love continue throughout the length and breadth of Zion.

Before closing, we want to state that we have many requests for views, and shall try to comply with each request, as far as we feel we have light at all, as we feel impressed to write. We never could write against time or space; the lead of mind must be given or our attempts would be very poor indeed. So please do not think we mean to be neglectful.

This letter is for all our readers, and especially for those who have written us.

With love in the Lord, K.

DIVORCE.

ELDER J. W. McClanahan, of West Virginia, asks our views on divorce. We know of no better way to comply with his request than to turn to the Bible and cite what it says upon this subject. What the Bible says should be final and satisfactory with every Old School Baptist. First, then, we turn to the Mosaic law, and in Deut. xxiv. 1, 2, we find this: "When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favor in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her; then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife." Thus we see that the Jews under the Mosaic law were allowed to divorce their wives and were allowed to marry again, also, divorce could be granted for any or "some uncleanness." There were no restrictions as to just what this

uncleanness might be. We cite this in the law of Moses, not because it is of special importance to the church now, because the church is not under law, but under grace, therefore not bound by the law of Moses at all, but we call attention to what the law says on divorce to contrast it with what Jesus said, to which we now turn. In Matthew v. 31, 32, the words of Jesus are, "It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: but I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery." Here Jesus negatives the commandment of Moses as cited in the beginning of our article, and says that a wife shall not be put away by her husband, that is, divorced, except on the one ground of fornication. To put her away for any other cause is adultery, or to marry one so put away is adultery. Again, in Matt. xix. 8, 9, Jesus says, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery." Here Jesus in addition to what he has said in Matthew, fifth chapter, adds that if the man who puts away his wife marries another, he, too, commits adultery, as well as the man who marries the woman put away. Now, further, in Mark x. 11, 12, Jesus says, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery." Again, in Luke xvi. 18: "Whosoever putteth away his wife and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery." These words of Jesus are conclusive, and settle the matter as to the proper attitude of his church respecting divorce. Jesus is head of the church, and the only lawgiver in Zion. While Moses allowed divorce and the remarriage of divorced persons, Jesus contradicts all that, as he did so many other things in the law, and for the church of Jesus Christ there is no choice left her as to which is right to pursue: the commandment of Moses or the law of Christ. We say the church has no choice in this matter, for she is not under law, but under grace, and is bound to abide by the law of her King, Jesus. To do other than this, and to take Moses' word as our authority in church matters, is to "fall from grace" and to recede to the weak and beggarly elements from which we have been redeemed. The words of Jesus are clear and plain and admit of but one construction, that is, a man may for the cause of fornication put away his wife, or divorce her, but neither of them can marry again during the lifetime of the other or they commit adultery. Should any brother or sister in the church be divorced from their wife or husband for fornication, that is all right, but should either of them, or both, marry again, they cannot be retained in church fellowship, for they have committed adultery, and the rule is: "Not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat."—1 Cor. v. 11.

We have simply given the commandment of Jesus and of his apostle Paul upon this subject. We have no views of our own

other than what Jesus says. His words are final and right in all matters pertaining to the doctrine and practice of the church. If any are disposed to quarrel with what we have said here, they cannot be satisfied with what Jesus said, for we have simply repeated what he said.

L.

AMOS IV. 12.

"PREPARE to meet thy God, O Israel."

This is not the whole of this verse as written in the Bible, but is two words more than is usually quoted when used by Arminians. The words, "O Israel," are always overlooked by those who tell dead sinners or unregenerate persons to prepare to meet their God. These words of the prophet are addressed to Israel, and to Israel only, never was such language used by the prophets in addressing the Gentiles round about them. In other words, it was elect Israel, the nation which God had chosen from among all the nations of the earth to be his peculiar treasure, these only were commanded to prepare to meet their God. The "prepare" was addressed to a prepared people, to the Israel of God. The preparation of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is of the Lord. These who have this preparation of the Lord within them, these only prepare to meet their God, and they prepare with the preparation already prepared in them. No man can work out his own salvation only as God works in him to will and to do of his good pleasure, so Paul says. On the same plan, no one of us can prepare to meet our God, only as the preparation is wrought within us by God himself. No man can work without tools to work with. The dead or unregenerate sinner has no capacity for activity in any spiritual direction, because he is dead. Before he can move he must be made alive, for life must precede all activity, natural as well as spiritual. Thus it would seem self-evident to any one reading our text without bias that it is Israel, and Israel alone, who are commanded to do this preparing, and they so commanded because they are already God's people, already chosen by him, and separated from the other nations, so that their preparing to meet him would be the consequence of God's previous choice of them and of his will concerning them. Indeed, there can be no doubt as to this, because the words immediately preceding those we have quoted are: "Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." This proves that God's will, and not their own will, is fulfilled in this preparing to meet him. It is because God's will is that they shall prepare that they are called to prepare, and God's will must be, and always is, done. Now, what is meant by their being commanded to prepare to meet their God? Is it to prepare themselves to meet him in heaven, is it to make restitution to divine justice for their sins against that justice? No, none of this, but "to meet thy God" in this case means to meet the fire, the pestilence and other calamities which God was about to bring upon Israel at the time then spoken of by Amos. "Our God is a consuming fire," and for Israel to meet God in this instance meant not to die and go to heaven, but to meet the fire which should cousume away their dross. This any Bible reader can find out for himself if he will take the pains to read the prophecy of Amos which leads up to the words of our text. God had been sending dire things into Israel on account of their transgressions, but none of these things wrought repent-

ance in them. He had sent want of bread into all their places, but they had not returned to him. He had withheld rain from them, but they had not returned to him. He had smitten them with blasting and mildew, the palmerworm had devoured their figs and olives, yet had they not returned to the Lord. Pestilence had been sent among them, so that their camps were filled with the stench of the dead, yet they returned not to the Lord. All these calamities God sent unto them, but they repented not. All this proves that external circumstances and providential occurrences will never work repentance in one sinner's heart, that repentance is a matter of grace inwardly, in the soul and not of outward acts or circumstances. Now, after the failure of all these national calamities to bring about returning to the Lord, the call comes: "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." The day of the Lord is approaching, and they are called to meet it; none but God's own Israel are ever called to meet this day. The people already prepared of the Lord are commanded to make ready for that day with the preparation already granted them. What is this day of the Lord? Let Amos tell it: "Wailing shall be in all the streets; and they shall say in all the highways, Alas! alas! and they shall call the husbandman to mourning, and such as are skillful of lamentation to wailing. And in all vineyards shall be wailing: for I will pass through thee, saith the Lord." Thus you see the Lord's passing through them will bring about all this lamentation and woe. Very different from external calamities which could not bring repentance will be this passage of the Lord through them which will mean such lamentation and weeping. "Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness and not light." "Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?" Thus it may be seen what is involved in Israel's being called (not invited) to meet their God. It was to meet this woe, this weeping, this darkness, this dread and awful day of the Lord, that Israel was called. This is the way their desire to see the day of the Lord will be answered. It will be in such a way as to almost drive them to despair. Thus will they prepare to meet their God, a very different preparation from what the world is preaching about, and a preparation which none but God's called and prepared Israel knows anything about.

This is written by request, and with a desire to respond to our inquirer's desire.

L.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, the fifth Sunday in April (30th). Services at 10:45 a. m. and 2 p. m. All welcome.

L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER W. E. Brush has changed his address from Benton, Illinois, to Greenfield, Tennessee.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder D. M. Vail, Feb. 2nd, 1916, at the home of his father, C. G. Dolson, Harold A. Dolson, of Waverly, Pa., and Miss Anna T. Richter, of Dickson, Pa.

By Elder Asa Howard, March 6th, 1916, near Kellar, Texas, Mr. F. E. Allred and Miss Gertrude Warren.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Emma Smith, of Brantford, Ontario, died at her home Feb. 10th, 1916, after a brief illness of pneumonia. Mrs. Smith was born in Ryarsh, Kent, England, March 10th, 1854, making her sojourn here 61 years and 9 months. Mrs. Smith was the daughter of Joseph and Rebecca Wells. Sister Smith was exercised in her mind when but a mere child, and saw herself a sinner before the just and holy God. When very young she received a hope in her blessed Lord, and at the age of sixteen was impressed to follow him in the sacred ordinance of baptism. She was received by the Strict Baptist Church at Ryarsh and baptized by the pastor, John Jull, in the year 1875. Sister Smith came to Canada and in the year 1877 was married to George D. Smith. To that union were born five daughters, two of whom died in childhood. Sister Smith's pathway through life had not been altogether a pleasant one. She had been called to pass through many sore trials, and many dark days had been hers to experience. At times she seemed to be forsaken of God, not having the privilege of meeting with the Lord's people or being blessed with the felt presence of her blessed Savior, being cast down in mind, and she feared that she was deceived and had deceived the church, but brighter days were in store for her. Some years ago she had a beautiful dream, and in the dream she found herself in the most beautiful place, which seemed to her like heaven, and she was walking, singing and praising God, and in the midst of her joy a glimpse of a more beautiful place was given her, and as she neared this most beautiful place that mortal eyes could ever behold a voice said to her: Not yet for awhile, you must go back to earth, and she awoke in sadness; earth with all its pleasures had lost its charms for her. Five years ago last summer she was privileged to visit some of the churches in the State of New York, and Southampton, Pa., which was the most enjoyable time of her life. Sister Smith was received in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada at the quarterly meeting held at Ekfrid June 28th, 1914. She leaves to mourn their loss her husband and three daughters: Mrs. Wm. Friend, Mrs. Ed. Stuart, of Brantford, and Mrs. James A. Lamound, of Toronto, also two brothers: George, of Brantford, and Alfred, of Buffalo, and three sisters: Mrs. Blake, of New York, Mrs. Doyle, of Brantford, and Mrs. Ardies, of Ekfrid, besides the church and many friends. We believe that sister Smith has entered into that most beautiful place which she saw in her dream, having fallen asleep in Jesus, from which none ever wake to weep.

Funeral services were held from her late residence in Brantford, conducted by the writer. Burial was in Brantford Cemetery. May the Lord bless and comfort all who mourn. J. B. SLAUSON.

Mrs. Rachel Lamison, of Cammal, Pa., died Jan. 27th, 1916. Sister Lamison was baptized by Elder S. H. Durand, August, 1875, uniting with the Cammal Old School Baptist Church. She was a lover of good things, strong in the faith of God's elect. Her house was a good home for all who love the truth as it is in Jesus. I know whereof I affirm, for I have stopped many a time with her and her husband, who died several years ago. The first time I saw her she, with sister Williamee, of Williamsport, Pa., and sister Fackenthall, now living in Spokane, Wash., came from Jersey Shore to Cammal, twenty-one miles, on foot, and returned the same way, poor, hungry soul, but she is now where there is no hunger or thirst, no long journeys to travel to be with her dear kindred in Christ; eternally with her dear Savior and all the saints, and satisfied. What a wonderful word, satisfied with his likeness, eternally to dwell. She leaves two daughters, two sisters and many other relatives and friends to mourn the loss of one they dearly loved. God bless all the mourning ones for Jesus' sake.

Elder J. M. Fenton officiated at the funeral, which was held in the Cammal meetinghouse, to the great comfort of the friends who were gathered there. One by one the dear saints are taken to their eternal home, from whence none ever return.

Written by request of her daughter, sister Ella Moffat. D. M. VAIL.

Mrs. Josephine Adams Vaughn, daughter of J. W. and Mary Jane Phillips, deceased, was born April 22nd, 1853, and departed this life Jan. 5th, 1916, aged 62 years, 8 months and 13 days. She was married to Mr. Earl Adams Oct. 23rd, 1872, and to that union was born one daughter, Mrs. Norah Roach, now living in Fulton, Ky. After the death of her first husband she was married to Deacon A. A. Vaughn, Nov. 28th, 1907, they living happily together until the Lord saw fit to call her home to await the resurrection morning, when Jesus shall come the second time without sin unto salvation to call his jewels home. She united with the Regular Primitive Baptist Church of Christ at Boaz Chapel, Hickman, Ky., Oct. 4th, 1904, and was baptized by Elder R. H. Boaz. She was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years, and was taking it at the time of her death. She was a faithful member, filling her seat regularly. She was highly esteemed by the church of her membership; in fact, she was dearly loved by all who knew her. She was a dear sister, and manifested that love which was shed abroad in her heart by the Holy Ghost. We shall greatly miss her. Her house was a home for the Baptists indeed. Her mind was much on divine things, and we may well say that she sought first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. I cannot give expression to our sorrow, nor fully express our deep sympathy with her be-

reaved husband and children. Her remains were carried to her home church, Boaz Chapel, where the funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder T. J. Prince, assisted by Elder J. W. Kerley. They both spoke much to the comfort of the church and the bereaved family. Sister Vaughn leaves one daughter, Mrs. Norah Roach, and one granddaughter, Mrs. A. Jolley, who resides in Fulton, Ky., brother A. A. Vaughn and three stepchildren to mourn, but they believe that their loss is her eternal gain. After the funeral services the remains were laid away to await the morning of the resurrection, when her body shall be raised a spiritual body, fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus and be like him, and sing praises unto him around the throne of God forever. May this be the happy lot of us all, is the prayer of the writer, who feels to be less than the least of all saints, if one at all.

Written by request. W. A. EDWARDS.

Samuel F. Baker died at his home in Burdette, N. Y., on Tuesday, Feb. 29th, 1916, in the 81st year of his age, after a short illness. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Burdette Old School Baptist Church by Elder Charles Bogardus, Sept. 7th, 1890, and remained a faithful and consistent member of that church until his death. As a man and a neighbor he was highly esteemed in his community by all who knew him, and as a brother in the church he was looked up to for counsel and advice in all church matters. He was a man of strict integrity, with a clear and forceful mind in the doctrine of salvation by grace, mild in manner, humble in deportment, yet firm and sound in his religious convictions. He leaves to mourn their loss, his beloved wife, sister Mary Baker, and three daughters: Mrs. Edith C. Vaughn, Mrs. Mary E. Buck and Mrs. Della M. Hendrick. Seven children in all were born to brother and sister Baker. The four who have passed away are as follows: Floyd S. died Oct. 8th, 1881; Cass L. Jan. 22nd, 1890; Maggie R. Feb. 7th, 1898, and J. Burritt June 28th, 1906.

Services were held at his late residence on Friday, March 3rd, 1916. The text used by the writer on the occasion was 1 Peter i. 23-25. The body was laid away in the cemetery one mile from Burdette. We do not mourn as those who have no hope.

B. F. COULTER.

Mrs. Alice Carey Hunt, wife of Benjamin F. Hunt, was born July 28th, 1867, and died Nov. 16th, 1915, at her home in Middletown, N. Y. She leaves to mourn their loss her husband and one daughter, Mrs. Leslie Wright, four grandchildren: Leslie, Alice, Winifred and Leicester Hunt. One son, Charles, died eight years ago, and a daughter, Ruth, twenty years ago. Sister Alice was baptized in the fellowship of the Middletown and Wallkill Church June 14th, 1896, by the late Elder Benton Jenkins, and remained faithful and steadfast to the end. She was a terrible sufferer for a number of years from lung trouble, but I do not think she was ever heard to murmur or complain in any way.

The funeral was held Nov. 19th at the late home, where a large number of relatives and friends gathered to pay their last respects to the departed, her pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, officiating. She was laid to rest in the New Vernon Cemetery.

Her cousin, SUSIE OSBURN.

SISTER Alice, as she was familiarly known, was indeed a noble woman, faithful in all the walks of life. The church was her delight, and she was always found in her seat when her health allowed her to be there. She possessed a cheerful disposition, and it was a pleasure to visit her in her home. She talked well of the doctrine of our Savior, and was well established in the truth. We shall all miss her greatly. Our desire is that the family will feel the presence of the Lord in their great loss. K.

Elizabeth Jane Bullack died at her home near Coquille, Oregon, Tuesday, Nov. 2nd, 1915, at the age of 79 years, 11 months and 12 days. The immediate cause of her death was neuralgia of the heart. She was the daughter of Owen and Mahala Cawlfield, and was born in Missouri Nov. 20th, 1835. She was married to Finis H. Simmons May 3rd, 1857, who died August 8th, 1859. With her two children she moved from Missouri to Oregon, crossing the plains with her father and his family in 1865, locating in the Willamette valley. There she was married to Richard G. Bullack June 14th, 1866. They moved to Coos County in 1868, locating on Cunningham creek, where she had since resided. Her husband died April 15th, 1898. She was the mother of eight children, seven of whom survive her, as follows: Lewis G. Simmons, Mrs. Amanda S. Nosler, James L., John F., Louisa A., Frank R. and Rose B. Bullack. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church fifty years ago, and has always since been firm in the belief of that doctrine.

Funeral services were conducted by H. M. Law at the M. E. Church South, and the remains were laid to rest in the Masonic Cemetery beside her husband.

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JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

THE PRINCE OF PEACE.

He is King of righteousness, and also King of peace. His peace is a gift through grace. He is the mighty King of grace, too. How incomprehensible to mortals is this peace of God which passeth all understanding. (Phil. iv. 7.) Natural men know nothing of this wonderful peace, for it is hid from all the natural faculties of the brain. All human nature is at war with God, holiness and his people, but it is ignorant of the fact. It can never know of this warfare until revelation makes it appear the bloody type that it is, which begets in the subject of grace, by the revelation of Jesus Christ, a desire for peace, and not war. He becomes a mourner over sin and war, and his one thought is to be at peace with God. He has been at peace with hell, with God at war, but revelation has now manifested the mercy of God, and he rejoices through faith in the peace of God. (Rom. v. 1.) God will speak peace unto his people, and unto his saints; mercy and truth meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other. (Psalms lxxxv. 8, 10.) All these are found in the quickened saint in combination. How wonderful! God dwells in the midst of his people, therefore he shall speak peace unto them. (Zech. ii. 10.) This is the high and holy place, right among those who have a contrite and humble spirit. These have a deep sorrow for sin, but the presence of the Prince of peace heals, and they feel the extension of peace like a river. (Isaiah lxvi. 2.) This peace was before prepared for his saints: "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us."—Isaiah xxvi. 12. This peace never was intended for the wicked. They may cry, Peace, peace, but they know not the peace of God, nor of his saints. There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked. (Isaiah xlviii. 22; lvii. 21.) The nonelect can never approach one step towards that peace. The elect only can know that peace which passeth all understanding. They are the "chosen" who know the joyful sound, and they shall walk in the light of God's countenance. The Prince says, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you."—John xiv. 27. The Prince is a strong guard, and none can obtain this peace except those for whom it was ordained. They all are unworthy of it, but mercy

and grace have made it possible for the most unworthy creature to have it. The great Prince plucks them as a firebrand is plucked out of the burning. (Amos iv. 11; Zech. iii. 2.) How dreadful to think that we are compared to firebrands, that are rapidly consumed. It takes an expert with alertness to rescue a firebrand from being destroyed, it being in the very last stages of decomposition. We, so to speak, were in a burning hell, then the Prince passed by and snatched us from its powerful grasp, and made us kings and priests unto our God. (Exodus xix. 6; Deut. xxxiii. 2; 1 Peter ii. 5; Rev. i. 6.) In speaking of the great peace thrust upon the saints unannounced, we cannot interest the world of mankind dead in sin, nor the religious world which has not the King of saints (Rev. xv. 3,) for their supreme guide. We may, however, find a deep and an abiding interest among the saints of the Most High, who have felt the power of war in their struggle against the prince of the power of the air, (Eph. ii. 2,) the prince of all deception, (2 Cor. xi. 14,) who exults within himself because of his power over the nonelect, (Heb. ii. 14,) and who intimidates the very saint, shaking, as it were, his deathly robes over the soul of the quickened sinner, who finds by real and sad experience that death is the wages of sin. In that dark hour how does he groan and weep for years of error; his waters are a roaring torrent, he cannot rest, nor find peace, which he so much desires; he prays, it is the Lord's preparation in the heart. (Prov. xvi. 1; Jer. x. 23; Matt. x. 19.) Jesus speaks, peace is instantly established. (Psalms lxxxv. 8; Zech. ix. 10.) This wonderful Voice that can be seen as well as heard and felt, has opened the crust of clay to the amazing truth that the atonement has been made, making free from condemnation every vessel of mercy, now clothed with righteousness and all the gifts of grace. This everlasting peace is for the saints of the Most High, for they only in the flesh have felt, or shall feel, the sorrows of death and the pangs of hell. (Psalms xviii; cxvi.)

I now wish to speak of the order of God's people in living and worshiping together in love. To do this, war must not enter among them, for if it does, peace will not abound there as it is commanded by the Master, (Mark ix. 50,) and also by the apostle. (Rom. xiv. 19; 2 Cor. xiii. 11.) It is certainly of the highest importance that the dearest and most precious treasure of the holy child Jesus, the church redeemed by his own blood, should be at peace in the body of his love. The song of the angels at the announcement of the birth of the holy child: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men," evidently refers to God's saints, who must receive this peace that passeth all understanding, and in this peace it is good will toward men, as all his children are also children of men. If it meant peace and good will toward all men indiscriminately, in the sense in which some men apply it, then why do nations still have war and have no lasting peace? If it be the will of God to abolish war, that peace might reign forever, then all wars would evidently cease. It is true, however, that no war can cease without the pleasure of God as the Ruler of mankind. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth. (Psalms xlviii. 9.) Neither shall nations learn war any more only at God's pleasure. (Isaiah ii. 4.) It is evidently true that if a child of God should live as he is enjoined to do, then war would not originate in his heart with his brethren, nor with his fellow-creatures, for if it be possible, he should live peace-

ably with all men, (Rom. xii. 8,) and to follow peace with all men was the desire of Paul. (Heb. xii. 14.) To be at peace with the household of faith is of great importance to the follower of Jesus. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."—Psalms cxxxiii. 1. The importance of peace is emphasized by the testimony of various passages of Scripture, which indicate with the advent of peace in our souls that we receive the full measure of grace intended for worms of the dust in their mortal pilgrimage. God is not penning it up to see who is entitled to it, but he knows full well who shall receive it. He declares, Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near. (Isaiah lvii.) Yes, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. (Acts ii. 37.) The word that God sent to Israel was the preaching of peace by Jesus Christ. (Acts x. 36.) As I have already stated, the Lord Jesus is our peace, (Eph. ii. 14; Micah v. 5; Col. i. 20,) having all power in heaven and on earth, being called by the most mighty names known among men: Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. (Isaiah ix. 6.) Now, brethren, seeing that we are compassed about with so many witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, even the weight of hate and backbiting among our brethren, that is, crucify the fleshly lusts, that peace in the churches may abound to our spiritual enjoyment. This is highly commendable in all the churches of the saints, and recommended to our consciences by the Lord and his apostles. I do firmly believe that our worst sinning after we have united with the church is to manifest a hatred for our brethren, expecting them to be perfect in the flesh. In doing this we greatly incur the displeasure of our Lord, who is as much the Master of these "little ones" as he is ours. Therefore, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father."

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., Feb. 28, 1916.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 22, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you a letter from sister Polly Knight, and one from sister Florence Pultz, for publication in the SIGNS, if you think best. I think they will be read with special interest by the brethren generally.

Your brother in love and fellowship,

SILAS H. DURAND.

NAYLOR, Ga., Feb. 1, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—It has been on my mind for some time to write to you and your dear sister Bessie, and let you know I am still living. I was very low last winter and spring, was confined to my bed five months. I felt that my time had come to leave this world, and I was willing to go, and at times the Lord seemed very near to me, and gave me the brightest evidence of his love, so I was anxious to go, and leave this world of suffering. Once I felt that I was going, and saw the Lord right above me; he looked so good and I was so happy, I thought I was going with him and was done with suffering here. O I have never been so happy. But instead of dying, I began to get better, and he raised me up again. I have ever felt glad and thankful for the many bright assurances of his love while confined to my bed so long; it helps me now to bear my afflictions with more patience. I am still afflicted, and have pain all the time, but have been blessed the last few months. As soon as

I was able to ride my dear good brother-in-law took me to his house and gave me a home, and is very good and kind to me. He lives close to my old home church, and takes me to the meetings. O it is a great pleasure and blessing to me. I desire to thank and praise our blessed Lord for all his love and mercy to me, for I am so little, weak and unprofitable, and can never do anything good, yet still I am spared for some purpose unknown to me.

My dear brother, tell sister Bessie I would be much pleased to get another letter from her. I feel I have done wrong in not letting you both hear from me long before this, when you have been so good and kind to me in the past. O that I could see you and hear you preach once in this life. I can do but little, as my health is so poor, but I love to read. If you get this, please let me hear from you and sister Bessie, and I will try and write a better letter. My dear daughter Bessie is still in very poor health with lung trouble. I am much grieved about her, but my health is so poor that I cannot help her. She has quite a family.

May the Lord ever be with us all, and lead, guide and comfort us, is the wish of your unworthy sister,

POLLIE A. KNIGHT.

WHEELING, W. Va., March 16, 1915.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—I want to speak of the great comfort your good letter afforded me, at least for a little season. How glad and thankful I would be if I could lay aside all thought of the separation that lies between us personally, and could think of ourselves as little children in Christ's kingdom. This thought came to me awhile ago as I began to read your sister's letter, which came this p. m. She addressed me as her dear sister Florence, and although I felt unworthy of this endearing familiarity, it threw me into a state of tender meditation. Directly I was thinking of these words: Except you become as a little child. I think I had a little view of what such a state would mean to us: that we might follow the drawings of this spiritual love which passeth knowledge, without any thought of creature love or admiration. I have thought that as beautiful a sight as I have ever witnessed is one babe leading another by the hand. Children's love for each other is a very touching sight to me. I have laughed to witness it, yet with tears that I could not repress. I have seen and felt a little of this childlike love in the saints, yet we are apt to try to restrain it in this world, but in the world to come I hope we will know no fear; perfect love will cast it out. I recall that at times when your sister referred to you as "my brother Silas" I could see something sweet and tender in it. I saw you as brother to her soul as well as in the ties of flesh and blood. I could get a glimpse of the Son of God being in some sense the same to his brethren in the flesh as he was also partaker of flesh and blood, and in form and fashion made like unto us. The truth has been so passing sweet to me to know that he was without sin. I have lately thought how sweet Mary's name must have sounded to her spoken by his voice. This has been a little Bethel to me. I have felt the sweetness and tenderness in his voice as he called her name. She knew his voice. Never man spake like he spake, and so, as we get a little of this sweetness and love that entoned his voice in our hearts it sweetens our names to hear our loved ones voice them.

March 18th.—After writing on this subject I seemed to lose the sweetness of it, and I then began to think it

would seem foolish to you, and I decided that I would not send it, then the thought came, Why should I try to hide my foolishness from you or any of the saints, since the Lord sees and knows our every weakness?

I want to speak about your good letter. It has been my greatest pleasure, and at the same time my greatest cause for self-abasement, to have you speak well of my writing, from the fact that I could neither doubt your sincerity nor your good and ripe judgment. When I read your kind words on this occasion I burst into tears, and felt to question why the Lord would show me this great favor, he who knows all my unworthiness. I know that you would not have us think of you above what you deserve, but you will have to allow us to judge the tree by its fruit. This subject is fraught with much tenderness of heart in me, as in retrospect my mind goes back over the period that I have known of you. By the mercy of God you are precious in the hearts of the saints. I think he has been there and prepared a place for you, that where he is, there may you be also. I know that according to your years you may not be long spared to us, yet I never feel distressed about the death of the saints; there is something joyful in it to me, and I feel glad to have the hope that the separation will not be for long. I wonder if I am selfish in this. There has often been thoughts in my mind of the aged saints and my own poor, unworthy self going away together. My poor health and their age make me hope that if we are so blessed as to reach the habitation of God, (as you so beautifully described it in your book) we shall soon be united there without sin. I was feeling so dreary this morning, when the thought came that we always in this life have to carry the old man of sin about with us. How often he humbles us and annoys us by his outbreakings; often we are amazed by the sense of sin in us. I have lately thought of our Savior in the garden of Gethsemane; he began to be sore amazed; I wonder if it was because of the load of sin that rested upon him. We, in a little measure, are amazed at the enormity of our own individual sin, what must the whole load, the sins of all his people have been? We can in a small measure know why he was in such agony as to sweat, as it were, great drops of blood. I have at times wished that I might have a plainer sight and sense of his sufferings, yet at the same time I have some assurance that God is merciful in withholding it from me; I suppose I could not bear it. I think I have seen or felt a little of it in viewing the broken bread and the wine of the sacrament. At times the burden of grief at the thought of his broken body has been almost more than I could bear. He has no peer, no equal; he stands alone in his person, in his beauties, in his wonders, in his love and majesty. After I had viewed him in my dream, or vision, I was at once reminded of the words of a hymn: Majestic sweetness sits enthroned upon the Savior's brow. But all our praise in hymns, and even Solomon's Song, seemed cold to express His beauties, not so much seen as felt. It was with great drawings of love that I saw him. Where you tell of your brother's sight of him, and of his exclamation, "O Silas, he is so lovely I have to praise him," has been a sweet place to me, and I have felt to bless the Lord for this declaration from your dying brother's lips. In the tiny sphere I occupy in the Master's kingdom I have had the same thoughts. I would be under such a heavy burden of unworthiness that I would think to hide my-

self away from the saints, but I could not, and in a moment I would feel a great longing for communion with them, and would not feel at rest unless writing to them or reading after them.

Dear brother, I had not thought to write to such length, and I fear it may appear presumptuous in me, and cause you to regret stirring me up again by your kind notice. I feel sure that you have not much time to spare me, and I feel so little worthy that you should show me such favor. I am thankful you are able to fill your appointments. I hope the Lord will continue to carry you in his bosom all your journey through, and will continue to fill your mouth with his hidden wisdom. My general health is about the same. The dear Lord has been all my strength and stay, and I am carried safely through each day, and have quietness in which to meditate upon his goodness and mercy. I ask your prayers. Give my kindest regards to your loved ones.

In much love, I am, as ever, your unworthy sister,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

FAIRMONT, W. Va., Nov. 1, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I will write to the readers of the SIGNS again, by the request of a dear brother. The subject that I shall attempt to write upon is wonderful, and I am not capable of doing it justice. Now the subject is the promise of God to Abram and Sarai. Sarai, it seemed, became impatient, and did not want to wait for the proper child at the proper time to be born, and to help the cause along she gave Hagar her handmaid to Abram. But behold, when the child was born it was an Ishmaelite, a child of the flesh, one who mocked when the son of promise was weaned. When Sarai became the mother of the promised child, Abram's name was changed to Abraham, and Sarai's to Sarah, because Isaac was the promised child, and "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." The Lord visited Sarah, as he had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as he had spoken, for Sarah conceived and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken. We have before us Ishmael and Isaac, the one by promise, the other born after the flesh, and they that are of the flesh cannot please God. So it was then, and so it is now. Ishmael mocked when Isaac was weaned, and was cast out because he was not the child God promised to Abraham and Sarah. Sarah said, "Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son." Those whom the Lord blesses are heirs and joint-heirs with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; they are sons, and because they are sons he sends forth his Spirit into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father; they are the children of God, and not the children of the flesh. (Gal. iv. 22, 23.) "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons; the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise."—Gal. iv. 22, 23. There are the two covenants, the one from mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. They still are in bondage, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with Sarah's son, the son of the freewoman, which is from above, which is the mother of us all. Here are the two covenants; the one people are God's children by promise, which he chose in Christ Jesus before the world

began, and they are heirs, but the children of this Hagar are in bondage, and they shall not be heirs. Men can make Ishmaelites, but they cannot bring them into the heirship. O no, this is impossible; they are still Ishmaelites, and will be to the very last, and we are told there should be a great nation of them, and do we not observe them in this day and age? They are a wild people; they must be up and doing. Look at their many ways and plans, the conditions which they must perform in order to be saved, and help God on with his promises; but, after all, behold, they bring forth a great nation of Ishmaelites, and they are not heirs, they are not God's children; indeed, they are tares, not wheat, and they are in bondage. As it was then, even so it is now: the children of bondage persecute the children of promise. Is it not plain who they are? Are they not workers? Look at their many inventions, are they not many? "And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him: and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren."—Gen. xvi. 12. Wild man! Does not this represent his nature? Wild against all that is good, ready to mock those born of the Spirit, and to persecute them because they are the children of God, born of the Spirit, and mind the things of the Spirit. So he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren, for they are the children of Abraham, both sons of Abraham. See how their hands are against them, see how they persecute them, saying, Ye are old fogies, behind the times, sitting on the stool of do-nothing, waiting for God to come and save you. Well, Sarah had to wait after all, and they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. We are against them, because we cannot go with them. We cannot believe as they do, so they persecute us; they are against us, and yet they say the Lord is with them. Well, he heard the cry of Ishmael, and preserved his life, but did not make him an heir, but made a great nation out of him; so you see God had a purpose in it. All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. They are Ishmaelites still, and we are Israelites, and an Ishmaelite cannot become an Israelite, because one is by promise, the other is born after the flesh, and they cannot please God; a goat is not a sheep, and cannot be. They are wicked, and the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand. What have the wicked to do with the covenant of grace? The good seed are the children of the kingdom, but the tares are the children of the wicked one, and they are to be gathered and cast to destruction, into the lake of fire to be burned, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever, so they have no rest day or night. But to the children of promise God promised great things. He will come and save them with an everlasting salvation; he will preserve them, and bring them into heaven, their home, forever and forever to dwell with him, and to behold the glory which he had with the Father before the world began. O happy thought for the children of promise.

Yours to serve,

JAMES W. LINN.

McEWEN, Tenn., Feb. 20, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been a long time since I wrote for publication, but I will try once more, if the Lord will. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."—

Rom. viii. 28. I was much comforted in reading the reply of dear brother Ker to brother Jackson's article in the SIGNS of Jan. 15th, 1916. It was written in such a loving spirit, but firm in the doctrine of "Absolute predestination of all things," a doctrine that this world hates, but is nevertheless true. Now let us look up this "called people." First I will quote Ephesians i. 4: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Now then who are these people? Did they actually exist before the foundation of the world? No, for that would destroy "purpose." This runs us to eternity, before there was anything but God; and there is a purpose, yes, a God of purpose. Now listen: He is before all things, and by him all things consist. Now where is that eternal devil? Where is anything to move, help or assist God in anything? Not a man on the earth and not a star in the heavens, not any existing power but God himself. Then God of his own will and omnipotent power made a choice according to his purpose. Who dare question his right, his wisdom and his power to create all things, and to save whom he pleases? "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" Before this "make" there was nothing but God. To my mind, there is no room there to make any excuse for God; he does not need any. If he had willed something to excuse him it would have been there, but being a perfect sovereign he needed none. So God chose these people before there were any of them, his purpose was that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. What does this religious world say about their holiness? Do they not teach that they must do something to be holy and without blame before God? When must their doing take place? Is it not here in this life? I understand them to teach that this work of theirs moves, or influences, God to save them. If this idea is true, then who is the sovereign in this case, God or the sinner? God happened to see the sinner work a little and he concluded to save him; is that it? Who acted according to purpose? It must have been the sinner. The sinner purposed to cease his sins, and God happened to see him working and took a notion to save him. That there must be a sovereign somewhere along this line is very evident, and that must be the sinner, if he happened to influence the Lord to save him by something he does. Paul says, Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ (When?) before the world began. Here are the people who are the called according to God's purpose and grace, and this grace was given them in Christ before the world began. They are called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, called according to purpose, absolutely called. Absolute means in one definition "independent." Then God is the only absolute, the only independent power of the universe. Upon this independent power all powers must depend; whether they be thrones, dominions or principalities, they must depend upon this only one, independent God; even their very being or existence must depend upon him. I wish I could frame words to write what I see here, but the honest readers know that the words of the English language cannot fathom the depth of this mystery. Let us think that God is of one mind, and was wise enough to fix his purposes in

eternity, and has the power to carry them out just as he purposed it in eternity; all the dependent powers of earth can never hinder this omnipotent power to carry out his design. I need not stop here and tell how God can be just and damn a world of sinners. I need not to stop here to make any excuses for God to please puny, finite man. It is a fact that God fixed his purposes in eternity to present a people holy and without blame before him in love. He chose them to this end, and not only so, but predestinated (purposed them unto the adoption of sons, &c. Paul says, We wait (not work) for the adoption, to wit: the redemption of our body. Now here is the line of purpose. It comes from eternity, and is swayed through time by God supreme, to the consummation of all things, giving the blessed assurance of bringing his called according to purpose home, fashioning our vile body in the resurrection like unto his own glorious body. How does God do all this? God, to make known his great power, determined to lay all the sins of his purposed people on his darling Son. This was his fixed way. That Son took upon himself their sins, bore them and carried them all the days of old. How blessedly sweet these words are to the children of God. What love, what mercy, what grace is shown here. He came and faced all the mighty powers of earth which came against the omnipotent power of God, and the Lord gave him the victory. Jesus was mocked, he was scourged and persecuted. He must die, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God. Am I one? Is it true that I have truly felt the need of this great Power? O I hope I have. In the winter of 1876 I first felt that I was a lost and ruined sinner. It was in the night, at late bedtime, when all my family were sound asleep, in a sudden moment I was condemned. From January until in May I roamed from place to place to get rid of this burden which seemed to be crushing me into endless woe. I tried all (not part) of my righteousness, and the works of other folks, and all in vain. I must die, and that is not all, I felt that I must go to an endless woe. I prayed my last prayer, and took my first born babe in my arms, trying to ask God not to let it meet me in woe. Ah, children of the most high God, I cannot express my sorrow of soul. Without hope, no way to escape, I could do nothing, I was sinking to rise no more. My senses left me for a time, I know not how long, but when they came back to me I was singing, "Come, thou Fount of every blessing, tune my heart." Just here I could sing no further, my great burden was gone, and I went a distance to tell my mother, but doubts arose, and I have been blundering along ever since.

Children, I have been short in telling you my feelings. Is it an experience of grace? Can it be that the great God supreme had me embraced in his purpose? Ah, tears are dripping, I see my unworthiness, and I feel just here like begging you to let me continue to live with you. I cannot live without you, and I know you could not miss me, as poor and little as I am, if I were cut off. I will be sixty years old next Wednesday, Feb. 23rd. I was baptized the fifth Sunday in May, 1881, and have been trying to preach and trying to refrain from preaching nearly ever since then. Dear brother Ker, has it been this way with you? I surely think the Lord has given you greater evidences than poor me. I will close just here, but I have said nothing on the subject as I think I should have said.

Dear brother Jackson, do not think I love you less; no, no, you go on in the Lord and in the power of his might. You

need not be afraid of "absolute" when applied to God, no more than to apply the word "sovereign" to the God supreme. I am glad we do not have to apologize for God to other folks. It matters not to me what they say, God will judge them.

Your very unworthy brother, if one at all,

J. R. HATCHER.

ALINE, Okla., March 13, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As my time for the good old paper is nearly out I will send in a renewal for it, as I do not want to miss a number, for it is a great pleasure to me to have it to read, and I would be very lonely without it, for I have no one to talk with who believes in the same doctrine that I do and that the dear old SIGNS advocates. Almost everything that is preached in this country is "do and live," and some of them go as far as to say there is no such thing as predestination taught in the Bible. I have been much pleased with the editorials of both editors, and also by the letters written by the brethren and sisters scattered over the country. I commenced taking the SIGNS in 1892, and I have not missed a number, and I hope the dear Lord will bless me with the privilege of reading it as long as he lets me live in this world of sorrow. I still trust in Jesus, and have hope of a life beyond this veil of tears. My dear companion departed this life December 28th, 1910, and without her and without the church I am lonely, yet am not alone, for I hope Jesus is with me.

I will send you a sketch of my life and travels, and if you think it worthy of a place in the good old SIGNS you may publish it, but do not crowd out better reading.

I, James Jacob Clark, was born January 4th, 1844, about two miles east of Dry Ridge, Grant County, Kentucky, was raised on a farm, and when about nineteen or twenty years of age became troubled about the life I was living. One day while in the field plowing it came into my mind, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? which I felt was the death by sin. I had been in the habit of going to hear the different denominations preach, then I began to read the Bible, and tried to pray to God to have mercy on me, a poor, sinful wretch. From what I could learn from reading the Bible there was nothing but the blood of Jesus that could do a helpless sinner good, and without the grace of God shed abroad in this poor heart of mine I was lost, for there was nothing good that I could do that would save me. So I went on for about two years, but there was nothing that I could do to be saved from this death of sin. I found that it is by faith we are saved, for the word says there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved except the name of Jesus. It was then I put my trust in him. When I was a little over twenty years of age I went to the Primitive Baptist Church at Williamstown, Kentucky, at the May meeting, 1866, for a home, and they received me. My mother had joined at the April meeting, and my father joined at the same meeting with me. It was arranged to have the baptizing the next day, so we met at the water, and while singing at the water's edge my brother, four years older than I, came forward and was received, so father, mother, brother and myself all went down into the water and were baptized by Elder William Conrad. In the year 1870 I married Harriett Washington Taylor, of Robertson County, Kentucky, and we

remained in Kentucky until January 15th, 1884, and had six children born to us while living in Kentucky; three of them died in infancy, the other three we brought to Kansas with us. We stopped in Hutchinson for one month, then we moved to Pratt County, Kansas, and remained there for about ten years, and one daughter was born to us while there. During the time we were in Kansas I did not meet a Primitive Baptist. We then moved to Oklahoma, at the opening of the Cherokee Strip, and settled in Woods County, about sixteen miles southeast of Alva, the county seat, and while living there, as I was working in the field, a man, his wife and a child came along the road and called to me. I went to the roadside and the man told me they had been somewhere to meet with some Primitive Baptists, and in his talk I found that he was Elder Beeman, and in some way he had found out that I was holding to the Primitive Baptist doctrine. I told him that I trusted in the doctrine that the Primitive Baptists preached, which was faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He told me that a few who held to the Old Baptist doctrine were going to meet at a certain time at what was known as the Driftwood schoolhouse to have meeting and organize a church, so my wife and I went. It was something like fifteen miles from my place, but there I heard the first Old Baptist sermon I had heard in about fifteen years, and it had that good old sound: saved by grace, and grace alone. After organizing they held their meetings in different places. There were five members in the organization, and there were from time to time others added to the number until five more joined, and then I sent back for a letter of dismission from the church at Williamstown, Kentucky, and it was granted. After receiving my letter I presented it to the little church, called Ebenezer, which met at the home of Elder J. F. Beeman, Saturday night, March 1st, 1902, and was received by them. Others were added from time to time until we numbered seventeen, and we had good meetings. At the June meeting, in 1902, sister Conner, our clerk, called for a letter of dismission, as she was moving away. It was granted, and the church appointed me their clerk, in which capacity I tried to serve the best I could as long as we met together as a church. From time to time some were called by death, and others moved to other places, and finally our pastor and his wife called for letters of dismission, on account of moving too far away to attend; so our last meeting was held at the home of brother and sister Morgan, at Ingersoll, Oklahoma, and now at the time of writing this I think there are but four of the members remaining in the county, and we are a long way apart and getting on in years. I myself have passed the age of seventy-two, but am still trusting in the same Lord and Savior Jesus Christ I hope I have trusted in for the last fifty years. I am a poor sinner in hope of immortality; if saved, saved by grace, and grace alone.

JAMES J. CLARK.

CERULEAN, Ky., Jan. 11, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have just read the last issue of your paper, and feel constrained to say a few things by way of commendation to you and all those who have so ably contributed to its columns. Write on, still contend for the faith, looking for the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. When I attempt to write anything to be read by the dear

Old Baptists I fear that what I may write will darken counsel rather than comfort any one, so then I can look only to him, the sovereign Ruler of all things, for my guide. I want to talk to you for a little while about salvation, the salvation of sinners. I feel interested, knowing as I do that I am a sinner, and, as I have often said, I have been hunting for the experience of those who have hope in Christ, and to inquire of them a reason of their hope; something to rest upon. There has been much said about time, eternal, conditional and unconditional salvation. For myself, I believe that of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace, believing that grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, and that he is the Fountain from which all blessings flow, whether for time or eternity; that stream of mercy is continually flowing and never fails. David said, There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early. Then may our tongue be tuned to sing,

"Come, thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise."

Paul said to the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, that they were saved by grace, and no other writer of the New Testament ever challenged the words of Paul, none ever contradicted them. If it were true then is it not true still? or has the plan of salvation been changed? If salvation is by grace, then we are safe in believing that God's mercy is not our merit. It is written, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior. I am the way, the truth and the life, said Jesus. If this is not true we have nothing to look to; if we know anything of an experience of grace, think of it as a free and unmerited gift. Not only is the word "grace" spoken of as a gift, but it is also true that everything that pertains to life and godliness is given. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all (all the election of grace), how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? The plan of salvation was laid in eternity, and grace was given in Christ Jesus before the world began. (2 Tim. i. 9.) The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. Jesus came to save his people from their sins, (Matt. i. 21,) for them he suffered and brought them to God. (1 Peter iii. 18.) He was delivered for our offences and was raised again for our justification; by his blood he obtained eternal redemption for us; this he did for his people. He hath by himself purged our sins, and for the great love he had for us he quickened us together and saved us by his grace. These things we believe to be true, not merely because we find them written in the Scriptures, but because we have felt the truth of them in our hearts.

On March 10th, 1866, I found peace in Jesus, and my heart was made glad, and I still rejoice in the hope of eternal life through Jesus. I realize that my days are numbered, that threescore years and ten are finished, so I say again, Write on. I think perhaps this will be my last letter.

I will close with these words: Whom having not seen ye love; in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Yours in hope,

D. R. TURNER.

CERULEAN, Ky., Jan. 25, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The word "absolute" when used in connection with the word "predestination" does not make it any stronger or change its meaning in any way, only by way of affirmation: absolute, unlimited, unconditional. Why men believe in unlimited creation and believe in limited predestination is not easily understood or harmonized by the teaching of the Bible. It is true men cannot look through the deep things of God. O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts.

I want to say a few things about creation and predestination. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. I will give a Bible reason in due time not only why he did so, but also why he created all things. He created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. This we understand was a creation of or out of the earth. In 2 Cor. v. 17, it is said, If any man be in Christ he is a new creature. This would imply a creation. Eph. ii. 10: The workmanship of God. 2 Cor. v. 18: And all things are of God. 1 Cor. viii. 6: "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." Rom. xi. 36: "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever." Col. i. 16, 17: "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Consist is to be in a fixed state, Webster says. I think this is enough to satisfy the minds of any; if unlimited creation is true, then why should we limit predestination? I said that I would show in due time why God created all things, and for what purpose he did it. Rev. iv. 11: Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power, for thou hast created all things, (here it will be seen that the four and twenty elders fell down before him that sat on the throne and worshiped him that liveth forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne,) and for thy pleasure they are and were created. If all things were created for his pleasure, did he not purpose, or predestinate, their creation? Eph. i. 11: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Is there not a turning back? Psalms lxxviii. 41: Yea, they turned back, and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel. Rom. ix. 20: Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? If predestination makes God the author of sin, does not creation do the same? If not, why not? If there is anything that is not governed or controlled by the great God what is it? Who can tell but what God will yet be snatched from his throne, and the cry will no longer be heard of his glory, honor and power?

"O tell me, Lord, that thou art mine;
What can I wish beside?
My soul shall at the fountain live
When all the streams are dried."

As to the charge that is being laid to the Old School Baptists, of making God the author of sin, because they teach the predestination of all things, I think it is

wrong. I may not know what others believe, but will try to tell what I believe, and what I do not believe. I believe that God created all things, and that he did it for his own pleasure, and that he is the author of all things created, and that he is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, (Rev. i. 8,) and he declared the end from the beginning, (Isaiah xlvi. 10,) but I do not understand that he is the author of sin. I understand, and do so teach, that sin is the transgression of the law. I have never read of God being under law or disobeying any law. Adam was under law. I think that Paul referred to him in Romans v. 12, that being the first account that we know of sin being in the world, hence it came by disobedience, not by creation, and was the act of man, the act of the creature that God created. If God is the author of sin, does it not appear that he brought it about through the agency of man?

I see that perhaps I am writing more than will be of interest. I said in my last letter to the dear old SIGNS that perhaps it would be the last time I wrote for its columns, but when the next issue came to hand my poor heart was made to rejoice. Brother Durand's letter was good, and brother Ker ably sets forth the truth that has ever been contended for by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Brother Lefferts' writing is good, and very instructive; indeed there is very little that I have seen in the SIGNS that I object to. I hope to be remembered by you; though many of you are strangers in the flesh, yet my love for you is very precious in the Lord. I believe in salvation by grace, and feel to hope that grace is sufficient for me.

I am, as ever, yours,

D. R. TURNER.

WAVERLY, Pa., March 8, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find two letters, and with these are more to follow. I do not want the SIGNS to go down for lack of publishing matter, but do not publish any letters I send you unless you wish to.

Yours as ever,

D. M. VAIL.

OTTAWA, Kans., Feb. 22, 1916.

DEAR ELDER VAIL:—Your card came yesterday, and it certainly is a comfort and of encouragement to me to think that I was enabled to write anything out of my own experience that would meet the approval of one of the Lord's true and tried servants. It is good indeed that the dear Lord has so ordered it that the excellency of the power is of him and not of us, the earthen vessels, otherwise some would have whereof to boast. After reading Elder Ker's editorial I had a great desire to give in my little testimony, not thinking to help any one but myself. I read it over before I sent it, and it seemed so small I was tempted to destroy it, when the thought came, You have felt that way before, and the Lord brought good out of it, so let it go this time. Since receiving your card I feel very glad I wrote, for my hope is strengthened. Like you, I have only a flickering hope that I am a child, but the great apostle said we are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for it? Though so small, we would not exchange it for all the world. Faith must be tried. Peter says it is more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire. Job's faith must have been tried with fire, for he said, Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. Also Habakkuk, when he said, Although the fig tree shall not blos-

som, neither shall fruit be in the vine. The labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat. The flocks shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stall, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. Those who are thus brought to trust in the Lord know that in him all fullness dwells, beside him there is no Savior, all other ground is sinking sand. They are not offended at anything he does, but desire to fall at his feet and implore mercy. It seems strange that Old School Baptists should object to the word "absolute," when used to express God's right to do his will in heaven and in earth. Job says with him are strength and wisdom, the deceived and the deceiver are his. The Savior taught his disciples to pray, saying, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven; not may be done. The Lord told Samuel, They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. The word "absolute" is nothing in itself, it is what it implies. May we not be found trying to set bounds to his wisdom and power, but in humility and love contending for the faith (not words) once delivered unto the saints. In John xiii. 34, 35, just before his crucifixion, Jesus said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you. * * * By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." In the fifteenth chapter, tenth verse, he says, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." Verse twelve: "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Verse seventeen: "These things I command you, that ye love one another." I have not found any other such commands. This was shown to me when I was laboring and heavy laden, trying to keep his commandments of the law. He says his yoke is easy, his burden light, and you know how easy it is to love those taught of God. One of old said he did not need to write to them to love one another, for they themselves were taught of God to do so. I hope it is love causing me to write this letter to you. I hope you will feel to write oftener for the SIGNS, though I know your time must all be taken up with your churches.

Your sister in hope of eternal life,

ANNA McKINNEY.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, Feb. 27, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—Thank you for your kind note of encouragement. I thought that I might write you a little this morning, if the Lord will enable me, for of myself I can do nothing. Timothy was warned to avoid profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called. My attention was directed to this as I glanced over in the newspaper the strange subjects to be discoursed on to-day by the denominations of this city who profess to be of Christ. I will just write down my thoughts as they came to my mind. Some members of the medical profession contend that there are portions of our body that are useless, and which should be removed for our betterment. They think they are scientists, but the statement that any portion of God's creation is useless is simply a confession that they are ignorant of its use. Of late years men of more understanding have found that many of the inconspicuous organs of the body have most vital importance in the growth and development of our body, but even the mistakes of the past do not teach these who have become wise in their own

conceits. Man is not only born to live, but born to die. His life is not indefinite, but is a cycle well determined by the mighty Maker of our frame. He ripens as the wheat in the field for the harvest. Some indeed are blasted in youth and some by reason of strength may reach great age, but neither of these factors affect the truth that man's life is circumscribed. Death is a natural process in our bodies; no way of escape is known to man, nor ever will be. No human wisdom can penetrate beyond mortality. Only the power of God, who created man, can bring to pass that victory over the grave which we hope for in Christ Jesus our Lord. This illustration will serve for a parallel with the attitude of men of learning toward the holy Scriptures. To acknowledge that they do not understand them is a right attitude, for the revelation of God alone can give such understanding, but to deny them is to affront Him whose wisdom is far above and beyond all wisdom of earth. Truly I know that in all the ages they have been handed down, and in the translation by men lacking inspiration something may have been taken from or added to their words. Indeed, it must be so if left to the direction of imperfect man, but the same God who is the author of these holy writings was able to keep them pure and preserve them for a witness of himself, to edify and instruct his church in the way of life and salvation through Jesus Christ. If anything is lost or hidden, it, too, is in his purpose, and will surely come to light in his own good time. How men of science have erred in their interpretation of the history of this world through ignorance. Little they know of that antediluvian state before the windows of heaven were opened and the fountains of the great deep broken up, wiping out all life on the earth save those whom the Lord had shut in the ark. We read of a time when God had not caused it to rain on the earth, but, as in a great hothouse, there went up a mist from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground. We also read that God set his bow in the cloud as a token of his covenant with Noah. Was there ever either rainbow or rain before this? How little we know. Who to-day can understand that state, or can account for the enormous vegetation which covered many parts of this earth, even to the polar regions, and left to this day the relics of its existence? Who knows of the firmament which divided the waters from the waters? But I had better stop, lest I, too, begin to speculate. What I wished to emphasize is the ignorance of science, falsely so called. I have heard men contend that a whale could not swallow a man. They were thinking of the Arctic whale, which, however, does not live in the Indian Ocean. The fact that there are whales which could not only swallow a man, but which live on seals and porpoises, swallowing these great animals whole, did not evidently come to the attention of these "learned" persons, nor did they consider that the same God who could send Jonah to declare to Nineveh her impending destruction forty years before it took place did also prepare a place for him in the belly of the whale. With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible. O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

With this I think I will close. Mrs. C. B. Rittenhouse, daughter of John Kugler, who formerly lived in Montreal, is now living here, and asked that I tell

you so when I wrote. Edith and the two children are well.

With love, in gospel fellowship your brother,

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

HARDING, W. Va., March 6, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—As I am sending in my remittance to our family paper, I will try to tell you how much I appreciated your reply to brother Jackson in the January 15th number. How it strengthens and comforts the weak ones of the flock when God's ministers stand boldly on the walls of Zion and fear not to proclaim such deep, God-honoring doctrine. You want the church to know, and care not if the world knows, that you believe in God, and him alone, and in salvation by his grace. When I read the reply I thought, Brother Ker, you thought you might stop writing for our paper, but you could not. You have passed through the fire, but the Son of God walked with you, and you were tried as gold is tried and came out unharmed, only the thongs that bound you were burned, and your hands were loosed, that you might wield the pen as God directs, to comfort his children. When Elder Chick was taken we all missed him much, his writings were deep and yet so plain. It has seemed to me that when the aged ministers near the shore of eternity they can, like the martyr Stephen, see the heavens opened and get glimpses of the glories within, and it is real strength to us to read their writings or to hear them preach, seeing them so near their reward, hoping that their God is also our God, and that we in our stumbling way are traveling the path which they have trodden. We are pleased to see how clear and plain Elder Lefferts makes his views, not fearing what men will say, but desiring only to please God. I have read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for thirty years, and it still contends for the same precious truth, and the experiences of the children of God are the same now as they were when I commenced to read it. How well I remember when I was awakened to a sense of my sinfulness, how I would go in a room alone and hunt up mother's papers and look for the experiences written there, to see if the writers had ever felt such a burden of guilt and sin as I then felt. I have been a subscriber to the paper more than twenty years, and would be very lonely without it, as it is all the preaching I get during the winter months. Elder J. N. Bartlett, of Philippi, W. Va., has been a faithful pastor to our church for ten years, and preaches for us regularly during the summer months, but the members are so scattered it is impossible for us to get together during the cold winter, but we often long to hear the gospel preached and to meet with those whose language we can understand and who can understand us.

May the Lord enable the brethren and sisters to keep on writing for our paper. May he also still strengthen the editors and publishers, that they may walk about Zion, mark well her bulwarks and find peace and joy in so doing.

Unworthily your sister,

(MRS.) E. E. WORKMAN.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan. 4, 1916.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I have been sick four weeks this winter, and had a great desire to read the Bible, and I feel I had more understanding of the word of God than I ever had since I received a hope. In the seventh chapter of Deuteronomy, sixth, seventh and eighth verses, you will find these words: "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God:

the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people," &c. We see the Lord's choice is not man's choice, the Lord's ways are not man's ways; the Lord selects whom he will, the poor, the lame, the blind, the halt and the weak, just the opposite from man's choice. The Lord reveals by his Spirit to this class of people, they are made to see his mighty power by this Spirit that dwells within them. He did not choose them for numbers or for size. We have David for an example, to show the children of the true and living God what God's power is, how it was manifested in him. God speaks and it is done, no power can stay his hand, and no man can understand the works of Almighty God only as God reveals them to him. God keeps the hidden things to himself until it pleases him to reveal them to his children; there is no way of finding out by study, or the craftiness of man, the things God has in store for his people, who are called with an holy calling. We know Jesus was conceived by the Holy Ghost; just so every one who is born of God, the Holy Ghost falls upon them, giving the spiritual birth, then they see they are among the fewest people. The world is against you, but God is for you. Ye have an unction from God, and ye know all things. You know the power of God and the power of the devil. You have come to the end of all natural help, by this new life you are drawn away from the things you once loved, a new song is put in your mouth, you now go leaping and praising God, seeking the things of the kingdom; you now are counted among the special people that he has chosen for himself above all people of the earth. They do not choose him; they know not God; they are far from him; they worship idol gods, gold and silver, and the works of men's hands, until the Holy Ghost falls upon them and the light of the glory of God shines in their hearts; by this light is made manifest what is in the dark, then you know you have been a trespasser against God's holy law. You need no one to tell you, you know your heart is wicked, and every thought is wicked. There is one thing you hope for when in this state of mind, that is, for God to be merciful to you, a sinner. These things are taught by the only teacher, Jesus Christ. By reading the Old Testament we find many old prophets and kings who by his power in them fought wonderful battles, conquered armies twice their number. Then God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten Son down here to suffer, bleed and die, that his people might live. Without sword or gun he, by the power of God which was within him, conquered every foe on earth, even hell, death and the grave, therefore left nothing for us to do. He did not choose us because we were more in number, but the fewest of all people. Just his elect he has chosen to serve him and to follow him and worship him in spirit and in truth. He says, I loved you before you loved me, and called you with an holy calling.

Hoping I am your brother in the Spirit,

C. S. BOND.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Feb. 2, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—If I can be permitted to address one of God's servants as such. I am sending you the experience of my mother, Mrs. R. J. Chilton, which she wrote several years ago, ad-

dressed as you see it, to her dear children. She is the mother of twelve children, eight of whom are living, they are Mrs. Elda McFarland, of Paducah, Ky., Mrs. J. P. Cotton, of Gainsburg, Pa., Mrs. I. P. McCullough, of Marshall Co., Tenn., John A. Chilton, of Wartrace, Tenn., Mrs. J. A. Ayers, Mrs. C. P. Keller, A. G. Chilton and myself, W. B. Chilton, all of Nashville, Tenn. One died in infancy, and she had two boys killed on the railroad, and in 1904 lost her husband, so you see it just took the grace of God to sustain her. One daughter died, leaving four children and her husband. I feel that I want to have this published in our family paper, the SIGNS. She does not take the paper, but I do, and I give her my papers to read and she seems to enjoy reading them. Her hearing is bad now, and she cannot hear preaching, but she does love to read. She was eighty-two years old last Sunday, Jan. 30th, and her general health is good.

Yours in the fear of the Lord,

W. B. CHILTON.

TO MY DEAR AND PRECIOUS CHILDREN:—I have had it on my mind for some time, if the dear Lord will guide my thoughts, to write a reason of my hope in Christ, if indeed I have one. I was very young when I first felt the fear of death, and have wept often when thinking about having to die, for I learned early every one had to die sooner or later, for I lost a little brother and sister younger than myself when I was small. The thought of death would make me feel very sad, more especially when I would do something wrong, for I had been told that the children who did wrong and wickedly God would punish forever. Sometimes I could forget such thoughts for awhile, then sometimes I would be afraid to go to sleep, and got to that dreadful place of torment. Things went on in this way until I was ten or twelve years old, when I went with one of my cousins to a camp meeting close to father's house. She was older than I, and was living at father's at that time. We walked to the meeting, and when they called for mourners a young lady came and talked to my cousin, and got her to go to the mourner's seat to be prayed for. I watched her go, and the thought came to me that no one cared what became of me, and I felt dreadfully bad. It went on in this way, and sometimes I would cry myself to sleep, thinking I would be forever lost. Things went on in this way for several years, and I would go up to be prayed for often, but I did not seem to get any help, it seemed that mine was surely an outside case, for others would rise up around me rejoicing, but it seemed there was no hope for me; but one night, at old Three Forks, at camp meeting, I was up among the mourners feeling lost and undone; my prayer was, Lord, save, I am lost. I saw the Savior extended on the cross not far from me, and I felt light and happy, and rose up rejoicing, but very soon the tempter came and told me I was deceived, then O how badly I did feel, for I thought I was not only deceived myself, but had deceived others, and I did try to pray the Lord to undeceive me. Sometimes I could feel that I did love the blessed Savior and felt that he died for my sins, but I did not tell any one my feelings, but some of them who were with me told mother about me, and she asked me, and I told her some of my feelings. She told me to ask the Lord to undeceive me if I was deceived, and that has been my cry, O so often, for I am often in doubt, and almost in despair, and think I surely never knew the Savior's love or I would not so

often be in doubt about my condition. It was several months before I joined with them. I was persuaded to join the Missionary Baptists by an old Missionary sister whom I had a great deal of confidence in, but I did not feel I was good enough to join any denomination. Father and mother belonged to the Primitive Baptists, and I felt that I wanted to join that church, if I was fit to join any, so a few months after that, on Saturday of their regular meeting I went forward and told part of what is written here, and was received, and baptized by my dear father; that was when I was about sixteen years old. I have passed through many dark and trying scenes, and have often doubted my fitness to belong to the Primitive Baptist Church, but have never doubted their being the right church. I used to think when I was old I would not have so many doubts and fears, but it is still the same, so if I am ever saved it will not be for any good that I have done, but in and through the blood of the crucified and risen Savior. I feel that I have failed often to live as I should, and have been impatient with my dear children many times, have not talked to them about their hope of their future happiness as I ought to, but surely no mother ever felt more concerned about her children than I, though I had such a poor way of expressing it. It has ever been my earnest prayer and desire that the dear Lord would save them all in that bright and happy world above, where sorrow and death are feared and felt no more.

Your loving mother,

(MRS.) R. J. CHILTON.

BENTON, Ky., March 23, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I herewith inclose money order for two dollars, for which you will please extend my time another year, for it is my meat and drink, though considering my age and feeble condition I do not expect to live to read it another year. I am very feeble and in my eighty-third year, and can truly say with the old patriarch Jacob, Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, but I hope in God's mercy, and have no confidence in the flesh, for God hath chosen base things of the world, and things which are despised, yea, and things that are not, to bring to naught things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence; but of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, so that according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. To deny the doctrine of salvation by grace from start to finish is to deny what the Scriptures say.

In the March 1st number of the SIGNS brother Durand's views on Isaiah xlii. 15, 16, so impressed me with the experimental beauty contained in them that I want to request you, brother Durand, if your eye happens to fall on this, to extend your views in the same chapter to the nineteenth verse, and give your views on that, as it is hid from me. It reads: "Who is blind but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? Who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the Lord's servant?"

Dear brethren, may the Lord guide and bless your work to his own honor, and glorify his name.

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all, R. J. HILL.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, the fifth Sunday in April (30th). Services at 10:45 a. m. and 2 p. m. All welcome.

L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1916.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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2 CORINTHIANS V. 10.

"FOR we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

Here we are told of certain ones that must appear before Christ's judgment-seat. Paul speaks of them as "we," therefore he means himself, together with those to whom he is writing the letter, which, in this case, is the church at Corinth, "with all the saints which are in all Achaia." We conclude from this that none but believers must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, and that with believers it is a case of must appear, not may or shall or will appear; that is, there is a needs be or necessity for the appearance of every child of God before the judgment-seat of Christ. Whatever judgment-seat the nonelect appear before, it certainly is not Christ's judgment-seat, for he is Head over his house, and the elect of God constitute his house. The nonelect are under God's judgment, but not subject to the judgment of God's Anointed (Christ). Here we must distinguish between the judgment of God and the judgment of Christ. While God and Christ are one, yet there is a difference, or a different relation between that in which God reveals himself to his elect and that which he bears to the wicked. To his elect people God is Christ: the Savior from sin and the victor over death and hell. In this relation Christ is the head of his elect, and they are his house, they are under law to him, must appear before his judgment-seat. To the nonelect God is Creator; he is not known to them or by them as Savior, victor or any other anointed relationship whatsoever. We are not saying that the nonelect are not or will not be judged, it is not the purpose of this article to discuss that, but we do say that our text at this time does not refer to any such matter, but simply to a judgment that concerns "we" (believers), a judgment to which "we must all appear." The church is not under Moses, nor under the law of sin and death, having been redeemed from under that law by the mediatorial work of Jesus Christ. He has bought his people, not with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with his own precious blood, hence they belong to him, and do not belong either to Moses, to Satan, or to themselves. Since the redemption of the elect is finished, since the work is perfect, and since the sanctified ones are forever perfected through this one offering, it must follow that those thus saved or redeemed are forever free from any claim, great or small, which their former captors may have held against them. The debt having all been paid, the elect can never again be brought into judgment by those things which were formerly their condemnation. God is just, and will not demand the payment again of the debt already paid. We say this to emphasize the point that "we must all appear" before the judgment-seat of Christ, who is our living head, our spiritual Lawgiver, and we are not bound to appear before any other judgment-seat than that of

Christ, because believers are not subject to Moses, nor to any other master than Christ, he only is their Lord and King. Having tried to make this plain, we now pass to consider for what purpose believers appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. Is it to be judged for their sins? Right here we had better determine just what we mean by sin. Sin is a transgression of law. Now, if we are thinking of the Mosaic law, or of the law of sin or of death, then God's elect cannot sin, for it is impossible to transgress a law to which one is not subject. A citizen of the United States, living in the United States, cannot transgress the law of France, for he is not subject to the jurisdiction of French law. On a higher plane, therefore, a child of God redeemed from under the curse and dominion of the law which once held him captive, can no more transgress that old law, for he is no longer under the dominion of that law. In that sense the believer cannot sin. However, the believer is now under law to Christ, and can and does disobey the commandments of his King, so that in this sense the believer does sin. It is for this that he must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. This is what John means when he says, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Again, in Hebrews we read, "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." A believer sins willfully whenever he offends against the truth, whenever he transgresses a command of Jesus or walks contrary to the order and doctrine of the church of Jesus. These transgressions of the believer which grieve the Holy Spirit, whereby he is sealed unto the day of redemption, do not cause the believer to forfeit his portion in Jesus' perfect work, for that would be to unsave what Jesus has saved, or would be the creature undoing the work of the God that made him, which is impossible, because absurd. Further, Paul declares that no creature is able to separate God's people from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. Therefore, the appearing before the judgment-seat of Christ of every child of God has nothing to do with their eternal salvation. It is an experience that all God's people have while here in the flesh, and does not affect eternity at all. This appearing before the judgment-seat of Christ is not something that takes place with the believer in the future, after death, but right now, while present in the body. The judgment-seat of Christ is set up in the soul of the believer, Christ is in him the hope of glory, and the believer is constantly before this judgment-seat, he cannot get away from it. He needs not some one outside himself to reprove him, for this inner quickened conscience reproves the believer for every foolish thought and every idle word. "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." The same grace that reveals salvation in a believer also teaches that believer the denial of worldly lusts and ungodliness, to the end that he should live in sobriety in this present evil world. Thus, whether the believer does good or bad, he receives the things done in his body. If one sows wheat, he will not reap oats; he cannot

gather figs of thistles. If one sows to the flesh, he reaps flesh; that is, corruption. If one is enabled to sow to the Spirit, he reaps Spirit; that is, everlasting life. The thought of the writer in our text is that God's people now while here in the flesh are constantly assembled, or are appearing before Christ's judgment-seat, not to decide whether they shall be sent to hell or shall go to heaven, for that was decided in the mind of God before the foundation of the world, but that the believer may receive right now the things done in his body. If the things done by us in the body are contrary to the law of Jesus and the order of his house, thus sowing to the flesh, we receive or reap flesh; if, on the other hand, grace is given us to obey the law of the Spirit, and to live in the precepts of Jesus, we do good and we receive or reap good.

Brother John Kerr, of Ontario, has asked us to write on this subject, and we have tried to do so to the best of our present ability.

L.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

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2 KINGS XVII. 17.

"And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger."

This is written regarding the conduct of Israel. Israel left, not part, but all the commandments of God, and made to themselves other gods: molten images, even two calves, and made a grove and served Baal. In addition to this, they involved their children in their own net, causing them to pass through the fire to these gods. All this was exactly in opposition to what God had commanded them by the hand of Moses. "There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or a witch." —Deut. xviii. 10. "And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the Lord."—Lev. xviii. 21. The history of Israel, as we have said before in these columns, proved conclusively that it is not in man's power to walk in conformity with the precepts of God. It is his nature to disobey God. This the law of Moses amply demonstrated. Molech was a heathen god, who was worshiped by human sacrifices. Figuratively, we might say that loss of life or sacrifice of principle is passing through the fire to Molech. Whenever the believer sacrifices some principle of truth to satisfy his own nature, or to please his fellow-man, he is serving Molech. Whenever the believer loses his life in running after the things of the world, this, too, is passing through the fire to Molech. What will it profit a man (a believer) to gain the world and lose his own soul, or himself? One cannot lose one's soul eternally, but there is such a thing as the things of the world occupying first place

in our thoughts and performances and becoming thus engrossed to the submergence of all spirituality. When this is the case, one experimentally loses his life in pursuit of that which satisfies not, and spends his money for that which is not bread. Our children are our offspring, our thoughts are the offspring of our brain, our deeds the offspring of our will. Now, when our natural will predominates, our thoughts and deeds spend themselves in pleasing our natural man, the spiritual man becomes submerged for the time being, and our children (thoughts and deeds) pass through the fire to Molech. This is to be condemned in the life of every child of God, and will receive its judgment at the seat of the Anointed, before whose authority we at all times stand, and to whom we must give account in the body for the deeds done in the body. It always causes us to wonder how any one who has been brought to believe that salvation is by grace, and grace alone, can bear to see their children become slowly entangled in the delusions of men. The whole world to-day is wrapped up in serving itself and the god of its own creating, of its own imagination, its Molech. We never see little children of all ages trooping to Sunday-school of a Sunday morning or afternoon but what we are reminded of the people of olden time causing their children to pass through the fire to Molech. The world of the present day is bringing up its young in the Sunday-school, where it is inculcating error into the childish mind which never can be erased by any power short of the grace of God. Now, it is bad enough to see this Molech worship being engaged in by the people of the world, but how much worse to see Old Baptists sending their children to Sunday-school, and thus also causing their children to pass through the fire to Molech. How dare we sacrifice our children to a false god in whom we have been made to see there is no virtue at all, but only evil altogether? The Sunday-school as at present conducted is nothing in the world but a nursery for the various Arminian denominations, in which are hatched out the error-spreading hordes of the generations to come. In these Sunday-schools false interpretations are put upon the Scriptures. Even the letter of the Bible is not correctly taught, but is given many twists and wrenches here and there to make it conform to what men think it ought to be, instead of what God says it is. Now, we know very well that we cannot teach our children the truth, but we can at least abstain from teaching them error. If our child is destined to be an Arminian, let it be an Arminian without any of our help. We know, too, that if our children are to be called by grace to a knowledge of the truth, all the Sunday-schools in the world cannot prevent it, and that the Lord is able to bring them out of a Sunday-school if they are in one. But all this does not relieve the parent of his duty to do that which he knows to be right to the best of his ability. We have noticed that where Old Baptists raised their children to not go to Sunday-school, and to go to meeting with their parents, that it does not make Old Baptists of them, but it does inculcate in the child a respect for their parents' belief, even if the child at heart knows nothing of the truth experimentally. On the other hand, we have noticed that where Old Baptists let their children go to Sunday-school, and to other Arminian religious doings, rarely or never taking their children to meeting with them, that they have very little respect for their parents' belief, and openly criticise it. There may be exceptions to this rule, but

then there are not many rules but what have their exceptions. Let us not cause our children to pass through the fire to Molech, let us not sacrifice them to principles we know to be false, let us not lose our lives in the pursuit of vanity.

We have written this at the request of sister E. E. Workman, of Harding, W. Va.

L.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

INSTRUCTORS AND FATHERS.

BROTHER BEEBE:—I will renew my request, which I made one year ago, for your views on 1 Cor. iv. 15: "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." By complying with this request you will oblige many who are inquiring after the truth, some of whom seem to be entangled with the means doctrine. It is for their sake that I make the request.

JAMES OSBURN.

LEESVILLE, Iowa, Jan. 1, 1866.

(*Concluded from page 187.*)

In resuming our remarks on 1 Cor. iv. 15, we propose to treat more fully on the affirmative, in regard to the indispensable requisites which constitute relation or position of a father in the church of God, in the sense in which the word is used in our text. As a progenitor, or author of our spiritual life, or rightful claimant of our supreme devotion, filial love, reverential fear and implicit obedience, the saints of God are forbidden to call any man on earth father, for One is their Father, even God. They are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God. The life therefore developed in that birth must be ascribed to God alone. But in the illustration of the various gifts which God has given to his church, the apostle has, as he tells us in verse six of the same chapter, in a figure transferred this to himself, and to Apollos. Not to exalt himself or Apollos by an assumption of titles applicable to God, but for the very opposite object: "That ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another." The apostle in thus transferring the figures employed in this chapter, to Apollos as well as to himself, gives us to understand that the term is applicable in the sense in which it is used to other ministers of the gospel besides the apostles, but not properly applied to all instructors, or there would be no disparity between instructors and fathers. We therefore may search for the marks of distinction by which we are to discriminate between those instructors which are, and those who are not fathers. We infer from the manner in which the apostles John, Peter, Paul and others have used the term, that it is designed not only to signify seniority of membership in the church, but certain peculiar qualities bearing analogy to the patriarchal or fatherly relation to and care for the children. In our former number we pointed out many of the opposite traits which some instructors have betrayed. We will now attempt to show what are some of the distinguishing qualities or characteristics of fathers in the church of God. First. Those who from long experience, wholesome training and spiritual gifts, are especially qualified to be useful by their counsels, instructions and examples, to the younger and less experienced members in the church. Second. Those who from long and faithful deportment have secured the well placed confidence of the saints. Third. Those who are sound in the faith, and deep in their understanding of the Scriptures, orderly in their walk, sober and grave, yet humble and courteous in their deportment. Fourth. Those who are familiar with the laws and disci-

pline of the church of God, and careful to observe and contend for the order of the house of God. Fifth. It is highly important that fathers in the church should render themselves perfectly accessible to the veriest babe, the weakest and most trembling child in the church. Sixth. Those who are qualified to be fathers in the church will show a father's affection, care, solicitude and untiring devotion to the spiritual welfare of all the family. Seventh. As affectionate and faithful fathers feel a responsibility resting upon them, to do all in their power, by diligent and indefatigable labor, or sacrifice of personal ease and comfort, for the benefit and well-being of their family, so those who are to be regarded as fathers in the house of God will show a corresponding devotedness to the best interests of the children of God, not only to those who have been enabled to come forward and openly profess the religion of Christ, but they will be quick to discover those lambs that may be bleating around the fold, trembling and diffident about making their trials known, giving to such wholesome instruction, comforting words and fatherly instructions. But the particular sense in which the apostle in our text claimed to be a father, is that he had, in Christ Jesus, begotten them through the gospel. We presume it is on this form of expression that the Arminians and means advocate cavil, and on which brother Osburn more especially desires our views. Now the simple question is, In what sense does Paul claim to have begotten the Corinthians through the gospel? If, as Arminian cavilers contend, their regeneration as subjects of saving grace was effected by the efforts of Paul in preaching the gospel to them as a means of grace, it must then follow that they were as christians begotten and born, not of the Spirit, but of Paul, and consequently not the children of God, but of Paul; not heirs of God, but heirs of Paul. Very unlike those spoken of in John i. 12, 13, to whom God gave power to become the sons of God, which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Now let us see the inevitable bearing of this logic. Paul is admitted to be a son of God, for God himself called him when on his way to Damascus, without any intermediate agency. Well, now, admitting the Corinthians were begotten by Paul, what is their relation to God, can it be any nearer than that of grandchildren? If that relation is near enough to suit the means advocates, we are certain that nothing short of the relation of sons of God will suffice to make us joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ to an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away. But Paul himself repudiates the absurdity, and denounces the theory as carnal. "For while one saith, "I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase."—1 Cor. iii. 4–7. Thus we see that the apostle repudiates the idea of his having power to beget children for the Lord. To be the children of God we must be begotten immediately of God himself, as the Scriptures everywhere affirm. It never was so in nature that one could beget children into a relationship to another, how absurd and ridiculous then to talk of Paul's having begotten the Corinthians into the relation of sons and heirs

of God. It is not, it cannot possibly be, that Paul intended to express any such thing. But the question then will return, What did he mean by the words, "For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel"? The answer, to be in harmony with all that Paul himself has said upon the subject, and all that the Scriptures teach, must be that Paul and these Corinthians addressed were in Christ Jesus, not out of him to be brought in by Paul or Apollos, or by anybody else, and in Christ Jesus they sustain certain relations to each other as fellow-members of Christ. The position of Paul in the body, on which he claims the relation of father, is that himself and Apollos were ministers of Christ, called, qualified and sent forth to preach the gospel and to proclaim among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and that under their divine commission they were the ministers by whom these Corinthians believed, not by whom they were redeemed from hell or quickened from death. How did these brethren believe by Paul and Apollos? Let Paul himself explain: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal." How as unto carnal? "Even as unto babes in Christ." Now, as babes in Christ they were already begotten and born of God, or they would not have been babes in Christ. "I have fed you with milk," as a nursing father, in adapting his instructions to their weak condition, so that they could understand his language, comprehend his meaning and digest the food ministered to them. Babes to be susceptible of food, even of milk, must be living babes; even milk cannot be fed to the unbegotten or the unborn babes, nor to any but living children. These, being babes in Christ, are babes in life, for Christ is the life of all his children. If they were not alive, feeding them with milk would not make them alive, or if they were not babes in Christ they could not possibly be fed upon the sincere milk of the word. This Paul has clearly proven in the preceding chapters of this epistle. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." How unnatural it would be for a father to attempt to feed either milk or meat to a dead child, especially when he knew and had declared positively that it could not possibly receive it. But when the children of God are born, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, then, and not until then, can they desire the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby. By the ministry of Paul and Apollos these brethren had been so instructed and fed that they had grown, and were still growing; and as transferring the figurative language to himself and Apollos, he speaks of having been with them from their early infancy, imparting to them that instruction which their heavenly birth and spiritual life had qualified them to receive with joy, and by which they were through Paul's ministry inducted, or figuratively born into the more full understanding of the gospel, the light and liberty of the children of God, who are taught and instructed by and through the gospel ministry. It was in this sense that Paul called Timothy his son, and the beloved John claimed all the scattered saints as his little children. In this application of the figure Paul appealed to the members of the Galatian churches who had received the Spirit, and who had run well, saying, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ

be formed in you," &c.—Gal. iv. 19. If he travailed of them again he had travailed of them before. As an anxious parent earnestly desiring that they might bear the image of Christ, to which end his former travail and labor had been successful, now that error, in the form of legality, meansism and Arminianism had bewitched them, again he travailed in birth, that their former beauty might be restored, and Christ, and not even Moses, be formed in them, so that they might again reflect his lovely image. By his administration of the gospel, which is Christ, to them Christ was reflected or formed understandingly in their hearts, so that in the exhibitions of their faith they presented Christ, and not Moses, or old testament doctrine.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Feb. 1, 1866.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at the home of Mrs. Benjamin Mace, southeast corner Fourth and Chestnut Sts., Colwyn, Pa., George W. Hunt and Mrs. Sarah E. Roberson, both of Lambertville, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Laura M. Davidson Baird, my mother, was born in Trenton, Tenn., March 13th, 1830, died Jan. 16th, 1916. She was married to my father, Gershom Baird, in 1850. To that union were given eight children, all of whom preceded her to the tomb except two brothers, William K. and Eugene Baird, and myself. I feel that I have been blessed in having a mother to go to for comfort and consolation even down to old age; I am the eldest child. Mother was a good, kind neighbor, ever ready to minister to the sick and afflicted, both rich and poor, as long as she was able. She was given to hospitality, her home was a home for the Baptists and many others as long as she was able to keep a home. She had been a widow thirty-three years; my sister Blanche had the care of her twenty-seven years. She died August 11th, 1913, since which time mother had a home with me. She had been unusually well this winter until the first of January, when she was taken sick with la grippe, which weakened her very much. On the 14th she got out of the bed alone and fell on the floor and fractured her hip, and from that time was not able to have her head raised from her pillow. She was kept under the influence of opiates most of the time until Sunday morning, the 16th, I saw she was failing. She told me she could not be here long, and gave instructions about what she wanted as calmly as if she were going on a visit. She requested that Elder P. W. Sawin be sent for to preach the funeral sermon, but it was the coldest weather we had this winter, and there was much sickness everywhere, and knowing brother Sawin was old and frail, we thought it best to put it off awhile. Mother told me the morning before she fell that if it were the Lord's will she felt reconciled to go. She said it would be lonely for me. I cannot express in words the loneliness I feel, but I realize that our loss is her eternal gain, that her spirit has gone to God who gave it; her mortal body has been consigned to the tomb, there to await the resurrection call. Mother joined the Mission Baptists when quite young, and was sincere, thinking she was doing God service. She said she felt that she would give the world, if she could, if father could believe as she did. She was given to see in a few years (I do not remember the date) that she was a condemned sinner in the sight of God; that by the deeds of the law no flesh could be saved. She felt the burden of sin and was deeply troubled a long time. She felt she had committed the unpardonable sin in joining the Mission Baptists, not knowing what she was doing. She could not rest until she wrote them to erase her name from the church book. She told them that she had been blind, and was led by the blind, and she felt it was right to tell them so. She said she could not tell the day or hour that she first felt her sins were pardoned. "I neither saw a bright light nor heard a voice, as many have experienced. All that is vouchsafed to me is a calm trust and hope in the blessed Redeemer, a feeling, Lord, save, I perish, and my love for those I believe to be God's people. She was comforted and strengthened from reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The last year of her life she did not take the same interest in life. I was with her day and night through her illness. Each one of my family did all in their power to make her comfortable.

Written by her daughter,

ALLIE DAVIS.

At sister Davis' request I will add to the above. It was my privilege to baptize sister Baird with her daughter Allie in 1897. She was a devoted Baptist, always ready to receive at her home those of like precious faith. I can never forget my first visit at her home in 1897. The Son of peace was there, and the house was filled with his praises; it was as the dew of Hermon. The little church has lost a precious member. Our sympathies and heartfelt wishes go out for and in behalf of the remaining children.

P. W. SAWIN.

BROTHER **Allison T. Smith,** of Pittsville, Wicomico Co., Md., was born June 9th, 1846, and died Feb. 24th, 1916, aged 69 years, 8 months and 15 days. He was married in June, 1874, to Martha J. Driscoll, who bore him three children, one dying in infancy, two surviving: Mrs. Willard Easham and Allison T. W. Smith, both living in Wicomico County. His first wife died about the year 1886, and August 21st, 1888, he was married the second time, to Earick Anzy Tyer, who survives him, but who had no issue. There are also eight grandchildren. Brother Smith was baptized by the writer in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Forest Grove, Wicomico Co., Md., the second Sunday in October, 1899, witnessing a good profession before many witnesses, and lived a consistent, orderly and honorable life to the end. He was a kind, generous and hospitable man, loving the society of his brethren and loving to entertain them in his home, where they always found a hearty welcome. May the good Lord sustain and comfort our dear sister Smith and the children in their sad bereavement. Brother Smith was afflicted for some years before his death with that dread malady, rheumatism, so that he had to give up farming and retire to the village. His death was caused by pleurisy and pneumonia, from which he suffered about five days, until relieved by death, a joyful release from all the ills of this life, and entered into everlasting rest.

ALSO,

Mrs. Sallie E. Townsend, relict of Mr. Thomas Townsend, died at her home near Salisbury, Md., Feb. 22nd, 1916. Her death came quite suddenly, while about her household duties. She was found by her daughter, sister Mary Townsend, with whom she lived, on entering the room where she had left her but a short while before, to be seriously ill. The doctor was called, but she was beyond the aid of human love and skill; Jesus had called, and the dear saint must go. She was born May 6th, 1834, making her age at the time of her decease 81 years, 9 months and 16 days. Her maiden name was Tilghman, and she was a native of Worcester County, Md., where the most of her long life was spent. In the year 1849 she was married to John Colbourne, who died in 1851, leaving one son, Joshua, who is still living. She was married the second time in 1855, to Thomas Townsend, who died in 1914. The fruit of that union was a son, who died in infancy, and two daughters, twins, sister Martha Staton and Mary Townsend, who survive their mother and are both esteemed members of the church in Salisbury, Md. Sister Townsend was baptized into the membership of the church at Nassaongo about the year 1860, by Elder George W. Slater, continuing her connection with the same until her death, about fifty-six years, and was steadfast in the faith, holding fast the doctrine of God our Savior unto the end. She leaves, besides the three children above mentioned, thirteen grandchildren, seventeen great-grandchildren and a host of other relatives, with the church, to mourn, but they sorrow not as those without hope, for we believe that when the dear Lord Jesus shall appear in the glory of his resurrection power she will also appear with him.

Her funeral was held from the home of her daughter, sister Staton, in Salisbury, Md., Feb. 24th, when the writer tried to speak to the comfort of the bereaved, after which her mortal remains were interred in Parsons Cemetery to await the sound of the last trump. A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., March 28, 1916.

James Rasmus Jones departed this life at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Belle Jones, near Clayton, Panola Co., Texas, Feb. 26th, 1916, at the advanced age of 81 years and 6 months, having been born August 26th, 1834, in Steward County, Ga. He was married April 15th, 1862, to Miss Emily Eliza Raussean. Not long afterward he emigrated to Panola County, Texas. To the union above named there were born nine children, five boys and four girls, eight of whom are still living, and all except two were present at the burial of the father in the Pine Hill Cemetery Feb. 28th, where a short service was conducted by the writer as per request of the deceased, in the presence of a large concourse of relatives and friends. Mr. Jones' wife died June 8th, 1906. Although not a very strong, healthy man physically, Mr. Jones was of naturally strong intellect, energetic in business and honest and faithful as a friend and neighbor. He served for a time in the confederate army during the Civil War. Several years ago he took an active part in politics, being a stanch oldtime democrat. He was elected to the lower house of the Texas legislature from Panola County in the year 1884, and it is a very clear expression of the estimate placed upon him by his people that he served them ten years in that capacity. Many years ago Mr. Jones joined the Masons, but for several years past I understand had not affiliated with them. He also joined the Missionary Baptists many years ago, but could not live agreeably with them, combating them at different times on the introduction of one new and unscriptural innovation after another, so of late years he had had no active affiliation with them. His sympathies were really with the Baptists of the Primitive faith and order, as evidenced by his interest in and attendance upon our meetings whenever and wherever he could. For several years he had not lived convenient to any of our churches, and so could not attend our meetings regularly. When visiting his son-in-law and daughter, brother J. M. Liles and wife, seemingly one of his greatest pleasures was to be with us at our meetings. To the writer and to others when on his last

visit here a few months ago he said: "I would yet offer myself to the church, but I live so inconvenient I could never attend the meetings except when visiting here, and it is probable I will never get back here again." This conversation was after the last regular church meeting he ever attended. I became acquainted with the deceased nearly thirty years ago, and from the beginning I found him interested in the truth, and this interest seemed to grow stronger and stronger as the years passed by. His course through life had ever been honorable and upright, and he left a host of friends behind who ever highly appreciated his many noble traits. He will be sadly missed by his devoted children and grandchildren, as well as by other relatives and friends, but our loss, which is only for a short time, is his eternal gain. Let us not sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. As on earth the saints bear the image of the earthly, so in heaven they shall bear the image of the heavenly. Not until all the bodies of the saints shall be raised up out of their graves, changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus, will the victory over death and the grave be fully manifest. May the Lord give grace and comfort to all who mourn.

H. B. JONES.

WINNSBORO, Texas, March 10, 1916.

Hazel Irene Starr died March 22nd, 1916, aged 9 years, 11 months and 13 days. She was the daughter of Joseph Starr, of Everett, Pa. Her mother died when she was about three years old, and her sister, Inez, the oldest daughter, was given to be a mother to Hazel and Frank. Hazel was never rugged and well, but was blessed of God with a spiritual mind from her early childhood days. The meetings held by the Old School Baptists were her chief delight. She would look forward to them with a hunger and pleasure that none but those risen with Christ could enjoy. I have visited the home many times, and have had many comforts seeing her and her desire to have singing of hymns and talking upon the things of the kingdom of God, and she was always an attentive listener. She would have a few special hymns selected, such as, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord," "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound," "Let thy kingdom, blessed Savior," &c. Any hymns not in accord with sound doctrine were not in favor with her, showing that she sang with the spirit and with the understanding also. At the Sideling Hill meeting in October, 1914, I spoke from the Savior's charge to Peter: "Feed my lambs; feed my sheep." She said going home, "You know I love Elder Fenton, but Elder Lefferts preaches with power, but this time Elder Fenton preached with power." I used the same subject in trying to speak at her funeral on Friday, March 24th.

Some time ago her stepmother was in the hospital, and about the time set for the operation Hazel took the hymn-book and had them sing, "Afflicted saints, to Christ draw near," &c. About a year ago she was very poorly, and had them bring the Bible and hymn-book and some other tokens precious to her and had them by her bedside. She told her grandma she wanted to go to heaven first and wanted to die before Elder Fenton died, for if he died first she felt she could not live. The dear Savior has granted her request and has taken her to himself. When I received a telegram of her departure it was as though the Lord had taken one of my children, but I could not mourn, knowing that she was at rest and delivered from this present evil world. Hazel was taken sick March 1st with gastritis and confined to her bed; although she suffered intensely at times, she never murmured or complained. She would say to those around her, "Let me rest." She was calm and resigned to the last. Truly God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings he hath perfected praise.

May the Lord be very near the dear afflicted family.

J. M. FENTON.

Henry Errett, an aged and respected citizen of Melbourne, Ontario, Canada, died very suddenly at his home Jan. 30th, 1916, in his 76th year. Mr. Errett was a lifelong resident of Melbourne. In the year 1876 he was married to Sarah McIntyre, and settled on the farm where he lived until his death. Mr. Errett was a firm believer in the doctrine of God our Savior, and a faithful attendant of the meetings of the Old School Baptists held in Ekfrid. He was not a professor, but we believe he was a possessor of divine grace, having experienced a hope in his blessed Savior many years ago. His feeling of unworthiness seemed to keep him from coming to the church and asking for a name and place among the people that he loved and whose company he greatly enjoyed. The theme of salvation by grace was very precious to him, and upon this most gracious theme his hope was built. Many times had his hungry soul been fed with the gospel truths which he rejoiced to hear from the called servants of God. The last meeting he was privileged to attend was a season of rejoicing to him, as the Lord gave unto him the hearing ear. The text used at that time was, "Never man spake like this man." Mr. Errett was a kind and devoted husband, a good citizen and a kind neighbor, and was respected by all who knew him. His sudden death cast a gloom over the community in which he lived.

His funeral was held from his late residence and was largely attended, which spoke of the high esteem in which he was held. He leaves to mourn their loss his devoted wife, an adopted daughter, Mrs. McPhail, of Bothwell, two brothers and three

sisters, besides other relatives and friends. The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the sorrowing friends, praying the blessings of God to rest upon them in the hour of sorrow. Burial was in the cemetery near the Ekfrid meetinghouse.

May the sustaining grace of God be ministered to our dear sister in this her great affliction.

J. B. SLAUSON.

APPOINTMENTS.

ELDER George Ruston will, Providence permitting, fill the following appointments:

Kingston, N. Y., Saturday, April 15th, 8 p. m., 58 Smith Ave.; Ashokan, Sunday, April 16th, 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m.; Halcottville, Sunday, April 23rd, 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

F. M. Sparks, Okla., $2.00; C. Stevens, Ark., $1.00; T. J. Ratliff, Ky., $1.00; Mrs. Lou Ratliff, Ky., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Black Rock Church, Butler, Md., beginning on Wednesday, May 17th, 1916. Visitors will be met at Cockeysville, N. C. R. R., on Tuesday p. m. at 4 o'clock. This association in her circular of last year says: "We believe that just as the man Christ Jesus died and rose again, so all his redeemed shall come up from the dead, soul, spirit and body, in the image of their glorified Lord." We still hold this precious Bible doctrine, and cordially invite all those of like precious faith to meet with us at the above named time and place.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Moderator.

FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., to begin on Wednesday, May 24th, 1916, and continue three days. Those coming from Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore will come via B. & O. R. R. to Newark, Del., on Wednesday morning. Train leaves Philadelphia, Twenty-fourth and Chestnut Sts., at 7:45 a. m., and Baltimore, Mt. Royal station, at 8:25 a. m. Those coming on the Delaware Division of the P. B. & W. will take train that leaves Delmar at 6:52 a. m. Wednesday and get tickets for Newark, Del., changing cars at Porter. Conveyances will be at stations to convey all to place of worship. Ministers and brethren and all lovers of truth of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us and are welcome to our homes.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, 1315 Columbia Avenue (Park Avenue Hall) PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Liberty Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, of Los Angeles, Cal., meets every first and third Sunday in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., at 42nd and Moneta Ave., and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal.

W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor.

B. C. RICE, Clerk.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 84. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1916. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SACRIFICE VERSUS SUBSTITUTE.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—To-day I am sixty-three years old, and I have been looking over an old paper which I wrote in December, 1901. Now I will copy it and send it to you for the SIGNS, if it meets your approval, as a birthday gift to the household of faith, who are commanded to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. The following is the letter.

As a substitute one acts for or in the place of another. As a sacrifice one does that which has become his own by imputation, though the cause of the sacrifice was by another. In substitution no good comes to the principal, only for the time being. In a sacrificial offering the cause for which the sacrifice was made is forever removed. The substitute does no more than the principal might do. He cannot exist until he for whom he is a substitute is first chosen or appointed to do that which the substitute must do in his stead. If the substitute becomes responsible to act for himself he for whom he is a substitute again becomes responsible to act for himself, therefore he was not free, only while his substitute was under the law for him; after the substitute becomes amenable to the law for himself he can no longer set free the one for whom he was a substitute. One drafted to go to war may employ a substitute, but as soon as he becomes of proper age, or by any means becomes subject to the war, the one who was first drafted stands subject to be drafted again, and must go and serve for himself, or get another substitute to act for him. The doctrine of substitution does not strike me as being sufficient for the salvation of sinners. It is like a bridge which does not reach either shore, and therefore travelers cannot get on it, and if one is on it he cannot get off of it. If Christ did not exist as our Savior prior to our being sinners then substitution is true, but if he did so exist I cannot understand substitution to be any stronger or better than the Arminian expression that he has made the way passable and possible. According to the Scriptures, and according to our doctrine (which is not ours, but God's, who sent us), Christ Jesus was our Savior before we were sinners, we were chosen in him before the world began, and therefore before we ever ex-

isted as sinners. When we were chosen in him unto salvation he was chosen and appointed to save us. The Mosaic law never required the life of the transgressor as an atoning sacrifice, but on every occasion it prescribed just what the sacrifice should be. If one had sinned, and the priest had slain him for his sins, and burned him upon the altar, it would have been murder and sacrilege in that priest, and he himself must die for his sins. The law pointed out just what the sacrifice should be, therefore the sacrifice was appointed before the sin was committed, and nothing could be substituted in its stead. The offering was ordained before the sin for which it was to atone was committed, therefore it was a sacrifice. Christ Jesus was appointed to die for sinners before there were any sinners. Those for whom he should die were chosen in him before they were formed in Adam. The election was in Christ, and not in Adam. As children of Adam they are children of wrath even as others. As being chosen in Christ they are the beloved of the Father. For this cause he gave his Son a sacrifice for them. In this sacrifice an atonement was made, and they are reconciled to God. There is no priesthood in substitution, but there must be a priesthood in an acceptable sacrifice. An Israelite comes to offer for his sins according to the law; he does not approach the altar and offer that offering, he turns it over to the priest, and he offers it for the sinner. Though he brings it himself I cannot understand it to be a substitute for him, for the law never appointed him to do what this sacrifice is to do for him. A substitute does what we were chosen to do, a sacrifice does for us what we cannot do for ourselves. We did not bring the Lord Jesus, he came of himself, of his own accord. There never was any commandment given to slay the sheep of this Shepherd, and then he came in and took the fatal blow. He took the responsibility, and was the appointed sacrifice. Aaron could not do this. What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his only Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. Christ the Lord is the Priest who offered this sacrifice. In him are combined both the priesthoods: that of blessing and that of offering. He blessed his people and gave himself for them a sacrifice of sweet-smelling savor. In his sacrificial death he paid all the redemption price, and set sinners free. They cannot become subject to the law any more, because this Sacrifice, High Priest and acceptable year of the Lord continues forever, therefore no charge can ever be brought against one of them, because by him they are justified before God. As a Sacrifice and High Priest he liveth forever. The atoning sacrifice which was offered once every year had to be offered by the high priest alone, no other one dared to go beyond the veil into the holy of holies. Jesus, the great High Priest of our profession, is the only one who could make this everlasting atonement; he, and he only, was appointed unto this end by the Father, and it was written in the will concerning him, and therefore it behooved him thus to die. No sinner living or dead could make an atonement for himself, therefore Christ did not come to do for us what we might have done or might now do for ourselves, as a substitute would do, but he came to do that which we could not do, and to make a reconciliation that we could not make. O what a blessed Sacrifice and High Priest is our Lord! We were mystically and virtually in him, chosen in him before the world began,

and now he has died that that sacred and blessed unity should be revealed in us. Thus the blessed Holy Spirit reveals in our hearts that which the blessed Jesus did for us on the tree. This is the work which was appointed unto him. He has done it. As our Lord was appointed to redeem his elect, and save them from their sins, even so the Holy Spirit was appointed to take of these things of Jesus and show them unto us, and to bring all things to our remembrance whatsoever our Lord has said unto us. As Jesus was faithful in all his work, even so the Holy Spirit is faithful in all his work, and what he is appointed to do he will do in his own good time and way, and none can hinder him any more than they could hinder the sacrifice offered by our blessed Jesus. As all opposition to him was appointed by the Father, to the sure accomplishment of that certain end unto which he was appointed, even so all opposition to the workings of the Holy Spirit in that which was appointed for him to do shall only work to the sure accomplishment of the word of God by him. We are commanded to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and in so doing no one can justly accuse us of wrong. Our God has done all for us. How glorious he is to provide salvation for us in such a sure way that the powers of hell and earth shall not prevail against the children of God though they are ever so weak. They are ever before the God of the humble and the contrite. Through the intercession of our Lord and High Priest the living streams of mercy are poured forth in our hearts. Thus the mourning sigh is heard and the penitential tear is gathered up, and we praise the Lord.

In hope and love,

L. H. HARDY.

ATLANTIC, N. C., March 17, 1916.

DAYTON, Ohio, March 8, 1916.

ELDER LEFFERTS:—No doubt, dear brother, you will be surprised to receive a letter from me. I am to you a stranger in the flesh, but I hope not a stranger spiritually. For a long time I have desired to write you, but an impression of inability to interest you as I wish to has caused me to hesitate. However, I shall make the attempt. Since you have been on the editorial staff in the publication of the dear old SIGNS assisting Elder Ker, I must say to you that I greatly enjoy reading your editorials, as well as those of Elder Ker. I, like many others who are subscribers to the SIGNS, felt greatly distressed after the death of Elder Chick in regard to who the assistant editor of the SIGNS would be. How relieved I felt after reading your editorials, feeling the dear Lord had raised up one who is so able as yourself, and I hope our gracious Master will prolong your life for many years yet to come to wield your pen so ably in the cause of Christ.

For several days a passage of Scripture has been in mind, which reads thus: "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."—Mark v. 19. I have many times felt that I would be glad to leave on record some things which I sometimes hope have been the dear Lord's dealings with me. I must say that I cannot recall the time when I did not believe that the Lord was all-wise and all-powerful, and that he knew the end from the beginning, so it is not hard, dear brother, for me to believe in predestination of all things. From my earliest recollection I have had serious thoughts concerning my future state, and I seemed to fully realize that if I were to die in my sad and sinful condition I would be forever debarred from the presence of the

dear Savior, and from all that is good. Many, many times I would resort to some secluded place when I was quite young, there to weep and mourn on account of my guilt and the great distance that I seemed to be from the dear Master. O the deep anguish of soul, language is inadequate for me to describe it. Soon after, I was stricken down with that dread disease, typhoid fever. I was then in my twenty-first year, and for several weeks I hovered between life and death, and the attending physician gave my dear, good, christian father little hope of my recovery. Our sainted mother had passed to the home of many mansions when I was but twelve years of age. During my severe illness I felt that if I should not recover I would be forever banished from the presence of the dear Redeemer, and to me this seemed more than I could bear, and, too, never more to be permitted to see my dear mother in the beautiful city of Zion walking with Jesus and all the redeemed. How I earnestly prayed to God to have mercy on my soul, for I felt that I was justly condemned. I sat up in bed and asked my dear Old Baptist sister, a sister in the flesh, if she would go to our dear father's bedroom and ask him if he would come and pray to the dear Lord to have mercy on poor me. He gladly arose from his bed and came to my sick-room and prayed earnestly to the Lord to care for my soul. It was just at the dawn of morning then, and when I came to myself it seemed to me that everything I saw was praising God, and my burden was gone. I felt joyous and happy, and O how my kind father, as well as my sister, who had long been members of the Old School Baptist Church, rejoiced with me, and assisted in singing that ever sweet and precious hymn to me, beginning with these words: "He has taken my feet out of the mire and the clay and has placed them on the Rock, Christ Jesus." Since my earliest remembrance my dear parents were subscribers to the SIGNS, and I have been a reader of the paper for many years. Soon after my marriage, thirty-nine years ago, I subscribed for it, and one year after my marriage to Dr. Keller I joined the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church at Tapscott, Warren Co., Ohio, and yet have a name among the dear saints, as I deem them. How glad I am that we worship and revere a God, dear brother Lefferts, who doeth as he pleases in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, whether we like it or not. Therefore I have no evidence that one has been reconciled to the ways of God the Father by the blood of Christ, the everlasting covenant, who still says, If God does this or that, or if he does not do this or that, he is unjust, and is the author of sin. O how glad I feel to know that Jesus said to his disciples when he sent them to preach salvation in his name, If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. What a number of so-called ministers are laboring to explain away the true meaning of the Scriptures, and how sweet and precious to know that "no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son." I feel safe in trusting all to the just and impartial Savior, and I know that God's people have no need to be at a loss to know why they are saved from sin and condemnation. The reason is plain to me: "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quick-

ened us together with Christ." I feel well assured that he will give us grace according to our day and our trials, for he told dear old Paul that his grace was sufficient for him. Our God never makes a mistake, he works and none can hinder, he opens and none can shut, he shuts and none can open. He says, I am God, and there is none else. He declares the end from the beginning, saying his counsel shall stand and he will do all his pleasure. He is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. This surely ought to be very encouraging to the children of the most high God. He never makes a mistake. Christ said, Without me ye can do nothing. Paul said, Through God we can do all things. Blessed and soul-cheering words. Can it be that I have had the precious blood applied to my sinsick soul? Was its sin-cleansing power ordained before the foundation of the world to save my poor soul from everlasting punishment? I can only answer by the witness I trust I feel within, the evidence I have that his Holy Spirit communes with my spirit, the love I have for his people, the hating of what I once loved, the loving of what I once hated. But over all is the felt sense of his pardoning love as it comes unmerited and unbidden into my heart, causing me to cry with rapture, My Lord and my God; and in the midst of darkness and doubt, and fiery trials within and without, to say, I know that my Redeemer liveth. How can our hope be false which is stayed on the cross of Christ, when the true language of the soul is: "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling"?

Please pardon me for writing such a long epistle, for that is one of the many mistakes I make.

I am unworthily your sister, if one at all,

LIDA KELLER.

HAVANA, Kansas, Jan. 21, 1916.

DEAR SISTER MCKINNEY:—As Mary is writing to you, I feel like adding a mite upon that subject that should be foremost in the thoughts of the believer in Christ: The faith that is professed. True faith, you realize, is circumscribed within the narrow confines of God's counsel. It is faith that does not change by the fluctuatory thrones of men. He has declared, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," then how can man or Satan destroy or affect the pleasure of God? Some think they can change the mind of Jehovah by earnest pleading or demand, but he declares, I am the Lord, and change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. God never changes, he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. Man, by his creation is a creature of change, he cannot direct his own footsteps, he cannot be certain of his future, but must conform to a power higher than he. God, the Creator, knows the end from the beginning, and every event intervening between these extremes are alike known to him and under his providence. How wonderful is the will of God, how vast its extent, how immeasurable its power. How greatly the Lord humbled Job when he asked him, Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? He that reproveth the Lord, let him answer it. Then Job answered the Lord, and said, Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken; but I will not answer, yea, twice; but I will proceed no further. How forcibly has that thought come into the experience of God's humble little one. Once, in his strength, he thought he could demand of God and he would answer him, but when he was made to feel the majesty of God, and view his

lofty habitation, and his great mystery, he became very humble and weak, wretched and undone. He could only make a plaintive cry for mercy; he felt so deeply enshrouded in sin that mercy he could not expect. He finds himself in Job's condition, and confesses, I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eyes seeth thee, therefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes. What deep anguish, what bitter repentance. The Lord lifted up Job, as the psalmist wrote in such soul-cheering language, "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth." Paul in the first three chapters of Ephesians unfolded to the church the distinctive doctrine upon which the church is built. He has welded together a golden chain of spiritual truth, every link necessary for the faith of the church. He showed how God the Father blessed them according as he had chosen them in Christ before the foundation of the world, and predestinated them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, &c. In the second chapter he tells how those predestinated ones are quickened from their dead state to a life in Christ. Then he informs them that all these blessings, choice, predestination and quickening, are the attributes of God's grace. By grace ye are saved.

I feel like dropping here a thought which the popular religions will not accept. The Old School Baptist Church is composed of the only true believers of the doctrine of grace. Paul took up the last three chapters of this wonderful book and wrote fully upon the relation of the believers to God and to each other, and wrought out very clearly those duties which if followed will keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Paul was a prisoner in Rome when he wrote this epistle. He penned every word with his great mind filled with deep anxiety for the welfare of the church he loved so well, and for which he sacrificed his liberty, and at last his life. "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Are the Baptists of our country endeavoring to follow the great apostle's advice? If not, why not? He commences the fifth chapter with this fatherly plea: "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us." How greatly he magnified that little word "love" in all his epistles. His reflection upon the relation of husband and wife should be read and studied with deep reverence. The sixth chapter commences with a lovely thought: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right." He gives the duties of the parents toward their children, servants to their masters, and masters to their servants. Then his mind embraces the whole church with, Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Again, he writes, Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand. He closes the epistle with such a loving tribute: "Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."

T. R. PITTMAN.

HAVANA, Kansas.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—The trend of the world's religious thought is moving forward towards a great unity of action with all religious creeds. Will not such a consummation be a fulfillment of prophecy? "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life [of the Lamb slain] from the foundation of the world." "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and spake as a dragon." Lutheranism in Germany, and Protestantism in England, including all their laterals throughout the earth. "And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed." These sayings will all be fulfilled to the letter. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. I placed brackets after the words "life" and "slain." I do not think the words "of the lamb slain" imply that he was slain from the foundation of the world, but mere words of explanation parenthetically used to give the name or title of the book. "Whose names are not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world" conveys the meaning of the language. Revelation xvii. 8, conveys the same meaning: "And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world." I have noticed many of our ministers use these words as Scripture: He stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. I have not been able to find these words in Scripture. In Revelation v. 6, we find these words: "And in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb, as it had been slain," &c. That was Jesus, who had suffered death upon the Roman cross. "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God," &c.

I received a letter from Elder Vail last week. He urges me to visit the eastern associations this spring, and I feel it would be a goodly trip. I would like to visit the old Sideling Hill Church, in Pennsylvania. My father united with that church about 1830. Shortly after he moved to Ohio. His father and mother, brothers and sisters, are buried there. It seems that it would be a great spiritual delight to meet face to face those whose names and writings are so familiar through the SIGNS. I was seventy-three years old March 15th, 1916. There are very few Baptists in Kansas, and very little preaching. I am glad that Elder Ker and you, in the management and course of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, meet with such strong approval from the many subscribers. You are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.

Your weak brother,

T. R. PITTMAN.

HEBRON, Ohio, March 23, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—Several have time after time expressed a desire for me to write my experience and send it to the SIGNS, and all winter it has clung to me, and I have been just like a naughty child, feeling it my duty to do so, yet running away from that duty day after day, bearing the chastisement. But what could I do? I dwell so much in the dark that there are but few days when my hope seems sure and steadfast, and even now as I write I feel like I would push my pen and paper away, so little does it seem, yet feel that I never can be able to tell from the depths of my heart what the

Lord has done for me, and how he has kept me all these years, and what a loving Father he has been to me, a poor, sinful worm of the dust.

"When I wandered on in the darkness
Not a ray of light could I see,
And the thought filled my heart with sadness,
There's no hope for a sinner like me."

Still I know that even when I was a child I feared him and longed to do something to make myself pleasing in his sight. I do not care to dwell on my childhood days, they were full of disappointments and sorrow, for when I was twelve years old fever and a severe illness affected my hearing, which left me entirely deaf (after being much under the care of renowned doctors, suffering everything) at the age of eighteen years, and it was at about that time that a feeling came over me, I know not what, and for ten years or more I was in the hands of the Potter, to be moulded for the Master's use. Dark and long did the angry clouds hover over me, and I longed for what I could not have, until it seemed I would sink into the depths of despair. Mother was a member of the Old School Baptist Church, and she always took us children with her if possible. We always entertained at the time of the meetings, and I loved to go there. Other denominations were of no interest to me, except the pleasure I received from being with the young people, and the more I saw of them the less I thought of them. I was prayed over, of course, and they used every means they could to get me to join them. I remember one woman said, "Come, we will make it as easy as we can for you," which caused me to shrink from them more than ever; so time passed. School, music, for which I had much love, the voices of the loved ones drifted away, and my heart became hardened in seeing others enjoying the things I so desired to enjoy. But I was all the time, unbeknown to me then, learning the lessons of life which would give me so many peaceful hours later on, and then, too, I was mastering lip reading without a teacher, in my eagerness to know what was going on around me, grieving my heart out night and day over the sorrows of my young life. How I longed to die, and then a great fear came over me when I thought of death. Thus I retired one night, bathing my pillow with the tears that would come for my sinfulness, as I had often done before, when I fell into a troubled sleep, and I dreamed of being alone in the darkness, sitting on a large rock; tall mountains loomed up all around me, and the stillness which hovered over me was almost unbearable, when to my dulled ears came such sweet singing, and, "There's a light in the window for thee," and such a beautiful ray of light shone down upon me that I raised my eyes to see from whence it came, and not in this life do I ever expect to be able to tell fully of the beautiful sight which met my view, for it seemed that the gates of heaven were thrown open, and the angels of God were ascending with their sweet carol. Nearer and nearer they came, I endeavored to raise my hands and go to them, and in my eagerness to do so I awoke, finding myself, much to my disappointment, still in this world, but surrounded by such sweet hope that never again have I been able to get back to where I was before the visions in my dreams.

"I then fully trusted in Jesus,
And O what a joy came to me,
My heart was filled with his praises
For saving a poor sinner like me."

I then wanted to sing all the day long, for Jesus was my joy and my song. I had read my Bible, which mother had given me when I was a child, but it had always seemed as a sealed book, now it

was full of precious promises, and it was then deeply underscored, and the things that I once hated I then loved, and the things I had loved I then hated. The Psalms were especially beautiful to me, and I could see the works of the Creator in every living thing, and all nature seemed to be singing praises unto the Lord. I shall never forget when, soon after, walking out on a spring morning, how beautiful everything seemed to me, every bud and flower, even the tiny blades of grass, seemed to tell me the great mystery of the Creator of all. My heart beat in rapture, until it seemed it would burst in this new joy unfolded unto me. At about that time there came another joy into my life, for I met my dear husband to be, Elder Frank McGlade, and as he came to be pastor of our home church, and was at our home often, we were much thrown together, as I was ever eager to understand more fully the meaning of the Scripture, never dreaming our friendship would ripen into love. I fought against it with my whole heart, but I was as powerless in this as I was in the other. For some time I had longed to be baptized and taken into the church, but no, there was a mistake, I could not ask a home in the dear Old Baptist Church. But where could I go? not to the other places. Whenever I would see a body of water a longing would come over me to be baptized, but the time had not come, and did not until a few months before my marriage. I had no thought of going before the church on that day, but was lifted up by that unseen power which took me forward at the close of the services on Sunday, and I was received for baptism. That night again did the dream repeat itself with still more power, and I could scarcely wait until the time for me to be baptized on the day following, which was twenty-two years ago last November. The day was cold, ice was on the water, yet it wrapped itself around and around me like silken folds, I felt the glorious light surround me again, and I was carried away from all the cares and sorrows of this world into that gate which I saw in my dreams. Words cannot express the sweet comfort and peace of a soul in its earliest love. I understood then fully that the Lord had finished his work in me, and that we have no more power in the second birth than we have in the first, when we were born into the world, and no more choice. If I have been born again, if I am a child of God, it is not by anything I have done, but it is by the grace of God that I am what I am, for,

> "Lord, now indeed I find
> Thy power, and thine alone,
> Can change the leopard's spots,
> And melt this heart of stone."

After seventeen years of happiness together my dear husband was called to his eternal home. His sickness and death were such a beautiful triumph in the Lord that I longed to go with him, and there to dwell in that bright city. His deep trust in the Lord caused all fear of death and the grave to melt away from me, and I was like one who would wrap the folds around him and lie down to pleasant dreams. When the cord of life dissolved us it was hard to live on, hard indeed to say, Thy will, O Lord, not mine, be done; but in all these years he has never forsaken me entirely, and, like David of old, would I say, The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, and I would not hide his righteousness in my heart. I would declare thy faithfulness and thy salvation. Truly my lines have fallen in pleasant places. I would rather be a door-keeper in the house of my Lord, than dwell in the tents of the wicked.

Who am I that I should murmur? I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.

To the many friends far and near, many whom I have never seen in this life, yet am drawn to with that cord of love which cannot be dissolved, I would send greetings, and would say that I find much comfort in our dear son, Hugh Boyd. How good the Lord was to give him to me; he is now fourteen years old, much like his father, and loves his father's church. How I pray every day of my life that the Lord will keep him, and protect his tender life from the snares of this world. I feel that this has given much of my life's history also, but they seem both to be so wrapped together that I cannot well separate them. Though poor in this world's goods, that which fadeth away with our earthly life, I feel myself rich in that which can neither be bought nor sold, therefore I would not murmur. Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and not evil? God forbid. I desire that I all the days of my life be kept low at the Master's feet, and ever be submissive to his will. May he keep us, dear readers, each and every one, rich in faith; and not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake.

"Ye are traveling home to God
In the way our fathers trod,
They are happy now, and ye
Soon their happiness shall see.

Lord submissive make us go,
Gladly leaving all below,
Only thou our leader be
And we still will follow thee."

(MRS.) FRANK McGLADE.

SALISBURY, Md., Feb. 8, 1916.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER:—I was truly glad to receive a line from you yesterday, for it had been a long time since I had gotten a letter from you, and glad to know you still had us in remembrance, even as little as I am. I often think of you, and during my long silence felt that I would be glad if I could write to Elder Vail again, but O how little I feel, and how far I have been from being able to write anything that could possibly be of any benefit to you or any of God's believing children. There is one thing I feel that I have greatly desired for more than forty years, that is, that I might be of some use in the kingdom of God's dear Son, if I am really a subject of such kingdom, but all these years I find myself to be the same weak, dependent creature that I was in the beginning, and I am glad that it is so, because by this knowledge we are enabled to deal justly, by ascribing honor to whom honor is due.

Brother Vail, you say it did you good to read my letter in the February 1st number of the SIGNS. I am glad that it did. I am glad if what I might be enabled to write or do, even in so small a way, would be of any benefit to even one of God's dear children, but you know as well as I do where to place all of the credit; you know from whom all our fruit is found. I would be glad to see you again. Wife and I often speak of you. I sometimes hope that we may yet some day be enabled to do some visiting in the north country, as we feel that we would like to see all of our brethren in New York. Our membership is still with the Ebenezer Church, New York city. If it were only the Lord's will for us to attend the Warwick Association what a rich treat we feel that would be to us. I

wanted to be there last year, but circumstances would not permit, yet I sometimes feel to have hope that it may be so we can yet be privileged to come. I know that my God has blessed me in the past, and there are times when I am made to trust that in his infinite goodness and mercy he will cause that I shall be brought to see the fulfillment of what I have been made to look for in the future, although at times all is dark, yes, exceedingly dark, and I am made to fear that surely I must be all wrong, but again I am made to hope, and it seems that I cannot believe but that where the God of all grace has given hope in the heart, in due time such will be realized. God is faithful, and will surely bring to pass that which he has purposed, although we often become weary waiting.

I must bring this rambling letter to a close. Wife joins me in love to yourself and sister Vail. Write to us when you can; it always does us good to hear from you.

Your brother,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

NEWBURY, Ont., Feb. 22, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—I was pleased to hear from you again, and that you had not forgotten your unworthy friends in Canada. I do not agree with you when you think the Lord's purpose in bringing you to Canada was to show the people here what a poor, vile, sinful creature Elder Vail is, but rather that you would see us as we are, possessing those same things, only in a much greater degree, but that is wherein our fellowship lies, for in us, that is, in our flesh, there dwelleth no good thing. As for me, I can see nothing within but all sorts of creeping things. I often think that if the brethren and sisters knew me as I know myself they would have no place for me in the church. If I ever am saved, it must be through the love and mercy of Christ, who is the friend of sinners, for I am too weak to do any good in this world, and often feel I am a stumbling-block; when I would do good, evil is present with me, though often there come to me sweet and precious promises of God's grace, mercy and longsuffering towards us. A year ago last October we were called to pass through a sore trial in the loss of our dear daughter Clara, the one who was at home with us. She never was a strong girl, and was a great sufferer from a severe pain, caused by tubercular peritonitis. Her last illness only lasted two weeks, and though we sadly miss her there is comfort in the thought that she had at last found rest. A couple of weeks afterward my husband was laid up with blood poisoning, which ultimately settled in his leg, where in his youth he had an attack of bone trouble, and has not been able to do anything since. He is able to go about the house on crutches, but does not go out. He is very patient and cheerful, has found the only Source of true comfort, and his faith and patience are often a rebuke to me. We have been visited by preachers of different denominations, but we often long to see one of our own faith and order, and have often thought of asking Elder Slauson to come and visit us, but as I never had the pleasure of meeting him I have not had the courage to ask him, but perhaps something will bring him this way so I can meet him.

Remember us to Mrs. Vail and the family, and best regards for yourself.

Yours unworthily,

(MRS.) JOSEPH WATTERWORTH.

EASTON, Pa., Feb. 29, 1916.

DEAR ELDER VAIL:—I have been thinking about you much lately, and how in years gone by we were in each other's company a great deal, but now it seems I do not see you very often. My health is very poor, I have rheumatism so much I can hardly get around to do my work. I cannot walk much, so that is the reason I do not get where I can see you or hear you preach, and it is a great trial to me. I have always had the blessed privilege of going to our associations, and to Hopewell to our meetings, but do not get there very often any more. I am all alone now, as all the children are married and Mr. Sharp is away all day, so I say we are where we first started out on our life journey; they all have gone out from the home nest to make homes for themselves, and they are all getting along nicely, for which I feel thankful. Well, Elder Vail, how are you both in body and mind? I wish I could write something that would be worth reading, but I feel so barren of all good things that it will be like the writer, no good at all. I have been thinking about the law, to whom the law was given, and who is under that law, and so on. We know that Christ is the end of the law to all them that believe and are saved.

How sad to recall the deaths of so many of our number. Sister Mary Fisher is gone, one whom I loved to be with, and she and I had traveled together quite a number of years. She died very suddenly, was just ready to come to see me and make a visit; but she is far better off. Our loss is her gain; she has gone to be forever with her Lord, whom she loved and praised here on earth, but her memory still lingers with us. Dear Elder Chick, how I do miss him and his letters of comfort. I wondered who would fill his place, but the Lord is good, and Elder Lefferts was chosen, and he is surely an able writer. How sad we all felt when Elder Ker wrote the article, "Alone;" my heart went out in love and fellowship to him. The SIGNS comes to us laden with good tidings from good writers, and I always look forward to its coming, and to see the names of those we know and love for the truth's sake. Amidst all our trials, afflictions and temptations of this world may we look to Him who is able and will do (not may do) all his good pleasure in heaven and on earth, and at last bring all his redeemed home to glory when done with the cares of this world; but O the piercing thought, Am I one of the redeemed? It cannot be. Why then all this doubting and stumbling along, sometimes so low that I almost give up, and think I am certainly a castaway, and a castaway I deserve to be, and when I look within and see what a vile sinner I am, I am nothing, and less than nothing, and with Paul exclaim, I am the chief of sinners, and I have to cry daily, Lord, have mercy on me. I recall one time while talking to dear old Elder Meredith he said his prayer was, Lord, remember a poor sinner like me, and he sang a hymn that I will never forget, with the tears running down his cheeks, and that was at the last of every verse: Lord, remember a poor sinner like me. Yes, me, I said, I am the one. Do you, Elder, ever get so cold and rebellious that you do not know who you are, or where you are, or where you are going, and so miserable that you wonder why you were ever born again? And then again we have to be whipped, and pretty hard, too, sometimes, for our sinful thoughts and actions, and then we feel sorry, and with tears exclaim, Lord, forgive.

Now, Elder, I have written along as

my mind has led me, and if you get time write me and I will be glad to hear from you.

Yours in love and fellowship,

MRS. SHARP.

GALION, Ohio, March 5, 1916.

DEAR ELDER VAIL:—Your kind and comforting letter was received several days ago, and I will now try to answer. I was not only glad to receive your kind and comforting letter, but surprised, for I had been waiting and looking for a letter from you ever since I wrote you last, several years ago, and had come to the conclusion that you had seen I was on the wrong track, and did not want anything to do with me, and I would not blame you, for I find the worst enemy I have is myself, and my greatest trouble is in trying to get away from self, and how often I think that if the brethren knew me as I know myself they surely could have no love or fellowship for me. Dear brother, I have always had a love for you I never could explain, having never met you, and I have always enjoyed your writings in the SIGNS, and your letters to me, and though they ceased, I still hoped one would yet come, and you cannot imagine how glad I was when I opened the letter and saw it was from you. I assure you I have enjoyed it, and hope you will see fit to write again, also to write for the SIGNS. In regard to my writing for the SIGNS, I do not feel that I have anything to write, and always fear I will crowd out something that would be of interest. I just finished reading the March 1st SIGNS, and it was surely a wonderful paper to me. I enjoyed every article in it, and for the first time in two years or more the tears came so I had to stop several times. I have been for over two years shut up under a thick cloud of darkness, so thick it could be felt, trying to find some excuse for trying to preach and trying to stop; trying to find some reason for the hope I have, when it seems everything in me, every move, every word, every act, is contrary to the fruit of the good tree, and sometimes on the way to my appointments I wonder why I am allowed to go, when I am such a miserable sinner and such a failure in everything, and I have to say, Lord, I do not know; but there is one I cannot get away from, and that is the Lord; he rules all things, not only the good ones, but even wicked men and devils must go aud come at his command, and everything we receive comes as a free and unmerited favor, both natural and spiritual, and are all embraced in the all good and perfect gifts which come down from the Father of lights, with whom is neither variableness nor the shadow of turning. This I did not know at one time, and how and just when the knowledge came I never could tell, but we know we see things just the opposite from what we did once, and this a great many times is the only reason I can give that I can hope I know anything at all.

I will bring this letter to a close. With love to yourself and all inquiring friends, and hoping to hear from you again soon, I am, as ever, your unworthy brother in hope, if not deceived,

C. E. JACKSON.

[THE foregoing letters were sent to us for publication by Elder D. M. Vail, and we gladly give them to our readers.—ED.]

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 25, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The subject of redemption has been somewhat upon my mind, and I suppose it is because of reading after the brethren in what they have presented for our comfort and edification. There is comfort also in viewing this wonderful part of the Savior's work, which he came to do, as honorable and glorious. There is also comfort to realize the effect of the work of redemption in our soul's experience, to know what we are redeemed from, and what we are redeemed unto, and what our hope is of redemption as it shall be finally consummated. Our hope is in Christ as our redemption, for the apostle says he is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. The word "redemption" implies something redeemed, and I never want to lose sight of the fact that it is the sinner redeemed, and is the subject of redemption, soul, body and spirit, for we know unless this be so there is not complete redemption. The right of redemption is in the one who has the proper relation to redeem, he must be owner of the object redeemed. In this we see the way of God regarding our Lord and Savior and his people. There never was a time that they were not his people, having been chosen in him before the foundation of the world. When Adam transgressed, and death passed upon all his posterity (for that all have sinned), there were those whom God had afore prepared unto glory by redemption that is in Christ Jesus; as they were his before transgression and death, he had the right to redeem them, and says, I came to seek and to save that which was lost. All are dead in trespasses and in sins that ever proceeded from Adam, and only those chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world are the subjects of redemption. Jesus is the resurrection and life of his people, and none other; his redemption accomplishes their deliverance from under the law, from death and the power of the grave, and redeems them unto God, so they are made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, have a new song in their mouth, even praise unto God. So we realize what we are redeemed from and what we are redeemed unto. "When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" The apostle is asking these questions. It seems to me here is where we realize the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, that it is precious, while we have now the earnest of the inheritance, and John says, Beloved, now are we the sons of God. We are still waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. Also Paul says, "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies [the subject of redemption] by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." "Bodies," in the plural, in this declaration, showing that God is the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. God is the Father of every one quickened from the dead. "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Being risen with Christ, we seek those things which are above (above the law), where Christ sitteth upon the right hand of God. The redemption that is in Christ Jesus accomplishes this in his subjects

While we realize this is the earnest of it, we still hope for the full consummation, when we shall be delivered from the things of time, and know the fullness of the redemption that yet awaits us.

Submitted for the comfort of those who love the appearing of our Lord and Savior.

J. M. FENTON.

BERRY, Ala., March 30, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As my subscription is about due, I will send you money order for two dollars for another year. I do not want to be without the paper as long as I live and can pay for it. This may be the last subscription I shall ever send, for I am getting old and am near my journey's end, and know that my departure is close at hand. How it will be with me when that time comes I cannot tell, but I have a faint hope that all will be well with me, for He says, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. I will be with thee in six troubles, and in the seventh I will not forsake thee. O, can it be that I am one of those to whom this promise is given? If so, all will be well with me when I come to pass from earth in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began. If that life was not given me in Christ at that time, I am lost forever, but all that the Father gave him shall come to him. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish. Then he has given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as he has given him. Then as many as were ordained to eternal life believed; just that many and no more.

I will send you a letter I received from sister Edwards, and if you think it would be good to publish in the SIGNS you can do so. May the Lord bless you and the editors of the SIGNS, and enable you all to earnestly contend for the faith as it is Christ.

Yours in a faint hope,

S. J. NORRIS.

DELCHAMPS, Ala., Dec. 13, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER NORRIS:—Your letter came as a glad surprise to me. I have thought of you often since I have been down here, and last night I lay awake thinking of you and of the good sermons I had heard you preach, and this morning I remarked that I wished I knew your address, that I might write to you; so when the train came and brought your letter I said, Surely God moves in a mysterious way. You do not know how your remembrance of me, who am the very least of the least, cheered my poor, fainting heart and caused me to take fresh courage and press onward. My dear brother, I have been much cast down of late, and felt sometimes that I did not have a friend, and almost that my heavenly Father had forsaken me. Sometimes I feel to be humbled in the very dust of humility, and at other times I feel to rebel, and I have often wondered if there is any one like me. Dear brother, you all can never know how blessed you are in the companionship of each other until you are cast off in a lonely desert, away from all the flock, and feel forsaken and alone. Still we sorrow not as those who have no hope, for we have His blessed promise that he will never leave nor forsake us, and I do so want to be submissive at all times, and to feel that underneath are the everlasting arms, but I find myself daily complaining and wishing it was otherwise. I feel sometimes that I am passing through the fiery furnace, and need the prayers of all the dear children of God that I may come forth

with no smell of fire on my garments. There is so much of the flesh about me, and I find the will to do is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I know not. We are about sixty miles from the nearest church, and not one of our faith anywhere near, and I find it hard to reconcile myself to giving up my church and all the good people I love so well. I wish I could write something that would be of interest to you, but I feel my littleness and unworthiness so plainly that I feel my writing is like myself, worthless. If you ever feel so impressed, and it is not asking too much, we would be glad to hear from you, for your letter to-day came as good news from a far country.

Yours in a sweet hope,

EFFIE EDWARDS.

ARENA, N. Y., Feb. 1, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I desire to express a few thoughts as I am writing to renew my subscription. As usual, I am well pleased with our periodical. The subjects treated are the most inspiring that ever engaged the attention of men or angels, the type is clear and good, and very few mistakes occur to cause any misunderstanding among our readers. How true it is that history repeats itself, the thing that hath been, is that which shall be, and that which hath been done is that which shall be done. As one of old said, there is no new thing under the sun. Since time began, and doubtless until time shall end, the human family all have inquiring minds, and to a certain extent this is right, yet to me it seems there is revealed in the word of God to the christian all he needs to know in this time state, and it is such a pleasure to be always learning. I presume we shall go on learning through eternity, and then, possessing a knowledge of the glorious attributes of our heavenly Father and his well beloved Son, we shall realize that the half can never be told. Our first parents were forbidden to eat of the one tree in the garden of Eden. Eve was beguiled by the serpent and tempted to eat of the forbidden fruit. It might have been the result of a spirit of inquisitiveness for aught I know. In later days the disciples had inquiring minds, for we read in John xiv. 8, one of the disciples (Philip) said, Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? To me the doctrine of the resurrection is a glorious theme; it is the sum and substance of the christian's hope, and I feel to gladly accept whatever is written in the New Testament concerning it. Paul said that if the dead rise not our preaching is vain, your hope is vain, and ye are yet in your sins; but thanks be to God, we have abundant proof that the dead shall rise, our vile body changed, those who have fallen asleep in Christ shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body. My dear departed husband in his last sickness asked me one day, Shall we know each other in heaven? I replied, I do not know, but the Bible says we shall know as we are known, and see as we are seen, Christ, our Elder Brother, will be there, and we shall see him as he is, and be like him, when we awake with his likeness we shall be satisfied. I said, Is not that enough? He said, O yes, that is enough, that is enough. I feel to leave it all with him who holds our destiny in his hand, who is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind, knowing he has declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. It is now fifty-three years since I made a profession

of religion, and I feel I would not exchange this little hope for all the world, it is as an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast.

"E'en down to old age, all my people shall prove
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;
And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,
Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne."

Elder Ker, if there is anything in this imperfect letter that you think might cause friction, do not publish it, all will be well.

With love to all the "little flock," your sister in hope,

JULANA H. DICKSON.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 18, 1916.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—God told Adam that in the day that he ate of the fruit of a certain tree in the garden that dying he should die, or that he would surely die. While Adam is supposed to have lived some nine hundred years, naturally, before he experienced what we call corporeal or physical death, he was in a scriptural sense dead all these nine hundred years. That is to say, he by his transgression became a sinner, and by that transgression was separated from God by that wicked work. Death in many places in the Scriptures seems to mean separation. What is true of Adam is of course then true of his posterity under the older dispensations: patriarchal and prophetic. In the death of Christ the entire election of grace, the whole family of God, both Jew and Gentile, were again brought nigh unto God, reconciled unto God, and as the fruit of his resurrection they live (as God views it) as free from sin as if sin had never been committed in their federal head Adam. The old testament saints by faith looked forward to the accomplishment of this wonderful work by the Savior, the Christ of God, as we as new testament saints look backward and rejoice in the finished work of the Savior. While all of the old testament saints, including John the Baptist, were duly manifested subjects of God's electing love and grace, born again from above, and lived by faith, and died in the faith of God's elect (Jesus), until the work of salvation, redemption, atonement and resurrection had been fully accomplished by the head of the body (Jesus), the gospel of the Son of God could not be proclaimed in its fullness, for in that gospel (glad tidings, good news) life and immortality are, as we know, brought to light. We new testament saints are manifested, born naturally, dead in trespasses and in sin, and perhaps live most of our appointed time in the earth utterly ignorant of God in his true character until he (God) sees fit to show us our condition as sinners. After showing us what sin is, and our utter inability to do anything to gain his favor and love, he gives us hope in his mercy in his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. The salvation of God's elect was just as sure from all eternity as it was after the work of salvation was accomplished and finished in the death of his Son, but it took ages under the older dispensations to unfold that plan, and it will take ages under the present dispensation (the gospel) to more fully unfold the wondrous things God has prepared, stored up, for them that love him. Now we know in part, we see in part, as through a glass darkly, but the time is coming when all will be made plain. For after the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, after every Gentile subject of grace, every Gentile member of the body of Christ has been gathered into the kingdom, then, if I mistake not, there is a remnant of the election of grace among the Jews (Israelites) who also are to be gathered in to complete the body in its manifestation,

and then, and not until then, will the gospel dispensation come to a close. Known unto God are all his children, and they are to be found among all the nations and peoples that dwell upon the earth, or have so dwelt therein or thereon.

Affectionately in the truth,

R. M. STRONG.

MT. VERNON, Texas, Jan. 7, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I herewith send you a money order for two dollars to pay for our paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I am very thankful to you for sending it to me so long, and I should have sent you some money sooner, but it seemed I could not. Elder J. R. Hardy got you to send it to me, and I feel thankful to him for it, for I think it to be one of our soundest papers. It is contending for the doctrine that is unmovable, and unshaken by any. Yes, they may fight against this doctrine of salvation by grace with all the false so-called doctrines combined, but it will still stand. Why? Because our God is unchangeable. He said, I am God, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. The children's salvation depends upon what the Lord has done for them, and he said, It is finished. He said, I give unto them (his sheep) eternal life, and they shall never perish. Why? Because that life is eternal, without end. The Lord says to his little ones, Verily, verily, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. The Lord gives this life. Paul said, You hath he quickened, who were dead. Yes, were dead, but now, being quickened, are alive. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life. Have his children any evidence that they have that life now? We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. Again, As many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God, and if sons, then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. God is their Father, that great, eternal, all-wise God of purpose and power is their God, the great Creator, upholder and final disposer of all things.

Pray for me, a poor sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all,

W. H. TATUM.

UPLAND, Cal., Dec. 20, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—As I am renewing my subscription to the SIGNS, I have a desire to add a few lines by way of encouragement, as I have for a long time wished to do, but from a felt sense of my inability to write as I would, have put it off, but will now make the attempt, realizing that at best it will be but a feeble effort. I have been a subscriber to the paper for about twenty years, and during that time I have never seen anything in the editorial columns that I could take any exception to from a doctrinal point of view, or for any other reason. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES has maintained in the past, and is maintaining down to the present time, the high standard set by its able founder, Elder Gilbert Beebe. When dear Elder Chick was called to his reward, having faithfully served the cause of the blessed Master, we wondered who would succeed him, and for some reason (even before Elder Chick's death) Elder Lefferts was suggested to our minds as the one upon whom the mantle would fall, and verily the dear Lord, who never makes mistakes, was pleased to have it just that way, and the choice seems to meet the approval of a goodly number of your readers. As for myself, if I may judge, I have never seen anything in the

editorial columns of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES which was not according to sound doctrine. I trust, dear brother, that neither you nor Elder Lefferts will take criticism too seriously. I realize that the place you both occupy as editors of the dear old family paper has its arduous duties, and desire in my feeble way to hold up your hands, as Moses' brethren did his. I shall endeavor to be faithful, and if I find anything to condemn in your writings shall let you know.

In conclusion, I would say, Dear brethren, write on, be of good courage, continue to earnestly contend for the faith, endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, and may the God of all grace sustain you, is my prayer.

I have written as my mind has been led, desiring the welfare of Zion and all her children. Do with this as you think best, and all will be right with me.

As ever, your brother, I hope,

G. A. DUNDAS.

YORK, Nebr., March 21, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription is a little past due, I will inclose one dollar to pay to September 1st, as I enjoy the SIGNS very much. We are blessed with two able ministers here at York: Elders J. H. Ring and C. M. Cooper, and often have visiting brethren, and I feel that we ought to be thankful to the Giver of blessings that it is as well with us as it is. We have preaching every Sunday, unless the weather hinders. My husband and I have lived here twelve years, and O the many good sermons we have listened to and enjoyed, and while enjoying them I think of many of the Lord's dear ones who live alone, without a Baptist to talk with. We have taken the SIGNS since 1892, with the exception of a year or two. We began when living on the lonely prairies of Wallace County, Kansas, where no one cared for it but ourselves, and we had no preaching, and how precious it was to us. I have given most of my papers to others situated as we were, and they have been enjoyed several times. May the Lord continue with you all, the writers as well as the editors.

Yours in christian love,

(MRS.) A. B. HANSON.

SOUTH PASADENA, California.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed please find two dollars to pay my subscription to the paper for another year, as I cannot well get along without the good letters it contains, and sometimes I think that one of them is worth a whole year's subscription. One such appeared in January 1st number. I can gather food from them day by day, and each time I read one of them over I get a little more sweetness and comfort, so I hope the brethren and sisters will keep on writing, for I know that if they could see how this poor old sinner is fed from on high by their pens they would rejoice with me.

A poor old sinner, saved by grace, and grace alone, if saved at all,

AMBROSE FLOURNOY.

UTICA, N. Y., March 21, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I want to inform you that I have changed my address from 61 Tracy Street to 1512 Miller Street, and would be pleased to have my paper sent to the latter place, as I do not want to have one number lost. My wife and I both enjoy reading it very much, as that is all the preaching we have, for I do not know of any place here in Utica where the truth is preached. Thanks to the Lord, who has given us such able and

gifted editors as brethren Ker and Lefferts, who proclaim the truth as it is in Jesus.

Dear brethren editors and correspondents, write on, for you do not know how many poor and discouraged sheep and lambs of the flock may receive comfort through your writings. I hope to take the SIGNS as long as I can see to read it and am able to pay for it, but that cannot be very long, for I am nearly eighty years of age and my wife eighty-one.

A poor sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all,

CHRISTIAN WINTER.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

DEAR EDITORS:—I hope this will be received before time for another SIGNS to be sent me, as it hurts me for the dear paper to come to me when I know I am owing for it, yet I would be more hurt should I have to miss a single copy. How I do love the contents of our family paper, and could we have two more gifted editors? I am, I hope, grateful that I can say that I am a member of Elder Lefferts' flock at Frying Pan Church, a dear old place, and O how his members appreciate and love him for the great gift our dear almighty Father has given him. It seems more than could be expected of man, but it is not of man, but God alone to whom he gives all praise, and puts himself down on equality with the rest of us, and we have to wonder at him, for he has a great gift. To you, best wishes.

Inclosed you will find two dollars to pay another year's subscription for SIGNS.

BETTIE F. BENNETT.

BOTHWELL, Ontario, April 19, 1916.

DEAR ELDER KER:—With your permission I would like a little space in our valued paper to thank those of like precious faith who so very kindly sympathized with me (by letter) in my late sad bereavement. Will each one accept my sincerest thanks for their kind words of sympathy, which I truly appreciate? My dear husband's death was a terrible shock to me, being alone at the time. We had just settled for the night, and he was talking to me, when he suddenly called, "I am dying," twice, and in one moment he was in eternity. O the solemn agony of that hour! I could not seem to realize that he was gone, but think I was brought to say, "Thy will be done." I know he is at rest, and do not wish him back, though I feel an inexpressible loneliness without his dear companionship, but it will only be a little while until time will be no more for each of us lonely ones.

SARA ERRETT.

IONA STATION, Ont., Jan. 13, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Inclosed find postal note for two dollars, which I wish to have applied to my credit for the SIGNS the present year. I am a few months past sixty-five years of age, and am still residing on the plot of earth upon which I was born, and with the exception of a a few short intervals the SIGNS has been coming to our home further back than I can remember. I began reading it quite early in life with some interest, which instead of decreasing seems to increase, for I am often comforted and encouraged in the weary pilgrimage of this life by the precious editorials and other articles which appear from time to time in its columns, and as far as my limited vision enables me to judge, I am unable to see any variation in doctrine or principle from that upon which it was founded, nearly one hundred years ago. May God grant the present editors many years of faithful devotion to the best of causes, the cause of truth, in the future as in the past, and

the contributors, too, some of whom appear to be near their journey's end. Many times has my poor soul been comforted by the perusal of their valued articles. The waymarks seemed familiar, therefore my heart was made glad.

I must come to a close. I would not have written so much were it not for a desire to assure you of my confidence and approval of the manner and matter with which the SIGNS abounds.

Your weakest brother, if one at all,

J. T. KERR.

FORSYTH, Ga., Jan. 17, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose my check for two dollars to pay for renewal of my subscription to the SIGNS, which I have been reading for twenty-five or thirty years, and enjoy much. I am taking several other periodicals of our order, but think more of the SIGNS than any that I get, it being our oldest publication. I think it stands above all, and should be sustained by our people, so I bid you Godspeed in the continuance of the good work of sending it out to saints scattered abroad in the land. It has been a great support, and has strengthened me many times when cast down. Your position on the subject of predestination is God-honoring and soul-cheering, and has been a great comfort also to me.

May you, brethren editors and contributors, live long to wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, is the prayer of yours to serve,

J. W. NEWTON.

ASHLAND, Ill., Feb. 15, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please excuse my delay in sending my remittance. I think the SIGNS is the best paper published, and brother Ker's reply to brother Jackson, in the January 15th number, is the kind of preaching I like, and it is Bible truth. I hope brother Ker will live to write many more such editorials along that line, if it is the Lord's will. I have never known any one who believed in the predestination of all things to stand behind predestination as an excuse for sin, but always feeling like a guilty wretch. Now, brother Ker, just write as the Lord puts it in your mind, and it will be food for some hungry soul.

Yours in hope,

D. S. KOONTZ.

WESTFIELD, Illinois.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am still receiving the dear old family paper, and as I see some have been thoughtful enough to acknowledge their thanks for the favor I feel it is my duty to do the same, for I do not think there can be any one who enjoys reading its good letters more than I do, for I seldom get to hear a sermon preached, and feel too unworthy to have you send it to me as you are and have been doing for so long. I want to thank you with all my heart, for it is a source of great pleasure to have it to read. I am now in my seventy-ninth year, and do not think I can be here very much longer, but do hope that you may live to continue its publication for many, many years. Thanking you again for your kindness, I will close. I am a poor, old, lonely widow, living alone, and if saved it is by grace.

Unworthily,

(MRS.) M. J. PETTY.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1916.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

BRIEF REPLIES.

"FOR as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

This text embraces all gospel truth, and volumes could be written upon it and the half not be told. Death in Adam is the result of disobedience, and death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Death as spoken of in this text includes both death by sin and corporeal death, as it seems to us. It is evident from the word "all" in this Scripture that there is no exception—all die. First, the saints of God fully understand that not one of Adam's posterity ever escaped that death which separated all men from God; all by nature are dead in trespasses and sin until quickened into divine life by the Spirit of God. Second, all men from the beginning of the world have died corporeally and continue to die. Not one has escaped this death from Adam down, except those who now live, and soon, likely less than one hundred years, every one living to-day will be gone forever from the earth. Thus "in Adam all die."

Many brethren think that our text refers to headships, and that all in Adam, all his children, die, so in Christ, our living Head, all shall be made alive. That is, all the elect children, beginning with Abel to the end of time, each one, shall be quickened into divine life. Perhaps this view is the right one, at any rate it is true in a gospel sense. Of one thing we feel sure: that Paul was not presenting universal salvation, but it seems to us two special points of doctrine are set forth in the text, viz., death by sin and life because of righteousness. Look to Adam from whatever standpoint one may, death is in evidence. No hope of peace with God through man. Look to Christ from whatever standpoint a child of God may and life from the dead is manifest. He lived in and with the Father before the world was; he lived in the flesh—"God manifest in the flesh." He arose from the dead because he could not be holden of death. He ever liveth at the right hand of God. In him there is life, and the life is the light (understanding) of men. Hence "in Christ shall all be made alive;" not only quickened into divine life while here, but shall be made alive from the dead. Then shall all know and experience "the redemption of our body."

We have thought also that the apostle was presenting salvation in Christ from a national standpoint. By nature the Jews, while the favored people of God, were no better than the Gentiles. Both Jews and Gentiles were dead in sin and under the curse of the law, but inasmuch as Christ paid the debt for all nations, in him there is neither Jew nor Gentile, all nations and classes shall be made alive in him.

Written at the request of G. E. Lee, Roanoke, Ala. K.

JOHN X. 9.

"I AM the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."

In this chapter the Savior is contrasting between himself and those who came before him. All who preceded him, claiming to be the shepherd of the sheep, were thieves and robbers, dishonest, deceivers, hypocrites and everything contrary to the truth of God; but Jesus was the good Shepherd of the sheep, and embodied every principle of right. He was the Door through which every sheep must enter into the sheepfold—no other way, no other means. There is no condition here suggested, but on the contrary a positive declaration: By me if any man enter in he shall be saved. The figure is very striking, and we should not lose sight of it. Sheep in a sheepfold are protected from all enemies, hence are saved from the attacks and assaults of beasts, whose nature it is to destroy them. The people of God have entered into the sheepfold (church) through the Door, Christ Jesus, and are saved from the world, its delusions and enemies, as Noah and his family were saved in the ark, being separated from the world. The word "saved" in the Scriptures does not always mean redeemed, saved with an everlasting salvation, but often it means care, protection, safety, &c., here in the sheepfold of God. Those mentioned in the text were already sheep, or, in other words, children of God, and because of that fact entered into the sheepfold prepared by the good Shepherd for their comfort and protection.

"And shall go in and out, and find pasture." This clause of the text carries the figure further: sheep are not kept always in the sheepfold, but they go in and out. The pasture literally is not inside the sheepfold, but shelter and protection are found therein. The pasture is outside. When in the sheepfold the walls serve as salvation to them from harm or injury; when outside in a pasture the shepherd is with them, hence always protected, and the pasture is sure. The certainty of a resting-place, safe from the ravening wolves often in sheep's clothing, is presented in the parable, and also the certainty of pasture for the children of God. The saints are seldom in the same place long at a time—led here and there, in and out, up and down, but all confess that places of safety and green pastures are theirs in all the journey. Children of his love and care, sheep of his pasture.

K.

IN WHAT RESPECT IS MAN IN THE LIKENESS OF GOD?

THE record is that man was made in the image, or likeness, of God. This means that Adam was the figure of Him that was to come. God created man male and female, and called their name Adam. The unity was so complete that the two were one, yes, one in creation, one in formation, one in life, one in death. This vital unity is the image of Christ and the church, in which Adam was made. Christ and the church, Head and body, are so inseparably connected that they are one, yes, one in life and in death, one in the resurrection and one before the Father in glory, and as the Father and Son are one, so the saints are perfect in one.

These last two replies are at the request of D. P. McCauley, Lipan, Texas.

K.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

THE NAIL.

"AND now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage."—Ezra ix. 8. "And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons. In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the Lord hath spoken it." —Isaiah xxii. 23-25.

The allusions to Christ throughout the Old Testament gleam as shafts of pure radiance illumining the long night of sin which enshrouded the world in its somber folds, never to be lifted from the time that Adam transgressed his Maker's law until the Sun of Righteousness arose in the person of Christ issuing from the dead. Throughout that darkness from Adam to Jesus, the path of that just One, Christ, was as the shining light shining more and more unto the perfect day of his gospel, destined to be unto all that believe, the power of God unto salvation. For seventy years Israel had sojourned captive in Babylon, involuntary exiles from the land of promise, consequent upon their disobedience to the law of God by his servant Moses. They learned by bitter hardness that the way of the transgressor is hard, that sin entails its own penalty and woe, that an evil tree cannot bring forth aught but corrupt fruit. The days of their captivity being fulfilled, there went forth a decree from Cyrus, king of Persia, whose spirit the Lord stirred in accordance with his word to Jeremiah a long time before, that the Jews should go forth from bondage to build again the temple of their God in Jerusalem in Judah. Forthwith, sheltered under the king's decree, went forth the remnant of Israel under their leader Zerubbabel. With mingled joy and mourning these laid the foundations of the second temple. Adversaries sought to hinder them in their work, and finally succeeded in having King Artaxerxes issue a decree suspending all operations. But his successor, Darius, affirmed the decree of Cyrus, commanding the work to go on, with the result that the house was finished amid great jubilation in the sixth year of Darius' reign. Following upon this work of Zerubbabel and his host, and some little time later, Ezra and his companions minded to go with him, not of constraint, but willingly, also went up to Jerusalem to set in order once more the law of Moses and all its ceremonies and rituals, its feasts and fasts, its offerings and sacrifices. Imagine Ezra's troubled soul upon learning when arrived at Jerusalem that his fellow Israelites, so soon escaped of captivity, had lost their separateness and were mingling in the abominations of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians and the Amorites. "For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons; so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands: yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass." The path of righteousness is indeed a difficult road, and it is hard for even God's children to maintain a life of integrity and sobriety in the midst of such manifold temptations. How true that those who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. In the midst of this falling away of the Israelites, Ezra and the little band with him stand as a miracle of grace, a living memorial unto the God who had manifested in them the sanctification of his Spirit. Ezra says, "Then were assembled unto

me every one that trembled at the words of the God of Israel." Thus there were some who had the fear of God in them, that fear which is the hatred of evil, and which furnished a common impulse to gather together those of like experience. This remnant, then, mentioned by Ezra in the text we have quoted at the beginning, did not include all that came out of Babylon, for many of them went lusting after strange peoples. If we call those who came out of captivity a remnant, then we must speak of these gathered about Ezra with God's fear in them as the remnant of a remnant. It is of this remaining few that Ezra says, "Grace hath been shewed from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape," and by "escape" Ezra means not so much the getting clear of Babylon as the escaping the pollution that followed when the holy seed mingled themselves with the various "ites" about them. This pollution they had escaped, because God by his grace had left them a remnant. Even then, therefore, there was a remnant according to the election of grace which escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. Ezra did not say, nor did he once think, that they had escaped pollution because they were naturally better or more virtuous than those who had corrupted themselves, but gave all the credit for the escape to the grace of God. This is the same old story, old yet ever new, told everywhere throughout holy writ, "to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." How good, in such a time of dissipation and decline, to have that on which to hang or to depend. This dependence this remnant had, and it was given them by that same God who had granted them grace to escape. This dependence Ezra speaks of as a "nail." "To give us a nail in his holy place." The "holy place," and the "sure place," spoken of by Isaiah are one and the same. By the nail spoken of by both Ezra and Isaiah is meant Jesus. Jesus is the dependence of his people, they all hang upon him. Jesus is the "nail" in the holy place, and fastened in a "sure place." This holy place, or sure place, is God's predestination. There can be no surer place to drive a nail than in that place which God has predetermined, and nowhere else can it be driven. As a man, Jesus did not have the arranging of his own life, nor the directing of his own steps. The steps of his feet, the work of his hands, the words of his lips, were all foretold by prophets before his advent, showing fully that Jesus, his life and sufferings, death and victory, were all predestinated to be as they were, and could possibly be no other way. His way was inclosed with hewn stones, so that he could not get out. God made his chain heavy, no sorrow was ever beheld like unto his sorrow. He came to his end and there was none to help, no arm reached forth to his relief, none pitied him. Bowed in Gethsemane beneath his heavy stroke, which was heavier than his groaning, he said, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." But because he was fastened as a nail in a sure and holy place the cup could not pass except he drank it, so he said, "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done." He, then, Jesus the crucified, is the nail fastened in the sure place, the nail in the holy place reserved by the grace of God to Ezra and the remnant with him. Upon this nail hang all the vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups to the vessels of flagons, upon him hang the offspring and the issue. These vessels of small quantity (for there are no big ones in Christ, or hanging

on him) range in measure from cups to flagons, but whatever be their measure, whether it be an apostle or only a little one of humbler measure, all depend on Christ, the nail, for whatever measure of grace they possess. Whatever fruit to God they bring forth also depends on this nail, on him hangs the offspring and the issue. The issues from death belong to him. Isaiah says there comes a time, "in that day," when the nail shall be removed, be cut down and fall. This means not the failure but the fulfillment of the predestination of God. Jesus, the nail, could not die, that is, be removed, until all his work was done, until the salvation of all hanging on him was eternally secured. His life was cut off from the earth, the nail cut down, in that day that Jesus was crucified. He went on living, but in another sphere of existence. As far as the earth was concerned, he came to his end, the nail was removed, cut down and fell. The burden that was upon him was cut off. He carried the sins of all his people in his own body on the cross, but the shedding of his blood purged all these sins away, so that the burden was removed. However, Isaiah says that the burden was not so much the sins themselves as all the vessels of small quantity, from cups to flagons, the offspring and the issue. Now, we know that in a wonderful, mystical way, that no man can understand, that his people were in him while on the cross, in him when he lay in the tomb, in him when he arose from the dead. But while all this is gloriously true, it is also true that no living mortal can ever suffer what Jesus suffered, none can ever die the death he died. Therefore, it is true that Jesus came to his end alone, suffered alone and died alone, alone without even a realizing sense of the presence of his Father. Thus, the vessels which hung upon him were cut off from this nail at the last. Not that Christ's elect will ever be eternally cut off from him, for nothing can ever separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, but cut off from him in the sense that none could actually participate with him in the work of salvation which he alone could accomplish. Arminians say we are partners with Christ in the work of salvation, that we do our part and he does his part, thus working together to save our own and others' souls, but this the Bible will not prove. Christ is the whole of salvation for every one of his people. So while all the elect were, and are, and ever will be, in Christ, yet in accomplishing the work of salvation he did all the work, and no man was his helper. This is what is signified by the vessels which hung on the nail being cut off, "in that day" when the predestination of God was accomplished and Jesus died, thus removing the nail out of its place. He went beyond all and each of us into depths of humiliation and woe into which none will ever be called to go. As proof of this truth that Jesus was alone and his people unable to accompany him, we quote the following: "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me."—Isaiah lxiii. 3. "He shall come to his end, and none shall help him."—Daniel xi. 45. "I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the housetop."—Psalms cii. 7. "Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you."—John xiii. 33. This Nail predestinated for the people of God is a glorious throne to his Father's house; that is, to the church. Jesus is not a glorious throne to any but his elect, so we should not be surprised nor indignant if others do not see the beauty in Jesus that

we see in him. He is a glorious throne to us, because he is the seat of God's power and authority to usward. The church knows no lawgiver but Jesus, the living Head, our glorious throne. Ezra names four ways in which the grace of God was peculiarly manifested to him and the escaped remnant with him; first, grace "to leave us a remnant to escape," of which we have already written; grace "to give us a nail in his holy place," of which we have also written; third, to "lighten our eyes;" fourth, to "give us a little reviving in our bondage." The lightening of the eyes is a figurative expression, meaning the giving of understanding. The law of Moses did not give understanding, but the commandment of the Lord does. "The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes."—Psalms xix. 8. The commandment of the Lord is given by Jesus to his disciples, and was never given to the world at large. Here it is: A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another. This commandment of the Lord, which is love, is the enlightening of the eyes, it gives understanding to the simple. This law, when written in the inward parts and put in the mind, opens the eyes of the understanding, spiritually, to comprehend spiritual things. Now we come to the fourth manifestation of the grace of God mentioned by Ezra: to "give us a little reviving in our bondage." To be sure, the church to-day is not under bondage, as was Ezra and the men with him, who all were under the law, and bound to its mandates, still we of the gospel age have our bondage, too, as expressed by Paul: "Ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."—Romans viii. 23. In this bondage, while in our earthly house of this tabernacle, all our reviving must proceed from the same grace as did the reviving of Ezra and his brethren in those days long ago amid the apostasy of Israel about them. What glorious revivals to the church here in the world as she travels along the wilderness way are those seasons of refreshing that come from the presence of the Lord, when Jesus comes to her, who before has been preached unto her. We believe in these heaven-sent revivals that come as the wind blowing where it lists, imbued with fragrance and power from the throne of God, but we want none of the man-made revivals, whose winds are laden with the miasma of death from the marshes of filth and the swamps of sin.

Written at the request of sister Sarah E. Runkle, of Macomb, Illinois. L.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, the fifth Sunday in April (30th). Services at 10:45 a. m. and 2 p. m. All welcome.

L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

APPOINTMENTS.

PLEASE publish the following appointments and oblige:

Union Grove, Sunday, May 21st, 11 a. m., Morris Faulkner's 8 p. m.; Kelly Corners, 22nd, 8 p. m.; Halcottville, 23rd, 8 p. m.; Vega, 24th, 2 p. m.; Roxbury, 25th, 11 a. m.; Olive, Sunday, 28th, 11 a. m.; evening, Kingston, 58 Smith Ave., 8 p. m.

D. M. VAIL.

MARRIAGES.

Elder H. C. Ker and Mrs. Lena B. Rath were married March 22nd, 1916, in New York city, by Elder John McConnell. Elder and Mrs. Ker are now at home to their friends, 273 North St., Middletown, N. Y. No private announcements of their marriage are being sent out, owing to their extensive acquaintance.—ED.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon Duncan McAlpine passed away Feb. 29th, 1916. He was born May 26th, 1840, at Yartmouth, and a few weeks later his parents, the late Alexander and Christina McAlpine, moved to the farm where he resided all his days here on earth. He taught school several years, and afterward he farmed the homestead. He united with the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church October 3rd, 1879, and was baptized by Elder Pollard. He was chosen deacon in 1883, and afterward clerk, Feb. 3rd, 1904, which offices he filled until his death. In 1874, he was married to Catherine Graham, of Lobo, who, with six children, survives him: Donald A., Dugald and Duncan B. McAlpine, Mrs. Samuel Campbell and Mrs. Alex. Pollard, of London, and Mrs. Peter McPherson, of Iona. His sisters are Mrs. Will McLandress, of Dutton, and Mrs. McTaggart, of St. Thomas. He also leaves a brother living in California. These, with many friends and relatives near and dear, mourn their loss. Deacon McAlpine was a man of sterling character, like holy men of old; he was firm in his convictions, and ever sought to know the will of his Savior. He searched the Scriptures like the Bereans of old, to know whether these things were true, and was guided thereby. He wanted to know these things for himself, and so we might say he was not satisfied with anything short of what was written therein and what the Lord would have him do. It was a constant prayer with him to have the Lord guide and direct him. The church was a solemn and holy place to him, and it was his chief desire to see it walking in gospel order and blessed of the Lord. He was confident of the ability of the Lord to do all things, and was ever watching to see his hand made manifest in the church. Even in his own course he wanted to see the hand of the Lord in it. Truly it could be said of him that he ceased from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, and counted the guidance of the Lord of far more value than the counsel of men. In this he proved himself a follower of the meek and lowly Savior, and it could be said that he lived very near him. His latter days were spent with his dear companion, and their conversation was much upon the Scriptures and the goodness and mercies of the Lord to them. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was of much comfort to them, and especially Elder Durand's article in March 1st issue. Brother McAlpine was in his usual health until a short time before his death. The angel of the Lord came suddenly to separate him from his earthly habitation and convey him to his eternal habitation in the paradise of God. He realized that his departure was at hand, and prayed that the Lord might be with him. He, like Jacob of old, remembered each child, and prayed for God's blessing upon each one, also for his dear and faithful companion. His last moments were prayers and supplication unto God, and as he was about departing he said, "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, praise his holy name." Thus we see the blessings of Almighty God crowning his last days with the riches of his grace, stamping it with the seal of his presence, with the outpouring of his Spirit upon them. May the bereaved family look beyond the earth to within the vail, to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, and realize that the Giver is more blessed and greater than the gift, and that the Lord has taken but his own.

Elder J. B. Slauson and myself conducted services at the home before a large gathering of those who had come to pay their last respects to the departed.

J. M. FENTON.

Miss Sarah E. Johnson died at her home near Manassas, Va., Jan. 7th, 1916. She was born October 14th, 1844, daughter of Joseph Johnson and Emma Wheatley, and niece of Mrs. Elizabeth Leachman. This notice is somewhat late in being written for our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but many tributes from her friends have been published, showing the esteem in which our dear friend was held. Forty years of her life, from 1872 to 1912, were spent in schools, and the most of that time at one school, Bradley, where it may be termed a labor of love, so efficient, careful and self-sacrificing during all that long service. As one of our papers gave it: "Throwing her heart and soul into the work of instructing and guiding the young into paths of knowledge, which will ever stand as a memorial to her and bear greater and greater fruit as her pupils pass to future generations the knowledge gained under her instruction." She was thoroughly conscientious, following strictly the path of duty, and battled long with trials and difficulties, bravely and with courage—a woman of strong intellect and good judgment. In the Manassas Chapter, U. D. C., she was an honored and prominent member, and in every undertaking, interesting and difficult, she was ready always to give her time. And better than all can the little Bethlehem Church remember the untiring attention and love which were ever hers to bestow. Even in her failing health, when her last days were seldom at ease, she was present at the meetings, active in every church duty, and always ready to invite cordially brethren and friends to the family home,

known by many as "Clover Hill," the home of the Baptists. She was not a member of the visible church, never feeling worthy to be one, but her love for the doctrine and interest in the Lord's people will long live in the memory of the wide circle of her acquaintance. She was known far and near and enjoyed by young and old. She was sick for many months, but her illness at the last was brief, yet the care and attention of her fond family and skill of physicians could not save her. All the days of her appointed time she lived, when called to that rest which remaineth to the Lord's people. Her brother, George W. Johnson, preceded her just a short while. One sister, Miss Annie, and one brother, Joseph B. Johnson, with many nephews and nieces, a large connection, survive her, and feel their loss is truly her gain. A large number attended the funeral, and floral tributes were profuse, showing the marked esteem of family, friends and pupils. Interment was in the family plot near the house.

By request. M. C. BADGER.

SISTER **Martha A. Duffield** departed this life on Sunday morning, March 19th, 1916, at her home, 3816 Pulaski Ave., Philadelphia, Pa., aged 79 years, 2 months and 16 days. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Salem Church, Philadelphia, Pa., October 7th, 1906, and remained a faithful and devoted member until her death. She was dearly loved and esteemed by her brethren and many friends. She was firm and unyielding in the doctrine of God our Savior. We can truly say of her that her conversation was in heaven, and her affection was set on the things which come down from heaven. Eight children were born unto her, and all are yet living, namely: George, Newton, Mrs. Annie Bond, sister Emma Addis, Mrs. Laura Jenks, Milton, sister Josephine Yerkes and Martha Duffield. She also leaves to mourn their loss one brother, several grandchildren and many relatives. The Salem Church and congregation have lost a dear mother in Israel, one whose seat was rarely vacant at the appointed meetings of the church. Services were held at her home Wednesday evening, March 22nd. The words used by the writer on the occasion are contained in the twenty-third Psalm. The following morning the body was taken to Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., where Elder S. H. Durand preached to an attentive congregation, after which her body was laid away by the side of her husband.

ALSO,

William H. Barnsley departed this life Feb. 14th, 1916, at his residence, 1601 Diamond St., Philadelphia, Pa., aged 61 years. He was a man of quiet demeanor, a loving husband and devoted father. He leaves to mourn their sad loss his beloved wife, sister Amy R. Barnsley, and one daughter, sister Lidie Barnsley, together with relatives and friends. He did not make any profession of religion, but respected the doctrine advocated and loved by his wife and daughter.

Funeral services were conducted at his late residence Thursday evening, Feb. 18th, by Elder John McConnell, of New York, and the writer. His body was laid away Friday morning in the Baptist Cemetery at Southampton, Pa.

B. F. COULTER.

IT was a great shock to the many friends of **Mrs. Isabella N. Bradner** to learn of her sudden death Tuesday, Jan. 11th, at the home of her youngest daughter, Mrs. Ralph Tilt, of Demarest, N. J. She was the widow of Benjamin D. Bradner. Mrs. Bradner had left town to spend the winter with her brother, Mr. George Noxon, of Auburndale, Fla., and had stopped enroute for a visit with her daughter Gertrude. While there she was taken ill with the grippe, and died Tuesday morning shortly after nine o'clock. For many years Mrs. Bradner had suffered keenly with asthma, and had a severe attack just prior to the holidays. Mrs. Bradner had endeared herself to many hearts with her own true kindly spirit. She was a great lover of home life, and welcomed to her hearthstone her kith and kin and friends. She was a good comrade, kind neighbor and a true friend. Mrs. Bradner was a member of the Old School Baptist Church. She was a daughter of Isaac D. and Janet Demorest Noxon, of Prince Edward County, Ontario, and was born there near Northport, Oct. 17th, 1843. Her mother, Mrs. Janet Demorest Noxon, who died March 14th, 1914, in her 101st year, made her home with Mrs. Bradner. Mrs. Bradner is survived by three daughters: Caroline, wife of Frank Fancher, of Middletown, N. Y., Janet B., wife of Ferd A. Stevens, of this village, and Gertrude, wife of Ralph D. Tilt, of Demarest, N. J.; also one sister, Mrs. Gertrude Fraser, of Taos, N. Mex., and one brother, George Noxon, of Auburndale, Fla.

Funeral services were held at her late residence Saturday afternoon at 2 o'clock, Elder H. C. Ker, of Middletown, officiating. Interment in Warwick Cemetery.

[THE above obituary was published in one of the Warwick, N. Y., papers, and forwarded to us by one of the daughters of our dear sister Bradner. We feel to add a few lines with reference to her life in the church. She was baptized by the late Elder J. N. Badger, July 29th, 1877, in the fellowship of the Warwick Old School Baptist Church, and was ever true and devoted to the church and faithful in all the walks of life. Her home was a pleasant resting-place for all brethren and friends, and she was never happier than when she was making others comfortable and happy. We all miss her and sadly mourn her departure, but are comforted in the assurance of her eternal blessedness beyond.—K.]

BROTHER **John R. Martin** departed this life Dec. 29th, 1915, aged 67 years and 15 days. The subject of this notice moved from Mississippi to Hermitage, Ark., twenty-five or thirty years ago. It was my privilege to know this dear brother for over twenty years, and I think I baptized him in old Pine Grove Church, in Drew Co., Ark., where our membership was for several years. He had much sorrow here, both in body and spirit. He was a good, sound, humble brother, believing in the wrought righteousness of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as his only hope beyond this sin-cursed world. He was married twice, and had several children by each of his wives. I baptized his second wife in Antioch Church, where brother Martin and myself held our membership, in Bradley County, about seven years ago. Sister Martin with three or four of her children survive him, also a son Walter and a widowed daughter with several children by his first wife. Brother Martin went to his daughter's, Mrs. Ola Patrick, near Linville, La., last fall, and was there only a short time when he was taken sick. He was conscious until the last, and spoke of his departure, and how sad it made him to leave them here, but his only hope was in our Lord, that he would be their Lord and Savior as he had been to him. We feel that our church has lost a good and faithful brother, but our loss is his gain. May the Lord ever be a present help to our sister and his children.

ALSO,

J. M. Stroud departed this life Jan. 6th, 1916, aged 77 years, 8 months and 26 days. He was born April 11th, 1838, the son of James and Jane Stroud, of Calhoun County, Ark., who were members of Pilgrim's Rest Church, of the Primitive Baptist faith. He was married to Miss Fannie Cone in 1874. They were blessed with two sons and two daughters, one daughter dying in infancy, one son at eleven years and the other son at twenty-three. His wife died May 16th, 1912, leaving a married daughter. He had six brothers and three sisters, all of whom have departed but one sister, sister A. Holloway, who waited on her father and mother in their last illness. She and brother Holloway ministered to the wants of five brothers at their home, and also his nephews. It was my privilege to know him the last two or three years of his life. He often spoke to me of his only hope in the mercy of God. He believed in the doctrine of God our Savior, and was a reader of the SIGNS, which he held very dear. We feel that our loss is his gain.

J. H. BLYTHE.

Mrs. Virginia F. Holladay, wife of Jasper Holladay, died Feb. 10th, 1916, at her old home near Fredericktown, Mo. She was born Jan. 24th, 1842, and was a daughter of Burdett O. Allen, an Old School Baptist minister. She was married June 9th, 1859, to Thomas Hill, who was killed in the Confederate army. She was married Nov. 3rd, 1889, to Jasper Holladay, who is still living. She had no children or near relatives. Like her father, she was always a believer and devoted to the Old School Baptist cause, having been a subscriber of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years.

(MRS.) W. A. ARMSTRONG.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

ELDERS W. T. Eaton, J. H. McDonald and W. H. Shields formed the presbytery which met by request at Puyallup, Wash., March 25th, 1916, for the purpose of organizing a church.

Elder W. H. Shields was chosen moderator and brother C. Jones clerk.

After examination, they were found to be in order and organized into a church.

The church being organized, the following members were enrolled and business transacted: Elders J. H. McDonald and W. H. Shields, Deacon C. J. Akers, V. L. McDonald, Florence Akers, C. Jones, Thomas Percell, Emma Percell.

Chose the name Puyallup Primitive Baptist Church.

Brother C. J. Akers was chosen for the office of deacon and was ordained, Elder W. T. Eaton offering prayer and Elder W. H. Shields delivering the charge.

This was certainly a pleasant little meeting, for some of us had been without church privileges for twenty-five or thirty years.

C. JONES.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

S. J. Roger, Ky., $1.00; George Harryman, Md., $1.00; Mrs. Wm. Brayton, Iowa, $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Black Rock Church, Butler, Md., beginning on Wednesday, May 17th, 1916. Visitors will be met at Cockeysville, N. C. R. R., on Tuesday p. m. at 4 o'clock. This association in her circular of last year says: "We believe that just as the man Christ Jesus died and rose again, so all his redeemed shall come up from the dead, soul, spirit and body, in the image of their glorified Lord." We still hold this precious Bible doctrine, and cordially invite all those of like precious faith to meet with us at the above named time and place.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Moderator.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., to begin on Wednesday, May 24th, 1916, and continue three days. Those coming from Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore will come via B. & O. R. R. to Newark, Del., on Wednesday morning. Train leaves Philadelphia, Twenty-fourth and Chestnut Sts., at 7:45 a. m., and Baltimore, Mt. Royal station, at 8:25 a. m. Those coming on the Delaware Division of the P. B. & W. will take train that leaves Delmar at 6:52 a. m. Wednesday and get tickets for Newark, Del., changing cars at Porter. Conveyances will be at stations to convey all to place of worship. Ministers and brethren and all lovers of truth of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us and are welcome to our homes.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the First Hopewell Church, Mercer Co., N. J., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the first Sunday in June (May 31st and June 1st and 2nd), 1916.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the New Vernon Church, at New Vernon, Sullivan Co., N. Y., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (7th, 8th and 9th), 1916.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Liberty Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, of Los Angeles, Cal., meets every first and third Sunday in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., at 42nd and Moneta Ave., and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal.

W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor.
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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 84. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1916. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST JESUS:—The Holy Ghost affords strong consolation to the heirs of promise in the gospel of Christ. It is his covenant work to minister the consolations of Christ unto all who are Christ's. They are called, the called of Jesus Christ, and in this fellowship and hope of their calling they are taught that they are but pilgrims and sojourners here in the world, and find their hearts inspired to look beyond the things of earth and time, even into eternity, for the consummation of their blessedness, of which by faith they have foretastes, in Christ Jesus. "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."—Psalms lxxiii. 24. And the apostle Paul at the finishing of his course exclaimed, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."—2 Tim. iv. 8. This expectation of believers in Christ shall not be cut off, and their faith shall not be shipwrecked, for it is the faith of God's elect, of the operation of God; Christ is the author and finisher of it, and it overcomes the world, and we receive the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls. The chosen of God do not die in unbelief, they do not die in despair, they do not die without hope, for "the righteous hath hope in his death."—Prov. xiv. 32. The good hope through grace sustains in the sacred moments of the dissolution of the body. Death is yours, O believer, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's, (1 Cor. iii. 21–23,) and in death we are not separated from the love of our God in Christ Jesus our Lord, (Romans viii. 38,) and this all the ransomed of the Lord shall prove. "These all died in faith."—Heb. xi. 13. They yield up their spirit, as Stephen did, to the Lord Jesus, (Acts vii. 59,) and our spirit in departing from the body in death departs to be with Christ, which, saith the apostle, is far better. (Phil. i. 23.) "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."—2 Cor. v. 8.

"As they draw near their journey's end,
How precious is their heavenly Friend;
And when in death they bow their head,
He's precious on a dying bed."

The finished work of Christ is our soul's

anchor, sure and steadfast, entering into that within the vail, whither our Forerunner is entered, and all the redeemed, his followers, shall arrive there, too, to dwell with our dear Savior in eternal glory. So, dear children of God, we shall not be swallowed up in unbelief when we die. You will not depart in your sins, in hopeless despair; O no, for that would be to disannul the everlasting covenant of grace, ordered in all things and sure. Therein God says, "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."—Jer. xxxii. 40. The believer in our Lord Jesus Christ lives whilst he is dying; he lives through all the ordeal of the dissolution of the body, the earthly house of this tabernacle, and when his body lies cold in death he lives. The shaft of death, which is by sin, cannot reach us in our life, which is hid with Christ in God. O, when the believer departs from this world and leaves "this trembling house of clay" his soul and spirit in departing are received by our covenant Head, Jesus Christ. Christ said unto Martha, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" This was not spoken of the bodies of believers, as the preceding verse shows: "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live;" meaning that the body, though dead, should be raised up again, immortal and incorruptible, at the last day, as Jesus taught in John vi. 39, 40, 44, 54, and Martha believed. (John xi. 24–26.) But the soul does not sleep, or die, when the body dies. This our dear Savior has most explicitly taught us, saying, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."—Matt. x. 28; and in Luke xii. 4, 5: "And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him." He that believeth on Christ hath everlasting life. Our life is hid with Christ in God. Christ liveth in me, and I in him, and it is blessedly comforting to know that my life, founded in such relationship and unity with the incarnate Son of God, cannot be infringed upon or invaded by any death. Sin and death are in relationship to the first man Adam; but "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."—Psalms cxvi. 15. (I hope to trace a little later how and why this is precious.) Our bodies die. "The body without the spirit is dead."—James ii. 26. So it is written, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."—Eccl. xii. 7. "The righteous perisheth [dieth], and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds [their bodies sleeping in the dust of the earth], each one walking in his uprightness."—Isaiah lvii. 1, 2. Their spirits are with Christ in paradise with God. "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."—Luke xxiii. 43. The martyr Stephen when dying exclaimed, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God; and they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud

voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge, and when he had said this he fell asleep, and devout men carried Stephen to his burial and made great lamentation over him. They did not bury his spirit with his body, for his spirit was not stoned by his persecutors; they could not kill his spirit. His spirit departed, and was received by the Lord Jesus. Stephen in his body is buried in the dust of the earth, and Stephen in his spirit is with Christ in heaven. How sacred is the narrative in Deut. xxxiv. 5, 6: "So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And he buried him in the valley in a land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." We read in Jude, ninth verse, "Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee." But Moses' spirit did not die in his departure from his body. No such thing is taught in the holy Scriptures as the sleep or death of man's spirit when the body dies. Man's spirit was not formed of the dust of the earth, and does not go with the body to the earth as it was, but is separated from the body in death. So we read of Jacob's wife, Rachel: "It came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died,) that she called his name Ben-oni: but his father called him Benjamin."—Gen. xxxv. 18. And we read, Elijah "cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again. And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth."—1 Kings xvii. 21–23. "Her spirit came again."—Luke viii. 55. So we find on the mount of transfiguration that, "Behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem."—Luke ix. 30, 31. When the incarnate Son of God, the Head of the church, gave himself a sacrifice for our sins, and he through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, he gave himself, in his manhood, soul and body, a sacrifice for the sins of his people. Thus we read, "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."—Isa. liii. 10–12. In 1 Peter ii. 24: "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." (See Heb. x. 5–10; Col. i. 22.) Come, poor sinners, and behold Christ the Lord, the man of sorrows, in Gethsemane. O, there our Emmanuel exclaimed, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. He poured out his soul unto death, and "being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Thus in soul and body Christ once suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, to bring

us to God. David speaketh concerning Christ: "I foresaw the Lord always before my face; for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." Read Acts ii. 23–36, and the Holy Ghost give you understanding. Christ upon the cross said, "It is finished," and "with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost," and there hung his sacred, holy body upon the cross in death. The human spirit of his verily human body, of the seed of Abraham, which the Son of God took upon him in his incarnation, departed, and thus our Lord Jesus Christ by the power of his own eternal Godhead gave up the ghost, lay down his life that he might take it again. "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." Only the God-man Christ Jesus could say this.

"Divinity back to his frame
The life he had yielded restored,
And Jesus entombed was the same
With Jesus in glory adored.

No nearer we venture than this,
To gaze on a deep so profound,
But tread, whilst we taste of the bliss,
With reverence, the hallowed ground."

Shall we say the soul of Christ, which was not left in hell, and his spirit which he commended and gave up into the hands of the Father, that his soul and spirit slept in death after the crucifixion, during the time that his incorruptible body slept in death three days and three nights in Joseph's new tomb, until the resurrection upon the first day of the week? Christ Jesus, our dear Redeemer, taught otherwise in his comforting answer to the crucified, dying thief. "Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."—Luke xxiii. 43. This the apostle declares to be the third heaven. (2 Cor. xii. 2–4.) The Sadducees were veritable materialists, annihilationists, they knew not the Scriptures nor the power of God. They taught that when men died there was no more future being to them than there is to dead animals, birds of the air, creeping things and fishes of the sea. "For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both." It was in relation to these matters that Paul cried out in the council, "Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question."—Acts xxiii. 6–8. The elect and redeemed of the Lord are said when they die to "sleep in Jesus." They are "fallen asleep in Christ." They are the blessed dead which die in the Lord. They are described as the dead in Christ. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."—1 Thess. iv. 16–18. The elect of God during the time of their earthly sojourn are called unto the fellowship of God's dear Son, and by the work of the Holy Spirit in their souls are joined to Jesus Christ, their living, heavenly, spiritual, new covenant Head. They are believers in Christ, and have everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but are passed from death

unto life. They are in experimental vital union with Jesus. "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."—Eph. v. 30. And so they live by faith during their earthly pilgrimage in union with Christ, and in this relationship and order they die, they "sleep in Jesus," to awake at the last trump, to arise to everlasting life, in the image and order of their Head, Jesus Christ, the last Adam, the Word made flesh, the Lord from heaven. "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's, at his coming." With the ungodly, the nonelect, it is not thus. When they die they are not "fallen asleep in Christ," they are unredeemed from their relation to and sin in the first man Adam, and die in their sins, in unbelief, in condemnation, under the curse of the law. Christ said, "I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come." "For if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."—John viii. 21, 24. In this order and relationship and image they die, and in this image they shall arise when the voice of the Lord shall call them forth from the graves to the resurrection of damnation, (John v. 29,) to shame and everlasting contempt. (Daniel xii. 2.) God shall despise their image, and these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal. (Matt. xxv. 46.) There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust, (Acts xxiv. 15,) and as a man dies so in the resurrection he shall arise, every man after his own order. All the elect of mankind are redeemed by Christ's precious blood from the curse of the law. He, their new covenant Head, has put away their sins by the sacrifice of himself, they therefore do not (as unbelievers do) die in their sins. Christ is the author and finisher of their faith, all the ransomed church therefore die in faith. Christ "died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him."—1 Thess. v. 10. "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living."—Romans xiv. 8, 9. When Christ confuted the Sadducees he told them they knew not the Scriptures nor the power of God, and said, "Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, [the Sadducees neither believing in the resurrection of the dead, nor in angel or spirit, taught that in death man's being suffered annihilation] but of the living: for all live unto him."—Luke xx. 37, 38. The Savior did not teach in this that the resurrection was consummated, past already with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, for that would contradict several explicit testimonies of the Scriptures, and the Scriptures cannot be broken. Christ himself was yet to suffer, and to be the first that should rise from the dead. (Acts xxvi. 33.) Jesus Christ is the first begotten of the dead. He is the Head of the body, the church, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he might have the preeminence. The members of Christ's body, the church, are not risen before himself, who is the Head of the church. This is not the order of the resurrection of Christ and the church. But

every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward they that are Christ's, at his coming. (1 Cor. xv. 23.) Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus. O believers in Emmanuel, are not our souls sometimes in earnest expectation of this glorious liberty and manifestation of the children of God? For it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we shall then be released from the bondage of corruption, triumphant over the grave; we shall come forth immortal, incorruptible, changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ. We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is, and in the redemption of our body from death, corruption and the grave, and our glorified spirit united again to our then glorified body, we shall in our whole spirit and soul and body be holy and blameless before our God in love, conformed to the image of Christ, our Husband and Redeemer, the heavenly One. The apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost preached that David foresaw the resurrection of Christ, and Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, taught that David was not risen from the dead, saying, "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day." "David is not ascended into the heavens." —Acts ii. 29, 34. And this is recorded of Abraham: "These are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years. Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people. And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre."—Gen. xxv. 7–9. It could in truth be said of Abraham as it was declared of David, he is both dead and buried, his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Abraham is not ascended into the heavens, his resurrection was not past already. But Abraham, Isaac and Jacob all live unto God, saith Christ. They are not annihilated, as the mocking Sadducees taught. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in their bodies are sleeping in the dust of the earth, yet in their souls that departed in the dissolution of their bodies they are living together with Christ in glory, and the language of Christ, who is the resurrection and the life, is as verily applicable to the patriarchs as unto all other saints. Jesus said, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"—John xi. 25, 26. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in their sleeping bodies are asleep in the dust of the earth, but in their departed spirits; absent from their bodies they are present with the Lord, and as with all the departed saints, whose deaths are precious in the sight of the Lord, they live with Jesus Christ in heaven; they all live unto him. Jesus died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him; and the bodies of the dead in Christ, now sleeping in the dust of the earth, sleep in hope of a glorious and triumphant awaking to everlasting life and glory at the coming of Christ at the last day. The ransomed and glorified spirits of his saints, whose bodies sleep in the dust of the earth, shall come with our Lord Jesus Christ at his second and personal coming. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even

so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."—1 Thess. iv. 14–18. The glorified spirits of those who have fallen asleep in Christ shall in that moment take possession of and be united again to their resurrected bodies, spiritual, immortal, in power and glory, and the believers in Christ who are alive, and remain when our Lord Jesus Christ shall come, shall in that moment be changed and put on immortality and incorruption. O how comforting and glorious is the doctrine! Saith the apostle, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

"I shall be with him when he comes
  Triumphant down the parting skies,
And when his voice breaks up the tombs,
  Among his children I shall rise.

Among his children I shall stand
  When quick and dead his throne surround,
Blest with a place at his right hand,
  And with immortal glory crowned."

When in death we are putting off this tabernacle, which, saith Peter, I must do shortly, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me, (2 Peter i. 14,) when the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, and the soul is in departing, to be with Christ, which is far better than to abide in the flesh, and when in dying the Lord Jesus receives our spirit, this is not the resurrection of the dead. To so teach is to ignore the teachings of the Scriptures of the resurrection of our mortal bodies to immortality and incorruption at the last trump, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. This would also signify that our "bodies which are the members of Christ," and are bought with a price, had perished forever in the dust of the earth. But, believer, thy body and spirit are Christ's, and in hope of the resurrection we are in earnest expectation, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."—Romans viii. 9–11. There is no cessation or break in the continuity of the power and blessedness of the life of the spirit of the believer in Christ Jesus. Absent from the body we are present with the Lord. In death we are not sep-

arated from him, and God's love to us in Christ Jesus. "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." We depart in the death of our body to be with Christ, which is far better. The apostle Paul, a man in Christ, was caught up to the third heaven, into paradise, whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell; God knoweth. (2 Cor. xii. 1-4.) Therefore in the abundance of the revelations given unto him he knew, beyond many, how far better it was to depart and to be with Christ, and the psalmist in the comfort of his hope exclaims, "But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave; for he shall receive me."—Psalms xlix. 15. The enemies of the cross of Christ mind earthly things, but "our conversation [citizen state of life] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."—Phil. iii. 18-21. How blessed! This is the faith of the gospel, and when at Christ's coming all the ransomed church in their whole spirits and souls and bodies shall be blameless in love before him, conformed to his image, caught up to meet our Lord Jesus Christ, and we shall be forever with him.

"Then shall the church, the Lamb's own bride,
Both crowned and seated by his side,
Outshine the sun's meridian ray;
While Jesus, smiling at the sight,
Shall then, with a supreme delight,
The travail of his soul survey."

In hope of the resurrection of the dead, I am your brother and companion in Christ's gospel,

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

HAMMOND, W. Va., March 15, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed find a letter written by Elder C. M. Hood, of Nashville, Tenn., and if you think proper you can give it a place in the SIGNS. I have been with Elder Hood and I have stayed at his home in Nashville, have heard him preach, and I think he is an able preacher, and I hope you will publish his letter, so others may read what he believes out there in Nashville. I have traveled among their churches and associations, and Elder J. M. Perkins and they are a sound body of brethren and sisters. God rules and reigns, a God of purpose, and none can stay his hand.

J. W. LINN.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Feb. 17, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER LINN:—Your letter to hand last night, and I read what you had to say, and feel that I know you wrote better this last time than you did before on the subject of the strong city. Now, do not think I mean that what you wrote before was not good, for it was, but we can get at things better sometimes than we can at others; that is, we are given more or better light, and, again, I may have been better prepared to look into it than I was before. Anyway you fix it the Lord must do the showing or nothing will be seen, for we read that he hath hid these things from the wise and the prudent and revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. These are the words of Jesus, and he thanked his Father that it was even so. Well, we are taught down here by the people that there are no mysteries in the word of God, but by searching we can see and find out the Lord to perfection. Such a thing is evidence to my mind that these things are hid from them, if no more, for they do

not seem to understand that such a position is an absolute denial of the words of Jesus Christ, which are as plain as letters can express, yet it is not so plain to them that they can see it and accept it. Now, when a person is in that fix it shows that he is standing in awful darkness, not only so, but in the power of it. Darkness itself is not so awful if we are acquainted with the surroundings; if we know the surroundings we can grope along and find the way, but where there is ignorance of the surroundings that is the power of the darkness. When that is the case, the darkness has power over us, and we do not know when we are going to fall into the ditch, for we do not know where the ditches are, nor how many there are. It is a dangerous thing to be traveling around under such conditions, and one would better be standing still than to be moving about, and any one sensible of the condition will stand still until he gets help or light from some source. I feel that though God's people may be feeling that they are walking in darkness and have no light, they are the very ones that are sensible of it, hence they are the people you will find standing still; they are afraid to move unless the Lord himself gives the light and the strength to move. These people are called by the spark-kindlers, do nothings, and idlers, and they say that they are in the way and hinder others from walking and doing the things that God commands us to do. Now if these people have the truth then Old Baptists are very far away from the track, and when you investigate the strength of their city you will find it ready to topple over, and they are attempting to hold it up with their own hands. They are so blinded and in such wonderful darkness that they do not know, but think that they are shielded by a strong city. But God's people are just the reverse; they know that the city of God is a strong city, but they do not know that they are citizens of that city, hence they are going slow, and must not be driven by men, if they are they will perish in one day. They would not last long, for they are young and very tender, and must be nourished by the great King who is the strength of this strong city. O how they do like to feel under the influence of the Spirit and grace of God, that they belong to this strong city. They are found beggars, not for the things of time and sense, but for a better knowledge and understanding of themselves in the light of God's light. They are not trying to kindle a fire and walk in that kind of light, they are afraid of such light as that, and they are very certain they must have the true light that lighteth every man that is a citizen of that strong city. They are fully aware of the fact that there is only one light of that city, and Jesus Christ is that light, so it needeth not any other light, the sun, nor the moon, nor the stars. We have people here in this city who call themselves shining lights, and are proud of the name, while it is plain to me that they are as ignorant of the true light as an infant is of anything. Now, dear brother, I may not know the truth as it is in Jesus, but what I think I know is far different from what others say they know, and we are not alike at all, and cannot mix, and they do not even understand why I cannot do that. They cannot see why two differences as far apart as we are in their make-up cannot mix together. Does not that prove they do not understand what the Bible means when it says, How can two walk together except they be agreed? Old Baptists, or the citizens of that strong city, are not asking those people to mix

with them, they do not want them, and we could not walk together, because we are not agreed, whether they know it or not. The reason we have a strong city is our oneness, or likeness; that is, all see alike, all are looking to the same source, and do not expect help or strength from any one but the great King. You have said so many good things about this city that I am persuaded that you are a citizen of the city; you certainly do know much about it, and you make me feel that I would give anything in the world just to know that I am a citizen of that wonderful city of the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. No wonder the poet would say, "Glorious things of thee are spoken, Zion, city of our God." "Blest inhabitants of Zion." O to be such an one is a wonderful blessing, translated from the kingdom of sin and wickedness into the city of Zion, the city of God, where Jesus himself is the light thereof, and it does not need any other light, for he himself is their light, and they walk all day in this light, and there is no night there, all just one eternal day. O it is so wonderful, I get lost in admiration. I do not know what to say, I cannot express it in words, words will never tell of its beauties and wonders. Paul speaks of the church as the "saints in light." I think that he must refer to those of the church who are gone from us and are now dwelling in light. He calls upon the church to give thanks unto the Father, who hath made them meet to be partakers of that rich inheritance. What a wonderful thing it is to be fit, for that is what he means by the word "meet," it is our being made fit. How? are we fit in ourselves? No, but our fitness is Jesus; no one else. If we are citizens of that strong city, it is because of his fitness, and not ours, only as it is imputed unto us by the Father, who imputeth not our sins to us, because of his eternal choice of us in his Son before the world began, and that to the end that we might be holy and without blame before him in love. So you see that love, nothing else but love, is the moving cause of all this wonderful work of the eternal God, through the gift of his own dear Son. Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God. The manner of love is what the apostle is calling our attention to; what is the manner of this love? We were enemies by wicked works. While enemies, Christ suffered and died, and then God's Spirit came, and that while we were yet enemies, and bestowed that love on us and changed us from hatred of God unto love of him and his cause. That is the manner of the love of God as bestowed on poor sinners of Adam's race, doomed under the curse and wrath of God's holy law, and that when they did not know it. Now, behold that wonderful love as it fell from God's eternal throne of holy justice into the hearts of his poor children, to make them manifestly heirs of that eternal inheritance of the family of God. How its bestowal on us melts us to tears and shame for being such bitter enemies, and how our many sins and awful crimes shed the blood of our Elder Brother on the tree of the cross. O wonderful indeed is this great love wherewith he hath loved us, in all our sins, and the guilty state that we were in by nature. Who could have ever devised such a wonderful way as this to save poor sinners from all their filth but the eternal God? Not even the angels themselves could ever have made so wonderful arrangement, or even thought of such a thing. They were not even allowed to look into it. God did not even reveal it unto the fathers, only in types

and shadows, but he revealed it unto his apostles, and since then unto the church which is his body. The old patriarchs received it by faith, and they saw it afar off and embraced it, did not see it in its fulfillment, but they all died in faith. This, the apostle Paul says, was the mystery of his will which was hid from them. O, wonderful indeed are God's ways with man, how unsearchable they are, and past finding out, and yet men say they are by close searching finding them out more to perfection every day. That is the difference, and what has made this difference is the bestowal of this wonderful love by the grace of God. It is this work that separates the citizens of that strong city from the citizens of a weak city that is crumbling with its using day by day, and in the end will crumble to pieces.

You see I am answering you promptly, because I want to see you and talk with you, and as I cannot I must write. May the good Lord add his rich blessings to you. Pray for me, a poor, guilty sinner, when you are at God's throne of mercy in prayer in the spirit. Write soon. Give my love to all.

Yours in bonds and chains,

C. M. HOOD.

WHEELING, W. Va., March 17, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—It is seldom that I feel courage given me to write direct for publication, but now that I am unable to write to the individual writers I feel to make the attempt, although in much weakness. I have been confined to my bed most of the time during the past two weeks. I took cold, which taxed my little remaining strength greatly. I seem to be in a bad state physically, but feel to leave it all with the great Physician. I have the SIGNS here on the bed by me, and have read it all. I want to thank sister Bessie Durand for sending the letters of sister Lefferts. I read them with unusual comfort, and, I hope, consolation of spirit, her every word seemed so good and sweet to me, and as I read her words I was reminded of Paul's words to Timothy: "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also," &c. I was putting Elder Lefferts in Timothy's place; I thought it was plain to be seen that it was the same faith reaching forth from his dear mother to him; and he goes on in this same first chapter of second Timothy with such loving admonition to Timothy, and as I read it I felt that it must comfort Elder Lefferts as though it were addressed to him personally. But I am too weak to say all that stirs in my heart.

Elder Keene's letter is very good; I feel there is much truth in his words. This morning when I awoke I began to cast about in my poor, confused mind, and found a great hungering after the Holy Spirit. How well I knew it would supply all my needs, and I tried to remind our blessed Advocate that he had encouraged us to pray for it, and directly, as I made my feeble moan to him, my heart was melted, tears were flowing, not for myself, but for the dear saints scattered abroad upon the face of the earth. O how earnestly I besought his mercy for his poor and afflicted people which he had left in Zion, and I thought of how they alone of all the earth know that all power is of God, and have no confidence in the flesh, and yet there are many in the world who know nothing of the power of God, yet there seems to be a kind spirit in them. My next door neighbor is a Roman Catholic, but I find her a dear, good friend in

my time of dire need. She comes to see me every day, although she has many household cares, and now that their Lenten season is on she has to attend their services once or twice a day, yet the dear soul finds time to visit the sick Protestant, and I love her, although I love not her religion. I know that God can put it into her heart to be kind to me, even as he caused the ravens to feed Elijah. I think of all the dear sisters with whom I have corresponded. I received a letter from sister Bessie Durand yesterday, but was then too ill to read it, but I read it this morning, and found much love and sympathy in it. She laments her inability to express her thoughts. I can assure her that I am deep in that condition. I can only hint at what I want to express, my thoughts are so light and flitting, just surface play, but this is as much as my lame head can bear, as my deep, heartfelt emotion causes great nervous exhaustion or excitement, as the nerves pound and flutter almost to suffocation, and my ears throb painfully. When I have felt a desire for more of the knowledge of God in his dealings, that I might see his wonders in providence and grace, the answer comes, You are too weak, you could not bear it, and how well I am assured that this is true.

I am resting and writing between times. I saw many letters in this number (March 15th) that stirred a desire in me to write each one. Elder H. B. Jones' letter is good; indeed, all that I have read seem unusually good to me. Brother Fisher's few remarks, describing his cold and lifeless state, brought the tears to my eyes, for I was in the same condition. I am glad he sent Miss Shepard's letter, for it was deeply interesting to me.

Dear brethren and sisters, I sent my letter two weeks ago, but failed to inclose all the pages, and when I found out my mistake I wrote the publishers to consign it to the waste-basket, as I did not feel that it was worth a place in the SIGNS, but yesterday received a few kind words from them, telling me to send on the missing pages, but still I do not think I could have gathered courage to do so had I not read Elder Ker's letter in the April 1st number of the SIGNS. This letter of his is very good and so comforting. As he so well says, brethren and sisters composing the body of our blessed Lord and Savior are very closely united, and it is good to be reminded of that fact often. I feel thankful for his kind and truly comforting thoughts on this matter. I always fear that what I write is too personal, too much about myself. I enjoyed Elder Durand's article in this number, also Elder J. S. Corder's letters, especially his views on Psalms lxxvi. 10. Mrs. S .G. Frazee's letter is good, also many others, or, I might say, all others, for I never fail to find the truth that I love set forth by each writer's pen.

I am thankful to say that my health has improved, so that I am now able to be up and about the house all day. Our daughter-in-law is with us now, and this lifts the burden entirely from my hands. I ask the prayers of all who read this weak effort. I want you all to know that I love you dearly for the truth's sake, and for your gracious condescension to the very least, if one at all. I feel truly and sincerely thankful to the dear brethren and sisters who have written to me, for my communion with the saints has been my greatest comfort, but of late I have feared that our love for each other was waxing cold, then I wondered if it can be the creature part of it that seems to be on the wane. We can hardly tell how much of it is on fancy's side, or how much is

real. We seem to be living in an age of confusion and wonder, and it may only exist in my own frail mind, but such is my case. I ask the prayers of all who may read this weak effort.

I want to say to Elder Lefferts that I felt truly glad he was moved to speak or write on "visions." I have read it over twice, and every word is sweet and savory to my taste.

I want to tell of the comfort I have had since lying here on my bed of sickness, by many sweet hymns coming and dwelling in my mind, and as I repeat the words in my mind I seem to hear them sung by a man's voice far off in the distance, and sometimes the voice is accompanied by a deep and powerful bass. The hymn that I hear oftener than any other is: "O how I love Jesus, because he first loved me." I hear it now as I write. I have no idea why this is so, and wonder much if my imagination paints it so. I would like to hope that it is God's mercy to a poor, lonely sinner.

With much love, and best wishes for all, I am, as ever, your unworthy sister,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

IONA STATION, Ontario.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—This is my dear husband's experience. He wrote it out in the year 1880, and I have copied it and send it to you. He felt it came far short of telling his feelings, but perhaps after he had gone from this world it could be put in the SIGNS.

Your sister in sorrow and hope,

CATHERINE McALPINE.

IONA, Ontario, Jan. 12, 1880.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I have not been very well for a few days with a bad cold, I feel a desire to write a few lines upon my past life. I came into this world a sinner like all the human race, and followed by it from day to day, and expect it to follow me as long as time is with me here, and, dear friends, I have to say that when I was a young man, between sixteen and twenty years of age, I was brought to see myself an awful sinner in my own sight before God. I was plowing at one time, and how I implored and prayed for mercy, and really thought I would lose my mind, and what to do I did not know. I would at times go with young company and see if that would ease my mind, I felt so low in spirit, and tried in that way to get rid of the load that was weighing me down from day to day. I would read the Bible to see if I could find any relief, but there was no relief there for me. I knew the law said, If you are guilty of one sin you are guilty of all, and I was made to know that I was a sinner of the deepest dye before my Savior, if I had one. How many nights I laid awake thinking what was going to become of me I cannot remember, but one night I can well remember: I went to bed, and in a short time an awful feeling came over me, words fail to tell it: I thought I was going to die and to be sent to the bottomless pit, and at the same time I felt it was my just due. I cried out at the top of my voice, and this brought my mother to my bedside to see what was the matter with me. I told her I was a lost and ruined sinner before God. I got out of my bed and took the Bible, to see if I could find anything to comfort me. Everywhere I read it would condemn me, so I concluded it was weakness of mind. I thought I would go out in gay company and see if I could get rid of the great load that was upon my mind, but that did no good; every time that I did anything that I thought was wrong I would have to suffer for it. I quite well remember going

to a Masonic ball one night, bought my ticket and stayed till supper was over, but could not stay any longer, I was in such grief. I gave my ticket to one of my chums, and went home, without going on the floor once, to mourn and weep the rest of the night. I went on in this way for a number of years, hardly knowing what was the matter with me, only that I was a great sinner before the just and holy God, who could not look upon sin. My brother Dan and I always went to the quarterly meetings, and while at one of them, at Duart, Elder J. F. Johnton took up my case and told me all things better than I could. "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" I felt that Christ was in that sermon to me, and at the close of the meeting he said he could see many at the meeting who were living outside of their privileges. I felt that I was one of them at that time, and one of his people that he referred to, but went home disappointed, as I had to go many times. I felt those people were without sin, and I a poor sinner, they were so pure and I so sinful, and to belong to such a people I would have to tell them how good I was, and that I did not possess, though I daily begged for it. I felt I was nothing but bruises and sadness from the top of my head to the soles of my feet. I thought if I married and settled in life that I could lead a better life. I could leave off young company, and in that way could seek my dear Savior. But, dear friends, all through those years I sometimes had joyful times, feeling the presence of my Savior. I at one time was driving my team by the side of the woods, and I thought I was with my Savior, in his arms. I knew nothing about my team or myself, I was lost as regards this world and its charms. But O that lasted but for a moment, and when I came to myself how sad and sorrowful to leave such glorious company. At another time I was bemoaning my sad case, and imploring mercy, and at break of day the words came to me, As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. I truly felt those words applicable to me, for I really felt I was panting for the living stream whereof maketh glad the city of our God. I did not know those words were in the Bible. I got up out of bed and took my Concordance and found them in the forty-second Psalm. O what comfort it gave me, my soul was made exceeding glad, that I was made to sing praises to my dear Savior for giving me such a wonderful blessing, he so holy, and I could feel his presence in my very being. I thought after that I would live a different life, but my sins still followed me, yet felt hope had sprung up in my life. After a few years it was made manifest that my wife was a subject of grace, and she united with the church, and the dear brethren wanted me to come with her, they told me they could see the mark, but no, I could not take such a sacred step, having nothing good to tell them, and to deceive those good people I could not. We came home, and I was somewhat delighted, and in another way cast down. I felt in my very soul that I would like to join those people. I went to bed, but not to sleep. The night was passed in imploring that I might be directed in his holy way in all I did. Just as the sun was rising in the morning the words came to me regarding those who came to John when he was baptizing in Jordan, simply confessing their sins. My poor soul was made to rejoice, and I felt then that if I had the church I could tell them of his goodness and mercy, and that was enough,

But to my surprise an uncle and aunt came to see me shortly after that to have a talk with me, but I was so dark in mind I could not say one word to them about religion. When uncle was bidding me good-bye he asked me how my mind was with regard to the next meeting. I said I did not know. He said to me he hoped the Lord would give me strength to follow his commandments. When the quarterly meeting came we went, and on Saturday I was given strength to go and tell what great things the dear Lord had done for me, and was baptized at the same time.

DUNCAN McALPINE.

[THE obituary of brother McAlpine was published in the May 1st issue of the SIGNS.—ED.]

HEBREWS VII. 26.

"FOR such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens."

Two points I wish to notice just here are, first, the condescension of Deity in the person of his Son, namely, He "became us." Second, he "was made higher than the heavens." It might be well to notice the priesthood of the tribe of Levi, that the law made these high priests, and they made their offerings under the law for themselves and for the sins of the people. Every high priest under the law offered ofttimes the same sacrifices, which could never take away sins, but only served as shadows of good things to come, &c. These offerings stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation, or until the time came when the great High Priest must come of the tribe of Juda, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. This unchangeable priesthood that must come was a secret to the priesthood under the law, and it must be remembered that those high priests under the law were often removed by reason of death, and all their offerings for sins could not save a poor sinner. "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." The law demanded perfect obedience, but it was weak through the flesh, i. e., men could not attain unto it by law. So there must be a better way, a better covenant to make the comers thereunto perfect, and it must come through the vail, through the flesh, but it must be established upon better principles, hence the first must wax old and vanish away. Now Jesus "became us." He is not like the other high priests, for he is God in the flesh. Became us an unchangeable Priest, an unchangeable priesthood, manifest in Jesus, made a Priest after the order of Melchisedec, after the order of God, an eternal priesthood, without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life Yes, a new and living way now is revealed. Christ "became us." Here is Deity now manifested in Jesus, an independent God showing forth his purposes in the great victory in our salvation. Only one Priest, only one offering, by which he forever perfected them that are sanctified. This is by a new and living way, yet old, and according to God's eternal purpose, which he purposed in himself. The old covenant was a covenant of works, and demanded full payment at the hands of its subjects. This new, and yet old, covenant is a covenant of works also, but all of its demands were fulfilled in Jesus the High Priest. God had a purpose in the law, or first covenant, and was not disappointed. It served to the "purifying of the flesh," but could not take away sin; but served as a shadow of better things. So the things in the heavens had to be

cleansed with a better sacrifice. Jesus "became us." He died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and rose again for our justification. He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. All this was determined of Deity before the world began. Look at the combined powers that came against this High Priest, beginning at the manger. "There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." All things were put under his feet. Ah, what a victorious work in our High Priest! In his obedience the church stands; she is presented holy and without blame before him in love. He has presented her as having no spot, wrinkle or any such thing. He has satisfied the demands of the law. He imputes his righteousness unto her without works. "Blessed are [not will be] they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Now we are not under the law, but under grace. Jesus arose from the dead and came forth, made higher than the heavens. He is now at the right hand of God making intercession for us according to the will of God. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Paul says, I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, powers nor principalities, height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God. This is salvation, complete, by the one offering, and by the one High Priest, one who is mighty to save. This is the better covenant, "the sure mercies of David," "the bright and morning star," "the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." God made this covenant in eternity, swore to it, and sealed it with the blood of his darling Son. What can hinder the salvation of the elect of God? Has not God in the person of his Son put away sin by the sacrifice of himself? I conclude that the grand old church of God stands in the finished work of Jesus.

"Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved, to sin no more."

If this is not true, then I am ruined.

Your most unworthy brother, if one at all,

J. R. HATCHER.

McEWEN, Tenn., March 5, 1916.

WASHINGTON, D. C., March 17. 1916.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—I have had a desire for weeks to write to you and tell you how much I have missed the pleasure of being at dear old Frying Pan and meeting with the dear brethren and sisters, yet I know I have more than I deserve, and hope, O so often, that God will keep me from finding fault with the things he has seen fit to put upon me. I have had some sad, lonely hours in the last few years, and I know not that which the future has in store for me. For the past year I have been in a dark state, with only now and then a glimpse of that hope which I have had since a mere child. I am not like many others, I scarcely know when that hope began. Years ago when a child, I was the most disobedient child my father had. Now I feel I am the most disobedient child my heavenly Father has, if one at all. When I look in my heart, I see nothing but sin; in my mind, ugly thoughts, and am made to cry, Lord, save, I perish. Then again, I sometimes hope that his dear hand leads me. Lou told me that you and others had asked after me, and how humble that made me feel, for I know myself better than others know me. Sometimes in my loneliness I think all these things are for my good. I get dependent when I real-

ize how helpless I am for even one blessing, it must be given me from the Fountain-head. This morning I felt so light for a little while, I just felt to be still and know that he is God. At times I am made to pray, I hope, that he will keep me down and make me say, "Thy will be done." It is not an easy matter to have those words come from the heart. Only now and then when I am down in the depths, or after a long night, in the morning when the light shines forth I am able to seek the Giver of all gifts. I try to pray that he will guide my steps, keep me from temptation and give me strength for all things necessary. When I hear people tell how good they are, and the wonderful things they are doing for God, I shudder, and wonder how they really feel. What kind of presumption is it that people can brag of what they are doing for a God who made this wonderful world, creating all things in it? I wish I might once more sit under the sound of the preaching of the gospel. In God's own good time I will. Overlook all errors in this letter.

Your sister, I hope,

ZORAH COLLINS.

CLAY, La., May 2, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Inclosed find two dollars for my renewal for the SIGNS. I also inclose the obituary of Mrs. Winifred J. Chandler, written by her daughter, and also a part of Mrs. Chandler's experience. She asked me to send it to the SIGNS for publication. I want to take the SIGNS as long as I can pay for it. I have a little hope beyond this world of sin and sorrow, but have many doubts and fears to pass through. Sometimes I come to where it seems that I will have to give it all up, and feel that there is no one like me. I read some brother's or sister's letter in the SIGNS, and O how it revives my poor, drooping heart. I feel for awhile I must write to them and tell them how sweet their letters were to me, but before I get ready to write I feel that they do not want to hear from me, a poor, sinful wretch, not worthy of their friendship. But I am living in hope we will all meet in that bright world above, where Jesus is, above sin and death, where we can sing his praise forever and ever. O happy thought! It lifts me up to things above.

Saved by grace, if saved at all,

J. R. CHANDLER.

EXPERIENCE.

DEAR CHILDREN ONE AND ALL:—I will try to tell you of the trouble I have seen, and you can read when I am dead and gone. When a small girl I had serious feelings about dying; that it seemed I would be lost; then that would wear off, and come back again with more force. I would go to bed and lie there, afraid to go to sleep. I grew worse as I got older, and I would try to pray, but my prayers did me no good. I would take the Bible and seek some lonely place and read, but every word would condemn me. O what trouble I was in. I went on in this way until I was afraid to see a cloud rise, for fear I would be killed and banished from the peaceful presence of my God. I could not say, My God. I would lie down at night, but could not go to sleep for fear I would awake in hell. O how badly I would feel. I thought my father and mother knew how mean I was, and that they could love me no more. When girls would come to see me I would try to talk to them, and when they would leave I would think that I had committed the unpardonable sin. O how I would hate to see the sun set. I would go to preaching,

and go to be prayed for, and then I would think it was a sin; they knew I was too mean to notice. I would think I would go there no more, and would make promises and break them. I would have changed beings with the trees of the woods, even the least worm that had no future being. I thought I had sinned away the day of grace, and that there was no chance for poor me. No one knows the feeling but those who travel the same road. Well, I got to where my life was a burden to me. Father, sister and I were going to meeting one evening, and father told us to go on, that he would overtake us, but I did not want to go on, for I thought I would be killed. I was afraid all the time, and begged sister to wait for father, but she would not wait. We went on to meeting, and it seemed that my heart would burst. I had promised to go to the so-called mourner's bench no more, as their prayers did me no good, but I found myself going, and I thought when they knelt in prayer I was gone if not delivered from that load of sin. The preacher prayed, and I arose from my knees. Now, my children, that was the darkest time of my life. I could feel the darkness. I thought I was gone, and if God had not been with me I never would have seen another day. I had come to the end of the law.

WINIFRED J. CHANDLER.

DEAR EDITORS:—Mother started to write her experience, and was never able to finish it, but I would like to see it in print although it is unfinished.

MINNIE B. CARTER.

(*See obituary on page 317.*)

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April 7, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending you a letter to be published in the SIGNS if you think best. I have brother Mayfield's consent to publish it.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—Your letter of the 23rd ult. at hand, and as I am confined in the house by inclement weather, will try to write you a few lines in reply to your letter. I feel sure we do not disagree that a child of God may sin, nor do I believe we would disagree to put it stronger than "may sin," but that they "do sin," and to their shame and sorrow, for it does not seem possible to me that any one could live free from sin, while in their flesh there is nothing good. It was the experience of one who was inspired to say, The evil that I would not, that I do, and, When I would do good, evil is present with me. I believe this is the experience of all who have been born again, and while they are made subject to vanity, it is not willingly; and how blessed it is that the election of grace is under law to Christ, against whom now they sin, instead of the law of sin and death, from which they were delivered by the sacrifices and shed blood of Christ their surety. They have been delivered from the ministration of death (the first covenant), and are now under the ministration of life, the new covenant, in which God hath said, Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. This to my mind shows God's people do sin, even under the new covenant, but their sins are not remembered against them, as were their sins under the first covenant. Here it is under the new. God will not impute sin. I understand all the sins of God's people were imputed to Christ, and two payments God will not demand, first at our bleeding Surety's hands, and then again at ours. The Jews accused our Savior of casting out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils. This was denying his divinity. Now let me offer here a few thoughts about the sin against the Holy Ghost, because your words that

God's people "sin against Christ," brought this thought to my mind. Here the Savior says, "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Here we have this fact set before us, that all manner of sin and blasphemy, when spoken against the Son of man, shall be forgiven; on the other hand, we have the fact, when spoken against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven; here is the key. The sins of the election of grace are all spoken against the Son of man, because he is their Surety, their Daysman, who stands between them and God, the daysman that Job felt the need of when he said, Neither is there any daysman betwixt us that might lay his hand upon us both. Israel felt the same need when they saw the fire and heard the thunder of Mt. Sinai, and said to Moses, Let God speak to thee, and you to us, and the Lord said, They have well spoken that which they have spoken, for a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things. This is the man that shall be as an hiding place from the wind, a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Paul says, There is one God and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. Now we see the sin of God's people is always spoken against the Daysman, who stands between him and God, or the Holy Ghost, which means God as a Spirit. But the wicked, the nonelect, have no daysman, no mediator, and all their sins are spoken against God, or the Holy Ghost (as I said above), and so hath no forgiveness, for only by the shedding of blood can sin be forgiven; and to my mind, dear brother, what wonders of grace are here taught, in that the dear Savior let those who denied his divinity know that there was but the one way of salvation, and that through a Mediator, and when this we are enabled to see, how precious are the words of Peter: Unto you that believe he is precious. Now let me just add before I close, this same Jesus is exalted a Prince and a Savior to give repentance to Israel, and the forgiveness of sins, and not only in their calling from death unto life, but all along the journey of life he will give his people repentance from all their sins. He had to look upon an erring Peter, and he went out and wept bitterly, so must he do for all his dear blood-bought children, which he will do. It is, I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. Not one blessing comes to them for their good works, either for time or eternity; all is of grace. Amen.

Are we still agreed, dear brother? I will be glad to hear from you, and if I am wrong show me the good and right way. I am so weak and so ignorant. Do not think I am writing as though I could teach you.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

GREENVILLE, Texas, April, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter for publication, if you approve of it, from a friend of mine, Elder J. B. Bowden's wife, and I hope and trust and believe, a sister in Christ, though she has never cast her lot with us, but all may know who read her letter that she ought to. This communication is, in my judg-

ment, too good to keep, it is food to my poor soul, and I think will be to others. If I know anything of the goodness and mercy of God, I believe that she does. If I know anything of the road that God's children travel, I believe that she is traveling it. God's humble poor are cripples, they are all babes, they have no righteousness of their own to commend themselves unto the Lord, neither have they any power to keep themselves, but God alone clothes them with his righteousness and keeps them by his power unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. I have not the consent of our friend to have her good letter published, but do not think she will take offence at me for sending it to the good old SIGNS, where it properly belongs; at least her husband has requested it so.

Love to all the saints of the Lord.

S. M. DICKENS.

COMO, Texas, April 11, 1916.

ELDER S. M. DICKENS—ESTEEMED FRIEND:—I will try, the Lord being my helper, to answer your good letter, for without him we can do nothing, for in him we live, move and have our being. At times I feel he is my help in time of trouble, at other times I feel to be without God. O what a miserable feeling to feel forsaken of the blessed Savior. I go mourning from day to day, and feel so helpless I think surely I must sink in despair. But O what a merciful God; could I but know that he is mine. If God is mine, then present things and things to come are mine. I feel and realize that I am a great sinner, and without him I know I shall sink in utter despair, yet feel to say that if my soul were sent to hell, his righteous law approves it well. I do not feel that I deserve the least of his great mercies. There was a time in my life when I did not feel that I was a sinner; God was not in my thoughts at all; but I have one consolation, and that is, Christ came to save sinners, and if he shed one drop of his precious blood for me I feel that I will be safely housed in that sweet home where sorrow is unknown. But ah, what troubles me most is, Am I one whom he died to redeem? I do not believe there is any power that can separate one of Christ's little ones from him. Paul says, What shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or famine, or persecution? and then says, I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Jesus says, I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am there shall ye be also; so I believe he has a place prepared for them that love him, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. I was reading in Isaiah this morning, and O what sweet and precious promises to His people. When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flames kindle upon thee. The poet who wrote, "How firm a foundation," surely must have been inspired of the Lord to write as he did. I love that good old hymn, it is one of the sweetest ever written. When in great distress of soul we cry unto the Lord, and he hears our cry and saves us out of all our trouble. I wish I could tell you just how I feel, how little and how helpless. O how dependent upon the Lord are we for all things. I feel that I need him every day and every hour all my journey through. Yes, Elder Dickens, I think I realize that

a contented mind is the best thing on earth, for my mind has been at rest, but I cannot say that it is now, always a burden to carry, and sometimes I think I must sink with its weight. It seems that my desire is to be with the dear Old Baptists, but O my unfitness, and as for them loving me, I do not see how it can be possible. I do not feel that I deserve their love.

I will close. I do not feel this is even worth your notice, but will send it.

Your unworthy friend,

(MRS.) M. E. BOWDEN.

TILBURY, Ont., Jan. 16, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I hope this will find you and your dear family in good health. I have had it in my mind to try and write to you ever since I read your article in the December 1st SIGNS. I can truly say I felt sore at heart; I was troubled so I could not sleep that night to think that anything would disturb your mind so much that you would think to stop writing for the paper I so dearly love. I had missed your writing for some time, as I look for something in each paper from your pen. I was glad to see your explanation in the January 1st number. I am also very much pleased with Elder Lefferts' writings, and feel he is a gift from the Lord in the position he fills on the SIGNS. I hope you both may be long spared to wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon. I anxiously wait for each number to come. I have no doubt it is a trial to each of you at times to sit down and write for our dear family paper, for I know how long I have put off trying to write to you to give even a word of encouragement from this poor worm of the dust, feeble as it may be. I can truly say from my heart that I desire the blessing of the dear Lord with each of you as editors, also the dear publishers and all who so ably write for publication. I trust each paper will be well filled to the comfort and edification of each reader. I expect Elder Lefferts is with our people in Duart to-day. How I would love to be under the sound of his voice. I did not feel able to go, as I do not feel as strong as usual since I had the grippe. In mind I am with them, and in spirit praying the blessing of the dear Lord to rest upon both speakers and hearers. My son and his wife have gone, while I am here keeping the children. I have been much favored in getting to our quarterly meetings; in the nearly eleven years that we have been in Tilbury this is the third time I have missed. I need not expect to be able to attend at all times now, as I am to-day entering my sixty-ninth birthday. I can truly say goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, in keeping me from dangers seen and unseen. I have been given to hope in the mercy of God over forty-seven years, and after all those years I feel as weak and in need of sustaining grace as ever. On Friday I felt the sweetness of these words, which are so suitable to my needs:

"O God of Bethel, by whose hand
Thy people still are fed,
Who through this weary pilgrimage
Hast all our fathers led."

"O spread thy covering wings around,
Till all our wanderings cease,
And at our Father's loved abode
Our souls arrive in peace."

I felt yesterday, though so far away from those I love in the Lord, I wished they would sing that hymn in meeting, for I felt in my heart that it is a sweet melody. I hope it will be a sweet and favored season to those who are now favored to meet in the dear Lord's name, wherever they are on earth.

I will now close, desiring the richest blessings of God to rest upon you and your dear family. I hope you may yet come and visit us here in Canada.

I am, I hope, your unworthy sister,

SARAH A. McCOLL.

PORTSMOUTH, Va., Feb. 7, 1916.

DEAR ELDER KER:—Inclosed find money order for fifty cents, for which please mail me six copies of February 15th SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the one containing my dear mother's (Mrs. Carrie C. Hitch's) obituary. I little thought when I renewed her subscription for her in December as a Christmas gift that she would only live to receive one copy. The first time she saw me after it came she said, "O Pinkie (my nickname), I would rather have had it than anything." She had been taking it most of the time for many years, but some time, in the early fall, I think, her subscription ran out, and without saying anything to me she wrote on and had it stopped until a convenient time for her to send on her new subscription, and knowing how she loved it I said to her in December that she should never be without it again. Do you think it wrong to let it keep coming in her name? It nearly breaks my heart to think of having it changed, but if you do, please send it to my brother, E. A. Hitch, at the same address. I live only a few miles from them and get each paper after he reads it. I was at the Salisbury Association with my mother last fall. Do you remember meeting us? She had seemed so well last fall, and just the Sunday before Christmas, three days before she was taken sick, we were out at the little church here (Norfolk), and she was telling some one of the association and the good preaching we heard, and she added, "One sermon is right with me yet," meaning yours, from the first chapter of Romans. I do not remember just how many verses you used, but especially remember the fifteenth and sixteenth. It seemed to me as you talked, it was all very beautiful and so powerful. I think I have never heard you preach but twice, certainly not since I have been grown. Once was at Black Rock, a few months before I was baptized, you spoke from John xix. 26, 27, or a part of it at least. It was away back in 1901, and I was very glad I went out there. I was in Baltimore at the time, and went out with Elder Rowe's son and daughter. Do you ever attend any of the meetings in the south? I wish you might visit our church here, and our home as well. I was once at Elder McConnell's home in New York, and when I met him at Parsonsburg in October I gave him my name and address again, as I had changed both since being at his home, and it seemed so singular that through doing this it reached a Mr. Kugler, a member of the church from Frenchtown, N. J., whose business brought him to Norfolk for some months this winter. His wife is with him now, and we have seen quite a little of them, and enjoy them very much. Mr. Kugler was getting very homesick he said for some of his own people. They are so few and so scattered here he had been unable to locate any of them until some one through Elder McConnell sent him my address. I know they would wish to be remembered to you if they knew I were writing.

Please pardon my writing so much, I only intended writing a short note about the SIGNS, but I have been so lonely and miserable, and I fear so unreconciled to the separation from my mother, that when I write or talk of her I hardly know when to stop. Sometimes I am afraid (when I miss her so much) that if it were possible

I would take her right out of heaven. Now I am sure, Elder Ker, through all your sorrow, your faith was too strong to ever for one moment have felt like that, and I am sorry that I am so weak and selfish, and so different from other Old School Baptists, for though I am numbered with them, I am sure I do not feel that I am worthy to be.

Yours in love and sorrow,

(MRS.) A. V. PEARCE.

OCEAN PARK, Cal., April 7, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—It seems to me I have enjoyed reading the SIGNS more this winter than ever before. I have been taking this dear paper for fifty years, and to-day I find the same sound as when I read the first one—all the same glorious theme: the mercy, goodness, power, honor and glory of our God, of whom is salvation by grace, not of the works of men, lest we boast. I have noticed particularly of the complaint of barrenness of spiritual things, and I must say that I have been made glad in the barrenness of the saints scattered abroad, who write for our dear family paper. Why am I made glad? Because I feel so barren myself that I almost give up sometimes, then when I read of others complaining in the same way I am made to take courage and look beyond my poor, feeble self to the glory which is in Christ Jesus. I want to look away from earth and earthly things and grow in grace and the knowledge of God, the Savior of mankind, but I am so vile, so prone to sin, I fear that I'm not born again.

"When I experience call to mind,
My understanding is so blind,
All feeling sense seems to be gone,
Which makes me fear that I am wrong."

We cannot by searching find out God, but when he reveals himself to us we are made to rejoice in our hearts.

Farewell, and may the Lord abide in the tents of Israel, and lead the lambs beside the still waters, through the green pastures of his love. Cast the mantle of charity over all errors.

(MRS.) J. B. DAWSON.

WILMINGTON, N. C.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I have little inclination, and less talent, to write, but I must tell you that I appreciate and enjoy the SIGNS, which comes regularly, bringing the good news of the salvation of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, speaking the truth in love. May you, with your able associate, Elder Lefferts, be long spared to feed the flock of God by writing, as well as from the pulpit. I remember with pleasure and comfort my two visits among your people some years ago, and how this poor sinner was made to feel at home. I would like very much to see you all again, but whether I ever shall the dear Lord only knows. I am in my weak way trying to serve fourteen churches, and have but little opportunity to get away from home. We would be very glad to have you visit and preach for us. Elders Keene and Rowe were with us at our association last fall.

Affectionately,

E. E. LUNDY.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER B. S. Pate has changed his address from Fairview, Oregon, to Coburg, Oregon.

C. E. Jackson has changed his address from Galion, Ohio, to 447 S. Poplar St., Bucyrus, Ohio.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1916.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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LUKE XVI. 1-13.

BROTHER Dr. J. H. McDonald, of Puyallup, Wash., about a year ago asked us to write on the above portion of Scripture. We did not feel at that time that we could do so, but during the past year we have had some exercise of mind on this Scripture, and will here try to write some of the things that have come into our mind upon this subject, leaving them for brother McDonald's consideration, and that of the other readers of the SIGNS. According to this parable there was a certain rich man which had a steward, who was accused unto him of having wasted his goods. These accusations of unfaithfulness on the part of his steward caused the rich man to demand an accounting of the steward. Knowing he was to be removed from the stewardship for his dishonesty, the steward was at a loss what to do: "What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed." Thereupon he resolves to add to his already unfaithful record more unfaithfulness: "I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses." So he called every one to him that was in debt to his master or lord. One man owed the rich man an hundred measures of oil, another owed an hundred measures of wheat. Now, in order to gain the friendship of these debtors to have something to fall back on in the day of his failure the steward juggles the accounts and fraudulently reduces the indebtedness of these men, to the detriment of the rich man whose steward he is supposed to be. Now when the lord of this steward, that is, the rich man, discovered what the steward had done he commended the unjust steward because he had done wisely. Even though the rich man himself had been defrauded he could not help but commend the wisdom which had prompted the steward to look out for himself. This wisdom so commended by the rich man is the wisdom of this world, and not the wisdom of God. The wisdom of God prompts one to suffer himself to be defrauded rather than defraud another, while the wisdom of this world looks out for self every time, and seeks its own ends through the defeat of others. Right here we are told: The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. This expression does not mean that the people of the world have more of the real true wisdom than have the children of God (light), for none have the real true wisdom but the people of God, but it means that what passes current as wisdom among the children of this world, "in their generation" is more plentiful far among the children of this world than among the Lord's people. If you want to find that which is accounted wise and smart and clever go not among the children of light, but among the children of this world. When it comes to looking out for self, to being resourceful, persevering, self-confident and all-conquering, the man of the world excels the man of God every time. He

has more of that kind of wisdom than has the man of God, for the child of this world is wiser in his generation than is the child of God in the same generation. Now Jesus did not cite this parable to his disciples as an example of what they must do. Jesus is not giving this to his people in this instance as a standard of conduct to be aspired to by them. No, but on the other hand, Jesus cites this instance of the rich man and his steward as showing what his disciples are not to do. While the lord of this steward, who was the rich man, commended the plan of his steward, the Lord of the twelve disciples did not commend any such principle in them, but commanded them to faithfulness, not unfaithfulness, in the unrighteous mammon, that if they were not faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who would commit unto them the true riches? If this steward defrauded his first master, what guarantee had the second master that he would not defraud him, too? "If ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?" The whole idea of the parable is to show how contrary to the true principle of godliness are the principles that pass current for wisdom among the children of this world. Right living in a disciple of Jesus demands faithfulness in the unrighteous mammon (that which is another man's) as a forerunner of faithfulness in the true riches (that which is your own). "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least [as that unjust steward], is unjust also in much." The word "mammon" means riches; the word "unrighteousness" means devoid of or having no righteousness. Therefore, the unrighteous mammon means the wealth in which is no righteousness. It is our view that by the unrighteous mammon, Jesus meant the legal covenant or law of Moses. All the wealth of legalism has not a vestige of righteousness in it, that is, the true righteousness, or righteousness of God. The law, with all its prescribed duties, sacrifices and ordinances, could never make one sinner clean, or give life to the dead. The law abounded in rituals, ceremonies, feasts, fasts and holy days, in offerings for sin and all uncleanness, yet all were unrighteous; not one sinner was made a whit better or more righteous, though he literally observed it all. All the appurtenances of the law which came by Moses constituted its wealth or mammon, and it was unrighteous, because it was intended by God simply as a type, and was utterly without power to bestow righteousness. Every jot and tittle of the law had to be satisfied to make way for the true riches or covenant of Jesus Christ. Jesus was faithful in the unrighteous mammon, he acknowledged the claim of the law against his people as entirely just and true, and paid the whole account, not seeking to minimize it as did the unjust steward. Jesus is therefore the perfection of true and faithful service. In order to come into that true riches which is his own, he rendered faithful service in the unrighteous or legal mammon. When a sinner is brought by the light of God's Holy Spirit to see himself guilty before God, he confesses the law to be just, and all its claims against him true. Now there are men in this world who call themselves servants of God who when they find one who really feels himself to be a sinner, and acknowledges the law's demands just and true, these servants tell such an one to not worry about his sins, that he is not such an awful sinner or debtor as he thinks he is, and that if he will do the best he can God will receive

him and give him a receipt in full, though he makes only part payment. We say there are such men, and many of them in the world to-day, preaching what they call the gospel and serving what they call God, who tell sinners that they are not so deep in debt as they esteem themselves, thus robbing God of his just portion, or seeking to do so. These are the stewards (for so they profess to be) who seek to ingratiate themselves into favor with men by preaching a smooth and easy doctrine and denying or very much minimizing the sinner's debt to divine justice. These stewards, the wisdom (rich man) of this world commends. But that sinner who is brought naked and undone before the law confesses his utter indebtedness, and also his utter inability to pay, that one makes to himself a friend of the unrighteous mammon. If a man owes another a debt, and even though he cannot pay it, yet comes to his creditor and acknowledges the debt and his desire to make it good, even though he cannot, that man makes a friend of his creditor, and wins his respect and compassion. But that man in debt who seeks through cunning and fraud to cheat his creditor out of his just due, brings down upon his head the relentless suspicion of his creditor, who will demand of him the very last cent. Therefore, said Jesus to his disciples, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness." That is just what every disciple of Jesus does. They confess their entire sinfulness and depravity, and their utter inability to measure up to the requirements of the law, yet they acknowledge the entire justness and holiness of the law, and never seek to minimize its demands or to avoid its penalty. These thus make to themselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness. Therefore, when they fail, as every such sinner will inevitably do, and be bankrupt before the law, then are such sinners received into the everlasting habitations, or dwelling-places, of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, into those many mansions in the Father's house prepared through the work of Jesus to receive those who have been faithful in the unrighteous mammon. To be faithful in any capacity requires faith, and to be faithful under the law requires that faith which is the gift of God and the fruit of his Spirit. So when this faith of God is implanted in a sinner's heart it makes him faithful in the unrighteous mammon, and brings him in the day of his failure into the everlasting dwelling-place of the gospel of Jesus. Unless he has this faith to be faithful under the law and all its requirements, he never can be faithful in that which is his own by the grace of God in Jesus Christ. The reason why so many men belittle their sinful condition in which all are involved in Adam, is because they have never been given faith to see themselves the sinners they really are, and the reason why so many so-called stewards rob God of his glory, and minimize man's indebtedness to that God, is because they, too, have not been given faith to understand the law and the dignity of God, and have not faith to separate law from gospel. Not having been faithful in that which is another man's (Moses'), how can they be faithful in the true riches (Christ's)? No servant can serve two masters (Moses and Christ), for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon [legalism]."

We hope brother McDonald will excuse us for not sooner complying with his request.

L.

INFANT BAPTISM.

An Arkansas reader of the Signs, who wants his name withheld, has asked our views on infant baptism. A very few words ought to suffice on this subject. The ordinances of the gospel church, including baptism, are for believers only. Jesus commanded his disciples to baptize none but believers. By belief, we do not mean that which usually passes current in the world to-day as belief, which is a matter of lip only, but we mean that belief which comes from the heart, and is the fruit of faith, the gift of God and the fruit of the Spirit. Philip told the eunuch there was no hindrance to his (the eunuch's) baptism if he (the eunuch) believed with all his heart. Therefore, the belief required as essential to baptism must be a whole-hearted belief, a belief wholly and unreservedly in the wholeness of Jesus as being one's all in all. Such a belief can only be engendered in the soul by the operation and experimental work of the Holy Spirit, and springs from that faith which is derived from God, God-given. Now, as to whether it is right to baptize an infant must turn on the question as to whether that infant is a believer in Christ or not, after the manner of belief as outlined above. There is nothing too hard for the Lord to do, and we see no reason why God is not just as able to reveal his grace in and to an infant of tender years as in and to a man or woman of adult years. Age has nothing to do with baptism. One might be ninety years old and unfit for baptism, because of the absence of that belief which is the work of faith; again, one might be very young and yet have experimental knowledge of grace and the salvation it brings. We think we have personally known of some very young children, in one case an infant not old enough to talk, who died, and in dying acted in such a way as to lead one to no other conclusion than that Jesus was with them and made himself known to them in their last hours. Now if such children were able to make a confession of that which they felt, and expressed a desire for baptism, we see no reason why baptism dared be refused to them. The difficulty is, however, that infants, not being able to express themselves intelligently, cannot make what would be considered a satisfactory acknowledgment of belief, and would not be likely to ask to be baptized, and there is no authority in the Bible for baptizing one against his wish or inclination, whether or no. One might be a real believer, yet until he openly confessed that belief, and expressed a desire for baptism, he could not be baptized. We believe in the cases of some of the Lord's people their exercises of mind began in very early years, indeed so early that they cannot remember when they did begin, but until they were in a position to make confession of that experience they could not be baptized. Therefore we do not believe in the baptism of infants, not because we believe infants incapable of being wrought upon by the Holy Spirit, but because infants, if so exercised, are not capable of such intelligent expression as would be necessary to baptize them. L.

APPOINTMENTS.

Please publish the following appointments and oblige:

Union Grove, Sunday, May 21st, 11 a. m., Morris Faulkner's 8 p. m.; Kelly Corners, 22nd, 8 p. m.; Halcottville, 23rd, 8 p. m.; Vega, 24th, 2 p. m.; Roxbury, 25th, 11 a. m.; Olive, Sunday, 28th, 11 a. m.; evening, Kingston, 58 Smith Ave., 8 p. m.

D. M. VAIL.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Sarah E. Money died March 3rd, in the 87th year of her age. Sister Money was born in Clark County, Ky., was married to the late Albert Money and moved to this country early in the fifties, where they spent the remainder of their lives. To them were born six sons and two daughters, all of whom survive except one son and one daughter. Sister Money united with the old Bethel Church, in Shelby County, in the sixties, and was baptized by the late Elder J. F. Johnson. She and her husband were devoted Baptists, given to hospitality, going far and near to attend meetings. How we miss the old, faithful soldiers of the cross. Truly the cause was in their hearts, and they were found seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. It was thought the immediate cause of death was from a fall, and after a lingering illness of two months she was reduced to a mere skeleton. In this most enfeebled state, a week or ten days before her release she sang with all the vigor of youth, "O for a closer walk with God," &c. It was most wonderful indeed, when she could scarcely speak above a whisper. Heaven no doubt opened before her. She no doubt has entered into the joys of her Lord. She spent the last days of her life at the home of her son, Virginius, where she was tenderly cared for and ministered to.

Her funeral was largely attended at the Grove Hill County chapel the first Sunday in March, where I tried to present the consolations of the gospel to the surviving children and friends.

May the Lord bless, comfort and prepare each member of the family, that the end may be peace, as was the dear mother's.

P. W. SAWIN.

Elder W. V. S. Allen was born in Cocke County, Tenn., March 3rd, 1850, came to Texas when quite young and settled near Keller. He was married to Miss Mary A. Mosley March 19th, 1874, and to that union were born nine children, seven of whom survive, five boys and two girls. In April, 1883, he, together with his companion, united with the Primitive Baptist Church known as Denton Creek, and in May, 1908, was ordained to the full work of the ministry, and was a faithful servant, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and was highly esteemed by the brethren and sisters and loved by all who knew him. It pleased the Lord to call him home April 22nd, 1916, at the age of 66 years, 1 month and 19 days.

Funeral services were held at his residence, Elder Robert Keith, of Blooming Grove Church, officiating. He had selected two hymns from Beebe's collection to be sung, and we tried to sing them. Why should we mourn for our loved ones, when it is the voice of Jesus that calls them to his arms?

TAYLOR BLEVINS.

Francis M. Adams was born in Johnson County, Mo., August 11th, 1838, and died in Orten, Wash., March 21st, 1916, making his stay on earth 77 years, 4 months and 10 days. Brother Adams was reared on the old homestead where he was born. May 21st, 1861, he was united in marriage to Frances J. Dearman. To that union were born eight children; four preceded him in death, and four remain to mourn the loss of a kind and loving father. Sister Adams died Dec. 17th, 1906, since which time brother Adams had made his home with his children. Brother Adams was blessed with a good hope in Jesus many years ago, but for some cause known to God, who gave that hope, he did not unite with the church until August 27th, 1911, when he cast his lot with the Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church called Mizpah, at Touchet, Wash., where he remained a faithful member until death. Brother Adams was stricken with nerve trouble shortly after coming to Washington, which gradually grew worse until it caused his death. This notice will be read by many who knew brother Adams personally, for while he never united with the church while in Missouri, his acquaintance was large, as he loved the dear brethren and sacrificed much to meet with them. He attended the associations and meetings when possible, and his home was the home of his brethren. He was well established in the doctrine of grace.

The children sent a message to the writer to attend the funeral, which he did, and felt a degree of liberty in trying to comfort the mourners with the grand truth that our dear brother had gained a victory over death by entering into it in the triumph of living faith, because he was perfectly reconciled to make the glorious change, in fact prayed the Father to hasten the same. He was laid to rest beside his companion to await the Father's call for the sleeping dust to come forth in immortality.

J. T. BARNES.

Mrs. Susan J. Greenland, whose maiden name was Baird, was born Jan. 12th, 1841, and died May 14th, 1915, aged 74 years, 4 months and 2 days. She was married to Barton Greenland Nov. 16th, 1860, and to that union were born nine children, seven of whom are living, two having died in infancy. In early girlhood mother united with the Methodist denomination, but was not satisfied with their baptism, and found she did not believe as they did. October 27th, 1889, she was baptized by Elder C. L. Funk, and united with the Huntingdon Baptist Church of Trough Creek Valley, and was a loyal Baptist until her death. She seldom talked much on religion, but the life she lived surely spoke more than words that she walked with God and his fear was before her eyes. A few days before she died she asked me to sit beside her bed, as she wanted to talk to me. She told me where to find the text she wanted used at

her funeral, and one hymn: "I would not live alway." She said she had selected another one, but it said "sister," and "you know we are not sure." She told me who she had selected for pall-bearers, and talked over these things as calmly as she would have talked on any other subject. Her patience and ofttimes cheerfulness during many days and nights of suffering, surely speak of sustaining grace. Elder Funk wrote the following in her memory: "She was always in her place at the church when able to be there, and was highly esteemed by all who knew her. She was always willing to lend a helping hand to those in need. She was a great sufferer with bronchial trouble for many years, but bore her suffering with great patience. No mother loved her children more than she did, and her children were all very kind to her, doing all they could to comfort her. She and her daughter, sister Laura, lived together for many years; their home was a pleasant one, and I have spent many restful hours there. We should not sorrow as those who have no hope. We believe our loss is her gain, and hope to meet her where there will be no pain, sickness or death. I was called to attend her funeral, and traveled a long distance to do so, and met with a large, sorrowing congregation. I tried to preach from the twenty-third Psalm, it being her choice. She was laid to rest by the side of her husband, in the beautiful cemetery of the Baptist Church, to await the morning of the resurrection, when God will change our vile body and fashion it like unto his glorious body, and there she shall ever be with him."

LAURA GREENLAND.

Mary Jane Madden, wife of Jehu Madden, died at her home, Three Springs, Pa., Saturday, April 8th, 1916, after an illness of over nine weeks, aged 71 years, 2 months and 22 days. Mrs. Madden had always been a devoted mother, and her absence in the home will be deeply felt. For many years she had been a faithful christian and a member of the Old School Baptist Church located in Springfield township, two miles from her village home. She loved to go to the little meetinghouse, and during her last years when she could no longer go her pastor would sometimes conduct services in her home. During her last illness, in the midst of great suffering, she found much comfort in hymns. She selected for her funeral "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep," "My Jesus, as thou wilt," and "Sweet land of rest, for thee I sigh," all of which were sung on that day. But her greatest comfort was the holy Bible, and she would often repeat many passages that she knew so well. Her memory was filled with gems from the holy Scriptures. But after time's winter had come she longed to join her loved ones who had gone before. Her winter was not cold, for the sunshine of love shone bright in the old home, but still she sighed for that land of eternal springtime, where there are no more tears, no death, neither sorrow, crying nor pain.

The funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder J. M. Fenton, who, in accordance with one of her last requests, used as a text Rev. xxi. 4: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Her body was laid to rest in the little cemetery just above the village, while many friends and loved ones gathered round her tomb. She leaves to mourn her departure, her husband, Mr. Jehu Madden, two daughters, Mrs. B. F. Rinker, of Mt. Union, Pa., and Mrs. Grant J. Anderson, of Three Springs Pa., and four sons, E. J. Madden, of Meadow Gap, Pa., A. S. Madden, of Orbisonia, Pa., Ralph Madden, of Chester, Pa., and Russell B. Madden, of Three Springs, Pa.

The inclosed obituary notice of sister Madden was written by her son and published in the *Mt. Union Times*. I will add that sister Madden was baptized by Elder S. H. Durand, and was a dear beloved sister. She desired to observe the Lord's supper, and not being able to meet at the meetinghouse her request was granted when Elder Vail, myself and some few brethren and sisters met at her home last October and we observed the solemn ordinance. May the Lord be very near the bereaved ones.

J. M. FENTON.

Winifred J. Chandler, our dear mother, widow of W. R. Chandler and daughter of Cisero and Martha Gilbert, departed this life August 26th, 1912, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Clara Edwards, Lincoln Parish, La. She was born Sept. 5th, 1846, in Macon County, Ga., and moved to Alabama with her parents when about two years of age, and removed from there to Lincoln Parish La., when but six years of age, where she resided until her death. She was married to W. R. Chandler April 5th, 1866, and they lived happily together until father's death, Jan. 15th, 1891, his age being 45 years, 4 months and 3 days. Thirteen children were born to them, seven of whom are left to mourn their loss, and we feel it to be a great loss, but may God help us to think as she said, "He knoweth best." Mother made her home with me the last two years of her life, but stayed with all the children some. She had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church since June, 1887, being baptized by Elder Spinks, and always attended meeting when possible. The last time she was there we carried her on her bed, and she lay down most of the time, but seemed to enjoy the preaching very much. She was humble in all her sickness, and would often say to me when I was trying to do something for her, "The greater my suffering the sweeter my rest will be." She was willing to die and knew

everything until the last. She was sick eight months with throat trouble, and never seemed to be impatient, but would often say she knew God was with her. She would often sing, "How firm a foundation," and say that hymn was sweet to her. A few minutes before she died she looked up at me and said, "I will soon be gone, but what do I care? I will be done suffering then." She closed her eyes and was soon gone, without a struggle. She told us all not to weep for her, and we hope to meet her in heaven. O, it is so hard to give up a good mother in this unfriendly world of sin and sorrow. She wanted them to sing, "While sorrows encompass me round," at her grave, which they did, and Uncle John Chandler talked some, and gave out the hymn at the cemetery. They laid her there to rest, as the sun was slowly sinking in the west. From that spot I turned away with a broken heart. Dear mother had all the medical aid that could be given her, and all the assistance that children and friends could give, but as she said, God doeth all things well. May the Lord help us to bear everything he sees fit to put upon us, and may we remember that God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Her daughter,

MINNIE B. CARTER.

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Black Rock Church, Butler, Md., beginning on Wednesday, May 17th, 1916. Visitors will be met at Cockeysville, N. C. R. R., on Tuesday p. m. at 4 o'clock. This association in her circular of last year says: "We believe that just as the man Christ Jesus died and rose again, so all his redeemed shall come up from the dead, soul, spirit and body, in the image of their glorified Lord." We still hold this precious Bible doctrine, and cordially invite all those of like precious faith to meet with us at the above named time and place.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Moderator.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., to begin on Wednesday, May 24th, 1916, and continue three days. Those coming from Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore will come via B. & O. R. R. to Newark, Del., on Wednesday morning. Train leaves Philadelphia, Twenty-fourth and Chestnut Sts., at 7:45 a. m., and Baltimore, Mt. Royal station, at 8:25 a. m. Those coming on the Delaware Division of the P. B. & W. will take train that leaves Delmar at 6:52 a. m. Wednesday and get tickets for Newark, Del., changing cars at Porter. Conveyances will be at stations to convey all to place of worship. Ministers and brethren and all lovers of truth of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us and are welcome to our homes.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the First Hopewell Church, Mercer Co., N. J., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the first Sunday in June (May 31st and June 1st and 2nd), 1916.

All afternoon trains on Tuesday before the association will be met at Hopewell station. Trains from the south will leave Philadelphia, Reading Terminal, at 12:35, 1:02 and 4:02 p. m. Trains from the north will leave New York city at 12:50 and 4:20 p. m. All who come on Wednesday morning can come direct to the meetinghouse. We shall be glad to welcome all who have a desire to meet with us.

D. M. VOORHEES, Church Clerk.

THE Middleburg Old School Baptist Church, Schoharie County, N. Y., has appointed her yearly meeting to be held the first Saturday and Sunday in June (3rd and 4th,, 1916, and extends a cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.
COBLESKILL, N. Y.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the New Vernon Church, at New Vernon, Sullivan Co., N. Y., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (7th, 8th and 9th), 1916.

Those coming from and via New York city will take Erie train leaving West Twenty-third St. at 4:25 p. m. on Tuesday before the meeting. This train leaves Jersey City at 4:45, and is due at Howells, N. Y., at 7:01, for which place all get tickets. Those coming from and via Kingston will take O. & W. train leaving Kingston at 4:45 p. m. Get tickets for Winterton, N. Y. The above trains will be met and friends cared for. We extend a cordial invitation to all brethren, sisters and friends.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
H. S. COLLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Bethel Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will hold its yearly three days meeting at Tallman, Oregon, commencing on Friday, June 16th, at 10 o'clock a. m. and continuing over Sunday. Those coming on S. P. road stop at Albany, take car on Lebanon Branch, stop off at Tallman. All lovers of truth invited.

A. HORNER.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Liberty Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, of Los Angeles, Cal., meets every first and third Sunday in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., at 42nd and Moneta Ave., and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal.

W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor.
B. C. RICE, Clerk.

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[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 84. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1916. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May 2, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I send you a letter of Elder John McConnell's, with a second letter replying to my request that he allow me to send it to the SIGNS for publication. I would like to see them both in the SIGNS if you think best; and more especially as he writes so seldom for publication.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,
SILAS H. DURAND.

NEW YORK, N. Y., April 22, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—Last Sunday we published an appointment for you to be with the church here on first Sunday in May, and our people are delighted with the prospect of your coming. I am sorry I cannot be with you at that time, for I have engaged to be with the Broad Run Church, in Maryland. Brother George Ruston will relieve you at Southampton for that Sunday.

While visiting your home last February, you and sister Bessie chided me for writing so seldom for the SIGNS. While I treated the matter lightly, I was not, nor am I, indifferent to your approval and confidence. Seriously, I have never felt that any communication of mine could be of profit to its readers; that is a settled conviction of my mind. I have often felt impressed to write, and frequently have attempted, but the result is always humiliating. Discovery in me of a desire to please self, be well thought of, to make for myself a reputation, ends such attempts. Pride, self-love, and unwillingness to abide by the judgment of the brethren, is an evil of my nature I cannot overcome. I am a mystery to myself: "What I am 'tis hard to know." After twenty-nine years of hoping, my desire and expectation to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ seems as far from realization as when I first believed, yet withal, I am thankful my interest in the things of the kingdom of God and his righteousness is not utterly lost. The lines have fallen unto me in pleasant places in being blessed with the loving-kindness of a people whose God is the Lord. Surely Ebenezer Church has been "a stone of help" to me. Her communication to me is good, and in her the glory of the Lord has appeared to me: Christ is the Rock upon which she is built, and to me his

name is "Wonderful." To know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent, is life eternal, and knowledge of the only true God is, in every sense, based upon the knowledge of Jesus Christ. There is but one Mediator between God and man, there never will be another, and in proportion as Christ is known and understood so is God known and understood as revealed in him. The apostle John says, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared [revealed] him." By seeing, is not meant bodily sight. The Son of God alone can behold the God whom no man hath seen, but even the Son could not see him through the outward sense. It is not bodily sight, but a spiritual perception which I think is meant. The only begotten Son of God could alone, by virtue of being one with God, truly know God by direct intuition, and from this knowledge could, as man, reveal him in a form comprehensible by man. The God who dwells in inaccessible light, into which no human mind can penetrate, must in order to be truly known by man condescend to be found in fashion as a man. Only in the image of God in human flesh could the idea of God enter as a living and substantial element into the being of man. Man, created in the image of God, through this image in himself, was to rise to the Spirit who is the Father of spirits, the Father of eternity. The perfect man is Christ, the image of the invisible God. God in his love and holiness gives a perfect reflection of himself as such in the life of Christ, for it is only in the union of these two attributes that he can be truly known as God. So it follows, as we increase in understanding the nature of Christ, correspondingly we increase in the knowledge of God, whose perfect image Christ is. "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Natural reason is opposition to a right conception of Christ, and true to its own nature it will go on in a progressive and more complete development and expression of itself. Hence the needs be for the commandment to take heed unto ourselves, and try the spirits whether they be of God, for so surely as we lose sight of the doctrine of God manifest in the flesh, we take to ourselves other spirits more wicked than ourself, "and the last state of that man is worse than the first." "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God." Quickened by his Spirit we stand in the most intimate fellowship of life with Christ, and through him in the same fellowship with the Father. Through this fellowship we know God, as he can only through this be known. Apart from unity of life with him, none can ever rise by mere effort of thought to such knowledge. How blessed it would be to never depart from the way of understanding how inseparable is Christ and his church, that the fullness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily, that his body is the church, that we are members in particular, and of his fullness have received, that both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one, that the Holy One, the Redeemer of our life from destruction, came to redeem and sanctify, to establish a kingdom of holiness in man, and of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end. Then would the end be of striving, contentions, evil surmisings and all the unhappy evils which hurt the peace of many churches. It is unquestionably true that the goodness of a tree is proved by the fruit borne. Many brethren have made shipwreck of their

usefulness in the church, sown discord and strife broadcast, by failure to deny self, for self-justification is the spirit of antichrist; it cannot make for peace, being impure, resentful, partial and to every good work reprobate. Being evil, it cannot communicate good. Throughout the Scriptures the character who dwells in God's holy hill is identified as "he that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not," confesses to no righteousness of his own, and feels to be less than the least of all saints; such an one truly knows the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, being made conformable unto his death, and is thereby made rich in faith, that faith which works by love. In giving diligence to make our calling and election sure, we will examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith, prove our own selves, prove all things, hold fast that which is good. It seems to me that the way to "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear," is to declare that which we have seen, heard, tasted and handled in a living way. We have at best but an imperfect knowledge of ourselves, but it is the nearest, surest and the most satisfying knowledge attainable by us. To deny that we are conscious of what we know, is equivalent to denying the facts of consciousness itself. Our consciousness is the most intimate assurance we can possess of anything. The knowledge we thus obtain is the most certain of all knowledge, for the least doubt cast upon the certainty of that by which everything else is known casts everything else into a still deeper uncertainty. Is it not true, if the Spirit of Christ be in us, that when we come to the knowledge of ourselves we come to the knowledge of the image of God? for having put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him, we are made capable of discerning between that which serves God and that which serves him not. Is not the manifestation of God in the flesh the revelation of such attributes of the divine nature as can be reflected in human flesh? If we are made partakers of the divine nature, surely it is according as divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who hath called us to glory and virtue.

I have written much, yet failed to express how firmly I believe the saints live, move and have their being in fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. (Read Col. i. 15–20.) There is comfort in believing that,

> "In union with the Lamb,
> From condemnation free,
> The saints from everlasting were,
> And shall forever be."

With love to you and your household, I am, in hope of eternal life, your brother,

JOHN McCONNELL.

NEW YORK, N. Y., April, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—Your acknowledgment of my letter was received yesterday morning. The letter is yours, and at your disposal, but I do not think it merits publicity. It is difficult for me to express my mind in writing, especially so when trying to tell what the appearing of Jesus means to me as the way, truth, resurrection and life of his saints. Some years ago I heard you speak of the travel of God's people as a new and living way, consecrated for us, through the flesh of Jesus, and, more or less, since that time my mind has been exercised to know the way his life is made manifest in mortal flesh, how the power and glory of his coming is revealed in them as supplying their every need in a new creation; receiv-

ing something which the world cannot give. We are all conscious of possessing a faculty to which nothing in this world corresponds, a taste for which there is no gratifying response, a desire that never finds or knows its object, and that is, want of sympathy. For every other want there is attainable, at some time, corresponding satisfaction. We want sympathy, we want to be understood, as it is commonly expressed. We talk about it, wait for it, expect it, and as growing years increase our need suspicion grows that we shall never find it, and later conviction comes that there is no such thing. Kindness is not it, love is not it. How often we say, No one can understand my case but those who have felt it. Yet it involves the whole secret of our want of sympathy, it is not want of will, but want of power to fellowship the sufferings of others. It must be felt with our own feelings before it can be appreciated; it must be viewed from within, not from without, before it can be understood. We must have another, an indwelling self, before the demand of our nature can be satisfied. There is but One that sticketh closer than a brother, nearer than the nearest, because he dwells within us, touched with the feeling of our infirmities, knows all, feels all, understands all, shares all. "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them." The nameless longing, the groaning which cannot be uttered, of every heart in which Christ is formed, has a witness, one who understands, appreciates, participates. Is not what we want, what we seek, but cannot find, and would, but cannot give, another self, a more than self? for Jesus understands our hearts much better than ever we do. We do not always know our sorrows from our sins. At times we needlessly condemn, or dangerously excuse ourselves, reproach ourselves for what is unavoidable, or bewail ourselves for what should be avoided. The greatest relief a troubled spirit knows is the appeal to Jesus from itself: "Search me, and know me," a puzzle, a riddle and a wonder to myself. This fellowship, this unity of being, between God in heaven and man on earth, is not a mere abstract truth which is never to be experimentally made proof of in the flesh. The body knows when it is fed, the mind knows when it is filled. Communion with Jesus may baffle words and be no thing to talk about, but it is a proved reality as satisfying to the soul as is food to the body, or knowledge to the mind, and never until the source of life is dried up shall that bread and water fail. He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. In unity of spirit there is love, fear, choice, judgment, taste and feeling. In fellowship we have the mind of Christ, our will is his will, our choice his choice, our purpose his purpose, our law his law, for us to live is Christ, and we know that he abideth in us, by the spirit which he has given us. In the midst of storm and gloom there is ministered comfort which passeth understanding, in the assurance of him who hath all power, both in heaven and in earth, "It is I, be not afraid." Then there is new meaning to us in the written word, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of all the people there was none with me." Surely it must be in the fellowship of life with him that he comes to be glorified in his saints

and to be admired in them that believe. It is good to be afflicted. Sorrow and anguish of soul for sin is in the likeness of the heavenly, not the earthly. The earthly never felt it, nor can any save those who are conformed to the image of God's dear Son. There is no resemblance between their sorrow and the sorrow of the world that worketh death; there is no difference between their sufferings and the sufferings of Jesus, who took away the sting of death. True, Jesus had no ways of sin to turn from and forsake, but it is not the necessity of doing this that afflicts the children of God; they are not grieving for sin's pleasure lost, they are not unwilling to part with the world's evils, their grief is that they stay by them, cling to them, humble them and put them to misery and shame. Even so it was with Jesus: "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

In christian love and fellowship, I am your brother,

JOHN McCONNELL.

FAYETTEVILLE, Ga., April 23, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am sending you a letter which you can use if you think it worthy, if not, it will be all right with the writer, as he, like myself, is willing to trust your judgment. He wrote me after reading my last letter in the SIGNS, and I wrote him as follows, in substance: "I have learned by this correspondence, things I did not know, so I do not care how hard you preach predestination, just so you do not make God the author of sin." I meant "accuse" God of sin, or "lay it at his door," for we cannot "make" him anything. Brother Pennington's letter shows that absolute predestination of all things gives God all praise, and none to man, which I do not remember having thought of before.

I would like to write more, but do not know anything at present.

Unworthily,

GEORGE W. JACKSON.

YAWKEY, W. Va., April 11, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER JACKSON:—I shall try to answer your good letter, which I received yesterday, and was truly glad to hear from you, but I do not feel as much like writing as I have in times past. I do not feel to have any wisdom from God, but feel to be left in darkness and in trouble, with fear and trembling; the clouds look dark and stormy, and this adds to my trouble, but O, dear brother, if all was light with us, then we would soon be in a condition that we would not enjoy the light. Surely the Lord has chosen his people in the furnace of affliction, as he says, "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." These words were spoken to the house of Jacob. The Lord says, "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things." I believe the Lord created the darkness of Babylon, and by the reason of this darkness in Babylon the unlearned worship their gods, but God has created the darkness for the purpose of calling his chosen ones out of darkness into his marvelous light, that they might have knowledge of both light and darkness, for if all was light there would not be any knowledge or praise of light; but according to the purpose of God, which he has purposed in himself, he calls his people whom he hath

chosen to shew forth his praise out of the darkness of Babylon; then they can praise him in the light, having knowledge of both light and darkness. The long, cold, dark winter is over, the beautiful spring is here, with its warmth and brightness, all nature seems to rejoice and praise the brightness of the spring; just so it is with God's people when they are called out of darkness, then the winter is over, the singing of birds is heard, the voice of the dove (the church) is heard, but after the opening of this great spring dark clouds of storm arise and take away our peace. Winter comes again, which we might have thought never would return, then we are cold and need some fire to warm us, and our God is the fire to warm us, natural fire has no warmth for us. For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and the glory in the midst of her (the church). There shall be winter and summer, cold and heat, seedtime and harvest, as long as time remains. I think that all these things are beautiful figures of God's great work in the church, but I am not eloquent enough to dive down and bring out the beauties of the figures, yet there is a grand and glorious purpose in the darkness that the Lord created, also in the evil that he created, for if there was no evil there would not be any knowledge of peace. The Lord says, I have created all things for myself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. If there was no wickedness there would not be any knowledge of righteousness, or praise of the same, so all things work good, that God be praised, therefore he said that the wrath of man shall praise him, but the remainder he will restrain. "Restrain," to hold from acting. I do not believe that God allows one more act in all the world of moving creatures than he has predetermined to be to his own glory and praise, for out of wickedness he has praise of righteousness, and out of darkness he has praise of light, and out of the tribulation of the whole earth he will have everlasting praise. His everlasting praise will be the everlasting happiness of his people chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began. All praise, honor and glory be to the all-wise God, who created this great world, and works all things after the counsel of his own will, and makes all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

I am fearful of my letter becoming too lengthy for you, but I want to express a few of my thoughts on the subject of absolute predestination, and what they call limited predestination. You said I could preach predestination as hard as I wanted to, just so I did not make God the author of sin. Now I want to say to you there is no danger of absolute predestination making God the author of sin, though some men might try to cloak themselves with it, but trying is all, for predestination soon brings to light what they are. The very false mind of doctrine which says that God does not have a good purpose in all that takes place in the earth is the very doctrine that charges God with being the author of sin. I know I am in deep water for a poor sinner, as I am, but if it is the Lord's will to keep my head above the water I will not drown. All the conditional men I have ever talked with say that man can direct his steps in a great many things, he can go to church or stay away, but God says that the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, yet they say he can, making God a liar, and a lie is sin, so God would be the author of sin, as there is no other power

above him to cause him to lie. That is the doctrine that charges God with being the author of sin, not absolute. I love the absolute doctrine, for it praises God in all things; it does not honor man, it does not tell men that they can act or let it alone, it strips all power from men, and they do not like it; absolute doctrine upholds God's word in all things. As it was said, the counsel of the Lord stands forever, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations; as I have thought, so shall it come to pass. Predestination advocates that God thought all things, and all shall come the way he thought, no ifs nor ands in it, and that (counsel) of the Lord that stands forever is a determinate counsel, and it was by the predetermined counsel of God that they took Jesus by wicked hands and crucified him, and I imagine when the apostle Peter told the people that it was by the determinate counsel of God that he was put to death, some of them said, No, God would not predetermine a crime like that; but the Lord did it, for he said, I lay down my life, and take it again. No man was able to take his life, he laid it down himself, and it was all for his own good purpose and glory, and man cannot hinder. God says, I will work, and none can hinder, neither can the poor natural man search out predestination, for it is the wisdom of God, and the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned. The Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God, and to my mind this searching is now being done in the children of God, and has been ever since the beginning of the world.

Well, dear brother, I must close. I have written in a way that I had not thought of when I began, and a much longer letter than I expected.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

W. C. PENNINGTON.

DALLAS, Texas, April 19, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—It has occurred to me that a brief account of my recent visit among the several churches of eastern Texas might prove of some benefit to some of the readers of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. For some months past I had been among the brethren of the churches composing the North Ouachita Association, in western Arkansas, and I felt a strong desire to visit some of the churches composing the New Hope and Sulphur Fork associations, in Texas. Finally the matter was arranged, and a number of appointments were made for me by Elder H. B. Jones, of Winnsboro, Texas, whose articles in the SIGNS have made his name familiar to many of its readers. I left Hope, Arkansas, on Tuesday morning, March 30th, 1916, and came to the little village of Omaha, Texas, arriving there at midnight of that day. I was exceedingly feeble in body, weary and ill from the effects of a severe internal hemorrhage, which I suffered during the day. The next day I was confined to my room most of the time, but I was cared for in the kindliest manner conceivable by Elder W. B. Robertson and his family. He is the pastor of Spring Hill Baptist Church, which is situated about five miles southeast of the town. Here I met for the first time Elder J. E. Knighton, an aged minister of the Old School Baptist Church, of the predestinarian faith and order. Bent and broken in body, but clear and active in mind, he is like a shock of wheat; rich in experience, and rooted and grounded in the truth, he is waiting patiently for the final summons. He is now in his eighty-third year. I called upon him twice, and shall always remember with pleasure our delightful conversations together. A drenching rain coming up just as we were hitching the horses to the

buggies prevented our going to meeting on Saturday, but on Sunday we drove out to the church and had a most blessed meeting. I was too ill and feeble to take any part in the service, but Elder Robertson preached an excellent sermon. On Monday I remained with brother Robertson, and on Tuesday, April 3rd, came to Mt. Vernon, and was carried out to Elder W. H. Tatum's, who lives about a mile from Providence Church. My appointments there were for Wednesday and Thursday. After much insistence on my part brother Tatum consented to preach at the Wednesday meeting. It was a most blessed and comforting sermon to me. I felt while he was preaching that if the Lord ever made a preacher, without any assistance from any one else, that that preacher must be brother Tatum. Here I met brother Robbins, who lives in the vicinity of Good Hope Church, and who kindly conveyed me to his house on Thursday afternoon. It is about twelve or fifteen miles, and the roads were rough. On Friday we all drove over to the Good Hope Church, where I met for the first time Elder H. B. Jones, of whom I had read and heard so much. The Lord greatly blessed me at this place in my feeble effort, while undertaking to open up in some slight measure the text found in Ephesians i. 11. Brother Jones closed the meeting with a few very pertinent remarks, in which he fully set forth the doctrine of God our Savior. From Good Hope I went home with Elder Jones, and was very kindly entertained. On Saturday we drove ten or twelve miles to Oak Grove Church, where I had the pleasure of listening to a clear, concise and able sermon by Elder Jones, their pastor, on Ephesians i. 18. He preached the glorious doctrine of absolute predestination, without apology. On Wednesday, April 10, I took the train at Winnsboro for Como, where I was met by Elder J. B. Bowden, pastor conjointly with brother Tatum of the Mt. Pisgah church, which is situated some three miles away. On Tuesday I prevailed on Elder Bowden to preach, which he did, to the satisfaction of all the brethren, and to the great comfort of my own heart. On Wednesday I was greatly helped from above in attempting to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. On Thursday and Friday Elder Bowden and others of the brethren accompanied me to Hopewell Church, a distance of some twelve or fifteen miles, where I was greatly blessed in preaching the word both days. Elder Jones was present also on Friday, and heartily indorsed the truth that went forth in the power of the Spirit. On Saturday, April 15th, we drove a long distance to Caney Church, where I had the pleasure of meeting Elder R. E. White, the pastor there. Caney is a new church, constituted not long ago, mostly of members from Hopewell Church. They have a newly built meetinghouse neatly painted white. Here I was introduced to so many "Whites" that I had to exclaim, Surely this must be a White community. On Saturday morning I was again too ill to preach, having had another severe hemorrhage, and insisted on Elder White preaching. He did so, with great enlargement and help from God. His subject was Romans vii. 1-7. Brother White is an able minister. He spoke for over two hours. He is cool, deliberate, a strong reasoner, a master workman. Like Elder Jones, he uses no soft rails, leaves none down and puts on the stakes and riders before leaving his subject. Arminianism and conditionalism find no quarter with any of these ministering brethren here in this part of Texas. On Sunday the writer

was again "enabled" (1 Tim. i. 12,) in attempting to open up the text found in Gal. iv. 4-6. The day was exceedingly beautiful, bright and fair and springlike, and the congregation was unusually large, attentive and appreciative. The singing was excellent, and Elder J. R. Perry, of Cash, Texas, opened with prayer. I remained in the vicinity over night with dear brother Wright, a sound and faithful Baptist of the Old School Predestinarian faith and order. On Monday he conveyed me about fifteen miles, as it seemed to me, to Alba, Texas, where Elder White lives, and where I am at this writing. I expect to go next week among the churches within the bounds of the old Union Association, which was organized, I think, about 1839. These churches extend south almost to the city of Houston.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

BEN HARDIN IRWIN.

OTTAWA, Kansas, March 9, 1916.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—Since the last SIGNS came, almost every day in my mind I have been writing to you. It would be impossible for me to tell you how good your sermon was to me on, Touch not mine anointed, do my prophets no harm. I am so thankful we are to have one to go before us, to stand with Elder Ker, who fears God more than man. If those who oppose these sacred truths will read their Bible with a real desire to know the truth as it is in Jesus, I can but believe God will show them that what he does is right. You say, "We have only to know God says a thing to know that it is so. Reason wants an explanation, but faith accepts gladly God's word without explanation. God will not stoop to appease our reason, but he will always respond to our faith, for faith never asks but what God is pleased to give." This brought to mind what the Savior told the scribes and Pharisees in the twelfth chapter of Matthew. He had been telling them wonderful things, but they did not have faith to believe, for they said, "Master, we would see a sign from thee." He answered and said unto them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." I believe with you, we should not be personal or sarcastic, but if God has taught us these things let us not hide them. If God has given us faith to believe that all power is given to Jesus, as he said, why fear to tell it? You have clearly shown in your editorial we cannot be harmed. Yesterday I was reading the biography of a great writer and preacher long since dead. I was struck by this sentence: "I fully believe that the entrance of sin into the world, and death by sin, was according to the permissive will of God, for without it sin could not have entered, but not appointed as God appoints good, for reason as we may, this would make God the author of sin." The question came into my mind quickly, What is sin? Transgression of the law. Who gave the law? God did. Did he not have the power over that lump of clay to make it unto honor or dishonor? He most surely did. What part had Adam in making himself, his wife or anything God gave to him? None at all. He was simply the dust of the ground until God formed him into man and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. God planted the garden, and there he put the man whom he had formed, and out of the ground made the Lord to grow every tree

that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam is perfectly passive up to this time. Now God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." God knew he would eat of it, because he told him what would happen when he did eat of it. Had God wanted him to live in innocency he had the power to make him strong to withstand the temptation, or why put the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the garden? God intended the world to be inhabited. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." This was said before man had sinned. God did not tell Adam to touch not that tree as he said, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm, or as he said to the sea, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed. If he had, Adam could not have partaken of the forbidden fruit. Admitting that he could would be to give the creature more power than the Creator. Adam is not supposed to have known good from evil until he had eaten of that tree, but Paul says Adam was not deceived. We find much in the Bible faith must accept. I often feel that to know God has said a thing is sufficient evidence for me that it is so. God is at the helm, everything is going just as he intended it should. You, nor I, nor any one else, can change things one hair's breadth. If we could, we would be touching his anointed and doing his prophets harm. If sin was not appointed by the Lord, why did Jesus stand as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world? What poor, finite mortal can put in any claim before that time? The Lord asked Job, "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding."

Dear brother, I have written these things as nearly as possible as they have presented themselves to my mind, and I trust you will not think me presumptuous, or trying to instruct you. I seem to know only one thing, and that is, God is all in all to me.

"Keep silence, all created things,
And wait your Maker's nod,
My soul stands trembling while she sings
The honors of her God.

Life, death and hell and worlds unknown
Hang on his firm decree,
He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be."

Those lines express my feelings better than I can. Pardon this long letter.

With love in the Lord,

ANNA McKINNEY.

BALTIMORE, Md., March 21, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have been requested to write my travel from nature to grace, but did not feel impressed at that time to do so, but have been thinking of it of late, and will, if the Lord directs my thoughts and pen, try to sketch a portion of what I hope the Lord has done for me.

I was living in Virginia some thirty years ago, about three miles from Messongoes Church, but seldom went, and then not to hear preaching. Twenty-two years ago last February I moved some ten or twelve miles away from the church, and on the third Sunday in March I drove the ten or twelve miles and went in to hear preaching. I could not understand why I wanted to go, but I went again in April, and kept on going. The very

people I had once scoffed at as being narrow and behind the times had become the most lovely people I had ever seen, and I liked to be in their company and hear them talk of the church, but I saw myself such a sinner that there was a great gulf between, and I used to feel the preached word was so lovely, but it was not for one so wicked as I, and I resolved to try to live a better life, and made many resolutions to try to be like the Old Baptists at Messongoes. I surely thought that a sinner like me could never belong to the church of the great and holy God, and at times I really thought I was getting a little better, but then I would appear to slip back, and would feel farther away from the Lord and his people than ever, and something seemed to say, Why do you go there? they are the Lord's people, while you know that you are a child of the devil, and he will claim his own. O how I would loathe myself, and shed many bitter tears over my condition, but the more I strived the worse I felt myself to be. I said over and over again, I will never go there to meeting any more, for some of the brethren would speak words of encouragement to me sometimes, and then I would see myself as a vile deceiver, and it would appear as though something would say, You are deceiving those dear people of the Lord, but you cannot deceive the Lord, for he knoweth all things, yea, the thoughts and intents of the hearts of all men; but I could not stay away from the places of worship whenever I could possibly attend. I did not think for one moment that I was a child of God, and thought sometimes that God could not save me and be just. I felt there was no one in all this world like me, and yet I felt a love for those people that I had never felt for any other I had ever met, and I just kept on going as long as I stayed on the eastern shore. I had a great desire to be baptized, if I could be like the members of Messongoes Church, but that was too great a blessing for one so vile as I. Whenever I made up my mind to tell the church how I loved them, and how I wanted to be with them and wanted their God to be my God, I would have a fear come over me that I could not live as they did, and would bring reproach upon them and upon the cause, and I have been made to say deep down in my heart that I would rather die and be cast out with the liars and infidels than to bring reproach upon the church of the Lord Jesus Christ; so I would say being baptized is all right, and a great blessing to those for whom it is intended, but it is not for me. I moved to Baltimore ten years ago last fall, and was there seven or eight months before I was led to the Baptist Church, and, behold, they preached the same doctrine: salvation by grace, and that is the only kind of doctrine that has been food for me. I saw myself a lost and ruined sinner. Well, I felt I had found the Lord's people here, and fell in love with them, and wanted to go with them, but I still saw the gulf that I could not get over. I would go and hear a sermon at times, then would think, I will ask a place with them at the next meeting, but when that time would come I would be shut up; could hear the preaching, but was away down in Egypt, and all would be dark and gloomy. Sometimes that would last for months, and I would think I had been deceived, that it was not for me, but for the Lord's people, yet I still had that love for them. I do not think I ever saw the Old School Baptists for the last twenty-two years anything else but the children of God. If I live to see the

fourth Sunday in May it will be five years since I was given strength to go before the church and ask a home with them. I was received, with two sisters, and we were to be baptized the second Sunday in June. During that time I was at work, and it appeared to me that something said, You have deceived the church, but you cannot deceive God, and O the anguish of soul that was mine I cannot describe; so I resolved there and then that I would go to the church and tell them that they had made a mistake. I hoped that would relieve me, at least in part, but my burden became heavier and heavier, until I felt it would crush me to the earth, and everything appeared to get darker and darker, as though it were night, and it appeared as though God was going to cut me off, that I was not going to live to get home. My strength was all gone, and I could hardly walk, for I thought my time on earth was short, and it was for the great sin of deceiving his people. Then I saw, as it were, the people of the Lord, and they said to me, We know you cannot keep yourself, but you will be kept by the power of God; if it had not been for his power you would have fallen long ago. It was, as it were, a great light shone round about me, and when I came to myself I was stepping as upon air, and trying to sing, "Glorious things of thee are spoken, Zion, city of our God." O, I thought, why do not all men praise him for his wonderful works to the children of men? The light had chased away the gloom, and there was not even a shadow left. I thought all my troubles were gone, but could not stay on the mountain-top all the time. I finally settled down in a peaceful calm, and stayed that way until some time after I was baptized, with not a cloud on the horizon. But that could not last. I began to have my doubts and fears, and would get in a cold and lifeless state, and could not enjoy preaching, or reading the Scriptures, or the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which I prize next to the Bible, for it sets forth what I believe to be the truth, the sovereignty of God, and does not give man any of the praise. So I am kept until this day by the power of God, and have no power in myself to do anything.

I have penned these things as they have come to me; if I have been directed to write by the Lord, and there is anything in this to comfort any of the Lord's people, give the Lord the praise. I will stop and leave this to your judgment to do with as you deem best. I desire an interest in the prayers of the household of faith.

A poor sinner, saved by grace, and grace alone, if saved at all,

L. C. GODWIN.

PORTLAND, Oregon, April 17, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending a copy of a letter written to my father, J. K. Boyd, and with both his and brother Walker's permission you may publish it in the SIGNS, if you think best.

CAMILLA WILKES.

WALKER, Oregon, Feb. 29, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER BOYD:—You will, no doubt, be surprised to hear from me again, after such a long delay, and I guess I could not offer any apology to you other than a state of barrenness, inability to say or write anything that would comfort others, being utterly comfortless myself, and yet all this in spite of many great privileges and blessings I receive. I have very much enjoyed brother Riley's company, he contends earnestly and ably for the very same

doctrine I have ever contended for when I could contend for anything: the absolute sovereignty of God our Creator, and the inability of creatures voluntarily to do a good deed, say a good word or even think a good thought. There is none good, no, not one; even Christ, God's only begotten Son, frankly acknowledged, Of mine own self I can do nothing, yet poor, puny creatures, who are begotten of Adam, try to rob God of his glory by proclaiming salvation on condition of good deeds performed. Even Christ could not receive a time blessing, for he could do nothing, could not perform the condition, but contended the same thing that you and all who have been killed to the love of the world do: The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. As Paul said, Having no confidence in the flesh. If our blessings came by deeds done in the flesh, then God's chosen certainly would be the mighty to confound the weak, and the wise to confound the foolish. O how loving, how merciful, that he giveth the uncomely parts more grace, until all fill their place to the full stature of a man; it is a complete work. As the material for Solomon's temple was gathered from the far and near parts of the earth, and was so fitted that it went together without the sound of axe or hammer, so the promise is to you and your children and all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call; and he finished the work on and in the awful agonies of Calvary's cross, so that when he calls one he also predestinates, justifies and glorifies him until he does not need to be measured by the theological line, and clipped off a little here and added to a few D. D.'s &c., six months probation, or any other carnal fixing. If there was even one perfect man, then Christ's name could not be exalted above every name that is named either in this world or in the world to come, and without holiness no man can see God. He that is guilty of one point of the law is guilty of the whole, so in order to claim one blessing on account of fulfilling the condition of the law one could not be a transgressor of any part of the law. But by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight. Hence there is only one salvation, and that is because as he said, I came to do the will of him that sent me, by the which will we are sanctified. He hath by one offering in the end of the (Jewish) world forever perfected them that are sanctified by the Father's will. I do not know why I should be writing thus to you, who know all this, and as Paul said, You received it not of man, neither were you taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! Who hath first given unto him and it shall be recompensed to him again? He stood alone, and there was none to help. What a wonderful tie that binds them to him, or him to them, that brought him in a lowly sin-cursed world to suffer in the flesh poverty, reproach, shame and agony. Jesus paid it all, all to him I owe. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels (while in the flesh), preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. In his own words he portrayed his work as the Son of God and the Son of man. (John v. 25–29.) They that are dead in trespasses and sins shall hear his voice; they do not have to manifest an artificial life and go to bring him down from heaven, but they are dead, and he tells them, Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen

you. God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. That is his work as the Son of God. Except a man be born of the Spirit he cannot see the kingdom of God. Then as the Son of man he was made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law. What wonderful condescension, the glorious Son of God, all glorious and beautiful, condescending to the lowest of men of low estate. What a cord to draw him, what a never ending band. (See Zechariah eleventh chapter, especially seventh verse.) Yes, he hath loved them with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness hath he drawn them. When they failed to justify themselves through the deeds of the law he brought them by a new and living way, by a covenant based upon better, far better promises than conditionalism; it was based altogether upon what God, and not man, will do. I will write my law in their hearts and put it in their inward parts. I will be to them a God, and they shall (because he says so) be unto me a people, and they shall not teach every man, &c. So in this covenant man shall not about as often as he ought to; in fact, there is no ought to or any other least indication of do and live. But how can we that hope in Christ and know of the awful sacrifice, the incomparable cost, who are dead to sin, live any longer therein? We do not desire to take our fill of sin any more than a dead man wants a drink of water, or a live man wants to be dead. The love of Christ constraineth us, and the thought of sin is grievous, for what a cost the entering in of this better covenant; how low the highest name of all names descended to men of low estate. In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them. In his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them and carried them all the days of old. Yes, as the Son of man (John v. 28,) he brought life and immortality to light, the judgment, the resurrection of all, both the just and the unjust.

I have not written at all as I had intended, or as I thought I could write. We are glad brother Riley is settled near, and I hope you may come this way, for I would be glad to have a visit with you.

Hoping to hear from you again, I am a sinner saved by grace, if at all,

G. O. WALKER.

PSALMS XXXVII. 37.

"MARK the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace."

In heart and life our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is the only perfect man that ever lived on this earth, and when baptized of John in Jordan, and when transfigured on the mount in the presence of his three disciples, there came a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, hear ye him. He did always those things which pleased the Father, for no jot or tittle of God's holy law could in anywise pass until all was fulfilled, and Jesus, the perfect man, alone could meet all of the requirements of God's holy law by rendering perfect obedience. Hence, as he did the work the Father sent him into the world to do, and his work is perfect, there came the voice from heaven, full of power, majesty and love: This is my beloved Son, hear ye him.

"And behold the upright." God made man upright, but Adam transgressed, and thereby all his unborn race was in the bondage of sin. Who shall stand in the holy place? He that hath clean hands,

and hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. As Jesus only hath clean hands, and hath not lifted up his soul to vanity, he alone could stand in the holy place. He is our Prophet, Priest and King. Jesus by his perfect work brought everlasting righteousness in, and, lest a shadow of a spot be found, he cast the glorious robe of righteousness around his bride, his church, his body, his people that God hath chosen in the blessed covenant of grace, and hence his beloved Son was born of the virgin Mary to save his people from their sins. This work he finished when he offered himself without spot unto God on the tree of the cross.

"The end of that man is peace." He came into the desired haven, and hath obtained peace for all of his people, for he was raised up from Joseph's new tomb on the third and appointed morn, and reigns on his mediatorial throne at the Father's right hand, ever to intercede for his people. "The end of that man is peace," and the end of every one that believeth on his name and trusteth in the Lord for salvation will be peace. In this wonderful Psalm the inspired psalmist sets forth the destiny of the righteous and the wicked. How blessed to be numbered with the righteous. "But the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord; he is their strength in time of trouble. And the Lord shall help them, and deliver them; he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trusted in him."—Psalms xxxvii. 39, 40. Trust in the Lord forever, in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. That does seem to be as easy a thing to do as anything in the world, just believe God, yet the fallen race of Adam while in nature's darkness will follow every will-o'-the-wisp and believe every superstition under the sun, and without faith they cannot believe God. Yea, they believe not, though one arose from the dead. Neither can any of the race of Adam escape the bondage of sin, only as the Son of God releases them. If the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed. Jesus hath suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God, that rebel sinners might live. Surely we are blessed to bear reproach and suffer with the Master without the camp. Amazing pity, amazing grace, and love beyond degree, that the mighty God, the Prince of Peace, should suffer for man the creature's sins. Extol the stem of Jesse's rod and crown him Lord of all, for he hath saved his people with an everlasting salvation, and not one of his portion will be missing when he speaks to the earth and sea to give up their dead. His work is perfect, nothing shall be added to it and nothing shall be taken from it. He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and without the shadow of turning. Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. You on Jesus' throne shall rest, for there is no power in all the universe that can separate the church, the bride, from the love of God in Christ our Lord and Savior, for in his name shall the Gentiles trust. If my name is cast out as evil for proclaiming the truth, so let it be, for to his people is given not only to believe on his name, but to suffer for his sake. If this be delusion, let me live and die in this delusion. May God sustain us by his grace, is my prayer.

Dear brethren, do with this as you think best, and there will be no complaint on my part.

Yours in hope,

WM. F. SLOAN.

LEXINGTON, Ky.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., May 4, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter I received from Elder C. M. Weaver, which seems good to me, and I feel sure that it would to others, but want you to be satisfied, for I feel sure that you know more about everything than I do.

(MRS.) S. G. FRAZEE.

COMMERCE, Mo., Nov. 21, 1915.

DEAR SISTER FRAZEE:—I am sorry to have waited so long to answer your good letter, which was gladly received and very highly appreciated. I could offer many excuses, but will not bother you with my complaints. I will now try to write you, and give expression to some of the thoughts and things bearing now upon my mind. I hope to be guided by the Spirit of Him who only can make me fruitful in the wisdom and knowledge of heavenly things. The older I grow in the service of the Master and in the years of my earthly pilgrimage, the more continuously and seriously does the mystery of godliness engross my thoughts and engage the hours of my profound meditation. I often find myself in mind going up and down in the earth searching for some one wise enough to explain the mighty works and marvelous way of the Lord God omnipotent. But when I have thus vainly sought to know the Lord and failed to be comforted the voice of the prophet is heard above the raging of the storm, saying, Be still, and know that he is God. O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! Verily man by searching cannot find him out. All we know of the infinitely Holy One he must reveal to us. Has he ever revealed himself to me? Have I ever felt the touch of his divine hand upon my heart? These are solemn and momentous questions to me, a worm of the dust. Sometimes I am hoping in his mercies, sometimes I am almost in despair. The great problems of life become more complicated and startling with me as I grow older, and I seem to be constantly expecting some awful phenomenal exhibition of God's mighty power upon the nations. Indeed, I have already seen it, and, like a helpless worm that I am, stand in awe and am possessed with fear for those things coming upon the earth. Surely if God is not our refuge what will the awful storm that now sweeps the world bring forth to the sons of men? Wars and rumor of wars, bloodshed and carnage on every hand, with our entire social fabric suspended over a smouldering volcano that threatens to burst forth any moment to blight civilization. No wonder the wise virgins of this our day are becoming anxious and restless as they listen and wait for the coming of the Bridegroom. No wonder the truly consecrated saints are crying out, saying, Come, Lord Jesus. There are but two places in which to stand in a dark and evil day like this in which we now live: either there is an almighty, all-wise, eternal God, who rules in the kingdoms of men, and who guides and controls the affairs of the world, or else blind fate holds sway, and the faith and hope of the christian are vain. Thank God, I am settled; my feet are planted in the way where faith shines and dispels the night of heathen superstition and drives the mist of error and unbelief away. O this is enough, blessed peace and sweet submission to the will of the Lord Jehovah. Though I am insignificant, less than nothing, and vanity, the same God who rules over the great and mighty things seeth and knoweth me, he also

careth for me. But why, O why should God look upon me? Why should he minister unto me the riches of his grace? Not because of any goodness in me, not for what I have done, but for what the blessed Christ has done for me. Yes, Christ has done it all. If I am righteous, it is in his righteousness; if I am good, it is in his goodness; if I am worthy, it is in his worthiness; if I am humble, it is in his humility; if I am kind, it is in his kindness; if I am meek, it is in his meekness; if I am gentle, it is in his gentleness; if I am wise, it is in his wisdom; if I am strong, it is in his strength; if I am saved, it is in his salvation; if I am ever holy, it will be in his holiness, and glory be to his blessed name. O why should a mortal who is builded upon such a sure foundation as Christ, our blessed Rock, ever be given over to doubts and fears? Why should he ever feel the spirit of unbelief springing up within him? These are strange experiences in the lives and travels of the saints, but that they need be, and are appointed unto us, I have no doubt. In fact, all things whatsoever befall us are in the providence of God, and are appointed for our good and his glory. This fact is surely borne out by the past history of God's dealings with his people. But how hard it is in our nature to say that God's ways are best. How prone we are to fight against his hand and strive to have our own way. Surely I have been the most rebellious of all his creatures. I am continually battling against the Hand that leads me and feeds me and keeps me, yet not I, but sin that dwelleth in me. But with all my base ingratitude toward the God of my salvation he ever has been, and continues to be, graciously good to me, and plenteous in mercy. I try to be thankful for all his benefits, and daily pray, Lord, abide with me and keep me humble and thankful.

Now, dear sister, I have written at considerable length, and must close. I had hoped to visit you this month, but find it will be impossible. I hope to come, if the Lord wills, some time ere we leave this world. Let me hear from you when convenient.

Your little brother in fellowship,

C. M. WEAVER.

COBLESKILL, N. Y., May 9, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I often think when reading the good articles published in the SIGNS that I would like to add my mite, and at least tell of my appreciation of the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and then I think, Who am I, or what could I write that would be of any interest or comfort to any one, or worthy of a place in so valuable a paper? I never see a blank space, or anything I would want crowded out to give place for anything that I could write. I have several times made the attempt, but concluded it was a failure, and so cast it aside. Now, as we want to send the subscription price for the paper for another year (we do not want to do without it), I will write a few lines, and trust you will give them the place they deserve; if in the waste-basket, all will be right, and I hope you will excuse the trespass. When I read from the pen of others I often feel they tell my mind much better than I can express it, but still I wonder if there is any one like me. I seem to be with them in their shortcomings, darkness and barrenness, but they seem to leave me behind when they soar away up on the mountain tops, for I never get there. I seem to drift along much of the time in a lukewarm state, neither hot nor cold, and you know that is not a blessed state to be in; but

sometimes I think I am lifted up just far enough to see that it is the Lord leading me, and that his everlasting arms are underneath, and if they are I am safe. I feel we have much to be thankful for. We have just returned to our home after spending the winter in California. We were many times amazed and stood in wonder and awe as we beheld some of the wonderful works of God in creation, in viewing the great mountains and deserts, the great waters and the fertile land, and while standing among fruits and flowers could see the snow on the mountains, and could find no words to express the beauty and grandeur, but would say, Wonderful! We also saw many beautiful things that puny man boasted of being the author and maker of, but, O man, thou canst not make a single blade of grass or a bud to come forth and blossom. No, it is God that made all things. Man and all that he has or enjoys is from God naturally, and surely all spiritual gifts and blessings are from him, and in mercy given, and he has a people in every land, who are a peculiar people, a people that are born of God, a spiritual people that have been brought out of darkness into light, that have no confidence in the flesh, but their trust or confidence is in him who is able to save them from their lost condition in sin and transgression. We were highly favored, and much pleased to find and meet with so many of the Lord's dear people, real Old School Baptists, in that far away land. We had read the notice in the SIGNS of the meetings at Los Angeles and Riverside, and in that way we found and enjoyed the hospitality and kindness of many of the brethren and sisters. We attended the meetings at Riverside twice, and witnessed the ordinance of baptism of one brother and one sister, and attended the meetings at Los Angeles several times, also the reception of two members, one by baptism and one by letter. Both of these churches have good congregations, and increasing in number, and seem to be closely bound in ties of love and fellowship. We did not feel that we were among strangers, but felt that it was good for us to be with them, though unworthy of the privilege. We found the SIGNS in several of the homes there, which made us feel all the more at home. We enjoy having and reading the many precious letters and editorials contained in our dear old paper, the SIGNS. We think the editorials the past winter have been very good and instructive, and would say to all the writers Write on. If I could write as do others, it would be a pleasure, but I cannot, so will try to be thankful if God will give me a hearing ear and understanding heart, that I may enjoy what others write.

We are looking forward to our yearly meeting, to be held the first Saturday and Sunday in June, and hope it may please God to send us gifts and blessings according to our need. We have nowhere else to look for help or comfort, for vain is the help of man, but the arm of the Lord is not shortened, he is able and will do all his pleasure, and I desire that he may lead, guide and keep me in the path that he would have me go.

I have not written as I would like, and feel that it is a failure as before, but will send it, hoping no harm may be done.

Yours unworthily, saved by grace if saved at all,

ADDIE LIVINGSTON.

MAUD, Okla., March 15, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—The dearest of all papers, the SIGNS, comes to hand, and I read and reread it with great interest and encouragement. I wait patiently each month for the dear paper, but sometimes it seems I can hardly wait until the time comes, and get low down in the valley of despair, and when it does come each column is filled with the blessed tidings of Jesus and his wonderful works to the children of men, each and every one traveling the same path and telling the same sweet story, that by grace we are saved through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any should boast; for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God foreordained that we should walk in them. Dearly beloved brethren and sisters of the precious faith and hope of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, if it be so that one is created to do a thing, God will give the power to do it, and a willing mind, and there is nothing left undone that the blessed Lord ordains for them to do, for there is no power but that of God, he controls all things, and prepares each and every one of his creatures for the purpose he created them. He says, I form the light, and create darkness, I the Lord do all these things. He made the wicked for the day of evil, and surely the day of evil is here. Each and every creature has his work to do, whether it be good or bad, and each and every one has his certain way of leaving this world, and their minds are led by the power of Jehovah to the very spot and moment and way of going. So then, dear brethren, all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are the called according to his purpose. It does not always seem so to us at the present, but when he gives us the eye of faith to behold his handiwork and the smiles of his face, we see him as the all-powerful, unchangeable, the only God, the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, and we realize that without him we can do nothing. He gives us a reconciled mind, all is well, and then we say, Surely goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our lives, for his mercies endure forever. He says to the prophet, Cry unto Jerusalem that her warfare is ended, and her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins, and her sins and iniquities will he remember no more forever. Is not that sufficient? Is there longer time than that?

Well, dear brethren, I only thought of writing a few lines, but pardon this unprofitable letter, for I do not want to weary your minds with anything unprofitable, and you all realize the fact that the writing is like the unworthy writer. I wish I could write to each of the dear editors, also to each one who writes for the SIGNS. How dear their writing is to poor me, and is all the preaching I get, and I long many times to see them face to face. I want to say to all, Write on. When it comes to absolute predestination, I never read any of the writing on that subject too hard for me. Brethren and sisters, I will just say that if we leave sugar out of our cake it will not be any good; so if we leave predestination out of the doctrine its sweetness would be gone, for foreknowledge and predestination are so closely linked together that we cannot separate them; so, beloved, if predestination and foreknowledge and election be left out we would only have of the Bible the backs left.

Dear brother Ker and brother Lefferts,

will you please at some convenient time write your experiences? I do enjoy reading experience, and of late there seems very little experience written.

I desire to know if any of the brethren know if sister W. J. Peck, of New York, is still living. I had a letter from her last spring, and I wrote her a month ago and have not heard from her, and am very anxious to hear, for she was a dear sister to me.

I will close. Forgive me for intruding on your precious time. May each and every one be given grace to press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling which is in Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. May he still sustain the dear editors with grace to comfort the little, weak ones of the Father's kingdom.

As ever, your very weak sister,

ELLA DAVIS.

BURDEN, Kans., March 23, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have wanted to write to the SIGNS for some time, and tell the dear writers how much I love the doctrine set forth in the paper, but owing to my weakness and unworthiness I hesitate to address God's little children. Many times in Elder Chick's time I wanted to tell him how I loved his writings, for very often he would tell my troubles much better than I could have told them, but I had a feeling that the writers were so much better and far superior to me that I feared to address them. I have no other excuse for addressing the readers of the SIGNS than that I love them. I am so lonely here away from any church, and only one member at this place, except the unworthy writer, and one other member in this county that I know of. There are several who know the joyful sound of the gospel that are not members, but we are destitute of gospel preaching. I hope in God's own good time he will call some one to preach for us. The greatest pleasure on earth would be to live where I could go often to the house of God and listen to the precious gospel of the Son of God, and watch for the handfuls let fall on purpose, as did Ruth in the field of Boaz, that I might gather them up as did she and feast on them for many days to come. I try to be submissive to God's holy will. O that some one could hear the Macedonian cry to come over and help us, not to save souls, but to feed the sheep and the lambs. We have plenty of the kind that claim they are saving souls, but I know if they are not saved by the power of God it is vain. I would love to meet you all and tell you how I have enjoyed your good writings, both editorials and correspondence. I wish to thank Elder Lefferts for the good letter he wrote on Rev. xxii. last May. I read and reread it, and then loaned it to lovers of the truth, and all enjoyed it much. I would love to tell of more good articles, but it would take too much space. I cannot forbear speaking of sister McKinney's letters. The first letter she wrote was very good, and she told my troubles better than I could. I hope to meet her some day, as we both live in the same State. I much enjoyed Elder L. H. Hardy's article of recent date on the Resurrection, as I do all his writings. May God in his own good time clear up all misunderstandings, and lead us in paths of righteousness, where all his paths are peace. I crave the prayers of all God's people. Do with this as seems best to you.

(MRS.) V. A. EDWARDS.

DARDANELLE, Ark., Feb. 9, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending money for the renewal of the SIGNS another year. My childhood home and the SIGNS were so closely associated to think of one is to think of the other, and since my parents have gone hence I feel that it would be sacrilege to drop the paper they both loved so well. It has also become a very treasured piece of literature in my own home. It tells only of peace, quiet and love where all else is a sea of unrest. It is like a river running peacefully on without a ripple to disturb its calm. I love to read from those pens of inspiration, am sure they have had a visitation, and may we meet where all is peace when our earthly pilgrimage shall have ceased.

An interested reader,

STELLA CORNWELL.

BALM, Fla., Dec. 23, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find a three dollar money order, which will pay my subscription, and one dollar in advance. I hope you can freely forgive my negligence. I hope I believe and am glad you believe that everything works together for good to them that love and fear the Lord, so I hope my negligence and your kindness and patience will in some way work a blessing for each of us. But do I love and fear? should be the question with many of us. I feel to say with John, that we know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren, for my experience has clearly taught me that I love the things I once hated, and hate the things I once loved. I am glad that so many of the brethren and sisters have a mind to write, and are blessed to bring forth so many good things. The editorial Elder Ker wrote in December 1st number was exceedingly good to me: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." It seems to me at the present time I never saw anything more appropriate, and I only hope I have the spirit which I believe I see set forth in this editorial.

I will close by wishing all, especially the kindred in Christ, a happy Christmas and new year. Pray for me, that I may be given strength to walk in that strait and narrow way, that I may keep my garments unspotted from the world, that my walk may be such as becometh a christian.

Your brother in hope,

H. C. COLDING.

BREWERS, Ky., May 10, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—The church and Soldier Creek Association at this time mourn the loss of their eminent and able moderator, Elder J. M. Perkins, who died April 20th. Thus ended the course of a very able and bold, fearless and conscientious defender of the Primitive Baptist doctrine. He fought a good fight, kept the faith and ceased from all his labors. We have all reason to believe that he has gained that heavenly band, there to ascribe all honor to the King immortal, for evermore. I suppose there will be a suitable obituary prepared and sent to the SIGNS.

Your weak brother,

J. C. CHESTER.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

ON the last page of each number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1916.

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Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PRAYER.

MOST people believe prayer to be an imparting of information to the Almighty that the Almighty is guided by the petition of men, that God waits to hear what men would have him do before he does it. If this be what prayer is, then it must do away with the foreknowledge of God, and with his predestination, because if the Almighty is guided in what he does by what men petition him to do, he could not arrange the events of time beforehand, inasmuch as the sequence of things would hinge upon what men would desire to have done. The truth is, that such an idea of prayer as is generally held is exceedingly belittling to the dignity of God, and carries with it no idea of the true character of God and the exceeding greatness of his majestic power. The prayers of God's people (for no others ever really pray) influence God not at all, nor are they of any benefit to God, but every prayer experienced by the child of God is for the welfare and comfort of the one who prays. But some will say, If God be all-powerful and has fixed unchangeably in his purpose and decree all things whatsoever come to pass before they do come to pass, then what is the use of prayer? It seems to the natural mind that predestination does away with the necessity of prayer. Instead of this, however, predestination is the very backbone of prayer, for it is not worth while for any poor, trembling sinner to pray to any but a predestinating God. Only that God who works all things after the counsel of his own will can be the resource of the tried and tempest-tossed soul. Prayer is not a matter that can be done or not done according to whether one feels like it or not. As to whether we shall or shall not pray is not left with us to decide, but prayer is the result of the Holy Spirit's operation in the child of grace, and exercises that child to seek divine favor, so that prayer is not something that we can exercise at pleasure, but is that which exercises the subject of grace whenever and wherever God wills. Even the apostle Paul confessed that he could not pray, that he did not know what to pray for, except as the Spirit itself made intercession for him. Including himself with the church of Rome, and all believers, he says: "We know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Thus, this matter of prayer is no easier for a believer, not even an apostle, to do of themselves any more than it is possible for the sinner unregenerate to do it of himself. Whenever one really prays he does so as the result of the Holy Spirit's intercession within himself. Inasmuch as God has decreed all things that shall ever come to pass, it is therefore certain that no petition will be answered that asks aught but what God's will has ordained shall be. Any prayer claiming to be prayer that asks for other than God's will to be done is not prayer at all. Whenever we follow our own natural inclina-

tions in this matter, and ask for those things we naturally crave, it is not prayer at all, but is asking amiss. Only that which the Spirit inspires one to ask is worthy of the name of prayer. It is a comfort to know that even the apostle Paul himself, able as he was in the exposition of the deep things of God, yet felt unable to pray for anything of himself, and realized the need of the Holy Spirit within him to lead him aright in this matter. Surely no one but the Spirit could be better or equally qualified to lead the saints aright in prayer, for, "He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." Since the Spirit searches the hearts of men, the Spirit therefore knows the need of every child of God. Also, the Spirit searches even the deep things of God, so that the deep things of election and of God's eternal purpose and will are all known to the Spirit. Since, therefore, the Spirit knows what is in God's mind toward each of his chosen, and since that Spirit also searches the heart of that chosen one, what better than this Holy Spirit can cause the believer to ask in accord with what it is God's will to bestow upon that one? The substance of all prayer in sincerity is, "Thy will be done." It may not be just in those exact words, or it may be in no words at all, but the theme of all true praying is submission to the will of God, for prayer does not consist in words, but in Spirit. It is not the words one uses, or does not use, that constitute prayer, but the Spirit that prompts the desire counts for prayer; the desire itself is the prayer, and not the words which express that desire. Christ told his disciples that they were not heard for their much speaking, it was not their words that counted with God, but the Spirit which actuated them. Sometimes we hear good brethren lament because they are unable to talk, and thus express themselves as they would wish upon spiritual things, but better than all the talking in the world, better than all the gifts of language, is it to have in the soul that sincere longing and desire toward God and the things of God. This desire it is which is the exercise of the Spirit in the believer causing him to draw nigh the seat of mercy to petition there for those things which it is God's will to bestow. All the blessings that all believers will ever enjoy here in time were treasured in Christ for them by the Almighty before the world began. All the prayers experienced by the people of God will never add one blessing to those already prepared for them; but, on the other hand, the Spirit causes the believer to ask for these very blessings which God has prepared from eternity for him and which God has predestinated him to enjoy. We have seen indulgent parents who lavished gifts on their children until they became satiated with them. A little child with several handsome and expensive dolls does not enjoy them nearly so much as some little poor child with its one rag doll. The one child has never known the need nor deprivation of playthings, and therefore is not prepared by that need to appreciate her blessings as is that other child who clings so tenderly to its one mute playmate of rags. God does not satiate his people with his goodness and the bestowal of unnumbered blessings. He is too wise for that. Though he has innumerable good things treasured for them in Christ from eternity, yet not one single blessing does God ever bestow upon his children until they have been brought into such an experience of need as qualifies them

to enjoy and appreciate the blessing when it comes. This need, or lack, felt in the soul of the believer is the Spirit's preparation therein for the goodness of God, and this feeling of need, this desire for the goodness and salvation which God alone can give, is prayer. Thus it will be seen that prayer does not change God's mind at all, for he is of one mind and none can turn him, neither does prayer ask for anything but what God has already determined to give. We would define prayer as that operation of the Holy Spirit within the believer through which he is brought into reconciliation with the divine will and made to desire those very things which God has decreed to bestow. Therefore, instead of prayer being something by which we bring God around to our way of thinking and to our point of view, it brings the believer into a godly attitude of mind, to think the thoughts of God and to crave his works. No bounds can be set by us to this matter of prayer. We cannot set times and seasons for it. We cannot say that we will pray every day, or several times a day, or even that we will pray at all, as all this is entirely dependent upon God's will and upon the leading and instruction of his Spirit within us. Whenever it is his pleasure to cause us to know our need of him, then we shall pray, and shall do so without ceasing. True, Paul did say, "Pray without ceasing," but he did not mean that we could do this of ourselves. In these words found in 1 Thess. v. 17, Paul is addressing the church as a body and not as individuals, and we do verily believe that the church as a body never ceases to pray. As individuals, there may be, and doubtless are, times when we each have not the spirit of prayer, and therefore do not pray, but it is sure that from the church somewhere there does at all times ascend unto the Father the incense of prayer perfectly and sincerely rendered. None but the praying of the righteous man avails anything. Jesus Christ is the only righteous man we have ever known. None others ever are or can be righteous, only as the righteousness of Christ is imputed unto them. The petitions of Christ avail with God, because they are effectual and fervent. They are effectual because they are the fruit of the Spirit's inspiration, and are therefore in harmony with the decreed purposes of God. They are fervent, burning, because there is no halfway or lukewarmness in this effectual prayer, but the whole substance of Christ is involved in it, so that when the believer prays he is made to feel that his whole soul and all his welfare is wrapped up in the petition, so that this makes it fervent, for his whole being burns within him as he earnestly petitions the throne of grace for that which the Spirit makes him feel he cannot do without. The posture of the body does not constitute prayer. Of what avail is it to put the body in an attitude of subjection when one's inmost soul is standing up defiantly. No, prayer is not a matter of bodily attitude, but is a matter of heart. In prayer one's soul is in humility before God, no matter where one's body may be. Neither does a form of words, however sound, constitute prayer. The prayer may be a groan that cannot be expressed, that cannot find expression in human language. Somehow we have been so impressed with prayer as being a matter so real, so vital to the well-being of a child of God, that we have felt to write these few thoughts upon it, hoping it may comfort some one somewhere. L.

MATTHEW XVI. 13–19.

MR. J. T. BRAND, of Lithonia, Ga., asks us about Matthew xvi. 13–19, especially as to what Christ meant by, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Also, what Christ meant by, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." Jesus had asked Peter who the world said he (Jesus) was, and had received from him the reply that some said he was John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets. Then Jesus asked Peter, Who say ye that I am? Peter replied, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus then tells Peter how he (Peter) knows this, that he has not been taught it of men, but that it has been revealed unto him by the Father. Then, says Jesus, I say unto thee, "Thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church," &c. Jesus does not mean here that he will build the church on Peter, for that would have been a weak foundation indeed, but that Jesus knows his sheep (as when he said, Thou art Peter), and his sheep know him (as when Peter said, Thou art the Christ, &c). Upon this personal relationship of Jesus to every one of his sheep, and of every one of his sheep to him, rests the security of the church against all the gates of hell. There is no intermediary between Christ and his people, no need of any one to introduce the needy sinner to the Savior or to make known the Savior unto the needy one. This comes by revelation direct from God, and cannot be overthrown so that it is a veritable rock upon which rests the church.

As to the keys of the kingdom of heaven, we have thought that this simply meant that the apostles were ordained to be judges of sound doctrine, sound faith and sound practice in the gospel church. The expression, "kingdom of heaven," means the visible organization of the church here in the world. Jesus had said, Fear not, little flock, for it is my Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. The little flock in this instance meant the twelve disciples afterward to be apostles in the gospel church. It was the pleasure of the Father to deliver through Christ unto this "little flock" the ordinances, doctrine and order of the gospel church for them to deliver to those believers afterward to be baptized by them. This is what was meant by the Father's giving them the kingdom. The church in its gospel character came into visible manifestation on the day of Pentecost. The church of that early time received the doctrine and ordinances at the hands of the apostles, so that the apostles' doctrine and order has from that day to this received divine sanction, and is the only rule still remaining to the church of doctrine and order. This is what we mean when we say that we believe the New Testament to be the only rule of faith and practice for the gospel church. The apostles, in this sense, did have the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever they loosed unto the church in the way of doctrine and order and enjoined to be observed by the church we must observe, or else not claim to be the apostolic church. Whatever the apostles bound or prohibited the church from observing or preaching, we must still refrain from preaching or observing, or else not call ourselves the apostolic church. The apostles said nothing about Sunday-schools, missionaries, &c., therefore we, too, must be silent on these matters when it comes to advocating or practicing them. Whatever they bound on earth has the approval of heaven, and is bound also in heaven.

On the other hand, the apostle did command the observance of the Lord's supper, the ordinance of baptism, the ordination of elders, the preaching of the doctrine of salvation by grace, the refraining from all legalism in doctrine and in practice, and the abounding of charity among all believers. These things they did loose to the church, and we have no right now to cease advocating or practicing anything which they did preach and observe. In short, the evidence that the Old Baptists are the church of God in gospel order is that the Old Baptists walk in the doctrine, faith and practice in which the apostles walked. We must not add to nor take from any of these things. In this way the apostles had the keys of the kingdom, and we do well when we hold fast those things which they loosed to us, and when we refrain from those things which they bound from or prohibited to us. L.

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Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

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EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE CHURCH OF GOD, WHAT IS IT?

How indefinite and vague is the popular idea of the church of the living God, and how various are the applications of the word "church" in the parlance of the learned and unlearned theologians of the present times. A building erected for the convenience and accommodation of religious convocations by almost universal consent is called a church, and by that name, with great ceremony, is frequently consecrated and with much parade given to the Lord. A church made of wood, or of bricks and mortar, so consecrated, is by many regarded as a most holy place. Others with scarcely less absurdity apply the term to all religious organizations, as the Catholic church, the Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian or Mormon church, and these, with very many other religious bodies, are very generally regarded as churches of God, but of different denominations, alike entitled to be known as churches of God, and all in their different ways real worshipers of God and alike acceptable to him. But the Scriptures of truth can only recognize the church of God as one body, having but one head, built upon one rock, by but one builder. The inspired apostle Paul said, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Will this apostolic description of the church of God apply to all the discordant and conflicting organizations which claim the name, but deny all the essential characteristics which divine inspiration has shown to be indispensable to the church of God? Do all these towering piles of

brick or lumber which men call churches stand vitally united to Christ as their head? Have all the various denominations alluded to above kept the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace? Have they all but one Lord, one faith and one baptism? Are they all one body, having but one Spirit, and do they all even profess to be called in one hope of their calling? They certainly do not. If then these great popular denominations when weighed in the balance are found wanting, and when tried by the Scriptures are rejected, does it not become us, who profess to be Old School or Primitive Baptists, most carefully to examine in the light of divine revelation whether we possess the marks by which the holy Scriptures identify the church of God? When the rising Savior brought the immortality of his church to light, when he had vanquished death and finished transgression, made an end of sin, having obtained eternal redemption for all his members, he ascended up on high, went to his Father, and our Father, to receive the kingdom which the Father had appointed him, and his coronation as King of righteousness and Priest to the most high God; he was raised up far above all principalities and powers, and all thrones and dominions were made subject to him, and he was given to be Head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. In evidence of all this he sent the Spirit down, as he had told his disciples he would, which came like a rushing mighty wind, immersing all who, obedient to his command, were in the house, and recognizing them as the only body vitalized by his Spirit and baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. On this occasion the church appeared in the first disclosure of her gospel organization, and was expressly recognized as the church, unto which God continued to add such as should be saved. The constituents of the church of Christ are, first, our Lord Jesus Christ himself, as the Head, the King and only and blessed Potentate, the Prophet and Priest, the Way, the Truth and the Life, in whom is vested exclusively all legislative power. Second, the apostles of the Lamb, seated, by the special command of Christ, on twelve thrones of judgment, not of legislation, immediately inspired by the Holy Ghost to rule in judgment as infallible expounders of the laws, ordinances, doctrine and order of their Sovereign. Next to the apostles are evangelists and pastors and teachers. These are solemnly required to recognize and be governed by the laws of Christ the King, as laid down and expounded by the enthroned apostles, with express instructions to be governed by the laws and institutions of Christ, without presuming under any circumstance to alter, revise, add to or diminish from the decisions made and recorded by the apostles. Deacons, exhorters, helps and every gift as found in the apostolic rules, are to be recognized precisely as it has pleased God to distribute them among the members of Christ's body for the profit and benefit of all the church. All the members which the church has power to recognize must come in by the door; all who climb up some other way are thieves and robbers, who come in only to steal, to kill and to destroy. As all the laws of the church of Christ are immutable and irrevocable, the same rules which were observed on the day of Pentecost for admitting to fellowship are in force throughout all ages in Christ's church, and any community claiming to be his church that does not recognize them is an harlot, and not the church of God. This declaration

may seem uncharitable, but let those who fear God beware how they controvert it. We hold, first, that Christ has no church in earth or heaven over which he does not positively preside. Second, there is no church existing over which Christ presides except where his apostles rule in judgment, for he himself has said, When the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory (his mediatorial throne is the throne of his glory), then shall ye also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. We know that the apostles are not here now in the flesh, nor is the Savior now here in the flesh, for henceforth know we them no more in the flesh. But all their doctrine, order and decisions are here in every church or branch of the church where Christ presides as the King, for Christ has further said that whosoever rejects his apostles rejects him also. They cannot be separated in the organization of his kingdom, or church. Now then, let the laws of Christ, embracing all the doctrine which he established, as settled forever by the decisions of the holy apostles, as left on record in the New Testament, be regarded as the infallible standard or test by which the church of Christ is identified, and it must follow that all who are deficient in these essential and indispensable points are weighed in the balance and found wanting. This cannot be the case with the church of Christ, for she is the ground and pillar of the truth. She is the perfection of beauty, she is the workmanship of God, and all his work is perfect. It therefore follows inevitably that all who profess to be the church of Christ, and reject him, his apostles, his doctrine, his ordinances or his government, are base impostors. In view of these well defined principles, let us look well to the order established by the apostles for the reception of members to church fellowship and membership. Of those who were received on and about the day of Pentecost it is written that the Spirit was poured out in a most astonishing manner, in fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, by virtue of which many heard the preaching of the apostles, so that they were pricked in their heart and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Thus quickened by the Spirit, and made to feel and know their lost and helpless condition, their minds were directed to the apostles for instruction, and when the way of life and salvation was opened to their understanding, and the word applied to them by the Holy Ghost, they gladly received the word. A wonderful change was wrought in them, insomuch that the word, which had no attraction, and of the spirit and power of which they had always been so profoundly ignorant before, now seemed to them as apples of gold in pictures of silver, as words of life, peace and comfort to their hearts. The apostles' doctrine, which so recently they could ridicule and reject with scorn, was more to be desired than all the glories of the world. Without reluctance now they gladly received the word. It was perfectly adapted to their renewed state, for now being born again of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, they desired the sincere milk of the word, that they might grow thereby. Hitherto they had despised and hated the apostles and their doctrine, but now by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit which God had poured upon them they not only received, but gladly received the word, and according to the word as preached to them by the apostles they were baptized and added to the church; that is, they were brought manifestly into the fellowship of the apostles

and the apostolic church, and they continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine; having gladly received it, they continued to be perfectly satisfied with it. The record given that they continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine, implies that they encountered opposition, which they certainly did, for it was a time of severe persecution, but so deeply were they rooted and grounded in the truth that neither the bitterness of cruel persecution nor the specious allurements of new doctrines zealously promulgated by Judaizing or other teachers could shake their confidence in the apostles' doctrine. The apostles' doctrine and the apostles' fellowship are so joined together that they cannot be separated. If steadfast in the one we are equally so in both, but if we depart from the one we cease to enjoy the other. In departing from the apostles' doctrine we may secure the fellowship of the world, or of antichrist, but we cannot depart from their instruction and still retain their fellowship. Thus, quickened by the Holy Ghost, recipients of the doctrine of the apostles, baptized on profession of faith in obedience to the command of Christ, fully recognizing Christ as the Head over all things to his church, and the apostles as divinely authorized and qualified exponents of all the laws, order, ordinances and doctrine of his kingdom, we have described the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, built upon the foundation of the apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone, and being thus steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, they will be steadfast also in prayers, and in breaking of bread, and they may confidently expect the Lord will add to them such as shall be saved. How very different in all respects is the church of the firstborn from those humanly constructed religious organizations which have become so numerous and diversified in these times. However much they may differ from each other in some characteristic peculiarities, they are all alike in adopting the spirit of the proposition of the seven women who shall take hold of one man, saying, "We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach."—Isaiah iv. 1. They dislike to be called antichristian, or false churches, as that would be too humiliating, but to live on every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God by no means suits their taste. They have no relish for the apostles' doctrine, nor do they desire their fellowship; they desire rather to make a figure in the world, and be at liberty to believe whatever doctrine they please, conform to such rites and ceremonies as they please, get religion when they please, of whatever kind or quality they please, keep it as long as they please and lay it aside or exchange it when they please. Such churches, as they presumptuously call themselves churches, are fond of receiving such members as will find themselves, having self-righteousness enough to live upon, and only desiring to have a name to live while they are dead. For them the apostles' doctrine is quite too stale, it is behind the age of progression in which we live, it is too slow, it waits for God to add to his church such as shall be saved, while their plan is to add themselves such as shall not be saved, or such as give no evidence that they shall be saved.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 15, 1866.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. M. Fenton, at the home of the bride, Cammal, Pa., May 17th, 1916, Robert M. McAllister, of Grand Island, Nebr., and Rhoda M. Campbell.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mary Mellott, wife of Deacon Joshua L. Mellott, departed this earthly life May 4th, 1916, in the 61st year of her age. She was the daughter of the late Dennis and Miriam (Hess) Mellott. She was married to brother Joshua Mellott Dec. 19th, 1872. Our brother is left to mourn his loss, together with three sons and three daughters. The three sons are: Smith Unger, of Bedford County, Dennis Thornton, at home, and Thomas Elmer, of South Fork, Pa. The three daughters are: Miriam, Maria Catherine and Edith M., all of whom are married. Also, our dear sister Mellott is survived by her dear aged mother, sister Miriam Mellott, and by three brothers and four sisters. The three brothers are: Silas, Jefferson and Marcus, all living in the bounds of the Sideling Hill Church, Fulton Co., Pa. The four sisters are: Tabitha, Sarah, in Franklin Co., Pa., Elizabeth, at Curwensville, Pa., and Ella, at Altoona, Pa. Sister Mary Mellott was baptized by Elder E. V. White into the membership of the Fairview Church, at Needmore, Pa., in July, 1889. She lived to the time of her death a consistent member of that church, and was dearly beloved by her brethren in Christ and highly esteemed and respected by all who knew her. Sister Mellott was one who adorned her profession with the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. She will be greatly missed in her home, where she was thought to be indispensable until the Lord took her away, when it was brought home forcibly to us all that no matter how important may be the place we fill, we must leave it vacant some day.

Elders J. M. Fenton and J. C. Mellott were present with the writer at the funeral services, which were held in the Sideling Hill Baptist meetinghouse. The text used at the request of the husband, Deacon Joshua Mellott, was, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Our sympathy goes out to all the bereaved ones, and may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ sustain them in this great trial and cause them to realize that the Lord has taken but his own, which he has a perfect right to do whenever it seems good to him to do so. L.

APPOINTMENTS.

ELDER George Ruston will, Providence permitting, fill the following appointments:

Vega, Sunday, June 4th, 11 a. m. and 1:45 p. m.; Union Grove, Sunday, 11th, 11 a. m.; Kingston, Saturday evening, 17th, 150 Prospect St., 8 p. m.; Olive, Sunday, 18th, 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.

MEETINGS.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the First Hopewell Church, Mercer Co., N. J., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the first Sunday in June (May 31st and June 1st and 2nd), 1916.

All afternoon trains on Tuesday before the association will be met at Hopewell station. Trains from the south will leave Philadelphia, Reading Terminal, at 12:35, 1:02 and 4:02 p. m. Trains from the north will leave New York city at 12:50 and 4:20 p. m. All who come on Wednesday morning can come direct to the meetinghouse. We shall be glad to welcome all who have a desire to meet with us.

D. M. VOORHEES, Church Clerk.

THE Middleburg Old School Baptist Church, Schoharie County, N. Y., has appointed her yearly meeting to be held the first Saturday and Sunday in June (3rd and 4th,, 1916, and extends a cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.
COBLESKILL, N. Y.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the New Vernon Church, at New Vernon, Sullivan Co., N. Y., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (7th, 8th and 9th), 1916.

Those coming from and via New York city will take Erie train leaving West Twenty-third St. at 4:25 p. m. on Tuesday before the meeting. This train leaves Jersey City at 4:45, and is due at Howells, N. Y., at 7:01, for which place all get tickets. Those coming from and via Kingston will take O. & W. train leaving Kingston at 4:45 p. m. Get tickets for Winterton, N. Y. The above trains will be met and friends cared for. We extend a cordial invitation to all brethren, sisters and friends.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
H. S. COLLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Liberty Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church of Christ expect to hold their opening services in their new building at 42nd Place and Menlo Ave., Los Angeles, Cal., the second Sunday in June, 1916, thereafter meeting every Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m., except the fourth Sunday services, which will be held at brother and sister J. B. Dawson's, 644 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Cal. Business meeting 3 p. m. Saturday before the first Sunday. We invite Baptist people to visit us.

Done and signed by order of the church.

W. T. HENDERSON, Pastor, 915 W. 37th Place.
JOHN W. MAVITY, Clerk, 322 E. 35th St.

THE Bethel Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will hold its yearly three days meeting at Tallman, Oregon, commencing on Friday, June 16th, at 10 o'clock a. m. and continuing over Sunday. Those coming on S. P. road stop at Albany, take car on Lebanon Branch, stop off at Tallman. All lovers of truth invited.

A. HORNER.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 84. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1916. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TIAWAH, Okla., April 25, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am sending you a letter from our sister, Mrs. Mary Ellison, and also a manuscript which I received from her a few days ago. I think both speak of deep wrought experience by the Spirit of our God, and that the readers of the SIGNS would be comforted by reading the wonderful travel of mind expressed by sister Ellison in these letters. I met her in 1912 at a meeting in Topeka, Kansas, and I was much impressed by her zeal and spiritual minded demeanor. I have not asked her consent to have them published, but I feel certain that she will not object. I leave it to your judgment.

All yours, in hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

OSKALOOSA, Kansas, April 16, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER BEEMAN:—After a long time of seeming neglect to answer your kind letter I hardly know how to begin a letter to you, but I will tell you that the delay has not been caused by neglect, but by a long train of trials, tribulation and misfortunes, including sickness and death, and more than that, the unfitness of what I did at two or three different times write to you. If you knew me as I really am, perhaps you would not even care if I did never again intrude myself upon your attention. But I do believe that the feeling of unworthiness and unfitness to be among the people of God is one thing that constitutes the fellowship, or equality, of the saints and makes them all one in Christ, and I often think it is neglect of duty when for that reason we withhold from those of like trials and conflicts a token of loving remembrance that the Spirit prompts us to write. I often think of the lines, "Surely others do not feel what is often felt by me. Such trials and temptations perhaps they never see," yet others who are far better by nature than I, and who are far more gifted in spiritual light and knowledge than I can ever hope to be, say the same thing. So now while I have been enduring such a fight of afflictions without and within, discouraged and fainthearted, how do I know but that you may be laboring under stress of the same gloom and despondency? and if so, have I any right to withhold the cup of cold water which the love of Christ, I hope, would constrain me to offer in his name?

Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and how do I know but that loving chastening has been visited upon you, until you would be glad to receive the little drop of water that might be sent you even by a poor, sinful hand like mine? But if it be living water that refreshes the thirsting soul, it would come from One higher than I, though penned by a poor, weak creature. Our silence, I presume, though occasioned by deepest feelings of unworthiness, is not the cup of cold water we should give, neither do I feel that a relation of my many failings and frailties is of comfort or edification to any, so what can I do if there is nothing else given me to write? I sometimes think that is looking on the things of our own, instead of on the things of others, and it shows us to ourselves anything but what we most desire. But I will try not to take any more of your time with my unprofitable complainings. I want to tell you that another reason I did not send you what I wrote is, because my writing always becomes too lengthy, and although I was told to send on one letter I wrote, I could not summon courage to do so, fearing it would be a weariness to you to try to read, if indeed you did read it at all.

One of our papers for last August was sent to me, I presume by you, and I remembered of writing that article a few years ago. The editor commented on the length of it, but even then I had not written all I wished, so I wrote another, rambling on as my mind was led, but I never ventured to send it. After the other was published, and you seemed to have enjoyed it, I felt impressed to send you the rest of it, but, as I said, it was too long, and I feared it was only the prompting of my fleshly inclinations that made me want to send it, so I wrote again and again, but each time laid it aside as unsatisfactory; it was not what I wanted to send. Now I am going to try again to pick up courage and venture to send it, and ask you, if you try to read it at all, to cast it aside when you become weary, for you will probably not care to read half of it, and after you have looked at it to tell me candidly if it was only the carnal mind that prompted it, or if it is all of the flesh that impresses me to send such to you. It is often mortifying to me because I cannot express myself in a short, concise letter like others do. I love the sublime language used to express the beautiful figures and symbols used in the Scriptures, and love to hear them enlarged upon, yet in many words there wanteth not sin, and if what I have written does not become sound doctrine I feel that it will do you no harm, for you are not one to be misled by a poor, weak creature like me, and will not allow others to be.

I will not attempt further apology, but want to tell you this was our meeting day, and as I sat waiting for them to come, feeling much discouraged and cast down at the coldness and neglect of duty that seems to have overtaken us, I picked up the SIGNS of June 1st, 1915, and began reading the first article in it with much interest, on Habakkuk xi. 2, 3. I came to several quotations about "waiting on the Lord," and I felt much comforted and encouraged. I turned to see who had written it, and found your name. I looked to see who had written it, as though thanks and praise would be due that one. You would not wish me to say that, but I do wish to encourage you by saying I felt that the Lord had, by your hand, sent a message of comfort to one of the least of all. Another SIGNS recently fell in my hands, and I read of your grievous loss by death of your oldest son. I truly was in fellowship with your grief, remem-

bering my firstborn, who passed from me at the age of seventeen years. He was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. Recently my daughter, whom you visited in Topeka, the only one left me of her father's children, went down apparently to the very gates of death under a severe surgical operation for appendicitis, seriously complicated with other diseases, having been sick a long time. Let us be still and know that the Lord he is God and has a good and wise purpose in all he does.

Hardly daring to ask your forbearance for what I am about to inflict upon you, I will now close. I know there are others more worthy and deserving of a remembrance from you, but at least remember in your petitions at the throne of grace this poor, weak and worthless worm of the dust.

MARY ELLISON.

OSKALOOSA, Kansas.

DEAR BROTHER:—I want to write more about the mandrakes. I used the quotation, The mandrakes give a smell, &c., as figurative of the fruits of the Spirit. A mandrake is a narcotic plant with a thick, edible root. A narcotic is something to ease pain, and the edible root would appease hunger. So a mandrake, figurating the fruits of the Spirit, would be a soothing balm to the wounded, broken heart, and would also fill those who do hunger and thirst after righteousness. The mandrakes give a smell. When the fruits of the Spirit, goodness, gentleness, meekness, and all, are evidenced, they create a most pleasant sensation to those in whom the same sweet fruits abound. The words, The tender grapes give a good smell, are used in the same way. The fruits of the Spirit are a cluster of tender grapes, and how sweet the fragrance shed abroad in our hearts.

"When love in one delightful stream
Through every bosom flows,
And union sweet, and dear esteem,
In every action glows."

I believe these figurative words are used with a deep significance, as I will try to show later on. I used the words in the same way as in the hymn:

"Love is the sweetest bud that blows,
Its beauty never dies,
On earth among the saints it grows,
And ripens in the skies.

Its deepest hue, its richest smell,
No mortal sense can bear,
Nor can the tongues of angels tell
How bright its colors are.

On heaven's banks supremely fair
This flower of wonder blooms,
Transplanted to its native air
And all its shore perfumes.

Yet not to heaven's banks confined,
The seeds from which it grows
Take root within the christian's mind
And scent the church below."

Notice how many figurative words in these lines. Love is a fruit of the Spirit, and the words "smell," "perfume" and "scent," are used in a figurative way, to designate the delightful sensation when the pleasant fruits are manifested. If we provoke one another to love and to good works it is a sweet-smelling savor. The sweet spices of love, joy, peace, faith, begin to flow, and we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ. That sweet-smelling savor of Christ is the fruit of the Spirit manifested in our orderly walk and godly conversation as we try to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, as on the hem of Aaron's garment there was "a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate." (O great is the mystery of godliness. Often when some of these beautiful figures are presented to the mind, how I would love for some one who is able to do business in deep waters to take up the subject and draw out the beauty and sweetness in it. Words are

too little and insufficient to express the depth of it, and how little and weak I feel as I try to speak of it.) The pomegranate is another sweet-smelling fruit, and is used in the same figurative way as the mandrakes, the tender grapes, the sweet spices, &c.

"A bell and a pomegranate." There must be some fruit shown as well as sound heard. The bell was of pure gold, and the sound of the bell figurates the profession we make. It must be in pure testimony of the sovereign grace and mercy of God, and without any alloy of human worth or merit, giving God all the glory for the great things done for us, and when we hear the sound of that bell, or of that profession, then we look for the pomegranate, for "by their fruits ye shall know them." We are not to be known alone by the sound of our profession, but when the Lord has "into his garden come, the spices yield a sweet perfume." The pomegranate must be there as well as the bell. The tender grapes of love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, temperance, emit a precious fragrance, the mandrakes give a smell, as we strive to give diligence to make our calling and election sure. Not give diligence to obtain our calling and election, but in trying to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, our lives must be such an open epistle, known and read of all men, that there is to them no doubt of our calling and election. It is made so apparent to them that it is to our brethren sure and undoubted, for if these things be in you and abound they make you that ye be neither barren nor unfruitful. As for ourselves, we are often oppressed by the heavy weight of doubt that we cannot wholly lay aside, but the heavier the pall of darkness that oppresses us the more diligence we should give to make our calling and election sure to our brethren.

"A bell and a pomegranate." Faith and works, for faith without works is dead. The sound of the bell is sweet, but the sound alone is of little worth without the pomegranate, for it is by our fruits we are known and judged. But as I said before, there often has to be a crushing of our dearest hopes and highest earthly aspirations before the sweet spices begin to flow, then the mandrakes give a smell, and by our orderly walk and godly conversation is exhibited all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old. Love, joy, peace, &c., are they not both new and old? But not only such old fruits as these, but in our every day lives there are new fruits, new examples of patience, love and submission to the will of our heavenly Father.

It may seem like a digression, but right here I want to speak of the "well of water," and the stone upon the well's mouth. Jacob looked and beheld a well of water in the field, and three flocks of sheep lying by it, for out of that well they watered the flocks, and a great stone upon the well's mouth, and thither were all the flocks gathered, and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth and watered the sheep, and put the stone upon the well's mouth again in his place. The three flocks of sheep show that the Lord had a people, a flock in each of the three dispensations, and they could not be watered until the stone was rolled from the well's mouth. They could not help themselves and drink at their will, but must wait until their spiritual Jacob rolls the stone from the well's mouth, for He shuts and none can open, he opens and none can shut. It has been suggested to me that when the brethren are assembled to hear the gospel preached, then the

stone is rolled from the well's mouth, the flock is watered, and the stone replaced until the time of the next meeting. Perhaps that is the true interpretation, but it seems to me it comes closer than that in the experience of each one of us, for it seems sometimes that we cannot drink, even when the well is uncovered, though it is said that they could not water the sheep until time to roll away the stone, and when "Rachel came with her father's sheep: for she kept them." What a beautiful figure, Rachel, a type of the church, keeping her father's sheep. Jacob arose and rolled away the stone and watered them. That, it seems, might be truly interpreted to mean at meeting time, when the antitypical Rachel comes with the sheep of her Father's pasture. Yet in my experience when I have sometimes come with the rest of the sheep, and thought to drink deeply of the well of salvation under the sound of the preached word, though all the others seemed to be feasting, yet to me it seemed that the stone was upon the well's mouth, and the well of water springing up into everlasting life, that I had hoped would be refreshing to my drooping soul, seemed completely blocked and hindered. Again, I have, as I humbly hope, been granted some sweet seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord when I least expected them. I have gone to meeting sometimes so tormented by "fiery serpents," so full of vile and hateful thoughts, even the words of silly, though very popular songs running through my mind, as I once went to our association; I thought, O what business have I, with such a mind as I have, to be going to such a place to mingle with spiritually-minded people, to go and leave my children, when there can be nothing for one so vile and full of sin as I am? But, great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, it was a feast of fat things from beginning to end; surely the stone was rolled from the well's mouth, and I was graciously permitted to drink and feast with the rest of the flock. O, dear kindred in Christ, as we so often condole with one another in our dark and lonely seasons, let us also for a little season lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and comfort one another with the rays of brightness given us to keep alive our little glimmering hope; let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven; not some great work that you yourself have done and would fain believe it a good work, but the good work the Lord has done for you, and wrought your joy in him, and so it is yours, your good work, and when your brethren see this good work that is yours they praise and glorify your Father in heaven, as you also do when you let your light shine before them, and do not hide it under a bushel, or measure of yourself, which you feel shows that you come far short of being in anywise worthy to claim that the Lord has done, and is still doing, a great work for you, whereof you are glad. That is the way I felt as I came home from that association; it did not seem that the stone was yet replaced on the well's mouth, and, if not deceived, I experienced a season of deeper rest, peace and joy in the Lord than is often mine to enjoy. I felt really that the great and only Preacher had come home with me. My children would go to school, and day after day, from morning until evening, I would be alone, yet there was such a feeling that I was not alone that once I involuntarily raised my head and looked about the room; the presence seemed like such a verity that I looked, as though I

would see the King in his beauty with my natural eyes as he can only be seen by the eye of faith. If I ever did realize the fulfillment of the promise, My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest, I did then. Such seasons with me are both precious and rare. O how I did pray that when the darkness and night seasons came, as they still must come, when all the horrid beasts of the forest creep forth, all the evil propensities of my fleshly nature assail me, that the Lord would give me strength to resist the devil when he comes in the form of the fiery serpents to whisper that it was only a season of pleasant fleshly delusion. But how true it is that the sorrow of the world worketh death to such a pleasant frame of mind. Some bitter trial of worldly trouble overtakes us and our whole mind is engrossed by it. Is it not then that the stone is laid again on the well's mouth? We grieve over our trouble until if we remember the former things of old at all it is with a feeling that the Lord hath forgotten to be gracious, that he is clean gone forever. Our worldly sorrow has worked death to the blessedness we knew when resting in the joy of his salvation. It is become such a weight that although we did run well, we now feel hindered in the race set before us, for it has become so dark we go halting and stumbling along, fearing the next step will lead to our utter downfall. How sorrowfully we realize that of ourselves we can do nothing; not one good thing dwells in our flesh. O who shall deliver us from the body of this death that is being worked by our worldly sorrow? In that faint prayer the sweet spices begin again to yield their perfume, in an humble petition to the Lord to draw us, that we may run after him, for we know, O Lord, that in righteousness thou hast afflicted us, that we might learn thy statutes. Our worldly affliction is very crushing and grievous, yet afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby. We cry unto God, Restore unto us the joys of thy salvation, and uphold us by thy free Spirit. We feebly hope that our salvation is safe in his hands, but the joy of it has fled, destroyed by the workings of our worldly sorrow. The crushing of our earthly hopes has come, but when the peaceable fruits of righteousness begin to yield again their fragrance we are then abased by a realizing sense of our unfaithfulness, for

> "O Lord, thou never changest,
> It is because I stray;
> Lord, guide me by thy Spirit,
> And keep me in the way."

In meekness now we realize that we needed the chastening hand of the Lord to bring us to a realizing sense of our dependence upon him. It was good for us to have been afflicted. "Before I was afflicted I went astray." It enables us to receive and appreciate the precious promises of One who is able to perform. If we were never hurt we would never feel the need of the healing medicine, nor have any appreciation of the goodness, mercy and loving-kindness of our neglected Lord. He says of his bride, "I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, [Lord, why is this? The wilderness is such a dark and gloomy place, why must we be brought there?] and speak comfortably unto her." O, indeed, when we get into the dark mazes of the wilderness then we are ready to come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty, enemies in our nature that seem ready to devour us. We realize that there is no help for us only the help of the Lord, the only one who is able to save to the uttermost all that come to him. We cry for,

and appreciate the words of comfort so mercifully reserved for us. We thought it was our own acts that led us into such thick darkness, but now we see that the Lord's hand was in it, leading us in the darkness as well as in the light, to work out his good and wise purpose, to speak comfortingly unto us, that we might make a joyful noise unto him for his goodness and his wonderful works to the children of men; and now we know that all things work together for good to them that love God. He gives us beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. The mandrakes give a smell, and once more we are relishing the peaceable fruits of righteousness more than we ever could if we had not been deprived of them for a season. We thank God and take courage, realizing that our afflictions work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, and learn obedience by the things we suffer. The peaceable fruits of righteousness are being evidenced in those who are thus exercised, and we truly feel that these momentary things we suffer are not worthy to be compared to that eternal weight of glory that all the days of our appointed time we must patiently wait. The night is past, the morning has again broken forth, the Daystar has arisen in our hearts, the time of the singing of birds is come; we again come forth and in the fruits of the Spirit by our orderly walk and godly conversation we praise our God with the timbrel and with the dance, the steps of our feet being kept in harmony with the music of our godly conversation, as we try to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called. As we have received Christ Jesus our Lord so let us walk in him. Let the hem of our garment of praise be adorned not only with the pure golden bell, as we speak to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs (a most pleasing sound,) but let it also have the pomegranate, for by their fruits ye shall know them. We must not only speak of our faith, but we must also act it, for without works it is not a living faith. We must work out our own salvation, realizing that it is God that worketh in us, and how shall we escape the chastening hand of the Lord if we neglect so great salvation as he has effected for us and so freely bestowed upon us? How did we receive Christ Jesus the Lord? For as we received him, so ought we to walk in him. This brings us again to the days of our youth. How did we walk then, in the love of our early espousal? O, it was in unspeakable joy, yet in heartfelt humbleness; in love, yet in fear; in rejoicing, yet in meekness; in wonder and admiration, yet in deepest feeling of littleness and humbleness before so great and glorious a God and Savior as we have received.

"When first I was delivered I scarcely could believe
That I, so vile a sinner, such favor should receive.
I thought my trials over, and all my troubles done,
That joy and peace and pleasure should be my lot alone."

O, dear friends, when days seem dark and full of gloom, then let us remember our Creator in the days of our youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh when we shall say there is no pleasure in them. How do we remember him? How did he appear to us, and how did we receive him in the days of our youth, in the love of our early espousal? Was he not the chiefest among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely? and in the joy of our first love did we not happily sing, "Through floods and flames, if Jesus leads, I'll swiftly follow on?" As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my love among the sons. Truly the One altogether lovely did our Creator ap-

pear unto us before the evil days came. O, we did not look for evil days then, in the days of our youth, in our early love; we could not believe they would ever come.

"On the wings of his love
I was carried above
All sin and temptation and pain;
And I could not believe
That I ever should grieve,
That I ever should suffer again."

We thought we would always go on our way rejoicing in the great things our Creator had done for us. The evil days came not then. But O, once I was young, but now I am old, and more often now my plaintive cry is,

"But where am I now;
When was it, or how,
That I fell from a sense of his grace?
I am brought into thrall,
As if stripped of my all,
And have lost the sweet smiles of his face."

Cannot each one of us, from sad experience, sorrowfully say the evil days do come, more evil days than bright ones, even months of vanity and wearisome nights are appointed unto us? Even the years draw nigh, yea they are here, that have brought us to feel that all the treasures of this world are only vanity and vexation of Spirit, and we must say there is no pleasure in them. Now in these wearisome days let us turn back and remember our Creator in the days of our youth. He remembers us, the kindness of our youth and the love of our early espousal, and says, Return unto me, O ye backsliding children, for I am married unto you. And, lo, I am with you alway.

I feel impelled to write on, and will revert again to the mandrakes in Genesis thirtieth chapter, the only other place I know that they are spoken of in the Scripture. "And Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest, and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them unto his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I pray thee, of thy son's mandrakes. And she said unto her, Is it a small matter that thou hast taken my husband? and wouldest thou take away my son's mandrakes also?" It has been suggested to me that Reuben is a type of an Arminian preacher, gathering his mandrakes, or the fruit of his labor from the field, or world, and he took them to his mother Leah, a type of the whole Arminian world, or church. Rachel, a type of the true church of Christ, asked Leah for some of her son's mandrakes. Leah was very resentful toward Rachel for having taken her husband, and now would take her son's mandrakes also. I am at a loss for words to convey the idea I have in mind, but perhaps can illustrate by a little experience of my own, though it may not be the right application. I went to hear one of these Reubenitish ministers preach; he was trying hard to gather from the field for his mother Leah. It was the first and only time I had heard one of them for years, except on funeral occasions, and then there seemed more reason to mourn for the cause of truth than for the dead, and it might have sounded worse to me than if I had been accustomed to hearing it, but when their services were over, if there ever was a time when I wanted to shake the very dust off of my feet and get away it was then. I could scarcely stop to answer the cordial greetings of my neighbors. I did not want to show even that much fellowship for it. But during their services I noticed the singing of the preacher, a strong, hardy looking man, with such a clear, strong voice. Indeed, the organ made such a noise I could not tell what they were singing only when the preacher joined in, and there sat a crowd of Leah's children, all eagerly laying hold of the

refuge of lies he had held out to them. I thought how sweet it would sound if he were singing hymns of praise in words of truth as sung by the people of God. And I found myself wishing that this poor and afflicted people who call upon the name of the Lord for all their strength, both naturally and spiritually, might have been blessed with such strength of voice and stature to sing and proclaim the unsearchable riches of grace and mercy. Now was I not wishing for some of Reuben's mandrakes? Was I not like the psalmist when he said, I was envious of the proud when I saw the prosperity of the wicked? Their strength is firm, no fear and trembling there. Is it any wonder that poor Rachel, in constant contact with them, and despised for her barrenness, just as the true church is despised to-day; I say, is it any wonder that she longed for some of the fruit gathered by Leah's son? Leah had many sons, typical of the many inventions the Arminian church has sought out. The Sunday-schools and Mission Societies, the Leagues and Endeavors, the Gospel Teams and Flying Squadrons, and all such unscriptural inventions, have been sought out by Leah's sons, and as they compass sea and land to make proselytes, gathering their fruit from the field and bringing it to her, how she does exult because she has gotten her hire. They must gather the fruit, and the hire must be forthcoming, or soon would come the cry with a strong voice saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen. It could not stand without the hire. Rachel, the type of the true church, had only two sons. When Joseph was born she had faith to confidently say the Lord would give her another son, and she died in giving birth to Benjamin. The true church only has two, doctrine and order, and they are all she ever needs or desires. She has no wish nor use for the many inventions it takes for Leah's sons to gather their fruit. The doctrine is as old as the three flocks of sheep that were watered at the well. It has gone with them through the three dispensations, the same yesterday and forever, as unchangeable as God himself. When the gospel order was established and the church militant set up, then Rachel, the old type, died. All the old types and shadows are now passed away, and behold, all things are become new. We are no more under the old covenant of works, but under grace, and in that new covenant, or new order of things, they no more teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, but they rest from their labors in that rest that remains to the people of God, not like the restless, troubled sea of human inventions, that continually casts up mire and dirt. Sure, Leah's children do not care for Rachel's sons, especially the older one, and as in their envy and hatred they sold Joseph away to get rid of him, and lied about it, so they would to-day obliterate every trace of the true doctrine from the face of the earth if they could. They cannot destroy the doctrine any more than they could Joseph, but they can still lie, and say those who believe it are all dead, or soon will be. They can only go so far and no farther. They mean just as much evil toward the doctrine as they meant to Joseph, but the Lord preserved him until he was reunited to his brother Benjamin. The Reubenites do not ask or care for the sweet-smelling fruits laid up, not gathered from the field, but laid up for the children of Rachel at their very gates. The two-leaved gates of doctrine and order are now open before him, and they shall not be shut. These gates open into the kingdom that is set up by the God of

heaven, and the gates of hell shall not prevail to close them. O the beauty and sweetness that is disclosed to view, but I must not now indulge in the pleasure of pursuing the subject any further.

I was tossing upon a sleepless pillow one night, tormented as usual by all manner of unprofitable and hateful thoughts, and involuntarily cried within myself, O, Lord, if I must lie here awake, lead me to think on thy name. Give me meditations of thee. I humbly trust he heard my cry, and presently I arose and penned part of what I have written here. I do fear that I know nothing aright, so if there is any truth or comfort in what I have written, it is from the source of all light and truth, and all honor is due Him. I realize that my writings will become too lengthy to send to any one lest they be an imposition on the patience and forbearance of any who might try to read. Life has been a veritable valley of Achor to me, and I often fear that it is more for my own pleasure, and to relieve for a few moments the unutterable loneliness of a life clouded and crowded with a long series of poignant griefs and disappointments than with an eye single to the glory of God, or for the comfort of his people. But it is a kind of lonesome pleasure to trace the leadings of my mind, so I write, not as a teacher, but to express my own views. Whether they are from the Giver of all good or from the carnal mind is the anxious question. I never can say I know I have the right view, for I fear I do not know anything aright, and often feel when writing that I should not say, "we," but in some instances should say "you," and in others "I." I cannot do the things that I would, but, if not deceived, I do feel such a oneness with this "people scattered and peeled" that the Lord is going to have brought as a present to himself, that I involuntarily say "we."

"From whence doth this union arise
That hatred is conquered by love?
It fastens our souls in such ties
As distance and time can't remove."

I have felt the crushing of life's dearest earthly hopes, and now I long for the fragrance of the sweet fruits of the Spirit that so richly abound in others, and often feel to cry out, Bless me, even me also, O my Father. Still I realize that

"This heart of mine sore chastening needs, or else I should not care
To seek a bright inheritance which lasting is and fair,
So in the future let me trust in Him who knoweth best,
Give me submission to His will, I'll leave with Him the rest."

I sometimes think I understand why ministers after delivering a profound discourse will apologize for not having done better. They see so much more in the subject than they can possibly tell in one sermon that they feel they have left out more and better than all they have said. My Father used to sing:

"Streaming mercy, how it flows,
Now I know, I feel it,
Half has never yet been told,
O, that I could tell it."

I was waiting in an office one day, and picked up a magazine and read an article that surprised me much to find in a worldly paper. The writer said among other things, "If I am of the household of God at all, I am as the smallest grain of sand in the cement used in the construction of a great building." I thought that fit me. But O to know that I have any place at all in that lovely building, that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

A question keeps coming into my mind as to what does the stone represent, or what was the stone that was laid upon the well's mouth? O how very, very little, if anything at all, do I know.

"Angelic minds cannot explore
This deep, unfathomed sea,
'Tis void of bottom, brim or shore,
And lost in Deity."

Still craving a place in the affection of all who love the truth as it is in Jesus, I remain as unworthily as ever,

MARY ELLISON.

VANLEER, Tenn., Feb. 12, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am sending you one new subscriber for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, also a letter from Elder J. W. Linn. As you will see, he asks me to read it to the churches, so if you see proper to publish it then it can be read in all the churches that dear brother Linn visited in Tennessee and Kentucky. He was on a visit of five weeks in Tennessee and Kentucky, and visited many churches, and I feel that the letter will be of great comfort to all the churches he visited, and to the household of faith generally.

In hope, L. D. SEALS.

FAIRMONT, W. Va., Jan. 20, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER SEALS:—I have been thinking of writing you, and to the brethren and sisters. I am anxious to meet you all again, and hope you people are anxious to meet with me; although I am very unworthy, yet my desire is to have your fellowship, and I would entreat you to let me continue to go with you, and entreat me not to leave you, and let me follow after you, that your God be my God and your people my people. I still remember those hymns you people sang when I was there, and like to hear that one, "A child of Jehovah, a subject of grace." O to be a child of Jehovah, a subject of grace; that would be worth more than all this world. "A child of Jehovah"! All the powers of hell combined cannot cheat us out of our heirship; all the temptations, trials and persecutions of this life cannot cause us to cease to be his children nor subjects of grace. Dear brother, what can harm us? What can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? No wonder the apostle was persuaded that neither height, nor depth, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor any other creature, is able to separate us from the love of God. But here is the question among the children of men: Why are we the children of Jehovah, and why are we the subjects of grace? Here is the turning point with the people, and the majority take the broad road, the wrong way, and claim that we must do something in order to become children of Jehovah, yet they surely know that they did not do anything in order to become children of their parents, but were children of their parents when born; their names were given to them, Linn or Seals, or Hood or Jenkins, or some other name; so with the children of Jehovah, they have their names given them, and they are children, being born again, and as they did not have any part in their natural birth, so they do not have any part in their spiritual birth; and as John the Baptist had no part in giving himself his name ("His name is John"), so neither have they any part in their name. "A child of Jehovah, a subject of grace." Not going to be if they perform conditions in order to be children of God, but they shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty; I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. Then again, some claim that all of Adam's race are the children of God. They surely cannot see that in nature we are all Linns, or all Seals, or Hoods. Did not Christ plainly say of some, Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of him ye will do? Then they are not all the children of God, neither can they become children of Jehovah by performing any condition, but the lusts of the devi

they will do, not may do, but they will do, for the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand. Here is one of the "shalls" of Jehovah. None of the wicked shall understand; no, not one of them shall understand the good seed are the children of the kingdom, but the tares are the children of the devil. The Son of man sowed the good seed, the enemy that sowed the tares is the devil, the harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels; therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this world, not a single tare converted to wheat, not a single child converted to a child of Satan, but the tares to be burned and the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. A child of Jehovah; God is their Father. So do you not see that one class of these are the children of God, and the tares are the children of the wicked one? Now how can any man say that all men are the children of God? Christ sowed his seed, the holy seed, the seed which the Lord hath blessed, a seed which shall serve him. Now we go right back to Genesis to find the two classes: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Christ shall bruise Satan shortly under thy feet. The seed of Satan are the tares, and I have never yet seen tares converted into wheat, nor goats into sheep. There is a great difference between a sheep and a goat. The wicked have no standing, and they cannot sustain their position concerning the great plan of salvation; the goats base their hope on conditions to be performed by them in order to be saved, but the sheep go back to the foundation of all things, and come right up on the way, and cannot be turned from the way, for Christ Jesus is the way, and he leads them right up from earth to heaven. The sheep hear Christ's voice, and they follow him, but not so with the goats, for the devil sowed them, and they bring forth after their kind. Christ says, My sheep hear my voice, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. So they believe in Christ, while the goats believe in conditions to be performed. The sheep hear Christ, and trust in him, and not in themselves; they believe that Christ has delivered them, and purged their conscience from dead works to serve God in newness of life. Their conscience being purged from dead works, then they cannot live in works, but they must walk in newness of life, new creatures in Christ Jesus; it is in him they walk, and serve God in spirit, having the Spirit of Christ in them, and they are led by the Spirit, and being led by the Spirit of Christ, they are his children, and being led, it is evident that they do not walk in obedience to God's commands of themselves, but are led in the way of truth by his Spirit, and they believe that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose, for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. So as he is before all things, it is evident that there was nothing before him. He began the work in us, and he will finish the work, and by him all things consist. So we see God created all things in heaven and in earth. As Job said, God's hand formed the crooked serpent. "Now

the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? * * * And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die." See his subtility, his cunning craftiness; as the apostle has said, we are not ignorant of his devices, of his cunning craftiness. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."—John viii. 44. The opposite of truth, the opposite of that which is right. "The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Surely God knew that they would take and eat of the fruit of that tree and die, because he said, In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. Did God ever make anything in vain? Was there not a purpose in this very tree of which they ate the fruit? and was not there a purpose in the serpent, in bringing about things as they are?

Yours to serve,

JAMES W. LINN.

BENTON, Ky., May 20, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I herewith send you a letter that I have copied, which I received over a year ago from the late Elder J. M. Perkins, which I desire to see published in the SIGNS, in memory of his firmness in the true principles of salvation by grace and grace alone. Brother Perkins was a model man and citizen, and held in high esteem even by his enemies in the gospel, as shown by a clipping I also send you from his home paper, the *Mayfield Messenger*, which I hope you will publish in the SIGNS. Brother Perkins never indulged in light and frivolous jokes, as some do, but applied himself to study and meditation of the Scriptures, and had a deep insight and understanding of them. You see he complains in his letter that his outward life was contrary to his inward life, showing that his warfare with sin and temptation was great. But he is gone, and, like Paul, has finished his course and kept the faith, and I feel sure there is a crown laid up for him in glory. The churches in this association will miss him, as his place will be hard to fill, but we hope the Lord will raise up one that will fill his place, and he will, if it is his will.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

R. J. HILL.

MAYFIELD, Ky., Feb. 28, 1915.

DEAR BROTHER HILL:—Your letter came the 23rd, and was read with much interest, which reminded me of the fact of your loving remembrance of me. It found me confined in the house, where I have been for thirteen or fourteen days with la grippe. I am able to go about the place a little, but it is about all I can do. I have a spell of la grippe most every winter, and I have gone but little this winter on account of the bad, hard weather. I was glad to hear from you and sister Hill. It seems that time is wafting us swiftly to the final end. I feel, though much younger than yourself, that my active days are behind me, and that but a few more years at most await me. When I look back over my past life I must say that it has been by the mercy of God that I have been brought on my journey thus far, and now in the evening of life I must say, if per-

mitted in his presence at last it must be through the merits of Jesus only, and that it will be a poor, unworthy wretch saved by grace. To live as I have desired I have failed, but I have desired God's glory and honor in my heart, if I am not deceived, but it seems my natural life, or manner of life outwardly, has contradicted my inward desires, and so I realize how helpless I am. I think by these things I have learned what Paul meant when he said, "When I would do good, evil is present with me," so I cannot do the things I would. Now when he came to realize this in the grief of his own heart he was made to loathe himself and to say, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I am made to ask, Is this the road God's children must walk in? Just here one is made to hope against hope, and in our despair we are driven to Jesus for succor, and when we go what have we to plead? No righteousness of ours, no merit to make us feel good, but sad and cast down, we feel dejected and unworthy, we can but plead for mercy; but the self-righteous man says, Do good, keep his commandments, and then you will have a light heart; but alas, I cannot, and if I could (and I would, too,) of what consolation would the Scriptures be to me? They would be a dead letter, and I would know nothing of their meaning. My dear brother, I must say that through my humiliation and weakness, and a felt sense of depraved nature and sin, is my hope made strong in the Lord. How contrary to nature's way, which says, Do good, be good and obey God, and then you can have a strong hope that God will save you. Such a hope could not be in God, but founded on self, and that is just such a hope as nature wants, and perhaps is just such as thousands have. Brother Hill, I may not know what it is to trust in God, and from a self point of view I dare not, but I know I have nothing else to trust in but God. The Scriptures say, Cursed is man that trusteth in man and maketh flesh his arm, but blessed is the man whose trust is the Lord. Now let me be what I may, one thing I know, and that is, I am not trusting in man, leaning on an arm of flesh; if I am not trusting in the Lord, then I am not trusting at all.

I have written as I have felt, and felt as I have written, though not on the line you suggested, but one cannot truly write except as he feels. Just a few thoughts in regard to the matter of the stone Jesus. Dr. Gill says it applies to the destruction of the Jews, but he may be mistaken. It may be that on whom it falls is like you and I ground to powder, and no strength left in us, and all our bones broken, and no power left in us, and we feel all undone, and so being ground to powder we should be moulded into the image of Jesus, that the body of sin may be done away. I only suggest this thought, and you can add the balance. I hope this will find you in the care of the Lord, and may comfort and ease abide with thee. Our love and fellowship to you.

J. M. PERKINS.

THE death of Elder John M. Perkins has probably brought more sorrow and grief among the rank and file of the men and women of a large section of country than almost any other man who has died in this county for many years. Since we came to Mayfield, fifteen years ago, we have had more or less business with him, and have always found him to be a courteous, respectful, honest man, and when this can be said about a man it almost covers the entire ground. We have

known him as a minister of the Primitive Baptist Church for nearly forty years, and in the various localities that he has preached all those who heard him loved him as an honest, christian gentleman. He was a man of extraordinary ability, a fine reasoner and firm in his convictions. Aside from the doctrine of his church he has always stood for good morals, good government and good society. He has always been an unpretentious, modest man, both in his daily walk and in his ministerial work. He was one who, in so far as worth and ability are concerned, never passed among his fellows for his real worth. There are many, many people within his acquaintance to-day that personally and socially were unknown to him, who are mourning his death as a great loss, not only to his family and relatives, but to the community in which he lived. It can be truly said by those who knew him and his manner of living, that the country was better off because of his citizenship.

The Messenger extends its best wishes to his surviving relatives, and joins them in their sorrow over the death of this excellent christian minister.

ABERDEEN, N. C., April 20, 1916.

DEAR ELDER KER:—Being quite alone to-day, I feel inclined to write some for publication, but if what I may write finds its way into the wastebasket I hope I will love you just as well. My mind has been exercised more or less of late in regard to the relation of Christ to the church. I am the Head, ye are the body. Naturally our features are all in the head. By the head we are known to others. The body cannot live without the head. In the head we have the sense of seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling and feeling. The head is the light of the body, speaks for the body. In the head is all the wisdom of the body. The head sees for and directs all the plans for the body. If one of the smallest or remotest parts of the body is hurt how quickly it conveys the fact to the head, and at once the head begins to prepare some remedy for relief. This is also true in a husband. The husband is the head of the family, and if he is worthy of the name he does and will labor for the family, and watch over and care for all of them. This has been so from the beginning. Eve was beguiled and deceived, and ate the forbidden fruit. Adam was not deceived, but for the love he had for his bride he partook with her in the transgression, but could not redeem her, but instead involved himself and his posterity in sin and under the curse of God's holy law. I think I have seen in my time good men who, for the love of their wives, have done things which caused them much trouble, or brought them to the electric chair or to State prison. Such men are not always as bad as the world thinks they are. Natural love has very strong ties. I have seen men helpless in their love for strong drink and other lustful things, and have felt to greatly pity them. If these things be true naturally among men of great weakness, whose throats are an open sepulchre, with their tongues they have used deceit, the poison of asps in their lips, whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness, and whose feet are swift to shed blood, destruction and misery in their ways, the way of peace they have not known, there being no fear of God before their eyes, how much more is it true in the upper and better kingdom, in which the King of Salem, King of peace, is head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all? There is but one generation

of Jesus Christ. The new Jerusalem is the mother of all the children of God, and God himself is their Father. Now since God in the person of Christ is given to be head over all things to the church, is it an incredible thing for us to write or speak or preach that the church has her life in her ever-living head? Ye are dead (to the law), and your life is hid with Christ in God, and when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory. Whatever else we may or may not know, I feel sure we all do know that it is only when he who is our life does appear that we can or do appear with him in glory. So that when we, or any one of his generation, by his love, grace, truth, mercy or righteousness, or by all these graces, are brought to see him as the great head of the church, and realize that he sees and feels and hears and tastes for us, it is no wonder that we rejoice with each other in his love. Are not all his people known to each other by the face of their living Head? Does he not speak and hear and taste for them? Is he not very careful to see that they are cared for, insomuch that he gathers the lambs with his arms and gently leads those that are with young (under the law or conviction for sin), with his everlasting arms ever underneath them? Such love and tender care cannot be described by mortal tongue or pen. Truly Christ and the church are as inseparably connected as the natural head and body, and have been as long as Christ has been the head. Not one of this generation of Jesus Christ has ever committed a sin that the Head has not suffered for, never had a trial that he has not borne, never a sigh that he has not felt. It may be out of place to write it here, but I sometimes feel glad that there is hatred, else there could be no love; I am glad there is sin, else there would be no Savior; I am glad there is death, else there could be no resurrection. A few weeks ago I read a second time the autobiography of Wilson Thompson, and often found myself weeping like a child when he would so minutely tell my feelings, especially so in his call to the ministry and first efforts to preach. I feel sure that I have never been able to preach in such demonstration of the Spirit and of power that he did, but I feel that truly after all, notwithstanding he died more than fifty years before I was born, that we were of the same generation, and had the same Father. The blood that flows in the head must of necessity flow into every vein in the body, is the life of the natural body. Love is the life of the spiritual body. The love in the spiritual Head must and does flow into all the spiritual body (we love him because he first loved us), so that all have the same spiritual life. While the members cannot all speak of the glory of his kingdom alike, they all do know the joyful sound, and what a blessing it is. Blessed are they that know the joyful sound, for they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance, and in thy name shall they rejoice all the day. I know this is called a hard doctrine, and is rejected by men, and has ever been rejected by the world's religion, but to the generation of Jesus Christ it is a glorious doctrine, and they rejoice in the hope that it has saved them, and in the blessed assurance that this one way, God's way, salvation by grace alone, is high enough, deep enough and broad enough to save every one of Adam's family that ever has, does or ever will call upon the name of the Lord, together with all the infants and idiots, though this last assertion may be traditional belief, for so far as I know we have no direct Scripture proof.

Brother Ker, while I have written the above for publication, I really feel that I am the poorest of the poor. I have often felt to say out of my own heart, O Lord, are thy mercies clean gone forever? Or, Behold, and see if there be any whose sorrows are like my sorrows. I have been in great darkness, and often while in darkness which could be easily felt have said, with my eyes filled with tears, Surely I am the poorest living man that ever walked. But thanks be to his great and glorious name, the clouds have rolled away, the Sun of Righteousness has arisen with healing in his wings, and my soul is all wonder and love. I feel as one who suddenly comes into possession of a very great fortune, and know by past experience that this feeling will not last long. Whether I will now be able to utter speech and tell of the things that I learned in those dark days, remains to be seen. May God's grace and love rest and abide with and upon all of his family.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

W. J. STEPHENSON.

POCA, West Va.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Solomon's Song v. 10, 11, reads, "My beloved is white and ruddy; the chiefest among ten thousand. His head is as the most fine gold; his locks are bushy, and black as a raven." Solomon, to my mind, is a type of Christ, and here he is setting forth the Spirit of Christ as he dwells in Zion, the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife. The bride possessing the Spirit of her husband, says, "My beloved is white and ruddy." White, pure, without spot or wrinkle; holy, righteous and separate from sinners, for he was without sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. She saw her Beloved red in his own blood as he hung on the cross bleeding, dying for every member of the body that makes the bride complete. There is no deformity about her, not a member short, neither a member too many. Her Husband tells her that even the very hairs of her head are all numbered. Her Beloved is head over all things to her (the church), the chiefest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely. His head is as the most fine gold. Fine gold may pass through the furnace repeatedly, yet it will come out with its full weight. Christ, who is head over all things to the church, (body, bride,) passed through the furnace of affliction for all who were chosen in him. We hear him saying, Thine they were, and thou gavest them me; those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost. This adorable husband ("My Beloved") came up on the other side of the grave without the loss of one that the Father had given him, save the son of perdition, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. Jesus also speaks to his bride, and says, Not a hair of your head shall perish. This spiritual bride is the only one of her mother that bare her; her spiritual knowledge and growth is in Christ her head.

"His locks are bushy, and black as a raven." "His locks," to my mind, represent his elect, or chosen people, among every nation, kindred, tongue and people in their Adam-standing, for in the first man, Adam, they were corrupt, and were by nature children of wrath, even as others, and were in the transgression by the disobedience of the first Adam, hence were corrupt in their nature, all undone, without God and without hope, black with sin and under the sentence of death; for as it is written in the law, The soul that sinneth it shall die; for the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our

Lord. Marvel not that I say unto you, Ye must be born again. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. The first birth is of corruptible seed, the second birth is of incorruptible Seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. The prophet Isaiah, by the Spirit, testified the same, saying, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?"

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

NEWARK, Del., March 29, 1916.

DEAR SISTER RITTENHOUSE:—I received your good letter a few days ago, and in compliance with your request I have written a few words in your mother's memory for the SIGNS, if you desire to send it. I am not satisfied with it now that it is written. If you believe Elder Eubanks can improve on it, I would suggest you ask him to write it for you, and would be better pleased if you would do so, as I have never undertaken to write an obituary before, and am honest in my desire to have it done by your pastor. You can keep it if you want to, or destroy it. I feel barren and destitute the last two days and feel that I cannot write a word of encouragement or comfort to any one. Last week I had some sweet exercises of mind, but yesterday and to-day it seems I can get no relief or comfort from anything. I feel as Watts expressed it in hymn 1046:

"My soul hath gone too far astray,
My feet too often slip,
Yet since I've not forgot thy way,
Restore thy wandering sheep."

The whole hymn is grace from start to finish, grace given to Watts when he penned it, and has been and is always sweet to me when I get down in the depths as I am at present. Yet we must "wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he will strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord." David records these promises to us, and it is pleasant to contemplate such Scripture, particularly when God's chosen characters, such as David, experience these things, knowing that all good things must come from above, from the Father of lights. When David was placed in such stresses of mind, it is a comfort to poor worms of the dust, is it not? One thing we know, that is, God is faithful, therefore the many promises he has written concerning those whom he died for, those who have been given a hope, are as an anchor of our soul. We may go astray from day to day, yet he will succor us. My mind a few days ago seemed exercised on a portion of Scripture found in James, first chapter: "Brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations. Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." He that endureth temptation when he is tried, shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to them that love him. Temptations to a child of grace come in many forms. We are told, Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man, but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then it is a settled fact that it is Satan in the flesh; he knows our weak points, pierces the weakest point of our armor, and through his evil suggestions we fall, enticed, fol-

lowing after the desires of the flesh, such worldly pleasures as our nature is so easily tempted with. But Paul gives us great hope regarding these temptations in 1 Cor. x. 13: "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." So we see he knows our very weaknesses, knows we are helpless, dependent worms of sin and dust; knows that we must be brought low and humiliated before he will honor us with his gracious strength, and not until then will he restore us; but unto him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at his word, when he has reduced us to this, then his love and peace will flow into our hearts as a peaceful flowing river. If we are given to search the Scriptures often, how many precious promises are set before us. A constant desire and searching for eternal life through the Book will sometimes bring us upon the mount. Searching for wisdom is pleasant thought and occupation. O, I had a desire for wisdom and knowledge a few days ago, and prayed for it, and he opened the Book to me at these words: "My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, or searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul, discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee: to deliver thee from the way of the evil man," &c.—Prov. ii. 1–5, 10, 11. I had sweet meditation on this Scripture for days, and it is still alive in my soul. It came to me as if He were talking to me direct, and I hope he was; it came to me as a visitation of his Holy Spirit. A preacher could edify others with such sweet grace as this, but these things come to us and we enjoy them, even if we cannot comfort others.

Your brother in hope,

J. B. MILLER.

(*See Sarah E. Davis' obituary on page 382.*)

BELLINGHAM, Wash., March 13, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel impressed to write a few words to you this morning, and indeed I have been impressed many times to write to you, but I much doubted its being an impression of grace, and I am such a poor old sinner that I put it off from time to time, hoping to get into a better frame of mind. I, like Elder Ker, felt that I could not write any more for publication, and my heart went out to him in love and sympathy, and I could say with him, and with one of old, that my soul was exceeding sorrowful. To sorrow over sin is surely a godly sorrow, which worketh repentance that is not to be repented of; the sorrow over the spirit of iniquity, which is so conspicuous in the churches, which is so grievous to all lovers of peace and truth. The future is dark and mysterious to us, and sometimes when our load gets so heavy, and the way so dark and rough, and our hearts so sore and sick of sin, we feel that we can bear up no longer; many times discouraged, we sink by the way, and about us all is darkness, we hardly dare to pray; then through the mists and shadows the sweetest voice ever known says, Child, am I not with thee, never to leave thee alone? O how precious are

those cheering words: I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.

When I received the December 15th number of the SIGNS and read the index to volume eighty-three, and my name did not appear on the list of correspondents, it made me shed tears of regret to think I had been so unfaithful as to not write even one letter telling you how your letters and editorials had been to me as food to a hungry, starving man, and it seems long between meals, or papers. It is comforting to read letters from all over the world, as it were, and all telling the same sweet story: salvation by grace, all rejoicing in Christ their Savior, and having no confidence in the flesh. It strengthens our faith, causing us to believe they have all been taught of the Lord, and as the face of man answereth to face in water, so the spirit of man to man; and somehow there is an indescribable something within me which reaches out to each of you, causing me to take hold of your words with an understanding heart, making me to rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, and I would say, Bless the Lord for their words of comfort; this is the Lord's work, and it is marvelous in our eyes.

I will just say in conclusion, that since the Lord rules both in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, if he is for us, who can be against us? So if we suffer afflictions let us bear them as good soldiers, taking up our cross and following him daily.

From an old sinner,

DAVIS BURCH.

BOWIE, Texas, Jan. 4, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I feel greatly impressed to try to write a few words for your consideration, and, I trust, your comfort also. Allow me to say first, that I received the copy of the SIGNS you sent me (Dec. 1st, 1915), which has been read with must interest. The SIGNS is no new paper to me, as I used to read it, and would now if I were able. My circumstances are very limited, and I have an invalid companion who cannot walk, and I never get away from the place, have not in three years or more, besides I am afflicted myself. I trust I feel thankful to the God of all grace that it is as well with us as it is. I very seldom see any of the brethren, but once in a great while one will drop in to see us. Upwards of twenty years ago I was received among the Primitive Baptists, and believe the doctrine set forth in the SIGNS, and which it has contended for from the late Elder Gilbert Beebe's time down to the present. Twenty-five or thirty years ago a friend gave me a copy of the paper, and in it was a beautiful letter from Elder Silas H. Durand on foreknowledge and predestination. At that time I did not know that there was any one on earth who believed this dangerous doctrine (so-called), so I made several attempts to read it, and eventually succeeded in perusing line after line. I tell you, my dear brother, it was like cold water to a thirsty soul. Indeed, this brother seems near to me, so much so that I have a son in Dallas, Texas, which I named after him. I see in this copy that you sent me a short editorial of yours, which I have read several times, and I note your earnestness in contending for the precious truth, and I must say it is a holy truth that never can be gainsayed. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren, &c. This gift is from the Lord, and is eternal; so is this love, it makes no difference to us whether men believe it or not. There is a spirit in man, but the inspiration of the Almighty

giveth it understanding; so then with this understanding men worship and praise and honor God, the flesh profiteth nothing. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. Dear brother, go on contending for the precious truth as it is in Jesus, and may the Lord bless, comfort and keep you in the hollow of his mighty hand and choose all your charges, is my prayer for Jesus' sake. When it goes well with you remember us in our lonely and sad condition. May the Lord bless you and be with you ever.

Your unworthy brother in gospel bonds,
A. M. McDONALD.

HILLSBORO, Texas, May 6, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is with pleasure that I am sending to you these words, and thanks to you for sending the SIGNS, as I am always anxious and waiting for the next copy. Dear editors, you will please pardon me for stepping in perhaps where I do not belong, and unworthy as I am, not belonging to the church, but standing ready at all times to defend what I believe to be the Old Baptist doctrine. I note in the April 15th number of the SIGNS Elder Lefferts' letter, saying there is nothing he (God) cannot help or avoid if he (God) wants to; sin could not have entered into the world had he (God) not wanted it to do so. Now, dear editors, I have always contended that God is not in want for anything; if so, he is not the God that ruleth and controleth all things after the counsel of his holy and righteous will. To place God in the attitude of wanting, to my mind would uncrown him of the honor and glory of being God; he would be just what the Arminians claim him to be: a God that is standing waiting and ready to save if you will only let him do so, as he wants to save you if you will let him. Think of it, a poor God without a crown. It would be more in keeping with the Old Baptist doctrine that sin could not have entered into the world had it not been his will for it to do so.

I am going to stop right here, for fear I am out of my place, but if you find me astray please set me in the way, and I will thank you for the light to guide me while I fight.

I feel to be your unworthy brother,
JOHN C. GUNN.

RALEIGH, N. C., March 14, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I am writing that I may inclose a check for the SIGNS, and at the same time tell you with what eagerness I await the arrival of each copy, knowing that it will be filled with good things. The last one, which I received this morning, is no exception, but, like all the others, is well worth reading time and again, and contains food for thought. How true your editorial is. I have observed the same thing many times in our town. All denominations preach the helpless condition of Christ, how he would save if we gave him the chance. I heard one preacher say a few weeks ago that Jesus tried in every way possible to prevent Judas from betraying him, but he failed. Elder Ker's editorial was especially good. It brought to my mind many things in the life of my father, who, until he was forty years old, was the most zealous of farmers. When he received a call he did not tarry, but for forty years preached without any hope of reward, save the answer of a good conscience. He gladly left farm, home, wife and children to go tell the good news that he had received. It does seem to me that we are few enough in number to make us try in every way pos-

sible to keep the few together, and not let any little point of doctrine that we cannot understand come between us. May God keep us as one body.

Sincerely,

PATTIE WOODARD ANDERSON.

CAMPBELLSBURG, Ky., May 17, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending in my remittance for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and want to say I do love our dear old paper, and believe I love the writers, for the letters and editorials are a great comfort to me, and the doctrine it sets forth is meat and drink to a hungry, thirsty soul. I never want to be without the paper as long as I can pay for it and can see to read. I cannot express in words the comfort I have derived from reading its pages. Surely we do bear one another's burdens. Often I feel to be in such darkness, so cast down and forsaken, and think, Surely there is none like me, and then I find something in the SIGNS that seems to give me strength, and I am made to go on from day to day.

I did not think I would write more than a line or two, so I will stop by asking an interest in your prayers when at the throne of grace, for I am a poor, needy sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all,

ADDIE CHANDLER.

NOANK, Conn., Feb. 14, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—If it will encourage you any, I wish to add my mite of approval in sending my remittance for another year. Having taken the SIGNS OF THE TIMES since 1901, I feel well acquainted with the writings of the editors, and many of the correspondents, and wish I could tell how profitable they have been to me in doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness, but the consciousness that I may be trying to call attention to myself, rather than trying to encourage others, keeps me silent. I trust that the Lord will so strengthen all associated with the SIGNS, that they, like their Master, will not fail nor be discouraged, but will continue to speak comfortably to Jerusalem.

EVA ASHBEY.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the Black Rock Church, May 17th, 18th and 19th, 1916, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond sends greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Notwithstanding the cold and declining days in which we live, we feel that we are still standing firm in the liberty with which Christ has made us free. We do not say this boastingly, for we are weak and dependent creatures; but our God in his abundant mercy has kept us until now, and we pray him to keep us and you near to himself, and enable us all to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. We have had a good meeting. The Lord has blessed us with good weather and good preaching, which we hope we are able to appreciate.

The next session of our association is appointed to be held with the Harford Church at the usual time next year, when and where we hope to meet your correspondents again. May the Lord bless you.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Moderator.

FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1916.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office a Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ISAIAH XXXIII. 19-21.

"THOU shalt not see a fierce people; a people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive; of a stammering tongue, that thou canst not understand."

The whole of this Scripture culled from the prophecy of Isaiah, of which we have here quoted the nineteenth verse, is the language of faith looking forward beyond the things then seen to the things yet to be made manifest in the gospel heavens several hundred years from the time in which the prophet was then living. This is one of the many internal evidences found within the Bible that prove its being inspired from a source outside of man himself, for how else could the Old Testament be so full of prophecies accurately foretelling what should afterward come exactly to pass as foretold, except that the authorship of the Bible be in One who is endowed with infinite comprehension and absolute foreknowledge? Isaiah is enabled here by faith to look beyond the law and legal Israel to the kingdom of Christ, then in the future, and to the glorious position in which this gospel kingdom stands. Thus, in describing the inhabitants of this new kingdom, he says they are not a fierce people. Fierceness, savagery, carnal bravado and courage, human boldness and egoism, are not characteristic of the new creature in Christ Jesus who lives in that Jerusalem from above, the mother of us all. On the other hand, humility and meekness, gentleness and peace and brotherly love are by grace infused into these regenerated subjects of the gospel kingdom, so that "thou shalt not see a fierce people." Right here, we must not confuse the visible organization of the gospel church with the church as it is in Spirit, which is the way Isaiah is having it revealed to him there. True, the church in its visible organization here in the world has always had its troubles and divisions, has at different times been troubled with men seeking their own ends, and having not an eye single to the glory of God. These contentions have at times waxed fierce, but we must remember that such contentions are of the flesh, and do not affect at all the quietude and humility of the church in the Spirit. However much the surface of the ocean of vital unity may be disturbed by storms and winds, its deep subterranean mysteries are all undisturbed and peaceful. This people dwelling in the new heavens at which the prophet is looking, is not of a deeper speech than he can perceive, nor of a stammering tongue that cannot be understood. To be sure, the world cannot understand the language of the people of God, and to the wisdom of this world they do seem to stammer, but to those of like precious faith the speech of the spiritual rings clear as a bell, giving a certain sound, and that which the world calls stammering is eloquent with power to the spiritual ear.

"Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither

shall any of the cords thereof be broken." The church is the city of the solemn things of the redeemed host. In the old, or typical Zion under the law, were the temple with all its furnishings fraught with such wonderful meaning and the priesthood of the Aaronic line, with all its vestments and incense, offerings and sacrifices, rituals and ceremonies. Here, in the temple, were the singers and the instruments of strings, the cornet and the organ. Here were the solemn feasts kept and the holy days observed. Here echoed and reechoed the songs of triumph when all went well, here resounded the plaints and wails when adversity overtook them. Here, too, in secrecy behind the vail in the temple was the holy of holies, where was the ark of the covenant upholding the seat of mercy overshadowed by cherubim, and containing the tables of the law, the pot of manna, and Aaron's budded rod. All these, and many other things, made the Zion of old a blessed and holy place to the Jew, and all these were shadows of things vastly more wonderful in the spiritual Zion, "the city of our solemnities," appearing to the faith of Isaiah. The church of God is a solemn place; not that it is especially a sad place, but a place filled with the reverence and adoration of the Highest, a place where all the transactions are in the Spirit, and have to do with eternal verities. This makes it a solemn place. Here dwells the Lamb of God, the one and only sacrifice for sin which does not have to be offered every year, but was offered once in the end of that legal world to perfect forever those whom God had sanctified in his covenant of election before time began. The efficacy of this atonement pervades the whole solemn city. All the inhabitants are solemn, for they remember the pit whence they were digged and the rock whence they were hewn, so that with sorrow for sin they reverently contemplate the great price paid by their Redeemer for their safety eternally. This is not a temple made with hands, but a habitation builded through the Spirit for the honor and glory of God, a temple builded of living stones: sinners quickened through the operation of the Spirit and raised up together to sit in the heavenlies. From these living tabernacles arises unto God the sweet savor of Christ, the holy incense of prayer and praise kindled in the hearts of all the saints for his wonderful mercy to the children of men. This Zion of our God is a "quiet habitation," for the dwellers therein are resting in the finished work of Jesus, observing that Sabbath day which shall never end. They have ceased from their works, as God did from his, and have entered into rest from all the labor of legalism which they were formerly so heavily laden with. There is no going about to save souls, for Jesus has done all that work, and finished it centuries ago. Nothing do these Zion-dwellers have to do but rest in his love. This is "a tabernacle that shall not be taken down." Under the old covenant, the tabernacle all through the wilderness had to be taken down and moved from place to place, its stakes had to be moved and its cords loosed, but that holy city coming down from God out of heaven, the new Jerusalem, shall never be taken down, it shall not fall nor decline. Its life is the same as the life of God, and as God cannot be moved, so shall not this city be moved, founded as it is in his immutable wills and shalls. Omnipotence upholds it, omnipresence secures it. The stakes shall never be moved. Paul says that whom God foreknew he also did predestinate unto conformation to the image of his

Son; whom he did predestinate them he also called, whom he called them he also justified, whom he justified them he also glorified. Here in a short sentence in his letter to the Romans Paul gives us the "stakes:" foreknowledge, predestination, effectual calling, justification and glorification. These stakes can never be removed. These eternal principles contingent upon God alone are too high for man to amend or to erase. Were the safety of the church contingent upon our doing this or that, were it hinged upon duties which we had to perform, it would not be a tabernacle not to be taken down, and it would certainly fall, for man has been nothing but a failure in himself from the beginning, and everything man has ever done has been a failure. But resident as it is in the eternal principles of God and his holiness, not one of the stakes shall ever be removed, nor shall any of the cords thereof be broken. Cords are used to fasten the tent to the stakes. There are certain cords which bind the "city of our solemnities" to the immovable stakes above mentioned. In other words, the experience of grace in the inhabitants furnishes the cord which binds them to the doctrine which furnishes the stakes. The doctrine of God our Savior never has any attraction for any one until that one has the experience of the doctrine within himself. Experience is the personal intercourse of God with the individual, and in this intercourse, which is through the operation of the Holy Spirit within the subject of grace, is revealed the doctrine of God. There can be no right knowledge of doctrine except through experience. This is the way (by experience) that God instructs his people and indoctrinates them in the principles of godliness. These cords shall never be broken. Nothing can ever prevent the communication of God with his people. Earthly intercourse is often interrupted. Death severs us from our friends, so that we cannot communicate with them (spiritualism notwithstanding), wars intervene and disturb intercourse between nations, telephone and telegraph lines go wrong and no messages can be sent, but nothing can ever sever the cords that hold the Zion of our God, nothing can break or discontinue the intercourse of God with his people, the experimental work of the Spirit. Godly sorrow for sin, repentance, peace that passeth understanding, love shed abroad in the heart, faith, temperance, and so on, are all the experience of God's people. These things bring the doctrine home to them, these cords bind them to the stakes, and these cords cannot be broken.

"But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby." The "glorious Lord" is the risen Lord, the resurrected Christ, the victorious conqueror of all the enemies of righteousness. The "glorious Lord" is the Lord at the right hand of God, the Lord that said to David's Lord, Sit thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The risen Christ is a place of broad rivers and streams to the city of God. His life waters the city and makes it fruitful in every good word and work. Time and space forbid us to tell all that Christ's resurrection means to his people. Indeed, it is a river so broad that human language cannot adequately deal with it. By Christ's being glorified in his ascension unto the Father he becomes her glorious Lord. Thus is he Zion's living head, sending down to and through her the stream of his living word, which makes her clean every whit, and which blesses her with all spiritual blessings in the

heavenlies. These heavenlies are, first, the nature of Christ; whereas she was in Adam made a partaker of the carnal nature, now by the life of her glorious Lord she is quickened from that death in Adam, and made a partaker of the divine nature, so that she bears about in her mortal body the dying of the Lord Jesus to make manifest the life of Christ, thus bearing the image of the heavenly. This being made a partaker of the very nature of Christ is the result of being watered by her glorious Lord, watered with and in a living stream. Second, the life. The life this city lives is by the faith of the Son of God, old things are passed away and all things become new; and whereas in time past they walked according to the course of this world, and in the lusts and appetites of this world, now this city lives not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, for the righteousness of the law is being fulfilled in her. Thus, is this a new life, a life spent in God's service and to his honor and glory. Third, relationship. Whereas in nature all relationship is sexual, and based on marriage, in the resurrection life there is no male or female, no marrying or giving in marriage, so that the relationships in this Zion of our God are all new, based on an entirely new foundation, that of the Spirit, so that instead of there being husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, aunts, uncles and cousins, all are brethren in Christ Jesus; only one husband there, and that is Jesus; only one bride there, and that is the church; only one father there, and that is God; only one mother there, and that is the new Jerusalem. Fourth, service. Every one in this new city is the servant of the other, all are servants one of another, no one lives to himself alone in this wonderful Zion and no one dies to himself alone, for as Jesus loved them and gave himself for them, so they do after his Spirit and in his likeness, because they love one another, serve one another, and inasmuch as they do it unto one of the least of these, they do it unto their Lord. Fifth, suffering. These inhabitants are called not only to believe on Christ, but to suffer for his sake; the world hated him, and will hate these; they desire to live godly in Christ, and so they suffer persecution; they are crucified with Christ unto the world, and the world is crucified unto them. Sixth, inheritance. They have an inheritance not of this world, an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for them. Seventh, future glory. The fullness is not here in time, but hereafter; the city waits for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of "our" body. We have here just hastily noted seven heavenlies in which the Zion of God is blessed. A whole sermon could be preached from any one of them. We simply list these things here to try to show how the glorious or risen Lord is a place of broad rivers and streams to his church. Whereas in nature, streams flow into and help to swell a river, in grace, the river is first and the streams flow out from the river. Things in grace are the opposite of things in nature, so that it was said of the apostles: These are they that turn the world upside down.

We must not forget to mention those ministering gifts which the glorious Lord gives to the city for its edification and comfort. He gave apostles, pastors, teachers, prophets, evangelists, helps, governments, &c., unto his church, and these are streams that flow from the one "place" (the glorious Lord), and these water the garden. No galley with oars is in these streams. No human instrumentality is employed here, none of the usual modes of travel or of transportation are in vogue

in the city of God. The Spirit is the message-bearer binding all in one and communicating with each and all. No noise or evidence of the world's commerce, of its hustle and bustle, of its rush and work, are seen upon the bosom of these placid streams. In olden times criminals used to be sentenced to serve a term in the galleys, so that the galleys were mostly manned by the condemned. This thought is doubtless in the mind of the writer here when he says: "Wherein shall go no galley with oars," to convey the idea that in this Zion of God there is no condemnation, no convict serving a sentence, but all are the Lord's freemen. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Also, "Neither shall gallant ship pass thereby." None of the gallantry of earthly pride is in evidence here. No room here for the pride and boastfulness of men. All have become nothing that Christ may be all in all. All glorying, if glory there be, is in the cross of Christ the Lord.

We have written this at the request of Mr. Walter F. Stafford, R. 1, Greenfield, Tenn., whom, we take it from his letter, is not a member of the Old School Baptist Church, but an inquirer after truth. This is a most beautiful portion of Scripture to have impressed upon the mind of any one, but especially so upon the mind of one as yet unbaptized. We believe if our friend is made to realize the force and beauty of this text, he will be so allured by the attractiveness of the "city of our solemnities" as not to be able to refrain from following his Lord and Savior in baptism. His letter to us breathes a sincere devotion to the truth, but he says it is not meant for publication. May the Lord be with him and guide him in the way of the ordinances of His house. Such thoughts as we have here written upon this text in Isaiah are very meagre indeed, as they must necessarily be owing to limited space, but we hope our readers will be able to meditate beyond what we have written, and thus fill up the gaps.

L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by brother Edward A. Johnson.)

The Baltimore Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the Black Rock Church, May 17th, 18th and 19th, 1916, to the several churches of which this Association is composed, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As it is customary at this time to address you in what is called a Circular Letter, and as our mind has been somewhat exercised of late upon the love of God to his people, allow us to call your attention to the thirty-first chapter of Jeremiah, third verse, in which we find these words: "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Surely there is no subject of more interest to the poor sinner than God's love to his chosen people. "I have loved thee." Who are these people whom God loves? It is written they are a peculiar people, zealous of good works, children that will not lie, a people whom the Lord formed for himself, they are the recipients of that love, loved and chosen in him before the foundation of the world. "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." For the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, he hath raised us up and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have ever-

lasting life." O what manner of love, that we should be called the sons of God. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Loved us with an everlasting love, an unchangeable love that passeth understanding, strong as death; many waters cannot quench it, for it is said of him that loved us and gave himself for us that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore because of this great love which the Lord has for his people, though they wander in forbidden paths, yet he says, "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away," that he sees not iniquity in Jacob nor perverseness in Israel. O what loving-kindness is here bestowed upon his people by a covenant-keeping God, who says, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," who crowneth us with lovingkindness and tender mercies. "I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies." What wondrous love is this that draws us with cords of a man, with bands of love, and brings us to his banqueting-house and spreads his banner of love over us, saying, Ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. Having this assurance of the loving-kindness of our God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Moderator.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, June 1st, 1916, at the home of the bride, James H. Dawson and Miss Sarah E. Slack, both of Leesburg, Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Isaac Randall, of North Berwick, Maine, was born May 11th, 1832, and departed this life May 23rd, 1916, aged 84 years and 12 days. Nov. 26th, 1854, he was married to Olive E. Coffin, who died May 17th, 1909. To that union were born eight sons and one daughter. Five of the sons and his daughter, Mrs. Bell Blaisdell, survive him. The sons are: Elmer E., of Rollinsford, N. H., Noah W., George H. and Arthur E., of Berwick, Maine, and Austin E., who remains at the family homestead. The three sons who died were: Isaac Henry, born March 23rd, 1856, died Sept. 8th, 1869; Charles, born Feb. 4th, 1858, died May 2nd, 1883; Moses, born Feb. 5th, 1860, died Dec. 23rd, 1872. When but a young man it pleased God to call him by his grace unto the fellowship of the Savior Jesus Christ. The Lord showed him that he was a lost, perishing, hell-deserving sinner. He was burdened under his sins and the condemnation of the law for many months, but at length the Holy Ghost gave him to find peace and forgiveness of his sins in the blood of the crucified Lamb of God. He made a public profession of his faith in Christ Jesus and united with the church. He was baptized by Elder William Quint in the year 1850, and continued a worthy and beloved member of the church all his days. He was an unwavering believer in the doctrine of Christ; his hope and comfort and life were therein; salvation by the grace of God flowing unto us through the atoning sacrifice and the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word of God. He lived in this profession of the name of Christ in all godliness and uprightness among his fellows, a humble, God-fearing man, a good husband, father and neighbor. He was surely respected and held in high esteem by all who knew him. It ever appeared to be his aim to walk as becometh the gospel of Christ in all the relationships of life, and thus glorify his God and Savior, whom he ever spoke well of, confessing all his hope and blessedness and his expectation of eternal glory to be in him. During the early part of his last illness he spoke much of the preciousness of the dear Redeemer, and of his earnest expectation of soon being with him in glory. He told of how he had been much under the cloud all winter, so that he feared the Lord would never shine upon him, a wretched sinner, any more. But last Saturday he appeared again to his soul and told him that he loved him, and that he had died for him, and that he was his. "O how lovely he was. He is altogether lovely. I sat there [he was in the barn]

and the tears of joy streamed down my face. O, I fear not death, Jesus is with me, my Savior, my Friend, I shall be glad when his time comes for me to go to be with him in glory. I am a poor sinner, just nothing at all, but Jesus, the lovely Savior, is everything." After this manner for a week or two he continued to speak every day of the blessedness that was in his heart, and of the sweet foretastes of heaven that were his, and of the ardent longings of his soul to depart and be with the Savior in glory. But this blissful state of mind was followed by sore conflicts, days and nights of darkness and anguish of soul, and with bitter moanings he now complained how wretched was his condition, for the Lord had hidden his face from him and was gone, and "my hope is gone, Jesus is gone, and I am dying in wretchedness." Our dear brother continued for about two weeks as one in abject desolation. Down from the blissful heights of salvation and foretastes of glory he was plunged into an abyss of darkness, amidst conflicts with Satan and unbelief, but the gates of hell could not suppress his soul's yearnings, sighs and moans after Jesus Christ. Thus tossed about, and his bodily strength wasting away, he continued until about a week before he died, when with a happy smile he expressed his satisfaction that he should soon depart to be with the Savior, which was all that he was longing for. The conflict was ended, the good fight of faith was won, the storm was past.

At his funeral I made some remarks from Hebrews iv. 9: "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." The foretastes here and the everlasting sabbath hereafter. They laid away his body in the home lot on the farm in hope of the resurrection of life at the last day.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

Sarah McDonald, of Dunwich, departed this life April 30th, after an illness of about four weeks. Sister McDonald was received in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada at the quarterly meeting in May, 1885, and was baptized by Elder Pollard in August following. Sister McDonald was a woman possessing those sterling qualities of faithfulness, uprightness and integrity. She was kind and obliging, always willing to lend a helping hand to those in need. Her faithful walk and love for the church will live in the memory of her many friends as an unmistakable evidence of the work of grace in her heart. Her chief enjoyment was in meeting with the Lord's people, and whenever she could minister unto their needs in word or deed her willing hands never withheld the good she could do. Her reward was in doing, and not for doing. Sister McDonald's home for forty years was with her only sister, Mrs. A. P. Campbell, who will feel her loss very keenly, but the grace of God, we trust, will be her strength. Sister McDonald's funeral was held at the meetinghouse in Dunwich, and was largely attended by friends and relatives, which spoke of the high esteem in which she was held in the community in which she had lived for a number of years. The writer tried to speak to the comfort of the mourning friends, using as a text Romans viii. 38, 39. Sister McDonald leaves one sister, Mrs. A. P. Campbell, of Dunwich, besides the church, and other relatives, to mourn their loss. Burial was in the Duart Cemetery. May the Lord be with all the mourning ones and comfort them in their sorrow.

ALSO,

Isabella McAlpine, widow of Deacon Malcolm McAlpine, of Brooke, Ontario, died at her home March 13th, 1916, in the 79th year of her age. Mrs. McAlpine never made a profession, but was a believer in the doctrine of grace, and her only hope of salvation was in her blessed Savior, to whom she gave all praise. Her home had for many years been a welcome place to all lovers of the truth. Her husband, Deacon McAlpine, preceded her seven years. Since her husband's death her home was with her children in the old homestead, where she had lived for many years. She leaves five sons and two daughters, besides many friends and relatives, to mourn their loss.

Her funeral was held from her home in Brooke, conducted by the writer, and was largely attended. Burial was in the Brooke Cemetery. May the dear Lord comfort the sorrowing children in their loss of a kind and devoted mother.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Virginia Lee Rust McDonald was born on the old Rust plantation, near North Fork Church, in Loudoun County, Va., June 11th, 1834. Her father's name was Benjamin Rust, her mother's maiden name was Frances Davis. She was married July 17th, 1865, near Jackson, C. H., W. Va., to J. H. McDonald, of Pennsylvania. They lived awhile in Pennsylvania, then in West Virginia, and in 1867 moved to Lebanon, Mo., and on the second Sunday in April, 1871, were baptized by Elder Harvey Doty, and became full members of Pisgah Old School Baptist Church, in Laclede County, Mo. In 1876 they moved to St. Louis, Mo., in 1878 to Worden, Ill., and later joined the Little Flock Church at Honey Bend, Ill. In 1887 took letters from Little Flock Church and moved west, first to Pine Ridge, S. D., then to San Jose, Cal., then to Dayton, Wash., and later to Puyallup, Wash. In 1916, an Old School Baptist Church having been organized at the residence of Dr. and Mrs. McDonald, known as the Puyallup Old School Baptist Church, they joined in the constitution of the same, where she remained a faithful member until Sunday morning, May 14th, at 6 o'clock a. m., she peacefully fell asleep in Jesus. Had she lived until June 11th she would have been 83 years old. They

celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary July 17th last, when a number of their friends gathered at the McDonald residence to honor the occasion. Her father, mother, brothers and sisters all preceded her to the grave, and she remarked a short time before her demise that she was the last of her generation, and would soon join them on the other side. We laid her remains to rest May 16th in the beautiful Sumner Cemetery, to await the call of the resurrection morning, when we shall all hope to meet the Lord in the air and so be forever with our Lord. She leaves a lonely household, her husband and an old colored man, Tim Hall; also an adopted daughter, Nina Richmond, residing in Alaska, with numerous friends and relatives to mourn her departure, but we mourn not without hope of a glorious meeting beyond this vale of tears, where there shall be no more sorrow, but rejoicing forever in the presence of our Lord. J. H. McDONALD.

Sarah E. Davis was born in New Castle County, Del., April 7th, 1860. Her father, John H. Sanders, was a Quaker, and her mother, Eliza M. Sanders, was (her daughters believe) an Old School Baptist, having been baptized when eighteen years of age, in the Brandywine Creek. Sister Davis was baptized in August, 1903, by Elder J. G. Eubanks. She was taken from bed a sick woman at the time, our deceased sister, Martha Staton, being one of those who assisted her to and from her bed to the Christiana Creek, at Welsh Tract Church, foot of Iron Hill. She recuperated quickly from her illness after her baptism and was much better afterwards for a time. Up until about six years before she came to the church to seek fellowship she was a Methodist. At that time she and her family were living on Iron Hill, and her daughter, Lidia, (now Mrs. Arthur C. Rittenhouse) about eight years old, (now a sister member of Welsh Tract Church) had a desire to go to the old meetinghouse, and her mother would accompany her to the edge of the wood and await her return from meeting. She would coax her mother to accompany her occasionally, and one day she yielded to her daughter's desire, as she had told her, "They are just the nicest people I ever met." That was the last time she had to be persuaded to visit the Old School Baptist meetinghouse, for ever afterward she was convicted within herself that she was a sinner, and her only hope was through the grace of God. She expressed to her pastor once that every breath from her being was sin. The writer had occasion to be with her quite frequently the last year or more of her time on earth, and her desire most of the time seemed to be to leave this time state and be with her Savior. She lived close to the cemetery, and told me it was the sweetest spot to her; she never was lonesome when she could look out of her window and see the spot. She was a most patient sufferer, an example of Christlike patience and fortitude as ever was made to suffer on this earth. Tuberculosis of the lungs was her affliction. For more than eighteen years she had her death-warrant passed upon her by physicians, but she told me she would never leave here until God's set time. The last few months of her earthly life were almost without sustenance of any kind; nothing but water. Her last words were scarcely audible: "Father, take me home." Her husband was present when she uttered them. He nursed her day and night most of the time during her last illness. She passed from us Sept. 29th, 1915, and we carried her to the grave, there to await that great day of His coming.

By request. J. B. MILLER.

Mrs. Peter Forbes passed away at Wallacetown, Ontario, June 5th, 1915, after a short illness, aged 68 years. Many years ago she gave me a sweet reason of her hope. She was a faithful follower of the Covenanted Baptists all her life, but never joined the church. Her father, Dugald Graham, and her mother were both members of the church. She was a faithful and devoted wife to her dear afflicted husband, who for about three years was confined to his bed, but she never wearied in trying to do all she could to make him comfortable and relieve his distress, waiting upon him until the last day of her life. About three weeks later, June 29th, 1915, her husband, Peter Forbes, passed away, aged about 74 years. For many years he was a lover of the truth as he heard it preached at the Baptist Church, and longed to know the dear Redeemer as his God and Savior. He rejoiced in the peace and prosperity of the cause of Zion. I believe he is now at rest. They left two sons, an adopted daughter and many relatives and dear friends to mourn their loss. Both were laid to rest in Fairview Cemetery, many friends being present to pay their last respects. The services on both occasions were conducted by Elder J. B. Slauson.

Written by request of her brother, John C. Graham, who is a member with us.

SARAH A. McCOLL.

APPOINTMENTS.

ELDER George Ruston will, Providence permitting, fill the following appointments:

Vega, Sunday, June 4th, 11 a. m. and 1:45 p. m.; Union Grove, Sunday, 11th, 11 a. m.; Kingston, Saturday evening, 17th, 150 Prospect St., 8 p. m.; Olive, Sunday, 18th, 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.

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CLAREMONT, Cal.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 84. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1916. NO. 13.

POETRY.

THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, our loyal friend,
To Old School Baptists very dear,
For they, through it, epistles send
To brethren living far and near.

It has for years withstood the test,
And is still faithful, staunch and true;
To Baptists all a welcome guest
Since eighteen hundred thirty-two.

It comes to all fraught with good news,
Pursues its course from shore to shore,
While God's poor, trembling saints peruse
And scan its pages o'er and o'er.

On some fair page they always find,
To them, a token of good cheer,
That's sure to stir the pure mind
In mitigation of their fear.

A special letter there may be,
To stir emotions in our breast;
For writers in God's family
Reside throughout the east and west.

These children of the heavenly King
Are all, in love, taught of the Lord;
Therefore this messenger doth bring
To each and all a cheering word.

To those in sickness or in health,
To those who in seclusion live,
It comes with news of greater wealth
Than all this world can ever give,
Of priceless treasures that are found
In Jesus Christ, the Son of God;
It carols no uncertain sound
To those beneath affliction's rod.

A blessing to God's humble poor,
This family sheet doth always prove;
It brings glad tidings to their door,
Of Jesus and his wondrous love.

"Sword of the Lord and Gideon,"
Has been the watchword all along;
The finished work of Christ well done,
And saving grace the theme and song.

The editors, all godly men,
Instructed by the Holy Ghost,
Were given grace to wield the pen
To comfort all the heavenly host.

Not for one moment giving space
To any man-made plan or scheme;
Salvation by God's sovereign grace
Has been, and ever is, their theme.

The present staff, Lefferts and Ker,
Doth boldly now the truth defend;
For God hath called them where they are,
And qualified them to this end.

O may thy blessing, Lord, abide
On this true harbinger of peace;
The pen of inspiration guide,
And let glad tidings never cease.

W. S. CUBBAGE.

FELTON, Del., May, 1916.

CORRESPONDENCE.

REVELATION XXII. 14.

"BLESSED are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

Dear brethren editors, and all who read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, after reading dearly beloved W. J. May's article in March 1st of present volume, on the words recorded in Revelation xxii. 18, 19, I feel a desire to write some on the subject contained in the words of the text quoted above. I am glad to say to brother May, and to all the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that I heartily agree with what he has written, with this one exception: I do not understand the church to be the holy city, new Jerusalem, referred to in this twenty-second and previous chapter. At least all the churches are not, as I see it. But I am not writing this to find fault with his able article on the words of his text, for if I rightly understand him I believe every word he said to prove his text referred to God's people, and the words of my text are in perfect accord with his text. The city spoken of in the fourteenth verse evidently is the same as the holy city spoken of in the nineteenth verse. I realize these Scriptures present a great subject, too wonderful for me, yet I hope it has pleased God to give me at least a glimpse of a few things contained in these Scriptures. All any one knows about them is what their understanding has been opened up to receive, and that is done alone by the Spirit of God. I desire to say here that until four years ago last January I also believed that the holy city, new Jerusalem, was the church, therefore how unreasonable it would be for me to feel hard toward brother May, or any other brother, for believing as I once believed; but for causes known to God, I believe it pleased him to show me a better way. At that time I was so badly crippled that I could not write, so I got my grandson to write for me most of one day. It was that day that I was made to rejoice in the presence of God, and made willing to give up my former opinion for something better, as I verily believe. Now let us read the text again. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." The inference here is that those who do not do his commandments do not have right to the tree of life, neither can they enter in through the gates into the city. I think the Scriptures abound with similar teachings to this, both in the Old and New Testaments. In short, it means as Paul said: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption: but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." The reaping in either case refers as to time, and not as for eternity. These things we learn in our own experience, unless we are so blind that we do not know that we are blind, as was the case with the church of the Laodiceans. They said, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing. They had been sowing to their flesh to the sorrowful extent that they did not realize their own need. They were not doing the commandments of God, therefore had no right to the tree of life. The Lord said, And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked? It seems a church could not be in a worse condition than this church was in. While they were in that condition they were not entering in through the gates into the city. The

holy city, new Jerusalem, has never been polluted by the works of the flesh. When we enter into that city we are stripped (so to speak) of every work of the flesh. Paul enumerated many of the works of the flesh, and then said, I tell you now as I have also told you in time past, that they that do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Evidently the kingdom of God spoken of here is the same as the kingdom of heaven referred to in Matthew xviii. 3. It was a fleshly desire that caused those disciples to want to be the greatest in the kingdom. Beside all this, they did not understand the nature of the kingdom set up by Christ. They would have to be converted and become as little children before they could enter into the kingdom of heaven. There evidently are many yet who desire to be the greatest that are blind to the fact of their helpless condition. Jesus said to Peter, When thou art converted strengthen thy brethren. After Peter was converted we no more hear him boasting of his own abilities, but he felt his dependence upon God for his daily needs. Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." These words are just as true now as when they were uttered. It is a blessed condition to be in to feel poor in spirit; it is a sorrowful condition to be in to say, I am rich and increased with goods (self-righteousness) and have need of nothing. There evidently has never been a greater contrast between any two churches than the church of Philadelphia and the church of the Laodiceans. The church of Philadelphia was not condemned for one thing that we read of here in Revelation. On the other hand, the church of the Laodiceans was not commended for one thing here in Revelation. We observe, regarding the church of Philadelphia, that after commending them for what they had done, it is said of them, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." Evidently all this refers to time, and not for eternity. Whether we understand what is meant by "thy crown," and also what follows in the twelfth verse, this all, I think, refers to time.

Now let us notice the twelfth verse. We see it is to him that overcometh that the promises are: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God; and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name." We now have a most wonderful subject before us. O that we may be given wisdom to rightly apply these Scriptures. I realize this is highly figurative language, yet there is harmony here with the words of the text. It seems plain to me that this is the city referred to in the text. It is they that do his commandments that do overcome, and it is the same ones who overcome that have right to enter in through the gates into the city. It also is the same ones of whom it is said, "I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God." This city we note has twelve foundations and twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. Read Revelation xxi. 12, 13, also Ezekiel xlviii. 31–35. This also evidently is the same city. Here we read, "And the name

of the city from that day shall be The Lord is there." O what a wonderful and glorious city; the Lord is always there. One peculiar thing about this wonderful city of twelve foundations and twelve gates is, that the gates are open all the time by day, and that there shall be no night there. (Rev. xxi. 25.) Another thing to observe is, that the tree of life that bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month (evidently meaning all the time,) was in the midst of it. (Or in the midst of the paradise of God, Rev. ii. 7.) Our text says, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." The church of Philadelphia had kept the word of his (the Lord's) patience, and the promise was, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth. We should note that it is to him that overcometh, that the promise is. "I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem." We should also remember that many of the members of those churches had already yielded to many of the temptations by which they were surrounded. It is said of the church in Sardis, "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead," and yet it was said, "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." These promises are to him that overcometh. Their name will not be blotted out of the book of life. On the other hand, "If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city."—Rev. xxii. 19. From this, and many other Scriptures, we learn that the blessings are pronounced upon him that overcometh, and the plagues are upon him that is overcome, even to the adding to or taking from the words of the book of this prophecy.

To the church of Ephesus it was said, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." Our text says, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life." This right is to him that overcometh, and evidently to no others. It was said to the Laodiceans, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." To thus sit with Jesus in his throne evidently is to know experimentally the blessed presence of Jesus. This is a paradise indeed. It is then we are enabled to eat of the hidden manna. (Rev. ii. 15.) This is for him that overcometh. It is then that we are raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. (Eph. ii. 6.) I think it is doubtful if all the members of any one church for any given length of time, if at all, ever experience these blessed things here pronounced upon those that do overcome. We are taught these things from time to time in our experience, as well as what the Scriptures teach. Taking the seven churches as representative churches, we know the most of them were overcome with some kind of evil. It is true no one was commanded to repent, in two of the churches, yet it was said to the church of Smyrna,

"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days." This church was not commanded to repent, therefore must have been right in the sight of God, yet I do not understand that while passing through those trials, and having tribulation, it could be said of them that they were in the holy city, new Jerusalem, for we read, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."—Rev. xxi. 4. These blessed things belong exclusively to the inhabitants of the new Jerusalem, after the old Jerusalem has been completely destroyed. The Lord said, Isaiah lxv. 18, 19, "But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying." These blessed conditions do not always belong to the church, but they will always be in the holy city, new Jerusalem. These things we are taught in our experience, as well as in the holy Scriptures. If all the church members were doing the commandments of God, evidently no one would be told to repent. The very fact that the majority were told to repent is proof of itself that all were not doing the commandments. Let us all remember the words of our text: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Jesus continues, "For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. I Jesus have sent my angel to testify unto you these things in the churches." These wicked things may get into the churches, but they will never get into the holy city, new Jerusalem, for they are without the city. O may we all take heed to these things spoken by Jesus.

Submitted in love to all the brethren who may read.

Yours in hope,

JOSEPH FORD.

DAVID CITY, Nebr., March 2, 1916.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., May 6, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Inclosed please find money order for two dollars, as I notice that my subscription to our family paper has expired, and I want it as long as I live. I not only want it, but I sorely need it, being without the sound of the gospel, and in a waste howling wilderness. The ravens would feed me, but not having been commanded to do so by our heavenly Father, their food would not be sweet to my taste, so I stumble along hungering and thirsting for that which satisfies, comforts and cheers. Having been taught of the Lord to know him (in part), to know the joyful sound, and to understand what the writers in the SIGNS explain to us bi-monthly, each number is eagerly waited for, my only preaching, and in one sense, my only enlightenment. Its contents confirm my faith. I know a few of the writers personally, know some through having corresponded with them, but those whom I have never met, but who I hope I know in the Lord, are just as dear to me. When doubts assail me, when the blessed Lord seems so far away, my chief solace is in knowing that I love the brethren. Inexpressible, indescribable love, even exceeding that which I have for my family, the very nature of it

being so superior to any worldly emotion. Surely if they are God's people I have reason for a firm faith and a brighter hope; more than that, and a better reason, is because he first loved me. But I must not say too much along this line of thought, for there is an involuntary inquiry within as to how or why I expect such great things, when I feel my unworthiness to such a degree that I fain would hide myself from him. I can only say, Great is the mystery of godliness. Sometimes I am glad that I am so far away from you all, that you may not know me as I know myself. Then I remember similar testimony given by those who believe as I do, by those to whom such a clear understanding and such wonderful talents have been given, and I long to be with you, that I might join in singing praises to him, and in hearing told, and in telling, the same old, old story, of Jesus and his love to one when dead in trespasses and in sin. I try to praise him every day for what he has done for me, but many times the words seem to rise no higher than my head. He puts me in remembrance of him, and the desire is with me to call on his name, yet there seems a lack of warmth, of nearness, and I cannot understand it. But as we believe that all things work together for our good, I shall continue to praise him that I think on his name, even though I do not call on him aright. How little we know of his excellency and greatness, and how incapable of doing anything that is pleasing to him, unless directed and controlled by his Spirit. One day I am down in the mire, the next I am praising him with all my soul. That first day I am considering myself, the following one I am looking to him in whom I believe, to him who is the author and finisher of all things, who declared the end from the beginning, and who is without variableness or shadow of turning, to him who rules in earth as he does in heaven, and will continue to do so without the help and against the hindering of any one or the combined worlds. I love his name to-day; I acknowledge his many mercies. I hope I have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, but I must confess my unfitness, my littleness, that sin is mixed with all I do, and if left to myself that I would be without God and without hope. But why should I write further to you? To you, a preacher, and a teacher of his holy word, when nothing but the fact that I am a fellow-traveler, one who has tasted that the Lord is gracious, could possibly interest you. My only intention was to let you know how I regard the SIGNS, then I thought to add that the love and grace of God had kept me steadfast all these years in the faith once delivered unto the saints, and through that same grace I hope to die in it. Day by day death seems to have less terror for me. Since Jesus has lain there I dread not its gloom. Since Jesus died for our sins there is justification, sanctification and redemption for us, and a raising of our bodies to life, light and immortality.

Now, dear brother, pardon me if I have written amiss. I believe I know the tune of the song I have tried to sing, but words do not come to me readily, and some that did come may not be in their proper places. After beginning this the love of God constrained me to continue, which is my only apology, and I cannot conclude without wishing that your new-found earthly happiness may abide with you throughout your entire life.

Just a word with reference to something you wrote in the SIGNS; as one of its editors, you have put your hand to

the plow, therefore I pray every day that God will give you strength to hold fast until you get to the end of the furrow. We need you more than ever, and if you have been given the assurance that you have been called to do that work, what does it matter if there are those who disagree with you, or who take pleasure in criticising? It was so in the Master's day, and will always be. For one, I never see anything to condemn; all the editorials are glorious and wonderful to me, reiterations in substance of those things spoken by Him who spake never as man spake before. If I do not understand all that is written I know the fault is in me.

Praying that he may keep you by his power and save you by his grace, I am your unworthy sister,

MARY E. WRIGHT.

IONA STATION, Ontario, May 26, 1916.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I am inclosing a message from sister Martha Young, which was read before the church at the quarterly meeting held in Dunwich the second Sunday of the present month. Some of the brethren mentioned that it should be put in the SIGNS, so I am accordingly sending it to you for that purpose, providing you see nothing objectionable about doing so.

J. T. KERR.

DEWINTON, Alberta, Canada, May 1, 1916.

TO THE PARTICULAR COVENANTED BAPTIST CHURCH OF CANADA—MY DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—With the dear Lord's help I will try and send you a message of love and fellowship from your sister in a blessed hope of a better life beyond this vale of tears. I wish to let you know that I often have you in remembrance, and often wish to send a few words to my dear home church, but always feel so little and unworthy, and cannot express or write what I would like to say. How I would like to be with you at this time. My mind will be there if my body cannot reach there. I often think and question why we are so far removed from you all, when I hope and believe it was my greatest enjoyment to meet with you all in your gathering together to hear the loved truth preached in its purity, and to help in singing God's praise. I feel the years to be passing, and what a waste of time to be living where we cannot hear the truth preached, or enjoy the company of our brethren. But we cannot help but believe it is for an all-wise purpose that we are so placed, or it would not be so. The words, "The way that I take and the station I fill, my Father determined and wrote in his will," came to me at a time I was mourning my lonesome condition, and questioning why it was so. I just feel like telling those who are so placed that they can get to the meetings, not to stay away; O you cannot feel what you are losing until you are deprived of that dear privilege, and may we not feel that we can hear one better than another. Each dear servant of God is only a mouthpiece to proclaim the word to you as he has been taught in his own experience, and we have to be given the hearing ear before we can hear the word preached. O I feel so thankful for the dear pastor that has been given to us. He preaches the truth, and puts no confidence in the puny arm of man. May the dear Lord give him strength to bear the burden, is my prayer. Two years have passed since I had the privilege of meeting with you, and O how hungry I felt, and I did get some sweet crumbs from the Master's table, dealt out by the loved servants of God. But, my dear brethren, even in

this barren place I do often get some good food in reading when I am given the heart to understand. We have the Bible, and also the dear old SIGNS, which very seldom fails in bringing comfort with it to me in my loneliness.

Now, my dear brethren, this is a poor letter, but my heart is full of love to you all. I wish to be remembered by you all until we meet again. This is the wish of your very unworthy sister,

MARTHA YOUNG.

WALKER, Oregon, April 8, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am inclosing copy of a letter I received from sister Baker for your consideration.

Your brother, I hope,

G. O. WALKER.

ROSEBURG, Oregon.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I wrote a portion of the Lord's dealings with me more than thirty years ago, and never feeling it worth a place in our family paper I burned it three years ago, but I have felt so much chastened since, I have resolved to try to write again. I am now confined to my room, have been under the doctor's care about three months. When we were living at my husband's father's in the Willamette valley, in 1877, I had been used to reading the Bible to my father, or at any time I wanted to, but I was given to see I was an awful sinner, and then I did not want any one to see me read it. I read it when alone, and slept with it under my head, because it was so much comfort to me. All winter I suffered with such awful dark, heavy clouds it seemed I could not stand it. Then I would come out in such beautiful places and think my trouble was all over, then I was soon under the cloud again, and I would feel as if the devil was behind me just ready to grab me in the back, then at times I would hear the heavy dragging of wings behind me. It seemed to me if I had to look behind I would surely die right there, such a sinner I felt to be in the sight of God. Along toward spring mother Baker came and sat down in my room, and I thought she was such a good christian woman I would tell her some of my feelings. I started to tell her about the heavy dragging of wings behind me. She said, "Yes, and it is the devil, and he will get you." I have no words to tell you what I suffered. I felt I must never mention it again to any one. I often wonder to this day if she did right. I went on in this way until the summer of 1878, when I went to my father's, in Camas valley, to stay through the summer. I did not want my father and mother to know what a sinner I was. A man came selling Bibles, and I wondered how I could get one without my parents knowing I wanted it, I felt they were such good christians. I did not have the money, but I had a nice pair of slippers that my sister wanted to buy, so I went and told her she could have them, and I soon had the money for my Bible. Pride seemed to be gone then, and while at father's I got to going to Primitive Baptist meetings, and it did me much good to hear Elder Mathews and others preach. One night while hearing my father and brother Jarnigan preach in my old childhood home they gave an opportunity for any one to talk, and I went up and told them my experience and was received for baptism, but was not baptized until in 1881, by Elder Jepthy Thornton, at Camas valley, in the Coquille River. When I came out of the water they were singing, "Happy day," and to this day that is a happy day to think of. I have found the

Lord a comfort in times of trouble, sickness and grief. Our family, father, mother, brothers and sisters, were all taken away in a few years, but I feel to say, Thy will, not mine, be done. It seems I am very weak, spiritually, bodily and in mind, and I do so many things I ought not to do, and so many things I ought to do I do not; when I would do good, evil is present with me. It seems that I breathe prayers when I am around at work, and many times I feel too unworthy to have a place to sit among God's children and be fed, for I certainly do get food, and it does me much good. Some seventeen years ago, being away from the church several years, I could go but once a year some of the time. In 1896 an evangelist preacher started a protracted meeting near us; he was a Methodist. I attended nearly every night, and it seemed to me that I was chosen to deliver a message for the cleansing of their house; it seemed that it came from a higher power. Dear brethren, this awful weight I was under seemed more than I could get through the day with. I tried all kinds of excuses, and plead to God to have a neighbor who lived next door deliver the message, as she was educated and could talk properly. It just seemed that some one spoke to me and said, No, you have lived so unspotted from the pleasures of this old, sinful world, you must deliver the message. I felt then that I would go anywhere to get away from this, but when meeting time came I was ready to go. I knew I had to obey my God, and when at the close of meeting they gave opportunity for any one who felt like it to speak I was up and talking before I knew it. It seemed that my mouth was filled, and such a criticising as God put in my mouth for those people, and the way they had the books, the class of people they had, and the sinful way they were carrying on the so-called church. There were seven of their big preachers sitting on the rostrum; I could hear them say, It is the Holy Ghost. Some would say, It is higher power. They came down and shook hands with me; the people seemed amazed all over the house, and I leave it all to God. After I went to bed I was very happy, it seemed as if the angels were all around my bed. I thought, O, I am going to die. They seemed so real I thought, If I do die I am very happy, and reached my hand out to see; then I raised up and looked out of the window, but saw nothing except the darkness. I do not think I ever had such a happy night's sleep in my life. I arose next morning thinking my trouble was over forever, and it seemed that I could hardly stay on this earth, but before night came I had another burden that I had to talk again, but it did not seem so hard this time, it seemed I had done my duty as God directed. I have failed to find words to express my happiness and sweet peace with my God. For days everything seemed different, but soon I found myself walking in the valley, and it seemed I was all alone, without even a little spark to kindle up praise to God. He said none can pluck them out of his hand; they can kill the body, but not the soul.

I have to lay my writing down every few lines, because I smother so for breath. I am able to walk around a little, and I praise my Savior that he saw fit to give me strength to get these few poorly written lines together to be published, or put in the wastebasket, which would not disappoint me. I do much enjoy reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I would be glad to receive a private letter from any brother or sister. My address is 303 W. Lane St., Roseburg, Oregon.

With love to all the household of faith,

DELILA J. BAKER.

HOPEWELL, N. J., May 9, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Thinking of the many precious words I have read in the SIGNS, and the grand, good letters written by those whom I have seen, and many whom I have not seen, I felt a desire to write. We learn to know the writers and love them by the precious words they proclaim, those truths and that doctrine which drops like the rain and distils as the dew, the gentle rain that revives the plants and makes them flourish and grow, that love which is shed abroad in our hearts. Dear brethren and sisters, is there anything to be compared with that love which is higher and broader and deeper than anything in this world? How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in the believer's ears! It soothes, it heals, it is all and in all to the child of God. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. One day is as a thousand years with the Lord, and a thousand years as one day. Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor? He speaks and it is done. Art thou not He that dried the sea, and made a way for the ransomed of the Lord to pass through dry shod, and the Egyptians were drowned? His goodness and mercy are from everlasting to everlasting. We must look to him for all our blessings, both natural and spiritual, for without him we can do nothing. Nothing in our hands we bring, simply to the cross we cling. I feel that I have been greatly blessed the forty-seven years that I have been mingling with the Lord's people, but I always feel to be the least among them, as prone to err as the sparks are to fly upward; when I would do good, evil is present with me, evil thoughts crowding out the good thoughts. It is through the power of God that I have been kept. I feel to praise him and give him all honor which is due him, and to crown him Lord of all. I am glad that I can write this beautiful morning and tell my brethren and friends what great things the Lord has done for me. If we are his he will supply all our needs, for he knows what we need, and he can do more for us than we can ever do for him. If ye abide with me I abide with you. I am the true Vine, ye are the branches. All branches that bear not fruit are cast away and burned; all the branches that bear fruit he purgeth, that they may bring forth more fruit. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you. Greater love hath no man than that a man lay down his life for his friends. I have power to lay down my life, and power to take it again. If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. Whom have we in heaven but thee? and there is none that we desire beside thee. I love to praise him for all that is past, and to trust him for all that is to come. What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels, thou crownest him with glory and honor, and didst set him over the works of thy hands. Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all things in

subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things, but we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. We know not how to pray as we ought, but he makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Whom he foreknew, them did he predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us who can be against us? He who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. What a blessing to have such a Savior.

Now, in closing, I am glad that I can say that I love you all, and wish you well. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, is my prayer.

Your unworthy brother,

D. L. BLACKWELL.

FLOYD, Va., May 10, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Perhaps no one feels more unworthy to set forth a spiritual letter than I do, for I feel my weakness, and without the strength of Christ I am a miserable failure. If we have been stripped of self-righteousness and clothed with the glorious righteousness of Christ, and have been enabled to dive into that which is spiritual, what are the fading scenes of the world? What are worldly pleasures to be compared with Christ and his glorious gospel, which is food to our hungry souls? Perhaps a minister, called of God to preach, often thinks he has a hard road to travel, often beset with doubts and fears, doubting his call to the ministry and his hope in Christ, but, dear servants of God, you are wonderfully blessed, for God has poured out his Holy Spirit upon you, which enables you to dive into the great and unsearchable riches of Christ, and we read that those who preach the gospel shall live of the gospel. We members think we have a hard road to travel, too, when we think of our sinful life, the doubts and fears, and losses and crosses, often coldness in spiritual things, feeling so far from God; but God will not leave his people in this sad and lonely state, he will return, then the soul will be revived, we will experience something that is spiritual, the sweet peace of God, that passeth all understanding, will afford joy, the love of God will sweetly flow from the heart towards God and his people, for God pours out his Holy Spirit upon his people, which enables them to love and worship him at times, perhaps as great as in a sermon. But these joyful seasons are soon gone, and we are left alone again and again. This is the road that our blessed Lord marked out for his people while here below. Our dear Lord was a man of sorrows; surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted, (Isaiah liii. 4,) and he bore it all patiently. Those who have felt the conviction of sin think they have a rough road to travel. Christ said that the world should rejoice and we should be sorrowful, but our sorrow should be turned into joy. (John xvi. 20.) You think that can never suit your case, but thousands have been brought as low as you. You think you are lost forever; your burdens are so heavy, that no one feels so wretched, so sinful, so unworthy, so far from God; your prayers seem as nothing in the sight

of the just and holy God; everything seems to condemn you; the evil spirit will tell you there is no hope for you, with a view of eternal destruction; but God will return at his own glorious will, his own appointed time, and turn your sorrow into joy, and such heavenly joy excels all carnal joys and worldly pleasures, and the Holy Spirit creates within the hearts of God's people spiritual desires to talk with the people of God, and will fulfill those desires to your greatest joy. I have dreamed three times of seeing the Savior. In one of my dreams he appeared to have all power, and looked very beautiful and mild. In another I saw him traveling in mourning because of the sins of his people. I long to see the dear saints of God in all parts of the country in peace and love, that all strife, confusion, backbiting and devouring may cease throughout the land, that the world may see the image of the meek and lowly Jesus in us. How different from our faith and order do we see the leading denominations of the present day, so-called ministers calling on sinners to take the first step in this glorious work of grace, which they are unable to do.

Your sister in hope,

MOLLIE SALMONS.

WEISER, Idaho, June 1, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—It is now the busy time of the year, and all are busy, but having a desire to write, I thought I would do so, and you may use your judgment as to publishing. I will quote the last verse of the second chapter of the Acts: "Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." The church had been wonderfully blessed, as set forth in this chapter. There had been many added to the church; in one day about three thousand. How many at other times it does not say, but it seems to have been a time of general ingathering. The apostles were very bold to declare the truth, and after a rehearsal of the whole matter the inspired writer says, "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." I do not feel to dispute this statement, and if that was the way then, I cannot help thinking it is the same way now. I know Peter exhorted and admonished them, and I do not think he could have done differently, as he was called and qualified for that work, and he could no more have kept from doing as he did than Jonah could from going to Nineveh. If there ever has been a man whom God called to preach, and that one did not preach, God desired a thing that did not take place. But whatsoever his soul desireth that he doeth. God calls and qualifies his ministers. He leads them to experience many things, all of which qualifies them to comfort others with the same things wherewith they themselves are comforted. (2 Cor. i. 4–6.) The quickening of a dead sinner is irresistible; the calling and qualifying of a minister is irresistible. One may try to resist, but the work goes on just the same, and I believe that a man called and qualified of God will do the work God has called him to do. Here we see more of the work of God, in that he has hearers for that man, and that man's preaching is a manifestation of the power of God, and those hearing a manifestation of the same power; one is called and qualified to preach, the other called and qualified to hear, and the result is that it (the gospel) leads the child to obedience. The believer is so wrought upon that he loves to hear, and his obedience is a manifestation of the irresistible power of God; for

the gospel is the power of God unto the believer, (Rom. i. 16,) so we can truthfully say the Lord adds to the church to-day as he ever did. We are often made to say, as did the apostle, when we look over our lives, we are unprofitable servants; we have no credits, nothing to boast of, for there is not a good word, thought or deed but what we receive, and if received why boast as though we received it not? If God has desired, or willed one to do a thing, and that one did not do it, there is one thing God ordained that was not done. How is it? does he still rule in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, doing whatsoever his soul desireth? If he does still rule let us be patient, knowing whatsoever he has purposed he will bring to pass; knowing that he will irresistibly draw his children to the church, that he will lead them in the way they should go, and what the Lord doeth is done forever; no man can stay his hand, or say, What doest thou? He works, and none can hinder. It seems to me that when one is by experience qualified to preach, join the church or do any good work, the Lord irresistibly draws him to that work, and that one can praise the Lord, Savior, Preserver, Deliverer, Leader, to the child's good and the undivided glory of God, for he first gives them the will and desire for his goodness, for he works in them, both to will and to do; the flesh resists, but does not hinder the work of God. (Jer. xxxi. 3.) The prophet says that with loving-kindness he draws us. This drawing is irresistible, for our affections have been changed, and it takes us the way we want to go; but we have learned we cannot go that way independently of the power of God. David could say, Lead me, and I will follow.

I am writing to you just as though you did not know these things, but at times it is sweet to meditate upon them when we can see they are sure to all the seed.

My wife continues perfectly helpless; has not regained strength sufficient to be raised up in bed yet. Others of my family are well, for which we hope we are thankful. May this find you and yours well, and may the God of all grace deal comfortingly with Israel.

T. E. ATTEBERY.

CLARKS, Nebr., Nov. 22, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As the time is about out for which we have paid for our paper, the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and as we are seldom at home long at a time any more, we think it is best to discontinue it for awhile at least. We are getting old and feeble, and stay among our children most of the time, as we cannot stay alone, for I am not able to do my work any longer. I am seventy-four years old, and my husband is eighty, so you see we are nearing the other shore, and O may we be ready when the summons comes, Child, come home. We have read the dear old paper most all our lives; our fathers both took it as long back as we can remember, and it is like giving up an old friend, but it is no use to have it coming here and we gone, for we read almost every number where we are visiting among the brethren. We spent last summer at Kearney, Nebr., where we have a daughter living, and as brother and sister Juda and brother and sister Craig live there we had an enjoyable time. When we are at home we are isolated from our kindred in Christ, and have no church privileges, as there is but one other Baptist living in the county, so you see it is lonely indeed for us, after being so long among the household of faith to be entirely cut off from their

company. Spiritual things are about all we care for any more, and if we are deprived of that blessing we have not much to live for. I often am made to exclaim, O that it were as in days past, when the candle of the Lord shone round about me, and his banner over me was love. I was glad when they said, Let us go up to the house of the Lord; but now coldness and darkness seem to be my lot most of the time, and O how sweet it is when I can get a glimpse of my Savior's lovely face, then I can run and not be weary, walk and not faint. I get tired of this sinful world with all of its vain show, and long to be released from the bondage of this death, for I die daily, and the road seems so rough to my poor, tired feet, and I am so often treading the deep, dark valley of sin and unbelief. I mourn sore, like the lonesome dove, or as the sparrow upon the housetop. I feel lonely and desolate, and often cry out, O had I the wings of a dove, then I would fly away and be at rest, and bask forever in my Savior's love, and lean upon his breast. I often think of my earliest love, and wonder why it is that I cannot grasp the promises as I once did, then I could soar away on wings of faith and view the King in his beauty, and behold the land that is afar off. Yes, I could then bathe in the sunshine of God's wonderful love. It is wonderful indeed that he can love poor, unworthy me, who am less than the least of all saints, and not worthy of the least of his mercies. O if I could only express myself like all of those who write for the dear old SIGNS. I often think how I would like to take each and every one of God's little ones by the hand in love and fellowship before I go hence, but alas, it cannot be, but may we all meet around that great white throne that John saw in that beautiful city that had no need of the sun to give it light, for the Lamb is the light of it.

But I must close, as my letter is too lengthy already.

Your sister in hope,

PHEBE WAGGONER.

DRAIN, Oregon, May 14, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—The time has arrived that I should renew my subscription to the dear old SIGNS. My husband and I have taken the paper since 1875, and I would be lost without it. My dear companion and I have had many a feast from its pages, and now he has passed on beyond this vale of tears, to fully realize the fullness of what he had often had glimpses in this life. How often he would relate his experience of grace at our church meetings, and often to the brethren when at our home. Now I am alone. O, what that word means to one bereft of their companion none knows but those who are so left. I have kind children, but they have families of their own to care for. Yet, while I feel alone in this world, I hope my Savior is with me. He has promised never to leave nor forsake me, and I hope he will be with me even down to death. Many afflictions I have to pass through, but I know they are all for my good, and I hope it is for God's glory. So many people of the religious world think that if we would only live right we could avoid all the afflictions that the people of God are subject to, but their god is not my God. Jesus said he left a poor and afflicted people. I believe all his children are afflicted; we have to be ground as wheat to be fit for bread for the Master's use. Our dross has to be consumed, and our gold refined. David said, Before I was afflicted I went astray. If we are without chastisement, then we are bastards, and not sons.

Many dark and cloudy days have been my portion, yet through it all there is a voice saying, This is the way, walk ye in it. O, if we could only know that we are in the strait and narrow way that leads to everlasting life; but if we had all light we would not know the darkness; it is necessary, or we would become puffed up and be like the bold Pharisee, full of self-righteousness. I am willing to be in the dark if I were sure Jesus was with me. O the ups and downs, more downs than ups with me. I feel that I would faint by the wayside if I did not hear and read of so many of my brethren and sisters telling of the same feelings; it gives me courage to know that I am not alone; even our ministers of the gospel tell the same. I often think if I could only write like some do I surely would try. They that are able to tell the feelings and thoughts of poor, stammering ones like me, would feel well paid for their efforts if they knew what comfort they give. Where the Lord has enabled some to tell of the sweetness of His love, and tell it so we all can understand, how thankful we are for the gift. None who write claim any honor to themselves, all must come from the Fountainhead.

Well, I have written more than I intended, but I want to let the brethren know that my poor, unprofitable life is spared, what for I know not. I am the last of a family of twelve, and the eldest of ten children. What great mysteries there are in this life, but the Lord knows, and I want to ever abide by his holy will. May he ever be with all the household of faith, is my prayer.

Your little sister, saved by grace, if saved at all,

S. MORNINGSTAR.

ROLAND PARK, Md., June 9, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—I wish to say in reference to the statement in the Circular Letter of the Baltimore Association of 1915, and quoted by me in the notice of this year's session, to wit, "That we believe that just as the body of Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, so also shall all his redeemed come up from the grave, soul, spirit and body, and ever be with their Savior," that I do not believe that the soul or spirit goes into the grave, but returns to God who gave it; that the body alone goes to the grave, and therefore it alone comes up from the grave. This I do most sincerely believe, and I think the Baltimore Association believes the same, but so far as I know, none of us believes that the soul, or spirit, goes into the grave, and I do not know why some one did not detect the slip when the letter was before the association.

Your brother, I trust, in Christ,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

MURRAY, Ky., May 8, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you one dollar to pay for the SIGNS six months, of which I have been a subscriber previous to this. You may begin sending with May 1st. I am only a young lady, but have been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church since Sept. 8th, 1904. I was baptized by Elder J. M. Perkins. O, so often I feel too unworthy to have a name with such good people, but I love them so much I long to be where I will never be separated from them. I love all true Primitive Baptists, and ask to be remembered by the dear saints in their prayers everywhere.

Your little sister, I humbly trust, in much tribulation,

FANNIE HENDRICKS.

POCA, West Va., March 3, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have felt very much impressed to write you my hearty indorsement as one of the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I feel the Lord has wonderfully blessed you with knowledge and a spiritual understanding of the Scriptures, and as it is recorded by inspiration, A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men. We are proud to think of you, and of you being a gift to the editorial staff of the dear, old, reliable SIGNS. I think I would be safe in speaking for every Primitive Baptist who reads the SIGNS, that each and all feel to thank God for the able gifts which he has qualified and given to be editors of the SIGNS, from its first issue down to the present editors. I will say to you and brother Ker, Be of good courage; if the Lord be for you who can be against you? Devils may howl and demons rage, yet no harm shall befall the Lord's anointed.

Brother Lefferts, please cast the mantle of charity over this badly written letter, for it is with a feeling of love to you and brother Ker, and the glorious doctrine you both so nobly advocate.

Yours truly,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

MACOMB, Illinois.

DEAR EDITORS:—My mother, Mrs. I. N. Vanmeter, who is now in her ninety-sixth year, still receives the SIGNS through your kindness and loves it very much, and is ever grateful to you. She reads several of the Old Baptist periodicals, and takes a deep interest in the cause. She is able to be up, and does some light work. I wish I could send something to the "poor of the flock," but it seems I can do no more than send my own subscription.

Dear Elder Ker, I send you greeting in the Lord. Praise his name, he has enabled you to still write for our comfort. May he bless you and spare you many years to proclaim the truth we love so well.

With love and best wishes to all connected with the SIGNS, I am your weak and unworthy sister,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

KLAMATH FALLS, Oregon, May 3, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—My copy of the SIGNS heretofore addressed to me at Zillah, Wash., I request you will please mail me to Klamath Falls, Oregon. For a month past I have been privileged to meet with and try to preach Jesus to many fellow-pilgrims in northwestern Washington. At Bellingham we found many lovely Old Baptists, and not a few so-called "Dry Land" ones, and the good Lord gave me favor among them and I am urged to assume the pastorate. There are many good homes and a hearty welcome for Old Baptists there. Inquiries with stamp may be made to yours in fellowship,

A. CHEYNE.

GREENBRIER, Ark., Dec. 29, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I want to thank the editors and contributors of the SIGNS; it is nearly all the preaching I get in winter months. Our church is almost gone, only six male members and six sisters, and it was a lively church at one time. Our pastor lives forty miles away, and is getting old and feeble. I want the SIGNS as long as I can read or hear reading. Now this may be my last letter to you all, and I desire the dear brethren and sisters to write on, for I surely love to read their communications.

Farewell. In hope of a blessed immortality beyond this life of sin, sorrow, pain and death,

(MRS.) E. J. HURST.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1916.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office a Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ROMANS XI. 29.

DEAR EDITORS:—I would like to have your views on the eleventh chapter of Romans. It is a puzzle to me, but I know all Scripture will harmonize if we understand it. It looks to me that the writer talks two ways. I have been wanting to ask some of you to give your views for several years, but hated to bother you.

I am sincerely yours,

J. E. BUCKNER.

PINE HILL, Texas.

As will be seen by the request of brother Buckner, he desires us to write upon the whole eleventh chapter of Romans, and while it is impossible to do so in one article, we have named the twenty-ninth verse as the foundation of what we may be given to write, which reads as follows: "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

By careful reading of the two preceding chapters it will be seen that the apostle had in heart and mind his brethren (the Jews), with longing desire for their salvation and spiritual welfare, saying, "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." Thus in writing to Gentiles at Rome he preaches the doctrine of God by calling attention to his dealings with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all Israel, then concludes with the words of our text as being the foundation of his hope for his brethren according to the flesh: "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Hence as God had begun the work by giving gifts, calling and making promises to Israel, he would perform that work in his own way and time, but the result was sure: "All Israel shall be saved."

In the first verse of the eleventh chapter he asks the question, Hath God cast away his people? Then answers the question by saying, "God forbid." His desire for his brethren's salvation and his faith in God's faithfulness seem perfectly linked together, hence he could write with all assurance that their salvation was sure, even though they as natural branches were cut off that the Gentiles might be grafted in and therefore saved. If the Lord was able to graft wild branches in and they became a part of the tame Olive Tree, is he not able to graft in the natural branches, that their life and salvation be sure? seems the argument of the apostle. Then, as the gifts and calling of God are without repentance, or in other words, not to be turned away from, will he not keep all his promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? Most assuredly so, hence "all Israel shall be saved." It seems to us that the apostle in this chapter has two salvations, so to speak, in mind. He says the Jews had a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. They were very zealous, as he himself had been as Saul of Tarsus, of

the law and the traditions of their fathers; from these things he wanted them saved. This is clearly shown by verses thirteen and fourteen: "I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: if by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them." They had, as Abraham's seed, received the law and the promises as the earnest of their greater salvation, but were blinded for a season, the time thereof known only to God. Hence God's promise is sure to all the seed, even though cut off, their eyes blinded, their ears heavy, and possessing the spirit of slumber. When the fullness of the Gentiles be come in, then the Lord will send out of Zion a Deliverer, who shall turn ungodliness away from Jacob, and they shall return and come to Zion with joy and everlasting songs upon their head.

Since the Jews were cut off, the Lord has been dealing with the Gentiles, taking out of them a people for himself; they are called the bride, the Lamb's wife. According to the statements of Paul in this chapter, the Lord will, when through dealing with the Gentiles, restore the kingdom to Israel, or in other words, establish the gospel church with and of them. The Lord did not deal with the Gentiles while he was dealing with the Jews; now he is not dealing with the Jews, nor will he until his dealing is through with the Gentiles, but Gentiles have no reason to boast over the Jews, because they bear not the root, but the root them. This shows that whether it be Jew or Gentile it is all of "mercy" through Jesus Christ, to the good of all men and for the glory of God the Father.

The fall of the Jews, as spoken of in verse twelve, simply means their cutting off, diminishing. If their fall be the riches of the world, or all nations, how much more their (the Jews') fullness. In speaking of salvation coming to the Gentiles through the fall of the Jews, the apostle does not mean that the Jews were in any way instrumental in the salvation of the Gentiles, but that through their fall, or being cut off, the salvation of the Gentiles, embraced in the promise made to Abraham, was made manifest. "Salvation is of the Lord" to all men, irrespective of nationality.

We, like brother Buckner, confess that some expressions in this eleventh chapter of Romans are confusing, yet when the Spirit breathes upon them all are clear and show forth that which all the children of God have in their own lives: the wonderful works of God in the redemption and salvation of his people.

Verse twenty tells us that the Jews were broken off because of unbelief, and that the Gentiles stand by faith, but they should not be highminded, but fear, for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he spare not the Gentiles. We have already shown that the cutting off of the Jews did not mean their everlasting death, or separation from God, because of his faithfulness to his gifts and calling. Even so with the Gentiles, should they be overtaken with a heart of unbelief in departing from the living God it would not mean their eternal condemnation, but another demonstration of the truth that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Salvation is absolutely sure to all embraced in the promise. Hence Paul says whether we live or whether we die we are the Lord's. The Jews to-day, as for centuries past, are concerning the gospel enemies for our sakes, because we are benefited thereby, but as touching election they are be-

loved for the fathers' sakes; in this sense they are benefited by the fathers.

The Gentiles, being wild branches and grafted in the tame Olive Tree, have been taught that salvation is by grace; even so when the Jews shall be grafted in again shall know that salvation is of grace. Being cut off, severed, from the olive tree, they are as separate from it as though they had never been a part of it, hence the receiving them again shall be life from the dead. "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" But we all know he is faithful to every promise and every work. He does not repent or turn away from that he begins, but rather performs it until the day of Jesus Christ. Vessels of honor and vessels of dishonor are now and ever have been in his house, but his promises and calling embrace them, and their inheritance is sure, reserved in heaven for them.

In this very brief way we have tried to give what we have concerning this most important chapter, and hope brother Buckner may receive some light or comfort from it. K.

PRICE OF BIBLES ADVANCED.

We are sorry to announce that hereafter the price of our Premium Bibles will be $2.50 instead of $2.25, as formerly. This advance is made necessary because the dealers have been compelled to raise their price to us, as everything used in printing and bookbinding has been raised in price.

For those who wish to secure a Bible as a premium, it will be necessary to send us four new subscribers at $2.00 each.

1 CORINTHIANS III. 16.

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

We have been requested to write on the above subject, and though the ground has been covered many times before by the writers of the Signs, we feel to add our mite to what has been said upon this subject, though not with the idea of presenting anything new. In the verses preceding the text Paul calls attention to the only foundation upon which the church either as a whole or as individuals rests: "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." True, there are many false prophets gone out into the world who do try to lay some other foundation for man's security than Jesus Christ; some try to lay a foundation of creature goodness, others a foundation of creature works, still others foundations of various isms and schemes guaranteed by their authors to rid the world of sin and to usher in a new era of peace and good will. But Paul knew, the Corinthian brethren knew, and every one of God's people to-day knows, that there is no name given under heaven among men whereby the elect must be saved but the name of Jesus; he alone brings salvation. His name was called Jesus because "he shall save his people from their sins." It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. The reason why the people of God know there is no other foundation than Jesus Christ, and the reason why all other people do not know this, is because God has revealed this to his people and has not revealed it to the world. There was a time in Paul's life when he, as Saul of Tarsus, did not know this foundation, and went about persecuting those who believed and

preached Jesus, but the Lord in a very wonderful way (yet not more wonderful than his dealings with all his people) brought Saul of Tarsus to repentance, and to the knowledge of this one foundation, Jesus Christ, and sent him on his way as Paul to preach that which he once hated, and to preach to those he once persecuted. This change in the career of Paul is explainable on no other ground than that it was the work of God's grace revealing Jesus Christ in him. After presenting Christ as this one foundation, Paul in the few verses preceding our text mentions two kinds of ministry: one builds upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones; the other builds wood, hay and stubble. But every man's work, that is, each ministry, will be made manifest. There is bound to come a day of trial which will reveal the ministry of God's servants. If their ministry stands the test of this fiery trial it is proof that they have built gold, silver, precious stones. If their ministry cannot stand the fire, they have built wood, hay and stubble. Now, some say that salvation begins in grace, but is carried on by ourselves; that Jesus quickens the dead sinner, brings him to repentance, starts him on the right road, then leaves him to obey or disobey as he chooses. This kind of preaching or ministry is building up wood, hay and stubble on the foundation, and is sure to fail when the fiery trial comes. When afflictions come to that one who has tried to earn his blessings by his obedience that one finds that no matter how hard he tries to walk obediently he cannot escape suffering, and further, that one finds no satisfaction or comfort in anything he can attain unto by his own efforts. To preach that salvation begins in the Spirit and is carried on by ourselves is to build up wood, hay and stubble. Now, the other ministry which builds up gold, silver and precious stones is the ministry, such as Paul's himself, which declares Jesus first, last and all the way through. This ministry declares him the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, the author and the finisher of his people's faith. Salvation by grace and grace alone, first last and all the time, is the ministry, and the only ministry, that will adequately stand the test of the fiery trial, which will be a comfort and support when all else fails. However, if there is any child of God anywhere who is bewitched by the "wood, hay, stubble" ministry, who has been deceived to think he can earn blessings by his obedience, that child will not be lost, but he will "suffer loss," but he himself shall be saved, "yet so as by fire." There is salvation to the Lord's people in these fiery trials. The fire consumes their idolatries, but they themselves are preserved. All that the fire did to the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace was to burn off their bands, it did not hurt them. So do the fiery trials sent the Lord's people rid them of earthly and sensual bonds so to bring them a new realization of their liberty in Christ Jesus. The church is the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwells in the church, and in each and every member of the church. In the sixth chapter of this same letter Paul says, "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" It seems that in this letter Paul is addressing the Corinthian brethren as a church collectively, and not as individuals. Thus, his saying, "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost," seems to mean in this instance not so much that the mortal body of each believer is the

temple of the Holy Ghost (though that is true), but that the church as a "body," "your body," is the temple of the Holy Ghost. However, we do not mean to stress this point, because in the connection in the sixth chapter he says, "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?" and here, beyond a doubt, he is speaking of the individual body of each believer, and doing so to press the truth that we should keep our bodies clean, that is, we should not join our bodies to harlots, and thus commit fornication. We think there are some of the Lord's people who believe that salvation is by grace, and grace alone, and yet they will sit at meat in the idol's temple; that is, they will commune with those who do not believe in the efficacy of Jesus' blood and who worship the works of their own hands. Is not this joining one's body to a harlot, and committing fornication? Why not come out from among them and be separate, and touch not, taste not, handle not, the unclean thing? However, going back to our text in the third chapter, Paul tells us what the temple of God really is. The temple of God is not anything that man can build. It is not composed of stone or marble or wood beautifully wrought. When Paul stood on Mars Hill in the city of Athens, that city which was then the centre of the world's learning and culture, he could from where he stood survey the magnificent buildings which the Greeks had builded to house their idol gods. Even to-day these buildings are splendid in their ruins, and tourists travel from all over the world to see them. What must they have been in the days of their entirety and preeminence? Yet Paul looked around upon the spectacle of Athenian splendor, and then boldly declared that the Almighty dwelleth not in temples made with hands, neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things. Think of the millions and millions of dollars that have been spent in the erection of magnificent and stupendous structures called "churches" and cathedrals for God to dwell in, yet he does not dwell in one of them, not one of them is really his church. No man or set of men can build a dwelling appropriate for the habitation of Almighty God. We hear from many quarters laments and regrets that so many of the beautiful cathedrals in Europe have been sacrificed to the guns of the warring nations, but those cathedrals are nothing but monuments memorializing error, and are better razed than raised. Vital religion will not suffer a bit from their downfall. David when king of Israel thought he would build a house for God, but God very quickly showed him his inefficiency to do any such thing: "Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in? * * * the Lord telleth thee that he will make thee an house." David could not be permitted to build God's house, for he was a man of war, but, "When thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever." We understand the word of the Lord here refers to Jesus, who was to descend after the flesh from David's line. We do not think Solomon is meant here, because God says, "I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever," and Solomon's kingdom was not stablished forever. Jesus, the son of David, and the Son of God, is the builder of the temple in which dwells God. He builds the temple not of dead things such as stone

and marble, but of living material, "lively stones," men and women of Adam's race born again, born from above, according to the will of God, begotten of his Holy Spirit. In these quickened subjects of God's grace made alive from the dead, and raised up together with Christ to sit together in the heavenlies, in these God dwells, so that they are in him and he in them, even as Christ and the Father are one. The tabernacle of God is with men. We so often are prone to think of God as away off from his people, and it is a blessed and comforting thought when we realize that God is right here on earth with his people, and that they are in him. The surest way to know that God is in you is to know that you love the brethren, for "God is love," and if this love be in you then God is in you, and you are a temple of God. "The kingdom of God is within you." How natural it is to look for the kingdom to come from somewhere outside ourselves, but the religion of God is a principle that declares that the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth. This kingdom is in power. The wind blows where it lists, and we hear the sound of it, but we cannot tell whence it comes nor whither it is going, yet so is every one that is born of the Spirit. We cannot conceive of "power," yet "power" is more real, more vital than things we can imagine. The things we can imagine are the frail, the ineffectual things. Those things which are beyond our conception, but which are constantly swaying us averse to our will, they are the only real things after all. Thus, the kingdom of God is better felt than described. It defies expression, because it is not in word, but in power. God is a Spirit. He is not tangible nor evident to our natural mind or senses. He is Power, he is Love. It is the power of God that makes a sinner believe in him, it is this same power that enables him to hear the gospel or to preach it. The love of God shed abroad in the heart causes us to love the people of God, for surely if we love God we must love that which is begotten of God. There is no such thing as saying we love God, whom we have not seen, when we love not our brother whom we have seen. This Power and this Love are God. It is in this way that God is known: in the manifestation and revelation of himself, not in imaginings or speculations about him. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. G. Eubanks.)

The Delaware Association, in session with the Welsh Tract Church, New Castle County, Delaware, May 24th, 25th and 26th, 1916, to the churches which form this Association, sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—According to our annual custom, we send you what we call our Circular Letter, the object of which is brotherly salutation. This is not a reply to the letters sent us from the several churches, but a simple statement of the doctrine of God our Savior as adhered to by this Association, lo these many years. We have no new thing to tell you. We are not in affiliation with those who are not satisfied with the "old paths." The rule of faith and practice with us is in accordance with that which was given us when the church was set up and made manifest on the earth; this rule was of heavenly origin. Jesus therefore said unto Peter, "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and

whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." From this foundation the church of Jesus Christ has not wavered. All that is reared as the superstructure of God's building of mercy and love is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth into an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." In giving to Peter and the other apostles the keys of the kingdom of heaven the door of the kingdom was unlocked by the Holy Ghost, revealing Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith. The Holy Ghost alone could reveal the things of Jesus, and open the windows of our faith to behold his wondrous glory, and to walk by faith in gospel order. The things which are bound on earth and also in heaven (the church), and also loosed, can only be viewed by the faith of God's elect. When confusion and dissensions arise in the church, it is because we are walking after the flesh, and the house cannot be cleansed and garnished until the Spirit takes of the things of Jesus and reveals them unto us. Every branch of Zion is entirely dependent upon the Spirit of God that guides and directs each individual member of the body. Peace and prosperity reign when the set time to favor Zion has come and the Spirit is in active exercise. The kingdom and the keys thereof imply a door, or entrance. Jesus declared to certain ones, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep." We love Jesus because he first loved us. We never went to him until he first came to us. Jesus being the door of the sheep, by his perfect obedience he unbarred the gates of the law and set the prisoners free. He called his own sheep by name, and they followed him, now they enter in through Jesus (the door), they sup with him, and he with them, they go in and out and find pasture, his love fills their heart, and now they walk in the light of his countenance. The door of the kingdom of heaven is unlocked, the mystery of godliness is shown to the astonished and delighted eyes of the saints, for they "see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor: that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." The several points of the doctrine of our God which we advocate and love embrace all that God is to his dear people, his predestinating power, his electing love, his foreknowledge and foreordination concerning all events that have taken place in all time, or ever can take place, his preservation of his saints in glory, and the resurrection of the dead through Jesus Christ the Lord. What an astounding and realistic picture is presented to our faith's view as the keys of the kingdom turn the lock, and we find ourselves in the rich pasture of God's wondrous love as we behold the unlimited riches of his grace. We have not drawn the sword, but the Captain of our salvation has proven victorious over death, hell and the grave, by which we have attained unto a finished salvation. Having that faith (Jesus) which was once delivered unto the saints, the apostle sweetly exhorts us, saying, "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness char-

ity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if you do these things, ye shall never fail: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

J. G. EUBANKS, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

(Written by Elder Silas H. Durand.)

The messengers composing the Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, when gathered together with our sister church, at Hopewell, N. J., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the first Sunday in June, 1916, to the churches whose messengers we are, send christian greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—In this letter, which we send you according to our annual custom, we call your particular attention to the words of the apostle Paul, recorded in 2 Cor. xiii. 11: "Be of one mind." The apostle addressed these words, not only to the churches of Christ at Corinth, but also to "all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ." They are, therefore, not merely a tender and loving exhortation, but are words of divine authority. They are an apostolic command. In obedience to them is felt the most vital experience of grace and love. As members of the body of Christ we are living spiritual life in him, while we still have our natural life in Adam. These two lives, we are told, are contrary the one to the other, causing us great trouble because we cannot do the things that we would. From the time of our new birth we have been living this new spiritual life, insofar as we have been given grace and the exercise of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. Concerning this mystery the apostle tells us, "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." —Rom. viii. 10. He also tells us that Christ is our life, saying, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." He also tells us a most wonderful experience, common to all the saints: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."—Gal. ii. 20. This apostle dwells much upon this sweet and delightful mystery of the unity of life in the church, which is Christ's body, "the fullness of him that filleth all in all." He carefully enjoins upon the church, and all the saints, that they earnestly endeavor to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." The psalmist had it in his heart to say, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," and the dear Savior prayed for all the chosen people of God, in this regard, that they might all be one in him, as he and the Father are one. "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." There are times when this spiritual life lights up our souls with holy, unselfish desires. How wonderful it is to find in our hearts thoughts of kindness and love exercising us in our inmost being, drawing out our thoughts toward the poor and needy of every kind, with earnest desires to help them in any way that we may be able to do so. Sometimes

our souls rise up in praise and thanksgiving to the dear Savior for these gracious exercises, and we are glad to have the pleasant assurance that the Lord is pleased to work in us thus the good pleasure of his goodness, and that which is wellpleasing in his sight, with strong desires to work out this precious salvation in our lives and conversation with holy fear and trembling. At such a season we would be with the dear saints wherever they may be meeting together. We feel like the two disciples did when Jesus was made known to them in the breaking of bread. They remembered that their hearts had burned within them while he talked with them as they walked by the way, and opened to them the Scriptures, but they did not know him. Now they wanted to meet the rest of the disciples and tell the good news, and they did not linger by the way. It was then with them as it is now with us. Those who have had such a sweet glimpse of his presence want to be at meeting as often as they can, and there, as they are gathered together, they feel his presence and receive his greeting: "Peace be unto you." The peace of God is in their hearts, and it is easy to live in peace when peace thus rules in us. This peace of God passeth all understanding, and it will surely keep their hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. It seems now an easy thing to "be of one mind;" no effort is needed. The unity of the Spirit is already there. There is one life, and the apostle's injunction is already fulfilled: Think not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. When we find ourselves differing from each other, then our first care must be to find out where the right is, and where the wrong. We must remember that there is but one right; only one life. There are diversities of gifts, but only one Spirit; differences of operations, but one Lord. Love, humility, every grace of the Spirit, are in our hearts. Now is the time for them to appear in our lives and in our conversation. One may say with confidence, I know I am right, but when he hears from his brethren, and looks over the ground again, he may be the first to decide against his own position. The natural mind says, Let the majority rule. But we are now considering a spiritual, not a natural, organization. Here all the members are one body. Here all are moved by one Life, one Spirit, and we cannot be sure we are right until that unity of life appears. If a majority is insisted upon, against an earnest and sincere minority of only one, discord, discomfort and sadness are likely to follow. If it appears to us to be impossible to agree, what shall we do? "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." The apostle did not say, Be of one mind if you can, but, "Be of one mind." The one Spirit is meek and lowly and causes the one who is exercised by it to feel and say, "My brother is better and wiser than I, and he may be right. I cannot see now that he is right, but I am liable to be led by a wrong spirit, and it will be more safe for me to wait, and stand still, and ask the Lord more earnestly to show me if I am in error, or to enable me to show my brother his error." If we undertake to walk when some members of the body are out of joint, or some missing, there is so much limping, so much staggering, that we make shameful work. We must be careful not to let anything "be done through strife or vainglory," also that we esteem others better than ourself. This we cannot help when we are spiritually-minded. It looks to us at such a time as though any one could see that our brother is really better than our-

selves, though we fear we may feign humility. We are settled in the judgment that every important act of the church of God should be done by the unanimous voice of the church as one body. We have known churches and pastors, who believed in the many waiting for the few, even for one. It is wonderful how great differences and difficulties are quieted, reconciled and healed by some little time of waiting and standing still, and how clearly an essentially wrong spirit is manifested. If we are truly looking to the Lord, to be led by him, how soon we find ourselves "of one mind." Those who believe in salvation by grace, and those who are trusting in the works of the flesh for salvation, soon separate themselves from each other. To the church of God this apostle says, "We have the mind of Christ," and also, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." May our churches in all their walk and conversation realize obedience to these loving commands.

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.
D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

(Written by Deacon R. M. Strong.)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the New Vernon Church, New Vernon, N. Y., June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1916, to the churches composing the same sends love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year of our pilgrimage is ended, and the time has arrived when, according to a long established custom, you will expect a token of love and fellowship, in what we are in the habit of calling a Circular Letter. If while penning this epistle we are led in right paths, and in the way of wisdom, (Prov. iv. 11) then what is written (though void of human wisdom or learning) will be of interest and comfort to those who are led in the same paths and taught in the same wisdom. We feel impressed, brethren, to give expression to a few thoughts in connection with the language of the prophet Zephaniah, as recorded in the third chapter, sixteenth and seventeenth verses: "In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not; and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy over thee with singing." In dealing with this portion of holy writ we do not propose to call your attention especially to God's dealings with Israel of old, nor to attempt to point out just when, how or where, this particular prophecy was literally fulfilled, for at the best we are but imperfectly acquainted with the events of the period in which the prophet lived, so that many things which were then written (though perhaps quite intelligible when so written) are very obscure to us now. Israel of old, as we know, was (and as we read the Scriptures, is) a type of spiritual Israel. God's dealings with that people were therefore typical of his dealings with his spiritual Israel. We would therefore call your attention to this Scripture as applying to spiritual Israel, the church of the living God, composed of all peoples and tongues, in other words, God's elect. Looking at the subject in this light we would first express a thought or so in connection with the expression, "In that day." All of us (when reading the Scriptures) have observed the frequent recurrence of the expression, "In that day." Sometimes it is spoken of as a day of trouble, then again as a day of deliverance and joy. God's people are from time to time made to know the meaning of "that day," as the Lord leads them about like his serv-

ant Jacob, and instructs them. They are made to know something of the day of judgment, when God lays judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet, when he searches Jerusalem with candles. They know something of the day of trial, the day of temptation; on the other hand, it is their portion to also know something of the day of deliverance, the day of salvation, the day of peace, the day of hope and the day of rest. So we see there is a day when Jerusalem fears, and one in which God speaks with power to her heart, saying, "Fear thou not." What is intended here by "Jerusalem?" It would seem that spiritually viewed we may take "Jerusalem" as a symbolic representation of the church of God, for do we not find the word so applied in the New Testament? Paul the apostle writes, "But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."—Gal. iv. 26. Again, "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels."—Heb. xii. 22. So it would seem that we have ample warrant for a spiritual interpretation of Jerusalem as mystically representing that glorious church of which the apostle John writes, and which he saw in vision as coming down from God: "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." —Rev. xxi. 2. Then may we not apply the exhortation, "Fear thou not," to the church of God, and the day spoken of as a day when she is in trouble and sorrow and beset with many fears on account of the number and strength of her adversaries? As the members of the body of Christ are all partakers of the same afflictions, may we not consider the words here expressed as applicable to each believer in Christ Jesus who is beset with trouble, doubt or fear? By so doing the language seems personal, speaking directly to the heart of each sufferer in and with Christ. The language we are considering while addressed to Jerusalem is also addressed to Zion: "Let not thy hands be slack." We feel we are fully warranted in viewing Zion and Jerusalem as one, for, as we know, literal Zion was a part of Jerusalem. It was a lofty eminence on which David built his palace, and is therefore combined with Jerusalem by the apostle: "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," and what is this but "the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven"? How suitable, how appropriate the language employed, as the people of God in the day of their fear are addressed, "Let not thy hands be slack." Is there anything that makes our hands so slack as the day of temptation, the day of affliction, the day of searching, the day of trial or the day of judgment? It is often a comfort to the Lord's people to know and realize that while they feel their utter inability in and of themselves to heed the many admonitions in which the Scriptures abound, they have a God who undertakes for them. It is by his mighty power (and that alone) that any of the admonitions are heeded and obeyed. How often, as in the case now under consideration, we find with an exhortation linked a sweet and suitable promise. The prophet here goes on as follows: "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save," &c. See how the Lord comes and gives his Zion reasons why she should not fear and her hands should not be slack. The language implies that Zion's God being in her

midst, her battles are fought by him, and through him she is brought forth a conqueror. The psalmist of old was enabled to sing in the triumph of faith, "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early."—Psalms xlvi. 5.

"He will rejoice over thee with joy." When God's dear Son offered himself as a sacrifice for sin, and put away the transgressions of the church, when he died for her sins and rose again for her justification, it was a fulfillment of God's eternal purpose of wisdom and grace. Having in the fullness of time accomplished this eternal purpose, God, viewing his church saved, redeemed and justified, he can in that sense at least be said (in the language of the prophet) to rejoice over her with joy.

"He will rest in his love." God is love. When, then, he rests in his love, he may be said to rest in himself. As in the creation it is recorded, "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made,"—Gen. ii. 2, so after the completion of this work of works (the salvation of his church) it may be said that God rested, in the sense that the work was perfect and complete, as all the works of God are. God's love for his people being an eternal and everlasting love, as unchangeable as himself, and the mission of that love having been accomplished, he rests in that changeless love. As God rests in his love, so at times does he cause his people to rest in that same love, realizing that they love God because he first loved them.

"He will joy over thee with singing." Singing in the word of God is set forth as an emblem and expression of joy. How often in the Psalms we read, "Sing ye to the Lord," &c. It would seem that the language of the prophet here sets forth the joy of God in the salvation of his people, expressed in the voice of song. A rejoicing over his Zion whom he hath reconciled unto himself in and through his Son, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Such grace, love and mercy is sufficient to overwhelm us with wonder and astonishment. May God grant that from time to time during our pilgrimage here we may know more and more of his wondrous love to usward, and patiently await his appointed time when we shall experience its fullness and be eternally satisfied.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

R. LESTER DODSON, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, convened with Welsh Tract Church, Newark, New Castle Co., Del., May 24th, 25th and 26th, 1916, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond sendeth greeting and love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the love and tender mercies of God we have been permitted to meet together in an association, in which your messengers have come to us bearing testimony to the gospel of peace and love to the poor sinner. There has been no discord in the messages you have brought us, for which we are glad. Our hearts have been made glad for the manifestation of love from you, and we long for the time to come when we hope to meet you again.

Our next session is appointed to meet with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster Co., Pa., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the fourth Sunday in May, 1917, where we hope to again meet and receive your messengers and messages.

J. G. EUBANKS, Moderator.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Lena B. Ker, beloved wife of Elder H. C. Ker, departed this life June 22nd, 1916, at Thrall Hospital, this city, following an operation for gall stones. Elder and Mrs. Ker were married exactly three months. An obituary will appear later.

J. E. BEEBE & CO.

Deacon Duncan H. Campbell died at his home in Lobo, Ontario, Canada, May 10th, 1916, after an illness of about four weeks. Brother Campbell was born in Lobo township May 1st, 1846, making his sojourn here 70 years and 9 days. His wife died eleven years previous to his death, leaving a family of five children, three sons and two daughters, the youngest being quite small. Brother Campbell was a man widely known, and had a large circle of friends. He was a kind and obliging neighbor, always ready to assist his fellow-men in times of need. He cherished a hope in his blessed Savior for many years, but a feeling of unworthiness seemed to keep him from coming to the church for a number of years, but he was finally given strength to come and tell what he hoped the Lord had done for his soul, and was received as a candidate for baptism at the quarterly meeting held at Lobo October 6th, 1907, and was baptized the following day by Elder H. C. Ker. Brother Campbell's life was adorned with a well ordered walk and a godly conversation; he lived a life of faithfulness and devotion to the church and cause. His many acts of kindness and generosity will live in the memory of the rising generation. His home was a welcome place to his kindred in Christ, and many can testify to his hospitality. Brother Campbell was highly favored with a meek and humble spirit, walking carefully and prayerfully before the Lord, always desiring to do his Master's will. He was firm and unfaltering in his own convictions, possessing the sterling qualities of faithfulness and integrity. At the quarterly meeting held in Duart the third Sunday in January, 1916, the church appointed him deacon, but he was only spared to serve in that capacity a short time. We have to bow in submission to the will of Providence and say, Not our will, but thine, O God, be done. We feel that in the death of brother Campbell the church has met with a great loss, but what is our loss as a church we believe to be his gain. It was my privilege to visit him several times during his illness, and always found him composed and reconciled to the Lord's will. The eighth chapter of Romans was very comforting to him, and especially the closing verse of this chapter were unfailing promises to him in his last hours. He passed peacefully away at 3 p. m. At his bedside were his brother and sister and sorrowing children, all bowed in orrow while the unrelenting hand of death claimed his mortal frame. Kind and devoted children did all that was possible to be done for their loving father, but the Lord took his own from a world of sorrow to a world of eternal rest.

The funeral was held from his late residence on Friday, May 12th, conducted by the writer, and was largely attended by many relatives and friends, also many of his brethren and sisters in the church came bowed in sorrow, yet in submission to the will of their heavenly Father. Brother Campbell leaves to mourn their loss, besides the church, three sons and two daughters, three brothers and three sisters, also other relatives and friends. Burial was in Ivan Cemetery. May the Lord bestow upon his dear and sorrowing children the blessings of heaven, and may that peace which passeth knowledge be theirs to enjoy.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Elder Perry C. Harris peacefully passed away May 26th, 1916, in the full triumph of living faith, aged 69 years, 10 months and 22 days. Elder Harris had been a true and devoted member of the Leading Creek Old School Baptist Church for nearly fifty years. Later he became impressed that God had called him to the ministry, which he tried to obey in declaring the truths of the gospel of our Lord and Master where and whenever it fell to his lot, in love and fear. On the morning of May 6th, 1916, Elder Harris was feeding his horses, and in some way unknown to him he knocked a small piece of skin off the back of his hand, of which he took no notice at the time. He and the writer went to Montrose (our business town) together to get fertilizer, and he made no complaint, so I knew nothing of it. That night about 10 o'clock it commenced to pain him very badly, and by Sunday morning it had swollen to the size of two hands. Dr. Gruber, of Montrose, was called on Monday and pronounced it a very bad case of blood-poisoning. On Thursday Dr. Woodford, of Belington, assisted Dr. Gruber in making two large and deep cuts in the back of his hand, which discharged freely. The swelling reduced very much, and did not give him much pain, but he had a very weak heart, and at times would faint away, but would rally again, but continued to grow weaker until the time above stated, when his spirit gently took its flight to God who gave it. Elder Harris leaves his dear companion and six children to mourn their loss. Two children preceded him to the spirit land. Every comfort and care was rendered by his dutiful and kind son, Arthur J., assisted by the other children, and kind friends and neighbors, that could be given. The writer spent considerable time with him in his affliction, assisting to the best of my ability, and had the privilege of hearing him speak of his faith in God, of which he talked a great deal, which confirms me in the belief that he was born of God. He often said his affliction was so ordered, and

was just. He was loyal to the cause of his Master until called to his great reward. All the days of his appointed time he waited, until his change came. He was a kind husband, father, friend and neighbor.

His funeral services were conducted by Elders J. B. Cross and J. S. Murphy, after which his remains were laid to rest in the Philippi Cemetery. He will be missed by his brethren and sisters in Christ, not only in the church to which he belonged, but in all the churches of the association, and many other near and dear friends. I shall miss him, as we had been together a great deal and had pleasant talks on the power and grace of God.

May the riches of the grace of God be with the bereaved ones. NOAH W. HYMES.

William Hance, son of Joseph and Patsy Hance, was born near Casstown, Miami Co., Ohio, Oct. 25th, 1833, and died May 27th, 1916, aged 82 years, 7 months and 2 days. He was married to Margaretta Wise Oct. 16th, 1856, and to that union were born four children: E. Florence Peters, of Yorkshire, Ohio, Forest P. Hance, of Lancaster, Cal., Ella I. Fisher, of Yorkshire, Ohio, and Minnie O. Shaw, of Redondo Beach, Cal. He united with the Harmony Old School Baptist Church in August, 1870, and was baptized by Elder George Cottrell. He was chosen church clerk in 1873, and deacon of the church in 1875. In both offices he performed the duties faithfully as long as the church continued to meet. He was firm in the belief of the predestination of all things, but of late years he could not talk on any subject any length of time. Often he would say to visitors who were conversing on the Scriptures, "I wish I could talk with you." Although he did not agree with them he was very lenient with them all, not wishing to offend any. His wife preceded him in death in March, 1884. After her death he, with two daughters, Ella and Minnie, continued to keep house until the daughters married. He then made his home with Minnie until on account of ill health she removed to California. In March, 1893, he went to live with Florence and family, near Lightsville, Darke Co., Ohio. After the death of her husband he with Florence and her two daughters moved back on his farm near Sidney, Shelby Co., Ohio. In 1905 he with Florence and one daughter came to Yorkshire, Ohio, to live, living there until his death. He had been a sufferer of arteris sclerosis for four years, and the last two years were almost unbearable, but he bore his sufferings with great fortitude, never complaining, but often wondered how long he would have to stay here. Being of a cheerful disposition, scarcely any one knew his suffering. He was only confined to his bed eight days, and was conscious until a few hours before he died. All was done for him that could be done by friends and neighbors. On Tuesday night before he died he had a sinking spell, and we thought him dying, but he rallied and told us that he heard the angelic host and that he expected to soon be with them. He surely did await his Lord's time patiently. He leaves to mourn their loss four children, five grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, two sisters, two brothers and many others. His wife and one granddaughter preceded him to the great beyond. As there was no minister of the Predestinarian Baptist near, the funeral services were held at the "Church of Christ," Yorkshire, Ohio, by W. H. Morgan, of Greenville, Ohio; interment in Graceland Cemetery, Sidney, Ohio.

He read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as long as he could read. His eyesight being poor, he could only read when the light favored him. His daughter read quite often to him. He had taken the paper nearly as long as he had been a member of the church.

His daughter, FLORENCE PETERS.

Mrs. E. L. Coble, wife of G. C. Coble, was born March 15th, 1871, and died May 12th, 1916. I suppose Mr. and Mrs. Coble lived as happily together for about twenty-five years as it is possible for man and wife to live. There were seven children born to that union. Two girls and two boys are still living: Mrs. W. J. Stephenson, of Aberdeen, N. C., and Miss Ada, Ernest and Roy, at home, who, together with their dear father, greatly mourn the loss of the dear wife and mother. Mrs. Coble was sick about ten days of pneumonia. All was done for her that medicall skill, trained nurses and loving hands could do, but God had called, and no human skill could stay the cold hand of death. We realize our nothingness and weakness perhaps nowhere more than in the hour of death. Mrs. Coble was not a member of the church, and knew but little of the faith and doctrine preached by Primitive Baptists, but she bore every mark of a true, humble christian, and seemed to enjoy religious conversation with the writer. She joined the Methodists in her young days, and lived a consistent member with them, and was much loved by all who knew her. My wife, being just out of the hospital, was not able to attend the funeral. I attended with my little girls. The floral offering, together with the many sympathizing friends, showed something of the high esteem in which she was held. May God's rich grace and love rest on the bereaved family. W. J. STEPHENSON.

Elder C. T. Nance was born in Tippah County, Miss., Feb. 13th, 1855. Dec. 28th, 1876, he was married to Miss M. L. Jamison, of the same county. There were born to that union ten sons and four daughters, four sons preceding him to the grave. There were four sons and three daughters present at the time of his death, May 25th, 1916. C. T. Nance joined the Primitive Baptist Church in Mississippi in the year 1880, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry October 28th, 1888, by the following

presbytery: S. A. Wells, B. C. Butler and L. H. Jamison. In the year 1897 he moved from Mississippi to McLellan County, Texas, where he resided until 1908, when he moved to Floyd County, Texas, where he lived until death. He leaves his wife, who has ever been a faithful helpmeet, to mourn her loss. Sister Nance was a great stay to Elder Nance, and their home has ever been a welcome place for the Baptists and their friends. When troubles have existed Elder Nance stood firm for the doctrine of Christ and the apostles. He was a burden-bearer and a peacemaker, and I do not suppose that even his enemies doubted the sincerity of his motives, and he left his little church in peace and good order. I was favored to visit him during his last illness, and spoke in the way of preaching four times in his hearing under his own roof.

His remains were laid to rest in the cemetery at Silverton, from whence the spirit and the body will be reunited in that great day which has been spoken of by all the holy prophets since the world began. The New Hope Church, of which Elder Nance was a member, was organized by J. W. Caudill, Wm. Reed and myself in the year 1900, I think.

May God bless and sustain dear sister Nance and all the children and relatives.

J. H. FISHER.

Laura E. Nicholas, wife of C. H. Nicholas, was born Feb. 16th, 1861, and departed this life Dec. 26th, 1915, making her stay on earth 54 years, 10 months and 10 days. She was sick eight days of pneumonia. She never murmured or complained, but bore her pain with great patience, ever trusting in our Lord Jesus for life and comfort. She was married to C. H. Nicholas June 28th, 1878, and to this union were born two sons, the younger departing this life Dec. 30th, 1907, leaving a hope to us that he is now with his Savior. She received a hope in her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in 1884, and lived a humble, devoted christian life until called home. She was a dear, loving wife, a good, kind and affectionate mother, a good neighbor, and all who knew her loved her. She leaves her husband, one son and a granddaughter ten years old to mourn her absence, but we mourn not as those who have no hope, for we are satisfied that our loss is her eternal gain. But O, dear brethren, remember this little bereaved family in your prayers at the throne of grace. We all have to bear our troubles here, but my time is almost spent; I have almost lived out my threescore years and ten, and when I look back on my past life I cannot see where I have done anything for the Lord, but I can see where the Lord has done for me all through my unprofitable life. I can cry out as did poor old David, Surely the goodness of God has followed me all along down my unprofitable life; his loving-kindness endureth forever.

C. H. NICHOLAS.

APPOINTMENTS.

PLEASE publish the following appointments and oblige:

Kelly Corners, N. Y., Saturday, July 15th, 8 p. m.; Vega, N. Y., Sunday, 16th, 11 a. m.; Monday, 17th, home of Miss Meads, 10:30 a. m.; evening of same day, Mary Slauson's, Halcottville, N. Y., 8 p. m.; Union Grove, N. Y., Tuesday, 18th, 10:30 a. m.; evening, 8 p. m., Mr. Morris Faulkner's.

D. M. VAIL.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

WAVERLY, Pa., June 14, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—My address after June 29th will be Clarks Summit, Pa. My mail and telegrams will reach me there, as I will be near the Delaware & Lackawanna station, corner of High School and Clearmont Sts., which is only a few rods from Northern Electric station.

D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

L. Z. Ross, N. Y., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Siloam Association of Oregon and Washington will meet with Mt. Zion Church, six miles northwest of Forest Grove, Oregon, commencing Friday 10 a. m. before the second Sunday in August, 1916. Trains will be met at Forest Grove Thursday evening and Friday morning. Lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

THE one hundred and fifth session of the Red River Association will meet with the church at Friendship, Sumner Co., Tenn., to begin Saturday before the second Sunday in August, 1916. Brethren will be met with conveyance at Hendersonville, Tenn., on Gallatin Interurban, and at Fountain Head, on the L. & N. R. R., near Gallatin, Tenn., Friday and Saturday.

THE ninety-ninth session of the West Tennessee Association will meet with Yellow Creek Church, Dickson Co., Tenn., two miles from Woodhaven, on the Clarksville Mineral R. R. Brethren will be met at Woodhaven with conveyance. Session to begin Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1916.

A. L. STANSELL.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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GLEN ROSE, Texas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 84. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1916. NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GRACE! A MIGHTY WORD!

RECENTLY I wrote a letter to an afflicted soul, rehearsing the mighty changes of providence in human affairs, and of our helplessness to reverse the almighty Hand that brings these changes to our knowledge, and that we in this respect are as helpless as infants, referring her to only one support in our sad bereavements: that of grace, emphasizing the importance of the word "grace" by saying: "What a mighty word." After sending the letter away I have thought much about using the above words regarding the word "grace." I am now trying to show that I was not far wrong in writing as I did. In the New Testament John has it recorded: "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Though grace seems to belong to the coming of Christ, the kingdom of grace existed before Christ entered into the flesh of his people. In a number of places grace is spoken of by the prophets. How wonderful and appropriate to the King of saints are the words in the forty-fifth Psalm, God speaking, as it were, to the Holy One of Israel, or the Anointed of the Father: "Grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever." To them who are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ and called, the word grace is mighty, because it carries with it the thought of the great King of grace, who received the blessing into his lips, unbounded in fullness, as the word "poured" signifies a continuous flow of grace. Jesus, the Christ of God, had all fullness dwelling in him to accomplish the pleasure of the Father to redeem his people, make known that redemption to them and give them conquering grace to bear all their afflictions while in the flesh. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell. There was no limiting bounds set to the Holy One of Israel. The crown of his Father was his everlasting seal. Inspired Paul said, In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. The Father gave the Son power over all flesh, to give eternal life to as many as the Father gave him. In imparting eternal life, they, every one of them, receive of his fullness, life, faith, hope, charity, &c., and grace for grace. Grace is imparted to the creature man because of that grace given him in Christ before the world be-

gan. That grace given him in time is grace, and not something else. The apostles use the words often: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ is the grand center of grace; he is the giver of grace and glory. Without grace Christ would be a misnomer in all the work of redemption, without it he could not fill the office of Prophet, Priest and King. If grace were lacking, the poor and afflicted people to be redeemed could not approach unto the Mediator, hence in the pit of despair they would forever be left. The saints of old time, before the coming of the Lord Jesus, had knowledge of grace and the mercy to be revealed in the coming of the promised Heir of the world. Grace is spoken of in Genesis, Exodus, 2 Samuel, Esther, Psalms and Zechariah. In Zechariah the glimmer of morning light of the day of grace is prefigured with greater force than in any other of the Old Testament books. Here the Lord says that he will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced. In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. The spirituality of his kingdom, and the invisibility of the power of his grace, are wonderfully portrayed in the fourth chapter of Zechariah: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain?" It seems that the great mountain of difficulty in the way of God accomplishing his purpose, as men view some of the mighty purposes of God, in the above question was: After Jesus is slain, how can he be raised up in three days and not see corruption? That Jesus was really slain, mortal men could testify to for a certainty, he being hanged on a rude cross for six hours, nailed there, through his hands and through his feet, dying in time to save all his bones, yet a cruel spear pierced his side, so that blood and water flowed out. So sure as Jesus was put to death in the flesh, so sure was he quickened by the Spirit. Before Zerubbabel (the architect, or rebuilder of the temple) the mountain shall be removed and a plain appear, illustrating in a figure the speedy and all-powerful work of the Spirit in raising up Jesus from the dead. In this great work that justifies every sinner that ever shall be saved from the power of the grave, grace is most prominently spoken of, as we hear the shoutings of angels and the heavenly host: "He shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace, unto it."—Zech. iv. 7. Jesus, that headstone, chief corner-stone, tried stone, elect stone, precious stone, and though rejected by Babel builders, becomes the chief corner, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy building in the Lord. As that stone appears in perfect beauty, without any defect whatever, grace is the crown of it forever, it is the great King of righteousness who is clothed with grace from his crown to his feet. Shall not grace be forever perpetuated unto the saints for whom he died, and arose in triumph, as angels shouted: Grace, grace, unto him? O how lovely the song of saints as grace crowns and clothes them, and their lips breathe forth the praises of the King of grace. O how blessed are the saints in their new discovered love of God, no more under the law, but under sweet, soul-cheering grace. May they ever, while on earth, abide in grace and under the shadow of that great Rock, Christ Jesus.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., June 13, 1916.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was commenced some time in 1832. I was born March 20th, 1832. My father and mother were among the first subscribers, I have often heard them say, and all the years that father lived he was pleased to be an agent, and every year he collected for the dear SIGNS. They took it as long as they lived, and I hope I will be able to do the same. No one in our church, except myself, takes it now. I have been so afflicted all the fall, and winter thus far, I do not feel to have spirit to write anything worth reading, and often feel my little hope, if I have one, is almost out of sight, but I will still say the Lord is merciful to me in giving me yet the SIGNS, when I am still a murmurer. To-day I was looking over my many good letters, and wondering if sister Laura Baird, of Kentucky, is still alive. Dear, precious sister, I have not heard from her in many years; and Sallie Bartley, I would like to know where she is. My sister, Susan Blair, who lived beside me so long, is gone to her long home, for two years or more, and I am left, the last of four sisters. Grippe has left me with sore eyes and pain in the back of my neck, and, like the poor woman, I can hardly lift up myself. Sorely afflicted, yet I dare not complain; I want to be patient and know that the dear Lord rules in wisdom, and I am only a poor, groveling worm. I miss many meetings, but my greatest enjoyment is to meet in the assembly of the saints. May the Lord still grant me grace to know and do his will.

These letters of sister Baird's you may publish if you think they will do.

LINA W. BECK.

CAVE CITY, Ky., April 12, 1901.

DEAR SISTERS BLAIR AND BECK:—Your precious letters came in due course of mail, and were a pleasure indeed. It fills my poor heart with joy unspeakable to be numbered among such dear christian friends in that "chosen relationship," yet I feel unworthy of such sacred relationship. Your dear letters would have been replied to earlier had not sickness prevented. I have been confined to my bed much of the time since their reception, and often during the long days when alone I would find myself inditing in mind such letters as I would have you read. There is much of the time that my thoughts revert to you, for sister Bartley has told me much concerning your dear christian lives, and the love she and dear Elder Bartley bore you, besides she kindly lets me read your dear letters. The worldly societies scoff at such love as exists among the dear Old Baptists, but I have formed a love for many whom I have never seen nor ever can in this life. I look forward with pleasure to the coming of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for it contains so many precious communications and rich editorials. We who can only hear the gospel in its purity twice during the year doubly appreciate our Old School Baptist literature, as it contains the most of our preaching. He who enjoined it upon his followers to love God has likewise commanded them to love one another. Sometimes when I am filled with doubts and fears my love for the dear brethren is my only hope. I feel that if I am a stranger to the joys of pardoning mercy, whence arises the sweet union with the dear Old Baptist brethren? There was a time when I had no love for them, or for the precious doctrine of the Bible, I was a Pharisee of the Pharisees. Never, never can I feel

thankful enough that my blind eyes were opened and my deaf ears unstopped, but, my dear sisters, as I cannot be with you I cannot go into details at present. There have been times when listening to the voice of our dear faithful ministers when holding forth the precious doctrine of our Savior that I have longed to feel willing to say with the apostle that I am willing to count all things but loss that I may win Christ. But this willingness has to be given us by our blessed Redeemer, God; it is something poor, sinful mortals cannot even desire of themselves. We feel thankful to you for each of your loving epistles. You said so many things in such a sincere manner that I was built up and comforted, and, if not deceived, was strengthened in my daily experience, but I really do feel unworthy of such notice and kind regard from the dear people of God. The older I grow the more I see of my failure to do my duty, and O such sinful thoughts take possession, I feel surely I am one alone. Dear sisters, remember myself and daughters in your prayers when you can say, "Our Father."

Dear sisters, next Friday we expect to have dear Elder P. W. Sawin, of Shelbyville, Ky., with us. He will remain until Monday, dividing his visit with brother John Nuckols and myself and children. Our little band usually met at Oak Grove, three miles distant from my home, but for six years I have been unable to attend, so he usually preaches at my home on Saturday and Oak Grove on Sunday, and his sermons have often been a source of much comfort to my poor, tried heart in times past. O that we may be given the hearing ear and understanding heart when he comes, and may God bless him with sweet liberty of soul and endue him with power from on high to hold forth the precious truths of the gospel. The true Old Baptist ministers declare the truth of the glory of God, and thus comfort the hearts of all those blessed with the hearing ear and understanding heart; but, dear sisters, you both are well versed in the Bible and rich in christian experience, while I feel to be the very poorest and least of all, even if one at all. Since sister Bartley has left us I feel sad. My daughter has so many cares that often I am left alone, but if able to sit up I can pass the time in reading much of the time; the cares of housekeeping devolve on her. On a farm in the country there is much more required than in a town or city. We live seven miles from Glasgow, the county seat, and eight miles from Cave City. There is not an Old Baptist either in town or Cave City, except brother Nuckols' family and ours, that I know of anywhere within many miles of us.

Dear sisters, I am not much in favor of birthday dinners, but in 1908 my children, unknown to me, invited my children and grandchildren. Sister Bartley was with us at that time. During my beloved husband's sojourn on earth his birthday was never observed in that way, and I feel that I wish to fare in that respect just as he did, but sister Bartley was again with us the present year, and again, unknown to me, my children and grandchildren were bidden. It must have been sister Bartley who told you, as I knew nothing of their intention when writing to you. Had I been well I should have written dear sister Beck, but I am never supplied with birthday cards.

It is now raining, and so dark I must finish in the morning.

Tuesday morning.—Dear sisters, I resume my pen to bring this poor letter to a close. If it were not the heart that

gives value to words I certainly could never write any more to loved ones. I trust you will pardon the many defects, as well as the poor writing, and that you will write often to me. I have been corresponding with sister M. D. Fisher, of New York city, more than ten years, also a sister who resides at Blackwater, Mo., fully that long, but have never seen either of them. I look forward to their loving epistles just the same as if personally acquainted.

I trust these lines, sister Blair, will find yourself and daughter, together with sister Beck, in the enjoyment of good health, and may the Lord spare you both to your loving daughters years to come, if it be his holy will. Blanche unites with me in love to each one, as would Allie if present. Remember each one of us in your supplications at the throne of mercy.

Affectionately yours,

LAURA M. BAIRD.

CAVE CITY, Ky., March 2, 1901.

DEAR SISTER BLAIR:—I am resolved to pen you a few lines, although I feel unworthy to do so, yet you have often remembered me in christian love in your letters to sister Bartley during her visits with our family, which was a source of comfort to my oft overburdened heart. I feel that I cannot sufficiently thank you for your sweet sympathy; more especially do I thank you for your dear picture. My eyes filled with tears when first beholding your placid christian features; no one could view them without feeling at heart that they were beholding the image of a meek and lowly mother in Israel. Also those precious quotations from the Psalms were indeed truly rich in consolation for the pure in heart, but I felt they were not for such as I. So often I am left to my own dark, carnal self; I feel to exclaim with the poet, "O, is there any one like me?" Dear sister, read the hymn, "I am a stranger here below." Also, "I would, but cannot sing; guilt has untuned my voice." They express my feelings, I hope, if I am not greatly deceived. I often feel that the desire is all that has been given me, but that is something good, for which my praise is due. In and of ourselves we are not equal to one good thought. I do believe that God will work all things for the good of his people and for his own glory. So amid my many doubts and fears and trials by the way I sometimes get crumbs of comfort from the writings of God's ministering servants, and sometimes from the preached word, though we have a dearth now. Ever since dear Elder Bartley was called to his reward we can only have services twice during the year, spring and fall, and it has been six years since I could attend services from my home. Elder P. W. Sawin, of Shelbyville, Ky., is our beloved pastor, and he holds services at my home on Saturday and at Oak Grove on Sunday. We are only a little band of believers, old brother Nuckols and two daughters, myself and eldest daughter. Several we feel have an experience, only a feeling of unworthiness is keeping them away. Death has made sad inroads, and some have removed to other States, among them my son William, and we miss him very much. He read the Bible when quite a youth, long before he became a member of the church, and was conversant with it. He and brother Nuckols would meet here and hold sweet converse on the word of God, each expressing their views in love, rarely, if ever, differing in their interpretation of the meaning of the Scriptures. For the past year brother

Nuckols has been unable to be with us, as he is partially paralyzed. Sister Bartley is anxious to visit him, but the weather has been such that she has not yet been, as he lives three miles distant, but the sun is shining to-day, and perhaps she can go soon.

Dear sister, pardon the many errors in this, as well as the writing. If I tried to rewrite it it might not be any better. Your daughter must read it for you. Blanche joins me in love to yourself and beloved daughter. Sister B. tells me that you, too, are debarred from attending services away from home on account of feeble health, so we can sympathize with each other in that, if nothing more. I only wish that I could see and be with you and many other loved ones whom I shall never see in this life, but O, if it is our happy lot to meet in that bright world above, heaven will make amends for all our sorrows, toils and cares.

Please remember me in love to dear sister Beck, and tell her I am anxious to read another one of her good letters in the SIGNS. I enjoy hers, together with many others, more than I can express on paper. I have been taking the SIGNS for many years, and am well pleased with it; the reading of it whiles away many hours that might otherwise be spent in loneliness of mind.

Dear sister, I must now bid you a loving adieu. May the Lord abundantly bless you all, is my heartfelt desire.

LAURA M. BAIRD.

RISING STAR, Texas, March 12, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I hope you will pardon my delay in renewing my subscription. The inclosed check contains one dollar additional to help send the SIGNS to "the poor of the flock." Excepting a short time I have been a reader of the SIGNS about twenty years. Those earlier years call to mind the ready writers as editors and contributors who are now gathered to their fathers. Watchmen on the walls of Zion they were, champions for the cause of truth and righteousness, whose words were so carefully chosen, and so seasonably and fitly spoken, as to make them as apples of gold in pictures of silver in comparison, in worth and memory. Here appears in memory a catalogue of the names of the dear departed ones, too lengthy to mention, so I do not make mention of any, except our late lamented Elder F. A. Chick, whose last editorial appeared in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of February 15th, 1914, headed 2 Timothy iv. 8: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." I well remember after reading over his first sentence, "This is the last letter which Paul wrote before the Lord called him home," &c., that I was interrupted by the thought which went through my mind like a flash: And this is the last editorial Elder Chick will ever write for the SIGNS before the Lord shall call him home. In some way I felt sure it was his last editorial, and began reading it as such with a solemnity never felt before. It seemed to better prepare me to feel and understand what great and fervent desire and prayer possessed him for the succession of the ministry of the word. With his dying words he now begins to illustrate, as only a parting epistle can, by this text, Paul's charge to Timothy. In the very spirit of the matter it was his own charge to his successors, his sons in the faith, but he would not at the last moment forget to mention the blessedness of the passing, as it were, of the work from the charge of Elder Philander Hartwell when in the midst of the charge he handed him the blessed

Bible, charging him to preach the word. In substance, he here, by the relation of the exercises of his heart and soul which took hold of him at that instant, emphasizes the truth of the Scripture: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." In all this he is showing as none but departing fathers in the ministry can show to their sons in the faith, of what great importance their callings are. He here classes Paul as best an inspired servant of God and father in the ministry can be, with an uninspired servant as was the aged Elder Philander Hartwell, and Timothy as inspired and himself as uninspired, as their respective sons in the faith and in the ministry, then leaves this part of the subject forever with these words: "It has seemed to us that Timothy must have remembered these words all his life, acquiring as they do special solemnity, because they were the last expressed desire of Paul toward him." Then how the remainder of the editorial glowed with sweetness, beauty and power, as it were, from one yet alive, but speaking from the eternal world, I can never begin to express. When through reading it I remarked to my wife that I felt it was the last from the pen of Elder Chick, and so it proved to be. Since his death many more have fallen asleep in Jesus. But now as we turn our eyes from beholding our dear ones who have passed over the river of death before us, we come to speak something of the present and of the living. It would seem too selfish to speak of myself in the first person singular further, but must use plurals instead. We find ourselves at this good day blessed with another on the editorial staff, in the person of Elder Lefferts, who, no doubt, our kind heavenly Father has qualified to fill the vacancy made by the death of our dear departed Elder Chick, and most assuredly he is all that Elder Ker expects as co-laborer upon the SIGNS. We feel it a special blessing to have reproductions of the editorials of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and the occasional letters written by dear Elder Chick. The coming of each successive number of the SIGNS gladdens the hearts of thousands of lovers of the truth, especially those isolated from church privileges and the companionship of the saints. While considering the great spiritual blessing of this valuable medium of correspondence to the household of faith, we should remember to see that it be kept on a solid financial basis; we cannot feel to let it become embarrassed with burdensome indebtedness, and if such be the case, we should hereto ask that a statement be issued at our request, as we do not think it right for the SIGNS to thus suffer as a result of lack of knowledge of its encumbrance. It is our duty to see that trial and burden may never have to be borne by the publishers, knowing that their labor is one of love, and not for mercenary and selfish interest, so we, as publishers, writers and readers, each of us, severally and individually, feel one common interest as supporters of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as far as our abilities extend, and should we through carelessness, negligence or for any other cause, let the dear old SIGNS come to need, we feel that the dear publishers would almost rather notify its readers of its discontinuance than tell us of our fault. We remember some years ago the SIGNS had to borrow money. Of course the publishers could have put up its office or other property as collateral for the needed funds, but they deemed it best to obtain it within its own limits and

boundaries of the brotherhood in Christ, and we think they did wisely in so doing, as it has taught us to be careful that such need may not occur again. Neither should we be satisfied to give the SIGNS a solid support only, but let us kindly remember the "poor of the flock," who are not able to pay their subscriptions.

Wishing the SIGNS a prosperous year, and its contributors and readers much peace, love and joy in the Holy Ghost, together with all who call upon the name of the Lord in sincerity and truth to the utmost borders of the earthly Zion of our God, is the prayer of the unworthy writer,

J. I. FOSTER.

ISAIAH XXXIII. 14–22.

"THE sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites: Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from the holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from the hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure. Thine eyes shall see the King [God] in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off [the new heaven and earth spoken of where dwelleth righteousness]. * * * Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us."

I have been asked for my views on the above Scripture. Remember God's fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem. "And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off, and die [the second death]; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them. I will say, It is my people, and they shall say, The Lord is my God." —Zech. xiii. 8, 9. "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple." "But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers sope: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years."—Malachi iii. 1–4. God is the only everlasting eternal fire that we have any account of in the Bible; all other fires belong to this world, and go out when this world goes out of existence. (See Exodus iii. 2–4.) God in the burning bush. For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire. (Deuteronomy iv. 24.) By the blast of God they perish, and by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed. (Job iv. 9.) And Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them. (Leviticus ix. 24; x. 1, 2.) (See 1 Kings xviii. 24–38; 2 Kings i. 10–13; ii. 11; 1 Chronicles xxi. 26.) For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her (Zion). (Zech. ii. 5.) And unto you that are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence

of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work, only he that now letteth will let until he be taken out of the way, and then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming. (See 2 Thessalonians, first and second chapters.) And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city, and fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. (See Rev. x. i; xx. 8–15; xxi. 1–27.) The Revelation of Jesus Christ is so plain it needs no explanation of uninspired men to interpret it; there is no mystery in that which is revealed. I believe what God Almighty says, just as the prophets and apostles have written it. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffer the vengeance of eternal fire. Was it not God, the only eternal fire that ever existed, that was angry? (Jude 7.—See Genesis xix.) Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven. Some think they are still suffering in the fire. The same fire that protects the elect burns up the nonelect. "Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Therefore because the King's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men, that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace." The king said, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered, True, O king. He answered, and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God. Then the king went to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake and said, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither. Then the three came forth out of the fire upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was a hair of their heads singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them. (Daniel iii. 13–28.) Enoch and Elijah are witnesses that the saints living when Christ comes again will be changed from mortal to immortal. Let us call Paul as a witness: "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord [the Lord is a good witness], that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."—1 Thess. iv. 15–18. "And it came to pass, as they still went on [Elijah and Elisha], and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven." Elijah was changed from mortal to immortal, with an indestructible body, that fire nor anything else could destroy, before he got into that chariot of fire; for such bodies as we have here

would burn up, as the Lord said of the wicked in Malachi iv. I believe that God means just what he says, whether I understand it or not. It is in the new heaven and new earth where there is no sea, no tears, no pain; nothing can destroy eternal life, which is the gift of God; you cannot destroy those eternal, immortal, incorruptible bodies. No death in the world to come, no night; none but they whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life will ever see the world above. I fully believe after this world there will be no more sin in the universe. God himself is the only everlasting, eternal fire that ever did, does now, or ever will exist. He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, and besides him there is no God. None have eternal life but God, and those to whom he gives it. All other lives are limited, must end. Let God be true, and every man a liar that disputes his word.

R. S. BANKS.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass., March 13, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am sending a letter written by brother Keene to sister Orinda Butler, my sister Lillian and myself. I think it worthy a place in the SIGNS.

Your sister in hope,

ELLA M. FORD.

KELLY CORNERS, N. Y.

DEAR SISTER:—Did I know your name I could address you personally. It is a pleasing thought that I am so kindly remembered at Mt. Hope. Your present was very acceptable, and both my wife and myself feel grateful to you, and also to the Lord, for your manifest kindness of heart. To-day while thinking over the matter, I have been in the multitude of my thoughts pondering over Genesis xliii. 11: "Carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts and almonds." Joseph, "the man," is a type of Jesus Christ, and in Joseph's brethren there is a precious view of poor sinners called by grace going unto the Savior and presenting before him their balm, honey, spices, myrrh and almonds. Our dear Redeemer, like Joseph, is the one by whom poor, perishing, hunger-stricken sinners are nourished and sustained. He himself is the bread of life, and he nourishes and cherishes the church. (Eph. v. 29.) What surpassing wonders the Son of God has wrought. He died for our sins and rose again for our justification. In him we have redemption and forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace, and in him we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places.

"Carry down the man a present." Of old time the typical people of God came with their presents before the Lord, bringing their first-fruits unto the place where God had recorded his name. (Deut. xxvi.) The queen of Sheba came to King Solomon with presents, (1 Kings xviii; Psalms lxxii.) all of which is significant of believers in Jesus coming unto Jesus with their spiritual offerings, (1 Peter ii. 5,) and in Hebrews xiii. 15, 16, the apostle says, "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name. But to do good, and to communicate, forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." You remember that the wise men fell down and worshipped Jesus, and when they had opened their treasures they presented unto him gifts, gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. (Matt. ii. 11.) Every subject of God's grace has in his heart spiritual treasures more precious than gold; the Holy Ghost has put them there.

"Carry down the man a present." What shall we carry? "A little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts and almonds." I will not enlarge upon these things, they are indicative of those spiritual exercises and acts in which we worship our God, whether it be to praise, to love and adore the Lord, or to sigh and mourn over our sinfulness. At our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, laid up for our beloved Redeemer. (Song of Solomon vii. 13.) "Carry down the man a present," and let us remember that our dear Savior has said, "Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."—Matt. xxv. 40.

May the gracious Lord bless you and all the dear friends whom I met (and whom I affectionately remember) at Mt. Hope. I shall be very glad to receive a few lines from you and to know of your welfare.

I am, I hope, your brother in Jesus,

FRED. W. KEENE.

EROS, Ark., Jan. 9, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel impressed to write a few lines for the SIGNS, if in your judgment it will not crowd out better matter. I have been requested by several to write, and that worthy dear brother, John M. Beard, of Silver Valley, Texas, has lately expressed a desire for me to write for the SIGNS. He is the first person I ever baptized; he and his wife came to the church nearly thirty years ago.

I have had some thoughts on Revelation xxii. 1, 2, also some other Scriptures on the same line of thought: "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Now I believe this river is God's love, or Spirit, and the tree is Jesus, the fruit is the gospel as preached and recorded by the twelve apostles; the same gospel, but each had his manner of expressing it. Just so with God's humble poor ministers to-day, all preach the same glorious doctrine of salvation by grace, but each has his manner of expressing it. Jesus healed all manner of disease whether his children or not, and his divine character and influence has and does heal nations and individuals yet, and if ever peace is restored among the nations of the earth it will be by his influence. David speaks of the same river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God, and Ezekiel saw the same river coming out of the threshold of God. It was very little, or shallow, at first, but grew deeper and larger until it became impassable. The manifestation of God's love was to only a few at first, but kept being manifested to thousands. The love was the same from eternity, but the manifestation greater, until it is unspeakable and full of glory. It was this love that caused Jesus, the blessed Savior, to leave the shining courts of bliss and glory and come down to redeem his bride from the curse of the law and from all iniquity. This subject is inexhaustible, so I will leave it.

I want to tell you about some of our good meetings this fall. I had the pleasure of baptizing a worthy sister in the fellowship of the Little Hope Church the first Sunday in October, and also a dear brother and his wife the fourth Sunday n October in the fellowship of Salem Church, in Baxter County, Arkansas.

Also another brother and his wife the first Sunday in November in the fellowship of Little Hope Church, in Boone County, Arkansas. I believe there are several others who will be made willing to cast in their lot with God's humble poor in these churches. The weather has been so unfavorable I have not attended last month or this. I desire the prayers of all connected with the SIGNS. May God bless and spare you all to keep sending the paper laden with gospel truth to God's little ones, to comfort, console and encourage them to press forward toward the mark of the high calling in Jesus.

If you think anything I have written is of any comfort to the household of faith you may publish it, and if not, all will be right with me.

Wishing the editors, publishers and contributors all a prosperous and happy year, I am yours in gospel bonds,

WILLIAM J. CASEY.

BERRY, Ala., Feb. 4, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—To-night, as many other nights, while here alone I turned to the SIGNS for comfort, and while I read a great deal, I find no reading so pure, so wholesome as the SIGNS, for it is in perfect harmony with the Bible. O how sweet for brethren to dwell together in unity. I have just read brother Jackson's letter, and brother Ker's answer, in January 15th issue, and can say that if I know what I do believe, that I heartily indorse brother Ker's views on predestination. So far as the word "absolute" is concerned, that does not have any material effect upon the meaning of the word "predestination," for the whole is included in the predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass, and we know that "all" does not mean a part. I believe that God did foreknow and predestinate all things, for he said, I am Alpha and Omega. "Is it fit to say to a king, Thou art wicked? and to princes, Ye are ungodly? How much less to him that accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor? for they all are the work of his hands."—Job xxxiv. 18, 19. Again, he says, in the twenty-first verse, "For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings." Then, has he not power to avenge those wicked acts? Surely God is good, and all our afflictions are only meant for good; they are all for the lifting of Jesus on high. Yes, I believe God is just and good in all his ways, for things come up daily that sorely distress me, and often when the dark clouds of sorrow come over me I am made to say, as did Job, "Why died I not from the womb? * * * For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept: then had I been at rest." But not so, God, who is holy and just, has a purpose in my being, I know not why, for it seems that everything I do or try to do is a failure, and my daily prayer is how to perform that which is good in his sight. Where our treasure is there will our heart be also, and often when sorrow like a tempest comes over my lonely life I long to join my loved ones where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. Many times as I sit alone thinking of the past and present (for the future is too dark to discern), and wondering why so many little ones were entrusted to my care, when I was so dependent, and felt that without the love and protection of my dear companion I was like a bird with a broken wing, I am made to know that without God man's arm is too short and his efforts too weak to bring that joy and ever-watchful protection that is necessary to guide our feet in the strait and narrow

way that leads onward and upward to that higher and better kingdom, and it is only through suffering and much tribulation that we find our utter weakness and dependence upon our heavenly Father. O what sweetness in the tender compassion the heavenly Father has on his wayward and disobedient children. Although lonely, sad and often cast down, as it were, in the mire of sin and sorrow, I would not exchange the little hope I sometimes feel I have for all the riches and vain glory of this world.

Before I close I want to say that we have had Elder J. C. Sikes and wife with us, and believe that many feel as I do, that he not only feeds God's hungering little ones, but casts bread upon the water to be gathered many days hence.

Dear brethren, do with this as you think best, and cast the mantle of charity over my weakness.

Yours in love, and in hope of a better and brighter world,

(MRS.) J. C. IVY.

CAMPBELLSBURG, Ky., Jan. 16, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have written several letters to you in my mind; when going about my work I find myself thinking of you, and trying in my feeble way to tell you some of my thoughts, but then comes the thought, Why should one so dull, so perfectly void of understanding as I am, try to tell others what I am thinking of? How can I write anything that will be to the comfort of any of God's dear children, when they are so blest with wisdom and knowledge that can only come from the great Giver of every good and perfect gift? I would love to tell you something of the comfort your writings have been to me, but I feel it would be impossible for this stammering tongue of mine, but many times when I am feeling cast down, cold and lifeless, the SIGNS comes in, and I begin reading, and in a few moments this stony heart of mine is melted to tears. I thought when Elder Chick was called home, Who can ever fill his place? I seemed to forget that the same One that raised up Elder Chick still reigns and rules supreme, and was and is able to raise up another, not to fill Elder Chick's, but to fill his own place, and we believe the lot fell on the right man, for he came preaching Christ, and him crucified, and that is what we want to read about, and it is what we want to hear proclaimed from the pulpit. For myself, I want to hear of a full and complete Savior, one who is able and does save poor sinners, without any creature help. O how glad I am that it is that way, for if he had left the smallest part for me to do my case would be hopeless, for my nature discloses to view more vileness than I can declare, and were not the promises true, I am sure I should sink in despair. In reading the SIGNS my heart is made to go out in love and sympathy to you both. I have never seen your faces, but I believe I love you both for the truth's sake. When I read Elder Lefferts' article under the heading "Personal," I was made to think of Moses when the Lord gave him the command to bring up the Israelites. He must have thought how on earth could he ever do it, for he said he was slow of speech; he must have felt his inability greatly, and Jacob tells us he was not worthy of the least of the Lord's mercies, and Paul complained of the thorn in the flesh, and sought the Lord thrice to remove it, but what was his answer? "My grace is sufficient for thee." O what a good answer, how comforting, and may he uphold you both by his sustaining grace, and enable you to continue in the work he has called you

unto. Many times I have gone to meeting feeling unfit to be there; I would look around on the others, and long for the assurance that it was as well with me as with them, and I would often think, I will not go any more, but when meeting time comes I find myself thinking of them, and even getting ready to go, and sometimes I am carried away from self and made to see the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings, then hope is renewed and I am made to say, The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want; he maketh me to lie down in green pastures, he leadeth me beside the still waters. Dear friends, what more can we want? What more can a sheep want than green pasture to feed upon, the still waters to quench its thirst, and the shade to rest under? and in that world to come what more can we desire than to be permitted to awake with His likeness, to see him as he is and to be like him? for he says, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love him. For myself, I feel satisfied to leave it all in the hands of him who doeth all things well.

I would like very much to see something in the SIGNS from brother Sawin's pen, as we are not having any preaching this winter, and he is our pastor, and I believe I can truly say he preached the first gospel sermon I ever heard, and the memory is still sweet to me; even the songs I thought were sung for me. What a strange creature I must be, I seem to be between doubts and fears and hope and joy.

Dear friends, do with this as you see fit. It is like the writer, very imperfect, but if you see fit to publish it please correct all mistakes, and if not, cast it aside, and it will be all right with me. Unto him who is able to keep you from falling be all praise, both now and forever.

Your sister, I hope,

ADDIE CHANDLER.

PORTLAND, Oregon, April 5, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—The inclosed writing is for publication, if in accordance with your judgment.

CAMILLA WILKES.

WALKER, Oregon, March 24, 1916.

DEAR SISTER WILKES:—We received and much appreciated your letter, and I am endeavoring to reply. We also enjoyed your letter lately published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I am glad you found harmony with your belief in my letter, but you must not think of me as though I were anything, because in long, dreary seasons of barrenness of spiritual fruit I am taught again and again that in me, at least in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing, and that I cannot of mine own self do or say one thing to praise the adorable name of the great object of our love, nor to comfort his loved little ones who rejoice in the wonderful doctrine of salvation by grace, first, last and always. O the sweetness of that gift of God to his poor creatures to speak the same thing and see eye to eye; and again, when we can with some degree of light contemplate the wonderful work of God, it seems a wonder that any one could think of it in any other way than that every detail was comprehended, or, as we might say, planned and decreed before there was ever a man or any other creature. Paul no doubt had that point in mind when he broke forth in sublime praise: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who

hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen." The four and twenty elders ascribed to him all glory, honor and power by casting their crowns at his feet and crying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."—Rev. iv. 11. In our imaginary wisdom we may think of many things that would appeal to our judgment as a better way, but God's ways are as high above our ways as the heavens are higher than the earth, and his wisdom according to his own word puts a succession of steps unto the glorious abode of perfection, and there is no other succession that will bring us to glory, or that will exalt his name above every other name. Before immortality there must be the resurrection; it is sown a mortal body, it is raised an immortal body. Before the resurrection there must be death, and before death there must be sin; the sting of death is sin; sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death; and before sin must be the creation. Now the other great object, the exaltation of that holy name, is accomplished in his perfect work, while there is not a just person on earth that liveth and sinneth not. God is holy and perfect; what God does is right; he is not a man that he should lie, or the son of man that he should repent, and he has given a law that requires perfection: Be ye holy, for I am holy; and if one is guilty of part of the law he is guilty of the whole. Then the law entered that the offense (not justification by its deeds) might abound. "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord."—Romans v. 20, 21. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, things in the earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. While I say what God does is right, I do not mean to say whatever man does is right. I hope I have been killed to the love of sin, and I know that if it is in my heart to abhor sin and love holiness God alone has put it there. The preparation of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is of the Lord. He works, and none can hinder. Not the fear of punishment, but the love of Christ constraineth us, so if he has begun a good work in our heart he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, and to such an one who hates sin it is not dangerous to believe the glorious God-praising doctrine declared throughout his word and by his saints of all ages. "God hath freely and unchangeably decreed all things whatsoever come to pass."—London Confession. He did not make the serpent straight and the serpent made himself crooked, but he formed the crooked serpent. But that does not obligate God to favor the serpent or any other creature in the least. There was a dream, and jealousy, and cunning devices, and a famine, a Midianitish merchant, seven years of plenty, seven years of famine, Potiphar and his wicked wife, the butler and the baker, and thousands of more details we could not mention or even know, were just at the right time to carry the children of Israel away into Egyptian bondage to be evil entreated four hundred years, as God had long be-

fore told Abraham they should be. People in Isaiah's time, as many seem to believe to-day, believed that to preach the doctrine of God's purpose in all things charged him with sin or folly, but he told them, Isaiah xlv. 6, 7, "That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me: I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things," and proves his right to do so, that we may not mistake the meaning. Shall the clay say to him that fashioned it, What makest thou? or his work, Thou hast no hands? as it is often asserted to-day, his arm is too short, we must help him. Evil spirits are at his command, and help fulfill his purposes. The evil spirit from the Lord was repeatedly upon Saul, (1 Samuel xvi. 14,) and the Lord put a lying spirit in Ahab's prophets to deceive them. (1 Kings xxii. 22; 2 Chron. xviii. 21.) I believe and trust in God, because he works all things after the counsel of his own will, and none can hinder. To illustrate: If we should see a man dig a pit and place a lot of venomous reptiles in it, and then place his children one after another in such danger, we certainly would say at once that he has no love, no justice, or even reason, but might we not judge indiscreetly? If he knows and is sure he has and can apply a sure remedy after they have been bitten that will heal the bite, and not only so, they will be forever eternally immune from any evil influences whatsoever, his love and wisdom appear. The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous, but it afterward yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby. All thy works shall praise thee, and thy saints shall bless thee; they shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom and talk of thy power. (Psalms cxlv.) So we glory in tribulation also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, &c. Then his law commands perfection, and there is not a just person on earth that liveth and sinneth not, and if there was one perfect except Christ his name could not be exalted above every other name. But we have such a High Priest, and by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

I did not feel as though I received your letter from a stranger, having heard of you frequently before, and there was no strange or uncertain sound in your letter I had read in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Yes, you may send the letter you mention to the editors of the SIGNS, if you think it would be of any profit, for their judgment as to selecting matter for the paper has always been excellent, I think. But all my efforts fall so far short of ascribing the praise due his holy name that I doubt the propriety of sending them to any one. Perhaps you would prefer sending this one.

Your brother, I hope,

G. O. WALKER.

ROSWELL, Ga., Jan. 25, 1916.

DEAR ELDER KER:—In my weakness I desire to write you and thank you for your kindness in sending me the SIGNS, for there is no paper published I have ever seen that I like as well as the dear old SIGNS, and here I desire to state that your reply to brother Jackson's letter on predestination did me more good than any article I have read lately; that God-honoring doctrine is all that will stand at his appearing. I know brother Jackson, and have heard him preach, and was pleased with his preaching. We have conditional, or time salvation, almost universally preached all over the south, but I am glad the SIGNS has editors who will not shun to declare the whole counsel of God, and will still contend for the doctrine that the SIGNS has maintained since its earliest publication.

A few words about myself. I have been afflicted for a long time with kidney trouble, and for the last five weeks have been confined to the house, and part of the time to the bed, our family physician visiting me. Sometimes I feel that I will smother to death, but thanks be to God, who doeth all things well, I am able to sit up by the fire a while each day. I hope it will not be long before I can get out again in the fresh air, if it is God's will. I hope you will cast the mantle of charity over this imperfect effort I have made at writing, for I am so ignorant and sinful and helpless in my nature that sometimes I almost despair, but I know God's grace is sufficient for all those who are called according to his purpose. Pray for me and mine, and may God bless you in all your work, and may you long live to herald to the saints through the columns of the SIGNS that Jesus is the Son of God and author of eternal salvation, the only name given whereby we must be saved; having all power in heaven above and earth beneath, working all things after the counsel of his own will for the good of them that love him. Go on in the work of the Lord, for you know your labor is not in vain in the Lord. I wish I were able at this time to send you some money on subscription, but will have to confess that on account of my affliction I am not prepared at this time.

I beg to remain yours in love of truth,

G. R. JOHNSON.

ONEONTA, N. Y., June 4, 1916.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I see my subscription has nearly expired, so I am sending one dollar to pay for the next six months. I am very weak, feeble and nervous, and may not be able to hear them read, but want them as long as I live. I have passed my eighty-ninth birthday, and cannot expect to be here much longer. I sometimes seem quite reconciled, but the flesh is weak.

Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling,
Naked, poor and blind am I,
Help me, Savior, or I die.

That expresses my feelings.

But I must stop this, as my poor head will not bear much.

Unworthily, I hope I am your sister in Christ,

LUCINDA B. BREWSTER.

JERSEY SHORE, Pa., June 29, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—My subscription being past due, inclosed find two dollars for renewal of the SIGNS. I enjoy reading the paper very much, and feel that I never want to be without it. I do not hear preaching very often, as it is twenty-two miles to Cammal, where there is regular preaching. I believe the doctrine that is set forth in this paper, not a head belief, but, I hope, a heart experience.

This world has been cold and lifeless to me, but I have met the ups and downs as best I could, and pray for strength to endure this life until He calls me home. I can say from the depth of my heart that I love the Lord, and O "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear." I know that the Lord has been mindful of me all through life in blessings and chastisements, and believe he will be with me to the end, come what may. I feel as the psalmist said, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name."

Do as you think best with this.

ROSE OSTRANDER.

KELLER, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I was about to step into the pulpit the last first Sunday of my meeting at Keller, Texas, July, 1916, the melancholy news of the death of Elder Ker's wife came to me as a great shock. However, such is the uncertainty of life. This is a heavy stroke to our dear brother, therefore the writer and the Old Baptist Church at Keller keenly sympathize with Elder Ker, and would express that sympathy in this sad hour of grief and affliction, and pray that the Lord's mercy and grace be with him to bear him up, strengthen and comfort him in his tribulation and through all the lonely hours of his life, to reconcile him to the will of the Lord our God, until he likewise shall hear the voice of Jesus saying, "Child, your Father calls, come home." We have no words sufficient to express the deep grief we feel for our dear brother. May the Lord's blessings rest upon him to keep and save him in the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Yours to serve in the gospel,

ASA HOWARD.

MARION, Ky., June 9, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you two dollars for the dear old paper for another year. Please excuse me for not sending sooner; I have been away from home is the cause. I am in my eightieth year, and do not expect to stay here much longer. I would like to say a few words here. I know of only four Primitive Baptists in this county. Our membership is in an adjoining county, and it is very seldom that we have any preaching at our church, in fact the association is almost destitute of preachers. Our association will meet at New Hope, Hopkins Co., Ky., on Friday before the third Sunday in August, and we would be glad to have some visiting preachers visit us there.

Do as you think best with this, but do not crowd out better matter.

Yours in hope of a better life,

M. W. TERRY.

NOTICE.

WE expect preaching in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, the fifth Sunday in this month (July 30th), at the usual hours. L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass.

PRICE OF BIBLES ADVANCED.

WE are sorry to announce that hereafter the price of our Premium Bibles will be $2.50 instead of $2.25, as formerly. This advance is made necessary because the dealers have been compelled to raise their price to us, as everything used in printing and bookbinding has been raised in price.

For those who wish to secure a Bible as a premium, it will be necessary to send us four new subscribers at $2.00 each.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1916.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

LUKE III. 17.

"WHOSE fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable."

Brother William Mellott, of Hopewell, Pa., laments his isolation from the meetings of the Old School Baptists, as there is no church of our faith and order very near him, and he gets to hear preaching but very seldom indeed. In his letter to us he requests us to write on the above text, and we feel a desire to comply with it, for if the SIGNS has any mission at all to fulfill, we feel it must be to these lone sheep scattered over the country who are exiled from their church privileges, and who rarely, if ever, enjoy the preached gospel. Concerning the above passage of Scripture, brother Mellott says in his letter: "It has been on my mind for a long time, and I have thought several times of trying to write on it myself, but I am such a poor writer and poor speller and feel so poor in spiritual knowledge that I could not make the attempt. Thirty or thirty-five years ago I went to an Arminian Bible class, and they had this subject under consideration, and explained the chaff as representing the unregenerate. I contended in this case that the chaff represented the Adamic body, or old or outer man, and the wheat represented the inner or new man, created after God in true righteousness and holiness, as it is through much tribulation we enter the kingdom, and in the world we shall have tribulation, and only in him, peace. Tribulation means to thresh out or separate this chaff from the wheat. This chaff, it seems to me, is something belonging to the wheat, it is the hull of the wheat, and therefore must be threshed out. We do not thresh wheat to injure it, but to clean it, or separate it, from the chaff (or flesh), for except a man deny himself and take up his cross, he cannot be Jesus' disciple." We have thought best to quote this much from our brother's letter in order to give our readers his viewpoint of the matter before proceeding to give our own views upon it. Such views as we have we are not indebted to any man for, and endeavor to present simply that which is our own mind's exercise upon the subject. There is something peculiarly attractive about the ministry of John the Baptist, and it arises from the fact that he was the "voice of one crying in the wilderness." He was not the One crying, but the "voice" of One. It was the Lord that cried in that wilderness, but the Baptist was the "voice" of that One, the Lord. He was God's mouthpiece, and the words that he spoke were "thus saith the Lord." John the Baptist was not a reincarnation of the prophet Elijah, he was not Elijah come to earth again, but the same Spirit that dwelt in Elijah of old now dwelt in the Baptist, so much so that his ministry and the message he brought bore a striking similarity to the ministry of Elijah, for which reason he is called Elijah or Elias in Matt. xi. 13, 14: "For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is

Elias, which was for to come." Again, in Malachi iv. 5: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." Both of the above Scriptures might seem on the face of them to signify that there was to be a reincarnation of the very personality and individuality of Elijah in the person of John the Baptist, but that this is not what was meant is sure from Luke i. 17: "He [the Baptist] shall go before him [Jesus] in the spirit and power of Elias." Here it is shown in what manner John was to be Elijah: in spirit and power. Now, if you will take the trouble to turn back to the Old Testament history of Elijah, and compare it with the ministry of the Baptist, we think spiritual readers cannot fail to notice the marked resemblance between the ministry and message of the two men, that indeed the same spirit and the same power did dwell in them both. John came preaching "in the wilderness of Judea," says Matthew. Not so much "wilderness," in the sense that Judea was a barren country, for we doubt if that be literally true from what is said of the land of Judea in other Scriptures, but, "wilderness" religiously and spiritually. For the four hundred years from Malachi to the birth of Jesus and the ensuing ministry of the Baptist, there was no "open vision," no prophet in all Israel, so far as we know, but instead there was a famine of hearing the words of the Lord. Israel was apostate, sinking lower and ever lower in moral, political and religious corruption. Creeds, sects and divisions flourished apace, and Israel was rent with jealousies and bickerings of every sort. Was not this, then, a "wilderness" indeed into which John came preaching, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand"? He was not afraid to preach the word straightforwardly, he did not use inuendoes nor evasions, but called things by their right names, making no compromise with error or the hidden evils of darkness and unbelief. He stigmatized certain ones as "vipers," because he saw in them no fruit of a divinely wrought repentance. When some mused in their hearts and thought to call him the Messiah long expected, he immediately disabused them of that idea, in saying, "I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." The word never speaks but error is confounded and truth exalted. Every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God, whether spoken by prophets of old or by his Son Jesus Christ, every word is a discriminating, a separate word. When God speaks judgment is always in evidence, even when he speaks in love and in mercy. Something is separated from something else. The coming of Jesus changed nothing, it simply manifested what always was. It put things in their right positions, in the places where they belonged: this in the garner, that in the fire; this on the right side, that on the left, and so on. Our text declares that he (Jesus) will thoroughly purge "his" floor, not the floor of some one else, but only his floor. This threshing-floor in this instance we believe to have been national Israel. Israel was under the old dispensation the elect nation of God, separate and distinct from all other nations. But in this nation there was much that was chaff, and therefore no good. The coming of Jesus into the world and among that people was a time for a winnowing to begin there, and for a work of purging to be accomplished among them. The preaching of Jesus made some mad and

others glad, and this attitude of theirs showed whether they were trees bringing forth good or evil fruit; his preaching did not make them either good or bad, but simply made manifest what manner of spirit they were of, whether they were under the devil's sway or being swayed by that wind, God's Holy Spirit, that bloweth where it listeth. All through the three years and a half of Jesus' public ministry he was threshing them: the Israelites. His own sheep he called by their names and they followed him; he brought them into his fold, gathered them into his garner. Those who hated him and despitefully used him he left where they were: in their godless state, without hope and without God in the world, under the wrath of God, under the power of the law, in the unquenchable fire. We understand the unquenchable fire here to mean, not a literal fire, but the eternal judgments of God, which are never revoked nor amended, hence are unquenchable. Under these eternal judgments of God against sin, in this fire which cannot be put out, were all those who had not faith to believe in Jesus, and who did not therefore rejoice at his coming, which only maddened instead of gladdened them. Some of these who at that time detested him and his truth, and who were thus in the fire, might afterwards, by the grace of God, have their positions changed, and they thus be on the side of truth and righteousness. In that case, the fire of God's wrath against sin would not be put out, but they should be through Jesus' salvation brands plucked from the burning. This winnowing or purging of the threshing-floor of national Israel culminated in the year seventy, at which time Jerusalem was destroyed by the Gentile power of imperial Rome and the Jews dispersed among the Gentiles, whither they remain unto this day as chaff thrown into the fire. But before that dispersion came, some upwards of thirty years before, the day of Pentecost had fully come, the church of Jesus Christ in its visible gospel organization had been set up as described in the Acts, and the wheat (those who gladly received the word having been ordained unto eternal life) had been gathered into this garner of the gospel kingdom. Now, such is our view of the primary meaning of the threshing or winnowing as spoken of by John in our text. The "fan," or *ptuon*, as it is in the Greek original manuscript, literally means "winnowing-shovel," and this "fan," or winnower, is the word of God, sharper than any two-edged sword, alive and full of power, which is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit. This living word is the "fan" with which he winnowed them. This "fan" was in his hand, subject to his power, entirely in his control, just as are the winds that he holds in his fists and which he directs to blow whither he will. However, it would not be doing violence to the primary meaning of the text to say that there is an experimental side to it, a viewpoint that touches in a living way every subject of God's grace everywhere. Every quickened sinner is a duplex being, he has two lives: the life of Adam and the life of Christ. From this arises a conflict, a warfare that knows no discharge so long as we are in this earthly tabernacle. The flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. During the old dispensation the expectation of Israel was that the Messiah would one day come to them and exalt them literally and visibly among the nations of the earth. They looked for this Messiah to come in great pomp and splendor, such

magnificence as would be visible and tangible to them. They expected him to come sitting on a great white throne, in the clouds of heaven, robed in royal purple, accompanied by myriads of angels. The prophets had used such highly wrought figurative language in foretelling his coming that the Jews took it literally, since they had not at all any spiritual conception of what it all meant. All this belief on their part was no more than so much chaff, it was wholly imaginary and illusive. But even the disciples of Jesus who followed him and who loved him for the very truth's sake because he alone had the words of eternal life, even they had much of this chaff wrapped about them, from which they needed to be threshed. They, too, looked for a literal kingdom, visible and tangible, to be established by this Jesus whom they loved. They had no conception of why he should die, and were discouraged and disappointed when he did die. Not until he arose from the dead and ascended to the Father and sent them the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, did the scales fall from their eyes and they see clearly. Not until then was the chaff purged away, and Peter and the rest able to interpret the Old Testament correctly. Thus, they were begotten "again," this time to a "lively hope," by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Now, as never before, they knew what Jesus had meant when he had said to them, The kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation; Know ye not that the kingdom of heaven is within you? and what he meant when he told Pilate, My kingdom is not of this world. This is where arises the benefit of clear, fearless, God-fearing, gospel preaching. The gospel never gave life to any sinner, nor ever will, the Spirit alone quickens, but the gospel does take off the graveclothes, it looses the believer and lets him go. Around every child of God when he first comes to a knowledge of God and godliness, and more or less all through his subsequent life here in the flesh, there cluster many traditional notions and ideas borrowed from the Egyptians, of which he is prone to make a golden calf to which to bow the knees. From these fleshly idolatries, which have no scriptural sanction whatever, he needs to be fanned, or winnowed, for the everlasting disapproval (fire) of God is upon these gods of ours. Through this purging the believer comes to stand upon sure ground, and to be established more and more in the solid truth. The church of God in its visible organization has been plagued with this chaff ever since Christ's day, and we suppose will always be until Christ appears for our ultimate deliverance. The Corinthians were worried with contention regarding baptism which threatened to break them into sects following this man or that, also with reference to the Lord's supper, and all this chaff had to be fanned out. The Galatians, some of them, had that chaffy idea that though our salvation begins in and by the Spirit, we must do something somehow to carry it on. This had to be purged out. Arminius many years later preached his chaffy free-willism, and this had to be fanned out of the church. Coming down within the recollection of some now living, the chaff of Sunday-schools, of Missionaries, of Theological Seminaries, all had to be fanned out, and it was done in the stormy years around 1832. While the church of God is perfect, it is only perfect in Christ, it never is perfect in the flesh. There never has been on this earth such a thing as a perfect church in the flesh. We are all struggling toward an unrealizable ideal, only

so far as it is attained in and by the spiritual apprehension of faith. Never from chaff will any of us be wholly free until we are wholly spiritual, and that will never be on this side of eternity.

L.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN.

BROTHER BEEBE:—If not troubling you too much, please give your views on Matthew xii. 32.

Yours in brotherly love,

JOHN K. JOHNSON.

Such views as we have on the text proposed we have given in former volumes of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and we have no new light upon the subject; still, as many of our present readers have not access to our former volumes, we will reassert what we have in substance written before. The thirty-first verse should be considered in connection with the thirty-second; they read thus: "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall he forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall shall not be fogiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Recognizing the Son of man as one in the Godhead, according to 1 John v. 7: "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one," we know of but one sense in which a sin or blasphemy can be against the Son of man, and not be equally against the Father and the Holy Ghost, or how sins and blasphemy can be against the Holy Ghost and not against the Father, and the Son, or Word. But while "these three are one" in the eternal Godhead, it should be remembered that the Son, or Word, as the Son of man, sustains a relative and official position which is never in the Scriptures applied to the Father or the Holy Ghost. As the Son of man, Christ sustains a mediatorial relation to and identity with his people, in which, as their head and surety, all their sins, including all manner of sins and all manner of blasphemy committed by them, is laid on him, for the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of all his people, and he has borne them all in his own body on the tree; he has put them away by the sacrifice of himself, for he was delivered for their offences, and raised from the dead for their justification. He, having suffered the just for the unjust, is now risen and exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins; as it is written, "There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." Therefore all Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. Repentance and remission of sins are, in the gospel, preached in his name. As the Son of man was held to law and justice for all the sins of his people, he has borne the penalty in his own person, and having made full and perfect satisfaction to law and justice for all the sins of all his members, they shall never be remembered against them. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."—Rom. viii. 33, 34. Some learned and popular commentators have attempted to classify the sins of men, and to find some kind of sin more

heinous than any other sins, and so bad that they can never be forgiven, and some have taxed their ingenuity to explain what the unpardonable sin is. It is said by some, It is a sin committed with light in the head and malice in the heart, &c., and some of God's dear quickened children have been dreadfully alarmed from fear that they may have unconsciously committed that sin which can never be forgiven. But where is the child of God who has been brought to see and feel the exceeding sinfulness of his nature who does not stand self-convicted of sinning with malice in his heart and light in his head? Was Saul of Tarsus free from malice in his heart when breathing slaughter to the saints? Or were there other sinners of a still deeper dye?

But let us examine the words of our text. The sins which shall be forgiven unto men, and the sins which shall not be forgiven, are described by our Lord as being precisely the same. "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men." Are there any other manner or kind than all manner? "But the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." The speaking of a word against the Son of man shall be forgiven, but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven. The Son of man is not the surety of any but his own members, all the sins they have ever committed were against him as their responsible surety, and the full expiation for them was exacted at his hand, and the sins of his people which he bore included all manner of sin and blasphemy, from speaking a word to the terrible sin of blasphemy. But all the sins which men commit, for which Christ as Surety is not responsible, from the speaking of a single word against the Holy Ghost to the sin of blasphemy, are absolutely unpardonable, not because the sins are varied in kind or enormity, but because there can be no remission of sins only through Christ. If our sins, however small or great, were not against Christ, and charged to or laid on him, then there is no hope for forgiveness or salvation, for there is salvation in no other name. If our sins are not righteously charged to and canceled by Christ, then they are against the Holy Ghost, or against God, as a Spirit, for God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. A spirit without a material or tangible body is called a ghost, and when applied to God as a Spirit it is distinguished from all other manifestations of his eternal power and Godhead, he is contemplated only as a holy, eternal Spirit, everywhere present, beholding all things, the evil and the good.

What we have written we give as our view of the subject; of course we hold none of our brethren responsible for our views. If we are wrong, we desire to be corrected, but we do not think our position will be controverted by our brethren, that all who are in Christ, whose sins were laid on him, and who are redeemed by him, have or shall receive the forgiveness of all their sins, and though they "be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool," and that no sins, however great or small they may be, which were not laid on the Son of man, and expiated by him, shall ever be forgiven in this world or the world to come. Those whose sins are remitted were by nature children of wrath, even as others, and all feel and confess that they are the very chief of sinners; none of them claim that by nature or by practice they are in any wise better than those who perish. As

the sins of Israel were laid on the scapegoat and borne away to a land of forgetfulness, so they hope their sins were borne away forever by the Lamb that was slain, who has redeemed us with his blood, through whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, with whose stripes we are healed.

1 CORINTHIANS VII. 14.

ELDER BEEBE:—Will you please give your views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on 1 Corinthians vii. 14, particularly on the last two clauses?

Yours in hope of eternal life,

WM. CORY.

FRANKFORD, Ohio, April 20, 1874.

The text on which our views are solicited reads thus: "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were you children unclean; but now are they holy." The sanctification of a husband by his wife, and of the wife by her husband, refers to the consecration of each to the other by the law of marriage, in and by which the twain become one flesh, each being legally set apart in this relation of husband or wife, the obligation mutually resting on both husband and wife to forsake all others in the marriage relation, and to cleave to each other until separated by death. The husband may be a Pagan, a Jew or an unbeliever, but his religion or infidelity cannot annul or impair the relationship, it is sacred, and must be kept inviolate; or, the wife may be an unbeliever, or of a different religion from that of her husband, but as the relationship of husband and wife is a fleshly relationship, it can no more be affected by their religious faith than the relation of parent and child, or of brother and sister can be affected by what they may believe or practice religiously.

This view of the perpetuity of the marriage obligation is confirmed by the context: "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband. But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife." Also in verse thirty-nine: "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord," or only according to the law of the Lord. This shows the sacredness and perpetuity of the relation. The husband and wife may live apart from each other by mutual consent for a season, or as long as they live, if they can live more happily apart, which is undoubtedly sometimes the case, but neither the consent of the parties nor any divorcement can give either the right to marry to another party while the other is living. So much for the sacredness of the marriage covenant, by which each is sanctified, or legally set apart to the other. Read also Romans vii. 1–3: "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man."

"Else were your children unclean; but now are they holy." If children are born of adultery, then are they unclean, illegitimate or bastards. The sacredness of the marriage consecration affects the legitimacy of the children. The unclean-

ness of the children does not relate to any distinction between even bastards and children, as fallen sinners against God, or the depravity of their fleshly nature, but it relates to their being born out of wedlock, and therefore not legally known as children or heirs. "But now are they holy." Holiness here simply means lawful, legitimate, perfect in relationship, as being born in wedlock. In their earthly nature, and as sinners against God, or as transgressors of the law of God, they are as unholy as all others of their race. Things under the law were ceremonially holy when legally sanctified or set apart to a consecrated use, and things are legally holy when strictly in conformity to law, and in this case it is very clear that the apostle aplies the word "holy" as meaning lawful, and perfect in the relation of children, and in contrast with what they would be if their parents were not sanctified by the consecration of a lawful marriage.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 15, 1874.

[THE foregoing editorials, written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, are republished at the request of brother A. L. Holden, of Durham, N. C.—ED.]

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE.

WILL those to whom we have sent statements of their accounts try to respond, even if they can pay only part of their indebtedness? We at present need all due us, and although a little matter to each person, when there are many in arrears it means much inconvenience to us, as we have large bills to pay.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by brother J. H. Wilson.)

The Bowdoinham, Maine, Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Old School Baptist Church in South Gardiner, Maine, September 10th, 11th and 12th, 1915, to the churches composing the same sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In presenting you with this our annual Circular Letter of our one hundred and thirty-first associational meeting, there is no other subject that presents itself to our minds at this time of more importance than that of a strict adherence to the teaching of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and his apostles, who received the word from his sacred lips, and were endued with power from on high after his ascension to heaven. The church of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ we believe is founded and built upon that spiritual Rock, which is divine revelation to the soul by the Holy Spirit. In Matthew xvi. 17, we find it is a revelation of God the Father to Peter that Jesus is the Christ, and not the teaching of flesh and blood. In Mark ix. Jesus said to his disciples, "Verily, I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power. And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them. And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow. * * * And there appeared unto them Elias, with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus. * * * And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son; hear him." Dear brethren, we are not preach-

ing to you a sermon on the sovereignty of God, the election of his saints to glory, or his righteousness in so doing, the predestination of things, past, present and to come, the laying on of hands in setting apart to the ministry of the gospel, the washing of the saints' feet, of the breaking of bread in communion or of the resurrection of the dead, all of which are Bible truths. It is God that commands, it is ours by his grace to obey. Dear brethren, we do not write these things because ye do not know them, but because ye do know them to be the word of God. Love and fellowship, prayer and tribulation are all attached to the christian armor, and the shield of faith dispels the fiery darts of the enemy. In the light of this subject we see the form of those departed: one was translated, the other died and God buried him. We see also the recognition of the departed saints, though thousands of years may intervene. The burdened and sin-sick soul hears the Son say, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." When sorrow swells the heart, and all is sadness before us, the Son says, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." The church may hear him in the dispensations of his divine providence.

Our thinly scattered members are growing less and less year by year, and we can only ask, Is the candlestick to be removed out of his place? We hear him in the hour of dissolution: "Because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets: or even the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." Hear him.

Z. M. BEAL, Moderator.

GEO. R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, convened with the First Baptist Church of Hopewell, Mercer Co., N. J., May 31st and June 1st and 2nd, 1916, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting and love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the tender mercy and kind providence of the God of heaven and earth, we have met as an association. Your messengers have come to us bearing the message of that one truth, the gospel of peace, which is proclaimed through the operation of the Spirit of the Son of God. Their expressions have been in a meek and quiet spirit, which we feel is the exercise of the worship of our God, and having this manifestation our hearts yearn for the time to come when they will meet with us in another session of our association. Let brotherly love continue. How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, one mind, one accord.

Our next association is appointed to be held with the Kingwood Church, Hunterdon Co., N. J., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, before the first Sunday in June, 1917, when we hope to again meet and receive all your ministers and messengers.

CHAS. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.

D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

The churches composing the Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Old School Baptist Church at South Gardiner, Maine, Sept. 10th, 11th and 12th, 1915, to the churches and associations with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Your messengers and Minutes have come to us with assurance of your love and fellowship. The preaching has all been of certain sound, ascribing salvation unto no other name than that of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We think all enjoyed that peace and joy which passeth all understanding.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Bowdoinham Church, Bowdoinham, Maine, beginning Friday before the second Monday in September, 1916, when we hope to again be favored with the attendance of your messengers and letters of correspondence.

Z. M. BEAL, Moderator.
GEO. R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the New Vernon Church, New Vernon, N. Y., June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1916, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond sends love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—This session of our association has been one of joy and agreement. The presence of the great Shepherd of the sheep has been felt, and we are glad to continue correspondence with you by receiving your messengers and Minutes.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Middletown and Wallkill Church, Middletown, N. Y., to begin Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1917, when and where we will hope to greet you again. Until then farewell.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
R. LESTER DODSON, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at his home, Leesburg, Va., June 23rd, 1916, Grover C. Gray and Mrs. Corrie Ballard Gray, both of Loudoun County, Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Lena B. Ker, wife of Elder H. C. Ker, the writer, departed this life June 22nd, 1916, at 4:30 p. m., at Thrall Hospital, Middletown, N. Y., following an operation for what was supposed to be gall stones, but was discovered to be septic poisoning, the cause unknown. She was a woman of fine health all her life until this trouble made itself manifest eleven days before her death. Monday afternoon, June 12th, she was taken with a severe headache followed by high fever. Thinking it only a slight bilious attack she took the usual remedies, but Tuesday she had a chill and fever again. Wednesday she had no chill, and feeling much better went down to my daughter's, in East Orange, N. J., as she had planned the week before. While there Thursday and Friday she had chills and fever. The doctor thought it grippe, though said there might be some little septic condition. Saturday morning she came home, and that night had more fever than at any time. Our family physician pronounced it malaria, and treated her accordingly. Tuesday morning, June 20th, she developed a severe pain in her right side. The doctor was hastily called and administered morphine hypodermically, which quieted her for four hours, and the remainder of the day she suffered but little pain, but excessive soreness of all the inner organs. No chill, no fever that day, and we thought her much better, but at bedtime the pain returned, and it was necessary to give a quarter of a grain of morphine, which quieted her until 3:30 Wednesday morning, when the pain returned with such violent force that medicine failed to relieve her. Early that morning we had a consultation of doctors, and they decided an operation for gall stones was absolutely necessary and should be done at once. She was taken to the hospital at 12:30 and operated on at 2:40. When the incision was made it was discovered that septic poisoning had taken complete possession of the liver and other organs, and that there was no help for her. One small stone was found in the gall duct and was removed. She came out of the ether and was conscious until a few minutes of the end. Her suffering was intense, though never a complaint nor murmuring word escaped her lips. At 4:30 o'clock Thursday afternoon, exactly three months almost to the minute from the time we were married she breathed her last. Of all the Lord's dealing with me this is the most mysterious. I cannot say, "Thy will be done." She came into my life and home as a bright ray of sunshine, then departed,

leaving darkness and gloom beyond description. She was not a member of the church of God visible, but was a believer and had just found her people and loved them dearly. She was in life and character among the loveliest and best of women, always cheerful, a happy disposition, never cross, never perplexed, never provoked about anything during my acquaintance with her. She attended with me a two days meeting in May with the Frying Pan Church of Virginia, of which Elder H. H. Lefferts is the pastor. Also we attended the Baltimore Association in May, held with the Black Rock Church, then our own association the first part of June. At these meetings she met many of our people, who were much drawn to her and she to them. No one who met her could help but love her for her lovely self. She is survived by one sister, Mrs. Sarah Gordon, of Marshallton, Del., one brother, of Oregon, and several nephews and nieces, together with myself and family, to mourn our irreparable loss.

Elder John McConnell, of New York city, conducted the funeral services from our home Sunday, June 25th, and spoke comfortingly. The interment took place in the family plot in the New Vernon Cemetery.

I have received many letters of love and sympathy, and as I cannot reply to each separately, I here acknowledge them with sincere appreciation, thanking each one for your kind words.

H. C. KER.

Mrs. Emma Halstead departed this life May 23rd, 1916, at her home in Unionville, Orange Co., N. Y., after an illness of four hours of heart trouble. She had not been in the best of health for several years, but such a sudden calling away was wholly unexpected, and hence a great shock to her children, other relatives and many friends. She was born May 17th, 1839, a daughter of William and Sally Murray Sayer, and was 77 years of age. May 13th, 1863, she was married to John R. Halstead, to which union were born six children, four of whom preceded here in death: Frank T., Spencer, Minnie and Harry. John Floyd Halstead, an attorney-at-law, of Goshen, N. Y., and Miss Mary Halstead, at home, survive her. The husband, Mr. Halstead, died many years ago. Sister Halstead was baptized by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe more than forty years ago, in the fellowship of the Middletown Church, and was ever a faithful and devoted member. She often said she preferred Jerusalem above her chief joy. She lived fourteen miles away from the church, but was seldom absent until the last year or so, when her health began to fail. She loved the doctrine of grace, and her faith in God was strong, believing all his ways righteous and all his dealing just, and that every dispensation of providence is sent in love. In disposition she was gentleness itself, kindness and forbearance marked all her life. She was all the word "mother" means, and as a neighbor none could be more kind. She is missed by the church and her many friends, but by the son and daughter more than language is adequate to express.

Her funeral, held at the home, was one of the largest ever attended in her neighborhood, which, together with the floral offerings, marked the high respect and esteem in which she was held. The writer spoke with the ability the Lord gave, using as a text, "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people, henceforth and forever." These words were thought to have been repeated by her a few moments before she passed away, and were very expressive of her faith in God and in his Son Jesus Christ. The interment was in the family plot in the Unionville Cemetery.

May the Lord reconcile us all to his will and keep us through faith to the end. K.

Mrs. Emma Young, our beloved sister in Christ Jesus, departed this life July 1st, 1916, at her home at North Fork, Loudoun Co., Va., after two months illness of paralysis. She was born Oct. 17th, 1863, and was the daughter of Francis and Nancy (Craig) Gulick. Both her parents have been dead several years, but one brother, J. F. Gulick, of Aldie, Va., and one sister, Mrs. Sallie Powell, of Hamilton, Va., survive our sister Young. She was married first to H. Clay Jenkins, and to them were born three children, two of which died in infancy, leaving one son, Roy Jenkins, to grow to manhood, and who now is left to realize and mourn the loss of a thoroughly devoted and indulgent mother. Some years after the death, in 1899, of her first husband, brother Jenkins, sister Jenkins was married to Fenton Young, who survives her. Besides these immediate relatives there are left many others more or less nearly related, and many neighbors and friends, who held our sister in high esteem and who now deeply feel their loss. Sister Young experienced a hope in the mercy of God and in the salvation of Jesus Christ many years ago, and was baptized by the late Elder J. N. Badger into the membership of the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church. By the grace of God she was enabled to honor her profession with a consistent and God-fearing walk and conversation. She dearly loved to meet with her brethren and to hear the gospel preached. Nothing ever kept her from her meetings when it was at all possible for her to get there. Also she was always ready and willing to contribute her share to the expenses of the church, and her house was always open to the entertainment of those she loved. She had the gift of hospitality, and exercised it well. We shall greatly miss her, not only in the meetings at Mt. Zion, but also in our Hughesville meetings, where she regularly attended as well as at her home church.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist meetinghouse, using

the words: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." Interment in the Mt. Zion burying-ground. We commend all the sorrowing ones to the disposition of the Judge of all the earth, who doeth all things well. L.

Mrs. Harriet E. Miers was born Sept. 25th, 1835, and departed this life Oct. 14th, 1915, having passed a little over fourscore years upon this earth. Sister Miers was baptized in the fellowship of Schoharie Old School Baptist Church Feb. 20th, 1859, by Elder Cole, and lived a life of faith upon the Son of God to the end. She was feeble in health for some time before her death, and suffered much, but had a good hope that the Savior knew her case and would deliver her unto his heavenly kingdom. Elder Clark conducted the funeral services from her daughter's (Mrs. Frank Vroman) at Schoharie village. She leaves three sons: George, Jacob and Burton, and two daughters: Mrs. Frank Vroman and Mrs. Daniel Moore, to mourn their loss. Burial at Schoharie village, N. Y. J. M. FENTON.

Christina Gillis, beloved wife of Deacon Duncan Gillis, departed this life June 31st, at her home in Muirkirk, Ontario. An obituary will apppear later.

ALSO,

THE death of **Mrs. Nancy Campbell,** of 163 Webster St., Tiffin, Ohio, May 31st, 1916, has cast a gloom over the community in which she had lived nearly all her life, which was 69 years. Mrs. Campbell was born in Kent County, Ontario, March 8th, 1847, her maiden name being Campbell. Her husband, Archie Campbell, died some years ago, leaving her a widow with three children, two daughters and one son, all still living. Mrs. Campbell's home was near Duart, Ontario, until about two years ago, when she left Duart to live with her son and daughter at Tiffin, Ohio, at which place her death occurred after suffering a stroke. Mrs. Campbell while residing in the bounds of the church was a faithful attendant at the meetings, and loved the doctrine held by the Old School Baptists. She cherished a hope for a number of years, but a feeling of unworthiness kept her from coming to the church and asking for a home among the people she loved for the truth's sake. Mrs. Campbell was a woman held in high esteem, and we sorrow because we shall see her face no more, but we hope our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was held from the home of her daughter, Mrs. Maggie Ford, Duart, Ontario, and was largely attended, showing the high esteem in which Mrs. Campbell was held in the community in which she had lived. The writer tried to speak such words of comfort to the mourning friends as the Lord was pleased to give, using as a text 2 Timothy iv. 6–8. The twenty-third Psalm was sung by request, as that Psalm was very sweet to her in her dying moments. Burial was in the Duart cemetery.

May the Lord comfort the mourning children, is our prayer. J. B. SLAUSON.

Mrs. Louisa Stewart, my dear sister, departed this life April 21st, 1916, aged 87 years, 11 months and 6 days. For more than sixty years she had been a reader of your paper, and while able to read, the Bible and the SIGNS were her daily companions. Distance prevented her from uniting with the church of her choice, the Primitive Baptist, and she joined the Missionary Baptists and was baptized by Mr. Morgan Tilton. Funeral services were conducted at her home by her friend, Stephen White, a Methodist minister, which denomination she joined in her early girlhood soon after her conversion. Five children are left to mourn the loss of a devoted mother. Her remains were laid to rest in the family burying-ground to await the resurrection morn.

ELISABETH STEWART PRICKETT.

POETRY.

"ONE DAY."

SOME day, some day, or you, or I alone,
Must look upon the scenes we two have known,
Must tread the selfsame paths we two have trod,
And cry in vain to one who is with God,
To lean down from the silent realms and say,
"I love you," in the old familiar way.

Some day, and each day, beauteous though it be,
Brings closer that dread hour for you or me.
Fleetfooted Joy, who hurries time along,
Is yet a secret foe who does us wrong—
Speeding us gaily, though he well doth know
Of yonder pathway where but one may go.

O, heart of mine, through all these perfect days,
Whether of white Decembers or green Mays,
There runs a dark thought like a creeping snake,
Or like a black thread, which by some mistake
Life has strung the pearls of happy years;
A thought which borders all my joy with tears.

Ay, one will go. To go is sweet, I wis—
Yet God must needs invent some special bliss
To make his Paradise seem very dear
To one who goes and leaves the other here.
To sever souls so bound by love and time,
For any one but God would be a crime.

Yet Death will entertain his own, I think;
To one who stays, life gives the gall to drink;
To one who stays, or be it you or me,
There waits the Garden of Gethsemane.
O dark, inevitable and awful day,
When one of us must go and one must stay!

The above piece of poetry was found in my wife's pocket-book after her death.

H. C. KER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

H. G. Garrett, Ky., $3.00; A. F. Jones, Ga., $2.50.

APPOINTMENTS.

PLEASE publish the following appointments and oblige:

Kelly Corners, N. Y., Saturday, July 15th, 8 p. m.; Vega, N. Y., Sunday, 16th, 11 a. m.; Monday, 17th, home of Miss Meads, 10:30 a. m.; evening of same day, Mary Slauson's, Halcottville, N. Y., 8 p. m.; Union Grove, N. Y., Tuesday, 18th, 10:30 a. m.; evening, 8 p. m., Mr. Morris Faulkner's.

D. M. VAIL.

MEETINGS.

THE Siloam Association of Oregon and Washington will meet with Mt. Zion Church, six miles northwest of Forest Grove, Oregon, commencing Friday 10 a. m. before the second Sunday in August, 1916. Trains will be met at Forest Grove Thursday evening and Friday morning. Lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

THE one hundred and fifth session of the Red River Association will meet with the church at Friendship, Sumner Co., Tenn., to begin Saturday before the second Sunday in August, 1916. Brethren will be met with conveyance at Hendersonville, Tenn., on Gallatin Interurban, and at Fountain Head, on the L. & N. R. R., near Gallatin, Tenn., Friday and Saturday.

THE Old School Predestinarian Baptists known as the New Hope Association will convene with Little Flock Church, three miles southeast of Edgewood, on the Texas Pacific Railroad, in Van Zandt Co., Texas, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1916. All Old School Predestinarian Baptists in fellowship with us, especially ministering brethren, are invited. All trains will be met on Thursday before with conveyance.

S. M. DICKENS.

THERE will be a two days meeting at Cammal, Pa., the fourth Sunday in August and Saturday preceding. A hearty invitation is given to all who desire to come. D. M. VAIL.

THE ninety-ninth session of the West Tennessee Association will meet with Yellow Creek Church, Dickson Co., Tenn., two miles from Woodhaven, on the Clarksville Mineral R. R. Brethren will be met at Woodhaven with conveyance. Session to begin Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1916. A. L. STANSELL.

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 84. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1916. NO. 15.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GOLCONDA, Ill., February, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—Since there seems to be such a variety of opinions among the people, even among the Old Baptists, in regard to who or what constitutes the children of God, their origin, the church, the final destiny of man, and things pertaining, I have been thinking of penning some of my views upon these subjects, and if I could only transfer my thoughts to paper as I think them and see them I would have no objection to submitting some of my convictions to writing, that others, whether they differ from me or not, might examine them and be their own judges as to whether or not I am sustained in my belief by the Bible. Should I cross the views of any, I wish it to be distinctly understood that I am not doing so to elicit controversy, or to wound the feelings of any. I am quite sure that I do not become offended at any brother for differing with me, then why should he become offended at me for differing with him, since I do not differ any farther from him than he differs from me? While I try to be plain and pointed, I desire that my earnestness be not mistaken for rudeness. Be sure I hold sacred the feelings of my brethren, and I am constrained to believe them to be honest in their convictions, even if I believe they are wrong. Deeming the foregoing remarks sufficient, I will in much weakness at once proceed.

We learn from the Bible that in the beginning God created man in His own image, or likeness; that God formed man of the dust of the ground; that he breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life, and that man became a living soul. God put this living soul in the garden of Eden, where he had planted different kinds of trees, one of which was the tree of life, which tree stood in the midst of the garden, and also the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God put Adam into this garden to dress and keep it. Adam, though made subject to vanity, yet at this time knew nothing of good and evil, hence it seems that there was nothing to incline or draw him in any direction. While alone in the garden God told him that he might eat freely of every tree in the garden, except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, of which tree he was commanded, "Thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

The foregoing command was followed by God saying, "It is not good that the man should be alone," so he took a rib from Adam, made it a woman, and presented her to Adam, who said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." From this man and woman have sprung, by ordinary generation, the people, men and women who have lived and do now live in this material world. Next we learn that the subtle serpent made his attack upon the woman, who, being made subject to vanity, listened to his flattery and cunning and partook of the forbidden fruit; she could not help it, and gave to Adam, and he ate of it. In eating the fruit Adam did that which God said he should not do, the penalty of which was death. I am not prepared to say the death he died the day he ate thereof was the mortal death, a ceasing to be in this world, but death in sin. When God began to reckon with Adam he said, "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life: thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field: in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Since Adam violated the command, and thereby became in a state of death in sin, those born in this world are born likewise in a state of death in sin, and yet alive to the love of it, delighting in it, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another, all pulling in one and the same direction—no warfare. Of this people (men and women) who have sprung from Adam, their federal head, is the church of Jesus Christ made up, and though they were made sinners by one man's (Adam's) disobedience, they are made righteous by one man's (Christ's) obedience. Hear what Isaiah says of Jesus: "For the transgression of my people was he stricken," and, "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: * * * and with his stripes we are healed." And hear Paul say, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." When Jesus made his advent into this world it was to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. Hear Matthew say, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins;" and when he suffered, bled and died upon the cross he atoned for every sin that his people (his church) ever did or ever will commit. I am talking about men and women, not some far-fetched "intangible entities." Before Jesus left this world to go to the Father he set up his church, a local organization, here on earth, with the number of the members of the church chosen in him before the foundation of the world, which local body was very aptly termed a "sheepfold," and was instituted, among other things, for the purpose of sheltering and the protection of the sheep. Jesus said to them, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom." These persons to whom he had appointed a kingdom Jesus called "little children," and let them know that he was soon to leave them for a time, but that

he would not leave them comfortless, for the Father would send the Comforter, which should abide with them. He says to them, Let not your heart be troubled, and tells them also that, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." From the foregoing statement of Jesus I cannot see how his church could have ascended to heaven in him when he went to heaven. The Bible does not read, to me, that his church was in him before the world was; in him when he suffered, in him when he was in the tomb, in him when he was resurrected, in him when he went to heaven. The Bible does, however, read, to me, that the church of Christ is composed of men and women, that she had her standing in Adam, and that her origin was from the ground, and yet God in his infinite wisdom and power could place every member in the body as it pleased him; Christ could have been slain for her sins from the foundation of the world, and their names written in the Lamb's book of life, when as yet there was none of them. As has already been noted, the members constituting the church of Christ, on account of Adam's disobedience became sinners, became in a state of death in trespasses and sins, taking delight in sin and folly, walking according to the course of this world, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, knowing nothing of their heirship and relation to Christ; but God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved them, even when they were in their dead state, quickened, and continues to quicken and raise them up from this dead state, as pleases him, all along down the line of time, and he will continue to quicken them until they all shall know him, from the least of them to the greatest, nor is there any danger of a single one of them being overlooked or left behind. Now when it pleases God to quicken one or more of his children from the dead state they are in and make them fit subjects for the local kingdom or church set up by Christ when he was here on earth, he writes his law in their hearts, opens their blind eyes, unstops their deaf ears, in short, regenerates them. I mean men and women. This frees them from the law of sin and death, and enables them to see the kingdom of God, and prepares them to show forth the praises of him who calls them out of darkness into his marvelous light. When this is done for the poor child of God it is his duty to go to the church. I desire to state just here that when one is "born again," that moment trouble begins. In the "new birth" the child does not lose, or get rid of, his Adamic nature, but receives a principle in direct opposition to his Adamic nature. These two opposite natures he now has cause a warfare, a pulling at both ends of the string, as it were. This state of things causes him to do that he would not, and hinders him from doing that he would, and makes him fear that he is deceived, and hence not fit to join the church. Probably for this reason many of God's doubting, trembling children hide away and try to keep secret the dealings of the Lord with them. Again, although God's children, flesh and bone men and women, have died a death in trespasses and sins, yet they have to die another death: they must return to dust, from whence they came. They must again come from the dust before they can dwell in "my Father's house," in which "are many man-

sions," "an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." While it is true that their life is hid with Christ in God (a safe place surely), his children are here in this sinful, sorrowful world, and in order to find that life they must go through death. Not merely go to death's door, where they, according to some, divide, the children of God going direct to heaven, while their bodies go the dust route. The children must return to dust, where sweet will be their rest until the great resurrection day, when the angel shall stand upon the land and upon the sea and swear by him that liveth forever that time shall be no longer; then will all that are in the graves hear his voice and come forth; then will God's children wake up as from a refreshing sleep, leaving their Adamic nature behind, meet Jesus, see him as he is and be like him; then will they hear that welcome call, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;" then shall they appear with him in glory, and live with him throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity, at God's right hand, in that house in which are many mansions, that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

If what I have written be true, then instead of Adamic men and women being the houses in which the children of God reside, the Adamic men and women themselves are the children of God, and the Bible discloses the fact that they are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones, hence there is a flesh and bone relationship existing between Jesus and his people which will never cease to exist, either in time or eternity. Job said, "Though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." What is true of Job is true of any child of God, is true of all children of God.

I will now make a summary or review of what I have been writing about, as if I were present from first to last. I hear God say in the beginning, Let us make man in our image, or likeness. I see God form man of the dust of the ground. I see God put the man he made in the garden. I hear God give him a law. I see God take a rib from this living soul and make it a woman and present her to him. I hear Adam say, This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. I see the serpent attack the woman and beguile her. I see her partake of the forbidden fruit, and give to her husband, and he did eat. I see God's command thus violated, consequently I see sin enter the world, and hence I see death pass upon Adam and his posterity. I see them walking according to the course of this world, delighting in sin and folly. I see Jesus nailed upon the cross, bearing the sins of his people in his own body. I see Jesus set up his church while here on earth. I see his people made free from the law of sin and death by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus all along down the line of time, as it pleases him. I see his people (men and women) go to the church and tell what they hope the Lord has done for them. I see them baptized, both men and women. I see them assemble in church; I see them eat and drink at the Lord's table in memory of the death of their departed Lord, and washing one another's feet. I hear them telling their troubles, trials, sorrows, afflictions, doubts, fears and hopes while on their march to the grave. I see them consigned to the tomb and moulder back to dust. I hear the trump sound; I see the graves open, and see the children of

God wake up as from a refreshing sleep. I see them clothed in linen clean and white. I see them with his likeness meet Jesus. I hear Jesus say, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. I see them enter that heavenly house in which are many mansions, and I add that I hear them, that innumerable company which no man can number, singing, "For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

Judging from their writings, there are numbers of precious brethren who believe the mortal death has no power over the saints, or children of God, yet for myself I believe the Bible discloses the fact that they must die. If the saints are not subject to the mortal death, I am at a loss to know what the psalmist meant when he said, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." If the children of God do not die the mortal death, I am at a loss to know what the voice from heaven meant when it said to John to write, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." From this Scripture it seems to me that the dead who die in the Lord are blessed in that they may rest from their labors, and in that their works do follow them. If the saints are not subject to the mortal death, I am at a loss to know what Paul meant when he said, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." From the foregoing quotations of Scripture I gather the thoughts and comfort that the saints, or children of God, die the mortal death; that they die in the Lord, and are blessed in that they rest from their labors; that they, when dead, are asleep in Jesus; that those asleep in Jesus are those who are dead in Christ; that at the coming of the Lord those asleep in Jesus (the dead in Christ) shall rise first; that they which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air.

Cherishing a faint hope that I, poor, unworthy, sinful I, shall be included in that number who "shall rise first," "they that are Christ's at his coming," I close this already too lengthy article.

THOMAS J. CARR.

[WE have thought for some time that a statement should be made through the SIGNS that the editors and publishers are not in agreement with every idea published, but that the views of brethren are for the consideration of the readers, and that each writer is responsible for whatever appears over his signature, yet we feel it necessary at times to call the attention of the writer to some things. Our brother Carr says he cannot see how the church of Christ could ascend to heaven in him, and that the Bible does

not read to him that the church was in him before the world was; in him when he suffered, in him when he was in the tomb, in him when he was resurrected, in him when he went to heaven. To deny these things would do away with "eternal vital unity," which is Bible doctrine. If the Father chose his people in Christ before the foundation of the world, they therefore being one with and in him, when were or could they be out of him without severing the union? Brother Carr also tells us that Christ could have been slain for her sins from the foundation of the world, and their names written in the Lamb's book of life, when as yet there was none of them. In the one hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm the statement is positive that all his members were written in his book when as yet there was none of them (manifestly, in the flesh). This seems to suggest at least that every member had his or her life and spiritual standing in the Head. Brother Carr says, The church of God is composed of men and women, and that her origin was from the ground. We think from the Scriptures named by us above that her origin was in Christ before the "ground" was, and is only manifested in the earth of the sons and daughters of Adam, after the flesh. Redemption of the sheep, or people, was because of prior existence and ownership. Brother Carr, we think, misunderstands the brethren he refers to regarding the "mortal death" of the saints. No man can deny the death of all the human family; every one dies in his or her own order, or time, but that this death has power over the saints in the sense of eternal condemnation, or everlasting separation from God, he himself, we feel sure, would deny. The body or "dust returns to the earth as it was, but the spirit returns to God who gave it." We are glad brother Carr calls attention to the Scripture declaration that the saints "sleep in Jesus." If they were out of him they could not sleep in him. Hence whether the saints die or live, whether asleep or awake, they are the Lord's, and with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob "all live unto him." We want to emphasize the truth that the saints sleep in Jesus, and not in the ground. We hope brother Carr will feel charitably toward us for following his article with the above remarks. We have not written in the way of unkind criticism, but merely to call his attention to the few things mentioned for consideration. We also ask to be excused for the delay in publishing his article.—K.]

SHOCK, Ky., July 4, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I see in the present number of the SIGNS, for July 1st, that brother Joseph Ford, of David City, Nebr., has written a wonderfully good article, bearing date March 2nd, 1916, in which he holds a different view in some respects to my view set forth in my letter written at the request of brother R. T. Hackney, bearing date Jan. 26th, 1916, and published in the SIGNS for March 1st. I have read his letter two or three times with interest, and am thoroughly satisfied that the Lord blessed the dear brother to write in love and tenderness, and I do not say that his views are wrong, for I am too weak and shortsighted to presume such a thing; in fact, it seems to me that if each of us understood ourselves and each other there is but little, if any, material difference in the principle. I am heartily glad that brother Ford wrote in regard to my article under consideration, for his love and faithfulness are plainly manifest in his writing, therefore I will suggest a few thoughts relative to my

views as set forth in my article for the consideration of brother Ford and all who may chance to read them. I shall not aim to affirm anything much, if any, for I am too weak for such things, but simply suggest a few things as they have and may occur to my mind, and will first say that I cannot see any difference in the holy city and the heavenly Jerusalem. (Heb. xii. 22.) "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven," &c. I have not yet been made able to see that John would have us believe that he saw this holy city coming down from the spirit world, the immortalized state, although my view may be wrong; however, I have thought all along that he had reference to her coming down through all the past ages, through types and shadows, down to the glorious gospel liberty, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, wherein dwelleth righteousness; no legalism in this new and heavenly Jerusalem, the holy city, there was no place found for them. (Rev. xx. 11.) It seems to be a matter of fact that the holy city (verse nineteen) was the one that the part was taken out of, or to be taken out of, and we cannot think for a moment that even one iota ever will or can be taken away from any of the Lord's people, as regards their standing in Christ. I do not think that we are to understand by the gospel church in her time state, the new Jerusalem, the holy city, that the Lord's people while blessed to dwell in this peaceable habitation and quiet resting-place, that they are sinless, or that they are holy in the strictest sense, but this holy city, the glorious gospel kingdom, is holy in distinction from the old legal city with its carnal ordinances, for in this holy city dwelleth righteousness; and not only so, but I am fully persuaded in my mind that the church of or at Philadelphia was no more a gospel church than was any or all of the other six, yet I may be mistaken on this point, the Lord knows. It seems clear to my mind that the book of Revelation is a summary of the entire Bible, and teaches us in a concise way the struggles, conflicts and sore trials the people of God have had to contend with through all ages of the world, and their great deliverance on all occasions by the mighty hand of God, and here at the twentieth chapter shows the closing out of the legal dispensation, when the books were opened and another book was opened, &c., when the old legal heaven departed as a scroll, when it is rolled together, being fulfilled, (Rev. vi. 14,) for the first heaven (legal heaven) passed away, and the new heaven, the gospel heaven, the holy city, wherein dwelleth righteousness, has come, whose builder and maker is God, the city which Abraham by faith had been looking for, and was one of the many who died in faith, not having received the promises, but saw them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. (Heb. xi. 10.) Hence at the twenty-first chapter, and on, it seems to be describing the holy city, the new Jerusalem, here in time, clothed with the glorious gospel ordinances, and not her immortalized state beyond time. Furthermore, in speaking of him, or "he," that overcometh, I do not remember the plural being used of any of them, therefore have thought that it was not the individual members who were meant, but the overcoming Jesus, and for the keynote to this view I will refer to what is said with reference to the church in Thyatira: "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him

will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers."—Rev. ii. 26, 27. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."—Rev. xxi. 7.

W. J. MAY.

THY VISITATION.

DEAR EDITORS:—Let it be understood, now and for evermore, that without the riches of God's grace none can speak, write or do anything that will nourish and cherish God's humble poor, the body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the church of the living God, neither can they without the riches of God's grace receive anything to their comfort and edification, to strengthen and upbuild them on their most holy faith, therefore God must visit them in his love, mercy and pity, and so manifest himself to them as a tender Father. Now David says, Psalms lxv. 9, "Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it; thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it." The earth here in this text I think means God's afflicted and poor people, or the church, while in this earthly tabernacle. Paul says, "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." So we believe that it is God's poor people in this text who need the riches of his grace in their poor and afflicted state, instead of David meaning this old earth, or dirt, on which we walk. David says in the first verse of this chapter, "Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion." So the word "thou" refers to God. He says, "Thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: thou preparest them corn." David says, again, "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High." Isaiah says, "A man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place." "He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places like a river."—Psalms cv. 41. Israel while in the wilderness was thirsty, and God in his love and pity through grace visited them, and gave them water in a dry place, signifying spiritually that when his humble poor get thirsty he will visit them and give them a good cool drink, for he says, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." "Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary. Thy congregation hath dwelt therein: thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor." Then as God's people are afflicted, poor and weary, they certainly have not much strength to get out and work for their bread and their drink, so as the Lord has prepared of his goodness for the poor, and has said, I will never leave them nor forsake them, he certainly then in love and mercy visits them with this great river that will make glad the city of God, which is love, joy, peace, goodness, mercy, faith, longsuffering and such like that is good for them. We read in verse ten, "Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly; thou settlest the furrows thereof; thou makest it soft with showers." The ridges are the high places that the Lord said to Jacob he would make him to ride, that he might eat the increase of the field; the furrows are the valley that the bride, the Lamb's wife, exclaimed, and said, I am the rose of Sharon and the lily of the

valleys. A valley is a rich, fertile place. This valley is the Lord Jesus Christ. Here is all the rich soil, for in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. His bride says, I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine; he feedeth among the lilies. So the little children are the lilies in the valley. In this rich valley (the Lord Jesus Christ) we are made to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. "But he [God] giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." Wherefore, receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, that we may serve God with reverence and with godly fear. It takes the grace of God to prepare one in humility to serve him in a right and acceptable way; it takes that to get him down in the very dust of humility, and when he gets down there he is in the rich valley, or furrow, where the showers of God's grace fall and soften the furrows (man's heart). "For God maketh my heart soft, and the Almighty troubleth me." When a man's heart is made soft he is in trouble, or when he is in trouble his heart is made soft, so says poor, afflicted Job. When the Lord put the plague on Pharaoh his heart was softened and he was in trouble, but when the Lord removed the plague then his heart was hardened. Jonah said, By reason of mine affliction cried I unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I and he heard my voice. So, little child of grace, it is when you are afflicted and in the belly of hell, or in the depth of distress, that you are in the valley, or furrow, and there is where the streams of this great river run, which make glad the children of God. This river (Christ) has healing properties in it. "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." Jesus said that he was sent to heal the broken-hearted, and he is the great Physician; he furnishes the healing balm, and he applies it, and it never fails to heal or cure. The Lord, though high and lifted up, bends to bind up the broken heart, to revive the spirit of the humble and contrite one, so when this is done for you, little child, you are made to grow as little calves of the stall, and then you become as little ridges in the field of grace, and here the little ridges are watered out of the pure river of water of life, with a new song, even praise unto the Lord, saying, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Thou hast forgiven us our sins according to the riches of thy grace. All the above is made known to the humble child of grace at the visitation of God. So press forward toward the mark (godly walk and godly conversation) for the prize (peace, joy and happiness in the Lord) of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, in all lowliness, meekness, longsuffering, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, laying aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race set before us, ever looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; then when God calls, and says, Child, come home, ye can say with Paul, I have fought a good fight, I

have kept the faith, I have finished my course, and there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me; and not unto me only, but unto all that love his appearing, then and there to sing and shout the everlasting praises of Jehovah.

Now, dear editors, if you do not think this is worthy of space in your good paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, just cast it into the waste-basket as unprofitable matter, for it is like the writer, imperfect.

Love to all the saints.

S. M. DICKENS.

GREENVILLE, Texas.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., July 5, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you a letter written me by Elder C. M. Hood, of Nashville, Tenn., which you may publish in the SIGNS if you think best.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., June 20, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—It has been a long time since we had any correspondence, and perhaps you will be surprised to get a letter from me, but I have you in mind a great deal of my time, and remember you with much pleasure, and often find comfort from your writings in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I do not remember of a single article that I have ever read of your production but what I have been greatly comforted and edified. It seems strange to me for one so high and so much esteemed by all lovers of the truth to have such an experience that will reach as low down into the pit as I feel myself to be, but you write so that I feel to understand from an experimental point of view. I know that you are honest in what you write, and that you are expressing the sentiments of your own heart, and what you say comes so near telling just how I see and how I humbly hope I feel about things concerning the salvation of poor, lost and ruined sinners of Adam's fallen race, that I am made to feel that surely we have the same Teacher. God has long since informed his people that they shall all be taught of him, and that they will need no man to teach them anything. Now this is one thing that I am sure of, that God is, has been, and will fulfill, until every single one of his family will fully know that he is the Lord. I say that I think I can see this plainly manifested in the words of God's humble poor as they are made able to speak of these things to one another, either in person or in print. See how far away from where I live is that dear man of God, Elder Keene, and I feel as if I had known him personally, and had hold of his hand, and looked into his face, and heard his voice, and yet I have never seen him, and probably never shall here in the flesh. Why is all this near and dear closeness? It is because we are so close by an experience of grace, which has wrought so powerfully in our souls that it has knit us together with bands that bind our souls together as one man in the Lord, hence we are one, one in understanding of God's work in the heart of his people by his Spirit and grace, showing us the wonderful salvation that is found in the atoning blood of the holy Son of God. I cannot mention all the able writers; it is not my mind to do that, I only mention a few who represent all the balance, even those whose names I have never heard. Just think about what an excellent gift is seen, felt and realized by God's children who know and love the truth of God as it is in Christ in our dear young brother Lefferts. It certainly is wonderful; and he has no idea

of how well pleased the readers of the SIGNS are, and how much they talk about him to one another. He is too wise, and and I feel that he is too deeply possessed with superabounding grace to be exalted over what I or any one else might say concerning his gift. He knows, he feels, he realizes where it all comes from, and I am sure that he is continually praising God through Jesus Christ for his wonderful works wrought in his soul, to understand and pour out of his heart the rich food that feeds and edifies the poor little children of the most high God. O what a wonderful occupation it is, to be blest with the care of the flock of God, and to feed them with bread that cometh down from heaven. There is no position any higher in this life, one could not be more highly favored of God than to be a feeder of his sheep. Then to meditate on the wonderful ability that God gives according as it pleases him, and at times causes the one so wonderfully blest to know and feel that he of himself is nothing. Take a view of Paul; how did he consider himself? That eminent apostle, so well qualified to go to the Gentiles and bear the name of the God of Israel in power and in demonstration of the Spirit, felt to be the least of all; yea, less than the least of all. Is not that the way yet, in every one that is manifested among us having the gifts that fit and qualify them to feed God's humble poor? It has been my observation all the while. I have watched these things closely in my life, and I have always found that where trouble and confusion arose among the churches and a preacher was the cause of it, that he had failed to manifest in himself that wonderful gift, "The least of all." Now, I know that it is an easy matter just to say those words, but saying and proving it by our actions in life among the flock of God is another thing. We might teach a parrot to say (if we could teach him at all) that he was the least of all, so far as the words are concerned, but what would it amount to? Nothing at all, but just a noise. I feel that I have great confidence in the experience of Elders Keene, Lefferts, yourself and Elder Ker, and a host of others who are correspondents of the SIGNS, and many who are not, that they have not so learned Christ Jesus the Lord. They have learned him in his humility, in his meekness, and they have had the love of Jesus shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto them, and having this love, they love his people, and have no other desire than to feed and edify, and they know that if they are made able to do this, that God himself was the moving cause that brought it all about, from start to finish. Now, in further reference to Elder Ker, I want him to know that there are a number of God's little children down in these parts who are delighted with the manner in which he so ably answered the Georgia brother who did not fully understand the predestination of all things, but had been frightened by the idea that it makes God the author of sin, and he did not want to believe that God could sin, or cause any one else to sin, and so he was honest about it, and spoke of the matter as a God-fearing man, and Elder Ker took the matter up with him in such a way that he gained his brother instead of turning him further away. Now, I tell you, I like that. It is more Godlike to my poor mind, and it shows that it is God's will for all his people to come to a knowledge of the truth. Go on, faithful ones, by the grace of God, until you reach the end, and my prayer is, that God by his free Spirit will speed your way, and keep you from all harm. I want to ex-

press my love and regard for all the writers and readers of the old SIGNS, and also the excellent publishers of so nice a sheet. May the Lord continue to bless and guide us in the way of all truth, and keep us humble, and at each other's feet, in the spirit of meekness and love, is the prayer of a poor sinner whose hope is the Lord. Farewell in the Lord.

Yours in many trials,

C. M. HOOD.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 11, 1916.

DEAR ELDER VAIL:—I received your very welcome letter on the 7th inst., and was certainly greatly surprised to think that one who is so much my superior in the knowledge of spiritual things could and would humble himself to write to a poor, ignorant and miserable creature like me, not worthy of such a high honor. I have not command of language to express my feelings of gratitude toward you for such kindness to me; I am also unable to tell you how much good it did me. It is not enough to say that it was as crumbs of comfort to a poor, weary, hungry soul, but it was a whole "loaf." I can hardly conceive what put it into your heart to feed me as you have, unless it be the mighty God of heaven and earth; he has placed you upon the earth to feed his sheep and lambs, and it makes me tremble with fear to think, Is it possible that I am one of them? I have my doubts that such is the case, and can only hope that I am. I could never get beyond that little hope. It is a word of only four letters, yet such a precious word, I am unable to place a valuation upon it; it has been to me in many times past as the anchor to the ship: the ship does not hold the anchor, but the anchor holds the ship. With me at times this hope gets very small, yet it still remains with me. I do not hold it, I have no power to, but it holds me; if it were not so, I should give up in despair. This proves that we are in God's omnipotent hand, and I feel thankful that matters are arranged as they are. I am also fully aware that I am not as thankful as I should be, which causes me to mourn sorrowfully. I heard a very dear friend say once that he mourned because he did not mourn. This may seem like a strange expression, yet I feel to say that it is too true.

I did not intend to write you a long letter, but just merely acknowledge the receipt, and to thank you for your kind letter, but it appears as if I have no control of my thoughts, they have led me, I cannot tell where, just rambled here and there, and I think I had better close, as I do not wish to weary your patience, as I fear I shall if I continue; it appears too much like a waste of time. I hope, however, you will pardon me for the intrusion, but I could not help it, I felt under obligations to write to you, to give you a short description of my feelings, which I have endeavored to do in a very poor way, and I feel it is like all my actions through life, a complete failure; my whole life appears to be made up of failures. I have done many things that I should not have done, and left undone many that I should have done. I sometimes wonder why I am permitted to remain upon God's footstool for over threescore and ten years, so unprofitable a servant, if a servant at all, but God has a purpose in it, as in everything he does. It is not always for us to see the wisdom of his ways; he will reveal to us at the proper time, if it is his will so to do, so I feel to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done, not mine. It is all with him, and I do not wish to change it. I know full well I am powerless to do so if I desired

to. Thanks be to him that I have no desire to. What a miserable failure it would be if man had the arrangement of these affairs. In fact, it does appear to me as if men are endeavoring continually to fix up plans by which men can be saved, and they think they are assisting the almighty God in his work. They claim that God will save them if they will only let him, and it will be all their own fault if they do not get to heaven; but I do not despise, but pity them. I think they should be pitied, for many of them are sincere in their work, and think they are right in what they are doing; they know nothing different. Some of them, I have no doubt, are really God's elect, and have not had their eyes opened; they have not yet been born again, and when that time arrives they will see the error of their ways, and will turn therefrom; not, however, until their eyes are opened, and this God will do in his own good time.

I feel as if I am dwelling upon a subject which is too deep for me, and one which you know more about and understand far better than I, so I will leave it. I hope you will spread the mantle of charity over all my imperfections.

I remain your warm, although unworthy friend,

C. S. FETTER.

HERNDON, Va., Feb. 20, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—I read your letter in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in which you said that you would first answer brother Oliver's request by saying, We have two sharp threshing instruments in the editors, Elders Ker and Lefferts, threshing out and separating the wheat from the chaff, truth from error, by the Spirit and power of God Almighty, and it cannot be done any other way. The point I want to get at is this: Does dear brother Vail want to excuse himself in this line of threshing out and separating the wheat from the chaff? No, not so, for he gives me the key to the desire. I want to know that the threshing comes not of man, but by the power of God. Paul says in Romans i. 16, For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, &c. Dear brother, (if you can allow me to call you dear brother, but I feel too sinful to address one of God's dear servants in these endearing words,) I awoke this morning, after having a very restless night, with the words of the poet on my mind:

"As on the cross the Savior hung,
And wept, and bled, and died,
He poured salvation on a wretch
That languished at his side."

I was comforted with the thought that Jesus, dear Jesus, could look upon me, a poor, worthless worm of the dust. Jesus said unto the thief on the cross, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise. Brother Vail, what is paradise? Can you tell me anything about it? Can we tell anything about the resurrection of the saints of God from the dead? No. John says, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he [Christ] shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." I sometimes think that I know nothing in regard to spiritual things, yet at times I do believe that I love the brethren, and we are told that we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. O wonder of wonders! Do I fully realize this in my poor heart, that I know that I have passed from death unto life, because I love the brethren? Yes, I feel to claim this, for I do believe that I love dear brother Vail with all my heart. He (brother Vail)

says all the writers of the SIGNS are doing nicely, and I agree with him, and would say to them all, Write on, dear brethren and sisters. I would gladly write if I could, but have no gift in that direction. My whole head is sick, my whole heart is faint, and from the sole of my foot even to my head I find no soundness in me. Yes, my whole being is corrupt, and I am made to cry out, in the language of David, When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?

Brother Vail, I must stop right here, for I cannot write anything to interest you, but will say, Keep on writing for the SIGNS, for I love to see your name in the dear old paper. I would be glad to write for it if I could, but I am now at the end of the earth, crying to God in my inmost soul, "God be merciful to me a sinner." I am no letter-writer, and I never expect to be, but please accept this as a token of my love for you. I believe this is the first letter I have ever written you, and if you should say, I hope it is the last, I should not be surprised. I do wish that I could write and tell God's people some of his dealings with me in the many years of my pilgrimage here on earth, but I cannot. I feel the most of my time to be a blank, and nothing but a blank, a worm, and no man.

Yours in fond fellowship,

J. F. OLIVER.

JUSTUS, Pa.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—I received your letter, and although it was unexpected I was very glad to get it, for it told of one more poor sinner who feels ugly and vile. That is a great comfort to me, and I have read it over a great many times. I was very glad you said the Lord comforted you, for it all comes from him, and he put it in your mind to write to me to comfort me; so everything comes from his hand. I do not feel like writing, I am so dark in my mind, but just thought I would let you know I was glad to get your letter.

I dreamed last night that father and I were riding along a very dangerous road, and he told me he was afraid we would not reach our journey's end alive, and said I had better prepare for death. I thought I told him that if my name was written in the Lamb's book of life I was just as prepared for death as I ever would be, and if my name was not written there I was as ready as I ever would be; and just so it is. I believe in a finished salvation, nothing for us to do but to praise the Lord for his finished work, but so little of my time do I feel that I have any part with the Lord's people, yet cannot give them up, cannot stop hoping that I am one of them. I know I deserve to be banished from his presence, and from the company of his followers, but still I desire to linger around where his people dwell, although I often feel that I cannot be one of the little ones.

I was reading brother E. D. Varnes' letter in the SIGNS, and came to where he said, I feel all my time to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and it is because I feel so unrighteous, so sin-polluted. Right there I stopped, and I think then the Lord showed me what it was to hunger and thirst after righteousness; that all the time when I was feeling so vile, longing to be good and do right, hating my own life, wishing I could live a perfect life, that I was hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Then your words came to me: "O how I do desire

to do that which is right," and I could see how the dear people of God did hunger and thirst after righteousness, and the promise is that they shall be filled. I was comforted at that time, for I never knew before that when I wanted to do right I was hungering and thirsting after righteousness. There are many waymarks in my experience that are very comforting when I can see them, but I cannot always find them. I can remember times when I have been in "the belly of hell," also times when I was so near heaven that I cannot describe it. In my early experience I was either up very high or down very low, but for years I have been more on a level, in darkness most of the time, yet not such awful trouble as in my first experience. I wish I could tell you better some things I have passed through, but you know these things are unspeakable; you cannot explain the darkness, neither the light; you cannot tell your sorrow, neither your joy; there is so much in this world to take our minds from the things we love to think upon.

I cannot write more. Write again if you feel like it, for I am always glad to hear from any of those I esteem as the salt of the earth.

HELEN ACKERLY.

[THE foregoing letters were sent to us for publication by Elder D. M. Vail, and we gladly give them space in the SIGNS. —ED.]

BELINGTON, W. Va., March 9, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I inclose a good letter written me by Elder J. W. Linn, which you may think worthy a place in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I hope it will reach you all right. I have some others I may send later.

With love to all, as ever, your afflicted sister,

ELIZABETH PHILLIPS.

FAIRMONT, W. Va., March 14, 1915.

DEAR SISTER PHILLIPS:—I will answer your kind and welcome letter, received yesterday evening. I was glad to hear from you, but not glad to hear of your poor health; I hope you are better by this time. As you say, we ought to be thankful that we are as well as we are. Yes, dear sister, we do not know what hard times are; we think we do at times, but look at the hard times and suffering they are having in England and Germany because of the war; people suffering, starving and dying without help. You speak of Jesus Christ dying on the cross, his side pierced, and nails driven through his feet and through his hands. O what an awful death it was, no mortal tongue can tell. Hear him cry out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? and yet there was no guile found in his mouth, he was the innocent Son of God, and then to think they would treat him so cruelly. O, dear sister, it should cause us to shed tears to think how he had to suffer, and that not for himself, but for poor, helpless sinners. O how vile we are, even in our thoughts, and we are so sinful that when we would do good, evil is present. O to think that Christ loved such sinful creatures as we are, and died for us, and that while we were enemies to him; but we were brought nigh by his death, being reconciled to God by his blood. We were under Satan in the kingdom of darkness, and not able to get out of bondage, as were the children of Israel when under King Pharaoh; they could not get out of that cruel bondage, but God made a way through the deep, when he parted the waters, and let his chosen pass through, then closed up the way again so the king and his host could not go through; as the way was closed up, how could] the children of Israel go back

to Egypt again? So when we are translated out of the kingdom of darkness how can we get back under Satan, or in the kingdom of darkness, which is his kingdom? God brings us out by our being born again. Christ gives unto us eternal life, and we shall never perish; so we cannot perish, no, never. What God does is done forever; he gives eternal life, and does not take it again. We shall not come into condemnation, but are passed from death unto life. John v. 24, 25: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is [is already], when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." They shall live, not die, and it is life eternal into which they come. They can sin, and do sin, but that does not make them children of Satan. O no. We who have children, say, They are my children, and it is so, and if one of them be disobedient whose child is he? does he belong to some one else, because he sins? He is still my child, but there is a difference in him. Well, what is the difference in him? I will tell you the difference. Take this for example: you have an obedient child, and a very disobedient child, yet both are your children, and not one of them some one's else because he has become disobedient. So with God's children, if they depart from him in disobedience he will correct them and bring them back. I want to say, that is the way with us all, we are disobedient children, but still the children of God, and if we have ever had his holy Spirit given to us, we have eternal life. Now, dear sister, this is what Christ Jesus came into the world for: to suffer, the Just for the unjust, and this ought to melt us to tears, for if he had not suffered and died we rebels would have had to pay the penalty by death. How thankful we ought to be to him. The dead represented in John v. are dead in trespasses and in sins. The apostle said of those brethren in Ephesians ii. 1, "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." The time had already passed with those in Ephesians, while in John they were to hear, and live: They that hear shall live. Those in the graves, "marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." So all shall come forth, both good and bad. Dear sister, let us believe what God says, and not what man says, because there shall arise false teachers, and false prophets, and draw disciples after them.

Write again.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

JAMES W. LINN.

ELLISVILLE, Ark., July 4, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—Many times I have been impressed to write a sketch of my experience of the Lord's dealings with me, as I hope, as I have been much comforted by reading the experiences of the dear brethren and sisters throughout the land. In my early life I was a wild boy, and at the age of twenty-four was married, and would sometimes think of my future destiny. I knew that I was a sinner, but was going to seek the Lord and get religion at my own option, when I got to where I could take care of it and be a good man, and I was happy on my way; but after a time I became a full

grown sinner, so sinful, so borne down under its load that I would often weep and mourn. I got so I would steal the Bible and hide from my wife and children, for they annoyed me, and my wife would find me, and say, It seems that I am no company for you any more, and O how that would hurt me. I would tell her that the flies were so bad at the house that they worried me; but she was telling me the truth, for it seemed that everything I had enjoyed was gone, and that I was left in the pit of sin. I went on in this condition for some months. I read the New Testament through, then laid it aside, and said to myself, That testifies of a blessed Savior and his people, but I can have no part with them, for I am carnal, sold under sin, and mine is an outside case, and when I would resolve to go to the silent grove and try to pray it would seem like mockery, and I would feel worse. I was plowing in the field one day, and weeping, and could hardly see the furrows, begging the Lord to have mercy on me, a poor sinner, when it seemed to me that I heard the gospel; it was not man's voice, but was with force and power, and said, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." I was standing in wonder and amazement, wiping my face, for it was wet with tears, when my wife blew the horn for dinner, and the thought came to me, What shall I do now? she will know I have been weeping. I resolved to wash my face and comb my hair and appear not to mourn before her, and so I gathered up all the courage I could and went in and took my seat at the table and tried to eat, but I could not, and pushed back my plate. My wife looked at me, and said, Willie, I want you to stop working so hard, and to take some medicine; you are sick now, and as pale as a corpse. At that time I was getting up and out, and as I turned my back to her I said, O I guess I will be all right, and with the same breath begged the Lord for his grace to bear me up. I went back to plowing, and that burden of sin and condemnation was gone, and it seemed to me that everything was praising the God who created the heavens, the earth, the sea and all things, and it was so bright with me that it seemed the cattle feeding were praising the Lord, and the birds seemed to be singing praises to him, and that the trees were clapping for joy. I said, O my soul, all that is within me, praise the Lord. I was happy, for I thought I would not commit any more sin, but it was not long before something said to me, You are deceived in the whole thing, God could not remain just and save a sinner as vile as you, so I was in the valley. But the Lord came again and took me up, and I was impressed to go home to my friends and tell them what great things the Lord had done for me, whereof I was glad, so I went to the Old School Baptists, and was received, and baptized in full fellowship.

Brethren, I have written for publication, as I have many times been impressed, but felt unfit to do so, and if I can but give one of the Lord's little ones a cup of cold water in his name it will be enough for me, so do as you think best with this letter.

Your little brother in hope,

W. A. MAY.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., June 7, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have not been a subscriber to the SIGNS very long, and therefore have not had opportunity to get acquainted with the editorial staff, but I find your contribution to the issue of January 1st, 1916, as regard the very elect, by request of dear brother Elder G. E. Mayfield, of Elgin, Oregon. I do not feel able to teach others, but hope that I have been compelled to meditate on the blessed truths set forth in holy writ. I sometimes think that I am a total failure; in fact, few seasons of peace I enjoy. You may think I am out of place in replying to this article, but I beg you to bear with my understanding of this Scripture. In the twenty-third verse Jesus said, "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not." In the next verse Jesus stands as a prophet, and said, "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they would deceive the very elect." There have been many prophets since the beginning, but none have ever been more true than Jesus, and he plainly said that if it were possible false prophets and false christs would deceive the very elect. I conclude that in the sense Jesus spoke there is a special elect, a very elect, that cannot be deceived. According to Scripture, God has a people among every nation, kindred, tongue and people, and these people are certainly his elect, and are precious in his holy sight. But we find them but babes, and teaching and believing that they merit salvation by their own works. It has been my pleasure to know some of these dear children of God who lived a long natural life, and could not get out from under the hand of deceit while they lived; that is, if I am not deceived in what is the truth. The enemies that Jesus is warning the flesh against here are lo heres and lo theres, and said that they should arise. I conclude that Jesus was a true prophet, and that his sayings will all come true that have not come to pass yet, and that it is impossible but that false prophets shall arise. Now, to my mind, to say that there is no very special elect, is to say that the elect cannot be deceived, or the very elect cannot be deceived, for Jesus meant that some cannot be deceived. There are many saying, Lo here and there, and Jesus' prophecy is being fulfilled now, but there are many of his elect who are not believing the lo heres and theres, and in this sense they are the very elect. These very elect are no more the children of God than those who are being deceived, but they certainly do not believe false teachers nor worship false christs. I do not think that any of the elect are immune from deception in some way, but in the sense that they follow false teachers there are some who are in no sense deceived. I have seen some of the Lord's dear people, or men and women at least, who showed every mark of Christ except that they would openly deny the sovereign power of God. No one could make me believe that they were not his elect, but I thought they were deceived by the doctrines of lo heres and theres, and I am going to say here that it is as much a wonder why he does not reveal himself to all alike as it is why he ever had an elect. We must admit that if Jesus should raise all his children above false teachers and false christs that they would be above their deceptions, and this shows of itself that there is a difference in them, to this end at least. I myself am not worthy to be numbered among his elect, especially that I should not be

deceived, but I do believe with the strongest confidence that I am many times blessed to hear brethren preach, and read the writings of some that the false prophets of this world cannot deceive. Well they know that Jesus cannot be brought out of the deep, nor from the dead again. The only reason that they are not deceived is because they are kept by the power of God through faith. So then it is in his doctrine that some are not deceived, and in the same doctrine that some are deceived. I am not to attempt to say why such is so, but it is, and we are all aware of it.

Hoping you will excuse my long letter, and that the truth may mount over all deceit and false teachers, I beg to remain yours in bonds of much affliction,

A. L. STANSELL.

SILVERTON, Texas, July 6, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I herewith send a check to renew my subscription to the dear old family paper for another year. I tried to get a few subscribers for you, but utterly failed. One brother said he was not able to take it, yet he was able to own a nice Ford car. Another brother said he had no time to read the SIGNS, he had to read the war news. I then asked a sister to take it, and she replied that she had no time to read it, yet I note she has plenty of time to go riding in her new car; I greatly fear she had no inclination to read it. Brethren, tell me, if you know, what has come over the people of God, those who once seemed to be so full of zeal for the cause? Sometimes when I ask that question I get something like this for an answer: O, we are living in a fast age, and must keep pace with the times. Does it seem reasonable that that would be a satisfactory answer to a child of God? We are commanded to follow Jesus. As ye have put on Christ Jesus, so walk ye in him. Can we do it and yet keep pace with the world? Can we afford to neglect the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, neglect visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and numerous other commands, just for the sake of keeping pace with the times? And what is that pace? Is it not a mad rush after style? Perhaps it is all right for the world, but O my soul, when I see my Father's children so swallowed up by the follies and fashions of the day that they have "no time" to read the Bible or the SIGNS, no time to go to their meetings, no time to visit each other and talk about Jesus, no time for anything except greed, well, to say the least of it, it hurts me. Tell me, is it true only of this small portion of his vineyard? If so, I can rejoice to know that only a few are cold, barren, desolate, yea, seemingly dead, dead to everything spiritual. May God in his own good time bring them to life, and cause them to walk in his footsteps, is the sincere desire of my heart.

I wish to notice an expression from brother McConnell in the June 1st number of the SIGNS. He says: "Seriously, I have never felt that any communication of mine could be of profit to its (the SIGNS) readers; that is a settled conviction of my mind." Now I want you to know of a truth, brother McConnell, that I never read a communication from your pen but what I was fed, and that abundantly, too. You are not to be the judge of your writings. You know not how many hungry babes you have fed. Write on, and leave the issue with the Lord. When I was quite a young girl an old father in Israel (whom I had never seen) sent me word to write on for the SIGNS, for my writings were of more comfort to him than any one who wrote. It was the

Lord's will that I should write a word of comfort for the dear old father. Others have told me that they had received comfort from my poor efforts, but they always seem so barren of anything spiritual I dread to send them after writing. I have been so wonderfully (to me) led in a way I knew not for the past year and a half I sometimes feel that I would love to write it out and send it to the SIGNS, then I hesitate lest it would not be interesting or comforting to any one, and might seem unreasonable to some, so I do not write. I will say this much: I do think I have felt the sweet, abiding presence of my Savior more for the last year than ever before in life, for which I praise and bless his holy name. Not long since I heard an "evangelist" preach on the signs of the second coming of Christ, and he claimed that when Christ comes the second time the saints will be caught up into the clouds and there remain with him three and one-half years. During that time Satan will be incarnated in some mighty king, and will make war on the Jews, who will rebuild Jerusalem and go forth to convert the people who remain here on earth. After the time for those things to expire Christ will come bringing his saints with him, Satan and the wicked will be cast into a lake of fire, and there will be everlasting peace for those who know the Lord. Now, will you, brother Ker or Lefferts, or any one who can, tell me in what part of the Bible he read that Christ is to remain in the clouds three and one-half years? I cannot find it, although I have searched diligently. I would love for you to write on the second coming of Christ.

If this meets your approval publish it, if not throw it into the waste-basket.

Your sister in hope,

LYDIA C. RAY.

[THE Scriptures nowhere say that Jesus and the saints shall remain three and one-half years in the clouds, nor do they say many other things said by such men as mentioned by sister Ray. They do say, however, that the saints shall all be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, so shall they ever be with the Lord.—K.]

SMITHSHIRE, Ill., June 18, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—For some time I have been impressed to write about fellowship, and have at last done so under some difficulties, and now that it is done it seems that I have said nothing that every one does not know, and nothing of profit, but I will send it and you may do with it as you please.

I have just read the SIGNS of June 15th with much satisfaction. It is all the preaching I have, but on Easter Sunday, last, it was my privilege to attend a Baptist meeting in Kansas City, Mo., and to visit in the home of Elder Smith Ketchum. The congregation there was the largest I have seen for years, except at the associations. Their practice is to take a simple luncheon with them and serve it from or in the kitchen which is attached to the meeting-house. A good social time is enjoyed by all, then the afternoon service begins. This was something new and admirable I thought, and worthy of mention. A number of ministers live in or near Kansas City, but most of them are getting along in years, and, as in so many places, the prospect for the future does not seem very bright. At present, however, they surely are a favored church, and we know that He in whom they and we trust is able to supply all their needs and ours.

Please do not publish my article unless

you deem it of some value to some little one.

Your unworthy sister in hope,
GRACE VEECH SMITH.

FELLOWSHIP.

FELLOWSHIP with those who love the Lord is one of the sweetest things granted his followers while in this life. By it they know they have passed from death unto life. How wonderful this is. When with their intellects they have tried to know God, when they have searched their hearts for some good thing, and some ground of acceptance in the Beloved, and have failed in both, and have been made to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?" how comforting then is the feeling of love and sympathy for those of like experience when coupled with the promise that by this token they have reason for a hope in Christ. It is unlike any other tie that binds them. In the world they are attracted to those of their own age, and to those who are interested in some work or science or amusement that they love. In the world "birds of a feather flock together," but those who know the fellowship of the suffering of Christ, and have mutual fellowship thereby, are not "birds of a feather," but of the most contrasting plumage, of the most varied attainments, tastes and ages. Among them age makes no difference, old and young feast together in his banqueting-house, and feel that his banner over them is love. Among them there may be Jew and Greek, bond and free, male and female, but these differences count for nothing, and they are all one in Christ Jesus.

One meaning of the word "fellow" is "a mate." Fellowship then, is the state of being mated. In what way are the children of God mated? Evidently in nothing but their hope in Christ. They are to come from every kindred, tribe and nation. That means from everywhere that people live. That means from all denominations, from no denomination and from heathen lands, and I think it means from among people of all shades of morality and immorality. Thanks be to God, this wonderful gift is not confined to "good" people. Howbeit its effect is to ennoble every life into which it comes. How foolish and wicked it is to allow any difference of opinion to mar this fellowship and hurt all, and possibly destroy some weak brethren. Certain doctrines evolved from a study of the Bible are not believed by all. Men of equal candor, intelligence and devotion to the cause of Christ cannot agree about them, the conclusions to which they come are merely the opinions of men, and are not binding, and yet sometimes the church is terribly torn by controversies about them. The Book gives full and clear directions for dealing with offenders. No case not covered by these instructions should cause a breach of fellowship. Sometimes brethren fall out about some worldly affair, and will say they cannot commune together. Christ said to do this in remembrance of him. Do we forget Jesus because our brother has erred? Wrongdoing belongs to, and is of the flesh. Christian fellowship is not with the deeds of the flesh, nor is it with head knowledge of doctrines, but is with the heart's conception of God's loving-kindness manifested toward us through his blessed Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. O that his people would not wrangle about the conclusions of the intellect, that they would be so lost in devotion to his cause as to forget petty personal injuries or slights, and that they could believe that their fellowship with each other touches

only two points; that is, a consciousness of sin, and a hope of redemption from it through Christ.

GRACE VEECH SMITH.

SHARPSBURG, Ky., March 30, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I see that my subscription has again expired, so another year has been numbered with the past. Time carries us on through the busy scenes of the world. It seems but a little while since I was baptized in the fellowship of the Bald Eagle Old School Baptist Church, now just about twenty years ago. I cannot tell just when the change came over me, as many can who date their experience back to early childhood days, but these dear people were near and dear to me, and I could sit and listen to their servants proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ and never tire. We now live far from any church of our denomination, and very seldom hear a sermon of our faith and order. I was a very small boy when my grandfather, an Old School Baptist minister, was holding meetings in the old Bald Eagle meetinghouse, near here, and very large congregations were in attendance, and among visiting ministers who came were Elder Thomas P. Dudley, and many others I cannot mention just now. Those were days I can never forget. Since then our members have gone to other places to live, still I am spared to live near where the old schoolhouse stood. In my father's family there were seven children, six boys and one girl. One brother and our only sister have passed away. Of those who were added to the church, two brothers, myself and our wives. I have always felt that if it were the Lord's will, I would love to spend my remaining days near a church of our order; but the dear Lord does all things well, and I feel we should not murmur or complain, for the God of heaven is too wise to err. We have been taking the dear family paper, the SIGNS, for many years, and hold it in high esteem, and hardly know how we could do without it, for it seems to me it is as good now as in former years. The editors, publishers and correspondents do their share in making up its columns that give to us the good letters from all over the land. I hope both editors may be spared many years to edit our dear family paper, and that the dear brethren may be given the spirit of wisdom from on high to still write on, and hope all those who are in arrears may send on their remittances, for it means much for the welfare of the paper. You will find inclosed a check for five dollars; two for the SIGNS for another year, one for "the poor of the flock" and two dollars from Mrs. Lou Ratliff, my mother, for "the poor of the flock." She is now in her eightieth year, and still loves to read the SIGNS.

Dear brethren, I will close this badly written letter, which, like the writer, is full of mistakes.

With love to you, and all the children of God, your brother, I hope,

T. J. RATLIFF.

CLAY, La., June 17, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have several times in the past tried to write something for the SIGNS, but usually find myself discomposed, barren and without fit substance, and to-day I almost feel myself without proper strength, knowledge and light, although at certain times in the past I have hoped, or perhaps even believed, that I was within God's circle of grace. My understanding of the Bible it seems is small, if I understand any of it, but I suppose it teaches that there is, or has been, a regenerated and an unre-

generated people; then it is a belief that some people of to-day are regenerated, or born of the holy Spirit of God, and if one has been born in God's kingdom that one perhaps would know something of God in reality. But where can I find a clear conscience to say that I know him? And if one does not know him, it seems that that one should not mislead or deceive those who do know him. So a christian may be brought to seriously question his authority to speak of God, or to claim any knowledge of God's holy Spirit. Regeneration, it seems to me, is a broad subject, considering that the Old Baptists belief of it is true. To think that at some certain time, place and way a special or certain individual was to be born in God's kingdom, but if it had been left with puny man to arrange these things perhaps they never would have been arranged. So the Old Baptists have the belief or knowledge that God is righteous and pure, without blame or any shadow of sin, although he (God) saw and knew all things from the beginning, but many of the things of God are not for us to know, I suppose. Dear readers, do you believe that a christian can at just any time after regeneration have the real joy of God with him? It seems to me that man cannot command or enjoy the light of God with all its brilliancy even after regeneration, but it seems that after regeneration one must surely be more careful in what he does or says than he was before. His knowledge of the divine Father is a greater matter to him than he had ever realized before.

I have been reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES quite regularly for three or four years, and it seems that it must be that among its readers and writers is a band of christians, if I know anything about such things, but why have I taken the uninvited privilege to speak to them, to speak of what I have thought to be some of the ways of the christian after regeneration? Cast this into the waste-basket if you find that its proper place is there, and all will be satisfactory with me.

Unworthily,

W. A. CHANDLER.

DURHAM, N. C., Nov. 1, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It has been said that the one talent servant was the type of Judas. There is no evidence that there was any difference in the characters of these servants with the master, because he called them his own, and he conferred upon them favors according to their several abilities, but in the instance of Judas there was a difference in his character and that of the other disciples, because he was a devil, and chosen as such to fulfill the prophecy of Zechariah (twelfth chapter, thirteenth verse). As to these servants, they were his, doubtless, by purchase, as was common, and they were answerable to him alone as to their discharge of duty, and no act of theirs could possibly change the relationship of master and servant. The master was responsible for any breach of the peace by his servant, and was charged with the cost. The master might say to the authorities, This fellow is no good, take him. They answer, No, he is your property, and you only have the right to inflict punishment for his reform; if even under your hand he dies you go free, because he is your servant, or money; therefore it is impossible to change the relationship of master and servant, even to the death at that time inflicted by the master because of wrongdoing. Paul says, "If we sin wilfully," &c. That being written, such does take place, and this servant with the one talent, does he

not sin wilfully when he declares that he is a hard master? Does Paul intimate in the least that this character ultimately loses out? He hides his talent in the earth, or flesh, and consequently loses the fruits of a well ordered life and a godly conversation, but his relation to his master (as master) is in no way changed. A common salvation is spoken of, which I think embraces the Adamic family under the common law, and he rises or falls according as his steps are directed, but the eternal salvation, which had its origin in eternity, cannot be affected by anything which might take place in this atom in eternity, placed in eternity, and called "time;" therefore a servant or child of God can never cease to be such.

Respectfully submitted. Lovingly,

A. L. HOLDEN.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, July 2, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I was thinking lately of the words recorded in Matthew v. 16: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Some time ago these words troubled me, but another passage of Scripture seems to open them up so plainly that I thought I would write of it to you. It is found in John xiii. 34, 35: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Again, in the first epistle of John we read, "He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes." Also, "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." And, "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another." And, "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." There are many more passages bearing like testimony, and while I know I am not bringing forth any new line of thought, yet the application is so far reaching that I felt like speaking of it. We may come together to worship God, and the meeting may not seem just right; the preacher may not have liberty; do we stop and think that he is God's minister, speaking as God gives him utterance? He is God's mouthpiece to and for the church. His condition depends on the church's condition. If love abounds, and there is fellowship one with another, then they walk in light, their light shines before men; the preaching is good, the hearing is good, and praise goes up to God. But if love is lacking anywhere, there is always evidence of it. All the members of the body suffer, the innocent as well as the offending ones, the ministers as well as the hearers. "Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. * * * Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled." Some may question whether there is any evil in love. I feel assured there is not in the gospel meaning of the word. Charity is used with an identical meaning in the Scriptures. Love must be pure, not mixed with covetousness, jealousy or envy. They defile love and render it fruitless. Charity envieth not, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly. Love can never injure another. They who walk in love are harmless as doves.

Dear brother, I trust there may be a word in this for you.

Affectionately, your brother,

GILBERT McCOLL.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1916.

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2 TIMOTHY II. 15.

"STUDY to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

Paul addresses Timothy as "My dearly beloved son," and nothing could more feelingly express the interest of the apostle in the young man Timothy, younger certainly in the ministry, even if not so much younger in years. Paul never married, and therefore had no sons of his own flesh and blood, but he calls Timothy his son, because of the spiritual relationship which the one bears to the other in the gospel. John, likewise, addressed his epistle, "My little children," not meaning that they were literally his children, but that they had been given to hear the word understandingly from his lips, and that he had begotten them by the word of truth, which is the gospel. Likewise had Paul begotten Timothy, Timothy being Paul's fruit in the ministry, therefore he felt fully warranted in addressing him as "My dearly beloved son." In reading this second letter of Paul to Timothy, there are two expressions in it that strike the attention. The first is in the fifteenth verse of the first chapter: "All they which are in Asia be turned away from me." This denotes that even in that early day of the church, and in the time of the apostles themselves, the apostasy, or falling away of the churches, had already set in. Already those who called themselves christians were departing from the faith and order of the gospel church, and were receding into legalist practices and teachings. This falling away, Paul says here, included "all they which are in Asia." This does not mean that the churches in Asia had disbanded, or that they had ceased to call themselves christians, but it means that they had fallen away from the doctrine of grace as revealed in the ministry of the apostle Paul, therefore "turned away from me [Paul]." The other expression that strikes us in reading this letter is to be found in the second chapter, third verse: "A good soldier of Jesus Christ." Nothing more severely tests whether one is a good soldier of Jesus than his standing firm in the midst of unfaithfulness on every hand, his facing unpopularity and scorn, his constant emphasis of the doctrine of grace, even though all men forbear. This is an exceedingly severe trial of one's call to preach, and needs great grace to withstand the ordeal. This grace Paul had so that he stood firm to the end, and this grace he desired for the young preacher, Timothy, that he, too, might be found enduring hardness with the courage which living faith alone can impart. It seems to us that these two expressions to which we have just called attention furnish a key to what was in the mind of the apostle in addressing this letter to Timothy. Being older than Timothy in years, in experience, in grace and in the ministry, and knowing so well the temptations and trials that beset the minister of Jesus, he could but fee an interested anxiety in the welfare and

in the labors of the young Timothy, so that he could not refrain from giving expression to this interest, love and sympathy which he did in these two letters written to Timothy. They are full of good advice and wise counsel, advice and counsel which we believe were blessed to the spiritual uplift and strengthening of the young man in his ministry. These two letters of Paul to Timothy, though neither of them long, cover a great deal of ground, for in them Paul calls attention to the different points of the doctrine of Jesus Christ, to the order of the house, the function of prayer, the qualifications of elders and deacons, and various other matters, all of which the apostle deemed of importance to the "son" Timothy, as well as to all the church. He stirs Timothy up to the remembrance of those things which Timothy already knew and believed, but which need to be kept constantly before the mind of one who professes to be, and is called to be, a preacher of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us take up the text at the beginning of this article in order: "Study." Study what? Is Timothy here commanded to study books, to give himself to an intellectual life, and to the gaining of knowledge which may develop his brain power? Is he even commanded to study the Bible? No, we think none of these things were in the mind of Paul when he told Timothy to study. The word "study" here means "be diligent." In another place, Paul says, Neglect not the gift that is in thee. That which improves a man's gift is the use of that gift. If one is called to preach, then let him preach, and not refuse to do so. Wherever a door is opened in the path of the preacher, wherever and whenever some hungry sheep somewhere calls for preaching, let him preach to that one. In this way he will not neglect his gift. A man's ministry comes first, before everything else; even before one's own family and one's personal interest and temporal welfare must come the work unto which one is called in the vineyard of the Master. Just as sure as external things intervene and interfere with one's ministry, just so sure is the usefulness of that ministry affected. Therefore, if God has given Timothy a gift to preach, let him preach, and let him do it wherever and whenever the way is opened for that gift to be exercised. Let him not pass by the opportunities of to-day, looking for some bigger thing to-morrow. We well remember a letter which brother Chick wrote us just after our ordination, in which he used this expression: "Do with your might what your hands find to do." He meant nothing more and nothing less than the thought we have just presented, that whatever opportunity there is presented in our path to declare the name of Jesus, declare it with such ability as God gives at that moment, and despise not the occasion because only one or two or a few are there to hear it. "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season." This is one way in which Timothy's diligence, or "study," was to be manifested. Again, let him "study" himself. Let him consider his failings and his shortcomings, his dependence upon grace and his need of the tuition of the Spirit. Let him take care how he behaves himself in the house (church) of God. Nothing hurts a man's ministry more than improper and undignified conduct in his goings out and comings in before the people to whom he ministers. This Paul mentions in his first letter to Timothy when he says that these things I write unto thee that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which

is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. Let him "study," that is, consider this matter of personal conduct and behavior. Again, let him take heed to the doctrine. "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." This is the kind of "study" that Paul desires to see Timothy engaged in. The word "save" is here used in the sense of "establish." In taking heed and in holding fast the sound doctrine of grace which is in Christ Jesus, he will both save himself from error and delusion, and also save from error and delusion those that hear him; thus will his ministry confirm the churches in the faith of Jesus and establish them in his glorious truth. Studying many or few books will never make a man a better preacher. We do not mean that a preacher of Jesus need be an ignoramus in the world's affairs, a veritable numskull whenever he mixes with his fellow-men, but we do mean that if any preacher reads or studies any book, even the Bible, with the idea that it will make him a better or more able preacher, that preacher has much to learn as to what it takes to make a preacher. Far be it from us to say that one called to preach should not read the Bible. He should most certainly read it, the Scriptures should be the man of his counsel, and we cannot understand how a man called to preach can help reading the Bible, indeed he will be compelled to read it. The stirrings of his gift within himself will compel him to read it whether he wants to or not. We simply mean that any reading that is done with a view to conscious self-improvement is effort vainly pursued. The Bible should be read for its own self, and for the truth's sake, and not with any ulterior purpose or selfish motive. If we are wrong in this, then our experience is wrong, for we have proved time and time again that whenever we have picked up the Bible with a view to our improvement in ability as a preacher, we have found it locked up and sealed away from our understanding. Now, what is the object of this "study," this diligence on the part of Timothy? It is that he may be manifested as approved unto God. This does not mean that he may show God his approval, but that those to whom he ministers may see in that ministry that Timothy is truly a God-called and God-sent laborer in the vineyard. In other words, it is the one who hears Timothy preach that receives the evidence that Timothy is surely approved of God. Timothy, nor any other one called to preach, is to make any effort to please man, he is not to accommodate himself to the carnal tastes and inclinations of the natural man. The very fact that hundreds and thousands of men calling themselves preachers of the gospel study to please their congregations, to discover what will draw large crowds, and what will especially hold the young people, is in itself an evidence that such men are not called of God to preach, and that their ministry has not his divine approval. The evidence that a man's preaching is approved of God is that he stands by the Scriptures, and proves what he says by the Scriptures, that his testimony accords with the written word, and with the experience of the subjects of grace. Such an one takes the Bible as his only authority in doctrine and order, and his preaching is not dependent upon logic or argument to clinch it, but upon the enforcing power of the Holy Ghost, which carries conviction to the hearts of those that hear, and which spiritually demonstrates its truth

within them. Such a preacher thus evidently approved of God unto the church is a workman who needeth not to be ashamed. He cannot be put to shame or confusion, for his doctrine is irrefutable when substantiated by the word of God. It cannot be gainsaid nor denied, though it may be scoffed at. Very often those who cannot disprove a thing seek refuge in ridiculing and belittling that thing. "Rightly dividing the word of truth" does not mean simply to show the difference between truth and error. It does not mean simply to tell what Arminians believe, and the distinction of that from what Old Baptists believe. Neither does it mean simply to tell one's own personal experiences. The word of truth itself needs to be divided, and not simply to be distinguished from error. One qualification of an elder is aptness to teach. (1 Tim. iii. 2.) This means ability to teach what the Scriptures mean, ability to expound them and to open up their meaning to the spiritual ear. In dividing the word of truth the law is separated from gospel, and each is given its proper place in the plan of salvation; works are distinguished from grace, the flesh from the Spirit. Then, too, doctrine is defined and explained, the experience is outlined and interpreted, exhortation comes in for its share in stirring up the pure minds unto a godly walk and conversation, and so forth. As we write these thoughts as they flash through our mind we wonder whether we have ever really preached a single sermon. The standard or ideal which Paul sets before the young man Timothy is so high and exalted that we exclaim, Lord, who is sufficient for these things? Surely no man ever can of himself preach the gospel, or behave himself seemly in the house of God; he cannot of himself be diligent, or rightly divide the word of truth. Grace must be his sufficiency every hour and every moment of his days and nights, else his ministry cannot profit those who hear. Grace is the armor of the man of God, it alone can stay him successfully against the cunning wiles of the devil. May the good Lord raise up more and more such preachers in this degenerate age to minister unto his humble poor. Old Baptists cannot look unto nor endow a college to turn out their preachers, they must and do wait upon their God in this matter, and he has never disappointed their trust. We may not have all the preachers we want, but we most assuredly shall have all we need, for we are promised that God will supply all our needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Written at the request of sister Nancy Hutchison, of Herndon, Va.

L.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

APPOINTMENTS.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please publish the following appointments:

Saturday evening, August 5th, 8 p. m., Mr. Morris Faulkner's; Sunday, 6th, Union Grove, N. Y., 10:30 a. m.; Saturday evening, August 19th, Kingston, N. Y., 8 p. m., 58 Smith Ave.; Sunday, 20th, Ashokan, 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m.; Sunday, 27th, Vega, 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m. GEORGE RUSTON.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, June 28th, 1916, at the home of the bride, in Salisbury, Md., Lynwood G. Warren and Bertha L. Pollith, both of Salisbury, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Wayne Leslie Nichols, only child of Mr. and Mrs. L. N. Nichols, died June 8th, 1916, aged a little more than 18 months. He was a bright, sweet child of more than average intelligence. He had the whooping cough last winter, which ran into tuberculosis. His parents had been living in Tacoma, Wash., but thinking a change might be beneficial to the child, his mother brought him home to her father's, J. B. Powrie. She is a granddaughter of mine, and only living daughter of Olive Powrie, deceased. She brought her darling little boy to my home, where he died. She having graduated as a trained nurse, did all, with the help of the best of doctors, to stay the hand of death, but alas, his Savior had called, and all the powers of earth could not keep him. It is so hard to give up our little ones, but they are only loaned to us, and when they go in childhood they are spared many trials of this world of sin and sorrow. We cannot grieve for the child, but we sympathize with his parents, and hope they may be made to say, He doeth all things well.

Written by request of my granddaughter.

S. MORNINGSTAR.

Nellie M. Records, my dear child, passed away May 25th, 1916, aged 22 years, 4 months and 25 days. Nellie was not a member of any church, but her faith was Old School Baptist, and I believe a living faith. She did not think from the first after her health began to fail that she would ever be well again, and often said she was not fit to die, but could not make herself any better, and knew the Lord was able to save her and would if it were his will. Often when she saw I was in trouble she would say, "Mamma, don't worry, where is your faith? Don't you know all these things must be, and the good Lord knows what is best for us?" She was a real pleasure, always truthful and obedient, so afraid she would give me trouble. I desire to bow in humble submission to God's will, but as yet I am in darkness, and feel my sun has gone down, never to rise again. Her health had been failing for ten months; the last four weeks she was confined to her bed, and suffered greatly at times. When I saw that she must leave me I asked the Lord for one more word, and it was given. The day before she died she looked at me and smiled, said she awoke that morning repeating that passage of Scripture, "In my Father's house are many mansions." "O, is not that good?" I said, "Nellie, the Lord gave that to you." She said, "Yes." We could say no more. I knew she would soon go from me. She passed peacefully away without any sign of suffering the next day at 7 o'clock p. m.

The funeral service was held at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse, conducted by Elder A. B. Francis, after which her body was laid to rest by the side of her father and brothers in the Old School Baptist Cemetery at Salisbury, Md. She leaves one brother and a sorrowing mother.

LUCINDA E. RECORDS.

I will add that I am sure all sister Records has said of Nellie is true, and that the dear child is now at rest in that blessed state where sickness, sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more. Sister Records has long been an esteemed member of the church in Salisbury, Md.

A. B. FRANCIS.

Elizabeth Frances Jones Mann was born Oct. 17th, 1835, in Warren County, Mo. At the age of twenty she was married to Wm. Elmore, with whom she lived a happy and devoted life until his death, which occurred in 1881. In 1900 she was again married, to Josiah Mann, of Wellington, Mo., with whom she lived five of the happiest years of her life, she said. He died in 1905, and after his death she returned to her old home in Troy, Mo., where she died May 17th, 1916. In her early life she united with the Primitive or Old School Baptist Church, and was a faithful and beloved member, whose walk and conversation gave evidence that she was taught of God and learned of him. She was never happier than when in the assembly of the saints, and while they mourn her departure and long to look upon her face again, they feel that it is well with her and for her to die is gain, for here she rejoiced in a covenant of grace ordered in all things and sure, and in a Savior in whom was all her trust. In the years of her lonely widowhood she could confidently say, I know that my Redeemer liveth.

Her remains were brought to Wellington for burial, and at the home of her stepson, R. L. Mann, short funeral services were conducted. Thus has passed away a lovely character. Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.

By request. NELIA M. STARTZMAN.

Charles E. Duff was born Feb. 26th, 1841, in the State of Illinois, and died Nov. 25th, 1915, making his stay upon earth 74 years, 8 months and 29 days. His parents moved to Virginia in the year 1844. While he was but a youth they settled in a wilderness country at that date, now Jackson County, W. Va. He was married to Mary Jane Fletcher March 17th, 1864, in what is now the State of West Virginia. To that union were born eleven children, five boys and six girls. Brother Duff joined the Primitive Baptist Church called Elium, of the Pocatalico Association, in his young and active days. He was

industrious, always striving to make a good and comfortable living for his family. Brother Duff was well versed in the Scriptures, and it was his delight to defend the doctrine advocated by the Primitive Baptists. His home was a home for those of like precious faith with him. He was free spoken on the vital principles of christianity, so that none needed to be kept in suspense. Brother Duff will be greatly missed by the Elium Church, and also by the Pocatalico Association, for he was ever ready and willing to take care of messengers of his own association and the correspondents from our sister associations, but we feel to rest in this, that our loss is his eternal gain.

The writer spoke on the day of his burial to a large congregation of relatives and friends, using as a text 2 Samuel xiv. 14: "For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God respect any person; yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him."

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

Elder J. M. Perkins was born March 1st, 1847, and died April 20th, 1916, aged 69 years, 1 month and 20 days. He was married to Winifred McNeil August 29th, 1872. To that union were born ten children, seven of whom survive to mourn the loss of their dear father, as follows: Mrs. May Carter, Mrs. Lena Lock, Mrs. Ellen Duke, Messrs. Lem, Tom, John and Hallie Perkins. He received a hope in 1873, he and his wife joining the Primitive Baptist Church in November following, and were baptized together in the fellowship of North Mt. Zion Church by Elder William Howard. He was ordained to the work of the ministry soon afterward, and in this work he continued faithful until death. Elder Perkins was an able defender of the gospel, and in all the trouble the Baptists had in his country he contended for the old landmarks. Brother Perkins will be greatly missed by the Baptists as well as his dear family. We sympathize deeply with sister Perkins and the dear children, but we must remember that the Lord will do right, and our loss is his gain. I have been with brother Perkins over twenty-five years; he attended our association last September, and preached to the comfort of God's dear children. O how we shall miss him. May God fill his place in his churches with able ministry.

The writer tried to speak to the comfort of the dear family, brethren and sisters, and a large assembly of people who were present to pay their last tribute of respect to brother, neighbor and friend. He was laid in the old cemetery at North Mt. Zion to await the last call, when he shall come forth with all the redeemed of the Lord. May God bless the dear family and brethren and sisters of his churches.

J. W. KERLEY.

MEETINGS.

THE Siloam Association of Oregon and Washington will meet with Mt. Zion Church, six miles northwest of Forest Grove, Oregon, commencing Friday 10 a. m. before the second Sunday in August, 1916. Trains will be met at Forest Grove Thursday evening and Friday morning. Lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

THE one hundred and fifth session of the Red River Association will meet with the church at Friendship, Sumner Co., Tenn., to begin Saturday before the second Sunday in August, 1916. Brethren will be met with conveyance at Hendersonville, Tenn., on Gallatin Interurban, and at Fountain Head, on the L. & N. R. R., near Gallatin, Tenn., Friday and Saturday.

THE Old School Predestinarian Baptists known as the New Hope Association will convene with Little Flock Church, three miles southeast of Edgewood, on the Texas Pacific Railroad, in Van Zandt Co., Texas, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1916. All Old School Predestinarian Baptists in fellowship with us, especially ministering brethren, are invited. All trains will be met on Thursday before with conveyance.

S. M. DICKENS.

THERE will be a two days meeting at Cammal, Pa., the fourth Sunday in August and Saturday preceding. A hearty invitation is given to all who desire to come. D. M. VAIL.

THE Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet with Providence Church, near Plano, Appanoose Co., Iowa, in her sixty-second annual session, on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1916, and continue three days. Trains will be met at Plano. All are invited.

S. B. JONES, Moderator.

H. C. CATE, Clerk.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will meet, if the Lord wills, with the church at Bowdoinham, Maine, on Friday before the second Monday in September (8th, 9th and 10th), 1916. Lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

GEO. R. TEDFORD.

THE ninety-ninth session of the West Tennessee Association will meet with Yellow Creek Church, Dickson Co., Tenn., two miles from Woodhaven, on the Clarksville Mineral R. R. Brethren will be met at Woodhaven with conveyance. Session to begin Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1916. A. L. STANSELL.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

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PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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(Judges v. 11.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 84. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1916. NO. 16.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SUTTON, W. Va.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have been repeatedly requested to write out and send to you for publication in the dear old SIGNS, the blessed medium of correspondence among the children of Zion's King, my experience and travel from nature to grace, and my reason of a hope in the once crucified, but now risen and exalted Redeemer, the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, but have delayed from time to time, being aware of the fact that I am not qualified to write in a way to interest and comfort the weary pilgrims on their journey to the celestial city, the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. How or where shall I begin? I will just say that to write out what I hope and believe to be God's dealings in mercy with me will lead me back to childhood, for I verily believe that if I have ever been taught to know the truth it began when I was just a mere child of perhaps seven or eight years of age. At that time my father took me to a nearby Arminian meeting of some kind, I know not what, but presume they were Methodists, but at that time I knew nothing of Methodists, or Baptists, or any other denomination; but for some reason unknown to me I was not favorably impressed with the preaching. Of course I was not a judge of preaching, but it did not sound good to me, and it never has from that day to this, and to further augment my displeasure, or disapproval, of their meeting, at the close of the meeting two ladies raised a great shout, which was mortifying to me, and which perhaps prejudiced me against the practice of shouting more than I should be. But a little after this an Old School Baptist preacher came in the neighborhood and preached, and I thought, O, if I only could preach like that old man, for it was sweet to me, although I was just a little boy, and, dear brethren, the same old story of Jesus and his love is sweet yet. About this time I began to have serious thoughts about death, and what would become of me if I should die. I had heard that good people lived after death in a good world forever, and that bad people would be punished forever. I tried to be good, but found I did many wrong things, for which I would be very sorry, and would

resolve to do so no more. I was certain that I was not good enough to live in the good world should I be called away, although I did not engage in the bad things that I saw other bad boys engage in, and was called a good boy by my parents and all who knew me, still I could see that I was wanting. I began to grow anxious and distressed about myself, and when I would do anything wrong, or even say or think anything wrong, O how troubled and sorry I would be, and would try to pray the Lord to be merciful and forgive me, and would promise if he would forgive me that wrong I never would do wrong any more. In this way I went for years, but to my sorrow and shame I found that I broke every promise I ever made, and in this way, vowing and breaking my vows, I have told legions of falsehoods. As soon as I was able to read, my father bought me a small pocket Testament, which I read earnestly and with much satisfaction, still I could not find just what I thought would cover my case. I did not want any one to see me reading it, so would often steal away to some secret, silent grove and there spend my Sundays in reading and meditating, and often crying and trying to pray, but could only say, God, be merciful to me, a poor sinner, or, Lord, save, I perish, Lord, forgive, or some like expression, but no relief could I get. I read in the Testament that Christ suffered and died to save sinners, and I realized that I was a sinner, and felt to be the chief of sinners, but how could I claim any interest in his suffering and death? It really seemed to me to be the basest of presumption for me to anticipate or even hope for salvation through him, and O the troubles, distresses and harassing fears I would experience and pass through. I would try to pray God that I might be given an interest in the atoning blood of the adorable Redeemer, but I could not see how it could be that the dear Savior would suffer and die to save such a vile wretch as I felt myself to be, and would repeatedly in deep contrition repeat the words of the poet:

"Alas, and did my Savior bleed,
And did my Sovereign die?
Would he devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?"

In this way I went for years, and instead of getting relief my sorrows and troubles only increased. At times my troubles almost left me, and for a time I would be merry and gleeful, but it only left to return greater and more terrible than before. I often went about my work crying, and praying God for his mercy to rest upon me, and often traveling along the public road I would be crying, and seeing I was about to meet some one I would try to brace up and get my tears dried before I would meet them. I was ashamed for any one to know I had been crying, yet it seemed I could not help crying, my troubles were so great. O, I have shed many, many tears, which I hope God has bottled up, but all my sobs, sighs, entreaties and tears seemed to avail me nothing, but still I went on praying God that I might be given an inheritance with all the redeemed. Time passed along, and no relief could I find, but only became more and more burdened and distressed. Often I have retired at night and lay awake until a late hour of night sobbing, sighing and mourning on account of my burden of sin, and my alienation from God, and finally weary myself to sleep, not expecting to ever awake this side of eternity, and then in eternal torment (knowing it was my desert), and awake next morning I hope thankfully surprised that the Lord in his infinite mercy had spared through an-

other night such a hell-deserving sinner as I felt myself to be. In this way I went for years, a poor, penitent, sorrowing soul, seeking rest and finding none. It seemed that Satan was constantly following close after me, or rather leading me captive at his will. Once while lying on my bed I thought I heard him just behind me, ready to carry me away, which so frightened me that I lay in breathless silence for quite awhile, expecting to fall a prey to his hand, but thanks be to God, he suffered him not, but kept me by his power. At another time while traveling along the road he followed me visibly for quite a distance, I verily believed, but in a transformed appearance, or figure, and before I reached home the Lord showed me his power. I was stricken down and lay unconscious for hours before I arose, and I have always felt that it was the Lord manifesting his power to me, and showing me my weakness, my sinfulness and my entire dependence upon him for all things, both temporal and spiritual. I would cry out, Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean. But the sorrows of my heart were more and more enlarged; there was no rest in my bones because of my sins; as a heavy burden they were too heavy for me, so I was bowed down greatly, and went mourning all the day. The deep waters had come in unto my soul, and in the anguish of my soul I would cry, Is his mercy clean gone forever? Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? O, my soul was full of trouble, and I felt my end for time and my destiny in eternity were near, that very soon I would receive my due merits and be banished from the presence of the dear Lord forever, and be cast into the lower regions, to dwell with devils and damned spirits eternally, and out of the depth of my soul I cried unto the Lord, O Lord, have mercy upon my soul, and forgive all my sins, and reveal thyself unto me as my Savior, and create a clean heart in me, and renew a right spirit within me. My soul was thirsting for God. As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panted my soul after God. My whole soul's desire was that I could feel my sins forgiven and be in his holy presence, that he would take me into a sacred nearness with him, that I might sup with him and he with me, that I might feed on the riches of his grace and be free from sin. But I realized my unworthiness so sensibly, and my troubles were so great on account of my sin, that I feared eternal condemnation would be my doom, knowing it would only be my just reward, and O what fears, turmoil and trouble I did experience; I often wished that I never had been born. My troubles grew heavier and heavier all the time, until I thought I was going to die, and I felt sure if I died in the condition I was in that I would be lost forever. I was working in the field one day, and felt that I had only a very short time on earth, and then I must go away to dwell with hypocrites and unbelievers in the depths of obscurity, and be banished forever from the presence of God and all that is good. O, it seemed that the end had come, and my troubles and the anguish of my soul were so great that I fell prostrate on my face to the ground, a poor, penitent soul, not expecting to live a minute longer, and if ever any poor sinner did beg and plead for mercy I surely did there, and in the very depth of my most bitter anguish and distress, after having been led right to death's door, and to the very gates of hell, as it were, I hope the Lord in his infinite mercy and compassion did hear me and bless me with the forgiveness of my sins and

the outpouring of his Holy Spirit; all my burden and all my troubles were gone in a moment of time, and I received a sweet peace of mind, and joy unspeakable. I arose from the earth so filled with peace, joy and happiness, feeling such relief from my burden, and such love and praise to God for his great mercy in my deliverance from sin and condemnation, that it seemed all nature was praising him, and I could scarcely refrain from praising him at the top of my voice for having given me beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. O, I never can forget that day, for I do hope it was the beginning of years to me. The next thing was a desire to be baptized, and I rode seventy-five miles on horseback to be baptized by an orderly Old School Baptist preacher, and was baptized by Elder J. S. Corder, assisted by Elder J. N. Bartlett, when the ice was about four inches thick, and I have never regretted it, for it seemed to me it was the most beautiful day I ever saw. The sun arose that morning in a peaceful, cloudless, blue sky, and it was so beautiful, so lovely and so grand it seemed almost heaven to me, and then the dear brethren showed such a degree of love and fellowship for me that I was constrained to say, This is none other than the house of God.

I have given a passing sketch of my exercise and hope, which I would not exchange for the whole world, if I could do it, yet I sometimes get so low down and see myself so imperfect that I fear I have grasped the shadow and missed the substance, that Satan has deceived me and I have deceived the church; but with all these fears and doubts I have been given some little refreshings, some rays of sweet sunshine, I hope. I have in a brief way told my case, and will leave it for the dear brethren to judge.

Asking an interest in the prayers of God's dear children, I remain your brother in hope of a glorious immortality,

J. R. DENNISON.

THE PROPHET'S ROOM.

"LET us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither."—2 Kings iv. 10.

The speaker here presented to my view is a woman who has much of this world's goods, a household and a husband to care for, and the society of people of like worldly estate. Neither her husband nor her neighbors have shown any desire for anything above or beyond worldly profit and pleasure; good people of the world and the things of the world satisfy them. In this woman's house there is an empty space; her acquaintance with Elisha and his religious faith, his need of comforts on his way and the empty space, all seem to come as one thought, and she presents the matter to her husband. He is not interested in such matters, and it is the woman who makes the room ready. (The Lord has been pleased to present his church throughout the Scriptures, in figure, as a woman), and the prophet recognizes her hand and heart in the matter. The void is filled, although she still dwells with her own people, and fills her place in the world's duties. Most of us are with the busy world and its cares, supplying food, or clothing, or transportation, or household cares, and our lives are useful to our families and our fellowmen. Here and there is a person with an unfilled desire for something more, something higher, deeper and more lasting joys; there is a small, empty room in their house, an empty, aching void. Very

few of our associates would know what we were talking about if we should mention our desires to them, but there are those who pass our way that we have faith in. That was one of the first supports I could catch hold of in my experience, the steadfast faith of the people of God. As long as we could keep our minds on the things of the world and be satisfied with them we did not notice the empty space, but the Spirit of God is not governed by natural laws, and presents views in such a way that we are compelled to see and feel them. The faith of the man of God as he passes to and fro by us, the faith we have in his God, the emptiness in all that the world calls pleasure, and the empty, aching void, are presented to us as in one view. There will be nothing in this for those who have all the rooms in their house full of earthly treasures. Before spiritual food is given there is hungering for that food; before the beauties of the kingdom of Christ are shown there is given a longing to see the beauties of holiness; before the love and mercy of God are shown there is a sense of unworthiness and depravity; before the little chamber in our house is filled it is an empty, aching void. This woman did not separate herself from her own people, as did Ruth, and identify herself with the Israelites, yet since she received an unexpected and unasked blessing in making the messenger of God welcome in her house, we must regard her as a chosen vessel of mercy, and also as a representative character. Are there not very many such, making the little empty space in mind and affections a welcome resting-place for the Spirit of God, that as often as he passes by in the busy days of our lives he may bless us with his presence for a little season, even though we seem to be of the earth and tied to its cares?

As soon as the room was ready the prophet came that way. Many, many receive these little seasons of spiritual communion, while the world moves on around them unconscious of the matter, and these sacred joys of the little room at the top of the wall, where the Prophet, or Spirit, is a most welcome guest. Others may wait for the new moon, or some time of religious excitement; our need is beyond human power, and if our hope is to die now our house will seem more empty than before we entertained this spiritual messenger. Even if the room be small, and the Spirit of peace may rest but a short while, I pray that he may often be my guest while in the house of my earthly pilgrimage. Whether we prepare the little room, or not, will not change our eternal destiny, according to the evidence, but it makes all the difference in regard to our enjoyment here. All that we can store up of earthly treasures must soon pass away, but the little room where the Prophet rests is a sure source of comfort for every trial, great or small, and in our greatest time of need, when all earthly comforts fail, may the Spirit of God be near at hand, so there will be no delay, and the light that the Spirit lighted on the candlestick in the prophet's room so long ago be the light that guides us to that brighter land, where there is no need of the sun by day, and there is no night there.

A. E. RITTENHOUSE.

STATE ROAD, Delaware.

GREENVILLE, Texas, July 11, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a copy of the experience of my mother, Mrs. Maria Ekelberry, and if you think best you may publish it in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We found it among her papers after her death, which occurred at her

home in Cardington, Ohio, November 1st, 1915. Her obituary was published in the SIGNS of December 15th, 1915. She had not signed her name to the manuscript, so perhaps had intended to write more. The year is not given, but I think it was written not very long after she had united with the church, which was in the year 1884. She mentions in it that father was not a member of the church. He joined several years after she did, and is still a faithful member. He makes his home with us since mother left this world to enter into her rest. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was mother's favorite paper, and she always derived much comfort from it, especially during her long sickness, when she was not able to leave home to attend the meetings of the church. She was afflicted with cancer of the face, and after her eyes became too weak to read she would ask me to read to her, always from the Bible, the SIGNS or the hymn-book. It was my privilege to be her constant attendant during the last six months of her life. Her mind was fixed on spiritual things, and while she longed to leave this world and be free from sin and the pains and sorrows of this life, she waited patiently her appointed time with never a murmur or complaint, but always with the thought, God knoweth best; whatever he does is right.

With best wishes,

BERTHA DARNELL.

DELAWARE, Ohio.

TO THE SAINTS OF GOD:—Those that feared God spake often one to another, and a book of remembrance was written. Dear brethren (if I may address you thus), it is not only a privilege but a duty to comfort one another as we travel through this world of sorrow. Whether I have anything to say that will be of any help or comfort I know not, but if I know the desire of my heart, it is that God's will be done, whether it is pleasant or grievous, for he knoweth best, and I know that of myself I can do nothing; the Lord gives me all I have; of myself I cannot think one good thought, my thoughts are evil, and that continually. But blessed be his great and holy name, I believe that by his Spirit and grace, given me, I am made to forget self and see none but Jesus; then all is well, all is peace and joy in the Lord; then I can sing the song that the angels sang: "Glory to God in the highest. Peace on earth, good will toward men." O what a happy state to be in; it seems to me that the enjoyment of a saint could not be told in a better way, or in fewer words.

When I began this letter I thought I would tell you something about myself, but I feel as if I only wanted to tell you of Jesus; but if I tell you of myself it will be what Jesus has done for me, so I hope it will be of him all the way.

My parents were Primitive Baptists. Father died when I was but seven years old, but I was well cared for. Mother was strong in the faith of God's elect (perhaps some may think I am positive, but that is what I believe). From her I believe, by God's will, I was given the right idea of Him: that he had all power in heaven and in earth; that he was just, and all he did was right. I cannot remember when in trouble I did not try to pray to him, and knew that if he would he could help me. Not that I thought much about my sins, but I cannot remember of ever doing wrong without being sorry. When I was about fifteen years of age I at times thought I was worse than any of the rest of those I knew, and this feeling followed me for years; and when I would read the Bible I thought

how happy God's people ought to be, as there was so much for them, but nothing for me, except at times; this gave me a little hope. They that hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled. I would think I did not hunger in the right way or I would be filled, but I thought that if I knew myself I did desire it with my whole heart. At times I felt so polluted I was afraid to take the Bible in my hands, or to kneel to pray, and at such times I could not still that intense longing prayer: Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. It seemed at times that prayer was in my soul continually. I thought I would live but a few years at most, and never expected to live to be twenty-five years old, and I was not at peace with God, and how my heart ached on account of sin, I cannot tell you, but perhaps you can understand if you have come that way. I now hope that before I was twenty-three years old I did die. I read the Bible often, searching if I might find something for me. I began at the first and read it through; in fact, I felt it wrong to read anything else, and especially so on Sunday. I was all the time trying to do something, but all I could do did not put away one sin; all I could do was to search the Scriptures. One evening I was reading about the death and resurrection of Christ, and when I came to that place where Thomas, except he could see, would not believe, I gave up all hope, for I thought if he could not believe after all he had seen, I could not, for I had no hope of ever seeing Jesus. But I looked, and Jesus said, Thomas, thou hast seen and believed, thou hast done well, but blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed. It seemed to me that Jesus stood right by my side, although with my eyes I saw nothing, and I knew I believed, and whether I opened my mouth or not I know not, but from my inmost heart I exclaimed, My Lord and my God. Then I had peace, and began to hope there was mercy for me, but I did not know that Jesus had taken my sins away. I felt there was a place of rest, for that dreadful feeling was gone, and it was not long until I began to hunt for it, but I have never been able to find that burden. But soon there was a new trouble, I felt there was something for me to do, and sometimes when the love of God seemed to fill me, and I would feel like praising him, this would come to me: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Then I would feel as nothing, and feel rebuked in the sight of God, and when I saw the river I thought it looked so beautiful and wished the Lord would send some one to baptize me. This troubled me for years. When evening would come I would often wish there was some one to pray, for I thought it would do me much good if I could hear one of the saints pray. My husband was not a member of any church, and mother was dead. The nearest Baptist church was nine miles away. There were other denominations close, but we seldom went to their meetings. While I loved some of their members, I did not believe what their ministers preached. So I lived through hope and fear until it seemed as if the Lord was about to forsake me, for I did not think as much about being baptized, and I began to fear, and felt that I must be baptized, for I felt that if I were ashamed to own the Lord he would be ashamed of me before his Father; so after traveling all alone for fifteen years, yet I hope not alone, by God's goodness I was enabled, as I hope, to go to my brethren, and they seemed to rejoice. I remember one dear sister said, "O I am so glad."

MARIA E. EKELBERRY.

THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD.

"BUT none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."—Acts xx. 24.

The inspired apostle Paul, in his letter to the churches, declares that salvation is by the grace of God through the perfect and finished atonement of Jesus. When he gave his life on the Roman cross he forever put away the sins of his people. People preach and talk about that which they love. Those who are born again know that their salvation is wholly and entirely of the grace of God, through the righteousness and the merits of Jesus, and therefore they sing, "O to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be." They like to hear the power of the reigning grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ extolled, for grace all the work shall crown to everlasting days. Salvation by the grace of God! O the joyful tidings, let it fly the spacious earth around. When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea the glad news was made known to the shepherds as they watched their flocks by night. "And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."—Luke ii. 10, 11. Now every one of average intelligence knows that a savior is one who saves. Christ saves to the uttermost all who come unto God by him, and this salvation is to all people, both Jews and Gentiles, high and low, rich and poor. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."—Titus ii. 11–14. This grace of God hath appeared unto all men; that is, all classes of men, the rich and poor, the high and low, the noble and ignoble. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." —John i. 29. The world of his people, both Jews and Gentiles. "This was he of whom I spake. He that cometh after me is preferred, before me: for he was before me. And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. [Not grace for works, but where grace is once given the Lord continues to bestow grace.] For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."—John i. 15–17. The apostle Paul speaks of himself three or four times in his letter to the churches, and his letter to Timothy says, "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."—2 Tim. i. 8–10. When the apostle speaks of himself it is for the instruction and comfort of believers throughout all time. "And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am

chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."—1 Tim. i. 14–16. Paul ever rejoiced in the fact that by grace are ye saved, and, By the grace of God I am what I am. Who in all the world to-day would endure and go through what Paul did to preach the gospel to poor, perishing sinners? Hear him: "Are they ministers of Christ? * * * I am more; in labor more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in death oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of water, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness."—2 Cor. xi. 23–27. He endured all this to preach the gospel of the grace of God, and that without pay. Now as to those who preach another gospel and worship another Jesus, in their do and live system. (2 Cor. xi. 4.) They are spread over our land, like the locust over ancient Egypt, and devour every green thing. Their name is legion, they work for a salary, and are therefore hirelings, and care not for the sheep; they claim to be free moral agents, and exercise their right to choose, and they will find they are like the foolish man, who built his house on the sand, which went down when the storm beat upon it, so the way they have chosen ends in death; they reject with disdain salvation entirely by the grace of God as too old-fashioned and out of date. "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."—Gal. i. 8.

"'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

"Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast."—Psalms lvii. 1. When my heart is overwhelmed, unto thee will I cry, Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I.

"Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song,
The joy of my heart, and the boast of my tongue;
Thy free grace alone, from the first to the last,
Hath won my affections, and bound my soul fast."

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Yours in hope,

WM. F. SLOAN.

NEWARK, Delaware.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending for publication in the SIGNS the experience of my uncle, Joseph Griffith, written in the year 1864. There are a few readers of the SIGNS living who remember this dear old brother. His generation has almost passed away and another has come. The sister he speaks of was my mother, Francina Griffith. She was baptized in the Potomac River, at Alexandria, Va., in the year 1818, when she was eighteen years of age, by Elder Spencer Houghton Cone. She removed when young to Delaware, and her membership was with the

Welsh Tract Church until her death in 1882.

AGNES E. MILLER.

DEAR BROTHER:—I have no doubt you will be surprised on the receipt of this from me, I having been considered not altogether sound, or a little touched with Arminianism, according to the creed of the Old School Baptists of the day, and indeed, my dear brother (as the best of men are but men at best), I very much doubt if there is a man under the heavens living who is altogether clear of it, but if I am not awfully deceived, I think I can say with blind Bartimæus, that whereas I was once blind, now I see. It is now about five and thirty years since I have had a name among the Baptists, about the time, or rather before, the division between the Old and the New School Baptists, and since that period I have had many ups and downs in my experience through the wilderness, sometimes (I trust) on Pisgah's mount, sometimes low down in the valley, but O my dear brother, through all this long travel through this vain world I have never had such bright evidence of my interest in Christ and him crucified, neither have I ever felt the wrath of God abiding on me and the hardness of a wicked and deceitful heart as I felt soon after that time. Why really when the Lord first brought me out, (if ever he has, as that is all the doubt with me) although I was thirty-five years old, I was so much of a child as to believe or think all my troubles were over; but ah, soon, very soon, I was left to try my strength and found it lacking. The day I was baptized and the night following, I think I can say conscientiously were the happiest in all my existence. I recollect on the afternoon of that day, I was reading in the prophecy of Isaiah, and among others the fifty-third chapter, which treats so fully of the errand of the blessed Redeemer into our lower world, and the full accomplishment of his work, and my interest in the same, that it really seemed to me that I was carried up into the third heaven, where Paul was, and saw things not to be uttered. I really saw such a fullness, such a glory in that chapter, that although I have read it often since, I have never been able to read it in the same light fully as I did on that day. After reading this chapter, and closing the book, I had occasion to go to the barn to feed my stock, and on the way this text came to mind: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary," &c. I felt full under these reflections, as though I could have gone right up to heaven. But ah, my dear brother, I was very soon left to try my strength, those happy feelings soon began to wear off, the world, the flesh and the devil began to creep in, and in a very short time total blindness seemed to overtake me, and my heart seemed to have become as hard as the nether millstone, even so much so that I considered that I had been altogether deceived, that I had made a false profession, that the church was deceived, that I knew nothing of the root of the matter, and that if I was a converted man, surely these troubles would not have come on me. When I laid down at night and those thoughts came on me, I thought my heart would surely break, so much so that it seemed to me the pains of hell could not be worse, and that I could say with David, The pains of hell gat hold on me. Well, I was left to worry on in this way for a time, without hope, until one evening the Lord put it in my sister's heart to call and see us, and

to bring with her "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress." I met her at the gate, and she saluted me with, "Well, Joseph, how do you do? Have you lost your roll yet? If you have, I have brought you the Pilgrim's Progress, and if you read that, maybe you will find it," remarking at the same time that after she was baptized, Mr. Cone brought her Pilgrim's Progress, and said to her if she had lost her roll to read it, and perhaps she would find it. I answered her that I knew not that I ever had any roll. Well, I commenced reading it that night, and soon found that Christian set out towards the heavenly Canaan as full of hope and expectation (and more so) than I did, and wanted to take everyone with him, but it appears there were none willing to go, but one: Pliable, who set out with him on the heavenly voyage, but they very soon got bedrabbled and mired in the Slough of Despond, and Pliable observed to Christian that if that was the way to that blessed country (in the setting out, what might they not expect before they got to their journey's end?) he might possess it alone, and with that made some desperate plunges and got back on that side next his home. But Christian struggled through the slough until he got on that side next the wicket gate, when he was helped out. Well, suffice it to say, that before I got half through the book I was so well satisfied that if Christian set forth in the Progress was a christian, I was one, that my experience tallied so with his that all doubts were removed, and poor me again on Pisgah's mount, and I yet believe (whether I have it or not,) it takes spiritual eyes to see, ears to hear and hearts to understand "Bunyan's Progress." Well, I soon began to get full of clouds and darkness again, until Captain Calvin Tubbs, (son-in-law to Elder Gideon Ferrel, now in heaven, I have no doubt) came to see me. I acquainted him with my darkness and conflicts of mind, and he remarked to me, Ah, my dear child, you are depending too much on sight and feeling altogether; you will have to learn to live by faith as well as sight. You will get a peep into the mystery of glory now and then as you pass through the valley, but you will have to learn to live by faith as well as by sight, and truly I have found it even so, and thus far the Lord has brought me, a poor, old, ignorant, gray-headed sinner, and has not left me altogether, and of this I am assured, that if I am his he will keep me, for he has promised to keep the feet of the saints; yea, and he will do it, for his promises are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus.

JOSEPH GRIFFITH.

FARMINGTON, Ill., July 9, 1916.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—I am sending you a letter dear sister Sarah Runkle wrote my dear husband while he was yet alive, but very poorly, which I would like to see in the SIGNS, as some of my children would read it. Now, dear brother, do as you think best.

(MRS.) E. D. VARNES.

MACOMB, Ill., Dec. 1, 1913.

DEAR BROTHER VARNES:—For more than a year I have thought of writing to you, but have put it off from time to time, saying, What could such a poor, weak, unworthy one as I write that would be of any comfort to one so deeply led into spiritual things, and so true and faithful in the house of the Lord as I feel you to be? I have always considered you one of God's beloved and honored servants, and among the excellent of the earth. I do not feel at all worthy to ad-

dress you as "brother," yet I feel I love you for the truth's sake, and after reading your good letter in the SIGNS, which I received to-day, I felt such a desire to write you that I will not defer it any longer, but will in much weakness pen you a few lines. Dear brother, I read your letter with tears, and I hope I deeply sympathize with you in all your afflictions. You know it is written, Many are the afflictions of the righteous, and it is truly the case that the righteous, besides being afflicted physically as others, are also troubled with a view of their sinfulness and unworthiness which tries their faith and hope, and therefore have more to bear than those who rely on their own goodness and merit. But, dear brother, I know you too well to believe for a moment that you put your trust in an arm of flesh, but as it is written, They shall trust in the name of the Lord, whom to know is life eternal; and, In the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. May you lean on him in all your afflictions, and find in him a safe and sure retreat.

We missed you very much at the association, and when your letter to the brethren was read tears were in the eyes of many. I thought of how tried and faithful you had been for so many years to the cause of Christ, and how the brethren had the highest regard and respect for you as a dear brother. My mind goes back to the time of my baptism, when our association was in a flourishing condition, having eight ordained ministers and nearly four hundred members; meetings were crowded, and all was peace and love. Now all of those ministers have laid their armor by and are "asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep." Now, alas, only a handful are left of our dear church, but we meet once a month and dear Elder Owens preaches for us. Those days of the past, dear brother, were the time of my first love, and O how happy I was then, not for a time knowing of the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit. But I have learned many things since then; one is, I know that in my flesh dwells no good thing; and another is, that sin is mixed with all I do; and still another thing I know, that if I am saved it is by grace alone, and if God does not have mercy to my unrighteousness there will be no hope for me. I know that salvation is of the Lord, and I feel to say, Though he slay me I will trust in him. Dear brother, where else can we go? he hath the words of eternal life. My mother, who has passed her ninety-third birthday, is still able to be up, and still clings to her little hope, and takes a deep interest in the cause of Christ. Sister Dark is very well and in her eighty-ninth year.

Brother and sister Singer are not very well. They are very dear to me, and are true and faithful Baptists.

I know I should bring this letter to a close. I have a very poor pen, and fear this will be hard to read, and hope you will read it with the spirit of charity toward the unworthy writer.

Dear brother, the Lord is not slack concerning his promises, but is true and faithful, and will bring them to pass; not one of them shall fail. He has promised to be with you in six trials, and in the seventh he will not forsake you, and, Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. He will deliver you out of all your afflictions, and bring you off more than conqueror; even down to old age he will carry you, and underneath are the everlasting arms.

"Though hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,
Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne."

The best of all this to us is that he who

has promised all these precious things has all power in heaven and earth, and is able to perform and carry out his will and purposes. Nothing is impossible with him, he speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. May you feel these promises yours, and rely on them, and he be your support and stay to the end of your journey.

Dear sister Varnes, this is for you also, if you can glean a crumb from it.

Tuesday morning. I wrote this letter last night, and after looking it over this morning I am almost ashamed to send it, it seems so poor. Dear sister, I often think of you in all your troubles and sorrows, and as I have many troubles also, I know how to sympathize with you. I am a poor comforter, and it seems I can write nothing to cheer or encourage you; none but God can give grace and strength sufficient for our day and trial; he still reigns, and is the God of love and mercy. May you and I be enabled to look to him to guide and keep us, and when our race is run may we feel him to be our Savior and our Redeemer. But I am such a poor sinner, I need your help and comfort, it seems, more than any one.

With much love to yourself and family, I am, I hope, your sister, though least of all, SARAH E. RUNKLE.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., July 28, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—In looking over some old letters I find these two from brother Monroe Fenton, which, as I read them over, I feel inclined to share with the readers of the SIGNS, if you care to insert them.

Your unworthy sister, in a blessed hope beyond this fading scene,

BESSIE DURAND.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 26, 1909.

DEAR SISTER:—While I saw you on Wednesday eve last, and we did have a little talk upon things heavenly and divine, I am somewhat occupied in mind of what the hope and belief embrace concerning us, in the kingdom of our God. I was much impressed with the illustration you made of the two pictures, might I say, one of a gay and worldly crowd and place, finely decorated and illuminated, dancing and singing, and all mirth and laughter, and then the other picture of a few old, feeble and careworn folks about a dim fireside, and nothing much to do on with this world's goods, and their conversation would be about Jesus and their hope, with which would I choose to spend the evening? My dear sister, it is well for us to examine ourselves, and it is well with us, if we would be drawn to mingle with those whose hope the Lord is. I often feel I cannot tell what I would like to; many times it seems there is no law of language to set forth our praise to him for all his blessings and mercy to such miserable and poor sinners as we feel to be. Now I have been thinking much upon the word of truth concerning God's people, and to feel the sovereignty of God in all his ways, and that he has given his people life in Christ, and made them sons of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, for no reason known to us, and we can only say, as did Jesus, Even so, Father, because it seemed good in thy sight. All the promises of God are upon no obligation he owes any one, but for his love and his mercy to us. Well might the apostle say, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" I have been much comforted lately in a way I am unable to tell; the testimony of the word

has seemed to have been sealed to my soul's comfort, even though I feel myself vile and sinful before the holy God. The power and sweetness of the word have been with me, and I feel to say that the Lord has blessed me in ways innumerable, and while I could not begin to enumerate them, I feel to say that our communion in things of the kingdom has been sweet and profitable. My home church is dear to me, and I feel to praise and thank God for my relationship to his people. I am thankful for all the way I have traveled in mind since I was brought in the church, thankful for all my trials and tribulations, thankful that the Lord has given me a desire to be with God's people, and that it is still with me, as above all the vanities of the present evil world, thankful for the hope that I shall one day be with Jesus, and be like him, and be satisfied, and that for eternity. Surely these things are wonderful. Now this is a little of what is on my mind.

Your brother, I hope,

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March 21, 1910.

DEAR SISTER DURAND:—We are commanded by the apostle to "quench not the Spirit," "and to communicate, forget not," and as I am thinking of you, and of our many sweet little conversations upon heavenly and divine things, I am minded to heed the apostle's words and "communicate," and if I can discern the prompting of my own heart, it is because of the love I trust the Lord has given me and is in my heart. It is impossible to get upon paper, by pen, or speak words to convey that which is made manifest in our heart, one to another; it is a holy relationship that unites the children of God. If one member suffers all suffer, or if one member be honored all the members rejoice in it; this has seemed to me to be evidence that we are members of his body, his flesh and of his bones, and members one of another. I do not suppose I am just like any one else, as I have from the first of my experience seemed to look to the end of our earthly pilgrimage as of short duration, and feel that James had that in mind when he said, "For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." What I have in mind is the communion of saints while in this earthly tabernacle, and when we are blessed with the presence of Jesus in our midst in the gathering of two or three together, or in the assembly of the saints, how precious this is to us. It is we who have tasted that the Lord is gracious and precious, the chief among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely, that shall be changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body, and shall see him as he is, and be like him. It is the sinner that is redeemed, it is the sinner that hopes in the mercy of God, that is clothed with the spotless robe of righteousness, and dwells eternally with God. Now we cannot contemplate what this embraces, for it is infinite, but we do know a foretaste of this blessed inheritance by the things we have experienced. The love of God shed abroad in our hearts is not another love, but the same love in the realms of eternal glory.

But I am not writing what I meant to write; what I do feel thankful for is that the Lord has blessed me to partake of that holy and blessed relationship with his people; having been partaker of the fellowship with the saints I have hope. I thank my heavenly Father for the blessings received, and that part of the blessings I count have been our little conversations upon heavenly and divine things, and my

relationship with our beloved pastor, your brother, and I think how graciously the Lord blessed you to have parents and brothers, and their rich experiences, and I am thankful that my parents feared the Lord. I know that these blessings have often come to your mind and you have rejoiced in the Lord, and praised and blessed his holy name, and the Lord has kept your mind meditating upon the things of the kingdom thus far. I feel thankful for the evidence of the Lord's favor upon us all at Southampton, in his adding unto the church such as should be saved, and we are looking forward to the coming of brother Gilbert McColl's sister, though young and tender in years, yet rich in faith and love and desire to the house of God. These are evidences of favor from the Lord, and I rejoice in the behalf of our pastor, for I am persuaded it holds up his hands and strengthens his feeble knees. May we remember the loving-kindness and tender mercies of the Lord and praise and exalt his holy name.

Yours in a precious hope,

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., July 11, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I send this for your consideration, to do with as you think best. John i. 12: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." Following on in this chapter, the reader will understand how we receive this power: not by man, but by the will of God. Now we were not the sons of Adam before we were born of the flesh, but by receiving this birth we became the sons of Adam, heirs of all sin and unrighteousness, not of ourselves. By this birth we are given a natural birth and a natural mind to understand natural things. There is much to know in this life, but little we do know. We are left in this state until it pleases God to call us from nature's darkness into his marvelous light, by giving us the spiritual birth. We were his sons before receiving this birth, but now by this bringing out we are given an heirship to righteousness. We now become his sons and his heirs by his power; there is no other power that can give us this knowledge, therefore by his power we become the sons of God. Dear reader, you know that we, by the natural birth, are sinners, and inherit all the evil in this world by and through Adam, the flesh, but by the birth of Jesus, and him in us, by his power (not by flesh and blood) we become heirs, and receive all blessings he has in his storehouse for his children. We can do nothing, but must wait for the appointed time of the Father, knowing not the time nor season when Jesus will come, but he was sent by the word, or power, of God to save all who were lost, and not one will be missed, no, not one. The lame, the blind and all such will be found, and each one in the proper time and place; all will be given this power to become his sons and heirs. "I go to prepare a place for you," and every place will be filled, there will be none vacant. This house that is built without the sound of a hammer, will be finished without the aid of man, every stone in its place, Jesus Christ the chief corner-stone. God gives us power to become one of these stones, and we will all fill our place if we are of these stones. I know this house will never fall, because Jesus is the corner-stone; all his promises are sure and steadfast, and will never fail. O what is man that God should be mindful of him? Why should he send such blessings down to poor, fallen man?

It is a great mystery, past finding out; God only reveals as much to man as he wants him to know. I have always thought it a blessing that he is a mysterious God, or man would know all of his ways. But his ways are far above our ways, his thoughts as far above our thoughts as the heavens above the earth.

Do as you think best with this; if you throw it into the wastebasket it will be all right with me.

I am yours, I hope, in christian love,

C. S. BOND.

HAMPTON, Iowa, June 29, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—My mind has been on a subject upon which the Scriptures are silent. I have been in the dark on spiritual things. We have our dark seasons, and except we are given light on spiritual things it is no use trying to explain the Scriptures. I know this by long experience. All we know about it is by revelation. The subject I will try to give my views on is infant salvation. I have heard it talked about by many brethren. I was called to preach a funeral some time ago of an infant only a few months old. Our Arminian friends' idea is that the infant is pure and holy, and has no sin; this is the prevailing idea. We are accused of believing that some infants are lost and that some are saved. I have refuted this falsehood, both publicly and privately. I have never met an Old Baptist who believed it; if there are any I have never met them, and I have met many in my nearly sixty years experience. I will turn to Romans v. 12: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." This includes all Adam's posterity (not part, but all). We must go back nearly four thousand years before Paul's time to find the cause and effect of sin. What was the first law given to man? When was it given? and where given? We read that everything God created he called good, and very good. Now where there is no law there cannot be any transgression. When God made Adam and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils he became a living soul; he knew nothing of sin, there was no law given to him that he could transgress. The first law that was given him was after he was put in the garden. The Lord God commanded the man that of every tree of the garden he might freely eat, but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. (Gen. ii. 16, 17.) This law was given Adam before our mother Eve was formed. There is a difference between creation and formation. Everything was created in six days, and there has been nothing created since, but there was a development, or bringing forth, in time. Adam and Eve were not formed until after six days. Adam was the only man whom God ever formed to whom he gave a law (the first law), and for the transgression of that law brought death and condemnation to every kindred, tongue and people until time shall end. It had an effect upon all men, and further, it had a bearing upon man's future eternal destiny. Notice particularly that all laws given to man or nations since the transgression of the law God gave to Adam only have a bearing on this mortal life, have nothing to do with the law given there in the garden; it has no bearing upon man's eternal destiny. Now it was fifteen hundred and six years from Adam to Moses, during which time there was no other law given to man. All were under the curse of God's holy law

for Adam's transgression, which affected all his posterity, and includes infants as well as adults. Paul says the death sentence is upon all; infants must die; none escape death. David said, Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. (Psalms li. 5.) A birth does not change the nature of anything; it partakes of the nature of its parents. So we have proved by the Scriptures that the child is a sinner, not pure and holy as some have it. David says they are estranged from the womb, speaking lies. They must be born again, for Jesus said so. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven. Read the twelfth chapter of second Samuel, how Nathan reproved David for his great sin, taking Uriah's wife and putting Uriah in front of the battle to be killed. David mourned over the child that was born of Uriah's wife, it was stricken unto death. After the child died he ate, before it died he fasted. He said, Wherefore should I fast, can I bring him back? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me. David was a man after God's own heart, he was an inspired writer, a holy man of God. This Scripture is more direct than any other on infant salvation. Jesus blessed the infants, and Balaam, the false prophet, said whatever the Lord blessed was forever blessed, and what he cursed was forever cursed. No doubt you have heard it said by our Arminian friends that children grow up to a certain age, the age of maturity. I heard one say the age of ten or twelve years. It is by grace, and grace alone, all are saved; not of works, lest any man should boast. Infants cannot work, they are helpless, so you can plainly see that theory will never work. I believe every child dying in infancy, from the beginning of time to the end of time, is saved by the blood of Jesus Christ. I will say to parents, When you are called to give up your little darlings, mourn not, they are at rest with Him who finished a complete salvation for all his people; not one will be lost.

Brethren editors, I have written this article for the readers of the SIGNS, as some have asked my views on the silent subject, and it is at your disposal.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

E. A. NORTON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., April 2, 1910.

MISS MILDRED P. DURAND—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I desire to say first that I was glad at the coming of your letter, and still more glad at some things that it contained. We all enjoyed your short visit here, and I very much enjoyed the little talk we had together on Sunday morning. It has for many years been a great pleasure to me when it has been my privilege to hear any of those who have been taught of God speak of the way in which they are being led. The dear Lord leads his children into the truth by sometimes sorrowful and sometimes glad experiences, and at the end it will be found that they come into union with himself and with all who have ever known him. Deep things in the Scriptures (and they are all deep things) are made plain by his teaching within, both in his providence and his grace. The Bible teaching will not be turned about, but we shall be turned about, until we come into harmony with God's word in the Scriptures, and to find that we are one in experience with the word of God is hope, joy and peace to the soul. Looking back over the past of my life I do not see that the Bible means anything different to me now than it did well-nigh fifty years ago, but it means much more than it did then. I believe that the Bible taught the very

same things then that I believe it teaches now, but how much more full each principle of doctrine seems now than then. It is the difference between the bud and the full blown flower. As the years go on you will, I have no doubt, find it so with yourself. I am glad that the Lord gave me something for you the Sunday that you you were here. Prayer has occupied much of the thoughts of my heart for fifty years. Just now as I recall that you speak in your letter of asking amiss and not receiving, it occurs to me to say that the prayers which are indited by the Spirit of God are always heard and answered. I believe that our God always hears his children when they cry to him, even though in their weakness and ignorance they pray for that which would be of harm to them. Our Father always hears, and he always gives that which is best to all his, and it seems to me well indeed that our prayers are often answered in such a way that we do not know that they are answered. Weak human nature would easily become puffed up were we always to know that certain prayers had brought certain answers. It is, I think, sometimes given to the children of God to know that their prayers have prevailed, but oftener it is not so, and sometimes the answers come in such a way that we never in this life know that the things through which we have passed were real answers to our cries. Perhaps I am not making myself clear. It is in this way: we ask for patience, and instead of seeing that we receive patience, more tribulation comes, and with that more discoveries of our impatience and more shame that we are so little like the Lord. We ask for more love to God, and perhaps the first thing we see is that we are cold toward him, and there comes grief instead of gladness. We ask for more faith, and perhaps the reply is given in showing us more of the unbelief that dwells in our hearts. All these are really answers, but they are not the answers that we expected. The answers that we expected might have puffed us up, while these that are given must humble us and exalt the grace of God.

I remain your brother in Christ,

F. A. CHICK.

EROS, Ark., June 12, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—If one so unworthy as I feel myself to be should thus address you. I am sending remittance to the dear old SIGNS. I have felt for a long time that I would love to write a few lines. I have taken the SIGNS only one year, but have read it ever since I could read. My father has taken it ever since I can recollect. If I know anything of myself, I love the doctrine it sets forth; I surely love the doctrine of election and predestination. It seems to me every lover of the truth as it is in Jesus ought to love and believe it. How could they believe otherwise and believe God to be all-wise and having all power? If I could write as some of the dear brethren and sisters do it seems I would write often for publication. Their dear letters are of much comfort to me. Sometimes I feel that surely there is no one like me, and then pick up the dear old SIGNS and read of some dear one telling my feelings so well it fills my poor soul with joy to think I am not alone in my feelings and belief. I am sending four dollars to renew my subscription and also that of my dear father's. He is getting old and somewhat feeble in body, but not in the spirit, for as he gets older and feebler in body I think he gets stronger in the precious truths of our blessed Savior. He has passed his eighty-third birthday, and is in

reasonably good health for a man of his age. He surely loves to read the SIGNS; it is the most precious reading of anything to me except the Bible. I once thought I loved it because my father and mother did, but now I hope I love it for the truth and love it carries to so many dear children of God. O, it seems such a blessing to the dear children of God to have the privilege of communicating with each other, and such dear editors to write so much truth and comfort.

If a saint at all, surely the least of all,

N. J. LANCASTER.

WEISER, Idaho, July 10, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I must tell you of our good meeting just closed. We are away out here, where the country is thinly settled, and Baptists are scarce, but some thirty or more of us got together at my home church here at Weiser, the annual union meeting being held here this year. Our precious brethren, Elder Mayfield, of Oregon, and Elder Barnes, of Washington both precious to us for the truth's sake, Elder Turnidge and myself, who live here, were the ministers present. The preaching I heard was most excellent. You know sometimes at meetings of this kind one thinks every sermon is the best; it seemed it was that way at this time. I feel sure that if there was any time wasted, it was what I consumed, but the Lord in mercy blessed even me so that I could truthfully say, It is good to be here. My mind went to the one hundred and thirty-third Psalm: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." There were the old, the middle aged and the young with those silent witnesses running down their cheeks, testifying King Jesus had prepared the banquet, and had stayed, and they were partaking together, and surely the banner over them was love; they were all receiving the glorious truth of salvation by grace for time and eternity. We had two services Saturday and Sunday, two discourses each service, and every sermon was just a continuation of the one before. On Saturday we received one dear sister by experience. It seemed we were just lifted up, maybe not to the third heaven, but surely to the first. We were all for a time above the cares of this life, and could praise God, I believe, in spirit and in truth. This church has had a very trying time for some years, even up to three years ago, since then life and love have gradually developed, until now we have a lovely little band, who love Jesus and the order of his house. In the last year we have received five, and the dear Lord gave us one more after that. You know John saw things unlawful to utter, and if I am not deceived, I saw and felt of the goodness and mercy of God things impossible to utter. I cannot commence to tell of the sweet communion of the Spirit, with a thirsting, hungering soul. But O, dear brother, it must be a foretaste of that joy that awaits the children of God when they are, as it were, wandering in the desert, O so weary, so thirsty and hungry, forced to almost conclude they are deceived, they never knew Christ as the Son of God, all their hope has been vain, how good to come into the shadow of that great Rock, how nice and comforting to rest in this cool place and quench our thirst with water out of the Rock; there are no doubts now, all fear is gone, and one can say, I know my Redeemer liveth. One is slow to leave such a place.

I must now close. I only thought to tell of our good meeting.

Yours in hope,

T. E. ATTEBERY.

SALINE, La., July 30, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—You will find inclosed one dollar for six months subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; send to Mrs. W. W. Readhimer, Ashland, La., R. F. D. Dear brethren, I think the SIGNS is a grand old paper; it advocates the doctrine that I believe and hope I love. It certainly is a comfort to God's humble saints to read the doctrine it proclaims, for it gives the Lord all the praise, and none to man. I hope I have been made to realize that if it had been left to me to work out the least part of my salvation in time or eternity I would be forever lost. I have a little hope, which sometimes seems almost gone, but that hope rests on the mercy of a merciful God, therefore is sure. O how sweet it is for brethren to meet together and talk of his mercies to his people. I do not think that they will ever get through praising God in all eternity for their salvation. Dear brethren, there is very little gospel preached in this so-called gospel land; it seems that the preaching they have this day and time is as false as it is possible for it to be; it has got to where it does not even resemble true preaching. Our preachers are getting old, and there are only a few of them, which makes the future look dark for the few Old Baptists which are scattered over this world of sin and sorrow, but we are blessed with the privilege of having the gospel preached to us by a few of God's called servants, who have been enabled by grace to declare the unsearchable riches of a God who doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou? May his people be enabled by grace divine to trust in his holy name. May the SIGNS and all the writers who have contributed to its pages be permitted by that same grace to wield the pen in defense of the truth in the future as they have in the past. I do not believe it could have stood firm and immovable as it has stood these many years if it had not been sustained by Israel's God.

Now may the God of grace be with you and sustain you in your trials and troubles here on this earth, is the desire of your little brother, I hope, in Jesus Christ, E. F. READHIMER.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., August 2, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—My thoughts turn to the incident of Philip and the eunuch. It is only surmise that this "man of Ethiopia" was black, for as a servant of Queen Candace he may have been a purchased alien. But why do we seem to be so particular about race or color, if we are sincere in our profession of being all one in Christ Jesus? The first and very pertinent question by Philip is, "Understandest thou what thou readest?"—Acts viii. 30. I have often been surprised and disappointed in myself when shown errors into which I had fallen from careless, indifferent or ignorant reading of the Scriptures. I have made the serious mistake in the past of including the whole race of Adam in several of Paul's letters, whereas none should be so included save those clearly indicated in the address of each letter. There can be no clear understanding of that which is read unless we confine ourselves to the writer, the subject, and the person or persons addressed, and after having observed these there can be no communication between flesh and Spirit, no understanding of heavenly things by the earthly man, for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit." The reader of our subject labored under the mistake that "some man," most anybody that came

along, could "guide" him into an understanding. He was returning from Jerusalem, signifying deliverance from the law, yet his faith was too weak and his understanding not as yet sufficiently clear to see Jesus as separate from the prophet and all else, the fairest and altogether lovely, and in confusing Jesus with the prophet he also confused Philip the evangelist with "some man;" that is, he had the idea that the explanation of the Scripture was not confined to any certain man or men, or that Philip had been called, qualified and ordained by the church and directed by the Spirit to "arise, and go toward the south," &c., and also "to go near and join thyself to this chariot," so that, like the case of Cornelius and Peter the apostle, while the eunuch was desiring to know the truth, Philip was on the run to enlighten him. God does not fail to attend to this after he gave his only Son to save us, for "God is not mocked," in that all his children shall be taught of the Lord. It is impossible for one to understand what he reads with "some man" fixed in his mind as a "guide;" it is only when one reads with a sincere desire to know the truth, regardless of what men or devils teach, or even what the dearest friend or brother understands, that his eye of faith can be single to behold Jesus as holy, undefiled and separate from sinners, standing in bold relief from the law and the prophets as he who filleth all in all. No man can guide another in this, for no Scripture is of any private interpretation. All understanding as it is in Jesus comes first handed to each disciple, and that is the only way there can be harmony and fellowship in the testimony according to the measure of the gift of grace, as each knows no man "save Jesus only."

Yours in christian love,

EVERETT R. KINNEY.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., June 25, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—As the Lord has spared my life to the present time, I wish to say to you all that I enjoy reading your communications in our family paper, and trust the Lord will still continue to guide you all to write such things as will comfort the poor, feeble and desolate of God's children. I wonder often why I have to stay here so long in this lonesome, distressed world, then when I rightly consider, I know I am just staying here because God has so ordered it. I would be very glad if I could write something to encourage some one, but I will just have to say, I trust we shall all meet where parting will be no more, where there will be no more sighing, sorrow or tears. I try daily to praise my God that it is as well with me as it is, that he has given me strength after so much suffering to work a little in my garden; now I can go to it and gather my support, which I deem a very great blessing. I want to be watching, waiting and longing for my Master to come and say, Child, come home. I want to thank you for sending the SIGNS to me. I pray God's blessing upon all connected with the SIGNS. May he spare you to go on with the good work of publishing our dear, good, old, reliable paper. I will say farewell.

Yours in hope of heaven,

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

CASTLE ROCK, Wash., July 11, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find money order, for which please give credit on subscription to our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We love the dear old SIGNS for the blessed truth it contains, and while reading the editorial of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, in June 1st, 1916, number, on the church of

God, what is it? our hearts were made to rejoice, and we were made to feel that it was worth more to us than the price of the paper for many years. I will add that we received the bundle ordered of that issue. I now have the pleasure of knowing that after reading the paper some of my children request that I send it to them to read, which I am pleased to do. I want to say that by the goodness and mercy of our covenant-keeping God and Savior I was permitted last October to meet once more with my home church (New Hope), which was held (by request) at my daughter's home, in Portland, Oregon, and it was a joy and a pleasure to me to meet with the brethren and sisters in church capacity once more. There are just a few of us, still we were made to feel that it was good to be there. We are so scattered, or live so far from each other, that it is seldom we get to meet together. New Hope Church has been constituted for more than fifty years, and has always stood aloof from the isms and schisms now among some of the churches on the coast calling themselves Baptists, and my prayer is that she may ever be found contending for the order of God's house and the faith once delivered unto the saints.

This from an old sinner,

J. K. BOYD.

HOPEWELL, N. J., July 20, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I feel constrained to write you a few words of love and fellowship, which I hope are in my heart for you all, for without that love and faith we cannot please God, and are as a tinkling cymbal, or nothing. O that I might know his will and do it in all things, and be guided by his loving hand. Yes, we as little children must come to our heavenly Father through Jesus, our dear Redeemer, for all our needs, both temporal and spiritual, and with his blessing be content with all he prepares for us, and praise and thank him for all his loving-kindness to us poor worms of the dust. By nature we are never satisfied, but by grace we are full, and want nothing more, but feel that all is well and peaceful, and Jesus all the day long is our joy and our song. He has prepared the meal, and we are feasting. O happy family, blessed of the Lord; praise his name. For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. By nature we are blind, and cannot see what is best for us, but our heavenly Father has prepared for us all that we need, both temporal and spiritual, while we journey here. So, dear ones, let not your heart be troubled, all is well; ye believe in God, believe also in the blessed Savior. Sometimes in our troubles all looks dark to us, and we know not what to do, but soon the Sun arises with all his refulgent glory, then we can see all is well and go on our way rejoicing, being glad and thankful. So the warfare will go on, but we shall all come off victorious through Jesus Christ our Redeemer, and unto him be all the praise now and evermore, world without end.

Farewell, dear ones in the Lord, hold fast to the faith once delivered unto the saints; hold fast to that which is good.

(MRS.) GEORGE R. YARD.

BAIRD, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I feel unworthy to address you in this language, knowing what a great sinner I am, and feeling you are so much better than I am, but we have the same faith and hope, which hope is as an anchor of the soul,

both sure and steadfast. I have been trying to preach the gospel of our Lord and Savior for thirty years, but have met with so much opposition I fear sometimes that I do not know anything about preaching the gospel, but I have always preached the doctrine as I understand it, but now I am too old and feeble to preach, and our nearest church is twenty-five miles away. My wife and self are the only Primitive Baptists in this community, and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is all the preaching we have. I am now in my eightieth year, and quite feeble and almost deaf. We do love the doctrine advocated in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; the foreknowledge of God, the predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass, is the doctrine we love. I am sending you money order for one dollar. Please extend my subscription for six months.

W. B. JONES.

OMAHA, Texas, Jan. 13, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find money order for five dollars, for which please give me credit, as I am behind with my subscription, which I regret, but I have done the best I could, and will, if the Lord wills, try to pay up as it comes due. It seems to me I could not do without the SIGNS, as I have been a reader of it almost all my life. I am now in my eighty-third year, and have always indorsed the doctrine set forth, and if I could write like the dear ones who contribute to its columns I would gladly do so, but I am one of the weak ones, and so sinful that I feel unworthy to even read the dear letters. If I can I will send my experience to you, as I have been requested to do so, but sometimes I get so low down that I could not tell it intelligently.

Fearing you will be wearied I will close, wishing you a happy and prosperous new year. Love to you all.

I am your brother in hope of a better life beyond the grave,

J. E. KNIGHTEN.

EVERETT, Pa., July 19, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We wish to speak a word of encouragement to you in your work of publishing the SIGNS. The Lord surely blesses it to the comfort of his poor, scattered people, and we, being nearly thirty miles from our nearest church, get most of our preaching through its columns. The publishing and editorial work of the SIGNS is certainly conducted in a most commendable manner. We wish to thank you for your kindness in waiting for us through the past year. Elder Ker has been sorely tried, and he has our sympathy in all these great trials. May the Lord continue to bless you and the editors, and also those who write for the SIGNS to the comfort of his poor people.

Sincerely your friends,

MR. & MRS. J. C. STARR.

PRICE OF BIBLES ADVANCED.

WE are sorry to announce that hereafter the price of our Premium Bibles will be $2.50 instead of $2.25, as formerly. This advance is made necessary because the dealers have been compelled to raise their price to us, as everything used in printing and bookbinding has been raised in price.

For those who wish to secure a Bible as a premium, it will be necessary to send us four new subscribers at $2.00 each.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1916.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

GRACE—WHAT IS IT?

PERHAPS there is no subject of the Scriptures more important. Perhaps no subject is so little understood by the masses of men. Surely no subject should be emphasized more. After an acquaintance and experience with and in the ministry for many years I have never heard any man tell his audience what "grace" is. This is my one point in this short article, and I wish that every statement be tried by the holy Scriptures, which are the infallible record of God, by which everything pertaining to godliness must be tried to see if it be true, just and right.

When the Lord put Adam in the garden of Eden to keep it and dress it, he gave him a law by which his life therein should be governed. The law gave him right to all the trees of the garden except one, which was called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The law said to him, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." That law was the word of God, hence was holy, just and good, and for Adam to transgress it meant death to him and to all his posterity. He did eat of that tree, in violation of the law, and immediately became dead in trespasses and in sin, separated from God, driven out of the garden, and the flaming sword was placed at the entrance of the garden to avoid his return. In that sad state and condition the Lord made Adam the promise that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, or undo the devil's work in bringing sin, and death by sin, into the world. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "So by the obedience of one [Christ] shall many be made righteous." Here is the key to the subject, "grace." If the law of our land holds the transgressor thereof responsible for his disobedience, and the guilty must meet its every demand, how much more so does the law of God hold the guilty accountable. Should man commit willful murder the law says he shall die. If he were to faithfully promise never to transgress again, and were able to keep that promise, would the law excuse him? Certainly not. If all men have sinned and come short of the glory of God, does God's law excuse the guilty upon promise to do better? Certainly not. The only hope for a man indicted for crime is to prove that man innocent in the eyes of the law of the crime of which he is charged. This is often done, but every man was guilty in the eyes of God's law, because all had sinned; hence by nature all were under the curse. All being in this condition, "without hope and without God in the world," the Lord manifested his mercy to men in sending his only begotten Son to die that they might live. Christ met every demand of God's law, suffered all its penalty, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. Therefore Paul tells us that we are saved by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. Since the sinner therefore could

not merit the favor of God, since he could not undo what he had done, salvation is God's free, unmerited gift, which is "grace."

It seems remarkably strange that while all intelligent persons admit the above facts, many still contend that all men are saved by their own works of obedience and self-righteousness. The apostle tells Titus plainly that men are not saved by works of righteousness performed by them, neither are they called with an holy calling according to their works, but according to the purpose and grace given them in Christ before the world began. A man condemned to death by the law and in the death-house awaiting the day of execution is no more helpless to work himself into the favor of the law and be excused for his crime than is the man condemned by the law of God for sin. When the apostles conceived the idea that they could do some things themselves, and desired, each, to be the greatest in the kingdom, the Savior said, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye can in no wise enter the kingdom of God. Little children are helpless, and can do nothing whatever for themselves. This is why, it seems to us, the Savior said, "Little children." There must be a realizing sense of this helplessness and a revelation of the power of God before any man can know experimentally that salvation is by grace and in no sense of creature works. If the children of God are the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus, what part of the work did they perform and what part in the creation did they take? Such questions put the wisest men to silence, as was the case of Job when the Lord asked him, saying, Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? That question taught Job that he was not in existence when the Lord laid the foundations, hence had no part whatever in the work. The word "create" means to bring into existence that which did not exist before. Hence if the children of God were created of the Father in Christ Jesus what part of the work did they perform? Absolutely none. Therefore salvation is by grace, to the glory of God the Father, and because of this salvation they are called with an holy calling unto holiness and everlasting life. But salvation by grace is not for eternity only, but for this time state, that the children may be saved now from falling away from the doctrine of Christ; that they be saved from despair when overtaken with the afflictions of this world; that they be kept from evil in the day of temptation; that the tongue be bridled that it speak no guile; that the hands be governed that they commit no crime. It is also a light to the pathway of the pilgrim, that the feet be kept in the way of peace. When we see the mighty works of God in building his spiritual house, the song is grace, grace be unto it. Then of grace let us sing, of grace let us preach, of grace let us write.

"Grace! 'tis a charming sound,
Harmonious to the ear;
Heaven with the echo shall resound,
And all the saints shall hear."

K.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the last page of each number of the Signs of the Times we request that all remittances be sent direct to this office, and if our brethren and friends would follow these directions they would save us much trouble and expense. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

PSALM XXIII.

To our mind this Psalm is not so much an expression of David's mind and experience as it is the Spirit of Christ speaking through David. The primary meaning of all Old Testament prophecies is Jesus, all in some way relate to him. Peter said when preaching on the day of Pentecost, that David in writing the sixteenth Psalm had no reference to himself or his own experience, but was prophesying of Jesus and things pertaining to Jesus. So we believe in this twenty-third Psalm that David is speaking of Jesus and his relation to the Father, that God the Father is the Shepherd of Jesus, and that Jesus, who is God manifest in the flesh, speaks of himself through David under the similitude of a sheep. In the twenty-second Psalm, the one preceding this we have under consideration, David is moved to testify of the sufferings of Jesus, and uses the exact words used by Jesus himself upon the cross: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" All through this Psalm we are given in minute detail the crucifixion of Christ, which did not actually transpire until several hundred years after David wrote this. The twenty-third Psalm, immediately following this recital of suffering, takes a more lofty and sublime tone, and depicts the grand trust and confidence of the Savior in the midst of his awful shame and agony. This is akin to what Job said: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." It is as though Jesus said, Though thou, my Father, bruiseth me, and willeth that I be put to death in an open shame, yet thou art my shepherd, and I shall not want for anything that I need to carry me safely and successfully through it all. God the Father is and was certainly the shepherd of our Jesus in all his life, and in his death. It was not in the power of Jesus as a man to map out his own life, or to direct his own steps, he could but walk and act as it had been decreed from eternity and had been prophesied of that he should walk and act. Jesus came into the world, not to be subject to himself, but to be subject to the will of his Father in all things. He came to carry out and to fulfill the will of his God, which will was that of all that the Father had given him he should lose nothing, but raise it up at the last day. In all this work he was shepherded by the Father, he was guided and watched over by him. Not a stone could touch him until his hour had come, and when his hour to be offered had come nothing could possibly keep the venom and spite of men from being vented upon him. Yet even in death he was shepherded by the Father, for though they broke the legs of the thieves on either side of him, they could not break his legs, for the prophecy was already gone forth, Not one bone of his body shall be broken. God is not our shepherd, or the shepherd of any one, only as he is the shepherd of that one through Christ Jesus. We must always bear in mind, and it cannot be emphasized too strongly, that God is not related to us, nor we to him, only as that relationship comes through Christ Jesus. Take away, if you can, this truth of the eternal vital unity of Christ and his people and there remains no ground whatever for the salvation of any sinner, nor any basis whatever for the relationship of any mortal to the immortal.

"I shall not want." Jesus never needed for anything that was necessary for him in the successful prosecution of the work assigned him. The word "want" is here used in the sense of "need," and because Jesus wanted, needed, nothing but what those needs were all supplied, so every

one chosen in him from before the world began shall never need anything that is essential to their welfare here or in the world to come. We may want many things that we shall not have granted us, but no one of all God's flock shall ever want for anything that God knows that one needs.

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." The fact that these were "green" feeding-places means that they were "living" pastures. We might consider this second verse in connection with the fifth, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." Please bear in mind that the figure of a sheep and a shepherd goes all through this Psalm, and therefore "table" does not mean a table such as we use to eat upon, which is made of wood and set upon legs off the floor so people may sit about it. In those eastern countries, and especially in Syria and Palestine, a "table" literally meant "table-land," a place suitable for the pasturage of sheep. Whenever a shepherd led his flock to a place where good pasture grew, this was called a "table." Thus, it seems to us, that "he maketh me to lie down in green pastures," and "thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies," mean about the same thing. The enemies of Jesus could not see this living pasturage of the Savior wherein he fed and wherein he was refreshed, but while he was in the midst of his enemies this table was spread before him for his strengthening and encouragement in the work of salvation. Listen to this from John iv. 31–34: "In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat. But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat? Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." Is not this wonderful? More than raiment for his body, more than food for his outer man, more than earthly comforts, was the inner consciousness that he was walking in obedience to his Father's will. This was meat indeed to him. His enemies could not perceive this secret sustenance that upheld him while in the midst of them. He moved among them in a mystery, he lived a divinely enchanted existence.

"He leadeth me beside the still waters." "Still waters" mean deep waters. Stillness signifies depth. He was led into the deep things of God. God's election, predestination, foreknowledge, all these deep things were not secret from him. To him they were unfolded, and he knew who to save and who not to save; he knew whose sins to forgive and whose not. This was because the deep things of God kept secret from the foundation of the world were to him unfolded. He knew his sheep, and called them by their name, and they followed him. He never made a mistake and called one that did not belong to him, nor did he ever omit to call a single one the Father had given him. This was all because he was led beside the still waters.

"He restoreth my soul." How true this is of Jesus. His soul was not left in hell, neither did this Holy One of God ever see corruption. This was because "He restoreth my soul." The same mighty power that brings sinners to believe in God also wrought in this Jesus that lay in Joseph's new tomb, and raised him from the dead. Thus his soul was restored. Experimentally, whenever we have a taste of this resurrection power working in us, we, too, are restored, and the joy of our salvation restored to us. The basis of all such restorations that

ever God's people experience is because Jesus' soul was restored. He is the first-fruits of all things that come unto the elect of God. Jesus must first know these things for himself before he can beget his individuality in the people belonging to him. All we have and are flows to us through him.

"He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." Just think what a path this was. It began in eternity with the Father, where the Son was equal with the Father. Then the Son laid aside his glory with the Father, and took upon himself the body of flesh and blood, condescending to be born of a woman, and to be made under the law of sin and death. Now, being found in fashion as a man, he is a servant, and humbles himself and becomes obedient unto the shameful death of the cross. He dies publicly disgraced as a common felon, yet he was without guile. He descends into hell, the grave, and is risen therefrom by the power of his majesty abounding over death. After this he reveals himself unto certain witnesses to establish beyond all successful contradiction that he is really risen from the dead. This done, he ascends to heaven and is again with the Father in that glory he had with him in the beginning. Is not this a wonderful and a most glorious path for the Holy One of God to tread? From heaven to earth, from earth through death to hell, from hell through resurrection to earth again, but not to earthly life again, from earth to final and ultimate glory never to be ended. This is the path of righteousness: the way to heaven lies through earth and hell, and just as Jesus, the sheep, trod this path, being shepherded by the almighty Father all along the way, just so shall every one that is in Christ know and learn this pathway in some measure. Though many dark and trying things lie in this path, though it leads through persecution and humiliation, though it passes through death and hell, everything connected with it is right, whether we see it that way or not at the time, for it is a righteous path.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." We do not think that by the "valley of the shadow of death" is meant any particular place in this pathway, or that it simply means the hour of final dissolution, but that this whole world of human existence, from the day of one's birth to the day of one's death, is "the valley of the shadow of death." The moment we begin to live, that moment we begin to die. All that we do, and all that we think, and all that we are, as men and women in this world are stamped with the shadow of death. Nothing lives forever but God, no immortality anywhere but in Jesus Christ. Through this valley of the shadow of death Jesus walked, but feared no evil, because, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." The "rod" signifies the protecting power of God. Some have said the rod means the chastisements of God. This is not so in this instance, for the shepherd's rod was never used to beat the sheep. In that day they had no guns or modern weapons with which to protect the sheep from the wolves and other dangers, so the shepherds used a heavy club, or rod; with this they beat away the enemies of the sheep and slew them. This "rod" or defense of Jehovah, comforted Jesus through the valley of the shadow of death. The shepherd's staff was for the guidance of the sheep. In those days shepherds went ahead of their sheep and led them, they did not go in

the rear of the sheep and drive them. Thus, going before the sheep, the shepherd carried in his hand a long and conspicuous staff, which he turned this way and that to show the sheep which way to go and where to turn, and so on. This "staff" is figurative of the Holy Ghost, or Spirit of God, which was the leader and the guiding star of Jesus as the sheep, and led him in all the walk and in all the work of his life and death. Just so is the Holy Ghost the shepherd's staff of every one of the elect in Christ, and guides them in all the journey of their lives. Thus preserved and guided by the power of Jehovah and the Spirit of his truth, why fear any evil as we journey through this world of sin and woe?

"Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." This brings to light the priesthood of Christ. Just as Aaron in the type was anointed with holy oil so that it was poured upon his head and ran down over his beard and to the uttermost skirts of his garments, so more really is Jesus anointed with the holy oil of God's own self. Not only is this oil poured upon Jesus, thus constituting him the great High Priest of our profession, but his cup runneth over, so that every member of his body is also made a priest and a king through him. Had not the cup run over, Jesus only would have been anointed, but the fact that the anointing cup ran over means that some drops come to each of the Lord's people, and they, too, through his anointing, are made kings and priests unto God, to offer unto him, not the blood of bulls and goats, but the spiritual sacrifices of thanksgiving.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." Wherever Jesus went, and wherever he now manifests himself, the goodness and mercy of God follow in his wake. He came unto Mary the Magdalene, and found her in her sin, but when he left her he left behind him a heart uplifted in adoration to its Maker for his goodness and mercy in making her pure and clean. He came unto the man at the pool of Bethesda, and found him crippled and diseased, he left him whole and clean, for the goodness and mercy of God followed wherever he went. Thus, to-day, Jesus comes into a sinner's heart and condemns sin in that sinner's flesh, but before Jesus gets through with him that sinner is praising God for his abundant goodness and mercy. Wherever Jesus passed along his pathway blossomed behind him with spiritual hearts uplifted in psalms to the goodness and mercy of God. It was so then, it is so now.

"I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." How different this is from the expression of David in the twenty-seventh Psalm. There he says, "I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life." But in the twenty-third Psalm, Jesus says, "I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." Quite a difference between "I may dwell," and "I will dwell." Also quite a difference between "for ever" and "all the days of my life." Man must say, "I may," but Jesus, God incarnate, can say, "I will." It is the will of Jesus, and therefore the will of God, that Jesus shall dwell in the house of God (the church) forever, for all eternity. Because he is in the midst of her she shall not be moved. He dwells always in the church, he is her life and her king, the center of her wellbeing and her governor, her peace and her salvation forever.

Sister Olivia Norris Hellings, of the Hopewell Church, N. J., asked us a long time ago to write on the words, "Thou preparest a table before me in the pres-

ence of mine enemies," so we have incorporated a few thoughts upon those words in this article, but have been impressed to consider the whole Psalm, instead of just that part of it. We fear the sister has thought we completely ignored her request, and indeed it looked like it, but we have not until now felt able to deal with the matter. Again we want to remind those who ask us for our views that we have no intention of ignoring their requests, but have no control of our mind in these matters, and can only write as we are led out into these things.

L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Leslie K. Smith, our beloved brother, was born in Henry County, Ky., October 30th, 1855, and died March 21st, 1916. He was married to Miss Mattie Christian, daughter of Marion and Amanda Christian, Nov. 25th, 1880. To them were born one son, Isaac, and one daughter, Mary Lillian, who passed from this life to that blessed home prepared for her May 19th, 1907, after undergoing an operation for appendicitis at a hospital in Louisville. Brother Smith was a man of sterling worth in his citizenship in the county, honorable and upright in all his dealings and a friend to the poor. He was blessed with plenty of this world's goods, and was faithful in the stewardship of the manifold blessing of his God. He was brought into the feeling sense of the greater riches, which can neither fade nor be dissolved: the riches of God's grace, or a good hope through grace, and united with the Sulphur Fork Church, with others, the fourth Saturday in October, 1901, and was baptized by Elder Eubanks, and lived a faithful and devoted member of that church. He was quiet in his manner of life, gentle, but firm, and well grounded in what he believed to be Bible doctrine. As a man in the county, no one was more honored or respected, which was evidenced by the very large attendance at the funeral at his home near Campbellsburg, which was conducted by the writer and John Christian, a brother of the devoted wife, who, together with the one son, two brothers, one sister and the dear aged mother, survives to deeply mourn the loss of one beloved by them all. Brother Smith had been in failing health for some months of Bright's disease, but the end was not thought to be near. He was taken to the hospital in Louisville to undergo an operation, from which he never rallied, but fell asleep in Jesus. The church and community feel their loss, and deeply sympathize with the family and near relatives. Our deepest sympathy and humble prayer go out in their behalf, that he who never slumbers or sleeps may graciously watch over, keep and preserve them from all harm. Burial was at New Castle Cemetery, where that which is mortal rests in peace.

Unavoidable delay prevented an earlier obituary.

P. W. SAWIN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky.

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Martha Gadd, Texas, $2.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Predestinarian Baptists known as the New Hope Association will convene with Little Flock Church, three miles southeast of Edgewood, on the Texas Pacific Railroad, in Van Zandt Co., Texas, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1916. All Old School Predestinarian Baptists in fellowship with us, especially ministering brethren, are invited. All trains will be met on Thursday before with conveyance.

S. M. DICKENS.

THERE will be a two days meeting at Cammal, Pa., the fourth Sunday in August and Saturday preceding. A hearty invitation is given to all who desire to come.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet with Providence Church, near Plano, Appanoose Co., Iowa, in her sixty-second annual session, on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1916, and continue three days. Trains will be met at Plano. All are invited.

S. B. JONES, Moderator.

H. C. CATE, Clerk.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will meet, if the Lord wills, with the church at Bowdoinham, Maine, on Friday before the second Monday in September (8th, 9th and 10th), 1916. Lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

GEO. R. TEDFORD.

THE ninety-ninth session of the West Tennessee Association will meet with Yellow Creek Church, Dickson Co., Tenn., two miles from Woodhaven, on the Clarksville Mineral R. R. Brethren will be met at Woodhaven with conveyance. Session to begin Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1916.

A. L. STANSELL.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

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[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 84. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1916. NO. 17.

CORRESPONDENCE.

REVELATION XXII. 12.

"AND behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

Dear brethren, whose hope is in the Lord, I desire to write some upon the subject contained in the words above, and their connections. I desire to try to write in a way to be understood as to what I believe. First of all I desire, if it be the will of God, that I may be given wisdom to enable me to rightly divide the word of truth. O how solemn a matter this is when we realize that Jesus has said: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."—Rev. xxii. 18, 19. This, to my mind, proves that it is God's people here under consideration, as well as it is God's people referred to in verse fourteen. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. These words are in harmony with the words of our text: "And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." This holds good concerning all of God's people that do his commandments, as well as of all God's people that add to these things or take away from the words of the book of this prophecy. God adds the blessings; God also adds the plagues that are written in this book. We also read, Rev. ii. 23: "And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works." This is in harmony with the words of our text. The words last quoted were to one of the seven churches which were in Asia. While I believe these seven churches did then actually exist in Asia, I also believe they were representative churches, and that similar conditions are always manifest in one church or another. Rev. i. 3, reads thus: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand."

Revelation xxii. 10, reads thus: "And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand." This is in harmony with our text: "And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." God was then judging his people. He yet is judging his people according to their works, blessing those who do his commandments on one hand, and on the other hand adding the plagues that are written in this book. Also note these words again (O how solemn they ought to be to us all): "And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." The holy city referred to here evidently is the same city referred to in verse fourteen, and the blessing referred to in verse fourteen is taken away from those referred to in verse nineteen. Their part is taken out of the book of life, and out of the holy city. Evidently the blessing and the plagues written in this book mean here in this time life, and not as for the life to come. Evidently for any one to say these plagues mean for the life to come in eternity, is adding unto these things, and yet (evidently) the great majority of God's people apply the judgments of God pertaining to his people to the life to come, instead of to this life, and also the blessings that are for those who do his commandments are applied to eternity, instead of for this life. If these positions are not true, then all such are both adding to and taking from the words of the book of this prophecy, therefore God shall add unto them the plagues that are written in this book. Let us ever remember the words of our text: "And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Paul said: "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses," and then said, "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"—Heb. x. 28, 29. God's people can do these things, and it is God's people that the Lord referred to when he said: For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell. These are the sore judgments of God against his people that sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to new gods, that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not. (Read Deut. xxxii. 17.) Verse eighteen reads thus: "Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee." These would be given according to their works. This evidently is the chapter that Paul was quoting from. Heb. x. 30, 31: "For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." So we see that Paul taught as the Lord taught, Deut. xxxii. 35, 36, and connections. The same is also taught in 2 Peter ii. These false teachers referred to by Peter would be given according to their works, just as surely as would the true teachers be given according to their works. All false teachers like those referred to by Peter were speaking by private interpretation. Peter said: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God

spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." If it were by the will of man, that would be by private interpretation. It is the teachers of private interpretation that add to and take from the Scriptures. They will be given according to their works, but remember their teaching is of private interpretation, instead of revelation. The first thing that God's people should do is to try the spirits, whether they be of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world. (Read 1 John iv. 1.) These false prophets referred to by John evidently are the same kind of prophets referred to by Peter, therefore were adding to and taking from the true meaning of the Scriptures. These teachers are referred to in many places in the Scriptures. In Acts xv. 24, we read: "For as much as we have heard, that certain which went out from us [note the words, went out from us. John said, gone out] have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment." These teachers were adding to and taking from the teachings of the holy Scriptures, and we should note they went out from us, evidently meaning that they went out from the church at Jerusalem, yet they were given no commandment to preach what they did preach. Paul said of the same kind of teachers: "As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ." Evidently no unbelieving Jew was ever afraid of being persecuted for the cross of Christ. It was believing Jews that preferred to preach a manpleasing doctrine than to preach the doctrine of grace. Through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. Such a doctrine has never been loved by teachers that desire part of the glory in the salvation of lost and ruined sinners. Paul continues: "For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh." This is the secret of the whole matter, self-glorification, and at the same time escaping persecution for the cross of Christ. There is no cross to bear when preaching the doctrine of works. But let us all remember the words of our text: "And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." The whole Arminian world to-day expects to be saved upon condition that they keep the commandments of God; and not only this, they teach that a man in a state of nature must keep the commandments in order to his being saved as for eternity. O what a hopeless doctrine for all who know the plague of their own heart. If their doctrine is true, not one of them can be saved, for they hinge their eternal destiny upon the condition that they do the commandments of God. Now let us reason together; Jesus said: Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God, yet we have no Scripture to prove that any man was ever commanded to be born again. On the other hand, the Scriptures clearly teach that being born of God is not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (John i. 13; also read John v. 1.) Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. These Scriptures alone clearly teach, first, it is necessary to be born of God before one can see the kingdom of God; second, that being born of God is not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; third, Whosoever believeth that

Jesus is the Christ is born of God. All mankind combined cannot overthrow these words of Jesus and John, but it is true that they can and do trouble God's people with words, subverting their souls, and teach for doctrine the commandments of men, instead of teaching and doing the commandments of God. Some even go so far as to teach that to be baptized is to be born again. From that standpoint they baptize unbelievers in order to born them again. Yet remember John said: Not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. It is because this is true that John said, Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. Man must first be born of God before he can believe that Jesus is the Christ. John said: "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."—John xii. 42, 43. From John's testimony there were many of the chief rulers that were born of God, for he said: Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and yet these chief rulers loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. There evidently are many to-day who believe on Jesus that love the praise of men more than the praise of God, therefore will not confess Jesus or what Jesus has done for them. Remember the words of our text: "And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Those chief rulers would not escape the judgments of God if they continued to love the praise of men more than the praise of God. Evidently no person not born of God ever has or ever will have right to the tree of life, nor to enter in through the gates into the city. Also it is evident to me that no person ever had his part taken out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book, unless he first was born of God. John said of Jesus: He came unto his own, and his own received him not; but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born. Evidently this power means the right or privilege to manifest what Jesus had done for them. This many of the rulers did not do. They did not confess Jesus, though they did believe on him; they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. The nine lepers who were cleansed did not return to give glory to God, yet they had the power or the right or privilege to manifest what had been done to them. This power or right or privilege is not given to any one who does not believe on his name, neither does any one believe on his name who is not born of God; born of God first, and then belief follows, but never precedes the truth. Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, said to Mary, the mother of Jesus: For lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears the babe leaped in my womb for joy. This proves that Christ can be revealed to the unborn babe, yet evidently this babe was born of God, or else would not have leaped for joy in his mother's womb. Jesus said: This is the work of God, that ye believe on his name. Therefore it was the work of God that the babe leaped for joy in his mother's womb; but let us ever remember, Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God. It is the living who are commanded to do his commandments, and those born of God have right

to the tree of life, and enter in through the gates into the city. It is also those who are born again who are meant in the words: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things written in this book. And it evidently is those born of God that are referred to in the words of our text: "And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

Submitted in love to all whose hope is the Lord.

JOSEPH FORD.

DAVID CITY, Nebr., June 1, 1916.

SALISBURY, Md., July 30, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I inclose a copy of a letter I wrote some time ago, which the recipient thereof asks, as you will see by the copy of her letter I inclose, be published in the SIGNS. When I wrote this I had no thought of its ever being published, and feel now that sister Ellison's letter, which I inclose, is as worthy of a place, or more so, than the one I wrote, but will leave all the writing to do with as the Lord may direct your mind.

Your unworthy brother,

F. SELBY FISHER.

SALISBURY, Md., June 25, 1915.

DEAR SISTER ELLISON:—I have read your excellent article in June 15th SIGNS, which, to say the least, I enjoyed, and felt profited thereby. I notice at the last part of the second article you speak of the question coming in your mind as to, What does the "stone" represent, or what was the stone that was laid upon the well's mouth? Since reading this article, which was a week ago, I have had considerable thought on this stone, and last evening after retiring my mind was very much in exercise about it, therefore I feel now to intrude, if the Lord wills, a portion of my meditations upon you for your consideration, and will take it as a special favor if I am wrong in my views for you to so tell me. I have never felt able to give instruction to the Lord's children, therefore it is with timidity I approach you on this subject. The fact that we are strangers, naturally, makes no help or hindrance with me, for if we are His we are not strangers. You will read the following words in Genesis, twenty-ninth chapter, and part of the tenth verse: "Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother." After Jacob had received the blessing from Isaac, his father, he must flee from the wrath of his brother Esau, and upon the entreaty of his mother, and the implicit instruction of his father, he fled to Padan-aram, unto Laban, his mother's brother, and when he had come into the land of the people of the east "he looked, and behold, a well in the field, and, lo, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks: and a great stone was on the well's mouth." We have here specially mentioned "three flocks of sheep," which represent the Lord's people in the three dispensations, and the stone upon the well's mouth is sin, which separated God's children from the well of salvation. As this stone was between the sheep and the water of the well, the sins of the people had separated them from God. There are those spoken of in verse three as "they," who rolled the stone from the well's mouth and watered the sheep and put the stone again upon the well's mouth in its place. These spoken of as "they," were as the priests during the legal dispensation, who,

when the Israelites were gathered at the temple for sacrifice and worship, the priests, as it were, rolled the stone (sin) away and watered the flock, in that a sacrifice was required and acceptable in that day as an atonement for sin, but they never made the comers thereunto perfect, and must needs be repeated often; so in that the stone was again put upon the well's mouth, the sacrifice being only typical of that great Sacrifice which was to come. But it answered the purpose in that day, and was in the counsel of God. While Jacob conversed with those who had already gathered at the well, inquiring for his kinsman Laban, his mother's brother, "Rachel came with her father's sheep: for she kept them."—Verse nine. In this instance Jacob is a type of Christ, and Rachel the church, for as soon as Jacob saw Rachel and the sheep he rolled the stone from the well's mouth and watered the flock of Laban, his mother's brother. "And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept," and he told her who he was, and she ran and told her father, and we see no account that the stone was ever placed on the well's mouth again after Jacob rolled it away. We also see election, in that Jacob watered the sheep that Rachel kept, and no account that he watered any other. So when in typical Israel, the many sacrifices, or waterings of the flock, which had to be done continually, the stone was as often replaced. But when Jesus left his Father and came on that lonely journey in earth (the flesh), which this journey of Jacob represented, for Jacob went to Padan-aram for his bride, and she was kin to him, too, and that on his mother's side, so Jesus came in the likeness of sinful flesh to his bride, which was kin to him on his mother's side, in that his mother (Mary) was a natural being, as we, from which he inherited all the natural feelings that flesh is heir to, knowing all our frames and feelings, thereby being in complete sympathy with our every ailment, whether natural or spiritual. He knew what natural hunger was, knew also what it was to be deprived of the comforts of this life, for he had not where to lay his head. He knew what it meant to be utterly forsaken by natural men, and even God himself, often in his destitution spending the night in the hills in solemn conversation with the Father. He experienced all the way from the depths of degradation to the supreme heights of eternal glory, and in his coming he forever rolled the stone (sin) from the mouth of the well of salvation, watering the flock of his bride with the water of the eternal well, which shall never fail, neither shall the stone any more be rolled upon the well's mouth, for he opened and none can shut; and the water that he gives is a well of water springing up into eternal life in us. In rolling away the stone he forever rolled away our sins, our transgressions are blotted out as a thick cloud, and our iniquities are remembered against us no more forever, and we have access to this heavenly well of water of eternal life through him; that is, through his work, which is finished. There could be a very great deal said on this wonderful subject, but my mind was only to say what to me seems to be meant by the stone which was upon the well's mouth. If I have written amiss, may the Lord enlighten you to see the error.

Your unworthy brother,

F. SELBY FISHER.

OSKALOOSA, Kansas, July 16, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER FISHER:—I wish I could express my appreciation of your

good letter, which reached me in due time. I certainly did feel edified and pleased when I read it, and believe you were given the right interpretation of the Scripture. I have wished to show your letter to the rest of our brethren before attempting to answer it, but as to-day was our meeting-day, and I was hindered from going, I will try, if the Lord wills, to pen you a few lines to let you know I am not unmindful of your kindness in sharing your good things with me. At one time it was said that the disciples had all things common, none of them said that any of the things which he possessed were his own. Those that believed were of one heart and one soul, and they laid the price of their possessions at the apostles' feet and had all things common. That is, I believe what belonged to one was freely shared with the rest, as though it belonged to all alike. I have thought that the spiritual interpretation of this Scripture had reference to the good things the Lord is sometimes graciously pleased to deal out to his people. It is not their own, but the price of it belongs to all alike, and so our good things should be shared with one another. The price of good so dearly bought and so freely bestowed on the Lord's people is the precious blood of Christ. He gives us a new commandment, that as he loved us so ought we also to love one another, and when he takes of the things of his and shows them to us, let us in turn talk of them to one another, and praise him for his goodness and his wonderful works to the children of men. So it was love to God, that works no ill, that made you, like the good Samaritan, minister to the needs of one of the poorest and neediest of all the flock. I had wondered much about the stone on the well's mouth, and your explanation, to my mind, seems entirely appropriate, and I feel anxious that it should be published for others to read, as, might I say, a kind of sequel to what I wrote? I have often feared the light that is in me is only darkness, and that I know nothing aright, and the more I fear so, when, as I sometimes hope, I have a little light on some portion of Scripture and a few words in close connection with it will seem utterly dark to me. I have heard it said that some Scripture is correctly susceptible of more than one interpretation, and unless that is true, I fear I had the wrong view of it when I wrote, and so I am the more anxious that what you have written should be published. It lifted me up so much I feel sure it will be gladly read by others, and to their edification. Dear brother, I cannot tell you how I have been both humbled and comforted by the kind words of encouragement that have come to me from east and west, from north and south, many asking me to write again, but I am fearful that my impressions to write are all of the flesh, I am such a contradiction to myself. Sometimes I long to write, and find no peace of mind until I do, but am prevented by the cares of this weary life. Sometimes I long to send what I write to some one, for it does not always relieve my mind to write and lay it away, but I fear it will be an imposition to send so long a letter to any one. Sometimes I long to write for publication, yet shrink from it, fearing it is Satan prompting me to try to vaunt myself. Sometimes I long for friendly criticism of what I write, yet dread criticism, thinking how mortified and discouraged I would be to find I was all in the wrong, yet if I do know myself, it is the truth I want, and nothing else. Sometimes I am much exalted over something that seems like it certainly is a revelation from God; again I am

abased by the thought that I am only puffed up in my fleshly mind; so I go on day after day, longing to write, but am restrained from it, so I try to think, If it was of the Lord he would open the way for me to write, and if it is his will that I shall not "darken counsel by words without knowledge," he will restrain me from doing so, and if it is his will that anything else I may write should ever be published to the comfort of his people it will certainly be of him, for I fully realize that of myself I can do nothing to his glory, for there is no good thing in me. But O how sweet to think that stone, that heavy load of sin, is rolled away, and the well of salvation is open, and none can shut. The fountain is open to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness; that is something the Lord has opened, and none can shut. Our spiritual Jacob has opened the way, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. As you say in your letter, a great deal might be said, indeed there seems no stopping-place when these sweet things are spread out before us, but lest I become wearisome to you I will close. I feel that I ought to tell you how unworthy I am of your kindness, but cannot; I can only voice your own sentiment, and ask you in charity to correct all that I have written amiss.

I remain as ever, a poor, weak creature, who yet dares to hope in the grace and mercy of God, for Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

MARY ELLISON.

P. S.—"LET us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." Dear brother in the Lord, of all the weights that oppress the people of God, there is none that weighs me down like the sense of unworthiness I deeply feel, and tears of contrition and humbleness fill my eyes as I take my pen to add a postscript to what I wrote you several days ago, but hesitated to send, because it lacks so much of being what I would like it to be, but the Lord has not given me opportunity or ability to do better, so I will venture to send it, trying to be content with the ability he giveth, not having the ability which my natural pride desires.

I have copied your letter with a wish that you may see fit to have it published. I prefer to keep the original, as I do not take the SIGNS, and possibly might not see it again. I wish I could express the tender emotion I felt as I copied and followed your line of thought of Jacob on his lonely journey being a type of Christ, and when he saw Rachel he kissed her, and lifted up his voice and wept, and told her who he was. It seemed like I could see Jesus as he was on the lonely journey you spoke of, weeping over Jerusalem, and in his agony in the dreadful Gethsemane, through which he had to pass, and seeing the needy condition of his lovely bride he said, "For this cause came I into the world," to roll away and blot out the sin that separated him and his people, and give unto them to drink of that water of which if they drink they shall never thirst again. He reveals himself to them, tells them who he is, and to every hungry, thirsty, needy and poor one in the flock he says, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money, and without price." "Hear, O heavens; and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken" these precious words. His doctrine shall drop as the

rain, and his speech shall distil as the dew, without money and without price. All the gold of Ophir would only be a vain offering for that which he freely bestows on his hungering poor. He tells them who he is, they hear his voice and follow him, and he gives unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish.

I am not writing for publication, but in the hope that, although not worthy to ask it, the Lord might direct your mind to write more on a theme so glorious and so beautifully depicted in the wonderful types of the Old Testament. When given a view of the right interpretation of these things, and seeing how they are being carried out in this last time, how can one doubt the authenticity of the Scriptures, or say in his heart, There is no God? Great and marvelous are his works; no human wisdom or power could ever devise such a book, nor could all the schools of men ever seek out the interpretation as was given you by night upon your bed, when every weight laid aside you were given a lovely view of Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

I will not intrude any longer on your time now, only to say, how truly you say that being strangers naturally makes no difference, if there is unity of Spirit, oneness in Christ. M. E.

WHEELING, W. Va., July 20, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing two letters, one from sister Young, in which she gives the particulars of her son's death, also telling of God's mercy to her in that trying hour. It proved so touching and interesting to me that I felt a desire to share it with others of like precious faith. Dear sister Bonnie Chick's letters are so comforting and so good that I feel like sending every one I receive from her. I will inclose the poetry by sister Sarah E. Runkle which Bonnie sent in her last letter; it is too good to hide away. I leave all to your good judgment.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

TORONTO, Ontario, April 24, 1916.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—I have so desired to answer your kind and loving letter containing words of the deepest sympathy for me in my late affliction, but, dear sister, while I have been wonderfully sustained through it all, yet it has so affected my feeble mind that I find it very difficult to concentrate my thoughts. Now as I undertake to tell you some of what I have passed through I trust the dear Lord will help me, for I feel so weak, and dependent upon him for every word fitly spoken. The verses you composed, "Out of weakness made strong," were most sweet and tender to me, and I can truly say there is such a nearness felt as I read any of your letters; they seem to express my own thoughts and feelings better than I can possibly convey them to any one. Now, my dear sister, I cannot express in words the loneliness I feel at times from the loss of our dear son, yet I feel I never want to cease giving thanks to the dear Lord for bestowing such gracious assurances of his eternal welfare. As a child he was of a serious mind, and was much inclined to believe our doctrine in spite of all opposing surroundings. But for some time before his illness he was given a mind to read the Scriptures, and talked with me freely when opportunity would permit. I shall never forget while memory lasts the day before he was taken sick. It was Sunday, and his mind seemed entirely absorbed in what the Scriptures contained. He read and talked freely

the greater part of the day. The next morning as he arose he said he did not feel very well, but went to work as usual. I could but think all the morning of the way he talked the day before; little did I think of how very sick he would be before night. He returned home at the lunch hour, but was unable to go back. He suffered severely with his head. We called a physician that evening, and by Thursday he had not improved, so a consultation was held with another doctor, and they would have him removed to the hospital at once for treatment for a case of meningitis. From that time on and the following week it is useless to try to tell you the anxiety and distress I was in. My mind was in utter darkness, but praying to God to reconcile me to his will. The doctors gave us encouragement until a week from the following Saturday, then when the word came from the hospital that he was worse and we were to go there nothing seemed to be given me, but I went and opened the Bible, and my eyes fell on these words: "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." I then felt I must look for the worst. When we arrived at the place and went in to see his dear face he seemed stricken with death, and was paralyzed on one side. While it seemed hard to give him up, yet I could not ask the Lord to spare him, but was given a heart to cry unto him to have mercy and take him to himself. He rallied a little in the afternoon and recognized me, as well as his sister, but our hope was not built up. I just prayed that I might be given an assurance that it would be well with his soul. On Sunday afternoon we were called again to his dying bedside. His eyes were closed, and he was breathing so heavily that no doubt it was the sleep of death slowly wafting him away. How very helpless I felt to do anything except to cry mightily unto God, who was able to save. At last these words were given me: The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. Yes, dear sister, that is enough to cleanse the vilest sin. But my dear child was leaving me, I could but weep, and these words came: "Woman, why weepest thou?" O, I wanted to thank the dear Lord that he had heard my cry, but my flesh is so weak I cannot but mourn for my dear son. But, my dear sister, I hasten to tell you our other son was away from home at the time of Ivan's illness, and did not get here until the evening of his death, on Sunday, Jan. 30th. He did not feel impressed to look at Ivan at all, as he was then unconscious, but, my dear sister, it has been an unspeakable consolation to me to have the blessed assurance that as God took Ivan from the evil to come he revealed his wonders to my other dear boy. It is just wonderful how Harry looks at this sudden stroke. They were always much attached to each other, so much so that some had looked at them and wondered if they were twins. But the dear Lord in tender mercy has appeared for Harry and comforted him in such a wonderful way that it seems he dare not reply against the stroke, but says God surely has a right to do as he pleases with his own. O, it is wonderful indeed how the Lord sustains in times of such deep distress. The poet has expressed it somewhat in these words: "Though my cup be filled with gall, something secret sweetens all."

I am not feeling at all well, and have about concluded the best thing for me to do is to rent the house furnished for the summer and go among my friends for a change. I do not feel equal to look after the responsibility of the cares of the household. I want to say I have shown

some of your letters to a dear sister that I know personally and correspond with, and she has told me they were food to her poor, hungry soul. My sister in the flesh is much interested in you, as she says your letters contain so much for her. So we thank the Lord for such a gift, and I hope you may still retain a spot in your heart for me, and so continue to breathe a prayer in my behalf. I sincerely hope you are being upheld by God's Spirit in your frail condition. This is a poor attempt, but I did not want to delay any longer, and trust you will cast the mantle of charity over it.

Your sister in sorrow,

(MRS.) W. C. YOUNG.

HOPEWELL, N. J., July 2, 1916.

MY DEAR, PRECIOUS SISTER:—While at my work this morning you seemed very near, and there were many things you have written me on my mind. Then came a fear lest I have been deceiving you, for I marvel that you feel as you do toward me. I realize how unworthy of your love and fellowship I am, and yet it is very sweet and precious to me, and I do long not to deceive you. I have told you how I have had a vivid imagination since a child, picturing many wonderful things in my mind, and now I am fearful that when I try to tell of these wonderful things this childhood trait still creeps in. I think of how in my teaching the children would rather have me make up a story and tell them than to read one, and they would beg me to think of more things to tell them. Do you wonder that I am fearful lest now I tell things for effect? I find myself trying to recall experiences I have passed through, and I know they come plainly before me and that I am not drawing on my imagination for these, but how is it when I go to tell them to others? Surely I have reason to beg our heavenly Father to only let me tell them just as they are. There would be no intention to deceive, but I cannot help feeling troubled after I have sent letters. Then again I have to write with a blank mind, as it seems to me, and I am still troubled, for even though I feel what I have had to write is the truth, there was no life in me when I wrote it. Do you have such feelings and fears? For some time I had desired to write to sister Runkle and tell her how much comfort I received from the poem, "The Lord will provide." I do shrink from approaching those who are strangers in the flesh, but when I read her letter in the last SIGNS the desire was so strong I had to make the attempt, and now I wonder why I sent the letter. I think if you have not already read this poem it would contain food for you, too.

My dear sister, I had to stop writing and get ready for meeting. While waiting for the others I went into the parlor and opened my hymn-book and sang, "How tedious and tiresome the hours" from beginning to end, then I wondered if it might be that this hymn would be sung at the meeting. Before giving out the last hymn Elder Vaughn asked if any one had a hymn, and brother David Voorhees gave out this very one. You know how I felt. I could not say I had especially enjoyed the preaching, but I did indeed feel my God had blessed me beyond measure. Then, too, I had such sweet talks with several of the members, and these are pleasant to think about. I was thinking this morning how when I am restless or cast down I fear to seek help in worldly things, and I find myself often longing for some one to write to, and then, too, I seek for something to read. I do not always find enjoyment,

and then I wonder if I am just making a form of these things, but, my dear sister, I do not know where else to look for comfort, and the time does pass. Sometimes I have wished I had some heavy manual work to do when these burdens weigh so heavily upon me; it seemed then I would be so tired that I would have to rest from exhaustion, but the Lord has not given me physical strength for such work, and I am driven to seek relief in other ways. For years I spent much time on my music, and I was indeed fond of it. From a girl I had always felt I would like to have some one playing when I was dying. The time came when I would feel so badly I could only sit at the piano a few minutes each time I attempted to practice. I was teaching at the time. One morning I left the piano and went out into the dining-room where the others were. Mamma noticed me right away, and said I looked as if I were sick, and that she felt my music was too much for me. I was more than willing to give it up then, and have hardly felt to touch the piano since that time until one night last week, when a friend was here from Maryland, who is also very fond of music. I found the same old fascination coming back, and feared it, for I know how I neglected many, many things because of this, and I see how it would be easy to do so again. Then, too, I am afraid of worldly reading, and few can understand me in this. O sister Pultz, I know how these things have in times past taken so many hours that could have been spent upon things more profitable. When I did enter into these natural pleasures it was with all the life I had in me. Can you understand why I am afraid of them now, and why I fear to pass time in this way to either please others or myself? With my teaching I found it the same as my music. One morning I went to school feeling comparatively well, and when I entered my room I wondered how I could get through the day. It was as if all my strength were gone. One of the teachers came in, and when she looked at me she told me that I just must not teach that day, and then I gave up for six weeks, but never went back. Year before last they wanted me to substitute; I tried it, but last year I told them I could not do even that. Positions have been offered me, but I hope it is not the Lord's will for me to ever have to do that work again. There are so many things connected with it that I could not take any part in, and drilling the children to take part in entertainments became a dreadful cross to me. To others so many of these things seem innocent, but to me there is indeed danger, for surely they take one's mind from better things. I long to be kept from finding enjoyment in worldly things, for the joy in spiritual things is so wonderful. We are told to seek these things and that all needful things will be provided. Surely the Lord has not let me want for any needful thing.

Monday morning. My dear sister, I wonder why it is I feel to tell you so much of my life. Please do not let me weary you, but it seems you are brought in my thoughts so often, and I long to talk to you, then I cannot seem to rest until I write. I recall the summer I spent with Aunt Angie when your first letter came. She had been telling me how you felt about reading novels and many such worldly things, and as I told you before, spoke often of other things she had read in your letters in the SIGNS. As soon as I was made to feel I could no longer spend time in these ways I knew you would understand me, and it is such

a relief to talk to one who does. Then I think of how careless I am getting about my writing since I have been doing so much and writing so rapidly, and fear it must be trying for others to read. Sister Pultz, there were many heavy showers around us last night, and I have always been timid, but of late I cannot seek the companionship of others, nor do things which I feel my motive is to protect myself. As I lay awake with the lightning flashing brilliantly across my bed the words, "It shall not come nigh thee," rang in my mind. Then the wind seemed to be carrying the storms toward the north, and these words came: "Stormy wind, fulfilling his word," and I had a feeling of assurance that the storms would not centre here. Then I found myself repeating several hymns. I can only marvel that I do not feel the terror I have felt in past years. There is such a longing to feel that the Lord is right with me, and not feel afraid. I could not seem to get up and read or write, and often the lights are turned off anyway, but now I am glad I could not, for the comfort of the words that came has not left me.

Sister Pultz, I stopped writing for a moment and sat here thinking, and when I realized what I was doing found a longing to have you here with me surging through me. I wonder more and more if it is the Lord's will for us to meet on earth. His will must be done, and all that he has planned will be fulfilled. O to be able to trust him for all. If my letters become a burden to you please tell me, for the love I have in my heart for you makes me only to desire what is for your good.

Your unworthy little sister,

BONNIE CHICK.

"JEHOVAH-JIREH." (THE LORD WILL PROVIDE.)

(COMPOSED for a dear, aged sister, who related her experience in connection with this passage of Scripture, Gen. xxii. 8.)

The Lord will provide, O promise so dear;
It hath lifted me up, it hath banished my fear;
It seemed to the lowest depths I must sink,
The cup to the bitterest dregs I must drink.

My trials and griefs were all I could bear;
My faith seemed to fail me, I sunk in despair.
O what shall I do? in anguish I cried,
When this came so sweetly: The Lord will provide.

The Lord will provide—how like balm to my heart!
It eased all my troubles, new life did impart;
I was filled with rejoicing, I praised his dear name,
Who is yesterday, to-day and forever the same.

I felt he'd supply both my clothing and food,
And all things temporal that are for my good;
And far greater blessings these sweet words doth imply—
All my spiritual food he will daily supply.

From youth to old age, all my long journey through,
This promise I've tested and found to be true;
These words help to cheer me when sorely I'm tried:
"Jehovah-jireh"—The Lord will provide.

The Lord will provide, tried one, dry thy tears;
A way shall be made through this valley of fears;
Then, tempest-tossed soul, whatever betide,
May this be thy solace: The Lord will provide.

The Lord will provide, O my soul, doubt no more;
A few more sharp trials, and all will be o'er;
Then Jesus will come for me, his face I shall see,
And dwell in the mansion he's provided for me.

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

DAYTON, Ohio, Nov. 1, 1914.

DEAR BRETHREN:—This most beautiful morning I shall again try and transmit my thoughts to you through the silent whisperings of the pen. When I read the inspired language of Paul, the eloquent outpouring of Isaiah, the sweet, heavenly music that flowed from the heart of King David, my soul seems to hold sweet communion with them, and I am uplifted by the thought that in the great beyond we shall be eternal heirs with those exalted spirits, if I am not clinging to a false hope. But how can

that hope be false which is centred and stayed on the cross of Christ, when the true language of the soul is, "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling"? I often feel cast down, so that I cannot even look toward Calvary's mount, when in my heart there is an aching void nothing can fill. I often feel I think as did Elijah when he told the Lord he alone was left of all the prophets. Often I feel destitute in every way, and in perusing the dear old SIGNS I am cheered and comforted by the sweet and precious communications of many dear friends, and how like delicious music falling upon the ear are the sweet sounds they send forth. How happy I am to know that the wisest have learned that there is no confidence to be put in the flesh, no good in our nature, nor help in the puny arm of flesh, and that vile and helpless and poor, we can only fall at the feet of Jesus and cry, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. Then into my mind come these words: All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. Great indeed is the peace of the child of God when, stripped of all self-righteousness, he seeks that righteousness which is found in Christ Jesus. The cultivation of the Lord's people is of a very different nature from that of the world, is it not, dear friends? for they are the only cultivated people; and the cultivation of the Lord's people is of a very different nature from that of the world, for they are refined as silver and tried as gold. In fiery trials and in the furnace of affliction are they tried, and the refinement is of the heart, causing them to remember the things which are pleasing to the Lord and which will best befit them in their places in his garden where he has planted them. Here we find the olive, the fir and the box tree, as also the myrtle and the hyssop, that springeth out of the wall, the pomegranate and the vine, all beautiful and grand in their place. Every plant is watered by the dew and rain from heaven, and warmed and cherished by the Sun of Righteousness, who ariseth with healing in his wings. Although there may be many dark and cloudy days, fierce tempests and wintry blasts, yet all are needful for the perfecting of these plants, that they may be fruitful in their appointed seasons. The south wind awakes at the command, the north wind comes at the call, and the Spirit of the Lord breathes upon the garden at the right time. The Father is the Husbandman of the garden, and the Lord is King in Zion; glorious and soul-cheering words. We fully and truly realize that the inhabitants of that home above shall no more say, I am sick; neither can they die any more. Sickness and sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more, and the city has no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God will lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. Do we not all need and desire the companionship of the saints? and what a sore trial it is to be deprived of that pleasure. I feel I could not endure such a bitter trial were it not for the help and strength of the blessed Master, for he says, I will never leave nor forsake thee. This sweet and precious promise is dear to my poor heart, and very comforting to my tempest-tossed soul. Jesus says, He that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. O how safe in him we are, dear christian friends. He came not to do his own will, but the Father's. It is his will that of all which he hath given him he should lose nothing. Not one of his children will be lost, but are securely safe in Christ, the Father's Son, for all power is

given unto him, that he should raise them up at the last day, but none can come to him except the Father draws them. What poor mortals, to think it is as we will to do or not, and that if we are willing to do our part God is willing to do his. O how much we have to thank God that in love and mercy he has shown us that all power is of him. How we are fed upon the bread that does not perish, but is everlasting life. Jesus says, I am that bread, and he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life. How much we ought to thank our blessed Master for all his goodness and loving-kindness; his mercies are many and great. I do feel to thank him, but I know not how to as I ought. Yes, dear ones, all our times are in his hand; if such were not so I would have no hope, for much of my time is spent under dark and lowering clouds, yet the light always comes after the darkness, and it has been so with me from the beginning. We all must pass through mixtures of joy and sorrow, which have caused me at times to almost despair, but the Captain of my salvation has never yet deserted me, and surely he will redeem us from the hand of our enemy. Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Then we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. I, dear friends, would come far short of that blessed abode if it depended upon self or works. If I ever am so fortunate as to reach that home of many mansions it will be by grace freely bestowed for his great love wherewith he loved me, even while I was dead in sin. We are begotten unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, to an inheritance undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them that are kept by the power of God, ready to be revealed in the last time. Is this not enough? Should we not revere our God for what he has so graciously done for us, and will do until the end of time? I am fully aware of the fact that by nature I am sinful and depraved, yet I have a hope in Christ that some time I will be separated from all sin and iniquity, and shall be like him. I am so often in "Doubting Castle," and so low down that I sometimes wonder if I have ever been taught in the school of Christ. O the depth of the mystery! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

Well, I have written my thoughts so scatteringly I fear you will not grant me the privilege of having a place in the dear old SIGNS, but if not, cast it aside. Now, dear editors, may the Lord keep you as the apple of his eye, and enable you to go on editing the dear old SIGNS to the comfort and edification of the saints of the Most High, is the prayer of your unworthy sister, if one at all,

LIDA KELLER.

DAYTON, Ohio, Jan. 4, 1915.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—Having felt for some time like writing again some of my thoughts to you through the medium of the SIGNS, the paper so dear to my heart, this gloomy winter morning I have come into my little library room with writing material in hand to address you, trusting to be guided by my dear and adorable Master, Christ Jesus, for of myself I would write nothing that would be of interest to God's little ones. Many times I feel a great desire to write, but what to write I know not, and surely if the Spirit says write, it will also tell me what to write. Well, dear ones, again a new year has dawned upon us, bringing with it, no doubt, many and various

changes to each and all, as the former years, and how glad I feel that it is so wisely arranged that I cannot see into the future what changes the new year has in store for me. Amidst all the confusion, strife and the terrible war now among the European nations, and the multitudinous changes that have already occurred, what a great comfort it is to me to know that there are no changes or failures in the promises of God to his suffering and persecuted children. If we can only say, dear ones, when the summons comes to us to lay down this life in this sinful world, like many of our christian friends who have crossed the boundaries of "Shadow Land," who were valiant old soldiers, I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith once delivered unto the saints, we will enter in and receive the crown, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give, now laid up and reserved for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. There is no people like our Father's family, but O I come so far short of filling my place that it makes me fear and tremble to even think of claiming relationship with, to me, such precious people. But to him only can I go, he has the words of eternal life. Where his people go I long and desire to go, and where they are buried I want to be buried, for their God is my God. If I could this morning but shake hands with some of the dear ones how rejoiced I would be, but I am anxiously awaiting that time when all the redeemed of the Lord will be gathered together, then we shall see Jesus, the blessed Jesus, as he is, and be like him. When I shall awake with his likeness, then shall I be satisfied, and it will not be because of any good works that I have done. God's dear people are not of the working class who see with natural eyes, but they have a hope. "But hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."

Dear editors, continue writing your soul-cheering comfort of good words to the scattered sheep of the Lord's pasture, and O may it be the dear Lord's will for you to still feed the little flock in the future as you have done in the past, and when he calls you to the home of many mansions may it be said to you, Well done, good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord. May it be said of you, They are dead, but their works do follow them. How very precious to me is the reading of the editorials in the SIGNS, for you are all taught of Christ, and are traveling the same road, and all serving the same Master, and all singing the same sweet songs, and blessed are they that know the joyful sound of the gospel. Dear household of faith, I many, so many times, am hasty in my words, quick to discern faults in others, when I am so full of faults myself, and am not charitable enough to overlook the imperfections of others, but as I now write there comes to my mind a time when I felt so anxious to be made humble, and prayed for the beautiful gift, humility, but the answer came with great suffering, even unto death seemingly, and now when I remember the sweet and great blessings I received from that experience I am yet almost afraid to desire those grand and sublime things. How we shrink from the sufferings of the flesh, do we not? though I feel that it is needful to be trimmed and pruned, and bent and bound, so that we may become small enough to wear this robe. It is indeed a close-fitting garment, and the flesh must

be disposed of, and therefore comes the trimming and pruning of the Lord. O how weak and cowardly seems the flesh. Do we not see in everything the Father's hand in all his works of providence, and can we deny it in all his works of grace? Though we are born of a sinful race, and born to die, the first knowledge of which gives us the deepest interest, yet when the promise of better things comes to us then we are rejoiced that it is so, since we shall obtain a better resurrection unto which God has called us. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?" Sweet and precious thought, to know that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and for the purpose of his own glory. The nights and the days, the winter and the summer of God's people are the ordering of their heavenly Father, and he hath said, Summer and winter shall not cease. David also says, Thou hast made summer and winter. He makes those seasons with his own dear children, and they cannot change winter into summer, nor night into day. I have learned by bitter experience that it is when the heart tendrils are bruised and broken that Jesus comes near and we are brought into a closer union and communion with him, and come into closer fellowship with his sufferings, and it is then that with his stripes we are healed. I sincerely trust, dear friends, that I have had that precious blood applied to my sin-sick soul. I can only answer by the witness I hope I feel within, the evidence I have that his holy Spirit communes with my spirit, the love I have for his people, the hating of what I once loved, the loving of what I once hated. But over all comes the felt sense of his dear pardoning love as it comes unmerited and unbidden into my poor heart, causing me to cry with rapture, My Lord and my God, and in the midst of darkness, and doubt, and fiery trials within and without, to say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Not merely to say it, dear friends, but to feel it in all the depths of its sweetness and meaning. It is said that flowers from pressure yield a sweeter perfume, so I believe when the child of God is bowed down by affliction or sorrow, and the trial seems too heavy to be borne, Jesus then so kindly comes to our rescue, and is the burden-bearer, and the sweet influence of his loving and blessed grace, the rare perfume of his pardoning love, are more manifest. How much I do appreciate the help and presence of this gracious Burden-bearer language seems inadequate to describe, and I cannot praise him as I desire, nor tell those about me, only in a most imperfect way, what a dear Savior I have found.

Well, I have written so little, I fear, that will be of interest, I will defer writing more at this time, so please cast the mantle of charity over my many imperfections.

With love to all the household of faith, I am, unworthily, your sister,

LIDA KELLER.

ISAIAH XXVI. 1.

"IN that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks."

The Lord by the prophet here speaks of the gospel day, and they, his people, sing the glad new song, "We have a strong city." The followers of Jesus sang at the approach of this gospel day, when Jesus in his humility came to Jerusalem riding on the humblest of beasts. They strewed their garments in the way, and cut down branches from the trees and strewed them in the way, and sang, Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest. This strong city, the Zion of our God, has a wall for her defense, great and high, that no enemy can scale to do harm to the blessed inhabitants thereof, and the inhabitants shout and sing and rejoice, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. "For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her." So we see how securely the Zion of our God is guarded and protected, for no weapon that is formed against her shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise in judgment against her thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?" Jesus has paid the debt of his bride, his church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. He arose from the tomb triumphant, victorious over death, hell and the grave, and hath ascended on high, and is seated on the right hand of power of the Lord God Almighty, and receives gifts for men, for he offered himself to God without spot, and has forever put away the sins of his people, and brought in everlasting righteousness. For this is the name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness, and this is the name whereby she shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness. His bride receives the name of her glorious and ever to be adored Husband, for all power in heaven and earth is given into his hands, to give eternal life to all that the Father gave the Son, in the covenant of grace, ordered in all things and sure, for Jesus will bring all of his people off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him that loved them and gave himself for them.

"The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake."

He gathers them from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, they shall all come, and not one will be missing of all of the redeemed family of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

"For this truth, like its author, eternal shall stand,
Though all things in nature decay;
Upheld by Jehovah's omnipotent hand,
The righteous shall hold on his way."

This charity, this love, which is the bond of perfection, will adorn his bride forever.

"Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God;
He, whose word cannot be broken,
Formed thee for his own abode.

On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
Thou mayest smile at all thy foes."

"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," so we sing and rejoice, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

Dear brethren, do with this as you think best.

Yours in hope,

WM. F. SLOAN.

LEXINGTON, Kentucky.

ELKMONT, Ala., Jan. 28, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—As it is time for me to send in my remittance for your paper, or have it stopped, with regret I will have to say, Stop it, as circumstances are such at present that I have not the money, as our expenses are so much, and there is no one to work but my husband, and his health is failing. I am still lingering with dropsy, have had it about six years and have been tapped forty-five times. I have been a subscriber for the SIGNS the last two years, and thought each time when I subscribed that I would not live to see the end of the time subscribed for, but the God of all mercy and grace has spared me for some purpose best known to himself. The doctors have said for the last five years that I could not live, and I have been very low several times, but now am able to be up and around my room part of the time. I will say that I have enjoyed every number of the SIGNS, as I am confined so closely, and deprived of hearing preaching, and I hope the Lord will sustain each and every writer, and the editors, that the good work may go on, to feed the poor and afflicted ones of the flock that are scattered abroad. Whether I am one or not, I do not know, but I do know I love the doctrine the SIGNS advocates, and think it is what the Bible teaches, so write on, dear brethren and sisters. I have thought several times I would write what I hope to be my experience of grace, but there are so many others who can tell it better than I can. I do wish I were gifted to write as some of the dear sisters, but I hope there are none who love the truth as it is in Jesus more than I do.

I thank you for past favors, and ask to be remembered in your prayers in my troubles and afflictions. I hope if I live to some day subscribe again for the dear paper which has been of so much comfort to me. I have read it for three years, as I was a subscriber in 1909, and I can read the old numbers yet, as they are like the Bible, never grow old.

Trusting in God my Savior alone for salvation, I am your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) W. R. JAMES.

[As the SIGNS is of so much comfort to sister James in her affliction, we gladly continue sending it to her, and hope she may still derive comfort from it.—ED.]

POCA, West Va.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Brother Sawin requested that I write a few words of comfort from God's written word, but I know of nothing at this time that has any bearing upon my mind except the following: "Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at; for behold, I will bring forth my servant, The Branch. For, behold, the stone that I have laid before Joshua: upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day."—Zech. iii. 8, 9. Joshua was a type of our great High Priest, Jesus Christ the righteous. "Thy fellows that sit before thee" are those who officiate in the outer court, priests chosen of God, without blemish or deformity, and typically of the gospel-called minister in this gospel day, "for they are men wondered at." Why is it these men go far and near preaching? If their preaching is not to quicken sinners and save them what do they go for? It is not for money, for they oppose the salaried system. What a wonder to those who know not the wonderful work of God in the hearts of his called servants. "I will bring forth my servant, The

Branch;" one of the names or titles of the Son of God. Again, he is called the Stone: "For, behold, the stone that I have laid before Joshua: upon one stone shall be seven eyes." This stone is Christ; the stone which the builders refused is become the head of the corner; one God-man, Mediator. The seven spirits or attributes of perfection shine forth in Jesus, he being perfect in every attribute, so much so that Pilate was compelled to say that in him he found no fault at all. Again, the Lord said by the prophet Isaiah, "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste." "In that [gospel] day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." Jesus dwells in Zion, he is also a wall round about his people. Jesus takes up his abode in the hearts of his chosen ones; he is the covenant of them in him by choice of the Father; he is the messenger of the covenant, and he suddenly comes to his temple. Know ye not that ye are the temple of the Holy Spirit? If Christ be in us we cry unto him, having no confidence in the flesh. "For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it." This is the stone laid before Joshua, the high priest, that he, in the type of Joshua, would show the restoration of the church by the Holy Spirit of the Son of God in this gospel dispensation. The reason we cry for mercy is, that it is the Spirit making intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered; it is Christ formed in us. "For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it." The beam denotes power; the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. What perfect harmony in the Spirit (Christ the Stone) and the gospel, the power of God. How true the saying of Jesus, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. O how true it is: "For before the child shall have knowledge to cry, My father, and my mother, the riches of Damascus [self-righteousness] and the spoil of Samaria [legal service] shall be taken away." Helpless as little children; and, Except ye be converted, and become as a little child, you can in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

GILBOA, N. Y., Feb. 24, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I received this letter from sister Agnes Goodrich, and it impressed me forcibly that I must send it to the SIGNS, and I have written her so, so if it meets your approval, please give it a place in your paper. May God bless you all, both editors and contributors.

Yours in love of the truth as it is in Jesus,

D. S. ELLIOTT.

MIDDLEBURG, N. Y., Jan. 13, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER:—If I may thus address you. I have been wondering for some time how you were getting along this winter. I realize the fact that God can keep you, and I believe he will. I have thought often of writing to you, but then it would seem that I had little to say. I have many blessings to be thankful for, although God saw fit in the summer to take from us a lot of our property. He has taught me many lessons thereby. He gives and he takes away, blessed be his name. He creates good and evil, daylight and darkness, love, &c. He will do his will in heaven and among the inhabit-

ants of earth. He can work and none can hinder. He says, Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated. He found Jacob in a waste-howling wilderness; he did not take him out at once, but led him about and instructed him; taught him that He has all power, and I feel that he has a purpose in all things; that he is too wise to err, too good to be unkind; that all things work together for good to them that love God, the called according to his purpose. He promises to be with us, and not leave nor forsake us.

The SIGNS is a source of great comfort to me. I thought last spring when you sent for it for me that by fall I could surprise you by paying you the two dollars, but God willed otherwise, and he alone can reward you. We are all well.

Unworthily yours,

AGNES B. GOODRICH.

ANCHO, New Mexico.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I will this morning send in my subscription for the SIGNS, so find inclosed two dollars for the best Old Baptist paper published. I do not know whether I am one of that flock or not, but that is what I claim. I think I have received the worth of a year's subscription from the January issue alone. I think the poetry, "Be of good cheer," is indeed good. When I was a girl my father took the SIGNS, and I remember a piece of poetry that was in one of the numbers at that time, which seems to me was about thirty years ago; the name of it was, "The Speckled Bird." When a mere child I joined the Old Baptists, and was baptized by Elder Charles Holcomb. I thought at that time that all Old Baptists were perfect, and that I would surely be rid of sin after being baptized, but, dear brethren, I soon found that was a sad mistake, for I can say with Paul, If a christian, the least of all, for I find more evil to tempt me than I do good.

I would like to know if brother John Holcomb is still living.

You can publish this if you wish. I have never written for publication, so do not know whether this will do or not, but if it should be published, and any read it who knew me, or my father or mother, I would like to receive a personal letter from them. I was Minnie Williams before my marriage, but now am a widow, living with my oldest son. My father was R. T. Williams. He was a deacon of old Union Church for a number of years, and was well known in Texas, which is my native State. Father lived in Panola County. I am away out here in New Mexico, alone as to my belief, but I find many good people here, and shall stay, as I am living with my children.

With love and best wishes for the SIGNS and its many writers, I am your unworthy sister,

MINNIE BELLAMY.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE.

WILL those to whom we have sent statements of their accounts try to respond, even if they can pay only part of their indebtedness? We at present need all due us, and although a little matter to each person, when there are many in arrears it means much inconvenience to us, as we have large bills to pay.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1916.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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JAMES II. 26.

"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

We shall try to write upon this Scripture at the request of Mrs. E. F. Reed, of Williamsville, Missouri. This friend of the SIGNS is at present a member of the Methodist denomination, but has for a long time been dissatisfied with the teachings and practices of that body of people, and wishes to unite with the Old School Baptists, but lives nowhere near any of our people. If any one who reads this article knows of any Old Baptists living in Wayne County, Missouri, we ask that one to please notify Mrs. Reed of same at her address given above. Mrs. Reed's letter to us is withheld from publication at her request, much to our regret, as it shows she is surely taught of the Lord in a wonderful way.

Coming directly to our subject, we wish to say that the expression, "The body without the spirit," means the body without the breath. The word "spirit" refers not to God's Spirit, but to the breath which is in every human being. When the breath leaves the body the body is dead. James uses this to illustrate faith without works. As the breath is the life of our mortal bodies, and manifests itself in action, so works are the activity of faith. James means that where faith is, there works will be. Works do not, cannot bring about that faith which is the gift of God, but when God imparts his divine faith in the life of the believer, that faith will show itself in results which he calls "works." If there are no actions or works of faith, then the faith is not there. God does not operate by his Holy Spirit in the believer and allow that work not to show itself. Wherever the Spirit of God is in operation it will show itself outwardly in "works." Old School Baptists are often accused of not believing in works, but this is utterly false. We do assuredly believe in works, not works which bring about salvation, but salvation which brings about works. We believe, because the Bible so teaches, that good works are the effect of grace; we do not believe that works bring about grace. Paul writes in his epistle to the Romans of justification by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; James writes in his letter of justification by works, yet there is not the shadow of a conflict between the doctrine of Paul and the doctrine of James. Paul is speaking of that which justifies the sinner in the sight of God: the resurrection of Christ from the dead. James writes of that which justifies us in the sight of our brethren in our church relationship here in the world. The works or acts of the believer do not justify him in God's sight at all, but our works, which are the issue of our faith, do show to our brethren whether our profession is a dead or a living one. No matter how much we might profess to our brethren that we love them, if we do not show by our actions that we love them, how are they to really know that we love them? Where the walk does not consist with one's pro-

fession, that one's profession or faith lacks vitality, just as the body without the breath is dead. You see, therefore, Paul is treating of the doctrine of justification from God's viewpoint, while James is thinking and writing of that same matter from the viewpoint of the brethren. Just as the resurrection of Christ from the dead justifies all the elect in the sight of God, so does the power or spirit of that same resurrection in the life of the child of God here in the world bring about certain activities or "works" that justify him in the sight of the church here in the world. God gave Abraham this gift of faith, which is the fruit of his Spirit. This faith in Abraham caused Abraham to do certain things which justified or proved the faith that was in him. It caused him to take his son Isaac, the child of promise, without staggering, or doubting the promise of God, and to be about to offer the child upon the altar. Here the renunciation of Abraham's paternal affection at God's command proves or justifies the character of Abraham's faith in God. His offering Isaac did not produce that faith, but the faith produced the obedience. Likewise, Rahab the harlot proved the faith that was in her when she hid the messengers, or spies, from Israel, and sent them out another way. Read Joshua, second chapter. Rahab was literally a stranger to these men that came from Israel, and they were strangers to her, nevertheless she knew "the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath." Now how did this woman, naturally a stranger to Israel and to Israel's God, know that the God of Israel was the only true God? She knew it because God had given her faith to know it. "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace." This faith in Rahab caused her to hide the spies which came from Israel and to send them away in safety. The hiding these spies did not bring about the faith, but the faith caused her to do the deed, the "work." It is not what we say that makes us followers of Christ; our actions or the life that we live cause our brethren to have or not to have confidence in our profession. What profit is it to say that we have faith if our works do not show that we have faith? Can faith save us? That is, can mere profession establish or confirm us in the eyes of the church as being a child of God? If one is saved by grace, he is saved by grace all the time. He has not been saved by grace, nor he shall not be saved by grace, but he "is" saved by grace all the way along. "By grace are ye saved," says the apostle, putting it in the present tense. Thus God's effectual grace in the life of the believer works an effect that is seen by the church, so that he is seen to be saved by his "works;" that is, his works manifest to the brethren that he is saved by grace. Then, too, "if a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?" That is, if we love not our brother whom we have seen, what evidence have we that we love God invisible? The evidence that we love God is that we love that which is begotten of God, and if we do love the people of God we need not to be telling them of it all the time; they will know by our actions whether we love them or not. Actions speak louder than words. Our works will prove our love for them, and so will we be justified before them by our works, which shall be the fruit of our faith. Can the fig tree bear olive berries? Can the vine bear figs? The figs do prove that it is a fig tree, the olives that it is an olive tree, the grapes that it is a vine, and so on. Likewise do love and humil-

ity and prayerfulness prove that the faith divine of God is in one's life. Where this faith is, there will contrite repentance be; there also will be hungerings and thirstings after righteousness, sincere soul-pantings after God. These are the works of faith, and by these, and many such works, is the believer proved or justified in the esteem of all other believers. When the humble believer comes in fearfulness and trembling before the church to seek the ordinance of baptism and a home with other believers, it is not so much what that one says that gives the brethren confidence in his experience as the manner of his coming. His humility and sincerity are more eloquent than words, and do show in the forehead the mark of the lowly Galileean. The fact that our friend Mrs. Reed is inquiring for the Old School Baptists with a desire to cast in her lot with them is a favorable "work," manifesting the nature of the faith that is in her. A person is often known by the company he or she keeps. If one loves Old School Baptists and fellowships their preaching, that one will most likely be found around where Old Baptists are. He will be moved to hunt them up and to enjoy their company. Such a "work" would beautifully justify the faith of that one. Among the churches that we are trying to serve here in Virginia, we have in the different congregations a few who never say much, but show by their actions year after year that they are taught of God and have been with Jesus. We have no doubt that the churches here would be willing to receive these for baptism without hesitation, even if they themselves were not able to express much in words, should they come before the church. Their works have long proved or justified the faith that is in them, and are more satisfactory than words could ever be. L.

TRIP TO GEORGIA.

HAVING just returned home from a three weeks visit among the Old School Baptists in Georgia, we wish to say through these columns to the brethren there that we much enjoyed the time spent in their company, and will long cherish the welcome and hospitality they accorded us while there. It would be impossible for us to write a personal letter to even a few that we met while there, so take this opportunity to write one letter to all. The churches visited were the Shoal Creek Church, in the Ocmulgee Association; Bald Rock Church, in the Yellow River Association; Monroe, Mt. Paran and Big Creek churches, in the Oconee Association. Elder Allen is pastor of the Shoal Creek and Mt. Paran churches, and is an humble and God-fearing man, anxious for the welfare and peace of the churches. Elder R. L. Cook is pastor of the Bald Rock Church, a gracious man, and a safe and faithful pastor to all the churches of his care. Elder James M. Adams is pastor of the Monroe and Big Creek churches. This brother is already known to many of our brethren, especially here in the north, and needs no appraisal at our hands. These three pastors are sound in the doctrine of the Old School Baptists, according to our understanding of that doctrine. It was also our privilege to meet at the Shoal Creek Union meeting, Elder C. K. Haines, of Florida, who is already known to SIGNS readers by his writings. The section visited by us is that where Elders Joseph L. Purington, William L. Beebe and J. G. Eubanks used to live and preach. We found that the ministries of these three able men of God still live and bear fruit in these churches in Georgia. We had a good time among you all, and may God bless you for Jesus' sake.

L.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ACTS XVII. 30.

BROTHER F. A. Chick, of Maine, desires us to give our views through the SIGNS on Acts xvii. 30: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent."

In reading this text and its immediate connection we are sensibly impressed with the striking analogy which the circumstances here presented bear to the time, place and circumstances occupied at the present day by those few who contend for the truth, and against the superstition and idolatry of the present hour in our own country and throughout the world. Paul was a stranger and sojourner at Athens, waiting the arrival of Silas and Timothy. Driven by persecution he came to Athens, and found that whole city was given to idolatry, and his spirit was stirred in him, and he disputed with the Jews and in the market daily with them that came to him. God's ministers and witnesses are now strangers and pilgrims in the world, driven about at this time by persecution, and shocked at the abominable idolatry which they encounter on every hand. Their testimony, like that of Paul, is in direct contradiction of that which is popular, involving them continually in disputation with legalists and idolaters. The doctrine of God our Savior, as preached then by Paul, was new and strange to that people, and their curiosity was excited, and they brought him to Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine whereof thou speakest is? For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing. Perhaps from that to the present time there has never been a greater disposition manifested in the religious circles for telling and hearing new things, but with all their relish for new things, the gospel, which was both new and strange to their ears, had no attraction for them, as the sequel will show. None can deny that at the present time, in which the invention of human ingenuity has been upon the rack to forge new theories of divinity and new machinery for what they profanely call evangelizing the world, while everything of human invention has its admirers and advocates, the simple truth as it is in Jesus is to-day about as unpopular in the world as it was in Paul's time at Athens. Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' Hill. Let us notice and compare his standpoint with that of the servants of God who preach the same doctrine which Paul preached then. Mars, in pagan mythology, was the imaginary god of war, which was worshiped and relied upon to give success in human butchery, and Mars' Hill was an eminence probably which was so named and consecrated in honor of that idol. Among the thousands of heathen deities, to whom they had built altars and offered sacrifices, none seemed to be more popular than Mars. Brother Chick, ascend the hill of Mars, and look around you, and report what you see. There stands an altar inscribed, Missionism, or the god of Missions, calling loudly and pathetically for men and money to save a sinking world. Millions have been offered upon this Missionary altar, and yet its avarice is not satisfied. No soul has ever yet been saved by it, no soul ever will or can be saved by it, for there is salvation nowhere else but in the name of Jesus. Hence all the men and all the money offered upon this idol's altar is offered in

vain. Yonder, yet near the first, towers up another; go read its superscription. The Sabbath-school, as a means of grace, is chiseled upon its front. Like Moloch of old, it has received its hundreds of thousands of children which have been offered upon it, and although its flaming claws have not consumed the bodies of the victims which have been offered, they have consumed in them all that respect for the truth of divine revelation and reverence for the God which made the heavens and earth that they naturally possessed, and has seared their consciences as with a hot iron, and fostered in them the spirit of delusion, infidelity and bitter persecution. Hard by your eyes rest upon another magnificent altar, on which is inscribed Tract Society; its god is made of paper daubed with ink. Costly sacrifices are laid in grand profusion upon it, and the salvation of souls is accredited to it. Turn yet again, and you gaze upon an altar bearing the title, Theological Seminary, and on the other side the engraving reads, Educational Society. This idol is by all the modern Athenian worshipers regarded as the lord of their harvest, to whom they cry for all the ministerial laborers they desire. From this altar proceed such flattering titles as Reverends, Doctors of Divinity, Right Reverends, Holy Fathers, Popes, Cardinals and Bishops, Chaplains, Deans, Monks, Friars, Colporteurs and numerous others which are forbidden to be used in the church and kingdom of our God and of his Christ. We are told that the pagans had some thirty thousand gods canonized, and held in sacred veneration, but how the number will compare with those of modern times we will not presume to say, for time would fail us to speak of all the sculptured altars that may be distinctly seen and read from the summit of Mars' Hill. Stained with the blood of millions, we shudder as we behold the altar of the god of war, who from the days of Cain has crimsoned the earth with human gore, yet this detestable monster has in all ages had his votaries, but never in our own beloved country so many, so violent and so cruel as in the last few years. Pile up the mangled, ghastly bodies of two millions who have been slain in the late war with our sister States, and heap on that frightful pile one million negroes who have perished since the war began in consequence of being forced or allured away from comfortable homes, and you will have a hill for Mars which will suffer nothing by comparison with that Mars' Hill on which the holy apostle stood. Let any one who fears God rise to the summit of this hill of Mars, and we doubt not that his spirit will be stirred, as was the spirit of Paul, to protest in the name of the Lord against the abominable idolatry and superstition of the present times.

But we will not now stop to institute a further comparison between the number or qualities of the ancient and modern imaginary gods which are made and worshiped by what our apostle calls art or man's device. Seeing that they are all alike condemned by divine authority as superstitious, we will pass to notice more particularly the verse on which our views are solicited.

"And the times of this ignorance." What times, and what ignorance? Observe, the apostle does not confine the application of his remarks to any one particular time, but speaks of the times, as though they were many, and then contrasting all former times when this abominable idolatry has prevailed with its prevalence in subsequent ages, says that the former he had winked at, but

henceforth a righteous jugment should mete due recompense to the offenders. Under the former ages, especially while national Israel stood the type of Christ's spiritual kingdom, while Israel was sorely punished for the sin of idolatry, the heathen nations of the earth were allowed to worship their idols without rebuke. The punishments inflicted upon Israel for worshiping idols were all temporal judgments, such as sword, pestilence and famine, captivity, and final extinction as a nation, but no such punishments were visited upon any but that typical people. It was thus that God had winked at the idolatry of the Gentiles. But now commandeth all men everywhere to repent. "Now," or from the time the separating partition between Jews and Gentiles was removed. "Now" that the Jewish organization and Jewish rites were abolished, from that time the apostle has taught that there is no distinction between Jews and Gentiles; all were alike to be judged and punished for the sins of idolatry. Here, lest our views be misapprehended, we will observe that we do not understand that it was in point of guilt before God, or exposure to everlasting damnation, any less criminal for the Gentiles to worship the works of their own hands before than subsequently to the abolition of Judaism, nor in that sense any more abominable for Jews than for the heathen to worship idols. But because Israel as a covenant and typical people were called in distinction from all other nations to be a peculiar people, and were held under a conditional covenant, which required that they should maintain the character of a peculiar people, consequently their special obedience to the law, and the severe chastisements for their disobedience, were specially provided in the law of a carnal commandment. But now, as Paul stands addressing the Athenians, and in all subsequent ages of the world, a just and righteous retribution for idolatry shall be inflicted alike upon Jews and Gentiles without discrimination. The times of this ignorance included the time in which the giving of the law, the prophets, the priesthood, &c., were all confined to Israel, giving them instructions, line upon line, and precept upon precept, but no law nor prophets were sent to the Gentiles, consequently these were times of ignorance to them. But now that the authorized apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ by divine authority were sent forth to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, the plea of ignorance could no longer be made or admitted. The repentance now commanded is to desist from the worshiping of idols, from paying their devotions to gods which are like unto gold or silver, or stone graven by art and men's device. Of course it is not that repentance which Christ as a Prince and Savior is exalted to give unto Israel, with the remission of sins, for that they have no power to obtain, for it requires the same display of the divine power of the exalted Savior to give it as to forgive their sins. But as rational and intelligent beings, creatures or offspring of God, now that the gospel is preached unto the Gentiles, and light has come into the world, they have no cloak for their persistent adhesion to the worship of dumb idols. Christ said on one occasion, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin. * * * If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father." —John xv. 22–24. The light which they then had beyond what they had in former

ages is expressed by the apostle in connection with our subject: "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." The resurrection of Christ from the dead afforded incontestable evidence of the supreme power and government of the God which raised him up and set him far above all principalities and powers, thrones and dominions, giving him a name which is above every name in this world or in the world to come, so that at his name every knee shall bow, both of things in heaven and things in earth, and of things under the earth. Thus fully demonstrating that God would hold all men answerable to him for their transgressions, and that he would judge them at the day appointed by that man whom he hath ordained. In the day appointed "he will judge the world in righteousness." That is, he will execute the judgments as already recorded in his word, against all unrighteousness. The righteousness of his judgment and of the final execution of his judgments will be measured by his law as the righteous standard of righteousness, which law forbids the worshiping or having any other god than the true and living God. The proclamation in all the world to every creature that the Lord is God, and beside him there is no other, implies a command of God that men should no longer bow down to idols or worship the work of their own hands. The judgment of God against idolatry is now already pronounced, the irrevocable sentence which was before published to Israel is now proclaimed to earth's remotest bounds, that "they shall go to confusion together that are makers of idols." That "the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." This fearful judgment and sentence applies as well to those who at this day ascribe salvation to imaginary gods, or to the works of men's hands, as to those who gave form and shape to masses of gold, silver or stone, and called them gods, or ascribed the works or attributes of God to them in former times. Those who are to-day worshiping Mars, the god of war, and ascribing salvation to the bloody works of their own hands, and exulting in what they have accomplished by the spirit of Mars, will not be found guiltless when arraigned before him whose Spirit proclaims peace on earth and good will to men. Their "judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not." The idolaters of the present time, as well as those of former ages, ignorantly worship the God who is to them unknown, when they presumptuously call on him to assist them in doing the very things which he has forbidden them to do. They pray to him who has said, "Thou shalt not kill," to enable them to slaughter their fellow-men; to him who says, "Thou shalt not steal," or "covet," to prosper them in dispossessing their neighbors of their men-servants and their maid-servants, their oxen, asses, and every other description of property. Such worship is idolatrous and vain, for it is written, In vain do ye worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. Like the too superstitious Athenians, modern idolaters all perform their religious service as though they believe that God needs something which can be supplied by them, and can be worshiped with men's hands. May God preserve his children in these dark and trying times from all evil, and make them valiant for the truth. His word says to them, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., August 1, 1866.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Nancy Dark, widow of Elder Samuel Dark, died at her home in Macomb, Ill., July 1st, 1916, aged 90 years and 8 months. She had been ill for three months of heart trouble and other ailments incident to old age. Her maiden name was Spencer, and she was born near Vincennes, Ind., Oct. 31st, 1825, the daughter of Richard and Jane Spencer. In girlhood she moved to Fulton County, Ill., and in 1854 she was united in marriage with Isaiah Morris. Two children survive of this union: Isaiah, who lives near Macomb, and Ophelia, at home. Mr. Morris died in 1864, and in 1866 she was married to Elder Dark, then a minister of the Old School Baptist order. One daughter, Mrs. Grace Minkler, was born to them, who survives. Elder Dark had eight children by his former wife when the subject of this sketch was married to him, and with her three children made a large family, which she raised as her own, and with great patience and fortitude she bore the heavy burden laid upon her, and with great grace she was enabled to raise them all to honorable manhood and womanhood, and truly it can be said of her, Her children arise up and call her blessed. They were all living near enough to be with her, and were most devoted to her all her life, and during her illness they were very kind and attentive, doing all in their power to alleviate her suffering, which was great at times, but she bore it all with great patience and resignation, saying she was willing and ready to go when her Savior called, and often told her daughter she must soon leave her, and for her to be resigned and not to grieve for her. She often during her illness repeated hymns, among her favorites being "A few more days on earth to spend" and "I am a stranger here below." During her last hours she was unconscious, and died peacefully, as if going to sleep. She was a Baptist over sixty years, her membership being with New Hope Church, in Warren Co., Ill. In all her long life with Elder Dark, who was an eminent minister of the gospel for over sixty years, and who died in his ninety-second year, she was a helpmeet to him in every sense, encouraging him and holding up his hands, bearing uncomplainingly the burdens and privations of a pioneer preacher's wife. Truly a mother in Israel is fallen. A more noble, humble, kind, sweet, christian woman I never knew. In all the walks of life she was a lovely character, and none knew her but to love her. She was unwavering in the faith of the Old School Baptists, and greatly enjoyed the visits of her brethren and sisters, and her house was ever open to the brethren, where she made all welcome. How we shall miss her dear face and kind words of welcome. She leaves to mourn, besides her three children, her eight stepchildren, whose names are: Andrew, Campbell, Mrs. Thompson, Mrs. Wilson, Mrs. Curtis, Mrs. Reed, Mrs. Goff and Mrs. Huff, also many grandchildren, and the church, to which she was warmly attached.

On Sunday, July 2nd, Elder L. E. Frazee preached an able and comforting discourse to a large gathering of friends from these words: "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality," &c., after which her remains were laid to rest in Oakwood Cemetery, at Macomb, to await the resurrection morn, when we firmly believe her body, with those of all the saints of God, shall be raised and changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ, and shall ever be with him, and be satisfied. May this hope ever sustain us to the end of our pilgrimage. May God bless all who mourn, and enable them to say, Not our will, but thine, be done.

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

Mrs. Emma D. Lowell, of South Gardiner, Maine, departed this life July 17th, 1916, aged 69 years and 9 months. Both she and her husband united with the church at Bowdoinham, Maine, Dec. 11th, 1870, and were baptized by Elder Hiram Campbell. The church at South Gardiner was organized August 18th, 1896, and having received letters of dismission they were members of this newly organized church. Brother James Lowell, her husband, died some years ago. They were both of them true and faithful members of the church of Christ, glorifying their Redeemer in their bodies and in their spirits, which are his. On Sunday, July 10th, our sister assembled with the little company gathered together in Jesus' name in the city of Gardiner, and returned home late in the afternoon, but she had been home but a short time when she was stricken with a stroke of paralysis, so that she was helpless and unable to speak, and she remained in that condition until her soul departed from her frail, mortal, corruptible body to be with Christ, which is far better. Those who knew our dear sister in the faith of the gospel loved her because of her holding fast the name and truth of Jesus Christ our Savior, and for those incorruptible ornaments of God's grace, the hidden man of the heart, which adorned her walk and conversation in this present evil world. She loved the assemblies of the church, and because of God's grace in her she loved not in words only, but in deeds. It could never be said of her as of some who are pretenders of godliness, who assume to be the people of God, that, "With their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness."—Ezek. xxxiii. 31. She leaves a brother and sister, brother Sidney Peacock, of Cowell, Cal., and sister Achsa Dill, of Machias, Maine. They were both dear to her, and she to them, not only by the ties of natural kinship, but also in the bonds of the spiritual and heavenly kinship of the household of God.

At her funeral the writer preached from the words, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave," &c —Hosea xiii. 14. Her body was laid away in the grave, and there sleeping in the dust of the earth it rests in hope of its triumphant awaking to everlasting life and glory at the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ from heaven at the last day, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

Harriet L. Dykes was born in Pike County, Ala., May 16th, 1846, and was united in marriage with J. A. Dykes, Jan. 18th, 1882 (brother in the flesh to the unworthy writer). Her maiden name was Harriet L. Sellers. To them were born three daughters, all of whom survive her: Mrs. Mary Dean, Mrs. Cora Coats and Mrs. James Darden. She, with her husband, moved to Wood County, Texas, in the year 1884, and in 1891 she united with Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, and was baptized by the pastor, Elder J. E. Carter, now deceased. She remained a consistent member of that church until her death, which occurred at the home of her son-in-law, Mr. Henry Coats, at Winnsboro, Texas, October 5th, 1915, after much suffering of cancer of the breast, for which she was operated on a short time before her death, which operation proved to be of but little benefit to her. A few days before she died she was stricken with partial paralysis, and was not conscious of her suffering for the last several days of her life. All that loving hands and earthly physicians could do proved unavailing, but the great Physician that raised Lazarus from the tomb appeared with healing in his wings and took her immortal spirit to that home not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, there to sing praises to him throughout all eternity. Sister Dykes bore her trials and afflictions of this world with great christian fortitude, ever appearing reconciled to her lot. As a wife she was devoted, kind and tender; as a mother she was loving and kind, always interested in the welfare of her children; as a neighbor she was ever ready to do all in her power to help those in distress; as a church member she was humble and obedient, and walked as becometh the children of the most high God.

The day following her death funeral services were held at the residence where she died, her pastor, Elder H. B. Jones, conducting the services. Elder Jones read some of the inspired word and spoke comfort and consolation to the bereaved relatives and friends, after which she was carried to the Lee Cemetery, where she was laid to rest by the side of her husband, who preceded her to the grave seven years, there to await the resurrection morn, when we have the assurance that Christ will come the second time without sin unto salvation, to gather his elect to ever reign with him in glory. "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Then, dear children, relatives and friends, be comforted, for she shall arise triumphant with that blood-washed throng, through Him that loved them and gave himself for them.

O. B. DYKES.

Thomas F. Routledge died at his home in Muirkirk, Ont., June 12th, 1916. Brother Routledge was born August 29th, 1837, making his sojourn here 78 years, 9 months and 13 days. He had been in failing health for some time, being afflicted with heart disease, but was able to be around until a short time before his death, although he suffered greatly at times from shortness of breath. He never murmured nor complained, but bore his suffering with patience until the end came and the Lord took him to himself. Brother Routledge was received in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, and baptized the fourth Sunday in June, by the late Elder Pollard, and lived a life of faithfulness and devotion to the church, and his walk before the Lord was attended with humility, love and fear. He was a man well respected by all who knew him, trustworthy and upright in his dealings with his fellow-men. His last hours were very pleasant, being filled with the goodness of God, and he felt the enduring mercies of God very precious to his soul.

His funeral was held from his late residence, conducted by the writer. Burial was in Duart Cemetery. May the dear Lord be with his widow and the dear children to comfort them in their sorrow.

J. B. SLAUSON.

APPOINTMENTS.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please publish the following appointments:

Roxbury, Sunday, Sept. 3rd, 11 a. m.; Union Grove, Sunday, Sept. 10th, 11 a. m.; Kingston, 150 Prospect St., Saturday, Sept. 16th, 8 p. m.; Ashokan, Sunday, Sept. 17th, 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m.

GEORGE RUSTON.

MEETINGS.

THERE will be a two days meeting at Cammal, Pa., the fourth Sunday in August and Saturday preceding. A hearty invitation is given to all who desire to come.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet with Providence Church, near Plano, Appanoose Co., Iowa, in her sixty-second

annual session, on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1916, and continue three days. Trains will be met at Plano. All are invited.

S. B. JONES, Moderator.

H. C. CATE, Clerk.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will meet, if the Lord wills, with the church at Bowdoinham, Maine, on Friday before the second Monday in September (8th, 9th and 10th), 1916. Lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

GEO. R. TEDFORD.

THE ninety-ninth session of the West Tennessee Association will meet with Yellow Creek Church, Dickson Co., Tenn., two miles from Woodhaven, on the Clarksville Mineral R. R. Brethren will be met at Woodhaven with conveyance. Session to begin Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1916.

A. L. STANSELL.

THE Roxbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Second Church of Roxbury, on Wednesday and Thursday following the second Sunday in September (13th and 14th), 1916. Trains will be met at Roxbury on Tuesday afternoon before the meeting, also Wednesday morning, the first day of the meeting. All who love to hear the truth proclaimed are invited to meet with us.

MARIETTA MEAD, Church Clerk.

THE Western Corresponding Association of Old School or Predestinarian Baptists of Missouri will meet with the church called Three Forks of Nodaway, in Nodaway County, Mo., on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 15th, 16th and 17th, 1916. Brethren of our faith and order are invited, especially ministers. Trains will be met at Pickering and Clearmont.

C. C. MOORE, Moderator.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 84. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1916. NO. 18.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JABEZ.

"AND Jabez was more honorable than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow. And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested."—1 Chronicles iv. 9, 10.

It is nothing less than the sacred, gracious power of God that moves a sinner to worship God in spirit and in truth. That working of the mighty power of God, according to which we are made believers in Jesus Christ our Savior, is put forth in the soul in vital teaching. It is that teaching that lives in us, moves us in things pertaining to God, brings forth fruit in us, yes, moulds us to worship the Lord our God in spirit and in truth. Christ saith, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."

"And Jabez was more honorable than his brethren." In the highest sense he was such because he was the workmanship of Jehovah's grace, and thus in his life and conversation he showed forth the praises of the Lord. He was one whom the King of kings delighted to honor. He was an Israelite indeed, and of such God saith, "Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee."—Isaiah xliii. 4. He honored God, for he called upon the God of Israel; and this was all of God's grace.

"And his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow." In sorrow she brought him forth, and doubtless there were other sorrows than her travail in childbirth that she had. "I bare him with sorrow." All the family of God, in times appointed of our heavenly Father, have their sorrows, even such griefs as are peculiar to the household of God, and Jabez, a child of sorrow, in his prayer gives us intimations of these sorrows. Child of God, are you sorrowful? It will be well in your grieved soul to think of him, the incarnate Son of God, who preeminently was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." There are no griefs and sorrows, though ever so bitter and deep, that the members of Christ's body experience, but Christ our Head

knows, and fellowship and succor and strong consolation are found with him for all that believe in him. He is our great and merciful High Priest upon his throne; let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

"Jabez called on the God of Israel." It is a sacred miracle of the grace of God that vile transgressors of the law of God should be moved to call upon the name of the Lord. It is written, "They shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God."—Zech. xiii. 9. In calling upon God there is a looking beyond all human aid. There are conditions that quickened sinners are brought into in which they prove that vain is the help of man. All our resources come short to minister comfort, strength and salvation to poor, perishing sinners. Heady, self-sufficient professors of Christ's name may sneer at the called of God being called "ready to perish," (Isaiah xxvii. 13,) poor and of a contrite spirit, trembling at the word of the Lord, (Isaiah lxvi. 2,) nevertheless the children of God all, at times, feel themselves to be just such wretched, needy ones before the Lord, with whom they have to do. How gracious then are the operations of the Holy Spirit that move us to feel after God; we that were enemies, far off from God, alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in us because of the blindness of our hearts; yet when God calls such a sinner by his grace he comes into that poor sinner's thoughts, he opens up to us little by little his name, and we think upon his name, we are drawn to the Lord, wretched and guilty, hell-deserving though we be; we flee for refuge to the name of the Lord, so graciously and comfortingly declared unto poor, lost sinners by Jesus the Savior. We believe that God is, and in our very hearts we believe he is just and holy, almighty, gracious, merciful. O that he would be merciful to me, take pity upon me; O that he would be my friend and save me. "Jabez called on the God of Israel." The Israelites were a signally favored people. They were the adopted nation of God, to whom belonged the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God and the promises. To them were committed the oracles of God, and of them, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. Jabez prayed to the Lord. A poet has said:

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Unuttered or expressed;
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near."

Communion with God is a true indication of the spiritual health of the child of God. If there is very little intercourse with God, if there are no sighs and longings, cries and praises in the soul unto God, then we are in a languishing, low condition indeed. No matter how a person may be talking or preaching about this and that doctrine, and no matter how constant may be the attendance at the assemblies of the church, if communion with God languishes what health can there be in the soul toward Christ? And that professor of Christ's name who has had no heart to heart communion with the Lord, and thus in his heart has nothing to do with God, how can he know God, and Jesus Christ the Savior? and where are the evidences that he is known of God? This is the

language of the new covenant: "I will give them a heart to know me."—Jer. xxiv. 7. And they shall all know me, from the least unto the greatest of them, signifies that they shall have a vital knowledge of the God of their salvation, even unto the blessedness of crying, Abba, Father. O, it is so essential that we poor sinners should thus know the Lord our God, for so much we need his help, compassion and forgiveness every day. Hypocrites and carnal professors have no such needs, and they know not God. "Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed." This is a sweet, comprehensive prayer, suitable to all conditions that a child of God may be in. This is the heart crying out unto God. There is such a God-wrought fervency in it. Contemplate the exclamation, "Oh" (not O). It is the wish, the yearning of the heart. And the word "indeed," which means, in very truth. That the blessing of the Lord may be upon me, that it may be my possession, my meat and my drink, my life for evermore. Though a sinner should gain the whole world and lacked the blessing of God he would lack everything, for all things without this blessing of the Lord fade and perish, and end in utter vanity. Look at a sinner, a vile transgressor; he is under the curse of the law, he is alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in him because of the blindness of his heart, the wrath of God abideth upon him. Such is the testimony of the Scriptures concerning a sinner. How can the blessing of God come upon such a creature? This blessedness cometh upon us through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, our everlasting covenant Head, in whom God blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. Christ, the Fountain of all our blessings, is our Redeemer King enthroned upon the holy hill of Zion, and there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore. So in this comprehensive, fervent prayer, "Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed," is the heart's entreaty of a sinner called by God's grace that such blessings as God hath treasured up in Christ for his loved ones may be bestowed upon wretched, sinful, hell-deserving me. O that forgiveness, peace and reconciliation may be mine. "Remember me, O Lord, with the favor that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation; that I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance." The child of God in ways without number finds the need of God's blessing. This is peculiarly felt in times of temptation, and when the way is felt to be in desert places, and when afflictions, persecutions, false tongues would do us mischief. Then how needful and much desired is the blessing of our heavenly Father, that we may be upheld and walk humbly in faith and love with our God. "Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed." Let thy doctrine drop as the rain and distil as the dew upon me, a poor sinner; let there be a plentiful rain to refresh my weary soul; let there be showers of blessing. (Ezek. xxxiv. 26.) Then I shall be fruitful and glorify thee in my body and spirit, which are thine. Then I will fear no evil, and say of all my foes, Let them curse, but bless thou me, O my God. That prayer of Jacob's is importunate and vehement indeed. We are told he wept and made supplication, (Hosea xii. 4,) and thus he cried, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me."—Gen. xxxii. 26. The blessing of the God of Israel is sought for by needy

sinners as the pearl of great price. The blessing of the Lord maketh us rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.

Oh that thou wouldest enlarge my coast. This could not mean that he desired of God a more extensive ownership of land than fell to his lot when Joshua divided the land among the tribes of Israel, for according to the laws of Moses regarding the ownership of land there could only under exceptional circumstances be any increased possession of land, by purchase or otherwise, and then in the year of jubilee it returned again to the original owner, or his heirs. But I think that, in the temporal aspect of his petition, it arose out of the circumstances and times in which he lived. Jabez felt to be straitened in his present circumstances, and sought the blessing of God that he would enlarge his coast, that the Lord would give him an entrance into and actual possession of his allotment in the promised land—the lot of his inheritance, which was his from God as an Israelite; and the next clause appears to sustain this thought: "That thine hand might be with me." There were Canaanites in the land, and the tribes of Jacob had to drive them out in order to have peaceable possession of their allotted inheritance. Read the whole first chapter of Judges. Here are a few verses of it: "Now, after the death of Joshua it came to pass, that the children of Israel asked the Lord, saying, Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them? And the Lord said, Judah shall go up: behold, I have delivered the land into his hand. And Judah said unto Simeon his brother, Come up with me into my lot, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I likewise will go with thee into thy lot. So Simeon went with him." We see in these verses a picture of brotherly helpfulness. The people of God are members one of another, and the church of Christ is unto the edifying of itself in love. You will see in this chapter in Judges the difficulties that then were to be encountered when the tribes of Israel sought the enlargement of their coasts, and some, for a time, failed to fully and peaceably possess the lot of their inheritance. Jabez appealed unto the God of Israel to enlarge his coast: Let thine hand be with me. Listen to the song sung in after days by Israel: "We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days in the times of old. How thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedst them; how thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out. For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them; but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favor unto them."—Psalms xliv. 1–3. The spiritual Israel of God often find in the spirit Jabez's prayer in their hearts: Oh that thou wouldest enlarge my coast, and that thy hand might be with me. We would go on and on to enter into the unsearchable riches of Christ. For all the land of promise, of our inheritance by faith, and of our ultimate eternal glory hereafter, is in and with our Head, the Lord Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God. "That I may know him."—Phil. iii. 10. "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints."

There are many professors of Christ's name who possess only a map of the land of Israel, and this suffices them. They can talk about the land of promise like a scholar who has studied his geography. Up there are the forests and mountains of Lebanon; here are mountains dropping new wine, there are the valleys, brooks and streams, olive yards and vineyards, villages and cities, fortresses and palaces. But they have never been there; they have never entered the land, not a step by faith have they taken therein. Their feet have not stood within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Thither the tribes of Israel go up, the tribes of the Lord, to give thanks at the remembrances of his holiness; of all this they have no experience. But the bare statements of what the holy Scriptures declare concerning the things of Christ alone do not suffice the quickened sinner; neither can a child of God be satisfied to wander through the land as a foreigner, an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, but he longs to have his portion therein, to blessedly realize, This is the land of my inheritance. He longs to eat freely of the fruits of the land, the bread and honey, milk and wine of Christ's gospel. He yearns to have, he feels he must have more than the map, the mere geography of the land of promise, that the gospel of Christ may be known not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance. Carnal professors of Christ's name appropriate all the good things of the gospel; they find no opposition to their doing so, and need no assistance to enlarge their coasts unto the uttermost bounds of salvation, sonship and eternal glory. Such exploits are very easy matters with those who are not of God, but with the children of God it is otherwise; they find they have need to be often looking unto their God in prayer. Oh that thou wouldest enlarge my coast, that thy hand might be with me. It is a strait gate into the path of life, and it is only through much tribulation that the child of God enters and possesses the kingdom. We read the Canaanites would dwell in that land. (Judges i. 27.) Giants, the sons of Anak, were there, with their cities built up to heaven, and much fighting had to be endured to dispossess them. The Canaanites are not in the precious things of Christ, but they are in our flesh, and they are ever our enemies, opposing and hindering the enlargement of our coast. Through fire and water we are brought into a wealthy place, and it is amidst the buffetings of Satan that the power of Christ shall rest upon us. The Holy Spirit of promise in his new covenant ministrations gives unto the heirs of promise earnests of their inheritance, unto which they are predestinated, according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. These foretastes are so blessed that our souls reach after more and more to know what is the height and depth and length and breadth of Jehovah's love in Christ Jesus our Lord. There are times when the heart is enlarged, (Psalms cxix. 32,) and the hand of the Lord is with us to mortify our members which are upon earth; to crucify the flesh with the affections and the lusts. This crucifying of the Canaanites is no mere pastime, but it is only by much prayer, by much grace being given us; it is amidst sighs and moans and wrestlings and many fervent cries to the Lord for his hand to be with us that the corruptions of our flesh, our unbelief, the opposition of the devil, are overcome. At all such times we are having our coast enlarged. We are growing up into him in all things,

learning how suitable, precious and glorious he is unto us vile sinners. We follow on to know the Lord, whose going forth is prepared as the morning, and he, in our faith's enlarged vision of the characters he sustains unto his people, comes unto us as the latter and former rain upon the earth, (Hosea vi. 3,) and thus we poor sinners thrive amidst the goodness of the Lord our God.

Oh that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me. Christ taught his disciples to pray after this manner: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." And in his prayer to the holy Father he thus intercedes in behalf of his own: "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." All that is evil is a grief to the quickened sinner. In this the children of God are manifest. Being born again of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever; made partakers of the divine nature, and having the Spirit of Christ; God has written his law in their heart, and thus they delight in the law of God after the inward man, and we would never, never do that which is evil in the sight of God, our heavenly Father. This is very explicitly taught in Romans vii. 19: "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me." The Holy Spirit gives to the quickened sinner a tender conscience, and all the uprisings of evil within grieve him. He often sighs and mourns, and loathing himself he cries unto his God to be kept from all that is evil in the eyes of him who is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and who cannot look on iniquity. (Hab. i. 3.) O, sin is ever abhorrent to such as are born of God, therefore it is no marvel that when they feel the dreadful working of the law of sin in their members they cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

"And God granted him that which he requested." Jesus told his disciples that "men ought always to pray, and not to faint." What a sacred privilege is thine, O child of God, to pour out your heart unto the Lord. Here lies our safety in living in much communion with our merciful, gracious God. O to walk humbly with our God. He will sustain and revive us in our pilgrimage, and, dear children of God, we find nothing so blessedly keeps us from evil as to have the crucified Savior revealed in our hearts. O to be looking unto Jesus! One look of love from the Lamb of God, one sin-pardoning word from his lips to a poor sinner plagued with evil, and the power of evil is broken, it shall not have dominion over us, for we are under the grace of Christ, our King, our Friend and Savior.

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

TILBURY, Ont., Aug. 2, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I can truly say that I was sorry for you in the deep trial you have been made to pass through in the loss of one so dear as your companion. How short-lived was your happiness in her companionship; in it all you have my sympathy. I hope the dear

Lord will give you grace to be reconciled to his all-wise will, and that it may be among the "all things" that work together for good. But blind unbelief is sure to err and scan God's work in vain; he is his own interpreter, and will make it plain. The day after you lost your dear one I lost my dear brother in Manitoba. Though I knew he was sick, I was not able to go to him, the distance was too great for my strength, as I have not been well for some time, though up and around, but when the telegram came it was a great shock. I believe I can truly say I felt sustaining grace given me in the hour of need, and a desire to be reconciled to his holy will. I have passed through many such trials in my time. Since then I have lost a nephew, on the 10th of last month, in a hospital in England. He died of an abscess on the brain. He went with the construction corps, but was unable to go to the war zone with the rest of the company. That awful war! the dear Lord alone knows where and when it will end. It is no doubt to fulfill God's purpose, though it is so terrible to think of.

I have some letters that were sent me some years ago; I felt them good then, and when reading them over they are as good as when written, at least to me. I hope you, too, may find some comfort in reading them, and if you think best you may publish them. You knew both the writers, brother Case, of London, and sister Eliza McDonald. They have finished their course and kept the faith, depending on His word, and are at rest in Jesus, I believe. My son and his wife join me in love and sympathy to yourself and family in your sore bereavement.

I am your sister in hope beyond this vale of sin and sorrow,

SARAH A. McCOLL.

AUGHRIM, Ont., January, 1907.

DEAR SISTER McCOLL:—Desiring that this will find you and yours well, I write to say that Lizzie is well, but that I am not very well. I have not been so well this winter, it has been such bad weather for my complaint, but I managed to keep about until January 1st, when I had to give up, and I have been laid up since. If good weather would come I think I would soon get better, but how good it is to know and feel that weather, health and all are in the hand of that One who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. As far as concerns this world, I have nothing to live for, feeling that at its best all is vanity here below. We enjoy, as we hope, the love of God in bringing us from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, in giving us to love and adore his great mercy in giving us a good hope through grace, giving us love, communion and fellowship with his saints and with his Son Jesus Christ, sweetness, light and comfort in his word, so that we are made to glory in his name, feeling that he that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, shall also freely give us all things. Dear sister, all the above things I have written in the midst of doubts, fears and questionings, such as, How do I know? Can it be possible that a poor, wretched sinner knows anything in truth about the above wonderful things? So that, dear sister, at best we are reduced to hope, and often hope against hope, and we read that if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it, and, like one of old, I have often to feel and say, To whom can I go? thou hast the words of eternal life, and as far as this short life or time state is concerned, we seem to enjoy the above blessings but for a moment, and that for the rest of our

lives we have been forsaken and left to ourselves, whereas the dear Lord declares, For a small moment I have forsaken thee, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee, so that, my dear sister, this time of sorrow, sin, doubts and fears with our God is but as a moment out of that eternity of time, or space, or life, that is with him, and which is from everlasting to everlasting. The revelation and experience of Paul made him reckon the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us; then, dear sister, may you and I be favored to gird up the loins of our minds, be sober and hope unto the end, knowing that death, that puts an end to life, shall put an end to sin, and O how sweet to contemplate; then shall we see and hear and know all we desired to here below, and find sweet employ in that eternal world of joy.

Forgive the rambling nature of this letter. If you find any comfort of love, any stirring up of your pure mind, then to God be all the praise.

I have been expecting to hear from you since the Lobo meeting, but have not, so I thought I would write. Elders Wyman, Sawin and Vail have been in Canada and served the church. We have had Elder Sawin out here, and he had dinner with us, and we enjoyed his visit. We hope to hear from you soon. Dear sister Bessie Bateman has gone to her longed for home.

Yours in hope,

R. CASE.

LONDON, Ont., July 19, 1909.

DEAR SISTER MCCOLL:—With love and best wishes to you all from us both, I write to say that Lizzie was up this p. m. to see Mrs. Graham; she is doing well, and Lizzie fell in love with her. She said that you were sick, so I am trying to write you now, for I know that it is in affliction that poor sinners need comfort and support, and if the dear Lord will give me a word of comfort to you then to him shall be all the praise. It was said by one of old, and by many before and since, It is good that I was afflicted. David did not and could not say that it was good while he was in that affliction, but after he was delivered out of that affliction and tasted the loving-kindness, longsuffering and faithfulness of his God, then, and only then, could he say it was good that he was afflicted, for before it he went astray; then he could take the cup of salvation and ascribe praise unto his God, and O what sweet work this is, for the poor, weary and heavy laden child of God to bless and praise the triumphant God; it is then we gladly obey the command of our heavenly Friend and King when he says unto us, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, and how often have you and I tasted of that rest, rest from ourselves, from our sins, from our burden, our guilt, rest from under the curse of the law and rest in Jesus. O how sweet that truth, rest in Jesus, rest in his everlasting love, when we cared not for ourselves, rest in his finished work of redemption, rest in that glorious truth that he was raised from the dead by the power of God, now no more to die, and he has given proof to very many that he did rise from the dead, and that he is alive for evermore, by giving many poor sinners to know that they are, or were, without hope and without God in the world, manifesting himself unto them as their God, their righteousness, their portion for evermore, and he has said, Because I live ye shall live also. O how good to feel:

"E'en down to old age all my people shall prove
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love,
And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn:
Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne."

"That soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake."

The above is better than what I may write; may the truth and comfort of it be to us all while in this vale of tears. May you soon be well in health again and be at the October meeting, is our prayer, if it is the will of God. Remember your unworthy brother when it is well with you.

Your brother and sister,

R. & L. CASE.

APPIN, Ont., Feb. 27, 1913.

DEAR MRS. MCCOLL:—I was very glad to receive your good letter. I remember once you said to me, "The church will be a wall of fire round about you." At that time I could not grasp the meaning. I thought you were so much older that you could not understand the temptations that come to those who are younger in years, and I could not see how being in the church would make it any easier to resist those temptations. On Sunday morning of the meeting I was thinking should God grant me strength to ever go to the church, how could I go back and meet my old associates, and how could I refuse to go places, when the words came, "All these things shall be added unto thee." Then I thought of the communion service, and I felt, How can I ever dare take part in that? And the words were in my mind, Except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood, &c., and again, As often as ye do this do it in remembrance of me; and then again the words came, And all these things shall be added unto thee, and O, I have felt that surely it is all wonderful, for things that it had been impossible for me to resist now seem so easy, and I feel to say, Strength in the Lord Jehovah, is eternal as his years. I know of myself I am weak and helpless, and apt to fall by the way, but I think of those golden candlesticks, pure gold, without any alloy, and how they held the little candles so they could not fall one way or the other, that pure love of God that holds his children so they are made to say, I will not eat meat for my life if it causeth my brother to offend. Again, Christ said, I will write my law in their heart, and his law is, Love one another, and when he puts that love in the hearts of his people then all is peace. I had never seen it that way until the Saturday afternoon of the meeting, then I felt to say, as did John, I saw a city. I could not see that I had any part in it, but the words came to my mind, Take thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place where thou standest is holy ground. Again,

"How glorious Zion's courts appear,
The city of our God;
His throne he hath established here,
Here fixed his blest abode."

I had never seen the church in such beauty, and I felt again the beauty of the words, These are they that have come up out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. As I was going out of the meetinghouse on Sunday morning, and the church was staying in, the words came, There shall ye taste unmingled joy and dwell in perfect peace, yet at that time I did not think of going to the church, but there has been much beauty in the words, When the fullness of the time had come. How often I had gone to the meetings with such a longing in my heart, and would come away feeling just the same, a longing, aching void. I would hear the members say that surely it had been a feast, but on

Monday of the meeting I felt I could say, "My cup runneth over." I felt I had surely been made to lie down in green pastures and been led by the still waters. I shall never forget that night at Deacon Gillis'. It had seemed, as I think of it now, that I had been at the side of the pool, as the poor man with the infirmities, and had waited for some one to put me in when the water was troubled, so I had gone on hoping that as I would listen to the preaching of the word I might be cured. But when the words came, Arise and shine, for thy light has come, all the burden was gone. I felt indeed that not one stone was left on top of another, for surely I could say,

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

I was "all undone." But O I have thought of the children of Israel. Some one said that night that surely it was a night to be remembered. And I felt that indeed it was a night to be remembered, when the angel of the Lord passed over and saw the blood of the Lamb sprinkled on the door post; I felt indeed there was nothing in me, but I felt I could say, He brought me up out of the horrible pit and the miry clay and set my feet upon a rock; he established my goings; he put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto God. O, I felt if I could but praise him. He was the chiefest among ten thousand, and the church was surely the fairest among daughters. I felt if I could but lie at their feet. At one time I had a desire to be something of use or value in the church, but then I felt if I could only be the smallest little pebble among all the stones of the building. I knew they could go on without me, but I felt to say, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee, for whither thou goest there will I go, and whither thou lodgest there will I lodge, for thy God shall be my God, and thy people my people. It seemed that all fear was wiped away, and that morning as Aunt Clara said to me, "I will go up with you," the thought came, I only want Jesus. I felt he was my strong tower, and, If Christ be for us, who can be against us? When I was received sweet joy filled my heart. I could but feel, "With believers enrolled, with believers to live and to die," and now the words are in my mind:

"To an inheritance divine
He taught my heart to rise,
'Tis uncorrupted, undefiled,
Unfading in the skies."

I felt that truly strength in the Lord Jehovah is eternal as his years, and as I have received sweet letters of love and fellowship from the church I have felt that surely as thy days thy strength shall be, and as God provided his Israel of old with manna each day, so he will provide that heavenly manna for his Israel now, and the words are very sweet, "God will provide." But only when we are given that faith of God are we made willing to trust him for all things. The words have been very sweet to me, In six trials I will be with thee, and in the seventh I will not forsake thee.

O no, I did not mind in the least your speaking of preparing for the baptism. I felt glad to know you thought of it. To-day I had a very sweet letter from Elder Lester. He spoke of the baptism, and said he would be glad to take part in the ordinance if it should be the will of God and of the church. As far as I am concerned, I have no choice, just whoever the church desires as moderator at that meeting.

We have Aunt Clara and Aunt Tish with us just now. We are very glad to have them, and I feel loath to leave them to come to the store. At first it seemed

very hard to come and mingle with the people; not that I thought that I was any better than others, O no, but it seemed I could not get my mind on my work, and I would think of the church, and felt to say,

"There my best friends, my kindred dwell,
There Christ my Savior reigns."

But lately I have been made more willing to do whatever comes in my way in the store work, and the words have come to my mind with much assurance,

"The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will."

I hope you will pardon me for writing so much, but I have felt to say that although I try so hard to praise his name I fall far short, and, The half has never been told. O that he might keep me and guide me, and all his children, if I be indeed one. Look with an eye of charity on all I have written. Love to all.

I am yours in hope,

ELIZA McDONALD.

APPIN, Ont., May 14, 1914.

DEAR SISTER McCOLL:—I have been so anxious about you ever since the meetings that to-night I felt I must drop you a line. We were very sorry that you were taken sick and had to leave the meeting, but sincerely hope you were soon feeling better, and by this time quite yourself. It is hard to have to be sick, but when blessed with His presence it lightens the burden. I know that he is everywhere present, but we cannot always feel that his everlasting arms are underneath, and his banner of love floating over us. But may he seem very near to you, as in days past, and as he has promised never to leave nor forsake his people, may you even down to old age feel his sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love. O the love of God that passes understanding. Just to lie passive in his hands, and know no will but his. But I cannot say what I would like to, and anyway I just felt so anxious I wanted to know if you were better. I hope, if it is the Lord's will, that he will grant you health and strength, and that you may be able to attend the meetings again. You have been like a mother in Israel to me, and when you were absent Sunday afternoon and Monday morning I greatly missed you. I knew you would be sorry you could not be at the rest of the meeting, but I am glad the Lord is not confined to time or place, for he can make even a dying bed feel soft as downy pillows are. He can wipe all tears from our eyes, and make us to feel that these light (otherwise grievous) afflictions work for us a far more exceeding weight of glory. And O that blessed hope that enters within the vale, for we know that when this earthly tabernacle is dissolved we have a building not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. And truly,

"A hope so great and so divine
May trials well endure,
And purge the soul for sense and sin,
As God himself is pure."

But if for this life only we have hope we are of all men most miserable. Yet we know it is not for the things of this world we hope, but there is an inward longing to be like Christ, and we are made to say, I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness. Here there is a continual warfare, the flesh lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, so often I fear I will fall by the hand of the mighty enemy. I feel my feet have wellnigh slipped, but I long that he might lead me and guide me and keep me, that I may be kept so that I may never bring shame or reproach to his cause.

Well, I am writing far too much, for I cannot write anything that will be of any comfort. Would it be too much to ask

Tom or Chris to drop me a card telling how you are, if you are not able to write? Mother kept pretty well while we were away, but has not been quite as well as usual to-day. She is very sorry you were taken sick, but hopes to hear soon that you are quite well again. Give our warmest love to all the rest, and to your own dear self.

Yours most unworthily,

ELIZA McDONALD.

TORONTO, Ont., Aug. 8, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter I received from Mrs. Pultz nearly three years ago. I consider it good matter for the SIGNS, but will leave it at your disposal. Love to you and all the household of faith.

Your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) W. C. YOUNG.

WHEELING, W. Va. Oct. 15, 1913.

MY PRECIOUS SISTER:—I think I am making this attempt to write to you today because I do not know what to do with myself. I often think of you; I doubt if there is a day goes by that you and sister McKinney are not in my mind. This is not saying that I do not think of all the dear ones with whom I have corresponded, but somehow I feel that she and you appeal to me as those needing more than the usual share of sympathy. I do not know that I am able to sympathize with you as I desire, from the fact that all my efforts are vain. I have a struggling desire to feel and to be truly sincere in all I say or do, but alas, I am (I almost feel to say) dead to everything. Usually when I try to pray a drowsiness comes over my mind and holds it down, especially in the nighttime, but creature things will hold my eyes waking. O dear sister, I am so weary, I wish I might lay my tired head on your dear shoulder and weep. O that the dear Lord would loose my bands and let the poor captive go free. I am willing to suffer pain and death if only he would reveal his love to me. My health is worse than usual. This I consider is his rod and his stripes. Often I think I cannot live through the day. I I feel (I think) willing to go any time he sees fit, if indeed he thinks on me at all. Often when trying to commune with him I feel that it could not be possible that he would take any account of me, yet I continue to struggle for a nearness to him. Many times I am faintly reminded that my righteousness does not matter. I cannot doubt that the righteousness of the dear Son of God is sufficient. I do not doubt this in the very least, but I want the truth of it to come into my heart with power and in loving assurance. I was going to ask, Why this dimness? but I dare not. How well my conscience knows that I have procured this to myself. True, I have no love for the things of this life, they are constant weariness to me. The conversation about worldly matters will soon cause my strength to run down to such a low ebb that I am often obliged to lie down and take something to stimulate my heart into action. I want to be alone in a quiet place where I can have time to think on spiritual things and to try to approach the throne of grace, but alas, as soon as my strength is a little revived, my mind, instead of pursuing spiritual things, is secretly wandering in forbidden paths, paths that would lead from the narrow way in which I so much desire to walk. Of late I have had a great desire to read the Bible, but I cannot seem to read to any profit. This morning before I arose I thought of our Savior's sweet and tender talk to the disciples in the fourteenth chapter of John: "Let not

your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." I repeated as much of it as I could remember, and promised myself that I would read it today, but it is now toward evening and this is the first I have thought of it since. I had so hoped that the dear Master would suffer me to find him precious in this chapter. When I first thought of it this morning I had a dim conception of how tenderly and lovingly he addressed them in this place, but after that my poor, foolish mind went roving back over the times that I had met with the dear saints, and I found that I was searching to see if I could see anything in myself at these times worthy of their love or admiration. I think I am glad to say that I was sent back from this quest with shame and confusion of face, and was made to call on the Lord to have mercy on me. I think I am having an overwhelming view of my frailties and my folly; I feel so sick of self and sin. You see, dear sister, I can only think and write about myself. Yesterday I was trying to understand why it was that my mind was so constantly on myself, when an answer came to this effect: Because you are yourself; self is centered in self; so I began to think that death only could sever me from this self that so annoys and distresses me. Then I have thought of what part of me should shortly leave this vale, and I began to be alarmed when I considered that the mind was my being, the flesh is only the vessel that contains my mind, or being, and I said, Is it possible that my whole being, with the exception of the flesh, shall return to God who gave it? But I remember that we shall be changed, so the mind of the flesh must be changed. As I often feel to be on the brink of the grave, I am often wondering about the change. I have so longed for a brighter evidence as the time draws near; I want dying grace; seeing my health so bad makes me feel that I need it now, yet I am very sure that I do not deserve it. I can ask nothing for my sake, but I can, or rather I desire, to plead it, for His holy name's sake, and for his promise to be with us even down to the end. Some months ago I was comforted with a felt assurance in these words: "His mercy endureth for ever." O how glad I was of this, his mercy would never cease. If he had ever been merciful to us we could rest assured that this same mercy would forever endure. Another word was very comforting to me: I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities I will remember no more forever. I have never felt at any time that his mercy was because of my righteousness, but many, many times I feel to say he is merciful to my unrighteousness.

I was much interested in your last letter in the SIGNS, also that of brother Burch, after reading what he said about throwing away our reserve, and pouring forth the words of love and gladness of heart, which are so strengthening to those who are heartsore and weary. I need not repeat his words further, but surely my heart responded to this so strongly that I wanted to write to him at once. We are told to quench not the Spirit, but how often our natural weakness causes us to disobey this command. I wonder if it is that enemy of divine life that so often stops us by telling us that we are only doing the things we would for self-praise, or to bring ourselves into prominence among the children of God. I am quite sure that I am held back many times by this accusation. Now I will draw to a close. I believe I had intended to tell you something about our temporal welfare, but it seems to be of such little con-

sequence, for, though the Lord keeps me so poor and empty in spiritual things, he continues to provide a way for me to escape any great hardships. Our son and his wife are here with us; she has been very kind to do all in her power for me; when I have those bad spells she attends to the household affairs. I had been better through the early part of the summer; I made a trip to Donora, Pa., in April, and attended a two days meeting; then I went again the last of June, and enjoyed another precious season with them. After I returned home there came a feeling that this was to be my last meeting. My health began to fail, and I was wondering how I could go along with even the light part of the work, when this son and his wife were brought into such a condition that they had to come home to us. In thinking of it I often wanted to sing, "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." Annie (his wife) is usually healthy and strong, but to-day she is prostrated with a sick headache. In this I had another display of God's mercy, for he so revived my strength that I was able to minister to her wants, and he also put it into our son's heart to help me greatly with the work. I want so much to feel thankful for this undeserved mercy. Failing altogether in this, I am hoping that our blessed Lord becomes our thankfulness as well as our righteousness. Dear sister, I do hope that all that we so earnestly desire to do and cannot, because of the weakness of the flesh, is imputed to us by the "King of Righteousness."

If you can find the time to write I would be glad to hear from you once more. I sincerely hope you are strengthened to bear all burdens, but I would rather you could have the blessed assurance that they are borne for you by our blessed Lord. It is so sweet if we can have the assurance that it is his strength that supports us under every trial.

Dear sister, I did not get my letter mailed yesterday, so will add a few more words. I see by the SIGNS that you have made another move. I can imagine how trying this is on both mind and body. I do hope and pray that you may be benefited by this move, and we hope it is the Lord who directs your steps. If we could only fully realize that he knoweth our thoughts afar off, and that it is his power and wisdom that guide us to the end of our lives. How we fear to take a step that he has not ordered, and our continual cry is to know his will. Dear sister, as to moving out of reach of his blessed gospel, (that is, hearing it preached) you cannot do it; he is all of the gospel of salvation by grace, and he is all of love. He says, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, and, Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end. O that he may keep you close in his embrace, is my poor prayer.

Ever your loving sister,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

DECATUR, Texas, August 7, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I feel ashamed of myself for not thanking you for sending me the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and never letting you know whether I was still living, but it has been a great comfort to me, for I have not heard the truth preached in six years or more, so I look for the SIGNS, and it has come regularly; I have not missed a number, and the Lord has blessed me with sight to read it, but I am nearly deaf, so I cannot hear preaching, and I am so nervous I can hardly write so one can read it, but if you will bear with my weakness I will make the attempt to

write about a few things which my mind has been burdened with before I am called hence, from whence no traveler ever returns. I am nearly seventy-two years of age, and so feeble that I do not expect to live much longer. One thing I wish to write about is creation. Now, if I understand the Scriptures, there is but one Creator, and that is God, and he created all things that ever did exist or ever will exist. I have a dear brother whom I esteem for the truth's sake, and he says sin is not included in the "all things," for he says sin is not a thing. If sin is not a thing, how will we get any comfort from this Scripture where it says, All things work together for good to them that love the Lord? and where can we get any comfort from this Scripture, where he says he declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure? Dear brethren, it seems to me that creation is one thing and formation another. It is written, In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth; then he formed things after they were created, for he says, The earth was without form, and void. I feel assured that God in his infinite wisdom before time commenced saw clear through the vista of time and beheld everything that ever has been or ever will be, and that he created everything that his wisdom beheld, and that all things will be made manifest at the appointed time just as the Lord intended it should, and by the transgression sin entered the world, or was made manifest. There is a time to everything under the sun, and they will all take place at their appointed time. The Lord of glory was made manifest in the flesh at the appointed time to redeem his people from their sins, and I believe he saved them, for we hear the angel saying to the virgin Mary, Thou shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. The world says the angel lied, and they are going around over the country telling the people to turn from their sins and be saved. Again, the world says Jesus was mistaken when he said to his Father, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do, and this is the work thou gavest me to do, that of all thou hast given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. Paul said, Jesus came to save sinners, of whom I am chief, and Christ told the Father he had finished the work he had given him to do. Then we feel assured that all the heirs of promise were saved when Christ hung suspended between the heavens and the earth and gave up the ghost, and said, It is finished. Then he made a full and complete atonement for all that ever will be saved; none can be added or none taken from that number, for that number embraced the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife, and their names were written in the book of life before the foundation of the world. We see the world with all its institutions of learning, and their money sending missionaries over the world to try to do what the Lord said he had already done, but vain are their works, for there never has been, nor ever will be, a soul saved since the crucifixion of Christ. O wonder of wonders, can it be that a poor sinner like I feel myself to be was embraced in that glorious covenant of redemption? If I knew I were, doubts and fears would flee away, but I cannot say I know I have passed from death unto life because I love the brethren. I can only say I hope I have passed from death unto life because I hope I love the brethren, for if I

knew I had passed from death unto life it seems that doubts and fears would flee away. I cannot say I know I love the brethren, I can only say I hope I do. This Scripture causes me to tremble and fear, because it does not comfort me as I hear others claiming it does them, for they can say they know, and I can only say, I hope.

Dear editors, I hope you will bear with my weakness for bothering you with this letter, but I thought I ought to let you know that I am still getting the SIGNS, which is a great comfort to me to know that the Lord has a few witnesses to declare the truth as it is taught in the holy Scriptures. I wish I could pay for the paper, but my son is taking care of me, for I am too feeble to work, and it takes what money I can get to buy medicine and pay the doctors, so if I am a burden to you in sending the SIGNS to me without pay I will not blame you in the least if you stop it, for I know it costs a great deal to publish it.

Brother Ker, I wish you or brother Lefferts would write an editorial on creation.

Farewell. I hope the Lord will be with you in the defence of the truth in the future as he has been in the past.

M. B. F. JONES.

DUQUOIN, Illinois.

DEAR BRETHREN:—On Friday, April 23rd, I left my home at 2 p. m. for Smithland, Ky., via Cairo, Ill., reaching Smithland Saturday evening by boat about five o'clock, where I stayed all night. On Friday morning we crossed the Cumberland River, and drove some ten or twelve miles into the country to the home of brother S. H. Berry, where I united in marriage Miss Elvira Berry and Mr. C. M. Harriss. Miss Berry is the eldest daughter of brother and sister Berry. Mr. Harriss is the eldest son of brother and sister J. P. Harriss, of Duquoin, Ill. After the marriage ceremony was performed at 10 o'clock the writer tried to preach at 11 o'clock from 2 Thess. i. 8–10, and again at 5 o'clock from Luke v. 31, 32, and was made to believe that those who were present went away much comforted. I was very much impressed with the holy zeal and godly character of those I met, and especially old brother Berry himself, who is in his seventy-second year, but he can yet sing with as clear a voice as a man of thirty. May God strengthen him in his declining years, and enable him to look steadfastly unto heaven, and patiently await for the appearing of the One who hath ascended up into heaven, even the Son of man. May God bless the SIGNS, and strengthen its editors and readers in the fellowship of the truth, is the prayer of your humble brother,

L. P. HARRISS.

ROANOKE, Texas, Jan. 6, 1915.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription is due, I will now remit, as I do not feel I can do without the dear old SIGNS, for I receive much comfort in reading it.

Well, I will tell about our little meeting the first Sunday in this year. Elder E. A. Moreland and brother Preston Staggs visited us at our home, and Sunday morning when we got up it was raining, and rained all day, so we read the Bible and talked and sang until about 2:30 o'clock, when we prevailed upon Elder Moreland to preach for us, and we had a good meeting. There were five of us, and when the meeting closed we were all weeping like children. It may be a delusion, but I believe the Spirit of the Lord was manifest in our midst. I told the brethren I believed I could travel in

the strength of that feast for many days, and so it has been, fresh in my mind ever since. I believe that when we fail in having our meetings, though there be but few present, we always leave with sad hearts, so let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together.

Brethren, one and all, write often, for those who are gifted to preach and write are a great comfort to the little ones. I believe it is the duty of God's ministers to preach to the comfort of his people, and let the world alone. Since I have had a hope, if ever I have had one, I know that the preached word never gives life, and it never changes unregenerated into regenerated sons and daughters of our heavenly Father, for that is God's work.

Well, dear editors, if you deem this worthy, publish it, if not, all will be well, for I speak as unto wise men, judge what I say.

Your brother, I hope,

C. Y. OSTEEN.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Aug. 28, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN AND FRIENDS:—Reading the good articles written by different brethren and sisters in all parts of the country, I was reminded that it is forty-seven years ago that six of the dear ones, with myself, were led into the water by Elder Hartwell; three of the number have passed on to a better home, we believe, and three of us are still living. I feel that my time here must be short, as I have just passed into my eighty-fifth year. I have been greatly blessed through those forty-seven years to be able to attend our meetings for so long a time, and miss but very few, and listen to the things that we contend for; not worldly things that decay, but things that have a sure foundation, that will stand until time is no more. If there ever was a time that we should stand for them, and not waver, it is to-day, so much false doctrine in the world, and things to please the young. It seems to me that they know nothing about being born again or becoming as a little child, humble and showing the spirit of meekness. Are they taught of the Lord, or of and by men? We love to see men live moral and upright lives, but if I know anything about it they can never be saved by that means, or by anything they can do. We believe it is all with our dear Redeemer, without the help of man or any of his assistance. How glad we are to crown him Lord of all.

Elder Bogardus was with us yesterday, our pastor, Elder Vaughn, being absent, and he spoke from the forty-first chapter of Isaiah, seventeenth and eighteenth verses: "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Isaac will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." I will be their God and they shall be my people. The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my lovingkindness I will not take from thee. How good it is to think on these things, to meditate on them both day and night. I have had many sweet meditations of these things these forty-seven years, and they are as sweet to-day as they were in my very first knowledge of them. Sometimes I think I know so little about spiritual things that I hesitate to make the attempt to write or say much about them. I do know one thing: that I love to meet with the brethren, and if I have any experience it is in these words: For we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.

God is love. We love him because he first loved us. Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, carried up into glory. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. If we are not born of God we are none of his, we are yet in our sins. If we deny him he will deny us. If we deny him, yet he remaineth faithful, he will not deny himself. He is the God of truth, without iniquity, just and right is he, the only perfect man. None good, no, not one. I feel to say that I am vile, unclean, evil thoughts continually, saying wrong things, doing wrong things; there is not a day or an hour passes but what I do or say some wrong thing. I believe I can say that I am as prone to evil as the sparks are to fly upwards. When I would do good, evil is present; the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. If ye love me keep my commandments. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. He died and rose again for our justification, that we might be saved. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God. That faith Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen; for if we see it why do we hope for it? How wonderful are all his works, his mysteries no man can fathom. The rain and the snow come down and water the earth and make it to bring forth and bud; so shall my word be, it shall accomplish that which I please, and prosper whereto I send it. I am the good Shepherd, my sheep hear my voice. I give them eternal life, and none shall perish. He will never leave nor forsake one of his little ones, they are his. Oft it causes me anxious thought, am I his, or am I not? I feel to say as the woman said, If I may but touch the hem of his garment, or dwell under the shadow of his wings, but I feel to be so far away from him most of the time, so much taken up with worldly things, forgetting spiritual things; but I do love to crown him Lord of all. There are many false gods, but there is only one true God, who rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. He must reign till he hath put all things under his feet; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? All power is his. I have power to lay down my life, and have power to take it again. Wonderful power! The foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of man. The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. Can I fall with such a prop that is sure and never fails? Men's works always fail, but God's work is from everlasting to everlasting. We need not fear if we are his chosen ones, we have his promise that not one shall be lost, and we can rest upon such a promise. Peter denied the Lord thrice, but in a short time he was praising him, and saying, Lord, thou knowest I love thee. I often think of Paul's life, and the troubles he had with unbelievers, but he said, By the grace of God I am what I am, and he was determined not to preach anything but Jesus Christ, and him crucified. He said, Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal; and I, brethren, when I came to you I came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God; and, I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trem-

bling, and my speech and my preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom. Such testimony as Paul bore we can all indorse, and feel that it is the true testimony of God, and the only testimony that is worth more to us than all the world can give.

I have rambled about in this letter, but you may look it over, and if you think it is the true testimony you may publish it, if not, cast it one side, and all will be well with me.

Your unworthy brother,

D. L. BLACKWELL.

THE APPEARING OF JESUS.

"AND unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation."

When Jesus was born of the virgin, he came bearing the sins of his people, bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, said Peter. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory, said Paul. John said, He is the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. Every eye shall see him, and they shall look upon him whom they have pierced. Behold, he cometh with clouds. He was seen of Paul as of one born out of due time, one born in Zion. Behold, the King in his beauty, chief among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely. See him as their Daysman, Mediator, Advocate with the Father. If we have known Jesus we have known the Father also, and we love his appearing. His appearing is to revive and comfort, speak peace to our troubled souls. He is our peace. Behold the man! Never man spake like this man, his word is with power, he speaks and the winds and the waves obey him, even devils are subject to his command; evil spirits are driven out and enter into swine at his bidding, and when we are clothed and in our right mind we want to be with him and sit at his feet. Many times we go, as did those of old, and say, Sirs, we would see Jesus. We want his appearing when we assemble ourselves together; we want to see him in the midst of the churches. His appearing speaks peace, as when he appeared unto his disciples. We want him to be master of ceremonies and sit at the gospel table and break the bread of life to each and every hungry soul. His presence abolishes death, hell and the power of the grave. His presence sheds sweet odors around, the perfumes or fragrance of heaven is the ointment poured forth upon him. Brethren are made to dwell together in unity by his presence, enmity, hatred and all evil surmisings are swept away when he appears, and we are made to sit down in heavenly places in Christ, being bound together in the bundle of life. The appearing of Jesus destroys him that had the power of death, and delivers us who through fear of death are all our lifetime subject to bondage. Brethren, it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

GRANBURY, Texas, Aug. 15, 1916.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I have often thought I would like to tell the dear saints what I hope the Lord has done for me, but when I would think of how sinful and unworthy I am in the sight of God I would blush and say I could never tell it, but to-night I find myself doing the very thing I thought I would not do. First, I was raised by strict Methodist parents; that is, my mother was, and my father belonged to the Methodists, but he

always said that what is to be will be and we cannot help it. When I was thirteen years old I joined the Methodists, where I was a member twenty years. I thought I was doing the right thing, until I was thirty-three years old, when I became dissatisfied and ceased going to the meetings and Sunday-school. I told my husband (and my parents, too) that I did not believe there was any good in the churches, that it seemed to me it was all mockery. I went on in that way a long time, the more I went to meeting the more I would say; so once I came home from a service and was giving some of my opinions when my father said, If I were you I would never attend meeting again; you do wrong by going. Well, a short time after that I got to where I believed I was going to die, I felt that I was the blackest sinner living, and could not think of a single good thing I had ever done. I got to where I could neither eat nor sleep, and my husband thought I was sick, and insisted that I should consult a doctor. I could not think of telling my troubles, and it seemed to me that I just wanted to get off somewhere and die alone, that it would be better for me, and my dear ones, too. I suffered that way for nearly a week, still not daring even to tell my husband, when one night I went to bed, but not to sleep, for I tossed and tried to pray nearly all night, when about four o'clock in the morning I felt that I was sinking down into the darkest place, and I cried out in great agony, My Lord, show me the way to heaven, and just then a beautiful light shone in the house, (yes, it lighted the house,) and I saw three lights about two inches wide pointing up, but I could not see the end of those lights. I can never tell what those three straight lights represented. I have thought much about it, and would love to understand it, but I cannot. One thing I do know, that after that I felt very light, easy and so happy, and I have often told my dear family that if I ever had a foretaste of the good things to come that was my first experience, and I do hope it was the grace of God. My husband asked me if I were going back to the Methodists, and I said, No, I never expect to join any people, and again I did the very thing that I said I would not do. We moved to Texas, where we attended meetings held by the Primitive Baptists, and the first thing I knew I was a subject for baptism, and have been a member of that church four years. Though I am often cast down, and my cross seems heavier than I can bear, yet when I see a ray of light I am strengthened and pick up and trudge on, hoping some bright day that I shall be like Him, and then I will be satisfied. But I often wonder why the dear saints ever accepted such a poor, unworthy creature as I am. God bless the church and the doctrine, for if I know my poor, sinful heart I love them. When it is well with you all, remember me at the throne of grace.

From one of the very least, if one at all,

(MRS.) J. E. BERRY.

WEISER, Idaho, June 22, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Being kept in the house this morning, my wife having had a very bad night, and so very weak that she has to be waited on, now between spells I will write you a few lines. No one who believes the Bible would claim Paul was not a preacher, and one, too, that was called and qualified by the almighty God. Paul, in speaking of where he would go, to whom he would preach, most always said (in substance), If the Lord wills. He was considered

the apostle to the Gentiles, so that not only was regeneration irresistibly given to him, but his call, his qualification and his field of labor. He was not ashamed of the gospel, for it was the power of God, &c., and he knew in the day of God's power his people should be a willing people. When one is willing it seems to me this would cover a wonderful field. He is willing to know the truth, to shun sin, to know no God but the true one, and this knowledge is imparted to our understanding by the gospel. It is always the direct work of the Holy Ghost taking of the things of Jesus and shewing them unto us. Paul may plant (preach), and Apollos may water (preach), but God must give the increase. It does not matter how much or what variety the increase, God must give it, let it be an increase of understanding or in works. There is no room here for creature boasting, God is all; he works, and none can hinder. Whatsoever he desires he does, even to directing the steps of a righteous man. Praise the Lord for his goodness and mercy. As many as were ordained to eternal life believed, and it is the work of God that you believe on me (Jesus). A person may have life, and believe much, little or nothing, naturally speaking; a person may love spiritual life, and not know what it really cost, and never will know unless revealed by the Holy Ghost. The preached word may comfort others qualified to hear, but every one must be so qualified in order for them to receive the gospel, hence the preparation of the heart in man is of the Lord. If one is a fit subject for the church, and it is the Lord's will for him to come, will he come? "Lazarus, come forth." Did he come? He surely did, and not only did he come, but he came bound. Now loose him and let him go. The gospel has loosed this prepared one, and the Lord adds him to the church. This is his work, for in this kingdom he has not given it to other hands, but does it himself. We are active in all the acts of obedience, for we are working out just what God has worked in us, and both the desire to do and the power to perform are the work of God, and we are after all unprofitable servants.

Yours in hope,

T. E. ATTEBERY.

MIDVALE, Idaho, Aug. 5, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription for the dear old paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, is about up, I am sending two dollars for another year, as I feel that I cannot do without it, for it is such a comfort to me, a poor worm of the dust. I much enjoy the editorials and also the many interesting and soul-cheering letters from the dear brethren and sisters scattered abroad in the land. I feel to thank God and praise his holy name for supplying us with two such able and efficient editors as Elders Ker and Lefferts in rightly dividing the word of truth to the edification of the saints. To God be all the praise and glory.

Dear brother Ker, if you will allow one so unworthy as I to address you, I deeply sympathize with you in the sad loss of your dear companion, but hope the dear Lord will keep you by his sustaining grace, and enable you to say, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. May the Lord's sweetest blessings rest upon you in this sad hour of bereavement, is the prayer of your little unworthy sister in hope of eternal life,

(MRS.) W. F. SEID.

[WE fully appreciate the kind words of sister Seid, together with all such expressions of sympathy by many. It is good in this day of affliction to know we have the sympathy and best wishes of the Lord's dear people.—K.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1916.

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JEHOVAH-JIREH.

WHEN reading the Old Testament Scriptures it is pleasant to behold the dealings of the Lord with his chosen and blessed people; pleasant to be reminded of his loving-kindness and faithful care of them in all generations. How true the saying of Moses: Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations. The mercy of the Lord has been in evidence since man transgressed his law; yea, even before man was formed of the dust of the ground the Lord's mercy was manifest in the creation and formation of everything needful for him while time shall last. But even this was not the beginning of the Lord's mercy, for spiritually all the elect were blessed in his choice of them unto salvation in Christ our Lord before the world began. The mercy of God endureth forever and forever, and his faithfulness is even unto the ends of the earth. Never has he failed one called by his name—he cannot deny himself. But how unfaithful and forgetful are all his children of him; how we all deny him in our lives, saying, "I know not the man." But as he knew in Peter's day all things, he is fully acquainted with us now, and as Peter received mercy and forgiveness, so do we. When Peter told the Lord he knew all things, he had in mind his vow, his promise never to forsake, never to deny him; he would go to prison and to death with him, though he did none of these things. Yes, he knew the Lord remembered all he had said, and on the other hand, he knew just as well that the Lord knew he loved him, notwithstanding his denial and unfaithfulness. How good it is now to know that the Lord knoweth all things, and that he searcheth all things, yea, even the deep things of God. Peter, like all the Lord's people now, had the faith of Abraham, hence the things written with reference to Abraham were not written for him alone, but for us all, if we believe that Christ died and rose again. Such belief was counted to Abraham for righteousness; such faith is also counted for righteousness to all the family. Abraham is the father of the faithful, or, in other words, of all who have faith. The faith of Abraham was severely tried when the Lord commanded him to offer Isaac, his only son, as a burnt offering. In that son was hope for all nations of the earth, but Abraham believed God was able to raise him up from the dead and fulfill his promise in him. Isaac in a sense was not the promised seed, because in Christ are all nations blessed, and he according to the flesh was Abraham's seed, hence Isaac's offspring as well as Abraham's. The Savior said, Abraham desired to see my day, and he saw it and was glad. How little the poor old man knew how and through what sore distress that revelation should come. The desire of his heart, or prayer, was to see the day of Jesus Christ: day of salvation, redemption and justification; that day of rest from all labor; that day when seeking the building of God, which hath foundations, would cease; that day when his seed

should be as the stars of heaven gathered into the fold of God, when the kingdom of Christ should become greater than all other kingdoms. This vision had to come through the trial of his faith in the sacrifice of Isaac, his only son. Early in the morning Abraham, his son and two young men started on the journey to the mount which God would afterward shew him. Two days were ended before the mountain appeared where and when the sacrifice had to be made. Two days or dispensations passed before the mountain of God's holiness appeared where Christ was offered for the redemption of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, together with all the promised seed. As Abraham, Isaac and the two young men drew near the place Abraham said to the young men, You abide here while I and the lad go yonder and worship and return unto you. Something seemed to say within Abraham, The son shall return with me. Here is seen the wonderful faith of the man of God, yes, faith that laid hold upon the truth that God was faithful to his promise, and if the life of the boy should be taken he would raise him up again and he should return with the father to the young men. When Isaac asked, saying, Father, here is the wood and here is the fire, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? Abraham by faith answered, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for an offering. A slight glimpse of the day of Christ was then seen. They journeyed until they came to the place, and Abraham built the altar, bound Isaac and placed him on it, fully expecting to take his life. We read of no resistance upon the part of Isaac, nor was there any way of escape in sight at that critical moment. Isaac was a figure of the church bound by the fetters of sin, without hope and without God in the world, absolutely no way of escape in and of herself, yet God had provided a Lamb for her deliverance. When Abraham raised the knife to take the life of Isaac the angel out of heaven said, Do the lad no harm, for now I know that thou fearest God. That was not a new thing to God, but was said that it might be recorded for the comfort of the tried and faithful. Abraham looked behind him, and saw a ram caught by the horns in the thicket, and he took the ram and offered it instead of Isaac. Through that sacrifice Isaac escaped, and Abraham then and there saw the day of Christ, salvation of the church, and was glad. Thus his prayer was answered, and Abraham called the name of the place Jehovah-jireh, which means, the Lord will provide.

O how little we know what we are asking when in our attempts to pray to God. We have sometimes thought if we could know how our prayers would be answered, through what great deeps we must pass, what fires we must endure, what heartaches and tears, that we would be most afraid to ask anything of God. We are glad he knows our frame, glad he knows all our needs, glad he will provide for all our needs through grace in Christ Jesus. If the children fail in asking, the blessings will not be less. If the cross be heavy, the strength shall be equal.

In conclusion we will say, if any have seen the Lamb of God, by faith, that they have seen the same as did Abraham, and now sit down in the kingdom of God with him. K.

ADAM.

PAUL says in Romans v. 14, that Adam "is the figure of him that was to come," meaning that Adam is the figure of Christ. The Scriptures of the Old Testament abound with many figures of Jesus Christ, but Adam is said by Paul to be not "a" figure, but "the" figure, as though Adam is the definitely, satisfactory figure of Christ, as though while many figures dimly show Christ forth, yet Adam particularly and more clearly shows the character of Christ as no other figure in the whole Bible does. Some thoughts about Adam being the figure of Christ we would like to present for our readers' consideration if they will bear with us for a few moments. The follower of reason is not satisfied to take the biblical account of the creation of man as being the truth. The rationalist accounts for man's presence in the world, not on the ground that he was specifically formed of the dust of the earth, apart from the other animals, but regards man to have been evolved out of some lower form of the animal kingdom, possibly descended from the apes. Reason rather believes this than the plain declaration of man's formation as written in the first part of the book of Genesis. Faith accepts unqualifiedly and without reserve the record of God's inspiration, and faith will never be able to persuade reason that reason is wrong until that one who is ensnared of his reason is rescued therefrom by the spiritual demonstration of God's truth within himself. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." Faith no one can have until God imparts it to him, for faith is God's gift, and exercises one unto the belief of God's word. Faith exercises the one in whom it is implanted, and is not for the creature himself to exercise as he will. Therefore when this heaven-sent gift of faith is in lively exercise it brings the one in whom it is to believe that the worlds were framed by God's great word of might. Before the triumph of faith, reason succumbs in defeat. Faith does not establish itself by argument or rules of logic, it manifests itself in power that cannot be resisted. God needs no argument to establish his truth. Enough for him to say that thus and thus is so. When his word declares a certain thing true, faith accepts without demur and with willingness. Jesus did not need to argue nor to resort to reason to prove to Martha that he is the resurrection and the life. Enough for him to say to her, I am the resurrection and the life. When he thus said she knew it was so. His words demonstrated their truth within her by power, so that she was convinced he spoke the truth. The truth can be experimentally known only by the demonstration of the Spirit and of power, never by clear argument logically unfolded. Therefore the spiritual reader exercised by God-given faith who reads the record of the creation, and of man's formation as given by inspiration in Genesis, is abundantly satisfied therewith, and accepts it for truth without question. The reader who reads it in the light of human reason discards it as childish and silly. What better proof do we need that the wisdom of God is foolishness to the world?

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Creation of all things therefore was in the beginning, and was the beginning of God's material manifestation of his power. Formation took place after creation, but all that were formed as their order came, were created in the beginning. Formation simply

made manifest, or brought into evidence, all that consisted in the creation. Like the oak tree is a development only of what originally lay in the acorn, nothing more and nothing less, so formation brought out and made visible all that God created in the beginning. Thus, though man was not formed until the "sixth day," he had already been created. "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." God had said, "Let us make man in our image." Here is where we begin to see how that Adam is "the figure" of him that was to come. Right here is where so many Bible readers go astray, not being able to see how and in what manner Adam is the figure of Christ. So many have jumped to the conclusion that Adam, being made in the image of God, that God is therefore somebody who looks like man, only on a grander scale. Many intelligent people think of God as being somewhere off in space, possibly having his abode on some one of the other planets (maybe in the sun), and picture him with eyes, nose, mouth, hands, feet, just like men have, only grander. This is entirely imagination, as we see it, and nowhere near the truth. Adam was not made in the image of God in that he was made a miniature copy of God. That is not the thought at all. Let us see what the record says: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. * * * So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." Right here, in the fact that in Adam God made both male and female, we see the figure of Christ. Just as the church is the bride of Christ, and was in him before the world began, so Eve was the companion of Adam, and was in Adam when he was formed from the dust of the ground, not having then any separate personality from him. Adam, the one individual, was made male and female; he and his bride were one in creation and formation. So Christ and his church are one. If you can tell when Christ began to be, then you can tell when the church began to be. If you concede that Christ is eternal, then you must concede that the church is and was eternally in him and of him. Now, further, while Adam was in this state, with Eve still in him, God put him under law. The law was given to Adam before Eve was taken from him. "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." This is the law given to Adam with Eve still in him, she not yet having any separate personality from him. Is it any wonder then that when the woman afterward disobeyed this law that punishment devolved upon the man? Is it any wonder then that the law looked for satisfaction, not to the woman, but to the man to whom it was originally given? Just so, the law of God given to Christ in eternity with his church still in him, and not yet manifested apart from him, which law the church afterward broke when given being in the flesh, this broken law of divine justice demanded satisfaction, not at the hands of the woman (the church), but at the hands of the man (Jesus Christ). This affords the real basis as to why Christ ought to have suffered in the flesh all the demands of the law thus to save his church from the law's penalty. The commandment came to the man, the man must obey. The law of God was concerned with Christ and with the church

only as she was in him, therefore Christ must fulfill the law. None but the elect of God ever stood in this relationship to Christ, ever were bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. Thus the law which Jesus came under when he was made of a woman, and which law Jesus fulfilled, this law never concerned any but Jesus and his bride in him, so that the purchase price paid can redeem none but those held captive by it and who were previously the property of the Redeemer. "The Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone, I will make an help meet for him." Now we come to where God is shortly to give Eve a visible entity apart from Adam, yet still bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. So the time came in the purpose of God when God manifested his church in flesh and blood here in the world. The same church which was from eternity in Christ is now to be given a visible existence here in the world in the persons of men and women of Adam's race. Eve was still Adam, even after she was taken out of him; her nature was his and his life was hers. Just so, the church does not cease to be in Christ even though she is given an identity here in the world so that she looks to be apart from him. His life is still her life, she is still a partaker of his divine nature, bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. Vitally, Christ and his church are never separated, not even when she is dead in trespasses and in sins. The Lord caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and a rib was taken from him. The Lord made that rib a woman. From the fact that woman was taken out of the side of Adam, we see that she is the partner of her husband, to share equally with him, not being inferior to him. So the church is the equal of Christ in all things given them of the Father. All that is Christ's is the church's. She is with him an heir of God, and more than this, she is joint-heir with him: his equal in the estate of the Father. Eve was beguiled by the serpent and ate the fruit forbidden. She was deceived, the Scriptures tell us. When Adam followed Eve in the transgression, he was not deceived, he did it fully aware as to what the consequences of his sin would be. Here, again, we see Christ. When Christ came down from heaven and condescended to be made in human form to follow his bride in transgression, Christ was not deceived, but was fully aware of the suffering and death it meant for him to undergo in order to redeem his bride. Even if Adam had not himself eaten the forbidden fruit, he still would have been a sinner just the same, for Eve's sin was his sin. Eve was but Adam himself, after all, and when she ate he ate, for was she not bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh? Further, was not the law given to man in the first place, and not to the woman, except as she was in him? Then, it behooved Adam to follow Eve and be with her in the transgression, otherwise Adam could not have been the figure of Christ that was to come, and this was the great purpose that God had in Adam. Therefore the moment Eve ate, Adam had already sinned. Just so, when the church transgressed God's holy law, the penalty devolved upon Christ, divine justice looked to him to follow his bride in condemnation so as to redeem her. In all this there is not a shadow of substitution as we see it. Our courts of law here will not accept an innocent man in place of the guilty. The one that is guilty must pay the penalty. Infinitely more so, the court of God's divine justice will not put to death an innocent man for the sake of the guilty. Therefore, Paul says that

Christ was made sin for us, who knew no sin. That is, that while Christ did not know sin in his own person, was not a sinner himself, yet the law of God required that he pay the penalty and die to redeem his people, for they were his property, chosen in him before the world began, and, more than that, they were his flesh and his bones and had received the law in him just as Eve had received the law in Adam, so that Christ must come under condemnation with her and die to redeem her; not as a substitute, but as being made sin for her, as being the Head and Surety of his church, her life and her nature. This being so, when Eve sinned Adam sinned. The moment the church sinned, that moment Christ became responsible for her transgression. Finally, in the end of the figure, God said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." "As one of us." Which one of "us" had Adam become like? He had become, not like God the Father, nor yet like God the Holy Ghost, so he must have become like God the Son. He had at last fulfilled the image of Christ that was to come when he had followed Eve in the transgression and his eyes had been opened to know good and evil. It was said of Jesus that he should know to choose the good and refuse the evil. Adam had become the image of this. Thus, Adam's being the image of Christ, or of God, begins with his being made male and female, and ends with his being with his bride in condemnation, having the knowledge of good and evil. All this it takes to make up the figure of the Christ that was to come. No other figure in all Scripture shows the vital unity of Christ and his people as does this relationship of Adam and Eve, their formation transgression and ensuing condemnation. L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Joab Philemon Stout, son of the late Deacon Philemon and Louisa Brassfield Stout, died at his comfortable rural home in Ball township, Sangamon County, Ill., in the early morning of May 29th, 1916, aged about 56 years. He was born April 3rd, 1860, grew up to manhood and lived continuously on the old Stout homestead, which for three-quarters of a century or more was known to hundreds of Primitive Baptists as a most welcome and restful stopping-place. Sept. 15th, 1886, the subject of this notice was united in marriage with Ida F. Sawin, at the home of her parents, in Coles County, Ill., our aged and beloved brother, Elder S. H. Durand, performing the marriage service. To that union four children were born: John P., Frank L., Edith L. and George D., all of whom, with the grief-stricken mother, survive and deeply feel the irreparable loss they have sustained. He was a kind, thoughtful and sympathetic husband, always liberal in providing everything for the convenience and comfort of his family. As a father, too, he was always concerned about his children, whom he wished to see grow up and become respected and honorable citizens. In this his ardent desires and prayers had, so far, been happily granted. A father never was more devoted to his family; neither did a father ever set before his children a more wholesome example than he. Thus the unbroken family circle was a happy one. There the strong, protecting arm of honest manhood was felt. The father and mother love was an unforgettable inspiration. The head and light of the household suddenly went out. In the night watches he lay down to sleep, a restful and peaceful slumber from the tiresome toils and cares of the day. In the early morn he slept, but it was the sleep that knows no waking. He had answered the summons; his spirit had taken its flight. The shock came to us all as a bolt out of a clear sky. Our son, for such he was in very truth, had never made a public profession of religion, but he knew and loved the truth as it is in Jesus; he was surely taught it by the revelation of Jesus Christ. He was devotion itself to the cause of truth and welfare of the church organization at old Sugar Creek. His heart and his home were always open to its interests, and he did much to fill the vacancy caused by the death of his sainted father several years ago. He and his beloved companion kept "open house," where the faithful in Christ Jesus always found a hearty welcome. In our heart to heart talks years ago it was made apparent to the writer that he had passed from death unto life and was made a new creature in Christ Jesus. His unfitness, as he saw it, seemed always to stand in the way of his offering himself to the church, though always prompt in his attendance. His faith in Christ as the Savior of helpless sinners could not be

shaken. An humble and contrite heart was his God-given possession. In all talks on heaven and divine things self and self-righteousness were always cast aside. Christ and him crucified was the rock on which his hope rested. "Evil is always present with me," he would say, "so that I cannot do the things that I would." Hope seemed to vanish at times, but he could never give it up. Then at times the good news and glad tidings would fill his soul until his cup was made to run over.

The funeral service was held at Sugar Creek Church on the 31st day of May. A large attendance was present. Elder John L. Scott, of Springfield, Ill., preached a comforting discourse to the poor and needy, who look to the Lord in time of sorrow and distress. It was like unto the "oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." The body was then laid at rest in the beautiful cemetery near by, where father, mother, brother and other loved ones rest.

This sketch would not be complete without the following, clipped from the editorial columns of the *State Register*, one of the leading dailies of Springfield, as indicating the manner of man he was among the people of the country in which he lived:

"A close friend of Joab P. Stout, in speaking of his sudden death yesterday, said: 'He was a man who lived an ideal life. He was an inspiration to any young man. He never drank or smoked, and I never heard him so much as utter a bad word. I do not know of any man who lived more according to the Scriptures than he did.' No higher tribute could be paid to any man. Death took Joab P. Stout without warning. He had never known what sickness was; he radiated good health and good cheer wherever he was. Mr. Stout was a large land owner. He was the son of the late Philemon Stout, one of the pioneers of Sangamon County. Joab Stout was the type of man that a community needs. He was big in ideas, and big in body and mind. He worked because he loved the refreshment of it, and accomplished because he put his heart into his work. His death will be a distinct loss to Sangamon County."

May God bless the dear, loving and patient mother under this sore bereavement, and gently lead the devoted children in straight paths and honorable ways, so beautifully exemplified by the father.

JOHN G. SAWIN.

Mrs. Emma McDonald, wife and companion of Elder A. M. McDonald, was born in Smith County, Texas, near Tyler, May 17th, 1861, and departed this life July 27th. At the age of fourteen her grandmother moved to Hill County, Texas, her father and mother being dead, and at the age of seventeen she was married to A. M. McDonald. To that union eleven children were born, nine of whom survive her. She embraced a strong hope in her Savior in early life, and joined the Missionary Baptists, but soon afterward, seeing her mistake, offered herself to the Old School or Primitive Baptists, and was received by an experience of grace, and baptized in the year 1895. She lived a very zealous life for her Master, and was a devoted wife and companion to her husband and a loving mother to her children. The last fourteen years of her life she suffered greatly, especially the last three years. During that time she fell and dislocated her hip, and on the 28th of last June her mind became affected, from which she never recovered. During all this time she was steadfast, unmovable in the doctrine of God her Savior, salvation by grace. May the Lord be pleased to comfort the sad and mourning family, especially her aged companion. The writer has been acquainted with the subject of this sketch for the past ten years or more, and knows of a truth that she bore her suffering with patience. We quietly laid her to rest on the 28th. We sang at the house, "Why do we mourn departing friends?" and as the remains were lowered into the grave we sang, "And must this body die?"

Written by a friend. J. G. SIMS.

Gilbert S. Hymes died at his home near Meadowville, W. Va., July 2nd, 1916. He was born Nov. 7th, 1840, making his stay on earth 73 years, 7 months and 25 days. He was married to Susan M. Fitzwater Jan. 4th, 1866, and to that union were born three children, one son and two daughters. His son preceded him in death nearly thirty years, and his wife, who was very near and dear to him, died nine years ago. Mr. Hymes had been in failing health for five years, having suffered a stroke of paralysis at that time, which greatly impaired his health, after which Bright's disease set in, causing him to suffer terribly at times. The last two years he became much worse, and for eighteen months was confined to his room, and most of that time was as helpless as a little child. All that could be done for a kind and loving father was done by his two daughters, who lived with him. Mr. Hymes was a kind and devoted husband and father. He was known as an honest, upright man in all his dealings, and was highly respected by all who knew him. He was not a member of the Old School Baptist Church, but was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and had a sweet hope, but his poor opinion of himself kept him out of the church. He was a friend to the cause, and attended the meetings whenever he could, even after he was very feeble. His home was a pleasant resting-place for the brethren and friends. It was my privilege to visit him frequently, and always found a hearty welcome. He was all to the church that one could be except the ordinances and a voice in her business, and I believe he is now joined unto that heavenly band, that congregation which never breaks up. He had been a subscriber

to the SIGNS many years, and often expressed his satisfaction in reading it.

Elder J. B. Cross and the writer conducted the funeral service at his late home July 3rd. By request of his two daughters we sang hymns No. 668, 807, 1246 and 1250. His body was then conveyed to the family cemetery, where Elder D. W. Upton held short services, after which his body was laid in the grave by the side of his wife to await the resurrection. We trust that the God of grace will minister comfort to the bereaved daughters and to all his loved ones.

Written by request. J. S. MURPHY.

Ananias Ayers entered into rest on the morning of July 24th, after a painful illness of several months. Brother Ayers was born in Hector, near Burdett, N. Y., 61 years ago, and had always lived in or near Burdett. He was baptized in early life by Elder Durand in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church of Burdett, and was a stanch defender of the faith of that branch of Zion for more than forty years. He leaves a wife, Ida, to mourn her loss. The funeral services were by his request conducted by Henry H. Thomas, of Vineland, N. J., uncle to Mrs. Ayers, and consisted in accordance with brother Ayers' wish of the reading of the ninetieth Psalm, some verses from a book of poems, "Songs in the Night," by James B. Durand, a prayer, and the singing of his favorite hymn, "Abide with me."

Catharine C. Meredith, widow of Deacon Jacob B. Meredith, departed this life Jan. 12th, 1916, at the home of her son-in-law, Arthur W. Rounds, Newark, Del. She was born July 25th, 1833, daughter of Alexander and Catharine (Cooper) Frasher, deceased members of Cow Marsh Church, Kent Co., Del. She was married Feb. 26th, 1861. Five children survive: Samuel J., of Weems, Va., Lucy M. Rounds, of Newark, Del., Alex. F. and Sarah Cubbage, of Felton, Del., and Martha G. Wilson, of Houston, Del. Three preceded her. One brother, Alex. C. Frasher, remains of a large family. She manifested a deep interest in the church, but a sense of unworthiness prevented her joining the visible body. When writing to a daughter, after she had attended an association in 1909, she said in substance: What a pretty sight to behold believers assembled to worship the Lord. She was self-sacrificing. After a nervous breakdown she devoted much of her time in caring for the sick, thereby endearing herself to many because of her kindness and goodness. She possessed wonderful ambition, and the infirmities of age and the relentless changes of time met with resistance even after she looked forward to the end with a feeling of relief. Our only comfort is that "on heaven's fair and peaceful shore all at last is well."

Her funeral was conducted by Elder B. E. Cubbage at Cow Marsh meetinghouse; interment in the adjoining cemetery, where so many of her loved ones have been put that it seemed about as sad to stay as to go. How powerless we mortals are to lift the burden of age or assuage affliction!

LUCY M. ROUNDS.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER W. E. Brush has changed his address from Greenfield, Tenn., to 123 Oak St., McKenzie, Tenn.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Jefferson, N. Y., will hold its yearly meeting, the Lord willing, on the third Sunday and Saturday before in September (16th and 17th), 1916. Those coming by rail to Stamford will be met on Friday before on the 11 o'clock a. m. train. We extend an invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, especially brethren in the ministry.

GEORGE E. MEAD, Church Clerk.

THERE will be an all day meeting at the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, Baltimore, Md., the third Sunday in September (17th), 1916. A hearty welcome will be given to all who desire to come.

E. A. J.

THE Cow Marsh Church, near Petersburg, Del., will hold the regular yearly meeting on the fourth Sunday in September and Saturday afternoon before. Trains will be met from both north and south on Saturday morning at Viola station, on Delaware Division R. R. A cordial invitation is given to all of our faith desiring to attend the meeting.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Pastor.

THE Lexington Association is appointed to be held with the Gilboa Church, in the village of Gilboa, Wednesday and Thursday after the first Sunday in October (4th and 5th), 1916. Trains will be met at Grand Gorge Wednesday night and Thursday morning.

JOHN CLARK.

THE Juniata Association is appointed to be held with the Fairview Church, Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa., on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 6th, 7th and 8th, 1916. Those coming by rail will come on Thursday before the meeting to Hancock, Md., on the Western Maryland Railway, or to Hancock, W. Va., on the Baltimore and Ohio R. R. Those coming on the B. & O. R. R. will walk across the bridge to the Maryland side, where all visitors will be met. Any contemplating coming to this meeting by rail will please notify beforehand brother Jefferson Mel-

lott, Needmore, Pa., or brother Dennis Mellott, Plum Run, Pa. All lovers of the truth, and especially ministering brethren of our faith and order, are invited to be with us at this meeting.

JOSHUA MELLOTT, Church Clerk.

AN all day meeting will be held with the Snow Hill Church, at Snow Hill, Md., on the second Sunday in October, (8th), 1916. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited. Elder H. C. Ker is expected to be with us.

B. F. COULTER, Pastor.

THE Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, to be held with the Bethlehem Old School Baptist Church, of Prince William Co., Va., is appointed to commence October 11th and to continue three days. Ministers and brethren and all lovers of truth of our faith and order are invited to meet with us and are welcome to our homes. Those coming by way of Washington, D. C., Tuesday evening, will take train at Union station at 3:45 p. m., which will be met at Manassas at 5:05 p. m.

H. M. JOHNSON, Church Clerk.

THE Olive and Hurley Church, of the Roxbury Association, has appointed her annual two days meeting to be held at Ashokan, N. Y., Saturday and Sunday, October 14th and 15th, 1916. Trains from Oneonta will be met Friday p. m., and trains leaving Kingston will be met Saturday a. m. All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited to meet with us at that time.

JOHN J. SECOR, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Association is appointed to meet with the Nassaongo Church, near Salisbury, Md., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 18th, 19th and 20th, 1916. All lovers of the truth, especially brethren in the ministry, are cordially invited to meet with us. The brethren will meet all the friends coming to the meeting on Tuesday afternoon before the association. The trains will arrive about the same time, coming north and south about 1:49 Tuesday afternoon. I think the train coming from Claiborne, on the B. C., is due about 12:05 p. m. If any should come they will be met. Old Point Express leaves Broad St. station at 10 o'clock Tuesday morning, coming south. Philadelphia Express leaves Norfolk at 9 o'clock, coming north, on the same date. Boat leaves Baltimore 6:30 Tuesday morning.

W. E. BAILEY, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 84. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1916. NO. 19.

POETRY.

FEAR NOT, FOR I AM WITH THEE.

FEAR not, for I am with thee,
Fear not the way to tread;
Though gates of brass confront thee,
And skies are dark o'erhead.
No gates shall stand before thee,
I'm with you all the way;
Clouds I'll make a light to thee,
My presence be thy day.

Chorus:
Then fear not, fear not,
For I'm with you all the way.
Go onward, forward in my strength,
Unto the perfect day.

Though Jordan's waves shall roll high,
And threaten thy frail life;
While Egypt's army draws nigh,
Thy heart with fear is rife;
Seas I'm holding in my hand,
I bid the waves be still;
Harmless shall be Egypt's band,
Obedient to my will.

Chorus:
Then fear not, &c.

Though thorns may pierce thee often,
Adown life's crooked way,
I'm there, thy grief to soften,
I'll wipe thy tears away.
The way I've trod before thee,
Alone when none was near;
My strength's sufficient for thee;
Go forward, do not fear.

Chorus:
Then fear not, &c.

NELLIE H. ARNOLD.

"THY WILL BE DONE."

CANST thou not say it, child,
'Neath darkened sun,
When thou art bent with grief,
And love is done?

Didst tendrils round thy heart
So closely cling,
They bruised and tore the flesh—
A living thing?

Dost pathway all adown
Look dark to thee?
Canst thou not upward look,
And trust in me?

Though I must crush thee sore,
And heart shall quail,
Dost know my love for thee
Shall never fail?

Dost know I look beyond,
And see the end,
And knowest all the way
Thy steps must bend?

Thy treasure is in heaven,
Safe and secure,
Whilst thou art still of earth,
And must endure.

And thou shalt learn in time
My will was best;
'Twas only for thy good,
And thou wert blest.

And thou shalt hold my hand
While earth's hopes fade,
And learn no perfect joy
For earth was made.

NELLIE H. ARNOLD.

CORRESPONDENCE.

2 CORINTHIANS III. 2, 3.

"YE are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men: forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not on tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart."

The subject referred to by the apostle as contained in this "epistle of Christ" is strictly spiritual. He distinguishes those things that are distinctly experimental from those which are natural, calling attention to the material things used in preparing his epistle, as ink, pen, tables of stone, or other material on which writing is done; also the labor used in writing or reading the experiences and exercises of the mind in the ministrations of the apostle. These spiritual things thus presented as the epistle of Christ, and ministered by the apostle, may be "known and read of all men," by all the men of God, who have been born of God, and who are therefore capable of receiving spiritual instruction and comfort. Some may come who read only the letter, and know nothing of the spiritual life and power. The apostle is here very sweetly careful to discriminate for the comfort of living souls. There must be a manifestation of this spiritual writing in the heart. "Written in our hearts," the apostle says, and wherever there is a possibility of being deceived the negative is clearly given. "Not with ink," "not on tables of stone." The reason that this writing is not with ink is not because the ink will fade some day; the reason that the writing of spiritual things is not on tables of stone, or of any other material, is not because tables of stone or any other substance are liable to be broken even with writing of God upon them, but because the writing, or with any earthly substance, or by the voice, even of an angel, can never convey to any one the knowledge of spiritual things, nor even true spiritual thoughts. Your thoughts are not my thoughts, the Lord says. If we have the Lord's thoughts it must be at the time of needing them, and we must wait upon him for them, and we must have them to-day for to-day.

"Not with ink." Not in any natural way, nor by any natural means. This has been much upon my mind of late. This is where my special thinking and anxiety have been most acute. Why have I been so dull and cold concerning spiritual things so long? Why have I been so unable to get any strong hold with my mind upon portions of Scripture which have formerly engaged my mind with divine power? Why has my mind been so wayward when I have tried to direct it in meditations upon spiritual things? Why so listless at times, and inattentive when preaching was going on, by myself or others? No, the ink never did convey the knowledge of spiritual things, nor yet the voice, however eloquent, nor did any earthly thing receive, convey or hold the knowledge of divine things of the gospel. The writing by which the saints receive the knowledge and power of the things of God is the writing of the Holy Spirit of the living God. He is the "ready writer," whose words always come to the hungry and thirsty soul with power and delight. Those who have this divine life "were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." From the time that the new birth is experienced all communications between Christ and his people are by the Spirit of the living God upon the fleshy tables of the heart. Those tables represent what can never change, fail, grow old or die.

"Ye are our epistle," says the apostle, but would quickly add, "Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ."

Those men who can read this "epistle of Christ" in the fleshy hearts of other men must first have read it in their own hearts. It is the same in every heart, and is read of all the men of God, in every clime, in every age, in every tongue. Those who read the writing often misinterpret the language of it, and misapply the mystery in which it is expressed, setting it down as against themselves, and in favor of others. The mystery was hid from past ages and generations, but is now made manifest to the saints in all its glory, which is "Christ in you the hope of glory." Those to whom have been given the riches of the glory of this mystery are one with each other in this glorious mystery, as the dear Savior is one with the Father.

I have been made to see sometimes that I had been looking to the flesh for comfort; that I had been seeking in the letter the mystery of joy and comfort that was never there. A few times in my mortal pilgrimage I have seen a table set before me in the wilderness, where I often dwell. In times of sorrow and affliction, when my tongue seemed failing me for thirst, I have tried to find that table again, and have failed. I have seen upon that table all of the most precious things I have seen and experienced, all the sweet promises of the dear Savior to the poor and needy, but could not find any that appeared as belonging to me. By such sad trials I have learned that the living truths cannot be kept in the memory; that the literal word cannot be laid up by us for to-morrow; that each day we must wait upon the Lord for what we need that day. Our supply for to-day may appear to us bitter and coarse, and most unpalatable, but will come to us, and we shall receive it, though it may be "with groanings which cannot be uttered." We cannot arrange for ourselves in this matter what our portion shall be, nor in what form it shall come, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought. Our only help and hope and strength and confidence are in the Lord.

But how wonderful these epistles of the apostles are, which by the ministration of the apostle become both the epistles of the churches to him and of him to them. What clear ministrations are given in epistles concerning the proper place of all the things of the law, and the full meaning of them, and how they are all passed away; and concerning the great and sweet things of the gospel, with the order and doctrine and ordinances, and with gifts which are given unto the church, for the work of the ministry, for the perfecting of the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man; unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. (Eph. iv. 12, 13.)

How wonderful these epistles are! They are not for the purpose of commending the apostles to some body, to introduce them, and give them assurance that they are true men. They do not need that. No one can be introduced in that way, or told by the church what to do. In this respect, as in all others, the teaching and commanding are all by the Lord, and unto him shall every one look for life, for the evidence of life, and for everything pertaining to the church. These are the epistles of the churches to Paul. Paul also claims them as his epistles to the churches, written by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and with divine authority to organize the churches and set them in order. But they are known,

above all, as they are manifestly the epistles of Christ.

What we want just at this time, just at any time, is the felt power of the word of God, the word of the dear Savior to us now; not the letter merely, but the Spirit. How often have I tried to set my thoughts in order in such a way as that the spiritual power of the word would come to me, and I would feel as though I were some way to blame when I failed, as though the cause of my failure were in me. But when there has come to me some feeling of spiritual life and power, it has not been because of my efforts, but unexpectedly, and in a new way, and always to my surprise and joy.

The apostle has told us the same thing. Not, he says, that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves. When we do think anything that is true and right and orderly, "our sufficiency is of God." The apostle presented nothing upon the authority of his own name. All that he presents to be observed, believed and obeyed by the churches is as the "epistles of Christ." He does all in the name of Christ. The dear Savior does all the thinking, all the writing. His is the power and the glory. We wait upon him.

"Not of the letter, but of the Spirit." No, not writing telling us what to do, but a declaration that the work is already done. Not a word or epistle written in the fleshly tables of a proud and deceitful heart, but written in the fleshy tables of a new and tender and humble and loving heart. Not in a heart self-satisfied and self-seeking, seeking only a legal righteousness, but a heart that has been "feeble and sore broken," and which now is sweetly and everlastingly built up in Jesus Christ.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Sept. 7, 1916.

ISAIAH LX. 22.

"A LITTLE one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation; I the Lord will hasten it in his time."

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." "When they had heard the king, they departed: and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was." "And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshiped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh." Thus was fulfilled the prophecy as the Lord had spoken by the mouth of the prophet hundreds of years before, that Jesus should be born in Bethlehem; and this little one was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger, because there was no room in the inn. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst." Thus this little one in his advent on earth became a thousand, for there is no way for one to become a thousand except by annexing naughts, and there were no doubt two or three of these wise men from the east, whom God had made wise unto salvation, for we are naught, and Jesus is all and in all. God hath chosen the things that are naught, to bring to naught the things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence, but as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. All that we have of the graces of the Spirit are treasured in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and having him we have

all, for it is written, I will dwell in them and walk in them, and not forsake them. A small one shall become a strong nation. This small one, despised and rejected of men, for he made himself of no reputation, yet shall he and his chosen people become a strong nation. The stone cut out of the mountain without hands, and smote the great image that the king saw in his dream, and broke it in pieces and ground it to powder, and it was carried as chaff by the wind, this stone became a great mountain, so that it filled the whole earth. "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."—Daniel ii. 44, 45. On the day of Pentecost, when the apostles were endued with power from on high, when the Holy Ghost moved them to speak of the wonderful works of God, there were devout men of about fourteen different tongues, and they were astonished to hear in their own tongue the wonderful work of God (not the wonderful works of men), and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved; and so it will continue through the ages, until the last lively stone is added to the church of God through the quickening power of his Holy Spirit. None will enter the new Jerusalem except those who are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.

"I the Lord will hasten it in his time." Jesus knew all the way, and the suffering that he must endure to pay the debt of his bride, and to forever destroy the works of the devil. The Romans and wicked Jews could not take his life until his hour had come, for he had power to lay his life down and power to take it again. "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him, in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Jesus reigns on high, and will continue to build his church until the last heir of immortal glory is brought in, crying, Grace, grace unto it.

Dear brethren, dispose of this as you think best.

Yours in hope,

WM. F. SLOAN.

LEXINGTON, Ky.

TOUCHET, Washington.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am trying to express myself to you, for no other purpose than to show you how my heart goes out to the God of all grace for the great provisions he has made to refresh the tried ones who have no abiding city here, but seek a city whose builder is God. Brethren, I never get the SIGNS and begin to read but what a feeling rises up in my

heart to write and say amen, if nothing else. How wonderful are all thy ways, O God. This last, the August 15th number of the SIGNS, is so full of the good things of the kingdom that I want to pick up a few of the fragments and send them to my brethren through the same medium. It is impossible to speak of all your God-given communications, but just a few of the gleanings as they come to me. First, I want to notice brother Dennison's experience. I do much enjoy hearing the brethren relate their travel of mind along the road of grace, for, dear ones, we as travelers from time to eternity often come into darkness so great we can go no farther forward, and have to go back and review our first evidences; so when the dear brethren begin to unveil some of the monuments along the way my soul stands trembling while it sings the honors of our God. Well do I remember the time and place, though nearly forty years have passed, and over two thousand miles lie between me and the memorable time and place, where I fell to the ground and truly never expected to rise again, and surely never would if dear Jesus had not revealed to me how wonderfully he bore my sins in his own body on the cross, and with this knowledge a love that is unspeakable and full of glory, as brother Attebery expresses in regard to the good meeting which is so fresh in my memory yet. Then how sweet and pleasant is that little room which brother Rittenhouse so beautifully unveils, where the man of God can and does rest. Then how wonderful and plain does sister Ekelberry show the fruits of the divine work of regeneration; it lifts the burden of condemnation from the soul, and causes the sweetest rest that soul ever experienced, and with that there was a desire to follow the dear Lord, the same monument that the apostle Paul so vividly brought to view: Lord, what wilt thou have me do? The command is to follow me (Jesus) in the way; not a way, as the world has it. Our carnal nature tries to make us believe we can follow him as well out of the church as in it, but, dear ones, this is a sad mistake, there is but the one way, and Jesus is that way; he is in the way, and if you follow him you must go home to your friends. If one way was as good for God's children to go as another Jonah never would have went into the sea. Then comes brother Sloan's able and comforting letter on the effectual work of grace. We have some gleanings from brother Griffith's experience which carried my mind back to a memorable time in my own experience. He notes the day he was baptized as being the most pleasant camping-place he has found on the journey. Well do I remember that notable place in my journey. I united with the church, and my baptism was deferred until the next month, and during the time Satan got a hold on me which seemed just unbearable; he fully convinced me I was deceived, and had deceived the church, which was worse than death to one so young and tender as my childish heart at that time. Now as I was deceived, and had caused the church to express such confidence in me as a fit subject for such a solemn and sacred ordinance, what would I do? Satan at once suggested the only thing to do was to go to the church and frankly tell them I was deceived, and by that I had deceived them, and ask them to just recall what was done, and that would make matters all right, and I at once accepted the suggestion, as I knew nothing better. So my mind was fixed to tell the church when the proper time came, but the

proper time never came, for they met and had their usual service and attended to the business of the church as usual, but not a word could I say, neither could I even act, and the Elder announced that they would go to the creek and attend to the ordinance of baptism, and, with the full knowledge that I was not fit to be baptized, I could not say no. I walked to the water feeling like a poor condemned criminal going to be executed, with no power to stay the hand of justice, and when Elder Copeland took me by the hand, and said, "Let us follow our Master," here mortal power fails to describe my feelings. But how wonderful are thy ways, O God; when he (Elder Copeland) laid me beneath the liquid wave and raised me it was certainly in newness of life, for the first scene that came to my vision was the most glorious I had ever beheld; the glory of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ certainly shone in the faces of those dear brethren who stood at the water's edge with outstretched hands and hearts to meet us as we came out, and if this was not the gift of the Holy Ghost I am yet a stranger to know what it is, for there was a joy that is unspeakable, and I was permitted to ride on this ocean of love for many days. It certainly was the mount of transfiguration to me, and there I, too, felt as the disciples: it was such a heavenly place I wanted to abide in that lovely state, but, to my surprise, all at once the grand vision was gone, and a cloud of gloom and despondency overshadowed my mind, and there the enemy again brought up the host of darkness against my soul, and while he was sending his darts of doubts thick and heavy, and just as I was about to surrender, a voice spoke out of these deep tribulations, and said, It is Jesus, hear ye him. Here, brethren, are some of the first lessons I learned in the school of Christ, if so it be his work, and now for forty years in this school I have learned that on these two principles hang or rest all the rest of the problems that the student of this school has to learn. First, the awful consequences of sin; second, the great victory of the atoning blood of Jesus over sin, with all its consequences, and from these two points the pilgrim must start in his survey of the way. Starting at the first, it leads to a perfect knowledge of self, and when fully known there can be no confidence put in the flesh or man. Starting from the second, it gives a perfect knowledge of the fullness of the Godhead in Jesus our Lord. In the first is tribulation, but in the second there is joy and peace in the Holy Ghost.

Dear editors, I only wanted to express my mind in regard to the comforting letters of both editors and correspondents of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but you will see I was led off on a few things I hope I have learned in the way, and have already made my letter too lengthy, so do as your judgment decides in disposing of it, but say to all those who write for the SIGNS that August 15th number was doubly good to me.

Yours in hope,

J. T. BARNES.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Aug. 24, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing a letter which I believe will be read by my brethren with interest. I have the permission of the writer to send it.

Your brother, I hope,

GEORGE RUSTON.

ROXBURY, N. Y., Aug. 2, 1916.

DEAR ELDER RUSTON:—I received your very kind and encouraging letter, which was a great comfort to me, and I

very much appreciate the interest you have in me, a poor, unworthy one. I have had a desire to write you since Elder Vail held meeting at the Mead sisters' home in Roxbury, two weeks ago. For some time I had been impressed to ask for a place in the church the next time you came to Roxbury, but it seems to have been ordered otherwise. As I could say but very little to the church that day, I have felt constrained to write you some of what I hope have been the dealings of the Lord with me. When I was about twelve years of age I first began to be exercised in mind concerning my future state. I thought, If I should die in my sins what a terrible fate would be mine. The people with whom I lived were Old School Baptists, and I generally attended meeting with them. I always loved to be in the company of these dear people and hear them talk of the blessed truths of the gospel. I felt to be such a sinner that I was not fit to be in their company, and I was very careful that they should not notice my interest in their conversation on the Scriptures, for I felt they could see what a sinner I was. How I longed for that hope in the blessed Savior I heard others tell of, but I thought that could never be my happy lot, as I felt justly condemned. I loved to read the SIGNS, which my people had taken for a number of years. I would read the experiences of the dear people of God with much comfort, for some of them seemed to express my feelings so well. I would try to live and do as nearly right as I could, but I soon found that not one good deed could I do to merit eternal life, that all of my good works were as filthy rags in the sight of the Lord, and my cry was then and is now, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. As I grew older and went out in young company these feelings would leave me for a time, only to return, and I would find no pleasure in their gaieties. When about eighteen I attended meeting and heard Elders Hewitt and Hubbell preach. It seemed as though every word was meant for me, and there seemed to be much beauty in the preaching and singing, and when the hymn, "As on the cross the Savior hung," was sung, I found I was singing with the rest until my heart seemed melted with love. As the people shook hands with me at the close of the meeting the tears ran down my face and I could not speak for the joy I felt. When I reached home something made me feel that I had greatly deceived the people I loved so well. I thought that if I could only know this was the work of the Lord I would be satisfied. Then the words, Where the Lord begins a good work he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, gave me comfort. After my marriage I lived quite a distance from where Baptist meetings were held, and owing to many household cares I could seldom attend. I often felt a loneliness that I cannot express; sometimes I would go to other meetings, but found no comfort in them. The words, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," often came to me with much force, and at times I felt a great desire to unite with the church, but I had such a feeling of unworthiness, and I still feel the same, unfit and unclean. For some time this hymn has been on my mind:

"People of the living God,
I have sought the world around,
Paths of sin and sorrow trod,
Peace and comfort nowhere found."

I have felt to ask a place with this blessed people, but I would not for the world deceive the church or be a stumbling to the cause. I desire to be ever humble and

submissive to the will of God, and my prayer is,

"O that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still;
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will."

I am made to wonder how the church can have any fellowship for me, and sometimes I have felt that I could almost give up. But we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren, and surely I love this blessed people and the doctrine they advocate. Of this I am sure, if I am ever saved it is by God's redeeming love and grace. I wish there might be others to receive the ordinance of baptism with me, but that I must leave in the hands of the Lord.

I have written this imperfect letter, trusting you will pardon all mistakes. Arnold was pleased to receive your letter and will reply soon. He sends you his kind regards. I trust Mrs. Ruston and the little ones are well. This leaves my family well as usual. I am looking forward to your coming in September, with much fear and trembling.

With love and best wishes to you and Mrs. Ruston, I am very unworthily yours,

(MRS.) SNIFFIN K. BELLOWS.

DUNKIN, Texas, Feb. 23, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have had a strong desire ever since I received the first copy of the good old SIGNS to write you a few lines and try and express my feelings of gratitude toward you, but find I am unable to express my thankfulness for the kindness you have shown me in sending me the paper, which is of so much comfort to a poor, hungry, mourning soul like me. It is all the preaching I get, and is as bread to the hungry and drink to the thirsty, to all who are brought forth from the bonds of iniquity by the sure mercy of Elijah's God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will, fulfilling the deep designs which he purposed in his only begotten Son. He predestinated the finished work of the redemption of his people pefore the foundation of the world. They were chosen in his beloved Son, the whole Savior, he not having to look to poor, puny creatures of his own creation, which is the idea the world holds, whose trust is in an arm of flesh; but, beloved of the Lord, listen to the admonition given unto you who are called according to his own purpose and grace given you in Christ Jesus: "Cursed be man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." They all have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof. The dear Lord talked plainly to the people while here on this sinful earth, saying unto certain of them, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but unto them it is not given. I think he was talking to a people under the covenant of grace, in whose hearts his true light had shined, and is yet to shine, or rather be made manifest in their dark and benighted souls, giving them the knowledge of the truth as it is in him, for in him was light, and the light was the life of men. "The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." Not all the powers of this world can prevent that true light shining within any individual upon earth when God is pleased to command it to shine, neither can all the powers of earth combined compel it to shine in any soul, for that is the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. The world was made by Him, and the world knew him not as the Savior, nor do they yet know him in that glorious sense, only as he reveals himself as their all-sufficient Savior. Their feet he says he will lift out of the miry clay, which clay is their old

rebellious nature, and he, the Savior of sinners, says he will lift their feet out of that miry clay and place them upon a rock, and put a new song in their mouth, even praise unto our God. Beloved, who to-day in the wide world can sing that song of praise to the mighty God of love and grace but the Old Predestinarian Baptists? Who but they can give a reason of their hope? They glory in Christ upon the earth, as he says they will do. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Beloved in the Lord, what a gracious God is ours, who brings us from the bonds of iniquity and darkness into his marvelous light, giving the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. That light which is revealed is truth which the world knoweth not of. John says a man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven; and another of old says that every good and perfect gift comes down from the Father of lights, in whom their is no variableness, neither shadow of turning; and I know, dear children of the most high God, that the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has a people here upon the earth, a chosen and peculiar people, a royal priesthood, who stand alone from all the world, giving honor and praise unto the Lord and who glory in his name. There is not a shadow of doubt in my mind of the plan of eternal salvation; it is sure, sealed by the blood of the pure and holy Lamb of God. Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world. I know they are saved with an everlasting salvation, but here come my doubts and fears: Am I one among that happy number blessed eternally, one so poor, weak, blind and helpless as I? I realize my nothingness more and more each day of my unprofitable life. My desire is to serve the Lord, but sin is mixed with all I do.

Dear brethren and sisters, remember me in your petitions. While we are strangers in the flesh, I do humbly hope we are not in the Spirit, and that I may be included in the everlasting covenant of grace. I, like Ruth of old, can say, Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee; let thy people be my people, and thy God be my God.

I must close, for I have already written too much, and taken up your valuable time. I did not intend to write so much, but just wanted to extend my thanks to you for your kind remembrance of me in sending the SIGNS, and to tell the dear brethren and sisters how sweet and solid is the comfort given in their writings. I have never met any of you, but O how I have been comforted by your God-given messages. Write on, dear ones, for you know not the many poor downcast souls you feed. The Lord says, Comfort ye one another, and again, Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Cry unto Jerusalem that her warfare is accomplished, that she hath received double from the Lord's hand for all her sins.

Pardon me, dear brethren, for this long, rambling letter. O if I could write as the other writers can I would want to write all the time, but I am a poor, weak worm of the dust, and unless the Spirit directs me I can do nothing. I hope what I have written is not dishonoring to God my Savior.

Your little sister, I humbly hope,

JENNIE LOYD.

LUKE VIII. 25.

"WHAT manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him."

He is the "wonderful" Man that holy men of old prophesied should come. If he had not been wonderful, prophecy would not have spoken of him in the most exalted terms of any language found among men. He is wonderful in that no creature can attain to anything that pertains to his kingdom. He is a creature, and he is not a creature. What a contradiction of terms! A seeming impossibility. Most wonderful is this for mortals to consider. He is man and he is God. "Let all the angels of God worship him." If angels worship him men ought to consider it a high privilege to be permitted to worship at his feet. He is God. He was made flesh. He was not made "a flesh" that he might visit Adam's seed and confer with him, but he was made of Adam's flesh, in being born of a woman. Great mystery: God who made all things condescends to be born of a woman. O what meekness.

"Angels who search all space around,
The like of such (an one) can ne'er be found."

He stands at the head, highest up, either in heaven or on earth.

"What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him." In saying that this man is God is not saying too much, for "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father," and, "I am in the Father, and the Father in me."—John xiv. 9, 10. He is also a creature, for, he is the firstborn of every creature. God's children are creatures and partakers of flesh and blood. The mighty One from heaven partook of the same flesh and blood. Being thus incarnated, he is the bread from heaven, the bread of life. None can live spiritually without eating that bread, and that bread is his flesh, his bones and his blood. To every one quickened by his Spirit this whole bread is sweet and most precious, lacking in nothing to satisfy the most fastidious in the kingdom of grace. Bread in the ordinary meaning is to sustain life, but this bread from heaven has a life-giving power. He that eateth this bread shall never die. On the other hand, we may say of a truth, He that eateth not of this bread shall die in his sins. He manifests himself unto his people and not unto the world. (John xiv.) Why? If a man love me, he will keep my words. He who keeps the words of the Lord Jesus has in him "the substance of things hoped for," and he cannot swerve from the true line of grace set up in his heart by the Spirit. He must love the Lord, though a sinner, may backslide as Peter did, yet the Lord is full of mercy for all such that love the appearing of Jesus, their Savior. Jesus is the Father's Word, all things are done by the word of God. The winds and water obey his command, shall not all created things obey as well? He holds the sea in the hollow of his hand, he weighs the hills and mountains in a balance, he takes up the isles as a very little thing, he holds the winds in his fists, and no hurricane can rush over the earth until he please. Being the God of providence to sustain this natural earth and world, he is much more, if there be any difference, the God of all grace to and for all his people, or else they could not live to praise his holy name. The Word is guided and guarded so that it goes effectually to none but the elect of God. It is the prating of a fool to say that God can be mistaken in men, that he cannot know who the elect shall be until he tries them. God through Christ would not be supreme if he did not know his people before he manifested himself unto them.

Editors of the SIGNS, use this, or not, as you may see fit.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., Aug. 12, 1916.

NOVEMBER 13, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER WHITE:—Your little missive of the 9th was received. You say "money is strength." Yes, strong to build and strong to destroy. The concentration of the wealth of the nation in the hands of the few has made magnificent the palaces and power of the Belshazzars, Cæsars and Alexanders of the world, and the reaction has tumbled their kingdoms into chaos and ruin: the legitimate fruit of the worship of the golden god. The curse of idolatry at its unholy shrine has already begun its cancerous rottenness in the vitals of our nation, young as it is, and the road has already turned downward after the fashion of the Babylons gone before. "Money is strength." The lesson is hard to learn. History writes it in brightness on one page; turn the page and the next is wailing and blood. The power it has conferred turns to curses on the heads and hearts of the children. History is simply repetition, but the same power makes it. The "love of money" and destruction wait upon it. Supreme selfishness is the dominating trait of the god of gold in its influence on all the race, creating hell and peopling it with devils, and no amount of lifting up Jesus in the polished preaching learned in the college will "draw all men" or any man from the power of gold, the god men worship. They call that lifting up the Son of man, even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness: preaching repent, accept the offer of salvation presented by God in his dying Son, meet God half-way, he has done his part, all he can do, now you do yours, he is waiting. Join the church, my church, says the preacher, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance and salvation in the form of the minted coins, so that the church may have the power to reach the uttermost parts of the earth and the isles of the sea, saving all men by the lifting up of—Jesus? No, the money devoted to the purpose of salvation by those who fear hell enough to devote their gold to aid the church in extending her power beyond that of any other church, and so purchase to themselves a good degree of reward in the kingdom of heaven, for have they not assisted with their money in turning many to righteousness, and does that not hide a multitude of sins, their own sins? And when they come to the end, to make sure of a higher seat in heaven than the other fellow, may even devote a million or two to found a college to teach the doctrines and tricks of the church to those who want a profession equal or better than law or medicine, and so lift up their jesus as Moses lifted up the serpent, and their jesus so lifted up will draw all men (or nearly all), for all men have their price, and well the educated priest knows all he has to do is to learn their price. It is a money standard, perhaps not in a direct way with all, but whatever it is, lift him up and he will draw. Christ said, "If I be lifted up," referring to the last act in the world's great tragedy, when in the body of flesh he was lifted up from earth on his cross of torture and death, and when, for sin, God condemned sin in his flesh, visibly. There was no perhaps in it, but I "will draw all men unto me" when I am lifted up on Calvary. I must be lifted up, it is my Father's will. When he was raised again the third day, the temple, the church of the redeemed, was builded again in his resurrection. The church complete in all

its members, parts, no spot or wrinkle, but all that the Father gave him shall come. No more teaching every man his neighbor and brother to know the Lord, but all shall know him. Moses lifted up the serpent at God's command for the healing of those bitten by the fiery serpents. You say they represent the penalty of the broken law, sin the transgression of the law, and the brazen serpent was the power of God for the healing of all, all who looked. How impossible for natural wisdom to know God, as impossible as to purchase (or redeem this carnality) with gold or good works. Bob Ingersoll is an example of an almost extinct type, honest enough to admit that by his natural reason he has no evidence of the truth of the Bible, and, in his intellect, he is a giant among men. Paul, the mighty man of God, chosen to a work which his nature resisted and rebelled against, says almost the same thing that the great infidel says: The world by wisdom knew not God. (But the Pharisee thought he knew him.) "Foolishness" to the intelligent, cultured, classic Greek, a stumbling-block to the Jews, though they were thoroughly taught in the law, and came from Abraham himself, with whom God's covenant was made, only to be understood through revelation of the Spirit made to a new spiritual existence or being, not the natural spirit revived or waked up to a sense of its lost and ruined condition as the preacher exhorts them to become by the power of their own will, through their own faith. No wonder Ingersoll in his honesty rejects it, for he has no spiritual knowledge, nor can have until the new creature in Christ is manifested, born in him. Thus, it is by the revelation of the Spirit, Holy Spirit, as you define it, the glorified Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of comfort and consolation. You express it that way, but I wondered why you used both words. They seem to mean the same thing: "comfort," "consolation." But since I heard you say it that way I heard a preacher talking with one bereft of a loved child. He spoke "comfort" in that the child, by its early death, had escaped many snares and evils in this wicked world, and "consolation" in the prospect of an everlasting existence in a deathless, endless life of happiness with the spirit of the child when the mother should lay down the burden of life and follow the little one through the dark valley. He took both words and they did not mean the same. So then the "comfort" is here with us in this troublesome trial time, and the "consolation" is in the hope of life eternal. That preacher was blundering along and doing the best he could with what he had, but he did not comfort or console that broken heart, still he tried his best. Not a bit better than Ingersoll, for the preacher could not prove his proposition to the mother, childless, and she had no faith or hope, while Ingersoll could say, I do not know, I do not know whether death is a wall or a door; whether it is the spreading of pinions in flight or the folding of wings forever, but if there is another life, it will at least be no worse or harder than this, on that we can rely.

Good-night, and God bless you, brother.

FRANK MYERS.

DAYTON, Ohio, July 17, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—If you will permit me to address you as a dear brother in the faith of God's elect. I have felt deeply impressed for some time to write you, but hesitate to do so, as we are strangers in the flesh, but I trust not in spirit. I feel that a heart to heart talk with you, dear brother, will be a great

source of pleasure to me, as I have felt so despondent and cast down in mind for some time, and am made to wonder if any one has such doubts and fears in regard to their being one among God's elect. We are taught by the Scriptures that we shall not have trials above that we are able to bear, and when I look back over my past life I wonder how I ever lived through the many sorrows of life; but God can enable us to go through trials that without his sustaining grace would sink us down and overcome us. Ten years ago was the greatest sorrow I have ever been called to pass through: the death of my dear, devoted husband; but how encouraging it is to us, dear brother, when we feel the sweet assurance that all is well with our loved ones, and that they are now basking in the sunlight of eternal day, and their hope of heaven crowned by the glad fruition of joys supernal, and are made partakers of the blessings of which it is declared that it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive. When I am filled with doubts and fears my love for the dear Old Baptists is my only hope. Often I feel to be a stranger to the joys of pardoning mercy. There have been times, too, when listening to the voice of our dear, faithful minister, when declaring the sweet and precious doctrine of our Savior, that I have longed to feel willing to say with the apostle that I count all things but loss that I may gain Christ, yet this willingness has to be given us by our blessed Redeemer. Dear Elder Lefferts, I feel so unworthy and so ignorant of spiritual things, and that perhaps I savor too much of the things of this world, that I wonder how the dear Old Baptists can fellowship me, and feel that if they saw me as I see myself they surely could not, yet God in his great mercy has enabled me to hope, and though at times it seems exceeding small, yet I have never entirely lost sight of it, and can truly say with the poet,

"His love in times past
Forbids me to think,
He will leave me at last
In sorrow to sink."

I spend much of my time in the valley of humility and mourn an absent Lord. Like Martha, I am troubled about many things, so I have to say, Just as I am, though tossed about with many conflicts, many doubts, fightings within and fears without, O Lamb of God, I come. How very much I have to be thankful for, dear brother, and it is through the power of God that I have been kept and feel to praise him, and give him all honor which is due him, and to crown him Lord of all.

How my heart responds to your good editorials in the SIGNS. I have felt deeply impressed to write a letter of sympathy to Elder Ker, knowing of his sad bereavement, but feeling my great inability to write anything consoling have not done so. It seems that at times God's hand is laid heavily upon us, and as I have told you, dear brother, I, too, have felt the stroke, and can truly say, Alone, alone, and it seems hard to say, Thy will be done when our loved ones are called to the great beyond and we are bereft of those who were dearer than life to us. But we sorrow not as those who have no hope. Though we miss our dear ones everywhere, we feel that he that doeth all things well hath called them to that better inheritance, where the heirs of the kingdom shall meet and praise his holy name through all eternity. But O, can one so sinful as I claim a part in that blessed inheritance? How we love to praise his name for his loving-kindness to poor worms of the dust. Did God not have [mercy upon the poor thief on the cross when he said, This day shalt thou

be with me in paradise? O how can any one deny God's power to save? We are his subjects of grace, and his wisdom, his eye is ever alert, and he knows our every movement.

"How firm a foundation,
Ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith
In his excellent word."

He bringeth the blind by a way they knew not, he leadeth them in paths they have not trod, and how sweet it is to meditate on these things night and day. The psalmist said, My meditation shall be sweet; I will be glad in the Lord. The joys of heaven which we feel that we sometimes experience are surely glimpses and foretastes of that which we shall know hereafter. The blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth us from all sin, prepares us to breathe the pure atmosphere of God's love. How unsearchable are the works of the Spirit in our hearts, and the strength that comes to us when Jesus speaks, the rest, the calmness we feel when we know that He walketh upon the sea, and that with his own dear hand he will stay the waves. O blessed, blessed Jesus, dear Savior of my soul.

I feel to say, dear brother Lefferts, that my writing you these very scattering thoughts is to tell you how much I enjoy your writings in the dear old SIGNS, and I sincerely believe your gift in writing so comfortingly to the saints scattered throughout the land is a gift to you from heaven, as was John's baptism, and, if I could so express it, that God has given grace for us. You are the earthen vessel which receives it, as the waterpots received the wine at the wedding feast. I have written as I usually do, too lengthily, and fear it will be of little comfort to any of God's little ones, and if it contains nothing of interest, dear brother, cast the mantle of charity over all, and consign it to the wastebasket, and I will not feel hurt in the least.

Unworthily your sister; if saved at all, it will only be through the grace and mercy of Him who doeth all things well.

LIDA KELLER.

HERNDON, Va., Sept. 1, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I am going to send you a letter for your judgment as to whether it is fit for the SIGNS or not. It seems that when my health is at its worst that is when my mind is exercised on spiritual things, so to-night, and all day, it has been that way. The doctor is attending me now. I am not able to get around the house, or to stand on my feet, and he will not permit me to do so for at least two weeks yet. I sometimes feel that the good Lord has forsaken me and hid his face, then again, every pain and trouble is gone, it seems his smiling face is near, and I am lifted up. I feel to know it is his will I should suffer this way for some good purpose. I cannot write to-night. My heart is heavy from some cause, I cannot tell why.

I am going to send you a letter I wrote last February. It is the third one attempted. When I would think of sending it, something would say, No, it is only imagination with you, there is nothing real and no good in you, so I am going to ask you to read it, and see if it is fit for the paper. I feel you will overlook all my blunders, and correct mistakes. I do hope I will be able to come to meeting, as it is the most pleasure of my life, although I do not hear the preaching every time I come; but when I do, it comes with such power it surely does my poor heart good to be there. I feel sometimes when I am home and down in the

pit, how I would love to hear a few words of preaching.

I will stop now, hoping I have not troubled you too much, and ask to be remembered in your prayers.

With love to all,

LOTTIE A. DAVIS.

HERNDON, Va., Feb. 15, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—It seems my mind at times is drawn to the SIGNS, to write a few of my thoughts, so to-night as all is quiet, it is drawn that way. If it is the Lord's will, I will try to write a few of my thoughts, if he will guide my mind and my pen. I cannot tell how much I enjoy the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; it is always a welcome visitor, and never fails to bring glad tidings of great joy to me. Often it revives that spark of burning love which we have for all the dear people of God. This, I think, is an evidence to all poor, trembling children that they have passed from death unto life. This is one great comfort to me, for I do know I have a peculiar love for all the Old Baptists which I never had before, and I know I did not do anything of myself to bring it about. Why do we love all the brethren with such burning love? It is because God first loved us. I feel to say of a truth, he has loved us with an everlasting love, and with loving-kindness has he drawn us. What more could his children ask than to be loved with an everlasting love? When I look a moment and see how sinful and unworthy I am of any of this love to me, I am made to doubt if I am one of those he has loved with an everlasting love. But when I consider how he has, I hope, led me and given me faith to believe and trust in his holy name, I feel like praising him. For myself, I feel very poor, depending entirely on the Lord for everything, both natural and spiritual. I hope I can ever trust him, for he has promised to keep his people as the apple of his eye, and what a tender keeping that is. What a blessing it is to have the gift of faith to believe in such an all-wise and powerful God, who is not slack in all his promises. The truth as it is in Jesus is all that will do us any good, and I hope I am one that has been given that faith.

I do not want to crowd out better letters, which I love to read, but if you think this worth publishing, you may do so; if not, all will be right with me.

I am your very little sister, if one at all,

LOTTIE A. DAVIS.

BALTIMORE, Md., June 11, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have felt impressed to-day to write you, on the anniversary of my baptism, which was on the second Sunday in June, five years ago; and I must confess that it has not all been a travel of peace and joy and ease, as I once thought it would be for a child of God, but has been a warfare, both within and without, sometimes feeling that I would be overwhelmed, or swamped. No doubt I would have been a castaway long ago if left to myself, but I hope that I have been upheld by the omnipotent power of God, who spoke the worlds into existence by his mighty power, and if it is that power that has kept me thus far I feel that there is no other power in heaven or earth to look to for salvation. I have had some sweet evidence lately of his power to make me lie down in peace, when I have such Scriptures come to me with force as these: Be not dismayed. I rule in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. Be still and know that I am God. I will make the lamb and the lion lie down together in peace. The wrath of man shall praise

God, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain. Then I am made to feel these Scriptures have come to me with comfort and assurance that the Lord was in it, as though I was with the apostles and the tempest arose and we were about to be lost, and we had gone to the Lord, and said, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose and rebuked the winds and the waves and said, Peace, be still, and there was a great calm. This has been some of my experience as I journeyed, and after feeling the assurance of our loving Savior, who has power over the winds and the seas, feel I will never doubt again, but do just the same. I suppose I might be called a doubting Thomas, but such is my disposition, and I cannot make one hair white or black, but if Christ has been formed in my heart the hope of glory I know that he is able to do all things, and that he works and none can hinder.

Dear brother, I have not written as I intended. I thought I would tell you how glad I was to meet you at our association, and how I enjoyed the preached word there. I thought you all preached with love and in the fear of God, showing that charity that Paul wrote about when he said, Though I speak with tongues of angels or men, and have not charity, I become as a tinkling cymbal or sounding brass; though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and have not charity, it profiteth nothing. Though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. It appears to me that the apostle was speaking of love, for what the body did, or appeared to do, did not amount to anything if the love of God was not manifest in that very thing; though he preached Jesus Christ, and him crucified, but did not manifest that charity, or love, toward a brother that is commanded in the Scripture, it would be as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. John says, How can a man love God, whom he hath not seen, if he loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen? How can we love our brother if we are ever ready to hold him up to ridicule and scorn if he happens to differ with us? The apostle says, love covers a multitude of sins. I have thought much of late on these things. Jesus says, Pick the beam out of thine own eye, and then thou wilt be able to pick the mote out of thy brother's eye; and it appears to be my case, that I have been trying to pick the mote out of some one's eye while at the same time I did not behold the beam in my own eye, but I hope I have done so in love.

I will close this rambling letter, for I feel it is like the writer, very imperfect. I have penned the thoughts as they have occurred to me, but I do not want to weary you. If I could express what I see at times, like some of the brethren and sisters do, I feel that I would write much oftener. I ask an interest in the prayers of all God's people, that I may be kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. My wife joins me in love to the household of faith. Do with this as you think best, and all will be well with me.

Your little brother,

L. C. GODWIN.

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EDITORIAL.

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LUKE XIX. 7.

"AND when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner."

The publicans and harlots in the eyes of Pharisees were despised of all creatures among the Jews, hence they marveled and murmured whenever Jesus, who claimed to be the Son of God, dined with or had dealings of any kind with them. Simon, the proud Pharisee, felt fully convinced that Jesus was an impostor when he allowed the poor, sinful woman to touch him in washing his feet with her tears and wiping them with the hairs of her head. The Jews could not understand why or how a holy man, a clean Jew, could keep company with sinners. Hence Jesus was condemned for so doing, but in visiting such characters, eating and drinking with them, was God's condescending grace made known. Paul tells us that Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom he was chief; yet he was not a publican nor in any sense a sinner in the eyes of the Jews, nor in the eyes of the law, but in his own feelings of soul he was more guilty than any other man, and presents himself an example of the saving grace of God, suggesting that if it were sufficient to save him it is equal to the sins of any other man. He as a zealous and proud Pharisee condemned Jesus for the strange things he did and said; not only so, but he condemned and persecuted all them that called upon his name. No man among the Jews was more zealous of the traditions to the fathers than was he; no man kept the commandments of the law more perfectly than did he, yet in that condition of nature he knew not Jesus as the Christ, but had to be taught by divine revelation. When the knowledge came his eyes were opened to behold the plan of God in salvation, and his purpose in Jesus keeping company with publicans and harlots, eating and drinking with them. How wonderful it is that when the revelation of Jesus as the Savior of sinners comes, all our proud waves are stayed, all our mountains brought low, all our pools dried up and all our beauty by nature fades as the flower of the grass. As was said of Him, There shall be no comeliness in him that we should desire him. According to the flesh that was so, yet as a man he was faultless. So all quickened children of God see the same in themselves: no comeliness, no beauty, no glory, nothing to commend them to God, but everything to separate between them and God.

We have made mention of the above things to show why the Jews murmured because Jesus went with Zaccheus the publican. This man desired to see Jesus, but being little of stature knew he could not for the people, so ran before them, knowing that Jesus must pass that way, and climbed up into a sycamore tree. There he had a view of him that no other man had at that time. No doubt Zaccheus thought he would be unobserved, but the thought to climb the tree to see Jesus was not of himself; Jesus had planned the whole affair to demonstrate

the truth that he came "to seek and to save that which was lost." The record is that Jesus saw Zaccheus, though he thought himself concealed, and said, Zaccheus, make haste, and come down, for to-day I must abide in thy house. Perhaps, notwithstanding all the surprise of the Jews, no man was as much astonished as was Zaccheus. First that Jesus should see him at all; more than that to tell him to come down from the tree, because he must abide in his house that day. Why Jesus should abide in the house of a man who was a sinner, and yet claim to be the Son of God, was beyond the comprehension of those who rejected him. It seems to us that he had already taken up his abode in the heart of the rich publican, and because of that the great desire to see him. The mercy of God in Christ was made manifest in abiding in the house of the man hated by the world because of his sins, and this same thing made Jesus hateful to the people. Had he always kept company with the self-righteous Pharisees and scorned publicans and harlots as they did he would never have been hated by them, but such was not the purpose and plan of God. All can see therefore that Jesus was hated for the sins of God's elect.

The appearing of Jesus to sinners and his words to them always had a peculiar effect upon them. The poor woman condemned by the law and the people, who wanted to stone her to death, was commanded to "go and sin no more." The man at the pool was commanded in like manner, and we have no record that either was ever guilty of wrongdoing again. "My words are spirit and they are life"—a living law in the hearts of the redeemed of the Lord. The grace of God teaches all men that, denying ungodly and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. This lesson was taught Zaccheus in the appearing of Jesus to him, and in the assurance that Jesus would abide in his house. That dishonest and sinful publican by nature was made honest, merciful and upright by the grace of Christ Jesus. Immediately he said, "Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." Jesus answered, "This day is salvation come to this house." He was then dead to sin, and could no longer live therein. This is always the fruit of salvation; a man saved desires to depart from the snares of death, manifesting, as did Peter and John, that he has been with Jesus and learned of him. In this sense the children of God are not of the world, because he hath taken them, translated them out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son, and manifests them the royal priesthood, the holy nation, the peculiar people, zealous of good works.

The people of God in this age of the world are reckoned as the most unredeemable characters the world holds; not that they are guilty of wilful transgressions, either against the laws of our land or the laws of society, but because they love, preach and believe the doctrine of God, salvation by grace, just as it came to Zaccheus, without works. How often we all have heard it said, The world would be better off were every Old School Baptist dead. Yes, and they have by calculation of their own appointed the time when all would be gone, but still they live to tell the story of grace, and while the world stands there will be witnesses of God and his truth, and it is just as true that they shall be hated and

called sinners to the end. But if Jesus abides in their house, which he surely does, the victory is theirs through him. There is not one quickened child of God in all this great world who does not confess that in Jesus abiding in his house, or heart, that He has become the guest of a sinner. K.

JOHN XV. 25.

"BUT this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause."

Very frequently we find in the New Testament references to the Old Testament. Jesus came to fulfill all that the law and the prophets had foretold of him. The new dispensation of the gospel could not be manifested until all the old dispensation of the law, every jot and tittle of it, had been fulfilled. Here, in the words of our text, Jesus says that "their law," the Jewish or Mosaic law, declared that he, Jesus, should be hated without a cause by the Jews. In order that this declaration of "their law" should be fulfilled, as well as everything else in that law, it was necessary for Jesus to perform works among them that none other had ever done. His doing these works among them brought into evidence their hatred toward him, thus fulfilling the Scripture that had long before said that they should hate him. This Scripture thus fulfilled is to be found in Psalms xxxv. 19, and in Psalms lxix. 4. The former reads: "Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me; neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause." The latter reads: "They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head." David, by inspiration, is writing in these Psalms of Jesus. Jesus, coming afterward, caused all to be done that had been foretold of him. This hatred of Jesus lay dormant in the Jewish nation and needed something to provoke it into evidence. This provocation was Jesus' doing the works which no other man did. He did these works purposely to bring out the fact that the Jewish world hated him. We might, perhaps, wonder why it was necessary for this hatred to come into exercise; but certainly the Jews never would have crucified Jesus had they not hated him, and had Jesus not been crucified there never would have been salvation for any of God's elect. The Jews were no different in their nature from all the rest of mankind. Every one by nature hates the truth of God as it is in Jesus. The reason of this is because human nature was so fashioned in the very beginning of man's existence in the world, in such a way that it is impossible for human nature to be in love with God and godliness. The carnal mind is enmity against God. The things of God are not known by the natural man, neither can they be known by him, for spiritual things can be discerned only by the Spirit. Thus the works which Jesus did among the Jews in that day brought into exercise the hatred that already existed against him among them. Should Jesus come back again on earth as a man as he was then and again do those works, men to-day would hate him as men did then. There is no change in human nature since those days, and this nature is just as corrupt and just as opposed to Jesus as it ever was. Jesus had done many wonderful works in that Jewish nation: he had raised the dead, healed divers diseases, opened the eyes of the blind, unstopped the ears of the deaf, calmed tempests, fed multitudes, forgiven sins, preached his gospel to the poor. All these works had he done among them; they had seen these works; they had in consequence not believed him, but had

hated both him and his Father. No matter how wonderfully God may manifest his power in our environment, in the circumstances and conditions about us, this will never bring about saving belief in God. Not until God, by the operation of his Spirit within us, executes the work of our regeneration, will we believe in him unto the saving of our souls. They hated him without a cause, in that Jesus was holy, harmless and undefiled; there was no guile in him; not the shadow of a fault or of a flaw of any kind could be found in him. He was God's Lamb without blemish. No reason in him why they should hate him. Neither could they give any reason why they did hate him. When finally they accused him before Pilate, not being able to bring any true or just charge against him, they swore to lies and thus perjured themselves in order to accomplish his death. All this had to be just as it was in order to bring about the death of Christ and the salvation of his people, and this hatred of Jesus by the Jews was just as much a part of God's eternal purpose and plan as was anything else connected with Christ and his people. But predestination could not be given by the Jews as a cause why they hated him, for the Jews knew nothing about predestination, since they were blind to that as well as all other parts of God's counsel. Not knowing anything about it, it could not be a motive actuating them to hate him. Therefore, they hated him and knew not why they hated him. When finally asked to make their charges against Jesus, and to prove them, as we have said before, they resorted to lies to establish their case, showing they were all the time hating him without a cause, that is, without knowing why they hated him.

Requested by brother Walter Mordecai, of Vernon, Alabama. L.

1 JOHN II. 1.

"My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

John means not his little children according to the flesh, but his children in the Lord, those begotten in the gospel, those given him by the grace of God as the fruit of his ministry. These, being gospel subjects, are not under the old law, but under grace. Sin is transgression of law, and whatever law one is not under that law he cannot transgress. A person living in America cannot transgress some European law. Not living in Europe, he is not subject to the jurisdiction of any law there. The gospel subject cannot transgress any commandment of the law, for he is no longer under the law. Jesus, by his death, and resurrection from death, brings his elect out from under the law, so that they are no longer under its dominion. Not being under its dominion, they cannot disobey it. When John, therefore, says, "that ye sin not," he is not hoping they will not transgress the law which formerly they were under, but means that he does not want them to transgress or disobey the precepts of Jesus. He is not thinking of the Mosaic or legal dispensation at all, nor of the law of sin and death, but knowing the church is now under the dominion of King Jesus, and subject to his grace, he desires to see believers walking in conformity with the doctrine and the precepts of grace, the teachings of Jesus. He desires to see them walking in the order of the Lord's house blameless, holding fast their faith without wavering. "Sin," as used by John here, means a transgression of the faith and order and practice of the gospel church. To forsake the assembling of ourselves together is to sin wilfully after we have come to a knowledge of the truth, it is a trans-

gression of church order and practice. John tells his "little children" not to do it. To be unequally yoked together with unbelievers at the Lord's table, or in any other department of the house of God, is a "sin" against grace. Do not do it. To keep company in church relationship with fornicators and idolaters is a "sin" against grace. Do not do that. In fact, any departure from the apostolic doctrine, faith and practice as laid down in the New Testament is a "sin" in the New Testament sense, and in the sense in which John here uses the word. The remarkable thing, however, about John's language here is, that instead of threatening the "little children" with dire things in case of their disobedience, he holds forth for their consolation the truth that they have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous. The natural mind might reason that this is a poor way for John to write, that by telling them they have an advocate with the Father in case they do sin he might encourage them to care little whether they sinned or not, but every true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is by grace made to hate sin so that it has no attraction for him, he cannot live in it, it is not his element. Every sin detected in him causes self-abhorrence and a desire to flee from it. Instead, therefore, of John's encouraging the brethren to sin, by telling them they have an advocate with the Father, he is handing out great comfort to them, for what a comfort it is to know that when we have sinned, however much we may have desired not to do it, that we have been cleansed from that and every other sin by the blood of Jesus. No sin ever committed by the elect but what is washed away in the blood of Jesus. Jesus not only took away all our sins that are past, but all present sins and all sins yet to be committed by us in the future. Thus, John says that it is his wish that the children of his ministry may be found walking worthy of the high vocation whereunto they are called, that they may be found walking in all the ordinances of the Lord's house blameless; but in case any one "sins," or transgresses any precept of the gospel, he tells them for their support in adversity that they have an advocate with the Father, and that this advocate is none other than Jesus Christ the righteous, who washed away, not part, but all, their sins in his own blood.

Requested by brother Walter Mordecai, of Vernon, Alabama. L.

JOHN X. 16.

"OTHER sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."

The elect of God, those chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world and predestinated unto the adoption of children, are to be found in every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue under heaven. The Jews thought that no nation would derive any benefit from the coming of the Messiah but they themselves. They thought no others but themselves were the children of Abraham, and therefore none but themselves were heirs of the promise made to Abraham. For this reason they called Abraham their father, and were very proud of their ability to trace their lineage by flesh and blood from Abraham. However, Jesus told them that flesh and blood should not inherit the kingdom of heaven, meaning that their ability to trace themselves in the flesh as descendants of Abraham would give them no right to the kingdom of God on that basis. In the words of the Scripture quoted above Jesus tells the Jews: "Other sheep I have, which

are not of this fold." He means that he has sheep among the Gentile nations outside the bounds of Jewry, which sheep were just as much given him of the Father before the world began as were his sheep among the Jews. These, also, he must bring. During the lifetime of Jesus here in the flesh he commanded the disciples to preach to Jews only, they were forbidden to go to the Gentiles; but after Jesus rose from the dead he told his disciples, All power in heaven and in earth is given unto me. Go ye therefore into all the world and preach the gospel unto every creature. By his death Jesus took away the handwriting of ordinances which was against the Gentiles, being contrary to them, and nailed them to his cross. Thus the wall of partition being abolished by the death and resurrection of Christ from between Jew and Gentile he makes of the twain (Jew and Gentile) one new man. Thus there is one fold and one shepherd. This is what was shown to Peter while he was upon the housetop when the sheet was let down knit at the four corners and containing all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. This vision showed him he, though a Jew, was not to despise anything that the Lord had cleansed, even though it be a dog of a Gentile. This prepared him to go to the house of the Gentile Cornelius, and when he saw the work that God had wrought in the house of Cornelius, Peter exclaimed, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons," that he has a people among the Gentiles as well as among the Jews. Those who came with Peter to the house of Cornelius, being Jews also, were astonished to see that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. Therefore when Jesus said, "Other sheep I have," he meant that he had people among the Gentiles; that is, among the nations outside of the Jews; that these were as much given him to redeem as were his elect among the Jews; that when he should redeem them there would no longer be any difference between Jews and Gentiles in the Spirit, but all would be one flock, or one fold, and Jesus would be the one Shepherd of them all. We here in America to-day are Gentiles, and belong to that "other sheep" which Jesus said he must also bring.

Requested by brother S. S. Miller, of Julian, Cal. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder James W. Linn.)

The Tygarts Valley River Association of Old School, or Primitive Baptists, now in session with the Mt. Olive Church, in Barbour Co., West Virginia, to the churches of which she is composed, and to all those of like precious faith, giveth christian greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is our custom to greet the churches composing this association by a Circular Letter, written by one of its members; then therefore let us greet one another in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ with a portion of his word, and let this be our motive in meeting together, to inquire of each other's welfare in the Lord, as this is what we should meet for, to have the cause at heart for the welfare of each church, and each other, to live in peace and in fellowship and love. What is an association? It is where God's children meet and associate with each other in the Lord, to enjoy each other's company, and to hear and tell of our joys and our welfare in the Lord, and also to hear the

word of God explained, for there is nothing sweeter to a hungry child than to hear the gospel of the Son of God proclaimed, and to have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, and to hear of each other's welfare in the Lord. This is an association; we meet together and associate together, and who can condemn it, and say that this is not taught in the Scriptures?. We assemble to worship God. Isaiah iv. 5: "And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence." God will defend his church when they assemble or associate together in his name, so we should be very careful not to come together in our own way or name. We should not neglect to assemble ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but so much the more as ye see the day approaching. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." There they were associated together with one accord, not two or three accords, but with one accord. They associated together to hear and to speak of the wonderful things of God, and God's children came together from different parts and nations, and there was gladness among them. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."—Acts ii. 1, 41. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name."—Malachi iii. 16. God's children have associated together in all ages, and when they did it was for the worship of God and for the welfare of one another; so let love continue and fellowship abound, and let us continue in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and then we are safe, and are not liable to go wrong. This brings our minds to an important question: What is this doctrine? and who has this doctrine? What is this doctrine? Well, it is the doctrine of Christ our Savior. Now let us investigate this doctrine for a few minutes, and see if we have it; let us examine what Peter spoke of on the day of Pentecost to the people, Acts ii. 36–39: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Here is some of the apostles' doctrine. What is it then that they preached? Well, they preached Christ Jesus as the only Savior, the only name given under heaven whereby we must be saved, and they preached it to Israel. "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Let them know it assuredly, and to know him is life eternal. Now let them know it, let them know that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, (not some other man or person, but the same Jesus whom ye have crucified) both Lord and Christ. All power, both in heaven and earth, is given into his hand, and he

is the only way by which any poor sinner can be saved. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest, What shall we do? They were pricked in their heart, this was the reason they made the inquiry, and this agrees with the word of God in Ezekiel xxxvi. 37: "Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them." Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ. Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, not in your name, not in the name of Peter, but in the name of Jesus Christ, for he is your Savior, the only name given under heaven whereby you must be saved. Be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. Be baptized for the remission of sins, and not in order to have them remitted in water baptism, but because they are already remitted by the blood of Jesus Christ, for the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, not the Holy Ghost, but the gift of the Holy Ghost, the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace and faith, for the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. They were pricked in their heart, those Israelites were, not to make them Israelites, for they were the house of Israel, therefore let all the house of Israel know. Who, then, is the promise unto? Well, it is unto you Israelites, and unto your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. Even as many, no more, no less, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. So then the Lord our God must do the calling, who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; so it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and whom I will I harden. So the promise is to the house of Israel, and to their children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. How does he call them, if the promise is only to them, only to a part of the human family? Paul said, God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace. Then they are called by his grace, and not by their works, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Then this grace is given to us, but in Christ Jesus before the world began; not after we repent and turn away from sin, and are baptized in water in order to get into Christ; O no, no, but according as he hath chosen us in him. When did he choose us? Before the foundation of the world. What did he choose us for? That we should be holy and without blame before him in love. This is the doctrine the apostles preached, so are we continuing in their doctrine, which is the doctrine of God our Savior. Did they have any missionary boards sending out men to convert the heathen? O no, they went out and preached the gospel as they were sent by God, and directed by the Holy Ghost, and when God called them to the work and place they went, and where they were forbidden to go by the Holy Ghost they did not go. (Acts xvi. 6.) They were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia. "After they

were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not." "And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; there stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them." So you see the Holy Ghost would not allow these apostles to go to certain places to preach the gospel. Why? They were not included in the promise, for the promise is unto you, and to your children, and unto them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call, and as many as were ordained to eternal life they are the only ones that are glad to hear the gospel, and they are the ones that we are sent to preach unto, so those who are not ordained unto eternal life, they never will hear the gospel and be saved. So we see that God knows best where to call and send his servants to preach his gospel, and do we think God would leave this work in the hands then of men, even when the apostles were forbidden to go to these two places? God knows where his work of grace is in their hearts, because this is God's work and not man's, for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure. All thy children shall be taught of the Lord. I will bring them with weeping, and with supplication will I lead them. I will say to the north, Keep not back, and to the south, Give up, bring my sons and daughters from afar (to them that are afar off), even as many as are called by my name, even as many as our Lord God shall call. So see, here they are, they shall come, a great company of them. Here, on the day of Pentecost, there were about three thousand souls that were pricked in their heart, and their cry arose from life, because life was in them. They did not cry in order to get life, but their cry was an evident fact that they had life, were quickened into life by Jesus Christ our Lord, for the promise is unto "you" and "to your children." Let us see what the promise is. God promised Abraham that he would bless his seed in all nations, and, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." Now they are the children of the promise, as Isaac was, so are we, and Isaac came into this world by promise; he did not have to perform certain conditions in order to get to be the promised child, nor in order to get eternal life, for, "I give unto them eternal life," for I will write my law in their heart, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, and they shall not teach their brother, saying, Know ye the Lord, for they all shall be taught of the Lord. Peter did not teach them to know the Lord, but he was filled by the Holy Ghost, and he saw the work of God in them, and therefore he could say, For the promise is unto you, and unto all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. "And I will pour upon the house of David [the children of promise], and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced." So see them right here before Peter, inquiring what they must do, after they had killed the Son of God. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." They did it by wicked hands, yet being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, but our God is a God of purpose, a sovereign, and there is none above him, no law over him, no evil in

him. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust."

In conclusion, we want to say that Scripture must be fulfilled which speaks on this wise in Zech. xii. 10: "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced." No wonder Peter could speak to them as he did when he said unto them, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ," and, "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced," for there they were, and the deed was done, and Peter, being filled of the Holy Ghost, could see what had been spoken about Christ and these people, and therefore it was the Holy Ghost in Peter revealing this unto him, and he spoke with power, not with the power of Peter, but with the power of God. Then again, Jesus Christ stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. No wonder Peter could speak so clearly and so boldly about this matter. Let the house of Israel know this, because Peter knew that God's promises were sure and secure, and that Christ had said, "Upon this rock will I build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," so nothing could prevent this from coming to pass. Christ must be crucified, and they shall (not may) look on him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him; so you see that when God pricked them in their heart, then it was they began to mourn, to repent and be baptized every one of them in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; repent and be baptized in his name, for repentance is in him, for he is the giver of repentance as the only way of salvation, for he is exalted a Prince and a Savior to give repentance unto Israel, so let the house of Israel know this and the forgiveness of sins. So repentance is in his name, and we must be baptized also in his name, and not in the name of the water. We do not preach that repentance is in the name of the creature at all, but we preach that repentance is in Christ Jesus' name, in him, like the apostle Peter did, and let us continue in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. They assembled together, they associated together in the name of Christ Jesus, so let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but so much the more as we see the day approaching. Christ gave them repentance, so they were pricked in their heart, then they that gladly received his word were baptized. Who were baptized? Those who were pricked in their heart. Who were pricked in their heart? The house of Israel. Who are the house of Israel? Well, they are the children of promise, of whom God said, a seed should serve him. Who, then, is this seed, and where did it originate? Matt. xiii. 37, 38: "He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man: the field is the world: the good seed are the children of the kingdom." So they are the children of God, and he works in them to will and to do of his good pleasure. By the obedience of one man (Christ) many were made righteous. They were made righteous, not by the obedience of many, but by one man's obedience many were made righteous; so it is by Christ's

obedience, and not by our obedience, that we are made righteous. As the Lord has said that their righteousness is of him, so all obedience that God will ever accept must come by Christ, must be his obedience. Because we are disobedient we have broken the law, and if guilty of one point we are guilty of the whole, and the Scriptures say, The soul that sinneth, it shall die. By the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified in his sight, and we are guilty before him, and are condemned to die, and are corrupt from the crown of our head to the sole of our feet, no soundness in us, nothing good in us, then how can we do good works? Then what can be plainer than this: It is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by him; he will justify the ungodly, and not the righteous; his obedience was for them that they may be justified, that they will be justified from all things? So the ungodly receive this justification. God's people were ungodly sinners, even to the slaying of the Son of God, and Christ's obedience to the law freed them from the law. Christ's death and resurrection freed them from condemnation, and they are made righteous by his obedience, and are saved by his blood, which cleanseth them from all sin. So you see this is the doctrine of the apostles, and Christ Jesus our Lord. Now to him be all the glory and praise, forever and ever. Fare ye well in the Lord.

J. B. CROSS, Moderator.
J. N. BARTLETT, Clerk.

MINUTES.

OF late years the amount sent us by some of the Associations for printing their Minutes has been gradually decreasing, until now some of them hardly send enough to cover the cost of production, and as everything used in printing has been greatly increased in price this makes it very hard for us. Brethren, please bear this in mind, and in making up contributions for printing Minutes do what you can for us.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, Sept. 6th, 1916, at his home, Leesburg, Va., Welby T. Gray, of Bluemont, Va., and Miss Ruth Starkey, of North Fork, Va.

By the same, Sept. 6th, 1916, at his home, Leesburg, Va., Beverley Suddeuth and Miss Nannie Jenkins, both of Loudoun County, Va.

By the same, Sept. 12th, 1916, at 643 Keefer Place, N. W., Washington, D. C., Edward M. Hood, of Leesburg, Va., and Miss Phœbe E. Hough, of Pæonian Springs, Va.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, Sept. 6th, 1916, at the home of the bride, in Bothwell, Ontario, Charles Hugh Bethel, of Gary, Ind., and Martha Ann McLean, of Bothwell, Ontario.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, Sept. 20th, 1916, at his residence, 118 Forest Ave., St. Thomas, Ont., Frank McLean and Minerva McDougall, both of Melbourne, Ont.

By Elder J. M. Fenton, on Tuesday, Sept. 12th, 1916, at the home of the bride, Ivyland, Bucks Co., Pa., William H. Schopfel and Anna Hobensack.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Sept. 9th, 1916, Clarence O. Adkins and Sadie B. Holloway, both of Wicomico County, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

John W. Magee, our esteemed brother in a precious hope, departed this life at his home in St. Joseph, Mo., August 25th, 1915, aged 74 years and 8 months. He was born on a farm near Mattoon, Coles Co., Ill., Jan. 1st, 1841. His father, Basil W. Magee, emigrated to Platte County, Mo., in 1849, where brother John grew to manhood, and in 1865 was married to Miss Anna Murdock. Of that union were born two daughters, Lena and May, both of whom grew to womanhood, but preceded their father to the grave. In 1872 brother Magee and wife, after relating a good hope through grace, were received in the fellowship of Unity Primitive Baptist Church, and were baptized by the late Elder R. M. Thomas. Both remained firm in the faith of God's elect to the end, sister Magee dying eight years ago. Elder C. C. Moore, pastor of Unity Church, was called, and comforted the mourning friends with the certain promises of mercy in Christ alone through his precious blood. The mortal remains of our beloved brother Magee were laid to rest beside those of his kindred in the family plot in the cemetery at Platte City, Mo. He leaves three sisters: Mrs. Mary A. Wortham, of Montclair, N. J., Mrs. Anna Wheat, of Camden Point, Mo., and Mrs. Frank Hall, of Lewiston, N. Y.; also two brothers: Harvey Magee, of Pasadena, Cal., and Lewis W. Magee, of Kansas, to mourn his departure. Brother Magee was a man of mild and gen-

tle manner, sturdy and upright in character. He remained firm in the belief of the sovereignty of God to the end, refusing to be led from the old paths followed by saints of God since the apostolic days. He was a nephew of the late Elder James M. True, of Kansas, Ill.

ALSO,

William Bloomfield, my beloved cousin, was called from this life Nov. 13th, 1915, at his home near Oklahoma City, Okla., aged 78 years. He was born in Crawfordsville, Ind., August 18th, 1837, son of Isaac and Mary Hahn Bloomfield. When five years old he emigrated with his parents to Knox County, Ill., where he grew to manhood. At the age of eighteen he was given a hope in the atoning blood of Jesus, and related his hope to the Henderson Primitive Baptist Church, in which faith he unswervingly remained until his death. In 1864 he was united in marriage with Miss Euphamia Reed, and to that union were born two sons, Frank and Warren, and three daughters, Ella, Nora and Wilmetta. In 1884 he emigrated with his family to Nodaway County, Mo., where he remained until the opening of Oklahoma territory, in 1900, to which place he moved to spend the remainder of his days. While a resident of Missouri he took part in the constitution of West Union Primitive Baptist Church. When the old and stable doctrines and practices of the church were assailed he remained firm as a rock, refusing to compromise in doctrine or order with false leaders. He was a noble husband, a kind father, a generous neighbor and an esteemed citizen.

His body was brought to the home of his son, in Parnell, Mo., and interred beside that of his wife, who preceded him to the grave twenty years. Elder M. E. Young, of Indianola, Iowa, delivered a comforting discourse to the sorrowing children, relatives and friends. He leaves one brother, Joseph H. Bloomfield, of Galesburgh, Ill., the last surviving member of his immediate family. Six grandsons acted as pall-bearers at the funeral.

I loved him dearly. We were much together in late years, and stood shoulder to shoulder in the upheavals through which the Primitive Baptists of northwest Missouri have past in the last twenty-five years.

ALSO,

Mary Loveridge Hahn was born in Somersetshire, near Taunton, England, in 1834, and died at the home of her son, Moses A. Hahn, Jr., in Maryville, Mo., July 13, 1916, of paralysis. She was the daughter of Elder Michael Loveridge, an ordained minister of the Strict Baptist Church of England, who emigrated to America in 1836, residing some years in Knox County, Ill. While residing there his daughter Mary, grown to womanhood, was married to my cousin, Moses Hahn, in 1851. They soon thereafter united with old Henderson Baptist Church. In 1880 they came to Missouri, settling in Nodaway County. Cousin Moses died twenty years ago. Since then Cousin Mary had made her home with her children, of whom ten are now living. These, together with thirty-nine grandchildren, thirty-six great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild, are left to mourn their loss. Few homes among the Primitive Baptists in America have entertained more of God's humble poor than did these dear cousins now gone to rest. This they loved to do, because they loved the brethren.

A. W. BLOOMFIELD.

ST. JOSEPH, MO.

Mrs. Lucinda Grant, of Springvale, Maine, departed this life Sept. 3rd, 1916, aged 63 years. Upon a profession of her faith in the Lord Jesus our sister was received in the fellowship of the church at North Berwick, Maine, May 26th, 1877, and was baptized by Elder William Quint. Her husband, Olando Grant, was received and baptized at the same time. He departed to be with Christ in the month of May, 1885. On Sept. 26th, 1893, she was united in marriage to brother Horatio Grant, who, with her children by her first husband, survive her to mourn their loss. Our sister for many years was subject to much sickness, from various causes, and no one during all those years could have had a more faithful and kind friend to wait upon her and minister to her comfort than her husband was unto her. The last year of her life was one continued sickness, most of the time being confined to her bed, and day and night her suffering was great; but our gracious Lord, whose mercies are unceasing, sustained her, and many were the consolations of Christ that were her portion. "Underneath are the everlasting arms." In all the twenty-three years that I have known her she ever confessed herself to be a poor sinner, whose only hope was in the riches of God's sovereign grace and the atoning, cleansing blood of Christ, the Lamb of God. During the last three months of her life her sufferings were very great. I visited her a number of times, to talk to her of the sure mercies of our gracious covenant God and Savior. She repeatedly, in a few words, expressed her hope and comfort to be in Jesus' blood and righteousness, and she longed thus to die and be removed from her sufferings, and to be with Jesus in heaven, when it should please the Lord to take her away from this world of sin, sufferings and afflictions.

On the day of her burial her husband, our dear brother Horatio Grant, requested me to preach from the words, "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." —1 Cor. xv. 53. Her body was taken to the family burying place and there laid in the dust of the earth in hope of the resurrection of life at the last day, when the dead in Christ shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

May the Lord be the rock and comfort of our brother, and of all the bereaved family.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

Mrs. Annie Hume Risler, wife of John T. Risler, of Hunterdon County, N. J., was born in Fauquier County, Va., August 7th, 1844, and died at the residence of her son-in-law, Frank Hogeland, in Bucks County, Pa., August 14th, 1916, aged 72 years and 7 days. She was baptized by the writer in 1869, in the fellowship of the Old School Baptists at Upper Broad Run, Fauquier Co., Va. In the year 1872 she went to New Jersey to live, and on June 21st, 1875, she was married to John T. Risler. In 1883 she joined the church at Kingwood (Locktown), Hunterdon Co., N. J., by letter, and continued her membership there until her decease. Her only child, Mrs. Isabel Hogeland, died in November, 1914, after which she and her husband left their farm in New Jersey and went to live with their son-in-law. She was taken sick in January last with that dread disease, cancer, from which she suffered severely until her release by death. She was a very useful and faithful Baptist, and will be greatly missed by the little church at Kingwood. Her home was a "Baptist hotel," and many of those who have visited Kingwood in the last forty years will remember her for her kind hospitality and cheerful manner of dispensing it. She was my sister in the flesh and my childhood's playmate, always gentle and loving, and those of the family who are left will greatly miss her. She was one of a family of thirteen, of whom but four are left, two brothers and two sisters. She leaves a disconsolate husband, a son-in-law, who has been as a son to her, and four grandchildren, with the church, to mourn the loss of one greatly beloved, but we sorrow not as those who have no hope.

Her pastor, Elder J. M. Fenton, conducted the funeral services at the home, speaking comfortingly to the sorrowing ones, after which the mortal remains were laid in the cemetery of the Southampton Church to await the last trump to sound.

A. B. FRANCIS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. J. L. Culpepper, Texas, $3.00; Elder J. M. Fenton, Pa., $2.00.

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MEETINGS.

THE Lexington Association is appointed to be held with the Gilboa Church, in the village of Gilboa, Wednesday and Thursday after the first Sunday in October (4th and 5th), 1916. Trains will be met at Grand Gorge Wednesday night and Thursday morning.

JOHN CLARK.

THE Juniata Association is appointed to be held with the Fairview Church, Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa., on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 6th, 7th and 8th, 1916. Those coming by rail will come on Thursday before the meeting to Hancock, Md., on the Western Maryland Railway, or to Hancock, W. Va., on the Baltimore and Ohio R. R. Those coming on the B. & O. R. R. will walk across the bridge to the Maryland side, where all visitors will be met. Any contemplating coming to this meeting by rail will please notify beforehand brother Jefferson Mellott, Needmore, Pa., or brother Dennis Mellott, Plum Run, Pa. All lovers of the truth, and especially ministering brethren of our faith and order, are invited to be with us at this meeting.

JOSHUA MELLOTT, Church Clerk.

AN all day meeting will be held with the Snow Hill Church, at Snow Hill, Md., on the second Sunday in October, (8th), 1916. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited. Elder H. C. Ker is expected to be with us.

B. F. COULTER, Pastor.

THE Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, to be held with the Bethlehem Old School Baptist Church, of Prince William Co., Va., is appointed to commence October 11th and to continue three days. Ministers and brethren and all lovers of truth of our faith and order are invited to meet with us and are welcome to our homes. Those coming by way of Washington, D. C., Tuesday evening, will take train at Union station at 3:45 p. m., which will be met at Manassas at 5:05 p. m.

H. M. JOHNSON, Church Clerk.

THE Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., has appointed a yearly meeting for Saturday and Sunday, October 14th and 15th, to begin at 10:30 a. m. Saturday. Those coming from Baltimore and Philadelphia will come via B. & O. to Newark. Train leaves Philadelphia at 7:45 a. m. Saturday. Ministers and brethren are cordially invited to meet with us.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE Olive and Hurley Church, of the Roxbury Association, has appointed her annual two days meeting to be held at Ashokan, N. Y., Saturday and Sunday, October 14th and 15th, 1916. Trains from One-

onta will be met Friday p. m., and trains leaving Kingston will be met Saturday a. m. All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited to meet with us at that time.

JOHN J. SECOR, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Association is appointed to meet with the Nassaongo Church, near Salisbury, Md., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 18th, 19th and 20th, 1916. All lovers of the truth, especially brethren in the ministry, are cordially invited to meet with us. The brethren will meet all the friends who come at Salisbury on Tuesday afternoon before the association. The trains will arrive about the same time, coming north and south about 1:49 Tuesday afternoon. I think the train coming from Claiborne, on the B. C., is due about 12:05 p. m. If any should come they will be met. Old Point Express leaves Broad St. station at 10 o'clock Tuesday morning, coming south. Philadelphia Express leaves Norfolk at 9 o'clock, coming north, on the same date. Boat leaves Baltimore 6:30 Tuesday morning.

W. E. BAILEY, Church Clerk.

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IN

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To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 84. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1916. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

VETO, Ala., Sept. 16, 1916.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS:—You may remember that when I last wrote, I stated that I would some time write my experience. Although I cannot express in words its value, my hope is a support and beacon to my soul. This hope points to the eternal shore, where all sorrows cease and happiness reigns for evermore. I am what I am by the grace of God, and why I am an Old Baptist is my understanding of the Scriptures that their faith in Christ's teachings suits my experience. From a child I thought to be Christlike (christian) was a sacred thing, and now I realize that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Only caused from love in sincerity, for the substance of Christ himself in the soul is the very essence of religion. I do not remember my exact age when I first began to have serious thoughts about my helpless condition, but was in my teens. I was brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. My parents were Old School Baptists, and our dear widowed mother in January, 1890, went to be forever with loved ones gone before. Her life was well spent in everything that goes to make a beautiful christian character. God saw fit to call her home, her mission here was filled; she is gone, but not forgotten. The same can also be said about our dear brother, who departed this life May 28th, 1916. He looked peacefully at rest. I hope that when the hour of death draws near we may fall asleep to awaken in the beautiful home of the soul. In the year 1894 or 95 there were two preachers who talked to me and others, and said to us that they had been told we were good, moral girls, and they thought we ought to join the church. I said to them, I cannot, for I have never been regenerated. One said, Well, when any one lives a pure, moral life they sometimes do not realize a change. I said, I cannot depend on morality alone. He replied, Well, join us as a seeker. Then I told him I preferred to stay outside until I was satisfied about it. He talked on, so I told him if I ever realized that I had been born of the Spirit I intended to join the Old Baptists. He said they had about all died out. I told him I could not help that, I was one of them in belief, and if there was none but myself I was one. He said, Well, sister, I am glad to see you so firm. Then he

turned to a girl who was a member and asked her how she was enjoying religion. She replied, I do not know, for I joined when too young to understand how it is. Immediately the conversation ended. So general principles did not satisfy me, I longed for some real soul-assurance, and was willing to wait, for, as you can imagine, I was already aware that the mere name of being a church member was no guarantee of safety, and I did not know at that time if I ever would be a christian, for I did not want to climb up on self-righteousness. This same year, one night as I was trying to pray from a burdened mind that had possession of me, I will never forget my happy state when I felt the burden flee away. I felt happy and light, as if I could fly away, and the troubled waves of unrest gave way to blessed peace. I felt I could face death without fear, and with calmness of mind. I felt too happy to sleep scarcely that night, but did not tell any one about this, it was too sacred and so wonderfully sweet; I just began to realize it was so dear. My hope seemed the fairest, and I have often wished I could go through the experience again and feel again the brightness. Ever since that grand moment my burden has been less, my life less gloomy, with all the shadows that darken my way, for the little hope lingering is too dear to set aside. I love to think of it and believe such blessedness must live eternally; that once again I may have a like experience, as it dwells in my thoughts and dreams still. O if I could have always lived in that happy state; but no, I am glad my Savior did not leave me there alone. He says, Take up thy cross and follow me. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; my yoke is easy and my burden light, and it is so true compared with a sinsick soul. Even when we get low down in the valley, Christ tells us, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. So after this experience in the year 1896, in May, I was present when an opportunity for membership was given with the Old Baptists. I sat with fear and trembling, not feeling worthy to be one among them, but a dear old mother, my pastor's mother, was noticing me, and came to me and asked if I wanted to unite with the church. I told her I did. Immediately the pastor came to me, and I told the church some of my experience and they received me, and I hope they will never have cause to regret it, for this is my home until life here is no more. The next morning, Sunday, I was baptized, buried with Christ by baptism into death, that as he was raised by the glory of the Father, even so should I walk in newness of life, but a continual warfare has waged against self. I will say right here, for the benefit of those who may read this, who are traveling along where I have been, that religion is no mere fancy, nor was it designed to make our pleasures less, but more perfect; for things we once loved we now hate after regeneration, and have no real pleasure in them, for our heart is centered on eternal interest, where we hope we are laying our treasures up, and having a desire to press forward toward the mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus, presenting our bodies a living sacrifice day by day, walking by faith. We all know that life must precede action, so when God quickens, we then believe, have faith and repent, and begin to hunger and thirst after righteousness. We are with Christ, and desire to follow his commands and examples. Search the Scriptures, for in them

ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me (Jesus). The law and the prophets were until John, since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. Now the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. It is said, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon, but let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon, for other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws in their mind and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people, and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For this cause he is Mediator of the new testament, that by means of death for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the old testament they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. Think of yourselves, but in your patience possess ye your souls. So wait for your calling; if you feel the need of a Savior, you cannot get religion, but use the wisdom already given, and religion gets you. Christ has by his coming in the flesh purged your sins, and he will reveal this grace in his own time and way, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lust, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Now it was not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy that he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. So we walk by faith, not by sight; for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. So after God quickens, and this light and wisdom shine in our hearts, we will then realize that salvation is of the Lord, and we become fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit. The Scriptures say your bodies are the temple, so God is building and christians are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, and you are confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. This is the work of God, that we believe on him whom he hath sent. Now worldly wisdom teaches historical belief, but the wisdom of God is spiritual belief, hence the necessity of regeneration. Paul declared that his preaching was not with excellency of speech or of human wisdom, but of the power of God, hence excelleth the wisdom of this world and human sense, so that the natural man cannot understand. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wis-

dom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual; but the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. We have to be born of the Spirit, so remember the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. Christ is not the author of confusion, but of peace, and he says, He that exalteth himself shall be abased, but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. James says, Faith without works is dead. Look at Abraham's faith in offering his son, and it was counted unto him for righteousness, and he was indeed partaker of the afflictions of the gospel. Trust in the Lord, he will guide you into all truth. Read 2 Corinthians third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh chapters.

I fear I have written too lengthily, and will now leave these scattering remarks for the editors' disposal. May God enable them and all ministers of the gospel of Christ to stand firm, defending the truth for the upbuilding of the cause of Christ and peace in Zion.

Trusting in the mercy and grace of God, I am, I hope, one among his children.

(MRS.) A. W. HAZLEWOOD.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., Sept., 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I hope you will excuse me for intruding upon your time so often, but as I have a good letter from dear brother Weaver I would like to see it in the paper so all can read it for themselves, but do with it as you think best, for what I think or believe is only as I feel. I am so very ignorant of all things relative to Christ and his everlasting gospel that I tremble at his word, and feel to be still and know that he is God. But I felt so revived at our meeting, last Saturday, Sunday and Monday, I would like to tell it to all the world if I had a steady hand that I could write of the sweet things I saw in this meeting. I cannot describe them unless the Lord guides my pen, if I had a thousand pens, but cannot write more now. I want the prayers of all God's children, and pray that each one may raise their voice in my behalf, as I feel that I am almost at my journey's end in this world. Dear editors, may God keep you as the apple of his eye to the end.

Love to all the flock.

(MRS.) S. G. FRAZEE.

COMMERCE, Mo., Aug. 27, 1916.

DEAR SISTER FRAZEE:—Your good letter, for which I had so anxiously waited, reached me by due course of mail, and now I am attempting to write you in answer. So many thoughts crowd into my mind I hardly know how to fitly express them. I have been passing through a very strange and profoundly serious state of mind for several months. I am feeling unusually concerned about the present signs, and the awful exhibition of God's providence upon the nations of the earth. Surely the Lord omnipotent is bringing to light in these times many of his purposes of old that have been hid from the wise and prudent through the ages that are past. The darkness of human traditions and superstition seems to be giving way, and the light of prophecy and divine revelation directing the minds of the Lord's "wise virgins" to behold the fulfillment of his exceeding great and precious promises. As I think of the world and its past history, the cruel and unrighteous reign of the Gentiles, fraught with the unspeakable horrors of war, poverty, heartaches and tears, it all appears

to me as an awfully black and hideous night preceding the glorious day of the Lord. Though my heart has been bleeding, and I have groaned under the mighty hand of Providence for nearly fifty years, I am now coming to hope that soon I shall be able to look up, and lift up mine eyes to see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. While the world is now convulsed under the mighty sway of unhindered human forces, and the restless hand of commercial greed is driving peace from the earth, I can but rejoice when I remember that God has limited the reign of the Gentiles, and that in the eternal decree of Jehovah their "time" is about full. I have been vainly trying all these years to do the impossible: find out God. Surely his judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out. Though his ways are in the heavens, in the seas and all deep places, yea, even in our own hearts and lives, they are all unknown to us save when to us he is pleased to reveal them. Possessing only a superficial view of God's providence in the affairs of the world, and guided only by the light of carnal reasoning, the unbelieving world is like the fool that hath said in his heart, There is no God. O how many times my own wretched, helpless soul would have said the same had not faith come to the rescue and delivered me from the thraldom of unbelief. The attitude of God's people does not always indicate faith in his promises, and submission to his will; often we are cast down and disquieted, and God must speak again and again in our hearts, saying, Be still, and know that I am God. O, if I could only be still. If I could only know that he is God, and always feel assured that all things work together for good. But I grow restless and impatient, running here and there for refuge, and finding none, and when the storm of life grows furious and threatening, and all around me is giving way, I cry out in my consternation and great distress: Master, carest thou not that I perish? How canst thou lie asleep? Then faith reveals Jesus coming my way, walking upon the crest of the turbulent waves. Like zealous Peter, I attempt to go to him upon the water, and begin to sink, and cry out, Lord, save, I perish. Such is the lesson I have had to learn over and over again, the lesson of my helplessness and of God's great power to save. It does seem that when once we have learned this lesson we would never forget it, but we do, and must be taught it day by day. My dear old sister, if you have been called to walk in this peculiarly sorrowful way, then you can weep with me when I weep, and rejoice with me when I rejoice. If these are not some of the "works of the Lord Jesus" that I bear in my body, then I am deceived, and have never passed under the rod of my great heavenly Shepherd, and yet, if it had been left for me to direct my steps, my life's history would not be written in the sorrow, disappointment and tears that it is. O, wonderful God that he is; who can sweeten the bitterest cup, and make the hardest bed like downy pillows. Unto this God I am made to look for all blessings, and as life's sun sinks lower and lower I am made to realize more and more the constant need of his sustaining grace. Dear sister, as my mind is caught away to look upon the ever-widening field of spiritual thought I am overwhelmed with the wondrous scene that meets my view. My finite mind is too feeble to grasp it, and it cannot be spoken or written in the language of a mortal dying race. I have

had sufficient evidence, it seems, to convince even a "doubting Thomas," that Jesus is my Lord and my God, but I find myself still doubting, and fearing I have never known the Lord aright. Sometimes he comes to me and with the eye of faith I can see his pierced side, and the nail-prints in his hands, and while thus beholding and adoring him as King of kings and Lord of lords, I am caught up with him, and live with him in glory, far away from the storm clouds of this present life. But those signs of his resurrection do not continue with me, his holy presence fades from my view and I am found again at the empty sepulcher crying out like Mary of old, If you have taken my Lord away, tell me where you have laid him. While thus bereft of his presence, and the light of divine faith, all I can do is to go about mourning, seeking the Lord in the land of death. If I inquire of human reason, of philosophy or science, they all tell me it is a thing incredible that God should raise the dead, and the awful thought fastens itself in my mind: If the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead be a delusion, then my faith is vain, hope gone forever, and I am doomed to an inevitable and irrevocable death.

"But O the light, the blessed light,
That dawns upon my awful night,
Jesus comes to break the spell,
And sweetly whispers, all is well.

I'm he that liveth and was dead,
I am the bride's exalted head,
I'll quickly come and take you home.
Even so, Lord Jesus, come."

Now may the Lord bless you abundantly, my dear sister. Write me as long as it is possible.

Yours in sweet hope,

C. M. WEAVER.

FAYETTEVILLE, Ga., Sept. 15, 1916.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I desire from time to time to write to you, but am hindered from various reasons, but I fear the worst is coldness, carelessness, lack of love for the cause I hope I love. I have seated myself several times to write, but my mind seemed to be too far away from the things I thought would be interesting to God's dear people. I feel too unworthy this morning, but if Christ is my worthiness, my all, I am indeed a blessed character; far more than I deserve. I can but wonder at the mysteries which no one but God understands, and those to whom the Spirit reveals them. When I do anything that attracts men I feel honored in the flesh, which is sin, but when I can partly realize God's immensity, wisdom and power, I feel to be but an atom in his sight, worthy of immediate and everlasting destruction. I will never be able to fully comprehend him as he is, in this world. He has the same power over me, yea, even the globe on which we live, as over the least particle of dust, and I am not worthy of any more honor than it is, for it fulfills the purpose for which it was made; but do I? He knows, and I know, I do not live up to the pattern or example in the Scripture; then can I not say in truth that everything gives God more honor, in its attitude, than man?

Dear friends, I must write my thoughts, and the editors are at liberty to do as they please with them. The last few days have been a time of anxiety and prayer with me. I hope it is prayer. I have not been feeling well, and was fearful of being sick; my crop is not good, and thinking of christian duty, &c., I have tried to beg the Lord for grace to help me. It seemed that I had not the least confidence in the skill of man, medicine and self, and I felt that God was

able without help or medicine to restore my health more perfectly than all the wisdom and skill of the world, so I tried as much as I could to trust him. If it is his will for me to be sick there is no power that can hinder, and I have begged for faith to trust myself in his care, and to be resigned, for I believe Christ is a perfect and complete Savior.

A few weeks ago I read in the SIGNS a letter from brother Johnson, of Roswell, Ga., and seeing that he is mistaken as to who I am, I intended to write at once, but cannot write every time I want to. He wrote that he had heard me preach, and was pleased with what I preached. He heard Elder Geo. W. Jackson, of Lawrenceville, Ga. I am only thirty-five years of age, and have not held any office in church other than clerk, and am a poor one even for that place. I am in the Primitive Western Association, and Elder Jackson is in the Yellow River, and I think he is as sound as can be.

I have never been more disappointed than when I read Elder Lefferts' letter telling of his trip to Georgia. I wanted to go to Bald Rock in August, and if I had known he was to be there I would have spent the little money I had to have met him. I feel that his coming is a link between you of the SIGNS, and me. Elder R. L. Cook is one of my favorites, and if he and Elder Lefferts agree, so do I. If any of you ever come to Georgia again I want to know it.

I have received some good letters since I last wrote, and if the writers will be patient I will try to answer. If I answer a brother's letter through the SIGNS, pointing out his mistakes, and not using his name or address, and for the good of others, I cannot see that that is exposing him to the public. Brother Ker answered my letter, giving my name, to which I did not object, for I am sure it was good for some one else as well as me, and if he wants to mention mistakes in this letter I have no objection. I believe we ought to try to live for each other and Christ, and not for self alone, for we are his, bought with his precious blood, and we owe him all our time.

A little one in hope,

GEO. W. JACKSON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Sept. 5, 1916.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I am inclosing a letter from sister Kinney, a dear mother in Israel, and one near life's journey's end in this world. I would like to have it published in the SIGNS if it meets with your approval.

In best of bonds.

J. M. FENTON.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., June 9, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER AND PASTOR:—As I am alone to-night, and thinking of the good preaching you have been hearing, I thought perhaps a little change in your food might be good for you, in showing you the difference in the gifts of one like me. I have thought of you often, and dreamed of talking with you. It seems a long time since you were here, so different from what it was when you came every month, and I often say, Why must it be so? I am never answered, but I do know my Father knows. O what a comfort to be made to know this, if nothing more. Then the thought comes, Who has given me to know this much? and I feel to say, I know I was not taught it by man.

Sunday afternoon.—I am still thinking of you, and wondering where you have been to-day. I think you have been about your Master's business, in feeding some of the flock, and while feeding others

I hope you have been fed with the same food. O what a storehouse, and what rich provisions it contains, prepared so there is nothing for the shepherd to do in the preparing the food but to hand it out, and so there can be no boasting. O what a God is ours, and what a thought that we can feel that he is our God, and how often we feel to say, Can it be possible that I am one of that number, when I see so little of his likeness in myself? Yes, there is that hope that is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail. Then our hope goes beyond this world. Yes, Paul says, If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. O how sweet to look beyond this world of sin and sorrow to that within the vail. Dear brother, why should we wish the hours more slow? I often feel to say, Fly swift around, ye wheels of time, and bring the welcome day. What a rest He has prepared for his children, and while here we can at times rest in the bosom of his love. John says, Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.

Wednesday evening.—I little thought when I commenced this letter that it would lie until now, but so it is, and you will know I am still thinking of you. I rather think your ears have burned today, as I had company, and we were talking of you. It has been another bright spot in my journey. O how highly favored am I in having my dear kindred with me so often. Last week three of the sisters called to see me, so do you wonder I feel that my Father is good? Now I am looking forward to our next meeting (O how long it seems between), and I hope sister Fenton will come. Please come so as to stay all day Sunday, yes, until Monday morning; shall expect you on the morning train Saturday.

I hope you have felt your Elder Brother near you, that you have had his presence to comfort you, but remember that in the world you shall have tribulation, but he says, Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. O just think, dear brother, let come what will, he has overcome it all.

Well, I must close, and go to bed. Remember me in love to all. Tell your dear sisters I have not forgotten them, and will write soon.

Good night. From your sister in hope,
HELEN KINNEY.

SALISBURY, Md., Sept. 20, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have just read your editorial in September 15th SIGNS, and I would be glad to put in words, were I able, just what it means to me, but I cannot. I feel if I ever have needed to know the fullness of the truth of the meaning of the words, "Jehovah-jireh," it is now, especially so in my own personal case; in fact of the matter it seems to me that the real and true religion of Jesus Christ, if I know anything about it, is purely a personal matter with each one. We, the Old School Baptists, are often accused of being selfish. Probably there is a certain sense in which this may be true, but it is my sins that hurt me more than all the sins of others. I do not see the sins and shortcomings, faithlessness and rebellion in others that I see in myself; I do not see another's need as I see my own, and when a full realization of my sins is felt I can but pray for myself, and it comes to me more and more that it is a personal matter between each one and his God. As to prayer, I feel the truth of what you have here said, how little we know for what we are

asking. If we ask that we be made a better man, we know not what we will be called upon to pass through in order that we may be made to walk more careful before God, and how little we know when asking for increased wisdom and knowledge, the length and severity of the school of experience to which we must go in order that our knowledge concerning these wonderful things be enlarged.

But to return to the words "Jehovah-jireh," and my felt need that they are true to me. I feel the need to know that this is, not that God will ever be unfaithful or unkind, but I feel my faith is at a low ebb. I have lately experienced a sense of loneliness very keenly, and your editorial of some time ago, "Alone," is often brought vividly to my mind. While I do not know anything by experience of your personal experience, which seemed to be the cause of you writing as you did at that time, yet, if not claiming too much, I feel that in a certain sense it has been my lot recently to enter into fellowship with you in this feeling of loneliness. I have used the following words to express my lonely condition at present, and for some time back: Loneliness surrounds me, as it were, myriads of hellish fiends, that extend in every direction beyond the power of vision, dancing before me in demonical glee, whose itching fingers seek to gather me in and drag me farther and farther into the abyss of loneliness, but God reigns.

Elder Ker, I am not writing for publication, but simply writing to you because I felt to. I hope you will be at the Salisbury Association.

Your unworthy brother,

F. SELBY FISHER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Sept. 24, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel impressed to talk a little while this evening with the readers of the dear old SIGNS. I have you all in my mind and in my heart; I think of you as having the mind of Christ, as formed into a bundle of love, love flowing from heart to heart and faith answering to faith. Unlike the love of men and women in the world, which becomes blurred and often blotted out by reason of reverses and offences, but a love which liveth and abideth forever in the hearts of the Lord's chosen. I love to think of each one of you as having one desire, and that to serve the Lord acceptably and with godly fear. "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." Ye are a "peculiar people," because all your possessions in righteousness are exclusive and peculiar to you, not being found in the world. Ye are a "chosen generation," the generation of Jesus Christ, chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Ye are "an holy nation," as in contrast to all earthly nations, standing alone and apart, illuminated by the brightness of the Sun of Righteousness; in the world, but not of it. Ye are "a royal priesthood," kings and priests unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Is it not in your hearts to say, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency!" Self-righteousness is a snare and temptation to you, and while you are led by it in the lusts of your flesh you hate it with a perfect hatred, for Christ is your righteousness. You are meek and lowly of heart,

because your gracious Redeemer was meek and lowly, "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." Sometimes your harps are hung upon the willows, and being in a strange land you cannot sing the songs of Zion, while at other times you are lifted up and rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. At times you groan and say, O, if I only knew for a certainty that I am a true follower of Jesus, born of God, but alas, if your hope was converted into certainty you cease to be a child; it is your precious hope that saves you and leads you on to a victorious end. The apostle John addresses you as "little children," reminding you that you are in your flesh idol worshipers, beseeching you to "keep yourselves from idols." Do you sometimes feel like Paul when you meet with the brethren, that you are determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified? and yet you find yourself right in their midst talking fashions and crops. These things teach you your weakness and helplessness. Do you mourn your emptiness in spiritual things? This is an evidence that spiritual things are yours, otherwise you would not mourn. Do you sometimes wish you were like brother or sister so and so, they seem so much better than you? But do you know that the Lord has fitted you for a certain place in his temple, which no one else can fill, and you would not fit in the shoes of your brother or sister? You are made to be willing to be the Lord's anything, if only you are the Lord's. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved: in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself." How great and wonderful is that mystery made known to us in a varied experience. The shuttle in the hands of our master weaver, filling in the threads of our life journey, both warp and woof, completing the garment, which sets forth in its lengthwise threads faith and hope and love, and in its cross lines depicting the conflict and the striving against the pride of life. "Fire and hail, snow and vapor, stormy wind," a perfect garment of the life and spiritual exercises of the children of our heavenly Father. Surely at times you become discouraged and say within yourselves, We will give it all up, is it worth this continual striving? Has any one ever been able to give it up? No, you are sweetly forced into the kingdom, and you press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. The attaining unto salvation through grace is your highest ambition and your sweetest inspiration. Strive on, brethren, in hope of the day that is to follow. Write for the SIGNS, you ready writers. "But to do good, and to communicate, forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

B. F. COULTER.

OTTAWA, Kansas, Sept. 5, 1916.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I am sending you two letters, thinking they might be as comforting to others as they have been to me, but if you think they are too personal to publish please return them to me.

Yours in sorrow,

ANNA McKINNEY.

OSKALOOSA, Kansas, June 22, 1916.

MRS. ANNA MCKINNEY:—I try to write, then I sit here and hold my pen, hardly daring to use the precious appellation, dear sister in Christ, but often when I have read your letters in the SIGNS I have felt that surely you are my sister, and for years I have desired to write to you, and in that way try to form a closer acquaintance with you. Once as I lay on my sleepless pillow I kept thinking of you, and arose in the night and got material and wrote, but for some good and wise purpose I was kept from sending it. Now, in the hope that we are little children of one household, cared for by the same Father and mother (Jerusalem above, which is free, and is coming down from God out of heaven, and is the bride, the Lamb's wife, the mother of us all) and that we have the same fellowship with our Elder Brother, I hope that in our spiritual minds we are not entire strangers, for truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, and daring to hope that I, with you, am a fellow-citizen with the saints and of the household of God, I venture to send you this short missive to let you know that our association will be held near you this fall, if it is the Lord's will, when, if I am permitted to attend, I would be glad to meet you, and I am sure all the brethren would be glad to form a closer acquaintance with you. I judge that you, like myself, are cumbered with many cares, and it is a heavy cross to the flesh to lay everything aside and go where the world can see no attraction at all, and think we ought not leave our worldly affairs to meet with just a few old-fashioned people who will not even have an organ or any instrumental music to make their meetings attractive and enticing to the people outside. They do not know how we sing and make melody in our hearts to the Lord, though we may not open our mouths, or if we do our voices sound old and quavering, and they see no beauty that we should desire to be numbered with such feeble folks. But we have meat to eat and nourishment that they know not of, and do hunger for it, and feel that we surely would perish without it, and whether at home or abroad we can look with confidence and trust to our Father in heaven to give us each day our daily bread, and though we often long for more, our good and wise Father gives us just as much as is good for us, and no more.

I can make no further apology for this intrusion, and am not worthy to ask an answer, but must close, feeling as unworthy as I did before I made this attempt to write.

In hope of a better life, I remain sincerely,

MARY ELLISON.

OSKALOOSA, Kansas, August 17, 1916.

DEAR SISTER ANNA MCKINNEY:—Your letter dated more than a month ago is before me, and I will now make the attempt to answer, which I have wished to do all the time, but for some good and wise purpose I have been hindered in various ways, but chiefly through my realized weakness and inability to write a suitable answer to your letter, much of which appealed to me very closely, and I wonder, now that I am trying, will the dear Lord go before and open a door of utterance for me to speak comfortingly unto you? I have long felt that there is special sweetness in the words: "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be

able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the same comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." So while we endure the same fight of afflictions, we can only comfort one another with the comfort the dear Lord gives us. Both the affliction and the comfort bring us into closer fellowship with one another and with the suffering of our dear Savior. In all our afflictions he was afflicted, and O what a comfort it is to think that now we have not an High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but he was tempted in all points like as we are, and he is faithful, so that when we are tempted he will not let us fall. You say, Faith without works is dead, and how can I work when I have nothing to work with? My thoughts came surging thick and fast, and my sympathies were indeed enlisted with you, for do we not all find ourselves just that destitute? We have nothing in our hands to bring as an oblation to our dear Master. But how blessed it is that he does not require costly devotion from his poor and needy servants, for

"Vainly we offer each ample oblation,
Vainly with gold would his favor secure;
Richer by far is the heart's adoration,
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor."

We have nothing to offer him but a broken heart and a contrite spirit, which we are often offering, even as we go about the performance of our daily duties. The kingdom of heaven is within you, and it cometh not with observation. The world knoweth us not, because it knew him not, but thinks because we do not join in some great work for Jesus, and try to help him, unto whom all power in heaven and on earth is given, to save souls, or get them into Christ (O how sickening such expressions are), that we are not christians. We desire to worship none other than an all-powerful God. Surely it would not be very fervent, heartfelt worship that we could offer a poor, weak god, whom we have to be continually holding up, supporting and helping to do his will among the inhabitants of the earth, and then half the time have to acknowledge him disappointed at last. No, as you say, our safety lies in his sovereignty. "The God of the whole earth shall he be called." We often feel rebellious, "envious of the proud when we see the prosperity of the wicked," but we would not exchange with them.

Dear sister, the turmoils—what are called pleasures or good times, really disturb me to-night. A three days Old Settlers' reunion has been going on in this town, and to-night is what is called carnival night. Yesterday afternoon I went down to the grounds, thinking I might see old friends and neighbors whom I had not seen lately, but surely it seemed like the lonesomest place I have been in for a long time, and I soon became so tired and weary that I returned to the house. I kept thinking of you, and others who have sent me such kind letters, and felt that I would much more enjoy being at home trying to acknowledge some of the tokens of the love of God, which he has so graciously put into the hearts of his dear people to send to poor, unworthy me. To-night I thought of going again, on account of the children, and my grandchildren, who are here, but I have been there before, and know what a pandemonium it is, and how reckless they get, and the automobiles are so thick, &c., that I did not go. I can well remember when I was as wild to go to such places as my children are now. I thought to-night I could sit here and quietly write, but the noise of their bed-

lam reaches me here, and I wish my dear ones were all safely in. My daughter is visiting her sister in Topeka. My boy works every day, and the evenings are his only time for play. What can we do for our children? It seems that they must have some recreation and be allowed to mingle with children of their own age. As I get older it seems that such noise and tumult get on my nerves; it is anything but genuine pleasure to me, but it will soon be over. Where I have to constantly try to guide, guard and direct my children is in trying to keep them out of the Sunday-schools and the many inventions of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. I feel that the Lord has greatly helped and favored me in that respect, and so far neither one of them has fallen into the snares of the strange woman, and now I do not believe they ever will. But her ways are movable, and if one device fails to entrap them something else is sought out, and we dare not relax our vigilance.

Dear sister, I must close, but I ask you not to speak of me as a gifted woman, it humbles me so. I feel sure that the more we become acquainted, either by writing or personally, if I am ever so favored as that, the more you will be disappointed in me, for I surely am only a poor, weak creature, dependent on a higher power for all my blessings, both natural and spiritual, and to-night I feel that he has almost left me to myself, so that I dread to offer you what I have written; but trusting in your charity to overlook my failings, I remain as ever, unworthily,

MARY ELLISON.

FOREST, Miss., Sept. 9, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—You will find inclosed a two dollar order for my renewal to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. May the good Lord continue to bless you, dear editors, and all the writers. Sometimes when I read a letter from some dear sister or brother that makes my poor heart rejoice, I feel to hope that I, too, have been taught of the good Lord. I feel surely he has taught them to give all praise, honor and glory to him, the giver of every perfect gift. I hope I have realized all our help must come from him.

Dear brother Ker, I have longed to try to write you one word of comfort in the great sorrow that has come to you, but I feel too weak to say anything that would comfort one of God's dear children in such great distress. I can only ask you to trust in God, for he hath borne your sorrows, he can heal them all, and can heal and bind up your broken heart. I cannot sympathize with you in giving up your dear companion, but I have given up father, mother and child, and that seemed more than I could bear, but the good Lord has helped me to endure it all, though I am sorely afflicted. My dear companion is greatly afflicted, and I have a little child who is also afflicted, and it seems at times that my poor heart can hold no more. I read the poetry that was found in your wife's pocket-book, read it over and over again, and felt that the good Lord had given her knowledge of the separation. It seemed so true. May the good Lord give you sustaining grace, that you may know that he works all things together for good to them that love him.

Please remember me and mine in your prayers, is the desire of your unworthy sister, if one at all. I hope all will write often for the dear old SIGNS.

Your little sister, in hope of eternal life beyond the grave,

ELLA MASSEY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1916.

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EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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NEHUSHTAN.

"He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan."—2 Kings xviii. 4.

Hezekiah's reign over Judah furnished a striking contrast to the reign of his father Ahaz before him. Ahaz had been a wicked king, a man evidently in whom the fear of the Lord was not. An instance of the truth that children do not always walk in the example of their fathers is Hezekiah, for whereas Ahaz delighted in heathen abominations and practices, his son Hezekiah upon succession to the throne at once manifested a great zeal for the house of the Lord and for the worship of God according to the divine direction given Moses. Among the first acts of King Hezekiah was the abolition of idolatry: he removed the high places of idol worship, destroying the images, cutting down the groves, and even brake in pieces the brazen serpent which Moses had made many years before to set upon a pole that time that God had sent fiery serpents among them. This brazen serpent, it seems, had been preserved by the Israelites perhaps as a memento or relic of that solemn incident in their journey through the wilderness. This brazen serpent the people of Judah during Ahaz's sinful reign had been worshiping, even burning incense to it. Hezekiah destroyed this serpent of brass, calling it "Nehushtan," which means a piece of brass. Hezekiah meant that this piece of brass was no more than any other piece of brass after it had served the purpose for which God had commanded it to be made, therefore it was not to be worshiped nor held in esteem any longer, and to do so was to worship an idol: a god out of brass. It is probable that at least seven hundred years separated the time that Moses made the serpent of brass in the wilderness as Israel was encompassing the land of Edom, and the time that King Hezekiah of Judah finally destroyed that serpent of brass. At the time that God had commanded Moses to make it there had been a necessity for it, but that necessity had long since past, so that to longer cherish it as an object of adoration was no better than any other form of idolatry. The Israelites had spoken against God and against Moses, saying, "Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt, to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread. And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died." Owing to the coming of this woe among them, the people besought Moses to pray to the Lord to take these serpents from among them. Moses did so, and the Lord said to him, "Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live." So Moses made a serpent of brass, not of fire, showing that Moses understood the Lord to mean "brazen" when he said "fiery." The Lord's words therefore are not al-

ways to be taken literally. This serpent Moses put upon a pole, and any man bitten by a serpent, and who beheld the serpent of brass, lived. It is our view that these fiery serpents represented the sting of death, which is sin. The brazen serpent upon a pole represented Jesus on the tree "made sin for us." "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up." Now this brazen serpent had no healing power in and of itself, but the faith of those who looked upon it did the healing. By faith they were healed. The serpent of brass was merely a symbol of their faith, and pointed to the Savior who should come in the end of that Jewish world to be made sin for them, to take from death its sting and to deliver from the power of death those who all their lifetime had been subject to bondage. This faith, then, was the healing power that wrought in the ones bitten to behold the brazen serpent upon the pole, and the serpent of brass was simply a concomitant of that faith. It is easy, very easy, for us poor, finite creatures (and so, too, for the Israelites of old) to substitute the visible for the invisible, to worship that which we see and not the Power we cannot see. God himself is infinite, eternal and incomprehensible. No wonder then that we who are finite, of the dust and full of vanity, cannot arise to a proper conception of divinity so as to, out of our natural equipment, worship God as he ought to be worshiped: in spirit, not in matter; in truth, not in error. God says that his ways and his thoughts are as far above our ways and our thoughts as the heavens are higher than the earth. This being so, man is forever helplessly unable with any of his natural powers to think the thoughts of the infinite God and to harmonize himself with the ways of godliness. Nevertheless man is naturally a religious being, though not by nature inclined to that religion which is pure and undefiled in the sight of God. Man, every man, we think, worships something. All men have a natural idea or standard of what they consider excellent or worth having and worthy of their struggles and devotion. Of course, this ideal is as much carnal as any other part of the natural man, notwithstanding it is a god to him. Some worship money, some fame or honor among men; some worship intellectual superiority, some the power of will or the will to power. Some crave a moral righteousness, others a fancied righteousness that will win them the favor of God. All these are gods to the ones that pant after them. Thus civilization compasses its heathen in its complex structure as well as the African wilderness wild shelters its heathen in its jungle-tangled fastnesses, for the self-professed christian who worships an imaginary god of moral and intellectual worth is no more worshiping the true and living God in Spirit and in truth than is the dark skinned ignoramus who crooks his knee to an idol carved from tree trunks or rocks. The natural religion of man leads him always to worship or to seek a god that lies within his own conception of what a god ought to be, but the true worship of God instilled by God-given faith in a man leads that one to seek the God who all the time is above his comprehension, and whose ways are too mysterious to be fathomed. It is contrary to nature for man to worship something he cannot apprehend either with his senses, his intellect or his will. Only by the working of that Power higher than man can one ever rise to right thoughts of God. God must think his thoughts in us before we can think them back to him again. However, when one

has had a remarkable spiritual experience in connection with some visible object or place, one easily drifts gradually into always associating that place or object with the attendant spiritual experience, and proneness is to thoughtlessly substitute the place or object for the experience, and to place too much value upon the visible accompaniment of the experience instead of upon the experience itself. For example, the Israelites had a wonderful deliverance in connection with this serpent of brass, so wonderful that they always associated that deliverance with the serpent of brass, instead of with the incarnate Savior whom it prefigured and who was invisible to them. They lost sight of the substance in the shadow, worshiping the image instead of the Power behind the image. The serpent of brass was no more than any other piece of brass, as Hezekiah knew, so he destroyed it in disgust at his people's shallowness, saying, "Nehushtan," it is a piece of brass. "Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the Lord your God." Here is forbidden in the law of God the making of any image to be worshiped. Suffice it to say that our imaginations are capable of graving images on the tablets of the mind, and to worship even these mental conceptions is as much idolatry in the sight of God as to worship something external to us and tangible. Further, we are commanded not to make "any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above" to bow down unto or to serve. Therefore to picture God, or Christ, or the saints in heaven, to represent them, either in statuary, or on canvas, or in the stuff that dreams are made of, so as to worship them, is idolatry. God, or Christ, or any of the heavenly host, cannot be pictured either with chisel, with brush or pencil, nor in our thoughts and imaginations, for how can He who is eternal, infinite, invisible and incomprehensible be transferred and transfixed in a medium that is material, finite and unstable? Thus it is that being so carnal and earth-bound as we are, and as the Judeans of old were also, whenever God reveals himself to us in any way, at a certain place and at a certain time, we invariably treasure in our recollection that time and that place which accompanied the revelation rather than the truth of God that was made manifest to us there. So did the Judeans of old degenerate unto the worship of the piece of brass instead of worshiping the Power signified by it. The bride in the Song of Solomon came unto the watchman seeking him whom her soul loved, but not until she passed a little beyond the watchman did she find him. God places his watchmen upon the walls of Zion, but we derive no comfort from the watchman until our faith looks beyond the visible man to the invisible Beloved behind him. Cornelius fell down at the feet of Peter and worshiped him, but Peter quickly commanded him, "Stand up; I myself also am a man." Here we see in Cornelius that ignorance which was in the Judeans of Hezekiah's day, that lack of knowledge which impelled him to worship the message-bearer instead of the Power behind. The same thing is instanced in Rev. xxii. 8, 9: "And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God." It is not to be wondered

at that John felt inclined to worship the angel which had shown him such wonderful things, nevertheless John's impulse was wrong, God alone is to be worshiped by his people, and no image must intrude between them and himself. John said to his brethren, My little children, keep yourselves from idols, and Paul said, My dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. Now, the crux of the whole subject is, how is idolatry cured? We have seen how we are every one carnally disposed to substitute the seen for the unseen and to worship the tangible. What is the cure? Hezekiah abolished the idolatry of the Judeans in his day. "Thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and wrought that which was good and right and truth, before the Lord his God. And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered." What a sublime summary of this man's reign inspiration here gives us. Hezekiah has been dead for centuries, but a greater than Hezekiah, our risen and victorious Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, is now among us by his Holy Spirit, though unseen to mortal capacities. Faith sees him always near. The risen Christ is the spiritual Hezekiah. As Hezekiah of old set his house in order, which house was Judah, so infinitely more has Christ set his house in order, whose house are we "if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." Zerubbabel was the name of the captain of the Lord's host who led the children of Israel out of captivity in Babylon back to their own land again. The name "Zerubbabel" means destroyer of idolatry, or of confusion. Jesus is the real, the antitypical, destroyer of idol worship. He, by his Spirit operating in the believer's heart, casts down every evil imagination and every thought that exalts itself against God. The only way not to be a heathen is to be by grace under the operation of the Spirit of Christ, which fulfills in us, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." We do not believe that any one can of himself for even a single moment fix his faith's eye on divinity to the utter exclusion of all images and literal conceptions, they will intrude themselves in spite of all we can do. But whenever Jesus Christ exalts himself graciously in our hearts, we then are clothed and in our right mind at his feet, saved from our demented and distorted visions of him prior thereto. We then appear in glory with him, see him as he is, and are like him for a little while. These periods of spiritual lucidity and sanity, seldom though they are, are all that make this earth-wilderness blossom as the rose. L.

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STATEMENTS SENT.

Will those to whom we have sent statements of their accounts try to respond, even if they can pay only part of their indebtedness? We at present need all due us, and although a little matter to each person, when there are many in arrears it means a great deal to us, as we have large bills to pay.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

JOB XIX. 25–27.

"For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."

The book of Job is supposed to have been written by Moses, and is regarded as a most sublime and sacred poem, parabolically presenting the church of God in the person of Job, in all her various phases, in which her patience and integrity are subjected to the severest tests, and the end of the Lord, or design and purpose of God, in suffering Satan to afflict his chosen ones, is made to appear. "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord."—James v. 11. Like all other parts of the holy Scriptures, this book of Job was written by inspiration of God, for as the inspired truth of God it is referred to and recognized by prophets and apostles. That there was a man that dwelt in the land of Uz, whose name was Job, is beyond all contradiction true, for God himself declares it, and that all that is written of him in this book is strictly true we have no doubt. But while such are our firm convictions, we still believe that, like David and others, what was written of Job was designed to allegorically apply to the church and people of God. As his name signifies patience, it is applicable not only to him as an individual, but is applicable to the patience of all the people of God. As Job's patience was sorely tried by afflictions, temptations, bereavements, physical and mental sufferings, by disappointment in those whom he had once regarded as his friends and confidential advisers, and by cruel persecutions, so also have all the people of God been tried in all ages. A poor and afflicted people, who trust in the name of the Lord. For if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution. Satan thought, and many of his ministers have fallen into the same error, that Job was what in modern times is called an Arminian; that he served God for pay, and from selfish motives, and not from the power and vitality of the love of God implanted in his heart, and hence his challenge: "Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land: but put forth thy hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face."—Job i. 9–11. How many such dialogues as are described in this connection have transpired in the experience of the children of God, by the Spirit of the Lord in the saints, and the spirit of Satan in the flesh. How keenly do the saints of God from time to time writhe with pain from the envenomed suggestions of the devil, suggesting to them that their religion is only natural and selfish, and that their devotion and obedience to God spring not from the power of an endless life, but from the law of a carnal commandment. Now the end of the Lord, that is, the purpose of God in all the trials and afflictions of his people, is to prove the power of his sustaining grace, by the trial of their faith, and patience, and to show beyond all controversy that their righteousness is of the Lord, and that their faith, patience, submission and hope are fruits, not of their carnal nature reformed, but of his own Spirit implanted in them. Now carefully review the whole experience of

Job, and see if we do not find in it portrayed the general experience of all the children of God. Plunged in deep distress, stripped of his worldly subsistence, bereaved of his children, tortured with distressing, loathsome boils, surrounded with miserable comforters, who instead of condoling sympathy and words of comfort, reproach and taunt him, while he vainly appeals to them for pity, and to make his misery complete, the presence of his God is withdrawn, and in bitterness of spirit he cries out, O that I knew where I might find him. Under all this weight of sorrow and distress his faith in God shines out from his darkness like the bow of divine assurance painted in living colors on the lowering cloud, or as the rising sun in his radiant strength dissipating the lowering shades of unbelief. Faith triumphant over fear shouts the victorious victory, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Although a sinner needing redemption, and without the least power of my own to make myself just with God, (Job ix. 1,) God has graciously provided for me a "Daysman," one who can lay his hand on both, who can secure all the honor of the throne of God, magnify and honor the divine law which I have transgressed, meet and cancel every demand of God's eternal justice, and yet deliver me from death, save me from hell, clothe me with the righteousness of God, and freely, effectually and forever justify me through the redemption that is in him. Such a Redeemer was seen clearly by the faith of the Son of God as exemplified in Job fifteen hundred and twenty years before the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ to our guilty world. This is the cheering language of faith, living faith, tried faith, and faith that overcometh the world. Dark, gloomy clouds may gather thickly around, tempests may spend their mightiest storms, and bellowing thunders shake the skies, but the undaunted faith of God's elect will surely reassert its conquering power, and bear its humble possessor safely through the final "wreck of matter and the crash of worlds." Esteemed friends, as in the case of Job, may withhold their tender sympathy in the time of our severest trials, and even load us with their cruel reproach, but as the lightning's brilliant flash upon surrounding darkness, our faith will disclose to us the cheering knowledge that our Redeemer liveth. Through the dim vista of more than fifteen centuries intervening between the day of Job and the incarnation of the Son of God, like Abraham at a still more distant standpoint, he saw the day, rejoiced in it and was glad.

"He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." This testimony of Christ was and is the spirit of prophecy. It was the Spirit of Christ in Job and in the prophets that in them did testify of his coming, of his sufferings and of the glory that should follow. So far as the first advent of the Redeemer is expressed in our text, it was fulfilled when the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. From the assurance expressed by Job that he should see him, and his eyes should behold him in the latter day, we understand him to be speaking of the second coming of the Son of God, as it is testified by Paul, Hebrews ix. 28: "And unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation." When he shall come to raise the dead and judge the world at the last day. This application of the prediction seems in harmony with the assurance of the faith of Job that he should personally see him, and his eyes behold him, and in his flesh, even after his flesh should be

destroyed by worms, and his reins consumed within him. This seems to be in substance what Paul expressed to the Philippians, iii. 10: "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings," &c. As the faith of all the saints looks for a blessed resurrection and happy immortality, so Job, after conceding the weakness and mortality of his flesh, and all his fleshly powers, admitting that my property may perish, my children die, my earthly joys may all be blasted, and my skin and my body become food for greedy worms, and my reins, or all my vital fleshly powers, possessions, affections and interests must fail, and decompose in the grave, this, even this shall not disturb the purpose of God or hinder the fulfillment of his promises. "I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." This faith was the same in the psalmist: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." —Psalms xvii. 15. The deep afflictions through which Job was passing were breaking down his mortal powers and consuming his life, and wearisome nights were appointed to him, still, like the psalmist, he could say, My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever. Although to the grave I bow down my head, and yield my flesh and say unto corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou art my mother and my sister, yet with the perfect assurance that I have a living Redeemer, who shall deliver me from death and bring me forth at last in triumph from the grave.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., January 15, 1867.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. B. Slauson.)

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Second Church of Roxbury, Sept. 13th and 14th, 1916.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Another year has passed, and it has brought many changes to our little band of brethren, who are steadfast in the doctrine of God our Savior. Some who were priviledged to meet with us at our last session have been called from the shores of time into that sweet rest that remains for the people of God. In writing this our annual epistle we hope to be guided by the unerring Spirit of our blessed Master, who leads us into all truth. The portion of his word which we will now call attention to is found in Hebrews iv. 9: "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews is here strongly setting forth the covenant of grace, and also showing the failure of the legal covenant. Under the legal covenant there was no promise of rest to Israel, the only promise that God made to Israel was in temporal blessings, and the foundation of this promise rested upon the faithful obedience of Israel walking in the statutes of the laws, to keep them; hence this was not a covenant of grace, neither was there any rest to be found under it, but continual labor, striving to keep the law of divine justice, but failing in every attempt. The law was holy, just and good, but man, who is carnal, sold under sin, could not fulfill a divine law, nor live up to its just demands; hence no rest, but continual labor. When God gave to Adam the law in the garden of Eden, embraced in the law was the penalty for its violation, and this penalty was visited, or executed, upon Adam

when he transgressed the law given him by divine authority. This transgression brought sin, for sin is the transgression of the law, and by sin came death. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." So by the transgression of our forefather Adam, all, both elect and nonelect, become sinners, and under the penalty of the law of divine justice, which says, The soul that sins shall die. God in the ages of eternity decreed that a ransom for his people should be found, therefore Jesus stood in the eternal mind of God as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and when the fullness of time had rolled around God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. This law that Jesus was made under was the law of sin and death, in which all his people were held for its violation, both Jew and Gentile. Jesus came clothed with divine authority from the bosom of his Father, to fulfill the demands of this law in every jot and tittle, hence he came as the Redeemer of his people, and to establish his powerful kingdom in the hearts of his people. When Jesus paid the penalty of the law of divine justice on the cross, the law being satisfied, it had no more dominion over the people of God. This act of unequal mercy by the sovereign gift of God, in sending his only Son to be the propitiation for the sins of his people, has brought that peace and rest to the children of God in their souls' experience in feeling the forgiveness of their sins, therefore the rest remains for the people of God. Each child of God has six days of labor under the law, and when delivered from its penalties enters into that rest which remains for the people of God. Jesus is the Sabbath of rest to his people, and while here we know only in part, and see in part, and can only know in part the fullness of that rest that remains for the Lord's dear people; so hope goes on as the anchor of our soul, and lays hold upon the blessed estate of the saints of God when they shall appear with him in glory and be like him, and see him as he is; then shall they be satisfied, when they awake, with His likeness.

ORVILLE WINCHELL, Moderator.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Second Roxbury Church, at Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., to the several associations with which she corresponds, sends christian greeting in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—It has pleased the Lord in his all-wise providence to privilege us once more to meet and hear the servants of the Lord proclaim the unsearchable riches of his grace as it is in Jesus, who died that poor, lost sinners might live; surely that is meat and drink to our poor hungry and thirsty souls, to hear his name exalted above every other name, and is the only name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved.

> "Jesus, the glorious head of grace,
> Knows every saint's peculiar case,
> What sorrows by their souls are borne,
> And how for sin they daily mourn."

In the Word we are told that blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled, and so at this time we can say, I was an hungered, and he gave me food; I was athirst, and he gave me drink; so blessed be the name of the Lord.

We have appointed our next session to

be held, the Lord willing, with the Middletown and Andes Church, Union Grove, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday following the second Sunday in September, 1917, where we hope to meet the dear brethren again. Lord, guide us.

ORVILLE WINCHELL, Moderator.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in October (29th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Rebecca Jane Greene, wife of Andrew J. Greene, departed this life March 5th, 1916, at her home near Fleischmanns, N. Y., aged 74 years, 11 months and 7 days. She had been a devoted member of the Old School Baptist Church since she was sixteen years of age. She was the daughter of Burch Hinkley and Mary Travis, the youngest of ten children. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and her home was a place of welcome to ministers, brethren and sisters of the church. Three years ago last October she fell and broke her hip, and never walked afterward, but went around in a wheel-chair, and seemed quite reconciled and cheerful. Her Bible and the SIGNS were her companions. Her last sickness was bronchial pneumonia, of which she passed peacefully away. Her mind was sound until the last.

Her daughter, (MRS.) M. H. SHONT.

Irwin Hough, son of the late William H. and Hannah A. Hough, was born near Waterford, Loudoun Co., Va., May 13th, 1852, and died May 8th, 1916, at his home, Pæonian Springs, after a lingering illness of many months. Mr. Hough never made a profession of religion, but for some time before the end his mind was much exercised on spiritual things. He loved to read the SIGNS for years, and attended no other meetings but the Old School Baptist. On several occasions he asked for Elder Lefferts and the members of New Valley Church to meet with him and talk of the things of the kingdom. He was resigned to the Lord's will, and his prayer was that he might be kept willing to endure all his pain and affliction without a murmur. Two sisters, Mrs. Wm. L. Rhoderick and Miss Phœbe E. Hough, both members of the New Valley Church, with nieces and nephews, are left to mourn his departure.

The funeral services were held from his late residence, conducted by Elder H. H. Lefferts, after which his remains were laid to rest in the Friends' burying-ground at Waterford, Va.

May God's rich grace and love rest on the bereaved ones. S. B. PAXSON.

Annette Hulsart, widow of the late Michael Hulsart, departed this life Sept. 7th, at the residence of her daughter, Mrs. Samuel Davis, North Delaware St., Paulsboro, N. J. She was taken to her bed last February, and from that time suffered greatly with cancer of the face, Bright's disease and uraemic poison. She was born at Cheesequakes, Middlesex County, in 1828, and was 88 years and 4 months of age. She was united in marriage to Michael Hulsart Jan. 3rd, 1853, in New York city, surviving him one year and three months. Had she lived until January next they would have been married sixty-four years. She was a long, patient sufferer, but was ready to go any time the Lord called her. She was a member of the Old School Baptist Church in New York, and came here about three years ago to make her home. She was the mother of six children, only two of whom are left to mourn their loss: Mrs. Samuel Davis and Miss Annie Hulsart, both of Paulsboro.

Funeral services were held Sunday afternoon at the house, and the remains taken to Bedle's undertaking parlor at Keyport for services there. The interment was in Green Grove Cemetery. Leon Chamberlain, a former Paulsboro pastor, officiated.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. T. J. Morris, Ga., $1.00; Aroyzena Chaney, Texas, $3.00; J. K. Yerkes, D. C., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., has appointed a yearly meeting for Saturday and Sunday, October 14th and 15th, to begin at 10:30 a. m. Saturday. Those coming from Baltimore and Philadelphia will come via B. & O. to Newark. Train leaves Philadelphia at 7:45 a. m. Saturday. Ministers and brethren are cordially invited to meet with us.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE Olive and Hurley Church, of the Roxbury Association, has appointed her annual two days meeting to be held at Ashokan, N. Y., Saturday and Sunday, October 14th and 15th, 1916. Trains from One-

onta will be met Friday p. m., and trains leaving Kingston will be met Saturday a. m. All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited to meet with us at that time.

JOHN J. SECOR, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Association is appointed to meet with the Nassaongo Church, near Salisbury, Md., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 18th, 19th and 20th, 1916. All lovers of the truth, especially brethren in the ministry, are cordially invited to meet with us. The brethren will meet all the friends who come at Salisbury on Tuesday afternoon before the association. The trains will arrive about the same time, coming north and south about 1:49 Tuesday afternoon. I think the train coming from Claiborne, on the B. C., is due about 12:05 p. m. If any should come they will be met. Old Point Express leaves Broad St. station at 10 o'clock Tuesday morning, coming south. Philadelphia Express leaves Norfolk at 9 o'clock, coming north, on the same date. Boat leaves Baltimore 6:30 Tuesday morning.

W. E. BAILEY, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of the Lexington Association has appointed its yearly meeting to be held at Halcottville, N. Y., October 21st and 22nd, 1916. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

JAMES AVERY, Church Clerk.

THE Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, Providence permitting, will hold its annual or yearly meeting the last Saturday and Sunday in October (28th and 29th), 1916. Those coming by rail east or west will get off at Ashokan, via U. & D. R. R., Ulster Co.

Done by order of the church this 30th day of September, 1916.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 84. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1916. NO. 21.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Dec. 17, 1908.

MRS. FLORA J. SINCLAIR—DEAR SISTER:—I have just now been reading again your kind, good letter of November 8th, and feel as though I would like, if I could do so, to write you a reply that would seem as good to you as yours has to me, but that will be as the Lord wills. I know, and I believe also that you know, that his Spirit must be in the writer and in the reader if good results from anything that is written. I am glad indeed that the meeting at Lobo was so much enjoyed by so many. It was a meeting full of comfort to me. I much enjoyed the preaching of Elder Coulter, and his conversation at the homes of the friends, but brother Coulter has been a dear brother and a great comforter to me for many years past. No better man lives among men than he, yet as he desires that all grace be ascribed to the Master, so I would also praise God alone for what brother Coulter has been to me. But I want to add that I had special pleasure in the homes of the brethren during my whole trip, both at Lobo and elsewhere. For the past two or three years it has been so that their minds were filled with the troubles that were upon them, and out of the abundance of the heart the mouth must speak, as it seems. But in this last visit I heard but little said anywhere about the trouble, and the conversation flowed on along the old spiritual lines, and it was refreshing to me. I can but believe that the Lord still has some mercy drops in store for you all in Canada, and that he has been making soft the ground for the showers to be received and for the seed to spring up and grow. I trust that it is so. At all events, I know that the Lord is always near his people, even when they cannot see him. How blind we poor mortals are to heavenly things, at the best of times. Even his living children are, so much of the time, blind, and cannot see afar off, but still he is merciful, and pities them as a father pities his children, for he knows our frame, he remembers that we are dust. How sweet this last quotation is when we feel our great weakness. We are so apt to be hard in our judgments of each other when one may err from the way, but the Lord pities us, for he knows just how weak we are, and he remembers that we are but dust. I desire to have at least some measure of this pitying spirit

towards those who err from the way. I desire to also remember that they are dust, and that their frame is weak. I ought to have more forbearance than almost every one else, since I am so weak myself, and so prone to go astray in so many ways. Some brethren seem strong and able to stand firm, no matter what trouble or difference comes up, and to know just what to do and say, but it is not so with me But it is very comforting to remember that our God is able to make all grace abound toward us all, and even toward me. God has helped me, else where should I have been long ere this? His love in time past is the sure and certain pledge that he will never leave nor forsake me. I do have this hope as I write these things. One of the encouragements that I do have is this, that I know that for fifty years past I have prized the things of the gospel of Christ above all else. I have loved christian conversation and worship, and have desired always to walk with those who walk with God, and how much I have been blessed in that way. For forty-five years there has hardly been a day when I have not met with some of the Lord's dear people, and how many precious seasons in conversation and in the house of God have been conferred upon me, and I am not tired of all this yet. Such conversation never grows stale or tiresome. I become sleepy and wearied at times in such service, but not tired of such service, and many times when I have retired to rest it has been in my heart to pray that I might awake refreshed and invigorated, so that I could go on with the conversation, or the public service, with animation, and to the enjoyment of my own soul, and, if it could be God's will, to the enjoyment of others. My life is, however, full of failures. How blessed that even a worm may overthrow a mountain. This is not to the praise of the worm, but to that God who made the worm, and can use him as he pleases. The instrument is poor, but the hand that uses it is skillful. I have heard workmen say that it is a skillful man indeed who can do good work with poor tools, and so how infinite is the wisdom and power of God, who can use such worms of the dust as we are to accomplish his own will.

But I will turn from these thoughts for a little season. I had not expected to write so much in this way, but some things in your letter led my mind in the way it has followed. I have been behind with my private correspondence this fall, and for the week past I have been trying to catch up, but I still have about a dozen letters to reply to. I have wanted to write to brother Black in St. Thomas, but have not done so as yet. I left him worried in his mind over his condition. Death has claimed some of your members since last fall. I noticed the account of the violent death of sister Walker, at Duart. Two years ago I called to see her for a time one evening, and I recall that my visit was most pleasant. One by one the dear ones are gathered home. I am glad that it is home to the Father who has loved them, and the Savior who has redeemed them. And we are not divided.

> "One army of the living God,
> At his command we bow;
> Part of the host has crossed the flood,
> And part are crossing now."

The saints above, beneath, are one indeed. Some are gone before, and some will go on a little later. That is all the difference, and all is as God wills. Are we not glad that this is so? If it were not written in the Bible, it seems to me that I should still want to say, Not my will, but thine. His will is always best. But I

need not say these things to you, for you are well assured of them. I have been called to attend funerals often of late. Last Monday I went about eight miles to attend a funeral service. Next Saturday I am called again to serve at such a time. Neither of these two were members of the church, but both good women. I think both had a knowledge of the grace of God in soul experience. An aged man lies at the point of death at the foot of the hill below us, and right across the street from the place of worship. He is a long time member, and a little time ago when I went in to see him he said that all was well, and that his hope in the blessed Savior still abided fast. It is always a tax upon my strength to attend funerals. I cannot help feeling sympathy with the bereaved, and desire so much to be able to say something to their comfort that I feel the strain upon my nerves much. Some seem to be able to make, as it were, a business of it, but thank God I have not learned to do that yet, and I hope that I never may. Jesus wept with the sisters in their grief, and I want to have a little of his spirit at least.

I am not writing you a very good letter, I know, but I trust that you will say in your heart, He is doing the best he can, and so not blame me too much for the poverty of this. Your letter was very rich to me.

Now may God bless you in all your ways according to his will. Remember me to all your family, and to all the dear ones in London when you see them. Write me again when you can feel to do so. I remain, as ever, your brother in a precious hope,

F. A. CHICK.

LAMONTE, Mo., Aug. 30, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—The inclosed letter speaks for itself. The dear young sister is so moved by the spirit of love for the glorious cause of Christ, that she only finds relief in humble obedience to that fervent zeal by the use of her pen. Her many correspondents will testify that they are much comforted and strengthened by her gracious thoughts. Your disposal of this will be perfectly satisfactory to her.

Unworthily, her pastor,

J. A. TEAGUE.

MEDITATIONS AND FEELINGS.

As I take up the pen to write "Meditations and Feelings," I hope I truly know something of "Can do nothing without him," and there is no such thing as worshiping God except in spirit and in truth. Indeed, there is much in being in the way. While we Old Baptists know God does with all his creatures as to him seems best, with his chosen people he has made a covenant, that they shall be his people and he will be their God. He writes his laws in their hearts and puts them in their minds, yet they often feel as one alone, no one like them, dwelling in a solitary place. Which ever way the wind does blow some heart is glad to have it so, that we may grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Then let it blow from the south, or from the north, that wind is best, and often we cry out from the depth of our soul, as David, As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God, yet while I am thus pouring out my soul how I look about me for marks that I do, in truth, seek that dear Lord with all my heart; how I tremble, fearing it is all a selfish desire to calm these trouble waves,

to be at rest from trouble instead of loving him with all my heart, soul, body and mind, really being in the way. If indeed and in truth I was chosen in him before the foundation of the world, it matters not which way the wind blows it will be best, for everything works together (not apart) for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Many are the things that are deep, entirely past my understanding how they ever will or can work together for good to them that love God. Yet by experience we know God is truth and man weak, and are often made to stand still and see the wonderful works of the mighty God. How I love to believe God is the God of power, and changes not, that the sons of Jacob are not consumed.

As I felt impressed to head this letter "Meditations and Feelings," I still feel to carry it on, not to seem to be admonishing in any way, I need too much of that myself. I simply wrote the heading with no one in view other than my own weak self, and if it should get close to any, let us give in love and receive in love, and be thankful to have our pure minds stirred up. The Almighty makes the heart soft. O that we be thus stirred to love and serve him better. There surely is no poor soul in all this wide world who feels more the need of that than does my poor weak self. I keep feeling as I write, I just cannot write anything that can be profitable, yet the answer comes, We can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us. How sad to see so many of the old members so walking as to make the younger ones almost doubt their own hope. If the older ones, in whom we have all confidence, do not stand together, what will we little ones do? Why, I know so little, it seems I ought to just hide my blushing face. What hope can I ever have of doing anything well? It surely leads to many feeble efforts to pray to be kept by the power of God through faith, ready to be revealed in the last time. How the bleating ones look on, wondering if there can be home and peace there. How can we love God whom we have not seen, if we love not our brethren whom we have seen? Where is the love that covers a multitude of sins? Does not that dear God we hope we love, because he first loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins, forgive seventy times seven? We cannot live one day as we long to; no, not one hour, but must continually be pleading with him to give us grace to guide, help and keep us in the way. Do we show forth love with the fear of God before our eyes? We are told of the fire the tongue will kindle. O dear ones, how strait is the way. O for grace in time of temptation. May we ever look to that dear Jesus who came to these low grounds of sorrow, a man of sorrow, acquainted with grief, and suffered the death of the cross to redeem us. O dear ones, what suffering, what love and mercy he had for his dear people. He came not to do his own will, but the will of the Father. What a time to try the spirits to see if such love flows in the members. It is not the example to grow cold one to another, but let us bear one another's burdens. Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. What sorrow of heart it gives to see how we depart from his laws and from his example of love and pity. O come, holy Dove, with all thy quickening powers, kindle a flame of sacred love in these cold hearts of ours. Help us to know the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, remembering what we do unto "the least of these," we do unto him. Against thee, and thee only have I

sinned. O may it be that all who are in wars and fightings will remember James' words: From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence even of your lusts that war in your members? Not of Christ, who is not the author of confusion. Many do not go to meeting for different reasons, forgetting it is our reasonable service to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God. How we need the light to search us, try us, and see if there is any wicked way in us. Remember charity is love, the bond of perfection, does not get puffed up, envieth not, and if so, it surely will work both ways. It is just as much lack of charity on my part to be thinking evil and envying my brother and sister, as to feel they envy and think evil toward me and think I will not go to meeting because of such. How much rather go on in humbleness and meekness. Lowliness is becoming, but I feel the lack of them all. What forbearance is shown toward me; I feel if all could see me as I see myself they would be in as much distress as I am. How I love to hear our dear ministers preach Jesus Christ, and him crucified, just as strong as they believe, and live it, not pleasing men, giving all praise to His great name, always praying to be led, that their words and meditations be acceptable to God. O to love and serve him with an eye single to his glory. Prayer is not a form of words, it is the fulfillment of the eternal God's purpose, for he has wrought all our works in us. How sweet to the poor trembling child who knows and feels the weakness of self to do anything, to go on in faith; the fruit of that wrought work in us is strengthening. I am longing to be in his dear hand and led by him when I am, as I must confess, trying with all effort to go the other way. In my flesh is no good thing. How easy to walk when he leads; even tears are sweet when he makes the heart soft; only by his wrought work do we love one another, weep with them that weep, rejoice with them that rejoice, pray for those in distress. It is then we crave to tread lightly. O to be led more and more by that dear Leader. He is not the author of confusion; he lifts the fallen, leads the blind, gives grace to the humble, makes us tender and loving toward one another and to feel to be the least of all; and if even we do see others wrongs, knowing that we of our own selves can do nothing, how we long to take them in our arms of love and pray for them, and for ourselves. How sweet it is when each can feel his brother's sigh, and with him bear a part, when sorrow flows from eye to eye, and joy from heart to heart, and all join in spirit and sing, Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me. Through many dangers, toils and snares I have already come; it is grace has brought me safe thus far. So we have nothing to boast over one another; all one in Christ, members one of another, with brotherly love, in honor preferring one another. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

"Praise the mount, O fix me on it,
Mount of God's unchanging love,
Here I raise my Ebenezer,
Hither by thy help I'm come."

Sweet in the confidence of faith to trust his firm decrees, sweet to lie passive in his hand and know no will but his. Lord, it is my chief complaint that my love to thee is weak and faint, yet I would love thee. O for grace to love thee more and more.

In hope,

LAURA E. ODELL.

HARRISONVILLE, Mo., Aug. 24, 1916.

FLEISCHMANNS, N. Y., Sept. 12, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you two articles written by Elder James Miller, by request of brother James Moore, to be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Brother Moore has had them all these years.

Respectfully yours,

O. F. BALLARD.

GRIFFIN CORNERS, N. Y., Jan. 4, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER MOORE:—As you requested me to write some of my christian experience and call to the ministry, I will try. I was born in the year 1826, of corruptible seed, which was a natural, sinful, fleshly body, which must die and return to dust, from whence it came. When only a little boy I thought I would always stay here, but my mother told me that we all had to die some time, then I began to have trouble. I lived along until I was between twelve and fourteen years old, went to school, and some of the boys I thought real smart would swear and chew tobacco, so I thought I would try to be as smart as they. When the teacher dismissed us I went out first, and as I reached the doorstep I jumped and said, "O the devil." That was the first and last time I ever used profane language, and only did it to be like the other boys. Then I found I was a sinner. When I was about eighteen years old I went one Sunday about two miles to hear a man by the name of Elder David Mead, an Old School Baptist, preach. The meeting was in a schoolhouse. His text was Psalms xxv. 8: "Good and upright is the Lord: therefore will he teach sinners in the way." On Sunday evening the same man preached in our schoolhouse, and I went again to hear him. He took the same text, and as he closed his discourse he said, "Brethren, it grows better and better." I saw by his talk that all my works and resolutions would not avail me anything. Then I began to read the Bible, to see what that said to sinners. I read it through, and found that under the first covenant there was a law of righteousness for them to obey in the land they were to possess, and in obeying they would be blessed in the fruit of their body and in the front of the battle, and if they offended in one point they were guilty of all. I read the Bible every chance I could get, so my parents thought I was getting lazy, and they hid the book from me. I found some leaves from a Bible and put them in my pocket, and would go away by myself and read them. I soon had my Bible again, but for all my reading I grew worse and worse—a sinner born in sin and shapen in iniquity. O, I have read in thy word, If thou wilt thou canst make me clean through thy blood and righteousness; all my own righteousness has become to me as filthy rags. Whither shall I flee to escape the vengeance due me? I was made to ponder over what the prophet had said: "It shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord." But I felt a sinner without hope. O save, I perish. At that time I had a dream, or I called it a dream, yet I seemed to be wide awake all the time. My brother-in-law, T. J. Streeter, lived just below me, and his wife was taken sick and sent for my wife, so I was left at home with my little girl when I had this dream. I thought I was on my father's farm with an axe on my shoulder, when it slipped and cut a vein in my neck, and I could hear the blood running freely. I thought

I would never see my father or mother again, and then I gave up all hope of ever being saved, but felt I was lost forever. Just then there was a bright light that came quickly at my feet, and from there it reached as far as I could see, to the regions above, and this verse was presented to me:

"O'er all those wide extended plains
Shines one eternal day;
There God the Son forever reigns,
And scatters night away."

In the morning I took my Bible and my eyes fell upon these words: For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name. And his mercy is on them that fear him, from generation to generation. Everything was changed; I could then sing, "All hail the power of Jesus' name." He had saved me from my lost estate, his loving-kindness O how great! I was led to find out more what the new covenant was, for I saw that it was by a new and living way that it brought in an everlasting righteousness of God by faith. So I found by reading the Bible that the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did. I would go to Methodist meetings and hear their preacher, whom I had known from boyhood, and thought him a good man. He gave me a book to read on baptism, which I read, and turned to my Bible to see how that agreed with his book, and found it was different. I took his book to his meeting one Sunday, and when I handed it to him he asked how I liked it. I told him it did not agree with my Bible in regard to Philip baptizing the eunuch. His book said that the "going down" might refer to the chariot, but the Bible reads that he commanded the chariot to stand still, and they went down both Philip and the eunuch into the water and he baptized him. O, said he, do you think when the Savior went up in the mountain to pray, he went into the heart of the earth? This man would immerse, sprinkle or pour, just as the candidate desired. All I wanted was the truth, and I trust I was led by the Spirit to believe in one Lord, one faith, one baptism. So I trust I was led by the Star of Bethlehem to the house of my Master's brethren, and the 12th of September, 1857, told them some of my feelings, and was received, although unworthy, and the following day was baptized by Elder Daniel Morrison, the first one he ever led into the water. That fall and winter and the following year some twenty or thirty came to the church at Halcott, N. Y., and were baptized. We could say, Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, love and fellowship.

Truly yours,

JAMES MILLER.

GRIFFIN CORNERS, N. Y., March 18, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER MOORE:—Brother in the faith once delivered unto the saints, and my brother-in-law according to the flesh. I am not feeling very well, and have put off from time to time answering your second request. I feel that my earthly tabernacle (the fleshly body) is decaying rapidly, and the time of my departure is near at hand, as I am now in my eighty-seventh year. As you and some other friends have requested me to write some of my call to the work of the ministry, I will try in weakness to do so. I had hope for myself five years before I united with the church, and after I had joined the people I love was made to say, Come, all ye that fear the Lord, and I will declare unto you what the Lord hath done for my soul. Yet for all this I was troubled on every side, was perplexed, but not in despair. I had many cast

down and gloomy seasons, but was not destroyed. But after this I was in worse trouble. I was on my farm in haying one very hot day, and stopped to sharpen my scythe under an apple tree. Some of the words spoken by the prophet Isaiah came to my mind: "Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people. Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken." I kept all my feelings to myself, and there was no comfort for me. I was chosen church clerk, and served them many years. After Elder Buel Maben was ordained I attended some associations with him; still the feelings I had the day under the apple tree had never left me. When I attended our church meetings and no minister was with us I would be chosen moderator, and in talking sometimes in the meetings would almost forget myself, and would stop. So I kept my light under a bushel, as the Bible tells us not to do, but the brethren saw more than I was aware of. Sometimes when sitting in the seat with some of the brethren they would say, Come, Miller, get up and preach for us. O how small I would feel. But I must make my story short. I kept along in this way, still working to pay for my little farm. I had a very narrow escape from death, and it seemed that some one said to me, O, you are in my hands, and I will show you what great things you must suffer for my sake; and I thought, Surely how true are the words of the poet: "Not a single shaft can hit, till the God of love sees fit." I could say with Paul: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation." Well, I shall have to omit a good many things, or this will be too lengthy. About the year 1877 the church gave me license to speak wherever the Lord opened a door. I did not want it, but had to submit to the decision of the church. Brother David Earl had liberty given him a year or so before the church licensed me, so we both went together until 1880, when the church called a council from the different churches of the Lexington Association to meet with the Halcott Church the first Saturday and Sunday in July. I think I wrote of it to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and it was published January 1st, 1911. After we were both ordained to the work of the ministry, brother Earl was called to Gilboa, N. Y., and I to Jefferson, N. Y., and we both had to serve some different churches in the Lexington Association. I went with Elder Hewitt to New York city to visit the Ebenezer Church, and to the Middletown, Union Grove, Clovesville and Halcott churches. Of the four last named churches, few are left; the members have nearly all passed over the river of death, so very few members attend the solemn feasts, who worship God in the spirit and have no confidence in the flesh. The world is after the law righteousness, which is not of faith. Paul told his brethren to be found in Him, not having their own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of God by faith. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did.

Now I must close, and I hope what I have written is according to the truth of the gospel. May love, peace and joy

abide in each heart, that we may forget the things that are behind, and have strength given us from Him who has promised strength equal to our day.

Your unworthy brother, saved by grace, and grace alone, if a brother at all,

JAMES MILLER.

(See obituary on page 653.)

KANSAS CITY, Kansas, Sept. 20, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Brother Philip and sister Elizabeth Shafer celebrated their sixty-sixth wedding anniversary at the home of their daughter, Mrs. C. B. Babbitt, 634 Franklin Ave., Kansas City, Kansas. Brother Shafer is eighty-nine and sister Shafer eighty-six years of age. The event was a surprise to the old couple, being planned by Mrs. Babbitt, with whom they make their home. The guests began to arrive about 5 o'clock p. m. Neither brother nor sister Shafer could imagine why so many people were coming until they were told it was in honor of their sixty-sixth wedding anniversary. They were completely surprised. Each guest brought a well filled basket, and a sumptuous 6 o'clock dinner was served. After dinner Elder W. T. Brown conducted services very beautiful and impressive from the twenty-third Psalm. This Scripture was very appropriate to the occasion, and made one feel the Lord had surely been our dear aged brother and sister's Shepherd in keeping and protecting them in all their long journey of this natural life. I think I never heard a discourse more suitable and more beautifully delivered than this was. It made one feel to look forward with an eye of faith to a city whose builder and maker is God. No matter how long our earthly pilgrimage, the Lord will never leave nor forsake us, but will be our help and stay in every condition in life. Brother and sister Shafer have two children, a daughter, Mrs. Lennie Babbitt, and a son, Mr. Rufus Shafer, and two grandchildren, Ernest and Earl Shafer. The guests departed with congratulations to the aged couple, who are in reasonably good health considering their advanced age. Brother and sister Shafer have been members of the Primitive Baptist Church fifty-eight years. They united with the Hogrun Church, in Western County, Ohio, in 1858, both joining at the same time. Elder Biggs was pastor of that church. They were baptized by Elder McClelland. They moved to Sedalia, Mo., in 1884, putting their letter in Walnut Branch Church. In 1905 they came to Kansas City, Kans., bringing their letter to Mt. Vernon Church, where they are now members.

May the Lord bless them with health and strength, both natural and spiritual, many days to come. When their earthly pilgrimage is over, may they enter into that rest which remaineth to the children of God.

Written by request.

SARAH P. COLLINS.

LA GRANDE, Ore., Sept. 16, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It has been a long time since I attempted to write for publication in the SIGNS, but to-day is the anniversary of my mother's birth, and she has written a birthday letter to the SIGNS on each succeeding birthday for many years, and now that she is so frail and in such changed circumstances I wonder if any of the readers of the SIGNS will consider her great age and write a line to comfort and help her. Should any one desire to do so, address, Mrs. S. J. Cummins, Chester, Montana, care Mrs. Mary Bassett. Mrs. Bassett is mother's youngest living child, and al-

though she is fifty years of age still manages to care for mother, although she is in very poor health, and has been told that she cannot live more than a few months, yet even her physician may not know how long the Lord may see fit to prolong her days. A great hail storm threshed their field of four hundred acres of wheat and left not a bushel to harvest for rental, so that may have helped to depress sister's physical condition, for she is a sufferer at best.

I still have some of mother's books for sale, and have sold almost enough to pay the cost of printing, but nothing to aid in giving mother the comfort she needs, but I trust I do all in my power to aid her, and I feel it would be a blessed privilege for some of the dear saints who have read her writings with comfort and encouragement to now write to her, or send something for her comfort, especially that winter, cold and severe, will soon be upon them. Should any one want a book, or books, please send to me, as the books are here, and rest assured that mother will get the proceeds. I borrowed money to pay part of the printing, and have managed that, but it is so sad to know that mother has come to where the strenuous times make it hard to get on in this world, but she has the faith of God's elect, and he in some way will provide for all.

Only a few weeks since, I visited the old Siloam churchyard, where I saw the graves of many of the saints who sleep, and viewed the same old house where mother had entertained the associations, yearly meetings, and the regular visitors to the church meetings as far back as the year 1849, when Elder Stipp was just coming into the ministry. There is not a living member left.

I have received some assistance in the past year, providing some necessities for mother from some friends from other denominations as well as among our own people, who sometimes "look to the necessities of the saints," but be assured it is only as one feels constrained in those matters. I was nine years old when father and mother took my best muslin clothes, all ironed and ready for wear, to the orphaned daughters of a dear old sister, and when I protested, and my tears flowed freely, they told me to go read the book of James and see how christians acted in regard to such deeds, and from that time until this day I have remembered one text: By their works as well as by faith are they known.

Do with this as seems best.

As ever, your unworthy sister in affliction,

MARTHA J. ALLEN.

SOLDIERS' AND SAILORS' HOME,
QUINCY, Ill., Sept. 18, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed please find two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, of which my father was a subscriber back in the year 1859, I think. He and my dear mother were members of the Primitive Baptist Church at Spoon River, Stark County, Ill.; Elder Chenowith was pastor at that time. My wife and I are members of Liberty Primitive Baptist Church, at Los Angeles, California.

Dear brethren, I would ask a favor of you: that you would through the SIGNS express our thanks to the dear brethren of Liberty Church, Los Angeles, California, also of Little Flock Church, Riverside, California, for their loving remembrance of us in supplying us with the SIGNS the past three or four years, and they will live in our memory as long as life shall last. Some of the names that are dear to us are brother and sister Daw-

son, brother and sister Boes, brother and sister Spiers, sister Brown, and a host of others whose names I cannot now recall, and may God bless them all. May Elder Henderson long be spared to speak comforting words to his Father's children, and sound a call to those who are blessed with a hearing ear to come home.

I will close by sending our christian love to you all, and will say to the able editors of the dear old SIGNS, May God in his infinite goodness bless you, is the prayer of yours in hope of a blissful reunion, when our Lord shall come gathering his elect from the four quarters of the earth.

B. F. MEHEW.

BLOOMBURY, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As my dear mother, Mary J. Easters, is sending in her subscription for the dear old SIGNS, she said she would be glad for me to write you, dear friends, a few lines to try to tell you how much comfort and consolation it has been to her in her dark and lonely hours, as my poor old father is helpless and very feeble. I, too, dearly love to read the dear paper, and my husband also enjoys it. I am so unworthy it is with great weakness and much fear I attempt to write you. I see many precious letters that give me much comfort and greatly revive that precious little hope in me. I longingly desire to tell you all the reason of that little hope I have, but I am so helpless I fear to make the attempt, for fear I may deceive the dear people of God. My mother has been a silent reader of the dear old SIGNS for a long time. She also has been a member of the Old Baptists for twenty odd years. My father joined three years ago. I have been a member two years and my husband one year.

Hoping you dear people may bear with my weakness, I am your unworthy sister in a precious hope in Christ, desiring the prayers of you all,

MAGGIE SIMMONS.

BARNES, Ark., Sept. 22, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I address you to inform you that I surely feel thankful to you and the God you so faithfully serve in the selection of the various articles which go to make up our leading family paper, the SIGNS, which contains about all the preaching I get. I am near the end of my seventy-fifth year, and have been a reader of the SIGNS for sixty years, and have always felt that the unalloyed truth was more ably set forth in it than in any other paper. I have read the last copy, and it has been worth to me the price of a year's subscription. While all was good, the editorials were so good I deem it a special copy. The letter written by sister J. E. Berry, of Granbury, Texas, proved we have traveled the same road in many respects. We have raised a large family, all married and gone, and we are left alone, and not able to work much. Brother Lefferts' article on Adam being the figure of him that was to come, is to me the ablest I have ever read. God bless the editors and contributors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. While I feel unworthy a name among them, still, if not deceived, I love them.

SAMUEL TURNER.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1916.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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"WHY STAND YE HERE ALL THE DAY IDLE?"

(MATTHEW XX. 6.)

THIS parable of the laborers in the vineyard, recorded in the twentieth chapter of Matthew, applies, we think, in direct connection with the conversation of Jesus and his disciples recorded in the nineteenth chapter. The beginning of the twentieth chapter is not the beginning of a new theme, but a continuation of the subject discoursed upon by Jesus in the chapter before. Let us glance at some things in the nineteenth chapter, that we may better arrive at the connection which furnishes a setting for this parable of the laborers in the vineyard. A rich young ruler came to Jesus and asked him: "What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" Jesus called his attention to the commandments of the law, but the young man said he had kept all these things from his youth up, "what lack I yet?" Then Jesus said, "Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me." This young man then went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. Turning to his disciples, Jesus then told them that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. This so astonished the disciples that they asked him, "Who then can be saved?" The reply of Jesus was, "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible." Now, the fact that Jesus had told this young man to sell all his goods and come follow him (Jesus), and that he should have treasure in heaven, caused Peter to wonder what would be his reward, seeing he, too, had left all and followed Jesus. The natural mind in Peter told him he ought to have some reward for leaving all and following Jesus. The natural mind loves to be paid for all it does. Therefore Peter's thought was something like this: If Jesus promises this young man treasure in heaven when he has sold all his goods and given to the poor, surely we twelve who have been now following him some time, and have left all our goods, should receive some compensation for the deprivations we have suffered. This thought of Peter's was shown in the manner he talked with Jesus: "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee: what shall we have therefore?" Jesus then said: "Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life." Here Jesus plainly told them that not simply were they twelve men to receive an hundredfold and to have everlasting life, but that "every one" leaving all for Jesus' name should receive an hundredfold and inherit everlasting life. Every child of God saved by grace

finds that the name of Jesus compels his separation from the world. It is not a question as to whether God's people want to be separate from the world or not, the very work of grace in their hearts brings about this separation, so that God's people, while in the world, are not of it. Every child of God, whatever be his or her place in the body, is what he is by the grace of God, and all boasting is excluded, so that one cannot lord it over another, or set himself up above his brethren. Jesus followed this conversation in the nineteenth chapter of Matthew with the parable in the twentieth chapter, and the parable simply illustrates what Jesus has already said to them. Jesus showed the disciples that even though they had been with him all through his ministry, and had suffered persecution with him, thus bearing the burden in the heat of the day, yet they were not on that account to expect any greater reward or pay than some humbler child and servant of God who might be called into the vineyard at a later time. Peter, though called to be an apostle of the Lamb, and given wonderful liberty to preach the gospel when Pentecost had fully come, was after all nothing but a sinner saved by grace, and thus no greater in himself than the thief on the cross, who also was a sinner saved by grace. Even though Peter had left all and followed Jesus, was that any credit to Peter? Peter had not done it in his own strength or according to his own will. Why, then, should he expect pay for what he had not and could not have done of himself? If grace had brought about this renunciation in Peter, and it was grace that had done it, then surely grace deserved the credit, and not Peter. It was carnal for Peter to say, "We have forsaken all, and followed thee: what shall we have therefore?" And Jesus told him and the eleven that though they were ordained to occupy thrones of judgment in the regeneration, yet every one that likewise was called to leave aught for the name of Jesus should receive an hundredfold in the gospel kingdom, so that these twelve were not to be able to boast over the least one in all the body of Christ. Jesus likens the kingdom of heaven to a man that was an householder who went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard, and when he had agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. Afterward, this same householder went out at the third, sixth and ninth hours of the day and sent other laborers into his vineyard, promising them not a penny, but "whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive." Now, Jesus speaks of himself here as a householder, and how beautiful that is. Jesus' house is the church, and he rules all things in his church, which is his house. Jesus, the spiritual householder, calls the laborers and sends them to work in his vineyard. The first laborers were hired very early in the morning and promised a penny. These first laborers are the twelve disciples whom Jesus called to follow him almost immediately upon the beginning of his public ministry; thus they were called very early in the morning of that day which Jesus spoke of as follows: "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is yet day: the night cometh when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." Thus it was day while Jesus was in the world performing the work of salvation. It was early in this day of Jesus in the world when he called the twelve and promised them a penny; that is, that they should sit upon twelve thrones judg-

ing the twelve tribes of Israel. The others whom Jesus called during his ministry here were not promised thrones of judgment, but all the children of God are promised that whatsoever Jesus deems it best for each member of his family to have, that shall they have. In the end of the day all received the same, a penny. This does not mean that in the end all became apostles. No, but it takes the same grace to cause one to believe and walk in the apostles' doctrine as it did to enable them to teach it. It is just as much a gift when one cleaves with all his heart to what Peter preached, as it was a gift that enabled Peter to preach it, and in the end all the laborers in the vineyard, no matter how long they had labored, were on the same plane and footing: all were what they were by divine calling, and not by any voluntary act of their own. Whether, like the twelve disciples, they had been with Jesus all through the heat of the day, or whether, like the thief on the cross, they came in at the eleventh hour, Jesus was the reward of each. He is his own reward, and each child of God finds full and perfect satisfaction in being with Jesus and clothed in his likeness. All owe their being and their labor to what Jesus has made them by his grace, and not to what they have made themselves. Now, it is particularly of those who came into the vineyard at the eleventh hour that we desire to write. The householder came into the market place at the eleventh hour and asked these, "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" Their answer was very simple: "Because no man hath hired us." How could they go before they were sent? They could not send themselves, could they? They could not force themselves into any vineyard, could not compel some man to employ their services. The question of the householder to these men was not a rebuke because they were idle, it was not a hint that should have been at work long before. No, it was none of this. The question of the householder simply brought out the reason why they were not working: "Because no man hath hired us." Surely they could not work unless they were engaged by the householder and sent by him into his vineyard. They had no right to enter his vineyard without being sent by him.

Now, we have said before that this householder is Jesus. Jesus calls whom he will to labor in his vineyard, and none can labor in that vineyard until he calls them and sends them. They cannot but remain idle in this matter until the householder appears to them. Did any one ever hear of a vineyard hiring its own workmen? No, but the owner of the vineyard, the householder, must look after his vineyard and send into it laborers to dress and keep the vines. Just so Jesus the householder must care for his vineyard, the church. The church does not go out and hire laborers to come to her. She has no more power to do this than grapevines to get themselves looked after. The husbandman calls and sends into his church such laborers as he pleases to look after her. It is one characteristic of the true church of Jesus that she has never been able to manufacture her own ministers, but has ever been dependent upon the Lord Jesus to send his laborers into her. Until he does this, she must and does remain idle, waiting upon him. Also, the men whom Jesus chooses to labor in his vineyard have no power to send themselves, but must wait for the householder, Jesus, to find them and send them. For this reason, then, these eleventh hour servants remained idle in the market place; no man had yet hired them,

and they could not do else but remain where they were until the householder found them and sent them to the work. No school, college or any institution of men can turn out laborers for Jesus' vineyard. The church has no source of supply but in Jesus her head. Sometimes the Old Baptists get very anxious about who will preach to them when the ministers they have are gone, and often some restless spirit among them gets to advocating things we ought to do in order to keep ourselves from dying out. Will you please tell us what a grapevine can do to keep itself alive? Nothing. No more can God's people do anything of themselves. All their strength and all their keeping is in Jesus. He is their life and the health of their countenance. Often we get discouraged when we see the few laborers that are being called and sent into the vineyard, and when we see, perhaps, the members of the churches passing away and few coming in, yet what can we do about it? God is the only one who has ever been able to call and qualify a man to preach his gospel, and he has never disclosed to man the secret as to how he does it. How, then, shall we go about making preachers? Also, Jesus is the only one who has ever been able to bring his little children into the visible organization of the church, and he has never handed over to us his power of doing that. How, then, shall we do it? We have seen some members who have been brought into the church through persuasion of men, perhaps the pastor of the church, but such never make good, reliable, sound Baptists, and more often these are inclined to bring in false doctrines among us, and tear up the peace of the militant body. It is always best to wait for the Lord to send his laborers into the vineyard, and not try to do it ourselves. The old ark may look pretty shaky sometimes, but any effort on our part to steady it always results in condemnation. Whenever you try to mix grace with works there is sure to be death in the pot, and it makes God's little children sick. All our fruit must come from Jesus. He is the vine, we are the branches, and no branch can bring forth fruit except it abide in the vine. Without Jesus we can do nothing. We can work out our own salvation with fear and trembling only as God works in us to will and to do according to his good pleasure. They that wait upon the Lord are the only ones to whom is promised the renewing of strength. It is good to patiently wait upon the Lord, to stand still and see his salvation. Zion is a quiet habitation, her name is, "The Lord is there." He is to her a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein goeth no galley with oars, neither does gallant ship pass thereby. These eleventh hour laborers just as much filled their place in the vineyard as those sent into it early in the day. It takes just as much grace to labor in Christ's vineyard one day as it does a thousand days. Then why should Peter and the eleven expect any more reward for having left all and followed Jesus than any other child of God who might also be called in their order and measure to also forsake all for Jesus' sake? To all the reward is the same. It is not reckoned of debt, but of grace. Jesus is as much the reward of these that came in at the eleventh hour as he is the reward of those who labored all day. None of them labored except by the calling and authority of the householder, therefore wherein was the right of the all-day laborers any more than the eleventh hour ones? When Paul shall stand before the face of God in glory, all he

can say, notwithstanding his valiant fight as an apostle of the Lamb, shall be, I am a sinner saved by grace. This is the same song, no more and no less, that every child of God shall sing, whether his days here have been many or few, whether his labor has been long or short. There are no bigs and littles in the church of our God, but all are one in him, sinners all saved by grace, and if any one seems to have more ability to labor than another here in the vineyard, that ability is not of self, but of grace.

We have written upon this subject by request, and do not know that we have gotten at the kernel of the parable at all, but we hope, at least, we have stirred up the minds of God's people to think of these grand things. The SIGNS never has had, and never will have, any use for any other salvation than that which is by grace through the Lord Jesus Christ by the mercy of God the Father. L.

MINUTES.

OF late years the amount sent us by some of the Associations for printing their Minutes has been gradually decreasing, until now some of them hardly send enough to cover the cost of production, and as everything used in printing has been greatly increased in price this makes it very hard for us. Brethren, please bear this in mind, and in making up contributions for printing Minutes do what you can for us.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in October (29th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by brother John F. Oliver.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the Bethlehem Church, Prince William County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 11th, 12th and 13th, 1916, to the churches composing this meeting, and to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—According to the custom practiced in our Association for many years, we desire to send you our annual epistle of love in the form of this Corresponding Circular Letter. Through the abounding goodness, mercy and loving-kindness of our covenant-keeping God, we have been preserved through another year, and favored to meet again in an associate capacity. Surely, brethren, we have great reason to be thankful to our heavenly Father that it is as well with us at this time as it is. Unless the Lord directs our mind we feel sure we shall not be able to write anything comforting or profitable to the children of the most high God. We do fully realize the meaning of our Savior's words, "Without me ye can do nothing." God's people are a fearing people, for when they write or speak on the glorious theme of God's salvation to his chosen people they are made to fear and tremble lest they darken counsel by words without knowledge. We read that the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?"—Job xxxviii. 2. We are told in holy writ that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. This knowledge must be given unto us as a light shining in a dark place, in the deep recesses of the heart, where the heart is

found to be a cage of unclean birds. When this is done for us, and we are made to see the vileness of our own carnal nature, we are made then to fear and tremble, and to think upon the Lord's name, and to stay upon our God. We do believe that God's people are a fearing people. They fear God and beg for mercy at his hands. We read in Malachi, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name."—Malachi iii. 16. God's people are a different, separate and distinct people from all other peoples of the world. They are a peculiar people, and the only people on God's green earth that can show forth the praises of Him who has called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. God is good and his mercy endureth forever. "And his mercy is on them that fear him, from generation to generation."—Luke i. 50. "Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land. Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." —Psalms lxxxv. 9, 10. The Lord is our righteousness, and he gives peace to those of a contrite heart, for he has said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." The world cannot receive this peace in or by their own strength, for it is the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, and shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ. "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again, I say, Rejoice." Dear brethren, may the Lord bind our hearts together in one bundle of love, so that we shall always endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace and fellowship. There is nothing more beautiful and pleasant on the Lord's green earth than to see brethren dwelling together in unity. The psalmist says, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" John says, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." The poet says:

> "My dearest friends in bonds of love,
> Whose hearts in sweetest union prove,
> Your friendship's like a drawing band,
> Yet we must take the parting hand."

The definition of the word "fellowship" is companionship, mutual association of persons on equal and friendly terms, familiar intercourse, &c. Paul says to the Philippian brethren, "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves."—Phil. ii. 1–3. Dear brethren, what a congenial family we see in God's dear people walking together in fellowship and in love one with the other, showing that they have been with Jesus and have learned of him. Jesus says, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Peter says, "Dearly beloved, I

beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; having your conversation honest," &c., assuring them at the same time that they are a chosen generation. He said to them, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." In all ages of the world the visible true church of God has been a chosen few. Israel was told of God that they were not chosen because of their number, but that they were few and the least of the nations. The people of God have always been described as a remnant, and their churches as little, and as long as there remains a church and assemblies of the saints the living promise and sweet assurance of our Savior will have a practical application: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Therefore, we can rejoice that even the visible status of our churches witnesses to the truth that the Old School Baptist Church is founded upon an abiding foundation: "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." He is the tried stone, the chief corner-stone. Brethren, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom ye are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. Jesus, the foundation and builder of his church, has said, "Upon this rock will I build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Of all the institutions of men of every name and character based upon human agency, we can say of them that their rock is not as our rock, our enemies themselves being judges. "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king, he will save us." For it is written that the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. Dear brethren, what we have already written seems to confirm our belief in the doctrine of the eternal vital unity of Christ and his church, his people. Take away our head and our body is dead. Jesus says, I am the vine and ye are the branches. Kill the vine and the branches die also. But our vine still lives, and so do his branches. Jesus says, "Because I live, ye shall live also." It is through him we live, move and have our being, naturally as well as spiritually. Paul asks, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? * * * Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The next session of this Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, beginning on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1917, and continuing three days. We invite your messengers, ministers, and all other lovers of the truth to meet with us at that time.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.

S. B. PAXSON, Clerk.

(Written by Elder John Clark.)

The Lexington Association, convened with the Gilboa Church, and churches and messengers with whom we correspond, October 4th and 5th, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the mercies of God we are glad to once more greet you as a remnant according to the election of grace, with the words recorded in Romans twelfth chapter, first verse: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Truly we are constrained to acknowledge that it is of the mercies of God that we are not consumed. The sacrifices of God, a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, because his mercy endureth forever. Let Israel now say that his mercy endureth forever. Let the house of Aaron now say that his mercy endureth forever. "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

JOHN CLARK, Moderator.
JAMES AVERY, Clerk.
O. F. BALLARD, Ass't Clerk.

(Written by Elder J. M. Fenton.)

The Juniata Association, in session with the Fairview Church, Fulton Co., Pa., Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 6th, 7th and 8th, 1916, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is our custom among the associations to have a Circular Letter written each year, the same to set forth somewhat the doctrine, faith and order of the churches. These Circular Letters, written by men of this age and day, are not understood to take the place of what is given us by the Savior and the apostles for the faith and order of the church, but are intended rather to give our views of what is meant by their testimony and record. Let it ever be understood that the apostles' words are by the authority of our Lord and Savior, and nothing can be added to or taken from, but we have the right to set forth according to our views what is meant by their words, and when our Circular Let-

ters are indorsed by the association they are not binding upon church or churches, but rather intended to be received as by way of advice and not authority. We ever feel impressed to regard the church in her position before the Savior as one who is first in his consideration, as joined unto him in vital unity, and as exalted above all organizations, assemblies, associations, or any other thing formulated by any one since the days of the apostles. We recognize no headquarters of authority of what Scriptures mean, or the faith and order of the church, only that which is given us by the Savior and the apostles, and our comfort and food will be only as the Spirit takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us. When we see eye to eye of what is meant by the Savior's words or the apostles' words, we have sweet fellowship one with another, but if we do not see eye to eye of what Scripture means no association has power to bind their views upon church or churches. We hope that the conducting of the associations as now observed by us will be so as to make for peace and whereby we may be edified and comforted together, and the associational relationship be continued.

At this time we have no further comment in this our Circular Letter.

J. M. FENTON, Moderator.

J. C. MELLOTT, Clerk.

STATEMENTS SENT.

WILL those to whom we have sent statements of their accounts try to respond, even if they can pay only part of their indebtedness? We at present need all due us, and although a little matter to each person, when there are many in arrears it means a great deal to us, as we have large bills to pay.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Fairview Church, Fulton Co., Pa., Oct. 6th, 7th and 8th, 1916, to the associations and churches with which we correspond, sendeth greeting and love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—In the providence of God we have met once more in an associate capacity, we trust gathered in the spirit of our dear Savior. Our meeting has been to our profit and comfort, and his glory. Your messengers report peace and harmony, and in this letter of correspondence to the sister associations with which we correspond, we desire to name the name of Christ Jesus the Lord above every name that is given in heaven and in earth. Our ministers have come declaring God's power to save, and salvation by grace in the fullness of the gospel.

Our next association will convene with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1917, when and where we hope to meet your messengers again.

J. M. FENTON, Moderator.

J. C. MELLOTT, Clerk.

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, now in session with our sister church at Gilboa, Schoharie Co., N. Y., October 4th and 5th, 1916, to the associations of our faith and order with which we correspond sends christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN:—How good it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. It is like the precious ointment on the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments; and in this manner would we greet you, that peace be within

thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces. This can only come from Him who bringeth glad tidings, that publisheth peace. How beautiful are the feet of him who bringeth glad tidings of great joy. We have been blessed with able ministers of the gospel, whom we trust the Lord hath set upon the walls of Zion to proclaim the everlasting gospel of the Son of God to every creature whose heart is open to receive the truth, and when this truth comes to the believing character it is like the dew on the tender herbs, it toils not, neither does it spin. We are informed that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like the lily of the field. So may we be enabled to look unto Him from whence all our help cometh, and from whom all blessings flow. We desire a continuance of your correspondence. May the God of love and peace be with you, is our prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Our next session is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with our sister church at Halcottville, Delaware Co., N. Y., at the usual time, first Wednesday and Thursday in October, 1917, where we hope to meet your messengers and receive your messages of love and fellowship once more. Until that time farewell.

JOHN CLARK, Moderator.
JAMES AVERY, Clerk.
O. F. BALLARD, Assistant Clerk.

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WE have many times requested our subscribers to send subscriptions direct to J. E. Beebe & Co. Many seem to think it makes no difference to whom they are sent, but if they knew how much inconvenience and delay it causes us, they would kindly comply with our request. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder W. S. Alexander, at the home of the bride's parents, Cockeysville, Md., Saturday, Sept. 23rd, 1916, James Gore, Jr., of Reisterstown, Md., and Edith Lillian Scott, of Cockeysville, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Harry Collins, a lover of the truth and a friend of the Old School Baptists, died at the end of a six months' illness Sept. 11th, 1916, at Glenbrook Farm, Fairfax County, Va. He was born in Gloucester, England, May 2nd, 1879, the son of Harry and Caroline Collins. He came to the United States in October, 1892. Nov. 12th, 1902, he was married to Zora Robey, a daughter of our late brother Lewis Robey, of the Frying Pan Church. Sister Zora was baptized a few years ago at Frying Pan, by Elder J. G. Eubanks. She is left with her little boy Harry to mourn the loss of her young and very dear husband. She has been wonderfully supported in her trial by the presence of Jesus, and murmurs not at all at the departure of her loved one. After their marriage they lived in Washington up until a few weeks of Mr. Collins' death. Burial took place in Vale Cemetery, in Fairfax County, and we tried to speak from the words, "If a man die, shall he live again?" Mr. Collins attended the Virginia Corresponding Meeting with the Bethlehem Church five years ago, and with the New Valley Church four years ago. These were very precious seasons to him. He was of an inquiring mind, and a great Bible reader. He loved to hear conversation upon the Scriptures, and showed his interest to be that of sincerity, and not of mere curiosity. May the good Lord continue to dwell manifestly with our dear sister Collins, and may she find that he supplies her every need. L.

Elder James Miller passed away at his home at 5 o'clock Sunday morning, Jan. 26th, 1913. He was born Jan. 4th, 1826, making his stay on earth 87 years and 22 days. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church in 1857, and was ordained to the work of the ministry in 1880. He was ever faithful to the work whereunto he was called. He was married to Polly Merea Van Valkenburgh, who died in 1893. Married again, to Miss Jane Hammond, who survives him, with one daughter, Mrs. Martha Whitney. Elder Miller was of a kind and cheerful disposition, and had many friends and few or no enemies. He died as he had lived, in the triumph of his faith, and we believe has gone to his reward.

The funeral was held at his home Jan. 29th, conducted by Elder John Clark, assisted by Elder R. W. Sanford. Interment in Halcott cemetery. May the God in whom he trusted comfort those who are left to mourn his departure.

Sarah Elizabeth Demic was born August 11th, 1852, and died at her home July 14th, 1916. She was married to S. D. Demic in the year 1869. To that union seven children were born, six of whom are still living. Soon after her marriage she with her husband united with the Missionary Baptists, never having heard a Primitive Baptist preach. About the year 1889 just through curiosity she went to a Primitive Baptist meeting that was being held near Farrar, Limestone Co., Texas, and heard old brother John Collins preach. So in satisfying that curiosity she found a people that preached exactly what she believed, and she of course fell in love with them and wanted to live with them, so not a great while later she with her husband united with the Old School Baptist Church, and lived with them until her death. It can truly be said of our dear sister that she was a kind and dutiful wife, a loving mother, and truly a mother in Israel. She leaves to mourn their loss a kind and affectionate husband, six loving and dutiful children, a large circle of friends and the little church Zion she loved so well. She was faithful to the end, and died in the full triumph of living faith. Her house was a home for Old Baptists, as many now living will testify. She was confined to her bed two months, and was never heard to murmur. She was perfectly resigned to the will of her heavenly Master. O may our last end be like hers. All that a good physician and loving hands could do was done for her, but to no avail, death came, and she fell asleep in the arms of Jesus as peacefully as a little child. It was a great loss to her neighbors and friends, as well as her family. She was laid to rest in the Past Oak Cemetery, to await the glorious resurrection, when she shall be changed and fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, and be forever with him and all the blood-washed throng, where sickness and sorrow never enter, and pain and death are no more. May our God fill her absence in all places with his divine presence.

Written by one who loved her as a dear and precious sister in Christ.

W. O. BEENE.

Mrs. Emma McDonald, wife of Elder A. M. McDonald, a sister in Christ, departed this life July 27th, 1916, at the age of 56 years. She was greatly afflicted, but I never heard her complain. She was always cheerful, and showed her faith in Christ by her godly conversation and orderly walk. She was a devoted companion and a loving mother, was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church twenty years, strong in the faith and doctrine of God our Savior. I visited her a short time before she died, and found her submissive to her lot. When I entered her room she smiled and said, "O, the Lord has been so gracious to me." She had a vision a short time before; she said that the Lord had given her the blessing that she had prayed for many years, that she might be spared to see her baby child a man, and her petition was granted. May her counsel ever be with him, and may he never go astray. May God's protecting care ever hover around her loving children, and may God be with her aged companion, and may he be reconciled to His holy will, ever looking to him who is the giver of every good and perfect gift. May he look beyond this vale of tears, sorrows and disappointments to the resurrection, where there will be no more parting, is the prayer of your unworthy sister.

LIZZIE BAKER.

Mrs. Bettie Fogleman, whose maiden name was Phillips, was born in Lee County, Miss., March 27th, 1855, and was married to Mason Fogleman August 18th, 1870. To that union one son was born, Isaac Franklin, who died at the age of three years, 4 months and 18 days. Sister Bettie joined the Primitive Baptists of the Predestinarian faith and order in the year 1887, being baptized by Elder Polk, and lived a consistent member until the end. She was an invalid some eight or ten years, and her suffering was great, but she bore it with as much patience as this nature will allow. She believed in salvation by grace, both for time and eternity. The church at Elm Ridge has sustained a great loss, but we hope our loss is sister Betty's gain. To the bereaved I would say, We must bow in humble submission to the will of Him who doeth all things well.

Her pastor, W. W. SLAUGHTER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Wm. Darby, Md., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, Providence permitting, will hold its annual or yearly meeting the last Saturday and Sunday in October (28th and 29th), 1916. Those coming by rail east or west will get off at Ashokan, via U. & D. R. R., Ulster Co.

Done by order of the church this 30th day of September, 1916.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 84. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1916. NO. 22.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ALVARADO, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I have been writing to the managers on business, I have decided to try to write something to you by way of encouragement, though I feel too ignorant and unworthy to say anything more than simply to acknowledge the great pleasure and instruction I derive from reading your writings, being alone, having no one to talk with, or to hear talk, that believes as I do on the teaching of the Scriptures, and being surrounded by teachers of many shades of beliefs, all claiming to be zealously engaged in winning souls for Christ, and thus helping him save sinners and evangelize the world. I am entirely cut off from public worship, so the SIGNS contains about all the preaching I get, and being in full accord with you both on every point of doctrine embraced in the wonderful plan of salvation by grace alone, you may imagine what joy it gives me to read your editorials, which are so plain and well expressed. I cannot see how any one with any spiritual discernment can fail to understand and believe, not that they are calculated to produce faith, but point to and show what a solid foundation the believer has for his faith to rest upon, which is Jesus, who alone can and will save all who come unto God by him and are drawn to Jesus by the Father. In your editorial on Revelation xxii. 17, brother Lefferts, you surely have divested that Scripture of every vestige of Arminianism and creature works, and shown conclusively, to my great satisfaction, what was the mind of the Spirit, that the "come" was and is addressed to Him who said, Behold, I come quickly, and not to sinners, as many seem to think. I was for fifteen years entangled with the New School, who often used that text as an invitation to sinners to come and let the Lord save them, implying that he was so deficient in power that he could not save them without their consent. My people, embracing a very large connection, are all Missionaries, and most all Baptists that claim to be anything. My father's entire family were members of the same organization, whose meetinghouse stood not more than a mile from where we were all raised. So I was taught from childhood to have great respect for old Enon, which was constituted long before the division of the Baptists, and being in the country, away

from town influence, stood firm for a long time on the foundation of the apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief corner-stone, and enjoyed the preaching of old-fashioned God-called preachers. But alas, the time came when some were admitted who sowed tares among the wheat, who imbued the doctrine of Andrew Fuller that the church should send missionaries to the destitute at home and heathen abroad; that she should assist in the formation of Bible societies for the dissemination of Bible knowledge, and build up schools to educate preachers for home and foreign fields, and thus preach the gospel (so-called) to every creature; to form Sunday-schools in every church to train the young mind; to give liberally to support all the institutions of so-called benevolence, and in 1843 I believe it was (I was born that year), the delegates to the association disregarded instructions from the church and voted to drop from fellowship the antis, as they were called. While many of the church were not satisfied with the action of the association, they remained in the church, but it was a long time before the new measures received any material support from old Enon, although she did assent to them. But those in the association who did contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and desired to walk in the old paths, being largely in the minority, made but little impression upon the new lights, more than being objects of contempt and ridicule, which were profusely heaped upon them. It was about that time that the heresy of Daniel Parker, who then lived in the bounds of the Mussel Shoals Association, made its appearance among Baptists, which caused another reduction, that left only a few names in Sardis to contend for the truth as it is in Jesus, who by the grace of God were enabled to keep up separate organizations. But twenty-four years later, in 1867, when it was my privilege to become identified with them, the Missionary Baptists, as they were pleased to call themselves, had thrown off all restraint, and began to spread out like a green bay tree—had, according to the prediction of Andrew Fuller, risen from a mere dunghill in society to honor and respectability among other denominations, and soon became as corrupt in doctrine and practice as any of them, notwithstanding they did quarrel with their pedobaptist brethren about baptism and close communion, and occasionally some one did attempt to preach predestination and election after a fashion of their own, and I was then in full accord with them, and assented to all they said, and really thought I was serving God. But the time came when, if I am not altogether deceived, the good Lord showed me that salvation is entirely of him, independent of all creature works, either good or bad, and that my own righteousness was only filthy rags, that I never have done, nor ever can do, anything to merit God's favor in the least, so have been moved to cut loose from every system that substitutes works for grace in salvation, which I now believe all Arminian teachers do. So it has been my lot for twenty-five years to be a homeless wanderer, having no relish for the service I once took great delight in, and feeling too sinful and unworthy to even ask a home with the people I love for the truth's sake, notwithstanding my great desire to be like them and to be worthy of a place among them. So I go mourning on account of sin, never being able to turn from sin, but keep doing the things I ought not, and leaving undone things I ought to do, often repeating the prayer of David: O Lord, turn me, and I

shall be turned. Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner. Often repeating the hymn, "'Tis a point I long to know." Often my lamentation is:

"O Lord, how vile am I,
Unholy and unclean!
How can I dare to venture nigh,
With such a load of sin?"

Again I am privileged to sing, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord," and I do thank God for such expression of confidence in the power, goodness and mercy of God to all his people in every condition or circumstance in which they may be. Yes, I do love that old song, but the perplexing question returns, Am I included? I can believe for others, but not for myself as I want to, for there is not the least doubt in my mind relative to the relation of Christ to his people, and that relation always existed, that they were chosen and created in him before the world was, as Adam's posterity were in him when God made him, and as Adam's descendants all actually sinned, and thereby were involved in death, so the death of Christ insures eternal life to all who are and were in him and his resurrection from the dead, is a guarantee that he will raise them all up when time shall be no more. That editorial on the resurrection is sublime and full of consolation to the weary pilgrims; and yours, brother Ker, on love, obedience, also Matthew v. 3: "Blessed are the poor in spirit," are fraught with consolation and comfort to the poor little ones. In fact, all the editorials are good and instructive, as well as the many corresponding writers, many of whom I almost envy for their clear spiritual vision and bright experience of grace. O to be sure that I know and love the Lord, whom to know aright is everlasting life; but how can one so full of sin, so prone to evil, ever attain to such knowledge? I do love the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and all connected with it, and because of that fact I have hope.

Now, dear brethren, if you can allow me to thus address you, no doubt you have wondered why I have written all this. Well, I cannot tell you why, for I had no idea when I began of making such draft upon your time and patience, but it seemed I just could not stop. I hesitate in sending it to you, on account of inaccurate spelling and bad writing, but it is the best I can do. I hope you may be able to read and comprehend enough to give you an idea of my feelings for you and the dear old SIGNS, also a little idea of my position spiritually, and if you can I wish you would tell me where I am, for I must confess to you that I do not know. I failed to find words to fully express what I wished to, but have followed the leadings of my mind in writing, and if I have said anything that is not true it is because I do not know any better, for it is my greatest desire to know the truth as it is in Jesus, and to propagate nothing but the truth. If you see anything in this worth publishing you can do so, otherwise it will not affect my love for you in the least.

G. E. KEYS.

ELGIN, Ore., Oct. 1, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you the inclosed letter from Elder A. Cheyne, and hope it may meet with your approval to publish it in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

In gospel bonds.

G. E. MAYFIELD.

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore., Sept. 10, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER MAYFIELD:—Your recent letter I duly received, wherein you speak of the Siloam Association of Old School Baptist churches of long ago as more than forty years since, and spe-

cially refers to Elder Stipp being at that meeting and his great ability as a scriptorian. Although I never met him, yet I have read after him in old copies of the SIGNS, occasionally given me to read by Elder Hess and sister Pitman, then resident in Klickitat Co., Wash., and felt to enjoy his able articles. Such gifts as he, and indeed the very humblest gifts to the church, are pillars held in everlasting remembrance. Our recent meetings at Forest Grove were of such a nature that all who were privileged to participate will long remember them, for all of the songs of praise, earnest and united petitions addressed to the One who heareth the cry of the needy, and the preaching of all, as far as I could hear, were a unit, and I am thankful to testify also that I was blessed in being enabled to hear and have much real enjoyment. The one theme was Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and forever. At the close of the meetings I discovered you had gone before I could say good-bye, which I regretted, because I longed to see you and speak of many things of mutual interest, but there was throughout the whole of the meetings, and at the homes, such a oneness of spirit and mind that temporarily I forgot much that I had planned to speak of; my predestinations so often fail. My mind goes back to the first sermon I heard you preach, the subject being Election, which discourse I can never forget, because under God it was the turning pivot in my career in a doctrinal sense. The technicalities I had memorized in boyhood without being enabled to understand practically, became a living and glorious reality, and thereby is fulfilled in my personal experience that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation (time) to every one that believeth, and how much that means to me never can I fully tell, therefore I can realize how truly blessed it is when the treasure in the earthen vessel is made effective.

My dear brother, you ask me for a recital of my travels from Adam the first condition, to that of the second Adam, and you are not the only one, but even in this attempt I am so thoroughly dependent upon the One who is my life, my all, that unless he directs, failure must ensue. The One who foreknew, predestinated, called, justified and glorified all the body in the One who is indeed the elect himself knows, for all things are of him, by him and through him alone. I was born of godly old school Presbyterian parents, in the shire of Aberdeen, Scotland, at the time when Sunday-schools were (if not all in use) very unpalatable, and regarded I know by those who only cared for me as an insult to the intelligence of those who understand that the command, "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it," is exclusively for the parent or guardian, and no proxy can release an understanding mind from this obligation, therefore I had no tutors, not even my parents, who strongly believed that "God will do all his pleasure," consequently if my experience is genuine I received it not of men, neither was I taught it, save by the unaided grace and mercy of God alone, yet,

> "'Tis a point I long to know,
> (Oft' it causes anxious thought,)
> Do I love the Lord or no?
> Am I his, or am I not?"

Soon after passing my sixth year there came to me as I lay on my bed in the dark hours of the night a terrible dread such as I cannot fully explain, sin became a terrible reality with me, and I could see no escape from punishment, yet my parents never claimed otherwise than that I was their pet little fellow

equal to the best, but truly the very pains of hell gat hold of me. What could I do? I had no form of prayer, and God seemed so far off and so great, and I the one that had sinned so awfully that no hope for me appeared at that time. My mind would plead O so earnestly for help, mercy, yet no light, no relief came, and I feared to sleep lest I should awake in torment, which I felt to deserve. My precious mother saw my trouble and said, Dear child, what ails you? But I lied to her, saying, Nothing at all. She shed tears as she took me to her breast, and said, "I believe the Lord has begun to work with you, and he surely will finish it. He will take care of you." For many days I could get no relief, but one morning, being in terrible trouble, I arose early, as the sun began to shine, and as I looked up it became so bright my eyes could not look at it, and as I was thus engaged a light far brighter shone out, and my burden left me and I was happy; but I knew nothing, yet felt I should tell of this, but I was admonished not to be too fast, because I might be mistaken. I had a very happy time of it for a day or so, but it did not last, and I was back where I was, and felt I must do something, so I promised the Lord (for I learned of him to pray) that if he would spare my life and be merciful I would do anything he appointed for me, but I failed to carry out any of my promises, and began to think it all a mistake, and concluded I might as well make the best of it, and run with my companions, who seemed not to be interested in serving the Lord. It began to dawn upon my mind that I ought to tell people about the way the Lord was leading me, and quite unexpectedly people in my neighborhood came together to pray, when an old man, a Cameronian Presbyterian, said, "Our young friend here will talk to us, and you must all listen." I could not preach, and tried to excuse myself, but got up, my knees shaking with fear, but it soon left me, and I prayed in public for the first time, and then talked, but can only say it was the Spirit that led me, and why I cannot tell, but most of the people wept, and some said, It must be the Spirit, for Alex is but a child, and knows nothing. He must soon go to college, &c. I soon left that home of childhood and went to the city and tried to bury myself in frivolity and my impressions, but the Lord I feel followed me and compelled me to do what I felt I could not do, and finally I was set apart to preach as a Presbyterian, being then engaged as teacher of the public school at Aspatria, near Carlyle, England. I preached at the Congregational chapel, and my text was, the night I now speak of, "And he preached unto him Jesus." Good liberty was mine, and extra good attention, and ere I concluded read on in the narrative where we are told they came to a certain water and the eunuch said, See, here is water, &c., and then finally they went down both into the water, and Philip baptized him. So unlike the Presbyterian baptism! I went home and wife and I spent hours trying to find sprinkling for baptism, you know with what success; so we were both dipped soon after, but the doctrines and practices of the party did not agree with our experience, so we gave it up, and soon thereafter I was appointed superintendent and my wife matron of a home for neglected and destitute ones in Edinburg, my duty being to preach and maintain order, &c. We at this juncture applied for admission to the Scottish Baptist Church (Calvanistic). Some of them objected to our baptism, but the majority said as our christian experience predated

our immersion they took us in and we had a congenial home with those dear people. But we must needs cross the Atlantic, and in the month of October passed through an angry sea fifteen days out, and our ship sustained great damage, and we were to friends in Britain reported gone down; but no, we safely reached New York. But I must omit much. Now the Baptists (Missionary), discovering I had been a preacher, soon got me into harness, but little did I know the wide difference between the old church in Edinburg and the new Baptists in the new world; suffice it to say I had to pay dearly for selling myself to preach for a people who were not my people at all (yet many of God's little ones were among them), but all the kicks and blows I had to experience were needed, and dear old sister Pitman prophesied, "You will have to go home, brother Cheyne," and so it came to pass, for while I resolved to unite no more with any denomination, yet I had to go as the door was opened at Pleasant Grove Church, Goldendale, Wash., where the dear people took us in, as I laid down my ordination, and what I knew was to me unsatisfactory, being alien baptism, or not baptism, and they ultimately, after waiting years, called a counsel for my ordination to the full functions of the gospel ministry, which took place at the Pleasant Grove Church, near North Yakima, Washington, of which church we are yet members, set me apart also as pastor, our dear brother Hess, who baptized us (wife and I), being sadly afflicted.

You have in the above a partial description of what you are the best judge as to its being a gracious experience.

Your brother in the fellowship of the gospel of peace, I trust,

A. CHEYNE & WIFE.

"THE GRACE OF LIFE."

THE called of God are heirs together of the grace of life, and in this grace they live unto their God, and unto one another, and have their conversation in this present world. This life is called, very blessedly so, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which hath made us free from the law of sin and death. (Rom. viii. 2.) The apostle saith, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." This life has a sacred and divine graciousness in it, and it is a blessed inheritance in which all believers in Christ are joint-heirs. "Heirs together of the grace of life."—1 Peter iii. 7. Bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord our God. (1 Sam. xxv. 29.) The grace of the believer's life in Christ flows forth in faith and love, in prayer and praise to God, and it flows out in love to the household of God. The grace of this life is found moving us to be pitiful and courteous to our dear fellows in the gospel, to be bearing one another's burdens, and often in prayer one for another. This grace of life is described in Gal. v. 22–25, as the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. These are the graces of the life of Christ in the soul; and in their season they are brought forth, for the Holy Spirit is the gracious new covenant nourisher of our life, and we very willingly can acknowledge that from him all our graces, all our fruit, is found. (Hosea xiv. 8.) Those who are truly born of God do in truth find fervent longings in their hearts that they may be fruitful in all the graces of life, and their complaints are frequent that so little of grace is felt and mani-

fested in them unto God. For where there is no grace, no fruit, what tokens have we that we are alive unto God? Those who know not God are dead in trespasses and sins, alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their hearts. If, beloved of God, the Lord by his Spirit hath quickened us into divine life, this will be found to be an experimental reality, and this life in all the sacred power of it, in the grace of it, moves the quickened sinner unto God, and the beauty, the adornment of this grace of life is to "put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."—Col. iii. 12, 13. What a paradox are the children of God to themselves, for though they are heirs together of this life, yet in their corrupt Adamic nature they find all that is contrary. The apostle Paul saith, "I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing."—Rom. vii. 18. So there is a conflict going on in the child of God. But in this warfare we are more than conquerors, for the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, glorifies Christ in us as our all-sufficiency. We are moved with compunctions of conscience, with sighs and supplications unto our gracious God over the sinfulness of our flesh, but we are led by the Spirit of God to thoughts, in faith and love to muse upon Christ crucified, and our heart goes out unto him, to his precious blood and justifying obedience, and we find in the dear Lamb of God sacred solace, refreshing and hope. Sweet are thy forgivenesses, Savior dear, thou art the only balm of the sin-wounded conscience. Thy love and compassion, so immutable and free, pour these streams into my oft tried soul again and again. Thus I shall love thee and trust thee and adore thee. Let my Beloved come into his garden and eat his pleasant fruits, and the spices shall flow forth, and thou wilt sup with me, and I with thee. O truly in our Beloved there are consolations, comfort of love, fellowship of the Spirit, bowels of mercies. (Phil. ii. 1.) Jesus is precious! How sovereign and abundant is the grace of God unto us in him.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., Sept. 5, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have been requested to write you about the good meeting of our last association, held with Middle Creek Church, the second Sunday, and Saturday before, in September, 1916,, but as I am so nervous and barren in mind I feel that I cannot write anything better than the county paper has said, it has told it far better than I could, and I want to add my little testimony that it is the truth. In the experience of sister Roberson, she dates back forty years that she has had a hope, but felt too unworthy to come into the fold. How much pleasure and sweet comfort she has missed. There was much rejoicing over it, and it was a day long to be remembered by all the saints.

I must tell you that Elder Frazee, who did the baptizing, has been very sick for the last two weeks. He is better now, but was not able to be with us at our last Sunday meeting, and how much we did miss him. He has served us faithfully and patiently for twenty-three years as our pastor and moderator. We were supplied by A. Jones and Dr. W. D.

Owens, and had a good meeting, but missed Elder Frazee's smiling face and cheerful voice. Dear brethren and sisters everywhere, remember him in your petitions at the throne of grace.

I will now close, hoping that what I have written and the clipping of the paper will meet the approval of all. As I am failing fast, that you will excuse mistakes, and pardon error, is my prayer.

(MRS.) S. G. FRAZEE.

PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.

THE annual session of the Primitive Baptist Association was held Saturday, Sunday and Monday at the church near Middle Creek. The Association covers Hancock County, and each year it is entertained at one of four strongholds of the church: Bentley, Providence, Middle Creek or Durham Center. Wherever the Association assembles two or three homes in the neighborhood are offered as places of public entertainment. Members of the church, not only from the charges in the county, but from other counties and States, come freely, and with happy hearts, knowing there will be food for the soul and meat and shelter for the body in generous abundance. Beside these homes of public entertainment, numerous families take guests to their homes. At this session the homes of Mrs. Martha Tucker, with Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Johnson assisting, and of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Kimbrough with the family of S. A. McCallister assisting, were places of public entertainment. Sixty-five guests were given supper, bed and breakfast Saturday night at the Kimbrough home, and as many Sunday night. Possibly the same number at Mrs. Tucker's. This hospitality is as generous and free as salvation itself. It is estimated that 1500 people attended the session Sunday. To accommodate the crowd a platform with seats for the audience was arranged on the church grounds, over which ample tarpaulins were stretched. The speakers taking part on the program were Elder Chastain, of Springfield, Elder Dobbs, of Springfield, Elder Hale, of Morgan Co., Illinois, Elder Turner, of Boone Co., Missouri, Elder Hardisty, of Missouri, Dr. Owen, of Hersman, Ill., and Elder Frazee, of Bentley. At the business session Saturday Elder Frazee was reelected moderator, having served in that capacity for thirty years. H. W. McPherson was reelected clerk, having served quite as long. The speakers the writer heard, Elders Dobbs and Chastain, presented the tenets of their faith with ability and clearness, and met with respectful and interested attention. There was sweetness and sincerity in the atmosphere that surrounded this meeting. The earnest tranquil faces of those who felt their souls had been ransomed by the blood of the Lamb, spoke tranquility of heart. There was no strained effort to bring about a great revival; there was just the sweet, simple appeal to the heart and the invitation. Mrs. Roberson, of Quincy, told her experience during the session, and was baptized Sunday afternoon in the J. M. Jones pond. The Primitive Baptist Association uses a song book made up largely of fine old-time hymns, such as were used by the pioneers of this western country in their religious life, hymns which are full of deep spirituality, but which have been for the most part replaced in modern books by a much cheaper grade of religious song. While there were many hymns sung that appear in all modern hymnals, devotion seemed to reach its height when Elder Frazee started the ancient air "Commack," and the words rolled over the audience in heart-searching tunes and rhythm:

"Ye pilgrims of Zion, and chosen of God,
Whose spirits are filled with dismay,
Since ye have eternal redemption through blood,
Ye cannot but hold on your way," &c.

Cowper's hymn, "O for a closer walk with God," was sung, and left nothing to be desired in its melody.

At the close of the afternoon service the people adjourned to reassemble at the pond to witness the rite of baptism. It was a beautiful scene. The pond was large, and surrounded by trees that cast their lacy shadows across its waters. The people assembled at the water's edge in quiet decorum for the service. How like the assembling of the saints on the banks of Jordan to wave another soul to glory. Elder Frazee walked out into the quiet water of the pond to test the depth, and returned for the candidate, during which time the audience on the bank was singing:

"In all my Lord's appointed ways,
My journey I'll pursue;
Hinder me not, ye much loved saints,
For I must go with you.

Through floods and flames, if Jesus leads,
I'll follow where he goes;
Hinder me not, shall be my cry,
Though earth and hell oppose."

When the Elder and the candidate returned to the shore the chorus burst into the joyful old hymn:

"O how happy are they,
Who their Savior obey."

It was a day of rest and gladness, and it made one feel that the "old time religion" was not only "good enough," but a lot better than some.

At the close of the service our party repaired by special invitation to the Kimbrough home, where supper was to be served to the guests of the household. About seventy were served. In the evening services were held at the houses of public entertainment, and were full of the same devout spirit that filled the daytime sessions.

The present association is possibly the first religious body to build a church in Hancock County. It was organized at the home of Elder Owens in 1835, and the old brick church, located in the woods nearer Middle Creek than the present church building and dismantled in recent years, was built soon after. It was furnished at first in the most primitive way, modern pews and other equipment being added later. It is one religious body in the county that seems to have kept the faith in its pristine beauty. May this body continue in grace and good works. The next annual meeting will be held at Bentley the second Sunday in September, 1917.

FORDYCE, Ark., Oct. 19, 1916.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—I have received your card acknowledging the receipt of my check and the list of subscribers, and referring to the Bible will say: It has been my principal purpose to assist in the further spreading of the doctrine as set forth in the SIGNS among our people, and also to assist in the upkeep and support of the paper, but as I am hoping to get you some more new subscribers soon, I will accept as a premium one of your Bibles to use in the ministry. I am also glad to inform you that the New Hope Association has just closed its sixty-first annual session, and that it was one of the most harmonious meetings I ever had the great blessing of attending. There were ten regularly ordained ministers, and two licentiates, and the preaching was an unbroken sound: salvation by grace, and grace alone, through God's mercy, through his Son Jesus Christ, leaving all human merit out of it. The Elders present, were: W. K. Smith, Randolph, La., R. W. Rhodes, Randolph, La., J. B. Hardy, Rowel, Cleveland Co., Ar-

kansas., G. R. Hatchcock, Saunders, Ark., J. H. Blythe, Hermitage, Ark., J. W. Bradley, New Edinburg, Ark., and others, and I surely did feel that the Lord was in the whole meeting. There were two that joined during this meeting, and many others showed that they were very much interested in the things that pertain to eternal life.

Since writing the above I was in attendance at another good meeting Saturday and Sunday; there two more joined, and Sunday morning at 10:30 we went "into" the water and baptized them in the presence of a large congregation of people. This was a great joy to me, to see the "little ones" coming home. We had been looking and expecting them almost every meeting for a long time, but as stated by them, such a great weight of unworthiness was upon them that they felt it would be nothing but solemn mockery for them to come. But when the time comes there is no resisting power to hold them back, and they come telling what great things the Lord has done for them, whereof they are glad. There are others who we feel will "come home" soon, as every indication shows that they are "pilgrims" wandering without the camp. We certainly hope that we are thankful that the Lord is good to us, and visiting us and manifesting his love and his everlasting promises to us, that he adds to the church daily such as "shall" be saved, that he has built his church upon "the Rock" and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Our churches are all in peace, and sweet fellowship abounds, and our brethren and sisters are good about being at their places of duty, feeling that the Lord has worked in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and they joyously do these things, because his love is shed abroad in their hearts to the discharging of these duties. We would be very glad to have more Old Baptists move here and cast their lot with us. We have good church conveniences, and a good, mild and pleasant country to make a living in, and we invite all good, sound, peace-loving Baptists to come and live with us.

In fellowship and sweet communion of God's Holy Spirit with you all, I am, sojourning in hope,

V. R. HARRIS.

ATLANTA, Ga., Oct. 31, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If one as unworthy as I feel myself to be should thus address you. I am yet here among the living, but I am no better, am suffering untold pain. I can get around some on a crutch and stick. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES still comes to me regularly, for which I do feel thankful to you for sending it to me, for I do enjoy reading it, and if I ever get able to work I will pay you for it; it does contain much good reading. I do hope the dear brethren and sisters will continue to write on as the good Lord gives them light and liberty to do so, for they comfort many of God's little children. O that I could comfort them as I feel and hope they have comforted me. My desire is that the good Lord will long spare your lives to stand on the walls of Zion to cry aloud and spare not, ever contending for the truth, for it is food to every little child of grace.

I will have to stop, as I am suffering much pain, and am very nervous. Remember me in your prayers to the good Lord, a poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

Your brother, I hope,

G. W. ALMAND.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1916.

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EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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1 CORINTHIANS III. 17.

"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

We understand this to mean that any man who defiles the temple of God by bringing into it false doctrines or false practices shall be destroyed from the love and fellowship of the church. The destruction here meant is not an eternal destruction, but a destruction here in time, a destruction that casts one out of the visible organization of the church, that excludes one from the fellowship of the church and from participation in the privileges and ordinances of the church. The text can mean nothing but this, because the temple of God cannot be defiled only so far as the visible organization of the church here in the world is that temple. The temple of God, as meaning the whole host of the redeemed, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and washed from their sins in the blood of Jesus' sacrifice of himself, cannot be defiled, because the body of Christ in its mystical meaning is beyond the reach of human defilement, removed beyond the machinations of men and devils. Therefore the word "temple" in our text must refer to the church here in the world in its militant state, in its visible organization. The visible organization of the church, ever since the days of the apostles, has been troubled more or less by men who taught for doctrines the commandments of men, who brought in false doctrines, who introduced disorderly practices and institutions, who have offered strange fire on altars built to idols. These things, foreign to the teachings of Christ and his apostles, have defiled the visible organization of the church, not to the extinction of the church, but to the condemnation of those who introduced them. God is not mocked, and no man can presume to introduce heresies into the temple of God without calling down on himself the vengeance of God in the protection of his people. Wolves cannot wantonly molest the sheep of God's pasture without sowing to themselves destruction which casts them forth out of the fold to wail and gnash teeth in the outer darkness. Paul is writing this way to the church at Corinth because some strange things were then among them which were defiling their order and walk. For one thing, controversies had arisen regarding baptism, which had resulted in the manifestation of a party spirit among them. Partisanship always defiles the temple of God. Again, they were not observing the Lord's supper in a gospel manner, but were employing it to satisfy their appetites, not discerning the Lord's body. Any such eating and drinking was a defilement of the order of the church. Again, fornication was being permitted in the Corinthian Church: a member had lived unseemly with his father's wife. This immorality was a defilement of the temple; that is, of the visible organization of the church. Now whoever was guilty of any of these things in the Corinthian Church was guilty of

defilement of the temple, and therefore the Lord would destroy him. This destruction, as we have said before, did not necessarily mean eternal destruction, but destruction from the fellowship of the church, being cast off from the privileges and ordinances of the visible church. Peter says: "There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." "Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings, while they feast with you." John says, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." Let such as speak perverse things contrary to the doctrine of Christ be excluded from the privileges of the temple. This is the destruction that God will surely visit on all that defile the temple. The wicked may prosper, but it is only for a little time.

Requested by E. W. Hatcher, McEwen, Tenn. L.

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MARK XVI. 17, 18.

"AND these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name * * * they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

Our inquirer asks for an explanation of only one of the signs that follow them that believe. The Scripture recorded by Mark gives five signs that follow them that believe, but as our inquirer wants us to write especially of the one sign: "They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover," we will not take up time and space in trying to write more than we are asked to write. First of all, belief in God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ is never the work of the creature, it is the work of God. It is the effect of the power of the resurrection working in the soul. The power that raised Christ from the dead is the same power required to cause one to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Belief, thus powerfully produced, has certain results or signs that follow. One of these is that they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover. Now, the twelve disciples were, by the working of this mighty power, believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, certain signs followed these twelve disciples which gave evidence that these men had been with Jesus and were taught of him. One of these evidences or signs that followed these disciples was that they laid hands on the sick and they recovered. We have but to turn to the book of the Acts of the apostles to find recorded there many significant instances of healings wrought by the apostles, not in their own name, but in the name and authority of the Lord, who had called and qualified them unto the performance of these signs. Thus was the lame man at the beautiful gate of the temple healed. Thus was Tabitha restored to life. Thus was it true that from the apostle's body, handkerchiefs and aprons were brought to

the sick, diseases departed from them and evil spirits went out of them. All these signs the apostles performed not of themselves, but in the name of Jesus; and all these signs that followed them proved the power of God that was in them, thus giving evidence that they were believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. But the question of importance to us to-day is, How does this sign now follow those who believe? There are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ to-day just as there were then, and the belief is wrought precisely now as it was then, that is, by the same power that raised Christ from the dead. How then do those who believe in Christ in this day and generation lay hands on the sick and cause them to recover? First of all, we must say that we do not believe that this sign is literally true in this age of the world. It was literally true of the apostles that they did heal diseases of the body by the power given them to do so; but the power is not now given to the church to heal bodily afflictions and diseases as it was then. However, there is a sickness which none but a believer understands, and which the believer touches with the hand of his faith, and which sickness is assuaged by such touch. This is the sickness on account of sin. None but a believer understands the symptoms and cause of this sickness, none but a believer can sympathize with another who is thus sick. When one is sick of sin, it is a great comfort to find one who has had this dreadful malady, and the hands of whose faith is able to coolingly comfort and console the one thus sick. None but Jesus can apply the healing balm, and often he is pleased to do this in the ministry of his gospel, thus causing one believer to minister to another, to lay hands on the one that is sick. There are instances of christian experience where one has long labored under conviction for sin, long been burdened with the law's condemnation, long sick of sin, the worst of all diseases. In some cases it has pleased God to send relief to these sin-burdened souls in the preached word. When such has been the case, has not the believer preaching the word laid hands of faith on him that was sick, and did he not recover? Yea, verily, for the burden was gone and a newborn hope became that one's health and peace, begotten by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Also, this matter may be looked at from another standpoint. Sometimes members of the church get sick, not physically, but spiritually. They seem to grow cold, their zeal flags, they get to staying away from the meetings and become wrapped up in the duties and cares of the world. Is not this sickness? However, when the members of the church have the mind and love not to give that one up, but to go after him, visit him, talk to him, continually showing that they love and fellowship that one, the Lord is pleased to restore that one to the fold, thus curing the sickness of that one. Sickness means disease, and disease means out of ease or out of order. Every disorder in the walk and conversation of a child of God is a spiritual sickness. Often the manifestation on the part of our brethren that they love us at such times when we are sick, is enough to recover us from our sickness. We are all servants one of another, not in our name, but in the name of Jesus, and every ministration from one member of the body of Christ to another member of the body of Christ is the fruit of God's power in the members, is the sign that follows their belief in him, so that they are given to lay hands on one another and to recover them from unhealthful states. The child of

God, the believer, does not exercise himself unto this ministration, but the power of salvation working in him exercises him unto all such ministrations, thus making our ministrations a sign that we do believe in him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. We know of one case where a brother in the church absented himself from the meetings of the church again and again and seemed to be growing spiritually cold. The other members of the church, because they loved this one sincerely, would not give him up to this coldness, but kept going to see him. Every time he missed a meeting, some of the brethren went to see why he was not there. They kept this up until this one who was staying away found that the only way to get rid of them and keep them from coming to pry him out was for him to go to the meetings. Thus he began going to the meetings again to avoid being compelled continually to give reasons for not going, and he found that the more he went the more he wanted to go, until finally he had no inclination not to go, but a strong desire to be at all the meetings and to be in the company of those who loved him and whom he loved, and who had not deserted him in the hour of his need. Here, it seems to us, is an instance where those who believed laid hands on him that was sick and he recovered. All the ministration that was accomplished throughout this whole proceeding was by the grace of God effectually working in them that thus ministered. We cannot do these things of ourselves. If we did, it would be nothing but formality, and would do no good. It takes grace to serve God with reverence and fear, and we can only minister to one another in this way as grace is given us so to do. What a beautiful sight it is, however, when grace does thus effectually energize the members of the church unto the bearing of another's burdens in love, so fulfilling the law of Christ. He has given us the commandment that we love one another. This commandment he gives not on tables of stone, but on the fleshly tables of the heart, writes it in the mind, imprints it in the inward parts, so that it is not resting with God's people whether they will love one another or not, but they do love one another because the religion of Jesus is a vital principle, the blessed effect of Jesus' resurrection from the dead dwelling in his people. Nothing is grander than to see this wonderful power working in believers, causing signs to follow them that are the outflowering of their belief. The aroma of pine forests is said to be beneficial in certain diseases of the body, but the fragrance of Jesus' name flowing out from his garden inclosed has cheered many a weary wanderer in his pilgrimage on the way home.

Written at the request of brother S. S. Taylor, of Mitchell, Arkansas. L.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I desire to acknowledge the kindness of many dear brethren, sisters and friends in writing me many words of comfort and sympathy after the loss of my dear wife and companion. As I do not feel that I can reply to each individually, please accept my sincere thanks for this great kindness in remembering this poor lonely one in sorrow.

Yours in hope of a better life beyond this vale of tears, D. M. GILLIS.

MUIRKIRK, Ontario, Oct. 17, 1916.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

JOSEPH FORD has changed his address from David City, Nebr., to Box 516, Seneca, Kansas.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder A. B. Francis.)

The Elders and messengers composing the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Nassaongo, Wicomico Co., Md, October 18th, 19th and 20th, 1916, to the several churches whose messengers we are sendeth christian salutation.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—It is meet that we maintain the long established custom of sending a Circular Letter to the several churches composing this association, in the way of stirring up your pure minds by way of remembrance of the goodness of the Lord and his gracious dealings with us all, and as witnesses to declare those things that we have seen and heard. The Lord our God has revealed unto his people in these last times things that were hidden from the sight of even prophets and kings of olden times, though the Spirit of Christ in them did testify of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow, and they sought earnestly to know them, yet they died without the sight. But unto his people hath he given to know these wonderful and glorious mysteries by revealing them by his Spirit, which searcheth even the deep things of God. All this mystery is embraced in the salvation of his people through his Son, in whom is contained all the purposes of God, all the wisdom and knowledge and power of God, and whom the Father sent into the world in the fullness of time (at the time appointed), as was determined of God before the foundation of the world, made of a woman and made under the law (that is, subservient to the law, to fulfill all that the law required at the hands of his people, and which they could not do), thus delivering them from its curse and redeeming them, to bring them forth and manifest them as his sons and daughters. This is a great mystery, that sinners of Adam's race, cut off and cast out and driven away, should be brought back and fully restored to all that was lost to them by the transgression of Adam; yea, more, for instead of an earthly paradise lost, they are now raised to a "paradise of bliss, where love triumphant reigns," and made secure in its title so that they cannot be deprived of it. In this wonderful mystery is embraced the vital unity of Christ and the church. Adam, as the figure of Christ, contained the woman, whose life was also in him, was a type, showing the vital, spiritual unity of Christ and the church. When the woman was separated from the man in a separate individuality, she was still bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, and was endowed with the same "breath of life" that was breathed into the nostrils of the man whom the Lord God formed of the dust of the ground. God did not breathe into the nostrils of the woman and endow her with a separate life, but she was joined unto Adam in a life union. So the apostle said, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." Thus in the antitype the church is brought forth and manifested by a new spiritual birth, in which each one is born again, receiving by the gift of God eternal life through Jesus Christ, being called with an holy calling, not according to their works (or according to their Adamic being), but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, by which the purpose of God toward them is made

manifest, and by that is revealed their unity with Christ, and they now receive that which God gave them, and which was theirs before the world began; thus they are now come into their own lawful right as heirs (that is, children) of God, and are made manifest as "members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones." And as their life is hid with him in God, so they receive their sustenance from him. "And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power; in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ. Let no man beguile you of your reward, in a voluntary humility and worshiping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God."—Col. ii. 10–19. Wonderful, wonderful mystery this: God manifest in the flesh, yea, even in the flesh of all his saints. Job said, "In my flesh shall I see God." The apostle John wrote, "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God." "Christ in you the hope of glory." Amen.

A. B. FRANCIS, Moderator.
JOHN H. TRUITT, Clerk.
GEO. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

(Written by Newton J. Jones.)

To the Elders and messengers of the Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, and the churches they represent, and to all who love our Lord, with whom we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED OF THE LORD:—Through the tender mercy of our God, and in the fulfillment of one more of his predestinated purposes, who doeth all things well (and none can hinder), we are enabled to meet again, praying the God of gods, if it should be pleasing in his sight, and if one can ask in this way for another, to have mercy on us poor sinners and give us a proper waiting before him, that we may worship toward his holy temple in spirit and in truth, as you know by experience and the written word of God that you cannot commune with God only by, in and through the Spirit. Now, very dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, when we come to meet with you in the association again it reminds us that another year of time has gone by with its joys and sorrows, and we have witnessed an end to many things, but to God's eternal mercy we have seen no end. We feel to say that it has pleased the Lord since we last met to call from our midst some sweet counsel, which reminds us, too, of our weakness and short stay here in time. O, praise his holy and reverend name forever, he doeth all things well and for our good, if we are what we hope

we are. Now, very dear brethren in the Lord, in compliance with the action of the association at her last meeting, and in accordance with her previous custom, you will expect something in the form of a Circular Letter to attach to our Minutes, and as this lot fell on me I will call your attention to the fourteenth chapter of Job, fourteenth and fifteenth verses, which read as follows: "If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands." Dear brethren, Job spake as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, therefore his language, we hope we make no change in it. He had in his mind at this time the death of our natural body and the resurrection of it after God shall have changed it and made it like the body of his dear Son, Christ the Lord. O be not afraid to say that your body in that day will please God. It will not be a body that the worms can destroy and bring it to corruption; no, sin and sorrow, and things of nature, and devils, hell and death will be passed away. As for sin, the angel told Joseph that he should call his name Jesus, for he should save his people from their sins, and Paul said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." O think of Christ when he was among his people; yea, his own kinsmen, his bride, and they would falsely accuse him. Bless his holy name forever, he did not murmur although he sweat, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground, and think of that Holy One, that guile was not found in his mouth. O think of him, I say, when he wore a purple robe and a crown of thorns, and think of your own sins along here; he was bearing them for you. He bore them on the cross, too, when they mocked and said to him, If thou be the King of the Jews save thyself. He bore them, yea, to the end, when he said, It is finished; and think, dear brethren, there will be no sorrow there, there will be no worldly sorrow there. What I mean by worldly sorrow is a sorrow that is occasioned by worldly troubles and carnal things, which the apostle says worketh death. The apostle says, For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of this world worketh death. Godly sorrow is that sorrow because of sin; this sorrow is wrought in the soul by the Spirit of God. O I cannot tell you, I will let the apostle do it: "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." God by his Spirit hath revealed himself to you, and that caused you to love him. By the same Spirit he has taught you that you are sinners, and this brings sorrow, godly sorrow. But, O my Father's children, there will not be either one of these sorrows in that place that Job had in his mind when he said, Thou wilt call and I will answer thee. O no, brethren, there is peace, joy and the fullness of love there. The joy that we have in time is but a small foretaste of heaven. We remember how that Jesus told one who was mourning on account of the death of her brother Lazarus that He was the resurrection. O think, he bore our griefs and carried our sorrows. We read where Christ said, I have heard their cry, for I know their sorrows. Sickness, sorrow, pain, sin, all end in death, therefore as he is conqueror over death, the child that has hope in Christ can have equal hope that heaven is his home. Dear brethren, the resurrection is so wonderful that na-

ture cannot think on it in its true light. O such wonderful works of God! There was an instance that our Savior and the apostle Paul made use of as an image of the resurrection: a grain of corn planted in the earth corrupts and dies, and after it dies it springs up. Christ Jesus' body at one time lay in the grave, but it could not hold him. Remember death was the last enemy that our Lord conquered, therefore death, rocks, grave, dirt, poor weak men to watch him, yea, the cross, and all things of time, yea, and time itself, could not hold the obedient Son of God only just long enough to loose the chain that God's holy law had on the children, or his bride, or his loved ones. Yes, God bless his holy, obedient actions forever; he arose from the grave for you, too; it was for our justification. He made his love manifest again by going to those mourners and staying with them until they knew him, and he showed them that their Lord and loved one was their solid rock, shelter in the time of storm, and their great Prophet, Priest and King, their Elder Brother, their everlasting Fountain of grace, Companion and Savior in all things. Bless him forever, there is none other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. Yes, he went to the two disciples to comfort them by teaching them, and to show them that he had risen conqueror over death, hell and the weak bars of the grave. Brethren, remember that the comfort he gave those two disciples is for the children of God to-day just as much as it was then. Do not be afraid, take comfort in the hope of the resurrection, for now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. Cannot you remember when you were dead in trespasses and in sin, and knew not God (the dead know not anything), but at God's own time he made you alive to righteousness by the Spirit of his Son? O take comfort; if so be that the Spirit of Christ dwell in you, the same Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead shall also quicken your mortal body. Christ said, Ye believe in God, believe also in me; in my Father's house are many mansions. If Christ was not raised from the dead, then we could have no faith in him, and Paul says, If Christ be not raised, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable. But thanks be to his holy name, he said, "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." I cannot find language to tell you how wonderful such promises are. O friends, look to him as the full and complete Savior, alive to die no more. O think, as his resurrection is, so is yours. He has gone before and shown you God's eternal purpose, and our God showed to the world that Christ's work while here in this low ground of sin and sorrow, as fulfilling the law, yea, and his death, yea, and all that he came to do, was a finished work, for he said, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." O think, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you. O brethren, take courage, these matchless blessings are yours, and you are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be

revealed in the last time. O think how he is joined to his people in such great and perfect power, love and knowledge. Remember the time when he was in the multitude, and a woman seeking a blessing touched him, and when Jesus asked who touched him, and when all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee. But Jesus said, Some one hath touched me, for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me; and she received the blessing, and Jesus told her to go in peace. Now, brethren, when the first ripe sheaf is secure the whole crop is secure, Christ the firstfruits, and they that are his at his coming. O sing praises to his holy name, your King is coming again, but he is not coming to be tempted forty days and nights of the devil, nor to be tried in earthly trials any more, nor to wear a purple robe or a crown of thorns, or bear his own cross, or to be wrapped in swaddling clothes, or to wear the linen graveclothes any more; he is coming to take his ransomed home; he will call and they will answer him, for he will have a desire to the work of his hands. "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

Brethren, it may be I have written too lengthily already, so I will close. My prayer to God is that the Spirit of Jesus Christ may be with you in all of your deliberations, and finally save us all in that happy home where Father, Son and Holy Ghost reign eternally. Amen.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator.

H. C. CATE, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Smith Ketchum, at his residence, 3506 Garner Ave., Kansas City, Mo., October 26th, 1916, Grey D. Semple and Miss Helen J. Reese, both of St. Joseph, Mo.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at his home, Leesburg, Va., Nov. 6th, 1916, Robert F. Carter, of Fauquier County, Va., and Mrs. Rosa Belle Ellison, of Loudoun County, Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Christena C. Gillis, my dearly beloved wife, was called from this life to be forever with her dear Lord and Savior, we humbly hope, June 30th, 1916, aged 57 years and 10 months. She was born in Caradoc, Ontario, August 22nd, 1858, daughter of Malcolm S. and Margaret Campbell. She was united in marriage to Duncan M. Gillis, of Muirkirk, Dec. 23rd, 1893. She was baptized by the late Elder William Pollard, in 1878, in Ekfrid. She always felt we should be at our places of meeting, and we were highly favored of the Lord to attend nearly all of our meetings since our marriage together. I do hope I feel thankful for all these blessings. Mrs. Gillis was ill about six months. She was taken sick last January, but recovered. In April she had an attack of appendicitis, but recovered sufficiently to be around, although she did not regain her strength. In June she had another attack, from which she never recovered, but gradually grew worse until the time of her pilgrimage was accomplished, when she was released from all her pains and tribulations of this life. She felt impressed that her time was short here below, and told us about the hymn that was on her mind so much: No. 1276 (Beebe's collection), and would say to me, "If I were only fit to die." I would quote to her words that came to her in her first exercises: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona," &c. She would say that they were sweet at that time, but were all gone now. I told her about the words we used to sing: "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." A few days after this she said to me, "I am not afraid to die now, the sting of death has been taken away," and would say how thankful she was that she was clothed in her right mind, and would talk of the Lord's goodness and mercy to her, and quote the words, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want," and was composed and talked until the end. About two hours before her death my brother and his wife went in to see her, and she told them that she felt her time had come and she must go, and would say to me, "Do not weep for me, Duncan, the Lord will take care of you." We had a trained nurse, three doctors and many kind friends to relieve her sufferings during her last few days on earth, but they could not stay the hand of death one

moment. She passed peacefully away at 2 p. m., with a smile on her countenance.

Funeral services were held in Duart Baptist meetinghouse, conducted by our pastor, Elder J. B. Slauson, who spoke many words of comfort to those who mourn their loss. She truly was a devoted and faithful wife and companion, and it was always her chief delight to entertain her brethren and friends. Burial was in Duart cemetery. The pall-bearers were nephews of the departed: Oliver Sinclair, of London, Ont., Malcolm Campbell and Oliver Grey, of Lobo, Dr. E. D. Gillis, of Ridgetown, J. D. Scott and J. A. Scott, of Aldboro. She left three brothers: D. D. Campbell, of Lobo, M. J. Campbell and A. R. Campbell, of Caradoc; also two sisters: Mrs. D. T. Grey, of Lobo, and Mrs. John Sinclair, of London, and many nephews and nieces and kind friends, beside her poor, lonely companion, but we sorrow not as those who have no hope. May the dear Lord reconcile us to this sad dispensation of providence, and make us feel to say, Not our will, but thine, dear Lord, be done. DUNCAN M. GILLIS.

I feel to add a few words to the above. Having known our dear sister for several years, I can testify to her kind hospitality, her faithfulness in the church and to the cause. Our dear sister was loved and respected not only by her kindred in Christ, but by all in the community in which she lived. Her pleasant home was a welcome place to her church people, whom she delighted to entertain. Many pleasant seasons have been spent at our dear brother and sister's home. Could we have had our way, we would still have our dear sister with us, but God has otherwise ordered and taken her to himself. All that kind and loving hands could do was done, the most skillful physicians that could be had were brought in consultation, but they were all helpless as a child, nothing could stay the hand of the grave messenger. The Lord took his dear child from this vale of tears, darkness and gloom to a brighter world on high. Our dear sorrowing brother has lost a kind and devoted companion, the church a worthy member, and the community a good friend. May each and all find consolation in Him who soothes our sorrows and heal our wounds. J. B. SLAUSON.

E. C. Paxson, our beloved brother in the faith of Jesus, died October 24th, 1916, after a long ten weeks' illness of cancer. He was the son of the late William B. Paxson and Henrietta C. Hough, of Waterford, Va. He was married to Miss Sarah C. Alexander, Dec. 12th, 1871. Seven children were born to them. The loving children who survive their father are Mrs. A. B. Dove and Mrs. K. W. Moreland, of Navy, Fairfax Co., Va., Mrs. C. W. Hurst, of Ryan, Va., Mrs. Grace Myers, of Ashburn, Va., and one son, Charles White Paxson, of Washington, D. C. These children, together with Mrs. Sarah Paxson, the widow of our brother, are left to mourn the loss of a devoted father and husband. July 23rd, 1910, brother Paxson was baptized by Elder J. G. Eubanks in the fellowship of the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church, of which church he continued to be a faithful and devoted member up to the time of his death. He was always in attendance at all the meetings of the church unless prevented by illness, which was very rare indeed. None enjoyed the gospel of Christ more than he, and it seemed to be the very bread of life indeed to his hungry soul. He had been, before coming to us at Frying Pan, first a member of the Missionary Baptists, and afterward was identified with the Clark faction of Old School Baptists. He, however, became dissatisfied with first one and then the other of these bodies, and finally found a real home in the Frying Pan Church. He said he never heard the gospel as he in his soul believed it until he heard it preached by the Old School Baptists at Frying Pan. Surely he seemed to verily rest and delight in the all-sufficiency of the salvation of Jesus. Conditions to be fulfilled by man in his own strength in order to be saved were hateful to our brother, because he believed them to be utterly contradictory to the doctrine of God our Savior as revealed and taught by Jesus Christ.

The funeral was preached in the Missionary Baptist meetinghouse by the writer, using Romans ix. 17-23. A large congregation assembled at the funeral, mutely attesting their respect for the dead and their sympathy for the bereaved family circle.

ALSO,

Mrs. Mary Starr Price, our beloved sister in Christ and mother in Israel, died October 1st, 1916, at the home of her daughter, sister Sadie Deshong, at Chestertown, Md. Sister Price was the daughter of the late Jeremiah and Sarah Mellott, of Fulton County, Pa. She was born near Sipes Mill, Pa., August 5th, 1835, and was one of a family of ten children. The parents and all ten children were Old School Baptists, a very remarkable and unusual fact. Sister Price's first husband was Marcus Starr, who died in 1887. The children of this union who survive the death of their mother are sister Sadie Deshong, of Kent Co., Md., Thomas R. Starr, of Kent Co., Md., who is a member of the Welsh Tract Church, Del., Barton Starr, of Mercersburg, Pa., and Joseph C. Starr, of near Everett, Pa. Some time after the death of her first husband our sister was married to Nathan Mellott. After the death of her second husband she was married to Joseph Price, who preceded her to the grave. She was baptized the second Sunday in August, 1862, by the late Elder Joseph Correll, and thus became a member of the Fairview Old School Baptist Church at Needmore, Pa. She first saw and felt herself a sinner in the sight of the just and holy God while yet a young girl. Her father

had presented her with a Testament, which she read secretly. She would go off by herself along the creek, in the woods, &c. One day she opened her Bible to the words: "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me." These words, applied to her by the Spirit, effectually removed the burden of guilt from her conscience and gave her a comfortable hope in the finished work of Jesus. After this she was tempest-tossed a long time before baptism. Finally a voice said, "Arise and be baptized." Instantly every stumbling-block was removed, and she went before the church and was received into membership. From that time until her death she was a stanch believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. This remarkable woman had thirty-one grandchildren, of whom twenty-four are living, twenty-six living great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.

She was buried in the Sideling Hill Cemetery, Pa., but the funeral was preached in the Needmore meetinghouse, from John xiv. 1-3. L.

Mary R. Lee Stephens, eldest child of David and Sarah Lee, was born in Green County, Ohio, Feb. 10th, 1829, and died Oct. 23rd, 1916, aged 87 years, 8 months and 14 days. With the exception of a few years she spent all her life in Green County. She was married to Jeremiah Stephens Dec. 19th, 1847. To that union were born eleven children. Her husband and three children have been called from earth. The other eight children, though scattered in different parts of the country, were permitted to visit her during her last illness, which was of long duration, being dropsy and heart trouble. At times her suffering was intense, but she never murmured or complained, except that she felt she was a great care. The end was quiet and peaceful, without a struggle; she just fell asleep in the arms of Jesus. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by Elder George Reeves a little over sixty-seven years ago, and ever lived faithful to the faith once delivered unto the saints, giving to the Lord all praise, honor and glory. She was the grandmother of twenty-one grandchildren, two of whom have departed this life. She was also the great-grandmother of twenty-four children, one of whom has been called to the great beyond. She left evidence that it was far better for her to depart and be with Christ, and she was only awaiting the will of her God to call her home. She leaves to mourn their loss, besides children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, one brother, George R. Lee, of Walker, Mo., one sister, Charlotte Hinshaw, of Nevada, Mo., together with a host of friends.

After services at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Cyrus Johnson, by the unworthy writer, from John xi. 25, she was laid to rest in the Jamestown Cemetery to await the summons from on high.

C. E. JACKSON.

Mrs. Frances Hobbie, widow of James B. Hobbie, died at Jamaica Hospital, Jamaica, L. I., October 6th, the result of an operation, aged 79 years. Mrs. Hobbie was a daughter of Gabriel Hallock, of Mount Hope. She was first married to Mr. Edson Mulford, of Howells, N. Y., and to their union was born one daughter, Nora. Then she was married to James B. Hobbie, of Warwick, N. Y. She is survived by her daughters: Nora, wife of Willis Halstead, of Nyack, N. Y., Mattie, widow of Chauncey L. Winne, of Jamaica, L. I., and one son, J. Willard Hobbie, of Rosedale, L. I.; also two sisters, Miss Ann Hallock, of Middletown, and Mrs. Susie Beyea, of Howells, N. Y. After Mr. Hobbie's death she lived with her daughter, Mrs. C. L. Winne. Mrs. Hobbie was a believer in Jesus, and loved the assembly of the saints. From a sense of unworthiness she never united with the church, but her love and fellowship were with them that fear the Lord.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer at Warwick, where interment was also made, on October 10th.

ALSO,

Clarence M. Housel died October 14th, 1916, at St. Luke's Hospital, New York city, of endocarditis, aged 52 years. He was born in New Brunswick, N. J. His parents were James Wilson and Isabella Housel. His wife was Minnie I. Benedict, to whom he had been married twenty-two years when she died. He is survived by two brothers: James Wilson Housel, of Denver, Colo., and Harry Housel, of Newark, N. J. His late residence was Warwick, N. Y., where he was employed in the executive offices of the Lehigh & Hudson Railroad. For some years Mr. Housel resided in New York city, and was a regular attendant at the services of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church. He was a lover of the truth, and commended himself to our love and fellowship as an earnest seeker and diligent inquirer to know the way of life as it is in Jesus. He never united with the church, but we loved him for Jesus' sake.

Funeral services were conducted at the home of Mr. Bert L. Hulse, in Warwick, N. Y., October 17th. Interment in the Warwick Cemetery, in the James A. Benedict family plot.

JOHN McCONNELL.

Sarah J. Wortman, our beloved sister in Christ our Redeemer, died at her home near Hunter station, Va., August 9th, 1916. She was born March 28th, 1831, making his stay on earth about 85 years. Sister Wortman was twice married; her first husband's name was James Gordon Huntt, who died many years ago. One son, Joseph W. Huntt, was born to them, who survives his mother. Sister Wortman lived a widow many years, but about eight or ten years ago she was married to James Wortman, who departed this life Jan. 2nd, 1912, in the 84th year of his age.

Sister Wortman was received in the fellowship of the church at Frying Pan, Va., May 12th, 1901, and baptized by the late Elder E. V. White, and lived an humble christian life to the day of her death. The writer has often heard dear sister Wortman say, "Salvation by grace, and grace alone, is all my hope, and I rest alone in that; the grace of God that bringeth salvation." Her son wrote me as follows: "The chief thing I want to say to you about my mother is this: she is in the hand of God, her Maker, and he doeth all things well and for the best. O, it is hard to part with mother, but the only thing I can say is, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Owing to the absence of our pastor, Elder H. H. Lefferts, there was no funeral preached, and we laid her body in the grave in Herndon cemetery to await the resurrection morn, when the dead shall come forth in the image of Jesus and be like him and see him as he is. May the dear Lord comfort the son of this dear sainted mother and her grandchildren, together with the church at dear old Frying Pan, who mourn the loss of a dear mother in Israel. May we all be still and know that God is God, and that he doeth all things well.

Written by request of her son, J. W. Huntt.

JOHN F. OLIVER.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, Elder D. M. Vail will visit churches and brethren as follows:

Schoharie, N. Y., Nov. 26th, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.; Middleburg, 27th, 1:30 p. m.; Central Bridge, 27th, 7:30 p. m.; Albany, 28th, brother Hecker's, 272 Clinton Ave., 1:30 p. m.; Cobleskill, 28th, 7:30 p. m.; Lutheranville, 29th, 1:30 p. m.; Jefferson, 30th, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.

EVERETT R. KINNEY.

A WORD OF REMEMBRANCE.

TO THE BETHLEHEM CHURCH, MANASSAS, VA.:—Grace, mercy and peace to all assembled, through Jesus Christ our Lord. May he direct the meeting and comfort his people. May there be no uncertain sound, and may all hearts be gladdened thereby. May his loving-kindness be before your eyes, and may you abide in his truth always.

MARY E. WRIGHT.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., Oct. 11, 1916.

[THE foregoing telegram from sister Mary E. Wright was received at the Virginia Corresponding Meeting during their last session.—ED.]

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Mary J. Wortham, N. J., $3.00; Mrs. J. B. Howell, N. Y., $2.00; Mrs. J. D. McWilliam, Ontario, $3.00; Mrs. D. McWilliam, Ontario, $2.00; G. W. Horner, Oregon, $3.00; Mrs. Mary E. Wright, Cal., $5.00.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk,

CLAREMONT, Cal.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 84. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1916. NO. 23.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SHOCK, Ky., Oct. 5, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As I have not written anything for the dear old SIGNS in a long time, I sit down this morning to suggest a few of the many things that have long exercised my mind concerning the purpose of God in Christ, as recorded in the Scriptures of eternal truth. The apostle Paul in his wonderful epistle to the church at Ephesus speaks of this purpose of God in Christ being an eternal purpose (third chapter, eleventh verse), and in this wonderful and eternal purpose of God, as written to the church, he plainly shows that this eternal purpose or design of God was that this manifest wisdom of God might be known by the church, "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." In the tenth verse the apostle uses the word "intent," which is equivalent to the word "purpose" or "design," showing conclusively that God in his eternal design purposed that the church, which is the body of Christ, should be by divine revelation brought into a saving knowledge of the wonderful purpose of God in Christ, and of his eternal love for them in Christ from everlasting, or ever the earth was, even before the earthly Adam was formed of the created dust. "The Lord possessed me [Christ, the wisdom of God] in the beginning of his way, before his works of old." —Prov. viii. 22. The phrase, "in the beginning of his way," means the beginning of God's manifestation or development of this wonderful mystery and purpose in Christ, by whom he created all things, and who (Christ) was made in that eternal purpose or council unto us, the church, his body, his bride, wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. (1 Cor. i. 30.) "That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." When it pleases God to prepare our poor hearts in these heavenly places in Christ, as there is none of these heavenly places out of Christ; I say, when it pleases God to prepare our hearts here in these heavenly places, it is then, and not until then, that we are blest by his Holy Spirit to glory in the Lord, and in these hearts of ours, according to the measure of the gift of Christ, realize that this was God's intent in his eternal purpose in Christ, that the church might know these manifold mysteries and bless-

ings of God in Christ for them in these heavenly places, which manifold wisdom, purposes and blessings he pleased to hide from the wise and prudent, those who are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight, but are not cleansed from their filthiness. This same apostle in writing to his son Timothy in the gospel of this eternal purpose of God in Christ, says, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."—1 Tim. i. 15. What a wonderful purpose of God in Christ: even the salvation of sinners—sinners of the earthy Adam, who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began, that they should be (exist) holy and without blame before him in love. The apostle is here still presenting the wonderful purpose of God in Christ, the salvation of Israel, God's chosen and redeemed people, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus, and called. This people known in the Scriptures as the Israel of God, elect vessels of mercy, &c., have two standings, one in Christ, the heavenly Adam, a quickening Spirit, and one in the earthy Adam, hence are earthy in their standing in and relation to their earthy head, the earthy Adam. In the order of development their standing in the earthy Adam was first, in which life and standing they were wholly depraved, dead in trespasses and sins, and were by nature, and in this standing, children of wrath, exactly or precisely as the nonelect, but in the order of existence their standing in Christ was first, was from everlasting, before ever the earth was formed, or even the Adamic dust was created and fashioned, and in this standing they are preserved in Christ, holy and without fault before God in love, and shall remain in their standing in Christ as untarnished as though they never had sinned, or been manifested here in time in their Adamic standing, for they were chosen in Christ, (not into) before the foundation of the world, that they should exist holy in their standing in Christ, therefore they never underwent any change whatever, so far as their standing in Christ the heavenly Adam is concerned; but I would not be understood to mean or believe that God's church or people existed in Christ in their individuality, but their eternal life was there, hid with Christ in God; in fact, Christ is himself our life, and when he appears in our hearts the hope of glory, then we shall also appear with him in glory in these heavenly places in Christ our dear Redeemer, who bore our sorrows and carried our griefs, and the chastisement of our peace was laid upon Christ, our covenant Head. All the chastisement, and the punishment that the law of divine justice required, or that was due for the transgression of the whole elect family of God, was laid on Christ, and he bore it in his own body on the tree, suffered the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. These wonderful things are made known to the church in these heavenly places in Christ, according to God's intent, that they might know them, according to his eternal purpose in Christ, his beloved Son. He anointed him a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel and the forgiveness of sins, and not only so, but Commander and Leader of his people Israel, their covenant Head. David was personating Christ when he said, "He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow."—2 Sam. xxiii. 5. In this well ordered covenant, Christ, God's well be-

loved Son, asked his Father to give him all his desire, which he did, and which was in harmony with his Father's eternal purpose in his Son before the world was, as is plainly exemplified in Psalms ii. 7, 8: "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." I cannot see why we should trouble ourselves about the salvation of the heathen, or any one, even in the extreme nooks and corners of the earth, for Christ in this unchangeable covenant of eternal love asked his Father for all his Father desired to give him, and all that he himself desired, and their desires are one, for they are one. All mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me. This is all my desire and all my salvation, said David. The Scriptures abundantly prove that God's purpose is unchangeable. Hence no desire of either the Father or Son to change the covenant, no desire for one more or less than those sealed, signed, and ratified forever and ever. Therefore, my beloved brethren in the Lord, remember me, a poor, imperfect creature, if saved, saved by sovereign grace. What a wonderful and mysterious thought occupies my mind as I am writing here. If I am saved, my blessed Jesus embraced and asked for me, a poor dustworm of the uttermost part of the earth. I would love to praise his name. This savors plainly of weakness and old age. I am eighty years old.

W. J. MAY.

BELINGTON, West Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have a letter that the late Elder Edmund Dennison wrote to his daughter many years ago, which I think would be of interest to the readers of the SIGNS, as it contains much of the rich things of God, a feast of fat things to our souls. I heard Elder Dennison preach when I was a young man, and now I am in my seventy-fifth year. I will send you his letter for your consideration, and I think it would be interesting to the many readers of the dear old SIGNS to see a letter written by one who was so highly esteemed for the truth's sake.

Now, dear brethren, you have been sending the SIGNS to me for some time, and I have not paid anything for it. Do not think hard of me, dear brethren, it is a great feast to my soul now that I am old. I was in the rebel army, and was wounded twice; once in the thigh, and once in the head, and had a piece of my skull removed, but am still spared, but for what purpose the Lord only knows. Now, dear brethren, I have no education; I went to school only about nine months in my life, so if this is published I hope you will please correct all mistakes. I have often been requested to write my experience. It has been long since, as I hope, I was led to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ our Lord, yet it is as plain and clear in my mind to-day as it was then. I was four years in trouble. I am old, and my hand so trembly that I cannot write. I have been in the Old School Baptist Church forty-one years, and have been preaching about forty years of that time. I am pastor of two churches, and moderator of our association. But poor old sinner as I am, God has had mercy on me and spared me. I went through the war and have been where the bullets flew as thick as

hail, but my life was in his all-powerful hand, and they came and went at his command. The doctrine that the good old SIGNS contains is the doctrine I love. When I see such good writing in it it fills my soul with joy that God has given such gifts to the church. When I am low down in the valley it raises my mind to David when he said, Let us go up to the house of the Lord.

Now, in conclusion, I hope for the good of Zion, and may God's blessings rest upon all his dear children.

Yours to serve in the gospel of the grace of God,

J. B. CROSS.

JACKSONVILLE, W. Va., Jan. 6, 1885.

MY DEAR DAUGHTER:—To-day, being eighty-six years old, and without my glasses, I find myself trying to write a letter to my daughter fifty-three years of age. Dear Dane, peace and love be with you. I have had in contemplation to greet you with an epistle of christian love, which may be the last time while in this sorrowful vale. It is hardly reasonable to suppose that we shall ever meet again in the flesh, hence I embrace the God-given privilege to converse with you through the medium of this imperfect communication. Will omit giving in detail the current news of our country. My health at present, with the exception of dizziness and the infirmities of old age, is as good as could be expected, for which I wish to be grateful to the God of all blessings. I believe I am writing to a child of sorrow, acquainted with grief, and if I could be instrumental in the hands of the God of all comfort, with my pen, to record one sentence, if but a drop of cold water, and God would add his blessing, to minister spiritual comfort in your dark and dreary hours of solitude, I should be amply rewarded. Look to Jesus, the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, who can feel our afflictions, in whom alone is help in times of need, lest under the weight of deep trouble of heart we faint and yield to dark and hopeless despair. He is a sure support in times of sorrow of heart. If he does not banish our trouble speedily, he gives us grace to bear it. There is nothing comes from his gracious hand, prosperity or adversity, that will hurt us. Dear child, in all our sorrows and trials there is no safer place than to lie weeping and helpless at his feet. The Lord has said for our comfort and encouragement that he draweth nigh to them of a broken heart, and saves such as be of a contrite spirit. Dear Dane, let us thank God and take courage, for in his wise dealing our troubles, deep sorrows, trials, temptations and sore struggles with unbelief, though not joyous at the time, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. They sweeten the heavenly abode of our eternal repose. The deeper the sorrow the louder we sing. Faint not at the chastening of the Lord, for all these are the trial of your faith employed by the mercy of the Lord, that it may come forth as pure gold, that you may stand before him at the day of judgment without shame. When you are in a state of warfare may the Father of mercies, the God of all comfort, who comforteth in tribulation, give unto you the peace of God that passeth understanding, to keep your mind in peace and love through Christ Jesus, support you in your troubles, giving now and then a sweet foretaste of the joys to come, and fill you with joy and peace in believing. May you abound in hope, that your faith fail not, and through grace endure to the end. May you be saved from the pernicious doctrines of

this day of strong delusions, trying by their false system of man's free will in a state of nature to do good (free agency) and conditional salvation, and disapproving of the soul-cheering doctrine of the sinner's salvation alone by grace, the atoning blood of Christ. Indeed, in this day of spiritual wickedness in high places, it seems that they are trampling on the precious blood of Christ and turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, by speaking evil of the way of truth. Beware of them, for their doctrine is not of God, but of men, and will eat as doth a canker. Teach your children to shun them as deceivers. Dear daughter, let us try in all our sorrows and temptations, which so often bring us to the brink of despair, to take courage and rejoice in the many sweet and precious promises of him who cannot lie, who hath said, I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you, I will guide you by my counsel and receive you to glory. Let us, while strangers and pilgrims in this barren land, plodding along, sometimes ready to halt and give up, overwhelmed with trouble, and feeling like one forsaken of God and man, with our harps upon the willows, and under dark and fearful clouds that so often overspread our spiritual sky, hiding his cheering countenance from us; let us, I say, try to raise our downcast eyes in these cases of darkness, and by faith look to our precious Jesus. When deep calleth unto deep, and all thy billows are gone over me, we hear his precious voice, It is I, be not afraid. Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, in faith, hope and patience. Lift up the hands that hang down, and look to Jesus, our faithful High Priest, who feels for all our afflictions, and hears every sigh and groan, our glorious Advocate. If any sin, through the infirmities of the flesh, he is ready to plead our cause and make intercession for us. We are hid with Christ in God. Dear daughter, take courage in his precious promises, for he is an unchangeable God. Why should we yield to the suggestions of the wicked one in unbelief? It weakens our faith and nourishes despair in regard to our interest in our blessed Lord and his salvation. Resist the adversary of our peace steadfastly in faith, and rejoice in the glory of God. Ah, you say, vapors arise from my corrupt nature over which I have no control, grow into fearful clouds of doubts and fears, hiding the face of the holy Comforter from me, and I mourn an absent God, until my precious Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, arises for my deliverance, and speaks peace, and the prison doors are opened. He breaks the fetters of unbelief and gently calls my soul out of prison, and his loving-kindness leads me out of the wilderness and brings my thirsty soul to his banqueting-house, to sit under his banner of love. Dear sister, what a glorious privilege to enjoy sweet fellowship with the Father and the Son, Jesus Christ. One day in the presence of our dear Lord is better than a thousand days of pleasure in sin. Thus it is with the Lord's people. Sometimes in the wilderness, and again in the fruitful fields. In view of heaven, and again in the valley of Achor, on the borders of hopeless despair. But he has said all these things work together for our good. Let us trust him in storms as well as in calms. He is the same faithful and unchangeable God. I said in the beginning this might be my last letter; if so, and we never meet again on earth, I pray by the favor of God we shall be brought to meet around the throne to join in fellowship with the church of the Firstborn, the spirits of the

just made happy, to rest in the realms of perfect happiness. Then shall this mortal put on immortality, and be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus. We shall then see him as he is and be like him. May God resign us to his will, for our sufferings abound in Christ, to rest free from all sorrow in the bosom of eternal love. Dear daughter, what glorious anticipations to support us on the way, and keep our sinking heads above the waves. The more we suffer here the sweeter rest will be. You are often present in my thoughts, and my feeble prayers ascend to God in your behalf, that the God who feeds the lambs and clothes the lilies will condescend to remember you in your lonely widowed state, and your dear Father's children in providence and in grace will remember you and family in your present state. He has promised to be a Father to the fatherless, and the widow's God. Now, the counsel from your old father, as a well-wisher, is to live in peace and love, and regard the welfare of each other, and obey the commandments of God, honor thy father and mother, and render the necessary labor to procure a living, and trust the Lord to bless your efforts, and verily you shall live in the land and be fed.

I must close. Take no offence at my long letter, but receive it as a loving token of the special regard of your old father. Read it and keep it in memory of one who prays for you all. Give my love to all the friends. While I am on earth let me hear from you often. Farewell, dear children, farewell. May God bless you all.

From your unworthy, but affectionate father,

E. DENNISON.

1 JOHN V. 4.

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

My Dear Brethren:—After several months of silence there has come into my mind an impression to again address the household of faith. The words at the commencement of this letter you will see are those of John. You will remember also that John was a lovely character, therefore when he wrote he wrote of love, and when he talked he talked of love. What an excellent gift. He starts out in this chapter to address a certain pious matron; this matron he calls the elect lady. He also has something to say to her children: he confesses that he loves this lady and her children. Brethren, is it not an excellent gift to be enabled to understand what John is writing about? All men cannot understand; the language is too strange. I am going to say he is talking to the church of God and the children who compose this church. I will now speak directly to the church, trusting I may be enabled to comfort her while she awaits the presence of her Husband (Jesus). The church, it seems to me, is like unto a woman whose husband has gone on a journey, and who does not return at the time expected by the devoted wife. Now I seem to be carried in mind to a lonely home in the wilderness; this house is an old one, and the woman and her children are poor; they are not clothed very well, and there is no bread in this house; the children are beginning to cry for bread, the husband has gone to get food for his family; the mother of the children is in great distress, she is uneasy, she goes out to listen for her husband; in her weakness she begins to be imaginary: some terrible calamity has overtaken him. She listens, she turns

first one ear and then the other, no sound can be heard. She remembers how she has heard her husband singing as he neared this little home in the wilderness, but now she can hear no voice. She goes into this house, and lies down to sleep. She sleeps, but her heart waketh, her sleep is not good; she is disturbed in her sleep, gloomy forebodings abound; devils are present, casting fiery darts, saying unto her, Where is now your God? Are you not now satisfied there is no God? Do you not know that if there was a God that he would not permit such things as these to come to pass? Why, even a man would have more compassion. Where then is your God in whom you have trusted? This woman is in intense agony. I see her eyes as they turn red with grief; I see the tear as it glides down the cheek. O that groaning in her breast. Now I hardly know how to continue this subject, such wonderful things do I feel, but I cannot forget this virtuous woman, for virtuous she is. I have seen the awful plight of this woman in this wilderness home; I know whom she is seeking: she is seeking Jesus, the Head of the church. I cannot at this time hold my peace. I am coming into this house; I am telling her that her Husband is safe, no evil has or can overtake him; that her Husband is a mighty man of valor; that he is different from Naaman, in that he is no leper; he is free from sin, there is no guile to be found in him. I am telling this woman that her Husband has power over these devils that have tormented her so long. Her Husband can say to these demons, Depart, and immediately they are gone. This encourages this woman some, but she had rather see her Husband —no one like him. Suddenly she hears a sound, it is in the nighttime. This Husband never sleeps, but is present at all times, but the natural vision cannot see him. Now he comes and knocks, and the bride arises to open unto him. It is the voice of my beloved, he has returned, he has brought with him bread and all kinds of good things to eat; no crying of the children, they are filled, and all kinds of wearing apparel has he brought. The bride cannot mourn now, because the Bridegroom is present. Now this woman is born of God, and she will overcome the world. This woman has faith, and because she has faith she overcomes the world. But we will ask, How did she come into possession of these things? Because she inherited them from her Husband. A man who is in possession of property has a right to make a will and testament, and to bequeath this property to whom he will, but in order for this will to become effective there must of necessity be a death of the one who makes the will, as we read in the New Testament. Now the legacy which Christ left to his bride was hope, which is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. This hope keeps his bride alive when devils are tormenting her, as I saw them when I told about it before in this letter. She was sore distressed then, but that little hope did not fail her. I think I forgot to say that in that terrible agony in which I saw this woman I also saw the beautiful and burning face of the Son of God watching this scene. What a wonderful thing for a sinner like me to say, but can I keep from telling what I see? I cannot, though I have tried. Now, you redeemed souls, I want to impress upon your minds the truth of these words: For whatsoever is born of God doth overcome the world. Brethren and sisters, why be dismayed? Nevertheless I am dismayed myself sometimes, but now I am not, the plan of salvation is so plain

and sure, the resurrection of Jesus Christ so wonderful, the power within me so great, I can only say, Why art thou cast down, O my soul? &c. Again I say to myself, O ye of little faith. But I am still in this tenement of clay, and what can clay turn itself into? Unless the potter makes a vessel out of it, it will remain hidden below the surface, for it certainly cannot dig itself up.

Brethren, I think I have written enough, though I am hardly through yet; but no man can tell it all. My mind has controlled my pen. If the mind of Christ has dictated this letter it will comfort Zion; if the natural mind, then it will not.

A. T. BENSON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.,

GOIN, Tenn., Oct. 12, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—Being confined to my room, I am made to feel that by your permission I would like to address my brethren and sisters who read the SIGNS, and as a starting point I will call your attention to the latter clause of the eleventh verse of the second chapter of Hebrews, which reads thus: "For which cause he [Christ] is not ashamed to call them [the children of God] brethren." Now Paul seems to teach that there is the relationship of brotherhood between Christ and these children of God who "are partakers [that is, a part of the human family] of flesh and blood."—Heb. ii. 14. Now the question comes up with us, How does this relationship with Christ, who is the eternal word, wisdom and power of God, exist with the sons and daughters of men who are time beings, created beings? Some tell us this comes about by creation, but I want to ask you if the relationship of brotherhood came about by creation? Then I fail to see how it is that Christ is not a brother to every man in existence. It is said, "For by him [Christ] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things [the devil not excepted] were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist."—Col. i. 16, 17. Dear brethren and sisters, if this does not do away with the idea of God's children having a material existence from all eternity, and only existed in the wisdom of God (which is Christ), and by virtue of life which was given them in this wisdom (Christ) from before the foundation of the world, they were spoken of "when as yet there was none of them," then this poor, ignorant one has read and studied nearly fifty years to no profit. Dear brethren and sisters, you might have some anxiety to ask me, How do you think this relationship came about, if those dear children did not have a material existence from all eternity? I know this is a deep question, but if you will bear with me I will endeavor to show you how I see it. In the first place, I would say God did before the world began choose a people in Christ out of the human family "when as yet there was none of them," and gave them to Christ in covenant that was ordered in all things and sure, and these people thus chosen are known as the seed of Abraham: "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed," &c. Now, we understand that when the fullness of time had come God sent his Son, made of a woman, to redeem them, &c. We hear it said, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood [the human family], he [Christ] also himself likewise took part of the same." You ask me, What

part did he take? I answer, if not much mistaken, he in some mysterious sense took upon him the seed of Abraham, the human nature of the church, and became one with her, for it is said, Both he (Christ) that sanctifieth, and they who (his children) are sanctified, are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. It seems to me that, if not much mistaken, I can see how Christ became related to his chosen people, and not the world. In the sense of brotherhood I can begin to see how we are one with them. I see how a nation was born at once when he was born from the dead. I think I see how it is that thy dead men arose with his dead body. I think I can see how it was after two days will he revive us, and in the third day (the day of resurrection) will he raise us up, and how it is we shall live in his sight. I think I can begin to see how it was we were quickened together with him; how it is the church is his body; how it is that we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. Why he loved his children is because they were flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones. It said, For no man ever yet hated his own flesh. Paul said, This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Then let us sing:

"With him his members, on the tree,
Fulfilled the law's demands;
'Tis 'I in them, and they in me,'
For thus the union stands.

Since Jesus slept among the dead
His saints have naught to fear;
For with their glorious suffering Head,
His members sojourned there.

When from the tomb we see him rise,
Triumphant o'er his foes,
He bore his members to the skies;
With Jesus they arose."

Jesus says of these members, And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. Now, in view of this relationship I think I can begin to see how it was true that Adam was the figure of him that was to come. Adam's bride had a material existence in him, and when Christ took on him the seed of Abraham and became the seed of the woman, the seed of Abraham, the seed of David, the Son of man, as well as the Son of God, then I think his children had existence in him, and that every trial he passed through while here in this world his children passed through in him, and when one of these dear children is born of God it does not make him or her a child of God, but only manifests a child of God. It is said, And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

Now, dear children of God, I want to say to you in conclusion that the children of God have to go into corporeal death and sleep in Jesus until that great resurrection day, when Jesus will raise them up again, for God said to Adam, Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return, and the personal pronoun "thou" includes the whole man. Then when the children of God come forth in the resurrection, being the children of the resurrection, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Then shall we who are the children of the resurrection enter into the kingdom prepared for us before the world began, there to praise God in countless ages, world without end. Amen. O that God would enlighten our minds to understand his word, and enable us to show our faith by our works, is the prayer of this poor, little, weak worm of the earth, who feels himself the least of all saints, if one at all.

Yours to serve,

P. N. MOYERS.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—My mind to-day was meditating on the tree of knowledge of good and evil, spoken of in Genesis. I like to compare Scripture with Scripture, but sometimes fear that I am too ready to seize on analogy and draw wrong conclusions. I saw in the tree of the knowledge of good and evil the law of God, which, partaken of without grace, brings death; yet through that death there is life made possible. The law was our schoolmaster unto Christ. The tree of life. It was the law of God which Paul partook of when he was convinced of sin. "For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." The Lord gave to Adam the commandment: "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Paul said, "I had not known sin but by the law." Right through the seventh chapter of Romans there is an unfolding of the purpose of the law in a sense which seems to me very similar to the Old Testament Scriptures bearing on the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It is this knowledge which makes us eat our bread in sorrow. If we were ignorant of good or evil how could we cry out as Paul did, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" The law of God is older than Moses. Moses as a servant of God was made an interpreter, a spokesman for God, to set forth God's law to the understanding of the people. They could not look even at the face of Moses uncovered, but must see it through a veil. The law was interpreted to them in types and ordinances; the spirit of it they could not receive, through unbelief. Our Lord set forth the law in its purity, fulfilling and setting aside all types. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God." What an immense ground that covers. Never mind the washings, they were typical, they were for the Jewish people, who must have something they could see and handle. The eternal, invisible God was beyond their knowledge. They called him Jehovah, and worshiped symbolically. Here and there you find one of their members made wise to the true meaning of the law, men favored with a view of their Savior, who in the latter day should stand upon the earth. Such men knew the gall of bitterness; they were persecuted from without, and had fears and sorrows within, yet holding fast through the sustaining grace given them they came off more than conquerors. Genesis iii. 22, 23: "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken." Was it not in God's purpose that man partook of the fruit? Was it not in his purpose that he should take also of the tree of life and live forever? God's ways are not our ways. All things shall work together for his glory and the good of his kingdom.

These scattered thoughts may cause you to meditate, and I trust the Lord will bless some portion to your comfort. I am nothing and can do nothing, except I be in Christ and he in me.

With much love, in gospel bonds, affectionately your brother,

GILBERT McCOLL.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 13, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed is a letter which I lately received from sister Bonnie Chick, which you may insert in the SIGNS if you think best. As I read it over again this morning I thought it might be of comfort to some dear one who feels far away and different from any one else. How good after the dark clouds have passed when there comes a ray of sunshine to brighten all the scene. This ray of sunshine is often conveyed to us by that precious messenger, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for it brings companionship. We see others have been traveling the same road, and we are no more alone. Surely "the soul without companionship is like a harp whose chords no fingers wander o'er to draw it forth in music, but whose strings, left to the passing breeze, flit strange and wildly." How wonderful that the heart should be filled with such deep and tender love for those we have never met, and whose voices we have never heard. But the Lord's ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts. But as the heavens are high above the earth, so are his ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts.

In sweet fellowship, your unworthy sister, BESSIE DURAND.

BOWDOINHAM, Maine, Oct. 13, 1916.

MY DEAR SISTER:—I feel I must tell you how good your letter seemed to me this morning. It is wonderful to receive such messages from those whom I esteem so highly, and know that they have fellowship for me in the trials which seem so strange and terrible to me. This morning ever since I wakened words of the hymn, "'Tis my happiness below not to live without the cross," have been ringing in my mind, and, my dear sister, I know it is not what my flesh would desire, but there is something within me that fears ease. I know if ever I have been made to know anything of the greatness of the delivering power of our Savior it has come through a felt sense of great need, when it seemed I could no longer endure the pain. Surely it is

"Just in the last distressing hour
The Lord displays delivering power;
The mount of danger is the place
Where we shall see surprising grace."

Sometimes in a moment our groans are turned to songs of praise, and we are rejoicing in the thought that we have been counted worthy to suffer. But then, sister Bessie, when my trials seem so strange I cannot help but wonder if they can be like those the children of God have. I look at them and see something to admire, but when I look within all is evil and polluted. I just feel that no child ever went so far astray as I. I cannot help loving these people and desiring to be with them, but O, if they knew me could they smile upon me and be so kind and gentle with me? It does seem too beautiful and wonderful for one like me. Ever since I came to Maine I have experienced such sweet peace and joy in the assembly of the saints. Last Sunday I was made to feel as I did in my early experience, when my heart overflowed with joy and love. No words can describe the rest; for so long I could not enjoy the meetings, and I wondered if ever again I would feel happy at the meetings.

You spoke of sister Pultz. She has surely been a dear, dear sister to me, and my heart goes out to her in a great love. What a mystery the union of the saints is. Strangers in the flesh, yet loving each other with a strong love.

Aunt Angie and I have had many pleasant, comforting talks. I have spent

much of the time with her, but just now I am with Aunt Bell, another of my mother's sisters, who is a member. Her daughter was given strength to come to the church two weeks ago and relate a wonderful experience. Then it seems there is a rich blessing in this for me, too. I hope some day to be able to tell you more about this. I am so glad you felt to write to me, for your words are a help to me, and how often have words that you wrote to me three years ago come to my mind: Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. But the question will come, Am I a partaker of Christ's sufferings? I am filled with doubts and fears. I know how you must miss the meetings, but I feel glad you have the companionship of those who love the truth. O what a precious thing it is. May the Lord be with you and grant you sweet peace in him. Give my love to all the family. As things seem now I expect to return the end of this month. God has all planned.

With love, your sister, I hope,

BONNIE CHICK.

CASTLE ROCK, Wash.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—Please send me the February 15th number of the SIGNS, as I failed to receive that number, and I do not want to miss even one issue of our family paper. I am so far away from preaching (that is, Baptist preaching, and I care not for any other) I feel that I could not do without the good things contained in every number of the SIGNS, and I do hope I am made to feel thankful that the God of all grace has seen fit to bless us with such a sound and faithful medium of correspondence. I will further add, more than forty years ago I saw the SIGNS for the first time, and for some cause I saw no beauty in it, and it appeared to me to be full of old men and women's fables, and of course I really thought they were not fit to read, and I had no love for such. But about that time it pleased God, in his infinite mercy and goodness, to strike this poor sinner to the ground, and cause him to cry and plead for mercy, when there seemed to be none, and O the surprise and joy that was my lot when I was raised up with a new song in my heart: praise to the Lord of glory that he had seen fit to bless me with a good hope, that, though vile, God for Christ's sake had, through grace, pardoned my many sins. From that day to this the dear old SIGNS has been my companion, and in all my wanderings it follows me from place to place and becomes more precious to me, so I can truly say the things I once hated I now love, and the things I once loved I now hate. I am now almost sixty-two years old, and few and evil have been all my days. Sin is mixed with all I do and say. Sometimes I am discouraged and cast down, and more so the older I grow. I have just read Elder Lefferts' article in March first number. My heart and soul cried out, The Lord be praised for putting it into his heart to write so ably and comfortingly. That article, or editorial, is worth more to this old sinner than the year's subscription price of the paper; it is so timely, just at the right time. There is marrow in every sentence to the hungry soul, and we that are not blessed with the privilege of often meeting together in our church privileges certainly find in the SIGNS that which our souls long for: Jesus Christ, and him crucified, to us the chiefest among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely. O for a heart to praise him more for the

great things he has done for us, whereof we are glad.

From an old sinner, whose only hope for time and eternity is in the atoning blood of our crucified and risen Savior.

Yours unworthily,

J. K. BOYD.

PALMER JUNCTION, Ore., Nov. 1, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—With my family I located four miles west of this place last April, having bought a small piece of logged-off land, where I hope to carve out a farm and spend my declining years by dint of hard work and careful management. We are thirteen miles from the Elgin Church meetinghouse, but it has been my happy privilege to meet with the brethren there several times of late, and to be received into that noble band of splendid brethren by unanimous vote at the September meeting. Like Abraham's trusted servant, so beautifully described in the twenty-fourth chapter of Genesis, I feel that I am now "in the way," notwithstanding I feel myself the chief of sinners. Regular meetings of this model church are held on the first and third Sundays of each month in our own church-house in Elgin, which is free from debt, and is equipped with all needed furniture, hymn-books, &c., and above all, a little flock of faithful brethren and sisters, who attend regularly and have the gospel in its purity and simplicity expounded to us by our faithful pastor, Elder G. E. Mayfield, who lives a few blocks away. Elder Mayfield is certainly entitled to be called the angel of the church at Elgin, having presided over it and kept it in constant peace since the date of its organization, over thirty-eight years ago. At our October meeting we enjoyed a visit from Elder J. C. Turnidge, pastor of the church at Weiser, Idaho, and Elder Moffitt, who lives twenty miles from Portland, at a place the name of which I cannot now recall. I met them on Sunday, and was reminded of the forceful statement to Peter on the occasion of his visit to the house of Cornelius: "Thou hast well done that thou art come."

Speaking on the subject of baptism, these brethren impressed me with this consoling thought: as the eight persons saved in the ark represent the countless thousands of those who died before and in the flood, but who are now safely housed in the realms of eternal bliss, so do the few baptized believers of the present day, who have a correct conception of the God of all grace and his plan of salvation, represent the countless millions of those who are saved eternally, but who live and die here without this evidence of grace.

To those brethren who may be looking for a new location, I want to say that one can buy good land here at fifteen dollars per acre, on terms that any one can comply with. I will cheerfully furnish any needed information to brethren who want to locate in this "paradise of the poor."

With best wishes and christian greeting to every subject of grace, I am, as I hope, your fellow-servant,

J. M. AMSBERRY.

HAMILTON, Texas, July 26, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I wish to state that the little church Hopewell, Clairette, Texas, had a great refreshing from the Lord at our three days meeting, embracing the fourth Sunday in July, which was our communion and feetwashing time. While we had but one visiting minister with us, brother John Fisher, of Graham, Texas, it seemed that our God who sent him filled him out of his unwasting full-

ness, so that he was enabled to occupy the stand twice each day to the full satisfaction and consolation of the church. Surely we were enabled to realize that the Lord was in the midst, and that to own and bless our meeting long to be remembered. Fortunately for us, the Missionaries set their place for a protracted meeting within a few hundred yards, so that our commodious little house had ample seat room, and the entire audience seemed to be interested hearers of the glorious gospel of the blessed Son of God that was set forth by brother Fisher in power and demonstration of the Holy Spirit, and to our agreeable surprise a few of the Missionaries were present to behold the order of God's house, and to witness the power of God that seemed so manifest to his dear little meek and humble followers. It seemed indeed the place was filled with his presence, and all gloom was dispersed. As we had not had a three days meeting for some time before, and the occasion was so rare to me, I had a mind to tell you about it, so if our beloved pastor or any of the other brethren more worthy and far more able have not sent you an account of our meeting, I will submit this to your judgment, and if you should think it fit for the SIGNS it will be all right, and if not, it will be the same with me.

Unworthily yours,

W. D. WOOD.

CHURCHVILLE, N. Y., Nov. 10, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I am back here for the winter, with my younger children, I feel that I must have my paper sent, therefore please find inclosed one dollar and ten cents for six months, also one dollar to continue the paper to Miss Lavina Robinson, at Burdett, N. Y. I hope to send the balance for the year later. There are still a few of us members left at Burdett, but somewhat scattered, and we cannot do without our church paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

With love, I close this.

NORMAN BROWN.

RANDOLPH, La., Nov. 5, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I am sending you an order for Bibles for some brethren, I feel I would love to speak a word of what I hope to be affection toward God's people. I have not been a member of the church long, and have only received the fourth copy of the SIGNS, but have enjoyed reading it very much, and have felt at times through the sovereign love and mercy of the Lord to hope that you are my people, and that your God is my God. I hope I have been taught that without him we can do nothing. O how sad and sorrowful I feel at times when I am enabled to see my depraved condition. It seems that if I knew my sorrow was after a godly manner, and that my hunger was after righteousness, then would I know his blessed promises were mine; but we are not carried above a hope, but when that hope is founded upon Jesus it is as an anchor of the soul, for Jesus is the author of that hope, as his precious, sweet promise is that he will carry his work on. O you that are of a broken heart and contrite spirit the Lord does not despise, but the arm of his love has ever been under you; he will not leave you nor forsake you to your hurt, but keep you as the apple of his eye. O how sweet to feel that his banner over us is love, and that he is our Rock.

Dear people, lest I in my weakness weary you, I will tell you that it seems for a wise purpose I am not able to write anything of any value. I sometimes fear that I am a stranger in the camp, but I

do believe that I love the people of God.

I enjoyed your editorial, brother Lefferts, on the parable, Why stand ye here all the day idle? May the Lord continue his blessings to you all.

Yours in the Lord, I hope,

R. W. RHODES.

KANSAS CITY, Mo., Nov. 2, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am sending payment to apply on subscription for the SIGNS, now past due. I wish to say I cannot remember a time in my life that the SIGNS was not accessible to me, as my father, the late Deacon Eddy Ketchum, was one of the subscribers to the first number of the paper, over eighty-four years ago, eight years before my birth, and I have been a subscriber for nearly fifty years, dating to a short time after my spiritual birth. I am not so sure of the date of the second birth, as the first evidence I had came to me when I found myself alive and hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and in what appeared to me engaged in mortal combat with unbidden impressions to preach.

I am, I hope, your poor, weak brother in gospel bonds,

SMITH KETCHUM.

RANDOLPH, Mo., Nov. 11, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I want to drop you a few lines this morning to have you stop my paper. My eyes have been failing me for the last six months, and now I am almost blind and cannot see to read my Testament or any of my papers. This letter I believe is written by one of the "elect lady's" children, who has come up out of great tribulation and washed her robes in the blood of the Lamb.

Brethren, live in peace. Farewell. Cast down, but not destroyed.

RICHARD WALLER.

HAVILAND, Kansas.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—Inclosed find my check, for which please enter on your list these new names. The SIGNS is received regularly, and highly appreciated by myself and wife. I deeply sympathize with the SIGNS' management in their burdens. I feel that but few of the subscribers realize the great effort, expense and responsibility that attends the publication of such a periodical, and I often wish that I could assist you more to carry your burdens. May the Lord give such a desire to those whom he has blessed with the means.

Yours with fervent charity,

J. R. HARDY.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER S. M. Dickens has changed his address from Greenville, Texas, to St. Charles, Ark.

A. M. Kitts has changed his address from Amarillo, Texas, to Armstrong Springs, Ark., eight miles west of Searcy, the county seat of White County, Ark., and would be pleased to hear from any Old School Baptist living near him.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANKS.

AS a great many of our subscribers' time expires with the end of the year, we inclose in each paper of this issue a subscription blank as a convenience to them in sending new subscribers, as well as in paying their own subscriptions. Will you please make a special effort to send one or more new subscribers when you renew your own subscription for next year?

When sending in your remittance make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., and send direct to us, thus avoiding delays and confusion.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1916.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REST.

In all ages of the world "rest" has been the hope of the Lord's people, and thousands have talked of it and written upon it, yet the theme is still of comfort to the weary. In the beginning of the world, after the Lord had created and made all things, he rested from all his works, and as he rested, so also do all his saints rest. The old testament saints rested in faith and hope, according to the promise the Lord made them, and died in faith to enter into everlasting rest. But there were many in those days who did not believe, therefore could not enter into rest by faith. The promise of the Lord to Israel that they should possess the land of Canaan, the place of peace, was as sure to come to pass as any other promise made them, yet they believed not, and rebelled against him and against Moses. How strange it seems that of all the host that left Egypt only two, Caleb and Joshua, reached the land of promise. All others who went over Jordan were born in the wilderness during the forty years travel. The death of so many thousands, however, did not make the promise void. The promise made to Abraham was as much for Isaac as for him, and the promise made to Isaac was as much for Jacob as for him, and just as sure to embrace their children. Caleb and Joshua went over Jordan into the promised land as witnesses of God's faithfulness and mercy. Those born in the wilderness knew nothing personally of the Lord's dealings with the Israelites in Egypt, nor of his faithfulness to his promise to deliver them after four hundred years of bondage and slavery, hence could not enter into the "rest" that the two living witnesses knew. It is true that those born in the wilderness had many demonstrations of the Lord's power and faithfulness, but it seems to us that they, like children, could not enter into the fullness of the wonders of God, therefore could not rest in hope of the glory of God. Notwithstanding all of Job's afflictions and torments of mind he could "rest" in the Lord. Yes, his confidence was implicit, knowing that even though worms should destroy his body, yet in his flesh should he see God. He knew his Redeemer lived, and for the glorious rest of all his people should stand in the latter day upon the earth, whom Job should see for himself, and not another. David said, As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness. His faith in the Lord brought rest to him which the world could not give, though at his command, neither could the world take it away. The work of Jesus was to give rest, joy and peace to his people, and when he said, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, that rest so longed for by the weary was glorious. Their faith and hope were, as it were, swallowed up in fruition. They found indeed that his burden was light and his yoke easy. This rest remains to the people of God. When they believe in Jesus they cease

from their own works, as God did from his, never to engage in them again. This means rest forever from the deeds of the law and all human efforts to save the soul. Christ Jesus the Lord, the Anointed of God, the Savior of sinners and the God of the whole earth, finished all the work and cut it short in righteousness, satisfied the demands of both law and justice. Hence there is no work to be done by the subjects of grace except to deal justly, love mercy and walk humbly before God. The Lord ordained good works, the works of Christ, that we should walk or live in them, be established in them, settled, fixed, rooted and grounded in them. In this the saints find "rest," absolute rest from all their works. As God promised this rest he also ordained that some should enter therein. Here, as everywhere, his ways are equal. Paul exhorts that the saints be steadfast in believing that they enter this rest. A heart of unbelief in departing from the living God robs the children of this rest. To depart from God means to turn from him, his law, his precepts and promises, and to depend upon our own works, forgetting at least for a time his faithfulness and tender mercy. Paul presented this thought in his letter to the churches of Galatia when he asked them if after having begun in the Spirit did they expect to be made perfect through the flesh? Peter exhorted the saints to be steadfast in faith, to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord and Savior. But unbelief is "the sin that doth so easily beset us." It causes us to be restless, to question all things, yea, doubt all things, even the existence of God, and we find ourselves often framing up some way by which all things that appear could exist without a Creator—without God. What a miserable state, yet the church could not be the antitype of the church under the law were it not so with the saints now. The condition also shows the children of God how weak they are of themselves, and how prone to go astray. Yes, like lost sheep they wander far from the fold, and were it not for the Shepherd's knowledge of them in all their wanderings, and his faithfulness to save, they would never return to the sheepfold. There is certainly no "rest" to the wanderer, no refreshing springs of water, no wholesome food in the desert of unbelief. Rest is not only for this life, but for the life to come, and we have often thought and felt during the past two or three years that "to die is gain;" yes, better than anything this world holds for man. Even salvation is only in part here, rest but for a season now and then. Hope passes away, faith fades like a flower, all is over in a moment, as it were, and we fly away. Where? To that blessed "rest" that awaits all who love His appearing, there to receive the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give each weary saint. Weary of self, earth and sin, weary of the long journey to the land of rest and peace. When natural forces fail and a grasshopper becomes a burden we long for rest. Why then weep for those who have entered into the glorious rest? Why sorrow as those who have no hope? Why not rejoice for them that the last battle is fought and the victory won? While we should we cannot; selfishness in our hearts wants the treasures back. Sometimes we are reminded of the poem:

"Gone where there are treasures of beauty untold,
Rivers of silver and mountains of gold.
Weep not to miss one from earth's weary shore—
Earth has an angel less, heaven one more."

Rest, peaceful rest. K.

REVELATION II. 27.

"AND he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father."

This promise recorded here is made to him that overcometh and that keepeth the Spirit's work unto the end. This overcoming one is Jesus. No one ever overcomes evil or keeps the Spirit's work unto the end except those in whom Jesus lives, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. The church in Thyratira was plagued with false doctrine within it. This false way was to be overcome. The only way it could be overcome was for the overcoming of Jesus to be manifested in those who were to overcome it. This overcoming, therefore, would make manifest the precious and the vile and separate between them. In this church in Thyratira was a remnant according to the election of grace, and this election was to be revealed in those composing the remnant being given the overcoming ability of Jesus to discern between the false and the true, and to be separated from the false unto the true. Thus, whether it is Paul or any other man that overcomes error, in the last analysis it is always Jesus. He is the overcoming one always, no matter in what subject of his power the overcoming is manifested. To Jesus, therefore, and not to Paul, or any one else, was given power over the nations. Jesus said after his resurrection from the dead, All power in heaven and in earth is given unto me. Therefore by his resurrection from the dead he is declared to be the Son of God with power. The reason why Christ is given power over all flesh is that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. It was necessary for him to have power over all flesh in order for him to effectively enliven those that were his by election. Only by having power over the nonelect could he reach the elect. Thus, to say that God predestinates everything connected with the salvation of his people, and nothing else, is but half a truth, since that expression infers there are some things not connected with the salvation of God's people, whereas everything that comes to pass everywhere, and at any time, is somehow or other working for the good of the elect, and for God's declarative glory. Thus the authority of the overcoming Jesus extends over all the nations, being given power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him. We are told in this book of Revelation that God has a people among all the kindreds, tribes, tongues and peoples of the earth, that there are Gentiles as well as Jews. Thus they are scattered among all the nations. Jesus, being the good Shepherd, knows his sheep, he calleth them by their name and they follow him. Now, in order to successfully call each and every one of his people unto him from wherever they have been scattered, he must have power over all the nations, so as to overcome every obstacle in his people's way. This necessarily requires him to have power over the devil and all his works, over all men and all their works, so as to gather out unto himself and his works all that the Father gave him in eternity before time began. This rule over the nations is with a rod of iron; that is, not one more and not one less than those chosen in him can or shall be called unto him. This is relentless as iron and as inflexible. Further, every one chosen in him shall come to him, they cannot remain away, no matter who or where they are. This mighty Ruler moves mountains and dries up seas, if

necessary, in order to come at those he loves and seeks unto salvation. In the vision which Nebuchadnezzar had, he saw a stone cut out of the mountain without hands, which smote the image upon the feet that were of iron and clay and brake them in pieces. Then the iron and clay and brass and silver and gold, of which the image was composed, became as the chaff of the summer threshingfloors, and the wind carried them away. This image represented certain kingdoms or nations of the earth. The stone cut out of the mountain, and which smote the image, was Jesus. The setting up of the kingdom of God uproots all other kingdoms. "As the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers." When Jesus' rule is made manifest in his people, they are broken-hearted and contrite-spirited. All fleshly ambition, pride and vainglory, all self-righteousness and creature wisdom, are cast down. The one in whom these are becomes less than nothing at the feet of the great Ruler, broken to shivers as a potter's vessel. Surely they are potter's vessels, for God is their Potter, and they are the work of his hands. All that fall upon this stone, Jesus, shall be broken. Every one that is brought to the end of the earth in his experience does fall on this stone, on this foundation that cannot be moved, this elect and precious corner-stone, and every such one is broken in heart and contrite in spirit. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. None know this fearfulness but the children of God. They know, too, that fearful as it is, it is the safest place for them to fall. They rather that God be their Judge than man, for God looks upon the heart, and not upon the outward appearance, as does man. Further, they know that the Judge of all the earth will do right. The overcoming power of Jesus is seen in his gathering his people from the ends of the earth and in their being broken to pieces upon him. It is a hard and bitter experience, but then, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God." Blessed is he that endureth these things for righteousness' sake. The poor in spirit have the kingdom of heaven. The rule of Jesus, full as it is of the hardness of iron to our natural powers, is tempered with mercy and loving-kindness to the faith of those that trust in him. L.

MATTHEW II. 6.

"AND thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel."

When the wise men from the east came to Jerusalem asking, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" Herod was troubled by this rumor of the advent of a new king, for he himself was ruler over Judea, and regarded with extreme jealousy the claims of any one else to the throne. Therefore Herod assembled the chief priests and scribes and demanded of them where Christ should be born. That is, not being himself familiar with the literature of the Jews, and knowing well that the scribes and priests were familiar with the Jewish law and prophecies, Herod demanded of these learned men to tell him where, according to prophecy, the King of the Jews was to be born. In answer to this demand of Herod the authorities told him that Bethlehem was the place named in prophecy as the location of this new king's birth. Substantiating this, they referred to the prophecy of Micah, fifth chapter, second verse: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in

Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." So far as we know, Micah lived at the same time as Isaiah, about seven hundred years before the birth of Jesus. Thus, we see that at the distance of seven centuries Micah was inspired by the Holy Ghost to leave on record the name of the birthplace of the coming Messiah, one of the many biblical proofs of the inspiration of the Scriptures. None but a predestinating God could inspire his prophet with such exact information. It must needs be that a God able to make such declaration seven centuries before its fulfillment must be able to determine beforehand all events that should come to pass in that interval. Surely God, our God, does his will among the inhabitants of the earth as well as in the army of heaven. Our text says that Bethlehem was not the least among the princes of Juda, and then gives the reason why Bethlehem was not the least: "For out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel." The Lord's choice of Bethlehem as the place for Messiah to be born made Bethlehem great. Though not marked by any greatness within herself, the Lord's attitude toward her made her great. David said, in the day that God delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul, "Thy gentleness hath made me great." David owed all his greatness, not to himself, but to the anointing which he had received of God. Paul owed his greatness, not to himself, but, "By the grace of God I am what I am." Thus, with Bethlehem, she was by no means least in the estimation of Jehovah, "for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel." One of the titles of Jesus is "Governor," because he does govern spiritual Israel. Everything in the Israel of God is subject to the rule and direction of King Jesus. Jesus governs his people's faith, hope and love. He governs their walk and conversation, their doctrine and practice. He adds to the visible organization of his church here in the world such as shall be saved from the untoward generation without, he calls and qualifies whom he will to feed the sheep of his pasture. The rule of Jesus over his Israel, while gentle and permeated with loving-kindness, is nevertheless stern and inflexible as iron, for where the Lord once begins his good work, there is no lull until he brings it to successful issue in the day of Jesus Christ. One whom he calls unto belief must believe; one called to preach must preach; one called unto membership in the visible church must be baptized. The Lord's people are willing only as his power makes them willing. The work of grace brooks no opposition, for while every child of God is at some time disobedient, even his disobedience is subject to the governance of the King in Zion, and cannot ever frustrate the purpose or will of God. Whatever Jesus by his Spirit moves one to do or say that must be done or said, though often to the humiliation of one's carnal will and inclination. There is a crucifying of the flesh in every following of Jesus, a bearing of the cross in every following in his footsteps. Being crucified unto the world is no voluntary act of a spiritual Israelite, but an inevitable decree and manifestation of the iron rule of the Governor, Jesus Christ.

We have written the two above articles at the request of Mrs. M. I. Davie, of Fulton, Ky. L.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The churches composing the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the church at Nassaongo, Wicomico County, Maryland, October 18th, 19th and 20th, 1916, to the churches and associations with which we correspond send greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—As it has pleased God in his infinite wisdom to bring us together once more in an associational capacity and make us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, we feel to thank God that he has by his Spirit enabled us to come together to sing his praises and hear the gospel of the Son of God proclaimed. We have a goodly number of ministering brethren with us, who came to us laden with the rich things of the kingdom of God, all preaching the same precious doctrine: salvation by grace, through the atoning blood of our crucified and risen Redeemer. Not one discordant note has been struck throughout the meeting; all has been peace, love and harmony. The reports from the different churches show that they are at peace among themselves and with one another. We feel to rejoice that we are made to trust in a God that has all power, both in heaven and in earth, who is able to keep us from all the snares and temptations which are ever ready to allure us away from the strait and narrow way that leads to life.

Our next session of the association is appointed to be held with the Indiantown Church, Wicomico Co., Md., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday after the third Sunday in October, 1917, where we hope to meet your messengers and receive your messages of love, thus continuing our correspondence, which is a pleasure and comfort to us.

A. B. FRANCIS, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

PURSUANT to a call by Elder I. R. Greathouse and other brethren of New Mexico, Elder W. S. Bourland, of Vernon, Texas, and Elder Asa Howard, of Keller, Texas, responded, meeting the brethren and friends at a schoolhouse in Quay County, N. M., on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1916, to constitute an Old School Baptist Church.

After preaching by the above named ministers, a presbytery was organized, choosing Elder Asa Howard moderator and Elder W. S. Bourland clerk, then proceeded to business in the regular way..

Elder I. R. Greathouse stated the object of the meeting, after which the moderator announced the presbytery ready, calling on all holding letters from different sections of the country to come forward and present them.

After examination of the letters, and finding them sound and orderly in doctrine and orthodox in faith, pronounced them a regularly constituted Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church of Christ, calling their name "Pleasant Hope" Church, in gospel order, electing Elder I. R. Greathouse, of Upton, N. M., as their pastor, and brother Scarborough clerk.

This church was organized upon an article of faith adopted by the Highland Old School Baptist Church of Kentucky in 1812. The occasion was fraught with great interest among the people at large, and under the blessings of God promises to build up and be a prosperous church, located as it is in a new and fertile region of Quay County, N. M.

Praying God's mercy and sustaining grace to overshadow, preserve and protect them for future years to come, as a precious vine of eternal truth, where the dear saints can meet to worship God in spirit and in truth, and to observe all things commanded them of God. To his name be all the glory henceforth and forever.

Any of our eastern Baptist brethren who contemplate going to a new country will please correspond with Elder I. R. Greathouse, Upton, N. Mex.

ASA HOWARD.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, Elder D. M. Vail will visit churches and brethren as follows:

Schoharie, N. Y., Nov. 26th, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.; Middleburg, 27th, 1:30 p. m.; Central Bridge, 27th, 7:30 p. m.; Albany, 28th, brother Hecker's, 272 Clinton Ave., 1:30 p. m.; Cobleskill, 28th, 7:30 p. m.; Lutheranville, 29th, 1:30 p. m.; Jefferson, 30th, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.

EVERETT R. KINNEY.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Charles J. Akers was born August 21st, 1856, died October 3rd, 1916. Deceased was a faithful member of the Old School Baptist Church for thirty-two years, and was ordained a deacon of the Puyallup Primitive Baptist Church organization March 25th, 1916, also the date of the organization. Deceased leaves a father, wife, two daughters, two sons and several grandchildren to mourn their loss. The funeral was held at the Geo. D. Osborne undertaking parlors, Puyallup, Wash., and was preached by Elder J. W. Peters. Interment took place in the Sumner Cemetery. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

Written by request. CORDER JONES.

Mrs. C. P. Jackson, wife of brother C. P. Jackson, departed this life October 19th, 1916, aged 76 years. She was a member of the church more than fifty years, during which time she lived an humble christian life. She was loved by all who knew her, and was a lover of the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God. She took great pleasure in caring for God's ministers. To know her was to love her as a child of God. Sister Jackson was afflicted with cancer, which ended her life. She leaves her dear husband, who is eighty-one years old, one son, two stepsons and one stepdaughter to mourn their loss, which is her eternal gain. She is done with the trials of this world, and will never suffer pain again. Dear children, rejoice to know she died in the faith which overcometh the world. Her spirit has gone to God who gave it, and when the dead in Christ shall arise, she will be with that number to praise him world without end. Amen. W. GARNER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. J. H. Rockafellow, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. M. D. Thomson, Ky., $6.00; Mrs. S. D. Campbell, Ontario, $1.00; Mrs. J. W. Parker, Ill., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

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(Park Avenue Hall)

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ALL WELCOME

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 84. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1916. NO. 24.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

THERE always have been signs of certain things, and the word "sign" is freely used throughout the Scriptures. After the flood God gave to Noah the sign of the rainbow, or gave the rainbow as a sign of his covenant that the earth should no more be destroyed by water. Then later, in Abraham's day, the sign of circumcision was given. There are very many accounts of signs given to man by Almighty God of coming events. There were many signs and wonders in Jesus' time on earth, he himself working many signs and wonders as proof of his Messiahship, which though in the main were misunderstood, for their eyes were holden, they were blinded. When he was baptized by John in Jordan the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove descended upon him from heaven as a sign to John that this was "he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." Again, the voice in the mount, saying, "This is my beloved Son; hear ye him," as a sign to the three favored ones, that they nor any other should look to Moses and Elias, but hear what the Son had to say and to hear him. There are signs in nature which we read and understand; certain winds from certain directions are signs of, or indicate rain, heat or cold; we notice and observe this: a red sunrise indicates, or is a sign of, foul weather, while a fair sun setting indicates settled weather; the budding of the trees, the starting of grass, the song of certain birds, are signs of approaching summer, while certain other things, such as the bloom of the goldenrod, the change of the color of the leaves of the forest, are signs of approaching winter. Christ told the disciples of these signs regarding the weather and seasons; they are old, established and correct. Seafaring men observe closer these signs of the weather than landsmen, rightly so, for they are more exposed to the elements, and have more preparations to make before the approach of storm and violent changes, but these signs are observed by all, even the lower animals. There are other signs which are not observed, or even noticed by many; there are prominent signs visible now, which are signs of the times. Elder Gilbert Beebe more than eighty years ago observed certain signs which were then visible to some, and so strong and forcibly were they impressed on his

mind that he preached and wrote, stirring up the pure minds by way of remembrance, founded and published a paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which still is published under the same title, and still upholds the same doctrine, principle and practice that he advanced in his day, which were then no new creed or theme, but we believe the same truth was set forth by Jesus and practiced by the disciples nearly two thousand years ago, which was and still is in perfect harmony with the whole Scripture. The sign in this is that we who believe and indorse this doctrine are true and faithful to the ancient landmarks as set by the fathers. Of the signs of the times in Elder Beebe's day some at least have been fulfilled. He saw the sign of Missionism as an entering wedge which caused division from them that were not of us, for had they been of us they had not gone out from us. He also saw the sign of integrity in some, which no doubt emboldened him to fight the harder, and encouraged him to preach with great boldness and fearlessness in those perilous times. There have always been signs of coming events. The star was given as a sign that Christ was born; wise men observed it as such, going at once and finding it true, and worshiping the babe in the manger. There is a sign by which the Lord's people are known to each other; this is secret though, and no man can tell it; the hailing sign, the sign of recognition, and the signal of distress are all secret. But what do the signs of the present time indicate? The love of many has waxed cold, pride is creeping in, also envy, jealousy and backbiting. These conditions exist in the church today; I do not mean universally, but are plainly manifest in many places. With many, the glitter of gold and the greed of gain, have caused them to be cold and formal in the attendance to religious duties; they do not have time to go to meeting, and if they do spare the time, it is done almost, if not quite, as cold and formally as one would go to the post-office for the morning mail, or to the courthouse to pay one's taxes—a matter of duty, and not of love, for before and after service the conversation of many are of natural things, crops and business, and worst of all, levity and idle talk of worldly amusements. We remember how terribly we have been shocked and grieved in times past, when some aged member, one whom we would feel to look to for counsel, seemed by all outward appearances to be more interested in the light, vain and frivolous things of this world, than in the deep and solemn things pertaining to the eternal kingdom. These things should not be indulged in by us at any time, much less at our places of worship, for it is idle, and profits nothing, and is detrimental to the peace and comfort of those who are young in these things, and might cause an innocent one to offend, feeling that if those older ones engage in idle talk, instead of that which is good, it is all right; thereby tending to draw away those young and tender ones from the solemnity of real and true worship. We all should guard our every word and act, and, as Paul admonishes, shun the appearance of evil. Idle conversation is evil, and proceeds from the evil one, having no part in the worship of God, and should not be indulged in by those professing to be followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, for in this we depart from the path; that path that no fowl knoweth, and that the vulture's eye hath not seen. We should be careful and sober, not affecting ourselves that we appear godly, but walking in truthfulness and solemnity as is becoming those who

love the Lord and desire to keep his commandments. Pride becomes more and more prominent, along with worldly gain, it goes hand in hand; this is seen in many places, both individually and collectively. Many of our places have become too humble to worship in, and we must tear down, and erect a building more modern, and in keeping with the strides of—what? Civilization? No, of pride; forgetting Christ's words to the woman of Samaria at the well: "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."—John iv. 23, 24. Again, his words to the disciples, as recorded by Luke xxi. 5, 6: "And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said, As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." The Jews were proud of the temple, not discerning that it only typified that which Jesus had come to set up, that is, a spiritual temple, a dwelling-place for him in the hearts of those who compose the heavenly and unseen temple of the most high God. With pride comes envy. Men are becoming envious if they cannot be in the places of prominence that others hold; they are envious, dissatisfied and contentious, stirring up strife. Some ministers envy the popularity which is accorded others, then cruel jealousy springs up, with all its ugliness of hatred, evil and that which invariably follows: backbiting, harboring ill thoughts against one, causing an imaginary offense or wrong, which are the fruits of pride, envy and jealousy. A spirit, but not of the Spirit. Feeling to be wronged by one, we at once hasten off to some other brother, or perchance to an outside friend, and forthwith unfold and unburden to him the cause of all our trouble, or what is our side of it: that brother So and So has terribly mistreated us, and, too, he is guilty of many things unbecoming in a member of the Old School Baptist Church, going to places, and doing many things he ought not to do; and we two sit comfortably together, painting a terrible picture of brother So and So, while like as not he is off somewhere else painting equally horrible ones of ourselves or some other brother; all the time forgetting the rule laid down by which we should go, which is, to go to the brother whom we feel has wronged us, or whom we feel is leading a disorderly life. Go to him, not as one of authority, and above him, but go in love and entreaty. How much better for us to suffer wrong, pass it by, and forget it, than to harbor it against one and speak illy of him. There is a rule laid down in the New Testament for every emergency that ever will arise, and we should look it up, and act accordingly, before we go out and talk about our brethren, slandering and backbiting, saying things which we would not dare face them with. We all have known of instances where one had been much talked about to his back, when he was entirely innocent, the charges and evil report being untrue and ungrounded, and while these things were being talked around, when in the presence of the ones doing the talking and backbiting, everything was as smooth as if no evil was ever thought of. We are willing to leave it to any: Is this the way to live? Is this brotherly, and acting a brother's part? These are true and undeniable facts. What are they the signs of? I have been speaking particularly of the

conditions as existing in the church. Let us broaden for a while and take a glance at the conditions as they exist in the whole world to-day. Naturally the first thing that comes to our mind is the gigantic struggle in so-called christian Europe. What is the cause of all this war? The same things that cause all such trouble: pride, envy and jealousy. War on such a scale is beyond the conception of our minds—that twentieth century, civilized christians (ugh) could be guilty of such things; but twentieth century civilization calls for and produces twentieth century or modern warfare and butchery, with all its attendant evils and suffering. One sign we see in this stupendous outrage is that man, with all his advantages of religious literature, religious teachings, theoretical christianizing, is not a whit ahead of our brethren of the stone age, when men fought with clubs and stones, except that with all their study, learning and teaching, instead of having to strike one or more strokes to kill a man they have the advanced methods of civilized and modern warfare: the machine gun, firing two hundred and fifty shots each minute, belching out a solid stream of death; monstrous cannon throwing an explosive shell for miles, and, by the use of the telephone, the man who directs this shot may be miles away. Poisonous gases to annihilate a whole army; aircrafts, ravenous birds of death, by far worse and more unsightly than the vulture, to drop wholesale death and destruction on a sleeping city, wherein are innocent persons. Submarine boats, sneaking beneath the water, rising up at the will of those who control them, firing an explosive from its devilish mechanism, destroying a whole ship, together with its innocent occupants, then quietly sink beneath the waves, out of sight, happy in the thought that they have destroyed another ship; easing their consciences that have been seared with a hot iron, with: "It is time of war." Then again, the morals of the world at large are at a very low ebb; watch the divorce courts and see. Observe the traffic in white slaves. Many to-day have a very slight idea, if indeed any idea at all, of the sacred ties of matrimony, not knowing that "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." The sacredness of the home is, in the main, a thing of the past. A mansion with all comforts and luxuries is not necessarily a home; a hovel may be one instead. Without pure love there can be no real home, and where love abounds there is a home of greater splendor than in a mansion superbly furnished with art and architecture, but lacking the pure and unselfish love of its occupants. This is as applicable to the church as to our natural homes and family relation. Love must abound before peace and harmony prevail.

Man has gone money-mad; corruptible gold outshining sacredness, purity and charity; envy, pride and jealousy, the tools and instruments of Satan, have a hold on him, and he is blinded, but he proudly and boldly goes up to worship at the shrine which by the rules of his own evil imagination he has builded, speaking and teaching lies in hypocrisy, for it seems clear and plain that no matter what man might or does do, whether it be illegal or immoral, just so it is done in the name of religion, for some mission movement or so-called charitable work, it would and does receive the sanction and support of the masses. The boy is punished for shooting crap, then is taken by his father and mother to the church fair and sees his parents take a chance for a cake. Is

it a wonder that he has no confidence in his parents' moral or religious teaching? These few things observed and noted are without doubt foreknown and decreed by Almighty God, and he has a wise design in them, they being for a purpose, and he will surely accomplish that which he designed. The fact that he designed, decreed and foreknew a thing does not necessarily carry with it the stamp of heavenly approval, that it is right for us to do it. It was certainly decreed that Judas should betray Jesus, but do we want to be a Judas? Or did it make it right on his part because it was in accordance with God's plan? and can we justify ourselves in doing a wicked or wrong act by the doctrine of predestination? No, ten thousand times no. These things are signs of something coming, and it seems to me that the conditions of the present time correspond very forcibly with the times just prior to and during the time of Christ in the flesh. His own people, the Jews, had turned things upside down, walking in their own lusts, striving for the chief seats, desiring to be seen of men; but it is a fact, that the farther man goes wrong, the more he tries to appear righteous in the presence of men; hypocrites and deceivers they are. The Jews at that time had so completely confused the Scriptures with the teachings of the Rabbis, that they were deaf, dumb and blind, as far as the true import of the Scriptures was concerned. Many to-day wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction. We hear to-day men of our own selves speak, favoring many new improvements, saying that times have changed, and we must improve on our ways and manner, keeping up with the times. O man, do you not know that the God that Abraham worshiped, the God that saved Noah and his house, the God that delivered Daniel from the lions, the three Hebrew children from the fire, and Jonah from the belly of the great fish, the God that is the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of all the faithful in him, changes not? No variableness nor shadow of turning is in him, the same yesterday, to-day and forever. Then has the manner of true worship changed, and shall we conform to worldly pride and be more modern in our manner of worshiping that God who knows no change? We think not; but rather seek more earnestly to be made more conformable to him, the meek and lowly Jesus, who made himself of no reputation. O that all men might have a view of the solemnity and grandeur of true worship, the felt presence of Almighty God, through the blessed Mediator, to feel that sacred oneness, and that blessed privilege of saying, "Father," realizing the sweet sacredness of the wealth of this relationship. It is useless to try to go farther, it is beyond words or power of expression. Wickedness and immorality raged rampant in the time of Noah. It is written that they married and were given in marriage; that is, they lived worldly, ungodly and idolatrous. There followed a grand display of destruction, and salvation from destruction of the faithful. Just think of what odds (that is, worldly) were against Noah, yet he remained a preacher of righteousness in the face of it all. In the days of Jesus here on earth men mocked, wickedness and immorality ran wild, there was a choosing of the faithful out from the masses, the prophecy, and the fulfillment of such prophecy, of the overthrow of the Jews, and the destruction of the temple. Jesus told the disciples that when the Son of man came again it would be as in the days of Noe. These things as recorded in the twenty-fourth chapter of

Matthew seem, according to Josephus and other historians of note, to have in a sense been literally fulfilled at the time of the destruction of the temple; but must we believe this teaching of Christ to have no other significance than that? and does it not apply to the church, his elect people, and for their instruction and comfort? He prophesied of false christs and false prophets, which should show great signs and wonders, and there are many lo heres and lo theres to-day, but we are not to believe them, or go out after them, but remember the words: "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him." There should be a "Thus saith the Lord" for a thing before we accept it. "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be;" and after certain things of which he speaks shall have been accomplished, "then shall appear the sign of the Son of man, in heaven," &c. Then he puts forth the parable of the fig tree: "When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh." So likewise when ye shall see all of these things (that is, the things of which he is here speaking) know that it (or he, reads the margin) is near, even at the doors.—Verse 33. "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." Jesus says in verse 34: "This generation shall not pass, till all things be fulfilled." We must not feel that he referred to that generation of natural men, alive at that time, but a broad meaning; that is, the generation of Jesus Christ. He was then speaking to his own, and his own to-day are of the same generation; and all these things will be accomplished before the last of this generation passes away, for he will not be left without a witness in earth as long as time lasts, until all things be accomplished. "Watch, therefore [or that is, for the reason that these things will be as is here recorded]; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."—Verse 42. Therefore the signs of the times indicate to us, as it were, the fig tree is beginning to bud, and put forth its leaves, for false prophets have arisen, iniquity does abound, and the love of many has waxed cold; but it is not yet summer when the fig tree begins to bud forth, only a sign that summer is nigh. So these things, as we see them, are signs of his coming, "but of that day and hour knoweth no man." "Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch."—Mark xiii. 36, 37. And he will come suddenly, as the lightning shineth out of the east even unto the west. To my mind there have always been those who earnestly and faithfully looked for the return of the Master to claim and take his own, and forever put down sin and wickedness, ever since the day that "a cloud received him out of their sight,"—Acts i. 9, and two men in white apparel stood by them (the disciples). "Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye here gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Years afterwards Paul writes, The Lord himself shall descend from heaven, &c., and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, so shall we ever be with the Lord; wherefore comfort one another with these words. (Thessalonians fourth chapter, last part.) Paul continues in the succeeding chapter, saying that there is no need that he should write them

of the times and seasons. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night, and continues with many other things good for us to read and think over. Then later, Peter, in his second epistle and third chapter, speaks of the day of the Lord coming as a thief in the night. Remember that this epistle is addressed to the church to-day, and in all days to come, from then until time is no more. Peter in this same epistle continues, saying, Seeing then that all these things (that is, the earth and its works) shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, &c. Nevertheless we according to his promise look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless. Speaking further of these things as written also by Paul, in which are some things hard to be understood. The fact that it is hard to understand does not alter its meaning and truth, and the signs of the times seem to be pointing to these things, but as, with the Lord, one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years are as one day, we cannot reckon and find out when these things will be; but be diligent, be awake, and to repeat the words of Jesus according to Mark: "What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch." There will be those who will be faithful and watching, as the five wise virgins represent; there will also be those who will be asleep, as the five foolish virgins represent; some servants will begin to smite his fellow-servants, being drunken on the productions of earth. Let us pray that we may be of those who are faithful and awake, diligent and ever watching for the return of the Master, for he will come. He is true and faithful, he will come. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so come, Lord Jesus.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

F. SELBY FISHER.

SALISBURY, Md., Sept. 29, 1916.

TOUCHET, Wash., May 19, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I often hear from some dear saint who is isolated from the privilege of the church and the association of the brethren, expressing the loneliness of their heart through our papers, and my heart goes out to such in deep sympathy. While my lot is not cast in a location where there is no church or brethren, yet I am cut off from the enjoyment of their association, and in this the yoke gets very heavy, yet I do not want to complain or call in question the right of my Master for measuring out to me the lonely, aching heart, for the strokes are so full of mercy it makes it easy at times to say, Thy will be done. I heard an editor say once he thought it strange that brethren would move to a locality where there was no church, and then complain of their lonely condition. Is it possible for one of the Lord's little ones to bear the yoke and go where it suits them or stay just where it suits them? I have often gathered some delicious fruit from the experience of the old apostle Paul; he said, The things I would, I do not, and the things I would not, them I do. I believe this is some of the fruit that the Master said should remain, and these are some of the things God's humble ones learn in bearing the yoke.

Dear publishers, editors and readers of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, a provision I firmly believe ordained of

God as a precious medium through which his poor and afflicted can let the great riches of divine grace flow from heart to heart, though miles apart and strangers in the flesh, I have just received the May 15th number, and only read two or three articles, and my soul is so stirred in me I feel I want to speak to the dear ones through this blessed medium, and the thought that is uppermost in my heart are the words of the dear Master to the poor and afflicted of his flock: Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. There are three grand principles which loom up in this command of Jesus, which so fill the soul that all we can do is to say like Elisha at the ascension of Elijah, or Thomas at the revelation of Jesus: My Lord and my God. Now he spake as never man spake. In what way is his (Jesus) word different from other men? My words are Spirit and they are life. They come to the one commanded, with power to accomplish the purpose intended, and in this is the glory of God manifest. The words of Jesus are effectual; when he says, Come, the character comes. The blind, self-righteous, will say they can come or they can reject, and that so harmonizes with the natural mind that the poor one bearing the yoke tries to accept it, and in our rebellious nature we learn, or prove, the truth of the effectiveness of Jesus' words. We, as all the yoke-bearers testify, cannot live and walk and feel as we desire. Dear ones, in this you manifest the fruit by which you are identified. You will notice it is Jesus' yoke that we put on, or, I should say, take on, and his yoke is not a carnal yoke, and for that reason we have to learn of Jesus, not only how to bear it, but the fruit produced by or from bearing it. The yoke of Jesus was to do the will of his Father. This he says is what he came to do; and he said, I must work the works of him that sent me. In this we see Jesus bearing his yoke. Then we hear him say to those bearing his yoke, As my Father sent me, even so I send you. Then not only the coming under the yoke is of Jesus, but the sending forth bearing the yoke is of him. Jesus said, Of myself I can do nothing, it is the Father that doeth the works, and he says, Without me ye can do nothing. So it is not only bearing the yoke, but the result, or fruit that results from the burden, is of Jesus. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you to go and bring forth fruit, and your fruit shall remain. We see in this, as in all the work of God, he has a purpose. He is the God of purpose, and if it is left to the one who bears the yoke to accomplish that purpose, God's purpose would be just as much a failure as mine, and I frankly acknowledge mine is nothing but a failure. The point is, it is not a mortal yoke, but a divine; it is the yoke of Jesus. First, he, Jesus, has sent the yoke-bearer, and the purpose is to bring forth fruit that shall remain; and his last and final words to the poor yoke-bearer that assured to them the certainty of the fulfillment of this purpose were the assurance of all power in heaven and on earth being delivered to them, in the fact that God had raised them from the dead. Now go ye into all the world and teach all nations, teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you, and lo I am with you alway, even to the end. O what a rest to the weary soul to have the blessed assurance of the companionship of Jesus; a present help in every time of need.

In conclusion, let us notice some of the evidences that grow out of the yoke-

bearer. We want the words of the Master, as he is the one that begins the work, the one that carries it on to the final perfection. He says, Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves. Dear companions, how is it with you? Have you in your effort to follow your Master come into the wilderness that was uninhabited, and the howl of the wolfish spirit of infidelity seemed ready to devour your poor soul? If so, let me call you happy, for this fearfulness caused you to remember your Savior's words: Look unto me, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened, and this you proved, and found him a present help in your great time of need. Then your poor soul was so refreshed that you could realize how easy the yoke is, in the place where fear and groaning filled your soul. Thanksgiving and praise flow through the barren land like a mighty river. But we change from this happy state to the mocking and scoffs of all the host of darkness, and we are much disappointed. We felt that the world would join us in praise, and instead they persecute us. Then we came to the conclusion that we were deceived, and all of our exercises of mind and heart were only delusions. Then, O my soul, such agony none but the yoke-bearer knows. Again, we learn by this the words of the Master. In this life (mortal) we shall have tribulation, and if the knowledge were to stop here there would be no rest to the soul; we should be of all men most miserable; but we learn of that sweet peace which Jesus gives, which passeth all understanding. In my Father's house are many mansions, says Jesus, and the Father's house is here, on earth, and it was set up or established here for the saints to live in, and I hear them say, I was glad when they said, Let us go up to the house of the Lord. All of these mansions are in the house of the Lord, and the ones who bear the yoke are the only ones admitted to this house, and as they walk they mark all the wonders of the mansions. There is a mansion suited to every condition that the poor and afflicted have to pass through in their stay here on earth. There is a mansion so perfectly suited that the soul can enter into the spirit life of the soul-cheering hymn, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord." Then we enter the mansion prepared for the weary, and join with the weary ones and sing, "O land of rest, for thee I sigh," &c.

Now, dear ones, I will have to close, as this letter is getting too lengthy, but reading your sweet communications in the last SIGNS caused my heart to seek some of the fruit which the dear Lord said should remain and praise his name; our Boaz commanded it.

Yours in hope of immortality in full when the Master unyokes his servants,

J. T. BARNES.

HERNDON, Va., Nov. 30, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I enjoyed both your and Elder Ker's editorials in the last issue of the SIGNS, December 1st. Elder Ker wrote beautifully upon the word "Rest." I have felt a great desire in my poor heart since reading his article to pen him a few lines and tell him I hope I did find rest in reading his dear letter. Such rest as he sets forth is the only rest that remaineth to and for the people of God, in this time state and in eternity. Elder Ker, like myself, has been made to taste many, many bitter things. We must be made to taste of many bitter things while journeying in this wilderness country before we can fully realize the precious things of heaven prepared for them that love God. O sweet rest, to

rest in the presence of Jesus, for it is written: In thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. Jesus says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The bride said, "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." O what a resting-place, to sit down under his shadow. He is a hiding-place from the wind, the storms of Satan and of sin, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. The poet said:

"Other refuge have I none—
Hangs my helpless soul on thee.
Leave, ah, leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me.
All my trust on thee is stayed,
All my help from thee I bring;
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of thy wing."

Dear brother Ker, like many of God's dear people, has passed through many deep waters of affliction, but the Lord has been preparing him through it all to still comfort God's little ones, and his letter shows that he is ready to say with one of old: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." I do wish brother Ker would write more frequently for the SIGNS, for I love to read his writings; he tells me of my daily experience. Often I feel that I have no christian experience, and deny that I know God, and just say the same words Peter did: "I know not the man." O what a dreadful condition for one to be in.

I wonder why one like me should write in the way I have in this letter. I am going to stop now, and it may be forever, for I cannot write and had better cease trying. I should be glad to write more at this time, but have nothing to write except to say that I still love the doctrine set forth in the SIGNS. I hope to be able to write a letter in the near future.

With love and best wishes to you all, sincerely yours,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

TIAWAH, Okla., Oct. 1, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In many things my memory fails, but of the day when my uncle, Elder J. C. Beeman, led me into the little stream called Second Creek, Warren County, Ohio, and baptized me in the name of the Lord Jesus, I do not forget. It is just fifty-six years ago today. I was then an invalid, and I had been one for about two years. To the natural minds of the onlookers that day it seemed impossible that I should survive many weeks after being immersed in the chilly waters, in the frost-laden air. Six months previous to that day such a step I had not considered, and if I had even thought of such a thing my mind would have revolted against submitting myself to the ordinance of baptism. However, I remember how gladly and boldly I walked into the water, rejoicing inwardly that I was counted worthy to embrace my dear Lord in the flowing stream. I soon afterwards marveled in soul that I was made so strong in zeal to walk firmly into and out of the water. All my brethren and sisters that greeted me on the shore were old, and old-fashioned in many worldly ways, and more so in their religion, but what was my mind then caring for the applause or contempt of the world, so that I might win the approval of my dear Lord and Savior? I believe to-day, that on that day (the first Sunday in October, 1860,) I did believe in the saving power of Jesus, and that I went down into his typical death with a hope as big as my soul; that as I was raised up I did rejoice in his resurrection, a victory over the power of the grave.

"Sweet is the memory of thy grace,
My God, my heavenly king,
Let age to age thy righteousness
In songs of glory sing."

Now, looking back over all the years that have passed since that day that is notable to me, I have very many misgivings. My life since then, as I look at my service in the kingdom of grace, seems to be destitute of any merit whatever; I wonder again and again that I have been so much filled with worldly lusts, and that I have given so much of my time to worldly things, when I consider that I was made to rejoice at that time in singing the lines:

"Now, my remnant of days,
I would spend in his praise,
Who hath died my poor soul to redeem;
Whether many or few,
All my years are his due,
May they all be devoted to him."

The seemingly tender love and holy zeal for the cause of Jesus and his truth which I thought were mine in those early days, were at times in later years lost sight of in the vain strife for the bubbles of this life. To-day, as I look backward over my past life I feel to say with the wise man, All is vanity and vexation of spirit. This of course relates to our mortal existence. Looking again at large over the field of mortal existence that is assigned to the children of men, to me there seems a ray of light which speaks volumes to the wisdom and foreknowledge of the great Creator in this, that his people were made subject to vanity; that the power of love, mercy and grace of the Redeemer might abound to all elected in him before the world began. Although we get disgusted and disappointed with the things of this life when we are enabled to view the better things of the Spirit, yet, it was evidently necessary for us to be born into this natural evil world that we might learn something of the mighty power of God in creation and in redemption. O that we may be submissive and satisfied with our natural surroundings, believing that it is God who cast our lot just where they have been; and if that be our feelings of belief, we are emitting a spark of praise to God, who is King of all things. The wisdom of this world says that this kind of belief is insanity, and that every one who believes that God gives evil as well as good ought to be sent to an insane asylum. A late writer in an Arminian Baptist paper that expressed himself in accord with the above, in speaking of the "Hardshells"—(meaning Old School Baptists) said: "If their theory be true, will some man rise up and tell us of any use they can be to either God or man?"

In hope of immortality.

J. F. BEEMAN.

ROANOKE, Texas, Nov. 4, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars, for which please send the SIGNS one year to the following address: J. I. Gillespie, Roanoke, Texas. This friend has recently become interested in the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS, and he seems to seek and to love the company and conversation of those who believe in salvation by grace, and grace alone. He is a worthy and well respected citizen, and I hope the doctrine contained in the SIGNS may be blessed to his comfort and instruction, for the gospel is to and for the living, and not the dead.

If not to the exclusion of better matter, please give this a place in the SIGNS.

Unworthily, C. Y. OSTEEN.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1916.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE HIGHEST GOOD.

INSPIRATION directed the apostle Paul to record in his letter to the Ephesians that God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath blessed his people with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; that this blessed provision of God in his beloved Son is according, not to any merit or goodness which omniscience knew or foreknew to be in those thus blessed, but to his choice of them before the foundation of the world, with the divine intent that this elect number shall be holy and without blame before the Deity in love. That this state of holiness and blamelessness will effectually ensue to every heir of God is insured, in that he has predestinated all the heirs unto the adoption of children unto the Father by Jesus Christ, not according to any volition or receptivity inherent in men, but according to the good pleasure of the divine will, all to the end that the glory of God's grace shall be praised, that rich grace wherein supreme love hath made all believers accepted in the beloved Son of God. The highest good that can come to one who truly believes in Jesus Christ is to be embraced in this spiritual blessedness in the heavenlies in the Beloved. It is our desire to be able to analyze this highest good in this article, and to be able to clearly present the matter before our readers. We shall say that the spiritual blessings in Christ to which all believers are elected in the divine foreordained purpose of God are sevenfold, though infinite. While it might appear to be the acme of ambition for man to presume to list the blessings in the spirit, of the children of election, yet we believe that every blessing granted the elect in the Son falls under at least one of seven heads or divisions: nature, life, relationship, service, suffering, inheritance, glory. We shall try to consider each of these in turn, to arrive at the highest good which can possibly accrue to the lot of each believer in the Lord.

1. Nature. Every child of God has the nature of Christ, and this is the foremost of all spiritual blessings. Just as every member of the human race has the nature of Adam, by having been generated and brought forth in Adam, so every believer who truly believes is regenerated and brought forth in Christ. Just as the child is passive in the natural birth, so is the believer passive in the spiritual birth. Just as the child did not will its advent into the natural world, so no believer has ever willed his entrance into the kingdom of heaven. It was in perfect harmony with the principle of Adam's nature that Eve believed the doctrine of Satan, rather than the commandment of God. It is in perfect harmony with the nature of Jesus Christ that every child of God believes every word that proceedeth out of God's mouth, even though it necessitates man's being a liar. Those endowed with power to become the sons of God receive that power in being born from above, according to the will and Word of God, not according to the flesh or will of man. The human nature, of which every one is made

a partaker in the natural birth, is depraved. It is in accordance with this nature that men lie and steal, murder and revel, idolize and theorize. No goodness nor acceptability in the sight of God can ever be evolved out of human nature. We do not deny that there are good men and good women in this world, but those who are good are so by the infusion of God's grace, and not by reason of any inherent goodness in their nature as men and women. There is a way that seemeth right to every man by nature, but the end of that way is death: separation from God and godliness. Turning now from the negative to the positive side of this question, every believer in the Lord having been made partaker of the divine nature, by being born of the incorruptible Seed according to the word of God, by that new nature hates sin and loves holiness, hungers and thirsts after righteousness, speaks the truth in love, abhors deceitfulness, praises God, to whom in secret he prays. It is just as spiritual for the believer in Christ to cleave to the truth, as it is natural for the earth-bound human to follow a lie. The nature of Christ is the necessary antecedent and accompaniment of all true christian life and conduct, just as the nature of Adam is the forerunning and abiding principle in all human life and conduct. This first and foremost spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ, then, is that every one of the elect is made a partaker of the divine nature. Read 2 Peter i. 4.

2. Life. It is because men have the nature they have that they live the life they do. It is because the believer has the nature of Christ that he lives a christian. The life lived is a reflex of the nature possessed. The life that believers now live in the flesh they live by the faith of the Son of God. The life that the natural man lives is not dictated by faith, but by carnal reason and intelligence, which reason and intelligence abide in his human and depraved nature. Out of the blessedness of having been made a partaker of the divine nature flows the blessing of being enabled to live the life of Christ in our mortal body. God was manifest in the flesh when Jesus lived here in the world nearly two thousand years ago, he is manifest in the flesh now in this present time in the life of every true believer. Incarnation did not cease with Jesus' ascension from the world, for Christ even now dwells in every one saved by divine grace, he is in them the hope of glory. The tabernacle of God is with men, every blood-sprinkled conscience is the habitation of the King of kings and Lord of lords, of him to whom all power in earth and heaven is given. Christ not only lived and talked and walked among Judea's hills twenty centuries ago, his footprints even now are seen by the faithful in him who are scattered abroad among all the nations of the world. Wherever true prayer ascends to God, there the life of Jesus is being manifested. Wherever one in sorrow cries, "God be merciful to me a sinner," or who exclaims, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" there is being lived the life of him who said in bloody sweat, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." The life of Christ, who said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," was in Stephen when he said, "Lay not this sin to their charge." This life in the believer moves him to love his enemies, to pray for those that mistreat him, to have compassion upon those who err. As all human beings are but Adam multiplied, it may not be irreverent to say that all true believers are but so

many manifestations of Christ. As Christ is the anointed, so every believer has received a holy unction, or anointing, by which he knows all things. The holy oil stopped not upon the head of the high priest, but descended to the uttermost extent of his garments, so not a member of the body of Christ but is anointed with the same unction as the Head receives. The life that Christ lived in the flesh is the life that every believer must, in some measure, also live. We may not be nailed through hands and feet as he was, but we are crucified unto the world and the world is crucified unto us. The things of the world, of flesh and time and sense no longer allure or satisfy as once they did. The life of Jesus in our mortal bodies compels the bearing about his holy dying. As the world hated him, so every elect vessel of mercy will experience this antipathy of his grosser against his better part. There will be that conflict of the flesh against the Spirit and of the Spirit against the flesh, that enduring the contradiction of sinners against oneself, without which one cannot have the hope that the life of Christ is in him. As this world was no home for Jesus, so every believer will here be a pilgrim and a stranger, the life of Jesus in him continually seeking the better part that cannot be taken from him. It is one of the greatest blessings in the heavenlies to be called unto this life of cross-bearing, to be enrolled in the army of the Lord to fight the good fight of faith on the side of him that goes forth conquering and to conquer.

3. Relationship. The elect in Christ Jesus are blessed with new and holy relationships the natural man conceives nothing of. All the relationships of human beings are based upon marriage. In the kingdom of heaven there is neither male nor female, no marrying nor giving in marriage, therefore the basis of spiritual relationships is entirely different from the basis of the relationships of earth. The relationship of parents and children, of husband and wife, of aunts and uncles, and cousins, &c., all flows out of flesh and blood union. The relationship of believers in the Lord flows out of, not flesh and blood, but Spirit. All are joined together as brethren in the Lord. Paul addressed Timothy as "my son," and John addressed the church as "my little children," not because there were ties of blood-kin existing between them, but because they were related in the Spirit by having been begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. We have never felt like saying that there is no recognition of any kind in heaven, but certainly we shall not know each other there as we do here. Whatever recognition there may be there will assuredly be upon a spiritual, and not upon an earthly plane. We shall not have husbands and wives, nor children, nor fathers and mothers, there. There is but one Father in the kingdom of heaven, and he is the infinite God; there is but one mother there, and she is the new Jerusalem; there is but one husband there, and he is Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom; there is but one wife there, and she is the church, the bride of the Lamb. "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" says the psalmist to his God. How much nearer do believers feel to be to one another than they do to those with whom related merely by ties of blood. If blood is thicker than water, surely the Spirit effects a compactness and a knitting together not to be consummated by either water or blood. Whereas Gentile believers were once aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenant of promise, and had no hope, being

without God in world, now in Christ Jesus they are made nigh by his blood, and are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God. This, then, is a spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ, this blessing of new and perfect relationship with those composing the redeemed heavenly host.

(To be continued.)

CLOSE OF VOLUME EIGHTY-FOUR.

WITH this number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES volume eighty-four closes, and as is our custom we shall make a brief statement of the financial standing of the paper and thank our friends for their kindness. At the close of each volume we are made to wonder at the mercies of the Lord to us all during the year, and it is always with a feeling of gratitude, we trust, that we record his goodness. This year has not differed very materially from previous ones; the work has been arduous and at times perplexing, but our efforts have been appreciated by our readers and very little complaint has come to our ears. Elder Lefferts has written for each number, and surely he has been blessed of the Lord in the work. As for ourself, it has been, as heretofore, impossible for us to write very often, owing to so many other duties, and now as the year closes we feel that if we ever had any gift in the direction of writing that it is about gone, yet we hope to continue, with such ability as the Lord gives, and hope the brethren will not be harsh in their judgment of us when we do not write regularly, and when we do not reply to private correspondence promptly. There is no reason, except that it seems impossible for us to do so. The writings of the year have been judged as good, timely and profitable. We thank all who have helped us by their writings, and ask that they continue in the good work of speaking often one to another. Our subscription list is about the same as this time last year, no smaller at any rate, which encourages us to think the SIGNS will be sustained by the Lord. Many of our subscribers have been prompt in payment of their subscriptions, and we fully appreciate their thoughtfulness. Those who are yet behind we hope will remember the SIGNS, when everything has so advanced in price, and send on what is due us. The donations for the "poor of the flock" have been more than last year, and we sincerely thank those who have so kindly contributed to that end. A great many are having the paper through this kindness. Many are the letters we receive from the poor, scattered ones, all testifying to the comfort derived from reading the SIGNS, and expressing gratitude to the Lord and to the brethren for their kindness in enabling them to have the paper.

Thanking all again, and wishing you a pleasant season, we say farewell for 1916.

K.

NOTICE.

IN sending renewals of subscription, changes of address, &c., it is very important that our subscribers give the exact name or initials to which the paper is addressed, as we often have more than one of the same name at the same post-office, and if they do not send the name just as we have it on our list we cannot tell which name to credit or change. It is also very important in sending on a change of address to give the name of the post-office to which the paper has been coming as well as the place to which it is to be changed.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder Peter Brown.)

The Mt. Enon Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the church at Paynes Creek, to the churches of which she is composed sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has pleased Almighty God, who rules and superrules heaven and earth and the fullness thereof, and works all things after the counsel of his own will, to spare us to meet in another association in peace and love, and we desire to praise his holy name for this and all of his great blessings, for all good and perfect gifts are of him. The churches report peace and love and some ingatherings among them.

In conclusion, we humbly trust that the God of all love and mercy will continue his blessings to us and all Israel everywhere. We solicit correspondence of associations of our faith and order.

Our next association will convene, the Lord willing, Friday before the second Sunday in November, 1917.

W. O. FUTCH, Moderator.

J. H. MILES, Clerk.

APPOINTMENTS.

PROVIDENCE permitting, Elder D. M. Vail will fill the following appointments:

Vega, N. Y., Sunday, Dec. 17th, 10:30 a. m.; Halcottville, N. Y., 2:30 p. m.; Roxbury, N. Y., the Misses Meads, Monday, 18th, 10:30 a. m.; Kelly Corners, N. Y., Mrs. O'Connor's, Tuesday, 19th, 7:30 p. m.; Margaretville, N. Y., Morris Faulkner's, Wednesday, 20th, 7:30 p. m.; Arena, N. Y., Dickerson Hall, Thursday, 21st, 11 a. m.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

John Oliver, Va., $1.00; Samuel W. Shipway, N. Y., $2.00; Mrs. W. H. Stout, N. J., $1.00; Miss Margaret B. Tiebout, N. Y., $24.00; L. O. Garrott, Ky., $2.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

S. E. Newlon was born and raised in Loudoun County, Va. His father was a member of the Ebenezer Church, near Bluemont, Va. Later in life he came to Washington, D. C., and after attending the meetings of Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church for some time offered himself for membership, was received, and on July 17th, 1910, was baptized by the writer of this notice, and proved a faithful member until death. He served the church as clerk for some years. He was taken sick in May, 1916, was removed to a hospital in Washington, died June 16th, and was buried in a cemetery in D. C. June 19th. The writer endeavored to speak some words of comfort to the sorrowing friends and relatives. I do not know to whom he was married, nor on what date, but his wife preceded him to the grave several years. He leaves, I think, three sons and three daughters, upon whom we would ask the mercies and blessings of the Lord. As a church, we miss brother Newlon very much. He was much afflicted while here; now he is at rest, his spirit having returned to God who gave it, and when Jesus shall come again his vile body shall arise from its present resting-place in the image of his glorified Savior, and then the whole man shall be perfect forever, live with and praise Jesus forever and ever for his wonderful and glorious salvation.

ALSO,

Peter Kessler was born in Switzerland March 7th, 1841, and came to this country with his parents when about five years of age. When quite a young man he came to Butler, Baltimore Co., Md., and on the 5th day of June, 1861, was married to Miss Katherine Merryman, who with six children: Mrs. Anne McElroy and Mrs. Dora Myers, of Baltimore, Md., Mrs. Fannie Goeke, of Piedmont, W. Va., Miss Ella Kessler and Joseph Kessler, of Butler, Md., and Dr. Calvin Kessler, of Clarksburg, W. Va., survives him, who, together with several grandchildren, mourn their loss, but not without a very sweet and precious hope. Brother Kessler was baptized in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church at Black Rock, Md., Sept. 19th, 1884, by the late Elder F. A. Chick, and unto the day of his death proved a faithful and profitable member. Brother Kessler was a quiet, unassuming man, attending to his own business and enjoying the confidence of all who knew him. He had a reputation for honesty and truth equal to any man, and was a true Primitive Baptist. He would sometimes talk to the church in her conference meetings, and we always enjoyed hearing him. He had a very lovable disposition, and was always gentle and kind. Brother Kessler had been sick for several months, but bore his afflictions with christian fortitude, often telling his family and friends that he was nearing the end of his mortal journey, and saying he was not

afraid, as he was going from sin and strife. On the morning of Nov. 28th, 1916, he passed away so gently that those around him hardly knew when the end came. All that loving hands could do was done by his wife, children, physician and friends, but he could stay no longer than his appointed time. On Friday, Dec. 1st, at 2 o'clock p. m. his mortal remains were taken to Black Rock meetinghouse, where for years he so much delighted to go, and the writer, his loving pastor, spoke to a very large gathering of friends, reading as a text Job xiv. 14, 15, also 1 Cor. xv. 53, 54, and though in sorrow for the loss of such a dear brother, felt that he had some sweet liberty in speaking of the christian hope that reaches beyond this life. Elder W. S. Alexander and brother F. G. Scott followed with a few well chosen remarks, after which the mortal remains were laid to rest in the cemetery adjoining the church lot until the second coming of Jesus. We shall all miss our dear brother from the church and the home he so much loved, and sorrow that we shall see his face no more in the flesh, but we rejoice in the sweet hope of meeting him in that world of spiritual bodies and join him in the everlasting praises of that Jesus in whose arms he now rests.

Now may the God of all grace comfort our dear sister in her sorrow, as well as each of the children and grandchildren, and give them all the sweet assurance of his love that their dear one was blessed with.

His loving pastor,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

[To the above obituary we wish to add that it had been our privilege to know brother Kessler personally and intimately for almost twenty years. To know him was to love him—ever sincere, honest and straightforward, strong in his convictions, yet mild in expression, strong in faith, giving glory to God. Perhaps a better and more indulgent husband and father never lived. We mourn with the dear family in their great loss, and pray God's blessing upon them.—K.]

MEETINGS.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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ALL WELCOME

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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(Judges v. 11.)

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A. H. RODEN.

GLEN ROSE, Texas.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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POETRY.

BE STILL, MY HEART.

"My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."—Exodus xxxiii. 14.

Be still, my heart, my Savior speaks;
His word will fill my soul with joy;
Upon my ear its music breaks,
It tones my gloomy fears destroy.
He knows me well, he loves me still;
His word is true, his favor sure;
His power will guard from every ill,
His mercy evermore endure.

My way is hid, my eyes are dim,
I cannot see the far-off land;
Gladly I turn my eyes to him,
And eager seize his outstretched hand.
His sight is clear, his arm is strong,
His love will never change nor die;
Mercy and truth to him belong,
He will my every need supply.

When dark the sky, and fierce the storm,
When friends shall fail, and weakness come,
When terrors fill me with alarm,
When underneath his stroke I'm dumb,
His voice shall hush my fears to rest,
His presence chase my doubts away;
I'll lean upon his loving breast,
And see my darkness turn to day.

In childhood's joys, in manhood's cares,
In age, and feebleness, and death,
In toil and pain, midst foes and snares,
His arms are ever underneath.
Where all is change, and grief, and woe,
He ever standeth by my side;
His plans no power can overthrow—
He changes not, his words abide.

And soon will come the blessed day
When doubts shall end, and sin and tears;
When clouds shall all have passed away,
And ended be the roll of years.
Then, gathered in from different lands,
The parted saints shall meet again,
And midst the songs of angel bands,
Begin their everlasting reign.

—*Selected.*

A PRAYER FOR STRENGTH.

Give me strength, my Lord and Master,
Give me strength for this one day—
Strength for battle in life's conflicts;
Give me strength, O Lord, I pray.

I would do thy will, my Master,
Would perform life's duties all;
I am weak, and I must perish,
Unless thou dost heed my call.

Give me strength, O make me stronger,
Fit me for life's duties all;
Give me strength, nor let me waver,
Choose my footsteps, lest I fall.

If not best that for my pathway
Flowers and sunshine fill my day,
Let me have the clouds and rainfall,
Only give me strength, I pray.

Never let my heart grow faithless,
Even though thou thy face dost hide;
Though my days be dark and dreary,
I would in thy strength abide.

—*Selected.*

CORRESPONDENCE.

COLMAR, Ky., Oct. 6, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter written me by brother J. E. Fincher, of Banks, Ala., which you may publish in the SIGNS if you wish to do so. I am like brother Fincher, I think his letter is in harmony with the teachings of the Bible; if it is not, I hope we may soon see our error, that we may be able to confess our errors to the brotherhood.

Yours in many doubts,

L. D. HOSKINS.

BANKS, Ala., Sept. 8, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER HOSKINS:—I feel that I have lived in soul union with you a portion of the time since you first wrote me, more than a year ago. Until that time I had no knowledge of your existence, and I feel that it is a great privilege to know that God's children can become acquainted in the spirit of love, even before they know each other naturally. I feel sure you never heard of me until you saw my name in the SIGNS, our family paper, and the tenor of your letter revealed the relationship; when I read it, I knew it was "brother" Hoskins. I could see clearly that you belong to the royal family, which is not of this world. When I consider what a vile wretch I am, I wonder how you could say that I, too, belong to this family. Jesus told his apostles they were not of the world; common sense and reason dispute this. There is a sense in which they are of the world. Our first existence, or nature, is of this world. Jesus was full of grace and truth; then it is very necessary to make the proper application before we can get the import or teachings of Jesus. He says, Father, I pray not for the world, but for them thou gavest me out of the world. This shows very clearly that there is more than one world. Jesus did not mean that the humanity of his people was not of this world, but the spirit of them was not of this world, even as Christ was not of this world. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that the world through him might have life. Again, I am that true light that came down from heaven, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. I understand this to be the grace world, or spiritual world, otherwise we would have to admit that he lighteth every man that comes into this visible world. Then all mankind is born of God, if this be true, but we know this is not true.

Brother Hoskins, I intended writing you on the subject of falling from grace, or the condition that God's children get into by reason of sin and unbelief. I meet with but few Baptists who accept this doctrine; they are inclined to think it is not Bible doctrine, but according to my views this doctrine is as true as salvation by grace. I will state in the beginning that I do not believe it final, but it affects them in this time world only. Paul tells the Galatian brethren, v. 3, 4, "For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the deeds of the law; ye are fallen from grace." If this was true in Paul's day, it is true at the present time. There were some in those days that held to circumcision, or human works, and they are doing the same things at this present time, and making Christ of none effect. Now we notice the seven churches of Asia, which to my mind represent the churches of God in all ages, or in all time, and there were only two

blameless; all of the other five had somewhat against them, while there was only one that had fallen to such an extent that our God said he would spue her out of his mouth. This church (the Laodicean) had completely fallen into dead works; there was not a live member there. She was not commanded to repent, I understand she had sinned unto death. John says, There is a sin unto death, for which I command thee not to pray for. Sardis was a dead church, yet there were a few names there that had not defiled their garments, and she was commanded to repent. Now the dividing line between the minor sins and the sin unto death is hid from all human wisdom. This dividing line runs through the promised land, which is Christ, and there is also a dividing line between the sick and those who are sick unto death in nature, and no human physician can know this line absolutely, God has reserved this knowledge to himself. Some tell me that God's spiritual children never die. I desire to be understood on this point, and will have to write what I see, if I write at all, and if it is of the Lord it is all right, if not, it is all wrong. David was a figure of Christ, and I understand he was speaking of his divine family when he said, Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days. These days are spiritual days in the promised land, which is Christ. Again, David says, Those that turn aside after the crooked ways the Lord will lead them forth with the workers of iniquity. Brother Hoskins, I believe this is the death that shall have no power over those who have no part in the first resurrection, which is Christ. I believe this possession which they have in Christ is obedience, and the two blameless churches in Revelation represent this class: a remnant saved in time according to the election of grace. I cannot mention all of the Scriptures in proof of this point, they are numerous. He that provideth not for his own household denieth the faith, and is worse than an infidel. This is a child of God; then if he denieth the faith, and is worse than an infidel, surely he is dead, meaning separation, he is not a live christian. It is written in John, I, (Christ) am the true vine, and ye are the branches, and every branch that bringeth forth fruit my Father purgeth it, and every branch that bringeth not forth fruit my Father taketh away. These branches are the children of God, Christ is the spiritual vine. When the Father taketh away these fruitless branches do they remain alive? Does not the apostle Paul say, As in nature so in grace? Then does not a tree or vine have dead branches? We all know they do. Are they not a part of the tree after they die before they are taken away? Yes. Are they not a part of the tree after they are taken away? Yes. Has not God the power to restore these branches if it is his will? Yes. This is what I mean by the children of God dying in time. Now let us notice Peter on this point. But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. How much difference is there in destruction and death? It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. These were the people of God, (2 Peter ii. 1–21,) for no other people can know the way of righteousness. They turned from the holy commandment delivered unto them. Verse 22: "It is

happened unto them according to the true proverb. The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire." Now what does this mean? They were delivered from bondage, but again became entangled therewith, and their destruction was swift. God's children after they have known the way of righteousness, if they turn from the holy commandments they become vile enemies to the truth, and from a spiritual point of view they are bloody and deceitful, and they shall not live out half their days in the promised land, for it is not a vain thing for you, for it is your life, for in this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it. (Deuteronomy iii. 47.) Moses commanded them to set their hearts unto all the words of the law which he had commanded them to teach unto their children to observe and do, for he says, It is your life. Moses was a figure of Christ, and in perfect obedience to him. Ye shall prolong your days in him, which is the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it. The Scriptures plainly show that God's children lengthen or shorten their days in Christ, which is the promised land that flows with milk and honey. This signifies something grand. Man cannot make either milk or honey. While man may lengthen or shorten his days in Christ, which is sometimes called "time salvation," it is not left to the option of the creature to accept or reject, although Joshua said to Israel, If it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose ye this day whom ye will serve; whether it be the gods on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell. This choice was put to them on conditions after it seemed evil to serve the living God. The cause of their getting into this condition is the works of Satan, who is going up and down and to and fro in the earth seeking whom he may devour; he is under complete control of our God, and can do nothing but what his hand and counsel determined should be done. Now it did seem evil to some of Israel to serve the Lord. The Lord led them out by Moses.

While Moses was leading this people thirty-three thousand fell in one day for disobedience. Again I refer you to the case of Korah, Dathan and Abiram: And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly famous in the congregation, men of renown. This is the kind that causes trouble in the house of God. David said he saw strife in the city; such as this is what he saw: And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron and said, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them. You see they showed their ignorance in this saying; they were not walking as children of light. Moses called for Dathan and Abiram, and they would not come; they accused Moses of bringing them out of a land that flowed with milk and honey to kill them; they not only lied, but rebelled against the God that brought them across the Red Sea. The Lord was able to draw the line between those who were holy unto him and those who were not. These men did not die the common death of all men, but the Lord caused the earth to cleave asunder, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up, and all that pertained to them went down alive into the pit, and I believe this is the pit David was brought out of. It is an horrible pit to those who have wisdom. Did not this

people die, or were they not separated from those who walked in that narrow way which but few find? That people was a type of spiritual Israel. The history of this case of the Korahites is found in Numbers xvi. Now we will hear a little from Solomon in this line. Prov. vii. 2: "Keep my commandments, and live." If we can live in the divine world, or in Christ, and keep not his commandments, why does he say, Keep my commandments, and live? The truth is, it is life to keep them, and death not to keep them. Solomon here is admonishing spiritual children, those born again, to keep the spiritual law, which is spirit and life to them. Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thy heart, say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister, and call understanding thy kinswoman, that they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words. In the same chapter Solomon saw a youth void of understanding going to her house; he was met by a woman with the attire of a harlot and subtle of heart; so she caught him and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him, I have peace offerings with me; this day have I paid my vows. This was in the dark. She was a legal worker. She began to lie to him and boast of what she had done. This strange woman is the only rival that Christ has; she is antichrist. She represents all the religious theories and spirits of Satan. She hath cast down many wounded, yea, many strong men have been slain by her. If she gets many of the strong men, what shall become of the weak? If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the sinner and the ungodly appear? This applies in time; the great struggle in time between the righteous and the unrighteous mammon, between life and death, the wisdom of God and the wisdom of this world. Moses calls Israel to remembrance of how Amalek met them by the way and smote the hindmost of them, even all that were feeble behind them when they were faint and weary, and he feared not God. (Deut. xxv.) The God of heaven said this war between him and Amalek should continue from generation to generation, and he confirmed it with an oath. This is the greatest of all wars; it is universal and very destructive. Whoso curseth his father or mother his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness. A child of God cursing his spiritual father or mother. (Prov. xx. 20.) I believe those forty-two children torn by the bears were typical of God's disobedient children. Before Elijah was taken up to heaven he told Elisha to ask of him what he should do for him, and he asked that a double portion of his spirit be upon him, and it was granted. I think Elisha here is a figure of the undershepherds, or gospel ministers; this is their souls' desire: a double portion of the Spirit of their Master, Christ. But I cannot go into the details of this. So Elisha went on to Bethel, and as he was going up by the way there came forth little children out of the city and mocked him, and said, Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head. I suppose his head was without hair, which represents power. Elisha knew he had no power, but what he did was in the name and power of God, so he turned back and looked on these children, and cursed them in the name of the Lord, and there came forth two she bears out of the wood and tore forty-two of them. I am sure they were vile enemies to truth, and were scoffers and mockers of the gospel, and destruction and misery were in their way, whether they represent the

children of God or not. The Lord prepared those bears for this purpose, and they knew it not. These things all exist to-day in the antitype, that which was, is yet, and that which is not, has already been. As to this state or falling away, lengthening and shortening of days in the promised land spiritually is fixed by the providence of God; his knowledge and purpose embraced it all before man was formed of the dust of the earth. The lot is cast into the lap, and the Lord is the whole disposer thereof.

One more point and I will close; this is much more than I expected to write. I refer you to the words of Jesus in Mark ix. 47: "And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than, having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Jesus was talking to the twelve, and telling them what was best for the body, from a spiritual point of view. In nature, if we see a member of our body cannot be saved, we then agree for it to be amputated to save the body from destruction. The teachings of Jesus show unless this offending eye is plucked out the whole body shall be cast into hell fire. Is this the hell that the world and some of the Baptists hold to? No, by no means; this hell fire none but the wise can see. Hell is the environment of the devil; this hell fire is the fire of the devil and his angels—what they keep themselves warm and comfortable by; they do not need Jesus to keep them warm. They also purify themselves by this fire. Paul became shipwrecked, got cold on the sabbath day, and tried warming himself, and there came an asp, or viper, out of that fire and bit him. Paul shook him off; he was a chosen vessel. This hell fire is full of vipers, and nothing but the power of God can save us from them.

Dear brother, I have not forgotten the promise I made you to write upon another subject, which I intend to do, if the Lord will give me sufficient light. I would be delighted if you could come to our association.

Yours in hope,

J. E. FINCHER.

CLARKS SUMMIT, Pa., Nov., 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—You will find inclosed two good letters; use your own judgment in regard to publishing them. I often wish I could write something that would be to the edifying of the body of Christ, the church, but the dear Lord has seen fit that it should not be so, and for this reason, with several others I could mention, I have written but little for some time. God has prepared some by giving them gifts of writing and preaching to the comfort of God's needy poor people, and I feel glad it is so, even if I am not one of them. I want to be thankful to God for the gift of hearing, for I do believe that I know when men are preaching the gospel or are just talking good. To me, preaching is expounding. I like good talk, and I like good preaching; both have their place. There are but few judges of the gospel; many good christian people cannot discriminate; all that is necessary to satisfy them is that he is called an Old School Baptist preacher. Am I right? I am still going about as usual trying to serve eight churches and supply in several other places. There have been a few additions the past year and some deaths. The congregations are about the same as in the past—small. Some interest seems manifest in some localities. The brethren in the ministry in this part

of the country all seem to be taught in the same school, therefore see eye to eye in regard to the fundamental principles of the gospel, each esteeming other better and superior to themselves, nothing being said like, You preach as I do or we do not want you. I do not know of any such spirit among us; no one attempts to regulate another's preaching, believing that God himself will do that; he holds them in his own almighty hand. While this is manifest, peace and prosperity exist, but to the contrary, strife, confusion, divisions and numerous evils or disorders are the result. May God continue to give us peace and keep us in the enjoyment of it, is my prayer for Jesus' sake. I wish to say that I attended the Delaware River, Warwick, Roxbury, Virginia Corresponding and Salisbury associations, and they all passed off quietly and were good; had excellent preaching at all of them, and they were well attended. I wish to thank the brethren for their kindness to me at each of them. Brethren, one and all, when you are in the lowest hell remember me; I am there much of the time. D. M. VAIL.

WILKINSBURG, Pa.

BELOVED BROTHER IN THE LORD:—Your good letter of some time ago deserved an answer long before this. It was a very great comfort to me, as I was at that time living over again the heart-rending scenes that I was called to endure a year ago. In the past few months I have received your good, comforting letter, also one from Elder Durand and sister Watie Beard. I do not need to tell you what a great comfort it was to know that I had the love, sympathy and fellowship of my dear kindred in Christ, those whom I esteem as the "salt of the earth." I have just reread your letter this morning, and I am thankful in my heart that our God is all sovereign, and that he in his great mercy has taught us to understand the truth. Here in Wilkinsburg are twenty-three large edifices called churches, and the masses are striving to see which can get the largest numbers, and which can get the brightest crown by being the best worker for the Lord. There is so much said about the Missionaries. I hear it and say nothing, but my heart goes out in gratitude to my dear heavenly Father for his great mercy in leading me in the way, for our dear Savior says, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." I hope I may still be led in the way, for of myself I can do nothing. My people here are very conscientious in their belief, and try to live up to it. My brother-in-law was singing, I am a child of a King, when I remarked, If we were only sure of it. He said he was, and asked me if I were not. I said I hoped I was. He said that was the work of the evil one to doubt. I said, Well, the Lord knoweth them that are his. I was glad to hear of your immediate family and of the church. I have been blessed with good health this winter, and feel more reconciled to the Lord's will, and have the precious promise that he is with his children even unto the end. You may read this to the church if you think best, as I do not feel capable of writing such a letter as I should, considering what a poor sister I have been to them; but I have had the comfort and consolation of having a home with the people of God, and should much enjoy meeting those dear ones face to face.

With the best of love, from your unworthy sister,

CARRIE EATON.

KELLY, Ky., August 10, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER:—If one so unworthy as I feel myself to be should claim that sacred relationship with one of the household of faith. I will try in my poor, weak way to unburden my mind, if the great Giver of every good gift will give me light, for without him I can do nothing. Praise him from whom all blessings flow. Brother Vail, I must say I was somewhat surprised to receive a card from you, saying that something I had written, published in the SIGNS, did you good. For myself, I can see nothing in all my efforts to edify or comfort any of the family of the redeemed, for in me (that is, in my flesh,) there dwelleth no good thing; when I would do good, evil is present with me. But I must say I took courage and was comforted to think that one so little and ignorant as I might claim a name with that dear people. It seems that these words have been written to express my feelings, therefore I feel impressed to pen them:

"I grope along on the highway,
Or deep in the valley of tears,
Searching for Jesus at noonday,
And on as the evening appears."

"As one veiled aside, after him I am pining,
Such a dreary waste desert is all unto me,
When Jesus most lovely, my hope, my salvation,
Is absent, and I his dear face cannot see."

It is then, dear brother, I am made to cry out, Save me, O God, for the waters are come into my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing; I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. I am weary of my crying, my throat is dried, my eyes fail while I wait for my God. The distress of those who are hungering for spiritual blessings is terribly real, and O the emptiness of soul. Will the Lord ever grant me a personal token of his love?

I have been looking over some back numbers of the SIGNS. I often read them over and over again, they never grow old. I would like to see your name, read something from your pen more often, but I know your time is about all taken up. O how I love to read the many good letters and editorials published in the SIGNS, and how I long for the pen of a ready writer, that I might express my feelings as they do, but I have already made my letter too long. Please cast the mantle of charity over the poor effort, and in your prayers remember a wayworn sinner, trusting alone in the crucified and risen Redeemer.

HARRIET UNDERWOOD.

WEISER, Idaho, July 26, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—Truly the apostle spoke wisely when he said, How to perform that which is good I find not. Surely he desired to do good, to walk in the steps of the Master, to live a humble christian life, to at all times honor God. He had tasted of the goodness of God and of the power of the world to come. He certainly knew Christ, whom to know is life everlasting; he had been taught of the Spirit. His desire was to follow Christ, but how to do good he found not. We have a great many Baptists to-day who can tell the apostle just where he missed the track, and how much he lost by his failure to do all the Master pointed out to do, and I am afraid if one to-day were to say he could not find how to perform that which was good, it might be said of him that he did not try, neither did he read to know what to do. I should not wonder if one read much, and believed what he did read, he by experience would be forced to use the same words the apostle did. David seemed to come to the conclusion that he could not stand in uprightness unless the Lord held him

up. One transgression makes one a manifest transgressor, and demonstrates a condition that exists in the human family, namely, the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, and if he receives them not, how can he keep them? Paul had this natural man, and also the inner man, that delighted to do God service, but he found them in opposition, contrary one to the other, so that the good he would he did not. If the apostle had found some way whereby he could have brought the "old man" under complete subjection, and the "new" or inner man ruled supreme, then he would have found how to perform that which was good, and would not have said, "O wretched man that I am!" I am of the opinion that the apostle did the best he could, and when I read of his efforts and life I stand in amazement, and am forced to say, How wonderfully blessed of God; and through it all the apostle, as well as all the disciples, took no honor to themselves nor claimed blessings as earned. But Paul, in summing up his whole christian life, confessed he was an unprofitable servant of God. I think one would have a hard time proving Paul left undone that which God had for him to do. Was he an unprofitable servant to the believers who have come after him? It would surely be quite a task to find one whom God had not in some way blessed through Paul's experience and ministry, hence we are forced to believe that Paul learned his profit, blessings or comfort came alone by the mercy of God. You can take him as he was, in his hope, in his sorrow, in his weakness or in power, and he sums up the whole affair with these words: "By the grace of God I am what I am." No, not by, nor for, what he did, but by grace. Now this encourages me, for I find two natures; one lustful, and enjoys natural things, and if not deceived, there is one that desires to live as Jesus did, to give and not take, and I get so worked up over this complex condition that I am often made to say, "O wretched man that I am!" If I know anything of God's mercy or love why am I so weak and sinful? I have heard a few brethren say they had never done a wrong knowingly. They are far ahead of this poor, weak sinner, and if they are so blessed I want to tell them one thing that is so, namely, the wrongs you do ignorantly do not hurt, for you do not know you do wrong; but those you do and know it, they are the ones which cause your bed to be hard, and force you to the closet to beg for forgiveness; they are the ones which cause you to stay awake and force you to say, Surely I am deceived in the whole matter. So with the mind we serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin. May God enable us to live after the Spirit.

Yours in hope,

T. E. ATTEBERY.

CERULEAN, Ky., Oct. 17, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you the experience of sister Strong, hoping that you will publish it. I will also write some for the paper, hoping to be guided by truth and honesty. Paul in Romans iv. 25, said this: "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Deliver is to free, as from danger or bondage. Offence, transgression of law. Justification, act of justifying, remission of sin. (Webster.) Who was delivered? Jesus. What for? For our offences; and was raised again for our justification. It is commonly believed that the word "our" refers to all men everywhere, in all nations, kindreds, tongues and peoples, uni-

versally speaking. If this is true, then what did Jesus accomplish by his death and resurrection? Those who believe in a universal redemption claim that Jesus did as much for the salvation of one man as he did for another, that he died for all and arose for all. If that is true, then all are in a saved state, or all are in a condemned state, and unsaved. To believe that all men are in a condemned state, is to deny the teaching of the Bible. Heb. i. 1–3: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Spake by the prophets, saying, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."—Isaiah ix. 6. I believe this Son given is none other than Jesus, who was wounded for our transgressions, was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. "For the transgression of my people was he stricken." To them God sent his prophet to cry that her warfare is accomplished, her sins are forgiven, and she hath received double for all her sins. When Jesus was delivered for our offences, the demands of the law were satisfied; it could claim nothing more. Jesus, being the resurrection and the life, arose from the dead for their justification; they, being reconciled to God by the death of his Son, were freely justified by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. If Jesus arose for the justification of all men, are not all men justified through the resurrection of Jesus? If a man for whom Jesus died and rose again is not justified, what hope has he in the resurrection? If all men were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, (Rom. v. 10,) and were justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, (Rom. iii. 24,) will not all men be saved? Jesus said, I lay down my life for the sheep. If Jesus laid down his life for the sheep, did he rise again for any other than the sheep? If Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, were there any goats in the church? If so, did he love them? The first promise as I see it in the New Testament is, that Jesus shall save his people from their sins. This we believe he has done. (Eph. i. 7.) In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. Jesus put sin away by the sacrifice of himself; so then, so now, his people are not under any law of a condemning nature. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the law of sin and death. So then there is therefore now no condemnation resting upon the church, the righteousness of the law being fulfilled in us by Christ; all things are put under his feet, and he is the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. Of his fullness the church receives, and grace for grace; hence his body is complete in him. In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

These things I have written, as they

appear to me to be truth. Submitted to your riper judgment.

Yours in love and fellowship,

D. R. TURNER.

SOME OF MY TRAVELS.

In the year 1907 I was made to wonder about eternal life. My burden commenced when I was thirty-one years of age. It would become heavy at times, and then again it would seem to be all gone. I went on in this way for some time, and I seemed to get worse and worse, and at last I thought I would try to pray, but could not; it seemed that something was holding me down. Then I thought to tell some one about my troubles, but could not, and it seemed that I was bound to go to torment, and could do nothing to prevent it. When I would try to do good, evil was always present with me. I was taken sick in the month of July, and as I lay upon the bed my burden was heavy and my heart throbbing, and I seemed to be sinking fast. I said, O what will become of poor me? When I got well I took my Bible to see if I could find any comfort, but little could I find. I would go to meeting, and it seemed to me that every one knew what a vile sinner I was. One morning I went to the garden to work, but I could not do anything, all was darkness to me. I sat down on the ground and thought I was going to die, such a dark cloud was hanging over me, and it seemed that I was too bad to live, but all at once a light fell upon me, and that was the brightest time I ever saw in my whole life. These words came to me:

> "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
> In a believer's ear;
> It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
> And drives away his fear."

It seemed that I could hear a sweet voice singing, and I was made to rejoice and praise the Lord for what he had done for me. I received my hope at the age of thirty-eight, after eight years of trial. I felt very thankful that my burden was gone, and I cannot express how rejoiced I did feel, and praised the Lord for all, and wanted to tell my friends what great things I hoped the Lord had done for me, but thought I might be deceived and my troubles might come back. I hope I am a true believer in Christ Jesus, for he has made me what I am, not anything that I could do, but he did it all. All praise to his name.

LAVANY STRONG.

MATTHEW XVI. 16.

"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

When Jesus asked his disciples the direct question, "Who say ye that I am?" Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus said to Peter, Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven hath given you this knowledge. Thus establishing the everlasting truth of the gospel of the grace of God that our Lord and Savior is known only by revelation, for no man can come unto him except drawn by the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the power of God's Holy Spirit. Every one who hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto Jesus. This is the way that Jesus builds his church through all ages of the world; that which is perfect cannot be changed. The work of Jesus is perfect, therefore nothing shall be added to it and nothing shall be taken from it; it stands forever, from everlasting to everlasting. He prepared all the lively stones that are in this glorious building, the church of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; he gathers them out of every nation, kindred and tongue under heaven,

and they constitute that innumerable company which no man can number, of both Jews and Gentiles, even the world, whose sins Jesus forever put away, by offering up himself unto God without spot. He forever removed the sins of his people, who are his church, that he might present them a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, for his church stands pure and complete in him and receives his name. This is the new name whereby she shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness. When our first parents, Adam and Eve, disobeyed the command of God the whole unborn race was plunged into the pit of sin and corruption, and are all under condemnation and held in bondage by the prince of the power of the air, the prince of darkness, and none comes out of this bondage except those whom Jesus releases, having paid their debt. For if the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed. They are the purchase of his blood, and Satan cannot hold them prisoners when Christ bids them come unto him. These weary and heavy laden ones find rest in the fold of God, and they ascribe all glory to him; they are not reckoned among the nations, for his kingdom is not of this world. They are given new life by being born again, even Christ in them the hope of glory, for the life of his people is hid with Christ in God, and they recognize and rejoice that Jesus is the Christ, the beloved Son of God, and this new life in his people is the only life in which the christian cannot sin, this new way created in righteousness. It is the good tree that cannot bring forth corrupt fruit, therefore all these tried and afflicted ones sing the glad new song, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thou hast redeemed us by thy blood, and brought us out of the pit, and put a new song in our mouth, even praise unto thy name. They all sing, It is by the grace of God I am what I am, and unless this grace reigns in our hearts we know that we are without hope.

"Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

Yours in hope,

WM. F. SLOAN.

LEXINGTON, Ky.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 17, 1916.

"I WANT to die." These words were spoken by one not three years old, when in distress and trouble, and I was wondering at the way of the Lord and his work by his Spirit in the hearts of his children. Like Jacob of old, I observed the saying, and as Mary, the mother of Jesus, I pondered it in my heart. As Samuel was sent of the Lord in answer to prayer by Hannah, so I believe this little one was sent to his mother, and my mind dwelt upon the wonderful way of God in dealing with us upon the earth. We are often asked to tell our experience, and how little of our travel of mind can we tell. John the Baptist leaped for joy in his mother's womb, and could it not be possible that he sorrowed also before he was born? Could he not have been grieved for the afflictions of Joseph even before birth naturally? And yet he could not intelligently go back and tell an experience when it actually began. We are apt to look for some wonderful revelation or exercise, whereas it is the Lord gently, softly and yet perfectly bringing us to know him, whom to know is life eternal. The exercise of mind to want to die is one common to the Lord's people. Elijah was the Lord's prophet, and after he had proven before four hun-

dred and fifty false prophets that the Lord received his offerings, he wanted to die. He had every evidence that the Lord had answered him from heaven, yet later on in his journey, under a juniper tree, he wanted to die. Moses, the servant of God, was in the Mt. Sinai, and had received the commandment upon tables of stone for Israel, and had been with the Lord forty days and forty nights, yet soon after he said unto the Lord: "Oh this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold; yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written." In this way the Lord prepared him to lead Israel. When the Savior was on his journey with the apostles to where Lazarus was dead, Thomas said unto his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him," counting it gain to die and be delivered. Judas Iscariot, one sent with the other eleven to preach, betrayed the Savior and wanted to die, and went out and hanged himself; so that the desire to die may be to such an extent as one to destroy himself, and yet not be separate in the experience of the Lord's elect.

J. M. FENTON.

ROANOKE, Va., Dec. 1, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am now a subscriber of your good paper, and desire to express my confidence in it, notwithstanding my ability is short of the knowledge of the great cause set forth therein. However, I feel to say a few words which may be understood to mean that I am in accord with the doctrine advocated through its columns, which is, salvation is of the Lord, nothing transpiring or expiring without the knowledge of him who knoweth all things, and the creature must abide therein, for our God changes not in all his ways. He has made his decrees, and all creatures must abide by these decrees, for they have gone forth, and will not be recalled by him who doeth all things well. Many good articles appear from different parts of the country which express my feelings and cause me to feel, or rather know, that I have fellowship for this people and wish to meet them in time, but feel this cannot be done, but hope that the time will come when we shall meet in that country spoken of by our Lord, where we shall ever be with him and be like him, which seems to me to be sufficient. We would be glad to have the editors visit Roanoke. Our pastor is Elder J. C. Hurst. We have meetings each Sunday. Our church has one hundred and forty-seven members, all in peace. Come and see us.

Yours in hope,

J. W. SIMPKINS.

BARTON, N. Mex., Oct. 25, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I want to thank you for sending us the SIGNS. We have been in New Mexico for over a year, and have gotten the paper regularly twice a month, and it has been a source of comfort to us old people. My husband could not read the paper himself, but I read to him, and he was glad when it came, and rejoiced in the many good letters, they did his poor heart so much good. We have not heard any preaching for two years, and have not seen a Baptist since we came here. There is one "dry land" Baptist in this county, and we let him read our paper, and he likes it very much, but is not able to take it, yet loves the doctrine it advocates. He is surrounded by people of different opinions, but they do not seem to have any influence with him. He is a true Baptist in belief, and would like to be a member of the church, but there is no church of that kind here in

New Mexico. Mr. Adams' health is no better, and we are going back to Colorado to our son's, where we can put him in a sanitarium for treatment. We have a son who is coming after us the last of this month, and he will take care of us both as long as we live. You can stop the paper until you hear from us if you please, and when we get settled again I will write you. It is so hard for us to do without the dear old paper, for we have been readers of it for many years, and love it very much. The Lord only knows what will become of us poor old sinners, but we still trust him for all things, both temporal and spiritual, and know he will be to us a kind Father and protector. In all things he is Alpha and Omega, and to whom else can we go? for he has the bread of life. He rules in the army of heaven, he works and none can hinder, and he is all in all to the poor, unworthy sinner. O what a dear Lord and Savior and High Priest we have. He is all in all to me, and I want to praise his holy name, and hope he will hear poor me. How can such sinners endure to the end? We would fall right now if it were not for the goodness of our dear heavenly Father, who remembers his children in pity. O how we ought to love him with all our hearts. How precious is his holy name to poor, lost sinners!

I hope you will excuse this poor letter, for I am seventy-two years old and never wrote a letter for publication before. You can publish this if you think best, for there are some old friends who would like to hear from us. May the good Lord help you through life, is my prayer for Jesus' sake. Pray for me, a poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

Your sister in hope of a better world than this, beyond this vale of tears,

JENNIE ADAMS.

ONEONTA, N. Y., Dec. 3, 1916.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I am again inclosing one dollar to pay for the SIGNS for the next six months. I have been able mostly to hear it read, and feel that I cannot be without it while I live; it is all the preaching I have. Elder Vail called on me yesterday on his way from his several appointments, and I very much enjoyed his visit. I am no better either physically or spiritually, as I had hoped to be as I grew older, but seem worse. This cold, hard, rebellious heart is a constant trial to me by day and by night. "Of feeling, all things show some sign, but this unfeeling heart of mine." There is nothing but the grace of God that can ever soften it. I know the Lord reigns, and works all things after the counsel of his own will, and what am I that I should murmur or say, What doest thou? I have thought much of the valley of dry bones. They were dry, and exceeding dry, but the Lord put new life in them and raised them up, and said they were the whole house of Israel; and Job and David complained in the same way. This journey here is truly a thorny maze, and the Lord leads his people in ways they knew not, and in paths that they have not seen, but I am so poor, weak and worthless I doubt I am one of them, still I had thought in times that are past that the Lord was with me and near me. I wish to lie passive in his hands, and know no will but his. I must stop this, for it is like myself, of no worth. I leave it all in the hands of Him who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind.

Your poor, doubting and unworthy sister in a trembling hope,

LUCINDA BREWSTER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1917.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

AGAIN the SIGNS greets all its readers, friends and contributors with the old, familiar greeting, "A happy new year." This has been the custom of the SIGNS for years, and perhaps many would be disappointed if something along this line did not appear in January 1st number. The desire for a happy year is good in itself, and we all appreciate such a wish for us, but our desires for each other do not change the path marked out for us nor lessen the cares, burdens and trials which await each one during the year. But all the path ordained for the people of God is not trials and afflictions, but joy and blessedness, and we should not forget to make mention of these in our writings and in our attempts to speak. When enumerated the blessings are far more than the trials and conflicts of life, but we all are prone to forget them and think more on the dark side of life. Adversity and prosperity are set over one against the other; one counteracts the other, so to speak. If we had prosperity always we would soon become highminded and have lack of fear in our hearts—would settle down on our lees with a feeling of satisfaction and pride. But adversity comes to counteract all such feelings. In sorrow we cannot rejoice; in poverty we cannot be proud; in humbleness of mind we cannot feel exalted. Prosperity is given to encourage the saints; adversity is given that they should walk by faith. Hence the prayer of one of old: Give me neither poverty nor riches, lest through riches I forget thee, or overwhelmed by poverty I curse thee. So we see that neither in itself is sufficient for the children of God, but both are necessary to their spiritual welfare, and in the wisdom and mercy of God he hath so blessed his children.

It is natural for each one at the beginning of the year to wonder what is in store for him or her during the twelve months ahead. Judging from the years past we know that many things await us, but we have not the slightest idea what they are, whether joy, gladness, prosperity or comfort, or all of these blessings, or whether sadness, sorrow, loss, cross, poverty, life or death. As in the years past, some of both are sure to be meted out to us. If we fully knew all the joys and gladness of heart, through prosperity of whatever sort, in store for us, it would be with the most pleasant anticipation that we wait the day for them to come to us. On the other hand, if we fully knew all the sorrow of the way for us to walk through we doubt if we could endure even the thought of its approach. Then how good that the Lord hides both joy and sorrow from us until the time arrives for each. On the side of joy we then say, Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me; bless his holy name. The Lord is good. O that men would praise him. While on the side of sorrow we say, O Lord, help me and forsake me not when the billows of grief overwhelm me; when my nights and my days are spent in tears be thou my refuge and

strength, that I faint not. Thus it is our lives are spent, but the Lord is faithful, and will bring all his redeemed off more than conquerors at last through Christ.

As we begin the new year knowing, if we live, the arduous labor before us, we shrink. No one can know the time and labor spent upon such a paper as the SIGNS except those fully acquainted with such work. Yet, like Israel of old, we remember the goodness and faithfulness of the Lord in days and years past, and in measure, at least, take courage. Every line for the paper for the year 1917 is ordained, predestinated and fully arranged in the plan of the Lord; comfort for one, reproof for another, instruction for one and correction for another. We are bound to believe these things from the holy Scriptures, and are bound to contend for them in meekness and fear. If there was uncertainty in the affairs of the world and in the church, faith would be of little consequence. If things ordained failed to come to pass, how could the saints be settled and fixed in anything? The very fact that all things are governed by the sovereign Ruler of heaven and earth establishes those who trust in the Lord. The Scriptures abound with proof that in the days of old all things were predestinated and brought to pass for the benefit, comfort and learning of the people of God. It was as true then as now that the people had dire distress, loss and persecution. On the other hand, they were the most favored people on earth. Their joy, their prosperity and their protection surpassed anything the world has ever known literally. Their deliverance from Egypt, their journey through the wilderness, the giving of the law, the priesthood, the oracles, the promises, their possession of Canaan, the temple with its worship, the prophecies, &c., were all ordained and came to pass in their proper order. Wars, famines, pestilences, &c., came to pass in those days also, and worked for the good of Israel in some visible or invisible way. All the efforts of that people proved failures unless the Lord blessed them. If all those things were true in days of old, why not now? The Lord has not changed, he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. But as Israel feared and quaked, doubted when walking in darkness, so do the children of God to-day. To-morrow's strength is not needed to-day, although we often feel it is; to-morrow's labor does not have to be done to-day. Hence the writing, the judgment nor the mechanical labor for the year has to be done in one day; each day brings with it its work, of whatever sort it is, and so far during the past eighty-four years the SIGNS has gone out on time as a rule with its columns filled as was ordained of the Lord, and notwithstanding all our fearfulness, misgivings and lack of faith, the same will doubtless result this year. Many of its editors, contributors and supporters have been called home during these many years, and are sadly missed, yet the SIGNS continues the same as in its beginning. How glad we all are that the doctrine of God changes not. We fully believe in and indorse progression, but the doctrine of Christ cannot progress, because it is perfect; the religion of Jesus cannot progress, because it is perfect; the ordinances of the church cannot be improved upon, because they are perfect. This is why the SIGNS has neither offered nor suggested anything new, but rather has affirmed the old landmarks for the salvation and comfort of the saints. The doctrine of God does not make his people careless nor indiffer-

ent, but rather careful and diligent. While everything is settled and fixed in the predestination of God, it does not hinder or exclude exhortation to good works. This is one way in which all things work together for good. Paul knew perfectly well that Timothy was called of God to the ministry, and that he would preach the doctrine of God our Savior, yet he exhorted him to preach the Word, to be instant in season, out of season, to reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. This was one of the Lord's ways to make known to Timothy what he had ordained that he should do. And while we have stated that every line for the SIGNS for the year 1917 is fixed in the plan of God, it does not hinder us from exhorting the brethren to be faithful in communicating one with another, that they write of the dealings of the Lord with them, that they continue to write of his grace and power to save. We do not think when the doctrine of predestination is understood that there is anything objectionable about it to any one, but the misconceived ideas men have of it make it very distasteful to them. No man can ever have the image of Jesus except through predestination, as God predestinated all the redeemed to be conformed to the image of his Son. Hence if any man hopes for this glorified image he must acknowledge that it must come to him according to predestination. We therefore exhort all who love God and his cause to write for the SIGNS during the present year. We shall do all in our power to make the paper pleasant and profitable. No unpleasant controversies nor unkind expressions will be admitted into its columns.

With all sincere and good wishes for the year, we close. K.

THE HIGHEST GOOD.

(*Continued from last number.*)

4. Service. Jesus came down from heaven, not that men might have the opportunity of waiting upon and serving him, but he came to serve his people, came to do sinners good, came to minister to his chosen. He girded himself with a towel, took a basin of water, knelt and washed the feet of sinful men. What awe-inspiring, holy condescension and humility is here enacted in the incarnate Son of God. Just as he came into the world to serve his people, by living and suffering and dying for their eternal welfare, so through him the spiritual blessing of being able to serve one another is given to all believers. It is a blessed thing in the heavenlies to be able to spend and be spent in the service of God's people. What a blessing to be able to perform this service with a willing mind and not by constraint. "Of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." We understand this to mean that the church is now living in the gospel dispensation, the day of grace, when it is no more possible to bring to the altar the blood of bulls and goats, of turtle doves and young pigeons, when no longer will the sprinkling of the ashes of an heifer avail to the sanctifying of the unclean, but in this day of grace, God, to be worshiped and served acceptably, must be worshiped and served in spirit and in truth. Where is obtained this spirit and this sincerity with which to worship and to serve our God? Nowhere but out of the fullness which is in Christ Jesus. Therefore, when the word says we all have received of his fullness, and "grace for grace," it means believers receive grace from him to answer all the demands and exigencies of this day of grace: grace with which to hear him; grace with which

to understand him; grace with which to preach him; grace with which to pray to him; grace with which to praise him; grace with which to obey and to follow him. This grace of divine service is one of the sweetest and most blessed of all the heavenly conditions of the children of God. Just think of all that Paul endured in his ministry as he went about serving the churches scattered over the country, and all without thought of being recompensed. He never made himself a burden to the brethren, but ministered to his necessities with his own hands. His was not the service of an hireling, but the service of one who was the Lord's free man. A service of love serves for the very joy of service, and not for pay or reward. Love is its own reward. Moses was faithful over his house as a servant, but Jesus over his house as a Son. See what a difference; one served for hire, the other out of infinite love and tender compassion; the one a harsh and unrelenting taskmaster, the other with pitying eye, knowing our frame, and remembering that we are but dust. That man or woman in whom is the life of Christ will, in the measure they possess it, be moved to serve the brethren of the Lord. We are all servants one of another, and we cannot get along without each other. If one organ of our physical body is out of order, all the body suffers in proportion. So, in the church, the burden of one is the burden of the whole. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." The grace of hospitality is a gift of God, and serves the church. How good and comfortable it is to find homes over the country with one's own kindred in spirit, homes where really one feels at home, where cordiality and welcome without stint await one. Such hospitable hosts in the Lord never dream of being paid, but entertain because they love to entertain: their's is the enjoyment of the gift of service, the fruit of divine grace; they bear the likeness of their Lord, and his mark is in their forehead. In whatsoever way one gives a cup of cold water to a thirsty soul, one does it unto the Lord. If we clothe one of these, we clothe him; visiting them, we visit him. It cannot be known by us when we do it, for we walk by faith and not by sight. Those on the right hand of the Lord who were bidden to enter into the joy of their Lord, were not conscious of having ever done good. Unconscious goodness is the only real goodness there is. A conscious christian is never humble, though he may assume it. So, it seems to us, to be blessed with grace to serve God in his people is to be blessed in the heavenlies in Christ, and since it takes grace to serve this way, "Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear."

5. Suffering. Can it be possible that suffering is a blessing to the believer? Assuredly it is, or the Scriptures are not true. The church is like a mighty woman travailing in pain, in birth to be delivered. She brings forth a man-child: Jesus. It is only through suffering, therefore, that Jesus is born, or brought into manifestation. No believer can be established in truth by merely hearing preaching or reading the Bible, it must be through experience which entails suffering. What do we know about predestination, or about election, or about salvation by grace, or about the resurrection of the dead, except as we have learned it through travail of soul? Every entrance into an understanding of spiritual truth is through affliction. This is why we never feel like entering into a controversy with those who do not see points of doctrine as we

do. Argument will never make them understand, and as they have not had the travails of mind to undergo that we have, of course they cannot appreciate our viewpoint, and we do not expect them to. The Lord alone is the teacher of his children, and he will wisely superintend and administer their instruction. No preacher can teach a believer what the Lord has not. Preaching awakens a response in us only so far as we are able to read our life and exercises of mind in that which is preached. Growth in grace and in knowledge of the truth is only attained through the enduring of hardness. Along natural lines, the men who have achieved success in the world are those who have served extended courses in the university of hardships. So, in the kingdom of heaven, suffering and affliction serve to root the believer more and more solidly in the love of God and in the doctrine of God our Savior. The glory of Christ never shone so radiantly as in his dying agony; so the glory of the Christ-life in the believer never does other believers more good than when self is effaced in the breaking of the earthen vessel, so that the treasure within shines forth without hindrance. It is a blessed thing to be called to suffer for righteousness' sake. One thus suffering is in a heavenly place in the Beloved. It is a gift of God not only to believe on Christ, but also to suffer for his sake. The cause of truth has sanctified itself in the blood of the martyrs all down the ages. These christians of old who were willing to suffer death for Christ's sake, counting not their lives dear unto themselves, had this grace of suffering accorded them, and were in a heavenly place in Christ all the time their bodies were burning at the stake or their flesh was being devoured by wild beasts. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." There are so many, many places in the Bible where suffering is said to be a blessing to the heir of glory, that we hesitate not to put suffering as fifth in the list of these spiritual blessings in the heavenlies.

6. Inheritance. "An inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." The believer already here below has an earnest of this wonderful inheritance, and hopes to enjoy the fullness hereafter. God has appointed his people that which cannot be corrupted nor defiled.

"He loved me of old, and he loveth me still;
Before the creation he gave me by will,
A portion worth more than the Indies of gold,
Which cannot be wasted, nor mortgaged, nor sold."

It can never be wasted by spending it. The more one enjoys it the more there is to enjoy. The more one is led to survey and to comprehend this inheritance, the more there is to survey and to understand.

"When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun."

One often sees rich men's sons who soon run through what their fathers have left them, and are reduced to straitened circumstances. In contrast, the eternal inheritance of the elect never lessens the more they enjoy it, it can never be diminished through expenditure, it is unwastable. Each one has as much as all the rest put together, and the possession of one makes the rest none the poorer on that account. To sum up in a few words, if possible, this inheritance consists of all the spiritual benefits, temporal and eternal, flowing out of the life, death and

resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. This wonderful inheritance of the people of God is a spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ.

7. Glory. It is the predestined end of every believer that he shall be conformed to the image of Jesus. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." This, the future glory of the elect, is incomprehensible now, only in measure as faith lays hold of it, but, unspeakable as it is, we must confess this glory to be the grand and wonderful consummation of all the purpose of God concerning his people. "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly," though flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God. "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" This, then, is the seventh and last blessing, the blessing that consummates all the others, the blessing that will never end, but which the redeemed shall enjoy throughout eternity. The Lord will glorify his people with his image, and the body of their humiliation shall be changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body by the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself. When and how and where this will be no man knows, but that it will be, we are sure, for God's word so declares, and God cannot lie. "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation." He will come to glorify his saints and to be admired in all them that believe. This, surely, is a spiritual blessing in the heavenlies. We denominate this here the seventh and last, not because it is by any means the least, but because all the other blessings we have enumerated lead up to this of glory and find their ultimate end and satisfaction in the glorification of the body of Christ, the church of the living God.

Now, here ends our analysis of the highest good that can accrue to redeemed souls. The philosophers of the ancient world, of Greece, Egypt and Rome, spent much time and effort in the search for the Absolute, for the Highest Good. Philosophy, nor science, nor man-made religion, will ever lay bare this secret. The Highest Good is discovered only by revelation. For who is good in the highest but God, and who can enjoy this highest good but those whom he has attracted unto himself in Christ Jesus? "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." Only, then, by the declaration of this sonship in the soul's experience of the people of God can God, the Highest Good, be known. The Spirit, not of bondage again to fear, but of adoption (sonship) being sent into the believer's being, causes him to cry, "Abba, Father," which Spirit draws the believer into harmony with the Absolute, which is God. For, is not God absolute in all things, in power, in wisdom, in love, in knowledge, and in all the other infinite attributes of his eternal being? God's bestowal of himself upon his people, therefore, constitutes their Highest Good, and it seems to us that Paul's words in Ephesians i. 3, define in fewest words what is the highest good of those who love the Lord. To have been blessed in

eternity before the world began with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus, is surely the believer's highest good, and will constitute in final consummation the full flowering and fruitage of all the believer's hope and love and aspiration.

It may be that some of our readers will think we have undertaken an ambitious thing in trying to analyze these spiritual things under seven heads, but we do believe that there is no blessing which ever falls to the lot of any child of God but which may be classified under one or more of these seven heads outlined here. We hope our readers will enjoy this at least as much as we have enjoyed writing it. L.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in December (31st). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Lieut. Col. Knifton, Ont., $2.00; Mrs. M. M. Rounsavel, N. Y., $3.00; Mrs. W. B. Sproul, N. Y., $2.00; Mrs. Duncan McCallum, Ont., $2.00; Mrs. J. H. Dickson, N. Y., $2.00; Mrs. H. J. O'Bannon, Va., $1.00; Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $5.00; John E. Bannister, Ont., $1.00; G. C. Jordan, Mo., $1.00; Martha Beardsley, Ind., $1.00; Mrs. W. J. Rees, Ky., $3.00; W. T. Hughett, Ill., $2.00; C. Stevens, Ark., $1.00; Ivory Ford, Maine, $1.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. C. Caldwell, at the home of the bride's parents, Nov. 25th, 1916, George W. Jackson and Miss Cora E. Hartley, both of Fayetteville, Fayette Co., Ga.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder H. J. Redd was born near Northport, Ala., Nov. 17th, 1848, and departed this life Nov. 24th, 1916. He was married to Miss Margaret Jane Taylor, April 11th, 1869. To that union were born fourteen children, five boys and nine girls, of whom only one boy and four girls survive. His faithful wife, one sister, one brother and a half sister are left to mourn the loss of this dear man of God. I met Elder Redd about twenty-eight years ago at a district meeting in Jefferson County. It was at this meeting that I heard him preach so ably from the text, Why art thou cast down within me, O my soul? Hope thou in God. I learned at this meeting to love brother Redd, and I have loved him ever since. After this meeting I only met him occasionally until about six years ago, since which time I have met him frequently. He has visited and preached for us at Mt. Olive, near Columbiana, Shelby County. The first time I met Elder Redd I found he was suffering from heart trouble and indigestion, and he was a great sufferer until his death. Besides suffering in body, he, being an able minister, suffered much in other ways. I said once publicly, Brother Redd is a battle-scarred soldier of Jesus Christ. He said in the preface to his autobiography, which now lies before me in manuscript: "My whole life has been one of sorrow, poverty, conflicts and trials." Elder Redd was the best versed man in the Scriptures I ever saw. It seemed when he was preaching that the whole Bible was at his command. Surely a great man has fallen, and we deeply mourn our loss. In his nature brother Redd was irritable and high tempered, but these defects were a source of grief and sorrow to him, far more than to others. Within him was the real man of love, of pity, of compassion, of piety and gravity. He was greatly troubled over the divided condition of the Old Baptists, and often said to me, "Brother Crumpton, there are too many bars of nonfellowship. Primitive Baptists are one family, and should not be divided." He loved the church of God, the doctrine and ordinances, and often said that the gospel of Christ would edify and unify the people of God. In his preaching he ever set forth Christ the way, the truth and the life, and for more than forty years this man of God contended earnestly for the faith of God's elect to the comfort of many of God's tempest-tossed children. To God he gave all the glory in all things. For himself he claimed nothing, except a sinner saved by grace. Dear brother Redd was so afflicted for the past two years that he was confined to his room nearly all the time. He could not lie down, but sat day and night, winter and summer in an armchair, while his wife with untiring devotion waited upon him. Much was done for him, but at last the summons came and he had to go. He sleeps in Jesus. Weep not, dear wife, dear children,

dear brother, dear sister, for blessed are the dead which die in the Lord. Brother Redd is at rest, resting from all his labors. Sleep on, dear brother, until Christ shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, then you shall awake with the full likeness of Jesus, whom you loved and served.

After services at the home by the writer, assisted by Elder Woods, and prayer by the pastor of the Mission Baptists, to which his youngest and only unmarried child belongs, on Saturday evening the body was laid to rest in the Woodlawn Cemetery to await the resurrection.

S. S. CRUMPTON.

William Shockley, husband of sister Mary Shockley, of Snow Hill, Md., died at his home in Snow Hill Nov. 20th, 1916, after a lingering illness, aged 73 years. He spent nearly all of his long and useful life in Worcester County, Md., a man highly esteemed in his community. His well ordered life, pleasant manners and intelligent conversation won him many friends and admirers. He leaves a loving and devoted wife, one son, Arthur E. Shockley, one daughter, Mrs. Emily Disharoon, two daughters-in-law, Mrs. G. B. Shockley and sister Alice Shockley, and six grandchildren to mourn their loss. His eldest son, Goldsborough B., died in June, 1915. All that loving hands could do to soothe and comfort him through all his suffering was done. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of God our Savior, and a warm lover of the truth as it is in Jesus, but felt unworthy to unite with the church.

He was laid away in the Old School Baptist Cemetery in Snow Hill on Wednesday, Nov. 22nd. Elder A. B. Francis and the writer conducted the services at the house and at the cemetery in the presence of a large congregation.

B. F. COULTER.

Mrs. Martha J. Kuykendall, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. L. B. Woodward, was born Feb. 11th, 1852, and departed this life Sept. 28th, 1916, making her stay on earth 64 years, 7 months and 14 days. She was united in marriage to brother M. J. Kuykendall, Jan. 11th, 1872. To that union were born five children, two sons and three daughters, all of whom are living and married. One son, S. M. Kuykendall, and two daughters, Mrs. Dollie Roberts and Mrs. Lizzie Slusher, were at her bedside when she fell asleep. Sister Kuykendall spent the last fifteen years of her life on earth a faithful member of the Old School Baptist Church. She, with her husband, brother M. J. Kuykendall, after spending twenty-three years with Cumberland Presbyterian people, went to West Providence Church, in Coke County, Texas, and asked for a home, and were received after relating their travel in grace. Elder J. S. Newman baptized them in the clear waters of the Colorado River. Sister Kuykendall was an affectionate wife and a kind mother. Though she had been in failing health for several years, and suffered untold misery and pain, she was always ready to do what she could to make her brethren and sisters happy when at her home. The writer was at her bedside when she fell asleep. She said before she went home that Jesus was with her and would not leave her. Sister Kuykendall certainly died in the full triumph of faith.

Elder I. D. Moody and the writer conducted the funeral service at the home of the deceased, after which the remains were conveyed to the Cement Cemetery and laid away to await the great resurrection morn. I would say to the bereaved husband and children that God works all things for good to them that love him, to them that are the called according to his purpose. May God reconcile us to his will.

Written by request of brother M. J. Kuykendall.

L. E. SKINNER.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., Dec. 5, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As 1916 draws to a close, I feel impelled to write you a few lines, though know, unless directed by the Spirit of the ever-living God, that I can say nothing that will interest or comfort you. If growing in grace and knowledge means to humble one's self, to know that my sins have found me out, to be thankful that all things are ordered and sure, and to trust him more and more for his grace, then I have been greatly blessed, have had a remarkable growth. Still, I feel this morning that I am not worthy of the least of his mercies, because of my sin before he made himself known to me, and because of my sin since he revealed himself to me. I cannot do the things that I would; I cannot live as near him as I desire; I cannot even pray to him without the cares of this world creeping in and diverting my mind, but when I can forget self, and ignore that which tends to make me fear him, I am very happy. Then I remember that he has promised to be my everlasting portion, a promise which is being fulfilled day by day, that he has promised eternal life to all who believe, and I rejoice, trusting that I am one of that number; moreover, he has promised that he will finish the work begun in the hearts of his people, and that no one can pluck them out of his hand. What more can he say to us than he hath said? What more can be done for us than has already been done? For what signs and wonders are we waiting that we hesitate to lay our burdens down and to sing of our deliverance? Why do we walk weeping through this world, when we are not of it? Why do we cling to life here, when we have so rich an inheritance beyond it? I ask myself these questions, with many similar ones, and the only answer I receive comes as quietly and as satisfyingly as his grace came into my heart: Be still, and know that I am God. I have found great comfort in those still moments, have found myself very close to him, and have wished the feeling might continue until he called me home. The stillness is not that of death, but of life and immortality. I am not beset by sin or sorrow, I am raised to where the veil intervenes but dimly between that bright city and me. Sacred moments to every child of God; a foundation for the faith

that is within us, a tower of strength, even when the silence is rudely broken by the whisperings of the tempter. We are with him one day, the next we look around for him whom our souls love, only to find that we are alone and helpless, and we cry,

"O, Savior, I have naught to plead
In earth, or heaven above,
But just my own exceeding need,
And thy exceeding love."

This cry is answered in these words: I will never leave nor forsake thee, and again we go boldly to the throne, that we may receive more of his fullness, more of his enabling power, that we may endure to the end. He does not always send us empty from the fountain, sometimes we get a sweet, refreshing draught which soothes our sorrows and heals our wounds. Some writers in the SIGNS, and some with whom I have talked, acknowledge themselves sinners without seeming to find any comfort in it, when it is a mercy to know, by the teaching of the Spirit, that one is a sinner. He that is whole needeth not a physician, but he that is sick. Christ, the great Physician, has promised that those who cry to him in spirit and in truth shall be healed; that by his suffering and death on the cross he paid the debt, thereby saving our souls from death. The promise is that sin shall not have dominion over us, for we are no longer under the law, but under grace, and we can say, Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none on earth I desire but thee. Dear brethren, we have much to be thankful for; then let us hold up our heads and sing that sweet song, Saved by grace. Is it not enough to strengthen us for the conflict? Is it not enough to know that we shall come off more than conquerors through him who loved us and called us with an holy calling? Then let us thank him that he sought us when strangers, found us poor, miserable sinners, saw our helplessness and interposed his precious blood. It was not of our willing, nor of our running, and if we are a peculiar people, is it not because we have been set apart from the world; because we rejoice in him and have no confidence in the flesh; because we give him all the glory, and praise him that he left nothing for us to do; because we have to confess that all our righteousness is but filthy rags? Our only plea is, "God be merciful to me a sinner," thus acknowledging our sins once more, and with it comes the sweetness of forgiveness, the remembrance of joys once tasted, and the assurance of an abundant entrance into the haven of eternal rest. The knowledge of Jesus and his love with our faith in unseen things should be enough to make us submissive to all his decrees, and to be willing to follow in his footsteps wherever they may lead, for we have the promise that the flame shall not hurt us, nor the rivers of woe overflow us. Blessed are those who have ears to hear, who walk in the light of his countenance, and who can say truthfully, Thy will, O God, be done. I have all of you in my mind continually, and my prayer is that I may live worthy to meet and to greet you once more. As some of you know, I am living in a barren country, spiritually, where, if seed has ever been sown, it fell on unfruitful ground, and I mourn on account of my loneliness; but his Spirit turns my heart to my mother, the church of God, and you may well believe that I love you, and continue to feel that sweet fellowship for you that I had in the beginning. But by this time you must know something of my poverty of spirit, as well as my ignorance in the things which so vitally concern you, and in which you are

so deeply taught by the one Teacher, who speaks as never man spake; so while I love you, and desire to be with you, I am wondering why I am writing, and can give no excuse except that brother Lefferts suggested it; and while I have much confidence in his judgment, I feel abased rather than exalted. Again, there came to me during the year the greatest earthly sorrow I ever experienced, and I have been only a fit companion for owls and dragons. If the dear Lord had not drawn very near, and filled my soul with the knowledge of his greatness and goodness, with love for him and for his truth, which comforted me so exceedingly, I would have given up in despair. Many of you have been called to lay away a dear companion, and to feel the sting of parting even as I did, but I feel constrained to say: Shall I receive good at thy hands, and not evil? And with it came a willingness and submission which has worked for me an exceeding weight of glory. I pray when similar trials come to you, or tribulation of whatever character, that you may be sustained as I have been; that you may be made strong enough by the power of His might to believe that all things work together for the good of those who love and trust him. I pray every day that God will bless the ministers of his gospel, that they may be given wisdom with which to exalt his holy name, and that his people may be edified and encouraged. Dear pastors, dear people. Though thousands of miles apart, in their inner lives there is no time nor space, they speak the same things, hear the same things, see the same things, and love one another. The explanation of this is, they are all taught of God; the beauty of it is, we never forget what we are taught, and the power of it is sufficient to give life, and to save that life forever and ever. From the ends of the earth they come; he has gathered them and put them together, and no man can put them asunder. In the light of the Sun of Righteousness we see what no man can teach us, viz., the wretched depravity of our minds and hearts, and we cry, "Woe is me, for I am undone;" but a miracle is wrought, for by the shining of the Sun which revealed our sins to us, we see the forgiveness of them, are alive in him, and we pray to be more like him, to love him more, and to be able to serve him more acceptably. How well it is that he directs our minds and steps; how faithful he has been to us in all our wanderings; how he has forgiven our disobedience; and he calls us children, when we are so unworthy of the least of his mercies. Was there ever such love, ever a more favored people? We should raise our voices in one accord, and proclaim him Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty, loving and merciful God; we should praise him in the highest when we remember the sacrifice he made that we might live, and with him, and we should walk humbly and softly, because he chose us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. But you who have tasted of his grace know all these things; have been with me in the valley of doubt, and on the mountain of delight; have borne crosses and losses to a greater degree, perhaps, and with more patience, with a greater trust, and with a more fervent love, so why write further, or attempt to tell of that which you have experienced and which you believe? You may call it vanity, but there will be no echo from my heart, for I know my leanness as well as the readers. It is not merely for the sake of seeing it in print, for the writings of so many others are far superior in strength and beauty, and uplift and com-

fort, when this may confuse them. So it must be my great love for you, my desire to let you know that I have not forsaken the old paths, and that I am willing to be less than the least by doing what I can. May he richly remember all who have patience to bear with me. Let us cast our cares on him, who careth for us, giving diligence to our calling and election, that we may not be unfruitful in the knowledge of him who has promised to be our everlasting portion. Let us stand fast in the faith whereby he has made us free.

With love unfeigned, your unworthy sister,

MARY E. WRIGHT.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 6, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In looking over the first letters I received from sister Florence Pultz I found this one containing a relation of her early experience, and have obtained her consent to send it for publication, as I think it will be read with interest by her many friends and all who love the dear SIGNS.

Unworthily,

BESSIE DURAND.

WHEELING, W. Va., March 10, 1911.

DEAR SISTER DURAND:—I have just reread your precious letter, and as I read I was wondering how I had restrained myself from trying to reply this long. Your dear letters are all good, but this last one I am at a loss to describe just how I do feel about it. I think it surely cannot be for me—it must be some one else that you are addressing. I take comfort in thinking that it is my mind which you have found favorable in your sight, and O, if I could say, as did Paul, I have the mind of Christ. Dear sister, I know you fully agree with me, that if there is any good in me it does not belong to me by nature. We are even afraid to hope that we have the Spirit of Christ; it seems too much to hope for. The thought of this is too stupendous, too wonderful; the thought is too much for my poor, weak mind to grasp. Some days ago as I was alone for a few minutes I was considering my poor condition, and O how miserable, forlorn and destitute I felt. I felt that I could not endure myself, and I wanted to flee from this miserable old body. I walked into another room, and as I passed along a wail went up from my heart for relief. I tried to implore that this burden be lifted a little from me, and our blessed Lord had mercy on me and answered my prayer, for when I considered or tried to recall these feelings they were gone from me. There are many things I want to speak of, but unless our great Teacher guides me I cannot set my thoughts in order. I feel very thankful to you for those pages from the SIGNS. How glad I was to read your brother's experience from childhood up. It is a sweet story, and so well told. His style of writing is very agreeable and pleasing. Now what can I say that will express my feelings in regard to your letter to Elder Beebe? Truly it is a soul-stirring letter, but I could not wonder at the holy joy that led you out into such a large place. Surely your family ties have been sweet, with this double fellowship of love. I have not been reading much lately, but at times I feel drawn to read the Bible. The Psalms have been impressed on my mind, but often by the time I sit down and open the book my poor, weak mind is drawn off in another direction, or I have some household duty to perform.

This is Sunday evening. I have been very weak to-day, and my mind very

weak and confused. When I started to write last Friday my heart was so stirred with the thought of your and your brother's kindness to me I felt that I must try to write to you and relieve a little of this overflowing, but soon I felt barren and destitute of anything to write. I hoped for a little rest and quiet to-day, but instead I have felt vexed in spirit, and have felt to fret under my burden. Some days it seems heavier than I can bear, yet at the same time I do not feel that I deserve anything better. You speak kindly of me visiting you. There have been times when I have thought that I might be permitted to do so, yet I have felt that I was not worthy to meet you in the flesh. In meditating about such an event I have felt to shrink within myself, then I have had some pleasant and (to me) very affecting thoughts about your church. I have fancied that it would be such a homelike place to me, and I have wept at the thought of entering its doors. Truly your church appears to me as the most sacred spot on earth; I cannot describe my impression of it. Last Friday, while my mind was so tenderly exercised about you, I felt a great desire to talk with you, and I thought of several portions of Scripture which I would like to have your brother explain, and I became so exalted in spirit that I lost sight of this sinful old self altogether, but after attempting to write I became so self-conscious that all my joy was turned to shame and confusion, then I decided that it was best for me to keep myself apart from the dear saints. I feel to describe my condition by this verse, which I read years ago, and which made such a deep impression on my mind that I have never forgotten it:

"Nay, leave me to my own sad heart—
To nature's more than midnight shade;
I seem to-day to stand apart
From everything that God has made."

You spoke of walking in darkness. This is my condition at present, yet I am blessed with a sure hope. I call it sure, for no matter how low and dejected I become this hope never wavers, but seems sure and steadfast; I cannot see any reason why I should be indulged with such a good hope. When I come to think about it, I do not remember the time that I ever was bereft of this hope of salvation. My experience is peculiar. I somehow got the impression that I was a christian when I was a child, but I have no idea how this became settled in my mind. When I grew up into young womanhood, and became fond of gay, young companions, and became concerned about my personal appearance, then I began to have twinges of conscience, and reminders that I was straying from the Lord. In reading of your brother's childish or youthful thoughts I saw many of my own described. I was very anxious to merit the favor of God, and feared to offend him; I feared torment, and greatly feared death. I am confident that when I was baptized and taken into the church I had not yet been born a new creature in Christ Jesus. I had been given a hearing ear and an understanding in the gospel of the imputed righteousness of our Savior, and I was given faith to lay hold on this, and in the strength of this faith I united with the church. It was in the year 1892. I went along (I might say) hand in hand with the world; I still loved the pleasures of the world. I could enjoy the conversation of worldly people, and did not have any scruples about going to the opera. I went to the so-called churches here in this place to see and be seen. I often thought that many things I did were wrong in the sight of God, and yet I tried to hope that he would forgive me.

I went along in this way until the year 1900, then I began to feel a keener sense of my sins before the just and holy God. I tried to search the Scriptures, and found many precious promises, but could not lay hold on them. I felt that I had lost the favor of God, and felt that I was separated from him by my sins. I felt that there was that in me which was abhorrent to my God. Yes, I still claimed him as my God. Then I began to have a great hungering for gospel preaching, and felt that I would find help in this way. I went to Hampshire County for the summer, and while there I was in reach of our church. I could hardly wait until our preaching days came. I set out and walked nearly two miles in the hot sun, over hills and hollows and dusty roads, to reach the meetinghouse, and, lo, when I got there I heard that Elder Power would not be there, as he had been called away to attend a funeral. I then had to wait four weeks for the next appointment. I set out again, and walked all this distance, only to be disappointed again; he failed to be there. During the next month I had a dream which comforted me a great deal. In the dream I was preparing dinner for company, and while doing this I became aware that there was preaching going on in the stable. I could see them through the cracks, but I was too busy to join them, but I told my son to watch, and when Elder Power came out to bring him in to dinner, but directly I looked out and saw Elder Power walking away, and I appeared to be in a perfect agony of fear that he would not come in to this dinner. I cried out to him loudly, and he turned and came toward me. I ran and met him, and clasped both his hands while I wept bitterly. I thought he led me up a hill, and as he kindly supported me as we ascended this hill I felt a sweet calm come over me. I woke from this dream with this calm, restful feeling still with me. I felt somewhat comforted, but still had the intense desire to hear a gospel sermon. The third time I went to our church (on Saturday) and Elder Power was absent, but there was a young preacher present whom I had never seen before, and when he got up to speak he appeared to be at such a loss for something that I began to assure myself that I would not hear any preaching. I began to feel much discouraged, but while grumbling at this (in my mind) I became interested in this young man. He was preaching with much feeling and liberty. I had never heard the gospel preached with such a blessed tone of assurance as he preached it. He dwelt much on the "wills" and "shalls" of Jehovah. That sermon was just exactly the kind that my soul was hungering for, and I was all attention and loved this dear young servant of the Lord for the rich feast he had given me. He had noticed the hungry looks, and he asked our deacon, at whose house he was staying, to take me home with them. Brother Compton (the deacon) had meant to ask me anyway, so I had the great pleasure of his company, and heard him preach another good sermon the following day (Sunday). It would be impossible for me to describe the joy that I experienced in believing I could claim the precious promises as my own; I seemed to be in a new world or existence. My heart was singing praises to our dear Lord from morning until night. I remember some hymns that were precious to me. The theme of predestination and election was my meat and my drink, and I loved to hear or read the experience of the saints. From that time on I lost my love for the world,

and felt as if the graveclothes were taken off of me, the Savior had loosed me and let me go. From that day I have, by the grace of God, been released from Satan's yoke. I feel to be sinful, and know I am all undone, yet I feel that sin does not have dominion over me. This sweet and blessed charity you speak of, I, too, see much beauty in. Our dear Lord has led me into the experience of it.

Now I will draw to a close, as I am becoming so confused that I cannot express my thoughts. Please pardon this long letter. I had thought I could not write at all to-night, but I became interested in trying to tell my poor little experience, or a small portion of it. I do long to be worthy of your kindness, but can never attain to it myself, my worthiness must all be in Him. Only in this hope could I dare to claim the fellowship of any of his children.

Your sister in this hope,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

UPTON, New Mexico, Dec. 3, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If one so poor and unworthy as I am should be allowed to thus address you. Many long days and years of suffering are allotted to the people of God in this life, and it is written, It is not only given you to believe on his name, but also to suffer for his sake. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward, not of himself, not by a change of his own mind voluntarily, but "by faith." He did not come in possession of this faith by hearing some one preach Jesus Christ, nor for any good thing he had done, and not by concluding he would seek for it, because faith is the fruit of the Spirit, and is in every child of God when born of God. When we are born of the flesh we possess certain characteristics, such as natural love, hatred, anger, envy, jealousy, murder, deceit, &c. So it is true, when we are born of the Spirit we have the fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, and we do not have to work to get these fruits. Our faith is born of God, for the Bible says, Whatsoever overcometh the world is born of God, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Faith exercises us, we do not exercise faith. Paul says, Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Did you ever know any one to exercise evidence? Evidence exercises us. You hear one of your loved ones is dead, through a not very reliable source, you doubt it, but when you get home there is the loved one in the cold embrace of death, you have the evidence right before you, and this exercises you, causes you to mourn, and you cannot help it. You were exercised by the evidence. Faith is a wonderful power, controlling us, and not we controlling it. Then by this power Moses was caused to make a choice, and that was to suffer affliction with the people of God. Who would stand up and say Moses did this of his own accord, without something unnatural to move him to do it? Only one destitute of reason or biblical understanding. It looks to me any one with good natural reason would know better, but God has hid these things from the wise and prudent. Look at his surroundings, he has almost everything a natural man could wish, the son of the daughter of

the king of one of the richest countries on earth, the nicest bed to sleep on, the finest food in the land, the best clothing, a life of luxury and ease. Who would give that up and go down and be one of a people that were suffering, terribly afflicted? God said, I have heard the cries of my people, and am come down to deliver them. What is the matter with you, Moses? You want to leave all of the natural pleasures of the king's court and go forth and suffer with a people whose cries have gone up to the Lord of Sabaoth. Yes, he is willing now, for "it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Do you not recollect when you were made willing to give up all worldly pleasure? When you became tired of earthly joys? Can you not well remember when you said with the poet,

"Weary of earth, myself and sin,
Dear Jesus, set me free;
And to thy glory take me in,
For there I long to be.

Burdened, dejected, and oppressed,
Ah, whither shall I flee
But to thy arms for peace and rest;
For there I long to be.

Empty, polluted, dark and vain,
Is all this world to me;
May I the better world obtain;
For there I long to be.

Lord, let a tempest-tossed soul
That peaceful harbor see,
Where waves and billows never roll;
For there I long to be"?

Before this there was so much joy in the world to you, the days passed with hardly a ripple on the sea of this life, but there came a change, something filled your heart with sadness, dark shadows began to hover over your heretofore bright pathway, there came creeping away down into your heart of hearts a sadness before unknown to you, you began to feel that you needed help, fear came over you that you could not shake off, the dark shadows became more dense, the anxiety increased, and you began to be awfully burdened. I could see the grave open and my bones lying in it, but for the life of me I could see no further, I felt that there I would go, and there remain forever and forever. So terrible was the darkness, and so heavy the burden, life was a misery to me. What did you say?

"Till late I saw no danger nigh,
I lived at ease, nor feared to die;
Wrapped up in self, conceit and pride,
I shall have peace at last, I cried.

But when, great God, thy light divine
Had shone in this dark soul of mine,
Then I beheld with trembling awe
The terrors of thy holy law.

With melting heart and weeping eyes
My guilty soul for mercy cries;
Where can I go, or whither flee,
To escape the vengeance due to me?"

I can go to the place where the burden rolled off and a text of Scripture came into my mind. This came: And the peace of God, that passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ. It has kept you, it will keep you, little, trembling one, although the bitter, briny waves of sorrow and affliction will come sweeping over the sea of this life, and will go over you, overwhelming you in the most awful grief and sorrow; still you will be kept, still you are safe. His love is always the same, never changes, and all your sorrows and every pain are for your good. Many waters cannot quench love, the floods cannot drown it; nothing can cause his love to change. The anguish and fear only prepare you to joy in Jesus when he manifests again himself to you as your Savior, Protector, King, Husband, Friend. Although years and years of the deepest sorrow have gone over me, I remember as well as yesterday when I

first heard Elder Silas Durand preach on the subject, "Who shall separate us from the love of God?" and still can see in my mind the illustration he used in describing real, true christianity and painted or false religion. That was away over from where I now live, where God has so wonderfully blessed me, away over in what the Indians called "the dark and blood ground," and it proved to be that to me. So faith forced Moses to suffer affliction with the people of God, choosing rather to suffer than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. Certainly the children prize the services and the joy and sweetness found in him more than all the world. David said, One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple. Worship him in the beauty of holiness. These are the greatest riches: to behold the beauty of the Lord. What is the beauty of the Lord? An upright walk and a godly conversation. Nothing in this life, hardly except the Savior himself, is more beautiful than an upright walk, and this is him manifest in us. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Disorderly conduct and bad language in one professing the name of our Savior are to the people of God very ugly. Do not boast, you cannot keep yourself; the dear Savior only can keep you. Who hath delivered me from so great a death, who doth also now deliver, and who will yet deliver us. Bless his holy name.

Your brother in hope of mercy,

ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

CEMENT CITY, Mich., December, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—Another year has passed and gone, and it reminds me that my subscription has expired, so please find inclosed two dollars to pay for another year. I have taken the paper a long time, and do not want to be without it. I only wish I could write like the dear ones do; how they cheer us on life's journey.

I inclose a letter from brother John Oliver, and would like to have you publish it in the SIGNS if you think best. I have not his consent, but think he will not care. I think it has the certain sound.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Farewell.

NETTIE KELLEY CARY.

TWIN LAKE, Mich., Nov. 23, 1916.

DEAR SISTER:—I have long had a desire to write you, but realizing my many imperfections, and my inability to write wholly to the glory of God, I have put it off from time to time. I am surely aware of the fact that this old fleshly man is a very insinuating character, and should be kept in subjection; but O, my sister, what a continual warfare do I pass through. I feel that the God we love leaves us to wander after the things of the flesh, that we may be taught our entire dependence on him. I remember that for many years I was almost proud of the fact that my conversation had been free from jesting, and looked upon those who indulged in those things as being very disobedient, but the time came when I, too, was found jesting, and that on a very solemn occasion, and what anguish of soul I passed through for that moment of jesting. A short time ago I was mourning on account of my shortcomings, when these words came to me

as they never had before: There are no pangs in the death of the wicked. I never saw any beauty in this portion of Scripture before, but then it came with force, and I was made to rejoice that it had been written. I began to inquire, Am I a living creature? Have I been born again? I know I am a subject of many pangs; I go mourning from morning until night on account of pangs, and with Paul I can say, Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? But there are no pangs in the death of the wicked. The children of the bondwoman are not troubled with pangs, for they are dead, and their sins trouble them not. Not so with the children of the free-woman, for God has written his law in their hearts, and they mourn because they are unable to keep that perfect law. None but these children is troubled with pangs. These children have all been circumcised in the heart, they are now very sensitive; what would cause them pain would not be felt by those uncircumcised children of the bondwoman. But blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Not only shall they be comforted, but they shall be satisfied. When we awake with his likeness, then we shall be satisfied. At times I find myself longing for that time to come. I sometimes ask, What good am I to the world or to the church? With the world I am not in harmony, I cannot go with it. Many hard things are said against me by the world, because I refuse to be harnessed with it. The other evening my little boy was accosted by a lady who belongs to modern times; she told him that she was astonished at the doctrine I contended for. He answered her by telling her that the Jews were astonished at the doctrine of Christ. She retorted by saying, You are too young to know anything about the Bible; if you will come to our Sunday-school you will learn something worth knowing. I am so far from our church, and have such poor health, that it seems to me I cannot expect to meet with you much more. I am about the same as I was last year; am able to do a little. I well remember the good time I had while with you all last year. While visiting brother and sister Titmus I could not doubt that the Lord was very close to us as we reasoned together concerning the things of the kingdom. After leaving Cement City, for many days I was with a strange people (relatives in the flesh), many of whom had waxed fat with the things of this world, but little evidence did I see of that spiritual food which builds up the inner man, and I felt to be a stranger among them. On my way home I stopped at Norville, and found Elder Pittman and family. Although I had never been there before, I did not feel to be a stranger among them. My visit there was somewhat marred by my sickness. Though I felt it good to be there, yet I felt unworthy of the much kindness shown. I hope the little church there may prosper, and hope I may visit them again.

I received the little book you sent me. Accept my thanks for the same.

Dear sister, I am addressing this letter to you, but it is meant for one and all of our little church. Please communicate this to them, and may they accept it as a token of my love.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

JOHN OLIVER.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Nov. 19, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I often think of you in your trials and tribulation, and often look for your writing in the SIGNS, but that space is often taken by others.

Man cannot always write, but when the Lord gives a portion it is good. I often feel alone, like a sparrow upon the housetop. Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may raise her young, even thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God. Even the sparrow has a house, and I do feel I can say I have a house where I can meet my brethren and sisters in spiritual worship.

I have written more than I thought to when I started. I often try to write, but give it up, and think I am of no comfort to any one, not even to the church of God; so prone to sin, so prone to wander from God's throne, but I have the comfort of hearing from God's people by letter. It has been a comfort to me to read your letters. I can truly say I do not see anything in myself except sin, vile and polluted, but I take comfort in writing sometimes of God and his ways, but his ways no man can understand. The same rod that parted the Red Sea closed it up again.

You will find inclosed a letter, which you may publish if you think best. It has been good to me.

Your brother,

GEORGE M. CONNER.

MURRAY, Ky., Nov. 6, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER CONNER: —I have been reading your letter of July 16th, and decided to write you again. O how it does my soul good to read such good letters, and to know that God's little ones are scattered abroad, but in the Shepherd's own good time all will be brought into the fold; he will not stop until all are gathered home. I often wish it were my privilege to attend the good meetings everywhere. I feel I have been wonderfully blessed, however, in having the sweet privilege of attending our association (Soldier Creek), also the Tennessee Obion Association, and we had able ministers present; God surely must have been there. I did not think I ever heard such good preaching, but I suppose I have; I probably was hungry and could understand better, and I trust God gave me an understanding mind. Dear brother and sister, as I am young, I fear the older members will not have confidence in me, but I love them, and am perfectly satisfied when I can have the pleasure of sitting under the sound of the voice that tells of Jesus and the wonderful and mighty works of God, not the works of men; man's works are no more than filthy rags. The God I serve I hope and trust is the God who is able to destroy both soul and body. How comforting to taste that the Lord is gracious. My heart's desire is to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. How sweet the name of Jesus sounds to the believing ear. I am glad I was born to die; yes, I long to be where I will never be separated from the Lord. The Old School or Primitive Baptists are the people I love, the little ones of God, if I do not misunderstand the Scriptures. "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."—John v. 39. This one verse of Scripture is on my mind, and why it is I do not know. How thankful I am that I give all praise to God. Jesus said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein." I do feel within myself that I received him as a little child, for I did not do anything. I tried, and did everything I could, and that was noth-

ing; so when I gave up all for lost, God, the great physician, took my case, I trust and hope, and healed me; a hopeless case for man, but God did the work, I hope. "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father." "He that hateth me hateth my Father also." "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." O, is not that grand? Christ has overcome the world. There is salvation in no other name, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. O glorious thought, that we trust in the true and living God. May God bless you, dear brother and sister, and give you grace to live and die in him, is my prayer.

Your little and unworthy sister, if one at all,

FANNIE HENDRICKS.

DRAIN, Oregon, Nov. 20, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have a short sketch of the experience of a dear niece only seventeen years old. She and her father and mother were received by our church last August. This dear young sister dates her hope back when she was but ten years old. She went through two severe operations within the past eighteen months, but I am glad to say she is getting quite strong again. Her mother said she never saw more wonderful faith in the Savior than Ethel had during all her sickness. Her parents were much worried about her, but she would tell them she trusted in the Lord, and for them not to grieve, all would be right. O how we love to see our loved ones coming home to the church of the true and living God. How thankful we felt at our meeting yesterday, when one of my daughters-in-law came forward and was received for baptism; again our cup of joy was full. We had long felt she was a fit subject for the church, but she wanted to wait until her husband could be with her. I tell my children, and all others who have a desire to follow in the footsteps of the meek and lowly Savior, to never let anything of a worldly nature keep them back. I do not believe it right to persuade any one to unite with the church, but when indeed one is inquiring after the truth to give them what the word of God says, and speak words of encouragement to them; but the Lord is able to bring the blind by a way they knew not.

I did not intend to write so much, but the half can never be told; we wander so far from what we feel to be our duty. I wonder how the Savior can be so kind to poor, unworthy me. If you see fit to publish this, all right, if not, cast it aside. My heart goes out to all lovers of the truth. May our heavenly Father be with us all.

Your little sister,

S. MORNINGSTAR.

MY DEAR AUNT AND SISTER:—When I was ten years old we came down there to one of the Old Baptist meetings, which I enjoyed very much and which I never shall forget. Although I had always tried to live a chistian life, I never until then thought about joining any church, but after that meeting I thought that the Old Baptist Church would be the one where I could make my home. This meeting of which I am speaking was in 1909. It was the year 1911 on a cold winter night when creeping into my bed I fell asleep, and some time in the night I

had a dream which was very different from any other I ever had. I dreamed that a crowd of us had gathered beside the waters of the creek down below your house, and some of us were going to be baptized; when, as we were looking upon the water, there appeared on the other side the gates of heaven. While looking upon those beautiful golden gates they opened, and we, marching forward, walked through those precious gates, and after we got inside the gates closed, and hurrying toward us was a band of angels to greet us, and they were the loved ones we had known on earth. As my dream came to a close I awoke and sat up in bed, for before me I saw the faces of those dear loved ones. I was struck dumb, and as I gazed upon those beloved faces they and the gates of heaven disappeared, and I was left alone sitting in my little bed. O auntie, that was the sweetest dream I ever had. As the years passed by my desire grew stronger and stronger to be a sister in the church. The sweetest moments of my life were at the meeting in August, 1916, when I went forward to bear the cross of Christ, and father and mother followed in the path. Now, auntie dear, I hope I may be given grace to live the life of a true christian.

Your loving little sister and niece,

ETHEL STOWELL.

HAVANA, Ark., Sept. 27, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed please find money order to pay my subscription from November 15th, 1915, to Nov. 15th, 1917. I can say that I fully indorse the doctrine that the SIGNS contends for, and it is, and has been, the most of the preaching I have had in several years. I subscribed for it in 1884, if my memory serves me right; the first number brother W. J. Purington wrote on the absolute predestination of all things, and he proved it to my satisfaction, without making God the author of sin, as a great many claim. He was an able writer. There are some who claim to be Primitive Baptists in this country who claim that predestination makes God the author of sin. If I understand the Bible, sin is the transgression of God's law. When any one transgresses God's law he or she sins against God's will. God is not the author of sin, although he allows it. He had the power to prevent it, but for his own power and glory he allowed it, as in the case of Pharaoh. He raised Pharaoh to do just what he did. I understand everything came to pass just as God knew it would; if not, how did the holy prophets and apostles prophesy of perilous times in the latter days? I understand all prophecies will come to pass in due time, and in God's appointed way; there is nothing new under the sun to God. Brother W. J. Purington said at one time that God's "wills" and "shalls" were recorded above fourteen thousand times in the Old and New Testament Scriptures, and I believe every one will come to pass in God's appointed time. If that is absolute predestination, it is what I believe, for I do not believe in trying to limit God, who has all power, both in heaven and on earth. As in the case of Pharaoh, God said, For this purpose have I raised thee up, to shew forth my power in thee. A thing does not have to occur before God knows it; he knows what is in man, even the secret intentions of the heart are known to him; he is all-wise. It is not a plausible doctrine with the world, or the worldly religionist. As long as a man is in nature's darkness he is spiritually blind; it is only by the revelation of God that we know anything of a spiritual nature; to God be all the power.

I wish that brother Ker or brother Lefferts would give their views on two passages of Scripture, both in Revelation. The first is found in the second chapter, seventeenth verse, the last part: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." The other is found in Revelation xvi. 13: "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet." Now is that the common religion that is taught in the world to-day?

M. T. PENCE.

CALLALLEN, Texas, Nov. 24, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Only once before have I attempted to write to the dear old SIGNS, and that was when I attempted to give some of my experience. Eight or nine years have passed, and I still find myself the same old sinner I felt to be then, and am more helpless and dependent upon the Lord for everything. I had hope then of getting better as I grew older, but this has been a failure, still I have been wonderfully blessed, far more than this poor mortal ever deserved. About eight years ago I married a Missionary Sunday-school teacher, who lived two hundred miles from where we had meeting, and she had never heard an Old Baptist preach; so when our meeting day came we went, and when we got home she said that the preacher directed all of his sermon to her, and she was offended. About a year later I noticed a change; she would be as anxious to go to meeting as I was, and glad when any Old Baptist would come to our home. I had been praying for months, If it be thy will, O Lord, show her the right way. One night I dreamed that I found her behind a haystack praying. After that I never was troubled about it any more. Night before last she told me what she had been going through with in the past, and you can imagine how happy this poor mortal was. She said many times she thought she would tell me all about it, but was afraid she was mistaken and it might be imagination on her part. She said, Now do not tell any one. I cannot keep it. She said, They know how I have argued and held out for my side so long, even when I myself did not believe it, and now they will laugh at me. It has been over a year since we have been permitted to attend meeting, and I get very hungry for preaching sometimes. We live at present about seventy miles from where they have meeting. Our dear old grandfather is visiting us now, and how glad we are to hear him talk. His name is M. V. Dykes, one of the pioneer Old Baptists in Texas. As high as the heavens are above the earth, so are the Lord's ways above man's. I am made to pause sometimes and exclaim, O Lord, how merciful thou art to thy little ones here below. May I always be found at the feet of my brethren, and esteeming others better than myself, is my prayer.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

E. B. AULT.

EVERETT, Pa.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST AT FRYING PAN:—Saturday and Sunday will be your meeting days again, and I wish I could see you face to face, but as I cannot, will try to write a few words just to let you know I still remember you, and hope I am kept by the power of God in love for the assemblies of the saints. I long for the time when it is my

privilege to go to meeting, but feel that, unworthy as I am, I am blessed far above what I deserve. It was my privilege to attend the Juniata Association this autumn, and I felt it was good to be there. There I met many whom I had met before, and several whom I had never met, and heard good preaching and singing. Sometimes I feel that I am in the wilderness indeed, and feel it would do me good just to hear real, true singing, then again I feel that there is singing and making of melody to the Lord right in my own heart.

I was very sorry to hear of the death of sister Wortman and brother Paxson. I know you will miss their faces and cheerful words when you come together.

I will not tire you with many words, only ask that you remember me at the throne of grace, and when you come together remember that the least one of the flock is with you in spirit, if not in body. Love to all the church.

MATILDA T. STARR.

ELKMONT, Ala., Dec. 3, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—As it is near the close of the year, and you have been so good to me in sending me the dearly beloved SIGNS, which is of much comfort to me, I must write and tell you how much I appreciate your kindness, as I am deprived of hearing preaching often, as I am not able to go. To-day is our meeting day. Brother Leonard, our pastor, and brother Hatchet, from Oklahoma, spent last night with us. Our church here is small in numbers. It is strange to me that when members can attend the meetings that they do not do it, for it seems to me that if I were able I would go every time. If the Lord will permit me, I will say to the writers of the SIGNS, Please continue writing as God gives you mind and directs your pens, as I believe he has done in the past, for without him I know you could not write to the comfort of poor, weak pilgrims, such as I feel myself to be. I enjoy reading all the editorials, and when I read sister Mary Ellison's letter in June 15th number I felt that she had written some of the things of God which I hope I have been able to see and understand for some time. When I cannot sleep or rest I am often meditating upon the Scriptures, and O what great things I do hope I am made to see, and I wish I were a ready writer, that I could tell it to others. Again, I am made to doubt, and to think it all a delusion, or imagination of the carnal mind. I have thought of trying to write what I hope have been the dealings of God by his grace with me, but of late I have felt so unworthy and ignorant that I fear I am deceived, and it would be of no use.

Elder Ker, you have my sympathy in your sad bereavements, you and all others who have severe trials in this life, for if there is anything I know, it is affliction and trouble; I am now just able to sit up after another operation.

Brethren, I thank you again for your kindness, and ask your prayers for a poor, afflicted sinner.

(MRS.) W. R. JAMES.

WARREN, Ark., Nov. 14, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I write to send you some new subscribers; I sent my own renewal in October. I do not see how I could get along without the dear old family paper, for through it I hear from the family of our God. It seems they all see alike, they all hear alike, they all speak alike, and I do believe they are all taught in the same school and by the same Teacher, and this Teacher has

taught every one of them that they must be saved by grace, and grace alone, and that salvation is of the Lord, and that they can have no confidence in the flesh, that without him they can do nothing. I believe they all know that he paid for his people with his blood to redeem them, for he loved them with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness has he drawn them. Dear children of God, do you not remember he said he would send another teacher, and he would take of his and show it unto us, and bring all things to our remembrance? "Ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." A place for you, dear family of God, the ones who have been to school to this great Teacher, and I do believe that every one of these children know he could lay down his life and take it again. The Father has given him power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all that he gave him. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his mercy hath begotten us again to a lively hope. Begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

You must forgive me; I only thought to write and send you the new subscribers.

An old sinner, in hope of a better world,

A. TULLAS.

LEBANON, Ohio, Sept. 27, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I see by the little slip on my SIGNS that my subscription has expired, so inclosed you will find postal order for two dollars, for which please send me that precious paper for another year, as it contains all the sermons I am permitted to read (or hear), and God is glorified in it, to the exclusion of all the evil claims of man to help the Lord do his work. By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Within those who have received this precious gift, is a company of two armies, and there is no release from the warfare. In the language of David, Let thy light shine upon me, and I shall be saved, not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord. Jesus says, I am the way, the truth and the life. He that cometh up any other way is a thief and a robber. O may I, a poor helpless sinner, buffeted by Satan within, and enemies without, on all sides, be kept by this mighty power to pursue this highway cast up where the redeemed of the Lord walk with meekness and godly fear. Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. Sometimes I think he delivers his wayward children into the hands of Satan (was it not so with his servant Job?) to be taught wherein their trust must dwell, for he (God) looked and there was none to help, and his own arm brought salvation. I know that often my feet have slipped (not well-nigh, but altogether), and I seem in the pit and miry clay, from which I once thought he raised me, and put songs of praise to his name in my mouth. O if this be true,

> "E'en down to old age, all my people shall prove,
> My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love."

The two editorials in September 15th, 1916, especially the second, on "Adam," by Elder Lefferts, were most comforting to me. When it is well with you all remember me at the throne of grace.

From the least of all, your sister, (if one) in the precious hope of immortality,

EVA W. MORRIS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1917.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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NEHEMIAH XIII. 23, 24.

"IN those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab: and their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people."

Proof is given us here of the inability of the Jews to obey the law of Moses. The law commanded Israel to have no dealings with the Gentile nations round about them, to abstain from all the idols of the strangers, and not to take their women in marriage. Human nature is such that it lusts after all that is forbidden. Notwithstanding that God told Adam he could eat of all the trees of the garden except one, his nature lusted to eat of that one forbidden, and was not satisfied with all the rest. So with the Jews, though they had many and sufficient women among themselves, they desired rather those forbidden them in their law. The result of this intermarriage with Gentile women was strange children, children that could not speak the Jew language, but spoke half Ashdod, half Ammon, or half Moab, as the case might be. As it was with national Israel in this instance, so is it now with spiritual Israel in a spiritual sense. In order to speak and to understand the pure language of Canaan, one must be a born Jew; and to be a spiritual Jew, we have but to read Paul's definition of a Jew to learn that such an one is the subject of a spiritual birth: "He is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Thus the spiritual Jew is the child of God who has been born from above by the will and of the operation of the Spirit of God. This one is by birth an inhabitant of the land of Canaan, his citizenship is in heaven, and he is a fellow-citizen with the saints of God and of the household of faith. Being thus a subject of the new and heavenly birth, there is turned unto him a pure language, and this language none can speak or understand but those who, like himself, have been born from above. "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." Those who speak this language worship God and not man. They call upon God, not man, to help them; they serve God, not as hirelings, but willingly, "with one consent." Those unto whom is turned this pure language learn the right pronunciation of every syllable in wisdom's school. They do not say "sibboleth," but "shibboleth." The poor publican that said: "God be merciful to me a sinner," was speaking this pure language. Jonah, in the belly of the great fish, when he said, "Salvation is of the Lord," was speaking this pure language. Peter, when he essayed to walk on the water, and failed, and cried out, Lord, save, I perish, was uttering the language of the heaven-born Jew. The patriarchs and prophets of old, and the apostles of more recent times, all spoke this pure language of Canaan. All having been born from above by the Spirit of God, having been translated

from nature's darkness into the kingdom of God's Son, spoke the language of their spiritual nativity, the tongue of their mother country: the new Jerusalem. This pure language gives God all the glory in the work of salvation, from beginning to end; it praises God in all things, thanks him for all things, has no confidence in the flesh, rejoices in Christ. It knows no conditions contingent upon puny man in the work of salvation. The substance of this pure language can be summed up in these words: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." But as there were restless ones among the national Jews who were not satisfied with their own things, but desired the things of the Gentiles around them, so from the days of Paul, even until now, there have at times been restless spirits among God's people, who have not been satisfied to walk in the old paths, who have not been satisfied with the simplicity of the apostolic faith and order, and who have lusted after new things, after the doctrines and institutions of men. Just as surely as these restless ones have succeeded in invading the church with their new things, just that certainly have converts (?) been begotten by that intermarriage with forbidden things, children that are not able to speak the language of the children of God, but the language of Ashdod, or of Ammon, or of Moab. We have an instance of this in the Galatian Church of Paul's time. There was a case where were those who had taught strange doctrines among God's people. "There be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ." These false teachers declared that though salvation is by grace in its beginning, yet the after blessings of the child of God depend upon his obedience. These taught a superstructure of blessings to be enjoyed by obedience, upon a foundation of salvation by grace. These looked to the law for blessings, though claiming to be saved by grace. Now, this speech was surely not pure Jew language, but was half Ashdod. Paul never agreed to any such language, but insisted that salvation is by grace to the believer at all times, not simply in the instance of his first receiving a hope. Paul believed that the very obedience of the child of God is the fruit of faith which exercises the believer unto obedience. Paul did not frustrate the grace of God as did these false teachers. To say that the believer's obedience is of himself, that he can obey or disobey at will, that his enjoyment is contingent upon such obedience, is to frustrate the grace of God, and to talk in the language of Ashdod, not of Canaan. Paul reproved these by saying, "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" God does not leave his work unfinished for man to complete, but when he begins a good work in the hearts of his people he himself carries that work on to completion in the day of Jesus Christ. It is so natural for even the believer to think that there is something he must do, that there is something required of him in the way of salvation. The Galatian brethren, some of them, thought so. They tried to carry on the Spirit's work by the efforts of the flesh. Paul asked them, Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? The language of Ashdod is very popular in every age of the world. Rarely does one meet with one who speaks the language of Canaan in its

purity. The Baptist Church in America was for a long time untroubled with Ashdodism, but restless spirits among the Baptists were not satisfied with the old order of things and longed to connect themselves with the doctrines and inventions of men about them. Thus came in the Sunday-schools and Missionaries and various societies, which gave birth to a new set of children, children unused to the ways of spiritual Israel, and who could not speak that language. These Ashdodites greatly troubled the Baptist Church in this country until 1832, when the Black Rock Convention was held, and those who spoke the pure language of Canaan resolved to have nothing further to do with the mixed breed of Ashdod, of Ammon and of Moab. Of late years a new idea in the way of "conditional time salvation" has made its inroads among the Baptists. This is not a pure Jew language, but an Ashdod dialect: a mixture of grace and works. We do not mean by this that grace and works ever really mix, but the mixture is all the time being attempted. To say that God predestinates some and not all things, is to speak half Ashdod. Pure language says that God does his will among the inhabitants of the earth and in the army of heaven, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

This article is written at the request of brother John R. Havens, of Santa Anna, Texas. This brother says: "I read many of our religious papers, but I am partial to the SIGNS when matters are controverted." L.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, in Salisbury, Md., October 16th, 1916, Isaac Lester Swann and Bessie Belle Dennis, both of Wicomico County, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

R. J. Hill died at his home in Marshall County, Ky., Dec. 17th, 1916, where he had spent a long and useful life. He was born on this same farm June 28th, 1833, making his stay here 83 years, 5 months and 19 days. He was married to Mariah Johnson Dec. 2nd, 1858, to which union were born eight children, three boys and five girls, seven of whom, with their mother, grandchildren and other relatives and friends, are left to mourn the loss of a dear, good man, but not without a sweet and precious hope. He and his wife joined the Primitive Baptist Church in October, 1889, and were baptized by the late Elder J. M. Perkins, and until the day of his death proved a faithful and profitable member. He was a dear lover and defender of the Baptist doctrine. Brother Hill was a loving husband and kind father, and he endeared himself to all with whom he associated. He was a quiet and unassuming man, enjoying the confidence and respect of both the aged and the young. He had a reputation for honesty and truth equal to any man, and was a true Primitive Baptist, and his friends felt at home when enjoying his kind hospitality. Brother Hill had been sick for some time, but bore his afflictions with christian fortitude, often telling his family and friends that he was nearing the end of his mortal journey, and was only waiting to be released from pain and this world of sin. He passed away very quietly in the afternoon of Dec. 17th. All that loving hands could do was done by his loving wife, dutiful son and other children, physician and friends, but he could stay no longer than his appointed time. He must answer the call of his Master: Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. He was a brave and fearless soldier of the cross of Christ, though meek and lowly of heart, and he fought a good fight, kept the faith, finished his course, and we believe he was ready to be offered, and realized there was laid up for him a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give him at that day; and not to him only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

On Monday, Dec. 18th, his mortal remains were carried to Bethlehem meetinghouse, where his beloved pastor, Elder J. P. Jenkins, with whom he had spent many pleasant hours in talking of the Lord's goodness and way of salvation, spoke to a large gathering of friends from 1 Cor. xv. 49, and although sorrowing much for the loss of such a dear brother,

spoke in power and demonstration of the Spirit, pointing to the christian's hope, that reaches beyond this life, after which the mortal remains were laid to rest in the cemetery adjoining the church lot until the resurrection morn. We shall miss our dear brother from the home and church he so much loved, also his kind and soul-cheering letters of love, in which he so many times ministered admonition and cheer to lone pilgrims of Zion; but we rejoice in the hope of meeting him in the new Jerusalem and joining him in everlasting praises to that Jesus whom he loved to serve here below. May the God of all grace comfort our dear sister in her sorrow, as well as each of the children, and all who mourn, and give them all the sweet assurance of His love that their dear one was blessed with.

One who loved him. J. C. CHESTER.

John A. Nuckols, of Cave City, Ky., departed this life August 25th, 1916, in the 83rd year of his age. Brother Nuckols was the third son of nine children of the late Pouncy and Hettie S. Nuckols, all having preceded him to the grave except one sister, Mrs. J. R. Hodges, of Marshall, Texas. His parents were members of the Primitive Baptist Church. He was united in marriage to Miss Lavina J. Baird, May 13th, 1855. To them were born two sons and three daughters: Mr. J. R. Nuckols, of Cave City, Dr. O. P., of Pineville, Mrs. O. P. Owens and Miss Lelia, of Cave City, and Mrs. G. W. Ellis, of Glasgow. The deceased united with the church in September, 1866, and was baptized by Elder Ishmael Higdon, then pastor of the church. Our dear brother was a firm believer in the doctrine of free, sovereign grace, the absolute rule and government over all powers, and the final resurrection of the saints through grace to glory. It has been my sweet privilege to enjoy many precious seasons in the home of this dear family of believers, which were to us all heavenly seasons, as we talked of the things by the way. He was highly esteemed in the neighborhood where he lived. To quote from a Glasgow paper: "No better, more clever, straightforward man ever lived. A kind, indulgent father and devoted husband."

The funeral was largely attended from the late residence, and was conducted by the writer, after which that which was mortal was laid to rest in Cave City Cemetery. He is survived by his devoted wife of more than sixty-one years of true companionship, and the five children, who deeply feel their loss, but are comfortingly assured of his eternal gain. Brother Nuckols had been in failing health for some time of a complication of diseases, to which frail nature had to finally succumb, but each of us will fill the measure of our days. May God graciously remember the dear lonely one, together with the dear children, with every needed grace.

In fond remembrance, P. W. SAWIN.

Katharine Labauw, widow of David Labauw, departed this life October 8th, 1916, aged 86 years, 4 months and 16 days. She was the mother of four children, three girls and one boy. Her husband and two girls preceded her in death, which leaves one son and one daughter, together with two sisters and two brothers, to mourn the loss that the hand of death brought upon them. She was one of the famous Leigh family, which has been so prominent in the Old School Baptist Church of Hopewell, N. J. Her brother, Elijah Leigh, was one of many strong deacons which the Hopewell Church has been blessed with, and many of her sisters were constant and devoted to the doctrine of salvation by grace. It was a great pleasure for her pastor to call on her, and her true devotion was manifested by the presentation of her Bible and solicitation to read therefrom and engage in thanks and supplication, feeling the bountiful blessings of the Lord bestowed upon her, both temporal and spiritual. She was a member of Hopewell Church for years, and her godly walk and conversation bore fruit of the foretaste of life and immortality beyond this world, which we feel was bestowed upon her by the Father of mercies. I could write much in connection with her life and character, but the expressions which are stated will give an outline of the deceased. She is dead, though she lives and is cherished in the memory of all who knew her. May all feel not to weep for her as though she had no hope, but say, Sleep on, dear one.

Funeral services were held October 11th, conducted by her pastor.

Written by her pastor,

C. W. VAUGHN.

Mrs. Amanda West Gorsuch, youngest daughter of Japeth and Charlotte West, the eleventh child of a family of twelve children, seven daughters and five sons, all of whom have departed this life except one sister, Mrs. Jane Gardner, of Fulton, Ohio, was born May 11th, 1847, in Delaware (now Morrow) County, Ohio, and died Sept. 13th, 1916, at her home near Marengo, Ohio, which was a part of the old home farm on which she was born. Her age was 69 years, 4 months and 2 days. She was united in marriage to Lemach Gorsuch, March 27th, 1870, who died Jan. 11th, 1910. To their marriage union were born three children: Lizzie Belle, Frances Caroline and Clay West. Frances Caroline died in infancy at the age of eleven months, October 3rd, 1874. Mother experienced a hope in Jesus in early life, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church at Mt. Pisgah in July, 1887, and lived a faithful and devoted member. She was faithful in attending all the services of her church as long as her health would permit. Her affliction of ten months was endured in humble, sweet submission, never complaining, never murmuring, just calmly and patiently

waiting to be called to her heavenly home, which she so often said would be rest, sweet rest. She realized she possessed no merits of her own, and often said, "Nothing but the righteousness of Christ can save a poor sinner like me." Her faith was strong and steadfast, and she would often say to us, "Jesus, precious Jesus, will take care of you and me," and just before she died she kissed us good-bye, saying, "I am going home." We bow in humble submission.

The funeral services were held at her home Sept. 15th, conducted by her beloved pastor, Elder George A. Bretz, after which she was laid to rest beside her husband in the Ebenezer Cemetery to await the summons from on high.

In loving memory of my precious mother.

BELLE GORSUCH.

Linnie Stephens Sparks, daughter of John and Ann Stephens, was born Sept. 16th, 1868, and died Dec. 18th, 1916, aged 48 years, 3 months and 2 days. She was one of a family of ten children. One brother and one sister, with her parents, have been called to the great beyond. She was united in marriage to Albert R. Sparks Sept. 15th, 1909. One son, John S., was born to this union, who, with his father, four sisters, three brothers and a host of relatives and friends, is left to mourn. She had not been in good health for some time, but her last illness was of short duration; she was only confined to her bed a few days. She had taken a severe cold, which terminated in asthma and heart trouble. All that kind hands could do was done for her, but as she often expressed it, her time had come and the Lord called her home. Linnie was quiet and unassuming, a lover of her home and family, and kind to all.

O Lord, thou art merciful. Grant us submission, for thine is the right to both give and take.

I will add to the above, as her kind husband asked me to do, and send it to the SIGNS. She died at her home, which was her father's old home, about four miles southwest of Jamestown, Ohio. Sept. 21st, after funeral services conducted by the unworthy writer, she was laid to rest in the beautiful cemetery at Jamestown to await the summons from on high.

L. E. STEPHENS.

Maria R. Riley was born in Yorkneck, Adams Co., Ill., May 5th, 1857, and died at the home of her son Dec. 8th, 1916, aged 59 years, 7 months and 3 days. She was united in marriage to Elijah E. Riley, of Bowen, Ill., Dec. 24th, 1874. To that union were born three children, two daughters and one son, as follows: Lottie M. Mairs, of State College, Pa., Lucy M. and Shrader S. Riley, of Sapulpa, Okla. She was the eldest daughter of Hiram and Matilda Shrader. Besides her husband and children she leaves to mourn their loss two brothers, two sisters and five grandsons. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church called Little Flock, at Coatsburg, Adams Co., Ill., when in her twentieth year, and was baptized by Elder John Goodson. She gave an active experience of a hope, believing in the saving power of grace, and that through Jesus Christ alone. While she dearly loved to hear the preaching of salvation by grace, and to meet and mingle with her brethren and sisters, she was deprived of that privilege, as she and her husband moved west, where she could not enjoy her church privileges. The country being new and sparsely settled, she met very few of her denomination, and no church organization. During her long illness, which lasted nearly two years, she often said she did not fear death, but was sorry to leave her loved ones, and would like to live to see her five grandchildren grow to manhood.

Her remains were brought back to her old home. Elder Rice Harris, of Denver, Ill., conducted the funeral services, after which all that was mortal was laid to rest in the family plot in Ebenezer Cemetery, there to await the resurrection morn.

E. E. R.

William Allen Hixon was born Jan. 15th, 1856, in Pike County, Ala., and died Dec. 23rd, 1916. He was married to Miss Lavonia Braswell, of Bullock County, in 1880, the county in which he died, and not more than five miles from where he was born. He lived in Perote, Ala., about seventeen years. He had many friends, as to know him was to like him. He raised a family of six children. On the night of Dec. 22nd he retired at the usual time, not knowing he had spoken his last, that he would see his dear ones no more, that he had finished his course on earth. O how sad to the writer when I realize I can never see his dear face again in this world, nor hear him speak of the glorious truth and the wonderful works of God. He fought the good fight, finished his course and ran with patience the race set before him, ever looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

J. E. FINCHER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Jane Lucas, Iowa, $2.00; G. C. Harrison, Texas, $2.00; Mary A. Barnett, Ont., $2.00; Mrs. Sarah A. McColl, Ont., $2.00; Reuben C. Clark, Maine, $1.00; J. D. Welborn, Ind., $1.00; E. R. Kinney, N. Y., $1.00; Lewis T. Sanders, Ark., $1.00; Mrs. T. V. Richardson, Md., $8.00; Lavina Morgan, Mo., $1.00; J. A. Tandy, Okla., $3.00; Simeon Hiltabrand, Ill., $3.00; H. C. Woodward, Mo., $1.00; Wm. F. Sloan, Ky., $1.00; Mrs. W. C. Stevens, Ga., $3.00; George Harryman, Md., $1.00.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, Elder J. M. Fenton will fill the following appointments:

Justus, Pa., Sunday, Jan. 21st, 1917, 11 a. m.; Clarks Summit, Pa., 2 p. m.; Brookdale, Pa., Monday, 22nd, 2. p. m.; Maywood, N. Y., Tuesday, 23rd, 8 p. m.; Otego, N. Y., Wednesday, 24th, 2 and 7 p. m.; Richmondville, N. Y., Loren Meads, Thursday, 25th, 1:30 p. m.; Geo. Meads 7:30 p. m.; Jefferson meetinghouse, Friday, 26th, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.; Cobleskill, N. Y., 7:30 p. m.; Middleburg, N. Y., Saturday, 27th, 1:30 p. m.; Schoharie, N. Y., sister Kinney's, 7:30 p. m.; Schoharie meetinghouse, Sunday, 28th, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.

E. R. KINNEY.

PROVIDENCE permitting, there will be an all day meeting in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse at Halcottville, N. Y., on the fourth Sunday in January (28th), 1917, commencing at 10:45 a. m. All are welcome; also Jefferson Church Sunday, February 4th.

GEORGE RUSTON.

ERRATA.

IN the last number of the SIGNS, on page 3, first column, sixth line from the bottom, the word "no" should have been omitted.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 85. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1917. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ISAIAH LXIV. 8.

"BUT now, O Lord, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand."

Dear brethren, whose hope is in Christ, my mind of late has been impressed with the above words as never before. I feel to write some thoughts as presented to me for your consideration. O what a wonderful subject is presented in these few words. First, the Lord is the Father of his people. Second, his people are clay (or dust of the ground). Third, the Lord is our Potter. Fourth, we are all the work of his hand. This I feel is conclusive evidence as pertaining to God's people being made of the dust of the earth. There is much Scripture to prove the same doctrine. Read Gen. ii. 7; iii. 19; also Job xxxiii. 5. Here Elisha says, I also am formed out of clay. In the words of our text. We note here that Isaiah includes himself as being the clay, and the Lord being his Potter, and then says, "And we all are the work of thy hand." These words evidently apply to all of God's people in all ages of the world. We yet by faith and hope can say, "But now, O Lord, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand." Our believing or disbelieving this truth does not change the fact that if in truth the Lord is our Father, then it is true we are the clay and he our Potter, whether we believe it or not. O how thankful we all should be (whose hope is in Christ) that it does not depend upon our believing that the Lord is our Father in order to make it true; neither does it depend upon our believing that we are the clay and the Lord our Potter in order to make it true, yet there is sweet comfort in believing these truths. First, because we hope it embraces us, realizing that we are clay. Second, because our hope reaches beyond this life, when our vile body shall be changed and fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body. It is the man of clay that is the subject of death and the resurrection; it is the man of clay that can say through the Spirit, "But now, O Lord, thou art our Father." Paul said, And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. From this time on we are no more servants, but sons, and if sons, then heirs of God through Christ. Read Gal. iv. 6, 7. It is after

we receive the adoption of sons that we in truth can call the Lord our Father. Paul also said, Ephesians i. 5: "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." This presents to our minds a great mystery, equally as great as the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. It is a personal or individual matter with each and every child of God. Each child of God was personally chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and those thus chosen are predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself. This we note is all done according to the good pleasure of his will. This is in harmony with the words of our text: "We are the clay, and thou our potter." It is just as unreasonable to claim that man in a state of nature has any power in and of himself to become a subject of grace, as it would be for a lump of clay to choose what kind of a vessel it would be formed into. The potter is the one that decides this matter, and not the clay. Read Romans ix. 21. Just so the Lord decides this matter. "We are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand." There is no failure in this work, from the fact that we all are the work of his hand. This was all planned and purposed before the world began, or as Paul said, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ." Man has no more to say or do in being predestinated unto the adoption of a son than he had of choosing himself in Christ before the foundation of the world, that he should be holy and without blame before him in love. Jesus said in prayer to his Father, "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." It is after receiving eternal life that we in truth can call God our Father. None but Christ was ever given this power to give eternal life. Paul said, In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began. Here again Paul goes back before the world began; that is when the promise was made, and it is as sure of fulfillment as it is true that God cannot lie. We also see the harmony between the words of Jesus and the words of our text; that is, Jesus has power over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as his Father hath given him. It is after eternal life is given that the subjects of God's grace know the true and living God. It is then they can call God their Father and Christ their Savior. This knowledge comes by revelation. Paul said, But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me. Here Paul attributes all to God. This was as certain of coming to pass as it is true that the Lord is our Potter and that we all are the work of his hand. O what wisdom and power are manifested here by the Lord, who is our Potter. If I have a right conception of the words of the text, and also the general teachings of the Scriptures concerning this subject, the subject of predestination is vividly brought to view; much more so, perhaps, than we want to acknowledge. Some even deny the doctrine of predestination to the extent that nothing is certain with God as to who will be saved, but it all hinges upon conditions to be performed by man. Most of the people who teach this doctrine teach that men by nature are free moral agents, meaning by that, that man in a state of nature can be a child of God when and where he pleases, or not be a child of God at all unless he wants to be. That they call free moral

agency. Evidently very many of God's dear people have been bewitched with this man-pleasing doctrine. Now let us reason together. We all know the words of our text are opposite to the doctrine that man is a free moral agent. The doctrine of free moral agency is as untrue as it would be to say that natural clay can say to the potter, I have the right to say what kind of a vessel I will be made into, or whether I will be made into a vessel at all. We all know that if it were left to the clay to say what kind of a vessel it should be formed into, it would not be formed at all. Even so with human beings upon the earth; if it had been left for them to say what kind of a vessel they should be formed into, they never would have been formed. It is too late after the thing is formed for the thing formed to say to the potter, I am free to choose as to what kind of a vessel I shall be made into. O how sorrowful it is that God's people can be deluded with such a doctrine as to claim that man is a free moral agent, meaning by that, that man can be a child of God and be eternally saved, or he can choose not to be a child of God and be eternally lost. If this doctrine is true, then it evidently must be true that God had no certain purpose in view in making man, but that his eternal destiny is left to the will of man, instead of the purpose and will of God.

The Lord said by the mouth of the psalmist David, Psalms cii. 18: "This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord." This refers to the Gentiles, as the fifteenth to seventeenth verses evidently teach. This would be a future event. "This shall be written for the generation to come." They were not yet created, yet David said: "And the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord." This would take place as described in verses sixteen and seventeen. When the Lord shall build up Zion he shall appear in his glory. He will regard the cry of the destitute and not despise their prayer. O what a sweet and precious promise, that the Lord will regard the cry of the destitute and not despise their prayer. O may we all (whose hope is in Christ) ever remember that these words were prophetic and pertained to the future when spoken, but have long since been fulfilled, and are yet being fulfilled. It is true that the Lord does regard the prayer of the destitute and does not despise their prayer; even the prayers of weak mortal beings that were not created, therefore had no existence in form or fashion until passing through the hand of the Lord, who is our Potter, our Creator. Read Eccl. xii. 1; Isaiah xl. 28; xliii. 15; 1 Peter iv. 19. We note Peter says, "Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their soul to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator." These and other Scriptures teach that the Lord is the Creator of his people. They also teach that the Lord is our Maker. Read Job iv. 17; xxxii. 22; xxxv. 10; xxxvi. 3; Psalms xcv. 6, 7. "O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand." All these Scriptures are in harmony with the words of our text. The Lord is our Potter, the Lord is our Creator, the Lord is our Maker, and we all are the work of his hand. O what a glorious thing it would be to hear all say with David, "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker." We note

the reason given for doing this is: "For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand." No other hand ever had any part in making them the people of his pasture, no, not even making the pasture. David said, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters." The Lord our Shepherd does all these things for the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand. No other hand can make the pasture green nor make the still waters, feed the hungry and quench the thirsty soul. Jesus said: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Those thus blessed are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand. The Lord God said: The flock of my pasture are men. All such can in truth say with Isaiah: "But now, O Lord, thou art our Father, we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand." O may we by faith, hope and grace take courage to ask of him from whom every good and perfect gift comes, for needed wisdom to enable us, the sheep of his pasture, to live as becometh the flock of his pasture.

Submitted in love.

JOSEPH FORD.

SENECA, Kansas, Nov. 10, 1916.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., Dec. 12, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing two letters which have been of comfort to myself and others, and they have said I ought to send them to the SIGNS, and am doing so, leaving it with you to judge.

Your sister in hope,

HELEN KINNEY.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Sept. 22, 1916.

DEAR SISTER KINNEY:—It is indeed very refreshing to a poor, famishing soul to receive such messages of love from one's kindred in Christ as are contained in your recent letter to the unworthy writer. I had no idea that you were even thinking of me, much less that you would have a mind to write me, but I believe I have long since learned that "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform," and I feel to thank him for putting it in your heart to remember one who so often finds himself "cast down, but not destroyed." Coming home this afternoon I took out your letter and began rereading it, and the language found in Deut. xxxii. 2–4, came into my mind. Beginning with the first verse, it reads as follows: "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." As I said before, your letter was very refreshing to me; it caused my drooping spirits to revive and take courage. I was in a dry place, my soul was thirsting for some manifestation that the Lord had not forsaken me, that his mercies were not clean gone forever, and that he would turn again and remember me as in the days that have past. And when we come to consider what the inspired writer of the above language had in mind, I think we will do well to recall to mind the condition of the grass, that it was evidently parched, dying and drying up because of the lack of moisture; that it was absolutely helpless and dependent upon some superhuman power to obtain that which it so much desired and needed to sustain

life. It had no power of itself to command the rain to descend and replenish that fountain of life. In another place it is declared that "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass." Why does the flesh cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Is it not because of the operation of the Holy Spirit being manifest in our wicked and deceitful hearts, showing us what we are by nature and what we must be by grace before we can even hope to appear before him with whom we have to do? This wonderful Sower prepares the ground before entrusting to its soil his precious seed of faith. He causes one to feel that he or she is a poor, lost, hell-deserving sinner, one who is in need of a Savior, an alien to the commonwealth of Israel and a stranger to grace, before making known that he came to seek and to save that which was lost; that he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance; that he is the one and only great Physician who can do them any good. They have first spent all of their substance endeavoring to find some remedy for their terrible malady, and instead of being benefited, have discovered that they have grown worse, and realizing their awful predicament are made to cry out, What shall I do? Where can I go for help? To whom must I look for assistance? Like the one who had been afflicted thirty-eight years and was helpless to let himself into the pool while the waters were troubled that he might be healed, so also is this character who has been made to know that of himself he can do nothing; and, dear sister, it takes the same Jesus to-day that it did then to speak and it is done, to command this one to take up his bed and walk, and he who was afflicted all those years arises to his feet and goes forth a living testimony of the wonderful works of this man Jesus. Again, we recall the man who was born blind, and his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who hath sinned, this man or his parents? Jesus replied, Neither this man nor his parents, but that the work of God might be made manifest. Does not God, then, lead us into the wilderness and cause us to realize in an experimental way what the desert is by nature in order that we might also realize with amazement and wonder something of that transforming power which causes even such a place as this to blossom as the rose? And so, dear sister, if we are to know the meaning of his doctrine dropping as the rain upon the grass and as the small rain upon the tender herbs; if we are to know anything by experience of the distilling power of his speech, we must first be brought into the place where we will rejoice with exceeding great joy when his doctrine is poured into our hungering souls, and be cast upon the stormy sea of trouble, unable to direct our course, before we welcome the sound of the voice of that one who spake as never man spake, saying, "Be not afraid, it is I." At such times as these do we not feel to call upon heaven and earth to bear us witness in ascribing greatness unto our God? We desire to publish his name and to tell all who may hear what a wonderful Savior we have found, because he is become our rock, our shelter in time of storm, our hiding place from the winds, and because his work is perfect. What do we mean when we say, "His work is perfect," if we do not mean that it is finished, that nothing can be added to nor taken from it? Anything that is perfect cannot be

improved in any way. If God's work is perfect, and it is, then he does not need man to help him do anything. Man has failed in everything pertaining to his salvation, he desires not the things of the Spirit of God; Christ is as a root out of dry ground to him, and there is no comeliness in him that he should desire him; his works and ways are in direct opposition to the works and ways of our God; then why should God, who knows all things and foresees all things, the end from the beginning, choose such a creature as this to help him perform such an important work as the salvation of his people? It is impossible. Jesus said on one occasion that he came down from heaven not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him, and what was the will of him that sent him? "That of all he hath given me I should lose nothing." And were not his last words as emphatic as it is possible for language to express, when he cried out while hanging upon that shameful cross of Calvary, "It is finished"? I believe that all of God's people rejoice in the finished work of Jesus; their only standing before the God of justice is in the meritorious work of their blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; neither do they desire to plead any righteousness save that of their Elder Brother, the one who gave his life that they might live, and they are perfect in him; none can bring any charge against God's elect. It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. He has paid the debt; he has led captivity captive; he has conquered every foe and put all enemies under his feet, and sits enthroned on high our victorious Captain, where, ere long, we hope to see him as he is and be like him, and praise him in that world that never shall end. Amen. The hymns you quote have been of great comfort to me in times that are past, as well as the one where the poet asks,

> "How can I sink, with such a prop,
> As my eternal God,
> Who bears the earth's huge pillars up,
> And spreads the heavens abroad?"

This is something upon which we can stand in the hours of trial and affliction, and without his everlasting arms underneath, upholding and sustaining, we would be certain to sink, but we know that he is able to keep that which we have committed unto his hands against that great day, and in the knowledge of this we are strengthened, realizing that while we are helpless and poor and needy, without any power to bring or retain the Spirit, that his doctrine does drop as the rain, that he does come to us, that he does open rivers in high places, and fountains in the valleys; that he does make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. Every child of God knows that he does these things for them, and they desire to render unto him undivided praise.

Sister Kinney, I fear I have made a poor answer to your good letter, and have written very scatteringly about a subject which is very dear to me, if I know my own heart, but if the Lord has been in the matter he will cause it to bring to your mind something of which you may receive comfort in meditation. I still feel that not only the church at Schoharie, but that the Lord's people everywhere of my acquaintance, are deceived in me. I am a mystery to myself, and often find the question in my mind, If I am a child of God, why am I thus? I cannot understand. The Lord knows. He is his own interpreter, and he can make it plain.

I desire that God's will be done, and as to the accomplishment of all his purposes, from the least even unto the greatest of them, I have not the slightest doubt. He rules all things after the counsel of his own will, and all the hosts of hell are and forever will be utterly unable to disturb a single one of his plans, or prevail against the church of God, except as the God of love sees fit.

Write me again when you have a mind so to do, and remember me with love to any who may inquire after my welfare, and forgive me for wearying you as I have, is my closing request.

Your unworthy brother,

R. LESTER DODSON.

FOREST HILL, Md., Aug. 12, 1916.

DEAR SISTER KINNEY:—I want to tell you I love you and esteem you highly for the truth's sake, and you are very near and dear to my soul. You have held up my hands, and your prayers in my behalf have been heard of the Almighty. We have had sweet fellowship together in the kingdom of God; it is the love that passeth knowledge of this world; it is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. As I sit in the home of the late Elder Wm. Grafton and see his daughters about their work, I am carried back to the days when I visited here and he was present, and I find that the home of the saints of the Most High is made pleasant; the dew of heaven distils there, the atmosphere and perfume of the Savior is there, and the power of the Almighty overshadows it. I am made to rejoice and praise him who is the Giver of every good and perfect gift and all our blessings. I have thought much of death, especially since my little granddaughter's death. It was shown me so plainly and clearly that Jesus is the only one who has power over death and does destroy him that has the power of death. David felt that though he walked through the valley of the shadow of death, he feared no evil, for God was with him. That was the secret why he feared no evil, because the Lord would be with him.

"It is not death to die,
To leave this weary load,
And with the brotherhood on high,
To be at home with God."

Jesus overcomes death; all that physicians, specialists, nurses, loving mother and father, all that loving hands can do cannot stop the progress of death. The babe must pass through the valley of the shadow of death in order that the Lord deliver her from death; and he did deliver her, and took her unto himself in the paradise of God. I think about the loved ones who have gone before, and where are they? In the paradise of God. Yes, and in our heart and love and being they are part of us, one body, one spirit, and when we are made to sit down in heavenly places in Christ we are with them. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory, and if our loved ones are with Jesus, and Jesus appears, do not those in Christ appear with him and with us who are blessed to be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord? The apostle says, We are come to the spirits of just men made perfect, to an innumerable company of angels, and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant; and surely we do know now that death is abolished, that Jesus reigns and sits a Sovereign on his throne, a great High Priest before God, ministering unto the saints, interceding before God for us, and he must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. When this corruptible

shall have put on incorruption, and that is when Jesus shall appear, then this mortal shall put on immortality; then shall be brought to pass the saying, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The Lord Jesus has manifested his power over all his enemies, and we are more than conquerors through him who loves us.

My love to you all.

In best of bonds,

J. M. FENTON.

JAMES III. 11.

"DOTH a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?"

The apostle James throughout all his epistle is bold in rebuking and reproving his brethren, in emulating the manifestations of faith in them, and denouncing the evil workings of the flesh, showing us all the beauty and profitableness of faithfulness one to another, and calling to our remembrance one of the chief frailties of our nature, which is, respecter of persons, and that we do well only when we fulfill the royal law to love our neighbor as ourself. And also, having the mind of Christ, we should mind the things which belong and pertain to Christ, rather than yield to temptation, when we are drawn away of our own lust and enticed. Now inspiration presents to the mind of the apostle the question in the words which have been quoted as a subject for this communication: Can a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? that they should be placed on record for the edification and profitable meditation of the church in all following generations. When faith exercises the creatures of God's choice it shows the church pure and unspotted in the eyes of Christ (the Bridegroom) and in the sight of God, and at the same time showing the creature having the mind of Christ, yet with the flesh serving the law of sin. The apostle is presenting the two opposing principles which are to be found in each subject of grace in the daily manifestations of the fitful fever of their journey through this vale of sin and sorrow. The water which springs up out of the earth, forming a spring or fountain, in its resting-place appears to be pure, clear and sparkling, because it has been filtered by passing through the sieve-like crevices of the earth in its passage from the mysterious depths to manifestation, in which case it is refreshing and desirable to natural man and beast alike. But perchance, in its travel from darkness to light, it comes in contact with bitter roots and soluble earthy matter. So in many portions of this broad land mineral and bitter springs abound. Fountains, whether sweet or bitter, receiving their water out of the earth, are never pure, yet they are suitable to the requirements of the natural man. So also that which proceedeth out of the natural heart of man, tinctured with the lusts of the carnal mind, is evil, and that continually, although to the untutored mind they may appear pure and untainted. But "there is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God," which cometh not up out of the earth, but cometh down from heaven; and this is a "pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God," and whosoever drinketh of this water shall live forever, and it shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life. The question of the apostle sets the machinery of our mind to work out the problem, whether good and evil, sweet and bitter, can issue from the same fountain at the

same time and place. Jesus said, A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. As the atmosphere of the firmament is purified of the poisons and odors passing through it, by the pure ozone in the air, so also in nature's darkness the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, yet when the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus spreads its banner of love among the tendrils of the heart, and the power of the word is made manifest therein, then as saith the Lord, Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, and though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. A new creature in Christ Jesus is he who is so richly blessed; old things are passed away and all things have become new. The heart then sings the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. The work of grace in the heart cleanses and purifies through the blood and righteousness of Christ, and to them who are pure all things are pure. The fountain of life sendeth forth sweet water, the conversation is in heaven, love flows from heart to heart, faith answering to faith. The wisdom of God declares the precepts by which we are exercised in the manifestations of grace. Thus are we taught the knowledge of God precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, there a little. So the Proverbs remind us that the law of the wise is a fountain of life. Also, The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life. Then in Revelation Jesus says, I will give of the fountain of life freely. The Bridegroom in the beautiful Song of Solomon says, "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." All of these bring to us refreshing and cooling draughts of sweet water from the ever-flowing river of God. Jesus is the only source of our salvation, the fountain of life, and we cry with the psalmist, Bless the Lord from the fountain of Israel. Pure water, sweet water from above, cleanses and purifies; we wash and are clean. Happy are they who are washed in the fountain of Jesus' blood, and whose God is the Lord. They faint not, neither are they weary. Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.

B. F. COULTER.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Ezra exclaimed, "Thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve."—Ezra ix. 13. Jacob said, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant."—Gen. xxxii. 10. Both of these Scriptures came into my mind, and as I mused upon them I felt to love the state of mind that both Ezra and Jacob were in that moved them thus to express themselves. I know when smarting under the chastenings of the Almighty that, left to our fleshly nature, we shall be far from enduring them. Fretfulness, hardness of heart, hard thoughts of God, self-pity and rebellion will hold us in wretched captivity, and thus our iniquity under his chastening hand becomes an added rod that smites us. "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of hosts."—Jer. ii. 19. But O, when we are humbled under the

mighty hand of God, when we are made to put our mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope, when in our affliction he draws us to seek him early, and at his footstool confess our vileness, hardness, utter baseness and nothingness, when the Lord puts a few drops of his pardoning mercy into our cup, O then we can drink it. Then we see the strokes of the rod in our heavenly Father's hand have not been too many, they have not been too heavy, but less than iniquities deserve. We are brought into submission to the gracious discipline of our God, and know that in faithfulness our covenant God has afflicted us. All for our profit. (Heb. xii. 10.)

"How light, while supported by grace,
Are all the afflictions I see,
To those the dear Lord of my peace,
My Jesus has suffered for me!
To him every comfort I owe
Above what the fiends have in hell,
And shall I not sing as I go,
My Jesus does everything well?"

Jacob saith, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant." There are mercies temporal, belonging to earth and time, and there are gospel, new covenant mercies, which are spiritual and eternal. It is good to have a measure of health, to have food and clothing, it is good to have a friend. O, there are thousands of mercies pertaining to our earthly life. I remember many years ago, when I was about sixteen years of age, I was singing the verse of the hymn I have just quoted, and when I came to the words, "To him every comfort I owe above what the fiends have in hell," I could hardly acquiesce to that thought. I said within me, That is putting it dreadfully strong, that is extravagance. I tried to shun those lines in the verse, but they stuck in my mind; I quarreled with them, saying in my mind, That is exaggerated language. But the Lord led me to know a little more of the vileness of my nature, and I saw, yes, I felt in my ashamed and bruised soul that in the corruptions of my earthy nature I was only fit for the society of the fiends in hell; anything above those dismal depths was mercy. It is good to have a heart to recognize the mercies of the Lord; his compassions fail not, they are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness. (Lam. iii. 23.) O my soul, forget not all his benefits. Our burdens, afflictions, griefs, our faded flowers, dried up brooks and broken cisterns, our plans defeated, our hopes overturned, these so swallow up our minds that we can scarcely have a thought for anything else. We brood over our miseries and forget our mercies; we think the Lord is showing us hard things, and it may be we become jealous of others of the household of God, imagining that he favors them more than he does us. But the Lord our God can cure us of all this sinful wretchedness; he can melt away all our hardness, make an end of our peevishness, jealousies and unbelief, and bring us in meekness, with brokenness of spirit, with tears and supplications, with love and trust, at his feet. It is the Lord who makes our wanderings away from him to cease, and heals our backslidings. He turns us by his gracious power unto himself; he enlightens the eyes of our understanding to see what is the hope of his calling, and he gives us to hope that he hath called us with an holy calling, with the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, even unto all the blessedness of eternal glory. God hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus. Am I a vessel of mercy afore prepared unto glory? O the exceeding riches of his grace in his

kindness toward us through Christ Jesus! The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant. O, as glimpses into this everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, are given unto us, our hearts are comforted, refreshed and strengthened, and we say, This is all my salvation and all my desire. (2 Samuel xxiii. 5.) O to be led to Jesus, to meditate upon our suffering, dying Savior, to enter into, even just a little, how he poured out his soul unto death to ransom us from the power of the grave and redeem us from death. Here, in Gethsemane, and at the cross, we sit down and watch him there. (Matt. xxvii. 36.)

"Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,
Which before the cross I spend;
Life and health and peace possessing
From the sinner's dying Friend.
Here I'll sit forever viewing
Mercy's streams in streams of blood,
Precious drops my soul bedewing,
Plead and claim my peace with God."

O just a little of this experience, just a few moments' sight of the bleeding, dying Lamb of God, a taste of the pardon of our sins, a glimpse of Emmanuel's loveliness, to have some token that we are set as a seal upon Christ's heart, a seal upon his arm. (Solomon's Song viii. 6.) Am I graven upon the palms of his hands, and may I hope that I am ever before him in everlasting love? (Isaiah xlix. 16.) O this is the cure for all disorders of the soul; this will sweeten the bitterest cup and quiet all our sinful murmurings, and we shall wonder at the marvelous kindness of the Lord to us vile sinners. Even in the midst of great and sore troubles, when blessed with spiritual mercies of the covenant of grace we are meekened, broken and contrite at the feet of our beloved Christ; yes, and we are dissolved in wonder, love and praise that such grace has been shown to a poor, vile sinner, such a base thing, despised. (Truly when we feel what miserable things we are in our flesh, we must loathe and despise ourselves.) We are nothing; God hath chosen things that are not. (1 Cor. i. 28.) Under the comfort of Jesus' love we see our mercies, and sweet gratitude moves our hearts toward our gracious God, and we say of our beloved Savior:

"His way was much rougher and harder than mine;
Did Christ my Lord suffer, and shall I repine?"

Well may we say like Jacob, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant." Not worthy of the least, then surely not worthy of the greatest. "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."—2 Cor. ix. 15.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

DECEMBER 16, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel to submit the inclosed letter from sister Reed to you for publication, subject to your better judgment. I have enjoyed several very pleasant visits with sister Reed, and like to hear her talk of these things of which she is an eye-witness.

Your unworthy brother,

F. SELBY FISHER.

HOPEWELL, N. J., March 6, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER FISHER:—I hope you will forgive me for being so long in answering your good letter to me. It did me much good in many ways, in bringing things to my mind away back in my first experience, when I was a very little girl. Also I want to tell you how I enjoyed your first visit at sister Chick's, and the last one, too. When I was a child I wanted to go to normal school, but my father thought he could not afford it, and I would cry when I went to bed, and

would cover my head, for I did not want my dear mother to see me. One night while I was crying it seemed as if some one were near me, and a voice said, Do not cry any more, I will give you knowledge of things more than all the world can give, and stand by to the end. I uncovered my head quickly, and there seemed a light about me, and I never cried about going to school any more, and it has been a comfort to me all my life. Afterwards I was in that waste howling wilderness, of which you were speaking, for a long time, for I felt to be such a sinner, everything so black. I tried to ask the Lord to take me out, but it did not please him to do it just then, but I was reading in the thirty-second chapter of Deuteronomy, the song of Moses, and where it speaks of Jacob, how He found him in a desert land. This wilderness, dear brother, you know. He kept him as the apple of his eye. I thought, If I were only one of his, then a little light came. Soon after this Elder Leachman came to Hopewell, and he took the next verse: "As an eagle stirreth up her nest," &c., but he spoke from the ninth to the twelfth verses, and it seemed to be all for me. I felt so light, as if I were walking above the earth, but the tempter was always near, telling me I was deceived. I was very much worried, and afraid that I had caught the shadow and missed the substance, but I had never said a word about it to any one. I went along hoping and despairing for some time. I was very much drawn to the church, but thought it would never do to think that any one would believe me a subject of grace. I tried going out into the world, thinking it would all wear away, and it did for a little while, but then O what trouble of mind; I thought I would go crazy. Every time I would go by much water the words would come, "See, here is water." My mind was on baptism all the time, awake or asleep. If ye love me keep my commandments and follow me. When in my nineteenth year, on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in May, 1860, I went to the church asking a place, feeling they would not receive me, but to my surprise they did. I felt that no one would think of me asking a place with them, but they seemed to know all about it. I was baptized the next day, and it was a very happy day to me, one of the happiest of my life. I stayed in this frame of mind for about three months, then doubts and fears began to arise, and I thought I had made a great mistake, and had deceived myself and the church, too, but it has been a sweet home to me and I love them all.

Dear brother, I hope to receive another letter from you.

Your sister in hope,

SARAH F. REED.

BUCYRUS, Ohio, Dec. 17, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have just finished reading the December 1st SIGNS, and feel a desire to write you a few lines and tell you how much I have enjoyed reading it the past year. Both your articles and Elder Ker's, and likewise all the others, have seemed to blend together in the one theme of Christ and him crucified, giving all glory to the one omnipotent God, who rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. When reading the many good letters I often think if I only could tell it like they do I surely would write often; but we know the members of the body of Christ all have their proper gifts of God, one after this manner and another after that. They cannot all prophesy, neither do all speak with tongues, nor yet do all

interpret, but God has set every member in the body as it pleased him. I am often made to wonder if there can really be a place in the body for one like me, if I am altogether mistaken; but there are one or two things which sometimes give me hope; one is, I know the Lord rules, and another is, I know the foundation of God standeth sure, for the Lord knoweth them that are his, and he will never leave nor forsake one of those he chose in Christ before the foundation of the world. There was a time when I did not see these things in this light, but thought the salvation of man depended on man, as the world preaches and believes today. I also read in the Scriptures that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. The preaching of the cross is unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness, but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power and wisdom of God. We remember when the Lord led the children of Israel out of Egypt and through the Red Sea, that the same cloud which gave light to the children of Israel was darkness to the Egyptians, which seems a type of the preaching of the Word, which is darkness to the world, but to the children of God is light and the power of God, just as the old or legal covenant was a type of the new or spiritual covenant. The old covenant was given to the Jews, the chosen people of God, and was not over any other people; so the new covenant, which was given to the chosen people of God, or spiritual Israel, is not given to any other people. The first covenant was given on condition that if those under it would live law-abiding they were allowed to live in peace and eat the good of the land. The new was not like the old, for after those days, saith the Lord, I will make a new covenant with the house of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; not according to the covenant I made with their fathers. For I will put my law in their mind, and in their hearts will I write it, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. So we see under the new law there are no ifs or ands, but the Lord says, I will and they shall; and he will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will remember no more. So we see it is not their righteousness, but their unrighteousness, the Lord is merciful to; not when they have become good and fulfilled the law of God, but as the Savior said, I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Again he said, The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick; but go ye and learn what this meaneth: I will have mercy, and not sacrifice. O, if it were not that way what hope could there be for any poor, sin-polluted mortal? The word declares that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Well, I will have to close this poor attempt at a letter, and hope you will overlook my many imperfections. I just arrived home from the hospital, where my wife underwent a serious operation for appendicitis. She is getting along nicely now, but for several days it looked doubtful. This is the second operation in two years, the other was for gall stones; but the Lord, the great Physician, has seen fit to spare her. O, if I only could be thankful to him for all his benefits to this poor, sinful worm of the dust, but it seems I cannot.

Do with this as you deem best, and remember me at the throne of grace.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

C. E. JACKSON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Dec. 17, 1916.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—Now that I have addressed you I do not know what to write you, but as many have asked why I do not write, felt to make an attempt. I can only plead my poverty and ignorance. I was thinking today that it is a very long time since I asked for a home in the church, and a home I yet find it. I am nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity, and so prone to leave the God I love, to look at or hear of the doings of the day. How I would love to be ever found at his feet, and as I just write it the thought comes to me, Well consider that, for to be found at his feet must be in humbleness, meekness, real inquiring. Now how do we get to any of these? Is it not through trials?

"Trials make the promise sweet;
Trials give new life to prayer;
Trials bring us to his feet,
Lay us low and keep us there."

So when we consider it, does not our flesh shrink for fear of the trials needful to bring us there? I went to meeting this morning rather disturbed in mind and tired of self and the many things around me. My hearing is so bad I could not hear without artificial help, and could not hear the prayer even with that, and O, I did want to hear the sermon, wanted something to rest and cheer me, and asked if I were not permitted to hear more to-day that I might get a few crumbs, and presently I heard Elder Vaughn say, Blessed is the man who putteth his trust in the Lord, and I thought, Is that for me? Do I put my trust in him? Have I anything to look to that gives me any comfort in this life but my faith in his mercy? I was made to see that I did put my trust in him; I had nowhere else to go but to the sinner's Friend; and then I was permitted to hear other parts of the sermon, and it was very rich and comforting to me, also to feel the Lord heard my desire. Another quotation I have so clear in my mind: Blessed is the man whose soul is stayed on thee. I had some sweet meditations on that, and they were of great comfort to me, and now comes the thought, Was I as a dog stealing from its master's table? Yet I feel to claim I do know something about these sweet things. Where is there a place for one to go? I am tried, and tired of the continual things of the day, almost making me feel the grasshopper a burden. Where can we turn for comfort or rest but to that One whom we know has all strength, and will comfort us and strengthen us and help us on our way with sweet promises? I will be thy God; none shall pluck them out of my hand; I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest; and O so many others. How they build us up, and we feel ready to go on, feeling the support. It makes me think of a weary child that the mother takes up and soothes and fondles, and soon it is ready to go on, rested from some of its troubles; and so we go on, desiring to be patient and submissive to all his will, and desire not to murmur, but to feel the Lord doeth what seemeth him best, and to be ever ready to wait on the Lord. One might ask, How long do these feelings of trust last? I answer, That is as the Lord wills it. I know I am not worthy of the notice of the brethren, and O how very unworthy of the notice of the Father. How merciful he has been to me all my days. I have been made to feel as did Mephibosheth: How was he remembered, such a dead dog as he was? So very, very often I feel more dead than alive. O that I could love

God more and serve him better. But what can I do in my own strength? Man's arm is so puny, not one good thing can he do, though they are proclaiming over the land what wonderful things they are doing, and they almost give man the honor and power. How little they think of the Lord's words in the beginning of creation, where he said he made all things, and without him was not anything made that was made; and we read of the development on through the Scriptures, and do we not continue to see it, and can we give the glory to man, who does not own the breath in his nostrils nor any space of time? No. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. O that I might love him more and serve him better.

I inclose a letter from sister Bonnie Chick, written while visiting in Maine, which you may publish if you see fit.

Love to you one and all.

MARY HILL TERRY.

BOWDOINHAM, Maine, Sept. 17, 1916.

MY DEAR SISTER:—You are on my mind, and in my moments of loneliness I so long for the companionship of the saints, and it seems now I can only talk to them through writing. There is no one where I am staying now who enjoys the things which are my only comfort and joy at present. I hope to go to Aunt Angie's this week, and then I will be with one whose delight is in these things, and one whom it seems now is nearing her heavenly home. There are moments when I can only long to be freed from this bondage of sin and be at rest in that home where there will be no more sorrow, sin or pain. The things you were given to write me were indeed a sermon, and how beautiful it is when we are granted these meditations. Such times leave a sweet savor, and we long to be in such a frame of mind all the time, but while we live here there are things we must attend to, and we know the Lord always gives us what is needful, even though we in our blindness cannot see it. It seemed as I read what you wrote that I knew just where you were, for several days after the meetings some Bible truth would be brought to my mind, and I was as one numbed to pain and distress by a soothing balm. The past few days I have been left to feel my loneliness more, and it is like one awaking to acute pain again. I wonder sometimes how I can keep up before the others, when it seems the heartache will crush me, and I am choked with pent up sobs. I know if I attempted to talk to those around me they would feel I needed to get out in worldly life. I long to write and read, yet I know they think the things in which I find my rest are those that would weary me. Yesterday evening it seemed I could neither sit nor stand still. All the time I kept hearing the words, Thou shalt see the glory of the Lord, but I was fearful lest I was just mistaken in all, and that deliverance would never come to me again. This morning I awoke with a sickening dread, and felt glad Uncle Everett and Aunt Etta had asked me to come there for the day, for they are alone, and there will be several young people here. I look back over the days of the meetings and the days afterward which I mentioned, and I know that there must have been some power keeping me in that wonderful peace. The words, Look to the Lord, and be ye saved, just came. I know there is no other source of help, but I have been made to cry out in anguish because of my unworthiness and sinfulness. I know that it is only the

grace of God that can save such a vile one as I. His grace is sufficient to cleanse the blackest stain. How wonderful that we have a Mediator through whom we can appear before God pure and spotless. O what a rich blessing is ours in this glorious High Priest, who is ever making intercession for his children at the throne of grace. This is far, far too wonderful for my poor, finite mind to grasp, but sometimes I am given glimpses into this truth which bring a feeling of gladness no words can express. If only I am one for whom he shed his precious blood I have nothing to fear, but O how often I am fearful and doubting. I know he is able to do all things, but will he deliver me?

Sister Mary, I never had such a restful trip as the one up here. It seemed but a moment, and I dreaded to get off the train and have to mingle in worldly talk again. I had spent such wondrously sweet, precious moments reading and writing and thinking upon the goodness of the Lord. There is no meeting today. Only God knows how I dreaded to have the meetings end. I need your prayers and those of all his children, for I am so weak that when left to myself I feel I cannot endure the burdens of the day. There is needful strength I know to endure the pain, but my flesh rebels against suffering. It seems my only quiet is in reading and writing.

May the Lord bless you both.

Your sister, I hope,

BONNIE CHICK.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Jan. 15, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—Just now I was reading the letter of sister Mary E. Wright, of Santa Cruz, Cal., in the SIGNS of January 15th. I felt reproved and rebuked, as well as greatly edified and comforted. That dear sister is away off by herself in a (gospelly) barren land, and can send out such a sweet message of gospel experience. We are here in the east where we can mingle together and visit each other and get up questions which none of us can understand, and contend for them and over them until we become alienated and lose fellowship for each other. I felt that there is more of the "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven," in that one letter than there is in a hundred letters of the deep questions which God has never revealed to mortal man, and which stir up so much opposition and strife among us. The letter of sister Wright will surely find a "Well done, thou good and faithful servant," in the heart and experience of every child of God, and we have already enfolded her in the arms of love and sweet fellowship. Such letters tell us of Shiloh, and we are gathered together in one body, with one mind. O that it could be the will of God for some of us to put our hands on our mouths and confess that we have spoken words too wonderful for us; that we might speak those things which edify, and which make for peace; speak that we do know, and testify of that we have seen; write and speak the things we have seen with our eyes, heard with our ears, and that our hands have handled of the Word of life. I feel that the letter of sister Wright is worth more to me than a thousand lengthy letters or sermons in explanation of the great unrevealed mysteries of God, which he has hid away in his own great storehouse to reveal in his time, when we shall all partake of them in seeing eye to eye and speaking the same things to the honor and praise of him who has saved us and called us.

The God of peace be with us all, and with our dear sister, and give her much comfort.

Your brother in a sweet hope,

L. H. HARDY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1917.

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EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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DANIEL XII. 3.

"AND they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."

The late pastor Russell, of the Brooklyn Tabernacle, and the Millennial Dawnists, interpret this Scripture in the prophecy of Daniel as applying to the millennium which is to be ushered in at the end of this gospel dispensation by the general resurrection of the bodies of the dead. We do not agree with this millennium theory. We do not believe that the words in Daniel xii. 2, as follows: "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt," apply to the resurrection of the bodies of the dead at the end of the gospel era. One reason for our not so agreeing is because "many" does not mean "all." If the Scripture meant a general resurrection of all bodies from the graves, it would have said "all" of them that sleep in the dust of the earth, and not "many" of them that sleep in the dust of the earth. In our view of this matter, the Spirit in the prophet Daniel in speaking of the sleeping in the dust of the earth had no reference at all to the corporeal death of the race of mankind. The Spirit when it descended upon the saints at Jerusalem at Pentecost, as described in Acts ii., brought about this twofold awakening. Peter and the disciples with him awoke to righteousness or everlasting life. They had, not so very long before that, turned back to the world, as when Peter had said, "I go a fishing," and all the others had assented to going with him. They had been overcome with doubts and serious questionings regarding the true character of the Savior, whom they had seen slain, and being discouraged, had essayed to go back to the world. In this sense, they had slept in the dust of the earth. These, at the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, were awakened out of that sleep and equipped with understanding of the true meaning of the sufferings and death of Jesus, awaking thereby to "everlasting" life, not eternal life. There is a distinction between the expressions "everlasting life" and "eternal life." Those in the congregation of the Jews who heard the gospel preached that day and were pricked in their heart, were stricken with a consciousness of their guilt before God, and awoke unto shame and "everlasting contempt." Again, we notice the word is "everlasting," not eternal. We believe, therefore, the Scripture in Daniel xii. 2, refers not to the end of the gospel era, but to its beginning. Following this, the words in the third verse find their fulfillment in this gospel dispensation, not in some theoretical era to come after awhile.

"They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament." The firmament shines with the reflected light of the sun. The sun is the center of our solar system. The moon and the stars shine with no light of their own, but with the reflection of the sun's glory. In the same way, those who are made wise unto salva-

tion, which is by grace through the Lord Jesus Christ, shine with no light of their own, but with the light of Jesus shining within them. This wisdom unto salvation cannot be imparted by one's intelligence, nor taught by others to one, but must come into the consciousness of the believer by divine revelation. Therefore, wherever and whenever a sinner is made alive to his own depravity, and to the hope of salvation by grace in Jesus, this is divine instruction, wisdom imparted by the God of heaven. Thus, these that are thus wise shine, not with any light of human wisdom or learning, but with the light of the Sun of Righteousness radiating within them, just as the firmament shines with the light of the sun.

"They that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." By this expression is meant the apostles. They turned many to righteousness. This does not mean that they saved souls or brought sinners to Christ. It does not mean that they imparted spiritual life to any one. It was given the apostles to set in order the things pertaining to the gospel church in its visible organization. They pointed the way to righteousness in sound doctrine, sound church order and sound gospel practice. All through this gospel day, though the apostles as men are dead, their testimony lives in the church of Jesus wherever it is raised up by the Spirit into manifestation. The words of the apostles are words of authority, because they are the words of inspiration. Their words being divinely inspired, turn believers to righteousness in doctrine, order and practice. In doing this they shine as the stars. That is, as we have said before, starlight is reflected sunlight; so apostolic teaching is not the shining of human wisdom, but the shining of the Spirit of Jesus out of the apostles. John saw a wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. These twelve stars represent the twelve apostles. Their teachings are the crown of the church, and the church walks in the light of these stars; that is, in the doctrine, faith and order of the apostles. L.

ACTS V. 38, 39.

"AND now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God."

Not long after the establishment of the gospel church in the city of Jerusalem, persecution broke out against it. Peter and the apostles were commanded by the high priest and those in authority not to preach their doctrine, because it was stirring up the whole city. The party in power never likes to be disturbed. Conventionalities intrench themselves behind the unanimity of public opinion and regard bitterly the invaders of a new regime who seek to root up things commonly accepted hitherto as being true and right. This new doctrine of salvation by grace without the works of the law was very disturbing and annoying to those who, like the high priest and the Sadducees and the Pharisees, made their living by the law. Thus it came to pass that Peter and the other apostles found themselves arraigned before the council of the Jews, and the high priest said to them: "Did we not straitly command you, that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's [Jesus] blood upon us." Peter answered to this: "We ought to obey God rather than men," and much more to the same effect. When the council heard what Peter had to say they were cut to

the heart, and took counsel to slay them. At this point in the proceedings, a member of the council, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, stood up and began to speak in defense of the accused apostles. He it was that used the words quoted in our text at the beginning of this article. One cannot help wondering what kind of a man this was, this man of the Jewish Sanhedrin, who felt himself actuated to take the part of the accused men. Can it be that Gamaliel himself was a subject of grace, and that he discerned in the apostles' doctrine that which could not be gainsaid nor destroyed? We shall never know just what was in this man's heart, but he certainly had the knowledge that God could not be successfully opposed by man; that if this preaching of the apostles was of God, it could not be overthrown. This man also knew the futility of the works of men; that if this preaching was of men, it would come to nought. Gamaliel knew that error was doomed to defeat, and that truth would ultimately triumph; that man's teaching ends in nothing, while the doctrine of God eternally prevails. One cannot help but feel Gamaliel must have had something of the divine essence within him to have realized this much. Gamaliel mentions to the other members of the council with him instances where false teachers have arisen whose movements amounted to nothing. There had, for instance, been one Theudas, who had insurrected, "boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought." Also, there had been one Judas of Galilee, who led an insurrection in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him; he also perished, and those who had obeyed him were scattered. Both these movements, Gamaliel showed, had come to nought. To Gamaliel, the fact that they came to naught proved their man-made origin. So now, if this new doctrine of Peter and those with him be of men, it will die out of itself. Therefore, let it alone. Why advertise it by persecuting it? On the other hand, if this doctrine be of God, it cannot be overthrown. Persecution, in that case, is simply so much hatred run to waste. The verdict of the centuries is that the doctrine of the apostles is of God, for all the venom vented by men against it has left it undaunted and triumphant.

L.

REVELATION XVIII. 7.

"How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her; for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow."

These words are used with reference to Babylon, the embodiment of the forces of antichrist, all opposed to God and his righteousness. Babylon, we think, does not any more represent the Catholic Church than it does united Protestantism. One is just as bad as the other, and all together are antichrist arrayed against the truth of salvation by grace through the unmerited and divine favor of eternal life through Jesus Christ the Lord. Babylon is religiously pompous and commercially great. She glorifies herself with the riches of the world and with the imaginary righteousness obtained by her good (?) works. She lives in luxury and ease, deliciously. Torment and sorrow are visited upon her from time to time, as when, for instance, a war like that now raging in Europe disrupts her commerce, demolishes her civilization and contradicts all her theological theories. The Bible prophesies the downfall of Baby-

lon, a downfall inevitable and unfailing as the word of God that had declared it, though it seem to the righteous strangely to tarry. All the boasted queenliness of Mystery Babylon will be leveled to the dust, her boast of being no widow will be discovered to have been but living in licentiousness and lust, her "no sorrow" but sorrow unceasing and unavailing. When all this shall be, we cannot say. God knows when the hour shall strike, not we; but we have no doubt as to its coming, nor to the outcome when it does come: error vanquished, truth triumphant.

We have written the three above sketches at the request of brother T. H. McKenzie, of Keaton, Ky. L.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., the second Sunday in February, (11th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Attie Curtis, Maine, $1.00; Joseph F. Hall, Maine, $1.00; C. E. Miller, Pa., $1.00; Rose Tamsett, N. Y., $1.00; J. P. Fields, Ky., $1.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at his home, Leesburg, Va., Dec. 20th, 1916, Norman B. Smallwood, of Millsville, Loudoun Co., Va., and Miss Lizzie Cross, of Halfway, Fauquier Co., Va.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at the home of the bride's parents, in the township of Caradoc, Ontario, Canada, Dec. 20th, 1916, Gerald M. Zavitz and Margaret H. Campbell.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Isaiah Bowden was born Jan. 18th, 1845, and died Dec. 28th, 1916, making his stay on earth 71 years, 11 months and 11 days. He was married in September, 1870, to Miss Linnie A. Emerson, and to that union were born eleven children, four dying in infancy. Seven children and our dear mother survive him. The children are J. B. Bowden, of Como, Texas, H. T. and Crate Bowden and Mrs. Cora Morris, of Murray, Ky., A. O. Bowden, of Huron, S. Dak., R. D. Bowden, of Dodge Center, Miss., and Mrs. Allie Smith, of Danville, Ill. Owing to the great distance and illness the writer failed to get there at his burial, which was in the old Harmony Cemetery. The funeral was conducted by Elder H. N. Oliver, who spoke to the comfort of all present. Dear father was given a hope in the mercy of God in the year 1874, and was baptized in the fellowship of South Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, by Elder W. A. Bowden, and walked all those years as becometh those professing the name of Jesus, contending at all times for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, believing in the sovereign and effectual working of God's grace in the salvation of poor, lost sinners. He stood firm during the stormy days of the introduction of conditional time salvation and limited predestination into our ranks, ever contending for the absolute sovereignty of God, rejoicing in hope of eternal life through the merit of Jesus Christ, having no confidence in the flesh or in the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reproved them. He was honorable and upright in dealing with his fellowmen, and lived and died in full triumph of a living faith, always attending his meetings as long as he was able. May the Lord enable us all to walk uprightly and honor the cause he so much loved. Even in his last years, when his mind was enfeebled by reason of high blood pressure, he was sound and unmovable in the Bible doctrine of salvation by grace. With the evidence we have of his gracious state in life, proven by his walk, let us through the grace and mercy of God look forward to the time of the coming of the Lord. O blessed, happy morn, when all the saints shall shout together in the church triumphant, where no farewell tears are shed, where God himself shall wipe all tears from our eyes. Dear mother, brothers and sisters, may God in his infinite mercy and love prepare us to meet on the shore of eternal bliss, there to join in singing the song of the redeemed host. I pray that God in mercy will give us all the spirit of reconciliation to his providential dealings with us, help us to bear the stroke, ever looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. I know, dear mother, it is hard to give him up, but the same God that has been with him will be with you and give you strength to bear the stroke.

Written by his affectionate son, in much tribulation. J. B. BOWDEN.

James D. Little died at White Plains, N. Y., Dec. 31st, 1916, aged 44 years. He was a grandson of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, being the son of sister Virginia Beebe by her first husband. The deceased was married to Estelle Blackford in 1898. Eight children were born of that union, five of whom survive. Mr. Little was devotedly attached to his family, and his wife and children sadly feel this bereavement. There also survive to mourn their loss, his mother, Mrs. Virginia B. L. Bailey, and three sisters: Mrs. Florien Root, Mrs. C. Virginia Camp and Mrs. Kathleen L. Jerome. The immediate cause of Mr. Little's death was Bright's disease. While he had been a sufferer for some time of this malady, he was active in general pursuits until shortly before the end came.

On Jan. 3rd, 1917, the funeral service was held in the New Vernon Church meetinghouse, New Vernon, N. Y., and interment made in the adjoining cemetery.

JOHN McCONNELL.

Neil McAlpine was born in Scotland in the year 1829. His parents came to this country in the year 1831, brother McAlpine being two years of age. His parents settled in Elgin County, on the Talbot road, about five miles west of St. Thomas, Ont. May 15th, 1856, he was married to May Curry, to which union were born thirteen children, eleven of whom are still living. Brother McAlpine was received in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada in the year 1874, and baptized by the late Elder Wm. Pollard, and lived a faithful and devoted member for forty-two years. Brother McAlpine was quiet in manner, yet firm in his convictions. His travel from nature's darkness into the light and liberty of the gospel was marked by great distress of soul. Deliverance came to him in the midst of the night, and to him the room was filled with light and his soul with joy. He was a man held in high esteem and loved for his honesty and integrity. His daily walk before the world, as well as among his brethren, was well ordered, and showed the effect of grace in his heart. Brother McAlpine had been in failing health for nearly two years, but never murmured nor complained, but patiently awaited his Master's call from the shores of time into that sweet and peaceful rest which awaits the people of God. His kind and devoted children were with him many times during his sickness, and all that kind and loving hands could do was done. His faithful companion, who now mourns her loss, was ever at his bedside to do what she could for his comfort, as well as his noble daughter, who was with him day and night for many weeks and gave her undivided attention to her kind and devoted father. All that kind and loving children could do for a parent his children did, not leaving anything undone that would be of comfort to their dear father, but time rolled on, and the relentless hand of death claimed their loved one at 10 o'clock p. m. August 16th, 1916.

His funeral was held from his late residence, conducted by the writer, who spoke with such ability as the Lord was pleased to give, using for a text Romans ix., last clause of verse fourteen. The large concourse of people which came from far and near to pay their last tribute of respect to one of their fellow-men showed the high esteem in which brother McAlpine was held. He leaves to mourn their loss his faithful and devoted companion, eleven children, besides the church and many other relatives and friends. Burial was in the St. Thomas Cemetery.

May the Lord apply the healing balm to their sorrowing hearts, is our earnest desire.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Mrs. Martha Reeves was born and lived near Ringoes, N. J., and died May 18th, 1916, aged 80 years. She had enjoyed very good health, and was a most conscientious person, loved by all her friends and neighbors. Being situated some distance from an Old School Baptist meetinghouse she would frequently remark, "All the preaching I get is from the SIGNS OF THE TIMES," which paper she much enjoyed reading, and was anxious that others situated as she was, far from preaching, or could not afford to take it, should receive the comfort she did in reading the articles which were of so much interest to her spiritually. She was a believer in good works, and knowing the isolated of the flock would receive comfort and instruction in reading, being deprived of meeting with the children of God, felt to assist in sending it to them. She never united with the visible church, but we all feel that she belonged to that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. The only preaching she ever heard was when Elder Chick spoke on the occasion of her husband's funeral, and in a visit he made her, which she always spoke of as being the best day she ever had.

Her funeral was held at Mr. Rynearson's, May 24th, 1916, Elder Charles W. Vaughn officiating.

J. P. Whitt was born Sept. 10th, 1840, in Carter County, Ky., and departed this life October 4th, 1916, aged 76 years and 24 days. He was married to Missouri Cox, and to them were born six children, four of whom survive him, two having passed to their reward. Brother Whitt professed a hope in Christ, and he and his wife were received in the fellowship of the Rockspring Church, and baptized in June, 1868, by Elder David Magard. Our dear beloved brother was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and claimed no merit himself, saying Christ was his only hope. He was clerk of the Macedonia Church for several years, and was an active member, always in his place in the church. His home was the home of his brethren, all of them were hospitably entertained, and he took great delight in the work of the association. By hard work,

and good and honest management, he accumulated a goodly portion of this world's goods; he worked because he enjoyed his labor. He had many friends, as was manifest at the time of his burial. He had good health for a man of his age until a few days before his death, when he contracted pneumonia and only lived seven or eight days. All that loving hands could do was done by his beloved and devoted wife, his only son, Senator W. B. Whitt, and his daughters, Mrs. Minty Jordan and Susan James, together with the most skilled physicians that could be obtained, but his time had come, and he must go to his reward.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder H. H. Wilcox, after which his mortal remains were laid in the family burial grounds at his home, in McGlone, Ky., to await the summons to arise with the likeness of his beloved Lord and Savior. We shall all miss him at our meetings, yet none will miss him so much as his beloved and devoted wife, sister Whitt. May the God of all grace enable us to bow to his sovereign will, and may the bereaved ones have grace to support them in this their greatest trial. J. E. THORNBURY.

John C. Shields was born in Missouri April 23rd, 1840, and departed this life at his home in Ft. Worth, Texas, Dec. 31st, 1916, after a lingering illness of that dread disease, tuberculosis of the lungs. He was married to Rebecca Vermillion Nov. 25th, 1860, and they shared the joys and bore the burdens of life in happy union for more than fifty-six years. To that union were born eight children, six of whom are still living, three sons and three daughters. He was a Union soldier, serving in Company G, 16th Missouri Cavalry. He moved to Texas about 1893, and shortly afterward he and wife united with Shiloh Church, Denton County, Texas, and were baptized by Elder Thomas A. Ball. At the time of his death his membership was with the Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and attended the meetings of the church as long as he was able. All that medical skill and faithful attention could do was done, but he gradually grew weaker until the end, when, surrounded by his faithful wife, children and friends, he quietly and peacefully fell asleep in Jesus. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

The next day the relatives and friends assembled at his home, and Elder E. A. Moreland preached a comforting sermon on the resurrection, after which his remains were conveyed to the beautiful Mt. Olivet Cemetery and there laid to rest to await the resurrection morn.

May God bless and comfort the bereaved widow and children, and grant them sweet resignation to his holy will in all things, is the prayer of the unworthy writer. PRESTON STAGGS.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, Elder J. M. Fenton will fill the following appointments:

Justus, Pa., Sunday, Jan. 21st, 1917, 11 a. m.; Clarks Summit, Pa., 2 p. m.; Brookdale, Pa., Monday, 22nd, 2. p. m.; Maywood, N. Y., Tuesday, 23rd, 8 p. m.; Otego, N. Y., Wednesday, 24th, 2 and 7 p. m.; Richmondville, N. Y., Loren Meads, Thursday, 25th, 1:30 p. m.; Geo. Meads 7:30 p. m.; Jefferson meetinghouse, Friday, 26th, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.; Cobleskill, N. Y., 7:30 p. m.; Middleburg, N. Y., Saturday, 27th, 1:30 p. m.; Schoharie, N. Y., sister Kinney's, 7:30 p. m.; Schoharie meetinghouse, Sunday, 28th, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.

E. R. KINNEY.

PROVIDENCE permitting, there will be an all day meeting in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse at Halcottville, N. Y., on the fourth Sunday in January (28th), 1917, commencing at 10:45 a. m. All are welcome; also Jefferson Church Sunday, February 4th. GEORGE RUSTON.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 85. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1917. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DEUTERONOMY XXXII. 9.

"FOR the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."

That the Lord will receive and keep his portion is as certain as it is that he possesses "all power in heaven and in earth," and is immutable. In the same chapter where my text is found it is recorded, "Just and right is he." Justice and right guarantee to every one his portion; and when there is power on the side of justice to enforce its demands, the end of righteousness is always attained. The Lord's portion is said to be his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. The lot is all of his inheritance, or all of his portion. The ends of justice could no more be served by one taking more than his portion than they could by his taking less than his portion; he must receive all of his, no more and no less. So we conclude the Lord will take all of his people, and nothing more. His people are identified as Jacob. Jacob was the twin brother of Esau, yet the Lord loved Jacob and hated Esau; this was so that the purpose of God according to election might stand. (Rom. ix. 11.) But it is not my purpose in this article to investigate the relation of Jacob and Esau; Jacob will claim all of our attention. The Lord chose Abraham, and through him Isaac, and through him Jacob, and in him all Israel to be his special people, and separated them from all other people, and distinguished them in many ways as his separate people. Likewise those who were chosen in Christ to obtain salvation and eternal glory are separated from the world of mankind (which is just like them by nature, and their equal in every respect by ordinary generation) by the distinguishing grace of God, and thereby manifested the spiritual Israel of God. On the way as Jacob journeyed toward the promised land, the angel of the Lord met him, and he wrestled with the angel all night until the break of day, and the angel blessed him, and his name was changed from Jacob to Israel. His person was not changed; his walk was changed, but the same person did the walking now that walked before. His condition was so changed that his walk was uneven henceforth, and he needed his staff to lean upon. Now the people of the Lord were chosen in Christ before the foundations of the earth were laid; this choice or election embraced the persons of his peo-

ple, not something that descended or was to descend from heaven. These people constitute the members of the body of Christ. The Lord speaking by David tells of their origin; he says: "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."—Psalms cxxxix. 15, 16. This locates the origin of the Lord's people in the lowest parts of the earth. Thus we see that the people that God loved, chose and gave to his Son to be his portion and the lot of his inheritance, and that he separates from the world and manifests as the members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones by distinguishing grace, are creatures of earth. They are in no way different by nature from all other people. They had their origin in the earthy Adam, and became transgressors of the law in him, and came under its penalty. Now the people that sinned are the the people that needed redemption from sin. The inspired record abounds with testimony declaring that the loved and chosen people of God became transgressors of the law and fell under its curse in Adam, and that redemption was provided in Christ Jesus to deliver them from their bondage and from death and to secure unto them the riches of eternal life and glory. Is not this the burden of the gospel to poor sinners? Yes, poor sinners; the very persons that sinned are the persons who need salvation from sin, and are the ones whom Christ came to seek and to save. Jesus says, "I am come to seek and to save that which was lost." "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." The angel said of Mary his mother, "She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."—Matt. i. 21. Paul said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." Again, in speaking of Christ, Paul says, Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Testimony might be added to testimony until every inspired witness had been examined, and all would be found declaring the same great truth that the salvation of sinners was the object of Christ's mission into the world. The covenant of grace and mercy embraced sinners and provided all the things necessary for their complete redemption and emancipation from sin and all of its baneful influences and effects before time began. The stipulations of this covenant were but the expressions of the will of the Father, and in it Christ became surety for his people and the executor of his Father's will. He said of his mission here: I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me; and this is the will of my Father which hath sent me, that of all he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day. We affirm that all that Christ ever did in execution of his Father's will, was done for his people, for sinners. There is such oneness existing between Christ and his people that they are inseparable. Neither of them can be perfect or happy without the other. The messenger of the covenant was held in contemplation and used as a pattern in the creation of man; for it is said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." So when Christ, the Husband of

the bride, was manifested in that body which the Father had prepared for him to do the will of God, it was a body like unto his bride's body. He was made in all things like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. This is the work of the omnipotent God, and is marvelous in our eyes. Great is the mystery of godliness. There is a profound mystery running through the whole work of God in the work of grace, a mystery that finite creatures cannot understand or explain, and yet faith embraces it as truth, and hope delights to cherish the bright anticipation of it. The resurrection and the changes attending the same are by no means the least mystery connected with the work of salvation, yet the crowning work in the salvation of sinners could never be reached until the resurrection is attained. The apostle says, If the dead rise not, then our hope is vain, our preaching is vain, Christ is yet in the grave, and we are found false witnesses of God. But such fearful consequences do not confront the trembling prisoners of hope, for Christ is risen and become the firstfruits of them that slept. The apostles were called in question for preaching Christ and the resurrection, which were inseparable themes with them, yet they proclaimed it the more and withstood and condemned those who denied the resurrection or taught that it was past already. Let us keep in mind that the resurrection is part of the work of salvation which Christ came to bring unto his people, and the people that were the recipients of all of the other provisions of the covenant are the recipients of this last and most glorious of them all, which admits them into the fullness of those blessings and glories which they have only been enabled to see and know in part heretofore. The faith and hope of the people of God—sinners redeemed, embrace a future state of bliss and glory, where they cease from sin and have perfect rest from all their fears within and foes without. To deny them this faith and hope would rob them of the only pleasant anticipations they know, and render them most miserable indeed. Paul says, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." But hope reaches beyond the shores of time, beyond this life, and embraces a higher and holier life where, as Job says, the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. Poor, halting, trembling, doubting ones, are you hoping for this blessed state? If so, then says the apostle, "do we with patience wait for it." And your waiting will not be in vain, for it is written, To them that look for him will he appear the second time without sin unto salvation. He appeared unto you once as your sin-bearer, and lifted that load of guilt and condemnation from you, and revealed to you how he had borne all your sins in his own body, and that they were not remembered against you any more forever; and he gave you faith to embrace this truth and rejoice in it, and here your hope still rests; but he is going to appear again, not to reveal himself as your sin-bearer, but as he who hath reigned until he hath put all enemies under his feet. He is coming in the clouds of his glory to receive his "portion," "the lot of his inheritance," "his people," all that the Father gave him; for he said they should come unto him, and that he would in no wise cast them out. I think I hear you say, I am such a great sinner; my thoughts and my conversation lie so far from God and righteousness. Yes, but

Christ is an infinitely greater and richer Savior, and he is full of grace and truth. So wonderfully great is his grace that when he extended it to his people—to you, my reader, it completely covered all your sins and blotted out not only them, but all the stain of them, and made you as clean in the eyes of God as though you had never been a sinner. While all this has been done for the people of God and is here revealed to them, yet there is a great change that must come before they are ready to meet the Lord at his second coming. They are still mortal, are bound by mortal relations, and are bearing the image of the earthy. These mortal relations must be dissolved, they must be made spiritual, and made to bear the image of their glorified Redeemer. This wonderful change is what Paul speaks of when he says, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."—1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. Indeed, this is a great mystery, yet the Spirit of God revealed it to the apostle, and he by the inspiration of that Spirit shewed it unto us, and it is no intrusion into the secret things of God for us to look at it and rejoice in the hope of its fulfillment. True, the apostle did not explain the mystery, for then it would have no longer remained a mystery; neither did he explain any other part of the mystery of godliness, but the children of God delight to contemplate its glories and rejoice in the part which they hope they have in it. The apostle in speaking of this same mysterious event on another occasion said, "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."—1 Thess. iv. 15–18. Where in all the inspired record is the mystery of election, of redemption, of pardon or of quickening presented in simpler or clearer words as embracing the persons of the people of God? Reader, it is of no consequence what you or I believe and teach for the resurrection; here is the simple truth of it declared by the inspired apostle, and our contrary belief or teaching will never change the divine arrangement. Let us pause for a moment and consider this grand, this sublime event toward which the flight of time is hastening all the people of God: "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed," writes the apostle to the Corinthian Church. I understand the sleep here mentioned to be the sleep in mortal death, for in this same connection it speaks of the dead rising. In his letter to the Thessalonians the apostle says, "We which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent [go before] them which are asleep," but that they shall rise first, and "then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." The truth of the apostle's words then is this: some of the Lord's people will be dead, and some will be still alive, engaging in the various pursuits of this life as they now are at the second coming of Christ,

at which time those that are dead will be raised up and those who are alive will with them instantaneously be changed, and all will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. The language of our text, "The Lord's portion is his people," will be as true at that moment as when it was uttered; it will be verified in the presence and to the perfect understanding of all his chosen, redeemed and resurrected people. They have labored and toiled, while they mingled their tears of penitence with their ecstasies of hope; they have hungered and thirsted for that satisfaction which this world is too poor to afford; they had often drank at the streams of this river that flowed from the throne of God and the Lamb, but they longed to drink at the fountain-head. You may be a doubting Thomas, you may be a denying Peter, you may be a trembling jailer; your trembling, your doubting or your denying will not hasten nor retard this supreme moment, this moment of all moments; it will certainly come, and your Savior will come with it. In their present condition the Lord's people are not suitable companions for him, therefore when that moment comes in which they are to be caught up in the clouds to meet him they will be changed. This, says the apostle, is what that change consists of: "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."—1 Cor. xv. 53. When this has been done for the Lord's people, their salvation from sin and all of its influences, effects and consequences will have been accomplished, their complete victory over death, hell and the grave been given, their feet will quit this earth as they rise to meet the Lord in the air, bearing his likeness, and "so shall they ever be with the Lord." Should you, who read these lines, never see my face, I want you to know that my hope embraces that salvation, which had its incipiency in eternity, is sufficient to reach down into the lowest depths of sin and degradation and embrace the persons of poor sinners, quicken them into divine life, lift them up above the claims of a broken law, give them a standing in Christ Jesus, put a song of praise to him in their mouths, set their affections upon things which are above, preserve their whole spirit and soul and body until the coming of the Lord Jesus, and then deliver them into the presence of the Father in the resurrection at the last day incorruptible and immortal. At this haven is where my hope, the anchor of the soul, is resting, and here my faith is staid; but as my frail bark is tossed to and fro on the billows of doubt, and its destruction threatened upon the shoals of unbelief, I am often compelled to take soundings and pause to consult my mariner's chart and compass in a vain effort to assure myself whether I am in reality sailing on those "broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars," and where gallant ships cannot pass. May the glorious Lord dwell richly in your hearts.

In humble hope,

J. R. HARDY.

HAVILAND, Kansas.

IONA, Ont., June 30, 1880.

DEAR BROTHER:—We arrived home from the June meeting, where we heard the gospel preached in its purity, and I feel to write to you, hoping to say nothing but the things I know and experience, and that it may stir up your pure mind by way of remembrance. For some time I thought of writing to you, and being more impressed at this time, I shall endeavor to write the reason of my hope in

Christ, though I am fully persuaded it will come far short of telling it in full. However feeble it may appear to the writer in the way it is set forth, I would not exchange it for all the treasures of this world. However, if the Spirit directs my mind I know it will comfort some one led, as I humbly hope I have been, by a way I knew not, in paths I had not seen.

When very young, I might say as far back as I can remember, I had serious thoughts of death and my future destiny. My grandmother taught me a prayer that I was to repeat every night, and when I would repeat the little verse I thought I was all right, but sometimes I would forget, and if I awoke in the night I would repeat it. As I grew in years I would often forget it, and finally I forgot it altogether. I was very fond of company and the amusements of the world, and enjoyed myself well, but now and then I would ask in my heart, If anything should happen to me where would I appear? and often I prayed to the Lord to forgive me; especially when a storm of thunder and lightning was approaching how I would beg of the Lord to forgive me, and would promise to be a better girl in future. But as often as promises were made they were broken, and that was truly sad to me. How could I go to Him again after such promises? but I would beg for mercy. I had a great desire to be good, and would walk long distances to hear preaching. I thought they were such good people they would not be afraid to die, and if I were as good as they I would not be afraid. I felt I was young and could not be good with so many things in my path, and that when I would settle down in life I could live a more christian life. As time passed on I was married, and then it did not seem to be any easier to become a christian than before, except, as before, now and again my convictions would come, and I would beg for forgiveness. My husband and I would often converse on the Scriptures, and he seemed to have a different light or opinion of them. I felt I must do a great deal myself in order to be a christian—duty and means. We would argue nearly every night, and when he would go out to his work I would get the concordance and Bible and hunt up all our arguments, and the passages I thought would back up my arguments, but in reading them over I found they were not as I understood them, but were plainly made to me that they were as my husband had them, and I was stripped of all my goodness, duty and means. Then I cried in sincerity and truth with a broken heart and contrite spirit for mercy. I could not cease from seeking him with my whole heart. Yes, dear ones, when we are stripped of our own righteousness, then we are made to cry out, As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. That is the way when the Lord begins his work in a poor sinner, although he may not realize it at the time; he will not leave it until he finishes it. Yes, when I worked the hardest with my hands I cried the more for mercy, and if at any time I felt careless about my soul I begged for my burden back, so that I could seek him. My prayer was to guide and direct me in the right path and lead me by the still waters; my desire was to belong and be numbered with his sheep, that if I were to be one of them to lead me in the footsteps of his flock. O what yearning for the living waters. Pen fails to relate the feelings of a convicted soul burdened with a load of sin and guilt before a just and holy Being; it cannot be fathomed,

nor can language ever express it. If my soul were sent to hell, thy righteous law approves it well. I do not know how long I was in this state of mind. I have been comforted several times in dreams, and in hearing the word of God preached while they spoke of the convicted sinner, but when they came to where their hope sprung up, I was lost, it was Egyptian darkness to me, I knew nothing about that, and O how sad that was to me; when the essential part came I was shut out. About this time it pleased the Lord to take our dear mother from us, which was to us a very trying time. I had a hope that she was numbered among the blessed, though I could not realize it then as I do now. She was firm in the faith and predestination of all things. She repeated the fifth hymn on Friday and slept quietly in Jesus on the following Monday morning. I was comforted by a dream a few nights before she died. I dreamed I was going on a long journey to a city, and several started with me, but I was finally left alone. I was to go on a straight line, and if I left that line there were wild men shooting arrows on either side of me, and I was terribly afraid. As I journeyed along I came to the city, and saw a large company who looked like soldiers, who wore the same clothes, their step the same, and I thought they were going where I wanted to go, but I had to go alone, and came to a large building which no one could enter without the password. I said something, and they let me in. There was a large company of people there, and as there was a second story in the building I went up there, and saw on the left side of the place one who looked like Christ, standing, and sheep lying down around him, and the sun on his breast illuminating the whole building, and on the other side there were people placing crowns on their heads; father and mother were there, and a crown was given to me. Then it seemed as if the great I AM came down on wings and made his abode with us. I awoke, and for some time I could not realize whether I was in heaven or on earth. The sight was marvelous to behold, and I was sorry when I found I was still on earth. Shortly after this as I laid down my weary body to sleep I told my husband that I did not know what to do; my feelings were more than I could bear, and I prayed the Lord to have mercy upon my soul. I felt I was wounded in soul and spirit, and as a flash the words came to me: Thy sins, though many, are all forgiven thee. Then I felt I was raised out of the miry clay and placed upon a rock. He put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto him. He gave me the oil of joy for mourning, beauty for ashes, turned darkness into light, and then I could praise him without ceasing. Then I could say, My God reigneth, I am his, and he is mine. Next morning when I went to my work I was making melody in my heart to the One my soul loveth. For I knew and felt that I had found him whom to know is life eternal. I thought then I was going to live the rest of my days rejoicing. I read Isaiah twice and other portions of the word of God, which were good to me, and I could see and understand the way I humbly hope I was led. My joy lasted for some time, and when I would go to meeting and hear Christ exalted above every name it was sweet music, and I never thought I could doubt any more. But I found it was not lasting, and I was much impressed to tell some one whom I felt was a child of God, also to tell the church. Shortly after this we went home, and Elder Pollard preached in a schoolhouse,

and we all went to hear him. As he went on preaching so beautifully he told my experience better than I could. It was the first gospel sermon I ever heard; I could follow him all the way through, and could say, Come, see a man that told me all things that ever I did. That was a feast to me, fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined. Language cannot express the sweet comfort of a soul in its earliest love. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth. Thy watchman shall lift up his voice, with the voice together they shall sing, for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord again shall bring Zion. Yes, dear friends, it is the most satisfying feeling in all our life when we have the witness within us, eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to understand the things of our heavenly King; it is sweet food to the hungry soul. I thought then I would tell Elder Pollard how sweet his preaching was to me, but when he came down I could not tell him. These words were on my mind, and I could not get rid of them: If ye love me, keep my commandments. I knew I loved him, and would love to tell the church what great things the Lord had done for me. Once I was going to the quarterly meeting at Ekfrid, and on my way there I felt the least concern about myself, and felt I had better stayed at home. But as soon as I heard the gospel preached it came to me in power and full assurance, so that I could not leave at that time until I related my sorrows and joys to those dear people whom I longed to be numbered with. The words came to me very forcibly, If you hold your peace the stones will cry out; so I spoke to Elder Pollard after the congregation had left the house, and he told me to stop over at the meeting on Monday morning next. I had no sooner told him than the tempter told me I was mistaken, and the words came to me: From whence cometh temptation? of the evil one; and my troubles left me, and I went before the church and was received, and baptized the same day by Elder Pollard, and felt the answer of a good conscience toward God and enjoyed the blessings of my dear Savior with those of like faith.

CATHERINE MACALPINE.

WHEELING, W. Va., Dec. 11, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am inclosing a good letter written by sister Lina Beck to sister Bessie Durand. She kindly shared it with me, and I feel a desire to share it with the rest of the household of faith. I have sister Bessie's consent to do so. I also inclose a letter from sister Anna McKinney, which I feel is too good to be hidden away.

I would like to speak a few words of greeting, and tell of the Lord's mercy in my times of need (which are many), but I am too weak at present. For the past two weeks I have been able to read or write but very little. I ask the prayers of our brethren and sisters for the least of all.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., July 16, 1916.

MISS BESSIE DURAND—MY PRECIOUS SISTER:—Words will not tell how glad I was to see your familiar writing once more. I could not blame you for dropping such a poor, unworthy correspondent, lame on both feet. I was sick all winter, and still have a sore throat, but this very warm weather makes me much better, so

I have ridden to two meetings with the very kind Stovers, who have an automobile. My eyes fail me, but I want to tell you my brother Mahlon, of Denver, Colo., came to see us in an automobile, accompanied by his wife, son and grandson, named Mahlon, eighteen years old. They went to Morristown, N. J., to attend the reunion of our grandfather, Mahlon Johnson, who had never seen any of the four. A large assembly of cousins met there. I was too feeble to go with them.

I want to speak of one more thing which is on my mind. In the June 15th number of the SIGNS is a long, interesting letter from Mary Ellison, which I have read several times, subject, Mandrakes. Please write me what you think of it. I think I wrote you once about going to our association with my father, in the year 1854, the year I was baptized. I read that Elder Beebe was to attend that association in Johnson County, Ind., and I was very anxious to be there. My father was building a bridge eight miles from home, and he must go with me. I hired a boy to take me in a wagon to Darlington, where my parents were staying, and that night I persuaded father to leave his work where it was. We started next morning, but railroads were very scarce in those early days. We caught rides as we could, making several changes, and reached Indianapolis, where we found cars that took us to Franklin. The notice said the meeting was to be four miles east of Franklin. Father asked every one he met where the association was to be held, but no one knew. We went to a hotel for dinner, and father said, "I think we will return on the next train." I sat at the table near a window, and looking out saw a man with a farm wagon drive up to a house, and another man handed him many loaves of bread, which were put into a box. I said, See, that wagon is taking food for the meeting. Father hastened to him, and he proved to be the right man, and gave us directions about a new railroad being built that we must go on. We soon found that new road and were started in those cars when father stood up and said, "Is any one here going to the Old Baptist Association?" Elder David Bartley came right to us, and as he had often been to that church he knew where to stop, which was in a large cornfield, with corn higher than our heads. After much difficulty we reached brother Nay's, where we, with many others, were made very welcome. Elder Bartley and another Elder preached that morning very comfortingly. We had supper, and a farm wagon was filled with men, who went many miles to a town where Elders Beebe and Dudley were to preach their first sermon. There was room for me, and I was tired. I think six preachers came home with them, and the next day we went to a beautiful woods, which made me think of the groves as God's first temple. The birds were very numerous, and sang cheerily, the mint and pennyroyal sent forth their fragrance, which I compared to Jesus and his faithfulness to his little flock. Sixteen preachers sat on the stand and sang, "Sons we are through God's election," &c. I think they sang that dear old hymn every day for three days of the session, and such wonderful preaching I had never heard before in such quantities. I look back to that time, 1854, and wonder if this poor, old, disconsolate woman, so full of doubts and fears, can be the same as that hopeful girl, so full of wondrous love. That was one of my hopeful years. Dear sister, my heart is full of love to you for bearing with me all these

years. Thank God for such choice blessings.

Sue Wilson, wife of Deacon Owen Wilson, was buried last Thursday. Elder Ollphant preached from the fourth chapter of 1st Thessalonians, commencing at the ninth verse and reading the rest of the chapter. When I was so sick and came near choking two nights I gave those words to Elder Oliphant to use at my funeral. Sue had been to see me often last winter, and I loved her much. She was seventy-seven years old. She stayed at her son's on our street, near us, so I could go and hear my own funeral text used, which was a coincidence.

Your loving sister,

LINA W. BECK.

OTTAWA, Kansas, Sept. 14, 1914.

DEAR SISTER FLORENCE:—More than a month has passed since I received your precious letter. It seems strange that I could wait so long to reply when you are so often in my mind, and your letters are such treasures to me, because you tell me of the things I know, which I hope I have seen with my eyes of the Word of life. I am always comforted and built up in the faith after reading one of your letters. I did not know you were so afflicted in body. How sad your lot in this life, yet how wonderfully blessed in things pertaining to the kingdom. Not every Old School Baptist has been given your deep understanding of the ways of the Lord. We have to be brought very low; we must be entirely helpless to become as little children. "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."—Matt. xviii. 3-6. I have ever been fearful of offending a little one who believes in Jesus. Often I have tried to beg him to keep me from doing anything in any way that would wound their feelings in the least. I think I know just how you feel while you are looking in two directions at the same time, working with your head and your hands, your hungry heart longing after the saints and the preached word. I have felt to be almost in a state of collapse. I was sure I could not go on from day to day year after year in this lonesome way. Once after going through one of these heartrending trials the dear Lord seemed to come very near me in these words: Am I not better to you than all the brethren? I said, O yes, Lord. Then I saw it was the Lord I was seeking among the saints. Then I saw, though we were gathered together, we could not be comforted in him if our minds were filled with worldly thoughts and our time spent in conversing about things of this life. How needful then that when a few are gathered together in his name that he be in the midst. It is no wonder Paul said, I would know nothing among you save Christ and him crucified. I think it is good to talk to one another of our trials and afflictions by the way, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in our brethren that are in the world. I do hope the dear Lord will be merciful to you and strengthen you in your labor of love. It seems a miracle is being performed in your case, or you certainly could not work every day in your condition. I, too, have much work to do, and

am never well, but I am not afflicted like you, though I know not how soon I may be. I am always interested in your personal welfare, and am so sorry when sorrow comes into your life.

I feel this is a poor return for your deep, spiritual letter. I can only write what is given me. I do not believe you would want me to try to do more. Write when you can.

Affectionately your sister, I hope,

ANNA McKINNEY.

ACTS X. 34, 35.

"THEN Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."

The proposition set forth in verse thirty-four is probably one of the most popular on the schedule of the inventions of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; for to separate or quote this verse without its qualification in the next verse is the most abominable deceit of lying deception, the object of which is to attempt to prove that God has no discriminating partiality among the children of men, but that the whole race of mankind is subject to equal favor. This is not so in the course of every day life, for daily we see that,

"Here he exalts neglected worms
To sceptres and a crown;
And there the following page he turns,
And treads the monarch down."

Some have all that heart can wish—honor, wealth and long life, and on the same street you find poverty, misery, distress and death, so it is plainly seen that partiality is shown to the sons of men on earth. Then why so much ado if in the affairs of eternal life he shall have mercy on whom he will have mercy? If we are powerless to thwart his will among the inhabitants of the earth, shall we find fault with his ruling in "the army of heaven"? The criticism is that if God does not treat all alike, if he is a respecter of persons in the blessings of glory, he is a monster and a tyrant, unjust and unfair. But if it is beyond man to regulate the equality of his race in his home town, how can he accomplish it "in the army of heaven"? If he cannot make one hair white or black, how shall he interfere with "the things which are not seen"? God had respect to the offering of Abel and not to Cain. He loved Jacob and hated Esau. He opened the Red Sea for the children of Israel to cross, and closed its waters over their enemies, and "from the days of righteous Abel until now" vessels of honor and dishonor in greater or lesser degree have emerged from the same lump, so that there is no question of distinction and partiality having been shown plainly among the children of men. The vision of the "great sheet" and its contents, and the visit of Peter to the house of Cornelius, taught him to say that God is no respecter of persons, so far as restricting favors to the Jews is concerned. But Peter did preach that God is a respecter of persons when the whole race of mankind is considered, when he said, Acts ii. 39: "The promise is unto you, * * * even as many as the Lord our God shall call." His respect then is surely partial to such as in every nation feareth him and worketh righteousness, fearing and working as the result of being subjects of respect, and as a result of God that worketh in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Yours in christian love,

EVERETT R. KINNEY.

POCA, W. Va., Jan. 1, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am satisfied there is much disobedience among the people of God in this age, as well as in all other ages. Those who are led by the promptings of the flesh always act in disobedience, for the two opposites are contrary to each other, the flesh against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh; so with the mind we serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin. Hence the apostle Paul could say, In my flesh dwelleth no good thing. Realizing the imperfection of his nature he also could say, For to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do. O how forcibly these Scriptures are presented to me in my afflictions, as I mourn over my transgressions because of the infirmity of my flesh; for after the order of ordinary generation I realize my imperfection, that I am but the multiplicity of Adam, and with the apostle can say, Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. Truly I feel to say with the apostle, I find then a law that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? By nature we are rebellious, for our natural mind is carnal, and enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. For to be carnally minded is death (spiritually lifeless), but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Just how far one may be influenced by the carnal mind to stray from the solemn admonitions given in the word of truth and still be a child of God I dare not say. Of a truth it is said of God's children, Having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his; and they are not of them that draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. God's people are the only people who are able to discern their imperfections, and are as willing to confess them as was the chief butler. Pharaoh was in spirit troubled over his dreams, and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof; and then told them his dreams, but there was none who could interpret them unto Pharaoh. Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying, I do remember my faults this day. This message to Pharaoh could have been of no benefit to him one day sooner, for Pharaoh (as the natural man has always done) was trusting in the natural ability of man to fathom the deep mystery of his dreams. Pharaoh had no conception of secret things belonging to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong unto us. So Joseph, being a type of Jesus, revealed to Pharaoh the mystery of his dreams, as the mystery of godliness is revealed to the heirs of promise by Jesus Christ.

Dear editors, please excuse this poor, old, sinful mortal. I just felt to-day that I wanted to confess my faults to you and the rest of the household of faith. I hope from an honest heart I can say, I remember my faults this day, which are many. With the poet I can say:

"In mercy, not in wrath, rebuke
Thy feeble worm, my God;
My spirit dreads thine angry look,
And trembles at thy rod.

Have mercy, Lord, for I am weak,
Regard my heavy groans;
O let thy voice of comfort speak,
And heal my broken bones.

By day my busy, beating head
Is filled with anxious fears;
By night upon my restless bed
I weep a flood of tears.

Thus I sit desolate and mourn,
Mine eyes grow dull with grief;
How long, my Lord, ere thou return,
And bring my soul relief?"

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan. 1, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—As we have just entered this new year, I feel inclined to pen a few of my thoughts and send them to you for consideration, and if you deem it advisable, you may publish them, but do not crowd out other matter that will be far more interesting, as I suppose you have plenty of it on hand. I am well aware that I shall not be able to write anything that will interest the household of faith, unless the God of heaven and earth directs my thoughts; I therefore pray to him that he will do so. I also realize that I am as prone to wander from the right way as the sparks are to fly upward; in fact, I find myself much of the time going into by and forbidden paths, which makes me abhor and be ashamed of myself. In looking back over my past life it appears to be made up of failures and mistakes, and I am entirely dissatisfied with myself, yet am all the time hoping that I may be able to make some improvement in the future. I make resolution after resolution toward that end, yet I find myself breaking them as fast as I make them, and stop and meditate, and ask myself, What shall I do? I find I can do nothing that I can make any headway in that direction, rather slipping backward, growing worse instead of better. If a good and pleasant thought enters my mind it lingers but a short time, for it is driven away by some vile and (shall I say devilish?) thought. I know this sounds like harsh language, but it is true nevertheless, and the pleasure I enjoyed with my good and pleasant thoughts is all destroyed and forgotten. At times I feel very much discouraged, and feel almost like giving up in despair. But that little hope, I said "little," but at times it appears like a big hope, springs up and encourages me; it lifts me up, and bids me go on in the unequal fight, as the good Lord is fighting the battle for me, and I hope will bring me off victoriously in the end. O what a dear and gracious Savior we have. I hope I am not too presumptuous in claiming him as my Savior, although I know that I am not worthy to do so. I know if it depended upon my works of righteousness I never could be accepted of him. I feel like saying with the poet, "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling." I also know that if I am saved it must be by the grace of God, as I see no other way, and if it is his will that I am saved (not will be, but am) he will bestow it upon me; it is a gift from him. But I am constantly doubting, fearing and wondering if I am a subject of his grace, or are all my thoughts delusions and illusions of the mind. I get bewildered in my mind at times, and do not know where I am, and sometimes think it matters but little where I am, as I feel myself of so little account. My friends (if I have any) you may think you know me, but I think you do not, and I am thankful you do not; if you could see me as I see myself, I do not see how you could fellowship me as you do. I do not even know myself; I am a very complex and complicated being. It is possible for me to deceive each and every one of you; not that I have any desire to do so, far from it, but I know it is impossible to deceive my God and Savior; he knows my every thought; in fact, he controls

them, and my every action; I can do nothing without him, he directs my footsteps and leads me day by day in the way he will have me to go. He is a good leader, I can find no other, and am not looking for another, although at times the road looks very gloomy and dark, but it always turns out to be the right way, any other way would have been entirely wrong. I feel to thank him that he has led me safely thus far, but I know I do not praise him as I should, that is one of my many shortcomings.

But I must close, not that the subject is exhausted, as I can see no end to it, it is inexhaustible. Please spread the mantle of charity over all my imperfections.

Your very unworthy servant,

C. S. FETTER.

MONROE, Ga., Jan. 13, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As life is made up of appointments and disappointments, both being good and bringing to pass just such things as God purposed long before our day and generation, today is my appointment at Bethlehem Church, fifty miles away, but the cold, dark clouds, with frozen roads, have shut me in, and my mind goes out and takes in you and those whom I have met up north, hence I will try to write. I often think of the cares and responsibilities that are upon you as ministers of the gospel; difficulties to be overcome, often not knowing what to do, how to do, nor when to do. At times we may feel we have done the right thing, but at a wrong time, perhaps. Love, duty and obedience are very closely connected in our travels, as when love prompts us to take the care of a church and duty comes before us to do it, and we obey by trying to solve the situation. Hence, obedience to the law of love, to the law of duty and to the law of obedience. Satan goes with me often on the way. He tells me why things are not better with me, that it is because I do not carry better prepared food to the saints, and I often agree with him. I am told that Satan rode with the minister of long time ago, when he went horseback all day to get to his appointment, and that the tempter even went into the pulpit with him. Later, he went with him in the top buggy snugly and with less time to tempt him, but none the less effectively. To-day I find this same Satan in the automobile with me putting in his time well with all the new things of the day, methods of progress, &c. I feel to hope sometimes that this Satan is disappointed, the Lord leading me into the fertile field of the gospel and plucking for me the fruit that is sweet to our taste, as perhaps the figs, pomegranates and grapes were to the children of Israel on their way to the promised land. Then I forget all the blow-outs and punctures on the way, rejoicing in the law of love, duty and obedience, notwithstanding all my imperfections. As I grow older, I think of those in the past who traveled in this way. Brother Horace, we love to think of your visit among us last summer as you stood in the pulpit where Elders Joseph L. Purington and William L. Beebe and others stood over fifty years ago, declaring the same glad tidings of salvation, and it was received in the same way, with joy and love, stirring up the pure minds by way of remembrance, reminding us of the woman who touched the hem of Jesus' garment and was healed, and that Jesus is touched even now with the feeling of our infirmities. We shall be glad for an opportunity to have you with us again. I think now that I shall be at the Warwick Association next June,

hoping to meet again the brethren and sisters and to renew the friendship and fellowship that I hope exist between us. There seems to be a tie of love in my heart for those who make the SIGNS what it is to-day, especially those whom I know. I well remember your pleasant home, Elder Ker, at the association in 1910, filled with light and cheer of love for all the friends who were there. How sad that home has been since then by death and sorrow. You have had the sympathy of all the readers of the SIGNS, you have comforted others with the comfort wherewith you have been comforted of God. David said when he prospered that he forgot God, but when he was afflicted he meditated in the law of the Lord both day and night. When the light of grace shines in our hearts, all self-righteousness vanishes. Then we can but say, O wretched man that I am! We then have no confidence in the flesh, a warfare continually going on in our breast. When we would do good, evil is present. Hence, the admonition to take heed to ourselves and to the doctrine, and to continue in them, will occupy all of our time; no place to stop, no abiding city until this warfare is over. Then it will be good if it can be said of us that we have fought a good fight and kept the faith, as we feel to say of some who have already finished their course.

Yours in hope of life,

JAMES M. ADAMS.

CHICAGO, Ill., Jan. 2, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Kindly find herewith check covering the subscription to the SIGNS for myself, and also for my sister, Mrs. Daniel Shields, as per blank. I am highly pleased with the SIGNS, having read it for many years, and according to my belief and experience I think it sounds the same sweet story of Jesus and his love to unworthy sinners. If I did not feel myself to be the chief of sinners I presume I could not get much comfort from the SIGNS, but after reading the conflicts and trials of the writers from almost every part of this country, it is about the only consolation that I am afforded, being situated so far from our church. I enjoyed very much Elder Ker's New Year's Greeting. I wish every one could read it, whatever the belief may be. Hope he will write oftener for the paper.

Yours in hope,

M. C. REEVES.

PARRY SOUND, Ont., Dec. 6, 1916.

DEAR SIRS:—Inclosed please find express order for four dollars, being the amount of my own subscription, expiring December 15th, and two dollars for the purpose of sending the SIGNS to some one who cannot afford to subscribe. I may say that I eagerly watch for the coming of the SIGNS, because, as far as I know, I am hundreds of miles from any place where the gospel is preached, consequently I have not heard a gospel sermon for years, and as I cannot attend the meetings of the "free will" denominations which abound here, as well as in almost every other place, I fancy I am looked upon as a heathen; however, I can bear their reproach.

Faithfully yours,

J. H. KNIFTON.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., the second Sunday in February, (11th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1917.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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1 CORINTHIANS XV. 29.

"ELSE what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?"

In this chapter the apostle is treating upon the resurrection of the dead; Christ as the firstfruits, and afterward them that are his at his coming. Some of the church at Corinth did not believe in the resurrection of the dead at all; such he classed as not having the knowledge of God, and spoke some things to their shame. The resurrection of Christ from the dead was his special argument in this chapter of his letter to the Corinthians, to establish the doctrine of God, who had declared by the prophets that he should die and be raised again from the dead. Not only did the resurrection of Christ from the dead establish the doctrine Paul preached, but the hope and faith of all the churches of that age, as well as in this age of the world. If Christ be not risen, our faith, hope and preaching are vain and we are yet in our sins. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and the saints are begotten again unto a lively hope, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for all who are kept by the power of God unto salvation. Christ came into the world to save sinners, which work could be wrought only through his death and resurrection from the dead. Therefore the apostle declared first of all that which he first also received, how that Christ died according to the Scriptures, and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he was seen alive by all the apostles, together with above five hundred brethren at once; last of all by himself, as one born out of due time. We understand that all except Paul, mentioned as having seen Jesus after his resurrection, saw him in bodily form, talked and some of them ate with him. Paul saw him in vision, and by faith the resurrected Christ, the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead. He affirms that there could be no doubt of his resurrection when so many had seen him, and had also seen him ascend upward until the cloud received him out of their sight. After most positively having declared the resurrection of Christ, the firstfruits of them that slept, he affirms the resurrection of the body, the church, as the culmination of the purpose, plan and salvation of God through Christ, which hope we all have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. If there be no resurrection of the dead there is no salvation to sinners, but the resurrection is sure, since Christ arose from the dead. He had power over death, and could not be holden of it. In obedience to the commandment of the Father he laid down his life and took it again. This is why the saints have hope in him, not only in this life, but in that beyond. His reign will endure until all enemies are destroyed, the last enemy being death. Here again the apostle emphasizes the truth that death shall not reign, shall not separate us from God. If this be not so, what shall they

do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead? In baptism the children of God profess faith in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. He lived, died and was raised from the dead, hence for, or because of, the dead the saints put on Christ in this way. Alive once without the law, sin revives and they die to sin, no longer live therein. This death makes burial necessary, then follows the resurrection unto newness of life. This is what baptism means: death, burial and resurrection. But if Christ be not raised, what does it mean? If he did not live and die, and was raised by the glory of the Father, baptism has no meaning whatever, and the saints are of all men most miserable. But, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified [dead] with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead [to sin] is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him." If the dead rise not at all, the foregoing Scripture is without meaning, and we are yet in our sins, and why are we baptized for the dead? There is no advantage to any man in being a believer in Christ if the dead rise not; let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die, and that would be the end of our hope and faith in Jesus. Be not deceived, beloved brethren, let us awake to righteousness and sin not. This hope through grace is a living hope, this faith is the fruit of the Spirit, and this love is the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost. We understand by the expression, "awake to righteousness and sin not," that the apostle meant for those who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead to accept and believe the testimony of the resurrection of Jesus. In the absence of that vital principle all else was vain. Evil communications had corrupted them. The preaching of Hymenæus and Philetus had overthrown the faith of some, those of Corinth were perhaps included. It is good to be fully established in the doctrine of God, to believe with the heart all the Scriptures declare, to lay hold of the new covenant promises, rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God. We are all waiting, to wit, the redemption of our body, and while waiting we are saved by hope; saved from despair, saved from error, the commandments of men and the doctrine of devils; saved from the craftiness of false teachers, who lie in wait to deceive. Since death has lost its sting (sin), it is powerless to claim one for whom Jesus died and rose again. The strength of sin being the law, and the law having been completely fulfilled by the blessed Son of God, it has no further dominion over the saints, they are now under grace, and sin shall have no dominion over them. Through this work the redeemed are made alive from the dead, to die no more in the sense of condemnation, separated from God by wicked works. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus; the law of the Spirit of life in him hath made all his people free from the law of sin, and hence free from death or condemnation. Yes, the sanctified, the preserved in Jesus Christ are as pure

and sinless in the sight of God as though Adam had never transgressed the law given him. Then let us all be steadfast, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

Written by request. K.

REVELATION XXII. 14.

"BLESSED are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

This is not offering a reward to any that will do the commandments. There is, in this Scripture, no condition to be fulfilled by the human creature in his own creature strength. The Scripture states an everlasting truth, that those doing the commandments of Jesus are blessed already. The meaning is that in order to do the commandments of Jesus one must be in a blessed condition. Therefore obedience to his commandments is an evidence of blessedness. Not that any do the commandments in order to obtain blessing, but have the blessing in being able to do the commandments. Those who do the commandments of Jesus show in their doing them their blessed state, which blessed state is that they are branches of the true Vine, that they abide in Jesus and he abides in them. For how, otherwise, could they be fruitful in the works of the Spirit? "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." Doing the commandments, therefore, is the visible sign of life union with Jesus Christ; it is the evidence that one is begotten of God, is made the partaker of his Spirit and of the divine nature, and is alive from death in sin to live unto God and his righteousness. The people of God were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, so that their unity with him is eternal. The evidence of this life unity with Christ is that they do his commandments. Obedience is the fruit of oneness with and in the Head of the church. No wonder, then, the Scripture says that those doing his commandments are blessed. Now, what is meant by "his commandments"? Here, many will think the commandments of Moses are meant. But the commandments of Moses are not the commandments of Jesus. The Jews tried to obey Moses, but failed, and their experience proved conclusively that no flesh can be justified in the sight of God by the deeds of the law. The commandments of Jesus involve more, much more, than the commandments of Moses. One may not lie, may not kill, may not covet, may not commit adultery, and still not keep the commandments of Jesus. Jesus said to his disciples: "A new commandment give I unto you: that ye love one another." This rule of love is the commandment of Jesus, and blessed are those who do it, for doing it they are in union with the Lamb. Otherwise, they could not love one another. Those who love one another (the brethren) are already passed from death unto life. Is not that a blessing? The very love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost is life from the dead. Paul declares the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. That is, those walking after the Spirit have the righteousness of the law fulfilled in (not by) them. The law is never fulfilled by us, but its righteousness is fulfilled in the people of God, and the evidence that it is, is that they walk after the Spirit. Now, this fulfilling of the righteousness of the law in the people of God is by the shedding abroad of the love of God in their hearts. "Therefore, love

is the fulfilling of the law." For the law commands love to the neighbor—an impossibility from the standpoint of the capabilities of human nature. But once the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, there worketh no ill to the neighbor. Having this love which endears the neighbor to us as ourselves, we cannot covet his goods, or kill him, or bear false witness against him. There was no righteousness in the law of Moses any more than a typical righteousness, which prefigured the righteousness of Jesus, and now this righteousness is fulfilled in those walking after the Spirit, because they have the love of God in them, and this love is the fulfilling of the law. Also, one loving the family of God will desire to obey the gospel and follow their Lord and Savior through baptism, to confess their faith and hope in his resurrection from the dead. They will desire to frequent the assemblies of the saints, and to present their bodies before the Lord. All this is keeping the commandments of Jesus. Doing this, they have right to the tree of life. They do not have this right by doing the commandments, nor does the doing the commandments give them the right to the tree of life, but the doing the commandments is the evidence of their right to the tree of life. Just as the obedience to the commandments of Jesus is proof of blessing because it betokens unity with Jesus in life and Spirit, so the same obedience is proof of one's right to the tree of life. This right to the tree of life is not because of obedience, but because of election in Christ before the foundation of the world, and the obedience is the badge of election, or sign of one's inalienable right to the tree of life. The tree of life was in the city that John saw, which, by the way, was not a vision of the heaven of future glory, but a revelation of the church of God here in the world. This tree of life is Jesus Christ, and he is in the midst of the church, "the paradise of God." Christ is God's heir, and all the elect are heirs and joint-heirs of God with him. Thus they have right to all the things of Jesus; what is his is theirs according to the eternal covenant of redemption made by the Father in him before all worlds were. They thus have right to the "tree of life," and the love of God working obedience in them does not give them this right, but proves their right which has been theirs from eternity.

"And may enter in through the gates into the city." This city, which John saw, which is the church not afar off, but present here in the world, had twelve gates: three on the east, three on the west, three on the north, three on the south. Each several gate was a pearl. So, whether one entered from the north, from the south, from the east or from the west, entrance was had into the city through the one way: the way of the pearl. Jesus is the pearl of great price, and Jesus is the way, the only way of salvation for all his people, no matter whether they come from the north, south, east or west. Whether they come from Jewry or from the Gentiles, whether from Greece or from Rome or from the barbarians, all come in through the finished redemption work of Jesus, the gate of pearl. No man comes unto the Father but by him, and he is the only way into the city of God. Those who come into the visible organization of the church are commended unto the love and fellowship of the saints by the evidence of Jesus in them. It is because the brethren see Jesus in the obedient one, that they embrace him in their fellowship and welcome him to all the privileges of God's house. Such an one comes through the Pearl, never comes through anything that he has done to commend himself to the consideration of the church.

Written at the request of Elder G. E. Mayfield, of Elgin, Ore. L.

ROMANS VI. 17.

"BUT God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."

Paul here thanks God that the Roman brethren had been formerly the servants of sin, and that they had been brought to obey the doctrine delivered them. This was a miracle of grace, such a miracle as God is yet to-day working in sinners who are the subjects of his divine grace. Not a link from all the chain of God's eternal purpose can be omitted. Sin has its place in God's plan of redemption just as much as righteousness. Except there had been sinners to save, there would have needed to be no Savior to save them. Without the full development of the iniquity in the first Adam there could not be the full revelation of the righteousness of the second Adam, Christ Jesus. If the birth of Jesus, his sufferings, death and resurrection, were all predestinated (and who dare deny it?) then all the sin and ruin of mankind consequent upon the fall of Adam must also have been predestinated. Otherwise, how could the redemption work of Jesus be certain, unless it were certain also that there would be sinners to save? And who could establish this certainty but God himself? Occasionally we hear the foolish query: Why could not have God prevented the sin of Adam and Eve and preserved them innocent in the garden? That he could have done so, there is no doubt; that it was not his will to do so, is evident from the course of events. Had he preserved our first parents in their innocency, God would still have been just as wonderful as he is now, but who would have known it but himself? That men should see his glory and praise him, was God's purpose in plunging us all into ruin, that he might make bare his mighty arm in extricating us therefrom. Therefore Paul thanked God that his brethren had once been the servants of sin, that they might contrast their former state with their present obedient one, and thus be qualified to render God the honor and glory due him. L.

ROMANS V. 20.

"MOREOVER, the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

Paul said he never would have known sin except by the law. That is, the law did not make him a sinner, but showed him that he was a sinner. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." The law was added because of the transgression. Paul here means the Mosaic law, which was not added to Israel until long after the transgression of Adam. They were all sinners by reason of Adam's transgression, but their sin was not revealed to them until Moses was given the law to declare unto them. This law did not make any change in their condition, it simply revealed their great distance from the righteousness of God. Thus the law entered, that the offence (sin) might abound. Paul said he had not known covetousness except the law said, Thou shalt not covet. When the commandment came, sin revived and he died. This is the experience of all God's people. When the law is made spiritual unto them by the Spirit of God, they then see what sinners they are, the offence then abounds. Soon they find, however, that God for Christ's sake has forgiven them all their sins, so that grace abounds where sin abounded, and abounds much more, in that it subdues the sins and gives perfect rest in the finished salvation of Jesus.

The above two brief articles are at the request of brother J. B. Adams, of Farmington, Ky. L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Lucetta B. Bartlett, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. G. P. Hampton, of Sparta, White Co., Tenn., was born May 7th, 1845, and died Jan. 12th, 1917, making her stay on earth 71 years, 8 months and 5 days. She was married to E. J. Bartlett, March 10th, 1868. There were sixteen children born to that union, of whom twelve boys and two girls lived to be grown. She leaves ten married sons and one married daughter, Mrs. T. C. Putman, of Potosi, Texas, thirty-eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Mrs. Bartlett had been in feeble health for about two years, so when she took to her bed on Jan. 2nd those about her were much concerned, and at once gave her close attention and loving care. Her husband was also ill at this time in another room, and could not reach her bedside without assistance, but her sons, several of whom lived near, were in constant attendance upon both parents. When death came all her living children, eleven sons and one daughter, were within call. Mrs. Bartlett joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Pleasant Valley, Texas, about twenty-four years ago, and retained membership with that body until her death. For the last ten years she had not been able to attend preaching, on account of the distance, but she remained loyal to the faith to the last. She loved the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and had long been a subscriber to that paper, even before it was published in its present form. The writer had been more or less closely associated with the deceased for some time past, and had learned to love and respect her as one who ever wished to have a conscience void of offence toward God and man. She possessed a strong character, and though weak in body she wielded a great influence for good in her family and in the community in which she lived. Our sympathy goes out to her aged husband, her children, grandchildren and friends.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder I. L. Hicks, of Gaines County, Texas. The remains were then borne to the Lamesa Cemetery, where she was laid to rest by the side of a son and daughter who preceded her.

LOU HANCOCK.

Maggie Manning passed away Jan. 12th, 1917, aged 63 years. She professed a hope in Christ and united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Bethany, Madison Co., Ala., about seventeen years ago, and was a faithful and devoted member until her death. Sister Manning leaves a dear companion, four children and many friends and relatives to mourn their loss, which we feel assured is her eternal gain. I had been acquainted with the dear sister fifteen years, and found her a devoted christian, a kind and loving wife and good mother. The dear sister who has passed away lies in the tomb to await the second coming of our Lord and Master. I will say to the dear husband and loving children, You can never meet your loved one or hear her sweet voice in this life, but may it be God's holy will that you may meet where you will never have to part again, where there is no sickness, sorrow, pain or death, all of these having been conquered by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who conquered death, hell and the grave for his people, and they will be made the happy recipients of all that he has in store for them.

The writer tried to speak to the comfort of the bereaved ones at our sister's funeral.

M. J. TAWRY.

Hannah A. Ellenbury was born in Columbus, Ohio, in 1830, and died Dec. 7th, 1916, after an illness of three weeks of pneumonia. She was married to Henry Ellenbury June 8th, 1852. In 1862 they crossed the plains with an ox team, stopping in Nevada until 1870, when they moved to Oregon. She was the mother of eight children, five of whom are living, together with twenty-one grandchildren and fourteen great-grandchildren. Her husband died nearly twenty years ago. On the third Sunday in June, 1898, she, with my son Charles and wife, was baptized in the fellowship of the Coast Fork Church, where she remained a faithful member until her death. She was gentle and unassuming, but firm in the faith of salvation by grace. She was cheerful to the last, and endured her suffering with patience, but was ready and willing to depart. We miss her dear face from our meetings, where she always filled her place unless providentially hindered. She had lived a long and useful life, and we know she is at rest. She was buried in Richey Cemetery, near Drain, by the side of her husband, to await the resurrection.

ALSO,

Delilah Baker died at her home in Roseburg, Oregon, Dec. 15th, 1916, after an illness of nearly a year of heart trouble, aged 62 years. She was the daughter of Elder Caan. She leaves her invalid husband and seven children to mourn their loss. Sister Baker wrote a short sketch of her life, which was published in the SIGNS last summer. She was a noble woman in every sense of the word, well established in the truth as it is in Jesus, and it was a great pleasure to hear her talk of the things of the kingdom. She made all arrangements for her departure as if preparing for a journey, and was calm and resigned. She was laid to rest in the Camas Valley Cemetery, beside her parents. I hope her family will be made to say, Thy will, O God, be done. They have the deepest sympathy of us all. She was a member in good standing of the Oak Creek Church, and will be greatly missed, but I hope the Lord will reconcile us to all his dealings with us. What a comfort it is to know our loved ones leave evidence of a good hope beyond this vale of tears. May our God comfort all who mourn.

ALSO,

A. A. Engels was born in Arkansas, and died at the home of his son, Peel, Oregon, aged 86 years. He came to Oregon in 1852, and was an active, energetic man, well liked by all who knew him. He was twice married, and both wives preceded him to the great beyond. He leaves a son and a daughter, sister Mary Birge. He never united with the church, but believed in the doctrine held by the Old School Baptists, and his walk was upright and honest, and his conversation godly, and gave evidence that he was a child of the heavenly King. May the children be able to say, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be his holy name.

The funeral was conducted by C. F. Morningstar, at Roseburg, after which he was laid to rest in the beautiful cemetery at Edeeden.

May God reconcile his children to his will, is my prayer. S. MORNINGSTAR.

Mrs. James I. Pierce was born in Marshall County, Ala., March 26th, 1844, and died Nov. 8th, 1916. She was married to James I. Pierce May 13th, 1860. To that union were born two daughters, Amy and Julia Bell, both living. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church on Saturday before the third Sunday in November, 1881, and with her husband was baptized by Elder T. J. Moore, joining the Lebanon Church, in Marshall Co., Ala., where she lived a consistent christian life, true to her faith. Her home was a home for her brethren and sisters. She was always ready to welcome all, and to know her was to love her. She was zealous for the cause, and filled her place in the meetings when possible, and will be greatly missed by all. She leaves her dear old companion, two daughters, five grandchildren, eleven great-grandchildren and many relatives and friends, with the church, to mourn their loss, but they know she is asleep in Jesus, and with all the redeemed will praise him forever. May the bereaved ones receive comfort and blessings.

The writer spoke to a large company of relatives and friends at the funeral.

Written by request. L. F. EASLEY.

APPOINTMENTS.

PLEASE publish the following appointments:

Arena, N. Y., Sunday, Feb. 11th, 11 a. m., Dickson Hall; Halcottville, N. Y., Sunday, Feb. 18th, all day meeting commencing at 10:45 a. m.

GEORGE RUSTON.

BY request of brethren I have an appointment at the home of Casper G. Fetter, Hamilton Ave., Trenton, N. J., Sunday, Feb. 18th, 11 a. m.; also at Stockton, N. J., 3:15 p. m. same day. D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

S. L. Moore, Pa., $1.00; Catherine E. Mills, Mont., $3.00; G. H. Tatom, Okla., $1.00; J. C. Chester, Ky., $2.50.

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JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 85. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1917. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TIAWAH, Okla., Jan. 10, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter from sister Mary Ellison, and if you think it will make good reading for the saints you may publish it in the SIGNS. I have her consent, though she feels like hiding her name from the dear people of God. I feel that it is right that her name should appear in connection with the letter if published.

All yours in hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

OSKALOOSA, Kansas, Dec. 3, 1916.

ELDER J. F. BEEMAN AND WIFE:—I will again attempt to write to you, and if the Lord will bestow his help and guidance, try to answer your letter. I think I never realized more that without him I can do nothing than I do at this moment. I have long wished to tell you how pleased we were with your letter, but have been so blocked and hindered with the cumbersome load of clay that I have to battle with all the time that I do not feel I ought to take the time of one so busily engaged as you are in your various occupations. It seems that I simply cannot write on any subject as it deserves. I think sometimes that surely the time to write is when the mind is so filled, as I sometimes hope, with good things, but am so pressed with the necessary duties of life that I put it off until a more convenient season; perhaps it is then I am found an empty blank, and I have to learn again that when He shuts none can open, and the things I had thought to enjoy penning are completely gone, or I am in such a lifeless state that I feel no pleasure in them. The different paragraphs in what is called the Lord's prayer have been filled with so much fatness and marrow, and also some of the commandments, I have much desired to record some of the reflections I have been given, and search and see if they are in accord with other portions of Scripture; but while I may think they are sweet and all right, perhaps no one else would see any beauty or right in them, and it is a good thing I do not get to write and inflict them upon others. But I know that a letter that is all apologies is not very interesting, and how much less so it would be if I could really tell how utterly unworthy I feel of the least of God's blessings. If I could praise him as I ought in my daily walk and conversation, or even in my writing when

the confusion of the day is over and the quiet evening has come, what a very great blessing it would be. My mind is led to the words: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." While the people of God long to send to one another tokens of brotherly love, yet how hard it is at times to lay aside the awful weight of unworthiness and the constant feeling of unfitness to handle sacred things, and try to share with others the good things which we hope the dear Lord has shown to us of the things of his. O my leanness, my leanness. When it comes to trying to fulfill my desire to communicate with others, and of sending my imperfect thoughts to them to read, I always fear it will be an infliction of weariness to the dear, elect, precious, rather than of pleasure to them. But if I could write in harmony with their belief of the truth according to the Scripture, it will come from the source of all good, and will not be weariness, but a pleasure, even though the hand that penned it is altogether sinful. "The elder shall serve the younger." The hand of the old, strong man of the flesh must be bound and subjected by the new, stronger man, and made to do his bidding, though so rebellious as to often get the mastery. And when we feel the strength of that old, strong man of the flesh lusting against the Spirit, so that we cannot do the things we would love to do, how can we ever present it holy and acceptable unto God? That is the question which arises in our minds. I have, very naturally, thought that this living sacrifice in presenting our bodies, consisted in attending our church meetings and trying to faithfully perform all our religious duties, even when very difficult for us to do so. I still think this to a certain extent, but how to present them holy and acceptable unto God is indeed a matter for deep and serious reflection. When it comes to rightly discerning the word of truth, does not every one feel that it is a time of need of the help of the Lord? and to his help we must come, and if he withholds it all our best efforts must fail. I believe this holiness of our bodies is the same as sanctification, when sanctification means separation or separateness from the world, a setting apart for the Master's use. We know that it does not mean sinlessness in the flesh, for then Paul would be beseeching us to do that which no man can ever pretend to attain to without making God a liar. But let God be true, and every man a liar. We know that there is none good, as God is good, no, not one. O what wretchedness when in the depths of our hearts we realize that in the flesh there dwells no good thing. And these poor, vile bodies, wherein dwell no goodness, no righteousness, no worth or merit, how can we present them holy and acceptable to a holy and righteous God, who cannot look upon sin? It surely can be done, or it would be a vain admonition to us to do it. If this holiness then does not mean sinlessness, as Christ was sinless, and it does mean sanctification, or separateness from the world, it means to keep ourselves unspotted from the world; to come out from among them and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing. This calls for a living, continual sacrifice of our bodies in denying self, denying worldly lusts. We must not be found in any of the institutions of men, walking with them in the lusts of the flesh, in the ballroom, barroom or other vile places, but being sanctified by God the Father and set apart from the world for the Master's use, we

must strive ever not only to walk with him in white, unspotted from the world, but to be of good report of them that are without. The evil that is said against us must be said falsely. We must not suffer as really evil doers or as busybodies in other men's matters, but striving always to maintain an orderly walk and godly conversation, in lowliness and meekness trying to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called. In this way we are holy, sanctified, separate from sinners, unspotted from the world; and even more is that separateness manifest when we refuse to mingle with them religiously. Then indeed is the two-edged sword of doctrine and order brought into requisition, and we are completely cut off and separated from them. This living sacrifice requires that we constantly watch to strictly maintain this separation and sanctification, or holiness. It does make a living, or continual sacrifice, to constantly deny our old Adamic bodies to indulge in worldly lusts. We sometimes, (naturally, not spiritually) crave Reuben's mandrakes, knowing that by partaking with them we could have the popularity and companionship that our human nature craves, but we must not so indulge our lusts. We must keep under our body and bring it into subjection, and keep the chosen vessel of mercy clean, the temple of God fit for the Master's use. This is your reasonable service. Then by the mercies of God, not by our own strength we do this, but by the mercies of God we can present our bodies before him and among our brethren holy and acceptable, having a clear conscience, knowing that we are holy, or unspotted from the world, uncontaminated, by having not run greedily and wilfully after the wickedness of the world. If we do sin wilfully after having received these admonitions and knowledge of what is required of us, then we are not holy, we are not guiltless, we do not feel a clear conscience, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, for God is not mocked. O, dear people of the living God, it is written that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. It is not enough that we rest and rejoice in the hope that he has so mercifully given us, but every word he has spoken by the mouth of his prophets and apostles, every word that proceedeth out of his mouth, should be carefully obeyed. Some of his words are: Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, and O, is it not a wilful sin when we allow our worldly interests to keep us away? When we know the reasonable service that is required of us, to allow little trifles to keep us away? O what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul? the precious life and standing in the church. Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? "Vainly we offer each ample oblation, vainly with gold would his favor secure," for there is no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment that shall devour the adversaries which so beset us and keep us from our love and duty. We are not told to present our bodies as often as we can without sacrificing our worldly interests too much, but O, how little and reasonable is the sacrifice and service required of us, in comparison to the great things that have been done for us. With all our best efforts we do sorrowfully realize that we come far short of the glory of God, or of glorifying him in our bodies, which are his. So we know that the keeping of our bodies, the temple of God, holy, is not the eradication of the work-

ings of sin in our members, (O wretched that we are) but in the constant watchfulness to keep ourselves separate from sinners, unspotted from the worldly lusts and inventions of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, in striving to maintain an orderly walk and godly conversation, working out the salvation that is so fully and freely bestowed on us; for how shall we escape that fearful looking for of judgment if we neglect so great salvation and turn aside and walk again in the weak and beggarly elements of the world? All the days of our carelessness and our backsliding from him his mercy is extended to us, and we hear him say, Return unto me, O ye backsliding children, for I am married unto you. "O for such love let rocks and hills their lasting silence break." How can we withhold or neglect the reasonable service that is required of us, in presenting our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto him? Some are so situated that, much as they long to mingle with the Lord's people and hear the truth proclaimed, it is impossible to do so. Such ones can scarcely comprehend how others who are favored with such a precious, God-given privilege, could ever neglect so great salvation. But whether we are able to get to our meetings or not, we must maintain that constant living sacrifice, denying worldly lusts and going not in the way of sinners. "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." But when by the mercy of God we are enabled to keep under our bodies, and bring them into subjection, and unspotted from the world, then by the sure mercies of David we can present them holy, acceptable unto him, and can say,

"Let worldly minds the world pursue,
It has no charms for me;
Once I admired its trifles, too,
But grace hath set me free."

The more we watch and strive to keep the temple holy, the more we realize that the holiness of our bodies is not spiritual holiness, as God is holy and sinless. And now, holy, separate or sanctified brethren, let us who who are of the day strive to live soberly and righteously in this present world, and by the mercy of God keep under our bodies, and by denying the lusts of the flesh keep the chosen vessels of mercy fit for the Master's service, so that we can present them at any and all times holy and acceptable unto him, for this is our reasonable service. If we do not maintain this constant living sacrifice we cannot present ourselves guiltless before him. And in view of the sacrifice of that Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, who has done more for us than we can ever in this life hope to be worthy of, it is not an unreasonable service for us to devote our lives to striving after holiness. But O how far short of such service do we come. We turn our eyes within and cry, O wretched man that I am! I know, O Lord, that the way of man is not in himself. I cannot do the things that I would, and more deplorable still, the evil which I would not, that I do. Wretched, wretched indeed, and undone, if left to our own strength, but O what a relief to know that we are not expected to act in our own strength, but by the mercy of God we can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth us. Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. O what a precious gift. After our utmost endeavors we are brought to realize that if it depended on our own efforts we never could win the victory, but he has won it, and he gives it to us. We can but try, knowing that it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. We dare not relinquish

our vigilance or watchfulness, though not one of our natural instincts would ever prompt us to this living sacrifice, but by the mercy of God may we be enabled in the end to say, I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, and may we hope to hear the welcome plaudit, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

Dear brother and sister, I do not know whether I have written truly according to the testimony of the Scripture or not. If I have, you will receive it and read it with pleasure; if not, taking none but the Man of God for your counsel, you will cast it aside as of the earth earthy—of the carnal mind, which is enmity against God. Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and unto God the things that are God's. It was my wish to answer your letter. Maybe I can some other time, but it seemed that I could not now. My mind was led this way, and I feel that I would love to follow it up with some thoughts on the words, "Honor thy father and thy mother." Maybe I will try later on, if you can find any fellowship of truth in what I have here written. I hope you are in better health than when I last heard from you. We are none of us at our best.

Our little association passed off very pleasantly, and I will send you a copy of the Minutes. I know I ought not ask any of your time, but, though little and unworthy, I do long for the communion of saints, and would like to hear from you again. I realize fully that this world through which we are passing is truly called a low ground of sorrow, but,

"Mixtures of joy and sorrow I daily do pass through;
Sometimes I'm in the valley, and sinking down with woe;
Sometimes I am exalted, on eagles' wings I fly,
Rising above the sorrow, I seem to reach the sky."

I must remain, as ever, unworthy to be called a sister in Christ, but still he is all my hope and all my salvation.

MARY ELLISON.

"THERE IS DEATH IN THE POT."

(2 Kings iv. 40.)

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As I have a desire to send to the readers of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES a new year's greeting, I have decided in my mind to offer a few thoughts on the above text and send to you for the consideration of the brethren and friends, its many readers, provided you think it proper to publish them. I do not remember of ever seeing or hearing the view of any one on this peculiar text, although I have often heard it referred to, and while I feel sure there is a deeper and more exalted view of this subject than I am prepared to conceive and grasp, my aim shall be to only mention a wonderful phase in it, which I think is evidence of the line of thought which has occupied my mind much of late years, and which I desire to express in this article, which is, that there is much of the preaching of our people of late, and has been for several years, that is the truth in the letter, and yet is death to a large per cent. of the Lord's people who are not capacitated to understand and feed upon it in the manner it is presented, and the spirit that actuates us. All the flock of God are not strong, neither are they all weak, but all must be looked after and taken care of. The Lord by the prophet Ezekiel reproved the bad shepherds of Israel, for they had thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with their horns, till they scattered them abroad. (Ezekiel xxxiv. 21.) These poor, weak, lean cattle, or sheep, were God's chosen, loved and redeemed children, as were those strong and robust ones who pushed and horned them off until they were scattered in every mountain and every hill, (institutions) in a dark and cloudy day. When Jesus strictly called the apostle Peter's attention to the

love and regard he had for him (for Jesus) he said to Peter, Feed my lambs. It seems to me from this that the lambs are the first to be looked after, although we are to take heed to all the flock which Jesus has purchased with his own blood, especially the weak, who cannot feed upon strong meat, unmasticated food, or in other words, preaching with grace but not seasoned with salt. Job says, "Can that which is unsavory be eaten without salt?"—Job vi. 6.

I will digress a little here and say that the Scriptures are to God's people only, and the discrimination that is so clearly demonstrated is not between God's chosen and redeemed people, the election of grace, and the nonelect, but between those of God's people who live after the flesh and die to the enjoyment, interest and privilege of the blessings of the gospel of the kingdom of God here in their time state, and those of God's children who are enabled by divine grace to mortify the deeds of the body and live in the light, life and liberty of the blessed kingdom of God, which is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost to those who are walking in the strait and narrow way unto the life which they live by the faith of the Son of God.

But to return to the line of thought under consideration. There are but two systems of religion, one of grace, the other of works; and strictly viewed there are but two things preached, or but two things to preach, which are Adam and Christ, and one is death, (Adam) the other is life (Christ), therefore when we preach Adam we preach death, and when we are blessed to preach Christ we preach life, light, rejoicing and strength, for Christ is the strength of Israel. The gospel is the power of God, and power is ability. Hence, all preach either the power of God (Christ) or the power of the creature (Adam). So there is death in the pot now as well as in the prophet Elisha's time, for this peculiar type is like all other types of the ages past, therefore has its antitype, or fulfillment, in this our day and time. There are but two vines to gather fruit from: one is the true vine, Christ, (John xv. 1,) and the other the vine of Sodom, Adam, or our Adamic nature, whose grapes, or fruits, are the grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter. (Deut. xxxii. 32.) This gives us the idea clearly that this one who went out into the field to gather herbs, gathered them from the vine of Sodom, and the bitter and poisonous fruit caused death in the pot of pottage, so that the sons of the prophets could not eat of it, but when the man of God cast meal into the pot there was no harm in it; therefore, they ate thereof and lived together in peace and enjoyment. Meal is only a modified form of grain, so we do not have to preach false doctrine in order to feed and take care of the weak and tender lambs of the flock of God, but preach Jesus in meekness, tenderness and love, leading them softly into the wonderful things of God, who is rich in mercy. All gospel preaching is leading softly, and is plainly exemplified in the case of Jacob leading the flock on softly, for he said, "The children are tender, and the flocks and herds with young are with me; and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die." A miserable death indeed, the death of all deaths to God's people. The inference is plain that if Jacob had yielded to the persuasions of

Esau the flock would have been destroyed. That is the great trouble with us now, we have yielded ourselves servants so much to the suggestions of the flesh, which Esau represents, and let some of his men drive the flock until they are scattered in every mountain and in every hill in a dark and cloudy day and state of mind. When preaching with a mastery spirit, which is always of the flesh, (Esau-like,) there is always death in the pot. All this is gathered from the wild vine of our Adamic nature, the vine of Sodom and fields of Gomorrah, which vine is of low stature and very prolific; no trouble to get a lap full from such a fruitful source, where the branches are laden with grapes of gall and bitter and poisonous fruits: the fruits of the flesh, the source from whence all the wild gourds that cause death in the pot are gathered, and which never fail to bring death and destruction among God's dear children, who are so lovingly commanded to love one another and to live in peace.

I wish to say in concluding this strange and peculiar article as a new year's greeting, that my heart's desire and prayer to God is, that we all may be blessed of the Lord our God, each and every one, to abide in the calling of God, wherewith we were called, as in David's time, when the people came to David day by day, until it was a great host, like the host of God, (1 Chron. xii. 22,) and they brought bountifully rich and suitable provision for all the people as their conditions required. Some brought bread, some meat, meal, cakes of figs, and bunches of raisins, wine and oil, and oxen and sheep, abundantly, for there was joy in Israel.

I hope to be remembered by you all. I am eighty-one years of age.

W. J. MAY.

SHOCK, Ky., Jan. 15, 1917.

BRANTFORD, Ont., Jan. 14, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—In the SIGNS of January 1st you exhort all those who love God and his cause to write for the paper during the present year. I feel to write, for it is some time since I attempted to do so; but what shall I write? I could write for hours, but of what use, unless of profit to writer and reader? My first thoughts were, when looking at this exhortation, Do I love God? Do I love his cause? This momentous question was put to poor Peter: "Lovest thou me?" We also have his answer recorded: "Thou knowest that I love thee." I believe there is no question which comes to the child of God that causes such anxious thought.

"'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought,)
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

There are times in my experience when like Peter, without a moment's hesitation I answer, Yes, and then again the question comes, and then again I am grieved at the question, and am made sad at heart, and exclaim, "Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." When I look back over my unprofitable life, lo these thirty-three years, since I first had a hope that the Lord loved me and gave himself for me, and to a degree could say, I love the Lord because he first loved me, I ask, What are the grounds of this assurance that I love him? There was a time when without a moment's thought I would say, I do not love him; in fact I hated him and his professing people, believing I could see much injustice in his ways and in the actions of his professed followers. I was almost ready to discard even the thought of there being a God. But now how different; I see all perfection in him and imperfection in self, and this makes me

think I have a hope, that I do love him, and that a change has been wrought in my whole being. I now love the things I once hated, and hate the things I once loved, and amidst all the trials and troubles of life I cannot give this hope up. Sometimes it seems almost hope against hope, nevertheless it will not be put down; and so after years of experience and many tokens of his loving watchcare over me I do from my heart say, I do love the Lord. The second thought is, Do I love his cause? He that loveth God loveth him also that is begotten of him. One of my chief joys in life is to meet with God's people, to hear the truth once delivered unto the saints. It is not often my privilege to do so in Brantford, and this fact often brings sorrow of heart. I have been unable to visit the church of my membership for about sixteen months, and this is a great trial, and questioning comes if I did right to ask them to receive me in their fellowship. I know I have fellowship for them, even though unable to meet with them. It was our privilege and joy to have our pastor, Elder J. B. Slauson, with us in the early part of 1916, even though the occasion was a sad one for us. He came to attend the funeral of our beloved sister, Mrs. Emma Smith, who has been much missed by all the friends here. Elder D. M. Vail was here twice in 1916, and Elder J. M. Fenton was here just before the year closed. These brethren are always welcome here, as indeed are all Elders who may visit Canada. (Elders who visit Canada, kindly accept this as an invitation to call on us.) The year just closed has been one of extreme anxiety and discouragement, both of mind and spirit—external things, which I could not divert from my mind either night or day. My youngest son is away at this dreadful war, and has been in some of the very thickest of it since September, 1915. He was brought back to England in August, but returned to France December 2nd. He had been suffering with trench fever, after having been between ten and eleven months without a break in its midst; but God has heard our cry, and he has been restored to health, and honors have been given him, but only those who have been through it know what it means, not knowing when sad news might arrive; but in the midst of it all, at times God by his Spirit would show me he still reigns, and that even this dispensation was working good to them that love God and are the called according to his purpose. I would be utterly cast down were it not for these visits. Only yesterday, when in the midst of sorrow of heart, these words came with sweetness into my mind: Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him. My only hope for time or eternity is in him who knows my every thought and action, and rules and reigns over all things, according to his own purpose and grace, which he purposed in Christ before the foundation of the world. May he give us grace at all times to see his hand, even in the things which seem to crush us to the earth.

My dear brother, many times I had the will to write you when I have learned of your manifold afflictions, but what could I write to the comfort of any in affliction when in such a state of mind myself? But I do know you have the sympathy of the whole church, and that you know it, and that many are far better able to express it than the writer, even at his best state, but I do want at this time to mention how my heart has gone out in sym-

pathy for you, even though my expressions have been tardy. I have been thinking this afternoon of that great hope of the church: the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. What thoughts came to my mind. If it is God's will I hope to at some future date send some of them to you, but as my letter is much longer than I expected I shall have to close. I dare not say I have written for publication in the SIGNS, but if you think any portion will be of comfort to any of the afflicted ones you are at liberty to use such portion. I do not think I have written you since you led me into the water. None but God knows my thoughts at that time. How I did pray that if not according to his blessed will to stop it at once. Trials and temptations have beset me on every hand, but he has brought me through, for which I give him all the glory.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

FRED SIMMONS.

[WE appreciate very much the kind expressions of brother Simmons regarding us in our times of need, and kindly thank him.—K.]

KNOX CITY, Texas, Jan. 21, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—I herewith inclose a copy of the experience of brother J. T. Bingham for publication.

With love and best wishes to all the household of faith, I remain your brother in hope, J. A. CAMPBELL.

MUNDAY, Texas, August 6, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN:—About the 15th of July, twenty-four years ago, it was on Cumberland River, Bell Co., Ky., I saw myself lost, condemned to endless woe, and it was as sudden and painful as if a red hot spear had pierced my heart. I began to pray for mercy, but something seemed to say to me, There is no use to pray, for the sentence is passed, and it is impossible for God to lie. I then thought I was committing sin by asking God to pardon me, knowing he could not lie, so asked him not to take the Spirit and power from me by which I prayed, but let me pray throughout eternity, though I must soon be in that pit. It seemed my prayers descended forever. I saw hell about eight feet away from me, and I saw a small platform between the earth and sky, on which Jesus stood, his Father sitting at his left hand, and my love was so great it cannot be described, though I must be forever banished from them. It then seemed I was in the front part of a house, and saw a hole in the ceiling about four inches in diameter, which was filled with a sponge and looked like smoke or fog drawing from all parts of the house. I thought it was my prayers which had entered through that wall, and a voice said, Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. I was then given power to examine myself, that I might know if it would apply to me or not. I will say I knew it did. I began to praise the Lord, and awoke; it was a dream. My mind and desire were different after this. A few days later I was riding along with an Old Baptist, whom I believed to be as good a man as I ever knew, and unaware of what he might think, I asked him if he thought any one was ever changed in a dream. He said, "Yes; the body sleeps, but the spirit never sleeps." I told him my dream, and he was so enthused he shouted, and told me to tell it to the church. I told him I was not a christian, but he tried to convince me that I had been born again. A few days later I became troubled about my condition, and decided to question christian people, but resisted, fearing they would suspect something of my condition.

At length I asked a Baptist preacher a question, and he answered thus: Behold, ye despisers, ye do wonder and perish, for I work a work in your day, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you. It was as a spear in my heart. I arose from where I was sitting and started for home, about five miles distant. I will not try to describe my feelings, as it is impossible. I thought I had fulfilled that Scripture he had quoted to me because of what the man had told me a few days before, to whom I had told my dream. It was night when I reached home, and my wife and I went to bed, and as I was restless she asked me what was the matter. I did not answer her. She asked me again, and I gave her no answer. The next morning about 4 o'clock she awoke and asked me again. I told her nothing to trouble her; I did not want any one to know my mind. That morning I made an excuse to get away alone, and was going along a path through the woods, crying and trying to pray, and it seemed that a voice spoke to me, saying, Fear God and keep his commandments. I returned home late in the evening with the same burden. All at once I felt as if water had been poured on my head and it ran off at my feet, and my trouble was gone. I did not think I was yet a christian, but that the Lord was showing me it was his work with me, and he had forgiven me for not believing that what had passed was his work. So all was love and joy for one month, except about one-half hour I was filled with trouble, and then my mind was easy again. One day I was pulling fodder with a man who had a short time before joined the Old Baptist Church and told a bright experience, and who afterward became an able minister. He became carried away in spirit talking of the dealings of the Lord with him. I could see so much of the power of the Spirit exhibited in him that I was afraid I knew nothing about it myself. I was burdened with prayer, and felt that I ought to get on my knees there and pray, but did not do what I felt was my duty. I went home at night with a dread upon me, and told my wife there was something going to happen to me. Next day we were pulling fodder in the afternoon when trouble came on me as suddenly as lightning, and I sank down. The man asked me what was the matter. I told him I felt very weak. He said I looked pale. This trouble lasted three months, and I had no rest day or night. I was troubled in dreams at night just as I was in the daytime. I was afraid I was committing the unpardonable sin. I would often ask the Lord in my weak way to let me rest a little while, that my burden was so heavy I could not bear it. I would often make lamentation at night, and disturb the sleep of my wife, but she was a believer in the Lord and was patient with me, and tried to comfort me, though I felt if she knew how wicked I was she would not have any sympathy for me. One night I dreamed eleven other men and myself were traveling up a ravine, as it appeared to my mind, and we passed some men digging a pit, and they were very immoral in appearance. We turned to our right hand, walked up out of the ravine. The land was fine and level as far as I could see. I did not know where we had started to go, but we all had farm tools of some sort on our shoulders. We had not gone fifty yards when I felt I was sinking into that awful pit, but instantly I felt safe in the hand of the Lord, and he had called me to prayer. I turned to go away in secret to pray, but just took three steps and was

forced to the ground. I saw the Lord in the air a short space above me, and he told me at his own appointed time he would demand of me and I could not resist; that I had tried to resist praying in public and could not, and that I should never stray beyond the limits of his love. I got rid of my burden there and lived twelve months at ease. I loved the Baptist Church, and had a great desire to be a member of their order, but never offered myself to the church, so doubts and fears overtook me, and I have had nothing but a continuous warfare ever since. I feel the battle is getting harder and I am getting weaker.

Now, all who may chance to read these few lines I have written, pray God for me that I may stronger be, that more thanks to God be given.

I am the poorest of all who ever dared to claim a hope.

J. T. BINGHAM.

BALTIMORE, Md., Jan. 5, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—I wish to call your attention to Revelation xiii. 8, which reads as follows: "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

It appears to me that John was given a heavenly vision, and was clearly shown those who should worship the beast, and also those who should worship the true and living God. It looks to me that God's children were all chosen in Jesus, and as he stood as a Lamb slain from the beginning, that is, he stood ransom for all whose names were written in the book of life from Abel and all of the prophets down to the end of time, there is never a time when one of God's dear children stands condemned before his throne, and God makes them manifest in his own time and way. The word says, Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated, when they were not yet born, having done neither good nor evil. It seems to me that he loved Jacob because he was his son already. The Lord found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness many years afterward, presenting the spiritual birth of God's people in the gospel dispensation. He hated Esau because he was not his son, and his name was not written in the Lamb's book of life, and he would worship the beast with the rest of the world that had no relationship with the Son, so they could not know him, whom to know is life everlasting. The Scripture declares that God loved his people with an everlasting love, and the word "everlasting" means eternal, having neither beginning nor end. Now it looks reasonable that they were his from the beginning, all of them, sons and daughters, and when the fullness of time comes he makes them manifest to each other. He takes frail man, who is as grass, and builds up his house as best suits his purpose, and they are made lively stones, and are made to fit together, made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. This building of God that I see marked out in the Scripture, is not put up by force, or with saw and hammer, but all are born of God. The light is not put under a bushel to be hid, but on a candlestick, that all in the house of God may see, and they are led about and instructed and drawn by love that is shed abroad in their hearts, and this comes in the Lord's own time and way. He leads them to his banqueting-house, and his banner over them is love. He loves them because they are his children, and when he makes known to them their lost and ruined condition according to the flesh,

or nature, then he shows them that his righteousness is sufficient for them; then are they made to rejoice with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the Lord leads them about and instructs them as he did the Israelites of old. Dear brethren, I feel that he never leaves nor forsakes his children, but is ever watchful over them, not only after their spiritual birth, but from the beginning. Although we get cast down, and feel that our every prop is gone, and are made to cry out from the belly of hell, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? it is all working for our good and God's glory, for it is God working in us to will and to do of his good pleasure; and after awhile, when the Lord shows his smiling countenance, we can say with one of old, He leadeth me beside the still waters, and maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he restoreth my soul, he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. It appears to me the Lord leads and instructs his people, and they, like Jesus, learn obedience by the things they suffer, and like David they complain of the Lord's absence and mourn because they are cast down; they do not feel that love and rejoicing which they did in their early experience, and fear the Lord has cast them off. But this is the rod and staff that comforted David. I have been cast down for some time, very little light on anything, but the Scripture quoted at the beginning of this letter has been on my mind until it became a burden, and I felt impressed to write a few of my thoughts which have occurred to me, but have written more than I intended, so will close, hoping you may have a prosperous year, and that God may bless the editors and publishers and all of the writers, that they may be enabled to write to the comfort of God's humble poor and to the praise of him to whom all praise is due; and I ask one and all of the household of faith to remember me when at the throne of grace, for I feel to-night to be the least one of the flock, if one at all, yet had to write to relieve my mind. Do with this as you think best.

Your little brother, I hope, in the love of God, L. C. GODWIN.

HAMMOND, W. Va., Dec. 14, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed money order to pay my subscription for the dear old SIGNS another year. I have taken the paper for about sixteen years, and still wish to take it while it continues to contend for salvation by the grace of God alone. I want to say to you, both editors and readers, that there is nothing that will save a poor sinner except the grace of God, and grace alone, because our works are evil, and there is no good thing in us, that is, in our flesh. Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners, and if he came to save sinners then he will save them, and not just try to save them and fail because they are too stubborn to let him save them. But let me say that the poor child of grace strives to do right; his desire is to do right, but how to perform, is what he cannot find out, because evil is present, so that he cannot do the good that he would; but the evil that he would not, that he does, because of the evil that is in his flesh, for in the flesh there dwells no good thing. Christ Jesus is able to save them, because he ever liveth to make intercession for them, for he finished the work that the Father gave to him, which work was to save all that the Father gave to him, and he saves them here in time and in eternity with an everlasting salvation, as he saved the jailer and Saul of Tarsus and Peter and all the saints; it

is not left to them to save themselves by their obedience in time or in eternity, because he will cause them to walk in his statutes, as the man that lay in the pool, who took up his bed and walked because Jesus caused him to do so. Christ is our everlasting strength.

I will close. Farewell.

JAMES W. LINN.

KINGSTON, N. Y., Dec. 13, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—Time admonishes me that I am again slow in sending in my renewal for my paper, so will try to attend to it now. Another year has passed, and many have been called home, and I am often made to wonder why my life, which seems so unprofitable, is still spared, while others that are so missed are taken and so many hearts and homes are saddened. It came very near to me when my nephew was taken, yet my very own have all been spared, and I wish to be thankful for all such mercies, while I deeply sympathize with those who are called to mourn losses. One of old said, It is good to be afflicted, so I can but think it is, although I shrink from affliction quite as much as any other person, and sometimes I think I have a great deal of affliction to bear one way and another, and wish to bear it with christian fortitude, but am afraid I do not; it seems that I only bear it because it comes to me, and I have to, and that seems to be about the way all the events of my life have been. So I can but think that all things of every nature are ordered and sure, and yet many times I find fault because I cannot have things go more to my mind; but when I think I see aright, I can say, Father, thy will, not mine, be done. I feel more and more the need of sustaining grace to lean upon as age creeps on and strength fails, and I so miss the companionship of those who are traveling the same dark and thorny road, for they alone can understand these lonely days and sleepless nights. Yet there is a ray of comfort with it all, for the poet says, Is this the blessing we expect? Is this the lot of God's elect? None others seem to know anything about the wormwood and the gall. I wish each and every one of the dear Father's household all the blessings that are stored up for them, which I feel assured will be dealt out to them in mercy according as they have need of them, for the promise is, As thy day, so shall thy strength be. Mine is not as much as I would like, but perhaps if I had more I would not use it wisely, for quite often I feel anxious to do things which, after considering, I feel would not be for the best. If I am saved it is alone of grace and mercy, and I do rejoice that it is not left to poor worms to work out their own salvation, for I know there would be no flesh saved, for it is not in man to direct his own steps, and the more I see of human goodness, the more I feel to rejoice that God alone reigns in earth as well as in heaven, and has brought me to know his great name, and that his mercy endureth forever and ever.

I will close, as I feel this is too poor an attempt, but I wish to say I enjoy the writings of those who so ably write for the SIGNS, and wish for the welfare of Zion.

From one who feels to be the last of all,

MARY M. FAULKNER.

RALEIGH, N. C., Jan. 20, 1917.

THE Primitive Baptist Church at Raleigh, N. C., in conference this date, having heard some dissatisfactory talk for some time, and also having heard of dissatisfactory talk abroad and faultfinding

of the business of this church transacted in our conference at times in the past, wish to state and do hereby invite and request that if any Primitive Baptist Church in good standing, or any individual member above suspicion and in good standing, has any charge against any member of this church, or the pastor of this church, or any charge against any of the business proceedings of this church, that such charge or charges be brought to this church in writing and in person, at our regular monthly conference on Saturday before the third Sunday in March, 1917.

We hereby also invite and request that each church of the Little River Association send one or more members as delegates or messengers to sit with us in said conference; and especially do we invite Elders and deacons of the churches of the association. The conference will be open to any Primitive Baptist out of the Little River Association also to sit with us or to present charges.

By order of the church in conference.

ELDER W. A. SIMPKINS, Mod.

ELDER G. T. POWELL, Clerk.

N. B. GULLEY,
J. L. BRITT,
JAS. E. WEATHERS, } Deacons.

N. B.—The minutes of our conferences are on record, and will be open for inspection. Elder Isaac Jones will be asked to sit as moderator. Meeting at 11 o'clock a. m.

HOMEWOOD, Miss., Feb. 17, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I feared this morning that my desire to write you all was not of the Lord, and I kept begging him to direct me; I picked up my Testament and read a chapter in the Psalms, and it said it was good for me to trust in the Lord, and I felt in my poor heart that it was indeed good for me, even me, to trust in the Lord, and a beautiful thought or Scripture came to my mind: Speak comfortably to Jerusalem. O that I might speak in a way to comfort you that are cast down. I trust that the Spirit of the true and living God will be with you, brother Easley, or whoever is permitted to speak in His great and glorious name when you all meet together Saturday and Sunday to worship his holy name, and enable you to speak comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her sins are pardoned. O it takes that to comfort a poor wayfaring one; the thought that our sins are pardoned is healing balm to our tried and weary souls, which enables each one to press on toward the mark. I am thinking this lovely morning of the door through which if we enter we shall go in and out and find pasture. Dear ones, do you care to climb up any other way, thereby becoming thieves and robbers? Robbing our crucified Redeemer of the glory that belongs alone to him, that of our eternal salvation, for he says that he will not give that glory to another, neither will he sell it, for it is without price, so if we climb up any other way than through that door spoken of we become thieves and robbers. According to the way I view it, the Old Baptists will have to enter in through that door or they will never gain an entrance into that blessed clime, for they claim no merit of their own, but they must be drawn by the tender cords of God's eternal love. That is why the Old Baptist doctrine suits my feelings. As we go in and out among the little flock we find sweet pasture, and there we can sit together in heavenly places; then we feel to praise God for his great and wonderful mercies to us poor sinners.

Dear brethren and sisters, if you can

feel it in your heart, please pray for me, a poor sinner, and may his rich mercy and love abound in dear beloved Zion to his honor and glory, and may his Holy Spirit be poured out upon each one of you as you meet to worship his holy name.

From the very least of the flock, if one at all,

ANNA WINDHAM.

ABERFELDY, Ont., Jan. 1, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In renewing my subscription to the SIGNS I thought I would like to write a few lines to you. It seems all well and good with us when our brethren and sisters speak well of and enjoy what we speak and write, but when it is otherwise it does not suit us as well. I have been a reader of the SIGNS for some fifteen years, and must confess that I have read many good and comforting things in its columns, and have been made to rejoice to know that there are others who have been shown the depravity and sinfulness of their old nature in thought, word and deed by the power of God as I hope I have. I know that I never would cry to God as the publican of old did unless I were made to know how corrupt and vile a creature I am, and how helpless I am to keep the holy law of God. But I find the natural mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. How plain the apostle spoke: neither indeed can be. So, then, if it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, and the law is holy, just and good, we by nature must be just the opposite—sinful and no soundness in us. My only hope is in the finished work of Jesus Christ, and I believe he finished it in every particular. I am an "absoluter" and a "can't help it" in every sense of the word. I cannot believe that God predestinated the good, as men call it, and the devil predestinated the bad, but that God created all things, the good, the devil and the bad. He said, I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create evil; I the Lord do all these things. It does not read, I and the devil do all these things. Then we may say that we shelter behind God's predestination with our sins. What have we but our sins to shelter behind his predestination? and if we do not shelter behind God's predestination where do we shelter? We have no righteousness, all is dark and vain and wild. I have to confess that I know of no other shelter for my sins, and I am like those at the baptism of Jesus, I have to come confessing my sins. But predestination is no excuse for sin. We read, There is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. All flesh is grass—no difference. I cannot say to any one of God's little ones, I am holier than thou, for I am carnal, sold under sin. When we are made to esteem others better than ourselves there are no divisions, no carnality and walking as men, no babblings about the law. As Elder Ker wrote some time ago, where most of the divisions come in is in striving about the law, which none of us is able to keep, for all have sinned. We read, If we say we have no sin, we make him a liar and his word is not in us. I had thought some time ago that I would not take the SIGNS any longer, but my ways and thoughts are not in myself. I know and am satisfied that those who write for the paper are the children of God, if I may be allowed to judge, and while there are some of the writings I cannot agree with, I hope I may be given the spirit to bear with them, if it can be his will.

Now, as this is the beginning of an-

other year, may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with us all, as we read that we are saved by grace.

I have written more than I intended. You may use this as you see fit.

A poor sinner,

REUBEN BENSTEAD.

BIVINS, Texas, Jan. 3, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars to renew my subscription to the SIGNS for one year. I have only been a subscriber for about two years, but have read it occasionally for forty years. My dear father was a subscriber when I was a boy, and I loved to read it then. If I have an experience of grace the work began with me when a boy of twelve years. There has been no change in the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS from my earliest recollection; if it was wrong then it is wrong to-day. If I know my heart, I love the doctrine it advocates: salvation by grace, and grace alone, and this is a fact, or there is no grace; and God predestinated all things, or there is no predestination. I certainly believe with all my mind and strength that God made all things, and made them for a purpose, and that all will fulfill the purpose for which they were made. Everything he made he pronounced good —good for the purpose for which it was created. He made a devil, good for a devil and for nothing else. God made this poor worm of the dust for a purpose known unto himself, and while seemingly my life so far has been an entire failure, I know that he has a wise purpose in my existence, and when his purpose is fulfilled in me he will call me, I hope, to himself, when and where I shall be fully prepared to ascribe all honor and praise to him for his great mercy.

I will say now in conclusion, that I hope the brethren everywhere will come to the aid and assistance of the dear editors and publishers of the SIGNS. I believe that they will do this, for our God is a God of might, and it has been of him and through him that the SIGNS has been sustained.

Wishing the dear editors and publishers a prosperous year, both spiritually and temporally, I am your poor, little, unworthy brother, in hope of sweet rest and peace beyond this vale of tears.

J. S. McLEOD.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Jan. 10, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—I wish to say through the SIGNS, that I have a daughter living at 886 Lenox Ave., Detroit, Mich. If there are any of the readers of the SIGNS in that city who could go and meet her some time when convenient, I would be glad, and so would she. Her name is Mrs. Minna Worrell. She is not a member of the church, but has been brought up among them, and knows who and what they are, and she would appreciate a visit from any one who might care to go and see her, and if the Baptists are meeting anywhere in that city she would be glad to know it. Also, there is a young man going to school in Cincinnati, a son of the late Elder George M. Hite, of this city, who also would be glad to see any of the Baptists who live in Cincinnati, or meet them at their place of worship, if there should be such in that city. His name is Geo. M. Hite, Jr., address 630 West Sixth Street at the college. He rooms at 602 West Seventh Street. He is not a member of the church, but would be glad to meet you at any time. He loves the Baptists, and would like to know if there is a place in that city where they worship.

Yours in humble hope,

C. M. HOOD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1917.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. K[illegible] Y.
Elder H. H. [illegible] Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
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2 THESSALONIANS II. 11, 12.

"AND for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

It seems from the reading of this letter to the church at Thessalonica, written by Paul, that certain men were troubling the church by teaching that the day of Christ was at hand. We understand by this that they were teaching that the end of the world was about to take place, and this teaching troubled the brethren. To substantiate this false idea they were even making use of letters purporting to have been written by Paul himself, but which were forgeries. "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand." Paul then goes on to say in this letter that there are certain things to be fulfilled before the day of the Lord shall come, that there must first be a falling away, that there must be a full revelation of the man of sin, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped. It is quite evident that the revelation of the man of sin in all his perfidy had not been realized at the time Paul wrote this letter, hence the day of the Lord, or the end of the world, could not be so near as these false teachers were declaring it to be. This declaration, then, was a delusion, and a strong one, as it had gotten hold disturbingly upon some in the church at Thessalonica. These false teachers were not established in the truth as it is in Jesus, they did not believe the truth, hence to make their "damnation," or condemnation, manifest, God sent this strong delusion into them to separate them from the believing body of the church, that the church might be purified from these troublesome spirits, and that the occasion would demand from Paul and the apostles such preaching and writing as would clear up this point of doctrine and establish the true believers more thoroughly in the doctrine of God our Savior. This sending of strong delusion is one of the ways that God works in preserving his church from error and false doctrine and to take out of the visible church organization those who do not belong there. John, in speaking of these spirits of antichrist, says, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." Some doubter might say, Would it not be more a proof of God's wisdom in taking care of his church to keep these false ones from ever getting in, rather than to plan a way to get them out after they have been in? To this, we answer that no man has a right to judge God's way of doing things. His way is ever best, no matter how it appears to human reason. Further, it is well for these delusions to

come into the church in its travel through this lower world, rather than for them always to have been kept out. This is so for several reasons: first, because it is God's purpose, as we have said; second, the prevalence of error calls for clear and discriminating preaching, and, therefore, furnishes the occasion for some of the greatest preaching gifts the church has ever known; third, error troubling the church compels self-examination to make sure of one's standing, therefore brings about more Bible-reading and prayerful searching of the Scriptures than might otherwise be the case; fourth, the Scriptures have been opened up and understood more clearly than would have been the case, doubtless, had error never been circulated. We are confident that God has a use for error and ordains it to carry out his purpose whenever he pleases. All the false religion that is now in the world, and that has ever been in the world, never came here by chance or a mere happen-so. It is in the world now, and has been hitherto by God's express purpose. The devil makes a fine broom in the hand of God to sweep out the house whenever God sees fit to use him that way. The Scriptures plainly teach the doctrine of election, which means that some are destined unto salvation, while others are left to perish in sin. Since it is not God's plan to save all, it is a very wise provision of Providence that the unsaved believe something, even though it be false. False religion teaches men are saved by their works, that every good deed is placed to their credit by the recording angel to offset wrongdoing that may have been committed. Such error as this, which holds such dominant sway in the civilized world to-day, serves to restrain men from outbreaking crimes, so that the social structure in the midst of which we live is outwardly decent, though it is inwardly a whited sepulchre. The restraint which error furnishes over the passions of men, in the providence of God, makes this world tolerable to the true people of the living God. Were not men kept in check by something such as this, persecution of the elect would be rampant and no true believer could ever have peace to live his own life according to the dictates of a living faith. Thus, it is honoring God to say that nothing, even error, is absent from the divine plan of things. Lights and shadows, good and evil, devil and saint, all find their place and their time in God's plan of salvation purposed in his Son before time began. The last chapter of Isaiah holds this declaration of the Lord: "I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them." Thus both the Old and New Testaments warrant us in believing that error is sent not by chance or accident, but by divine intent. "Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." One way in which the "sons of Levi," in other words, the church, is purified in its visible organization here in the world, is in having these errors or delusions sent to act as a ladle or spoon to take away the scum which collects on the top of the silver in the crucible over the fire. Ahab was a wicked king over Israel in the days of old, and the Lord determined his death. To bring about this man's death in the Lord's way, Ahab was encouraged to believe he would be successful in battle against the king of Syria. Being thus made to believe he would be

successful, Ahab went forth in battle and was killed. If any one will turn to the eighteenth chapter of 2nd Chronicles they will learn there just how the death of Ahab was accomplished. It was accomplished by Ahab's being made to believe a lie. He was deluded, and this delusion was sent him by the hand of the Lord. The Lord said to the lying spirit, "Thou shalt entice him, [Ahab] and thou shalt also prevail: go out and do even so. Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil against thee." Thus we see how God saved Israel of old from a wicked king by sending him strong delusion, which accomplished his destruction. The case is not so very dissimilar from the way in which God has worked in more recent times to extricate his people out of dangerous errors. Sunday-schools, missionary societies, theological seminaries, and all other inventions of men to save souls, are very strong delusions, and they have a mighty hold on the people of this day and generation. Time was when the above inventions troubled the church, but not now. The damnation or condemnation of those advocating such things was made so plainly evident to the true church that there occurred a separation or sifting, which purified the visible organization at that time. Being carried away by strong delusions shows that one has pleasure in unrighteousness, and not in the truth. Belief in lies shows that one is in a state of condemnation; belief in the truth shows that one is in a state of justification. One believing a lie to-day may be brought to believe the truth to-morrow. In that case, one is passed from death unto life, and every one of God's people has passed through such an experience. The strong delusion to which Paul had reference in our text was the teaching that the day of the Lord, or end of the world, was immediately at hand. This delusion has persisted even to this late day, and prophets every now and then rise up claiming to be able to tell the exact date when the world will come to an end. Mosheim tells us in his history that a general belief prevailed in Europe toward the close of the tenth century that the year 1000 would witness the coming of Christ, the day of judgment, and the end of the world. As the time drew near a general panic seized the minds of men. Many abandoned their homes and their families and repaired to Palestine; others made over their lands to the Roman Catholic Church or permitted them to lie uncultivated, and the whole course of ordinary life was violently disturbed and deranged. But the year 1000 came and went and the world still stood, proving that it was all a delusion. Now it is not hard to find any number of people who believe the year 2000 will witness the destruction of this material world and the end of time. We are safe in saying, as Paul said, that the day of the Lord cannot come until there be first a full revelation of the man of sin. Who can say when this man of sin has been fully discovered? Furthermore, no man knoweth the day nor the hour when the Son of man cometh. The day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night. Does the householder know when the thief is coming? Neither, then, can any man fix the date for time to end. It is foolish to try to do so, and surely entangles in a snare any who pursue such delusion. Here in our own country in the year 1843 there rose up a man named William Miller, who figured out from Daniel viii. 14, that the end of the world would take place in 1843. This caused

great consternation among multitudes of people, so that some sold their farms and houses, some cast their stocks of goods from their stores into the streets, to be taken by whomsoever they might, and others completely lost their reason. Notwithstanding all these prophets have been proved false by the outcome of events, the delusion still persists, and it is not hard to find persons who soberly claim to be able to tell just when the world will come to an end. It is easier to believe a lie than the truth. Our first parents proved this in the garden of Eden when they believed the words of Satan that they should not die, but would become as gods, knowing good and evil, though God had plainly said, Thou shalt surely die. The same nature in them that then believed the devil, now dwells in every individual of the human family, so that it is natural to follow a delusion and believe a lie, while it takes the grace of God to cause one to follow Christ and believe the truth.

Written at the request of brother Milton Maddock, Alvinston, Ont. L.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Dec. 25th, 1916, at the residence of the bride, in Delmar, Del., Marion H. Hearn and Mae M. Elliott, both of Delmar.

By the same, Dec. 30th, 1916, at the residence of Robert Bailey, near Salisbury, Md., Gardner H. Fooks and Mollie E. Miller, both of Wicomico County, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mary A. Yarbrough, wife of brother H. P. Yarbrough, was born July 5th, 1849, and departed this life at her home in Montgomery, Ala., October 7th, 1916. Her maiden name was Croxton, daughter of brother E. M. and sister Nancy Croxton, deceased. She was married March 5th, 1868, to which union were born thirteen children, six sons and seven daughters, most of whom are living, who, together with her husband and a host of relatives and friends, mourn the loss of a good and loving wife, a kind and affectionate mother, a true and faithful christian and friend, whose generosity and hospitality were unbounded. Her home was a Baptist home indeed and in truth; she was never too weary to welcome them. One of her chief delights was entertaining and caring for the poor, humble ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ. She united with the church at Harmony, Ala., August 27th, 1881, to which profession she faithfully clung to the last moment, ever adorning the same with an upright walk and godly conversation. Her seat at her meetings was seldom vacant when health permitted her to attend. She was sound in doctrine, and her faith was sorely tried many times, but she always came through, shining brighter than before. She stood firm and unwavering, and died in the full triumph of living faith. To know her was to love her. Often has the poor, unworthy writer enjoyed the hospitality of her humble home and received godly counsel at her fireside. Now her voice is stilled by the chilly hand of death, no more to be heard on earth, but while she is dead, she yet speaks. To the sorrowing and bereaved husband let me say, Dear brother, while in this sad hour of bereavement, while clouds of darkness hover about you, and the storms of sorrow beat upon you, and the thunders of desolation and bereavement terrify you, your Father is at the helm; there is a bright day coming. Soon the conflict will be over and the joyful summons will come, Child, your Father calls, come home. Children, you had a christian mother, who has left many sweet admonitions, and noble examples which are worthy of imitation. May God give you grace to heed her godly admonitions. May kindness and hospitality toward the Old Baptists ever abound with you, having your hearts, hands and homes open to receive them; they were your mother's people.

The funeral service, at her home, was conducted by her pastor, Elder B. J. Wilson, who preached a very able and comforting discourse. Her remains were conveyed to the cemetery at Rocky Mount, Ala., near her childhood home. The pall-bearers were her five sons and one grandson. At the cemetery were many sorrowing relatives and friends. Elder H. M. Curry spoke in a very able and comforting manner, after which, in compliance with her request, the

hymn, "O sing to me of heaven," &c., was beautifully sung. Her request was for Elders J. A. Mills, B. J. Wilson and A. H. Williamson to be with her family at her funeral, on account of the great love and esteem she had for them, and the able and faithful manner in which they contended for the doctrine of the Bible. Circumstances were such that Elders Mills and Williamson failed to get there.

Written by request of the bereaved husband.

A. H. WILLIAMSON.

Elder Ahimaaz Mellott was born April 10th, 1835, died Jan. 6th, 1917, aged 81 years, 9 months and 3 days. Was baptized by Elder Joseph Furr in the fellowship of the Sideling Hill Old School Baptist Church and ordained to the office of deacon about the close of the Civil War, and served in that capacity until 1893. Was ordained to the work of the gospel ministry in May of that year, by Elders E. V. White and A. B. Francis, of Virginia, John Roe, of North Carolina, and J. D. Hubbell, of New York, and served the Springfield Church as pastor for many years, and the Tuscarora Church from 1898, and preached for the Sideling Hill, Fairview and other churches. I wish Elder Funk to preach my funeral and to send a notice to the SIGNS of my death.

The above was written by Elder Mellott Feb. 17th, 1911. I tried to comply with the above request the best I could, using for a text 2 Timothy iv. 7, 8, after which we laid his body to rest amid the snow of the winter to await the resurrection, when, according to the word of God, it will be raised incorruptible and fashioned like unto his glorious body. Elder Mellott was a good citizen, spent his days in the community in which he died, was kind to all and a loving father. He was well informed in the Scriptures and in the plan of salvation by grace, as taught in the Scriptures, and longed to see the time when God's dear children who had been separated could be united in sweet union and fellowship. He is gone from this sinful world, and his spirit is sweetly resting in the paradise of God until the day in which Jesus will come according to his word and raise our vile body and fashion it like unto his glorious body, and we shall be prepared to sing the song of the redeemed host: Not unto us, but unto him who washed us in his blood on the tree.

C. L. FUNK.

Margaret S. Campbell was born April 15th, 1834, and died Dec. 3rd, 1916. She was baptized in the fellowship of Welsh Tract Church, at the foot of Iron Hill, Del., in the Christiana Creek, on the church property, the first Sunday in August, 1866, by Elder Thomas Barton. For some time prior to her baptism she had been in a suffering condition, physically, and at the time of her baptism she was carried in a chair into the water and out of the water by brethren Joseph Griffith and Ries. Afterward her health was much improved, and she was given strength to the extent of being the nurse of the family until within three years of her death. The last remaining years of her life were spent with more or less suffering and pain, being afflicted with bronchitis and asthma. Pneumonia ultimately was the direct cause of her death. She is survived by two sisters, sisters Sarah A. and Emma Campbell, both beloved members of Welsh Tract Church, and the last of a family of eleven. Sister Margaret was the first Old School Baptist her present pastor met on his first trip north, on this side of the Potomac River, at Washington, D. C. She was a faithful and useful member of the visible church, and the interests of the church were paramount with her. She was a consistent, practical adviser in both church and business matters, and will be missed by the members and friends wherever she was known. She expressed a wish a short time before her death that she hoped she would be taken home before the dreadful war we are threatened with should come upon us. She died as she had lived, in hope of eternal life, and we who knew her are strengthened in the belief and hope that she is "asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep," and that her spirit has returned to God who gave it.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder B. F. Coulter and her pastor, Elder John G. Eubanks, Dec. 6th, 1916, and her mortal remains were laid in the earth in her favorite spot, Welsh Tract Cemetery.

JOHN G. EUBANKS.

Mrs. Kate W. Mace, aged 82 years, widow of John Mace, died Wednesday morning, Jan. 31st, 1917, of acute indigestion. Her husband died about twenty-five years ago, and her last years were spent with her son-in-law and her daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Cator, on Taylors Island, Md., about thirty miles south of Cambridge, Md. She was a member of the well known and highly esteemed family of brother and sister George Whitefield Woolford. Those who survive her are Samuel W. Woolford, of Woolford, Md., sister Susie Woolford and Mrs. Virginia Hurlock, of Cambridge, Md. Mrs. Mace was not a member of the visible church, but was an ardent lover of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. She was indeed a lovely character, both in her family and among her friends, being highly esteemed by all who knew her. Her last days were spent in singing her favorite hymns and having the Scriptures and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES read to her, as she was nearly blind. She raised five children: Bassett Mace, of Baltimore, Md., a high official in the Baltimore & Ohio R. R. Co., Benjamin Mace, an electrician, who died in June, 1913, Harry Mace, Assistant Director of Health and Charities, in Philadelphia, Pa., John Sawin Mace,

inspector in a large railroad packing company, and Mrs. Virginia Cator, of Taylors Island, Md. The children were all earnestly devoted to the mother who loved them so dearly, and did all in their power to make life comfortable and happy.

Funeral services were held in the Fishing Creek meetinghouse at Woolford, Md., Friday, Feb. 2nd, 1917. By request of her daughter, the twenty-third Psalm was read by the writer, after which her body was laid away in the adjoining cemetery.

B. F. COULTER.

J. W. Hale was born in the State of Mississippi in the year 1853, and died June 7th, 1916. He was married to S. E. Linza Jan. 26th, 1873. To that union were born eleven children, six of whom preceded him to the better world. He leaves his widow and five children to mourn their loss, which we hope is his eternal gain. The children who survive are W. T. Hale, Mrs. Mary Burges, Mrs. M. E. Hale, Mrs. P. A. Thornton and Mrs. P. A. Geddie. In the death of brother Hale the church has lost a faithful member, but we bow in humble submission to Him who doeth all things right, and say, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. At about the age of eighteen, brother Hale received a hope in Christ. In 1887 he joined the Primitive Baptists of the Predestinarian faith and order at Friendship, in Vanburen Co., Ark. He was baptized by Elder J. E. Venable. He lived a consistent member, always filling his seat when not providentially hindered. He never had a charge against him, and was godly in conversation and orderly in his walk, believing in the unlimited sovereignty of God and salvation by grace both in time and eternity. I will say to the dear bereaved ones, Weep not as those who have no hope, for he is gone from the evil to come.

Written by his pastor,

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

Mrs. Fannie Thomas, whose maiden name was Smith, was born and raised on the eastern shore of Virginia, and was married in early life to Samuel J. Thomas, who died several years ago. For many years they made their home in the city of Norfolk, Va., and their home was always a home for the Old School Baptists. Sister Thomas was baptized many years ago in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., by the late Elder C. B. Hassell, of North Carolina, and proved a faithful member until death, which occurred Jan. 23rd, 1917. It was the privilege and great pleasure of the writer to be intimately acquainted with sister Thomas since the year 1899, when he became her pastor, and he can say of sister Thomas that she was faithful to her church and pastor. She was a genuine Old Baptist, and it was her delight to have her brethren and sisters in her home and to talk of the things of the kingdom. She knew what she believed and she rejoiced in it. For some years she had lived in the home of her only living child, Mrs. C. W. Northern, of Norfolk, Va., where she was cared for as tenderly as mortal hands could. Although unable for a long time to mingle with her brethren in the church of Norfolk, they visited her, to her delight and spiritual comfort. The last time I saw her she spoke of the constancy of the Savior's love, that he still showed his loving-kindness to her in her afflictions. Sister Thomas had many friends, and they manifested their friendship by their presence and floral designs at her funeral, which was held Jan. 25th, 1917, when the writer spoke for a short time from portions of the fourteenth chapter of Job and fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians, showing to the sorrowing ones from these and other Scriptures the certain present joy of the soul of their loved one, and also the assurance of the mortal putting on immortality when the blessed Jesus shall come again without sin unto salvation. I would say to the bereaved daughter and family, that while you miss your dear mother, remember the mercy of the Lord in giving her to you for so many years, and now he has called her to himself, which for her is far better. May he give you also the precious faith which was hers, is the desire of your friend,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

Charles Wible, son of sister Evaline and the late John G. Wible, of Three Springs, Pa., was born August 4th, 1878, and died Jan. 4th, 1917, aged 38 years and 5 months. Mr. Wible had been failing in health for some time, but was not considered as sick as he really was. He evidently realized that the end of his journey of life in this world was near at hand. He told his wife how to arrange the affairs of the home so that she might remain on the farm and care for her little ones. The subject of this notice was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace for time and eternity. He had a clear view of the Scriptures, and loved to talk upon them, and it was his meat and drink to have the members meet at his home and have preaching. He was one who paid strict attention to what was declared by the ministry, and I shall greatly miss him at our meetings. We had expected he would talk to the church regarding his exercises of mind, but this was not his portion. We believe he is in the paradise of God perfect and in eternity, for time and time conditions are at an end with him, therefore no waiting. His faith and hope are swallowed up in the full fruition of that blessed and never-ending eternity with the redeemed of the Lord.

The writer spoke from the words of Jesus: "I go to prepare a place for you." Hymns 69 and 1022 (Beebe's collection) were his most favorite ones,

and were read in the services held at Springfield Old School Baptist meetinghouse on Monday, Jan. 8th, a large number being present to show their respect and esteem with which he was held by all who knew him. He leaves a widow, sister Rosa, baptized last August, and seven children, besides five brothers and one sister, to mourn their loss. May the Almighty comfort all the bereaved. J. M. FENTON.

APPOINTMENTS.

PLEASE publish the following appointments:

Roxbury, N. Y., Sunday, March 11th, at the Mead sisters' home, 10:45 a. m.; Halcottville, N. Y., Sunday, March 25th, all day meeting, commencing at 10:45 a. m.

GEORGE RUSTON.

THE Lord willing, Elder D. M. Vail will visit friends, brethren and churches as follows:

Schoharie village, Feb. 24th, 7:30 p. m.; Schoharie Hill, 25th, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.; Central Bridge, 26th, 7:30 p. m.; Albany, 272 Clinton Ave., 27th, 1:30 p. m.; Howe Cave, 27th, 7:30 p. m.; Isaac Smith's, 28th, 7:30 p. m.; sister Gardner's, March 1st, 1:30 p. m.; George A. Miers, 1st, 7:30 p. m.

E. R. KINNEY.

ANNOUNCEMENT.

I have written and am preparing for the press a book of about 100 pages, treating upon the personal identity of the church of God, titled, "My God and my Salvation," and will be priced at 50 cents postpaid. I earnestly request that all who may want one of those books will notify me as soon as possible, that I may know how many to print. Write name and address plainly, and send to

ELDER C. M. WEAVER.

COMMERCE, Mo.

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Mrs. M. J. Miller, Ill., $2.00; Dr. D. M. Leonard, Fla., $2.00; Mrs. F. J. Gray, Texas, $1.00; Mrs. Roena Wilson, Texas, $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 85. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1917. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"BETHLEHEM EPHRATAH."

(Micah v. 2.)

How peculiarly blessed it is to us that God decreed and chose Bethlehem as the place where Jesus Christ, the Son of God, should be born into this world. This was foretold by the prophet Micah; and when it was demanded by Herod of the chief priests and scribes where Christ should be born they readily answered, "In Bethlehem of Judæa: for thus it is written by the prophet; and thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel."—Matt. ii. 5, 6. But Joseph and Mary, his espoused wife, have their home in Nazareth of Galilee, a long way, after the manner of journeying in those days, from Bethlehem. The Scriptures cannot be broken, the counsel of the Lord it shall stand. God's decree, declared by the mouth of the prophet seven hundred and ten years before the birth of Jesus Christ, is that he should be born in Bethlehem. So, when the fullness of time was come, God by his unerring wisdom, in the execution of his counsel, by his providence, for he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, caused a puny creature (but he was considered among men to be the greatest in the earth at that time) to make a decree, and the fruit of this decree was to make Joseph the carpenter with Mary his wife take that long journey from their home to Bethlehem. But let us read together the story as told in Luke ii. 1–7: "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judæa, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, (because he was of the house and lineage of David,) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." The Lord taught his

people to look for Christ the Lord to be born in Bethlehem. This was of sacred signification unto them. This is how the Lord foretold the matter unto them: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Bethlehem signifies the house of bread, and Ephratah, fruitful, fertility. Christ is the Bread of Bethlehem, and there is no bread in all the world except Christ, the true and living Bread. (John vi. 48.)

"Without this Bread I starve and die,
No other can my need supply;
But this will suit my wretched case
Abroad, at home, in every place.

This precious food my heart revives;
What strength, what nourishment it gives!
O let me evermore be fed
With this divine, celestial Bread."

Jesus Christ is peculiarly the food of his people; he nourishes and cherishes the church. (Eph. v. 29.) It is in Christ that a poor sinner is made to know his sins are all forgiven. It is in him we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of our sins, according to the riches of his grace. O how the sin-famished soul feasts upon the pardon of sin. By Jesus we receive the atonement, and our sins all covered by Emmanuel's blood how blessed before our God is our condition. The quickened sinner hungers and thirsts after righteousness, and no such food is to be found in his sinful, wretched life. But Christ, who came forth in Bethlehem, is Jehovah our Righteousness. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, and his righteousness is unto and upon them that believe in him. Here we are filled and our hungerings are satisfied, for we are made the righteousness of God in him.

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

"The terrors of law and of God
With me can have nothing to do;
My Savior's obedience and blood
Hide all my transgressions from view."

Jesus Christ is the "hidden manna," (Rev. ii. 17,) the golden pot of manna in the ark of the covenant. (Heb. ix. 4.) O Christ, thou hast the words of eternal life, and on these our hungry souls must live. To whom shall we go if we should go away from thee? Thou art our Bethlehem, the house of bread. Thou only, Jesus dear, art the life and sustenance, the living bread of poor, perishing sinners. Christ, our Passover Lamb, is sacrificed for us. (1 Cor. v. 7.) He is our feast of fat things, of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined. (Isaiah xxv. 6.) Out of Bethlehem Christ came forth unto the Father, the Ruler in Israel. The Son of God was made of a woman, the Word was made flesh. In Bethlehem he was born of the virgin Mary, and she laid him in a manger. He was thus in fashion as a man; he was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. Christ was born a king, (John xviii. 37,) and we remember that Nathaniel exclaimed, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel."—John i. 49. The dying thief, beholding Christ upon the cross, according to the working of God's gracious and mighty power in his heart believed in Jesus, and prayed unto him, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom," and our dear Savior said unto him, "Verily, I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."—Luke xxiii. 42, 43.

"Jesus the Savior reigns,
The God of truth and love;
When he had purged our stains,

He took his seat above.
Lift up your hearts, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, again I say, Rejoice.

His kingdom cannot fail,
He rules o'er earth and heaven;
The keys of death and hell
Are to our Jesus given.
Lift up your hearts, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, again I say, Rejoice."

The shepherds were watching over their flocks by night. "And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."—Luke ii. 8–11. And I am sure if we poor sinners have had the testimony of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, in our hearts that Jesus is our Savior we shall in truth believe that he is not only our Friend and Redeemer, but that he is Christ the Lord, the Ruler in Israel, the blessed and only Potentate, King of kings and Lord of lords. (1 Tim. vi. 15.) Christ came the Deliverer and Ruler in Israel to deliver his people from sin and death, hell and the grave. He came to redeem us from the curse of the law; he spoiled principalities and powers, sin, death and Satan, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in his cross. (Col. ii. 15.) He finished the work the Father gave him to do; he was the Surety of the everlasting covenant, and ratified it with his precious blood. On the night in which he was betrayed he said, "This is the new covenant in my blood, shed for the remission of sins." Truly it is our precious Christ who has done worthily in Ephratah, and who is preeminently famous in Bethlehem. (Ruth iv. 11.) The renown of his fame has gone into all the world. The queen of Sheba heard of the renown of Solomon, and she came from the ends of the earth to partake of his wisdom. O, she found he was so glorious that she was overcome with his magnificence and wisdom, and she said to the King, "It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes have seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard. Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighteth in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice. And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon. * * * And king Solomon gave unto the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, besides that which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants."—1 Kings x. 6–10, 13. Our Lord Jesus Christ being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God. (Phil. ii. 6.) In him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and one in his Deity with the Father and the Holy Ghost, he is the eternal God. No other being save the one self-existent, eternal Jehovah, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, inhabiteth eternity. (Isaiah lvii. 15.) In the beginning the heavens and the earth and all the host of them were created by the breath of his mouth. (Psalms xxxiii. 6.) "For by him

were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist."—Col. i. 16, 17. All these creative acts of God were according to his eternal purpose. He created not the earth in vain, he formed it to be inhabited. I am the Lord, and there is none else. (Isaiah xlv. 18.) There is not an atom too many nor too few in all the universe, and no atom thereof shall exceed or come short of fulfilling his holy, wise, eternal decrees.

"In heaven, and earth, and air, and seas,
He executes his firm decrees;
And by his saints it stands confessed
That what he does is ever best."

And it is peculiarly in connection with the church, the elect of mankind, that his goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the wisdom and power of God; yes, he is "the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory; which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."—1 Cor. ii. 7, 8. So in Proverbs viii. 22–31, we have so blessedly declared his goings forth from of old, from everlasting, in the covenant ordered in all things and sure: "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: when he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men."

Some scoffers have asked, What was God doing in eternity before the creation of the world? All that he was doing we do not know, but the transactions of Jehovah the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, that he has been pleased to reveal unto us in the Scriptures, "are most surely believed among us," and we muse upon these acts of the eternal God, his goings forth from of old, from everlasting, with sacred pleasure. Contemplate a few of the testimonies of the holy Scriptures relative to these matters. In Ephesians i. 3–6, the apostle Paul testifies: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." And Christ, "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word." And then he says, Thou "hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that

they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."—John xvii. 6, 23, 24. Christ, the Lamb of God, was verily foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God. (1 Peter i. 20, 21.) Christ is the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory. (1 Cor. ii. 7.) God hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. (2 Tim. i. 9, 10.) And thus the apostle Peter writes: Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. All, the sufferings, death, resurrection and ascension to glory of Christ, was in fulfillment of the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the covenant Head of the church. He was set up as such from of old, from everlasting, and all the characters he should sustain unto his people, and all the offices he should fulfill in their behalf, were provided for in the counsel of Jehovah's will, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Eph. iii. 11.) But these matters of the goings forth from of old, from everlasting, are too deep and too extensive to enlarge upon just now. This belief is our comfort, that we are "in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; but hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me, according to the commandment of God our Savior."—Titus i. 2, 3.

"Vast were the settlements of grace
On millions of the human race,
And every favor richly given
Flows from the high decree of heaven."

"O wondrous grace, and mystery profound,
In God's eternal purpose I was found;
His sovereign love, his grace, his deep decree,
In some mysterious way included me."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

SUMNER, Wash., Jan. 4, 1917.

DEAR ELDER KER:—In looking over some old correspondence during the inclement weather I have copied most of several letters, which I send you. I do not presume to judge of their value or fitness for your purpose, but merely submit them; they at least furnish us a glimpse of how those old saints who are fallen asleep were led.

Yours in the joys and sorrows of the way,
B. H. CARTER.

FOREST HILL, Md., April 21, 1904.

DEAR SISTER MARTHA:—Yours of March 24th was received here in due time, and appreciated by us all, but one would suppose more especially by me, as my memory runs back over the past, and can call up many things they know nothing of, although it seems strange to me to be writing to one so far away and so well acquainted with in former years. But in reading your letter I hear the same things that you used to say in your home when I used to visit there; the change of place of living has made no change in the doctrine you then defended and the truth you

then espoused by being led by the Spirit to believe that salvation is of the Lord, and that you had an interest in that salvation. Many times in my early days, when I saw old people who had been traveling by faith until old in years, it seemed to encourage me to believe that the religion of or taught in the Bible was no cunningly devised fable, but well grounded truth, to still live with them in old age. As I was then earnestly desiring to see a way of life and salvation and ground of hope for a seemingly lost and ruined creature, this evidence in old people helped me much to believe that in hoary hairs he would carry those who believed in him, and that he would never leave nor forsake them. Now I have come into those years myself, and that generation has gone the way of all the earth. I heard them talk of things then that I have since learned to understand better, and am led to believe one must pass that way to know. I am in old age different from what I had expected in some things; I have fallen short in my calculations, for I surely thought of a growth in grace and knowledge in spiritual and eternal things, but instead I have been made to feel the hidden evils of my own heart. I looked to have it in one way, and the Lord was pleased to lead me in another way, I believe to teach me that man was not to live by bread alone. I hope I have learned some things, but not in the way that I expected. If not so pleasant, I hope it has been profitable to me. I have been trying to serve the same churches for so long I may imagine many things, for it is hard for me to do otherwise, but they arise from my unprofitable life. To will is present, but how to perform I find not. When a little fruitful traveling is mine to enjoy, all is well, but this is not always the case, indeed but seldom. I love to go as well as ever, but the trips now seem to be more of an undertaking as I get older, but I feel anxious to do no harm if I can do no good; to leave my post at last and feel to say, Neither count I my life dear to myself, that I might finish my course with joy, and the gospel committed unto me. You are the last one of the members at Rock Springs who were there at my first visit. I want you and all the family to know that you have my best wishes for your welfare, and when it is well with you remember me, fainting, yet still pursuing and knowing no way for a poor sinner to be saved but through Christ.

Your old servant,

WM. GRAFTON.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 27, 1909.

MY DEAR SISTER:—Your good and kind letter written early in December was greatly enjoyed by me, as well as by all with whom I shared it. It touches me deeply that you should have us all in such tender remembrance, and especially that you should continually remember me at the throne of grace. I feel so unworthy, yet so needy, your words strengthen and comfort me more than I can say; your letters have a value that I cannot measure. I want to thank you for telling me as much as you did about your own family. I believe you have realized all that is promised in Matthew xix. 21, and Mark x. 30, to those who have left all and followed Him. I believe all do receive here in time an hundredfold. This has seemed a most touching example of the condescension and love of the Father, who sent his Son to bear not only our sins, but our weaknesses. I have heard parents say they were not impressed to pray for their children; they knew they were in the Lord's hand, and he

would call them when it seemed good to him. Doubtless they spoke the truth. Perhaps the agonizing supplication that proceeds from many a parent's heart is not prayer in the true sense, if only the prayer of faith is true, yet I cannot believe the Lord forbids us to ask the blessing of his love for our children, if in our hearts we also say, "Thy will be done." I would not instruct the mind of the Lord, or make channels wherein his grace may flow, but I can no more resist the continual supplication for our children which goes on in my heart than I can help breathing. Once I was stunned and made dumb for a considerable time by the words spoken to my soul with power: Speak no more to me of this matter; but the cry began to go up again, and I think after that I knew as I had not before the meaning of, If it be thy will. I know there was always an humble attitude after that, and I do not know in what other way I could have been taught the full value of that call by grace which comes to those the Father hath chosen than in the waiting for its manifestation in those I most dearly love. Do you not think that just as Abraham laid Isaac on the altar at God's command, so we lay our children on the altar of God's righteous judgment, trusting, just as he did, in the power and mercy of God to save? Sometimes I have feared it irreverent to think of this; at other times it has seemed beautiful to me, and more and more so as it comes to me again and again. I do not know how I could ever have been so fully established in the truth that, No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him, as by the experiences I have had. It used to seem to me the Lord always heard and answered my prayers. I did not know that I was presumptuous in thinking so; it seemed wonderful, and I thought I felt humbled and grateful, but by the consternation and dismay I experience when the heavens are brass above me and my cry is not heard, I learn that I have been presuming. There seems to be no wrong attitude that I do not at times assume. Surely only infinite mercy could meet a case like mine, and how great the grace that inspired an apostle to say that they cannot sin who are born of God. This wonderful language never seemed clear to me until a few days ago, and at a time when the sin of the broken law seemed most dreadful.

Yours in love,

C. E. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 18, 1910.

MY VERY DEAR SISTER:—I wonder how I could wait so long to acknowledge your most excellent and more than welcome letter of Nov. 4th. I know it has not been my pleasure to thus delay. There has always been a feeling like this in my mind with reference to our correspondence, that it was an imposition on you, and that I ought not to write too often. Most kindly and patiently you have sought to relieve me of this impression, and it is ungenerous of me not to freely receive the assurance, and it is scarcely courteous when you do write for me not to acknowledge at once a favor so much valued and of so much worth. I think any one who has any interest in christian experience could not fail to appreciate your letters, and to be the one to whom their contents are addressed, and to be the subject of them is like every gift to me from the Father's hand, inexplainable, wonderful. You have often expressed this interest, mentioning me and mine in your prayers, &c. I was thinking of this, and the wonder of it

this morning, and it appeared to me to be like all the adaptation of circumstances to the need of the Lord's children. Your mind was drawn out to pray for me because my need was so great, and I could not but worship the mercy that so ordained it. Perhaps I have told you this before, but I will refer to it again as showing my great poverty and the depth of my unworthiness, or part of it. Some twenty years ago or thereabout I was thinking, but not with emotion, of the deadness of my condition; I could not recall a spiritual impulse in years. The words, At evening time it shall be light, occurred to my mind, but not with power or promise. I continued in the same frame of mind I do not know how long thereafter, but many times these words were in my mind. At last I began to wonder if they were a promise to me, just to wonder. As they persisted, I came to the conclusion they were really spoken to me, and what then do you think was the attitude of my mind toward them? I was afraid to claim the promise or desire it, lest the evening might be at hand and I was not ready. It would be a longer story than I have days to write or you to read to tell all that has since intervened, but the evening has come, and with it light by which to see day by day more and more of my dreadful deformity. I supposed light would mean something like complaisance, and a comfortable acceptance of my condition, but nothing could be farther than that from what I know. But I am comforted by the belief that the Lord would not have shown me so much truth about myself if he had not had thoughts of mercy toward me. I know he has at times enabled me to praise him for his wonderful works to the children of men. I suppose I could not do this if I did not love him, although my heart is so cold and dead. I have been enabled to realize the necessity of the work of the Mediator more and more clearly, for which I have felt very thankful. There could be no hope for me were the atonement any less perfect than it is. Here and there, up and down in the world there are scattered evidences that the Lord has not forgotten to be gracious, yet often I tremble lest he has. I have been rather impatient lately because the Lord with his great power does not make an end of sin, but I have suffered rebuke for my presumption, which for the time has made me willing the Lord should do his own work in his own way. I have also been reminded it would be better to be more diligent in the performance of what we are already directed in the New Testament to do.

Lovingly yours,

CLARICE E. DURAND.

LYLES, Pa., April 20, 1903.

MY DEAR SISTER:—I cannot help addressing you in this way, though I never felt farther from the community of interest which this implies than I do at the present time, and I do not know that I ever felt a greater longing for the fellowship of the saints of God. I am cold and lifeless, and realize fully that I am helpless and undone unless our gracious Redeemer reveals himself again to me as my Savior. More than once these words have remained in my mind: "If the vision tarry, wait for it." I have waited long, and have had perhaps a little glimpse, but do not receive the fullness of joy which was mine in my early experience, when over and over with an almost perfect assurance and for many days these words lingered with me: "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage." I could not then

know the weary way which lay before me, and as the years pass I groan more and more over the sin that doth so easily beset me and the sorrows that are meted out to me. In those early days, when my health was frail and I often seemed to walk hand in hand with death, Jesus all the day long was my hope and my song, my meditations were sweet, and no outward occurrences seemed to mar the nearness to him. I scarcely now seem to be the same person who experienced this love and joy; I am so different, and I look back with amazement at my path. I can indeed lay my hand upon my mouth and say, I have sinned, and in all things come short of what is a true christian walk. If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not. I feel sometimes that I cannot pray, that I constantly ask amiss, and then I do not know whether I am sincere, and the problem seems so unsolvable that I give it up; but not for long, it returns, and again I feel indifferent as to the result, and conclude that I cannot change anything. I was reading not long ago, and the words, Quench not the Spirit, remained in my mind, and I began to think that no doubt that was the reason I was in such a strait; instead of taking the Bible and compelling my mind to retain the words, I was reading until I gained interest in it. I would take a paper or a magazine and enjoy the diversion. I was quite sure this must be true until I was taught again that I had no such strength; I could not will a thing like that and do it. How could a weak and puny thing quench the Spirit of the living God?

In the joys and afflictions of the way, I am, I hope, your sister,

MARY THOMAS JENKINS.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Feb. 8, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—In your "New Year's Greeting" you exhorted all who love God and his cause to write for the SIGNS during the present year. I hope I am included in that number, though I feel the columns of the SIGNS can be filled with much better material for the Lord's people than anything I can contribute. At the same time, when I reflect upon the faithful and arduous work which you and Elder Lefferts have been performing in keeping our dear paper up to the high standard set by its founder and continued by those who have succeeded him, there comes the desire to at least acknowledge to our beloved editors and contributors some of the benefits which I have derived in following their pens. No doubt they all need the encouragement which the knowledge that their efforts are appreciated gives, and I am glad to state that many of the sayings of those who have written during the past year have come to me as water in a dry place, and I was enabled to drink of the streams which flowed out from the wonderful river of grace, which proceeds forth from the throne of our adorable God. It has been provided that the precious garden of the Lord shall be well watered; a river shall flow into each of its four corners, thus signifying that not a single plant of his right hand setting shall fail for thirst, but that each and every one shall be supplied with all that is needful, in due season. The plants are unable of themselves to approach that which sustains and gives life, but how glad they are when the beloved gardener sees fit to send forth this living water, causing it to permeate their very being, reviving and nourishing wherever its power is known and felt.

In tracing the rivers of nature we find

that the nearer we approach their head the smaller they become, until finally we come to only a little spring at the foot of a hill, which as it wends its downward course becomes enlarged by other little streams flowing into it, gradually swelling until by and by it is lost in the mighty ocean. How different from this is the river of eternal life! The great ocean of this wonderful river is at its fountain-head, and instead of tributaries flowing "in," they flow "out" into the desert, and wherever their waters reach the parched soil it becomes fertile and brings forth a copious fruit. The soil has absolutely no power to turn away or to refuse to drink of this water.

The world to-day is full of people who would have us believe that the Lord is wooing and beseeching all of Adam's race to accept of his salvation, and that he cannot save them so long as they resist his pleadings. Any one who believes that must be entirely void of any knowledge of the effectual working of his mighty power. There are a peculiar people, however, who, having been called out of darkness into his marvelous light, believe that God is omnipotent, almighty, sovereign, unlimited in power; that he created the heavens and the earth and all that in them is, and that all things hang on his firm decree. When this One speaks it is done, and when he commands it stands fast; there is nothing to hinder him from doing all his pleasure, and whatsoever he desireth that he doeth. The words of this One are accompanied with power, and holy writ contains not even the slightest hint of his failure at any time in all of his marvelous works. Whether he says to the leper, Be ye cleansed, or to the maimed, Arise, take up thy bed and walk, or to the blind, Receive thy sight, or to the dead, Come forth, it is done. A power that comes short of this is not sufficient for the people of God to trust in, for their case requires infinite power, one that can and does deliver from the very belly of hell, that brings one up out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and sets their feet upon a rock and establishes their goings. O what a wonderful Rock is the Rock Christ Jesus! "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." His people rejoice greatly in this glorious truth, for they know that though heaven and earth pass away, the foundation upon which their faith rests cannot be shaken; therefore, instead of telling what they are doing for the Lord, they feel that heaven itself could not contain the books that it would take to describe what wonderful things the Lord has done for them. They know that the things which they have received were not given according to the reasoning of a natural man, neither did flesh and blood reveal it, but that some wonderful, mysterious power, which they cannot describe, has wrought a marvelous change in them, causing them to hate the things they once loved and to love the things they once hated, and they delight in believing that this power is none other than the almighty power of God. Many are the times that doubt and fear that it is not the Lord almost sink them in despair, but this good Shepherd does not leave his sheep to become the prey of the destroying wolf; he watches over them, and they know his voice and follow him; he gives unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. He makes them to lie down in green pastures, he leadeth them beside the still waters; he restoreth their souls, he leadeth them in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though they walk through the valley

of the shadow of death, they fear no evil, for he is with them; his rod and his staff comfort them. He prepares a table before them in the presence of their enemies, he anoints their heads with oil; their cup runneth over. When he makes bare his arm in their behalf and reveals himself unto them as their Savior they can and do adopt the language of the psalmist in saying, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." The religion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is a personal religion, and he alone can and does teach his people in such a way that caused Peter to say, "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye witnesses of his majesty." The Lord's witnesses are true witnesses, therefore they must see, handle and taste of his goodness, of his long-suffering to usward, of his never-ending mercy and of his eternal love, which knows no height, nor depth, nor circumference, and from which nothing, tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword, death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor any other creature, can separate us from this love of God, which is in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Submitted in love.

R. LESTER DODSON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Feb. 10, 1917.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I will mail you a letter written by sister Elvira H. Perrine to sister A. Johnson Drake, for publication in the SIGNS. It was handed to me by sister Drake by sister Perrine's consent, so I ask you to publish it, if in your judgment you feel it is good matter for the readers of the SIGNS.

I much enjoyed the last number of the SIGNS, and several previous issues have also been good.

Wishing the SIGNS and all its readers the divine guidance of the great Shepherd, I am, I hope, your brother in tribulation, C. W. VAUGHN.

OCTOBER 24.

DEAR SISTER:—I told you this morning I felt to write you, and will now try to tell you some of my sweet experiences to-day. "Joy cometh in the morning," and it came to me very sweetly about 4 a. m. to-day; it was the morning of a new day to me, spiritually as well as naturally. When I awoke it seemed as if some one spoke, and these were the words: The light of the world is Jesus. I laid for half an hour thinking of how wonderful it is to think what is the light of the world. After I arose these words came to me: "Lord, forever at thy side let my place and portion be." I looked for the hymn and found it. You do not know who I am, for I am like this: "I am a stranger here below." Read the whole hymn, it suits my case perfectly. Again, this afternoon while ironing, the hymn, "Quiet, Lord, my froward heart," &c., came to me so beautifully. Weeping can endure but a night. The morning and evening were the first day, the day of joy, not measured by hours and minutes, but measured as God sees fit to unfold his love to us and makes us bask in his sunshine, and when it pleases him to withdraw his presence from us, then night and darkness cover the earth and gross darkness the people. I understand this earth to be our bodies, as God rules in heaven and in earth, and how long the night. It has pleased God to give me a long night, but in his, not my time, joy cometh in the morning, and the Sun

arises with healing in his wings, making all joy, and he that wipes the widow's eyes wiped mine, and put a new song in my mouth, even praise to his holy name. It seems the very smallest ray of hope I have held fast to like an anchor is like the grain of mustard seed grown into a large tree. There seems to be so many doubting castles in my path that I get almost behind the rest, just get almost out of sight, then I am out of doubting castle again and traveling with the rest until I am caused to go through another doubting castle, and the way is so rough and slippery that my feet too often slip. Then again I come out of the castle and am led in green pastures and he restoreth my soul, and it seems that I will never want or cry for help or mercy again, but every day will be the same; but I so often leave the narrow way and trespass where the paths are pleasant to my feet, but ere I go far I am walking on thorns and thistles, and then I am made to know the cry of one in the wilderness, and when He brings back his wandering one it is with love and tender forbearance, so I am made to say, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty. This afternoon I broke out in singing, "Rescue the perishing, care for the dying," and when I had sung this line through I stopped and thought, The worldly minded sing that to rescue the natural ones; but I saw it was for me when I lay perishing and dying, as I die daily, and when I am covered with putrefying sores and all hope is gone; that is the perishing and dying I was singing about.

Dear sister, these are some of my travels, never on the mountain top, but mostly in the valley, on the shady side, with few bright spots. Now let me go a little farther and tell you how my brethren and sisters appear to me. As I write this I can see them all assembled at our place of worship, and how good they look; all have the mark in their foreheads that they are born of God. Can this be the poor, despised company that the world hates? It must be the world does not know them; they are not poor, but rich, rich in God's grace, each esteeming other better than self. O what a beautiful place, it must be the very gate of heaven.

I will not weary you with my rambling letter much longer, but just want to say to you that I pray God may give you many such days, more so than me, for you are more worthy than I, and that he in all your pains and weaknesses may hold up your hands and confirm your feeble knees, and may you find in him a very present help in trouble. As the good Samaritan found the man lying in the highway and took him to the inn, so may you feel He has taken you to the inn and fed you with manna, a new supply each morning, and gave you dew from heaven for your thirst. He is the great Physician, pouring in oil and wine and restoring your soul. May it be when he afflicts you with bodily pain that his strength will carry you through. Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. I know you feel that the way is barren, but there is hope. If you feel you are alone, you are not, for it is then he travels with you. As your day your strength shall be; weak in the flesh but strong in the Lord. It seems I have never had such a blessed day and evening. As I write, thoughts are passing through my mind too fast to get them all on paper. May God bestow upon you health, is my desire, and also give you an understanding of him and his love daily, that you may have sweet communion with him in a little sanctuary built round about you, where thieves cannot break through and steal.

I hope I have not wearied you too much; it just seemed I could not stop, but I suppose before this is in your hands I shall have repented sending it, fearing the flesh and worldly notions have occupied too large a place, when it was my desire to dwell on heavenly and divine things.

Good-by, dear sister; write me, it will do us good.

Very lovingly and unworthily,

ELVIRA H. PERRINE.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Jan. 29, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN AND FRIENDS:—The many good letters I read in the SIGNS are a comfort and blessing to me in my old age, and I often think how we have been blessed here as a church to have preaching most of the time, while others who are as worthy as we are deprived of that privilege; but we hear them say that the SIGNS preaches to them, and so it does. It tells of each other's joys and sorrows, pleasures and comforts, and that love which binds our hearts together in one bundle of love. It is wonderful love, so different from natural love. Our pastor spoke yesterday from Luke iii. 9: "And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees; every tree, therefore, which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire." I believe that I need pruning at times, when the flesh gets the uppermost of me. But I do believe that I love the children of God, and like to be present with them, and enjoy every meeting; it is my meat and my drink to be with my brethren and crown God Lord of all. To the name of Jesus every knee must bow and every tongue confess. He that confesseth my name before men, him will I confess before my Father which art in heaven; he that denieth me before men, him will I deny before my Father which is in heaven. "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. * * * Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." There certainly can come no fruit from the branches unless they abide in the vine. "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." Job said, Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God. But ye are forgers of lies, ye are all physicians of no value. O that ye would altogether hold your peace, and it should be your wisdom. Job knew full well that it was much safer to put his trust in his heavenly Father than to trust in worldly men, wherein is no salvation. O that men would praise him for his wonderful works. All his people are taught of the Lord, and great shall be their peace. That Friend which Job trusted in we also trust in; he is the Rock of our salvation. Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. He rules, and must rule, until all things are put under his feet, and the last enemy is death. O death, where is thy sting? O

grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law, but through our Lord Jesus Christ we gain the victory. He conquered death, hell and the grave, and rose triumphant over all his foes in glorious victory. We love to meditate on these things both day and night; they are lovely in our sight. We are guided by that precious hope, which is the anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast. We are pilgrims and strangers here below, but we have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. On the blessed promises of our heavenly Father we can rely. He will never forsake one of the little ones; they are his, and he loves them with an everlasting love, and with that love he draws them to him. Seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you. He leads the blind by a way they knew not, makes the lame walk, cures the lepers. We are in the Potter's hand. Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? Not many mighty, not many noble are called, but the poor of this world. When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, he makes rivers on the mountains and streams in the valleys. The mountains shall depart, and the hills shall be removed, but my loving-kindness I will not take from you. O thou afflicted and not comforted, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and thy windows of agate, and they shall all know me, from the least to the greatest. I will discern between the righteous and the wicked, between them that serveth me and them that serveth me not. We are not our own keepers, we are kept by the power of God. The redeemed of the Lord shall come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads. He is merciful and gracious, he will not chide, neither will he keep his anger forever. If we suffer, we shall reign with him; if we deny him, yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself. We are told that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose. We know not how to pray as we ought, but he maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. What great love he had for his people to lay down his life for them as he did. He said, Greater love hath no man than to lay down his life for his friends. We love him because he first loved us. He brought us up out of the miry clay, set our feet on a rock, established our goings, and does so much for us that we surely love to crown him Lord of all. Not unto us, but unto him be all honor and glory, knowledge and wisdom, and all power to save just such poor sinners as we are. He stilled the mighty waves, divided the Red Sea so that the ransomed of the Lord passed through dry shod, which the Egyptians attempted to do and were all drowned. We feel glad to trust him for all that is to come and praise him for all that is past. None can stay his hand. What is man? He is as the grass that springeth up in the morning, as the flower of the field; the wind bloweth over it, and the place that knew it knows it no more.

Dear brethren and sisters, may you be kept by his almighty arm and be the lot of his inheritance. May you be kept from falling, is my sincere prayer.

Your brother in a precious hope,

D. L. BLACKWELL.

OMAHA, Texas, Dec. 22, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed please find check for renewal of my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I wish you all a merry Christmas and a prosperous new year, and hope the Lord will still sustain you and enable you to publish the SIGNS in the future as you have in the past. No one ever contends for or publishes the truth without the will of the Lord, neither can any receive it without the Spirit of the Lord, and then O how sweet it is when we can see it strictly by grace, that grace that brings salvation to poor sinners, and elects them to glory and enables them to worship God in spirit and in truth and true holiness and righteousness before him all the days of their life here upon the earth, which is their delight, and in which is all of their joy. Surely such people are wonderfully blessed with those spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus which God has, according to his own purpose and grace, blessed us with in him in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Then there can be salvation in no other; it is he who is our deliverer and who delivers us from all the evil consequences of sin. Then there is no more condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; hence the admonition of the apostle to stand fast in that liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. Then may it be the will of the Lord to bless us all with that steadfastness in this glorious liberty of the Lord, that we may ever contend for that faith once delivered unto the saints.

Yours in hope of a blessed immortality,

W. B. ROBERTSON.

SOLDIERS' HOME, QUINCY, Ill., Jan. 26, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Those who feared the Lord spake often one to another, and a book of remembrance was written, so my Bible tells me. Now, dear brethren, as my wife and I are so situated that we cannot speak face to face, it has been impressed upon my mind to use the only medium to talk: through the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. May the dear Lord direct me in writing to the dear ones from whom through its columns I have received so much spiritual comfort to cheer me on my pilgrimage here. O brethren, what a solid foundation we have for our faith recorded in his word. When we feel cast down what joy to know that we will never be forsaken. Our Savior is the great rock of defense in a weary land. When temptations assail us, and the archenemy of our soul assails us, we can hear him say, Fear not, I will be with you, nothing can harm you. Let us trust him, for he knows our every trial, and we can rest upon his word that nothing shall harm one of his little ones whom he gave his life to redeem. Yes, brethren, in all our conflicts with the flesh he certainly will bring us off more than conquerors over all our foes. Blessed Jesus, keep us humble, and as little children.

Dear editors, if there is one word of comfort in this for any of the scattered little ones, send it on its errand; if not, cast it aside. My wife joins me in sending christian love to all the brethren.

Yours in hope through Christ of everlasting life,

B. F. MEHEW.

A CORRECTION.

IN the article of brother Reuben Benstead, of Aberfeldy, Ontario, on page 111, March 1st, number, in the second column, a little more than one-third down, will be found the expression, "But predestination is no excuse for sin," which he wishes us to state should not be there.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1917.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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ARMAGEDDON.

THIS word, though it occurs in the New Testament, is of Hebrew origin. It is used but once: in Revelation xvi. 16. It signifies the "mountain of slaughter," and is the battle-ground of that great day of God Almighty. The three frog-like spirits that come out of the mouths of the dragon, of the beast, and of the false prophet, proceed from the devil and work miracles. These evil spirits go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world to gather them together unto the battle of Armageddon. These three spirits are spirits of error and delusion, but the whole world believes them and is swept along by them to certain defeat and overthrow in the battle of the Lord. They never have a single likelihood of being ultimately victorious, for it is certain the Lord will overcome and that Christ and his truth will be victorious. Frequently we hear it said that the present awful war raging across the sea in Europe is the battle of Armageddon: the battle of that great day of God Almighty. We are not prepared to fall in with this notion ourselves, for we have never been able to see, as yet, where any great spiritual truth or principle is at stake in the European war, neither is righteousness wholly on the side of either Germany or of those arrayed against her. The battle of the great day of God Almighty, it seems to us, is a conflict in which truth is arrayed against error—a conflict of Christ and all his people against the devil and all his forces. We have tried to closely follow the varying fortunes of the European war ever since its beginning in the summer of 1914, and have so far failed to see where truth on one side is arrayed against wickedness on the other. There has been a great deal of wickedness manifested on all sides, and we do not deny that there have also been worthy aims actuating all the contestants in a more or less degree. However, these worthy aims, excellent as they may have been and still are, are not spiritual aims, but either moral or intellectual, or social or political. This war is not a religious war at all, and we know of no principle of any religious faith that is at stake or that will be affected by the outcome. Boundaries of nations may be changed, new treaties affecting commerce and world-politics may be entered into by the peace-contracting parties, and forms of government may be altered to some extent; but where in all this is godliness affected, or how does it in anywise touch the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ? No, this European war is not Armageddon. Armageddon is the arraying of all the host of antichrist against the truth of Christ, and all in whom is that truth. It is the conflict between the church and the world, the flesh and the devil. This is a spiritual conflict, and is not fought with carnal weapons, such as are being used in the slaughter abroad. In Armageddon, spirituals and not materials are in conflict. The battle of the great day of God Almighty will end decisively, will end never to be fought again, will end with

truth triumphant and with error forever routed and vanquished. Christ came into this world to vanquish the power of Satan. Sin, death and hell are the awful triumvirate against which the Savior fought. He fought with the word of the Lord. This was, in his hand, sharper than any two-edged sword. He, through death, destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Christ, in his life and sufferings and death, vanquished his foes and delivered his church. The tragedy of Calvary was the battle of Armageddon. There heaven and earth met, and heaven defeated all the powers of the world, the flesh and the devil. The omnipotence of God triumphed over all the works of the devil, and that battle will never need to be fought again. By this one offering of himself, Christ has forever perfected them that are sanctified. He will never repeat that sacrifice, for there is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. "Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east." "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark, but it shall be one day, which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light." The evening time is when the sun sets. As Christ, the Son of God, was leaving this world, as the life of Jesus ebbed away on the cross, it was evening time. This was the end of the legal day. But, lo, instead of great darkness following the withdrawing of this Sun of Righteousness from the world, behold a new day: the gospel dispensation is ushered in. This is, we believe, the meaning of the expression: at evening time it shall be light. The death of Christ is the dawn of salvation for every one of God's sheep held captive under the law. The glory of victory for righteousness shines forth from the cross with the Savior's words: "It is finished." His death is the release of the elect from death. His death paid the debt they owed. Thus, when it was evening time with him, it meant light and life for the church of God. By his stripes the chosen of God are healed. Thus was fought out to the bitter end the issue between truth and error. It took the blood and sweat and agony of our Redeemer to win the fight, but he triumphed over all his foes and ransomed his people from the captivity to sin, death and hell. This was a glorious victory, and in this overcoming work of Jesus is the hope of every heaven-born soul secured. As he once triumphed for them, so shall they triumph through him and be brought off more than conquerors, too. This is our understanding of the battle of Armageddon, and we cannot understand how the European conflict has any connection with it or wears any religious aspect at all. L.

SUBSCRIBERS TAKE NOTICE.

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BIBLE READING.

THERE can be no cast-iron rule laid down for one to follow in reading the Scriptures, as to how often, or when, or how much. For ourself, systematic as we have tried to be in most things, we have never been able to be very systematic in reading the Bible. While we believe there is no part of the Scriptures but what we have read, we have never been able to read it through from beginning to end by course. If one feels inclined to read it that way, let him do so, but to do so simply for the sake of saying one has done so, amounts to nothing. The Bible is the one book in all the world that is wholly reliable. It is the only wholly truthful book in existence. It is the only book written by divine inspiration, and serves as the only test as to what is true and what is false. Whatever or whoever does not agree with the Scriptures is false. The opinions or views of no man or body of men count for anything when in opposition to the Scriptures. Without a "thus saith the Lord" for authority, one is not worth the consideration of spiritually-minded people. To read profitably, the Bible reader needs the guidance of the Holy Spirit to illuminate the page of holy writ. Since the Bible is written by the Spirit of God, it is therefore necessary that the Spirit of God direct one in the understanding of it. The Bible can only be understood in the light of the same Spirit that wrote it. When the Spirit of God in the heart of the reader meets the testimony of the Spirit of God in the written page, the Bible is more enjoyable than any other book. Every other kind of reading, at such times, seems utter folly and waste of one's time. On the other hand, when the Spirit of God is not with the reader, and one is aware only of the bare letter of the Scriptures, how disheartening and dull it seems. At such times one appreciates the fact that the hidden treasures of the Scriptures cannot be unlocked by dint of study or mental effort. At such times one might read it as a matter of history; but if one has ever read the Bible with an insight into its spiritual significance, one hates to read it simply as a history book ever afterward. The bulk of Arminians have never read the Bible other than as a religious duty, have never known what it was to read the Scriptures breathlessly under the tuition of the Spirit; therefore, they seem to be satisfied, most of them, to read a few verses or a chapter every day and call it a deed well done. But the Old School Baptist, having known in his first love what it means to verily eat the word of God, lays the Bible down with a sigh of keen regret in after days when he finds not that sharpness of appetite nor fullness of satisfaction which was his in spiritual youth when the Bible seemed a new book because the Holy Spirit unlocked its treasures so wonderfully and clearly to the quickened understanding. This is the reason, we think, that Old Baptists as a rule are not great Bible readers. If one had never known the intense joy of being able to see beneath the bare letter of the Bible and to appreciate its hidden spiritual significance, one might be contented to read it merely for the letter's sake. But after one has had a taste of the kernel, one hates to feed on the bare husk afterward. So it is that often we pick up the Bible and try to read it, but when we find its treasures locked away from our understanding we lay it by with a sigh and wish for the days that are gone. However, there are times when one picks up the Bible not expecting to meet with any enjoyment in reading it,

when something will strike the attention, and we read on and on, oblivious of how many chapters or verses we have read, and finally lay it down with a feeling that we are glad we picked it up, having found it more engrossing than anything we ever remember to have read. Why cannot it always be this way with us? The only reason why it cannot, that we can now think of, is to keep us ever mindful of the fact that we are wholly dependent upon divine guidance in understanding the Bible, and that, in the absence of such guidance, our intellect will not suffice. We do not think the Bible is being read as much as it used to be. It is our observation that Old School Baptists are not the readers of the Bible that our fathers were. The reason for this must be that the Spirit of God is not as much with us as it was with them. Is not this deplorable? There is no escaping the fact that the church generally throughout the United States is passing through a period of coldness, indifference and falling away. Many absent themselves unnecessarily from the meetings of the church. The conversation of many of us is upon worldly themes, and not upon the things of the kingdom of God. In no place are there many being added to the church. From north to south and from east to west we are rent asunder by differences over this or that point of doctrine or order; jealousies, backbitings and cruel prejudices hold sway. All this proves a predominance of carnality in the minds of all of us, and absence of the spirituality of the mind of Christ. What can it all mean? To what is it leading? We sometimes wonder if the visibility of the church is to be taken from among the Old Baptists and given to another people. You know that ever since the apostles' day the visible organization of the church has been known to history under varying names. The name Old School or Primitive Baptist, is a new name, and has been used only since 1832. What if the Old School Baptist organization has served its purpose and God is about ready to have the visibility of his gospel manifested among some other body of people? It will be the same truth wherever it is and by whatever people it may be advocated. Certainly there is something the matter with us. We all feel it, though we may not be able to read its meaning. At least, the Spirit is not with us in the same vigor and intensity and zeal that it was with our fathers. That much is clear. For the rest, we can only wait and hope.

L.

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Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

APPOINTMENTS.

PLEASE publish the following appointments:

Roxbury, N. Y., Sunday, March 11th, at the Mead sisters' home, 10:45 a. m.; Halcottville, N. Y., Sunday, March 25th, all day meeting, commencing at 10:45 a. m.

GEORGE RUSTON.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. F. Tipton, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Hatchett, Reed, Okla., Jan. 14th, 1917, Elder W. N. Green, of Mt. Park, Okla., and Mrs. Kittie Hobbs, of Hollis, Okla.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Geo. H. Merryman, Md., $1.00; Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Okla., $2.00; S. A. Campbell, Md., $1.00; E. M. Kuehne, N. J., $1.00; O. F. Ballard, N. Y., $1.00; R. Scates, Ont., $1.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Annie M. Staples, of North Berwick, Maine, departed this life to be with Christ, which is far better, Jan. 24th, 1917, aged 62 years, 9 months and 15 days. Our sister was the daughter of Joseph and Joanna Staples, both of whom were members of the church at North Berwick. She had one brother and four sisters. Three of the sisters died of consumption of the lungs. Sarah Elizabeth died in 1860, aged 22 years; Mary Ellen in 1865, aged 21 years, and Elmira in 1866, aged 24 years. She has left to mourn their loss her sister, Mrs. Luthera Chadbourn, wife of Frank U. Chadbourn, and her brother, Orlando C. Staples. From her childhood days she was exercised in her soul about eternal things, and felt she was a lost sinner, needing salvation from God. During those years, in which her conscience was often in affliction under the burden of her felt sinfulness and apprehensions of the wrath to come, she longed to hear believers talk one to another of their experiences in divine things. She loved also to hear the preaching of the gospel. "Often when father and mother went to Oak Woods meeting I longed to go, and I mourned because there was no way for me to go, and I was left at home, for I was afraid to let them know how I longed to hear the gospel preached." The Lord led her along in his sacred teachings unto Christ and gave her at length a comfortable hope that her sins were all pardoned in Jesus' precious blood. She confessed her hope in the Savior and united with the church at Oak Woods, North Berwick, and was baptized by the writer August 12th, 1894. Our sister was a person of an amiable nature, unselfish, agreeable, cheerful; in her tongue was the law of kindness. Her life was a blessing, ever ministering to the welfare and happiness of others. Though her life was amiable, so Christlike, she was in her own eyes only a poor, vile transgressor. This was her constant confession, and that her hope was built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. This can be said of her, which can be said of very few in this world: "She hath done what she could." One day she said to me: "I feel sometimes I am a great hypocrite, for when any one acts unkindly toward me, or speaks to me unbecomingly, I never retaliate, I never say an unkind word in reply, I appear to endure it all with meekness, and people think I am good, [and putting her hand upon her breast she said, with tears in her eyes,] but I feel it all within, though I do not say a word or show it; so I feel I am a hypocrite, appearing to be better than I am." I told her I thought it was a very great mercy if when we felt anger or bitterness within us we were enabled to keep it all secreted, imprisoned within us.

Our sister was sick but a few days, and died of pneumonia at the home of sister Luthera Chadbourn. At her funeral the writer preached from the words: "I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors: and their works do follow them." —Rev. xiv. 13. Her body was laid away in the Sanford Cemetery, and is there awaiting the resurrection of the bodies of the just to immortality and incorruption at the last day.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

William E. Records, my dear son, died at our home in Salisbury, Md., Dec. 10th, 1916, of typhoid fever, aged 35 years, 2 months and 5 days. Willie was never well after the death of his dear sister Nellie, who died last May. When she died he said he would never get over it. I think his worrying had a great deal to do with bringing on the fever. I hoped as time passed he might get better and not feel so lonely, but such was not the case. All was done that could be done, but nothing seemed to do any good. He lived but two weeks after being confined to his bed. He was not a member of any church, but went with me whenever he went to any meeting. He was very quiet, never happier than when at home with his loved ones. I have hope that he is at rest, which is a great comfort to me. A few hours before he passed away he called me and said: "Mother, you are worrying, but don't do it; I have a higher place." Those were his last words. I said, Thank the Lord, Willie, he will take care of you. Such a peaceful expression passed over his face I shall never forget; it never left his face in death; he looked as if he were smiling. My dear children are all gone, but I am not left without hope that they are all gathered home in that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. O that I may be given strength to wait patiently, knowing it will not be long before I hope to go where sorrow shall be no more.

The funeral service was held at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Salisbury, conducted by Elder A. B. Francis, after which the remains were laid to rest by the side of his dear sister, whom he loved so well.

His sorrowing mother,

LUCINDA RECORDS.

This dear sister has been led through deep waters, and experienced trials which fall to the lot of but few. Within comparatively a short time her husband, three sons and daughter, all that she had, have passed away from earth, but with unwavering faith in the God of all grace she, like Job, is enabled to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." May the Lord ever be her support and stay, a very present help in time of trouble. She has the heartfelt sympathy of a host of friends and all the brethren and sisters of the Salisbury Association.

A. B. FRANCIS.

Mrs. Hester C. Williams, our dear and faithful sister in Christ Jesus, departed this life Feb. 5th, 1917, in the 83rd year of her age, at the home of her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Allnutt, near Poolesville, Montgomery Co., Md. She was born June 1st, 1834, and was the daughter of Benjamin White and Rachel Chiswell, being one of ten children, six girls and four boys. Of these ten children only one is now living, Mrs. Rachel Allnutt, of Dawsonville. Md., the surviving sister of our sister Williams. Nov. 17th, 1863, she was married to Richard Walter Williams, and was his third wife. Of this union two children were born, a son and a daughter, who both survive their mother: Walter Williams, an Episcopal clergyman in New York city, and Mrs. Lucy Allnutt, at whose home our sister Williams passed away. Besides these children of her own, sister Williams is survived by four step-children: Mrs. Mary Florence Pyles, Charles Williams and William Williams, all of Poolesville, Md., and Mrs. Sallie Eagle, of Rockville, Md. Sister Williams was baptized Nov. 3rd, 1895, by the late Elder E. V. White, into membership with the New Valley Old School Baptist Church, in Loudoun Co., Va. A branch of this church is established near our sister's home, and is called Broad Run. Here our sister lived and faithfully attended all her meetings whenever not providentially hindered. No one seemed to enjoy the meetings more than she, and none looked forward with more eager anticipation to the meetings, which came the first Sunday in every month to the little meetinghouse near her home. She was a stanch believer in salvation by grace and absolute predestination. She showed her faith by her works; her walk and conversation were salted with grace. She lived what she believed. We shall all miss her sorely: the church, the family and the community. May God comfort the mourning ones.

The funeral services were conducted at her late home near Poolesville, and burial took place in the Monocacy Cemetery, at Beallsville, Md. L.

Thomas Alexander Ardies, my beloved husband, departed this life at Ekfrid, Ontario, Canada, Jan. 31st, 1917, aged 80 years, 4 months and 5 days. He was born in New York city, came to Canada in 1875 with his mother and aunt, Julia Brawley, to live with his aunt, Mrs. Sarah Gurney, close by the meetinghouse of the Covenanted Baptist Church. He cared for these three dear ones with untiring devotion during their last hours on earth, as one after another they were taken from him to the realms above. He never attended Baptist meetings until he came to Canada, and it never ceased to be a wonder to him that he was at once drawn to that people in love and affection. His home had been a home to them for years, and he never tired waiting upon them as long as he was able. He asked a home with them in June, 1906, and was received and baptized July 1st, by Elder Silas H. Durand. He was married in November, 1911, to Bertha Wells. He had been in failing health the past two years, but kept about until two weeks before his death. He was a firm believer in the predestination of all things, and said when laid up if it was to be his last sickness it was all right, the God of the whole earth would do right; that if he was among that number who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, nothing could separate him. The words, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness," came sweetly to his mind at that time. He talked freely then of his hope, but toward the last could not talk, and became helpless as a little child. My dear companion loved to read the Bible and the dear old SIGNS aloud, or to sing a hymn of praise to God. Many pleasant hours we have spent this way in our quiet little home, and now I am left alone to mourn. O may I be submissive to the Lord's will and enabled to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Funeral services were held in the meetinghouse, conducted by Elder J. B. Slauson, and interment made in the little graveyard close by.

BERTHA ARDIES.

I wish to add a few words to what sister Ardies has written concerning her dear husband. I have known him many years, nearly fifty I suppose, and held him in high and loving esteem, both before and since his baptism. He was very attentive to church duties and privileges, and his mind seemed to be much upon spiritual things. He is much missed by the brethren. I sympathize with our dear sister and with the church.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Jefferson M. Moffitt was born in Nodaway County, Mo., Jan. 8th, 1862, where he resided until 1887. In December of that year he was united in marriage with Miss Siotha Jane Vanbuskirk, making his home in Andrew County, where they have since resided, with the exception of about four years spent in Iowa. In 1893 he with his wife was baptized in the fellowship of the "Three Forks of Nodaway" Old School Baptist Church, by the late Elder Richard M. Thomas, of St. Joseph, Mo. Father had been afflicted with a lingering illness for several years, but was not seriously ill until Friday, Feb. 2nd, when he continued to grow worse until he passed away, Sunday, Feb. 4th, aged 55 years and 27 days. Father was a faithful member of the church, and held the office of clerk several years. He said just a short time before his death: "I am ready to go home, for I have no enjoyment any more." His one great source of consolation was in reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which was nearly all the preaching he had the last few years,

being unable to attend meetings often on account of his health.

The funeral services were held at the residence Wednesday, Feb. 7th, at 11 o'clock a. m., conducted by Elder C. C. Moore, of Clarksdale, Mo., who used as a text Rev. xxii. 1, after which the body was laid to rest in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, near Savannah, Mo.

Besides his wife and one son, Levi B., who lives at home, he leaves five brothers and one sister to mourn their loss: R. T. and Winfield, of Ray Co., Mo., Wm. W. and Mrs. Alexander Wilson, of Oklahoma, Elder S. B. Moffitt, of Newberg, Oregon, and A. C. Moffitt. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

LEVI B. MOFFITT.

Rosa I. Bales, daughter of Jeremiah and Mary Stephens, was born in Greene County, Ohio, June 25th, 1862, and died Feb. 8th, 1917, at her home near Jamestown, Ohio, after an illness of several weeks. She was joined in marriage to Mr. Clayton Bales, August 14th, 1898. To that union were born two children, Lee and John. Her husband preceded her to the great beyond several years. Besides her two sons there are two sisters and five brothers living. Rosa's parents were both members of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, also one brother, L. E. Stephens, of Delaware, Ohio. While she never felt worthy or had courage to offer herself to the church, it was plainly evident to those who knew her (by her walk, conversation and love for the doctrine and fellowship for the people of God) that she had been given a good hope in Christ. Her home was always a stopping-place for the Baptists, and she was never too busy with her work to stop for the meetings. All through her last illness she was resigned and ready to go, making all the arrangements for her funeral, and told her friends not to weep for her, she was going home.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort to a large number of relatives and friends, after which she was laid to rest in the cemetery at Jamestown to await the summons of the blessed Savior in the resurrection.

GEO. L. WEAVER.

ANNOUNCEMENT.

I have written and am preparing for the press a book of about 100 pages, treating upon the personal identity of the church of God, titled, "My God and my Salvation," and will be priced at 50 cents postpaid. I earnestly request that all who may want one of those books will notify me as soon as possible, that I may know how many to print. Write name and address plainly, and send to

ELDER C. M. WEAVER.

COMMERCE, Mo.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 85. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1917. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ABOUT PRAYING.

"AND in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed."—Mark i. 35.

What a solemn interest there is for me in this incident concerning the dear Savior, and in the form of words in which it is related. I would love to be able to tell some of the thoughts and emotions which have been in my mind from time to time for many years as I have read this most wonderful and touching portion of his history. But it has appeared to me so sacred and solemn that I have felt a kind of backwardness as I approached the subject, as though it were a kind of intrusion upon a most solemn scene. What a strong, overpowering desire he must have had to be alone. Could I rudely break in upon this holy solitude with my worldly, coarse mind? Many a time I have hesitated when my mind has been drawn out by words used by holy men of old, feeling that my mind was too coarse, and I was too unworthy to use them. How much more ought I to hesitate when contemplating the words and works of the Savior. Nevertheless I have found it most sweet and comforting to let the spirit of my mind follow the dear Savior as "he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." Why would he be alone when he prayed? Why would he go beyond the sound of human voices and the tumult of moving feet when he prayed to the Father? Crowds of people had gathered when the sun was set, and were now waiting to be healed when he should come out of this solitude and appear again; for in the crowd were those who had all manner of disease to cure, and devils to cast out, false doctrine to withstand, and the gospel to preach. The whole city was at the door. Can we wonder that he should need to be alone at times a little while, alone with the Father, alone with that mighty work, and that fearful responsibility resting upon him? If I ask questions concerning this most solemn work it is with trembling of soul. I would not send my poor thoughts rashly into this sacred solitude where the Savior is alone with the Father, beyond where he gives me the gracious right and privilege. But I may remember that he has caused his servants to write and speak of these blessed things to the poor and unlearned, and revealed them to babes. The precious promises

are all given to those who especially feel and humbly acknowledge that they are unworthy of them. They are all given in the dear name of Jesus, and in his name alone.

How many questions are asked in ourselves concerning prayer; how to pray, and what to pray for! What is true prayer before the Lord? As for me, this subject of prayer is one that has given me much trouble and perplexity of mind. Questions arise with reference to it which reach to the depths of my soul. Can any man, except Jesus, teach another man to pray? Can anything be done to any form of words which will cause them to become a prayer? By the mystery of faith Jesus teaches, and his work is perfect and without fault. But I am talking of our experiences here in time, and of our trials and troubles concerning the work of faith in our hearts. Sometimes poor souls try to come to the Lord in prayer, and they can only whisper. Then they fear they are all wrong. For me, when I am alone my prayers are much oftener in a whisper than spoken aloud. Did Jesus speak aloud when in that solitary place? When one can pray only in whispers he is sometimes tempted to question his hope. But there are times when that temptation is so sweetly and powerfully overcome that he finds his soul swallowed up in whispers of love and joy and peace. After having suffered many trials upon this subject as the poorest of the Lord's ministers, for more than fifty years, I find myself at the age of eighty-four years with no more ability to pray as I ought than the ability of a little babe to cry. (Romans viii. 26.)

My mind keeps going again and again to that sacred solitude of the dear Lord our Savior where he was in holy communion with the Father, with whom he was so fully alone that he did not desire, just then, that one soul in all the world should be with him. In the work in which he was soon to engage, no one could render him any help. That was his work; but no one could minister unto him in that great, holy and mysterious work. All that great crowd of people sleeping a little way from the solitary place where he was praying went there for their own benefit, and he was doing everything for them.

We know that the attitude of the body, the tone of voice, or any circumstance of the kind has nothing to do with the prayer of any one. The prayer must be in the soul first, and it will bring the poor soul to the mercy-seat in the Lord's own time. But he does not yet know that this cry which comes up from the depths of the heart is prayer, nor can any uninspired man tell him so he can understand. But in the Holy Spirit's own way and time he will come to feel and understand the "groanings which cannot be uttered." How little we think that these inward groanings are prayer. But it is the desire of the pure heart which causes us to feel this trouble. As for prayer, we thought we understood clearly enough about that, and were sure that if we prayed in the right way, and did the best we could, the Lord would bless us. But he who searches the heart made us to know what is the mind of the Spirit, who showed us more fully the depths of our depravity, and who made intercession for us according to the will of God.

How often we have to be taught that we do not know what to pray for as we ought, (Rom. viii. 26,) but if we were left to ourselves to choose what to pray for, what bungling work we would make of it. How good it is for us that the

Lord has kept all this in his own hands, so that whatever he commands us to do no mistake is made by the Lord. There is none to stay his hand, nor to say unto him, What doest thou?

Has it sometimes appeared to us that the object in praying is to let the Lord know what to do, and that the success of our petitions will be according to some power and energy and attractiveness with which we may be able to address the Lord? And have we been surprised to find our words entirely without life or strength? And to remember that the Lord does not need any words of ours to tell him what to do, nor will he allow any one to persuade him. His power and purposes are beyond our reach. There is just as much power before the Lord in the prayer of a little babe, or of a feeble-minded man, as in that of the wisest man. Eloquence of speech has no place here. The true prayer must be felt in the depths of the soul before it can be understood in the mind of the one who spiritually prays. When we feel our helplessness in this respect, and are ready to give up, then we are surprised to feel a renewal of strength in our souls, and to feel some words of inspiration living in us, as of Paul, "Pray without ceasing," and to find that by prayer and supplications our requests are being made known unto God.

What sweet and astonishing surprises are sometimes given to us as we try to get near the dear Savior with our griefs and longings and poor petitions, and with our vain efforts to reach the hem of his garment. It seems to me that Elijah was as much surprised when he saw the effect of his earnest prayer that it might not rain for three years and six months, as was the poor widow when she found a handful of meal in the barrel after she had taken the last handful out. Elijah thought he was alone. If he had known about the seven thousand it might have been different with his feelings. He thought there were no true worshippers of the Lord near him. It is wonderful that he should feel such an earnest desire for so terrible a drought. The Lord had purposed to bring that awful judgment upon that guilty nation. It was undoubtedly a wonderful experience. It is a work beyond the power of any man to say of himself honestly, "Thy will be done." Elijah could be afraid, but not when the Lord put a prayer into his heart. The apostle speaks of this prayer of his as an encouragement to the timid and fearful. The dear Savior also refers to Elijah and the poor widow as representing the elect of God. (Luke iv. 27; James v. 17.)

When Jesus comes into that solitary place, in the garden of Gethsemane, there he prays for them, but would still be alone. He would go a stone's throw beyond the chosen three, but his inexpressible suffering brings him down to the ground. Now in his death and resurrection and entrance into glory he is with them for evermore. Unworthy of the divine favor of the Lord they all feel themselves to be, but it is that favor they forever desire and long for. Only in the felt presence of Jesus can they feel that favor to be theirs. Loneliness because of the dear Savior's absence is distressing. They cannot but continue to seek his face sorrowing. When he rises up now a great while before day, and goes out, and departs into that solitary place, they at once try to follow him. His prayer now is their prayer. They try to get near to him. They are afraid they are going to lose him. His prayer is in their hearts. Any place is lonely without him. This is because the dear Savior has gone with

them and they with him. And he has prayed for them, and has said to the Father: The glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, even as we are one. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 5, 1917.

2 CORINTHIANS V. 1-4.

"FOR we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."

The apostle calls attention to the glory of Moses in his house and the glory that excelleth in the gospel; also declares that we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day, while we look not at the things which are seen, but the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things that are not seen are eternal. Then the words, "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved," and we might embrace the Mosaic tabernacle with all its rites and ceremonies, the outward man that perishes, the gospel ordinances; any one or all of these no doubt were in the apostle's mind when he wrote the words, For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a house not made with hands. The Mosaic rites and ceremonies were things seen, made with hands, an outward man formed of the dust of the ground, made with hands, the gospel ordinances, baptism, laying on of hands, Lord's supper, things seen and temporal, made with hands. Now if all of these perish, we have an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan. Abel offered unto God an acceptable sacrifice, and in his tabernacle he groaned, desiring to be clothed upon with that house which is from heaven. This house is eternal in the heavens (legal, prophetical and gospel), though Abel offered and Noah offered and Aaron offered, they desired to be clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. The apostle could view this house not made with hands as from heaven, and eternal in the heavens. In this we groan, desiring to be clothed upon, if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon. When we are unclothed our nakedness appears. How often we hear it said by the Lord's people, If they knew me as I know myself they could not have fellowship for me. We see some of the nakedness and depravity of our nature. This is what the apostle meant by being unclothed and naked; he wanted mortality to be swallowed up of life, to be clothed upon with that house which is from heaven. He desired the garments of salvation and the robe of righteousness. How good when we are clothed and in our right mind, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed with humility, meekness, kindness, brotherly love, esteeming others better than ourselves. These are gar-

ments of salvation, and from our house which is from heaven. Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. Our house is from heaven, the Lord Jesus is from heaven and our conversation is in heaven, and we are made to sit in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. Beloved, now are we the sons of God.

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Dec. 21. 1916.

BENJAMIN.

BENJAMIN was the full brother of Joseph, the children of Jacob and Rachel. Benjamin was the younger, and therefore the least. It was in Benjamin's sack the divining cup of Joseph was found, and fear and dread seized Benjamin, as well as the other brethren. It was Benjamin that received five times as much as his brethren when they ate and drank in Joseph's house. It was Benjamin that received three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of raiment from Joseph; while each of the brethren received changes of raiment, Benjamin received five changes. Joseph is a type of Christ, and Benjamin those who feel themselves as less than the least of all saints. Those who feel themselves as less than the least have been given the cup of the spiritual Joseph, and made to drink of the bitterness and anguish of soul and brought into nearness with Jesus. What fearfulness and dread seizes them at times, what pains of hell and sorrows of death encompass them, predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son; then what cup of rejoicing when the Spirit takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us; our cup runneth over. Joseph's brethren with Benjamin ate in Joseph's house, but Benjamin's mess was five times greater than the brethren's. Benjamin here presents the Lord's people, who have five times seemingly the bread of affliction and sorrow. The more we are made partakers of the sorrows, the nearer we are to the Savior; he was a man of sorrows. The woman who went out to gather sticks to cook the handful of meal and oil for herself and son and then die, was eating of the Bread whereof if a man eat he shall never die. Benjamin's mess was five times greater than the rest, and yet he had not eaten the bitterness to the extent that Joseph, his elder brother, had eaten. Benjamin was given silver and five changes of raiment. Seems to me this presents the truth of what Paul says: This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality; for it is the change of raiment that changes the man. It is from our spiritual Joseph, our Elder Brother; when he appears we are like him, and it is he that supplies all our needs and changes our vile body and fashions it like unto his glorious body—gives us change of raiment, but to Benjamin, less than the least, he has five changes of raiment. How the grace of God does manifest itself in those who feel themselves less than the least. The raiment of brotherly love clothes them, they show their love by their deeds, the raiment of charity clothes them, and the apostle tells us what charity is: Charity suffereth long, and is kind; envy and hatred and malice have no place when the raiment of charity is on one: the raiment of forbearance, meekness, kindness. Benjamin, the least, was given these raiments, and may the Lord manifest many Benjamins among us.

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 9, 1917.

THE GRACE OF GOD IN ONE'S HEART, AND ITS EFFECT.

THIS is far reaching, and we cannot fathom the depths thereof, neither can we ascend unto its heights. None can lay out the measure of the length and breadth of this unspeakable gift from God to the children of men through Jesus Christ, the only begotten of the Father, our Lord and Savior. God's judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out. Searching has never revealed God, but the revelation of him through Christ produces a searching in us for some good thing that would merit his esteem or give him delight; but with all our searching we do not find it, for it is not there, but we find that we are less than nothing, and vanity. We have the gracious gift from God of his grace, which teaches us our frailty and the total depravity of man. God is secret, and dwells in secret, and secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but things revealed belong unto us. Therefore there must needs be a revelation from God, and of God, before we are possessors of any knowledge whatever of him and of what we really are by nature. So then it is alone by and of his grace that we know and are anything. We believe and are sure that it is by the grace of God we are what we are. Wherever this grace is bestowed it produces a change. Let us consider that the grace of God is never bestowed for our asking, but we ask because we have received of his grace. If it were given for our asking, this would make it of works on the part of the creature, and not by grace on the part of the Creator. Remember that no soul ever breathed a prayer for mercy until the grace of God had been freely and abundantly bestowed in that heart; the grace of God is first, and produces prayer. Yes, we are blessed, and abundantly so, when we see our helplessness and realize our need of help. We then worship God in spirit and in truth, acknowledging him supreme and above all; we do this when we truly pray. It is God-given knowledge when man knows his utter helpless and sinful condition in the sight of the just and holy God. The grace of God shows us that we are by nature children of wrath, even as others. The first effect of it is to make us praying men and women. It made Hannah pray for a son; it made Paul pray, saying, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Changed him from Saul, a destroyer, to Paul, a believer. Saul was a dangerous man, although most zealous of the law, versed in all points of the law, being able to confound the rulers and those who judged him; and as touching the righteousness of the law he was blameless, and verily believed he was doing God service in persecuting the early christians. With all his learning, and knowledge of the law, he was ignorant and void of understanding, having not yet received the grace of God in his heart; and when he did receive it, a thing he had not asked for, he knew nothing of it; being on his way to Damascus with letters of authority, to bind and bring to Jerusalem, to be cast into prison, certain ones who were followers of Jesus Christ; those who had received the grace of God in their hearts. It is certain that one cannot ask for a thing of which he knows nothing, and the natural man knows nothing of the grace of God. There are many effects, or rather many forms of effect, produced by the grace of God in the heart, but really they may be summed up in two distinct effects: first, producing the greatest sorrow or anguish of soul that is possible for man to endure—a sorrow, an

anguish that cannot be told, and none can understand it except those of like suffering. Second, it gives to us an exceeding great weight of joy, equally as incomprehensible and inexpressible as the sorrow. There are no words with which to express this unspeakable joy, and the world knows nothing of this sorrow or joy, it cannot be told to them; none know it except the children of God, and they do know it; they can and do tell it to each other by certain signs, which are peculiar and unknown to any other. A parrot can be taught to say, I am an Old School Baptist, but what would this signify to the child of God? We are not known one to another simply by saying, I am an Old School Baptist, or, I am a member of the church, nor merely by the outward expression of the countenance. It is easy to tell how it is not, but hard to tell how it is that we are known one to another; but we do know these things by the grace of God given us, though we only know each other to the depths to which we ourselves have passed, or to the heights of joy to which we have ascended. The grace of God causes us to love the brotherhood, to esteem each other better than ourselves, placing us at our brother's feet, making us to forgive our brother if he trespass against us, and causing him to implore our forgiveness, and we forgive him not only seven times, but seventy times seven. This does not mean four hundred and ninety times, as in the order of multiplication. Seven is a perfect number, as used in the Scriptures, and seventy times seven, a multiple of seven, means perfect and complete forgiveness, blotted out; we do not remember it any more against him. It causes us to want to mingle with the saints, to be regular and attentive at our appointed meetings, careful of our pastor and of each other, seeking after each other's welfare, not through idle curiosity, but for good, to be of help, if help is needed; causes us to enjoy spiritual conversation and intercourse above all things in this life; to prize a moment of conversation or meditation on the holiness of God and his mercy through Christ to us above hours of the chiefest earthly joy; it causes us to lose pleasure in the things of this worldly life. Worldly amusements fail to amuse, and one had rather be alone, in a solitary place, with his meditations on the glory of God and his goodness to his people, his loving-kindness and his mercy, which endureth forever, than to be in the house of mirth and worldly joy surrounded by thousands of gay and frivolous companions, for even though we be surrounded by such companions, we are yet alone, and the mirth and gaiety only add to our confusion and discomfort. This is because the grace of God has touched our hearts and shown us better things by far than this world has to offer. The spiritual hope of the future cannot be compared with the realities of the natural life with all its pleasures, and by the power of the love of God shed abroad in our hearts according to the riches of his grace in Christ Jesus, which constrains us to forsake the old way, we are unable to go farther in the delights of the ways of the world, and we count it not a sacrifice to give up worldly pleasures, but rather give thanks to God that we are counted worthy to suffer the loss of all worldly joys, that we may find our whole pleasure in Christ and in fellowship with the sufferings of his death. The grace of God never caused or prompted one to enter into this world's gaieties to seek pleasure there, neither does it prompt idle conversation, jesting or joking; it is the flesh that does these things, for the

grace of God changes one from the things of this world and transplants them into another sphere or life. Our joys are different, our pleasures entirely different from what they once were: the pleasures of this world and of the old man, earthy. The grace of God changes one from head to foot, changes the thoughts of the head, also the walk in life; it is all so entirely different from the ways of this life that the natural man cannot in any sense understand it. Would or could a man of himself refuse to be called the son of the daughter of the richest king on earth, to associate himself and dwell with a band of people that were slaves, bondmen and bondwomen to that king? We cannot understand it by reason, for it is unreasonable; but Moses did this thing, and in a certain sense we did the same. We refuse to be called the son of a heathen king, refuse to be recognized with the rich and noble of this life with its idolatrous worship and ungodly practices, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, a despised few. Moses was a born Jew literally, and in no way related to the king of Egypt. We are born Jews spiritually, and in no way related to the idolatrous kings of the earth, refusing to be recognized with them; and this choosing or choice we have made is the effect produced by and because of the grace of God in our hearts. It caused men of old to prophesy contrary to and against kings and their ungodly acts; it has caused man to feel that he, according to his belief, is the only one on earth—absolutely alone. The prophet Elijah thought so, saying, Lord, they have digged down thine altars and slain all thy prophets, and, behold, they seek my life to take it from me. Absolutely alone in the wide world; but the Lord came with the comforting and assuring answer that he had reserved seven thousand men who had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal, which number still stands intact, for it signifies the perfect and complete number, the elect according to the multitude of his mercies toward us. All this we each have to learn for ourself, it cannot be taught by another; none can impart this knowledge, for it is the grace of God. I was reared under the sound of the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God Almighty, his determinate counsel and foreknowledge, election and effectual calling, the total depravity of man and his inability to do anything whatever in his behalf, yet until I was nearly thirty years old I had very little if any knowledge of this glorious doctrine, and in many prominent features I felt I was absolutely alone in my belief; and if I ever have known anything of it, it is surely by the grace of God, and not by the teachings of man. If I know one word of truth, if I ever spoke or wrote one word of truth, if I ever prayed or if I ever thought seriously concerning God, it is by and because of his grace in my heart, and if I ever again think, pray, talk or write of the truth it will be alone by his grace freely and abundantly bestowed in my heart. The grace of God in our hearts has caused us to do things, say things, live a life we said in our nature we would never do. This I know of a truth. I am unworthy, and would have cursed God and died had it not been for the grace of God in my heart that would not let me do it. It causes us to be sad and humble, lays us low and keeps us there, for it shows us our sins and shortcomings and keeps them before our eyes. Then how can we laugh and joy in the idle and vain things of this life with such a terrible and revolting spectacle as our sin-polluted self standing before Him,

and in humility remembering that in due time Christ died for the ungodly? The grace of God does not always cause us to be of sad countenance, for it makes us rejoice and shout with joy and praise unspeakable and full of glory for the riches of his grace of never-ending mercy in the glorious redemption in Christ Jesus our Lord. The life we now live in the flesh we live by faith in the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us. When the grace of God in our hearts is showing us these things and causing us to rejoice by reason of the fact that we feel a strong hope through grace, feeling our salvation sure by reason of our acceptance in him, who is the chiefest among ten thousand, when this is the cause produced we have no time or place for the gaudy baubles of natural scenes. So the grace of God separates us from our fellow-man according to the flesh, separates us from all things in nature, but it does not cause one to love their husband or wife less if they be not of the same mind, but it causes us to love others who are of the same mind with us in a way we never loved before. Not love that is sensual and devilish, but love that is holy, thinking no evil, in which we look upon them not after the flesh, nor regard them as male or female, youth or old age. This grace does not lessen our love for those in ties of nature, for the love which is by the grace of God is as different from natural affection as day is from night, and as far apart as the east is from the west—no comparison.

This theme is as inexhaustible as any of the riches of God, for all that we receive is by grace and in mercy sent; it will never be fully told, it is eternal, it causes us to sing, it causes us to weep, it causes us to bemoan our condition, it causes us the greatest rejoicing. The grace of God is the beginning of a good work in us, and where the Lord begins a good work he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. This grace is bestowed on each as we are able to bear it. It was sufficient for Paul, it is sufficient for us; it is the same grace to-day. God reigns. Amen.

Your unworthy brother,

F. SELBY FISHER.

SALISBURY, Md.

THE VICTORY IS WON.

HERE I am again with pen in hand, with one mind to write and another mind not to write. The spiritual man seems to tell me to write, but the fleshly man tells me that every time I try to write it mortifies him to see me make such a foolish child of myself, trying to write about something I know nothing of; but against his will I am going to try, God being my helper, and put on paper some thoughts on the words named above: "The victory is won." Some days ago I awoke with these words ringing in my ears, and I trust they did ring also in the deep recesses of my heart and soul. I first thought, when the words came, that it was a token of my sudden death, but the next thought was, you must write about "The victory is won." Now, while I am wondering just how I am going to start to write, these words are before me: But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. They are a guarantee to every subject of God's free grace that the victory is won; yes, the victory is ours. Our dear Jesus won it for us. He is the Captain of our salvation. He went before us, led the way, and fought the battle for us, and has brought us into an everlasting kingdom which knows no end. He abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, which is the

power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Yes, the victory is his. Jesus is our Captain and Leader; he goes before us, and we follow him. He says, My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I am the good Shepherd. The good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. It was our sins that put him to an open shame. Isaiah the prophet foretold the suffering of Jesus when he said: "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." O what wondrous love, that the pure, innocent Son of God should suffer, bleed and die for sinners of Adam's fallen race. No other could love like Jesus, for it is said, Greater love hath no man, than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. No natural man could love as Jesus loves, for his is an everlasting love, a love he had with his Father before the world began. It was our sins that caused him to be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. It was our sins that caused him to suffer such great agony in the garden of Gethsemane, where he sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, falling down to the ground. It was love in him that caused him to cry with a loud voice on the cross, "It is finished;" when he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. The poet says,

"Alas! and did my Savior bleed,
And did my Savior die?
Would he devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?"

Dear child of God, now the debt is paid, the victory is won, and his people are freed from all condemnation, and made holy and without blame before God in love. He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. Yes, the victory is won, and our Jesus is at the right hand of his Father, and ever lives to make intercession for his people. Paul said, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Yes, the victory is won. O how glad I would be if I could write about Jesus as I would like to, but I am such a poor, ignorant creature that I cannot command words to express my thoughts, so can only give outlines of them, and feel at times that I will cease to write and lay down my pen forever; but when I read so many sweet, comforting letters in our dear old family paper, the SIGNS, a feeling springs up in my poor heart, and I am made to ask the dear Lord just to enable me to cast in my little mite, to let my kindred in Christ know that I am still in the land of the living—a sojourner and a lonely pilgrim on the earth. I have many very dear friends all around me, and I meet with my dear brethren very often, and attend our regular meetings once a month, and hear our dear pastor, Elder Lefferts, preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, yet I feel the most of my time to be all alone, and the words of the poet describe my case:

"Like one alone I seem to be,
O, is there any one like me?"

And again,

"I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

But I must bring this letter to a close, for I have written too much already; but before closing I want to say to the brethren and sisters who write for the SIGNS, Write on, for I do believe that you com-

fort many others as you comfort this poor, old sinner, who, if saved at all, it must be by grace, through the blood and righteousness of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who won the victory.

Brother Ker, I do hope you will write often for the SIGNS, I like your editorials, as I do those of Elder Lefferts. If you can find anything in this worth publishing, do so; if not, cast it aside and I shall not be hurt. With good will and best wishes for you all, I now bid you all farewell.

Your poor, weak brother,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

HERNDON, Va., Jan. 2, 1917.

MACOMB, Illinois.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I am sending you a letter lately received from Elder Vail, for publication in the SIGNS, if you think proper. I have not his consent, but think he would not object when there are many who would love to read more from his pen, and have often expressed the wish that he write oftener. But as his time is so nearly all taken up in traveling and preaching he has little time to write, so I feel justified in sending his letter, believing that all will be comforted in reading it, for he so clearly portrays the trials and temptations of the saints in their pilgrimage journey. He wrote me some months ago, asking if he had not met me in Illinois years ago at our association. I answered that I remembered him well, though it was thirty years ago. He visited our association with Elder Bundy. I remember a special discourse he delivered, the text, &c., and how I was so comforted by it. Ever since I have loved his writings. In recounting his experience along the way he has often told my own, of doubts, darkness of mind, of unbelief, which seems to be my besetting sin. Yes, dear brother Vail, I have been along this way, when my faith would be tried to the uttermost, when the temptings of Satan and unbelief would seem more than I could endure, and nothing but God's amazing grace kept me from falling by the way; but through his great mercy and grace I continue to this day, the chief of sinners, saved by grace if saved at all, desiring to give God all the glory, for without him I am nothing. When such able ministers of the gospel as Elder Vail and many others, who have spent a lifetime of service in the cause of their Master, complain of their unworthiness and insufficiency, and feel that they have come short, and wonder and question whether they have ever given a cup of cold water in his name, or ever ministered to the needs of his children—if such as they feel to be unprofitable, what am I? How should such an one as I feel? This brings out many heart-searching questions, which humble me and bring me down to the very dust, when and where I can feel my weakness and dependence and know that all my help must come from God. Yet it is a comfort to read and hear from those who feel humble, and we are encouraged and built up by these very experiences, feeling we are not alone, and believing that God has worked in his servants and enabled them to minister to the needs of his "little ones," the sick and the afflicted, the oppressed in body and mind, the hungry and thirsty, and to those in prison. No doubt Elder Vail and all God's called servants have often thus ministered to the sheep and lambs of the flock, and the blessed promise is to all such: As often as ye have done it to the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the

foundation of the world. May they take courage, remembering that their Lord and Master himself traveled the way before them, marking out the path and leaving landmarks by which a wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein; and this is the way, walk ye in it. Though the path ministers must travel is beset with tribulation, affliction, persecution, sore and bitter trials, they know there is no discharge in this war until death, yet their God has promised to be with them to the end. May we all ever remember our duty to these faithful undershepherds, ministering to them of our carnal things, even as they are faithful in ministering to us of spiritual things. How often while in the banqueting-house of our Lord, sitting under the sound of the gospel as proclaimed by the tried and called servants of our God, have we been made to rejoice. We have been fed with the sincere milk of the word, as well as strong meat, have eaten the honeycomb with the honey, the wine with the milk, yea, all good things from the great storehouse of our Lord.

Brother Ker, excuse me for writing so much; I had not thought of doing so.

With best wishes to you and Elder Lefferts, and to all of the houshold of faith, I am your poor, weak sister in the faith,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

CLARKS SUMMIT, Pa., Nov. 8, 1916.

DEAR SISTER RUNKLE:—Your most excellent letter came in due time, and was very much enjoyed by my family and myself. Some of the things you mentioned I remember very well, others have gone from me. My life has been such a confused one that much which has taken place in my journey has gone from me, but some things remain with me. I have almost a constant thought that I am the chief of sinners, and if saved, surely it will be by rich and sovereign grace, for I can do nothing of myself. What poor, weak and helpless creatures we are! How close the dear Savior comes to his children; in his own testimony he says, Of mine own self I can do nothing. He must be made like unto his brethren, and they are made like each other, and this is the secret of their love and fellowship for each other. They continually confess that they find a law in their members warring against the law of their mind, bringing them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members, so that we cannot do the things that we would, crying out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" All at times feel to say, I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord, that I myself with the mind (mind of Christ) serve the law of God, but with the flesh (fleshly mind) the law of sin. This is the cause of all the warfare, and it seems that the mind or heart is the battleground. I often feel that much of my experience is summed up in these words: waste howling wilderness. Dear sister, were you ever tempted to doubt the existence of a supreme Ruler or the reality of religion? The dear Lord only knows how I have suffered from unbelief. I often wonder if it is right to mention it to any one, it seems so unlike a christian. I have been driven to believe that the natural mind is nothing more or less than infidelity, at least mine is. I would love to be in the mind of Christ continually, but alas, I am not; day after day my mind wanders, like the fool's eye, to the ends of the earth. It seems like a square contradiction for me to say that I hate vain thoughts, but thy law do I love, when my mind is full

of such thoughts continually. Were it not that I believe in a God that is full of mercy, pity and compassion I would have given up in despair many, many times, but somehow by some unseen power I still hope in God. I recall the testimony of Jesus in David: Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him. Will I ever praise him? I hope so. The Syrophenician woman fell on her knees and worshiped him, saying, Lord, help me. Her name means, drawn to. The first expression, Lord, signifies faith; second, help signifies helplessness; third, "me," individuality. I am the needy one. If this is worship, I may have worshiped God. The publican said, God, be merciful to me, a sinner (not a christian). If I have ever prayed, the prayer of the publican has been the burden of my prayer nearly or quite sixty years; not one word could be added to or taken from it. I know that I am a sinner, and I know that mercy can come from God alone. Have I prayed? God knows. I do not know when I pray, I do not know when I worship, I do not know what I need, therefore do not know how to ask, or what for. I know I am happy sometimes for a few moments, and feel like singing, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord," &c., but whether my feelings are natural or spiritual I cannot say. I am so peculiarly constituted I cannot understand myself. Truly I am fearfully and wonderfully made, and that my soul knoweth right well. Jesus said to some, When I was sick and in prison ye visited me; when I was naked ye clothed me; when I was an hungered ye fed me; when I was thirsty ye gave me drink. They answered, Lord, when did we do these things? I have no other answer to give; God knows whether I have done these things, I do not. I have desired to, but what I desire I cannot attain. Pray tell me, is it thus with you?

I remember well the good visits Elder Bundy and I had when with the churches in the west, but I do not remember much about my speaking, only I remember I felt my efforts were very weak and lame all the way round, and they have always been the same. Forty years ago the second Sunday in last October was the first attempt I made by way of speaking in public. I have traveled several hundred thousand miles, talked by way of trying to preach thousands of times, talked much, but fear I have done but little if any real preaching; God knows, and perhaps the brethren know; I leave it there.

I will now close. This is the most I have written to one person for a long time. I fear it will do you no good, but it is all I can do. If I could write like you and many others I might mention, and my shoulder and arm would permit, I would write more for the SIGNS, but I cannot, absolutely cannot. I would like to send your letter to the SIGNS, it is too good to hide. Please write and tell me that I may.

Yours in the sweet love and fellowship of the gospel of God our Savior, I hope,

D. M. VAIL.

HANFORD, Cal., Dec., 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Since writing you the letter which you published in your issue of June 1st, 1916, I have been very ill much of the time, and several times have been close to the gates of death. For nearly three months now I have been confined almost constantly to my room, and am still unable to be out or to do anything.

I feel it in my heart to say a word of commendation in behalf of the precious brethren among whom I was permitted to be and to labor during a part of the time since I last wrote you. I shall never forget the great kindness I was shown at Greenville, Texas, and at Elder Sikes' home, during the three days meeting which it was my privilege to attend at his home church (Sabine) last May. The preaching was in absolute harmony, and the most perfect fellowship prevailed. I met also and had the great pleasure of being with dear brother Slaughter in one service in his home church. At Eustace we had precious times, and sweet and perfect fellowship prevailed. Later on I visited the brethren at Martindale, Falls City, Stockdale, San Marcos and Blanco. Here I discovered the footprints of several of the Lord's faithful ministers, among whom I may be permitted to mention Elder James Wagner, of blessed memory, Elder J. B. Bowden, Elder H. B. Jones and Elder Isaac Greathouse. Others whose names I cannot now recall have labored in this part of the Lord's vineyard. Here I met Elder S. N. Stephens, of Austin, who preaches regularly for these brethren. Nor must I forget to speak of the blessed times I had with Elder Bourland and Elder Pace, of Athens, the worthy moderator of the old Union Association. It was my privilege to attend the three days meeting at his home church and endeavor to preach the gospel with him. An immense congregation gathered on Sunday to hear the word.

The trip in the automobile stage from San Marcos to Blanco was rather hard, but interesting; the distance is forty miles. We arrived in Blanco about two o'clock in the afternoon. Here we had four services: two in the schoolhouse near brother Solomon Wagner's, one Sunday afternoon at dear brother Frank Jones', and one on Monday night in the Methodist meetinghouse in Blanco. There had been no Old Baptist preaching there for eleven years, I was told.

From Blanco I was driven across the mountains fifty miles to Austin. The scenery along this route is grand and picturesque. We arrived safely in the capital city of the Lone Star State in good time for dinner. The trip was made in a new Ford.

When I left Texas for this coast I took the route via Denver, Salt Lake and Los Angeles. On reaching the high altitudes in Colorado I was taken very ill with severe and frequent inward hemorrhages and nervous prostration. I was compelled to lay over one day in Grand Junction, and two days in Los Angeles. In the latter place the man who waited upon me said afterward that he could not see how I could live; but the incomprehensible purpose of God was that I should not then die.

On arriving here I was compelled to take to my bed at once, and for a month I was exceedingly ill. I have suffered greatly, but I feel somehow that I shall yet recover and be able to return to the middle west in the spring. I have lost about twenty-five pounds since I left Texas, and am gaining strength very slowly indeed.

I beg of all the brethren to remember me when it goes well with them.

In love and hope,

BEN HARDIN IRWIN.

COLUMBUS, Ga., Feb. 12, 1917.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—I so much desire to write you that I must make an effort, although I hardly know how to address you. I would rather say "brother," but suppose I have not the right or priv-

ilege, as I have never united with the church of God, of which you are one of the most blessed. I hope and believe I received that precious hope about twenty-one years ago, when I was about that same age. There is no church near here in which I could have faith and fellowship. It is a sad and lonely feeling to be thus situated. There are no absolute Predestinarian Baptists about here that I know of, outside of some members of my family. There are a great many so-called Primitive Baptists, but not absolute predestinarians. Although I do not want to judge any, somehow I cannot love them, and we know we must love the brethren, for that is our blessed assurance, is it not? My mother takes the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and has for years. We much enjoy reading the good things in its precious pages. The SIGNS is to our poor, hungry souls, as many of the dear writers say, our only preaching of the true gospel of the precious Savior. The Scriptures as taught and expounded by yourself, Elder Ker and others are manna to our hungry souls. I do not attend any of the meetings here, for they have nothing for me; not one single crumb do I receive when I hear them. I sometimes feel that my cross is a very heavy one to bear. My husband and children are not with me in the faith, but I try to be reconciled to the will of God, for I know he knows best in all things. My husband and two of my daughters belong to other denominations, in which you know we have no faith or confidence. Is not that a great cross to bear, knowing that our near and dear ones in the flesh are not with us in the Spirit? So we are near, and yet so far apart. But just so strong is my faith and love for the doctrine I believe to be the strait and narrow way, the true gospel way, that I am made willing to be separated from all I possess on earth. Thus I am made to realize, as Paul said, that nothing, no, nothing, shall separate us from the love of God. For we would not be counted worthy of him if we were not willing to forsake father and mother, brother and sister and all else for his sake. My dear old father, who departed this life two years ago last July at the age of seventy-four, was a whole-souled Predestinarian Baptist. My mother, several brothers and sisters, and, I hope, myself, contend in our weak way for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and the gospel as Paul preached it. I often feel that we are away off in the wilderness, separated from all the rest of you, still I know there must be others situated as we are.

Elder Lefferts, I hardly know why I have written thus to you, but feel that you are able to bear with me in my weakness and forgive me if I have trespassed upon your patience and time. It seemed that I must write you and tell you that down here in this wilderness there are several poor, hungry souls that love you for the truth's sake and the doctrine you so faithfully and efficiently set forth. I love to read your editorials, also those of Elder Ker. Elder Lefferts, we read in the SIGNS of your "Trip to Georgia." My mother and I were talking of it, and would have been glad to have known of your coming beforehand, as perhaps we might have gone to hear you. I feel that it would be worth much to me to know you personally and hear from your lips the truth as it is in Jesus. Would it be asking too much of you and your indeed valuable time if you ever make another trip to Georgia to let me know the time and place? If it should be that we could at that time we would love to go and hear you and be with you. Perhaps I will try to write my little experience for the SIGNS some time. I am anxious to know whether you all would accept it or not. Although I am not acquainted in

the flesh with a single one whose names I have seen in the SIGNS, yet feel to know and love every one, and dare hope that you all are my dear kindred in Christ. Perhaps this is taking great liberty on my part, and would not do were it not for my sincere love for you all. What a blessed assurance is given us in the Scripture where it reads, Ye know ye are his by your love for the brethren.

May you long be spared and sustained by God, the giver of all good, to continue to feed his lambs. Remember me at the throne of grace.

(MRS.) C. M. THETFORD.

HAVANA, Kansas, Feb. 18, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I wish to submit for your consideration and opinion my views upon Romans vi. 17. They may be somewhat different from your editorial of February 15th, 1917.

Paul made use of the words, "But God be thanked," as a gracious conclusion to what he had written in the preceding verses of the chapter. It is giving as the central thought of yielding unto God all the glory "of obedience unto righteousness." The comma after "God be thanked," shows a change in expression, and is used parenthetically to remind those Romans of their condition under the service of sin. "That" has the same meaning as "though" or "as." The next clause presents an entirely opposite conclusion: "But ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you." The transition from being servants of sin unto obedience from the heart that form of doctrine delivered you caused the apostle to exclaim, "God be thanked." God is praised by mortal man for blessings received, and not for service under the reign of sin. By one man's offence death reigned by one. The gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. "God be thanked." Paul wrote to the Ephesian brethren upon the same line of thought: Ye were by nature children of wrath, even as others. Then with great assurance declared, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." When one who was a servant of sin is made by the grace of God a servant of righteousness, in gladness he will declare, "God be thanked." "Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God."—Phil. i. 11. Paul was delighted with his Roman brethren that they in sincerity obeyed from the heart the doctrine he and other ministers delivered them. He felt in his heart that what he had taught them was absolutely the doctrine; he had received it by the revelation of Jesus Christ. He delivered his messages as the approved ambassador of his heavenly Lord and Master. How different was the language written to his Galatian brethren: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth," &c.—Gal. iii. 1. "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" The epistle to the Galatians from the third chapter is an earnest exposition of the gospel of Christ, with a fervent solicitude not to turn from the truth of the gospel, as he had taught them. "Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am." With a feeling of sorrow he asked those brethren, "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?"—Gal. iv. 12, 16. That entire epistle is as binding upon God's children now as it was to the Galatian Church.

Submitted in love.

T. R. PITTMAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1917.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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JOHN XX. 23.

"WHOSESOEVER sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained."

The above words were spoken by Jesus to the apostles, Thomas being absent, after his resurrection from the dead and after he had given them the Holy Ghost, by which Spirit they were to discern between the righteous and the wicked; between him that served God and him that served him not. By the Holy Ghost they were also to be led into all truth and understand the mysteries of the kingdom of God. By the Spirit they were also to write holy things, set things in order in the house of God. By the same Spirit they were to judge Israel, and their judgment was and is irrevocable, cannot be appealed from, because it is the judgment of the Holy Ghost.

We have made the above statements as leading up to our understanding of the text under consideration. It seems evident to us that this statement of Jesus referred then as well as now to the order of the church, rather than vesting in the apostles power to forgive, or remit, sins. There are some men in the world who claim power to forgive sins, and practice such deception upon the ignorant, who are not allowed opportunity to learn for themselves better. If a man cannot forgive his own sins and make atonement to God for his own iniquity, be assured, every man, that he cannot forgive the sins of any other man, woman or child on earth. Jesus said to the man sick of palsy, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." Then the scribes and the Pharisees said, "Who is this man that speaketh blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only." Those men were of Jerusalem, serving the law, but knew it was blasphemy for man to say he could forgive sins, and they did not hesitate to say so. If such a claim of man (they not knowing Jesus) was blasphemy then, is it not blasphemy now? The Forgiver of sins has never given the power to forgive sins to any man. Jesus Christ, the Mediator between God and man, was God manifest in the flesh. All the work has been done, is being done and will be accomplished through God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. The text at the head of this article clinches this truth: the work of the apostles being under the influence of the Holy Ghost. The apostles composed the visible church, or body, at that time, and authority was given them pertaining to all things of the kingdom. Jesus had instructed them long before his resurrection from the dead how to deal with the high-minded, self-important, unruly, &c., and said, I give unto you the keys (authority) of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. We think the import of this Scripture close kin to the text we are now considering. If a member of the church becomes disorderly, and hence an offence to the church, the rule is laid down by the Savior as to how to

deal with him, and we should all remember that if our dealing with an unruly member, or one who has given offence to the church, is not in perfect harmony, or, in other words, not exactly as laid down, we may rest assured it is not the work of the Holy Ghost, as the Holy Spirit does not say one thing and act in another direction. The Lord's ways are always equal.

Going back to the apostles' day, we will find that now and then it became necessary to exclude one from the privileges of the church because of some ungodly course. That was binding that one, restricting, prohibiting such an one from entering upon and into the ordinances of the house; could not partake of the Lord's supper, could not act in any matter of business by suggestion or voice, and as long as he continued in the offensive course he was to be to the church as a heathen man and a publican. But should he repent—give up, or turn from the course which caused his exclusion, and live soberly, righteously and godly, he should be restored, loosed from his bondage, to the full fellowship and privileges of the church. In his restoration his sins were remitted, forgiven by the church of his membership. But while he continued in the sinful course his sins were retained, not forgiven.

Our text therefore has reference to church order in forgiving the transgressions of the offending ones on the one hand, and of holding them fully accountable for their transgressions on the other hand, and has no reference whatever to the forgiveness of sins in the sense of making a sinful man holy in the sight of God.

Written at the request of sister Woodson Cummins, Touchet, Wash. K.

JOHN XXI. 15.

"LOVEST thou me more than these?"

This question was asked by the Savior under peculiar and very trying circumstances, and we feel sure that never a question sank deeper into man's heart, conscience and soul. It searched the very depths of the man's being, and caused him to remember vows, promises and proud declarations. It caused him to know that his sin had found him out, that nothing was covered from the Lord. It also gave him to understand something at least of the mercy and longsuffering of the Lamb of God.

Peter, the apostle, was a man like other men, though he knew it not. His idea or opinion of himself seemed higher and better than of all other men. He thought his ability superior to that of either of the other apostles; yes, even superior to the ability of "all men." How little he knew himself, but how well Jesus knew him. No doubt he was perfectly sincere in all he said, but knew not his own weakness. We have sometimes thought of him as a mirror, as it were, in which we all see ourselves after having been converted as Peter was. By nature so proud, so exalted in our own estimation, but the fall always shows us that we cannot stand on that pinnacle. When we come to ourselves we find that we are with Jeremiah, whose face was in the dust and his teeth broken with gravel stones. Job, too, appears in the ditch with his clothes in such condition that he abhors himself, but we love him as a companion, and say to him, You abhor yourself, so do we abhor ourselves, but if you are sure your Redeemer lives, our Redeemer must live also.

Peter told Jesus that he would go to prison and to death with him, and though all men should forsake him he would not

Did he do it? No, but instead, with cursing and swearing he said, "I know not the man." Jesus did not forget that denial, nor did Peter. Hence after the resurrection of Jesus, while the disciples were fishing, he appeared by the sea and asked if they had any meat. They replied, No. Then he said, Cast the net on the right side and ye shall find. They did so, and took a great number of fish. When that was done John the disciple said, "It is the Lord." Peter seemed more anxious to be with him than any of the others, and cast himself into the sea and came to where he was. When the other disciples came, bringing the net with the fish, they discovered that dinner was already prepared for them; the fire was seen, whereon were fish and bread. No doubt surprise met them, but no one asked a question, knowing it was the Lord. After they had dined of the meal Jesus had prepared by his power, he addressed Peter, saying, "Lovest thou me more than these?" Not more than he loved the fish, but more than the other disciples loved him. Not many days before he had said so, but had he proven it? By no means, but he must answer truthfully, so said, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus did not accuse him of being false to his vow, nor did he upbraid him for cursing, but said, "Feed my lambs." Peter no doubt asked within himself, How can a liar and a man of unclean lips feed the lambs of God? But before he decided how it could be Jesus asked him again the same question, to which Peter answered as before. Jesus then said, Feed my sheep. The same questioning in Peter's mind: How can it be? revived, and while wondering about it, pondering it over in his heart, Jesus asked him the third time, saying, "Lovest thou me?" Peter, being grieved, said, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." Yes, thou knowest all things; even before the world was all was naked and open before thee. Yes, thou knowest I lied, proved false, cursed and swore and said, I know not the man; and down deep in my poor, sinful heart something tells me that thou knowest I love thee, notwithstanding all my faults, sins, shortcomings and backslidings. Just then a prayer of thanksgiving to God must have gone up from the heart of that poor man who had denied his Lord, perhaps something like this: God be praised for his mercy, long-suffering, pity, compassion, tenderness and love. Were not God able to justify the ungodly, what hope could Peter have had? What hope could any of us have were it not for his power and Godhead? Peter denied the Lord three times, and confessed three times that he loved him. Yes, if we deny him once or one hundred times we must confess that many times that we love him. How good that "his mercy endureth for ever"!

K.

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER S. N. STEPHENS has changed his address from 507 E. 15th St., Austin, Texas, to Stockdale, Texas.

POETRY.

NEW YORK, N. Y., March 5, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The writer of the following verses is a blind sister in Canada. I requested permission of the friend who sent them to me to have them published in the SIGNS. The spirit animating the composer is to be coveted.

Yours in brotherly love,

JOHN McCONNELL.

FAITH.

THOUGH my years are spent in darkness,
With my earthly vision veiled;
Though I have not seen at evening
Rosy hues by shadows paled;

There is One who guides my footsteps
In the darkest shades of night,
While within my heart are shining
Rays of never-fading light.

For I know God's way is perfect,
And his hand in love I see,
For in faithfulness my Father
In this world afflicted me.

Though I cannot see the flowers,
Nor the trees in beauty clad;
Cannot see the pretty warblers,
Even yet my heart is glad.

For I know that when my spirit
From this temple soars away,
I shall view eternal beauties
In that never-ending day,

Where no more shall be remembered
Pain or sorrow, grief or sin,
But the light of God's own presence
Peace and joy create therein.

What are then these light afflictions
Which one moment here annoy?
They shall soon all fade and vanish,
And my soul be filled with joy.

As a pilgrim here I journey
To that city clothed in light,
God shall be my hope and comfort
Till my faith is lost in sight.

LIZZIE McCALLUM.

WALLACETOWN, Ont.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder John McConnell, March 4th, 1917, at the home of the bride's mother, 415 State St., Brooklyn, N. Y., Everett H. Winchell, of St. Charles, Mich., and Mrs. Florence C. Sawtelle, of Brooklyn, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon James S. Foreman, of the Sideling Hill Church, Fulton County, Pa., died at his home near Laidig, Pa., Feb. 24th, 1917, aged 60 years, 9 months and 20 days. He had been sick for a long time, and would not consent to have a doctor attend him. He never believed in doctors for himself, though never objected to others having them if they wanted them. His wife was Sarah Laidig, who was baptized with him into membership with the Sideling Hill Church, by the late Elder Ahimaaz Mellott, several years ago. After the writer became pastor of that church, brother Foreman was ordained deacon of the church, which office he filled to the time of his death. One son, Paul B. Foreman, of Laidig, Pa., and two daughters, Mrs. Ruth Mellott, of Three Springs, Pa., and Mrs. Jenette Erb, of Laidig, Pa., together with their mother, our sister Sarah Foreman, survive their father. One son, Charles, died some years ago. Brother Foreman had the respect of all who knew him, and consistently maintained a godly walk and conversation to the time of his death. He was firm in the belief of salvation by grace, and in the confidence that God works all things after the counsel of his own will. May the Lord by his Spirit comfort our dear sister in her affliction and reconcile all the sorrowing ones to his divine will.

The funeral was preached in the Sideling Hill church-house by the writer, from Ephesians ii. 8-10. Burial in the Sideling Hill Cemetery.

ALSO,

Mary Wyatt died Feb. 20th, 1917, at the home of her daughter, near Herndon, Va. She was a member of the Frying Pan Church, having been baptized some years ago by the late Elder E. V. White. She was about 78 years old. I know very little about her early life or about her family. I write this notice not to give her family history, but to testify to the steadfastness in the faith of this excellent colored sister. Her walk as a member of the church was always characterized by humility and meekness. She was blessed with a wonderfully spiritual mind, and was well informed in the Scriptures. She was exercised much as to what the Scriptures meant, and upon more than one occasion gave her pastor a text from which to speak when his own mind was not occupied with anything from which to speak at the meetings of the church. All of us at Frying Pan shall miss her, for she was at our meetings whenever not hindered from being there. Firm in the faith that salvation is by grace, and not by works, she was not ashamed of her Savior, and was ever ready to give a reason of the hope that was hers, always in meekness and in fear.

The funeral was preached from the colored meetinghouse near Herndon, the writer officiating.

L.

Mrs. Sarah Phillips was born Dec. 3rd, 1853, and married to Able Wilmoth July 15th, 1869. To that union were born four children, one son and three daughters. Brother Wilmoth died August 21st, 1892. She was married to Albert G. Phillips Jan. 5th, 1893. She died Dec. 26th, 1916, aged 63 years and 23 days. She joined the Leading Creek Church Feb. 22nd, 1873, and was a faithful member of the church forty-three years. Sister Phillips was much devoted to the cause, faith and practice, order and doctrine of the Old School Baptists. She was faithful in her attendance of the church meetings, and delighted to hear the gospel preached. Her home was ever open for the entertainment of the ministers, brethren, sisters and friends who attended the meetings of the church. She hath done what she could. Sister Phillips was a daughter of Elder James Murphy, granddaughter of Elder David Murphy and sister of Elder Jona S. Murphy, so she had been under the pastoral care of her grandfather and father, and after their death her brother, who is yet pastor of the Leading Creek Church. She leaves to mourn their loss her aged husband, brother Phillips, who is very feeble, two children, a son and a daughter (the other two daughters having preceded her to the spirit world), three brothers and three sisters, besides many relatives and friends, and the church, where she will be missed in their assembling together to worship God.

The funeral services were held at the home, and by her request conducted by the writer, who was assisted by Elders J. B. Cross and J. W. Linn. She was buried in the family graveyard on the farm, there to await the great resurrection day, when this mortal must put on immortality. The day of sister Phillips' funeral was a sad day for the Leading Creek Church, for on the same day Deacon A. C. Kelley was buried. Thus two of her useful, faithful members were buried the same day. May the dear Lord bless and comfort our aged brother Phillips, and son and daughter of sister Phillips, also her brothers, sisters, relatives and the church. May we all bow in humble submission to the will of God.

ALSO,

Edward Marshal Bartlett, my eldest son, departed this life Jan. 24th, 1917, aged 46 years, lacking one day. Marshal was married to Octavie Phillips June 16th, 1901. Two daughters were born to them, Gertrude, aged 14, and Evelyn, aged 12. He died of pneumonia fever, after an illness of eight days. He had been a teacher in the public schools for many years, and was also engaged in farming. He was a respected citizen where he lived, a good husband, kind father and a dearly beloved son. It seems to me we would not know how well we love our children if death did not take from us one of our loved ones. When I looked on the face of my son after his death, realizing I would soon see his face no more on earth, words cannot describe how sad and disconsolate I felt. It is awful to think about, and yet I cannot banish it from my memory. I have the comforting hope that Marshal is saved with an everlasting salvation, that his spirit is now in the presence of the dear Savior he loved. He was given an experience of God's grace in 1909. He had gladly received the word, loved Old School Baptist preaching and believed their doctrine, and had expressed a desire to go to the church and be baptized. I had hoped to baptize this dear son, but death took him from us, and I never had that privilege. I preached on the occasion of his funeral. I felt that I wanted to preach the gospel for the comfort of his widow and children and my remaining children and the relatives and friends. I hoped to comfort them and receive comfort for myself from the gospel I preached to them. I believe God was with me and enabled me to preach the gospel.

Marshal has left to mourn his death his devoted wife, two daughters, aged father and mother, three brothers and one sister, besides many relatives and friends. May the dear Lord comfort us all.

J. N. BARTLETT.

Eliza A. Byrum Hutchens was born October 20th, 1823, in the State of New York, and departed this life Feb. 14th, 1917, having reached the ripe age of 93 years, 3 months and 24 days. She was united in marriage to William Brower, in Ohio, in 1840, and moved to Illinois in 1842. To that union were born seven children, four sons and three daughters. One son and three daughters died in infancy; two sons, Almon and Byron, died at the age of 62 years, and George, the only survivor, now resides in Glenwood, Iowa. William Brower, the husband, died at Glenwood, Iowa, in April, 1856. In 1857, Mrs. Brower was united in marriage to John Hutchens, at Glenwood. Four children were born to that union, one son dying in infancy; the other three, Joel, of Arnold, Omar, of McMinnville, Oregon, and John J., of Banks, Oregon, survive her. John Hutchens, her second husband, died at Glenwood in 1887. In 1892 she moved to Nebraska, living there ten years, then went to Oregon, where she spent eleven years with her children, coming back to Arnold in May. The following September she went to Glenwood, Iowa, returning later to Arnold, where she resided until her death. She united with the "United Brethren" in 1860, and in 1876 she joined the Primitive Baptist Church, of which she remained a faithful member through all her declining years. Her Bible was her constant comfort. She was conscious until the last, and many times was heard to say that she was waiting for the end to come. Besides a host of friends, she leaves to mourn her departure four sons, thirty-one grandchildren, thirty-three great-grandchildren, one sister in Illinois, 87 years old, one brother in

Iowa, 83 years old, and one sister in California, 81 years old.

Funeral services were held Friday morning at 11 o'clock, from the Baptist church-house in Arnold, Elder Craig, pastor of the Primitive Baptist Church at Kearney, officiating. The body was buried at Glenwood, Iowa, Friday afternoon.

JOEL HUTCHENS.

Orville Slauson, son of Amizah and Alpha Slauson, was born in Delaware County, N. Y., Oct. 8th, 1837, and died Feb. 26th, 1917, in Delaware County, Ohio. He came to Ohio with his parents when eleven years of age. He was married to Adelia Whipple Dec. 19th, 1863. To that union there were born six children; one son, one daughter and his wife preceded him in death. Besides his children there are several brothers and sisters. Elder J. B. Slauson, pastor of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, is a cousin. Mr. Slauson, lived near the place where the Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, which doctrine he loved and rejoiced to hear, and was looked upon by the members as being one of them, but he always felt too unworthy and never offered himself to the church. His mind was firm to the last. Just before he died he requested the friends to sing, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord," and "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!" He told them he was not afraid to die, and felt it was well with him; that God never makes mistakes, all his ways are perfect, and he still rules all things. He said, "If it is possible, get Elder Weaver to preach my funeral, for he preaches the doctrine I believe, and the only doctrine that will stand the test."

According to request, I was called from Cleveland, and spoke with the ability that the Lord gave me, using as a text Deut. xxxii. 4; "He is the Rock, his work is perfect. The children told me afterward that was the doctrine their father had believed for the last twenty-five years. As we saw him lowered into the grave we felt to say, Brother, rest in peace until the Savior calls, then you will hear and see him as he is, be like him and be satisfied.

May the Lord comfort all the friends.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

APPOINTMENTS.

PLEASE publish the following appointments:

Halcottville, N. Y., Sunday, March 25th, all day meeting, commencing at 10:45 a. m.; Union Grove, Sunday, April 1st, 11 a. m.; Roxbury, Sunday, April 8th, at the Mead sisters' home, 10:45 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.; Ashokan, Sunday, April 15th, 10:45 a. m. and 2 p. m; Vega, Sunday, April 29th, 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.

GEORGE RUSTON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

A Sister, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. Jasper Seale, Ark., $.50; A Friend, N. J., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Harford Church, Harford County, Md., May 16th, 17th and 18th, 1917. Those coming by way of Baltimore take train leaving North Ave. station, Md. & Pa. R. R., at 3:20 p. m. for Long Green or Forest Hill on Tuesday before. Those from the north take train that leaves York., Pa., at 1:50 p. m. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to be with us, especially ministering brethren.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

M. F. WHITAKER, Clerk.

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ALL WELCOME

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

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[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 85. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1917. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., March 6, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—The SIGNS OF THE TIMES is the dearest of all papers to me, for if I am not deceived in the Lord's teaching both the editors and writers are surely taught of the Lord, for they do send glad tidings of great joy to the wayfaring ones who are so tempest-tossed, cast down and discouraged. I remember some time ago when my dear companion was at the hospital, and, it seemed, at death's door, and I not able to work, just able to do my chores and drive to see her each day, not able to provide food or clothing for our little ones. I became so discouraged and cast down that I was ready to give it all up, and the tempter kept saying to me, You are foolish to think there is a God who cares for you and loves you, for if he did he would not let you suffer so, and for a few days I gave ear to him and said, Surely there is no God, and I will not trust in him any more, and I can tell you those few days were the most miserable ones I ever passed. No God, no hope, no comfort anywhere. I tried the world, but found no comfort there, and when I would get home from the hospital tired and discouraged, and my children would come to meet me, I almost wished for their sakes that they had never been born. I would not even read the Bible, which had since my earliest recollection been the one loved and sacred book to me, and the one in which I had found so much comfort in all my trials before, but now I felt it held nothing for me. I was led on in this state of mind for nearly two weeks, and was like a ship in a storm without sail or rudder. In due time the SIGNS came, and I cast it aside for a day or two; but one evening I picked it up carelessly without any intention of reading it, but just because it lay on the stand near me. I was like one in a dream, for I knew not what to do nor where to go to find relief, when without any desire or even intention of reading the dear old SIGNS I began reading a piece merely to pass the time away, but before I finished the piece the Lord had looked at me, and I, like Peter, wept bitterly. O how ashamed I was to think that I would deny him in the face of all the evidences I had had. I will speak of one, and I have had many such visitations of his precious, comforting presence, and always just in times of

the direst need. The first one was in April, 1895. We lived in Ellis County, Kansas, at the time, and any one who lived there from 1892 to 1898 will know how hard the times were. We had had no crop since 1892, and my wife was sick and I was working every way to keep the wolf from our door. Finally our provisions gave out and we had no money; the stores stopped giving credit. My wife insisted on my going to Hays City, eleven miles away, to see if I could not get a sack of flour and some sugar; so I went, though I told her it was useless. I went to all the stores and the mill, but could get nothing, and I was sorely tempted to steal a sack of flour, but had no opportunity. Finally I started home, and was driving along wondering what would become of us, our bread and flour all gone, and no meat or potatoes, only milk to sustain our lives, for we had two cows, but could not sell one, for no one had the money to buy. I got nearly to the outskirts of town, my head bowed down in deep sorrow, when a sound as of some large bird just above, and to my left, attracted my attention. I looked up, expecting to see an eagle close above me (for there were many of them there), but to my unutterable joy our precious Savior appeared to me. I became dead to all around me, and began talking to him and praising him for his goodness and mercy to me, and I was carried away from earth and all my sorrows. He seemed so near that I could almost reach out my hand and touch him, though I could not plainly see him, but, as it were, through a thick fog, though the sun was brightly shining. He journeyed with me for nearly a mile, and I forgot all about our distress, and was hurrying home to tell my wife of the beautiful vision I had seen; but while yet a mile from home a neighbor who lived a mile off the road called me and wanted to know if I did not want a job husking a couple hundred shocks of corn; he said he would give me one dollar a day, and I could have the fodder and leave all the nubbins on, as he had more feed than he could use; and do you know I felt like getting out of my wagon and hugging him, I was so happy. I thanked him for his generous offer, and told him I would commence next morning, which I did, and as I had sold almost the last bit of feed I had the fodder was a blessing to me. While I was husking the corn the Lord appeared to me again, and such joy and happiness no pen can describe nor tongue express. Inexpressible and full of glory; yes, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. I felt then that I would bear anything that was laid upon me, and never falter or complain; but alas, how unstable are the ways of man. It is a wonder he has not banished me long ago, but still his mercy endureth, his promises are true. I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins will I remember no more. What a comforting thought, our sins are all covered, for Christ has borne them in his own body, and we are free and stand justified in his righteousness, through the atoning blood he shed for all those the Father gave him; no more, and not one less, else the body would not be complete. The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his, and he knows them that are not his as well, though they can and do deceive us and creep in; wolves they are in sheep's clothing, but God is not mocked nor deceived, and will separate the sheep from the goats, for they shall all be judged according to the deeds done in the body, and he is no respecter of per-

sons. They that confess that Christ is come in the flesh are born of God; he knows them.

Well, I see I have not written as I intended, but just followed the lead of my mind, yet I do want to speak to some of the dear writers and tell them how they comfort me. First I must speak of Elder Ker, who is surely bearing the hinder part of the cross of Christ—a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and my heart goes out to him in love and sympathy. It seems that he is like gold that is refined, the hotter the fire the more dross is removed, leaving a purer article, as his writings attest. God doeth all things well, and although we cannot see his face we can see his hinder parts, and even if we are never given light to see the kind hand of Providence in his dealings with us, let us be still and know that he is God, our God, who hath redeemed us from all iniquity by the death of his Son, the Just for the unjust. Then Elder Lefferts' able editorials are so strengthening and comforting to me. Elder J. R. Hardy with his strong doctrinal discourses, which cannot be contradicted, and Elder Frederick W. Keene, with his sincere milk of the word, so full of love and comfort to God's little weary ones. Also Elder Joseph Ford; if I could write as he can I would write often. Then Elder J. F. Beeman, with his comforting, soul-cheering messages, and sisters Bessie Durand, Florence Pultz, Mary E. Wright, and the letter from sister Mary Ellison alone was worth the price of the paper one year to me. I miss the able and comforting letters of Elder Durand; they seem to fit into my understanding like the cogs of a master wheel in a pinion. I cannot name them all, but I could not leave one out who writes for the SIGNS, as I feel I could not do without them, but they can do without me, and not miss me, either; but poor, weak and sinful as I am, yet I love you all for the truth's sake, giving all honor, praise and glory to the Lamb that was slain, yet lives again to intercede for us; and my prayer is for God to draw us all closer together in one bundle of love, loving one another even as Christ loved us. O why can we not cast off that proud demeanor and show our love more by our works than by our lips? May the Lord help us to do so.

Now, thanking you for sending me the SIGNS, I am, I hope, your brother in a precious hope,

DAVIS BURCH.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Feb. 16, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—The inclosed letter from my Aunt Angie Thomas was written three days before she passed away. It was my privilege to be with her much of the time for three months during her illness. She suffered greatly, but would often say, "I long to be kept from murmuring, for I know the Lord has sent this affliction in mercy." She talked of death as a welcome release. We spent many pleasant moments talking of the things that were most precious to her. She found great enjoyment in reading the SIGNS. I know she will be greatly missed by many.

Your sister, I hope,

BONNIE A. CHICK.

RICHMOND, Maine, Feb. 9, 1917.

DEAR BONNIE:—When brother Clark's letter came I was in the darkest time of my life, in the deepest hell. I was so rebellious, so unreconciled to my lot. O, how I remembered dear sister Hubbard's words. She used to say she thought the desire of reconciliation to God's will was

the greatest prayer we could pray. Every time I have reread brother Clark's letter it has seemed more wonderful to me, so I send it to you to send to the SIGNS. I inclose one of Nerva's, too. You will see by my writing that I am failing rapidly, and I could not prepare them for the SIGNS. My heart is heavy. The death of your Aunt Etta has brought me sadness. She was a dear sister-in-law, and came to me in my illness always bringing some cheer. Poor brother Everett and the children will be lost without her.

ANGIE THOMAS.

FREEPORT, Maine, Jan. 11, 1917.

DEAR SISTER ANGIE:—Agnes received your very welcome letter and will answer it. Knowing your condition, I feel I would like to write something concerning the life to come that would cheer and comfort you, but I have not the ability, so in what little I write I know you will overlook all mistakes. I have just had a letter from Elder Beal. He called my attention to 1 Peter, first chapter, and it seems to me if we have this faith we will receive much comfort from the words as they are recorded in this chapter. In the third verse the apostle tells the church that God through Christ has begotten us again unto a lively hope. We notice that the work is according to his abundant mercy through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is not the work of the creature, but it is the work of God, therefore it is a holy work, and a just work, for God's works are all holy. If man had had anything to do with it the work would have been mixed with unholy work. Sometimes it seems almost impossible for us to realize how God can be just and save sinners, people who have not done one perfect thing, but the inspired word tells us it is so, and the word also tells us how God has done the work through the resurrection of Christ from the dead. We are also told what the work is: that it is to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled. No one can interfere with this work, for it is perfect, no law against it. The child of God may even feel that his hope is worthless, yet he cannot lose sight of the hope which God has given him, for it fadeth not away. The child of God is begotten again. This work, although from the foundation of the world, the Lord makes known to his children here in this life, that they may have reason to praise him, and his children will praise him by ascribing all their salvation to him. They will not cease from it, for they are begotten unto a lively hope, a hope that lives, even though we may become, as it were, dead, twice dead and plucked up by the roots. Yet God's work through his Son is reserved in heaven, a safe place. Yes, sister Angie, I believe that God with his own hand completed your salvation, and his works praise him. We are told in the fifth verse of this chapter that this glorious work is dependent in no way upon helpless, mortal man, but there is a saving power, the power of God, that keeps his children through faith unto salvation. While here in this world we only know in part. The time will come when it shall be revealed to us in its fullness, and we shall be satisfied. We are not satisfied here, for we are waiting, looking forward, not backward to our dead works, but to that heaven where our incorruptible inheritance is reserved. How true these words of the apostle: "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be

tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." Every time when he appears unto us he appears in glory. Therefore when he does appear there is nothing to be seen but his glory, and by faith we praise and honor him.

I am afraid I have written a letter which is not worth reading. No matter how far I am out of the way the Scriptures are true. I hope that God will be very gracious to you, give you peace and much grace unto the end, but you know his ways are not our ways.

Now just a word about ourselves. We are well. I seem to be compassed about with many temptations, but God has not purposed that I lose sight of my hope in him. I judge from Elder Beal's letter that he and sister Beal are gradually growing more feeble. They are with their daughter in Topsham. Agnes sends love.

Yours in hope of eternal life through Christ,

J. C. CLARK.

PORTLAND, Maine, Dec. 2, 1916.

DEAR AUNT ANGIE:—Your card came this morning, and I was glad to hear from you. I am with Aunt Emma now, as she is alone. I shall not leave home again this winter if I can help it, so as to be ready to come to you if you need me. Aunt Angie, things seem so different here now than when I was here in the summer. Then I could not go enough to suit me; always ready to have fun with the others; now it seems as if I would rather stay at home alone than go to one of their good times. When I go I do not enjoy it, and it seems worse than useless to me. I realize that by myself this change would never have come, for last year and last summer I began to enjoy dressing and going and having a good time more than I ever did before. It seemed as though I had more freedom in every kind of fun-making than I ever had before. Then all was taken from me, and I was made to see the vanity of it all in such a wonderful way. Surely it is a wonderful power that can so work in the heart, but we know he does work in us, for we have felt the power. How useless it is to talk of these things to those who know nothing about it; how wonderful to know there are those on earth who do understand, and who can comfort us and make us rejoice by speaking of the great things the Lord has done for them. O, how glad I am that I have been led to know the true religion, and have been made to know so satisfyingly it is the true one. We know that this is the true God, and all the world lieth in wickedness. We know that the Son of God hath come and hath given us an understanding, that we might know him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. This is my experience. Without the understanding had been given to me I never could have known the true God. He is immeasurably greater than my mortal mind could have imagined. How little we feel when he makes that power felt. All we can cry is, My God, my God. One night at home, when everything was as black as night can be, I saw, spiritually, I suppose, though it seemed by natural sight, a great light break out from a cloud in the eastern sky. It seemed a light like the sun, but more like fire, which shone directly upon me for what seemed half a minute, but I suppose it was only for a second or two. The power of it that filled my heart seemed too great to stand. I felt I could not live if it were not withdrawn. There was no special thought

came to my mind, but just wonder at the might and power of him who can show forth his wonders to those whom he hath chosen. I have been so interested since this all came to me to know the history of the church through the ages. I had a good letter from Elder Keene, which I will send for you to read.

With love, your niece,

MINERVA DUNLAP.

1 KINGS XIX. 10.

"AND he said, [Elijah] I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword: and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."

The number of the people who fear the Lord seems to be very small in comparison with the multitudes of the world, although the children shall be as the sands of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered. Not that we could not set down a number to represent them, if it were possible to count them, but scattered as they are in all the nations, man cannot find them, hence does not know them. Elijah was of the opinion that he was the only one left, yet in the providence of God there were seven thousand. I have often thought it has been my lot to be left in a large, wicked city of nearly a million souls, and out of this vast number less than a dozen come together once a month for worship. I tried to find out by visiting other people if there were not some meat or enjoyments among them. I watched the whirlwind that turned around everything before it, and people flocked to hear it, and made great things out of it, yet for the life of me I could not see God in it. Then came the earthquake, which opened up great fissures in the earth, causing the people to tremble and cry, but it was all a natural delusion, the Lord was not in it. Then came the fire, which licked up all combustible material before it (the natural fire of excitement, which men try to exert upon weak and wavering humanity, and by frightening them into submission for fear of punishment), but the Lord was not in the fire. Then if God is not in the whirlwind, nor the earthquake, nor the fire, where is he? Did you, my readers, ever hear the "still small voice," and did you not when you heard it wrap your face in your mantle for shame and cry, Woe is me, for I am undone? Elijah was left alone, which is the experience of most of us; alone, without help, all turned away but me; not a soul to comfort me out in the wilderness of sin and darkness, then the still small voice speaks to us. "What doest thou here, Elijah?" While most of us are not satisfied with our experience, and wish to be shown, like Saul of Tarsus, and go through all our life hoping and praying for brighter evidence, we are obliged to still cling to the memory of the still small voice, that voice which speaks in the heart of God's kingdom, which is within you. As Saul must always go back to his trip to Damascus, the heavenly vision, as he calls it, so we poor, stumbling sinners must go back to our last trip in darkness, where the same God found us and delivered us from its power into the glorious liberty of the children of God, into his marvelous light. Not only has he raised us out of the mire, but he has placed our feet upon a rock, where we never more will sink. He hath established our goings, and put a new song in our mouth, even praise unto our God. It is useless for me or any one else to try to enumerate all the things that God has done for his people. John said the world could not contain the books if they were written, neither has

entered into the heart of man what God has prepared for them that love him. Just a few glimpses here as time goes on, a few more days on earth to spend, and to those who have the assurance of the still small voice something wonderful awaits them. When they awake with his likeness and see him as he is they shall be satisfied.

While Cleveland is my telephone address, all who wish to write to me should mail my letters to South Euclid, Ohio, R. R. 3.

Now just a word (if the editors feel like publishing this letter). We hold our meeting every third Sunday, and would gladly welcome those who have a desire for the truth, to meet with us. Any one can talk with me at my home on the Bell telephone most any time, more preferably evenings.

In hope,

GEO. L. WEAVER.

SOUTH EUCLID, Ohio.

DAYTON, Ohio, Feb. 8, 1917.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—The past winter months have been an unusually and intensely trying time to me. I have had many heart trials which no one knows but my dear Helper, my gracious Burden-bearer. How dark have seemed the clouds which seem to envelop me! O for more grace, more faith, a closer drawing to him whose tender tones come to his people in the "still small voice." I desire always to praise, adore and bless him on whom we are told to cast all our care, but O, with what halting, feeble steps do I go forth to serve him. How cold and insipid the utmost zeal I can make manifest! So far short do I fall in all my attempts to honor and serve him that I feel to cover myself with dust and cry, Unclean, unclean. I long for the dear companionship of God's children who are scattered throughout the world. We who seem to be led in the same shadowed paths, whose spiritual sky is so often overcast, could we but converse face to face how supremely happy we would be. When, O when will these dreary earthly nights be past, and we behold the bright dawning of eternal day? When the dear Redeemer speaks peace to our troubled souls what a sublime and precious relief; it is the peace of God that passeth understanding, and the reason we cannot understand it is because it is of God, and his ways are above our ways and his thoughts above our thoughts. It is high, I cannot attain unto it, the psalmist said. O how true, dear friends, that we poor creatures cannot understand the ways of God, but we know he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, and that he works all things after the counsel of his own will. I feel well assured that none of us will suffer one pain too much, and that although we cannot see the way, God knows what is for our good and for his own glory. I know that God has his own chosen people, and not one of them will be lost. How sweet to me are his promises, yet I long to know if those promises are for me. I know they are for his people, but I fear to claim them, for it seems to me, dear ones, that God's children could not go so far astray as I do, and I feel I have little, if any, clear understanding of the Scriptures; but while here we shall never be fully satisfied, for we live by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope, and we long for the time when hope shall be swallowed up in fruition, victory and glory, for we shall be satisfied, when we awake, with his likeness, and shall see him as he is and be like him. We all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. For what is life?

It is even vapor that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away. How truly we prove this to be so as we go wearily along. We are taught it by others, or seeing others falling by the way. Some who are much older than we still remain as witnesses of the unchangeable purposes of Him with whom are the issues of life. O how grand it is to know that the weakest cannot go wrong if led by our heavenly Guide. We feel to say our dear adorable Leader hath done all things well. Though we have been so crossed, so chastened, tried and afflicted, we at last learn it is best for us that it should be so. We should be thankful, too, for this life, with all its sorrows and conflicts, and what can we say, dear friends, who trust that eternal life is ours? Can we not well endure our nighttime here a little longer, with the prospect before us of a never-ending existence, where there is no night? This passage of Scripture comes very forcibly to my mind now: Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. This Scripture shows the absolute certainty of the words of Jesus coming to pass. The difference between God's words and those of man is infinite, God foreknowing, predestinating all things, man not knowing one moment ahead of him is certain to come to pass. The children of God in all ages of the world have taken great comfort in the immutability of him who rules and reigns both in heaven and earth, without whom not a sparrow can fall to the ground. How gracious and good is our dear Master to translate us out of darkness into the marvelous light of God our Savior, and we become children of light. May we all show forth his praise, who hath called us unto glory and virtue. To believe his words, to trust his grace, is praise to his holy name.

I almost hesitate to send this very uninteresting letter; of myself I can do nothing. What a comfort the dear old SIGNS seems to me as a medium through which we are drawn nigh to the teachings of Jesus, our only Savior, the one able to save. He is the way, the only way, walk ye in it. My dear kindred, this is the great question with me: Am I his, or am I not? I can truly say with the poet, "Mixtures of joy and sorrow I daily do pass through."

I will say in closing, if you see nothing of interest in this, dear editors, cast it aside and I will appreciate the favor.

LIDA KELLER.

2 TIMOTHY III. 16, 17.

"ALL scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

There is much contained in these verses that serves as rich food for the inquiring mind, yet we can only hope to glean a few thoughts which may come to us, and hope they may be of comfort to some of God's little ones.

In the first place, the Scriptures are precious to God's dear children not only for what they contain of precious promises and admonitions, but also because they are inspired, thus giving confidence and assurance not found in other books. In our public libraries are many good books, which treat of many subjects, but when God has put his seal upon any, that soul no longer finds its chief joy in reading subjects like their authors, fallible, but desire something more stable, something that the natural mind has never been able to understand, and this they find in the book of inspiration. Here God's children are able to make a distinction between what God does and

what man does. The one is perfect, the other is filled with imperfection.

The Scripture is profitable for doctrine. The natural man teaches for doctrine the commandments of men. The spiritual man is no longer satisfied with natural reasoning, he must have a "thus saith the Lord." What does it matter to him how beautiful the words and how grand the line of reasoning, so long as it lacks a "thus saith the Lord"?

For reproof. The Lord's people are reproved by the world for being peculiar, and in many other ways, but these things seem light indeed compared with that reproof which comes from holy writ to them. The Lord's people have only to look into their own lives and compare them with the Scriptures to feel reproof upon every hand. The very fact that we feel to have come short in many things places us in line with the apostle Paul: "The good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do."

The Scriptures are profitable for correction. Many evil practices get in among the brethren, not only as individuals, but also into the churches. Sometimes it requires diligent search into the Scriptures to correct these evils. The apostle Paul in many of his epistles spoke in regard to the correction of evil practices.

For instruction in righteousness. How pleasant it is to sit down and read portions of God's word and meditate upon it, feasting upon the good things that have been recorded for our instruction. When we turn to the Psalms we are enabled to see something of the depths into which David came, as well as the mountain top of his rejoicing, how he gives forth the true conditions of his heart in sadness as well as in joy. God's people are enabled to have their own hope confirmed by reading of his dealings with his servants in other ages.

"That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." The primary object of the Scriptures, as set forth in the Scriptures themselves, is that they were written to the man of God, or God's children. Now this is not strange, neither does it work a hardship upon any. Those who enjoy its truth and are comforted by the same would sadly miss the sacred volume if they knew it was not written to them, but now they are made to feel that many times it is their meat and drink to meditate upon these things. The ungodly are not so, but find it a dull, dry book, or, on the other hand, use it to defend their own selfish, worldly practices. One of the great evidences to the child of God that the Scriptures are inspired is that there is no condition or experience into which they come that there is not a confirmation of their hope or an example of suffering and privation equal to or greater than their own but has been borne by the saints in other ages, and by which we have fellowship for God's people in every age.

I have written a few scattered thoughts on the above Scripture. Much more could be written and more profitable things said by many others. Please do with the above as you see fit, and my esteem for the dear editors will in no wise be changed.

Your brother in hope,

CHARLES A. JONES.

CARTHAGE, Ill.

ASHBORO, N. C., March 7, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It has been in my mind many times to write a few words for the SIGNS, but when I read the editorials and communications from the dear brethren and sisters scattered over our continent, all coming together

from north, south, east and west, filling its columns so richly, the inquiry arises, Can there be any place for a letter written in such weakness as mine? Although I am a stranger to most of the readers, yet many have been brought to me in sweet, and, I hope, sacred nearness. Mr. Lambert was a subscriber to the SIGNS when we were married, which is more than thirty years ago; thus we were readers for years while Elder Beebe was editor. Circumstances became such that we failed to take the paper for a while, but during that time it was held dear in our memory, and we spent many hours reading the old copies which were in our home. Before dear brother Chick died we were blessed to have it come to us again, and it still continues to come. Four editors have passed away, and many of the correspondents' names have disappeared from the columns of the paper since our first acquaintance with it, yet the theme of editors and correspondents now is the same as then. The same sweet song of blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever. How wonderful is our God! While time is passing, men and scenes are changing, he remains the same unchangeable God; nothing transpires contrary to his eternal purpose. The faith of his saints in all ages is the same, the path of tribulation the same, and the perfect rest in Jesus the same. When trials and afflictions press sorely, how good to have such a medium of correspondence as the SIGNS, where we may read from the little ones with a witnessing spirit that their path is ours, and to realize that neither they, nor any of the ancient worthies back to the beginning of time, have been able to perform any condition to bring relief in distress of any kind, but each feels to be the same continual sinner, the same hateful sinner in need of His mercy every moment of life. Dear brethren, is there not a path here in which we find the sweetest fellowship? We may talk about fellowship, but real fellowship only dwells for a fellow-traveler in the path each is traveling. It seems to me the more divine light is reflected, the more vivid is the reality of our corrupt nature, and as one is carried into the depths of the knowledge of the exceeding sinfulness of sin they realize the sovereign right and power of the eternal God to do all his pleasure. Each knows the corrupt nature of all the fellow-travelers, but that of each one is so vivid in the heart at home that each one has not time for gazing on the failings of his fellow-traveler. The failings are in all, but in the path of sweet fellowship the point is that each esteems their brother better than their vile self. Dear brethren, when pain and sorrow come to us we seek for freedom, but when we are freed from the trial we think of what we have passed through, and not a pang can we regret. In the earnest of the Spirit, we do abhor the unholy acts of the flesh. Sometimes we have to regret some circumstance that has existed in which some one has proved unfaithful, and we are tried, but if children of the most high God, all is for our good, and we rejoice in tribulation, for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Much comfort comes to me at times that there is a rejoicing with me in what I hope is the tribulation of the saints, and that there is within my heart knowledge of my corrupt and depraved nature. I am glad that this knowledge is with me and would not be blind to it for the world. It seems to me that nothing promotes the nearness

of feeling one for another as the manifestation that each has been carried into the depths of the knowledge of sin, and been made to abhor it. I have often thought of an expression of a minister now gone to his reward. He said, "I have thought that a sinner under conviction is the most lovely object I ever saw, for it seems I know his sorrows so well." It has been more than thirty years since he uttered those words, yet his words and the solemn expression of his face I remember well. Much is said about love, and if we be partakers of Christ's sufferings love dwells in the heart, which cannot be conceived by natural powers. It is implanted by the Spirit of God, and can only be known as his Spirit reveals. When the dear Lord was nearing the time of the agony he suffered to save his people from deserved wrath, he said to his disciples, A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. Was ever love like this, deep, unfathomable? Think of the volume of the sins of one poor sinner, and yet the sins of an innumerable company were pressing him, who is holy, holy, holy. As a cart full of sheaves is pressed, he was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth; he was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. Dear brethren, when faith sees our sins buried at the foot of the cross at the pouring forth of the blood of the suffering Lord, what thoughts we have of wonder and praise; the inquiry often arises, Was it truly for me? Yea, and because I live ye shall live also. What precious words, and what precious thought, that his words never fail, his words and his love are as lasting as he, from everlasting to everlasting. He had power to lay down his life and power to take it again, which he did, that vile rebels might live; and having loved them, he loves them to the end; not as the world loves, but as the Father loved his Son, he loves his bride, and in loving-kindness he draws them with sweet constraint. What a beautiful waymark of having passed from death unto life, if ye have love one for another; and now by the one Spirit, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of faith, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

Dear brother Lefferts, please give your views in the SIGNS on the silence of half an hour, spoken of in Revelation viii. 1. We would be glad to send you many more subscribers, but know not where to obtain any. I write with pencil, for my hand trembles too much to write with pen and ink.

Your sister, I hope,

(MRS.) THOMAS LAMBERT.

BELINGTON, W. Va., Jan. 1, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—After reading many of your articles in the dear SIGNS I feel like writing a few lines just to tell you that words fail to express how much good I have received; praise be to Him. As those articles reach my heart I can say I believe they are truth, and go out to feed us poor, weak ones, who depend on the Lord. I see my littleness more and more as time goes by. I am so low down in the dark often I do not know what will

become of me, so poor and weak I have no strength at all, and desire my Lord's return to renew my spirit. I call in vain often, as he does not answer my request, and I have learned that he gives the blessings just when he pleases. He is not a God who is led around by people's prayers, but works all things according to the good pleasure of his will, so I learn to wait and be still. I cannot say, like some, that I can do something to bring satisfactory results. I find all must be done by him in us and for us before we can do anything that is worth while, and where is our praise? There is none coming to us, all is to him. What are we poor worms? We are very small, and if our warfare is not ended and our iniquity pardoned where are we? There is no ground for our feet, for our deeds will not justify; but thanks be to God, Jesus came and took out of the way the very thing that was between us and God, which no man can remove, and if the Son makes us free, then we are free indeed. I am glad I have learned to put my trust in him. People of to-day say, Pray to God, trust him, believe on him and he will save you. I will say right here, we must have the spirit of prayer given us before we can utter a prayer, and it takes nothing more than the work of God to make us believe on him. He teaches here a little and there a little until we see everything we trusted in is gone. It is then we are in the horrible pit, nothing to do, no act can help us out, and if ever I was helpless as a child it was when in this pit, and you know the word says that all who call on the name of God shall be saved. Dear ones who have been taught the lessons all know and understand, there is a path that no fowl knoweth, the lion has not trodden it, nor the vulture's eye seen it. This path cannot be seen by natural eyes; no one knows it except those who are blessed of God. I have often wondered why I do not, and ask myself this question: What will become of me after death? One morning as I was thinking it over something within said, The Lord will take care of you. I answered, If the Lord will take care of me after I am dead I do not want any more. This has comforted me part of the time. I do not think one would get in those low, dark places if they had strength to do as they desire to do. We complain, but if we only knew that we were God's children then we could say these things are working for our good. I have heard people say they knew they were christians, and were going to heaven. I often wished I could be sure like they seem to be.

Well, as this is getting lengthy I will come to a close by saying, if you deem best you may publish this; if not, all will be satisfactory, as I feel it is imperfect, like myself. If you put it in print correct mistakes, and if this is worthless cast it aside and pardon me, as I can give only such as I have.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

(MRS.) W. D. PARSONS.

MONROE, Ga., Feb. 24, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed check for $10.25, for four new subscribers and myself, also one copy of the "Feast of Fat Things." I feel a great interest in the paper, and love to see it in the homes of my brethren, because it means something. The doctrine it contains is always in the singular, but it is sufficient to embrace a multitude which no man can number, and condemns all the doctrines of men. It is as a key to unlock the very soul of the children of God, and they have sweet communion with fellowship that the

world knows not of. This doctrine makes us often feel that we have an inheritance reserved in heaven that will not fade away, and that we are kept by the power of God; also often feel to be of good cheer, because Jesus said that he had overcome the world. In his resurrection he spoiled principalities and powers, making a show of them openly, triumphing over them. We love to sing the same song that the children of Israel sang when they crossed the Red Sea, with the spirit and understanding that the Lord had triumphed gloriously. His sovereignty gives us comfort that he even has the keys of hell, and we delight to declare that he has risen according to the Scriptures, and not according to what the Jews said about it for a large sum of money. Paul said, We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake; telling what he did, what he was and why he did. A good servant is pleasant to have in the household of faith, always ready to do the bidding of his Master, esteeming others better than himself, feeling as the prodigal son did when he came to himself, knowing that his father had plenty, nothing lacking, and he wanted to tell it and even be a servant. When we wait upon the Lord our strength is renewed, and we mount up and look down upon the things of the world, and they look so little that we are surprised at the size of man and all of his glory. We see him now trying to build a tower whose top will reach to heaven, trying to establish his own righteousness, as though he could direct his own steps, and things discretionary with him, forgetting that he is only clay in the Potter's hand. This doctrine meets with much opposition from those who feel that they are doing wonderful things for the Lord. Some day they must fall as Saul did, or receive the sad word, Depart from me, for I never knew you. May we walk uprightly, work righteousness, speak the truth and abide in the holy hill.

I often feel to contribute a few lines to the SIGNS by way of showing my appreciation of it, but my writings look so much like myself, rough, seem to need smoothing over, do not look like apples of gold in pictures of silver; if they did I would know they were fitly written or spoken. Do as you think best with this. Much love to you and yours.

Your brother in hope,

J. M. ADAMS.

THE SAINTS ARE THE SALT OF THE EARTH, AND THE LIGHT THEREOF.

THE Savior proclaimed this to his disciples in his sermon on the mount: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."—Matt. v. 13–16. This testimony is just as encouraging to the Lord's people of to-day as it was when it was delivered to his disciples. According to this testimony the Baptists should endeavor to walk worthy of their vocation as nearly as possible, and not be conformed to the alluring vanities of the world around them. There are some Baptist preachers now who say the Lord's commandments are not enjoined on the saints under the gospel dispensation.

The Savior said in his sermon on the mount, Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. Baptists who enjoy the sacred rest which remaineth for the people of God desire to walk circumspectly and keep themselves unspotted from the world, for they do not have to attend its deluding amusements to find enjoyment. The ancient prophets were endowed with the most sublime faith and piety, and their reverence for the cause and kingdom of heaven enabled them to proclaim the mandates of God in the face of persecution and death. When the Savior commenced his ministry he condemned many of the Jews for their disorderly conduct, for he did not court the friendship of the apostate Jews, therefore they crucified the Lord of glory. The apostles were renowned for their piety and orderly conduct, and they were an example to their followers and proclaimed it in their preaching and writing. This great spiritual light which was so fully manifested by the Savior and his prophets and apostles was the light which led the people of God through their long and toilsome journey in the wilderness while they were clothed in sackcloth. When Elder Beebe began to publish the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in 1832, it illuminated the pathway of a great many of the Baptists in the United States and Canada, for he wielded the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, fearless of the derision and scoff of his enemies. He could not be influenced to proclaim in his preaching or writing anything that he could not prove by the Scriptures, for he could not depart from the mandates of God for worldly gain or to make himself popular with the people of the world, and he continued to promulgate the doctrine of the great spiritual light of his Lord and Savior until the spring of 1881, when he passed away from the scenes of earth. Since his death the spiritual light of the SIGNS has been fully manifested, and it is a great consolation to the Baptists of to-day that they have such able editors and publishers, who are still proclaiming the same doctrine which has always been advocated by our much loved SIGNS OF THE TIMES. No matter how much war and commotion there is in the world, when the SIGNS comes to them they sit down and read it, for it is a great consolation to them under all circumstances. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law. They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit let us also walk in the Spirit. As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. For the saints are the salt of the earth, and the light thereof.

L. E. MCKAY.

WAYNESVILLE, Ohio, Feb. 6, 1917.

FT. CHADBOURNE, Texas, Nov. 5, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—As the time paid for my subscription has about expired, I will send you some money on subscription. As my lot is cast in a country where there are but few who care anything about the truth, I must take the SIGNS, as I believe

it sets forth the truth as taught by God's holy word. Brother Lefferts' editorial in November 1st number is surely the truth, and will bear comparing with God's word. In fact I see but little in the SIGNS but what I heartily indorse. Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. I mourn because I am not situated where I can hear the pure, sweet gospel of the grace of God preached, but the Lord knows best, and all I can do is to wait for better times, or wait for the salvation of the Lord. I note that a great many who have been called out of nature's darkness are situated like myself, where they cannot hear the preached word. It seems that in some places where there are churches there are strifes and divisions about words to no profit. O why should we bite and devour one another just because we cannot see everything alike? It seems that if we believe in salvation by grace, predestination and the resurrection, and are orderly in our walk, we ought to live together as becometh brethren. Designing men have crept in unawares among the flock, and in places have drawn away disciples after them. Dear brethren, let brotherly love continue, and let us stop making a brother an offender for a word when there is no sound doctrine to be sacrificed. The strong should be willing to bear the infirmities of the weak, as they are told to do in holy writ. It seems that a dark and cloudy day is upon the church, yet I know that God is able to lead his people out of Egyptian darkness, and will do so in his own good time.

As I cannot write anything edifying I will close. Let brotherly love continue. May we be granted grace for every time of need.

In hope, J. W. CAUDLE.

ISAIAH LI. 22.

"THUS saith thy Lord the Lord, and thy God that pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again."

These words seem to be spoken to me. How well I remember when the cup of gall and wormwood has been pressed to my lips, and I have drained it to the dregs. I often think of brother Ker's article, "Alone." For thirteen years I have been alone on the farm most of the time, sometimes with twenty cows to milk and everything to do alone. We are admonished, Be ye also ready, for ye know not what one day or one hour may bring forth. As we draw near threescore years and ten we know that the time cannot be long ere we shall be called to lay aside our armor and pass on to our rest. It will be forty-six years next June since I became a member of the church. They have been eventful years to me. I have often had to fight this strong man armed which keepeth his house. We are told that his goods are safe, but I have often found that I am not safe, for he has often made me do things which I would not have done if I had had my way; but when the stronger than he has come to set me free, then I have a little respite. But soon the strong man would return and the battle commence again. The words of Joseph to his brethren, God will surely visit you, have come true in my case. When I have been left alone I always found it a dreary time; but the Lord's arm is not shortened, he will surely save all who come unto God by him. The Lord has said unto Zion, No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise in judgment against thee thou shalt condemn. The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. Unto this

man will I look: him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word. We are told that the Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Dear brother Lefferts, I wish to thank you for the many good things you have written for the SIGNS. I have always found them sound. When it is well with you remember me. May the God of truth sustain and keep you under every trial.

Your brother, H. BEAKES.

HOWELLS, N. Y.

ROMANS XI. 7.

"WHAT then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."

The foregoing Scripture in this chapter is considering salvation, whether it be by works, or by grace, or by election, or the will of man. Elias in his intercession to God thought he was the only one left; they had killed all, and were trying to destroy him; but at that time God had reserved seven thousand that had not bowed to the image of Baal. We must not get this confused. God had reserved them, they had not kept themselves. Then Paul says, "Even so at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." A great many people seem to hate the word "election." But without election no one could say there were seven thousand in Elias' day and a few at this present time. So we conclude salvation is either by grace or by works. If by grace, it is not by works, but if by works it is not by grace. By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Some think we must choose Christ in order to be saved. Jesus says, Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you. Brethren, he talks just like an Old Baptist. God made choice of one, even our father Abraham, and blessed him and his seed after him. You that do not believe in election, just follow the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan. He divided the Red Sea, and the children crossed dry shod. The Egyptians tried to cross and were destroyed. This is election made manifest. Every heaven-born soul can rejoice when they cross the Red Sea (washed in the blood of Jesus) and have their enemy (load of sin) destroyed, and they can sing a new song, By grace are ye saved. Every one thinks he knows the way of salvation. The Israelites were not led the way they knew; Jacob was in a wilderness, Saul was in the way of persecution. Remember he is found by them that sought him not. There is no unregenerate sinner qualified to search for Jesus, for he is blind, deaf, dumb and dead, and when the Almighty gives him life, then, and not before, is he qualified to act. The way that seemed right to him he now finds to be the way of death. He finds the law to be a schoolmaster unto Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness to the believer, so that now the election obtains what the law could not give. There never has been a law given that could give life; if there had been, righteousness would have been by the law; but the law, in that it was weak, God, sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. The election are freed from the law, but the rest are blinded and still serve the law.

Yours in hope,

T. E. ATTEBERY.

WEISER, Idaho.

ALBANY, Oregon, Feb. 26, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have been thinking a long time that I would renew my subscription for the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but have neglected to do so until now. I am an old subscriber, commenced taking it in 1880, and have been reading it for many years, and always found it to be sound in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, without the help of man. I am now eighty-two years old. I professed a hope in Christ when I was sixteen years old, united with the Missionary Baptists and preached for them many years. Why did I do this? Because I did not understand the Scriptures. This is the reason there is so much false doctrine taught in the world. When our Savior arose from the dead and met his disciples by the way, the first thing he did was to open their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures. A man who is not taught of the Lord is sure to teach a false system of religion. Paul was sent to preach to the Gentiles; not to be the means of their eternal salvation, but to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of sin and Satan to God. While I was laboring so long preaching the conditional system of religion I think I had spiritual life, but needed a preacher who was taught of the Lord to open my eyes and show me the true doctrine of grace as set forth in the holy Scriptures. This was accomplished when the SIGNS OF THE TIMES fell into my hands in the year 1880, and when I commenced reading it the glorious light of eternal truth was revealed to me, and I then had no love for the doctrine I had been preaching. My mind then turned to the Primitive Baptist Church called Bethel, who held their meetings about ten miles from my home, in Linn County, Oregon. Old Elder Stipp was there, and I thought he preached a powerful sermon, which he was able to do. He opened the door of the church for the reception of members, and my impressions were so great that I arose and gave him my hand, and tried to relate to the church what I hoped the Lord had done for me, and they received me, and I was baptized by Elder Stipp the next day. Soon after I was ordained and chosen pastor of this church, and have been pastor until the present time. Since then many of those precious brethren and sisters have gone to their eternal home. Our church is located in Tallman, Oregon. We have built a good house and our membership is about forty. Peace, love and fellowship abound with us. If this is published in the SIGNS, and any of our Baptist friends see it who are thinking of coming to Oregon, we invite them to meet with us at the above mentioned place. We meet Saturday before the third Sunday, and Sunday also.

Now, brethren editors, I will close, hoping the Lord will be with you in the future as in the past, and enable you to wield the sword in defence of the truth.

SILAS WILLIAMS.

ELDON, Iowa, Jan. 13, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I see my subscription has expired, so inclosed find draft, as I feel that I cannot do without the paper, for it is like one of the family. My father took it from its first publication, mother took it after his death until her death, and I have taken it since her death, twenty-two years ago, so you may know it is a most welcome messenger in our home, and I hope I may have the blessed privilege of reading it as long as I live here in this sinful world. We have a little church one-half mile from our home,

and have meeting on Saturday and Sunday once a month. We are few in number, but have sweet fellowship one for another, which is worth all of this world, far ahead of a multitude in confusion. Our little church is called Des Moines, near Eldon, Iowa. If any of the eastern brethren can visit us we will give them a kind reception and be glad to have them.

I will close by hoping the dear old SIGNS may prosper in the future as in the past.

Your unworthy sister,

SUSIE KNIGHT.

WARRENTON, Va., Sept. 18, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—My subscription being past due, inclosed find post-office money order for renewal of the SIGNS. I enjoy reading the paper very much, and feel that I never want to do without it. I do not hear preaching very often, as it is about twenty-five miles to Mt. Zion, where there is regular preaching. I believe the doctrine that is set forth in the SIGNS; not a head belief, but, I hope, a heart experience. This world has been cold and lifeless to me, but I have met the ups and downs as best I could, and pray for strength to endure this life until He calls me home. I can say from the depths of my heart that I love the Lord. I feel as the psalmist said: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name.

Do as you think best with this.

Yours unworthily,

WILLIAM UTTERBACK.

SKAGGS, Ky., Jan. 9, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN—As my subscription to the dear old SIGNS has expired, I will renew at once. I feel that I have been so much comforted by reading the many good letters from the brethren and sisters that I never want to be without the paper as long as I live. It is to me as jewels of thought set in words of gold. It has caused me to rejoice in the hope that I have of eternal life and think as the poet says:

"Be still, sad heart, and cease repining,
Behind the clouds is the sun still shining;
Thy fate is the common fate of all:
Into each life some rain must fall."

Some days must be dark and dreary. I thank God that I am made to believe that the love of my blessed Redeemer is shining in my heart, and that I am a member of the Old School Baptist Church.

Praying the Lord to bless you with every blessing necessary to the salvation of your souls, I remain your sister in the gospel of Jesus Christ,

MELISSA C. SPARKS.

BLAKE, Texas, Oct. 31, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have had a strong desire ever since I received the first copy of the good old SIGNS to write you a few lines and try and express my feelings of gratitude toward you, but I find that I am unable to express my thankfulness for the kindness you have shown me in sending me the good old paper, which is of much comfort to a hungering soul like me, and it is nearly all the preaching I get. I cannot begin to thank you half enough, for it is the best paper I ever read; it is as bread to the hungry and drink to the thirsty, to all who are brought forth from the bonds of iniquity by the sure mercy of God, who works and none can hinder. Remember your unworthy sister at the throne of God's grace.

In hope of eternal life,

(MRS.) M. A. JONES.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1917.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

GENESIS XLII. 36; ROMANS VIII. 28.

"ALL these things are against me."

"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God."

The above Scriptures are far apart in the Bible, one being in Genesis and the other in Romans, and seem in contradiction one with the other. We shall try to harmonize them, and show that the sayings of the two men are like all other sayings of holy men. Often we hear that the Scriptures contradict themselves, hence men cannot depend upon them as having been given by inspiration. False teachers say that the prophets wrote according to their own ideas of things. Moses had a hobby, and wrote things that pleased his fancy. The same is said of all others who wrote the Old Testament Scriptures. The same false teaching is promulgated regarding the apostles. Paul, they say, had a hobby they call election and predestination, and he wrote along those lines because it suited his notions and ideas. John's hobby was love, they say, hence he wrote upon that subject more than any other. We sometimes wonder what sort of a Bible we would have if the Lord had moved each prophet and each apostle to say exactly the same things. What Moses said did not need to be repeated by David, and what David said did not need to be repeated by Solomon, and the things said by Solomon did not need to be repeated by Isaiah. The same is true of all the Old Testament writers, yet each one wrote as moved by the Holy Ghost, and in substance declared the same things. All the testimony is summed up by one who said, "They testified of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." There are no contradictions whatever in the Scriptures, and if any of us fail to understand them the difficulty is with us, not with the Scriptures. It is only as the Holy Ghost reveals them to man that he can know anything of their spiritual import. Peter tells us that no Scripture is of any private interpretation, for the reason that holy men of old wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. If it was the work of the Holy Spirit to move men to write, is it not also the work of the same Spirit to open the true import of those things to men? It would really seem so, yea, more, it is an absolute truth. The historical records of the Scriptures are just as true as those of prophecy. Because men cannot reason out how the Hebrew children could remain in the fiery furnace and yet not be burned, is no reason why it was not true. Because science teaches that the whale's throat is not sufficiently large to swallow a man, is no reason why Jonah was not in the whale's belly three days and three nights. If never a whale before nor since could swallow a man, that one could, because "the Lord prepared the fish." The whole record is true, regardless of what men or angels think or say.

When Jacob said, "All these things are against me," he was in the very depths of affliction and sorrow. Joseph, his dearly beloved son, had been devoured by

wild beasts, as he thought, and at that time Benjamin was to be taken from him also and carried down into Egypt, else they could have no corn, and Jacob felt that he would never see him again. Those two boys were the sons of his favorite wife, and because of that were very dear to him. It was not a wonder that he said, It will bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. Who can imagine greater sorrow than was his? From this standpoint what he said was absolutely true. All those things were against him in that sense, yet on the other hand, unknown to him, every detail of the whole affair was working for his good and the glory of God. The Lord knew where Joseph was and why he had sent him down into Egypt. He knew his fame in that land, because he had given him favor in the king, who had made him ruler in Egypt. The Lord knew that corn was stored there for Jacob and all his house. He knew that the best land, Goshen, had been reserved for Jacob and his children. But Jacob was told nothing about it. "It is the Lord's glory to hide a matter." We now begin to see that the two Scriptures at the head of this article do not contradict each other farther than the finite understanding of man concerning God's ways, thoughts, plans and works is concerned. We think we would be safe in saying that never, since the world began, has anything taken place that did not work for the good of the Lord's people, though we seldom know how it can be. If we could see the end of the predestination of God as the beginning comes to us we would have no worry about anything, but would know that all things between the beginning and the end were working for our good. Had Paul been told beforehand of his sore afflictions, such as he enumerates, shipwrecked, in the deep, stripes, stoned, imprisoned, perils among false brethren, &c., he surely would have said, "All these things are against me," not knowing how they could work for his good. But later in life, when he had, like Job, seen the end of the Lord, could say, "All things work together for good." The life he lived in the flesh, by the faith of the Son of God, was an example of the grace of God and of the power of faith. In all his sufferings and persecutions he was taught how helpless to deliver himself he was; also the power of God to save. Through his experience all the saints are taught that there is no escape; all must know the afflictions of Christ, being made conformable unto his death. Not only did Paul mean that experimentally all things work for good, but from the beginning of the world unto the end of the same. The entrance of sin into the world, and death by sin, worked together for good, in that Christ came to do away with both sin and death. God declared the end from the beginning, the end of sin, hence everything between the two extremes, as well as the extremes, was predestinated, settled, fixed in the purpose and plan of God. This makes a complete chain, without a weak or broken link. Every event in the world and of the world has been a link forming the predestinated chain of events for the good of God's people. As each link in an ordinary chain has its bearing upon another, and each link is dependent upon another, so the predestinated events of God all have their bearing one upon another, all working together for good. It was after the Lord passed by that Moses saw his glory; so with all the Lord's people, it is after the Lord accomplishes a thing that we understand how all things, which seem so against us in the begin-

ning, are working for our good and his glory. When Paul was made to understand this truth he could with boldness and all assurance ask the question, "What shall we then say to these things? if God be for us who can be against us?" Job must have known this doctrine to be true. He suffered the loss of all things, was sorely afflicted himself in body, yet he said, Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. With the assurance that his Redeemer lived, things of time and sense meant very little to him. So it is with us all when brought to the same place. We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. K.

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WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mary Enderlin, widow of John Enderlin, died at her home, Roxbury, Delaware County, New York, Sunday, Feb. 11th, 1917, aged nearly 78 years. She had lived in Roxbury village a good part of her life. She was baptized by Elder Isaac Hewitt when about the age of sixteen years, and had been a member of the Roxbury Old School Baptist Church over sixty years, and had no use whatever for the popular religion of the day, by which she was surrounded. We shall miss her very much, but feel that what is loss to us is gain to her. She was a faithful christian, a lover of good, sound doctrine. I had known her personally for over forty years, and always found her ready to give a reason of the hope that was within her with meekness and fear. She was not ashamed to let her neighbors know that she was an Old School Baptist, and what the Old School Baptists believe, and while many did not believe as she did, they esteemed her as an excellent neighbor and friend and an honorable, upright christian woman, which she truly was. She was with her daughter, Mrs Booth, who, with her husband, did all that could be done for her comfort in her illness. Her maiden name was Leonard, being one of a family of twelve children, only one of whom remains, Dr. D. M. Leonard, of Florida, who is aged and feeble. She leaves one son, one daughter and one granddaughter, with many friends, to mourn her absence, while she is in eternity with her dear Savior, whom she loved so much and served so faithfully more than sixty years. She is eternally happy, not waiting to be, as there is no to-morrow in eternity.

Elder George Ruston, of New York city, and myself officiated at the funeral, which was held at her home Wednesday, Feb. 14th. Burial in the Moore Cemetery in the village.

May the dear Lord bless all the dear mourning family and friends with strength to bear the affliction, is the desire of the writer.

D. M. VAIL.

Mary E. Smith died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. W. T. Chilton, Campbellsburg, Ky., Feb. 14th, 1917, aged 81 years. She was the daughter of John Ladd, of Pleasureville, Ky. Was married to Jacob S. Smith August 11th, 1853. To that union were born five children, four sons and one daughter: L. K., E. H., C. V. and Jacob S. Smith and Mrs. Lillian Chilton, of Campbellsburg. L. K. and C. V. Smith preceded her to the grave. She was received a member of Sulphur Fork Church at Campbellsburg the fourth Sunday in February, 1886. Sister Smith fell on the icy pavement a few months before her death, and with her advanced age and weakened condition she was not able to regain her strength. She was a great blessing to her church, deeply exercised in

spiritual things, always calling for songs that pertained to the glory of God and his kingdom upon earth. We shall miss her in the church, but we rejoice. She has gone home to her heavenly Father to be with him in his eternal home.

The funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder P. W. Sawin, and Rubelt Pearcy, of the "Christian Church," and the remains buried in New Castle Cemetery. Truly a great and good woman has gone. God grant comfort to the bereaved children, is the prayer of the writer.

ALSO,

W. T. Humston departed this life at the home of his nephew, Noble Humston, Campbellsburg, Ky., March 19th, 1917. He was born May 29th, 1840. He was first married to Miss Birtie Massie, who died in 1878. Three children were born to them, all dying in infancy. He was married to Miss Maggie E. Roberson Nov. 8th, 1888, who died Jan. 22nd, 1917, just preceding him to the grave a short time, therefore I will write both obituaries as one. Brother Humston first united with Cane Run Church of Regular Baptists at Turners Station, Ky., over forty years ago, then joined Sulphur Fork Church by letter in October, 1909. Sister Maggie united with Sulphur Fork Church in June, 1881. Both were faithful members until death, and their home was indeed a home for the Regular Baptists. She was born Dec. 20th, 1840, both dying in their 77th year.

The funeral was conducted at the residence by Elder P. W. Sawin and Rubelt Pearcy, and their remains laid to rest in the Sulphur Fork burying ground. May God comfort all the bereaved.

ERNEST F. RANSDELL.

R. P. Trimble was born in Staunton, Va., March 1st, 1810, and moved in his early childhood with his parents to West Virginia, where he lived until the close of the Civil War, moving to Jackson County, Mo., in 1865. October 14th, 1868, he was married to Miss Eliza Jeffries, and moved to Holt County the following spring, settling in Kansas City in 1878, where he lived with his family until the day of his death, which occurred Feb. 9th, 1917, after what first appeared to be a slight indisposition, but in three weeks terminated in his death. He leaves to mourn his death his companion, our dear sister in Christ, two sons, C. A., of Los Angeles, Cal., and Dr. Trimble, of Kansas City, Mo., two daughters, Mrs. Dobler, of Wichita, Kansas, and Mrs. Watkins, of Kansas City. He was a man of an unassuming disposition, and never made a public profession of religion or united with any church.

A short service was held at the home Sunday morning, Feb. 12th, conducted by the writer, after which the remains were taken by automobile to Missouri City, Mo., about twenty-five miles from the late home, and laid at rest to await the pleasure of the Lord.

S. KETCHUM.

Albert Houston Drew departed this life Jan. 20th, 1917, in Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., aged 67 years. He was a son of John Drew and Mary C. Edsall. Mr. Drew was one of the oldest business men of Warwick; he had been engaged in business many years, and was very successful. His business was his delight. Mr. Drew was quiet and unassuming in manner and won many friends. He had been in failing health for several years, and found it necessary to spend part of the winter months in Florida, and was preparing to leave for the warmer climate when stricken with pneumonia, which took him away in a few days. He was not a member of the church, but attended quite regularly and was very attentive, a believer no doubt. He was kind to the poor, and will be much missed in Warwick. He is survived by his widow, sister Drew, and two children: Fred, of Warwick, and Mrs. Sarah Stern, of Brooklyn, N. Y.; also one sister, Mrs. Garity, of Newburgh, N. Y.

The writer conducted the funeral services in the home of Mrs. Mary Furman, an aunt of sister Drew, where they had boarded several months. The funeral was largely attended, and the interment took place in the family plot in the Warwick Cemetery. May comfort abound toward our sister Drew, the children and the sister.

K.

Mrs. Emeline Jenkins, widow of Thomas Jenkins, departed this life Nov. 22nd, 1916, aged 92 years. She had been a faithful member of the Old School Baptist Church of Otego for nearly fifty years, having been baptized by Elder Durand in 1872. Although afflicted with poor eyesight for many years, which led almost to total blindness, she was cheerful, never murmuring, ever trusting Him who doeth all things well. She leaves a son, a daughter and two grandchildren to mourn their loss. She was laid to rest beside her husband in Sanitaria Springs Cemetery, many friends being present to pay their last respects. Services were conducted by Elder D. M. Vail.

APPOINTMENTS.

PLEASE publish the following appointments:

Halcottville, N. Y., Sunday, March 25th, all day meeting, commencing at 10:45 a. m.; Union Grove, Sunday, April 1st, 11 a. m.; Roxbury, Sunday, April 8th, at the Mead sisters' home, 10:45 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.; Ashokan, Sunday, April 15th, 10:45 a. m. and 2 p. m; Vega, Sunday, April 29th, 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.

GEORGE RUSTON.

THE Lord willing, I will be at the home of Casper G. Fetter, Hamilton Ave., opposite Greenwood Cemetery, Trenton, N. J., Sunday, April 15th, meeting 10:30 a. m.; also at Stockton 3:30 p. m.

D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Allie Davis, Ky., $3.00; R. Lester Dodson, N. Y., $3.00; Decatur Mouser, Ohio, $3.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Harford Church, Harford County, Md., May 16th, 17th and 18th, 1917. Those coming by way of Baltimore take train leaving North Ave. station, Md. & Pa. R. R., at 3:20 p. m. for Long Green or Forest Hill on Tuesday before. Those from the north take train that leaves York., Pa., at 1:50 p. m. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to be with us, especially ministering brethren.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.
M. F. WHITAKER, Clerk.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 85. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1917. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HARDING, W. Va., April 5, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—It was thirty years the 22nd day of February since the Lord enabled me to believe that he had pardoned my sins and caused me to praise him as my Savior. In my early childhood I often thought I would like to be a christian, but did not see what a sinner I was until I was about seventeen years old. I then felt deeply troubled about my condition, and tried to pray to God for help, but my prayers seemed very weak and brought no ease to my troubled mind. I read the Bible to see if I could find any help there. Thus I went for several months, feeling condemned and hopeless. Once while at a Baptist meeting the minister preached on experience. I thought he meant it all for me, and wondered how he knew about my feelings. After that the feeling of condemnation and the burden that I had felt seemed to wear away and leave me. That was in the autumn, and I was again careless and unconcerned about myself until during the winter I was reading "Pilgrim's Progress," and when I came to where Pliable turned back because of the Slough of Despond, I felt that I had done the same thing, and a terrible fear took possession of me, and from that I prayed that my feeling of guilt might not leave me again until I could feel that it was washed away by the blood of Jesus. How I longed and prayed for the pardon of my sins, and how great they loomed up before me, until I loathed myself and all that I had ever done. I would get mother's paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and peruse it to see if the experiences published there were in any way like I felt. They had all felt that they were sinners, had also felt relief, but no relief came to me. I read Christ's sermon on the mount; he said, Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. That was a little comfort to me, for I had come to know that I did hunger and thirst for the righteousness of Christ, and that I had no righteousness of my own. Thus I wept and mourned day after day, and would go alone to pray where none but God could hear, and there was almost continually a cry in my heart for mercy. Who can describe the anguish of soul that a sinner feels when he realizes that he is without hope and without God in

the world? I labored and was heavy laden, and longed for rest, but was working for it, for God had not yet given me faith to stand still and see his salvation. One evening while praying for mercy a great light seemed to shine into my heart for a moment, then was gone. How I longed for such joy to remain. I feared the desire for the pardon of my sins might leave me again, for I now realized more clearly than before how terrible it was to go on in sin without hope of heaven, with eternity ever before me. I read where Jesus prayed, and there appeared unto him an angel from heaven, strengthening him, and being in an agony he prayed more earnestly, and he sweat, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground. Again I begged the Lord to be merciful and pardon me, and felt that I would be willing to do anything that he would show me was my duty. Once while meditating and begging for mercy I seemed to see (but not with my natural eyes) the Lord on a high seat in a beautiful grove, and the Savior standing at his right hand. Again joy filled my heart for a moment, then all was gone and I was left in darkness. As the days passed I did not cease to beg for mercy, feeling then that, Though he slay me, yet will I trust him. The next day the words of the hymn, "Jesus, lover of my soul," kept passing through my mind with some sweetness, but did not bring the relief I was craving. The next morning while meditating on my condition I felt I was willing to give up everything in this life if I could but feel that the Lord had pardoned my sins and given me a hope of heaven. I had now come to the end of the law, and to know that all my efforts were in vain. I knew I had no strength of my own, no faith until he should give it. Here is where I hope Christ became the end of the law for righteousness to me. During the morning these words of the hymn were passing through my mind again and again: "Jesus, lover of my soul, let me to thy bosom fly;" "Other refuge have I none, hangs my helpless soul on thee," and "Thou, O Christ, art all I want." O how well they expressed what I felt, and were the cry of my broken heart and contrite spirit, and with them came a sweetness and joy that I had not before experienced. In a moment my burden of sin was gone, and a great joy and peace took possession of me; a peace which passeth understanding, causing me from the depths of my heart and soul to praise God for the unspeakable gift of his love. For several weeks this great happiness was undisturbed, and such love to God as I cannot describe filled my heart most of the time. I then thought I understood why Jesus suffered such agony. He had to suffer for the sins of all who would ever know his salvation. No wonder he wanted to go alone to pray; he felt that none but the Father could help. Surely this is why his children want to be alone to pray: they know that their's is a case that none but God can help. I could now read the Bible with an understanding which made it meat and drink to me. Many good hymns were opened up to me, and expressed the very praises I wished to render to God. As time passed I felt it my duty to confess what I believed the Lord had done for me and be baptized. Father and mother were members of the Tygarts Valley Old School Baptist Church, and as they had to go a considerable distance over a rough road to get to their meetings they could not often take any of their children with them, therefore I had not heard a Baptist sermon since I received

a hope. I had heard ministers of other denominations preach, but their preaching was not in harmony with my experience, so I could not have fellowship for them. I felt troubled, and feared the Lord would in some way punish me if I neglected to do what I felt impressed was my duty. The Baptist Association was to be held in August with the Valley Church, and I felt very anxious to go and hear the preaching. My sister, Mrs. Taylor, came home to go, and wanted to join the church during the association. We went, and I have not words to express how much I enjoyed the preaching; it all seemed so plain now, and was in harmony with what I had been taught by experience, and felt I must go to that church when I went to any. Elder J. S. Corder was moderator of the association. As sister wanted him to baptize her she told him what she desired, and they assembled the church on Saturday and opened the door for the reception of members. As I looked upon the members of that church and Elder Corder seated with them I saw a beauty in the church which was not of earth, but seemed divine and heavenly; a beauty which I felt belonged to God's church, and was shown to me that I might know where to find a home with his people. My sister was received, and when I saw her baptized I could not refrain from weeping. Elder Lewis noticed me, and said, "You will be the next one." After I went home from the association I felt very much exercised about going to the church; my heart was troubled and heavy, and I prayed the Lord to show me what I must do. While I was feeling so cast down these words came to me: "Jesus, I my cross have taken, all to leave and follow thee." My mind was instantly at ease; I felt that I could gladly go. Shortly after that, while reading some Baptist papers aloud for my parents, I came to a place that was so much like my own experience that I broke down and wept; my younger sister Alice left the room to hide her tears, and I followed her. Next day mother questioned me about myself, and I told her all. She was greatly rejoiced, and when father came in she told him. I then learned that sister Alice had received a hope before I had, and felt that she must go to the church and be baptized. We went to meeting with father and mother on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1887, related our experience to the church, were received, and baptized the next day by the pastor of the church, Elder E. P. Hart. We felt the answer of a good conscience in doing our duty as it had been shown to us. I have passed through many trials since then, of sickness, bereavements, losses and crosses, and through them all have had my own sinful nature, the world and Satan to contend with. Many times I have felt that the Lord was with me, and enabled me to bear with resignation the afflictions and bereavements that have come to me. Sometimes he has by his grace given me strength to say, "Thy will be done," but when it has pleased him to hide his presence from me I have come to know by experience that I cannot go one step aright without him, and I realize fully that my salvation in time and eternity is and must be by his grace alone; to him be all the honor and glory.

Before I close I want to say to the editors and writers of our paper that I much enjoy what they have written. I do not know that the paper has been any better than usual for awhile, but I have felt the need of the very things which have been published in the last few numbers. The most of the writers are strangers to me

in the flesh, but I hope we have all received of the same Spirit and are drawn to each other for the truth's sake as it is in Jesus. I enjoyed Elder Durand's article "About Praying" in the April 1st number, also "The grace of God in one's heart, and its effect," by F. Selby Fisher. I was glad when I read in Elder Ker's "New Year's Greeting:" "The doctrine of Christ cannot progress, because it is perfect; the religion of Jesus cannot progress, because it is perfect; the ordinances of the church cannot be improved upon, because they are perfect." How comforting it is to hear the servants of the living God proclaim such words in the face of the religious world, who are trying to teach the people that the churches must keep up with the progress of the times to save sinners and hold their membership. I have enjoyed Elder Lefferts' editorials; he has made many things plain that I needed to know. I noticed a short sketch from Elder Vaughn's pen; it brought to my mind again how much I enjoyed his preaching at our association last August. May the Lord comfort him with the comfort wherewith he comforted us. May He also bless the editors and publishers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and make them to proclaim the same precious truth it has always contended for, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

(MRS.) E. E. WORKMAN.

SILVERTON, Texas, Jan. 1, 1917.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—I have just read Elder Ker's "New Year's Greeting," and note that he begs all who love the cause to write for the SIGNS during the year. I feel to respond, yet I have nothing to bring to the "storehouse" except the same old sweet story of Jesus and his love. But what more do we want? Has he not brought us up out of the miry clay, and placed our feet upon a rock, and put a new song in our mouth, even praise unto God? He has established our goings, has caused us to lie down in green pastures, by the side of still waters. He has caused us to sit down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit is sweet to our taste. He brought us to the banqueting-house, and his banner over us is love. O loved ones, cannot you remember when it was thus with you? When we heard our Beloved speak and say, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, and the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land. Then all was joy, peace and love. Jesus all day long was our joy and our song. But ah, how very soon did he leave us; we sought him, but could not find him; called, but he gave no answer. Then we cried out from the depths of our hearts, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me? How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord, forever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me? We go mourning all the days until our strength is dried up like a potsherd, and our tongues cleave to our jaws, and we wonder why we must suffer so intensely, forgetting that it is through much suffering we enter the kingdom; and if we suffer not with him we reign not with him. We do not realize that the Lord is doing great things for our souls, whereof we should be glad. We are cast down, but not forsaken, for he will strengthen us and uphold us with his right hand of righteousness; he will cause us to walk in his statutes and keep his ordinances; he will make darkness light before us, and crooked things straight. These things will he do, and not forsake us. Then,

beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you, but rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him. For some months past I have been in a peculiar frame of mind, it seems I am calmly waiting for "something" in the near future; what it is I am unable to tell. I have ceased to lament the cold, barren state of Zion, fully believing that the two witnesses (the church and the Bible) are lying dead in the streets of Sodom and Egypt, dead to the world. The Scripture that came with great force to me one day while I was lamenting the sad condition of Zion and caused me to cease my lamentations was this: "Be still and know that I am God;" and when I remember that he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, I am made to be still, for well do I know that nothing can happen contrary to the fixed purpose of the great Jehovah. Why do I think the two witnesses are lying dead in the streets of Sodom (wickedness) and Egypt (darkness)? Because if there ever was a time when the testimony of the true church and the Bible was completely ignored it is now. Scorned, scoffed at, ridiculed and hated by the entire antichristian world it certainly is at the present time and has been for some time. How long before the three and one-half days will expire none knoweth save the great I AM. It does seem that the woman which sat upon the scarlet colored beast is now reigning over the kings of the earth; for all nations have drunk of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. No nation is exempt; many run to and fro, and knowledge is on the increase. What was said to Israel of old might be applied to the times now. The Lord through Hosea says to the children of Israel that he has a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing and lying and killing and stealing and committing adultery they break out, and blood toucheth blood. How long before a great change will take place we know not, but we know it will be for the time appointed, and all we can do is to be still and know that he is God.

I began this January 1st, and here it is March, and it is still unfinished. I will send it thus, and if it meets your approbation, brethren editors, publish it; if not, all is well. Now may God in his goodness bless Zion, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Yours in tribulation,

LYDIA C. RAY.

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1 JOHN I. 1–3.

"THAT which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the light was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

This morning as I sat and read the sweet letter of brother Durand on Prayer, and brother Fisher's letter, "The grace of God in one's heart, and its effect," I was made to rejoice, and to hope that I knew a little about these things. I do believe that the Lord has blessed me with the forgiveness of sins many times as I have passed along the pathway of life, and given me to see and know that I cannot live without him and his continual mer-

cies. I often try to pray when it appears to me that there is no prayer in it, and I often fear that there is none in me. Indeed, I feel sure there is not any in me unless the Lord gives it to me. I have felt prayer in my heart with the full assurance that that prayer was then and there answered, and then again I have felt prayer in my heart which I was given to feel that I should have to wait for the answer. I have been made to ask the Lord to deliver me from this tenement of clay, and have been given to feel that I must wait for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body, before I could see this corruptible put on incorruption and this mortal put on immortality, and I hope that the Lord has so far given me that patience which has made me willing and able to wait all my appointed time till my change comes. Now there is a working within which makes me understand that the Lord is here, and that he is performing a work that is marvelous in my eyes; a work of the resurrection in me as the earnest of the joys to come. Thus the little faith which he has so graciously given to me ever points to that blessed hope which is within the vail, and is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. There is there a sure foundation to every grace of the Spirit, and hope is there to enable us to outride every storm that comes upon us. In these storms of sorrow and great tribulation we are given to fully try the strength of our moorings, and we learn that they are sure. In these we also learn that we are but passive creatures in the hand of the almighty God; that he is the Potter, and that we are the clay. While we live here we never see anything else in ourselves, therefore we do not see the incorruptible body. When we are given to see that then we will not need hope any more, for that grace of the Spirit will have ended in the reality, and there will be no more hope nor fear. Prayer will all turn to praise, and our joy will be full in and with our Lord in his righteousness and glory. Until then we wait and hope on in the fear of God, who has promised and who is able to fulfill all his word. How good and how sweet that he has given to us while we are here in the flesh the throne of grace, and that he with his own hand brings us to that throne. It may be that we come there in very weakness and only in the smallest whispers; yes, in groanings which are to us unutterable, yet he brings us there. We have concluded that there is no use to pray, that we cannot pray, that our words are but a chattering noise, or thoughts of the worst foolishness, and all vanity, but then the prayer is there, and all of the Lord. Even the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. How heavy the heart is when there are not words enough in all our vocabulary to express the thoughts of our necessity, and yet it is then that the unutterable groanings of the Spirit are in our hearts. Then also we learn the fellowship of our Lord Jesus in his sufferings. Fellowship is learned only in experience. Many say, "Brother," and never feel the troubles of those things that give the right to that relationship, nor do they know the joys which the children feel in the presence of the Lord on the holy mountain. Simply being a church member does not give that fellowship. To be a true Old School Baptist there must be the experience that other Old School Baptists have and have had since the Lord came in his flesh. It is in experience that we learn that "In me (that is, in my flesh,) there dwelleth no good thing," and all the other experiences

which Paul expresses in the seventh chapter of Romans. In it we learn the fellowship of John the Baptist, as is expressed in the eleventh chapter of Matthew, and of any others of the holy writers of the Bible, and of the saints of even this present time. All must be brought together in experience, and without this there is confusion and division. We have no evidence of the things which we have not seen, heard and felt. We have the authority of the inspired writers in many things which we have not as yet felt or entered into. However, there are enough of those things which we have felt to give us to believe all of their teachings, regardless of the apparent impossibility for those things to be or to come to pass. We have experienced enough to tell us that God can do all things, whether we believe it or not. Things have come to us which we felt could never be, that they were too hard to be, and yet they have been. This proves to us the power of God to do all his pleasure. There are things we would love to pray for, but we cannot, and then there are things we do not care so much about, but the first we know we are praying in our hearts for the accomplishment of those things, and we are led into the experience of seeing the accomplishing of those things. I know a case of two women: one had no use for the other, did not want to be in the same company with her, and I expect that she never thought of praying for her. One night she was aroused from her sleep with the assurance that the Lord had given that woman a good hope. It was so plain to her that she called her mother-in-law and told her that it was true. Not many days passed before it became known to the brethren and sisters, and shortly it was my privilege to baptize that sister in the fellowship of our church. Before that she had no use for us nor the doctrine we preached, but after that it was the theme of her soul as long as she lived, and she and the other sister were the warmest of friends. Even so in many cases the Lord so works that the first we know we are praising him for his wonderful works to the children of men. We are glad that our God is not confined to what we believe nor to what we know; that he does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and that none can stay his hand nor say unto him, "What doest thou?" I want to pray to the Lord that he will give us all to be subject to his will, and to do his commandments while we live here on the earth; that he will deal gently with us in death and give us to live with him in glory.

Your brother in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

ATLANTIC, N. C., March 29, 1917.

DAWSON SPRINGS, Ky., March 23, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter I received from brother C. M. Hood, of Nashville, Tenn. I have his consent for you to publish it in the SIGNS, with your approval. It was quite a consolation to me, and I wish to divide it with the saints.

Very truly yours, in hope of life eternal,

BEN P. EARLE.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Jan. 8, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER:—I am thinking of you and some of the church that I have in remembrance, and have concluded to drop you a line, if the Lord be pleased to allow it, and let you know that I hold you in fond remembrance. I feel I shall always be glad that I had the special privilege of meeting you and knowing you personally. It is a grand thing to be held in high esteem by God's family,

when one feels within himself to be so unworthy. I just do not know how to express my thoughts in regard to it. There is something about it that is too high for me, I cannot comprehend it. We remember that the family of God is "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation;" they are God's particular elect people, chosen in Christ before the world began, and it is according to this choice that they are manifested among the living family of God and made able to glorify him who has called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. They were chosen in Christ unto a certain end, and that will be that each and every one of this choice will be holy and without blame before him in love. This is the purpose of the choice. It was not for any foreseen good in them, for we read, The children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand; for Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. Then we must confess that this choice was not made because God foresaw that these people would of themselves hate evil and do good, and because of that he chose them as his people. Like all of the rest of the Adamic family, they were the children of wrath, even as others, but (now this is it): God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved them, even while dead in trespasses and in sins, hath quickened them (given them life) together with Christ, hence by grace are ye saved. These people were all in Christ as his children when there was none of them, that is, as they are now, actually, but they were in him just like the oak in the acorn, and brought by the thousands in due season, and are made manifest. In this sense God could lay the sins of all his people on his Son, and, as Job said, Sewed up all mine iniquities in a bag. Jesus was this bag, so to speak, and all the iniquities of every one of this divine choice was sewed up in him, and by his death he forever put them away, nailing them to the cross, hence, "It is finished." All that had to be done to appease the wrath of God against sin and unholiness was done, and he bowed his head and gave up the ghost and was buried, and on the third morning he arose and went out and made himself known to his family, and then from Mt. Olivet ascended back to God, a living Jesus, there to intercede for his people according to the will of God, and God's will is that none shall perish. Then how safe they are, and how sure it is that the Holy Ghost will at the appointed time take these things and communicate them to them. Now we have it from Paul, that he died for our offences and was raised for our justification. Then the offences of all this family have been put away by his death, and their justification is sure, as he ever lives to make intercession for them. Hence, he says, As I live, ye shall also live. I am he that was dead, but am alive for evermore. We are looking for these highly favored people. How shall we know them? How shall we find them? God says, I leave in the midst of thee a poor and afflicted people, and they shall trust in the Lord. That is a very evident mark that these people bear. He says again, With weeping and with supplication will I lead them. Here, then, is another mark: they are a people badly afflicted. Affliction brings poverty, poverty brings weeping, and weeping brings deep and profound supplication. Now these are marks. If we were to start out to find these people who among all this so-called christian world bear these marks? Unless you can find a

people that bear these marks I want to tell you that you have not found this chosen generation, this royal priesthood, holy nation.

Well, there is more to be said, more than I can ever tell, but my time is up, and I must close. Pray for us. Farewell in the Lord.

Yours in love,

C. M. HOOD.

GLEN ANDREW, Ontario, March 6, 1917.

EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR FRIENDS:—In my letter of the 28th of last September I made reference to the illness of my eldest daughter, stating that hope still lingered with me, and I earnestly prayed that she would be restored to health again. It is now with sadness and sorrow of heart I write this morning, informing you that dear Eva fell asleep in Jesus Saturday evening about half-past nine, the 13th day of January, aged nineteen years, two months and eleven days. There are four of our family of seven with us now: Barbara Ann, Sarah Isabell, Archie Hugh and Irene. Dear Eva never made a public profession of religion, but there was a wonderful revelation of the grace of God and his everlasting love to one of his dear redeemed children made manifest before her spirit took its flight to God who gave it. On Friday morning about five o'clock for the first time she made known to me she was going to leave us, and requested that the ring on her finger (a gift from her mother) be given to her sister Barbara, and that her favorite hymn be sung at her funeral; the first verse is:

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,
Come unto me and rest;
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down,
Thy head upon my breast.
I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary and worn and sad;
I found in him a resting-place,
And He has made me glad."

She spoke to us of her going home, and not to feel sorry, assuring us of a reunion in the happy home on high. She then took a weak turn, and as we were gently lowering the mattress said, "I am going now," and folding her arms on her bosom said, "Lay me in the coffin like this," and after a brief pause closed her eyes and said farewell. After a little while she awoke and seemed to have a vision of heaven, and after taking a look at each one of us gathered around her bedside said how lovely we appeared to her; our faces looked like angels, and that she thought it was her last, and said that she came back again and would be with us a little longer, but did not know how long. She asked her Uncle Archie to read a chapter and pray, and, as I believe, guided by the Holy Spirit he read the fourteenth chapter of John and then engaged in prayer. At times she would express a desire to go home, but was willing to patiently wait and suffer without complaining until the Lord would call her. The remainder of the day was spent in sweet conversation with her and the singing of hymns, and dear Eva joined in the singing, but was too weak to repeat many of the words. The night was passed without closing her eyes in slumber, talking with us at times, and continued to converse with us during the day, and about three hours before the end of her earthly pilgrimage she seemed to be given renewed strength and delivered an important message to her father and mother, sisters and brother, and said that her father would complete it by prayer (which was a terrible cross to me, being the first time I ever made the feeble attempt to pray in public), and that her

Uncle Archie would pray in the morning. Previous to delivering the message, having a desire to meet her friends for the last time on earth, fully realizing that the time was near at hand when they would hear the sound of her sweet voice no more, she made this statement that, "In a few days I will be laid beneath the cold sod." In compliance with dear Eva's dying request, and, as brother Archie felt, in obedience to the command of the Lord delivered to him by his dear niece, given her by inspiration, on Sunday morning, after reading a chapter and the singing of hymn No. 668 (Beebe's collection), the first verse being,

"Jesus, while our hearts our bleeding,
O'er the spoils that death has won,
We would at this solemn meeting,
Calmly say, 'Thy will be done.'"

he made a few remarks, and then engaged in prayer, which I believe ascended heavenward to the throne of God. It was a memorable three days, the 12th, 13th and 14th of January, 1917. I desire to link these three days together as one continuous day, which will be held sacred in the memory of the writer and some others present with me until the appointed time comes to each of us to bid adieu to all things here below. Brother Archie arrived at our home the 23rd of December, and departed the 18th of January, and sister Barbara arrived the 9th of January and departed the 5th of February. Their presence with us at the time of our sore bereavement was, I believe, in accordance with the decree and wise purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and I will continue to praise him for his loving-kindness all the days of my life, and though he slay me, yet will I trust in him, and desire to be submissive to his will in all things, looking and longing for the second coming of our dear Redeemer, when we all shall meet in paradise, the eternal home of the blessed, to part no more.

This letter is a memorial in loving remembrance of our dear departed loved one, and will be kept as such by the writer and his family, who are sorely afflicted.

In much tribulation, I remain yours affectionately,

JOHN C. McALPINE.

ISAIAH VI. 1.

"In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up."

We are told but very little of Isaiah's early life. He said of himself that he was "a man of unclean lips." We might infer from this that whatever serious thoughts he may have had in regard to religious subjects, he had spoken of such things in a light and jesting way, as has been the manner of many of us. But there comes a time when the realities of spiritual existence are brought to his mind in such a positive manner that he fixes the date by so important an event in history as the death of a king; that king's power to control the actions of his subjects is gone forever, and another ruling power takes his place. Whatever Isaiah's former ideas of religion may have been, the view given him of the Lord seated upon a throne places him under authority of the new and living King, whose dominion is from sea to sea and from the rivers to the ends of the earth. The view of the King, the subjects and the manner of government, make him feel utterly unfit to dwell in such a kingdom. Whatever have been the ambitions of his fleshly nature, they die, as did King Uzziah, and new aspirations take control of his whole mind. What is it then to see the Lord as the sovereign ruler and to regard him with reverence and

fear? The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. It is to see the heavenly kingdom with spiritual eyes, a kingdom that is above all earthly kingdoms, whose subjects are gathered from all lands; all are taught by the same Spirit to love the things pertaining to this higher and holier relationship. The government is love, and they that love the law have no desire to transgress it; for the subjects are also princes in the King's court, their clothing is of spotless purity and of wrought gold and fine needlework. There is no fear of death or separation. The King is seated upon a throne; he has eternal power; none can dispute, none can overthrow his power or dispossess any of his subjects. The glory of his presence is such that there is no need of the sun by day, and there is no night there. When Isaiah saw these things he said, Woe is me, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. The first impression on the mind is of fear in such presence. A ray of light from that brightness that is above the noonday sun has shined into the sinner's mind, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, to show them that they are born into the kingdom of light; and it has made the things that were darkness and mystery to be living realities, the King in his beauty and holiness, the spiritual kingdom and the saints that dwell therein. It is only by that light from the spirit world that these things have ever been seen, and once seen are never forgotten, although the contrast makes us see the evils of our fleshly nature. We may feel too little even to talk about it, but O what a relief to the mind when one can forget their flesh for a little season and talk of their real hopes and fears, and how we enjoy hearing others tell of when and how the light first shined in their minds. We are always watching for waymarks that others have left who have passed this way, which shows that the one thing we desire above all others is to be found in the way to the kingdom of light and life. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace. Isaiah talked of the beauties and strength of this kingdom all his after life. Even if we sometimes get into "Doubting Castle" we can never go back to be just what we were before that Light quickened us into life, and we are now subjects of the kingdom of light. Who yet has ever been able to tell the fullness of the vision?

A. E. RITTENHOUSE.

STATE ROAD, Del.

LOS ANGELES, Cal., March 20, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I cannot get rid of the desire to write, which desire came to me when I read your editorial in the last SIGNS (March 15th), "Bible Reading." I was edified, reproved and made to rejoice when I read your views in that article. It did me good that some one of the household had a mind to write on that subject. At the same time I felt the reproof, for I must plead guilty to the charge of coldness; I feel it and know it, and feel to say as did Paul, The things that I would, I do not.

> "'Tis seldom I can ever see
> Myself as I would wish to be;
> What I desire I can't attain;
> From what I hate I can't refrain."

So it is no more I, but sin that dwelleth in me, causing me to mourn daily my infirmities. The Bible so often is a sealed book to me that I fear it is hypocrisy in me to open the sacred book and read, yet I desire to read of the dear Savior, his precious words and promises to his people, the meek and lowly example he set before his disciples as he walked in and out

before them. "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." That testimony is sweet to the true believer, and he loves to dwell upon it and turn the leaves of holy writ and read of the wonderful works of him who spake as never man spake. Yet, as you say, there is coldness in the churches; it seems a lack of love among God's people, a love for each other; we look too much to I and pass you by; not in humility, but in self-exaltation. In our seeming zeal we lose the blessing, our churches seem to lack in love toward one another; we put on the garments of Babylon and fall into the ways of the world rather than the narrow way, which leads to life. There seems to be a lack of the Spirit, too much carnality, neither cold nor hot, but lukewarm. David said, I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. I sometimes hope I have felt that gladness, for I have been made to rejoice when I could meet with the dear people of God, and sing praises to his great name, and hear his name exalted by our undershepherds, whom he had sent with glad tidings of great joy. I would that I could write as I sometimes hope I see. Even when we get low in the valley, with our harps on the willows, there are fountains, and waters break out in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Such beauty and sweetness. Who can fathom the works of the Lord? Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.

May Israel's God be your God, and his Spirit be with you as it has been many times to direct your pen to the edification of his people, and to him be all the glory.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

LAVINA J. DAWSON.

GOOD WORKS.

WHILE waiting on a busy street in this city as the throng of people hurried by in their wild rush after the wealth, the follies and vanities of this mortal life, the thought came to me, What do the inspired apostles and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ term good works? "Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment. Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein. Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this. For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always."—John xii. 3-8. "For she hath wrought a good work upon me." "Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her."—Matt. xxvi. 10, 13. "Who is my neighbor? And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his

wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise."—Luke x. 29–37. "Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompence thee: for thou shalt be recompenced at the resurrection of the just."—Luke xiv. 12–14. The church must take care of widows, that are widows indeed. "Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work."—1 Tim. v. 10. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."—James i. 27. It is imperative that we bridle the tongue, that unruly evil, full of deadly poison, and not wound our brethren with unkind words. "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." —James i. 26. Now nowhere in the Scriptures can I find it called good works to go out in the streets and persuade the unregenerate to come in and join; but the Scriptures plainly teach that those who do that kind of work are proselyting their party to increase, and are therefore in the class of the ancient Pharisees, who compassed sea and land to make one proselyte. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation."—Matt. xxiii. 14, 15. Cornelius, "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always." The angel that came from God said unto him, "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God."—Acts x. 2, 4. It is right and commendable to help the poor and needy. Day after day, week after week as the years go by the Lord bestows innumerable blessings upon the unworthy creatures of Adam's race that inhabit this earth, which is his footstool. For the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof. He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust; he giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not, and yet thousands go along with never a note of thanks for the many blessings bestowed upon them, but are full of cursing because they cannot get more of the perishing things of earth, and go along like the swine, eating acorns, that never look up to see where the acorn comes from. As to those who claim to be saving souls, verily they have their reward; they get their reward as they go in this life, en-

joying their fairs, their raffles and entertainments and fun, with all the show and style that they put on as they lavish gold out of the bag to their many idol gods. But those made wise unto salvation trust in the mercy of God, who knoweth the hearts of all the fallen race of Adam. O that men would praise God for his goodness to the children of men, for his mercy endureth forever. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain on the tender herb and the showers on the grass. As the snow cometh down, and the rain from heaven, watering the earth, causing it to bring forth and bud, giving grain to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall it be with the word that goeth forth out of my mouth, it shall not return unto me void, it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it, it shall accomplish that which I please, saith the Lord. Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye do good that are accustomed to do evil. Has puny man any power over the dew and the rain? Not the least in the world. Hence all the effort system since the dawn of creation has never given eternal life to one sinner of Adam's race. In thy light shall we see light. O continue thy loving-kindness unto them that know thee, and thy righteousness unto the upright in heart. Let not the foot of pride come against me; keep me as the apple of the eye; hide me under the shadow of thy wing from the wicked that oppress me, from my deadly enemies that encompass me about; for thou art my rock, my fortress and my high tower. The enemies that the psalmist speaks of are undoubtedly the enemies of soul that vex us, causing the warfare between the flesh and Spirit. May the Lord guide us in the way of life, sustain us by his grace and keep us from evil, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

Dear brethren, dispose of this as you think best.

Yours in hope,

WM. F. SLOAN.

LEXINGTON, Ky.

JOHN XI. 44.

"AND he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go."

This demonstration of the Spirit and power of God took place while Jesus, Mary, Martha and many of the Jews stood before the cave where he that was dead lay. It was the sequel of the words of Jesus to his Father and to Lazarus, proving that there is but one Mediator between God and man. For of the people there was none to help. Not one move was made by any one to help Jesus restore Lazarus to life, and he that was dead was absolutely passive in the whole matter, never taking the first step or raising a hand; no expression of a desire to live again; just as one would expect in one dead, showing the complete ignorance of the whole matter of life on the part of those who claim that it rests with us to signify our desire to live. The response on the part of Lazarus proves that our "life is hid with Christ in God;" that the natural death of the subject of grace does not separate him from that life in Christ, for nothing can do that. Jesus was informed of the condition of Lazarus from the foundation of the world until time shall be no more, and throughout eternity. He received no message from man of his death, yet he informed his disciples "plainly, Lazarus is dead," proving plainly that natural death does not interrupt "the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for

me;" that it was begun in Christ before the world was, and is hid with Christ in God. It is a fact, then, that one may be dead to the world and alive to heaven, as Lazarus was dead to his friends and kindred of the flesh, but alive in the Spirit, and as much in communication and subject to the power of God as ever. But the whole operation is contrary to all natural conclusions, for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit." Taken literally, there is a glaring contradiction in it, for how could there be a coming forth so long as he was bound hand, foot and face? The loosing him gave him no life; he received life while bound, but it was necessary to a more complete manifestation of life to be loosed, and the words to loose him and let him go were as much of the Lord as the command to "come forth." The resumption of life here by the power of God is typical of the quickening of sinners dead in trespasses and sins, in which it is most ridiculous to claim that the dead are active in the most remote degree. We do not exercise faith either in death or life, but faith exercises us. "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." It is not our faith in him, but his faith in us, that is "the faith of the Son of God." That is why man has no control over the most minute detail of the whole matter, but is entirely dependent upon God for the one solitary breath in his nostrils and every step that he treads. The words of Jesus to Lazarus to "come forth" were not intended to bring him forth from the "cave," but from a state of natural death. Any who would expect Lazarus to "go" at this period of his experience must remember that he is still bound hand, foot and face—not much better off than in the state of death, if this condition is to be permanent; but He that hath begun will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, so that he might truly say, "It is finished." Those who stood by had no part in the restoration to life; I wish to make that emphatic; but after he came forth from the state of death they did "loose him, and let him go," but this was done at the command of him who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. Our graveclothes and napkin, which impede our spiritual walk and sight and nourishment and growth in grace and knowledge of the truth, our travel with and service to the brethren, are not obstacles to be removed by us; we are as powerless to rid ourselves of these undesirable hindrances as Lazarus himself; so we simply lie in our cave until he who gave life also gives freedom, then, like he which had been dead, we sit at the table with him, as seen in the following chapter.

Yours in faith, hope, charity,

EVERETT R. KINNEY.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., March 11, 1917.

MIDDLETON, Tenn., March 21, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending a money order to pay for another year's subscription to the SIGNS. I hope you will excuse the delay, and I want to thank you for sending the paper. As I have had a desire for a long time to write something for the SIGNS, I will try to add my mite of testimony to the truth as I believe it is in Christ Jesus our Lord, praying the Lord to guide me in the way of all truth and righteousness, knowing this, that vain is every attempt to worship God by the deeds of the law or by the will of the flesh, or the natural mind, for God is a Spirit, and seeketh such to worship him as do worship him in spirit and in truth. This the natural man cannot do until God sends his Spirit into the

heart, crying, Abba, Father; and no man hath power over the Spirit to retain the Spirit, neither hath he power in the hour of death. There is no discharge in this war. God created all things for his own glory, and without him there was nothing made that was made. He is the God of all the earth; all things are upheld by the might of his great power, and by him all things consist. He does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and none can stay his hand or say, What doest thou, Jehovah? He has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.

Now I want to write something of what I hope has been the Lord's dealing with me. It seems there is something I want my brethren to know that I have always failed to tell with any satisfaction to myself; it seems that I have always failed to give a reason for the hope I have. Sometimes I am so cast down that I am made to doubt and fear. Now I believe this is God calling his people to worship him, for it is at such seasons I can call upon the name of the Lord, for I feel that I have nowhere else to go. Blessed be the name of the Lord. I feel that the years of my life have been few and full of trouble, but the Lord says, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. All things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are the called according to his purpose and grace given us in Christ before the world began. I thought before I was baptized that if I could be baptized and commune with the saints my troubles would be over, but I find it different. This warfare must go on, I believe, until death. I want to be resigned to God's will in all things, for it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and he chastiseth every son whom he receiveth. I believe that all things are according to the eternal purpose of Almighty God, and we should not be moved by the things which fall to our lot, for thereunto are we appointed. Whatsoever things come to pass, from the least to the greatest, are all according to the eternal purpose of Almighty God. I have wanted to leave something on record to show what I believe in regard to the doctrine advocated by the Primitive Baptists. The doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things I believe will stand through time and eternity, for if it were by the deeds of the law none could stand before God justified. He that saith he is without sin is a liar, and the truth is not in him. If we keep the whole law, yet offend in one point, we are guilty of the whole. By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Then it is not by works of righteousness which we have done, for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned. All our righteousness is of God. It is Christ's righteousness in us that prompts us to do the good we do, for the natural mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be. Then let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us, ever looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Dear brethren, if you find this worthy of publication in the SIGNS you may publish it; if not, it will be all right, for I have felt my great weakness in writing. Let all glory, honor, majesty and might be ascribed to the Lord our God, now and forever.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

J. S. STANLEY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1917.

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PROVERBS XXV. 2.

"It is the glory of God to conceal a thing."

This morning, at our appointment at New Valley, we tried to talk about the above passage of Scripture. It has since persisted in our mind, and as it again falls to our lot to try to write something for the SIGNS, we can do nothing but endeavor to put on paper some of our thoughts in connection with this subject. Faith is the gift of God, and it is to this faith given in the soul of the believer that God reveals his hidden wisdom. God is not to be known by the powers of the natural mind, he cannot be found out by searching. No man has seen him at any time. The only begotten Son alone declares him. Only as this declaration or revelation of Christ is made manifest in the sinner's heart can God be known in any of his ways. It is God's glory to so work in nature, providence and in grace that he is concealed from being discovered by the powers of one's natural being. Says Isaiah: "Verily, thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior." Habakkuk says that God's glory covered the heavens, the earth was full of his praise, "there was the hiding of his power." It pleases God to have so arranged things that when he comes to be truly known by his people it is always in such a way that no glory can be given to one's diligence, strength or ingenuity, but always, Not unto us, but unto Thee be all the glory. The Scriptures declare that no flesh shall glory in the presence of God. He will not share his glory with another. Therefore it is not strange that every one that is saved in the blood of the Lamb should be brought to know the things of God in such a way that they cannot boast of superiority in intellect, will or affections, but must acknowledge all they know of the truth to have come by divine revelation. God's glory, then, is in concealing a thing so that he is past finding out, and can only be known as he is pleased to reveal himself by his Spirit. Thus, Jesus thanked the Father that these things were hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. Could the wise and prudent have known God of themselves, would they not have thanked their wisdom and prudence? Would God, then, have been glorified? Instead of that, he is revealed unto babes; to those who realize their lack of all true wisdom and prudence; to those who, when he is revealed in them, know it is not of themselves they have been brought to know him.

First, God conceals himself in nature. While all nature is God's created work, yet none can see God in nature but those in whom is the Spirit of God. Faith in the heart of a child of God sees God everywhere and in everything, but lacking this faith, one sees God nowhere. One of the old poets speaks of looking through nature up to nature's God, but the natural man has never been able to do this. Those who do see God in the things of nature see him because God is in them. Man might be willing to acknowledge from the facts of nature that

there is a power of some kind, supreme perhaps, dominating all nature, but this is a very vague perception, and falls infinitely short of a right comprehension of the true and living God of revelation. It is a remarkable fact that most scientists and men who have devoted their lives to unmasking the secrets of nature turn out to be, if not infidels, at least agnostics. One could name these brilliant men in a long list, and every one would be found to be exceedingly skeptical of the existence of a personal God. Now, if the study of nature could lead one to know the God of nature, why did not such study so convince men like Darwin, Huxley, Bergson and a host more like them? It is because it is God's glory to conceal a thing, that a persistent and diligent study of the field of nature fails to discover him in his true being.

Second, God is concealed in providence. God has provided all things needful for man's comfort and well-being here on this earth, no matter whether men are believers in him or not. He sends his rain alike upon the just and the unjust, and the warming beams of his sun shine on all. The very air we breathe, the fuel we burn, the food we eat, the clothes we wear, all are provided of God, yet none realizes this wonderful providence of God but those in whom is the divine gift of faith. How often one hears men talking of doing this or doing that, of having so and so; all as if the doing and the possessing were of themselves, never realizing for a moment that we have nothing but what we have received, nothing that we can really call our own, nothing to which we have an inalienable right. All men subsist by the bounty of a beneficient God, and are entirely ignorant of the hand that feeds them, of the power that supports them, unless this God chooses to reveal himself to one's spiritual vision: the divine gift of faith. We sit down to a meal and eat it as though it were a matter of course, as though we would have a right to be highly insulted and very indignant if it were not there for us to eat; when, as a matter of truth, should God see fit at any moment and without notice to deprive us of anything, he would be taking but what was his before it was ours, and we should have no right or cause to find fault.

Third, God is concealed in all the matters of grace. This is the most wonderful and important concealment of all. A plan of salvation that has nothing to do with the acts of the creature, that is resolved upon by God alone and according to his own good pleasure, that saves one and not another simply because it is God's will so to do, and not because of any goodness, obedience or works of the one saved, is entirely foreign to the conception of the natural man. The only salvation that the natural man knows anything about is that fancied kind which is made to depend upon the good works and assent of the one saved, that comes about somehow by cooperation between God and man, that God is not successful in accomplishing without the consent and help of men. This kind of salvation is the invention of the natural mind, and God is not in it. But the true salvation, which is alone by grace in the Lord Jesus Christ, which comes to the sinner as a free and unmerited favor of God, is a mystery to the natural mind, and not capable of being understood or believed by men in a state of nature. This salvation is concealed from human understanding, and it is God's glory so to keep it hid. The true character of Jesus was hid from those who crucified him. Had they known the Lord of glory, they

would not have crucified him. Had they not crucified him, God's elect would still be in their sins. Thus, it might be said that their ignorance was the salvation of the world: the Gentiles. The eyes of their understanding were blinded so that they could not rightly perceive and believe him, to the end that they should crucify him, to the end that the Scriptures should be fulfilled, to the end that every child of God should be saved and washed from his sins in the blood of the Lamb. One thing leads up to another, and that to something else, and so on to infinity. Not one link from the chain of God's purpose can be dispensed with, for then must the chain of his whole purpose fail in its effectiveness. Both the law and the prophets were to the Jews. There were learned men among them that studied diligently and carefully the letter of the Old Testament Scriptures, yet, with all their study and with all their knowledge of the law and the prophets, they failed to recognize the Son of God when he came in the flesh. Knowing nothing of the power of the Word, being entirely ignorant of the spiritual import of law and of prophecy, they read the Scriptures literally and expected them to be fulfilled strictly according to the letter. When Jesus came and fulfilled all the law and the prophets, it was in such a way, in such a spiritual way, that Jewry could not see it nor understand it. Therefore they refused to believe him, saying: "We will not have this man to rule over us." This led up to the bringing in of the Gentiles, for "blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." Again, it was a custom of Jesus to always speak to the multitudes in parables. On one occasion, being asked by his disciples why he did this, he told them because while it was given his people to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, to the multitude it was not given. Therefore he spoke to the multitude in parables purposely to conceal the truth from them and to fulfill what Isaiah had said: "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed." When Christ asked Peter who he believed him to be, Peter said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. Then Jesus told Peter that he was blessed in that this had not been taught him by any man or human power, but that it had been revealed unto him by the heavenly Father. God holds the key of all true wisdom and knowledge; he alone can unlock the secrets of his hidden wisdom. Blessed is that one to whom these things are made known, even though only in measure. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." To the natural mind, the maze of human existence seems to be an inextricable mass of contradictions, but there is a divine consistency running through all the warp and woof of the fabric of history as it comes forth from the loom of the master Weaver. He hides from us the whys and wherefores of this or that. Blessed is it to have faith to know that he works all things after the counsel of his own will, and that all things work together for good to the elect of God, whether they realize it or not. The world, as we have known it, seems to be coming to an end in the warring of nations, the crumbling of earthly powers, the sucking of earthly concerns into the whirlpool of battle. What has been, we know; what is to be, God knows. It is his glory to hide it from us until the

appointed hour. What a comfort to know there is a God, and that he does his will in heaven, in earth and in all deep places. A strong consolation it is to be able to feelingly say: "Thy God reigneth." L.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in April (29th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER George Ruston's address after May 1st will be Kelly Corners, Delaware Co., N. Y.

B. S. Pate has changed his address from Coburg, Oregon, to Dayton, Wash.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. C. Smallbone, March 28th, 1917, at the home of the bride, Winnipeg, Man., James W. Black, of London, Ont., and Miss Annie Louise McColl.

By Elder J. M. Fenton, April 7th, 1917, at 5128 Master St., West Philadelphia, Pa., Wm. J. Weiss and Anna L. Fritts, both of Frenchtown, N. J.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Miss Emma Birdsall, N. Y., $2.00; G. W. Horner, Oregon, $2.00; A Friend, Warwick, N. Y., $2.00; Lena Langford, Ariz., $1.00; J. D. Hatchett, Okla., $2.50.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon Harden L. Sheff was born in Clay County, Va., Nov. 5th, 1844, and departed this life March 19th, 1917, at St. Mary's Hospital, Walla Walla, Wash. He moved with his parents to Illinois, settling in Jacksonville when a small boy. After the death of his parents he made his home with his brother in Pike County, Ill., until the Civil War broke out. He enlisted in May, 1861, served three years and was honorably discharged, and afterward reenlisted in the same company and served to the end of the war. He returned home, and May 17th, 1870, was united in marriage to Miss Martha M. Baker. To that union were born two sons, who still live to mourn the loss of a kind and affectionate father. Brother Sheff professed a good hope in Jesus and united with the Primitive Baptist Church in Coatsville, Ill., in the year 1873. He and his family moved to Texas in 1876, and three years later they moved to southern Kansas, where he and wife cast their lot with the Primitive Baptists at that place, and the church seeing the gift of a deacon manifested in him, set him apart to that office, and to our knowledge he honored his high calling by filling the office in the fear of God, who had so blessed him with the gift of serving the church, which he esteemed above all earthly pleasures or earthly fame or wealth. Brother and sister Sheff located in Walla Walla, Wash., about twelve years ago, and cast their lot with Mizpah Church, at Touchet, Wash., where he remained a faithful and loving brother, serving the church to the perfect satisfaction of all the members until the God who called him to serve him called him home to enter into the fullness of his blessed hope. Brother Sheff was the possessor of a quiet disposition, a great peacemaker in Israel, always ready to assist all he found in distress, and his chief joy was to meet with his brethren and join his voice with them in praise and thanksgiving. I was not at home at the time of his death, being in Missouri. Elder Mayfield was called to attend the funeral, and spoke words of comfort to the bereaved, and requested that I, as his pastor, write the obituary, which request I gladly comply with, and while my delight is to serve my brethren, yet pen fails to tell the deep sorrow that fills my soul as I have to record the departure of one of my dear companions in the afflictions of the cross of Christ. Truly my sympathy goes out to the family, and especially dear old sister Sheff, who has not only lost a companion in Christ, but one who had been a true and faithful companion in all the difficulties of life. May the dear Lord, who has kept and comforted her in all the trials of life, comfort her in this the greatest trial, and may the mercy of God, that led the father to trust in him, lead the dear boys to the same high calling, for Jesus' sake.

J. T. BARNES.

Mrs. Florence Merryman Mellor was born October 13th, 1852, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., August 7th, 1887, by the late Elder F. A. Chick, was married to Thomas H. Mellor, of Harford County, Md., Sept. 16th, 1896, and passed from this life March 17th, 1917. Sister Mellor was one of the noblest of women, true in every relation of life. The writer became the pastor of the church of her membership Jan. 1st, 1899, and in September of the same year her husband died, and she came back near Baltimore to live, and from that time was a regular attendant upon the meetings of her church, in which she took great delight. She was a true Old Baptist, knew what she believed and contended earnestly for it. Sister Mellor was very easy to preach to, being an intent listener, and showed her approval in her face so plainly that it was a sort of inspiration to her pastor, and when sore afflictions stopped her from her meetings her pastor, brethren and sisters missed her very much. She bore her afflictions with marked christian fortitude, always saying that whatever the Lord put on her was all right. She was a great sufferer the last few months of her life, but never complained, and when the end came she quietly fell asleep in Jesus to awake with his likeness, when he shall come again without sin unto salvation.

On March 19th the writer spoke on the occasion of her funeral, reading and talking of those portions of Scripture which so confirm us in our faith in the resurrection of the dead. While we mourn the absence of dear sister Mellor, we mourn not as those without hope, for we know that the mortal shall put on immortality and death shall be swallowed up in victory. May these precious thoughts comfort all who mourn for her.

Written at the request of her sister, also our dear sister in the church, Miss Ella Merryman. I rejoice that I had the confidence and fellowship of so faithful a christian woman. Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep.

Her loving pastor,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

Mrs. Frances E. Bowles was born in Tennessee Dec. 20th, 1842, and departed this life Sunday evening, March 11th, 1917, aged 74 years, 2 months and 21 days. She moved with her parents to Illinois when about nine years of age. October 12th, 1865, she was married to John Stanly Bowles, who preceded her to the better world Feb. 2nd, 1897. To that union were born eight children, three sons: Charles H., Benjamin F. and William E., and five daughters: Mrs. Mary O. Masters, Mrs. Barthenia J. Wright, Mrs. Cora A. Wiegreffo, Miss Lily M. Bowles and Mrs. Bertha P. Kemp, all of whom survive her and were present at her funeral. She leaves four sons-in-law, 3 daughters-in-law, eighteen grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, two brothers: James P. and Bluford W. Bandy, one sister, Mrs. Margaret N. Gusden, and many relatives and friends. She united with Little Flock Primitive Baptist Church at Honey Bend, Ill., in August, 1893, and lived a faithful member until her death. Truly a faithful mother in Israel has gone. Sister Bowles was loved by all who knew her; her life was one of devotion to her family and church. She was never happier than when entertaining her brethren and friends at her home. Her family, church and community have sustained a great loss, but our loss is her eternal gain. Her voice is silent, her presence gone; we can but remember her and all her kindness. Her hope of heaven was in God's rich mercy, and God has now called her home beyond. We rejoice in the sweet hope of meeting her where there is no death, and where all tears are wiped from our eyes. She was sick only about three hours of paralysis.

Her funeral was preached to the comfort of the family by Elder W. A. Chastain, of Springfield, Ill., and her body placed in its narrow bed of clay beside her husband in Cedar Ridge Cemetery, at Honey Bend, Ill., near the church where their membership was, also four of their children and one grandson.

A DAUGHTER.

J. B. Jones was born June 29th, 1850, and died March 22nd, 1917. He was married Dec. 24th, 1877, to Alice A. Herndon. To that union were born five children, three boys and two girls, the girls having died in infancy and the youngest son in young manhood, thus leaving but two sons and his widow to mourn their loss. Brother Jones had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for years, and had had a hope for over forty years. He had been in feeble health for several years, during which time he and his wife had made their home with their son, R. B. Jones. During his last sickness, which lasted for months, all was done for him that the loving hands of wife and two sons could, besides a number of kind friends to render any assistance in their power, also medical attention; but his Savior was ready for him to come home. The writer is a niece of brother Jones, and was with him several days before his death. I have never heard more beautiful preaching than he did, leaving such bright and assuring evidence of his sweet communion with his dear Savior. Although he was not an ordained minister of the gospel, he had read and reread the Scriptures, and was well versed, and could quote Scripture equal to a minister. As the readers of the SIGNS will know, he had written several articles for publication. He also wrote some for the "Gospel News," of which our dear brother Perkins was editor. Just a few days before he fell asleep he quoted some of Paul's language, found in 2 Timothy iv. 6–8. After quoting this passage he said he did not wish to dwell

on this language too much in his case, but he wished to say that by the grace of God he had tried to do the best he could. We shall all miss our dear brother Jones, both as a brother in the church and as a friend and relative, but we do not wish him back here in this vain world, when we feel so sure all is well with his soul. I wish to say to his widow and two sons, Robert and Amos, Weep not, he is not dead, but sleepeth. I have never seen sweeter devotion shown to a parent than these dear boys have shown. They were right by his bedside day and night to render all the comfort human hands could give.

These few lines are written by one who loved brother Jones as a brother in Christ, also he had been a dear uncle to me.

NINA WOOD SHEARON.

Osmond T. Johnson, son of Edgar T. and Bertha Johnson and grandson of Elder D. M. and Sarah Vail, died at his home, Elmira, N. Y., March 11th, 1917, after an illness of two weeks and five days. He was born Nov. 15th, 1902. Father, mother, three brothers and four sisters are left to mourn. The mother writes me: "I miss him more and more, but I know it is as the Lord ordained it to be, although hard to bear." The writer officiated at the funeral March 15th. May the dear Lord strengthen all who mourn.

D. M. VAIL.

J. P. Freeman was born in Georgia June 19th, 1835, and departed this life [illegible]. 17th, 1917. He was a firm believer in the prede[illegible]nation of all things, and looked upon man as nothing, compared with the all-wise and adorable Savior. He was sick but a short time. He has left me alone to battle on a few more days, but I would not call him back if I could. He left four sons and one daughter, a host of grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren to mourn their loss, but we sorrow not as those who have no hope, for we believe he is at rest.

MALINDIA FREEMAN.

APPOINTMENTS.

PLEASE publish the following appointments:

Thursday, May 17th, home of Laura Cook, Anderson St., Trenton, N. J., 7:30 p. m.; Stockton, N. J., Friday, 18th, 2:30 p. m. D. M. VAIL.

PLEASE publish the following appointments:

Halcottville, N. Y., Sunday, March 25th, all day meeting, commencing at 10:45 a. m.; Union Grove, Sunday, April 1st, 11 a. m.; Roxbury, Sunday, April 8th, at the Mead sisters' home, 10:45 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.; Ashokan, Sunday, April 15th, 10:45 a. m. and 2 p. m; Vega, Sunday, April 29th, 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.

GEORGE RUSTON.

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Harford Church, Harford County, Md., May 16th, 17th and 18th, 1917. Those coming by way of Baltimore take train leaving North Ave. station, Md. & Pa. R. R., at 3:20 p. m. for Long Green or Forest Hill on Tuesday before. Those from the north take train that leaves York., Pa., at 1:50 p. m. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to be with us, especially ministering brethren.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

M. F. WHITAKER, Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pa., May 23rd, 24th and 25th, 1917. Those coming by way of Baltimore take train at Union Station, Philadelphia, Baltimore & Washington R. R., at 2:10 p. m. Those by way of Philadelphia take train at Broad St. Station, on same railroad, at 1:50 p. m., changing cars at Perryville, Md., to the Columbia and Port Deposit branch for Conowingo, Md., on Tuesday before. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to be with us, especially ministering brethren.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

C. J. ROWLAND, Clerk.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

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[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 85. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1917. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PSALMS XLII. 5.

"WHY art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance."

Read the eleventh verse in this Psalm; it is worded somewhat differently from this fifth verse, but they are intimately related, as I shall endeavor to show. The psalmist pours out his sorrows, tells his yearnings, and of his refuge in his God. He speaks of his hope of ultimate health and salvation, of triumph and praise. All this shall be his in intimacy with God, whom, saith he, is my Rock. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" Ah, professors of Christ's name may talk about God, and Christ, and his gospel. They may debate with Arminians, and prove by texts of Scripture that salvation is by grace, and not of works; that it is of the Lord, and not of men, and yet they themselves know nothing experimentally what the grace of God and his salvation is. Being born again, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, a broken and a contrite heart, receiving the atonement, the blood of Christ speaking to and cleansing the conscience from dead works to serve the living and true God, and the imputation of Christ's righteousness, which is unto and upon all that believe, are matters experimentally unknown to carnal religionists. "But the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant." Because of the oppression of the enemy, by whom in his adversities he has been pursued, the psalmist finds himself in the desert. Here he finds no flowing brook; he is in a thirsty land, where there is no water, and he cries out, "As with a sword in my bones mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God?" His soul is cast down, and he goes mourning because of the oppression of the enemy, and his aching heart with plaintive moans is saying unto God, Why hast thou forgotten me? Ah, he is in the deeps, the waves and billows overflow him. But even in the sea of his adversities he remembers the Lord's former loving-kindness to him in his distresses, and in thus going back to these times he pours forth again his sorrows, saying, "O my God, my soul is cast down within me;

therefore I will remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar." The Holy Spirit often puts courage and hope in the soul by bringing to our remembrance the Lord's former mercies toward us. We see that he was gracious, pitiful, faithful, almighty to sustain and deliver us. Then, like David, our soul holds its soliloquy, as in this fifth verse: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance." There are many things encountered by those who fear God that cast them down; but our God is described by the apostle Paul as, "God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus."—2 Cor. vii. 6. Therefore, though from many causes we are cast down, we cannot be destroyed. (2 Cor. iv. 9.) Has not our God said, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be"?—Deut. xxxiii. 25. In the castings down of our souls we learn how frail we are, that we are not able of ourselves to bear up under the weight of our burdens. David exclaimed, "Mine iniquities are gone over mine head; as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me." —Psalms xxxviii. 4. O reader of these lines, do you know anything of this staggering burden? Are thy sins too heavy for thee? Perhaps they may cause some momentary unrest in your conscience, but on the whole you get on quite comfortably with your iniquities. But it is not so with sinners called by God's grace. There is a warfare within, and many sighs, and prayers unto God because of the corruptions felt within. "I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long." "Mine enemies are lively, and they are strong." O how weak is a poor sinner under such a burden of sin. It is because the multitudes of professors know nothing of such things that they know nothing of the gracious, loving, almighty Savior. If sin is only a small, trifling affair, then a small, trifling thing that you may call a savior will suit you well enough. God our Savior is "mighty to save." But, poor, troubled soul, know that though in our temptations, afflictions, and conflicts with the powers of darkness, and the horrible depravities that are discovered to dwell in our flesh, we find ourselves insufficient to stand against such odds, and we become wearied, wounded, dismayed and cast down, and, like the poor bowed down woman, we can in nowise lift up ourselves. (Luke xiii. 11.) Yet God is full of compassion, he regards the cry of the humble, he knows our frailty, our nothingness, our sorrows, and will not give us up an utter prey to the powers that are against us. "They were too strong for me."—Psalms xviii. 17. Listen to the cry of the distressed one: "Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I."—Psalms cxlii. 6. We read how the saints of old by faith in their God out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in the fight and turned to flight the armies of the aliens. (Heb. xi. 34.) All such exploits were by the power of God working in them. Our faith in our merciful, almighty Friend is by the operation of God. (Col. ii. 12.) We believe according to the working of his mighty power. (Eph. i. 19.) Our precious Christ is the author and finisher of our faith, and so by the inspiration and teachings of our God we are moved to muse upon the kindness, the faithfulness, the all-sufficiency of his grace, and that all our trust

must be in God. O, God is truly gracious to poor, worthless, helpless sinners. Then, though in ourselves there is no help, and other helpers fail, "Hope thou in God;" faith is lifting up the head; I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance. He sees the one thing that shall bring him up out of the deeps, give him the victory and fill his soul with praise. That one thing is the help of his countenance. Ah, that look God gave to the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud was to their confusion and utter dismay, (Exodus xiv. 24,) and when Christ looked round about upon those Pharisees with anger it was to their condemnation, (Mark iii. 5,) and when the enemies of the Lord are crying to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" —Rev. vi. 16, 17, how awful their terror, how dreadful the doom of the ungodly! But David says, "I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance." O when and how can I thus see God, and his countenance shall be the help of a perishing, vile transgressor? It is not at Mount Sinai, for there is no shining of his countenance there. The mountain burned with fire, and all was blackness and darkness and tempest; and as God speaks in this mountain we cannot endure his awful voice, we are afraid, we exceedingly fear and quake, and entreat that God speak not to us any more lest we die. (Exodus xx. 18–21; Heb. xii. 18–20.) It is in the face of Jesus Christ that we find the help of God's countenance. Jesus Christ is the Word made flesh, the only begotten Son of God, who is in the bosom of the Father and declares the Father unto us. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. iv. 6. The incarnate Son of God is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. (Heb. i. 3.) It was in the house of the Lord that David longed to behold the beauty of the Lord, and in this forty-second Psalm he exclaims, "When shall I come and appear before God?" How full then of sacred significance it was unto the worshipers of God that he instructed Aaron and his sons, saying, "On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them." "And Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people, and blessed them, and came down from offering of the sin offering, and the burnt offering, and peace offerings."—Lev. ix. 22. Our God thus instructed Israel, and made himself known in types and shadows of Christ and his glorious gospel. Christ, our triumphant and ascended Savior, is the Sun of Righteousness, and in the light of his countenance is all our help. He looks down from the height of his sanctuary, from the holiest of all, whither he is entered for us with his own blood, there to appear in the presence of God for us, and sheds upon us poor, needy, sinful, perishing sinners the beams of his grace. The light of his countenance, the grace of Christ, the altogether lovely Savior, full

of grace and truth. That light, that grace, is shedding abroad in our sin-distressed hearts the pardon of all our sins, and this, we are taught in the good news of his gospel, is through his atoning sacrifice of himself in our behalf. His countenance (O there is none so fair, so altogether lovely,) sheds upon us abundantly all new covenant blessings, for he is the Surety and Mediator of the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure. As Christ is revealed unto us by the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, Jesus' dear face shines upon us poor sinners with such love and mercy and grace that we are persuaded that God hath reconciled us unto himself by the blood and righteousness of the Lamb of God, and that he is our Friend. O the beauty of the Lord in our Emmanuel's face. Salvation, righteousness, justification and everlasting kindness are shed upon us as we look unto him with eyes of faith and love. O the help of Jesus' countenance! Though all other faces frown upon us, one kind look from Christ upon us will put strength and hope in our hearts, the frowning faces fade away, we fear no evil, and our hearts can say, "Let them curse, but bless thou."—Psalms cix. 28. His blessing is all that we need. Can you enter into and in some measure understand the following Scriptures? "How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?"—Psalms xiii. 1. "Hide not thy face far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation."—Psalms xxvii. 9. "Hear me speedily, O Lord: my spirit faileth: hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit."—Psalms cxliii. 7. These mournful complaints and heart-aching cries are a miracle of God's grace, for such persons, though they are frail and base and sinful, are moved by the Lord's divine power to believe in, to love, to yearn after himself, the holy, gracious, glorious, almighty One. It is written of Moses, "He endured as seeing him who is invisible."—Heb. xi. 27. If God is the invisible God, how can it then be said that he will lift up the light of his countenance upon us? and that he says, Seek ye my face, and our hearts respond, saying, Thy face, Lord, will I seek? "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."—John i. 18. The Son of God verily took upon him the seed of Abraham, the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature; but when it is declared by the apostle John, "We beheld his glory," this was not confined to beholding with the natural eyes the Son of God in fashion as a man, for multitudes thus beheld him as he lived in the land of Canaan in the days of his flesh, and yet never knew him, never beheld his glory, never knew him to be full of grace and truth, but they despised and hated him, persecuted and crucified him. Then this beholding Jesus in his glory, in his surpassing beauty, so infinitely full of grace and truth, was more than the sight of him with mortal eyes. Our Savior said, Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. The apostle John writes: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life; (for the life

was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."—1 John i. 1-3. The help of God's countenance is the face of God revealed in the face of Jesus Christ, and only in his light do we see the light of his face. God hath shined in the hearts of his children to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of their beloved Redeemer. "The Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."—Psalms lxxxiv. 11. Christ, the incarnate Son of God, who is the image of God, is the Sun of Righteousness, the light of his own glorious gospel shining upon us. He turns the shadow of death into morning; he is the Dayspring from on high, the light of the morning, a morning without clouds. O the help of his countenance!

"Did Jesus once upon me shine?
Then Jesus is forever mine.
A single smile from Jesus given
Will lift a drooping soul to heaven."

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." This verse and the fifth that we have been considering are both very sacred exhibitions of the operations of God the Holy Ghost in the hearts of the saints. They show that the teachings, meditations granted them by the ministrations of the Spirit, have been refreshings in the midst of afflictions. "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, thy right hand shall save me."—Psalms cxxxviii. 7. The distressed worshiper of God is lifting up his head above the waves; he is rising again to his feet from the field of conflict, where he has been lying in his wounds half dead. The wilderness begins to rejoice and to blossom as the rose; there is a highway there, and I will walk therein, and come unto Zion with everlasting gladness. The Lord has inwardly visited the psalmist as he is lying upon a bed of languishing; the Lord, the Comforter, makes all his bed in his sickness, he gives him "healing medicine," pouring in oil and wine, and the hand, the kind smile, the words of his lips; yes, being fed with little morsels of the everlasting covenant by the Lord, our physician and nurse, we feel the restoring and strengthening power of his ministrations, and we say, I shall yet praise him, I shall yet glorify him, I shall yet arise from this bed of affliction and go abroad again, and I will go with my Beloved early to the vineyards, and see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grapes appear and the pomegranate buds forth; and there he will give me his loves, for he is the health of my countenance and my God. The help of his countenance is the health of my countenance. No longer shall adversities, trials, afflictions and conflicts make my face wax pale with direful apprehensions. O my soul, hope thou in God; I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance. Sometimes in the midst of troubles, just a thought, a moment's meditation is given us in some doctrine of Christ's gospel, and in that opening up of the doctrine we, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, see therein the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and

we are in these moments thinking, I am poor and needy, but surely the Lord thinketh upon me. I see Jesus' face in this Scripture, in this verse of the hymn, and he looks with kindness, with everlasting help upon poor, wretched, sinful, unworthy me. O, these blessed moments put the ruddy glow of health and youth into our pale faces. Christ Jesus is the health of my countenance and my God.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

DENTSVILLE, S. C., Feb. 23, 1917.

DEAR BROTHERS, SISTERS, WIFE AND CHILDREN:—I will tell you some of the Lord's dealings with me, but it is with fear and trembling that I make the attempt, knowing my weakness and inability.

I was conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity in Jackson County, Alabama, in 1836, but knew nothing of my guilty distance from God until he revealed it to me in 1854. About the night of the 29th of May I was caused to dream that I was going to die, and that I was preparing my grave in the field, while there were two other persons preparing their graves by mine, and we threw up the dirt in a ridge. I went to the house to die, as I thought, and began to feel very badly, and thought I should die soon. About this time my father awoke me, for it was daylight. That dream caused me to have serious reflections about death and eternity, and I felt that if I should have to stand before the just and holy God in the condition I was that I should be forever cast off. I had serious reflections about these things, and thought I would try to offer up my prayer to the God of heaven in behalf of my poor soul. My mind was exercised in this way about six weeks, and on the 16th of July following, in the evening of a beautiful Sunday, I was alone where I supposed that no mortal eye beheld me, and there, for the first time in my life, I fell before God. My whole frame shook like a leaf, and I had no power to stand, neither had I any will to stand. I was perfectly reconciled to his will, and words came into my mouth, my tongue was loosed, and I rejoiced in God my Savior. I did not know what I was going to say, but these words, O Lord God, forgive me my sins and iniquities, I pray thee, were uttered. Now, dear brothers and sisters, there was a shaking of the dry bones, and in a few minutes I was rejoicing; I looked toward the setting sun and all nature seemed to be praising God; my pen fails to express my feelings. But I could not claim this as a hope, I thought it was only a conviction. I commenced reading the Bible and trying to pray, and went on in this way about five years; sometimes I was made to rejoice, but I was so weak that I could not understand it as being a hope in Jesus. In 1859 I was caused to dream of seeing a great eagle sitting on a dead tree which stood by my field, and the next day while I was plowing I stopped my plow to try to pray, and then started again. I had not gone far before I felt as I did at first; I could not speak to the animal at the plow, but had to stop it by pulling the lines, for my tongue was engaged in the praise of such a glorious Savior that was revealed to me. I know not how long I lay on the ground, but I know one thing: when I did rise my heart rejoiced and my tongue was glad. It seemed to me that the trees of the field were clapping their hands for joy, and I think I was as happy a mortal as ever lived on earth; I felt that I could fly away and be at rest; mortal tongue fails to express the joy I received. Then I

was enabled to mount upon eagles' wings and soar away to that world of endless day, and as the poet says:

"On the wings of his love
I was carried above
All sin and temptation and pain;
And I could not believe
That I ever should grieve,
That I ever should suffer again."

I then rode on the sky, feeling justified; everything looked beautiful, and I rejoiced in God my Savior. This world seemed a heaven below, and I felt I would never see any more trouble here on earth. I could hardly stay in my field, but desired to go to the house and tell my companion, but I remained until nearly night, and by that time it did not look so bright, and I could hardly tell it to my wife. Then I felt it my duty to go to the people, the Old Baptists, for they were my choice, and tell them what great things the Lord had done for me in bringing me from darkness into his marvelous light. So I went and told them, in my weak and imperfect manner, some of the things that I have here written, and was received, and baptized June 12th, 1859, by Elder S. McKay. My dear mother was standing on the bank of the creek among a group of people, and as the dear brother raised me up out of the water I heard mother crying out in praise and glory to God in the highest. She told me she did not know she shouted at all, but said she saw a dove descend from above and light on me. This was in Attala County, Miss. From the time that, I trust, the Lord had shown me that I was a sinner, to the time I joined the church, I went to hear all other denominations in the country, and attended their exciting meetings, but could not get any comfort, for they said that dead sinners had to do something to live, and that did not correspond with what I felt the good Lord had taught me. I would go home cast down, for I knew if I had anything to do to get to that world of bliss I would fail to reach that happy shore. Then I would go to hear those old despised Nazarenes, and they would lift me up, for they told that the Lord was wonderful and mighty to save, and when he began a good work he would perform it; and they told the riches of his grace and the mighty power in the salvation of poor, lost sinners, and I would go home lifted up and glad of such a wonderful Savior as I had heard declared.

Now, my dear kindred in Christ, I have tried to write a few thoughts relative to my hope in Jesus, but I feel that I have come far short of telling it as I can see it with the eye of faith. I have felt too unworthy, and still feel so, and wish that I could express myself in a few words. I desire before I close this imperfect letter, to give you, my dear kindred, some of the evidences of my call to the ministry, if indeed I have a call to that high and wonderful work. I feel that I come so far short of my duty as a christian it makes me groan within myself and exclaim, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Not long after I joined the church I had impressions to go and tell sinners that salvation is of the Lord, and not of men, as it was being told by preachers of the world. But when those impressions would come that I must preach it seemed that I could not bear the idea of approaching the sanctuary of the most high God; more excuses would present themselves to my mind to hinder me from making the attempt to preach than I now have space and time to present. My dear brethren in the ministry doubtless know something of the conflict that I

had to pass through, since they have traveled the same road; it is a rugged one, but Jesus says, Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. This impression to preach was, at times, very forcible, but at other times I could scarcely realize it at all, and then I would conclude it was all a notion. I was tossed to and fro for many years in this way. Sometimes I would dream of preaching, and of a congregation in front of me, and I then felt that I could speak of the glory of his kingdom and talk of his power. Sometimes while riding along the road my mind would get to running and meditating upon the glorious plan of salvation by grace, and I would often utter words, and at times when I read the Scriptures, it seemed that the plan of salvation was opened to my mind so clearly and wonderfully that it put a feeling on me that I cannot describe. The prophet described it better when he said it was as fire shut up in his bones, and he could not withhold. My mind was much exercised in this way, doubting and halting between two opinions. I often thought that if I could preach as some ministers I would give the world, if it were mine. I thought I would rather have the gift of an able minister than to sit on a king's throne and have the world at my command. But, my dear kindred, all the excuses that ever came before a man, I reckon, would present themselves to me. This conflict went on until August, 1875, when I made the attempt to speak in public in Jesus' name, and have ever since, when opportunity offered, tried in my weak way to proclaim Jesus the way, the truth and the life. On March 3rd, 1877, C. M. Scroggins and I were ordained to the work of the ministry.

My dear kindred, sometimes I am on eagles' wings and sometimes in the valley. I have given you but a small sketch of the reason of my hope as it is in Jesus, and also of my call to the ministry. Hoping and trusting that God may lead us in wisdom's narrow way and crown our travels through the dark valley and shadow of death with the bright, eternal glory of another and better world, I remain your unworthy brother, in hope of life eternal,

W. B. McADAMS.

DEAR EDITORS:—I desire, with your permission, to have a short article published below, of the doctrinal views I have tried to preach for many years, that is, the certainty of all things, whether things present or things to come, or great or small, even to the numbering of the hairs of our head and the falling of a sparrow to the ground. The prophet said that God measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance. These things show something of the sovereignty of a wonderful and sovereign God, who is so pure and holy that he charges the angels with folly. The stars are not pure in his sight. Then what is man, whose breath is in his nostrils, that he should reply against God and try to limit the Holy One of Israel, and set bounds by saying he is unjust if he does not give every one a chance and reward us for our works? This idea of God is worse than folly, it seems to me. It originates in carnality and leads in the way of death. Solomon said, "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." This is very different to the King's highway of holiness. Job says, There is a

path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen; the lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it. But the redeemed shall walk there, and that by faith, for faith leads in the strait and narrow way. The children are so helpless and dependent that they cannot do anything without Jesus and his sustaining grace to lead them into every christian duty that they perform. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God, and all we can do does not influence him in the least; but the divine Spirit influences men and women to follow after Jesus, the Captain of their salvation. There is certainty in this leading, for the prophet said, He (God) will lead them by the right way to a city of habitation. But if the leading is of us, it will be to destruction. The ability of the leading is in the living Head, which is Christ, not in the body, but the head does the leading, and the body does the action as it is moved by the head. In doing our duty there is a reward, not for doing, as some have it; that would bring God under obligation to man, and man would be the independent party. This idea would make God a mere machine, it seems to me. Any Baptist that believes in grace can see at a glance that will not do, for the blessings hinge, or depend, on our actions, instead of on the grace of God. The Scriptures read wrong if that be true, for Paul said to the church (not to dead sinners), For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. It is grace, then, that saves in time, and grace that saves in eternity. Brethren, I am opposed to dividing the child. Give me the living child, a whole Savior in time and eternity. It is God that works in the saint to will and to do of his good pleasure. Work what? Both the will and the do of God's good pleasure. Well might the apostle say, "By grace ye are saved." Saved from what? Saved from error and delusion of false teachers and precepts of men that set themselves up as teachers, and bewitch the people, as those false teachers did the Galatian church, and made that church believe they must do something to be saved. It is a wrong idea to teach that blessings come to people for doing, but in doing. Why do I put so much stress in doing, instead of doing? In doing is grace, because they are led into this duty by the promptings of the divine Spirit, which brings God under no obligation to his creatures for works of their own, for their works of righteousness are as filthy rags in the sight of God. Peter said, There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, except Jesus; there is salvation in none other. Salvation means deliverance. Jonah cried out in the whale's belly, and said, like these grace Baptists say, "Salvation is of the Lord." He did not have any condition in it at all. It was a time salvation, or deliverance. But some will say Jonah prayed; so say I, but God gave him the spirit of prayer, for he is the giver of every good and perfect gift, and leads his people to feel the need of prayer and supplication and remembrance of his mercy. Paul said, "By the grace of God I am what I am," and, "The good that I would I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do." It seems the way the apostle talks he did not have the ability to do good at all times, but was wholly dependent on the grace of a sovereign God to lead and direct him in the way of all truth. Solomon said, "The preparation of the heart in man, and the

answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." Therefore it is the Lord's work. Moses said, His (God's) works are perfect, and David said, "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee." "They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power." It did not seem that David had any conditions in it at all, but like the apostle said, Our sufficiency is of the Lord. We believe this with our whole heart. This being true, everything great or small, high or low, is sure to come to pass in its time and place, according to God's foreknowledge and purpose. We poor worms of the dust ought to rejoice and be exceeding glad that God limits men and devils, for if otherwise war would never cease. He causes wars to cease to the ends of the earth, and has bound Satan a thousand years. If so, it is not incredible to say he limits men, as well as devils, and controls them as he did Pharaoh, to carry out his purpose and make his glory known throughout all the earth. God hardened Pharaoh's heart to carry out his purpose, and he was even raised up for that purpose. Then who can say he is not the God of purpose as well as of grace? I do not believe that Pharaoh could have done otherwise than he did; for God said, The wicked shall do wickedly, and for this same purpose have I raised thee up. If Pharaoh could have done otherwise God would have been thwarted in that same purpose. God told Moses to tell Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go, but he said he would not let them go; I will harden his heart.

My dear and precious brethren, this teaches us, and not only us, but the generations that have passed, and the generations to come, the sovereignty of an all-wise and wonderful God, who can and does make the wrath of man praise him, and he is the same to-day, yesterday and forever, working all things after the counsel of his own will. He, being the first cause of all causes, nothing could exsist without him. Everything is certain. Why so? Because his foreknowledge and purpose embrace everything, and it is sure to come to pass in its time and place, and he works in the saint both to will and to do of his good pleasure. "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

W. B. McADAMS.

DEATH AND LIFE, OR WAGES VERSUS GRACE.

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." —Rom. vi. 23.

I have thought much for several days on death through Adam and life through Christ. I am surrounded with people that are agitating the old lie of Satan in the beginning, that God does not mean what he says. Some are earning seats in heaven by close attention to their worship, according to their own statements. They have entirely eradicated sin from their souls, hence they have become "real saints" that do no sin whatever. Their outward bearing may indicate that they are law-abiding toward their fellow-creatures, but I cannot hear of one of these self-righteous, holy people admitting that he has "secret sins" that need to be atoned for and pardon extended to him from the King of saints. The text at the head of this article is very significant, in that it is a very concise statement, embracing the great doctrine of the gospel so fully that I am led to-day to speak of the awful destruction caused by transgression. There was no palliating circumstance connected with sin that would lessen the full sentence promised

for disobedience. All excuses were futile to ward off the awful sentence of death which was passed upon Adam and all his unborn race. However, he felt somewhat like his children when they get into trouble, to have an excuse for what they do, for Adam said: "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." Eve's reply to God was an excuse for disobedience when she said: "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." They both received their wages: death. It was not instantaneous, physically, but the seeds of decay were instantly incorporated into their lives, eating like a cancer the very foundation of their physical structure. There was a twofold meaning to the sentence; not that Adam died a spiritual death, because he had no spiritual life, speaking from the testimony of Jesus. Death means the absence of life, a separation. "The body is dead without the spirit," is a declaration of Scripture.

In a sense death means a separation. Adam was separated from the garden of Eden, where spontaneous production was a pleasure to the natural man, who was of the earth, earthy. Because of his transgression he died forever from the pleasure of God's beautiful and bountiful garden on earth. Neither did the ravages of death (sin) stop at this expulsion from the garden, but they continued through his life until he crumbled back to dust. All his children in all countries, in all ages, irrespective of any conditions of life, whether saints or sinners, shall all reap their wages: death. Paul says they all have sinned; then most surely their wages are coming. Because sin entered into the world by one man, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. The great consequence of sin is mighty, so much so that no mortal power of man, or the power of the earth or sea or sky, can redeem him from under its power. It strikes me like a blotting out of existence when thinking of all of our fleshly faculties turning to dust. Even admitting that the small "we" spirit in us ascends to God, the giver of it, where, O where is our personality? I am using reason now which cannot reach out and illustrate the hidden things of God. The Scriptures tell us many things that are and ever will be puzzles to us while we remain in the flesh. To man as we know him on earth his "wages" absolves him from participating in any way whatsoever with any of his fellow-creatures on this earth, and the places that have known him shall know him no more forever. I have been speaking upon the side of receiving a wage for doing, which is along the line of the exchange of a commodity for an active effort on the other hand, or a reward or pay for doing or undoing which has been previously promised on conditions. All of these features for a reward, or a curse, are conditional. In a beautiful and grand contrast to the sad and deplorable state to which sin has brought man, is the glad tidings of the way of grace expressed by the apostle in the words: "But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." We notice that the opposite of death is pointed out here in the use of the disjunctive connective word "but," as well as the use of the word "gift." There is a great showing of the supremacy of grace over the law of sin and death in the above text. Upon this foundation-stone (grace) rests the whole building of God, the church of the Firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. The way of life is the way of grace, all, all hangs upon the side of mercy. Mercy by the grace of God goes

out to the condemned, dead in sin, who are without any means whatever to gain the favor of the great Judge and disposer of all things. To say that man in his natural state of life is devoid of means to make himself available to the notice of God, is putting it too mild, for he is not yet "passed from death unto life." The very meaning of the words: "grace and mercy," signifies that it does not have any reference to the law of works among the children of men, or any law, except as Paul says, "the law of faith." There ought not to be any misunderstanding among plain Bible readers on this subject, because Paul has delineated so distinctly between death and life. However, in speaking of death here—the wages of sin, it relates only to the natural man, the taking away of his natural life, and in speaking of the gift of God, it does not refer to the natural, carnal life, but to a different and higher life. O how destitute of wisdom is the popular theory that man dead in trespasses and in sins has something to offer to God to get into his favor, and then earn the blessing of eternal life!

Now, brethren editors, if you can use these wandering thoughts of mine as I have penned them down, they are all yours.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., March 27, 1917.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 4, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending a letter from sister Florence Pultz, which, if you think best, you can publish. I have not her consent to send it, but do not think she would object. It seems to me this letter belongs to all the household of faith. It has been of much comfort to me; it came at a time when I was much cast down, even desiring to be free from the things of this world. Often I find myself quoting these words: "Cast down, but not destroyed." This hymn is one of my favorites.

I would say to all to whom it is my duty, Be of good cheer, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. His people are safe, Satan's power is limited.

As ever, yours in hope,

A. T. BENSON.

WHEELING, W. Va., Dec. 4, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER BENSON:—"God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." You have been often in my mind during the past month. I reread your little book, "My Thoughts," which you kindly sent me, but I cannot recall how long ago. I had been meditating about the second coming of our Lord, and although my memory is almost gone I recalled your poem: "The earth shall be refulgent," and wanted to read it again. I knew that I had in my weakness tried to reply to your letter (I read it over also), and as my health is very, very poor, I thought I would not write and tell you how you had been revived in my mind; but when the SIGNS came to-day I glanced through it, as I had not then time to read it. Still as my eyes got sight of a word here and there I caught a few words of your letter. As soon as I had opportunity I gathered up the SIGNS, and as those words seemed focused on my mind I looked for them and found them. I feel that your letter is seasoned with the grace of God. I was in a condition spiritually that caused it to fall sweetly in my mind. Like you, I think the beloved disciple was addressing the church and its members. Your words brought certain hymns to my mind on which I have

many times feasted. This hymn has been a great feast to me:

"From sin's dark, thorny maze,
To Canaan's fertile plains,
A traveling fair one in distress
On her Beloved leans."

Also this one:

"Behold the spouse, replete with fears,
Seeking her absent Lord in tears;
In great distress she seems to be,
And pants his sacred face to see."

Dear brother, I started this letter over a week ago, but became so ill that I had to lay it aside. It has pleased the Lord to raise me up again; I am able to be up and about the house. Our daughter-in-law is with us, so that I have rest from the housework. It seems impossible from a natural standpoint that I could ever be any better in health, as I grow weaker with each attack. It was a year ago last July since I had congestion of the brain. I had but little hope of recovery from that, but one day the thought came that I would live to commune (in this way) with the saints. I thought it would be a miracle if I could write with such a lame head, but when I was able to be up and about I found that I could write with rather more ease than usual. After a time I began to suffer much from congestion of the stomach and liver, sometimes two attacks in a week. They leave me very low in strength, and often affect my lame head so that I can neither read nor write. My mind is much clouded, and at times greatly confused; still I feel willing to submit to any chastening that the Lord lays upon me. I feel to need his corrections, I would fear to be without them; I know full well that I cannot be trusted to have any ease in the flesh. This old mud-house would hold enough ease and comfort that I would feel satisfied to live in it, and you know, dear brother, that when we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. I do not think that all saints have to be so severely dealt with. I feel that I am one that will have to be killed outright before I am fully subdued.

I wanted to speak further about your article, but now my mind is led away from it to my own poor murmurings. I am not fit to follow out any subject. I think to-day vaguely on what passed yesterday, and I cannot recall it clearly. One thing I know more clearly than anything else, and that is, all my efforts in any direction are vain. I have proved this true: Vain is the help of man, or any human merit. The things I once rejoiced in are now dead to me. There is but one prop left me to cling to, and that is Christ our righteousness. Sometimes he permits the poor, vile worm that I am to hope in his mercy, and to twine my poor, feeble arms of faith about his precious promises. This morning before I arose he suffered me to have some sweet and tender thoughts about his second coming, and as I thought on him coming down from above I was aware of a great love in my heart, as if he would draw me and I would rise up to meet him. How I would love to hold on to these little tastes of his love and mercy, but they are soon gone, at least the good savor of them.

Dec. 30th.—You will see, dear brother, that I have been delayed a long time. I became so ill that I could not write. My strength diminishes with each severe attack. I have had several this month. I have wondered if I am to be cut off from everything wherein I once took pleasure. Things that were in my mind to speak of have vanished away, so I fear this poor effort will appear as a failure to you. The blessed and holy One said, Without me ye can do nothing. I find this true at all times, yet at times we go along a little more comfortably and for-

get that it is the Lord. I am so weary with waiting for his uplifting. Time has been when I would have some gladness or lightness of spirit, such warm aspirations after the Holy Spirit, and I even hoped that I felt some drawing after him, as if a responsive spirit of love met my outgoings to him.

Dear brother, this is Sunday a. m., the last day of the old year. Many will be saying, "A happy new year to ye." What meaningless words they are in my ear, merely a repetition of stale words. "Merry Christmas" is the same to me. My soul revolts from it; it is the spirit of the world, and I hope I may honestly say it hath nothing in me. Still we worship in some of the high places, as they wear the cloak of religion. This Christmas altar was erected by the church of Rome, and it has such an aspect of holy zeal for the holy child Jesus that we Old School Baptists cater a little to it also, while we know that we have no "thus saith the Lord" for it. Surely if the birth of the holy Child was not celebrated in his time on earth by those whose hearts burned with loved for him, we need not follow Rome in the attempt now. Ask for the old paths and walk ye in them. I have seen that instead of this attempt gendering peace and joy and gladness, it genders strife and contention, and many hearts are grieved and disturbed by feeling that they must return the bounty they receive. There is much money spent unwillingly for this custom's sake.

I will close by telling you that I had a sweet little season of earnest and heartfelt entreaty with my Master this morning. I feel better in spirit, the gloom is lifted.

I am your very unworthy sister,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

PSALMS LV. 22.

"CAST thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."

It does not occur to me that this language is intended as an invitation to any who may read this Psalm in the letter, nor is it an invitation at all. The Lord does not invite any of his creatures to come unto him; neither is this Psalm addressed broadcast to all of Adam's race. Since the human family began to multiply, God has made himself manifest as one who discriminates. He had respect unto Abel and his offering, but unto Cain and his offering he had not respect. He loved Jacob but hated Esau before either were even born, and yet it is declared that God is no respecter of persons; that is, he will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. He regardeth not the person of any man, but calleth whomsoever he will, rich or poor, bond or free, white or black, at his own time, and they fill the very place that he hath before designed. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." God is of one mind, and time is only fulfilling and making manifest his purposes, and the completion of his workmanship is as certain as though it had already been.

In the Scripture referred to the Lord discriminates between those who are burdened and those who are not. The word "burden" implies that a heavy load is being carried, that one is laboring beneath an awful weight, and that it is only with great difficulty that he travels. That such was the case with David seems evident from the way in which he began this Psalm, saying, "Give ear to my prayer, O God; and hide not thyself from my

supplication. Attend unto me, and hear me: I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise; because of the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked: for they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me. My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me. * * * Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me." This is one who is burdened and knows not what to do or how to rid himself of that which is bearing down upon him. He feels that no sorrow is like unto his sorrow, that his trials are more than he can bear, and the one desire of his heart is that he might find a place of refuge from the storm, for he says, "Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away and be at rest. Lo, then would I wander off, and remain in the wilderness. Selah." The Lord's people often feel as David did here; they sometimes think that if they could go to some new country and get away from their old surroundings and environments they would forget their troubles, and, like Jonah, some do run away, as it were; but the Lord's plans are not to be upset by poor, little, puny man, and he makes them to know that he is omnipresent (present in all places at the same time), and that there is no place where he is not. David realized this when he wrote in another Psalm, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."

If the child of God could only realize that the burden which he bears was of the Lord's placing, and that all the things which seem to shut him in, hedge him about, cut him off and try him were ordered of the Lord for the purpose of separating him from self and bringing him into a closer relationship experimentally with the only begotten Son of the Father, he would rejoice in tribulations, but his mind is so full of doubts and fears that he questions much of the time his right to the tree of life. Occasionally when reading the Scriptures or listening to the preached word he may find the things of his life so vividly set forth that he feels to say, Come see a man who told me all things whatsoever I did. Is not this the Christ, or is not this the gospel of the Son of God? He is satisfied for the moment that he has heard the joyful sound, and he verily eats and drinks of the bounties at the King's table; he is encouraged and strengthened, and feels that he will never again get down into the slough of despond, but it may not be long before he finds himself asking, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me?" His life is one of ups and downs, and he finds himself continually crying unto the Lord out of distress to deliver him from the snares which the fowler has set to entrap him. One has no occasion to cry for help so long as he can fight his own battles, but when his strength has become exhausted and he is powerless, then it is that he must of necessity look to some other source. The Lord makes the burden so heavy that his people must cry out as the psalmist says, "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud, and he shall hear my voice." Yes, he does hear their voice, and how beautiful are the words, "and he shall sustain thee." That is something the weary can rest upon. His grace is sufficient for every need, and his strength is made perfect in weakness.

"He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." Many are ready to say, This does not apply to me, for I am anything but righteous; but your standing is in Jesus, and he presents you holy and without blame before the Father in love. His righteousness has been imputed to you, and your sins have been blotted out as a thick cloud through the shedding of his precious blood. I remember a few years ago being comforted by words spoken at our communion service by Elder Durand in his prayer. I was feeling so unworthy to partake of this most sacred ordinance, and it seemed something stood between me and this part of the service, but Elder Durand said that our worthiness was all in Jesus, and that brought great relief. I had been examining my sinful heart, and it appeared so unclean and so black that I felt I of all creatures had no right there; but when, as I hope, I was enabled to look unto Jesus, feeling that he had paid the debt for me, and that my standing was in him, that he was my all in all, my heart seemed melted into one of thanksgiving and praise for the wonderful things he had done for me. He is the only righteous one that ever lived upon earth, but he and his people are one. He is the Vine and they are the branches, and it is only in this sense that they can be said to be righteous.

Yours in christian love,

R. LESTER DODSON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., March 20, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—When in Maine last summer I was given the inclosed letter to read. I asked Aunt Angie if I might have it published, and she gave me permission to do so after her death. I leave it to your judgment.

Your sister, I hope,

BONNIE A. CHICK.

PORTLAND, Maine, Nov. 29, 1915.

MY DEAR, DEAR SISTER:—When the nurse brought me a letter from you, one from home and a card from Edna, I just thought, How good is God to bless me with such dear, good, loved ones. I have had many good letters and kind words and deeds from all. It was good of you and Abbie to go up home and help them there. That was doing unto me as you would be done by, and I know that you will have your reward. There is a little experience which I had almost three years ago, when there was such a feeling because of different views on the resurrection, that I desire to tell you of. It was a beautiful Sabbath morning. The sunshine fell upon the pine trees' needles and the earth seemed so beautiful. I always loved the beauty of nature, as you may know. Elder Beal was speaking, but I do not remember the subject. All at once I felt no bodily weariness, a sort of exaltation instead. The faces of all the brethren and sisters seemed to glow with love one for another, and I remember that I asked, as did Mary, the mother of Jesus, What manner of salutation this might be? when the angel announced that she was highly favored among women, &c. Except, I said, this is heaven, and what does this foreshadow to me? The answer seemed to come: Either trouble and dissension in the church, or you will not live many years. I looked over the faces around me glowing with fellowship and love for the truth and each other, and I said, O Lord, spare the church; keep our hearts right toward each other; let discord be put away from among us. I can bear no more trouble in our midst, let what may come upon me. For some time longer this condition was mine, then I came back to a realization that there was still and must be dis-

cord while the church is here in this time state. Time passed; our few members seemed to be drawn closer and closer together. Those who had spoken harshly one of another had only good and brotherly expressions one for the other; we were at peace. In the meantime my health slowly gave way; little by little I lost strength, then came suffering, as you know. I asked or rather implored that if it were God's will he would take me home. Over and over again I entreated, until one day, as if some one had spoken, came the words, Stand still; salvation is of the Lord. I have tried to leave it there. He knows what is best for me. I used to think I would tell you and sister Abbie what I have tried to write when you came to see me, but I could not seem to do so. This is for you and her. It seems as if God has spared me until this time for some purpose. My courage is good.

Now, dear, many thanks for all your kindness, not the least of which have been your cheery, helpful letters.

Your loving sister,

ANGIE THOMAS.

BERRY, Ala., April 20, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I will send two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES another year. I am so well pleased with it that I do not want to do without it. I hear from the brethren and sisters in different parts of the land whom I have never met nor ever will in this life, and it is strange indeed that they tell my belief and my feelings better than I can myself. Brother Durand's article on prayer was grand. He told my feelings and my belief about prayer. It does not take a multitude of words to constitute prayer, but the sincere desire of the heart, and that is the work of the Lord. The preparation of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is of the Lord, and unless the Lord prepares the heart our efforts are all vain. That is why I dread the attempt to offer prayer. I fear that my poor, sinful heart has never been prepared by Him, but if I could know of a truth that I have ever breathed one breath of prayer I would be satisfied, but I do not know that. It shall come to pass that they shall call on me and I will answer them, and they shall say that I am their God, and I will say they are my people. It shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved, and there is no question with me but what they shall all call and their call will be answered. The promise is to his people, and this is the promise of the Father, even eternal life, which life was given them in Christ before the world began, and in a day to come they will all be gathered together and be placed in that great building whose maker and builder is God. Not one particle of the material will be left out nor one piece added thereto, for that house was complete in his mind before the world began; so he maketh it not to grow.

Your brother, I hope, in sorrow,

S. J. NORRIS.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER H. E. Purris has changed his address from Bloomville, Ohio, to Attica, Seneca Co., Ohio, at which place his correspondents will please address him in the future.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1917.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REFLECTIONS.

DEAR Elder William Grafton used to say that to try to write or speak on spiritual things when one was not in the Spirit, was like plowing in the cold. Personally, we know nothing about plowing, but we do know that nothing is harder than to have to preach or write on some spiritual subject when the Spirit of God is being withheld. There is an infinite difference between preaching and trying to preach. Preaching is easy, but trying to preach is the hardest thing one ever tried to do. We say preaching is easy, because it is not at all the work of man, but is the work entirely of the Spirit of God. To be in the grasp of the Spirit, to have thoughts come to one involuntarily, to have a subject unfold itself as one goes along with it, is delightful and enjoyable. Preaching is, without a doubt, the most wonderful gift ever bestowed upon man, and the man has no more to do with his gift than he has with the rising of the sun. His gift controls him, and not he his gift. Because a man is called to preach, does not mean that he can preach all the time. There must be times when he is in the dark, when the Spirit is withheld from him, and when no unction accompanies his words to the hearts of others. At such times he may be faithful in attending every appointment of the churches he serves, but the proceedings will savor of formality; there will not be that animation and interest in evidence as when the Spirit of God is present. We do not argue from this that one should never preach only when he feels like it. If we make our feelings a guide in matters pertaining to meetings of the church, and to our attendance upon them, soon chaos would reign among us. Better be guided by well-defined principles as laid down in God's written word, than to make a criterion of our frames and feelings, for our feelings are as uncertain and unreliable as the very fickleness of human nature itself. Further, it does not follow that because the preacher himself has no liberty to enter into a lively appreciation of his subject, that the hearers also are without liberty. Be it known that the word of God is never bound, even though God's servant may be so hedged about that he cannot come forth. Every word the preacher says may be God's very truth, and though he may feel cold and lifeless, the hearers may be receiving it and enjoying it. When it is out of season with the preacher it may be in season with the hearer. Again, it is sometimes in season with the preacher when it is out of season with the hearer. We are sure our brethren in the ministry have often noticed that sometimes when they have enjoyed speaking upon a certain subject they have met with slight evidence that any one outside of themselves enjoyed what was said. On the other hand, have you not tried to preach at times when you felt that each word would be your last, when you kept stumbling along in the dark, wondering what would come next, when you would have given worlds to be a thousand miles away

from your congregation because of your own sense of humiliation? And have you not, at such times, been surprised to have some one say he or she enjoyed what you said? It proves that because one feels he has no liberty is no evidence he is not preaching the truth; it shows the word of God is not limited by our feelings, but goes forth on its errand to the hearer regardless of how the preacher may be feeling himself. As we sat down to write to our readers at this time we tried in vain to think of something to write about. Never yet have we been able to get a subject for speaking or writing by trying to think about it beforehand. It absolutely refuses to come that way. It must come spontaneously and involuntarily, or not at all. We have never by taking thought ever succeeded in adding one cubit to our spiritual stature. If any brother has been able to do this, will he kindly let us into the secret? We have several requests on hand from readers of the SIGNS for our views on this subject or that. We got them out and looked over them, thinking that some one request or another would arrest our mind, but this, too, was vain. So we concluded just to make an honest confession to all of you, and acknowledge our barrenness and destitution of soul in these few rambling reflections. We know not what purpose God has in these seasons of destitution that befall us, unless to remind us continually that we cannot get along without him, that all our strength is in him, that he is the cause of every manifestation of life there is ever in us. Once, several years ago, while walking with a schoolmate of ours in the graveyard at the Southampton meetinghouse, we paused at the grave of Elder Thomas B. Montanye while our young friend read the inscription thereon. At the end of it it reads: "The chief of sinners and the least of saints." It was at Elder Montanye's request before his death, so we have understood, that this inscription was put on his tombstone. As our friend read this we shall never forget the strange and wondering look he gave us as he remarked: What a strange thing for a preacher of the gospel to have written about himself. We reminded him that Paul said this about himself many hundreds of years before Elder Montanye used it. He seemed never to have remembered reading such language in the Bible, even though he was a Sunday-school product, and a very faithful attendant of that institution. It is a puzzle to the world how a servant of God can feel so little and so sinful. The natural mind supposes that if one is a child of God there should be a satisfactory consciousness of that fact present with one all the time. The world has no comprehension of what a life or walk of faith means, of what it means to be saved by hope. Most people scorn a religion of hope as a no-account thing, and protest that if they are saved they want to be sure of it, and not merely hope for it. All we can say is that the apostles were saved by hope, and we are no better than they. They walked by faith, not by sight, and can we presume to do more or to go beyond them? We know of no humbler men than those who have grown old in the service of their Master in the gospel ministry. Instead of getting puffed up with wisdom and knowledge as they grow older, they become more child-like and gracious the nearer they approach the end of their pilgrimage here. The world sings of its heroes and writes their names prominently on history's page, but the heroes of faith, the soldiers of the cross of Jesus, missed and mourned for

by the circle of brethren in the midst of which they have moved, pass out unwept, unhonored and unsung by the world at large. We know of no group of men that are more self-sacrificing than the preachers of the Old School Baptist Church; at least those that have come within the range of our acquaintance. They count not their own ease and comfort dear unto themselves, but often inconvenience themselves and their families in the faithful discharge of their duties. They go through heat and cold, through stormy weather as well as fair, to their appointments, often many miles apart, often to find very small congregations awaiting them. Most of our preachers serve several churches, which of necessity entails much traveling and much absence from homes and families. Circumstances such as these prevent the servant of God from engaging in gainful occupations. These, together with the moderate circumstances financially of the people he serves, compel him to be an expert in economy, and he could give most people points on how to make a nickle do what a dime did before. We wonder if all this self-sacrifice and service of unselfishness on the part of the gospel ministry is appreciated by the churches they serve. We are sure some are alive to their duties toward the pastors that serve them, and do all in their power to meet the situation, but we are equally sure many others are remiss in this matter and need stirring up. Most pastors hesitate to bring this matter to the attention of their flocks for fear of being accused of being lovers of filthy lucre, and of caring more for the fleece than for the sheep. This fear stops the mouths of those servants, who would rather suffer in silence than bring the matter up for discussion. We agree it is a very delicate matter to handle for the pastor himself, therefore the SIGNS can probably do this in an impersonal way to some advantage, without being accused of self-interest in the matter. In these times of high prices, when the necessities of life are costing as they have never cost before, give a thought to him whom God has sent to minister to you in spiritual things, and anything you can do to relieve his carnal necessities, that do and thank God that you are able to do it. We write these words in behalf of the Old School Baptist preachers throughout these United States, of that noble body of faithful men who would rather be martyrs to their temporal necessities than breathe a hint of them to their churches. This should be enough of this. "A word to the wise is sufficient." It has been the custom of the SIGNS' editors for many years to take up a passage of Scripture in each number and give their views upon it. We suppose this has met with the approval of the readers of the paper for these many, many years, and we do not wish to depart from it. But, at this time, it has just simply been impossible for us to follow the established custom, and we hope our readers will forgive us. L.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. L. E. Neeley, Miss., $1.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

A. J. Richardson was born in Winston County, Miss., August 10th, 1845, and departed this life Feb. 15th, 1917, aged 71 years, 6 months and 5 days. He was married to Miss Mary Susan McAdams Jan. 19th, 1865. To that union were born seven children, four boys and three girls, all of whom grew to manhood and womanhood and married. Two of them, a son and a daughter, preceded him but a few years to enter that eternal home from whence no traveler ever returns. Our dear brother was stricken with that dread disease, paralysis, several days before his death, and was unable to talk afterward. About all that could be understood was "Lord," which was an evidence that he was trusting in a supreme power beyond this vale of tears. Brother Richardson professed a hope in Christ Jesus and joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Macedonia, Winston Co., Miss., in 1867, and several years later moved his membership to Zion Hill Church, Leake Co., Miss., and his membership was with the last named church at the time of his death. I had known brother Richardson personally for a long time, and to know him was to love him. He was very prompt to attend his church meetings, and nearly always filled his seat unless providentially hindered. He was a great lover and always contended for the unlimited power of God in the salvation of his people, having no compromise with those who might differ on the subject of God's predestination and final preservation of the saints unto glory.

Our dear brother was consigned to the tomb in old Harmony Cemetery, in Neshoba County, and a short burial service was conducted at the grave by our beloved and highly esteemed brother, L. M. Fairchilds, in the presence of a number of relatives and friends.

I would say to the bereaved family, While your hearts are almost broken and your loss great, we believe your loss is his eternal gain. To the heartbroken widow and children, Weep not as those who have no hope, for your dear husband and father is now in the sweet presence of Jesus, and will remain there in spirit until the morning of the resurrection, when his body shall be changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Son of God. It is hard to give up our husband, father and brother, but we humbly bow in submission to the providential dealings of the covenant-keeping God, who doeth all things well. The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Sister Richardson, you will sadly miss your dear husband, and I feel to know that it is hard for you to give him up, but the Lord knows best, and his will, not ours, must be done. Children, you will miss your father, your loss is great, but live an upright, exemplary life, as your father lived, ever looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of every true believer's faith; and above all things, dear children, be attentive to your heartbroken mother; see that she lacks for nothing that natural hands can give. This I know will be done with pleasure by each of you.

J. T. SHIELDS.

Mrs. Emma S. Starr, wife of Miles W. Starr, died at her home near Shepherdstown, W. Va., Sunday morning, March 4th, 1917. She was born March 14th, 1846, the daughter of Adrian Jones and Mary Lemmon. She is survived by one brother: Thomas F. Jones. She was married June 11th, 1874, at Hagerstown, Md., to Mr. Starr, who survives her. She was the mother of two daughters: Bessie May, who died in infancy, and Mrs. Ruth Pitzer, who also survives her mother. Mrs. Starr had not been in good health for some months prior to her death, but the end came suddenly. She united many years ago with the Presbyterians, but had not attended the meetings of that body for many years, for the reason that she had gotten out of sympathy with them, and did not believe what they preached. She was, with her husband, an attendant of the meetings of the Mill Creek Old School Baptist Church in West Virginia. She believed the doctrine advocated by the Old School Baptists, and had a hope of salvation in the blood of Jesus Christ. She was convinced of the all-power of God, and had no use for any scheme of salvation by works. She was a good and indulgent mother, a faithful wife, a kind friend. May the Lord in his mercy and compassion dwell with our dear friends, Mr. Miles Starr and Mrs. Pitzer, to comfort them in their bereavement and enable them to look by faith beyond the present moment of sorrow to the glory that is promised when this life of suffering shall be over.

Owing to my being detained at home by sickness in my family I was not able to conduct this funeral. Short services were held by a Presbyterian clergyman. Burial took place in the cemetery at Shepherdstown.

L.

Sarah Ann Culy, wife of brother E. S. Culy, of Franklin, Ohio, departed this life in February last. Sister Culy was born in Ashford, England, in 1832, and came to this country with her father's family when about eight years old. She joined the West Baptist Church, of Lebanon, Ohio, in the year 1860, and remained a faithful, consistent and beloved member until death. She was married to brother E. S. Culy in 1860, the same year she united with the church, who survives her. She also leaves one daughter, Mrs. Earheart, to mourn her loss. Sister Culy was a lover of sound doctrine; nothing but grace, both for time and eternity, could satisfy her. She was a meek, lowly, gentle follower of Christ, and is doubtless gone to receive the reward of grace.

May those who are so sorely bereaved by her de-

parture realize through divine grace that it is better to go to the house of mourning than the house of feasting, and that better is the day of one's death than the day of one's birth.

H. M. CURRY.

Samuel Horner died Feb. 27th, 1917, aged 75 years, 11 months and 21 days. He was the son of James and Frances Horner. He is survived by his wife, Martha A., and four children, two sons and two daughters. The cause of his death was pneumonia, of which he was sick but a few days. The funeral service was held March 3rd at his late residence, Stockton, N. J. Elder J. M. Fenton preached to the comfort of the friends. May God comfort with his rich, sovereign grace all who mourn their loss.

ALSO,

Asa Hockenberry, son of John S. and Sarah Hockenberry, was born March 26th, 1833, and died April 7th, 1917. He had lived in or near Stockton nearly all his life. He is survived by his widow, Hester, and daughter, Mary. He fell on the railroad track several years ago and broke his hip, since which time he had been unable to walk. He was well cared for by his wife, daughter and grandson all those years. May the Lord comfort all the mourning ones.

Funeral was held April 11th, at the late residence in Stockton; the writer spoke to the friends. Burial was in Frenchtown Cemetery. D. M. VAIL.

Mary Jane Wortham, widow of Henry Clay Wortham, died at Montclair, N. J., April 15th, 1917, aged nearly 80 years. She was born June 16th, 1837, the daughter of Basil W. and Elvira Magee, of Nebraska, and niece of the late Elder James M. True. Three children survive: Charles, Walton and Nettie Wortham. Sister Wortham was a lovely character, shewing herself a pattern of good works, and adorning the doctrine of God our Savior in all things. Her life was a blessing to all who knew her, and she will be sadly missed. She was a consistent and faithful Old School Baptist for many years; her membership was with the church at Fort Worth, Texas. For several years past she resided with her son and daughter in Montclair, N. J. She was rather frail physically, but her sons and daughter were devoted in their care, exerting every effort toward guarding and protecting her against possible ills.

The funeral service was held at her late home April 16th; text used, 1 Corinthians xv. 26.

JOHN McCONNELL.

APPOINTMENTS.

PLEASE publish the following appointments:

Thursday, May 17th, home of Laura Cook, Anderson St., Trenton, N. J., 7:30 p. m.; Stockton, N. J., Friday, 18th, 2:30 p. m. D. M. VAIL.

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Harford Church, Harford County, Md., May 16th, 17th and 18th, 1917. Those coming by way of Baltimore take train leaving North Ave. station, Md. & Pa. R. R., at 3:20 p. m. for Long Green or Forest Hill on Tuesday before. Those from the north take train that leaves York., Pa., at 1:50 p. m. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to be with us, especially ministering brethren.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

M. F. WHITAKER, Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pa., May 23rd, 24th and 25th, 1917. Those coming by way of Baltimore take train at Union Station, Philadelphia, Baltimore & Washington R. R., at 2:10 p. m. Those by way of Philadelphia take train at Broad St. Station, on same railroad, at 1:50 p. m., changing cars at Perryville, Md., to the Columbia and Port Deposit branch for Conowingo, Md., on Tuesday before. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to be with us, especially ministering brethren.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

C. J. ROWLAND, Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., May 30th and 31st and June 1st, 1917. Those coming to the meeting will be met and cared for at Stockton, on arrival of B. & R. train at 5 p. m., and at Frenchtown about twenty minutes later. A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

C. RISLER, Church Clerk.

THE Middleburg Old School Baptist Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., has appointed her yearly meeting to be held as usual on the first Sunday and Saturday previous in June, (2nd and 3rd) 1917. A cordial invitation is extended to ministers, brethren and friends who care to meet with us.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

THE Lord willing, there will be a meeting held with the Beulah Old School Baptist Church in their meetinghouse near Aberfeldy, Ont., the third Saturday and Sunday in June (16th and 17th). Conference and business meeting 4 p. m. Saturday; preaching on Sunday 11 a. m. and 3:30 p. m. All are welcome who desire precious love and fellowship to abound in the church of Jesus Christ.

ARCHIE McALPINE, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

NOTICE.

Complying with urgent requests, I have included a select number of "Predestinarian Baptist" Editorials in my book, "My God and my Salvation," increasing the size to 200 pages and the price to $1.00. My copy is now in the hands of the printer, and the book will be ready for delivery on or before June 1st. Order now and pay when book is delivered. Address,

C. M. WEAVER.

COMMERCE, Mo.

HYMN BOOKS.

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These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Our assortment of small books embraces:

Cloth Binding, per copy, 75 cents; per dozen, $6.00.

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A SKETCH OF THE LIFE of JOSHUA S. CORDER.

PRICE REDUCED.

I will sell the remaining copies I have on hand of this little memorial book for seventy-five cents per copy, postpaid. And I want to say to you of the household of faith who wish this book and are too poor to pay for it, if you will send me your name and address and ten cents to cover postage, I will gladly mail you a copy. The sweet expressions I have received concerning this little work have more than doubly paid me for the anxious hours I spent over its publication, not knowing whether He from whom all blessings flow would bless it to his saints or no. I thank every one who has ordered the book, and kindly solicit further patronage. Send all orders to me.

SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

THE

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 85. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1917. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"IN THE BEGINNING."

(Genesis i. 1.)

THESE three words are the first three of the Bible, and apply directly to time and things of time. Time and things of time are all that have a beginning. Eternity has no beginning, therefore these words apply to time alone, and it is the beginning of the chronicle of time; yet this Scripture has a spiritual application, as does all Scripture. There is no Scripture that is merely history; if it is, it is to the unregenerate, but to the children of God it is more, and the historical part pales into insignificance as soon as one has an understanding of the spirituality of even that which to the natural man seems only a historical account; therefore there is much, very much, couched in even these three words, and it brings to our minds many deep and unsearchable thoughts; but now my aim especially is to make mention in a brief synopsis of this and the immediate succeeding events as recorded here in an experimental way, specially applicable to the subject of grace from the beginning to the seventh day. In order for one to have an intelligible idea of the true import of the Scriptures they must needs have experienced the thing as recorded by holy men of old, who wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, otherwise we have no knowledge of the real meaning of the Scripture.

It was in this, the beginning of time, that God created the heaven and the earth. This earth was then created, or spoken into existence, by the word of God, which word always accomplishes the purpose designed. The natural mind cannot grasp creation; we are manufacturers, and not creators. God is not a, but the Creator, the only Creator. When the earth was created it was without form, and void. Let us take this first and apply it to our earliest experience, when we were first aware of an existence and a feeling sense; that is, when we first came to feel and know there was a something about us we had never known before, experimentally. We realize creation, for this all came from nothing, so far as we are concerned, but we are now in this state without form, that is, not in an intelligible shape. We at that early date did not know anything, only aware of an existence hitherto unknown and unthought of, and we were without form, and void, that is, empty, no understand-

ing, no intelligence, in a state of vacancy, and darkness upon the face of the deep; we were covered in darkness. The deep signifies troubles, in darkness and troubles; and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters—moved upon this troubled condition of ours. He is in it all, always is, but we, being without form, and void of all understanding, are unconscious of him. He said, "Let there be light." He commands, and it is done; all things obey his voice. His voice is the voice of not a, but the Sovereign, the Ruler of the universe. He commanded the light to shine, and there was light. We become somewhat aware of our condition now since there is light, which reveals somewhat of our true condition. We are still without form, and void; the light reveals this to us; we are not yet in shape, and the light makes us aware of this condition. Light does not change the condition of a thing, simply reveals things as they are. This is all done "in the beginning;" and God divides the light from the darkness and calls the light day and the darkness night, and this evening and this morning were the first day in our soul's experience. It seems from the account here given that God did his work in darkness, for after this creation, and the earth had come into existence, that darkness was upon the face of the deep. The eyes are in the face, therefore all vision was obscured. All this was done before he said, "Let there be light." Is it not so in your soul's experience? and does not God do great wonders in the darkness of the nighttime of the soul?

Now a firmament is commanded in the midst of the waters to divide the waters from the waters. As waters seem to signify troubles, this firmament divides trouble from trouble. All mankind is subject to trouble while in this life, and it is in this life and during time of which we are dealing. We as natural men and women have our troubles, and have had all through life, but this firmament divides our troubles from our troubles; that is, our natural troubles, which man and beast alike have, are divided, separated and different from our spiritual troubles; for now in the beginning of this creation we are beset with troubles of which the world, or the unregenerate, knows nothing. We know this is true, for we cannot tell our darkness of mind, our doubts and trials, to our neighbors, no, not to our bosom friend, if they have not experienced the same things. When we have physical or any other natural trouble our neighbors and friends are ready and willing and capable of extending sympathy, but they cannot understand nor sympathize with us in this darkness of mind, spiritual anxiety and trouble. This firmament divides the one from the other, and we learn and know there is something the matter with us which is not common to all flesh. This firmament God called heaven. We have a sorrow now above that of our natural brethren, and it takes a heaven or that which is above to divide these troubles and show us the difference. This evening and this morning are the second day. There is now somewhat accomplished, for God is at work, and it is his work absolutely, and he does nothing in vain, he accomplishes that which he pleases. "Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear." We see that God only had to command that these things be done "and it was so." As time progressed certain things developed. Now it seems that when God spoke this material ball into existence, then was the

water and the earth or land in existence, just as much of each as there is to-day, but not in form as now. He commanded the waters to one place and let the dry land appear. Earth now begins to take on some form; that is, in our experience there is beginning to be an order of things, and not all chaos, as has been. This dry land God called earth; that is what we are—earth, naturally so; and the water he called seas. He commanded the earth to bring forth, "and it was so." This command, as all others, is obeyed, and the thing is done, and the earth brought forth, first grass and herb yielding seed, then the fruit tree, yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself. We see here a difference between the grass and the herb from the tree: the grass and herb yielded seed after its kind; so did the tree, but the tree's seed is in itself. Now earth has begun to yield an increase; that is, vegetation or a growth is begun, but we ourselves in our experience have not yet discerned it. The grass is only yielding seed, while the tree yields fruit, whose seed is in itself, after his kind. So this evening and this morning are the third day.

God now makes two lights, and he also made stars, but it is the two lights I will speak of now. They were in the natural creation the sun and the moon, but in our souls' experience the two lights are Christ and the church. Christ is risen in our soul, and we have hope. It is he or his Spirit who is the tree whose Seed is in itself, that is self-existing, self-sustaining, eternal life that never dies, yielding fruit. We see him the One altogether lovely, having power and might, shining in the deep and dark recesses of our nature, revealing all things, laying our life bare before him, yet we have hope, the warmth of his glorious rays penetrates and warms into action our cold souls; also we are partakers of the fruit as food with him, and by the light of the knowledge of the glory of God revealed in his face we see the delicate feminine beauty of the moon, the church. He, the Sun, rules the day, that is, both evening and morning; it takes both to make the day. The moon, the church, rules only in the night. Christ rules over all, but the church rules here in earth; there is no higher tribunal here in earth than the church; from her decision there can be no appeal taken; she rules. In the night when all is dark we still can see the church; we see the brethren and we love them, even though great and terrible darkness reigns. We must remember this, that the beauty of the moon is only the reflected glory and beauty of the sun. This evening and this morning are the fourth day. Many things are being set in order now. Since seeing Christ and the church the tree yields us fruit, whose seed is in itself, and is planted in us, the earth yielding after its kind. We are now come into knowledge of the church, and there is an increase. Until the third day we were void, but now no longer, the tree yields fruit, the seed of Christ is in us and we are no longer void. In the process of time many changes have taken place. After this fourth day the waters are spoken to bring forth, and we are beset with serious troubles. The third day grass was called for, which is a product of nature; but now the waters also bring forth abundantly, which they do. God saw all of this, and said it was good. Troubles without and within, our grass-producing nature begins to bother us, and all the evils that Satan can afflict are now hurled unrelentlessly at the new-born child of God when he has come to the church. O how many terrible things

he must endure, but God sees it is good, and this evening and this morning are the fifth day. Now a further development takes place in the natural order of creation; the earth is commanded to bring forth living creatures of his kind, creeping things and beasts, "and it was so," for God commanded it. There is now a further development or manifestation of our nature; we find the creeping things, the beasts, even the fowls of the air. All these natural things are made and multiply, and accordingly our troubles increase.

We thought at one time when we were brought into the church our troubles had ended, yes, farther back than that, when light first came, that is, those little reliefs, and when the sun was set in the heavens, then we thought all trouble and darkness was gone forever, but not so; with the increase of light and wisdom so increase troubles, and it is a succession of evenings and mornings all through time, and instead of being freed from trouble, sorrow and fear, these seem to increase as time goes on; and all these things which God created and made he pronounced good. So are all his works, every one is good, fulfilling the particular purpose for which it is made. It is good to be afflicted, for when I was afflicted I went not astray. Now in the last day in the order of creation God creates man, or forms him of the dust of the ground. O man, did you know you were the very last of all of God's wonderful creation? How then will you help God, seeing he accomplished all these things without your help, seeing you were not yet made, not yet formed? All other things were finished and complete and set in order and motion and pronounced by the Creator as being good. Man is now created, or formed, and in him dwells all the fullness of nature, possessing every faculty of every other creature all summed up in man; for man is the crowning work of God's creation, being given dominion over every other creature, for every other creature is represented in man; there is not an evil under the sun that is not in man. Now in this last day of work, which is now, God is finishing the work of all creation, or bringing into manifestation as fast as time goes the fulfillment of all things. Creation has reached its height, man is formed, the earth has form, all things are being set in order this last day, and is not void, for all things are created, and there is sight and understanding; man by the light of the sun sees all creation, and we see it in ourselves, all these creeping things, every living creature, and it is all nature—nothing spiritual in our nature; it is all good, but not perfect. This evening and this morning are the sixth day, and the last day of labor. This now is the sixth day of the creation of God in us as we experience creation; this is the last day of nature. Man of himself is lost, but man is made in the image of God. "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." "In the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." This man, the last of created things, was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, but made manifest in time, created in the image of God. Creation now is done. "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." God's work was all accomplished in six days; everything of nature was made or created in six days, and the whole creation groaneth in travail, pained to be delivered. All our experience since "in the beginning" has been a succession of evenings and mornings; day and night shall not cease while

time lasts, neither does evening and morning cease in our soul's experience, nor will until time with us is no more. As God's work was accomplished in six days, so also is ours. As God rested on the seventh day from all his labors, so also shall we when we have accomplished our six days of labor, which will be when we bow our head in death and our change comes.

Your unworthy brother,

F. SELBY FISHER.

SALISBURY, Md.

MACOMB, Ill., Aug. 22, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—Your card came a few days ago, and now in much weakness I will try to at least acknowledge it. I feel too unworthy and incapable to write anything of interest to one like yourself, a called and qualified minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, and myself a poor, weak worm of the dust. I was surprised to get your card, wondering why you should ever have taken any interest in my poor writings. I have always been greatly comforted and edified with your writings. At the present time I feel my incompetency so forcibly that were it not that you request a letter from me I could not make the attempt. You wish to know if I were among those you met in Illinois some twenty years ago. I will say I was, and have good cause to remember meeting you. It was, I think, in 1877, at our (the Spoon River) association, which was held about thirty miles from where I lived. I will relate a little circumstance that took place at that time, which will prove to you that I remember meeting you. I went with my father, mother and, I think, two sisters. I had been baptized a short time before, and while I was very happy at my baptism, I was at this time in much darkness and trouble, feeling that I was deceived and had deceived the dear brethren and sisters, whom I loved above all others on earth. Most of the congregation went to Elder Humphrey's for dinner, and you were among them. While waiting for dinner, quite a number were talking, when you said, "Brethren, I am appointed to preach this afternoon, and I feel like an empty blank; my mind does not seem to take hold of a subject that would do for a text. Can you not suggest something?" As no one answered I said, Why do you not preach what Philip preached to the eunuch? You answered, "Let me see now, what was that?" I think you were wishing to draw me out. I said, He preached unto him Jesus. You said, "That would be a good text, but it is too big for me." I felt ashamed for presuming to mention such a thing, and during dinner and until time for service I felt badly over it; but how gladly surprised I was when the company repaired to the yard under the trees, and after singing and prayer you arose and took for your text, "He preached unto him Jesus." You spoke of how barren you felt, how empty and unfruitful, and unless the Lord helped you could do nothing; but you had such a big text that surely something should be presented that would be of comfort, and if you preached Jesus you would have to begin at Genesis and go through to Revelation, for Jesus was God manifest in the flesh, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last and all in all. Dear brother, I remember the brethren said you preached clear through the Bible. I will not attempt to tell more of your discourse, but it was soul-cheering to me. It was full of comfort and sweetness. I was hungering for a crumb from the Master's table, not thinking I should be led into

his banqueting-house and be made to sit at the King's table and feast on the rich provisions of the kingdom. You did indeed preach Jesus to me, and though twenty-nine years have passed since then, I have never forgotten that sermon or the peace I enjoyed at that time. My doubts were all gone for a little time at least, and I felt that what Jesus was to his people, he was to me, my Savior, my Redeemer, my all in all. I have never read an article from your pen since but what this all comes up in my mind. Perhaps you never even remembered the incident at all, but I never could forget you or your preaching. I often think, dear brother, that when one of God's ministers gets up to preach, feeling that he has nothing to deliver, barren, empty, in darkness, having no confidence in himself, and feels as nothing, it is then that God displays his power, he fills the mouth of his servant with a sweet message to his children, the loaves and fishes are multiplied, and they are fed and his name glorified, for he has done it all. His servant knows it was not of himself, and there is no room for boasting. I have at different times had a desire to write to you, but could never make up my mind to do so, and now it seems so strange that after all these years you have asked me to write to you, and I have felt like trying to comply with your request, and relate this little incident and let you know you have always occupied a warm place in my affections, and I treasure that sermon as one among many others that have been as an oasis in my pilgrimage journey. Since then my father and three sisters, all members of the Old School Baptist Church, have passed away. My father preached nearly sixty years. Our association has discontinued holding its sessions, our churches are small. I have taken the SIGNS for thirty years, and my father since my childhood. I have never missed a number nor destroyed one, but have given some to others. I love the doctrine it sets forth, and in your own language, I cannot help it. Salvation by grace alone, the predestination of all things, both good and evil, election, special atonement, man's total depravity, perseverance of the saints and the resurrection of the body are grand and glorious truths which all God's children love. It is my meat and my drink, my hope, my all in all. If I only knew that I had a personal interest in all these things. "Am I his, or am I not?" is my greatest concern day by day. I am such a sinner, denying my Master every day, and were it not that Christ came into the world to save sinners I would have no hope. In him is all my trust, for all my righteousness is but filthy rags in his sight. This little hope that I have is an anchor of my soul, and enters into that within the veil.

Dear brother, see where I am going. Page after page I have covered, and it seems nothing of profit I have written, yet more could be written of these wonderful things of Jesus that I have just touched. I will ask you to forgive me for this long epistle, as I have written much more than I intended when I began. Hoping that you will read it in the spirit of charity, I will close. May the Lord ever bless and keep you, is my sincere desire.

With love to your family, I am, I trust, your sister, though least of all,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

KELLY, Ky., Nov. 24, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—If one so unworthy as I feel myself to be may address you thus. I will try in my weak way to write something to let you know

I received your letter, and was comforted and encouraged to feel that one of the servants of the Most High could have fellowship for this poor worm of the dust. Brother Vail, I have been impressed for some time to write, but my mind is so barren, it seems at times I have no concentration of thought, and it is true that without him we can do nothing. I am alone to-day, and my home comfort, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, has failed to come this week. I never want to miss a number. You spoke of sending my letter to the editors. I blush to see my poor efforts in print, though if you think it worth the space it is at your disposal. I would dearly love to feel worthy of a name with the people of God; there is a tie that draws me to them which I feel for none other. I wandered long and lonely outside the fold with that feeling of unworthiness. I have been a member of the Predestinarian Baptist Church about twenty years. I am now in my seventy-eighth year.

But my complaints remain,
I feel the very same:
As full of guilt and fear and shame
As when at first I came.

But whither can I go?
There is no other pool
Where streams of sovereign virtue flow
To make a sinner whole.

Brother Vail, I can sympathize with you in regard to your afflicted shoulder. I, too, have a shoulder which gives me trouble, and at times disables me; otherwise my health is reasonable for one of my age, for which I am thankful. Right here let me use these words of the poet:

"Poor and afflicted, Lord, are thine,
Among the great unfit to shine;
But though the world may think it strange,
They would not with the world exchange.

Poor and afflicted, yes, they are;
They're not exempt from grief and care,
But he who saved them by his blood,
Makes every sorrow yield them good."

Please pardon this poor letter, and in your prayers remember a lonely old sinner.

HARRIET UNDERWOOD.

RICHMOND, Va., March 4, 1917.

DEAR ELDER VAIL:—I received your most welcome letter of Jan. 10, 1917, and was much pleased to hear from you. I have thought many times of trying to answer it, but to tell the truth I felt and now feel that it would be impossible to write anything that would interest you in the least. However, I am afraid you will not write me again unless I at least acknowledge the receipt of your letter, and as I love to hear what you have to say, or rather write, I want to let you know it. I feel that you overestimate my writings to my loving mother, as they contain nothing worth while I am sure. I only wish I could see it as you express it in your letter, but impossible to be true of one so ignorant, vile and sinful as I to have anything good about them. Not impossible for the good and merciful God to have made me one of his chosen ones, but I feel that it must not be so, and it is all right, so it pleases him that doeth all things according to his own will and pleasure, and may he have all the praise. I am sure in my own mind that I can do nothing of myself to change the plans that he has made. I can only hope though I may die in despair. I find I cannot agree with the strife and extravagance of the various denominations that I have visited from time to time. I seem to have no ear to hear anything of satisfaction from them; they seem more like some sort of lecture and show of extravagance to me. I have never visited but one that I could agree with, and that is the one which you represent, and would love to go often if it were possible. There

is one in this city, and I have tried many times, but have failed to go there when they had meeting. I cannot find out whether they have them at any stated time. You are correct that I will find very few whom I could agree with, thus I must be very much alone, but I feel sure in my own mind nothing short of the power of God could change me, as it is certain that if I have any spiritual mind at all it is led by him alone. I hope the merciful God may see fit to enlighten me. How I would love to feel that I might have some hope of being one of the chosen ones, but I feel myself so sinful and alone I fear it cannot be so. If I know my own mind there is no question for me to decide, that all this has been fixed. There can be no such thing as there having been only a way provided that we may save ourselves if we will, and I hope I am right, as I would stand no show in that case I am very sure. When Christ was crucified he was asked why he did not save himself if he were the Son of God. He finished the work by his action. God alone knows my desires and my fate, and I thank him that it is not in my hands, and hope that he is leading me as he would have me go, and that I am really and truly correct in my convictions, which have been steadfast and unchanged for many years. I am waiting for some assurance that I am right or wrong. May I leave it all with him who knows best, and may I be submissive to his will at all times.

I must close, lest I tire you. I have written much more than I intended. Hope I do not discourage you in writing again, and shall be glad to hear from you when you have nothing else to do.

With kindest regards, and love to all who care for it, sincerely,

A. J. BRITTON.

NEWARK, Del., March 11, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER:—If I may thus address you in love, hoping to be of the same mind in Christ, our dear Redeemer. I may say I feel burdened in love to write you a few words on my mind which came into my heart after reading your last article, on "Bible Reading," in the SIGNS of March 15th. I repeat, in love, for it is in the hope that this love is the same love that is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, that I am meditating in the spirit of love, at the present time, and it must be so, or why should my heart go out to you in mourning for the very thing that has been burdensome to me for a long time: that is, the wintry season hovering over his church here?

"Savior, visit thy plantation;
Grant us, Lord, a gracious rain;
All will come to desolation,
Unless thou return again."

It seems indifference and coldness feature in our hearts more than real bickerings or fightings, yet, as you say, why is this condition among us? It seems many of us are tempted of our own lusts to follow the pleasures of the sinful world. Some of us no doubt endeavor to trust in the flesh and rule according to the carnal mind, but notwithstanding all this we are helpless, dependable creatures even now, in our present condition. We are made to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." How we are comforted, brother Lefferts, by the whole of the next chapter, (Rom. viii.) defining the difference between a life of sin after the flesh and a life in Christ after the Spirit. This whole chapter seems precious and sweet to me this morning, and I wish I

were given to enlarge and comment on its every verse and line; it portrays the same condition of the church in Paul's time as now. It is full of the fruit of the Spirit to me to-day to meditate upon this whole Scripture, yet I am not given liberty to write of these beautiful things, but you have been given to preach and satisfy the hungry of the Lord upon this very Scripture, all the thirty-nine verses contained therein. To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Is not that a sweet, comforting Scripture to a child that has a hope, who has once tasted of those things? Grace in the heart vanishes as quickly as it comes sometimes, but how sweet it is for the time being, while it rests in the hungry, tempest-tossed soul. This coldness and indifference on the part of some of us cannot be helped, for it belongs to the infirmities of the flesh, and God has a purpose and design in allowing just such a condition of affairs in our visible churches at the present time. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." We are being purged, no doubt, passing through the furnace of affliction, and while we may be burned or scorched, yet we will not be destroyed; for if God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, if he made him to suffer agony, sweat and bleed on the cross to cleanse us of sin, why should we not suffer, insignificant creatures that we are? I have felt the effect in my soul of late of one member being sensible to the feeling of another member when that member is sick or hurt; to me it acted like the passing of an electric current through the flesh. I cut my finger, and the whole body recoils with pain in the shock given the system. I endeavor to rule or dictate to the church in carnality, and how quickly every member of that body recoils, for when the whole (visible) church suffers for one carnal act of mine the mourning of that church or body is great. Sometimes it is for the want of a temporal shepherd, I believe, yet it is part of the purging process of the visible church to which it has to be subjected. Patience, then, is the fruit of the Spirit that we must pray for. Sometimes it is words, words and words over some point of doctrine, which after it is all over proves carnality of mind again. Then sometimes a deacon or lay member desires to rule subject to carnal reasoning, and then again patience must have her perfect work; so faith and patience must essentially work hand in hand, awaiting God's good pleasure and designs to be revealed in his time. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." This purging and suffering daily caused Paul to utter these things for our benefit, to show us the present time is about in like condition to his time in the church, and he was given grace to wait in patience to that end, the redemption of his body. Paul gloried in his infirmities, for he knew when grace was in his heart the flesh could not be felt; so then let us hope for grace from above, and pray that carnality be cast behind us. "If we hope

for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." In passing through this furnace of affliction are we not strengthened by these words: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord"? I feel all these things which I have written you, and to me they are some comfort while viewing, not only retrospectively, but present conditions of the visible churches here; but is the present any worse than the past? There was something wrong with all the churches in John's time. Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus, saith he, "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." Unto the church of Smyrna he predicted tribulation: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." And to Pergamos: "I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is," &c. "But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam," &c. And to Thyatira also, "I have a few things against thee." To Sardis: "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments." To Philadelphia: "Thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name." "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." This was most comforting to them, was it not? It would seem this church was blessed more than them all. It would seem the Laodiceans were rich in their own understanding, had need of nothing (grace), in their own estimation they were rich, teeming with Arminianism, I presume, but they were severely rebuked. "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent." So we to-day are no better than they, in all respects, probably worse, therefore we can expect nothing but rebukes and chastisement for following the lusts of the flesh to our own discomfort.

I had no intention of extending this beyond a few words which seemed to burden me, but I have passed far beyond my original limit.

Your little brother in hope,

J. B. MILLER.

DRAIN, Oregon, March 20, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending you two letters to publish, if you think they would be profitable reading The one from our dear old brother Miller is short, as he is in his ninety-fourth year. He has been a great strength to the church; he never misses a month to report to the church of his choice. May God be with him even to the end, and walk with him through the valley and shadow of death. The other letter, written to our church, is from my dear granddaughter, daughter of G. O. and Dollie Walker. O how we rejoice when we hear our loved ones telling of the wonderful

mercies of an all-powerful Savior; it shows they are not led by the false religion of the Arminian world. I feel to thank Christ to-day that he has led so many of my own family in the true paths. It was not through any instrumentality of mine that they are brought into the fold, but through the Savior's own power and by the shedding of his own blood on Calvary. No one on earth can give religion to a mortal, it is all of the Lord. It is so sweet to think that we poor mortals have such a sure foundation. Christ is the solid Rock on which we stand. May the Lord bless each and every one of his children, is my prayer. We have nothing to fear with such a God.

Your poor sister, saved by grace, if saved at all,

S. MORNINGSTAR.

JULIAN, Cal., March 1, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN OF THE COAST FORK OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH:—This is for my March report; it will be short, on account of my health and weakness of body and mind. We have been having a siege of colds. My son's wife is in bed, and will be for some time, and as for myself, I am just able to be up a part of the time. I will only write you a few lines to let you know how I am. It is with God to know how long I shall be here, not me. Dear brethren, you know my thoughts and belief by previous letters, so there is no use writing any more on different subjects, as I am still of the same faith. I hope your prayers are for me that I shall stand fast in the doctrine of Christ and the apostles, as recorded in the New Testament. I request that brother G. O. Walker deliver this to the church. Let me hear from you once more.

From your old worn-out brother,

S. S. MILLER.

ALGONA, Wash., March 6, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I have thought many times that I would write to you, but knowing I could say nothing that would be of comfort or benefit I have never attempted it; but I feel that it is my duty to let you know that I have not forgotten the little Coast Fork Church, and that my thoughts are often with you at meeting time. I know that the time taken in reading this could be much more profitably spent otherwise, but, the Lord willing, I will write a few lines anyway. I know that without his help I can do nothing, for I fully realize the utter helplessness of the human flesh. It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. Sometimes I am made to believe I have felt that quickening Spirit, and a great feeling of joy fills me; but when I examine my wicked, sinful heart all brightness leaves, and I am filled with darkness and doubt. How expressive are the words:

"When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark, and vain, and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?

If I pray, or hear, or read,
Sin is mixed with all I do.
You that love the Lord indeed,
Tell me, is it thus with you?"

O, if I could only be relieved of the doubt that always possesses me. I sometimes find comfort in some of the precious promises given throughout the Bible. For we are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. It is not of him

that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. There are many more which no doubt you are more familiar with than I. But can they apply to one so sinful as I? Can it be possible that I am one of those whom he hath loved with an everlasting love and drawn with his loving-kindness? Did Jesus shed his precious life-blood for such a vile woman as I? Can it be that I am among those for whom he is making intercession at his Father's right hand? Can his sweet messages and promises which are recorded by the saints be meant for me? I cannot think so; I can only cry with the poor publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner." That he is the only one to whom I can apply for compassion I fully realize, as did Simon Peter when he said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." It is only through his free, unmerited grace that I could be saved, for if it be otherwise I am surely lost. My chief consolation still is in those precious words which seemed to come as a special message to my sin-sick soul seven years ago: "Thy will be done." O how comforting to know that all things which come to pass are of his holy and righteous will, and that he is a God of power, whose ways and purposes are fixed. O that we were able to reconcile ourselves to all trials through which we may pass by these precious words. Also we should remember them in hours of peace and joy, and give praise to him who willed them.

Dear brethren, when I look over this I am tempted to destroy it, but I know that another effort would bring no better results, so will send it, hoping you will lay all errors to the weakness of my flesh. I rejoiced to hear that the Lord is bringing new members into the church to take the places of the ones whom he has called home. Remember me, dear brethren, as a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

ICIE D. McKEE.

STREET, Maryland.

MANY times I have thought I would pen down what I hope are the Lord's dealings with me. At the age of twelve years I became deeply concerned about my sinful condition. My constant cry was, Lord, have mercy on me. Every opportunity when no one was near I would kneel and try to pray. I did not know what caused this exercise. I thought I was going to live but a short time. The burden grew heavier; many times a day I would go in another room and kneel and try to pray. I would feel some relief, it seemed, each time I would in this way ask the Lord to have mercy on me. Sweet hour of prayer. I was constantly meditating on my condition, unconscious of what was the matter. In the public school at that time the teacher and pupils would read verses in the New Testament. I found among some old books a portion of the New Testament, and loved to read it at times when not in school. Thus time went on until I was grown. I went with other young people to places of amusement; dancing I thoroughly enjoyed. Those serious impressions left me when grown. I cannot recall that they came into my mind but once in ten years, and then as a flash. I used to have thoughts I have no more. This occurred about six months before my dear companion was taken from me. At the age of twenty-five I married my dear companion. I then felt that I had all I desired, for I dearly loved him. When we had been married fifteen days he was taken sick, but not seriously, was confined to his bed about three weeks. He

got better, and we would think him almost well, but he never entirely recovered; was better, then not so well for two years and two months, the whole of our married life. I have never been able to command language to express the anxiety I felt during that time. When he breathed his last breath a great calm took possession of me; hope sprang up within my heart that moment, if indeed I have a good hope through grace. Such sacred solemnity on the one hand, on the other sorrow too deep for utterance. For three years that sweet calm continued; no matter what confusion was going on around me I felt undisturbed; at the same time my great loss was almost more than I could bear. For seven years it was all I could do to live without him; just enough strength given, it seemed, to live, on the one hand, on the other hand a sweet calm beyond expression. Three weeks after my dear companion was taken I went to the Old School Baptist meeting where I had always attended, Harford Church, Harford Co., Md., and there heard the first sermon understandingly, preached by my uncle, Elder William Grafton, from the words, "Let brotherly love continue." This was in the spring of 1883. The preaching was so plain that I wondered why I had not understood it before. From that time on I attended Baptist meetings, and often enjoyed what was said. In the fall of 1890, while listening to Elder E. V. White preach from 1st Peter i. 1, 2, the church was shown to me, and a longing came to be one with them. He preached the sermon at Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa., at a yearly meeting. The next month I went before the Harford Church, was received, and baptized by my uncle, Elder William Grafton. While memory lasts I shall not forget the peaceful feeling when the water flowed over my face in baptism. They sang the hymn, "Buried beneath the yielding wave, the great Redeemer lies," &c.

HANNAH SCARBOROUGH.

(See obituary on page 261.)

HERNDON, Va., Feb. 26, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am taking the liberty of inclosing you a letter written to me by brother John J. Oliver, of Twin Lake, Michigan. I think the letter too good for me to lay away in my desk, so send it to you for publication in the SIGNS, if it meets with your approval. I received brother Oliver's letter at a time I was stricken down with la grippe, and could not answer it; and more than that, I feel now, and did then, when I received his letter, a blank, and nothing but a blank, in the feeling of letter writing. I am in such a lost and lonely condition that my case is past finding out, and none but God can know of a sad case like mine. I do hope brother Oliver will excuse me for sending his letter without his consent.

A poor old sinner,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

TWIN LAKE, Mich., Jan. 24, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER OLIVER:—It is with a realization of my many imperfections that I attempt to answer your most welcome letter. Although I am a stranger to you in the flesh, I have long believed you to be one among those who are a poor and an afflicted people, trusting in the name of the Lord. Your writings in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES have been such as to lead me to feel sweet fellowship for you. While I have often hoped that I could claim spiritual relationship with you, I have often wondered if we are not also related in the flesh. Be that as it may, two cannot be as closely related

in the flesh as they can be in the Spirit. I am of English descent. My father came to the United States nearly seventy years ago. My great-grandfather's name was Richard; he lived near London, and was born about 1765. I am stating this from memory, as it has been several years since I have seen a record. My parents and grandparents, so far as I am able to learn, were believers in salvation by grace alone. Father had one or two uncles who came to America about one hundred and twenty years ago. Undoubtedly they left many descendants. In addition to giving you a short sketch of our history, I want to speak of something that seems to be stamped upon our whole family. We are all afflicted with a most loathsome disease, which passes down from one generation to another in its most malignant form, the children being born blind and remaining so unless operated upon. Not only are they born blind, but they are born dead, and remain in this state of death unless they undergo a second birth. This second birth gives new sight and life to all operated upon. Our family is very much divided in regard to the nature of this second birth; many of them contend that it is a metamorphosis brought about by one's own activity, while a very few of us believe that where there is a second birth there must be a second child, and that a child always presupposes a father. We also contend that there must be a begetting and a manifestation. In fact, we believe that God is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. Yes, my dear brother, we believe that all of the children acted upon in the second birth are begotten of God, and that he is their Father. What a complex being we now have; one who is born of the flesh and then born of God. Two births and two characters, the old man and the new, the strong man and the stronger, two contending armies, the flesh against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. These two characters seem to keep house together. At times they are quite harmonious, at other times the old man insists on ruling, and whenever he rules he is always manifested by his works, for they are always the same. They consist of adultery, together with a long catalogue of other evils. At other times the new man seems to be the ruling power; his works are always the same; they consist of love, joy, longsuffering, together with many more of like virtues. One of these is a living character, the other is a dying one. Great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh. Jesus says he came not to send peace, but division. How true it is that when Jesus makes his abode with one of his little ones division takes place. If you let your light shine you are hated by the world; your relatives in the flesh have little use for you. It is then one longs for the companionship of those of like precious faith. It has been my lot through life to be separated from those I love in the Spirit. I am now nearly sixty years of age, have taken the SIGNS about thirty-five years, have been a member of the Baptist Church less than four years. I lost my partner in the flesh nearly four years ago. Since then I have been able to sympathize with them that are like afflicted. I have one boy yet dependent on me for a home. We have been talking much of moving to a warmer climate, as our long winters are hard on those growing old.

My dear brother, I have not written as I intended to, but as my mind has led me along. When you read this you will perhaps understand why I have not written for our dear family paper: I have not

felt qualified to do so. I hope I may hear from you again, as I have read and reread your letter with much interest and enjoyment. These letters to me are like a friend from a far country; I appreciate them much.

Your brother in hope of a life not clouded by sin,

JOHN J. OLIVER.

WEISER, Idaho, Dec. 5, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—Our time to renew is at hand; we cannot do without the SIGNS. We surely are thankful for the comfort of the church and the SIGNS. It seems that it brings God nearer to have good preaching or to get the SIGNS. We read the Scriptures and try to understand them, getting much comfort from them, but when we hear the word explained from the pulpit or read the good preaching in the SIGNS we seem to be nearer the Savior, or rather that he is nearer us. A very good article to me is in the November 1st SIGNS, entitled, "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" I had not been able to understand that Scripture; had had two different opinions on the passage, but neither right. Brother Lefferts' views were so plain and so true to the Bible doctrine of divine choice that all my former views vanished. While the Lord has not seen fit to enable me to preach or write the deep mysteries of his doctrine of salvation by free grace, he has enabled me to partake of the gospel crumbs that fall from the Master's table. This gift is most comforting to me. I seldom hear a sermon but what I get new light on some subject, a crumb I had not had before. The same thing occurs when I read the SIGNS. Then I sometimes think that the guiding Spirit gives me sweet morsels direct from the fountain of life. O, those blessings are unmerited, but without them I must perish in the slough of despond. I thank the Lord for the privilege of sitting in the back seat in the house of the Lord and having his mercies proclaimed and explained. My companion has been blessed with an understanding for twenty-eight years, but my eyes were not opened until recently, so the SIGNS comes in her name. We read of an eternal inheritance laid up for his own, safe and sure to the elect. We sometimes hear that God is persuading people to come and be his heirs; that he has a great estate, but does not know who will be his heirs. In this life children are born heirs, not persuaded to become heirs. Our only hope is that we have been born heirs to this eternal inheritance. Sometimes we seem to lose our deed to this inheritance, but we know that if we ever had a deed it is recorded in the Lamb's book of life, and is kept by the One who has all power. It may be out of our sight for a while, but it is under the all-seeing Eye, and only removed for a while for chastisement, or that it may seem more precious when we get it back. One of the sweetest crumbs dropped for me was last October, by Elder G. E. Mayfield, when he said that those who feel the need of a Savior are the ones that have the best assurance of having a Savior. For many years I had felt the need of a Savior, and when brother Mayfield said that, it seemed that my hope was stronger than ever before. Sow the seed in the morning, and withhold not your hand in the evening, for you know not which the Lord will prosper. There are some hungry children waiting for those crumbs of comfort to be dropped near them; they are life to them. Preach, write, talk and sing his praises, not to persuade them to become heirs, but to comfort those who have been born heirs. My hope is but a faint hope, but it is founded on the Baptist doctrine that his people are born heirs, and I am comforted by God's precious promises, and not by the good works of my own.

May the Lord's peace be with you.

M. N. WEBB.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1917.

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EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
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JUDGE NOT.

"JUDGE not, that ye be not judged."—Matt. vii. 1.

"Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven."—Luke vi. 37.

"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."—John vii. 24.

"Let us not therefore judge one another any more."—Romans xiv. 13.

"Who art thou that judgest another?"—James iv. 12.

If multitude of testimony from the Scriptures of sacred truth be worth anything at all, certainly the texts quoted above from five inspired writers of the New Testament prove it wrong for us to judge one another. However, one must be careful to draw a line in these matters and to rightly divide the word of truth. There are certain matters in which the people of God are to exercise their spiritual judgment, and we must be careful to discriminate between those matters in which the members of the church have jurisdiction and those other matters concerning which we are to judge not. For instance, the church has authority from the Scriptures to judge angels; that is, to judge of the gifts divinely placed in her midst for her comfort, edification and instruction. The sixth chapter of 1st Corinthians tells some things in which the judgment of the church is effective. If a man is called to preach, the church is the judge of his gift, and not he himself. Also, one having capacity to act as a deacon of the church is authorized to that office by the church, and cannot give himself that authority. One does not have to tell the church that he is called to preach or that he is able to act as deacon. The church will see the gift and recognize the ability, so that the church will set the seal of its judgment upon the gift by ordination to whatever place it feels the brother is called and qualified by the Spirit. In matters of discipline the New Testament is very explicit, and the church has right to exercise its judgment in keeping its house clean, along the lines laid down by the apostles and by the Lord himself. If two members of the church are having a difference between them, they each or both have a right to seek the advice and counsel of the church in settling their trouble. Also, if these brethren refuse to become reconciled to each other and to settle their trouble amicably, the church has a right to call them to account and to judge them in the matter. If the contestants refuse to hear the church, the brethren have right to set them aside from the ordinances and privileges of the church. The church has right to judge that a drunkard or a fornicator or a murderer is unfit for the ordinances of the church, and has authority to set such aside from their fellowship. She has this right because it is given her in the New Testament; but she has no right to reverse the Scriptures and go contrary to them. She cannot set her judgment in any matter above what the Scriptures say. The Scriptures are already written, and cannot be rewritten. What they say, they say; it cannot be unsaid. We cannot write Scripture to-day. Brother cannot go to law with brother

before the unbelievers. The church is the place for him to bring his difficulty, and he must abide by the judgment of the church, whether he agrees with it or not. In matters of discipline, the New Testament explicitly directs us how to proceed. The judgment of the church is to be exercised in accordance with those directions, and not contrary to them. The church is the judge of when its meetings shall be held, of the times it shall observe the Lord's supper, and all other matters pertaining to its business, spiritual or temporal. No one member in the church, even though it be the pastor, can enforce his judgment on the church. It is the privilege of the pastor and of any other member of the church to give his opinion or advice on any matter coming before the body for discussion or settlement, but if the church judges to set aside the views or advice of this or that one, it becomes the duty of that one to gracefully submit to the judgment of the whole, and to coincide with the rest of his brethren. In short, love is the ruling principle in all church order and discipline, and where love is, the rest is easy. But if love be absent, there is no equivalent for it, and the church is in a lamentable condition indeed. However, it is very rarely that any church trouble arises but that love is manifested in some, at least, of the brethren. It is in these where love abounds that the correct judgment will be seen. Blessed will be the condition of the rest if they can heed the judgment of these spiritually-minded ones, even though these latter be in the minority. Majority rule is not an infallible guide in church matters. The minority is sometimes right, and all the rest wrong. If the minority are standing on Bible ground, and have the commendation of the Spirit, they are sure to be in the right, even though opposed by the majority. We must remember that the Savior and his disciples were a very small minority in the days of his flesh, yet his word was unfailingly true, though the whole world believed otherwise. But our object in writing this article was not to discuss matters which the church has a right to judge, but to consider what is meant by the Savior and by the apostles when they command us to judge not. First of all, let it be known that our conduct toward one another does not influence God's attitude toward us. God is ever the same God of love, no matter what our life or conduct be. He is as unchangeable now as always, and knows not the shadow of turning. But our treatment or judgment of our brethren does have something to do with their attitude toward us, and this is what is meant by the Scriptures quoted at the beginning of this article. "Judge not, that ye be not judged," means not that God will judge us if we judge one another, but that if we maintain a critical or judicial attitude toward our brethren, they will reflect our attitude in their attitude toward us. "Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven," means not that God's forgiveness depends upon our forgiving one another, but that our forgiving our brethren will lead them to be lenient and forgiving with us. All of the texts quoted at the beginning have no reference to God's dealings with his children, but treat of the dealings of brethren with brethren. "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."—Matt. vii. 12. Surely no one of the Lord's people but desires the brethren to be charitable to one's weaknesses and failings. If this is the treatment we desire at the hands of those we love, we must be charitable to the weaknesses and

failings of our brethren. A critical or fault-finding attitude on our part is bound to alienate the brethren from us to a great extent. "A man that has friends must shew himself friendly."—Prov. xviii. 24. Solomon does not say we must be friendly in order to get friends, but that if we already have friends we must shew ourselves friendly. That is, if the Lord has given us friends, we owe it to him to show friendliness toward them. The only way Christ can be served by us is as we serve one another. Inasmuch as we do it unto one of his children, we do it unto him. If, then, the Lord has dealt graciously with us in forgiving our sins and bringing us home to the church, uniting us in sincere and real friendliness with them, it is as little as we can do to let the brethren see that we love them. Where this love is there will be a disposition to hide one another's faults, and not to expose them. It is an unnatural parent that would expose his child's naughtiness to all the country round. Most parents, while seeking to correct the child, would hide its misbehavior from publicity. Not one of us but falters and stumbles daily. Daily we need the mercy of God and the charity of our brethren. We do not mean that the church should be slack concerning breaches of discipline nor lax in keeping a decent and orderly house, but we do mean that brethren should not always be watching for faults in one another and condemning hastily because of appearances. Most of all, we should not countenance the gossip of the world about our brethren. The tales that travel from mouth to mouth in any community should not be the basis in our minds for judging and condemning a brother before we have heard his defense or account of his doings. We shall be very apt to be measured by the same yard-stick which we use to measure others. As we judge our brethren they also shall judge us. They will mete to us the same measure we mete to them. A harsh and critical attitude toward our brethren always begets something of the same in others toward us. The standard of conduct we erect for others to go by we shall be expected to live up to ourselves. If a report comes to us of misconduct on the part of some brother or sister, we nine cases out of ten know from our knowledge of that brother's or sister's character whether to believe it or not. Should we feel there may be grounds for the report, go to the brother or sister and apprise him or her of it. Do not use your mouth to circulate further the report by telling it to the rest of the church or to the world, but go personally yourself to the one reported. Above all, be careful not to say of a brother or sister in their absence what you would not have the courage to say in their presence. Faithfulness is a great virtue; grace only can beget it between brethren. But where this faithfulness is, we shall always go to a brother with anything we may have against him, and not tell it to any one else, not even to the other brethren. But we do not mean to be running to our brethren with every little thing. Many things are better never mentioned; just forget them. Many a slight or hurt is never intended, and some sensitive souls suppose a brother or sister has meant to slur them when no such thing was ever dreamed of. Remember we must expect others to treat us as we treat them. Do not criticise others if you do not want them to criticise you. "Judge not, that ye be not judged." Jesus' use of these words as applying to his disciples was very apt indeed. Remember these disciples were all taken

from among the Jews, and it had been the habit of the Jews to judge the Gentiles unworthy of eternal life. However, John the Baptist had assured the Jews that God was able of stones to raise up children unto Abraham, and the time came when the Jewish nationality ceased, when the kingdom of heaven was taken from among them and given to the Gentiles, when the natural branches were cut off and the wild olive branches grafted in. As the Jews had judged, so they were judged. But now that God in his mercy has grafted us into the tame olive tree, let us not boast against the natural branches, but rather fear lest we fall from our own steadfastness, for God is able to graft them in again. The Lord knoweth his own, and it is not for us to judge who is a child of God and who is not. We are told that we shall know them by their fruits, but in the absence of the fruit of faith it is not our province to adjudge this or that one to hell. What we need and need abundantly is grace. Grace can keep our hearts and souls alive with holy fire and heavenly zeal, with charity for all the brotherhood pure and unfeigned. "Let brotherly love continue."

L.

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CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the Harford Church, in Harford County, Maryland.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Another year has passed since we last met in this same capacity, and as usual it has brought many changes. Some of our loved ones have been called home to be with Jesus, and we are left to mourn, but not as those who have no hope. We wish at this time to call your attention to Paul's epistle to the Corinthians, 1st Corinthians xii. 31; xiii. 1, which reads as follows: "But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." If the Lord will direct us we hope to set forth some of the things the apostle was here teaching the church at Corinth, which are profitable to His people in all ages. In the twelfth chapter Paul had been setting forth the different gifts to the church and teaching them their inability to fill any place to the edification of each other unless the Lord had called and qualified them, and he had placed them in the church where they belonged and as it seemed good in his sight. They could preach or exhort or prophesy only as they were led by the Spirit of the living God, and that they were brethren, and that they had nothing of which to boast; and now he says, I will show you a more excellent way; I will show you by my example that I have been with Jesus and learned of him; I am meek in heart and lowly in spirit. Though I am an apostle, though I am educated and have all knowledge of the Scriptures, though I am an orator and

can instruct you in the way you should go and what you should teach, and have not charity, I become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. Yes, if I manifest a dislike for my brother in the kingdom, am ready to hold him up to scorn, I am not manifesting that love which our Savior commanded, so I will become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal to those who hear me. Jesus told his apostles to love one another with a pure love; he told them if they loved him they would keep his commandments. Now, dear brethren, show by your acts, both in word and in deed, that you have been with Jesus and have learned of him, that you love each other. The apostle asked, "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" He is teaching here the same blessed truth, that all we know and all the knowledge we have of a divine Savior or his love is all a gift from God to poor, weak, sinful man, who is blind and cannot see afar off, neither can he direct his steps. Then why are some of us puffed up and think we are better than our brethren? We only know what our heavenly Father has revealed unto us, and each one of God's children is a lively stone, and is fitted in the place that God has placed him; and he builds his house, and except he build it they labor in vain that build it. The children of God are a peculiar people, but they are fitly formed together, and when they are led by the Spirit of the living God they are one happy family. Now, dear brethren, let us covet earnestly the best gifts and show forth that spirit of meekness and love and humility, thereby showing that we do in truth esteem our brethren better than ourselves; for against such there is no law. May we all be upheld by God's eternal, unchangeable love, for without mercy we will all be consumed.

Written in love to our brethren and in the fear of the living God.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Moderator.
EDWARD A. JOHNSON, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at his home, Leesburg, Va., May 10th, 1917, John T. Cockrill and Miss Ida Jackson Utterback, both of the vicinity of Warrenton, Fauquier Co., Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

George W. McClellan died at his home, 531 West Center St., Fostoria, Ohio, Monday morning, Feb. 26th, 1917. He was born in Friends Cove, Bedford Co., Pa., March 2nd, 1843, hence he was aged 73 years, 11 months and 24 days. He was a son of Abraham and Elizabeth Morgart McClellan, and was the last member of his family, his parents, five brothers and two sisters having preceded him to the grave. February 20th, 1873, he was united in marriage to Anna R. Greenland, who survives with the following children: Charles E., near Fostoria, Bertie A. and Chester G., of Fostoria, and Mrs. Edna M. Ake, of Akron, Ohio; also five grandchildren and a number of nephews and nieces to mourn the loss of one who was dear to them. He was a kind husband and loving father, and will be sadly missed in the home, yet we feel to bow in humble submission to His divine will, knowing our loss is his eternal gain. He was a faithful member of the Providence Church, in Bedford County, Pa., for thirty-five years, and served as deacon for a number of years. His seat in the church was never vacant unless he was providentially hindered. He was devoted to the doctrine and order of the Old School Baptists, firm in the belief of salvation by grace. His home was always open for the entertainment of the brethren and sisters of the church he loved. He was an invalid for several years, being afflicted with nerve and heart trouble, at times almost helpless, but bore his afflictions with christian fortitude and patience, fully resigned to the will of Him who doeth all things well. All that medical skill and loving hands could do was done, but all to no avail. No children could be more devoted than ours were, ministering to every want day and night during his last illness, a period of eleven days. Surrounded by his family he peacefully passed into the haven of rest, where pain and sorrow are unknown.

On March 1st a large assembly of friends and neighbors gathered to pay the last tribute of respect. Services were conducted at the home by Elder C. E. Stuckey, of Newark, and Elder A. F. Dove, of Van Buren, Ohio. The body was laid to rest in the Fountain Cemetery to await the resurrection morn. May the Lord reconcile us all to his will.

ANNA R. McCLELLAN.

Rebecca Riner Thurston was born May 16th, 1839, in Preble County, Ohio, and died April 13th, 1917, in Columbus Junction, Iowa, at the home of her son, J. L. Thurston, aged nearly 78 years. She was married April 15th, 1858, to Isaac Thurston. In early life she received an experimental knowledge of the Savior's love and power to save, and accordingly soon asked for a home in the Primitive Baptist Church, being received, and baptized by Elder Chenoweth, of Illinois. She ever lived a most worthy and consistent life, and at the time of her death was a member of Harmony Primitive Baptist Church, near Winfield, Iowa. In 1881 she and her husband moved to Nodaway County, Mo., and in 1892 to Page County, Iowa, then in 1902 to Missouri again, returning to Iowa and coming to Louisa County in 1905. Of the immediate family there were four sons: J. L., of Columbus Junction, Iowa, I. P., of Los Angeles, Cal., and F. E. and A. R. Thurston, of Knobnoster, Mo. The father was called away by death in October, 1911. One sister also survives: Mrs. Malinda Swafford, of Onarga, Ill. Besides these there are eleven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. The church and community join with those who mourn to-day for the dear one gone, and share the grief such a loss involves. Her last illness was of but a few days' duration, being caused by a paralytic stroke, after which consciousness prevailed only a part of the time. Gradually she drifted out of earth and its mists into the summer land of the soul, the sweet haven of rest, where neither are light nor starlight are needed, for God and the Lamb are the light thereof.

The funeral service was held Sunday afternoon at the home of her son, conducted by Elder B. L. Nay, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Interment in Columbus City Cemetery.

J. L. THURSTON.

Hannah Boyd was born in Hardin County, Tenn., Jan. 22nd, 1850, and departed this life Jan. 29th, 1917. Her maiden name was McWhirter. Sister Boyd came to Kaufman County, Texas, in 1881, and was married to Henry Dridine July 12th, 1883, he living but ten months. She was married to J. A. Boyd Sept. 22nd, 1885. To that union were born two children: E. B. and E. L. Boyd, twin brothers. Brother and sister Boyd moved from Kaufman to Rains County in 1885, and joined the church of the Primitive faith in 1886, and were baptized by Elder James Hernage. Brother Boyd died Feb. 6th, 1901. Sister Boyd suffered for some time before her death of tumor of the stomach, but bore her suffering with patience and meekness. She stood firm in the faith, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. She looked to Jesus as her Savior, as her all; not only as her past Savior, but her Savior every day and every hour. To know her was to love her. She was a good neighbor, a consistent member of the church and a devoted mother. She leaves two sons, four brothers and sisters and a host of friends, and last, but not least, the church to mourn for her, but we do not mourn as others who have no hope, for we believe that Jesus died and rose again and reigns as our King, and will reign until the last enemy is destroyed, which is death, then we shall hear his voice saying, Come, thou blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Dear kindred in Christ Jesus, let us not forget that our God rules among the inhabitants of the earth and in heaven. Sister Boyd said to me a short time before her death that if in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable, for life is one continual warfare. But we have the assurance that she fought a good fight and kept the faith, hence she sleeps that peaceful sleep, and will at the last day awake with the likeness of her Savior, see him as he is and be like him. We have the assurance that as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly; then we shall be satisfied.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the living at her funeral, after which we laid her body to rest in Prospect Cemetery, three miles west of Emory, Rains, Co., Texas.

R. E. WHITE.

Hannah Scarborough was born near Chestnut Hill, Harford Co., Md., Sept. 2nd, 1856, and passed from this world March 13th, 1917, after a lengthy period of physical suffering, languishing but patient through it all. She died firm and sound in the gospel doctrine of Christ her Redeemer in hope. She was baptized by her uncle, Elder William Grafton, in November, 1890. She was married in 1881, and her beloved husband was separated from her by death two years and two months later, from the shock of which she never fully recovered. It is said by those closely connected with her, and from her own words in her experience, that she felt the loss to the day of her death. Notwithstanding this bereavement, it would seem that the covenant of grace was consummated in her case in this very death, for as she stated, a peaceful calm (the peace and love of Christ) came down into her soul, and ever afterward dwelt therein. It was God's way through this very trial to bring her into the liquid grave. He thus designed and pur-

posed she should be brought into the church through this suffering, fitly joined as a member of his body to himself. Her earthly home was ever open to the strangers and pilgrims passing that way, and always the place of abode for those assembled at the different associations in that territory.

Services were conducted by her pastor March 16th, and her earthly remains were laid away in the cemetery near her home to await His second coming, for she firmly and consistently believed in the resurrection of the bodies of his saints at the last day, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

J. G. EUBANKS.

MEETINGS.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., May 30th and 31st and June 1st, 1917. Those coming to the meeting will be met and cared for at Stockton, on arrival of B. & R. train at 5 p. m., and at Frenchtown about twenty minutes later. A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

C. RISLER, Church Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Middletown and Wallkill Church, at Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 6th, 7th and 8th, 1917. Those coming from and via New York will take train, Erie Railroad, leaving West 23rd St. ferry at 4:25 and Jersey City at 4:45 p. m. on Tuesday before the meeting. Get tickets for Middletown, N. Y. Those coming by the O. & W. R. R. from Kingston will take train at 1:55 p. m. Get tickets for Middletown. These trains will be met and friends cared for. Those coming Wednesday at any time of the day will come direct to the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Sts. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

M. A. EMORY, Church Clerk.

THE Lord willing, there will be a meeting held with the Beulah Old School Baptist Church in their meetinghouse near Aberfeldy, Ont., the third Saturday and Sunday in June (16th and 17th). Conference and business meeting 4 p. m. Saturday; preaching on Sunday 11 a. m. and 3:30 p. m. All are welcome who desire precious love and fellowship to abound in the church of Jesus Christ.

ARCHIE McALPINE, Church Clerk.

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ALL WELCOME

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Middleburg Old School Baptist Church, Schoharie Co., N. Y., has appointed her yearly meeting to be held as usual on the first Sunday and Saturday previous in June, (2nd and 3rd) 1917. A cordial invitation is extended to ministers, brethren and friends who care to meet with us.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

NOTICE.

Complying with urgent requests, I have included a select number of "Predestinarian Baptist" Editorials in my book, "My God and my Salvation," increasing the size to 200 pages and the price to $1.00. My copy is now in the hands of the printer, and the book will be ready for delivery on or before June 1st. Order now and pay when book is delivered. Address,

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CORRESPONDENCE.

"IT IS FINISHED."

(John xix. 30.)

THESE three words are the words of Jesus, and the very last words he uttered before his awful death for sin. There is so much in these three words it is impossible for man to see and comprehend it all. It seems peculiar that three words are used to express "the beginning," and three words used when that which was to have been done was accomplished. "In the beginning" God created, &c., then Jesus' dying words about four thousand years afterward, as we count time: "It is finished." It seems strange that each should be expressed by the use of three words, which fully and completely express that which was about to be done and that which was done. These words have been impressed on my mind many times in the last several years, and again of late with seemingly renewed force in connection with that which I have written on "In the beginning." Jesus Christ was born in this life of the virgin Mary, she being overshadowed by the Holy Ghost, and conceived the holy child Jesus by the Holy Ghost, which made him God and also man, being the Son of God, also "the Son of man" with power, inheriting from the Father all power, from the mother the principles of the flesh, he being touched by our infirmities and tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin. He was born in this life for a definite and fixed purpose; there was a work for him to do that none other could do; it must needs be that he be born just as he was and live the life that he lived and die the death he died. It is absolutely impossible that he should have escaped one thing through which he passed, as it is impossible for you or me to escape that which God designed from all eternity we should pass through. Notwithstanding the fact that all power in heaven and earth is his, but in that, that God cannot lie made it impossible that he could escape one thing, for a work was designed from all eternity that he should do in time, and none other could do it, neither could there be any failure on his part to perform to the uttermost all that which the Father gave him to do, and that of breathing his last breath in agony of death on the cross, thereby forever satisfying the demands of strict justice, fulfilled the law and paid the debt of his bride, the church. This

was the crowning act of that which he came to do in time, in the flesh; he finished the work the Father gave him to do, he came for this very work, for "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" they with wicked hands slew him. His crucifixion was as much according to the will and purpose of God as was his birth or resurrection, or as anything else that ever transpired. No miscarriage in the eternal plan of God, but a perfect and complete fulfillment; and there is not the shadow of a doubt that when he uttered those last three words, bowing his head and giving up the ghost, he had forever finished all that the Father gave him to do, and every one for whom he died, and he died for all that were chosen in him, and all that were chosen in him are partakers with him of that eternal life which brought him forth from the grave, and no one except the members of his body is interested in these things. It is the members of his body who feel the sting of sin and pangs of hell, for they are living members of a living body, therefore they feel and suffer with him. But he had not finished this work until this particular moment, for it was given to him of the Father to die for sin, the just for the unjust, the righteous Lamb of God for the sinner. He came to do a work, and he did it. There is no difference between him and his people, except that he is the Head and we the members of his body; that is, the church is his body. When the Head was dead then was the body dead, and there is no account of any spiritual emotion or activity during the time he lay dead. The first account of any movement among his people after his burial is of Mary coming to the tomb on the third morning to anoint the body, but the body of Jesus was risen when she arrived. Life had entered in that body and brought it forth, because death hath no power over this life. There was a general activity on this particular morning among his disciples. All did not come to the sepulcher, but when life went out of him it went out of every member of the body. When that life of which death hath no power entered the Head, bringing it forth from the confines of the grave, it also entered and stirred into action each member of the body, which is controlled by the Head; therefore there is no difference between Christ and his people. Because the Head lives the whole body lives; yes, we live because he lives. As Christ had a life to live in the flesh and a work to perform in the flesh, so does each and every member of the body, and it is just as essential that we have this natural existence and perform all that is given us to do as it was of him. If the most minute detail could be left out the chain of the purposes of God would be incomplete; so there is a work for each and every member of his body. Not that they can atone for sin or bring themselves into favor by meritorious work; not at all, this is not our work; but there is a work performed in us: the life we now live, that is, spiritual life, is by the faith of the Son of God, and is the same life he lived, it is eternal, for the life of the body is the same as the life of the head; there is not one life in my head and another in my feet, it is the same; and we know there is a labor and a travail of soul going on within us, there is a warfare, as it were, a company of two armies.

The labor began in us when God by his power spoke into existence a thing in us that was not in us before, as I tried to show in the preceding writing, that the literal creation is but typical of our spirit-

ual life. While it is necessary that the material earth exist, in order that we might exist upon it, and further, all creation was created for the manifestation of God's people in the flesh and a demonstration of his power, for the good of his people and for his glory, there was nothing made that was made except for the good of his people and his glory. The acts of wicked men and devils all accomplish these two things; for this same purpose has he raised them up. The account of the creation and the six days labor on the part of the Creator is applicable to us in an experimental way, and that is what the account given is designed to represent or typify; and as Christ performed all that work given him by the Father, so do we in anguish and travail of soul perform that work which is designed that we should do, and we accomplish all our work in the six days of creation, for it is written, "Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work." Not that there are six days given in which we may do our work if we choose, but it is a command: Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work. Now I do not mean to imply any other than that Christ fulfilled the whole law, paid the penalty of the law broken with his life. We are not dealing with literal things and events, only as they apply spiritually, and spiritually the law applies to the whole body; and, too, in the crucifixion the wounds were all in the body; the nails and the spear pierced the body, and not the head, yet through the mighty suffering and grief the head bowed in death; but the wounds were all in the body and all in the flesh, not a bone broken. We, the body, suffer in the flesh, there is where the wounds are; therefore all this work is accomplished in six days, and when all our work shall have been done the words uttered by Christ, "It is finished," are applicable to every member of his body. The six days are spoken of differently from the seventh. Each of the six days is spoken of as "the evening and the morning" being the first day, second, third, and so on, no mention being made of any evening or morning in connection with the seventh day. The seventh day has no evening, no morning, it is one eternal day. God rested from all his labors on the seventh day, so also shall we when we have attained unto that perfect day. The seventh, or perfect day, does not come to us in time, neither do we know anything about it except by faith that we shall by his mercy, according to his promise, attain unto perfect rest from all our labor and be satisfied; but all our labor must be accomplished first, and that labor is death, or the end of our mortal life; but as the Head could not be holden of death, neither can the body, for there is one life of the Head and the body. In this world, this life, in the flesh, ye shall have tribulation, one succession of evenings and mornings, cold and heat, seedtime and harvest. There are certain periods of rest granted us while here, so also is every servant given some rest, yet they know when they lie down to rest the work is not finished, and that they must soon go on again and continue to work, serving their master. We are given certain periods of rest and comfort, yet we know our work is not done while life lasts. This labor is not voluntary on our part, but is designed and must be accomplished. Many of our labors and trials seem unnecessarily hard to us, but there is a purpose in all our trials and afflictions. At times our doubts and fears seem as though they would crush us, but God, who designed the cross, also designed the strength of

each of us; it is all for our good and his glory. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." It is all in mercy sent; for who can measure the mercy and love that caused him to choose us to be worthy to suffer all things, even death with Christ, thereby being conformed to his image? And unto him who in wisdom and mercy designed and decreed all things, be all honor, might, dominion and glory, now and forever. Amen.

F. SELBY FISHER.

LA GRANDE, Ore., April 15, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—If you think it will be of interest to the readers of the SIGNS to publish the following account of my recent visit to Kentucky, you may do so. The hand of a wise Providence was so visibly manifest in so much of it that I feel an impression to write of it, as it may be for the glory of God.

I left Kentucky nine years ago the 12th of March last with the intention of returning again in two or three years, for the purpose at least of visiting my kindred, brethren and friends, but the years fled by so fast and furnished such limited returns for my labor that until last summer I had thought little of returning, or had little opportunity of doing so. At that time my father requested me to visit him, rather urging me to do so, stating it would be better for me to come and visit all the kindred and brethren and to be with him than for him to come to visit me. I wrote him I would come, and began arranging my affairs for the visit as soon as possible. Many things stood in the way and continued to hinder me until the 9th of January, when the several things interfering were removed the same day and the way was open for me to start, which I did on the evening of the 13th of January, accompanied by my five year old boy, who had never seen his Kentucky kindred. Our first stop was with brother A. B. Bickers and family, at Amy, Kansas. He had united with the Goshen Church, in Anderson County, Ky., during the pastorate of Elder D. G. Johnson and myself, and was the church clerk when he left, about 1905. It was like home to me to enter into this western home of our brother and to renew old recollections and recall our trials in the past and many we each had passed through since we last met. The family of J. W. Herndon, a kinsman and dear friend of early life, was visited and much enjoyed, also other former Kentuckians I had never met before. Brother Bickers took me to see a Baptist family in Dighton, Kans., named Wristen, in which the mother and two daughters were members and were readers of the SIGNS. One daughter, Caroline, is an invalid, and confined to her bed all the time, but she is cheerful and patient and resigned to the affliction she must endure. I felt to be in divine presence to see such brigh evidences of the work of grace as was manifest in this young believer, who is as a lamb borne in the bosom of the Shepherd of her soul and resting in the everlasting arms, which are ever underneath his saints. At the request of this young sister I took her Bible and read a portion of Scripture and made such remarks as I felt to be for gospel comfort. When I saw the consolation which it afforded her I almost felt to take her by the hand and say, The Lord Jesus maketh thee whole. O that we could have that faith which overcomes all difficulties and infirmities, that the praise and glory of our God might be magnified among his saints

in this day as in the times past. We know that his power is no less now than in former times, but we do not receive the blessing, because of unbelief. The two days thus spent in Kansas were too short, and when it was proposed to have preaching I preferred that in so short a time the sacredness of former memories be not interrupted by a public appointment for preaching. Our journey was continued on to Louisville, where we stopped two days with friends, and arrived at McBrayer, Ky., on the evening of January 21st. The next morning we rode in a buggy with a friend to near my father's home, and walked the remainder of the distance. The hills and hollows looked natural, except that they were not so large as I thought to see them, and the trees have grown so much. No one knew of my coming until I was on the old home place, but my father had an assurance so strong of my coming that he had arranged a hearty welcome for me, and had ordered special things cooked, and had told his friends he was sure I was coming, and when we met at the door it was as the meeting of Jacob and Joseph, when each wept on the other's neck and neither could say a word. I never knew what that meant before, nor how that weeping could be an evidence of joy; but it is so, and those tears which are shed at the joy of meeting loved ones long separated cannot be withheld, because of the complete surrender of all individual thoughts to the kindred affection which then flows from breast to breast. The saints of God experience a similar joy when they are first assured of their acceptance in the Beloved. Their wanderings in this strange and unfriendly world of sin and sorrow are ended for the time when they are greeted at the door of eternal life by Him who has loved them from the beginning, and is now bringing them to his banqueting-house, where they may partake freely of the bounties of his grace and rest under the banner of his love. Such love and greeting from the Lord of life cause the tears to flow freely from the sinner's eyes, which are only outward evidences of the cup of joy of the heart overflowing. After seeing the members of my immediate family I began to visit the old brethren, who were so dear in ties of faith, and to attend the meetings of the churches I tried for more than twelve years to serve as minister. It was a joy to again see those old soldiers of the cross, but a sort of sadness possessed me that so many I had loved and had been accustomed to see so regularly in their places of worship when I last met with them were gone. Their places were vacant, their voices were still, yet in the liberty of the gospel which I was given to feel at times it was as though they were with us, those departed ones, and we all as the one great family of the living God; some still in the flesh, and some gone to their home above, but all present where Jesus is. It is in Jesus we sit together in heavenly places. At such times there is perfect joy and peace. No lonesome ones, no sorrowing ones, no sadness, no doubts, no temptations and no fears. If we can have such evidences of heavenly bliss while here in the flesh, what must the joy of the saints in glory be, who have passed beyond this mortal state?

I will mention a few of the older brethren known to many of the readers of the SIGNS. Elder Smith Hawkins, ninety-one years old, lives with his youngest daughter near Salt River Church. He is blind and very deaf, but his mind is clear on the principles of faith and doctrine, and he still delights to tell his

friends who call to see him at his home the reason of the hope which is in him. He has been an Elder for some sixty years or more, and attended his meetings regularly until he lost his sight and hearing, in the last three or four years. He was glad for me to visit him, and assured me that the same doctrine he had tried to preach for so long was still his only hope and comfort. Brother James Paxton, of the Goshen Church, is eighty-one, and not able to be out of his house. He and his good wife, sister Paxton, will be remembered by all visitors at that church, for their house has always been a home for the Baptists, and at the request of this faithful couple we had preaching at their home, where a good congregation of neighbors and friends met to worship the living God. Elder P. W. Sawin, of Shelbyville, Ky., was found to be in feeble health, but able to be about the house and to talk of the wonderful mysteries of the gospel. This faithful brother is no stranger to the household of faith, and it is a real pleasure to be entertained in his home by him and to hear him recount the mercies of God in the many and wonderful ways they have been made known to him during a long life filled with trials, tribulations and deliverances. One is impressed with the strength of the psalmist's words where he says: "I have been young, but now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." Such is the faith of Elder Sawin, and doubting ones are made strong by his testimony, and are made to see the glitter of the pure gold in his christian life, as he recounts the strength of the refiner's fire felt in the agonies of his soul. Blessed assurance to God's children, that when they are tried they shall come forth as gold. But so many of us, like the ore of low grade when mined out of the earth, have so little value that when put to the refiner's test have so little left which is pure gold that we can hardly be distinguished from worthless earth, yet this little is necessary to complete the crown of righteousness which shall adorn our dear Redeemer throughout eternity, and he must search it out also, as well as the rich and glittering ore, which yields so much to his praise. Little children, it is not in yourselves to thus shine, but it is in his hand that you become a gem, and your brightness is but the reflection of his glory as manifested in your life in overcoming the world and the trials thereof. At Farmdale I was again welcomed to the home of brother J. T. McCoun, who has always been as a father to me in the church. For nearly twenty-five years that home has stood open to me, as it has to all members and visitors of Little Flock Church, and especially to visiting ministers. At that time it was brother Benedict Farmer's home, after him sister Farmer, and brother and sister McCoun, daughter and son-in-law of brother and sister Farmer, maintaining the same generous hospitality toward their brethren as in brother Farmer's lifetime. Another aged and respected member of the same church is brother A. G. Herndon, at whose home a hearty welcome to all Old School Baptists has always been extended. This brother has been blind for seventeen years, yet he rarely misses a meeting of his church, and readily recognizes his brethren and friends by the sound of their voices. He is always glad to entertain them in conversation, and to search out the deep and hidden truths of the Scriptures. Both brother McCoun and brother Herndon are seventy-five years old or past, and lost their wives two or three years ago, which makes their

lives somewhat lonely, but they each reside with one of their children and bear the trials of life with christian patience, looking forward to the full fruition of their hope, when this mortal shall put on immortality and death shall be swallowed up in victory. Many other loved and respected brethren, sisters and friends were visited, and pleasant hours were spent at their homes, but space forbids an extended mention of them all. My allotted time of five weeks passed so quickly that I could hardly realize it, but I began preparing to return to my home, when the hand of Providence seemed to be revealed to me that the time for my departure was not yet. As I was preparing to start home my little boy was taken with a sore mouth, which, though nothing serious, was enough to make it impossible to travel with him. I gave him the best medical attention in order to be delayed as little as possible, and in one week he began to improve so that we again set a day for starting. On the morning of that day while at breakfast my father, T. H. Bond, was taken with a chill, which was so severe that we were fearful of results, and again were prevented from leaving. This soon developed into pneumonia, and the seventh day he died. As I saw my father pass from a state of almost perfect health into death in so short a time it impressed me with the small value of all earthly things as compared with the value of eternal things. The day before his sickness began my father took me with him to his place of business, and while there showed me his books and explained all the details of his business. This with us was a matter of friendship and courtesy, for neither of us could have had a thought of what was in store for us, and so near, but the hand of the Lord was in this, as it was in all the details of my visit, and my detention to this time was manifested so unmistakably in so many ways. We employed the best medical skill we could, but to no avail. His suffering was intense during the last two days, but never a word of complaint was uttered. After his departure we could look back through several months and see how his every act had been shaped to this end; even while his unusual good health prevailed he had rounded up his business and finished it to be handed over to other hands. In matters of faith he was thoroughly established in the Old School Baptist doctrine, and went with me to the meetings I held, and rejoiced in them as one of the elect children. After we saw that medical skill could do nothing but prolong his sufferings, we told the doctor and nurse to do no more, and the sorrowing family and friends gathered around his bed to await the end. As I saw this great suffering, and that man could do nothing, most solemn thoughts filled my mind. How glad I was that salvation is finished and that God's everlasting arms are underneath. What good would a conditional plan do at such a time? If it is necessary to look to Jesus to be saved in such suffering one might forget to look. Should we tell such an one just to merely accept the offered terms of salvation and all will be well, how can the one whose strength is so near gone that he does not even know his own children, and is not able to understand the most familiar sentence, obey these admonitions? God be praised that he in wisdom did not leave any such conditions for his children to perform in order to be heirs of eternal glory. All such conditional plans are based on the wisdom of men, and shall die with them; but God's plan of the sure redemption made

once for all the elect by the sufferings and death of Christ, the knowledge of which is implanted in each and every heir by the operation of the Spirit in the new birth, and they are kept secure because their life is hid with Christ in God, shall remain secure through every age and condition of mankind, and all the heirs shall come into their full inheritance, which is eternal life, and that is the gift of God, not purchased in any sense, or in any way dependent upon creature effort. As I thus thought on the perfect work of God in comparison to man's best efforts, and saw the sad and burdened family quietly waiting for the end, I began consoling them with gospel consolation as to what death is, and the glory which is to follow, and began quoting the hymn, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord," quoting the first two verses and the first line of the third, when the remainder was lost to me, and the next to the last verse came in mind and I quoted it:

"E'en down to old age all my people shall prove
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;
And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,
Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne."

Just as the last line was finished father ceased to breathe, his sufferings were over, and I felt he was borne to the bosom of his Master, and I said, Amen; even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight. As I considered all this, and the many things shaping to this, I was filled with thanksgiving and praise in the midst of my sorrow to think the Lord counted me worthy to be so led that I should witness such wonders of his dispensation and receive such a knowledge of my father's faith. I remained a few days to help transfer father's business to his heirs, and again started for home, on Sunday evening, March 25th, and reached home the 29th, finding my family all well and glad to welcome us back. We had been absent ten weeks, during most of the winter weather, and had traveled six thousand miles without harm to us or inconvenience to my family. I am now busy with the season's work, and picture myself as the man in Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, who was too busy with the muckrake to see the bright crown just above his head. O that we could never lose sight of this precious crown which is to adorn us after this world has faded away and the joys thereof are forgotten for evermore. But how to perform that which I would I find not. Brethren, is it with you as it is with the unworthy writer?

C. W. BOND.

(See obituary in this number.)

PLYMOUTH, Ill., Feb. 12, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending you a good letter from C. M. Weaver. He did not tell me not to send it for publication, so I am thinking that it will be meat and drink to the faithful in Christ Jesus our Lord. I have been fed many times by his comforting and edifying letters to me, seeing that he is steadfast, diligent and patient in waiting upon the God of all grace. I have other good letters that I could send, and see no reason why I should not send them, only the writers tell me not to, and I cannot feel free to send them when they tell me not to. They are so good, so full of the Spirit and understanding, that they would be food to all of like precious faith.

I am trembling so I can hardly write. Pray for me, dear brethren, is my prayer.

Yours in hope,

BELLE FRAZEE.

COMMERCE, Mo., Dec. 31, 1916.

DEAR SISTER FRAZEE:—On this, the last day of the year 1916, I once more attempt to communicate some of my

thoughts, and give expression to some of my feelings in answer to your last comforting and edifying letter. As my thoughts turn to the past, I am filled with reminiscences that are both painful and pleasing. There was a time in my life when I lived much of the time in the past, either feasting my mind upon the sweet experienced of God's gracious ministrations, or else brooding over the regrettable mistakes of my life. I have now come to a time when the present concerns me more. In the present are so many things to distress us, so many things to make the sensitive heart ache, so many dark forebodings, that I am often made to cry out in the depth of my sorrow, Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I. Surely a day of the trial of our faith is upon us; a time when all the subtle forces of evil and ungodly men seem to be sweeping the pyramid of world civilization from its base; a time when men mock the Deity and reproach those who would trust God in this dark and evil day. Human depravity in all its hideousness is stalking forth to leave its malediction upon generations yet unborn. The beasts of prophecy have come free of the chains that bound them in God's decree, and must accomplish the work for which their nature and purpose fit them. The world is on fire, and who but the eternal God is equal to the task of controlling the conflagration? I am made to sing in the silent, meditative hours:

"Other refuge have I none—
Hangs my helpless soul on thee!
Leave, ah, leave me not alone;
Still support and comfort me."

How strengthening is his support, how sweet his comfort! When I can feel his everlasting arms underneath and experience the comfort he gives I can then say with David, Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God.

My dear sister, in some of my musing upon the past I often find myself in your godly home, living over again those enjoyable and profitable seasons I spent with you and your noble christian husband. It saddens me to think now I shall never meet him in this life again; but we are all traveling the same way in which he has gone: in the road that leads to the grave. While many of those who were dear to us by nature's ties have already passed the gates that open into the grave, others, and possibly ourselves, are standing just without. Some day we, too, will enter the silent city. What a blessing to be supported by the power and promises of our God, who said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. My hope in his mercies becomes sweeter each time he is pleased to revive it within me. The nearer I come to the end of my earthly pilgrimage the more I feel to need the christian's hope to comfort and support. The more I see of my own imperfections, the more I crave to be perfect in Christ, my risen Lord. When that which is in part shall be done away, and we are raised up on the other side of death in the image of the glorified Son of God, then we shall be satisfied. Then let the nations of earth in their madness proceed; let the adversary of righteousness mock and revile, God has prepared for his saints a city, a blessed and peaceful habitation, where neither moth nor rust can corrupt nor thieves break through and steal the heavenly inheritance of that everlasting kingdom.

My family and I are blessed with usual health. I hope you are being so favored of the Lord. When you can, let me hear from you.

Yours in hope and faith of the gospel of Christ Jesus our Lord,

C. M. WEAVER.

SHOCK, Ky., Feb. 5, 1917.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—I am writing you in order to let you know how highly I appreciate your editorials in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and how much I enjoy them, especially the one written upon the prophecy of Daniel xii. 2, in the February 1st number. Words utterly fail me to speak of this wonderful article as I much desire, therefore I must ask your forbearance, for of a truth I am both ashamed and afraid to write you, lest I should burden your mind through my weakness and bungling way of expressing my views on any subject; but as I cannot be content without writing you, I have decided to write, risking the consequences, considering the old adage that "all dangers are not death." The view that you have so clearly set forth of this Scripture is in harmony with the view which I have had of it for several years, but you have made it so much clearer than I could even comprehend and grasp that I rejoice in reading it, or even thinking of it. As you have so scripturally said, this prophecy of Daniel has reference to the beginning of the gospel era, and not to its ending. I have referred to the following Scripture time and again in vindicating this point: "But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him [Herod]: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many."—Daniel xi. 44. It has seemed clear to my mind for several years that this prophecy of Daniel had reference to King Herod at the time when Christ was born in Bethlehem of Judea, as follows: "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." "Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under," &c.—Matt. ii. 1-3, 16. This was the time of the great fury and destruction that occupied and inspired the mind of the prophet Daniel, as recorded in the eleventh chapter, forty-fourth and forty-fifth verses of the book of his prophecy, going on to the twelfth chapter, saying, And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble (Matt. ii. 3,) such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, &c. Brother Lefferts, you have well said that this prophecy had reference to the ushering in of the gospel era, when many of God's children were sleeping in the dust of the earth; not corporeally dead, but as in the case of the ten virgins, as recorded in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew and otherwise, as you have so clearly shown with reference to the day of Pentecost. "While the bridegroom [Christ] tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom [Christ] cometh; go ye out to meet him," &c. Here was the rising of many that were sleeping in the dust of the earth, some of them (the wise virgins) to everlasting life, and some of them (the foolish virgins) to shame and everlasting contempt. I do not think that we are to understand that those wise

and foolish virgins are equal in individual numbers, but are equal in class numbers, as is so plainly exemplified in both Old and New Testaments. For instance, Isaiah lii. 1, 2: "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; * * * shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem." The Lord's people are often in a sleeping, dusty state, and must be awakened to righteousness by the power of God; and it has seemed to me for several years that the Lord's people in this part of the country are to some degree at least asleep to their reasonable services and blessed privileges respecting God's blessed cause among us; but I am glad in this heart of mine, if I am not deceived, that the Lord has raised up such wonderful gifts in this dark day of delusion, whose explanations and applications of the blessed truths of God contained in the Scriptures cannot be gainsaid nor successfully resisted.

Yours in tribulation,

W. J. MAY.

FOREST HILL, Md., May 27, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Please find inclosed four dollars for the SIGNS. I am also sending another of my dear father's letters, which you may publish if you think best.

In love,

JENNIE GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md., Jan. 16, 1892.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER DURAND:—Your letter of January 4th reached us to-day. It has been some time since we have heard directly from you, but it has probably been as much my fault as yours, as I have not written anything for a long time. Well, I am glad you are both able to write, and we appreciate the interest which you express in our welfare, because we believe it to be sincere. I have never been able to see a reason for such feelings or expressions of love and fellowship in the gospel, neither do I feel in any way worthy to occupy the place and relation to the churches which I professionally do. There is an inward pressing forward in a calling and work which I have never felt competent to perform.

I have just received word through brother Coulter of the death of brother John Hill, of Newark, Del. I do not know that I have ever had anything to shock me more. True, he was a man advanced in years, but when I saw him at our last meeting at Welsh Tract he was perfectly well, and comfortable in mind and body. After the night meeting in Newark we walked in company to his home, where I lodged for the night. He talked all the time of the goodness of the Lord in his case, and especially in his declining years was that goodness manifest. The path seemed brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. There appeared to be not the least ripple upon the waters. Dying was but going home, and he longed for the hour of full discharge that sets the prisoner free. He went back over much of his life, and was able to put the chain together and to see the Lord's hand in all the way in which he had been led. I have thought much about his talk since, and now feel that he was ripening for the gathering, as a shock of corn in its season. Both of the Tract churches are decreasing in membership, but a good feeling prevails, and good attendance and attention. I feel a growing desire like this: O that the Lord would build up Zion and appear in his glory. I am troubled when I see our members dropping off and no bright prospects of others to take their places; but, say you, The Lord is able to raise up others, and he

will not leave himself without witnesses. True, but will he do it? Will our eyes see it and our ears hear it? I know the arm of the Lord is not shortened, and that he will save his people, but when I try to trust I often find it as hard as to frame a piece of machinery which I never saw or heard of. There are some things which I believe I know, and the first is that I am a poor, erring, sinful, unprofitable creature. Another thing I know is, that I do feel an interest in the upbuilding and prosperity of the churches, and desire to serve them with such ability as I have, if it is of any benefit to the Lord's people; but whether or not the Lord called me to this work is another matter, and often a serious question with me.

Perhaps I have said enough along this line, as you may not be troubled about these things as I am. I have no doubt sister Clarice wants to hear something about the friends in this county where she spent her early life. Last Saturday we attended the funeral of sister Hurst, the oldest of our Harford members. There are now but three remaining who were members of the Harford Church when I united with it. I heard on Sunday that sister Sue Dance has been quite ill with the grippe. My family is in good health. I do desire to feel thankful for the blessings by which I am surrounded. My wife will accompany me on my trip to Philadelphia, and we greatly desire to meet you in connection with the trip, either in the city or at your home. It occurs to me now that you are both younger than we; perhaps you have not thought of this, and if you should conclude to meet us in the city it would be an agreeable surprise.

Now I have written over a sheet of foolscap, and have said but little of what I wanted to say. You know me, therefore I need make no apology. My family joins me in love to you all. Write again. Our writing days will soon be over.

In love and fellowship,

WM. GRAFTON.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., Jan. 10, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am inclosing you a good letter from dear old brother McClanahan. I have his consent, if you think it proper, to give it a place in the SIGNS. I had the pleasure of seeing this dear old brother and hearing him preach three sermons in November last. The first was from Ruth ii. 22, 23; second, Isaiah xxii. 23, 24; the third and last was on the subject of Christ being the head of his church. He very beautifully illustrated this discourse by the figure of the natural man being the head of the woman. I am so thankful to our dear Lord that he feels that his preaching found a response in many hearts, and that he can adopt your precious words, brother Lefferts, in your last editorial, where you said, How good and comfortable it is to find homes over the country with one's own kindred in spirit, where one really feels at home, where cordiality and welcome without stint await one, &c. I have been blessed with the precious privilege once more of entertaining not only brother J. W. McClanahan at my humble and lonely home, but also a young brother, W. C. Pennington, whose conversation was godly and cheering to my poor soul; also a cousin, Jacob Adkins, whose home is in Kentucky. After an absence of five years he visited his relatives here and spent three weeks, going from house to house of all relations, rich and poor, young and old, afflicted and well, over many miles of rough roads, through cold and storm. As I sat one lonely day thinking of the un-

tiring pains he was taking, my mind was led to the words in Hebrews i. 14: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"

Dear brethren and sisters who read the SIGNS, I did not think I could write a line that would be worthy a place in our dear old family paper, but I trust I was guided by grace divine to write what I have, and if it finds a place in the SIGNS and any one is comforted, my prayer is that you will give our God all the praise.

Hoping that good will attend the labors of all concerned in publishing the SIGNS, and all the poor, afflicted in Zion, I bid you an affectionate farewell.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

POCA, W. Va., Jan. 1, 1917.

MY HIGHLY ESTEEMED SISTER:—This, the first day of the new year, 1917, finds me yet alive. My feelings have been for a number of years that I would not live to see the coming in of another year, but for some purpose known unto God only I am still spared to near the end of my sixty-eighth year in this world of sin and sorrow. If I could tell you of the many sorrows that have pierced my poor heart, as daggers to my trembling soul, on account of my evil disposition, I would try to do so. Sorrows have encompassed me round, and many distresses I see. Astonished I cry, Can a mortal be found surrounded with troubles like me? The cold shoulder of a professed religious world has been turned against me, with all its scoffs and scorn, because of the doctrine I advocate, which is the doctrine of predestination unlimited, election and the effectual calling of all the chosen in Christ, by the rich reign of God's free grace alone, without any merit of the poor, helpless creature. This is not a popular doctrine by any means, but it is God-honoring, while the nations take to themselves the honor of saving souls. In this deceitful garb of christianity they compass sea and land to make one proselyte, which is to capture one of God's little, weak ones, and lead them into some of the man-made institutions or so-called churches. Then it is that they begin to realize their mistake, and their trouble is doubled, twofold. This is the sense in which I think they are twofold more the children of hell than the one who proselyted them, seeing they have been led by a false teacher who has no troubles at all. Many are the afflictions of God's humble poor, but the blessed thought is, he is able, and will deliver them out of every snare, and restore unto them the joy of his salvation. He leads them so lovingly beside the still waters of his peace, and causes them to lie down in the ever green pastures of his everlasting love. It is then that our poor, drooping spirits are revived, and we feel to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, looking away from the perishing things of this poor world for a little season. But ere we are aware, he withdraws himself from us, and we are left again to grope in darkness and mourn his absence, and with David we can say, Thou makest darkness and it is night, wherein all the beasts (the evil propensities of our nature) of the forest do creep forth.

Hoping that the blessings of God may be with you all, to the glory and praise of his holy name, I remain your unworthy servant,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

GODLEY, Texas, Jan. 22, 1917.

LOVED ONES IN CHRIST JESUS:—I hardly know how to begin a letter to the Lord's chosen few, but somehow I want to write; why it is so I cannot tell, for I feel to be so in the dark lately. I have been stumbling and running against things, as it were, until I can hardly tell which way I am going. I know the way I want to go, but whether I am in that way or not it is hard to know. Sometimes when the dear Lord shows himself to me I am made to say, Surely this is the way. O if I could feel his presence with me all the way, but I am so vile, so prone to sin, I sometimes fear I am not born again. I surely cannot believe that there is any one who has the doubts and fears I do. It seems that when I try to do good, then is when I do the worst. I used to think in my younger days (when I belonged to the Methodists) that I could do great things for God; I could sing and talk and pray and work among the lost and dying sinners; but when God showed me what a dead sinner I was I soon found out how powerless I was. Yes, I very quickly saw that I could not save any one, I could not even help save them; no, I could not save myself. O my dear friends, how down I did feel when I was made to see my littleness, my nothingness in the sight of God; and now, even since I hope the Lord for Christ's sake has pardoned my sins, how I do blush with shame when I recall the way I used to live, in trying to do God's work. Dear saints, I have long since found out that it is more than I can do to keep myself; I must be led by the light of His love. If I am saved it is through his love and tender mercy, not through any good that I can do. The spirit seems indeed willing, but the flesh is weak, and unless Jesus is with me to strengthen me my little work will amount to nothing.

"So by experience do I know
There is nothing good that I can do;
I cannot satisfy the law,
Nor hope nor comfort from it draw."

Somehow that good old hymn has been on my mind all the time for the last week; it seems that it was composed on purpose for me. Will some one with understanding please write their views upon this Scripture? "Thus saith the Lord: As the shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear; so shall the children of Israel be taken out that dwell in Samaria in the corner of a bed, and in Damascus in a couch."—Amos iii. 12. Again the words of the hymn:

"When I experience call to mind,
My understanding is so blind,
All feeling sense seems to be gone,
Which makes me fear that I am wrong."

But I know there are others not so blind, and I would be pleased to have some one write on it, or rather explain to me some of the hidden manna that I know must be in the beautiful text.

Well, I have written as I have thought, and after all I cannot see any good in it, but I want some gifted person to write on the above Scripture, or I probably would not send it. If there is any good in it pass it on and give God the praise. Please throw the mantle of charity over this poorly written letter. I ask the prayers of the saints when it is well with them. May God bless all the household of faith.

I am, very unworthily, your sister in hope of a better world,

(MRS.) J. E. BERRY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1917.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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WAR.

THIS subject is uppermost in most minds just now, and it may not be amiss to present some thoughts upon it from the viewpoint of ourselves. War is preeminently an affair that belongs to the legal dispensation, rather than to the gospel. The word "war" occurs some two hundred times in the Old Testament, but occurs only fifteen times in the New Testament. "The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his name," sang Moses and the Israelites when the Lord saved them out of the hands of the Egyptians. When God appears in Christ for the work of salvation, he reveals himself as a man of war, fighting against the powers of darkness and overcoming, through his death, him that has the power of death, that is, the devil, and delivering them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. The Lord fights in the work of redemption, not with carnal weapons, but with the sword of the Spirit. The children of Reuben and of Gad, though their inheritance lay on the wilderness side of Jordan, yet were they required to fight with the other Israelites in the land of Canaan in all the wars that fell to the lot of Israel. So it was that the people of God who lived before the coming of Jesus in the flesh, fought the same spiritual warfare that all God's people wage to-day in the gospel dispensation against the world, the flesh and the devil. Though our brethren, the prophets, were not given to enjoy the privileges and blessings that we do now under the gospel, yet they were not exempt from the warfare between the Spirit and the flesh. In the day that God delivered David out of the hands of all his enemies, and out of the hands of Saul, David sang a song unto the Lord in which he said: "He teacheth my hands to war; so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms." Here David speaks as a prophet, and testifies of Jesus Christ. David is a figure of Christ, and in his war against the Philistines represents Christ in his war against antichrist. In his war against Saul, David rather presents Christ in his opposition to his own people, the Jews, who were against Christ. As Saul sought to slay David, so the Jews sought the life of Jesus, but God delivered him out of their hands through death, so they could no longer get at him. His death was a victory, not a defeat. He accomplished more in his death than he ever did in his life. We read that the sons of Reuben and the Gadites and half the tribe of Manasseh, of valiant men, men able to bear buckler and sword, and to shoot with bow and skillful in war, were four and forty thousand, seven hundred and threescore, that went out to war against the Hagarites, and God delivered the Hagarites into their hand so that "there fell down many slain, because the war was of God." The terrible slaughter which befell the Hagarites at the hands of these Israelites seems to have been because the war was of God, or because God appointed it. Solomon, the wise man, said: "With good advice

make war;" also, "By wise counsel thou shalt make war." This would indicate that war is sometimes dictated by wisdom as a wise course. Surely the wisdom of God dictated in the heart of his beloved Son, Jesus, all the course of his warfare against the enemies of righteousness. And, too, in the soul of Paul, the wisdom of God counseled him in his contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and enabled him to finish his course, having fought a good fight. There is, then, such a thing as a good fight. The good fight is to be called to fight on the Lord's side. The grace of God calls the soldiers of the cross to battle against sin, error and all the doctrines of men and devils, on the side of righteousness against the legions of darkness. If one is enlisted by effectual calling in this fight, it is good. War is not to be condemned simply because it is war. The test as to whether it is right or wrong to fight depends upon the spirit prompting one. It is right to fight against all unrighteousness. We should contend against all evil, whether we see that evil in ourselves or in the world around us. All error, false doctrine and principles of evil are to be warred against by the people of God. This was what made the prophets of old so unpopular: they were continually crying out against the sins of Israel and of Judah. This was what made Christ so disliked: because he fought against all sin with the strong sword of his living word. This was what made the apostles so obnoxious in their day and generation: because they would not compromise with the Judaism of their fellows nor with the pagan rites of the Gentiles. And, this, brethren, is what makes Old School Baptists unpopular to-day: because we are continually fighting against the doctrines and institutions of Arminianism which have overspread the whole world. Whatever comes to pass is ordained of God. In nature, in providence and in grace, God works all things after the counsel of his own will. Therefore, if war be the present world condition, it cannot be going on without the will and purpose of God being in it. It is not the work of the devil only so far as the devil is in the hands of God and controlled by him. Satan can go so far, and no farther. God has limited the devil, but God himself is unlimited in all his power and wisdom. The horrors of war are terrible to contemplate, but we must remember that the nearer we are to war the more terrible it seems to us. To read in history of the terrible wars of the past seems not nearly so horrifying as to have war come right to our own doors where we are eyewitnesses of its terrible realities. Those who lived through and witnessed themselves the horrors of the Civil War never forgot them, but children who study about those things in the schools of today soon forget them. So it may be with those living fifty years from now who shall then read and study about this war now going on. It will not seem nearly so dreadful to them as to us who are living through it. Do not lose your faith in these troublous times. Nothing is occurring now but what has occurred many times before in the history of mankind. Just because we are living in the midst of it all does not necessarily mean these are the worst times that ever were. To be sure, battle lines are longer and cover vaster area than ever before; engines of war are more cunningly devised and more destructive than ever before; the list of the wounded and slain piles up by hundreds where it used to accumulate by tens. All this is true, and the vastness of it all stuns one into dumb amazement.

But when we pause to calmly estimate the causes that produced this war, and the aims for which the opponents are striving, we find there is nothing new under the sun; the same motives actuate men now that have moved them in similar combats, many, many times before. This is not a religious war at all. Let us not lose our heads and call it Armageddon, nor frantically conclude that our own beloved country is fighting the battle of the Lord. The Lord does not need anybody to fight his battles, and the advantage in being on the Lord's side is not that we can be such a great help to him, but that we are then able to witness his help of us. Those that came not up to the help of the Lord against the mighty were not condemned because the Lord needed their help and did not get it, but because they were not there to see how greatly the Lord helped his people against their foes. The United States, together with France and England, are simply fighting to resist the arrogance of Prussian autocracy, and to resist being in the future dominated and controlled by the German Empire. Our forefathers fought for freedom from England and secured it. We Americans love our liberty, and do not want to lose it in exchange for German rule, therefore we fight; that is all. No religion about it, nor is there any religious principle involved in it. A hundred years ago England threatened our freedom, and we fought. To-day Germany threatens us, and we fight. This time England helps us. A hundred years from now some other nation may try to dominate us, and we shall fight again. Then, who knows, Germany may be our helper. So goes the world from age to age. Nothing new under the sun, but only a repetition of what has already been. New elements may enter into the mixture, but the principle remains the same. It is natural for us to believe that our own country is in the right and that our enemy is wholly in the wrong; but God is the only impartial Judge, and the matter will end in the right way, whether it ends in our favor or not. England prays that she may win, we pray that we may win, Germany prays that she may win, and so on; but none of these prayers amount to anything only so far as we are enabled to say: Thy will, not ours, be done. The trouble with man, though, is that he does not want God's will to be done unless it happens to be the man's will, too. However, all unswayed by our fitful impulses, the consummation of the divine purpose goes grandly on. As sure as God is in heaven, righteousness and truth will triumph. Everything is all right now, and always will be all right as long as God is on the throne, and that is for evermore. The world seems to us to be dreadfully confused and upset, but there is no more chaos to-day than ever. Through all the seeming jar and discord, through all the noise and tumult, the harmony of God's will steadily runs its course. The history of Israel of old shows repeatedly how the Lord used war and the sword of her enemies to bring her down from her high-mindedness and to lay her in the dust of humiliation and repentance. It would seem that God is reproving the world for the way in which they have defied him in years gone by. Man has devised many inventions by which to save souls and bring them to God, thus setting at nought the blood of the Lamb of God, which alone can take away the sin of the world. Now their tower of Babel is tumbling about their ears, and the nations stagger to and fro like a drunken man in the ruin. The civilization about which the nations

boasted is crumbling into dust. In the place of the boasted ideal of universal brotherhood, which three years ago so dominated most thinking minds, now comes the roar and thunder of battle as men shed the blood of their fellow-men. The heathen have raged and the people have imagined a vain thing, and now God leaves them to the natural consequences of the seeds they have sown. The sum total of all the Sunday-schools, of all the missionaries, of all the theological seminaries, of all the grand cathedrals, of all the religious structure which man has reared, is war. The world thought it was out of the dark ages and done with them forever, when, lo, it finds itself back in their midst again. The world thought it had progressed a long way on the road to the millennium and the end of all strife, when, lo, its progress reveals itself as only so many more devilish ways to slay one another than had hitherto been thought of or devised. It is enough to make the saints laugh to see how deluded these mortals be; and yet is a laugh tinged with pity and compassion for these, our fellow-men, whose eyes God seems not to have opened to behold their folly and their shame. Some agnostics and infidels have been saying ever since this war commenced that there is no God and that this war proves it. They are mistaken. If there is no God, then there is no certainty as to where it will all end. If it is running rampant without omnipotence, then there is no security for any soul in all the universe. No, it only proves that false religion has not God. It only proves that the religion which man has reared will not bear the strain it was guaranteed to stand, and that therefore it is counterfeit, not genuine. Pure religion and undefiled need fear no stress or strain. It is unconquerable, and shines the brightest in adversity. The acid test of time reveals the falsity of man's boasted pride, but the religion of Jesus stands out and endures all and every test time or eternity shall apply to it. Have you that real religion? have I? Ah, that is the question of greatest import. All we can say is, we have a hope; nothing more. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder C. W. Vaughn.)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., May 30th, 31st and June 1st, 1917, to the several churches of which it is composed, greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been a long and standing custom to salute our association of churches and her correspondents by a Circular Letter, which we will endeavor to do by calling your attention to Paul's admonition to Timothy, which is recorded in the second epistle of Paul to Timothy, second chapter and fifteenth verse: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." The first of the quotation Paul says, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God." This admonition to Timothy was given in the Spirit, as all Scripture was given by the inspiration of God. So this is applicable to all those who are born of the Spirit, and for all brethren and sisters to be approved unto God is to be Christlike in their deliberations, in conversation, preaching and practice. There has never been but one that was approved unto God in every act and thought, which is Jesus Christ, because he was perfect, soul, body and spirit; but we are sinners in the flesh, and can-

not be perfect in this world, but we hope we are made perfect in Jesus Christ, who is able to make an ungodly sinner perfect before the Father. When one is thus born of the Spirit his meditation is in the law of the Lord day and night. (Psalms i. 2.) This to our mind is the exercise of the spirit that meditates upon those things which are of the Spirit, and by that Spirit the deep things of God are searched. For the church or individual brethren to be approved unto God is to be Christlike, desiring that all they do and say would be embraced by the spiritual application of the Old and New Testament and the exercise of a spiritual mind to be edified and built up on the most pure and holy faith. In this studying to be approved unto God we are continually meditating as to edification of the brethren in the body of Christ (the church). Study those things which work for peace and harmony among the brethren. Paul was addressing Timothy upon this all-important point that in the ministry which God had called him to fill should manifest the truth in spirit as it is in Christ Jesus. In the latter part of Paul's quotation, that Timothy should be a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, is much to be considered by all ministers of the Old School Baptist Church everywhere. In preaching declare the whole counsel of God in its season, in doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness; not in lust, that we should gain notoriety and have a great name with individuals, but stand as Christ stood, for nothing but the will of his Father; so should we stand to know nothing among the people but Jesus Christ and him crucified. Paul says to the Philippians, first chapter, fourteenth and fifteenth verses: "Many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife, and some also of good will." From the above quotation we feel that peace and good will should be our stand, with human boldness for the truth; not that we should tolerate ungodliness among brethren, but be approved unto God, and by these things we are known among the brethren. We cannot fathom all that is in the text, as it reaches into those things which are far above all earthly things. So in conclusion we wish to implore God in behalf of all the brethren we have addressed that we may be kept in godly fear that after we have preached to others we ourselves would not be a castaway, and be blessed to strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

J. M. FENTON, Moderator.
D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association convened with the Harford Church, Harford County, Maryland, May 16th, 17th and 18th, 1917.

IN THE LORD GREETING ONCE AGAIN: —We are beholding one of the many milestones of God's kind providence. Your messengers and messages have come to us sweetened and mellowed as with the lilies of the valley and the dews of heaven, so we can say it is good to be here. Our next association is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, at Baltimore, Md., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the third Sunday in May, 1918, when and where we hope to receive your messages and messengers again.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Moderator.
EDWARD A. JOHNSON, Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, N. J., May 30th, 31st and June 1st, 1917, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond sendeth greeting and love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED:—We are glad to write you that our gathering together has been blessed of the Lord. Preaching by the ministering brethren has been good, and attended with power and much assurance in the Holy Ghost. Our comfort and blessing cause us to desire to again meet you and be mutually comforted together.

Our next association is appointed to be held with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the first Sunday in June, 1918, when we hope to again meet and receive your ministers and messengers.

J. M. FENTON, Moderator.
D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. M. Fenton, at his residence, 5128 Master St., West Philadelphia, Pa., June 4th, 1917, Everett R. Kinney, of Schoharie, N. Y., and Aseneth C. Bishop, of Ashokan, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Turner Hanks Bond was born March 18th, 1848, and died March 7th, 1917. His whole life was spent in Anderson County, Ky., not far from his birthplace, with the exception of five years, during which time he lived in Missouri. December 25th, 1868, he was married to Miss Elizabeth F. Duncan. To that union were born four children: C. W. Bond, of La Grande, Oregon, Malinda F. Boggess, Mary J. Hanks and Vergie A. Routt, of Lawrenceburg, Ky. This wife died April 28th, 1876, during the residence in Missouri. After her death he moved with his children to his old home in Kentucky, where he was married the second time, in May, 1877, to Miss Alvia R. Hawkins. Three children were born to this second union: Bettie R. Houchin, Florella H. Chilton and Mattie L. Bond, all of Lawrenceburg, Ky., who resided near their father, the youngest, being unmarried, lived with him. The second wife died in June, 1913. October 11th, 1916, he was married to Miss Jennie A. Gibson, who survives him. He was taken with a severe chill on the morning of March 1st, and the third day pneumonia developed. From the beginning but little hope was entertained of his recovery, but the best of medical attention was given him. During the first hours of his sickness he gave directions for completing some unfinished business should his illness prove fatal. Before his sickness he was as well prepared for meeting death as man can be while in good health. No business which could have been arranged was found incomplete, and it can truthfully be said that his house was in order when he was called away. He suffered intensely during most of his illness, but bore it in patience and without complaint. Almost every breath was a groan or a prayer until death relieved him. Around his bed at the end were all his children and several friends, who had done what they could. Even the unworthy writer had been led three thousand miles to add to the joys of the last days of his worthy father and to minister to him in death, to share his sorrow with the bereaved family and also to speak words of consolation to them, pointing to better things in the heavenly home. As a man, father was upright, honest and honorable in all his dealings, having the confidence and esteem of all his neighbors and friends. He was a good husband and kind father. During his residence in Missouri he and his first wife united with the "Christian Church," and for a long time he believed they were correct in their doctrine, but as

he grew older he began to see the Old School Baptists were the people holding to the doctrine of the Bible, and he became a regular attendant at their services and rejoiced in the proclamation of the gospel in its purity.

Elder L. B. Ragan, of Indianapolis, Ind., his favorite minister, was called to preach the funeral discourse, which he did to the comfort of the family and friends, using the text, "I am the resurrection and the life." The remains were laid to rest in the Lawrenceville Cemetery, beside his second wife.

C. W. BOND.

B. F. Culpepper was born May 22nd, 1835, and married to J. F. Walterman July 6th, 1865, in Dale County, Ala. To that union were born eight children, six girls and two boys, two boys and two girls preceding him in death, leaving four daughters to survive him: Mrs. Florence Sanders, Mrs. D. Reece, Mrs. S. E. Smith and Mrs. M. C. Barber. Some time during the year 1874 brother and sister Culpepper received a hope in Christ, and about a year later joined the church of the Predestinarian faith and order at Mt. Pelia, in Henry Co., Ala., and were baptized by Elder Hubbard, of Georgia. He lived a consistent member, always filling his seat when not providentially hindered, and went far and near to associations and meetings. In 1879 he and his family moved to Upshur County, Texas, and joined the church at Bluff Spring, where his membership was at the time of his death, which occurred March 25th, 1917. The church at Bluff Spring has sustained a great loss, but we hope her loss is his eternal gain. Brother Culpepper was a staunch believer in the sovereignty of God in controlling all things whatsoever come to pass. Surely a good man in Israel has fallen.

His remains were laid to rest in the Walnut Creek Cemetery to await the resurrection morn.

Written by request.

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

Deacon Elisha H. Drake was born near Lambertville, N. J., June 9th, 1843. He was married to Lucretia Phillips Feb. 22nd, 1865. She bore him five children, viz.: Dr. Hervey S. Drake and Mrs. Mary L. Carter, of Leesburg, Va., Wm. O. Drake, of Linvale, N. J., Margaret E. Christopher, of Trenton, N. J., and Joseph G. Drake, of Hopewell, N. J. She died in 1886. There are twelve grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. After passing six years of life as a widower he was married to Miss Martha Elizabeth Blackwell, April 23rd, 1891. She and five children survive him, together with their children and grandchildren to mourn their loss. He was received in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Second Hopewell, and baptized at the August meeting in 1869 by Elder Philander Hartwell. His life in his home was a continued course of affection to his companion and children, which is a type of true manhood. His life in the church was one of true devotion to the doctrine of salvation by grace, and expressed that power of hope in the resurrection of the dead, not of the soul only, but soul, body and spirit to a glorious inheritance through Jesus Christ, which he was called from hence unto March 17th, 1917. He served the church as clerk and deacon, and his work was complete to the satisfaction of the church. We miss him both in church and state, but should not weep as though he had no hope, but say, Rest on, dear one.

The funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder C. W. Vaughn, from his late residence at Woodsville, and his body laid to rest in the cemetery adjoining the Second Hopewell Church to await the time when the grave shall give up its dead.

He was the last male member of his church, and there is a little band of five sisters left to contend for the true salvation of sinners. Little sister, lift up your eyes unto the hills, and rejoice in Him who is able of these stones to raise them up to speak to the honor and glory of his grace. Words are too shallow to express our feelings regarding the deceased and the commendation we feel to the living. To the children I wish to say, Forget not to express your love to the one who took the responsibilities of mother to you, and may you feel she is left entirely alone without you.

Written by his pastor,

CHARLES W. VAUGHN.

Marietta Dickerson, of Wheelerville, Pa., widow of Harvey D. Dickerson and daughter of Everett and Amy Shaddock, died April 17th, 1917, aged 84 years, 5 months and 15 days. She leaves behind to mourn, not for her, but themselves, two brothers, two sisters, seven children, nine grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. I think she was baptized by Elder Beeman, joining the Canton and Columbia Old School Baptist Church more than sixty years ago. Sister Dickerson had lived with her children since the death of her husband, and had all of the kind and tender care of loving hands of her children until God took her to himself in glory. She was a loving, faithful mother, neighbor, friend and christian, sound and clear in every principle of eternal truth. God bless the dear ones left behind with living grace and faith to lay hold upon his precious promise; I will not leave you comfortless. I was in Canada at the time of her death, so could not be with them, but I spoke to the friends May 24th, at Wheelerville, where she died.

D. M. VAIL.

Mrs. Hephzibah Keene died May 24th, 1917, at the home of her son, Elder Frederick W. Keene, North Berwick, Maine.

Mrs. I. A. I. C. Woodford departed this life at the home of her son, Arlie D. Woodford, near the old homestead, aged nearly 61 years, having been born Sept. 27th, 1856. She was married Sept. 27th, 1877, on her 21st birthday, to L. D. Woodford, who died Sept. 9th, 1886, leaving her with three small children and one unborn, the oldest not quite seven. Shortly after his death her parents requested her to come back home, which she did, as she felt the need of help in rearing her children. In 1895 death took her sainted mother, whom she loved so well, and in 1900 her dear old father, James W. Corder, was stricken with paralysis, and was helpless for six weeks, when he, too, passed away. She was afflicted with rheumatism for fifteen or eighteen years, but bore her suffering without murmuring. She spent practically her whole life in caring for her parents and children, and in entertaining her church, which was a great pleasure to her. She underwent a severe operation, but expressed herself as perfectly reconciled to her fate; that her God would direct the knife. She was strong in the belief of the absolute predestination of all things, and the Scriptures were her guide. Sister Woodford leaves four children, two brothers and one sister to mourn their loss. May the good Lord sustain them.

Written by her pastor,

S. A. CLEAVENGER.

Mrs. Sallie M. Bartley, wife of the late Elder David Bartley, was born in Clark County, Va., and died in Montgomery, Ala., May 19th, 1917, aged 78 years. She was the daughter of Archibald and Margaret Bowen. In early life she united with the Old School Baptist Church near Bloomington, Ill., and was baptized by Elder J. H. Ring. After the death of her husband she made her home with me, often spending the winter in the south, where she was when taken sick, having gone from here in February. On receipt of the first telegram my daughter went immediately, and cared for her until the end, taking her body to Bloomington, Ill., the family home, for burial. She was a firm believer in the predestination of all things, was well versed in the Scriptures, and with her last breath gave God all the glory of her salvation.

In much sorrow, her sister,

NELIA M. STARTZMAN.

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MEETINGS.

THE Lord willing, there will be a meeting held with the Beulah Old School Baptist Church in their meetinghouse near Aberfeldy, Ont., the third Saturday and Sunday in June (16th and 17th). Conference and business meeting 4 p. m. Saturday; preaching on Sunday 11 a. m. and 3:30 p. m. All are welcome who desire precious love and fellowship to abound in the church of Jesus Christ.

ARCHIE McALPINE, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church meeting at Vega, Delaware Co., N. Y., will, Providence permitting, hold a two days meeting on the fourth Sunday in June, and Saturday before. We extend a cordial invitation to brethren and friends to meet with us.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 85. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1917. NO. 13.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE MORE EXCELLENT WAY.

"BUT covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way." These gifts which the apostle has been dwelling upon at length are excellent, having been received by the Savior when he ascended up on high, having led captivity captive, and they were all given to the church for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

The apostle has by divine authority given him as an apostle set these gifts in order in the church; they must therefore be excellent; as the gifts of God no fault can be found with them. The church in which they are manifested is called "the perfection of beauty." What, then, can be the "more excellent way"? The Savior and his apostles have given all necessary instruction concerning the church, order, place and work. In gifts there is one glorious and divine principle which gives to each one of them all of its true value, power and beauty, and that is charity, and charity may well be defined as the love of God dwelling in the life and conversation; as a firm, unchangeable principle in the soul and a divine emotion in the life, rising up through all the mystery of our being with an overcoming power, breaking through the coarse elements of our sinful nature and going forth in the holy actings of our spiritual desires. This is the true love of God, making itself felt in our own souls, and making its constant drawings felt and known by others in whom the same love exists; this is charity. I can no more describe it than I can describe the fragrant atmosphere which I breathe with comfort and delight, or the glorious sunshine which fills my being with joy. Aside from this sweetest and most divine principle there is nothing truly desirable in all this world of sin and sorrow. When the dear Savior, and the holy men of old inspired by the Holy Spirit, speak concerning this subject, their language seems most wonderfully to answer the needs of my soul.

When the apostle tells us to "covet earnestly the best gifts," I do not understand him to be appealing to our am-

bition, or any other selfish principle of our natural hearts, which are deceitful and desperately wicked, but to that principle which says, Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and which also says, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Those who are moved by this principle will be found truly humble, but no true minister will ever, or seldom, have to say to a church, I am the gift you need. Every church will be able to answer the questions as to gifts sent to them, when they are looking to the Lord for instruction. How good and how pleasant it is to see brethren of a church dwelling together in unity with all their members, and all their gifts in exercise and in gospel peace and order. "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." There is also danger here in the exercise of our minds in regard to gifts and gospel work; we may have and give a taste of the earthen vessel. How thoroughly and lovingly the apostle has gone over this ground in the preceding chapters, endeavoring to show how needful it is that brethren endeavor so to walk as to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," and to keep in remembrance that in this gospel walk the apostle has sweetly assured the saints that the peace of God, which passeth understanding, shall keep their hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

I do not understand from the Scriptures that superior learning or eloquence, or natural attractiveness of any kind, is necessary to a spiritual gift; nor does it appear to me that such gifts as the apostle tells us in chapter fourteen to desire are to be obtained by any human power. Spiritual mindedness characterizes all such gifts; and the best gifts we find with some degree of our old nature about them in their manifestation, so that in giving instruction concerning them exhortations and admonitions and reproofs are needed by the apostle. Their usefulness is in proportion to the power of the Holy Spirit working in them. The one who is exercised by these gifts finds himself more or less hampered by the hindrances of his old nature, whose evil propensities are making themselves felt even in his best and most divine work. This is manifest by the apostle, as we read in the two preceding chapters, eleven and twelve. Now if the love of God can be felt in the heart and manifest in the heart and in the life in its fullness, these hindrances of the flesh would disappear. The apostle indicates the possibility of this in many places, and especially in Ephesians iii. 17–19. Here he prays most wonderfully that the saints might so know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that they might be filled with all the fullness of God. This appears to me to be the "more excellent way."

The apostle begins to consider this more excellent way, and gives a description of it by showing the destitution of it. A sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal are brought to us, and we are asked to listen to the music they produce. Whatever kind of sounds they might produce, we are sure the apostle intended to represent by them sounds most harsh and disagreeable, from which the true musician would turn away. There may be some to whom the sounds produced upon the sounding brass and the tinkling cymbal are agreeable, but upon our ears they grate harshly; and though to some the tongues which address us appear as the tongues of angels singing, and are declared by some to be most exquisitely beautiful, to us there is no melody at all in them. Wealth and worldly glory may

be in them, but what we want is not there. What we want, charity, is not in the most musical of those sounds. The heart from which the sounds come forth is not moved to make them by the love of God, charity is not in them. What we want is Christ dwelling in the heart by faith, and there is no sound of the kind in any of these brass instruments. What we want are tongues that sing such songs as the angels sang in the heavens above to the shepherds keeping their flocks by night: "Glory to God in the highest," and there are no such sweet sounds of salvation by grace in all the hired music we hear of a worldly kind. "They invent to themselves instruments of music like David," but there is no sound or word of salvation in them to the praise of the glorious name of Jesus. The sounding brass and tinkling cymbals cannot mix their gross sounds with the notes of true music. There can be no coming together of the false and the true in any degree. The Leader of the heavenly choir will at once point out the false sound, and the least of the true company will at once see that the Savior's voice is not there. My sheep, he says, hear my voice. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."

The next thing in showing the more excellent way is to suppose one possessed of the gift of prophecy, and having all knowledge and all mysteries and all faith, so one could remove mountains, and yet has not charity, that one is nothing. It is understood that there is no true charity here, although there appears to be best of knowledge and understanding and such appearance of faith. Pride and ambition and every selfish propensity are built upon learning and extensive mental acquirements, and great things of the highest intellectual character and worldly fame are sought for by us as most desirable, but if charity be not present as the incentive moving us in every step of the way, we are nothing. What close discriminating work there must be for us to do in searching our hearts, and what a wonder it is that in each case those who have charity are the very ones who fear they have not.

The work of showing the "more excellent way" goes on, and Christ in the saint by faith is still shown to us as the only way, the only true knowledge, the only excellence. Christ, who ascended far above all heavens, that he might fill all things, is forever the Way, the Truth and the Life. What close work is given us here, and yet how sweet it is.

Now the natural sympathies are appealed to, the feelings are touched. "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor." Can this be done and the act not be moved by the charity which is alone for the honor and glory of God? Can it be that a man could do such helpful things, such kind things, and not be moved to do them by charity, by the love of God? Yes, the apostle puts it stronger: "Though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." If one should be induced to believe that by any religious authority, or with the idea that thereby he would obtain fame, he should obtain fame, it would profit him nothing. Much good may be done to those around us, much help rendered to the poor, much instruction of a natural kind given to those who need and desire it, in all of which the love of God does not appear. Whenever charity is present to its full

extent, then the power and presence of the fullness of God are experienced, and the work of his grace appears, and man is lost sight of; then the church is seen standing in the truth, and walking in gospel order, and self is lost sight of; then every one is thinking, not only on his own things, but each one also on the things of others. Here charity is fully felt and seen. This is the "more excellent way." (Phil. ii. 4.)

"Charity suffereth long, and is kind." Here are a few words which are most sweet and comforting merely to read. They begin the most wonderful description of charity, of its appearance and character and its effect, that can be found anywhere. We think of one forsaken by all, and perhaps despised justly. While all his acquaintances avoid him, there is one who still suffers long and shows wonderful kindness. His true and faithful charity constrains him to show the kindness he feels. In his own case charity never faileth. The apostle undoubtedly has the dear Savior in his mind as he refers to the abiding nature of charity, as he was pressed down under the terrible weight of his people's sins and was despised and rejected of men. He suffered long with them, and expressed his kindness and tender care of them to the very last; and the holy charity, and tender care toward them, is the same as that manifested toward his people to-day. It never faileth, and therefore they are not consumed. And that same tender and abiding love in the hearts of his people to-day constrains them to acts of obedience and kindness toward others.

If the Lord will, I will express some thoughts concerning the after part of this chapter.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May 27, 1917.

LUKE VI. 26.

"WOE unto you when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets."

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—The reading of your miscellaneous editorial in the SIGNS for May 15th was so blessed to me that the Holy Spirit brought to my memory things of years ago, an experience which was given to me in connection with the Scripture quoted above. This morning brother Fisher came along in the SIGNS for June 1st and told me that it was the sun which made manifest that which I then saw, and that very dark evening was one part of the day over which the sun ruled. I feel just like telling you and him and any others who have traveled in this varied pathway a little of that experience, provided it is fit for the SIGNS.

In the early days of my ministry I had not much experience in the doctrine of the Scriptures. I spoke on experience, exhortations, admonitions and such like. I fully believed, and yet believe, what I then taught. The people of all denominations seemed to like me, and spoke well of me. I received many invitations from them to go and preach in their meetinghouses, schoolhouses and sometimes in their homes. I had not had any convictions of what all this led to. In the year 1882 I was elected to represent the county in the State Legislature. I was poor and needy, and felt that the salary from that office would help me much, and it did financially. I served the term and came home in March, 1883. A few days later I was reading, and read the Scripture I have quoted. I had read it many times before, for I had read every word in the New Testament six times as I would read any other book, but that was a new word which I had never noticed. It went like a dagger to my poor

heart. I stopped and read it again. It was true that the Lord had passed a woe on me. I was the very man he had spoken of, and I knew it. I saw that I could not hide my emotions from my wife and children (for we had only one room to our house and we were all in that), therefore I laid the book down, and without a word to any one went across a little branch to our garden. There I wept and begged the Lord for mercy. The woe was in me, and I could not get away from it. The more I thought of it the more I knew the truth of that text. I could not think of a time that any Arminian had spoken a word against my doctrine, and I knew that that was the point. What I suffered for nearly six months I shall never tell any one. As the days went by the woe grew heavier and the darkness thicker. To add to it it appeared to me that I received more invitations to preach among them than ever before, and they spoke more approvingly of my ministry. All this was a continual death to me, for that word, "Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you," had filled my heart, and it now was packed in and running over, and at times it felt like bursting. I did not see any way out of this trouble and darkness. I was preaching what I believed; I wanted to be courteous and kind to every one; I could not purposely speak insultingly to make myself hateful; I could not tell them abruptly that I would not go and preach, nor tell them that their words were such a thorn in me, and there was no other field of thought opened up to me. There I was, and there I had to stay. That experience has been one thing which taught me the falsity of "conditional time salvation." During those months of absolute darkness the churches were prosperous, and I think I baptized more in the fellowship of the churches than in any other six months of my ministry. But all this was no comfort to me; I was a body full of death. I fully concluded in my mind that I would ask the church to exclude me; not because I did not love the church, nor because I wanted to be away from her, but because I felt that my very presence with the brethren was defiling to them. They looked the more beautiful and lovely to me as I saw so much death and corruption in myself. I told my dear companion, mother and sister of my determination. Wife was not then a member, but she said, "Now, Lemmie, you know what you have suffered about preaching, and I have seen and felt some of it. I do not ever want to hear you say again that you are going to leave the church nor quit preaching. Just go on and do your duty and behave yourself." Mother tried to comfort me, and sister cried. They were both members, but none of them knew of the woe that was in my heart. The day of our meeting came. I walked twelve miles that morning to the meeting. It was in the month of August. As I came in sight of the meetinghouse I saw the people all gathered together in front of the house, a lovely band of people. I felt that I would be a black speck among them. Something appeared to say, What have they gathered here for? Then the question was answered: To hear the word of the Lord at your mouth. Something appeared to say again, And you are going to leave them to-day; where are you going? Quicker than I can say it my mind took in all the religious sects I knew, and not one of them could I live with, because I did not believe them to be the church of God, and I could not believe their way. I could not go back to the world, I could not

stay there when I was there. These crossings were so great in my mind, if it had not been playing the part of the coward I would have taken to the woods, and no one would have known that I had been near there that day. But I went on and tried to preach, and they appeared to enjoy a pleasant meeting. I did not have the courage to carry out my determination, and spoke again Sunday and went home with my burden yet weighing me down. Twenty miles below me a brother lived with no Primitive Baptists except himself and his wife anywhere near. He had made an appointment for me near his home for Wednesday night before the fourth Sunday in August. On Monday morning as I awoke the words came, "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Those words came just as I have given them, but there was no light in them to me. As the day passed on they became a burden to me. They revolved in my mind constantly, but there was no meaning to them. This continued on Tuesday and Wednesday. Wednesday night I got to the appointment in a new Methodist meeting-house. When I got up to speak I read John vi. 39, but there was no light except just a little space, and then a wall was there. I began to talk in that little space, and the wall began to go before me, and that little space of light to fill up. This continued during the sermon of forty-five minutes. As a point in the text would open up in me so beautifully and my tongue would be so sweetly loosed to speak of things spiritual, some clear illustration of things in nature would be given to me to clear the matter in plain language. I will say that never before nor since have I spoken with sweeter liberty than on that occasion. When I had finished the woe was gone, and from that time I have never had the occasion to feel that woe for the same cause, for that sermon turned the tide of praise to hatred and bitterness because of the doctrine which so clearly opened up to me at that time. There I learned and have continued to learn that doctrine comes up to us out of very deep places, wherein all our natural powers of wisdom and knowledge are swallowed up, and we are shown our inability to attain to any place where we may obtain them. With this experience I am yet dependent, and have to go down under the mighty hand of the Lord and be tried before I am raised up to an understanding of the deep places. We do not have to do wrong to get into those places, but the Lord puts us there to purge us from our old sins and make us meet for the Master's use.

This letter is long, and I will stop. The Lord bless you.

Your brother, I hope,

L. H. HARDY.

ATLANTIC, N. C., May 31, 1917.

WINNIPEG, Man., May 18, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I feel a desire to write to you; whether it is a spiritual desire or not is known to the Lord. I am often deceived. When I talk of spiritual things, or write, I am conscious of the necessity of divine guidance. At times thoughts come to me unbidden, but often also my mind is stirred up and caused to meditate by the conversation or writings of others who are spiritually minded. I find our dear pastor very profitable to me in bringing to my remembrance and opening up to me many sweet gospel truths. He never deals with a subject as if he would finish it conclusively, but opens up the word in

such a way as to cause us to consider. Last week he spoke from the one hundred and third Psalm. In the first verse: "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name," he brought out the thought, "Christ in you" so beautifully, showing the source of praise, of righteousness and everlasting mercy. I wish you could know each other; he enjoys your writings so much.

The subject I have in mind to write you about is how Satan appears as a master counterfeiter, displaying such cunning as to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. (Matthew xxiv. 24.) Even the glorious attributes of the Godhead, in which we rejoice, have been so artfully perverted as to become a snare and stumbling-block to many. Antinomianism is the devil's counterfeit of predestination; let us beware of it. Predestination is neither an excuse for sin nor a shelter for our sins. If one is ordained to destruction what shelter has he in God's predestination? Here lies the fallacy of antinomianism. We must be partakers of our Lord Jesus Christ, embraced in the covenant of God's grace. Here is the refuge of the saints. The steadfastness of this covenant is assured us in the glorious attributes of the Godhead. His omnipotence, foreknowledge, immutability and absolute predestination are sureties of his covenant. Without these attributes the covenant would be in danger of nonfulfillment. (Hebrews vi. 16–18.) Satan is apt at quoting Scripture. With what effrontery he addressed the Lord: "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." Was not this Scripture truly quoted? But what said the Lord? "Get thee hence, Satan." Let us take heed, and never receive a suggestion, even couched in words of truth, from the adversary. Peter was rebuked for his zeal when Satan used him as a mouthpiece. How the archenemy misapplies Scripture. Even on the cross he taunted, "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." The poor disciples, overcome by things they could not understand for lack of faith, lamented: "We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." Satan was at work as usual. How often in these awful times we hear comparisons of the death of men on the battlefield with the death of Christ. They truly make a great personal sacrifice, take great risks of death in the interests of victory, but their death is a loss, not a gain. If they die their usefulness in the field is finished; they gain by killing, not by dying. But with our Lord, the victory was in his death. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?" Satan prompts, "We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." "For this cause came I unto this hour." How little we hear of the virtue of his atoning blood, the necessity of his death that we might live, but that is the keynote to the understanding of the gospel. Again, let us consider prayer, the vital breathing of the heaven-born soul. Satan tells us to make merchandise of it, and quotes, "Ye have not because ye ask not." How many a poor heaven-born soul has grieved at this misapplied suggestion. Will we who have health and comforts boast over that poor soul who in affliction and dire want cries out to the Lord? Is it in vain? God

forbid. Let us read the full epistle of James and meditate, and not entertain Satan as an interpreter of Scripture. "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." "Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat?" &c. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness." Read the epistle of James and see if it does not say the same thing. What of the prayer of the Pharisee and the publican? True prayer is an evidence of spiritual life. The new-born soul cries out to God, and there is no limitation on that cry. But Satan comes along with his counterfeit, which any man may use, formal prayer. Will God respect it? It is an offence to him, a stench in his nostrils. Can we have everything we want for the asking? Is that the office of prayer? "Be content with such things as you have." "The little that a righteous man hath." How beautifully our dear pastor was led to emphasize that little until it seemed to comprehend eternity. "Christ in you." What more can we want? Although the fig tree shall not blossom, &c., yet will I rejoice in the Lord. Why did Elijah pray that it should not rain? Was he to derive personal benefit? No; it was because the Spirit of the Lord moved him to do so, that the Lord might fulfill his purpose against Israel. Let the children of God pray naturally, not formally—pray as they breathe, knowing that the only prayer that avails is that indited by the Spirit of God in the heart. "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet." Prayer is a secret, sacred thing not to be advertised or made much ado of before men. Some good men I believe have erred in this. Boast not of your power in prayer. Paul had to pray in weakness, in humiliation, and had to suffer the buffets of Satan still. Think not that any of us are better able to pray than Paul. Be not puffed up. This, dear brother, has not any personal significance, as I know you, even as myself, have learned these truths, but I speak to God's children who may be led away by false teaching. Our Lord himself would not give the people the sign or demonstration they wanted. If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe though one rise from the dead. To his own chosen witnesses he appeared, and they believed, being filled with the Spirit, but the world remained in unbelief. Do not think that I despise prayer; it is my very life itself. Would that we were more given to prayer. I believe a knowledge of the perversion of this precious gift has caused many to neglect it. Do not let Satan rob you of such a wonderful provision of God's grace. Pray always. Meet together for prayer; but pray in the spirit, not formally, pray for the things of the kingdom, not for the satisfying of your lusts; pray as God gives you utterance.

Dear brother, I hope you will not be weary of this long letter. God bless you with his richest mercies in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Affectionately your brother,

GILBERT McCOLL.

DUTTON, Ontario, Dec. 20, 1916.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—Many times I feel so beneath the dear children of God that I wonder if I belong to them or not; but the dear Lord knows them that are his, and not one will be left. His work is a perfect work. What a comforting thought! O what worthless worms we are! Well might David say, What is man? Surely none was ever so vile as I

am—the very end of the world, a particle of corruption, and still I know I am walking in the path ordered before time began. Now this is not what I intended to write when I started. You wanted me to write what I felt the dear Lord has done for me; the many things he has set before me to comfort and cheer my poor, weary soul when down in the deep. The first I began to wonder was when father was sick. I was thirteen years old. I had never heard him say much, and began to wonder how he felt. At last I asked him if he was afraid to die. He said, No, and that was a comfort to me, but I began to think about myself; I felt I would be afraid. When somewhere between fourteen and fifteen I was sitting on grandmother's doorstep, and a bird flew in one of the highest trees and sang with these words: Are you weary, are you heavy laden? Tell it to Jesus alone. I asked grandmother if she heard that bird. She heard it sing, but no words. Well, I can never tell just how I felt; it was sweet to me. Grandmother never said much to me about those things. Many a night I laid beside her, listening to her singing and praising the dear Lord, when she thought I was asleep. I loved to hear her, and was afraid to say anything to her for fear it might stop her. To-day it is the same with myself. At night when everything is still I feel so near the blessed One I hate to go to sleep; I do not want to leave Him. My very heart leaps within when I think of the name Jesus. Some time after I heard the bird I had a dream. I was going through a very crooked path, full of picks and briars and thistles. All at once a bright light shone in front of me, and a voice said, Follow me, I will take you through. When I heard the voice I thought it was Elder Vail. At that time I had never seen Elder Vail, and it was about two years later when he preached in Dunwich Church, and I thought all he said was for me. That was the first sermon I enjoyed, and have always had love for Elder Vail, although I have not met him very often. About thirteen years ago, coming from Ekfrid in June, I was thinking about the good preaching and myself, when these words were spoken as if some one was by my side:

> I am the first, and I the last;
> Time centers all in me;
> The almighty Lord, who was, and is,
> And evermore shall be.

From then until a year ago last May I was here and there, sometimes happy and sometimes sad; and from a year ago last May until last May words cannot tell how condemned I felt, not fit for anything or anybody. I felt if the dear Lord would only show me that my sins were not as many as I could see them I could be happy like others. Our next meeting was in June, 1915. Brother Maddock was baptized, and it was a glorious sight while our dear pastor and he were in the water; the angels of heaven appeared to be hovering over their heads, and the words that came to my mind were: I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes. This was Saturday afternoon. Sunday afternoon our dear pastor preached. He took for his text: And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new, &c. Dear Elder Fenton, I do not know of anything that affected me so; it was a wonderful sermon to me. Last May at our last meeting I came before the church to ask a place among them, and was received, and four weeks later was baptized. The Sunday of my baptism I could hardly wait; I felt the time so long. It was a

lovely bright day, and the water was lovely. That was one happy day for me; I was like a bird let loose, and after all this I sometimes am left to wonder if it is all imagination. Of course Satan will try to make me think so; he has many ways to try us to accomplish his work. I believe all the dear children of God know what it is to go to war daily, else they would not want a captain, and Jesus is the Captain of their salvation.

Now I must close, as I feel I will weary you reading so much, although I feel I have not written half. Words cannot express, language is too weak to tell the true story of Jesus and his love to poor sinners. I cannot forget the last October meeting; I did enjoy that meeting; I always loved your preaching. Often since reading "The Macedonian Cry," which Elder Lefferts wrote on in the SIGNS, I think of that October meeting. He said Paul did not invite the maiden or coax her to follow him or join the church. Truly, I thought, you are men of the most high God, who shew unto us the way of salvation.

MARGARET HALES.

HERNDON, Va., June 13, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I will try this morning to write you some of the things Miss Sarah Jane Cockrill said to me soon after I went to see her in February. She asked what we Baptists believe, and before I could reply she began to tell me her belief in predestination, election, and in the unity of Christ and his church. It sounded good to me, for it was the first I knew of any spiritual exercise of her mind, and I told her that I felt she and I were drawn together by stronger ties than natural relationship. At that there was such an expression on her face, past my power of telling you. At another time, as she had strength, she said it had been many years, yes, twenty years, since the world had had no charms for her. She had been deprived of going to hear the preaching she loved, and could not feed on any other, so would stay at home, where she hoped she had sweet meditations, if she could dare claim them as such. She was a lovely character, very gentle and unassuming, a sly Bible reader, and loved to read the SIGNS. There were many things in that paper good to her. She often said she did not want to shrink from pain, that Job did not murmur, that the Savior's flesh was tortured worse than hers, and that she deserved it all. As her strength would return after severe spells of coughing, I would hear her beg the Lord to be kept from being rebellious at her affliction. One day she said, How much longer will this last? I replied that I hoped it would not be much longer, if it were the Lord's will. She said, I have prayed many times for the end, and then would feel I had done wrong and beg for pardon. The morning she died her sister came into the room and said that if she, the sick one, were strong enough to go where it was quiet, it might do her good. The sick replied, I want to go to a home of a never-ending day, to where a merciful and unchangeable God assigns me; he never errs. Then she turned to me and said so many hymns were passing through her mind. One was: "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep." About three hours before she died she asked me to read your editorial of June 1st. She failed in strength before I had finished reading it to her. She fell asleep at 3 p. m. Sunday.

I have written the above in a blundering way, but hope you can get something out of it.

Your little sister, I hope,

NANCY HUTCHISON.

(*See obituary notice on page 308.*)

SALVATION BY GRACE.

"THEN said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe."—John iv. 48.

Is this the truth with all men? Jesus said this to "a certain nobleman, whose son was sick." Is it a fact that no sinner can believe on Jesus "except ye see signs and wonders"? Would we believe this Scripture to-day, this word that Jesus spoke to this man, had we not seen "signs and wonders"? I am tempted to say we would not, yet can I claim to have seen signs and wonders? Did we ever get the joy of the truth of one passage of Scripture until we had seen signs and wonders? and is that salvation by grace? We see natural things by the effect of the rays of light from the sun being reflected from the object we see into the eye, and acts upon the nerve which goes to the brain, or mind. The cause then is the external light entering into our organ of sight and making the impression upon our natural mind, involuntary on our part, so far as the effect is concerned. So we cannot believe except we see those things as pictured in the natural eye. Jesus is speaking of the belief in Christ. This "certain nobleman" had a son he loved, and who was very sick, for he said to Jesus, "Sir, come down ere my child die." This carries the thought that the only hope was in Jesus; meaning, If you do not come, there is no salvation, and if you wait too long my son will die. The father was not looking to other help, no man's power. But he was not sure that Christ would save. Christ knew the man's mind and desire, his doubts and fears. "Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth." "And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way." The man seemed to hope if Christ would come to the child he would heal him, but when he saw and heard Jesus say, "Go thy way; thy son liveth," that was wonderful. He spoke with authority and assurance. He saw it was not needful that the Savior should make the journey, but just speak peace, and he believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him. The word was life: "Thy son liveth." He believed that far. But he met his servants, and they told him the same; then he asked what hour he began to amend. When they said, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him," the father believed more still, for he knew that it was the same hour in which Jesus had said unto him, "Thy son liveth." Had he not seen "signs and wonders"? Then he not only believed that his son lived, but that it was by Christ's own words as spoken to him, for it was at the same hour that the fever left him, and Christ had told him so. The testimony of all the witnesses proved beyond a single doubt that the Lord spoke the very words of salvation by grace, a free gift, and his whole house believed. Why was that? They had seen "signs and wonders." All the faithful believers we read of in the Bible, from Abel down to the last writing of Revelation, have believed through "signs and wonders." Spiritual believers believe by the light in the eye of faith; they believe on invisible things, seeing by faith as though they were. Did not Paul see "signs and wonders" which his fellow-travelers could not see? and Peter on the housetop? Cornelius in a vision? By this Peter learned that God was no respecter of persons. Did Jonah see signs and wonders before he believed? What made him believe "salvation is of the Lord"? Just what it takes to make us believe on Christ Jesus. O, belief is easy with "signs and wonders," but try just once without. But

is this salvation by grace? I will leave the reader to say. I learned long ago that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is among the strongest advocates of salvation by grace, and I have no desire to write anything which will deny that theme. I would love to see that doctrine more popular, even with the Baptists. The blind man could see that when his eyes were opened, he could see the sign and the wonder; even so can we when our eyes are opened. But all men have not faith, for some are yet blind to the way of salvation. Signs and wonders are so necessary to a belief in Christ that no child of God desiring fellowship in his church can come in by the door into the sheepfold "except ye see signs and wonders." Each one must bring those signs and wonders with them; they must tell something of how God has worked with and upon them, and so changed their mind, and give a reason of their hope in Christ. Those signs and wonders must necessarily be outside of man's power; they must be peculiarly of God, for this is the meaning of Christ's words to the man whose son was sick. This man must see something in Christ and his works that he had not seen in any other man, or he could never believe in his power of salvation; it must be miraculous and supernatural. If it were only man's power it would not be wonderful and could not reach the case. So the church of God must have this kind of testimony, the evidence of "signs and wonders," in every approaching sinner unto her table; they must live of the crumbs that fall from the Master's table. No one ever saw the "signs and wonders" of God's salvation but what loved the free grace plan. Would you think of the poor, sorrowing father, after he had fully enjoyed the healing of his son, as wishing for a better way of salvation? No, vanish the thought. "Go thy way; thy son liveth," was good enough for him. Is it not good enough for you?

My only hope. E. G. WEBB.

CULLISON, Kansas.

BALTIMORE, Md., April 6, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I am renewing my subscription, which is over due, will try to cast in my mite, if the dear Lord will direct me. The words found in Matthew vii. 1–3, have been on my mind for some time, which read as follows: "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" Our Savior in this sermon was teaching his disciples the way in which they should go, and it was put on record for the instruction of the Lord's people in all ages to come. In the preceding chapter he tells them, Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all needful things shall be added unto you. Jesus says, God is the Judge, and his is righteous judgment. He says, Love ye one another, and we are told that love hideth a multitude of sins. Now he tells us, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." If we love one another with a true love we should not be too ready to judge each other, for no one of us is perfect, no, not one. Jesus is teaching the disciples that they see the failings, which are trifling, and do not see the imperfections in themselves, though they are many. Brethren, when we are led by the flesh we are like unto the Pharisee, but when we are led by the Spirit we esteem our brethren better than ourselves; then we are worshiping God

in spirit and in truth; then we can say with the publican, Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner. Brethren, this judgment here spoken of has caused more strife among the Baptists than anything else; some have put up bars of fellowship, and no doubt are sorry, and would like to resume correspondence with those same people. Now comes the time that they will have the same judgment meted out to them again, but it is as Jesus has told them it should be; they were imperfect themselves, but did not see their errors or the beam in their own eye, but tried to pick the mote out of their brother's eye; they disobeyed the express command of the Savior, which was worse than differing on some point of doctrine. Jesus says, If ye love me, keep my commandments. The apostle Paul tells the difference between the works of the flesh and the works of the Spirit. All things in the church pertaining toward strife in the church are the fruit of the flesh. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vainglory, provoking one another, envying one another. Dear brethren, the teaching of the apostle here is practically the same as the teaching of our Savior, and he tells us that when we are led by the flesh or our carnal mind it works strife, sedition and murder. Brethren, if we esteem others better than ourselves, and feel to be at the feet of our brethren, we are not apt to judge another. Paul says, As ye have received Christ, so walk ye in him. Jesus says, Except ye receive the kingdom of God as a little child, ye can in no wise enter therein. Now if we receive Jesus as a little child, and walk as a little child, we will not be ready to judge our brethren hastily.

I enjoyed Elder L. H. Hardy's letter in the SIGNS, and felt it was timely, for it appears to be the unexplainable that causes the most contention, and contention genders strife, and strife causes coldness and a falling away. Jesus says, If a house is divided against itself it shall fall. Dear brethren, let us strive to shew forth love one for another, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Brother Ker, you or brother Lefferts or some of the writers perhaps may be led to write on this same Scripture. If it were properly set forth I feel it would be profitable to the household of faith.

Do with this as you think best.

Your brother in tribulation,

L. C. GODWIN.

HOTEVILLA, Ariz., April 11, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have for some time intended to send money to renew my subscription, but have not. The paper is very welcome, as it and the Bible are my only preaching. When I see such good letters in the paper I often wish I could tell the writers how much comfort they are, but do not feel that I can rightly do so, I am too unworthy the place among them. Were it not for the fact that the love of the brethren is given as proof of a change, I could have no hope it seems, but small as it is, it is priceless. Pray for me, that I may some time be where I can attend the meetings of the church.

Your sister, I hope,

LENA LANGFORD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1917.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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SPIRITUAL TOUCH.

We have heard that in the new birth the believer is manifested as possessing spiritual gifts or senses, which enable him to understand and enjoy the things of the spiritual world. The senses with which one is endowed in the natural birth will not enable him to reach out unto spiritual things, for that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. The carnal mind is enmity against God, even in one who is the subject of spiritual regeneration. The natural man knows not the things of God, and cannot know them, for they are spiritually discerned. This applies as well to the natural man of the believer as to one who is wholly an unbeliever, for the believer witnesses in himself the warfare of the new man against the old man. If the new birth makes any change in the nature of the sinner, then there could be no warfare of the flesh against the Spirit, or *vice versa*; but the new birth, while it brings the sinner into the manifestation of a new or spiritual life, makes no change in his old Adam nature, hence the warfare arises between these two contrary principles. Now, as a natural child is endowed with the senses of sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch, so the sinner born again, or born from above, of an incorruptible Seed, comes into the possession of spiritual sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch. In this article we desire to treat only of the spiritual touch. The apostles testified to the churches of those things which they had seen with their eyes, heard with their ears, and handled with their hands, of the Word of life. The apostles' doctrine was not mere untried theory or imaginary concept, it was received by them by divine revelation, and every principle of that doctrine was lived out in their lives, so that it was a vital matter with them; something they had seen, heard and handled for themselves. Now, if there is such a thing as handling the Word of life, such a thing as touching the Christ of God, how is it? This is the matter we now propose to answer. As the Bible is a vast theme, and our field of exploration a large one, and as the space allowed us is limited, we will confine ourselves to one of the most striking examples of spiritual touch which the Scriptures afford. This is to be found in Matthew ix. 20–22; Mark v. 25–34; Luke viii. 43–48. In these three records we have the instance narrated of a woman who had had an issue of blood for twelve years, and who, in her extremity, came to touch the hem of Jesus' garment. This woman had spent all her living on physicians, neither could be healed of any. Not until she exhausted all other remedies prescribed for her case did she come to Jesus. She came to him because she could go nowhere else. It was not as though she had two or three other ways of escape open and chose this way, but every other way was closed to her but this way: the way of Jesus. Just so, no sinner ever comes to Jesus until he finds he can go nowhere else. These physicians to whom this poor soul

had gone had been willing to take her money, even though they could do her no good. Jesus heals, but charges nothing. His salvation is free, without money and without price. Joseph's brethren went down to Egypt to buy corn, but Joseph sent them back with both corn and money. He wanted not their payment. So the Lord wants not our works to pay him for saving us. He saves freely and without end. How many a poor soul has gone to the Revs. and D. D.'s of the world hunting a cure for the sin-sick soul. These learned religious (?) physicians have been willing and glad to take all the pay they could get, whether they understood the case of the sinner or not. They cared more for the fleece than for the sheep itself. Jesus, however, loves not what the sinner has, but the sinner himself. He came into the world to minister unto sinners, not that they might minister unto him. The sinner's extremity drives him to the feet of Jesus. As long as he can go anywhere else he will not go to the great Physician. We do not wait upon the Lord until we get done waiting on ourselves. How perverse and crooked we are. Also, this woman came up behind Jesus, not facing him. Why was this, if not because she felt unworthy that he should look upon her? This coming up behind him showed the humble spirit that was in her. She realized her unfitness to receive anything at the hands of the blessed Jesus, yet her dreadful condition drove her to him. She desired healing through the touch of his garment, but also desired to remain hidden and to slink away out of sight as soon as the benefit should be received. Now, a large crowd was pressing Jesus on every side, yet through the press came this weak, diseased woman to be healed. Faith drove her onward; not the faith which is natural and inherent in every carnal mind, for there is a natural or historical faith, and there is the spiritual or God-given faith; but that faith which was the gift of God in her soul, which was the fruit of God's Spirit; this faith kept urging her on to the Savior, notwithstanding the throng that pressed him on every side. A living vine, though appearing to be weak and frail, has been known to split rocks; so living faith will remove mountains; the omnipotence of God is in this faith which God gives his people. In this woman, this wonderful heaven-born faith pushed the crowd apart that she might come to where her Savior was. Nothing is too hard for those who have such faith. As she came, she said: "If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole." This is the way faith always expresses itself: certain of Christ's power to heal her, but doubtful as to whether she should touch him. Now, if she had said instead: I shall touch his garment and I may be made whole, how different that would have been. Such an expression would have signified her determination to touch him, but doubtful as to whether he could do her any good. This latter is the way carnal religion talks: always saying it will do its part whether God does his or not; certain of creature ability, but skeptical of the divine power. This woman talked not so, but expressed all confidence in the ability of Christ to heal her: "I shall be whole." The doubt with her was, not concerning God, but as to whether she ought to touch his garment. She doubted herself, but never doubted Jesus. This is the way real religion talks: skeptical of all man-made excellence, confident of the power of Almighty God. Immediately she touched him, Jesus said: "Who touched me?" This question surprised his disci-

ples, for, in such a press, it was impossible to tell who touched him. Many thronged about him in the crowd, and jostled him here and there, but it was not physical or bodily touch that Jesus meant. He said: "Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me." Some one in all that crowd had touched him as no one else did. Many came in contact with his body, but this woman touched him in his divinity. It was not so much that her hands touched his garment as that her faith saw through the outer man to his Godhead. This touch of faith brought virtue, healing and uprightness, out of him to her. But, though virtue went out of him to her, did that leave any the less virtue in him? No, for his virtue is inexhaustible. God spends himself upon his people, but does not lose nor lessen himself in the spending. As the sun does not have to lessen itself because of the millions of people it has warmed in ages gone, but waxes warm as ever, even though centuries have rolled by, so God in Christ never becomes exhausted because of the countless thousands who have received mercy and salvation at his hands. Because the sun shines on this one makes it no less able to shine on all else. So Jesus, in imparting virtue to this poor woman, was not deprived of virtue himself, nor did he have to rob some one else of salvation in order to heal her. It had been the desire of this woman to touch his garment from behind and so remain hidden, but when Jesus kept on insisting that some one had touched him, the poor soul found she could stay no longer hidden, so came in front of him and fell trembling down before him, confessing his great work before all the multitude. Faith can make a timid sinner bold. This woman was not the first, and will not be the last to desire to remain hidden while receiving healing at Jesus' hands. Many a trembling soul has been hunted down by the voice of Jesus and made to confess him, even though with fear and trembling. Some have tried to keep the knowledge of the truth shut up within themselves for many years, and have struggled not to let others know of the truth that was in them, but have been brought at last to confess that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. Some are brought into the church late in life who have been following in the footsteps of the flock for many years. They refrain from telling of the hope that is in them through fear of self, not because they are ashamed of Jesus. We suppose that after this woman found she could remain no longer hidden, she cared not if all the world had heard her testimony. Many a soul has shrunk from a crowd of people and dreaded baptism because it was so public and so many beholders out of idle curiosity, but when the way to baptism is opened to the believer, and the believer can no longer stay unbaptized, this shrinking one goes forward confessing the Lord, caring not if all the world were there to witness the confession. Jesus' dismissing words to this woman were: "Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole: go in peace." She received, therefore, the answer of her faith, that faith which was hers by God's gift within her, and which was the fruit of his Spirit. God had begun in her this good work of faith, and he carried it on to the day of Jesus Christ, when she received the end of her faith, even the salvation of her soul. This woman knew her infirmity and her need of Christ. She knew this by faith, and also that Christ had all power to heal her. So with this faith by which she

knew her infirmity and knew his sovereign power, she touched the Christ. In this way, she touched him as no other in all that crowd touched him. This is spiritual touch. "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."—Hebrews iv. 15. Every sinner who knows and feels his guilt before God, who is made to mourn over his sins, who hungers and thirsts after righteousness, every such soul is in contact with the great High Priest of the church of God. While Jesus does not appear to our mortal senses, he is seen by faith and touched by faith. In no other way can sinners touch him but as they themselves are made conscious of their infirmities and of their need of him. This consciousness of infirmity within one's self is by faith; this leads one to beg for mercy, and this is touching Christ. This is not seeing him merely as a man, or as the son of Mary and Joseph, but seeing him as the anointed One of the Highest, and as verily the only begotten Son of God. Such sinners, made sensible of their utter sinfulness and helplessness, commune with him who was tempted in all points like as themselves. Do you ever feel you cannot pray or even think a good thought? Such feeling sense of weakness is a cry to Jesus for help. This helplessness touches him, and he always heeds the cry of the destitute. Whether as nations or as individuals, all must be brought in contrition before him to acknowledge their transgressions before there can be any communion with God, any sense of the perfectness of that peace that passes all understanding. As long as we as individuals or as a nation seek to justify ourselves and to excuse our sins, the way of peace and righteousness is hid from our eyes. May God give us more and more that faith with which to touch his dear Son, that faith to know our constant need of him, that faith to view that spotless garment of heavenly righteousness which completely robes the great High Priest of our profession. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder B. E. Cubbage.)

The churches comprising the Delaware Association of Old School Baptists, convened with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster Co., Pa., May 23rd, 24th and 25th, 1917, greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—When believers in the Lord Jesus Christ meet together with the desire to praise his holy name, whether it be in associate capacity of several churches, or in the meeting of the members of one single church organization, the chief theme and subject should be, Christ and the church. Every text of Scripture in the Bible bears either directly or figuratively upon these two objects of the love of Almighty God. When the beauty of holiness, with which Salem's bright King is clothed, is presented and set forth, the church in all her relations to Christ, the bride, the Lamb's wife, rejoices and responds to the praise of his holiness. Also, when the church in her loveliness, purity and white apparel is honored, loved, cherished and praised, in honoring her we honor her Lord and Master, and thereby name him a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance unto men. All her loveliness or honor is that with which he clothes her. Christ loves the church, and every subject of God's love and mercy loves what Christ loves. God's people therefore love the church of the true and living God, the church our dear Redeemer bought

with his own precious blood. We love the church, and we praise the Head of the church, Christ. Of him we say, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive all honor, power, dominion and glory for ever and for evermore. Amen. What do we say of the church? Do we praise her, Jerusalem, the mother of us all? Ah, how sad it is, dear, dear mother! The children do grow up so fast. Your young men dream dreams, and some do prophesy. To Jerusalem of old the Lord cried, "O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Some one will say, There seems to be something the matter in the church; there is such a coldness, such a lack of interest, and indeed there is so much fault found with our dear mother, so much imperfection found in the church, that often some in doubt and distress ask the question, Am I all wrong? Is the church wrong? Brethren can very easily be wrong. Our best efforts are but poor, but we should always take careful thought before criticizing an act of the church or of one therein, for the church, that Jerusalem that is our mother, is the Jerusalem that cometh down from above, prepared to meet our dear Lord, adorned as pleaseth him. Therefore, children, hearken unto your mother, love her, praise her, honor her, for there is a new order of things. Perfection you will not find in our brethren in the church. God grant that we cease to complain about it. But just so sure as Christ was a perfect man in the flesh, just so sure is every one, though vile, perfect in him, through the washing of regeneration, for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. In view of all that Christ in his death and resurrection would do for the church, Solomon sang continuously of her beauty and honor. What can so cheer and comfort and gladden the hearts of God's people as the testimony of his servants that the sweetest and closest relationship exists between Christ and his bride? They are still lovers, dear brethren, there is no estrangement between them, but instead there is perfect love that casteth out all fear. Where there is coldness, be assured that it is coldness between brethren, man and man, and not between the church and Christ. The Lord careth for them that love him. May we all of one mind and one heart pray God, saying, Lord, lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the honor, power and glory, forever. Amen.

J. G. EUBANKS, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

(Written by Elder H. C. Ker.)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Middletown and Wallkill Church, Middletown, N. Y., June 6th, 7th and 8th, 1917, to the churches composing the same sends love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As has been our custom in the past, we will address you again with what we call a Circular Letter. This kind of letter usually conveys to our correspondents some point of doctrine or order of our denomination, and we do not wish to depart from our custom at this time. The doctrine of our association is well known by all who know and correspond with us. There is no special point at this time needful to dwell upon, therefore we write in a general way and call attention to some things by way of remembrance. The doctrine

of the prophets was that of faith, and gave glory to God in the salvation of his chosen people. That doctrine was precious to those who felt their need of the almighty Lord. Their faith was demonstrated by their walk in life, enduring hardship for their testimony of God. The Lord was good to them in giving them hope in his mercy and faith in his promises. They looked for the redemption of Israel through the promised Seed, yet could not understand how it could be. The mystery was too great for them, and it is no less deep now. The old prophet could say, "A virgin shall conceive and bring forth a son," but how such a thing could be was more than he could understand. Mary herself asked how it could be. She was told more than was ever told mortal before, yet she had not the slightest conception how she could be overshadowed by the Holy Ghost, but accepted the word of God and believed it. Abraham did not understand how Sarah could bring forth a son when she was ninety years old, but staggered not at the promise; believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness. When rightly considered there is very little indeed we know of God and his mighty works. His ways are high, we cannot attain unto them; they are deep, we cannot fathom them. All this causes us to walk by faith, and it brings us into sweet fellowship with the saints of old. Job said, "The thunder of his power who can understand?" When we think of Him we are lost in wonder, admiration and praise, especially when given to think of his purpose and plan to save, and that we poor, vile sinners were loved by him when dead in sin and enemies to him. Such love is beyond the conception of man, but though we cannot comprehend it, we feel it at times in our poor hearts, causing us to rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

The ordinances established also by the Savior and apostles are perfect, and we as an association are satisfied to continue in them. The ordinance of baptism, setting forth the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, is really wonderful, and those who thus put on Christ should be dead to sin, that they live unto God. That ordinance belongs to the church only, and believers only are proper subjects for it. On the other hand, those called of God to preach the gospel are the only ones qualified to administer the ordinance. The ordinance of the Lord's supper, instituted by the Savior, is full of meaning, too deep for finite minds to comprehend. The new testament is his blood, that covenant which speaketh better things than the one that never could make the comers thereunto perfect. The blood of the Lamb of God took away sin and brought in everlasting righteousness through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. The laying on of hands in setting the servants of the church apart, where the gifts are made manifest, is also of divine origin, and we gladly recognize it as the only way to appoint men to their several offices whereunto the Lord calls them.

We as an association are glad to report to our correspondents that we abide in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and are satisfied with the goodness of the Lord's house.

May the feet of all the redeemed stand within the gates of Jerusalem.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
R. L. DODSON, Clerk.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in July (29th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Emily Carey Springstead died Jan. 28th, 1917, at her home in Middletown, N. Y., in the 74th year of her age. The deceased was born May 9th, 1842, a daughter of John B. Carey and Susan Kirby. She was married to George M. Springstead in 1867. The deceased was a great sufferer for over a year with heart trouble, but bore up bravely to the end. She never made a public profession of religion, but always attended the Old School Baptist meeting when she went anywhere. She is survived by her husband, one son, an adopted daughter, Mrs. James Duryea, a sister, Mrs. Clara E. Hunt, and several nephews and nieces.

The funeral was held Feb. 1st, Elder Ker speaking to a large concourse of sorrowing relatives and friends, who had come to pay their last respects to the departed one.

ALSO,

George Hunt died Jan. 10th, 1917, at his home in Middletown, N. Y., after five years' illness of paralysis, aged 64 years. The deceased was born in England in 1852, and came to this country in 1870. He was married to Clara E. Carey in 1873, who, with two daughters and one son, survives.

The funeral was held at the late home, 67 Monhagen Ave., our pastor, Elder Ker, officiating, speaking with much comfort to the bereaved ones left to mourn their loss.

His daughter, SUSIE OSBURN.

M. W. Davis was born in March, 1851, was married to Miss Louise Quigg in 1878, and baptized in the fellowship of the Harris Spring Primitive Baptist Church, near Covington, Ga., in the summer of 1916, his family having the gracious pleasure of seeing also his sisters, Mrs. W. C. Stevens, of Stevens Pottery, Ga., and Mrs. S. A. Irby, of Covington, Ga., baptized on the same glorious occasion. He had for years been longing for the courts of Zion, and in the one year allotted to him I never saw more enjoyment exhibited. How he loved to gather with the redeemed for worship! He is gone from a large circle of sympathizing friends, from the three children he loved so well: Harry Q. and Carlton C. Davis and Marie Davis Caldwell; gone from the brother, A. H. S. Davis, of Jackson, Ga., from his three sisters: Mrs. W. C. Stevens, Mrs. S. A. Irby and Mrs. M. A. D. Roberts, all of whom deeply mourn his departure. Rousing from sleep two weeks before his death he caught the writer's hand and said he had a glorious vision of heaven and its brightness, that he had seen the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. The bright evidence and hope he left of entering into the glorious home above are all that light the deep gloom of his departure. To the writer the loss is irreparable.

His sister, (MRS.) M. A. D. ROBERTS.

Miss Sarah Jane Cockrill, daughter of Henry W. and the late Lucinda Cockrill, departed this life at the home of her father, near Hunter Station, Fairfax Co., Va., June 3rd, 1917, in the 49th year of her age. Miss Cockrill is survived by her aged father, who is in the eighty-ninth year of his age, and who deeply feels the loss of this dear one, upon whom he so much depended for the earthly ministrations so necessary to his comfort. Also this dear woman is survived by four brothers, two sisters and one stepsister. She was a lover of the truth of God as it is revealed in Jesus Christ. It was twenty years ago or more that the world lost its charms for her through her having been brought to see herself a sinner before God and to realize the vanity and emptiness of all earthly things. All these years she kept the secret of her hope shut up in her own breast, not acknowledging to any, not even to her own family, her exercises of mind. She was a great reader of the Bible and of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but no one knew of her great interest in these things until just a short time before her death, when she was brought to acknowledge what the Lord had done for her. She was a great sufferer for a long time before the end came, but no one ever heard a word of murmuring or of complaint escape her lips. She prayed to be submissive to the Father's will, and said more than once that God is merciful, since her punishment could not compare with the sufferings of Christ for the sins of his people. The family of our dear Miss Cockrill, while they keenly realize the loss death has brought to their family circle, are much comforted by the sweet evidences which the dear one was enabled to leave behind of a good hope through grace. The dear aged father wonders why he is left, while his dear daughter has been taken from him, but the ways of God are inscrutable to our finite minds. His ways are just, his counsels wise. May God comfort the dear bereaved father and every member of the family circle of the dear departed one. L.

Mrs. Martha Sophrona Gadd, nee Lowry, was born in Campbell County, Ga., and died May 17th, 1917, at the home of her sister, Mrs. Mary Gilbreath, Dublin, Texas. Her age was a little over 61 years. Her people moved to Arkansas when she was a child, and later moved to Texas. She was married in 1882 to William T. Gadd, who died in 1885. Mrs. Gadd lived with her father, George W. Lowry, until his death in 1912, and then until her death with her sister, Mrs. Mary Gilbreath. There were no children born to that union. Mrs. Gadd was a firm believer in the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which paper she enjoyed reading very much. She cast her lot with the Primitive Baptists in 1891, and remained a faithful member to the end of her sojourn here upon earth. She read a great deal, and could quote many portions of Scripture in defense of the

doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone. She did not claim any glory for herself, but gave it all to God. Ill health prevented her from attending meeting during her last years. She had been confined to her bed since Dec. 10th, 1916, and death did not come unexpectedly. She was patient in her severe suffering, and was thoroughly reconciled to go to meet her Savior. She is survived by one sister, Mrs. Mary Gilbreath, and four brothers: J. H., Sam. A., M. H. and George W. Lowry, Jr., also fifteen nieces and nephews, who have sustained a great loss, which we hope is her eternal gain. Not only have her relatives sustained a loss, but the church has lost one of its most faithful members, who was ever firm in the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ; but we believe it is all for the best, for God has given the breath of life to every mortal, and has power to take it from them at his own will. Even the wrath of man shall praise the Lord, how much more so the Lord's own works.

Elder W. R. Hardin conducted the funeral services, and she was laid to rest in the Shiloh Cemetery, eight miles south of Dublin.

PRENTISS GILBREATH.

Bertha Ferguson Lee, wife of Benjamin Walden Lee, was born Nov. 12th, 1892, and died May 11th, 1917, at the home of her mother, Mrs. Martha Ferguson. At the age of fourteen she became deeply convicted of her unsaved condition, and after a bright hope of immortal life had been revealed to her she united with the Free Methodists, and lived an admirable christian life. She never heard a Primitive Baptist preach, but often spoke of how she enjoyed hearing Ben's grandma talk on Bible subjects and explain the Scriptures; also she said Elder Mayfield and family were the dearest christian people she ever met, and she hoped to hear him preach. March 9th, 1914, she was married to Benjamin Walden Lee. To that union one child, Hazel, was born. She suffered from an enlarged spleen, and had been ill for the past two years. Although often given no encouragement by physicians, she was cheerful and patient, always looking forward to the time when she would be well. Last October her husband took her to the Mayo Hospital at Rochester, Minn., where her spleen was removed. For a time she recuperated, and when they returned home in March she was anxious to move to their own home, which they did, and for a few weeks she seemed to enjoy normal health. About May 1st she suffered a relapse, and was removed to her mother's home. Three physicians attended her, but the time had come when the great Physician summoned her, and she crossed the silent river, surrounded by near and dear ones. When the last illness came on she told them her time had come to go home, and long after she became oblivious to all earthly surroundings she continued in earnest prayer to the Savior, asking for his will to be done, while striving for life that she might care for her dear babe and keep up her home ties. She leaves to mourn their loss a heartbroken husband, little daughter, mother, seven brothers, two sisters and a host of friends.

Her sorrowing mother-in-law,

(MRS.) E. W. P. ALLEN.

Mary Corwin Howell, wife of brother Joseph B. Howell, was born Sept. 9th, 1845, and died at her home in Middletown, N. Y., May 11th, 1917. She was the daughter of George W. Corwin and Louisa Horton, and was married to brother Howell Nov. 9th, 1865. Of her immediate family her husband, one son, one daughter and six grandchildren survive her, with other relatives and friends. She united with the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church about the year 1888, the writer of this notice baptizing her, the church having no pastor at that time. Sister Howell gave good evidence of having been born of God; she loved her brethren, loved to have them at her home and to care for them; none could do more. This I know, for I have shared her hospitality with many others many times. But she has gone to her home above, heaven, eternity, Christ. Brother Howell is a lonely, God-sorrowing man. May the presence of the dear Savior be his stay, comfort and strength, is my prayer. The dear children and grandchildren will also greatly miss her; Lord bless them.

Elder H. C. Ker conducted the funeral and preached to the comfort of the friends, after which her body was laid away.

Written by request of brother Howell.

D. M. VAIL.

Isaac T. Rountree was born in Pike County, Ala., Jan. 15th, 1866, and died in Wood County, Texas, Feb. 23rd, 1917. He came to Texas in 1884, and was married to Miss Havala Stevens Feb. 4th, 1892. To that union were born six children, four boys and two girls, who, with their mother and other relatives, are left to mourn. "Ike," as he was familiarly called, never made a public profession of religion, but left satisfactory evidence that he had passed from death unto life. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace and the absolute predestination of all things, as advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He had been in failing health several years, and all was done for him that could be done. I would say to the dear mother and children, Look to Jesus for reconciliation, for he alone is able.

After funeral services Feb. 24th, conducted by Elder H. B. Jones in a very appropriate and comforting manner, his body was buried in Hopewell Cemetery, amidst a large concourse of relatives and friends.

His uncle, M. B. DYKES.

James Middleton Stephens was born March 29th, 1834, in Bedford County, Tenn., where he spent all his life, and lived on this earth 83 years, 1 month and 8 days. He was married in early life to Emeline Keller, and they lived together sixty-three years, she having died two years ago. Since that time brother Stephens did not seem to care to live, having grieved continually for his companion, who was also a member of the Primitive Baptist Church. Brother Stephens joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Bethlehem, Bedford Co., Tenn., in 1886, and was baptized by Elder J. E. Frost. He leaves to mourn their loss the following children: Mrs. J. C. Justice, of Wartrace, Tenn., and Mrs. Eliza Overall, of Murfreesboro, Tenn.; also the following brothers and sisters: Reuben Stephens, of West, Tenn., Rufus Stephens, of Murfreesboro, Tenn., Cooper Stevens, Mrs. Caroline Shelton, Mrs. Bettie Thrombery and Mrs. Jones, of Wartrace, Tenn., besides a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Written by his nephew,

W. B. CHILTON.

POETRY.

HAD I THE WINGS OF AN EAGLE.

O, HAD I the wings of an eagle,
I'd fly to the mansions so bright,
Where no one ever is weary,
Where blind eyes are given their sight;
Where sun has no need for its shining—
In His presence it always is light;
I would fly, O fly away homeward,
Nor look backward to earth in my flight.

O, had I the wings of an eagle,
I'd fly from this world of care,
Where I'd be at rest forever,
And free from each sinful snare.
I'd lay down the heartache and worry,
And fly to my home over there;
I would fly, O fly away homeward,
To the land that is always fair.

O, had I the wings of an eagle,
The faith that overcomes all,
I'd fly from this sinful world away,
That's holding me here in its thrall.
For how can I do things that I would,
Since this earth is cursed by the fall?
I would fly, O fly away homeward,
When my heavenly Father shall call.

NELLIE H. ARNOLD.

PETALUMA, Cal.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Arthur F. Jones, Ga., $1.00.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, there will be a meeting at the home of Mrs. Laura Cook, Anderson St., Trenton, N. J., Friday, July 13th, 8 p. m.; Saturday, 14th, at the home of sister Horner, Stockton, N. J., 2:30 p. m.; Sunday, 15th, Locktown, 11 a. m.; Frenchtown, N. J., 4 p. m. same day; Monday, 16th, brother Demott's, Grandon, N. J., 8 p. m.; Tuesday, 17th, Clinton, N. J., at the home of Oscar Rittenhouse, 8 p. m.

D. M. VAIL.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 85. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1917. NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE MORE EXCELLENT WAY.

(1 Corinthians xiii. No. 2.)

In his peculiar and very striking manner the apostle gives especial prominence to charity, as though it could act and suffer things; but it is always the man, the child of God, in whom the principle exists which prompts the actings of this grace in the life, and this truth gives to this portion of Scripture a sweet and solemn interest. The power of faith, by which holy and divine things are said and done in sinful man, is always manifested by charity felt in the heart. The apostle tells the brethren to make melody in their hearts unto the Lord. If charity be not in the heart there can be no true melody in the voice.

"Charity suffereth long, and is kind." What a tender, soothing effect this expression of the inspired apostle has upon the troubled heart! It seems like an open gate into a rich field of grace and mercy and love. Many volumes could not tell the restfulness and peace that these words suggest to the one needing them. Then follow words that tell of some evil and base things which are common among men, but which charity has not: "Charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly." How much soever these uncomfortable propensities may be present in any trouble or controversy, if charity be present in any degree, to the same degree there will be just prospects of peace among all living souls, for charity is the "more excellent way," and brings about a settlement when all other gifts have failed.

I will pause here to say that I have long desired to say something with my pen about this sweet and lovely chapter, and have often taken up my pen for that purpose, but have as often laid it down again. It is a subject beyond the power of my pen to reach, so I will just go on repeating the apostle's language and talking a little about it.

Charity "seeketh not her own." It certainly appears right that one should seek his own, and according to worldly wisdom it is right. But here we are judging according to the mind of Christ, we are seeking what Jesus did. He sought not his own, but the comfort and salvation of his people; and that love which caused him to deny himself of all

comfort and suffer all things for his people is now their true guiding star, and we shall find it ever true that charity "seeketh not her own."

"Is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." How precious and refreshing and full of pleasant confidence this is, when all seem to be seeking, at times, more ground to think evil of each other, and take the first opportunity to get provoked and to be angry, or jealous of each other, and to appear gratified when they seem to be succeeding in hunting out some evil thing against some one. Now how pleasant it is to find one who refuses to the last hint, or suspicious mite, to think evil against any one. How astonished we are, but how glad; how good it sounds. Here is one who makes it a point to steadily refuse to get provoked. "Is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil."

"Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." The thought of charity rejoicing is a most wonderful thought. Jesus is the truth, as he said, "I am the way, the truth and the life." He never rejoiced while in the days of his flesh; he is never said to have rejoiced but once, and that was in spirit, not in flesh, and that was because these things were hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. The glorious truth of salvation by grace is ever rejoiced in by the Lord Jesus Christ and in the hearts of all his people throughout all the world. Iniquity and the truth stand over against each other.

"Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." What a wonder is this! Who can explain this wonder? Can these four things be said of any man? Not of any man in nature. Yet may we not hope that many have this charity in their hearts, though not claiming a hope of being children of God? There are so many kindly acts done, so many unselfish words spoken, of which no public record is ever made, not even in the memory of the ungrateful son, whose mourning mother never forgets the least thing she can possibly place to his favor. How glad we are to see goodness and kindliness, forbearance and forgiveness, and all care and tenderness among relatives and neighbors in the world, but in our own hearts and consciences we shall have to learn that there is a limit to such care in nature; that not until the limit of mortality to what is expressed in these four wonderful things, that charity, the life in the soul, is required before one can bear all things, believe all things, hope all things, endure all things. The child of God, who has eternal life, would do all things for a loved relative in nature, before he was born again, but would act with terrible cruelty toward any who called on the name of Jesus, but after he receives eternal life he will fear and believe and hope and endure all things for his brethren according to the flesh, as well as in the Spirit, if he can do them good.

We are looking for the "more excellent way," and what is there in these four things that presents as more excellent in doing all necessary work in the gospel church than all the gifts the apostle has named as "the best gifts"? Of course in this question, as in all of the like questions, the charity involved answers them all. This is the one absolutely perfect in all the world throughout all time and in eternity. No effort is made to remove the burdens, but where they are first placed by the eternal God there they remain until the time appointed for them to be removed by the Holy Spirit. Until then they are quietly borne. "Beareth

all things, believeth all things." This belief is also a most wonderful thing. No one in the world can effect his own belief, only so far as he can effect the evidence on which that belief is founded. Paul had a strong and abiding desire and prayer that his brethren might know that exceeding greatness of the mighty power by which they believed was the same mighty power of God which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead. (Eph. ii. 9.) Now it can be truthfully said of each believing soul that he "believeth all things;" his belief does not depend upon himself. There must be evidence before there can be belief. Jesus is the true witness. He that believeth hath the witness in himself; he that believeth in Jesus hath eternal life. He may be led away into erroneous things, but when Jesus is preached that preaching comes to him with life and light and power. The witness is in his heart, in his own experience. He is brought face to face with self; he sees his own life in a measure in the life of Jesus. And what he has felt and seen in the Bible and in the preaching he hopes for. He looks for Jesus to come again without sin unto salvation. We are saved by hope, but what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. So charity "hopeth all things." This hope we have as an "anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast." However dark the way, however great the trials, however unworthy we feel, yet we hope, we cannot but hope. It is something we cannot give up, cannot throw away, and it cannot be lost; it is safe in the care of the dear Savior, who hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace. But the great trials are yet to come. We often fear them, and look apprehensively for them. We try to trust that all will be well, but we do not know how to trust, it must be given every time. When trust comes into our hearts we count it as a special treasure, something of infinite value. All we can do is to "endure." How sweet it is to endure. Our faith must be tried, as gold is tried in the fire. How many and how various are the trials; but would we be without them? We cannot see ourselves any better in our flesh, we cannot ever see any good thing in us, that is, in our flesh, but we see Jesus; he is all our desire and all of our salvation. We would endure all things, and trust in the Lord, and stay upon our God.

All the time we are trying to keep in mind that we are considering "a more excellent way" than the apostolic and all other gifts in the church. When we think of the wonder of redeeming love and grace we question how there could be any difference among any of the gifts, and there could not be only as we are seeing in part. This I hope to refer to hereafter. But all the time we must keep in mind that where charity is there is not, and cannot be, any unpleasant disagreement or ill feeling. All the time we want to be getting nearer and nearer to the meaning of that precious word, "charity." And so we come to the most remarkable characteristics of the gift of eternal life: "Charity never faileth." This includes all the wonderful excellencies of this far-reaching gift of eternal life, but does not separate itself from any of them; so we are upon sure and safe ground.

"Charity never faileth." What can be said more delightfully perfect by any mortal in recommendation of charity? The first thought that comes to the mind is to compare this glorious principle and gift with some things which are liable to

fail. "Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." The object of these gifts is the instruction and comfort of the church; but when prophecy is fulfilled it fails; when the tongue has done its work, either in the work of using a language in the cause of truth or in proclaiming the gospel, it ceases, and the voice that was heard with comfort and delight, is silent, and likewise all the learning shall vanish away. "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away."

This apostle dwells much upon this truth that in all the gifts of the gospel, and in all gospel work and worship, we are doing only in part. He divides between the things that are seen and the things not seen. The things that are seen (by natural sight) are temporal. He counts them light and but for a moment, but when seen by faith they work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Every literal thing we do in the church has a spiritual meaning, and we are looking for and waiting for that which we see by faith; looking for the second coming of Jesus, when he shall come the second time without sin unto salvation.

The apostle speaks here in this wonderfully clear and sweet way of the present gospel state of the church as a childhood state of the church. How many questions the little child is constantly asking; it is continually growing in the knowledge of things, growing in the meaning of the words used. So the child of God is growing in grace, growing in the deeper and greater meaning of these spiritual things of the gospel. All the knowledge is only in part, the same as in literal things; for we know in part.

How wonderful to think of one who has grown old in the service of the church coming daily to the Fountain of all spiritual knowledge like a little child, to question concerning spiritual things, feeling so helpless, and yet feeling it a delightful privilege to keep calling for these spiritual things. How seldom do we get all we want, so we can rest in the Lord.

"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things." This figure I do not understand to be presenting to christians a standard excellence in gospel things to which those who are diligent may attain, while others fail because of less mental power. Success to which any attain will not be in the nature of competition. The meekest and the one most filled with charity will be, to appearances, most advanced, but this is, in the apostle's figure, that no one while in the days of his flesh can speak other than as a child. No one can ever, while in this natural state, get so that he can see and experience the absolute spiritual reality of the doctrine and order and ordinances of the gospel. These spiritual things cannot be fully seen and felt and understood by natural powers of the mind. We break the bread, we pour the wine, but O, my soul wants more than sign. In regard to these things we shall always be in the childhood state of the church; we shall always be looking and waiting and longing to see more perfectly; but there is a limit, beyond which we cannot go. When

we become men it will not be that manhood will bring us any nearer to the possession of spiritual powers, but will give us a clearer knowledge of our limits. "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face." We cannot know yet what it is to see the face of the Spirit. We do not know what it is to see the face of Jesus. The apostle does not say some can get to know, but it is still true of all, "We know not what we shall be." But when that perfect state is come, then that which is in part shall be done away, and then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part, but then shall I know as also I am known. I want to see the Savior now, but I am become a man in the knowledge that I cannot know yet. Once I thought I had seen the dear Savior's face, but I was a child then; now I know that I cannot yet see his face. We know not what we shall be, but when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Thankful? Most truly I am thankful for the knowledge of him by faith, and for the sweet presence of the dear Savior felt by faith. Since the first time it was given me to feel that he died for me, and afterward to feel the peace of God which passeth all understanding, I have learned that I must wait patiently for the Lord, and that my waiting must be in the furnace of affliction and in great tribulation. Yes, I am thankful, if I know my own heart, for the trouble and for the gift to wait patiently; thankful for the knowledge that when the perfect is come, then I shall know even as also I am known; no longer "in part," but even according to the Lord's knowledge of me. So vile, so unworthy, yet so wonderfully, so sacredly and eternally loved.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., June, 1917.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., June 15, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing two letters which are so good that I want to share them with the readers of the SIGNS, feeling that they will be a comfort to many of our spiritual family.

Your most unworthy sister,

MILDRED DURAND.

NEW YORK, N. Y., April 8, 1917.

DEAR SISTER MILDRED DURAND:—Your letter came to hand in due time, and was read by both of us with much interest. My wife will answer her part of it, and that part of it which referred to me I will now acknowledge. I know you are sincere in expressing a wish to hear me, and it has been a comfort many times to feel assured of your fellowship and understanding of my travel of mind. A man whose life is as hard to understand as mine, who labors in word only, and not in deed, is not apt to be of lasting profit to his hearers. A tree too full of leaves seldom bears much fruit, and a cloud, though to all appearance heavy with water, if it is accompanied with much wind, seldom affords much rain. Perhaps Prov. xxv. 14, has reference to a great profession without accompanying fruits in the life: "Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain." The Pharisees affected show, to court observation, and I am far from confident that I am not one of that sect. Yet your letter made me glad and content to be sensibly less than the least of all God's people, if in so being I might continue in the love and fellowship of such characters as you confess to being one with. While I was reading there came to my mind some comforting thoughts of how we are "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might

be made manifest in our body." "As dying, and, behold, we live;" of how Christ preached unto the spirits in prison, and why the gospel was preached also to them that are dead. In trying to tell you how it appears to me, perhaps I may wrest the Scriptures from their true meaning; but to me it appears to be the way the Lord answers the prayer of those whose "soul thirsteth for God, for the living God," in the cry, O that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down. The Scriptures describe the state of fallen man under a variety of figures: imprisonment, bondage, impotence, servitude, death. Deliverance from it is "liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." When we understand the exercise of mind experienced by men of old as they were moved to write as they did, by the Holy Ghost, we will be in the selfsame Spirit, witnesses to the same things. For unto us now is ministered the grace which they prophesied should come unto us; so the things they wrote of are not to be understood as merely applicable to past generations. What is recorded of God's dealings with his people of old has the same significance for us as for them. Worldly wisdom has invented various explanations of the effect of Adam's transgression, and of how the penalty inflicted is manifested in the world. They generally agree upon the penalty being bodily dissolution; a physical fact in which not only man, but all creation, participates. Upon this foundation of materialism is built all doctrines of men. They add to and take away from the word of life. When God said, "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," there was no reprieve from the infliction of that penalty, and in the day that Adam ate he died, his became a state of death—separation from a life of peace with God. It seems to me that the spirits in prison were not so in the sense of being outwardly locked up in a future hell, in the heart of the earth, or in any such material confinement, for there is no record that Christ ever preached in any such prison. Their imprisonment is in some way connected with the filth of the flesh, from which they are liberated by Christ's resurrection power, as represented in a baptism, or spiritual purification. Death in Adam is represented as an imprisonment in the flesh and the world, a captivity, freedom from which can never be enjoyed until the Son makes them free. Preaching to the spirits in prison, is the same as preaching "to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." Their fleshly state is arraigned, condemned and executed, as it were, by gospel truth brought home to their conscience; but out of their death comes forth a new creature in Christ, whose life is "according to God in the spirit." The imprisonment the apostle is writing about represents that of men to-day, as it did then: fleshly lust, the worst of imprisonments and deaths. In the days of Noah they ate, they drank, they married and were given in marriage. "The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose." Children were born, monstrous births, giants, strong of appetite, greedy dogs. Every imagination of the thoughts of their heart was only evil continually—all flesh was corrupted. Violence also went hand in hand with lust, of which the deluge was a fitting end.

Death to desire for freedom constitutes the worst feature of imprisonment. The liberty of the sons of God cannot be conceived of by the natural man, any more than a dog or worm can know and feel the degradation of their life while the nature of a dog or worm survives in them. A changed nature, a new creature, must be in evidence. A man must be born again before he can know the exceeding sinfulness of sin. He cannot conceive the wretchedness and misery of carnal mindedness and the excellency of a spiritual and holy life until he knows what he is, and what he must become in order to be saved. For this cause is the gospel preached to the spirits in prison, and to them that are dead, that the quickening power of the Spirit attending the word may bring them to a sense of their lost condition, and of the only way of salvation. The word of God is quick and powerful, a ministration of the Spirit for the imprisoned and the dead, a light shining in a dark place, the voice of the Son of God calling the dead to life, judging and condemning them as men yet in the flesh, that they may live according to God in the spirit. The gospel is a killing power as well as a power to make alive. Dying to live was that which Paul determined only to know in preaching nothing but Christ and him crucified. The way in which the Son of God wrought out redemption was in dying for our sins, and being raised for our justification; delivered by the eternal counsel and foreknowledge of God to be crucified and slain; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death. In all the Scriptures there is no mention of atonement for sin which is not a dying to live. The Holy Spirit effectually works in them that believe, by taking of the things of Christ and showing them unto us, and does not speak of himself. That means more than suggesting his words. Laying down his life and taking it again is shown us; so that in a living way we might "know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death."

Your letter did me good. It stirred my mind to think upon the name of your God and my God. A man after God's own heart, in a sense of desolation, prayed, "Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thee; according to the greatness of thy power preserve thou those that are appointed to die." He was heard, in that he feared. "He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death."

Remember me in love to your father and your aunt, sister Bessie. Forgive my lengthiness in writing, and believe me in unabating love and fellowship, your brother in faith and hope,

JOHN McCONNELL.

WINNIPEG, Man., April 15, 1917.

DEAR SISTER MILDRED:—I was glad to have your letter, and want to write a little to-day in reply, if I can order my thoughts so as to be intelligible. The times we live in cause us all to do some deep thinking, at least every one who feels the effect for himself or whose sympathies reach out to his fellow. It is a time of trial of faith for God's people. I read Elder Lefferts' editorial on Bible reading and felt like writing him about it, but so far have not been able. While the majority of those who bear the name "Old School Baptist" are dear to me, and I look upon them as children of God, his witnesses before the world, walking in the doctrine and order of the apostles of Jesus Christ, yet the relationship I feel and love is not in the name Old School

Baptist, but in the name Jesus Christ. Some who bear the former name do not walk worthy of the Lord they profess, but have turned aside to false doctrines after the manner of men, who by nature prefer to worship the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. The very nature of the churches of our faith, where each is independent and subject to no governing body, forbids that a denominational name should have any significance. It is at best a secular thing, used in reference to our worldly surroundings. There is only one name in our spiritual community: the church of God, the bride of the Lamb. Wherever God has brought his children out from under the bondage of the great worldly religious institutions and made them search the Scriptures of truth for their doctrine and order, they are led to the same conclusions. Sometimes tradition is deeply rooted and dies hard. An example of this is recorded in the Scriptures, where the law of the Hebrews had such a deep hold on the people that even after they had been brought out of it into the liberty of the gospel, they returned to its ordinances. Similarly in later times, men whom we honor as elect children of God, clung to the observance of days and other rites not in accordance with the teaching of the apostles of our Lord. The ordinance of baptism was so perverted and misrepresented through false agencies that godly men erred in its significance, who otherwise were shining lights to the church. We ourselves individually and collectively have errors woven into our belief. Idolatry and creature worship are natural to man. We have not escaped entirely from their pollution. Tradition is a powerful enemy of the truth. Even valued members of the church are often deeply bound by its fetters. Peter himself suffered a rebuke on this account. Personally, I find many things in my nature which I suffer, or even cherish, which are not according to the word of God. I may question them at times, make feeble attempts to get free, yet secretly yearn after them. We sometimes sing:

> "Do not I love thee, O my Lord?
> Behold my heart and see;
> And turn each cursed idol out
> That dares to rival thee."

We may sing with zeal, or half-heartedly, but our affections remain the same. Paul prayed earnestly for deliverance, and received the answer, "My grace is sufficient for thee." We are not made perfect in the flesh, though the law of God written in our hearts causes us to long for perfection, for holiness in the sight of God, for oneness with him in Christ. To one who is not born again, who has not been subject to the regeneration of the Holy Ghost, who has not tasted the excellency of the fullness of God's grace, such doctrine as I am feebly trying to expound is foolishness; indeed, it must be so. They have no desire for God, for they do not know him. The frailties of our bodies, the sicknesses and infirmities which blemish our present life, have no effect whatever on our standing in the Lord. I say this with assurance that it is according to the word and testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ. The change is through death and resurrection. This is a mystery. There is an earnest of faith, a foretaste of heavenly things given here. This creates in us new desires after holiness, after God. Our sinfulness is laid bare, and the pleasant things of the flesh become bitter. Thus we are saved by hope while in the flesh. Hope of salvation causes a fear lest we fall short, lest our profession is vain. So we walk tenderly, fearing to sin, hating

our very nature because of sin. These are deep things, and are not for those who are still in the unregeneracy of the flesh. But I am persuaded that nothing can separate us from the love of God, neither past, present nor to come. However, we should pray for a path which is free from bitterness in this life. Prayer is a wonderful mystery, whereby God makes known his purposes of grace to his children.

"Did Jesus once upon thee shine?
Then Jesus is forever thine."

Although we change, he changes not. In him we live. When wrath seems imminent, let your cry be, Look upon the face of thine Anointed. He is our shield.

With christian love to you all, your brother in hope,

GILBERT McCOLL.

ACTS XV. 18.

"KNOWN unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world."

The above Scripture is the language of the apostle James at the meeting in Jerusalem on the day of the visit of Paul and Barnabas to the church to see about the preaching of "certain men which came down from Judæa taught the brethren and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." What a difference between the idea taught by the apostle James and these certain men. If God did know all his works from the beginning of the world, did he not know who would be saved and who would not be saved? These men who were preaching salvation by works, were preaching the works of men instead of the works of God. The idea is, that salvation is not the work of God, but the work of men. That is what men are teaching the religious world to-day, and they did not learn this of God, but in the schools of men. It certainly must be a fact that God has hid these things from the wise and prudent of earth, for they could certainly see from the reading of the Bible that salvation is not by our works, but by grace, and that through faith, which is the gift of God. Now, that is just as plain as our language can make it, and if the same words were used concerning anything else they could see the meaning, but used here concerning the salvation of sinners, they cannot see the idea at all, and if they use it as a text, which is frequently the case, they do more in their argument to prove that it is not by grace, but by works, than anything else; so it is wonderful to me how much power is shown by the eternal God in blinding the minds of them that believe not. O how true it is that God shuts and none can open. It is one of the ways of God, who moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. It is that great darkness that Jesus speaks about. If the light (they think it is light) that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness. The light that is light to them is absolute darkness, and they do not know it. There is no power but of God that can move the darkness and show the true Light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. We read, In thy light we have light, and we have no light only God's light to manifest our ignorance of all God's work, which he knew before all time and declared should be done. Jesus told one, It is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. Well, if it is God's work to believe on his only begotten Son, and he knew that from the beginning, there certainly cannot be anything that will ever occur that will hinder the belief of every one that he knew would believe and every one who would not believe. This being the case, there

is no truth in preaching anything that will convey the idea that any one may do things differently from the way the Lord from the beginning declared it. God never sent any such a man out to preach, neither did the church at Jerusalem send those certain men down from Judæa to teach the commandments of men. Their going is done through the spirit that has transformed himself into an angel of light, to deceive and lie in wait to overthrow the Lord Jesus Christ and rob him of his glory. But, while this is so, God the Father sits at the front of all things, and these evil things are declared in his eternal counsel and are brought forth according to his counsel, and there will never be a single thing, little or big, that will be done that has not been conquered by the suffering and death of the holy Son of God. All that wicked men and devils can do is but to further their own destruction and work together to bring about the end the eternal God had in view from the beginning. The final consummation of all things will be to the glory of God and the good of the people in all ages of the world and in all nations of earth. None can stay his hand nor say, Jehovah, why or what doest thou? God had sent Paul out to declare his name among the Gentiles, hence when these certain men came down and preached the works of men for salvation they found the apostle there able and ready to deny it, and to let the brethren know that it was no part of the truth of God. So to settle the question they went to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about the matter, and they at Jerusalem said, We gave them no such commandment. So every man or woman, as the case may be, that is out preaching salvation by works, did not get the authority from God nor from the church of God, the pillar and ground of the truth. While at Jerusalem there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying that it was needful to be circumcised and keep the law of Moses. There are plenty of them to-day, and they have been among the Old Baptists in many places teaching these things, but God did not send them, neither did the church, and it is plain proof, for all the main leaders among them have gone out from among us and are now among the Missionary Baptists, where they belong.

This is not all, but I will close.

Yours in love,

C. M. HOOD.

NASHVILLE, Tenn.

THE CHURCH.

EVERYTHING has its opposite, as light and darkness, right and wrong, truth and falsehood. We conclude therefore that there is a true and a false church. The true is called the bride, the Lamb's wife. It is the true we have in mind to write about at this time, of which there are recorded in the Scriptures types from Abel's day until Christ. Noah, soon after departing from the ark, built an altar and made an offering or sacrifice of the clean beast and fowl. Abraham in his early life also built an altar, and sacrificed thereon. It required in that day, as well as in all others to the present, to make an offering acceptable to God one must have been blessed with faith, that faith which works by love and purifies the heart. The church of the living God is composed of living material. God is a Spirit, and seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth. Figurative language is often used in the Scriptures; God is called our Rock in many places, Christ a stone, the church living stones; divine revelation is also

called a rock, as, On this rock I will build my church. Flesh and blood, or the wisdom of men, have never revealed God or godliness to any one. There are three things essential to a gospel baptism: first, a proper subject (one who has been born of the Spirit); second, a proper mode, (that is, immersion); third, a proper administrator, a minister of the Old School Baptist Church, who is in good standing in his church. A number of this kind, when organized into a body to keep house for God, constitute the church. This is the body of Christ, and members in particular. Ye have not come to Mount Sinai, or the law, but ye are come to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven. Christ tells us to know God is eternal life, and nothing short of that knowledge, which is by divine revelation, will constitute a subject fit for the Master's use. Paul says while wielding the pen of inspiration, Great is the mystery of godliness. So great that no one ever attained to it except by revelation. No man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Why God suffered sin to enter the world, when he foreknew what would be the consequences thereof, no one ever has or ever will know; that he purposed it in the ancients of eternity there is not a doubt. In proof thereof the plan for the salvation of his people was fixed before man was made or the world created. Paul says the elect of God were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. He said to Timothy, Be not ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God, who saved us and called us, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. The christian warfare has been the same in all ages. Isaiah the prophet said, Israel shall be saved with an everlasting salvation, world without end. Jonah said, Salvation is of the Lord. National Israel was a true type of the church in the christian dispensation. Isaiah said, When king Uzziah died I saw the Lord high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple; not one lacking, not one too many. Solomon saw by faith the church when he asked the question, Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun and as terrible as an army with banners? David greatly desired to build a house for God, but was denied that privilege on account of his sin in the case of Uriah, who was one of his subjects. Solomon his son built the house, which was called after his name: Solomon's temple, a striking type of the church of Christ. This temple was in some respects the grandest edifice ever erected by human hands, notwithstanding it was destroyed by the king of Babylon for or on account of the sins of Israel. This is another one of the great mysteries. It was rebuilt by the decree of the King of kings, and again destroyed by wicked hands, according to the prophecy of the Savior. We are told in holy writ that the hearts of regenerated sinners are the temple of the living God. In a universal sense every child of God from Abel to the last day constitutes a component part of the church. Thousands and tens of thousands of them never enter the organized church. We are told by the great apostle of the Gentiles that all things work together for good to them that

love the Lord. Many of those things no human being ever comprehended. Secret things belong to God, revealed things to us and our children forever. We only know in part and see in part; but when that which is in part is done away, then shall we see as we are seen and know as we are known. When the evangelist said to the Ethiopian eunuch, Understandest thou what thou readest? the eunuch said, How can I except some man guide me? The eunuch invited Philip to take a seat with him in his chariot. Philip accepted and preached to him the ordinances of the gospel and the plan of salvation. How do you know this? know by the eunuch asking, when they came to a certain water, Here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? The eunuch had never before heard of baptism. We are often asked if sinners are not saved by preaching. What is preaching for? Preaching saves the believer, and not the unbeliever, or alien sinner. The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us that are saved it is the power of God. The eunuch went on his way rejoicing in a felt sense of having done his duty; felt that he was obeying the command of the dear Savior, who said, Follow me. These three bear record in heaven: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Father chose, the Son redeemed, the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, takes of the things of Jesus and shows them to his chosen people. In this they are blessed with joy unspeakable and full of glory. The world by wisdom has never nor will ever know God, but the apostles tell us of a hidden wisdom that the world knew not of, for had they known it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. That wisdom is hidden from them that know not God. Paul says, The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men (that is, all nationalities), teaching us (that is, God's people) that, denying ungodliness and worldly lust, we should live soberly and righteously in this present world, looking for the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

May the good Lord bless his dear people with his presence often, is my sincere prayer.

JAMES W. SIMMONS.

RULEVILLE, Miss.

TOUCHET, Wash., March 26, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—By request of the dear brethren with whom it was my privilege to visit this winter, I will give a short sketch of our visit. I will make it as condensed as possible, for it would take up too much space to give all the names of those we visited. Wife and I left our home in Touchet December 20th for Missouri, and arrived at our son's on Christmas day. After visiting with them three weeks and holding meeting four times with the brethren and friends of Bethel Church, in Bates County, we left our son's to visit the churches of my early ministry, and on the fourth Sunday and Saturday before in January we met the brethren and friends of Walnut Branch Church at Elder J. A. Teague's house, and there brother C. D. Grove met us and took us to our old home church, Bethlehem, Saturday before the first Sunday in February, the meeting being held at brother Eubanks' house, as he was not able to meet at the church-house. From there we went to the church at Leeton Sardis, Bethlehem, Thursday and Friday, and Friday evening we took the train to Little Flock, where we met the brethren and friends the second Saturday and

Sunday in February. This was our second time to meet with this church, as we met with them in January. From there we went to Blue Springs, to the home of sister Startzman, where the brethren and friends gathered, and Tuesday night we had service in her house, and Wednesday night at the home of Elder Hall we were blessed with another good meeting. From there we met with Zion Church the third Saturday and Sunday, this being the church which set me apart to the work of the ministry in June, 1889. From there we visited with my wife's brother until Friday, when we left for Goshen Church. From there we visited my oldest brother, in Boone County, where we were blessed with two good meetings with the brethren and friends of our childhood days. From there we met with Oak Grove Church, in Jackson County, the first Saturday and Sunday in March. Here brother Harvey Johnson met us and took us in his car to his home in Grain Valley, where we met with Little Blue Church Monday and Tuesday, where we were blessed with another good meeting. From there, in company with brother and sister Davy Owens, we went to Mt. Washington, where we spent the night with Elder Ogle and wife; he was my father in the gospel, and we had not met for twenty years. From there we went to Kansas City, and spent the rest of the week with my youngest brother and his wife, whom we had not seen for thirteen years. Sunday we met with the church in the city, which ended our visit with the ten churches we met while in Missouri. I would like to mention the names of all the dear brethren with whom we visited, but space will not allow. I want to say to one and all that it was one of the greatest pleasures of our lives; it was to our soul and mind what that delightful spot was to Jacob on that memorable night when the God of all grace visited him with the sweet association of the angels of heaven. In all our visit with you the blessing was so far beyond our expectations that we can only stand in wonder and amazement at the wonderful mercy and grace treasured up in Christ Jesus for such poor, unworthy creatures as we are. After finishing our visit with the churches we left Kansas City Monday morning for our son's, to prepare for our return home, and spent the week with him and his little family. The brethren and friends of Bethel Church, with whom we first met, could not give us up without one more meeting. They had another appointment Saturday night, and Sunday they brought their dinners, and we spent the day in the worship of God. It certainly seemed that the best wine was saved until the last. On Tuesday morning our son, after a solemn and long remembered farewell with our daughter-in-law and the sweet little babes, and brother and sister and Grandma Jackson, took us to Butler, where we had to say farewell to him. How gracious it is to say farewell in the Lord. We took the train for home, and Saturday morning at 11 o'clock we landed at our station. It being our meeting day at our home church, we went to the meetinghouse to meet our dear brethren, whom we had not met for three months, and as our greatest joy is always mixed with sorrow, so was this sweet joy mixed with sorrow. We learned at once that our beloved deacon had been called to his reward. While we deeply realized his great gain, we could not help feeling our great loss, for truly a great man in Israel has been called to a higher state. May God reconcile us to every dispensation of his divine providence.

Now, in conclusion, let me say to all with whom we met, May God bless you. I saw nothing in your actions toward me and my companion but what called out a deep thankfulness to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. In all the difficulties of life look to him, trust him, love him and follow him.

Dear brethren, we would love to hear from you at any time you have a mind to write.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. T. BARNES.

HOPEWELL, New Jersey.

DEAR ELDER KER:—Inclosed you will find a letter from sister Sharp. She is a member of the Hopewell Church. It was written to sister Sarah Blackwell, also of the Hopewell Church. I wish to say I enjoyed the letter very much, and feel sorry for her to not be able to meet with us often, but so it is; changes come to us, and while they are saddening, they seem to draw us closer and give us greater desires to be with Jesus. We see and feel that every hour we need him; that in and of ourselves we can do nothing, that our trust is nowhere else, for all else must perish with the using; but he is the Rock, everlasting, and all the household of faith are secure in him. In sister Sharp's letter she brought the scene of Elder Lefferts' ordination before me, and I am sure it will be interesting to many, if you see fit to publish it. That surely was a day the Lord had made. Who else could have done it? How often I think of that dear boy, as it were, among those dear old ministers; so submissive, so childlike, so humble, all at peace, all seeing eye to eye, and standing shoulder to shoulder, yes, as one man, and they all were one in Christ, and that singing seemed beyond earth. Never, never can I forget it as long as reason lasts. She speaks of Elder Chick and his letters, so rich and sacred to me, too; but he is at rest; he surely was a saint. I have never known of one like him, so gentle, so mild, ever ready to talk of divine things; a dear, good brother to us all. I am hoping sister Sharp will be enabled to come among us again and become acquainted with Elder Vaughn; I know they would enjoy talking together. I wish she could have heard the sermon to-day; all seemed to be partakers of it, by their words and countenances. The text was Romans viii. 5–9. How I have wished it seems more earnestly to live a spiritual life, but I am so vile, so prone to sin, that I often fear I am not born again. If so, why am I thus? Why do the things of the day come to my notice so quickly? Why so ready to listen to the nothings of the world? Yet I know if I am one of the redeemed I am not of the world, if in it, and my desire is that I may bring no reproach upon the church.

Love to you.

MARY HILL TERRY.

EASTON, Pa., Dec. 27, 1916.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—You must excuse me for not answering your good letter before this. It was not because I did not think of you; I had it in my heart to write many times, but, like I always am, did not know what to write. I often think of the loved ones, and wish I could write something that would be of comfort to them, but I am so weak and sinful, and cannot do the things I would. How often I think of all there in that dear old meetinghouse, and wish I could be there as of old, but years have brought changes to me, and my health has failed so that I do not get there or anywhere any more. When one feels sick home is the best place. I have many sad hours and lonely

ones to be deprived of meeting with the Lord's people. Years ago I had the blessed privilege of going to our associations and meetings and was at Hopewell so much at my dear sisters' homes: sister Yard and sister Hellings, and was in the company of dear sister Mary Fisher, which were seasons of joy and comfort; but now she is gone from our midst, and so is our dear pastor, Elder Chick. How I miss him and his good letters. I have not been able yet to get there to see Elder Vaughn, but when the weather gets better I may be able to go, if the Lord will. Dear sister, what a comfort the SIGNS is to us all. How we love to hear from those we know and have seen face to face. How we love them, all for the truth's sake. The article Elder Ker wrote: Rest, was so good. Did you notice it? What great trials he has been called to pass through, but the Lord has given him strength to bear all, and through these great trials he will be like the gold that is tried, will come out brighter and sing praises to the mighty King for his loving-kindness to the children of men. How wonderful it all is, the old, old story; it never gets old, we never get tired of hearing it; we love to hear it preached and to sing it with the loved ones. Our hymns are so full of meaning, and the words so true, so different from others. The one they sang over at Southampton at Elder Lefferts' ordination I will never forget, and I well remember there was not a dry eye there; it all seemed so wonderful; it was, "Father, we rest in thy love." When the meeting closed we all felt sad to leave the place. Sometimes we are so drawn toward our dear Master we forget all about the things outside; it seems all heavenly. But O, when we have to go to our homes and take up the cares of this world again we feel sad, but it is our duty to do our work and care for our families; that is right, too, and we must have the storms, as well as the sunshine, in order to make us grow in spiritual things; some dark days as well as bright ones.

Now I must close. When you feel like writing do so, I am always glad to read your letters, and when it is well with you remember me, yes, me. Love to you.

(MRS.) L. E. SHARP.

TROUTVILLE, Va., Jan. 9, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been waiting for some time in hope of having a mind to write some of my travels, so that I could send it with my renewal of subscription, but as my subscription is past due, and my mind continues to be on carnal or frivolous things, I fear I am in no condition to give an intelligent reason of the hope that dwells within me. I began to think of and read about God and his wonderful power and wisdom, and about the devil and the lake of fire and brimstone, when quite young. I naturally believed I could get religion any time I should take a notion to do so, as most people seemed to talk, and most of the preachers I heard seemed to understand and preach it that way, except Primitive Baptist preachers, and for the life of me I could not tell what they believed or preached. Their preaching sounded to me like a lot of foolishness; I could not understand them at all. I finally decided that when I got to be a man and got a little start in the world, so that I could spare the time to attend Saturday meetings, I would accept Christ as my Savior, join some church and be a good christian, so that I might go to heaven when I died, or rather would not go to hell, which was what I feared most. My mother was a Primitive Baptist. I often

wondered what she saw in the meetings to affect her so. I have often seen her sit and shed tears while some preacher was preaching, when I could see nothing in the preaching at all, neither pro nor con. But on the fourth Sunday in August, 1900, I was at an Old Baptist meeting, and heard the preacher say that the Scriptures were written and the gospel was preached to and for God's people only, and no other could hear or understand them. I felt sure that was the reason I could never see any sense in Baptist preaching; it was not for me, I was one of the nonelect. I was shedding tears, bitter tears. However, I resolved to turn over a new leaf and live a better life. I have never doubted the Primitive Baptist Church being the church of God since that day. I will further say I never thought of joining any other church since that time. I thought maybe I could practice doing good until I got about perfect, then I would join them; but instead of getting better I got worse. I think I can truthfully say I broke every vow I ever made. My confidence in myself dwindled away to nothing. My love for the Baptist Church and people grew stronger and stronger. In spite of all I could do, sin was ever present with me. It seemed that my whole life was one mass of sin; not one good thing had I ever done or could do. When I would try to pray it would seem but a mockery; it seemed to me that God was too far away to hear me. My burden became more than I could bear. I got so I could not work, while apparently in perfect health. Finally one night just after retiring I saw myself in a pit, sinking down. I was past all human aid, and had given up all for lost, when I saw my Lord and Master standing just in front of me with a pleasant and assuring smile on his face, saying, I am the way, the truth and the life. I was then awake; I do not know if I had been asleep or not. I lay and thought over this for a long time, but knew not what to make of it. My troubles continued to get worse. About three months after I saw myself in the pit while in bed, I was in the field plowing corn, or rather trying to, but my troubles were so great because of sin I cared not for the corn, for all seemed lost to me, all was dark. It was about ten o'clock in the morning, and I reckon the sun shone as brightly as usual, but to me it was the darkest day I ever saw. I felt myself in some way made to judge my own case. I saw I was guilty and in justice I must go down to hell. I saw I would go down praising God. Just then I saw myself in that same pit exactly as I had seen before while in bed, but this time just as I saw Christ the pit was gone, also my burden of troubles was gone, and I looked about me and never saw as bright a day in my life; everything seemed to be praising God. I was somehow given to see or feel that Christ would do or had done for me what I had so utterly failed to do. I could now go to the church and tell my friends what great things the Lord had done for me. I went on the following Sunday and told some of the things I have here written, and was received for baptism. I was baptized by our pastor, Elder J. C. Hurst, on the second Sunday in June, 1913. I want to say here that the happiest day I have ever seen was the day I united with the church. I had been desiring and longing to be one of them so long, and when I saw they received me and rejoiced, my cup was full.

Brethren, for fear of wearying you I will close. Do as you think best with this. If you should think best to publish it correct all mistakes.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

F. S. SHELTON.

"AND IT WAS SO."

(Genesis i. 7, 9, 11, 15, 24, 30.)

DEAR ELDER KER:—Would it not seem that if there was ever a time that the words of the Lord should have failed that it would have occurred in the creation of the world? Adam was not formed of the dust of the ground until all else was complete, and it would seem so very imperative for him to have assisted at that time, else what claim can we make of being "workers together with God"? If Adam had no being until all the work was done, what credit can he claim for any of its performance? And since there can be no question now as to Adam's having had any part or lot in the creation of the world or the smallest insect that inhabits it, we may be absolutely positive that he had no choosing of the people of God in Christ before the world was. All that pertains to both heaven and earth was complete in Christ and in creation before Adam lived, and were, are and will be manifest, with the unfailing, unchanging rolling on of the undisturbed purpose of an infinite God, all for one purpose: to manifest his power, might, majesty and dominion, in the demonstration that "none can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou?" The words, "and it was so," appear to be in the original text, and it is very significant that they occur six times, once for each day's work, seeming to verify the fulfillment of every word of the Lord as creation progressed to its very last detail, including Adam himself, proving that there was no hitch or objection in anything, or that one word had returned unto him void. So that as we contemplate even in our small degree his almighty power and never-failing word in the creation of "the heaven and the earth," that as "it was so" it will be so, and that none who grant that "it was so" in every word that he spoke in the six days of creation may claim that the manifestation of that power will not reflect God, his will and purpose in everything, for

> "His providence unfolds the book,
> And makes his councils shine;
> Each opening leaf and every stroke
> Fulfills some deep design."

Yours as ever,

E. R. KINNEY.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y.

NOCONA, Texas, Feb. 14, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—We are a little slow in sending our subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We love to read the paper, for it is all the preaching we get. It has been over three years since we heard any preaching, and only those who are absent from the church and brethren can know how hungry one gets when so isolated. We moved from Ohio to Oklahoma in 1906, and united with the little Ebenezer Church; Elder J. F. Beeman was the pastor. We had good meetings every month. We lived there two years, and moved to New Mexico; have not met with the church since. The church at Helena, Oklahoma, has gone down; some have moved away and others died. The pastor, Elder Beeman, moved away, so that little church has gone. While we lived in New Mexico we had preaching in the schoolhouse by brother Isaac R. Greathouse, and always had a feast at every meeting. There was no organized church, only a few members lived there. We were glad to see brother Greathouse's article in the SIGNS; hope he is taking the SIGNS and will write often for the paper. While we cannot choose the writers, yet we love to read from those we know, and we have been made to rejoice reading from those we never knew in the flesh; for the Lord prepares them to write for the comfort of his elect, and also prepares the heart to receive what is written; the disposing is of the Lord.

Your brother in hope,

C. G. MILLER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1917.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEAR EDITORS:—There are signs of the times which seem to indicate that the day of the Lord is near, when earthly kingdoms shall fade away and a different order of things be established. If the editors or any one else have enlightenment on those prophecies I would be glad to read it in the SIGNS.

W. E. BLUE.

NIAGARA FALLS, N. Y., May 31, 1917.

It would be a pleasure to grant the request of brother Blue if we could, but we fear that our view of the present condition of things is not in harmony with that of many of our brethren. However, we are willing to give such as we have for the consideration of our readers.

There have always been signs and wonders in the earth since the beginning, and such will doubtless continue until the end. In olden times the Lord made himself known by such things as displayed his power and glory. Sometimes he told his servants why he would do things, and what the end of such things should be, but even in those days many of his wonders were hid from man. It is as much the glory of the Lord to hide a thing as it is to reveal it, and except when it is necessary, in his wisdom, that his dealings with men be known to establish his glory and to accomplish his purpose, he never tells them why he does this or that. No one knew why the famine came upon the land of Canaan and the seven years of plenty in the land of Egypt until it had all come to pass. The brethren of Joseph had not the slightest idea why they hated and sold him except the envy and jealousy they found in their hearts. The Lord had arranged it all for their good and for his glory. After the "four hundred years" were finished they could look back over all the way and see the Lord's purpose in it all. Many of that people died without fully understanding the purpose the Lord had in it. So also many who live to-day will die without seeing, or understanding, God's purpose in the present condition of the nations. It is a conceded fact that there seems no just or real cause why such conditions should exist. What is to be gained? And should everything be gained for which nations are fighting, what would it all amount to when compared with the bloodshed, misery, woe and billions of dollars spent? We answer, Nothing, absolutely nothing; yet there is a cause. We want to emphasize the fact that this is not a religious war, though it is more than likely that some religious revolution will be wrought by it.

With reference to the prophecies, whether of the Old or New Testament, we do not think the present war and rumors of wars have anything whatever to do with them. The prophecy of the Old Testament referred to the coming of Christ, his sufferings, death and the glory which followed. The glory that followed was the setting up of his spiritual kingdom in the earth, composed of all nations, thus revealing the secret hid from the beginning of the world: that the Lord had a chosen people among all nations. The prophecies of the New Testament referred to the destruction of Jerusalem, together

with the end of all rites, forms and ceremonies, the bringing in of heresies and the setting up of antichrist. When Jesus said to the disciples that they should hear of wars and rumors of wars, he also said, but the end is not yet. Kingdom should rise against kingdom and nation against nation, pestilences, earthquakes and so on should come to pass; the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel should also be seen by that generation, for that generation should not pass until all those things be fulfilled. If, therefore, those things should be fulfilled in the days of that generation, why do any of us apply that Scripture to the present age and condition of things now? The end of the world spoken of in that place meant the end of that age, dispensation, legal covenant. The throwing down of the stones of the temple, that not one stone should be left upon another, signified that not one thing of the law should remain in force, but that all should be fulfilled in Christ and a complete new covenant established upon better works and better promises. The Scriptures are not literal, but are the work of God's Spirit, hence teach heavenly and divine things. If they were literal all men could understand alike, and no mystery would be involved. It is true that some portions speak of temporal and literal things, but under it all there is a spiritual significance known and seen by spiritual beings, the children of the great Spirit. One other thing the Savior said in this special connection was, And this gospel of the kingdom must be preached in all the world for a witness, then shall the end come. This is understood by many to refer to the end of this material world, and by sending, as they say, the gospel to all nations, are hastening the end of the same, when in reality no man wants this world to end. He gave that commission to his apostles, saying, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel unto every creature, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. They in obedience to that command went and preached the gospel to both Jews and Gentiles, which they were not permitted to do before the resurrection of Christ; but then, the debt having been paid, and the middle wall which separated them removed, the glad tidings must be sent to all nations. By reading Paul's letter to the Colossians it will be seen that the gospel was preached in all the world to every creature during his day. Again, if that commandment was obeyed by those to whom it was given, why try to apply that Scripture to men now as making it their duty to leave homes, wives and children and go into some uncivilized country to be murdered by the heathen? To rightly divide the word of truth is the commandment of God, put things where they belong, and that commandment is given only to those whom he has called to preach his Word. The test as to whether he has called them or not is that they preach him, the truth, the life and the way, teaching men to observe all things whatsoever he commands them, nothing more, nothing less. When a man teaches anything not commanded of God it is evident the Lord has not sent him to preach the gospel.

We have reason to believe, as brother Blue says, that some earthly kingdoms will fall from their present standing and order, but their falling and the raising of others will never affect the kingdom of God, which is now and has been for centuries established in the hearts of men in all the world. This kingdom, as Daniel

said, has broken down every other kingdom, and fills the whole earth. This glorious kingdom is in the hearts of all nations, and abides when other kingdoms fall. This kingdom is joy, righteousness and peace in the Holy Ghost, while other kingdoms are sorrow, ungodliness and war, but in it all his purpose will be accomplished and good for the nations wrought. K.

MATTHEW XXVI. 11.

"For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always."

His enemies accused Jesus of companying with publicans and sinners, and in this case we find him sitting in the house of Simon the leper. He went to such because they needed him, while the self-righteous had no use for him. "They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick." Into this house, also, came a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment. This ointment she poured on Jesus' head. To the disciples standing by this seemed a woeful waste, and they said so. "To what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor." But Jesus replied to them: "She hath wrought a good work upon me." Thus Jesus' estimate of what a really good work is was widely at variance with his own disciples' opinion of what constituted a good work. To them it would have seemed a better work for this woman to have sold this ointment, and with the proceeds to have alleviated the conditions of the poor. But Jesus said she did a good work in using the ointment on his body. This woman had suffered much, and had been forgiven all at the hands of the Savior. It was no wonder she desired to adore and reverence him because of the great things he had done for her in forgiving all her sins. The anointing he received at her hands was but the outward expression of the worship in her soul. Wherever the gospel is being preached to-day, this woman is being memorialized; she is still anointing the body of the Lord with the precious ointment. For this woman represents the church, which is compared to a woman in many places throughout the Scriptures. The church of God loves to be engaged in his service, in worshiping him and in declaring his goodness and mercy through Christ to poor, lost sinners redeemed by grace. This is the true and blessed business of the true church of God: to preach Jesus and to testify of him. She is the lighthouse, whose clear, crystal light shines out over the tossings of a sin-cursed world, and those are attracted to its shining ray whose eyes have been opened by God and the work of his Holy Spirit. "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." This is her light, then, clear as crystal, like a jasper stone. This, then, is the object of the church: to be a living monument to testify to the power of God in the salvation of sinners through the blood of Jesus Christ alone. But in this day and time the churches of the world think it the business of the church to organize, conduct and supervise all kinds of so-called charitable institutions for the less fortunate of mankind. While such organizations may be all right in their place, their place is not in the true church. They are of the world, and belong in the world. Poverty and misery are no new things in the earth. These were prevalent in Christ's day and in the days of the apostles, as now. Yet we find neither in the teachings of Jesus nor in the teachings of the apostles any authority for his church to father organizations and so-

cieties having for their sole object the distribution of charitable aid to those who are judged as needing such aid. There is abundant testimony in the Scriptures which authorizes the true brotherhood, the church, to help one another substantially when in need of such help. The brethren should help one another, and not let any of their number suffer for the necessities of life, nor allow any of their numbers to be pensioners on the bounty of unbelievers. Herein is the love of God made manifest: in that we love one another. But we find no order to the church anywhere for them to organize societies or institute wholesale campaigns for the material betterment of mankind. These things may be, and doubtless are, all right for the world and worldly men and women to look after and to engage in, but they form no part of church order and government as commanded by Christ and his apostles. To the church of God there is assigned another, a far higher and more distinctive business than that mentioned above: it is to minister unto the body of Christ, his people. This is done in the preaching of the gospel, in observing the order and ordinances of his house, in comforting and in helping one another, in maintaining a godly walk and conversation. The poor ye have always with you. These words of the Savior show that poverty is no new thing, and that it is always insistently present, no matter where or when one may live. And, as the poor always are with us, so there is not wanting plenty of people to look after the poor, plenty of schemes for solving and alleviating poverty and its attendant misery, plenty of willing hands and willing hearts among men to take up this work. "But me ye have not always." Christ is not everywhere to be found. To find him in his purity is to find a real gem. Plenty of people for everything else, but not plenty of people to serve him. No, precious few there are who have this blessed ministry assigned to them, and who are called unto it. Therefore, if God has called us to the ministry of his truth, let us wait on our ministry, and not turn aside to dabble in matters with which we have no business. There are any number of men with far better natural qualifications than ourselves to take up and carry on political or sociological or moral causes and problems; but there are only a few men scattered far and wide over the country who can preach the gospel in all its wholeness. Therefore, let the dead bury their dead, but let us follow Jesus only. When Saul of Tarsus, who had been educated to be a great lawyer, was brought low in the dust and called to preach the Christ he once despised, when he went down into the water to be baptized and thus became identified with the despised christians, his former friends must have thought that he had thrown all his talents and golden opportunities to the four winds. What a waste, they must have exclaimed. No matter, he is now serving the body of his Lord, a far better work than feeding the poor. So Jesus said, and so it must be true. It looks like the waste of good material when men of talent are called to serve Jesus' little flock; but how little are we able to truly value such service.

L.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in July (29th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Middletown and Wallkill Church, Middletown, N. Y., June 6th, 7th and 8th, 1917, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond sends love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We appreciate your continuing fellowship and correspondence, assured us in the Minutes of your last association. There has been no communication from a few of our correspondents, but we presume this is due to oversight. Our association has been good and pleasant, for in unity of the Spirit our churches dwell together in peace, and in the assurance of love abounding the God of all grace manifestly reigns in our midst. In demonstration of the Spirit and of power the preaching confirmed our faith, making us to hear with joy and gladness in renewed assurance that in a loving way we are saved by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our next session, the Lord willing, is to be held with the Ebenezer Church, in New York city, beginning on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1918, where and when a cordial welcome awaits your messengers. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
R. L. DODSON, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, June 21st, 1917, at the residence of Mr. S. D. Jarman, 12 S. 16th St., Philadelphia, Pa., William D. Bassett and Myrtle E. Carey, both of Berlin, Md.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. J. E. Chadwick, Texas, $1.00; H. G. Garrett, Ky., $3.00; Mrs. Sarah Gandy, N. J., $1.00; Miss C. A. Davis, Ill., $1.00; Elder J. M. Fenton, Pa., $2.00.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, there will be a meeting at the home of Mrs. Laura Cook, Anderson St., Trenton, N. J., Friday, July 13th, 8 p. m.; Saturday, 14th, at the home of sister Horner, Stockton, N. J., 2:30 p. m.; Sunday, 15th, Locktown, 11 a. m.; Frenchtown, N. J., 4 p. m. same day; Monday, 16th, brother Demott's, Grandon, N. J., 8 p. m.; Tuesday, 17th, Clinton, N. J., at the home of Oscar Rittenhouse, 8 p. m.

D. M. VAIL.

MEETINGS.

THE covenant meeting of the Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Washington, Oregon and Idaho will be held with Mizpah Church, Touchet, Wash., commencing on Friday before the fourth Sunday in July, at 11 o'clock. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. T. BARNES, Moderator.
WOODSON CUMMINS, Clerk.

THE New Hope Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will be held with Mt. Zion Church, nine miles south of Greenville, Texas, near Cash, on the Midland R. R, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in August. Those coming by rail will be met at Cash Thursday and Friday. All lovers of truth are invited, especially ministering brethren of our faith and order.

S. M. DICKENS.

THE Hazel Creek Association of Primitive Baptists will meet with Providence Church, in Appanoose County, Iowa, August 29th, 30th and 31st. This is the original Hazel Creek Association, the one that holds the records. Trains will be met at Plano or any convenient place. Visitors cordially invited.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator, Novinger, Mo.
H. C. CATE, Clerk, Moravia, Iowa.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

NOTICE.

Complying with urgent requests, I have included a select number of "Predestinarian Baptist" Editorials in my book, "My God and my Salvation," increasing the size to 200 pages and the price to $1.00. My copy is now in the hands of the printer, and the book will be ready for delivery on or before June 1st. Order now and pay when book is delivered. Address,

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

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[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 85. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1917. NO. 15.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HEBREWS XIII. 13.

"LET us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach."

Among the types in the Old Testament Scriptures was the disease of leprosy, which was a type of sin. The priests in the land of Israel were qualified to diagnose the disease as separate from all other skin affections, and when a man or woman within the camp of Israel was found having the disease, he or she was placed without the camp, excluded from all others except those having the disease, and if one approached their dwelling-place they were required to cry, "Unclean, unclean," not allowing them to approach near them. They were examined from time to time, and when it was found that the disease had spread over all the body, then the patient was pronounced clean. The antitype presents the beautiful and wonderful work of God's grace in the heart of the sinner. The woman whom God had given to Adam for an helpmeet was tempted of Satan, and was drawn away of her own lust, and enticed, and in her temptation she partook of the fruit of the tree, which God commanded Adam not to eat, saying, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Through the violation of God's commandment by the woman sin entered into the world, and death by sin. This one act in the beginning of time brought condemnation and death upon all the posterity of the race of Adam. The sweet singer of Israel prayed, and said, "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight; that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." The psalmist confessed (as does every one who knoweth the plague of his own heart) his own sin, not attributing it to the first offense. When the work of the Spirit is begun in the sinner he is quickened into life; the sentence of death has been passed upon him, and he is dead; but now he is made to see and taste and feel, and to know things which he knew not before;

that he was a sinner without hope and without God in the world. The leprous affliction of sin now begins to show itself in his body (in other words, the knowledge of sin and depravity gets hold upon him in its horrible loathsomeness and dread reality). He does not yet know what is this powerful medicine that is bringing his vile disease to the surface. He is driven without the camp of God's holy law, and he cries, "Unclean, unclean." He realizes his unfitness to be under the same roof even with his own family. As said one of old: Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord. And said another: The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me; I found trouble and sorrow. Another said: I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes. The cleansing and purifying work of the Spirit goes on. The horrid leprous spots present themselves in loathsome, condemning form. Sin abounds, but grace doth much more abound, leading the sin-sick soul even through the valley of the shadow of death, and always without the camp fearing and trembling, yet hoping against hope. But we have this promise: "But it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light." We come to the evening of the sixth day under the law, and at midnight the Bridegroom cometh, he whom our soul loveth, saying, "It is finished." He came in the likeness of sinful flesh, bearing our sins in his own body without the camp, as the author and finisher of our faith, "Who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Now that we have been brought out of the darkness of death into the light and liberty of the glorious gospel of Christ, the knowledge of our leprous, sinful condition is manifest in all our body. We behold a body that is corrupt from our head even unto our feet. Therefore we have the evidence that the great Physician has healed us completely, that we are redeemed, justified and sanctified. Now we are exhorted to be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines, but it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace. Now we have an altar whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle, for the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. We desire to be true followers of him who suffered for us. Let us not be ashamed of the gospel of Christ; then let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pennsylvania.

REVELATION VII. 14.

"THESE are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I am this Sunday morning writing you, submitting to your better judgment my views of the above text of Scripture, which you will dispose of as you deem best. These are a peculiar people, a great number or multitude which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues; they stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. This peculiar people are innumerable, so far as man is concerned, yet I deem them but a remnant of the election of grace. I will here give some negative reasons why I do not believe that all the election

of grace are under consideration in this text, or that washing their robes here in the blood of the Lamb had any reference to that perfect righteousness of Christ which prepared them for heaven and immortal glory (save by virtue of) by no means whatever, nor that the throne here mentioned means their dwelling in the eternal world, or after their corporeal death. First, all the election of grace while here in their time state, I cannot view according to the Scriptures with palms in their hands, which is a symbol of victory, and I cannot believe that all of God's elect family have or will ever get the victory over the beast and his image, his mark and the number of his name, while here in this life. Second, that washing their robes and making them white in the blood of the Lamb is metaphorical language. Third, the word "therefore," the beginning of the fifteenth verse, implies that it was what they had done that gave them a place around the throne of God to serve him day and night in his temple, or in his church, for "there is no night there." Day and night are here in the time state of the Lord's chosen and redeemed family. Last, but not least, after the Lord's dear children are happily housed in heaven and immortal glory, there will be no leading them unto living fountains of waters, but then and there they will be at the fountainhead to live and rejoice for ever and ever. It is here in our experience and time state that the Lamb of God is leading us to these blessed fountains of living waters, which John speaks of as coming down or proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool. I am fully persuaded in my mind that the gospel kingdom or church is spoken of in the Scriptures in different places as a throne, or being a throne. "A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary;" therefore I am writing with the thought in mind that this wonderful apostle, John, had the gospel church under consideration when he said, Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple (church). These are they that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth; these are they who are walking the strait and narrow way unto life in this blessed kingdom which is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. These are they who through the Spirit are mortifying the deeds of the body and are living with the living in Jerusalem, the gospel church, for they are written among the living in Jerusalem, the holy city. These are they who are not defiled with women (religious systems), for they are virgins. These are they who have and are coming out of great tribulation. As blood is the symbol of life, it here means that God for an all-wise purpose of his own blessed this portion of his elect people to so live here as to not strain or spot their professional robes or garments. These are the robes or garments meant here, I think, their professional garments, therefore they are before the throne in the gospel church and serve him day and night, and the Lamb is leading them both day and night, and they are following him, for they hear and know his voice and follow him. As is said of one of the seven churches in Asia: "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments [their professional garments]; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy." So in like manner those who came out of great tribulation and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the

Lamb, and those who by virtue of the life of Christ are enabled to take up their cross daily and follow Christ through evil as well as good report, through much tribulation enter the kingdom.

Humbly submitted.

W. J. MAY.

SHOCK, Ky., April 1, 1917.

THE TRUE WISDOM.

"BUT where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding? * * * The depth saith, It is not in me: and the sea saith, It is not with me. It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof. * * * Whence then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding? Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living, and kept close from the fowls of the air. Destruction and death say, We have heard the fame thereof with our ears. God understandeth the way thereof, and knoweth the place thereof. For he looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven; to make the weight for the winds; and he weigheth the waters by measure. When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder; then did he see it, and declare it; he prepared it, yea, and searched it out. And unto man he saith, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom: and to depart from evil is understanding."—Job xxviii. 12, 14, 15, 20–28. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge."—Psalms xix. 1, 2. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever."—Psalms cxi. 10. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; but fools despise wisdom and instruction. My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: for they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck."—Prov. i. 7–9. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge of the holy is understanding. For by me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy life shall be increased."—Prov. ix. 10, 11. "I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions. The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate." "Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord. But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death."—Prov. viii. 12, 13, 32–36. And forsake not the law of thy mother (the church). They shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck. All they that hate me love death. All they that hate Jesus love death. "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death."—Prov. xiv. 27. "Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness."—Eccl. ii. 13. "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the

wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks [worldly wise] foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God [this preaching of the cross] is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."—1 Cor. i. 18–31. "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world that come to nought: but we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory; which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."—1 Cor. ii. 4–8, 14–16. Here is the true wisdom, the mind of Christ; for it is written, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and they shall be unto me a people, and I will be unto them a God. He has every treasure of wisdom and knowledge, and of his fullness we receive, and grace for grace. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."—James i. 17. "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." —James iii. 14–18. The Scriptures are their own best interpreters when the Lord gives us an understanding. The inspired apostle James is very plain concerning our daily walk, or the practical side of the religion that we profess. "There

was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it. Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man."—Eccl. ix. 14, 15. Jesus had not where to lay his head, yet by his wisdom delivered the city, Zion, well beloved. All forsook him and fled, yet he triumphed over all the powers of darkness and cohorts of Satan. "And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me."—Isaiah lxiii. 5. "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation."—Psalms xxiii. 3-5. This is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; he receives the blessing, and his people receive blessing through the merits of the Elder Brother, and through his merits alone the mercy and blessing are bestowed upon unworthy sinners of Adam's race.

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."—Phil. iv. 8.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Yours in hope,

WM. F. SLOAN.

LEXINGTON, Ky.

THE LORD'S WAYS ARE RIGHT.

I HAD come to the conclusion that I was justified in letting my pen rest, because I could not see in my writings anything to commend them to anybody. I said to myself, There is no gift, I cannot see any; and when I considered my confused life I said, There is nothing better for me to do than to work and make money, and be of some importance in the world. Surely it is right, for I have the Scripture to back me: He that looketh not for the welfare of his own, and especially they of his own household, has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. So you see I had something to base my conclusion upon. I have been working steadily for several weeks past, and the work is pretty hard, and when Sunday would come it was quite a trial to get ready for the meetings, and about half the time I have stayed at home and rested so I could go back to my work Monday mornings. I could not feel that I ought to absent myself from the meetings, but in order to hold my position I must work, and I must have rest in order to work, and I will say right here that this natural body has to be given some consideration. Sometimes I think we are guilty of tempting the Lord (or perhaps I should have said I am guilty). The Lord has ordained a natural law, and we should consider this law. When a man overtaxes his strength he pays the penalty with a feeling of weakness or exhaustion; and when we talk about a natural law, do we not also talk about God's law? Again, I ask, Can anything exist without God? Some say the war that is going on in Europe, and which is about to spread to our country, is caused by the devil; that the Lord has nothing to do with it, but let us be careful about these speculative minds we have. Of course the

natural mind will say this, but let us cling to the Scriptures. Did not the lying spirit have to get permission from the Lord before he could entice Ahab? The record is, the Lord said to the lying spirit, Thou shalt entice him. If the Lord is not directing all events I must confess I do not know anything; but there is a mind within me which seems to make me understand God Almighty, and this is just what he is, almighty; he is the Governor of the nations; and if he is the Governor of the nations, he is the Governor of the people, for it is the people who compose the nations. It is in this belief that I rest. This doctrine is as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. I see I am drifting. I do honestly believe that the Lord accomplishes his great designs by man's disobedience. I cannot go into detail in this article, as it would make it too lengthy, but here is one instance: because of David's wickedness Solomon came into the world, and Solomon must build the temple, not David. I do not like to talk about myself or my exercise of mind, but I cannot refrain at this time from mentioning what actually is causing me to write now. I told at the beginning of this article about coming to the conclusion that I was justified in letting my pen rest, and the reason for this conclusion. Still I had an inward feeling that I was doing wrong, and I have felt all was not well with me. To-day I have met with what is called an accident. I had one finger on my left hand cut and another mashed. I had to go to a doctor for attention. On my way home the thought came into my mind, I wonder why my right hand did not get hurt. Immediately the thought came, You write with that hand, you can take time to write again now. I felt just as I have felt when my natural father whipped me and I had to suffer the shame of others knowing I had to be whipped. In the car as I went home it seemed the passengers were all staring at me; it seemed to me they knew I was being punished. So now I have time to write, and yet I do not know who is to be comforted by this article, whether any one or not, but something is saying, What is that to thee? Though I cannot understand the Lord's ways, I must say what I did at the beginning of this article: The Lord's ways are right.

April 18th.—I have kept this article for nearly a month. I have been thinking I would destroy it, but have not done so. I have decided to send it to you, so you can do whatever you think is best with it. I wrote as soon as I got my hand done up and got home. I had a pencil convenient, so did not wait to get pen and ink.

A. T. BENSON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March 26, 1917.

MACOMB, Ill., June 7, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find one dollar, for which please extend my subscription to the SIGNS six months. I will say as I always have done, that I am well pleased with the SIGNS, and could not think of doing without it. Dear Elder Ker, your editorial on the Resurrection some time back was worth the price of the paper a year to me. Too much cannot be written on this glorious theme when written in the right spirit, with a "Thus saith the Lord." Your writings are a comfort to me, who am one of the weak ones of the flock and need "strong meat," such as you hand out, to strengthen me. I love Elder Lefferts' writings also, and indeed all who write for our dear paper. My mother, Mrs. I.

N. Van Meter, to whom you send the SIGNS free, is still living at the age of ninety-six, but is pretty feeble, cannot walk without assistance. She appreciates your kindness to her, and greatly loves the SIGNS.

I will inclose a letter from sister Bonnie Chick, received some months ago, to do with as you deem best. It was not written for publication, but she writes such lovely letters I am sure all will be comforted by reading it, and hope she will forgive me for sending it.

With best wishes for all connected with the SIGNS, your sister,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

RICHMOND, Maine, Nov. 4, 1916.

MY VERY DEAR SISTER:—Surely no words can tell how little and unworthy I felt as I read your precious letter. I will have to say again, I am not worthy to receive such messages. As I read I marveled that one whom I know to be so far above me in spiritual things could feel to write of such wonderful things to me. There are so many things I desire to speak of that I know not where to begin. You will no doubt be surprised to receive a letter from me from Maine. All summer I felt a desire to attend the association in Bowdoinham. All of my mother's people live in this section. Aunt Angie Thomas, whose writings you have no doubt read in the SIGNS, is in a critical condition. When I came the first of September I expected to return in October, but it seemed I could be of some service to her, so have planned, if it is the Lord's will, to stay until the middle of December. I long to do the Lord's will, but so often I fear lest I am just following my own inclinations, and that I am seeking ease for the flesh. I am prone to think the pleasantest things are the best for me, but we are told that it is through much tribulation we enter the kingdom, and one poet wrote:

> "Yes, 'tis a rough and thorny road
> That leads us to the saints' abode,
> But when our Father's house we gain,
> 'Twill make amends for all our pain."

You said you could not help your heart going out to those who are called to pass through dark, troublesome places more than it does to those who are always rejoicing. This has been a source of trouble to me, too. It has seemed there are some I can get so much nearer to than others. When reading your letters I have ever felt that you could understand me in many things that would seem strange to others. I can no longer enjoy the things of the world, and I feel so little interest in the things around me. How often I am begging for strength to go on quietly before the others, that they may not be distressed, and I feel the need of his care to be so great, but am so fearful lest I weary him with my cries for help. It seems many times all I can say is, Lord, help me; thou knowest my need. I know not what to pray for, and am filled with fear when I find a longing to pray springing up in my heart, for O how often something comes that will almost drive us to despair. Since I have been in Maine it seems I have been called to pass through one of the darkest times I have ever known, when my hope seemed well nigh gone. For a time the burden was so great that I could neither sleep nor eat, but no words can describe the joy of the deliverance, and at the meeting that Sunday I was granted a taste of the peace and joy I felt in my early experience. It was so sweet to feel again that the everlasting arms were underneath, realizing that he could lead me and guide me safely through all the dangers, toils and snares that I may be called to pass while

I dwell upon this earth. How wondrously precious his promises come to us at such times. Surely we can then sing:

"O save a trembling sinner, Lord,
Whose hope, still hovering round thy word,
Would light on some sweet promise there,
Some sure support against despair."

Several nights ago these words seemed so good to me: Call upon me in the day of trouble. I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. Then I wonder how one so prone to sin can ever dare attempt to praise a just and holy God, and yet I do love to have others write or talk to me of his goodness, and I cannot restrain the response that springs up in my heart.

Monday afternoon. O how wonderful are the ways of the Lord! How glad I would be for words to express what I feel. When I stopped writing Saturday afternoon it was as if my thoughts had come to a standstill, and I could not seem to send what I had written. When the carrier came he brought the SIGNS you sent me; they had remailed it to me. Aunt Angie and I were alone, so I began reading your experience aloud to her at once, and it was just as if I were reading my own. Tears would come to my eyes when you told of Scriptures that came to you in your dark hours, for several of these very Scriptures had come to me in hours of distress. I recalled one day when I was first plunged into the depths how the words, "My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid," came, and all day I felt a peace I could not describe. I thought surely my suffering had ended, but O, for how many months and days after that I wakened with a shudder at the sight of daylight, dreading the thought of the suffering that seemed to be my portion. I walked with a heartache and burden that I felt would crush me to the ground. Many thought it was my mind, but I almost wished I might lose my mind, or that unconsciousness would seize me, so that I could not feel the pain. Then when you spoke of opening the Bible to the words, Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the help of my countenance, and my God, I thought of one night when searching for comfort I opened to these words, and they were so wonderful to me I went to bed repeating them over and over. The next morning I tried to recall them and could not, and neither could I find them in the Bible. I could not even bring to mind one word. It went on for several months until one day Elder Francis came, and he read the forty-second Psalm. When he came to those words I knew them, and I was made to rejoice that they had been given back to me. I, too, was granted the sweet privilege of taking communion with the saints the day I was baptized. I felt a calm, settled peace at the time, but before night a friend belonging to the New School Baptists began to talk to me and question me. We argued for a time, and O the terror I felt when I realized I was no longer feeling the peace that had been with me in the morning. That night I lay awake with troubled thoughts, when suddenly it was as if I were surrounded by a wonderful love, and my joy was unspeakable.

I must not weary you, but so many, many things came to my mind as I read your precious letter. Then I know so many of the other writers—and there are so many things connected with the coming of the paper this afternoon that I long to praise Him who does such wonderful things for the children of men. My cup seems filled with joy. Had I

sent what I wrote Saturday I would have had to write again, for it just seems there is no rest for me at times until I unburden my mind. I long to hear you tell more of your travels, but know what it is not to feel strong or well. When you told me in your letter that you feared your trials would weary me, I felt they would be a comfort to me. I am glad that your son is so much better. May the Lord bless you and make you to feel that his strength is sufficient.

Your sister, I hope,

BONNIE A. CHICK.

DAYTON, Ohio, May 1, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—Since reading your precious editorial in the 1st of May SIGNS, I feel the subject you wrote upon was ably explained to me: "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing." How clear to my mind you have made it! I pray the dear Master, if consistent with his will, that your life may be spared many years hence to so ably wield the pen as an editor of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that brings to me so much comfort, living as I do in a large city having many fine and expensive edifices called the houses of God, and fashionable congregations filling them, but to me no home as a church home; so, therefore, when my SIGNS comes to me filled with precious gospel food, you may well be assured that the magazine contains food much appreciated by my poor, hungry soul. How precious to me is the thought in connection with your subject that faith is the gift of God, and that it is to this faith given in the soul of the believer that God reveals his hidden wisdom, so that surely God is not to be known by the powers of the natural mind nor found out by searching. How sublime to feel that our God is such an all-wise and blessed Master, that he knows the end of time from the beginning, regardless of what men declare. These lines to me seem sweet and comforting:

> "Hail sovereign love, that first began
> The scheme to rescue fallen man!
> Hail matchless, free, eternal grace,
> That gives my soul a hiding-place."

Within the past twelve years I have indeed experienced great and sad tribulation. O that I may be numbered with that happy company who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. How strong the tie that binds the Lord's chosen ones together! Though I many times fear I am not one, yet I know I love them above all others, and I would gladly live and die among them. I am glad to say that even living in a wicked city with all its allurements and vice, I have at times had many precious seasons with some of the choice ones of the Lord's dear family, and how blessed are such interviews, especially when I am afflicted, and how truly I can understand and appreciate the many varied trials of the living in Jerusalem, but their joys seem to be denied me. I have, however, felt enough to melt me to tears momentarily, and to make me hunger and thirst for more of those blessed influences. O how I feel my utter helplessness, that I cannot of myself move one step in the life divine. I know and feel that in thought, word and deed I am daily sinning against the Most High, and that I cannot control my thoughts, which often place themselves upon things of time. How I long, as heretofore, for an assurance that I shall inherit eternal glory. How could I endure to be shut out forever from that dear company that I devotedly love in this life because I see in them the image of the Beloved? In the New Testament we see fulfilled all the prophecy of the Old. The promised

Messiah came, and when upon the cross he said, "It is finished," then there was the fulfillment of the law, the work of redemption was complete. There comes to my mind now the beautiful figure of the rainbow as a covenant between God and his people. As no storm-cloud is too dark for the rainbow to show itself upon, so no storms that sweep over the sin-sick soul can be so dark but that the promise of the gospel shall be seen. Amid all our darkness of mind we own that we love God's people, and the apostle says it is one of the evidences that we have passed from death unto life. May we rest under the shadow of the Lord's sheltering wing. With what tender, regretful emotions do I now call to mind other and happier days in the parental home, where I was a happy young girl reared by good christian parents, when "Jesus all the day long was my joy and my song," and when after the fall of the curtain of night I would listen to my father's dear voice while supplicating the throne of grace. I often felt as did Jacob: "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." How lonely and sad seems my mind to-night because Jesus, that dearest of friends, the blessed heavenly guest, has not come in at the closed door of my heart and warmed the cold and weary soul by his dear presence and the sweet manifestations of his love. But amid the storms and dark waves that seem to toss with fierce tempest the frail bark of my life, is not Jesus near? Though I cannot see him as I stretch forth my helpless hands with arms too weak and too short to save, will he not walk with me in the water and will he not hold me in his dear, restful embrace?

As ever, your sister, I hope, saved by pardoning grace, if saved at all,

LIDA KELLER.

MARIETTA, Ga., April 25, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I feel very unworthy to thus address you. I just want to let you know that I am yet alive, but am no better; I can get around on crutch and stick, but am suffering untold pain night and day. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES still comes to me regularly, for which I feel thankful to the good Lord, and you, brethren editors, for sending it to me. The good letters in it are much comfort to me in my lonely and suffering condition, but I trust I have a little hope that when I am done with suffering, trial and trouble in this world I shall be eternally at rest. I feel at times perfectly willing to die, but O, I dread the suffering of death. This earth has lost its charms for me. I have many doubts and fears, and do not live as I desire to, which makes me fear that I am not born again; but there is one thing I hope I do know: if I am a child of God it is by grace, and grace alone, for my prayers and best works of righteousness did not avail anything in point of my eternal salvation. My only hope is that my name was written in the Lamb's book of life before the world was. I believe that Christ died and redeemed his people, and that God will make it known to them in due time. There is one thing I do know: that I love the children of God and the doctrine they preach, but the question with me is, Is it the love of God? I hope it is. We know it is different from natural love. John says that we may know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren, and I know I love them, which makes me hope that I am a child of God. Would it be thus with me if I had not been born again? Another evidence is when we read the sweet letters from dear brethren and sisters from

all parts of this wide world our love goes out to them. I often think if I am a child of God I would not have to suffer so much here in this world; then the thought will come that many are the afflictions of the children of God, and it is through great tribulation that they enter the kingdom of God; so there is a sweet for every bitter and a bitter for every sweet. The blessed Savior told his little children to be of good cheer, for he had overcome the world. They of the wicked one will persecute the children of God and speak all manner of evil against them falsely. Dear ones, let it be falsely for Christ's sake; let it be without a cause. Let us try and keep ourselves unspotted from the world as much as possible. I know we cannot live without sin, for even the thought of foolishness is sin. I believe a child of God wants to and would live without sin if he could, yet I am sorry to say there are many who have a name with the Primitive Baptists who have become very careless in attending their meetings. Some hardly know when their meeting day comes, I have heard them say so, and they are backbiting and devouring one another. Brethren, James says these things ought not so to be; we ought to act so as to let brotherly love continue. How much better to live in peace and love than in confusion. Brethren, I cannot help having doubts and fears as to being a child of God. I do not doubt the Primitive Baptists being the true church of Christ, but if we are what we profess to be we ought to let our light so shine that others: other little children of God, may see our good works, and it would encourage them to come home to the church, and glorify God in spirit and in truth, in soul and body, which are his.

Dear brother Ker, if one so unworthy as I feel myself to be should thus address you, I desire an interest in your prayers, and all of the brethren, that I may be kept humble and submissive to the dealings of the good Lord with me, and that I may live and conduct myself so as not to sin myself out of fellowship of the brethren and sisters. If I am a child of God I am a poor, helpless sinner saved by grace, and grace alone. Please pardon bad spelling and writing, as I am lying on the bed. I have been down with rheumatism for eleven years, and never have been easy since taken. I am on crutch and stick a part of the time. If this is published please correct mistakes; if thrown into the waste-basket all will be right with me.

Your brother, I hope, in affliction,

G. W. ALMAND.

ELGIN, Oregon, March 31, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have been slow in telling you that I heartily indorse your views given on Revelation xxii. 14, by my request. You certainly did show that good works manifested in God's people are the fruits of the Spirit of God in them, and not the cause; only the working out what God by his Spirit has worked in them. This is certainly in harmony with the word of God and the christian's experience. How true are the words of the Lord Jesus: "Without me ye can do nothing." Then, if blessed with the ability to do, certainly the blessing has gone before the do, and we should not think of claiming the blessing because of the doing. All acceptable service God's people are able to render is the direct fruits of faith, for we are told, "Without faith it is impossible to please God." God's people are not able to exercise faith, but rather faith exercises them, and their faith always embraces

Christ as the Lord their righteousness, and they are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, according as they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world; and their blessings come to them in time, not for what they do, but for Christ's sake, and can there be a failure of their receiving a single blessing that was treasured up for them? These spiritual blessings are not given to them on the basis of law; it is not now under this new covenant, If you will I will, but rather, I will and you shall. But there are many now even among our people who are contending that all spiritual blessings here in time are conditioned on our works; it is to him that worketh is the reward reckoned, and make no difference between the law covenant and the covenant of grace. In fact, you will notice to sustain this position the Scriptures given to national Israel are freely quoted. It is still, I set before you cursing and blessing. It does not seem to me to be rightly dividing the word of truth to make no distinction between the covenant of grace and the covenant of works, between those whose law was written on tables of stone and those whose law is written on the fleshly tables of their heart, and those dead in sin and those who are born again and raised up from the dead. Under the first law covenant God said they broke his law, they continued not in his covenant, and he regarded them not, so he said the day would come when he would make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and it should not be like that first covenant. Now let us notice that difference. Under the first he remembered their sins and punished them for them, but under the new covenant he says, Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. I will be merciful to their unrighteousness. They shall all know me, from the least unto the greatest. Then this new covenant is the one under which God's people are now; then why take the things of the law covenant and apply them to God's people under the new covenant? Is not this like putting new wine into old bottles, or binding the yoke on God's people, which Peter says "neither our fathers nor we were able to bear"? It is my humble opinion that this conditional time salvation, based on the principle of law, is a perversion of the truths of the gospel, and well represented by the gourds put into the pot by the young prophets, and we do hope God may grant always there to be old prophets to put in plenty of meal to overcome the bad effects of the gourds. Can we not see the need now among us of these old prophets? Contend earnestly for salvation by grace. The dear Redeemer, who bore the sins of all God's people, is worthy of all the praise, and if he bore them and put them away by the sacrifice of himself, let us not say we put any of them away by our works; and if all our spiritual blessings were treasured up for us in Christ Jesus, let us not claim we merit any of them by our works. It is my humble belief that there is not a blessing so treasured up in Christ Jesus for his people that they will not receive. The chastening rod is among the blessings. The evil received, as well as the good, is just as necessary in our heavenly Father's account. All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. I am not one who believes that one who believes all things work together for good to them that love God will make it a cloak for their sins or try to excuse their sins because of this belief. No, I am one who believes that all who are born again are indeed dead

to sin and cannot live any longer therein, and if there were no hell they would not wilfully sin. How can they that are dead to sin live any longer therein? They cannot.

Dear brother Lefferts, I did not think to write so much, I only wanted to tell you I indorse your views. I leave what I have here written to your judgment about publishing. Do not publish if I have said anything not in harmony with the truth. The Lord be with you.

Your unworthy brother in gospel bonds,
G. E. MAYFIELD.

HAMMOND, W. Va., Feb. 28, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I will try to write to you again, if it meets the approval of the editors. I hope that we all may have the spirit to understand truth and to shun error. Let me kindly say to you all that we cannot have the mind and spirit to write as we should except we are in possession of the Spirit of the Lord; so I will try and write and leave it with you to be your own judges. You will find my subject in Isaiah xxvi. 13: "O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name." The Scriptures teach that there are lords many and gods many, but unto us, the people of the true and living God, there is but one God; and after we are born of the Spirit we only want to make mention of his name, because we feel that other gods are dead gods, although they claim much power. But where is their power when God appears? Where was the soldiers' power when guarding the tomb of our dear Savior? were they not as dead men on the ground when our God appeared? When we were under Satan's control he had dominion over us and our enemies ruled us. Did they not have dominion over us? But when Christ Jesus appeared and set us free from all those lords and powers, then they could not have dominion over us, because we were freed from their power and dominion. Now we are under grace, being made free from the law of sin, and if the Son makes you free you are free indeed, so we will only make mention of his great name, the Lord God of heaven and earth, who works all things after the counsel of his own will. Now we are his servants, and we serve him because he has wrought all our works in us. Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us, for thou also hast wrought all our works in us. We are out of bondage now, are under grace and service of the only true and wise God. Paul said, If God be for us, who can be against us? It was Christ that suffered and died; it was Christ that rose for our justification. "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."—Isaiah xxvi. 19. We were chosen in Christ, and he is our life, for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God; and when Christ, who is our life, appears, then we shall also appear with him in glory. We being in Christ Jesus when he arose, we arose with him, and he has dominion over us, and will have forever. He arose for our justification, and will have the glory, and his praise he will not give to another. No wonder the prophet said, We only will make mention of thy name. All the people Christ Jesus healed did not make mention of any other lord in all their praises but Jesus their Lord, and gave him all the praise. For thou art worthy, for thou hast done all things well. Yes, thou art worthy, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God

by thy blood, and made us kings and priests unto God. Thou givest unto us eternal life, and we are kept by thy power, and we receive all our blessings from thee, and thou hast them already in store for us, and thou wilt bestow them upon us, not according to our works, but according to thy purpose and grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; and hast made us to sit together in heavenly places, and provided all things for us. Be it known unto you that I do it not for your sakes, but I do it for my sake, even for my mercy's sake. Where is boasting? Where are conditions? Where is time salvation? Where is works on our part? I have thought good for you, and as I have thought I will also do it; and as I have purposed it I will perform it. He purposed it in his Son, and will he not with his Son freely give us all things? Now who is it that will not give all the praise and honor to God except those who are still under other lords? Will we not make mention of our Lord, and him only, in our salvation? Do we need to make mention of any other salvation for time or for eternity? O no; salvation is of the Lord; his mercy endureth forever; he will perform all our works in us, and when he works in us to will and to do, then we give him the praise, we make mention of his name, and his only. We do not take part of the praise, we do not mention other names. There is none like him, there is none beside him; they are all dead, and shall not live. So you see they cannot do anything. But our God is the Lord, he is alive for evermore to make intercession for us. I hope I have made mention of his name, and his name only, in the work of our salvation in time or in eternity. There is no good thing, says the apostle Paul, that dwells in the flesh. When we would do good, evil is present with us, so that we cannot do the good that we would. We will make mention of his name, and his only. Salvation is of the Lord.

JAMES W. LINN.

MONROE, Ga., June 18, 1917.

DEAR ELDER KER:—The fresh memory of the Warwick Association is being enjoyed by me, and the time for the promise I made you to write a few lines when I returned home seems to be at hand. As I look back and see myself determining to go to Middletown June 6th, 7th and 8th, not knowing what was in store for me, but hoping to meet those whom I love of the same faith and enjoy that fellowship which I hope is from above, and now realize what I did hear, see and feel, it makes me feel that it was good to be there, feeling that my strength has been renewed, that I may walk and faint not, and run and not be weary. It was not the excellency of speech, but the demonstration of the power and wisdom of God that did me good, and to be received as a citizen of the household of faith, with the privilege to speak of the kingdom set up in the world that shall break in pieces all other kingdoms. The King is Jesus, the Son of God, who said, I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. We sometimes feel discouraged by the way, then we love to read what he said: Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world, I have finished the work. We need to lose confidence in the flesh. When the apostle said, We preach not ourselves, he knew what he was by nature; notwithstanding all the advantages he had he saw that in his best estate he was altogether vanity. It is good for us to know our weaknesses, it is an evidence of life. There are five distinct senses of our nat-

ural life: seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and feeling, so I have thought that there are five immutable evidences of a sinner who has eternal life: poor, lost, guilty, perishing and helpless. Blessed are the poor, for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Jesus came into the world to save the lost. The poor publican was so guilty he could not so much as lift his eyes to heaven, but asked for mercy. Perishing the prodigal son felt when he came to himself. Peter felt to say, Lord, save, I perish. David felt helpless in the horrible pit when he said that the Lord brought him up, also placed his feet upon a rock and put a new song in his mouth, even praise to God. When a sinner has all of these symptoms he is sinsick, and is going for the Physician that can be touched by the feeling of his infirmities. This Physician has never lost a case; he has only to speak, as he did to Darius, and life is imparted. Hence when we come together we want to praise his great and holy name, because he has done great things for us, whereof we are glad. We have no abiding city here, but seek one to come. I felt that the association was a good little station on the way, all signs were pointing in the right direction. I was made to feel how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. Not a word of discord about the way, the truth and the life.

We came back by way of Leesburg, Va., and stopped with Elder H. H. Lefferts and family. We were with him at Frying Pan Church, it being communion, and we were received in fellowship. I also had the privilege of speaking, and had the assurance that they received me gladly. At home we found all well, and I surely felt to thank God that even my life had been spared to enjoy such a good and pleasant trip. May the Lord keep us all in the good and right way, is my desire.

Your brother in hope of life,

J. M. ADAMS.

TIFFIN, Ohio, April, 29, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST OF THE SIDELING HILL AND FAIRVIEW CHURCHES:—If you will allow such an unworthy one as I to address you thus. Saturday and Sunday will be your meeting days again, and I wish I could see you face to face. As I cannot, I will endeavor to write you a few words just to let you know I still remember you and hope I am being kept by the power of God in love for the assemblage of the saints. I long for the time when it will be my privilege to be in your midst to hear that blessed theme of salvation by grace, the song of God's love and power to save sinners, of whom I feel to be chief. Dear brethren, if there ever was one in the wilderness surely I am that one, hungering for a crumb from the Master's table. However, if it be the good and merciful will of God, he will provide for all my needs. Wherever he begins a work in one's heart he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. His promises stand fast, his ways are just, his counsels wise. His people are fenced about with Jehovah's wills and shalls, firmer than the everlasting hills. When I count up my many blessings I feel I have been blessed with far more than I deserve. I have been having great comfort from some dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I hope I have been led by the Spirit of the Lord to have an eye to see and a heart to understand a portion, at least, of the writings, as the SIGNS contains all the preaching I have had since leaving Fulton County, Pa. I live in hope that it may be my privilege to meet with you at the Juniata Association

next fall. There have been some dear, highly esteemed brethren who have been taken away from earth to a blessed and peaceful rest since I left you, whose faces I will never have the privilege of seeing in your midst again. I sincerely hope that our loss is their eternal gain. The Lord's hand is in it all, and he doeth all things well, after the counsel of his own will and according to his good pleasure, that it may glorify him from whom all blessings flow. I ask you to remember me at the throne of grace as one of the least of the flock, if one at all. When you assemble yourselves together, remember there is one who is with you in the Spirit, if not in the flesh.

In hope of glory to him who saves sinners, I remain, yours in bonds of love to all the church. Whenever any of you have a mind to write me, I shall be glad to hear from you, and will answer you to the best of my ability.

ROLLA E. MELLOTT.

FARMINGTON, Ky., May 4, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—You may not appreciate a letter from one so ignorant, vile and wretched as I am, but I want you to know that I highly appreciate and indorse your editorial in the SIGNS of February 15th on Romans vi. 17, which you wrote at my request. The text reads: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you." That we should be servants of sin is one of the links in the chain of God's eternal purpose, and that we should be made free from the service of sin is another link in the chain of his purpose. If we omit one link in this chain then the chain is too short; but, as you said, we cannot omit one link in the chain. The chain is even long enough to reach all things, not one link lacking, not one too many. If God should be thanked for one link in this chain of eternal purpose, then he should be thanked for all the links. If the link, "ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine," be thankworthy, then the link, "ye were the servants of sin," is thankworthy, and Paul said it was. Those who do not believe in the purpose of God in all things, but believe we were servants of sin contrary to God's will and purpose, cannot see how God should be thanked that we were once the servants of sin. Those who do not believe the doctrine of election do not believe Jesus meant to thank the Father for hiding eternal life from the wise and prudent and revealing it unto babes, but Jesus thanked the Father for both the hiding and the revealing, and Paul thanked God for both: that we were servants of sin and for our obedience to righteousness. "Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favor."—Prov. xiv. 9.

Bear with me for bothering you. I have learned some things from your writings that I needed to know.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

J. B. ADAMS.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., July 12, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—A member of our church here in North Nashville is now living in Akron, Ohio. Her address is: Mrs. Ella Read, 563 Carrol St., Akron, Ohio. If there are any Old Baptists there, I, as the pastor of the little church here, would be glad if they would visit her. They will find her an excellent lady and a good Old Baptist of the right faith.

Yours in love,

C. M. HOOD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1917.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SPIRITS IN PRISON.

(1 Peter iii. 18-20.)

THIS record reads that Christ has suffered once for the sins of his people, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring his people to God; that Christ was put to death in the flesh, but justified by the Spirit, by which Spirit also he went and preached to the spirits in prison. There is a very large religious organization in the world that teaches an intermediate state where the dead go after leaving this life. This state is called by them purgatory; by others paradise. It is believed by some that Jesus, when he died, did not go into the presence of the Father, but that, the three days his body lay in the tomb, Jesus went in the Spirit into this intermediate state and preached there to the unrepentant, disobedient, disembodied spirits of those who had departed this life without having been saved. This text in 1 Peter iii. is referred to by the above teachers to substantiate their doctrine of an intermediate state of the dead, and to further teach that Jesus went into this state and preached there in the Spirit, while his body was in the tomb, to the disembodied spirits of those who had died in disobedience, as, for instance, those who were destroyed in the flood in the days of Noah. We want to say that we do not believe any such doctrine as is referred to above. If there is an intermediate state for the dead we do not know it, and therefore cannot teach it. In the absence of any positive knowledge, we have no hesitancy in unequivocally denying it. Further, Peter is not teaching that Jesus went and preached to the spirits in prison while his body lay three days in the tomb. Jesus did most certainly preach to the spirits in prison; he did this preaching not in his flesh, but in the Spirit, but not during the three days that elapsed between his death and resurrection. Neither did he preach to disembodied spirits, but to his own people in prison. The "spirits in prison" are synonymous with the people of God in the prison-house of the law of sin and death. The children of God are released from captivity to the law of sin and death by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Before his resurrection from the dead, the people of God were in prison, even though they had been given faith to look beyond their prison walls, beyond the legal dispensation, to the liberty wherewith Christ should make his people free when he should come forth from the dead triumphing over all his foes. Christ preached in his Spirit to all his elect that lived from the time that man was made until the time that he came himself in the flesh. Christ's ministry in the flesh comprised but about three and a half years, but his ministry in the Spirit extends through all time and to all peoples. This is what Peter declares in our text: that Jesus preached to the spirits in prison by the same Spirit which raised him from the dead, or which quickened him. Not that he did this preaching while his body lay dead, but that the same Spirit which quickened or resurrected him was the

very same Spirit by which he had preached his truth to Noah in the days when his people were disobedient. All of God's people have been at some time in their lives disobedient. The truth is made known to them in their disobedience by the Spirit of Jesus, else they never would be brought unto obedience. If we had to become obedient before Jesus would or could preach to us, then we should all, every one, perish without ever hearing the truth. Noah had been some time disobedient, as Peter goes on to say, but the truth was preached to him while in that condition by Jesus in the Spirit, the same Spirit which wrought the mystery of the resurrection of Jesus. This work of Jesus by his Spirit in Noah wrought faith in that man, so that he became obedient by that faith and wrought the ark according as God commanded. Thus Noah himself was made a preacher of righteousness because the Preacher of preachers was making known the truth in him by the Spirit. Noah was dead in sin when the Spirit quickened him, so he was in prison, that is, under bondage to the law of sin and in captivity unto death. Jesus is the one whom God anointed to preach liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound. His people are dead in sin and held captive by the law of sin until Christ by his Spirit quickens them into spiritual life and preaches his gospel unto them, then they are loosed and let go. This truth was also preached to Abraham, another spirit in prison; also to Jacob, to Isaac, to Joseph, to Moses, to David, to Daniel, to Jeremiah, all of them spirits in prison, and all of them in disobedience when the preaching came to them. The Spirit of God bears witness with their spirits that they are the children of God; the preaching is not done to the flesh, nor to the natural minds of the people of God, but to the spirit of eternal life in them which they receive by the quickening Spirit of God. This is the reason Peter says "spirits in prison," instead of saying men in prison or some other word which might signify a physical entity, emphasizing the truth that the work of Jesus does not appeal to the carnal nature of the people of God, but that it is his Spirit bearing witness with or preaching unto their spirits, which are the Spirit of divine faith in them. Peter's text mentions the time of imprisonment being back in the days of Noah, but we do not feel we are violating the text to say that the elect of God manifested during the time from Moses to Christ were also in prison, though not, possibly, so intensely as in the days of Noah. Also, though the people of God to-day are not living under the law, but under grace, nevertheless we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened. Paul exclaimed: "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" He, though a gospel subject of the Lord, was nevertheless in prison. This tenement of clay, the natural or earthly body, is the prison-house of every believer in Christ. We are hedged about with the sins and infirmities of the flesh. If it were not that Christ comes to us by his Spirit and preaches to us in this prison, we should be without hope of salvation indeed. And it is a further and more blessed thought that this same Spirit by which he makes known his truth in his people now is the same Spirit which brought him victoriously from the dead.

We have written this article at the request of brother J. E. Buckner, of Pine Hill, Texas. L.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Rock Springs Old School Baptist Church, at Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa., May 23rd, 24th and 25th, 1917, to the associations and churches with which we correspond sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more in the dispensation of time, by the mercy of a kind and loving God, we have met as an association and received your messengers, who came preaching the gospel of peace as it is in Jesus, to our comfort and consolation. We feel we have had a season of refreshing in the Lord.

Our next association is appointed to meet with the Wilmington Church, at Wilmington, Del., beginning on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, 1918, where and when we hope to again meet and receive your ministers and messengers.

J. G. EUBANKS, Moderator.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

NOTICE.

ANY reader of the SIGNS who has a copy of the "Autobiography of Elder Wilson Thompson," which they are willing to dispose of, please address, giving price, J. C. NELSON,
SHARPSBURG, Ky.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

POETRY.

CLARKS SUMMIT, Pa., July 9, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—The inclosed pieces of poetry were found in my daughter's (Mrs. Pearl Messick) Bible after her death. We can judge something of her mind and feelings from the sentiment of them.

D. M. VAIL.

I KNOW NOT.

I KNOW not when on the heaven-blue sea
The boat of death shall be launched for me,
When the heart shall falter, the brain shall reel,
And the active fingers cease to feel;
But I know some time, on the other shore,
The bark shall be anchored for evermore.

I know not how the change shall be,
Through what black waves of misery,
What clouds shall gather, or storm waves beat,
Ere the outward voyage shall be complete;
But I know when the pain of the voyage is o'er,
I shall pass through the tempest never more.

I know not why I am waiting here,
And what I shall be "doth not yet appear;"
But I know some time the Lord shall call,
Without whose notice no birdlings fall,
And in pain or pleasure, toil or rest,
I shall be as his wisdom seeth best.

SOMEWHERE.

SOMEWHERE the wind is blowing,
I thought as I toiled along
In the burning heat of the noontide,
And the fancy made me strong.
Yes, somewhere the wind is blowing,
Though here where I gasp and sigh
Not a breath of air is stirring,
Not a cloud in the burning sky.

Somewhere the thing we long for
Exists on earth's wide bound;
Somewhere the sun is shining
When winter nips the ground;
Somewhere the flowers are springing,
Somewhere the corn is brown,
And ready unto the harvest
To feed the hungry town.

Somewhere the twilight gathers,
And weary men lay by
The burden of the daytime,
And wrapped in slumber lie.
Somewhere the day is breaking,
And gloom and darkness flee;
Though storms our bark our tossing,
There's somewhere a placid sea.

And thus, I thought, 'tis always,
In this mysterious life;
There's always gladness somewhere,
In spite of its pains and strife;

And somewhere the sin and sorrow
Of earth are known no more;
Somewhere our weary spirits
Shall find a peaceful shore.

Somewhere the things that try us
Shall all have passed away,
And doubt and fear no longer
Impede the perfect day.
O brother, though the darkness
Around thy soul be cast,
The earth is rolling sunward,
And light shall come at last.

THE clouds hang heavy round my way,
I cannot see;
But through the darkness I believe
God leadeth me.
'Tis sweet to keep my hand in his,
While all is dim;
To close my weary, aching eyes,
And follow him.
Through many a thorny path he leads
My tired feet;
Through many a path of tears I go,
But it is sweet
To know that he is close to me,
My God, my Guide.
He leadeth me, and so I walk
Quite satisfied.
To my blind eyes he may reveal
No light at all;
But while I lean on his strong arm
I cannot fall.

WATCHING FOR THE MORNING.

WHEN the shadows gather,
And the night grows deep,
And the weary eyelids
Cannot close in sleep,
'Mid these hours of sadness,
With their solemn warning,
Comes that song of gladness—
Watching for the morning.

Though the shadows gather,
And the night grows deep,
And the weary eyelids
Close in death's long sleep,
Through that night of sadness,
With its solemn warning,
Comes the song of gladness—
Watching for the morning.

Watching, watching, watching,
Lord, how long, how long?
When shall break the shadows?
When burst forth the song?
Haste, O blessed daybreak,
With thy bright adorning;
Let the joyous lay wake—
Morning, lo, the morning!

MARRIAGES.

By Elder John McConnell, July 17th, 1917, at the residence of the bride's uncle, Mr. Oscar Rittenhouse, in Clinton, N. J., Lewis Arthur Heath, of New Brunswick, N. J., and Alwilda Rittenhouse Bellis, of Flemington, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Joseph H. Bloomfield was born in Ohio, Nov. 30th, 1834, and moved to Indiana with his parents at the age of six years. In 1844 his parents moved to Knox County, Ill., and settled between Rio and Henderson. He was united in marriage to Lucinda Jackson April 24th, 1859. To that union were born eight children, four of whom preceded him in death. He was the eldest and last of a family of ten children. The living children are Mrs. Alice E. Peterson, of Ponylake, Nebr., Mrs. Retta McBride, of Columbus, Nebr., Mrs. Daisy Carter, of Monmouth, Ill., and Mrs. Lelia Eley, of Bardolph, Ill., who, with fifteen grandchildren and five great-grandchildren, are left to mourn. He died suddenly at his home, 1019 West North St., Galesburg, Ill., Saturday, June 30th, 1917, aged 82 years and 7 months. He lived alone, and was found dead about one hour after he expired. He had lived alone since his wife's death, Jan. 27th, 1916. Last October his daughter Alice came and took him home with her for the winter. He returned home last May, and was satisfied to get home again. He was in better health than for two years, and seemed to enjoy life better. Brother Bloomfield united with the Henderson Church of Regular Baptists over forty years ago, and continued his membership in that church until his demise. He was a great reader; our religious papers and his Bible were his main reading.

The writer was requested to take charge of the services, which were held from his late residence at 10:30 a. m. on Tuesday following, after which the body was conveyed to Henderson church-house and laid beside that of his wife to await the trump of God to come forth to life again. May we be reconciled to God's decree.

S. H. HUMPHREY.

Hannah Jackson Haines has passed away. She was born Feb. 11th, 1837, married by Elder Barton to Albert Haines October 19th, 1856, baptized October 28th, 1866, died October 25th, 1916, and was buried on the 28th, just fifty years from the day she was baptized. I nursed her through her last sickness. She died at her home in Kennett Square, Pa. She was my husband's sister, and a dear one, both in the Spirit and in the flesh. The mark was in her forehead. She told me Jesus was calling; all desire to live was gone. She suffered much, but bore her suffering with patience.

The above was handed me by sister Addie P. Jackson, and I feel like adding my testimony as her unworthy pastor to the virtuous and well-ordered walk and conversation of sister Haines. One would not be in her company long before they would discover that her mind was so taken up with the things of the Spirit that there was little room for anything else. The last time I visited her she was too weak to say one word, but held my hand while her lips moved in an effort to speak. It was easy to see that she was resigned. She was the oldest member of Rock Springs Church, and greatly loved by all. We miss her, but our loss is her eternal gain.

J. G. EUBANKS.

Deacon Allen King was born in Mississippi July 1st, 1847, and died June 7th, 1917. He united with the church about the year 1884, and was ordained deacon in the year 1900. He was married to Annie Harmon. Three sons were born to them, one of whom, J. A. King, survives him, together with his widow, sister King, two grandchildren and one great-grandchild. He served the church faithfully to the end. He believed the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which he took for a long time. His mother-in-law, whose name was Janey Harmon, used to write for it a long time ago.

Written by his pastor, ROBERT KEITH.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, Elder D. M. Vail will fill the following appointments:

Adelbert Meads, August 29th, 7:30 p. m.; Jefferson, N. Y., August 30th, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.; Loren Meads, August 30th, 7:30 p. m.; Albany, August 31st, 1:30 p. m.; Schoharie village, August 31st, 7:30 p. m.; Schoharie meetinghouse, Sept. 1st, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.

E. R. KINNEY.

MEETINGS.

THE New Hope Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will be held with Mt. Zion Church, nine miles south of Greenville, Texas, near Cash, on the Midland R. R., beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in August. Those coming by rail will be met at Cash Thursday and Friday. All lovers of truth are invited, especially ministering brethren of our faith and order.

S. M. DICKENS.

THE Olive and Hurley Church will hold its annual two days meeting August 18th and 19th. All lovers of the truth are invited to be with us. South bound trains will be met at Ashokan Friday at 4:48 and 6:49 p. m., and northbound at 7:31 a. m. Saturday.

JOHN J. SECOR, Church Clerk.

THE Hazel Creek Association of Primitive Baptists will meet with Providence Church, in Appanoose County, Iowa, August 29th, 30th and 31st. This is the original Hazel Creek Association, the one that holds the records. Trains will be met at Plano or any convenient place. Visitors cordially invited.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator, Novinger, Mo.
H. C. CATE, Clerk, Moravia, Iowa.

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 85. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1917. NO. 16.

POETRY.

WHERE MY SOUL LONGS TO BE.

THERE'S a land far away, where my soul longs to be,
A peaceful and perfect abode;
I long there the King in his beauty to see,
My risen and glorified Lord.

When here upon earth he did suffer and die,
My guilt to remove far away;
An alien from God, but his blood made me nigh;
My life, my Redeemer, my stay.

I want to be where I can sing of his love
Without the besetting of sin;
I want to be free with our mother above,
And drink immortality in.

A stranger, a pilgrim am I on the earth;
I sigh for that heavenly land,
To reign with Christ Jesus forever thenceforth,
And be at the Father's right hand.

My Lord and my God, O to thee I aspire,
None have I in heaven but thee,
And none upon earth beside thee I desire;
Thy mercy extendeth to me.

A victim of sorrow, acquainted with grief,
I love not the world and its own;
I'd hie me away to that land of relief,
Exchanging the cross for the crown.

Believing in joy, when these tear-bedimmed eyes
On scenes of mortality close,
They'll open rejoicing on scenes in the skies,
That region of hallowed repose.

SEMMA E. CORDER.

PHILIPPI, W. Va.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JAMES I. 5. "Rich in Faith." LUKE XII. 21. "Rich Toward God."

How transitory, vain, unsatisfying, are all terrestrial things! Those whose portion is only in this life think otherwise. Give them their fill of this vain world and they have all they desire. They pant after the dust of the earth. (Amos ii. 7.) They say: "This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater: and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool! this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." O child of God, if earthly riches increase with thee, set not your heart upon them. "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing

to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."—1 Tim. vi. 17–19. It is very manifest in regard to all earthly possessions that we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. (1 Tim. vi. 7.) It was in contemplation of this that Job amidst most trying providences "arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshiped, and said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."—Job. i. 20, 21. Earthly riches are not forever; moth and rust corrupt, and thieves break through and steal. Riches take to themselves wings and fly away, or man dies and takes his departure and is forever separated from all. Riches profit not in the day of God's wrath, and though men trust in their wealth and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him that he should still live forever and not see corruption. (Psalms xlix. 6, 7, 9.) Though "all is vanity" is written upon earthly riches, yet how envious is the foolish, sinful heart of man of the prosperity of the wicked. At times we are made to observe it is shamefully true that the poor is hated even of his own neighbor, but the rich hath many friends. (Prov. xiv. 20.) But, child of God, listen to this gracious counsel of our God: "Godliness with contentment is great gain."—1 Tim. vi. 6. He that is rich toward God has imperishable riches; we have in heaven a better and an enduring substance far, far better than all this world affords, and it all is ours in association with our precious Lord Jesus Christ. In his unsearchable riches his people are made eternally rich toward God. Indeed, we are infinitely rich in him, for we are predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto the Father; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. The apostle Paul wrote, All men seek their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's. To vast multitudes of professors Christ is a mere fiction, an idle tale; they have no part, no treasures in him. It is a rare thing to find one who seeks the things of Jesus Christ. Many profess to do so, but it is but a shallow pretence, just a little lip religion. Beloved of God, let us hearken and examine ourselves by the following Scriptures: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."—1 John ii. 15–17. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."—Col. iii. 1–4. But in order to an appreciation and entrance into these things by faith there must be divine teaching, in which we are shown how wretchedly poor we are, so utterly destitute of all that can make us rich toward God. "The Lord maketh poor, and

maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory." —1 Sam. ii. 7, 8. It is the covenant work of the Holy Ghost to show unto the predestinated heirs of promise that by nature they are poor toward God; that they are destitute of those things which are altogether essential to acceptance and eternal happiness with God, with whom they have to do. Before the Lord begins his good work in a sinner he feels unconcerned, and feels no lack of anything; he knows not what wretchedness and poverty he is in; but in his own appointed time the Holy Ghost quickens the soul of this and that chosen vessel of mercy into divine life, and in the power, grace and light of this life we are moved and awakened to see and feel our lost condition as wretched, hell-deserving sinners. The prodigal son in the far off country began to be in want, (Luke xv. 14,) and the convicted sinner is in dire want, ready to perish. (Isaiah xxvii. 13.) The sinner is under law to God his Creator. The law demands obedience, that we should love him and serve him; demands righteousness and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. The Holy Ghost in his gracious operations upon the soul causes the poor sinner to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and that sinner finds himself destitute of such food, and he feels to be famishing under the curse of the law, which in his spirit he acknowledges to be holy, just and good. He also learns that he is deeply in debt to God, for all his days he has failed to render that obedience which is due to God. Instead of this, he has come short of the glory of God and has wandered far away in the lusts of his flesh, in alienation from God. "Pay me that thou owest," demands the law of God, and this wretched sinner's heart meditates terror, (Isaiah xxxiii. 18,) for he has nothing, and cannot pay the first farthing of his dreadful debt. He has no food, no raiment, no shelter; he is a perishing sinner, a wretched, homeless outcast, a vile transgressor, justly exposed to the wrath to come. (1 Thess. i. 10.) How shall such a sinner escape the damnation of hell? What will this poor sinner do? He cannot alleviate his woes, he cannot furnish himself with what he needs. He is brought low, and with his mouth in the dust he is moved by the Spirit of God to pray, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Such a sinner is now a beggar.

"A beggar poor, at mercy's door,
Lies such a wretch as I;
Thou knowest my need is great indeed,
Lord, hear me when I cry.

With guilt beset, and deep in debt,
For pardon, Lord, I pray;
O let thy love sufficient prove
To take my sins away."

"This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles."—Psalms xxxiv. 6. O what a mercy it is to be just such a poor man. It is declared of Christ our King: "He shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper."—Psalms lxxii. 12. Christ has all that they need, and they are enriched out of his fullness. It is in him that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath blessed the church with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, according as the Father hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. (Eph. i. 3, 4.) Quite a large portion of these spiritual blessings flow unto his people through Christ's sacrificial work. This is very blessedly de-

clared in the following few words of the apostle Paul: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."—2 Cor. viii. 9. The Word, the eternal Son of God, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (Phil. ii. 6–8.) All this was the carrying out of the eternal covenant purpose of God; it was declaring the covenant suretyship of Christ in behalf of the church, and was for her redemption, justification and glorification. "He made himself of no reputation; he emptied himself, he became poor." The Lord of glory, the Prince of life, was in the world as one in disguise. None of the princes of this world knew him, for had they known him they would not have crucified him. Christ was in the bosom of the Father, and in his doctrine declared the Father unto his own. To them was given an understanding that they might know him, and the works that he did also bore witness unto his chosen ones that he was the Lord from heaven, God manifest in the flesh, verily Emmanuel. But he was despised and rejected of men, the world hated him because he testified thereof that their works were evil. Only by divine revelation was he known by those whom the Father gave unto him. To them Christ manifested the Father's name and gave them his word. Once, unto three of the disciples, in a gloriously transcendent manner he manifested forth his eternal Godhead, and they were eyewitnesses of his majesty when they were with him in the holy mount. (Matt. xvii. 1–5; 2 Peter i. 16–18.) He was in the world, and the world knew him not; and though he was the Lord from heaven, yet being made of a woman, made under the law, being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and could say, The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. Jesus was sometimes hungry, weary, thirsty, but all this outward or physical poverty was but an infinitesimal portion of the poverty that is signified when it is said, Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor. It is when we see the God-man, Christ Jesus, made a curse for us that we can enter a little into the matter that he for our sakes became poor. It was for us he entered into and took upon him all the wretchedness, the shame, the reproaches, the sorrows, the curse. He endured the cross, despising the shame. He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. "He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."—Isaiah liii. 6. O what a sight to see Christ bearing our sins in Gethsemane and on Calvary. For our sakes he became poor, he sacrificed himself; he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, smitten of God and afflicted; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. O the travail of his soul; he poured out his soul unto death.

"Behold the darling Son of God
  Bowed down with horror to the ground;
Wrung at the heart, and sweating blood,
  His eyes in tears of sorrow drowned.
What pangs are these that tear his heart?
  What burden's this that's on him laid?
What means this agony of smart?
  What makes our Savior hang his head?

But O, behold that cursed tree,
Beneath his Father's wrath he lies;
Come, brethren, come to Calvary,
And see, was ever grief like his?
Nailed naked to the accursed wood,
Exposed to earth and heaven above,
A spectacle of wounds and blood,
A prodigy of injured love."

Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself. (Daniel ix. 26.) "He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken." —Isaiah liii. 8. In his love for his people he subjected himself to all deprivations. "He made himself of no reputation, he emptied himself," poured out all he could give; he lay down his life for the flock of God. For us he surrendered himself unto unspeakable wretchedness, unto the sorrows of death, the pangs of hell, he endured the curse of the law. Being exceeding sorrowful even unto death he poured out his soul an offering for sin. How sacred, how dreadful is the language of Christ: "Messiah shall be cut off, he shall have nothing."

"To make his sorrows quite complete,
By God deserted too."

No heart can conceive, no tongue can tell what was in that cup that Jesus drank up. O the unfathomed deeps of woe contained in that cry of the God-man, Christ Jesus, upon the cross of Calvary, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

"Much we talk of Jesus' blood,
But how little's understood!
Of his sufferings, so intense,
Angels have no perfect sense.
Who can rightly comprehend
Their beginning or their end?
'Tis to God, and God alone,
That their weight is fully known."

But how does all Christ's ignominy, his agonies, the pouring out his soul unto death, the shedding of his precious blood, his death upon the cross, make rich those for whom he sacrificed himself? I will tell you the wondrous story, the good news, the glad tidings of great joy. Do the things of Christ ever yield any joy to your soul? Our conditions as transgressors of the law of God are that we are under the curse, and we are held the very slaves of sin. Christ gave himself for our ransom. He gave not money, although all the gold and silver are his, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. He did not give as a ransom for us tens of millions of holy angels, but "he gave himself for the church an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor." (Eph. v. 2, 25.) We know that we are not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. (1 Peter i. 18.) He died to redeem us, what could he do more? He paid all the debt we owed, he satisfied all the claims of eternal justice in the law. "Ye are bought with a price," saith the apostle. O, no one can tell the price he paid in agonies, in blood. He gave all he could give, yes, our Emmanuel, the Word made flesh, gave himself a ransom for us.

"He bore all incarnate God could bear,
With strength enough, and none to spare."

Thus he purchased the church unto himself with his own blood. (Acts xx. 28; Exodus xv. 16.)

"Complete atonement thou hast made,
And to the utmost farthing paid,
Whate'er thy people owed;
How then can wrath on me take place,
If sheltered in thy righteousness,
And sprinkled with thy blood?
If thou hast my discharge procured,
And freely in my room endured
The whole of wrath divine;
Payment God cannot twice demand,
First at my bleeding Surety's hand,
And then again at mine."

Christ hath purchased the freedom of his people, and if the Son make us free we are free indeed; and much more, for not only hath Christ canceled with his precious blood all the charges, all the debts his

people owed, having redeemed them from the curse of the law, ransoming them from the power of the grave, redeeming them from death, but he has unsearchable riches, incorruptible, immortal glories to bestow upon them, to make them an eternal excellency. Christ in his ascension into glory received gifts for men, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. (Eph. iv. 8.) In these gifts we are made rich toward God, and he dwells with us and we with him. The everlasting covenant declares, "I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." Thus we become partakers of Christ's grace. The Spirit of Christ enriches the soul toward God, for we are exercised thereby to believe in, to worship and love our God; and the sacred fruits of his Spirit in us are that we have the power, the comforting blessedness to say, "Our Father which art in heaven; hallowed be thy name."

"I'm rich to all the intents of grace,
If thou, O Christ, art mine."

In our beloved Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and we are made wise unto salvation in him. Yes, Christ is the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory. There is such an opening up to us in Christ's gospel of the eternal mind of God, of the riches of his grace, of his everlasting love and mercy, yes, and of all the divine attributes. The world with its earthy wisdom knows not God, and because of this ignorance that is in them in the blindness of their hearts, they are alienated from God. All the wisdom of earth in comparison with this wisdom that is ours in Christ Jesus, which God ordained for our glory, is vanity, and will perish. The Lord says in Jeremiah ix. 23, 24: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." Christ is engraven, by the Spirit of the living God, upon the fleshly tables of the hearts of the chosen of God. (2 Cor. iii. 3.) Christ liveth in me, (Gal. ii. 20,) and the church is graven upon the palms of his hands, (Isaiah xlix. 16,) and he bears them ever for a memorial upon his heart before the Majesty in the heavens. (Exodus xxviii. 29.) The saints of God are endowed by the Holy Ghost with imperishable excellencies, immortal graces. The fear of the Lord is his treasure, and this he puts in our hearts; and by humility and the fear of the Lord are riches and honor and life. (Prov. xxii. 4.) "I will cause them that love me to inherit substance, and I will fill their treasures." The apostle Paul esteemed the knowledge of Christ above all things. Such was the excellency of this knowledge that he willingly suffered the loss of all things, and counted all things in comparison to be but dung, that he might win Christ and be found in him. (Phil. iii. 8, 9.) Vast multitudes despise this knowledge of Christ, whom to know is life eternal. Christ crucified is to the Jew a stumbling-block, and to the Greek foolishness, but to the called of God he is the power and wisdom of God. Christ our wisdom is better than rubies; yea, all things that may be desired are not to be compared with our precious Savior. (Prov. viii. 11.) O to win Christ! Dwell in my heart, O chiefest among ten thousand, then I can sing,

"I've found the pearl of greatest price!
My heart doth sing for joy,
And sing I must—a Christ I have!
O, what a Christ have I.

My Christ, he is the heaven of heavens,
My Christ what shall I call?
My Christ is first, my Christ is last,
My Christ is all in all."

O we are rich in faith in our precious Christ, and heirs of the kingdom which God hath promised to them that love him. (James i. 5.) No moth or rust shall corrupt the "true riches" of the heirs of promise, but there is an immortal blessedness and glory awaiting us in glory, reserved in heaven for us who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. We have now only a taste, an earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession. (Eph. i. 14.) Christ is in us the hope of glory; and we shall be crowned, not with a corruptible crown, but with an incorruptible. (1 Cor. ix. 25.) We shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away, (1 Peter v. 4,) and also a crown of righteousness which God will bestow upon all that love his appearing. We shall appear with him in glory. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."—Rev. ii. 10; James i. 12. Our portion in and with Christ is a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. (2 Cor. iv. 17.)

"Then, while I make my secret moan,
Upwards I cast my eyes and see,
Though I have nothing of my own,
My treasure is immense in thee."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

WEISER, Idaho, April 3, 1917.

DEAR ELDER KER:—If I knew I were worthy, by the mercy of God, to call you brother, I think I would be the happiest one on earth. I feel the wretchedness of sin very forcibly this morning; God seems far off, and the Savior, there must be one, but can it be possible that such a bundle of weakness, sin and wretchedness as I am has an interest in the goodness and mercy of the Son of God? It seems I can surely fellowship the expression of the apostle, "O wretched man that I am!" All has gone wrong, all is confusion, all disquietude. O my soul, why art thou cast down? Why this unrest? I find myself asking the question, What is the matter? Sin. O that I might live more up to the example set by our Elder Brother, that the blessed Sun of Righteousness would arise, and that the heavenly rays of the glorified Son of God would drive these dark clouds away. Yes, this I know is what I want; the comforting presence of Jesus is gone. Have you seen him whom my soul loveth? Can you tell me where he is? If I look this way, or that, I cannot behold him; there is a thick darkness that I cannot see through; my weakness, sin, rises up before me, and I quake with fear. What shall I do? All seems confusion and contradiction, and I a poor, helpless sinner. Even in this unpleasant, wretched condition one must learn that there is no help in an arm of flesh, and that there is no use of going to Egypt for help. Then where must we go? Paul in 2 Thess. i. 7, says, "And to you who are troubled, rest with us." He, as well as all the inspired writers, affirms that there is no permanent satisfactory place of abode in this life; that we are pilgrims in a strange land; that we have no continuing city here, but we seek a home not made with hands, where we will be free from all the disquieting effects of sin, yes, and sin itself. And to you who are worried, have I any company? or do the children of God have no trouble? Is the blessed Savior ever present to assure them they are his? I

hardly think they are all so blessed. O no, all must at times desire to return to their first love, all must feel that they are strangers, all must become thirsty and hungry, all must be troubled, or they could not "rest with us." What does it mean to "rest with us"? Under the law there was no rest, but continual obedience, for if they failed in one instance to keep all the law they were transgressors, and the law condemned; but under grace, he who made the perfect offering is faithful to forgive us our sins. This is where the apostle is resting. O let me rest there, too. He is resting in a perfected salvation; he is resting in the assurance, though our sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; he is resting in the assurance that Jesus came to save sinners, and that he finished the work. O let me rest with him. I need just such a Savior. I need a Savior that can save the chief of sinners; I need one who can take my feet out of an horrible pit, and put them on a rock, and put a song of praise in my mouth. This is a glorious place of rest for them that are troubled. All our worries, all our troubles, our unbelief and our sin must disappear when he who is our life appears. He takes us into his banqueting-house, and his banner over us is love; then all our sin, weakness, worries and troubles of every kind are gone, and we can say as did one of old, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." As he lives, we shall live also. Then, O tempest-tossed and tried child, come "rest with us," for all his promises are yea and amen. If you have trouble, if you hunger or thirst, if you find that the things you would not, you do, if you desire to be delivered from this awful condition, "rest with us," for Jesus has promised never to leave nor forsake, and will bring us off more than conquerors. Then, trembling child, "rest with us," in these sweet promises, for we know that what he has promised he is able to perform.

Yours in hope,

T. E. ATTEBERY.

KELLER, Texas, May 19, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I wish to give a brief account of a precious meeting I have just attended, held with Union Church of Old School Baptists, near Fairfield, Freestone Co., Texas, on the second Sunday in May, 1917, it being the regular time of their communion service. In the order of arrangement the writer was put into the stand to introduce the service, and preached the first discourse to a vast concourse of people, using as a text, "Behold, God is my salvation." At once that deep, sublime subject took possession of my mind, carrying me through the wonderful works of God—his eternal purpose in the salvation of poor, helpless sinners. The sovereignty, greatness and unlimited power of our eternal King shone within and around me with such resplendent glory and brilliancy that my soul was absorbed in the efficiency, suffering and glorified state of the church, and the victory of the Lamb over all the powers of darkness when he satisfied divine justice and delivered his bride, the church, whom he purchased with his own blood, from the curse of the law, embracing all the elect, given him in the covenant of redemption, and brought life and immortality to the heirs of promise, and to none others; a full and complete atonement all vested in the crucified and risen Lord, making manifest his eternal, unchangeable love to his poor, afflicted children scattered abroad over this wide world, who confess they are strangers and pilgrims on the earth,

because this world is not their home, but they seek one to come, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. This fact of the pure, pristine faith of the Lord Jesus ever directed and pointed them, as the chosen of God and precious, to the great Fountain of everlasting life, preached and proclaimed in types and shadows by prophets or holy men of old, who prophesied of the grace of God that should come unto them, announcing the glad news of the birth of the Messiah (Christ), his mission and ministerial work in the world, to save his people from all their sins, who by one offering hath forever perfected them that are sanctified by the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called. In the midst of this most profound, inexhaustible Bible subject I felt to realize the angel presence of our loving Savior, as I proceeded to portray the glory of God and a complete, finished salvation through Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep, the living water, in the house of King David, going to the inhabitants thereof for sin and uncleanness. Here the writer closed with an admonition to the church to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. I was followed by our highly esteemed brother in the gospel, Elder I. W. Bowers, pastor of the church, who arose solemnly before the people singing these words of the poet: "There is a place where christians meet," &c. As he sang, a glow of heavenly intelligence covered his features, and for about forty minutes he expounded the Scriptures of eternal truth to the congregation of more than three hundred people, having on the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of the Lord, preaching peace by Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all, taking up the same line of thought: that salvation first, last and all the time is of God, through our crucified and risen Redeemer, the positive certainty of the predestination of God. All that fell from his lips was in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, like apples of gold in pictures of silver, sweeter than honey and the honeycomb, showing from the testimony of the Bible that in the death, resurrection and ascension of the Lord the whole crop was secured. Then in the most kind and affectionate way he exhorted the church to a faithful discharge of their duty, to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free, to abound in the work of the Lord and be at peace among themselves, thanking all the people for their attention.

An intermission of five minutes was given, whereupon the church was called to order, and, preparation having been made, the writer and Elder Bowers waited on the church in distributing the emblems, the bread and wine. Supper being ended, began to wash each other's feet.

The whole service was fraught with great solemnity. The meeting closed in the sweet hope of eternal life, promised before the world began.

Dear editors, I have written this sketch by request of the brethren, who love the good old SIGNS and the sacred truths of the gospel published therein. We pray the Lord to bless and prosper for years to come the editors and publishers of the paper. I trust you may have space to insert the above report of this glorious meeting. Elder Bowers is a gifted preacher, an able expounder of Bible doctrine and a friend and supporter of the SIGNS.

I am sorry I have no new subscribers, but the pressure of the times is a cause.

Your brother in gospel bonds, I hope,

ASA HOWARD.

"THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME."

THESE words were spoken by the Savior to his disciples as regards the communion, or the Lord's supper. They, as well as all baptized believers, were to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them, and it was to be in remembrance of him. I have thought there was much that we must do, if we are the professed followers of Jesus, not to make us followers, and yet if we do not the things commanded by the Savior are we followers? or might it not be that we are merely professors, and not followers? The life that we now live in the flesh we live by the faith of the Son of God, is true, but is it not just as necessary to show our faith by our works? for surely faith without works is dead, being alone. The Savior said, If ye love me keep my commandments. The ordinance of baptism, to follow him in the baptismal waters, is to be a professed follower of Jesus. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, is to submit your case to the judgment of the church and abide by their judgment. If received by the church and baptized you are then taking the yoke upon you; you learn of Him. You are now a member, and as a follower of Jesus you are to do whatever your hands find to do; you as a follower of Jesus are to do all things and perform all things by the grace of God that is in you. The apostle Paul was an able preacher and an able apostle, and he was what he was by the grace of God, and the churches in all ages from his day are wonderfully blessed by what Paul did while in the ministry, and so every man must prove his ministry who has been given a dispensation of the gospel. We are not apostles, but we believe that every man has his gift to profit thereby, and as Paul has laid the foundation, others are to build upon that foundation. Paul, writing to the church at Corinth, says: "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest," and tried as by fire. The gold, silver and precious stones will remain, and he has his reward, but all the hay, wood and stubble will be consumed, and he suffers loss. Is it not possible that one might continually be gathering together and building hay, wood and stubble, and have nothing to show for his labors? So it proves that we are to do all things as unto Jesus, and it will abide, and we will find some evidences of gold, silver and precious stones in our journey. The communion, or Lord's supper, was to be observed by his apostles and all who have been received into church fellowship by baptism; they are to do it in remembrance of Jesus, discerning the body or church in her gospel order. Some of the Corinthian members were ignorant of what the communion of the body of Christ meant, and Paul wrote them: "When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating, every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What! have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God," and said also, "Whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth

and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." The condemnation was in one eating and drinking, not discerning the Lord's body, or in remembrance of the Savior, for he said, "This do in remembrance of me." Our feeling to be unworthy to partake is evidence that we are clothed with the wedding garment, clothed with humility, meekness, kindness, brotherly love, charity, forbearance, forgiveness. The wedding garment is made up of clothing from heaven, and we realize that we are unworthy to sit with our kindred in Christ. What a solemn time it was with the Savior and his apostles. Judas had received the sop, and Satan had taken possession of him, and he had gone out, and the Savior and the eleven partook of the bread and the cup, and so we pray that we may also realize in some degree the solemnity of the occasion, and in partaking do it in remembrance of the Savior.

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., June 29, 1917.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., April 30, 1917.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—O how dear all of like precious faith are to me. This morning as I sit in my home all alone, (still not alone, for I feel that my Elder Brother is present with me) I feel to pen a few lines, as to-morrow I shall see my eightieth birthday. In looking back over all the way I have come, how plainly I am made to see my Father's hand which has led me. Yes, when but a child he gave me to desire to know him whom to know is life eternal. O how plain it comes to me this morning, the way I was led until I was twenty-two years old, when the words were spoken to me, Thy name is written in the book of life. It seemed I heard them with my natural ear; but not so, for it is that still small voice that speaks. O how sweet it sounds, and it is never forgotten by those who hear it, although many are the dark seasons the children are called to pass through while traveling in this world of sin and sorrow. If we could always feel as in our first love, when all was joy; but it has been told us that if we would reign with him we must suffer with him; but what is our suffering compared with his when they gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall? What are our light afflictions? They are but for a moment, as it were; and when I think of the many blessings that have been given me all the way until the present, I feel that I have the greatest reason to praise him who has bestowed them all; not for any good in me. The thought comes, Why have I been left so long? What use have I been in the world? All I can say is, For so it has seemed good to my Father. In looking back over the years I have had a name and place in the church, I feel to rejoice that he has kept me from bringing reproach upon the cause that is dearer than all else to me. How few are left who were in the churches when I first found a home with those I love; but others have been raised up to fill their places, and the work goes on. Yes, our dear old SIGNS is as good to-day as when I first loved to read it, over sixty years ago. In reading Elder Durand's writing in April 1st number, on prayer, I was made to rejoice, and a dear sister wrote me she felt while reading it to take off her shoes, for she was on holy ground. Also Elder Lefferts' editorial on "Bible Reading," which gave me much comfort, for it told my feelings better than I could; as he says, in my early days I did verily eat the word of God, but have also known what it was to lay it down with a sigh of

keen regret; but sometimes we are given some portion of the glorious things that we enjoyed when it was sweet to us, and how often it is when we least expect it the fountain is opened and we drink of the springs flowing from that fountain which makes glad the city of our God; and how sweet to know that nothing can harm the founain or the city, for he who rules all never slumbers nor sleeps.

Please do with what I have written as you see fit, for I feel that you, dear editors, are the ones to judge what is written.

Your sister, I hope,

HELEN W. KINNEY.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., June 1, 1917.

DEAR SISTER CORDER:—I write to thank you for sending me the sketch of the life of your dear father, a book which I have wanted so much, and now since reading it I treasure it as the dearest book I have, except the Bible, which has been so much comfort through all my sorrows and afflictions. How my heart goes out to you in love and sympathy in your sorrow and loneliness, but God alone can comfort you, for he alone knows our sorrows and can all our sorrows heal. I do pray that he will be always near you, for I attest to the joy it is to have him near when in sorrow and affliction, for some of the sweetest seasons of rejoicing I have ever had were while I was suffering excruciating pain, both physically and mentally. At such times the precious Savior was ever near me, and I was singing and praising him all the day long; but when I am well and prospering I so often forget him and wander into by and forbidden paths. Well, sister, did you ever start to write a letter, and especially desire to write something cheering to one of God's little ones, and find yourself so cold and barren of any spiritual life that you were completely shut up? That is my condition now, and the tempter suggests that it is foolishness to write about God's love and mercy. O why am I thus tossed to and fro? Sometimes I am in the valley groveling in the dark, and know not what to do or where to go that I may find him whom my soul loveth, and then at other times I am up above earth and earthly things, feeling to know that he is mine and I am his. Then again I seem to drift along at ease, neither high nor low, feeling indifferent; then I mourn because I can neither mourn nor rejoice.

"'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought,)
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?

If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse
Who have never heard his name."

This describes me, but I must tell you of the seasons of joy I have had since I wrote to the SIGNS in April, although I am so unworthy of all. I could see nothing but my complaining in my letter, and was ashamed to send it, for it seemed like imposing my trials and sorrows upon the dearest people on earth, and I was loath to send it, but feared if I wrote another it would be no better, and to my great surprise when the SIGNS came it was the first piece in the paper, and about ten days later I received three letters in the same mail, one from Elder Barnes, of Touchet, Wash., one from Bessie Durand and one from Florence Pultz, each one telling of the comfort they had received from my letter, and since then I have received two others, one from sister Young, of Alberta, B. C., and one from a dear old brother in Indiana, and then came your most valued present. It makes me feel so humble, for surely the Lord went

with my little mite and blessed it to the comfort of others and then returned the comfort unto me, causing my cup to overflow with love and joy; and yet there is a feeling of sadness, for surely they do not know me as I am, poor both spiritually and financially and weak and disobedient, although I do try to do right, but the thorn is in my flesh, and if I am ever saved it is because His grace and mercy are extended to me; not for anything I have done or can do, but grace, free grace, and that through mercy. We have much to be thankful for, and our trust is in Israel's God, who never slumbers nor sleeps, who is the same unchangeable God that Abraham trusted in; therefore we have hope that when this life is over and our King comes in his glory to make up his jewels we shall be raised incorruptible to meet the Lord in the air with you and all the redeemed, there to praise Father, Son and ever-blessed Spirit, world without end. Amen.

Again I thank you for the book, it is so full of comfort to me.

Your little, unworthy brother in hope,
DAVIS BURCH.

JACKSON, Ga., June 15, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—It has been nearly three years since I addressed you, and what changes for the country, and what personal tribulations for you and for me have come in that time! I have been sick much, and like one of the sisters in her recent letter to you, I have begged that I might depart and be with Jesus. I also agree with sister Thomas, that the greatest prayer is the one saying, "Thy will be done." I am satisfied that amid sufferings it is only Christ in us that prays that prayer. I enjoyed Elder Ker's editorial; he chose the words of Jacob: "All these things are against me," and those of Paul, "For all things work together for good to them that love the Lord." I agree fully with him that there are no contradictions in the word of God. Everything given by divine inspiration is perfect. I know we are finite creatures, and we cannot see always that perfect agreement of every part, and are still less able to explain the glorious harmony. I am satisfied that in the hearts of God's people there is a felt understanding of the harmony of grace and works that they cannot tell fully to others. Paul, the great expounder of predestination and election, and of the faith that was the gift of God, "Not of works, lest any man should boast." James told his brethren that faith without works was dead, and said, "Shew me your faith without your works, and I will shew you my faith by my works." Paul the apostle besought so much the church to walk worthy of the high vocation wherewith we are called, and besought us to lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and to run with patience the race set before us. We are told to resist Satan and he will flee from us. We are told of the fearful penalties of walking in disobedience, and we have loving promises to be found only in obedience. Of ourselves we can do nothing; but Paul said he could do all things through Christ who strengthened him. There is the solution of the problem. We know that he is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end of our faith, and we know also that he has pointed out the path for our feet, and said, "This is the way, walk ye in it." We also know that he has promised the rod in disobedience, and that he has promised peace and comfort in obedience. The New Testament Scriptures are just teeming with the doctrine of faith and good works, and to me the har-

mony is so glorious and perfect that I could hardly exist spiritually without this union of the two. Many are confused and much sorrow to the little lambs results because of misunderstandings on this line. Let us accept the whole Scriptures, for we are told that they are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. We have no unnecessary Scriptures; you need them all, little flock, to withstand the onslaughts of Satan, who dared even to tempt the Son of God. We hear the Savior telling his disciples to go not in the way of temptation, and we hear him teaching them, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." I agree with the brother who said the Scriptures and the church are not progressive, as men claim progression. The Scriptures have been perfect from the beginning, they cannot be improved upon. Christ laid the foundations and built his church upon himself, and said the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Men only add alloy to the gold when they try to improve the Scriptures. Christ gave his last will and testament to his church, and he who adds to it or takes from it shall have the plagues written in this book. I feel to seek my Savior and ask him who suffered alone in Gethsemane, (for his disciples could not watch with him one hour) to remember me. I pray him who suffered the unspeakable anguish of the cross alone to be touched with a feeling of my infirmities. I pray him who arose and sitteth on the right hand of the Father to intercede for me.

Elder Lefferts, I met you once at Holly Spring Church, near Covington, and heard you deliver one of the greatest sermons on Jacob wrestling with the angel that I ever listened to. It was full of spiritual glory, and was so instructive, and it lingers with me yet.

Elder Ker, I can appreciate what you suffered in your recent bereavement. Ah, dear brother, all these tribulations are ripening and mellowing the saints, so that they shed the reflected image of Christ in them, and thus glorify our Father which is in heaven the more effectively. No affliction for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous (I realize that sorely), but by and by it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby.

God be with editors and correspondents everywhere, and may we all at last be received up into glory to dwell with him evermore.

Your sister in hope,

MITTIE DAVIS ROBERTS.

HOPEWELL, N. J., July 29, 1917.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—For so long I have felt to write you, but it did not seem I had anything to say, so it was easy to put it off. Many times, the last few days, it has come to me to write you. I now have that desire, but I desire also the guiding of my pen by that mighty One so there may be something of interest to you all. I do not feel I can add anything to the reading matter of the SIGNS, for it is all so good that I feel it could not be bettered by any one. I have been permitted to enjoy it so much. I do not have the desire to read and search the Scriptures as I would like, and I cannot make myself understand them. Often I feel I will just read the Bible a few minutes, when it seems a story or light reading of some kind would be more my choice, but my conscience will not allow it, so I read in the book of all books; and while I do not always under-

stand all I read, there at times comes a sweetness, and I am glad that I read the word. What a very depressing time to one and all we are now living in. It hangs heavy over us all, and for a time I could but cry unto the Father to give us peace, not asking if it were his will. But I was made to see how wrong I was, and could only ask his forgiveness and for submission to whatever his will might be, for I know all must be in accordance with his will and that it must have been predestinated by him. He knew all things from the beginning, and nothing could come but it is right in his sight; not one dare hinder or can hinder him or say, What doest thou? We are the work of his hand, and he has all right to do with us as is his pleasure. I did truly enjoy Elder Ker's writing in the last SIGNS. It was very strengthening to me. I was also given strength because of a dear boy whose name appeared among the ones drafted for war, and whose mother was so broken down and wept so. He wanted to know of her why she wept, and she told him she feared he would have to go to France. He asked her if she did not believe that whatever is to be will be, and did she not believe that God had predestinated all things, that if it were appointed him to die in France, must he not go there, and did she not feel the same God ruled there as here and would as well protect him there as here? Then he asked her, Where is your faith, where is your faith, mother? It was a great comfort to her, and it did certainly give me strength to know of such faith in him. How little we know how the young mind is traveling if we hear no expression. We have a number of such boys coming to meeting, and we all feel interested in them and count them as our dear ones. Yes, the Lord Jehovah reigns, and who are we to dictate how it should be? I do feel that I can see good in it all at the present time, for people are being kept in fear and can see they have little strength. Yes, I feel men are fearing before him and know that of themselves they are weak. The terrible robbing by means of high prices seems like taking bread from the poor. It makes one shudder and wonder where the scene will end. However, he is the same God in the storm as in the sunshine, and he knows what he doeth, so may we be submissive, earnestly desiring to love him more and serve him better. May we keep near each other, help to cheer, comfort and strengthen one another. I know I need all that can come to me, and desire to be able to cheer others. We are to comfort others with the same comfort wherewith we ourselves have been comforted of God, and I do desire ability to do this. Just now this world is a beautiful world, and if left at our ease it would be good enough for us so long as everything transpired to please us. We do need to be shaken and awakened to the truth that we are commanded to set our affections on things above, which do not perish with the using; to seek the Father's face, to serve him, and him alone; to know nothing among us save Jesus Christ and him crucified. How many of us have heeded these things continually? Instead, perhaps you have done as I, have been taken up with the things of the day. If not brought back to see where we stand, where would we go? I am afraid not where Jesus leads us, but would get more and more with the world. What pride, pleasure-seeking, rapidity of motion, great possessions, egotism, leadership and deceit seem to be uppermost in the world. May this poor, peculiar people have no part in it nor any desire for such, but may they be kept in faith, ever trusting

in the Father of all mercies, looking to him alone for their comfort and strength. May they see and feel his promise to be true, that as their day so shall their strength be. May they desire the will of the Father to be done, not theirs, and be wholly submissive to his most holy will, knowing he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. May they be kept from ever falling. It is so very saddening to see the numbers of true followers diminishing, as shown by the membership of our churches, but how little we know where trust and love are. I do desire that it please the Father to give strength to the many dear ones to come to the visible church. What a great rejoicing it would be. However, the Lord knows them that are his, and will perform his pleasure in them.

I have written too lengthily. Love to all.

MARY HILL TERRY.

COLFAX, Pa., June 10, 1917.

ELDER J. M. FENTON:—There have been many things passing through my mind I would like to say to you, but wonder now if I should take your time with what must seem so little. I have wished that I might express to the church at Springfield, and to you their pastor, and surely you are a pastor to me, too, how much it is to me, that you do not seem to mind that I come among you so often, but I feel so welcome and at home. I have enjoyed again and again the last meeting, which was so much to me. It is marred only by the weakness of the flesh. I fear as you all come to know me you cannot welcome me. Why should we complain of any of our conditions in life? Does not our heavenly Father know what is best for us? I truly have many blessings, and trust I am really thankful. This morning I can only see the wonderful goodness of God. Last Sunday morning my mind was sweetly and comfortingly filled with thoughts of the resurrection; not with the wondrous beauty that I saw: The building of God, the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, but trust I was given to know for myself that Jesus is the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. We live because Jesus lives. He is our resurrection and our life. Do we not know in our experience that Jesus died, that to us he was in the grave? and if Jesus was in the grave, so was each subject of grace; but now surely he is a risen Jesus; he appears to us in the same flesh as before the resurrection. That he appeared with the same body, it seems to me proves that we experience the resurrection power here in our own natural bodies. As we have borne the image of the earthy, may we also bear the image of the heavenly. In what a sweetly comforting way he appeared at different times to his followers after the resurrection. What wonders must be in the fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians.

LAURA GREENLAND.

RANDOLPH, La.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—It is my desire to commune with the poor, cast down, afflicted people of the living God. You are the only people I have ever found that are dear to my soul, and that can talk and write to my comfort and understand my speech. I realize my insufficiency of myself to do any good thing. My desire is that the Lord will cleanse me from all sin and iniquity, keep me and constrain me by love divine to speak and meditate acceptably in his sight, but I often find that his blessed

face is hid from me, and I then fear he is gone forever. How terrible it is to be in this desert of despair, to fear and daily hunger and thirst, mourn and weep, cry and beg for deliverance, for all we have is spent and a mighty famine has arisen. We long to be free from sin; we want to be covered or robed with his righteousness, justified freely by his grace, behold his face in blessed peace and worship him in the beauty of holiness. We want to hear his loving voice speaking to our troubled souls, saying, Peace be unto you. As I live, ye shall live also. Fear not, it is I. O how sweet to feel his dear and blessed presence here in this wilderness of woe, and just think, we only know in part, but there we shall see him as he is, for we shall be like him. May the Lord grant us this glorious gift, to be made alive in the glorious image of his dear Son, who was dead, but is alive for evermore. He said, I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go away I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also. The question is ringing in my mind, Is this blessed promise mine? The only answer I can give is, I hope through the mercy of God it is. Puny man is under the delusion of Satan, saying or speaking many lies in the name of Christ, and this is only a fulfillment of the Scripture, For many shall come in my name, and shall deceive many; and even the man of sin is sitting in his temple shewing himself to be God, and they are doing many miracles in the sight of them that have the mark of the beast; at least it seems to me that the fig tree is almost in the stage of summer, but that is known only to the Lord. O dear people, I do feel that your redemption draweth nigh, because the abomination of desolation (which I believe is pride in the church) spoken of by Daniel the prophet, seems to me to have made its sad appearance. O, may the Lord not deal with us according to our ways; may he remember we are but dust, and renew us to repentance, and not remove the candlestick, but guide us by his blessed Spirit into all truth, that we may speak forth the truth in love, not having the person of man in view, nor for filthy lucre's sake, but for the glory of God and the good of his little ones, which includes us all, if I am one. I have never been able to get beyond a little hope; sometimes it is in lively exercise, and again, as it were, asleep. I love to hear and read the Lord's dealings with his people.

I have written more than I thought to when I began. May the Lord bless his truth.

Your little unworthy brother in hope,

R. W. RHODES.

INFORMATION WANTED.

ANY one knowing the present address of Elder E. W. J. Adams will confer a favor by forwarding the same to M. L. Liles, Route 3, Henderson, Texas.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1917.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JEREMIAH V. 21; EZEKIEL XII. 2.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I would like for you at your earliest convenience to explain through the columns of the SIGNS what you understand by the Scripture recorded in Jeremiah v. 21, also Ezekiel xii. 2, whether the characters mentioned are the unenlightened children of God or unregenerated people.

Yours in hope, V. W. FOSTER.

BRIDGEPORT, Texas, July 22, 1917

Jeremiah v. 21, reads as follows: "Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not." Ezekiel xii. 2, reads as follows: "Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not: for they are a rebellious house."

When the world is given to pleasure and money-making it is pleasant to know there are a few scattered over this broad land who think on the name of the Lord and want to know what his word teaches. How vain is all else, yet how taken up with perishable things many of us are! How different we feel and act from what we did in our "first love"! Then we had but little time for anything except the things of the kingdom of God; now with many of us those things are the last to be considered. Then our hearts were soft and our manner gentle, but now our hearts are like flint and our manner cool and indifferent. We often wonder if it will always be so. O for a refreshing shower from the Lord to cause the plants of his garden to revive and show forth his praise. He has from time to time called upon the north and south winds to blow upon his garden, and except he does so again "all will come to desolation."

We hope that such thoughts as we have on the Scriptures named at the head of this article may be satisfactory to brother Foster. In the days of old the Lord spake unto the fathers by the prophets, and often messages of good will and commendation were sent them, and they rejoiced in the faithfulness and longsuffering of God. Now and then they were reminded of the promise of deliverance from sin through the "blessing in the cluster," and for that reason the sinful and rebellious nation could not be destroyed. Among the people of God in that age of the world there were sinners stiffnecked and rebellious, who needed rebuke and judgment visited upon them from time to time. These are the kind spoken of in the texts called to our attention by brother Foster. We should remember that all the seed of Abraham were the Lord's typical people, and the rebellious sinners filled their place equally with the faithful and upright. Such had of necessity to be, since that people were the true type of the gospel church. Had all been men of faith and steadfastness they could not have been the type. Had all been stiffnecked and rebellious they could not have been the type. Many lessons have been taught which were altogether wrong from Old Testament Scriptures. Some men of prominence among our people have applied declarations belonging entirely to the Israelites to the nations of the world. Whatever

was said by the true prophets was of God, and spoken directly to Israel, therefore it matters not what was said, it was not said to any other people or nation. Many things said seem very strange to be addressed to the Lord's people, yet the ungodly needed all that was said to them, and strange to say very few ever were benefited by either judgment or rebuke. They loved the ways of death, hence satisfied their lusts living in unrighteousness. They had eyes to see, because they were the Lord's people and had the law and oracles of God, yet they understood not. They had ears to hear what the prophets said, yet hearkened not. Following their own ways and inclinations they wandered far from the law and precepts of the Lord.

Coming now over into the gospel dispensation, not one word of gospel instruction, reproof, rebuke, exhortation, belongs to any man, woman or child except those embraced in the spiritual Israel of God. These blessings are to the end "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." But just as was the case of old, so it is now: some are true, faithful and steadfast, abounding in the work of the Lord, satisfied with the goodness of the Lord's house. On the other hand, there are those who live as they list, gratifying the pride of the eye and the desires of the heart. Apparently these are not related to the steadfast at all, yet they are the children of God. There have ever been those who have earnestly contended for the faith once delivered unto the saints, rejoice in Jesus Christ and have no confidence in the flesh; while on the other hand, there are those who have followed their own inclinations, have denied the faith and preach salvation by works and teach for doctrine the commandments of men. Judgment, rebuke and exhortation are sent them, but as that class among the Israelites did not see (understand) or hear (heed), so these turn away from the true servants of God and wander farther and farther away from the right way. Paul tells us that in every great house there are not only vessels of honor, but some of dishonor. Be sure to remember that both dwell in the same house and fill their respective places. Let us remember also that Ezekiel, called the son of man, was told that he dwelt in just such a house. Isaiah said he dwelt among a people of unclean lips, and confessed that he was no better than they, which is characteristic of the Lord's children. Paul said he was the chief of sinners, and that it was not meet that he should be an apostle, but by the grace of God he was.

Careful reading of the epistles will show that each of them is addressed either to some church or special individual who was a subject of grace, so all that was said by the Savior in the way of rebuke and condemnation was said to the Jews and of them, hence let us not look outside of the church for any character to whom we may apply any part of God's word.

We hope that our readers, as well as brother Foster, may consider what we say, and the Lord give us all understanding. K.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

THE FATAL STONE.

(1 Samuel xvii. 49.)

BROTHER George Conner, of Hopewell, N. J., has asked us to write on the meaning of the five stones which David chose from the brook, one of which proved fatal to the giant Goliath. That David is a type of Jesus, is generally believed by Old School Baptists, therefore that point needs not to be dwelt upon. Jesus, through death, destroyed death and also him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. We would say, therefore, that Goliath represents the devil, or the adversary of the people of God. Before the appearance of David at the battle front, the presence of Goliath there made the Israelites dismayed and greatly afraid, so greatly afraid that they fled from him. So does unrighteousness in any or all of its forms terrorize the hearts of God's people until Jesus appears for their deliverance. The weapons which the Lord chooses to destroy his enemies are mean and insignificant in and of themselves, but they show thereby how God can mightily endow weakness with strength and littleness with divine nobility in order to overthrow that which evilly boasts itself of greatness and wisdom, exalting itself above all that is called God. Shamgar, the third judge over Israel, slew six hundred men with an ox-goad and delivered Israel in his day. Gideon's little army of three hundred men equipped with trumpets, pitchers and lamps, accomplished the destruction of the Midianites. Samson slew a thousand men with the new jawbone of an ass. Many instances might be noted from Scripture to show the employment of little things to accomplish the infinite purposes of Jehovah. In other words, weapons in themselves utterly ineffective and useless are made to effect ends which could not be achieved by weapons devised by men especially for those ends. As Paul says in writing to the Corinthians: "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence." David's success lay not in his unerring aim, nor in any especial virtue in the little stones from the brook, but in the fact that God was with him. Jesus' triumph rested in the sublime truth that he was Immanuel, that is, God in the flesh. Had he been any less than this he could not have overcome death, hell and the grave, no matter what weapons he might have used. As David's success owed itself to the presence of God with him, so Jesus' work knew no defeat because he was God incarnate. These five stones chosen by David from the brook were "smooth;" they had been subjected a long time to the action of the water, which had worn them smooth. This water was in a brook, a stream of running water. The brook was water in action, in other words, living water. Therefore, we think this brook represents the water of life. We think the five stones represent the five gifts of the ministry mentioned by Paul in Ephesians: apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers and evangelists. Any one of these gifts in the hands of the spiritual David, Jesus, can deliver the people of God from conditions full of distress. As those five stones were nothing of themselves, so the men whom the Spirit calls and qualifies to the ministry are nothing of themselves. Saul's armor, made especially by men for the uses of war, could not help David in his purpose; so the

learned men of Jewish Jerusalem who had given their time and minds to the study of the law and the prophets were passed by when Jesus chose men to feed his sheep, and he chose instead men with no natural qualifications whatever; ignorant and unlearned men some of them, and these were subjected to the action of the Holy Spirit, the brook of running water, to shape and polish them fit for the Master's use. The words of Isaiah here suggest themselves: "In the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft: in his quiver hath he hid me." While we have no doubt these words primarily refer to Jesus himself, yet they apply even to Isaiah in a secondary sense, and to every servant whom God chooses and sends to labor in his vineyard. The Spirit of Jesus shoots them at a mark, and they always hit that mark. The work of the Lord never miscarries. The preaching of the gospel saves them that believe. The believer hears the certain sound of the trump of God and is saved from error and delusion, from the doctrines of men, and is established in the doctrine of God, built up on his holy faith, comforted and edified in the truth. Jesus commanded his disciples at the grave of Lazarus to loose Lazarus and let him go; so they unbound the grave-clothes from about him and set him free. Thus does the gospel ministry embodied in the called disciples preach liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound. This ministry is enforced by mighty grace, and is shot by the hand of the spiritual David straight at its mark, which it never misses. Never was preaching breath spent in vain, the gospel is not wasted. The bulwarks of error and of legalism are shattered before the spiritual demonstration of the truth in the power of the gospel. But O what refining is undergone by these stones in the brook before they are prepared for David's sling. Look what Peter and what Paul and what the others have had to experience to make them fit for the Master's use. Peter had to be put in Satan's sieve and thoroughly purged from all self-righteousness before he could strengthen his brethren. Paul, the upright Pharisee, had to become a beggar for mercy in the Damascus road before he could preach the gospel of which he was never ashamed. This erosion by God's Holy Spirit is a very painful experience that God's servants must necessarily have to enable them to preach his truth, before they are stones smooth enough to go in the Shepherd's bag and be used in his sling. That servant of God who manifests most perfect courage in the presence of the enemy is that one who is most humble within himself, whose whole confidence is in his God, and who has suffered the loss of all things for Jesus' sake. L.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, Elder D. M. Vail will fill the following appointments:

Adelbert Meads, August 29th, 7:30 p. m.; Jefferson, N. Y., August 30th, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.; Loren Meads, August 30th, 7:30 p. m.; Albany, August 31st, 1:30 p. m.; Schoharie village, August 31st, 7:30 p. m.; Schoharie meetinghouse, Sept. 1st, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. E. R. KINNEY.

PLEASE publish the following appointments:

Saturday 2 p. m. and Sunday 11 a. m. and 2:30 p. m., Sept. 22nd and 23rd, Beulah Church, Brooke, Canada; Wednesday, 26th, 7:45 p. m., London, Canada; Thursday, 27th, 7:45 p. m., Brantford, Canada. Between these appointments I hope to be with the friends at Dunwich, Duart and St. Thomas.

D. M. VAIL.

ELDER D. M. Vail will preach, Providence permitting, at brother Morris Faulkner's, Margaretville, Monday, August 20th, 7:45 p. m., and at sister P. O'Connor's, Halcottville, August 22nd, 7 p. m.

GEORGE RUSTON.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mary E. Beeman, nee Howsare, was born near Oldtown, Md., April 25th, 1853, and died in Tiawah, Okla., July 11th, 1917, aged 64 years, 2 months and 16 days. Her mother died when she was two weeks old, leaving the infant in the care of her father's mother, Mrs. David Howsare. Her early life was spent in the southern part of Bedford County, Pa. At about the age of fifteen years she joined the old order of Christians (not Campbellites), her grandfather being a preacher of that denomination. In 1875 she joined her father near Lexington, Mo., where she resided for three years. Returning to Pennsylvania, she made her home part of the time in Rainsburg, near the Providence Old School Baptist Church, where for the first time she heard the joyful sound of the gospel, which to her mind was greater riches than anything she had ever known in the Arminian world. Though yet young, and all the church members old and old-fashioned, she, like Paul, when it pleased God to reveal his Son in her, conferred not with flesh and blood, but immediately united with the church, and was baptized by Elder Thomas Rose on the first Sunday in December, 1879. During all her after life the strong doctrine of grace and the firm decrees of Jehovah were her meat and her drink. She could never yield to looseness in order or doctrine. The SIGNS was her special friend. She often led the singing in the churches and at associations. She served the Juniata Association as clerk one term. On Nov. 23rd, 1884, she was married to Elder J. F. Beeman, and with her husband and family resided in Fayette County, Pa., until March, 1891, when we moved to Missouri. In 1897 we moved to Oklahoma, which was her home until the Lord called her. In 1901, when the Ebenezer Church was organized, she was one of the constituent members. For four and one-half years our home in Helena, Okla., was the monthly meeting-place of the church, and it was her delight and privilege to entertain the "remnants" of God's elect, who came long distances to worship God in spirit and in truth. After coming to eastern Oklahoma, in 1910, she again was a constituent member of a little band called "Remnant," organized Nov. 9th, 1912. In early life she had few opportunities for an education and literary improvement, but all the spare moments of her after life were given to the accumulation of the knowledge of current events and in reading the Scriptures and Old School Baptist papers. She became afflicted eighteen months ago with dropsy, but a year ago the disease seemed to be under complete control, and a general weakness seemed to be the only burden until the last few months, when the insidious malady appeared again. She was not confined to her room until the last fifty-eight hours of her life. Sunday, the 8th inst., at 11 p. m. she became paralyzed in her right side and in her tongue, so that she was never able to speak again, although conscious at times. I asked her, Is Jesus still your Rock? She nodded, Yes. Is the Lord your only trust? She nodded, Yes. Is the Lord still your Shepherd? She nodded, Yes. She had faith in God, and died in faith. Her last moments, sitting up in the chair, were calm and peaceful; so she fell asleep. Her children were all present: Mrs. Nelle Waller, Oscar Beeman and Etta Beeman, of Tiawah, Okla., and Mrs. Leona Gibson, of Cherokee, Okla., also six grandchildren. Besides these she leaves five stepsons, one stepdaughter-in-law with their families of fourteen stepgrandchildren and two stepgreat-grandchildren, with the sorrowful writer, a sister, Mrs. Alice P. Erb, of Johnstown, Pa., and many friends to mourn.

We had the services of Elder Thomas R. Pittman, of Havana, Kansas, at the funeral on the 12th inst., who declared the unsearchable riches of Christ to those assembled at our home on the occasion.

Brethren who have passed through like afflictions and sorrows know something of my loss and of my loneliness. I know that I must submit to the mighty hand of God, but O Lord, how my heart bleeds.

J. F. BEEMAN.

Jesse Columbus Jinkins, son of G. C. and L. E. Jinkins, was born Jan. 13th, 1890, and departed this life May 28th, 1917, making his stay on earth 27 years, four months and 15 days. He was taken sick April 22nd with hemorrhage of the brain, and suffered untold agony for five weeks. He was born and reared in Hickman County, Tenn., never leaving his father's home. He was a good, obedient son, loved by all who knew him, and was a great favorite with little children. He was married Nov. 19th, 1916, to Miss Nora Warren. After his marriage they lived near his father's house. He never made a profession of faith until after he was taken sick, but felt he was a condemned sinner before God. They moved him back to his father's house, and while carrying him on the cot they all thought he was dying, but he revived, and when asked if he knew where he was, said, "I am at father's." Then he looked up and smiled and told his people about what he had seen and heard; tried to tell them that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son to redeem all who believed. He told what the Lord had done for him, and told his mother that he had an Old Baptist experience; said he had met his Lord in peace. He said to his eldest sister (Berbin), "I have suffered more than the rest of the family, but when I get through with this I will be done with suffering, for my debts are all paid." O, he left such sweet evidence. I visited him just one week before he died, and will never forget his smiles mixed with tears as he began to tell me of his hope. He said, "Esther, I have got to be a regular Old Baptist

since I have been sick." Then he told me some things which he had seen and heard. He ate his breakfast a few minutes before he passed away, and without a struggle quietly fell asleep never more to awake in this world, but we feel assured when Christ shall come to gather his people home his name will be found written in the book of life, and he will be fully prepared to ascribe glory and honor to his Lord and King. He leaves wife, father and mother, four brothers, three sisters and a host of relatives and friends to mourn his absence, but they feel their loss is his gain, as he told them so often of his bright home and was so willing to go.

Written by his cousin,

ESTHER JINKINS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Franklin Terry, N. J., $1.00; J. C. Nelson, Ky., $1.00; Mrs. Frank Robey, Va., $1.00; Mrs. Kenneth Findlayson, Canada, $3.00; Mrs. Mary E. Lake, W. Va., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE New Hope Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will be held with Mt. Zion Church, nine miles south of Greenville, Texas, near Cash, on the Midland R. R., beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in August. Those coming by rail will be met at Cash Thursday and Friday. All lovers of truth are invited, especially ministering brethren of our faith and order. S. M. DICKENS.

THE Olive and Hurley Church will hold its annual two days meeting August 18th and 19th. All lovers of the truth are invited to be with us. South bound trains will be met at Ashokan Friday at 4:48 and 6:49 p. m., and northbound at 7:31 a. m. Saturday.

JOHN J. SECOR, Church Clerk.

THE Hazel Creek Association of Primitive Baptists will meet with Providence Church, in Appanoose County, Iowa, August 29th, 30th and 31st. This is the original Hazel Creek Association, the one that holds the records. Trains will be met at Plano or any convenient place. Visitors cordially invited.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator, Novinger, Mo.
H. C. CATE, Clerk, Moravia, Iowa.

THE Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, Providence permitting, will hold their annual or yearly meeting the second Saturday and Sunday following in September (8th and 9th). Brethren and friends are cordially invited.

Done by order of the church.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association will convene with the Old School Baptist Church of Andes and Middletown, at Union Grove, Andes, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, September 12th and 13th, 1917. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. Those coming by way of Kingston or Oneonta will change at Arkville for the Delaware & Northern R. R. Trains will be met Wednesday morning and brethren conveyed to the place of worship.

J. H. DICKSON, Church Clerk.

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

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"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 85. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1917. NO. 17.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BANKS, Ala., July 2, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—For some time I have been impressed to write my views on some of the first commands given to Israel after they were delivered from Egyptian bondage (which is typical of the law of sin and death), but because of my ignorance and weakness have refrained from making the attempt until now, and I now see very clearly that I can do nothing of myself in this work. This law is of vast importance to the household of faith, and it is my desire that they should know the import of it. We will first notice the preparation of the Lord, and the charge he gave Moses on Sinai before the reception of the law. "In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai, * * * and were come to the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount. And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." —Exodus xix. 1-6. I take Moses and the children of Israel to be a type of Christ and his people in the gospel day. This is admitted by all Baptists, I think. Then let us notice the type in detail, and overlook nothing, or we cannot be correct in our views of the antitype. We notice the same day Israel went out of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai, and this seems to be the condition of all heaven-born souls, they immediately find themselves in the wilderness of Sinai, or sin, and our spiritual Moses is our counselor, and he hath taken away the first law that he might establish the second. The first was written on tables of stone, the second in the heart, hence we have the letter of the law and the spirit of it. So it is the spirit of it that applies to us to-day, for the letter killeth, but the spirit maketh alive. Then if we live in Christ we should not

look to the letter of the law, for this is what the heathen do. We as the children of light should have nothing to do with this law of Sinai. The Lord said to be ready against the third day, and he charged Moses to set bounds unto the people, "saying, Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death: there shall not an hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether it be beast or man, it shall not live." "And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and sanctified the people; and they washed their clothes." This shows us that the preparation of the heart, together with the answer of the tongue, is of the Lord. One might say the children had something to do with it: they had to wash their clothes, had to do their part, and they did have to do their part, and Moses pointing to Christ was the cause of it; it was not a voluntary act of theirs, Moses required it. So it is with every sinner when God begins a work in his heart, and tells him to wash his robe and make it white in the blood the Lamb and be ready to hear his words when he comes down on this Sinai to speak his law to his benighted soul. "And he said unto the people, Be ready against the third day." "And it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled." This points to that mighty trumpet of the gospel which is the power of God unto salvation to every believer. All Israel heard this trumpet; so does spiritual Israel hear it to-day throughout earth's remotest bounds, regardless of the mission workers. Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God. They did not volunteer, they were brought; and Mount Sinai altogether smoked, because the Lord descended upon it in fire. This third day is a memorial day with the child of God. When God comes down on the mount to talk to his people in the morning there is a thick cloud in our experience, so the natural eye cannot see him. The thunderings and lightnings of his mighty power are wonderful, and we feel that destruction has justly come to us, and we beg for mercy. How we are abased, and how we exalt the Lord. Yes, dear people, this was a wonderful sight for Israel to behold, and so it is with you in your experience. You see the Lord descend upon Sinai, which represents your nature in the law system of salvation; you see it on fire by the presence of our God. It will not endure; the foundation of it is shaken, showing its inferiority, fallacy and weakness. This is the way the Lord gets this law religion out of his people: he shakes it out and burns it out. Man cannot get it out. We can wound, but cannot bind up, but our God can do all of these things; great and holy is he. Well might Israel praise him, for he is the only God. The Lord called Moses up to the top of the mount and said unto him: "Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze, and many of them perish. And let the priests also, which come near to the Lord, sanctify themselves, lest the Lord break forth upon them." Moses was just like most of the Baptists of to-day, he did not think the people could break through, as he had given them the charge and set bounds. So the Baptist people do not think God's people can break through to gaze, because Christ has set bounds and given the charge. Now this

all means something; to break through, to gaze, is to disregard God's word and to follow the carnal mind, which claims man can gaze on God and his wonderful works. The leaders of the law religion break through, they say, and tell you you can by your works walk right on into heaven. Now if God's people here in time while he is leading them break through to gaze in their ignorance they shall perish. There is one other expression of the Lord to this people I wish to notice before taking up the law, the fifth verse of the same chapter: "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine." Now for us to be a peculiar treasure unto him is based on a condition. Here I ask the questions, Did all national Israel keep his covenant? Did not some of them break it? Did not three and thirty thousand fall in one day for disobedience? Are they not falling in the same manner in the antitype?

Now come the commandments, twentieth chapter. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." There is no command of more importance to those born of the Spirit than this one, and if you keep this one you are absolutely qualified to keep all of them. If ye love me keep my commandments. In Mark xii. Jesus says, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself. If ye do this ye keep all of the law, for on this hang all the law and the prophets. Your neighbor is your brother in the faith. The first command which I quoted means this: Thou shalt worship nothing but the true and living God, who delivered thee. He is a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love him and keep his commandments.

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." This is to take his name in idle worship, not prompted by faith, and advocating things that would reproach his high and lofty cause. "For the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy." Many of the people of God have thought this was the Jewish sabbath or the Catholic Sunday, but this sabbath under consideration was not ordained or set apart by any man or set of men, but by the God of heaven. This sabbath is Jesus. It is written of the creation that the evening and the morning were the first day, second day, third day, and so on. This is Jesus, and he is the resting-place for the weary sinner; and when we find this sabbath of rest we should keep it holy; it is a holy day to the child of God. He is every day to the poor, weary sinner; then should we not keep him holy? He is the first day and every day; he is hallowed.

"Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." In the divine family there is neither male nor female; so God is our Father and the church our mother, and if we honor them our days shall be long in the given land.

"Thou shalt not kill." We cannot believe that some of these commands have a spiritual meaning and some a natural, but we take the position that they all have a spiritual meaning and must be spiritually discerned, for God's words are spirit and they are life, and they must be spiritually discerned. To kill naturally is to murder and destroy, and such are called murderers. In a spiritual view

one that is against God and his people and would destroy them is a murderer. Jesus said to his disciples, The time will come when they that kill you will think they are doing God service. Men cannot kill a spirit. If it had been in their power they would have killed the God of heaven when they killed the body of his Son; so to kill in a spiritual point of view is to hate our brother. It is written, A murderer cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. It is impossible for an unclean spirit to enter the kingdom of heaven. Moses and David both were murderers literally. Shall we say that they were disinherited? God forbid.

"Thou shalt not commit adultery." None but God's people can commit adultery as set forth in this command. Of course we all know what adultery is with men: it is to mix or mingle, a violation of the marriage vow. We are married to Christ, and if we begin to mix with any other and violate the marriage vow or contract we are guilty of adultery. It is written that such shall not inherit the kingdom. This means in this time world, and does not apply any further. Those of God's people who commit adultery have denied the faith; they have turned against the commandment delivered unto them, and such have no place in the kingdom of heaven, because they did not keep the faith; they are not true to their Husband.

"Thou shalt not steal." To steal literally is to take that which is not yours secretly; if it is done openly it is called taking by force or robbing. We need not say that man cannot steal from God, when God said men robbed him. How did they rob him? In their offerings taking that which belonged to God greedily and wilfully. So they steal from him in their tithe offerings, stealing honor, glory and power from him. Some born of him claim the power, honor and glory of their salvation here in time. This is just a claim; our God did not give it to them, they stole it, and God will inflict the penalty, for it is written, Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be. Every man is every man born of God.

Dear brethren, if in your judgment you think this meet for the lovers of truth you may publish it; it is more lengthy than I expected.

Your brother in hope,

J. E. FINCHER.

CASEY, Iowa, June 21, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—With this I send you Scripture views from parts of the Old Testament concerning Christ and the church. I believe that God only can interpret the same. Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion, I will declare the decree. The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee (alluding to Christ's birth). For thou hast possessed my reins; thou hast covered me in my mother's womb (Mary). I will praise thee; for I (Christ) am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works, and that my soul (his body) knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members (of his body, the church,) were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. (That was the book Christ told the seventy their names were written in.) Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen (us Gentiles) for

thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. (This country is one of the uttermost parts alluded to.) His name shall endure for ever, his name shall be continued as long as the sun, and men shall in him of all nations call him blessed. I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth; my mercy will I keep for him for evermore, my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. Let Mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Juda be glad because of thy judgments. Walk about Zion, and go round about her, tell the towers thereof, mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever, he will be our guide even unto death. Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion. The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels; the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place. Thou (Christ) hast ascended on high, thou hast received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. In Juda is God known, his name is great in Israel. In Salem (the church) also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion. Let thy hand be upon the Son of man, man of thy right hand, whom thou hast made strong for thyself. Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth; my mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed (the saints) also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof. Clouds and darkness are round about him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. A fire goeth before him and burneth up his enemies round about. His lightnings enlightened the world. The earth saw and trembled; the hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. Zion heard and was glad, and the daughters of Juda rejoiced because of thy judgments. O Lord, thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion, for the time to favor her, yea, the set time, is come, when the Lord shall build up Zion; he shall appear in his glory. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sake I will now say, Peace be within thee.. He that goeth forth (Christ) and weepeth, bearing precious seed (the children of his kingdom), shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him (to that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens). For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell: for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread. I will also clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall shout aloud for joy. Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore. The Lord shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the Lord, praise the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion. For he hath

strengthened thy bars of thy gates; he hath blessed thy children within thee. He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat. I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth. As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love. A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed (to all not born of the Spirit). I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night. There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number (false churches). My dove, my undefiled, (not defiled by false doctrine) is but one: she is the only one of her mother, (Jerusalem above) she is the choice one of her that bare her. Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners? What shall one then answer the messengers of the nation? That the Lord hath founded Zion, and the poor of his people shall trust in it. And the key of the house of David will he lay upon his shoulder (Christ), so he shall open, and none shall shut, and he shall shut, and none shall open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his Father's house (the house not made with hands). In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden (the sins of his people) that was upon it shall be cut off: for the Lord hath spoken it. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. What shall one then answer the messengers of the nation? That the Lord hath founded Zion, and the poor of his people shall trust in it. O Lord our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us, but by thee only will we make mention of thy name. Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us, for thou also hast wrought all our works in us (good works). For thus hath the Lord spoken unto me, Like as the lion, and the young lion roaring on his prey, when a multitude of shepherds is called forth against him, he will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself for the noise of them: so shall the Lord of hosts come down to fight for Mount Zion, and for the hill thereof. As birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also he will deliver it, and passing over he will preserve it. The sinners in Zion (such will creep into the church) are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from

seeing evil. He shall dwell on high; his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure. Thine eyes shall see the King (Christ) in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off. Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities; thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down, not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King, he will save us. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called, The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those; the wayfaring men, though fools, (to the eyes of the world) shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there: but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand for ever. O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance. Behold my servant (Christ), whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him, he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee: and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For the Lord shall comfort Zion, he will comfort all her waste places, and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord. Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O

Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion. For thus saith the Lord, Ye have sold yourselves for nought: and ye shall be redeemed without money (Christ's blood was the price). All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, (a very good teacher) and great shall be the peace of thy children. Behold, I (God) have given him (Christ) for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people. Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; (Christ) because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek: he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound (in chains of sin). To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed. For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, (red with his blood) traveling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the wine-press alone; and of the people there was none with me; for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury it upheld me. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them: and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, (his elect) and out of Judah an inheritor (Christ) of my mountains: (the branches or hills) and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there. For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you; and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion. And I will give you pastors according to my heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely, and this is the name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness.

God's words need no apology, they speak for themselves.

R. S. BANKS.

EXHORTATIONS BY PAUL.

(Hebrews xiii.)

THE faith of God's elect, what is it? The same in all ages. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." This chapter embraces more than fifteen direct exhortations woven in with great and strong declarations of doctrine. "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." These rulers were, no doubt, elders or ministers, who had been speaking to the saints of the immutability of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. These ministers who had spoken unto them "the word of God" spake according to the unchangeable covenant "ordered in all things and sure." The doctrine of the holy Scriptures can never be understood only on the ground of God's unchangeableness. This was the vital, essential belief in the apostolic day, the faith of God's elect. This faith, on the ground of God's immutability, will stand the test against all opposition in all ages, in all worlds and through eternity. Is not this the reason why their faith shall conquer and overcome the world? Some may claim that they believe that God is unchangeable, but how do they believe this, through a carnal notion, or by the hearing of faith? None, only those born from above, born again of incorruptible seed by the Word of God, can believe that God is too wise to change his mind concerning any event that shall ever take place in time or in eternity. These having received the promise of eternal inheritance through the hearing of faith may consistently be exhorted: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving."—Col. ii. 6, 7. He that was merciful to us before the world began, (2 Tim. i. 9; Rom. xvi. 25; Eph. i. 4; 1 Peter i. 2; Rom. viii. 29,) and merciful to us when his only Son was on the cross, (Titus iii. 5,) and merciful to us when his Son arose from the dead, (1 Peter iii. 21; 1 Cor. xv. 20,) and merciful to us when we were dead in sins, (Rom. v. 6–8; Eph. ii. 5,) and merciful to us along our pilgrimage on earth, as we all bear testimony of his grace and mercy, will still be merciful through the balance of time until eternity is ours. He is of one mind, and none can turn him, and his mercy endureth forever. We shall all be changed when that which is perfect is come, but we still will remain we. For the great work of redemption was to redeem from under the curse of sin; so sinners shall be redeemed, and none others. After all, it may be a happy providence for us that we have been sinners, for none but mortals shall put on immortality. I must confess that years ago I became a little confused, reading after and hearing brethren preach as if the child of God had no interest in or connection with the Adamic man, the sinner. Paul the apostle was encouraged to say: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." It is a faithful saying, and also a worthy saying, that the object of Christ's coming into the world was to save sinners, and for no other cause did he come, and he hath accomplished all the work that the Father assigned unto him, until he sounds the last trump, the final call to glory.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla.

HOPEWELL, N. J., July 28, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN AND FRIENDS:—I feel like expressing a few thoughts through the dear old SIGNS, that has so many messages of good cheer and gospel truth laid down by holy men of old that will stand when all things else decay and pass away. Christ said, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every tongue, kindred, tribe and nation. He did not say send, but he said go; and I often think of our ministering brethren who go through storms, snowdrifts and all kinds of roads to preach the gospel; it is not an easy task by any means. I have taken many trips with our former pastor, dear Elder Chick, and I will never forget those good times. I was always glad to go with him, he was good company. I often wish I could be just a little like he was, but I have to be just as I am, a poor, trembling sinner saved by God's goodness, grace and power, if saved at all. Salvation is of the Lord, and without him there is no salvation. I feel to be the least among the brethren, and as prone to evil as the sparks are to fly upward. When I would do good, evil is present with me, and the good I would, I do not. I can hardly realize that I am eighty-five years old. When I look back over my past life, what has it been? Not as it should have been. Sometimes I think if I could live it over I would do differently, but how do I know what difference there would be from my former life? We are in the hands of an all-wise God, and he doeth all things well, and I hope I may be reconciled to his will. He is a just God, and I am not afraid to trust him, and to say all his ways are just and perfect. I love to praise him for all things. If we abide in him he abides in us. The psalmist said, What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the Lord. Blessed are they that keep his testimony, and that seek him with their whole heart. They also do no iniquity, they walk in his way. Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes. Then shall I not be ashamed when I have respect unto all thy commandments. I will praise thee with uprightness of heart when I shall have learned thy righteous judgment; I will keep thy statutes. O forsake me not utterly. The mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but my loving-kindness I will not take from thee. I am the good Shepherd. The good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. I am the good Shepherd and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father, and I lay down my life for the sheep; and other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd. Feed my sheep. Feed my lambs. He will carry the lambs in his bosom, and not forget nor forsake one of his sheep. He is a hiding-place from the wind and a refuge from the storm. The thunders may roar, the lightnings flash, but not a shaft shall hit until the God of love sees fit. We love to praise him for his wonderful works to the children of men. He can turn the hearts of men as the rivers of water are turned. All power is given him, power to lay down his life and power to take it again. Job said, I know that my Redeemer liveth. Do I know the Lord or no? Oft it causes anxious thought. Am I his, or am I not? I have so many vain, idle thoughts. I often think if I could be as my brethren seem to me I might feel differently.

They are the salt of the earth. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people that are of his inheritance. O I long to feel sure of that inheritance—the inheritance that Jacob possessed, that fadeth not away, but is reserved for you and me at the last day. That inheritance is not like earthly inheritances, which take wings and fly away, but that inheritance is from everlasting to everlasting. This world is not our home. We have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, where there will be no strife or vainglory, or sorrow, or pain, which will be ours when we are done with this tabernacle here below. Who knoweth the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor? Salvation is by and through the Lord. When we meet together to worship in spirit and truth, we come together as little children taught of the Lord. All thy children shalt be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. Worldly men say, Work out your own salvation through fear and trembling; that is as far as they get, but we go farther, and we have Scripture for it: Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Alas, vain world, how mistaken you are. No salvation is in that way. It does not come in that way. The still small voice speaks, and is heard by those who love to praise his name above all other names. To the name of Jesus every knee must bow and every tongue confess. He is the only perfect one, the only one that can save his people from their sins. He that searcheth the heart knows the mind of the Spirit. We do not know how to pray as we ought, but he makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. True prayer is not of man, nor does it come from the lips of men; it comes from the heart. I hope I pray many times for his guidance and his mercy and goodness, without uttering a word. False prayer is very much like false doctrine proclaimed throughout the world at this day. Not many mighty, not many noble, but the poor of this world are called. The poor ye have always with you, but me ye have not. Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive honor, wisdom, glory, majesty and dominion; the only one that could open the book with seven seals.

It will be forty-eight years the twenty-eighth of this month that I have been indorsing this true gospel doctrine, and it is just as sweet and true as it was when I was first taught of the Lord to believe it. I love it because it has a sure foundation and cannot be disturbed or removed by men. Whatever they may say or do, it will remain the same gospel truth as long as the world stands.

I will close by wishing you all well, and may you be the lot of his inheritance, is my prayer.

Your brother in hope,

D. L. BLACKWELL.

CHICAGO, Ill., May 22, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have lately been reading some old numbers, and have been much edified and refreshed by the letters from various children of the household of faith. To my shame I must confess I have to be punished and afflicted before my mind is moved away from earthly matters and turned to things above. I am now convalescing from a month's illness, and have had some good seasons during that time, and have felt truly to pray that we may be strengthened with might in the inner man to all the fullness

of God, that we may stand with our loins girt about with truth, having on the breastplate of righteousness, the helmet of salvation and the shield of faith. I have never before felt so to pray for all saints. It is a curious fact to me that as I read the Scriptures each time some line or sentence seems to stand out separate. I may have read the page a dozen times before, but it had never arrested my attention. I notice occasionally in letters the use of the phrase, Conditional time salvation. Let me say I used to believe in that for some years after I had an experience. I did not doubt that eternal salvation was all of grace, for I had seen myself a guilty, hell-deserving sinner, and had realized that it was only by grace I was made to rejoice in Christ's love. That was twenty-five years ago, and while I felt I wanted to do right, I believed that if I wished to enjoy temporal blessings I must try and do right to merit them. How often since I have felt the plague of my own heart, the weakness of the flesh, and to realize were the blessings I have in time dependent on my merits how long ago they would have ended. Ah no, dear reader, whatever we enjoy, either in time or eternity, is not because of any merit or works. If we do good works, it is by the grace of God we do them, and in the last analysis we realize it is all of grace, salvation, both in time and eternity. David would not have prayed, "Uphold me with thy free Spirit," if he could have held himself up. All the glory of our well-being, both in time and eternity, belongs to God, and let us no longer talk of any merit in ourselves. Enter thou not into judgment with me, for if thou should mark iniquities who shall stand? The Scriptures do certainly teach we will be chastened for wrongdoing here in time. There is no doubt of that, but if we are going to escape those punishments it is only by the grace of God I am what I am. Here in this great city we have no visible organization. I have often wondered at it, and have often talked about it, and why it should be I do not know, but I am firmly convinced God wishes it so. I am a very strong believer in the doctrine of predestination, and I read in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES letters from brethren and sisters far from any church of God's people, yet I do not doubt it is God's will it should be so. All things work together for good to them that love God, that are the called according to his purpose. I have felt sometimes that if I could be situated as some others seem to be in the midst of a "Hardshell" community, with regular services, &c., I would be much happier. Now I may be mistaken; as it is I am content. Like Paul, I wish to know how to abound and to be scanty. I shall be pleased to hear from any who feel like writing.

Yours in the faith,

W. C. COX.

HOPE, La., July 3, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I write you this morning with a sad heart, on account of the death of my dear companion, with whom I had lived fifty-one years, five months and sixteen days through many troubles and trials, having lost seven children. Through all this she was there to comfort and console me, but when God, who is rich in mercy, saw fit to take her home there was no earthly comforter left me. My consolation is the hope of meeting her. She had no confidence in the flesh; her hope rested in the finished work of Christ. We talked many times during her afflictions. Two days before she died she told me that for two even-

ings she had seen the most beautiful sight: The trees in front of the door were covered with white flowers and the base of yellow, and just at that moment she said, "I have lost my Scripture." I am sure she by the eye of faith saw that heavenly Jerusalem. She expressed her willingness to go, and told the children not to worry about her, and gave our daughter some instructions as to how she wished some things done, and also told me not to go about alone, but to get some of the children to go with me. She lived a consistent member of the Primitive Baptist Church since the spring of 1866. She died at the home of our daughter June 7th, 1917, surrounded by her descendants, consisting of three children: O. W. Collinsworth, aged fifty, D. L. Collinsworth, aged forty-eight, and Mrs. M. J. Brunson, aged thirty-five, ten granddaughters, nine grandsons, one great-granddaughter, one great-grandson, and her only brother, C. F. Thomas. She was the daughter of D. K. Thomas, and a niece of Elder Z. Thomas. She was born in Georgia, June 29th, 1843. I I am seventy-five years old, and left to tread life's rugged path alone. Spread the mantle of charity over my weakness and imperfection.

Your brother in hope,

J. F. COLLINSWORTH.

CASTLE ROCK, Wash., July 21, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more I am reminded that my subscription is a little over due, so will hasten to make amends by inclosing money order, for which please give me credit. The persecution being done by those who hate the Bible doctrine of the sovereignty of our God, as advocated and contended for in the dear old SIGNS, only makes the name Old School Baptist more precious to its readers. We understand those of the Old School Baptist faith are the ones who are taught in the school of Christ, and we are told by the prophet Isaiah, All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. I have just read with much pleasure and comfort the article written by brother C. M. Hood, of Nashville, Tenn., in the July 15th number of the SIGNS; also brother Simmons' writing on "The Church;" both are comforting and edifying. I have long loved the dear old SIGNS for the blessed truth it contains, while so ably contending for the glorious doctrine of salvation by free and sovereign grace. It is the only doctrine that can do and does a sinner any good, for all else is as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.

Before I close I want to say that the editorials are being written in a manner that builds up on the most holy faith of God's elect people, especially those who are so far away from their home church that they cannot often meet together for worship. I do hope that I am thankful that the children are blessed with such a beautiful and able medium of christian correspondence, where they see eye to eye and say the selfsame thing: Salvation is of the Lord.

From an old sinner,

J. K. BOYD.

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EDITORIAL.

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THE SURER WORD.

"WE have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts."—2 Peter i. 19.

In the Scriptures is foreseen every contingency that shall ever arise in the experience of true believers and in the travel of the church as a whole. What more proof does one need that they are divinely inspired? But the modern thinkers of the world charge the Bible to have been written by men who cunningly devised fabulous tales and skillfully wove them together and called them Scripture, claiming for them divine inspiration. This charge of the intellectuals against the truth is nothing new. Peter was familiar with the same in his day, and gives two proofs to the brethren to prove that the apostles did not follow cunningly devised fables when they made known unto the faithful the power and coming of Jesus. These two proofs are, first, the apostles "were eyewitnesses of his majesty;" second, the apostles had a "more sure word of prophecy." It is with the second of these items that we desire to deal in this brief sketch. Neither of these reasons given by Peter for authority of the Scriptures will suffice to stop the gainsayings of ungodly men, but so long as the apostles were enabled to produce proof that would establish the church in the infallibility of God's written word, the heathen might rage. It is not to be expected that unbelievers will be impressed by that which will satisfy faith. So long as the church refuses to logically establish its doctrine and to give reasons for its position that will satisfy the carnal mind, just so long must God's people live under the charge of being inconsistent and illogical, childish and irresponsible dreamers. But what need the believer care how foolish and simple his faith appears to the world, so long as in his own heart there dwells the abiding word of Jesus' testimony like a lamp shining in a dark place until the break of day? Instead of following, then, cunningly devised fables, as they had been accused of doing, Peter asserts that he with others had been eyewitnesses of the majesty of Jesus. They had not been guided by rumors or hearsay reports of Jesus, but had seen him for themselves; had seen him not simply as a man among men, but had been shown his real majesty. Peter goes on to say that this revelation of Jesus' majesty was vouchsafed them in the holy mount, that is, in the mount of transfiguration. Peter is referring here to what Matthew records in the seventeenth chapter of his narrative, and to Mark ix. 1–13. Peter, James and John witnessed for themselves the transfiguration of Jesus; they saw his raiment shine white as snow, saw his countenance shine as the sun. To them had been given the glorious vision of the God within the man; others saw merely the man Jesus, but these saw his real majesty. Is it any wonder, then, that Peter said they had not followed fables in preaching Christ, but had declared that which they had seen with their

own eyes: knowledge of which they could not be defrauded, however much they might be derided? But after and above all this that they saw in the mount when they heard God's voice from above say of Jesus: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him," they had a more sure word of prophecy. At first reading, this seems to us rather startling that Peter should say anything could be more sure than what they saw in the mount. However, this is just what Peter does mean. That while the vision given them in the mount was wonderful and real, still they had afterward a more sure word of the testimony of Jesus than that. By a more sure word, Peter means they had a more abiding word, that is, something that stayed with them more than what they had witnessed in the mount. What they had seen in the mount had been glorious, but it did not stay with them, they could not have it every day. But this more sure word was a prophecy or testimony that stayed with them day by day, therefore was more abiding than the former vision. Peter, therefore, preached not by remembering continually what had transpired in the past when he was in the mount with Jesus, but preached right out of his own daily life, out of the inward teaching of this testimony of Jesus or prophecy that abided with him all the time. This more abiding word, then, is the Holy Ghost or Comforter which Jesus assured his disciples before his death would be sent them by the Father after his resurrection. This abiding word, when it should come, would lead them into all truth, would take of the things of Jesus and expound them unto them, would break the bonds of legalism and establish them in gospel liberty, would anoint them to go forth into all the world and preach the gospel to every man that is in Christ a new creature. This surer or more abiding word than what occurred in the mount of transfiguration, took up its abode in the apostles when the day of Pentecost fully came and Peter preached so wonderfully. That day Peter saw for the first time what the Old Testament meant; saw how both the law and the prophets pointed to Christ. He had seen in the mount Moses and Elias talk with Jesus, for they passed away and Jesus alone remained, but he understood what it all meant. But when the Holy Ghost came upon him, when he received the more abiding word of Jesus' testimony on the day of Pentecost, he understood then that Moses and Elias talking with Jesus in the mount had signified that the law and the prophets looked to Jesus and foreshadowed him. He understood when the Holy Ghost came that Moses and Elias passed away, the law and the prophets ceased to be, and Jesus with his glorious gospel alone remained as the embodiment of the truth of God in all its purity. He further understood that the gospel church is to obey Jesus, to hear him only, and not to take the law or the prophets as their guide and authority. This more abiding word, then, of Jesus' testimony is a rounding out of all that has gone before, it opens up and explains all that went before, it expounds Moses and the prophets. The basis of all the apostles wrote and preached was, therefore, not simply the memory of what they had seen Jesus do and say while here in the world, but the daily instruction of this more sure and more abiding word of God's Holy Spirit, which continually dwelt with them, and which was the inspiration of the Scriptures they penned and of the sermons they preached. Miserable preachers would they have been indeed had they had to depend wholly upon the memory of what they had seen Jesus do and say. Their ministry was vitalized and made effective to the spiritually-minded because it came daily fresh

and clear out of this testimony of the living word abiding in them, which was more sure than having to depend upon the memory of what had gone before, even though that had been wonderful indeed. God's people must be fed with that which comes fresh and clear from the Fountain-head of truth; they cannot subsist on memorized preaching, even though all that might be memorized should be sound and true. One must have been an eyewitness of Jesus and must also have this more abiding word of God's Holy Spirit continually with him in order to be an apostle of Jesus and to preach his truth. We think it takes this much even now to enable a man to preach the truth, even though he be not an apostle. One cannot hope to expound the Scriptures without this soul-instruction of the more abiding word being within him; and without the exposition of the Scriptures the people cannot be established in the truth. To see and not to understand is to soon forget, but both to see and to understand what one sees is to have the truth so firmly clinched that it becomes a veritable strong tower in the day of trouble. Peter saw all that took place in the mount of transfiguration, but he did not understand all it signified until the more sure word took up its abode within him; then and not until then was he established in the truth of what he had previously seen. What a comfort to God's people when the gospel preacher is able to explain the meaning of what they have seen and experienced. They then become established in the truth of which they have been eyewitnesses. This opening up of what the Scriptures, and of what the christian experience means, is to the believer a lamp shining in a dark place until the day dawns and the sun rises. L.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

1 PETER III. 18, 19.

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison."

The context, and almost the whole of the epistle, is devoted to the encouragement of the persecuted and scattered saints, with instruction and solemn admonition and exhortation. As the saints were then suffering severely for the truth's sake, the apostle gives them, and us, to understand that it is the will of God that his people shall suffer for well doing. He says, "For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing than for evil doing." It is undoubtedly good for us to suffer chastisements for our faults, and in such a manner as the Lord in wisdom may direct, whether by his ministration of the rod, or by allowing the enemies of truth to persecute us. But good as his fatherly chastisements may be for our faults, it is far better when by his will we are enabled to bear the frowns, reproaches and cruel persecutions of our adversaries for a strict and conscientious adherence to the truth and order of the gospel. If all manner of evil be said of us falsely for Christ's sake, or because we honor and obey him in all things, then may we rejoice and be exceeding glad. The apostle says, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a christian, let him not be

ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf." As an encouragement to the saints thus suffering for righteousness' sake, the text proposed for our consideration was written. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." While in this text the great doctrine of redemption, reconciliation to God and salvation through the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ is clearly stated, a bright and glorious example is presented for the encouragement of the saints, unto whom it is given not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. Are we to be falsely accused, our names cast out as evil, our rights trampled upon, our liberties taken from us, and our very existence disputed by wicked and malicious men, and must we, when guilty of no crime, tamely submit to all this? Look at this example. Behold the beloved of the Father, the adored of all holy beings in earth and heaven, the just, the holy, the immaculate Lamb of God, suffering for sins. Ah, yes, for sins; for himself bare our sins in his own body on the cross. He suffered for sins, the just for the unjust. As the holy and the just One, his Father from heaven bears record of him, the Holy Ghost as such descends from heaven upon him, the law and the prophets testify of him. The saints inspired of God bear witness, saying, "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." And the very court which delivered him to be crucified was constrained to acquit him of all the false and malicious charges against him. "I find no fault at all in this just man," said Pilate. No guile was in his mouth, yet as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth, not even to assert or plead his innocence. Yet to bring his people to God he must suffer and die. He manifested his character as the just by his exact obedience to the just and righteous law of God, and in all the complete satisfaction rendered to all its jots and tittles, and his perfect right to that character is vindicated by his resurrection from the dead. He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened and justified by the Spirit. If then it were the will of God that his only begotten Son, in whom he is well pleased, so holy, so just, so separate from sinners, and above all, one so much higher than the heavens, should suffer, shall we be surprised, discouraged or disheartened that it is the will of God that his people, his members, shall participate in his sufferings? Shall we desire to know him and the power of his resurrection, and object to the fellowship of his sufferings and conformity to his death? Though holy, just and pure, it was just that he should suffer, bleed and die to bring us to God; for all the iniquities of all his people were laid upon him, and he by relationship to them possessed the right to redeem them, to bear their griefs, carry their sorrows, assume the chastisement of their peace and heal them with his stripes. As their surety, God in justice laid on him the iniquities of them all, and he in equal justice bore them in his own body on the tree, and put away their sins by the sacrifice of himself. Those for whom he died were enemies to God by wicked works, unrighteous, ungodly and unjust, and by nature children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. "He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification," and

we are freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Here the great object of his suffering is made known: it was to bring us to God. This end could not be attained in any other way. It was not possible that the blood of bulls, goats or other victims, which had been offered continually under the law, should cleanse us from guilt and purge our conscience from dead works, or bring us to God. But he by his own blood has entered into the holiest of all, even into heaven itself, having obtained eternal redemption for us. Thus has he by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified. In the accomplishment of this our text reminds us that he was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. His Spirit being the life and immortality of the eternal God, he could not in that Spirit die, nor be recognized as under the law which we had transgressed. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death. Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. He was made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law. He took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." But he was quickened by the Spirit. That is, by the Spirit of life and immortality, which now dwells in the hearts of his saints, of which they are born, when born of the Spirit, and by which they are sealed to the day of redemption. "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."—Romans viii. 11. This Spirit which raised up the crucified body of Jesus from the dead is the same that we now have an earnest of, and shall quicken and animate our resurrected body in the world to come. It is the Spirit of life, of immortality, and is expressly called the Spirit of Christ. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." But as many as have this Spirit of God, they are the sons of God; for it is only by being born of this Spirit that our relation to God as sons is or can be made manifest. The apostle informs us moreover that this resurrection Spirit is the same by which he went and preached to the spirits in prison. To Abel, Enoch, Noah, and to all the old testament saints, patriarchs and prophets who were born of this resurrection Spirit, and through it were savingly acquainted with him, held communion with him, and by him found access to the throne of grace. This is the Spirit of which he testified by Isaiah, saying, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Those prisoners to whom he preached deliverance, he did not go to them in his fleshly body, for he had not in their day become incarnate; but he went to them in this Spirit, and by this Spirit dwelt in them. We are told that they searched diligently what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it (the Spirit of Christ in them) testified beforehand of his sufferings and of the glory that should follow. Christ

by his Spirit was in the prophets and in the old testament saints, and in them preached, as instanced by Peter in the connection of our subject, in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing. Noah by this Spirit was a preacher of righteousness to the antediluvians. And certainly it was by this Spirit of Christ that God at sundry times and in divers manner spake to the fathers by the prophets, the same by which he has in these last times spoken to us by his Son. It is the same Spirit which raised up Christ from the dead, the same that was shed upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost, and the same which (in measure) dwells in all who are born of the Spirit in all ages. It is called, as we have seen, "The Spirit of the Lord God," by which the head of the church is anointed, and identified as the Christ, which name or title signifies the Anointed. Christ publicly declared this Scripture fulfilled in him, manifestly, or in the eyes of those whom he was addressing, when he read to them in the book of Isaiah the prophet: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound."—Isaiah lxi. 1. The spirits in prison to whom Peter says he by the Spirit of his resurrection went and preached, are by Isaiah called captives, to whom he went and proclaimed liberty. Prisoners, to whom he by that Spirit went and preached the opening of the prison doors; to whom Zechariah ix. 9–12, says: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. * * * And he shall speak peace [or preach good tidings] unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth. As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee." These must be the prisoners to whom Christ by his resurrection Spirit went and preached deliverance. They were prisoners in a perishing condition, in a pit where there is no water, yet prisoners of hope, for God had promised them deliverance.

Every saint may find an illustration of this subject in his or her personal experience. Only look back to the rock whence ye were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye were digged. Once were ye under arrest, proven guilty, condemned, sentenced and thrown into prison; the walls were strong, the bars were massive and your escape by human power or agency impossible. The apostle Paul most clearly attributes the quickening, enlightening and salvation of the saints to the Spirit and power of the resurrection of our Lord, as also the faith by which the saints believe on him. (See Eph. i. 18–23.) The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead and sat him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over

all things to his church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

Carnal professors may believe according to their powers of human agencies—schools, tracts and moral suasion, &c., but God's people believe according to the working of that mighty power of God which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead and exalted him far above all heavens. Thus we see that the Spirit and power of the resurrection of Christ is the Spirit and power by which the risen and glorified Savior went and preached to Abel, Enoch, Noah and Abraham, who rejoiced to see his day, saw it and were glad. And the same resurrection life, power and Spirit is that by which Gentile sinners, embracing the saints at Ephesus and all the faithful in Christ Jesus everywhere, are quickened and delivered from bondage and from prison houses, and brought into the liberty of the gospel, raised up together with him and made to sit together with him in those heavenly places, which are far above all principality, power, dominion or government in this world or that which is to come. This resurrection Spirit and power is in all the saints; by it they all were quickened and born; by it they are sealed to the day of the resurrection. Well might Peter say, and every saint respond: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."—1 Peter i. 3-5.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 1, 1867.

CORRESPONDENCE MEETING.

WEISER, Idaho, August 3, 1917.

Correspondence Meeting of Washington, Oregon and Idaho, July 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1917, held at Touchet, Wash., with Mizpah Church.

Churches represented by messenger or correspondence are as follows:

Mizpah, Touchet, Wash., Elder J. T. Barnes, pastor.

Pleasant Grove, North Yakima, Wash., Elders Eaton, Hess and Huett.

Big Springs, Elgin, Oregon, Elder G. E. Mayfield.

Salem, Weiser, Idaho; Elders T. E. Attebery and J. C. Turnidge.

Others present, Elders Langford and Pate.

Friday, introductory by Elder J. T. Barnes.

Saturday morning, Elders Huett and Mayfield.

Evening, Elders Pate and Turnidge.

Sunday morning, Elders Mayfield and Huett.

Evening, Elders Langford and Turnidge.

The next Correspondence Meeting will be held with Big Springs Church, Elgin, Oregon, commencing Friday before the first Sunday in September, and continuing on Saturday and Sunday following.

This year's meeting was as good as it has been my privilege to attend. Surely not because of the great number present, although the churches were well represented, but to me because of the sincere spirit of devotion that seemed to be felt by all present. All were in peace, and the preaching demonstrated the power of the Spirit to reveal the truth. In giving my own feelings I would not overestimate the feelings of the brethren and sisters present. I surely felt that the Lord was with us, that God was our Father, Jesus was our Savior and the Holy Ghost was our Comforter. Perhaps my feelings were best expressed by the apostle, when Christ's glory and kingdom were so fully magnified before him on the mount of transfiguration: Lord, it is good to be here. Surely his goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our lives, and may it be ours to dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

In behalf of the churches composing the union, and by their request, we send a cordial invitation to our brethren and sisters everywhere to visit us and partake of the feast of good things, and that peace that passeth all understanding, and that union and fellowship by which we are bound to Jesus our Savior, as the great Head of the church, and our brethren as members of his body and one another.

I would not close this article without mentioning the kindness of the brethren's children in leaving nothing undone that they could do to add to our comfort and make us feel our presence was appreciated.

May the Lord abundantly bless them and us all together, and may the memory of such sweet and divine associations linger with us all and be truly as bread cast upon the waters, gathered many days hence, is our humble desire and prayer, I hope.

J. C. TURNIDGE.

MARRIAGES.

In San Francisco, Cal., August 8th, 1917, Mr. James P. Townsend, of Snow Hill, Md., and Miss Marion E. Baker, granddaughter of Elder B. F. Coulter.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Flora Nickles, wife of Mr. Nelson Nickles and daughter of John and Eliza Chapman, was born at Ingleside, N. Y., in 1867, and died July 31st, 1917, at her home near Ingleside. She leaves to mourn their loss her husband, four daughters, one son, seven sisters and two brothers, with many other relatives and friends. She was married to Mr. Nickles Feb. 27th, 1890. She was a good, faithful wife, a kind and affectionate mother, and friendly to all. She was not a member of the church, but was a firm believer in the doctrine preached by Old School Baptist preachers, and had no use for any other. She with her husband and four daughters were regular attendants at the Old School Baptist meetings at Ingleside, N. Y., and had been for several years. We shall miss her at her home and at our meetings, but most of all she will be missed by her dear, sad, lonely husband and dear children. It was a very sad funeral. May the good Lord give sustaining grace to each of the sorrowing ones. Dear Flora is glorified with the saints in glory, eternally happy. You do not mourn for her, but the loss you have sustained by her departure. God bless you all with his restful presence.

The writer officiated at the funeral Friday, August 3rd, which was held in the Christian church building at Ingleside, the congregation being too large for our own house, after which the body was buried in the cemetery at North Cohocton, N. Y.

ALSO,

Mrs. Tessie A. Ellis, daughter of the late Deacon A. B. and Chloe Russell, of Justus, Pa., died June 29th, 1917, aged 61 years and 5 days. She leaves a daughter, Mrs. Chloe Jones, one granddaughter, one half-brother, Mr. Jerome Britton, one half-sister, Mrs. Elizabeth Fike, and many friends. She was badly afflicted for several years with some blood disease, I believe, which finally resulted in her release from this natural life to dwell, as we hope, in glory. She was not a member of the church, but a believer in the doctrine of grace alone. May God bless all who mourn with reconciled minds to his will.

The writer spoke at the funeral, which was held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse at Justus June 25th. Burial in Ackerly Cemetery, Mount Bethel, Pa.

ALSO,

Wayne Robert Bratzman, son of Elmer and Hazel Bratzman, aged 7 months. Funeral May 18th, at the home of his parents, Justus, Pa.; burial in Akerly Cemetery. The dear little boy is gone from the evil to come to his home beyond. May the dear Lord in his rich mercy bless the mourning parents and friends with reconciled minds to his will.

ALSO,

Andrew J. Dalrymple died May 19th, 1917. Funeral 22nd, at Christian meetinghouse, Sergeantsville, N. J. His age was 74 years. He leaves a wife and two sisters: Mrs. Hester Hockenbury and Mrs. Emily Naylor, of Stockton, N. J. May God give grace to all who mourn. D. M. VAIL.

Elder J. B. Adams was born near Lexington, Mo., Nov. 13th, 1847, and died at Barton, N. M., Jan. 12th, 1917, aged 70 years, 1 month and 29 days. His boyhood and young manhood were spent in Missouri. At the early age of sixteen he received a hope in Christ, and was baptized in the fellowship of Oak Grove Church, by Elder Peter Branstetter. About the year 1879 he was ordained to preach the gospel, and for thirty-eight years was "instant in season, out of season," in its declaration. Up to the very last his faith seemed stronger in the doctrine he loved. He resided and preached for several years in Oklahoma, going from there to Loveland, Colo. To that place an arm of Bethel Church at Lamar was extended, and Elder Adams and his wife became members, in the fellowship of which church he lived until death. Before leaving his native state he was married to Miss Jennie Mulinx, who with two sons survive and mourn their loss.

Brief services were held, after which he was laid to rest in the cemetery at Barton. He is gone, but not forgotten. D. B. NOWELS.

Mrs. Sarah McDonald died at her home in Ridgetown, Ont., July 26th, 1917, in her 71st year. Sister McDonald united with the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada June 26th, 1882, and was baptized by Elder William Beebe. She formerly resided at Duart, Ont., but after the death of her husband she moved to Ridgetown, where she lived until her death. The end came very suddenly, she being ill but a few hours. The sad news of her death was a shock to all her friends and relatives. She was composed, and felt reconciled to the Lord's will, and said that she felt it was her last sickness. Though short, it was very painful. Sister McDonald was well known among the church people, as she seldom missed any of the quarterly meetings, and was a faithful and devoted member. She leaves to mourn their loss three brothers and two sisters, besides other relatives and friends.

The funeral service was held in the Duart meetinghouse, conducted by the writer, using the words of our Savior, "Follow me," for a text. The large concourse of people who came to show their last deed of kindness to our dear departed sister showed the high esteem in which she was held by all who knew her. Interment was in the Duart Cemetery.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Mrs. Angie Williams Thomas passed away at her home in Bowdoinham, Maine, Feb. 12th, 1917. She was born Nov. 11th, 1858, was received in the fellowship of the Bowdoinham Church and baptized by Elder Hiram Campbell in July, 1885. She leaves a husband, two sons and one daughter, three sisters and one brother, and many nieces, nephews and cousins to mourn their loss. She was a great sufferer during her last illness, but was made patient to bear it all without a murmur. Our sister was firmly established in the truth, loved the people of God, and was always ready to speak of his goodness, love, mercy and power. We miss her in our meetings, but feel that our loss is her gain.

Elder F. W. Keene attended the funeral, and spoke words of comfort to the sorrowing relatives and friends. ATTIE A. CURTIS.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, Elder D. M. Vail will fill the following appointments:

Adelbert Meads, August 29th, 7:30 p. m.; Jefferson, N. Y., August 30th, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.; Loren Meads, August 30th, 7:30 p. m.; Albany, August 31st, 1:30 p. m.; Schoharie village, August 31st, 7:30 p. m.; Schoharie meetinghouse, Sept. 1st, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m. E. R. KINNEY.

PLEASE publish the following appointments:

Casper G. Fetter's, Hamilton Ave., Friday, Sept. 14th, 7:45 p. m.; Mrs. S. Horner's, Stockton, N. J., Saturday, 15th, 2:30 p. m.; Locktown, N. J., Sunday, 16th, 10:30 a. m.; Frenchtown, 4 p. m.; brother A. J. Demott's, Grandon, N. J., Monday, 17th, 7:45 p. m.

Saturday 2 p. m. and Sunday 11 a. m. and 2:30 p. m., Sept. 22nd and 23rd, Beulah Church, Brooke, Canada; Wednesday, 26th, 7:45 p. m., London, Canada; Thursday, 27th, 7:45 p. m., Brantford, Canada. Between these appointments I hope to be with the friends at Dunwich, Duart and St. Thomas.

D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Wm. F. Sloan, Kentucky, $1.00.

INFORMATION WANTED.

WILL sister Lida Keller, of Dayton, Ohio, kindly give us her address? as letters mailed to her are returned. P. W. SAWIN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky.

MEETINGS.

THE Hazel Creek Association of Primitive Baptists will meet with Providence Church, in Appanoose County, Iowa, August 29th, 30th and 31st. This is the original Hazel Creek Association, the one that holds the records. Trains will be met at Plano or any convenient place. Visitors cordially invited.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator, Novinger, Mo.
H. C. CATE, Clerk, Moravia, Iowa.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association, the Lord willing, will hold its annual three days meeting commencing on Friday before the second Monday in September (7th, 8th and 9th). All lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus are invited.

GEO. R. TEDFORD.

THE Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, Providence permitting, will hold their annual or yearly meeting the second Saturday and Sunday following in September (8th and 9th). Brethren and friends are cordially invited.

Done by order of the church.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association will convene with the Old School Baptist Church of Andes and Middletown, at Union Grove, Andes, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, September 12th and 13th, 1917. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. Those coming by way of Kingston or Oneonta will change at Arkville for the Delaware & Northern R. R. Trains will be met Wednesday morning and brethren conveyed to the place of worship.

J. H. DICKSON, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Jefferson, N. Y., will hold its yearly meeting the third Sunday and Saturday before in September (15th and 16th), 1917. Those coming by train to Stamford will be met on Friday before on the 11 o'clock a. m. train. We extend an invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, especially brethren in the ministry.

G. E. MEAD, Church Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Church has appointed a yearly meeting to be held the last Saturday and Sunday in September (29th and 30th), 1917. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, especially brethren in the ministry of our faith and order.

R. W. SANFORD, Pastor.

THERE will be a two days meeting held at Cammal, Pa., Saturday and Sunday, September 29th and 30th. All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Done by order of the church.

J. T. BADGLEY, Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held at Halcottville, N. Y., on the Ulster & Delaware R. R., at the regular time, first Wednesday and Thursday in October (3rd and 4th), 1917. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

Done by order of the church.

JAMES AVERY, Church Clerk.

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1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 85. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1917. NO. 18.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Aug. 7, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending two letters for publication in the SIGNS. They speak for themselves, and need no comment from me, except a hearty "Amen."

B. F. COULTER.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Aug. 3, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER COULTER:—It will please me very much to attend the meeting of the Snow Hill Church on the second Sunday in October, and if not providentially hindered I will be at your home on Friday evening before and go on with you the following morning. I have never visited the Snow Hill Church, but have met some of the members at various associations. They impressed me as a lovable people, and I can understand why you find it a joy and comfort to serve them. How good and how pleasant it is to dwell where love is without dissimulation, where truth is spoken in love! What is more beautiful in character than truth and sincerity? Truth is of God. He that came from God brought grace and truth. Every departure from truth is denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ. "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." Speaking, witnessing, testifying, confessing, is a communication or impression for somebody to receive, hence it is not of a secret or solitary nature. Whatever else the apostle had in mind when he commanded, "To do good, and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased," he certainly had in view the excellency of the grace of "speaking the truth in love," as God working in us that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ. The wrath of God is pronounced against bearing false witness against a brother. The devil is a liar, and the father of it, the mystery that doth already work in them that perish; "because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." Bearing false witness against a brother is slander, murder. Detraction in its mildest form, telling what is true of another, with intent to injure him, keeping back the truth, to avoid doing him a service,

disparaging inuendoes, hints to excite suspicion, retailing some one else's talk under the disclaimer of not believing it, introducing in conversation that which will draw from others words of disapproval, and thus virtually say, Report, and we will report it, (Jer. xx. 10,) are some of the practices which God condemns. Better be deaf, "as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs."—Psalms xxxviii. 14. Teaching false doctrine is lying, corrupting, and calculated to overthrow the faith of some. Speaking the truth in love establishes confidence between brethren, assures peace and quietness. "Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land. Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven. Yea, the Lord shall give that which is good, and our land shall yield her increase. Righteousness shall go before him, and shall set us in the way of his steps."—Psalms lxxxv. 9–13. It is in a state of endeavor that God manifests himself in us as the resurrection power. All discovery, revelation, attainment, comes to us in seeking, looking for, striving to attain, seeking the Lord. "If haply they feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us." The doctrine of the cross is full of inspiration to a higher and still higher spiritual life. All that will live godly in Christ Jesus realize in themselves the effects of atoning blood, and he who trusts his hope of heaven on the death and resurrection of Christ's body, without being conformed either to his death or resurrection, is building upon sand. Whatever covering for sin he trusts in, it is certainly not that of being influenced by the mercies of God in giving his Son to die for us, which shows itself in presenting our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service. Whenever there is a real death of the body of sin, and a real resurrection to newness of life, the grace of God which bringeth salvation appears; the fruit of the Spirit, against which there is no law. Jesus prayed for his disciples: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." To Satan's suggestion he replied: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." And to the Jews he said: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever." Jesus, who is the truth, is the food of his people, that on which they must live, and which their inward necessity hungers for. It raises, sanctifies, purifies, and belief of the truth is the reception of it into the living heart, not the cold consent of the understanding. The famishing, the sick, the dying, know that truth in the inward parts is refreshment, healing and life. Christ revealed to them, is Christ revealed in them, and in this inward revelation lies the highest source of spiritual knowledge. In no scriptural sense does a man abide in the truth while his life, his spirit, is wrong. He may be letter perfect in external observances, but lacking that which makes it God's truth, God's revelation in him, it is carnal mindedness. A believer is one who is in living fellowship with Christ. The salvation confessed to is the life of God in his soul, a conscious life, a reaching forth of its warm, loving affection after God, a life manifested by joyful obedience to his commands, by the Spirit of holiness and love pervading his character and conduct. That "some have not the

knowledge of God," is as true to-day as when the apostle declared it, (1 Cor. xv. 34,) and he was not addressing the non-elect, but those "called to be saints." The will of God done in earth is the sanctifying, purifying of his people. Were every man to give diligence to make his calling and election sure, proving what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God, there would be less disputing, contention and strife among brethren and churches. Taking heed unto ourselves, examining ourselves, whether we be in the faith, proving our own selves, is the way of life in which God has called us to walk before him unto all wellpleasing. Fear lest we come short of the glory of God is always associated with trying the spirits whether they be of God, and watchfulness lest we be led away by the error of the wicked; and this is being wise unto salvation.

I have written you a long letter. In years gone by we spent much time in writing to each other. Those were happy days, trying to tell one another how "Wonderful" our God is. I often long for a renewing of the singleness of mind I then rejoiced in, for "woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!" Everything but memory seems to be slipping away from me, and yet I feel that:

"My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life or breath remains;
There my best friends, my kindred, dwell,
There God my Savior reigns."

You will be glad to hear that it was my privilege to baptize sister Sarah A. Smith last Sunday. You will remember having met her at meeting in Philadelphia. She is a lovely sister, and will be, I am sure, a blessing to us all. The Lord has been very good to us here in preserving us in keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. I was glad to see your name in the last SIGNS, and enjoyed your writing. If you knew how much the readers of the SIGNS appreciate your articles I believe you would write more often. I will be more than glad to hear from you personally, whenever you feel impressed to write. It may be presumption in me to imagine you might have some thought of sending this letter to the SIGNS. If you have, please forget it; the less publicity I have among the Old School Baptists the more comfortable my mind is, and I need all the comfort I can find.

Anticipating much pleasure in meeting you and the members at the Snow Hill Church, I am, I hope, your brother in gospel bonds,

JOHN McCONNELL.

PREDESTINATION.

THE subject at the heading of this article has often been in my mind, and I feel like presenting some thoughts which have come to me from time to time upon it. Some believe in this doctrine absolutely, some believe in a limited way, and some do not believe it at all, and if I were only writing to people of natural minds I feel sure that no one who read would believe, for the natural mind understandeth not the things of the Lord; but I am persuaded that I am writing to some who have eyes to see, ears to hear and hearts to understand. Before proceeding further, let us consider the meaning of the word. The standard dictionaries give the following definition: "The act of foreordaining; the doctrine that God has from all eternity decreed whatever comes to pass, especially by an unchangeable purpose; the eternal life or death of man." I do not feel that I can object to this definition, because I understand the Lord to be just such a being. It is a great pleas-

ure to write about such a being when one is in the right mind, but one cannot get himself into a right mind. Now I seem to be carried away in mind to consider the majesty of God, to consider him as he really is, unchangeable, arranging events in his own mind and bringing these events to pass just as he predestinated. Surely our Lord is a predestinator. I now understand that the Lord had no beginning of days, therefore will have no end of days. Of course we feel as though there had to be a beginning, and there was a beginning of natural things, and there will be an end of the same, for this mortal must put on immortality. Why? Because it is predestinated; and I believe, whether traditional or otherwise, that the day is coming when sin is to be destroyed forever. I do not believe that the Lord will allow Satan to always have power in the earth as he is now having. I believe he (the Lord) has predestinated that Satan should have the power he now has to deceive the nations, that the Lord may accomplish some great purpose of his, but he will not tell us now what that great purpose is; it is his glory to conceal a thing. I sometimes think it is his glory to allow his people not to believe that he will do certain things, and yet he will do them to show unto us that he is all in all and changes not. I am glad the Lord is not swayed by our human notions. How often we find ourselves trying to find out something by natural reasoning. How often we want the Lord to show us certain signs. If he would do this it would frighten these natural bodies to death. The Lord has determined what he will do for us before we know anything, and he does it, and we do not like it, either. His ways are not ours, and we mourn because of it; that is, we want an easy time in the world, and the Lord has predestinated that we shall not have it so; but yet it is all for our good, and we know it not. The case of Joseph has often been referred to by predestinarians to show that the Lord predestinates, and this incident will stand any test that man may desire to put upon it. The Lord predestinated there should be a certain Joseph, and it was so. He also predestinated that he should have certain dreams, and that those dreams would so interest him that he would tell them to his brethren, and that that would so offend his brethren that they would attempt to destroy him; but the Lord had ordained beforehand that Joseph should not be destroyed, therefore he was not; nevertheless he had severe trials to pass through, as do all God's chosen. I must only call attention to the most interesting events in the life of Joseph, that this article be not too long; but no spiritually-minded person will ever tire reading the history of Joseph. It was ordained by the Lord that Joseph was to be sold by his brethren, and that after awhile he should go into the land of Egypt. There were certain trials through which he must pass before he could be appointed to the high position of providing food for the seven years of famine which was to come upon the land. He must go into prison awhile, and in prison he demonstrated the wisdom which the Lord had given him, in telling the butler and baker the meaning of their dreams. Now the interpretation of those dreams was correct. Time went on, and the king had a dream, and it troubled him, and he wanted to know what the dream meant, and he, like all other earthly creatures, consulted man-wisdom to find out what the dream meant; so he summoned the astrologers and soothsayers to him to tell him what he dreamed and its meaning; but here

human wisdom failed, as it always does. The king did not want any guesswork in the matter. We see that Joseph's prison days are nearly ended. The time has now come for the one who was restored to his place in the king's house to remember that Joseph had told him the meaning of his dream. This of course gave him the reputation of interpreting dreams. The king commanded that Joseph be brought before him, and Joseph interpreted the dream, and received the benefit for what the Lord had done for him. Can you not see that it is the Lord's glory to conceal a thing? Notice the glory that was in store for Joseph, and he could not know it until the Lord's appointed time. Do not forget that your suffering is to be followed by great glory.

I cannot refrain at this time from calling attention to the experience of Jacob, the father of Joseph. You who are familiar with this history will remember that Jacob thought Joseph was dead; he had been told that a beast had torn him to pieces. Now a famine had come upon the land of Israel, or Jacob, and his family was facing starvation. There was corn in the land of Egypt, but the only way which Jacob could get that corn was to let Benjamin go along with his elder brethren. That was a trying ordeal for Jacob, for he loved Benjamin dearly. Jacob said, Joseph is dead, and now Benjamin must go away, and I fear I will never see him again; surely all these things are against me, but Benjamin must go, or we starve. Who can imagine the anguish of Jacob as Benjamin departs? Sleepless nights were in store for Jacob, but they were not to last long.

I must now turn to the time when Joseph makes himself known to his brethren. Benjamin goes into the land of Egypt with his brethren. How little they knew what awaited them. They came unto Joseph, and they knew him not, but he knew them. For a little while Joseph seemed somewhat harsh, and yet he loved them all the time. Joseph could refrain no longer, he called them aside. Let us look upon this scene for a moment. Joseph and his brethren all in one room. The brethren are amazed; I think they are saying to each other, What does all this mean? Joseph tells them plainly, I am Joseph; you sold me and thought I was dead, but God for your sake sent me here. The very language of Joseph proves that the Lord had a purpose in sending him there. Joseph comforts his brethren by telling them that God meant it for good, to save much people alive. Now in our minds we will follow Benjamin and his older brothers as they journey back to their father with the good news, Joseph is yet alive and sendeth for thee. Benjamin has not been devoured, and the heart of Jacob leaps for joy. Joseph is great in the land of Egypt, and there is plenty to eat in that land. I think we have seen that the hand of the Lord was in all these things, and if the Lord's hand was in this, is it not in everything that takes place under the sun?

I feel like continuing this article, even though it is already long. I hear some talk as though the Lord's hand is not in the events which are taking place to-day, but I cannot believe but that the Lord's hand is in everything great and small. We have abundant evidence in the Scriptures that Satan cannot do anything unless permitted by the Lord. It was true in the case of Ahab, in the case of Job, and in many other cases which I cannot mention for want of space. I want to talk a little to those who may be disturbed because of the wars into

which many nations are getting. I know it is a very easy matter for us to be disturbed, but Jesus said, Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. The Lord has promised good to his people, and his promises do not fail. Now suppose something new is about to take place, what have we to fear? The Lord will not suffer his faithfulness to fail. I would not have any one think that we are worthy of the Lord's protecting care, but I would call attention to the fact that the Lord protects, even though we be not worthy, therefore we are singing this praise to his name:

"All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall.
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all."

I now come to the last of the subject, and will be as brief as I can. In defence of this doctrine I will say that those who believe in this doctrine are not narrow-minded creatures, as they are said to be. Many educated men of national affairs have advocated this doctrine. The late president McKinley once said this doctrine has behind it an honorable history. Again I call attention to his last words to his wife: "It is the Lord's way; his will, not ours, be done." Reader, study these words, and you will get much out of them. I have often thought of Morse when he sent his first telegram. He sent the following words: "What hath God wrought?" It seems to me that Morse realized the Lord had given him the ability to accomplish this wonderful achievement. Notice the language he used; it does seem to me it denotes a broad mind when one believes this doctrine. The positive fact is that none but those whom the Lord has taught can believe these things. I do believe the Lord has a people who do not believe this doctrine. The Lord does not wait for a man to believe on him to save him, but he saves and calls before the man can have time to answer. There is no power in man to believe, or to cause anybody else to believe. I have had experience along this line. If one is not a believer it is useless to talk to him about the saving power of Jesus, for they generally say, I think I am all right; I do better than John Smith, and he belongs to the church. So it takes the Lord to teach these things, and I cannot quarrel with one who does not believe them. I will admit that it is a hard doctrine to believe. The thought comes to my mind that the Lord for reasons best known to himself has been pleased to allow some of his chosen not to believe some points of doctrine, and when all are brought to understand who can tell the wonderful rejoicing that will take place? We all shall know as we are known and see as we are seen. Another thought I wish to present as being illustrative of the Lord's dealing with his people. A father may have a present for his son when his birthday shall arrive, and yet the son not know anything about it; and if any one should apprise the son of this fact he might not believe, because he has not seen for himself. But though he does not believe, this does not alter the fact that there is a pleasant surprise in store for him. If a natural father knows how to give good gifts unto his children, how much more does the heavenly Father know. What glorious things the Lord has prepared for his people, but he will keep these hid until his predestinated time to reveal them, then shall we be satisfied.

I leave the subject for the consideration of others.

A. T. BENSON.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., June 15, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have received permission of brother McColl to send this letter to you for publication in the SIGNS, if you think best. To me it seems to be one which will be read by your readers with comfort and profit.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

WINNIPEG, Man., May 6, 1917.

MY DEAR FATHER:—I would like to write you a letter that would be of some comfort to you. My thoughts sometimes travel along the way of spiritual things, but whether they are truly profitable depends on the direction of the Holy Spirit. Without him we can do nothing. In spiritual things our reason fails; it can only deal with things that are seen, and search as we may into the mystery of life we end at death. We cannot lay aside our reason and enter the realm of faith, the revelation of Jesus Christ in the soul. The natural man worships things that are seen—things he can handle or reach with his reason. The sun gives him light and warmth, and he bows down to the sun. He makes gods of the dead and living things of creation. His superstition causes him to worship life, which he cannot understand. But the heaven-born soul sees God in all creation; his works manifest his glory, and his children worship him, the source of life, the Creator of the universe. "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. * * * When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers." See how the psalmist sees God in all his works. Likewise when God's children are blessed with comfort they praise the Lord. When they are afflicted they say, It is the Lord, and seek his mercy. They have the same troubles and joys which are common to mankind, they see the same sun, moon and stars, they eat the same bread and live in like surroundings, but to them God is manifest in all things, while to the worldling he is not. They see a new kingdom, not of this world; they seek a city built by God. The Lord's words in the sixth chapter of Matthew do not justify careless living. On the reverse, the "take no thought" is limited to earthly things. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness," follows the admonition against earthly riches, and is the main thought of the chapter. In John iv. the Lord says, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." The admonitions of the apostles to the churches to maintain good works are in perfect harmony with the admonitions of the Lord. We are not instructed to live at ease. The pathway of the christian lies through great tribulation. Tribulation cannot be measured by the nature of external occurrences; it is what we suffer within. We have to live fearfully, trembling in humility, not puffed up with pride and self-sufficiency. The works of God are manifested in his children. Jesus said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." Can we infer from this that his will was not in conformity with the will of God? Was there violence done to his will? No. "I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart." His will was the will of the Father, but coming as a servant, being made after the fashion of the creature, he ascribed the glory to the Father, who wrought in him and by him. Much more ought we to ascribe all glory to God, and not seek to take from his

glory that we might boast of our will. The predestination of God may be misunderstood. I do not believe it is right to say that we can shelter behind it. There are certain attributes of God which are essential to his Godhead. We know he is omnipotent, but we do not find our salvation in that. All his glorious attributes are a source of comfort and assurance to his children. There is no more shelter for sin in God's predestination than in his omnipotence. The only refuge for the sinner lies in the covenant of grace, sealed with the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is his protection from the wrath of God. There is no salvation outside of Christ. His death is essential to our life. There is no uncertainty in the matter. His electing love knows no change, his covenant is sure. All the glorious attributes of God shine forth in this covenant, but predestination alone has no meaning to the sinner. You cannot separate God from his attributes or separate his attributes from himself. Let us remember that it is God who predestinates our salvation, not man. There is no lack of harmony where God is the author, for all his works agree in perfect unity. Likewise it is God's free will that works, not man's. Free will and predestination can rightly be applied to God alone. Our life, our being, is circumscribed. To believe in blind fate is the reverse of believing in predestination. Predestination involves a perfect harmony of purpose, without which there could be nothing but chaos. I know I am writing of something you understand much better than I, and I fear I may not order my thoughts so as to be understood; but I do feel there is a great deal of misunderstanding concerning certain fundamental truths due to misconception of the meaning of terms. Predestination is certainly no excuse for sin. Predestination cannot involve God in sin. Sin has its source in the mystery of iniquity, which works as a leaven in the human heart. It opposes itself against God, and thinks to change times and laws, but it does not prevail. The sin of man crucified our Lord Jesus. The predestination of God triumphed in his death. It was the fulfillment of the covenant, the sealing of the testament, the death of death and hell's destruction. This is high ground, I should tread carefully, lest I fall into presumption. May the Lord forgive what I have said amiss, and grant some little portion to your comfort.

Affectionately your son and brother in Christ,

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

WAYNESVILLE, Ohio, March 3, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—After the Savior had healed the man who had been afflicted for thirty-eight years the Jews sought to kill him, because he had done those things on the sabbath day. But Jesus answered them: My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God. "Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed

all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man."—John v. 19–27. There are no conditions in regard to these things, for the chosen people of God are saved with an everlasting salvation, ordered in all things and sure. The Savior said in the following chapter: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day. The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven? Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." All these promises are just as sure to come to pass as the resurrection of Lazarus, which glorified the Son of God. There is no uncertainty about the complete redemption of all the spiritual heirs of Christ. He is a sovereign, he needs no help. People do not have any more control over their spiritual destiny than they do over the ordinances of heaven and earth. From the most ancient days the people of the world have looked upon the starry heavens with reverential awe. The science of astronomy dates backward into the morning of time. Some of the principal constellations as they are now named are mentioned in the book of Job. There is nothing that would naturally make people believe in predestination more than astronomy, for the glittering wonders and mysteries of the starry heavens are no more awe-inspiring to them than the daily and yearly motion of the earth rolling through the heavens, surrounded on every side by the planets and the countless myriads of stars, all performing their stated motions under the guidance of their great Creator; and when we gaze upon their dazzling splendor we have to exclaim with the poet:

"Praise the Lord, ye heavens adore him;
  Praise him, angels, in the height;
Sun and moon, rejoice before him;
  Praise him, all ye stars of light.

Praise the Lord, for he hath spoken;
  Worlds his mighty voice obeyed;
Laws which never can be broken,
  For their guidance he hath made.

Praise the Lord, for he is glorious,
Never shall his promise fail;
God hath made his saints victorious—
Sin and death shall not prevail.

Praise the God of our salvation;
Hosts on high, his power proclaim;
Heaven and earth and all creation,
Praise and magnify his name."

And when we meditate upon the changes of the moon every month, and the eclipse of the sun and moon in their appointed season, we are lost in wonder and amazement, and desire to be thankful to the God of heaven and earth that he controls our spiritual destiny instead of we poor, dying mortals, who know not what a day or an hour will bring forth. No matter how much war and commotion there is in the world, when the appointed time arrives spring will come with its roseate hues, and the trees, shrubs and plants will bud and bloom with all their beauty and fragrance. The turmoil and convulsion of earth has left no stain on the face of nature, for no earthly power can change the Lord's appointed seasons, no more than they can change any of his universal decrees. The Primitive Baptists should be the happiest people in the world, and we are constrained to believe that they are, especially those of former days, before there was so much division and strife among them. We were well acquainted with some Baptists of this class, who had their singing days of spiritual sunshine, when they were permitted to enjoy its radiant splendor, which carried them away to the mountain top, where there was scarcely a veil between them and the pearly gates of eternity; and just as sure as the Savior said unto Martha, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die," it shall come to pass. When his appointed time comes he will reveal himself unto his saints, and they will rejoice in his salvation and exclaim, Happy art thou, O people saved by the Lord! And when the glorious resurrection dawns they will awake with the likeness of their Lord and Savior.

L. E. McKAY.

TOUCHET, Wash.

DEAR EDITORS:—The brethren in Missouri, with whom I visited last winter, made a strong request that I write more often for the SIGNS, and my mind is now to make the attempt once more and leave it entirely to your judgment as to its publication. There is no grander subject that interests my mind now than the promise of God that he will provide. This glorious promise is far-reaching; it reaches the depths and ascends the heights and spreads its protecting wings to all eternity. It, as all the sweet promises of God, embraces the poor and lowly, the ones who are not able to help themselves. The Lord will provide. What do we understand by this? I understand that it means everything necessary to bring the poor, afflicted child of God into full possession of all that faith sees and hope embraces, and to see Jesus as he is and be like him. This being so, well might inspiration say, All things work together for good to them that are called of God, for he will provide. In his provision he has stored every needful blessing in Jesus to perfect this glorious work; and the beauty or glory of this promise is that there is no condition in it on the part of the one embraced in it. It is not yea and nay, but yea and amen in the Lord. If it were conditional we could find no sweetness in it; but when we were without strength, in due time Christ died for us. In this we see the great

provision of the atonement. But this is not all he provided; if so, we would be of all men most miserable. He arose again the third day for our justification, so we have justification provided for us in Jesus; and we yet would be without hope if there were not other provision. He ascended to the Father and sent the Comforter (Holy Ghost) as he promised, and it takes of the things of Jesus, the things which God provided, and shows them to us, and in this gift the one provided for is fully prepared unto every good work. The good work is not in self, but in Jesus, for there is no good thing in the flesh. The provision is in Jesus, so we are provided with the Spirit, that we can and do glory in God through our Lord Jesus Christ and have no confidence in the flesh. Dear brethren, how often in these rich provisions do your hearts well up in blessedness, as the old apostles and prophets, and break out with thankfulness that cannot be uttered by mortal tongue. Yes, David can come as near the feeling of the soul thus blessed as any: Praise him, O my soul; praise him, all that is within me, praise his holy name, for he has shown me his salvation. Under such provisions the soul can enter in with old Simeon and feel the willingness to depart and be with God, and we daily experience these rich provisions as we journey through this sinful world. Yes, we with those who have gone before can say we know what it is to abound and we know what it is to want. We know what it is to be cast down, but while we are cast down God has so provided that we are not destroyed; he has in all our temptations provided a way for our escape. We know what the presence of the dear Lord is in our devotion. When the little lambs come home with such tenderness that our hearts are melted within us, it seems that the springtime has come, the singing of birds and the voice of the dove is heard in the land. These sweet provisions came forcibly to mind in all my visit with you, while it seemed you were bowed down because those beauties you so loved and cherished were gone forever. Dear ones, the same God that provided the sight of Moses and Elias and Jesus in their glorified state to your vision is the one that provided the cloud that overshadowed you, and out of that cloud he provided the sweet voice that speaks to you with love and power and teaches you that this is his beloved Son, hear ye him in all things. Look to the Author of your faith, for he has provided everything necessary to finish your faith. Paul in the eighth chapter of Romans comes to us with such provisions that we surely can see the wonders of God's provision, when he calls our mind to the great wonders of God's love for us, which is the principle or foundation upon which all provisions rest. He who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things? This is full and complete. Rest in hope, trust in God, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. David says there is a set time to remember Zion, and I am truly glad our God has so provided his heavenly and divine blessings that man cannot change them. You or I cannot hurry, neither can we prevent the purpose of God. I sometimes think it is good for the cloud to be let down, for we are made at such times to look beyond the watchman; there is where the bride found him, and it is where we all find him. God has provided that the church cannot live without the pastor, neither can the pastor live without the church. While this is true, the blessing of adding to the church is of the Lord,

and the prosperity of the church is in the Lord. Except the Lord build the house, they that build labor in vain; except the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain.

In conclusion, I want to be understood upon this text, The Lord will provide. Upon these provisions rest all acceptable service to the Lord. I believe that the provisions of God in Christ Jesus are the cause of obedience, and obedience is the fruit of the Spirit. May the blessings of God rest upon Zion, is my prayer.

Yours in hope,

J. T. BARNES.

ISAIAH XLVI. 9, 10.

"I AM God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

Paul told the church at Ephesus that they were predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. God's purpose and predestination are the same. If anything that has ever transpired has been contrary to his purpose, his purpose was not carried out, and he was thereby disappointed, which would be a reflection on his majesty. I make good, I create evil; I form the light, I create darkness; I the Lord do all these things. (Isaiah xlv. 7.) The thought of foolishness is sin. (Prov. xxiv. 9.) Will some one tell us the difference between evil and foolishness (as regards sin)? John tells us that God made all things that were made, but does not express or imply that God caused man to sin or offered any inducement thereto. Paul tells us that by the disobedience of one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin. This one man was Adam, the father of all living naturally. He was innocent when created, and until he violated the law. The penalty annexed to the violation of that law was death; death in a twofold sense: death to the environments of the happy home that God prepared for him, and death in sin. Of one blood God made all nations of men to inhabit the earth. (Acts xvii. 26.) Like always produces its like. After Adam and Eve fell under the condemnation of the law, God said Eve should bear children, and her desire should be to her husband. God tells us by the pen of the prophet Isaiah that he made the world to be inhabited. This being the purpose of God in the creation, and the judgment on Eve to bear children, it necessarily follows that God purposed that sin should enter the world in the ancients of eternity. Again, the covenant of redemption was made before man was created. We read that God's elect were given an inheritance in Christ before the world began. Paul told Timothy to be a partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God, who hath saved us and called us, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began. God said to Pharaoh, the Egyptian king: For this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew forth my power in thee. God called Abraham out of his native land and showed him the land of Canaan, told him he would give it to him and his posterity for an everlasting possession, revealed to him in a vision that his posterity would be in bondage four hundred years, and would come out with great substance, when as yet he had no child. Abraham believed God. Joseph told his brethren concerning selling him into bondage that they meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. Jacob and Esau were Abraham's grandchildren; they were twins. God said to their mother, Rebecca, before

they were born, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. The whys and wherefores of this have never been solved by human wisdom; Paul says it was that the purpose of God according to election might stand. Paul said this by inspiration. No man has ever known God except by divine revelation. The Savior said, No man knoweth the Son, but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. If God could not have controlled sin he would not have suffered it to have entered the world, and again, there would have been no use of a Savior. His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins, so said the angel sent from God. If there had been no sin there would have been nothing to save. God told Abraham that the land of Canaan would be a land flowing with milk and honey. This is figurative language, meaning that it would be in a high state of cultivation, contain vineyards and olive yards, cities, cattle and sheep and many other things necessary to the comfort of his people. The people who built and inhabited that country should be driven out and put to the sword. While they were agriculturists and horticulturists, they were also skilled in mechanism and masonry, but they were heathens in a gospel sense, and as those of the antediluvian world were destroyed for their sins, so were they. God promised Abraham this land occupied by seven different nations hundreds of years before his posterity came in possession of it. This was purposed or predetermined by God before the world was. God told Joshua, Saul and others by the mouth of his prophets to utterly destroy those peoples, together with their cattle and other substance. This can be explained in no other way than that it was the purpose of God, whose ways are past finding out. He rules in the army of heaven as well as among the inhabitants of the earth. Jude tells us certain characters were foreordained to condemnation. Who had the power, save God alone, to set any apart to condemnation? God is not limited, neither is the word of God bound. God is infinite, man is finite, and in nature pronounced nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."—Isaiah lv. 9. The Savior of sinners said on a certain occasion, It must needs be that offences come, but woe unto that man by whom they come. Christ was delivered into the hands of sinners to be crucified by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. This plan was fixed in the ancients of eternity, therefore predetermined or predestinated. Judas Iscariot was one of the characters that Jude wrote about who was foreordained to condemnation. Paul in his charge to the elders at Ephesus, said, I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. While he would refrain from eating meat rather than be offensive to his brethren, he could not afford to sacrifice principle to please any. The foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. Israel's God is the sovereign over all works, in the most absolute sense of that term; in his presence is fullness of joy, at his right hand are pleasures for evermore. He will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

May his dear people know his will and be satisfied, is the sincere prayer of the writer.

JAMES M. SIMMONS.

RULEVILLE, Miss.

CLARKS SUMMIT, Pa.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find two short letters which you are at liberty to publish or not. I would like to read the views of some brother upon Job xiv. 10. Does it mean a corporeal death or an experimental death, or, in other words, an experience of grace?

Yours as ever,

D. M. VAIL.

WEISER, Idaho, April 10, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—I received your word of comfort. The strange article you saw from my pen was not written for publication. My brother asked me to send my experience to him at Haviland, Kansas. He said nothing to me about having it published in the SIGNS. I might have trimmed it up a little had I known it was to be inspected by the fathers in Israel; but the strange thoughts are public property now, so let it go, but I am not able to instruct the household of faith, when my own faith is so weak that I must continually wonder if I am really one myself. We had a good meeting to-day. Brother T. E. Attebery preached from: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." This was good news to us here, because we are such sinners that nothing but such a Savior could reach our condition. He told us that those who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled. When the flesh hungers for righteousness it will be filled with self-righteousness. Now I remember of having seen some very full of self-righteousness, so full that they claimed to live for years without sin. They had hungered for that kind and were filled. If the spirit hungers and thirsts after righteousness it will be filled, if not in this world it shall be in the next world, with the righteousness of Jesus our Savior. This righteousness will not forsake us, will not fade away; it is a precious gift, and while we may not lead pure lives, his righteousness is imputed, and the Father accepts us because of Jesus' righteousness, which is now ours. Elder Attebery explained how it would be if Christ had done all that he could and yet we are not saved, if salvation is left to us poor, dead sinners. Sad thought. My hope is not built on such certain failure. Then he directed our hope to the Savior, who comes to the dead sinner and quickens him to life by his divine power and bids him come and take of the water of life freely. That divine life then hungers for righteousness, and it is given by the one who finished the work of saving his people. Then I had portrayed to me the scene of Christ here in the flesh before our natural eyes. What would I do? Would I stand back and simply look on as many did in his day? My answer was that I would approach him and acknowledge his divinity, offer my petitions for mercy and salvation, when the question suddenly came, Are you worthy to approach so pure a Being? And the answer was as sudden as the question: No, you are no more worthy than they. Then I saw why none but those commanded went to him. Jesus, bid me come.

Brother Vail, I write to get you to write me a long letter some day when you feel that you can spare the time without taking the bread from his children and throwing it to those not worthy to eat. I cannot write for public reading, but I do like to read from our fathers in Israel. Our little church has seventeen members. I get a crumb from nearly every discourse I hear. I am going to

wait patiently for my little crumb from you. The Savior said it was not meet to take the bread from the children and give it to dogs; but as the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the master's table, I am going to wait until my crumb falls.

Your unworthy brother in hope of salvation finished before I was born, but not manifest to me until his divine Spirit revealed it to me.

M. N. WEBB.

WAVERLY, Pa., April 4, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—I received both of your cards addressed to me, and tried to write an acknowledgment to the first one, but did not send it to you. No doubt you have long decided that I am a very ungrateful man, altogether unfit to be called a brother in the faith of the Son of God. My dear brother, though you never entertained such thoughts toward me or any other brother, allow me to say that the above exactly fits my own feelings in regard to myself. While your card was very comforting to me, I am unable to see how you could get any comfort out of what I wrote to the SIGNS. Your cards carried me back to the time that I made my first effort to speak in the dread name of God in public. The subject that I tried to use was, Ye cannot serve two masters, else ye cleave to one and hate the other, &c. I took the stand trembling like a leaf in the wind. I stood twenty or thirty minutes and sat down in shame. There was something pulling at my heart, saying in thunder tones, If you had listened to me you would have saved yourself from this shame. I could not look up, I was as a dead man; I was certain I would never try to preach again. In my sorrow and shame I could see my mistake after it was too late. I was sure that every one present was beholding me in scorn for undertaking to do something that I knew I could not. My grief was overcome by the sound of voices praising God. On raising my head I beheld the brethren and sisters with tear-dimmed eyes shaking hands, giving God honor and praise for his love and mercy toward the children of men. I rallied enough to meditate on the possibilities of God and to behold the nothingness of man. My dear brother, I believe that God there and then opened a poor sinner's eyes to see and know that Israel's God is a great omnipotent, omniscient God, and that his servants are poor, dependent creatures. Twenty years (or nearly so) have come and gone since my sad experience referred to above, and like Jacob of old, after wrestling all night with an angel and getting his thigh put out of joint, so that he went the remainder of his life a poor cripple, I am fully persuaded that each and every one of God's called and chosen servants must have their carnal minds, their carnal affections, put out of joint before they are qualified to preach the truth as it is in the Son of God. Then, and not before then, they can and do say with Paul, God forbid that I should know anything among you save Jesus and him crucified. A man that can see success in his own efforts does not see and preach the righteousness of the Lord's Christ.

My dear brother, allow me to say that I have no hope of ever meeting you on earth, though if I am one of God's little ones, I feel sure that we will join in praising God on the shores of eternal rest, where God and his holy angels abide. May God comfort, keep and use you as an humble servant until he calls you home. Pray for me, a poor, tempest-tossed sinner, saved by grace, I hope. Pardon this long, imperfect letter.

I am yours in hope and gospel bonds,

L. E. SKINNER.

WEISER, Idaho, Feb. 17, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have received several requests to write, and have tried to do so, but my writing has been like my preaching, very weak, which makes me feel that I ought not to try, if any one else will.

"Lazarus, come forth." Lazarus had been dead four days, and I hardly think the doctors of that day or even now would have undertaken to raise him or doctor him. Lazarus had died and was laid away. Of course he had ears, but could not hear, eyes, but could not see, a heart, and could not understand; he was dead. Now, if you believe, you shall see the glory of God. Lazarus represents a dead sinner, and as it took the power of God to bring him forth, just so it takes the same power to quicken the dead sinner. Do you not remember the young man who asked what good work he could do to do the work of God? The only answer Jesus gave him was, This is the work of God, that ye believe on me; but he did not tell the young man he could do it. The dead sinner has no life to act with, consequently his eyes, ears and heart can receive no impressions. One in this condition is perfectly helpless, and in just the right condition to receive the kingdom as a little child. There has never been a law given that could give life, neither have there ever been any conditions left him to comply with in order to get life. There is only one way to help such an one: Jesus, the way. There are no ways, for Jesus says, "I am the way." So when a poor sinner first sees the need of a Savior, the grave (eternal doom) so close to him, and his helpless condition (bound hand and foot), do you not think he needs some one to loose him and let him go? I think God has called and qualified servants for this purpose, for the gospel saves the believer. The power and glory of God were manifest in raising Lazarus, so it is when the blessed Lord reveals to one the fact that he is their Savior. How our poor heart leaps for joy when he who is our life appears; there are peace, joy and contentment. When we are blessed with the comforting presence of Jesus we can say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Thus he brings us out of darkness, and when we are in the desert, O so thirsty, almost ready to give up, and would if it were possible, this same blessed Jesus that raised Lazarus, by the same power quenches our thirst out of the spiritual Rock (Christ Jesus) and blesses us to rest in the shadow of a great Rock. O how good our God is; he knows our weakness, he remembers our frame, that it is but dust; we are not consumed because God is always merciful, never, never changes, the same yesterday, today and forever.

Dear brother, I am much of the time down, it seems lower than any one else, and I can no more come out and take hold of the promises and rejoice in them than I can make a world; but I can still say God has wonderfully blessed me, for if I am not deceived he sometimes takes me into his banqueting-house; then I rejoice in his love, and am encouraged to go on.

Yours in hope,

T. E. ATTEBERY.

FORSYTH, Ga., July 12, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been a subscriber to the SIGNS for a long time, thirty years or more. During all the time I have been a reader of it I have not had occasion to differ with either its editorial department or any of its contributors. Even if I did no harm would

be done, for we all have the privilege to think and speak our sentiments. But what gives me the most comfort is, that I can witness with such able expounders of the Scriptures. The doctrine set forth has not and cannot be refuted, every declaration is in harmony. Revelation can build a structure without any defects. I know of no other doctrine but has some combustible that will not stand the fire. They believe and preach good works as a means to salvation, not understanding that spiritual life must precede spiritual action. We would not discount good works, but believe that blessings produce good works, and not good blessings. The rich man who went to Christ inquiring what he could do to inherit eternal life, believed in good works, for he had kept the Mosaic law and expected blessing for so doing; but when told that he lacked one thing, which was to sell all he had and give to the poor, he could not do that, for he was very rich. This is a plain and simple figure, and utterly refutes the do and live system of salvation, and yet we have preached to us continually, Do good and God will bless us for it. Do good, and we will inherit eternal life. It seems the simple letter would teach our D. D.'s that no creature can do anything of himself to inherit anything, but there must be relationship before we inherit a thing; so it does not come by act of the one benefited. The condition the man was in who wanted to know what good thing he could do to obtain eternal life, is a true figure of every one in the state of nature. It does not necessarily have to be one with much of this world's goods to be a rich man in the full meaning here set forth; all have to become poor in spirit, give up all self-righteousness and say, Lord, save, I perish, let him have much or little of this world's goods. This is what I feel is the lesson here taught. I am not saying these things to instruct any one, because I am sure that every child of grace knows these sayings if they are true, but I only want to bear testimony to what I believe is the truth. I will mention another reason for our faith, and that is, we have never claimed that the world was growing better, and that money would christianize the world, as others have claimed, putting christianity on the same basis as any other commercial commodity; but we have been made to mourn the sad state of drifting from the plain gospel teaching. The popular religionists of the day, only a short time back, said that we would never have any more war. All difference would be settled by The Hague (arbitration). Behold, we are now in one of the worst wars the world has ever known, and their teachers all praying for their will to be done, &c., each for his own country. How long before we will see Zion travailing? May it not be long, is the sincere wish and prayer of the unworthy writer.

Do with this as you wish and all will be well.

Yours in christian bonds,

J. W. NEWTON.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in September (30th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1917.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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PATRIOTISM HONORABLE, BUT NOT GODLINESS.

On every side, these days, one hears the glorification of patriotism. It is continually being exalted into a spiritual virtue, is pronounced to be a grace of the Spirit of God. It is being considered equal to the love of and the service of God. Patriotism means the love of and devotion to one's own country. Like morality, it is a most excellent trait of a man's character. We would not belittle it in the least, neither would we exaggerate it and glorify it into something it is not. How important it is to be able to distinguish between those things which belong to the kingdom of God and those things which belong merely to the kingdoms of this world. To try to point out this difference as it relates to patriotism is our purpose in writing this article at this time. It is so necessary that we put things in their proper places where they belong, and not get them confused in our minds. In the providence of God everything has its time and place, a place for everything and everything in its place. The revelation which the Spirit of God brings about in the lives of God's people enables them to perceive, by faith, this divine arrangement, that the universe is not run on any hit-or-miss plan, but that God works all things after the counsel of his own will, ever bringing about his purpose among the inhabitants of the earth as well as in the army of heaven. Without the spirit of patriotism manifested in the inhabitants of a country, a nation would lack cohesiveness, or the quality of sticking together. The citizens of a country to which they are linked by ties of flesh and blood, in which they have lived for generations, and in which they have their homes, and to whose traditions they are devoted, and with which they are in sympathy, naturally rise up in indignation when the aims of their country are defied, or when the peace and safety of their country are threatened. A people that would be lacking in this spirit of patriotism, lacking in this power to resent encroachments upon their country or its rights, would deservedly forfeit the world's respect, and would end in being the servants, not the equals or the masters, of their fellow-men. One cannot but admire that man or that woman who conducts himself or herself with propriety, dignity and self-respect. Without self-respect one cannot hope to have the respect of others for one's self. What self-respect is to an individual, patriotism is to a nation. On the other hand, patriotism is inclined to be narrow, and not able to transcend the rights of one's own flesh and blood; it is not international, but national. A world patriot would be one who is zealous for the interests and rights of the whole world, rather than for any one nation in it. This sort of person is just now very rare, though time may develop more of him later on. We like to see a true patriot, just as we like to see a man whose morality and uprightness of character are above reproach, just as we like to see a man who is honest and

who shows his manliness in all the relationships and duties of life. But patriotism and good morals, honesty and manliness, are traits of human character, and are not to be confused with the fruit of God's Spirit nor lauded as being necessarily spiritual graces. We have no quarrel with patriotism whatever when it is considered in the realm to which it properly belongs, but we do protest strenuously against the deification of patriotism, and against its being hailed as one of the good works by which the kingdom of God is advanced. Peter drew his sword zealously in behalf of his Savior and cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest, but Jesus told him to put up his sword, for all they that take the sword shall perish by it; meaning that any disciple of Jesus who thinks to advance his interest or that of the truth by an appeal to carnal means and weapons shall realize spiritual death in the attempt. This saying of Jesus in regard to those that take the sword means not that nations of the world have no warrant at times in resorting to arms to establish their prerogatives, but it does mean that the salvation of sinners or the establishment of the church or the defence of the truth or any of the many affairs of the kingdom of heaven are not furthered by any such means. Christ's kingdom is not of this world, therefore there can be no carnal fighting to further its progress. Jesus himself said, My kingdom is not of this world, else would my servants fight that I be not delivered to the Jews. Since his kingdom was not of this world, no fighting for its protection with the weapons of the world could be permitted. Let us, therefore, render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and unto God the things that are God's. Patriotism belongs to Cæsar and is his moral due. Every loyal citizen of whatsoever country will leap to obey his country's call when the interests of his country demand it, but there is no necessity to make a god out of patriotism and bow the knee to it as did the Israelites to the golden calf. Right here is where we emphatically differ with many and much of the religious practice of our time. It is love of country that is being widely preached, not the love of God; patriotism and not Christ. Patriotism is not a Bible word, nor is love of country so much as mentioned anywhere in the Scriptures. The Jews, while conspicuously a religious people, were not especially patriotic. During the seventy years that they were captives in Babylon it was not so much their native land they longed for as it was the worship of the temple at Jerusalem, from which they were exiled. As a nation they were generally sticklers for the sacraments, rites and ceremonies of the law, painstaking regarding the literal observance of the feasts, fasts and holy days; but we read in the prophets very little evidence that the Jews were essentially patriotic or that they were particularly in love with their own land as a country merely. Generally when a nation goes to war against an outside foe it has a tendency to unite the factions within the nation; and the people of all parties and opinions combine to present a united front to the foe. A universal danger from without obliterates party differences and bickerings from within. This, however, was rarely true of the Jews. When the Roman army under Titus laid siege to the city of Jerusalem before its final destruction in 70 A. D., Jerusalem was rent asunder with internal quarrels, political and religious parties and factions, so that the inhabitants were not able to lose sight of their petty jealousies and pre-

sent a united front as their common protection against the Roman menace from without; one of the factors in the providence of God which led to the downfall of the city. The children of God in this world are not lacking in devotion to their native land, but their spiritual faith and hope and love are centered in a better country, an heavenly, so that the things of this world are not able to fill their time and thought to the exclusion of all else, as is the case with those who have not been born from above and so translated from nature's darkness into the liberty and light of the kingdom of God. The child of God is a pilgrim and a stranger in this present world. He cannot, to save his life, become wholly wrapped up in the things of this world; to do so would be to lose his life. The child of God, while conscientiously anxious and careful to do his duty to his country and to his fellow-men, could not be as outwardly ardent about it as are mere people of the world. He would, in the time of crisis and of danger, be found at his post, but he would not be especially proud of his promptness, nor would he be able to inwardly nurse his patriotism with as much comfort and satisfaction as would one who is strenuous for the things of this world, not knowing aught of the world to come. The Japanese believe that death on the battlefield is a sure passport into the paradise of the gods; that to die for one's country is a sufficient propitiation for any and all sins one may have been guilty of. How well it is indeed for us to be able to put things in their proper places, and not to confuse temporal things with spiritual, or *vice versa.* Jesus was not a patriot in any worldly definition of the term. While he was a Jew of the Jews, he was not zealous for Jewish customs and traditions, nor was he an advocate of Jewish rights against those of other nations. He most certainly did command there be rendered unto Cæsar the things that belonged to Cæsar; that men be obedient to the governments that held sway over them, in so far as those governments dictated merely in temporal affairs. It was the Spirit of this same Jesus that afterward moved the apostle Paul to write thus: "Put them [the church] in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work." Obedience to the civil authorities that have the rule over us is, therefore, the bounden duty of every one who hopes and professes he is a child of God. Paul, while in Corinth, was moved by the Spirit to write a letter to the church in Rome. Did he suggest to the Roman brethren that they insurrect against the Roman government? Most certainly he did not. He commanded obedience to that pagan government in civil matters, notwithstanding the fact that Rome, pagan as well as Catholic, has been the most inveterate persecutor the people of God have ever had. Listen to his words: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." Again, "Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor." Patriotism is rendering to one's country that honor and respect and devotion which is our country's just, moral and civil due. But patriotism is not a fruit of the Spirit, and is not to be confounded with nor substituted for the believer's devotion to God and to the cause of truth. Let us not make a religious ideal of our patriotism. One need boast no more of his pa-

triotism than of his ability to pay his debts. Paying our debts is no more than our duty to do, as is dying for one's country. In either case there is nothing to brag about. Dying on the battlefield will not give one a passport into heaven, since nothing but the blood of Jesus can remove sins and justify before God.

L.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. M. Fenton, at the home of the bride's parents, Rising Sun, Md., Wednesday, August 15th, 1917, Slater B. Pyle and Helen C. Sterrett, both of Rising Sun, Md.

By the same, at the home of the bride's parents, Everett, Pa., Thursday, August 23rd, 1917, Scott Wible, of Three Springs, Pa., and Inez F. Starr, of Everett, Pa.

By Elder George Ruston, June 6th, 1917, at the bride's home, 2310 Cambrelling Ave., New York city, John James Secor, of Ashokan, N. Y., and Maud Brown, of New York.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Edson C. Reeves, eldest son of David L. and Mary A. Reeves, was born in Bowersville, Ohio, Feb. 20th, 1863, and passed from this earthly life in Phœnix, Arizona, August 6th, 1917, making his age 54 years, 5 months and 17 days. He was married to Alice Glass in February, 1883, to which union were born three sons, one dying in infancy, another at the age of twelve, leaving, together with the heartbroken widow, one son, Harry T., of Phœnix, Ariz., one sister, Mrs. Ella Shields, of Paris, Ill., two brothers, M. C. and J. P., of Chicago, Ill., two half-sisters, besides numerous other relatives and friends to mourn their loss. The deceased, together with his wife, united with the New School Baptists about twenty-five years ago, being baptized at Momence, Ill. He had a love for the Old School Baptists, and often attended their services and loved to mingle with them. He was at heart an Old Baptist. A few weeks before he passed away his wife asked him if he would like to attend meeting that day. He replied, "Yes, if it were an Old Baptist meeting." The writer visited him last May, and promised to send him some SIGNS to read. He later wrote that he had received them and enjoyed reading them very much. I was closely associated with him most of our lives, with the exception of a few years which I spent on the Pacific coast, and perhaps knew him better than any other aside from the wife and son. During all that time I seldom knew him to find fault with or speak illy of any one. He possessed that happy faculty, if differing with any one, or hearing one speak illy of another, of changing the conversation. He was very fond of his family, and of the families of his brothers and sister, and was held in high esteem by every one in his employ, as well as by all who knew him. "By their fruits ye shall know them." "The tree is not made good because of the fruit that it bears, but the fruit is good, indicating that the tree has previously been made good." "Ye must be born again." "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil." This I am sure was our brother's faith; to God only be all the glory. He entered the railroad service when but a boy, first as telegraph operator and agent, later served as train dispatcher, assistant superintendent and general storekeeper. In 1900, together with the writer, he entered the mercantile business, which was conducted until 1912, when on account of failing health he was obliged to retire. About a year later he with his family sought the climate of southern Arizona, hoping to be benefited, and seemed better for about three years. During the past winter he was taken with a severe case of grippe, from which he never fully recovered, but was not thought to be in a dangerous condition until about ten days before he passed away. Brother J. P. started from Chicago the morning of August 4th, due to arrive at Phœnix Monday night the 6th, hoping to be in time to see him alive, but he passed away about 6:30 a. m. Monday. The next day my brother, together with the stricken widow and son, started with the remains for Bowersville, Ohio, arriving Friday evening the 10th. The funeral services were conducted at 2 p. m. Saturday, J. W. Roberts, a New School Baptist minister, of Toledo, Ohio, the former pastor of the family, officiating. A large assemblage of sorrowing relatives and sympathizing friends was present. The body was laid with tender hands in its last resting-place in the Bowersville Cemetery, near where he was born, there to await the resurrection morn; for we believe that the spirit has returned to God who gave it, and is now dwelling with the saints gone before; and when he shall come again with all his saints, he shall raise this same body which was sown in corruption to incorruption; sown in weakness, it shall be raised in power, and fashioned like unto the glorious body of our Lord Jesus, and together with the redeemed shall dwell forever with the One who was slain but is risen again to reign throughout all eternity.

It is our prayer that the widow and son, together with others who mourn, may receive comfort from the God of all comfort. Then, sorrowing ones, let us not mourn as those who have no hope. He will never leave nor forsake you.

Written by a loving brother,

M. C. REEVES.

John S. Ferguson died suddenly at his home near Aldie, Loudoun Co., Va., August 1st, 1917. He was born Sept. 1st, 1852, the son of Romulus and Katherine Ferguson. He leaves two brothers: James W., who lives on an adjoining farm, and George O., of Leesburg. He is also survived by one sister, Mrs. R. D. Leith, of Vienna, Fairfax Co., Va. He was married April 6th, 1880, to Miss Lelia A. Megeath, who survives her husband, together with four children, two sons and two daughters. Mr. Ferguson, while he never united with the Old School Baptists, was a firm believer in the truth advocated by them, and was a regular attendant for many years at the meetings of the Mt. Zion Church, near Aldie, Va. He was a great Bible reader, and was able to quote Scripture aptly to defend the truth whenever necessary. He firmly believed that salvation is by grace, and not by works of the law. He also firmly believed and advocated the absolute predestination of all things. We had been looking for him to unite with the church, but a keen sense of his own unreadiness for the ordinance of baptism kept him from casting in his lot with the people he loved. It is always true that the righteousness of Jesus is never revealed but that it is accompanied with a sharp sense of self-depreciation. This was markedly true of Mr. Ferguson, who, while he was blessed to understand the preaching and the interpretation of many Scriptures, was all the time aware of the depravity of human nature and of the vanity of all things earthly. He had felt for a long time that the world had no charms for him, and that life for him was not worth living. He longed for the time to come that he might die. We hope he has at last found rest and peace for his weary soul. May God in his mercy comfort all the mourning ones.

A large company of relatives, friends and neighbors gathered at the funeral, when the writer tried to speak from the words in Romans viii. 38, 39. The body was interred in the cemetery at Middleburg, Va.

L.

APPOINTMENTS.

PLEASE publish the following appointments:

Casper G. Fetter's, Hamilton Ave., Friday, Sept. 14th, 7:45 p. m.; Mrs. S. Horner's, Stockton, N. J., Saturday, 15th, 2:30 p. m.; Locktown, N. J., Sunday, 16th, 10:30 a. m.; Frenchtown, 4 p. m.; brother A. J. Demott's, Grandon, N. J., Monday, 17th, 7:45 p. m.

Saturday 2 p. m. and Sunday 11 a. m. and 2:30 p. m., Sept. 22nd and 23rd, Beulah Church, Brooke, Canada; Wednesday, 26th, 7:45 p. m., London, Canada; Thursday, 27th, 7:45 p. m., Brantford, Canada. Between these appointments I hope to be with the friends at Dunwich, Duart and St. Thomas.

D. M. VAIL.

ORDINATIONS.

ACCORDING to agreement with the brethren assembled at the session of the First Oklahoma Association, held with the Little Zion Church, Pottawatomie Co., Okla., August 24th, 25th and 26th, 1917, it was decided to ordain brother Felix B. Morris, of Little Hope Church, Bryan Co., Okla., to the full work of the ministry.

On Saturday, August 25th, a presbytery was formed composed of the following brethren: Elder J. A. Campbell, Little Flock Church, Knox County, Texas, Elder J. F. Beeman, Remnant Church, Rogers Co., Okla., Elder A. Springer, Little Zion Church, Pottawatomie Co., Okla., and five deacons of Little Hope and Little Zion churches.

Organized by choosing Elder J. A. Campbell moderator and brother John Woods clerk.

Proceeded in the following order: Elder J. F. Beeman spoke in prayer, with the laying on of the hands of the Elders and deacons, after which the right hand of fellowship was given to the candidate by the Elders and all the brethren and sisters present.

J. A. CAMPBELL, Moderator.

JOHN WOODS, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. P. W. Koebig, N. J., $1.00; Mrs. N. A. Simmons, Ala., $3.00.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

I would be pleased to correspond with any one who may possess any or all files of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES covering the four decades from 1860 to 1900, and containing complete articles or letters by any of the following named writers, to wit: Richard M. Newport, William J. Purington, James Wagner, Thomas P. Dudley, Joseph H. Flint, Isaiah Guymon, George W. Stipp, W. M. Mitchell, William Lively.

B. H. IRWIN.

HANFORD, Cal., General Delivery.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Jefferson, N. Y., will hold its yearly meeting the third Sunday and Saturday before in September (15th and 16th), 1917. Those coming by train to Stamford will be met on Friday before on the 11 o'clock a. m. train. We extend an invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, especially brethren in the ministry.

G. E. MEAD, Church Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Church has appointed a yearly meeting to be held the last Saturday and Sunday in September (29th and 30th), 1917. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, especially brethren in the ministry of our faith and order.

R. W. SANFORD, Pastor.

THE Cow Marsh Old School Baptist Church, Providence permitting, will hold their annual or yearly meeting the fourth Sunday and Saturday afternoon preceding in September (22nd and 23rd). Brethren and friends are invited to meet with us. Trains will be met at Viola Saturday morning.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Pastor.

THERE will be a two days meeting held at Cammal, Pa., Saturday and Sunday, September 29th and 30th. All members and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Done by order of the church.

J. T. BADGLEY, Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held at Halcottville, N. Y., on the Ulster & Delaware R. R., at the regular time, first Wednesday and Thursday in October (3rd and 4th), 1917. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

Done by order of the church.

JAMES AVERY, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Association will be held with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1917. Ministers, brethren and sisters who desire to attend the meeting will be met at the train at Three Springs and conveyed to and from the church.

M. F. STARR, Church Clerk.

AN all day meeting will be held with the Snow Hill Church, at Snow Hill, Worcester Co., Md., on the second Sunday in October (14th), 1917. All lovers of gospel truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

JOHN H. TRUITT, Church Clerk.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the New Valley Church, Loudoun Co., Va., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 17th, 18th and 19th, 1917. Trains will be met Tuesday afternoon and evening before the meeting at Leesburg, Va., on the Washington & Old Dominion Electric Railway. Trains leave 36th and M Sts., N. W., Washington, D. C., at 2:10, 4:15, 5:10, 5:30 and 6:05 p. m. Trains Wednesday morning arrive too late to be met for the meeting. All lovers of the truth, and especially ministers of our faith and order, are earnestly requested to meet with us.

T. S. TITUS, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church in the city of Wilmington, Del., will hold their yearly meeting in the meetinghouse, 1304 Jefferson St., on the third Saturday and Sunday in October, commencing 2 o'clock p. m. Saturday and continuing all day Sunday. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited. Trolley cars from all railroad stations and boat wharves pass near the meetinghouse.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

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IN

NEW YORK CITY.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 85. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1917. NO. 19.

CORRESPONDENCE.

COLUMBUS, Ga., July 29, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you the experience or travels of our beloved brother Fisher, which he has written for me, and I believe that all those of like precious faith will be deeply interested in reading it. It is to me as all else from his pen, both edifying to the saints and glorifying to God our Savior. He gave me permission to do as I liked with the letter, so I leave it with you.

Your little sister, I hope,

(MRS.) C. M. THETFORD.

SALISBURY, Md., July 8, 1917.

DEAR SISTER THETFORD:—You have asked of me to write for you my experience. Many have been the experiences of the forty years of my life. One thing I know, and that is, I have an experience, but the question often arises, Is it a christian experience, the travel of the Lord's people? I have hope through Christ in the mercy of God that he has been pleased to deal with me after the manner of his dealing with his children. To attempt to go into detail of the many incidents of my past would be both tedious and tiresome, and probably unprofitable, and my intent now is, if the Lord wills, to relate a brief synopsis of past experiences, leaving it to your judgment as to whether you accept that which I may be given to say. First, my parents were both members of the Old School Baptist Church before my natural birth, from whom I received much good instruction as to moral and upright living, and however far I may have departed or will yet depart from an honest, moral, upright life, it cannot be rightly charged to their account, though at no time did either of them attempt to teach me the way of salvation, but the principal part of their teaching lay in their daily walk of life before me and all men. They never missed their meeting days either Saturday or Sunday unless by some unavoidable occurrence wholly beyond their control, riding in the farm wagon eight miles to meeting over hilly, rocky roads. So I was raised to go to meeting, which was instilled into my heart by example. When between the age of four and six years I began to have serious thoughts about many things, often experiencing great loneliness, and often would be stopped in my play to behold the works

of God in nature with awe and astonishment. What made the trees, the clouds, the sun, the wind, the moon, the stars? What was I, where would I go, and what was my end? These and many other mysterious questions would startle my childish mind and throw me in a state of serious thought in contemplating the mysteries by which I was surrounded, including myself. I generally consoled myself with the one thought that when I became a man like my father I would be a member of the church (Old School Baptist) and be a good man. Such were some of my childhood thoughts, and in my childish way I prayed with all sincerity fervently, to, as it were, the unknown God, for I was then given to know there was a supreme power—a place of being and control somewhere, and to him I addressed my childish petitions for protection. Although I played ball and other games the same as other boys, yet in the midst of our games I was often seized with fear and trembling; knowing the power of God, I quaked with fear before his majesty, for I felt he knew all things, and from him nothing could be hid. As I grew older, for a time I was relieved somewhat of these serious thoughts. At no time in my life have I ever believed salvation to be by works of man, though I knew not by what terms to express myself, nor could I have put it into words. I know now I have always from my earliest recollection believed in salvation by grace alone, election, foreknowledge, predestination, the omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence of the unlimited, sovereign God of heaven and earth, with whom is neither variableness nor shadow of turning; that men, devils, principalities and kings are all alike in his hand; that absolutely nothing could change his decree. When I was about seventeen to twenty-one there was never any who led a more dual life; though I had much serious thought I was enabled to completely cover it up and drown any sorrowful appearance in frivolity and laughter. I prided myself on hardheartedness, determining within me to be a man who had never been known to shed a tear. I loved dancing parties, gay company and fun at that time. I mocked religion and religious services, preached mock sermons and made fun out of such things; was quite a story-teller (not a liar) and thought seriously of becoming a writer of fiction or an actor. I was very proud, loved good appearances and nice clothes. One evening when about eighteen I attended a dance, and had just stepped out of the set with a lady; we were laughing and talking (she was a lively girl and full of fun), when instantly the whole scene of mirth and fun before me was swept away, obliterated from my view, and instead I saw myself standing on the very brink (half of each foot over the edge) of the bottomless abyss of hell, filled with devils, whose eagerness for me paralyzed me with fear, and with this there came, as it were, a brick hurled with tremendous force, striking me at my heart. My heart ached from the blow. I swallowed the choked feeling as best I could and composed myself some so that my anguish was undetected. This scene followed me. I dived deeper and deeper in fun and frivolity, attempting to bury my troubles in the glare of a gay life; relief was only temporary. Finally I began playing cards, which I loved better than eating or sleeping. I was never given to swearing, drinking or keeping of immoral company, though in this I dare not boast, except I glory in the power of God, who by his grace through Christ kept me from some things which others have been left

to indulge in. I refuse absolutely to let man have credit or honor for one thing. This refusal in me is also by the grace and mercy of God. Time went on until I was of age, when I stopped attending religious services of every kind, except on very rare occasions. The Arminian faith I knew conclusively beyond all shadow of doubt to be wrong. There was not, nor ever was, any question in my mind as to their teachings, and that faith which I knew was right was a hard, uncompromising, unjust religion, which gave man no opportunity or chance to save himself. I knew it was true, and it was the truth that hurt. I never read the Scriptures until the summer after I was of age. I took a Testament and carried it to my boarding-house and read it in secret, seeking relief, but in what form I did not know or care, but each word condemned me, and I could find no salvation for a sinner, and a sinner I knew myself to be. One day of that year of which I am now speaking, I was hauling staves on a cart alone in the road, but in sight of a little town, with no one to speak to, when my anguish became so great I asked, If it had to be that I must exist in this world, why could I not have been a dog, a pine bush, or even the gnat on my hand, whose existence I crushed out with my finger and there was an end to his existence? Why, O why was I born? Such was my anguish at that time and many others. Time passed on and I became more and more rebellious, charging God Almighty with unjustness and unfairness, going on in this way for two or three years, until in the evilness of my wicked heart I defied him to thwart me in my purpose to do a certain thing. Time went on. One night there came a most terrific thunder storm, which I thought was sent on purpose to kill me, for I knew my wickedness and felt he could not be just and save me; salvation was not to be hoped for by me. After an hour or so the storm passed over whereupon I lay down in my rebellion and sin, and in a few moments was asleep, and as ready the next morning to fight against God as I ever was. The following year was the final consummation, the climax. My last straw was gone; I had long since known for sure I was lost beyond redemption, and now in this last fight the Lord had beaten me; the last ounce of strength and ambition for this life or the next was gone. I was a wretched creature who deserved no pity. I had lost financially every dollar I had, and more, too, could not pay my debts. I had a good wife and little girl, and with both I was so cross at times as to be almost unbearable. It is useless to attempt to describe this place, this hell I found my helpless self in. I decided to go to Snow Hill, Md., with my father to an association, simply to see the country and enjoy, the best I could, the hospitality I knew abounded in such places. I knew they would feed and shelter me on account of my father. I went purely for the loaves and fishes, the natural enjoyment of the trip. The last day came; I had paid little or no attention to the preaching. Elder Chick was preaching; his words were as red hot irons thrust through my soul, worse than the dissecting knives in the hands of inexperienced students dissecting a live body, for under this condition one would soon die, but I could not die. I knew he was preaching the truth of God, and I knew I was a sinner, vile and undeserving of the least favor, but deserving the full wrath of God. Elder Chick sat down after what to me seemed an age. Elder Eubanks got up. I tried not to listen, for I sup-

posed he would kill me, but directly I heard him say: "It is the living child that cries and begs and suffers; the dead know nothing, therefore if one cries, that is infallible proof of life." I saw the whole thing through in one extended view of the great plan of salvation, that it was the living subject only of God's grace that felt the need of the Savior. I saw Jesus Christ my Savior, in whom my hope was. I was happy and bursting with joy. I supposed at that time that every man, woman and child heard those glorious words and rejoiced at the sound of them, supposing them to have never been uttered before, and that they were divine and direct revelation in which all present could rejoice, but very likely I am the only one who remembers those words, and possibly they were sent directly to and for me. As you say, I feel this was the way the Lord had of revealing himself to me as my Savior. I have indulged in calling this my hope and dating my hope in the eternal mercy of God through Jesus Christ from that hour, or, that is, hope was revealed to me at that time. May God have all the glory. Amen. I had ups and downs then for about three years, both naturally and spiritually, and went to live in Brooklyn, N. Y. Many times doubts beclouded my mind, and I never told any one at any time my hope and fears. I never talked of these things, and under no consideration before my father and mother. The spring of 1907 I became seriously impressed to speak of these things before the church. There is only one church organization in the whole of greater New York; over four million people, and only one Old School Baptist Church, but they are the salt of the city. I was practically a stranger to all the members. My father and mother were members there at that time, but I did not attend. On the third Sunday, or the nineteenth of May that year, I went because necessity was laid upon me; I had to go, bearing a burden that bowed me down so that I could not look up. On account of a serious injury sustained by my mother the Sunday before she and my father were not there. Miserable beyond description, I had some talk with Elder McConnell, who is pastor there, that morning. I felt I had nothing to say, but the great burden was to talk to the church. I was given opportunity by the church and liberty of God to speak of the way by which I had come. I was received without questioning or a dissenting voice, baptized the following Sunday morning by Elder John McConnell at the foot of 155th St., New York city, N. Y., in the Hudson River, where there is much water.

I have written more than I intended, and will not write much more now. I will say since then I have been carried to heights of joy, seeing things, as Paul says, that are not lawful to utter. I have gone down into depths of doubt, darkness, unbelief and infidelity, disbelieving there was any God, heaven, Christ, sinner, devil or hell, or even any controlling power. Many questions have arisen, but this I know: God has been good to me. My hope for the present and future is in the righteous obedience of the risen and exalted Savior, who ever liveth to make intercession for the saints with groanings which cannot be uttered. The life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. It is by the grace of God I am what I am. Can you accept this?

F. SELBY FISHER.

FORDYCE, Ark., Aug. 28, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending you two letters that I feel would be of interest to the household of faith, and ask that if in your judgment you think that they have the right sound to let them come out in the good old SIGNS. This young man has been most wonderfully wrought upon. He was raised in Little Rock under the very strictest sect of the doctrines of the law, and was tutored and governed in that way, but our God had a work for him to perform to his own name's honor and glory, and called him right out of the hotbeds of the self-righteous workmongers, and revealed his grace in the young man, and he now, like Paul, has discovered that God's grace is sufficient for him, and his good letters do show forth the praises of him who hath called us all out of darkness into his marvelous light. It does make us feel to rejoice that our God is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness, but is long-suffering to usward (the household of faith), not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, and in this case it is demonstratively manifested that these are facts. This young man was not allowed to perish by reason of being carried away with the doctrines of men and devils to the loss of his spiritual enjoyments. God had a place for him to come forth and declare his riches and to know and serve him, and he revealed himself to him and made him to know that he was the Lord God, and the only name under heaven whereby we must be saved. God be praised for his wonderful goodness and mercy and the verification of his promises.

I am yours in bonds,

V. R. HARRIS.

PARSONS, Kans., May 15, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER:—After a week's meditation on our last meeting, which I attended at Iola, Kansas, I will undertake once more to write you a few lines to thank you for writing those inspiring and comforting letters. I want to tell you of our grand May meeting, held at Iola, Kansas, May 4th, 5th and 6th. I went up on Friday afternoon and stayed until three p. m. Sunday. There were four Elders present: Elder Ford, Elder T. B. Fisher, Elder Sutton and Elder J. M. Preston, who is our pastor; and above all I want to state that if my heart deceives me not, the Lord Jesus Christ was in the midst of us, so you can judge what the meeting was like under those conditions. On Friday night brother Ford and brother Fisher (from Oak Grove, Mo.,) preached Christ, and him crucified, and that to lost sinners. On Saturday we had preaching at eleven o'clock, and dinner and supper at the meetinghouse. Brethren Fisher, Ford and Sutton all explained my condition, and I wondered how they knew my inmost thoughts so well. Sunday all were present at the church, and brother Fisher commenced preaching without a text, trusting the Lord to give him one, and when he got his text, which was, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?"—Solomon's Song viii. 5, it was not long until we were deep in the Scriptures searching them. I found myself in such a way that I could not tell whether I was in the body or not. It surely is comforting to know that this meeting was held for the sole purpose of worshiping the Lord our God, and not to try to raise money nor to pray for some one to be converted, for to convert any one is impossible. I have just been reading my SIGNS, which comes promptly, and I am always

glad to see it arrive, for it is always full of comfort and edification to the child of God whose soul is cast down.

I want to tell you more about myself. The first is, that (perhaps as you know) I had felt a desire to do better, and did make an attempt to try and live right, but this was not of the Lord. A friend told me about the Primitive Baptists, and she had some of the dear old SIGNS, which I read, also I started to read the Bible. When Mr. Reed, my mother's pastor, heard that I read the Bible he came with an invitation for me to join them (the Presbyterians), saying that it was the duty of all young married people to join the church and to accept Christ as their Savior. But thanks be to God the Father, I was kept from being a hypocrite; that is, from professing something that I had no faith in. Then he got me down to pray one night when my wife was sick, and I really meant my prayers and was sorrowful, because she was sick and not because I was full of sin. So you see I was not yet led by the Lord. This man tried to make me believe that I had been born again, and to get me to join with his people, but by that time I had read a great deal in the Bible and could see a little of the Old School Baptist doctrine, so I did not go to the Arminian meetings very often, and it was not long before I began to see myself a sinner, and I knew that christians ought to be happy. I could not see that there was any christianity in me, and that if there ever would be the Lord was my only hope to place it there. Then I moved to Chicago, Ill., and it was not long before the Lord (I trust) started my conviction. Then I hated sin and wickedness worse than ever, and I surely was in the midst of it in Chicago. I grew restless under those conditions, and thought it was the confinement that was troubling me, so I moved to Garrett, Ill., but there I found no rest or contentment, so I went back to Chicago and was there for two months. I could not rest, and was in a wretched condition, so I came here to Parsons, Kans., and after I had been here two weeks the Lord sent conviction with force, and I saw my doom and my sinful condition. I was in the wilderness, and felt in my soul that there was not another like me, that I was entirely different from other people. I prayed without ceasing, my soul was downcast, my only hope was Jesus, and I felt too unworthy to approach him. I thought that I had to kneel at his feet, but now I trust that all of my groans, all of my unnoticed cries, were prayers. Then is when I thought I had a call to the ministry, but thought I would have nothing to say unless the Lord put it in my mouth and impressed me to speak. I lost all interest in my work (and have until this day), in fact, all of my thoughts were of heaven. My soul was downcast, and the enemies were seeking my life, I was in the wilderness and could see destruction on every hand. Then when I tried to seek relief I found none, as perhaps you remember my first letter. Then it was at a revival meeting of the Methodists I thought that I might find what I was looking for, and that was some one who could tell me about themselves as I saw myself, but there I found none; they were all talking of what they had done, and that did not fit my case at all, for my case was what the Lord had done, and not what I had done. Then the preacher said that any one who would not accept the invitation to join the church that night was spurning Christ, and that hurt me worse than ever, for I was weeping then because I had spurned him all my life. When I could find no

one who could tell me the same things I felt myself, I concluded there was no other person like me. Then I wrote you, thinking it might be possible that you could tell me what was my case and what I wanted (for I hungered and thirsted after righteousness), and many thanks to God our Father, he has built his church upon a rock, and you assisted me in finding just what was within me. This church that I was speaking of that I wanted was one like the one Jesus speaks of: Consider the lilies of the field how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin, yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. This passage of Scripture resembles the kind of church I wanted, one that was dependent upon the Lord, for if it were any other way it could not fit my case. I now live with one of the brethren of the church; we read your last letter together and in truth enjoyed its contents, also we enjoy the dear old SIGNS together.

Your unworthy brother,

C. J. PEACOCK.

PARSONS, Kans., August 19, 1917.

DEAR KINSMAN IN CHRIST:—I hesitate to address you in this manner, but it seems I so much desire to be numbered with the household of faith that I feel to address my brethren in this way. I hope that I am numbered with Zion and shall be gathered together with the jewels when the holy Son of God comes again without sin unto salvation. My mind seems to be running on the great subject of salvation, Christ the chief corner-stone. It seems to me that the world has accepted the doctrine of salvation by both grace and works; partly of works, and then after one has done some certain things the Lord will reward him with grace. At least that is the way I understand that kind of doctrine, after hearing it preached and being almost persuaded into it several times. To my mind this kind of doctrine, which pleases the world, is without root or base. This kind of doctrine will not fit into what the Savior told the disciples when they asked him, Who then can be saved? And Jesus said unto them, With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible. So then this ends the thought that man figures in the saving of sinners, and it does not agree with Paul's writing to the church at Rome: "And if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."—Romans xi. 6. Now, dear child of God, does this not disagree with the doctrine of to-day (the progressive doctrine)? are not these writings of Paul the apostle the doctrine which was everywhere spoken against? and if you preach salvation by grace today is not this the kind of doctrine which is everywhere spoken against? Yet when we consider these things, just think of Jesus and how they accused him falsely. He told them the truth, yet they had ears and heard not, they had eyes and saw not the glory of God, even Jesus. He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. (Romans x. 4.) Then, dear brother, if he is the end is he not the beginning also? for he says, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. He is the author and finisher of our faith, and to them that are saved he is Christ Jesus the power of God. He truly came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and because of sin condemned sin, that

as many as the Father had given him might have eternal life, and might have it more abundantly. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."—Romans x. 13. This I believe, because by divine inspiration the God of heaven and earth (of the living, and not the dead) by his Spirit has spoken these things, not unto the world, but unto the church. I perceive that every word in the blessed book of truth is right, and there are no contradictions when it is understood in its spiritual meaning. Jesus did not send his disciples unto the world, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then he says, not unto the world, but to those of his children, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Now, dear child, was not this your experience when you bore a heavy burden and was full of labor? You walked in dry places, seeking rest, but found none until you had exhausted all earthly resources, then when you saw no way out of your sinful condition you called upon the name of your God, and Jesus came to rescue and to save. Now, my Father's little children, I do not understand this thirteenth verse of the tenth chapter of Romans to mean that the world will call upon the name of the Lord and be saved. In the following verses you will find a better explanation than I can give: "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?"

If you find faults in my writings please have charity enough to overlook them, for they are much like the writer. May the Lord be with you and keep you.

Your unworthy brother,

C. J. PEACOCK.

MACON, Ga., August 28, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—For years I took the SIGNS, but for three years my health was poor, and being only a poor school-teacher, depending on a small salary, I simply did not have money to continue. My health is better now, for which I feel to thank the dear Lord, and I desire to renew my subscription to the much appreciated paper. I often read over my old copies, and think surely the writers are taught of the Lord, for all speak the selfsame things; all feel the depths of their own sins and the heights of the glories of God. Truly deplorable is the sin and corruption of sinful man, but how wonderful the power and wisdom and love and mercy of God. In times past I received some good letters from Elder Chick, and however unworthy I felt of such a blessing, I rejoiced that God granted one who seemed to walk so close with Jesus to write and comfort me, the most vile sinner, I know, and one not worthy the least of God's mercies. How wonderful that God does not leave himself, his truth, without a witness, and how truly has he raised up others to follow Elder Beebe in the work I feel God's hand had ordained him for, the defence of the gospel of our Lord, the truth of our God, the foundation of the church, the bride of Jesus; for truly do I feel that the truth of God's unlimited or absolute predestination and unconditional salvation for time or eternity is the basis of all truth. For myself, however, the words predestination and salvation need no modifiers. Salvation by grace extends through and embraces all eternity, which is without beginning or end, and predestination embraces all things included in that eternity; all is in God. How comforting it is to feel that we can look back to the writings and works of

the past and seem to see how surely God's hand was in the preparation of the present dear editors to take the place of those gone to their reward. How fitting it seemed for Elder Ker to come in to assist in dear Elder Chick's last work, and then how equally fitting for Elder Lefferts to come in. It just seemed to be all the work of an all-wise and loving God.

Dear editors, may I write you just a little of the way I feel that I have been led, and ask you if I am deceived and deceiving others? When I read of others deprived of the privilege of hearing the gospel preached I seem to feel a fellowship for them, but still I feel that there is no one quite like me, so full of sin and so unworthy of anything but cold and dark and hunger. I do not remember ever being in a church until I was about nine or ten years of age. So far as being taught of the Lord by men, I was as much a heathen as those in darkest heathendom. The first real conviction of a personal nature that I remember was after reading of some lovely, lovable girl, I wondered if I were such a girl, and looking at myself in the mirror it seemed to me I looked vile and black. I burst into tears, and from that day those first natural impressions have remained with me. However, later I was to feel it in another sense than on that day. From my earliest recollections my mother was an invalid, and for years I was troubled about her dying and leaving me. I knew nothing of prayer, but my mind was continually burdened with the desire that I might die before she died, for I felt if I were left without her I should be lost; I just could not live without her care. I was then about nine or ten years of age. About that time I went for the first time, as I remember, to a Primitive Baptist Church in Crawford County, Ga. I shall never forget that day. It seemed to me the people were different from any I had ever seen; their faces looked contented, happy, really beautiful to me. I know the desire came into my heart to be like them when I was grown. I even remember the text and sermon preached by an old minister, who has since been much loved by me: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I know now that I did not understand the full meaning of the text and discourse, for a child cannot know much of the burden of sin and the law, but I did feel to enjoy it in some way. In a year or two my mother's health grew worse; I felt sure she would die, and I grieved continually. One night she was much worse. I was sitting in her room alone with her. I felt if only I could die first. I heard her speak and went to her side and asked if there was anything she wanted. She said, "No, daughter, but mamma cannot be with you all much longer." I turned without a word, and went into my room, where it was dark, and for the first time in my life fell on my knees beside my bed and cried aloud, I think, O God, let me die first. In an instant, I know not from where, a voice said as plainly as I have ever heard words, Fear not, I am with thee always. For an instant I knew not what it was; it seemed a gentle arm was around me. I raised up, thinking perhaps it was mamma, when the room seemed light and a great peace came over my mind and heart. I got up and went back to mamma. I did not understand it, but I felt at peace. She spoke a few words more of dying, and we both were calm. I said nothing to her of what had occurred. I was only about eleven years old, and of a rather timid disposition, and, too, it had all seemed just

for me. My mother died. For several years I went to school preparing myself to be a teacher. I felt that the young people with whom I associated had not received such an assurance as had I, or they could not be so careless and indifferent. I became a pharisee; I read the Bible some, and truly felt that I must be better than most girls I knew. When I was about twenty years old I had been reading the Bible through, and I wrote in my diary at that time that perhaps it was not the inspired word of God. I seemed to feel the truth of the things said, but perhaps men were deceived as to it being absolutely the work inspired of God. About that time I became very much troubled about my sins. For the first time I realized how vile and black indeed I was. I had been going to meeting some, but there were four divisions of so-called Primitive Baptists here, and I had many arguments with them as to their doctrine and practice. The different ones had separated from the others, not on doctrinal truth, but on order. One element was very much disturbed at that time over some of the churches desiring to use organs in their services. All of them, however, were contending very earnestly against the doctrine of absolute predestination, and holding to what they called "conditional time salvation." I became so confused at the sins in my own heart and the confusion without that I almost lost my mind. I could hardly do my work. I was teaching, or trying to teach. I decided at last that perhaps I was all wrong; that the truth I held to was perhaps wrong. I forgot almost for a time the sweet promise that had been given me: Fear not, I am with thee always. I felt that God had forsaken me, if indeed he had ever been with me. One night I was more cast down than usual; I felt surely I was lost and God was just. Had he not promised to be with me? and I had acted in such a way that the people all hated me, and now even God had forsaken me. I had been trying to read the Bible, but all was dark, it all condemned me. I got up, threw myself across my bed in agony, and said, O God, show me my sins and I will try to make them right. When in an instant the same sweet voice that had brought peace to my childish heart in the assurance, Fear not, I will be with thee always, said, Jesus is the atonement. For some time I lay as dead; I thought I was dead; every particle of natural pain left my body. My head had been aching; all became peaceful and still. It was late at night. I thought, Am I dead? I remember taking hold of one hand with the other to see if I had life. I got up and opened the Bible to read. I wanted to sing, but knew it would not do to sing then, so I opened the Bible at the chapter beginning thus: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ;" and on further down I read, "We also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." No human tongue can tell, no pen can write the great joy I felt. Even that night everything seemed glorious and rejoicing with me. I longed to sing praises to my dear Savior. The words, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me," came to me. How glorious it was to feel that now I could claim him as my Savior. Now God would look no more upon my sins, but my dear Jesus would ever stand between me and a just God. I rejoiced for many days, and desired to tell some one of my great peace. I talked of the beauties of the kingdom of Jesus, but in expressing my feelings

often those former truths as I felt them to be would come in, and immediately my hearers would seem to feel uneasy. I felt impressed to read and meditate upon those wonderful truths which I felt my life and that of the writers in the Bible taught, but no one seemed inclined to speak of them with me. About that time Mrs. R. Anna Phillips, who lived near me, gave me a copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and my heart was made to rejoice. Here were people who believed as I did. She herself did not indorse the doctrine contended for by the SIGNS, and I had loved her very much I felt, but I was glad to know there was a people who believed and contended for the things I loved. I felt a desire to unite with the church, but some way there always seemed something between that prevented. I decided to give up thinking and talking of truth as it appeared to me, and perhaps God would suffer me to be with them, for I longed to be at rest, at peace. About that time Elder H. B. Jones, of Winnsboro, Texas, visited Georgia, and I went to hear him. Some way it seemed the Lord had just sent him to tell me the wonderful things of his kingdom. My heart was full of joy; a great peace came into my soul. When they gave opportunity for membership I went trembling before them and told them something, I know not what, and they received me. All day my heart was rejoicing. When I reached home I opened my Bible and these words were before my eyes: "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light." Some way in an instant I felt peculiarly sad. That night two members of the church came to see me. Somehow I felt very much depressed. One of them told me that the church preferred Elder Jones not baptizing me, because of his being associated with the "Absoluters," as they called them. I did not sleep all night. Can you imagine my feelings? I was baptized by the pastor of the church, and in a measure my heart praised God for the truth I heard that day from Elder Jones, but some way I was not as happy as I had been. For some time, however, I felt peace in a measure. Then it seemed that the ministers with whom I was associated became more eager in condemning "absolute predestination," and establishing the doctrine of what they called "conditional time salvation." I went bowed down with grief continually. I could not speak of things I loved as truth, feeling that they looked upon me with fear and suspicion; I was miserable. There was a church not far from my home, whose pastor and members were not identified with the Baptists with whom I was associated. I had always heard them spoken of with contempt. In some way I was impressed to go and hear him. I found him contending for the doctrine I loved, and the few with him loved the same truth I felt to love. About that time the churches I was associated with divided, because of some desiring organs in their worship. There was much confusion and strife among them, and the other few seemed more satisfying, so I wrote the church where my membership was that I felt we were not in fellowship on the truth as I felt it, especially of God's absolute power, and more especially of the unconditional salvation by grace for time and eternity, therefore I desired to withdraw. In a year or two I felt that it was

not right for me to be with this few and persecuted people and still not be willing to bear the shame with which their name was cast out, as being "Absoluters," &c. I did not feel to be worthy in myself to be with them, but God could give me faith to endure the reproach heaped upon them. I united with them. For years I felt a peace that I had never known could come to mortal man. There were but few, but we loved to talk of the power and mercy of God and to joy in the beauties of the kingdom of his dear Son. Last year our beloved pastor died, so for several months we have had no preaching. We meet together at the home of a dear, afflicted sister, and talk of the things of Jesus, but we greatly miss our dear pastor, but God's will be done. I hope, if it be his will, that we shall again be blessed to hear the word; if not, may we be reconciled to his will concerning us. At times I am in darkness, and feel that perhaps I am all wrong, and then when I read how the saints of old were often cast down, and read the SIGNS and see that others are away from hearing the gospel preached, I am hopeful.

Tell me, dear editors, if you deem this worthy of your reading, and if you deem me worthy of a word, have I been all wrong? Can two walk together in peace and fellowship who are not agreed? Is it not better "to dwell in the corner of the housetop than with a brawling woman and in a wide house"? Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Please forgive this long letter, I shall not bother you often. One little word from either of you as to my condition will be much appreciated, though unworthy I be.

ELLA BARFIELD.

WOODSTOCK, Ont., Sept. 17, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find one dollar for renewal of my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for six months. I am this day seventy-two years old, and have been a reader of the SIGNS for over sixty years and a subscriber nearly forty-five years, and feel like continuing it as long as I can read it, not because I take much comfort from it of late, but because it does not seem as if I can throw aside the paper for the comfort I have received from it in days that are past and gone, when I had a good hope in the mercy of God and hoped I had an evidence that Jesus loved me and gave himself for me, and I could praise him for his great love and kindness to me; when I felt that he had given me an evidence that my sins were all forgiven and blotted out in the blood of the Lamb, and when I also felt his presence in times of trouble and distress, and when I hoped he told my heart, When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee, &c., and when I hoped he had broken me down completely with the words, Where sin abounded grace did much more abound. But now all is dark as midnight, not a single star of hope, and I am cold, barren and unfruitful, with no evidence that I am a child of God, unless it is that I am a vile sinner. I dwell in a wilderness alone, no springs of water, no green pastures, all desolation and death. Gladly would I lie down and die if I had a hope in the mercy of God, but O, how can I die in such a state, without hope and without God in the world? It is terrible, and yet I am helpless and destitute, and in looking over my long life I cannot see one single act that was dictated by an eye single to the glory of God, everything selfish, none

with pure, unselfish love. O what a sinner I am; and these are not the worst things I experience, for I so often doubt the truth or reality of religion, and fear it is all a delusion and that there is no God. I cannot throw off these horrible doubts and fears. How is it I never was thus tempted in the days of my youth, before I felt that God had been merciful to me and forgiven me my sins? Surely the poet expresses my feelings when he says: "Like one alone I seem to be; O is there any one like me?" and yet I do not want to convey the idea that hope is entirely gone, for who can tell but what God will come to me and lift me out of this horrible pit and miry clay and set my feet once more on the everlasting Rock, Christ Jesus? Once I truly felt that he was as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, and that I was on the King's highway and the road to glory, and thought as did Job that I would die in my nest and be safe from fear, and that my latter end would be my best, but alas, I now often fear I am on my way to despair and eternal gloom. I cannot recall any of my former joys or bring back any of the hopes that I once thought God had given me. I wonder if there is any one who is a professed follower of Jesus that is troubled, oppressed and sunk in gloom such as mine. Sometimes I fear it is all natural or worldly trouble, and a natural dread of death, or because I am an old man nearing the end of my journey. I know none but God can give me relief and peace. O, if Jesus would only say to my heart, Peace I give unto thee; not as the world giveth give I unto thee. O, I must have Jesus or I die.

Do not publish this unless it will or is liable to comfort some poor, disconsolate soul.

Yours, a poor, unworthy sinner,

R. SCATES.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., August 21, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been sick and feeble ever since I last wrote; my eyes have been so sore and dim that I could not write. I remember that I am indebted for the SIGNS since December 15th. I thought I might have to do without my comforting paper, which I have had ever since it was first published in 1832. My father and mother were among the first subscribers. Words will not express how much enjoyment I have had all these years since the Lord opened my eyes, in 1850, to understand what I read. This year I have had a daughter read it for me evenings after she came from her library work, and it seemed long to wait; yet I know I ought to be very thankful for my many blessings. Besides this choice paper I have willing daughters to care for me and take me to my dear old church to hear the gospel preached. I cannot bear to miss one meeting. I ride there in an automobile, and feel it is good to meet with the saints, clasp their hands and hear them speak of their joys and sorrows. This cruel war is a sad state for us all. Many of our church have sons who have gone to France. One of my friends has two boys (all her children) gone. We are told our tax will increase, but I hope we can still keep our home. The Lord has helped me hitherto, may he help me all my journey through. Praise him for his great faithfulness. I lie idle on my bed much of the time, wondering when the end will come, and singing, "O when shall I see Jesus, and reign with him above?" If I were sure of my inheritance in heaven I might stop feeling so sad, but now my little hope is almost out of sight. I was conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity in 1832, but did not feel the depth of my guilt until I was

eight or ten years of age. It came upon me suddenly, like a flash of lightning, and enshrouded me in agony. I promised the Lord that night to mend my ways and walk uprightly. The next morning I took a shingle from father's carpenter shop and a black coal to mark my evil and good thoughts. I found I had no good ones, but soon had my shingle covered with black marks, and I threw it away in despair and lay on the ground and cried. A woman told me to read one chapter in the Bible every day, and that would cure my heartache. I tried that, but I was not a good reader, and did not understand what I read, so I commenced reading Pilgrim's Progress, and followed Christian through the awful Slough of Despond, and finally came to Doubting Castle, where was Giant Despair, and I was then locked up with the two pilgrims, and seemed to understand their case as mine. I read that book through four times, and every time I came to the hill Difficulty and fought with Apolyon I trembled and cried and tried to pray to God for help. There was a revival in our village, and many of my schoolmates were converted. One girl asked me to go with her and pray and give my heart to the Lord and join the church. I asked mother, and she said, Yes, go once. The old, grey-haired pastor asked me if I were a christian. I said, No, sir, and am sorry. He said, There is provision made for everybody; just pray and give your heart to the Lord and you will be happy. He told me where to find the Lord's prayer, and I read it, but it was for the disciples, not for a hard case like mine. Three people told me to give my heart to the Lord, but I could not do it. The Lord made me, and could do as he pleased with his own. I tried to give up my trouble. I always went to Old Baptist meetings, where my parents belonged. Once a stranger was preaching for us, and he pounded on the pulpit, saying, O sinner, sinner, turn to God. I was startled, for I knew I was that sinner, but wondered how he knew. I had a dream that time was ending, and many people came fast toward my home, where stood an ox with horns reaching to heaven, and they ascended by the horns. I thought I would try that way, but found I was helpless, could not take one step. A man looked at me and said, I will help you. I knew it was the Savior, and awoke with joy. In 1850 I went to New Jersey to visit my grandfather and other relatives and attend school for one year. I took my burden of sin with me, and one morning (after a restless night of gloom) on my way to school it was revealed to me that Jesus died for sinners. I knew I was a sinner, and claimed him as my Savior, and my burden left me. I wanted to sing aloud, but was walking on the public highway and dared not, but sang in my heart all day. Many old hymns flowed into memory, and I was happy.

I have written my childhood experience, for I think this is my last message to you. May God add his choicest blessing.

LINA W. BECK.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER Geo. L. Weaver has changed his address from South Euclid, Ohio, to 1727 Bryn-Mawr, Suite 2, Cleveland, Ohio.

Elder J. T. Barnes has changed his address from Touchet, Wash., to Walla Walla, Wash.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1917.

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EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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LUKE XVIII. 1.

"MEN ought always to pray, and not to faint."

In the parables spoken by the Savior there was always some special lesson or deep doctrine taught, and we do well to read them carefully. We all need instruction, and every lesson is important to the children of God. While it is true that all spiritual import of the Lord's word must come by divine revelation, it is also true that the Scriptures were given to be read by the saints, that the man of God might be thoroughly furnished with knowledge relative to the Lord's dealings with man, both in condemnation and justification. It is sad, however to see how we all neglect the Book of books as we grow older; the very time it should be our daily companion we find ourselves reading everything else, thinking of everything else. Surely the Lord is good not to forsake us when we all are so forgetful of him.

In presenting the truth that men ought always to pray and faint not, the Savior spoke the parable of "the unjust judge," who feared not God nor regarded man. Rather a strange individual, but the world is full of them to-day. To that judge came a widow, who cried unto him to avenge her of her adversary. At first he did not hear her cry, in other words paid no attention to her petition. Likely he had no feeling sense of pity or sympathy, and since more than likely the poor widow had nothing to give for his services, he turned a deaf ear to her sad cry. But all that did not discourage the poor woman, she continued to go and to cry unto him for help. At last the hard-hearted judge said, "Though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me." Her persistency caused the judge to hear her cry, and we have reason to believe that whatever her petition was it was granted by the judge. Jesus then said, "Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?" If an unjust judge could be moved by the continual cry of a poor widow, shall not God, who fears neither men nor devils, nor regards the person of any man, hear the sad cry of his bride? Verily, verily he will. The people of the Lord have been a praying people since the world began. There was prayer in the act of Adam and Eve in making the fig leaf garment; desire to be clothed was made manifest, and the Lord heard and clothed them. There was desire in the heart even of Cain, after he had killed Abel, that his life should be preserved, and the Lord put a mark upon him that he should not die. We are not told that Cain had faith, nor are we told that the thief on the cross had faith, but he must have had or the Lord would not have heard him. Think of the elect of the Lord crying unto him for salvation, deliverance from sin, during all the generations of the world until the coming of Christ, and after his coming until the work was verily wrought. God

was in all those generations the just Judge of the whole earth, yet he could not speedily, to them, avenge them, because the time had not come to make war with and destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil. Notwithstanding the long delay, as it seemed to them who cried day and night unto him, the Lord heard every groan and pitied every sigh, yet held in store the very blessings they so much needed and desired. It often seemed to his waiting people that his mercy was clean gone forever, that their cries were shut out from the throne of heaven, and that God had forgotten to be gracious, but how mistaken they were. The Lord was faithful to his promise and was merciful and gracious in all ages of the world, giving his people to eat and drink, to inhabit the goodly land, giving them kings and priests, fighting their battles for them, giving them the temple worship and renewing in different ways his promise. But how little they understood those things, and how little appreciated were his mercies. In ancient days the Lord did not exhort his people to pray, but surrounded them in such a way with conditions and circumstances that, as Paul said, they were bound to pray and give thanks. Daniel, contrary to the commandment of the king, prayed daily with his face toward Jerusalem, and the Lord heard his cry, and when the time came to manifest his power and glory he delivered him from death, the lions. Well did Paul say, "We know not how to pray as we ought, nor what to pray for." When the Lord's people of old prayed, saying, In terrible things in righteousness wilt thou hear us, O God of truth, little did they know that the "terrible things" were the sufferings and death of Christ; little did they know they were asking for such a horrible murder, such excruciating pain, such dire humiliation; yet such was their cry during all those centuries, and at last the Lord answered them according to their petition, it being according to his determinate counsel and foreknowledge. The same Lord who was faithful to his promise then is faithful now to every word that proceedeth out of his mouth, and by this we all live.

We are told that the parable of the unjust judge was spoken to the end that men ought always to pray and faint not. Careless reading of this parable has given some people to understand that the Lord wants men to pray always, but many of his people fail to do it, when in reality it is a positive declaration that the Lord's people do cry unto him day and night, and that he will hear them. There is no such thing as a spiritually born child of God fainting or giving up in this sense. When in distress, sorrow, temptation and death how well he knows "vain is the help of man;" how well he knows that the sentence of death is in himself; how well he knows it is vain to go down into Egypt for help, and often the words of Peter are in his heart and in his mouth: "To whom, Lord, shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." Yes, to him only do we all look, to him only can we go, for he only can bind up the broken-hearted, open the prison to them that are bound: he only can comfort all that mourn, making manifest the trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, (in the land of sorrow) that he might be glorified in their humble and contrite acknowledgment of him as the God of all grace and the God of all comfort. How wonderfully strong are "the everlasting arms," and how securely fixed they are under the household of faith, both individually and collectively.

How can we sink with such a prop
As our eternal God,
Who bears the earth's huge pillars up,
And spreads the heavens abroad?

The wounds are often deep and sore, the billows high and the winds contrary, the foundations seem to tremble, the earth quakes, the sun fails to shine and the moon refuses to give her light, yet God the same abiding, his praise shall tune our voice. Pray always and faint not. Yes, and how thankful we all are that there is a throne of grace to which we, through the merits of Christ, may come and find our heavenly Father a present help in times of need. He may "bear long" with us, but will surely bear, and his longsuffering, or waiting, means salvation to us. How precious the words: He hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. Then deliverance from all our trials, losses and crosses is just as sure as is rest at last. Give us a thankful heart, from every murmur free; the blessing of thy grace impart, and make us live in thee. K.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

WISDOM.

THE thought of wisdom flashed into our mind just now as we sat down to write. The thought was no doubt prompted by the sense of utter unreadiness to write anything at this time, for this is one of the many times when we feel we have nothing to write. Thus, if we just had wisdom to know what to say and when to say it, what a blessed thing it would be! Without wisdom, that is, godly wisdom, one cannot do God's people any good. The sheep of the pasture of God cannot be fed spiritually on the things that man's wisdom teaches. They must be enabled to partake of the things of divine wisdom if there is to be any soul growth among them. The subject of wisdom occupied the attention of Solomon more than any other writer of the Scriptures. He could not help his mind being employed with thoughts and reflections upon divine wisdom, for it was divine wisdom that directed his mind that way. When Solomon came to the throne of Israel upon the death of his father, David, he asked of God not fame, nor honor, nor riches, nor power, but wisdom. To Solomon wisdom seemed the principal thing, therefore he earnestly and prayerfully desired it, and God answered his petition in granting him that wisdom he so much desired. Solomon faintly prefigures Jesus in this. Jesus was the embodiment of the wisdom of God. He, the spiritual Solomon, was filled with wisdom, and to the mind of Jesus there was no treasure or quality of earth that could bear the slightest comparison with this divine wisdom which filled the Son of God completely. This wisdom which God gave Solomon enabled him to rule Israel; so Jesus governs his house, the church, by that wisdom which is embodied in him. It is a singular and noteworthy

fact that almost each and every writer of the Scriptures had his own especial gift to enable him to write, and no two wrote alike; that is, while wisdom seemed to impress one with its importance and beauty more than any other subject, as it did Solomon, it was the subject of the law that was Moses' special province, while the promises to the Gentiles particularly permeate the writings of Isaiah. Also, we find John dwelling particularly upon the love of God and upon the manifestation of that love between brethren. When we turn to James, we find him emphasizing works as the outgrowth or fruit of faith. Going back to Paul, we find a writer who was especially gifted to set forth in order, and clearly, the different points of the doctrine of God, together with the delineation of the order of the church and its disciplinary procedure. Jesus was the only preacher who confined not himself to this or that line of thought, but covered the whole ground of eternal truth, the doctrine and experience, as well as church order and commands to love and obedience. No preacher short of Jesus will ever be able to tell it all, nor even to cover but a small portion of the gospel field. Just as it was with the writers and preachers of the Bible, so with those whom God raises up to preach to his people to-day. No two of them preach alike, though they all declare the one truth: salvation by grace; but each man has his own special gift given him by divine wisdom, and has his own special line of ministering meted out to him, so that we find one preacher dwelling upon this or that point of doctrine, another dwelling more upon the phases of the christian experience, another setting forth the order of the church, while another is being impressed with the exhortations to love and obedience. So, while no two preach exactly alike, all agree in one faith, one hope and one heart of love. We have thought that God signally displays his wisdom in the manner in which he calls and prepares his preachers for the ministry and in the matter with which he fills their hearts. There is an infinite variety of experience among the people of God until no two have exactly the same experience, while all agree in the fundamental points of the doctrine they believe. It seems to us that God exercises each ministering gift to meet the requirements of the individual experiences among those to be fed, so that we find a person enjoying one gift more than another because one gift more than another is exercised along the line to fit into the needs of this or that experience. It is rarely we find one preacher who preaches to all hearers; some prefer this and others prefer that one. We do not believe this is wrong, so long as the hearers are considering the gifts, and not the persons of men. It is true that enjoying this or that man's gift may degenerate into an admiration of men's persons, but if it does, the weakness of the flesh is to blame, and not the wisdom of God. Now, wisdom and knowledge are by no means the same, though they are very generally confused. One might be wise yet not know many things; also one might have great knowledge or learning yet not be wise. It is not the mere knowing of things, but the ability to put that learning to use, to make that knowledge serve one, that constitutes wisdom. We have seen people who appeared as though they knew a great deal, who passed as being educated persons, yet who made shipwreck of life through their failure to apply what they knew or through the unwise management of their affairs. Again, we have seen persons of limited education who were

longsighted enough to manage their affairs with such foresight and common sense as to be ready for almost any contingency that might arise. These were wise. We know of no being other than God whose wisdom is commensurate with his knowledge. Divine wisdom knows no limit, neither does the knowledge of God. Of no other being can it be said that these principles are coextensive. Solomon calls attention to the ant as being wise, in that she prepares for the winter while it is yet summer. A wise young man is one who lays up something against old age while he yet has youth and vigor. Absolute foreknowledge is not a human trait, therefore it is not possible for men to entirely safeguard themselves against the future; yet a certain amount of wisdom tells us that the sun does not always shine, prosperity does not always last, so wisdom dictates that one lay up against adversity. We only speak of these human things to show in some way that wisdom requires a certain amount of foresight to be effectual. Nowhere is this so wonderfully displayed as in the divine character of God himself. He is the God of foreknowledge, foreknowing accurately and minutely all things that shall ever come to pass. Thus his wisdom, combined with his omniscience and foreknowledge, makes an eternal bulwark to safeguard each and every one of his elect. Having chosen his people in Christ before the foundation of the world, he predestinated them to be conformed to the image of his Son. The wisdom of God foresaw every need, every strait, every perplexity and trouble that each and every heir of glory would ever have to endure, so that, by that same wisdom, he made ample provision in Christ Jesus to supply every need in time of each and every one of his elect eternally foreknown. Such wisdom is too high for mortals to attain unto, but faith enables us in our low estate to contemplate it at times. "Wisdom hath builded her house." The house of God is thoroughly furnished with everything conducive to the welfare spiritually of all the children of God. The wisdom of God provides this furnishing. This wisdom which combines foreknowledge and power has so arranged that the material which goes into this house of God, which is sinners quickened and made alive by the Spirit of God, is called effectually by grace, and not invited by conditions depending upon the fickle human will, is justified by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and finally glorified with the heavenly likeness of Christ himself. Wisdom provides that though a man die, yet shall he live; so arranges that even the weakness and helplessness of every child of grace is a convenient place for God to make manifest his strength and power. The conies, a species of small hare or rabbit, though feeble, yet dwell in the rocks. This is a wise arrangement for such feeble folk. So God has wisely arranged that his feeble children who mourn the plague of their own heart and who keenly realize their inability to do anything of themselves, shall dwell in the Rock, Christ Jesus. The house of God is built on this eternal Rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, though the inhabitants of the Rock be ever so feeble. Is it any wonder the inhabitants of the Rock sing? How can they help singing when divine wisdom has so wonderfully provided for their safety? The locusts, even though they go forth in bands, yet they have no king. Again, we see a display of wisdom. Thus God's wisdom has provided that there be no kings or rulers or leaders or dictators among his people. Jesus alone is King in Zion, and no man has been delegated to rule for him. God's people are all one and are all equal. No one is greater

than another. Even the apostles disclaimed any right to lord it over God's heritage, saying they had no dominion over the faith of the church. The apostles were servants of the church. The ministers among you to-day are your servants, not your kings or lords. There are no bosses in the church. Just as the locusts go forth in bands, yet have no king among them, so the people of God are scattered over the earth in flocks here and there, but there are no lords among them. This is another display of divine wisdom on the behalf of his people. The world is ranged in parties and classes, in nationalities and sects and sections. What a line more and more is coming to divide between the rich and poor! How distressing would it be if God allowed such things to prevail in the church! Such discriminations are carnal and belong to the world. They have no place among God's people. In the church, rich and poor, high and low, all nations and tongues and peoples, meet on an equal footing: that of sinners saved by grace. No flesh can glory there and all boasting is excluded. This subject of wisdom is too broad for us to get at, but we just want to notice one thing more: that is, that God in his wisdom determined that man by man's wisdom should not find out God. All true knowledge of God and the way of salvation must come by revelation. This is very wise, because it excludes no person from knowing God by reason of any deficiency of his own. Even the idiot is capable of knowing God from the standpoint of revelation. It does not take brains to comprehend God, nor does the lack of intelligence shut out one from ever knowing God. This surely is an example of divine wisdom. Inasmuch as God can be known only by revelation, one man has no advantage over another by reason of any natural advantages when it comes to being saved.

L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

William Stewart Ker, the only son of the writer, was born in Delmar, Md., July 27th, 1889, and died suddenly in Meriden, Conn., August 17th, 1917, aged 28 years and 20 days. He was an undertaker, and had practiced that profession since he was twenty-one years of age. He made no profession of religion, but when in training in New York city he often attended the Old School Baptist meetings and heard Elder John McConnell preach. On one of those occasions Elder McConnell used as a text the first few verses of the fourteenth chapter of John. His discourse so impressed Stewart that he wrote me, asking that I write my views of the same Scripture and send them to him, which I did. He also requested that I send him a Bible; that also was done. Ever afterward in speaking of his death he said, I want no preaching, but a prayer and the fourteenth chapter of John read. When the end came we tried to reach Elder McConnell by telephone, but found he was in Virginia in exchange with Elder H. H. Lefferts, and was not likely to be home in time for the funeral, and we engaged Elder Lefferts for the service. He came, and the wishes of my dear boy were carried out. After the services were concluded Elder McConnell arrived, having heard of the funeral on his arrival in New York. We all fully appreciated his presence. The services were held from the home, 273 North St., Middletown, N. Y., Monday, August 20th. Interment was in the family plot in the New Vernon Cemetery.

Again I utterly fail to understand the Lord's dealings with me. I know he doeth all things well; but such sore afflictions are dreadful to endure. May grace be sufficient to the end.

K.

Sarah Olive Perry, the subject of this notice, was born Dec. 12th, 1855, near Turners Station, Henry Co., Ky., and departed this life June 18th, 1917, making her sojourn on earth 61 years, 6 months and 6 days. She was a daughter of the late Joseph B. and Caroline Turner. Sister Ollie, as she was called, (being a sister in the flesh of the writer, and I hope in the Spirit also) was in a more or less degree a sufferer most all her life, having in infancy contracted a severe cold, which left her with a cough that remained with her until her last hours. The immediate cause of her death was of a dropsical nature. Although for several years past a great sufferer, she bore all without murmur or complaint. Early in life she became much interested in spiritual matters (or things of the Spirit), and in June, 1889, being weary of wandering, she went to the Sulphur Fork Primitive Baptist Church and told in her simple, childlike way what she hoped the Lord had done for her and asked a home with them, and was gladly received into the fold and fellowship of the church,

where she remained and lived a dutiful christian life until the time of her departure into, as we hope and believe, a better life, to be forever with him who is the Savior of sinners, of whom she felt to be chief. Dear sister has been taken from us, but her life is a living epistle, known and read of all who knew her. At the age of nineteen years she was married to Elisha K. Perry, who survives her. To them were born six children, all of whom died in infancy. Besides her husband she leaves three sisters, three brothers and three half-brothers to mourn their loss, yet we mourn not as those who have no hope, feeling that our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was held at Turners Station (Cane Run Church), conducted by her pastor, Elder P. W. Sawin, in the presence of a large concourse of friends, after which her remains were laid to rest in the family graveyard at the old home.

May the Lord bless, support and sustain us, and at his appointed time give us all an abundant entrance into the joy of his love, is the sincere prayer of the writer. G. R. TURNER.

Elder William J. Hess, my dear husband, departed this life August 17th, 1917, aged 62 years, 7 months and 19 days. He was a son of Jacob and E. E. Hess, and was born in Bremer County, Iowa, and moved with his parents to Oregon in 1867, locating in Clackamas County, later moving to Clatsop Plains, near Astoria, where he lived until the spring of 1878. March 10th, 1878, he was married to the writer near Forest Grove. In the fall of that year we moved to Klickitat County, Wash., where we lived twenty-one years. In January, 1879, we buried our first born son. We moved to Yakima County in the fall of 1900. Besides myself, he left four sons, three daughters, four grandchildren and one sister to mourn their loss. Those who have been in our home know what he was to it, devoted and tender. He received a hope in Christ in 1877, and was baptized by Elder James A. Bullack the same year. He assisted in the constitution of Pleasant Grove Church and united by relation in December, 1878. In October, 1892 he was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, and in November of the same year was chosen pastor, serving more than twenty years. He was moderator of the Siloam Association when taken ill. In the spring of 1915 he had severe inflammation of the eyes, which left the vision so impaired that he was never able to read or write much afterward, and on May 6th he had a very severe attack of heart trouble, after which he never had a well day. March 19th, 1916, he had a stroke of paralysis, which affected the entire left side. By the end of summer he could walk about some, but his hand remained helpless. His mind was not impaired by the illness, and for more than two years I had the blessed privilege of ministering to one of the most patient, uncomplaining invalids I ever saw, and I have wished many times I had written down while fresh on my mind some of the expressions of his loving trust and hope and confidence in the dear Savior. He felt that the everlasting arms upheld him, and made him, although longing for rest, run with patience the race set before him, many times weeping for joy with the comfort he got from the felt presence of his Redeemer. The hot weather in July seemed to weaken him gradually, and his daily walks became shorter as his breathing became more labored and his strength failed. July 29th he had another heart attack, and the doctor thought the end was near. He rallied sufficiently the next week to walk a little, but we had but little to encourage us.

He requested that Elder W. T. Eaton preach his funeral from 2 Timothy i. 10, which he did on Monday, August 20th, to a large and attentive congregation. It is hard to say, "Thy will be done," when we miss him everywhere, yet knowing his desires and the hopelessness of his ever being free from suffering here, we ought to feel reconciled to our great loss in his greater gain.

ALSO,

Mrs. Louisa Pitman, daughter of Dr. John M. and Cynthia Savage, was born near Boonville, Mo., March 4th, 1831, and departed this life at the home of her daughter, Mrs. A. W. Hewitt, near Amity, Oregon, July 30th, 1917, in her 87th year. She was married August 3rd, 1848, to A. J. Pitman, and came to Oregon with her husband and young son in 1850, locating in the Waldo Hills, Marion County. Ten children were born to them; the husband and five daughters passed on before her. John M. Pitman, Loomis, Wash., Mrs. Cynthia J. Hewitt, Amity, Oregon, Mrs. Mary L. Newland, Palo Alto, Cal., Mrs. Arena F. Courtney, Newberg, Oregon, and Mrs. Effie P. Brown, Ashland, Oregon, survive her. Mrs. M. C. Byrd, of Salem, Oregon, is the only surviving sister. She had thirty grandchildren, twenty-eight grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren. She united with the Siloam Church in 1853, being baptized by Elder Wm. Simpson, and lived a devoted and consistent christian life. She was a member of Pleasant Grove Church almost thirty-seven years. My parents, T. G. and E. J. Flanary, and uncle, J. L. Chamberlain, and wife were near neighbors to brother and sister Pitman, and were pioneers in Marion County, Ore., where they all united with the Siloam Church in the early fifties. They were also members of New Hope Church together, in Washington County, Oregon, and of Pleasant Grove Church, in Washington State, and were always in touch during their lives, sister Chamberlain being the only one left. Since the death of my parents, in 1899, I have corresponded with our dear sister Pitman. It was a source of regret with her that she was unable to meet often with her church. In one letter she wrote me; "My time

is short now, and things will change for me. I shall not have to mourn and feel so disappointed about not getting to attend our church or the house of God, for I hope and trust in God that giveth his people rest, that when I have finished all that he intended for me here to do, his overlasting arms will bear me safely home to that great assemblage of his children who have gone on before, and I shall see my blessed Lord and be like him." Her children were all with her during her last illness. Her daughter, Mrs. Newland, wrote me: "Dear mother passed away peacefully, trusting in the dear Lord and Savior to the end."

The funeral services were conducted by Mr. Mummy, of the Evangelical denomination, and a letter written to her recently by Elder A. Cheyne, who was also a member of Pleasant Grove Church, was read at the services. She requested that I prepare her obituary notice for the SIGNS, which she had enjoyed many years as the only preaching she had, but I feel that my weak effort cannot do justice to the memory of one who was so devoted and faithful a follower of the Prince of Peace.

SONORA A. HESS.

Mrs. Alma R. Sholler, wife of Mr. Frank Sholler and daughter of Wm. B. and Emma B. MacDowell, was born in Warminster, Bucks Co., Pa., Dec. 1st, 1868, and died June 27th, 1917, at her home in Doylestown. She leaves to mourn their loss, her husband, three daughters, mother, one brother and many other relatives and a host of friends. She was a good, faithful wife, kind, affectionate mother and loving daughter, of a sweet disposition and with a cheery smile for every one. It is hard to say, "Thy will be done." She united with the Southampton Old School Baptist Church, and was baptized by Elder Silas H. Durand June 13th, 1915, but I firmly believe she was given a heart to hear and understand the joyful sound long before that time.

Funeral services were held July 1st at her late residence. Elder Durand preached to the comfort of the friends, followed by prayer by Mr. C. H. Haines, pastor of the New School Baptist Church of Doylestown, and the singing of her favorite hymn: "Nearer, my God, to thee," by a friend. Burial in Doylestown Cemetery.

She cannot come to us, but may we go to her, is the earnest hope of her sorrowing mother.

EMMA B. FETTER.

B. F. Culpepper was born May 22nd, 1835, and died March 25th, 1917. He was married to Miss J. F. Wallerman July 6th, 1865, in Dale County, Ala. To that union were born eight children, six girls and two boys. Two boys and two girls preceded him in death, leaving four daughters to survive him: Mrs. Florence Sanders, Mrs. D. Rees, Mrs. S. E. Smith and Mrs. M. C. Barber. Some time during the year 1874 brother and sister Culpepper received a good hope in Christ, and about a year later joined the church of the Predestinarian faith and order at Mt. Pelia, in Henry County, Ala., and were baptized by Elder Hubbard, of Georgia. He lived a consistent member, always filling his seat when not providentially hindered, and went far and near to associations and meetings. In 1879 he moved to Upshur County, Texas, and joined the church at Bluff Springs, where his membership was at the time of his death. The church at Bluff Springs has sustained a great loss, but we hope her loss is his eternal gain. Surely a great man in Israel is fallen. Brother Culpepper was a staunch believer in the doctrine of God's sovereignty in controlling all things whatsoever come to pass.

His remains were laid to rest in Walnut Hill Cemetery to await the resurrection morn.

Written by request.

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

W. M. Day died August 12th, 1917, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Effie Talley, in Beetman, La., in the 84th year of his age. Brother Day was the last member that was in the constitution of old Concord Church, which was constituted in 1874. He lived a consistent member of that church, and was clerk of the New Hope Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association for twenty-four years, also clerk of Concord Church until a few years ago, when his health failed and he could not serve, then the writer was chosen to take his place. Brother Day was well known, and liked by everybody, and went by the name of "Uncle Bill" in this county. He was a member of the board of supervisors of this parish for years. He had a large circle of relatives and friends in Union Parish, where he lived in his early days. He was the last boy of the family. One sister, one son and one daughter survive him. The church feels that it has sustained a great loss. Brother Day and I have ridden many miles on horseback together going to our association. It seems now that our old church is about gone, and I feel sad.

D. B. CAIN.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in September (30th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

MEETINGS.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held at Halcottville, N. Y., on the Ulster & Delaware R. R., at the regular time, first Wednesday and Thursday in October (3rd and 4th), 1917. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

Done by order of the church.

JAMES AVERY, Church Clerk.

THE Juniata Association will be held with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1917. Ministers, brethren and sisters who desire to attend the meeting will be met at the train at Three Springs and conveyed to and from the church.

M. F. STARR, Church Clerk.

THE Second Roxbury Old School Baptist Church, Roxbury, N. Y., will, Providence permitting, hold their yearly meeting on the second Sunday and Saturday before in October (13th and 14th). Trains will be met on Friday night and Saturday morning. We extend a cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

GEORGE RUSTON, Pastor.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa, the Lord willing, will hold their yearly meeting the second Sunday and Saturday previous in October (13th and 14th), at their meetinghouse. Ministering brethren and all lovers of the truth are most cordially invited to meet with us. Trains will be met at Grand Gorge, on the U. & D. Railroad, on Friday.

H. J. LEONARD, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa will hold their yearly meeting the second Saturday and Sunday in October (13th and 14th), 1917. All who desire to come will be welcome.

JOHN CLARK, Pastor.

AN all day meeting will be held with the Snow Hill Church, at Snow Hill, Worcester Co., Md., on the second Sunday in October (14th), 1917. All lovers of gospel truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

JOHN H. TRUITT, Church Clerk.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the New Valley Church, Loudoun Co., Va., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 17th, 18th and 19th, 1917. Trains will be met Tuesday afternoon and evening before the meeting at Leesburg, Va., on the Washington & Old Dominion Electric Railway. Trains leave 36th and M Sts., N. W., Washington, D. C., at 2:10, 4:15, 5:10, 5:30 and 6:05 p. m. Trains Wednesday morning arrive too late to be met for the meeting. All lovers of the truth, and especially ministers of our faith and order, are earnestly requested to meet with us.

T. S. TITUS, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church in the city of Wilmington, Del., will hold their yearly meeting in the meetinghouse, 1304 Jefferson St., on the third Saturday and Sunday in October, commencing 2 o'clock p. m. Saturday and continuing all day Sunday. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited. Trolley cars from all railroad stations and boat wharves pass near the meetinghouse.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Association of Old School Baptists is appointed to convene with the church at Indiantown, near Powellville, Wicomico Co., Md., on Wednesday, October 24th, 1917, and continue three days. All lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus, as proclaimed by the heralds of the cross, are cordially invited to meet with us. Those coming from the north will take the Old Point Express, leaving Broad St., Philadelphia, at 9:58 o'clock a. m. Those from the south will take train leaving Cape Charles, Va., 10:55 a. m. on Tuesday, 23rd. Get tickets for Salisbury, Md. Those trains are both due at Salisbury about 1:45 p. m. We will arrange with the Transit Co. to provide conveyance for all who come on those trains to convey them to Pittsville, ten miles east of Salisbury, where they will be met and taken to our homes and on to the meeting.

GEORGE F. ADKINS, Church Clerk.

THE Ebenezer Church in Baltimore will hold an all day meeting on the second Sunday in November. All who love to meet with us are invited to do so.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 85. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1917. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

1 SAMUEL XX. 39.

"ONLY Jonathan and David knew the matter."

The friendship of Jonathan and David, as portrayed in the Scriptures, is wonderful; it is so touchingly beautiful. David slew the Philistine champion, Goliath, the giant king of Gath, and Abner took David and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand. And Saul said to him, Whose son art thou, thou young man? And David answered, I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Beth-lehemite. And it came to pass when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle. (1 Samuel xviii. 1–4.) Years after this, when Saul and Jonathan were slain in battle, at the close of his lamentation over them David pours forth his heart and exclaims: "How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women. How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!"—2 Samuel i. 25–27. So in this twentieth chapter of 1st Samuel we have portrayed, in scenes most dramatic, the loves of Jonathan and David. Saul, king of Israel, in his envious hatred sought to slay David, and David in consequence fled from the face of Saul. But he and Jonathan meet and discourse with one another over the trying providences that have come upon the slayer of Goliath the Philistine. I need not repeat the whole story, read it for yourselves. Jonathan promises, if he assuredly finds that King Saul his father is set upon David's destruction, he will let David know, and this was the agreement between them concerning this matter. "Then Jonathan said to David, To-morrow is the new moon: and thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty. And when thou hast stayed three days, then thou shalt

go down quickly, and come to the place where thou didst hide thyself when the business was in hand, and thou shalt remain by the stone Ezel. And I will shoot three arrows on the side thereof, as though I shot at a mark. And, behold, I will send a lad, saying, Go, find out the arrows. If I expressly say unto the lad, Behold, the arrows are on this side of thee, take them; then come thou: for there is peace to thee, and no hurt; as the Lord liveth. But if I say thus unto the young man, Behold, the arrows are beyond thee; go thy way: for the Lord hath sent thee away. And as touching the matter which thou and I have spoken of, behold, the Lord be between thee and me for ever." Jonathan soon found out that his father was determined to slay David. Jonathan fasted and grieved for David because his father had done him shame. "And it came to pass in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the field at the time appointed with David, and a little lad with him. And he said unto his lad, Run, find out now the arrows which I shoot. And as the lad ran, he shot an arrow beyond him. And when the lad was come to the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried after the lad, and said, Is not the arrow beyond thee? And Jonathan cried after the lad, Make speed, haste, stay not. And Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows, and came to his master. But the lad knew not any thing: only Jonathan and David knew the matter. And Jonathan gave his artillery unto his lad, and said unto him, Go, carry them to the city. And as soon as the lad was gone, David arose out of a place toward the south, and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times: and they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded. And Jonathan said to David, Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, The Lord be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever. And he arose and departed: and Jonathan went into the city." All this covenant and its tokens and transactions were between Jonathan and David; there was no eavesdropper, no telltale spy, no intruder, no one had knowledge of the covenant between them. The lad with his nimble feet sought out and gathered the arrows, and came to his master. "But the lad knew not any thing: only Jonathan and David knew the matter."

"You only have I known of all the families of the earth."—Amos iii. 2. All others are strangers and foreigners, with whom the Lord has no friendship. They are his enemies, alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts. The sworn covenant of ceaseless friendship with all its tokens only Jonathan and David knew, the lad knew not anything. Now in the highest aspect let us view the matter; that is, the matter between Christ and the church. As only Jonathan and David knew the matter, so the matter between Christ and his church is only known by them; all others are utterly outside, (Mark iv. 11,) and like the lad, they know not anything of the matter. The matter between Christ and the church is of eternal importance, and happy are they that know the matter. There are multitudes who imagine they know the matter, but if Christ is not dwelling in our hearts by faith we know not anything. God hath called us unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, and all carnal professors and hypocrites with their feigned faith and dissembled love and lip service are out-

side the matter. Christ says, I will sup with him and he with me. (Rev. iii. 20.) This is union and communion, blessed intimacy. "When they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples."—Mark iv. 34. To them it was given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them that were without it was not given. Very frequently the children of God find their communion with Jesus interrupted, for so much intrudes itself between them and their beloved Savior. Jesus knows this, and ah, we amidst our conflicts and burdens know it, too. But Christ can put an end to our apartness from himself. How kindly he speaks in Mark vi. 31, 32. "He said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. And they departed into a desert place by ship privately." There they are alone; they rest and eat and hold communion with Jesus. All around them is the desert; the one green spot, the oasis in this desert, is Jesus and his own resting, eating and in intimate discourse together. The world knows not anything of this; only Christ and his loved ones know the matter. Truly there is something of a divine secrecy between Christ and poor, perishing sinners who are called unto fellowship with him. He manifests himself unto them as he does not unto the world. "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." "The love of Jesus, what it is none but his loved ones know." "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." —Deut. xxxii. 9–12. From all our idols our God will cleanse us. Those who are called by his grace are so led about and taught of him that they are made to cast away all false gods, all vain confidences, all lying doctrines. We find in the wilderness they fail to yield us sustenance, they can do us no good, they are miserable comforters. God in our experience of his teachings famishes all the gods of the earth, we cast them to the moles and to the bats, and the Lord alone is exalted in that day. We look alone to Christ our salvation, everything else is renounced, and there is no strange god with us. Jesus alone can lead us, and so in our faith in him we are coming up from the wilderness leaning on him alone. "Only Jonathan and David knew the matter." There are many instances given us in the Scriptures setting forth the personal relations of Christ and his people. Let us look at a few of these; perhaps in them we may see our experimental oneness with Jesus displayed. Look at the dreadful yet sacred scene presented in John viii. 3–11. There comes a company of men, scribes and Pharisees. I suppose they profess themselves to be gentlemen. There is a woman in their midst, they are bringing her with them, a wretched prisoner, whom they have taken in adultery, in the very act. Poor, wretched woman. They bring this sinful one before the Son of God. There she stands, an adulteress. They said unto Jesus, "Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to

accuse him." Why did they not drag the equally guilty man also before Jesus? Moses commanded that "the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death."—Lev. xx. 10. O the contemptible, cowardly hypocrites. She has no advocate to plead her cause, no one to pity her in that crowd; they are all her accusers, and she answers them not. She does not attempt to palliate her offence by putting the blame upon the adulterer; she has no word to speak in her own defence, she is a sinner, and dumb. She knows what Moses' law saith concerning her, but what will be the sentence from the lips of Jesus? King Lemuel in the prophecy that his mother taught him said, "Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction."—Prov. xxxi. 8. But there is no mouth opened in behalf of this sinner. "Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not." Was it her death sentence he wrote with his finger? O no. I am sure that none of her accusers knew what he wrote, I do not know. Jesus knew what he wrote, and perhaps this sinful woman with her downcast eyes also knew the matter. "So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground." What Jesus wrote was surely for some one to read. Shall I say that the woman read what his finger wrote on the ground? May I say that only the woman and Jesus knew the matter? Christ did not come to destroy Moses' law. If Moses can stone her let her be stoned. The accusers, these professed witnesses of her guilt, who apprehended her in the very act of her adultery, let them stone her. Jesus saith, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." What silence there is in this court! No voice is heard. Their accusations are ended, they can say no more on that head. Not a dog shall move his tongue against this woman; they cease their barking. (Exodus xi. 7.) No one takes hold of the guilty one to lead her forth to be stoned to death; not one of them has any power to cast a stone at her. She is a vessel of God's mercy, even though the law would show her none. But her accusers know not anything of this, and the woman as yet does not know the matter, but Jesus does, and soon it will be her unspeakable consolation, and then only the woman and Jesus will know the matter. "And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground." And was not Jesus doing some writing in this sinful woman's heart? While Jesus is writing on the ground, the prisoner, the woman in her shame and condemnation, stands in the midst, but the witnesses, her accusers, are leaving the court. They are all guilty, Jesus knew them, they cannot stand before him. His uplifted countenance is upon them while he speaks to them. Ah, wretched men, they cannot look Jesus in the face. As the Egyptians, when the Lord looked unto them through the pillar of fire and of cloud, were troubled and fled, (Exodus xiv. 24,) so these scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, when they heard what Christ said, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest even unto the last, and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. "When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord." The

accusers are gone, the last one has left. Will Jesus accuse her? Will the holy child Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, condemn her, cast the first stone at her? O what will he say to her, what will he do? It is now altogether a matter between Jesus and this sinful woman. All her accusers have had to give her case up to Jesus. "Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst." When Jesus lifted up himself and saw none but the woman, did he look upon her with loathing? Was that face severe? Did she read her just doom in his looks? He said, "Hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord." All the hateful, hypocritical faces of her accusers are gone, not one of them is to be seen. Jesus sees none but the woman, and her eyes see none but Jesus; and while he looks upon her and she looks in his face the lips of Jesus say, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." What court, what judge is this that sets the prisoner free? This is not the court of the law of Moses, of the old covenant. For he that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. (Heb. x. 28.) But Moses and Moses' law are not present now, they have withdrawn. Under the law this sinful woman found only condemnation, it was the ministration of death; but she now stands in another court, and before another Judge. That Judge is Jesus, the Son of God, the Mediator of the new covenant. This is the tribunal of our blessed Emmanuel, this is the throne of God and the Lamb. Here justice and judgment inhabit the throne, and mercy and truth go before his face. Righteousness and peace have kissed each other. This woman stands before the throne of grace, and Jesus, the glorious Head of grace, sits upon the throne. He is our Lawgiver, he is our Judge, he is our King, and he will save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him. He will show mercy unto the foulest transgressors that are brought before his seat; for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth in him. O the blessedness! The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus maketh us free from the law of sin and death. This poor sinner before Jesus is now to experience that she is not under the law, not under its curse, but under the reign of the grace of Christ; and though her sins have abounded, grace doth much more abound; and that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so shall grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. This woman has felt the terrors of the law, its curse was announced and the sentence passed upon her. Even Jesus said, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." Christ has no quarrel with Moses; but there is no one to cast the first stone at this sinner. Christ is her Savior, he came into the world to save sinners, to die for the ungodly, and from his lips comes unto this poor sinner the judgment (not of the law of Moses, but of God in the everlasting covenant of redemption), and this is what the woman heard from Jesus' lips: "Go, and sin no more." His lips are like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh, his mouth is most sweet. His words dropped into her aching heart. They were words of heavenly balm, words of pardoning love, words that set the prisoner free in justification of life. O Christ, thou hast the words of eternal life, and the woman lives upon the words of Jesus' lips. The outsiders know not anything, only the woman and Jesus know the matter. "Go, and sin no more." A pardoned sinner

goes forth. The Son of God hath set this prisoner free, and she is free indeed. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Not one of Moses' witnesses accosts her, not an accusation is hurled at her, not a finger of scorn is pointed at her, no look of loathing is cast upon her, for she is justified freely by Jehovah's grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. "Go, and sin no more." O how those words were cherished in her heart. All her days Jesus' dear face, his eyes of pardoning grace were before her, and with Jesus ever before her, his mouth so kind, so sweet, was ever saying to her, Sin no more. Only she and the Savior knew this matter.

A very blessed exhibition of God's sovereign grace is given us in that crucified thief who hung, in his agonies, beside the Savior on Calvary. They crucified Christ and the malefactors, one on the right hand and the other on the left. Both of them reviled the Savior. (Mark xv. 32; Matt. xxvii. 44.) Thus far neither of them knew anything, and that howling, mocking mob knows nothing of Christ. Had they known him they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

"Soldiers with thorns his temples crowned,
And lashed him when his hands were bound;
But thorns and knotted whips and bands
By us were furnished to their hands.

They nailed him to the accursed tree;
They did, my brethren, so did we;
The soldier pierced his side, 'tis true,
But we have pierced him through and through."

The crucified thieves were both of them by nature children of wrath. While they were reviling Christ all the indications were that they both were vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. Who would have thought that either of those dying men was a vessel of God's mercy, whom God would, in so short a time, prepare unto everlasting glory? One of the thieves ceases to revile the dear Redeemer, and begins to rebuke his fellow-malefactor, saying, "Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? and we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss." What an amazing transformation! That wicked mob can see the crucified ones, behold their sufferings, hear their groans and cries, but the transactions of God's sovereign grace in the heart of this dying thief they cannot see, they know not anything thereof. Only the Lord and this thief know the matter. During the time that Jesus hung upon the cross even the true believers in him, who witnessed his sufferings and heard his dying groans, were so tossed with conflicting hopes and fears, so filled with sorrow over him whom they loved, and were so confounded, that all their expectations in him as the Lord's Christ appeared to be wrecked. But though all others are enshrouded in obscurity, and the eyes of their faith are dimmed, yet the Lord in matchless sovereign mercy so wrought in the soul of this suffering, dying thief, gave him such eyes to see, such an heart to perceive, and poured upon his vision such revelations of what was now being transacted on Calvary, that he was moved to cry unto Jesus with all entreaty, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." "The lad knew not any thing: only Jonathan and David knew the matter." Now upon Calvary there is a matter which no one has knowledge of in all that multitude that looks upon Christ crucified between the two crucified thieves. This mat-

ter that other thief does not know. Only Jesus and the suppliant thief know the matter; yes, he then knew more than all the believers in Christ upon the earth knew. Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross, and the writing was, Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews. (John xix. 19.) But this was not the source from which this dying thief obtained his knowledge of Christ, but unto him it was given by the Holy Spirit to know this mystery of the kingdom. Christ crucified then hanging upon his cross was the King of glory, and he not only beheld him to be the King, but in the revelations given unto him he beholds him spoiling principalities and powers, triumphing over them in his sufferings and blood on the cross. He is given to see Jesus, the Mighty One, mighty to save, vanquishing all the foes of his people, making an end of their sins, finishing transgression, reconciling iniquity, and bringing in everlasting righteousness for his redeemed. (Daniel ix. 24.) He believes that though now he gives himself a sacrifice, and is dying for them, he will triumph over death, arise from the grave and enter into his glory. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" —Luke xxiv. 26. O how moved is the heart of this poor sinner toward Christ. The other crucified thief is not so moved. God has graciously wrought in the heart of the suppliant one, and so he now yearns for mercy, for salvation, for an entrance into and a place in Christ's kingdom; and out of his sin-distressed, aching heart he cries, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Think upon me, have a thought for me, have pity, show mercy; do not shut me out of thy kingdom; Lord, remember me. He does not ask, as he did awhile ago, to be saved from dying upon the cross. There is a hereafter in his thoughts, and glimpses of the glory of the everlasting kingdom of Christ, the Lord of glory, are given him. O that I might enter there, that I might a sharer be in its holy blessedness, though I am nothing but a vile, worthless malefactor. There on the cross hangs the incarnate Son of God in unspeakable anguish, a sacrifice for the sins of his people. Amidst the travail of his soul can he have a thought for, can he, will he hear the cry of this vile transgressor, who only a little while ago reviled him? O the exceeding riches of the grace of Christ! He will. I can think that the dear Lamb of God turned his head unto this crucified, dying thief while he said, "Verily, I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Take notice of this "verily." It is no fiction Jesus speaks. He does not comfort this dying man with delusive expectations. The words that Christ speaks are spirit and life. He has the words of eternal life, and speaks them to the heart of this perishing sinner. How comforted is this dying man. It is bliss now to die, for to die will be eternal gain, to be with Christ in paradise. O the love of Christ for this thief! O the love of this crucified thief for Jesus! Only Christ and the thief know this matter. They both suffer the tortures of crucifixion. But O the unfathomed anguish of Christ's soul, which he poured out unto death to redeem his church from sin and death and hell. Christ Jesus in the midst of all his travail of soul pours into the soul of this dying thief the blessedness of the hope of everlasting glory. Never can we poor mortals know all the deeps of anguish Jesus endured when he cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" At length Jesus said, "It is finished,"—John xix. 30, and with a loud voice said,

"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said this, he gave up the ghost."—Luke xxiii. 46. And there came soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs, ("a bone of him shall not be broken"), but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. There in his bodily sufferings, for a little while, hangs the dying thief, but in his soul the voice of Christ is saying, Verily, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

I thought to have presented other illustrations of the subject, but let this that I have penned suffice for the present. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant." O may it be our heritage to know the matter.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

SULLIGENT, Ala., Jan. 19, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER MORDECAI:—According to your request, I will try to write my experience and call to the ministry, if indeed I have any. When I was sixteen years old, in the year 1885, in May, I first felt that I was without hope and without God. I was plowing cotton one day and felt that I was going to die, and that where God was I could not go. This meant despair to me, and I commenced trying to pray, but it seemed to me all I could say was wasted breath; but I kept on trying to pray, and would ask every one I knew to pray for me, but nothing did me any good; still I went on, trying everything every one told me to do, but nothing helped me. I surely was in deep trouble, and the very breathing of my heart was, Lord, have mercy upon me, a sinner. So it went on until September, 1886. On the third Sunday I bade everything farewell, as I thought I was surely going to die, and I went to pray for the last time, and fell to the ground, saying, Lord, have mercy upon me. In a short time he gave me relief and peace. It was the most precious season I ever experienced, and this is the reason of my hope, if indeed I have a hope. At times it seems very small; sometimes it seems that it is all in all to me, and again it seems that I am deceived and have deceived my brethren. So I grope along. The first time that I ever thought of preaching was after I dreamed that I was trying to preach to a large gathering, and my subject was, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." As I awoke it appeared to me that I must try to do this again, but I cried to God that I could not do it. It was not long before I wanted to join the church, but felt that there was something I must do or some dreadful thing would come upon me. This gave me great trouble, and I tried every way I could to get rid of it, but it seemed to grow worse and worse, and although I tried in every way to drown it nothing helped me. So it went on until I was thirty-five years old, when I joined the "Free Will Baptists," and they wanted me to try to preach for them, and I did so, but this did not give me ease. Then I left them and joined the Missionary Baptists; there I did the same thing, and tried to be satisfied, but could get no better. I thought I had been so wicked that there was no hope for me, and I was so miserable I did not know what to do, and was ready to give up. I asked the good Lord if he would show me the right thing to do and I would try and do it. I dreamed one night that I went to an old log house, and there was a

crowd of old people, and when I went in they asked me if the Lord had been with me, and I told them I did not know. They asked me to stay and talk with them, which I did. When I awoke I was very happy; my trouble was gone and all was peace. By and by I went to the Old School Baptist Church and heard them preach, and they told me just how I felt. I went on, but did not ask to join them, but kept dreaming of trying to preach, but thought I never could do that with these dear old people. My troubles grew worse again, and I thought that I had so persecuted the good Lord that he would never forgive me. I promised if God would forgive me I would do better, but I seemed to grow worse and worse, and went groping on my way until I was a misery to myself and my family. Finally I went to the Old Baptists and told them how I felt, and to my surprise they took me in. After a time they wanted me to talk for them, and I commenced trying, and felt some better, and to my surprise they licensed me to preach.

These are just a few hints of my troubles. If this is worth anything to you, keep it; if not, put it in the fire. I am so imperfect and so sinful it looks to me that I am too full of sin to be a servant of God; may he help and guide me. Pray for me when all is well with you. This is a very small portion of what I have experienced, but I hope the Lord has led me so far and will strengthen and help me to go in the right way. I feel there is no one like me.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

W. M. HANEY.

APRIL 12, 1917.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I am sending you two letters, one from my sister by birth, and Spirit, I hope; the other is from my cousin by marriage. I have not their consent, but I know it will be all right with them. Use your judgment about publishing them and it will be all right with me.

TRYPHENA THORNE.

GILBOA, N. Y., Nov. 19, 1916.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I was both surprised and pleased to receive a letter from you, as I often think of you and of writing you, but have kept delaying until a more convenient season, therefore I miss a great deal. I often long to converse with some one who believes as I do: that God is a sovereign, and controls all things in heaven and earth, and accomplishes his purposes, and all things will work in line for the accomplishment of his purposes, and poor, feeble man cannot hinder. Men boast of great things they can do in the name of the Lord, but what is man? his breath is in his nostrils, given him of God. I live in the past, and think of the time when we met in the house of God with the dear saints and held sweet communion in love and fellowship; it was to me a heavenly place. Now there are only a few left, the rest have gone to their reward, and we shall soon follow and be at rest. I often long for the time to come, to be free from this body of sin, where all is joy and peace, no more sorrow, but to be forever with the Lord. I often wonder why I am spared; he has a purpose, and I desire to be reconciled to his will, and say, Not my will, but thine, be done.

Elder Clark was here last Sunday; there were about twelve present. I feel his age will not permit him to come very

much longer, but the Lord will provide all needful things for us. It was my sweet privilege to be at the yearly meeting here last year, also the association this fall. Elder McConnell was here last year, and brother Ruston this year. I had heard neither before, and enjoyed all the meetings very much, and thank the Giver of all good gifts for the privilege given me, for I do love to hear the gospel preached that gives God all the glory for our salvation.

I am not very strong, and each year tells me that the old house is tumbling down, but I am thankful that it is as well with me as it is. I still wait on myself, and keep my room, and work at something most of the time. I have pieced ten quilts since I have been here, also other sewing. I have the best of children and grandchildren, who remember me, so you see I have blessings without number to thank my heavenly Father for; his watchful care has been over me from youth to old age. I was eighty-one years old last October. There are very few, as you say, of our youthful companions who are living, yet we are still spared for some purpose only known to the Lord.

I take the SIGNS, which is a great comfort to me in my lonely hours. What a turmoil there is at the present time. I feel prophecy is rapidly being fulfilled: wars and rumors of wars in the land. People seem to have gone mad with pleasure and greed, no fear of God before their eyes, and what will be the end? But God reigns.

Well, I must close. My mind has run on and on in a wandering way.

I hope you may pass a pleasant winter, and that the Lord will guard and guide us as in the past. If we never meet on earth, I trust we may in the blessed beyond. Please excuse this long, rambling letter, and write me when convenient.

With best wishes, from one of the least,

AMILIA A. BILLINGS.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., Dec. 9, 1916.

DEAR SISTER:—I was glad to get your letter, as it had been some time since I heard from you. O how often when sitting here alone I think if we could only be together. Why must we be so far from each other? All I can say is, the Lord has so willed it, and what he does is right, for he never makes a mistake. Two weeks ago to-morrow was our meeting. Elder Vail was with us. O what a preacher he is; I have heard him for more than thirty-six years, and his preaching is just as good as when I first heard him. He spoke twice Sunday at the meeting-house, and here in the evening. How much I have to be thankful for. Yesterday three of the sisters came to see me. I often wonder why I have been so highly favored, I know there is nothing I have done to merit the blessing. O that I might praise my dear Father as I ought, for I have so much to be thankful for. I do not mind being lame, I am not alone long at a time, and have my sewing, which keeps me busy. I can get around to do my work, and have a boy come in nights and mornings to attend to the fires, and I have near neighbors, and they are all very good to me. It will be eleven years to-morrow since my husband left me for a better home. He is at rest, no pain or sorrow there. Well might the poet say, "It is not death to die;" it is only going home.

I have a letter from Amilia Billings, which I will send you.

I will close. The bells are calling, and why do I not feel to go? Because I have not so learned Christ. Remember me to all.

With best wishes, your sister,

HELEN.

HAMILTON, Texas, Feb. 3, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you a letter I received comfort from for your judgment as to whether you think it good matter for publication. I have brother Curlee's consent if you wish to give it space. He is a very precious brother to me.

Unworthily yours in affliction, yet in a blessed hope of another and better world,

W. D. WOOD.

ATHENS, Texas, Jan. 5, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER WOOD:—Brother in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, upon whom all our hope of life and salvation depends, and around whom all our love and affections cling under any and all circumstances. I have all along had in mind to write to you, but I feel my own weakness and inability to do so; however I will try to tell you some of the thoughts that are and have been on my mind for some time, from which I have received comfort, and I feel that I want to present them to you, if the Lord will enable me to do so, hoping that you may draw some comfort from the same line of thought. "Not a hoof shall be left behind." These are the words of Moses to Pharaoh just before the departure of God's chosen people out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, in accordance with God's promise to Abraham four hundred years before; and as he was now about to redeem his chosen people, Israel, it was not possible that even one hoof should be left behind. All of God's chosen people then in Egypt must pass through the Red Sea, the way provided by God's almighty power, led by the pillar of cloud (Jesus). No invitation was given to any one to follow, nor were they permitted to do so, but in hatred and revenge against Israel they attempted to follow and were destroyed. "For this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." To my mind national Israel represents in a measure spiritual Israel, but not wholly so. I do understand however that God did with a high hand and outstretched arm bring out his chosen people without any voluntary act on their part, but alone by his own power, according to the previous covenant or promise made. When Israel had passed through the Red Sea and beheld her enemies dead, and they could never more trouble her, they sang the song of redemption: redeeming grace. Brother Wood, here is where I feel that all of God's little ones are made to rejoice when they see and are made to feel that all their sins are forever put away, and that they are fully justified in Christ Jesus their Lord. But as Israel journeyed on through the wilderness she found other trials. There was nothing to eat and no water to drink, men could not furnish either. The pillar of cloud (Jesus) still led them, but the people murmured, as they so often do, and Moses cried unto the Lord, and the Lord gave them water to sustain natural life, pointing to the true water of life which Jesus alone can give, and God gave them bread from heaven to eat. No man was offered or could obtain this water or bread except an Israelite. It was not offered under the law to any one willing to obey or accept. As national Israel had her conflicts in the wilderness after she was freed from the house of bondage, so to my view spiritual Israel has her conflicts before entering the visible church as well as after entering.

Dear brother, I feel that this letter is growing longer than interesting. I see the subject is too great for me; I have

hardly started in the great field, but before closing I want to say that the crossing of Jordan and entering the land of promise typifies God's children entering the visible church through baptism. These are only my own thoughts; I am open for correction. I know you are acquainted with my weakness, and will in love correct me if you see that I am wrong. May the Lord bless you, is the prayer of your unworthy brother in hope of life beyond this vale of tears,

J. E. CURLEE.

COTTAGE GROVE, Ore., Aug. 18, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I ask you to please send to the above address my copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We purposed going to our former church home, at North Yakima, but circumstances beyond our control defeated our predestination, therefore we yield to the inevitable, and feel to be assured that good, not evil, will be the result, because if we (wife and I) are indeed joint-heirs with the Heir of all things, it is true. While our estimate of self is small, yet his assurance, "Ye are of more value than many sparrows," bids us take courage, since by the mouth of his chosen vessel, Paul, he affirms that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. I also planned visiting Bellingham, as well as the Siloam Association, but feel to trust that his way, not mine, is for the best. In these small things his hand is evident, and I feel so glad to be led, as I humbly hope, to rejoice that his purposes apply in all of our wanderings. Some of the wise ones profess to know what is or is not good, but I confess to be thoroughly dependent upon the One who hideth himself from the wise and prudent and revealeth secretly to those who seek him not. (Psalms lxv. 1.) He saw them from afar, even before Adam was called into being; ere sin entered he had provision made for his redemption, and that of his chosen people, and the advance of time has not added to his foreknowledge and his predestination. His foreknowledge predestinated that Adam should eat of the tree of good and evil. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Yes, the day was appointed in which it was to be done. Herein is declared the foreknowledge, also his predestination, deny the fact whoever will. "He sits on no precarious throne," nor does he need puny man to defend his acts. This is a thrice blessed phase of the scheme of redemption, and is so ably presented in the SIGNS that my poor addendum is unnecessary.

One thought more and I am done. In what way could the advent of the Savior have been so absolutely predestinated and the entrance of sin as an undeniable fact left out of the predestination of Jehovah? Our Lord is one of purpose (not of chance) and the predestination of a Savior of necessity admits the existence of sin.

In closing, I make free to remind the objectors that Revelation v. 6, corresponds with what took place in fact when on the cross of Calvary at the appointed time, and, too, with all contingent circumstances, He who had no sin made full atonement for all, even those whom he mentions in his prayer (John xvii. 2), nor shall one of them perish; no, never. Glory be to God. I meet here several who are akin to the flock of slaughter, a blessed company, and some are passing over, and incidently I am advised of the home-going of precious sister L. S. Pittman, whose kindly interest, by loaning me copies of the old SIGNS, proved to me an incalculable aid doctrinally.

Your brother and sister,

ALEXANDER & MARY CHEYNE.

DRAIN, Oregon, May 23, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—The time has come for me to renew my subscription to the dear old SIGNS. I want to take it as long as I live. It seems that we are living in a dark age, a world war is on, and we fear there will be great suffering before it is over. There is another thing that causes me great anxiety, and that is, it seems to me that our once faithful ministers have waxed cold, and we are all so indifferent about the assembling of ourselves together, not as in days gone by; we let trivial matters that come up keep us away from the meetings. I often wonder if the whole world has gone off after the war gods, yet when we stop to think we know God is in it all. He knows our every need, and suffers all these things to be so. I feel as Moses did when he came to the Red Sea: he commanded the children of Israel to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. O if we could only trust God and feel assured that he is watching over his chosen vessels of mercy for their good we could be at rest; but I am like doubting Thomas, I feel deep down in the dark valley at times, yet through it all want to be submissive, and at times can say, I know that my Redeemer liveth; then there is a calm or peace comes into my soul. If I could only write like some of the correspondents of the SIGNS I surely would be glad, but I think we all understand each other, even if we little ones have not the gift that the abler ones have, and what a blessing it is that we know the joyful sound when we hear it. We hope we are all taught to speak and understand this language, Christ being our schoolmaster. The world has no use for our doctrine, for it gives the Lord all power. I have neighbors who tell me that we have to do something ourselves, and I ask them who gave us power and knowledge to do for ourselves. The Lord is able to dethrone our reason in the twinkling of an eye, he alone holds the key of life and death in his hand. It is the same with our spiritual life; at times when we feel his presence we are made to rejoice, and I often wonder why we cannot always be kept in that spirit; but Satan soon comes in and tells us our hope is all delusion, then we are left to feel our own sinful nature; but, dear ones, the Savior is in the darkness as well as in the light; it is necessary that we be led as we are, for it teaches us the weakness of our flesh and our dependence upon the Lord. I often think of the words,

"Keep silence, all created things,
And wait your Maker's nod;
My soul stands trembling while she sings
The honors of her God."

Well, here I am writing in a rambling way again; I do wish I could keep silent, and not try to fill the place of more able writers. Please do not let this crowd out better matter, for I do love all the writers with a spiritual love that the world knows nothing about, and we cannot tell them, for none but Jesus can give spiritual understanding.

I will close, with christian love to all the household of God, praying that he will hear and revive us, and that we may be able to ascribe all honor, power and praise to him to whom it belongs.

Your little sister, saved by grace if saved at all,

S. MORNINGSTAR.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS has changed his address from Claremont, Cal., to 229 North Market St., Riverside, Cal.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1917.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REVELATION III. 20.

"BEHOLD, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

Few Scriptures have been more misapplied than the above. It has been a favorite theme with those who believe that the sinner's salvation depends upon his own efforts to so apply this Scripture as to mean that God is knocking at the door of every sinner's heart, and that if the sinner will open his heart and allow God to come in he will be saved. Such an interpretation does not at all take into account the connection in which this text occurs. Let us notice this scriptural setting of our text in order to come at a more correct understanding of the intention of the Spirit in using such words as our text contains. First of all, these words are not addressed to unbelieving sinners, but to the church, an association of baptized believers. To the church of Laodicea, which was in a lukewarm state, the Spirit comes voicing reproof. God's children either as individuals or as a church, often get into that state where they need reproof. One of the purposes of the Scriptures is to furnish reproof and correction to the people of God. It is evident that the Laodicean brethren at the time in which the Spirit addressed them in Rev. iii. 20, needed to be corrected. God is the judge of when to reprove and whom to reprove. Brethren cannot tell, even though they be ministers of the gospel, when to correct or to reprove. Criticism or fault-finding between brethren accomplishes little that is good; more often it serves to alienate brethren than to heal a breach. When the Spirit moves a pastor to call his brethren's attention to faults or matters that need remedying, it will invariably be in the spirit of kindliness and brotherly love, never harshly or bitterly. The Laodicean brethren were in such shape that they felt themselves to be rich, when, in reality, they were poor, wretched, miserable and blind; thinking themselves clothed when indeed they were naked. In other words, while this church was possibly observing the order and the ordinances of the house of God, it must have been only in a sort of formal, lifeless manner, without due regard for the solemnity and substance of what they were doing. We believe it is possible for God's people to degenerate into formal christians without having much feeling or sense of spirituality of what they are doing. We think the Laodicean Church was in somewhat such a state as that: lukewarm, neither cold nor hot. It goes without saying that God alone, the Husbandman of the vineyard, is the only one who knows when and how to dig about his plants and to give them the stirring up that they need. Sometimes this stirring up comes in the way we do not want it; often it seems that our very vitals are being torn out of us, that we are being torn up by the roots. This works spiritual good to the church of God, even though it may entail great temporal sacrifice or loss. Therefore there is not the slightest warrant for say-

ing that God knocks at every sinner's heart, that he knocks at the hearts of dead, unrepentant, unbelieving sinners. Such a construction of the text does violence to the whole tenor of God's written word from Genesis to Revelation. It is only at the door of his own church that God knocks. This knocking is done by his Holy Spirit, and it appeals not to any part of the believer's nature carnally, but to his faith given him of God, that is, to the Christ-life within him. In other words, the knocking is at the door, and Jesus is the door of his people, the church. The knocking is not done at the door of a man's heart at all, no matter whether he be saint or sinner, and we cannot see where any one has gotten that idea of its being the heart that is here spoken of as being knocked at. No mention is made of any part of a man's body, his heart or any other part. The ones addressed are the church, and it is said that the knocking is at the door. Then it must mean the door of the church. Therefore, Jesus is the door of the church, and the nature of Jesus is in every believer, for they receive the divine nature in being born from above of the incorruptible Seed of God, according to his word. Thus we must conclude that this reproof of God to his people is administered to the door of the church, that is, to the spiritual nature of the believer, to that which is Christ in them. This must be so, for the natural man knows not nor receives the things of God. The carnal mind, whether in believer or in unbeliever, is enmity against God in the one as well as in the other. The Lord never appeals to the natural man to better himself, for the natural man is without any ability whatever to proceed obediently along the spiritual path. The word "if" in the text does not imply a condition which it is in the power of believers to perform themselves, but it does mean that the Spirit speaking to the faith of the hearers will make manifest those who have the ability to hear the knocking and those who have not that ability. Those that have ears to hear will hear what the Spirit says to the church; those who do not hear, hear not because they have no ears. In the days of the apostles there were those who crept into the churches unawares, those who intruded themselves into things which they had not seen, vainly puffed up in their fleshly minds. These, because they had no spiritual hearing, were not able to receive the admonitions of the Spirit, nor to heed them. These caused divisions and contentions among the brethren. Thus the "if" does not imply that those in the church may or may not of themselves respond to the reproof of the Spirit, but it means that if there are any in the church possessed of a spiritual mind, the reproof of the Spirit will meet with a response from such, and there will be an opening unto the message which the Spirit of Jesus brings. The condition of the Baptist Church from 1800 to 1832 illustrates what we mean. During that period there were certain restless spirits in the church who sought to bring in strange doctrines and to add new institutions, thereby setting at naught the old landmarks and departing from the faith of the fathers. But there were raised up such men as Gilbert Beebe, Thos. P. Dudley, Samuel Trott, Thomas Barton and others who fearlessly preached Christ and him crucified. In these men as angels the Spirit of God was speaking to the churches and reproving the false things among them. If there were any among the churches, and there were many, who heeded this knocking of sound doctrine, they could not help but open unto

it, and unto such Jesus entered and entertained them, or supped with them, breaking unto them the bread of life, comforting them in the midst of the divisions which were rending the churches, establishing them firmly in the doctrine of God our Savior. We firmly believe, therefore, that the words of our text apply only unto the church of God here in the world, that wherever the Spirit sees fit to stir up our pure minds, there is always a response on the part of the brethren, some of them at least, to this stirring up, thus bringing about a discrimination between him that serves God and him that serves him not. Wherever the true faith is, there are bound to be certain works manifesting that faith. These works are being tested by the Spirit to make evident whether they are the works of the flesh or of the Spirit.

This is written at the request of sister Mary E. Lake of Hurricane, W. Va.

L.

ACTS VIII. 17.

"THEN laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost."

We must insist, first of all, that the apostles of themselves could not bestow the Holy Ghost on any one. It was only as they abode in Jesus, and he in them, that they could perform anything of a spiritual nature at all. Jesus had told them that without him they could do nothing, that he was the Vine and they were the branches. The life in the vine is the life that flows through the branches and that produces the fruit in the branches. Thus the apostles were all what they were by the grace of God, and not of themselves. To them certain gifts of the Spirit were given, and these gifts exercised them, and they had no control over their own gifts. The Holy Ghost dwelt in these called servants of God and wrought certain things by them. No credit whatever is due to the apostles for the things the Spirit caused them to do. All glory and honor and power is unto God. Now, it appears from the reading of the eighth chapter of the Acts that Philip had been preaching and baptizing in Samaria. Those baptized by Philip did not receive the Holy Ghost. Referring back to the second chapter of the Acts, we find that those baptized at Jerusalem by the apostles during Pentecost received in their baptism the gift of the Holy Ghost. This gift of the Holy Ghost was lacking in those by Philip baptized in Samaria. Why there should have been this lack we do not know. This gift of the Holy Ghost is understanding and enlightenment. Jesus, before his death, told the disciples that when the Comforter or Holy Ghost should come, he would guide them in the way of all truth, and would reveal the things of Jesus unto them; that is, the sayings which Jesus had told them would be opened up or explained unto them so that they would understand their meaning. This promise we find verified when the Holy Ghost did come at Pentecost, for Peter was then able to expound the Old Testament, a thing which neither he nor any other man, except Jesus, had ever been able before to do. This understanding or being enlightened seems to be the gift of the Holy Ghost, and is the privilege only of baptized believers. This understanding seems to have been deficient in those baptized by Philip. They had been baptized, but had not received the Holy Ghost in the sense that they were not clear in their minds as to what the Scriptures meant. This gift they received through the laying on of hands by the apostles. Now, please bear in mind, we are not saying the apostles did this of themselves. They

nor any other set of men could ever, then or since, endow any one with spiritual understanding. But if the Holy Ghost saw fit to impart this gift through their laying on of hands, this makes it no less the work of God and of his Spirit, and is not at all the work of men. God does to-day greatly comfort his people through the ministry. Is it any wonder then that he saw fit to grant the Holy Ghost through the apostles' laying on of hands?

At the request of brother S. J. Norris, of Berry, Ala. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

Written by Elder J. R. Dennison.

The Tygarts Valley River Association of Old School Primitive Predestinarian Baptists, now in session with the Valley Church, Randolph County, West Virginia, to the several churches of which she is composed, and to all of like precious, God-given faith, sendeth christian salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Once more a few of us, through the kind providence of the ever merciful God, have been permitted to meet as an association of churches and brethren, and, we humbly hope, for the alone purpose of worshiping, praising and glorifying his great and exalted name, and comforting and edifying one another. Dear brethren, many and varied have been the changes that have taken place since our last assembling together in an associate capacity; some of our dear loved ones have been called away to the realities of an eternal world, where we believe they are now basking in the sweet sunshine of God's holy, peaceful presence, praising, glorifying and adoring Father, Son and Holy Spirit for electing love, redeeming grace and justifying faith, and while they are greatly missed by us here, we can but hope that by the grace of God it may be our happy estate to join them on the sunny side of sweet deliverance in the fair, bright world of glory, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary be at rest. O may it be his holy will to keep us one and all in the highway of holiness that leads to joys at his right hand, for in his presence is fullness of joy, and at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore. The past year has been one of great trials and tribulations, of sorrows and griefs, and of anxieties and fears, the whole world in a commotion; not only is it true from a political point of view, nation rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, but it is gone into idolatry, the whole world gone after the beast, crying, Lo here and lo there. Dear brethren, let us believe them not, nor run after them, for they are false teachers, deceitful workers; they are greedy dogs, which can never have enough, they look every one for his gain from his quarter, so that the continual cry is, Give, give. But, dear brethren, we were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He gave his life a ransom for the church (not the world), that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. Then he says, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me peace; be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. Yea, the battle is fought, the victory won. We have many conflicts in the world, but he has gained the victory over them all in his death, and triumphed over death, hell and the grave in his resurrection.

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Then, dear brethren, how sweet to reflect on the joys that await us in yon blissful region, the haven of rest. Yes, this mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruptible incorruption, so that our vile bodies will be fashioned like unto his glorious body, and then shall we be satisfied, for we shall see him as he is and be like him. O glorious thought, blessed anticipation. How sweet to be blessed with a precious hope of meeting the dear Savior in glory. Dear brethren, let us strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, bear one another's burdens, and not make a brother an offender for a word, but by long-suffering forgive one another as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us. Now, to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen.

Dear brethren, farewell.

J. B. CROSS, Moderator.
J. N. BARTLETT, Clerk.

(Written by J. M. Cate.)

To the Elders and messengers of the Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, and the churches they represent, when in session with Providence Church, Appanoose County, Iowa, and all who love the Lord.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—We realize it is through the loving-kindness and tender mercy of the all-wise God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will, that we are once more permitted to meet together in council and worship his most holy name. This reminds us that time is swiftly passing, and that another year is gone with its joys and sorrows, which seem to be the lot of pilgrim strangers sojourning in a strange land. How thankful we should be that we have such a great Leader to guide us in the ways of peace, who is too wise to err and too good to do wrong.

Dear brethren and sisters, it seems that by your action in the last session of the association, and according to previous custom, you will expect a Circular Letter to attach to your Minutes. I do not see why the lot to write one should have fallen to a poor, weak lay member of the church. You did not expect me to take a text and preach to you Jesus, the way, the truth and the life, therefore, and seeing we call ourselves Predestinarian Baptists, will try to search for some few of the reasons why.

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, and all the hosts thereof. In the beginning of what? In the beginning of time. And God saw all that he had made, that it was very good. Good for what? Good for the purpose for which it was made. We begin to imagine that God must have had a purpose in all his creation. We also read that God made man last, and before he made him said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let him have dominion over all the earth. You see God decided to make man before he made him, decided to make him in his own image and likeness, and decided to give him dominion over all the earth. Decided, determined, predestinated if you please. We begin to think that God must be a predestinarian, but perhaps we had better look a little further. Maybe he has changed, but we read somewhere in the Scripture that he said, I am God, and change not. James said, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever. We would like to bring a few other proofs which mildly imply that

God must have continued to be a predestinarian. God predetermined to destroy man off the face of the earth. Yes, he determined beforehand, for he told Noah he was going to do it long before he did. He also told Noah to build an ark, how to build it, and what kind of material to use. Thou shalt build it so and so, not, You may build it so and so if you will. Searching a little more diligently, we find when God made this man he planted a garden eastward in Eden and put him therein, and gave him a few little laws to govern his actions. Well, it seems that Adam may have been like his posterity nowadays, concluded he was a free moral agent and would try his hand, but the very first move God drove him out of the garden and placed a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way of the tree of life. Hardly free. The Scripture says, Know ye not that ye are not your own? Ye are bought with a price. Well, Adam, trying to be a free moral agent, fell under sin, and the sentence was death. Looking a little further we find that God had prepared a Ransom, prepared it before he made man. He must have known that man would transgress, and must also be a predestinarian, for we see that he determined to redeem man from this death before he made him, for we read that Christ stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Searching farther down in time, we find that God began to tell the people when that Lamb should come, and of all the surroundings, that is, of the things that should come to pass. We read, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." This sounds like God is all-wise, a sovereign ruler and a predestinarian, for before these things came to pass God said they should be. Now we all agree that the first two "shalls" have been fulfilled, and Christ himself says that he fulfilled the other. Let us see if this predestination extends any farther. Christ says, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring." God hath said, I will dwell in them, and I will be their God and they shall be my people. Paul says in Ephesians, "We have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." In Romans viii. 29, we read: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." Christ says, "I go to prepare a place for you." He told his disciples he was going before he went. Well, we will have to conclude that Christ continued a predestinarian to the end. I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am there ye may be also. In heaven of ultimate glory with Christ, to see him as he is and be like him, and as the poet says:

> "When we've been there ten thousand years,
> Bright shining as the sun,
> We've no less days to sing God's praise
> Than when we first begun."

And all according to the eternal purpose of God, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. So God must have had a purpose in all his creation, for the Scripture says he created it not in vain. So we see that predestination was not only in the beginning, but reaches on down through the annals of time and on into eternity. Now, dear brethren, if we have any part or lot in this why should we not be called predestinarians?

Now may grace, mercy and truth be with you all, and in you all, and may his Spirit be with you in all your deliberations. Amen.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator.
H. C. CATE, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

My father, **Hardin Irwin,** the eldest child in a family of six sons, was born about a mile west of what was then the village of Boston, in Nelson County, Ky., on the 17th day of January, 1809. He lived with his parents on his native heath until he was fourteen years old. In the year 1823 his parents left Kentucky and removed with the family to Perry County, Ind., where they lived for five years. In 1828 his father, Joseph Irwin, removed from Perry County to Putnam County, Ind., and located near the town of Morton. My father lived in Putnam County, Ind., for twenty-four years. Like the parents of Wilson Thompson, the great Old School Baptist preacher, my father and mother were first cousins, my grandfathers, Joseph and Isaac Irwin, being brothers. In the year 1835 my father married Miss Hetty Irwin, daughter of Isaac Irwin. By this marriage he had ten children, seven sons and three daughters, two of whom died in infancy. The writer of this notice was the ninth child of this union. In 1852 my father moved with his family to Mercer County, Mo., where he resided for eleven years. On the 23rd day of June, 1863, having been warned by a friend that it had been decreed by the Union men of the community to kill my father that night, he bade farewell to mother and us children, and in the dusk of that memorable evening he, in company with Elder Willoughby, an Old School Predestinarian Baptist preacher, left the old homestead where the writer was born, in order to prevent his Republican neighbors from murdering him, and walked all the way back to Putnam County, Ind. During August and September of that mid-year of the war between the States, he attended several Old School Baptist associations in western Indiana, and heard some of the ablest and soundest Old School Predestinarian Baptist preachers that ever lived in America. Among these were Gilbert Beebe, Thomas P. Dudley, Joel Humes, Grigg M. Thompson and John Shields. On the 6th of October, 1863, my father joined his family in Johnson County, Nebr., to which place mother and we children had gone in the meantime. Here he resided, with the exception of one year, until the spring of 1883. In April of that year he returned, sick and alone, to the old homestead in Missouri, which had been purchased back and was then occupied by my brother, John W. Irwin. There, in the old log house, on the 23rd day of June, 1883, just twenty years after he had left there in order to keep from being killed, he passed away.

My father was a thorough Old School Predestinarian Baptist, and had a deep and abiding experience of grace in his heart, although he never united with the church. When reminded of his duty he always declared, with feelings of deep emotion and with tears: "I have never felt worthy to belong to the Old Baptist Church." He wrote to two of his children, in a letter dated eleven months and ten days before his death, and which has but lately come into my possession: "If I am not deceived, I had at least a glimmering hope that I was one of that number that passed through great tribulation, trials and distresses. I say a glimmering hope, but if I am not deceived it grows brighter and brighter every day, which comfort, my children, I have had for fifty-one years. Some few words that I may try to say may make you think that I am losing faith in the Old Baptists, but for your comfort I will say that I feel, if possible, stronger and more confirmed than ever." This letter was written to my sister and the writer July 13th, 1882. My father was a loving, faithful husband, a noble father, a neighbor of unimpeachable integrity, honest, industrious, economical, and yet generous and magnanimous to a degree. He had a strong, logical, legal mind, but the subject that interested him most was the Bible and the doctrine of God our Savior. Our house was always a Baptist home, and often there was preaching at our house. Isaac Blakely, Joseph H. Flint, Isaiah Guymon, Richard M. Thomas, Isaiah Waggoner, William Jones and many others whom I could name have preached in my father's house the unsearchable riches of Christ.

BENJAMIN HARDIN IRWIN.

Mrs. Mary J. Butler, our sister in Christ, died at her home, 621 23rd St., N. W., Washington, D. C., Sept. 26th, 1917, aged 58 years. She was the daughter of Daniel and Jane Ferris, born in Washington, D. C. In 1875 she was married to Lafayette J. Butler. To them were born four children, three daughters and one son. Sister Butler is survived by her husband and two daughters: Mrs. Katz and Mrs. Milstead, and by one son, Ulysses Butler, also a half-sister, Mrs. Martha Shearer, and one brother, John R. Ferris, and two grandchildren. In 1913 sister Butler was baptized by Elder Joshua T. Rowe into membership with the Shiloh Church, Washington, D. C. The death of her daughter about a year ago was a great trial to sister Butler, and she seemed to decline in health from that time. She was a great sufferer, but very patient. She did not murmur or complain, though her pain was terrible at times. She had been a follower of the Old School Baptists for a long time before she united with them. To meet with her brethren was her chief joy in life; no pleasure of the world could compare with the enjoyment she found in her meetings. After she became ill so that she could not attend the meetings, her meeting day never came that she did not think of it and wish that she might be present with her brethren.

Owing to the absence of her pastor, Elder J. T. Rowe, the family called on the writer to attend her funeral. Services were held at her late home, the

interment being in Congressional Cemetery. We read the twenty-third Psalm and the fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians, making some brief comments on the truths contained therein. Also her favorite hymn, 746 (Beebe's collection), was read.

May the Spirit of God abide with the bereaved family to reconcile them to the loss of their loved one.

ALSO,

Mrs. Elguiva DeCoss, our sister in Christ, departed this life at her home, Clifton, Fairfax Co., Va., Oct. 1st, 1917. She was the daughter of the late Hezekiah and Harriet Crouch, and was born in Fairfax County, Va., Feb. 2nd, 1847. She was married to Jesse DeCoss Oct. 17th, 1877, and to them were born two sons and two daughters, who, with their father, survive their mother and deeply mourn their loss. One of the sons, Wilkie H. DeCoss, is married and lives in Alexandria, Va., while the other married son, Wm. E. DeCoss, lives in Warrenton, Va. The married daughter, Mrs. Katie Fairfax, together with her sister, Miss Hattie DeCoss, lives at the home place with their father, and both were there to faithfully and lovingly attend their mother in all the days and nights of her last illness. Besides these four children sister DeCoss is survived by eight grandchildren. Up to within the past year sister DeCoss had been a woman of remarkable health, never having been sick all her life, nor ever having had the care of a physician until this last illness, which lasted just fifteen weeks. In all her illness, while a great sufferer, she was a very patient one, and no word of murmur or complaint ever escaped her lips. She was ready and anxious to depart from this world and to be with Christ. She was baptized by the late Elder J. N. Badger into the membership of the Bethlehem Church, Prince William Co., Va., in November, 1897. She lived a faithful and consistent member of the church to the day of her death, telling her family if an Old School Baptist preacher could not be gotten to preach her funeral not to have any services at all. We tried to speak to the comfort of the bereaved family from the words in Rev. xx. 6. May the Spirit of God, which alone can bring consolation to mourning hearts, comfort all that mourn, especially those who mourn their sins and hunger for the word of God.

L.

Mrs. Laura Myers, wife of D. L. Myers, of Minoa, N. Y., died March 12th, 1917, of cancer of the bowels. She was the eldest daughter of Matthew and Jennie Stradley, of Cammal. Her father died seven years ago of the same disease. She leaves a kind and loving husband, one daughter, Mrs. Louisa Lamb, Syracuse, N. Y., a mother, Mrs. Jennie Hart, of Cammal, Pa., and the following brothers and sisters: Mrs. Rosa Harris, Shedrick Stradley and Otis Stradley, of Cammal, Pa., Reuben Stradley, of Springville, Pa., and Elmyron Stradley, of Syracuse, N. Y. She died in great faith, praying for the Lord to remove her. She suffered terribly for two long years, and was confined to her bed for ten months; four months of this time I was there to care for her.

Mr. Brown, the Methodist minister, preached the funeral sermon. She was buried at Minoa, N. Y., by the side of her niece, whom she raised from a small child to womanhood. JENNIE HART.

Mrs. Rachel M. Hulburt, daughter of Stephen and Maria Fuggles, of Delphi Falls, N. Y., died Sept. 24th, 1917, of chronic bronchitis, aged 75 years and 6 months. She was born in England, and married to William Hulburt in 1866, who died about sixteen months ago. She leaves to mourn her absence, one son, one daughter, three brothers, five sisters and many others. She was not a member of the church, but was a lover of the doctrine of sovereign grace and a good christian woman. The writer of this notice had been personally acquainted with her for many years, and if allowed to judge can say she could tell as good a christian experience as any one could desire to hear. She is now at rest in her heavenly home, to live forever with the Lord her Savior. God bless all the mourning ones with reconciled minds and hearts to his sovereign will. The writer spoke on the occasion of her funeral to the friends assembled at the home of the deceased. She was buried Sept. 28th in the cemetery near her home.

D. M. VAIL.

M. V. Anderson, son of G. and Sarah and husband of E. E. Anderson, was born in Noxubee County, Miss., November 26th, 1836, and departed this life July 6th, 1917. He received a hope in Christ some thirty-five years before his demise, but never united with the church, but was a firm believer in the sovereignty of God and salvation by grace. Mr. Anderson was an honorable, upright citizen; he served four years in the war between the States. His home was always a home for the Primitive Baptists. Dear children, weep not, for God's will must be done. May he reconcile you to his will.

ALSO,

Emily Adeline Anderson, daughter of James and Sarah Blalock, was born March 6th, 1845, in Attala County, Miss., and died August 28th, 1917. In the year 1867 she was married to M. V. Anderson. To that union were born nine children, three boys and six girls, all of whom survive her except the first who died in infancy. At about the age of seventeen she received a hope in Christ and united with the New School Baptists, but soon became dissatisfied and joined the Baptists of the Primitive faith and order, being baptized by Elder J. C. Denton. She lived a consistent member until death, always filling her seat when not providentially hindered. The

church at Cool Springs has sustained a great loss, but we hope her loss is sister Anderson's eternal gain. She was a firm believer in the sovereignty of God in all things and salvation by grace.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort on the subject of the resurrection. I would say to the children, Weep not as those who have no hope, but try to live the exemplary life she lived. May the God of all grace comfort you all and give you a good hope in Christ.

Written by her pastor,

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

MEETINGS.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the New Valley Church, Loudoun Co., Va., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 17th, 18th and 19th, 1917. Trains will be met Tuesday afternoon and evening before the meeting at Leesburg, Va., on the Washington & Old Dominion Electric Railway. Trains leave 36th and M Sts., N. W., Washington, D. C., at 2:10, 4:15, 5:10, 5:30 and 6:05 p. m. Trains Wednesday morning arrive too late to be met for the meeting. All lovers of the truth, and especially ministers of our faith and order, are earnestly requested to meet with us.

T. S. TITUS, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church in the city of Wilmington, Del., will hold their yearly meeting in the meetinghouse, 1304 Jefferson St., on the third Saturday and Sunday in October, commencing 2 o'clock p. m. Saturday and continuing all day Sunday. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited. Trolley cars from all railroad stations and boat wharves pass near the meetinghouse.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Association of Old School Baptists is appointed to convene with the church at Indiantown, near Powellville, Wicomico Co., Md., on Wednesday, October 24th, 1917, and continue three days. All lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus, as proclaimed by the heralds of the cross, are cordially invited to meet with us. Those coming from the north will take the Old Point Express, leaving Broad St., Philadelphia, at 9:58 o'clock a. m. Those from the south will take train leaving Cape Charles, Va., 10:55 a. m. on Tuesday, 23rd. Get tickets for Salisbury, Md. Those trains are both due at Salisbury about 1:45 p. m. We will arrange with the Transit Co. to provide conveyance for all who come on those trains to convey them to Pittsville, ten miles east of Salisbury, where they will be met and taken to our homes and on to the meeting.

GEORGE F. ADKINS, Church Clerk.

THE Ebenezer Church in Baltimore will hold an all day meeting on the second Sunday in November. All who love to meet with us are invited to do so.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

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ALL WELCOME

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

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[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 85. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1917. NO. 21.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LIVING WORDS.

THE first words of Scripture which I remember having come to my mind with divine power, changing the whole current and tenor of my life, were these: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." The remembrance of these words, with all the circumstances connected with my experience of them, is as clear and distinct to-day, after more than fifty years have passed away, as then, and I feel as clearly and definitely their settlement in my soul as a part of my very being.

I was thinking of my sorrowful condition as a sinner, which had occupied my mind more or less for about twenty years. I had been a member of the Presbyterian denomination for a year, but was not satisfied. I had never been satisfied that I had a good hope of salvation. On this wonderful Monday morning in March, fifty-three years ago, as I was walking toward my office, thinking what could I do, and whether there could be salvation for me, and whether I could ever know anything, in an instant those words were going back and forth in my mind: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness," and I was saying, Perhaps I am one of those for whom Jesus died. I had never before been able to say that. I could think, Perhaps I may be one, but never, Perhaps I am one. In an instant I was rejoicing with joy I had never known before. I was so glad I could not be still. My very soul was stirred with divine power. The word "perhaps" expressed to me no doubt or question. I was assured, but did not then understand how or why. "Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased." The assurance was upon the same ground that it is to-day: Perhaps I am one for whom Jesus died. The word "perhaps" seems to me now, as it did then, filled with a sweet and holy assurance, as that of a little child. It was so unexpected, so like the gentle opening of a door into a field full of everything we love and desire.

After a long time of winter weather I am feeling this morning a little return of an appearance of spring. I realize that I cannot control the weather in my mind any more than I can control the condition

of the seasons naturally. When there does come into my soul a season of refreshing I feel that I have assurance that it is from the Lord, for I seem never able to bring about any such desirable change in my own heart. If I can only get into the house of the Lord I can feel assured of the true gladness in my soul, for the dear Savior has left it there in such words as these: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." How much I have tried to get peace for trouble, gladness for sorrow, but my nature is so prone to sin, my heart is so vile, and I am altogether so unworthy, that I can see why the word "perhaps" was in that sweet, glorious and loving message sent to me so many years ago from the Father of mercies, to tell me that Jesus died for me.

As portions of the word that have been made life and light to me during the past years are now coming to my mind, I feel a leading of mind to write some of them here for the readers of the SIGNS, as I would tell them to the brethren in our "covenant meetings."

I was riding along with my mother from one of our meetings when, as we were talking, my mind was away among the stars, wondering at their distances and terribly great immensities, and trying, as I have from boyhood, to get my thoughts out into their infinite greatness, and was trying to think of the greatness of the great God who created them, and who controls and directs them by his power, when all at once I seemed to shrink into nothingness, and said to myself, Where is the evidence that I know anything about so infinitely great and glorious a Being? when these words came to me with power and comfort: He that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. I felt that it was enough. It seemed to me at the time that I was sure I had his love in my heart, and therefore had the joyful assurance that I knew him. This is life eternal, that they may know him. How wonderful "that worms of earth should ever be one with incarnate Deity." This word is life, a living word; it lives in us, and is our life. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory. They always come so timely and so unexpectedly, and so exactly suit some present need of our soul. The words were of a hymn not familiar to me: "Bold shall I stand in that great day." They seemed to have been spoken aloud, and to have awakened me. There had been a tendency in my mind, as there is often, to question the ground of my hope, and to ask myself what the end will be. This line of the hymn appeared clear and strong and forceful, and yet at the same time soft and sweet and restful to my soul. I am enabled to repeat it with a power which I feel to be divine.

I was in the meetinghouse yard, having arrived early to see if I could find something to preach about. It was early in my ministry, and I was in a strange part of the country, and was so destitute and desolate that I hardly felt able to say, "Good morning" to a brother. I went into a cornfield to be alone and to try to think of something to talk about. I was distressed, and feared I should fail utterly if I tried to preach. I thought I would try to pray, but said to myself, If I try to pray the Lord will despise the prayer of such a sinful man as I. Instantly the words came into my mind with glorious power: He will hear the prayer of the destitute, and will not despise their prayer. They seemed as though written for me, and I could hardly go fast enough into the house to tell the

brethren about it, and declare the good news that the dear Savior has risen indeed, and that he who raised Jesus will also raise up all of his people in all their straits by his glorious power, and will never fail or forget one of them in his time of need. (2 Cor. iv. 14.) There is a coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for their help in the individual time of need of each one of them, and there is to be a coming or appearance the second time, without sin unto salvation, to all them that look for him. All of the Lord's people are looking for that coming, but no one of them knows how he shall come. Concerning that coming no one knows anything. We know what we shall be; we know that we shall be with him, that we shall be like him and appear with him in glory. That is enough for us to know while we are in time.

It was in Kentucky in 1866. I was riding along on a pleasant afternoon. I had been speaking about two weeks, most of the time twice a day, and was going sixteen miles to attend my last appointment at a private house, a very large house on a large farm. I was tired, and my mind was, or appeared to me to be, without spiritual life or light or feeling. I knew there was to be a very large gathering of people. I felt that I could not preach, and how terribly ashamed I should feel if I must fail, which seemed sure. There was just one sentence on my mind: "The Lord is my shepherd." I had used that subject a year before and had not felt at liberty in speaking upon it, so I had no encouragement to try to preach from that. As we drove into the great yard filled with people I decided to tell the people my condition of physical weariness, and ask them to excuse me from doing anything more than reading that Psalm. I read the Psalm, but after the first verse I do not seem to remember much more. I was caught away from earth and earthly things. I remember of no effort in speaking. I saw the Lord's sheep being fed; I felt that one, the least of all, was feeding them in the name of Jesus, and that there was abundance of food. I saw one of these sheep was telling the story. Great emotion was felt, and all the company was moved and stirred. A sister had been given some reason, she hoped, of receiving a word of comfort at those meetings, but up to that Sunday morning she had been sadly disappointed. She had a fatal disease. She was very spiritually minded. At this meeting the dear Lord gave her a season of refreshing from his presence, and she rejoiced greatly. Soon after returning home she passed away from this earthly home to her home above. I had never been given such liberty in speaking before. How humble I felt! Since that meeting of more than fifty years ago what a variety of exercises and incidents there have been in my life and experience; sometimes elated with pride, and then shrinking away with shame from people; sometimes bewildered by the sight of contradictions in my nature, and then humbled under a keen sense of my nothingness in the sight of the Lord and in my own sight. How I do wonder, at times, that I have been kept from outbreaking sins.

I had such a long and tedious spell of coldness and darkness and of suffering in my soul that it seemed sometimes as though I could hardly live. Some of the complainings of Jonah and Hezekiah and Jeremiah seemed very expressive. I tried to get something out of the inspired Scriptures of truth that might come to me with living power, but while the words described my case they had no power to

remove my trouble. To add to my sore affliction of mind I was taken with a painful fever, which kept me in bed some time, my mind still worried and still in a state of supplication for grace and mercy. One day these words came with power into my mind: I will remember thy sins against thee no more forever. There was a degree of assurance in them, but not the close work I wanted, they were not made mine. In my sickness I thought the words came over the side of the bed, while the Lord was hidden above me out of my sight. My constant desire was that the Lord would send the Holy Spirit to assure me those words were mine. I gradually recovered from the sickness. It was slow work, and supplication still went on in my soul. While still very weak in body I took a journey of nearly two hundred miles to visit one of the churches I served. I was pressed in mind to go, though against the judgment of my physician and friends. In the morning, while sitting alone, reading, I thought, but really only musing, I realized the presence of the dear Savior, but in a way that could not be told or described. I could talk with him, but O how softly and solemnly. I felt his holy presence. Infinite love and peace and purity were about me, and in some undefinable way they were within my soul. It seems now that that was an experience of Christ in me the hope of glory; Christ who filleth all things. But at that wonderful time I was not thinking so much of the deep meaning of this wonderful experience, but was feeling it and rejoicing in it, and wondering that the dear Savior should come to me, to such a sinner as I, to one so unworthy, and wondering above all that I should be feeling freedom from sin and rejoicing in righteousness and in mercy. I went into the pulpit that morning and opened the hymn-book and began reading where my eye rested:

> "Sprinkled with reconciling blood,
> I dare approach thy throne, O God."

Only a very few times since then have I been given so near an approach unto the Lord; never have I experienced his sweet and glorious presence so fully as then, nor for so long a time; and the holy power of his love felt in my poor heart, how inexpressible it was. O to be always rooted and grounded in love, that I might be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that I might be filled with all the fullness of God.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., September, 1917.

COMO, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—It has been quite a long time since I have written anything for your consideration, and that of the readers. First, I will say that I fear greatly to make the attempt, for I am so much of the time in the flesh, doing things I ought not. I have for a long time had thoughts on the duty of both pastors to the church and the church to pastors, and to speak relative to whom the church should worship. First, a minister whom the church calls to go in and out before them should go as admonished by Peter: "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."—1 Peter v. 2, 3. A very good reason why Peter could write in such strong terms is that Jesus asked him in person three times just before his ascension, Simon Peter, lovest thou

me? Jesus then said, Feed my sheep; feed my lambs. We do not find that Jesus told Peter to furnish the food, but we do find where Jesus said, Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. This, to my mind, is clear proof where the ministers of God to-day are to get the food to hand out to the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made them overseers. To preach Jesus, and him crucified, is preaching the gospel. Paul said he determined not to know anything among the brethren save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. Feeding the sheep and lambs is a gracious calling; the preachers that feed must preach to them what Jesus has done for them, how that Jesus accomplished the work the Father gave him to do, that he redeemed them from under the curse of the law. As Paul said, He (Jesus) was delivered for our (the sheep) offences and was raised again for our justification. Tell them that Jesus justified them, and therefore there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who (the justified ones) walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. In none of the charges given by Jesus or his apostles do we find where any of the apostles or the succession of ministers were commanded to make sheep, but to feed them that are sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant.

In these few words you see what I understand to be the duty of the pastor, and now I will say a few words as to whom I understand the church should worship. Moses told the children of Israel to worship the Lord with all their soul, mind and strength, and in Revelation xxii. 8, 9, we find this: "And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God." Again, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." These are plain Scriptures, and beside these the experience of the child of grace is strong evidence of whom we should worship. I have noticed in some localities that there are those who seem to lose sight of these things, or at least it seems so from the way many act. It has become too common among many to-day to be too much for running after what is termed "big preachers," so much so that many will not take pains to go to meeting unless Elder So-and-so will be there. It reminds me sometimes of a little child that is very hard to please, and when one of the family attempts to give it food or drink it frets and draws back, and says, I want so-and-so to feed me. O, my dear brethren, you may take from one thus petted for a long time, but I assure you that the poor little fellow will take food and drink from any of the flock, let him be a little preacher or a big one. If such as the above is not serving the creature more than the Creator, I do not know the reason. It is right to look after the pastor, or pastors, as the case may be. If a church has two, or even more, ordained Elders, it is their duty to see that they are cared for. One is no better to be cared for than the other; if so, if one is the real choice of the church, and their love and fellowship centers in that one, let that one be called, and leave the others out, for it is wrong to call to the care of the church two or more to walk in and out before you if you really do not want to hear but the one, and cannot care for equally or share in your care for all alike.

These things were not so plain in days past. The pastor of a church has many things beside the care of the church to look after; most of them are poor in this world's goods, and there are none of them but are willing to go at our call. Beside all this, a preacher cannot have the liberty to speak as in other work, his mind is so burdened that he cannot put in as much time reading, as Paul told Timothy, to shew himself a workman rightly dividing the word of truth, that he needeth not be ashamed. This day many who are in good financial condition are more or less negligent about the church affairs, and seem to take pleasure in running after the things of the world; very few ever have time to visit their pastor, not knowing that frequent visits by the members of his church are encouraging to him. The poor preacher has a family to care for, and much of the time he has no means of support, and has to depend upon his day's work, yet he loves his church, and loves to mix and mingle with them. I well remember when I was a boy how childlike the Old Baptists were; they used to gather early on Saturdays, as well as on Sundays, and talk, and sing the old songs of Zion, and tell of the wonderful things that Jesus had done for them, and when the pastor came they met him with joy, and in conference there would be an inquiry into the affairs of all, the afflicted were looked after, and at once it became a matter of interest to all. Preacher worship and worldly gossip, such as are common now, are fruits of the flesh. The abounding of iniquity never was so great as it seems to be now, the love of many has waxed cold.

Well, I have written more than I intended, and not as I expected to when I began. Pray for me and mine.

J. B. BOWDEN.

TILBURY, Ont., Jan. 28, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am sending you two letters I received from my cousin, Dan Campbell, of Lobo, which to me are good. He is not as yet a member, but is one who is greatly exercised on spiritual things, and I hope he will soon come to the church. He had no thought of the letters being published when writing, but was just telling me his thoughts on those things that are dear to him. We have talked a great deal together, and I find it profitable. I asked his consent to send them to you for publication, so do as you think best about publishing them.

Dear brother, I hope this will find you and family all in good health. My daughter-in-law was at the Duart meeting. Elder Weaver was there with Elder Slauson, and a Mrs. Willie came to the church. She is a daughter of old sister McTaggart, of Ekfrid. It is nice to have even one come to the church. There have been very many called home during the past year, and while we miss their companionship, we believe that for them to die is gain, and we sometimes long to enter that rest, rest from sin and sorrow, of which this world is so full; but I desire to run with patience the race that is set before me, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. I would be glad to have you write oftener for the SIGNS, still I am well pleased with the things published.

I hope you will not think me too ready to have the letters published that are sent to me privately, for I do not wish to see anything in the SIGNS but that which is right and for the benefit of the readers thereof. If you publish these letters, please correct, for I know he would not want anything to appear but what is right. His wife also is much exercised and a lover of the church.

I hope you will find the way clear to come and visit us here in Canada before long, and I would be pleased to receive a letter from you at any time. I know your feeling of loneliness, as I have passed through it, and can sympathize with you and others who have had the same trials to pass through. I have passed through many trials, but can say the Lord is my helper, and has fulfilled his promise so far, that he will never leave nor forsake me, and I hope to be able to trust him for the rest; I know that without him I can do nothing. May the dear Lord be our help and support in every hour of need.

Your weak sister, I hope,

SARAH A. McCOLL.

ILDERTON, Ont., Dec. 31, 1916.

MY DEAR COUSIN:—I am going to try and write you a letter, for it is good to get your letters, but it is very hard to answer them. They seem to bring pleasant meditations to my mind, so I am going to tell you some thoughts I had of the Master and the state the fishermen were in when he appeared at the sea of Gennesaret. He found the disciples, or fishermen, the nets, the ships, the sea, with those fish in it, and the shore. I will have to condense my thoughts very much, so I cannot do this subject justice in a letter, but would like to be talking with you to-day. They had toiled all night and caught nothing. Have you never been there? That is my condition most of the time. Now they have gone to wash their nets. Have you tried to put away those evil thoughts that trouble you and tried to read the Bible, thinking it might bring you into a season of pleasant meditation? This is washing the net. What would the "Free Willer" say to this? These men toiled hard all night, but it was a failure. Vain is the help of man. From this state of things I am going to turn to another scene. The Master appeared, and entered into the ship, and commanded Peter to launch out into the deep. These fishermen and the ship are the treasure in earthen vessels. Paul says there is a natural and a spiritual body. Christ was both divine and human; so is every subject of grace, in a sense, when he receives that birth of the Spirit. I in them and thou in me. This deep is the plans and purposes of God from creation, based on the shalls and wills of Jehovah. What great depth the prophet was out in when he was given this knowledge, when he said, "This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." Now the command is to launch out and let down the net. Peter was downcast and discouraged, and complained, "We have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing;" but he will make a willing people in the day of his power. "Nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net." That is the power and ability the Lord has given us to receive instruction in spiritual things. Fish is food; the net was full; so it is with us when the Lord favors us in meditation on a beautiful portion of Scripture like this. I feel that my mind is not able to contain it all, so I would ask you to come and help me to meditate on it, that we may get our ships filled so that we feel them beginning to sink. That is the weakness of the flesh and the wonderful power of God.

"Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." Peter felt this weakness when he said, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Another said, I am not worthy that thou come under my roof.

Dear cousin, may you continue to write to us and feed us of the good things you catch out in the deep, while we toil so much of our time through dark seasons and seem to catch nothing.

Your cousin,

DAN CAMPBELL.

ILDERTON, Ont., Jan. 7, 1917.

MY DEAR COUSIN:—I received your letter, and was surprised at its request. I did not know what to say, so I asked Neil and Christy, and they said that if you wanted to have it published I should allow you to do so. I would like you to think it over carefully, and be sure it is right. There are thoughts there that are new to me, but I think they are in harmony with the experience of a subject of grace, but, my knowledge and understanding being limited, I might apply them wrongly. I would like to have said more about this ship, and the fishermen. The wind and the waves out on the deep had a tendency to drift the ship. These winds and waves are the desires and lusts of the flesh, drifting us away from spiritual things. Now this is what I found to be the warfare, the fishermen, or spiritual mind, wishing to go in a spiritual direction. Paul says, When I would do good, evil is present with me. When the Master appears, and speaks peace to the troubled soul, then there is a great calm; it is then that we are favored to enter into that rest that you spoke about. For myself, I can say, after years of trouble and doubts this peace and rest have been made sweet to me. This is when the lion and the lamb are made to lie down together, and a little child leadeth them; this is when we are made to lie down in green pastures by the still waters. What more can I say, dear old pilgrim? You have cared for me as a mother would care for a child.

I had a thought on the last part of that scene, where they forsook all and followed Christ. Am I right in thinking that this is death? It was the fishermen, or that spiritual character, that left everything behind. The spirit goeth back to him who gave it.

With this I will close.

DAN CAMPBELL.

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah, Sept. 20, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Brother in the faith of God's elect, in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began, in whom we live, move and have our being, who is the Creator of every perfect gift, who declared, Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom the building is joined together. Jesus Christ is the rock, and it shall stand forever, built without the sound of a hammer, a stone hewn out of the mountain, hidden from the world. All the stones (members) of the body are placed in the building in their proper places by the Builder. The building represents the church of Jesus Christ, his elect, chosen before the foundation of the world. Not one of the members of his body will be left out, all is complete, a people called out of every kindred and nation, washed by the blood of the Lamb. The Builder made no mistakes, he is a master builder, and the author and finisher of the faith of his elect. The building is completed, finished; his last dying

words were, It is finished. The work his Father sent him to do. Dear children of God, fear not, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. A complete salvation of all his elect, his church, shall (not may) stand forever. The world with all its worldly wisdom knows not God and cannot find out God, he is hidden from them with all their machinery and artillery, and the religious institutions cannot move the church from her foundation nor move one of her stakes; winds and storms may rush against her walls, but cannot affect her. It is complete, a building not made with hands; Jesus Christ is the chief cornerstone.

Dear brethren, you will see by the date line that I am in the great Mormon metropolis. I left my home in Hampton, Iowa, the ninth of August, for a visit with my relatives, and am now visiting my son and his wife. I stopped off at Denver, Colo., on my way here, and visited my son-in-law and other relatives there, also visited at Byers, Colo., forty-five miles east of Denver, where I was met by sister Roberts' son, who conveyed me to their home. She is a member of the church, and had arranged an appointment for me at a meeting in the schoolhouse, twelve miles away, for Sunday, August 26th, where I met my old Iowa friends, Mr. and Mrs. Fellows, who are what we call "Dryland Baptists." Mr. Roberts, her husband, is also a "Drylander." I also met a brother and sister Bowlers, who live near Fort Morgan, and who came forty miles to be at the meeting, and who are members of a church in Illinois. A good congregation was present, and I had good liberty and received good attention. Most of those present had never heard of the Old Baptists nor heard an Old Baptist sermon. Sister Roberts, brother and sister Bowlers and a brother by the name of Longfellow, who lives in Denver, are all the Baptists in that part of the country. This brother in Denver did not get to the meeting. Sister Roberts wrote him, but for some cause he did not come. I expect to stop off on my way home and visit him, also at Byers, and hold meeting in the schoolhouse near sister Roberts'.

If I live until October 8th next I will complete my seventy-seventh milestone, and have been an unworthy member of the Old School Baptists sixty-one years last August, and have been trying to proclaim publicly the unsearchable riches of Christ for over forty-five years, and have been a subscriber of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES for over fifty years.

Brother Ker, I have written more than I intended, so will close by quoting David's Psalm: "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

Yours to serve in great tribulation in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,

E. A. NORTON.

LA GRANDE, Ore., May 29, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I herewith inclose a letter written by my aged mother, Mrs. S. J. Cummins, which you will please be so kind as to publish in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Mother, as you see, is now about ninety years of age, and yet blessed to read and write of the glorious hope which revives our hearts along the way. Would that such wonderful manifestation of mercy be with all God's dear ones everywhere. Mother is very frail and very lonely for the comforts of the gospel.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

MARTHA J. ALLEN.

CHESTER, Montana, May 12, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—By faith do I hope for that which I see not, yea, the hope I see not, yet long to realize when this mortal shall have put on immortality. I do not feel able or competent to write a letter to be published in our precious paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, yet will venture to try, as I cannot write to each one who still wishes to hear from me, and know that I still live, although I am now in my eighty-ninth year, as I was born September 16th, 1828. O to think that one so weak, so feeble in the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ, should attempt so great a task. I surely realize that many are the blessings with which I have been blessed all the way along. There was a time when I was yet very young that a still small whisper came to me, "Ye must be born again." O what could this whisper mean? Ye must be born again still sounded in my ears. I began anew to read my Testament, and for five years I read and studied it diligently to learn the meaning of that great impression that so troubled my mind. I read "Baxter's Call to Mourners," but could get no comfort there. I attended "Sabbath-school" regularly, and memorized the lessons assigned, but that did not relieve my burdened mind. On April 16th, 1845, I was married to Benjamin Walden, and with my father's family we crossed the plains to Oregon, leaving St. Joseph, Mo., May 3rd, 1845, and arriving at The Dalles, Ore., Sept. 14th, 1845. O I cannot think of all the miraculous paths through which the Lord has caused me to pass, yet spared my life. I think and think as I sit here alone of all the past, and feel so lonely. Although I have enough for food and am comfortable, yet I long for the comfort of the gospel. War is all the talk everywhere, many think the end of time is near. I read that all these things shall come to pass, and yet the end is not. What is man to talk about it? When we die that will be the end of time to us. I am surely willing for the Lord's will to be done; we cannot make one hair black or white by taking thought. O, dear brethren and sisters, we can pray for one another. What did Jesus say to those following him to his crucifixion? We can pray for all God's dear children, and for our ownselves, and may the Lord be with us to the end, is my prayer.

As ever, your sister,

(MRS.) S. J. CUMMINS.

MATTHEW XIII. 44.

"AGAIN, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field."

In the above parable the word "again" signifies that it is one of a series of parables which our incarnate Lord was uttering at that time to illustrate the plan of salvation, which was complete before man was created. The kingdom of heaven here spoken of has special reference to the redeemed of the Lord, who from the beginning have lived, suffered and died in this sin-cursed world. This treasure is the church the blessed Redeemer bought with his own precious blood. The field is the world and the fullness thereof. The man is our risen Lord and Master. It is a curious fact that when the Lord found this treasure he hid it, and it is still hidden; the great mass of mankind is in complete ignorance of the church, and its hiding-place is known only to the inhabitants of Zion. Just as a man or a company buys land for mining or timber purposes, so the Lord bought the earth and its fullness for this treasure. The great world war is a part of his purpose,

to sift out his jewels and to prepare them for his kingdom. Thus we see it is through great tribulation that we enter the kingdom, but it is consoling that our stay will not be transient in that goodly, heavenly land. It is well that we study the Lord's parables and acquaint ourselves with his wonderful works, so much the more since the time of the end seems very near.

J. M. AMSBERRY.

PALMER JUNCTION, Ore., Sept. 6, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The correspondence meeting of Washington, Oregon and Idaho, notice of which was given in the current issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, was held at Elgin last Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and was one of the very best meetings it was ever my privilege to attend. Dinner was served at the church-house both Saturday and Sunday. Elder W. T. Eaton, of Sunnyside, Washington, did practically all the preaching up to Sunday forenoon, when Elder C. W. Bond, of La Grande, arrived for the forenoon service, but somewhat late, on account of tire trouble with his car. My cup of joy is still running over. I hope to be able to attend the three days meeting at Weiser, Idaho, on the fourth Sunday in next month, and will report same for publication.

J. M. AMSBERRY.

MOUNT VERNON, Ohio, May 30, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am changing my address, so please send my SIGNS to Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, instead of Port Clinton, Ohio. I dearly love to read the paper, and am very anxious not to miss one number. I take great comfort in reading the blessings sent out of dear Jesus and his love. I feel very much cast down a great deal of the time, and that I am nothing in the eyes of my dear Lord and Master. I know that this vile body is full of sin, and I try to pray to my dear Savior to guide me, that I may do the things pleasing to his eye, but it seems the more I try the more I am unfit to speak his name; all I can do is to say, Lord, be merciful. I wish to tell you the happiest times in my life are when I seem to drop this worldly mind and my thoughts are carried to that beautiful place where all is love and joy. When I was but a boy I would try to ask God to forgive my sins, but it always seemed he would not hear me, and now I go along in life forgetting him, only to come back in time of trouble. Three years ago I was working in Delaware, Ohio, and was in an awful state of mind, feeling to be such a sinner. For a long time I thought I could not live, but felt if I should die doom was staring me in the face. One night as I lay weeping everything seemed to be changed. O such a happy time it was for me, it seemed that I could see my dear Savior in all his glory, purity and truth. The next day I was riding on the car and every one and everything looked so good I felt I wanted to tell what a dear Savior I had found. I felt that I never would worry again; all I wanted to do was to pray. I was in this state of mind quite a while. I was given a home by the dear members of the St. Louisville Church, but alas, I feel quite different at times; I am so low, and wonder am I his or am I not? I would give ten thousand worlds like this, if they were mine to give, to know that I am one for whom Christ suffered and died, but I know that if I am saved at all, it is by grace, and by nothing I can do.

Yours in hope,

C. LOU WRIGHT.

AVOCA, Nebr., Sept. 12, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been thinking for some time that I would subscribe for the dear old SIGNS, which I love dearly to read, as it fills my hungry, aching soul with peace and comfort, and is also a great comfort to my husband as well as myself. I have not seen or heard an Old Baptist since I have been here. My home was in Arkansas before I was married, but my husband has always lived in the north. I am well pleased here and am content, for if it were not God's will for me to be here I surely would be in some other place, and I hope I can say I am truly thankful to God that it is as well with us as it is, and I feel he has wonderfully blessed me with blessings which the world cannot give. I hope he will guide my footsteps, that he may lead me in a way that I will always be humble and perfectly submissive to all his will, for I feel he has all power, both in heaven and earth, and that we are all in his hands, and that he will do with us as he sees fit, for he is a merciful and just God and does all things well, and leaves nothing undone that should be done, for he does all things exactly at the time appointed. O he is God, and is worthy of all praise and glory, and is the God whom I hope I worship, for he is the only true and living God, and if he sends my very soul to hell it will be just and right. At times I have these very ideas, and wonder if there is really another like me, and often the question comes to me, Am I a child of God, or am I not? This is a serious and solemn question, and one I long to know, and must say all I have to refer to is the precious little hope which I feel that God gave me. But I get down in the depths at times, and feel it is all a mistake, that I have never been changed from the darkness of nature to a new-born creature in Christ. But we all have our trials and tribulations here on earth, and we all have our doubts and fears, ups and downs. The Arminian world of to-day think they know they are on the Lord's side, and know that they are sure of heaven. I will just say I hope the Lord has been with me and opened my eyes and given me an understanding heart, and my sincere hope is that my eternal home is in heaven.

Dear editors, I am sending you two dollars and ten cents, two dollars for the dear SIGNS for one year, and the ten cents for the number which has W. O. White's experience in. I think he wrote it in 1912, but do not know the exact number. He was my mother's father, and a minister of the dear Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, and died contending for the doctrine which the dear SIGNS advocates. He took the SIGNS, and he and grandmother enjoyed it very much. I have a few of his old numbers which my mother sent me since I have been out in this State. Grandfather's address was W. O. White, Langley, Arkansas.

I will close by saying that my prayer is that God will be with you all, and that you will continue to publish what the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES advocates, feeling you all will be wonderfully rewarded in this life in welldoing. May God be with us all.

Your unworthy sister, in hope of a better world,

(MRS.) J. E. BECKMAN.

CALION, Ark., Oct. 18, 1916.

DEAR EDITORS:—You will find inclosed two dollars, which is to pay for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I assure you, if I know my own heart, I more than appreciate your kindness in sending me the good

paper, which I do love to read. As poor, unworthy and sinful as I feel myself to be I do love it, and say, It is good news from a far country, when I read the letters of those who write for it. I do not belong to the church, but I believe and indorse the teaching of the SIGNS and the doctrine it advocates. I do hope, if it is the Lord's will, I will be able to pay for it when due, if not, you can stop sending it, although I do not want to do without it. I hope that you and the dear ones who write for the SIGNS will pray for one who is poor and needy.

Will either of the dear editors, or any one else who feels he has light, give their views on Genesis, fourth chapter, fourth, fifth, sixth and thirteenth verses? It might be you would give some light to a poor, sinful creature, which I feel myself to be. May the SIGNS continue to come filled with sweetness to my poor soul.

With love to all the dear writers, respectfully,

J. C. DAVIS.

ONEONTA, N. Y., June 17, 1917.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I am again sending my remittance for the dear old SIGNS for the next six months. I have been feeling very weak and miserable, and thought I should not read it any more, but I feel I cannot do without it, and need it more than ever. I have passed my ninetieth landmark, and am a wonder to others, and more to myself, but wish I could say that I had grown better, as I had vainly hoped that I should, for

"When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark, and vain, and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?"

You who love the Lord indeed, tell me, is it thus with you? Sometimes I hope I feel a desire, but how to obtain that which is good I find not. Other refuge have I none, hangs my helpless soul on thee. O leave me not alone, all my help must come from thee. Thus far the Lord has led me on, thus far his power has prolonged my days.

"Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

If I am not deceived, these are my heartfelt desires.

I will close by bidding all the dear ones farewell.

I hope I am your sister in tribulation and affliction,

LUCINDA B. BREWSTER.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., July 1, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is through the kind providence of God that I am still here and permitted to read and renew my subscription to the SIGNS. I am sorry that brother Ker has been so long silent, and have hunted up and read his editorial of April 15th. How often in the very bitterest anguish has poor unworthy me cried, and used the very words at the head of his editorial: "All these things are against me," forgetting that the Lord omnipotent rules and reigns. He has sustained me through many and very sore trials and great tribulations which at the time I could not see how any good could come out of, yet I have been made to have consolation in the thirty-seventh Psalm, especially the thirty-fifth and the thirty-sixth verses. I have been brought to see the Scripture fulfilled, "Be sure your sin will find you out." I would be glad to have brother Lefferts know how much I enjoy his editorials, especially the one in the June 15th number. I try to be resigned to God's will, but I am greatly afflicted. I would mention many of the good letters in the SIGNS, but can-

not, for want of eyesight, but want to say to all the writers, Write on, for the Lord directs and guides you, and will continue to do so.

Farewell, my dear kindred in Christ. I think each year when I renew my subscription it will be the last, and I want to praise God that he gives me strength each day I live to work some and do for myself. Please excuse all mistakes.

Your sister, I hope,

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

LAMBERT, Okla., March 28, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have received the SIGNS for April 1st, and, after reading the many good things contained in it, I see that it is the last number I have paid for, and I wish not to miss a number of the dear old paper, for it is a great satisfaction to me to read the good editorials and the many good letters written by the brethren and sisters from all parts of the country. I know but few of them in the flesh, but hope I have some knowledge of them spiritually through their writings in the SIGNS. May God bless editors, publishers and contributors of the dear old paper, for it contains about all the preaching I get in this part of the country. I did hear three sermons by Elder Beeman, by going something over thirty miles, and it was a great pleasure to me to be there and to meet brother and sister Beeman. Sister Kimmel and daughter met us at the station and took us to their home, where there were quite a number gathered. Elder Beeman preached that night, and the next day and night he preached at a school-house not far from sister Kimmel's, and we had good meetings. The dear Lord said, Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst, and I have a hope that he was with us.

I must now close, for I am trespassing upon your time. I am growing old, and my greatest pleasure in this world is to read the word of God and the good old SIGNS.

In hope of life beyond,

JAMES J. CLARK.

NESIKA, Washington.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Find inclosed money order to pay for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I love the doctrine it advocates; there is no uncertain sound, as if things happened by chance, as the popular religion of the day proclaims. I do believe in the doctrine of the predestination of all things, and do not believe that anything happens by chance. Well might the apostle say, All things work together for good to them who love the Lord, to them who are called according to his purpose. I believe that everything that occurs is for the good of God's children in some way, but I cannot always see it in that light, and am often found murmuring or complaining. I can say with Paul, The things that I would I do not, but the things that I would not I do. I am often made to cry, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? But I know that if it is my happy lot to enter heaven it will be wholly through the grace of God.

Your little brother in hope,

F. L. RIFFE.

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Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1917.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ISAIAH XLII. 11.

"LET the inhabitants of the rock sing."

Of course these words are not all of the eleventh verse of the forty-second chapter of Isaiah, but they seem to be the words that have particularly impressed those who have asked us to write on them. It is the word of God speaking through the prophet Isaiah, and not the prophet speaking of his own volition. This is the testimony of Jesus Christ. God Almighty, the Maker of heaven and of earth, who gives breath to all the people upon the earth, called his Son Jesus Christ the righteous man, and held his hand during all his lifetime here in the world, kept him and gave him for a covenant of the people, a light to lighten the Gentiles. God sent his Son Jesus to open the blind eyes, to bring prisoners from the prison and to deliver those who sit in darkness. This is not Isaiah who was sent to open the eyes of the blind and to deliver prisoners, but it is the Savior Jesus; the Lord is his name. It is his glory to do this work, and he does not surrender this glorious work to another, nor his praise to graven images. The former things, that is, the commandments and ordinances of the law of Moses, are all fulfilled in the coming of Jesus Christ, and he declares new things, that is, gospel truth and beauty. Before these new gospel things sprang forth they were told of by prophets of old, and also by Jesus himself before his death and resurrection. Now, as to singing, there are various manners of singing. There is that singing which is the product of art, which comes forth by education and training, wherein great attention is had to tone, pitch, time and to the correct control of the vocal organs. This training produces what is called artistic singing, which pleases the ear much as paintings delight the eye. On the other hand, and contrary to this kind of singing, is spiritual singing. Spiritual singing is with the heart, whether with the lips or not, and is that singing which is making melody unto the Lord. Please do not understand us to mean that a musical artist never sings with the heart. No doubt many of them do. Doubtless the sentiment expressed with their lips really comes from their heart; but spiritual singing is first and foremost a fruit of the work of God's Spirit in the heart of the believer in Jesus Christ, though the outward expression of that inner melody be ever so crude and discordant to the natural ear. Singing unto the Lord with one's heart is an expression of rejoicing and adoration, perhaps of thanksgiving. When one has realized salvation from sin at the hands of Christ, it produces a new song in the heart, even praise unto the Lord. Singing is also an expression of good health. Sickness or pain usually makes one feel like anything else than singing. The Italians, many of them, are naturally singers, and it is said of the Italian soldiers that they most always go into battle singing to keep up their own courage and that of their comrades. One day an Italian officer was inspecting

his soldiers returning from the trenches after a hard engagement, and nearly all of them were singing. One soldier, however, was silent, and upon being asked why he was silent, he replied that he was not feeling well. Another, who was silent, had received bad news from home. Thus it may generally be said that singing is an expression of the degree of health one has. The better one feels, with the more ardor he sings. This is true of the children of God. Jesus is their great Physician. He is the health of their countenance, their life and their salvation. He rescues them from death, cures them of the malady of sin-sickness, dries up the sore boils which their inner corruption has brought out on the surface so as to be discoverable, drives out their leprosy. Their health springs forth speedily when Jesus applies the heavenly balm of his free grace, and because they are healed of sin and all its diseases they sing and cannot help singing. Singing and making melody in the heart unto the Lord is a sign that one's spiritual health is good. The inhabitants of the rock are the ones especially commanded to sing, for the word "let" is not an invitation to sing, but a command to sing. Just as when God said: "Let there be light," it was not an invitation, but a mighty command which immediately brought light into manifestation, so in the words of our text, the same God who commanded light in the beginning, commands the singing in the inhabitants of the rock. The word "let" is spoken by the same omnipotence in Isaiah xlii., as in Genesis i. 3, and accomplishes its purpose just as well in the former as in the latter case. When God speaks, it comes to pass, and none can hinder him. So when he says, Let them sing, there surely will be singing done in and by those whom he commands. He gives the spirit to do the singing in the hearts of those who live in the Rock, and the spirit fills the heart with matter to be sung. God is the Rock, and his work is perfect. This Moses declares in Deut. xxxii. God is the Rock of all ages, has ever been the refuge and strong tower of his people, no matter when or where they may have lived, nor what condition they may have been in. God chose his people in his Son Jesus Christ before the world began and predestinated them unto the adoption of children by Christ unto himself. Thus the people of God live in the covenant of God's election, sheltered in his predestinating purpose. Hence every believer lives in God and believes because his life is hid with Christ in God. His believing does not put him in the Rock, but belief is an evidence that one is inhabiting the Rock. God's people all dwell in him. God in the flesh is called Jesus. Jesus died to save his people from their sins. They are each and all members of his flesh and of his bones, all are partakers of his divine nature; therefore they dwell in the Rock. Christ is the Rock on which the church of God is builded, the chief corner-stone. They are in him, and he in them, just as God is in Christ and Christ in God, so that, as God and Christ are one, so are all believers one in Christ. Thus the church inhabits the Rock, and how can they help singing when such is the case? The appearing of Jesus unto the sinner as his salvation causes singing to awaken in the spiritual heart, just as the first faint rays of dawn awaken the song-birds. As the first direct rays of the sun in the early morning cause the dewdrops on the grass to glisten like diamonds, so the rising of the Sun of Righteousness upon the weary sinner makes drops of sacred sorrow rise to rivers of delight. Old School Baptist

churches do not have trained choirs nor paid soloists, and the singing usually heard in our churches would sound crude to most worldly ears, but O, when one has been made to love God's people for the sake of the truth, how sweet and pure sounds that singing which we are made to feel comes from the sincere heart. The best of all singing is that which comes from the heart and is the fruit of being exercised by living, divine faith. In the midst of the church Jesus sings praises unto his Father, who is God. Whenever a group of believers are engaged in singing spiritual songs, though that group comprise but two or three, there Jesus is in the midst, that is, in their hearts, praising God. Jesus is the Master-singer, and he is the only power able to rightly train and attune one to sing God's praise. To praise God, then, in one's heart and inmost soul, is to confess that one is dwelling in the Rock, for none others sing rightly God's praise but those who inhabit the Rock. God's people often say they cannot sing, or that they are poor singers. They mean, perhaps, that they cannot sing with their lips, or that they do not know how to sing by note; but there is not a single child of God, no matter how ignorant of the art of singing he may be, that has not or does not sing in his heart unto the Lord when the Spirit of God restores his spiritual health and puts that new song in his heart. It would be as impossible then not to sing and make melody unto the Lord as it would be to blot the sun from the sky.

We have written these few thoughts at the request of three friends of the SIGNS living in Mulberry, Arkansas, and now leave the subject to their consideration and that of our other readers.

L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder George Ruston.)

The Roxbury Association of Old School Baptists, now in session with the Middletown and Andes Church, Union Grove, N. Y., September 12th and 13th, 1917, to the churches composing the same.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Through the tender mercy of our covenant-keeping God we have been preserved through another year, and are favored to meet again as an association. Surely the continuation of our interest in the assembly of the saints is an evidence that the Lord is still with us, causing us to feel the goodness and pleasantness of dwelling together in unity. The presence of the Lord is our life, and therefore it is necessary for that life which is the light of men to ever keep us conscious of our proneness to evil, and of our fallen state by nature, thus causing us to loathe ourselves and desire him to be ever with us. From day to day we are taught that in us, that is, in our flesh, dwelleth no good thing, and that self is our worst enemy, so that we are in constant need of a salvation that will save us from ourselves. The dear Redeemer is our all, and in all; without him and his Spirit manifested in our lives we are dead, and our faith is vain. We believe that Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life, therefore he is the life of all that live. As an association, we rejoice to see that the Lord's hand is still working in our midst, and at times we are constrained to say, "What hath God wrought?" Knowing that man is unable to help his Creator in the cause of truth, we want him who is the truth to build and establish us in himself. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it;" therefore the Lord must work in us ac-

cording to his wisdom, for are we not made to see in a living way that without him we can do nothing? As an association, we believe in the absolute sovereignty of God, and are glad that to him all the power and glory belong, and though often we cannot his goings see, nor all his footsteps trace, yet we believe he is too wise to be mistaken and too good to be unkind. He only can teach to profit, and we believe that his doctrine is felt and understood by his children only, and is effectual in an humble walk and an upright conversation. Often we fear that after all we have nothing but a judgmental knowledge of the truth; we desire something more than a mere understanding of the letter of the truth, knowing that without feeling it in the heart it is vain. Our Lord Jesus ever taught doctrine coupled with experience, and while we believe that the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his, yet the same Scripture declares, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. We believe all who know the doctrine of God our Savior will be found praying for the peace and prosperity of Zion, and in doing so will be kept from strife and vainglory, for with meekness they will testify that they have been with Jesus and learned of him.

"O may his meekness be my guide,
The pattern I pursue;
How can I bear revenge or pride
With Jesus in my view?"

The very presence of Jesus upon earth was an evidence of God's love to man, and his life was a life of service, for the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and give his life a ransom for many. If he be born in us the hope of glory, then we shall have the love of God in our hearts, which will cause us to love one another and desire each other's welfare. "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

GEORGE RUSTON, Moderator.
A. J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

(Written by Elder W. H. Osburn.)

To the Elders, messengers and churches comprising the Little Zion Association of Old School or Primitive Baptists, in session with Little Hope Church, Bellefonte, Boone County, Arkansas, September 15th, 16th and 17th, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The subject of this article will be found in the twenty-third chapter of Joshua: "I am old and stricken in age." How forcible this expression, stricken with age or stricken with years. As age comes it surely will weaken, stiffen and destroy one's body. It matters not how useful or great one has been, he must go the way of all the earth. It is a trait of old people to indulge in retrospection. Memory comes up and serves a pleasant duty if one has been faithful, but not so if one has been unfaithful and wicked. Joshua, after counting his day and realizing his departure from his loved ones and this world close at hand, very earnestly reminds Israel of how the Lord had led them and the many things he had done for them, and that not one of

all his promises had failed, and not a single one been broken. It no doubt was a very pleasing thing to Joshua at the close of his sojourn here to realize the hand of the God of Israel so active in all of the events of his life, and now he is very earnestly but tenderly admonishing his brethren, Joshua xxiii. 6, 7: "Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left; that ye come not among these nations, these that remain among you; neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear by them, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them." Joshua knew that these strange gods were in the land, and during all his life he had never seen one of them delivered from the hand of the enemy, and so at the close of his life he felt the need of charging Israel to swear by no god but the God that was able to protect and care for them under any and all conditions. I know I have witnessed a scene similar to this more than once, but under a different age. Now let us call to our memory some father or mother in Israel who has lived a life of usefulness, and their only hope and comfort is in the cross of dear Calvary, and then, as Joshua, old and stricken with years, turns to those who are left behind and with their angel voices softened with the affections and sorrows of this world say, Be faithful and loyal to the church, the Zion of our God, and neglect not the assembling of yourselves together for holy, solemn worship. Many of our good brethren and sisters in Little Zion Association are now at the brink of their eternal home, and I think I can almost hear them say, The God that led Joshua, that delivered Joseph, that gave faith to Abraham and led all the prophets of old, is my God, and in him only can I put my trust. No doubt if you were asked to review your life you would give a like experience of Joshua, and admonish those who are younger and more tender, and whose tendency is to follow after strange and fashionable things, to "watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." Similar conditions are around spiritual Israel as were around national Israel. Now let us for a few moments look and see the conflicts of their lives, and then draw the picture from the type and let it shine forth in the gospel substance. We see by a careful reading that the Canaanites were not all expelled from the land of Canaan, but were left there seemingly to scourge them. There was a class known as the Gibeonites that Israel was not allowed to slay, yet they made them hewers of wood and drawers of water for the temple, thus keeping them always in their sight or under their eye where they could watch them and also keep them at or near the temple, so that they would be kept doing all the time that which was contrary to their nature. Now to draw the comparison with our own experience. Soon after we received testimony and were extolling the praises of our personal Redeemer for our deliverance from under the yoke of bondage and sin, our natural members of our body all seemed to be praising and rejoicing in the same like experience, and seemed to be a friend to our spiritual hope, but alas, we discovered a messenger of Satan, a thorn in our flesh, which buffets and scourges us, and must be kept in subjection, for they are contrary one to the other. Our natural members must be kept, as it were, hewing wood and drawing water, for as Paul painfully discovered, I with the mind serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

WILLIAM J. CASEY, Moderator.
JAMES LANCASTER, Clerk.

(Written by Elder R. W. Sanford.)

To the Elders and messengers of the Lexington Association, now in session with the Second Church of Roxbury, at Halcottville, Delaware County, N. Y., October 3rd and 4th, 1917, to one and all, greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—God has been pleased to convene us, as in former years, in an associated capacity, to honor and glorify his great name, so let us endeavor to do with full purpose of heart. He has given us a kingdom that is not of this world, over which, in the person of his Son Jesus Christ, are laws that are not of an earthly character, demanding earthly sacrifices after the flesh, such as was enjoined upon the church under the old dispensation, who by faith looked forward to the coming of a new heaven and new earth, wherein righteousness should dwell. All the old worthies died in faith, not receiving the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. Let us therefore be watchful over ourselves, and over each other, striving to walk worthy of the high vocation wherewith we have been called. We are born of incorruptible seed in the kingdom by the word of God, and quickened together with Christ (by grace are ye saved), and are raised up together with Christ and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ. This is the inheritance of God's people. Surely we should walk as we profess, striving to adorn the doctrine by well ordered lives and godly conversation, bearing each other's burdens in a forgiving spirit, greeting one another in love, and in so doing we shall cover a multitude of sins. You know full well that when you live after the flesh you die to the comfort of the assurance and rest in his kingdom, where all is love, joy and assurance forever of that heavenly rest when done with the conflicts of this life. You have learned by experience obedience is better than sacrifice. You cannot sit down with a restful feeling as you remember you have omitted to discharge some well-known duty, suffered some fleshly desire to come in your way and your seat is vacant at church appointments, not at the table of the Lord, giving occasion for some brother or sister to say in their thoughts, Am I in the way? The Scriptures plainly teach, If my children forsake my law, and keep not my statutes, I will visit them with chastisements. Like Ephraim, when joined to his idols, God sent leanness in his soul. As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, laying aside every weight and all fleshly hindrances, go in the spirit of his kingdom with full purpose of heart and assurance of faith, for God has prepared in his kingdom all needed grace, that his people may walk with singleness of heart to his honor, esteeming the righteousness of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt. Our conversation should be yea and nay. Whatsoever more cometh of evil, the time has come when judgment must begin at the house of God. Our laws are imperative, his love is boundless; then, brethren, let us live as we have professed, with full purpose of heart going forth in his strength, not having on our own righteousness, which is of the law, but that righteousness which is of faith, for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death; for Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

JOHN CLARK, Moderator.

JAMES AVERY, Clerk.

O. F. BALLARD, Assistant Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Little Zion Association, now in session with Little Hope Church, to the First Oklahoma Association of Primitive Baptists.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Through the mercy of a covenant-keeping God we have been blessed with the privilege of meeting together in an association, and have received your messenger, to wit, Elder Jeff Beeman, who, with Elder A. M. Morris, as visiting ministers, came laden with the sweet messages of the gospel of peace, and they with our own ministers have preached much to the comfort of God's little ones, all preaching Jesus Christ and him crucified, the way, the truth and the life. We desire to continue correspondence with you, and hope to receive your messengers and messages of love. We refer you to our Minutes for the time and place of our next session.

WM. J. CASEY, Moderator.

JAMES LANCASTER, Clerk.

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Second Church of Roxbury, at Halcottville, Delaware County, New York, to those of our faith with whom we correspond sends christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We desire that this salutation be of a christian character, in spirit and in truth, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which he purposed in himself before time began; that the same desire which our Master expressed continue to abound with each one of us, that we may look unto him, the author of our profession, and surround the table to partake of the food which he prepares, that it may do us good, as it doth the upright in heart, and rejoice in it as the work of our God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will, builds us up on the most holy faith, makes us sit around this table, and as he breaks the bread he makes known to us that this is his body and his blood, shed for us for the remission of sin, guided by his unerring counsel and led by him to pray always, that we may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

Our next session will be held with the Olive and Hurley Church, Ulster County, N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, 1918, where we hope to meet your messengers again laden with the good news of the gospel, that it may redound to the glory of God, and his great name have all the praise, honor, might and dominion now and evermore. May those of us who come to receive this good news hear the Master say, In this world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace. Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

JOHN CLARK, Moderator.

JAMES AVERY, Clerk.

O. F. BALLARD, Assistant Clerk.

APPOINTMENTS.

PLEASE publish the following appointments and oblige:

Trenton, N. J., Friday, Nov. 16th, 7:45 p. m.; Stockton, N. J., Saturday, 17th, Mrs. Horner's, 2:30 p. m.; Locktown, N. J., Sunday, 18th, 10:30 a. m.; Frenchtown, N. J., 4 p. m.; Tuesday, 20th, Grandon, N. J., A. J. Demott's, 7:30 p. m.

D. M. VAIL.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, October 20th, 1917, at the residence of Mr. S. E. Benson, Delmar, Md., Amos D. Benson and Ida M. Woodward, of Modena, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Cevilla C. Cross (nee Ferguson) was born March 4th, 1877, and died Sept. 1st, 1917, aged 40 years, 5 months and 27 days. She was married to H. H. Cross Sept. 19th, 1896, and to that union were born nine children, three of whom preceded her to the grave, six surviving. She became a member of the Leading Creek Old School Baptist Church at Montrose, W. Va., May 22nd, 1910, and was a faithful and beloved sister. She was a patient sufferer, and her life was a model one. The gentle drawing of the Spirit of grace enabled our sister to look beyond "chariots and horses" and trust in the true and living God, who made her feet to stand, by a new and living way, within the gates of Jerusalem. May he bless this dispensation of his providence to the weeping family and all who mourn for her, and grant them submission to the fast ripening of his purposes, which unfold every hour.

Services were held at the home by Elder J. S. Murphy, and a sermon was preached on the occasion by Elder J. B. Cross at the Leading Creek meetinghouse, with some remarks by Elder Murphy. The body was laid to rest in the Leading Creek burying-ground until the great resurrection day.

Written by request.

SEMMA E. CORDER.

Elder James H. Ring was born in Lancaster, Ohio, July 27th, 1840, where he grew to manhood; moved to Illinois in 1864, where he lived until 1888, when the family moved to Lancaster County, Nebr., where he lived in different parts of the State until the day of his death, which occurred Sept. 5th, 1917, at the age of 77 years, 1 month and 6 days. Death came to him as the result of an accident, in which he was knocked down and run over by an automobile. After the close of the first day's session of the Missouri Valley Association, in the village of Cheney, Nebr., as he was going to his home, a short distance from the place of meeting, arm in arm with Elder W. T. Brown, an automobile came suddenly around a corner from behind them and ran him down, two wheels of the car passing over him. He was taken to a hospital in Lincoln, where he passed away five days after the accident. Soon after the injury consciousness returned to him, and remained until a short time before the end. He was able to give specific directions as to every detail of his funeral, selecting the hymns to be sung and the text to be used: "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." The funeral occurred Sept. 7th. Services were held in the chapel where he had been pastor since the church was first constituted, after which the body was buried beside the companion of his youth, the mother of his children.

It was my good fortune to become acquainted with him soon after we entered the ministry, and as time passed our attachment ripened into a friendship that death alone could interrupt. He was blessed with an unselfish, peace-loving and self-sacrificing disposition. He was an able defender of the doctrine held by the Old School Primitive Baptist Church, and his death is a great loss to the churches in the west, where his services were greatly appreciated. He leaves to mourn, a companion, five sons and three daughters, one brother, one sister, several grandchildren, beside a multitude of brethren and sisters scattered over several States. It can be truthfully said that he fought a good fight and kept the faith, and we believe there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give him. The writer was called to attend the funeral, and as I looked upon the calm, peaceful face of the dead for the last time an unuttered prayer, I hope, went up to the Source of all spiritual blessings that his sleep might be sweet and his awakening glorious.

SMITH KETCHUM.

Deacon John S. Benson entered into his eternal rest at his home near Laurel, Del., Sept. 14th, 1917, at the age of 53 years, 6 months and 29 days. Brother Benson was baptized by the writer in the fellowship of the church at Little Creek, Del., about twenty-four years ago. A few years later he moved into the bounds of the Broad Creek Church and soon united with that church by letter. Several years ago he was chosen deacon, which office he filled to the entire satisfaction of the church. He was a very faithful member and deacon, and in truth in all the walks of life, as son, husband, father, neighbor and friend. He was twice married, first when a very young man, to a Miss Lokey, by whom he had seven children, three sons and four daughters, who lived to grow to manhood and womanhood. Two died in early womanhood; two daughters, Mrs. Mary Jones and Mrs. Eva Brittinghouse, and three sons, William, George and Oliver, survive, together with his second wife, to whom he was married in January, 1916, also several grandchildren. His first wife died about seven years ago. We surely miss our dear brother, but we sorrow not as those who have no hope, for we are sure that our loss is his infinite and eternal gain. Our sympathy goes out to our dear bereaved sister and all the family, and we commend them to the care of him who is the Father of the fatherless and the God of the widow in his holy habitation. Beside his widow and children he also leaves three brothers: brother Samuel E. Benson, brother A. T. Benson and Jos. W. Benson, and one sister, Mrs. Nancy German, by all of whom he was greatly beloved. May the Lord comfort them.

The funeral service was held in the Broad Creek meetinghouse on Sunday, the 16th, conducted by the

writer in the presence of a large congregation, who thus attested the esteem in which he was held, after which the mortal body was laid in the cemetery near by to await the sound of the last trump. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise. We yet look for the second coming of the Lord, and by him hope for the resurrection of our bodies.

In hope of that blessed event, your unworthy brother and fellow-servant,

A. B. FRANCIS.

MEETINGS.

THE Particular Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada have changed the date for holding their quarterly meeting at Duart, which now will be held commencing on Saturday before the first Sunday in November, 1917.

J. T. KERR, Clerk.

THE Ebenezer Church in Baltimore will hold an all day meeting on the second Sunday in November. All who love to meet with us are invited to do so.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

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JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 85. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1917. NO. 22.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ISAIAH XIV. 24.

"As I have thought, so shall it come to pass."

DEAR BRETHREN:—Will you permit one so poor and unworthy as I feel this morning just a little space in your precious, comforting paper? I have often had a desire to write some of my thoughts and send to the SIGNS for the consideration of the dear readers of the same, but when I would have a mind to write, my weakness and imperfections were so great I could not make the attempt, but this morning finds me with sufficient faith, I trust, to make the attempt.

Dear saints, while we are strangers in the flesh, and many, many miles apart, I hope we are close together in the faith of the Son of God, and, as I trust and pray, it is by the direction of the Spirit of God that I have stolen away to this solitary place to try and write. I believe at the appointed time of that same Spirit my pen will cease to pen these lines, so if I should write at length I hope the same Spirit will direct your minds to be patient and bear with one so weak.

First, I will say that what few brethren I have been blessed to meet tell me that I am a Predestinarian Baptist. I will frankly admit that I am such a peculiar being that I do not know myself, but I believe that there is One who does know all about me. There is but one true and living God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and all things that dwell therein, and he changes not, the same yesterday, to-day and forever, who looks upon things that are not the same as if they were. He is not deceived in any of his works, a God that purposed and decreed all things whatsoever come to pass, before the world began. O what a God the God of the whole earth is, one who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. We hear him say through one of the old prophets, "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass." "I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." Dear little children, can you ascribe this to your Father which is in heaven? O how pleasant and strengthening it is to think upon a God like our God, who controls all things in heaven and on earth. Our God, the God of the whole earth, is not deceived in anything that ever has or that ever will come to pass; he purposed it, he will also do it, and he is none the wiser when it

comes to pass. If there is anything that comes to pass that God had not thought of, then he is not an all-wise God, but knows more after it comes to pass than he did before. My dear kindred in Christ, are you not glad that the God we hope we honor and serve is a God of wisdom, power, purpose and love, and not one who tries and cannot, one who was thwarted and deceived in his creation? He is not a God that possesses all power in heaven and earth yet cannot do his will, but depends upon the man he created, who, according to the teachings of God's word, has no power at all of his own, but is as the grass of the field, which to-day is and to-morrow is cast into the oven, who is nothing, yea, less than nothing, and altogether vanity, whose bounds and habitations are fixed. Now, dear saints, would not that be a conglomerated mass of affairs if it were the case? Do you not think everything would have been blocked when God, with all power, created man and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul? If God has all power, that certainly leaves the man without any, only as God gives him power. How could man have kept or transgressed the law, either one, without power from the One who possessed all power? I guess God did not know of the power of the serpent, so he failed to give man power to keep the law, so along came the serpent with his manufactured power and caught the man an empty blank, God failing to give him power to keep the law, so, in spite of the purpose God had in making man, he left a gap, and Satan took advantage of God's mistake and snatched man from his grasp. No matter how badly God was disappointed or thwarted in his purpose in making man, it was then too late. O how grieved and sorry God must have been that he forgot to give the man power to keep the law; but it is too late now; he can only offer him a chance to be redeemed from under the curse that the manufactured power has dragged him into, but this plan of redemption must meet with the man's approval, and he must be sorry that he followed Satan and broke God's law, and want to leave Satan and go back to God. This must be a voluntary act on the man's part before God can redeem him. Surely this sets up a god that cannot, a god that does not, hold all power in his grasp, one that is dependent upon the choice of the creature; a dependent god. Dear child of God, let us set forth another God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God that created all things, both visible and invisible, by the power of his word. O think of the one true God, whom to know is eternal life. Can we know our earthly parents before we are born of them? Neither can we know our heavenly Father before we are born again, and to be born again means a spiritual birth, means life eternal; then we are ready to be taught of our heavenly Father, and O, dear child, how great is that teaching. How wonderful it is to be taught of him, to view him as he is, the great Creator of all things, the only true and living God, the one who can say, I am God, and beside me there is no Savior; the one who had neither beginning of days nor end of life. He is a God who never tried to do anything, one who never made a mistake, one who cannot be deceived. Dear reader, view him in eternity as all wisdom and knowledge and power before time began, viewing, purposing and decreeing a creation before time began, so wise that all creation, from the very first to the very last, was before him. He did not only view it, but purposed it, yet there were

no time and timely things yet in existence, wisdom or foreknowledge looking upon a creation that was not as though it were, and declaring the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. I have purposed it, I will also do it. There is no new, no old thing with God, but all is one eternal now; he is the very embodiment of wisdom and power. Dear reader, I sometimes think I can view God in eternity, before time began, with his pattern, or decree, or purpose, all before him, a complete creation, with all of its details, begun and ended in purpose, not one thing left out, not even the transgression; it was all finished, yet there was nothing created, because God had not yet said, Let there be light, only in purpose, and it was in his decree or purpose for light to make manifest: As I have thought, so shall it come to pass. When all of these things were before him, dear child of God, do you think he thought of them? I believe he did. Again, we read, "Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever," there can nothing be added to nor taken from it, and God doeth it that man should fear before him. Dear brethren, let me say to you here that the purposes of God are just as sure to come to pass as if they had already taken place, and if I have any knowledge of the teaching of God's word, he surely did purpose and decree the whole creation, nothing was left out. This was all before time began, and he has all power in heaven and earth, is now and ever has been, is the same unchangeable God, the same yesterday, to-day and forever. Then I am persuaded that he is just powerful enough to bring to pass here in time the very things he purposed before time began, and as he foresaw it all he is not deceived in any part of it, and that from the least to the greatest things, as we term them. There is no great, no small with God, everything the same to him, all fulfilling his wise and foreseen purpose to a jot and tittle. He speaks, and it is done; commands, and it stands fast. O what a God Israel's God is. If this is the true God I have represented, dear reader, what can you hinder or bring to pass? God does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; he works and none can hinder, he hinders and none can work; he shuts the door and none can open, he opens the door and none can shut it. O, vain man, who art thou that repliest against God? What right has the thing formed to say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Has not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? God is the potter and we are the clay. Dear child of God, stand firm in the faith once delivered unto the saints.

There is no end to the subject: "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass." I hope I believe in the absolute predestination of God in all things whatsoever come to pass.

I must desist for this time, and if this escapes the wastebasket, perhaps I may write again. May the Lord bless all of his chosen, is the prayer of the unworthy writer,

W. N. GREEN.

DODSONVILLE, Texas, May 23, 1917.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Aug. 11, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Inclosed is a letter which you are at liberty to insert in the SIGNS if you think best. I always hesitate to send personal letters for publication, and perhaps I have felt too much that way, for I have many that would probably be of general interest to those

who love those dear columns. Yesterday I was reading this letter of brother Burch's to a dear sister in this blessed hope, and she said, "You ought to send that to the SIGNS; it is such a good letter, and would be a comfort to many." So I am acting on her suggestion, and hope that he will not mind, and that it will not be long before the SIGNS will contain another communication from his pen, with another sketch of his life, which he has promised, wherein he has been led over dark and rugged places into safety and joy unspeakable. Certainly this dear messenger of truth is a most wonderful blessing to many, both far and near, reaching numerous hidden ones who are not able to meet in the assembly of the saints; but these very ones often feel, while reading in the silence of their rooms, that they are in this great company, listening to psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, and making melody in the heart to the Lord.

Your unworthy sister in a blessed hope beyond this fading scene,

BESSIE DURAND.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., June 2, 1917.

DEAR SISTER DURAND:—It has been some time since I received your most kind and comforting card, which I have read and reread many times with seeming added comfort. Your message of christian love came as a great surprise to me. I have always loved your writings in the SIGNS, and wished I might write to you and tell you how they sank into my heart as a rich draught from the fountain of God's wonderful storehouse, from which we are permitted to draw according to his own will and pleasure the unsearchable riches of Christ, which he has laid up in store for all those who love him and wait for his appearing. In the same mail there came two others, one from sister Florence Pultz and one from Elder J. T. Barnes, and since then one from sister Young, of Alberta, Canada, and one from a dear old brother in Indiana, none of whom I have ever met except Elder J. T. Barnes, whom I had the pleasure of entertaining at our house and hearing him preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, giving him all the glory, which was very comforting to me. Just a few days ago I received as a present through the mail the sketch of the life of Elder Joshua S. Corder, sent me by sister Semma, his daughter. The book is surely a revelation of God's everlasting power and guardian care over those whom he has chosen to preach his gospel, and I took much comfort in reading it. Now, dear sister, maybe I do not feel right about these sweet messages of love, which build me up and cause tears of love to flow, but they also cause sadness to come over me, with a deep searching of the heart, for I fear they are all deceived in me; I am just a poor old sinner, and have no power to do good or be good, for I have tried with all the might I have, and have to acknowledge that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing; so if there was a crumb of comfort in my letter to the dear old SIGNS for any of God's little ones, it was because he indited it, and also blessed others to receive it. I was loath to send it, for it seemed so much like me, full of complainings; you must give God all the glory. Now, dear sister, if you will but write me a letter I will write you another sketch of my life, wherein God has led me safely over some very dark and rugged places, but his everlasting arm has always been my prop and stay, and when I am given faith to lay hold of these I find a great love and trust welling up in my heart, causing me to rejoice with joy

unspeakable and full of glory. At such times I do so long to go to him, where I can see him as he is. Here my pen refuses to go further, for can it be possible that I, who am so vile, so base, so full of guilt and shame, shall ever be like him? Yes, dear sister, he says it is so, and in and through him I believe it will be so. O such joy, to be free from this old body of death. Well can we say that ear hath not heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man the things the Father hath laid up in store for his little ones. Still, when writing to others of my life, the old man gets before me, and I am so ashamed of his doings that I hesitate to write about myself, but I do believe our every step and action in life, yes, the little every day acts, are all predestinated, and not ours only, but every one and everything, both great and small, was predestinated, and he causes us to do and go whenever and wherever we go; so in the sketch which I spoke of writing it is not my part in the matter, but God's mercy and kind guardian care over a poor, wayward sinner, that I wish to speak of, but I do not want to impose my writing upon any one. You perhaps wonder at my long delay in answering your card, but I believe if you knew the reason you would excuse me, though part of it has been such a feeling of inability to write a suitable letter, for my mind has been so barren that I felt I could not write anything worth reading.

Well, the SIGNS came, and I had to stop and look through it, of course. I read brother F. S. Fisher's article, which was good, on "In the beginning," which was something new to me, as I had never thought on that portion of Scripture before, but it was all in harmony. Then sister Runkle's letter to Elder Vail was so good, as all her letters are, and where she said salvation by grace alone, and the predestination of all things, both good and evil, election, special atonement, the final perseverance of the saints and the resurrection of the dead, are grand and glorious truths, and are my meat and drink. I have always since my first acquaintance with your and Elder Durand's writings wished I might meet you and talk with you about the precious Savior, our Savior. May he ever be near you to comfort you both while life lasts, and be especially near you while passing through the valley of death, is my prayer.

Your little brother in hope,

DAVIS BURCH.

WHEELING, W. Va., July 3, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing brother A. T. Benson's good letter for publication, if you see fit. I wanted to send it long ago, but was hindered until now. When I saw my letter written to him in the SIGNS, and saw that I had dwelt largely on my afflictions of the flesh, I felt somewhat ashamed of what I had written, but found some comfort in the thought that his judgment was superior to mine, and if he deemed it fit for the whole family it was all right. I am glad to have to tell that I am rather better in health at present, and am sometimes hoping that I may be so far restored as to be able to go to some of the meetings this summer; but if the Lord wills to bring me low again, so that I may not live, I have a hope given me to look forward to a full realization of all that I most desire. Here we have two or three days of preaching, and sometimes the flesh and pride so predominate that we cannot feel the sweetness in the pure word; but when we have clean escaped from this old body of sinful flesh, and stand in the assembly of the glorified saints above, and see the object of our

adoration, see him as he is, and be like him, I feel that there will be no end to our meeting, no going back to our own sad place in this body of sin.

I inclose one dollar to pay for the SIGNS the balance of the year. When I renewed for six months I felt that I might not live that long. I should have sent it last month, and truly I wanted to, but I am so that I cannot do the things I would. My strength is so frail that I cannot forge ahead, but have to wait until energy is given me. My heart goes out in tender love as I write. Many of the dear readers of the SIGNS seem to come forward and find a warm entrance into my heart. I feel to say, God bless you all. He alone knows how dear you are to me. I could mention many names; I believe they are written in the Lamb's book of life.

With the trembling hope that we are one in him, I subscribe myself, your unworthy sister,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 4, 1917.

DEAR SISTER PULTZ:—Your letter sent to Cannon, Del., was duly received, but owing to barrenness of mind I have put off answering until now. Will say your letter came at a time when I was much cast down, and I believe the Lord, knowing my condition, put the thought in your mind to write to me. Your letters have always been of much comfort to me. You certainly know something of the things of the everlasting kingdom, or you could not write so beautifully concerning them. It is good for our minds to be upon the things above, and because our minds are upon these things we are made to hope that we have indeed found favor in the Lord. I have been thinking much of late about the writings of the apostle. You will remember that he wrote much about a change. Among other things, he said, This mortal must put on immortality. I want to ask, Can anything be more comforting to us than to contemplate the changing of this body? Some day there will be no more sinful thoughts to torment us; no more sighing, for the former things shall pass away; that is, the things through which we are now passing will be done away. But we ask, How are these things to be accomplished? This thought brings us to the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no sweetness in singing a hymn unless he is in the song; there is no beauty in preaching the word unless he is in it; he is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. He said also of himself, "I am the resurrection, and the life." Then he is all we need in time and eternity, and if we have found favor in his sight what a blessed people we are. I am somewhat disturbed about myself as to whether I have found favor in his sight or not. I find there is much pride in my heart yet, and many other things that should not be there, and I have no power at all to remove them. I want to inform you that I am not an Elder, as you thought. When I saw that you addressed me as such I felt very small. I only talk a little occasionally, and am trying to stop even that. My own idea is that I should be silent, because I know that I know but very little. There is one thing, however, that comforts me, and that is, the Lord's plans are laid, and no man or any being can change them. Man is inventing, and the Lord is looking on. One small breath from him can frustrate the whole plan of man. It is interesting in these days to watch man's scheming, and see the hand of the Lord upsetting his schemes (man's schemes I mean).

There is more I might say, but perhaps it is best not to say too much. Now, my sister, I want to say to you just what I would if I were in your presence: Be of good cheer. May the Lord sustain you in your affliction. A better world is in your view, I have no doubt. Again I must mention that precious name, Jesus Christ the righteous. I do not know how to speak comfortingly to you without mentioning this name. Just the meaning of the name is all we need to know: God with us. What a glorious thought!

I have sent your letter to the SIGNS. I felt as though some one else would enjoy reading it, so I sent it along.

I remain, as ever, your brother in hope,

A. T. BENSON.

2 CORINTHIANS X. 10.

"FOR his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible."

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—For some days the above Scripture has been on my mind, but I have postponed attempting to write anything on the subject, as the text and its connection cover such a large scope I fear my effort to handle the subject intelligently. If the Lord is pleased to guide my pen, and to favor me with wisdom, light and understanding, I will present a few thoughts and submit them for the consideration of the editors of the dear old SIGNS.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable and edifying, and is truth. From the days of Abel down through all ages the called servants and witnesses of our Lord must endure a great fight of affliction to withstand all the fiery darts of Satan, and the true ministering servants of God have ever been opposed and persecuted by the world. Worldly religionists and false teachers must acknowledge that the epistles and letters of Paul are weighty and powerful. They, the people, could see on the surface that much, although ignorant of their spiritual significance, pronouncing his bodily presence weak, and his speech contemptible. The doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ was what they despised, which Paul preached, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, armed with dignity and authority from high heaven. They could not resist nor overthrow, could only accuse him before rulers, assail his character and speak all manner of evil against him, to misrepresent and hire false witness against him. The religious world hates the truth and those who advocate the unlimited sovereignty of Almighty God, who contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and the false modern divines, so-called, try to repudiate the principles of the true christian faith. Such are the combinations of men and devils, with all their stratagem, to do away with and banish truth from the world. No wonder these false teachers could say, His speech is contemptible, away with such a man; and because of the vagabond Jews and their traditions the apostle Paul was in great heaviness and continual sorrow of heart. He said: "For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."—Romans ix. 3. The beasts at Ephesus were ever ready to confront Paul with their falsehoods and unlawful deeds, to catch some word whereof they might accuse him. The same Judaizing spirit that made the people there so hostile and bitter against Christ and the apostles yet dominates the enemies of all truth, like the Arminian world, that teaches for doctrine the commandments of men, the

same as referred to by the Savior in Luke xi. 49, 50: "Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute: that the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation." Paul, speaking in the same chapter of our text, said: "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."—2 Cor. x. 3-5. Man is not justified by his own works, but alone through the unmerited grace of God in Christ Jesus, whose ways are above our ways, as the heavens are above the earth; exalted to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sin. I do feel to say that the Old School Baptist Church, according to the authorized version of King James' translation of the Bible, is the true church or kingdom of God, and bears all the marks of christian character so declared in the Scriptures; and although numerous miracles performed by Christ and the apostles were often acknowledged by the people as notable and weighty, they could not look to the end of that which was abolished, therefore pronounced it (the doctrine) contemptible; because the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, as they do to this day reject the truth and cleave to the whims and inventions of men, to follow after the idols and superstitions of their own hearts, by reason of their traditions and religious training in the schools of the world, the grace plan of salvation being a stench in their nostrils, to minimize the doctrine of God our Savior and to praise the works of men, to sacrifice to the image of the golden calf and rejoice in their own works, dependent upon conditions to be performed by the creature. So there is no peace to the wicked, saith the God of Israel. The wisdom of God is foolishness to them; they seek after the things which please the flesh and carnal fancy, and are blinded by the gods of this world. The letters and epistles of Paul carry in them the weight of supremacy and sovereignty of Almighty God, which unbelievers or the ungodly can never realize or accept, it being hid from the wise and prudent of this world and revealed to babes in Christ. All the law workers and religious schemers are incessantly on the alert to deceive and dupe the children of men by their craft and pernicious operations. Self-righteousness, greed and vain hallucinations of the carnal mind, which is enmity to God, allure and walk after the lust of the flesh and the popular clergy of the world of old, mystery, Babylon and abomination of the earth, marshaling all their cohorts against the truth and the faithful servants of our Lord; hence no wonder they call the Old Baptists "old fogies" and other vile epithets to gratify their personal hatred, because they have not the love of God abiding in them. Professionally they resort to the letter of the law, being ignorant of the fact that the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life, so said Paul. They deny the efficiency of the atonement and all the cardinal principles of election and predestination by substituting works, to mold the mind of the youth to their false theories. But the church is admonished to beware of false teachers that come in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. However, inspiration

describes the signs and coming of antichrist, and all must be fulfilled.

I see I have already written too much, and have said but little. If the Lord will permit, I may at some future time pursue the subject further. I submit the above to our worthy editors and readers of the dear, old, reliable SIGNS, praying for the peace of Zion, the prosperity of the paper, and all who love our Lord Jesus Christ, unto the glory of the eternal God.

In gospel bonds, affectionately,

ASA HOWARD.

KELLER, Texas, Oct. 2, 1917.

WHAT IS MAN?

"WHAT is man, that thou art mindful of him?"—Psalms viii. 4. "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things under his feet."—Psalms viii. 5, 6. This is man in his first estate. But what is he since our foreparents plunged the entire race into the abyss of sin? The inspired prophets and the inspired apostles of Jesus Christ all testify that the entire race of Adam is totally depraved. "There is none that doeth good." "They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."—Psalms xiv. 3. "All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."—Isaiah liii. 6. "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes."—Rom. iii. 10–18. Surely no words in the English language could set forth the total depravity of the race of Adam more plainly than the apostle Paul has here set it forth. Nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity. (Isaiah xl. 17.) What in all the world can be smaller than puny man? Jesus "needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man."—John ii. 25. The Lord knew that man would utterly fail to keep the law, so he established the new covenant, fenced with Jehovah's wills and shalls, and from every condition free. I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. (Heb. viii. 10–12.) That there could be no possibility of a failure, he chose all the members of his body, which is his church, before the foundation of the world. (Eph. i. 4.) The Lord not only chose them before time began, he wrote the names of all his people in the book of life, and only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life enter the new Jerusalem, the holy city of pure gold. "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."—Rev. xxi. 27. The Lord left nothing to chance in the building of his church, but established a glorious highway, and the redeemed shall walk there. (Isaiah xxxv. 9, 10.) That his house shall be full, and not one left out, from the least to the greatest, he compels the poor ones to come in, who have nowhere else to go,

only to Jesus, who is their only hope for life and immortality. (Luke xiv. 23.) The Lord in his wisdom has provided one street, and only one, for the redeemed to enter the new Jerusalem, and that of pure gold, as it were transparent glass. (Rev. xxi. 21.) This is the one street, and the compelling power that compels his people to come in: "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." —Jer. xxxi. 3. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him."—John vi. 44. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." —Psalms cxxvii. 1. Thus we see that the Lord of hosts has not left the work of building his church in the hands of puny man, who is nothing. Vain man has concluded that the Lord's way of saving sinners is entirely too slow, so he has taken the bit in his teeth, and wants to rush along on a large and fast scale, and what do we see on every hand the world over? Confusion everywhere among the Babel builders, yet the glorious church of our God will be completed without the sound of a hammer or any iron tool. (1 Kings vi. 7.) So perfect is the work of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ that no hammer or axe is needed in erecting this glorious building, for the Lord prepares all the lively stones, and they fit in the place he designed. They shall all be taught of the Lord, and they ascribe all praise unto his blessed name forever. "We love him, because he first loved us." —1 John iv. 19. The kingdom of Jesus Christ ruleth over all. He plucks up nations, and he plants others, and he shall dash them to pieces as a potter's vessel, with a rod of iron. (Psalms ciii. 19; Dan. iv. 17; Psalms ii. 9.) The Lord will bring down high looks in individuals or nations, for the Lord of hosts sits on no precarious throne, nor borrows leave to be; his kingdom stands forever. "From everlasting to everlasting thou art God." —Psalms xc. 2.

Yours in hope,

WM. F. SLOAN.

LEXINGTON, Kentucky.

TIAWAH, Okla., Oct. 28, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—My silence has been caused by my inability to write anything that would seem to me to be of interest to you. As many readers of the SIGNS have requested me to write more along the lines which have appeared above my name in the past few years, I shall to-day make an effort to write something that may, by the providence of God, help some of the scattered saints to bear their afflictions with patience, while they are looking to him who is the author and finisher of their faith. While these "afflicted and poor people" are made, by the ruling of the grace of God in their hearts, to trust in the Lord, yet words that coincide with their experience, coming from their fellow-creatures, are words of consolation, which give strength to the very soul that hungers for the perfect righteousness of the Lord Jesus. Such words I know help them, and their hope "maketh not ashamed," but sweetly rests within the veil. While searching the columns of the SIGNS for good and wholesome doctrine and tender, heartfelt experience I sometimes find letters that tell of the good meetings of the saints in different and distant parts of the land, which I read with as much avidity as any of the other letters. I may be an exception to the average reader of the SIGNS. However, I am presuming that hints along

the line of the prosperity or the adversity of the small churches of the saints in this "desert land" will be read with interest. Much more, this is momentous, in this dark day of murderous warfare among the nations of the earth, to all lovers of the truth, that they may know that the Lord has still a few names that are hid in the crevice of the Rock, who live, move and have a being.

I want to note as briefly as I can some of my recent visits among the churches, meetings and associations of Oklahoma, Arkansas and Texas. In August I visited a small band of brethren and sisters in Garfield County, Okla. These brethren indorse the doctrine of the SIGNS, and some are subscribers. It is needless to say that they, religiously, accept the admonition, "Be ye separate" from the world, and they are particular, too, about receiving any in their fellowship unless they bring a "thus saith the Lord." This little band is strong in the Lord, because united in the love of God. In the same month I visited the First Oklahoma Association, held in Pottawatomie County, Okla. This body of three small churches has a small membership, but they are united in the doctrine of the predestination of all things, election, salvation altogether by grace and the resurrection of the dead. They also indorse the SIGNS. This was formerly a much larger body, until a division eleven years ago and a subdivision since. These divisions were principally caused by unsoundness in doctrine. Strange to human reason that a remnant even should be left to the Lord, but God's testimony comforts us: My people are the fewest of all people. In September I spent nearly two weeks in Boone County, Ark. This was in the vicinity of the meeting-place of the Little Zion Association. On several occasions before the association convened I spoke in the way of preaching. Having a day of leisure, by the request of a friend I was taken to hear a man preach who claimed to be a Primitive Baptist, but who was a real nonresurrectionist. His discourse was the most mixed of anything that I ever heard. I shall not attempt to detail his discourse, but merely state that the most of his interpretations of the Scriptures were spiritual, thus destroying the legitimate application of the testimony of Jesus and the apostles. In riding home with one of the leading members, as he was trying to explain his position in regard to the resurrection, I asked for the privilege of putting his belief in my own language, and just as I had inferred from his argument. After he consented to give me this privilege I said: "You believe that when the body of a child of God dies his spirit, new man, inner man, soul or life immediately enters into a new spiritual body there at the death-bed, and soars up on high to glory?" He said, "That is it, that is it." I said, "So you believe that the resurrection is going on daily?" He said, "I do." This idea has a small holding in the west. I am glad to know that the Little Zion Association, of Arkansas, and some six or seven larger associations of that State, and many churches of north Texas, are unanimous against accepting such an idea. I visited the Sulphur Fork Association, in northeast Texas, which was held on Friday before the first Sunday in October. Most of these brethren indorse the doctrine of the SIGNS, and some of them are subscribers. While there, some brethren and sisters requested me to send them old copies of the SIGNS, they prepaying the postage. Since coming home I have mailed two hundred and forty-five copies to the different

addresses in Texas and Louisiana. Elder V. R. Harris, of Fordyce, Ark., is also distributing old copies of the SIGNS among brethren. In the last two months I have met twenty Old School Baptist preachers, and have heard most of them preach. They all, as far as I know, are "can't help its," and strong advocates of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead.

Though to me is indicated the signs of his coming, as I hope was shown me in October, 1860, while my friends were weeping around my bed, when the world was dead to me and I dead to my earthly surroundings, yet I am rejoiced to know that the Lord has, and that he always will have while the gospel day remains, a chosen few, a remnant, almost unknown to the great religious elements of this day, securely preserved to himself, that shall "be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air."

All yours, in hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Oct. 8, 1917.

MY DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—As my work is done for the day, I thought, Well, what shall I do this evening? and the thought came to me to write on this, my sixty-first birthday, to the dear ones who read our family paper. As I write the words, "family paper," I see so plainly it is so, for all enjoy it, and it is just as much to one as to another, and so all of its readers are as one family. As I think, What shall I write? these words come to my mind: Tell them to "be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." These words are recorded in John xvi. 33. Christ tells his disciples in him they shall have peace, but in the world tribulation. He also tells them he has overcome the world. What comfort it must have been to them to have Christ speak such words to them. I know they did not understand all his words, neither do we, only as they come to us with the sweet promise that we can but feel is direct from him; then how we feel strengthened, knowing once more it is the Spirit of God made manifest to us by himself. So many times have I been thus blessed, having such sweet things come to me seemingly direct from the Lord, and when these things have been I have felt I would never doubt again, but I have, and have wondered if this was the real Christ. How faithless and unbelieving I am. I do not see how I have been permitted to have so many rich and precious seasons. In Acts it is recorded where the Lord stood by Paul in the castle and told him to be of good cheer, for as Paul had testified of him in Jerusalem, so also must he bear witness at Rome. So in his trouble the Lord bade him be of good cheer, but in the spirit, not in the world. Again, in Acts, where they are in shipwreck, Paul exhorts them to be of good cheer, and tells them of the promise of the Lord to him, which he had given all them that sailed with him, without loss of life. Then again he said, Be of good cheer, that he believed God that it would be even as it was told him. Then we are told afterward where they were of good cheer, and took meat. I have never been in a shipwreck, but have seen some severe troubles, when it seemed sad and gloomy, yet I have been cheered by the word of the Lord and have been comforted in the midst of it, and so I can but say to you all to-night, notwithstanding these sad times, which are of so serious a nature, with a continual fear that they will grow worse, Be of good cheer in Christ, and trust him in it all, knowing that he came to do the will of his Father and save all

the Father gave him, and not one shall perish, he will not leave nor forsake them. He also says, Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Yes, I say, trust him, for he is mighty to save. How can we keep too near the fold? and in these perilous times how we need the continual comfort of each other. How we need the word preached to us in all its strength. We want the whole truth, nothing left out, nothing but the real truth to give us comfort and cheer. A few days ago I was made to think of these words: How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? which are found in the first part of the second chapter of Hebrews. I was made to think and see what great salvation it is, and if I could only pen it to you I am sure you would enjoy it, but that I cannot do, and I feel none of us can tell of these things at all times, for they have seemed to be to us when we had need of them, and yet we are commanded to comfort others with the comfort wherewith we ourselves have been comforted of God. It does seem to me there is neglect of so great salvation in different ways. The word tells us to present our bodies a living sacrifice. Read the twelfth chapter of Hebrews, which is so good to read, so instructing. We are told in Hebrews to forsake not the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is. We are to exhort one another, but it must be in all love and tenderness; not to provoke, but in all confidence and love, with fear of not being understood. I do feel we should give all heed to so great salvation, and there are all ways to do it. It seems to me there were some in those days who neglected their duties. Do we keep all the commands given us? I do not, far from it, I am sorry to say. I do try to present my body, and to assemble with the dear ones. I know from past experience that the more we neglect our duties the easier it is to do so. Times have grown so that Sunday is the only day many have as their day from business, and so it is often used for pleasure instead of meeting and mingling with the brethren. To me it is sad, and I hear the same expression from different churches. I am sure all would feel our pastors had done a wrong thing should they go and leave the congregation in such a way. These things ought not so to be. If we are away from our home church and visiting with another church we are still assembling ourselves together, as it is all one church. I hear some say, I do not hear when I go, or, I go to sleep, or, I can think just as much about these things at home. Even if all this be true, the command is neglected and it is wrong. To keep in an interested and brotherly interest is to meet and to mingle and to speak often one to another of these better things, to place our affections on things above, for where our treasure is, there will our heart be also. O that I could serve the Father of all mercies better, but I wander so far from the path I love to see dear ones walking in.

Dear brethren, one and all, be of good cheer and trust the Father of all mercies, for he will be with you and give you strength for every trial you are to pass through. My love to you all.

MARY HILL TERRY.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1917.

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OBEDIENCE IS BETTER THAN SACRIFICE.

(1 Samuel xv. 22.)

In days of old the Lord gave his people leaders and judges, yet they were not satisfied and wanted to have a king, in order that they might be like other nations. This has been a peculiarity of the people of God in all ages—never satisfied, always wanting what they have not, and most always want that which is not good for them. Hence when they wanted a king the Lord told them what it would mean to them: that their young men and maidens would be taken and the king would rule over them all as a nation. That given knowledge, however, did not change their minds, and they continued to ask for a king. The Lord granted their request, but did not allow them to choose the man, but made the choice himself of Saul, the noble giant of Israel, nor did he allow them as a nation to anoint him king, but sent Samuel, his faithful prophet, to do the anointing. When the time came Saul could not at first be found; realizing his littleness and insufficiency to reign over such a people "he hid himself among the stuff," but was found and anointed king. It seems, from the record, that for a long time he did well, but later was not faithful. The Lord knew all about him and his doings, hence sent the same prophet to the house of Jesse to anoint David to be king and reign instead of Saul. When these two men are compared there indeed seems but little comparison. Saul was a man of note, and in stature from the shoulders and upward higher than any man in Israel, the giant of giants, while David was a mere stripling of a boy, the keeper of his father's sheep, and scarcely known out of his own neighborhood, yet each was the Lord's choice, and in many ways in all ages the Lord has taught his people that it is not by might, nor by strength, but by his Spirit things are accomplished. In our view it required Saul, David and Solomon to complete the type of Christ, the anointed of God. Jesus is head over all things to the church, which is his body. "Head over" means above, or Lord over the church. Saul, being from the shoulders and upward higher (head over) than any man in Israel, was that part of the type. David was a man of war, and fought the battle of Israel against Goliath and slew him, thereby delivering his brethren from slavery and death. In that work David was a figure of Jesus, who fought the archenemy, death, removed its sting and delivered his brethren of its power. Solomon builded the house unto the Lord and reigned in wisdom. In that he was a type of Jesus, the builder of the spiritual house unto the Lord. There was a special difference between Saul and David, in that Saul never seemed to realize the hand or presence of God in his reign, and all he did seemed to have been from a selfish standpoint, while David from the first saw the Lord in all things, even in the slaying of the lion and the bear. A different feeling, a different work for each.

In the special connection in which is our text we find the Lord dealing out vengeance upon the Amalekites because of their persecution of his people. In thus dealing with them he sent Samuel, the same man who anointed Saul, to him with commandment to go against Amalek and utterly destroy them and all their substance, leaving nothing alive. Saul gathered his army of two hundred and ten thousand men and smote the Amalekites, but took Agag their king alive and spared the best of the sheep and oxen and the fatlings and lambs and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them. Then the Lord said to Samuel: It repenteth me that I have set Saul up to be king, for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. Just here we will call attention to the words, "It repenteth me," with reference to what the Lord meant. This does not infer that the Lord was disappointed in Saul, but even then, and for some time before, he was turning away from Saul. This is conclusive, since he had already chosen David to be king of Israel, and this act of disobedience in Saul was the climax when he should soon be dethroned and David's reign begin. When the Lord told Samuel that Saul had not obeyed his commandment to utterly destroy the Amalekites and all their substance he went in search of Saul, and when he found him Saul said, "Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord," and Samuel said, "What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" Saul said, The people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen and the chief things to sacrifice unto thy God. No doubt Saul thought this would please the prophet, and perhaps had not the Lord told him all about Saul's wickedness he might not have felt just as he did. Man can be deceived, but the Lord knows all things, yea, even the secrets and intents of the heart. Saul also sought to place the responsibility upon the people for taking the best of the flocks and the chief things, but the Lord knew better. Saul received the commandment, not the people. Saul was responsible to the Lord, and the people to Saul. It seems innate from the beginning to shift responsibility upon the other fellow. When the Lord asked Adam why he had partaken of the forbidden fruit he said, The woman thou gavest to be with me gave me of the fruit and I did eat. Then he asked the woman why she did it, and she replied, The devil tempted me. It has ever been so since. At the end of Saul's statements Samuel asked him if the Lord had more pleasure in sacrifices than in obeying the word of the Lord. In the question the answer seems encouched. Surely obedience is first of all things. Had Adam not disobeyed there would have been no necessity for sacrifice. Hence "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." The sacrifices under the old covenant were because of sin, yet not one of those sacrifices could make the guilty clean except ceremonially. The blood of goats and calves could never take away sin; therefore in burnt offerings and sacrifices the Lord had no pleasure, but in the volume of the book it is written of Jesus that he should come to do what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, and it was his delight to make the comers unto God perfect through his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross. How much better therefore the obedience of Christ, the Son of God, than all the sheep, oxen, fatlings and spoils of all nations. By the disobedience of one man, Adam, many were made

sinners, so by the obedience of one, even Christ, shall many be made righteous. The Lord has therefore more pleasure in the obedience of his Son than in all the sacrifices from the beginning of the world to the end of the same. Really obedience is the greatest sacrifice the Lord's children can make. To live according to the law of the Lord is to live unto God, sacrificing all things, crucifying the flesh day and night, never yielding to temptation. With such obedience the Lord is well pleased. To hearken to his word is better than the fat of rams. This word is his truth, and his truth is the testimony of Jesus. Not only are the subjects of his kingdom commanded to hearken or hear his word, but to be doers of the word. "If ye know these things happy are ye if ye do them." To be kind and tender-hearted one toward another, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake forgave us, is to do the word. To save a brother rather than kill him is to do the word. To be steadfast, rooted and grounded in the truth, is to do the word; these works are not vain in the Lord. The Lord would have had respect unto the obedience of Saul, but would have had none unto all the sacrifices that all the sheep and oxen and fatlings would have made. If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, nothing can we do to atone for our disobedience, but there remaineth a certain fearful looking for and fiery indignation, which each one must experience for himself or herself. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, yet David preferred it to falling into the hands of his enemies, because the Lord is gracious and merciful. How good that his mercy endureth forever. K.

JOHN XV. 13.

"GREATER love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

A friend of the truth is one who does the truth. Not one who merely professes the truth, but possesses it, and who shows in his works that he does possess it. Works justify faith, because they are the fruit of faith and produced by faith. The works of the flesh are sinful, but the works of the Spirit are righteous, because that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." The evidence that one is a friend of Jesus is that he does what Jesus says. And what did Jesus say? He commanded his disciples to love one another as he had loved them. The followers of Jesus are not to love one another with fleshly, sensual love, but with the same love wherewith they have been loved of Jesus. One who thus finds himself or herself loving the people of God is a friend of Jesus or of truth, for Jesus is truth. Abraham was called the friend of God, because he did the commandment of God. His obedience did not make him a friend of God, but his friendship toward God was evidenced by his obedience, and he was obedient because he was the friend of God, not to make himself the friend of God. Jesus says that no man has a greater love than to lay down his life for his friends, yet the love of God in Christ is as far above the height of man's love as the heavens are above the earth, so that, while a man would do no more than lay down his life for his friends, the love of God surpasses this in that Christ laid down his life for his enemies, for those that despitefully used him, for those who denied and slew him. The love of God for his people is proved in that while they were sinners and enemies

to him, Christ died for them. It is all very well for us to say the Jews crucified the Savior, but there is no escaping the fact that the Gentiles were participants in that crime, and we Gentiles at that, for, while we were not actually there in person, it was our sins and our iniquities nevertheless that drove the nails through his hands and feet and that thrust the spear into his side. The time is come when we are made by faith to look upon him whom we have pierced and to mourn because of him. The love of God is after a wonderful manner, infinitely different from the manner of men. While men might be ready through love to die for those who had or would befriend them, God in Christ suffered death for the salvation and welfare of those who were by nature enemies to godliness. No wonder, then, that John elsewhere says: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." It must follow, then, that if the love of God dwell in us, we shall be found loving not only our friends, but loving our enemies. We are not sure that we have ever loved our enemies, but whether we ourselves have ever done it or not, it must be and is right that the people of God should do so. If we do it not, then the evidence is against our being the people of God. It is a solemn thing to examine one's self to see whether we be in the faith, and then have to conclude that the evidence we wish to find is not in us. It is certain that one will search his flesh in vain for any godly principle. It is only as Christ by his Spirit dwells in us and accomplishes in us that which is right that we can have any encouragement to believe ourselves in the company of the saints of God. However others, whether in the church or out of it, may have trespassed against us or done us hurt, we shall not feel, if Christ be in us, to retaliate or seek revenge, but we shall be given to feel they are ignorant of the harm they have done and will have the principle in us to feel: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Or to feel as did Stephen: "Lay not this sin to their charge." The good works of Jesus were foreordained that the people of God should walk in and enjoy them. This does not mean that it is our duty to walk in them, but that the people of God shall walk in them. Grace will accomplish these good works in them. If we have not these good things abounding in us, it gives cause for serious heart-searchings and prayerful questionings at the throne of grace.

L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder H. H. Lefferts.)

The Juniata Association, in session with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 12th, 13th and 14th, 1917, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is right, in seeking a further continuance of your correspondence with us, which we so much appreciate, that you should receive some token from us as to our position in regard to the doctrine of the Scriptures. We are living in an era of great changes. On every hand we witness an impatience with the old order of things and a restlessness to hurry into untried, new and strange things. New ideas, new manners, new religions crop up any and everywhere. Unless one is steadied and held in check by some solid principle, the strong current of new things threatens to

sweep us along with it. In this letter none of these strange things need occupy us, except the new ideas in religion. There is but one real religion: the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ revealed by the Holy Spirit. Man has tried to improve the old-fashioned doctrine of the apostles and prophets by adding his own ideas and placing his own constructions upon what the doctrine means. Man has also sought to build up many societies and institutions in the name of truth, which belie the Spirit of God's truth as it is in Christ. As for the churches of this association, we have no disposition to remove the ancient landmark which the fathers have set. This ancient landmark is Christ Jesus himself. He was known unto Abel and all down through the prophetic and apostolic line to ourselves. Jesus Christ and him crucified is what true believers need, and all that they need, and a full and complete and finished salvation in Christ for time and eternity is what we believe and is what we preach. Jesus Christ embodies the whole doctrine of God, and the fundamental principles of this doctrine as advocated among us are: foreknowledge, predestination of all things, election, effectual calling, adoption, final preservation of the saints to glory and the resurrection of the dead. These things are commonly believed among us, and we are a fearful people, not fearing men, but God, fearfully anxious to know whether our hope is a good hope through grace, whether our exercises of mind are such as God's people generally have. "Am I his, or am I not?" is a question that often gives us anxious thought. We go to our meetings not to criticise the preacher, but to size up our own individual cases in the light of the preaching, to see whether the gospel gives us sinners a clear title to the mansions in the Father's house. The mercy of God is always enduring, else we could not endure what is going on now in the world and in our own fleshly nature. "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us," else we could not have successfully gotten thus far on our journey through this wilderness world. May the grace of God stablish your and our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

J. M. FENTON, Moderator.

J. C. MELLOTT, Clerk.

(Written by brother King C. Spindle.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the New Valley Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun Co., Va., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 17th, 18th and 19th, 1917, to the churches composing this meeting, and to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been a custom of long standing to address you at these annual meetings in a Corresponding Circular Letter, setting forth some Scripture or point of doctrine for the edification of the saints. We feel to say we are unequal to the task, yet with the help of divine guidance we will give such thoughts as we have on the following Scripture: "He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."—Deut. xxxii. 4. The first clause of our text, "He is the Rock," presents a solid foundation. God is the Rock of our salvation. Upon this Rock God builds his church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. All our fathers "did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ."—1 Cor. x. 4. We wish to confine our writing to the second clause: "His work is perfect." What is God's

work? All things, both visible and invisible, both natural and spiritual; that is, there is nothing past, present or to come but is the work of God. The definition of perfect is complete. Since his work is perfect, it is in the true sense complete. God chose his people in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world. Since his work is perfect, there can be no more choosing. God created in Adam all the human family, a perfect creation, yet it will take until the end of time to bring the last of that human family into existence. Just so with the spiritual family. While they were all chosen in Christ before the world was, it will take until the end of this time state to make the last one manifest. Again, we look with the natural eye and see the perfection of God's work in the creation of the ocean, with the rivers and brooks all joined together in one body. Each river and brook has some office to fill. In the larger streams we find the larger fish, that cannot come into the smaller streams and destroy the smaller fish. Hence the smaller streams are just as necessary as the larger ones. Here we see God made the protection for the fish before he made the fish, otherwise it would not have been a perfect work. We feel to say that as God predestinated the safety of the fish, beasts and birds before there were any of them, so Christ was predestinated for the salvation of his people before there were any of them. When God created Adam and put him in the garden of Eden, he forbade him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, saying: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The penalty, therefore, for eating was death, and the moment the man ate the forbidden fruit, that moment he died, and not himself only, but all his posterity died in him. The wages of sin is death, hence man became dead and can do nothing to bring about or restore life, for by nature the dead remain dead. Paul says, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" We believe the answer to Paul's question is to be found in 1 Peter i. 18–21: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God." Dear brethren, what a perfect hope is this, for God is from everlasting to everlasting, so what could be more perfect? "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." In this was manifested the love of God toward us, in that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, to the end that we should live through him. Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time, but if we love one another, God dwells in us and his love is perfected in us. "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect."—1 John iv. 16, 17.

The next session of this Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Virginia, beginning on

Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1918, and continuing three days, at which time we hope to be privileged to again receive your messengers and letters, and to hear from your ministers.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
S. B. PAXSON, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Roxbury Association of Old School Baptists, in session with the Middletown and Andes Church, Union Grove, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 12th and 13th, 1917, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond sends christian greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The Lord has truly been good to us as an association in gathering us together by his Spirit in brotherly love and fellowship. Your ministers have preached to us the unsearchable riches of Christ, and we have been comforted together in our mutual faith. We hope we have been made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. The preaching has been to many a feast of fat things, and they have been filled with joy and gladness, so that they could feelingly say, "My cup runneth over." We desire a continuance of your correspondence in the future as in the past.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Olive and Hurley Church, Ashokan, N. Y., on the Wednesday and Thursday between the second and third Sunday in September, 1918, commencing at 10:30 a. m.

GEORGE RUSTON, Moderator.
A. J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder John G. Eubanks, October 31st, 1917, at the home of the Misses Sarah and Emma Campbell, Thomas Y. Nichols and Miss Lina Grafton, daughter of the late Elder Wm. Grafton. They will reside at Mr. Nichols' residence, 528 North 34th St., Philadelphia, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Susie L. Kenedy Bloomfield was born near Plymouth, Ill., March 5th, 1863, was married to A. W. Bloomfield July 22nd, 1879, and died in a hospital in St. Joseph, Mo., October 12th, 1917, leaving husband, father and one brother to mourn her departure. She was the daughter of Simeon M. and Malinda Harrison Kenedy. In March, 1880, they moved to Vesta, Nebr., where they found a small pioneer church of Primitive Baptists. In May, 1884, she related the dealings of the Lord with her, and was baptized by the late Elder Isaac Irwin. She moved with her husband to St. Joseph, Mo., in 1887, where they have resided for the past thirty years. When the controversy among the Baptists in northwest Missouri in the early nineties occurred she took a decided stand against the new digressions. She was blessed with a keen insight into spiritual matters; was a constant reader of the Bible and enjoyed the study of its precepts. She preferred the association with God's people to the exclusion of all worldly allurements. She gave much aid to her husband in his professional work as a teacher in the city schools, where he has been employed for twenty-five years, and has written a number of articles for Baptist publications. Her life was a life service as well as sacrifice; not service so often rendered to secure applause of others, but service rendered by a loving and sympathetic heart. Much of her time throughout her whole life was given to the sufferings of the needy. It was remarkable to note the unaffected resignation that possessed her whole being as she approached the river of the valley and shadow of death. I copy a portion of her last letter to her father and only brother, living in Florida: "I know you will be surprised when I tell you I am all ready to go this afternoon at 4 o'clock to the hospital to be operated on. I have known for years that I have a tumor, but was not going to be operated on only as a last resort. Well, that time has come. The operation will take place at 8 o'clock in the morning; I have one more night of this awful suffering. What the end will be we cannot tell, but I do not worry one bit about it. I feel so trustful and wait upon God. You know I never clung to life very strongly; I long to go, yet I am willing to live if God so wills it. I never felt more trustful and willing to wait." Often during the last few hours of her life she remarked to friends who called at the hospital that she was ready to go, for she was at peace with God and all of the world. After passing a restless day, the second after the operation, as the shades of evening came on she complained of the gathering darkness, and as the light faded from her eyes she said, "It is dark here, but it is light beyond," and closed her eyes in death, after bidding a final farewell to husband, father, brother and other relatives. A multitude of friends

mourn her departure to a better world than this. Four years ago she and her husband visited a number of churches in the east, including Baltimore and Black Rock, in Maryland, Hopewell, N. J., and at New York city, meeting and forming acquaintances with Elders Chick, Rowe and McConnell and many precious brethren and sisters.

The funeral occurred on Sunday p. m. at the home. Services were conducted by Elder G. E. Higden, of Richmond, and the writer, after which the mortal remains were placed in a vault, to be transferred to the family plot. SMITH KETCHUM.

Elder S. J. English died at his home near Andersonville, Macon Co., Ga., July 4th, 1916. He was born at the same place of his death August 5th, 1854, making his stay upon earth nearly sixty-two years. His grandfather, Elder Sampson English, came to America from England and settled first in Monroe County, Ga., later moving to Macon County, where the family has lived for three generations. He was ordained to the ministry in the Old School Baptist Church and was a very able and faithful defender of truth. He was among the early subscribers to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He died the last year of the Civil War, leaving several children, one of which was the father of Elder S. J. English. Elder S. J. English was early called to be about his Father's business. He was given a hope in Christ when a boy, baptized in the fellowship of Bluff Springs Old School Baptist Church, near Andersonville, in his sixteenth year, and was ordained to the ministry a few years later, by Elders John Respass, John Rowe and Sikes. He served the churches of his care nearly forty years, making the work of his grandfather and himself in the same churches an almost continual service of nearly one hundred years. Elder English was a man of an uncompromising nature; he esteemed truth above all things else. He was ordained to the ministry about the time that a great revival among Baptists in this section took place, during which the churches went off into the contentions of limited predestination and conditional time salvation. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty and salvation by grace for time and eternity. His whole life was one continual warfare against false doctrine. He was never willing to receive into the church or bid God speed to one bringing in contentions. Truly was he often "in perils among false brethren." He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He could say with Paul: "No man stood with me, but all men forsook me; I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me; that by me the preaching might be fully known." Sad indeed were the hearts of those who loved him because of his declining health, but God spared him to be at his appointment just one month before his death. He sat in a chair, being too weak to stand, and most feelingly set forth the glories of the holy Jerusalem, the bride, the Lamb's wife, descending out of heaven from God. The little band who loved him miss him from their midst, but God's will be done. Truly do we feel that with Paul he could have said: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, I have finished my course. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." ELLA BARFIELD.

William R. Wilson died October 4th, 1917, aged 58 years. He was the son of Alexander Wilson, of near Welsh Tract, Del. Mr. Wilson lived the greater part of his stay on earth in Delaware, and faithfully attended the meetings at Welsh Tract. His first wife was Miss Margaret Staton, eldest daughter of Elder Joseph L. Staton, by whom he had two children, Margaret and Ernest. She died March 4th, 1907. On February 4th, 1915, he was married to Miss Helen R. Badger, daughter of Elder Joseph N. Badger. He is survived by his wife and both children. Mr. Wilson was a lover of the truth as it is in Jesus, a kind and devoted husband and father. He never united with the church. The last twenty years of his life were spent in Wilmington, Del. He attended all the meetings of the church of his preference (the Old School Baptist), and largely and gladly entertained the brethren and friends. The writer has conversed with him on the subject of his hope, and all our social relations resulted in the cementing of a sweet, spiritual fellowship.

He was laid away in the Welsh Tract Cemetery, New Castle Co., Del., on Sunday, October 7th, 1917. The services were conducted by the writer in the presence of a large company of friends and neighbors. May the Lord comfort the bereaved wife and children.

B. F. COULTER.

James Albert Cox, our brother in Christ, departed this life at his home near Roanoke, Va., on Sunday, October 21st, 1917. He was the son of Samuel and Sarah Chamblin Cox, and was born June 21st, 1833, near Middleburg, Va., and lived most of his life in that vicinity. He had four brothers and five sisters, but outlived all of them. He was married to Catherine E. Dodd, the daughter of John W. and Rachel Dodd, Dec. 11th, 1856, and she died Jan. 15th, 1875, leaving two children, both of whom are still living: sister Rosa Garrett, of Leesburg, Va., and William S. Cox, of Fayette, Mo. In 1877 brother Cox married a sister of his first wife, Miss Abbie Dodd, who, with her son, H. R. Cox, of Roanoke, Va., survives our brother Cox. He is also survived by four grandchildren. Brother Cox was baptized about forty-five

years ago by the late Elder Joseph L. Purington, into membership with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Va. The Loudoun Mirror, of Leesburg, Va., says: "Mr. Cox lived for sixty years in this county, where he was well and favorably known, and where he had a host of friends. He was for many years a consistent member of the Old School Baptist Church."

His remains were brought from Roanoke to his native county and buried in the cemetery at Middleburg, Va. Our heart goes out in sincere desire for the comfort and consolation of the sorrowing widow and children. May they realize the presence of Jesus in their affliction. L.

Cora Elnora Pennington, daughter of Solomon and Sue Pennington, was born in Neelyville, Mo., Nov. 14th, 1895, and departed this life Sept. 14th, 1917, aged 21 years and 10 months. She leaves father and mother, two brothers and five sisters, beside a host of relatives and friends to mourn her departure. She never made an open profession of religion, but left evidence of having a hope beyond this veil of tears. I was called upon to preach her funeral, held in the Missionary Baptist meetinghouse at New Hope, Ripley Co., Mo., to a large concourse of people, using as a text Isaiah lxv. 20, trying to set forth the power of God, who gave this natural life and prepared in his Son to give his children eternal life beyond this veil of tears. May he bless this dispensation of his providence to the weeping family and all who mourn for her, and grant them submission to the fast ripening of his purposes, which unfold every hour.

B. H. YATES.

APPOINTMENTS.

PLEASE publish the following appointments and oblige:

Trenton, N. J., Friday, Nov. 16th, 7:45 p. m.; Stockton, N. J., Saturday, 17th, Mrs. Horner's, 2:30 p. m.; Locktown, N. J., Sunday, 18th, 10:30 a. m.; Frenchtown, N. J., 4 p. m.; Tuesday, 20th, Grandon, N. J., A. J. Demott's, 7:30 p. m.

D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Wm. Brayton, Iowa, $1.00; Reuben C. Clark, Maine, $1.00; Mrs. Margaret Hale, Ont., $2.00; John Rockafellow, N. Y., $3.00.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

GEORGE D. CONKLIN has changed his address from Warwick, N. Y., to Box 412, Benton, Ill.

NOTICE.

PLEASE say to the readers of the SIGNS that my address is 416 No. 59th St., Philadelphia, Pa. I am receiving letters with no street address, and it makes extra work for the post-office clerks to refer to the city directory to find my street address.

A. T. BENSON.

A CORRECTION.

IN the SIGNS for November 1st, current volume, page 483, first column, seventeenth line, the word "not" is omitted. The sentence should read: "We know not what we shall be."

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

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1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 85. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1917. NO. 23.

CORRESPONDENCE.

1 PETER I. 1, 2.

"PETER, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God."

We notice Peter is addressing strangers. God's chosen people, after they are called with a holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his purpose, are now, and always will be, a peculiar people to the carnally-minded. God made choice of a portion of the human race to salvation and eternal glory before the world began. Paul said to the church at Ephesus: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." If there is an elect, it necessarily follows there is a nonelect. The disciples of the Savior asked him why he spake in parables. He told them, Because unto you it is given to understand the things of the kingdom of heaven, but to those without it is not given. Again he said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes, because it seemed good in thy sight. The potter has perfect sovereignty over the clay, to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor. The Creator has the same right concerning his creatures. I am God, and beside me there is none else; for this reason ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. (Mal. iii. 6.) Jesus appeared to John on the isle of Patmos and said to him, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."—Rev. i. 18. Keys are used to lock and unlock doors. Certainly no one ever dies or enters hell without the door of death and that of hell being unlocked. Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."—John xiv. 6. The unregenerate, even so-called D. D.'s, assail with vehemence the doctrine of election. "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places." —Psalms cxxxv. 6. Many have asserted that if God does not give all men a chance to be saved he is unjust. Since every imagination of the heart in man is evil,

and that continually, a chance of salvation without salvation itself would be worthless. The heart in man is said by the word of inspiration to be deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked—the elect before regeneration, as well as the nonelect. The Savior said, Except a man be born again he can neither see nor enter the kingdom of heaven. The new birth is Christ in the soul the hope of glory, without which no one has ever or ever will see God. The natural man understandeth not the things of the Spirit of God, they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. God is a spirit, and seeketh such to worship him as worship in spirit and in truth. Formal worship is idolatry. I asked a preacher not long since if he could harmonize the doctrine of election and a general atonement. He said it depended on how one understood the doctrine of election. He said one by obedience could elect himself, and that God would save all sinners if they would let him. He also said that God was disappointed in the way men acted before the flood, and for that reason repented he had made man, and in consequence brought on the flood for his destruction. Such talk is a reflection on the majesty of the King of saints. Some men are more to be pitied than blamed for such views as the above. To please people in preaching is to preach something they desire to hear; the truth only pleases a few. When Christ told the multitude that there were many lepers in Israel in the days of Elijah, but to none of them was Elijah sent save Naaman, who was a leper, and that there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elias the prophet, but to none of them was Elias sent but unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, to a woman that was a widow, they undertook to cast him headlong down the hill on which their city was built, but he passed out of their way. Leprosy is a type of sin. The doctrine the Savior was preaching to them was that of election. That is the effect to this day that the truth has on unbelievers. Paul said to the saints, The more I love you the less I am beloved (by the world he meant). Peter told those strangers that they were elected to an incorruptible inheritance, and were kept by the power of God. Surely they were perfectly safe. Jesus said, If they hate you, marvel not; they hated me before they hated you. Peter admonished those strangers to love each other with a pure heart fervently, that they were born again, not of corruptible seed, but by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. The Arminian will ask, What will you do with the Scripture that says, Make your calling and election sure? Paul said to Timothy, Take heed to thyself and the doctrine; in so doing you will both save thyself and them that hear thee. One of the writers of the Old Testament said, Obedience is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. Some of God's elect lead a wild or ungodly life, and are saved, yet as by fire. Our God is a consuming fire, so says the word of truth. Those who walk as Zechariah and Elizabeth of old did, in the ordinances of God blameless, have less doubts and fears than those who fail to take heed to their ways. If the alien or unregenerate sinner has any share in his salvation then salvation is a joint matter, and the creature is entitled to part of the glory. "I am the Lord; that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images."—Isaiah xlii. 8. When Joshua said to the Hebrews, Choose you this day whom you will serve, whether the gods of the fathers before the flood

or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye now dwell, the only option the Hebrews had was the two heathen gods. Joshua said, As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. It was Israel's God he meant to worship, and his house was that portion of the people who had been born of the Spirit of God. The same way with Gideon; those who lapped water like dogs were the portion that bore witness of a heavenly birth. Gideon was chosen of God to lead that little band of only three hundred to put to flight thousands. It is possible when led by the Spirit of God for one to chase a thousand, and two to put ten thousand to flight. The apostle Paul tells us that when Rebecca had conceived by one, even our father Isaac, the children being not yet born, neither having done good or evil, but that the purpose of God according to election might stand, it was said unto her (by Almighty God), The elder shall serve the younger. Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. Paul said, They are not all Israel who are of Israel, but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. Again he said, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved according to the election of grace. I feel sometimes that I can adopt the language of the apostle of the Gentiles when he said to the church at Galatia, I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. David said, Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. The sins of all of God's elect are imputed to Christ, and his righteousness is imputed to them. God made Jesus Christ to his elect, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Paul said, Christ was made to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. The "us" here spoken of takes in all the elect of God of all ages and climes. The Savior said to his disciples, Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit. The Savior said, By their fruits ye shall know them. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law. God has and will call all of his elect people, from Abel to the last day. Paul told Timothy to be a partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God, who hath saved us and called us, not according to our works, but according to his purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. He also calls and qualifies his ministers to preach his everlasting gospel. Paul said he was not taught it by man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ, and that no man taketh this honor to himself, but those who are called of God, as was Aaron. He also preserves his elect. The Savior said, My sheep hear my voice, and I know them; I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. In the seventeenth chapter of John is recorded the prayer of the Savior. He says of all the Father gave him he had lost none, only the son of perdition. He also says, I pray not for the world, but for those thou hast given me. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me. The prophet Nahum said, The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and he knows them that trust in him. Doubtless many of God's chosen people do not believe the doctrine of election, but that by no means changes the truthfulness thereof. Some

disbelieve it from a standpoint of the goodness of God, others from a standpoint of justice. They think it could not be just to elect or choose some and leave others out. That is a matter entirely with God, which man has nothing to do with. Known unto God are all his works, from the foundation of the world. No man has the right to say, Jehovah, what doest thou? No man in an unregenerated state believes in the sovereignty of God, not even the most learned doctors of divinity (so-called by men); neither do they believe in revealed religion. A very large majority of professed christians believe that morality is religion. Morality is commendable in all, but it requires more than that to constitute the religion of Christ. Some of the very vilest sinners are called of God, after which they confer not with flesh and blood. In the new birth divine light shines in the heart, and gives knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. That light is life, and comes direct from God, and is the only way any one ever has or ever will know God, whom to know is life eternal.

May God give his dear people everywhere to say, Not my will, but thine be done, O God.

JAMES M. SIMMONS.

RULEVILLE, Mississippi.

ST. THOMAS, Ont., August 30, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER FENTON:—A few lines replying to your letter received shortly after you returned home from Canada. I am glad that you were blessed to enjoy the quarterly meeting at Ekfrid. To me it was a very precious season in the felt presence of the Lord. The sweet fragrance of humility filled the house, which has left a lasting savor, for which we feel thankful to the Lord. How needful and how sweet is the spirit of humility, yet how painful to the flesh. No greater evidence can a child of grace have of his acceptance in the Beloved than to be humbled at the feet of his blessed Lord and at the feet of his brethren. To occupy the place of a servant is a safe place to be in, and when actuated by the Spirit of our blessed Master it is the place desired by the Lord's little ones. There can be no kings in Zion, for the Lord alone is King of kings and Lord of lords. He alone keeps Zion, and he alone rules in her, from whence cometh the sweet fragrance of humility. The first and one of the essential spices that composed the anointing oil was camphor; not the gum which is derived from the camphor tree, but the spice of that low flowering shrub which is a type of the spirit of humility. This low flowering shrub produces one of the chief spices of the anointing oil. The flowers are pure white and very fragrant, and the fruit of this lowly shrub is the first and among the chief spices of the anointing oil. Humility is the first and among the chief fruits of the Spirit. How brilliant the spirit of humility shone forth in the Man of sorrows, and the one that was acquainted with grief. Nothing can more beautifully set forth the manifestation of that pure spirit than humility; nothing has a sweeter fragrance than humility. How needful then the anointing of that sweet spice growing on that lowly shrub. What a beautiful type of our blessed Lord! The flowers being of pure white, show the purity of the life of the shrub, and as the life, so the fruit; every seed must bring forth after its kind. This law cannot be violated, for it is the law of God. Hence Paul was inspired to write: For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

What a wonderful victory through our blessed Lord. How wonderfully it is manifested in his saints by the felt presence of his blessed Spirit. O how sweet the seasons of that felt freedom from sin and death; even though they may be short, yet they leave a lasting fragrance that is very sweet in the dark hours of the experience of the saints. My earnest desire and prayer for Zion is that she may feel the evidence of the anointing of the blessed Spirit, and that more of the fruits of the choice spices may be found on her branches.

I regret that I shall not be able to attend the fall associations, but such seems to be my lot, so I hope to be content and say, Not my will, but thine, be done.

With love to you and all the friends, I am your brother in gospel bonds,

J. B. SLAUSON.

DAYTON, Ohio, June 18, 1917.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—This most beautiful summer afternoon I feel deeply impressed to converse with you for awhile through the silent whisperings of the pen, but fear I shall not be able to write anything of interest unless the dear Lord directs my thoughts. It is indeed with solemnity that I now attempt to write, and surely when we enter the abode of the blest, where Jehovah dwells and reigns in all his majesty and power, that solemnity will fill our souls. How wonderful to think that just across that silent stream dwells Jesus, the dear Savior, and about him are the apostles and prophets, of whom we have so often heard. Dear ones, is it not soul-cheering to know that at some time we shall be released from this life of sin and death and clothed with immortality and light, to awake with the likeness of the dear Redeemer and dwell evermore with him? How precious it will be. O the matchless goodness of God's wondrous, encircling love. We pray, we hunger and thirst after righteousness, wilt thou answer our prayers? Many times we are surprised that he so kindly answers our petitions, are we not? and we exclaim as did Jacob, "All these things are against me," forgetting the while that he will try us as gold is tried and that in the furnace of affliction he has chosen us. Looking away beyond these things to the suffering, the agony, the groans of the dear Savior, who in all our afflictions was afflicted, and who by his death brought salvation unto us, can we not find grace and comfort and help in every time of need? O what a blessed Savior he is to us, and how blessed we are through him. Have we not need to praise and adore one who has done such wonders for poor, sinful worms of the dust as we are? We know that Jesus will save his people, but O, what is there in poor, unworthy me to merit esteem or give the Creator delight? Many times I am filled with fear and trembling at the thought of leaving this prison of clay, yet I must remember that our glorified and risen Savior once suffered the same in his human nature, though in far deeper degree of pain and anguish and woe. Let us look at him in the garden of Gethsemane, where he sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, and when he cried in anguish of soul, "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass;" and even when groaning in all the agony of his ignominious death upon the cross he cried in anguish, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" I believe that some of us may have to mourn an absent Lord even when we come down to the very gates of death. Our sun may be beneath a cloud, but he is there just the same, and when his light bursts through the darkness will

it not be the light of immortal glory? Dear friends, but for the fact of revelation we must be ignorant of what is to be revealed in us in the glorious resurrection day, that day to be made glorious at the second coming of our Lord Jesus. No amount of human study, no imagination of the philosopher, can ever penetrate the future and bring to us the glory of the future life. God hath revealed it to us by his Spirit. Paul was not taught it, but by revelation. Do we not know, dear friends, that all our thoughts after the flesh are folly? Jesus is made wisdom and power to poor sinners, that their thoughts after all worldly things are folly. Do poor sinners not know that in themselves they are all unrighteousness? Therefore the blessed Jesus is made their righteousness. Do not poor sinners feel the utter pollution of their own nature? yet Jesus is made their sanctification. Do we not all feel the slavery to flesh? Jesus is made unto us all an eternal redemption. Blessed are those who are made conscious that they have an interest in that everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure. Do we not many times find ourselves looking for the warfare to cease and the journey of life to end? Our strength may begin to fail and disease fasten upon us, and we see no way whereby we can press on. The frail house of the earthly tabernacle seems ready to be dissolved, and we feel and desire to be ready to go when the summons comes. With an eye of faith we must look to our great Leader, who goes before us and overcomes every enemy for us.

Now if what I have written does not meet with your approval, dear editors, cast the mantle of charity over all mistakes, and believe me your unworthy sister, LIDA KELLER.

JONAH IV. 11.

"WHEREIN are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand, and their left hand."

Adam was not informed of the nature of his existence until after he was created, nor was Jonah informed that he was to show in an especial manner to a gainsaying and idolatrous world that almighty power existed that held the destinies of all men in his control. Jonah, like nearly all who have been called by grace, that mysterious still small voice that speaks to the thoughts, that turns men and nations at the Lord's bidding, doubted his call. Could it be the Lord of heaven that spoke thus to him? Could he have been sure that the stirring up of his mind was the result of a spiritual birth, and that he was being taught the lessons of a new life, which was capable of heavenly enjoyment in the favor of God, or terrible distress when punished for disobedience, he of course would have obeyed at once the voice that bade him go to Nineveh; but he was one chosen among all the doubting ones to be shown and to show before the world that the Creator had the same power over death that he had to give life in the beginning. Jesus said that the only sign that should be given to the world was the sign of the prophet Jonas: "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."—Matt. xii. 40. Jonah was conscious enough of the voice that spoke to him in his own country to do a great amount of arguing. That is the way with most of us before we try to follow the Lord and do his commands; for we are in our own country, and usually contented there until the voice speaks to us of a better country. We are never to rest in that state any more, but argu-

ments and restlessness are our portion by day and by night. When Jonah was discouraged, with the feeling that the Lord had not supported his preaching, he went back to his old arguments, that the word that was put in his mouth would not be fulfilled. How many are asking that question in all our congregations: Will the Lord fulfill his promises in the book? How strong they could go forward if they could have the evidence beforehand. Look over the records and see if any had a sure evidence before they obeyed the Lord's commands. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. Esther received her evidence when she went before the king, but she had asked all her people to pray for her, and she went with prayer on her lips for herself and her people. Ruth received her first evidence of a welcome in small handfuls, but in fullness in due time. The same Power that created man called his people one and all, and they come doubting and praying for light and guidance. Some must go down into the depths of despair, that others may find comfort from their words. The world sees nothing of the work going on in the thoughts. Those who are led by the Spirit look at the sixscore thousand persons about them that do not know these things at all, and ask, How is it all these arguments are with me all the days? But Jonah was made a sign to the people of Nineveh, for the people repented at the preaching of Jonas. I sometimes wonder if a life according to the faith that is given us in Jesus is not noticed more by those around us than we are aware of. One thing Jonah did know: he knew what it was to hear the word of the Lord, and until he preached it the people of Nineveh had not heard it. It should have been some comfort to him to have a message entrusted to him, and to be faithful in delivering it, but it was not a popular doctrine he was sent to preach; he could not prepare a pleasing discourse beforehand, but was charged to preach unto the city just what the Lord bade him, and Jonah had tried disobedience once. Even if the Ninevites appeared to him to be entirely worldly minded, Jonah knew his right hand from his left, if his audience did not, and he must preach the truth as he had received it from the Spirit and learned it in his recent experience. When a man gets up to preach he does not always know what is in the minds of his hearers. Some of them may know the Spirit's teachings, even though there be sixscore thousand that have never heard the still small voice. There is not much change yet in the work of the Spirit; the world at large is still asking for a sign of the faith of the saints. But Jonah, who knew his right hand from his left, even if he did not feel competent to do the Spirit's bidding, fled from his own country. His condition and associations there were intolerable (an illustration of the way one feels when awakened by the Holy Spirit) and after that he found no place of rest until he had done the Lord's will. He still found discouragement in the way, but it was impossible for him to go back to his own country. He said under conditions that he could not forget that salvation is of the Lord, and if in times of spiritual darkness he thought of getting back to his former condition he had only to remember the condition he was in when he made his vow. His distress was for the comfort of many. They must go forward with doubts and trembling. But consider the way you have come thus far, and the darkness around you when you made your vows, and that now you do know your right hand from

your left, even in times when you complain of spiritual darkness. There is no other darkness equal to the darkness of ignorance, nor light equal to that of the divine message that enlightens the mind to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

A. E. RITTENHOUSE.

STATE ROAD, Delaware.

"DRINK YE ALL OF IT."

(Matt. xxvi. 27.)

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—If the patience and charity of your readers will allow, I will offer something on the life of Judas Iscariot, and what I believe to have been his part in the true ministry and at the last supper. We cannot enter into this matter as it is in Jesus unless it is done in the Spirit. If we are to measure the life of Judas it must be by what he was by grace, and not by works. The attitude of Jesus toward him must not be made to tally with our experience of natural parents toward their children, for any such conclusion is of the earth earthy, and not in accord with the loving-kindness and tender mercy of our heavenly Father. Where is the man who has been taught that his "heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," and yet feels to hope in the grace and mercy of God, that cannot find comfort in the thought that Jesus included this wicked murderer in the command to "drink ye all of it"? How many would partake of communion in the church if they waited until their heart was any the less wicked or deceitful than the heart of Judas Iscariot? I have never felt to be any more worthy by my works of the grace of God than I consider Judas to have been, and I feel that the same grace and power which I hope saves me and gives me a place at the table of the Lord is able to save to the uttermost, and it is among this class that we find Judas. Judas was not the last called and chosen minister of Jesus to become a castaway, for the way to the grave is strewn with shipwrecked lives, yet the "foundation of God standeth sure," and not one of the ransomed shall ever be (forever or eternally) lost. What a mockery to offer prayer in the death-house of the prison if no murderer reaches heaven. What a farce to sing of the great and loving-kindness of the Lord if he does not save to the uttermost, and if his patience, love and charity do not far exceed that of our parents of flesh. The four gospels show Judas as present at the last supper. Jesus recognized him as "one of you" on that occasion. Peter said of him, "He was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry," —Acts i. 17, but his course was such that Peter also said, "His bishoprick let another take;" just as the church has been called upon to say many times since. Nevertheless, "the Lord knoweth them that are his," and no man has a right to frustrate the grace of God by attempting to pass judgment on the eternal welfare of Judas or any one else. I am not so strenuous over this matter, only for the reason that if only those to "drink ye all of it" are to be free from a wicked, deceitful and murderous heart, then there is no more walking with the church for me. My comfort, hope and confidence in the God of heaven are that there is nothing too hard for him; that not one of his children is too vile for him to own. Jesus never even exposed Judas at the supper, so the others never knew while the supper was serving that he should betray Jesus. Each of them was so busy with the question, "Is it I?" that they never even understood the plain accusation of Jesus to Judas. Was it not indeed a

complete communion, each one looking on his own faults? It was not necessary for them to accuse poor Judas, for he surely felt his sin and shame, to the extent that he took his own life. According to popular ideas of finance, Jesus was very shortsighted to allow this thief to carry "the bag," and it is no wonder that those who have never tasted of the grace and mercy of God cannot credit him with having all power and wisdom; but we who have felt how patient and merciful he is can understand in some degree why Judas was never cast out. It is a lying vanity for us to hold out the idea that the wicked life of the covetous, thieving, murderous Judas separated him from the love and mercy of our Lord, and we "forsake our own mercy" if we attempt to separate them. May the Lord give us grace to compare "spiritual things with spiritual," rather than be left to conclude that heavenly and divine things are to correspond with our experience, with the mean and beggarly things of this vile earth.

Yours sincerely, I hope, but unworthily I know, E. R. KINNEY.

ASHOKAN, N. Y., August, 1917.

FAYETTEVILLE, Ga., Sept. 27, 1917.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—As I was reading the SIGNS to-night I remembered some of the letters I received from brethren who said they were comforted by my writing, and I feel a desire to write, if it is the Lord's will. Elder D. M. Vail wrote me a card saying my letter was a joy to him. It was comforting to me to know that those old fathers in Israel who know so much more than I, can get comfort from such poor attempts as mine, and it is also humiliating, for if he knew how wicked I am I do not think he could have any confidence in my writing. I also received a letter recently from one who had just read some of last year's SIGNS, and it is encouraging to this poor sinner. I have written only once this year, and it was not published, for which I feel thankful. I do not know what to write. Our pastor has been sick nearly all the year; has preached for us only once, and I have grown cold (have been that way all the time, am afraid) and careless, having so many worldly cares, so much work, and not able to hire hands. I want to go to my association (The Primitive Western), but it seems almost hopeless. It is raining now, and part of my crop is being ruined, but that is God's work and is for good, so I am trying to be submissive, for I believe, I hope, that he will care for us if he destroys all we have. It is all his, and we have no right to even ask him why, much less complain.

I want to tell some of my thoughts during the past months. I fear to do so, lest some will think I want to appear good. I want to be good, but cannot. I am a good (or bad) deceiver. If I am a child of God I am an unworthy one. Even the murderers of Christ were not worse than I feel to be at times. I have been exercised about family prayer for several months. It was not burdensome, as some tell of their trials, but it was on my mind a great deal. When I could first remember there was more family prayer than now, and I know we need it as much as they did. I do not know but one preacher nor a deacon of our order, (I mean know how they live at home) who holds daily prayer at home, and I felt that if it were any one's duty to pray it was their's, for the family looks to them for example, and as we read in the Bible, they should be above reproach. All members should live above reproach, and it seems to me that it is their duty to read

and pray, thereby setting an example for their children and others about them. If the leaders in the church do not set good examples who will? If they neglect these things the weaker ones are sure to do so, then what kind of a church condition will exist with such carelessness? I believe the neglect of duty is what ails the church to-day. The thought of prayer was with me, but I was so vile, and people knew it, I could not kneel in their presence, for they would not have any confidence in me. If I ever prayed, I did so the first time I tried it in public, and only those who have had the experience know how I felt. A brother was talking and asked me to pray for him. I protested, but the pastor said, "Let us bow with brother George." Having been taught to obey, by my parents, I feared to disobey my heavenly Father, so I tried to pray for all who needed help, in one petition. When they spoke of me being a deacon the thought of prayer was stronger, also other duties. I was not fit for a church member, much less for a deacon, but I must submit, so was ordained by our pastor, Elder B. C. Caldwell, Elders R. L. Cook, J. A. Jordan, brother Rees and Deacon A. M. Keith. I felt when I joined the church that I was a worse sinner than before, so I feel to be still worse, and it seems that I get worse as I grow older. Do you wonder that I should feel like I ought to pray? I have been trying in my poor, weak, sinful way to pray every night for ten months. I do not feel that it makes me any better, but if I am one for whom the blessed Redeemer died, I owe him all the service I can give, and if I could live as good as I wish as long as time lasts, I owe my life to him, without one particle of honor for myself. Just think what an awful sacrifice he made for us, and then we forget and trample his mercies under our feet. Yes, I need all the prayers I can utter and all the dear people of God can send up for me. They do not send them up, but it is the Spirit that carries them to the Father. It seems we ought not to forget God's goodness after he has done so much for us, but I am so sinful I do forget to read and pray sometimes, but my dear companion, who, it seems, was intended for a deacon's wife, reminds me of it.

This is imperfect, and is at the disposal of the editors, who, I believe, are competent, by the direction of the Spirit, to judge. May God bless you all and spare the SIGNS many years. Some papers have already been thrown out of the mail, which makes me quake within, for persecution is near, but Daniel's God is our God, and I hope to fear him more than all else. Pray for me.

A sinner,

GEORGE W. JACKSON.

DIVIDE, W. Va., Nov. 18, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter written by my brother-in-law, W. C. Pennington, who was also a precious brother in Christ, I hope. He died Nov. 13th, 1917, at the age of thirty-five years, having been born in November, 1882, I do not remember the exact date. Many readers of the SIGNS will be filled with grief, as we are, to know of his death, because he was a well beloved brother, whose membership was with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, of the Pocatalico Association. It is so hard to say, Thy will be done, because he was, we believe and hope, a christian, and often enlightened us on parts of the Scriptures, and was also our friend and brother in time of sickness and need. He often said, "If there is any good done by me, give God the praise, for there is no good

in me." The following letter is a type of his character and life. He leaves one sister and four brothers. We have to bow in submission to God's holy will.

His unworthy sister in hope,

OTHA PENNINGTON.

YAWKEY, W. Va., Nov. 26, 1915.

W. L. PENNINGTON—DEAR BROTHER:—I received your letter this evening, and was truly glad to hear from you. I am staying at home a great deal of my time now. Father is not very well; he has been in bed most of the time for about three weeks, and has been suffering severely the last three days. No, I am not expecting you to help father; we can get along some way. Sampson still helps, though he does not want to stay here. You have my sympathy in your affliction. I am sorry for any one who is afflicted, and I hope the Lord will give you strength sufficient to sustain you and family. All power belongs to the Lord. The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away; blessed be the name of the Lord. He afflicts, and he binds up; he kills, and he makes alive; he works all things after the counsel of his own will, and none can hinder him, and I feel glad to know he is a God that none can hinder, for men would rule us out of eternal glory if they could, but they cannot. Yes, to have Jesus is all, for our life here is but vapor, but there is a life beyond the grave that is not vapor, and though after the skin, worms destroy my body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. O how I (Adam) hated to die this first death from sin, yet it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, to reveal his Son in me, and call me out of darkness into his marvelous light of truth, and in this truth I was made to rejoice, but before the light came I hated this truth. Just so it is with us again, we hate to die the second death and leave this world. O foolish man! But to our surprise, beyond the grave it will be a much greater life to live than to live here. Yes, we dread to die now, but some time we will be made to rejoice that we have died, and it is just as sure to be this way as it was with us when we were called out of darkness and made to rejoice. Paul could view this when he said that the suffering of this present time is not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. Yes, I have suffered affliction for the afflicted, and I have suffered in my own body, and also have dreaded death, but all this is nothing compared with being in Christ Jesus; for blessed is he that has part in the first resurrection, for on such the second death hath no power. Christ is the first resurrection, and all who believe in him are in the first resurrection, and the "us" were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. The choice of God, the elect, the bride, the Lamb's wife, the church of the living God, my dove, my undefiled, is but one, and the choice one of her that bare her, and man cannot defile her, for she is all pure within, and she only loves one man, the man Christ Jesus, and I am glad to know that this bride cannot be defiled. Christ loved her with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness draws her, and all her members are with her, not one of them lost. Yes, some time I hope to rejoice that I am gone from this troublesome world. The world is all right, but man born of woman is of but few days, and full of trouble; and so it is with me, my time is filled with trouble. I hope for pleasure, but trouble comes; but we have got to have tribulation here if we are in Christ Jesus, for these are they which came up out of great tribulation,

having their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. Tribulation works experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts.

Well, I must bring this letter to a close, as it is too lengthy now. Write soon if you can.

Your brother in tribulation,

W. C. PENNINGTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Sept. 18, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—How shall we draw the line between that which is good and that which is evil, between truth and error, between the works of God and the deceitfulness of the carnal mind? We try to draw the line by natural reasoning, but in that we fail, because reason cannot enter into the mysteries of the kingdom of God. It (carnal reason) endeavors to work out the problem of life by the process of a human will-power, not having a knowledge of the power and wisdom of God. It discourses upon the judgments of God, knowing nothing of God or his judgments. There were certain men who told Jesus of the Galilæans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, "Suppose ye that these Galilæans were sinners above all the Galilæans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower of Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Carnal reason judged that it was not a hard matter for one to repent, and that it required one to be a wicked man that he should need to repent. Reason says: Simply believe and salvation will come your way. So the scientific mind cannot draw any line that is truthful, because it cannot go beyond its own narrow environment. The testimony of God (divine Scripture) tells the believer that, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin," and that faith is the gift of God, and man has no power to attain to it, neither can he reject it, neither has man the power to repent. Peter (by inspiration) said, "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye [unbelievers] slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Our faith is Jesus, for he is that faith for which we are to contend earnestly, "which was once delivered unto the saints." Then "the grace of God which bringeth salvation" must come to us, we cannot go to it. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." The grace of God through faith raiseth the dead sinner to life eternal; it opens the blind eyes, unstops the deaf ears, and with life cometh wisdom, knowledge and understanding of the things of God, which things are hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes (in Christ). Now wisdom draws the line between the things which come up out of the earth and the things which come down from heaven. Faith exercises us unto good works. The light of faith reveals the exceeding sinfulness of sin in the charnel-house of our earthly tabernacle. We hunger and thirst after righteousness, and we have the precious promise that we shall be filled. We now know that carnal reasoning cannot enter into the mysteries of God's kingdom, but the man of sin is clearly revealed to those to whom salvation is sent; our walk is by faith,

and not by sight. The beauties of holiness shed a glory over our affections, which are upon the things from above, and not upon the things of earth. We do not always know whether our walk is by faith or sight, because our minds are finite and sin is mixed with all we do, but by the operation of the Spirit of Christ our faith worketh repentance, and hope appears as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, entering into the secrets of God's holy love, and we cry, with one of old: "I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me." We seek a country not hitherto known, but by faith we behold with joy and gladness, not very far off. May our hearts be attuned to the glory of God's grace continually.

B. F. COULTER.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 19, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending you a letter for publication in the SIGNS, if you think best. I received it last June from brother Jabez Butler, who is a soldier "at the front" in France. He was baptized in Winnipeg, Canada, about two years ago, and was among those who constituted the church in that city.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

LONDON, Ontario, June 19, 1917.

DEAR ELDER DURAND:—I thought I must write you one more letter ere I leave my native land. I am on draft for the front, and expect to leave on Thursday, the 21st. I do not know what is in store for me in the near future. The poet wrote:

"My God, I would not long to see
My fate with curious eyes;
What gloomy lines are writ for me,
Or what bright scenes may rise.

In thy fair book of life and grace
O may I find my name
Recorded in some humble place,
Beneath my Lord, the Lamb."

This suits me at the present time. I want to realize more of the satisfaction that my name is written in heaven, and that all will be well with me, come life or come death. I am firmly of the opinion that He who has helped me hitherto can help me all my journey through. May the God of all grace give me all the faith which I so much stand in need of, so that I can trust him where I cannot trace him. He has promised to be with me in all places whithersoever I go, and at times I believe he will fulfill that promise, but if he is pleased to withhold the light divine we lose our signs, and Satan tempts us to give up, and tells us it is no use for us to pray. What a mercy it is when we can resist him and tell him he ever was a liar.

Yes, this terrible war does try our faith, and we wonder where the scene will end. May it please God to speedily fulfill his purpose and bring the war to an end. The bud is indeed bitter, but God has promised that sweet shall be the flower. Your letter gave me encouragement to hope on against hope, feeling that you are in the same pathway as myself, viz., a feeling sense of unworthiness, sin and sinfulness, and a questioning if after all am I in the good old beaten track which saints in all ages have trodden. We read it is through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom, but at times our pathway seems so peculiar that we cannot trace the leadings and dealings of our God. Is it not strange that we receive encouragement through hearing of others having the same feelings in tribulations, sorrows and afflictions, and their deliverances out of them? Yes, we need new evidences all the time. I feel to need the prayers of the saints of God more than ever; the older I get the worse I seem to grow. My own bad heart creates me smart, which none but God can

know. May he enable me to confess and forsake my sins and implore his forgiveness.

Horace Reed expects to leave with me on Thursday. I hope we shall be able to be at the same base and often be in each other's company. May God hear the many prayers which are being put up by his godly parents, and restore him to them again. I trust he may go back to them a sensible sinner, with no hope but in the Savior of sinners. If this is the case, there will be hope in his end when that time may come.

Now I would endeavor to once more commit you and your dear daughter, and all those near and dear to you, into the hands of the God of all grace. May he abundantly bless you, is the desire of your brother in love and fellowship in the sweet things of God,

JABEZ BUTLER.

Greetings from far away California, to the beloved brethren at New Valley.

My thoughts are of you to-day, and my greatest earthly desire is to be with you, but your feast will also be my fatness, for my heart beats faster and love grows stronger as I think of the joyful sound to which you have the great privilege of listening. Though a great distance from you, we are bound together with an invisible cord, and it will bring to me an unwritten message of continued love and fellowship. My sincere prayer is that every hour of the association may prove for your good and His glory. "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

Unworthily your sister,

MARY E WRIGHT.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., Oct. 11, 1917.

MOTHER.

WHAT fragrance is wrought in that word to me, and as I meditate upon it the days of my childhood come before me, when I remember the kind and tender care that was mine to receive from a dear and blessed mother. She was the one who could soothe my troubles, and the one who put me to bed and saw that I was snugly covered up for the night. As I grew to manhood I could see along the way her ever tender care for my welfare. When quite young she said to me, "Whatever you do, be able to do it, if only driving cows." This advice has ever remained with me. My visits to her home in her last days were precious. When I would leave there was always a kiss and a pat upon the back; but that has all ceased, for the Lord has taken her to himself, and I have the remembrance of those days as a lasting and blessed treasure. I believe my mother is in the paradise of God, and I am thinking of the blessedness of God in so wisely providing not only earthly, but heavenly relationship. Jerusalem, which is above, is the mother of us all (the household of faith), and what a blessed gift of God, through the Lord and Savior, that the church is established in the earth for the comfort of the children. How good to look up to her and seek to know her mind. It is with her to judge and decide matters relating to her welfare. We often drift into the habit of a few prominent members deciding the important matters, whereas it is the church, the mother, as a whole, that is to be considered. Let us honor our Father (God) and our mother (the church), that our days may be long upon the land which the Lord our God giveth us.

J. M. FENTON.

ROGERS, Ky., Nov. 6, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed please find post-office money order for four dollars, for which you will credit the subscription of the late Wm. C. Cornett, of Rogers, Ky. Wm. C. Cornett, my father, has been dead almost two years, and trouble, grief and neglect is the cause for my not notifying you. Please excuse me for my neglect in this matter. My father loved to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for it sets forth the doctrine and principles of truth as he experienced and believed the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace, through faith, the gift of God, and I, his daughter, believe as he did, for it was by mercy that I was saved; not by works nor merit on my part, but by the meritorious blood of Jesus. Elder P. R. Hobbs, of Whisman, Ky., constituted a Primitive Baptist Church in our little town (Rogers) over two years ago, and my father, one sister and myself were in the constitution, although my father was a member, of Primitive faith, over forty-five years. We are prospering by the love of God, and adhere closely to the order of the house. We have no communication with the "ites" of the land as far as church relationship is concerned. We feel that we are of the chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, as spoken of by the apostle Peter. It is food to our hungry souls when we read the precious letters written in the SIGNS. It is lovely and joyful to us when our pastor, Elder P. R. Hobbs, comes, the first Saturday and Sunday in each month, and preaches glad tidings to us, unfolding the great mysteries of the wisdom of God, that mighty men in nature know nothing about. He comes to us endued with power from on high, for no man can unfold the glorious gospel unless it is by the Spirit of inspiration. He brings to our understanding that the Lord's people are the lost, dead, blind, poor and naked, and that our blessed Jesus came to seek and to save the lost, and declared the dead shall hear and live, for Jesus gives them eternal life. He consoles us with the blessed promise that we shall never perish (a nail in a sure place against apostasy). That sight is given to the blind, that by the remission of sins the poor are made rich, in having the gospel preached to them, in declaring that they are blessed, and that theirs is the kingdom of heaven, and to the naked, he clothes them with the best robe, the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, and that Jesus is our present help in time of need, and that everything that his humble poor needs was given in Jesus before the world was, but is made manifest by Jesus in his time according to the purpose given in him, and that he saves his people with an everlasting salvation. Being saved with such a salvation, and it being everlasting, we are not afraid of falling from grace, for such are not their own keepers, but are kept by the power of God, ready to be revealed at the last day, when Jesus will say, Father, here are they thou gavest me, and I have kept them in thy name (not one missing).

May God bless you all, and enable you to continue the dear old paper with its rich treasures of truth.

If this is worth space, publish; if not, let it go to the wastebasket.

Your unworthy sister,

NAOMI CORNETT SPENCER.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1917.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SAMSON'S RIDDLE.

"OUT of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness."—Judges xiv. 14.

The greatest thing in the world is love, and of all the various manners of love the love of God is the greatest. The Bible abounds in love narratives, most all of them looking forward to or having their source springing out of the greatest love story of all: that of Christ and the church. It is a singular thing that man is so fashioned that he likes to dwell on the subject of love. Books of fiction, we suppose, are more widely read and bring in their authors more remuneration than any other class of literature, and there are very few works of fiction but have a thread of love-narrative running through them. The fact that there is in human nature a principle which this sort of thing appeals to, makes such books profitable to those who put them on the market. But of all the love-themes that ever occupied the minds of men, none are worthy of comparison with that love which the almighty God bore and still bears toward his people in his Son, Jesus Christ. This is a theme of love which only the pure mind, the spiritual mind, of the true believer can rightly contemplate, for the natural or carnal mind cannot know the things of God, since divine things are discerned only in the light of the Spirit. The most remarkable thing about Samson was his great strength, and had it not been for his strength he would never have had any riddle to propose to his enemies. That which called forth the exhibition of Samson's strength on this occasion was his love for a woman. Samson's life prior to his love experience is summed up in two short Bible verses telling of his birth, growth and of the Spirit's moving him. The Bible can be wonderfully brief and condensed when there is nothing of spiritual import to be recorded; again, it can be wonderfully elaborate and extensive when every minute detail has its spiritual import. Much space is given to the love affair of Samson with the woman of Timnath, while his childhood and youth are passed over in almost silence. This must be, because the love of Samson contains a spiritual lesson for the people of God. It is this spiritual truth we desire to arrive at. Now, Samson was an Israelite, but he loved a woman of Timnath, and the people of Timnath were Philistines, that is, they were Gentiles. Being Gentiles, they were aliens to all things Jewish. They were strangers to the covenant under which Israel lived. However, there is no telling what love will do. It is more likely, much more likely, to leap over the barriers of caste and nationality than it is to confine itself to one's own class or race or creed. Samson's father and mother were at a loss to understand his affection for this strange woman, and questioned him: "Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines?" But parents rarely have much influence in the love affairs of their children nowadays, and it was so hundreds of

years ago in the judgeship of Samson. Samson asked not his parents to choose a wife for him, but followed the bent of his own heart, much as the young of this age now do. Now Samson, with all his imperfections, was a type of Jesus. He had to have imperfections, else he would have been too near like the Savior, and there could be nor can be but one Jesus. He must have the preeminence in all things, hence each and every type throughout the Old Testament possesses singular blemishes which compel them to fall short of the substance they portray. Thus Samson had his faults to prove him mortal; yet, notwithstanding this, he foreshadowed the immortal. Jesus said: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I must bring." Jesus had sheep which were outside the Jewish nation; he had a people among the Gentiles; these are the "other sheep." Just as Samson's parents could not understand Samson's love for the foreign woman, so the Jews could not see how the Gentiles could possibly be included in the covenant which God made with their father Abraham. It seemed to Jews that Jews only should share in Messiah's kingdom. Just as Samson's parents thought their son should confine his affections to a woman of his own people, so the Jews believed Messiah, when he should come, would exalt Israel alone and alone marry her unto himself. But God is able of stones to raise up children unto Abraham; this the Jews knew not. We would say, then, that the Timnath woman represents the church of Jesus among the Gentiles, the "other sheep" not of "this fold." These are by nature strangers to the commonwealth of Israel and to the covenants of promise, "without hope and without God in the world." Now, between Samson and this woman of Timnath there roared a young lion against him. It is plain that this obstacle must be gotten rid of before he can come to her whom he loves. This young lion represents the barrier between Christ and his Gentile people. This lion is the "handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us." This, Jesus took out of the way, nailing them to his cross and making a show of them openly. This handwriting of ordinances was the Mosaic covenant, and embraced all the rituals and ceremonials which God prescribed for the Jews, but which the Gentiles never had anything to do with. Samson rent the young lion as easily as he would have rent a kid, because the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, so that he had supernatural strength, for we are expressly told he had no weapon of any kind in his hand. Just so, Jesus, because the Spirit was poured out upon him without measure, and without the use of carnal weapons at all, destroyed the Mosaic covenant and put it out of the way. As Samson rent the lion, so the vail of the temple was rent in twain from top to bottom when Jesus cried with a loud voice and gave up the ghost. The law written upon tables of stone was fulfilled by Jesus only in its spiritual significance, literally it held no meaning for him. So far as the redeemed people of God are concerned, the handwriting of Jewish ordinances came to an end when Jesus died. This was the obstacle between Jesus and his Gentile sheep, and by the presence of the Holy Ghost mightily with him he put it out of the way. Some time after Samson had slain the lion he returned to take this woman he loved, and turned aside to see the carcass of the lion. "Behold, there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcase of the lion." He ate of this sweetness out of that which had formerly

stood between him and his love. Jesus had to go away into death and the grave in order to rise from the dead for the justification of his people. Now, being risen, he returns in the Spirit to gather his people unto himself from the east and from the west. Many are brought from the east and from the west to sit with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God. The north gives up, the south keeps not back, God's sons are brought from afar and his daughters from the ends of the earth. All this has reference to the bringing of God's people among the Gentiles in this present gospel age to the knowledge of the truth. As Samson returned after the slaughter of the lion to take the woman he loved, so Jesus comes back in the Spirit to gather his people from among all nations unto himself after having taken out of the way the handwriting of ordinances which was against us Gentiles, being contrary to us. This dead carcass of the lion yields sweetness and food on the return of Samson. So the dead carcass of the "handwriting of ordinances" is made to yield spiritual food to the people of God among all nations when Jesus comes in his Spirit now and takes of these old testament feasts and fasts, offerings and sacrifices, rites and ceremonies, and opens them up to our understanding as containing deep, spiritual truth. While all those Mosaic ordinances are a dead letter now, and no longer have power to terrorize the children of God, yet out of that dead carcass the spiritual Samson brings forth gospel truth and beauty for the delectation of the saints of God. We see now that the altars of burnt offering and of incense, the table of shew-bread, the seven-branched candlestick, the meat offerings, sin offerings and peace offerings, the Aaronic priesthood, the feasts of trumpets, of tabernacles, of the passover and of Pentecost, the sabbaths, etc, are all things which are dead to the Gentile church now, but when the Spirit of Jesus takes these dead things and breathes gospel meaning into them, we eat meat out of the eater and sweetness out of the strong. This is something which the Gentile people of God are now realizing in this present age of the world. Some of our ministers have been wonderfully gifted to preach from these old testament themes and to expound from them gospel doctrine. When this is done, though the handwriting of ordinances has been taken out of the way, the carcass yields honey to the comfort and edification of inquiring, hungry souls. We said in the beginning, had it not been for Samson's strength there would have never been any riddle to propound. So, had it not been for the omnipotence of God manifested in Jesus to the overcoming of his enemies, there never would have been any end to the old heavens and old earth, therefore no triumph for the new. Hence there would have been no carcass for the bees to swarm in, no honey of gospel sweetness for the people of God. The love in Samson's heart for the strange woman wrought the occasion for the slaying of the lion; so the love of God for us sinners furnished the eternal cause for the sufferings and triumph of Jesus on the behalf of his people. All we enjoy here or ever shall enjoy hereafter centers in the love of God. There would have been no election, no predestination, no effectual calling, no justification of the sinful, no glorification of saints, had God been otherwise than the God of love. While God is equal in all his attributes, just now, as we write, the attribute of infinite and eternal love seems to be the propelling

power that actuates the Godhead in all dealings with creatures here below.

"O for such love let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break,
And all harmonious human tongues
The Savior's praises speak."

Written by request. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. C. Mellott.)

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Indiantown Church, Oct. 24th, 25th and 26th, 1917, to the several churches of which this Association is composed, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—According to a long established custom, we again address you in this our annual Circular Letter. It is our desire to write in a way calculated to diffuse light and truth, give comfort and instruction, expose error and falsehood, and maintain the honor and praise of God. If we succeed, we have no reason to boast, for we have nothing except what we have been given. We intend to express some sentiments which we believe to be scriptural, and earnestly contended for by us. Paul said, "He that cometh to God must believe that he is." The existence of God, then, is the first that comes under consideration. That God exists needs no comment. Of God it is said, "To whom will ye liken me?" "I am God, and there is none else." To us there is but one God. If he be for us, who can be against us? God and the things of God are known only by revelation. The revelation which God has given of himself is the next item under consideration. We believe that God works in the heart, and that his people believe according to the working of his mighty power. They were all dead in trespasses and sins until quickened by the Spirit. As God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul, so the Spirit raises us from a death in sin to a life in Christ. We must bear in mind these three: Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and that these three are one. Paul tells us that God shines in our hearts. This manifests, or shows us, what is in the heart. When we begin to see the hidden evil of the heart we are somewhat disturbed by it, but think that by a little effort and a little more watchfulness we can atone for all that we see amiss, and thus preserve a good name and maintain our former undisturbed standing. When once disturbed by the Light, there is no end to the conflict begun between flesh and Spirit, nature and grace, until we are brought to the end of the law, to Jesus, who has triumphed over death, and here we behold the glory of God. It is impossible to fully express the travel of mind from darkness to light, from death in sin to life in Christ, but we do firmly believe that the only real knowledge that we have comes from a vital, experimental, heartfelt acquaintance with the truth, and that in the experience of every subject of grace there is a giving-up-place, a place where our strength fails, all our righteousness is as filthy rags, and where we are acknowledging God's justice in our condemnation. The same power that manifests, condemns and causes a hatred of sin also manifests, approves and gives a love for righteousness, a hungering and a thirsting after it. Those who are brought to realize their need of salvation are also made to experience that salvation in themselves. It is in this way that the Scriptures are opened up to our understanding. We are planted in the likeness of his death and raised in the likeness of his resurrection. We cannot explain it to another, nor can we acquire a knowledge of it by study. Paul wrote, "I am cruci-

fied with Christ," so when we experience that crucifixion in ourselves, then, and not until then, do we understand it. Those who truly know what prayer is realize that they do not know how to pray, and cannot therefore teach another. The power that shows the necessity for prayer is the Spirit which maketh intercession for us according to the will of God. We are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, and by the Holy Ghost are these blessings communicated to us. Paul said, "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given us of God." As these things are revealed to us so also are our hearts or minds new formed. God said, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." So we are made to love God, delight in his law, hate sin, love righteousness and that justice which condemns unrighteousness, and to renounce our own righteousness, and believe and embrace the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace through the blood and righteousness of Christ. When this revelation is once made in the heart it lives and reigns there, and is that which enables one to rightly discern and divide the word of truth, and to hear and understand it.

A. B. FRANCIS, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANKS.

As the majority of our subscribers' time expires with the end of the year, we inclose in each paper of this issue a subscription blank, as a convenience to them in sending new subscribers, as well as in paying their own subscriptions. Will you please make a special effort to send one or more new subscribers when you renew your subscription for next year?

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., October 12th, 13th and 14th, 1917, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greetings and love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have been permitted to meet together in an association, in which your messengers have come to us bearing testimony to the gospel of peace and love to the poor sinner. Our hearts have been made glad by the manifestation of love from you, and we long for the time to come when we hope to meet you again.

Our next session is appointed to meet with the Sideling Hill Baptist Church, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, at the usual time in October.

J. M. FENTON, Moderator.
J. C. MELLOTT, Clerk.

PRICE OF BIBLES ADVANCED.

OWING to the increased cost of Bibles to us, we are compelled to advance our sale price from $2.50 to $3.00. Those who wish to secure a Bible as a premium, will now have to send us five new subscribers, instead of four, as formerly. We are sorry to have to increase our price, but as the cost has been advanced to us, we cannot afford to sell them at the old figure.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder George Ruston, Nov. 8th, 1917, at the bride's home, Vega, N. Y., Floyd V. Sherwood and Orra A. Ballard, both of Vega, N. Y.

By Elder W. S. Alexander, Nov. 14th, 1917, at Elsmere, Del., Warren Barnaby McCoy, of Wilmington, and Edna L. Frazier, of Felton, Del. The couple will reside at 100 E. Seventh St., Wilmington

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Bettie Robinson, of near Ridgeway, Texas, was born Jan. 13th, 1868, and died Nov. 12th, 1917, aged 49 years and 10 months. She received a hope in Jesus in 1897, and joined the Primitive Baptist Church in Rains County, Texas, in July of that year, and lived a consistent member until her death. The doctrine of God our Savior was of great comfort to her. She was a kind and devoted companion, willing at all times to take her share of the burdens of life, and was faithful in every way, looking to Jesus for comfort and consolation.

The writer was called to speak a few words of comfort to the grief-stricken husband and friends, and used as a text 1 Cor. xv. 21–44. Owing to delay enroute, I failed to have time to relieve my mind on the above subject.

Dear brother Robinson, weep not for your dear wife as for one having no hope, but rather rejoice that her sufferings are over and she is now resting in Jesus, sweetly resting where the weary are at rest, with nothing to disturb.

Written by request of brother Robinson.

J. B. BOWDEN.

Albert A. Caldwell was born July 5th, 1865, at Rising Sun, Ind., and died Nov. 3rd, 1917, aged 52 years, 3 months and 29 days. In 1887 he was married to Mary F. Hyatt, of Galveston, Ind., and they made their home at Kokomo, Ind., until 1903, when they moved to western Kansas, where he professed a hope in Jesus and was baptized by Elder D. B. Nowels, and lived a faithful member of the Old School Baptist Church, contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. His health had been bad for several years, and his beloved wife and children faithfully ministered unto his needs. He moved to Parsons, Kansas, in the spring of 1916, but was unable to attend any of the meetings he loved so well, but became a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, from which he derived much spiritual benefit and comfort. At times he felt very lonely, and looked forward to the day of his deliverance. He often spoke of his death to come, and seemed to rejoice in the thoughts of a better home, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest; but he was willing to submit all things unto the Lord his God, and could say, Thy will be done. He leaves the faithful companion of his youth (who also has a hope of a better home and is a faithful member of the same denomination) and seven dear children, whom he cherished in his mind until the end. Another father in Israel has entered into rest forever and is asleep in Jesus.

He was buried in Oakwood Cemetery, Parsons, Kansas. Elder J. M. Preston conducted the funeral and preached to the comfort of those who survive.

C. J. PEACOCK.

Fannie H. Doggett, my dear wife, was born Dec. 17th, 1871, and was taken from us by death April 17th, 1917, making her age 46 years and 4 months. We were married in the year 1894, and to our union were born three children, two sons and one daughter: Slater, Ben and Lottie, aged twenty-three, twenty-one and nineteen respectively. Two weeks after his mother's death Slater volunteered and joined the C. A. Brigade and has been sent to France. Ben has not been called, but expects to be any day. She was not a member of the Primitive Baptist Church. She joined the Methodists when she was sixteen years old. She always kindly entertained the Old Baptists whenever they were in her home, and we feel to rejoice that she left a bright hope of life beyond this vale of tears. Her lot was cast among the sick and afflicted of this world, and she was always ready and willing to do everything that her kind hands found to do. She leaves to mourn their loss, her mother, Mrs. L. Smith, one sister, Mrs. W. M. Doggett, one brother, J. W. Clements, two half-brothers, Derr and Alva Smith, two half sisters, Mrs. G. H. Williamson and Miss Eva Smith, and many relatives and friends. A Methodist preacher conducted the funeral services, after which she was laid to rest in the Porogan Cemetery to await the resurrection.

Written in much weakness by her sorrowing husband,

A. J. DOGGETT.

William S. Byrd, my brother, eldest son of Jacob K. Byrd and Susan his wife, was born in Accomac County, Va., Jan. 19th, 1848, and died Sept. 24th, 1917, aged 69 years, 8 months and 5 days. God showed him his lost and helpless condition as a sinner when he was quite a young man, and made him to rejoice in his Savior and led him about and instructed him in the paths of righteousness and led him to the church of his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He was baptized August 4th, 1872, by Elder Thomas M. Poulson, at Messongoes, Accomac Co., Va., and lived a consistent life until the Lord called him home to be with his Savior Jesus Christ. He was a deacon of the church for several years. The church has sustained a great loss in one whom was given good counsel. He was unmovable in the faith of our Lord and Savior, believing in the finished work of Jesus Christ. To know him was to love him for the truth as it is in Jesus. He was gentle and kind toward his fellow-men and had many friends. He was a good neighbor, and highly respected by all who knew him. He leaves his widow, one daughter, one brother and two sisters and several other relatives and friends and the church to mourn their loss, but while we feel the loss is great, we feel that his eternal gain is more to him than our loss is to us, so we would in humble submission say, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

J. F. BYRD.

David S. Elliott was born in South Westerlo, Albany Co., N. Y., March 24th, 1832, and died of heart failure at his home in Conesville, Schoharie Co., N. Y., August 29th, 1916, aged 83 years, 5 months and 5 days. He united with the Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa Sept. 12th, 1863, and was elected church clerk Sept. 11th, 1880. He was a good and faithful church member, always delighting to see each member in their place at meeting time. He was a good and industrious citizen, and will be greatly missed by the church, as well as the community at large.

EZRA J. MORSE.

Hattie Brehm died at the home of her mother, Mariam J. Brehm, 527 East Main St., Logan, Ohio, Friday night, October 19th, 1917, at about 11 o'clock, aged 27 years. She leaves her mother and two married sisters to mourn her departure. The funeral was held from the home at 2 o'clock Monday afternoon, Oct. 22nd, Mr. Riebel officiating. Interment at Oak Grove.

APPOINTMENTS.

ELDER George Ruston will, the Lord willing, fill the following appointments:

Stockton, N. J., Saturday, Dec. 15th, 10:30 a. m., Mrs. Sam. Horner's; Saturday afternoon, Trenton, N. J., 2 p. m., at the residence of Casper Fetter, Hamilton Ave.; Sunday, 16th, Locktown, N. J., 11 a. m.; afternoon, Frenchtown, N. J., 4 p. m.; Monday, 17th, Grandon, N. J., at the home of brother A. J. Demott, 7:45 p. m.

Also, nothing preventing, I expect to be with the friends in Brantford, Canada, Sunday, Dec. 23rd, and Hamilton Wednesday, 26th. Brother Fred Simmons will locate the meeting in Brantford. Meeting in Hamilton will be at Mr. Calhoun's residence, 29 Strathcome St., 7:45 p. m.

D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Margaret B. Tiebout, N. Y., $24.00; Bonnie Chick, N. J., $2.00; Wm. Darby, Md., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Middletown and Andes Church has decided to hold its meetings during the winter months at Dickson Hall, Arena, N. Y., instead of at Union Grove.

The Second Roxbury Church will hold its meetings during the winter months at the Mead sisters home, Roxbury, N. Y.

There will be meeting at Halcottville, N. Y., on Tuesday, Dec. 11th, at 7:15 p. m., at the home of sister Mary Slauson.

To the above meetings all who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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ELDER S. HASSELL.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 85. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1917. NO. 24.

CORRESPONDENCE.

COLUMBUS, Ga., Oct. 14, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you three letters which were of so much joy and comfort to me that I feel they will be some comfort to others. It seems that they are too good and rich in spirit to be hidden away. The one written by brother Fisher on the text, "Jesus wept," was written at my request, following a little experience I had one morning last spring. I so longed for spiritual food, being literally alone concerning these things, being with none to whom I could make known a single thought or receive a single crumb of food for thought. I sought a secluded spot, and in my heart I think there was a prayer to the Father for spiritual food, something upon which to meditate and feast my hungry soul. Immediately as I sat down the text came to me, "Jesus wept." I thought a few moments upon this, then I wept; I could not help it. The very thought of the Lord of glory weeping as we weep seemed more than I could bear. I wept, and felt that I cared not to cease. The lines of the hymn came directly to me:

"Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow."

This text had never come to me with power before, and I felt there was much food and comfort in these two words for a poor, unworthy sinner, and felt to have only a partial understanding of them and longed for a more full knowledge of why our blessed Lord should weep as we weep, hence my request to brother Fisher for his views, upon which it is needless for me to comment, except I would love to say that the spiritual view presented to my mind and heart through his dear letter, though sad and full of suffering, is most glorious and wonderful, and I feel will be with me always. The one from sister Barfield also has a special and peculiar interest for me, of which I cannot now take space to speak. I have not their consent to have them published, but feel they will not object. I also inclose a letter from sister Bonnie A. Chick, whose consent I have, though reluctantly given. I leave all to your better judgment.

Yours in love for the truth,
(MRS.) C. M. THETFORD.

SALISBURY, Md., May 20, 1917.

DEAR SISTER:—You have asked me for an expression of my views on the

words found in John xi. 35: "Jesus wept." I must say I do not feel equal to the task of writing anything interesting to you on this or any other Scripture. Man's views do not amount to anything unless attended with spiritual revelation of their true import or meaning as applied to the children of God. The record found in the Scriptures is for the church of God, no others have any right to or understanding of it. The whole record, while it took place literally as recorded, yet is spiritual and is spiritually discerned, having no private interpretation; therefore in order for one to speak or write to the comfort of others, each, both the writer and the reader, must be given spiritual understanding of the Scripture. This is often done, for God's ways are equal. He prepares both, nothing done in vain, nothing wasted, for it is written that his word shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish that which he pleases and prosper whereunto he sends it. Historians of note gather that Jesus was an intimate and frequent visitor in the home of Lazarus, Mary and Martha, who were evidently poor people, or at most in only moderate circumstances, all of which has its meaning to us. Think over these two things, that Jesus was a frequent visitor in this humble home. It is also supposed that upon the occasions of his visits to Jerusalem after the duties of the day were past he would retire to this home, a distance of about two miles, and spend the nights in more secluded quietness than the city afforded. This feature also seems prominent in his people of to-day, for ofttimes we prefer solitude and quietness to the confusion of the crowds. In the strictest sense he was absolutely alone here in the flesh, having no thorough and complete companions, for none on earth could understand him; even his own people after the flesh began before his death to judge him as crazy, or having an unbalanced mind, persuading him to return home and rest for a time from his duties. So there is a sense wherein he was alone while here, and doubtless for this reason preferred to spend much of his time in literal solitude and quietness, spending many whole nights alone in the top of the numerous hills in solemn communication with the Father. The seclusion of this little home in the hills, together with the pure and unfeigned love and devotion of its three occupants for him, endeared the place to him. The picture presented to our minds of this home is that of the brother and two sisters, who seem to have been left alone as regards relatives and friends, but clinging together and maintaining the old home, loving each other tenderly. When Lazarus was taken seriously ill the sisters were very much disturbed, sending at once for their nearest and dearest friend, Jesus, and from a natural point of view one would charge him with negligence in not going at once when informed of the serious condition of Lazarus. But instead of hastening, he abode two days in the place where he was. No doubt these two sisters could not understand why he did not come at once; but that his glory and power might more fully be shown them and other witnesses he tarried until Lazarus had been dead four days. It would be no more than human for them to feel this way about him not coming, for we wonder why he tarries so long when we have in all sincerity begged his presence in our hours of darkness, and he tarries for the same reason as then, that the glory of God may be more perfectly revealed to us and in us. Now, while he was a frequent visitor among them, conversing with him in private conversation

at the evening meal and other times, yet they had not comprehended his power, believing only in part, as had been revealed to them; they had seen him heal the sick, and believed he could heal their brother Lazarus if he arrived before he died, but as death preceded Jesus to that humble home and bore away their brother, the support and head of the family, their hope concerning him for this life went out with his life. They seemed to still believe that at the last day Lazarus would be called forth, but that did not fully assuage the intensity of their grief, for they wanted him to live in this life. It seems that Jesus wept from, as we might say, two points of view, if I may so express myself. First, will say as a reason of weeping on this occasion, that he wept for a dear friend gone, and the intense anguish and grief expressed by Mary and Martha; that is, it seems to me, he was touched by the weakness of humanity, the feelings and sympathy of the flesh, knowing and entering into our every suffering. While he was the Son of God, having all power, yet he was verily man, knowing the weakness and infirmity of the flesh. There is no suffering, pain or fear that one in the flesh can or does have that he did not experience while in the flesh, therefore he is the faithful and efficient High Priest, and an ever-present help in time of need; having felt these things in the flesh, he knows the weakness of our flesh. He was not too proud nor too high to weep with those who wept. We love to look on him as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, entering in our present suffering and affliction with us, one with us and we one with him in all things. One might go on more elaborately with this view of why he wept, but I shall not now, as doubtless his weeping was also caused by a deeper and more intense suffering than that occasioned by the death of a dear friend and the grief expressed by the two lonely sisters, and the unbelief expressed by all those around, including Mary and Martha. Mary, in her burst of grief, when she had come to where Jesus was, fell at his feet. What a wonderful picture to see her in her anguish fall at Jesus' feet in unbelief, yet expressing belief in part, saying, Lord, if thou hadst been here my brother had not died. While she expressed certain belief, yet great unbelief, for she limited the high and Holy One at whose feet she had fallen, by her expression saying in a sense that Jesus had come too late to be of any service. Now, he saw all the weeping, which all expressed unbelief, for had they known that the power of God should so soon be made manifest and Lazarus be restored whole and sound to the desolate sisters, there would have been no place for weeping. I do not feel that our weeping would be manifest if we knew the glory and power of God would be manifest in the restoring to life of a dear one who lay dead. While Mary expressed belief that Jesus could and would have prevented the death of Lazarus, yet she could not believe that he would in a few moments be restored to them; therefore Jesus groaned in Spirit, being troubled, but presently lifted up his eyes and spoke to the Father, not in doubt or unbelief: "But because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me." The unbelief of those around him caused him to weep. Then should we be ashamed of our tears? Are we too proud to weep with the Lord of lords and King of kings? Does it not make you feel nearer to him or him nearer to you by the fact that it is recorded that he wept? We weep and cannot help it,

we groan in spirit, being troubled, and the same thing that troubled him troubles us now: unbelief, the weakness of the flesh, doubts, and that "if," which implies contingency, that troubles us, causes grief in us, for we have the Spirit of Christ, and we weep entering into these things with him, being one with him in all things, even in terrible anguish, often alone surrounded by the solitude of the mountains in the nighttime, when all is dark and lonely, in solemn and terrible supplications to the Father, holy communications with God, when all earthly friends are asleep to our terrible anguish, with none near but God, and he seems afar off, yet with Paul, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." There is but one true and real glory, and that is the glory of God.

Dear sister, I feel I have but faintly touched this all-important matter, if indeed it be that I have touched it at all, and if you were aware of my ignorance in these high and sacred things you would not expect anything from me; but I have willingly tried in my weakness to comply with your request, and if it is the Lord's will may he bless what is written to your comfort, giving you to realize our ever and incessant dependence on him. The grace of God and his mercy through Christ Jesus our Lord be present with you, giving you to depend upon him for all things, who will hear the prayer of the destitute and not despise their cry. Amen. I shall look for you to comply with my request to write for me your experience; also I shall be glad to have a letter from you any time when you feel to write me, but do not expect much of a reply. God reigns.

Your unworthy brother,

F. SELBY FISHER.

MACON, Ga., Oct. 7, 1917.

DEAR SISTER:—I greet you in love. Have you ever felt as a tired little child, who longs to lay its head in the lap of one who knows, who understands, and to feel a gentle hand caressing, as it pours out the love and gratitude of a full heart? If so, then you can know how I feel this beautiful Sunday morning, as I take a lifeless pen in my hand to write thoughts which come faster and with so much more feeling than I can express. A few weeks ago I felt such a great desire for communion with those who love Jesus, for fellowship in suffering, that I wrote the editors of the SIGNS a very lengthy letter. Immediately after mailing it I became humiliated at doing so, and longed to have it back; it was so lifeless, as was the writer. I prayed that it might get lost in the mail and the dear editors never be bothered with it. One afternoon as I came in from school I saw my October 1st SIGNS had come. I picked it up, and as I opened the first page my eyes fell on the words, "Columbus, Ga." The thought flashed into my heart and mind in an instant, Thank God there is one lover of truth in Georgia. I looked to see who wrote it. I said, I must write her. I read your little letter, in which you sent the very interesting and comforting letter from brother Fisher. I read the letters as I came to them, and was surprised when I saw that my letter had been published; but in reading it I felt humiliated again, it was such a weak letter. I seemed only to state facts. O, I could not write them of the utter lost condition I feel at times to be in. Words fail to express the depths of the vileness of my own evil heart and the exceeding glory of God. Why had I attempted to do it? I was so cast down for a few days I did not feel to write you as I intended

but thought, I shall wait until Sunday, then perhaps I shall feel better. Saturday afternoon as I came in from Macon your letter was on the mantel. When I saw your name on the outside of the envelope I sat down on a footstool, threw my arms across the chair, buried my face in my hands and burst into tears of pure joy; this before reading it. Then can you not imagine in a small degree the great love and appreciation I felt overflowing my poor, tired, hungry heart as I read your wonderful letter, a beautiful letter of faith and hope and love and encouragement to even me, a vile worm of the dust, not worthy the least of God's mercies? When I had read it again and again I rejoiced, but still the tears would flow. If I could only have been with you just then, I could not have spoken what was in my heart, but I could have put my arms around your neck and wept and praised God for the wonderful gift of his love. Does not such precious seasons of love and joy make us to feel a foretaste of the resurrection, when all shall be with Jesus, shall be like him and be satisfied? I do feel that if I am in it at all, truly I shall be satisfied. How unworthy do I feel to be of such love, such blessings as the dear Master has so graciously bestowed upon me, I feel to hope at times. Perhaps there was something in my letter that I did not realize was there, or else you could not have felt to have said the sweet, comforting things you did say. Perhaps I did reveal my utter unworthiness and weakness to a degree, and you were given a desire to express your sympathy; may peace be with you. With Paul I can say, For I long to see you, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me. But, my dear, dear sister, I do feel that there are more believers in Georgia than we know of. I know a few in different sections, that is, I know them by correspondence, not having met them. There are a few living within a few miles of me, with whom I am associated. God has never and will never leave himself without a witness of his truth. His true followers are the light of the world, even though the world does not know it; for it is because of the love of Jesus for his bride that all things exist, and however much we may be discouraged, I feel that his hand rules. He told Elijah, when Jezebel had resolved to take his life because he had slain the false prophets of Baal and Elijah had fled into the wilderness, "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal." This he declared unto Elijah after he had said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts; because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword [truth]: and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." Was not that a very comforting assurance to the sorrowful prophet? Then, too when the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the cave, where he had hidden, and asked him, What doest thou here? Elijah told him, and he said, "Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice." The Lord was in the still small voice. Truly all those things, the wind, the earthquake, the fire, are the works of God, and his

omnipotent hand directs them, but when he speaks to his people it is in a still small voice. Sometimes when I am given to read and meditate on the word of God, and am given to behold the glories of his kingdom, I feel to declare as did the Savior: "I thank thee, O Father, God of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." How wonderful to feel that through him, our High Priest, our King, we shall endure to the end, we shall be saved.

Dear sister, your letter was so comforting to me I have felt it would be comforting to others. Would you object to my sending it to the SIGNS? I am sure when you read this long letter you will feel there was no need for you to ask me to pardon the length of yours. I would be so glad to meet you, and I feel to hope that some day we may meet. We few are so poor that we are kept very closely at home. I do not live in Macon; I am teaching at the school, "Rutland Consolidated High School," of this district, about six miles from Macon. I have a sister and brother living in Macon. Sister Carolyn would be glad to have you visit her at any time. If you ever come to Macon I will meet you and we will visit her. I feel a desire to beg you to remember poor, unworthy me when asking God's mercy upon sinners, of whom I feel to be chief.

In love and fellowship, I am, I hope, your sister,

ELLA BARFIELD.

HOPEWELL, N. J., July 13, 1917.

DEAR SISTER:—As I sat here reading your letter this evening I felt that I must tell you of how barren I feel of grace in the heart. It just seems to me I cannot tell people how terribly sinful I am; try as hard as I may I cannot see any of those graces that you speak of in your letter. If only you could see how hard and rebellious my heart is at times, when the way seems hard. Whenever I do anything for any one I see a selfish motive prompting the act. I hate it, but I have it; and then again I am revolving all sorts of plans in my mind to escape the trying places. Dear sister, I long to be gentle and humble, but have that cursed pride which you speak of. There are moments of peace and joy when all is well and I can rest in his love, knowing that whatever he does is best. This is rest beyond all the rest this world affords. My heart is just overflowing with desires to tell you how wonderful it seems that the Lord put it in your heart to write to me. This has ever been a mystery to me, when I think of how those who are so gifted and so far above me in spiritual things are made to write to me. You complain of self in your letters, but I could only see the God of all grace being glorified in the things you wrote. I am the one who cannot get away from self. This has been the source of much trouble to me, and I have been made to feel that my letters must indeed be wearisome to others, but all bear so patiently with me. I do feel I know something of how your heart ached when you heard this God whom you adore, spoken of in a way to belittle his power. The spirit groaned within you. My heart ached for you as I read what you wrote. I felt if we could only sit down and have a heart to heart talk how sweet and comforting it would be, but God has willed it otherwise. I told brother Fisher that it just seemed as if another had been brought into our little family circle. The Lord setteth the

solitary in families, and I do feel there are those whose experiences draw them closer together than others. Each one has their place to fill in the church, but there seems to be some who are called to pass through deeper waters than others in their experiences, and how wonderful it is to meet with those who can understand our trials. One evening about two years ago I was lighting the fire. While I was bending over to do this the burden was so heavy that I just felt I could not raise my body again. I cried, Lord, help me. In a moment the bell rang, and as I was the only one there to go I had to rise. It was brother Fisher, and I wondered had the Lord sent help. I had only met him once or twice when he came to see my father, but we had not talked many moments before I felt the burden dropping off, and only God knows what a relief it was to talk to one who could understand.

Dear sister, you ask me to tell some of my early travels. From a child I believed the Old Baptists were those who knew the truth, but I knew I was ignorant of the things they talked about. I always loved to hear them tell their experiences, but would often think it strange that they would be so sad and not be able to be lively and throw off those feelings. I would keep looking forward to two years, thinking that perhaps in that time I would be shown some of the things they knew. There was always a feeling of gladness when the members were coming. I went on in this way for a number of years until I was twenty-four. I was at my oldest sister's home in Maryland, taking care of her house and children, as she was not well at the time. One day during the fall I was troubled about a dear friend leaving the town to teach somewhere else. I knew I would be very lonely without her. There came a desire to pray that she would not go, but I realized I had never prayed before, and now how dare I ask the Lord for this thing that I so much desired? I walked miles to get away from the desire, but I could not, and she did not leave, but I did not take this as an answer to prayer. At Christmas time she went with me to my home in New Jersey, and the last Sunday morning I was there, while my father was preaching I again felt a desire to pray, and could not help crying unto God that I might have some evidence that my friendship meant as much to her as hers did to me. That night she began talking to me, and told me the very things I so longed to hear. The next morning everything was praising God, and O how my heart rejoiced in the thought that God had answered my prayer. No words can describe the joy and the peace that were mine, but you, my dear sister, already know it. For weeks it seemed as if I could never be unhappy again. I could not feel disturbed about anything. I thought that my troubles had all ended, and wondered how I had ever lived without this wonderful God. I recall when the first hateful thought came, O how terrible it seemed. It was as if all were over for me, and that I had lost the greatest joy that I had ever known. I had many young friends in the town, as I lived there until I was fourteen. One of them came one day and wanted me to go to a play at the Woman's College in Baltimore. I tried to tell her how I felt, but she said she did not feel that the Lord intended us to give up all these pleasures, that he had put them here for us to enjoy. She prevailed, and I went. It had ever been my nature to throw my whole heart and soul into anything I entered into, so I did this that night, and I can never tell you my anguish when I got into bed and found I

could not receive any joy and comfort in thinking upon better things. For three days and nights I never closed my eyes. Relief did come, but I found the early joy was taken. The association was at Black Rock that spring. I could drive from my sister's. I knew that my father expected to be there. I had had to write to him during the time, but O how I dreaded to have him say anything to me. I trembled as I went to where he stood. He asked me how it was with me, and I felt as if all power of speech was gone, but tried to tell him a little. He was ever a kind, gentle father, but I felt he knew me so well that surely he could have no confidence in me. I had always been one of the most fun-loving girls, and was ever ready for a good time, as these times seemed then. I was spending the night at a place where I had ever had jolly times, and the girls not knowing I wanted to go to meeting begged me to wait until noon and go with them. I dreaded to tell them how I longed to go, but felt I must, so I went into where their aunt was sitting and tried to tell her how I felt. She told me to go by all means, that the girls would feel all right about it. O how beautiful the people looked to me. I wondered how I could ever leave them and go back to my sister's. They were not members there. In the summer I went home again, reaching there Wednesday before the regular Saturday church meeting. My father asked me how I felt regarding going before the church. I was not troubled about that. When the invitation was given and they were singing a hymn something seemed to tell me I would not be satisfied if I did not go. I started forward and many of the members broke down and could not sing. I wondered why they should feel it so. This was on my twenty-fifth birthday, and now in the past ten years I look back and see a pathway dotted with trials and deliverances. Little did I think that such sorrows and trials would ever befall me, but I do know that if I have been brought into the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ it has been in these terrible places.

My dear sister, pardon me for going on at such length, but I could not rest until I had told you some of the things that were on my mind. I was teaching four years before I went to stay with my sister, then I taught four years after I was a member, but the work and life connected with it became such a burden to me that my health broke down and I had to stop. The other teachers would insist on me entering into their good times, but I would often have to refuse, knowing that I could not go to places and do the things that seemed innocent amusement to them without having to suffer. During my father's illness I stayed home and had no desire to mingle with the world. I walked in darkness and pain; I could not enjoy anything. How rich to hear you tell of your father standing firm. I cannot answer your precious letter; it contains so many comforting things. Dear sister, I have just been reading what I have written, and wonder whether I should send it or not. I fear you will find no comfort in it, but I do so long to hear from you again. May the Lord bless and keep you.

Please think of me as your most unworthy little sister,

BONNIE A. CHICK.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Nov. 27, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—To-night I am beginning what I hope to be able at the conclusion to feel is fit to be read by the readers of the SIGNS. I do not know how much I shall write, as I do not know now what I shall be able to say. First of all, I want to tell them that I certainly do love the Old Baptists, together with all who are their friends. Just how much I love them I cannot tell, but it is a fact that they are constantly in my mind. I feel that I could meet with them somewhere isolated from all the world, and stay together and never part, but just continue to talk, sing and pray and praise the Lord for his goodness, mercy and love so long as he would leave us here on the earth. That would be my chief delight, if I know my own feelings. But it is not to be that way; it is my lot here in this world to have to spend the most of my time among the business men of this business world. It is most wonderful to me as I observe more and more from day to day how little they know about God and his Son, and, as I humbly hope, our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Though I am out among professors of every class and name, none are like the Old Baptists in any sense of the word. I have seen among the tall professors some of them stoop to very little, low and mean things which they could cover up, to carry out things that would redound to their own personal interest, detrimental to their fellow-men. I mean by this, some who stand the highest among the men of earth, and I get tired of being in their company; but it has pleased the Lord that my lot here in the world be cast among them, and I am glad when Sunday comes that I can escape them and hunt up some of the few Old Baptists who live in and around this idolatrous city. Such association makes me tired of the world, and I long for a departure out, but when I think of that sometimes I shudder and tremble at the thought that comes: Who are you, and what are you anyway, that you should be so presumptuous as to think you are fit for heaven and immortal glory? This causes a halt, I must stop right there and dare not move a step, and as I begin to meditate I hear God say, Without holiness no man can see the Lord, and I am everything else but holy. Then I say, I am altogether unholy, and if without holiness no man can see the Lord, then to die I would go down to hell with all those who forget God; how then do I dare to die? I tremble and almost faint in my sighing, and like Baruch I say, Woe is me now, for the Lord has added grief to my sorrow. Yes, being mixed up with the world and beholding their utter ignorance of the truth as it is in Jesus, I am made to pity them, but when I turn my eyes within and behold my own sinful self as I feel that I am, then comes grief, and it is added to my sorrow and I faint in my sighing. Does God work these things in the experience of his people? Tell me, you who know something about his wonderful works. He says, I will do my work, my strange work. Again he says, I will work a work in your day that ye will not believe, though one tell it unto you. Then he tells us about his wonderful work in the land of Ham and terrible things at the Red Sea. Now this is what God says about his work; then it must be as he says, and the things of my experience that I am now trying to tell you about are very strange to me. I sometimes try to tell them among my business friends, but they do not understand what I am talking about, but when I get among the

Old Baptists they seem to know what I mean, and they talk the same way about their own feelings in regard to the matter, and that produces a love for them that is not fleshly. It is not the same love that I have for my kindred in the flesh, even my own children. I am sometimes able to feel that it is the love that proceeds from God through Jesus Christ. God is love, and from him springs all the love that is pure and holy, and such love no man ever yet possessed except such as are born of God. This love is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, which is freely given unto us through Jesus Christ our Savior. Many times do I conclude that I do not know anything aright, but I want to tell you plainly that I cannot help it. I want to do better and desire to live a pure and holy life, but the imperfection of my human nature is just too much for me, and of all men that ever lived in the world I seem to be the weakest and less able to cope with sin. I certainly do need Jesus to deliver me from this present evil world, and I find myself wondering, Will he do it? O, I do not know about that, but he says that he came to seek and to save that which was lost. Well, there is one thing about it that I do know, and that is, without him I am lost. Reader, are you a beggar? I am, I am a beggar daily, and at night when awake I am a beggar. I read where God said by the mouth of Hannah, God will raise the poor man from the dust and lift the beggar from the dunghill. Will that reach me? I do not know, but I know this, that God is able to do all that he promised to do, but the thought is in that respect, Did he promise to do this for you? I do not know, but I have an humble hope in it, and I tell you it is a sweet comfort to know that much. My hope is alone in the tender mercy of God through Jesus Christ. He, and he only, is the Savior of sinners, and with all the power of faith that God will give me I am looking to him for salvation. O, it is so suitable to my need. Now, my dear friends, I want to tell you the truth; I am not at all worthy of these things, nor of your confidence and fellowship, but I do want to stay with you and love you all, although many I have never seen. Pray for me that God will richly bestow upon me his free grace, and may the Lord bless you all and save you for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Dear editors, read this over and correct all mistakes. I am going to send it to you just as it is for your consideration. If worthy of a place in the SIGNS publish it, if not burn it. Farewell.

Yours in hope,

C. M. HOOD.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 30, 1917.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I would like the inclosed letter from sister Durand to my mother (written at the time of my father's death) published in the SIGNS, if you think proper. Now both are departed, and we cherish their memory; though dead they yet speak.

Inclosed is five dollars to help the poor of the flock.

Wishing the SIGNS and editors a prosperous year, both spiritually and temporally, yours in best of bonds,

J. M. FENTON.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 29, 1907.

MRS. JULIA A. FENTON—MY DEAR SISTER:—It always seems impossible to find words that are fitting to use to one suffering the pain of a fresh bereavement. It seems a time to be silent, a time when one cannot hear much except what the Lord may be pleased to communicate.

Friends offer their sympathy, and we would think it strange if they did not, yet their words fall lifeless upon the ear when the heart is torn and bleeding. My heart goes out to you in sympathy that I cannot express. It did the first time I ever met you, when I thought I recognized in you one the Lord had chosen for peculiar trials. I have never lost that impression, although, as you know, we have never had any intimate acquaintance. But the Lord is not unacquainted with you; not a sigh or groan or tear or apprehension of which he has not been mindful, and his mercies have exceeded them all, I am sure you will say and do feel. If you at times have said, Has the Lord forgotten to be gracious? or, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? you are comforted by the thought that these are the Savior's very words, and that you are but experiencing the fellowship of his sufferings.

Monroe spoke for us this morning. How good the Lord has been to enable you and the dear one who is gone to see this joyful sight. How true that the day of rejoicing and the days of adversity are set one over against the other, even as the Scriptures say; and with streaming eyes and breaking hearts we are yet forced to say that our cup runneth over, and to feel the assurance that goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our life. I pray this may be your experience at this time.

Affectionately your sister,

CLARICE E. DURAND.

EVERETT, Pennsylvania.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS AT FRYING PAN CHURCH:—I know the coming Saturday and Sunday are our meeting days, and many of you are looking forward to hearing the gospel preached, and to seeing each other again in this life, but I can only think of you and remember the past, when I, too, was so highly favored. I used to prate very glibly how all of the salt of the earth must not be piled in one place, but be scattered as a preservative of this old earth, but if I am one least grain of that wonderful salt, why then I find I am very weak when scattered abroad, and cannot see any of that wonderful preserving quality in me. I think you will understand I have reference to the text, "Ye are the salt of the earth," &c. I do not feel those wonderful exercises of mind that used to be my blessed privilege so often, but the Lord is good to me, and I hope I am thankful. I have never been in an Arminian meeting, or heard but one sermon, and that the occasion of the death of a near neighbor, and then I could see the wonderful contrast between truth and error.

May your coming together be a blessing to you all. Think of and pray for a poor, weak one. We have very good health, for which we feel thankful, and hope yet it may be our lot to get nearer a church.

Your most unworthy sister, I hope,

MATILDA STARR.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in December (30th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1917.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REVELATION III. 12.

"HIM that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God."

A pillar in a temple is a support to the temple, and must be well grounded and well founded. It must be stable and immovable, unwavering and settled. That which is slender and frail, flimsy and shaky, will not adequately sustain the superstructure built upon it. We well remember our childhood days and those of our youth, when we went to the meetings at the Southampton Church, in Bucks County, Pa. Solomon says: "The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness." So it seemed to us that those old men and women, the members of the Southampton Church, were indeed saints of the most high God, that they had attained unto a spiritual excellence that we ourself could never hope to enjoy as our portion. We looked up to those aged brethren as pillars in the church. When they one by one began to pass away from the world, we felt as though a loss was suffered that could never be remedied. This was not only true of the Southampton Church, but we are sure readers of this paper know of similar brethren that, to them, in their youth, seemed as pillars in the church. The walk and conversation of these aged pilgrims seemed to evidence the glory of God in their hearts; they seemed so sound in the faith, so unwavering in doctrine, so uncompromising in their defense of the truth, they were like very pillars indeed. It seemed to us there could be nothing calculated to make one more happy than to be in possession of real truth, that is, to have one's treasure laid up above, where moth and rust could not corrupt, where thieves could not break in and steal; and we never doubted but that those hoary heads in the way of righteousness were in possession of that priceless inheritance which is undefiled and fadeth not away. For ourself, we were filled with fear and trembling whenever we tried to compare our state with theirs, for the comparison invariably resulted in our own discomfiture, giving rise to serious and doleful questionings concerning our own spiritual integrity and our own right to such a glorious inheritance as seemed to us to be theirs. Now, if one is a pillar in the temple of God, there is a reason or cause for it, and it becomes us to consider what is the underlying and permeating cause that gives rise to these supports in the church. Noticing this text in Revelation, we see that the being a pillar is the result of having overcome something. In other words, a pillar is in some sense a conqueror. If we engage a person to do a piece of work for us, we say, If you will do so and so I will pay you a sum of money for the performance of the work. Now, many people who read the Bible say they find there many conditions to be performed by man in order to obtain spiritual good. So, some would say, that this text in Revelation means that if one will do all he can to overcome, God will make him a pillar in the temple or church; that one can be a pillar if only

he will overcome. In other words, it seems to some that the being a pillar is the reward or payment from God to the sinner for overcoming. Now, let it be understood that God never pays any one for doing good, for none can do good except the goodness first be in them. The doing good, then, is an outgrowth of indwelling good, so that goodness is its own reward. The doer of good finds reward not for doing good, but in doing good, because all true goodness is the effect of grace, and what more can the spiritual mind desire than to be the channel, through grace, of infinite goodness? The text does not mean that, if one will or does overcome, God will make that one a pillar in return for the overcoming; but it means that one is a pillar because one does or has overcome, that the very overcoming is the grounding and settling and strengthening which makes the pillar. Nor is the overcoming something to be done of one's self, but it is the performance of grace through the activity of faith in the sinner being brought unto salvation. There is One, and only One, that has the preeminence in the work of overcoming, and that One is Jesus. It is not becoming in us to talk of this or that one's being a pillar in the temple without first considering Jesus, who is the Pillar of pillars. The saints being pillars is all because Jesus is their one foundation or support or pillar. No one is or ever can be a pillar in the temple only as Jesus dwells in them by his truth, making them stable and unwavering. It is not too much to say that Jesus is the foundation of the church; he is its corner-stone, head-stone and overshadowing heavens. In short, Jesus is all and in all to his people. So, whenever we talk or write of the saints being this or that in the church or in their spiritual life, we have first to consider Jesus in that capacity in which we wish to consider them, because all capacity in any and every christian to perform or become any spiritual benefit to the people of God arises from the fact that Jesus must first be in them and abound. Would we be brethren one of another, then Jesus must first manifest himself to us as the Brother of brothers, our Elder Brother. Would we be christians in deed and in truth, then Jesus must first show himself to us and in us as the very Christ of God we are to follow, and give us grace to follow. Would we be preachers, then the great Preacher of all preachers must first do his preaching in us ere we can preach to others. Would we pray, then the intercession of that holy Jesus must be made within us, though it be with groans we cannot utter. In short, every spiritual ideal we crave to attain unto must first find its realization in Jesus before it can be fulfilled in us. That is why we say the above text in Revelation primarily refers to Jesus. He has overcome the world, the flesh, the devil, sin and death and hell. He has arisen triumphant over all his foes. Through this wonderful work of overcoming he is developed as the Pillar in the temple of God. He cannot be moved out of his place, for omnipotence supports him in it. The whole structure of God's building rests on this Pillar, who has overcome. All this overcoming Jesus performed for the good of his people; it was that they should triumph too through him. "So surely as he overcame, so shall you triumph too," the hymn says. Jesus, by his Spirit, brings to pass in his people, the subjects of his grace, those characteristics that make them like a pillar. The experimental operation of the Spirit of God. makes his people firm, unwavering, settled and grounded in the truth. They

are not tossed about by every wind of doctrine, nor are they deceived by the lo heres and lo theres of men. While others said of Jesus that he was this or might be that, that he was John the Baptist or one of the prophets, Peter had no such uncertainty regarding him, but firmly and unwaveringly believed him to be the Christ, the Son of the living God. This he knew, not through flesh and blood, but by the revelation from the Father. This work of revelation, then, in the subject of grace is what acts as the rudder of the soul, enabling one to steer a true course by the compass of God-given faith. One not having this revelation is like a rudderless ship at the mercy of the waves, all the steering-gear gone. The revelation of truth may not be, and we think seldom is, a sudden, vivid thing, but is more often a gradual process extending over many years of one's christian experience. One never gets through learning. It is only here a little, there a little, line upon line, that we know anything at all. Grace has to overcome many things in one's soul before one can be a pillar in the house of God, that is, before one can be rooted and grounded and settled in the truth. Being sound in the faith is a great virtue much cherished among Old Baptists, but it is seldom one is really sound who thinks he is. Others are better judges of one's soundness than one's self. Just as soon as we think we know anything, Paul says we know nothing as we ought to know it. This makes us pause and wonder whether we have gotten anywhere or not. Just the moment when we think we have arrived, we awake to find the journey just begun. He who is a pillar has overcome self, sin and error. We fear, then, there are few pillars. Indeed, there are none, only those in whom Jesus does the overcoming. "'Tis his love his people raises over self to reign as kings," another hymn says. Solomon says, Greater is he that ruleth his own spirit than he that taketh a city. This means that self-subjugation is greater than the subjugation of others. Jesus subdued the fleshly self in himself. He was supremely in control of himself at all times. No one ever saw him angry, not even when he drove the money-changers out of the temple. He could chastise without being angry. Envy, jealousy, hatred, malice, never found place to build their foul nests in his spotless being. Now, true self-control is the fruit of the divine Spirit. It is not voluntary on the part of the believer, but is imposed effectually by the inner working of a higher power than one's self. True self-denial lies in not living one's own life, in not living to the gratification of self. How many of God's people are there who live the lives they want to live? Not one, we venture to say. This is because their lives are not their own. They are bought with a price, and that not with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of God's own Son. Therefore you belong not to yourselves, but unto God. You owe the flesh nothing, and are no more debtors to the flesh to live after the flesh. You owe God everything, are and will be eternally in debt to him for all his goodness and mercy toward you. Therefore be not surprised when you find yourselves not able to direct your own lives, not able to shape them as you would; for, remember, our lives are not ours, but God's. He shapes them as he will. Herein is true self-control brought about by sovereign grace, herein is the denial of one's self. One has to learn to deny self, to hate sin, to abhor all false doctrine, to abjure the world, before one is a pillar in the temple. This overcoming is a life-

time process, but it makes one stable, dependable, reliable. We have no doubt this experimental overcoming was accomplished in those dear hoary-headed saints we used to know at Southampton in the days of our youth. As Jesus is to his people wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, so is he their stability and every other good thing as well. It is fitting that in the adoration of our hearts we should bring forth the royal diadem and crown him Lord of all.

L.

CLOSE OF VOLUME EIGHTY-FIVE.

WITH this issue of the SIGNS is closed the eighty-fifth volume. A long time for a religious paper to live, and especially so when it has had so much opposition waged against it. It is also remarkable that during the eighty-five years it has been conducted by the one family: Beebe. Perhaps no paper of its kind has had so wide a circulation, covering every State in the Union, together with Canada and England. We feel sure that the SIGNS has visited, and we hope gladdened, more destitute and lonely homes than any periodical of its kind ever published in the United States. We hear from every quarter of the joy and comfort derived from reading the messages of love and fellowship its pages contain. This alone is encouragement sufficient, if we had no other, to continue in the arduous labors. During the eighty-five years the SIGNS has had seven editors: Elders Gilbert Beebe and William L. Beebe, brother Benton L. Beebe, Elders Benton Jenkins and F. A. Chick, together with the present staff: Ker and Lefferts. Of those departed all save one, Elder William L. Beebe, who resigned after about nine years service, continued to serve until death called them hence to their great reward. Elder Lefferts and ourself are left to continue the work until such time as it pleases the Lord to sever our connection by death or otherwise. According to the SIGNS, and our oldest subscribers, all seven editors have contended earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. It is true that there have always been misunderstandings, in other words, the editors' views have not always been understood, and when understood have not always been agreed with. This is perfectly natural; no preacher or writer need think that he is pleasing all the people all the while. But while there have been disagreements, taking it as a whole there has been wonderful unity between the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and its many readers these eighty-five years. At the beginning of the year 1917 we all wondered how we could go on with the duties of the twelve months ahead of us, but the year has passed, and we must confess that as our day our strength has been, and we now feel glad that we did not despair. The writers have been very kind in supplying us with matter for publication, and we have heard very little criticism of articles published, or of the conduct of the SIGNS, for which we feel thankful. Our subscription list is larger than at the close of volume eighty-four, notwithstanding the depressed state of affairs, owing to the deplorable war of the nations. Many sad hearts will ache this Christmas, and God only knows where the scene will end. O that he may deliver us and restore peace to our beloved land.

During the year many private letters have gone unanswered, many requests for views have been neglected, and we thank our friends for their kind and loving forbearance. We assure you that we have not forgotten you, nor have we meant to treat your requests silently, but

sometimes, for want of light or understanding, and sometimes for want of time, we have been compelled to omit many things we would gladly have done.

The contributions for "the poor of the flock" have been highly appreciated, not only by the SIGNS, but by the poor, and in their behalf, as well as our own, we thank each one who has so kindly donated.

Now, with all good wishes and prayers for your peace and comfort, we say farewell for 1917. K.

SALE OF CONCORDANCE DISCONTINUED.

OWING to the increase in cost to us of Cruden's Complete Concordance we have decided to discontinue selling them, as we know our readers would not feel like paying the price we would be compelled to charge. We are sorry to have to make this announcement, but as there is a fairly good concordance contained in our Premium Bibles we feel our brethren will not be inconvenienced to any great extent.

PRICE OF BIBLES ADVANCED.

OWING to the increased cost of Bibles to us, we are compelled to advance our sale price from $2.50 to $3.00. Those who wish to secure a Bible as a premium, will now have to send us five new subscribers, instead of four, as formerly. We are sorry to have to increase our price, but as the cost has been advanced to us, we cannot afford to sell them at the old figure.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at his home, 1910 N. 22nd St., Philadelphia, Pa., Thursday, Nov. 29th, 1917, Ensign Charles E. F. Gifford and Elizabeth A. E. Smith, both of Woodshole, Mass.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Benjamin F. Higgs departed this life May 11th, 1917, at his home not many miles from the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va. He lived to be 86 years old, and died in the same room in which he was born. Mr. Higgs is not survived by any relatives nearer than nieces and nephews, of whom there are several. The widow of Mr. Higgs, Lucy Orrison Higgs, survived him a little more than five months, and passed away at the home of her sister, Mrs. J. W. Whaley, Sterling, Va., Nov. 24th, 1917. She would have been 75 years old had she lived until Dec. 16th. We write this brief notice of these two dear friends of truth not so much to record the details of their family history, as to testify in our family paper to the unwavering constancy all these years in their friendship for the Old School Baptists. While neither of them ever united with the church, their friendship was not the result of mere natural civility, but was the fruit of God's grace in them, for we have hope for them that they are the children of God. Mr. and Mrs. Higgs were real old-time southern people, bearing that stamp of refinement and gentility which so characterized southerners of a former generation. They were the very embodiment of hospitality, and their home was always open to the entertainment of God's people. Mr. Higgs had a wonderful mind and a most excellent memory. He was familiar with all the little details in the history of Frying Pan Church, and we frequently referred to him when we wanted the verification of certain data. Both Mr. and Mrs. Higgs became more and more deaf as they grew older, so that neither of them could hear enough of the preaching to appreciate it as they would have liked, but this infirmity never kept them from the meetings. They seemed to love to come to meeting to be with the people they loved, even if they could not enter into the preaching. We shall miss them in our meetings more than we can express. Mrs. Higgs is survived by two brothers: Oscar Orrison, of near Herndon, Va., and W. W. Orrison, of Washington, D. C.; also by two sisters, both living in Sterling: Miss Florence Orrison and Mrs. W. J. Whaley. L.

Fred Miller, son of William and Eleanor Miller, was born near Burtonville, Ohio, April 29th, 1859, and died October 23rd, 1917. He was united in marriage to Miss Ella Lewis Sept. 25th, 1885. To that union were born seven children, all of whom survive him except one child, who died three years ago. About twenty-five years ago brother Miller experienced a hope in the Savior, and upon relating his experience was received in the fellowship of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church called Mercers Run, being baptized by Elder Levi Bavis, their pastor. Brother Miller was of an exceptional quiet dis-

position, slow to speak, but enjoyed himself among the Baptist people and was always ready to help entertain his brethren, and ever ready to give an answer to them that asked for the reason of his hope. He had been a sufferer of stomach trouble for some time, and finally consented to be taken to the hospital at Columbus, Ohio, for an operation, from which he never recovered.

I was called from Cleveland for the funeral, which was held in the M. E. meetinghouse at Pt. William, Ohio, before a large congregation of brethren and friends. I tried to comfort the living with the ability the Lord gave me, after which all that was mortal was laid to rest to await the resurrection.

May the Lord comfort the family and friends.

GEO. L. WEAVER.

Mrs. Rachel Heyd died May 9th, 1917, aged 64 years. She was the daughter of William and Anne Frazier, and spent her early life in the bounds of the Cow Marsh Church, in Kent County, Del. She was married to David Heyd in the year 1874. A few years later they moved to New Castle County, in the bounds of the Welsh Tract Church, and she was baptized in the fellowship of that church by Elder J. L. Staton in the year 1885, her husband joining some time later. Their home was always open to Old School Baptists, and meetings were frequently held in their house. The writer has attended many pleasant meetings there, particularly in the last years of her life. She leaves her husband and three married daughters to mourn: Mrs. Hamilton and Mrs. Rambo, of State Road, and Mrs. Cooper, of Wilmington, Del.

Elder John Eubanks, who was her pastor at the time of her death, conducted her funeral, using as a text Eccl. vii. 2: "It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting." She was buried in the cemetery near the Cow Marsh Church.

Written by request.

A. E. RITTENHOUSE.

Mrs. Henrietta Carter, nee Fuller, was born Jan. 11th, 1850, and was raised by a widowed mother of the Primitive faith and order, who was in the split and stayed with the old order of Baptists. She was married to Bennett S. Carter July 20th, 1873, in Alabama. To that union were born eight children: James Edgar, Bennett Joseph, Gustavus Fuller, Ernest Green, Uriah Dorling, Richard Samuel, Valto and Cane Horace. They moved to Smith County, Texas, in 1874, and settled near Garden Valley. She and her husband joined the Predestinarian Baptists at Big Springs in the year 1886, and were baptized by Elder Fodam. She lived a consistent member, always filling her seat when not providentially hindered; a firm believer in the sovereignty of God in all things and salvation by grace. To know her was to love her. She was a kind, loving and patient mother and good neighbor until the end. She died at the home of her son, Bennett, in the town of Edgewood, Texas, about 4 o'clock in the morning of Nov. 17th. Surely the church has sustained a great loss, but we feel sure it is her eternal gain. Six children survive her, her husband and two children having preceded her in death. Dear children, weep not, for your mother is not dead, but asleep in Jesus, from which none wake to mourn.

Written by her former pastor,

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

William Thomas Cubbage was born July 18th, 1860, in Kent County, Del., and died suddenly after working all day October 19th, 1917, at his home, Seaford, Del., of heart failure due to neuritis, from which he had suffered the past six years. He was a man of sterling qualities and pleasing personality, and though he never united with the church, he was a lover of the truth and an able defender of the doctrine of salvation by grace. Having an experimental knowledge of the Scriptures, and being a good conversationalist, his talk was with convincing power. He was a regular attendant at Baptist meetings as long as he was able and had opportunity, deriving much pleasure and comfort therefrom. He leaves a widow, two daughters, one granddaughter, two brothers and a host of relatives and friends to mourn their loss, but we believe our loss is his eternal gain, that he has entered into the full fruition of that for which he hoped.

Funeral services were held from his late residence in Seaford, Del., Monday, October 22nd, 7:30 p. m., conducted by Elder B. E. Cubbage, who spoke to the comfort of the sorrowing ones. The remains were taken by train Tuesday morning to Wyoming, Del., thence by automobile to Odd Fellows' Cemetery, Camden, Del., for interment, after a short but appropriate service by Elders Coulter and Mellott, of Philadelphia. May God comfort the bereaved ones.

His brother, WILLARD S. CUBBAGE.

Albinus Nightwine was born in Columbiana County, Ohio, Dec. 10th, 1843, and emigrated with his parents to Saline County, Mo., in 1860, where he lived until the day of his death, which occurred October 28th, 1917, at the age of 73 years, 10 months and 18 days. He served in the Union army during the Civil War. He was married to Miss Kanzada Harmon May 3rd, 1866, by which union he became the father of eleven children. She preceded him to her eternal home July 24th, 1912. He leaves to mourn, eleven children, of whom our dear sister Collins, a member of the Mount Vernon Church in Kansas City, is the eldest, four brothers, sixteen grandchildren, beside other relatives and a host of friends and neighbors. He never united with any church, but had for many

years entertained a good hope in God's mercy, and dearly loved the Old School Baptist doctrine of salvation by grace. He lived a strictly moral and upright life.

Funeral services were conducted at the home, in the presence of a large number of relatives and friends, by the writer, after which the remains were buried in the beautiful cemetery at Sweet Springs, Saline Co., Mo. SMITH KETCHUM.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Elder J. M. Fenton, Pa., $5.00; J. D. Welborn, Ind., $5.00; H. J. O'Bannon, Va., $1.00; Dr. Ben P. Earle, Ky., $1.00; Mrs. M. M. Rounsavell, N. Y., $5.00; Mrs. E. W. Sproul, N. Y., $2.00.

APPOINTMENTS.

ELDER George Ruston will, the Lord willing, fill the following appointments:

Stockton, N. J., Saturday, Dec. 15th, 10:30 a. m., Mrs. Sam. Horner's; Saturday afternoon, Trenton, N. J., 2 p. m., at the residence of Casper Fetter, Hamilton Ave.; Sunday, 16th, Locktown, N. J., 11 a. m.; afternoon, Frenchtown, N. J., 4 p. m.; Monday, 17th, Grandon, N. J., at the home of brother A. J. Demott, 7:45 p. m.

Also, nothing preventing, I expect to be with the friends in Brantford, Canada, Sunday, Dec. 23rd, and Hamilton Wednesday, 26th. Brother Fred Simmons will locate the meeting in Brantford. Meeting in Hamilton will be at Mr. Calhoun's residence, 29 Strathcome St., 7:45 p. m. D. M. VAIL.

ELDER D. M. Vail will, the Lord willing, fill the following appointments:

Kingston, N. Y., Saturday, Dec. 15th, 7:45 p. m.; Sunday, 16th, Ashokan, 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m.; Monday, 17th, Margaretville, brother Morris Faulkner's, 7:45 p. m.; Tuesday, 18th, Arena, sister Dickson's, 10:45 a. m.; Wednesday, 19th, Halcottville, sister Polly Ann O'Connor's, 7:45 p. m.

GEORGE RUSTON.

MEETINGS.

THE Middletown and Andes Church has decided to hold its meetings during the winter months at Dickson Hall, Arena, N. Y., instead of at Union Grove.

The Second Roxbury Church will hold its meetings during the winter months at the Mead sisters home, Roxbury, N. Y.

To the above meetings all who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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SUBSCRIBERS TAKE NOTICE.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1918. NO. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

UPTON, N. Mex., Sept. 9, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have a desire to write a few lines on the most important subject man has ever thought about. I have feared that all I know I have learned by reading and committing to memory the texts of Scripture bearing upon certain subjects, and I have thought that the greatest sin I ever committed was to try to talk in public. People have had and still entertain different views as to how sinners are saved. While it appears clear to one class that they are saved by doing certain things, to another class it seems plain nothing that man can say, think or do has anything to do with salvation. What Old School or Primitive Baptists want and delight in is a plan that has no defects in it—one that is sure to accomplish that which God desired and intended: salvation based upon a certainty; no chance plan is any comfort to them. Any plan that depends on such frail, imperfect, sinful creatures as we are is no benefit to our people. They have learned that vain is the help of man, and have read where it says, Cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils. Also, Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, or maketh flesh his arm. We think, and the Bible teaches, that before God created this world he had a plan upon which he intended to save his people that he loved. The poet wrote:

"The law that was given on Sinai of old
Was still the great mercy and love to unfold,
Which did in the womb of eternity lie,
And all for the lifting of Jesus on high."

The Lord intended to save the objects of his love before time began, because it is written: In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began. Peter said of Jesus: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world. Then with these texts before us we know that God intended to save somebody, and knew some would need a Savior. He, being perfect, his plan is also perfect. He had the wisdom to plan, and the power to carry out his determination. There is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God. I wisdom was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. Wisdom hath builded her house. David said, O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all. Paul said, O the depth of the riches, both of the wis-

dom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out. Paul said, In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Then before the world was made God in counsel laid out a plan. A counsel is when two or more parties come together and consult and exchange ideas and plan what is best to be done to carry out the plan they think is best to accomplish certain things or certain ends, for their benefit or for the good of their heirs. God in his counsel determined that Jesus should die for his loved ones, therefore it is written in Acts: Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. The Lord said by the prophet Isaiah: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." So his counsel shall stand, none can change it, and nothing can prevent him from doing what he wants done, for he says, "I will do all my pleasure." If it is his pleasure to save his people from their sins and bring them home to glory, who can prevent it? If it were his pleasure that they were to be defiled and degraded by sin and need a Savior, who could change it? If it were his pleasure that they should be under the law, under the control of the power of darkness, and "driven by Satan," and shut up in prison, please tell me where or what power could prevent this being the case. After Adam had eaten the forbidden fruit and fallen under the condemnation of God's violated law, the judgment was by one to condemnation. By the disobedience of one man many were made sinners. As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. God said to him, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake." All this was for the benefit of the children of God and for his glory. They must be here under the law and under its curse, suffering in this world of sin, struggling to make bread, afflicted both in body and mind, and all for their benefit. "Cursed is the ground for thy sake," is what God said to Adam. Paul said, For I reckon the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. Not to us, but in us. It has gone out in places that Baptists who believe as Elder Beebe did do not believe in the resurrection. If I was ever taught anything it was in line with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I will go one step further than most preachers go: I am sure our vile bodies will be quickened, changed and raised up as certain as the body of Jesus was. Paul said, If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. I am established in the fact that when you go home to glory it will be with a shout of joy, and you will know in all eternity you were here, and how you suffered, why you were here, where you lived, what an awful sinner you were, how much Jesus suffered to redeem you from the curse of God's law. For Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. How much he loved you, how he watched over you and delivered you from this present world. You certainly do not expect to know less there than

you do here. Paul said, For now we see through a glass, darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part; but when that which is perfect is come then shall we know even as also we are known. You only know a very small part in regard to all that pertains to your salvation, and why you had to be here to suffer, but then you shall know as God knows. A resurrection that causes you to lose your identity, and knowledge of being redeemed by whom and from whence, seems to me is as bad as no salvation and no resurrection at all. If you do not know who redeemed you, and where you were and the awful condition you were in because of sin, and the lost, ruined and captivated state you were in because Satan had you in his kingdom and under his control, and that in his service you delighted, being deceived by him, and that Jesus by the shedding of his blood cleansed you and delivered you from prison, I would like to know what you are going to praise him for. The prophet said, As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant hast thou sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. Again, Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered? Thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered, for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children. These declarations are positive, they tell what Jesus did for us: I will save thy children, testifying beforehand emphatically what he was going to do. This statement is recorded in the Old Testament, followed up in the New, where the angel says, Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. Again, Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to whom be glory for ever; basing the eternal salvation of all of the elect of God upon a certainty, all dependent and depending upon the merits of Jesus, his ability to keep the law, his power to lay down his life and to take it again. He said, No man taketh my life from me; I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. You had lost your life in Adam, the law of God demanded your life. You cannot run away or escape the law of God. You may escape from a natural prison, evade the authorities always, but not so with God, he is everywhere, and all things are open to him with whom we have to do. So it is; you were under the law and under its curse, and unable to deliver yourself; but thanks be unto God, he said by the prophet, Out of Zion shall come the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; so Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. This embraced all the spiritual Israel of God, for Paul said, He is not a Jew that is one outwardly, but he is a Jew that is one inwardly. Then, as was determined of him, In the fullness of time he came under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. The salvation of all the loved ones of God depended on him. Who are they? Do not know. Where are they? In all nations. How many? God said to Abraham, Come out here and count the stars and tell me how many; so shall thy seed be. Paul said, There sprang from one, and him as good as dead, as the stars of the sky for multitude and as the sand of the sea innumerable. What a wonderful sight, what wondrous glory is this! All of the children of God saved by the blessed Savior of sinners, no matter how far away from preachers

and Bibles, no difference how low down sunken in sin, notwithstanding they are dead in sin and captives of the devil, your blessed Jesus has the power after having saved you to give you life and reveal to you your lost condition. Ah, yes, he bowed the heavens and came down, and darkness was under his feet. Then, after God had laid on him your iniquities, as Isaiah said, The Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all, he went up with a shout, for it is written, God is gone up with a shout, and the Lord with the sound of a trumpet. Then he came according to the perfect plan, and was delivered into the hands of wicked men to be crucified and slain, and when he laid down his life the debt was paid, and when he took his life he brought you up. So the law is satisfied, and you are no longer under the law, but under grace, raised above the law, it being satisfied in full. Paul said, When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. In the garden he suffered; on the cross he cried, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? A soldier took a spear and pierced his side, and there came thereout blood and water, as the prophet had said, They shall look upon him whom they have pierced. He said, It is finished, and gave up the ghost. All his sufferings were over; no more are they to scourge him, never again will a crown of thorns pierce his blessed brow, not a man shall ever spit in his face; all this has been done and over, not a drop of sweat like blood shall come from his blessed body; all this was finished. They came to him after they had broken the legs of the two thieves. He was dead, and they did not break his legs, because it was written by the prophet long before this, Not a bone of him shall be broken. This signified the same as the carrying out of Egypt all the bones of Joseph. He made them swear that they would not leave his bones in Egypt, testifying that not one of God's elect shall be lost, their eternal salvation is based upon a certainty. Paul said, Therefore it is of grace, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed. They laid his (Jesus) body in Joseph's new tomb, but it must not stay there; no power on earth or in hell could keep it there. If it had remained there all would have been lost, but it was raised, for God said by the prophet, After two days he will revive us, in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. The third morning he arose. Paul said, Who was delivered for our offences, but was raised again for our justification. Again, Therefore, being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. Again, If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. After he had risen he said to the woman, Go quickly, and tell my brethren I am risen. Again, As I live, ye shall live also. All of his loved ones are going to live because he lives. So now he watches over you, and when you do wrong he punishes you for your good and for his glory. Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and if ye be without chastisement, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Paul said, For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth, but if the husband be dead she is loosed from the law of her husband. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ. Having satisfied the law in her behalf, and she having died with him and been raised up above

the law by him, he has the right to enrich and cherish her always. He abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is forever set down at the right hand of God, where he ever liveth to make intercession for us.

"Then give all the glory to his holy name,
To him all the glory belongs;
Be yours the high joy still to sound forth his fame,
And crown him in each of your songs."

Now, brethren, if I may assume to call you by that name, you can do as you please with this and it will be all right with me. If there is anything wrong in it just say, It is as good as we could expect from so ignorant a person away out in the far west, who punches cattle and never did know much. From him who, like Joseph, was sold into Egypt and separated from his brethren; but it is all right and just. If anything in this is fit to read give God the praise and no one else.

ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

CASEY, Iowa.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I try to prove all I write by inspired writers, not by uninspired. "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: * * * but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain [the church]," for Isaiah wrote, "For unto us, [the church] a child [Christ] is born, unto us a son is given, and the government [of the church] shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace," "without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter."—Dan. ii. 44, 45. "For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's [Mary's] womb. I will praise thee; for I [Christ] am fearfully and wonderfully made." The flesh of the woman, the Spirit of God, that made him God manifest in the flesh. (See 1 Tim. iii. 16.) "My substance [church, his people] was not hid from thee [Father], when I [Christ's conception] was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book [of eternal life] all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."—Psalms cxxxix. 13–17. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren; saying, I will declare thy name [God] unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold, I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."—Heb. ii. 10–14. I fully believe that Christ will destroy the devil. The only way he can deliver his own is by destroying the old serpent, annihilating him; he can do it as easily as I can kill a common snake. Do you believe there is anything too hard for

God? I do not. "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people [from all nations] shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob: and he will teach us his ways." Christ said, It is written in the prophets, All thy children shall be taught of God. He writes his spiritual law in their hearts. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant. "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this [house of clay] we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven."—2 Cor. v. 1, 2. "But I [Christ] am like a green olive tree in the house of God."—Psalms lii. 8. "For we are laborers together with God: ye [the saints] are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. iii. 9–11. See Solomon's Song, eighth chapter. "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."—Psalms ii. 6–8. "Fear not; for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory."—Isaiah xliii. 5–7. "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation."—Isaiah xxviii. 16. The Gentiles shall say, "Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O Lord, art our father, our redeemer: thy name is from everlasting." "Thus saith the Lord, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants' sake, that I may not destroy them all. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there."—Isaiah lxv. 8, 9. "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."—2 Cor. v. 1, 2. "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us [the saints] a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver [the law written in the heart], the Lord is our king; he will save us." "The inhabitants shall not say, I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity."—Isaiah

xxxiii. 20–22, 24. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."—Isaiah xl. 2. "All the ends of the world [that is not the whole world] shall remember [what they are taught of the Lord] and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's; and he is the governor among the nations. * * * And none can keep alive his own soul. A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation."—Psalms xxii. 27–30. This is the seed or grain spoken of. Amos ix. 9: "For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations [his chosen], like as corn [in other places they are compared to wheat] is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain [saint] fall upon the earth." "And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them [the stubble], and devour them; and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the Lord hath spoken it."—Obadiah 18. "For, behold, I [Jehovah] will bring forth my servant, The Branch [Christ]. For, behold, the stone [cut out of the mountain without hands] that I have laid before Joshua: upon one stone [Christ] shall be seven eyes [of the Lord]: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day [the day that Christ died]."—Zech. iii. 8, 9. "Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone [Christ] thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it." Christ the true witness. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit [the other witness], saith the Lord of hosts." "The stone which the builders rejected [and reject now], the same is become the head of the corner. Whosoever shall fall upon that stone [Christ] shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."—Luke xx. 17, 18. "To whom coming, as unto a living stone [Christ], disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed: but ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."—1 Peter ii. 4–10. There is no other kingdom that will last eternally and forever only Christ's kingdom, and no other people only Christ's that will live eternally and forever, for no others are given eternal life; eternal life is the gift of God. He gives eternal life to his sheep, if he did not they would have all perished.

Yours for the truth's sake,

R. S. BANKS.

POCA, W. Va., Nov. 28, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—From time to time since my return home from the Juniata Association and Virginia Corresponding Meeting I have felt to comply with the promise I made you and many of the saints of God while attending these meetings; indeed it was quite a feast to me to see you all. I will send this epistle of love and fellowship to you, my brother, for your inspection and correction, that it may be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that all who read it may know I still have them in remembrance individually, but will address them collectively, desiring that each one may receive it as being addressed to them personally.

First, I will say it was not at all unexpected to me to find you all so well rooted and grounded in the faith and doctrine of God's elect, having been brought up under good sound doctrinal preaching, well seasoned with experience. I think that God's little children were under consideration when it was said, Bring up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, (established in the faith) he will not depart from it. As I sit by my fireside to-day penning these few lines there is a feeling of love in my bosom for the wellfare and prosperity of Zion, a warm feeling for all who know the truth and love it, and it seems that I must speak a few words of the comfort I received from the preaching I heard while attending these two associations. Elders H. H. Lefferts and J. M. Fenton were the first for me to hear of your eastern brethren, and their preaching surely had the right ring to me. They are workmen indeed who needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. How thankful we are to God for such able gifts.

From the Juniata Association I went to the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, there to meet Elders Eubanks, Ker, McConnell, Vail, Lester, Vaughn and Ruston. Elders Fenton and Lefferts were there also. At both associations the coming together of the people seemed to be for no other purpose than to hear the gospel of the Son of God preached; indeed I felt in my heart that they were the meek and lowly followers of Jesus. The kindness shown to me by the brethren, sisters and friends at both of these associations will be remembered by me as long as life remains in this old body of mine. I felt the full force of the Scripture in my heart, Ye are of God, little children, standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free.

Now a few words to my brethren in the ministry. I had heard of you, but there mine eyes beheld you, and in my heart I thanked God for his loving-kindness in placing such wonderful gifts on the walls of Zion; watchmen indeed who watch over the flock of his pasture for the good of their souls, and not for filthy lucre. It was a great pleasure to me to meet with Elder Eubanks, as he is getting old, and has spent most of his time in the ministry, and being personally acquainted with Elder P. W. Sawin, and having heard him so often speak of him in the highest terms, made me the more anxious to meet him. He surely is a sweet experimental preacher. I do not speak of him in the way of slighting any, but because of his age. We love to speak of our God as being a sovereign over all worlds, all things and all events, and that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

I will now ask an interest in all your prayers when at the throne of grace, hoping that if I should live until your next

annual meetings to be with you in love and fellowship.

Your brother in afflictions,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

ROANOKE, Va., June 26, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER McCLANAHAN:—I read your letter in the SIGNS, written to sister Johnson, January 10th, and it impressed me somehow where you said, "The cold shoulder of a professed religious world has been turned against me, with all its scoffs and scorn, because of the doctrine I advocate, which is the doctrine of predestination, unlimited election and the effectual calling of the chosen in Christ by the rich reign of God's free grace alone, without the merit of the poor, helpless creature," &c. Now, my dear brother, I will be seventy-eight years old in a few days, and that is all I have to depend upon, and I feel a little different from that; I care but little for their ignorance. It is, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." If I am so blessed as to obtain that kingdom they can have all the balance. But I reason it is somewhat different with you, as you are a public man and have to stand in the stand. It was told once that if I joined this old, despised set I could never get office among the people, but I paid no attention to it. I had a good office and they beat me out, although I am a cripple, having lost my right arm. But I cared but little, as I trust I was not dependent upon Arminianism for a living. My God has taken care of me and enabled me to have three meals a day, and will as long as I live if I am worth taking care of, so, my brother, Arminian scoffs are nothing. Sometimes I draw comfort from this Scripture, when I see the actions of the Arminian world, that it is but a remnant, according to the election of grace. If I were in a great number like they are then I would doubt, but it says election of grace. Take grace, election and the purposes of God out of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation and you have only the covers left. But they are to be pitied more than blamed. It is all revelation: "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." We cannot teach them anything, it takes the God of heaven to do that, and when we labor ever so hard to teach a Greek anything, unless accompanied by the Spirit it is foolishness; so if not revealed none of us knows anything. When the old king dreamed and it went from him, and the soothsayers were told to tell the dream and the interpretation they could not do it, and said it had never been heard of that a king would require such a thing, but tell us the dream and we will give the interpretation. Easy enough to fool the old king that way, but he had forgotten it, so he ordered all put to death at a certain time. Daniel was informed of the king's command, and he asked his brethren to desire mercy of the Lord, saying, These soothsayers cannot do that, but there is a God in heaven who can reveal secrets. Daniel was depending on him, and acknowledged it was not in himself. But when the God of heaven showed it to Daniel he could go before the king, and when he had to tell the dream it was not hard to make him believe the interpretation, and the same truth is set forth by Joseph and Pharaoh, also by the apostle Paul: "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Paul

said he knew what the gospel was: it was the power of God; he could not know that only by revelation. But when nothing is revealed to an Arminian you can detect him in a five minute talk. I heard a precious old sister say once that she did not believe there were any christians among the Arminian workers. She said if they had been killed to that as she had they could not talk that way. I thought at that time maybe she was wrong, but I have grown in age to nearly believe the same thing.

Dear brother, excuse me for writing so much, it got on my mind and I have gone on and on. If you do not believe all I have written throw it aside and overlook my ignorance. I wish I could meet you again in this world, but that is doubtful, but, my precious old brother, I expect to meet my God with just what you set up: predestination, unlimited election and effectual calling, all the purposes of God, that he knows all things, both in heaven and earth. If you have time write me a line. I love you for the truth's sake.

In love and fellowship,

C. M. TURNER.

WEISER, Idaho, Aug. 3, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I will now try to write you a few lines. I know this is the busy time of the year, and many of your writers may be busy. It has always seemed to me if I wrote or tried to preach it should be after the rest have written, or there was no one to preach. I do not know how it is with you, but sometimes it seems to me that I just cannot open meeting with prayer; such a poor, weak, sinful creature as I am, one who cannot pray for himself; but at such times I usually feel that it would not be so bad to tell the children of God that their inheritance is sure, that they have a full and complete Savior, and that they are kept by the power of God, and that the promise is sure to all the seed, &c. Now, I do not mean by this that I feel qualified to do such work, for I never yet have made an effort I could say I preached; I think I tell the truth, but it is so bungled. There is one thing I can conscientiously say: every time I try to preach I do the best I can. It makes no difference if I have liberty to talk or if all is dark, just a few out to meeting, I must, it seems try. My mind may be a blank as to spiritual joy and a view of the plan of salvation. You see, brother, "all these things are against me." But how can I quit? I have tried; I have had some reasonable excuses, and have tried to use many others, but all to no avail; for woe is me if I preach not the gospel. Yes, the absence of the brethren and an unfruitful mind are ease compared to an accusing conscience, when our breath becomes a groan and our rest torment, then, brother, out of a guilty conscience we must beg for mercy and strength to walk in all our Lord's appointed ways. So I go on, trying to quit and trying to preach, in much weakness, yet with the ability God giveth. I reckon when the brethren get so they cannot stand me any longer they will tell me so. We are having some good meetings, although the busy season cuts down the attendance.

Brother Webb asked me to write on Hebrews iv. 9: "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." This rest is only for the believer. The last of the third chapter shows that they that entered not into this rest, entered not because of unbelief. This rest remaineth; it is ever present with the believer of God. Under the law there were six days work required, but the seventh day was a day of rest. They were to do no work on the

seventh day, but it was just as necessary to do the six days work as to rest on the seventh. This to my mind represents the time of the child of God from conviction to a hope, let that time be seven or seventy or any number of days. The object is to establish the fact that salvation is not by works of the law, but by grace, and when one has this knowledge they are ready to cease from their works and enter into the rest that he gives them, and this rest remains with them. They never desire to (though they may be in the depths) try to get salvation by the deeds of the law; they have died to the law, &c., they have Christ, who is the end of the law to the believer. They have now that hope which is their anchor; they rest in free grace, and look back on their labor as filthy rags, and they never will see their condemnation, their lost condition, their tired, helpless state, as they did just before they were enabled to hope in the mercy of Jesus, because they have got to the end of the law of their works, and entered into this glorious rest that remaineth to the children of God.

Yours in hope of a better resurrection,

T. E. ATTEBERY.

KENOVA, W. Va., Oct. 1, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I feel disposed to write you a few words for publication, if you deem them fit. I feel so depraved and lonesome, and in such condition I often think of the Old Baptists and their doctrine as touching these things, and find seasons of rejoicing in them. So it appears that this one word has been impressed upon my mind more than any other of which to write. When the Savior was here in the world, and so many people following him, he said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."—John vi. 44. The Jews said, "This is an hard saying." Now, brethren, is it not just as true to-day that so many people come to this very point and call it "hard" and turn back? At this point it seems to my mind that the people of God display that great characteristic, which distinguishes them peculiar from all other people. As the children of Israel could only move as the cloud moved before them, so christians can only go as he leads them. Then is it not blessed that we may feel and realize our own depravity? and may we be like Peter when he said, "Lord, to whom shall we go?" And inasmuch as we come to realize the truth at this point, it occurs to me that here is the foundation of a christian hope. I mean to say that if I am not deceived in myself, a sense of depravity is reason for a hope. Then as he (Christ) is the way, and only way, what could be gained by going back? Here I come to remember an expression used by brother W. J. May in preaching on the language of Christ: "I pray not for the world," and I feel that that is the only conclusion of the matter, to the effect that if there is nothing in those "hard sayings" my condition surely would be no worse to believe in them: "I would be gone anyhow."

I gladly solicit correspondence from any of the brethren who find opportunity to write.

Yours with only a hope,

J. A. PRESTON.

PALESTINE, Texas, Nov. 10, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—I notice that my subscription is nearly due, so I will inclose two dollars to renew for 1918, for it is a comfort for me to read. The editorials are worth the price of the paper, and all the writings are good and comforting to

me. There are but few of the writers I know in the flesh, but sometimes I am made to feel that I can call them brethren and sisters in Christ.

We have closed our seventy-eighth session of the Union Association, which I cannot keep from mentioning, for it seemed it was the grandest and most glorious meeting I ever attended. The preaching brethren came laden with the gospel of peace; Jesus was our theme and our song. There were seventeen ordained ministers with us, and the preaching was a chain of Jesus and his love all the way through. O it was a love feast from beginning to end.

I feel to thank God and praise his holy name for supplying us with two such able and efficient editors as Elders Ker and Lefferts in rightly dividing the word of truth to the edification of the saints. To God be all the praise and glory. Remember me at the throne of grace.

Your little sister, if one at all,

SARAH E. COOK.

BUCYRUS, Ohio, Sept. 10, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—As it is past time, I will renew my subscription to our family paper, which has been of great comfort to me, as I have enjoyed all of the many letters written by the strangers scattered throughout the many States of our country; elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, for I am satisfied that those who contribute to the dear old SIGNS are of the same family addressed in 1 Peter i. 2, set apart, or elect of God, and chosen in Christ, and as Peter says in the twenty-third verse of this same chapter, are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God. It seems to me that if I could only write as they do I would not hesitate, but I seem to go stumbling along so much of the time in the dark, and know so little of spiritual things, that often, like John, I wonder if I ever knew the Master, and am made to inquire, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?

Well, I only wanted to renew my subscription, and to tell you of the two good meetings we have had at Pleasant Hill, Delaware County, Ohio. On the second Sunday in July the wife of brother J. S. Main was baptized in the fellowship of this church by the unworthy writer. At our last yearly meeting, held September 8th and 9th, Elder G. L. Weaver, of Cleveland, was with us, and we had a most enjoyable season. Peace and harmony prevailed, and all seemed to feel that it was good to be there.

If in your better judgment you think there is anything in this letter to comfort Zion, you may give it a place in the paper, if not, put it in the wastebasket, and it will be all right with me.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

C. E. JACKSON.

ROANOKE, Va., Nov. 21, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have changed my address, and will try and write a few lines for your consideration. I was living near Roanoke when I received a hope in Christ, and was near enough to attend meetings regularly, which I did, and enjoyed them very much. For some purpose, best known to God, I became dissatisfied with my little home, and traded it for a farm near Troutville, and about eighteen miles from our church. There was no other church of our faith and order nearer, so notwithstanding the fact that I had a good farm, I soon found that I could not be satisfied so far away. I

believe it is the duty of all church members to attend their meetings regularly, whether they feel like it or not; we never know what God has in store for us. I have never yet refused to do, nor tried to find excuse for not doing, or trying to do, whatever the church called upon me to do. I know I am weak, and only possess just such ability as God gives me, but I have been made willing to serve my brethren. All I have to offer is my willingness, or my body as a living sacrifice. I believe all of us should be willing to serve, and not try to shift the burden upon some one else. If I am a child of God, it is enough; I can hope for nothing greater. The one thing I esteem is the fellowship of the brethren; I only want to be a member of the Primitive Baptist Church in full fellowship and good standing. I am again within easy reach of our church, for which I have felt to thank the Giver of all good and perfect gifts in tears. We have a good pastor here, brother J. C. Hurst; he is an able preacher, and attends regularly, and we esteem him highly.

Please address me in the future at Roanoke, Virginia, Route 4.

Yours in hope of a better world beyond the grave,

F. S. SHELTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Dec. 4, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—By your permission I desire to write a few lines to the readers of the SIGNS, and say to all from whom I have received letters in answer to my articles, The Lord's ways are right, and Predestination, that I thank you all for your words of encouragement. I had no idea when I was writing these articles that any one would be particularly interested in them. To me they seemed rather lifeless, like myself, but I have really felt glad that I did not burn them up, as I have much of my writing; but there are some letters I seem not to be allowed to burn; if I attempt it there seems to be a feeling of shame come over me, and I cannot destroy a letter when I feel that way. All this is a mystery to me. I sometimes stand in great amazement when I consider what a complex being I am. I say foolish things sometimes, and am ill-natured, and sometimes of a lively disposition, and again my mind becomes absorbed (or seems to be) upon spiritual things, and a peculiar steadfastness gets possession of me, so that nothing disturbs me. I am trying to do better, but do worse, therefore I do not know what to call myself except a complex being. I sometimes try to investigate and see if I am not a deceiver, and I cannot finish my investigation. I seem to get all confused, and have to be just what I am. I think I must be put here to do what Elder Vail said he was here for: to worry people. This really seems to me to be about the solution. I am not saying these things to amuse anybody, they are my honest convictions.

I would say to all the readers, A happy new year to you, but I know I cannot cause it to be so with you, you are not in my hands, but you are in much better hands, in the hands of the Lord, and he reigneth. Perhaps some think I use this sentence too much, but I cannot help it. I certainly do believe the Lord reigns, if he does not we are in bad circumstances, but I will repeat the sentence: The Lord reigneth.

A. T. BENSON.

JUSTUS, Pa., Dec. 18, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—By request of the church I am sending you a letter for publication, if you think best. Sister Eaton was formerly a member of the church at Waverly, N. Y. When the

church at that place was dissolved on account of the members being so few and scattered, her membership was transferred to the church here. Her letters to the church are very comforting to us, and we feel glad to know she was blessed of the Lord to enjoy the meeting when she was here in July.

G. W. GOODRICH.

WILKINSBURG, Pa., Dec. 2, 1917.

TO THE CHURCH AT JUSTUS, PA.—VERY DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I have been thinking I ought to have written you before, telling you of the enjoyment I had in meeting the dear ones there face to face, a privilege I had never expected. You perhaps remember my being with you at your meeting on the second Sunday in July, and that we heard such a good sermon from our beloved pastor, Elder Vail. It being our communion season, it was very enjoyable to me; my cup that day was full to overflowing. After not meeting with the church in that sacred ordinance in several years, not since our church met in Waverly at dear mother Vail's, and after being in this land of dearth for nearly two years, not hearing the preached word, you will not be surprised to know that I enjoyed it so much. "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow." His blessings and mercies to me are numerous and wonderful, a poor, vile sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all. If you, dear ones, knew me as I know myself I would despair of you having any fellowship for me. If there is any good in me it is all of grace, from first to last. I have a little hope that is more to me than all this world, if I could possess it. It is all so wonderful to me that I, the least of all, should be given this knowledge which surpasses all worldly knowledge. There was much I would have liked to have said to you, my dear kindred, when I was there, but I could not. I trust you all understand what my feelings were on that day; they were all of love and fellowship for you. I trust, dear ones, that you will overlook all my stammering, and believe me to be your loving and unworthy sister,

CARRIE EATON.

SMEDLEY, Va., Oct. 29, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will send you four dollars for your good paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which will pay for the years 1916, 1917, and I do hope the dear Lord will let you live to continue to send out the good old SIGNS, for sometimes I do feel that I have lost sight of that dear house and I do not know the way back. I am like a little child that has wandered away out of sight of its home, and how dark and terrible it is. How far away I must be from that place; no one could hear me if I should call, nor could they care for me, but could that dear Father hear? and would he attend to my cry? for I must cry out for mercy and for help. Yes, dear friends, I feel all this down deep in my poor heart more than I can express, for sometimes, like Job, I can say, Have pity upon me.

Dear brethren, I hope the dear Lord will bless you all to continue on in your good work.

From your sister, I hope,

FANNIE GRIGSBY.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1918.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

It is a pleasure to greet all our subscribers, readers and friends at this the beginning of 1918. How swiftly the time has flown since our last greeting, and we all realize that we are one year older and that much nearer the end of our journey in this world of sin and sorrow, yet beautiful world, filled with every blessing needful for mankind. How wonderfully infinite the wisdom of God in the creation of every necessary comfort and everything beautiful to look upon for man here, and how infinitely merciful to provide the Lamb that took away the sin of the world, that man might live in the glory world with the Father and the Son, there to behold the glory and infinite beauty of the blessed beyond, which so far exceeds anything this world contains that there is not the slightest comparison. O that we all had hearts full of gratitude to God for his mercy to the children of men, but instead our hearts are often cold and void of feeling such as love, gratitude, praise, thanksgiving and prayer; yet as deplorable as such a condition is to us all, it is in just such state of mind, heart and soul that the mercy of God is made manifest. In our forgetfulness of him his care of us is made known; in our unfaithfulness to him his faithfulness to us is seen; in our unrighteousness his righteousness is brought to view, and in our death his life is made manifest. These are a part of the all things that work together for good to the Lord's people.

At the beginning of 1917 we remember saying that "we all begin the year not knowing what it holds in store for us." We all know now what it held for us, and what a mercy we did not know at the beginning of the year. Darker and more sorrowful would have been our pathway as we plodded along day by day. It is a real blessing that our afflictions are hid until they come upon us, otherwise our whole lives would be spent in sadness and gloom. It is just as good that our joys and blessings are hid from us until they come to us, otherwise we would not be content with the present, and desire to hasten time on to our anticipated pleasure. Therefore, after all, all is best as the Lord has planned it. The same is true now at the beginning of 1918, that we know not what the year holds in store for us, but as in the year just past, and as during all our years, "the Lord will provide" for every sorrow, loss, cross and disappointment, and though darkness may endure for a night, joy cometh in the morning. Our country has never known such a distressing time as now, and doubtless never shall again. Thousands and tens of thousands of our young men are now at the front, and hundreds of thousands of others ready to be sent over, the very cream of our land; young men to whom we all have looked for statesmen, professors and all branches of business will in all probability never again return to the mother land; hence more sorrow this year for fathers and mothers than ever before in the history

of America. It is therefore with great anxiety that we all enter upon the year 1918, hoping, praying God to be merciful to us all. We can sympathize with those who have lost or may lose their boy or boys, as we lost during 1917 our son, all we had, and none but those having passed through the deep waters know the sorrow of heart and disappointment such affliction brings. Yet He who gives and takes away will be our guide and strength until death, and may we all have faith as Job had to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." The Lord did not only take all of Job's children, but he took all his possessions, and instead of complaining he said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." "Lord, increase our faith."

Thinking of the vast work before us for the year, and the advanced prices of all printers' materials, together with everything else, we wonder how we shall get through, but while this is now hid from us the Lord knows all things, and there we must leave it. No doubt many of our readers are equally concerned about themselves, when there is such an apparent scarcity of many necessary things and the exceeding high cost of living. Many in our country are suffering now for want of food, clothing and fuel, as the thermometer is hovering around zero. We all doubtless would ask the reason "why," but Gabriel is not allowed to ask nor pry between the folded leaves. To be still under such trying conditions and circumstances requires more faith than many of us possess. However, the office force and editorial staff will do our best to make the SIGNS both pleasant and profitable, but we are in great measure helpless without your support. We need your communications for publication; we shall need to have good letters sent in by you. It will be a great favor if your subscriptions are paid promptly, and those blessed with this world's goods and who feel inclined should not forget the poor of the flock. We request that more of our ministers write for the SIGNS; it will be a great help to us and a comfort to the brethren. We have tried to avoid controversy and all unpleasant things during the year now passed, and we shall endeavor to do the same this year. Nothing is ever gained by contention regarding spiritual things, and it is much better not to debate any question not understood. We know so little in this life, and nothing as we ought, that we all should rejoice in the little we know, and not undertake to fathom the depths of the mysteries of God. Let us serve one another in love and meekness of heart. The journey is not long for any of us, therefore let us not fall out by the way—we are brethren. K.

SALE OF CONCORDANCE DISCONTINUED.

OWING to the increase in cost to us of Cruden's Complete Concordance we have decided to discontinue selling them, as we know our readers would not feel like paying the price we would be compelled to charge. We are sorry to have to make this announcement, but as there is a fairly good concordance contained in our Premium Bibles we feel our brethren will not be inconvenienced to any great extent.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

URIM AND THUMMIM.

On the west side of a hill, not far from the top, about four miles from Palmyra, in the county of Ontario, and near what used to be the mail road which led from Palmyra to the town of Manchester, in the state of New York, a young man of eighteen in the year 1823 claimed that an angel of God showed him a set of engraved plates bound together with rings, plates containing strange hieroglyphics purporting to be the record of the dealings of God with a band of Israelites who had in some strange, unaccountable way wandered from Jerusalem clear across Asia and the Pacific Ocean and settled in what is now the American continent in what is now New York State, long before the birth of Christ. Why these people left Jerusalem, how they managed to cross Asia when there were no means at hand for long distance travel, how they made out to cross the wide expanse of the Pacific when there were none but the very crudest boats, why they stopped not on the Pacific coast, but pushed their way across this beforested continent to what is now New York, all these explanations are not so much as referred to in the record claimed to be found by a young man on a lonely New York hillside. Inasmuch as all the inscriptions were in a strange language, the young man could not read them; but along with these records were two transparent stones set in the rim on a bow fastened to a breastplate. These, when looked through like a pair of spectacles, enabled the young man to translate the records into the English language. These queer spectacles, the young man said, were the "Urim and Thummim" mentioned in the Old Testament. We give the above, not because we believe a word of it, but simply to show what the young man claimed for himself and for his discovery. He said the "Urim and Thummim" were two transparent stones attached to the breastplate worn by the Jewish high priest, by Aaron and his successors up to the Babylonian captivity; that the "Urim and Thummim" were lost at the time when Israel was carried away captive to Babylon, and that they were not worn by the high priests after the restoration to Jerusalem, which took place during the reign of Cyrus, king of the Persians. He said that this lost "Urim and Thummim" was brought by the Jews, who escaped from Jerusalem to America, and finally buried on the hillside where the angel revealed it to him in 1823. All this sounds like a fairy tale devised by an imaginative brain, and we believe it is just that, no more, no less. However, the story has aroused our interest in the "Urim and Thummim," and made us search the Scriptures to see what they say about it. Every man who claims to be a channel of divine inspiration must have his claims tested by the word of God. If he speaks not according to the law and to the testimony, it is because there is no light in him. The young man mentioned above was able to beguile many people with his strange story, and got to himself many followers, so that he founded a sect which now flourishes, even after the death of its founder, in the western part of the United States, dominating the policy, civil and religious, of an entire state. With all this we have nothing to do, further than to turn our attention to the Scriptures with the hope of unraveling the mystery of the "Urim and Thummim." Turning now to the twenty-eighth chapter of Exodus, we find there enumerated the garments which the high priest was to wear. They consisted of a breastplate, an ephod, a robe, a broidered coat, a

mitre and a girdle. The breastplate was made foursquare and doubled, of gold, blue, purple, scarlet and fine twined linen, a span long and a span wide. This was the breastplate, and was called the breastplate of judgment. Further, in this breastplate were to be set twelve stones in settings or "inclosings" of gold. These stones were to be arranged in four rows of three stones each: the top row was a sardius, topaz and carbuncle; the second row was an emerald, sapphire and diamond; the third row was a ligure, agate and amethyst; and the last row was a beryl, an onyx and a jasper. On each of these stones was the name of one of the tribes of Israel, so that the twelve stones complete in their settings of gold stood for the twelve tribes of Israel. This handsome set of stones all inclosed in gold was set in the breastplate, but could be removed therefrom when the breastplate was not in use. Now, reading the thirtieth verse of the twenty-eighth chapter of Exodus, we have this: "And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the Lord: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually." The Urim and Thummim, therefore, we believe were the twelve stones in their gold settings, which together made a solid piece of jewelry to be set in the breastplate. The breastplate could not be worn without it when the high priest went in before the Lord to make intercession for the sins of his people. The Urim and Thummim were not two transparent stones to be used like spectacles to read through, but twelve stones engraved with the names of the twelve tribes, to be worn by the high priest in his intercessory work. Turning now to the eighth chapter of Leviticus, where we are told how Moses carried out the directions given him in Exodus, we find Moses duly consecrated Aaron and his sons to the priesthood, as he was divinely ordered to do. In the eighth verse it says: "He put the breastplate upon him; also he put in the breastplate the Urim and the Thummim." Here we see Moses not only put the breastplate on Aaron, but set in the breastplate the twelve stones in their settings of gold, which constituted the Urim and Thummim. Now, turning to the twenty-seventh chapter of Numbers, Aaron having died in Mount Hor, we find his son Eleazar priest in his stead. Joshua, the new leader of Israel, is brought before Eleazar, that Eleazar may ask counsel or advice for him according to the Urim. This is the first place in the record where the Urim is spoken of as being a counsellor. In some way, we do not know how, the Urim had the power to communicate the will of God unto the high priest, that he might communicate this will to the people. In 1 Samuel xxviii. 6, we have it that Saul inquired of the Lord, but that the Lord would not answer him in any way whatever, "neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets." It seems, therefore, that the Urim and Thummim, the twelve stones worn in the breastplate of the high priest, not only represented the people for whom the high priest stood, but also that through them was reflected the answer or counsel of God to the high priest, that he might make it known to the people. In the prophecies of Ezra and Nehemiah we have the history given us of the return of the Israelites from captivity in Babylon. In the returning remnant there were some who claimed to be priests, but whose pedigree was lost, so that they could not

prove their right to be among the priests. These the Tirshatha (which is a Persian name for governor) prohibited from exercising their priestly office until there should appear a priest having the Urim and Thummim. Thus some Bible students have concluded the Urim and Thummim to have been lost, so that the priests after the captivity were unable to wear it. This evidently Joseph Smith believed, for he claims to have found these lost stones on a lonely hillside in New York. However, it taxes our credulity to believe that a set of jewels lost in Judea somewhere around 600 B. C. should turn up in 1823 A. D. in New York State. We believe that the record in Ezra and in Nehemiah means not so much that the Urim and Thummim were lost, as that the governor compelled the upstart priests to produce those stones as a proof of their right to the priesthood, inasmuch as their names could not be found among the pedigrees of the priests. As much as to say, I cannot find your names in the record as having been priests when we went into captivity, but if you can produce a priest having the Urim, I shall accept that as proof of your priestly right, otherwise you shall not eat of the most holy things nor enjoy any of the privileges of those who are rightfully priests. This means, then, not that the Urim was lost, but that their pedigrees, if they ever had any, were lost. Thus far we have referred to every text where the Urim and Thummim are mentioned, except one. Let us now turn to that, Deut xxxiii. 8. Here we have the prayer of Moses unto the Lord, just before his death, in which he seeks the blessing of God upon each of the twelve tribes. For the tribe of Levi, which tribe contained the priesthood of Israel, he asks: "Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah." This would mean that Moses pleads with the Lord not to take away from the tribe of Levi the priesthood, that is, the right to wear Urim and Thummim, notwithstanding the fact that the Lord proved Aaron at Massah and found him to fall short in the trial which befell at the waters of Meribah. Moses did not want the Levites to forfeit their priestly rights on account of Aaron's lapse at the waters of Meribah. It would seem that it was the purpose of the Lord to answer Moses' prayer, for the Levites continued in the priesthood throughout Israel's existence as a nation. But there is a spiritual import in this prayer of Moses that is of more account than its literal application to Aaron and the Levites. This reference is to Jesus. Jesus is God's Holy One, the great High Priest of our profession. The Urim and the Thummim surely never depart from him. He wears the names of all his saints on his breast continually. The breastplate of judgment is his garment, and his people are his jewels in that judgment. The day of vengeance was in his, Jesus', heart. Instead of the law of divine justice wreaking its vengeance upon the guilty sinner, his sins were imputed unto the blameless Savior, so that he was made sin for his people and paid himself the full penalty of all the guilt of his people. Thus the day of vengeance was his portion when the year to redeem his people had come. He wore then, as the great High Priest of his people, their judgment when he went to offer himself as a sacrifice for their sins, without spot unto God. The judgment which should have in strict justice been theirs, in mercy to them fell upon his innocent head. When Jesus offered unto God this sacri-

fice of himself, his people like jewels were in the breast of his love impressed; he wore the Urim and Thummim when he went beyond the veil of his flesh to appear in the presence of God for us. O holy thought, with what heavenly comfort fraught! The word "Urim" is the plural form of the Hebrew word "ur," meaning light; the word "Thummim" is the plural form of the Hebrew word "tam," meaning perfection. Thus the "Urim and Thummim" means lights and perfections. Spurious gems, made of paste or something else, have not the quality of glistening and sparkling like real gems. Real gems look as though a miniature sun were hidden within them. So God is hidden in his people and shines out of them. This causes them to be lights in an otherwise dark and sin-cursed world. "Ye are the light of the world," Jesus says. Why is the church the light of the world? Because, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." Arise and shine, thy light is come, says Isaiah to the people of God. The glory of God is risen upon us from the empty tomb which the Savior occupied. The Spirit and power of his resurrection dwell in his people, making them to shine as stars in the kingdom of the Father. James says God is the Father of these lights. Not only the light of God is shining in his saints, but the perfections of Jehovah are reflected there also. The name "Urim and Thummim," then, fits in very well for a term by which to signify the jewels of election embraced in the covenant which God made in his Son before time began. When Jesus died, these lights and perfections were secure in him to shine with renewed and undimmed lustre when he should rise from the dead. As we have already mentioned, it was a function of the Urim to give the counsel of God to the people, of course through the high priest. Individual members of the church seek the mind of God as it is reflected in and through the church. That is, if a man thinks he is called to preach, the church collectively is his judge in that matter. If they say he has no gift to preach, he must accept that counsel as truth in the matter, for no man is judge of his own gift. If one has a desire to be baptized, he judges not his own case, but the church as a body judges him worthy or not worthy of that holy ordinance. The counsel of God is revealed through the Urim or through his people, who are his jewels composing the diadem in the hand of our God. Too much stress cannot be placed upon this capacity of the church to be the counsellor of its individual members. We would do better than we do if we more frequently sought the advice and counsel of our mother, the church. Preachers too often try to impose their own judgment on their churches, instead of seeking to know the mind and will of the churches. Not only preachers do this, but often a member of the church seeks to have his own way about matters without knowing or trying to discover what is the will of the brethren in those things. We are really servants one of another, and we do well to remember this and to act accordingly. Let us seek the counsel of God at the Urim, and not at the shrine of self-love and ambition.

To-day is cold and snowy, the roads are blocked with snow, so that we are not able to fill, this morning, our regular appointment with the New Valley Church. Since we cannot talk with the little flock at New Valley, it seems good to sit down and talk by means of the pen with the dear children of God scattered all over this broad land of ours. May this new

year just dawning be filled with the blessings of God to all our dear readers, and whether or not it be God's will to bring about peace among the nations of the earth now warring, may he grant you that spiritual peace in Christ Jesus that passeth all understanding. L.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Association, in session with the Indiantown Church, Wicomico Co., Md., October 24th, 25th and 26th, 1917, to the associations and churches with which we correspond sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—We have been privileged to hold this, another session of the Salisbury Association, and we hope we are thankful for the blessings and privileges accorded us. We have had a precious meeting and a large attendance. We have received your messengers and messages with gladness of heart.

Our next association is appointed to meet with the Broad Creek Church, in Sussex County, Delaware, between the third and fourth Sunday in May, 1918, where we hope to meet you again.

A. B. FRANCIS, Moderator.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. E. J. Loyd, Cal., $1.00; Mrs. J. W. Parker, Ill., $2.00; Mrs. W. C. Stevens, Ga., $3.00; L. O. Garrott, Ky., $2.00; Mrs. Martha Beardsley, Ill., $1.00; G. C. Harrison, Texas, $2.00; A Friend, N. Y., $1.00; Maria Rees, Ky., $3.00; Lester Livingston, N. Y., $1.00; Elder John Downey, Mo., $1.00; "North Carolina Friend," N. C., $2.00; Mary A. Barnett, N. B., $1.00; W. T. Hugett, Ill., $2.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, Dec. 22nd, 1917, at the home of Victor Laws, Salisbury, Md., Jacob M. Adkins, of Wango, Md., and Alice C. Laws, of Powellville, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Daniel McAlpine died at the home of his brother Joseph, in the township of Brooke, Ontario, Sept. 11th, 1917, in his 85th year. He was the son of Malcolm McAlpine, and his mother was Sarah Black. Mr. McAlpine's wife, Maria Murry, preceded him twelve years ago. Since the death of his wife he had lived a part of the time with his brother Joseph. He had been failing in health for the past year, but was able to be around until a short time before his death. He never made a profession of religion, but was a believer of the doctrine held by the Old School Baptists. He was brought to see himself a sinner before his righteous Judge, and realized his inability to do anything to merit his salvation, and his only hope was centered in Jesus, the Savior of sinners. As the end drew near he spoke of his hope in Jesus, and longed to leave this world of sin and sorrow. His faithful and devoted niece, sister Barbara McAlpine, waited upon him during his last sickness. All that could be done by kind and loving hands was done to relieve his suffering, but could not stay the hand of death.

His funeral was held from the home of his brother, Joseph McAlpine, and was largely attended by friends and relatives, who came to pay the last tribute of respect to an aged and respected citizen. The writer tried to comfort the living by speaking such words of comfort as the Lord was pleased to give, after which his body was laid to rest in the Rickard Cemetery. May the dear Lord bless those who mourn his departure with a measure of grace to say, Not my will, but thine, be done.

ALSO,

Miss Jennie Campbell, daughter of Alex Campbell, of Duart, Ontario, died in Harper's Hospital, Detroit, Mich., Sept. 25th, 1917, after a short illness of inflammation of the lining of the heart. Miss Campbell left her father's home just two weeks before the day of her death well and enjoying good health, but a few days later was stricken with inflammation of the heart and removed to the hospital. Her father, on receiving word of her serious condition, hastened to her bedside, but she had lapsed into unconsciousness and was not able to speak to him. Her sister was constantly at her bedside, and all that could be done by mortal hands was done, but she grew weaker and weaker until she breathed her last. As the end drew dear her sister heard her whisper these words: "Lord, have mercy on me." Truly it was a dying

prayer, and a prayer of faith in her blessed Lord, who could speak peace to her troubled soul and make a dying bed feel soft as downy pillows are. Her body was brought to her father's home, but the spirit had gone to God who gave it.

The writer was called to attend the funeral, which was held from her father's home to the Duart Cemetery. After her lifeless form was laid in its last resting-place the large concourse of people repaired to the meetinghouse, where the writer tried to speak a few comforting words to the sorrowing friends. She leaves to mourn their loss, her father, a kind and devoted stepmother, two sisters and one brother, beside other relatives and friends. May Zion's God comfort these dear ones in their sad affliction.

ALSO,

Catherine McArthur died at the home of her cousin, Mr. Hall, on Queen St., St. Thomas, Ont., Sept. 24th, 1917, in her 67th year. Sister McArthur had resided in Detroait with her niece for the past three years. Prior to her going to Detroit to live she resided in St. Thomas. She came to St. Thomas in August to visit her brother Daniel, who is in poor health. She expected to remain in St. Thomas only a few weeks, visiting her brother Daniel, and also her brother Duncan in London, and then to return to Detroit; but the Lord's ways are mysterious, she was taken seriously ill and only lived a few days. It was my privilege to visit her during her sickness, and at each of the visits she was reconciled to the Lord's will and expressed a desire to leave this world of sorrow and be at rest. She died praising her blessed Savior for the manifestation of his love to a poor sinner saved by his grace. Sister McArthur was received in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada June 23rd, 1902, and was baptized by the late Elder W. I. Carnell.

Her funeral was held from the home of Mr. Hall, Queen St., St. Thomas, conducted by the writer, and was largely attended by many of her friends and relatives, as well as those of her brethren and sisters in the church. Her body was laid to rest in the St. Thomas Cemetery.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Miss Jane Anderson, our sister in Christ, died at the home of her cousin, Mr. Robert Conner, near Purcellville, Va., Dec. 11th, 1917, of muscular rheumatism, from which she had been a sufferer for several years, and which had gradually extended to all parts of her body, rendering her at the last helpless to exercise any bodily movements. She was the daughter of Robert and Mary Hanes Anderson, both deceased. Her exact age even she herself did not know, nor the exact place of her birth. She was born somewhere in the Goose Creek section of Loudoun County, but her parents both died while she was still very young, and her home and the old family Bible, in which was the family record, were destroyed by a freshet. However, as nearly as can be determined, we feel sure sister Anderson could have been not far short of eighty years old when she died. She was taken while very young by her aunt, her mother's sister-in-law, Mrs. Mary Ann (Megeath) Hanes. This aunt cared for and reared her. Elder Wm. L. Beebe baptized this aunt at Hughesville in 1886. Sister Anderson was baptized by the late Elder E. V. White, at Hughesville, Sept. 30th, 1888. She was convicted of sin at a very early age, and labored under the burden of sin many years. The Scripture which came to her so forcibly as to relieve her burden and give her a hope in Christ was: In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you. After receiving a hope in Christ she became much exercised regarding baptism. The words, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," were more or less constantly with her until she united with the church. The night before her baptism, being fearful she had committed a wrong step in going before the church, her fears were allayed by these words: "Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed; I, I am thy God, and will still give thee aid." She took especial comfort in those Bible promises to the Lord's people in which suffering and trials are named as part of their inheritance. She was often fearful of claiming these promises for herself, owing to an ever-present consciousness of her unworthiness and sinfulness. Sister Anderson was faithful to the church as long as she lived, and always attended the meetings until ill health prevented. Even then she ardently desired the brethren to visit her. She loved to talk of her Savior, and was blessed with a spiritual mind. Her hymn-book has many pages turned down and marked with pencil at hymns which had been especially blessed to her comfort. Among them are 367, 850 and 881 (Beebe's collection).

Funeral services were held from her cousin's home. The fourteenth chapter of John, a favorite portion of Scripture with her, was read. Interment in the cemetery at Hamilton, Va. L.

ORDINATIONS.

ACCORDING to arrangement, messengers of the Beulah Baptist Church, Elder George L. Weaver and Deacon Cyrus Cross, met with the messengers of Pleasant Hill Church, near Delaware, Ohio, to consider the propriety of ordaining to the full work of the gospel ministry brother Lisbon E. Stephens.

A presbytery was formed by electing Elder George L. Weaver moderator and Elder C. E. Jackson clerk.

Called upon brother Stephens to relate his experience and call to the ministry, which, being satisfactory, it was moved and carried by an unanimous vote that we proceed with the ordination by the laying on of hands and prayer.

Brother Stephens was proclaimed a regularly ordained minister of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist denomination, after which Elder Weaver delivered the charge to a small but attentive congregation.

We most heartily recommend brother Stephens to all brethren of our faith and order.

GEO. L. WEAVER, Moderator.

C. E. JACKSON, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Middletown and Andes Church has decided to hold its meetings during the winter months at Dickson Hall, Arena, N. Y., instead of at Union Grove.

The Second Roxbury Church will hold its meetings during the winter months at the Mead sisters home, Roxbury, N. Y.

To the above meetings all who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1918. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MEDITATIONS ON THE LORD'S PRAYER.

How often I feel as the disciples did when they said: "Lord, teach us to pray." How weak and meaningless my words sound when I try to speak or ask for what my heart desires. But sweet is the thought that our heavenly Father knows what we need before we ask. The secret moanings of the heart, that cannot be formed into words, are the prayers he hears and answers. What a mistake when the world takes the prayer the Savior taught his disciples to pray and hands it out to every one to repeat and call it a prayer.

"Our Father which art in heaven." How much we have to pass through before we can say of a truth, "Our Father." The Lord must come to us, open our blind eyes, unstop our deaf ears, give us life and light to see what we are by nature, "without hope and without God in the world." The Savior said, "Ye must be born again." He is not speaking of a natural birth, for he tells us, "Not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Life is wonderful in any form, natural or spiritual; none but God can give either. So to him alone we must look for divine life, as we do for our natural life. We are now but natural men and women; we have the life or spirit of man in us; we can understand the things of man, but how can we understand God? for nothing but the Spirit of God can understand spiritual things. So we must possess the Spirit and life of Christ before we can understand the things of his kingdom. How do we get that life? The Savior says, "I give unto them eternal life." In another place, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." This is how it comes. But what evidence have we that the Lord has spoken to us, has implanted divine life in our hearts, that causes the travail of soul, that when the fullness of time appointed by God comes we are born, brought forth from nature's darkness into the marvelous light of God, to breathe the breath of his heavenly atmosphere, to see and understand the things of his kingdom? If we are truly born again, if we are babes in Christ Jesus, we cannot at first see and realize

it. Think how ignorant and helpless a babe is the first few months. Its little mind cannot grasp that it is in a new world. Growth and experience only can teach it that; it feels perfect peace and safety when folded in the arms of its mother. So we, cradled in the arms of our Lifegiver, our Savior, do not realize that we are helpless. There is no fear, we sleep in peace, awake and are fed by his loving hand. How we thrive and grow from the food that is drawn from his precious life and body. As the mother's face is the rising and setting sun to her babe, so the Savior's presence to the new creature in Christ Jesus is all it wants. How chilling are the first winds of doubt and fear. We do not know we have to be taught, and that it is his loving hand that leads and teaches us; leads us in ways we have not trod. Often it is humiliating to the flesh; ways that we by nature would never choose. How unsearchable are his ways; we cannot understand them until it is his will to make them plain to us, as to the disciples that sat at meat with the Savior; when he had opened their eyes they knew him. "And they said one to another, Did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" We cannot understand how it all is, we just know our hard and stony heart is warm and every tendril now throbs with life and love. We no longer stand as a dead stone, but we can weep for joy and thankfulness. O how plain and lovely all God's works seem to us; our hope and evidence of God's love for us are so plain, we would not care if the whole earth knew it. So we try to tell some one. How different it sounds when we try it from what we viewed it. It is so little we are sorry we ever tried to tell it. Perhaps I am deceived, and this is not a change of heart at all. I will keep it a secret from everybody, but in my heart I will try to live a christian life. I want to serve God. It is not in form we want to serve him now or to be seen of men; no, no, but it is from the very heart. If we have wicked thoughts it grieves us; if we are cold or indifferent we mourn over it; it is not what we thought a christian life was or should be. How we beg to know if we are children of God. Lord, if I am deceived, undeceive me. The very breathing of our heart is prayer. The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. We feel that we cannot live a christian life. O no, with shame we are not able to do the work the Lord in his perfect life has done for us; we look away from self and look unto him who is our Savior and Redeemer. Yes, the burden that was laid upon us, the travail of mind we have passed through, is the evidence he has given us that we were the ones addressed when he said, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." O what love, to save us when we cannot serve and praise him as we should. But we know how our souls love him; we have to say with Paul, The good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. Now we begin to pray to be led and taught in the way a christian should walk. Now we begin to ask as the disciples did, "Lord, teach us to pray." With what childish fear and trembling emotion we look up and try to utter our Father's name. Yes, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. O what a thought, to be an heir equal with our Savior—his Father and my Father! So now we can say, "Our Father which art

in heaven." It is heaven, the most delightful experience we have ever known, to be brought into his presence, to be enabled to feel his presence, and how he can save such helpless, undeserving sinners as we are.

"Hallowed be thy name." Hallowed and sacred. It is so sacred I hardly dare take it upon my lips.

"Thy kingdom come." How sure we are, knowing God as we do, that all his chosen ones will be brought in; not one will be lost. He is able and has all power. He says, "I will do all my pleasure." What he says he will do. Just as he was able to melt our hard and stony heart, and cause us to love him, so he brings each and every one in.

"Thy will be done." How glad we are to trust his will and have it done. We know he makes no mistakes. But our will we are afraid to trust; in our shortsightedness we cannot see what is best for us. Had my will and wish been carried out I would still be without hope. I thought I was not old enough; I wanted to have a good time while I was young. There was plenty of time for such serious thoughts when I was older and could not enjoy life so well. The dear Savior willed it otherwise, and I am so glad he did. So gladly we can say, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." We well know we cannot enjoy heavenly places unless we are found at the feet of our Savior and our brethren.

"Give us this day our daily bread." When we have once been fed upon spiritual food that comes down from heaven how our souls crave it. It is something we can feast upon only when it is the Lord's will to prepare us for the food. When the Lord appeared unto Jacob in a dream and told him, Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, Jacob said, This is none other but the house of God and this is the gate of heaven. This is the food that all God's children crave, that he will be with them wherever they go and lead them so they will walk in a good and acceptable manner in his sight. We often get disheartened with ourselves when we see what failures we make; we think we might just as well give the whole matter up. Like Elijah, we pray to die. Now, Lord, take away my life. But as he lay and slept (often we get cold and indifferent and sleep), Behold, then an angel touched him and said unto him, Arise and eat. O how delightful to be touched by the angel of God's Spirit and have food set before us that we may eat. How our heart leaps for joy! God only can give it, so thus we pray to him, "Give us this day our daily bread."

"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." No one knows how much he is in debt to God until he is shown his nothingness before him. All our best efforts have been but filthy rags. So in viewing our many failures we can only pray, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Forgiving is not an act of our own; it is like love, a God-given spirit. We do not love because we want to, but we love because we cannot help it. When we hear one of God's children relate the Lord's dealings with him it touches every tendril of our hearts, and our love flows out unconsciously to him. When, on the other hand, we hear some talk of a do-and-live system, telling how they are going to serve God and how they have kept the commandments and now God is under obligation to save them, they wonder why we do not love them. Why do we not? As the old grandma said once, "I can't feel him talk." The same way is forgiveness.

There is true repentance and an imitation. The true repentance comes from God, it has no motive or self in it. When he makes us sorry, and we ask to be forgiven by those around us, every heart feels it, and they forgive us from their heart, and not from their lips. How well I remember when I was shown my exceeding sinfulness before God. I no longer blamed him for not pardoning my sins as I had done before. Before, when I had wept and prayed over my sins, I thought God was unjust not to forgive me and reveal himself to me. I knew I had made lots of mistakes, and had done wrong many times, but there was much good in me still. Poor, blind creature that I was, I had not yet been shown that there was no good in me. The Lord only can show and teach a poor sinner that he is vanity, and less than nothing. When we are left to ourselves we always think we are good. Satan tells us we are better than lots of others. But O when the Lord showed me what my heart was, when he gave me that godly sorrow, that godly repentance that need not be repented of, how different. Like the poor prodigal son, I did not think I was worthy to be called a child. I could only beg, If it is possible, be merciful to me, a sinner; and as he has for Christ's sake forgiven us, we should forgive those that trespass against us. No matter what the injury may be that they have done us, when they come truthfully acknowledging their fault we must forgive them. I sometimes think when we confess our mistakes to each other where we have been tempted, and how the hand of God saved us, or made a way for our escape, we are not only willing to forgive the erring ones, but our sympathy and love are greater than before, knowing how weak and easily tempted the best and truest hearts are. Then with united hearts we pray, "And lead us not into temptation." What kind of temptation does God lead us into? He does not tempt us to sin. Temptation and trial often express the same meaning. God did tempt Abraham to try his faith. The angel of the Lord said to him, For now I know that thou fearest God. The Lord gave Job into the hands of Satan, notwithstanding his faithfulness. There is none like him in the earth, a perfect and upright man, one that feareth God. Job longed for death while his Savior's face was hid from him. He cried out in his suffering, O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come to his seat. While the stroke was heavy and his complaint bitter, he said, in speaking of God, When he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold. God tries our hearts, and he tries our works, to see of what sort they are. Often in our most bitter trials we are left in darkness so dense we cannot see and understand that it is a trial from God's hand. We think that such trials, such heart wounds as these, are certainly not found where he leads, and instead of the soothing presence of our Savior, Satan with all his craftiness comes to us, as he did to our Savior when he was in the wilderness and hungry, and said to him, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. Now, if you are a child of God, rejoice in this sorrow, rejoice in tribulation, make bread of this and feast upon it. O what a soul-trying argument. How delightful it is to be made to know and feed upon the presence of our Savior, who is that bread which came down from heaven. But how it tries the heart and soul to be taught as the Savior said, that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of

God. The children of Israel had to be humbled and tried, to see whether they would keep his commandments or not. (Deut. viii. 2.) Hezekiah was a good king, but God left him to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart. (2 Chron. xxxii. 31.) Paul said, I know both how to be abased and how to abound. Jesus has been humbled and brought low. He knew how to abound, that means to be in great plenty. So God does not only try his people with sickness, poverty and disgrace, but with plenty (riches). If God blesses us with plenty and we humbly and unassumingly possess it, and use it to the honor and glory of God, we are blessed indeed, both spiritually and naturally. When we see brethren who have stood through poverty, trials, riches and honor unmoved from the humble path of duty, we say, There is a plant of the Lord's right hand planting. James said, Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried he shall receive a crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. The Savior walked through every temptation, and by his walk and example taught his little ones how to walk. When he fed about five thousand with five barley loaves and two small fishes it was such a miracle they said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. When Jesus, therefore, perceived that they would come and take him by force to make him a king, he departed again to a mountain himself alone. (John vi. 14, 15.) How hard it is at all times to follow that example, when we see where we could have prosperity, fame and position, our family could be surrounded with pleasures and luxuries we in our love so long to see them have. To put all aside and go patiently about doing that only that our heavenly Father has commanded us to do, looking to him for all things, causes us to be bowed and humbled before men all our days. The world cannot understand it, and they think we are foolish.

"Boast not, ye sons of earth,
Nor look with scornful eyes;
Above your highest mirth
Our saddest hours we prize.
For though our cup seems filled with gall,
There's something secret sweetens all."

That sweetness is only given in humble obedience to our Savior's commands. Whenever we seek the company and applause of this world we are doing that which our Savior never did. Paul, in writing to the Corinthian brethren, said, Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and be partakers of the Lord's table and the tables of devils. Whenever we do not walk honestly and uprightly before all men, as the children of God, we are punished for it. The Savior suffered all we ever could by poverty. He was clothed with our flesh, he suffered pain, hunger, humiliation and sorrow just as we do, he knew what it was not to have a place to lay his head, he knew how trying and often humiliating is poverty, he no doubt saw how pleasant it would be to be known as owning kingdoms of this world; but to all this Jesus said, Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Every heart that has been made honest by the grace of God, and to know its inability, its helplessness to battle and resist the subtle traps of Satan, prays to be led not into temptation.

"But deliver us from evil." We have to pray for God to deliver us from evil, for we may be deceived. We cannot see and always discern what is evil. We know this: what is not for Christ is against him, so anything that does not agree with Christ and his teachings is

evil, no matter how plausible or innocent it appears. Solomon prayed for an understanding heart, that he might discern between good and evil. So we should want to shrink from every evil that will lead our minds from Christ, and keep ourselves aloof from every person that would dare to bring reproach upon his name. Paul said in writing to the Philippian brethren, For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction. Leaning on the armor of light, let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in strife and envying, but ever be found providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men. If we be stumbling-stones let it be as our Savior, to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient.

"For thine is the kingdom." How can we tell those of Christ's kingdom? The Savior says, Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. In another place he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples and said, Behold my mother and my brethren, for whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother. He was not speaking to the world, but to his disciples, those who had been taught of the Father. No one else can do the works of God. God is able to raise up a kingdom out of the base things of this world. He chooses out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people, the coarse and untrue, high and low, rich and poor. But after he leads and teaches them they are made honest, fountains made pure, consequently they turn from their old haunts of wickedness and take no more pleasure in such. The fountain no longer brings forth impure water, for it has been cleansed. How lovely it is to see those who give evidence by their walk and talk of being cleansed. Perhaps they are not ornaments to the society of this world; they cannot talk fluently on the topics of the day, but they can say such sweet things in their own homely language of the heavenly kingdom; that is the only school they have been taught in. How sacred they hold that knowledge! They will not allow any one to change it or teach them any other way, knowing it came from the Teacher who teaches the best, the right and the only way. When we see their honest, unfeigned simplicity in serving God, we no longer care for their slow speech and stammering tongues; we are willing to bear with their infirmities (not vices), seeing they possess the image of Christ in their faces.

"And the power." How will every heart that has been taught of the Lord know he has all power? He alone is able to open up our poor, dumb minds and make us talk or proclaim his glory. He can take all boasted strength from us, bring us down in the dust to mourn over our nothingness before him. If we ever do right, or walk acceptably before God, he deserves all the glory forever. How can we be submissive, or say amen to all sorrow and losses this life is heir to? When our loving Savior comes to us, draws the robe of his own weaving more closely about us, shows us that we have nothing to fear—"It is I, be not afraid," then we can be still and wait until he reveals all his purposes. We may love a person, but we cannot sympathize with him in his troubles until we have suffered. Often I think of the lonely days I spent while keeping house for my fath-

er after my mother's death. My schoolmates and young companions often came to visit me to show their love and sympathy. They would say, I do not see how you stand it. What poor comfort to a broken heart that is suffering a loss not of its own choosing. How could I help myself? I longed for sympathy from a heart that understood how it was. After awhile a young lady came to teach our school and boarded with us. She told me that her mother was dead and that she, too, had kept house for her father. One evening after we had finished our work we took a walk out in the twilight and told each other how our mothers died. I told her of the long days and nights of anxiety we spent watching by my mother's bedside, and after we found she could not live I often knelt by her bed and caressed the sweet, placid face that would soon be taken from us forever, and how my eyes were like fountains of tears; but when the time came, and I saw the life actually leaving her body and her loving heart stilled forever, then I knew that I had never understood, never dreamed what it would be. I had never known grief too deep for tears before. I stood like stone, bereft of speech, while the awful truth closed in about my heart. When I had told her thus far I stopped for lack of words. She took me in her arms and said, "O I know," and our tears expressed the grief our words failed to explain. We may love our Savior, but we can never have holy, sacred sympathy and companionship with him until we have suffered. Had we never known grief and suffering so great that we were made to shrink from all human eyes and try to pray to God alone, we could not have appreciated the Savior's suffering in the garden of Gethsemane. He withdrew himself even from his faithful brethren, not because he did not love them, but they could not give him the strength that he had to have to bear his awful suffering and humiliation. We cannot taste anything that he before us has not suffered. He suffered with and for the guilty, and was nailed to the rugged cross between two thieves, yet there was no guile found in his mouth. It was not because he had unconsciously walked with the guilty, but because our heavenly Father so willed it. We only question God's ways when we in our ignorance cannot understand them. We know that if it were God's will he could remove every burden, turn every curse into a blessing. If not, we still have the loving companionship of our Savior, who went bowed under his heavy load all his days, patiently doing his Father's will, knowing his kingdom was not of this world. So if we can but have his loving peace and presence with us we can say to it all, Amen.

SUSIE L. BLOOMFIELD.

ST. JOSEPH, Mo., Feb. 15, 1896.

TEHUACANA, Texas, Nov. 28, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have had a mind for some time to write a few lines for your perusal, but have refrained, fearing the impression might not be from the proper source, still I have not been able to get rid of the impression to write, and I am made to cry as one of old when he was told to cry, and he asked, What shall I cry? and the answer came to him, Cry that the people are as grass, and further on he says they are grass. Now if they are grass, what power have they to change their condition? The human children are just as passive in the hands of the eternal God as the grass in the hands of the farmer, and can no more resist the power of the Spirit of God than the grass

can resist the power of the man when he drives into his meadow to mow it down and convert it into hay. After it is cut down it has no power to save and preserve itself. Just so with the dead sinner; when he is cut down he has no power to rise and walk in newness of life without the power of God. It takes the power of man to take up the grass and protect it, and it takes the power of God to take up the sinner and house him from the storms of trouble of all kinds through this sinful world and lead him safely home in the bright beyond. When the Sun of Righteousness shines in the heart of the individual he withers just as the grass and the flower of the grass. So the good works of man wither and fall away. I have heard some who claim to be Primitive Baptists say that after they have been regenerated and born of God it is left with them to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, and they can work it out at their own option and receive a blessing, or they can neglect it and miss a blessing, but I understand that every blessing I ever have or ever will receive in this life and the life to come was treasured up in the mind and wise purpose of the eternal, all-wise God that rules and disposes of all things as seemeth right in his own sight. If I could do anything that would deprive me of one blessing, that blessing which God purposed for me would be lost, for no one else could inherit my blessing, neither can one receive the chastisements of another. I believe my life and yours and every life were marked out in the annals of eternity, and there is no changing it, yet I believe that man is condemned for his wrongdoing. While it was transgression against the law that God gave Adam, I do not believe Adam could have failed to transgress any more than I believe Christ could have failed being crucified, for I view Adam a figure of Christ. Some say Adam was able to stand but liable to fall, but I contend that he was sure to fall and unable to stand. I or any one of the Adam family is just as able to keep from sinning to-day as Adam was at the time he transgressed. When God gave Adam the law, if he had spoken from a sovereign standpoint Adam could never have transgressed, but God spoke from a law standpoint, and God being amenable to no law, being above all law, he could give Adam a law with the purpose of its being violated. Without a violation there would be no salvation, and without salvation there would be no glorification. I hear a great many people say there are many things transpiring contrary to God's will, but viewing God as I do as a sovereign, eternal, all-wise God, who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast, and has a purpose concerning all things, times and events that take place here in this time world, I understand that there was a time, if we should call it a time before time began to be numbered by man, that there was not anything in existence but the one eternal God, and he having all power, there was not anything that could exist contrary to his eternal will and purpose.

Well, I will stop here, asking you to pardon all imperfections in this poorly composed article, for it is written by a very poor, imperfect old sinner. I truly hope and trust the editors and contributors may be spared with long and useful lives to fill the columns of the good old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. May God bless us all with the richest blessings according to his eternal will, is the prayer of one of the least, if a child at all. If saved, it is by grace, and grace alone.

You will find inclosed a post-office order for two dollars to pay for the SIGNS for the year 1918, for I do not feel like doing without it what little time I have here in this sin-cursed world. I say what little time I have, because I know according to nature I have not long here, for I am nearing my seventy-third birthday. Farewell. J. H. BOZEMAN.

THE FREE GIFT.

"FOR the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification."—Romans v. 16.

How grand is the bountiful mercy and far-reaching power of God declared through the above Scripture! Sinners with a multitude of sins are rescued from the power of death and justified, notwithstanding their mountains of sin. To human minds this seems unreasonable and outlandish. Finite minds cannot comprehend the great condescension of our God to his chosen people, or the disparity shown in the text: that for one single offence, and that offence somewhat mitigated in favor of man because of Satan's interference with the affections of the woman, all the unborn nations should fall under the curse of death, without a single exception, and that the free gift should fall upon many whose offences were many and great, displaying the mighty power of grace through the Lord Jesus Christ. Briefly stated, just one transgression sunk a world of unborn human beings into the pit of death, but the free gift is given unto millions irrespective of their numerous transgressions. Though their "sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."—Isaiah i. 18. Though death holds a firm grip over all the sons of Adam, yet how much more shall the blood of Christ deliver the chosen vessels from the grasp of Satan unto the glorious liberty of the children of God. When mortals are led to behold the manifold beneficence of God to unborn, undeserving sinners, dead in sins, the cry of grace, grace, looms up in their hearts, and they are made to taste of the wonders of the free gift and the powers of the world to come. It is always supposed that a gift is free; that is, not in exchange for something valuable, but altogether one-sided. A gift bestowed upon a person often signifies that the donor has love for the receiver, which would indicate that the gift was free. The apostle uses the phrase, "free gift," clearing all doubt from our minds of any meritorious work on our part. No carnal reason can be given why God loved sinners when they were dead in sins. The fact is that God did love his people when they were dead in sins, and did quicken them together with Christ, and did raise them up together and made them to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, for the very purpose "that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." Surely the "free gift" manifests the exceeding riches of his grace. No saint moved by the Spirit of Christ can crave anything better than redemption through the blood of Jesus, and no better way to receive the knowledge of the free gift than through the channel of faith and grace. Having faith and grace we have hope, the free gift, and all things belonging to the household of faith. Love and mercy were stronger than death, the work of the devil, so that many offences, as it were, brought complete justification. Just so, according to Scripture, the wrath of man and the work

of the devil shall all finally praise the Lord Jehovah.

All for the saints,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., August 13, 1917.

THE SURE MERCIES OF DAVID.

IF it were not for the mercy of God not one lost sinner could ever be saved. Saints of old understood God's manner of saving poor, helpless creatures, and in songs of praise they exclaimed again and again, "His mercy endureth for ever." (2 Chron. v. 13; vii. 3; Ezra iii. 11; Psalms cvi. 1; cvii. 1; cxviii. 1; cxxxvi. 1; Jer. xxxiii. 11, and other places.) By intuition we all know the import of the word "mercy." However, the literal meaning may make it stronger to our minds. Mercy means a disposition to overlook injuries, to treat an offender better than he deserves. This meaning exactly suits the condition of poor, lost sinners who are altogether unrighteous in the sight of God, and are also unrighteous in their own eyes, by the teaching of the Spirit of God. David in full faith of God's promises said, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life."—Psalms xxiii. 6. It seemed to be plain to all the primitive saints that the only claim or plea that they could bring before God was through mercy, for justice had consigned them to destruction, and only the longsuffering of God had stayed the penalty that hung over them. Knowing that justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne, (Psalms lxxxix. 14,) their only hope of deliverance was through mercy, and mercy alone. Believing that the mercy of God only could reach them, they were emboldened to sing, "Thy mercy is great above the heavens."—Psalms cviii. 4. Also, The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy. Also, With the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. Also, The Lord delighteth in mercy. (Micah vii. 18.) God's mercy is great, abundant. (1 Peter i. 3.) His mercy is before him always, because, "Mercy and truth shall go before thy face."—Psalms lxxxix. 14. Guilty transgressors cannot be cleared through justice, except through Christ their Head; neither can their cry come up to God for mercy, only through Christ their Mediator. God, to meet all requirements in the glorious kingdom of grace, hath raised his Son up as being the "sure mercies of David." In him mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Being the King of righteousness and the King of peace, he can and does exercise mercy to all the saints. He gathers his saints, for he has power over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as the Father gave him. He cries, through the prophet, With great mercies will I gather thee. God is the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort. (2 Cor. i. 3.) God is rich in mercy. (Eph. ii. 4.) Under the law covenant the mercy-seat set above the ark of God that held the testimony was very important. It was made of pure gold, and the two golden cherubims spread their wings facing each other, over the mercy-seat. There God communed with the High Priest from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubims, of all things given in commandment for the children of Israel. These commandments must come from over the mercy-seat, thus signifying that it was only through God's mercy that even a carnal commandment could be delivered to the children of Israel. Through mercy salvation was wrought for all the chosen vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory. Ac-

cording to his mercy he saved us, and not according to any other way. (Titus iii. 5.) It is through mercy that it is made known unto us what God has done for us through the death and suffering of Christ. God is still merciful, and he makes sinners cry in the anguish of their souls, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. How consoling to think, Though I am a sinner, God is merciful, full of mercy. O what a stronghold for poor worms of the dust. May songs of praise rise up in our hearts and ascend to the Father of all our mercies.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

TIAWAH, Okla., Nov. 27, 1917.

TIAWAH, Okla., Nov. 17, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you some verses which you may publish if you think they will make good reading. I have made no attempt at rhyming, the subject matter was the all-important effort of my mind in writing them. The peculiar language of the apostle in regard to the angels in the first chapter of Hebrews has engaged my attention for several years. The fourteenth verse has been the most absorbent to my mind, perhaps from the fact that I have never seen the views of my brethren on the subject. While the word "angel" means messenger, and it sometimes refers to the gospel minister, yet I think in this verse, as well as in the sixth and seventh of the same chapter, it means a heavenly messenger, a spirit, not discernible by the natural eye. I do not want to attempt to portray the heavenly angel as worldly religionists do. There are many places in Scripture where angels are spoken of, and where they appeared to the children of men. In some places where they have come eyes had to be opened before they could be seen. We cannot stretch our imagination so that we can tell what an angel is, for we cannot go any farther than the Scriptures will warrant. God "maketh his angels spirits." An angel is a spirit. The Scriptures do not tell us what a spirit is, neither can any man tell us. The Scriptures do tell us what a spirit is not: A spirit hath not flesh and bones. We are taught by inspiration that natural eyes cannot see a spirit, or spiritual things. We must conclude that a spirit is not of nature's creation, and I doubt if we have the right to use the word "creation" in relation to a spirit. Jesus, in speaking of these "little ones" that trust in him, says, "For I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."—Matt. xviii. 10. It seems evident to me from the reading of the Scriptures that in this chapter (Hebrews i.) the angels of God spoken of are not men, but spirits sent from God to men, sent to the "elect," or "sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." Heirs of God are "made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."—Titus iii. 7. Heirs of God are the elect, "the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom."—James ii. 5. These heirs of God have a joint-heirship, and that is with their Elder Brother; then it is no marvel that God should be careful about their calling, their keeping and their glorification. When saints by the power of God are made to see the "beauties of holiness" they willingly and gladly sing the good old song:

> "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
> Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!"

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

"LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM."

(Hebrews i. 6, 7, 14.)

THE angel of the Lord came down
To view the trees of righteousness,
That grow in the garden of God;
He sees their grace and godliness.

The angel of the Lord came down
To purge the trees of dross and sin,
That they may show forth righteousness
In the name of the child Jesus.

The angel of the Lord came down
Unseen by nature's eye that sleeps;
He is like a spirit to man
Who dwells among the dead on earth.

The angel of the Lord came down;
He hovereth near the saints of God,
To bind them in a sheaf of gold,
That they may sing a song of praise.

The angel of the Lord came down,
A spirit sent from God to man,
To minister unto the man
That God shall call by grace divine.

The angel of the Lord came down
To those freed from sins eternal,
Who still hold the poisons of sin
All within their poor, feeble frames.

The angel of the Lord came down
Among the trees, a flaming fire,
To guard the holy way of God
For saints that pass the shades of death.

The angel of the Lord went up,
As a great shout from earth is heard,
And as the trump sounded on high,
Proclaiming victory over sin.

SHOCK, Ky., Nov. 12, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a good letter written by brother J. S. Turner, of Louisville, Ky., which you may publish in the SIGNS if you think proper. I have not his consent to send it, but feel sure it will be well with him. I have read it often with interest and comfort; it is so explanatory, so much said in so few words. This is a time of great need with the Lord's little children. Great care should be taken both in speaking and hearing, and also great forbearance. Especially we preachers should strive to make straight paths for our feet, lest that which is lame (deficient in understanding) be turned out of the way. Also in meekness let us instruct them that oppose themselves.

Yours in tribulation,

W. J. MAY.

EPHESIANS I. 5.

"HAVING predestinated us unto the adoption of children."

Parents cannot adopt their own children, for the reason that they are their children already, hence they cannot be adopted by them; but persons can and do adopt alien children by processes of the court, and those wishing to adopt make application to the court, and when all the requirements of the court are complied with the child is adopted, and then the adopted child shares in the estate of its foster parents the same as a child born to them. Therefore, as what God doeth is forever, and he having predestinated and adopted his children, it follows that their inheritance is made sure, which inheritance is life eternal and immortal glory, all to the glory of his grace. Predestination, as I understand it, when reduced to its final analysis, is to determine beforehand, and I conclude that every person is naturally a predestinarian. Who is it that performs an act without first determining to do it? and this applies to the smallest as well as the largest actions. What kind of conditions would exist if persons proceeded without predestinating or determining their acts? All would soon be confusion and chaos. The world at large appears to scare at the word "predestination" more than at the meaning of the word. In fact, they appear not to realize what the significance of the word is, and to have natural aversion to it. God's people comprehend and

appreciate it, and live, hope and trust by and through it. Chosen, predestinated and adopted, according as he hath chosen us in him, &c. As a great rock in a weary land, his almighty arms beneath us; are not his people secure? The Baptists have always earnestly contended for what they felt to be Bible teaching, and this truth will hold. This is a time of great stress; death and destruction have almost encompassed the world, and it is impossible to forecast the future; but we know the all-wise God rules, and all else may fail, yet God and truth will prevail, and to him be all praise. Let us humbly bow to his will.

Dear brother May, are the foregoing deductions correct? Your kind reply to my former questions on "They have washed" I forwarded to Elder Sawin, and wrote him that you regarded him somewhat as your "straight edge," and said this being the case, to use a military term, he might "censor" it. This he did, and said he agreed with you in the interpretation. As in unity there is strength, I take it you are correct.

Your brother in hope,

J. S. TURNER.

ARDMORE, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—Through the tender mercies of the covenant-keeping God, who works, not some, but all things, after the counsel of his own eternal will and purpose, this poor sinner, saved by grace if saved at all, finds himself trying to talk to you again on paper, and I hope you will excuse me for troubling you so often, also for calling you brother, for I know for us to be brethren in the Spirit of the case God must be our Father and Jerusalem our mother. I mean Jerusalem above, that is free, which is the mother of all the children of God. Sometimes I have a sweet hope that God and Jerusalem are my Father and my mother, while at other times my hope is almost gone; it seems to be hope against hope. Dear brother, I have just had the sweet pleasure of reading the March number of the dear old SIGNS, and if not deceived, I dearly love the doctrine advocated by the editors and contributors. I feel I want to tell you how much I enjoyed your article on 2 Thess. ii. 11, 12. That is what I believe, dear brother, and if that is not the truth I am frank to confess that I do not understand one thing about it, which I may not, but as you said to me in your first letter, all the strength and knowledge I have are in Israel's God, hence it must all be a divine revelation from him, for we read that Paul with all of his learning and worldly wisdom received the knowledge of God by divine revelation. He said, I neither received it of man, nor was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Then Peter, with all of his ignorance, was taught it the same way, for when the Lord Jesus Christ asked the people, Whom do men say that I am? they said, Some say one thing and some say another. Then he turned to his disciples and said, But whom say ye that I am? and Peter said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus answered and said unto him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church: [not churches, no, no, but my church] and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." So, my dear brother, these strong delusion men may try to put all the slats they can in the gates, but our God has said that they shall never prevail against his church.

I am glad that I believe in a God that absolutely did predestinate, not some, but all things, before the foundation of the world, and that he rules and controls wicked men and devils to accomplish his grand purpose. I very well remember the time when I first professed a hope in Christ, if I am not deceived, and joined the Missionary Baptists, and had been with them hardly twelve months when they began to charge me with being a "Hardshell," but I had never seen these people they styled as "Hardshells." I was married long before I had the pleasure of meeting or hearing a Primitive or Old School Baptist preacher, so we see it was the strong delusions of the Missionaries that carried me away, or tried to delude me, but I had a sweet revelation, as I humbly hope, in a night vision that Almighty God showed me his church that the gates of hell shall not prevail against. I united with this church twenty-eight years ago the first Sunday in this month, and have never doubted it being the church of Christ, but O, I have had so many doubts and fears about myself. I believe the Primitive Baptists have the true doctrine, but it may be that some of us handle the doctrine wrongfully. Now, my dear brother, I can understand your writings on almost everything I have noticed over your signature, and also agree with you in most all, and I say, with due respect and I hope brotherly love and christian fellowship, that I have read and reread your editorial on the subject of the resurrection, and I do not think there is much difference in us. You present a thought in it that is just with me, only expressed in a different way. You say the head, which is Christ, cannot rise without the body, which is true. I have often said from the stand that when Christ came up out of the narrow limits of the tomb he brought up each and every member of the bride at the same time and by the same power. You say that the dear children of God will be made and fashioned like unto his (Christ's) glorious body, which is a glorious thought indeed. You know David said, When I awake, then shall I be satisfied with thy likeness, and so my thought is, that when all the children of God awake with the image or likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ they will be satisfied, and I think that is your thought. My dear brother, my prayer and heart's desire is that it may be God's will and purpose that you and Elder Ker live long to wield the pen of ready writers to the comfort and edification of his dear little ones, for if I know my poor heart I do love you both, also all the dear brethren and sisters who write so many good articles, while I only get to read them now an then. Some of the brethren and sisters of some of the churches I try to attend take the SIGNS. In old Antioch Church, at Elkmont, Ala., where I go once a month, two of the sisters take the paper.

In conclusion, I want to say that my prayer and heart's desire is that the good Lord may be pleased to give us all of his sweet Spirit to keep us in the right way, and that all may be found walking worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called. Remember this poor sinner at the throne of grace when it goes well with you. I hope you will pardon me for intruding on your precious time. Do with this as you think best, and all will be right. Brother Lefferts, I would surely appreciate a private letter from you at any time you may have a mind or the time to write.

As ever, yours in a sweet hope,

D. T. LEONARD.

RISING SUN, Md., Sept. 30, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending check to renew the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which is a little over due. I feel as though I would be at a loss without it, as it contains all the preaching I get, for my hearing is so poor that I get very little preaching from the pulpit. We have a faithful pastor, Elder J. G. Eubanks, who comes to us at Rock Springs, Pa., once a month filled with the precious words of the Savior: I am the way, the truth and the life. In him all fullness dwells; he rules in righteousness, mighty to save. I feel that it is presumption in me to try to pen a line for the SIGNS, but we read, They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and a book of remembrance was written. I know there is nothing in me, that when I would do good, evil is present. I write many letters in my mind, but when I take my pen in hand all I want to say is gone, which goes to show we can lay nothing up; the storehouse is empty unless the Lord puts it in the mind and writes it in the heart. The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it? I have been interrupted several times by friends calling to see me. O what is in me to merit esteem? for I feel myself nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity. When I meet the brethren and sisters they look so peaceful and lovely I think if only I could be like them; and when they tell of their trials I feel that we all have to pass through trials and tribulations to enter the kingdom; where there is no cross there is no crown. There are so many gifted writers, all so good, but I do not have language to express myself. All hail the power of Jesus' name, for there is no other name under heaven that can save poor, lost sinners. He is the author and finisher of our faith, and without faith it is impossible to please the Lord. Blessed be his name.

I felt after the association at Welsh Tract, Del., that I wanted to write a little letter to express my feeling of gratitude toward the brethren and sisters for their great kindness to the friends who visited them and the love they showed to one another. I felt I could never repay them, but the thought came to me, The Lord had a hand in it, and he will repay, for he has promised to be with his people to the end of the world—their earthly pilgrimage. Our little band of brethren and sisters at Rock Springs are at peace and unity, each esteeming others better than themselves.

This is like the writer, full of mistakes. I am very nervous at times, and it is hard for me to read or write. Write on, dear brethren and sisters, for the weaklings of the flock need the sincere milk of the word; we are only babes in Christ.

I am making this too lengthy; please cast the mantle of charity over it and do not crowd out better matter by publishing it. With love and fellowship for the children of the Most High. His watchful eye, that never slumbers nor sleeps, is over them, guiding and keeping them to the end of their mortal pilgrimage, and he will crown them his at last.

SALLIE E. LOWE.

BELINGTON, W. Va., Sept 2, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—It has been on my mind for some time to write you a few lines to let you know how much I enjoy reading your editorials. It made me so sorry for you when you wrote how you sat up at night and wrote after your little children had been put to bed. No doubt you were tired and weary, but there was One who was able to strengthen you

and he did. He has promised to be with his children in their troubles, and he will not forsake them. If I could only write as some of the brethren and sisters do I would write often. I am like the poor widow who cast into the treasury. Many, of their abundance cast in much, but she of her penury cast in all she had. So I will cast in my little mite, and you can do as you think best with it. I think that Elder F. W. Keene wrote such a grand article in the SIGNS of August 15th. He spoke of the rich and the poor, and referred to Proverbs where it says that the poor is hated even of his own neighbor, but the rich have many friends. How true it is that the poor are hated and the rich have many friends. I never had much of this world's riches, and I have been slighted many times because I am poor. I never wanted fine clothes, for my Bible says that women professing godliness should dress in modest apparel. There is one garment which, if I am permitted to wear, is worth all the fine clothing in the world: the robe of righteousness that is washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. Our blessed Savior was poor; he said, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. Lay not up treasures on earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and thieves break through and steal, but lay up treasure in heaven; for where your treasure is there will your heart be also.

Now, dear brother, I will bring this poorly written letter to a close, and if you see fit to publish it correct mistakes. May God be with you, and may you long be spared to feed the little ones, and if we never meet on earth, may we meet around the throne of God, where all will be joy, peace and happiness.

I am sending you a letter from Elder J. W. Linn, which I think worthy a place in the SIGNS.

Your sister in hope of a better world,
ELIZABETH PHILLIPS.

FAIRMONT, W. Va., Feb. 15, 1916.

DEAR SISTER PHILLIPS:—I have neglected to answer your welcome letter, and hope you will pardon my delay, as I thought I had written to you. We are as well as usual, and I hope you are well. Dear sister, we are in this world of sin and sorrow, and the world is very busy, as they claim, in helping the Lord along with the plan of salvation, but it is all in vain, for the Lord needs no help. He beheld from heaven, and of the people there was none to help, so his own arm brought salvation unto him, and his own righteousness it sustained him; so you see then there was none to help him. Now look how fast the world is going, as they claim they are saving souls, or helping the Lord to save them, but I am afraid they are making of them proselytes that are twofold more the children of hell than themselves, for Christ Jesus is the Savior, and not only a part of a Savior, and the people a part also, and it does not take both to make a Savior, for he is a complete Savior without their help. It seems that they want to rob the Lord of his honor, and take it to themselves; but the Lord will not give his glory to another, for he alone shall save his people from their sins. They are his people, because they were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began; his name was called Jesus, and he shall save them from their sins. Not try to save them, and in many cases fail on account of their not letting him save them, but he shall save all his elect. So he became their Savior, and he needs no help from the children of men. Thine they were, says the dear Savior, and thou

gavest them me, and I have kept them. When he shall deliver them up to the Father, then time shall be no more.

JAMES W. LINN.

INDEPENDENCE, Mo., Dec. 25, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—My subscription expired the 15th inst., and I should have renewed sooner, but on account of age and affliction I failed to do so. I have wanted to send one more little mite to the editors and correspondents of the dear SIGNS, but for several months I have been as one dead to all spiritual things. Through the lonely days I try to ask for a return of the sweet seasons of peace which were sometimes mine in the past. O Lord, restore to me the joys of thy salvation. Now as the shades of night gather around me I feel sadder than usual. A friend and neighbor died suddenly this morning, one who had many times provided a way for me to go to where my kindred (I hope) meet to worship a complete Savior. His wife is a dear sister in the church. The sorrows of others bring my own great losses afresh in my mind. The twenty-first of June a dear sister died, and now I am the only one left of father's family of eleven children, and I am nearing my seventy-ninth birthday. None but God can know how sad I felt when I turned from that newly made grave to go back to my lonely home, where I was left a childless widow in March, 1902; but, blessed thought, there is a home where no one is ever left alone.

I have read the two December numbers of the SIGNS through during the last twenty-four hours, several pieces twice. There seems to be something more precious each time I read them. Many of the writers tell of sorrows and suffering, but the everlasting arms have been their support, for salvation is in and of the Lord in all things.

When I commenced this I thought to mention some names in the last number of the paper, but suffice it to say each letter was good, yes, very good, and I have again read the last two editorials, and felt in my heart that they alone were of value that cannot be counted by dollars and cents. Do not let this crowd out any other one's letter.

The old stranger,

LAVINIA MORGAN.

CLINTON, N. J., Oct. 29, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed two dollars for the SIGNS; it is very precious to me, and good company. I am in my seventy-fourth year, and not able to get out very often to meeting, which makes me feel very sad, and I wonder why I am deprived of my greatest enjoyment. It is a wonderful privilege to be within walking distance and to meet with the dear people of God. I feel that I am of but little use, either in the church or in the world, but I cannot bear the thought of being deprived of the company of the dear Old Baptists while this mortal life shall last, still how far I am from being worthy of such company and such fellowship. My heart says, Hinder me not, ye much loved saints, for I must go with you. Elder Vail comes to our house and preaches for us, and it is very comforting to hear him. He is a dear old father in Israel, and I love to have him come whenever he can.

In hope of a better world,

(MRS.) A. J. DEMOTT.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

L. E. SKINNER has changed his address from Cement, Okla., to Rush Springs, Okla., R. 2, Box 37.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1918.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ROMANS XIV. 7.

"For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself."

So closely and intimately are the spiritual lives of all the children of God interwoven one with another that there is no room for selfishness in all the kingdom of God. This is the result of the truth that Jesus is the life of all his people, that they, through the work of regeneration, are made partakers of the divine nature. Jesus' life and Spirit flowing through each subject of his grace makes them all members of his one body. This being so, the health of each member has its influence on all the other members of the body. Also this makes them so that none is independent of the others. In church government it has always been a principle of the Baptists that each church organization is its own adjudicator in matters pertaining to its own order or discipline. But, even so, any action taken by a church with reference to some matters within its own borders cannot help but have its effect upon the sister churches with whom that church may bear relations. The gravity of that effect will depend upon how serious the matter in which the action is taken. For instance, suppose a church is without a pastor and is considering the call of one. Now, it is quite evident that none of the sister churches have a right to dictate, perhaps not even to suggest, in a matter of this kind; yet no one will deny but that the sister churches will be affected by the decision made; that is, whoever is called as pastor to the one church will be expected to visit from time to time the sister churches. How important, therefore, that the pastor called to the one church be a gift acceptable to the sister churches bearing relations with that church. We simply use this as an illustration to show that when we talk about the independence of individual churches we should not lose sight of the interdependence of the several churches, and that what affects one has its inevitable bearing upon all. Neither the true christian nor the true christian church can afford to live for self alone. Selfishness turns in upon itself and most certainly degenerates its victim. The highest life, the most noble and the best, is that life which is spent in the service of others. This is infinitely true in the kingdom of God. The acme and perfection of this highest, best and noblest life is seen in the life of Jesus himself, who lived not for the gratification of self, but that he should lift up his people. He says himself that he came down from heaven not to do his own will, but the will or his Father who sent him. Had he been selfish he would have remained in glory with his Father and never have humbled himself to the ignominous death of the cross. On the other hand, he descended into the poverty and degradation in which his people were dead, he took all their sins upon himself, he was tempted in all the temptations to which his people are subjected, he was with them in all their weakness and helplessness.

He says the Son of man came from heaven not to be ministered unto, but to minister. When we consider Jesus in all his humility and utter lack of self-love, his infinite and holy service to the uplifting of his people, it ought to make every true christian and every true christian church utterly ashamed of their selfishness. Jesus is in us just to the extent that we forget self and live for the service of our brethren. Paul found his highest joy in spending and being spent for his brethren. God's people of the present day have found the key to really celestial lives when they can immolate self in seeking the welfare of their kindred in Christ. This kind of living has its reward within itself. Truly it is better to give than to receive. Paul, in writing to the brethren at Rome, was addressing those who were of the same faith and hope as the brethren he had left in the city of Jerusalem, while the ones were Gentiles and the others were Jews. The traditions in which the Gentile brethren had been reared were different from those traditions and customs in which the Jewish brethren had been brought up. Since nothing is more persistent than nature, it was but natural that even after these brethren had been brought, by the grace of God, to the knowledge of the truth, some of those natural ideas and customs to which they had been used all their lives should cling to them. None of us get entirely free from the graveclothes as long as we are in the flesh, but some are freer from them than others, owing to the degree in which grace has established them in the perfect doctrine of God. Now, the Jews had been brought up to believe that some meats were not fit to eat, while the Gentiles made no such distinction. Some of these Jewish brethren, even after having been brought to see Jesus, persisted in the notion that some meats were forbidden to them, losing sight of the truth that the work of Jesus had put an end to the old covenant observances, and that the church now was not under Moses, but subject to Christ. The persistence of these legal traditions caused some of the Jewish believers to have tender consciences regarding the eating of meats. On the other hand, the Gentile brother had no compunctions of conscience in this matter, being a stranger to the customs and traditions of the Jews. The same difference between Jew and Gentile prevailed in the matter of the observance of days. The Jew had been taught to regard the sabbath as a special day holy unto the Lord from all other days of the week. The Gentile was a stranger to this Jewish custom, and would as soon regard every day sacred as to regard one day so. However, the Jewish believer, even after coming to the knowledge of the truth, found it hard to rid his mind of the validity of the sabbath. These circumstances caused the Jewish brother to criticise and find fault with his Gentile brother because the latter ate what meats he pleased and held not one day sacred above another. Paul, himself, knew that eating meat or not eating meat availed him nothing in God's sight, also keeping the sabbath or not keeping it helped him not a whit with God. But, though Paul was clear in this matter and was a free man in Christ, he felt his brethren to be of such dearness to him that if this or that practice of his offended his weaker brethren, he would leave off that practice forthwith. The strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, Paul said. Paul did not feel that a brother strong in the faith should use his liberty to offend the weak brother or to cause him to stumble. While to Paul all

things were lawful, all things were not for him expedient. None of us live to ourselves alone. The Gentile christians could not live to themselves alone, neither could the Jewish christians. To have done so would have been to cause a schism in the church. These schisms spring from the flesh, the author of all disorder, and are not the fruit of Christ's Spirit. His Spirit maintains unity in the bond of peace. Brethren should be willing to lay down any practice that is offensive to the church. Jesus laid down his life for his people, and should we not lay down our lives for one another? This we will do if the grace of God abounds in us. If it does not abound in us, what evidence have we that we are the people of God? Mere intellectual comprehension of what Baptists believe and preach is no adequate substitute for godly charity, and without charity we are sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. The Old School Baptists would, without a doubt, be the grandest organization on the face of the earth if all its members lived for one another. This acme of perfection will, we fear, never be realized in this lower world, but we hope for it in the world to come, when the flesh shall be done away and we shall be clothed in the likeness of our blessed Lord. There the unity we now talk about will be an eternal and never-ending reality. In the meantime, may grace enable us to move nearer and nearer to this ideal of christian perfection: that of living for others and immolating our own selfish ends in the pursuit of the commonwealth of all. We do not believe in the universal brotherhood of man, but we do believe in the spiritual brotherhood of all the saved in Jesus. This is no dream, but the teaching of the Scriptures by divine inspiration, from Genesis to Revelation. Let us hope for it and press onward to behold it. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder H. A. Sloan.)

The Mt. Enon Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the church at Mt. Zion, to the churches of which she is composed sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inasmuch as we feel that it has pleased the God of our hope, who works all things after the counsel of his own will, both in heaven and earth, in sparing our unprofitable lives to meet again in an associate capacity, with the banner of peace and love ruling over us, it makes us desire to praise and adore his holy name for all of his past blessings upon us, his unworthy creatures. We feel thankful that God has blessed us in having the glorious doctrine of his absolute sovereignty and unlimited power preached in our midst. We also note that all the churches composing this association report that they have the doctrine preached to them in its purity, and also that peace and love abound among them, for which we are thankful also, and humbly pray that the blessings and mercies of God may continue upon us all according to his holy will.

To whom it may concern of other associations of like precious faith, believing in and holding to the doctrine of absolute or unlimited predestination, we send greeting and solicit correspondence.

W. O. FUTCH, Moderator.

J. H. MILES, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $5.00; J. H. Knifton, Ont., $2.00; Sarah A. McColl, Ont., $2.00; Lavina Morgan, Mo., $1.00; Lewis T. Sanders, Ark., $1.00; Jane Lucas, Iowa, $2.00; Mrs. W. H. Stout, N. J., $1.00; J. C. Clark, Maine, $1.00; E. J. Hurst, Ark., $1.00; Geo. Harryman, Md., $1.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at his home, Leesburg, Va., Dec. 26th, 1917, George J. Campbell and Miss Pearl Gray, both of Middleburg, Va.

By Elder George Ruston, Dec. 30th, 1917, at the bride's home, Halcottville, N. Y., Elmer George Bussy and Mary Allie Davis, both of Halcottville, N. Y.

In Kansas City, Mo., October 19th, 1917, Dr. J. Walter Hastings, of Delmar, Del., and Mildred Durand Yerkes, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John S. Yerkes, of Philadelphia, Pa.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Dec. 5th, 1917, at Delmar, Md., J. Oscar Powell and Beulah E. Bethard, both of Wicomico County, Md.

By the same, Dec. 20th, 1917, at the same place, Walter J. Lewis and Stella A. Brittingham, both of Wicomico County, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Madelene Jane Davie (nee Roper) was born in Fulton County, Ky., Feb. 18th, 1854. She was married to W. F. Davie, Feb. 20th, 1876. To that union were born five children, three girls and two boys, four of whom survive her, one girl dying in infancy. She professed a hope in Christ and united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Mud Creek when about thirty years of age. Her husband died Jan. 13th, 1887. Sister Davie lived a consistent member of the church to the day of her death. It was the privilege of the writer to know her and to be associated with her for about two years, which she spent with her son, John W. Davie, at Washington, D. C., and although she was an invalid from rheumatism, she was a regular attendant at our meetings, her son lifting her on and off the street cars and wheeling her on the street in her chair. I visited with her in her home several times, and became very fond of her as a dear sister in Christ. I baptized her son John in Washington last August, which was a great pleasure to her. She passed from this life at the home of her son, J. R. Davie, in the same county in which she was born, on October 8th, 1917. I would say to her children, You have great reason to be glad that you had a godly mother. She loved the gospel of the grace of God, and now sleeps in the arms of her Savior, who will watch over her sleeping dust until he shall come the second time without sin unto salvation, when he will call her forth in his own glorious likeness to live forever with him, being no more fettered with disease, but to enjoy eternal health. May God give to each of you the same precious faith that he gave your dear mother and comfort you in all your tribulations, is the desire of your brother and friend.

Written at the request of her son, brother John W. Davie, Washington, D. C.

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

Mrs. Caroline Guernsey, daughter of the late brother John Livingston, was born April 7th, 1838, and died of shock Nov. 21st, 1917, aged 79 years, 7 months and 14 days. She was united in marriage Nov. 5th, 1853, to Ira Guernsey, who preceded her to the grave several years ago. The surviving relatives are five children: Wellington, Eli, Jesse and Charles Guernsey and Mrs. Clinton Nethaway, one brother, James E. Livingston, one sister, Betsey Rockefeller, of Kingston, N. Y., who is also a sister in the same church and over ninety years of age, and several grandchildren, nieces and nephews. Sister Caroline was received by the church at Schoharie, N. Y., and baptized by Elder John Clark October 27th, 1895, where her walk and conversation ever gave her a warm place in the love and fellowship of those of like precious faith. In her husband's lifetime their farm joined the lot of the Schoharie meetinghouse, and was always open to the friends and brethren, and during the long years of her widowhood her home in Cobleskill was known by all as a place of christian hospitality, and it was her delight for preachers and brethren to visit and preach the truth there, so that her family, friends and kindred in hope have consolation in calling to mind that "this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did." Her daughter, Mrs. Clinton Nethaway, and family, of Schoharie, at whose home she died, did all they could to make her last days comfortable and saw that her funeral was conducted in accord with her wishes.

Her pastor, Elder J. M. Fenton, of Philadelphia, Pa., preached the truth that she loved so well and spoke words of comfort to all from Rev. xix. 8: "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints." She was buried in the family plot in the Lutheran Cemetery at Schoharie village.

EVERETT R. KINNEY.

Winifred Hewitt, only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. H. D. Hewitt, was born May 3rd, 1905, and died July 18th, 1917. Our dear little girl had been ill for ten months with diabetes, but we thought she was improving, when she was suddenly taken very much worse and was laid on the bed with me (where I was lying helpless with a broken hip) and died in four days. She attended meeting with her father and me, and one time said, "When I am older I will understand and enjoy preaching like you." She seemed old for her years, and would ask such questions as how the soul left the body, &c. All the light of our home has gone out with the life of our darling. I cannot understand why she must leave us, but desire to be reconciled to the will of God, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind.

Elders Clark and Ruston spoke a few words at her funeral from the home, now so desolate.

AMY S. HEWITT.

Mrs. Louisa Irwin Brotherton departed this life Nov. 18th, 1917, aged 67 years and 9 days. She was born in Putnam County, Ind., Nov. 9th, 1850. She was the eighth child of Hardin and Hetty Irwin. In 1852, when she was only two years old, her parents emigrated to Mercer County, Mo., where she lived until she was thirteen years of age. In the summer of 1863 we left Missouri and emigrated to Johnson County, Nebr. In 1879 she united with the Old School Baptist Church in Johnson County, Nebr., and was baptized at the same time with the writer and our youngest brother, Charles G. Irwin. She had a rich experience of grace in her heart, and lived an exemplary christain life. Her life was full of storm and trouble. She had the confidence and respect of all who knew her. She was energetic, industrious, frugal and truthful to a degree. It is the writer's firm belief that no lie ever passed her lips. At the time of her death she had lived in California for nearly a quarter of a century, and had not heard an Old Baptist sermon during all that time, yet she was a stanch Old School Predestinarian Baptist to the very last. Not long before her death she told the writer that her hope of eternal life was clear and strong, and that her experience was brighter than it had ever been; that she was fully prepared and waiting patiently for the great change. She bore all her trials with true christian fortitude, and died without the least bitterness or malice in her heart toward any one. In all my troubles and sorrows she remained constant and faithful; she was a true, devoted sister to the last. When, but a few weeks before her death, she seemed to be recovering, she willingly consented to my coming away in order that I might attend some Old School Baptist associations in Arkansas and Alabama, and to look up a little place somewhere among people of God where we might locate and spend the rest of our days in the enjoyment of the privileges of the church, but God had not predestinated that such should be the case. She has left us to be forever with the Lord. Amen.

BEN HARDIN IRWIN.

Elder C. K. Haines was born August 13th, 1861, (place of birth not known) and died August 16th, 1917, aged 56 years and 8 days. He was married to Miss Sallie Hagan Feb. 12th, 1891. He received a hope in Christ about the year 1896, and united with the Old School Baptist Church at Cerulean Springs, Trigg Co., Ky., and was baptized by the late Elder W. I. Carnell, and began preaching in a short time, and preached to the comfort and satisfaction of his brethren until he was called home.

His funeral was conducted by the writer on the second Sunday in November, 1917.

H. N. OLIVER.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, Elder D. M. Vail will visit and preach to the brethren and friends as follows:

Schoharie, N. Y., Jan. 27th, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.; Middleburg, 28th, 1:30 p. m.; sister Rickard's, 29th, 1:30 p. m.; Albany, 30th, 1:30 p. m.; David Nethaway's, 31st, 1:30 p. m.

E. R. KINNEY.

MEETINGS.

THERE will be meeting at Halcottville on Tuesday, Jan. 15th, at 7:15 p. m., at the home of Abner Morse. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Middletown and Andes Church has decided to hold its meetings during the winter months at Dickson Hall, Arena, N. Y., instead of at Union Grove.

The Second Roxbury Church will hold its meetings during the winter months at the Mead sisters home, Roxbury, N. Y.

To the above meetings all who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please allow me to say in your valuable paper that I have a few copies of Benedict's "FIFTY YEARS AMONG THE BAPTISTS," which I am offering at $1.00 per copy, postage paid. Every one knows what this book is worth to the student of Baptist history. Send all orders to

A. H. RODEN.

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THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at 5 cents per copy. Address,

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(Judges v. 11.)

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ELDER S. HASSELL.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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BY J. E. BEEBE & COMPANY

MIDDLETOWN, ORANGE CO., NEW YORK,

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Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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A SKETCH OF THE LIFE

of

JOSHUA S. CORDER.

PRICE REDUCED.

I will sell the remaining copies I have on hand of this little memorial book for seventy-five cents per copy, postpaid. And I want to say to you of the household of faith who wish this book and are too poor to pay for it, if you will send me your name and address and ten cents to cover postage, I will gladly mail you a copy. The sweet expressions I have received concerning this little work have more than doubly paid me for the anxious hours I spent over its publication, not knowing whether He from whom all blessings flow would bless it to his saints or no. I thank every one who has ordered the book, and kindly solicit further patronage. Send all orders to me.

SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1918. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MATTHEW XVI. 19.

"AND I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven."

The above was addressed to Peter by the Savior. "And Jesus said unto them [the apostles], Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."—Matt. xix. 28. "Then said Jesus to them again [the apostles], Peace be unto you; as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."—John xx. 21-23. It seems necessary to have all of the Scripture referred to in order to present what is upon my mind. Jesus said to Peter, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven," &c. It would seem that Peter was placed in authority above the other apostles, but not so, for the apostles were to sit upon thrones judging Israel, that is, spiritual Israel, the new Jerusalem, the church. Each apostle has equal authority, or, as we speak of it, apostolic authority, this having been given them of the Savior. They have no successors to their thrones; because Jesus lives they live, and because Jesus reigns King of kings and Lord of lords they reign with him. It is an everlasting kingdom. The words, "I will give unto thee the keys," &c., were fulfilled in part when Jesus had risen from the dead and breathed on them (the apostles) and saith unto them, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." The Holy Ghost is the keys to the kingdom of heaven. "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." "Upon this rock [revelation] I will build my church," &c.

A key is used to lock and unlock. Heaven is known by those having the keys to unlock the things kept secret from the foundation of the world, things hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. The keys are the revelation of God through Christ Jesus the Lord, and are without number. Peter

and the apostles received keys when the Savior said unto them, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Also on the day of Pentecost, when the apostles preached; also when Peter preached at the house of Cornelius. Every manifestation of the Spirit taking of the things of Jesus and showing them unto them was a key given unto them of the kingdom of heaven, and unlocked the mysteries hid from the wisdom of this world. The epistles written by the apostles are for the church, the redeemed of the Lord, the called of God, and when their declarations as judges in Israel remit your sins, they are remitted, and when the apostles' declarations retain your sins, they are retained. There is no higher tribunal than the Savior, who is judge of the whole earth, and the apostles, who are judges of spiritual Israel. When the apostle Paul says, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is," it is by apostolic authority. When James says, To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin, it is binding upon the household of faith. When Peter says to the elders, "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage," &c., every declaration is binding upon every elder who has or will be set apart to the work of the ministry, and what the apostles have bound on earth is bound in heaven. When Paul said, "By grace are ye saved through faith," it was by authority he declared it, for Paul was a chosen vessel unto the Lord. How often we have heard some sayings of the apostles as well as the words of Jesus having delivered some heavily burdened souls, the Spirit having taken of the things of Jesus and shown them unto them. So we believe it is the Spirit accompanying the words of Jesus, or the words of the apostles, that remits our sins or retains our sins; and if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemns us not, then have we confidence toward God. To sum up briefly, I would say that every one born of God, born in Zion, is given keys to the kingdom of heaven; they enter in and behold the King in his beauty, their eyes see and ears hear, their hearts understand; they can behold if they cannot tell it. Many things they behold are unlocked and opened up to them by the preached word, and every member, no matter how small, occupies a place in the kingdom and is under law to Christ. The apostles in their declarations have given every needed instruction to the church, and what they have bound on earth is bound in heaven. What they have loosed on earth is loosed in heaven. Whose soever sins they have remitted, they are remitted, and whose soever sins they have retained, they are retained.

J. M. FENTON.

REVELATION X.

JOHN tells of what he saw while in the isle of Patmos, for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ, and while reading the tenth chapter of Revelation I felt to write also. The mighty angel come down from heaven clothed with a cloud, was the Savior. "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him." A rainbow upon his head, shows the covenant of God's blessings in all their varied beauty and glory as upon the head of Jesus; his face as the sun shows splendor and glory and brightness that shall shine eternally. He is the light that lighteth every man that com-

eth into the world. His feet are as pillars of fire; it is in the furnace that we are at his feet and where the church is manifested, and in his hand a little book open; this he gave to John. The little book open was a dispensation of the gospel; had it been handed to him sealed, John could not have written of the things of the gospel. A little book, denotes that John felt he knew but little of the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh. The dispensation of the gospel in the little book was in his mouth sweet, but in his belly bitter. Brethren in the ministry can testify the sweetness of the gospel as spoken in their first exercises, and how soon it was bitter in their belly, and how often we partake of the sweetness as we eat with the flock and later find bitterness of soul that is indescribable; the pains of hell and sorrows of death are our portion. John went unto the angel and said unto him, "Give me the little book." This presents prayer and supplication unto the Savior for wisdom and guidance. The apostle James says, If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally. Not only are we to pray for wisdom to feed the flock, but also that we may know the mind of the Lord where we shall go, and as Paul said: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and the Lord told him what to do. Elder Grafton once said to me: "Watch the hand of the Lord in it," and, "It is well to be often at the throne of grace." John was one very near the Savior; he leaned upon his breast at the supper, and his letters are full of tender and sweet communion with the Savior.

He (Jesus) set his right foot upon the sea and his left foot on the earth. His feet present the church as a multitude no man can number, chosen in Christ Jesus before the world was, and while some are in heaven, and some on earth, and some under the earth, and some in the sea, the feet of Jesus go wherever they are. If they are in heaven, he is there; if on earth, he is there; if under the earth (covered over with earthly cares), he is there; or in the sea (carried about with every wind of doctrine of men and devils), he is there to rescue. John likens the confusions and false worship to the sea, and when he was brought to know Jesus and the gospel he said the first heaven, first earth, had fled away (legalism), and there was a new heaven and new earth and no more sea (no more carried about, but established on the Rock Christ Jesus).

The seven thunders that uttered their voices present the law and prophets, which were until John. He was told to write them not. John was not to write the seven thunders' law, or the seven thunders of Mt. Sinai. Moses had performed that. John was to write the things of the gospel, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, the marriage supper, &c., and what he wrote was to the seven churches in Asia, and is to the churches of like precious faith even in this day, for he must prophesy before many people, nations, tongues and kings.

The angel which John saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever that there should be time no longer. Time no longer is known in the gospel or presence of Jesus. When the apostles were rowing and a storm raging and they could not make any headway, Jesus appeared, and immediately they were at land. One day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day; time is no

longer in the presence of Jesus. "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, [Jesus] when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." Jesus cried upon the cross, "It is finished." A finished salvation is now declared by those called of God to preach.

Law and prophecy were until John. John heard the voice from heaven saying, "Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel," and he did so, and he said unto him, "Thou must prophesy [testify of Jesus] again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings." What a blessed gift of God was John to the people of God, for he has ministered comfort to the flock. John, with the other apostles, goes into all the world and preaches the gospel to every creature, as Jesus commanded, and those who are followers of Jesus observe the things Jesus and the apostles commanded to be observed.

J. M. FENTON.

JOHN XVIII. 36.

"My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews."

These words were spoken by the Savior to Pilate, who was the emperor of Rome. They had brought Jesus bound before Pilate with their accusations. John the Baptist had come preaching, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Jesus had preached, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. He had called his apostles and instructed them; it now remained for the Savior to drink the cup his Father had given unto him. Jesus had prayed that if it were possible the cup might pass from him. Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done. What wrestling the Savior passed through!

Jesus was born King of the Jews. Herod, the king of the Jews, sought his life, and expected to accomplish his purpose by slaying all the male children two years and under in Bethlehem and all the coasts thereof, but God had appeared to Joseph and instructed him to take the young child and his mother and flee into Egypt. "Not a single shaft can hit, till the God of love sees fit." Not a hair could fall from the head of Jesus or any power prevail against him only as designed by the Father. Jesus said to Pilate, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." Peter said, "Him [Jesus] being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Jesus and his servants were not to fight the nations of this world for worldly kingdoms or earthly possessions; that warfare is engaged in by the nations of the earth, and never attains to anything that is above earthly possessions. The kingdom of heaven suffered violence, and had from the day that Satan beguiled the woman in the garden of Eden. Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords had appeared to triumph over all that was opposed to the kingdom of heaven. The powers of darkness, death, hell and the grave were all triumphant and had dominion over all the earth and had prevailed. Jesus came to destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. He came to destroy all the works of the devil. O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction; repentance (turning away) shall be hid from mine eyes; the powers of darkness should not prevail. Jesus is the light and life of his people, and he must overcome all enemies before he could with honor and glory take his seat

upon the throne of glory in his Father's kingdom. He must destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; he must triumph over the powers of hell; he must destroy the power of the grave, and this he did by going down into death. As David went down into the valley of Elah to meet and overcome and destroy Goliath, so Jesus must enter into the valley of death and meet the adversary and destroy him and all the powers of darkness and be raised the third day by the glory of the Father, and we by faith see him a risen Savior, triumphant and victorious over all his enemies. Therefore he could say, All power is given unto me both in heaven and in earth; go ye therefore and preach the gospel to every creature. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, so that the ends of the earth rejoice and are glad. Their faith and hope are in Jesus; the wars and conflicts of nations do not distress them so much as the wars and conflicts between the flesh and Spirit in their own souls' experience, and it is God that makes wars to cease in their exercises of mind, and says, "Be still and know that I am God." What a glorious victory was wrought by the Savior for all his subjects, and how firmly established is his kingdom.

J. M. FENTON.

ELGIN, Ore., Jan. 1, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Having to write you on a little business, I would like also to send you some of my thoughts on Revelation xxii. 14: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." I wish to state now that the city here spoken of is the church, the pillar and ground of the truth. In the twenty-first chapter of Revelation is given a full description of this city. John says, I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away. This first heaven and earth, now passed away, was the Jewish heaven, or the law dispensation, and the new heaven and the new earth the gospel kingdom, or heaven. Speaking of this old covenant it is said, "Whose voice then shook the earth; but now hath he promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." The law was only a shadow of good things to come, and all the blood shed upon its altars made nothing perfect, and each time the high priest went into the holy of holies with blood it signified that sin still remained. But the bringing in of the better hope did make perfect, so he took away the first covenant, of works, and established the second covenant, of grace, for in this new covenant Jesus entered not with the blood of others, but with his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption. In this twenty-first chapter is described this glorious kingdom, or city. Behold the tabernacle of God is with men (here on earth), and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and be their God. This city has a wall great and high, and this wall has twelve foundations, in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. This, to my mind, shows that the wonderful city under consideration is the

church. David refers to these foundations when he says, If the foundations be removed what shall the righteous do? Jesus said to his disciples, And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me a kingdom. This kingdom appointed unto the apostles is the church militant. "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes [the apostles] shall rule in judgment." "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." This testimony proves that the apostles rule in judgment in the church. And the foundations of the wall were garnished with all manner of precious stones. These precious stones in the foundations represent the gifts, differing for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. "And the wall great and high," represents salvation; so the old prophets say, "We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." Again, But thou shalt call thy walls salvation and thy gates praise. The city had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels. These angels are the twelve apostles, and the twelve are at each gate as judges, and we should notice that the twelve gates are of one pearl, and represent but the one way. All who enter these gates must bring forth fruits meet for repentance. The three gates on each side represent the four quarters of the earth. Many shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. All that is said about this city, the length and breadth and height being equal, and its street of gold, shows its beauty and perfection, and no other city is like it. Well could David say, Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion, the city of the great King. God is known in her palaces for a refuge. Walk about Zion, and go round about her, tell the towers thereof, mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following, for this God is our God for ever and ever, he will be our guide even unto death.

Now let us come to our text: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." The right to the tree of life and the blessings to be enjoyed in this city we notice are upon the ground of obedience. If this city here described in the twenty-first and twenty-second chapters of Revelation is the heaven of eternal glory, are poor, helpless sinners given a right there by keeping the commandments? If that be the way, then here is a poor old sinner whose hope of eternal deliverance from sin and death will perish. But it is, "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches." In which none have a right but those who do the commandments, and there is none capable of doing the commandments who are not blessed, for no one can see this kingdom who has not been born again. There is no doubt in my mind that there are millions of God's loved ones who never enter this militant kingdom, but there is not one who will fail to enter that heaven of eternal glory, and will, with all who ever enter that eternal heaven, unite in the song of redemption unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood; to him be glory forever. Amen. It is here in the militant king-

dom that "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. * * * And let him that is athirst come: and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Now let us notice what follows: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." I do not see how this could be applied to the kingdom of eternal glory, but how plain it is when we apply it to the church here, for who has not seen, or can call to mind, where these very things have been done in the church? Men arise teaching perverse things, taking from and adding to the Scriptures, and have been excluded. Paul could see even in his day the spirit of antichrist showing itself, in that of falling away, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; from the earliest history down to the present time has this cutting off had to be done. Even in these United States has the church had to cut off those who added to or took from the words of the prophecy of this book, their names taken out of the holy city, the church.

Dear brethren, I realize that I have fallen far short of expressing myself as I wished to, but hope you will be able to see what I have been trying to explain. I would be glad if any of the brethren who have a mind would give us their views, and if I am wrong show me wherein. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

Now, brethren, after you have read my article if you think best not to publish it, please do not do it, for I do not want anything I write published if you judge it not consistent with the truth. I hope I desire the peace and welfare of Zion, and I love the glorious doctrine contended for by the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Your unworthy brother in gospel bonds, I hope,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

REPENTANCE AND A BROKEN AND CONTRITE HEART.

PEOPLE talk about believing, about faith and hope, and loving the brethren, but how seldom do we hear a word about repentance, confession of sin unto God, godly sorrow for sin, a broken and contrite heart. Have all such experiences been removed from the lives of God's children now in the world? Can it be that there is gospel faith and hope and love in the soul and that person never to have known repentance, godly sorrow for sin, mourning over iniquity, never experienced in them a broken and a contrite heart? Surely all these things are now wrought in the souls of God's elect as verily as they have been in the ages that are past, and as verily as faith, and hope, and love. The apostle Paul testified, both to Jews and also to the Gentiles, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. (Acts xv. 21.) Christ has gone into heaven, there to appear in the presence of God for us, and he is exalted a Prince and Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins. It is through his all-gracious mediation in our behalf that we are granted re-

pentance unto life. (Acts xi. 18.) According to the everlasting covenant, which is ordered in all things and sure, the heirs of promise are so wrought by the Holy Ghost that they not only see themselves vile transgressors, and feel that they are condemned, and under the curse of the law, and their heart meditates terror, but they are so taught, the things of Christ are so revealed to them, that they are moved to mourn every one of them over their sins. The Holy Spirit dissolves their hard, stubborn hearts into sighs and moans, and they are abased and loathe themselves for their iniquities, and they crave the mercy of God; they sigh and yearn for the forgiveness of their sins through Jesus' precious blood. It is not in our early experiences alone that these things are known, but all our lifelong pilgrimage we are frail, sinful beings, needing mercy, and therefore God in covenant faithfulness and love performs the good work which he has begun until the day of Jesus Christ, and we often find within us, under the ministered kindness of our God, a broken and contrite heart.

"Law and terrors do not harden,
All the while they work alone;
But a sense of blood-bought pardon
Soon dissolves a heart of stone."

There are with the people of God times of depression and grief and times of refreshing and relief. The Lord healeth the broken in heart and bindeth up their wounds. "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."—Isa. lvii. 15. Christ crucified is a blessed, sacred balm such as the world knows nothing of. For that professor who in his very heart does not know Christ, and him crucified, knows him not. That believers in Christ have peace with God by the blood of his cross, that they are reconciled unto God by the death of his Son, that they are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, are matters not only testified of in the Scriptures, but they are matters of faith wrought in the hearts of the taught of the Lord. They are vital, comforting experiences, in which poor sinners live unto their God.

"Emmanuel for me hath died,
My Lord, my Love, was crucified."

His flesh is meat indeed, his blood is drink indeed. It is in our intimacy with Jesus our hearts thrive, and everlasting consolation and a good hope through his grace abound in us. Grace comes unto us by our dear Savior. He declares the Father unto us. He says, and it is blessedly true, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."—Heb. ii. 12. Blessed are we to know the joyful sound of our beloved Savior's voice. We shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. Truly blessed are the renewings of the Holy Ghost, who in his communion with our souls takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto us. "He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." We are at periods of our sojourn in the world tempted and plagued by sin and Satan, and so burdened by the afflictions and perplexities of life that it appears a task to get through the day.

"See every day new straits attend,
And wonders where the scene will end."

O at such times I have gone down as into a dismal valley, where murmurings, rebellion, hard thoughts and a hardened heart have made my life wretched indeed. The promises come into my mind, but

they only appear to mock my case; they are only in the letter, and my perverse heart says, How can they be for you? I am not persuaded of them, and have no arms to embrace them. What I need, and what many times has very graciously been given me, is a word of reconcilation, in power, in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance. This will break my hard heart and subdue me and bring me down a suppliant at Jesus' feet. There I lie in penitence, in meekness, in all affection, and I am then all acquiesence to all the providences of our God, and I then truly believe that as my days so shall my strength be.

"He shows me that all shall end well,
His blood is my prevalent plea;
And through his rich grace I believe
He saved a sinner like me."

It is our precious Christ who has reconciled us unto God by his blood, and in our union and communion with him he says in our hearts, "Be ye reconciled to God."—2 Cor. v. 20. How softening, how reconciling it is to see by faith Jesus the man of sorrows, to have glimpses of his sorrows in Gethsemane and on Calvary.

"Love moved him to die, on this I rely,
My Jesus hath loved me, I cannot tell why,
But this I can tell, he hath loved me so well
As to lay down his life to redeem me from hell."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

LEXINGTON, Ky., Jan. 15, 1918.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I have read with interest your remarks upon the loss of your son, and very probable loss, in this cruel war, of many of the pick and choice of the sons of our people, and I feel that I can and do enter into the spirit, to some extent, of this sore affliction, and I feel that there is a willingness in my heart to stand under the rod with the fathers and mothers of our land, and, by the grace of our God, to bear with them such burdens as he may be pleased to put upon us to teach us the extent and character of our sins and transgressions, that in the severity of his judgments he might manifest mercy. While I do not believe that he takes your son from you and afflicts mine because you and I may have sinned, yet I want to see, and look for no other hand, but that of our God in these afflictions, and to him, and to him only, would I confess my sins. I would feel that his hand only can and does afflict, and from affliction saves. Satan can only afflict as he is in the hand of God, and Job, whom he afflicted, was also, and graciously so, in the hand of God, therefore Job, by the grace of God, did not see the hand of Satan at all, but he saw the hand of God, and eventually saw God himself, and worshipped him. It seems to me that those who feel to credit their afflictions to Satan never see the gracious, saving hand of God. They want to say, The Lord gave, and Satan hath taken away, but in that it could not be said, "Blessed be the name of the Lord." The light of the knowledge of the glory of God is seen only in the face of Jesus Christ. It seems to me that in this war should be seen the chastisements of God by which the nations of the earth are being scourged, and will eventually be rebuked, and humbled, and the church, not being without sin, will be found in the great caldron with the nations that forget God, but it shall be saved, yet so as by fire. What is the matter with the people? Why this mighty, maddening, onward, downward rush and scramble of men and women, saint and sinner? A morbid desire for wealth, with rank and power, financially and socially, with all of

their attendant parasites, have so eaten, as a cankering cancer, into the very vitals of our body politic as to fill it with microbes of covetousness, selfishness, greed and graft, and to so embellish the principles of predatory fortune seeking as to make them appear as paramount to all other characteristics of the virtues of a nation of peoples claiming for their religion the principles of christianity, with the very outpouring of the blood of our sons, with its attendant ravages of war, threaten to become the wellspring of our financial, political and religious greatness. While the best of the young manhood of our country is being offered upon the altar of the world as the price for the world-wide liberties of a universal democracy, a prevailing element of our common citizenship, under the pretext of war times, and the enforced high cost of living, threaten to sap the very roots of our domestic structure, and but for the strong hand and outstretched arm of our government the ultimate consumer with a large body of producers would eventually be left to share in anything, with perhaps the exception of the liberties of democracy. However, it is to be hoped that when democracy has been vouchsafed to others it will in turn be likewise vouchsafed to us, and to our children. While the people of God are to be subject to the powers that be, in every lawful way, to the upkeep of the government and the maintenance of the mutual and just rights of its people, they should nevertheless endeavor to maintain the integrity of the liberty of the commonwealth of Israel. Perhaps there never has been a time in the history of the church since the days of the apostles and disciples in which its light should have more certainty, so shined before men, that they might see its good works, and glorify its Father in heaven than at this time. These are such times as try men's souls. While they are being borne upon the bosom of the great conflicting seas of troubled waters, whose seething, surging, rolling billows threaten to swallow them up, they will no doubt keep a sharp lookout for beacon lights along the shore, hardly a little haven wherein they might cast anchor and rest for a little season, and what is more appropriate for such requirements than the church of the living God? It is that real home, the like of which there is no place. For the hungry, there is always an abundance of the shewbread of the gospel upon its altar, ever fresh from the bakery of divine grace. For the thirsty, the refreshing waters of the upper and nether springs flow placidly forth from its sacred thresholds. To the weary one, the rest that remains to the people of God is there. For the troubled soul, the balm of Gilead and the oil of joy are there. For those whose hearts are tired because of war, the peace of God that passeth understanding is there, and to all needy ones, the Lord has commanded the blessing there, even life for evermore; there the pilgrim finds his native land, there the stranger finds his friends.

Yours in the best of bonds.

P. G. LESTER.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Jan. 15, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER:—At five o'clock this morning a cyclone, accompanied by water, struck our town, and destroyed several residences, but killed no one that I know of. Our meetinghouse is a total loss. The damage cannot be replaced for two thousand dollars. Our men are oystermen and fishermen. Their boats are turned over, masts broken out and such other damage that it will be quite a

while before any work can be done. This followed a heavy freeze, which has kept them from following their occupations for the past four weeks. I do not know that it will be possible for us to replace our meetinghouse for a long time, unless the brethren and friends in the country will come to our help. If there are any of the brethren or friends who feel willing to send us help at this time it will be highly appreciated by us all. Money for that purpose can be sent to me, or to our deacon, John L. Smith, Atlantic, Carteret County, N. C.

Your brother, I hope,

L. H. HARDY.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Jan. 16, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Last night we held a mass meeting, to try to estimate the damage done to our town by the cyclone of yesterday morning. We found that one-fifth of the homes were destroyed, and others damaged. Nearly all the oyster boats were turned over and so damaged that they cannot be used again this season, thus cutting off the means of a livelihood, and that one hundred thousand dollars is a low estimate of the damage done to the town, and two thousand dollars will not replace our meetinghouse. Whatever you can do in any way to help us will be highly appreciated. Funds for the town and those for the church should be stated separately, so I will know how to apply them properly.

I hope to see you all at the spring associations. Pray for us in our afflictions.

Yours in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

[THE SIGNS is indeed sorry to learn of the destruction of property, and the suffering bound to follow such conditions in Atlantic, N. C., and can vouch for the statement made by Elder L. H. Hardy. We gladly give space to brother Hardy's letters, and hope that all who can will help them. Follow his directions in remitting whatever amounts you feel to contribute. We shall all be glad to see brother Hardy at our spring associations.—K.]

THE CHURCH OF GOD.

IN the second chapter of the Acts of the apostles we have a complete description of the church as it was manifest on the day of Pentecost, as is known by all Bible readers. This day was the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel. It is evident that there were at least two classes of people in that gathering, although there were men out of every nation under heaven. Upon some of this company the Holy Ghost fell. The apostles spake as they were moved by the same Holy Ghost; some said, These men are full of new wine, totally ignorant of what had taken place. The world in nature never has and never can know why the redeemed sinners believe and talk as they do, from the fact that his kingdom is within his people and does not come by observation. While it is true that his people are in the world, they are not of the world, even as Christ was not of the world. Peter preached that day what every true servant of God preaches to this present time (the gospel). Some of that company (not all) were pricked in the heart, and the effect caused them to cry out, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Peter said, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." They had already received the Holy Ghost, Jesus had risen from the dead, a new heaven and a new earth ap-

peared (gospel heaven), and the old heaven (legal heaven) had passed away. Peter knew where they were, therefore he spoke with authority from high heaven, Repent, turn away from all legal or law service, trusting in the blood of bulls and goats, burnt offerings and sacrifices, new moons and sabbath days. All of these pointed to the great sacrifice, even Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, the Son of God, the Savior, whose blood alone atones for sin, therefore be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for, or because, of the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, which is the answer of a good conscience. Then they that gladly received his word, the gospel, (none but true believers gladly receive the word of truth) were baptized. Here we have a gospel church walking in gospel order, for they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread and in prayer, and the Lord, not Peter, added to the church daily such as should be saved. Although this body of people, or church, is told to be in subjection to the powers that be, it is the highest tribunal under high heaven, shall we say an independent government? The laws and ordinances are in the church, and administered by the authority of the church alone, and no church or association of churches can exercise authority over another, or dictate to them what they may or may not do. The judgment of the church decides the gifts, whatever they may be, and no man can decide or judge his own gift. I have not found any scriptural authority to license men to preach; there may be, but when in the judgment of the church a man has the gift to preach they do have authority for ordaining him. A presbytery is not called together to decide whether a man is called to preach, for that is decided already, but as servants of the church to ordain him for the church. A church makes her own appointments, therefore it is as much the duty of each member to be present as it is the duty of the pastor, neither has a right to allow worldly interests to interfere with their church duties or privileges. Seek first the kingdom of God, is the command. It is the bounden duty of the pastor of the church to look after the welfare of all the flock, old and young, rich and poor, sick or well, through cold or heat, in season, out of season, and it is just as much the duty of the church to look after the welfare and prosperity of their pastor and his family; they are human beings, they need fuel to keep them warm, victuals to stop hunger, for surely they cannot live on air, clothes to make them comfortable, beds to rest their weary bodies; in fact they need what other families need, no more, no less. Brethren one and all, am I right? The pastor of a church boards a train and travels one hundred and fifty miles, leaves home Saturday morning, Sunday morning there is a storm, perhaps a blizzard, no one out to meeting; would it not be the duty of that church to pay all of his expenses and a few dollars beside? for he is losing four days from home. Most certainly. Why not? He did not make the storm, did he? See here, brethren, if you have a pastor, and you feel that his family is burdensome to the church, tell him so right away, get rid of him quick; it would be far more honorable than to starve him to death. Do you not think so? When pastors and members all do what is their duty, or privilege I will say, everything runs smoothly, but when they do not it is a hard task. I have heard merchants and farmers say that the last few years have been hard times with them. I believe it is true,

and of course this would affect others financially. I know what it is, I hope and believe, to be poor spiritually and naturally, and what it is to feel rich spiritually and naturally. If I am in debt I feel poor and sad, when I am free from debt I feel good, and am happy naturally, even though I only have my nice little home, which I had before I was ordained. My present home was bought with money that I received from my former home in Waverly, Pa., by putting several hundred dollars with it that my wife received from her father's estate, and with what we could do for ourselves, and with what the good, kind brethren have done for us over and above my traveling expenses, we have lived as comfortably as most of the brethren, but nothing to bank, and do not need it, unless some of us should be sick or die, and then there would be some way provided, as there has always been for the sick. The yearly expenses of my family for forty years past have been four hundred and fifty dollars. Three hundred and fifty dollars of this amount came from the several churches I have served, showing that the churches are much more liberal with their pastors than they were seventy-five or one hundred years ago. Of course from a financial standpoint they are more able.

I have now answered about thirty questions without stating the questions, and will answer two more, then I am through for this time. First. Would it be in order for a company of baptized believers to organize into a regular church if they are within five miles of a church of the same order? It would. Nothing could hinder if they are orderly, God-fearing members. Second question. Why is it that most of the ministers ordained during the past ten or fifteen years have positions drawing salaries of fifty to one hundred dollars a month, beside what they receive from the churches? Easy enough. It takes three dollars to buy of general merchandise such as a family needs what seventy-five cents would have bought forty years ago, and I suppose the churches are not able to make up the difference.

I have now answered each question as best I can, and send them, by request, for publication, if the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES see fit to publish such a strange letter, but each one of the questioners will know when they come to the answer to their question.

I will now say that I am still going about the same as usual. The churches are about the same. I am called pastor by seven churches. A few additions and a few deaths. Spiritually I feel twice dead and plucked up by the roots, no good anywhere, but I believe that God reigns. Yes, the present war is God's war, and he will accomplish his purpose by it, and in his time it will end.

Love to all the brethren in the fellowship of the gospel.

D. M. VAIL.

RUSH SPRINGS, Okla., Nov. 18, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending two dollars to pay for one more year. Please mark my time up one year as above stated. I certainly enjoy reading the many good letters and able editorials that come to my abode through the SIGNS, and I appreciate the privilege of reading a paper that is not poisoned with the winds of doctrine, the isms and schisms and commandments of men, and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is certainly that paper. I wish I could say something to comfort the contributors and many readers of the SIGNS; though I am so dull and ignorant I realize that such must come from an abler

pen than mine. I can say from my heart that I dearly love the editors and friends I am acquainted with through the columns of the SIGNS, and try in my humble way to thank the all-wise God for such able witnesses to the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Dear brethren, may God continue to lead and use you, giving you fruitful minds, thus enabling you to edify and comfort Zion. These are trying times, though all things work together for good to them that love God, &c. All men do not love God, all men have not faith, and without faith it is impossible to please God. Faith is not necessary to be a man-pleaser. If all things work together for good to them that love God, then real faith in the Son of God, faith that is wrought by the Spirit of God, enables God's true servants to stand firm on God's decrees, denouncing the commandments of men. As I understand, every decree and every promise of God to his chosen, elect people, is fixed and made sure for and to his people in and through the obedience of his Son. The Spirit of God reveals to his chosen people what Jesus wrought out on Calvary's cross for them; thus faith is the fruit of the Spirit, and not of the works of men. God is not slack concerning his promises, as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. This text cannot be applied to any but God's elect children. To apply this language to the world (as many do) thwarts God's promises, calling him slack. God knows how to bring his children to repentance. God's people often become slack in their devotion and service to God, but this does not signify that God is slack even in one of his promises. God's love to his people never grows cold; he knows when and how to renew his servants. Dear brethren, be of good cheer, for in due time God will lift you up; when weary and tired feelings take hold on you, in due time God will manifest himself unto you and give you rest. If not asking too much, I desire to be remembered in the prayers of God's people.

I am, as ever, your unworthy brother, I hope, in gospel bonds,

L. E. SKINNER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan. 6, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I inclose a good letter from brother Dan Campbell, and would like it published if you judge it worthy a place in the SIGNS.

Yours in best of bonds,

J. M. FENTON.

ILDERTON, Ont., Oct. 28, 1917.

DEAR ELDER FENTON:—We received your letter and were glad to hear from you, but the things that you wrote with regard to myself seem too wonderful for me to think of ever attaining, but the ways of man are not in his own hands. We look back to the visit you had with us in Lobo as being good. The angel of the Lord surely went before you to prepare the way for you.

Now I am going to write you some thoughts on a portion of Scripture, and I want you to tell me if they are right. I will use the third verse of the seventeenth chapter of 1st Kings, which reads as follows: "Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan."

We find that this took place before they reached Jordan, and Moses at that time was their leader. Moses representing the law, we will have to apply this Scripture to a character under the law. The words, "hide thyself"—was not this your condition in your early experience?

You did not want any person to know what was going on in your mind; you feared you were deceiving them. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him. But you like to be about the fold listening to the bleating of the flock. They do not know that it is the hand of the Lord that is dealing with them. No man knoweth the Father, but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. In this condition Elijah was fed by ravens morning and evening, and drank out of this brook, which is the law, that he tried to obey. Now these ravens had to gather the food. What do the preachers of this day do? They sit in their studies and gather what they will have for their next appointment. We read that the brook went dry; he could not eat any longer of this kind of flesh that these characters brought him. Now the Lord spoke to him and commanded him to get away to the city of Zarephath, and he would find a character of like faith, and there they would be fed until the rain came. This woman was a widow, and she had a son, which would be some of the pleasure of nature that she clung to. This child died, and it was taken from her bosom. She is a widow indeed, as Paul says, with no earthly support. It was said to such an one as this, Thy maker is thine husband, the Lord of hosts is his name. But this child came to life again. So does it with many of these former lusts, such as pride and conceit; these come to life again. This child was delivered to her, but it does not say she took it back in her bosom any more. When the rain came there arose a cloud like a man's hand out of the sea. This is the time when we are wonderfully blessed, and we know it was the hand of the Lord that brought it. One of old wanted to look back to those days when they said, Cause me to remember the days of my youth, when the candle of the Lord shone round about me. The Lord on another occasion fed Elijah differently from the way the ravens fed him. He complained of a sad and lonely condition, and laid down under a juniper tree and wished he were dead. The Lord spoke to him and said he had reserved to himself seven thousand men that had not bowed their knees to Baal. Elijah slept, and an angel of the Lord touched him and he looked. A cake baked on coals and a cruse of water were at his head. This was done the second time, and he went forty days in the strength of that meal. So may the Lord continue to instruct you and guide you all, is the desire of us both.

DAN CAMPBELL.

STOCKDALE, Texas, Nov. 24, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars to pay for the SIGNS another year. We have been having a severe drouth here, which was the cause of my delay. I am so feeble I hardly ever get to meeting, and if the SIGNS is a little late I can hardly wait until it comes. It is refreshing to my poor soul, as a shower of rain is to wilting grass. It seems the most of my time I am in a furnace of affliction, but there is but one way to look to see the light, and that is to Jesus, for he is the light of the world, and he said, He that believeth on me hath eternal life, and shall never perish. But did this promise include this poor old sinner? Can I ever be like Jesus? Yes, if it is his will I know he has the power to change this vile body like unto his glorious body. What more could we wish? I thought when this war broke out it would kill me to see one of my boys taken, but one is gone and more may have to go, but we are told, As thy days thy strength shall be.

My whole trust for them and their return is in the good Lord, who can stay the hand of death. The people have set days for prayer again and again, but when the Lord's time comes the war will cease, and not before. He has fought their battles in times past, and he has the same power to-day that he ever had. I want to tell the dear brethren and sisters how I enjoy their writings, for I feel that they are prompted of the Lord.

Unworthily,

(MRS.) W. L. HAWK.

HENDERSONVILLE, Tenn., March 4, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am writing you on business; I do not feel that I can write for publication, but I want to tell you how much I enjoy reading your valuable paper. I can hardly wait for the time for it to come, as it is all the preaching I have. There are no Old Baptists living near me, and I have no one to converse with on spiritual things. I have wondered if this is the world war predicted. One of the prophets said, Woe unto you when they say a confederacy; also when they say, All is peace and safety, for suddenly destruction comes. When we read of the efforts to christianize the world and observe the times, it surely seems like a broad field for thought. There is nothing we poor worms can do but wait, hope and trust in the high and Holy One who rules in the army of heaven and among men.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) HENRY J. DORRIS.

LIGONIER, Indiana.

DEAR KINDRED:—Another year has rolled around, and the dear old SIGNS comes as usual, with its fund of comforting things, and in these days of wars and rumors of wars we need the assurance again and again that our God is not asleep nor gone on a journey, and the SIGNS certainly bears these good tidings. In these boasted religious times the poor in spirit can but stand and wonder at the wickedness of the world, the great spiritual wickedness in high places, the vicious prayers for ability to do more killing, and yet we must be still and know that he is God, and that he has set bounds which they shall not pass over. When we get greatly wrought up over the outlook, and think of our dear boys who will probably be torn from us, how blessedly dear is that "Peace be still" that he alone can give. Were it not for the blessed assurance that our times are in his hand, that he rules in heaven, on earth and under the earth, that he speaks and it is done, and that he gives the dear hope which is an anchor of the soul, we should be indeed miserable. I am trying to be still and know that he is God, and I want the dear SIGNS another year, with its comforting editorials and precious letters from the humble, trusting, poor in spirit. I do hope Elder Durand may be spared to write many more of his dear spiritual articles, which I read again and again.

Yours in hope of peaceful rest when this warfare is over,

(MRS.) CURTIS COLE.

FORSYTH, Ga., Dec. 13, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose check for three dollars to renew my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; any excess you can apply to aid in your work, as I am sure you need some help to keep pace with the increase in the cost of living and sending out your semi-monthly messages of good cheer to the Lord's humble poor. Where we are, and what we will be at the final termination of this great world war, no prophet has yet arisen who can tell us, but I believe God is at the helm and will steer the ship safely to shore. Having this faith carries us on day by day, praying and looking for his guiding hand, knowing that all is for the good of those who indeed love the Lord. May his will be done, is my prayer. Amen.

J. W. NEWTON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1918.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

HEBREWS VII. 3, 21.

DEAR ELDER KER:—Please give your views through the SIGNS regarding the following passages of Scripture: "Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually." "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

In hope of life eternal,

ELLA BARFIELD.

MACON, Ga.

In attempting to comply with the request of sister Barfield we realize that we are dealing with profoundly deep things, "yea, the deep things of God;" but if his Spirit hath ever revealed such things unto us we must have them still, for what the Lord doeth is done forever. In presenting our understanding of the subject we shall be as brief and pointed as possible, in order that our sister and others who may read what we may write may readily grasp our view.

The priests of the Levitical priesthood were the sons of Levi, carnal men, priests after the law of a carnal commandment, and offered carnal things in the sacrifices for the sins of Israel. Not one of those priests continued forever, but as one died another succeeded him in the office of the priesthood; hence neither the priest nor the sacrifice availed anything, because neither continued. There is no difficulty in tracing the lineage of the sons of Levi to Abraham, as we are told in Hebrews that Levi was in the loins of his father when Abraham offered tithes unto Melchisedec. Because Aaron was a priest after the law of a carnal commandment, offered carnal things for the sins of the people, which never could take away sins, and at last died without having accomplished the redemption of Israel by the blood of goats and calves, the priesthood of Christ could not be after his order, or in the likeness of Aaron's priesthood. "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Melchisedec is the most mysterious character of the Old Testament, and all that we know of him is what is said of him, hence any speculation regarding him would be vain. We think, however, that we are safe in saying that his existence was in order to the type of the priesthood of Christ. He was the priest of the most high God; "King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually." How vast the difference between Aaron and Melchisedec! How infinitely different the priesthood of Aaron and the priesthood of Melchisedec, and how absolutely necessary that the priesthood of Christ be after the order of Melchisedec. This man was so great that even Abraham, "the friend of God," bowed to him and was blessed by him; and Levi, the head of the Levitical priesthood, offered tithes to him when yet in the loins of Abraham. He was the priest of the most high God, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but made like unto the Son of God, "a priest for ever." He was King of righteousness, hence without

spot before God. He was King of peace, the peace of God that passeth understanding, which peace knoweth no war. All these attributes are found in Jesus Christ our Lord, and in all of them he is a priest after the order of Melchisedec, and not after the order of Aaron. Melchisedec being the priest of the most high God, and not of the law, needed not, as did Aaron, to enter into the holy of holies to offer carnal sacrifices for the transgressions of the people, but offered sacrifices in righteousness unto God.

He was without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life. Some able men have said that inasmuch as his ancestry was absolutely unknown, his lineage could not be ascertained, but the word says he was without descent, and we must all accept the plain statement, notwithstanding its mystery. As deep as the mystery is, it must of necessity have been so in order to the type. Christ as man was without father, as God he was without mother, and as God (manifest in the flesh) had neither beginning of days nor end of life. Therefore his priesthood is not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. Jesus while in the flesh and under the law of sin did not after the order of Aaron offer the blood of goats and calves for the remission of sins, but offered himself without spot unto God, and having obtained eternal redemption for us by his own blood, entered into heaven itself, and at the right hand of God ever liveth to make intercession for us according to the will of God. Jesus Christ, the High Priest of our profession, being above all principalities and powers, every knee shall bow to him and every tongue confess that he is the priest of the most high God, King of righteousness, King of Salem, King of peace, and abideth forever. He is our peace, our reconciliation to God, and the author of that peace which like a river sometimes flows into the heart of the troubled and afflicted soul.

As there was a change in the law, there was of necessity a change in the priesthood: now a living priesthood, because as I live, ye shall live also. The children of God are now kings and priests unto God the Father through the blood of Christ to offer up spiritual sacrifices unto the Lord through Him that loved us and gave himself for us. K.

NEHEMIAH V. 19.

"THINK upon me, my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people."

If we separate this text from all that goes before it, it does sound, as our inquirer says, as though Nehemiah felt he had done a great deal for God's people, and wanted to be rewarded accordingly. But there are fewer things more dangerous in reading the Bible than to form snap-shot judgment of what this or that means. We are sure no real servant of God ever feels that he has done anything for the Lord's people for which God ought to reward him. If one is able to do anything for the Lord's people, it is because God gives the ability so to do. The ability to serve the people of God, therefore, is itself a proof of indwelling godliness, and godliness is a sufficient reward in and of itself, without there being any further reward for godliness. Nehemiah, being a servant of God and called to serve the Israelites, must have known in his heart that if he possessed any goodness at all, any ability to do good, it could not possibly be by reason of any strength of his own as a natural man, but because of the power of God residing in

him or given unto him to do his work. We are able to prove that Nehemiah felt this way about his calling if we will refer back to previous chapters in this book of his. We must first find out what principle was actuating Nehemiah before we can conclude that he expected the Lord to reward him for his goodness. Turning to the first chapter, we find that news was brought to Nehemiah that the remnant left in Judea after the main part of the Israelites was carried captive to Babylon, was in great affliction and reproach, that the wall of the city of Jerusalem was broken down and the city gates burned up. This news so troubled Nehemiah that he besought the Lord in prayer. In this prayer Nehemiah sought not to pose as a good man, but humbly acknowledged himself to be a sinner, as well as that all Israel, including his father's house, were sinners. He honestly confessed: "We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments which thou commandedst thy servant Moses." There could hardly be a more wholehearted confession of entire failure before God on the part of a human being than this confession of Nehemiah's. It would indeed seem strange if a man who thus felt himself to be such a failure in the way of obedience should afterward ask God to be good to him accordingly as he had been himself good. If a man thus keenly realizing his failure should ask God to reward him according to his goodness, either his confession of failure was not sincere, or else he could not expect much reward upon the basis of goodness which he knew did not exist. This puzzle will straighten itself out as we go on. Reading on into the second chapter, we find Nehemiah to have been heavily impressed to return to Jerusalem, and being so impressed, he earnestly besought Artaxerxes the king to let him return to Jerusalem to rebuild it. Being granted this permission, he set out for Jerusalem and arrived there. But, arrived at Jerusalem, he told no one "what God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem." Here is the secret of the whole errand and work of Nehemiah. The prophet came to do only what God had put it in his heart to do. Therefore the good which Nehemiah performed for the people at Jerusalem was not the result of any natural ability of his own, but was the result of what God put in his heart to do. Therefore when Nehemiah desired the Lord to think upon him for good according to all that he had done for Israel, Nehemiah had not in mind any goodness which he possessed himself, for such consciousness of goodness on his part would have been inconsistent with his former confession of utter failure before God. But he meant this: Inasmuch as thou hast, O God, put it into my heart to come to Jerusalem and do the things that I have done for this people according as thou hast put it in my heart, therefore let not the work cease which thou hast begun in me and in this people, but carry it on by thy mighty power until it comes to fruition in the day of Jesus Christ, which day was the fruition of all old testament hopes and aspirations. God has always wrought in his people to will and to do of his good pleasure. This will of God working in them causes an outward manifestation of salvation. It is the will to goodness, and is as separate and distinct from the natural will as God is separate from and different from man. It was this spiritual will that was given unto Nehemiah and wrought in him to the doing of good to the people of Jerusalem. Now as God had begun this good work in

Nehemiah, thus causing him to do good to God's people, would he suffer the good work to lag and finally fail? This was what Nehemiah had in mind when he asked the Lord to think upon him for good according as he (Nehemiah) had done for the people. "According to all that I have done for this people," meant nothing more nor less than "what my God had put in my heart to do." Putting these things together, we easily see Nehemiah was thinking of no natural goodness of his own, but simply of what the Lord had inspired him to do. Thus, as thou hast previously thought upon me, O Lord, when thou puttest it in my heart to do these things, so wilt thou continue to think upon me in bringing to a glorious end the work which thou, O God, hast so wonderfully begun. L.

1 SAMUEL XVI. 23.

"AND it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him."

Our inquirer wants to know if this means that natural music had the power to drive the evil spirit out of Saul. In other words, did the effect of the music upon Saul prove an influence which music is of itself capable? The crux of this matter lies in an expression in the eighteenth verse of this same chapter. This expression spoken with reference to David is this, "And the Lord is with him." This fact explains the power of David's music on the harp. The fact that the Lord was with David gave his music that peculiar potency over the evil spirit in Saul. David slew Goliath with a stone from the brook. Does that prove that stones picked up from brooks have the power to kill giants? By no means. The power to kill the giant was not in the stone, but resided in the truth that God was with David and guided the stone unerringly to his mark. The secret of David's success lay in the fact that God was with him. His cunning skill with the harp could not of itself have availed to drive the evil spirit from Saul, but the fact that the Lord was with David imbued his music with a peculiar charm that the devil himself could not resist. Music is refreshing, and we love it, but it would not do to say that music is an infallible recipe to drive the devil away. It takes the Lord to do that. If the Lord chooses to use music to refresh us in our evil hours, well and good, but music without the Lord cannot do it.

L.

ATTENTION!

OF late we have been receiving more complaints than usual from subscribers missing one or more numbers of the SIGNS, and we wish them to know that it is through no fault of ours, as we are very particular to have each paper securely wrapped and plainly addressed before it leaves this office. We ask our subscribers to please not censure us, but if they do not receive their paper to notify us, and we will gladly mail them another copy free of charge.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER J. F. BEEMAN has changed his address from Tiawah, Okla., to Claremore, Rogers Co., Okla.

ELDER GEO. L. WEAVER has changed his address from 1727 Bryn-Mawr Rd. to 11223 Ashbury Ave., Cleveland, Ohio.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Charles Rittenhouse, Man., $3.00; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $3.00; Mrs. Allie Gooch Reid, N. C., $1.00; J. A. Tandy, Okla., $3.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder S. H. Durand, at his home in Southampton, Pa., Saturday, Jan. 12th, 1918, Charles B. Gordy, of Philadelphia, and Mildred P. Durand, of Southampton, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Thomas R. Pittman died at his home in Havana, Kansas, Jan. 4th, 1918, from injuries received in an automobile wreck late in the afternoon of that day. Deceased was born in Crawford County, Ohio, March 15th, 1843, and if he had lived until March 15th he would have been 75 years old. He received a hope in Christ while in the state of Ohio in 1862, and four years later united with the Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by the late Elder Lewis Seitz. In 1870 he was married to Mary E. Vore. To that union were born six children, two sons and four daughters. The eldest daughter preceded him to the great beyond; the other three daughters are: Mrs. Bertha Lindley, Mrs. Nellie Hunt and Mrs. Clyde Baker, all of Havana, Kansas. The two sons are: Jesse, of Seattle, Wash., and Louis, of Havana, Kansas. Some time in the early seventies brother Pittman came with his family to Kansas and settled near Havana, where he had since resided. Soon after he came he united with Little Flock Church. As I now remember, some years later he united with the Bethlehem Church of Primitive Baptists, of which he and his wife and daughter, Mrs. Lindley, were members. In the year 1900 the church ordained him to the full work of the gospel ministry, and he preached ever afterward to the edification of the children of God. Soon after his ordination he was chosen assistant pastor of his home church. He was a thorough Bible student, an able defender of the doctrine of the church and a continuous subscriber and supporter of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, it being his choice of Primitive Baptist publications. He held various positions of public trust and honor, lived an honorable, upright and religious life, having the confidence and esteem of those without. As to his religious belief, he was firm and uncompromising, yet meek and humble. In his last hours, though just at death's door, he quoted praises to God from Psalms ciii. We feel our loss to be very great. He was a good counselor, a kind husband and father, a good citizen, a good, kind neighbor and an humble church member. He was charitable, always ready to help the poor and needy. He always enjoyed the company of his brethren in his own home. We mourn not as those without hope; we have every evidence that he was a child of God and is now at rest. I had been acquainted with him for more than thirty-five years, and what I have written of him seems insufficient, for his was a noble life.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder Marion Preston, of Iola, Kansas, from the Pittman home, who preached an able and comforting discourse to a large assembly of sorrowing relatives and friends, using the words of the psalmist David as a text: "Be still and know that I am God." The body was tenderly laid in the grave to await the resurrection at the last day, when it shall come forth with the likeness of the dear Savior.

May God bless the sorrowing friends.

NATHAN REEDER.

Elder Alexander Cheyne departed this life Nov. 7th, 1917, aged 76 years, 10 months and 21 days. He was born in Aberdeen, Scotland, Feb. 15th, 1841. At the age of seventeen he began teaching, and was engaged in educational work in parochial schools in England and Scotland for twenty-five years. In 1865 he was married to Miss Mary McAlley. To that union were born nine children, five sons and four daughters, two of whom died in infancy. Of those remaining the eldest daughter, Nellie, died Nov. 18th, 1905. In 1884 they emigrated to the United States, residing in Wisconsin and Dakota five years. During the spring of 1889 he moved with his family to Klickitat County, Wash., where they lived until 1910, when they moved to Klamath Falls, Oregon. In July, 1917, he went to Cottage Grove, Oregon, where he purchased a home, at which place he died. During his stay at Hartland, Klickitat County, brother A. J. Pitman loaned him the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and talked with him of the doctrine held by the Primitive Baptists. Brother Cheyne at that time was preaching for the Missionary Baptists. In August, 1895, brother and sister Cheyne and brother and sister Pitman stayed all night at our home. This was practically the beginning of our acquaintance with Elder Cheyne. The next day he and sister Cheyne related their christian experience to Pleasant Grove Church and were baptized by Elder W. J. Hess, brother Cheyne being the first person baptized by him. Since that time up to my husband's death there was an unbroken fellowship mutually enjoyed, at the fireside and by correspondence when separated. In his letter of condolence to me he wrote: "He was a younger man than I, yet he was as a father in the gospel, and so tender, so patient, yes, painstaking in expounding to me, especially where he saw I was so long held in thrall by a false system, was in error, and he it was who, when at first we were led home to the church, baptized us in the river at Goldendale in the presence of many witnesses, thus showing the tie that binds." In September, 1915, he and sister Cheyne came to visit their son James and family at Zillah, this county, remaining there until the following March. They came to meeting at Yakima regularly, and in December he was set apart by the church and ordained to the full work of the ministry by a pres-

bytery composed of Elders J. T. Barnes, W. T. Eaton, A. Wilson and W. J. Hess. In January he was chosen pastor of the church for that year, but after returning to Klamath Falls he sent a request in June for the church to release him from the pastoral care of the church, also for letters of dismission for himself and wife, as they hoped to be nearer some other church of our faith and order. After leaving Yakima they visited among the churches and with brethren in western Washington and Oregon. His chief delight seemed to be to preach. Circumstances seemed to hold him in Klamath until last summer, when they went to Cottage Grove and united with Coast Fork Church. His daughter wrote me: "As was his greatest pleasure, he spent his last days in preaching. He quoted Scripture to the last, and told mother he was glad his sins were all forgiven. He had been so well until one day while chopping wood the axe came in contact with the clothesline and cut a deep gash in his forehead. It healed quickly, too soon perhaps, and a day or two after the doctor removed the stitches he complained of his jaws hurting him; his speech was so affected it was hard to understand him. He told mother she had better send for some of the family, he was worse than she knew." He was taken worse Saturday, and passed away at 1 o'clock a. m. Tuesday before his children could reach him. Besides his widow he leaves six children to mourn their loss: James A., of Zillah, Wash., Wm. M., Robert D., Alexander B., Mrs. G. S. Thompson and Mrs. L. B. Dawson, of Klamath Falls. He was buried in the cemetery at Cottage Grove. Sister Cheyne returned to Klamath Falls with her children. The old home will no doubt be very lonely for her, but it will be a comfort to her that his last days were spent where he could attend meetings and be with his brethren. May the sorrowing ones be enabled to look above for sustaining grace.

SONORA A. HESS.

Mrs. Manerva Booker, my sister in the flesh, departed this life Dec. 21st, 1917, in the 76th year of her age. She was a native of Missouri, coming to Texas at an early day with our parents, settling in Tarrant County, at Ft. Worth. She was married to Mr. Booker (who preceded her to the grave thirteen years) in 1859, and soon afterward moved to Parker County and settled at Weatherford, Texas, where they resided until death. This being a frontier country then, they were exposed to many hardships and privations incidental to a new and sparsely settled country, within the range of hostile Indians. At that time, having no transportation facilities, she and her husband frequently walked thirty-one miles to visit our father in Tarrant County. Eleven children were born to them, six sons and five daughters, all grown, who survive her and were at her bedside when death came. Her husband served through the Civil War, which left a heavy burden and responsibility upon the mother to care for the family; but with great courage and fortitude she endured that stormy period. In 1867 she united with the Old School Baptist Church called Clear Fork, the first Primitive Baptist Church organized in the county, and was baptized by Elder John Bryant. The past year her health failed rapidly, and for two months her life gradually ebbed from senile decay, and she calmly passed from this world of sorrow to live with her dear Savior. Her neighbors and all who knew her loved her as a faithful, devoted child of God, who was always kind and cheerful.

I received the message of her death too late to be present at the funeral, and as there was no minister of our faith and order near, a Methodist minister, Mr. McCain, conducted the funeral service, after which the remains were laid by the side of her husband in the city cemetery to await the great morn of the glorious resurrection.

ASA HOWARD.

Mrs. A. Jane McKean, widow of David McKean, died May 4th, 1917, aged 81 years. She leaves two sons: David, of Hornell, N. Y., and Jesse, of Peckville, Pa., also nine grandchildren and one great-grandchild. She was with her son Jesse at the time of her death. She suffered a paralytic stroke, after which she never spoke, and lived but a short time. I think she, with her husband, was baptized by Elder Gilbert Beebe, uniting with the Old School Baptist Church in Middletown, N. Y., about fifty years ago. She was a firm believer in salvation by rich and reigning grace. "Aunt Jane," as she was commonly called, was a good christian woman, a kind and affectionate mother and a helpful neighbor; but she has gone to her heavenly home, sweet, sweet home. God bless and comfort all who mourn.

A Missionary Baptist conducted the funeral, after which the clay was returned to mother earth.

Written by request of brother David McKean and wife, sister McKean. D. M. VAIL.

Elder A. G. Hudspeth was born April 11th, 1833, in Coweta Co., Ga., died Nov. 27th, 1917, in Lexington, Okla., after an illness of eight years, having been blind five years, and was confined to his bed most of that time. He joined Harmony Primitive Baptist Church, in Harris County, Ga., and was baptized by his father, Elder Wm. Hudspeth. On his nineteenth birthday he was married to Fannie V. Dean Jan. 1st, 1857, by Elder Moses Gunn, in Coosa County, Ala. To that union were born eight children, five boys and three girls. Four children were present at his death. He was ordained to the full work of the ministry at Zion Rest Church, in Navarro County, in 1875, by Elders G. R. Hoge, J. H. Weeks, John Owens, Samuel Bryant and Deacon Gilbert. After

living there several years his health failed, and he moved to Mineral Wells, in Erath County, where he lived until 1889. He then moved to Oklahoma, where he traveled hundreds of miles on horseback, serving churches in different parts of the country, finally moving to Lexington, Okla., where he lived until he fell peacefully asleep Nov. 27th, leaving many sweet expressions of comfort. He bore his afflictions with great patience, longing to go and be at rest.

His funeral was conducted by Elder A. D. West, a Baptist preacher of the same faith living near Purcell.

Written by his wife, who is over eighty-one years old. F. V. HUDSPETH.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, Elder D. M. Vail will visit and preach to the brethren and friends as follows:

Schoharie, N. Y., Jan. 27th, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.; Middleburg, 28th, 1:30 p. m.; sister Rickard's, 29th, 1:30 p. m.; Albany, 30th, 1:30 p. m.; David Nethaway's, 31st, 1:30 p. m.

E. R. KINNEY.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Middletown and Andes Church has decided to hold its meetings during the winter months at Dickson Hall, Arena, N. Y., instead of at Union Grove.

The Second Roxbury Church will hold its meetings during the winter months at the Mead sisters home, Roxbury, N. Y.

To the above meetings all who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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PRICE REDUCED.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1918. NO. 4.

POETRY.

REST.

RESTING in the Rock of Ages
We may fear no earthly foe;
In him all our joys are centred,
From him all our blessings flow.

Resting from the world's temptations,
Resting from the strife within,
Resting from ourselves and Satan,
Resting from the blight of sin.

Resting when the darkness hovers
O'er the ever moving deep,
Resting when our hearts are aching,
And our eyes they cannot sleep.

Resting if we cannot answer
All the questions that arise;
Though cast down we're not forsaken—
Faith and hope still underlies.

Kept by such a wondrous power,
Can our hearts refuse to sing,
Glory, praise and glad thanksgiving
Unto Christ, our living King?

LIZZIE MACALLUM.

WALLACETOWN, Ontario.

"O THOU, who hast at thy command
The hearts of all men in thy hand,
Our wayward, erring hearts incline
To have no other will but thine.

Our wishes, our desires, control;
Mold every purpose of the soul;
O'er all may we victorious prove
That stands between us and thy love.

And while we to thy glory live,
May we to thee all glory give,
Until the final summons come
That calls thy willing servants home."

CORRESPONDENCE.

1 JOHN V. 1.

"WHOSOEVER believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God."

Traditionally this is universally accepted among all who are termed christian people, and both Jew and Gentile alike agree that there was such a man, and that he was a great man. The Jews, some of them at least, accept him as a good man and a prophet, but not the Christ, and that his claims to his messiahship were false. Many at the time of his personal ministry on earth thought him to have become unbalanced in mind by his incessant labors and great zeal; others took him for a bold usurper and impostor, a blasphemer, and worthy of death, for he made himself equal with God; he thought it not robbery to be called the Son of God. The general belief to-day concerning Jesus is purely traditional, and men have so warped the Scriptures, they with addition and subtraction have completely set Christ aside and made his work of none effect; therefore they do not believe that Jesus is the Christ; but he who does believe it is born of God, and except a man be born of God he does not believe it, except by tradition, and

tradition has ever been prominent in opposition of the truth. Man seems to want to take the Scriptures and make them plain by reason, which thing is utterly impossible; the answer of spiritual things cannot be reached by reasoning, for the finite cannot grasp infinity; but when one is born of God he is a new creature, and as we of our own selves had nothing to do with this our material existence and birth, neither has one who is born of God anything to do with the spiritual existence and birth. When one says that there is even so small a thing on the part of the creature to perform as to accept Christ or to believe on him and he shall be saved, his testimony is false, and he testifies not as an eye-witness, but as by tradition or hearsay. The true witness testifies that Christ has saved with an everlasting salvation all the Father gave him, which the Father also draws to him, and believes that he is the Christ because they are born of God. We are not born for believing, but believe because we are born of God. The true born child of God knows his own utter helplessness, and there is a vast difference in believing there was once on earth a man Jesus, who set a good example and made a way possible for all men to be saved if they choose to accept, and in believing that Jesus is the Christ, that he has finished his work, which is a complete work, with no part for the creature to perform, and that salvation is sure, and all that are his are securely sealed in the ark of the covenant of his grace and are all believing children, though the seed of unbelief is sown by that wicked one, which seed germinates and takes root in the flesh, bearing fruit which is distasteful to the child of God. This is only in the flesh, yet we have it to contend with, which also is evidence of new life and a new taste. The fruit of unbelief is bitter to the child of God. Many men knew the man Jesus, for they saw him, and on one occasion saw him feed four thousand men, besides women and children, on seven loaves and a few small fishes; but we only have the words of Peter, who acted as spokesman for the disciples: Thou art the Christ, the Son of God. When the multitude had gone, on one occasion Jesus asked the disciples, Will ye also go away? Whereupon Peter again replied, Lord, unto whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. Again he asked the disciples, Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am? Their opinion was divided; some said John the Baptist, some said Elias, some said Jeremias or one of the old prophets. So we see the popular opinion was divided. Even so it is to-day; some say one thing of him to-day, some another; some say he did all he could for sinners; some say he set a good example, and if we walk accordingly we shall be saved; some say he made a way of salvation possible; others say he is still begging and pleading with sinners to come. So the world has different opinions concerning him, yet they are together in one thing: in that they are all wrong. There was at that time a little band that believed and emphatically declared him to be "the Christ, the Son of the living God," and there is now a little band of faithful believers who believe and preach that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the living God." When Peter replied thus to Jesus he answered and said unto him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." There is no other way to receive this knowledge except the way which Peter received it, which was by divine revela-

tion. Flesh and blood could not reveal the Spirit; the flesh and blood of the man Jesus did not reveal to any one that he was the Christ, or is the Christ, for all men saw him alike with the natural eye. So all intelligent men can read the letter of the testimony alike; yet at that time the twelve, they that were chosen, were the only ones of all that vast multitude who had heard his teaching literally and had partaken of the blessing of his bounty, which he miraculously provided for their benefit before their very eyes; only the twelve believed on him. Therefore flesh and blood did not reveal him to any, for they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord. (Jer. xxxi. 34.) To believe that he is the Christ is by divine revelation, and "blessed art thou" that believes these things; not blessed because you believe it, but believe it because you are blessed. It is a divine blessing to have the truth revealed to one; the capability of believing is a blessing. One must have divine life to believe the divinity of Christ. Men preach a Christ, but deny his divinity and power, limiting him, making him inferior to man, who has, as they claim, the right and power of acceptance or rejection. If it be true, that man has the power to reject salvation, why has he not also the power to reject damnation and refuse to be damned? Such is the testimony of one who testifies by hearsay, being not an eye-witness to his majesty, and is a false witness, whose testimony shall not stand, but shall be thrown out. Our testimony does not limit him, but ascribes to him all power and right as the sovereign King and supreme Ruler of unlimited space to save or to condemn, to pull down or to build up, to kill and to make alive, to form light and create darkness, make peace or create evil; that he does all things after the counsel of his own will; that no one at any time hath been his counselor, and no one hath given to him first that it should be recompensed unto him again; that all things, times and events are in his hand; that each development is the fulfillment of a predetermined plan; that nothing is left to fate or happens by chance. Being a God of purpose, he has a purpose in all things, everything without enumeration, from the mote in the sunbeam to the creation of this world; that absolutely nothing can possibly miscarry or turn to the right or left of his plan, or stay or go on contrary to his decree; that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the virgin Mary, is the Christ, the Son of the living God; that he is come in the flesh; that as the virgin Mary conceived within her flesh that holy thing by the Holy Ghost, so also have we conceived in our flesh that Holy Spirit, even the Spirit of Christ; that our testimony agrees with the testimony of the prophets and the apostles; for the whole Scripture and our preaching is the testimony of Christ, for it is his Spirit that testifies both in them and us. Then it is by his Spirit that we believe and testify that he is the Christ, that he is come in the flesh; then we are born of God and are children of one Father, and Christ is our Elder Brother. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."—1 John iii. 1, 2. The testimony of true witnesses always agrees. When

men begin to tell something as they have heard it they invariably get tangled, and an incident told and retold soon becomes so exaggerated or so dissected, and through ignorance, eliminating the most important details, that there is scarcely any resemblance to the original happening. It seems impossible for it to be otherwise, but John wrote in this epistle: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life." John is a faithful witness, his testimony is true, and so long as our testimony agrees with his ours is true also. The religion of the Lord Jesus is not a theory based on the capability of the reasoning faculties of man, but is a living reality; for it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and we live it and learn it by experience, being made witnesses with those holy men of old who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, also with the apostles, who were with Jesus, which were not more highly favored than we; for though they were with the man Jesus, yet flesh and blood did not reveal him to them, but the Father which is in heaven. He also has revealed the same to us, and we are blessed and believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, that he is the only Savior of sinners and our Savior, and we know if saved at all it is by grace, through faith, and that faith not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. This is the plan by which all are saved that are saved, and it is not that we are going to be or hope to be saved by that plan, but we are already saved, and it is by that plan the work of redemption is finished, the price has been paid, and we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, it being by his righteous obedience that we are made righteous. We look in our flesh for righteousness, but it is not there, it is in Jesus. When we look in the flesh we only see sin and corruption, but in Jesus is righteousness and redemption. "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true: and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." And we know these things together with John. Amen. May the Lord shine upon us and light our way, that we may not stumble, but be faithful witnesses of him, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Your unworthy brother,

F. SELBY FISHER.

SALISBURY, Md.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan. 1, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—Another year has passed and we start upon a new one, and as it is time for me to renew my subscription to the SIGNS I will in connection therewith endeavor to write a little for publication, if it should meet with your approval. I am extremely sorry that I have not control of language to express my thoughts, but I suppose I should be content with what the dear Lord has seen fit to give me, and I hope he will guide my thoughts in this undertaking as will redound to his glory. I know full well that if I am left to my own carnal mind it will not be worthy of space in your valuable periodical, and you will have no use for it. Many times while reading the many good articles in the SIGNS I come across expressions that seem to express my thoughts much better than I am able to do, and I almost envy the gift of the writers. I know this is not the proper thing to do, nevertheless I

can hardly refrain from it. I will have to write such as is given me as I pass along, hoping to be led by the Holy Spirit. I feel so unworthy that I dread to undertake so sacred a task as this appears to be. A dear friend said she was so much comforted by what I had written some time ago that it makes me feel that if a single soul on earth should receive a crumb of comfort from my pen I would be doing an injustice by withholding any of these messages. I feel a little encouraged even if I accomplish but little, yet I feel very small, as if I am nothing, yea, less than nothing. We know this is an impossibility as viewed from a carnal standpoint, but viewing it in a spiritual manner it appears to express our feelings thoroughly. I feel as if I were one all alone in this cold world, there is no one like me, so vile and sinful a wretch; there is no place for me in the church or out of it; I am just staying here apparently in everybody's way, no one to sympathize with me in my loneliness, no one to whom I can go and tell of my joys and sorrows. In looking back over my past life, it appears to be full of failures and mistakes. I see so little good that I have accomplished that I feel like giving up in despair; then there springs up that little hope, which causes me to plod on through life, which with me seems but a few more years at most. The poet expresses my feelings very aptly:

"A few more days on earth to spend,
And all my toils and cares shall end,
And I shall see my God and friend,
And praise his name on high:
No more to sigh or shed a tear,
No more to suffer pain or fear,
But God, and Christ, and heaven appear
Unto the raptured eye."

My mind is led to the building of Solomon's temple, in which work not the sound of a hammer or axe was heard, every stone and piece of timber being dressed, squared and numbered in the quarry and forest to such perfection that every piece fitted in the place designated for it. Let us look back into the quarry and forest; there is where the great work was performed. Are we not at the present time there? Do we not realize each day that work is being performed with us and in us? Do we not find that each day a huge portion is being knocked off? Many times it causes great humiliation, we not being able to realize the necessity of it at the time; but later on we see it was for our own good and benefit. The Lord makes no mistakes, he is always right; he dresses to the line. We are (to my mind) those stones that are being dressed in the quarry, and that timber in the forest. Sometimes an ugly knot protrudes, and it is necessary to chop it off, that it may fit in the place designed for it. We do not see those ugly knots many times, and we become peevish at our lot, and wander out of that strait and narrow path where we should be traveling; but we are brought back and beaten with many stripes, not a single one too many, and if we received according to our deserts they would be double; yea, more. But our God is a gracious God; he is very lenient with us, and bestows upon us daily many rich blessings, yet we are so very careless and negligent that we do not praise or thank him as we should. Many times I feel ashamed of myself on account of my negligence and sinfulness; I mourn because I do not mourn. This may appear to be a strange expression, yet I feel it to be true. My dear friends, do any of you have such feelings as I am trying to describe? If you have, you may be able to sympathize with me a little, which, if you do, will be

consolation to poor me. I crave your prayers and sympathies, and I must still cling to that hope, which at times becomes very small. I should say rather, I hope it will cling to me, as I am not able to hold it, but it holds me in such measure as the God of heaven and earth sees fit. I thank him that he never allows it to leave me entirely; if he did, of all creatures I should be the most miserable. O what a gracious Redeemer we have, he never leaves us nor forsakes us; his power and knowledge are beyond our comprehension. He spake worlds and planets into existence. Some of our great philosophers tell us that the planets were probably millions of years in forming. We poor, finite creatures cannot understand how he could form them at all, consequently I am made to believe that (as nothing is impossible with him) he spake them into existence instantly. He did the work according to his own will and purpose, and he has a purpose in all his acts. He consults no one, not even the angels in heaven, much less such poor, insignificant worms of the dust as we. Some professors tell us there are about ninety-three millions of planets of the sixteenth magnitude, and thousands of millions of lesser size. I will not dispute their word, but there is not a single one more or less than God intended there should be, and each has its place and course to travel in the universe, and is placed there for a purpose; and furthermore, it is not within our province to question why he did it; we can only look with wonder and amazement and say, Amen—so let it be, believing it to be perfect, as all of God's works are perfect; they cannot be otherwise; if they could he would not be the God of the entire universe. We cannot extol him too high. He controls everything and every event; he is controlling my thoughts at this moment (I hope). I also hope that what I have written may find lodgment in some poor, hungry soul's heart who has similar feelings, who has been down-hearted like myself many times, full of doubts and fears, traveling with much uncertainty, yet hoping.

But prudence demands that I draw this article to a close. I have written this rather hastily, and under peculiar circumstances. Give all honor, praise and glory to the only true and living God; I claim none, as none is due me; God deserves it all, yea, more than all.

Your unworthy friend,

C. S. FETTER.

WHEELING, W. Va.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—This communication of sister McKinney's came as a joyful surprise to me. She had written a pitiful little letter of two pages two weeks before, telling me of her inability to write. She said that when she attempted to write it was as if her mind was paralyzed. I felt much sympathy for her, as I am so often in the same case. This last letter came with power and sweet assurance to me; I felt greatly in need of the very things the blessed Master had revealed to her. How I felt to rejoice in her deliverance. She has comforted me many times with the comfort wherewith she has been comforted. When she or any other of the brethren or sisters are shut up my heart aches for them. As our comfort is not of this world, we are then desolate indeed; and the most wonderful thing is, that we are kept from turning to the world for solace. Our Savior said, As I am not of the world, so ye are not of the world. Again, Fear not, for I have overcome the world. If he is in us we can

never willingly go back to the weak and beggarly elements wherein we were once held.

I would greet all the household of faith. There are times that you all are much more precious in my heart than words can express.

Unworthily,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

OTTAWA, Kans., Nov. 21, 1917.

DEAR SISTER:—Your precious letter was received, and afforded the same sweet comfort your letters always do. It is wonderful to me when I think how comforting and soothing your letters have been to me all these years; so patient and sympathetic with all my complainings, never chiding, but showing me always that you have traveled the same path and have not forgotten the lessons learned by the way. This is what we are told to do: comfort one another with the same comfort wherewith we have been comforted of God, and surely you have comforted me many times, telling me my inmost thoughts; in other words, all things that ever I did. May I not hope this is Christ in you? I feel that it is, and I love you for Jesus' sake. This morning I was feeling very weak, helpless and discouraged; I felt so forcibly my inability to do the least thing to better my condition, either temporally or spiritually, when these words came: He shall not fail or be discouraged till he brings forth judgment unto victory. It stayed in my mind so I got my Bible and found the forty-second chapter of Isaiah, also the twelfth chapter of Matthew, eighteenth to twenty-first verses. I cannot tell you the wonderful things I saw there, but I am fully persuaded you know all about it. The Lord has truly made waste my mountains and hills, and dried up my herbs, made my rivers islands, and dried up all my pools. They shall be greatly ashamed that trust in graven images, that say to the molten images, Ye are our gods. But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and that formed thee, O Israel, fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior. Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen, that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he. Before me there was no God found, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord, and beside me there is no Savior. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when there was no strange god among you. Therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God. Dear sister, we must be cut off from our own works before we can be a true witness for Jesus. (Notice the "therefore.") Last Sunday I opened the Bible to where Ananias and his wife kept back part of the purchase price. It seemed to be revealed to me at that moment that this is our condition when we try to save ourselves out of Christ. In sickness, in health, in poverty or wealth, we are willing to lay only part of the price at his dear feet. We are willing to let him save us in eternity, but in time we want to save ourselves. We think surely there is something we must do to save ourselves from wrath to come. The poor jailer was in a helpless, distressed condition, when the Lord suddenly sent an earthquake, which shook the foundations of the prison, and immediately all the doors were opened and every one's bands were loosed. He awoke out of his sleep, and seeing what was done would have killed himself had not Paul cried with a

loud voice, Do yourself no harm, for we are all here. Then he tremblingly fell down before Paul and Silas. Sirs, what must I do to be saved? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. Precious sister, it does seem to me that too many of us are asleep to-day; we depend too much on the creature; we have forgotten that Christ's blood cleanseth from all sin, that he finished the work his Father gave him to do. The promise is unto all that come unto God by him; not by works of righteousness which we have done. It seems to me that to look for any good in ourselves is denying Jesus and counting his blood an unholy thing, in that it has not been able to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. I would love to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith I am called, if I am a child, but I daily find another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, bringing me into captivity. We are surely not holier than Paul, and he said, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin. Whether I am a child or not, I have the witness within that this is true. Paul declares all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; so, being freely justified by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. What a wonderful promise is here made: that he might be just and yet justify the ungodly. O why do we who profess to believe in Jesus still cling to some works for salvation? God could not be just and save us for any righteous act in ourselves. Paul says we have proved, both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; there is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. He sends the rain on the just and the unjust. Jesus told the Jews: Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive all honor, power and glory. Let us give him all the praise, who has redeemed us from the power of the law, that it should not have dominion over us. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. How hard I have worked, trying to do good. I felt there was something I must do after I had believed; but the good I would I could not do, and the evil I would not do I did. But now I hope I see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. He is our merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, and has made reconciliation for the sins of his people. Being tempted, he is able to

succor them that are tempted. If he is our merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, does not that take in everything? Does he not say that all things are his, and for his pleasure they are and were created? He says if he were hungry he would not tell us, for the world is his, and the fullness thereof. Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High; and this will I do, God being my helper. In the next verse I find a wonderful promise. And call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. With Mrs. Chapman I can say, I have fled to him affrighted at the awful power of sin; also I have felt my bosom swell with fear at the scorn of Jesus' name.

Now, dear sister, I have written you the things I have been comforted in, and I can only hope they may be some comfort to you. Write as often as you can.

Ever your loving sister,

ANNA McKINNEY.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Jan. 8, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—For some time I have felt that the weather we are having and my inward experiences are much alike. We had a cold December for this section, and on the 29th we received our last communication from the outside world and sent our last messages up until now. That night we were visited by a blizzard of wind and snow, which continued all day Sunday, and on January 1st the temperature was eight degrees above zero, snow about eight inches deep, and the waters of the sound a sheet of ice three miles wide and thirty miles long. Our transportation was all cut off, both going and coming. The cold continued until the 4th, when it registered seven degrees above, and the ice did not begin to melt until yesterday. It was of such thickness that two of the men from the coast-guard station walked across it, three miles, and they with one other walked back. I have thought many times how helpless poor, boastful man is. Man cannot have any control of these natural things. The wind bloweth where it listeth; we cannot tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth. God commands it, and it readily obeys his voice. He says, Awake, O north wind, and it comes at his word and brings his cold. Boastful man claims that God cannot do only as man will submit to him; that man has the power to submit to or refuse the blessings of God. In the hearts of his people the Lord sends the north wind, and it brings the Lord's cold, the treasures of the ice and the hail and the snow. They all come down from the heavens, and return not again. It is the word of God reproving or approving us, and showing that we are nothing and that we can do nothing. Our hearts are full of iniquity, and of the flesh, and leading away from God and godliness. Were it not for the guiding Spirit of the Lord we would never come out of this terribly frozen state nor know the love of God. All the time we hunger for the odor of the sweet spices; we listen for that word which says, Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee. We little realize that the cold north wind, the freezes, the ice, the hail and the snow are a part of God's way of cultivating his garden, but we are thus led to experience this. He that is born of God hath the witness in himself. All the Lord's teachings concerning him are in him, in his own experience. The hard freezing of the stony heart causes a little shelling off and gives a little fallowed soil. It looks and is very poor until fertilized by God's divine

grace. When he speaks and says, Come, thou south wind, there is a melting of the ice and the snow and a starting of the little streams. The water running over the little stones makes a noise as if it were singing merrily to him who gave the command. The heart is warmed up, and the poor but rejoicing soul experiences that the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land. The communications which before were all shut in and out are now open in every avenue. A sweet communication is heard from an unseen one saying, "Peace, be still." We look to see who it is that gave this command, and see One walking on the face of our troubled waters; yes, he has come into the boat with us. We see that every element of our troubled soul is in his hands and at his command, and we see and feel them obey him immediately. We look, there is no more ice, just the living waters, and we are immediately on the other shore, and our Deliverer with us. Then we experience that we are in the garden of the Lord; and are we not plants there? Who else ever got there but the plants? Trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord. "My Father is the Husbandman," said our blessed Jesus. Has he not planted? does he not water? does he not cultivate? are not all the trees his, and the fruits also? Then he knows how and when to prune, to plow and to gather. He does not need for us to tell him anything. It is he who commands his cold and his heat, his winter and his summer, his seedtime and his harvest. If there is one barren tree he knows when to pluck it up. Satan cannot hide in the garden of the Lord, for the eyes of the Lord are in every part. As much darkness as we experience, there is none with him. The darkness and the light are both alike to him. We see only through a glass darkly, but his seeing is the very sunshine of his righteousness searching every part, even the most secret parts of the heart. He gives us to see it as deceitful and desperately wicked, but it is his to cleanse it and make it meet for the Master's use. In all my darkness, barrenness of soul, frozen condition, I have a little hope that he is my Sun and Shield, and that he will make me to walk uprightly and withhold no good thing from me.

Your brother, I hope, in the truth,

L. H. HARDY.

HAMMOND, W. Va., Dec. 31, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I thought of writing to you and to the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES after reading your article, "Close of volume eighty-five." I want to say that the SIGNS has contended for salvation by grace, and grace alone, of the God of Jacob. As you say, there have been some differences of view. There is none perfect, and if not perfect we need not expect our writings to be perfect. These are trying times for us all, as well as for the dear old SIGNS. In the first place, my mind was called to God's children among the men of England and the warring nations, and the thought came to me that I wanted them to know that I wish them well, and that I hope I love them for the truth's sake, and hope that we are brethren, and that we desire one another's peace and welfare, and that we have good, kind feelings toward them. God's children are taught by the Spirit to love one another, and they are also taught to do unto others as they would have others do unto them. We learn from the Scriptures that there shall be wars and rumors of wars, and that the wicked shall do wickedly, and that none

of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand. (Daniel xii. 10.) We read in Acts xvii. 26, that God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation. Hence we cannot say, Why dwell you here or there? Because if our bounds and habitation are set for us to dwell on the face of all the earth, who can hinder the purposes of God? and if the wicked shall do wickedly, who shall cause them to refrain from it? So by these Scriptures we plainly see that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy; for he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Then, if there shall be wars, who can prevent them from coming to pass? No one can, and by coming does it not prove to us that the Scriptures are true and sin is of the devil, and God is the author of peace? God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. Yes, the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of them shall understand. So they just go on in the way that seems right unto them, and that way leads unto death, and into death do they go. But there is a class that does understand, and that class is the wise, but not the worldly wise—not the wisdom of the kings of the earth; but the wise receive their wisdom through the revelation of the eternal God, and their wisdom is spiritual; not of the earth, but from heaven; they understand, because they are all taught of the Lord. Then it is useless for you or me to try to make them understand or teach them to know the Lord, or teach them to stop wars and troubles of the nations when it is in the wicked to do wickedly. There is a time and a purpose for all things; a time of war and a time of peace; a time to all things, and who can hinder them from taking place? For that which is determined shall be done, and who can hinder it? The eternal God is the only King of kings and Lord of lords, and he holds the keys of life and of death, and none can deliver out of his hand. I have only one son, and he is liable to be drafted at any time, and I love him and would protect him from misery and pain, and have seen much trouble over him being called away, but that may all be natural; but who knows this except the eternal God, who knows all things? What can I do but wait and see what God will do for him and for me and all his believing children? Abraham was grieved over his son, and are we better than he? O no, no. Then if there is a time of war, is it not true and verily true to-day, and is there not cause for the children of men dwelling in the bounds and places of their habitation which were before appointed them on the face of all the earth? So where the soldiers' places are for them to dwell, who can stop them before they land at their dwelling-places, and who can send them beyond their bounds and habitations? I am not able, you are not, so let us trust in the eternal God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will. I remember another Scripture: There is a time to die. Now let us reason; if there is a time of war, and a time of peace, who can make peace in the time of war? Because there is a time for all things, when the time comes for war to cease, it will cease. Then when war ceases, it will be a time of peace, and peace will last in its season, and when its season ceases peace ceases. Even so with life and death, there is a time and season, and when the time of life ceases,

then the time to die is at hand, and die we will; but we cannot die while we have life, and there is a season and place for this life, and it must have its season and its place; even so death must have its season and place, and if that season and place appointed beforehand is on the water, or in the trenches, there is nothing to prevent its coming to pass, and who can hinder us from being there where our bounds and habitations were set for us to dwell? We cannot pass over them. Are we not creatures of time? Are we not the clay? Is not God the potter? And what power has the lump of clay? Is it not in the potter's hand? He uses it as he pleases. Is not the clay without power or will against the purpose and arrangements of God, or sovereign Ruler, both in the heaven above and on the earth beneath? Dear readers, there might arise in our minds the question, Why then do we worry over our sons? Well, the flesh is weak, and in the flesh there dwells no good thing, and this causes a warfare. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak, and we in the flesh cannot please God. These two, the flesh and the Spirit, are at warfare one against the other, so that we cannot do the things we would. O how good it is to be reconciled to the will of God, but we are only reconciled to God through Christ Jesus our Lord. Dear brethren, you who are in the war, or whose sons are, be of good cheer as much as lieth within you, and may God give you grace to bear it all. Remember the patience of Job, remember the humility of Jesus Christ our Lord, remember the sufferings of God's children. Lest you might come to the conclusion that I am above trouble and sorrow, I will say to you all that I am a man of sorrows; I have many sorrows, many troubles, but I hope that the Lord is my Shepherd and that I have sufferings and sorrows for Jesus' sake.

Dear children of our God, I hope that I have a tender feeling toward you at this present time. Farewell.

JAMES W. LINN.

FAYETTEVILLE, Ga., Dec. 13, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The Lord willing, I will write you again, but do not know what to write. First, I want to correct a mistake in my letter in December 1st number of the SIGNS. On page 538, first column, twenty-ninth line, the words, "brother Rees," should be "Rees Prather." I enjoy the good letters in the SIGNS, but the last one brought me unexpected sorrow. When I read of brother W. C. Pennington's death I felt sorrow as I had never felt before for one I had never seen. We were strangers in the flesh, but I felt that I only needed to see him to be acquainted, for we had corresponded, and I had read his letters in the SIGNS. My sympathy is with his loved ones, and as I think of their sorrow I cannot restrain the tears. I feel that he was a good son and brother, and wish I could be as good as I think he was. May God abundantly bless the bereaved ones, and may they realize that what he does is right and for his glory and for good, for all things work together for good to them who love the Lord. The dealings of the Lord with his people are mysterious, wonderful and beautiful when we can see the good in them. Mysterious to the carnal mind, but not so when revealed by the blessed Spirit to our spiritual mind, but wonderful, amazing, that the great God of everything should be so kind and loving as to bless vile sinners with an inheritance equal to his only begotten Son, for we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. Then

as Christ is to live forever in eternal glory with the Father, so shall his people, redeemed from all iniquity. The world is running wild for riches and honor, but the grandest riches and honor bestowed on humanity are hope and faith in Jesus, and just as sure as the anchor (hope) is there, the person will one sweet day rest there. The anchor chain sometimes breaks and lets ships stray, but the spiritual anchor will never give way until the ship, or trusting, hoping sinner, is safely landed on that blissful, eternal shore; then will be no more tossing on seas of sorrow, poverty, sickness and pain. Sometimes we hear people say their hope is so little they are almost ready to give it up or throw it away, but why do they not do so? Just at that moment if they were asked what they would take for their little hope they could not price it. Although it may seem ever so small, it is large and glittering compared with the riches and honors of all the world, which fade away. I do not claim to know much, am ignorant, it seems to me, but in thinking of our hope being so little, I think we are mistaken about hope being little. It seems to me that it is faith that is now weak, instead of hope. The farther we are from God, the more we desire to see his smiling face, but when we see him, or a token of his love, we are not hoping so much, but are realizing that for which we so earnestly hoped. When we lose sight of these glories faith gets weak and hope grows stronger. When John was with Christ he did not need hope, but when he was cast into prison, shut up in darkness where he could not see Christ, then he needed hope, but faith was weak, and he sent to Christ to know if he were the Christ, or must he look for another.

Bad crops and misfortune have left me in a poor condition financially, but God is the same, and it is according to his mercy that I am enjoying the blessings I now enjoy. I know not how soon I may have to suffer the miseries of poverty, cold, hunger, sickness or warfare, but I hope I will be able to trust him, though he slay me. Pray for me.

Unworthily,

GEORGE W. JACKSON.

SALISBURY, Md., Jan. 16, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—As it is time to renew my subscription, I feel I would like to write a few lines and try to tell you what a comfort the SIGNS has been to me, but do not feel that I can express my feelings as I would like to. I can hardly wait for the paper; the communications are all so good I enjoy reading them. The editorials, too, are wonderful to me. I have read and reread Elder Ker's New Year's Greeting. I cannot tell just how I feel about it, but the Lord has greatly blessed him with understanding in sacred things, and it is wonderful to me and there is great comfort in it. As he said, our country has never known such distressing times, and I feel we need much help to guide us in such trying times. I felt when my son enlisted that it was more than I could bear, but the dear Lord has given me strength as I have needed it, and I have tried to pray that he may be spared to return to me. He wrote me a beautiful letter just before he enlisted, and said he was very sorry he did not get the comfort from religion that I did, but he believed with a belief that had become almost second nature that predestination is as certain and sure as final judgment, hence if he was to come to death by a bullet, it would be no less certain and true, if he never got within several thousand miles of the firing lines. I know

that is true, and it was a real comfort to me to know that he had been shown that; but as dear brother Ker said, it requires more faith than I have to be still under such trying conditions. Elder Ker's writings are much comfort to me, and I always feel sad when I do not find the letter "K," as I always look in the back of the paper; he is very dear to me. I feel the Lord has blessed me far more than I deserve in having the privilege of hearing so many of our ministers. I hope I feel thankful to the Giver of all good gifts. It is needless to try to tell how much comfort I have had from our dear aged brother, Elder Durand. I have visited at his home within a short time, and it is wonderful to me how his mind is exercised in his declining years. Elder Francis preaches here once a month. My membership is not in Salisbury, but it is very dear to me, and so are both Elders Durand and Francis. My pastor is Elder Mellott, and I hope I do feel thankful to God for such a gift. I felt when Elder Poulson was taken away that his place could never be filled, but what seems impossible with us is not so with God; he knows what we need before we ask and supplies all our needs, if we cannot see at the time. I often want things made plain, but know God is his own interpreter, and he will make it plain.

I have wandered far away from what I thought I would write; I only thought I would try to tell you how much I enjoy reading the SIGNS and how much comfort it is. I hardly see how any Baptist can get along without the paper. I hope the dear Lord will ever be near us and keep us meek and lowly followers of Jesus and bless our dear ministers. Pardon me for taking this privilege.

In christian love,

(MRS.) CHAS. GORDY.

BALTIMORE, Md., Dec. 27, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—At the close of the year 1917 I find myself desiring to add my mite to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, although some months back I thought I would not attempt to write any more, but have been requested by quite a few to keep on writing for publication, as they have enjoyed my writing in general. I do not know why, for my letters are too much like the writer, very imperfect; but it is said a child shall lead them, and O what a little child I am, if I have any relationship at all with God's dear people. I do not know, but this I do know: the things I once loved I now hate, and the things I once hated I now love, yes, with my whole heart, and one of these things is God's predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass. It matters not if it looks good to us or not, it is in the purpose of God and for the purifying of his people, who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and they were his by choice of the Father, consequently union existed. The angel said to Joseph, His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins, showing plainly that God had a people long before Jesus came to save the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Now, if the Lord will direct my thoughts I will try to speak of those lost sheep. Some of them were deaf, and some dumb, but when Jesus had healed them they could hear and speak and sing praises to him who had made them whole, and yet their relation to Jesus Christ was the same. Then there was the man who had lain at the pool of Bethesda for thirty and eight years, was a child of Abraham, and men could tell him to step into the pool when the water was troubled and he would be made whole, but when Jesus said, Arise, take up thy bed and walk, he

did so. The woman that Satan had bound eighteen years, being a daughter of Abraham, Jesus straightway healed her; and the blind man that had his eyes opened with an anointment of clay. Jesus said it was neither his sins nor those of his parents that he was born blind, but that the works of God might be manifest. I understand the Scriptures to teach that all the people Jesus healed belonged to God, and were spoken of as the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Jesus nowhere taught that he came to make sheep, or to make people, but he said to the Father, Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and I will raise them up at the last day. Now, brethren, if I can claim relationship with you, these are some of the things which drew me to the Old School Baptist Church, and until a few years ago I did not know there were any Old Baptists that did not believe in God's predestination of all things, and also believe in the vital unity of Christ and his people. It has made my heart bleed to hear some remarks from some of the Baptists. I heard one preacher say that all who heard the word preached with any degree of comfort had no right to stay out of the church, but should be baptized and receive the blessing therefor. I heard a brother, in speaking about some who manifested a deep interest in spiritual things, say that he had no doubt in his mind but that the Lord wanted them to be baptized; as though the Lord did not build his church and has the members thereof fitly framed together, and does these things without the sound of hammer or any such tool.

If this is worth publishing, all right; if not, throw it into the wastebasket. I have not written this for controversy, but it appears there is something wrong about these things, for they are the foundation of my hope; take them away and I have no place to stand.

With love and best wishes to all the household of faith, your weak brother, I hope, L. C. GODWIN.

DAYTON, Ohio, Oct. 18, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—After reading your most precious editorial, written by request of sister Mary E. Lake, of Hurricane, W. Va., in October 15th number, I felt I must write you and congratulate you on so ably explaining and so clearly showing the true meaning of the Scripture found in Revelation iii. 20. As you say, dear brother, few Scriptures have been more misapplied than the third chapter of Revelation. O how those who believe that sinners' salvation depends upon their own efforts do so apply this Scripture as to mean that God is knocking at the door of the poor sinner's heart, and if the sinner will open his heart and allow God to come in he will be saved. What poor deluded people they are to ever entertain such an idea. I realize, dear brother, that it is only through the loving-kindness and tender mercy of the all-wise God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth and all the hosts thereof. And God saw all that he made, that it was very good. I am God and change not. James said, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever. God predetermined to destroy man off the face of the earth, for he told Noah he was going to do so long before he did. Does not this sound like God is all-wise, a sovereign ruler? Christ says, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring." God further says, I will dwell in them, and I will be their God and they shall be my people. Sweet

and comforting words to God's chosen ones. How dear the glorious covenant of grace is to all who feel their unrighteousness and their need of mercy. How secure and safe, since God has not in all his covenant trusted to frail humanity as much as a breath of speech or the lifting of a hand. As a counterpart to the new covenant Paul as the wise masterbuilder set up what we may call "steps unto heaven," that, like the ladder in Jacob's dream, reaches from the depths of sin to the heights of glory; an ascending ladder of God's love and mercy, unspotted by the touch of man. We read that whom God foreknew he also did predestinate, and whom he predestinated them he also called, and whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified. Is it any wonder, dear brother Lefferts, that it drew from Paul the glad acclaim, "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" No, no, a thousand times no. Paul was persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. How sweet and precious to be basking in the sunshine of God's presence. As day and night succeed each other all the way along life's journey, even in the nighttime he gives us songs. The noise of strife, confusion and conflict can be so sweetly hushed that ere we are aware all the powers of the soul are engaged in songs of heartgladness. What a soul-cheering thought to me, that the inhabitants of that glorious land will no more say, I am sick. Neither can they die any more. Sickness and sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more. In the Word of inspiration our little span of time is spoken of as a journey, and our brief stay upon earth as a pilgrimage, and we are assured that he will be our God and guide even unto death. This indeed tells us plainly that we are as pilgrims, and that a journey lies before us through a land in which we are but strangers. So time bears us steadily onward, although in our experience we often seem returning and coming back instead of going forward, yet we are surely circling in the eddies of the great stream of time which is surely leading us forward to the ocean of eternity.

Well, I have written lengthily, so will close after saying, please bear with me, dear brother, in all my shortcomings, and I ask an interest in your prayers, as the ardent request of a poor sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all.

"Thither my weak and weary steps are tending,
Savior and Lord, with thy frail child abide;
Guide me toward home, where all my wanderings ending,
I shall see thee and be satisfied."

LIDA KELLER.

UPLAND, Cal., Dec. 7, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I am renewing my subscription for our dear old family paper, the SIGNS, I have a desire to pen a few lines to you by way of encouraging our dear brethren in what must be very arduous duties, the conduct of a paper of such a high standard as the SIGNS. I just received December 1st number by to-day's mail; have read it all through, and enjoyed the many good letters, and especially brother Lefferts' editorial, "Samson's Riddle," which I

have just read over twice. Truly the readers of the SIGNS are highly favored of the dear Lord in having such a precious medium of correspondence. We trust you may both be long spared to the cause which you so ably defend. We are glad so many of the readers of the SIGNS have at different times spoken words of commendation of your labors, and we have felt it is the duty of every lover of the truth to hold up the hands of our brethren in this work in every way possible. From a sense of our own inability we have been too negligent in this matter. Many times we would love to talk to our dear brethren, both editors and readers, many of whom we have met face to face and whom we love in the truth; but we feel so incapable we seldom make the attempt. However, sometimes we are favored through the infinite mercy of the dear Lord to hold sweet communion and fellowship in the spirit with our dear brethren who are scattered over this vast continent, many of whom we have never met, but have read their good letters in the SIGNS, and because they speak the same precious truth we love them for Jesus' sake.

Dear brethren, this is more than I first thought of writing. Wishing you both a happy and prosperous new year, and trusting that we may all be kept steadfast in the faith, your brother in hope,

G. A. DUNDAS.

KENOVA, W. Va., Jan. 4, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—While confined at home this cold day I picked up the New Testament, and my eyes fell on the text: "If ye love me, keep my commandments."—John xiv. 15. It seems to me that when I feel so lifeless and void of earthly consolation I can just open the Testament and find there the very theme touched that my heart yearns for. The phrase following, seventeenth verse, "Whom the world cannot receive," drove this subject more forcibly into my mind. I have heard those who advocate conditional salvation for the world use this text as though the subjunctive part was with the Almighty, and the indicative part with the man, but to my mind it is the absolute reverse: the Spirit and love of God precede the man's obedience to his commandments. It seems to me that the world's version of this is, that puny man can work out for himself a share in heaven. No wonder then that the Scripture says that he would come and knock at a closed door. If I but knew that the Lord Jesus had prayed for me, then I could rest assured that I am not of the world, for you remember that he said he prayed not for the world, and if I only knew that I had one speck of the love of God in me, it seems to me I could rest assured of his glory, but I must admit that I have many reasons every day of my life to doubt that such is the case. Brethren, my hope is based on an experimental awakening to sin and depravity, and my inability to recover myself from this awful condition, no matter how earnestly I desire it. Then I am brought to fear, and wonder, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" with only a hope of the love of God that leadeth to repentance. I would be glad to have correspondence with those who know anything about such an experience, for I seldom ever meet with any one here who touches my case. You may publish this if you deem it worthy of space.

Yours with only a hope,

J. A. PRESTON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1918.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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ISAIAH XL. 11.

"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."

This chapter of Isaiah is looking beyond the time of the Babylonian captivity to the restoration, to the time when Israel shall again realize the tender care of their God for them. Also, secondarily, this portion of Isaiah looks not only beyond the Babylonian captivity, but beyond that captivity which the whole people of God were under to the law of sin and death, which captivity was destroyed in the resurrection of Christ from the dead. The resurrection of Christ set the church free from captivity to the reigning power of sin and from its penalty, death. Looking beyond this great captivity of the whole church, our text has to do with the gospel life of the church of Jesus as it is now in this present dispensation. The Lord here likens himself to a shepherd and his people to sheep. This is a frequent figure found throughout the Scriptures, and is a favorite illustration employed by the Spirit of inspiration to set forth the attitude of Christ toward his people. It is not necessary for us to go much into an explanation of this figure of the shepherd and his sheep, for it is familiar to all our readers and a subject that has been frequently written upon through the columns of the SIGNS. "He shall gather the lambs with his arm," signifies that his almighty power and omnipotent strength shall gather the little, tender ones of the flock. All must be lambs before they can be sheep. There is an infancy in grace as well as in nature; that is, a time when one does not see as clearly and understand the Scriptures and the doctrine as clearly as when one becomes older in grace and in experience. There is surely such a thing as growing in grace and in knowledge of the truth. When one has not attained to this growth in grace to the extent that older ones have, one is in the "lamb" state. Our text does not mean to imply that the lambs are the only ones of the flock that need the sheltering arm of omnipotence, nor does it convey the idea that the older ones, the sheep, can get along without this same care and this same almighty power; but the thought is that the lambs need not the care of the older sheep to make them bcome, in turn, sheep. The watchcare and tenderness of the shepherd is what all the sheep and all the lambs need; none can dispense with it. Unless the lambs are properly cared for by the shepherd there will be no sheep. The strong arm of Jesus, the fullness of God's power embodied in him, is the salvation of every one of the lambs. The lamb aptly represents the helplessness of the child of God. Nothing but the omnipotence of God is sufficient to protect and shelter the helpless lambs in grace. "Carry them in his bosom," means that they rest in his love. The new-born child of grace is brought from under the law into the sweet liberty and comfort of the gospel of Jesus.

Here he finds the true sabbath and rests in the perfect love of God. This is comprehended in the expression: "Carry them in his bosom." "Shall gently lead those that are with young," applies to the child of God who has been quickened by the Spirit but has not yet been brought to the birth; that is, has not been brought to the end of the law and delivered out into the liberty of the gospel. These have not yet brought forth Christ, Christ has not yet been manifested out of them. God's good work has begun in them by the operation of his Holy Spirit, but it has not yet been brought to a manifested end in the day of Jesus Christ. These are "with young," and need to be handled gently. The Lord's dealings with these quickened sinners whose consciences have been made very tender and keenly conscious of every defect in themselves, are very tender dealings indeed. He is full of compassionate tenderness toward them, and he will lead them gently on until Christ be fully formed in them the hope of glory, until they are brought to the end of the law and give birth to full faith and confidence in Jesus as their one and only Savior. L.

ATTENTION!

Of late we have been receiving more complaints than usual from subscribers missing one or more numbers of the Signs, and we wish them to know that it is through no fault of ours, as we are very particular to have each paper securely wrapped and plainly addressed before it leaves this office. We ask our subscribers to please not censure us, but if they do not receive their paper to notify us, and we will gladly mail them another copy free of charge.

ISAIAH XXVI. 17.

"Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O Lord."

This presents the attitude of the church under the law looking forward by faith unto and eagerly hoping for the coming of the day of the Lord, which would bring salvation to Israel. All the patriarchs and prophets and all the holy ones of the old covenant period were like a woman travailing in pain, in birth to be delivered, because they were all longing for and earnestly desiring the coming of the Messiah, in whom the spiritual ones truly hoped for salvation from sin and from death. The people of God from ancient times have been as one body hungering and thirsting for the coming of Jesus. Therefore the church under the law was a woman great with child. This child was Jesus, and was the man-child brought forth by the woman. In all the types of the old testament, in all the sayings of the prophets, in all the experiences of the patriarchs, Jesus was presented or was the One brought forth or given birth to in all their testimony. The people of God were in this shape in the sight of the Lord. All their own efforts could bring forth nothing but wind or emptiness, but the Spirit of the Lord working mightily in them could and did bring forth Jesus out of them. The pangs of this spiritual travail grew more and more intense the nearer the day of Jesus approached, until at last he was brought forth upon the earth: the fruitions of all the hopes and longings of his people. If our readers will turn to the twelfth chapter of Revelation they will there see how the word of inspiration presents the church in the figure of a woman clothed with the sun (the glory of God), with the moon

(the law) under her feet, upon her head a crown of twelve stars (the apostles). "And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered." Down in the fifth verse it is recorded that the church gave birth to a man-child. This child is Jesus. This text in Revelation shows the gospel church raised above the law and clothed with the beauty of God's holiness bringing forth Christ. Christ is brought forth in all the teachings, in all the experiences, in all the ordinances, in all the order, of the gospel church. The text previously quoted from the twenty-sixth chapter of Isaiah shows how this was true of the people of God under the law: that they too were in pain, owing to the fact that they were wrought upon by the Spirit to look forward unto the coming of Christ, seeing themselves as poor, needy sinners and greatly in need of him to save them. Thus all the testimony of the people of God, whether under the law or under the gospel, is likened unto the condition of a woman in travail. The object that God had in all the fears and tremblings of his people, his purpose in all their trials and afflictions, was that Jesus should be brought forth out of all that pain.

We have written these two brief articles at the request of a sister who lives near Macon, Georgia. L.

PRICE OF BIBLES ADVANCED.

OWING to the increased cost of Bibles to us, we are compelled to advance our sale price from $2.50 to $3.00. Those who wish to secure a Bible as a premium, will now have to send us five new subscribers, instead of four, as formerly. We are sorry to have to increase our price, but as the cost has been advanced to us, we cannot afford to sell them at the old figure.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at his home in St. Thomas, Ontario, Jan. 15th, 1918, Robert Burns English and Miss Elma Gage, both of Ridgetown, Ontario.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Daniel Tommie Arnn was born in Baxter County, Ark., Jan. 19th, 1876, and died at the home of his brother-in-law and sister, Mr. and Mrs. F. C. Mitchell, Rush Springs, Okla., Nov. 26th, 1917, aged 41 years, 10 months and 7 days. He lived in the county where he was born and taught school quite a while, and was loved by all his students, as he had a friendly word for all. In April, 1906, he was married to Miss Sarah Green, of the same county, and to them were born four children, two girls and two boys. He moved to Oklahoma in 1913, and two years later his health began to fail, which resulted in tuberculosis. The doctors advised him to go to New Mexico, which he did in March, 1917, and stayed until the following November; but it was of no avail, he grew weaker all the time. He came back to Rush Springs Nov. 4th, 1917, to his sister's, Annie Mitchell, and all was done for him that loving hands could do, but the Lord called, Child, come home, and he had to go. He was not a member of any church, but a strong believer in the Primitive Baptist doctrine: salvation by grace. He professed a hope in Christ about a year before he died, and it was precious to him to the last. It was my (his father) privilege to visit him in December, 1916, and he talked of his hope in Jesus, saying he had a desire to be baptized by a Primitive Baptist minister, but was too feeble, and no minister was near. I visited him again in November, 1917, and when I went to his bedside he said: "Father, you have come to see me for the last time; I will not be here long, I am only waiting until the Lord calls me home; I am ready to go at any time." He said he regretted he could not have been baptized. I told him I would have been glad if he could have obeyed that commandment, but baptism does not house one in heaven. The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin; baptism is only an act of a good conscience toward God. His request was that a Primitive Baptist officiate at his funeral, and his request was carried out; Elder Moody was called, and spoke words of comfort to a large gathering of sorrowing relatives and friends, using as a text Eccl. iii. 1, 2. A hymn was selected by his mother, commencing, "Jesus, while our hearts are bleeding." They also sang, "Nearer, my God, to thee." Glorious thought, that our dear one will be raised up and fashioned like unto Jesus. He was conscious to the last, and after he got so he could only whisper he told his sister, who was sitting by his bed, that death was near. She said, "Dear brother,

is all well?" and he said, "Yes; yes." He is now released from suffering, and his spirit free to enjoy all that heaven is. His body was laid to rest in the Rush Spring Cemetery, there to await the resurrection morning, when Christ will come to gather his jewels home from the four quarters of the earth. He leaves to mourn, his father and mother, who are old, seven brothers and four sisters, wife and four children, and a host of relatives and friends; but we mourn not as those who have no hope, for we believe when Jesus shall appear then shall he also appear with him in glory, and all we can do is humbly bow our heads in submission and say, Thy will be done.

Written by his father, J. R., his mother, R. A., and his sister, Etta Arnn.

Deacon Frederick F. Myers, son of Japh and Elizabeth Myers, was born October 30th, 1834, and departed this life Jan. 27th, 1918, aged 83 years, 2 months and 27 days. He was united in marriage to Martha Mason Dec. 7th, 1856. To that union were born nine children. One son and one daughter, with the wife and mother, preceded him to that heavenly rest. Seven children, thirty-nine grandchildren, twenty-nine great-grandchildren and and a host of friends are left to mourn their loss. He united with the Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church over forty years ago, and for many years served as one of the deacons of Darby Run Church. After the other members had been called away he placed his membership with Pleasant Hill Church, near Delaware, Ohio, at the time of the yearly meeting, which was held Sept. 12th and 13th, 1914, and was most gladly received by the church and visiting brethren present. He was always ready to lend a hand to any one in need. His last sickness extended over a period of one year, but in all that time he never complained. We feel to submit and say, Lord, not our will, but thine, be done. While we miss him, we know that He who controls all things will help us to bear our burdens in this dark hour of sorrow and grief. We will say, Lord, make us ready, for in an hour we know not the Son of man cometh. Before his death he made requests concerning his funeral, naming the undertaker he wished to officiate, and that two sons, three sons-in-law and one grandson be pall-bearers, that hymn No. 141 in Goble's and 1228 in Beebe's hymn-book be sung, and that the writer of this notice preach his funeral sermon, using 2 Timothy iv. 2, which I tried to do with such ability as the Lord saw fit to give me.

The funeral was held from the home of his daughter, in Columbus, Ohio, where he died, Jan. 29th. Many relatives, friends and neighbors were present and were very attentive. The remains were laid to rest in the Galloway Cemetery, west of the city, to await the resurrection morn.

L. E. STEPHENS.

Mrs. Rebecca Engle Search Duffield, daughter of James and Susanna (Hall) Search, was born March 5th, 1850, in Southampton, Pa. She was married Feb. 8th, 1871, to Thomas Hart Benton Duffield, who died Nov. 19th, 1887. They had three children: Davis, Elizabeth and Alfred. The two former died before their mother. She was baptized Dec. 8th, 1866, by Elder Quint, in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Southampton. All these years she had been a faithful and beloved sister in the church. She longed to attend every meeting, and when she was able to be there the joy of meeting with the brethren shone in her face. The one hundred and third Psalm was a special favorite of hers. Her whole life seemed to be a continual song of praise to God. I think I never knew any one to have stronger faith in sorrow and bereavement, or who kept more brave and cheerful through sore trials. In her last illness, although her suffering was severe and tedious, she was kept patient and quiet in the midst of her pain, and spoke often of the many things she had to be thankful for. She died Dec. 1st, 1917, at the home of her son Alfred, in Summit, N. J.

The funeral services were held in the Southampton meetinghouse on Tuesday, Dec. 4th, 1917. It was her request that Elder Lefferts should assist me, but as illness kept me at home, Elder Lefferts conducted the services, reading the one hundred and third Psalm and preaching from it as a text. Sister Duffield is survived by her son Alfred, also by three grandchildren.

May God comfort and bless her relatives and loving friends who mourn their loss.

SILAS H. DURAND.

G. W. Baker died at his home Nov. 21st, 1917, of abscess of the lungs, in his 75th year. Mr. Baker had been in very poor health nearly four years, but kept up the greater part of the time until shortly before his death, being confined to his bed only four days prior to his departure. He was born in Georgia, where he resided until he removed to Cooke County, Texas, nine miles east of Valley View, where he lived about thirty years. Of his early life the writer is not familiar, having known him only eight or ten years. Mr. Baker was a devoted member of the Old School Baptist Church for some thirty years, and it has been the privilege of the unworthy writer to spend some time in conversation with him on the blessings of the Lord. He always seemed anxious to give all the praise to God. I remember one Scripture he was wont to use: All things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are the called according to his purpose, and from his every day walk we are sure he believed it, and could say he knew that his Redeemer liveth. No one had more love for his brethren than he. While in his last days his health did not permit him to go often the

great distance to meeting, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES was a great comfort to him, and he much enjoyed the letters from his brethren and sisters.

Mr. Baker was buried at Flat Creek, Cooke Co., Texas, amid friends and relatives. He leaves to mourn, his widow, five sons and two daughters, living in various portions of Texas and New Mexico.

Written by request of his widow.

Mrs. Myrtle Marine Chester was born near Kirksey, Calloway Co., Ky., Dec. 28th, 1882, and departed this life October 27th, 1917, at the age of 34 years. She was married to Wm. T. Chester June 2nd, 1904, with whom she lived happily until her death. Beside her husband she leaves two precious little girls, Marine, aged ten, and Ina, aged five years, four sisters, three brothers and a host of other relatives and friends to mourn the death of this dear one, but we mourn not as those who have no hope. Myrtle professed a hope in Christ at the age of fifteen years, and united with the Methodists, and her walk on earth was sufficient to show to all who knew her that she was a christian. To know her was to love her, and we find it hard at this time to bow in humble submission to the will of the Lord. She was sick only one short week, her family not realizing any danger until the night before she died, and all that could be done by loving hands and best physicians was done, but her frail form could not battle with the grim monster death, and after much suffering she peacefully fell asleep in Jesus. Myrtle had for several years been a lover of the Primitive Baptist doctrine, and often remarked that she regretted not being baptized when her husband was, for she felt that church would be a home for her if she were only to live with them. She possessed such a mild and sweet disposition and a meek and quiet spirit that no one could doubt but she had been with Jesus and learned of him who is meek and lowly. We feel satisfied that she now rests in the full assurance of a blessed immortality beyond.

On Sunday, October 28th, she was carried to Soldier Creek burying-ground, where, by her request, brother H. N. Oliver spoke to the comfort of the bereaved family and large concourse of sorrowing friends and relatives, who had met to pay the last sad tribute of respect to one so dearly loved; after which her body was laid in the silent tomb to await the sound of the trump of God. May the heartbroken companion, who feels that he can hardly be reconciled to the will of God in this bereavement, but remembers God's goodness in blessing him with such a gift, be enabled to say, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. May the Father of mercies and God of all comfort reconcile us all to his will in all things.

Written by one who loved her.

LILLIAN CHESTER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

O. F. Ballard, N. Y., $1.00; Olivia Hellings, N. J., $1.00; W. M. Winchell, Mich., $1.00; Mrs. A. Ballard, Mich., $1.00; "A Friend," Md., $1.00; C. Stevens, Ark., $3.00; E. F. Readhimer, La., $2.00; Mrs. Duncan McCallum, Ont., $2.00; J. M. Hixon, Ala., $2.00; Mrs. Martha Miller, Ill., $2.00; A Friend, N. Y., $4.00.

A CORRECTION.

IN the Corresponding Letter to the Salisbury Association, page 21, first column, current volume, in giving the time for holding the next session of the association it should read, commencing on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in October, instead of May.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m

ALL WELCOME

THE Middletown and Andes Church has decided to hold its meetings during the winter months at Dickson Hall, Arena, N. Y., instead of at Union Grove.

The Second Roxbury Church will hold its meetings during the winter months at the Mead sisters home, Roxbury, N. Y.

To the above meetings all who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

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[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1918. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JOHN XVIII. 36.

"JESUS answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."

This language will be recognized as the answer of the Savior when he was arraigned before Pilate to receive the sentence of death. These solemn yet sublime words were pronounced as the King in Zion calmly approached the last enemy (death) which should contest his claim to this kingdom, and set at rest once and for all time every occasion for any contest or strife among earthly kings or rulers to share the honors or glory of his kingdom. He completely divorced it from the honor and glory of the kingdoms of this world, for which earthly kings and nobles strive. So securely was this kingdom in his possession, and so certain was he of his office as King, that not even his subjects were called upon to resist with force those who would seek to put him to death. In truth no resistance was necessary, for all that was done and all that could be done was but the ordained means in the achievement of a determined end. "For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."—Acts iv. 27, 28.

This kingdom was not Christ's by conquest and subjugation by force of earthly arms, neither could it be wrested from him by the employment of such means. We understand this kingdom to embrace all of the gift of the Father to the Son in the covenant of redemption, and for whom the Son became surety. Priority of title was vested in the Father, and by gift descended to the Son. Jesus said, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." No one else has now or ever had any title to or authority in this kingdom; therefore all of the laws governing this kingdom and all the benefits and privileges enjoyed in it are such only as are provided by Christ. This kingdom, being not of this world, does not require worldly effects to support it, neither does it promise any worldly emoluments or temporal rewards to any of its subjects. In the fullest sense Christ's kingdom is not of this world. Contrary to the belief and

contention of the multitudes who profess christianity, the wealth of the world might be diverted from what is termed charitable and spiritual uses, the governments of earth might plunge into chaos, and the combined powers (both mental and physical) of the people of all nations be concentrated on the production and manipulation of implements of destruction, without disturbing or in any way impairing the stability of Christ's kingdom. Just at this time almost the entire world power is engaged in the most extensive and destructive war that has ever been staged upon this earth; one alliance of nations entrenched against another. The inevitable results will be not only the consuming and wasting away of the wealth and resources of the nations involved, but the depleting of the inhabitants of these nations as well. But were it possible to unite all these warring nations and combine all their strength and skill in an assault upon Christ's kingdom, they could not impair a single resource of it, destroy the life of one of his subjects, nor take a single prisoner. Their life is hid with Christ in God, and they are kept by God's power, ready to be revealed in the last time. On the other hand, if all the wealth and power (intellectual and physical) of this world were combined in an effort to increase or enrich Christ's kingdom, it would be equally ineffectual. The Savior's language, "My kingdom is not of this world," places it beyond the reach of worldly means or worldly beings to add to or take from it. All of the rights, privileges and benefits vouchsafed to the subjects of this kingdom are provided by the King of kings according to the good pleasure of his will, and do not depend upon the subjects themselves, neither are they increased by their industry nor diminished by their neglect. Therefore the apostle could say, "All of the promises of God in Christ are yea and amen, to the glory of God by us." These promises are not precarious, are not hinged upon uncertain creature conditions; they belong in that catalogue termed the "sure mercies of David." The statement of the Savior, "My kingdom is not of this world," warrants, I think, the foregoing observations.

The popular theology (so-called) of the world stands condemned by Christ's words, "My kingdom is not of this world," because it presupposes that man possesses qualities of goodness which, when brought into exercise, will render him eligible to citizenship in this kingdom and admit him to all of its benefits. This is but drawing from the resources of this world to prepare one for citizenship in the kingdom which is not of this world. Whatever of merit or creature goodness human beings possess, they derive those qualities from their relationship to this world, and that goodness is relative, not absolute; it is goodness only in the comparative degree; that is, it is better than something else that is worse, but it is not such merit as entitles one to citizenship in the kingdom of Christ. As his kingdom is not of this world, the qualities of his subjects which entitle them to a place in his kingdom are not of this world. The same scriptural and logical considerations that would forbid membership in Christ's kingdom upon merits of human qualities, conditions or acts of goodness would obtain with equal force against claiming the blessings and benefits incident to such membership upon a like basis. The one is as much in violation of Christ's declaration as is the other. But we may go a step further. Not only is Christ's kingdom not of this world, but the subjects of his kingdom are also not of the world;

for in addressing his Father he said of them, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." While they are in the world, and mix or mingle with the world in temporal matters, yet in their relationship to Christ and his kingdom, and to one another in spiritual things, they are not of the world. How often does it occur that one of the trembling prisoners of hope finds himself or herself in the midst of a throng of human beings of almost every shade of temperament and sociability, and still not one of them affords that companionship for which his or her soul is famishing. Why this condition? The world would tell you it is because they are selfish; but not so, it is but the longing of the new creature, the spiritual self, for companionship of its kind; it is the hungering for that bread which the world knows not of. It requires more than a resolution, more than a reformation, more than having one's name enrolled upon a church book, to become a suitable companion for the subjects of Christ's kingdom; it requires a crucifixion, crucified unto the world and the world unto you; it requires a death and subsequent life, death to sin and alive unto God through the Spirit; it requires a translation from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. These and many other expressions in the divine record declare our complete separation, in our spiritual existence, from the things of this world. All our spiritual food, raiment, joys and blessings, as well as the healing ointment for all our maladies, are found in this kingdom and provided independently of any influences derived from this world. So far from the wealth and influence of this world contributing to the furtherance of the kingdom of Christ, it is our relation to this world that keeps us from the full enjoyment of Christ's kingdom. When the broad expanse of the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll and the elements shall have been melted with fervent heat, when earthly ties have been dissolved and mortality swallowed up of life, then shall we comprehend fully and experience in that immortal state of glory the whole significance and scope of the Savior's words, "My kingdom is not of this world."

Yours in humble hope,

J. R. HARDY.

HAVILAND, Kansas.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., Jan. 24, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—This is to you, to the churches at Los Angeles and Riverside, and to the brethren everywhere. In the first place, will say that I know I cannot write that which will instruct you in the things of the kingdom, but have promised to let so many hear from me that I take this method of doing so. I just want to have a little conversation with you, and if we cannot sit around a real fireside, I hope that we may be warmed by His love, and feel that we are brethren indeed in spirit and in truth. The editors give us their labor of love so abundantly and so unselfishly that I desire to thank them for what their writings have meant to me, and to encourage them to continue, believing that God has placed them upon the watch-tower to tell us of the night, for the comfort and uplifting of his scattered children. I well realize that they have obstacles to overcome, that they have hardships to endure, that they have trials of which we know nothing, that the Spirit does not influence them at all times even as with us, yet they have to preach, and it is not an easy thing to do; but they remember that the sheep must be fed, that they have put their hands to

the plow and must not look back, so they can only trust in God to give them a message. May they persevere in the things which they have learned and been assured of, knowing of whom they were taught. I believe all of us appreciate their faithfulness, but that does not compare with the "Well done, thou good and faithful servant," which they will hear when they stand in the presence of their Lord and Savior. I pray every day that he may bless their efforts, that he may attend them throughout this year, and all the years to come, granting them all that is best and good. Recently my thoughts have been wandering more than ever to the dear ones at Bethlehem; it was there that I was led into the watery grave by Elder Badger, after traveling about three thousand miles, that I might have that privilege if they consented to receive me. I told so little, and with such a stammering tongue, that I wonder to this day why they added me to their number. How beautiful everything looked that morning; how lovingly they greeted me. Surely I looked into angel faces; if not real ones, the disguise was perfect. I know their ministrations were tender and sweet, giving me a foretaste of the glory of heaven. May God minister to them as they did to me; may he comfort them as they comforted me, and may their faith always be as firm and their trust as unwavering as mine was on that occasion. Since that time, seventeen years ago, I have visited them but once, yet the remembrance of it repays me for being deprived of hearing preaching during the intervening years. God had prepared a feast for me, and I ate and drank of the bread and water of life until I was lifted above the things of time and sense; I saw new beauties in all his works and ways, and I thanked him that he had thus directed my steps. For the time being he was my all in all, and I was satisfied. Until the foregoing specified occasions I had been living in a barren country for twenty-five years; had met only one person who believed as I do, and had not heard a sermon. Later, Elder Hess, of Oregon, came this way, stayed two nights and preached each evening, once at my home to an audience of two, and again at the house of the brother just mentioned. He was a brother, though not a member of the visible church. He passed to the beyond more than a year ago, and died triumphant. Brother Hess was gladly welcomed at both places, and we thanked God for leading him to this far away country; also that there were as many as three in company, for the promise is that where two or three are gathered in his name that he will be in their midst, and we realized the fulfillment of it. Again, during the year of the exposition, I answered the door-bell, and a gentlemen asked, "Is this Mrs. Mary E. Wright?" Something told me that he was a brother in the Lord, and it proved to be so. I think he was from Ohio, and that his name was Hudson. He was on his way home, and said that he could not pass without stopping to see me. Though he only stayed a few hours, I rejoiced that he thought me worthy to enter my gates, and I praised the Giver of all good gifts that he had been mindful of me. In the meantime I have been the recipient of many letters which I greatly prize; I believe I answered all of them, but could not keep up the correspondence owing to my many duties. It may be that I could have laid aside some of them, but I knew my replies would have been so inferior that I hesitated. Some who scan these lines may wonder why I have so spe-

cifically mentioned the coming of those brethren, and the letters. Well, if any one of you have been compelled to live in the wilderness for forty years without hearing a familiar voice, you will know something about it. Their visits were like springs of water in a dry land, and I drank to the depths; more like the fragrance of sweet flowers, and it lingers with me yet. They talked of the things which had been taught me more than fifty years ago, and though it was the old, old story, it was so new to me, by reason of my isolation, that my heart was melted to tenderness and my eyes were suffused with tears. I realized how I had been watched over and cared for, when for months at a time I had been so indifferent and careless. I looked back over the path which I had traveled, and saw one as crooked as ever was made by a professed follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, but I remember that he can make crooked things straight, that his promises are yea and amen, and my mistakes were put behind me; I only saw his goodness and glory. Now I will take you to the churches in southern California. For several years I had read the notice of the meetings of Little Flock Church at Riverside, but it was nearly five hundred miles distant, and though my mind was continually on them, could not see the way clear to visit them. In July, 1916, my dear companion was taken from me, and the first of the following April I was on the way to visit a daughter in Los Angeles; I was getting nearer and nearer to the dear brethren, and it greatly lessened my grief. The thought of meeting with them, of hearing the certain sound once more, of the comfort of their fellowship, and of my need of their reproof and correction, gave me new life, and I looked forward to the time with eagerness. I did not know then that there was a Primitive Baptist Church in Los Angeles, but after arriving there wrote to the church clerk of Little Flock and asked concerning a sister Dawson, whose name I had also seen in the SIGNS. He informed me that she was living near where I was stopping, and the next day (Saturday) I went over to see her. To my surprise and delight I found that there was a church (Liberty) within a few blocks of her home. The next morning I met with them. The outside of the house looked good to me as I approached, but when I got inside I was filled with love and praise, and I walked softly, for I felt that I was in a holy place. I wish I could tell you in an entertaining manner what a trusting, faithful, humble, well-grounded people I found there. Some of them remembered my letters in the SIGNS, which gave me recognition, and they opened their hearts and their doors to me. I was no longer a stranger to them, but a poor, unworthy sinner, such as they; a sinner trusting alone to Jesus for salvation, as they were; a poorly taught sinner, but one who believed in predestination without any conditions attached, and I found a response from their hearts, genuine and true. From that on we were fellow-travelers, and every other Sunday I was numbered among them, spending there some of the happiest days of my life, and to each one I extend love and gratitude for their hearty handclasps, for their hospitality, and for the confidence they reposed in me. Their manifestations of love for each other, and their zeal for the cause, were to me evidences of their heirship to an undefiled inheritance; and furthermore, I had my great desire granted: that of going to Riverside, where I met the same kind of people, giving me, and all others who came in His name, a

warm welcome. They told the same story of Jesus and his love; they worshipped in spirit and in truth the same God, counting it no shame to own his cause and to confess their sins. To them all I send greeting, and ask that they remember me in bonds, as bound with them. Business brought me back here the last of June, but in October the call to return was so strong that I heeded it; received the same warm welcome and remained there until the last of December. Both churches were without a pastor, and I pray that God, knowing their need, will send them one who preaches the gospel in its purity; one who believes that God can and does save sinners without let or hindrance; that by and through the atoning blood of Jesus, and that alone, can they hope for salvation. Elder Mayfield, of Oregon, visited and preached at both places during my stay, and he spoke as one having authority. I had the opportunity of partaking of the bread and wine, which were blessed and offered in remembrance of Him whose body was bruised and whose blood was shed, that those for whom he died might live forever. Several members at both places spoke to those assembled with great liberty and much feeling. It seems to me that God is preparing them for his use. I tried in my feeble way to arrange it for brother Lefferts to visit there, but as an Elder of Missouri had signified his willingness to do so for a few months, and they had agreed to it, I thought best, as did the few to whom I spoke, to wait awhile, but some day I hope to be one of the number who will welcome him to our midst. I am not one bit selfish in it, either; I want them to hear even as I have. When I was leaving, one of the brothers said, "Write me something that will help and cheer me." It had seemed to me that he was one whom God had greatly blessed, and I was astonished. He appeared to be sorrowful of heart, but it is wholesome to be of a contrite spirit, and God loves just such; he will hearken unto them and be a present help in all their troubles. He believes with all his heart, and has been promised eternal life; he loves the brethren, an infallible test of his kinship; he has confessed his sins and his Savior before men, and will be confessed before his Father in heaven; he has ministered to the saints and walked orderly in his profession, and God will remember him in love and mercy. If he is working out his salvation with fear and trembling he is the better adorning his high calling, and it is that for which I pray daily. God made a covenant that he would put his laws into the hearts and minds of his people, and that he would remember their sins and iniquities no more forever. Then let us hold fast to our profession without wavering. Even down to old age his people shall prove his sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love. Glorious things have been spoken to us. His greatness and goodness have been manifested in a satisfying, convincing, comforting way; then let us be still and know that he is God. I expect some of you will think I am too confident, or, How does she know that she is one for whom Christ died? I have told you all I know about it; the good book says so. All of us admit that God has a people, a peculiar people, that he loved them before the foundation of the world, and that Christ suffered and died that they might live with him in eternity. Moreover, they have been described so minutely, have been promised so much, being told of the glory that awaits them, and that in his own good time he would reveal himself to them. The Bible testifies of him. Does it not testify of us? We feel and know that it

does. For whom are the promises? To them that put their trust in the arm of flesh, or to those who are taught in colleges and in Sunday-schools, whose god is their belly, and who are wedded to the world and the lust thereof? I do not think so. He draws the people of his choice by cords of kindness, and we have felt the drawing. He caused us to see ourselves as he sees us, and we were led to call on him for mercy; moreover, he taught us to call aright. He caused us to hunger and thirst, then gave us the bread and water of life freely. He caused us to humble ourselves in his sight, then raised us to see him, to know and to commune with him. He told us of the glory that awaits us, until the veil intervenes but dimly between us. He has taken our stony hearts away and given us new ones, has put a new song in our mouths, even praise unto him. He found us too, when strangers to his commonwealth and led us in paths we had not known. He caused us to rejoice in a finished salvation, and to ascribe to him all honor, glory and power. We believe that no weapon formed against us shall prosper, and that he shall condemn every tongue that shall rise against us. If we believe these things, and the hundreds of others confirming the same, and constraining us, let us conclude that we are on our way to the city of the everlasting God; that we are his predestinated children, and when compassed about with such a cloud of witnesses, let us hold fast to the truth which made us free, laying aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, seeing that we have been born again, not of incorruptible seed, but by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. If I believe I am one of his children, it is not of my willing or running, it is of the will of God. Does it make me boastful, or make me feel better than others who see through a glass darkly? No, a thousand times no. It makes me feel more humble, more prayerful, more desirous of following in his footsteps, more sorrowful when I err, more deferential to my brethren whom I love so well. In fact, the more of his light and glory I see, the more defect I see in myself, and if we humble ourselves he will exalt us in due time. I feel that I am the least of his children, and when we gather at the pearly gates, if there were such a thing as literal ones, I shall hesitate to enter until all those for whom he died have passed through; God, who knoweth the secret thoughts and intents of the hearts of men, being my judge.

I have written a great deal, but am afraid to no profit; know, though, that those I have met will be glad to hear that I am as well as usual and abounding in his love. And now may the God of all grace, who hath called you unto his eternal glory by Jesus Christ, after ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen and settle you.

From an unworthy sister, who asks your indulgence.

MARY E. WRIGHT.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., Nov. 25, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been thinking ever since the Salem Association here in Hancock County, Ill., that I would write a little about our good meeting for the benefit of those who asked me to write, and especially our dear old sister Rily, wife of Elder John Rily, who is ninety-one years old and still enjoys hearing the good news of the gospel of Christ, as it was preached at our last association. It seemed that our pure minds were stirred up by way of remembrance as we listened to the dear saints of God

as they were pouring forth the sweet messages of truth. I sat between two old saints whom I have known all my life, and who believe the same doctrine, salvation by grace: sister Cannon and sister Rily, as they seemed to be feeding upon the crumbs that fell from the Master's table, and we enjoyed it together this one more time. Pray for us, dear brethren and sisters, and all who may read this, that we may be permitted to meet at these good meetings as long as we live, together with all who love the truth as it is in Jesus. I have been reading the two last numbers of the SIGNS, and find many of the dear writers believe that Christ has all power in heaven and earth; that he is the sovereign Ruler, and none can stay his hand. It has given me courage to go on. I am sometimes low down in the valley of despair, lower even than is usual in these dark days that hover over me almost continually; but when I read such precious correspondence as the dear old SIGNS has, I find that is the way the most of them travel, and it feeds me for awhile; but soon my strength begins to fail, and I feel that the frail house of this earthly tabernacle must soon be dissolved, and I desire to be ready to go when the summons comes, and as I will be seventy-seven years old next New Year's day, if I live until then, I know according to the course of nature that it must come soon. I now send in my remittance for another year, and am sorry that I did not get it off sooner, but hope you will pardon me. Correct all that is amiss, and send me the dear old SIGNS without stopping it as long as I live or can see to read, for I do not want to miss one number, it is a great comfort to me at all times. My comfort, hope and confidence in the God of heaven are that there is nothing too hard for him, that not one child is too vile for him to own, and that none of his promises will fail, but will all be fulfilled according as he has purposed. If I know myself, I want to serve Israel's God all my appointed days. May the God of all grace be with you, dear editors and readers of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Yours in love,

BELLE FRAZEE.

A PECULIAR PEOPLE.

(1 Peter ii. 9.)

PETER, in writing to the strangers (church) scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, calls them a peculiar people. He tells several ways they are peculiar; the Bible tells many ways in which they are peculiar. Now, the Primitive Baptists, or Old School Baptists, are a peculiar people, and their peculiarities are mentioned in the Bible.

1. They are few in number. Strait and narrow is the way that leads to life, and few there be that find it. The Baptists do not boast of numbers. The Lord makes the increase—no big revival meeting to persuade the Lord to add many souls to his elect. The Lord had one prophet, Elijah, while Baal had four hundred prophets, but Elijah's sacrifice was accepted.

2. The Old School Baptists admit they are sinful, and continually bemoaning their carnal nature, but not able to overcome it. They, like Paul, have the thorn in the flesh, feel their depravity, no inherent merit. Others claim complete sanctification, live without sin, have ability to do as they please in spiritual things; self-righteous, no thorn in the flesh.

3. Another peculiarity, the Baptists are

continually telling what the Lord has done for them; how that he found them deep in sin and folly and showed them the end thereof; how all human efforts to overcome sin are a failure; how God's Holy Spirit quickened them and enabled them to behold Jesus Christ as their Savior. Others are telling what they are doing for the Lord, what good christians they are and how much they are helping in the great work of christianizing the world; how they have done this and done that, and will do much more; how they expect to work out their salvation; asking all to pray for them, that they may hold out faithful and win a crown.

4. Baptists depend upon God—wholly dependent. All they have is given to them by the Giver of all good gifts. Born of the Spirit, not of man. Thank the Lord for food, clothing, health and spiritual guidance; for a plan of salvation not dependent upon poor, weak, sinful man. Others depend upon man. When they want religion they go get it. When their preacher wants them to be religious he tells them how they can get saved, or save themselves, can put God under obligations to save. God is dependent on man, that is, he stands ready to save, but cannot do it until man gets ready and puts God under obligations to save, according to his promise to save if man accepts Christ as his Savior.

5. Baptist preachers are called of the Lord and preach God's word to his people. Christ said to Peter, "Feed my sheep; feed my lambs." This is what Baptist preachers try to do: preach to the church, preach for the comfort of those who have been quickened into life by the divine Spirit; to those who have eyes to see, ears to hear and hearts to understand. They do not wait for nor work for a stipulated salary. Others are called by a conference of men, preach for a stipulated salary and watch for a place of larger salary. They preach to wicked sinners, telling them how to make God save them. If the salary should fail, many of them would not think enough of the sinner or the Lord to preach, and thereby show their calling.

6. Old School Baptists become religious by being born again; spiritual birth of divine origin. Man has no more to do with his spiritual birth than with his own natural birth of the flesh. Religion is God manifest in man. This work of the Spirit is like the wind that bloweth where it listeth; you hear the sound thereof, but know not whence it cometh or whither it goeth. Others become religious by accepting Christ as their Savior, which the preacher tells the sinner is his own work, the work of man. The one who got religion according to the preacher's instructions is now told that he can lose his religion, and is in great danger of losing it. Christ died for him, and the atonement was applied when he accepted Christ. His sins were washed away, but the atonement will lose its cleansing power if he does not look out. This man-made religion is a poor comforter to poor, carnal man, who knows his failings. Saved but lost.

7. Baptists believe that all the names of Christ's redeemed were written in the Lamb's book of life before the world was made—none added since, and none erased. When one is quickened by the divine Spirit, and this Spirit reveals Christ to him as his Savior, he is saved by grace, and no power can separate him from the love of God. Others believe that names are being added and erased to suit poor, weak, sinful man's whims. The recording angel will write your name in the book of life when you go to Christ,

and draw a line through your name when you backslide. Those big revivals and what follows after give the recording angel much work. O what a book! John's name has been entered and erased four times, and finally the poor fellow died at the wrong time. Mary had about the same experience, but was lucky.

8. Baptists believe in only one Savior, Jesus Christ the righteous. Christ came to do the Father's will; and this is the Father's will, that of all the Father gave him he should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day. He will do this without man's help or hindrance. Others believe in many saviors: the church, the preacher, the priest, the Sunday-school, the mission system; parents save their children, children save their parents, and church members save their friends. Now the church that patronizes so many saviors will likely have more members than the Old School Baptist Church, which has only one Savior. Each one who saves a sinner will have a star added to his crown, and each society will have a banner telling what it has done.

9. Baptists believe in one complete atonement, completed when Christ said, "It is finished." All the sins that Christ atoned for on the cross are blotted out of God's book of remembrance, and will be remembered no more forever. Christ's atonement is not a failure, it is sufficient. Others believe that the atonement does not save anybody, but that it was made, and, as it were, laid up for all who want it bad enough to accept it and live religiously until death; that Christ died, but you are not saved by his agony and death, burial and resurrection, but you may be saved by your works, by accepting Christ, by living right until death.

10. Baptists claim no righteousness of their own, but depend on the righteousness of Christ for justification before God; Christ's righteousness imputed. No other righteousness will be of any use before the great Judge. Others believe in self-righteousness—that man must justify himself before God. You must work yourself into favor with God, put him under obligations to bless and justify you. Christ's righteousness is not enough.

11. Baptists believe in salvation by election, by grace, by divine power. This salvation coming from God through Christ the Son is sure and steadfast. No power can hinder, there will be no failures; this salvation is sure. Others believe in salvation by chance; Christ died, but you may be saved, and you may not; you have a chance to be saved, but all depends on what you do, you weak, wicked man; you may make God save you, you may not. Chance.

12. Old School Baptists worship a God who is all-wise and all-powerful. He knows the end from the beginning, knows who are saved before they are born; no guesswork with God, no salvation laid up that will not be used, no chance. God is able to do his holy will without help or hindrance. M. N. WEBB.

WEISER, Idaho, Dec. 7, 1917.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 22, 1918.

ELDER H. H. LEFFERTS—DEAR BROTHER:—When left to myself and to my own thinking powers, the result is not valuable, but when the Lord's most precious thoughts are given me, "the sum of them" and the value and beauty of them are infinite. He says, I know my thoughts concerning you: thoughts of peace, and not of evil; to bring to pass an expected end. Now, at any time when the Lord's thoughts come into my heart and take possession of my soul, then I can under-

stand how a sacred principle of reconciliation is connected with the gospel of the dear Savior. I know that by the peculiar power of faith I am right sure of this; but I am so very seldom, if ever, in possession of that holy, heavenly principle. It is by this faith alone that the divine power of faith can be known, and by that alone can resignation, true resignation to the will of God, be known by mortal, sinful man. The power of this soul-searching principle cannot be obtained by anything that mortal man can do. It is, like all things belonging to the kingdom of Christ, the gift of God. We cannot purchase it, we cannot make or create it, we cannot obtain it by any device of men. In no way can it come into our possession except as the gift of God by the power and will of Jesus Christ. The day after I was baptized, over fifty-six years ago, I found this question in my mind: What is faith? What is there in mind now that was not there before? At that time I was at peace. I was glad all the time for those few days, or, I might say, weeks. The Word was there and the church and the brethren, and I wanted no more. I thought then I could see and feel the power of faith. I was not curious, but had enough for my own poor soul. I do not think I have had much more of a view of faith since then than I had at that time. How many things are said about faith in different parts of the New Testament! The brethren, Paul and others, are so clear in their arguments and write so confidently that it seems I can see their statements as unanswerable and can follow them with assurance. Then I turn to my own heart to see if that holy principle is there, and with a drooping head and with a great deal of uncertainty I have to acknowledge much of the time that I am not sure I have faith. Sometimes I can see and hear from others the same things that are in my own heart. Then I can but recognize evidence for them, and see it forced back upon me as a reflection in a glass; as the apostle says: "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." I have to acknowledge that. So when evidence of this kind is experienced, we have to acknowledge it is true, we cannot dispute it; and the apostle gives evidence thus by inspiration, which comes by divine power, showing what is true in us and true in Jesus. He says: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Concerning faith and the exercise of it and many things connected with it in such a wonderful manner, I would love to write a little or talk a little, but the time has gone by for that. I cannot feel that I shall write at length any more; but I do enjoy talking with the brethren and to hear from the publishers of the SIGNS and others of the brethren scattered far and wide. The unity of the brethren manifested in the writings is delightful to me. The great beauty of the doctrine and of the order of the church takes hold upon my soul most thoroughly. Zion is called in the Psalms "the perfection of beauty." My mind has been led, when writing or preaching, to trace out the exercises of such as feel, like I always have, that they are the poorest of the poor, and that strongest doctrine (if there be any difference) would be the only doctrine that could answer the needs of such a weak person as I.

I can go no further just now. On January 5th I entered my eighty-sixth year.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

HAVANA, Kansas, Feb. 3, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—I received the February 1st number of the SIGNS to-day, which contains the obituary of my dear husband. Inclosed find stamps, for which please send this number to my address, as each of the children want one. Dear Elder Ker, your letter written to Elder Pittman was received. I know it would have been much appreciated by him had he been here, but he is gone from this world of great sorrow and is sweetly resting. "Asleep in Jesus," which hymn was read at his funeral on Monday, January 7th. I cannot tell you how much we miss him, but, dear brother, I have no doubt you know how our hearts ache. He and I talked about your "New Year's Greeting," that we do not know what is in store for us. I thank God for this. O, it was such a terrible shock. He only went out for a little pleasure ride with our son-in-law, Mr. Lindley, who did not regain consciousness for two days, but is all right now. They were crossing a bridge at a sharp turn in the road when something went wrong with the car, so that it could not turn, and it jumped off the bridge fourteen feet. A friend was near and saw the accident, and they were brought home at once. No bones were broken, but Mr. Pittman had a bad flesh wound in his right leg; he died from the loss of blood and the shock. His last words were: "Lord, take me, if it is thy will. O how sweet Jesus is, my precious Savior." He talked much during the last few years about leaving this world. He always said he would be ready to depart at any time, that he did not want to live to be very old, and hoped his last sickness would be short. I know he would have said this is the way it was to be. He was never sick in bed all day in his life, although during the last few years he had not been very strong. Dear Elder Nathan Reeder says in his obituary that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES was his choice Baptist paper. I, too, love it, and want to take it the rest of my life. May God spare you both many years to bear good tidings to those who appreciate it. My husband took the SIGNS when we were married. I cared nothing about it, I never read it. When God in his goodness and mercy showed me my sinful condition and I was in great trouble, my husband knew it and advised me to read the SIGNS. I said, No, there is nothing in it for me. I read the Bible, and truly I thought there was nothing in that for me; but when Jesus said, Thy sins are all forgiven, I was very, very happy. One day as I passed by where the SIGNS lay on a table I noticed the name "Jesus," which attracted my attention. I immediately picked it up and began reading to see what was said about this dear Jesus who had so recently spoken peace to my soul. I read on and on, and I am still reading it. My experience was published in the SIGNS of September 1st, 1898. O how sweet it was when I became a member of the Baptist Church and we could go to meeting together. We have always been so situated that I could accompany him, and he seldom went without me. I do not want to complain against the Lord's will, but pray for reconciliation. I hope I trust in him who said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Our youngest daughter, Mrs. Baker, and her three little children have lived with us ever since she lost her husband, three and one-half years ago. You see I am not left alone; we have much to be thankful for.

I am sorry I have written so much; you will not have time to read it. I only intended to write a few lines to ask for the papers. I firmly believe, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." Forgive me for trespassing upon your time.

Sorrowfully, your sister,

(MRS.) T. R. PITTMAN.

CHESTER, Montana, Jan. 20, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I came to this place from my home in La Grande, Oregon, to visit my dear aged mother, who is in her ninetieth year. She is now at the home of my only living sister, Mrs. Mary Bassett. Mother is in her usual health, although very frail. She wrote the accompanying letter on New Year's day, and I should have mailed it sooner, but we have been very busy caring for sister, who has been through severe nervous prostration; but thanks to the Giver of every good and perfect gift she is now recovering, and may soon be in normal condition. It is very sad for me to find mother without the comfort of preaching, and it is a mercy that one of her great age can keep her mind without such rest and comfort. She desires to keep her mind clear and her heart contrite before her Maker, whose loving-kindness she has witnessed these many years, and the precious gospel truth which she has felt so precious to her soul. She wrote this letter to the SIGNS because of her anxious longing of heart for the cause she so much loves and esteems above every other blessing. I have found many letters and compositions among her belongings, which she has given me permission to copy and send for publication. It is very sad to me to be compelled to say good-bye and go so far away, but God knows best and we should walk in his appointed way resignedly.

Do as you think best with this.

MARTHA J. ALLEN.

CHESTER, Montana, Jan. 1, 1918.

DEAR KINDRED:—This New Year's day I desire to write a few lines to our beloved paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for publication. I seem isolated, far from the sound of the gospel trumpet. I have the Bible to read, but like to hear the sound of the voices of those called to the work of the ministry to preach the gospel to the poor, for this was God's purpose. Many times I have been lifted out of the "Slough of Despond" by the words spoken by God's servants. O, I realize more and more of the presence of his power, in that my faith is renewed day by day, so I faint not. I once fainted from the sound of persecuting words; I arose with this: You should pray, and faint not. Now, dear household, I am in my ninetieth year. I was born Sept. 16th, 1828, and lived in innocent thoughtlessness until in my eleventh year, when these words came to me: "Ye must be born again." I thought, O what does this signify? I strove indeed to know what it meant. Five years did I go mourning, praying, crying to be given this new birth. I became listless, I cared for little, yet attended to my daily duties toward those for whom it was my duty to care. In the Lord's own time he said, Where is your faith? O, then I saw I had striven to save myself; I had not trusted solely in God's power, supposing I could save myself by good works. I found I had been depending upon human ability. O how blessed the hour when first I saw the Lord. I felt I could teach men how to be born again, but alas, in less than one hour I found myself in the flesh—found I was yet a sinner. Nevertheless the day dawned brighter, despite the old Adam flesh; I thought my anxieties over. Then another sentence came to me: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." O what were his commandments? I had been raised to attend Sabbath-school, but never did the teacher speak of the new birth, but the hat was passed around for the collection of money

for foreign missions. I saw no place for me. When in my twenty-seventh year I went to hear an Old School Baptist preach, and how astonished I was to hear my own views spoken. I wondered how he came to tell my thoughts, the travel of my soul, my being brought by a way I knew not. I attended again, and heard the certain sound of the gospel spoken by the old man, whose hair was gray. I was again astonished, having heard that sect spoken of as "Old Hardshells." I read my Bible, and all he said agreed with the word as I understood it. The third time I attended I gave him my hand, and ere I was aware was received by unanimous vote, and was baptized in the fellowship of the doctrine of salvation by grace, not works. My name is still on the old church book, though I am far removed from it. I am persuaded that neither principalities, powers nor anything else can induce me to give up my faith or unite with any other society or sect.

Dear brethren and sisters, not knowing what persecution is awaiting us, let us pray for one another in sincerity, that our faith fail not. Even so, dear household. S. J. CUMMINS.

DIVIDE, W. Va., Jan. 21, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter written by brother J. W. McClanahan, which I would like to have published in the SIGNS. I have his consent if you think best. I want to thank you for kindly sending the SIGNS so long without pay. I thought I would be able to pay something on it last year, but was taken sick, and could not. My health is not much better, but if the Lord prospers me and so wills it I will try to pay something this year. We can hardly bear to be without it, as it is all the preaching we have here, and it is a most welcome visitor in our home.

Hoping God will bless you in your good work, I am your unworthy brother, I hope,
W. L. PENNINGTON.

POCA, W. Va., Dec. 9, 1917.

DEAR SISTER PENNINGTON:—I read the account of the death of our much esteemed and precious brother, W. C. Pennington, published in the SIGNS of December 1st, written by you, and feel it my sorrowful duty to write you and brother Willard a few lines to let you know that our hearts were made sad when we read those lines from your pen. None will miss him more than myself, for my house was his home when in my neighborhood. His membership being with me at Hopewell Church, brought us together often. Indeed, he was a great deal of comfort to me, for he was well established in the faith of God's elect. He often spoke of seeking words of comfort among other denominations, but found none. He heard of my appointment at Kelley Creek and came out to hear what I had to say, hoping to get a crumb of comfort for his hungry soul. It was the first time he ever saw me. My text was Matt. xi. 28: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He there gave me sufficient evidence of his being a child of God. He came to me with tears trickling from his eyes and said: "Your preaching to-day was to me and for me, it being the first I ever heard with spiritual understanding." It was not long after this until he came to the church, and I had the pleasure of baptizing him. I felt then as I do yet, that he was a fit subject for baptism. Now, dear children, while your hearts are sad on account of your loss of a brother in the flesh, and a brother in the Spirit to all of the household of faith, we have the blessed hope

that our loss is his eternal gain, that he has fallen asleep in Jesus.

"Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep,
From which none ever wake to weep!
A calm and undisturbed repose,
Unbroken by the last of foes."

He fought a good fight and kept the faith.

Yours in tribulation,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

CLARKSVILLE, Tenn., Dec. 13, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am taking the privilege of introducing you to my cousin, R. B. Jones, by sending one of his good letters for publication, if you see fit. He is not a member of the church, but has felt a change for twenty years or more, and has been in deep trouble concerning the Scriptures and eternal life, more especially since the death of his father, J. B. Jones, whose obituary appeared in the May number of the SIGNS. This dear young brother has felt too unworthy and timid through all these years to make it public. Would it be asking too much if some good brother who has been in the same deep distress would write a word of encouragement to this young brother, either personally or through the SIGNS? For fear of making this too lengthy, I will say farewell to the readers of the SIGNS. I am a reader of the SIGNS, get it from my aunt. I get much comfort from many of the writings. If I could write as others I would love to write sometimes, but am too unworthy, and fearful of crowding out something far better.

A little sister, I hope,

NINA WOOD SHEARON.

RUSSELLVILLE, Ky., Sept. 7, 1917.

DEAR COUSIN:—I will try to write you a short letter to-night. Hope this will find you and Mrs. Shearon in good health and peace of mind. We are as well as usual except Paul, who has been real sick for several days, but is much better to-day. When I started to write you I thought I would write principally of something nearer my heart, but I find it like I was last Sunday. I walked over my crop; fine tobacco and everything, and while going through an extra good piece of corn it came over me like a flash, as it were, that to God, and to him alone, was I indebted for the health of my family, for this brilliant prospect of better days, and I thought I would try to thank him weakly. I got down on my face in the dirt, where no eye but his could see. What, my dear cousin, do you suppose my prayer of thankfulness was? Just this: O Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner. It just seemed that was all I could say or think, and I am sometimes glad that it is this way with me. It would not do for me to have anything else: the thankfulness is there, but I cannot express it very often, but sometimes the groanings of my heart seem to soar upward to him who gave me life. I seem to be heard then; I have peace that is past all understanding and inexpressible. I am afraid though that I am beside myself. Why should I escape the wrath of a just God? I never did anything but trample his mercies under my feet; a sinner by nature and by practice; but I know from the depths of my heart that I do not love sin, and I would walk uprightly before God and man, but I cannot and do not, so I go on a while, and have to cry, Lord, save me from myself, lest I perish. One passage of Scripture has given me great consolation at times: Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. And thank God he never changes. Another is: It is not in man

that walketh to direct his steps. Does not that correspond with your experience? You do not from your heart's prompting walk in sin. There is your inability to direct your steps. We desire most fervently to do some good deed, and through the goodness of God we sometimes do perform a good deed, but it was God; for in man (in his flesh) there dwelleth no good thing. Our inability again to direct our steps. May the great God of heaven give me a heart of flesh, that I may thank him without ceasing for this; for were I able to direct my steps I would have long since made my bed in torment. There is a feeling comes to me often like this: If I am made a vessel unto honor, Father, give me a heart of thankfulness and adoration, for I am incapable of it in and of myself. If unto dishonor, it is most wonderful that he did consider me even for that, and I am just as incompetent to thank him for one as the other. It is all for God's glory. It is all most wonderful and unsearchable. I see but one thing to do: Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Does that mean me? I answer one with another: Have I something in my heart that responds to all of this? If so, it is good; if good, it was put there of the Lord. If put there by him, all powers in heaven and in earth cannot take it from me, for he never changes, and will carry it on to the end. There is but one thing for me to do, and that is, to pass my sojourning here in fear. A picture comes to me, Nina, as I end this, that appeals to me (a bit sentimental perhaps), but this is it: a child starts on a short errand almost at night. He has an infirmity—sin. Darkness comes, he becomes alarmed and begins calling, Father. His infirmity is aggravated by his emotions, so much so that he cannot go at all. Sometimes he sees the light through the trees, but cannot go to it. In the fullness of time the father knows his child is undone and gone astray, goes out and with his strong arms takes the child to the house, to light, love and serenity; there he forgets all about the darkness, the infirmity and the errand in the abounded protection and security of his father. If the father sends the child out again to-morrow it will be the same thing over, as the infirmity is incurable here. The body is dead because of it, needs a change, and the change is, buried in mortality, raised in immortality.

R. B. JONES.

GLEN ANDREW, Ont., Dec. 6, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am still in the land of the living, a poor, dependent worm of the dust, enjoying the blessing of good health, and have been given a good hope and faith in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to supply me and mine with all needful blessings, temporal and spiritual. I have no excuse to offer for the delay in not remitting before this date, but instead I owe an apology for the long delay, which I trust you will pardon. I inclose the sum of three dollars for my renewal subscription. I have decided after mature consideration and am very willing to allow this amount as my yearly subscription, owing in part to the advance in price of all our publications on this side of the line and the high cost of living. Last spring I advanced the rate of my manufacturing price of cheese from one and one-half to two cents per pound, and am fully persuaded that I am still within the bounds of justice and right between man and man; so please accept this amount, as I realize and appreciate your position. You would rather suffer than to ask what in reality you are entitled to, fearing some might

attribute the "love of money" as the motive behind the request. I therefore humbly beg of you to accept it as something belonging to you. I will say further that I will never feel that I could be able to contribute, even if I were worth millions, an amount which would cover the value of the matter contained in the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. God's blessings cannot be bought and sold like merchandise.

In closing, I desire to express my heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved editor in the separation of him and his dear son, only for a little while. I know what affliction means. On the evening of the 13th day of next month one year ago we had to part with dear Eva and to be submissive to the will of Him who doeth all things well.

Yours very affectionately,

JOHN C. McALPINE.

SALINE, La., Jan. 27, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—As it is time for me to renew my subscription to the good old SIGNS, I feel that I want to write a few lines to let you know that I certainly love to read that paper, for it advocates the doctrine I hope I love, as it is the only doctrine that does me any good. It gives God all the praise, and none to man, and it is sweet to be enabled to trust in a God that has all power both in heaven and in earth, who is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient. I feel too unworthy sometimes to claim that I have a hope, as I am so wicked, and my heart so deceitful, but as it is the sinner that is saved, I sometimes hope that my name is written in the Lamb's book of life as saved by grace, and if so, it is according to the love and mercy of the holy God who changes not; and if I am one of his redeemed, all the powers of hell cannot undo what has been done for me in redemption's glorious plan, for his people are safe in his hands. I very often think of the terrible distress that is in the land now, and dread to think of the future, for we do not know what it will bring forth. It is best that we do not know what is in store for us, as brother Ker said in January 1st SIGNS. My only consolation is, that God rules in all things, there is nothing that can go beyond its limits; the devil can go no further than the Lord sees fit for him to go. God has a purpose in all this woe and misery, and it will be to his honor and glory, but we poor mortals cannot understand why these things must be. May his people be enabled to trust in him, and not fear them that can only kill this old body, and cannot do that unless it is the Lord's will for it to be done. I am not afraid of dying one moment before my time comes, for Solomon has said there is a time to all things; a time to be born and a time to die, and we who live here on this earth know that our time will soon be spent, although we should live to be old. The longer I live, the less I see to live for; but may we be reconciled to his holy will, and patiently wait until our appointed time to leave this world of sin and sorrow. Everything that God's people have to suffer is for their good and his glory; we cannot follow Christ unless we follow him in suffering. He came here and suffered and died that his people might live. They have joys that the world knows nothing of, which are inexpressible and full of glory, which joys they would not give for all that is in this world, for they realize the vanities of this earth, which are perishable and only endureth for a short time. May the God of all grace guide and direct his people in the way they should go.

Your brother, I hope, in Christ,

E. F. READHIMER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1918.

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EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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HABAKKUK II. 11.

"FOR the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it."

Sin is a burden to the people of God. The Spirit of God causes one to have a very tender conscience regarding sin. Thoughts and imaginations which would not give the natural man a moment's uneasiness, prick like thorns in the conscience of the spiritually-minded. At no time in the history of Israel was that chosen nation without the witnesses of God among it. To these living witnesses, such as Habakkuk, the corruption of Israel was a source of great sorrow. Habakkuk preached in Israel prior to the Babylonian captivity. Israel was then exceedingly corrupt. It was a mystery to the prophet that the Lord should tolerate such wickedness in Israel. The book of Habakkuk begins with the crying out of the prophet unto the Lord because of the sins of Israel. Habakkuk complains that the Lord does not hear his crying, that he has complained unto him of violence, but still he receives no answer, the Lord does not appear to save. Habakkuk cannot understand why the Lord has caused him to see iniquity and to behold grievance, yet the power of the Lord is not manifested to clear away the evil. We think there are many, very many, of the Lord's people living in this age of the world who have experienced something of the same as Habakkuk. We often wonder how much longer it will be before the Lord's purpose in all the evil that is going on at the present time will be accomplished and the evil brought to an end by the outcome of righteousness. These are mysteries that no human mind can fathom, and it is good to have living faith to await the Lord's time to reveal himself to us and to bring to light the good which must surely ensue out of all that comes to pass. Habakkuk lived when spoiling and violence were going on in Israel, when strife and contention were rampant. The law was slacked, that is, its mandates were being wantonly disregarded and wrongdoing was indulged; judgment was abased; wickedness enjoyed immunity from the law at the expense of the righteous. Those whose duty it was to uphold the law were traitors to the duties of their office and sought to uphold and protect evil in its stronghold, instead of sheltering the righteous against the schemes of the wicked. Such was the condition of Israel at the time of Habakkuk's crying unto the Lord, as told in the first four verses of the first chapter of the book. Now, from the fifth to the eleventh verses of the first chapter, inclusive, we have the answer of the Lord to Habakkuk's cry. In this answer the prophet is assured that the Lord is not unmindful of the evil going on among his people, and will rectify it at the right time. This coming of the Lord to judge his people is to be a time of great trouble and affliction, a day of darkness, and not light. "For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land,

to possess the dwelling-places that are not their's." God's people sowing to the flesh inevitably reap corruption; the experience of every subject of grace will attest to this. The fruit slowly ripening out of the disobedience and corruption of Israel prior to the Babylonian captivity was that they were to be led captive to Babylon, there to remain for seventy long years. These Chaldeans were to sweep over Israel on horses swifter than leopards, fiercer than the evening wolves; they were to come for violence among the Israelites and to gather them into captivity like heaps of sand. These Chaldeans, to whom war was a business and a science, would laugh at the kings and princes of Israel and hold their fortifications in derision. Such was to be the terrible punishment visited by Jehovah upon his Israel of the old covenant for their evil transactions and corrupt living. When the Lord revealed to Habakkuk the coming captivity at the hands of Babylon, which was to ensnare them all, then Habakkuk in turn testified to the Lord of the purity and holiness of God, and that surely God would not allow his people to perish forever in Babylon. Habakkuk, while sorely grieved at the corruption of Israel, and deeming some sort of punishment necessary, was astonished at the awful calamity about to be visited upon them, and begged the Lord that the affliction might be tempered with mercy, lest they be swallowed up and lost forever. He asked the question: "Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One?" This being true, then, "we shall not die." The Chaldeans were the arch-imperialists of that day and time, and at the height of their power ruled well-nigh all the known world of that era. Habakkuk says they raked all the peoples like fishes into their net of dominion. "They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag: therefore they rejoice and are glad." And now even Israel was not to be spared captivity, but was also to be dragged into the net of Chaldean world-dominion. Habakkuk says to the Lord: "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." This being true, it mystified Habakkuk to understand how the Lord could prosper insatiable Chaldea to the extent of delivering Israel into its power. Habakkuk did not know that Chaldea was itself to fall while yet the Jews were captive in her midst, and that Cyrus the Great was to be the deliverer of Israel back into their own land. So it often occurs that God's purposes are hid from our eyes while yet we stand astounded at the present's tale of woe. Habakkuk feared that after Chaldea had gathered all nations into its net that it would never let go. Alas, the prophet forgot that no temporal power remains fixed, that all nations have their periods of increase and of decrease; they rise and fall. Nevertheless the prophet thus voiced his fear: "Shall they therefore empty their net, and not spare continually to slay the nations?" Thus, you see, Habakkuk feared the victorious progress of the Chaldeans would ever remain unchecked, and that, having gotten their hold on the necks of all peoples, they would never forego their hold. Like all of us weak, short-sighted mortals, the dear prophet for a moment forgot there is a God in heaven, and that this Providence rules among the affairs of men and nations, so that the tyrant of to-day is the servant of to-morrow. God will never fail at the proper time (which is God's time, not ours) to appear for his people's safety,

and no matter how hard and difficult the place they are in, God is abundantly able to deliver their soul from the snare of the fowler and his darling from the jaws of the lion. Now, coming to the second chapter, the Lord again answered Habakkuk, and this time the prophet was shown that the power of the Chaldeans would not prevail continually, but that Babylon itself should fall and Israel be delivered when they should have learned the truth for which God purposed their captivity. Chaldea, who had spoiled the nations, should itself be spoiled. "Because thou hast spoiled many nations, all the remnant of the people shall spoil thee; because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein." Chaldea was so powerful and so well fortified that it thought itself invulnerable and supreme forever. Chaldea set its nest on high, that it might be secure against all dangers; yet it took the Lord a very little while to bring all that pomp and power low in the dust of defeat and to disclose the sham of all its fancied security. Chaldea was built up by blood and established through iniquity. Her palaces were built by her slaves, those whom she had conquered. The blood of her captives mingled with the feasts of her princes. Greed, vice, lust, oppression and all manner of sin were the mortar that held Chaldea together. Was it any wonder it crumbled and fell when the Lord blew upon it to deliver his people Israel, and that it consumed away like chaff? The very stones and beams and timbers of her magnificence cried out against her wickedness. Her splendor was the mute condemnation of her wickedness. This is what is meant primarily by the words: "The stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it." The very stones of their palaces testify to the oppression and guilt through which they were erected, and the beam out of the timber should add its witness to this condemnation. God's people were slaves in Babylon. The ear of their God was ever open to their cry, even though he seemed often not to hear. Their wounds and stripes, their burdens and tears, were all borne in their Jehovah's mind until it came his time to recompense them on their enemies. Their very sorrows cried out against their captors. Thus did God's living stones and timbers cry out against the evil round about them and unto their God to deliver them. When a subject of grace is made to see himself a sinner, he sees the vileness of the house and the earthly kingdom in the midst of which he lives. He is now a living stone, and cries out of the wall because of oppression, and his cry is answered by all the beams and timbers of the house of God. All of God's people have a tender and compassionate fellow-feeling for every mortal that has ever been made to see himself a sinner in the sight of God. This testimony of sinfulness brings amens out of the hearts of all the members of the temple. Every testimony of weakness, of unworthiness, of sinfulness, awakens a response in every contrite heart, for all have been made to know what the burden and oppression of sin is. Just as the very stones and beams of those palaces, reared through oppression and vice, cried out against their builders, so our frail refuges of lies tumbled about our ears when the Spirit of the Lord disclosed to us the rottenness of our works and swept away the spider's web in which we had sought to clothe ourselves. Then we saw that all is vanity, that even man at his best estate is altogether vanity. We had vainly

sought justification by the deeds of the law, but any building so reared is founded on the sinking and shifting sands of human wisdom, and cannot abide the day, the terribleness, of our Lord's coming. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, and none know it better than God's own people, for they are the ones who fall there.

We have written on this subject at the request of Mrs. J. H. Holloway, of Gorman, N. C. The third chapter of Habakkuk, which closes the book, is the best of all, and is the glorious psalm of praise welling up from the heart of the prophet unto the throne of God. After the Lord disclosed to him how Chaldea would eventually fall and Israel be delivered, the prophet had a wonderful exercise of faith, and narrated in psalm the goodness and mercy of the Lord in his dealings with his people. However, we will not go into this now, as we were only asked to write on Habakkuk ii. 11, so this will suffice for this time. L.

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Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

J. P. Fields, Ky., $1.00; J. C. Chester, Ky., $2.00; C. Carter, Canada, $1.00; Miss Margaret Williams, Va., $3.00; Mrs. John Sked, N. J., $3.50; E. B. Ault, Texas, $1.00; Lydia C. Ray, Texas, $2.00; J. H. Lanier, Tenn., $1.00; First Ind. Baptist Church, Woburn, Mass., $2.00; J. R. Arnn, Ark., $.50; W. E. Ellis, Texas, $1.00; Mrs. Hart, N. Y., $1.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Y. C. Norris, our dear father, was born near Lafayette, Chambers Co., Ala., March 23rd, 1840, and departed this life at his home, Chalybeate, Ga., July 29th, 1914, making his stay upon earth 74 years, 4 months and 6 days. He was the third of seven children born to Dr. Jack Norris and Katherine Norris (nee Pratt), of Chambers County, Ala., where he lived until nearly grown, when his family moved to Greenville, Butler Co., Ala. At the age of twenty-one he went to the war between the States, returning at the close very little the worse for his service. At the age of thirty-one he was married to Fannie J. Lloyd, Dec. 19th, 1871, and to that union were born eleven children, one dying in infancy, all the others, with our mother, living to mourn our loss. The children who survive him are: B. L. Norris, of Lineville, Ala., Y. C. and J. C. Norris, of Olney, Texas, Mrs. N. C. Alston, of Bullochville, Ga., Mrs. Herman Rodgers, of Omaha, Ga., Mrs. G. W. Smith, of Standing Rock, Ala., Mrs. E. C. Dean, of Chalybeate, Ga., Miss Naomi Norris and Mrs. J. A. Mayberry, of Columbus, Ga., and the humble writer of this notice. Father professed a hope in Christ and united with the Primitive Baptist Church in the year 1877, near Greenville, Ala., and was a much loved and consistent member until about the year 1885, when there arose some disturbance in the church on predestination, upon which father was excluded for his belief in the unlimited predestination of God and his absolute sovereignty over all things; and though several of the members begged him to come back to the church, he could not do so, as he said he had no apologies to make and could never forfeit his faith and views given him by his omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient God. A few years after this he moved with his family to Columbus, Ga., and though he continually searched his surroundings for some who possessed and professed the faith once delivered unto the saints, he found none. Thus it was his lot to walk almost totally alone. He was indeed a pilgrim and a stranger on earth, ever looking forward to the full consummation of his faith and the full and final glory of God. In his younger days he was a literary teacher, but had to give it up, as all worldly and temporal things lost all attraction for him in the light of the glories of God, which it pleased the Father in love and mercy to reveal to him. He was not a preacher, but a teacher indeed, for his special gift was in interpreting and expounding the holy Scriptures. He was not a writer, but loved to read and meditate, especially his Bible, which he had read almost continually since I can remember. I could not understand him then, but can look back now and see how deeply he walked, how he suffered for Jesus' sake. We feel sure he walked very close to his Savior. He brought his children up in the nur-

ture and admonition of the Lord, from which not one has departed. All love and respect the Old Baptist faith and doctrine, and five or more are subjects of the all-saving, amazing grace of God. Father was a reader and lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and found most of his fellowship and communion with the saints on earth through that medium. He talked much of his death before the end came, and was willing to go; said he had no fear of death, but felt it would be far better to depart and be with Christ. Although his health was very feeble for several years before his death, he was able to go to the table with his family until a few days before his death. Very quietly and peacefully he passed away. He desired to be buried as much like his Savior as was possible, which desire was carried out. There was no funeral, as he did not desire that an Arminian or so-called Baptist preacher have anything to say of his departure, and we knew of none of our faith that could be had. He wished no strangers to attend his body, so his sons and sons-in-law were his pall-bearers. Thus he was quietly laid to rest in a tomb of stone to await the glorious resurrection morn. Though we sadly miss him and mourn his absence, we know that our loss is his eternal gain. God said, I will be a husband to the widow and a father to the orphan, and we know his words are truth. May he reconcile us to his perfect judgment.

To the memory of our sainted and blessed father.

(MRS.) C. M. THETFORD.

Mrs. Matilda M. Williams, wife of Abner Williams, died Jan. 23rd, 1918, aged 77 years. She had been in feeble health the last nine or ten years, but being of a very ambitious nature was generally up and about, and if possible would be present meeting days, for she loved the assembly of the saints more than any earthly assembly. She was baptized by Elder S. H. Durand about forty-seven years ago, uniting with the Old School Baptist Church in Cammal, Pa. She lived and died in the love and fellowship of her brethren, sound and firm in the faith of God's elect people. A little more than forty years ago I met her at Cammal, Pa. She with sister Lamison and sister Fackenthall came on foot from Jersey Shore, Pa., a distance of twenty-three or twenty-four miles. Those were golden days for the little church. She was for a number of years with her daughter and son-in-law, Dr. Cozer, in their beautiful home at Williamsport, Pa., who faithfully ministered to her comfort until the home was burned, after which she made her home with her daughter, Abba Moffit, who with her three sons did all that kind hands could do for her comfort as long as she lived, with the assistance of Dr. Crozer and wife. She was a faithful, loving christian in the church, a kind and faithful loving mother in her family, and a good, helpful neighbor to all near her; but she has gone home to be with God, absent from this world and present with the Lord. The disease of which she died was called bronchial grip, she living but a short time after she was taken. She leaves one son, two daughters, sixteen grandchildren and three great-grandchildren, with many friends to mourn the loss of one they loved.

The writer of this notice conducted the funeral, which was held from the home of Mrs. Moffat Friday, Jan. 25th, after which the remains were placed in a vault in the outskirts of Williamsport for the present.

May the grace of God be richly ministered to the mourning ones, is the desire of the writer.

D. M. VAIL.

Mrs. Mary F. Hyatt Caldwell was born Jan. 17th, 1868, and died Feb. 6th, 1918, aged 50 years and 21 days. She was united in marriage to Albert A. Caldwell April 23rd, 1887. To that union were born nine children, two dying while quite young, seven surviving. After her marriage she lived in Kokomo, Ind., until 1903, then moved to western Kansas. She was a member of the "Christian Church" while living in Indiana, but after moving to Kansas she joined the Primitive Baptists, and died a faithful believer in salvation by grace (Jesus Christ). She was a devoted and faithful companion to her afflicted husband, who passed from this life about three months before her death. She was buried in Oakwood Cemetery at Parsons, Kansas. Elder John Preston, of Iola, Kansas, conducted the funeral services and preached to the comfort of those who survive.

C. J. PEACOCK.

Horace Boice was born July 24th, 1843, at Ashokan, N. Y., and died October 22nd, 1917, at Ulster, near Kingston, N. Y. He was married to Mary E. Davis, of Roxbury, N. Y., Sept. 24th, 1874, who died some years ago. To them were born eleven children; one died young, the rest survive him, also twenty-three grandchildren, one brother and two sisters. Burial was at old Hurley, N. Y. He was not a member of the church, but had attended Old School Baptist meetings all his life. He was a kind husband and loving father, and will be greatly missed by all.

In the absence of an Old School Baptist Elder, the services were conducted by the New School Baptist minister of Kingston, N. Y.

(MRS.) W. M. GRIFFIN.

Mrs. Elvee Ferguson (nee Murphy) was born near Montrose, W. Va. She was married to D. A. Ferguson April 16th, 1874, and to that union were born fourteen children, eight girls and six boys; eight are living to mourn their loss, six dying in infancy. She professed a hope in Christ and united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Leading Creek, and was baptized April 26th, 1858, by Elder J. B. Cross, of Belington, W. Va. She lived a consistent member of

the church to the day of her death, and had a host of friends, as she was kind and loving to all. She died of dropsy of the heart and asthma. She was a patient sufferer, and bore all without murmuring. She died Nov. 20th, and was buried Nov. 22nd in the Leading Creek Cemetery at the Baptist meeting-house. The funeral was held from the home, now so desolate without her dear presence, conducted by Elder J. B. Cross, of Belington, W. Va., and Elder Bartlett, of Philippi, W. Va. She has left us to be with the Lord forever.

APPOINTMENTS.

PLEASE publish the following appointments:

Trenton, N. J., Friday, March 15th, 27 Stouthard St., home of Mrs. Elizabeth R. Bodine, 7:45 p. m.; March 16th, Stockton, N. J., at the home of sister Horner, 2:30 p. m.; March 17th, Locktown, 11 a. m.; Frenchtown, 4 p. m. D. M. VAIL.

MEETINGS.

THERE will be an all day meeting at Halcottville, N. Y., Sunday, March 3rd, at the Grange Hall. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

There will be no meeting at Arena, N. Y., on Sunday, March 3rd. The brethren will commence meeting at Union Grove, N. Y., on the first Sunday in April (7th). GEORGE RUSTON.

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A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m

ALL WELCOME

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1918. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

1 CORINTHIANS XIII. 13.

"AND now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have felt impressed for some time to write on the above subject, but feeling my weakness and inability to write to the comfort of the saints, I have failed to do so until the present time.

This text is comprehensive, and embraces the whole system of salvation by grace. Faith, hope and charity are inseparably connected, and abide alone with the heirs of grace and are the gifts of God. If so, how can the poor, helpless sinner obtain them by his own efforts? Men are now urged to believe in order to obtain eternal life. We believe a thing according to the testimony adduced. How can the poor, blind sinner believe without evidence? The sinner does not believe in order to obtain life, but because he has life. The apostle says, He that believeth on the Son hath life, so we must have life first, which is given us by the Holy Spirit, independent of means or the instrumentalities of man. Again, He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; not will be born. If we believe the evidence that the children of grace have is the Spirit of God bearing witness with our spirit, we are the children of God, and if children, then heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. We are now killed to the love of sin, and would shun it as a deadly poison. Dear child of grace, is this your experience? If so, you can rest assured that God has given you eternal life. He said, I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. A precious thought contained in the text is the word "hope." This is closely connected with faith, and follows after regeneration. The apostle speaks of it as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, which enters into that within the vail. How precious the word "hope" to the child of grace when he feels cast down, with not a ray of light from the presence of the Lord to comfort him; he then feels as did the psalmist when he asked himself the question, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him." The apostle says, "Hope that is seen, is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with pa-

tience wait for it." These precious truths are written in the Bible for the comfort of all God's dear children, and O how thankful we should be for such a precious gift.

I will now call your attention to the word "charity," which I think is the brightest jewel contained in the text, which is love. This love is pure, because God is its author. There is nothing we can do to produce it, for it is the gift of God. All our efforts to do good, in giving to the poor and afflicted, will not be charity, unless we are impressed to do so by the Spirit of God. Some are giving largely to help the poor, and for the support of what they call charitable institutions, when perhaps there is no Bible charity in it. The apostle says, Though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. The apostle tells us in few words the true principles of charity; he says, Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil. My dear brethren, have you this pure charity? I fear that I have not. Though I professed a hope when but a boy, and am now in my eighty-fourth year, and have been trying to serve God all that time, I must say with the apostle, that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing.

The text says the greatest of these is charity. This love existed with Christ in God before the world began. He says, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. This love embraces all of his elect people, chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and for whom he died. We need faith and hope in this life, but if we are permitted to enter that house not made with hands, and be like him, we shall not need faith and hope, but charity will abide forever, and we will all sing one song, and it will be to Him who loved us and washed us in his own blood; to him we will give all the glory forever. What a glorious thought this is! When I think of it I feel like the apostle did when he said, "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you."

Dear editors, dispose of this as you think best, and all will be well with me.

SILAS WILLIAMS.

ALBANY, Oregon, Feb. 4, 1918.

GLENARM, Illinois.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—On the first of the new year I wrote a letter to our venerable brother and companion in tribulation, Elder Silas H. Durand, and mailed it to him with the suggestion that he might, if he thought proper, send it to the SIGNS. He wrote me in a short time, acknowledging the receipt of my letter, and his gratification in hearing from me, and said: "I send the letter to the SIGNS for publication," but, inadvertently I presume, inclosed it with the personal letter written to me. Hence I am now mailing it to you, with this explanation, for your disposal. I regretted indeed to hear of his failing eyesight, so much so that it is with difficulty that he writes. My acquaintance with brother Durand began sixty odd years ago, when I became a reader of the SIGNS, my father being a subscriber thereto. In 1866 we met face to face at an association in southern Indiana. Since then we have met at various times and places. His lucid explanation of hundreds of texts of Scripture has left with me vivid recollections of his earnest zeal in the Master's cause,

In 1871 I attended for the first time the Warwick Association, which was held that year with the church in Middletown. That was forty-seven years ago. What changes have taken place in the social, religious and political world since then! None the less, either, are the changes that have taken place in the militant kingdom, or church of Christ. Hundreds of the then able defenders of the truth as it is in Jesus have fallen asleep and rest from their labors. At the meeting referred to there were, if my memory serves me correctly, the following ministers in attendance: Elders G. Beebe, Wm. L. Beebe, R. Hartwell, Wm. Quint, W. M. Mitchell, J. R. Respess, P. D. Gold, Jos. Badger, Sr., Jos. Badger, Jr., Jos. L. Purington, Wm. Purington, S. H. Durand and the unworthy writer. Of this number brother Gold, brother Durand and I are the only survivors. The able discourses that I listened to thrilled my very soul to its innermost depths. The testimony as it came from each witness was perfect, and without a single jar or discordant note. The exaltation of Christ and the abasement of man in setting forth the wonderful plan of salvation was the keynote. The simple story of the cross is one that thrills the heart and soul of every heaven-born soul. It may be a stumbling-block to the uncircumcised Jew, and foolishness to the wisdom-seeking Greek, but to those who are called, both Jew and Greek, it is Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Your brother in hope,

J. G. SAWIN.

GLENARM, Ill., Jan. 1, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—I have had you in mind many times during the past year, and have as often thought to write you, but something always seemed to come in my way, not the least of these being a consciousness of inability to write instructively to one whose gift in the ministration of the word, both from pulpit and pen, has been so graciously blessed, heralding good news throughout the length and breadth of the land, bringing comfort, consolation and encouragement to thousands of the Lord's children in times of distress and poverty of soul, who in return were enabled to praise God for all his benefits toward them. Everywhere throughout the land liberated captives have gladly received, through you, the word and testimony of the dear Savior as the Lord gave you wisdom and strength to proclaim it. The many seals of your ministry must now, in your declining years, be a source of great comfort and satisfaction. Indeed, I am reminded of what Job said, and that it must apply in your case: "And thine age shall be clearer than the noonday." You have passed your fourscore years, and are now as a full ripe shock of corn in his season, and Job's words seem to me to be fully verified; for when the divine effulgence greets and expands the heavenly vision as the Spirit takes of the things of God and shows them unto us, the infirmities of age are swept aside and the joys of salvation and hope come to us in all their undimmed radiance, far above the brightness of the noonday sun, and we are once more in the morning of our youth, when the candle of the Lord, in our early experience, shed its light on our pathway. Then again Job says, Thou shalt be as the morning. How invigorating the dew of morning as it softly falls on the tender plants! When the doctrine of God our Savior descends as the rain upon the earth it is "as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord

commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." No distress so great, no sorrow so dark and bewildering, and no foe so strong and unrelenting, but what the presence and power of Him who hath said, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord," will drive away sorrow and mourning, turn distress and anguish of soul into praise and thanksgiving, and hurl back every foe that would seek their hurt. Their righteousness being of the Lord, they are walled about as a strong city, and the glory of the Lord is in the midst thereof. Thus the light breaks forth as the morning, and the Lord's children realize that in his presence is fullness of joy, a joy that tongue cannot express. Carnal things are forgotten while heavenly rapture fills heart and soul, and the cup of joy is brim full. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." This is the joy of salvation restored unto us. Age and infirmities are not troublesome factors now. By the power of God alone cometh this joy into the soul. Thy light, my brother, is come. It is an uncreated light; it is the Light that John came to bear witness of, the light that you have so faithfully testified of for nearly threescore years. You know the prophet Isaiah says, Thy light is come, and, The glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. This light, too, has shined through you to the comfort of Zion and the bringing in of many ripe sheaves into the storehouse of the Master, and no doubt you have felt as did Jacob when he exclaimed, This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. Jacob had risen early in the morning, and though his head had lain upon pillows of stone, he had seen a most wonderful vision in the nighttime. But now it is morning, early in the morning. The Sun of Righteousness had risen, and its heavenly lustre fell upon Jacob, and whatever may have been his doubts before, he is now sure the Lord was in the place. As the Lord reveals himself to his servants it intensifies their conception of his unchanging love, and that he never suffers his faithfulness to fail nor his promises to go unfulfilled. I trust I have now and then along the uneven pathway of life been given a glimpse of heavenly and divine things, otherwise I could not have overcome the carnal fears and difficulties which have so often harassed my soul. I, too, am nearing the end of my fourscore years, and now as I glance back over nearly fifty-eight years that I have been in great weakness trying to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ, my work appears so small and insignificant, as well as barren of gospel fruit, in comparison with that of yours, and others who have labored so incessantly for the cause of the Redeemer, that I am often made to doubt the reality of my call to the ministry, and were it not for the occasional manifestations of divine presence and help, as before mentioned, I would have perished long ago. However, may we both be enabled to say with Paul as he was nearing the end of his eventful life's journey: The time of my departure is at hand. I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me, and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing. O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out.

When mortality is swallowed up of life, and this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, then we shall see him as he is and be like him.

Your brother in hope of eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord,

J. G. SAWIN.

OSKALOOSA, Kans., Feb. 5, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Brother in that blessed relationship of being children of the same Father. I often think how sweetly that precious relationship is expressed by the words of Christ when he said, My Father and your Father, and my God and your God; and in teaching us to pray he said, Say, Our Father, thus plainly indicating our joint-heirship with him. For which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren. In that feeling of kinship we are all made glad to hear from one another of the way the Lord is leading each one; for after he has brought the blind by a way they knew not, he still leads them in paths they have not known. What a wise provision of his grace it is that we have not known beforehand of the dark and sorrowful places in the paths in which he leads us, and often when having come through the same deep and troubled waters we realize that words are too little to express the sympathy felt for each other in the same mutual woes, and also in the temptation to question our Father, and say, Why hast thou made me thus?

My object in writing is to send a letter written by the late Elder A. D. Jones, which came to me as a cup of cold water in a dry and parched land, when by distance and heavy persecution I was prevented for years from meeting with the people of God. If in your judgment it would be food for any other hungry soul, place it before them in the SIGNS, otherwise withhold it.

In fellowship of the truth, I remain as ever, unworthy of the hope vouchsafed to me, of a better life,

MARY ELLISON.

TOPEKA, Kansas.

DEAR SISTER ELLISON:—Your kind letter was received, and read with interest, as all your letters are. You spoke of your cast down feeling, and seemed to think it would cast a gloom or shadow over us after passing through such lovely seasons. Well, if holy men of old had never been troubled in that way, then we might feel disappointed, but the apostle Paul testifies in the eighth chapter of Romans, and says, For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together until now; and not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves do groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. Now here is the testimony of Christ, which is the truth. You say you have been continually crying to the Lord to give you a token, that you may know, or set you as a seal upon his arm. My dear sister, the good Lord has surely given you, and is still giving you, token after token, for it is the living child that cries, not the dead. You seem to be wearying yourself about a portion of Scripture that was spoken by the dear Savior to the Pharisees and scribes, who demanded a sign. They were a wicked and adulterous generation, whom Christ said seeketh after a sign, and no sign shall be given them but the sign of Jonas the prophet. That was a generation of vipers, and the promises are not given to them, but to the seed of Abraham, which are Christ's. But God has promised to show them (the

seed of Abraham) signs and wonders in heaven, and the apostle did shew forth many signs and wonders in their day, as did Moses and the prophets. The dear Savior was set for a sign that should be spoken against, and so were his people. He spoke by the prophet Isaiah thus: "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me, are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts." The Lord promised to give his people an ensign. (Isaiah xi. 10–12.) Now an ensign is a mark of note to distinguish one from another, and his people are marked, and one of the marks, or signs, is a broken heart, a contrite spirit, and he said on one occasion, that these signs shall follow them that believe. If they drink any deadly thing (Arminian doctrine) it shall not hurt them. See Mark xvi. 18. Here are some other signs promised. You will no doubt remember, my sister, that poor old Hezekiah asked for a sign, that he might know whether the Lord would heal him, and that he would go up into the house of the Lord on the third day, for he had been sick unto death, and so are all God's people, their wound is unto death, and the Lord said by the prophet Isaiah, "This sign shalt thou have of the Lord, that the Lord will do the thing that he hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go backward ten degrees? And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees. And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the Lord; and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down by the dial of Ahaz." Here is something contrary to nature, for the shadow to go backward ten degrees. Even so when the Lord turned the shadow backward, (which was the law of condemnation) the apostle Paul said, Those things were a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ, and had given sinners the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which made them free from the law of sin and death. This was a sign, and an evidence that the Lord would not only heal them, but that he would do what he had promised; and not only so, but even now, at this present time also, he commands the shadow to move backward, so we can see the glorious Sun of Righteousness shining with all his healing powers. It is then that the doubts are all removed from our troubled breast. We find that the old servant Gideon prayed for a sign to be given him, that he might know that the Lord would deliver Israel by his hand. He said, "Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; and if the dew be on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said. And it was so, for he rose up early on the morrow, and thrust the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl full of water. And Gideon said unto God, Let not thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once: Let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the fleece; let it now be dry upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew. And God did so that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground."—Judges vi. 37–40. So we see that God did, and does still, show signs and wonders unto his chosen people, but unto a wicked and adulterous generation there is no sign given but the sign of Jonas. Now, my sister, the Lord's people can bear witness to this sign also. How often has this been seen by his chosen people. The fleece is the clothing of the sheep, and the children of God have seen

the fleece, or clothing, dampened by the dew that fell upon it when the Lord would let that heavenly dew drop upon it, and yet all of the earth or world would be dry, and *vice versa.*

Well, I will close for fear I weary you. Since I have written I am made to wonder why I have been led thus to write, but it seemed when I read your letter that my mind was so directed, for what purpose I know not, but if you can glean anything from this I hope you will remember the dear Lord in your thanksgiving, and that he will remember us all in his heavenly blessings, and also temporal.

Yours in hope of eternal life, and in christian fellowship,

A. D. JONES.

OXFORD, North Carolina.

DEAR EDITORS:—I received from brother J. H. Gooch, of Stem, N. C., one of your good papers, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and enjoyed so much the contents of it that I was induced to get you a few subscribers that I felt would enjoy reading it. I like the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES; it seems to be the same as it was many years ago, contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints: salvation by grace. For by grace are ye saved, through the obedience of Christ, who was foreordained of God according to his own will and purpose. He said, Not my will, but my Father's be done. He came to save his people from their sins. He was given and born unto us for that purpose, to live for us, to be tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. Sin was not an act of God, but of creatures, therefore they could not satisfy the law, for in Adam all died, and are in a state of depravity under the law of sin and death; not one of them can extricate himself from under that law. We clearly see from the Scripture that there was no law given that could save his people from their sins, for by grace are they saved. So in Christ all of his people are made alive; every man in his order: Christ the firstfruits, after that they that are his at his coming. Then there had to be a new thing: Christ made of a woman, made under the law, who knew no sin. He was the perfect man; he lived and obeyed the law to a jot and tittle for them, then said, I have finished the work my Father sent me to do, and am ready to be delivered up to die on the cross. Not my will, but thy will be done; and he gave up the ghost and forever perfected eternal redemption for every man his Father gave him. He by the grace of God tasted death for every man. His body was confined in the tomb three days and nights for the past, present and future, then his Father raised him from the dead, having the victory over death, hell and the grave. While he was separated by death from his brethren they, like we, felt to be without God and without hope in the world. O what a sad time that was with us; our hope was deferred and it made our heart sick; but when our desire came it was a tree of life. We were hungry, and had nothing to eat; thirsty, and had no water to quench our thirst. Like David, we would have fainted unless we had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord. After he arose from the dead he appeared to his brethren and sisters. They that do his Father's will, the same are his mother, his brethren and sisters. We are begotten again unto a lively hope, which hope is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and entereth into that within

the vail. Then we that have been begotten again unto a lively hope are in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began. Then it was grace given us in him before we did either good or evil. For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth. Who then that has the gift and calling of God can doubt the election, adoption and predestination of all things; that God created and made all things? While sin was not the work of God, it being the transgression of the law, he predestinated the end of sin and wickedness. He says the way of the ungodly shall perish; and also the wicked, not only their way, but they, shall perish. If God is not a sovereign God how could he make all things work together for good to them that love him, to them who are the called according to his purpose? Our God is under no law, he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him. He had the right, the will and power to choose a people in Christ before the world had any form. The earth was without form, and void, before the children were born. Did he not have a perfect right to make vessels as it pleased him? How could there be an elect without a nonelect? How could he choose a people out of the world without leaving the world? Christ said, I pray not for the world, but for them thou gavest me out of the world. Why did he pray for them? Because he loved them, as his Father loved him. He told them the world would hate them because it hated him first. Is not that true? Yes, we have learned it by experience. Hath not God made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil? The wicked are reserved unto the day of judgment; they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath. To the minds of Primitive people either everything or nothing must be held in subjection to the will and providence of our God. Even the wickedness of ungodly men is restricted by God's power, so that the wrath of man shall praise him. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy; they that have no mercy shall obtain no mercy. Did not God make the vessel of wrath fitted to destruction, and the vessel of mercy? Did not God make that old crooked serpent? He had a purpose for Pharaoh, for the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. The nonelect will find fault with God; they have no reason to hope in God's mercy; but the elect have reason for hope.

This is not intended to disgrace the beloved SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but to be disposed of as you think best.

Yours in love and hope of heaven,

I. H. HARRIS.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Feb. 14, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—If in your judgment the inclosed letter would be profitable to the readers of the SIGNS, kindly publish it. It is good to me. In sending it without asking his permission, I am confident brother Dodson will excuse the liberty taken.

In the fellowship of what he writes, I am your brother,

JOHN McCONNELL.

SPRINGFIELD, Massachusetts.

DEAR BROTHER McCONNELL:—I have been thinking of you and our little band

to-day. Perhaps it is but natural that I should think of you, since I have formed the habit of being with you almost every Sunday. I hope, however, that my thoughts concerning the people of God cannot be attributed altogether to that. Sometimes I seem to be dead and unable to eat for myself of that bread of life when the gospel is preached, but when I get in a strange land and hear things which according to my understanding are not in harmony with the true teachings of the inspired Scriptures, nor with the experience of the children of God, as I hope has been taught me by the one great Teacher, and there is that within me which appears to discern between truth and error, which tries the spirits to see whether they are of God, I am encouraged to hope that these workings of the inward man are evidences of life; and, too, when I am made to beg the Lord for mercy, to deal with me not according to what I deserve, but to have pity and compassion upon such a creature as I, it seems to suggest a sign of life, for we know naturally that only the living child cries, and so are we reminded that he is the God of the living, and will only be worshipped by a living people, in a real living way. How often does it seem the way of death to us. It is the way of death to the flesh, for all flesh must be crucified, but when we are crucified in the flesh, are we not also quickened and made alive unto Christ by that mighty power which wrought in him in raising him from the dead? That seems to be the way we are to be brought into fellowship with him, by overcoming through him (Jesus) the power of death. Must we not taste death? I mean a living death, something that we actually feel, taste and handle before we can appreciate the joy of his salvation. Perhaps I do not make myself clear, and it is because of my inability to give expression to what I feel that I sometimes determine to put a watch upon my mouth that words of confusion should not come forth, and why I am trying to write to you as I am about things which I know so little, is a wonder to me. Sometimes I am made to feel that you know something of my make-up, and can understand my feeble efforts and sympathize with my shortcomings. I just felt I wanted to pen you a few lines, as I did not get to see or speak with you after deciding to come to Springfield. My present intention is to be here at least two weeks, and it may be longer. Hope you and sister McConnell are well, as well as all of the other dear ones. Remember me to them next Sunday. Have had a two hour walk over the snow and ice, and feel somewhat fatigued.

Yours in hope,

R. LESTER DODSON.

EDGEMOOR, Del., Jan. 18, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—When I was young I used to attend Sunday-schools, revivals and other meetings. The religion I learned in those days might be summed up in my youthful mind in these words. I understood that salvation was a very important matter, and that it was easy to get but hard to keep. All I had to do was to comply with the conditions and I could easily get religion, but when I had gotten religion I must hold out faithful or lose it. This conditional salvation seemed to me so uncertain that I used to wonder if any one could live a lifetime faithful enough to finally get to heaven. Another thought often came to my mind: If salvation was really so eternally important, why did not every one try to get it? It seemed hard work to persuade any one to make a start to get

it. How different is this conditional salvation from that which is found in the sacred Scriptures and revealed to the chosen people of God. I have never found any better way to tell how salvation is obtained than what Christ told Nicodemus: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." We also find in John i. 13: "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Also in James i. 18: "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." In 1 Peter i. 23: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." Many other passages might be quoted to prove that the salvation of all the elect or chosen people of God is wholly, entirely and completely the work of our Savior. When Christ was about to leave his disciples he gave them a most precious promise, John xiv. 16, 17: "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive." And in the twenty-sixth verse: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things." While the world cannot receive this Spirit of truth, it is the precious privilege of the children of God not only to receive the Spirit, but to have him open the Scriptures to their understanding and teach them all things. Of all the hundreds of religions in the world this is the only religion that gives all the glory of our salvation to God, who is the author and finisher of it. Before the foundation of this world the children of God were chosen in Christ, and also before the foundation of this world Christ verily was foreordained, but was manifest in these last times for you who by him do believe in God. In Isaiah xl. 10, we read, "His reward is with him, and his work before him." His reward was his chosen people, and his work was their salvation. Now, since God is our salvation, there surely can be no uncertainty about it. "The counsel of the Lord, that shall stand." As we find also in John xvii 2, "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." In the fourth verse Christ said, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." In the last words of David, the psalmist of Israel, he said, God "hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure."

B. F. HAMILTON.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 19, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you this letter for publication in the SIGNS, if you think best. I think it will be of interest and comfort to your readers.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

MONTROSE, W. Va., Jan. 30, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—Having read so many good articles in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES which you have written, it came to my mind to write and tell you how I have enjoyed reading them. In August, 1876, I attended the association at Mount Olive Church, Barbour County, W. Va., and heard you preach. I stayed at John Corder's, and if I am not mistaken you stayed on Friday night at the same place. I remember that the ministers were talking together, and I was listening to what they said. That was two years before I received a hope in Christ,

but I had been in trouble about my sinful condition for many years. I was then twenty-three years old. When I was eleven years old the first impression was made on my mind. I then thought that I could live right, and that was religion; but later I felt to be a great sinner, and would promise myself to live better, but always broke my promises. I was of a lively disposition, and did not want any one to know that I was troubled about my sins. When I would hear any one talk on spiritual things I could hardly keep from crying, and often when my sister and I were at the Old School Baptist meetings we could not keep from shedding tears, as they told us our own feelings. She was exercised at the same time, but neither of us told the other of our exercises of mind. I was married the fall after I was at that association, and for two years, or nearly that long, I seemed to be in darkness, and prayed the Lord to give me light. We had an association at what is called the Leading Creek Church. I lived about a half mile from the church, but it rained on Sunday and I could not get there. On Monday morning I felt to thank the dear Savior for his kindness to me, not knowing then that he had forgiven my sins. I thought I would go to a secret place and pray, but instead of praying I felt like singing and praising the Lord. The hymn came to me, "When I can read my title clear," and I sang it. I did not realize until in later years what that hymn meant. The great trials I had to go through I did not want to tell any one but my husband and sister. The next morning after I received a hope I felt that peace within which none but God can give, and that day while going to see my sister I rejoiced in God my Savior. She had not yet received a hope; but in a few days my mind was drawn back to worldly things. I did not seem to be troubled about joining the church until the next winter after I received a hope. Then I wanted to be baptized, and the burden grew heavier and heavier. I had a sick spell, and could see a beauty in the Primitive Baptist Church that I could not see anywhere else, and when that burden came over me I trembled under it. My husband and his mother, who was living with us then, were opposed to my joining the Baptist Church, and it was only the power of God that made me do my duty. Although I felt very sinful and unworthy, the church received me the Saturday before the fourth Sunday in June, and I was baptized the next day. Since then I have had the world, the flesh and the devil to contend with, and sometimes it seems that the battles are hard; but my prayer is, Thy will be done in heaven and on earth. May the God of love be with you and make you strong in the faith in your old age, is my prayer. Do with this as you think best.

Your sister through much tribulation,
JULIA C. WILMOTH.

WACO, Georgia.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have just finished reading the SIGNS of December 1st, 1917, and I want to assure you that my poor heart has been refreshed and encouraged, and would say that some of the communications have been real food to my soul. In these cold and perilous times upon which we have fallen, it is indeed refreshing to one whose heart cries out and thirsts for the pure, sweet waters of divine truth, to get hold of a paper like the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It is indeed like rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of valleys. It is like pools of water in the wilderness, and springs of

water in a dry land. But this is what the Lord has promised to the poor and needy among his chosen people. But the question that troubles and perplexes me, and ofttimes causes "anxious thought," is whether I am one of his people or not. I feel and know in my heart that I am not worthy to be reckoned among His people; and yet, if my heart deceives me not, I love God's people with a love which no language can ever express. I know, and with shame confess, that I have been, and am still, so great a sinner, so disobedient and rebellious, that I do not deserve a place among the Old School Predestinarian Baptists, still it is the desire of my heart to live the rest of my days among them. I shall not now attempt to give any account of my past life, (it is my intention to do this at another time, and in another form,) but I feel in my soul that my travels have been altogether different from those of any other Old School Baptist that ever lived. I feel in the most profound recesses of my soul that I am less than the least of all saints, if indeed I am one of God's children at all, yet if I am not hopelessly deceived, I love his people with an ever increasing love, and I love the doctrine of God our Savior as it has always been held and maintained by the Old School Baptist people. During this present year I have traveled a great many miles, have met a large number of Old School Baptist people, and have tried to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ in many places. I have visited among the brethren in Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, Alabama and Georgia, and have everywhere been received with the greatest kindness and consideration, and, with few exceptions, I have found the Baptists everywhere sound in the faith and loyal to the truth. Conditional time salvationists, and other Arminians, have crept in in certain places, and have tried to draw away disciples after them, but everywhere the genuine Old School Baptists embrace with whole heartedness the grand old weather-beaten doctrine of salvation by grace alone, the absolute predestination of all things, the necessity of being born again, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust, the effectual calling of the saints and the final perseverance of all the elect of God through grace unto glory, total depravity, man's helplessness and utter inability to extricate himself from the thraldom in which he is by nature, and the eternal punishment of the wicked. This is the doctrine of God our Savior. It is not spoken of in the Bible as the doctrines of God, it is nowhere spoken of in the plural, but always in the singular. My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. My doctrine shall drop as the rain. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine. On the other hand, we do read in the Bible of doctrines of men, and of doctrines of devils, always in the plural, but God's doctrine, like his salvation, is one, always consistent, always harmonious.

Dear brethren, I have not touched the subject I had in mind when I began to write this letter, and as I do not wish to occupy very much of your valuable space I shall reserve that subject for a future communication. If you think this letter would be of comfort to any of God's saints, you may publish it; but if not, consign it, without apology, to the waste-basket.

Yours, in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began,

BEN HARDIN IRWIN.

MEMORY.

OF all "the manifold grace of God" there is nothing more wonderful to me than the memory of man. In fancy I go back thirty-three years in time to the hallowed spot where I first experienced the consoling influence of the Spirit, assuring me that I had found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write—Jesus of Nazareth.

"Hard was my toil to reach the shore,
Long tossed upon the ocean;
Above me was the thunderous roar,
Beneath the waves' commotion.

Darkly the pall of night was thrown
Around me, faint with terror;
In that dark hour how did my groans
Ascend for years of error."

The poet has told my story in fewer words, if less in detail, than I can hope to do at this time, but standing on an eminence of a third of a century, during which I have enjoyed a precious hope, I cannot refrain from repeating a story that is especially precious to me at this time when

"Memory to her duty true,
Brings back those precious scenes to view."

The hallowed spot in my case was the northeast corner of a sod school, near the present site of Mason City, Custer County, Nebraska, where I first my Savior found and felt my sins forgiven. For some time previous to this date, December 1st, 1884, I had felt that my hope to attain to a good hope in Christ was forever lost. I had left my native home, at Southside, Mason County, West Virginia, in April, 1883, feeling sure that I would go west and get so mixed up with worldly affairs that I never would find Him for whom I sought. Gradually I sank lower and lower in the miry sinks of sin, until all hope was lost. I had earnestly asked the Lord to deliver me out of the snares of the evil one—that of profanity, having lost all hope of that balm in Gilead, which is now my chief joy, but, in this dark hour, when I surely thought mercy could never reach my case, as quick as thought I felt him mine. My Savior stood before me, I saw his brightness round me shine and shouted, Glory, glory. A protracted meeting had been in progress at the schoolhouse for several weeks, and I had gone night after night, mainly to be in the company of a young lady with whom I was keeping company at that time. She was a consistent member of the Missionary Baptists, and being much in my company she is a living witness to what I now believe to have been my spiritual birth.

"O sacred hour, O hallowed spot,
Where love divine first found me;
Wherever falls my distant lot
My heart shall linger round thee.

And when from earth I rise to soar
Up to my home in heaven,
Down will I cast my eyes once more
Where I was first forgiven."

J. M. AMSBERRY.

ALVARADO, Tex., Jan. 18, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—Having to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, I would like to say something in the way of appreciation and encouragement to the brethren editors and others, but feel too ignorant to say much, if anything at all, that would be beneficial or interesting to any; in fact I have been for some time asleep spiritually, if indeed I ever did have spiritual life, which is a question with me that often causes anxious thought: Do I love the Lord or no? Am I his, or am I not? Your "New Year's Greeting" seems to have had a kind of awakening tendency, brother Ker, causing me to make that inquiry and respect the prayer expressed by the poet:

"Do not I love thee, O my Lord?
Behold my heart and see;
And turn each cursed idol out
That dares to rival thee."

I do not know what has caused my late indifference to spiritual things; want of faith and a natural tendency to sin, I presume, beside the distressed condition of our country, and other things causing worry, and, as you say, to be still under such trials requires much faith. O for faith like Job's, that will enable us to say under all circumstances, Though he slay me, yet will I trust him. You surely did say a great deal in that short editorial; also brother Lefferts' editorial on Urim and Thummim was very instructive and interesting. His reference to the young man's discovery reminded me of three young men who claimed to have called down the spirit of modern Missions behind a haystack near the college where they were accustomed to pray while attending school, learning how to preach to get a good salary, which I presume has about as much truth in it as the claim of the young man he alluded to in that editorial, but no more. Elder Gilbert Beebe said he thought the spirit they called, if indeed they called any, most have come from below, which I think is a very fair conclusion, as the spirits by which they are governed in their Missionary operations, together with the many auxiliary institutions, seem to be more in keeping with spirits that come from below than with any that come from God.

I still like to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for I believe it sets forth the truth as it is in Jesus, and I am deprived of hearing the gospel preached, being too far from any Old Baptists who preach the the whole truth. We have some here claiming to be Primitive Baptists who are afraid to preach predestination for fear of making God the author of sin, when in fact they are the party themselves who make God the author of sin, if such a thing is possible, for they say that if God did predestinate all things he is a partial and an unjust God, consequently a sinner. But we know God is not unjust, neither is he the author of sin, notwithstanding he has predestinated all things for his own glory and the good of all his predestinated people. Absolute predestination is the foundation of the Bible; limited predestination is of men.

Well, I have not written as I thought I would when I began. I wish I could write better and more interestingly, but I cannot. I join you, brother Ker, in your request for more preachers to write for the SIGNS, and thereby let their light shine.

Well, I must close lest I weary you. If you think this worth it you have my permission to publish it; if not, I will not be disappointed.

Yours in love of the truth,

G. E. KEYS.

DENTON, Ky., Feb. 10, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—I enjoy reading the SIGNS; it gives me much comfort and instruction. I see by it that the great God has wonderfully instructed his servants, and enabled them to look into the deep things that pertain to eternity. I firmly believe that you Baptist people are the people that God has made for himself to reign with him in eternity. You have the doctrine that gives God Almighty all the honor, praise and glory for all things that he created, and you have the experience that you have been taught of him, and you also have the love, which is the greatest evidence of all that God has loved you. I am persuaded to believe that the great God Almighty is the life and power of everything in the universe, both in heaven and on earth, as he is before all things and above all things. He

has made all things just as he would have them to be, and has given them life and power. In his foreknowledge it has pleased him that all things should give honor unto him. The wicked in his purpose honor him, as well as do the righteous. The wicked cannot go beyond his decree, neither can the righteous fall short, but everything is fulfilled to a jot and tittle, all is to his honor, and everything that exists shows forth his beauty, and gives praise to him who made it. It seems to me that I can see the presence of the great God in every living thing, the beasts, the fowls of the air, the fish in the sea, all vegetation and the trees of the woods. We see that the presence of the Almighty is with every living thing that he has made.

I will close by asking the question, Is there any other source of life but God himself? If he is before all things he must have given life to all things that have life. H. L. ROGERS.

TAFT, Tennessee.

DEAR EDITORS:—My mind at this time is running over the Scriptures. I am thinking of how good the Lord has been to me and how ungrateful I am for it. Everything for my good was given in Christ before the world was. It is wonderful to have a hope that he in all his perfection could think of poor me and have given me all things. I think that everything for our good was given in his Son before the world was. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ before the world began; not going to, but has already blessed, in the past tense. In Christ we have redemption; not going to get it, but have it already. Redemption from what? Sin. Not according to our works, but according to his purpose and grace; not offered us in Christ, but given us in Christ before the world began. We were not in a condition either to accept or reject; we were dead in trespasses and sin, dead to everything that pertains to the Spirit. The thing necessary is to have life, and that is the gift of God. Paul said that he stood in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began; not one condition for us to comply with in order to have this life, it is the gift of God. Peter said, The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to usward (a definite people), not willing any should perish. Any of whom? Any of us, the people of God, chosen in Christ before the world began; but that all should come to repentance. All of whom? All of us, this definite people. For this reason God exalted his Son to give this people repentance, and not only repentance, but the forgiveness of sins to Israel. Then Israel has repentance by the gift of God, so Israel repents. Why? Because of the gift; not in order to get repentance, but because they have it. No man can repent until God gives him repentance; it is the live man that repents, and not the dead man. So all Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. Now is there any one else going to be saved but Israel? If so, the Bible is silent on it. Israel's salvation was finished on the cross by the blessed Son of God; he put their sins away by the sacrifice of himself, nailing them to the cross. Your salvation was completed more than nineteen hundred years ago, and is now being made manifest to you, and God will continue to make it manifest until it reaches the last heir of promise.

I have written much more than I thought I would. Dear brethren, you can do with it as you think best, and it will be all right with me.

Your brother in much tribulation,

M. J. TOWRY.

MUNDAY, Texas, Jan. 23, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending a letter written by my wife before she died, March 14th, 1910, which I found in the Bible after she was buried. It was written to Elder J. R. Hardy, as we were taking his paper, *The Advocate of Truth*, at that time. She never joined the church, but I know she believed as I do. I would like to see the letter in the SIGNS, if it is not asking too much. Do as you think best with it.

W. I. STEWART.

MORAN, Texas, Dec. 21, 1909.

DEAR ELDER HARDY:—I have been wanting to write you for a long time and tell you how much pleasure your dear paper has given me. It is all the preaching I have had for over a year. There is no Old School Baptist Church near enough for me to attend, and I do not care to hear any others preach. They do not suit my case at all, and I do not think it right to go to hear them. I thank the dear Lord that I do not want to hear them, that I find no food in what they preach. I want to hear one whom God has called to preach his truth, not for filthy lucre's sake. Sometimes I feel so little that I could hardly go among God's people even if there were a church near. I always feel that my place is a back seat; they all seem so much better than I that I feel unworthy to be among them, but I do love them.

I want to try to tell you of a dream I had. I thought I was to be baptized, and the way I had to go was rough and rugged, but there was a little straight mark I had to walk on. On one side of the mark were mud and water, and on the other side were sharp stumps and sticks. I knew I could not walk that narrow path by myself, and as I stopped to look I saw the Savior walking before me, and I followed him and did not stumble. When we got to the end of the mark we went up a hill, and there I saw a lake of the clearest water I ever saw. There were many people there, and as I went into the water I asked them to sing the hymn, "Jesus, lover of my soul." The next day I took the hymn-book and found and sang it. I had heard it sung often, but never had it seemed so sweet to me as it did then. At times now it is just as sweet to me. Another hymn that tells how I feel is, "I am a stranger here below," &c. I cannot write of these things as I feel them, but you can see something of the way I go.

A pilgrim and a stranger,

(MRS.) W. I. STEWART.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in March (31st). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1918.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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REVELATION XX. 12.

"AND I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."

First we call attention to the fact that much of the language of this chapter is highly figurative. It is important that we remember this in reading, writing or preaching. The preceding chapter predicts the overthrow of all opposition to Christ and his kingdom. The beginning of chapter twenty declares the dominion of God over Satan, called "that old serpent, which is the Devil." He was bound with a chain and cast into the bottomless pit for a thousand years. This denotes the overthrow of antichrist for a period of time until other similar powers arose. The expression, "a thousand years," is figurative; it may have been one hundred, five hundred or more years; but during whatever time it was, the early christians had peace and quietness. In the coming up of other wicked and persecuting kings or powers, Satan was loosed again to deceive the nations, but not the saints; the elect of God are not deceived by Satan or false prophets.

The dominion of God over all creatures and powers is here clearly seen, and also the effects of his authority; on the one hand it is woe, on the other it is blessedness. In the former condemnation is seen, in the latter the resurrection of the elect from death to the standing of priests of God and of Christ, and (they) shall reign with him a thousand years. This period having been enjoyed by early christians, is past, though many are looking forward to the time when it shall come. If the reign of a thousand years is at all applicable in this day, it signifies the entire reign of Christ, and that of his saints in him, over Satan, hell and the grave. Surely this, to us, is the day of Jesus Christ; his kingdom and government are without end; all worlds, angels and devils are subject to him, and cannot go beyond their bounds, which are set.

Among these peculiar and wonderful things given John to behold is a great white throne. Great signifies majesty, white, righteousness. He that sat upon it is the victorious King Jesus in his glory, before whose face nothing imperfect, unclean, unholy, nor types or shadows could stand. "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." The first heaven and the first earth passed away, and before his face there was found no place for them; they were the old covenant with all that pertained to it. That covenant was recognized by the Lord at Mount Sinai when terror reigned and fearfulness seized Israel, but there is no place for that covenant before the throne of grace established through the work of Jesus Christ. Moses and Elias did not appear upon that great white throne; none but he whose dominion is from sea to sea and from one end of heaven to the other.

Immediately following this vision, John saw the dead, small and great, stand before God. It is very evident from this

declaration that all were dead. "If one died for all, [nations] then were all dead." This Scripture establishes the fact that all mankind was in the transgression, and that death passed upon all because of sin. The word "then" is used synomymously with of course, surely, without doubt, and does not signify time, as if at that time all died in Christ. That could not be true; we have no record that we in any sense died in Christ; the children were dead already in Adam. Christ died because we were dead, that we might live in him free from condemnation. The idea of substitution is gross error when applied to the work of Christ in behalf of his bride, the church. The substitute experiences that which the man substituted by him never endures; the one is relieved entirely by the other. The work of Christ was not that the chosen of God should not die, but that they might be made alive from the dead. He died that we who were dead might live. Christ, the husband, was responsible for the debt of his bride; in the payment of the debt she was delivered from the condition of sin and death. Death is the end of the law; by death, through transgression, every child of God chosen in Christ was separated from God. Christ the head must also suffer this separation, therefore he was made of a woman and made under the law. In this he came where the children were, and when he said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" he fully realized the separation, because of the sin of his bride. But thanks be to God, he could and did take his life again, and bursting asunder the bars of death came forth to die no more; and because he is the Husband and the life of the bride, the church lives in him, therefore can never again come into condemnation, having passed from death unto life.

John saw every one of Adam's race, dead because of sin, stand before God, or in other words, they appeared in the sight of God in the same condition; none good, no, not one. Every quickened sinner has seen the great white throne, and Christ who sits upon it; they have also seen the old covenant, the first heaven and the first earth, pass away, and all their hope of salvation in it fade as a leaf. In this revelation each sinner sees his or her own condemnation, and that also of each son and daughter of Adam; therefore we are brought into fellowship with John and say, I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God. This Scripture does not refer to the resurrection, except as each one in his or her experience is resurrected to behold the glory of God and their own condemnation.

John saw the books opened. This does not mean that books are kept by the Lord against all men, and that all shall be judged according to them at the end of this world. "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out." "He that believeth not is condemned already." "All that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses," or out of the books. The matter is settled now, the elect are forever justified, the nonelect are forever condemned. No man, angel or devil can lay anything to the charge of God's elect; it is God that justifieth; it is Christ who died, yea rather, is risen again. "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins," therefore those not embraced in the atonement are eternally lost without hope.

The opening of the books signifies understanding given of them; Paul said, that which he thought to be unto life, proved to be unto death; he was judged

out of the books according to his works, and with us was condemned because of transgression. Now finding ourselves cut off without hope of life by the law, we, like John, were given to behold the book of life (God's eternal purpose in Christ), wherein are written the names of all the redeemed, saved because their names were written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, and not because of works of righteousness which were impossible for poor, dead sinners to perform. May we be given to rejoice that our names are written in the book of life.

We have now given the best we have upon this deep and profound subject, and hope all may carefully read the twentieth chapter of Revelation and weigh our words by it and their own experience.

Written by request. K.

GENESIS XLV. 1.

"AND there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren."

We have not quoted all of the above verse, but so much of it as we have is now on our mind. For the past several months we have received several requests from different brethren to write on portions of the book of Revelation. It seems that the minds of the brethren throughout the land would like to know more about the meaning of things told in the book that John wrote while in the isle of Patmos. We suppose the present situation of affairs in this country and the almost universal state of war existing throughout the world has something to do with the minds of the spiritual turning to the Bible to see if they can find these things foretold anywhere in Scripture, and naturally they seem to think these things are couched in the book of Revelation if contained anywhere in the Bible. We have to confess that this is our feeling, and we have wanted to know more and more as to what the Scriptures say of things now going on in the world. We hope our inquirers will bear with us for not heeding their requests for views on portions of Revelation. If we had any satisfactory views to spread before them we should be glad to give them to our readers, but we are in the dark ourself as to what much of the symbolic language in Revelation means, and it is not worth while to assert definitely what one questions in one's own self. The lack of decisive views has kept us from writing much on the book of Revelation. However, is it really necessary for us to know definitely what all the Scriptures mean? Evidently it is not necessary, or the Scriptures would have ere this been unlocked to our understanding. The Lord gives his people to know only so much as is good for them; more than that he withholds from them. It is only here and there a little that we can understand anything of the deep things of God, and even that little we know not by dint of study and search, but by the revelation of God's own Spirit. This brings us to the text in Genesis quoted at the beginning of this article. There stood no man with Joseph when he revealed himself unto his brethren. Joseph is a type of Jesus. This brother whom the other brothers hated, afterward became their help in the time of famine, and the time came when those who had hated and persecuted bowed in submission and in supplication before him whom they had despised. The people of God, whose sins crucified the Lord of glory, in their natural and depraved state hated the very name of Jesus. The natural man has not the least desire for anything of God's, not even for his only begotten Son Jesus.

When, however, the sinner is quickened by the Spirit of God and born of heaven, he hungers and thirsts for that salvation which Jesus alone can accomplish. Then he hates that which he once loved and loves that which he hated. Joseph's brethren had formerly hated him, and had sold him into Egypt. They little knew that this was God's provision for them in the day of their troubles; that while they meant to do evil unto Joseph, God intended it all for their good, to save much people alive. It is no wonder that when Joseph disclosed to them his identity and told his brothers who he was, that they were troubled. They could hardly keep from being troubled in the presence of this brother whom they had so cruelly wronged, especially as they did not yet know how he felt about it and toward them, or what terrible vengeance Joseph might seek to wreak upon them to revenge himself for all they had done toward him. They could scarcely believe they heard him aright when he told them not to be angry with themselves for what they had done to him. It was to them unbelievable that this brother could have any charity for them, that he could forgive them so abundantly and so graciously consign to forgetfulness their despicable treatment of him. Such faith had Joseph that he told his brethren: "It was not you that sent me hither, but God." He did not consider that their hatred and malice toward him sent him into Egypt, but that God sent him there to save their lives by a great deliverance. It is wonderful when one can have such faith as Joseph had to look beyond this or that incident which causes pain and injury and consider that it is all but a small part of the grand divine purpose working in and through the threads of human existence. There was in Joseph's heart toward his brethren nothing but love and compassion for them. It was infinitely more so with the spiritual Joseph, Jesus, who prayed for his enemies even while they despitefully used him, asking his Father to forgive them even as they crucified him. It is well for us to note that there was no man with Joseph when he disclosed himself unto his brethren. No Egyptian eye witnessed that solemn scene. It was a secret affair between Joseph and his brethren, too sacred for any worldly eye to look upon. We emphasize this because the religious (?) world emphasizes just the contrary: that no sinner can know his Savior except through the instrumentality of men; in other words, that when our spiritual Joseph, Jesus, reveals himself unto the sinner he needs some man to stand with him to help him in the work. Even as no Egyptian beheld what passed between Joseph and his brethren, so no worldly or unbelieving person can ever understand, while in that worldly and unbelieving state, how Jesus makes himself known unto his people. The reason people have no use for revealed religion is because they know nothing about it. A man cannot testify to what he does not know. Jesus told Peter that flesh and blood had never made him (Peter) know the identity of the Son of God, that this had been revealed to him by the Father in heaven. This is the solid rock upon which all the church is built. The spiritual Joseph comes in unto his people and says in them, I am your Elder Brother. By this token they know him. Now, brethren, the point we want to make is this: if we have ever so little real knowledge of Jesus and of who he is, it makes no difference whether we can explain the whole Bible or not. It is, of course, good to know what this and that text means, and

we would not discourage any one from so inquiring, but our salvation does not depend upon knowing everything from Genesis to Revelation. If the root of the matter is in us, there is no doubt but that all the tree will grow and flourish perfectly in due time. We need not be at all disturbed at what is going on in the world so long as the knowledge of God has been vouchsafed us in some measure, be it ever so little. That little is true so far as it goes, and is just as perfect as the fullness shall be, though not in the same measure. It is well to be grounded in the basic principles of the religion of Jesus, and all taught of God by revelation are established. If the foundation be in one, the superstructure will show itself after awhile, and one need not unduly worry about it. Faith is the greatest stabilizer, and the hope based upon God-given faith is a tried and proved anchor of the soul; it will surely hold you fast to your God, no matter how the tempest may howl and dash about you. Wait upon the Lord. He will not disappoint the hope which he himself has wrought. L.

APPOINTMENTS.

PLEASE publish the following appointments:

Trenton, N. J., Friday, March 15th, 27 Stouthard St., home of Mrs. Elizabeth R. Bodine, 7:45 p. m.; March 16th, Stockton, N. J., at the home of sister Horner, 2:30 p. m.; March 17th, Locktown, 11 a. m.; Frenchtown, 4 p. m. D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. J. E. Chadwick, Texas, $2.00; Mary Hill Terry, N. J., $1.00; J. R. Nuckols, Ky., $3.00; Mrs. O. P. Owens, Ky., $3.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Elisha Palmer was born June 10th, 1848, and departed this life October 8th, 1917, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Nellie Williford, in Upshur County, Texas, at the age of 69 years, 3 months and 29 days. He was the son of John and Mary Palmer. He first joined the Missionary Baptists, but becoming dissatisfied with the doctrine and order of that people, united with the Baptists of the Primitive faith and order in June, 1874, and was baptized by Elder John A. Moore. He was married to Mary A. Little Sept. 26th, 1867. To them were born ten children, six boys and four girls, eight of whom are still living. His wife died Feb. 28th, 1902. In January, 1906, he was again married, to Mrs. Vannie Culpepper, who survives him. Elder Palmer was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry by a presbytery composed of Elders J. J. Akers and W. L. Williams, at Bluff Springs Church, in Upshur County, Texas, on the 18th day of July, 1905, and proved to be a faithful servant of the churches of that vicinity up to the time of his death. He will be sadly missed by them, more especially as there is no other minister of our faith and order in that section of country. Besides being a devoted Primitive Baptist and minister, Elder Palmer was a good citizen and neighbor, and so far as the writer has ever known was above reproach as an honorable man, and raised a large and respected family of children, who now live mostly in the country in which he died. He fought a good fight, he finished his course, he kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give him at that day; and not to him only, but also all them that love his appearing. Such is our confidence and hope of our dear brother Palmer. May the Lord comfort the bereaved and reconcile them to his holy will.

Written by Elder H. B. Jones, at the request of sister S. S. Palmer.

W. H. Chaney was born in the year 1845, in Blunt County, Ala. He received a hope in his youth, and united with the Primitive Baptist Church in his fifteenth year. He was baptized by Elder H. B. Harborn, and spent the remainder of his days on earth contending for the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace only, and the unlimited sovereignty of God over the universal world, creatures and things. In this doctrine, though despised by the wise and prudent, we always found brother Chaney standing firm, unshaken and unmovable. His first marriage was to Miss Leona Nunn, in Morgan County, Ala., in 1865. To that union were born five children, two dying in infancy. In the year 1872 brother Chaney came to Texas, stopping in Limestone County two years, where in 1873 his first wife died. Afterward

he moved to Erath County, where the Lord blessed and prospered his labors, and also blessed him with many friends. In 1875 he was married to Miss Menervia Gilbreth. To that union one child was born, which died in infancy. His second wife died in 1914. His two first wives were members with him of the same church. In 1915 he was again married, to Miss Lou Kennedy. She and his three daughters are left to mourn their loss of his kind and loving presence. His presence is missed in the church; it is lonely, his seat is vacant, his smiling face has ceased to shine while listening to the grand old doctrine proclaimed by ministers of the old order of Baptists. He is missed in his home more than anywhere; his companion, children and grandchildren are all lonely without him; but we have all evidence to believe that he is at rest, therefore we could not wish him back. He has filled his cup of suffering on earth and entered the victory won by Christ. Two of his daughters, sisters Arvyzena Chaney and Mattie Carter, are members of Hopewell Church, where their father held membership. Brother Chaney was confined to the house and his bed for about one year. All was done that medical skill and the faithful and untiring hands of his three loving daughters and friends could do, but all this could not keep him with us, the Lord's time had come to call him home, so just as the hour hand on the old clock pointed to 1 o'clock p. m., Dec. 27th, 1917, he quietly passed away without a struggle, as if falling into a sweet sleep. The next day funeral services were held in the church-house, conducted by Elder W. R. Hardin and Collins, in the presence of a large congregation, who had assembled to pay their last tribute of respect; after which his mortal remains were laid away beside his second wife in the Clairette Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection, when Jesus will come and bring those who sleep with him.

May God's sustaining grace be upon the bereaved ones, and the sweet influence of the Holy Spirit reconcile us all to God's ways.

S. N. STEPHENS.

L. D. Campbell, of Cammal, Pa., was born March 26th, 1844, in Lycoming County, Pa., where he had always lived, and died Dec. 17th, 1917. He was the son of Abner and Rhoda Campbell. Only one of his father's family, a sister, is left. He leaves a widow, two sons, two daughters, several grandchildren and other relatives and many friends, who will miss and mourn for him. May the dear Lord comfort the sad, lonely widow, sister Campbell, and all of the dear mourning ones with the precious promise: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Brother Campbell was baptized by Elder S. H. Durand more than forty years ago, uniting with the Charleston and Sullivan Old School Baptist Church, and when the church at Cammal was organized he cast in his lot with them, living in the love and fellowship of his brethren to the end. He was sound and clear in every principle of doctrine. He was deacon and clerk of the church.

Elder J. M. Fenton preached greatly to the comfort of all the mourning ones Dec. 20th. Burial was in Cammal Cemetery. He is with Jesus.

Written by request of the family.

D. M. VAIL.

Mrs. Mary Morgan, daughter of H. P. Yarbrough, of Montgomery, Ala., was born August 4th, 1879, and died Feb. 17th, 1917, at a local hospital in Montgomery, Ala. Sister Morgan, although a great sufferer for several years past, bore it all without murmur or complaint. She was a faithful member of Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, Pratt City, Ala., at the time of her departure. She never failed to fill her seat at meeting when able, and spent many lonely hours reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which she dearly loved. She was always doing some charitable deed for those who chanced to come her way. Dear sister has been taken from us. It is hard to say, "Thy will be done," but we feel our loss is her eternal gain. May the Lord bless and comfort the bereaved family, and at his appointed time give us all an entrance into the joy of his love, is the sincere prayer of the writer.

IDA POWERS.

MEETINGS.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

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[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1918. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

IS CHRIST DIVIDED?

THE following article I think was written in February, 1905, but not finished and sent for publication, to the best of my knowledge and recollection of the matter now. I also have many other articles unfinished.

Is Christ divided? These were the words of Paul to his Corinthian brethren, recorded in 1 Cor. i. 13. The connections show that this church of God was living as though Christ is divided; therefore Paul's question, "Is Christ divided?" This was an all-important question for those brethren to consider; it is just as important to-day as when the words were written. O that all of God's people everywhere could be impressed by the Spirit of Christ to repeat these words: "Is Christ divided?" before they act in taking sides in the wars that are now raging in so many places over different subjects that so disturb and divide God's people. Dear brethren, what do you think would be the result among the Primitive Baptists if all would consider well the words of Paul before they act harshly in declaring nonfellowship for their brethren? Paul said, "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord."—1 Cor. i. 9. Here we learn that it is a God-given fellowship which his people have for his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore Paul continued: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment." If this was good admonition for Paul to give and for his brethren to heed then, it is good to heed now. It yet would be good for the church of Christ to be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. To thus live would be to live as though Christ and his people were one in fellowship, instead of living as though Christ were divided. If God calls the members of his church (which is the body of Christ) into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, then it evidently is wrong for any man or set of men to work to cause the church of God to declare nonfellowship for each other or a church of Christ. John said: "That which we have seen and heard declare

we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."—1 John i. 3. John was desirous that his brethren have fellowship with him, therefore he declared unto them what he had seen and heard. We note that his great reason for his brethren having fellowship with him was: "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." O how sad would our condition be if we were seeking to break fellowship with our brethren and at the same time claiming that we had fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. Evidently to make such a claim would be equivalent to claiming that it mattered not whether we had fellowship for the church of Christ; that we could have fellowship with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, just the same. We note John taught differently. He continues: "And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." Let us note these words. O how solemn these things are! John here is teaching first the necessity of fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ; and second, if we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. John continues: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another." From this we learn why God's people have true fellowship one with another. On the other hand, John says: "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now." John continues to contrast between the conditions of those who are in darkness and those who are in the light. He says: "He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes." It is when the church of Christ is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither they goeth, that they are led to live as though Christ were divided.

My dearly beloved brethren, I have learned to my sorrow and shame what it means to live as if Christ were divided, yet I plead that I did it ignorantly; yes, I verily thought I must take sides, and I did take sides, to the extent that sweet fellowship which once existed was broken. O how cruel these things are, and yet they do exist in many places even to this day. I verily believe many are just as honest as I was, and yet there is no doubt in my mind, if the truth were known, many like myself are under the influence of some would-be leader who has men's persons in admiration because of advantage. Read Jude sixteenth verse. Such as these evidently do not have true love and fellowship for their brethren, but are seeking advantage, and it is done so cunningly that some never detect their craftiness. It is such as those who seemingly have great admiration for their brethren as long as they can control and lead them; but just as soon as they find out their selfish advantage is at an end, such ones will have no more use for their brethren, and they even will go to the extent of trying to kill the very ones that they seemingly manifested such great admiration and love for. John said: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his

brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" This is very plain language, and it seems very easily understood, if indeed we ourselves are in the light. But if darkness hath blinded our eyes, so that we ourselves know not whither we go, we fail to see aright. It is then that we are willing to live as though Christ is divided. Paul said to his Corinthian brethren: "That every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ;" then the words of our text, "Is Christ divided?" Paul did not take sides with any of them, no, not even with those who said, I am of Paul. Paul attributed their condition to their being carnal instead of spiritual. "For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?" From Paul's argument here and elsewhere no man can justly claim to be spiritual, and at the same time laboring to divide God's people. The truth of the matter is, we are carnal whenever we try to divide God's people. None of the apostles ever tried to divide the church of Christ. Then let me ask, O why should we work to divide the church of Christ, and at the same time claim to be apostolic both in faith and practice? At the same time we certainly know that the apostles did not teach or practice trying to divide the church of Christ. Notwithstanding the carnality and the lack of spirituality on the part of these brethren, Paul yet labored with them and said to them, "To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." He then tells why he did this: "And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you." This was Paul's way of dealing with the weak; this was true love manifested on the part of Paul toward his brethren. Now let us reason together. Suppose Paul had taken sides with those who said, I am of Paul, and they had declared nonfellowship for those who said, And I of Apollos; then suppose Paul and his faction were right, as far as doctrine was concerned, and Apollos and his faction were wrong. We see in such case Paul would be deprived of preaching the true gospel to those weak brethren who said, And I of Apollos. They were wrong, and would in all probability have remained wrong, seeing they were cut off from hearing the truth. Brethren, let me ask which would be the better way, if we truly love our brethren. Would it be better to declare nonfellowship for the weak, or would it be better to do as Paul said he did for the gospel's sake? One way he could not be partaker with them of the gospel. On the other hand, Paul could be partaker thereof with his weak brethren, if no divisions were allowed to the extent of breaking church fellowship. Now the fact of the matter was, and is yet, God had given a diversity of gifts to the church. Paul said, "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." Both gifts were useful for the church as a whole while undivided. Paul continues: "For we are laborers together with God." In such a case there is fellowship first with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; and in the second place there should be and evidently is fellowship one for the other. How would it sound for two ministers to claim that they were laborers together with God, and yet working to divide the church of Christ? To make such a claim would be to claim

that Christ is divided, and that God is the author of confusion, yet Paul said: "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."—1 Cor. xiv. 33. James said: "For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." James tells from whence this wisdom comes, and also tells them from whence it doth not come. It would have been vain for James' brethren to have claimed that they were laborers together with God. He told them plainly not to lie against the truth. They were living as though Christ was divided, and they wanted to live that way. James said: "Ye have condemned and killed the just, and he doth not resist you." All of James' warring brethren would condemn and kill the just. That is one sorrowful feature of those who want to live as though Christ is divided; they do not want to be opposed by the just. "Is Christ divided?" What shall we answer? Paul said to these Corinthian brethren: "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." It would be just as reasonable to say that Christ has two bodies, as it is to live as though Christ were divided. Christ is not divided, neither has he two bodies; for by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink of one Spirit. Paul makes an illustration by comparing the visible church of Christ to a human body. He shows that no member of the human body can say to another member of the same body, I have no need of thee. Paul asks the question, And if they were all one member, where were the body? He then says, But now are they many members, yet one body. Paul's argument is that the body of Christ is composed of different members, yet note he says, members in particular; meaning, as the connection shows, that each member has its particular place to fill in the body of Christ, the same as the members of the human body have their particular places to fill in the human body. The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee, nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. When we divide into factions we then live as though we had no need of the different gifts of God to the church of Christ, which is the body of Christ.

Submitted in love.

JOSEPH FORD.

SENECA, Kans., Feb. 1, 1918.

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1 SAMUEL II. 9.

"HE will keep the feet of his saints."

I have had great pleasure of late following the marks of God's people, as laid down in the Scriptures of eternal truth. The above text is an expression from the praising heart of Hannah, the beloved wife of Elkanah. She spoke these words out of her heart, with the greatest confidence that they were the solid truth, and the Holy Ghost has recorded her words for the comfort of the church of God, the pillar and ground of the truth, through all ages of the world since her day and time. The Bible is full of the characteristics of God's people; they are, as the Bible says, written for our learning (the same experiences), that we through comfort and patience of the Scriptures might have hope. If the reader will just turn and read her prayer of praise to the God of Israel, who had done for her what she could not do for herself, found in the second chapter of 1st Samuel, he will find that she spoke from experience that she knew to be the truth of God. It is said of her in the first chapter that Elkanah loved Hannah, and by reading the chap-

ter you will find that his love for her was not based upon anything which she had done for him, but you will find that she was barren and unfruitful, and not able to bear sons to Elkanah. The reason of this barren and unfruitful condition the Holy Ghost tells us: God had closed up her womb, and the evidence is that none but God could open it and make her fruitful. This Hannah well knew, hence she went to Him who alone could help her, and in prayer from her heart, out of the bitterness of her soul she cried unto the God of Israel to do for her that which she could not do for herself. O, this is so characteristic of the mark of a true child of God, who realizes in his heart feelingly and sensibly the so much needed help. She knew from experience that Elkanah was not able, she knew that Eli, the high priest of God, was not able, and she therefore humbly, as a poor beggar, went to God and begged him to open her womb and give her a man child. God heard her cry, and blessed her, and opened her womb, and she was by that made able to conceive and bear a son to Elkanah, and she called his name Samuel, because she had asked him of the Lord. This to her was a mighty manifestation of God's mercy, and she realized it, and when she had weaned the child she brought him to the Lord and gave him over into his hand forever. Then breaks forth out of her rejoicing heart the praises of him who had so wonderfully blessed her, and in this song of praise she spoke the words of the text: "He will keep the feet of his saints." Who will do this? God. What does the word "will" mean when applied to the eternal Jehovah? It means that he just will, without hindrance from any source; just will do it in spite of every enemy of the soul of every saint. David said, The Lord will give grace and glory. O how comforting this is to God's humble poor. He just will do it, that is what it means, and who can hinder him? It is his sovereign and eternal will to do this. But you may ask, Who are his saints? They are God's chosen people, whom he chose in Christ before the world began, and as Jude said, "Sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." These are the saints of the most high God, and these are the people whose feet will be kept through all ages of the world unto God's eternal glory; so, according to the expression of this saint of God, she was from an experimental knowledge of the fact fully persuaded of this, hence she said, "He will keep the feet of his saints." Now when God says that he will do a thing it will be done just as he said it, and there will never anything come up that will hinder it. The feet of saints are used here in a figurative sense. They stand upon their feet, they walk with their feet; so then God will keep the standing of his saints, and he will also keep their walk. The standing of a saint is in Jesus, our walk is in Jesus. As ye have received the Lord Jesus Christ, so walk ye in him, said the apostle Paul. The Bible tells us that grace was given in Christ, and then he tells the church at Rome that they stand in grace, and by it they rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. The Holy Ghost has left on record the marks of God's living family, and they are revealed in the experience of every member of the family, and when these things are read in the word of God each one finds drawn by the Spirit a picture of himself. None know these things except such as have them deeply rooted and grounded in their souls by the mighty power of God. The words of all God's saints, from a Bible standpoint, are,

as Job says, O that my words were written in a book, and written with an iron pen, and lead in the rock forever. So it is; the words of the Bible saints are written in a book, and it is done with an iron pen, the strong hand of the eternal Jehovah, and laid deep in the rock, the Lord Jesus Christ, and that forever. Hannah was sensible of her barren and unfruitful state, and she groaned in the bitterness of her soul. Peninnah, the fruitful woman, provoked her and fretted her with her ten sons. She was able, she was naturally able, just as this vast world of natural religionists are to-day; they can at any time and at any place kindle a fire and walk in the light of their own sparks. The barren and unfruitful observe this, and sometimes they come to the conclusion, Surely I am not a child of God. These zealous people doing His service so readily, they certainly must be the true people of God, and I am only an impostor. This brings on bitterness of soul, groaning and crying out of the depths of a broken heart unto God for help and strength. David felt about like this when he asked his own soul, Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? If the soul had answered, which no doubt it did, it would have said, O, I am so barren, I am so unfruitful, that is why I am cast down, that is why I am so disquieted. I am such a miserable sinner, there lurks in my bosom such an enemy of my soul, my carnal mind, so opposed to God and godliness, surely I am not a child of God, I am mistaken; and this brings not only sorrow, but grief. Like Baruch, "Woe is me now! for the Lord hath added grief to my sorrow." Now I feel, dear reader, that I am well acquainted with this grief and this sorrow, for it is at work in my bosom all the time. O, I cannot be what I want to be; no, indeed, I am a wretched man, and as Paul said of himself, Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? And like him I am ready to say, I hope in God through Jesus Christ. That is all the hope I have; if that fails me I am a lost and ruined sinner; but I am hoping in it, and have no other but that.

I was sitting here this Sunday evening in my room, pondering these things over in my mind, and I just picked up my pencil and began to write as the Spirit gave me light, as I humbly hope.

Yours in many sorrows,

C. M. HOOD.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Feb. 17, 1918.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Feb. 24, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—The inclosed letter was received by me from our beloved brother, Elder John McConnell, and I commend it to you for publication in the SIGNS. I feel to be undeserving of such messages from one I esteem so highly for the truth's sake, yet I am made to rejoice in the hope that we are one in Christ Jesus our Lord, and that his words find an echo in my heart.

Yours in christian love,

R. LESTER DODSON.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Feb. 11, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—Your letter of yesterday just received, and I will reply at once. To-day and to-morrow are "workless" days, and I propose to employ most of the time in writing to members whom I have sadly neglected in correspondence. I am so far behind, however, so deeply in debt, that I cannot hope to write them all at this time. Perhaps I should give attention first to my longest outstanding obligations, instead of beginning by replying to the last letter received, but your letter is before me, my

thoughts are of you and of the way of life you confess to, and I am impressed to write you first. We missed you yesterday, far more than you think. Our gathering together seemed incomplete without your presence; and to me especially was your absence noticeable, for your close attention and evident interest in the services is helpful and encouraging to me. Often there is comfort in feeling that within our measure, in preaching the gospel of Christ, we reach unto others. Your letter stirred my mind again to remember how dull in understanding I have been, from the beginning, of what be the first principles of the oracles of God. It passes understanding how the church could have continued for the past nineteen years to recognize me as a gospel minister, while I have been so indifferent to the fact that the gospel of the grace of God is in demonstration of his Spirit—the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, quickening our mortal bodies to newness of life, that we should not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us and rose again. How presumptuous I have been all these years to indulge a hope that perhaps the Lord had set me apart to minister spiritual things unto his saints, to be a helper of their joy, while I was barren and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Some time ago there appeared in the SIGNS an editorial on "Bible Reading." It has occasioned much thought and some comment among the brethren, especially the suggested possibility that, in the course of time, the name "Old School, or Primitive Baptist," may cease to be the name of our faith and order. That many of our churches are weak in membership is undeniable, but that fact is no reason for fearing the eventual loss of our name, I am persuaded that such loss will result sooner from failure to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. It is not unusual for members and pastors of dying churches, in lamenting existing conditions, to excuse themselves of responsibility by making mention of their own righteousness in having maintained the order and good works of a gospel church. But in this the word of the Lord: "Hast thou not procured this unto thyself," &c., —Jer. ii. 17–19, does not speak by them. There is a cause and a reason for everything under the sun. "Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us."—Eccl. i. 10. The Scriptures testify of all that has, is now, or ever shall come to pass in the life of the church. They are "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."—2 Tim. iii. 16. Self-justification is denial of the faith once delivered unto the saints. Taking heed unto ourselves and our ways, that we sin not with our tongue, looking diligently lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble us, and thereby many be defiled, is holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. (2 Tim. iv. 16; Psalms xxxix. 1; Heb. xii. 15; 1 Tim. iii. 9.) Where there is great profession of zeal in maintaining order in churches there is usually manifest bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and evil speaking; but bitterness against the persons of men is no part of the nature of the zeal of the Lord's house; quite the contrary. Its opposition to sin is chiefly against the iniquity of our own hearts. There is nothing in true christian zeal opposed to the spirit of meekness, gentleness and love—the spirit of a little child. The Scriptures expressly and clearly assert the absolute necessity of mercy, for-

giveness and love, as exercises belonging to the character of the child of God. They are positive in asserting that none can be truly saints but those who are of a spirit to pity and relieve the poor and needy. "The righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth."—Psalms xxxvii. 21. "He is ever merciful, and lendeth."—Verse 26. "He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor."—Psalms cxii. 9. "He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with him: was not this to know me? saith the Lord."—Jer. xxii. 16. "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy."—Matt. v. 7. "For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy."—James ii. 13. And Christ, in describing the day of judgment, represents the different sentences as being passed, according as men have been merciful or otherwise. His design is to convince us that, unless this is our spirit, we can have no hope of being owned and accepted by him. The last day, or final judgment, will not be a trial of our hearts for the satisfaction of God's mind, but a declarative judgment, a manifestation of the justice of God to our own consciences. Hence the day of judgment is called the day of the "revelation of the righteous judgment of God."—Romans ii. 5. In Scripture the terms, a righteous man, and a merciful man, are synonymous expressions. "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come."—Isaiah lvii. 1. And a forgiving spirit, a disposition to overlook injuries, Christ urges both negatively and positively. He expressly declares that if we are of such a spirit it is an evidence that our sins are forgiven, and that if we are not of such a spirit it is proof that we are not forgiven. "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," is the manner of prayer he taught his disciples, and then he adds, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."—Matt. vi. 12, 14, 15. The Scriptures know nothing of a merciless, unforgiving, ill-tempered, contentious, malicious christian; a greater contradiction does not exist. The grace of God that bringeth salvation teaches us the denial of these things as having any place in a new creature. A remarkable change is confessed to by the subject of grace. "For we ourselves also were sometime foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."—Titus iii. 3–5. "In the which ye also walked sometime, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth."—Col. iii. 7, 8. Ministers are not altogether blameless for the hurt many churches have suffered. It cannot be denied that much of the evil deplored has been the consequence of failure to study to shew themselves approved unto God, as workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. The inevitable result from lording it over God's heritage, striving about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers, thinking we know anything, when we know nothing as we ought to know, is confusion and hurt. However steadfast we may be in main-

taining good works, we can never glory in our profitableness, for Jesus said unto his apostles: "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do." Is it not true that all who are contentious for their own judgment and understanding of order in the church, denouncing as corrupt all who, for conscience toward God, cannot walk according to their rule, are denying the faith of God's elect? "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it."—1 John v. 16. The spirit of true prayer is in fellowship with Christ —a fellowship of life; and that which is the animating principle of our life must be the animating principle of prayer. The prayer of love is that which esteems others better than ourselves, desires the peace and prosperity of Jerusalem, and is expressed in endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. The sympathy of brotherly love expresses itself in prayer. As our chief concern is our own spiritual poverty and need, and as such neediness arises from sin, our sympathy for a brother will have special reference to the same need, which we feel to bear with him. In consciousness of our own weakness, our own need of continual redemption, we will be pitiful, merciful and kind. It is perfect love which feels as its own a brother's need. Sympathy, fervent desire for the good of an erring brother, is prayer, intercession prompted by love—a service of love. "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." There is a sin unto death—a cutting off of our life from the fellowship of them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Paul made full proof of his ministry in taking heed unto himself, fearful lest he be overcome through the deceitfulness of sin. He is wise to the weakness of his flesh and the nature of its works (Gal. v. 19–21,) when he said, "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."—1 Cor. ix. 26, 27. Surely, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."—Matt. vii. 14.

Your unworthy brother, in hope of life in Jesus,

JOHN McCONNELL.

St. Thomas, Ont., Feb. 28, 1918.

Dear Brother Ker:—I am sending a letter written by sister Young for publication in the Signs. This letter is very comforting to me, and I feel to share it with others who are traveling in the pathway of Zion. Truly the pathway of the redeemed is not a smooth one, and not one that the flesh craves, but it is one in which our Savior traveled, and we, as followers of the blessed Savior, must be partakers of his sorrows as well as his joys. The trials by the way are hard to bear, but here is his promise verified: My grace is sufficient for you. How little would we know of the virtue of his grace, and of faith, were it not for the trials by the way. Where would be the evidence that our spirit bears witness with his Spirit that we are the sons of God? How could we eat of his flesh and drink of his blood without partaking of his sorrows? How could we know him as our Elder Brother?

"Trials make the promise sweet,
Trials give new life to prayer,
Trials bring me to his feet,
Lay me low and keep me there."

A blessed place to be, at the feet of our Savior, but how hard and crushing to the flesh. What else could Paul have meant when he said, I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, than the crucifying of the flesh with the lusts thereof?

Hoping that you and Mrs. Ker are well, and that you may be able to visit us during the year, I am sincerely your brother in the love and fellowship of the gospel,

J. B. SLAUSON.

TORONTO, Ont., Sept. 30, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I wonder if the Lord will so favor me as to enable me to write a few lines in the way of a reply to your most reassuring and comforting letter. It came to me when I was much tried and cast down in my soul, and burdened with a feeling sense of my infirmities and nothingness, and for you to say my letter to you was excellent, was more than I could understand, yet I have no reason to doubt your sincerity. It melted me to tears, as I had written through a sense of shame (from procrastination), and felt it was merely a form of words, without any unction of the Spirit. Dear brother, all you said was as an excellent oil to my wounded heart. You must have been given the spirit of vision to read between the lines, for you seemed to fully understand what I was laboring under. It comes to my mind what I once read "that a slaughtered flock needs a minister that has been slaughtered in his own soul, or how can he tell how to trace the footsteps?" What afflictions he (the minister) is called upon to endure to mold him for the Master's use. But you, dear brother, have been brought to feel at times as did Paul when he said, These light afflictions are but for a moment, and worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. He said, It is through much tribulation we enter the kingdom. No other way. Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. Surely his was a path of suffering. If I only could consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners, and who was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin, but I find I am continually seeking a smooth path, where thorns and thistles flourish not. What a mass of contradictions I am. "Behold I am vile; * * * I will lay mine hand upon my mouth," for of what am I not guilty? What cause for strong crying unto the God of all grace and comfort.

You speak of desiring youthful days. I quite recall those days when I listened to the dear fathers and mothers in Israel lamenting the deplorable state of their minds, the darkness and barrenness felt in their soul's experiences, with no light to illuminate their pathway. I wondered, but could hardly understand or realize how the candle could be so far removed. But the lesson has been learned through many bitter trials. We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness as filthy rags, and we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have carried us away. The question from day to day arises in my perplexed and confused path, What is the matter with me? Why so much murmuring, uneasiness and fretfulness, when you have been so fully assured in your heart that God is over all, and is in all transpiring events, and that he doeth all things well? How weak my faith in God's blessed promises, which are yea and amen in Christ Jesus

our Lord and Savior. I find I can no more possess faith than I can create a world, but my feeling the need of it causes a cry of anguish from my heart, Lord, increase my faith; and now, dear brother, these words have fallen tenderly in my mind: The Lord regardeth the prayer of the destitute. This prayer needs no form of words, but proceedeth from a broken heart and contrite spirit.

Next Sunday will be the Lobo meeting. I am not expecting to go, much as I would like to, but in spirit I will be there, and I trust to continue in the fellowship of the dear brethren. I am a little hopeful that some way may be opened for me to go to the Duart meeting in November, but cannot depend much upon it. It is my greatest desire (if not greatly deceived) that I may be granted the privilege of mingling with the saints. But I desire greatly to remember at all times that I have a Friend who sticketh closer than a brother; may I be enabled to trust in his name, and bow in humble submission to his will.

I am glad to know you still hope to come to Toronto this fall. I shall certainly be glad to see you and any of your family, but I would not like you to burden yourself in any way, as I know quite well what cares and anxieties of mind are already laid upon you. I will not ask you to reply to this, though a letter from you is appreciated at any time, and should you feel to come, drop a line and I will gladly meet you.

With love to you and family, as well as the other friends, I will bring this to a close. May God be with you to comfort and bless, keep you and deliver you, and supply your every need, is my sincere desire.

Your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) W. C. YOUNG.

COLUMBUS, Ga., March 6, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find post-office money order for two dollars, one dollar to continue my subscription to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES for six months, and one dollar to aid in sending the paper to the poor of the flock. I cannot find words to express to you what the SIGNS is to me in my lonely life, separated so far from those I love for the truth's sake. It seems to me that all the dear writers are taught by the same great Teacher—all taught the same great truth. Some dear one writes of the power and majesty of our God, who has all power in heaven and on earth, and of the nothingness of man. How I realize the truth and beauty of the words. What a sweet and comforting doctrine, that our God is the God of purpose and grace; that he works all things after the counsel of his own will, and that all things work together for good to them who are the called according to his purpose. Such letters are full of comfort, and strengthen the little ones. Then a letter from one whose heart is drawn out in love and sympathy for those who are situated like myself, far away from those they love for the truth's sake; they I feel are my friends, and I hear no preaching except through the SIGNS. We have the Bible, the precious word of God; yes, and a precious treasure it is, but sometimes our hearts are so dark and dead we cannot see the beauty in its pages, and it seems like mockery to attempt to read its divine words. O how dark and dead is our heart when we can see no beauty in that word, so full, so precious to God's dear people. I read on; each and every writer has some word that touches a responsive chord in my heart, telling some of my daily experience; so it all seems like an unbroken chain linked together in love.

I can but hope that I am taught by the same unerring Spirit, and my heart is drawn out in love for each dear one. My only hope is in Jesus, that because he lives I shall live also. How much I love the Old Baptists; I feel that I know something about their sorrows, their longings and also their great joy when the burden is lifted. My heart rejoices with those who rejoice and sympathizes with those who sorrow. May the Lord keep and bless you and spare you long to publish the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and long spare the dear editors to continue to fill it with truth and light from above, to share with the little ones.

Yours in love for the truth,

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

ST. JOSEPH, MO., Feb. 17, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am inclosing herewith a recent letter from Elder L. H. Hardy, of Atlantic, N. C., in which he portrays feelingly the dealings of God in reconciling him to the loss sustained by himself and brethren at Atlantic. I have been much comforted by the reading of his letter, having so lately been tried by life's deepest loss—that of my beloved companion. Many other dear readers of the SIGNS may have also of late "passed under the rod," and may likewise find reconciliation and peace of mind by reading these lines from one who has been shown the dark cloud's silver lining. The old English poet had surely witnessed the majesty of our Lord when he penned the lines:

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

Your brother in bonds of affliction,

A. W. BLOOMFIELD.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Feb. 9, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER BLOOMFIELD:—Your letter of the 5th, with valuable present for our stricken church, came last evening. I now thank you in behalf of all our brethren, sisters and friends. I do believe the Lord is working in the hearts of people throughout this broad land to help us, and that he will give a place in which we shall worship him, as he gave us the one which he took away on January 15th. That day, when I learned that our meetinghouse was destroyed, my heart became burdened in an unusual way. I felt so unworthy to call on the name of the Lord that it appeared to be the cause why he had taken our meetinghouse away. I was burdened, and my heart was sore grieved. The next day I walked down to the place, and, as I looked on the ruined walls and the scattered and shattered timbers, my eyes filled with tears and my heart was greatly burdened. I walked in on the shaking floor and looked at the place where I had stood for thirty-five years (since the house was built) and had tried in my weak way to publish the glad tidings of salvation by Jesus Christ, my heart's burden grew heavier, and I groaned within. It appeared that there was a small whisper within me which said, The Lord gave it, the Lord has taken it, and he will give another. I was comforted; I could see the hand of the Lord and knew all was well. On the third Sunday in January I got to the meeting of another church ahead of the congregation, and as I sat alone I was musing on our loss when it appeared that that same inward whisper said, God used your meetinghouse to save the lives of the family just near by and others of your town. I was comforted. When I came home I went to the place and stood and saw that when the

cyclone struck our meetinghouse it had a volume of water in it. There it lost that water and burst into three smaller cyclones, thus losing its force. There were three other sections of it which passed through, one along the water front and doing up the boats, while five sections did up the town. If the three had come through our town in one body the amount of destruction must have been very great in both life and property. I am glad that God reigns, and that all things are his; that he holds the winds in his fist and gives to them his decrees. Dear brother, I do feel that I could not trust any other god. I am such a sinner and so needy that no other could save me nor in anywise do me good. I am as clay in the potter's hands. I am glad that God is the great Potter, and pray him to fashion me to his glory. When I awake with his likeness I shall be satisfied.

The Lord bless you and give you grace to love and serve him all the days of your life, and take you to dwell with him in glory.

Your brother, I hope,

L. H. HARDY.

HENRIETTA, Tex., Feb. 9, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Another year has passed, and left its marks of joy and sorrow, peace and confusion, sadness and rejoicing, and I am made to wonder what the year of 1918 will leave. It entered into this lap of time with confusion hovering over all our land and countries, what shall the end be? The lot is cast into the lap, but all the disposing thereof is of the Lord, as all things will come to pass at the appointed time, and will accomplish the purpose for which they came. There is a time to be born and a time to die, a time to laugh and a time to mourn, a time of war and a time of peace; so in the lapse of time, and at a certain time, all are born into this world and live through a certain space of time, and every man and woman has to pass through the joys and sorrows embraced in the space of time in which they live, as that is their lot. The angel told Daniel, Thou shalt stand in thy lot at the end. The Lord made of one blood all the nations of men, to dwell on all the face of the earth, determined their time before appointed, and the bounds of their habitations. I am made to ask many times why it is so with me, but I realize that I cannot change anything. I hope my consolation is that the Lord rules all things, and why should I complain? Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.

Brother Ker, excuse me for intruding on your time. I surely can sympathize with you in your bereavements. You spoke one word in referring to the death of your son; as my dear boy had just left for the training camp, I could realize what that word meant to the one who spoke it; but, my dear brother, as a mother watches over her little babe to comfort it, so the Lord watches over his children. We must all stand in our lot and realize the disposing of the events of the Lord. The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

I must close. May the good Lord bless the editors and writers of the SIGNS. Remember me when it is well with you.

Your brother, I hope, through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ,

A. A. HAAM.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER S. M. DICKENS has changed his address from St. Charles, Ark., to 1820 N. Walnut St., Greenville, Texas.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1918.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

"BE YE STEADFAST."

"TAKE heed that no man deceive you."

Perhaps the SIGNS has never known a time when there was so much inquiry relative to the sayings of Revelation as now. The office is, and has been for several months, flooded with requests that either Elder Lefferts or ourself, or both, write, explaining different chapters and verses. In the March 15th SIGNS Elder Lefferts mentioned this, and said it was for lack of definite views that he had not replied to many requests, and exhorted our readers to continue in "the old paths," that all was right, and if any of us needed special revelation the Lord would give it. His advice is good, and we join with him in his admonition. We, however, ventured to give a few thoughts on the twentieth chapter of Revelation in the same number, and feel assured that we did no violence to the Scripture. All the saints of God have in different ages confessed their lack of understanding in those deep, figurative and mysterious things, but in this age of the world the learned clergymen do not hesitate to interpret them, and are stirring the people of all classes to excitement and wonder. No doubt this very thing is causing the saints to desire the real import of the Scriptures. We remember hearing a faithful brother say some years ago that in listening to the preachers of the world he could readily tell what was wrong, but to tell himself what was right he could not. This is true now, and will ever be. The children of God detect error at the twinkling of an eye, but if called upon to present the truth concerning that same matter few likely could do it; but when they hear the truth of the subject they discern that as readily as they do error. This is the advantage the redeemed have over worldly religionists: they know both truth and error, while the wise and prudent know only error, yet think it truth. Some folks are said to put darkness for light, and Satan himself boasts of having the power and knowledge of God. It matters not who the man is, nor what his natural attainments are, everything of a spiritual nature must be tried by the Scriptures, and if found wanting must be discarded. Some of these mighty men, in their own estimation, are telling the people that this world war is a spiritual war, and that every christian therefore must get into the fight, and that the first step is to "close the saloons and prohibit the manufacture of all intoxicating liquors; in doing so we shall win the war for Christ." They know nothing whatever of the power of God, and little or nothing of his purposes. How long would the war last if Christ wanted it to cease? All weapons of warfare would be laid down in a moment, if he so desired or purposed, and the banner of peace float the world over. But such is not his plan, hence the war continues. If Christ were on earth to-day as he was more than nineteen hundred years ago even he would be judged and condemned by the self-righteous Pharisees of this age, as he was by the same class then, saying, "He

is a winebibber and a friend of sinners." He did drink wine, and did not prohibit the use of it, but rather encouraged the use, but not abuse of it. When at the wedding and the wine gave out he turned water into wine, that the users of it might have more; and surely it was real wine, "the best wine," so pronounced by those who were judges. He visited and ate with sinners such as are shunned to-day by self-righteous Pharisees. These men are, in their vain attempts to be christians, trying to turn the world upside down, and all who do not follow in their wake are termed "slackers," and turned down as not being the followers or servants of Christ. How very blind the blind are, yet they say, We see, but Jesus says their blindness remains.

We now want to fully emphasize the fact, in opposition to the assertion of the wonderful "D. D.'s," that the present war is not a spiritual or religious war at all. There is absolutely no question, either of religion or doctrine of the Scriptures, involved. Further, we want to assert and affirm that no prophecy, either of the Old or New Testament, points to or foretells of it. Neither is there the slightest shadow of reference to the Kaiser in the Bible, either by name, number or figure. If the aim or intent of this war was the persecution of the saints of God for their faith in and worship of Christ, then we might think more seriously that some sayings in Matthew xxiv., Revelation xx., &c., were being fulfilled, but since no question of religion or Bible doctrine is involved (which the much quoted and talked of Scriptures most positively declare should be) they can have no reference to the present war. The Kaiser is said to be, by the false teachers, represented by the beast, but since he has not made war with the saints and put the faithful worshipers of Christ to death he most assuredly is not the character spoken of as the beast, and it matters not who says so. There seems no doubt from history that Nero was "the beast" who persecuted the saints, and power was given those who had his image, that is, to those who felt as he felt, who despised and hated the servants of Christ as he did, who desired their destruction as he did, to persecute and put to death the saints of God. Nero and the powers which followed him are represented by the dragon, the old serpent, who sought the life of the child, or early church, born of the woman, as is recorded in the twelfth chapter of Revelation. Everything said in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew concerning wars and rumors of wars, earthquakes, pestilences, nation rising against nation and kingdom against kingdom, was positively declared by the Savior to take place during the lifetime of some of that generation, and all those things denoted the end of the world, or that age—legal dispensation, when all legal worship should end and the saints serve God with reverence and fear, which are the outcome of grace. The readers of the SIGNS, as well as all Old School Baptists generally, have long been established in the doctrine preached by the apostle Peter, that no prophecy of the Scriptures is of any private interpretation, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. As, therefore, the Scriptures were given by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, holy men speaking as they were moved, the same Holy Spirit must enlighten the hearts and minds of spiritual men now in order that they understand the things written. Of one thing the church of God may be certain, viz., that whether the saints can or cannot interpret the Scrip-

tures, all said of them by those never called of God to preach is absolutely wrong. Brethren, be ye steadfast; why be troubled or concerned about anything they say? since they all are blind leaders of the blind. Such men as would now be leaders of the world have a form of godliness, but by their works deny the power thereof. They claim to be the servants and ministers of Christ, yet deny his divinity, his power and Godhead, declaring that he is helpless to accomplish his work without the assistance of men. Be ye steadfast, brethren, be not weary in well doing; continue to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. Be not shaken by the cunning craftiness of men, who lie in wait to deceive, whose god is their belly and whose end will be shame and contempt. Take heed that no man deceive you; for many shall say, Lo, Christ is in the desert; believe it not; or, Behold, he is in the secret chamber; go not after them. These things are to establish the children of God in the doctrine which Paul declares: The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. How prone we all are to forget these things and at times become disturbed in mind when we see and hear so much that is called good. If we all would read God's word more and the sayings and doings of men less we would be far better off, and more established in the doctrine of God our Savior, that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose; that all nations before the Father are as a drop in a bucket; that he holds the waters in the hollow of his hand; that he doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; that none can stay his hand or say, What doest thou? Let us all bear in mind, regardless of all the notions and ideas now advanced by different classes of men, that Jesus assured his disciples, as recorded in Matthew xxiv., that all the terrible things he declared there should come to pass, should take place during the lifetime of some of the generation then living. We have every reason to believe that the Son of God spake the truth, hence none of those things was two thousand years in the future, even though they may seem, in the minds of some, to fit conditions now. Let us remember also that the things revealed and declared in the book of Revelation were "things shortly to come to pass," therefore were not events to take place two thousand years in the future, nor were they past events, nor were they immediately present, but things shortly to come to pass.

Having felt impressed to write as we have, we feel to hope that the Lord may bless it to the comfort and satisfaction of his distressed and perplexed people, that being reminded of the things of God, his power and omnipotence, they may rest under the shadow of the Almighty, having implicit confidence and trust in him that all is and will be right. He is the Captain of our salvation, and is ever at the helm, and will guide the church safely into the haven of rest, where wars, deceivers and false prophets are unknown, but where the righteous shall shine in the glory and presence of God and the Lamb.

K.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

We have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

PROVERBS XVI. 9.

"A MAN'S heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps."

In order to acknowledge truly one's utter inability to carry out one's plans and purposes one must have learned the supremacy of God in humility and bitterness of soul. The Scriptures are very plain and positive as to the utter depravity of the heart of man, yet man cannot believe he is so utterly wicked as the Scriptures say until the light of truth is shining within him to reveal the depth of evil in the heart of flesh. Man simply cannot bring himself voluntarily to think that there is not one whit of good in him. When David said he came forth from the womb speaking lies, he said that which is exceedingly repulsive to every natural man to believe; yet it is absolutely true that man is by nature a deceiver, and he deceives no one more than himself. It is so profoundly natural for men to think themselves otherwise than they are, to think their motives pure when they are really evil, to appraise their acts as benevolent when they are simply selfish, to consider themselves serving others when they are really ministering to their own personal ends. Man is constantly dressing up in a disguise to deceive himself, and is all the time blind to the fact that he is not the man he thinks he is. If a man really knew himself as he is, he would feel every impulse to get away from self, and would see that his own bitterest enemy is dwelling in the same house with him, that is, in his own heart. It is the highest wisdom to know one's self, and this wisdom comes only by revelation of the Spirit of God. To know that one is at his best estate nothing but vanity, calls for divine instruction, which none but God can impart, and this knowledge is imparted in the deepest depths of helplessness and woe. What man proposes to do is one thing, what God actually does with that man is quite another. Nothing is truer than that a man's heart does lay plans and proposes to perform this and that, but the will and purpose of God are paramount and direct the man's steps in paths wholly unsought to results wholly unlooked for. At the command of God to go to Nineveh and preach, Jonah devised in his heart that he would not do so, but that he would go exactly in the opposite direction, so took ship to Tarshish. The Lord, however, directed Jonah nearer and nearer to Nineveh the farther and farther Jonah thought he was getting away from Nineveh. The longest way around is many times, in the providence of God, the most direct way to one's journey's end. Because of the unpopularity of his doctrine, Jeremiah resolved it was useless to preach what Jerusalem seemed not inclined to hear, so he devised in his heart he would speak no more in the name of the Lord. However, when he refrained from speaking, he found the word of God was like fire in his bones, and that the very stones of the street threatened to cry out if he longer held his peace. Nothing remained but for the prophet to declare what was given him to say, no matter whether the people heard or not. He, poor man, learned in fiery soul-anguish to say, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Joseph's brethren devised in their hearts to get rid of Joseph, and so they sold him to the Midianites; but this so worked out that Joseph's being in Egypt caused the very same brethren to afterward wend their steps thitherward to procure food of him they had despised. Though that which they had planned was evil in them, God directed

their steps unto the saving of much people alive, to bring about in Joseph a great deliverance. Nebuchadnezzar devised in his heart to rule the whole world, and to this end captured Jerusalem and led Israel away captive; but though he meant to firmly establish himself securely against all defeat, yet the farther he pushed his conquests, the more and more the elements of decay imbedded themselves in his kingdom, so that he who would have ruled the world came afterward to serve those who triumphed over him. The wise men from the east who came to where the child Jesus lay in the manger at Bethlehem thought within themselves to return to Herod at Jerusalem to apprise him of the birthplace of the holy child, but an angel from God appeared to these men and directed them out another way, so that Herod never received the message for which he so much yearned; not, however, that he might worship him, but that he might destroy Jesus and thus rid himself of a rival in the kingdom. The apostle Paul thought at one time to take a trip into Asia and preach the gospel there, but the Spirit thwarted him; again he essayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit prevented. Afterward the Lord directed him into Macedonia; a striking instance of how the Lord disappoints where man appoints, and carries his creatures into places not anticipated by them. The Bible from cover to cover abounds in many such instances as those we have given here, but we have mentioned only those which sprang into our mind. Man predestinates, that is, makes up his mind beforehand to do this or that; but God's predestination, being based on his infinite ability to execute his will, makes him abundantly sufficient to direct men here and there, while man's determining, being founded in frailty and shortsightedness, fails to bring to successful ends the things devised within his heart. Many able spiritual writers have multiplied words in the endeavor to show how God's ways are not man's; to show how God is different from man, and so forth; but these are things better felt than known, and better known than said. Faith is the only thing that can give to man any adequate conception of what God is and of how God's ways and thoughts are higher than man's, as the heavens are higher than the earth—a distance that no reckoning of man's has ever comprehended. Also, there is another way of looking at this matter. What a man plans within himself he may be prospered of the Lord to carry out, only to find that the end to which his plans bring him are not the ones his soul desired. We believe that very rarely is one whom the world looks upon as a successful man satisfied with what he has accomplished. Many have planned to get themselves riches, and have gotten their gains only to find the wealth an empty shell, without the comfort and solidity they had supposed it to be. Many have sought fame and have achieved it, only to find that the applause of men brings not with it the sweetness they had sought. Travelers in deserts are often deceived by mirages to seek water where there is none; so does the mirage of fancy induce ambitious men to press forward to roseate goals, only to find there emptiness and desolation. The cunning and genius of man's heart often unleash forces that cannot afterward be bridled, and which ride their inventor to destruction. Does any one suppose that when Franklin discovered electricity by the simple device of a key on a kite-string that he had any idea the force he had hit upon would come to be an agency of destruction in a

supposed-to-be civilized world, when men would kill one another with it, outvieing one another in schemes of electrical machination? The Lord often directs these things to ends unguessed and unsought by those who discover or invent them. Every civilization that the world has ever known has inevitably carried within it the seeds of its own decay. People talk about the world being civilized now, as though it had never been civilized before, when, as a matter of fact, there were some things in the civilizations of the ancients that are superior to what is called civilization to-day. Just as the civilizations of Egypt and of Greece and of Rome each perished in their turn, so we are witnessing to-day the crumbling of modern civilization, which is bound to be superseded by a civilization of another order, whatever that may be. The world which many of us lived in prior to the summer of 1914 is gone never to return. What the future will be none can say, but it will be different. We do not mean by this assertion that what is coming will be any better than what has been, but it will differ from what has been, as one age has differed from preceding ages in all the history of the world. The civilization decaying all around us has carried unsuspected within it the seeds of its own destruction. Forces have been unleashed through the devising of men's hearts which men have been unable to control once they were committed. These unguessed forces have carried the nations to unguessed ends, and are threatening to engulf us all in world-wide calamity, whence none but the mighty arm of God can ever deliver us. The doctrines of Arminius had gained such a foothold in the world we all have been living in, man's ability to bring about his own salvation was so widely preached and universally believed, man was thought to be so mighty, while God merely an auxiliary, such mighty strides were being made to convert the whole world to christianity through millions of dollars sent to the heathen, such great reforms were thought to be assured in all walks of life and among all conditions of men, that the world awoke affrighted and astounded four years ago when hell opened its jaws to swallow us all. What happened was but the consequence of man's own doctrines and institutions. They had sown the wind and were now to reap the whirlwind, and the harvest is not ended yet. Christ had said two thousand years ago that they compassed both land and sea to make proselytes, converts to hell and not to heaven; but then this modern world regarded Christ as out of date, and his teachings not applicable to this gilded age of ours. The gods worshipped by this generation have gone back on their worshippers and left them floundering in a welter of blood and sorrow, from which they cannot find their way out. These gods, what are they? First of all, gold. Men and nations and religions have worshipped at the shrine of gold. They are now calling upon their god to deliver them, but their god is dumb, the whole world is sweeping onto the rocks of financial ruin. Gold is all right in its place, just as every gift of God is made to be used and not abused. The right place for gold is as man's servant, but when men serve gold, then woe betide them. Another god of this age has been science and learning. What magic could not these accomplish in the minds of their adorers? Science had proved the Bible a fake, and learning had relegated to back numbers the sacred sayings of Christ and his apostles. Science and learning, like gold, are all right in their places, and that is, as man's

servants; but when men serve learning and science and make them their gods, then woe is coming their way. Truly men's hearts devise tremendous things, but to what evil ends their plans do often come. Money and science and learning, these have been the trinity of this modern civilization; these have been the gods expected to usher in the regenerated world of universal brotherhood. Now they stand unmasked as devils pursuing man to destruction, hurling their victims into abysmal woe. In the midst of the havoc man's ingenuity has wrought we have a strong tower, a sure defence: the mighty God, the everlasting Father. His dear Son is a hiding-place from the wind to all who trust in him, a covert from the tempest, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Come, all ye weary travelers whom faith guides on your way. Rest in him, ye prisoners of hope.

L.

BOOK OF EDITORIALS.

We have on hand a number of copies of the Second Volume of Editorials. This book is made up of editorials written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the Signs of the Times from March, 1842, to March, 1847, and contains 768 pages, neatly bound in cloth.

This work originally sold at two dollars per copy, but as a few of the pages are stained by water we will, as long as the supply lasts, sell them at the extremely low price of seventy-five cents per copy. Postage paid by us. All who wish this book should procure it now, as we will have no more after these are sold.

NOTICE.

Providence permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in March (31st). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Eber Hix was born May 9th, 1833, and died Jan. 10th, 1918, at the home of Henry Sheldon, near Olive Bridge, N. Y., where he had been spending the winter, aged 84 years, 8 months and 1 day. He had been in feeble health for some time from hardening of the arteries, but his death was unexpected. Brother Hix was the youngest son of Eber M. and Betsy White Hix, and the last remaining member of a family of eight children, four boys and four girls. He was twice married, his first wife being Catherine Harriet Moak, of Binghamton, N. Y., by whom he had six children, three of whom died in infancy. Dr. Ira Hix, former mayor of Binghamton and prominent physician of that city, died in 1912. Prof. Melvin Hix and Mrs. Hattie Holmes survive. The former is principal of a New York city school, and author of several well known school text books, and resides at 115 Delaware St., Flushing, N. Y. The latter, wife of Hiram M. Holmes, resides at 431 West Eighth Ave., Columbus, Ohio. His second wife was Mrs. Elizabeth Thompson Horton, of Middletown, N. Y. By that union there were two children: Irving M., a very promising youth, died at the age of fourteen; the other, Prof. Frank Hix, is principal of the union school at Staatsburg-on-the-Hudson. Sister Hix died several years ago. Brother Hix was a licensed Baptist minister for many years, but owing to some family feeling which predominated in the church of his membership he was never ordained, thus proving in his case the words of his divine Master: A prophet is not without honor save in his own country and among his own kindred. He was a man of fine intellect, a gifted expounder of the Scriptures, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and a firm believer in the resurrection of the saints in the likeness of Christ's glorious body. It can truly be said of him as Paul said of himself: He finished his course, he kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give him at that day.

His funeral was held at the East Jefferson Baptist meetinghouse at 11 o'clock Sunday morning, Jan. 13th, the writer speaking from 1 Cor. xv. 47-49. The body was laid to rest in the cemetery near the meetinghouse to await the morning of the resurrection. His children were all in attendance.

The following is taken from the Jefferson Courier, and shows the esteem in which he was held by his fellow-men: "Eber Hix owned a farm in this town and was a licentiate in the Old School Baptist Church and a local preacher for many years. He was a man of strict integrity, ambitious, whose burning desire was to make the world better. He labored hard all his life. He foresaw the approaching end, and made all the arrangements for his funeral, saying in a letter

that he wished but little spent on his funeral, inasmuch as there were so many in need about him. The expression was characteristic of the man, whose thoughts were not of himself, but of the welfare of others. His labors are ended and his reward is a home in the mansions in the skies."

JOHN CLARK.

Mrs. Fannie Sue Jamerson Burgess, daughter of Peter M. and Emma J. Jamerson, was born near Sydnorsville, Franklin Co., Va., October 29th, 1883, and died Feb. 9th, 1918. She died in less than twelve hours after she was taken with acute gastritis. All that loving hands and physicians could do could not stay the hand of death. Her stay on earth was 34 years, 4 months and 10 days. We were married April 10th, 1907. She leaves a precious little girl six years old (the idol of her heart), father, mother, six brothers, one sister and a host of other relatives and friends to mourn the death of this dear one. We mourn not as those who have no hope, for she professed a hope in Christ and joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Camp Branch the third Saturday in May, 1909, and was baptized the third Sunday in June by Elder Z. T. Turner. Her mother, my mother and three sisters were baptized at the same time. She was zealous in the cause of salvation by grace, delighting in the preaching, writing and fireside conversation that extolled our God with power unlimited, and the only Savior, ruling in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and foreknowing all things, independent of all opposing powers. She would frequently say that God has power to have things different if he wanted them different. Owing to poor health, she was deprived of the pleasure of attending meeting often, which was very sad to her, and one of her greatest pleasures was to have the brethren and sisters visit our home. She was ever ready to help me to go to meeting, and by her willingness and efforts I have gone many times I would not have gone. As a helpmeet she could not be excelled, always ready to minister to my welfare lovingly and tenderly. She was a good neighbor, and would divide anything she had to benefit others. A dear lover of peace, and shared everybody's troubles and misfortunes; a noble character indeed. I have lost a wife who was more than all things else to me, and it is hard to give her up and be reconciled to God's will. May it please our God to reconcile me and also to give the saints a mind to pray for me and my little girl. My wife possessed such a mild and sweet disposition and a meek and quiet spirit that no one could doubt she had been with Jesus and learned of him who is meek and lowly. We feel satisfied that she now rests in the full assurance of a blessed immortality beyond this life.

On Monday, Feb. 11th, at our home, Elder P. J. Washburn preached very comfortingly to a large gathering of sorrowing relatives and friends, who had met to pay the last sad tribute of respect to one so dearly loved, after which her body was laid in the silent tomb to await the sound of the trump of God. O that I could say in spirit and in truth as one of old: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." May I be so highly favored as to meet her in heaven.

Written by her devoted husband,

JOHN E. BURGESS.

Julia Ann Meredith Boyd, daughter of Isaac and Margaret Meredith, was born in Trenton township, Delaware Co., Ohio, March 29th, 1834, and died Feb. 21st, 1918, aged 83 years, 10 months and 23 days. She was the second of a family of seven children; one sister and two brothers preceded her to the great beyond. She was united in marriage to George Huffman March 16th, 1853, who passed away August 7th, 1864. To that union were born three children: Mary Margaret, now Mrs. Amos Montgomery, of Rich Hill, John Wesley, who died June 26th, 1882, and George W., of Centerburg. She was a widow for twenty years in the battle of life with her little children, the oldest being but ten years. She then married Henry Boyd, of Sunbury, who lived only two years. She then made her home with her son, George W. Huffman. She lived on the farm on which she died over sixty years. She received a hope in Christ and was baptized in 1865, by Elder John Biggs, and joined the Hartford Old School Baptist Church, in Hartford township, remaining steadfast in the faith of absolute predestination, election and foreordination, which doctrine was precious to her. She had been afflicted for several years, and was waiting, wanting to go and be with Christ at rest. She chose the ninth chapter of Romans to be read at her funeral and the following hymns to be sung: "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!" "Nearer, my God, to thee," and 881 (Beebe's collection) to be read. She was a loving, faithful, devoted mother, grandmother and friend. She had a kind and sweet disposition, always thinking of others before herself. Her gracious and quiet manner and winning ways made her welcome wherever she went. She had a hope which no one could take from her, and we know she is at rest. She was a reader of the SIGNS for years until her health failed so that she could not read; she dearly loved the good old paper. Death came in such a shocking manner that we can hardly bear it. Her clothing caught fire, and she only lived about twelve hours. Dear brethren, I ask an interest in your prayers. My dear mother leaves to mourn her departure a son and a daughter, a son-in-law and daughter-in-law, four grandchildren, one sister, Eliza Davison, of Centerburg, and a host of relatives and friends.

The funeral services were conducted at the home

of her son Saturday at 10:30, by Elder Nathan Reed, of Galion, and the body was laid to rest in the Trenton Cemetery at Condit until the resurrection morning, when Christ shall appear.

Her daughter, MARY MONTGOMERY.

Willie A. Brackman was born August 11th, 1871, and died at his home near Star City, Lincoln Co., Ark., Sept. 21st, 1916, aged 45 years, 1 month and 10 days. He was married to Miss Viola Matthews Dec. 31st, 1891. To that union were born five children, three sons and two daughters, one son having preceded him in death several years. His wife died July 27th, 1913. He leaves two sons, Odwin and John, and two daughters, Feddie and Mary, to mourn their great loss, but their loss is his eternal gain. His death will be a distinct loss to the community in which he lived, especially Providence Church, where he loved so much to go. He had been in failing health for the past year or more, suffering from kidney trouble. Mr. Brackman was a kind and devoted husband and father; he was known as an honest, upright man in all his dealings, and was highly respected by all who knew him. He was not a member of the Old School Baptist Church, but was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace and had a sweet hope. He was a friend to the cause, and attended the meetings whenever he could. His home was a pleasant resting-place for the brethren and friends. He was all to the church that one could be except the ordinances and a voice in her business, and I believe he is now joined unto that heavenly band, that congregation which never breaks up.

F. S. VICK.

Mrs. Sarah Gilbert, my dear mother, was born March 5th, 1835, in Buffalo, N. Y., and departed this life Sept. 7th, 1917, at her home in Mazon, Ill., in her 83rd year. She was a daughter of Charles and Mary Carrick. She was married Jan. 11th, 1863, to George L. Gilbert, who was a firm Old School Baptist. He preceded her to the better land nine years. To their union were born ten children, four boys dying in infancy and Harriet A. at the age of fourteen years. The five living are Mrs. Mary Gillett and Mrs. Miriam Kuns, of Holtville, Cal., Thomas J., of Mazon, Ill., Mrs. Jennie Ash, of Verona, Ill., and Mrs. Augusta Leach, with whom she lived. She never made a public profession of religion, saying she was not worthy, but was a firm believer in the doctrine which the SIGNS advocates, and was a subscriber and reader of it, as well as her Bible. She was blessed with a very tender disposition, caring for every one's needs before her own, as mothers will do. She had several strokes of paralysis during the summer, but was not confined to her bed until about ten days before the end came. She told me one day that she felt her Savior was with her, which brightened her mind and was a great comfort to us. Soon afterward a harder stroke took her speech and the use of her entire side, which was a severe trial to her children. She lingered a few days, then gradually sank away like a child falling asleep. O the trial of parting with a true, precious mother, and how we miss her.

There being no Baptist minister in reach, a Methodist minister officiated, using as a text, To live is Christ, and to die is gain. Her remains were laid to rest beside her husband in the Ward Cemetery.

JENNIE G. ASH.

Mrs. Ida Kugler, whose maiden name was Howell, was born June 7th, 1841, and died March 4th, 1918. She was married May 31st, 1870, to Bateman Kugler, by Elder A. B. Francis. She had always lived near where she died. At the time of her death she was living with her son, Charles Kugler, and family. About five weeks before her decease she suffered a stroke of paralysis, from which she did not recover. She leaves one son, seven grandchildren, one sister and other relatives to mourn because they shall see her face no more. She was a good mother, neighbor, friend and a christian woman, beloved by her brethren and sisters of the Locktown Old School Baptist Church. She was baptized by Elder Gabriel Conklin many years ago, and lived in the love and fellowship of the church until removed by death. The Lord bless the dear mourning ones with reconciling grace.

The writer spoke on the occasion of the funeral to an attentive congregation, after which the body was taken to Rosemont Cemetery for burial.

D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. F. J. Norris, Ga., $1.00; Mrs. Allie Davis, Ky., $1.00; Mrs. A. V. Pearce, Va., $1.00; Roy G. Sanders, Ont., $5.00; Sarah G. Hart, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Okla., $2.00; Ida Powers, Ala., $1.00; E. R. Kinney, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. Jasper Seal, Ark., $.50.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1918. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MATTHEW XIII. 8.

"BUT other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold."

The Savior in this parable of the sower takes a natural illustration to teach us a spiritual truth. The sower went forth to sow. As he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, some on stony ground and some among thorns, while others fell into good ground. Since the ground was cursed for man's sake, the natural production of the earth is to bring forth "thorns and thistles," and in this respect all the ground is just the same. Good ground is prepared ground. All intelligent farmers know that in order to reap a crop they must first prepare the ground for the reception of the seed. He takes out the stones, digs up the thorns, breaks up the soil and then sows the seed. What would be thought of the farmer who would sow his seed to prepare his ground? Would he not be judged insane? As foolish as this may seem, there are thousands to-day doing this very thing in what they think a spiritual sense. Further, the Savior in the parable shows what may naturally take place with the sower: some seeds fall by the wayside, some on stony ground, and some among thorns. But if a farmer did this he could not expect to reap anything from the grains that fell by the wayside, nor on stony ground, nor among thorns. No, he knows the grain that falls into such places will never bear fruit. Do you think the Lord would expect fruit from such conditions? In the preparation of the ground for the reception of the seed we know it is passive. The good ground is the ground that has had the stones and thorns removed by the husbandman, and the ground is perfectly passive as to the reception of the seed, and, too, it is perfectly passive as to the growing of the seed sown in it. Growth depends upon the rain, so the prophet says: "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow, from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." The apostle in his letter to the Hebrews says: "For the earth which

drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth a blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned." Here we are shown the "dressed ground" only brings forth herbs meet, but the undressed brings forth thorns and briers. The good, the prepared ground, represents the sinner "born again," given eternal life, raised up from the dead. The ground that bears "thorns and briers" represents the unregenerate, the sinner dead in trespasses and in sins; both by nature just the same, and the work of grace alone makes the difference, as represented in Cain and Abel. God had respect unto Abel and to his offering, but unto Cain and his offering he had not respect. Notice, God had respect first to Abel, and then to his offering. That respect first made Abel righteous, by which he was enabled to offer an acceptable sacrifice. Let us notice what Paul says of Abel: "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he, being dead, yet speaketh." His "more excellent sacrifice" was not the cause of him being righteous, but rather testified that he was righteous, and this is the key to all acceptable service. The "respect" God has to his people fits and prepares them to serve him. God said unto Cain, "If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." How true; sin is the cause of all evil doing. Men sin because they are sinful; their acts are but the fruit of a sinful, depraved nature; so Cain's offering was the fruit of the ground, and God said to Adam, Cursed is the ground for thy sake; thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee. So Cain's offering was but "thorns and thistles," the cursed thing, but Abel's offering of the lamb was acceptable; it was a type of the Lamb of God, who should come into the world and put away sin by the shedding of his own blood. "But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God."

I believe I have said enough to show the farmer does not sow his seed in order to prepare the ground. Then if we are taught anything by the parable or lesson, we are taught the gospel is not preached to prepare the sinner for the reception of the truth. Even the preaching of Jesus did not prepare men to hear and believe the gospel. He said unto the Jews: "Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word." "He that is of God [first] heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." Here we see that even words of Jesus could not be received or believed, because men were not first prepared of God—were not born again. "I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." If preaching the gospel had been God's plan to give life to the dead sinner, the preaching of Jesus would have certainly accomplished that end, but we see it did

not; they would not, yea, they could not believe. "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life," said Jesus. "Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." To come to Jesus, we here see, is the work of God, and is the direct result of the gift of eternal life. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." No peradventure or maybe here. "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and learned of the Father, cometh unto me." The old prophet said, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." Not one shall be forgotten or neglected; all shall be taught, to the remotest bounds of earth; and not only that, but every one taught shall come to Jesus. He is the way, the truth and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by him. For there is none other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. There must first be a preparation, a learning of the Father, in order to come to and believe on Jesus, and the preached gospel does not do this; even the preaching of Jesus did not do this. Jesus said to the Jews, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." The same was true of the apostle's preaching. Paul said, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." Who could believe that God would choose as a means for the salvation of a sinner that which is a stumblingblock and foolishness unto them? Would not such be charging God with folly? John says: "We are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." Does this not show the seed of the kingdom must fall into good ground, the good and honest heart, made so by the grace of God? The quickening, regenerating power of God that raiseth up the dead is given before the reception of the gospel, just as the farmer prepares the ground before he sows the seed. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith. Is ever any of this fruit found in the unregenerate heart, or could it produce them? No, no more than we would expect the wayside, stony ground to produce fruit. In the more than fifty years that I have farmed there is no doubt that many times I have literally done what the parable says: sown some seed that fell by the wayside, and some among stones; and, too, there is no doubt in my mind that in the nearly forty-five years I have been trying to preach, some of the spiritual seed sown fell by the wayside, and on stony ground, and among thorns. The gospel is to be preached to every creature. I did not expect in my sowing my natural wheat that the seed which incidentally fell on the unprepared ground would yield fruit, nor have I expected spiritual fruit to grow in unregenerate hearts, nor do I believe the Lord does. But who has not seen many who have done just as the Savior said in the parable about the stony ground and the thorny ground—hearers

who manifested quite a lively interest in the truth, and showed much zeal, even uniting with the church, but by and by their zeal and love began to grow cold and they finally fell away? This condition was evident in the apostles' day. John said, "They went out from us, but they were not of us." Is it not evident that they could not have gone out unless they had first gone in? "For if they had been of us, [the good ground] they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." I am with the beloved John here, that they went out because they were not of us. Had they been "born again" they would have borne fruit and have continued; but it has happened to them as the true proverb said: "The dog has returned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire." Peter did not say they, like the dog or the sow, but the dog and the sow have returned. The returning did not make them either, but it made manifest what they were. No one ever saw a sheep do what the dog and the sow did, nor ever will. I have often observed how careful a sheep is to keep out of a mudhole. John says, They went out from us, that it might be made manifest that they were not of us; and he added without a doubt about the matter: "Had they been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us." These characters are, as Peter says, wells without water and clouds without rain, or virgins without oil in their vessels. In the kingdom of heaven under the law dispensation, all the seed of Abraham were included; the wheat and the tares grew together—no separation. But when the Bridegroom came, at the cry, Go ye out to meet him, all arose and trimmed their lamps. The wise had oil, and their lamps burned; the foolish said, Our lamps are gone out. Being the seed of Abraham gave them no right now, that light had gone out. Saying, We are the seed of Abraham, could not be accepted. Bring forth fruits meet for repentance, for now in this new dispensation the axe is laid to the root of the tree, and he who does not bring forth good fruit (faith and repentance) is cut down; the door is forever shut, and it ever will be against that law religion. Jesus said, I never knew you, depart from me. He never said to that people whom he foreknew in the covenant of grace and mercy, Depart from me, I never knew you, but, Come unto me. All the Father hath given me shall come unto me, and he that cometh I will in no wise cast out. The wheat and the tares teach the same truth under the law dispensation; both grew together, and when the time of the harvest came (the beginning of the gospel dispensation) it was said to the reapers (John the Baptist and the apostles, yes, and all the ministers of the gospel), Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn (church). The gospel always takes the precious from the vile. I believe the proclamation of the truth always does this. "If thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth." So that separating the wheat from the tares is not to be at the end of this natural world, but at the end of the law dispensation, and at the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ. "And then shall he send his angels [gospel ministers], and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost parts of earth, to the uttermost parts of heaven." Jesus said, This shall come to pass before this generation shall pass away, showing that

these things have taken place. This is the gospel day, the day the old prophet was given to see. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem." The ones who shall come are the "ready to perish" and the "outcasts." Gospel is good news, and what was good news to the poor, the halt, the lame and the blind, was not good news to the men who had bought land and oxen and married a wife. It must be a prepared people to receive the gospel. "The poor [only] have the gospel preached to them," in spirit and power; as Paul says, not in word only, but in spirit and power, and they can no more reject the word that comes in power than can the earth reject the rain that comes down from heaven to make it bring forth and bud. Imagine a poor man dying with thirst rejecting a cup of cold water, and I could as easily believe that as to believe the heaven-taught soul could reject the mercy of God. While God's people are not willing until the day of his power, they shall be willing then. "I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name." Every one is brought from a long distance, for all are far off. The angel said to Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." And, All thy children shall be taught of the Lord. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." Not one shall be left in the "broad way" of sin and death that leadeth to destruction, the way in which all the world dead in sin is going. What a failure would the mission of Jesus have been had he only saved a "special few" of his elect, and left the greater part to wander in the broad way that leadeth to destruction. Would not the angel blush with shame who heralded the purpose and mission of the Savior into the world? "He shall save his people from their sins." Solomon says, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." The legal way; by the deeds of the law is the "broad way" all men dead in trespasses and sins are in. But if any man be in Christ Jesus (no matter who he is or where he is) he is a new creature; old things have passed away, and, behold, all things have become new. Not every character spoken of in the Bible was a child of God, even if they had taken the communion with the Savior. Satan was once in heaven, the legal or law heaven, but was cast out into the earth. "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out." He was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. These are the tares that grew with the wheat until the time of the harvest, the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The axe was then laid to the root of the tree. These things we notice took place soon after. He that was born was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. (See Revelation xii.)

Dear brother Ker, these thoughts I leave in your hands to do with as you may see fit. I wish you not to publish if you think it not best, for I desire the peace and prosperity of Zion.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

ELGIN, Ore., Feb. 21, 1918.

"THE BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR."

(Rev. xxii. 16.)

THE blind can never see it, even though they call to their aid all their intellectual powers and the most powerful telescope of human philosophy. The world by wisdom knows not God; they are alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their hearts. O the gloom of sin and condemnation that the quickened sinner experiences at Mount Sinai! (Deut. iv. 11; Heb. xii. 18.) If typical Israel trembled under the voice waxing louder and louder, and in their anguish cried out unto Moses, "Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die,"—Exodus xx. 19, "And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake," so in truth do quickened sinners fear and quake in their sins, their guilt, and under the just condemnation of God's law, which is holy, just and good. The experience of a poor sinner under the ministration of condemnation and death (2 Cor. iii. 7–9,) is in truth as a dreadful night, for under the law our sins are laid upon our conscience, a heavy burden, and we are filled with apprehension of "the wrath to come." (1 Thess. i. 10.) Those who are taught of the Lord, who are convinced by the Spirit of truth of their sins, are given to foresee the evil before them, so they are thus made wise concerning their condition; yes, ultimately they are made wise unto salvation through faith that is in Christ Jesus. The wise man foreseeth the evil, and fleeth for refuge to the hope set before him in the gospel, and hideth himself in Christ; but the wicked pass on and are punished. (Prov. xxii. 3.) Self-dislike, self-abasement and self-condemnation are found in the soul of the quickened sinner, and he is brought to mourn unto God over his iniquities. But all our wretchedness, humility and contriteness of heart over our sins cannot atone for our guilt. The law demands of us perfect obedience, and in our failure to render this obedience we feel we are under the curse of God in his law; as it is written: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."—Gal. iii. 10.

"Not the labors of my hands
Can fulfill thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and thou alone."

Job speaks of being full of tossings to and fro until the dawning of the day, (Job vii. 4,) and how disturbed, what waves of trouble the convicted sinner is made to feel in the darkness and shadow of death that covers him in his guilt and just condemnation before God. The Lord alone can turn the shadow of death into morning. (Amos v. 8.) Christ is the bright and morning Star, the Dayspring from on high, who must visit the wretched sinner, or else he must remain in everlasting darkness. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines in the face of Jesus Christ, (2 Cor. iv. 6,) and this is peculiarly so in the character of Christ as the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world; and so we read: "The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it."—Rev. xxi. 23, 24. All is guilt and apprehensions of the wrath to come with the quickened sinner until the light of the dawn of God's salvation begins to dissipate the darkness of the night of sin and the curse of the law. The tribes of Israel were called "to meet

with God" at Mount Sinai. (Exodus xix. 18.) There blackness, darkness, tempest, fear and trembling were their experience. At length God spake unto them saying, "Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount."—Deut. i. 6. All the called of God have an experience of being under the law, and being there as vile transgressors. They all meet with God at Mount Sinai before they come to Mount Zion to meet with our Lord Jesus Christ; for there the Lord commandeth the blessing, even life for evermore. Every one of God's elect is called to dwell at Mount Sinai just so long, "long enough" is the Bible language, just long enough under the schoolmaster, (Gal. iii. 24,) where we are taught dreadful, humbling, bitter lessons, and are brought to feel we are wretched transgressors, lost and perishing sinners. But,

"In darkest shades, if he appear,
My dawning is begun;
He is my soul's bright morning star,
And he my rising sun.

The opening heavens around me shine
With beams of sacred bliss,
While Jesus shows his heart is mine,
And whispers I am His!"

From the moment of faith's first glimpse of Christ crucified, light dawns upon the troubled sinner, for his heart begins to understand that there is forgiveness with God, and that mercy streams in streams of blood that flow from Jesus, the bleeding, dying, crucified Savior. I repeat, though but a glimpse of Christ, God's sacrifice for sin, be given to the poor sinner by the Holy Ghost, it begins to scatter the darkness of the night of guilt; it is telling our hearts that there is deliverance for poor sinners, and that day will come; that righteousness and salvation as brightness, as a morning without clouds, will come. Hope springs up in the heart that it will be so. The apostle Peter speaks of the day dawning and the day star arising in your hearts, (2 Peter i. 19,) and the apostle Paul speaks of God shining in the heart. (2 Cor. iv. 6.) This means that our affections embrace the light. Our yearning heart is moved, is taught by the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. "The glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." The attributes of God are his glories, and they are all shed forth upon poor sinners abundantly in Christ the Lamb of God, the Lamb that was slain, but now liveth again; the Lamb in the midst of the throne. The light of the Lamb is "marvelous light." (1 Peter ii. 9.) Here justice and grace, mercy and love, almighty power and the tender mercy of God all shine forth and chase away our guilt, make an end of our sins and pour down in our hearts forgiveness, reconciliation, all the blessedness of justification from all offences. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.". O, the assurance of this felt in a poor sinner's heart is marvelous light indeed; it is Jesus, our dear Savior, shining there. Our darkness, our sins, our gloomy fears and condemnation flee away; for the Lord is our light and our salvation, of whom shall we be afraid? Our Lord Jesus Christ is not only the bright and morning star unto his people, the earnest in their hearts of everlasting day, but he is the Sun of Righteousness. (Mal. iv. 2.) The Lord, their everlasting light. (Isaiah lx. 20.) To dwell with him forever is our eternal blessedness, for in his presence is fullness of joy, at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore; and ultimately

all his loved and redeemed people shall dwell with him in glory. "And there shall be no night there: and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever."—Rev. xxii. 5.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Jan. 21, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN AND FRIENDS:—I feel to-night like penning a few lines for this good old paper, to tell my brethren and friends what great things the Lord has done for me. If there is anything I love, it is to crown him Lord of all. He has done so much for me all through my long life, of nearly eighty-six years, that I cannot thank him enough. He is always mindful of his people chosen before the foundation of the world. You have not chosen him, but he has chosen you out of every kingdom, kindred and tongue and kept you as the apple of his eye. He never slumbers nor sleeps. Think of his suffering! Led as as a lamb to the slaughter, not a word from his mouth, only crying out, If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; but he was willing that his Father's will should be done. He is the good Shepherd, and knows his sheep. Other sheep have I which are not of this fold. He says, I will bring back those that were driven out, I will heal their backslidings, I will be their God and they shall be my people. I will discern between the wicked and the righteous, and they shall be mine when I make up my jewels. How wonderful are all his works. He opens, and none can shut; he shuts, and none can open. He turns the hearts of men as the rivers of water are turned. He makes rivers in high places. He speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast. I will bring my sons from far and my daughters from the ends of the earth. There is nothing too hard for him to do. We love to praise and honor him for all he does. He said to the boisterous waves, Be still, and there was a calm. Be still, and know that I am God. Blessed are they that hunger after righteousness, for they shall be filled. I believe there remaineth a rest to the Lord's people. I have been resting on his almighty arm for many years. The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my lovingkindness I will not take from thee. O thou afflicted and not comforted, I will lay thy stones with fair colors and make thy windows of agates. All thy people shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy people. Consider what I say, that the Lord gives the understanding in all things; unless he gives that understanding we never can know them. Marvel not that I said unto you, Ye must be born again, become a new creature, the old man and the new man. Nicodemus said, How can a man be born again when he is old? Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit. "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that

he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." "He must increase, but I must decrease. He that cometh from above is above all; he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all." "He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true." "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands." God is love. We love him because he first loved us. That love, like a chain, binds our christian hearts together. How he has blessed us to give us all things that are needful. I often think of the woman that took the last handful of meal from the barrel. She did not know what she would do; it looked like starvation to her, but she thought she would take another look, and there was meal in plenty. So we believe the Lord will provide; it may look dark to us at times, but he has loved us with an everlasting love, and with loving-kindness has he drawn us. Ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find. It is good to think on his name. No other name given under heaven whereby we must be saved. He is the rock; his work is perfect. Just and right is he; no spot or blemish can be found; perfect, the only perfect One. O that men would praise him for his wonderful works unto the children of men; he has done so much for us. Even the little birds praise him. All things are his; the cattle on a thousand hills. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price." "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." Salvation is of the Lord, and in no other way is there salvation. He says, If ye love me keep my commandments. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gate into the city. How wonderful are his works, and his ways so different from man's works and ways.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear;
It soothes his sorrows; heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly,
While the raging billows roll,
While the tempest still is nigh."

The psalmist said, My meditation of him shall be sweet. How sweet and comforting it is to the children of God to meditate on these things; it is sweet to their taste, and these things do not perish with the using, like worldly things that decay and pass away. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful: but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water." He is a merciful and gracious God; he will not chide, neither will he keep his anger for ever. As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. We are as the grass that withereth; the wind bloweth over it and the place that knew it knows it no more for ever. To know his wonderful works, behold the lilies, how they grow. Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like them. Are not two

sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one shall fall without your Father. If God be for us, who can be against us? Who shall separate us from these things? Shall tribulation, persecution, peril or sword? For I am persuaded that neither principalities, nor powers, nor things to come, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Peter denied the Lord thrice, but when he saw his danger of sinking he was glad to cry out, Lord, save, I perish, and he could say, Lord, thou knowest I love thee.

"And ye shall hear of wars, and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled." I have a grandson who expects to leave home to-morrow and go to Florida, in the Aviation Navy. We shall miss him, and are sorry to have him go, but our forefathers fought for liberty, and so should our children and grandchildren. "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake." If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." If a man die shall he live again? We are told that he shall live with Him and be made like Him. If we suffer we shall reign with him. If we deny him he will deny us. If we deny him yet he remaineth faithful; he cannot deny himself. Great and marvelous are thy works, great God Almighty, just and holy is thy cause. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that confesses against thee shall be condemned. I was naked and he clothed me; I was sick and he visited me. If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. I think of that great sermon on the mount; when he saw the multitude "he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." What a safe place the ark of grace is to dwell in; no storm can wreck it; the billows may roll, the lightning flash, but not a shaft shall hit until the God of love sees fit. There is safety in Thee, in the ark of grace. Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Not like a worldly kingdom, but a kingdom that will stand when time is no more.

I want to say that I enjoyed Elder Ker's "New Year's Greeting." He spoke of things that we know and things that we could not know. We know what

happened in 1917, but we cannot tell what will transpire in 1918, and how good it is that we cannot tell of the future. There is One who can tell all things, so it is best for us all to leave it with him and be content.

I have written more than I intended, so will close with best wishes to all the brethren and friends. Peace be with you all, is my prayer.

Your brother in a precious hope,

D. L. BLACKWELL.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Feb. 24, 1918.

DEAR ONES ALL:—Once more I have taken my pen to write you all, but fear I am not in the frame of mind to make an interesting letter, but if there should be profit in it I feel to give all the glory to the Father, for unless he guides my pen, there will be no profit. We are now living in a saddening time, and as we look around not much comfort do we see, for lo, here is sadness, the war and all its privations to us; lo, here our boys are called to leave their homes, and go forth, we know not where, and the aching hearts they leave, are so saddening to us; but right here the Father gives me a message to you: "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." In the beginning of this verse, John xvi. 33, it reads: "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace." Read all the sixteenth chapter of John, such a wonderful chapter. One might say, How can we have peace with such sad and terrible things about us? Do we seek peace among them, these sad and terrible things? No, I can truly say. When they commenced drafting, and the cloud was so dark and terrible looking, I could only continually beg for peace. I did not ask the Father if it were according to his will, but just continually begged for peace. At last I was shown what I was doing: continuing a feeling of my own, as though I knew what was best, and was not trusting in the wisdom of the Father of all mercies, who is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind, and I was at once made to ask forgiveness and real submission to the will of the Father; to make me reconciled, if it were his will, to whatever he had for us to pass through, to make me to know and do his will. How I was brought down and made to find peace in my soul from Christ in only desiring to be submissive to the Father's will; and as I look out now I feel a soberness, a solemn feeling to trust him all the way. How little we know whether we will ever see the end of the tumult, but I feel to leave it to the Father of all mercies, for all, all is known to him. He has promised as our day our strength shall be, and I know his promises are sure, and that he will fulfill them all. It is indeed seldom as we would have it, but it is all according to his most holy will, and that is ever best in all things. Last evening I was reading a letter in the SIGNS to Elder Ker from James W. Linn, and I could but feel he gave us the real truth of the matter, and I feel the Father was with him where he speaks of a time for all things. I could but feel the Lord had wonderfully blessed him in giving him such faith. How true, we can be reconciled to his will through Christ Jesus our Lord. I have no children to go to the war, but some dear friends, and dear one's boys, and I can but sorrow with them, but not as those who have no hope. I believe all things are by the Father ordered, planned, and that he knows the end from the beginning, and I desire it may be his will to give faith and trust to his children that he leads all the way. Can you not, dear ones, look back over your life and see it is so? Then may you

be given strength to trust him all the way. Little we know how soon our medium of correspondence might be destroyed, and should such a thing be how we would treasure the writings of the dear ones we now have. For a few weeks I have been a mystery to myself; I cannot seem to pray as I did for submission, for the Lord to keep us in these trying times, for the Lord to provide for us in accordance with his will, but a quietness, a solemnity, a trust that the world knows not of seems to have settled about me; yet I am continually asking that it may be his will to give me faith in him. How much I have enjoyed the SIGNS. I wish I might know more of its writers, yet I am wonderfully blessed in knowing a great number of them. I have been and am blessed in being able to meet with the dear ones nearly every Sunday for over forty years, and have listened to many great sermons, but I have not seemed to profit by them as I wish I could, but am all the time forgetting the good things I hear. Elder Vaughn gave us a good sermon this morning, one I should profit by, but as before, will stumble along in my own way so far as I can, I expect. The text was Titus ii. 11.

I must not weary you further, but will inclose some lines sent by sister Martha Howarth, but I think they were not composed by her. They have been and are much comfort to me.

With love to you all, truly,

MARY HILL TERRY.

My God, whose precious pity I may claim,
Calling thee Father, sweet, endearing name,
The suffering of this weak and weary frame,
All, all is known to thee.

From human eye 'tis better to conceal
Much that I suffer, much I hourly feel;
But O, the thought does tranquilize and heal:
All, all is known to thee.

Each secret conflict, indwelling sin,
Each sickening fear I ne'er the prize shall win,
Each pang from irritation, turmoil, din,
All, all is known to thee.

When in the morning unrefreshed I wake,
Or in the night but little sleep can take,
This brief appeal submissively I make:
All, all is known to thee.

Nay, all by thee is ordered, chosen, planned;
Each drop that fills my daily cup thy hand
Prescribes for ills, none else can understand.
All, all is known by thee.

And this continued feebleness, this state
Which seems to unnerve and incapacitate,
Will work the cure my hope and fears await,
That I can leave with thee.

Nor will the bitter draught distasteful prove
When I recall the Son of thy dear love.
The cup thou wouldst not for our sakes remove,
That cup he drank for me.

He drank it to the dregs; no drop remained
Of wrath for those whose cup of woe he drained;
Man ne'er can know what that sad cup contained.
All, all is known to thee.

And welcome precious can his Spirit make
The little drop of suffering for his sake.
Father, the cup I drink, the path I take,
All, all is known to thee.

MARTHA A. HOWARTH.

HELMIC, Texas, Feb. 11, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—You are strangers to me in the flesh, but I hope not spiritually. I have desired to write you, but inability to interest you as I wish has caused me to hesitate; however I shall make the attempt. I am nothing but just a babe, if one at all. Dear brethren, if I was ever delivered from my sins it was in the fall of 1900, and I thought when I was delivered that I would never sin any more. Everything that my eyes beheld was in praise to God. I went on for some time, thinking I would join the church, but there was always something in the way. The first thing I knew there was trouble among the Old Baptists, and I thought I would never go to them, but again my mind was changed and I got in trouble. At this time the limited Baptists had de-

clared nonfellowship for the Predestinarians, and I did not know which were the true Old Baptists. One night on going to bed, being burdened, I hope with prayer, I called upon the Lord to show me the true Old Baptists, and in the night I viewed the unlimited Baptists in a meeting, and I was with them in the pulpit contending for the doctrine, together with brother Sikes, of Texas, and brother J. R. Hardy, and many others. I went on until the second Saturday in August, 1909, when I joined the Primitive Baptist Church, and was baptized by Elder M. T. Pace, of Athens, Texas. The next time I was at meeting they called upon me to talk, and I told them I had no desire to talk in public, but told them a lie. I went home and determined that I would never go to meeting any more, and stayed away something over a year. During that time I suffered in many ways. I dreamed one night that stones were falling on my nephew and me, and they kept getting larger, and that I went in under a shed at my father's old place. One stone fell upon the building, smashing it to the ground, and I told my nephew to look out, and when I said that I thought I found myself in the pulpit of Corinth Church, preaching to my brethren, and could see the motions of my hands and the flash of my eyes. After that I lost my health and was miserable. I thought I had wandered so far from God that there was no redemption for me; I also lost what little I had of this world's goods. But I was made willing to go back to the church and tell them what great things the Lord had done for me, and how God saves poor sinners. Dear brethren, I believe we learn obedience by the things we suffer, and not on the grounds of free agency. Jesus was a son, yet learned obedience by the things he suffered. The Bible says that every son God loves he chastens, and it also says that if we are without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are we bastards and not sons. I do not believe in a conditional time salvation, which places man on the ground of free agency, but I believe in time salvation, for I realize that there are many deliverances. I believe in a God that does all his pleasure; yes, he doeth his will in the army of heaven and in earth and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say, What doest thou? Yes, he says, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Then how can man or Satan destroy or affect the pleasure of God? Some think that they can change the mind of Jehovah by earnest pleading or demand, but he declares, I am the Lord, and change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. God never changes; he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. Man by his creation is a creature of change; he cannot direct his own footsteps, he cannot be certain of his future, but must conform to a power higher than he. God, the Creator, knows the end from the beginning, and every event intervening between those extremes is alike known to him and under his providence. How wonderful is the will of God, how vast its extent, how immeasurable its power. How greatly the Lord humbled Job when he asked him, "Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it. Then Job answered the Lord, and said, Behold, I am vile: what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further." How forcefully has that thought come into the experience of God's humble little ones. Once in his

strength he thought he could demand of God and he would answer him, but when he was made to feel the majesty of God and view his lofty habitation and his great mystery he became very humble, weak, wretched and undone, and could only make a plaintive cry for mercy; he felt so deeply enshrouded in sin that mercy he could not expect. He finds himself in Job's condition, and confesses, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." What deep anguish! What bitter repentance! The Lord lifted Job up, as the psalmist wrote in such soul-cheering language: "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God."

Dear brethren, if you see fit to publish this, correct all mistakes; if not, cast it into the wastebasket, and all will be well with me. Remember me at the throne of grace when it is well with you.

A poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

G. E. RUSHING.

DELHI, Okla., Nov. 26, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—By request of some of the readers of your valuable paper, I will write a few lines for publication, if agreeable to you. I was born in Laurel County, Kentucky, March 17th, 1850, of humble parents, whose only religion was the golden rule. My earliest ambition was to know the truth, and I began trying to read the Scriptures at about the age of eight years. I thought the whole matter lay in the Scriptures. At about the age of thirteen I got in trouble about my condition religiously. I could find no comfort in the Scriptures; the more I read the worse I seemed to get. I went on in this condition for about three years. It seemed to me at times that there was hope for every one except me. My burden at times seemed more than I could bear. On the third Saturday evening in May, 1866, about sundown, I fell across my bed, asking God if it were his will to remove me from time to eternity. I felt I had no friend on earth or in heaven. When I came to myself, in about one hour, I found myself on my feet on the floor, my trouble was all gone, and I felt as light as a feather; everything around seemed to be light, although it was dark. I did not know what had happened. I desired to go through the experience again, but could not. It seemed I could see more light in the Scriptures and understand them better. I seldom conversed with any one who could understand them as I did. At about the age of twenty I heard a Baptist preacher in the stand relate his experience, which corresponded with what I had realized, and it gave me fellowship for him. He belonged to what was called the United Baptists. They advocated a doctrine I did not understand. There were a number of those preachers; I consulted many of them, but only found one other who seemed to understand as I did the doctrine of the Bible. After I was twenty-two years of age, and had a family, my wife and I joined with this preacher, and were baptized by him. I remained with them for about eleven years. The members, preachers and all went with the Missionaries against my protestations. About that time Elder B. E. Caudell located in my neighborhood, and preached what I understood the Scriptures to teach, and we fell in with him in the Red Bird Association, Laurel County, Kentucky. Everything was

brotherly with him until his death. I was not so popular with his successors; questions of doctrine arose, and it seemed the more we discussed the matter the further apart we got, as designing men got in among us, and the result was a nonfellowship resolution was passed in our association against what was called the absolute doctrine; no fellowship for the doctrine or those who advocated it, which were only a few of us. Now I wish to relate my views for your consideration, approval or disapproval. I believe that God is perfectly independent over all worlds, principalities and powers, and that he created the heavens and the earth, the sea and the things that therein are, whether they be thrones, dominons, principalities or powers. He is before all things, and by him all things consist. By him kings reign and princes decree justice. By him princes rule; yea, all judges of the earth. I believe God does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, none staying his hand. If I were to quote a text in reference to God's sovereignty it would be, Get thee hence, Satan. It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Now let us see. We are commanded to fear not him who killeth the body, but rather fear him who hath power to cast both soul and body into hell. It seems the first thing God did for his people was to save them, and then call them, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which were stored in Christ Jesus before the world began, and without the shedding of blood there is no remission; so it seems Christ stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. In him was the salvation of his people, and when the time was fulfilled according to the prophet, God said by the mouth of his prophet, Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man that is my fellow; smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn my hand upon the little ones. Now it seems God had chosen one, Judas Iscariot, because he had a devil, or because he was a devil, to accomplish His purpose in the salvation of his people. One lets us know that the Jews and the Gentiles and the people of Israel gathered themselves together, crucified and slew the Lord of glory, and when they did it they did no more or less than God's hand and counsel before determined to be done. God gave Adam a law in the garden, knowing it would be violated, and I do not believe God's purpose was thwarted in the transgression. I believe this same devil is at the head of most all the orders, societies and institutions of learning, teaching the wisdom of the world, which is foolishness with God. God said to his disciples, Ye are the salt of the earth. They have a law written in their hearts, and that law, or unction, teaches them all things, and it is for them to obey the truth. I would say to the people of God, Be still, and know that God is God, doing his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. It is appointed unto man once to die, and after that the judgment. Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return. Christ is our way, our truth, our life, righteousness, sanctification and redemption; he is our faith and resurrection, and without him we can do nothing. My brethren and sisters, by their fruits ye shall know them; try to remember the golden rule and obey it. Let God be true and every man a liar.

May the Lord bless truth and condemn error, and save us all, if agreeable to his will.

J. K. NICHOLSON.

"THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD; I SHALL NOT WANT."

How full of spiritual meaning are these words of David in the twenty-third Psalm, and if filled with the same heavenly wisdom that the psalmist was when he uttered the words, every child of God may consistently and joyfully adopt the language as their own, because the experience of David is a part of their own experience. His (David's) life was made up of great struggles and severe conflicts, but his victories and deliverances at the hand of the mighty God, even the Lord, were equally wonderful and soul-exalting. His persecutions at the wicked hands of Saul brought great distress and anguish of heart and soul. In the darkness and gloom of night he would cry out, "Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favorable no more? * * * Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" In his heart communings his spirit made diligent search, and he was made to confess, "This is my infirmity." To question the integrity and righteousness of the Lord is but the fruit of an untamed carnal or fleshly mind. How often are we, as was David, pursued and harassed by an unrelenting Saul (the flesh with its train of evil thoughts, cruel misgivings and uncharitable tendencies) until we are driven into the darkest avenues of wretchedness and despair. We are cut off from the well of Bethlehem, as was David when shut up in the cave of Adullam. The light has gone out, a somber mantle of darkness stretches across our pathway, the storm rages in its fury, the billows come nigh over our heads. All our efforts to restore the light, calm the storm and suppress the billows are in vain; we are helpless and without strength. In this sad plight well do we remember the years of the right hand of the Most High. We cannot forget, even amidst the gloom of this chaotic state, the Lord's wonders of old, when he so graciously delivered us and filled heart and soul with joy unspeakable; when as captives we were triumphantly delivered from bondage into the glorious light and liberty of the children of God. When the Master's gently spoken "Peace, be still," to the troubled waters of the sea of Galilee, even the winds and waves obeyed his voice. The world, the flesh and the devil all have been vanquished by his mighty power—not a single foe left to rise up in judgment against his people. While he may forsake them for a small moment, yet with great mercies will he gather them. They are now ready to meditate on his matchless work and talk of the excellency of his kingdom. Thus delivered and searched out by the good Shepherd in the day he is among his sheep that are scattered, and brought into the heavenly fold, they can say, each one personally for himself or herself, "The Lord is my shepherd." The green pastures of grace and love are theirs; he maketh them to lie down therein. What a restful haven! Are they thirsty for the living waters? Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Is there lack of courage or strength, he will lead them beside the still waters. Their triumph is complete through Christ, the anointed of God. Now in these moments of rapture and delight the valley of the shadow of death is shorn of all its terrors. Even in the midst thereof they fear no evil, for the King of glory shields them on every side. On the rod and staff of his faithfulness and strength they confidingly lean, and none dare make them afraid. "Surely

goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

Dear brethren editors, if after you have read the above thoughts, written at various intervals, you see anything that might interest the household of faith, you are at liberty to publish them in the SIGNS. It has been many months since my environments have been such that I could persuade myself to attempt to write for publication. Then, too, the good old dependable SIGNS, which I have read for sixty odd years, has been supplied with communications and editorials far better than anything my pen, which never was that of a ready writer, could furnish; but such as I have I submit to you, fully knowing that you will make the proper disposition of it.

Your brother and companion in tribulation, J. G. SAWIN.

MATTOON, Illinois.

PICKERING, Mo., Dec. 12, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please stop the paper, as wife and I are both old, nearly eighty-five. We love the SIGNS; we read it when we were in distress of mind on account of sin. The experiences of God's dear children were very precious to us then, sixty-four years ago, and are just as precious now. In our farewell to the paper we wish to say to Elder Durand that our fellowship or love for him is just as strong as when we heard him declare God's eternal truth in Ohio from the text in Deut. xxxii. 1–3; and sister Florence Pultz, of Wheeling, W. Va., who at one time had her membership in the same church with us, if yet living will remember the precious meetings. O God, how sad to say farewell to the thousands of God's dear children with whom we have met in bygone years. We are in the darkest days this world has ever witnessed. Our blessed Redeemer said, When ye shall see the abomination of desolation, stand in the holy place. (See Matt. xxiv. 15; Daniel ix. 27; xi. 31.) Do we not see it? Again, he says in Daniel xi. 36, That that is determined shall be done. Beloved in the Lord, as the shadows of death gather about us we take courage in the exceeding great and precious promises of God, that Michael the great prince shall stand up for his people, and they shall be delivered, every one whose name is written in the book of life. Then let us look away beyond the gloom of death to that celestial city whose maker and builder is God. May kind heaven bless us all.

C. J. CARMICHAEL.

WITTER, Ark., March 21, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find draft for five dollars. This is not to be credited to my subscription to the SIGNS, but to help you with the publication in these times of increased cost of everything. Kindly accept this as a very small token of my appreciation of the help you have been to me with my Dropsy Remedy. I will try to make it more in the future.

Yours in hope,

C. W. ANDERSON.

BOOK OF EDITORIALS.

WE have on hand a number of copies of the Second Volume of Editorials. This book is made up of editorials written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES from March, 1842, to March, 1847, and contains 768 pages, neatly bound in cloth.

This work originally sold at two dollars per copy, but as a few of the pages are stained by water we will, as long as the supply lasts, sell them at the extremely low price of seventy-five cents per copy. Postage paid by us. All who wish this book should procure it now, as we will have no more after these are sold.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1918.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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PSALMS CXXXVIII. 1.

"BEFORE the gods will I sing praise unto thee."

To be able to sing the praises of God in the presence of idols and their worshippers requires great stability. We doubt if any one can have this stability unless kept by the power of a God-given faith. True religion is a matter of the heart, the result of the operation of the Spirit of God. One who is actuated by the spirit of true religion will not cry nor lift up his voice in the street. Piety is not a matter for parade and display, and true sobriety shuns bombast and ostentation. Jesus himself, who was the very embodiment of religion in very truth, was meek and lowly in heart, a frequenter of the byways and solitary places, loving the calm peace of the country rather than the tumult of the crowded market-place. Jesus forbade his followers to use their faith as a cloak, telling them not to give their alms to be seen of men, not to stand on the street corners and make long prayers to be seen of men, not to use vain repetitions as did the heathen. In other words, all outward display of their religion to attract the attention of men was forbidden unto the followers of Jesus. This does not mean that the outward life of the believer will not reflect his inward faith, but it does mean that an outward profession of piety without the grace of that piety in the soul is a mere sham, and it further means that wherever the true faith of Jesus is in the heart it will surely lead its subject to careful living and prayerful walking while making that one dread the publication of his faith through open display and public parade. However, there were times when even Jesus came out openly and boldly and declared the truth that was in him, without the fear or favor of men; and there are times when the followers of Jesus cannot restrain themselves, but when they are constrained to come out fearlessly and proclaim the faith that is in them. These occasions are generally those upon which error and false doctrine assert themselves, times when the saints are persecuted for righteousness' sake. We are reminded of the experience of Daniel in this particular. His case well shows how the child of God is made to proclaim the praise of the true God in the presence of the gods of this world, which are false. After Belshazzar, king of Babylon, was slain, his kingdom was taken over by Darius the Mede. Daniel, the prophet of God and Hebrew captive, found favor in the eyes of Darius, so that Darius made him first president in the realm. This position necessitated all princes rendering their accountings to Daniel. Somehow the king Darius had seen that there was an excellent spirit in this man Daniel, and for that reason he sought to place him in authority over the whole realm. This was very galling to those men who had to recognize Daniel as being above them, and who had to render their accountings unto him. The prosperity of the Hebrew captive aroused the malice and envy of his enemies, so that they planned together to seek an occasion

against him, whereby they might accuse him to the king. Now, these men, even though at enmity against Daniel, recognized Daniel's uprightness, for in planning against him they said, "We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God." What a wonderful tribute even these hateful men were forced to pay to Daniel's integrity. Daniel's religion was all that these men could find against him, and they resolved to strike at that. These plotters appeared before Darius and begged him to sign a decree which should compel all within the kingdom to ask no petition of any god or of any person except of King Darius, for thirty days. These schemers knew very well that Daniel would never obey such a decree, that he would positively worship none but his God nor seek a petition of any other. Darius himself, however, was entirely unsuspecting of the designs these plotters had in mind against Daniel, therefore he signed the decree which compelled everybody to pray to none but Darius for the space of thirty days. Once signed, this decree could not be revoked, since the laws of the Medes and Persians were irrevocable. Having obtained the king's signature to the new law, they took care to see that Daniel found out about it. Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house, and his windows were opened toward Jerusalem. Here, with his windows thus open toward the holy temple, Daniel knelt in plain sight of all the people and prayed three times a day to his God. This was a plain declaration from Daniel that he refused to worship any other than the true and living God of Israel. Here was an occasion when a follower of Jesus made an open and public display of his faith, and such was the time and place that nothing short of a bold stand for what he believed would satisfy his own conscience. Here, in the presence of false gods whom his enemies wished to compel him to petition, he calmly and quietly knelt in prayer to his own God. The words of David, "Before the gods will I sing praise unto thee," caused us to think of Daniel's experience and the trial of his faith. There is a time to keep silent, and there is a time to speak out boldly the faith that is in us, not for the sake of display, nor to win human applause, but to let people know where we stand. The time to speak plainly and boldly is when we are assailed by false doctrine, and when men would coerce us in the matter of what we shall and shall not worship. Jesus always had his face set as a flint against all error and every evil way. He shunned not to speak the plain and simple truth, regardless of what bodily harm or temporal inconvenience might ensue therefrom. We feel that it is the Spirit of Jesus speaking through David in the writing of the one hundred and thirty-eighth Psalm, and that, therefore, it is the testimony of the life and experience of the Son of God. Before the Jews and the Romans, in the presence of all sects of the former and before all parties of the latter, Jesus declared the truth of God. They said his sayings were "hard," but they could do nothing against him until his hour came for them to slay him. Even in death he waited upon his God, and petitioned not the shrine of idolaters. With his whole heart and mind and strength he cleaved unto his God. But though he told them the truth plainly, he was not angry with them, and prayed to his Father to forgive them, for they knew not what they did. This life of Jesus manifested in his people is what will compel them to stick

to the truth and refrain from idols. Ability to withstand error and false teaching is derived from faith. None of us can keep alive our own soul, but we hope to be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. The reason that so many of the early christians perished because of the faith that was in them, and suffered, too, in many violent and hideous ways, was not because they were any more courageous or heroic than God's people in any other age and time, but for the reason that they were kept constant to their God by a higher power than themselves, and could not, therefore, recant the faith that was in them. And, further, we are convinced that if there ever comes a time again in the history of the world when God's people shall have to die for their faith, the same power that kept them true to their God in days of old will keep them just as truly in days to come. Faith is never wasted, but is measured out to the saints according to their needs; just enough, no more, no less. The coward flesh would shrink from pain and persecution, but faith will not let the cowardly flesh sway the true believer in times when he is on trial for his faith. This is our confidence in God, and we cannot believe our confidence is misplaced. To trust in God is not to make haste, that is, not to be confused or put to utter rout. The army of the Lord shall never go down to final defeat, however sharp the conflict may wage before the heights of glory are attained.

L.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder George Ruston, at his home, Kelly Corners, N. Y., March 27th, 1918, David F. Sanford, of Margaretville, N. Y., and Mary E. Ostenhoudt, of Fleischmanns, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Jane Galbraith, of the township of Ekfrid, Ontario, Canada, died at the home of her daughter March 16th, 1918, in the 86th year of her age. Sister Galbraith united with the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada in May, 1877, and was baptized by the late Elder William Pollard. She was married to Neil Galbraith in the year 1860, and to that union were born seven children, three sons and four daughters, of whom six are still living. Her husband died May 24th, 1875. Sister Galbraith was born in the same township in which she died. She was a kind and devoted mother and a good and kind neighbor, always ready to lend a helping hand in times of need. Since the writer came to Canada, four years ago, sister Galbraith had not been able to attend meeting, not being a strong person, and with the infirmities of old age, she had been able to go out but very little. Three years ago she had a fall, from which she never fully recovered. She was bright and cheerful during her last sickness, and passed from the shores of time in full assurance of faith in her blessed Lord.

The funeral was held from the home of her daughter, where she died. The large concourse of people that gathered to pay their respect to this aged and highly esteemed mother and neighbor showed how dearly she was beloved by all who knew her. Her body was laid to rest in the Appin Cemetery to await the second coming of her blessed Lord, who will change her vile body and fashion it like unto his own glorious body.

May the Lord of all comfort and grace sustain the mourning ones. J. B. SLAUSON.

Miss Prudence Chilcote, daughter of Enoch and Prudence Chilcote, deceased, was born in Hares Valley, Huntingdon Co., Pa., April 21st, 1831, and died Feb. 7th, 1918, aged 86 years, 9 months and 16 days. She was baptized October 14th, 1877, by the late Elder Thomas Rose, in the fellowship of the Springfield Church, of which church she was a faithful and loved member, and from what I have known of her I think it probable that in all these intervening years she did not allow any worldly cares to keep her away from her much loved meetings with the church. The most of her early life was spent with her uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Solomon Mierley, in Trough Creek Valley, near Cassville, Pa., where she was well and favorably known. Theirs was a Baptist home; her uncle and aunt were members of the Huntingdon Old School Baptist Church, of that valley. The remaining years of her life were spent in and near Three Springs. My first recollection of her is when, with my father, I attended the association and some of the other meetings held with the Springfield Church. She and her sister Margaret lived together at that time, and it was evidently a comfort to both

to entertain the Baptists in their home. Later she and her brother Mordecai, and nephew, William Chilcote, had their home together. Always it has been a home where it was one of their greatest pleasures to entertain the Baptists, as was the home of their parents. Sister Prudence maintained it until the last, even when friends thought it too much, she having entertained during the association in October. We loved to meet in their home for worship, which was the custom in their declining years, to hold at least one service there during a meeting. The services held in their home during the association seemed a veritable feast to her, as so often they were. The last meeting there for her was when Elder J. M. Fenton preached in their home the evening of the third Sunday in November. How we shall miss her! Our lives become very closely entwined with those with whom we have met in loving fellowship for so many years. She will be much missed in the home; but for her the trials of life are over, and we have the assurance that she is in the enjoyment of perfect rest and endless bliss.

One who loved her.

LAURA GREENLAND.

James N. Rush was born March 16th, 1838, in the State of Virginia, and departed this life March 22nd, 1918, aged 80 years and 6 days. He was married to Lucy F. Clore August 12th, 1860, who preceded him in death Nov. 27th, 1912. To that union were born nine children, five sons and four daughters, two daughters having preceded him in death. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church in September, 1887, and was a faithful and consistent member of the church to the day of his death, telling his family that if an Old School Baptist minister could not be gotten to conduct his funeral not to have any service at all. He was ready and anxious to depart from this world and to be with Christ and his loved ones who had gone before. He was a good neighbor, a devoted companion and a kind and loving father. He is survived by five sons: William, Madison, George, Calvin and Elmer, of Ottumwa, Iowa, two daughters: Mrs. Lodema Nickles, of Kansas City, Mo., and Mrs. Emma Goodwin, of Ottumwa, Iowa, a brother, W. H. Rush, of Indiana, eleven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Owing to a misunderstanding in the telegram, the minister did not arrive, so a short funeral service was conducted by a brother of the church at the home, 530 N. Hancock St., after which the body was laid to rest in the McCormick Cemetery to await the Master's call.

I had known brother Rush for a number of years. He was a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and had no use for the doctrines of the world. May the Lord reconcile the family.

J. W. BRADLEY.

Melissa A. Griffin was born in the town of Hamden, N. Y., May 14th, 1842, and died at the home of her stepdaughter, sister Eliza Mann, Feb. 1st, 1918. She was the daughter of Lyman and Hannah Hulbert, and was married to George Griffin in May, 1873. To that marriage was born one son, Frederick, who died when fourteen years of age. Her husband died Dec. 24th, 1909. She is survived by four stepchildren: John W. and James A. Griffin, of Roxbury, N. Y., George A. Griffin, of Buckley, Wash., and sister Eliza Mann, of Turnwood, N. Y.; also by a sister in Spokane, Wash., and several nephews and nieces in Delaware County, N. Y. For the past four years she had lived with sister Mann. Last May she had a shock, which left her quite helpless. She received loving and patient attention from our dear sister, who found it a pleasure to minister to her needs, she in turn being very grateful for the care bestowed upon her. She joined the Methodists when quite young, but those who were in constant care of her loved her for the truth's sake. She had no confidence in herself, but confessed a hope of salvation through the mercy of God.

The funeral service was held at the home of sister Mann, the writer, at her request, speaking from a part of the fourteenth chapter of John. The remains were interred in the cemetery at Margaretville, N. Y.

GEO. RUSTON.

Mrs. Sarah Holston Laws died at the home of her nephew, Mr. Wm. K. Truitt, in Worcester County, Md., in the 75th year of her age. She was the widow of Mr. John W. Laws, of Parsonsburg, Wicomico County, who died several years ago. She was married to Mr. Laws in November, 1888. She leaves two stepchildren and several stepgrandchildren, but had no issue of her own. She was very much beloved by her husband's children and relatives, and highly respected by all who knew her, and gave evidence of a gracious work in her soul. She loved the Old Baptists and the doctrine they advocate, but never united with the church; a sense of unworthiness prevented her coming to the church, but her heart and home were open to them, and her hands never tired of ministering to their necessities.

The funeral was held at Forest Grove on the 9th, conducted by the writer, after which the mortal body was laid in the cemetery near by, by the side of her husband, until the trump of God shall call it forth unto immortality.

A. B. FRANCIS.

Mary Emma Simons, wife of Philip Simons and daughter of brother John W. and Mary Lee Brimer, was born May 20th, 1855, and passed from this world of sorrow and vale of tears Nov. 6th, 1917. She leaves her husband and one child to mourn her departure. She was a regular attendant of Baptist meetings at Wilmington, Del., her home having been

in that town for years. She gave marked attention to the preaching, and surely was a most faithful inquirer after the truth as it is in Jesus. On one occasion recently after the meeting she told the writer that one of the hymns he read: "A crumb of mercy, Lord, I crave," (884) seemed to have been written for her; she felt needy, and a desire for the Master's bread, even a crumb to drop from his table to feed her. She seemed to hunger and thirst for that bread and water of life which flows from the great Fountainhead, King Jesus of Nazareth.

Her remains were laid in the earth Nov. 9th, 1917, after a few words spoken by the writer.

JOHN G. EUBANKS.

Miss Lavina Roberson died March 2nd, 1918, aged 77 years. She was a daughter of one of the old pioneer families of this county. She is survived by a brother, Oliver, and a sister, Mrs. Mary Egbert, both of Burdett, N. Y. She was a lifelong member of the Old School Baptist Church, being baptized by Elder S. H. Durand early in life, and was always present at the meetings of the church when able. She possessed charity for others. Although her hearing was poor, she could receive a sermon when delivered and could testify to the truth, and loved to read the Bible and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. She cheerfully served as assistant church clerk when needed. We feel that we have lost a faithful member, but know she is at rest. My prayer is that we may be prepared to enter that eternal home of rest, as she has.

NORMAN BROWN.

BURDETT, N. Y.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, of New York city, deplores the necessity for withdrawing her invitation to the Warwick Association to hold its annual convention in this city next June. War conditions have developed difficulties so hard to overcome that it seems impossible to insure the satisfactory entertainment of visiting members and friends.

CYRUS RISLER, JR., Church Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Elder C. W. Anderson, Ark., $5.00; Decatur Mouser, Ohio, $3.00; Mrs. Catherine Walker, Ont., $3.00; Mrs. W. S. Johnson, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. M. B. Keogan, N. Y., $1.00; Henry C. Merryman, Md., $2.00; Attie Curtis, Maine, $1.00; Lena Langford, Ariz., $4.00; A Friend, W. Va., $10.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Otego has appointed an all day meeting for Sunday, May 5th, beginning 10:30 a. m., sun time, 11:30 a. m., government time. Lunch will be served at the meeting-house. We hope to see a goodly number in attendance.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Ingleside, N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting, the Lord willing, for Saturday and Sunday, June 29th and 30th, 1918. Those coming from the east or west on the Rochester Branch of the Erie or D., L. & W. R. R., will be met at Atlanta station Friday, 28th, by writing to Mr. Harvey Graves, Nelson Nichols or Riley Prester, R. F. D. 7, Naples, N. Y. Those coming on the Lehigh Valley R. R. will be met at Naples, N. Y., by writing to Mr. Silas Drake, R. F. D. 27, Naples, N. Y. Place of meeting five miles from either station. All who come will be made welcome.

D. M. VAIL.

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IN

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m

ALL WELCOME

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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SYLVESTER HASSELL.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1918. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOME HARD SAYINGS.

MANY, very many things in the Scriptures will always be mysterious to the children of God while they remain in the flesh. We search and research the testimony of truth to gain light on many passages of Scripture, but often our labor is in vain, for after much meditation and comparing Scripture with Scripture we are no wiser than at the beginning. I suppose that my mind is exercised similarly, at times, to many of my brethren, wanting to know the exact meaning of certain passages of Scripture, and also fearful to settle down upon what seems to be the mind of the Holy Spirit that gave it to the holy men of old. I feel the important weight of advancing the exact meaning of some Scriptures, because of the lack of other Scriptures testifying exactly to the same point. Though it is a Bible truth that, "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established," yet, it seems also true that some Bible sayings standing alone are just as true as if two or three or more sayings declare the same things.

I want to speak of the third verse of the ninetieth Psalm, which reads: "Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men." This being a prayer of Moses, the man of God, we readily see to whom he is speaking—God, the upholder of all things. I have heard very little from any Bible reader in regard to the meaning of the Scripture quoted. It seems to me this verse is a paradox, that is, if I understand the literal meaning of each part of the sentence. We know from many testimonies of holy men that it is a well established fact that God did turn man to destruction. Moses has here put that fact before the throne of grace, set it in opposition to the command of God, who sayest, "Return, ye children of men." In my understanding of this verse, literally, there is a flat contradiction: man consigned to destruction, commanded to deliver himself from the mighty edict of the Almighty. It is a settled fact that man is turned to destruction—death sentence passed upon him. After the great decree has gone forth, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," man is commanded by the great Judge that issued the decree of death, to return—an impossibility. "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh;

the Lord shall have them in derision."—Psalms ii. 4. We may ask, If God puts up a barrier impossible for man to pass over, why then does he call on man to return from destruction? This is a hard saying, "who can hear it?" There are many religionists if confronted with such testimonies as the above, divert the Scriptures from their true meaning, attempting to make apologies for what God does, as though God cannot have his own way when he wills to do some things. There are many people who claim to believe in Christ, yet they will not concede that God has any rights above the laws he gave to the children of men. Granting, as in their talk, that God has all power in heaven and on earth, yet he is somewhat like men, limited and controlled by the laws that he made for man. We now tread on holy ground. What man is there in all the earth to bring accusations against the mighty God of Jacob? If men do with their children as God did with his only Son they would be vile murderers. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," is also a hard saying. "And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!" "For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, * * * for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Another hard saying; not good for tender feet. If men, or a nation, do as the children of Israel did at the command of God, in driving people out of their homes, killing all, men and women, young and old, destroying all that breathe, without the authority of God, it would be the greatest sin for them next to idolatry. Man being under law to his Creator, forbidden to kill, he thinks that the Lawgiver ought to be controlled by the same law. He does not consider the right, privilege and power of the great King, nor the absolute freedom of his will above all things earthly and heavenly. A safe and a sure position to take is to know that whatever God does is right, because it is God who does it. Whenever a poor sinner is made to know and feel that God is supreme, above himself, and all worlds, and all things, that sinner is not far from the kingdom of God. Poor finite man in his worldly wisdom wants to judge the Lord God of Jacob, who is infinite. It is also a hard saying recorded about the enemies of Israel in Joshua's day, when he warred with them; for the Lord made it possible that the war should continue, that the seven nations that were in Israel's way might be destroyed, as in the cities of Jericho and Ai, where they killed men and women, utterly destroying all the inhabitants. Let me pause here, a few words to the wise: Is it not a remarkable and a blessed fact that in the fall and the destruction of Jericho, a harlot's life and that of all her kindred were saved? Ask me why the Lord would spare a lewd woman, perhaps viler than the average person in her doomed city, my answer is, like that of Jesus, Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. Another good reason, she, the harlot, was an ancestor of our dear Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; and two other reasons, one was that she kept and entertained the spies that Joshua sent, letting them down over the wall with a scarlet line to safety. The other reason for her safe escape from destruction, and a most important one, is that she had faith, the faith of God's elect. I ask, Is it a hard saying to remember Rahab, the harlot, one whom the Lord loved with an everlasting love, suffered her to go astray, but gathered her in through faith? I cannot speak to-day

of all the hard sayings mentioned in the Scriptures, they are many, but will give one more. To get to the bottom, the real cause, of the war that Joshua had with the enemies of Israel, in the land of Goshen, in the valley and in the plain, and in the valley of Lebanon unto Mount Hermon, hear what the Holy Ghost said: "For it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favor, but that he might destroy them, as the Lord commanded Moses."—Joshua xi. 20. Do we believe in God? If so, can we believe his testimonies? Are they true? Did God harden the hearts of the enemies of Israel to cause them to fight that they might be destroyed, as the above Scripture says? Child of God, do you believe in God? Can you take these hard sayings home to your hearts as sweet morsels of honey in the honeycomb? Jesus said, Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. Dear brethren, it is the power of God in us that makes us believe in his holy name, and that makes us receive his hard sayings. All to the praise of God,

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

CLAREMORE, Okla., Feb. 22, 1918.

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CLAREMORE, Okla., Jan. 25, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Showing friendship to a neighbor, a very old lady who had died, I dropped into a modern churchhouse, in this town, to attend her funeral service. Old School Baptists never expect to get comfort in hearing Baal's prophets eulogizing the power of man and painting the disappointments of God, but it seems that these false teachers get in our way, and we through fleshly courtesy are made to hear the name of our Lord and Master dishonored. Upon this occasion I was greatly impressed with the important truth that man is frail and mortal, standing out boldly against the doctrines of the so-called gospel minister, who uttered the following words of blasphemy: "God is infinite, man is infinite. Man has the privilege and the power of revealing God to others." Everything he said was in conformity to the above. He prated much upon the theory, so near the heart of every Arminian: that the soul of man is immortal, and that it is unlimited in thought and action. I do not think he said one word about the frailty and mortality of man. The lie of Satan against God in the beginning does not get any smaller by the passing of years, but it is enlarged upon by those who hate the truth of God and love a lie. His words could not in anywise indorse the words of the psalmist, but to the very reverse: "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am."—Psalms xxxix. 4. Instead of manifesting a holy desire to know his end, and confessing his weakness, as the above Scripture teaches, he exalted himself above God, declaring that he was infinite, like God, and that man had no real end. All religious denominations are alike, except the old order of Baptists. If there be such a thing possible that the old-fashioned Baptists should lose their identity, where will the children of God appear to show the true doctrine of God their Savior? Certainly not as members of any of the present so-called christian churches. I think the fire of hell in the midst too hot for the "little ones" of Jesus. I wonder, and wonder, how long the Lord will suffer the devil and his followers to tempt and distress the "little

ones" who trust in the Lord Jehovah for everything that they are, and for everything that they expect to be; but in the idolatry spoken of here, God is finally praised, he overruling all manner of wickedness for the good of his chosen people, and for his own glory. It seems from Scripture testimony that idolatry is the greatest sin charged against the family of man. Carnal Israelites were idolaters; spiritual Israelites are not idolaters, from the fact that they are made spiritual by God himself, being quickened by the Spirit of life to the knowledge of the holy, spiritual command, that forever bars the will of men from worshipping God; it reads, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."—Exodus xx. 3. Without the Spirit of Christ none can keep this first and great command, and in doing this they are worshiping God in spirit and in truth, and they are not idolaters. The Lord says that his chosen will not lie; this must be in their spiritual relation with the Lord their Savior, and not in their earthly character, for they, as the children of men, do lie, but I am persuaded that they repent of their lies daily, and are made to say, O wretched man that I am. Yet, in their inmost souls they do not deny the supreme authority of the Lord, their King, and do not lie to God in prayer. They admit that there is only one way to save vile wretches, and that is by grace.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

NEW YORK, N. Y., March 17, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—In sending in my renewal for the SIGNS I would like to offer a few thoughts concerning the doctrine for which it contends. I am glad that it does not contend for "the doctrines of men," but that it is a strong advocate of "the doctrine of God our Savior." My mind seems somewhat exercised along this line by the reading of the first chapter of Paul's letter to the Galatians, where he points out so clearly that "the gospel of Christ" is one, in the singular. He says, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." Truth and error have been the two contending forces since the fall of Adam, and there have been many false christs and false prophets in every age, even as there are in our land to-day, and the Galatian brethren were not immune from these little foxes which spoil the tender vines; but Paul was not ashamed to declare the whole counsel of God and to "shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." He not only declares the gospel to be one, but is emphatic in saying that it is received by the revelation of Jesus Christ: "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Neither was his apostleship according to the choosing of man: "Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)" he had chosen an opposite course. He had been exceedingly zealous of the traditions of his fathers in the Jews' religion and profit-

ed in it above many of his equals, and beyond measure had persecuted the church of God. "But," as he says, "when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus." Is it possible that the theologians of to-day can read this chapter, understand the English language, believe this to be the inspired word of God, and reconcile it with all of their machinations in manufacturing men to order to go up and down throughout the breadth and length of our land, and the lands beyond the seas, to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God? Paul did not even confer with Peter for three years, and of the other apostles saw only James. It was not necessary for him to be taught of man how to preach, neither did he seek to please men. "For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." The gospel which he preached was as a fire shut up in his bones, burning its way to the surface, and woe be unto him if he preached not the gospel. It was the power of God in him, moving him to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; "and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ." "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." The wisdom of the world knows not God, neither can the world by its wisdom search out God, for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. But we thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay, but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."—Rom. iii. 27, 28. Brethren, unless these things be true there is no hope for a poor sinner; but these things are true, therefore I say, rejoice. God's doctrine, (in the singular) does drop as the rain, his speech distils as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass. "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow, from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Then is not this a glorious doctrine, wonderful news from a far country and glad tidings of great joy to the Lord's poor and afflicted people? Therefore, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

R. LESTER DODSON.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 19, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—As I read the inclosed letter from sister McKinney to a dear spiritual sister, she said I ought to send it to you to dispose of as you thought best, as it would be a comfort to many of our dear household who read our messenger of truth. How often when we see our thoughts expressed by some one far away it brings that one so closely into our hearts that we can hardly believe that we have never met face to face. The SIGNS is a great blessing to many who are not able to meet in the assembly of the saints, yet in spirit they flow together, rejoicing in the Lord.

Unworthily your sister,

BESSIE DURAND.

OTTAWA, Kans., Nov. 9, 1917.

DEAR SISTER BESSIE:—Wednesday morning while I was out among my chickens I was talking to Elder Durand of what I hope has been the Spirit's work within. The postman came, and I went out for the mail and found your letter. I said, Bless her dear heart, how good of her to answer my request so soon. Elder Durand is especially dear to me, because his writings confirm so much, or all, I may say, of what has been revealed to me, though previously they had been obscure; I could not fathom them, try as I would, but now they are meat and drink. I gathered up my back numbers of the SIGNS, and when I would see his name I could feel my heart thrill with love. That lasted for quite awhile, then I began to see other good letters while searching for his, and I would stop and read and rejoice. I wondered that I could be interested in any other's writings, when the words came: Lest you worship the creature more than the Creator. That was in 1909, but it is as dear to my heart to-day as it was that moment. I love the brethren, but O, let me worship God alone and serve him only. I was reading this morning in Elder Bartley's book, "Priesthood of the Son of God." How plainly he shows the difference between the two covenants: Moses, the servant of God, the mediator of the old, and Jesus, the Son of God, the mediator of the new. Moses was the mediator of the law, which ministered justice, and therefore condemnation unto death, but Jesus is the mediator of the gospel, which ministers mercy and grace, therefore justification unto life. As many as are under the works of the law are under the curse, for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. While reading the above these thoughts came: Jesus, being the Son, was heir of all things. He told them the servant was not greater than his master. So then the law is not greater than the gospel. How sweet it is to trust in his finished salvation and to hope for mercy through the shedding of his precious blood. May he work in us all to will and to do of his good pleasure. He has led me through deep waters, and I feel a sweet hope this morning that he is my Shepherd and that I do know his voice. I surely do long to follow him, and I trust he will yet lead me where he feeds his flock, and that I may go in and out and find pasture. Early this morning I was feeling very sad, when the words came softly into my mind, He was tried and tempted, too. They were very sweet and comforting to me. For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the

Lord; I will put my laws in their hearts, and in their minds will I write them, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is there is no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the vail, that is to say, his flesh, and having a high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for he is faithful that promised; and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works. In these times we find plenty preaching the law, but few preaching the gospel in its purity. Any poor little work we might do is only a reasonable service for what the dear Savior has done for all those who fervently love and trust in his name. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. Now, dear sister, what is the fruit? Is it not praising God, from whom all blessings flow, giving all honor, power and glory unto his name, who alone is worthy to be praised? The German ruler says, "Forward with God." While pondering it in perplexity the thought came: Wait upon God; wait patiently upon him who is able to subdue all things. All nations are as a drop in a bucket to him. This thought was presented to my mind a few days ago: Jesus is King over spiritual Israel, and he rules in their hearts by love and fear. We long to obey him in all things, and are always grieving because we are so prone to go astray. God as creator rules and controls all his creatures. Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world," so you see it must be a spiritual kingdom. It seems to me that Jesus reigns only in the hearts of his children. The worldly wise cast him out, they do not want this man to reign over them; but they are willing to be called by his name, to take away their reproach among men. Dear sister, this is the way I have been led alone in the wilderness; I have had no man to teach me. If I am wrong I want you or Elder Durand to write me and faithfully point out my errors. The Lord has been good to me, and the remnant of my days I would spend in his praise. Sometimes I hear or read that he is not all-powerful, that he is only a kind of go-between; then I am in distress until I am again confirmed that he is God and changes not, therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed. He is God, and beside him there is no Savior. He works, and none can hinder. For of him, and to him, and through him, are all things, to whom be glory forever.

I am so nervous I cannot write plainly; I am afraid you will have trouble to read my letter. Elder Durand mentioned in a letter published in the SIGNS that his daughter Mildred went with him to his appointments. I almost, if not quite, envied her her privilege. Dear sister, I hope to see you some day face to face, God willing. Write when you feel that you can.

With a heart full of love for you all, I am, I hope, your sister,

ANNA McKINNEY.

KENDALL, Wash., Feb. 25, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will attempt once more to write a few of my thoughts and meditations to my dear kindred in Christ, our precious Savior. But what shall I write? I feel like an old Elder once said as he arose in the pulpit to preach, with tears streaming down his cheeks: I feel like one who has been bidden to go and feed the little lambs, and I have nothing to offer them but an empty sack; but if the dear Lord will give me the same kind of food to place before my brethren and sisters, who are so dear to me, as he gave that servant at that time, there will be some one fed, but all praise and honor belong to him who rules all things after the counsel of his own will, for I know that I am nothing, and less than nothing, but a suppliant at the throne of mercy, where I go every day and nearly every hour to beg for a continuance of his love and mercy to me, a sinner, which is all the reason I can give for asking, and, like Peter, I have nowhere else to go for help.

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." These are the words of our Savior, as recorded in Luke xxi. 36, where Jesus was instructing the disciples in regard to the throwing down of the temple, or, as it appears to me, the old Jewish law with its rites and ceremonies, which was built upon such a foundation as man furnishes: wood, hay, stubble, &c. This was the time when the law was in force, and Christ knew that the time was near at hand when the prophecy was going to be fulfilled which is recorded in Jer. xxxi. 31: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah." The latter half of the thirty-third and the thirty-fourth verses read: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more [as they had been, and as some are trying to to-day] every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Then goes on to establish the fact beyond all controversy by declaring: "Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is his name." The rest of the chapter goes on to confirm this fact. Christ had just told his disciples, when some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts: Behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down. They asked him when these things should be, and the signs of his coming. His first warning was, Take heed that ye be not deceived; for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near. Then he goes on and enumerates the different calamities which shall befall the people; but, he says, before all these they shall lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake; and it shall turn to you for a testimony. Did not Saul lay hands upon the saints, bringing them before kings and rulers, there to be punished? Some were put to death, like Stephen, and it was all for his dear

name's sake. Has it not turned to his disciples for a witness, even down to the present time? Is it not a witness to his saving grace and mercy to poor, lost, hell-deserving sinners, who never did anything more deserving than Paul was doing to commend them when he was going to Damascus with letters of authority to bind all that called on the name of the Lord to bring them to Jerusalem to be judged of the rulers and punished? Was Paul seeking salvation? I have had Arminians tell me that Paul was under conviction all this time. Paul did not say so, but deplored his sinful condition; yes, the chief, and yet he said he was an ensample, and as such I believe him to be without strength, yet in due time Christ died for the ungodly. "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Yes, the redemption price was soon to be paid for our sins, the Just for the unjust. He was to be offered for our offenses and raised for our justification, when the disciples should see him coming in a cloud with power and great glory, and he abode with them many days, teaching them and showing them wonderful mysteries. "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away." Now we see the old heaven, or Jewish law, wherein they rested, pass away, and a new heaven, or the new covenant, wherein all of God's children find sweet rest from all their labors, appear; and this new covenant is only with the bride, the Lamb's wife, who is so beautifully pictured in the second verse of this twenty-first chapter of Luke: "And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites," which was all the living that she had, trusting all in Jesus, keeping back none of the price.

I have written as my mind has been led, whether it is the way of truth or error. One thing I do know; it has been in fear and trembling, with prayer for guidance in the way of truth. The verse which I thought I could see so much in at first seemed to close up and fade away, but there is a lesson in it that is sweet to me and to every child of God, and that is to pray alway, that we may be counted worthy to escape such calamities and to stand before the Son of man; for if we are worthy it is because we are of that number for whom Christ died, who love him and wait for his appearing, for we have been made worthy by his suffering.

I must tell you of the great comfort I get from reading the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The editorials and letters are in sweet accord with the way in which I have been taught, and I hope I have been taught of the Lord, though I am much of the time cast down, and go mourning over my sins, with now and then a season of rejoicing; then December is pleasant as May.

I have changed my residence from Bellingham, Wash., to Kendall, Wash., where I wish my correspondents to address me.

From one of the least of all,

DAVIS BURCH.

VIDALIA, Ga., March 28, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I want to express to you my gratitude for your kindness in sending me the SIGNS. I see much in it that I love and appreciate, and feel that I have experienced the same in my poor heart. The Lord has most wonderfully blessed you and Elder Lefferts to expound unto the Lord's people many blessed truths contained in the Scriptures and our experience. I love an humble,

godly ministry, who feel in their souls that their sufficiency is of God. I feel sure that the great body of our people love the glorious doctrine of grace, and are agreed on the grand cardinal principles. There are some points that we might express differently, but we should have great forbearance and be tender with one another. No one is perfect, and all any of us know aright is by revelation. I enjoyed Elders Ford, McConnell, yours and Elder Lefferts' articles as good and timely. We have often said the Primitive or Old School Baptists are the only people on earth who love the doctrine of grace, and we should be loving, tender and forbearing, and not make a brother an offender for a word. We should avoid hobby-riding and stressing things which confuse or alienate. We feel sure that the great body of our people are agreed in the main, if they could meet together in love. We see now in part and understand in part. Many times we fear that we know nothing of a spiritual nature. Over forty years ago it was my happy privilege to get hold of the writings of dear Elder G. Beebe. I read them with joy, and thanked God for the man. I feel sure that the Lord raised him up as a valiant soldier to stand as a bulwark against Fullerism. I was reared a stranger to the doctrine of grace, and when the dear Lord revealed himself to me and I found the dear Old Baptists they preached the doctrine I loved and felt in my heart to be the truth. I do not doubt the Old School Baptists being the church of God, but often doubt myself. I loved the writings of Elders Wm. L. Beebe, Chick, Rittenhouse, Purington, Grafton and many others who have gone to their eternal home. It was my privilege to meet those dear men of God, and to know them was to love them. Elder Wm. L. Beebe was so kind, tender and fatherly in his manner; he was truly a nursing father to the little lambs. I shall never forget him while memory lasts. I shall never forget the pleasant conversation in Elder Purington's home. He set forth to me the wonderful effects of grace in regeneration, in making vile rebels love and serve God and to hunger and thirst after righteousness. Dear Elder Chick was so good, humble, tender and Christlike. It has been my pleasure to hear Elder Durand preach a number of times, and much to my comfort. His preaching was filled with the heartfelt assurances of the work of grace in the soul. The dear old man is now nearing the end, and will soon lay his armor by and go home and be at rest. I feel sad to think that soon Elders Gold, Lester, Hassell and many other great and noble men will fall asleep in the loving arms of Jesus. It will be sad to give them up, and I am so weak in the faith at times as to ask myself, What will become of the dear Old School Baptists when all of these great and noble men shall have fallen asleep in Jesus? The same God that gave those men to the church can raise up others who will love and contend for the same blessed truths that our fathers did. Our hope is in the Lord and his rich grace for the perpetuity of the church and the salvation of their children. Old Baptists do not need Sunday-schools to save our children, theological schools to make preachers, nor boards to send them. Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain. The Lord is the preacher maker, and he calls, qualifies and sends whom he will. They will never preach the gospel nor be a comfort to the Lord's people unless he sends them. The Lord

does not need our help. Whenever the church makes a preacher he will prove a curse instead of a blessing. They are restless, and get tired of the good old faith and practice of our people. We here indorse the Black Rock address of 1832, and have it printed in the Minutes of our association. We oppose all the effort system of Messrs. Fuller & Co. We desire to be plain Old School Baptists, free from all the innovations of men, satisfied with the goodness of the Lord's house. We desire to labor in the most loving, tender manner with all lovers of grace, and who live their profession, keeping themselves unspotted from the world, for the things that make for peace. Internal wars have hurt us. We should not bite and devour one another; if we do, take heed that we be not consumed one of another. O that we all could lay aside all malice, envy, jealousy, evil speaking, hobby-riding, faultfinding, restlessness, and live together in love as brethren. We are brethren; we need each other. We are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

Pardon this intrusion. Pray for me and mine.

Yours in gospel bonds,

LEE HANKS.

MACON, Ga., Feb. 3, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—I inclose parts of three letters from the late Elder S. J. English, our beloved pastor, written to me. If you will I would be glad to see them published in the SIGNS; if not, all will be well. The letters were of much comfort to me during a period of great sorrow and darkness.

ELLA BARFIELD.

DEAR SISTER:—Your letter came duly to hand, and I make the attempt to answer, feeling, however, that it may not meet your expectations. You have the advantage of me, since you have but few business or any family cares, while I have both; in addition, the care of the churches. You may not appreciate the misgivings, fears, disturbances of mind that grow out of these responsibilities; especially since, in my contention for what I feel to be truth, I have become the target at which many delight to shoot. One might think that such things should not perplex me, and perhaps they should not, but they do, since I cannot always know just what to say and do. Many times when accusations of my unfitness have been thrust at me they have come home to my poor heart, that has been bleeding for nearly fifty years with a feeling sense of its own unfitness, with such force that language cannot express the sorrow and darkness that seize upon me. I can well appreciate the words of the prophet: Behold and see if there is any sorrow like mine. No one can realize the great depth of unworthiness and shame I feel in my heart, and how I have struggled with these gloomy hours of darkness and despondency, almost despair. How often in my great weakness have I been forced to wait upon this promise: When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, then I the Lord will hear their cry. How often have I thirsted for that river of life, righteousness, but could see it only at a distance, if at all, and often mountains of darkness obstruct that meager view.

DEAR SISTER:—The great subject: Righteousness, is inexhaustible, viewing it from any standpoint possible. All things that pertain to godliness are of an exalted character. This subject is like a city beautiful, and exalted above the

hills; when we walk around it something new and beautiful appears at every step, so that we can but exclaim, Beautiful, beautiful! If we could always look upon that city. But when our eyes, our thoughts, are turned from its beauty and are directed within, lo, what a contrast! Then are we bowed with shame, humiliation and sorrow. It calls to mind an incident I read once of a sailor boy's first experience in a storm. The captain had ordered him to go high upon the mast. He ascended, but when up he chanced to look below, and awed at the height he suddenly grasped the rigging and cried, "Lord, save me." The captain, realizing his condition, shouted to him, "Look aloft." It proved his salvation. The exhortation of prophecy is: Look unto me and be ye saved. As long as our eyes are upon him, are above, all is peace; but when we look down into the corruption of our own vile hearts, dismay overcomes us. You seem to think that I do not appreciate your sorrows; you are greatly mistaken. If I know anything of truth, I feel that I have learned it through this same source—deep sorrow. Truly in this way are we brought into fellowship with the sorrow and sufferings of the Master. Yes, we all appreciate your sorrows.

DEAR SISTER:—I have a conviction that the great God of the universe is possessed of unlimited knowledge and power. He is just as unlimited in resources as in wisdom. To say that he is unlimited in wisdom or knowledge, and yet is limited in resources, would be a reflection upon his perfection. He is a perfect God, and it became him, for whom were all things, and by whom were all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering. I understand that the "all things" here referred to were the things created, including their respective relationships one to the other and their effects one upon another. The wisdom of God was sufficiently comprehensive as to embrace or include all the acts of men and devils from the beginning to the end of time; and not only of these, but of all things, all creatures, the conduct of the forces of nature, &c. As the whale was in readiness to convey Jonah to the purposed haven, the winds on Galilee brought the disciples to the feet of Jesus, just so all acts of all creation, good, bad or otherwise, are interlinked with each other, thus constituting the great chain of events that characterizes creation and the mighty purpose of God in creation.

S. J. ENGLISH.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Apr. 19, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Will you kindly allow me through the SIGNS to thank the many dear ones who have so sweetly, tenderly and lovingly written us in our sad bereavement? Your sympathetic words have truly been a healing balm to our poor torn and bleeding hearts, and have brightened our pathway, lightened our burden of deep sorrow and strengthened us for the conflicts to come, in the blessed assurances of the ever-gracious promises that our God will never leave nor forsake, bringing these things to our remembrance. During the past year, and especially the fall and winter, I was brought exceedingly low, often in almost utter despair; I seemed to be left in a barren waste, where no living thing grew, comparable to the frozen Arctic regions, with no heart to pray, nor what to pray for; there were groanings which could not be uttered, but I could not think they were the real groans of a liv-

ing child. I cannot tell you, or describe the strange feeling, or seasons; was I really wandering about in sheepskins and goatskins, afflicted and tormented? Were those of old my companions, or were any of you, my dear kindred, my companions in those tribulations? If so, a line from you would be helpful indeed. I did long for some evidence of sweet communion with God our Father, some message or token of love, but O for so long a time his mercies seemed gone forever. As I sat by the bed of the dear one now at rest, I was thinking of her great suffering, and why it must be so, and in my heart I did cry out against God; I could see plainly why I should suffer, and while thus reflecting a voice sweetly, tenderly spoke, O fools, slow of heart to believe, ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? My poor heart was melted and it seemed I was brought in sweet communion and assured that all would end in peace. Now I look over the past months and feel that the hand of the Lord was in it all, to prepare me for the ordeal before me. Soldiers must undergo hard training to fit them for the battle-front. How blind we are, and dull of understanding; our God hath said, Thou shalt only see my hinder parts. While he is passing we are like poor old Jacob, feeling all these things are against us; but they are links in the chain of God's providence, to bring about the fixed purpose determined before time. During the past year my eyesight has been rapidly failing, and for the past three months I could barely see to get around with great care, and could only read large print. On March 25th I went to a hospital in Louisville and underwent a painful operation, with, we think, good results, as the sight is now much better, and hope for more gain. Without the operation total blindness was certain. These are but parts of his ways. I was able to read sister Mary Hill Terry's letter in the last SIGNS, the first I had read for three months.

I want to close with these precious, sublime words:

"If God is mine, then present things,
And things to come are mine;
Yea, Christ, his word, and Spirit, too,
And glory all divine.

If he is mine, then from his love
He every trouble sends;
All things are working for my good,
And bliss his rod attends."

Dear editors, publishers and readers, you will all bear with me in this poorly written letter, as I have not troubled you for a long time, but have read many of your good letters (editorials as well) with interest, instruction and comfort.

With much love, and in sweet gospel bonds to the household of faith, a poor lonely pilgrim, longing to depart from this life,

P. W. SAWIN.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER J. T. BARNES has changed his address from Walla Walla, Wash., to Milton, Oregon.

Brother W. M. Little has changed his address from Gorman, Texas, to Ouachita, Ark.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1918.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JAMES II. 26.

"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

In the writings of James much is said about works, while in Paul's writings much is said about grace, and in the writings of John much is said about love. In fact, each writer of the Scriptures had his own style of writing and presenting the doctrine of God. The same is true now of all the ministers of the gospel; each one has his own gift, hence style of setting forth his views of the word of God. But there has been in late years much contention and strife because all did not express themselves in the same way. It was not so with the apostles, they were in perfect fellowship and union with each other. The fact that Paul said, We are justified by faith, did not cause James to lose fellowship for him and speak unkindly of him, nor did Paul criticise James. How good it would be if we all could walk together as they did, but to the contrary, as soon as one uses different language in expressing himself from that of another trouble begins. One quoting the exact words of the Savior is sometimes accused of lying and denying the word of God, while the accuser at the same time will say in positive terms that the things quoted from Jesus are not true. No wonder that from time to time the children of God become confused and wonder if there is any reality in anything called religion; nor is it to be wondered at when the ministers become discouraged and feel like giving the whole thing up. Just as Paul, who said, We are justified by faith, and James who said, We are justified by works, were both right, just so brethren are often both right when an apparent difference appears, one giving expression to his thought from one standpoint and the other from another standpoint. Some have tried to prove that there was a wide difference between Paul and James, that they contradicted each other and therefore their writings could not have been inspired, but all spiritual readers know that what each said was absolutely true. In this letter of James' he dwells upon faith in a wonderful way, showing its power and benefits, criticising those who said they had faith and at the same time denied it by their works; while on the other hand he approved and commended those who by their works made the faith of God perfect. Those who said they had faith denied it by being partial to the rich and noble, while on the other hand, those who made no claim to having faith proved by their works that they were in possession of it. A man who is blind manifests his blindness by stumbling and falling over objects impossible for him to see, and should he say, I see, it would not convince those with whom he came in contact that he was telling the truth. On the other hand, one who glides along unhesitatingly, shunning all objects in his path, does not need to say, I see. In either case men know and understand us; so also did James know whether his "brethren" had or were manifesting the faith of God or not. In-

asmuch as it was not the Spirit of Christ to have respect of persons, it was not of faith, the fruit of that Spirit, to have respect unto persons. If such was wrong then, and rebuked by James, it is just as wrong now, and should be rebuked as not manifesting the faith of God. With shame many of us must confess that we are guilty. How strange, yet how true, that the poor are left often until the last, if not altogether, while the rich, well dressed, are shown the preference. It is an established fact that all men are classed, and not at home out of their class. The poor do not feel at home in the company of the rich, nor the rich at home in the company of the poor. The illiterate are not at home in the company of the learned; those of culture and re-refinement are not at home in the company of those less dignified. But while this is all true, there should be more equality manifested among the children of God. James told his brethren that the rich oppressed them, but that the poor were rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, yet when one well dressed entered their meetings they were given the best seat, while the poor were commanded to sit under the footstool. Some in his day who claimed to have faith would say to the poor and destitute, Be ye clothed and be ye fed, notwithstanding they gave them nothing. Then he asked, Where is your faith? They were not manifesting the Spirit of Christ, who gave himself for the benefit, peace, comfort and salvation of mankind. Well may he have asked, Where is your faith? when there was no manifestation either of pity or compassion. Then he said, Shew me your faith without your works, and I will shew you my faith by my works. As already illustrated by the figure of the blind man, it was impossible to show faith without works, but faith could not be hid where works were in evidence. This has always been so, yes, even from the beginning; Cain and Abel, by the things they did, manifested what they were. Cain's offering was without faith, hence not of the works of the children of God. Abel's offering was by faith, and therefore accepted of God. Faith is shown by the works of those who have it; it is not a dead fruit, but a living, powerful principle moving men to all sorts of good works. The works of faith are not, as all the saints know, works in order to obtain salvation, though such is the impression of the world; they are the outcome of salvation, and make known to the church that such as do them have been with Jesus and learned of him. Light now begins to dawn, and we discover the truth and weight of the text that, "As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." We all know how dead the body is without the spirit, or life—dead, dead, dead. Just so faith without works is dead also. "By their fruits shall ye know them," is true. By the fruit the tree is known, not by the leaves nor by the bark. An apple tree is sure to bring forth apples, a cherry tree is sure to bring forth cherries, and a pear tree is just as sure to bring forth pears—every tree after its kind. Hence thus in nature men and women are sure to manifest fruits according to their nature. The wild olive tree will bring forth wild olives. Yes, every branch of that tree, nature, will bring forth fruit of its kind. Paul tells us what those fruits are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings and such like, and they that do such things shall not inherit the kingdom

of God. Natural men will do these things because they are the fruit of the tree, nature. It is of course fully understood that no one man is guilty of all the things mentioned above, but the entire tree, all the branches, will bring forth all the fruit. It is the general idea that all men have faith and can exercise it at will, but Paul says "all men have not faith." Another natural idea is that all men, women and children have a spark of divine or eternal life dwelling in them, and that they can fan it into a flame if they only will. John says, "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life." The testimony of these two apostles removes forever the imagined foundation from under the popular ideas just mentioned above. If any man has the Son he has the Spirit of the Son, and if he has the Spirit he will manifest the fruit of that Spirit, or tree of life, which is: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against which there is no law. Just as the natural body without the spirit is dead, so is the natural man dead in sin without the Spirit of Christ, and the record is, the dead know not anything, hence have not faith, without which it is impossible to please God. The works of faith are the kind spoken of by James in his letter. Abraham by faith offered his only son Isaac as a burnt offering at the command of God, believing that God was able to raise him from the dead, and was therefore justified by works, and by his works his faith was made perfect, or its power made manifest. The harlot Rahab was justified by works when she received the spies and sent them out another way. Her faith, unknown to those round about her, was made perfect by her works. Neither Abraham nor she talked or boasted of faith, but what they did made manifest their faith in God. Abraham received favor of God and was called the friend of God. Rahab the harlot received promise of salvation, and the scarlet line, by which she let the spies down by the wall, was the sign when Jericho fell. Abraham being the father of the faithful, or those of faith, all the children of Abraham have like precious faith. His faith believed the power of God to raise the dead, or to raise Isaac and fulfill his promise in him. We all have this faith in God, not only that he is able, but will raise the dead. Therefore Paul tells us that it was not written for Abraham alone that he believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness, but for all who believe that God is able to raise the dead. How good it is to find ourselves in the company of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and to discover that those gracious things were written for us as well as for them; and how good it is to know the difference between the works of the flesh and the works of faith. Let us therefore be steadfast, always abounding in the works of the Lord.

K.

BOOK OF EDITORIALS.

We have on hand a number of copies of the Second Volume of Editorials. This book is made up of editorials written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the Signs of the Times from March, 1842, to March, 1847, and contains 768 pages, neatly bound in cloth.

This work originally sold at two dollars per copy, but as a few of the pages are stained by water we will, as long as the supply lasts, sell them at the extremely low price of seventy-five cents per copy. Postage paid by us. All who wish this book should procure it now, as we will have no more after these are sold.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

LUKE VII. 35.

"BUT Wisdom is justified of all her children."

At the request of an esteemed brother, we propose to give some general views on the subject of wisdom; and the apostle James informs us that there are two kinds, which are essentially different from each other, emanating from opposite sources, and productive of very different fruits, each known by its peculiar qualities and general characteristics. That which is most popular in the world, and which is called the wisdom of this world, we are told, descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish; its tendency is to confusion and every evil work. (James iii. 13–16.) It was found in the serpent that beguiled Eve in the morning of the creation, and has its fountain in the depths of hell. By this kind of wisdom the world knew not God. None of the princes or ruling powers of this world knew Christ, for if they had known him they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. This wisdom is so cheap that all may have it, it is so easily acquired that no divine or spiritual power is required for the attainment of it. Our mother Eve received it unasked from the serpent in the garden, and it is now being insiduously instilled into the natural minds of children and adults from all the humanly devised religious institutions of the world, from the Infant School to the more imposing Theological Seminaries in the land, and almost every school is more or less infected with it. It being of the world, the world approves and loves it. It qualifies the carnal mind of men to contest and resist the truth of God with more subtilty, and craft, and to control the natural mind with greater plausibility. It is set forth allegorically in the seventh chapter of Proverbs, as used by the strange woman (antichrist) in her seductive and adulterous wiles, and missionary arts by which she makes proselytes of those who are void of true wisdom. Allured by her deceptive flattery and crafty words, her converts go "after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; till a dart strike through his liver, as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life." "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."—James iii. 17. This wisdom which is from above is the wisdom of God, and it is therefore pure: free from all impurity or deception, and possessed of eternal excellency in itself. It is peaceable in its fruits, inspiring good will to men, and glory to God in the highest; all who are richly endowed with it will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks, and the nation ruled by it will learn war no more. It is gentle in its nature and in all its effects. Easy to be entreated. "If any of you [of the scattered people of God to whom this epistle was addressed] lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."—James i. 5. How gentle, and how easily entreated by all who have faith in God! It is full of good fruits, leaving no room for partiality or hypocrisy. This wisdom, let it be remembered, can only come from above, God alone can make us wise unto salvation. This heavenly wisdom is personified in the Proverbs, viii., throughout the chapter; and indeed the whole book of Proverbs is addressed by Wisdom to her

children. This should be carefully observed that we may better understand their proper import. Some of the proverbs have been read and so constructed as to make the false impression that they are addressed by God himself to men, or that our Lord Jesus Christ is personified by wisdom, and in that character he speaks in the Proverbs to the sons of men generally, saying, for instance, I love them that love me, and they that seek me early shall find me. Now God has nowhere in the Scriptures made any such propositions to men. God does not love men in return for their love to him, nor does he propose to do so, for his people, and all who ever have or ever shall love God, love him because he has first loved them. Our love is subsequent to his, and his first love is invariably the cause of our love to him. When he has shed abroad his love in us, but not before, then we love him as a consequence. But when wisdom doth cry, and understanding puts forth her voice, she crieth at the gates, at the entrance, at the coming in, at the doors; that is, at the portals of the house which she has builded. None can enter her gates and be admitted to participate with her children in the banquet of wisdom until they are called by grace, quickened by the Holy Spirit, and made partakers of that fear of the Lord which God has graciously promised to put in the hearts of his people. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." This beginning of wisdom is the gate of her house, the entry of her city and the coming in of her doors. Here at her portals wisdom is found, and here her voice is put forth to all who possessing the fear of the Lord approach her dwelling. Unto all such she calls, and her voice is to the sons of men, and thus she speaks to them: O ye simple, understand wisdom: and ye fools, be of an understanding heart. All who approach her gates are of this character. The fear of the Lord has made them conscious of their simplicity, and aware of their folly. If any man would be wise let him first become a fool, that he may be wise. In the early experience of every saint he is made to see, feel and confess that all his wisdom is foolishness, and all his righteousness but filthy rags. All his schemes and plans, which he thought were so wisely laid for attaining life, have failed, all his former calculations are laid low, and in the fear of the Lord he will acknowledge that he is the very character addressed by wisdom. Blessed now of the Lord with a knowledge of his folly, and of his need of understanding, he watcheth daily at wisdom's gates, and waits at the posts of her doors for that wisdom which descendeth from above, which wisdom dwells with prudence, and finds out knowledge of witty inventions. Unwilling now to depart from the avenues of true wisdom, though he feels that he is very slow to learn, yet having nowhere else to look, he waits at the posts of her doors. For whoso findeth wisdom findeth life and shall obtain favor of the Lord. As he listens to her voice, she speaks to him of excellent things, and the opening of her lips, in the disclosure of her treasures, points out to him the way of understanding; she discriminates understandingly between right and wrong, truth and error, good and evil; she directs only to right things. The mouth of true wisdom always speaks truth; as error is unwise, wisdom rejects it, and wickedness being unwise is an abomination to the lips of wisdom. As she cries and lifts up her voice to the pupil who is entering her gates, he finds that all the words of her mouth are in righteousness, and that there is nothing froward or perverse in them. True wisdom, which comes from above, never misleads, deceives or fails to give unerring counsel. All her ways are

pleasantness, and all her paths are peace, and they are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge. All the children of Zion are taught of God, and therefore they have understanding and knowledge of the truth, and can understand the instructions of that wisdom which is an attribute of God himself. But none can understand the words of wisdom until they are quickened and taught of God. The preaching of the gospel of Christ crucified, is to the work-mongrel Jew or legalist a stumbling-block, and to the learned Greek, foolishness; but to them that are called it is the wisdom and the power of God. To the disciple in the school of Christ wisdom says, Receive my instruction and not silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold, for wisdom is better than rubies, and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared with it. Silver and gold are among the most precious treasures of this world; the carnal mind makes them an idol, and they constitute the mammon of this world. The love of this specious idol is the root of all evil. The rich fool whose golden treasures were increased, could take no part of them with him on the night in which his soul was required of him. But the revenue of wisdom is durable riches of righteousness. The children of wisdom should never diverge from the counsels of wisdom for all the glittering baits this world can present. Wisdom from on high proclaims her dwelling, association, and her business, saying, "I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions." Some have supposed these words were spoken by Christ, personated by wisdom, but it will be seen in all this connection wisdom assumes the feminine gender, which is nowhere in the Scriptures applied to Christ.

(To be continued.)

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, April 4th, 1918, at the home of the bride's mother, in Glencoe, Ontario, James McCracken, of Jenner, Alberta, and Miss Christena Elliott, of Glencoe.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Cordelia E. Tipton Sawin, my beloved wife, was born in the village of Shannon, Muskingum Co., Ohio, Jan. 23rd, 1848. She, with her parents, Thomas and Julia A. (Tunis) Tipton, moved to Moultrie Co., Ill., in 1861 or 1862. We were united in the precious bonds of holy wedlock at the home of my brother, Elder J. G. Sawin, in Stockton, Ill., April 27th, 1865, and started life's journey young in years, but hand in hand, and continued to the end, having journeyed together nearly fifty-three years. She united with the old Conns Creek Church in 1867, was baptized by Elder A. B. Nay, and it can be truly said she lived a faithful, devoted member, and the blessed cause of God and truth was always near her heart. I think it can be truly said of her that few, if any, ever suffered or underwent more privations for the cause's sake. During all the fifty-three years it mattered not what our conditions were (and God knows that many times they were trying), she never was heard to intimate that she would rather I would not leave for my appointments, but always said, "Go; we will get along some way." Truly she was a God-given helpmeet. In all our hardships as to the things of this life there never was a murmur or complaint, but a hoping and looking on the brighter side, often saying, Every cloud has a silver lining. She was always ready to accompany me to my meetings when circumstances would permit, but such often forbade, and I have turned away many times with a heavy heart because she could not go. For the past four or five years or more she had been a great sufferer from bronchitis, which became chronic, and for the past two years her sufferings much of the time were indescribable, yet she never murmured or complained, but was always cheerful. Her only complaint was the care and heavy expense attending her long continued illness. All was cheerfully done for her that could be done. The fourth Saturday in October she was taken critically ill, and for seven weeks was confined to her bed, with but little hope of her recovery, but she finally rallied and got up around the house, and we hoped when warm weather came she would get stronger, but on March 12th she was taken with a chill and went to her bed to rise no more. She had the constant attendance of her physician, and every care that could be bestowed by loving, devoted children, but she gradually grew worse until the end came, at 7:15 p. m. Sunday, March 17th, 1918. The last words she was heard to utter were:

"Jesus, throw thy arms round about me." While her sufferings were great, yet relief and peace were given her, and the end was peaceful; life just seemed to go out as a burned out candle, like the gentle zephyrs of evening just past.

The funeral services were very largely attended at our home in Shelbyville, at our request conducted by my dear brother, Elder J. G. Sawin, who was surely given words of wisdom as a healing balm to our torn and bleeding hearts. Many have spoken of the sweet, tender, comforting words. Burial was in Grove Hill Cemetery. Three children, I. L. Sawin, of Indianapolis, Mrs. Warren H. White and Vola M. Sawin, and the poor old sinner husband, together with numerous friends and relatives, are left to mourn the loss of a good wife, mother and friend. Many know of and have been partakers of her loving and generous hospitality. P. W. SAWIN.

Mrs. Luella E. Bray, of Haverhill, Mass., departed this life to be with Christ, which is far better, March 12th, 1918, aged 62 years, 5 months and 18 days. Our sister was married to Mr. Wallace Bray in the month of July, 1881, who survives her to suffer his bereavement of such a devoted wife. For quite a number of years our sister was in delicate health, and because of this she and her husband removed to Colorado, and from there to Los Angeles, Cal., in the year 1902. Her health was somewhat built up, but she was still as a frail plant, easily affected by the storms of this life. Before she removed to the west she was exercised in her heart unto God concerning her condition as a poor sinner, and during all the years she was away from Massachusetts the things of eternity were of the utmost importance to her. While in Denver, Colo., she wrote that there were many churches in that city, but she could not attend any of them, for there was no foundation in the preaching for poor, perishing sinners to build upon. She had no fellowship for the isms of the day, and no desire to go to hear error preached, for her soul was yearning for the gospel of Christ. While in Los Angeles, for some time she could find no companionship with any in the gospel except with sister Millie A. Little, of Maine, who was then living in Los Angeles; but when the Primitive Baptist Church was organized she learned about it, and from that time attended their meetings, much pleased and comforted with the company of the saints and the precious gospel it was her privilege to hear proclaimed. In her letters and after her return to the east she always spoke of the dear brethren in Los Angeles with the utmost affection. In the spring of 1913 she returned from California and spent that summer with her husband at the home of her uncle, brother Joseph F. Hall, North Berwick, Maine. She thus was privileged to attend the meetings of the church every Sunday. On July 6th she related her experience to the church and was baptized in their fellowship that day by the writer. Our dear sister was one who had her share, a full share we think, of the trials and shadows of this earthly life, but the Lord was her stay and consolation. In her last sickness she was providentially at the home of her brother, Mr. Wm. Ham, of Haverhill, Mass., where for about eighteen weeks she was kindly nursed and everything was done that could be for her comfort. She was stricken with pneumonia and afterward tuberculosis of the lungs. She suffered much until she died, but was sustained by the loving-kindness of the Lord, and was enabled to bear without complaining the distresses that were her portion.

At her funeral the writer preached from the words: "Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense."—Solomon's Song iv. 6.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

Marilda J. Ford was born Nov. 8th, 1857, and departed this life March 5th, 1918, aged 60 years, 3 months and 27 days. She was first married to Wm. Stauffer, to which union were born three children, two sons and one daughter. Mr. Stauffer died in September, 1886. June 29th, 1895, she was married to the humble writer of this notice, who was left with four small children, three sons and one daughter, by the death of their mother. To this second marriage were born two sons, making a family of nine children, and I am proud to say that after our marriage these children never knew each other except as brothers and sisters. She leaves to mourn, this family of nine children, ten grandchildren, husband, three sisters, two brothers and many other relatives and a large number of brethren and sisters, with whom it was her happy lot to be acquainted. Her father, Frederick T. Myers, whose obituary appeared in the February 15th number, current volume of the SIGNS, preceded her to their happy home but thirty-eight days. She united with the Darby Run Church, in Galloway, Ohio, in 1892, and was baptized by the late Elder J. G. Ford, who afterward became her father-in-law. It was her chief joy to be with and care for and wait upon her brethren and sisters, which she esteemed a great privilege rather than a burden. For three years our home was the regular meeting place of the Prairie Run Church. October 28th, 1909, she was stricken with paralysis, from which she never fully recovered, although she became able to care for her own house until two years ago, when creeping paralysis set in, and we were compelled to break up housekeeping. At the time of her death we were staying with her son, Fred J. Stauffer, near Ashtabula, Ohio. The last few months of her life she was a great sufferer, yet in all her suffering she never murmured or complained, but often said that not one pain too many would she

be called upon to endure. She often quoted Paul's words: I reckon the sufferings of this present life are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. Her death was the most beautiful I ever witnessed. After being asleep she awakened with love and happiness beaming in every feature, and in her way she bade us all good-bye, although she could not speak, and after remaining awake a short time all at once a great light shone in her face as from within, and as the light disappeared she closed her eyes as in a peaceful sleep and never moved again, but gradually breathed her life away. Some time before her death she requested to be buried by the side of my former wife, with just room enough for me to be buried between them, and as that was my desire her remains were taken to Putnam County, Ohio, and after a very comforting discourse by Elder A. F. Dove to a large and attentive congregation she was laid in her last resting-place in the Guffey Cemetery. While we miss her much, we sorrow not as those who have no hope, for we know our loss is her eternal gain.

Brethren, pray for us in our lonely hours, for we feel alone in the world. B. G. FORD.

Daniel McArthur, a respected citizen of St. Thomas, Ontario, died at his home on Welington St. Feb. 20th, in the 69th year of his age, after a lingering illness. Mr. McArthur was united in marriage to Sarah Graham Jan. 1st, 1902. They settled in St. Thomas, where they lived all their married life. Mr. McArthur was in the employ of the Michigan Central Railroad for twenty-five years, until his health failed, about two years ago, and the company had the utmost confidence in his ability to perform the duties entrusted to him. He was not a professor of religion, but left bright evidence of his faith in God. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of God our Savior, and cherished a hope in a full and complete salvation through Jesus Christ, claiming no merit of his own, but relying on the all-sufficient grace of God which bringeth salvation. It was my privilege to visit him often during his sickness, and he looked forward to my coming to read and engage in prayer with him. He passed from this life into that sweet rest which remains for the people of God without a struggle. So quietly did the end come that those who were watching at his bedside could not tell just the moment that he breathed his last. For several days as the end approached he seemed to be conversing with loved ones who had gone before him.

His funeral, which was private, was held from his late residence, conducted by the writer. Burial was in the St. Thomas Cemetery. Mr. McArthur leaves his widow, three brothers and other relatives and friends to mourn their loss. May the Lord's blessing rest with the mourning ones.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Miss Henrietta Krewson died at the home of Mrs. Carr, at Ivyland, Pa., Jan. 29th, 1918, in her 91st year. She was born a sinner of Adam's race June 5th, 1827, and born again, or of God, and baptized in the fellowship of the Southampton Old School Baptist Church by the late Elder Earle in the year 1845, and lived a life by the faith of the Son of God, who loved her, for about seventy-three years. She was a mother in Israel, and one who was well versed in Scripture and the doctrine and order of the church, and loved to converse upon them. Some few years ago she attended the associations at Harford, Welsh Tract and Warwick, and they were bright Ebenezers in her life. A few months ago I received a letter from her, in which she wrote: "When quite young I felt there was something not right within, and was made to know I was a sinner in the sight of a just and holy God. I went to meeting, and the hymn was read, 'That awful day will surely come.' I did not have to wait, the day had already come; I was bowed down with a load of sin and could only cry for mercy, but could see no way of escape. I longed to be like Jesus, holy, pure and clean. The next day while in the cellar a light inclosed me, and the words came from behind me, Be still and know that I am God. Be of good cheer; it is I, be not afraid. I thought I would go to the barn and tell father, but the light left me."

Sister Krewson was a dear sister in Christ to me, and we shall miss her. She would often walk eight or ten miles to meet with the assembly of the saints.

Elder Durand preached to those gathered to pay their last respects to our aged sister. Burial in the Southampton Old School Baptist burying-ground Feb. 2nd. J. M. FENTON.

Mrs. Lucinda B. Brewster, widow of Daniel D. Brewster, was born May 27th, 1827, at Blenhiem, Schoharie Co., N. Y., and died March 9th, 1918, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Lucy Tamsett, in Oneonta, N. Y., where she had been cared for the past six years. She was the fifth child born to Ezra and Lucy (Chamberlain) Stevens, and the last to survive of a family of eight children. Sister Brewster was baptized about sixty years ago, by Elder Choate, uniting with the Gilboa Old School Baptist Church. She was received by letter from the Gilboa Church to the Otego Church Sept. 10th, 1871, and ever afterward retained her membership there.

A brief prayer service was held the evening of March 11th, at the home of her daughter, conducted by Elder R. W. Sanford. The next morning the body was taken to Hopewell, N. J., where the funeral was held, her pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, conducting the services, assisted by Elder Vaughn. By request of sister Brewster the fourteenth chapter of John was read, also hymns No. 807 and 751 (Beebe's collection). Burial was in Hopewell Cemetery, beside her two sons, Zeno and Ezra. Sister Brewster was the mother of nine children. Four children, eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren survive her.

ROSE TAMSETT.

APPOINTMENTS.

Nothing preventing, there will be meeting at Casper Fetter's, 127 South Montgomery St., Trenton, N. J., Friday, May 17th, 8:30 p. m.; Stockton, Saturday, 18th, 2:30 p. m., at Mrs. Horner's; Sunday, 19th, Locktown, 10:30 a. m.; Frenchtown, 3 p. m.; Monday, 20th, Grandon, brother Demott's, 8:30 p. m.

D. M. VAIL.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, of New York city, deplores the necessity for withdrawing her invitation to the Warwick Association to hold its annual convention in this city next June. War conditions have developed difficulties so hard to overcome that it seems impossible to insure the satisfactory entertainment of visiting members and friends.

CYRUS RISLER, JR., Church Clerk.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Otego has appointed an all day meeting for Sunday, May 5th, beginning 10:30 a. m., sun time, 11:30 a. m., government time. Lunch will be served at the meetinghouse. We hope to see a goodly number in attendance.

D. M. VAIL.

THE next session of the Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Ebenezer Church, of Baltimore city, commencing May 15th, 1918, and continuing three days. Those coming via Pennsylvania Railroad to union station will take any car going south on Charleston St. and get off at Calvert and Madison Sts. and walk one-half block east on Madison St. Those coming from the east over the B. & O. Railroad get off at Mt. Royal station, walk two blocks on Mt. Royal Ave. to Charles St. and follow above directions. Those coming from the west or south over the B. & O. Railroad will get off at Camden station and take cars in front of station marked St. Paul St. No. 17, going west on Camden St. and get off at Calvert and Madison Sts. Those coming over the electric line from Washington, D. C., will get off at Baltimore St. and take car going east on Baltimore St. marked St. Paul St. No. 17, get off at Calvert and Madison Sts. Any one coming via Western Maryland Railroad will get off at union station. Any one coming by boat, which arrives about 7 a. m., will take car going north on Light St., change at Baltimore and Calvert Sts. to car No. 17, get off at Calvert and Madison Sts. Persons coming to the city Tuesday p. m. will follow above directions, going to the meetinghouse, where they will be met and cared for. House open until 6 p. m., new time. All welcome.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to meet with the church in Wilmington, Delaware, at the meetinghouse, 1304 Jefferson St., on Wednesday, May 22nd, 1918, at 10 o'clock a m. sun time. Trolley cars from all railroad stations and boat landings pass within one or two squares of the meetinghouse. Any one arriving in the city on Tuesday can come to the meetinghouse, where they will find some one to send them to places of entertainment. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

By order of the church.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Ingleside, N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting, the Lord willing, for Saturday and Sunday, June 29th and 30th, 1918. Those coming from the east or west on the Rochester Branch of the Erie or D., L. & W. R. R., will be met at Atlanta station Friday, 28th, by writing to Mr. Harvey Graves, Nelson Nichols or Riley Prester, R. F. D. 7, Naples, N. Y. Those coming on the Lehigh Valley R. R. will be met at Naples, N. Y., by writing to Mr. Silas Drake, R. F. D. 27, Naples, N. Y. Place of meeting five miles from either station. All who come will be made welcome.

D. M. VAIL.

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THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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SYLVESTER HASSELL.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1918. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

REVELATION XX. 5.

"THE rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished."

DEAR BRETHREN:—I find myself this morning writing you in order to express some thoughts on the above text of Scripture, and must confess that it is with great embarrassment of mind that I am making the effort to write you on this sublime and probably much controverted text, therefore I wish to say in the first place that the book of "the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass," is a summary of the entire Bible, or Scripture, showing the trials, conflicts and struggles the church of God has had with the powers of the world in all the ages (seven) of the world, and reaching unto the end of this material world; for the angel said unto John, "What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia," calling them by their names, and the revelation was, hence the writing included the things of the past, present and future. (Rev. i. 19.) The word "seven" is a complete or perfect number, and is used here to prefigure the one church of God in her different conditions under different circumstances; and after their introduction and descriptive conditions every chapter in the book of Revelation begins just alike, with the copulative conjunction "and," showing that the book of Revelation is one unbroken chain of living testimony, and it being a summary of all, hence the entire Scriptures are an unbroken chain of living testimony of the church of God, the pillar and ground of the truth, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, leaning (depending) upon her Beloved, the Lord Jesus Christ, her Savior. Furthermore, we should emphasize that eternity and eternal things never expire, therefore we must conclude that this text with the context has reference to God's people in their time state, and we must consider it in that light in order to make straight paths for the feet of the Lord's humble poor. So with the idea in view that the book of Revelation is a summary of the entire Bible, we are led to believe that the twentieth chapter is descriptive of the closing out of the legal dispensation and the ushering in or opening up of the glorious gospel heaven, called "a great white throne" (verse eleven). In the fourth verse he says:

"And I saw thrones [plural], and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls [lives] of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection." I do not remember any Scripture that says Christ is the first resurrection, but it does say that he is the Resurrection, for he declared of himself, saying, "I am the resurrection and the life."—John xi. 25. Jesus said unto his disciples: "That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne [great white throne.—Rev. xx. 11,] of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones [fourth verse], judging the twelve tribes of Israel."—Matt. xix. 28. This fourth verse of the twentieth chapter of Revelation shows clearly that those under consideration were those of God's people who followed him in the regeneration, or resurrection from under the law, having been dead wherein they were held; that we should serve in newness of the spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter, but now we are delivered from that law, (Romans vii. 6,) and are risen with Christ, seeking those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. (Col. iii. 1.) It is clearly taught in the Scriptures that all through the ages past God reserved, or kept, a remnant of his people from bowing the knee to the image of the beast—antichrist. These have and do follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth; these were not, neither are they, defiled with women—religious systems, to keep them from following Christ in the strait and narrow way, and therefore reign with him in this glorious gospel kingdom. While it has been his purpose respecting a large number of his people to allow them to bow the knee to the beast—antichrist, and worship his image, and receive the mark of the beast in their foreheads and in their hands, these are they, all who, with one consent, excused themselves from this wonderful supper, the third and last meal, the glorious gospel fullness, a wonderful feast of fat things; and Jesus said they should not taste of his supper. Jesus neither said nor meant that they should not inherit heaven and immortal glory, but that they should not enter into the glorious rest nor feed and feast upon this blessed repast, although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. But all those who have part in the first resurrection, followed Jesus in the regeneration, have not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither have nor do they receive the mark of the beast upon their foreheads nor in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years, but the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. The rest of the dead under consideration in this text are those of the Lord's people who have and are worshiping the beast (antichrist) and his image, &c., and are defiled with women, or religious systems and institutions of the world, living after the flesh, going the broad way to destruction in this life, so as they could not live again, or cannot live again until the thousand years were or are finished. We cannot set the bounds or limits of the thousand years in our way of calculating, for with the Lord a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years.

So far as I myself am concerned, I have believed for many years that the time represented by the thousand years is the period of time that some are calling a millennium, but in such millennium as they represent I have nothing whatever, yet I do believe most assuredly that there was a peaceable reign with God's people when the angel came down from heaven and laid hold on the dragon or Satan and bound him a thousand years; but when the thousand years are fulfilled he must be (and will be) loosed a little season. The binding and loosing of Satan, as mentioned here, mean no more or less to me than the restraining and loosing the satanic nature of man. If the time is not now nigh, even at the door, it will come, when the satanic nature of man will be unrestrained and martyrdom will again be rampant for a little season until the fellow-servants also and their brethren that should (appointed thereunto) be killed as they were, should be fulfilled. (Rev. vi. 10, 11.) Bottomless means without a bottom or foundation, and was the place of confinement of Satan during the thousand years, while God's church and people had rest, and are yet having rest under their vine and fig tree. All the opposing powers of earth and hell were restrained to that effect. May God's wonderful mercy and abounding grace strengthen us poor, weak and helpless mortals in this day and time of great distress, sore trials and temptations.

Dear brethren editors, I have had the most of this article written for a month or more, but had decided not to send it to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication, but when I read dear Elder Durand's article in the SIGNS for March 1st, 1918, it made such an impression on my mind that I have concluded to send this on for your consideration, and if you have the least thought that it will confuse the mind of one of the readers of the dear old SIGNS, please do not publish it. The part of Elder Durand's letter that so impressed me was where he said: "I can go no further just now. On January 5th I entered my eighty-sixth year." On the 10th day of January I entered my eighty-third year.

Yours in great tribulation,

W. J. MAY.

SHOCK, Ky., March 9, 1918.

ROMANS VIII. 33.

"WHO shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth."

Many and various are the charges made against the elect of God by the enemies of the truth of God, by those who know not God, and herein is clearly manifest the wide distinction between the precious and the vile. The little flock whom Jesus feeds is precious in God's sight. The apostle does not ask the question to obtain information, but it is a positive declaration that all charges are false and vile, without foundation, except in the carnal reasoning mind, which is enmity against God. The remnant according to the election of grace (being saved by grace through faith, and not of themselves), while they are in the world, yet they are not of the world, but separated from the world by their life in Christ Jesus the Lord. Election means taken out from, and set apart through choice. God's election of his peculiar people was made before the visible world was created, chosen in Christ Jesus, who was to be the Savior of all whom the Father had given him. Thus the apostle says, "There is therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." No man then, can justly lay anything to the charge of God's

elect, for it is God (whose they are) that justifieth, neither can they be justly condemned; it is Christ that died. Although the elect are persecuted in the flesh, so also was Christ likewise persecuted. Therefore do we glory in the light of truth which shows unto us that God is all and in all to his people. Walls of salvation separate between the elect and the nonelect. "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Charges and condemnation cannot enter the spiritual abode of the living in Christ Jesus. It is an house separate from the earthly house, yet within it, as it were, a company of two armies. In the world, but not of the world. It is the new Jerusalem of which God said, For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her. Many have endeavored to scale this wall and have been destroyed. Jesus said: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter [justice, judgment and equity] openeth; and the sheep hear his voice." Adamic sinners (chosen of God) are born again, born from above, by the Word of God, incorruptible seed, which liveth and abideth forever. Jesus died for the justification of his people. They are called his sheep. They were under the condemnation of the law, having the sentence of death in themselves. The death of Jesus satisfied every requirement of the law. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Justification by faith (through Jesus Christ, who is our faith by the shedding of his blood) cleanseth the creature from all sin and clothes him with the righteousness and holiness of God. Thus being a new creature in Christ Jesus, the condemnation of the law is annulled and put away forever. Is it any wonder then that by faith we hear the apostle say, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth"? Does not your heart ofttimes cry out, I, a poor and needy sinner, stand justified before the living God? Yes, the cry gives evidence that you are justified in his sight.

B. F. COULTER.

THE NEW JERUSALEM.

"COME hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God."—Rev. xxi. 9, 10.

This wonderful city that John saw when carried up in the mountain of God's holiness by the Spirit, is the church of God. Jesus gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. (Eph. v. 26, 27.) Who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purged your conscience from dead works to serve the living God. (Heb. ix. 14.) The inspired apostles Paul and John are in perfect accord. The Spirit revealed to John the church, or holy city, in all her perfection of pure gold, and the street of pure gold, and there is but one street in this perfect city. This city is the work of Deity, even the Lord God omnipotent, and his work is perfect, nothing shall be added to it, and nothing shall be taken from it,

and it shall stand forever. The city is built on the sure foundation-stone, Jesus Christ. "Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." The city is pure gold; this is the love of God shed abroad in the hearts of all his people. The one street is pure gold, drawn by the Father's love. No man can come unto me except my Father which sent me draw him. This city has a wall great and high that no enemy can scale; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks, a wall of fire round about her and the glory in the midst of her. The foundations of the wall of the city are garnished with all manner of precious stones. This city is coming down from God out of heaven through the ages by the quickening power of his Holy Spirit. You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins, rebel sinners, given life by being born again, not of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God. The foundation of the wall of this city has the jasper first: chosen in Christ were all his people before the foundation of the world. The second, sapphire: to be holy and without blame before him in love, being washed in Jesus' blood. Third, a chalcedony: predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son. I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness, says the psalmist. Fourth, an emerald: we love him because he first loved us. Fifth, sardonyx: We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. Sixth, the sardius: Who hath given us a good hope, through the power of the reigning grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, that we have an interest in the perfect and finished salvation of Jesus. Seventh, chrysolite: Believe on his name, their belief wrought in them by God's quickening power. Eighth, beryl: Hope, the anchor of the soul, which entereth within the vail, whither the forerunner hath for us entered. Ninth, a topaz: Steadfast, trust in the word and promise of Jesus: Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure. Tenth, a chrysoprasus: To endure hardness as good soldiers of the cross, and suffer reproach for his name's sake. Eleventh, a jacinth: Charity. Now abideth faith, hope and charity; the greatest of these is charity. Charity suffereth long, and is kind, is not puffed up, thinketh no evil; without charity all our religious pretensions are nothing. Twelfth, an amethyst: The final perseverance of all his saints. "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Rom. viii. 38, 39. The holy city is perfect, the height and breadth and length are equal. The security of this holy city, the church of God, depends upon the strength of the wall, and the wall cannot be overthrown, for God is her defence, and there is no enemy in all the universe that can scale this wall of salvation. The gates of this city face every point of the compass, and every gate is a pearl, which is praise. All thy gates are praise; from east to west, north or south, his people come singing the glad new song, Not unto us, but unto thy name be glory, for thou art worthy to take thy great power and reign, for thou hast redeemed us out of every nation, kindred and tongue. I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live. I will sing praises

unto thee while I have my being, says the psalmist. For his glory he will not give to another, nor his praise to graven images. All praise is his due, for his own name brought salvation unto his chosen people. He upholdeth all things by the word of his power. He hath appointed the bounds of the habitation of all individuals, as well as all nations; he putteth down one and raiseth up another, and none can stay his hand, or say, What doest thou? He wounds, and he heals; he kills, and he makes alive; he chastises the heathen, and rules over all nations, and turns kings' hearts as the rivers of water. He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and without the shadow of turning. Because I change not ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. So this holy city will stand forever, and is the bride, the Lamb's wife. All things were created by thee, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

These precious stones also garnish this wonderful wall of salvation great and high. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." "He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth;" so it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.

Dear brethren, do with this as you think best.

Yours in hope of a blessed immortality beyond this vale of tears,

WM. F. SLOAN.

SOLOMON'S SONG I. 8.

"If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents."

The above Scripture is found in the deep writings of King Solomon, in which are some of the sweetest and most sublime things of all the writings in prophetic times. There are many symbols used by Solomon referring to the church. First, I will call attention to what is meant by the word "church." The primary meaning is "called out." The church is composed of men and women of Adam's race, and embraces the election of grace out of every nation under the sun, whom King Solomon addresses, "O thou fairest among women." She is the choice one of her that bare her. Although there are assemblies that call themselves the church, and appear very pious, and in many ways appear to be very virtuous, they do not go by the footprints of the flock, neither are they fed by the shepherds' tents. They are described as threescore queens and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number, but my dove, my undefiled, is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her; she is without spot or wrinkle, having no blemish, and is represented in the revelation to John as one that had washed her robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; Jesus, her head and husband, hath redeemed her from all iniquity. The church is a garden inclosed, full of spices; the doctrine of salvation by sovereign grace, and all the kindred points of doctrine relating to the eternal wisdom of God are represented by the different fruits found in the garden. Yes, a garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Sealed so that no worldly wisdom can

ever by diligent search find the gate, or even behold the beauty of the orchard of pomegranates with pleasant fruits, or drink of the fountain sealed, which fountain is only opened to the house of David for sin and uncleanness. All the house of David is inclosed in this garden, chosen in Christ from all eternity, being made manifest in time, saved by Christ in time to all eternity, born of the earthy, first bearing the image of the earthy, born again, given a hope through grace, and they walk in the footsteps of the flock, and enter in through the gates into the city, (garden inclosed) thus to hear the words, "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out." Yes, flow out through the inhabitants of the new Jerusalem, which is from above, which is free—free from sin and condemnation. She is most glorious, and is clothed in fine needlework wrought with fine gold (grace and truth), united to the head (Christ) by everlasting love, wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sin, in open rebellion against his righteous law, dead to the knowledge of his love, without hope, living in malice; but when he revealed his shining face then were we like the one spoken of by Solomon: "By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not." O, dear friends, many nights in the dead hours when all the world perhaps was resting in deep sleep were we seeking him whom our soul loveth. Then we perhaps thought we could find relief by going to those whom we believed to have been delivered, and talk of Him whom our heart so craved. In restless hours and sleepless nights we mourn and weep, and then arise and go about the city (church), hoping to find him, but find him not. Then how sad; we grovel in darkness, and, as it seems, in despair. At the appointed time he appears, and then do we feel to embrace him whom our soul loveth; then do we feel the burden of baptism resting upon us, but perhaps months and years pass by, we feeling our unworthiness, and the burden gets so heavy we can hardly endure it. O how we long for an entrance into the visible church, the militant kingdom, but not until the time appointed do we ever enter into the fold; but when we do there is another experience, a calmness we never felt before; then we realize the true meaning of the Scripture, "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." So it is with God's little ones, when they are brought into the banqueting-house they seem to lose sight of the world, for the banner of love is over them, and the true fruits of the gospel of the Son of God sound forth unto them with a certain sound, for when the watchman upon the walls of Zion cries unto them it is like the golden bells on the high priest's garment, which when sounded give a certain sound; then do they know that the High Priest liveth, ever to make intercession for them, according to the will of God, and tells them through inspiration that no weapon that is formed against them shall prosper, and then he (Christ), our high priest, ever stands as a mediator, the only mediator between God and men, ever making intercession for us, the saints, though so much of our time we feel unworthy of the least of God's blessings, and are not grateful enough for them. I desire to be reconciled to his providence.

Do as you think best with this.

Your brother,

J. B. BOWDEN.

ATHENS, Texas.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

DEAR ELDER KER:—Inclosed are two letters from brother J. W. McClanahan. Use them if you wish, otherwise return them to me.

In gospel bonds,

J. M. FENTON.

POCA, W. Va., Dec. 30, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER FENTON:—I feel this morning that there is something I want to say to you, but not being very well my mind seems to be unfruitful, so I will draw the bow at a venture, leaving the event with the blessed Redeemer for words to write that may be of interest to you or any of the household of faith. My limited understanding of the Scriptures troubles me when I attempt to write to any of my brethren in the ministry, for of them all I feel to be the least. It is evidently true that secret things belong to God and only revealed things to us, and when God is pleased to reveal to us any portion of the Scriptures, then it is that we get the spiritual meaning and application of it. What do we see in that sacred narrative recorded in Genesis viii. 12? A harmless, innocent little dove sent out of the ark by Noah, which to my mind prefigured the mission of Jesus and the sending of his ministers to bear a message. The prophet Isaiah makes the matter very clear as he has recorded it, vi. 8: "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me." Again, Lo, I come, as it is written of me in the volume of the book, to do thy will, O God. No doubt the dove bore a message of comfort to the inmates of the ark, Noah and his family. To my mind the ark prefigured the church. As Noah built the ark according to God's instruction, so Jesus builds his church according to God's choice; for the kind of wood of which the ark was built was God's choice, it being gopher wood. The material of which Jesus builds his church is the choice of God, elect and precious. The door of the ark is the way of entrance into the ark. Baptism is the door into the church. Proof, John x. 1, 2: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep." Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, thus entering the church by the door, setting the example for all his followers, John being the forerunner (porter) he administered the ordinance of baptism. None can doubt that the Spirit descended upon our Lord in the form of a dove at his baptism. And lo, a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. None can doubt the glorious message borne to Noah and his family by the dove he had sent out, for in its mouth was an olive leaf plucked from an olive tree. This was unmistakable evidence to them that the waters were abated from off the earth. The leaf borne to them by the mouth of the dove carried with it the evidence of life, hence was no dry moss to them. Noah was one with the inmates of the ark; so Jesus is one with his people, the elect, of whom he is head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. When we speak of the church we speak of Christ, for he is her life, and her life is hid with him in God; there is a oneness with Christ and his church (body). If we be the antitypical material which the gopher wood typified, we are in the building according to God's choice; each one is filling his place to the completion of

the body, there being many members, but one body. The ark rode on the mighty waters and rested safely on the summit of Mount Ararat; so the church is resting in the finished work of her adorable Lord and Savior on Mount Calvary, carried above the mighty deluge of sin, and is free from the law of sin and death.

Dear brother, I had laid this letter away, thinking it to be so imperfect that I would not send it to you. I hope you will write on this subject, that I may see my mistakes, if I be mistaken.

Yours in bonds of affliction,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

DEUTERONOMY XXIII. 18.

"THOU shalt not bring the hire of a whore, or the price of a dog, into the house of the Lord thy God for any vow: for even both these are abomination unto the Lord thy God."

It seems to me that this Scripture is enough to condemn any professed religious denomination that hires or sets salaries for their preachers. Being law worshipers, yet they are condemned by the law of Moses. There is a marked distinction between the daughters of Israel and the Egyptians. "There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel." Wonderful miracles were performed by Moses in delivering the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt. Moses told Pharaoh plainly: "But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast; that ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel." This marked distinction or difference was to be an evidence to Pharaoh that the Lord was at the helm in separating the children of Israel from the Egyptians and delivering them out of the land of bondage, for Israel is to be a separate people, and is to dwell alone, and is not to be reckoned among the nations. So it is true to this day that the Israel of our God, the church of Jesus Christ, has verily lifted up her voice against the hire or setting of salaries for preachers, for the price of a dog is the hire of the institutions of men under the name of religious denominations, called by them churches. These are not the house of the Lord thy God. The house of the Lord is but one, and she is not to join house to house with the so-called houses; she stands aloof from all the institutions of men, and is not led by the spirit of lewdness—prostituting for hire. Israel, in speaking of the hireling, calls them "dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand; they all look to their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter." Evidently this is true to this day, and on to the end of time will this distinction be between the true and the false worshipers; no salaries offered by the daughters of Israel, the churches of the primitive faith; no price of a dog to be received by these peddlers of dead men's brains, who teach for hire and divine for money. To the church of Jesus Christ, the house of the Lord, these are an abomination, and cannot be brought into the house of the Lord for any reason.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

POCA, W. Va., Jan. 8, 1918.

HAMPSTEAD, Md., February, 1918.

DEAR FRIENDS:—My unprofitable life has been spared to again thank you all for the kindness of another year's reading, in which I find pleasure, comfort and instruction. When I open my paper and find my subscription blank it makes me sad to think I cannot fill it, and therefore

be a help instead of a burden, but I know that God's ways are not our ways, but as much higher as the heavens are above the earth. I know, too, that he is a God of purpose, too wise to err and too good to be unkind; therefore I desire to praise him and be thankful for such kind friends. I often become anxious about the things of this life, but so far there has been a way provided; not always my way, but God's own way. I often think of the way in which I was led to take the SIGNS. When I went to ask for a home at Black Rock Elder Chick said to me: "I would like for you to take one of our papers." I did not feel my need of it then; my heart was full of love to my dear Redeemer. He had brought me into his banqueting-house, and over me was his banner of love. I did not know how much I would need fellowship, companionship, when I was carried away into the wilderness, but our Father did, and opened up a way for me. I asked for a piece of my clothing to be wrapped up. What should the wrapper be but a piece of the SIGNS. I eagerly read it, and at once wrote to Elder Chick (O how I miss him, although I saw so little of him, but that letter was sure to come filled with the sweet assurances of Jesus Christ and his love for his children), asking him to subscribe for me. I enjoyed it for ten years, when circumstances caused me to feel that I must be deprived of that comfort. Then came a dark period in my life, but God was gracious. Whom he loveth he chasteneth, but does not withdraw his loving-kindness, and after a time he strengthened me, and through the kindness of dear brother Kelley and family I again had the pleasure of meeting with those of like precious faith, and through their kindness I again enjoyed reading the SIGNS, and as you know, after brother Kelley's death I was placed on the free list. God is ever merciful, God is love, and if in times of trial I could only keep in view that my times are in his hand, and that all things work together for good to those who love the Lord, but in my weakness I seem to forget, and in selfishness shrink from the trying places. He says, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. Comfort ye one another with these words. I know I am not as thankful as I ought to be for the steadfast hope of eternal life. It is thirty-two years since the Savior came to me and left his Spirit with my soul to stay, but still it seems all self, and none of him. O how glad I am that Christ came to save sinners, for I cannot keep my thoughts where I desire them, much less walk worthy of the vocation wherewith I am called. That which is not of faith is sin; then all the worthiness must come through Jesus Christ, our righteousness. Because I live, ye shall live also. My desire is, Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. He justly claims a song from me. Is it asking too much that your prayer for me may be that I be kept trustful and thankful?

Dear Elder Ker, while you cannot understand the Lord's dealings with you, and feel like saying as one of old, All these things are against me, I am most glad to learn through your editorials that he has been with you, therefore his grace is sufficient. You know we all sympathize with you, and we, too, know that none can heal but he who afflicts. Sisters Kelley were to see us last week, having been shut in all winter. Perhaps you know mother Kelley was ill last fall of pneumonia. I thought they were looking well. I was very glad that you could

speak so favorably of the condition of the SIGNS. I wish you all a prosperous year naturally and spiritually. Again I thank you all. I hope you will pardon my delay in thanking you (many things are neglected in my weakness) and have charity for the thoughts I have written.

Your sister, I hope, through the cleansing blood of Christ. Though weak and erring, yet grateful, I hope.

GEORGIA ENGLAND.

WASHINGTON, D. C., March 28, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find two dollars to continue sending our dear family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as I would be lost and lonesome without it, and am eager to see its contents every time it comes, and always feel fully paid after reading over a few of the letters contained therein. Many speak my own feelings much better than I could myself; their experience and life are so much like my own that it gives me hope I am one of them, but am in constant doubt of being anything like any other dear one who claims membership among the people I love best, and different from any other; nor could I love any others with the same kind of love. What a lovely passage of Scripture is, We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. I trust I do that, and in the right spirit. I am constantly longing for their companionship, of which I am very much deprived, surrounded by all other denominations; even in my own home, or my brother's home, I hear all kinds of works talked of but our almighty God's, which is the only kind we Old Baptists care anything about, for what are man's works in God's sight? He says they are but filthy rags in his sight, and to us are anything but pleasant to listen to, but are called good works, and helping the Lord. But the thorns in the flesh must be endured; though they sting and hurt we cannot remove them. Many things we would remove, or have different if we could, but God's ways are not our ways, and it is a blessing they are not, for we would soon be in more trouble, instead of lessening what he puts upon us, for all he does is for our good, and sooner or later we find out what a good God we have. But why am I writing all this? Because I am alone, and lonesome, and longing for a chat with some of my own congenial people. O how I did enjoy the last letter of my own dear cousin, and sister in the church, Mary Wright, of California. What a gift for writing she has. Would that many more were so blessed. I am glad she has found Old Baptists out in her own State, for she has for many years been so alone. I am thankful she is my own blood kin.

Please excuse me for taking so much of your time to even read this. I will know this and contents were received when date of my paper is changed.

With best wishes and love from a sister, the least of all,

BETTIE BENNETT.

ARDMORE, Tenn., Dec. 30, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I want to ask a favor of some one of the brethren who may have a mind to grant it, either through the SIGNS or by private letter. While I am not a subscriber of the paper, yet I get to read it now and then, and I surely indorse the doctrine it sets forth; that is, I mean in the main, if I know anything about the teaching of God's word, which I sometimes greatly fear I do not; then again I hope I get a little view of the wonderful truth set forth therein. Dear brethren, what I want to know is this: Is it a fact that no man can

take the Bible and prove by it that God is not the author of sin? I heard a preaching brother at our association, which is the Flint River Association, say that he would challenge the world to take the Bible and prove that God is not the author of sin. Now, dear brethren in the Lord, if you will pardon such a poor, weak, sinful worm of the dust as I feel myself to be for addressing you as such, I want to say that I hope I believe in a God who created all worlds, creatures and things, yes, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist; but while that is so, I do not believe that God influences men to sin, but that he withdraws his restraining power, and then man's devilish disposition manifests itself, and in that the wrath of man praises God, and the remainder of wrath does God restrain.

Write on, dear brethren and sisters, and my prayer and heart's desire is that it may be our happy lot to have God's rich grace and sweet Spirit to lead, guide and direct us all in the way of truth.

Well, I must close. Pray for me and mine when you have a mind to do so.

Brother Ker, I will address this to you.

As ever, your little brother in hope,

D. T. LEONARD.

WINONA, Miss., March 29, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—Several months ago a sister Baptist brought me a lot of back numbers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have been much interested in your writings, they are so instructive and comforting to me; you stir me up in many things. I have been identified with the Primitive or Old School Baptists nearly forty years, and am more of a beggar each day I live. I seem barren of all that is good. I do not know whether I love God or not, nor the brethren, but I do believe, if I know anything, that I love the doctrine the brethren preach. In bed the other morning I was wondering about this love when the thought flashed in my mind, You love the truth, and that is Jesus. I have been in deep distress for the last year; I have three boys all in the draft. I have begged the Lord to be my strength, and if it were his holy will, to spare me this great trouble. Three or four mornings ago I fell asleep, and thought we were burying the body of Jesus. I fell on my knees before him and asked him to remember me. I could see in a mist the outlines of a host, and they began to sing; such melody and harmony I never heard before; just a flash, then gone. I have spent much time with music, and love singing. Here I am telling a stranger my troubles. I am seeking comfort from a minister of Jesus. I do not know that I am a child of God, or that I have a right to call you brother, but I love what you write.

In conclusion, will say I am old, nearly sixty-two years. If I am lost at last, I am glad I have spent my life trying in my ignorant way to honor God. Forgive me for taking up your precious time, and when you feel the spirit of prayer remember me.

From one whose hope is in Jesus,

FLORENCE K. SHOFNER.

DELAWARE, Ohio.

DEAR EDITORS:—Find inclosed check for two dollars, which I received last night, for a new subscriber for the SIGNS. It is a pleasure to send in another name, as I enjoy reading the paper very much. It came to my father's house ever since I

can remember, as long as my parents lived, and I have received it regularly for several years. I like to read the writings of both editors, also of the other writers, but I sometimes think I do not know enough of the responsibility and labor that fall on the editors and publishers of the SIGNS to appreciate their usefulness as I ought, but I do feel that I wish you all well, and that the SIGNS may be kept up to be a comfort to the children of the heavenly King who are scattered over the land. I like to see the SIGNS in the homes of the Baptists, and I sometimes think that many more could take it if they only thought so, but I must leave that for them to decide.

I see that I am making this too lengthy just to send in a subscription; I only want to let you know that I enjoy reading the paper very much, and wish all concerned and interested in it well.

Yours in hope,

L. E. STEPHENS.

HOTEVILLA, Ariz., March 24, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I am renewing my subscription, I want to say I enjoy the paper very much; it and the Bible are my only preaching. However unworthy the contributions may seem to the writers, I feel they are directed of the Lord, and sometimes I feel to bless his name for the feeling of unworthiness on our part, as an all-powerful God who saves to the uttermost is the only one who could be of any use to me. "How firm a foundation" sometimes comes to me with a sweet power that I am enabled to enjoy, but not when left to myself, for then, which is most of the time, it seems, my mind is as barren of spiritual things as the desert around me, or more so, for there is a natural beauty here of mountains, valleys and clouds. It seems to me so natural to believe in an all-powerful God that I doubt if he has ever been revealed to me, the thing I most desire in this world. Remember me at the throne of grace.

Your sister, I hope,

LENA LANGFORD.

LAMBERT, Oklahoma.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my time on the dear old SIGNS expires the first of April, I will send you post-office order. I failed to get the February 15th number, which was the first copy I ever failed to receive at the office at Lambert, and I have been taking it since some time in 1902. I do not wish to miss a number, for it is a great comfort to me, being about all the preaching I get these days that has the right sound to me. I was blessed during Christmas week to meet with Elder Beeman and a few sisters by going about sixty miles, and I think I was well paid for my trip, as I heard five sermons, the first of our kind that I had heard for about a year, and I was getting hungry to hear the true gospel preached. May God bless you, dear editors, and all who write for the dear old SIGNS, that you may write on for the benefit of the scattered ones. O how I wish I could write like some of the brethren and sisters, that it might be as interesting to them as theirs are to me.

I remain a poor old sinner in hope of life beyond this vale of tears,

JAMES J. CLARK.

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EDITORIAL.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ACTS VIII. 18–23.

FROM a brother in Texas comes the query, asking our views on the above portion of Scripture. This concerns the preaching Philip. Philip, though a servant of God, was not one of the apostles, so was not qualified by the Spirit to do the work of an apostle. Philip went down to Samaria and preached Christ there. Among those baptized by Philip was one Simon, who had been a sorcerer and had bewitched or deceived and beguiled many people. This man heard the truth from the lips of Philip, believed in God and was baptized by Philip. But none of those baptized by Philip received the Holy Ghost in their baptism. That is, while their baptism was all right enough as to mode, subject and administrator, they lacked understanding and discernment, which are the peculiar gifts of the Holy Ghost. Now, when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent thither Peter and John. Upon meeting with those baptized by Philip, these apostles prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost. Then they laid their hands upon those believers and they received the Holy Ghost, or the gift of understanding which they had formerly lacked. Simon, falling a prey to the covetousness of his carnal heart, saw at once a road to great personal profit, if he should be able, as were Peter and John, to thus administer this ordinance of the laying on of hands. Therefore he asked the apostles to sell him this great gift. This showed the gross ignorance of Simon regarding the gift of the Holy Ghost. However, this does not mean that Simon's belief in God was not genuine. One may be a believer and yet stumble through ignorance, lacking discernment and understanding. We believe Simon had not yet had hands laid on him when he tried to drive this bargain with the apostles, but he had witnessed the apostles laying hands on the others and had seen the effect of the Holy Ghost. Therefore, when he offered them money, Peter told him, "Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter." The matter in which Simon had no part nor lot was that he was neither to receive this gift of the Holy Ghost for his own comfort, nor was he to be able to administer this ordinance to others. While a believer in God, he lacked understanding and discernment, and it pleased God thus to leave him, not to fall from grace and to perish forever, but experimentally in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity. Whether this Simon was after that delivered from that condition and given his right spiritual mind, we cannot say. We rather think, though, that the evidence is in favor of his having been at some later time delivered, from the fact that he desired the apostles to "Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me." We believe that there are to-day many of God's people scattered throughout the world, enmeshed in Babylon and preyed upon by the delusions of their own carnal natures, who

really believe in God sincerely and truthfully, but who yet lack power to understand and to interpret either the Scriptures or their own experience; unable to discriminate between that which is spirit and that which is flesh. These, having received the first anointing, and not the second, see men as trees walking; that is, men look like trees and trees look like men; the ability to rightly discriminate is lacking. These are subjects of grace, for Jesus has once touched their eyes, but they lack the gift of the Holy Ghost, the second touch. This, we believe, was the predicament of Simon. He believed and did not comprehend what he believed. To that extent he was yet in bondage, yet in the gall and bond of bitterness and iniquity. This Scripture does not prove that a believer can fall from grace so as to be eternally lost. There is one place in the Scriptures where falling from grace is mentioned. It is in Paul's letter to the Galatians, fifth chapter, fourth verse. The Galatians were a body of believers, but they had become confused in their minds and were trying to mix law and gospel. Whenever God's people get to thinking the law is in some sense binding upon them they are departing from the doctrine of grace and are teaching legality. For a child of God to preach or to practice that sinners must do certain things in order to be saved, is to fall from grace; not so as to undo what Christ has done and be eternally lost, but to rely on one's obedience or works instead of wholly in the finished work of Jesus. One not saved by grace cannot fall from grace. No one can fall from that which they never had. Only God's people, that is, true believers, know anything about falling from grace. If one believes he is saved by works, as do the Arminians, he has not grace to fall from. But for a true believer who has been experimentally taught of God that salvation is by grace, to go contrary to this experience and advocate the doctrine of works, is for that one to fall from grace. This, some of the Galatians did. This, however, has nothing to do with the believer's standing before God in Christ. That cannot be touched by what we do or do not do. It is, however, sinning wilfully after one has been brought to a knowledge of the truth, and is accompanied with a certain fearful looking for of judgment and of fiery indignation, which, when it comes, devours, not the believer, but his adversary, and restores him to his right gospel mind. There are very few Old Baptists, if any, but what have at some time in their experience fallen from grace. The preaching of conditional time salvation is one instance of how some good, faithful brethren have fallen from grace and gone back to advocating legal principles and ideas. This does not argue that they are not the children of God, but only that they are deluded and lacking in spiritual discernment. He moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. L.

BOOK OF EDITORIALS.

We have on hand a number of copies of the Second Volume of Editorials. This book is made up of editorials written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the Signs of the Times from March, 1842, to March, 1847, and contains 768 pages, neatly bound in cloth.

This work originally sold at two dollars per copy, but as a few of the pages are stained by water we will, as long as the supply lasts, sell them at the extremely low price of seventy-five cents per copy. Postage paid by us. All who wish this book should procure it now, as we will have no more after these are sold.

BEING THANKFUL.

To-day we saw a small pasteboard box on the counter of one of the stores here. This small thing was folded neatly together and lettered on the outside: "An expression of my gratitude to God." Other lettering followed giving due notice that this box was meant to receive money, whatever one might choose to give, for the missions both home and foreign. In other words, the intent of the whole affair was that any money which might be dropped into the box for missions was to be considered as a gift or expression of one's gratitude to God. This business is shocking. Can it be that sensible people really think that a piece of money, whatever its value, can be a fitting expression of thankfulness to God for the benefits his creatures have received at his hands? If so people do really think, then it proves that they have either a very small knowledge of the real God or that they think him to be a very small god. One of old said: "Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" Another said: "And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering." Here are the expressions of men who had the faith-view of God, and who believed God to be so infinitely great and holy, and themselves to be so insignificantly weak and small, that they fully realized anything they could possibly do or bring forth would not suffice as an offering to God, either of an atonement for their sins or as paying their debt of gratitude to God for all he had done for them. Now, if faith thus showed the men of old they could never repay God for all he had done for them, then those who think a bit of money will express to God their gratitude have neither gratitude nor faith. And further, while money might clothe and feed men it can never save their soul. The forty-ninth Psalm settles that matter forever. "They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; * * * that he should still live for ever, and not see corruption." This Scripture excludes all human means, money and all other means, in the redemption of sinners. If one had ever felt the power of Christ's blood applied to cleanse from sin, that one would never think of trying to substitute money for that precious blood in the work of salvation. It is only because thousands have never felt the power of sin reigning within them, and have never felt the efficacy of Christ's blood, that they are always confusing material with spiritual things, so putting light for darkness and darkness for light. On the other hand, a spiritual man once said: "What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" And the answer that attends this query is, "I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people." To be glad and rejoice in what the Lord has done, is all that God asks of his people, is all that he commands them to do. Nothing in the way of return payment does God require at the hands of his saints. He freely gives them all in his dear Son. The coming of Jesus ushers in a day that is wholly new, a day of liberty and gladness for sinners saved by his blood. Their portion in this new day is not to work for God, but to rest in the work God himself has finished. This resting from all the labors and burdens

of the law is the real and perfect Sabbath day. Jesus was the only man that ever thanked God as he deserves to be thanked, and it is only as the Spirit of Jesus dwells in and abounds in his people that they can, in any degree, return him thanks for all his goodness to them. We ought to remember that man of himself can never bring forth acceptable fruit unto God. Only as believers draw their vigor from the tree of life can they be lively in offering to God the spiritual sacrifices of thanksgiving. L.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

LUKE VII. 35.

"But Wisdom is justified of all her children."

Concluded from page 211.)

It is to us a most glorious truth, wisdom as an attribute of the eternal God, with every other perfection of the Deity, is embodied in Christ, and that Christ is of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, sanctification and redemption, and that in him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. But no one perfection severed from its connection with all the other perfections of the Godhead, is sufficient to express all the fullness of the Godhead that dwells in him bodily. Besides, we think the misapplication of this perfection as a personal identification of Christ, has a tendency to mystify some of the words of wisdom, and make them seem to conflict with the general doctrine of the Bible. Some have supposed that the strong language used of wisdom in this eighth chapter of Proverbs is required to prove the divinity, or eternity of Christ. To such a supposition we cannot consent, for John i. 1, is much more conclusive and to the point. The Word was with God, and the Word was God; this is irrefragible testimony of his eternal Godhead; and there are many other passages equally strong and conclusive. When we attempt to prove a position by passages which are inapplicable to the subject we weaken rather than strengthen our argument. We feel certain that if the inspired writer had designed to personate Christ in this chapter, he would not have used pronouns of the feminine gender, as where he says, Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice? She hath hewn out her seven pillars. She hath killed her beasts, she hath mingled her wine, she hath furnished her table, she hath sent forth her maidens, she crieth upon the high places of the city, &c. Can any Scripture be found wherein the feminine gender is applied personally to Christ, or to God? Again, some have thought that what is written in this chapter must apply to Christ, as proving what is called his preexistence, that he was with the Father, from everlasting, &c. We do not need thus to construe the chapter for any such purpose, as we have abundant direct testimony to prove not only that he was with God before the worlds began, but also that he was absolutely God. Let us read the testimony as applicable to wisdom, as a perfection or attribute of God, and it must also stand confessed that the wisdom as well as every other attribute of his Godhead was with him, or ever the earth was, and from everlasting. Can we conceive a period either in time or eternity when God was without wisdom, or when wisdom was not with him? In these inspired Scriptures the exalted character of divine wisdom is very clearly and most beautifully demonstrated. Remember that it is wisdom that makes the proclamations, I, wisdom, dwell with prudence. Counsel is mine and sound wisdom, I am

understanding, I have strength. By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth. This last passage is relied upon by some to prove a divine right by which many of the most despotic kings and wicked and profligate governments are sustained. Compare this text with Psalms ii. 10–12: "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way." How many foolish kings have been deposed in ancient and modern times for their folly in their mad rejection of the counsels of wisdom. How many human governments have perished for their folly. Wisdom directs that human rulers shall kiss, or be at peace, with the Son of God, who is invested with power above them as King of kings and Lord of lords. He shall rule the nations with a rod of iron, and break them in pieces like a potter's vessel. It is extreme folly and madness for kings and rulers of the earth to ignore his government, and dare to oppress his saints, to command them to do what Christ has forbidden, or fail to do what he has commanded. Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm; for he that toucheth them touches the apple of his eye. It is not by Christ's mediatorial power or command that the kings of this world reign, for he says, My kingdom is not of this world. But it is by wisdom they reign. A fool may be a king nominally for a time, but he does not really reign, his ministers do that for him, and soon his dominion ceases. Wisdom further proclaims, I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me. Is this a proclamation from Christ to the children of men? How very differently it sounds from what he said, John vii. 34, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me, &c. But how harmonious with the whole of the divine testimony when understood as a proclamation of wisdom to her children. Those who, as soon as they are born of the Spirit (for that is as early as any seek this wisdom which cometh from above) seek the counsel of wisdom, and stand waiting at the posts of her door for a supply, shall assuredly find it, and such are the peculiar favorites of wisdom. Can any dispute that riches and honor are with wisdom, even durable riches and righteousness? Well may she declare, My fruit (the fruit of wisdom) is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver. Those who are void of understanding are led by folly, like fools to the correction of the stocks. But wisdom says, I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment, that I may cause them that love me to inherit substance, and I will fill their treasures. The highest possible commendation of the wisdom set forth in this chapter is found in the testimony that God possessed it in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. It is the wisdom which God displayed when his hand garnished the skies and laid the foundation of the earth. This wisdom shines in all his works of creation, providence and grace. In the contemplation of this profound wisdom the inspired apostle exclaimed, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again?"—Rom. xi. 33–35.

Wisdom claims association and companionship with God from everlasting: I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. However justly and truly this language may be applicable to the Son of God, as set up in his mediatorial relation to his church, we cannot, for reasons already given, understand it as in this connection spoken of him personally. The truth that God possessed this wisdom before his works of old is abundantly apparent in the perfections of all his works, for in the absence of it, how could his wonderful works have been so perfectly wrought? He had not to experiment and try a variety of experiments in order to gain a knowledge, or to perfect his wisdom, for if he were less wise before his works of old than now how could we rely upon his immutability, or any of his eternal attributes? He is of one mind and none can turn him. He is the Lord, he changes not; therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed. Wisdom may well claim her priority to all the works of God, and, in the sublime language of this chapter, declare, "When there were no depths, I was brought forth [or as pre-existing in God himself, called into requisition]; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depths; when he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of the deep; when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." Now all this is declared in commendation of the wisdom of God, and in all the particulars named these declarations are sustained and demonstrated, and in conclusion, the children of wisdom, by whom she is justified, are appealed to, from these considerations, to listen to her voice, to discard folly and cordially embrace her. "Now therefore [or in consideration of all this] hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways." The plain import of this strong appeal of wisdom to her children is, that they should attend at her gates, wait at the posts of her doors, hear her instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not, for she saith, "Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord. But he that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death." How peculiarly appropriate are all the illustrations of the wisdom which God has displayed in all his works and ways, and how important that all who would live godly in Christ Jesus should hearken to all her admonitions, receive all her instructions, conform to all her rules, obey all her precepts and walk in all her paths. How blessed are the children of wisdom, trained under her tuition, and endowed with her revenue. All who possess this wisdom are wise unto salvation, and find life; but all who hate her, and love folly, reject her counsels and heed not her admonitions, love death. Allured, ensnared and betrayed by that wisdom which is from beneath, and which is the opposite of that which is from above, those who

despise her maxims shall be involved in the direful consequences of their folly, and then wisdom shall laugh at their calamities and mock when their fear cometh. Alas, how true are the words:

"Broad is the road that leads to death,
And thousands walk together there;
But wisdom shows a narrow path,
With here and there a traveler."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., April 1, 1867.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at his home, Leesburg, Va., April 30th, 1918, Orville Reed Beatty and Miss Virgie Viola Gress, both of Fulton County, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder J. H. Bourland was born in Franklin County, Ala., Oct. 3rd, 1847, and died Jan. 16th, 1918. He was married to Cynthia A. Kuykendall Nov. 18th, 1869. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church in the year 1869, and was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry Dec. 14th, 1895. He had been preaching about ten years before he was ordained. He was taken with la grippe Jan. 3rd, 1918, and gradually grew worse until it ran into pneumonia. All was done for him that a good physician and kind relatives and friends could do, but he quietly passed away Jan. 16th, aged 70 years, 3 months and 13 days. He leaves his sorrowing widow, one son, one daughter and several grandchildren to mourn, but we are admonished to sorrow not even as others who have no hope. Our dear brother was an able minister of the gospel, and was very able in prayer. He certainly had a good report of them that are without. O how beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel. By their fruits ye shall know them. We feel sure our precious brother is gone to rest to await the resurrection morn. May God bless all who mourn.

ALSO,

Sarah Elizabeth Blevins, our dear sister, was born in Alabama Sept. 19th, 1847, and died March 1st, 1918. She was married to Taylor Blevins Sept. 18th, 1868, in Dade County, Ga. They moved to Texas in 1873 and put their letters in Denton Creek Church, got their letters and were in the organization of Liberty Church, near Grapevine, where she remained a worthy member until her death. She was confined to her bed nearly three months with something like jaundice. All was done for her that good physicians, kind relatives and friends could do, but she quietly passed away March 1st, 1918, leaving a loving husband, one son, two daughters and several grandchildren, beside many relatives and friends to mourn. The writer was at her bedside a few days before she died, and she told me she wanted me to conduct her funeral. She sat up and talked beautifully; said she saw heaven in all its glory and was ready to die. She passed peacefully away at the age of 70 years, 5 months and 9 days, and was laid to rest at White's Chapel, near Grapevine, Tarrant Co., Texas. A large concourse of sorrowing relatives and friends were present to pay the last tribute of respect to the dear sister. The writer tried to preach to a large congregation at the home of the dear old brother. Their home has always been a home for God's servants. May God bless all who mourn.

SOLON GIPSON.

Hiram Bogart was born in Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., Sept. 24th, 1831, and passed beyond this life Dec. 16th, 1917, aged 86 years, 2 months and 22 days. He was united in marriage to Elizabeth A. Keator June 4th, 1851, at Olive, where both were born and grew to maturity. The passing years brought this devoted couple six children, three having preceded the father to another life: Henry, the eldest, at the age of fifty-seven, Ellen, aged twenty-two, and Eva Delilah, aged five years. Three daughters remain to mourn his departure and bless his memory: Ida E., Lottie and May. Father and mother united with the Primitive Baptist Church July 4th, 1863, being baptized by Elder Chenowith in the fellowship of Spoon River Church, in Illinois, and the church knew no more loyal and steadfast members than they. Always an ardent reader, he daily read the Bible and the SIGNS, gaining comfort and assurance from their pages, and his firm belief in Christ as his Redeemer, which gave him strength to endure his great pain to the end. For many years a sufferer from dropsy and Bright's disease, the last four months of his life were passed in fearful agony, he being unable to lie down or scarcely ever to sleep. He retained his wonderful intellect to the last. On October 12th he wrote me, saying it was ten years since dear mother was laid to rest in Jesus, and desiring that he might pass away as calmly as she did. October 26th he wrote me for the last time: "How long I have to suffer this the Lord only knows, but I try to pray for patience and strength to endure it." How he ever did endure his terrible misery was a marvel to all—never a word of complaint, but always the same sweet, patient smile to greet us every day. Since mother's death sister Ida had been his constant companion, nursing him devotedly year after year. At the time of his death father was the oldest pioneer in Whiteside County, he and mother having settled there in April, 1858. He purchased one hundred and twenty acres without, as he said, a tree or stick on

it, and the next year built his home and later added eighty acres more to the homestead. He once wrote me that it was only seven days from the time he left New York State until he was breaking the soil in Illinois. Many years of pioneer hardships, trials and illness came and passed to them, but they came at last to years of comfort and contentment, celebrating their fiftieth wedding anniversary June 4th, 1901. Typical of the esteem in which others held him, another has written these words: "He was an honored citizen of his community, respected for his integrity and high ideals by all who knew him, and his influence will be felt for many years to come." He was the last of a family of five children. Three daughters, six grandchildren and five great-grandchildren, with numerous nieces and nephews, are left to mourn.

The funeral services were conducted at his late home Tuesday afternoon, Dec. 18th, 1917, Elder Humphrey, of Galesburg, Ill., officiating, using the text father had himself chosen: Isaiah ix. 6. It seems he selected that text thinking to find words of comfort for us as the lonely Christmastide drew near, always forgetful of self, planning for the comfort and welfare of those he loved. He also selected hymn No. 571: "I would not live alway," &c.

ALSO,

Henry Bogart, only son of Hiram and Elizabeth Keator Bogart, was born in Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., Oct. 7th, 1852, and died at his home in Rock Falls, Ill., March 10th, 1910, aged 57 years, 5 months and three days. He came to Illinois with his parents when five years old, and grew to manhood in the old home. Dec. 31st, 1872, he was united in marriage to Miss Amanda Brown, and set up housekeeping on part of the home farm, which his father gave him at that time. In 1894 he sold his farm and bought a home in Rock Falls, Ill., where he had since resided. His character was exemplary, always upright and honest, quiet and home-loving, devoted to his wife and children, ever ready to extend the hand of friendship. He was loved by his relatives and respected by his friends and neighbors as one of the best of men. Although he never united with the church, he was deeply religious and believed in the faith of his parents. Truly he wronged no man by word or deed. He leaves to mourn his departure, a loving, heartbroken wife, four sorrowing daughters, his aged father (to whom his death came as a great shock) and three sisters, all of whom loved him dearly, besides many relatives and friends. We are left to sorrow, but know that he has only gone before—gone home with the dear mother, passed to life everlasting. For him the labors of life are ended, and when they shall also end for us, God grant that we may pass beyond with the same loving faith in God's wisdom and mercy.

LOTTIE ROBINSON.

Mrs. Sarah A. Sherwood, widow of the late Jesse Sherwood, died August 12th, 1917, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. A. Moore, near New Castle Del., in her 87th year. She was the last member of her family, being the only daughter of the late Elder Peter Meredith and sister of Peter, Elder Whitely W., Ezekiel C. and Samuel R. Meredith. At the advanced age of seventy-two years she united with the Old School Baptist Church at Welsh Tract, and was baptized by Elder J. G. Eubanks the first Sunday in June, 1902. For many years before she offered herself to the church she took great pleasure in reading the Bible, and longed to unite with the church, but felt her unworthiness so much that she delayed taking the step. She was of a bright, cheerful disposition, a devoted mother, and her unselfish interest in people continued up to the day of her death. She was the mother of ten children, two of whom preceded her to the grave. Those surviving her are: P. M. Sherwood, Jennie S. Dance, Anna, Mira and James M. Sherwood, Mrs. A. Moore, Mrs. W. A. Wise and Mrs. W. O. Merrick.

The funeral services were held at the home of her son-in-law, Mr. A. Moore, conducted by her pastor, Elder J. G. Eubanks, assisted by J. H. Bickford, pastor of the M. E. denomination of New Castle, who had visited her before and during her last illness. Interment in the Glebe Cemetery, near New Castle, Del.

Her daughter, (MRS.) J. S. DANCE.

Rebecca Addie Patton (nee Culpepper), daughter of J. T. J. and Carrie Culpepper, was born near Sweet Home, Texas, Sept. 18th, 1884, and died Jan. 23rd, 1918. She was married to Charles Patton Sept. 25th, 1902. She professed a hope when fourteen years of age, but never united with the church, though she had a great desire to be baptized. She believed in the resurrection of the dead, the effectual calling of the saints and predestination of all things. She was a true companion and mother, a good neighbor and a dear lover of peace. We feel satisfied that she now rests in the full assurance of a blessed immortality beyond this life. She was sick eleven days of pneumonia. All was done that loving hands could do. Although her suffering was great she complained but little. She asked us all to do all we could for her children. Her children were taken in the room to see her about three hours before she died; she knew them all and called them by name, then turned to her husband and said, "O come and go with me to-night." He sat by her bedside most all day and held her hand. Weep not for her, dear ones, but may God prepare you all to meet her in heaven, where there will be no parting, no sickness nor sorrow. She leaves her husband, seven children, mother, three brothers and several half-brothers and sisters to mourn their loss.

Services were held at the residence by Mr. White, of Nixon. We sang her favorite hymn: "O sing to me of heaven," &c. Her body was laid to rest in the Stockdale Cemetery in the presence of a large gathering of relatives and friends.

Written by her sister-in-law,

(MRS.) J. CULPEPPER.

J. B. Kinkade, son of J. F. and J. A. Kinkade, was born Dec. 17th, 1887, and departed this life March 23rd, 1918, leaving father and mother, wife and four children, three brothers and three sisters to weep for one they loved. The deceased came to his death at Steubenville, Ohio, being overcome by gas. He was buried at Springfield, Tenn., March 28th, 1918.

Written by his father,

J. F. KINKADE.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

F. W. Gainer, W., Va., $.50; Mrs. A. B. Hanson, Nebr., $5.00; Mary Hockenbury, N. J., $2.00; Rebecca Stone, Ind., $2.00; Sue McW., Mo., $1.00.

APPOINTMENTS.

Nothing preventing, there will be meeting at Casper Fetter's, 127 South Montgomery St., Trenton, N. J., Friday, May 17th, 8:30 p. m.; Stockton, Saturday, 18th, 2:30 p. m., at Mrs. Horner's; Sunday, 19th, Locktown, 10:30 a. m.; Frenchtown, 3 p. m.; Monday, 20th, Grandon, brother Demott's, 8:30 p. m.

D. M. VAIL.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, of New York city, deplores the necessity for withdrawing her invitation to the Warwick Association to hold its annual convention in this city next June. War conditions have developed difficulties so hard to overcome that it seems impossible to insure the satisfactory entertainment of visiting members and friends.

CYRUS RISLER, JR., Church Clerk.

ERRATA.

IN the obituary of Mary Emma Simons, page 189, second column, current volume, the date of her birth should have read May 20th, 1885, instead of 1855, as printed.

MEETINGS.

THE next session of the Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Ebenezer Church, of Baltimore city, commencing May 15th, 1918, and continuing three days. Those coming via Pennsylvania Railroad to union station will take any car going south on Charleston St. and get off at Calvert and Madison Sts. and walk one-half block east on Madison St. Those coming from the east over the B. & O. Railroad get off at Mt. Royal station, walk two blocks on Mt. Royal Ave. to Charles St. and follow above directions. Those coming from the west or south over the B. & O. Railroad will get off at Camden station and take cars in front of station marked St. Paul St. No. 17, going west on Camden St. and get off at Calvert and Madison Sts. Those coming over the electric line from Washington, D. C., will get off at Baltimore St. and take car going east on Baltimore St. marked St. Paul St. No. 17, get off at Calvert and Madison Sts. Any one coming via Western Maryland Railroad will get off at union station. Any one coming by boat, which arrives about 7 a. m., will take car going north on Light St., change at Baltimore and Calvert Sts. to car No. 17, get off at Calvert and Madison Sts. Persons coming to the city Tuesday p. m. will follow above directions, going to the meetinghouse, where they will be met and cared for. House open until 6 p. m., new time. All welcome.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to meet with the church in Wilmington, Delaware, at the meetinghouse, 1304 Jefferson St., on Wednesday, May 22nd, 1918, at 10 o'clock a. m. sun time. Trolley cars from all railroad stations and boat landings pass within one or two squares of the meetinghouse. Any one arriving in the city on Tuesday can come to the meetinghouse, where they will find some one to send them to places of entertainment. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

By order of the church.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will hold its session with the Church at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 29th, 30th and 31st. Those coming from Philadelphia on Wednesday morning will be met at Southampton station, train leaving Reading Terminal 9:23. Those coming from New Hope inquire at Ivyland station for Wm. Hobensack.

WM. HOBENSACK, Clerk.

THE Lord willing, there will be a meeting held with the Beulah Old School Baptist Church in their meetinghouse near Aberfeldy, Ontario, the third

Saturday and Sunday in June (15th and 16th). Conference and business meeting 4 p. m. Saturday; preaching on Sunday 11 a. m. and 3:30 p. m. usual time. All are welcome who desire precious love and fellowship to abound in the church of Jesus Christ.

ARCHIE McALPINE, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Ingleside, N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting, the Lord willing, for Saturday and Sunday, June 29th and 30th, 1918. Those coming from the east or west on the Rochester Branch of the Erie or D., L. & W. R. R., will be met at Atlanta station Friday, 28th, by writing to Mr. Harvey Graves, Nelson Nichols or Riley Prester, R. F. D. 7, Naples, N. Y. Those coming on the Lehigh Valley R. R. will be met at Naples, N. Y., by writing to Mr. Silas Drake, R. F. D. 27, Naples, N. Y. Place of meeting five miles from either station. All who come will be made welcome.

D. M. VAIL.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m

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1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

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(Judges v. 11.)

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THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,
PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1918. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WALLA WALLA, Washington.

DEAR EDITORS:—As it is time for me to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, I will, with your permission, try and write a few lines to the many brethren who read its columns, many of whom I have never met in the flesh, but hope I have met them in the Spirit. I do not believe it is necessary for the children of God to meet in the flesh to know and love each other. I believe Jesus taught this truth at the well of Samaria, when he told the woman the time had come when the people did not have to go to Jerusalem, nor to the mountain of Samaria, to worship God, but that they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth, for God is a Spirit and must be worshipped in spirit, and whenever or wherever the Spirit of God is manifested there is fellowship (oneness) in Christ Jesus. Here is where all the heavenly blessings are, and here is where we meet and worship, whether we are present with each other in the flesh or hundreds of miles apart. We do not walk by sight, but by faith, and faith is of God, and is not limited to natural things, but sees that which the natural eye has never seen, nor can see, for eye hath not seen, neither hath ear heard, nor heart understood the things God has prepared for them that love him, but he has revealed them to us by his Spirit. So it is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; faith is revealed from faith to faith.

As I have been deprived of meeting with my brethren most of the winter, I feel a desire to try and tell them some of the exercises of my mind. Paul says, I with my mind serve the law of God. Time and space are too limited to give all the travel of my mind, even if I were able to do so, so I will only try and gather some of the fragments. I will say that for the first three weeks of my sickness I never enjoyed a sweeter travel of mind on heaven and heavenly things than I did at that time; then the curtain was let down for three weeks, and I have never experienced a darker, colder time in soul and mind. My desire is now to try and find if any evidence of a child of God is found in such exercises of mind as these, for they stand exactly opposite to each other. In the agonies of my soul while wrestling at the throne of grace my mind was startled when the same Scrip-

ture from which I had drawn so much comfort was so suited to my present condition. I was made in astonishment to cry out, How can these things be? and before I was aware my soul was feasting upon the wonders of the rich provision of God's amazing grace out of the very same text which I had been drinking from before I was plunged into such darkness. This is the text: God found him (Jacob) in a waste howling wilderness, he led him about, and instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye, and there was no strange god with him. The surety of the preservation of Jacob was the delight of my mind, at first feeling that Jacob was a representative of all God's people, and I could embrace the precious promise as mine, and it came with great force to my mind that nothing was able to separate us from God's love, and in this blessed state my mind rested for three days undisturbed. But alas, the change came, and all the evidence I had that I was one represented in that faithful promise was gone, and in place of joy and gladness my heart was filled with distress and misery. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me? O Lord, see how mine enemies increase. O Lord, is thy loving-kindness utterly taken from me? Now, brethren, this portion of the text came to my mind: He led him about. The "about" means that he led him in more than one place. He led him to see the glory of God as it shines in the face of Jesus, which is joy unspeakable. He led him to see the wretchedness of his own depraved and sinful nature, which nature causes us to mourn with groanings that cannot be uttered. The thought here is this, let it sink deep in your heart: It is God that leads. We are often persuaded to believe that God leads us in all the pleasant places and the devil leads us into all the disagreeable places we get in, but the text says God led him, and in this leading he and we learn two fundamental truths: First, God is good, he is love, he is our all and in all; second, we are sinful, nothing, and less than nothing. This is God's way of instructing his people, this is the way we learn of him; so all his children shall be taught of him, and great is the peace of the people who are led about of the Lord; they not only learn that it is good to taste of his glory, but they learn that it is good to taste of his suffering, and this they learn by God leading them about. Jesus teaches the same lesson in John x. 9: "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." He does not say, as some today, that there is no pasture out, that it is only when we can feel his presence that we feed, but Jesus says we find pasture whether in or out, and this is what the apostles taught. Paul said to Timothy, Be instant in season and out of season. The "out" is just as essential as the "in." So the Lord led him about, and instructed him. Here is one truth that is very necessary for God's people to learn, and not only this one, but all his dear ways are absolutely necessary, but I mention this one, for it is so often referred to, and I feel is misunderstood as much as most any truth taught. Paul, in speaking to the saints at Rome, says, If ye live after the flesh ye shall die. Paul here states a positive fact. Well, is that all you or I know about the truth of the statement? If so, we can be taught of man, and we are not at all taught of God. Paul says he was not taught of man, neither received it of man, but of God, and he says that the Holy Ghost does accompany his words to demonstrate that which he teaches. This being so,

you and I must know that they that live after the flesh shall die, and we believe that God teaches us this lesson himself, and he alone leads us, and there is no strange god with us; and on this principle we can see and believe and rejoice in the truth that all things work together for the good of God's people; not only our joys, but our sorrows; not only our seasonable times, but our most unseasonable times. I have merely given a hint of the beauty I have seen in the thought here presented, and if published, cast the mantle of charity over my imperfections.

In love and fellowship, for Jesus' sake,

J. T. BARNES.

SALISBURY, Md., August 16, 1917.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending you some of the travels of Mrs. C. M. Thetford, as recorded by herself at my request. Her testimony seems to have no uncertain sound; I have enjoyed reading it. I have several other letters from her of recent date which are rich in faith and strong in doctrine. She has never united with the visible church, because there is none of our faith in her territory, though many of the so-called, who advocate and practice a form of doctrine that she has learned by experience as untrue. Surely the Lord's ways are not our ways, but as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways high above ours, and he has his own peculiar way of bringing his children together. If this meets with your approval I would like to see it published. I have her consent.

Your unworthy brother,

F. SELBY FISHER.

COLUMBUS, Ga., June 3, 1917.

DEAR MR. FISHER:—It is with fear and trembling that I take my pen to try to write you something concerning the way I hope the Lord has led me. I feel that I have very little to tell, especially to one whom I believe God has so wonderfully blessed with these spiritual blessings, one whom he has bestowed grace upon grace in your heart, but I know this grace in your heart will enable you to forgive and bear with me in whatever I may write amiss. Nothing I have ever undertaken to do has made me feel so little, so helpless, so unworthy, so ignorant as this. I thought I could do it very easily until I had made several efforts and utterly failed. I have no memory of dates, so cannot tell it in narrative form, but hope I can make it plain enough so that you can believe I have been led to know the only Redeemer, I trust and hope my Redeemer. The substance of what I shall try to relate is and ever will be an oasis in life's desert to me, but feeling and believing these things in one's heart is quite different from writing them down in black and white. The manner in which my little hope came to me seems different from that in which God deals with most of his children, if indeed I be a child. It may be best for me to keep silent, but as we should always be ready to give a reason of the hope within us, be the reason ever so small, I will make another attempt, begging for courage and faith to proceed.

About as far back as I can remember I was interested and impressed with eternal things, having serious thoughts concerning God and the hereafter. I felt in my childhood to be a sinful and disobedient child; I thought my brothers and sisters much better and more obedient, and feel sure they were. Many times when I had to obey my parents, or tried to do what I thought God required of children, I knew and felt my obedience was not from the heart, and felt rebel-

lious. Something in my heart seemed to condemn me, but I could not help it. I was selfish by nature, and felt that I could not perfectly obey the law of God or that of my parents, which meant, all told, Be good. I had several dreams when a child of the end of time and the world on fire. I always escaped destruction, but could not tell how. Those dreams troubled me, but would soon pass off. I had great fear of the punishment which I believed to be in store for me. One dream was very different from the rest: it was of a very beautiful place, an inclosure under high walls, with a church or building in the center, all, everything snow-white. That dream is as plain to me to-day as when I dreamed it. I had the thought then, and it still lingers with me, that if I should never dwell there, why was I given a glimpse or view of such a heavenly place? In those days I thought God to be a hard, severe judge, but if I could only live as he commanded, I thought I would escape the awful punishment that he will inflict upon the wicked at the end of time. Often I resolved to try to do better, but some sin committed or wicked thought would as often convince me I was doing no better. I thought, though, I had a long time to improve, and was glad that I had. As I became older, perhaps twelve or thirteen years, I came to the conclusion that all my efforts were useless; I knew I did not and could not keep the commandments, but thought others did. About that time I came to the conclusion that unless this man Jesus, that people were talking and preaching about, died to save me from my sins, I was lost. I began to believe in the doctrine of election, although I had no hope of being included in that choice, but hoped to receive a hope. I was raised among Old Baptists, and felt them to be the best examples of these things. I heard them talking of these things, which made a deep impression upon my mind. I felt, though, that Jesus did not die for any except those good and worthy, and I could not see anything so wonderful, loving, kind or self-sacrificing about this Jesus who died to save people, though I heard him preached often in those days. How blind are those who have eyes and cannot see; how deaf who have ears and cannot hear. I felt to rely more and more on this hope that I must receive, also that I must be born again, born of his Spirit, ere I could receive a hope. All I felt I could do was to wait for those things, for I had no conception of how, nor what, nor when, and felt that perhaps they were never to be mine. My eternal destination seemed to be hanging in the balance, all seemed dark and uncertain, and I felt I could only await my doom. About that time this Scripture came to me with some comfort: "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." I tried to rely on this, feeling more and more dependent on this hope I must receive if saved from my sins. Something kept telling me that Jesus would not love and did not die for me unless I was good. As I became older I was simply carried away with the gaieties and frivolities of life. I may say eternal things were forgotten but for pangs I would have concerning them, yet I did enjoy those sinful, foolish things for a short season. In the winter of 1891 some false prophet put out the report that the end of time would come on a certain night, and I wanted to go to a dance that same night, and did go, but well remember how I hoped the end of time or judgment would not find me there so engaged. The next summer I was

married. My husband and his people were Methodists. I attended his meetings with him through respect to him, but cared nothing for their teaching or preaching. I was still waiting for something to take place with me which I felt had not. I felt separated from them concerning religion, but cannot describe my feelings. I was troubled with the knowledge that I was expected to join with them, but could not; I felt to know there was nothing there for me. They thought I was a hard-hearted sinner, which I knew I was, but beyond their help. Time passed until I had been married about five years, and had not heard an Old Baptist preach but once in about seven years. One day it was announced that a Primitive Baptist preacher would preach that night in the Missionary meeting-house, about one-half mile from our home, on his way to some appointment. My husband asked me if I wished to go. I told him yes, but did not feel any special desire or hunger to hear this preacher, and if I had been prepared to hear this sermon I had no knowledge of it, and did not know what was in store for me; but this is an hour that means so much to me that I can never forget. The preacher had spoken but a few words when I saw my condition, and I hope that man Jesus was revealed to me a Prince and a Savior, a wonderful, loving, kind and merciful Savior. Words can never express the brightness, righteousness, love and mercy, yes, perfection in every sense, as this poor, lost wanderer saw him in the vision of her mind and heart. I seemed to see him a risen and exalted Savior, sufficient for the sins of the whole world. I felt the full weight of my helplessness, wretchedness and dire need of such a Savior, the revelation of his glory and power to save, praises due him, the Lord of glory, and the precious hope that he loved and died for me, I saw all this in that hour. I do not remember anything of the text used, but I know he used words that portrayed the most wonderful vision I ever beheld, in the brightness of which all others vanished. I felt that my whole being, heart and soul lay prostrate at the feet of Jesus, and my soul's desire was to remain there forever. This was the first time I had ever said, Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner. I felt it almost impossible to control myself, but tried hard to do so, as I wanted no one to know my feelings. I was very happy for months after that night. My soul felt to be shouting praises to Him whom I used to think a hard, severe judge, but now so merciful and forgiving. Notwithstanding my joy and happiness the question kept coming, Am I born again, born of his Spirit? While searching for proof of this I was relieved by this Scripture: The wind bloweth where it listeth, and none can tell from whence it cometh or whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit of God. O how thirsty I found myself for knowledge of Christ's kingdom. I searched the Scriptures every minute I could steal away from my earthly duties, finding them full of joy and interest, heretofore hard and dull. I had the sweet thought then, and it follows me, that God in his infinite wisdom, love and mercy sent his precious gospel truth to me at that time and to that isolated spot, where he had no organized church, and very few, if any, who were interested in his doctrine; it all seemed especially for me. This took place in the county above here, in the fall of 1898. The following winter we moved to this city, and since then I have felt to be in Babylon, with darkness within and without. Often I

have felt my faith severely tried, I hope by the Refiner's fire, which burns the chaff, leaving the substance stronger and more reconciled to the will of God, who always gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Dear Mr. Fisher, you have asked me to write for you at least a portion of my little experience in grace. I have endeavored herein to comply with your request, and humbly leave it to your better judgment, believing you will be guided by One who makes no mistakes. The thought often comes to me that perhaps I am deceived in all. Remember me at the throne of grace.

Yours unworthily,

(MRS.) C. M. THETFORD.

CALALLEN, Tex., Jan. 30, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find money order for five dollars, four of it for my subscription, and the other for the contribution department.

This part of the country is going through the worst drought ever known in this section, the old settlers tell us. Practically no rain for two years, and here it is near planting time again and no rain yet. People are deserting the farms, and the stock is in poor condition, but still we know it is all according to God's will. We read in times past there were droughts, wars and great earthquakes, so we must expect these things to come upon us. The Lord's people have always been a poor and afflicted people, going through many hardships, trials and distresses. It seems almost that I am cast away from the fellowship of the brethren, very seldom getting to hear preaching. I do not know of any church that has regular preaching nearer than two or three hundred miles from me now. We once had regular meetings, and how I did like to go, but now, for some all-wise purpose unknown to us, this privilege has been taken away. Our beloved pastor died, and many moved away, or grew cold it seems; then we were blessed with another preacher who would come and preach for us, but it seemed that the unity that we once enjoyed did not return in its full power, and soon we began to miss our meeting time, and finally stopped altogether. This beloved brother moved to north Texas among other Old Baptists. Now there is a preacher who comes and holds meetings in an Old Baptist settlement about ninety miles from here once every two months, but there is no organized church there, and while we enjoy the meetings, it does not seem like home, as it would if we had an established church. Then we see those who have not had an opportunity to join any church of our faith and order, who, I feel satisfied, would like to have a name among us if we were an organized church, and it makes me feel that we are not doing our duty by not organizing a church. Still it may all be for the best; I know we sometimes seem to get in too much of a hurry, and try to do things ahead of time, too often prompted by the flesh. Then I think of Moses' commandment: Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord. How helpless they were, how dependent upon the Lord for deliverance; so are his little ones dependent upon him to-day. Sometimes when we are going through our dark hours we cannot realize that the light, or blessing, is just ahead of us, but the deliverance is just as sure to come as are the trials. I firmly believe that all events that come to pass in this world were just as plain to His mind in the beginning as they are now. He foreknew all things, therefore nothing can come to pass contrary to what he foresaw it would

We readily see it would cause him to cease to be an all-wise God to say it could take place any other way. How strange to hear others admit God to be all-wise and then hear them say it is just left with them whether they are saved or not. They might as well say God has got to wait and see what they are going to do, and if that be the case he is an ignorant God just that far.

I started this letter the other day, thinking that I would send my remittance only, and it was laid away, for I could see nothing in what I had written that would be of benefit to any one, but if I could say anything that would encourage just one of God's little ones I would feel amply repaid for making the effort. I am so low down in the valley most of my time I do not see how I can be of comfort to any one, and often get disgusted with myself. I am so imperfect, cannot live as I would like to, and feel wretched and undone. But the prophets tell us we are strangers in this land, and we seek a city not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, so we must press on, and some sweet day it will be our privilege to enter this blessed home, never more to be troubled with the earthly things which now vex us.

You are at liberty to publish any part of this you see fit; or cast it in the waste-basket, and all will be well with me.

Your poor, unworthy brother, if one at all,

E. B. AULT.

WEISER, Idaho, April 15, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—That God is the ruler of the whole world, I think all Baptists agree. The trouble comes when dividing, so we will try to miss this trouble, by not dividing. Now comes my petition: Lord, enable me to see and understand thy truth. Brethren, have you ever sent such an appeal to the throne of God's rich grace? If so, you must have felt the need of strength, and probably learned by experience that you of yourself can do nothing. Did you ever see an Old Baptist preacher who did not depend alone upon the Lord for all the requirements necessary to deliver a gospel sermon? I never did, though I have seen but few Baptist preachers. Now I will quote the eighteenth verse of the eighth chapter of Deuteronomy: "But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant, which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day." The prophet is speaking to a nation of people of natural things, and had these people concluded they could get wealth by themselves they surely would have experienced that which is contained in the two following verses. Read them, and while we are reading, let us turn to and read the eighth and ninth verses of the second chapter of Hosea. This Scripture is speaking to and of God's chosen people as a nation, thus establishing the fact as said by Job: The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, &c. So we see God does work among the inhabitants of the earth to do his will, so that he gives seed to the sower and bread to the eater. It looks to me that if we are so helpless in natural things, we must be much more so in spiritual things. The Lord found Jacob, and the Lord led him, and kept him, &c.; according to this Scripture, the Lord did everything. Jacob was the happy recipient of all those wonderful things. Paul may plant and Apollos water, but God giveth the increase. We do not even choose Christ, but he chooses us, and works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. Now if it is his good

pleasure for us to do a thing do you not think we will do it? It was his pleasure for Jonah to go to a certain place; did he go? So it is to-day, where the Lord calls, the poor trembling one must say, Here am I. Where he leads, his child must follow, so he leads us in such a way that we learn obedience by the things we suffer. We are led and learn obedience by love, so that if you are able to think good thoughts, or do good works, the power, strength, wisdom, is of God, for every good gift is from above, and we are left with nothing to boast of but our infirmities. So we see in spiritual things he must give us wisdom. One brother says we could have gone to the church before we did. Well, if there is a time to gather, I reckon we went in at that time, and if the Lord added to the church in the days of the apostles I suppose he does now. I reckon he has not changed, nor given the government of his kingdom into men's hands yet. You, dear brethren, were led in such a way as to desire to go to the church. You went, told the church your travels, that was all you were qualified to do; you did not know whether they would receive you or not, and sat there as passive as a stone. Mind you, the Lord led and instructed you, but the church received you. You went to the water, you wanted to go, the Lord led you, but again in baptism you were passive, but being led no doubt the same as the eunuch. David says in Psalms cxix. 117: "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe." I can sometimes rejoice when I find the saints of old (after they had learned of the Father) showing their utter helpless condition, that they were depending upon the good Lord to direct their steps and lead them and keep them in the way of righteousness. How can we say the Lord's will is for Mary, Samuel, Peter, and a thousand others, to do a thing now if some of them do that thing in a month, some in a year and some never? Would that prove God did whatsoever his soul desired? Would that prove he worked his will among the inhabitants of the earth? Again, we cannot always do what we know and feel to be right, or if we can we have gotten along further in knowledge and power than Paul had. He says, How to perform that which is good I find not, and he could not always do what he would, yet the Scripture is true, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." Now if we were to quote no farther here is a blessed one, he is in a blessed condition, and the promise is his, for he "shall be filled." The Lord will lead him into his banqueting-house, and his (the Lord's) arm will be under him, and the Lord's banner over him will be love. The Lord here does all for him; surely every one of these can say, Salvation is of the Lord. If there is one single thing depending upon the strength of man, that much is not of the Lord, hence salvation would be of the Lord and man. If the Lord works in you to will and to do of his good pleasure, where is the independence, or pleasure, of man? Does not this prove the Lord first works, or puts in the heart, the will or desire to do? Then that one must wait until the power to do is given, so that both to will and to do is of the Lord. This God is the God we adore, our faithful, unchangeable friend. He is glorious, his work is perfect, we can neither add to nor take away. We are as clay in the potter's hands. Our cry is, Lord, lead us; hold us up; enable us to know thy will and do it, for we are weak. If left to ourselves we can do nothing. We feel to depend upon Him for every good thought, good act, the very breath we

draw; no wonder we say it is by him we get wisdom to gain all our spiritual wealth. Then if we have this wisdom and power to be rich in spiritual things, it is the gift of God, and we again must fall at his feet and ascribe all honor to his glorious name.

Yours in hope of a glorious resurrection,

T. E. ATTEBERRY.

MATTHEW VIII. 7.

"AND Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him."

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The efforts of our very best physicians are often very properly called "the practice of medicine," because the result is so very uncertain, and the bill is the only thing that one may feel quite sure of receiving. The family or friends of the patient are frankly told to "try this treatment to-day, and if no improvement follows I will change the medicine to-morrow," so that neither the physician nor the patient can rest with full assurance as to the outcome. This gives an idea of the estimate of men of the healing of the great Physician. Men do not seem to consider that he never lost a case, that he never failed to "heal all manner of diseases." His work was never the practice of medicine or an attempt to heal; his word never changed and never failed to prosper in the thing whereto he sent it, and no patient of his ever failed to follow his counsel, for they come unto him as a last resort, and there is nothing left to do but obey his will. Another unusual feature of the healing of this palsy patient is that there was no personal visit of the great Physician at all, which would seem on the face of it to be a flat contradiction of his words to the centurion: "I will come and heal him," and then never go near the sick man at all. But let us keep in mind the most important feature, that the sick was "healed in the selfsame hour." It is not that the sick long for a personal visit from some doctor, but their earnest longing is to be healed. While none of us ever enjoyed a literal personal visit from the great Physician, still we hope to have experienced that cure and deliverance from death, hell and the grave from which there can be no relapse. The confession of unworthiness by the centurion showed him to be a man of faith, so that he could through that faith receive from Jesus the fulfillment of his request regarding his servant, so that at that time, the same as to-day, it was "the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing." The healing was accomplished "in the selfsame hour," and there was no change in the mind or purpose of Jesus concerning the "sick of the palsy," for he was visited with a demonstration of the Spirit and power of God independent of any earthly aid, and our hope and comfort are that while we never beheld Jesus in the flesh, we have seen by faith his infallible cure applied to our own and many another sinsick soul, so that when by faith we get the message, "I will come and heal," we feel to rest in it. Our experience has led us to that trust and confidence in him that we are assured he will minister the proper remedy, and that we will not fail to take it because it may be a trifle bitter or for some other childish reason. We are confident that no failures, mistakes or disappointments are his in common with our physicians of earth, so that we do not take his name in vain by measuring his success with theirs.

Yours in faith, hope, charity,

E. R. KINNEY.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., July 7, 1917.

WILLIAMSTOWN, Kans., April 4, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have long felt impressed to write a few lines and at least express my appreciation of the SIGNS, but a feeling sense of my weakness has restrained me hitherto, and although I feel no stronger spiritually today than I ever have, yet a sense of duty prompts me to make the attempt. The SIGNS has been coming to my address for a long time, having been ordered by a kind sister. The time is past due that I should have renewed my subscription, or have ordered it stopped; moreover, a dear sister in Oklahoma handed me two dollars and requested me to order the SIGNS sent to her, and for those reasons I find myself seated to try and write a few lines. I have never written the SIGNS before this, and it might be well therefore for me to state my belief frankly and briefly. Our association was organized as the First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Baptists something more than half a century ago, with the late Elder W. T. Jones as moderator. It was organized upon the principles of doctrine maintained by the old Black Rock Convention, and stood side by side in doctrine and order with the original editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and those other old and true servants of his day: Elders Dudley, Johnson, &c. It is due our little band to say that we still stand upon the very same footing as our fathers did, and try to worship the same God as did they. We are known by the same name as that under which we were organized, except some years ago our brethren saw fit to add the term "Predestinarian," in order to distinguish us from those who would appropriate to themselves the name of Old School or Primitive Baptists and yet deny the predestination of all things. Many new issues have arisen since we were organized as an association, and many old ones have been dug up and fought over again. Some have had the effect of separating brethren who were near and dear to one another. Some have been settled by casting out the evil one. These conditions have always abounded more or less in the church militant, and I presume they ever will, inasmuch as our Redeemer has said, It is impossible but that offenses will come, but woe unto him by whom they come. Some unscrupulous brother might try to hide under the cloak of predestination and say one should not be blamed if he does wrong, for it was so predestinated. It would be hard indeed for one to prove that such was not predestinated; indeed, it is impossible that it should be otherwise, nevertheless the offender is not justified in his offense, but contrariwise, a woe is pronounced upon him. The church in gospel order is an object of great beauty. Her glorious husband pronounced her "all fair." "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee," and we might observe in passing that she is a helpmeet for him; not a helpmeet, as many pronounce it, but a help that is meet; in other words, a help that is fit for him. She is exactly fitted and prepared of the Lord to serve her adorable husband. The Lord brought her unto the man. It is noteworthy that there was not found a help fit for Adam among all the beasts of the field or fowls of the air when they were brought unto Adam to see what he would call them, but the Lord said, "I will make him a help meet for him." To my mind those creatures are typical of the legions of antichrist, and although they pretend to be so zealously engaged in helping the Lord, it is not a help that is acceptable to him. Christ has not commissioned any man

nor any group of men to help him in the work his Father gave him to do. The dutiful wife is indeed a help to her husband; her place is in the house, she must keep her house in order. It would be unbecoming of her to go into the field and undertake to do the work that her husband has declared "finished." The true bride has that faith and confidence in her husband that she believes what he has said, she is willing to let the matter rest there; but those who are engaged in "helping the Lord to save souls" have no such faith, no such confidence, yet they seek to take his name upon them, but they are not his bride, and therefore they have no right to his name; they have taken his name in vain, and it is written, God will not hold him guiltless who taketh his name in vain. Isaiah prophesied of these, saying, "In that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." The dear Lord has bestowed his name upon his bride: "And this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness." I have been led to reflect much of late upon the "name" of our blessed Redeemer, and it would require volumes to write all that might be said concerning the significance of that name, and the jealousy with which he guards that name. "I am the Lord; that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." Holy and Reverend is his name, and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace. Not infrequently do we see men who have taken upon them the name of "Reverend," notwithstanding that is God's name; they have taken his name in vain.

But I will write no more of these rambling thoughts at present.

I am, unworthily,

L. L. SCHENCK.

MONROE, Ga., April 11, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—This is to say that my subscription has expired, and I must renew because of the value of the paper. The contributions to its columns keep it very high in my estimation, and knowing so many of the writers makes it doubly esteemed by me. I sometimes feel to know the spirit that prompts them, and that prompts you to continue its publication. It is food to them that have the same faith, being the fruit of the Spirit. We often feel to know the truth as Peter did, by revelation of the Father, and that Jesus will build his church and present it a glorious church, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, that it should be holy and without blemish. The hope we have gives us comfort when troubles assail; we remember that Jesus said, Be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world; I have been given all power in heaven and earth. He finished the work his Father gave him to do. How absurd it is for men to claim that part of the work of salvation depends upon them. Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. It is as good in Georgia as in New York; it is a heavenly place anywhere in Christ Jesus, as it was last June at the association in Middletown, N. Y. I remember the tears of love, joy and fellowship that made us all feel that we were brethren indeed, and receive the admonition that Joseph gave his brethren when they parted: See that ye fall not out by the way. This relationship makes us love one another

and visit each other and try to pray for the Spirit to lead us in the good and right way, taking heed to ourselves and to the doctrine, continuing in it, walking uprightly, working righteousness, speaking truth in our hearts. We need encouragement by the way, our minds need to be stirred up by way of remembrance of the things of the kingdom. You should try to be at the place of worship on time every time, for the poor pastor who is taking the oversight of you knows when you are absent, and he also knows who will be there if possible. The brethren should also take in the manner of his testimony, and if it is good tell him so, sometimes it will help him; he wants to show himself approved of his Master, rightly dividing the word of truth, as a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, and when a good, honest servant has done a good, honest piece of labor he should be encouraged.

If you think this worthy of a place in the SIGNS, you can use it.

Your brother in hope,

J. M. ADAMS.

LAMONTE, Missouri.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I will again send in my remittance for the precious old SIGNS. Why it is precious to me is because it has been in our family from my earliest recollection, without a change. It has certainly contended for the same grand truth from the beginning, and that has continuously been salvation by grace, and grace alone, no mixture of works. If the Bible has said salvation is by grace the SIGNS has also said so; if the Bible has said not by works, so says the SIGNS, and if the Bible says as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and that death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned, the SIGNS has said so, and that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord; also, according as he (God) hath chosen us in him (not into) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, &c.; also, because God hath from the beginning chosen us to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; to all these things it has always said yes. Having contended for good, even works of the Spirit, and not the adulterous works of the flesh, it has always stood sound on the resurrection, teaching just what the Bible has to say about it. We think now of Christ, who suffered all these things for us, yea, met the demands of the law in the fullest sense, paying the full penalty of the law, the Just suffering for the unjust, the innocent for the guilty, that we might go free, and wherever these things have been said by the Bible the SIGNS has said so, too. In fact, if not mistaken, wherever the Bible has said yes, so has the SIGNS, and where the Bible has said no, the SIGNS has fully agreed. In summarizing the grand principles the SIGNS has always stood for, I would not be understood that I think the paper has been clear of mistakes; the editors themselves will not claim that for it; that cannot be said of man, only as the Spirit of Christ moves him, but the God the SIGNS has contended for certainly is the God of the Bible. The dear old SIGNS has been a source of great comfort to those who have been killed to the love of sin, lost all confidence in self, those who go mourning on account of sin, whose only hope is the Lord, whose daily prayer is, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? As long as the Lord has a people upon this sin-cursed earth who

worship him in spirit and in truth, who love him, who know him through the quickening power of the Spirit, they will love, adore and worship the unchanging God; yes, a God of all power in heaven and in earth, who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast; even the winds and the sea obey him, and his dear, doubting, mourning people obey him. O how they long for the God-given power to obey him. They love the company of those who thus love him, for their whole heart, soul and mind go out to those who thus love him. Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in christian love. The fellowship of christian minds is like to that above, and to all such the SIGNS is of great comfort.

In much weakness,

J. A. TEAGUE.

HAMPTON, Iowa, March 19, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—It is time to renew my subscription to the dear old SIGNS, of which I have been a subscriber for many years. My father was a subscriber when I was a small boy, and he always filed them away to refer to. I believe it was then the only Old School Baptist periodical in the United States. At that time I read the SIGNS, but only for pastime. In those days there were not so many papers and books as at the present time, and no free schools. I attended school in the winter and worked on the farm during the season. I read every book and paper that I could get, as I loved to read. I learned my letters before I ever attended school. When father read the Bible he would take me upon his lap and I learned the alphabet. At the beginning of each chapter was a capital letter, and I could soon repeat the whole alphabet. I was then about five years old. I learned to write with a quill, and never saw a steel pen until I was ten years old. The schoolteachers wrote copies and made our pens for us. I write this to let the rising generation know how we were taught in the schools in those days. My father and mother were members with the Old School Baptists before I can remember. My father was a minister, and died in the faith, as did also my mother. One sister and myself are the only ones of the four children who are members. I keep on file copies of the SIGNS, and often read the articles written by our old faithful ministers and brethren and sisters who have passed to their reward. Many names I could mention, but it would take too much space. Dear brother, when I take a review of my religious life in the past sixty-one years, and in my ministry of forty-six years, of the forbidden paths I have taken, and the trials I have been called to pass through, I wonder why the God of all grace has extended mercies toward me, and that I am still a spared monument of his amazing mercy. Many are my doubts and fears. As the poet says, "'Tis a point I long to know," &c., and the poet corresponds with the experience of every heaven-born child, of every poor sinner who has passed from death unto life, all are taught in the school of grace, which the wisdom of the world knows nothing about. Jesus said to his disciples, Ye are not of the world, as I am not of the world; the world will hate you, as it hated me. I feel to render thanks and praise to his dear name that he finished the work that his Father sent him to do: complete salvation of all his elect; not one will be lost. The dear old SIGNS, now in its eighty-sixth year, has always contended for the doctrine of God our Savior. Many periodicals are now published which are called Old School

Baptist, but they are mixed with conditional time salvation, and have departed from the old paths, yet the dear old SIGNS has not departed, and has been sustained until the present time, and I believe it will be henceforth. So, dear brother Ker, be of good cheer, God will be with you and brother Lefferts, as he was with the old editors before you, who have passed to their reward. May the God of all grace sustain you and all the dear correspondents who write for the paper.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

E. A. NORTON.

SALINE, Louisiana.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I am sending in my (and my mother's) subscription to the SIGNS for another year, I will try in my weakness to write a few lines to that dear old paper, which, dear brethren, will be at your disposal, to do with as it seems best to you, for I know that in this flesh of mine there is no good thing, and if I am not guided by the Spirit of Jesus Christ it will not be worth anything to the household of faith; that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that of the Spirit is spirit, and our actions are always controlled by one or the other, but I often fear that mine is of the flesh and not of the Spirit, and it does my poor soul good to hear the brethren tell of their doubts and fears, for I can fellowship them in their feelings, which makes me hope that I am one with them. We live by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope. It is certainly a glorious blessing to the children of God to be permitted to speak often one to another through the SIGNS, and have the gospel preached to them by able defenders of the truth in this world of lo heres and lo theres; and even if I am a child of God, I know I am not worthy of being enabled to enjoy the doctrine of Jesus Christ, which is hated by the world, for I am no better by nature than any of Adam's race, and very often feel that I am the most sinful creature that ever lived, and it is a wonder to me very often, when I think of what a poor, sinful creature I am, that I am permitted to be remembered with a people whom I believe to be that little flock whom Christ told, Fear not, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. The only reason I can give for my hope of being numbered with the dear people of God, is by the love and mercy of the almighty God, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, for I never have merited anything good, and if it had been left to me, I never would have believed the glorious doctrine that is advocated by the SIGNS, for I did not want to believe in a doctrine that gave man no chance to be saved of his own volition, but I hope the God of all grace has led me in ways that I had never known and in paths I had never wanted to tread, and to make his doctrine sweet to me. I am glad that man has nothing to do with his salvation, for if he did there would be no certainty about it, for man is ever changing, but God never changes, which makes the salvation of his people sure; they can never die, for they are born of God, and our hope is, that when this mortal puts on immortality, and this corruption puts on incorruption, we will be pure and holy as God himself. It is glorious to me to think that we will soon be through with this world of sin and suffering. The longer I live the less I can see to live for; it is all vain, and soon passes away. Solomon was made to behold the vanities of this earth, and I think every child of God is shown to some extent that the wisdom

of this world is all vanity, and every true follower of the Lamb of God has to be killed to the love of the things of this earth; they are kept humble through suffering. I certainly agree with brother Lefferts as to suffering being a blessing to the children of God; they follow the dear Savior through suffering, which keeps them humble.

Well, I had better close, and not weary your patience any longer, for I feel what I have written is not of much account. If I could write as some do I would enjoy writing and telling what great things God has done for his people, but I have not the pen of a ready writer, and if I am a saint I am the least of all. I felt a desire to write a few lines this morning to let the brethren know that I certainly enjoy reading and heartily endorse the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS. Brethren, I hope you will be spared to go on in the future as in the past, upheld by the God of all grace in conducting and publishing the paper. Cast the mantle of charity over this imperfect letter.

May the God of all grace sustain and uphold you, is the desire of your little brother in Christ, I hope,

E. F. READHIMER.

ENTWISTLE, Canada, April 6, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been reading much of late, and with unusual interest, the Bible, and other works of the late servants of God: "Songs in the Night," and poems by J. B. Durand, and "The Christ-man in Type," by Elder David Bartley, and the "Second Volume of Editorials," written by Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, March, 1842, to March, 1847, which to my understanding is the greatest work I ever read, outside of the Bible. I have not been able to hear, nor to read after, as able a defender of the truth and exposer of error as was Elder Beebe; his manner was humble, but fearless of what man could do or say.

"O for such faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by every foe,
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe.

A faith that shines more bright and clear,
When tempests rage without,
That when in danger knows no fear,
In darkness feels no doubt."

I have read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for twenty-six years or more, and it has been of much comfort and encouragement to me, more so of late years, as I am exiled from all my people except one son and two little grandsons. For ten years I have been in the northwest, and I have not seen one person who believes the doctrine the SIGNS advocates, which doctrine is food to my soul, if I know myself at all, and to-day I am among infidels on all sides, with a few who profess to know God, but deny his power to save, by going about to establish their own righteousness. If I have a hope in Christ, it was given me about twenty-eight years ago last February. I have been identified with four different denominations, the New Lights first, in my younger days, with no faith, so fell by the wayside. After hope came I fell in with the Methodists, but left them for the Missionary Baptists, and afterward left them and fell in with the Time, or "Soft Shell" Baptists, who believe our salvation here in time depends upon ourselves, but they proved to be of no more comfort to my poor, sinful, helpless condition than did the other doctrines I had been deceived by. I was with them for ten years, when I withdrew from them as I had done from the others, and was afterward excluded from their organization, in 1904. I have not attended any kind of religious

service for eleven years; better is a dry morsel and quietness therewith than a house full of sacrifices with strife. Am I justified? Am I sanctified or set apart meet for the Master's use? Do I hate sin? Do I love righteousness? If I knew I loved the children of God I could hope, but I am as a ship without a sail, tossed with doubts and fears. All I do is sinful. I cannot say, as some do, I know I am a christian, or as I once could say. I often feel that for me to speak of God or try to pray is only sinful, and is all against me, and think God will surely take my life for such mockery, but I have no other place to go, no other source to look to for life, for forgiveness for sins, all else is sinking sand. I sometimes rejoice in the grand old hymns, "Rock of Ages" and "Jesus, lover of my soul," but to say, In the rifted Rock I am resting, seems too high for me. I feel that by this time your enlightened mind will see in this letter such weakness as will not commend it to you, and if cast into the wastebasket all will be well. Is there any one like me outside of God's non-elect?

J. W. LAWS.

ROANOKE, Va., May 16, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I find that my subscription has been due for some time, and that I have neglected attending to it, not purposely, but carelessly; please pardon. Your paper is contending for the way of the Lord as I understand it, and I feel that my wife and I cannot do without it. I only wish that I could greet the dear writers and embrace them for Christ's sake. I am a poor old sinner, and cannot do that which I would, but the contrary, only when I am blessed to look away to the Rock of Ages, forgetting the things of time, but this is only for a few minutes at a time.

Find inclosed my check for four dollars and fifty cents, for two years. I feel that the high cost of living, with material, justifies my personal raise of fifty cents for the paper. Really sometimes one article or subject is worth the price hereto attached. There can be no price fixed on the gospel of the Son of God, which is truth, and your wonderful paper, the SIGNS, contends for the way of all truth, therefore continue it to my address, which has been changed from 208 to 304 Terry Building, Roanoke, Va. May God bless you and all contributors to the SIGNS, is the prayer of one who delights in the truth.

Yours in hope,

J. W. SIMPKINS.

[IT is very encouraging to receive such letters as the above, and we thank brother Simpkins and all others who have helped us with their kind words and financial aid, for we need such encouragement in these times of high prices, when the cost of everything used in publishing the SIGNS has advanced so that it makes our burden very heavy; but we know that as long as the Lord has use for the paper he will sustain it.—ED.]

BOOK OF EDITORIALS.

WE have on hand a number of copies of the Second Volume of Editorials. This book is made up of editorials written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES from March, 1842, to March, 1847, and contains 768 pages, neatly bound in cloth.

This work originally sold at two dollars per copy, but as a few of the pages are stained by water we will, as long as the supply lasts, sell them at the extremely low price of seventy-five cents per copy. Postage paid by us. All who wish this book should procure it now, as we will have no more after these are sold.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1918.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

WHICH AND WHY?

"PETER sat down among them. But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire."—Luke xxii. 55, 56. "Peter stood with them, and warmed himself."—John xviii. 18. "Peter sat without in the palace."—Matt. xxvi. 69. "He was gone out into the porch."—Matt. xxvi. 71. "She saw Peter warming himself."—Mark xiv. 67. "He went out into the porch; and the cock crew."—Mark xiv. 68.

That Peter was nervous and agitated that awful night in which the Savior was betrayed, arrested and brought before his accusers there can be no doubt. That he felt cold and needed the warmth of a fire, also there is abundant proof. But did he sit or stand during the time of his denial? If he stood, why did he? If he sat, why did he? Probably our readers have never thought anything about this, and probably you will think us foolish for dwelling on such a seeming little thing. But is it insignificant? Is anything in the Bible insignificant? We believe these apparently trivial incidents would not have been recorded by inspiration unless they contribute their quota of truth. The edifice reared by inspiration throughout the Bible results in a structure of complete and dovetailed truth from which not a single word-stone can be omitted. Many religious bodies and societies stress certain portions of the Bible to the neglect of others. If Old School Baptists are what they hope they are, that is, the church of God, we must not omit or overlook any portion of the inspired word of God. If we shun any part of the Scriptures so as to unduly emphasize others, it is an evidence against us that our deeds are evil and that we dread the light. Any exposition of Scripture that will not bear comparison with the whole Scriptures may be a pretty theory, but it cannot be true. Any exposition of Scripture that becomes a rallying-point for all other Scriptures which rally to its support, like reinforcements to an embattled host, is always a true exposition, however gaunt and ragged its expression may be. Therefore, feeling as we do, that nothing in all the Bible can be really too small to notice, it is borne in upon our mind now to inquire into what was Peter's behavior the night he betrayed the dear Savior. Did he sit or stand, and why? Not only is there nothing insignificant in all the Scriptures, but, when rightly understood in the light of the Spirit, there are no contradictions between the various records in the Bible. According to John's record of how Peter behaved himself that night, it appears he stood by the fire. According to Matthew, Mark and Luke there can be no doubt but that Peter sat by the fire, at least when he was not either out in the porch or without in the palace. We conclude that all these four witnesses as to Peter's attitude are correct, not one of them has made a misstatement, because the records of all were equally inspired, so that we cannot admit an error in any of them. Therefore we are forced to the conclusion that Peter did not maintain any one position long at a time, and that is exactly what we would expect an excited and agitated person to do. Now he stood, then he sat; now he went

out into the porch, then he was without in the palace. So he spent his time in moving about, now here, now there, never remaining long in one place. This bodily behavior is an excellent index to the man's state of mind. He was greatly excited, very much agitated, alarmed and worried. Had he been able to remain sitting by the fire and witness his Savior in such danger from his enemies, it would have shown Peter to have been quietly indifferent to all that was going on, but that composure was impossible for him to maintain, for he was anything but indifferent to the plight of the Master. Had he been able also to remain by the fire standing, it would have argued a like self-control on Peter's part. His nervousness made him feel colder than the weather warranted, so that he kept hovering about the fire, but he could not long remain either standing or sitting. His whole behavior proves him not to have had himself in hand, shows his lack of resolution and his inability to make up his mind what to do or what course to adopt. Some argue that Peter denied his Savior because Peter was a coward. We do not believe this. Others say Peter denied Christ, through desire to shield him, but neither do we believe this. Peter denied Christ from the simple fact that he was so wrought up and excited that he scarcely knew what he was doing. His irresolution got the better of him so that he could not only not master his bodily movements, but could not control his mind nor his tongue. Jesus had foretold Peter of his denial, but it could never seem to Peter that he would be so base as to deny his Lord and Master. Peter had yet to learn that one is as unable to control one's mind and thoughts as one is to control the seething waves of the ocean. He had yet to know that his fairest resolutions must fail, and his strength become weakness in the time of test and stress. Peter had vowed to Jesus that he would never leave him; that, let come what might, he would go to prison with him, and to death with him, if need be. This shows that Peter had neither the proper conception of his own instability nor of the Savior's true character. None of the disciples ever seemed to realize that death was a part of Jesus' work, that it was as necessary for him to die for his people as to live for them, indeed, that there could be no living in the truest sense except through death. Therefore, to follow out the predestination of God with reference to Peter and to prepare him to strengthen the brethren in his ministry among them, what better preparation could be designed for this man than to let him suffer a paralysis of his will, both physically and mentally, and so to blast his resolutions once so ardently avowed? All this to show him that his strength was all of grace and not of self, that the only way he could ever bring forth fruit unto God would be as Jesus abode in him and he in Jesus. We claim, then, that it was neither cowardice nor desire to shield Jesus that made Peter act as he did, but that the shock of the terrible calamity which had overtaken the man he loved caused a temporary paralysis of his will-power so that he could not control himself either bodily or mentally. He was at a loss what to do or to say, he could not still himself either sitting or standing, he wandered about in great agitation. Alternate waves of fear, of anxiety and of distress passed over him, making him now hot, now cold, causing him now to draw near the fire to warm himself, then to pass out to the porch to cool his mental feverishness. It is all very well to say what one will do should certain

contingencies arise, but to hold one's self to a true course in times of crisis requires strength above mortal, that is, the support of divine grace. This gracious reinforcement was not given Peter in this night of his testing in order to show him what a weak, despicable thing is man when left to himself. He was like a ship off the sea-track with no compass or gear, at the mercy of conflicting elements which drift it now here, now there. The very thing we say we will not do is often the very thing we shall do. Nothing more proves the existence of an almighty God than our inability to carry out our intentions, even though we bend ourselves to the issue before us with all our might. God's people are constantly bumping against predestination, constantly running against obstacles they cannot undermine, overscale nor evade. Here is the standing-still place where they must await the making bare the arm of omnipotence in their salvation. So it was with Peter. He was face to face with an extremity he had not foreseen, nor ever dreamed of. He had no rule to go by. He was waiting for the Lord, though he knew it not. His agitation proved him at his wits' end. The Lord came to him in that one look of the dear Savior's face, which brought Peter to himself with shame and contrition, causing him to go out weeping bitterly. How strange that the peeling of one's soul down to the bone, so one sees his own hideous nakedness, should be the time that God chooses to manifest his glory and his power. Nothing of self and all of God must be the acclaim that swells upward to the glory of God. If a man ever saw his own soul naked and unadorned in all its depravity and shame, Peter so saw himself that night. The look from out the face of Jesus made him slink away like a criminal from the convicting hand of fate. Unlike the criminal, though, Peter became his own accuser and needed none to sentence him, for he doubtless sat in judgment on himself, and without mercy at that. Whether we have thoughts, they shall fail; whether we have power to will or to act, to go or to remain, all shall fail. But the constancy of faith which God alone produces shall never fail. Peter found himself that night to be a miserable failure, but he also found Jesus to be a constant friend, despite the shameful denials of his fickle disciple. We must remember that faith did not fail even though the man failed, for Jesus had prayed for Peter that his faith fail not. Underneath, therefore, all that nakedness and turmoil of soul which Peter endured, was the constancy of that God-given faith which buoyantly rose to the surface and brought Peter to himself when the Savior looked at him. After all, what a strange and turbulent battleground is man's soul! What passions and emotions, hopes and fears, anxieties and distresses sway back and forth on that battlefield, and yet there is never a doubt as to the issue, though long the decision seems delayed. Jesus has gained the victory, and truth shall never know defeat. The poor victim may be flayed and tortured, but the devil shall never wholly possess, for he is bought with the incorruptible price of Jesus' own precious blood. Some think that Peter's behavior that night shows him to have been a weak character naturally, but this is folly. Philosophers may talk about characters being weak or strong, but, spiritually, all human character is weak, for all of it is sinful and depraved. Peter was no more sinful than any other sinner. All alike are weak when without the grace and Spirit of God. Stephen's attitude was glorious

when, as he was being stoned to death, he prayed: Lay not this sin to their charge. But must we credit Stephen's sublimity to his being naturally a stronger and nobler character, for instance, than Peter? No, never. Naturally, we believe Stephen to have been just as Peter—no difference. The difference is to be accredited to the grace of God, and not to any inherent distinction between the natures of the two men. Had Peter been fortified, as was Stephen, by the angel of the divine presence, he would have been as loyal, but it was the will of God that Peter should be stripped in soul in order to experience a conversion from self-confidence very essential in one called to preach the gospel. We have no record of Peter ever denying his Savior afterward, and we have not the slightest doubt but that Peter many times afterward, when in much greater personal danger, held true to the line of his faith without wavering, never giving thought to his own personal safety. When we remember the wonderful sermon Peter preached at Jerusalem at the Pentecostal season, and that not so many days after his denial of Jesus, we can scarcely believe this bold and fearless preacher to have been the same individual so woefully wrought up but little earlier. This shows how grace does produce quietness and strength of soul even in the face of great extremities. Then, too, let us not overlook the fact that Peter, though again and again warned by Jews not to preach in the name of Jesus, boldly declared the word of God nevertheless, little caring what happened to him so long as he felt he was obeying God rather than men. Even though he was beaten for preaching, yet he rejoiced that he was counted worthy to suffer shame for Jesus' name. We can hardly realize this to be the same Peter who thrice denied the man he loved, yet it is the same; yes, the same so far as the man goes, but now we see the man fortified and uplifted by a holy faith and confidence, where before he was left to his own devices and suffered a miserable defeat. This ought to warn us over and over again to place no confidence in ourselves nor in any man. Let our confidence be in the Lord our God. L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Ann Eliza Ratliff, beloved and faithful helpmeet of the late Newton C. Ratliff, was born unto Elder Samuel and Nancy Jones, late of Sharpsburg, Ky., Sept. 12th, 1842, and departed this life at the home of her son, Omer M. Ratliff, and his wife Nancy, in Sharpsburg, Ky., Feb. 17th, 1918. She was married to Newton C. Ratliff in 1862, to which union were born four sons: Omer M., William J., Allie B. and Roland J. Her husband and youngest son preceded her to the infinite and blessed beyond some years ago. Sister Ratliff had been a member of the church at Bald Eagle for many years, and her life was in true and faithful accord with what must have been a good confession, to have obtained the lasting fellowship in which she walked among the saints, and by which she firmly held their confidence and love. In the doctrine of salvation by grace she confided with peculiar simplicity. Her life and conversation were a constant confession of the mystery of godliness, and while she did not feel to understand it, and at times feared she knew nothing about it, yet it was to her a strong tower and her citadel. She was a comfort and strength to those of like precious faith, and will be greatly missed in the home and in the meetings for the worship of God. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES lay on the shelf with the Bible, as she was for many years one of its constant readers. For many years sister Ratliff had been a great sufferer, the cause for which finally prevailed and she passed away in the blessed assurance of that victory which overcometh the world, even the faith which had sustained her through all the years of the pilgrimage to which she had been assigned in this life. While she was strong in the faith, giving glory to God, she also confessed weakness in the flesh. Like her blessed Redeemer, she had a will to evade the ordeal of death, and yet there was that greater will prevailing and confessing that the will of God be done. While these characteristics are common with and peculiar to the saints of God, which render their death precious in his sight, yet I love to dwell

upon them in discoursing to the individual memory of the departed.

Thirty years ago I served this church as pastor, and have been nominally so held by them ever since. I was called and spoke to the sorrowing relatives, brethren and friends gathered to do for her the last sad service in this life, and our hearts were greatly comforted as we thought upon the things which had been held precious by her, as in a blessed and abiding assurance of realities in infinite glory we committed her to the faithful keeping of Him who raiseth the dead. P. G. LESTER.

Richard Harris Boaz was born August 7th, 1845, and died April 16th, 1918, aged 72 years, 8 months and 9 days. He was married to Tennie Slayden Nov. 10th, 1867, and raised a family of six boys and one girl, all of whom are living and were with him at the time of his death. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church in 1869, was ordained as minister in 1871, and was known extensively among the Baptists as an able minister of the Predestinarian faith, in which he believed and loved until his death. Just a short time before his death I asked him what he thought of the doctrine of salvation by grace, which he had so long earnestly contended for. He said he still believed and loved it, and that it was his hope, and he felt sure it is through the love and mercy of God we are kept in this world and saved in the one to come. Father had been afflicted with heart trouble for several years prior to his death, but he continued to go among the Baptists and contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints until a short time before his death. He was a kind and faithful husband, a loving father, and we all miss his presence and counsel. He had traveled over most all the United States and had made trips to Canada for the love of Zion and the great cause he contended for, and of course we know he will be missed by the Baptists he so loved. Father was highly esteemed by those who knew him for his honesty and fairness with his fellow-men, always exhorting his children and others to be honest and truthful; in all things to do right, because it was right to do so. He was indeed a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and it seemed that the greatest burden was the late trouble among the Baptists in this part of the country, and he spent many of his last days writing and exhorting his brethren to beware of false doctrine. Many other things could be said in regard to his life, but he objected to notoriety while living and wished to be regarded as a plain God-fearing and God-loving man when he died. We feel to know he is at rest.

His funeral service was held at Boaz Chapel, the church he so long served as pastor, conducted by Elders Prince and Kerley, who referred to him as a father in Israel, and as having fought a good fight, kept the faith and now at rest.

L. A. BOAZ.

Mrs. Laura May Ball Harsh was born west of Hopkins, Mo., Nov. 23rd, 1871, and departed this life Feb. 1st, 1918, aged 46 years, 2 months and 8 days. She was united in marriage to Lucius W. Harsh June 10th, 1913. She united with the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church when quite young, and was baptized by the late Elder R. M. Simmons, and had been a consistent and faithful member ever since. She leaves her husband, three half-brothers, one half-sister and a host of friends to mourn their loss. Sister Harsh was a woman who was well thought of by her neighbors and all who knew her. She expressed her trust in her Savior to a number who called upon her previous to her death. Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to the bereaved husband and other near relatives in this time of sadness and parting.

The funeral services were conducted Sunday afternoon at the home east of Hopkins, by Elder C. J. Carmichael, of Pickering, Mo., assisted by Mr. R. R. Watts and several singers from the Hopkins Baptist choir. She had requested before her death that her pastor, Elder C. C. Moore, of Clarksdale, Mo., conduct the services, but he was unable to come. The body was laid to rest in the Hopkins Cemetery. May we be enabled to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

L. B. MOFFITT.

Mrs. Sallie E. Lowe was born April 2nd, 1845, and died Jan. 24th, 1918, aged 72 years, 8 months and 8 days. Sister Lowe was baptized at Rock Springs Church Jan. 31st, 1875, by the late Elder Wm. Grafton. Too much cannot be said of our dear sister, who has passed beyond the realms of this vale of tears and sorrows. Her disposition in mortality was in comparison to sunshine on a balmy June day, and kindness seemed to be paramount in her nature, not only to her most intimate Baptist brethren, but to all who came in contact with her. Patience and faith were among the many virtues of her character or being. She could not do enough to entertain her many brethren during association times, and the writer on his first trip to the eastern associations at Baltimore was entertained the whole time by dear sister Lowe, and on the second visit north remained with her family for two nights. She was strong in the faith as it is in Christ, and constantly lived in hope of life in Christ, always at meeting when possible and ever ready to minister to the care of the brethren when sojourning in her vicinity. The evening before she passed away she requested to be sung for her, "All hail the power of Jesus' name," showing that Jesus was on her mind and her all in all. She loved to hear the word preached. Less than two years ago she attended yearly meeting at Welsh Tract. She was an affable and congenial companion, and lived a truly consistent christian life as nearly as it is possible for mortal to live.

I was providentially hindered from being in attendance at the funeral of sister Lowe. The day she was laid in the earth a terrible blinding snow storm visited this section of the country and prevented me from leaving home. I am told by friends through correspondence that a chapter of holy writ was read, a hymn sung, and her remains were safely conducted to Rock Springs Cemetery and laid away. Her spirit has returned to God who gave it. "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep."

Sister Lowe was a daughter of David and Dorcas Durham, born in Harford County, Md. She leaves one daughter to mourn her absence: Mrs. Edward Dawson, of Rising Sun, Md. She raised Ida Brown from a small child, who mourns her death equally as much as her daughter.

JOHN G. EUBANKS.

Maud Adkins, wife of Loyd Adkins, died March 14th, 1918, of consumption, which affliction preyed upon her mortal body for over six years, causing much suffering, which she bore calmly to the last. She told her husband not to grieve for her, she was ready to go. I can say of the dear departed one that she was an industrious and kind companion to my dear grandson, who has my heartfelt sympathy, for before he could recover from this trial he had to be plunged into this cruel war. He, with another dear brother, has to go this month. I can only trust in the all-wise sovereign Ruler, who gave him existence in this world, knowing he can care for him body and soul.

ALSO,

Mrs. Mary M. Adkins, wife of George W. Adkins, died April 14th, 1918. Her sickness was of short duration, only about two days and nights; it was thought to be acute indigestion. She was 70 years old March 29th. Her dear brother told me she desired to die before he did. She also desired that her illness might be of short duration, and if it were the Lord's will she would like to die before her sons had to leave her and their families. She leaves four sons and three daughters, several grandchildren and many other near relatives and friends to mourn their loss, but none will mourn as her family, and especially my poor old brother, her dear companion. I can say of her that she was much more to me than a sister-in-law: she was a dear lover of the truth as it is in Jesus. I have felt for years that she was my spiritual sister. I feel to hope that I am not far behind her, that I, too, can soon go home.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

A. L. Harrison was born in the State of North Carolina, near the town of Raleigh, May 20th, 1846, died Dec. 22nd, 1917, making his stay on earth 71 years, 7 months and 2 days. He moved with his parents to Obion County, Tenn., in the year 1857, and lived continuously, I am told, upon the same farm until death. He was married to Miss Millie Walker Feb. 17th, 1885. To them was born one son, who is a man of more than ordinary ability, and, with his wife, seems to take pleasure in caring for his mother. Brother Harrison united with Cane Creek Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Church, in Obion County, Tenn., and was baptized June 28th, 1903, by the late Elder W. I. Carnell. It can truly be said that brother Harrison's house was a home for his brethren and friends. He lived only a short distance from the meetinghouse, and he and sister Harrison took great pleasure in caring for the hosts that visited them. The writer was called over the long distance telephone, and in connection with his pastor, Elder Prince, tried to preach what is called a funeral discourse to the many sorrowing brethren, sisters and friends gathered at Cane Creek meetinghouse, after which kind friends laid his body away in the silent grave to await the second coming of the Savior.

May God's blessing rest upon sister Harrison and brother Harrison's many brethren and friends.

H. N. OLIVER.

Mary Long Allison was born June 11th, 1833, in Fulton County, Ill., and died April 20th, 1918, aged nearly 85 years. Early in life she moved with her parents to Iowa. She was married to J. P. Allison Dec. 8th, 1850. Eleven children were born to them, all of whom with her husband, except two girls and three boys, have passed away. Tabitha Buckner and Robert Allison only being present at her funeral. Sister Allison's illness was of short duration, and she suffered no pain whatever. She united with the Old School Baptist Church in early life. She was the wife of Elder J. P. Allison, one of the pioneer ministers of the west, and was a most discreet and patient christian woman. She certainly proved her faith by her works.

I was called upon and officiated at her funeral, which occurred in the town of Sherwood April 22nd, after which she was laid beside her husband.

WM. J. REEVES.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Levin Hastings, Del., $1.00; Mrs. G. E. Anderson, Va., $.50; Mrs. J. A. Turner, Texas, $2.00; L. Z. Ross, N. Y., $1.00; Josephine Culpepper, Texas, $3.00; W. N. Cullen, Ky., $1.00.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER W. B. MCADAMS has changed his address from Dentsville, S. C., to Jonesboro, Texas, Route 4.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, of New York city, deplores the necessity for withdrawing her invitation to the Warwick Association to hold its annual convention in this city next June. War conditions have developed difficulties so hard to overcome that it seems impossible to insure the satisfactory entertainment of visiting members and friends.

CYRUS RISLER, JR., Church Clerk.

MEETINGS.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will hold its session with the Church at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 29th, 30th and 31st. Those coming from Philadelphia on Wednesday morning will be met at Southampton station, train leaving Reading Terminal 9:23. Those coming from New Hope inquire at Ivyland station for Wm. Hobensack.

WM. HOBENSACK, Clerk.

THE Middleburg Old School Baptist Church will, Providence permitting, hold her yearly two days meeting on Saturday and Sunday, June 1st and 2nd, 1918. A cordial invitation is extended to ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

THE Lord willing, there will be a meeting held with the Beulah Old School Baptist Church in their meetinghouse near Aberfeldy, Ontario, the third Saturday and Sunday in June (15th and 16th). Conference and business meeting 4 p. m. Saturday; preaching on Sunday 11 a. m. and 3:30 p. m. usual time. All are welcome who desire precious love and fellowship to abound in the church of Jesus Christ.

ARCHIE McALPINE, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Ingleside, N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting, the Lord willing, for Saturday and Sunday, June 29th and 30th, 1918. Those coming from the east or west on the Rochester Branch of the Erie or D., L. & W. R. R., will be met at Atlanta station Friday, 28th, by writing to Mr. Harvey Graves, Nelson Nichols or Riley Prester, R. F. D. 7, Naples, N. Y. Those coming on the Lehigh Valley R. R. will be met at Naples, N. Y., by writing to Mr. Silas Drake, R. F. D. 27, Naples, N. Y. Place of meeting five miles from either station. All who come will be made welcome.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SEMMA E. CORDER,
PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1918. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD AND THE GRACE OF GOD.

In using the word "providence," I understand it to mean the foresight and care which God exercises over his creatures pertaining to their earthly life. In using the word "grace," I am referring to that holy principle of free favor which is infused into the heart of a child of God, which encourages him to hope in the Lord. I am inquiring into the final result of God's provision for his people here on earth, and shall ask a pertinent question: Does God provide and bring to pass all the earthly enjoyments, reverses and spiritual privileges which he foresaw must come to pass for the benefit of his children? I answer, Yes. God, the heavenly Father of his children, most assuredly provides for his children in all things needful all the days of their lives that are spent upon this earth. God being all-wise, there can be no doubt about his ample provision in carnal things for every vessel of mercy. This being true, it is just as true that his provision of grace is certain, without fail, to reach every one of the "elect," though he be isolated from hearing the servants of God proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ. In the face of the above assertions as my belief, I am often inquiring of myself, If the Old School Baptists are the Lord's people, why do we find only a few of them in the cities? Is there a scarcity of the grace of God in the cities, or is the providence of God slack there? Does God arrange his providential changes among the children of men so that all his people at some time of their lives have one or more opportunities to hear the vocal sound of the gospel? These questions have come up in my mind for many years. In regard to the certainty of God calling his people by the power of his grace, I cannot doubt, from the light of the testimony of the Word; that their holy calling is manifested to them at the exact appointed time, and the surrounding circumstances in their lives which have seemed to lead them to inquire of the way of salvation, are all ordered of the Lord. A late editor of a secular paper, in speaking of his publisher, said: "He is as positive as a Hardshell Baptist preacher." I believe it to be true that the Old School Baptist preachers are a positive set of men when they are speaking of the way of salva-

tion, for they all say that that way is paved by the grace of God. If these ministers of the Lord "which shew unto us the way of salvation" (Acts xvi. 17,) are positive, is not their Lord more firm and positive than they? The certainty of God's call dropping into the hearts of every one of his people is secured by the everlasting Surety. The positiveness of that call is also secured by God's promise, for he is not "slack," but "willing that all [his people] should come to repentance." When God is willing that anything should be done, it is done. Neither men, angels, devils nor any power can change the will of God. It is nonsensical, it is idolatrous, to say that God may be willing for a thing to transpire and yet it will not be done because men will not let God do it. Such words of men charging God with weakness is the worst kind of blasphemy, yea, the highest degree of it. How can the children of God bear with indifference to hear that their heavenly Father and their Savior, the Lord Jesus, is made helpless in the hands of men? Such language as it used at many public places of worship where the works of men are worshiped is not to the praise of God any further than the wrath of man, which shall praise him. Those unholy words, if true, would dethrone the King of kings and place the devil on the throne of the highest power that exists. We rejoice that it is a well known fact that the devil and his power over the saints was destroyed long years ago, when the First-born of every creature rose a conqueror over all his foes and brought life and immortality to light. I am positive in some things that I have said, because the Scriptures have declared them. Without Scripture testimony I am weaker than water and poorer than the publican who went up into the temple to pray. May we rest well in the promise of God, that he will bring the blind by a way that they have not known, and that he will lead them in paths that they have not trodden, making darkness light, placing their feet upon that mighty Rock, Christ Jesus, establishing their goings, putting the new song of deliverance in their mouths, an everlasting song. Having believed the doctrine of the one way of salvation, by grace, for fifty-eight years, and been a member of the Old School Baptist Church for more than fifty-seven years, in a sense I feel to say that the Lord has strengthened me to be bold when opposed by the enemies of the truth, all these years. How wonderful has the providence of God been to me, a poor sinner, all my days! In my youth he snatched me from the grave, immediately he gave me the vigor of life, clothed my bare bones with healthy flesh; he has preserved my life beyond threescore and thirteen years with strength of body and activity of limbs that far exceed the average man of that age, which is a marvel to my fellow-citizens. Surely if the Lord would fill my heart and mouth with praises to him I sometimes feel that I would like to let them go forth.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

CLAREMORE, Okla., March 27, 1918.

CLAREMORE, Okla., April 24, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—After reading the Scriptures for sixty years I have tried to find the exact status of a child of God while he is on the earth. On one hand I have thought many times that I had succeeded, while I have on the other hand miserably failed, so that my thoughts were confused and I concluded that after all I knew but little about it. In early life I thought that after years of study

and preaching I would "grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth," so that in old age I would be skillful in handling the testimony of the Word. I have learned to know so little that some things which seemed easy for me to comprehend years ago are now deep mysteries. I am not complaining for the lack of faith in believing in the grace way of saving lost sinners from under the law of sin and death, but to understand the different attitudes that the children of God as sinners and as saints stand in the light of the Scriptures. These different positions are pointed to by doctrine and by the experience of patriarchs, prophets and the apostles. Turning to the epistle to the Romans, there seems to be some things hard to be understood. Peter, himself an apostle, admits this to be the result of his reading, yet he does not reject them, but considers Paul's writings as part of the Scriptures. Peter was certainly liberal toward his brother Paul in placing his writings along with "the other Scriptures." I presume that Peter did not fully comprehend all of Paul's teaching, yet he condemned the unlearned for wresting them from their true meaning as they did the other Scriptures "unto their own destruction." There are at least four places in Romans where Paul says that his hearers are made free from sin, and declares them to be under grace, and not under the law. Also he tells the Galatians that they are not under the law. These are positive assertions, and seem not to depend upon any contingencies. Freedom from sin through the obedience of Christ cannot mean perfection in the flesh, but must mean their freedom from the law of sin and death and free from the sting of death, which is the band that holds all the nonelect forever in the grasp of death. "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."—Romans vi. 18. These words were fully adapted to the saints in Rome that were beloved of God. These words must be fittingly appropriate to all saints everywhere, for what can be the difference in saints anywhere, or in any age, except in their walk? However, the saying will always stand good that the saints of God were made free from sin, and they shall always remain free from sin by the body of Christ. There is a sense in which they are dead, which makes them free from sin. Paul says that he that is dead is freed from sin. Making argument to suit the application, it would imply that death, in the sense used by the apostle, is absolving, or separating us from our sins "as far as the east is from the west." If these believers are free from the law by the body of Christ, and no more under the law, but under grace, why are they tormented with the lusts of the flesh in their daily life? Can it be possible that they are free from sin, that they cannot sin, and yet are sinners? O what a contradiction! Free from sin, but sinners. Can any one believe such flat contradiction without faith? Faith alone must lead us along to comprehend the saints' standing in Christ, when as a Lamb slain they stood in him and fell with him in death, but being raised up together with him and made to sit together with him in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, for the glorious purpose: "That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." The law could see them in Christ, it was satisfied; it did not nor could not bring any charge against God's elect, for it is Christ that died. They are now free from sin by the body of Christ, therefore there is no con-

demnation that can come against the elect of God, for in the sight of high heaven they are doubly freed from sin; no sin written on high against any of them. They are free, clear as the moon, bright as the sun and terrible as an army with banners. In Romans viii. 1, 4, there seems to be a contingency implied in regard to condemnation: "Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Is this conditional, or is it declarative? I have thought many times that the language was conditional, that the freedom from condemnation depended upon the walk. Or shall we infer that there is more than one condemnation implied, or just two, eternal and temporal? Further reading in verse thirteen would seem to indicate that the foregoing summary is correct, as stated in this verse: "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Going back to the second verse we find a positive declaration: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." So positive is Paul in this verse that he has expressed it in one breath sentence. This freedom is given by the power of God through his Son, for, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." For they that are after the Spirit do mind the things of the Spirit, so "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." They do walk after the Spirit, for they are led by the Spirit, and in their minds they do themselves serve the law of God and are Christ's free men, for, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Appealing to John for evidence of the purity of a child of God, or of a child born of God, I find that he is just as positive as Paul: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."—1 John iii. 9. The same writer also said: "Whosoever sinneth hath not seen him [God or Christ], neither known him." Again: "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning." In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: "Whosoever doth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." It seems that John has drawn the line distinctly between believers and unbelievers, and do I understand him properly? Can it be possible that a child of God can sin, and yet be a child of God? Is there any mercy from God for one who has tasted of the heavenly gift, if he shall sin? Can there be any allowance made for a poor erring wretch who has sinned, if he has the love of God in his heart? The same writer did say that there was a sin not unto death. From this we can get a little comfort for the shortcomings of a poor, weak believer, even from John, "the beloved disciple." John even goes further, and would seem to almost contradict his own teaching, which I have been considering in a previous chapter; hear him say: "If we say [believers, or saints] that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."—1 John i. 8. Also: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Here is a clear confession that the children of God in some sense can and do sin. This testimony is convincing, coming as it does from the writer, who said concerning the man born of God, "He cannot sin." Having pointed toward the great height

that John was pointing out to the beloved of God, I feel that I am not doing violence to his testimony when I say that it must be an evident fact that he that is born of God in his mind is no sinner, call him what you may in that sense. Paul was not afraid to say, So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin. The mind is I myself, as well as the flesh is I myself. The child of God is pure in the sense that the sting of death is forever obliterated, impossible to ever come against him. But we shall be delivered from the bondage which causes us to sin, lusts of the flesh, evil thoughts, besetting sins, our iniquities and our secret sins. There is a day of deliverance: "Because the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." "The creature itself" must mean something in relation to our earthly state, life or being. We are waiting for the adoption, it shall come, and be glorious, too; this is what all the saints are hoping for. Now we see through a glass darkly (in a dark manner), but then we shall see face to face and know even as we are known.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

CLARKS SUMMIT, Pa., Dec. 10, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find two letters, one from sister Kinney, and one from brother Simmons, which you are at liberty to publish if you wish; they are both good.

Yours,

D. M. VAIL.

BRANTFORD, Ontario, April 1, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—Yours of March 14th at hand, and I am glad to know you are in good health, and contemplate visiting Canada, and Brantford April 22nd (Sunday). There have been some changes in the time of trains here on account of the war, but if there is any change regarding the train you hope to reach here by I will send you a card. We were pleased to receive your kind letter. No one knows how helpful such letters are to one in trial but those who are passing through trial. No words can express the strain upon our minds and spirits which we have been passing through for months past, and so far as we can see there is no end in sight; in many respects the outlook seems darker and darker as the months pass, nation after nation is more affected day by day, until it looks as if the whole world will be drawn into this war of wars. I fully expect that before many days your own country will be in the thick of it, even if they are not now. I dread the thought of it, and were it not for the faith given to behold Him who rules the world, and who knows the end from the beginning, how could we withstand the strain? I think when you were here we had just received word that our son John had returned to France after his sickness, and has been in the very thickest of it since December 2nd. We are glad his thoughts are for us, as well as ours for him; he writes us every week, and sometimes we get two letters in one week. We received one last evening (March 31st) dated March 2nd, in which he tells us of having been through a battle between February 25th and March 2nd, and came through without being hit, but a number of his friends "went under," as he expressed it. Our hearts go out to God day and night that he may be spared to us, and at times we are led to hope our prayers are heard, and only this morning, when asking for some word of assurance, these words

came to my mind: Have I not brought him through thus far? and of a truth I had to confess none other than a God of love and mercy could have brought him through the fires of battle, with shot and shell falling in every direction. My heart goes out in thankfulness, and says, Bless the Lord, O my soul; and, O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men. If ever there was an age when men ought always to pray and not faint it is now, but instead of doing this my poor soul seems so dark most of the time, until some word comes that even this terrible war must have its purpose, and will accomplish the same, even if the nations of the earth must be destroyed, to destroy the sin in them, and at times I feel that nothing but the coming of the Son of man will stop it, and my heart says, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Truly our ways are not God's ways nor our thoughts his thoughts; as the heavens are above the earth, so are his ways above ours, and so we feel that just as soon as his blessed will is accomplished just so soon will this war stop, and not a moment sooner.

"Sovereign Ruler of the skies,
Ever gracious, ever wise,
All my times are in thy hand,
All events at thy command."

"Plagues and death around me fly,
Till he bids, I cannot die;
Not a single shaft can hit
Till the God of love sees fit."

Nations may rise and fall, one may be taken and another left, and we must but admit it is of the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good; it is not for us, the clay, to say to him that formed us, Why hast thou made us thus? but submit to his molding process until he has accomplished his design. Neither you nor I can or should attempt to frustrate his will. I shall never forget an experience, over twenty-five years since, when we lost our firstborn; how hard our hearts were, how rebellious we got, and questioned God as to why he had done it; and so we went on for weeks, until at last I was called upon to assist at the funeral of the wife of a friend, and the question came, Why not my wife? and I had to confess it was of the Lord's goodness, and according to his purpose, and many times since have I had to confess to the same truth. We try to put the "ifs" and "buts" of man's frail nature against God's omnipotent will and omniscient knowledge, and it sometimes makes great trial of our faith, and at times many heart searchings.

I have written far more than I intended. We note the close call of your son; let us thank God and take courage, he that has brought us thus far shall lead us all our journey through. We are pleased to be able to say that this leaves us in good health.

We had Elder J. B. Slauson, our pastor, with us about two weeks ago, and he preached for us, to our comfort and consolation.

I must now close, with love and good wishes for yourself and family, and hope that a prosperous journey may be given you when you come to Canada.

Yours in Christ's fellowship,

FRED SIMMONS.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., Oct. 14, 1917.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER:—I am sitting here alone, and my mind goes out to you that are gathered at the yellow meetinghouse, where I have been so many times in years gone by, and am wondering how many will be there who were there in those days. I cannot think of one except yourself; but, happy thought,

there will be others who have entered the field in later years, which shows us that our Father will not be left without his witnesses. So his work goes on; yes, none can stop that work, neither can any bring one to know the Lord. O it is a comfort to know that the Lord rules all things after the counsel of his own will, and I wonder why I have been made to know these things; not because I am any better than the rest; I know I was never taught it by man. I would have enjoyed being with you all, and listening to the good things of the kingdom. O what rich provision the Father has prepared for his children; not any lack, neither can the price be raised. This has been a pleasant day for meeting. I presume Everett and wife were there. They are getting around to the meetings, and it will be something they can look back to in after years as I do now. I enjoyed it then, and also now in thinking of it in my old age, for now I cannot go as I did then; but it is not so with you, still you are not as old as I am. I often think of you going around as you have. O what a calling to be called to go forth to feed the flock of God with the rich food, and to think you are not to prepare it, but to hand it out. I do not wonder that the dear undershepherds tremble, feeling they are not fit for so great a work; but one comfort is that you know it is impossible to fit yourself.

Well, I see I am writing another long letter, so will close, hoping this finds you and yours well. Remember me to sister Vail; tell her I think of her very often, and wish I could have another visit with her.

Your sister in hope,

HELEN KINNEY.

KEATON, Ky., March, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Christ says, I and my Father will come unto you and take up our abode, and the world will not know you, but he told his disciples that by their fruits ye shall know them. Except ye forsake yourself ye cannot be my disciple. After the whole heart has been given a sacrifice then we possess this charity, which is Christ, the hope of glory formed in the soul. Then the praise is to God, who quickened us who were dead in trespasses and in sin, who creates within us a pure heart, who gives us of his Spirit, who came to open the eyes of the blind and unstop the deaf ears, and who makes them blind that see (pharisees.) (John ix. last few verses.) He was all the time ready to help the helpless; when in a place where all earthly props fail them, then they can call from the inside, where he looks. Believe on him whom I have sent, is sweet in a believer's ear. Ask to be justified by the blood of Jesus rather than by the works of man. It is said, If this counsel or this work be of man it will all come to nought, but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it. The works of man verily have been overthrown by the works of God, and when these pharisees, which are fair to the carnal mind, or world, offer up their "good deeds" in the last day the Lord will abase them, for they have never been born of the Spirit, and therefore their outward appearance is of no use; their sad countenances and their long faces will have no effect upon the Lord. They accused Christ of being a law-breaker, and we need expect nothing else but that they will persecute us, therefore we can only endure as he did until the time comes when he will say, Come, ye blessed of my Father. They are they which came up from much tribulation. He suffered so

he would know how to succor his. We are tried as by fire. If our faith is never tried we are none of his. By his Spirit we get a foretaste at times, but God's people always have been, and always will be, in this world a sorrowing people, chastisements and afflictions are their heritage, but Paul says, The suffering of this world cannot be compared with the glory of the next. Hope that is seen is not hope; by faith in his holy word we stand through the many storms and temptations. Peter says, When ye do well and suffer for it ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. Things that cannot be cured must be endured. It takes pruning to make the fruit good. We are made willing to bear the stripes that we may be called his sons, and not bastards. All these chastisements are for our good, and to the edifying of one another. We learn obedience by the things we suffer. We grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth by being led by his Spirit, not trusting in phariseeism. He will lead us over rough roads, but we will still trust him. It takes tribulation, chastisements and sorrows to teach us humility. He loves the pure and humble heart. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. As a child expects to get its promised reward from its father when it arrives at the age of twenty-one, so we expect when this vile body (which is sown in corruption) is changed to wear a crown not made by hands; when this tabernacle falls we shall see face to face, and not through a glass darkly. We shall be stripped of this sinful flesh, which grows weaker day by day. We delight in the law of God after the inward man. He that is born of a woman is of but few days and full of trouble. He that is born of God does not commit sin, for the seed remaineth in him. We are commanded to mortify the deeds and lusts of the flesh and bring them into subjection. Let the elder serve the younger. The elder, or carnal mind, is nothing more than a bondman. I do not believe he ever dies until we get rid of this natural life. Our natural desires are stilled when we feel the foretaste which He reveals by his Spirit to his apostles and prophets. We have no more power within ourselves to bring the spiritual seasons than we have to bring the natural seasons. He who pities us as a father pities his child feeds us manna. Christ says, I am the bread that came down from heaven, that a man may eat and never hunger. Christ had a body like ours. Paul was a saint when he said this; he was also a saint when he said, When this vile body is changed. We know that if our body, or even a child's body, were pure, as some false teachers say it is, it could never be vile or sown in corruption. We should not let sin reign or rule in our mortal body; if we fail to bring it into subjection we will suffer as some of the prophets and apostles did. The first man Adam was of the earth earthy, the second man Adam was the Lord from heaven, Christ a quickening Spirit. Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated, and the children not yet being born, the Lord loved Jacob, who was a figure of the inward man; he hated Esau, who was a figure of the outward man, or natural man, that is born of a woman. He blessed Esau, and so he blesses our natural lives, but I cannot believe the natural, or carnal, works of man will ever worship God. It seems that Paul had confidence in the flesh before he received the Holy Ghost; he then was living the very straightest of a pharisee life, but when it pleased God to show him he did not seem to have any confidence in the flesh; he delighted in the law of God after the inward man; he also said, I am carnal, sold under sin. Adam was not born in sin and shapen in iniquity like his children; by his transgression sin en-

tered into the world, and by sin death came. I never have been able to find where Christ ever took sin out of the flesh, like some say, he only condemned it in the flesh. If we obey the lust of the flesh and the gods of the world we are not led by his Spirit, therefore we are not his sons. He chastens his people for their disobedience, as he did Saul. He destroyed them for murmuring in the wilderness, but he blessed them for his own name's sake and kept them as the apple of his eye. His love is stronger for his people than their parents' love. They may pierce themselves through with many sorrows, but the goodness of God will lead them to repentance. If ye are without chastisement ye are bastards. He commands them to look to him and love him, instead of other gods or the cunning craftiness of men. I believe he loves a disobedient son better than a self-righteous one. Christ loved the sinner better than the pharisee who was continually finding fault with God's people; he loved the sinner but hated sin. He says that as there were false prophets among the people there shall be false teachers among us. Look out, dear reader, there are more false teachers who have called themselves into the field than ever before; do not stray away after the doctrines of men, but abide in the calling wherein He calls you. If any of you have not the Spirit of Christ you are none of his. Without charity we are nothing. The Lord Jehovah is the strength of Israel, and we all fully realize his words, Without me ye can do nothing.

Dear editors, if you think this worthy of space in the dear old SIGNS you may publish it; if not, all will be well with me.

Your brother, in hope of immortal glory and eternal happiness,

HARRISON McKENZIE.

ACTS III. 12, 16.

"AND when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?" It was through faith in his name (Jesus) that made this man strong, "the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all."

So you see that Peter wanted the people to understand that nothing he could do would make this man walk. He was made to stand and walk through Christ; no power of poor fleshly man could give him this soundness. Peter wanted the praise to go to the Savior, where it belonged, and, dear brethren, it just takes the same power to-day to cause a sinner to walk aright in the footprints of his Savior, and if not aided by that power he cannot even follow; he has to be drawn by the cords of that love of Christ in him to even say, Christ is my Savior. So Christ in us gives us the hope of glory; without hope we would be of all men most miserable. Man without the Spirit or life of Christ in him is a very weak creature, but when Christ is formed in a sinner I do not think it ever leaves him entirely. Of course, through the works of the flesh we often feel in the dark, and cannot do the things that we wish to do. You know we are not free agents, for we are only free when Christ makes us free. All our help spiritually comes from a higher source than a child of Adam. It is a free gift bestowed upon the creature, it cannot be bought with money. Silver and gold will perish, the styles and fashions of this world will all pass away, but the word of God shall never pass away. The word of God is a sure foundation, all others are sinking sand. God is a sure foundation; he is a rest to the weary traveler. We are sure to meet with sore trials in this life, while we are in this fleshly body. Just as long

as we are in this fleshly body we are not at home, but by and by this corrupt body will return to the dust from whence it came, and the Spirit will fashion it after Christ's most glorious body, and then it will soar to its long sought rest. Yes, it will be, Farewell, vain world, I am going home; but we timorous mortals fear to pass away. We must run the race set before us, looking unto God, the author and finisher of our faith; the same faith that made the man walk. Peter could not give the faith to make the man walk. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and without faith we cannot please God, and so the warfare goes on with God's people. Once we had no warfare, because we only knew the carnal side of it, but when the new man came into this lump of clay the warfare began, and now the war goes on. We are coming up through great tribulation, but we hope the Lord will bring us off more than conquerors through him. Salvation is all of the Lord. Yes, all the Lord's people are taught of the Lord. If a man does not have the Spirit of Christ in him he is none of his. Some may say, How do you get the Spirit? That Spirit comes to a sinner as a mighty rushing wind. I knew a man it stopped while walking along the road, and turned the man around and made him say, or think in his soul, My Lord, hast thou visited me? That man had been on a journey of nearly five miles, and all that five miles was spent in deep waters, meditation, pleading, praying, and at that certain place the burden of his soul rolled away. Then there is a spot to such most dear, a spot that will be looked back to as long as life shall last. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hand of the Lord. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The people marveled at Peter, and looked on him as if by his power or holiness he had made the man walk. They thought Peter was doing it all, and they did not understand it was through faith that the man walked, as they had not faith, and could not see beyond the natural eye, and what they saw was not faith. Faith is what you hope for, not see. I have not been long in the fold, and cannot instruct the sheep, but we are told to be always ready to give a reason of the hope that is in us. I was born in the year 1844, so I am getting to be of ripe old age. My sun is going down, and it will not be many years before I yield up my life and return to the clay, and if that Spirit is in me that raised Christ I will be quickened and live on. At death I drop this mortal coil, and, if one of God's chosen children, I pass through the gateway of death to that endless life with all the redeemed; Christ will lose none that the Father gave him.

Dear brother Lefferts, I have so often this long, cold winter thought of you that I feel I must give vent to my hope in God in my poor, weak, stammering way, and hope you will excuse all mistakes, as my education is limited, but of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. Sometimes my cup runneth over with praise to my God, then again it is nearly empty, but still there are a few grains of corn in it. Yes, there are still some grains of corn in the land of the high mountain; a remnant according to the election of grace shall be saved.

I do not think I can be at your May meeting, but if it is the Lord's will, I want to be at your association at the Sideling Hill Church this fall. My mother often told me about taking me when only a babe between three and four weeks old to an association there, and if I am spared to get there it will be a return to that

place after seventy-four years. May the Lord spare me to come. I live alone, and am nearly anchored with rheumatism in my hip. By affliction I am sorely tried, but I must not murmur or complain. There is but one way home to God, all others go astray. Lord, keep us ever in the way, thou art our keeper. We must be kept by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

Well, I must come to a close, for fear I weary you. May God bless us and save us with an everlasting salvation through Christ.

Your weak old brother, in hope of a better life beyond this vale of tears,

R. M. BROWN.

MOUNT UNION, Pa., April 10, 1918.

RULEVILLE, Mississippi.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Who calls men to the work of the ministry, and what is the object thereof? "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." "There were in the church that was at Antioch, certain prophets and teachers. * * * The Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." Who did the Holy Ghost tell to separate, or set apart to the ministry (what we commonly call ordaining), the church or the prophets and teachers? Surely this question will be easily answered by all who have been taught of the Lord, irrespective of literary attainments. When God calls one to preach the gospel, he preaches the gospel. I have known four different men called by as many different churches to preach for them, who tried to preach from thirty to fifty years, who never preached the gospel of God our Savior (they were fairly good deacons). The prophets were men chosen of God, and not of national Israel. The prophets spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and not as national Israel dictated. Paul told the preachers of his time to feed the flock of God over which the Holy Ghost made them overseers (and not the church). Paul says, "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Jesus did not tell Peter to make, or try to make sheep, but to feed them. There is no worldly inducement to be a minister of the gospel. Paul told Timothy to be a partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, and not to be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord; he also said that the Holy Ghost had made known to him that bonds and afflictions awaited him in every city that he entered. There have always been false prophets and false teachers in the world, and I reasonably suppose always will be, who if possible would deceive the very elect. No doubt many have been deceived, and thought, as did Paul when he was persecuting the church, that they were doing God service. There is no doubt but a man can learn the letter of the doctrine of God our Savior and be extolled by the ignorant, and even hold debates and be pronounced victorious, who never knew the Lord. A parrot can be taught to say, I am a Primitive Baptist. The magicians could command that their rods be transformed into serpents, and it was so, but Moses' serpent swallowed them, or the rod that Moses commanded. Even so Satan can command, and be obeyed, that his ministers be transformed as ministers of righteousness, but their end will be according to their works. Great is the mystery of godliness. The church of Christ is the

only organized authority on earth to keep house for God. God's ministers are servants of his church, and while this is the case, the church on earth is not infallible. Witness the seven churches of Asia. When they go wrong, or err in discipline, they have a perfect right to reconsider and set at naught former errors, one conference rescind the action of a previous conference. "Who maketh thee to differ from another? or what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" If then you received it why boast? The stars of heaven differ in glory. God is a God of purpose, and works all things after the counsel of his own will; he has suffered false prophets and false teachers to be mixed up with his people in all ages. Some things we believe and feel sure are true, but we do not know why. If it had been the purpose of God he could have chosen his people of such as were out of reach of persecution, instead thereof he tells us by divine inspiration that they that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, and again, Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth, and if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

JAMES M. SIMMONS.

DRAIN, Ore., May 21, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I see my subscription for the dear old SIGNS has expired, and I feel that I cannot do without it, for every paper is a feast of fat things to my poor hungry soul. I read it and pass it on to my dear children and brethren who are not able to take it, for they enjoy reading it as much as I do myself. I often wonder why my poor unprofitable life is spared so long, but I think that is questioning God.

"Not Gabriel asks the reason why,
Nor God the reason gives;
Nor dares the favorite angel pry
Between the folded leaves."

I feel to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, yet the flesh is so weak I murmur and complain over my fate in this life, and am filled with doubts and fears. I often think the reason I am left so long in this world of sin and sorrow is because I am so full of sin it takes longer for the dross to be consumed. The Lord has taken away all of my father's and mother's family of twelve except me, and I am older than any of them were when they passed away to a happy world above, as I hope. All things are known to our heavenly Father, who rules both heaven and earth, and none can stay his hand, or say, Why dost thou allow these terrible wars, and the fearful things we are passing through? All is known to him; while we cannot see the outcome, nor what good there can be in all this turmoil, God has a wise purpose in it all. While our hearts are bleeding at seeing our dear boys leaving for the battle front, we know that the Lord is able to protect them, and can teach them to put their trust in him, and in him alone; he is everywhere, and knows all things. How thankful we should be that the people of God are kept steadfast in the faith, while the rebel world of unbelievers have run wild after other gods. O where will all this end?

We still hold our church meetings at my house. My son surely had great liberty last Sunday. It is wonderful how the Lord can enable our ministers to feed the sheep and lambs; it comes as a revelation, and is bread. We who are born of the Spirit can understand the truth when we hear it. O how can any one doubt the all-powerful God?

Well, I am writing too much. I feel I cannot say or do as I would like to. I sometimes feel that my time on this earth is short, and I want all my brethren to know that the Lord has never let me go after the idols of Babel. He has promised never to leave nor forsake us, what more can we ask? Dear loved ones, remember me in your prayers when it is well with you.

Your sister, saved by grace, if saved at all, S. MORNINGSTAR.

LOVELL, Okla., May 2, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have been thinking for some time that I would write a letter for the SIGNS, but can hardly collect my thoughts since I lost my husband the 16th of February, I miss him so much. We had lived together seventy-two years. To-day is his birthday; he would have been ninety-three years old. I will be eighty-eight the 16th of next July. We were married by Elder Shelton Low, in Platte County, Missouri. I united with the Old Baptist Church at Sugar Creek, Buchannon Co., Mo., and was baptized by brother Burris in the year 1847. I often think of the good associations I have attended, and have had them at my own house. I sometimes wish I could hear them all over again. But the dear ones who preached the gospel then are all gone to their reward, and I am only waiting until Jesus calls me to that place which he has prepared for them that love him.

I am sending you the obituary of my husband, and would like for you to put it in the SIGNS, also this letter, if it will not crowd out better matter.

With a heart full of love for you all, I am, I hope, your sister,

MARGARETT JONES.

(*See obituary on page 285.*)

BUFFALO VIEW, Alberta, Canada.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Seeing that I am a subscriber to our beloved SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I thought it proper to announce through our paper our location in this seemingly far off land, and ask any of our faith who may be located in Alberta or Sask to correspond with me. There are about seventeen located within seventy-five miles, and we are anxious to organize a church. Many of God's people live within easy communication of each other for years, not knowing of any being near. Also, I would like to announce to those of our faith who have a mind to investigate this part of the country, that there are opportunities to be found here which are lacking in the older settled districts. Land is cheap; good land from one-half to two-thirds clear ready for the plow can be bought for twelve dollars per acre, one-tenth payment down, no more payment for four years, then the balance in sixteen equal yearly payments. I will be glad to give full details to any of our people who will write me. I have nothing to sell; I am a purchaser of one-half section on these terms myself. I am lonesome.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

G. W. HORNER.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in June (30th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

EXPLANATION.

FOR the last few issues we have received for publication more obituary notices than we have had space for, and have been compelled to leave some out each number, but will publish them all as soon as we can.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1918.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

2 PETER I. 16–19.

"FOR we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts."

(Sermon by Elder H. C. Ker, at the Old Baptist Church, 13th and Jefferson Sts., Wilmington, Delaware, on Wednesday, May 23rd, 1918. Reported by N. A. Rittenhouse. Published by request.)

I have read from the second epistle of Peter, first chapter, verses sixteen to twenty.

I had no thought, and consequently no intention of reading this text to-night, as I thought I had found the subject for the occasion in one of the parables, but I have long since learned that I must use at the time of speaking that which is uppermost in my mind, therefore I have read this text with the hope that it has been given unto the glory of God and for our mutual comfort and upbuilding. In reading the Scriptures and hearing the Scriptures talked about we want to be, if possible, gathered in, to feel in our hearts, in our souls, that we are numbered with those addressed, and that these letters written by the apostles are God's word to us. Paul tells us, that which was written before time was written for us, that through patience and comfort of the Scriptures we might hope. We have the same reason to believe that all the writings of the apostles were written to the same end, that the people of God might have hope. To talk about divine things is one thing, and to feel what one is saying is another thing. To speak to one another is a glorious thing, to be united in love and in fellowship through this blessed gospel of the grace of God that we may be mutually comforted. To that end Paul desired to visit brethren at Rome, and to that end John wrote to the brethren generally, that they might have fellowship unto him, and the apostles declared that their fellowship was with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. These things we need, we must have them in the Spirit-preparation of heart as well as the answer of the tongue. We are not able of ourselves to prepare ourselves for divine service. Each morsel that you have received during this meeting, and each that you may receive during the meeting, will be the gift of God, as he breaks the bread of life unto you. Therefore, we desire in all we say, and in all our songs, to give praise and glory to the Lord of our salvation.

This letter is called the general epistle of Peter. Whether or not Peter when writing this letter knew or felt that these words would be for you or for me I am not able to say, but of one thing we are all sure: God knew, therefore the address of this letter embraces every subject of divine grace throughout the whole

world. It takes in every one who has obtained like precious faith with the apostles through the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus when we know that our faith is of God, that he is not only able to raise the dead (as Abraham believed), but that he verily will raise the dead, it causes us to feel peculiar companionship and fellowship for Peter, the servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God.

We sometimes speak of the sayings of the Old Testament saints, and feel fellowship for them. Job said in his day, I am vile. Perhaps some one may be here tonight who cannot fellowship such an expression. Many of us well remember when we could not, but when divine light enters the heart and shows the evil thereof, that it is nothing short of a nest of venomous reptiles, a cage of unclean birds, we then understand what Job meant when he said, I am vile. Again, the same man said, O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness. Well do we remember when we had not the slightest conception of what Job meant. Perhaps we know better now. Sometimes we make mistakes in quoting Scriptures, often perhaps, and this one in particular. Sometimes we say that Job uttered it thus: O that it were with me as in the months past. His heart and mind were not upon God as in the days of praise, hope and joy, when he felt himself in the presence of God, when the candle shone round about him, and by the light of God he walked through darkness. The light had disappeared, night had taken its place, forgetfulness of God had come instead of remembrance of his goodness and of his mercy, and sin filled his being, instead of praise. Perhaps we know what he felt; we may know more of this experience now than we knew weeks and months and years ago. Job to-day is our companion; it is with him that we doubt, it is with him that we fear, it is in company with him that we walk in darkness. This letter, therefore, being written by Peter, and addressed to all of like precious faith, embraces us with him and the other apostles in the love and in the mercy and in the righteousness of God. Not only does Peter tell us that we have this righteousness of God, and precious faith, but that we have received great and precious promises through which we are partakers of the divine nature. Think for a moment of the sons and daughters of Adam's race, lost, ruined, miserable and wretched, being translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son; being partakers of the divine nature, therefore partakers of God himself, a part of the Holy Spirit, partakers of his life, of his divine nature; and because of this Peter tells us that we should add to our faith virtue, and to virtue temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience kindness, and so on. If these things be in you and abound they make you that you are neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. This adding is simply manifesting, or in other words, as Paul puts it, is working out that which God has wrought in us.

There is nothing in man by nature that can commend him to God; there is nothing by nature in him through which or by which he can approach the throne of grace. He is a vile, polluted enemy to God, a stranger to his covenants. The child of God derives through the merits of Jesus Christ all he has, and all thoughts contrary to the Adamic nature are the gift of God, hence the outcome of

the divine nature. This is not a conditional matter, that if we will do these things we shall be blessed. Peter is simply telling the brethren of God's mercy and of God's goodness and of his power, grace and nature, and the power of God's will to work in them to do his good pleasure. This tree of God, so to speak, is not a barren tree. The tree of life which Jesus represents is a fruitful tree, bearing fruit every month in the year, and the people of God which are a living tree in Christ Jesus are not dead, but alive unto God, living unto good works, alive unto grace, and therefore bring forth the fruits of God's Spirit which are in them: love, joy, long-suffering, faith and patience, against which there is no law. But Peter tells us if we lack these things, that if these things are not manifested, we have forgotten that we were purged from our old sins. How true this is. When God is not working in us to will and to do of his good pleasure; in other words, not working in us to manifest or show forth the fruits of the Spirit, where are our thoughts? Not of God, not of regeneration, not of the redemption in Christ, but of earth and earthy things. Consequently at such times we have forgotten God and all his works of grace and mercy. A man's ministry is not only during his life. A man's works will follow him, a man's example lives after he is dead, a man's words live when by the world he is forgotten. These words of the apostle Peter are living words, therefore we are helped and kept by this gracious and merciful blessing. How well you remember the ministers formerly of this Association, many of whom are now sleeping. How well you remember sermon after sermon, exhortation after exhortation, and perhaps rebuke after rebuke. The words of those men still live, live in your lives, living with you, dead according to men, but living unto God, and as we live unto him and in him we all live together. Then we remember to-day these gracious things said by this man Peter to assure the brethren in his last days that he was an apostle of God, and that the other apostles were called to the apostleship, separated unto the gospel of God. Then he said, We have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. This was not something imaginary; he would not have said these things if they were not true. These things are real facts. All that I am telling you and all that I am writing you, he would say, are living truths, we were witnesses of the majesty of God. There is such a thing as men "preparing cunningly devised fables" in an attempt to please the people, but the apostles never did. The prophets also never did, and often, as you know, the messages of the prophets turned Israel away from them because God had sent his word of reproof, rebuke and judgment. They desired the prophets to speak unto them smooth things. But the prophets ceased not to declare unto them God's word, and the apostles did the same, and because of their faith in God, and in the word, each one of them, with the exception of John, died for the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ; John being the only one of the apostles who died a natural death.

You remember in ancient times when the king had the vision, or dream, of that image that stood before him, he forgot what it was. He was troubled, and could not sleep or rest at night, so he ordered all the wise men of his realm to come before him, and when they were all assem-

bled he told them that he had had a dream and was sorely troubled, and that, therefore, they must tell him the dream and the interpretation thereof. What did they say? Such a thing had never been required by king or man before, to tell something one had never heard of. So they said to him, You tell us the dream and we will tell you the interpretation. The king replied, I know ye have prepared lies (in other words, "cunningly devised fables,") to tell me in order to please me, to satisfy me, as an interpretation of this dream or vision that I have had. If you cannot tell me the dream you cannot tell me the interpretation. So the king ordered that all the wise men of the realm be put to death. Daniel, an Israelite, a captive in Babylon, was told of the king's order. He was reckoned as a wise man, but was not brought in before the king with the others, so far as we have record of, and he was troubled when the news came that all of the wise men in the realm should be put to death because of their inability to tell the king the dream and the interpretation, and he said, If the king will wait just a little perhaps the Lord will tell me this dream, and he went to the Lord by night and asked him to show him the vision and give the interpretation thereof, and the Lord did. Then Daniel was brought in before the king, and after addressing the king he began, O king, in thy dream thou sawest an image. A slight remembrance flashed into the mind of the king, and his countenance began to brighten. Daniel described minutely the vision or image as the king had seen it, and then told him the interpretation. Immediately the king confessed that the God of the Israelites was able to reveal secrets and to give interpretations. So also what the apostles said and wrote about the transfiguration can be absolutely relied upon. Perhaps a man might tell you he had visited a certain place, that he had traveled a certain route, and all that he would tell you in his description of the journey would be correct so far as your knowledge of those things were concerned; but if he describes a way you have traveled, landmarks which you have seen, you know beyond any question that he has been there. I remember hearing a story some years ago of a group of men, rather aged, experienced men, who had traveled more or less, who were describing a certain place and a fountain which some of them had seen in the city of London. One of the party was describing it, and his description was beautiful. Those of the party who had seen it agreed with him. A young man who had been standing a little way off listening and wanting to join the group spoke up and said, You are right about that fountain, it is beautiful in architecture, it is grand in every way. The old man doubted the young fellow, so he said, Can you tell me how many steps there are down to the water? The young man replied, No, I do not remember exactly; eight or ten possibly. The old man said, Young man, you have never seen that fountain; you have not been there; there is not a step about the place. The king knew that Daniel had been with God and had learned of him, and when the apostle tells you these things you know, according to your own life and experience, that he had been with God and learned of him. Therefore, whether these things be reckoned and credited by the wise of the earth to-day, they are believed by the household of faith.

Not long ago I conducted a funeral service in the city of Middletown, and was assisted by a minister of that city.

I used a text by request. During my remarks I made some reference to election, predestination and reconciliation. On Monday following an extract from his Sunday sermon was published in the daily papers: "We believe in new things, we believe in using the vocabulary that Christ used, but we do not believe in building upon what Paul said or what Peter said or what Augustine said, therefore we have no use for the words "reconciliation," "predestination" and "election." No use for these words of the servants of God. What does this mean? Simply this: to cast aside the words of the apostles of the Lord as having no significance at all; simply and merely the words of man, forgetting entirely that Jesus commanded them as his servants to go out in the world and among all nations and testify in his name, to teach what he had commanded them; nothing short or nothing more than the commandments they received from God did they teach or write. Jesus used the word "elect," telling his people if it were possible false teachers would deceive the very elect. It is just as impossible for man, devil or an angel to deceive the heaven-born soul, with reference to the salvation of the sinner, as it is for the same devil, man or angel to make a world. If you have faith in you it is a matter between you and God; no man has dominion over it. If salvation is not through the blood and righteousness of the Son of God there is absolutely no salvation. If sinners are not saved by the grace of God they are forever lost. The only way to God is by his Son, all other ways are wrong. Therefore we have use for the words "predestination," "election," "reconciliation," and all other words pertaining to the work of God in the salvation and calling of the sinner from nature to grace. These words have always been used, they always will be while the world stands. These men knew what they were talking about, and testified only of the things they had seen, heard and felt, that the brethren might have fellowship with them. How do you know that Peter told the truth? Because you have seen the same vision or image that he saw, the transfiguration of Christ; not as he saw it, visibly, in other words, not an eyewitness, but by faith. Faith is the evidence of things not seen. How do you know the things I am telling you are true? Because you have seen the vision I am telling you about. I am telling you of the God you have seen, just as the Indian could say, This is the man I saw in the woods—the glory of a man he had never seen before. After awhile it pleased the Lord to bring him the message of salvation through Christ. Whosoever believes that Jesus is the Son of God has the witness within, or in other words, has life, and that eternal.

When Jesus was transfigured he took three of his disciples with him upon the mount: Peter, James and John. Peculiar as it may seem, he took the same three into the garden with him when he was about to be betrayed, when he sweat great drops of blood, as it were, falling upon the ground. While they were in the mount, when Jesus was transfigured, Moses and Elias appeared, talking with Jesus of his sufferings and death at Jerusalem. Moses and Elias represented the law and the prophets. They testified of Jesus, of his sufferings, and the glory that should follow. These disciples were there as witnesses, and they were afraid and fell upon their faces on the ground. They said, It is good for us to be here. Let us make here three tabernacles, one for Thee, one for Moses and one for Elias.

It is always good to be in the presence of God. Presently a hand touched Peter and a voice said, Arise, fear not, and a voice from heaven said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. What had become of Moses and Elias? They had disappeared, no longer to be seen or heard. What does it mean? Simply that the law and the prophets had finished their work. Jesus, the King of kings and Lord of lords, had come into the earth to reign in righteousness. "Hear ye him." They heard this voice from heaven. Think for a moment of men hearing a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, hear ye him. The prophets in ancient times spake unto the fathers, but in these last days God hath spoken unto us by his Son. It has always been the same voice. It was Christ manifested in the flesh which spoke to them, the apostles, and to-day we are hearing them, and in hearing them we hear the Son of God. This is my beloved Son, said the Father, hear ye him. Therefore this is not a devised fable, but a solemn reality, a wonderful truth. "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts." This is something that we must never give up, never turn away from it. This is a more sure word of prophecy. It was wonderful to behold Christ in his glory; it was wonderful to behold Moses and Elias; it was wonderful to hear the word of the Father, saying, This is my beloved Son, hear ye him. It was most wonderful for a man crucified, dead and buried to live again, yet this has taken place. All nations were dead to God, separated from him by wicked works. Jesus is the gospel of the grace of God; he was offered for our offences, raised again for our justification. We needed more than pardon, sin had to be removed before man could stand in the presence of God, therefore we have received pardon and justification, and in the eyes of the law are as holy as though sin had never entered the world. You want the message of salvation, you want to be gathered in, you want to know that your name is written in the Lamb's book of life; take heed then, think of the gospel, and the resurrection of Christ, and of the resurrection of his people. We live in him, move in him, and in him have our being. This is not a "cunningly devised fable," and well you know it. Peter said, Christ has risen from the dead. Paul did not see Christ in the flesh after the resurrection, but he saw him in spiritual light and in the glory of the Father, and you know that Christ lives, because he lives in you. Therefore when Peter and the other apostles testify of these wonderful things you know they are true, because you have seen Jesus in the glory he had with the Father, and have felt the salvation in the forgiveness of your sins. He is with you at all times, in the darkness as well as in the light, saying time and again unto you, Fear not, it is I. It is our desire, therefore, as the ministers of God to declare unto you the whole counsel of God, that we be free from the blood of all men. As Paul said, I have declared unto you the whole counsel of God, therefore I am free from the blood of all men. When a man preaches as the servant of God, complete salvation in the name of the blessed Lamb of God, declaring unto men God's mercy and power and glory, he discharges his whole duty to God and man. Amen.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Mary Roberts Earle was born in Charleston, Ky., Nov. 26th, 1857, and died at her home March 25th. Mrs. Earle's illness was of short duration, she having contracted pneumonia one week before, thus the announcement of her death was quite unexpected to her many friends. She was married to Dr. Ben P. Earle, continuing her residence in Charleston up to the time of her death. To Dr. and Mrs. Earle were born nine children; four sons and three daughters survive: Dr. E. R. Earle, of Urbana, Ohio, Thomas Earle, of Mattoon, Ill., Irby Earle, of Dawson Springs, Ky., Herndon Earle and Miss Amma Nell Earle, of Charleston, Mrs. W. T. Fowler of Hopkinsville, and Mrs. A. C. King, of Oak Grove, Ky. In her home, now desolate, her deeply bereft husband mourns the loss of the companion of many years; in the homes of her children they weep for the loss of a mother so dear, so noble and true, while her many friends mourn the loss of a friend and neighbor so rare.

The funeral was held at the home Wednesday afternoon, conducted by Elder D. R. Turner, of Cerulean Springs, assisted by Elder Chandler. The sons and sons-in-law were pall-bearers, the body being laid to rest in the Young Cemetery, one mile from her home.

ALSO,

Dr. Ben P. Earle was born in Robertson County, Tenn., April 22nd, 1846, and moved to Kentucky with his parents in early life. His father, Elder Ezros Earle, was a minister of the Primitive order of Baptists for over fifty years. His labors were in Tennessee, Missouri and Kentucky. He was sound in the faith of God our Savior and was a lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He died in 1877, at the age of 77 years. Dr. Ben P. Earle was educated in early life, and practiced medicine in Hopkins County, Ky., for forty-nine years, never changing his home. He was married to Mary Roberts Earle April 22nd, 1875. Nine children were born to that union, two little girls, Georgia Isabel and Dora, dying in childhood; four sons and three daughters survive them. Dr. Earle received a hope in Christ at the age of fourteen years, but did not unite with the church until the year 1890, and was baptized the third Sunday in July of the same year, by Elder J. V. Kirkland. He was a true believer in the sovereignty of God. He was clerk of his church and also his association. He was much beloved by the Baptists, not only at home, but abroad. His seat was never vacant at his monthly meetings when he could be there. His house was a home for the Baptists. Dr. Earle by his industry had accumulated a good property and educated his children, fitting them for their journey through life.

The writer tried to speak to the comfort of loved ones attending the funeral, using these words: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."—1 Cor. xv. 19.

Dear children, your loss is great; father and mother both called away in so short a time. You will rest in the hope of their eternal gain.

D. R. TURNER.

Mrs. Helen S. Knight was born March 18th, 1839, and departed this life April 23rd, 1918, making her stay on earth 79 years, 1 month and 5 days. Her maiden name was White. She was born near Bladenboro, Bladen Co., N. C. She with her father, Wm. White, moved from North Carolina to Alabama, and from there they moved to Scott County, Miss., where she was married to Jackson M. Knight August 1st, 1866. She united with the Antioch Old School Baptist Church July 14th, 1877. She lived a faithful member, and died in the full triumph of living faith. Her dear companion, who was a member of the same church, preceded her to the grave over six years, if I mistake not. She grieved greatly, but never complained, knowing the good Lord doeth all things well. I believe she said in her heart, Thy will, O Lord, and not mine, be done. She had no children, so she made her home with her husband's nephew and his wife. There is a vacant chair in their home which never can be filled. Sister Knight was loved and esteemed by her brethren and sisters as a dear mother in Israel, always giving good counsel and advice. O how we all miss her. She will be much missed in her church, where she was so faithful, always attending when her health and the weather would permit. She has gone from us to that sweet home prepared for the saints, there to bask in the presence of her Lord and King. Surely she has entered that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Her faith in God was strong.

She requested that her beloved pastor, Elder H. A. Sills, conduct her funeral, which he did, and spoke beautifully on the resurrection, 1 Corinthians xv., to a large concourse of sorrowing relatives and friends, after which her body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Antioch by the side of her companion, there to await the resurrection morn. May the good Lord reconcile us to his blessed will.

Written by one who loved her.

ELLA MASSEY.

Lorenzo W. Reed was born August 5th, 1836, in Galion, Crawford Co., Ohio, and departed this life at his residence in Rockford, Floyd Co., Iowa., at the ripe age of 81 years, 8 months and 20 days. He came to Iowa by wagon route in 1855, at the age of nineteen years, with his parents, who settled on government land near Mason City, where he resided until he was united in marriage to Miss Sylvia J. Fellows, which occurred July 3rd, 1860. To that union were born one daughter, Anna J., who died in infancy, and

one son, Benjamin S. There were two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, also one sister, Mrs. Elvira Roberts, of Byers, Colo., the youngest of her father's family, he being the eldest of ten children. His wife died May 3rd, 1909. October 30th he was united in marriage to Mrs. Jennie M. Smith; they had since resided in Rockford. He united with the Little Cedar Church in September, 1892, and was baptized by Elder Nicholas Burch. The funeral service was held at the home Friday afternoon at 2 o'clock, conducted by Mr. Culver, of the Methodist denomination, assisted by the writer. A large concourse of relatives and friends was present.

I had been intimately acquainted with brother Reed for over twenty years, and he was a precious brother to me. I visited him last November; he was then in poor health. We always conversed upon religion, and he related his experience. He had a hope in Christ long before he united with the church. I visited the Little Cedar Church regularly for several years, and he was always in his seat. He was ordained a deacon, and filled the place in every respect. He was a kind father, a good friend and neighbor and respected by all. I will say to those whom he has left behind to mourn their great loss, especially to sister Reed and his son, You have my deep sympathy. May the God of all grace sustain you and reconcile you to his providential dealings while in this life, and when life's journey is ended may he take you to that home where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.

E. A. NORTON.

George B. Russell, our brother in Christ, passed from this life May 29th, 1918, at his home near Waterford, Loudoun Co., Va. We visited brother Russell about ten days before his death. He was very low at that time, but knew us and seemed glad to have his brethren at his bedside. At his request we read a portion of Scripture and tried to speak in prayer. His death came while we were away from home attending the Delaware River Association at Southampton, Pa. We were sorry not to be able to attend his funeral, as it was his desire to have his pastor conduct the services. It seems that God purposed otherwise for some inscrutable purpose we cannot fathom. Brother Russell was born near Markham, Fauquier Co., Va., Feb. 24th, 1834. He was the son of Wesley Russell and Harriet Twittenham. In 1866 he was married to Mary McDaniel, and to them were born eight children, seven of whom are living, five sons and two daughters. One maiden daughter, Miss Alice F. Russell, stayed at home with her father and tenderly and lovingly cared for him through his declining years and last illness. He was baptized into membership with the New Valley Old School Baptist Church several years ago, by the late Elder E. V. White. During the Civil War he served three years in the Confederate Army in Capt. Gus Pfieffer's company. At the battles of Fredericksburg, Barney's Ford and at Gettysburg he served as courier to General Lee. We believe brother Russell is at rest. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace and in the unlimited sovereignty of God. His was a good hope through grace. We wish we could have as much confidence in the genuineness of our own experience as we were confident of his. L.

James S. Jones was born in Rushville, Rush Co., Ind., May 2nd, 1825, and departed this life at the home of his son, C. L. Jones, Feb. 16th, 1918, aged 92 years, 9 months and 14 days. He was united in marriage to Margarett Patton July 30th, 1845, and they lived a happy married life seventy-three years. To that union were born fourteen children, seven boys and seven girls, ten of whom preceded him to the better world. He leaves to mourn his departure his widow, three sons and one daughter: Anderson Clabe Jones, of Denver, Colo., C. L. Jones, of Lovell, Okla., John Jones, of Kansas City, Mo., and Mrs. Mary McKee, of Pickering, Mo. Mr. Jones united with the Baptist Church at the age of eighteen years, and followed Jesus for seventy-five years, having preached the gospel for twenty-five years. Many times he rode on horseback thirty miles to fill an appointment. When a young man he would get a pan of chips and sit before the fireplace and read from the light reflected by the fire until he became a good Bible scholar. He was an able minister, and could truly say as did Paul, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

Mrs. Nora Frances Ross, wife of Mr. George N. Ross and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James F. Figgs, was called away from the sorrows and tribulations of earth, we hope, to the joys of immortality, at her home in Delmar, Md., May 13th, 1918, at the early age of 25 years, 3 months and 28 days. She is survived by her husband and three young children, the eldest, Mildred, being but five years old, George Franklin, two years, and a babe four days old. She also leaves her father and mother disconsolate, now bereft of the last of their children. Nora was a fine woman, a loving, dutiful daughter, an affectionate and faithful wife and a fond mother, filling her station in life faithfully in all that was required of her according to the light that was in her. She never made a public profession of religion, but gave evidence of a gracious work, being a firm believer in the sovereignty of God, saying, "The Lord's will must be done." The bereaved mother writes: "It is hard to say, The Lord's will be done, as both my children have been taken away within four years, but I hope

he will give me strength to bear it. He has all power both in heaven and on earth, and when I am done with what I was put here for he will take me to himself; then my troubles will be over."

It was the wish of the bereaved that I conduct the funeral service, but as I was prevented by other engagements, and there was no other minister of our order in reach, Mr. Rhodes, the N. S. pastor at Salisbury, was called and responded, conducting the service on the 15th, after which she was laid away to await the sound of the last trump.

May the blessed Lord comfort the bereaved husband and children, father, mother and aged grandmother with the consolations of the gospel and hope of a blessed immortality. A. B. FRANCIS.

Phœbe Dance Ensor, the subject of this notice, was born Sept. 21st, 1838, was married to Edward C. Ensor Dec. 22nd, 1864, and departed this life Jan. 11th, 1918. Mrs. Ensor never made a public confession of her faith, but was strong in the faith of the Old School Baptists, and frequently attended their meetings as long as she was able to do so. She leaves two brothers, two sons and three daughters with several grandchildren to mourn the loss of an affectionate sister and devoted mother.

The writer spoke to the sorrowing ones on the occasion of her funeral on Jan. 14th, 1918, when the body was laid to rest until Jesus her Savior shall come and call it forth in his own glorified image. May God bless the sorrowing ones.

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

Rebecca J. Lee, our beloved sister, was born Feb. 26th, 1838, and died March 27th, 1918. Sister Lee was baptized about twelve years ago in the fellowship of the Salem Old School Baptist Church in Philadelphia, Pa. She was a sister faithful and dearly beloved, ascribing all power and glory to her heavenly Father. She was the daughter of Abraham and Rebecca L. Gregg. She was married to William Lee, who died several years ago. Five children were born to them, three of whom preceded her to the grave. Two sons survive her: Clayton H. and Dr. Alfred P. Lee.

Funeral services were held on Friday evening, March 29th, conducted by Elders J. M. Fenton, J. C. Mellott and the writer. On Saturday, March 30th, the remains were quietly laid away in Penn Hill Cemetery, Lancaster County, beside her husband and three children. B. F. COULTER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

John Oliver, Va., $1.00; A. B. Corder, W. Va., $3 00; E. M. Kuehne, N. J., $1.00; W. P. Walters, Md., $.50; James R. Crutcher, Tenn., $2.00; Franklin Terry, N. J., $1.00; Sarah Rittenhouse, N. J., $2.00; Mrs. Sarah F. Gandy, N. J., $.2.00.

APPOINTMENTS.

PROVIDENCE permitting, Elder D. M. Vail will fill the following appointments: Friday, July 19th, 117 South Montgomery St., Trenton, N. J., 8 p. m.; Saturday, 20th, Stockton, N. J., sister Horner's, 2:30 p. m.; Sunday, 21st, Locktown, N. J., 10:30 a. m.; Frenchtown, N. J., 4 p. m.; Monday, 22nd, Grandon, N. J., A. J. Demot's, 8 p. m.

Elder George Ruston will, the Lord willing, preach as follows: Friday, August 16th, 117 South Montgomery St., Trenton, N. J., 8 p. m.; Saturday, 17th, Stockton, N. J., at sister Horner's, 2:30 p. m.; Sunday, 18th, Locktown, N. J., 10:30 a. m.; Frenchtown, N. J., 4 p. m.; Monday, 19th, Grandon, N. J., at A. J. Demot's, 8 p. m.

MEETINGS.

THE Lord willing, there will be a meeting held with the Beulah Old School Baptist Church in their meetinghouse near Aberfeldy, Ontario, the third Saturday and Sunday in June (15th and 16th). Conference and business meeting 4 p. m. Saturday; preaching on Sunday 11 a. m. and 3:30 p. m. usual time. All are welcome who desire precious love and fellowship to abound in the church of Jesus Christ.

ARCHIE McALPINE, Clerk.

THE First Roxbury Church, of the Roxbury Association, will hold a two days meeting at Vega, N. Y., on Saturday and Sunday, June 22nd and 23rd. The Ulster & Delaware R. R. trains will be met at Kelly Corners on Friday evening and Saturday morning. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie, Schoharie Co., N. Y., have appointed a two days meeting to be held Saturday and Sunday, June 22nd and 23rd, 1918, beginning at 10:30 a. m. Those coming from Binghamton and along the line of the D. & H. R. R. will be met at Howes Cave Saturday morning. All coming from Albany will come to Schoharie village Saturday morning and they will be met. All who come will be welcome.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada will hold her quarterly meeting commencing on the fourth Sunday in June, instead of Saturday, as in previous years. The reason for this change is that Saturday, June 22nd, is set for labor registration. Meeting will commence on Sunday at 10 a. m., standard time.

Done by order of the church at our last quarterly meeting.

J. B. SLAUSON, Moderator.
J. T. KERR, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Ingleside, N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting, the Lord willing, for Saturday and Sunday, June 29th and 30th, 1918. Those coming from the east or west on the Rochester Branch of the Erie or D., L. & W. R. R., will be met at Atlanta station Friday, 28th, by writing to Mr. Harvey Graves, Nelson Nichols or Riley Prester, R. F. D. 7, Naples, N. Y. Those coming on the Lehigh Valley R. R. will be met at Naples, N. Y., by writing to Mr. Silas Drake, R. F. D. 27, Naples, N. Y. Place of meeting five miles from either station. All who come will be made welcome.

D. M. VAIL.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m

ALL WELCOME

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

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(Judges v. 11.)

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THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1918. NO. 13.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SALISBURY, Md., June 8, 1918.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I am inclosing a letter written to me by Elder John McConnell nearly eleven years ago, which at that time was soon after I united with the church, and was experiencing great darkness of mind concerning my utter unworthiness, which feeling I have thus far been unable to overcome. Surely of all who have been privileged to have a home among the people of God I am the least worthy of so high a privilege. I do feel that I better understand this good letter now than I did then, yet I have kept the letter as a treasure, feeling that he knew the truth of the matter. I have seen many changes since then, many sharp and trying, yet in the midst of an ever-changing existence I can witness the unchangeableness and faithfulness of our God, and unto him may we be able to ascribe praise, honor and glory through Christ. Amen.

I feel that you will join me in the desire to see this letter in the SIGNS. Your visit here was most highly appreciated.

Your unworthy brother,

F. SELBY FISHER.

NEW YORK, N. Y., August 14, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER SELBY FISHER:—Your letter has been read with interest. It stirred my mind in remembrance of similar questionings and fears of years gone by. The exercise of mind which you think is peculiar to you alone has been mine also. Many and oft are my complaints. "Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none." "And I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the Lord: remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not."—Lam. iii. 18–22. The writing of bitter things against yourself did not, I am sure, suggest the thought: "My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer." Yet that is how I heard you. It is blessedness to be poor in spirit; always delivered unto death; to consider your ways,

and ponder the path of thy feet. Such is the path of the just, as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day; and that perfect day is in the appearing of Jesus Christ, unto the praise and honor and glory of which you will never attain except in the trial of your faith. You have intimated in the past that my understanding of the things concerning Jesus is more discerning than your own, but I have deceived you in this respect. Of all men I know least of the kingdom of God in power. If any sufficiency has ever been given me to speak a word in season to them that are weary, my text, or epistle, has been the life of Jesus as manifest in mortal flesh: that now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ. Great and marvelous are the works of him unto whom all power is given in heaven and in earth. As he is, so are we in this world: by his stripes are we healed. Condemnation of sin, and sense of weakness in the flesh, and insufficiency to do any good thing of ourselves, is the spirit that confesseth that Christ is come in the flesh. Peace which passeth all understanding is given us in the fellowship of chastisement laid upon him. Can it be that fearfulness, trembling, questioning, loneliness and desolation are the heritage of God's people? Is it by these things they live? Is this a new and living way which Jesus has consecrated for us through his flesh? Are we to count the longsuffering of God salvation, and is believing on him that justifieth the ungodly counted unto us for righteousness? Perhaps I am all wrong, but some way there has been joy to me in seeing Jesus crowned with glory and honor in the sufferings of death, and I want to "know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."

But all this is not answering your letter, nor replying to your parting remark of last Sunday. To the latter ("Don't worry about me, I'm not worth it"), I will reply, I am not worrying about you, and do not expect to until you get through worrying about yourself. Your enthusiastic frames and feelings will not comfort me so much as your present travel.

Concerning the third chapter of Malachi, to which you referred in your letter, and which seemed to be against you in some particulars, is there not comfort in the sixth verse? It comforted me as the declaration of God's sovereignty and immutability, and as I considered the goodness, wisdom and mercy of God to the sons of Jacob I rejoiced in the doctrine of election and predestination, for the doctrine of election and predestination contains the whole substance of the gospel. It is a foundation which standeth sure, for it is of God's own laying. Election is his good pleasure in choosing in Christ a special people and ordaining them to eternal life before the world began; and that ordination is the same as preparing, decreeing, predestinating things to come. Eternal life means not only the blessedness of being conformed to the image of God's dear Son, but it means also whatever is necessary to the blessedness, such as effectual calling and perseverance in faith and holiness. Isaiah lxii. 12, sets forth for whom the highway is cast up, and names them, "The holy people," (that is their election) "The redeemed of the Lord: [that is redemption] and thou shalt be called, Sought out, [which means effectual calling] A city

not forsaken" (which means perseverance). As these things are recorded in order, so they fall in order of time; therefore election is called, "a preparing unto glory." They were personally, individually, chosen and called by name, chosen in Christ, so that all the grace and glory they were chosen unto might be righteously theirs and applied to them; and as this choice was before the world began, according to his own good pleasure, that was the root, the motive, the cause of it all. It is a doctrine the heart of man cannot receive or understand. The choosing and naming of Abraham to be the father of the faithful, with the promise that in him all families of the earth should be blessed, was not because of any goodness in Abraham above others; there was nothing in him nor in his wife to induce such a choice. And in the same mind he deals with Abraham's immediate seed. He does not take all of them, but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. Isaac is taken, Ishmael is left. Jacob he loved, but Esau he hated, and the difference was made before they were born, and is entailed upon their posterity. The one, the people of his wrath, against whom he hath indignation forever, their captivity shall not return; when the whole earth rejoiceth they shall be desolate. (Obad. 5, 10, 18; Ezek. xxxv. 5; Jer. xxxii. 41.) But for Jacob, the Lord will bring them back to their own land and plant them, and build them assuredly, and do them good with his whole heart. No worthiness in Jacob procured him the blessing. On the contrary, Esau was far more honest, truthful and sincere than Jacob, and certainly more deserving. How strange, unreasonable and unjust such dealing seems to the natural mind; but it was that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand (the elder must serve the younger); not of works, but of him that calleth. It is wonderful to consider how God ordered all this, for it holds forth to us his sovereignty, his grace in choosing those who are least deserving, the sure effect of his purposes, and the use of things quite contrary in their nature to such use. The people whom God chose in Abraham four hundred years before he publicly acknowledged them are called "an elect nation," as being separated from the rest of the world as an holy, special, peculiar people unto God. We delight to read that this doctrine concerned a people of old, but we rejoice much more in the assurance that this doctrine concerns men now as being unto salvation; that it is absolute, personal and from eternity, and that the election chosen in Christ is founded upon grace. Who shall deny that a certain remnant shall be saved; that some are vessels of mercy afore prepared for glory; that the Lord adds to the church such as should be saved; that as many as were ordained to eternal life believed; that these are the elect, chosen vessels of mercy, chosen out of the world to know the mystery of the kingdom of God? How any one can quibble over the word "absolute" I cannot understand. Election is absolute, because God's decree is irrevocable and he cannot change from his eternal purpose to save his people, and no unworthiness on their part can hinder the accomplishment of his pleasure. And the predestination of all things is absolute, for election predestinates, ordains, prepares and appoints them to holiness and to living soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. If election and predestination are not absolute, then they must be after the covenant of works, which is conditional and cannot be kept. If there had been a

law given that could have been kept, righteousness should have been by the law. The new covenant does more for us than the old, for it gives life, and therefore gives the performance of every condition upon which life can hang. It also shows that the first covenant failed because it was conditional. The law shows us what we ought to do, but it gives no life to perform it. Under this covenant we are without God, without Christ, without hope, because we are strangers to the covenant of grace, or grace of election. If the elect are to be in a better condition than before, their election must be absolute, and that it might be so the new covenant was made with Christ in their behalf, and is that grace given us in him before the world began. It must be absolute, because by such an election only can salvation be assured. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

JOHN McCONNELL.

TORONTO, Ont., April 10, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing a letter which I have recently come across and read with renewed interest. It was written more than five years ago by our highly esteemed brother, Elder P. W. Sawin, whose letters appearing in the SIGNS from time to time have been a source of much comfort to me, and thinking this might be of interest and comfort to others I submit it for your disposal.

I would like to say, dear editors, that words fail to express to you the feeling of satisfaction I had while reading your editorials in March 15th and April 1st SIGNS. I have had much thought in connection with the very things you have written about. My surroundings are such that I seldom hear the true import of scriptural truth, but much is being said and interpreted by the learned clergymen and their followers. They, I believe, have the form of godliness, but deny the power thereof. Elder Ker has well said that Elder Lefferts' admonition was good: "Continue in the old paths, all will end well." O that we heed Paul's words: Be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. Much as I would like to write more, feeling so stirred up in my mind, and impressed with what you have so ably written, I shall close lest I weary you. Kindly read Eph. iv. 11; also 2 Tim. iv. 5. I would like to know in what way the work of an evangelist differs from a pastor. I have had considerable thought on this, and think there must be a difference; am I wrong?

Yours in love for the truth,

(MRS.) W. C. YOUNG.

[WE are glad sister Young found comfort in the writings she mentioned. Many have written indorsing the same articles, and we all feel glad and encouraged. An evangelist is one of the gifts to the church for its comfort and benefit, and differs from that of a pastor in that the evangelist is impressed to travel from place to place and preach the gospel of grace to the scattered people of God, yet does not feel the burden or care of any special church resting upon him, while a pastor feels that he is made overseer of some special flock, hence not impressed to travel.—K.]

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Aug. 8, 1912.

DEAR SISTER YOUNG:—Your good letter of April 1st last was received in due time, and I felt to answer it right away, but was very busy rebuilding a fence, setting posts, &c., and my arms being yet somewhat sore from rheumatism, I did

not feel that I could write at night, and thus the days have passed, with the many burdens and cares each day, until months have come and gone. I cannot tell you how your letter gladdened my heart at that time. It is always a mystery how any one can be benefited by my preaching or writing. Your letter came to me as a surprise, and it is true, as you say, a word of commendation in real heart sincerity does cause one to hope his labor is not in vain. These heart-words do not exalt the flesh, but humble in the dust. I think I felt a deep sense of contrition of soul as I read and reread your tender, loving words and expressions of prayer and good wishes in my behalf as a servant of the Lord Jesus. You speak of the manner in which they bring out the rich things of the great treasure-house; this seems simple and plain, as they enter experimentally into all the peculiar trials that enter into the life of every one to whom each one is called to preach. The husbandman must first be partaker of the fruits. They are prophets unto the dear children of God, prophesying of the grace of God, telling you what you are, when you have told no one, going over that peculiar exercise that you thought concealed in your own heart. It is from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, therefore they often speak of the bitterness of soul, the wormwood and the gall. You think, Does that servant of God experience all these things? Yes, he has drunken of the bitter dregs, and in telling you or some other poor famishing soul how the Lord has or will deliver he only knows from his own experience. How true it is, as witnessed by Paul, and how assuring to the brethren at Corinth: I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling, and my speech and my preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, &c., not claiming superiority; all that is felt by you I am. Are any weak, so am I. Are any abased, so am I. I am glad, dear sister, Paul has left such testimony on record. While I dare not compare myself with Paul (or any other servant of the Lord Jesus) in his great ability in the profound declaration of the word, yet I go in weakness, fear and trembling. I cannot rise above it. It was the awful sense of weakness and fear that caused me to desist from speaking at the time you mention at Ekfrid; there were those I knew could preach, so I had determined in my mind I would not open my mouth. I think I would be ever ready to open my mouth and speak in His blessed name if I could speak to his honor and glory. I love to tell the old, old story of Jesus and the cross. I love to tell of his goodness and mercy, and how he saved a sinner like me. O think of the matchless grace and mercy, of the condescension of the incarnate Son of God to be identified and mingle with poor sinners like me, to yield up his own precious life to redeem, save and make them heirs of glory. Is it not enough to inspire one to talk of His power, love and tender mercies, and never cease to praise him? Yet how oft, alas, this wretched heart has wandered from him, how oft by our acts we say, like Peter, I know not the man. God is faithful, just and true; the bow ever witnesses his everlasting covenant of mercy, the sure mercies of David. His promises are yea and amen. I have recently had pleasant reflections upon these wonderfully blessed words: "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven."—Psalms cxix. 89. How comforting the thought that all things that pertain to the peace and welfare of Zion, of every dear lamb of the

fold, the steps you take, the station you fill, all, all are fixed in the eternal mind and purpose of God. It is the only source of comfort in the weary journey of this life when we can feel our God has ordained it so, when we can feel it is the Father's will we can drink of the cup of afflictions, suffer poverty, endure all things for the excellency of his name. It was this thought, dear, precious one in Christ, that stilled the tempest, causing my soul to rejoice, and lifted this poor soul above the earthy amidst such suffering and pain last summer: God hath ordained it so; you can find comfort nowhere else. But I am free to confess I have not the power or wisdom to bring about that blessed state. No, we only triumph in our God, all blessings are freely and graciously bestowed. I have been much in the valley, in doubting castle, in the slough of despond, the past few months; the heavens have seemed as brass, shut up to my groans and cries. Do you know, dear child, I have sometimes thought my faith in God has been too strong, or that it was only imaginary. O the depths and heights one may go, yet the dear Redeemer is there. I cry out often, O is there any one like me? When you get down in the depths of woe remember there is one poor soul who often eats the bread of sorrow.

I remember well that dear grandmother and mother (your mother). One of my pleasantest visits was at her home near Ekfrid. I, with one or two more, went to spend the day there, and unexpectedly your Uncle Robert and wife and Duncan McAlpine and wife came, and we were blessed with one of those heavenly seasons, solemn and impressive, that leaves its imprint, not easily erased from memory. I also remember you as one of the company. After the Lobo meeting you spoke of meeting me at the depot at Komoka. It was a meeting of sweet communion that left its fragrance and rich perfume; the Husbandman came into his garden that the spices might flow out.

I leave in the morning for a four weeks' trip, to attend associations and meetings in southern Kentucky and middle Tennessee. I go with fear and trembling, and have need of your prayers.

You see I have written a long letter, but I cannot abridge. Cast the mantle of charity over it, for it is like the author, found wanting. I will be glad to hear from you at any time. The Lord bless thee and keep thee every moment.

P. W. SAWIN.

DAYTON, Ohio, April 28, 1918.

DEAR KINDRED:—This dark and cloudy Sunday afternoon I feel a desire to converse awhile with you through the medium of the pen, although if not guided in thought by the dear Lord and Savior my communication will be of little pleasure or comfort to any of you. My comfort, hope, confidence, in the God of heaven is this: that there is nothing too hard for him, and that not one of God's children is too vile to know what great love the dear Master has for his chosen ones. Our beloved Jesus did not even expose Judas at the supper, so the others did not know while the supper was being served that he should betray him. Each one of them was so busy with the question, Is it I? that they did not even understand the plain accusation of Jesus of Judas. Was it not indeed a complete communion, each one looking at his own faults? Is it any wonder that those who have never tasted the sweet and sovereign grace of God cannot credit him with having all power and wisdom? But the dear ones who have felt how patient and merciful

God is can comprehend to some degree why Judas was never cast out. O may the Lord give us grace to compare spiritual things with spiritual, rather than be left to conclude that heavenly and divine things are to correspond with our own experience with the sad and cruel things of this vile earth. Wonderful indeed to me is love and devotion that makes such a sacrifice, but wonder of wonders it seems when we apply it to ourselves, when we read that Jesus, whose name is called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, suffered all to redeem poor sinners, and to know that we, who are as nothing in his sight, should have an interest in his blood, should be partakers of so glorious an inheritance. It all exceeds our understanding, and seems wonderful beyond expression. Often do I ask myself, dear friends, if I really know anything about God's love, or if ever I have tasted of its sweetness, or felt its power in saving and cleansing my poor sin-polluted soul. What was it that caused a light softer and more brilliant than the rays of the setting sun to shine about me when I first found peace, and which at times now manifests itself when in darkness of mind I pour out my soul to Him? Surely it is Jesus who speaks and says, Peace, be still, is it not? When sorrow beats heavily upon my frail bark, and with bitter anguish I cry, Lord, save, I perish, it is surely his divine love and power that make my almost unbearable sorrow bearable and cause me by faith to look beyond it all to the land of never-ending peace and rest, where my sin-stained feet shall soon stand. All seems confusion and turmoil here, but did not Jesus say, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace? Precious and soul-cheering words! How sweet his peace is when it comes flowing into the soul. The goodness of God seems so sweetly made manifest to me, and Jesus seems so near, so precious to my soul, and there seems to be so much love and unity between his people and himself that my poor soul seems sweetly lifted up, and my heart goes out in praise to God's name and in love to his people everywhere. He is not too proud nor too high to weep with those who weep. How we love to look upon him as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, entering into our suffering and afflictions as one with us, and we one with him in all things. I might go on more elaborately with this view of why Jesus wept, but I shall not, as doubtless his weeping was caused by a deeper and more intense suffering than that occasioned by the death of a loved one; and the grief expressed by the two lonely sisters, and the unbelief expressed by all those around, including Mary and Martha. Mary in her great grief, when she came where Jesus was, fell at his feet. What a profound picture to see her in her anguish fall at Jesus' feet expressing belief, saying, Lord, if thou hadst been here my brother had not died. How supremely happy I feel to know that the Lord intended to save the objects of his love before time began, because it is written, In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before time began. Peter said of Jesus, Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world. So from these texts we know that God intended to save some, and knew some would need a Savior, so God being perfect his plans are all perfect. How grand and sublime are the bountiful mercy and far-reaching power of God.

Well, I must indeed say that were it not for the sweet comfort I get from the

many good and precious letters contained in the dear old SIGNS I should surely sink in despair, as it contains all the gospel preaching I get, for living in a city of two hundred thousand inhabitants with no church of our faith is to me deplorable, but many, many times I am made to cry out, and do greatly appreciate these sweet and precious words of the Savior: I am the way, the truth and the life. In him all fullness dwells; he rules in righteousness, mighty to save. How greatly I enjoy the editorials in the SIGNS, and feel surely Elders Ker and Lefferts are called of God, as both are so blessed and endued with wisdom and knowledge from on high, and my ardent desire is that it may be God's will and purpose that both be spared many years to wield the pen of ready writers to the comfort and happiness of God's little ones, and I love you both spiritually, dear editors, although we have never been permitted to meet face to face.

I have written more perhaps than will be of interest to any, and will soon close my epistle, but wish to say in conclusion that my prayer is that the dear Master may be graciously kind in giving us all of his Spirit to guide us in the right way, and that each and all may be found walking worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called.

Your sister in a precious hope,

LIDA KELLER.

POCA, West Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing two letters, one from brother Willard Pennington, the other from his wife; both of them have the right ring to me. There is no doubt in my mind that these children are of God, for their language is the language of God's little ones who feel their unworthiness. If you think them worthy a place in the SIGNS I would be glad to have them published, as they need encouragement.

I will say to sister Pennington, Dear child of God, we surely will receive you at Hopewell Church upon such testimony as your letter contains, and hope you may have the opportunity of coming to the church in the near future, for it is a home for such as have no confidence in themselves, and feel that they are sinners, saved alone by the grace of God, if saved at all.

Yours truly,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

DIVIDE, W. Va., Dec. 13, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER McCLANAHAN:—I will say father, too, if you will excuse me, for this is how I feel about it. You are the dear old burden-bearer I believe God sent when I was lost in the wilderness to turn me to the path where hope was found. Dear brother, the last time I saw you you took my hand in yours and the tears came into your eyes, and I have never forgotten that fatherly face, but am ashamed of myself. I have thought of writing to you time and again, though I have not done it, but hope you will pardon me for this neglect. I feel that it is almost hypocrisy in me to write you at all, for my hope seems buried beneath the waves. Sometimes it seems that the light is going to shine again, and then it is cut off and darkness takes hold of my sinful being; however, there is a little spark yet, and that is, I believe God will save all who belong to him, without the loss of one. Sometimes I feel that I ought to pray, and will go to the woods and fall on my knees, but cannot pray, for my sins rise higher than anything else. Lord, have mercy, is all I can say. I desire the prayers of all the household

of faith, because I feel like a poor sick sheep lost in the mountains. I feel very lonely since my dear brother died; he was a great comfort to me in my darkest hours; but he is gone, it pleased God to call him home. How I loved him. Now, dear brother, I want you to tell the church my condition, and tell them I love them all, although I am nothing but a poor, sinful wretch; I need the prayers of all of them. I am here in the lonely mountains, where I do not hear any preaching. I know not why I am here, but feel that God has put me here for some purpose. I hope we shall meet again on this earth and talk of this blessed doctrine. Give my love to brother George and tell him I love him, too, and he cannot keep me from it. Do not forget me when you kneel in the dust, dear brother.

With love to you and family, I am yours with a little hope,

W. L. PENNINGTON.

DEAR BROTHER MCCLANAHAN:—Your letter came as a blessing to us, to comfort us in our sad bereavement in the loss of our dear brother, because he always looked upon you as a father, as do Willard and I. If I could be as satisfied of myself being a subject of grace as I am of him, I could be happy, but there is always a doubt about my condition, although at times my hope is bright, but the doubt always returns, for I do not think there ever was any one as contrary as I about the true doctrine. I was convinced long before I would admit it even to myself. I am ashamed of this, yet it is true; but I believe God gave me power to overcome my contrary self and to tell my dear companion the blessed truth. I at once wrote to the Missionaries, of whom I was a member, and had my name taken off their book. I want to join the people of God, if they think me worthy. I want my membership to be with Hopewell Church with Willard, if it is God's will. I am satisfied that the doctrine of the Old School Baptists is the only right one, but I am altogether dissatisfied with myself. We want to come to the association next fall if God wills. We have planned to go several times, but were prevented; usually it was Willard's poor health and lack of means to pay our way.

I have just read what I have written, and it is so imperfect I almost decided to not send it, but I know another trial would be no better, and I want to acknowledge your kind letter, so I will send it as it is. Think of me as best you can, for I am only a sinner.

Your sister, I hope,

OTHA PENNINGTON.

VAIDEN, Miss., Feb. 21, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find four dollars, for which please give credit on my subscription for one dollar, as it expires March 1st, and also send me one of your Bibles. I have desired one of these Bibles for a long time, but did not feel able to pay for it, but I feel that the good Lord has blessed me in many ways, although my wife was very sick most all of last year, but her life is still spared and she is able to be around, for which I hope I feel thankful, though I do not feel worthy of such a great and precious blessing. I feel so weak and sinful; it seems that sin is mixed with all I do.

Dear editors, I have had a great desire ever since our association to give the readers of the SIGNS a short sketch of one of the grandest meetings (to me) I have ever attended. Thursday night before the fourth Sunday in September, 1917, I met Elder A. B. Morris at Vaiden, also two brethren from Sweet Water Church, Carroll County, and brought them to my humble home, and Elder

Morris preached from John xv. 1: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman." He preached to the comfort of the brethren. May the Lord be blessed. Friday morning we went to Providence Church, and Elder J. M. Palmertree, the moderator, appointed Elder Tolbert to preach the introductory sermon, and Elder Alderman preached the evening discourse to the comfort and edification of the brethren and sisters, giving God all the honor and glory for our salvation. Saturday morning we met at ten o'clock, and Elders Morris and Varell were appointed to occupy the stand, and preached in the order named. I do not think I ever heard better preaching in my life; it was a feast to me. Sunday Elders Pennington and Alderman were appointed to preach the morning discourses and Elder Palmertree to close. They also preached the Word in its purity, ascribing all honor, glory and power to God, where it belongs, and at the close of the services the door of the church was opened and my cousin, Atta Rosemond, came forward and told the brethren what great things the good Lord had done for her, and was received. May the Lord be blessed, O my soul. I felt that it was good to be there. Two of the Carroll County brethren came home with me to spend the night, accompanied by Elder Ricks, of the same county, and he preached for us. He said, You have been hearing the big preachers, now you will hear the little boy preacher, if indeed I am a preacher at all. It was a feast to me, and I think the brethren and my wife were as well pleased as I was. Some of our neighbors said it was the best sermon they ever heard; others said, He knew what he was talking about. It was a grand and glorious meeting to me.

Yours in hope,

H. C. FERGUSON.

HERNDON, Va., May 20, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find check for three dollars, two dollars of it to be applied to the renewal of the SIGNS for another year to Mrs. Wm. E. Hall, of Vienna, Va., and one dollar to aid in sending the paper to the poor of the flock.

Dear brethren, I would like to say to you, that since my dwelling-house and the most of its contents were destroyed by fire, on the night of March 22nd, 1917, I have been in a dreadful condition of mind to write letters to the people of God, and more than that, the spirit of infidelity has been my daily companion for many, many long months, and, like Jonah of old, I have been made to cry out (the Lord heard his cry, but he does not seem to hear mine), out of the belly of hell cried I. The Lord heard his cry and delivered him from his awful condition, and put his feet upon dry land, which indicates to my mind a solid standing, which caused Jonah to exclaim, "Salvation is of the Lord." O that the Lord might hear my cry and deliver me from an awful hell, and restore again unto me the joy of his salvation, that I might return again to Zion with songs of praise to his great name, that I might come to his mercy-seat and find grace to help in this great time of need. But alas, I am still in "doubting castle," yet this Scripture came into my mind this morning when I first awoke, and a feeling of strong desire came with it: Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation. But I am such a great sinner, how dare I call upon the Lord for any of his blessings? I am so vile, so prone to sin, I fear that I am not born again. Brethren, if I could tell you of all my downsittings in the past twelve months I know that you would not have the patience with me to even read this letter, yet in all of my downsittings

I still feel to be a repenting sinner, and, like Peter, after denying his Savior, I go out and weep bitterly. Brethren, pray for me when it goes well with you. I told a brother some time ago that I never expected to have another letter of mine published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but as it is written, the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, so you can publish this if you see fit.

A poor sinner,

JOHN. F. OLIVER.

ARENA, New York.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I feel like writing a few words to the editors, contributors and publishers of the SIGNS. In these trying times of war and confusion it seems we have no solid comfort or solace only in the thought that our heavenly Father is at the helm, and has all power in heaven and earth; his arm is not shortened that he cannot save, nor is his power limited. Such dark times as these try our faith, and here I am reminded of the disciple John, who, notwithstanding he had the great distinction of baptizing the Savior, afterward when shut up in prison was left in doubt, and sent messengers to Christ, saying, Art thou the Christ, or do we look for another? Although at times we feel discouraged, we have it on record that our Lord will come, and will not tarry; he shall go forth conquering and to conquer. He will rule and reign until all enemies are put under his feet. How it becomes us who have named the name of the Lord to depart from iniquity, to put on the whole christian armor, that we may be able to stand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand, having our loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith we shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, and take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

I am well pleased with the manner in which the SIGNS is conducted and the subjects it contains. I think I feel thankful that our heavenly Father has raised up so many gifted brethren and sisters to write so intelligently of the deep and mysterious truths revealed in the gospel. Among the sisters, I much enjoy the writings of sisters Pultz, Sarah E. Runkle, Bonnie Chick and sister Terry, and the letter in February 15th number from sister Lida Keller was excellent. I hope they all will continue to write, and thereby strengthen one another with their messages of love. My constant prayer is that the Lord will cause this terrible war to end soon, if it be his will, and that we may enjoy the reign of peace and prosperity again.

With kind wishes for you all, I remain your unworthy sister in a blessed hope,

JULANA H. DICKSON.

DALTON, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I am sending our remittance for your valuable paper, I wish to express a few thoughts, which I have often wished and have as often neglected to do. I know not what I shall write, and feel that it is holy ground on which I tread, and no words of mine can change the eternal plan of the most high God, who rules heaven and earth. "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." I feel that God's will is being done in this great day of trouble, even as in the day of peace, for the Scripture says, I have refined thee, but not with silver, I have chosen thee in the furnace of afflic-

tion. Then John saw them coming up out of great tribulation. All these things are grievous while we are passing through them, but He only designs our dross to consume and our gold to refine. God's promises are great to me when I view him as working all things after the counsel of his own will. He made the heaven and the earth, and the waters that connect the different countries in such a manner that all may become confused, and war with each other until their own strength is exhausted, and all are ready to call upon the name of the Lord. I believe that nothing can come that was not in the purpose of all things, and that all things work together for good, so if we are tried in the fiery furnace, God will be there, and not one hair of our head will be burned. God is the power that keeps from all harm.

Yours in hope,

CYNTHIA BROWN.

CARBON, Texas, Feb. 22, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—If one such as I may call you brother. Seeing my subscription is past due, I inclose one dollar to pay what I owe, and will try and send more soon. It seems that if I did not get the SIGNS I would be lost, for it is all the preaching I get, and I watch for it, and find something in each number to comfort me. It has been coming regularly to me for a long time, and I will try and keep paid up as nearly as I can. I am in my eighty-sixth year, and feeble, not able to get out to preaching, and very lonely. My companion was taken from me last July, after we had lived together for sixty-six years. Her age was eighty-three years and two months. She had been a Predestinarian Baptist for thirty-five years or more, and died in the faith, and left evidence that she has gone to her Redeemer, where she will suffer no more sickness, pain or sorrow. I feel that I have but a short time to wait before I shall follow.

Thank you for sending me the SIGNS for so long after my time was out; hope I can keep paid up in the future. I pray that the Lord will enable the editors and correspondents to continue to write and comfort the poor for a long time, for we are living in perilous times. When it goes well with you remember this poor old sinner.

Yours in hope, J. J. HOUSE.

BERRY, Ala., April 28, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As my subscription has expired, I will send you two dollars for another year, also two dollars for sister Norris, of Samantha, Alabama. I am well pleased with the SIGNS, for it sets forth, according to my understanding, the doctrine of God our Savior: salvation by grace, and grace alone. The older I get the stronger I believe it, and more and more I look to Him for all things in this life, and in the world to come. I like to read the writings of the brethren and sisters from the different parts, who give Him all the praise and glory in all things. We are strangers in the flesh, but I hope not in Spirit, but all of the same family, all having the same Father and the same mother: God the Father and wisdom the mother. Paul says we are not of the bondwoman, but of the free, and Jerusalem, which is above, is the mother of us all. The religious world is trying to obtain that relationship, but it never can do it. It is a free gift, unmerited upon our part. The apostle Paul was asked if he was a Roman. He said he was. The ruler said, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. Paul said, I was born free.

There are great sums being paid to-day to obtain that freedom, but it has ever been a failure, and ever will be, for every child of the bondwoman is born in bondage, and they cannot help it. It is not so with the freewoman; her children are free born. The children of the two women have nothing to do with their birth. I wish I knew that I were of the freewoman, but I cannot know, therefore I have many doubts, fears, trials and troubles on the way. I often think of the word of the Lord to Adam; after he had cursed the earth for his sake he said: "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee." Surely this is the truth, and the older I get the more of these things I have to endure, and how to get away from them I do not know, and I must say it surely is a grief, but I must bear it, for I know it is all of the Lord, and I must say, Thy will be done, and not mine.

May the Lord bless the editors and publishers of the SIGNS, and enable them to contend for the truth in the future as they have in the past.

S. J. NORRIS.

CHURCHVILLE, N. Y., Jan. 24, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been thinking for some time of writing to you, or that I ought to, and tell you how I appreciate your paper, and all its correspondents; it is indeed a rest to me. It is the gospel I believe, and I hear from all the brethren, with whom I feel I am acquainted after reading their writings, although I feel unworthy to be called a brother. I am here with my daughter this winter (unexpectedly), but I expect to return to Watkins in the spring, and will then send the balance on my subscription.

Unworthily yours,

NORMAN BROWN.

RIVES, Tenn., May 29, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—Will you please correct mistakes in the obituary of A. L. Harrison? He was baptized by Elder J. W. Moon, not by Elder W. I. Carnell. It should read Miss Wilmouth Walker, instead of Millie.

(MRS.) A. L. HARRISON.

[WE frequently receive requests to note corrections of some articles or notices that have appeared in the SIGNS, such as the above, which mistakes are not often our fault, as we are very careful to publish them as near as possible as they are written, and if the writers of such notices would be more particular in writing names, dates, &c., they would assist us greatly in publishing their articles correctly.—ED.]

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in June (30th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

BOOK OF EDITORIALS.

WE have on hand a number of copies of the Second Volume of Editorials. This book is made up of editorials written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES from March, 1842, to March, 1847, and contains 768 pages, neatly bound in cloth.

This work originally sold at two dollars per copy, but as a few of the pages are stained by water we will, as long as the supply lasts, sell them at the extremely low price of seventy-five cents per copy. Postage paid by us. All who wish this book should procure it now, as we will have no more after these are sold.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1918.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PSALM XV.

WE have a request to write our view of this peculiar and wonderful Psalm, and shall try to do so as light may be given. Like all Scripture, it is deep, and its doctrine profound. The deep things of God are said by Paul to be revealed unto his people by his Spirit. How well the children of God know that without his influence they can do nothing. This is really the key to the subject before us. An impure fountain cannot send forth pure water, nor does the length of a stream purify its water. Grapes do not grow on briers, nor can a bad tree bring forth good fruit. This fifteenth Psalm is much like the first, which speaks of a certain man who walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful, but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night. Of this man it is said: "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Where shall we find such a man? If we begin with Adam we shall find him a sinner by transgression. If we examine Cain's record we find him a murderer. If we look into the life of Abel, there we shall find confession of guilt and the need of the cleansing blood of the Lamb to purify him in the sight of God. If we come over to the time of the flood we shall find that only one righteous man is mentioned, and that man, Noah, forgot the mercy and salvation of God and was found drunk. If we examine the record of Abraham we shall find that he lied when he told the king that Sarah was his sister rather than his wife. If we follow Moses from Pharaoh's palace to the land where the Israelites were we shall discover that he slew an Egyptian and hid him in the sand. If we investigate the life of David, the writer of the Psalms, we shall find that he was virtually the murderer of Uriah, that he might have his wife. We could continue and give record after record of men, both of the Old and New Testaments, to show that the man described in the first and fifteenth Psalms was not a son of Adam. Not one of them from the beginning of the world to the present day answers the description. This is one of the things that has caused the children of God in all ages of the world to doubt, fear and tremble, knowing that they do not measure up to "the stature of a perfect man." We all seem cut off from the presence of God when we read such Scriptures as the Psalms referred to. The hand goes over the mouth, we fall upon our faces in the dust and cry, Unclean, unclean. It is evident, however, that such a man has lived and lives now, but if not a son of Adam we of necessity must look elsewhere for him, and in so doing we shall find him the Son of God, holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. He was the perfect man, whose end, or death, was peace between

God and sinners. He was never found walking in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standing in the way of sinners, nor sitting in the seat of the scornful. His delight was in the law of the Lord, and in it did he meditate day and night—in the darkness as well as in the light. All he did prospered as a flourishing tree planted by the rivers of water. His meat and his drink were to do the will of the Father who sent him, and to finish his work. How different his perfect life from that of his poor and afflicted children, who spend more or less time in the counsel of the ungodly and in the way of sinners, whose meditations in his law are few and seldom, who devote much time to pleasure, gratifying the lusts of the flesh and the pride of the eye, who can easily find an excuse for being absent from meeting, whose minds are often far away when under the sound of the gospel. Yes, ministers are just like all others—often would rather do office work, labor on the farm, in fact rather do anything than try to preach. Seldom do they open the Bible between Sundays; their minds are occupied with everything other than meditation upon God's word and law; almost every service is mechanical—no life, no exercise of mind or soul. Were it not that the righteousness of Christ is our righteousness, his perfection our perfection, and his obedience to the law of God our obedience, surely we all would be without hope and without God in the world. The saints bless God that Christ lives in them, and that by that the will is present, even though how to perform that which is good they find not. The desire for holiness is there; the desire to walk uprightly is good and acceptable to the Lord.

The questions are asked in the first verse of Psalm fifteen as to who shall abide in the tabernacle, and who shall dwell in the holy hill? The remainder of the Psalm is devoted to answering the two questions. Read the Psalm at the head of this article and it will be found as we have endeavored to show all along, that Christ is the only man who lived such a life; hence this testifies of him, not David. "Christ abideth for ever," and in the midst of the church he sings praise unto the Lord. K.

REVELATION V. 4.

"I WEPT because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon."

Among the wonderful things revealed to John was a book in the hand of Him that sat upon the throne written within, and on the back side sealed with seven seals. All the writing was within the book, and the book was sealed on the back side with seven seals. The book seems to denote all God's works, sealed from the beginning from man, yet known to God. Known unto him are all his works from the foundation of the world. We once supposed there was writing on the back side of the book, but of late years that idea has been exploded. The seven seals were on the back side, denoting the perfect obscurity of all God's ways and purposes from man, and also denoting that everything, both great and small, must be revealed as the seals are broken. Because no man was found worthy to open and read the book, neither to look thereon, John wept much. How distressed and disappointed we all were when we found no man to help, no man to save, no man to open unto us the things of God. Vain is the help of man, and cursed is the man that trusteth in man. We have no record that John was told the book was written within. He likely could see the seals, but not within

the book, yet he understood that secret things of God were under those seals, and as no man was able to open and read the book, his desire to know of the things sealed increased. Just then when the help of man failed, and his confidence in the flesh was blasted, he was assured by one of the four and twenty elders that the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the root of David, had prevailed to open the book and to loose the seals thereof. The elders seem rather to represent the former witnesses of God—those who had testified of the coming of Christ, his work and Godhead. It has been so since the transgression of the law by Adam that God must do for man what he cannot do for himself. Adam did not know why he was created, and Eve in him, why the law was given, why Satan was more subtle than the beasts of the field, nor why the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil presented such beauty and created such desire until one of God's seals was loosed; then he understood it all, and knew it was for the good of man and to the glory of God. Since that day, little by little, here and there the Lord has been revealing himself and his pleasure, and the end is not yet. Great things are yet in store, much knowledge and wisdom are yet to be revealed. But not until he pleases to loose a seal can man look upon or read the book. As Jesus loosed one seal the book unfolded to the next seal, there it stopped. In reading and beholding the things of God John wanted to see and know more, but as Jesus only could and had loosed one seal he must wait His time and purpose in opening another. As the seals were opened and God's power and glory revealed the elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints; and they sang a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood. How seldom the saints think that their prayers are precious odors before God, and all of them are kept in vials; in other words, not one prayer escapes the Father. The prayer of the destitute he will not despise, and we have been convinced for a long time that the saints never pray except when destitute—no need of prayer any other time. The words often employed by the children of God in their attempts to pray do not compose the prayer at all; seldom, if ever, do words express what one feels. The longing, the groaning, the bitter tears, the heartaches and the halting steps are all prayers understood by the Lord, and are precious in his sight. We have often thought that the life the saints live in the flesh is a sealed book, and understood only as the seals are loosed. The life of faith is not one of sight, hence little or nothing is known except as they are led step by step, instructed and kept as the apple of his eye. The Israelites in the journey from Egypt to Canaan moved only as the pillar of cloud moved; they never sought their own path, were not allowed to do so; neither do the saints seek their way, but are directed by the Spirit of God.

"How strange is the course that a christian must steer,
How perplexed is the path he must tread!
The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
And his life he receives from the dead."

It requires the opening of many seals to acquaint the travelers of Zion with all suggested by the above hymn. The saints do not always weep, however, when such seals are loosed, but often rejoice in hope and press on toward the prize set before them.

K.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Ebenezer Church, Baltimore city, Md., sendeth greetings to the churches of which it is composed.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In coming to you in this year of our Lord 1918, we desire to come in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the same blessed truth of salvation by the grace of God, so will call your attention to Romans, first chapter, sixteenth verse, which reads as follows: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." In the verse preceding Paul says, "So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also," giving as his reason for this readiness, that he is not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, and then as his reason for not being ashamed of the gospel of Christ he declares that it is the power of God unto salvation both to Jews and the Greeks who believe. It affords great pleasure to tell people, and especially poor needy ones, good news that we know to be true. The Lord's people are poor and needy, and he, ever mindful of their needs, has especially qualified witnesses to the riches and glories of his grace, men who have been taught of God to know their own need, and then have been given to find in Christ a full supply of all their needs. These, being interested in the comfort of the Lord's people, would be ashamed to tell them to look to themselves, or any other earthly power, since they have found that the help of man is vain; but having learned by experience that Jesus has all power, both in heaven and earth, and that his mercy endureth forever, it is a pleasure to tell them of Christ and his power to save and comfort in all their tribulations. That power by which sinners are born again is the gracious power of Christ, and his is the only power that can comfort and sustain his little ones in the many conflicts of this mortal life, and he dwells in his children, and Paul tells us, If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. It requires all this to save a sinner, and there is none that has sufficient power to do this save Jesus Christ. He is able to save to the uttermost all who come to God by him, and he came into the world to save sinners, and he says, "I know my sheep, and am known of mine." This includes the Greek as well as the Jew, for he said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." This is to the circumcised and the uncircumcised. The Gentiles, who are without law, are a law unto themselves, having the law of God written in their hearts. Yes, he puts his law in the minds of all his dear people, and writes it in their hearts, and is unto them a God, a Father and a Savior, who will never leave nor forsake them. Well did the poet sing,

> "Ashamed of Jesus! sooner far
> Let evening blush to own a star."

We feel that no one who has been made truly and spiritually acquainted with him can be ashamed of him, since they know all their comfort in this life, and that also which is to come, is through and by him. Any power that fails to regenerate and resurrect the sinner fails to save him, and therefore is not the gospel of Christ, and gospel ministers would be ashamed to

talk to the Lord's people about it, because it would be a disappointment. But Jesus has done in his flesh all that the Father sent him to do, and will also do all that God has purposed for him to do by his Spirit. His every word shall be fulfilled in its season, and this is to every one that believeth, whether he be Jew or Gentile, bond or free, whether he lived before or since Christ came into the world. It does not matter what part of the earth he lives in, or whether he dies unborn or at one hundred years of age, all are kept in the hollow of his hand, and within the vision of his all-seeing eye, and shall ultimately be brought home to the Father by his Son Jesus Christ. Then why, brethren, should not we be ready, and that without shame, to preach this glorious and only gospel of Christ to all such sinners as will listen to us? Jesus says, If they hear my words they will hear yours also. Let us, therefore, as the dear Lord gives ability, contend earnestly for this faith which was once delivered unto the saints, and may God grant that his word may find access to the hearts of his loved ones for their good and his glory.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Moderator.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.
EDWARD A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

(Written by Deacon O. R. Kugler.)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Southampton, Bucks County, Pa., May 29th, 30th and 31st, 1918, to the several churches of which she is composed, sends greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We again send you our Circular Letter, according to the established custom of this association, calling again your attention to the things that bind together the household of faith. Wonderfully blessed is the church of God above every worldly institution, worshiping God in spirit, rejoicing in Christ Jesus and having no confidence in the flesh, obtaining evidence through the operation of the Spirit, the Holy Ghost taking of the things of Jesus and showing unto them in that they are partakers of the sufferings of Christ they are heirs with him in glory. The evidence of reigning with him is found in suffering with him. How beautiful is the order of the house of God as established in the new covenant, when Jesus stands revealed in the midst of the church. After the resurrection of Jesus the disciples were gathered together on the first day of the week, and the doors were shut for fear of the Jews, Jesus appeared and revealed himself, saying, "Peace be unto you." So it has been with the followers of Jesus since that time: fear sometimes comes upon them in their felt need of the appearing of him who is their life, spiritual intercourse seems to be lacking, and fearing utter destruction at the hand of their enemies, through the coming of traditions, the devising of man's heart, the doors are closed, Jesus appears, saying, "Peace be unto you." It is in this blessed appearing of the Bridegroom that the bride, the church, realizes what a wonderful salvation is hers; his glory is revealed, faith is triumphant, death and hell swallowed up in victory. This is the evidence of the power of his resurrection; this is the salvation God has appointed for walls and bulwarks; through and by him are all things to the glory of God the Father. All her salvation, all her desire, is found in him, and she is to him the perfection of beauty; out of her, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. In such a time there is no place in Zion for any scheme, the devising of man's heart, no room at

all for salvation in time to be performed by the bride, for she is the body of Christ and she is complete in him, hence they exclaim with one heart and one voice, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory, for thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood. May we, the churches of this association, together with all with whom we walk in the fellowship of the gospel, be constrained by the indwelling of his Spirit to walk humbly, looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

SILAS H. DURAND, Moderator.
WM. HOBENSACK, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Ebenezer Church, Baltimore, Md., May 15th, 16th and 17th, 1918, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greetings in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the kind providence of our heavenly Father we have been permitted to meet this once more, and have great reason for gratitude to him who has preserved us in love and fellowship of the gospel and brought us together and caused us to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord. Your messages of love and fellowship have been gladly received. The ministering brethren have come bringing us good news and glad tidings from a far country, telling us the old, old story, but ever new, of Jesus and his love, and we feel that we have been permitted to enjoy some of the fragrance that emanates from that garden inclosed, and to partake of the fruit, and to drink of the fountain that proceeds therefrom, so we feel that it is good to be here, and to ascribe all the glory to God the Father, and to the praise of his dear Son.

We have appointed our next meeting to be held with the Black Rock Church, the usual time next year, when and where we hope to meet your messengers and receive your messages of love.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.
F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.
E. A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Southampton Church, at Southampton, Bucks County, Pa., May 29th, 30th and 31st, 1918, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting with love and fellowship in the gospel.

DEARLY BELOVED:—We are wonderfully blessed to write you this message to express the glad tidings which we have received through the servants of the most high God who have preached for us during this meeting. The preaching has been good all through, from first to last, with the sweet name of Jesus Christ, and him crucified, as the only theme.

Our next association is appointed to be held with the First Hopewell Church, at Hopewell, N. J., to commence on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1919, when we hope to meet and receive your ministers and messengers. Some have not been represented as we desired, which we hope will be filled.

S. H. DURAND, Moderator.
WM. HOBENSACK, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at his residence in St. Thomas, Ont., June 10th, 1918, Clifford Squire and Lizzie Watt, both of St. Thomas, Ontario.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Nunie Curtis Tompkins was born March 28th, 1878, and died March 1st, 1918, making her stay on earth 39 years, 11 months and 3 days. She was a faithful and loving wife and mother. She leaves her husband and five children to mourn their loss, but we feel to know that our loss is her eternal gain. The children's names are Graves, Elsie, Hurst, Joseph and Elizabeth. Mrs. Tompkins was a great sufferer the last two years of her life. She had a cancer near the stomach, for which she was operated on at Johns-Hopkins Hospital August 23rd, 1917, but they could do her no good, so we brought her home eight days afterward, and she died in six months in triumph of the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. She died praising God. She was married to the writer Sept. 3rd, 1902, at Joppa Mills, Bedford Co., Va., where we lived three years, and the remainder of her life was spent in Vinton, Roanoke Co., Va. She was a strict member of the Missionary Baptists when we were married, but in March, 1913, she joined the Primitive Baptist Church of Roanoke City, Va., with the same experience she had when she joined the Missionaries, except more added to it. She was baptized by her pastor, Dr. J. C. Hurst, in the Roanoke River, the first Sunday in March, 1913. She left a letter to her children, which we never saw until after she died. The letter shows inspiration, I think. She bore her afflictions with great fortitude. I waited on her every night by myself, and attended to my work at the office every day until about three weeks before she died, when I had to get help. One night after she came from the hospital we all left the room that she might go to sleep early, and we had not been out long before I heard her singing to the tune of "Mear" hymn No. 835 (Beebe's collection). I could not help shedding tears of joy when I went in and she asked me to help her sing, because I felt I was on holy ground; I thought surely the angels were round about her bed, for her to have the spirit to sing in her afflictions that way. A few days after this Dr. J. C. Hurst and his wife and sister, Nannie R. Dyer, came to see her, and she asked us to sing the above hymn and some other favorite hymns of hers, which we did, after which she asked the doctor to pray with her, which he did, and I thought and she told me that surely the Lord was in the meeting.

Dr. Hurst, her pastor, conducted her funeral March 3rd, in the Missionary Baptist church-house at Vinton, in the presence of a large concourse of people. She loved her pastor for the sake of the doctrine he preached, viz.: absolute predestination of all things, election, salvation by grace, &c., in which she was a strong believer. As strange as it may seem to those who believe differently, I am going to say right here that her funeral was one of the most beautiful scenes I ever witnessed, because I could see the power of God demonstrated. He made us to sit down with hands off and consider and listen to the message he had sent us through his servant, which was delivered in power and demonstration of the Spirit.

Her husband, R. B. TOMPKINS.

Samuel Hiram Selvidge was born in Polk County, Tenn., July 8th, 1839, and died of pneumonia at his home in North Ft. Worth April 15th, 1918. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church by his grandfather, Elder Absalom Mattock, in 1859. Deacon Selvidge served in the southern army four years in the war between the States. He was married to Miss Miranda J. Wood, in Polk Co., Tenn. To that union were born six sons and four daughters; seven children are still living. He with his family emigrated to Texas in 1869, stopping near Cleburne, Johnson County, after which he decided to move to Parker County, where he became a permanent settler near Springtown, Texas. He and his wife became members of Springtown Church about the year 1878, where he served as deacon until he moved fifteen miles south, where he settled a good farm on Silver Creek. He and his wife were in the constitution of the Silver Creek Church, near his home. The writer served as pastor of that church for three years. Deacon Selvidge had the great misfortune to lose his faithful companion by death Nov. 15th, 1899, and Feb. 21st, 1901, he was married to Mrs. Margaret Van Sant, who, with her two boys, now grown, are yet living. His last wife is the half-sister of the late Elder A. D. Bourland, and she united with Denton Creek Church at Keller, Texas, July, 1887. Deacon Selvidge moved to North Ft. Worth, where he and his wife united with the Ft. Worth Church by letter in 1906. He stood firm in the doctrine as advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, of which he was an interested reader for about thirty-five years. The brethren always found brother Selvidge kind and pleasant, even in the discussion of controverted points of Scripture, in which he never hurt a brother's feelings. He was a pillar in the churches of Springtown, Silver Creek and Ft. Worth. His health had been declining for some time, yet was not thought to be serious until a day or two before he passed away, consequently his death was a great shock to his two sisters and the brethren and sisters living in the city.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral from the residence, and used as a text Rev. xiv. 16. There was a large congregation of sorrowing kindred and friends present to pay the last tribute of respect to

the dear, faithful brother, father, husband and friend. A great man in Israel has fallen. He leaves to mourn, his disconsolate widow, seven children, two brothers, seven sisters and all that are living of his forty grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. May the Lord comfort all who mourn.

W. L. ROGERS.

Mrs. Sarah Jane Laub passed away Sunday morning, August 5th, 1917, at 9:30 o'clock. Death occurred at the family home, where the deceased had been a patient sufferer since the first week in May. Her demise was due to old age and a complication of diseases. Sarah Jane Shearer was born in Nodaway County, Mo., Nov. 24th, 1842, and at the time of her death was 74 years, 8 months and 11 days of age. She came to this county when quite young, accompanying her grandparents, with whom she made her home until March 6th, 1860, when she became the life partner of Henry Laub, who survives her. As a bride, her first home was a little log cabin in Buchannan township, where her husband kept bachelor quarters before their marriage; it contained only home made furnishings. When the Civil War was declared the husband joined the recruits, she managing the home and crops in his absence, keeping three little ones and herself the best she could. They occupied the same farm in Buchannan township for fifty years. About seven years ago they decided to retire, and moved to Clarinda, locating at the corner of Seventeenth and Garfield Sts. The deceased was a good neighbor and had many friends. She had been a member of the Baptist Church about forty years, joining the Primitive organization when quite young.

The funeral cortege left the residence at 10 o'clock Tuesday, going to the Shearer Church, southeast of Shambaugh. Elder C. C. Moore, of Clarksdale, Mo., conducted the services, and burial took place in the cemetery nearby.

ALSO,

Henry Laub died Wednesday night, April 3rd, 1918. He was born in Stuttgart, Germany, in 1834, and came to the United States when fourteen years of age, in company with a brother, and located in Ohio. Four years later he moved to Iowa and homesteaded the land in Buchannan township, Page County, which is still in the family. March 6th, 1860, he was married to Miss Jane Shearer, of Page County. To their union were born thirteen children, eight of whom are living, as follows: Mrs. Rosina Davison, of Elberton, Wash., Mrs. George Jenrick and Charles H. Laub, of Sheridan, Wyo., Mrs. Charles Robinson, of Porterville, Cal., Dale Laub, of Metiskow, Canada, Mrs. Floyd Harsh, of Bedford, Iowa, and George Laub, of Clarinda. Mr. and Mrs. Henry Laub celebrated their golden wedding at their old home farm. They later moved to Clarinda, to the family residence on Garfield Street, where August 5th, 1917, Mrs. Laub was called to her reward. Mr. Laub had been in failing health for some time before his death, having been stricken with paralysis. He was a member of the Grand Army of the Republic.

His funeral was held Friday. Burial was in the Shearer cemetery, in Buchannan township.

Elder William Overton Harris, a minister in the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, peacefully and willingly answered the Master's call Jan. 16th, 1918, at Hollis, Okla. He was born near Camden, Ark., October 31st, 1845, and was married to Miss Mary A Collie Feb. 6th, 1868, in Calhoun County, Ark. To that union were born five children, one of whom preceded the father to that home above when about four years old; the other four, with his loving and devoted companion, are left to sorrow and follow him. They weep only because of the vacant chair in the family circle, and the stilled tongue that had given them so much comfort and pleasure in expounding to them the gospel as he believed it. Brother Harris was a stanch Predestinarian Baptist; he believed in the sovereign power of God, read his Bible daily, and for the last few years of his life he read it almost hourly. He talked of the one powerful God of the whole earth, preached him and believed him; he was not ashamed of the gospel he believed in, always abasing himself and all flesh and giving the glory, honor and power to God, to whom it belongs. He preached this doctrine for twenty-five or thirty years, and the older he got the stronger he grew in the faith and practice of the teachings of God's word. He was a man who failed not to declare the whole counsel of God. It pleased the all-wise God to afflict this brother, his servant, with sore affliction, but he wounds and he heals; he gives sufficient grace to those who are his to withstand the fiery darts of the evil one. He endured as a good soldier, looking to that God who never makes mistakes, who does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, to be his deliverer, always expressing a willingness and readiness to hear the Master's final call. O how sweet it is to write of one who has left the evidence behind that he has gone to that blissful home from whence no traveler returns. Weep not, dear ones, it is only a member of that body taken from earth to fill its place in that house whose maker and builder is God.

The funeral services were conducted by the unworthy writer, who took for a scriptural subject some blessed truths found in Colossians i. 16, and tried to comfort the broken-hearted with the same doctrine they had so often heard him defend. May the dear Lord bless all of such faith as this dear brother possessed.

This is written by request of members of the family.

A son-in-law, W. N. GREEN.

Frances Sophronia Harris Rambo was born in Tallapoosa County, Ala., March 11th, 1846, and died of pneumonia at the home of her son, Osie Rambo, near Lovelady, Texas, Jan. 13th, 1918. She with her parents emigrated to Limestone County, Texas, in 1860. She was married to W. L. Rambo in December, 1873. To them were born two sons and two daughters: Thomas, Osie, Eula and Susan. Three children survive their dear sainted mother. Little Susan died in her third year. Their father died July 23rd, 1905. He was a good citizen, husband and father. Sister Rambo united with County Line Church of Old School Baptists and was baptized by Elder James L. Linsley in 1885. Some years after she was left a widow she moved to Mineral Wells, Texas, and joined the Mineral Wells Church by letter, but her stay there was brief; she then moved to Alvarado, Texas, and joined the church in Cleburne, where her membership remained until her death. Sister Rambo lived in Cleburne about one year before she went to live with her son, near Lovelady, Texas. She had passed through many sorrows and sore trials since the death of her husband, yet her faith failed not, but was sufficient for her day and trial. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. I would say to sister Eula, Weep not, for your dear mother is forever at rest.

W. L. ROGERS.

Halie Kinkade, daughter of J. F. and J. A. Kinkade, was born Nov. 22nd, 1894, and departed this life April 5th, 1917. She leaves a heartbroken father and mother, three brothers and three sisters to mourn, but we sorrow not as those who have no hope, for we feel sure she is in heaven. The night she died she called every one in the house to her bedside and bade them good-bye and sang, "I'm going home to die no more." She was a loving girl, and was dearly loved by all who knew her. She was in poor health for a year before she died of that dreadful disease, consumption, but was confined to her bed only about two weeks before she passed away. All was done for her that kind and loving hands could do. She was buried Easter Sunday, 1917, near Adams, Tenn.

Written by one who loved her.

HER SISTER.

Mrs. Lavina Nethaway, wife of Judson Nethaway, died Dec. 29th, 1917, aged 84 years. Her maiden name was Burton. She had lived on the place where she died fifty years. She leaves of her family one son and five daughters, with other relatives. The son, Urias, and daughter, Melissa Nethaway, with the mother, lived together on the place in Duanesburg, Schenectady Co., N. Y. Sister Nethaway was baptized by Elder Balas Bundy, uniting with the Schoharie Hill Church forty-two years ago. She is now in glory. God bless all who mourn. I was called to officiate at the funeral.

D. M. VAIL.

Dora Kodelle Oliver, daughter of Elder H. N. and Nettie Oliver, was born October 29th, 1912, and died May 12th, 1918, after an illness of a few days of scarlet fever, aged 5 years, 6 months and 13 days. We were made sad in hearing of her death, but God thought it best to take her. She was the bud of promise in the home, and was especially the favorite of her neighbors. Elder and Mrs. Oliver and family have our sympathy. We pray that God's richest blessing may rest upon the entire family. The little one is not dead, but asleep with our dear Savior in that sweet home above, where there is no parting, no death.

The funeral services were conducted Monday afternoon at 3 o'clock at Walnut Fork, by F. P. Chandler, after which a few remarks were made by Prof. M. E. Woolridge. The remains were laid to rest at that place. Many flowers were placed upon her little grave, which showed the love and friendship for her. She is survived by father, mother, five brothers, four sisters and many friends and playmates, who loved her dearly. Her last words were: "Mamma, go with me."

PEARLE DUMAS.

George W. Grove, son of David and Rebecca Grove, was born in Hancock County, Ill., Sept. 26th, 1844, and died May 2nd, 1918. He was united in marriage to Mary J. Grove Jan. 18th, 1872. To that union were born six children: Freeman, Fannie, Cora, Anna and Hugh, one dying in infancy. He was one of a family of ten children, and spent all of his long life near the place of his birth. Through ardent toil and patient industry he gained a fair competency in life, so that when age and disease had rendered him unfit for further service he had a good home to give him shelter and kind hands to minister to his wants. About four years ago he sustained the loss of his dear companion, from which he never fully recovered. He never united with the church, but was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and always enjoyed hearing the story of the cross; but he is gone, his life's work is done. On May 2nd he answered the summons and passed into the joys eternal, at the age of 73 years, 7 months and 6 days. He leaves, beside his children and grandchildren, an aged sister, Mrs. Belle Frazee, and other relatives and a host of friends to mourn their loss.

LOUIS FRAZEE.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

J. P. Starr, Texas, $1.00; J. L. Deshong, Fla., $2.00; W. H. Wicks, Md., $1.00; W. E. Blue, N. Y., $2.00.

APPOINTMENTS.

PROVIDENCE permitting, Elder D. M. Vail will fill the following appointments: Friday, July 19th, 117 South Montgomery St., Trenton, N. J., 8 p. m.; Saturday, 20th, Stockton, N. J., sister Horner's, 2:30 p. m.; Sunday, 21st, Locktown, N. J., 10:30 a. m.; Frenchtown, N. J., 4 p. m.; Monday, 22nd, Grandon, N. J., A. J. Demot's, 8 p. m.

Elder George Ruston will, the Lord willing, preach as follows: Friday, August 16th, 117 South Montgomery St., Trenton, N. J., 8 p. m.; Saturday, 17th, Stockton, N. J., at sister Horner's, 2:30 p. m.; Sunday, 18th, Locktown, N. J., 10:30 a. m.; Frenchtown, N. J., 4 p. m.; Monday, 19th, Grandon, N. J., at A. J. Demot's, 8 p. m.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Ingleside, N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting, the Lord willing, for Saturday and Sunday, June 29th and 30th, 1918. Those coming from the east or west on the Rochester Branch of the Erie or D., L. & W. R. R., will be met at Atlanta station Friday, 28th, by writing to Mr. Harvey Graves, Nelson Nichols or Riley Prester, R. F. D. 7, Naples, N. Y. Those coming on the Lehigh Valley R. R. will be met at Naples, N. Y., by writing to Mr. Silas Drake, R. F. D. 27, Naples, N. Y. Place of meeting five miles from either station. All who come will be made welcome.

D. M. VAIL.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m

ALL WELCOME

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

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(Judges v. 11.)

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1918. NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LUKE V. 31, 32.

THE words this morning resting on my mind are the words of the dear Redeemer. Although I cannot turn right to them in the Scriptures, I can quote them now and look up the text afterward. The words are: "They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

The whole truth of the dear Redeemer is based upon facts in themselves, carried from these natural things by faith only to spiritual and divine things. In other words, they are carried from natural things to the things of the gospel. I do not suppose that there is one in the house to-day or one person on earth but what knows it is a self-evident conclusion that a person in good health—no pain, no sickness, taking refreshing sleep, has no need of a physician, and it is repulsive for them to think of taking medicine they do not need. I want now to call your attention, my friends, to the circumstances under which He used these words. He had sat down to eat with publicans and sinners and with unwashed hands. The scribes and Pharisees did not agree upon most of their traditions, but they agreed on this subject: that it was very wrong for a person, a good man, to eat with publicans and sinners, and especially it was a violation of the law of Moses to eat with unwashed hands. Jesus sat down with just such company as that, taking the meal literally, in order that the scribes and Pharisees might propound a question, which they did: Why is it thy Master eats with publicans and sinners, and with unwashed hands? Is he so low down as that, such a sinner as that? They as much as said: Would he sink himself so low as to be seen in such company as that? The home-made idea of religion was disgusting. But the dear Redeemer intended to impart a lesson here which should be a comfort to every sick soul, and he imparted that lesson. Jesus, knowing the thoughts and the words especially of individuals, addressed these words so as to bring them to the attention of home-made religionists and Pharisees and Sadducees. He answered them, saying, I am eating with publicans and sinners, it is true. You are whole in yourselves, considering you need not a Savior, you need no physician. Just as

a man sound and well, so are the Pharisees, they need no physician; and as you do not need a physician I have not come to cure you. Just as long as you are in that frame of mind, safe and secure in the religion you have worked up for yourselves, there is no need of me. But his summons here appears. Of the definition of these words of the dear Redeemer I will speak awhile the best I can. In all ages of the world, even to the time of creation, there have been two classes of people religiously. You will find it in the days of Abraham, and can apply it all the way down, that those whom God had called and separated unto himself for the accomplishment of his great and glorious power were looked down upon by those who considered themselves righteous, although they themselves were the worst of sinners. Because they could not read what was in the heart of Noah and others they discarded them and set them aside. That same principle exists to-day; we find it in our own flesh, which lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. This makes the warfare in the heart and mind of every child of grace to-day. Notice, if you please, this group of christians that objected to the Savior eating with publicans and sinners. When the Savior came on the earth and began to preach his own everlasting gospel his bitterest words were against that class of people: Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye do indeed make clean your outward appearance, but within you are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. So far as their outward life was concerned, and their every day walk, no man could condemn them. Individuals who rely upon goodness make it their religion; that is where the objection comes in. I have said, and I will say again, that I have never heard of an Old School Baptist on account of his belief, whether he had hope of salvation or not, to do other than walk uprightly. I have never heard of an Old School Baptist encouraging his children to swear or to drunkenness, or do violence or sinful things, but to the contrary, I say without fear of successful contradiction that the Baptists have raised their children to become as respectable and as good citizens as any other denomination. But that is not the point. I have never heard of an Old School Baptist saying to one of his children, If you will be a good boy, or a good girl, God will take you to heaven for being good. Now, it is that principle which the dear Redeemer rebuked; it is the untruths they are uttering. You as much as say within yourself that you are well, you have no sickness at all, there is no pain bothering you about your sins, you are not self-convicted for anything you shall do, because you are walking uprightly, and so on; that is why they do not want a physician.

Now I want to speak a little further about them that are sick. Any naturally good are in their natural element, as much so as a fish in water, but it is impossible for them to see themselves wretched sinners in the sight of God, to mourn and grieve over their condition, when up to that time they had never seen themselves as sinners. It is one thing for an individual to be a sinner and know it, and it is quite another thing for one to be a vile sinner and ignorant of it. All the saints of God are sinners, but all sinners are not saints. Now let me repeat that: all saints are sinners, but all sinners are not saints. Well, who are the saints? Those sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ and called; and that sanctification, my friends, took place before this world began. First, sanctifi-

cation, second, preservation in Christ, third, called. This is the work of God; it began in eternity, and will be continued until time shall end. Sanctification simply means "set apart." God set apart an innumerable host of the human race thousands upon thousands of years ago, set them apart for his eternal purpose, and preserved them in Christ Jesus before the world began. You see the good housewife, when fruit begins to ripen in the summer and fall of the year, going or sending to the orchard and gathering the sound, nice fruit before it falls, that she may preserve it before it falls off and becomes bruised, and she preserves it and sets it away, and it will stay preserved for years. This is a single illustration of the preservation of God—that he called, sanctified and preserved them in Christ Jesus before they fell—before it was too late.

Not long ago, one Sunday afternoon after the meeting in Baltimore, I was walking on the sidewalk with brother Search, who was an experienced brother, who is gone now. In the midst of our conversation he said: "Brother Eubanks, in reading Dr. Gill closely I find there were no plans for salvation whatever entered into until after man fell under the law and under the curse." Pointing up to a six or eight story building on the other side of the street I said: "Brother Search, if a man had fallen from the top story of that building to the sidewalk and killed himself yesterday, and I were putting up a scaffold to-day, and you happened along, saw me putting up the scaffold and asked me what I was doing, and I said, I am putting up a scaffold to catch the man that fell yesterday and killed himself, what answer could you make?" He dropped his head, laughed and said: "That won't do." "No," said I, "if there had not been a plan sufficient to catch the man before he fell, it would have been entirely too late, and he would have killed himself. Here the preservation, my friends, is the preservation in Christ Jesus. The saints are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and nobody can rob them of that inheritance. Inquiry comes to us, Was I thought of, was I preserved in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that I should be holy? There is nothing short of this, my friends, that will save such sinners as you and I. The call of God is always effectual. You may take the Old Testament and read it from first to last, and you will find that the call was always effectual, that it produced the desired effect. I am not going to talk at length on this, but simply wish to call your attention to this fact, that Abraham was a Chaldean. As to his real origin we have no account, other than that he was a Chaldean, and suddenly one day his name was called. He was quite a youth, he heard his name called, "Abraham." There was something or other in the sound of that word that went down into his soul with power, which instantly made him inquire as to it: Here am I, Lord. It was the effect of the call. When God called him he did not call others around him, but he singled him out and simply called his name, and that was enough. You may go through the whole Bible and you will find that the call is always that way. When Samuel was a very small boy his mother gave him to the high priest to be dedicated to the purpose of God. One night he heard his name called, "Samuel." He rose from where he was, supposing it was the high priest who had called him; but Eli said, I did not call you, my son, go back and lie down where you were. There was

something or other that troubled him; he was hardly still when his name was called again, "Samuel," and he again arose and went to the high priest a second time, and said, Here am I. The high priest perceived that it was of the Lord, and he said to Samuel: Now go and lie down, and if your name is called again say, Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth thee. What was the result? His name was called twice: "Samuel, Samuel." Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth thee. Go and tell Eli that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity he has put on it; because he made himself vile his sons were vile, and he restrained them not. What heavier message could have been given him to deliver? Eli was his father, so to speak, his protector, his guide, his counsel, and now to go and tell him this. It is death to me, but I must do it. This is the effect of a call, and God's call is always effectual. It matters not, dear sinner, where you are or what you are doing, you cannot do other than heed the call when it is given you. The father cannot do anything for his child in the way of salvation, for it is God alone who does that.

I want to talk a little more about the circumstances which surround these words of the dear Redeemer: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." This reverses the very best judgment which is given by the "Reverend" benches of the day, because they advise all the people to be religious so that God will save them. Now understand me; I am not objecting to the people being morally good, but I object to the idea of them relying upon that for life and salvation. In other words, the general belief is that if you do not make the first step toward religion God will never make one toward you; that it depends upon you. I have seen men rise before congregations; I have heard them say, It is entirely up to you; if you make the first step God will make two toward you. Now if this were true, he would be calling those who are not sinners; he would be calling those who were not sensible that they were sinners, whereas a child of grace is always conscious of the fact that he is a sinner, a vile sinner, and, as I remarked before, all sinners are not saints, but all saints are sinners. All men are not called by God the Father, for if they were called they would instantly see that they were sinners, but they cannot see it until then, and it takes the call of God to make a sinner know he is really vile in God's sight. If you in your heart realize that you are a sinner, a wretched sinner, and that feeling remains with you, I say to you that you have an interest in the blood of the Redeemer, and that your sins are washed away, because God never shows one that he is a sinner unless he forgives him his sins.

I was serving a church once, and there was a woman who often came to the meeting. She always sat near the middle of the house. One day just as I started to dismiss the meeting she arose and said: "I want to live with you in the church. I am not fit to come in, and what am I to do?" There was not one in the house but what felt fellowship for her. That is the experience of grace; it always has that effect. There is always a feeling that they are saved by the grace of God alone, and they know it to be true. I will illustrate this by calling your attention to one case. There was a Pharisee, a chief among them. All his habits of life were so strict and so pure in the eyes of men, that is, as touching the righteousness which was in the law of Moses, that he was a blameless man. No man can

beat that. I never heard in all my life of any man who was as strict in his every day life, and still he was not a child of grace, because he wanted all christians put to death, and even gave his consent when Stephen was stoned to death, and held the garments of those who stoned him. Notwithstanding his whole religion, notwithstanding the fact that he was such a cruel man, he hoped for the mercy of God, and yet never saw himself as a sinner. The time finally came when he was struck down by the power of the Almighty, and the voice came to him as he was on his way to Damascus to further afflict that people. He heard the voice of God saying, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? and immediately he fell on his face and answered, Who art thou, Lord? He saw himself for the first time a sinner. A new light had burst upon him. I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. What wilt thou have me to do? He had known precisely what to do up to that moment, but now he did not know, he felt uncertain. Arise and go into the city and into the street that is called straight, and there it shall be told thee what thou must do, and also that you shall suffer many things for my sake; and the effect of going from the darkness into the glorious gospel became so bright that he was blinded, and thus blind he was sent to a certain house and there remained for several days blind. God spoke to a servant and told him to go to this house, for Saul of Tarsus was there, and speak to him; and the servant was sore afraid, for he had heard of Saul. But God said, Fear not, for behold he prayeth; and as soon as the servant heard this he knew that Saul was turned from his purpose. That very moment the servant started to do God's bidding, and as soon as he entered where Saul was his first words were, Brother Saul, because he was a praying man. Brother Saul, receive thy sight, and the scales fell from his eyes and he saw; and he immediately began to preach the things of Jesus, proclaiming that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, and that is the meaning of what the Savior said to the Pharisees: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

I will say no more, for I have talked longer than I really should have done. Repentance is often named in the Bible and read by many people, but it is as little understood by the common masses of the people as any other portion of gospel truth. The Bible says that repentance is God's gift, consequently we could not live without repentance. It is the necessary gift of the Spirit of God to us. I will have to leave the subject, feeling that I have only touched a little upon it, for your consideration. May God bless you. Amen.

[SERMON preached by Elder J. G. Eubanks, in the Old School Baptist meeting-house, 13th and Jefferson Sts., Wilmington, Del., Feb. 10th, 1918.—ED.]

ATLANTIC, N. C., Feb. 25, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Since the cyclone, January 15th, I have had many changes of thought. The way in which our brethren, sisters and friends have responded to our call for help has very much humbled me before the Lord. It has made me feel that the Lord has not forgotten to be gracious, that he is full of tender mercies, and remembers the poor and the needy. At first when I went to look at the wrecked meeting-house I could not help shedding tears, to think that the house in which I had tried to preach the word of the Lord for thirty-five years was no more. I thought of the

joys and the sorrows we had had together there, and felt that the Lord had given both to us, that we should remember him and our dependence on him, but I did not feel reconciled to this visitation. On the third Sunday I was at Kingston, N. C., to attend my appointment. I got to the meetinghouse first, and sat down to read, but our loss continued to be on my mind. Presently there appeared to be a whisper in my heart which said, Do you know that the destruction of that house saved the families near by? I mused on these words for awhile, and it appeared to me that our meetinghouse had been made use of by the Lord to burst the storm, and to save some of those who lived near. When I got home I went to the place and saw that there were three courses of the storm that went away from that place, and each one of them was of great violence. I stood and thought what would have been the consequence if they had continued in one volume. My heart was made to rejoice that the lives of our neighbors had been saved, and it might be that even further on in our little town there could have been much more damage. I have not been able to grieve so much since that time. I felt that the Lord had given that house to us, that he had taken it away, and that it was for a purpose of his own glory. I also felt that the Lord would give us another place of worship. I feel glad that all things are in the hands of our God, and to know that he is the living God, that he doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, that none can stay his hand nor say, What doest thou, Jehovah? He does not give us any account of his matters, nor ask questions of men. He is in nowise dependent on man for help. He is God. While he is the God of such wonderful power, he is also the God of the most tender mercies. Indeed, if it were not for his great power he could not be merciful. If the devil, or men, or angels, could change him, thwart his purposes, or in any other thing turn him from his course, his mercies would fail to reach his purposed place. I am glad that this cannot be. He is perfect in his mercies and in his judgments. His judgments are eternal, therefore they never change for any purpose. His course is straight forward, and without any stumbling. His mind is always the same, and he never forgets. If there is a little one hidden in some lonesome corner of the housetop, the lonesome closet, the forest or on the great deep, the battlefield, where the guns roar, threatening death, or though death itself shall appear, the Lord is there to hear the groanings of the contrite one, and to save him who calleth on his holy name. Ah, if one is so faint that he cannot call, if words are denied him, and the fountain of tears is dried up, until he is a dry bone of the valley, yet the Lord looks on him who even thinks on his name. Or if he be so dead that thoughts are denied him, our God has power to raise him from that dead slumber and to show him the way of salvation. He has power over death, and delivers from the lowest hell. O that we might ever be given to trust him, and to love him.

I want to thank all those who have sent us help in our distress. The Lord bless you.

Yours in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

WEISER, Idaho, May 2, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I will write a few lines this morning and you may use them as you see fit.

Others say to me that if they believed as I do they would not preach, and would take their fill of sin. They seem to think of the Old Baptists now about in the same way as they did of them in the apostles' day. (Romans iii. 8.) They (the unbelievers) affirmed the apostles taught, "Let us do evil, that good may come." But the apostles neither taught nor believed such, neither indeed do we. Jonah, after learning obedience by the things which he suffered, preached the preaching God bade him. Paul said he conferred not with flesh and blood, neither received he it of man, but by the Holy Ghost, and I think Paul used an expression that every truly called preacher can say amen to, namely, Woe is me if I preach not the gospel. So if they believed as we do they would preach; and as to taking their fill of sin, this sounds very odd to us, who once saw we were so full of sin that there was room for no more, and because of this fullness, and knowledge of what sin is, we saw ourselves dead in sin, and no power to change our condition, and realized that as we were we never could see God in peace. O when you know this is your condition, when you realize you are lost, and all on account of sin, I expect you have about had your fill of sin; there is no more enjoyment in a thing you realize has condemned you, and if possible you never would commit another sin. But truly the law has entered, sin has revived and we have died. What to? To the love of sin; sin now appears exceeding sinful. If we are dead to sin how can we live in it longer? It looks as though one would have gotten his fill of sin, and I think he would be as we are: hate and fear sin. If I know anything of the travel of a child of God, the desire is always to be free from sin, to walk in the footsteps of the Master; teach us thy laws, cause us to know thee, enable us to walk in the paths of righteousness. O how often the poor, weak, doubting child must go to secret confession and there acknowledge his sin and beg forgiveness. This is because of sin; do you think such an one has any desire for more sin? Because of this continual, ever-present sin bringing us into new worries every day we get so tired we sometimes desire to leave this sinful world and be at rest. Yes, we have learned to hate sin and love righteousness so that in the morning our desire is to spend the day in that way that at nighttime we can lie down in peace, and hope all is well. But almost all the time, after looking over the day, we must start our secret prayers with a confession, for we have fallen far short of our desires. We are somewhat like the apostle: How to perform that which is good we find not. The same apostle said, To will is present. Then, brethren, we are in good company, even if we "can't help it." Then the Lord must not only work the will, but also the doing, if there is ever any good done by us. Of course the Israelites did at times repent of their sins, and cried to God, and he heard their cry. Repentance is godly sorrow for sin, and is the gift of God. True, sincere prayer is the gift of God, and one can no more help repenting when repentance is given than he could make a world; even so with prayer, because it is the sincere desire of the heart, and not merely lip service. So, brethren, if we have ever repented, ever prayed, ever performed a good work or thought a good thought, it is the gift of God, for every perfect gift is from God, so we can

truly say it is not by our works, but by the grace of God we are what we are. For me to claim a blessing or reward for anything good the Lord had blessed me to do I surely would have to change materially, and there are some Scriptures that would have to be gotten rid of. Read Luke xvi. 7–10.

Yours in hope,

T. E. ATTEBERY.

TRENTON, N. J., May 30, 1918.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—Many days have passed since I tried to write anything of my experience in the things that are dearest to the hearts of the people of God. What I may say will not be from worldly wisdom, but as I am led by the Spirit of God. The words of David have been in my mind most of the day and I will write them here: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God." In these words there seems to be a rebuke that any soul that has ever tasted of the good things of Christ should ever be cast down, but in my case it seems that the blessing of God's presence has been taken from me for so long a time that my heart is indeed sick. How can we hope in God when all things are against us? Only by the strength of Christ and the grace of God can we believe that any of the precious promises of God are for us, and take them as messages of comfort to our souls. Months have passed since I was able to enjoy any of the good things from the Master's table, and the crumbs that have fallen have not been for me. I have been tempted in all things, and the greatest has been to absent myself from the gatherings of the brethren. I could go and not hear the preaching or conversation with a spiritual ear, so why go? Why humble the flesh to attend the meetings? The devil has been ever ready with suggestions, and I have been too willing to listen, and have experienced the death of "the soul that sinneth, it shall die," and truly no one could be more dead to spiritual things than I. By the grace of God it has pleased him to say unto my soul, Come forth; and though bound hand and foot I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in his own good time he will loose me and let me go, and I shall run and not be weary, walk and not faint. The question comes often to my mind, Do I know what suffering is? Have I truly been encompassed with sorrows of hell? Have I been tried with fire and purged as gold, that I may come forth and glorify God? There is no doubt in my mind but that I have been wandering in darkness and dwelling in the lowest depths, but there is no help for me in the strength and counsel of man; all my help is in him who is God over all. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," bear all things with his everlasting arm underneath; knowing that, why should I despair? In his presence is warmth, life, peace and contentment, but it seems so long to wait for his time to again assure me that Christ died for me. I need this assurance often, for I am very slow in learning that all things are in his hand, and my life is only his gift, and whether it ends with this world, or lasts to glorify him in eternity, has been known to him from the beginning, but my poor soul wants the assurance from above. As a small child realizes that its strength, comfort and nourishment are in its mother's love, so do I know that without God there is no strength, no comfort for the soul, no joy in this life to a child of God who has been taught by the sufferings of Jesus that he has been born in the kingdom

of God's dear Son, and has been made a joint-heir with Christ in that suffering. We learn nothing while enjoying the light of his countenance, because we are satisfied to be there, have no desire for anything else but to live in his presence; but when darkness comes then do we learn that in him is our strength, and without him are we weak indeed. The longest, darkest journey will be ended, step by step; no one can take but a step at a time, and though we stumble and fall, every step means nearer home, and my prayer is that I may be given strength for each step, and not be left to go alone, for I shall fall if I ever try to stand in my own strength.

These lines have been written without any thought of what they might be, and I will leave them to your judgment to do with as you see fit. I need the prayers of the saints, and will say with one of old, Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Your sister, in hope of eternal life,

ELIZABETH L. FETTER.

JUSTUS, Pa., June 4, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending you a letter written by sister Carrie Eaton for publication in the SIGNS if you think best. G. W. GOODRICH.

WILKINSBURG, Pa., May, 1918.

To my dear home church, at Justus, Pa.

DEAR KINDRED IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—As I cannot be with you to-day, I trust my thoughts will be with you in christian love and fellowship. If I had the gift of writing perhaps I could write something of the thoughts that are passing through my mind while in this land of dearth, but I can only say that I am a poor, weak, dependent creature, saved by rich and sovereign grace, if saved at all, for I have no merits of my own to plead. I fully realize that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and am made to cry out, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. I have been thinking how wonderfully blessed we are as children of God, in having the wonderful gifts in the editors of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and in many of our ministers. What a wonderful gift has been our beloved brother, Elder S. H. Durand, to the church, and to all. He preached the first gospel sermon I ever heard, and I was baptized by him nearly forty years ago, when he was pastor of the church in Waverly, N. Y. Last, but not least, in our beloved pastor, Elder D. M. Vail. He, too, is a wonderful gift to us, in rightly dividing the word of truth. I love them all dearly for the truth's sake. I wish it were possible to meet with you all to-day and listen to the word of truth. I have not forgotten, and am not likely to forget, the first and last time I looked into your dear faces, which was the second Sunday of last July. My cup was not only filled to the brim, but was filled to overflowing. All praise to the blessed name of Jesus, who has promised to be with his loved ones always, it seems that I have enjoyed more of the sweetness of his glorious presence in the past year than ever before, for which I find my praise to him is very feeble at the best.

Dear kindred, forget not the assembling of yourselves together, and when you can say, "Our Father," remember a lonely old and unworthy sister at the throne of grace. What wonders there are in that word "grace."

> "Grace, 'tis a charming sound,
> Harmonious to the ear."

Grace from first to last. May the dear Lord bless you all with his rich grace, is the sincere wish of your unworthy and affectionate sister,

CARRIE EATON.

IONA STATION, Ont., July 1, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I received a letter from Elder Durand, addressed to the church, and which was read before the church at their quarterly meeting in Ekfrid, and I, as clerk, was asked to send a copy for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which I herewith inclose. We had a good meeting; Elders B. F. Coulter and P. W. Sawin were the visiting ministers, and both spoke comfortingly to my needy soul, for, as one of old said, I was brought low. We had another good meeting yesterday, commemorating the one hundredth anniversary of the origin of the church in Canada, at a place about half way between the Dunwich and Duart meetinghouses. Elder Sawin, who is remaining for a month in Canada, was with Elder Slauson. There was a large gathering of people from all the meeting places, and as there were appointments for two meetings, one in the forenoon and the other in the afternoon, and as there are not many of our faith conveniently near now, it was arranged that each family take provisions for a lunch, and there was an abundance for the large assemblage. After lunch all joined in singing hymns until the time for the afternoon meeting to begin. It was indeed a pleasant time, the weather being all that could be desired for such an occasion. It seemed like the revival of the days when large congregations would assemble at the regular appointments.

Deacon D. W. Campbell, of Duart, is in very poor health, and I feel sure he would be glad to have a letter from you.

I must close. We are in our usual health at present, and hope you and yours are in the best of health.

With kind regards, I remain unworthily your brother, in hope of eternal life,

JOHN T. KERR.

To the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, when assembled in your quarterly meeting, in Ekfrid, on the fourth Sunday in June, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I was with you at your quarterly meeting in June, 1867, by invitation of Elder Thomas McColl, sent to Elder Gilbert Beebe. This was my first visit to you, and it was memorable to me, and to many others. The preaching was done by Elders McColl, Beebe, Piper and myself. I think it could be truthfully said that the word as preached came to the people not in word only, but in power in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance. As I visited among the brethren my heart was drawn out in love to them, and in sweet gospel fellowship. I continued to visit them at their four quarterly meetings, and they have been very kind to me. My visits have always been by special invitation, which I consider necessary in the ministry visiting churches. Elder McColl once, in the presence of some brethren, gave me a call to become the pastor, but, warm as I have ever felt toward the brethren there, I could not at any time feel it to be from the Lord. The church once gave me a standing invitation to visit them when I could, without waiting for a special invitation. After Elder William Pollard became their pastor they continued the invitation to me. I have been favored to visit you at Ekfrid each time the quarterly meeting was held there with three exceptions. I hoped, and much desired, to meet with you this year, but cannot arrange to do so. I am disappointed and sorry, for I want to see you all and hear you talk and preach once more, but the Lord will do what is right. I have seldom failed to have some special seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord when at your meetings in Ekfrid, and at

other places of meeting. My desire and prayer is that the Lord will be with you at your meeting, and with your pastor, and with the visiting brethren who may be with you, and may they be given a word in season for those who are weary. The Lord has favored you in days that are past as a church faithful and true, and I trust he will continue thus to bless you and keep you in his love.

Your brother in gospel bonds,

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., June 10, 1918.

BENTON, Miss., April 19, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—If you will allow me to address you as such. I feel unworthy to claim a name among God's people, so I hope you will pardon my imperfections. I am behind with my subscription, and not able to pay you all now, but inclose two dollars, which please place to my credit. I have had much sickness in my family. My dear wife had appendicitis, and I had to send her to a sanitarium for treatment, which was very expensive, but I do not regret it, for she has been restored to health, for which I am thankful.

Dear brethren, I want to tell you how much I esteem the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It is the first Primitive Baptist paper I ever saw; that was in 1866 or 1867, and the Old Baptists, so far as I knew, all indorsed it. But there are now some who say that if God predestinated all things which come to pass it would make him the author of sin. My Bible tells me that by man came sin, so the penalty is upon all, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. So all the human family, as they stand related to the earth, are in a state of condemnation, and if one is justified it is through Jesus. I always thought that predestination was predestination, and if this is not so, tell me what man can do without it. Is a man so full of predestination that he cannot allow the great Jehovah the same privilege he takes himself? Known unto God are all his works from the beginning. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. * * * For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works."

Well, for fear of wearying you I will close, and ask you all to pray for me, a poor sinner. I am in my seventy-first year.

Your unworthy brother,

J. W. WOODS.

CUYAHOGA FALLS, Ohio, March 7, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed please find check to pay for the SIGNS. I am very anxious to get every number, as I am so situated that I cannot get to hear the gospel preached, and I read and reread the paper as soon as I get it. I know it is the Lord's will, and feel that I am too unworthy to hear the sound of his praise. I do not understand my case, for I feel so vile and prone to sin I fear I am not born again; it makes me shrink to think of it. I have received good letters from different ones, one especially from brother Cyrus Cross, of Cleveland. I have tried until I know for a fact that I have no control of natural things; the wind bloweth where it listeth, and when I would do good, evil is present with me. My daily prayer is, Lord, be merciful. The only spark of hope I have is when I look back to the time when it seemed I could see my dear Savior in all his love,

and he told me I was one of his children and my sins were all forgiven. These are the most beautiful things I can think of, but are they true, or did I just imagine them? May God be the judge. I am truly willing to put all my trust in the omnipotent One, who is Alpha and Omega, he who could lay down his life and take it again. O what wonderful power! He holds the waters in his hand and works all things according to his pleasure. A day with him is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. O mortal man, why think you can do anything to save yourself? He has all power over sin and death, and came to save all that the Father gave him. God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. We do not understand it; man knoweth nothing.

Dear editors, this is not for publication, but only to let you know just how I feel, for I am low down in the depths much of the time. My work is with many men, and I hear nothing but cursing and swearing every day. I ask you to please remember me in your prayers, and if you know any who would write me I will surely answer, and thank you a thousand times. I had no idea of writing except to renew my subscription when I commenced. May God bless you all.

Unworthily,

C. LOU WRIGHT.

ARDMORE, Tenn., Feb. 24, 1918.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS;—As my subscription to the dear old SIGNS expired some time ago, I am now sending two dollars for its renewal. I have thought for some few days past of having it stopped, but I can hardly get along without it, for I enjoy reading your editorials, and all of the many good letters, as I truly believe the writers are guided by the unerring Spirit or they could not write as they do. Most of them describe my feelings, and I hope I love them for the truth's sake, but I do not feel worthy of the blessing of reading the grand and glorious truth that I think the SIGNS OF THE TIMES contends for. I am not a member of any denomination, and have no desire to become a member of any but the Old School or Primitive Baptists, but feel altogether unfit and unworthy to ask a place among such good people as I think them to be, but my desire is, I hope, for the welfare of those dear people, for I believe they are chosen and redeemed of the Lord. I wish I knew I were one of the chosen few, but fear I am not. I feel to be in a class by myself.

I will close. W. J. PYLANT.

MANSFIELD, Georgia.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been impressed with a subject we had at our meeting Sunday. Brother Cook took for his text the last clause of the nineteenth verse of the fourteenth chapter of John: "Because I live, ye shall live also." Brother Cook preached it to its fullest extent, followed by brother Lee Adams with a good talk, then I had a little to say in my weak, humble way. This is a good passage of Scripture, whether I shall be able to draw anything from it or not. He is the way, the truth and the life. When I was dead in trespasses and sins he called me with an holy calling, translated me from nature to grace; he lifted me out of the miry clay in which I was sunk and made me sing the songs of Zion. I have been cast down, but yet live to sing: Cast down, but not destroyed. Oft the united powers of hell have sore annoyed my soul, yet I live this precious truth to tell: cast down, but not destroyed. Christ said, Whosoever believ-

eth on me shall never perish, but have everlasting life. Christ said, Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. It takes the love of Christ to carry us through the storm tides of this life. This is the gift of God: Christ bleeding and dying on the rugged tree of the cross for the remission of our sins, that we might live instead of perishing. There is reality and immortality in these things. It is the greatest theme that ever engaged the attention of mortal man; it is the only thing that is worth anything. None can depend upon the puny arm of flesh for salvation. Christ said, I am the vine, ye are the branches. Without this blessed hope I would be miserable.

I will close by admonishing you all to contend for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints. May God's blessing rest upon you all.

Your unworthy brother in Christ,

J. C. KENERLEY.

YORK, Nebr., April 23, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed five dollars, to help you in publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. This is something I have wanted to do for a long time, for I do enjoy the paper, and know of many, many others who do.

Our little church here at York is still alive, and we try and meet, though only a few of us, to keep up our meetings, though our beloved pastor has been sick for nearly six months. He has been in a hospital for several weeks, but is coming home soon, and we hope he may be raised up and preach again for us. We have missed him sorely, but we have been blessed in having other ministers with us. Brother Carmichael has been talking for us, and a few weeks ago the church gave him liberty to speak wherever a door was opened for him. Next Saturday and Sunday is our communion time, and we expect Elder W. S. Craig to minister to us.

May the Lord prosper you, and give you ability to publish the SIGNS in the future as in the past.

Yours, with love to all,

(MRS.) A. B. HANSON.

JUNCTION CITY, Kans., May 10, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—You will find inclosed a postal money order for two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

I got caught between two trucks, and it injured me so that I have not done any work for more than a month, but am able to get around some, for which I hope I feel thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

Please publish this so the brethren will know my post-office address, which is R. 7, Junction City, Kansas.

I am crippled both in my hips and shoulders, so will close, with love to all the dear saints of God.

As ever, your brother in hope,

J. H. HAMMONS.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1918.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

EZEKIEL XXXVII. 3.

"CAN these bones live?"

How wonderful and good it is and has been that the Lord has preached his gospel in all ages of the world to his chosen people. When we consider the gospel as the message of salvation to lost and ruined man we can see the mercy of God in preaching his gospel. When we consider it as the power of God we can understand why, in the wisdom of God, that such power should visit mankind. Before the transgression of the law there was no necessity of glad tidings, nor was there need of demonstration of God's power to save; but immediately after Adam's sin good news was vouchsafed to him in the promise of victory over the power and work of Satan through the Seed of the woman. Not many years after that great and precious promise the Lord worked in Abel to preach remission of sins through the shedding of the blood of the lamb, and he was given the witness that through the shedding of the blood of the Lamb of God he was righteous. Not many years after that display of his grace he manifested his power over death in the translation of Enoch; and "Enoch was not, for God took him." After that the Lord preached his doctrine of electing love in the salvation of Noah and his family in the ark. After this he made known the doctrine of effectual calling by calling Abraham and separating him from his own house. After this he preached his doctrine of predestination in declaring that in Abraham's Seed all nations should be blessed. This he confirmed by an oath. After this he presented the experience of his people in famine and starvation in their own land (nature), and then sent them into the land of plenty, where Joseph their brother had preceded them and made provision for them. After this the doctrine of mediation was preached in making Moses a mediator between the Lord and his brethren. Then the frailty and forgetfulness of his people was shown in their worship of the golden calf. At that time God's broken law was made manifest when Moses threw down the tables of stone and broke them, on which was written the law of commandments. After which was presented the keeping of the law by Christ in placing the tables of the law in the ark of the covenant. Then the doctrine of the priesthood of Christ was presented in appointing Aaron high priest to enter into the holy of holies to offer blood for the sins of the people. The end of the law was shown in the death of Moses, he never entering the land of Canaan, or gospel rest. The leadership of Jesus then was shown in the appointment of Joshua as leader of the people across the Jordan (judgment) into the inheritance of the people of God. After this the wisdom of Jesus and his power to build his church of lively stones was presented in the anointing of Solomon to be king, and in giving him wisdom above all other men and commandment to build the house unto

the Lord. After this the gospel ministry was foreshadowed in sending the prophets to the Israelites with the commandment to speak comfortably unto Jerusalem. Then in this subject before us is shown the dead, lost and ruined state of all men in the figure of the dry bones and the fulfillment of God's promise to raise the dead. Ezekiel tells us that the hand of the Lord was upon him, and he was carried out in the Spirit of the Lord and set down in the midst of the valley, which was full of bones, and that he was caused to pass by them round about, and he discovered that there were very many of them in the open valley and they were very dry. Ezekiel, like all other prophets and those who preached the gospel in word, life or figure, was under the influence of the Spirit of the Lord. We understand that the Lord worked in Ezekiel, giving him the wonderful vision of dry bones and the interpretation of it by causing the bones to live. The hand of the Lord means the power of God, therefore the power of the Lord was upon him, and he was carried out of himself and surroundings and given the revelation, as it were. We have not thought for a long time that the terms, carried out, and he carried me away in the Spirit, mean that those given to behold such wonders of the Lord had to change location or take a journey in order to see the things of God. This is clearly shown by the experience of John on the isle of Patmos. All that was shown to him was shown while he was there. When one is given to behold the kingdom of God and its glory and unspeakable beauty, he or she is not transported from one place to another. The revelation may be given at the business desk, surrounded by cares and duties; it may be given when between the plow handles; it may be given when about household duties or in the silent hours of the night; but whenever or wherever, that one is under the hand or power of the Lord, and by his Spirit is shown the wonderful things of God. Ezekiel therefore was shown the valley full of bones, and they were very dry, indicating that all life in them was gone. It will be noticed, too, that the bones were all in an open valley—all on the surface of the earth, visible to the eye of the prophet. Hence this vision of dead bones could not represent the resurrection of the dead, except in the quickening of dead sinners by the Spirit of God. Had the bones been buried they would have been out of sight, but they were all in plain view. The prophet was no doubt amazed at such a sight, and wondered what it could mean, and in the midst of his amazement the Lord asked him if the bones could live. Startled at the question and seeing that by all the powers of earth it was impossible, he answered, "O Lord God, thou knowest." It would be as reasonable for a court of justice to ask, Can a guilty man be clean in the eyes of the law? All intelligent people know that such is an utter impossibility; therefore if a guilty man cannot possibly be clean, but rather condemned by the law, how could dead, dry bones live? Ezekiel did not know, but confessed that the Lord knew. The prophet and the apostle Peter were companions in faith, for Peter said to the resurrected Lord Jesus, "Thou knowest all things." Yes, he knoweth all things, and volumes could be written upon the foreknowledge of God, for indeed it is all foreknowledge—nothing new with him. Everything, beginning with creation, has existed and transpired according to his foreknowledge and plan embraced in his foreknowledge.

The Lord commanded Ezekiel to "prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord." This shows the class that hears the word of the Lord. The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. The word of the Lord to the dry bones was, Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. The knowledge of God and salvation in his Son comes to man only as he is made alive from the dead. You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. In that state of death and condemnation all men, as dead, dry bones, are without hope and without God in the world. How infinitely wonderful is the doctrine of God preached in this vision of dry bones! Nothing even in the New Testament seems clearer, even though "plainness of speech" is employed there by the Holy Spirit. We want to emphasize the fact that Ezekiel was moved by the Spirit of God to speak to the dry bones, and not one word did he utter except that which the Lord commanded him, therefore the word had effect upon and prospered in the thing whereunto the Lord sent it. As the message was delivered there was a noise, and, behold, a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. This scene has sometimes, to us, associated itself with the day of Pentecost, when all nations heard the word of God and there was a coming together, bone to his bone. We are not prepared to say whether or not there was any connection between the two, further than the quickening of dry bones and dead sinners. Perhaps no man has ever been able to enter into the wonder and amazement of Ezekiel when he heard the noise and beheld the bones coming together, "bone to his bone." There was absolutely no mismatching of the bones, such as bones forming or coming to the wrong body, it was bone to his bone; in other words, all the bones of each and every body came together to form the body, or frame, that originally was, and so complete was the work that every bone came to and fitted into its own place. This same thing in another sense was done by the power of God when all living things entered the ark. They did not need to be directed here and there, but each entered into its place prepared beforehand. The dry bones were operated upon by the word and Spirit of God until they lived and stood upon their feet an exceeding great army, and then the Lord said, This is the whole house of Israel. This wonderful thing, no doubt, has its reference to the condition of national Israel in its state of deadness because of rebellion and transgression and God's ultimate mercy upon them, but as said in the introduction of this article, God's everlasting doctrine of power, grace, quickening, saving, and everything pertaining to making alive the dead and saving them with an everlasting salvation, is here presented. "The whole house of Israel" not only means all the seed of Abraham, but the whole spiritual house, showing the condition by nature of every son and daughter of Adam chosen in Christ before the world began, and that it requires the power of God to deliver them from that lost and ruined

state. Unity is also shown, or preached, in the coming of bone to his bone. The members of Christ's body are called bones several times in the Scriptures, and not one of his bones shall be broken, lost nor marred. Hence, as the children are the bones of his bone, they all come to and center in the one body, the church, which body is the whole house of Israel, raised from the dead in him and by him and stand upon their feet triumphant over sin, death, hell and the grave. All such know the Lord and praise him for his wonderful works to the children of men. Thus we say again, the gospel of God has been preached by him in all ages of the world in sign, figure, vision, promise and so on, and as is said in the book of Revelation, He has his own everlasting gospel to preach, and such preaching will not cease until time shall be no more, then all the redeemed shall join in the song of Moses, the servant of God and the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.

K.

BOOK OF EDITORIALS.

We have on hand a number of copies of the Second Volume of Editorials. This book is made up of editorials written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the Signs of the Times from March, 1842, to March, 1847, and contains 768 pages, neatly bound in cloth.

This work originally sold at two dollars per copy, but as a few of the pages are stained by water we will, as long as the supply lasts, sell them at the extremely low price of seventy-five cents per copy. Postage paid by us. All who wish this book should procure it now, as we will have no more after these are sold.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ZECHARIAH III. 3.

"Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel."

Cotemporary with Nehemiah and Zerubbabel, at the time of the building of the second temple in Jerusalem, Joshua presided as the high priest of Israel, and as such a type of the great High Priest of our profession, who is brought to view in the gospel, as presiding over the building of the spiritual and antitypical temple, which of lively stones is built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ. Christ as the builder of his church was prophesied of by this same prophet in Zech. vi. 12, 13, saying, "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The Branch: and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." The priesthood of Aaron and his sons claimed no regal power, no right to reign or rule, but was confined to the service of the altar, and continually engaged in offering sacrifices for the sins of his people, but in the figure of the man whose name is The Branch is presented a regal or royal priesthood, not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchisedec, and in it is presented the king and priest in one man, whose name is The Branch, and the counsel of peace between them both, that is, between the king and the priest. As all the approved kings of Israel counseled with the priests, and through them re-

ceived counsel from the Lord, they in their communion and consultation pointed to him who should sum up all that was set forth by the prophets, priests and kings in the person of him who is our Prophet, Priest and King, the King of Righteousness, and Priest unto the most high God, and all the counsel of peace involving and embracing the eternal salvation of his church and kingdom is embraced in the official characters which are embodied in and sustained by our Lord Jesus Christ. Men sometimes volunteer their counsels, professedly for peace, and which they seem to flatter themselves will be an improvement on God's counsel; but the counsels of men invariably conflict with the counsel of the Lord, which alone shall stand.

In offering a few remarks on the text which we have placed at the head of this article we propose to notice Joshua in his typical relation to Christ, and of Christ in his vital relation to his church. The person, priesthood and official service of Joshua differed in nothing essential from that of other priests of the same order, but in his name, and connection with the building of the temple, as also in his presentation in the subject under consideration, are found some expressive peculiarities in which he prefigures our Lord Jesus Christ. The name Joshua is in signification the same as Jesus, and signifies a savior, and as such was given to our Lord to assure us that he should save his people from their sins, and Joshua's connection with the building of the temple gives additional significance to him as a type of our great High Priest, but the position occupied by him in our text, and its surroundings, demands our special attention. The prophet says, "And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him." Here, if we comprehend the figure, our Lord Jesus Christ is brought to view in his mediatorial work in his priestly habiliments, as bearing all the tribes of his redeemed Israel, and stands for them before the angel of the divine presence in his holy law. The angel, or spirit of the holy law of God, is the angel of the Lord. God's presence is called his angel, and God appears in his law demanding satisfaction for the sins which Christ in his priesthood came to expiate and make atonement for. No priest or offering under the old dispensation could meet the demands of the law and justice of God, but our spiritual Joshua was able to stand before the angel, and although there resisted in his mediatorial work by Satan, sin, death, hell and the grave, he occupies the place, as one arraigned before the angel, to bear the judgment and meet the awakened sword which God had commanded to smite the shepherd. In his description of this dreadful conflict Jude says, "Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, * * * said, The Lord rebuke thee." From this declaration of Jude we learn what was the ground of contention. By the body of Moses, which God buried in the wilderness, and whose sepulchre could never afterwards be found, we understand is signified the power and dominion of the law as administered by Moses over God's people, Israel, whose demands were met and canceled by our Redeemer, and which in its dominion became dead to them, and they to it, by the body of Christ. In this conflict an effectual appeal was made to God to rebuke the disputing adversary. "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem," the very God of election, whose sovereign

choice of Jerusalem is in the eternal and immutable election of grace, "rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" Observe the figure. After a seventy years' captivity of the children of Israel in Babylon, in which the city had been nearly demolished, the old temple destroyed, its consecrated furniture desecrated and carried away, and few of the citizens permitted to return, what more appropriate figure could represent this preserved remnant according to the election of grace than is here used: "A brand plucked out of the fire?" Nearly consumed, but a brand remains, which must inevitably have been consumed but for the election of grace. Now in the great redemption and deliverance of his chosen remnant our High Priest appears before the angel of our Lord clothed with filthy garments. His work is to purge and cleanse Jerusalem from all her uncleanness, and to do this as her High Priest he must represent her as she truly is, by an assumption of all her sins and pollutions. And the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all. Bearing all the sins of his people he stands before the angel of the divine presence. The flaming eye of the law and justice of the pure and holy God is upon him, and yet he stands clothed in filthy garments before whose searching gaze no unclean or unholy thing can be tolerated or allowed to live. No greater affront could be offered to the law than for the priests to appear before the Lord except in consecrated priestly garments perfectly pure and clean. But wonder, ye heavens, and be astonished, O earth, the High Priest of our profession before the presence of the angel of the Lord in filthy garments; behold, he comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, and he will stain all his raiment. He is made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He is numbered with the transgressors, and bears the sins of many. He is holy, harmless, separate from sinners, and higher than the heavens; he who is the righteousness of God is clothed in filthy garments and stands before the angel. How could this be? The Word which was with God, even the Word which was God, is made flesh. He has taken upon him the seed of Abraham, is made of a woman, is made under the law, to redeem them that are under the law, and in the assumption of the seed of Abraham all the transgressions of that seed are laid upon him, and bearing them in his own body on the tree he stood before the angel, with full ability to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and to finish transgressions and make an end of sin, and to bring in everlasting righteousness. Having as our High Priest made an offering for sin, he has by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified. There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Through the efficient priesthood of our spiritual Joshua a fountain is opened for the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness, for he has himself borne our griefs, carried our sorrows and endured the chastisement of our peace, and with his stripes we are healed. Truly such an High Priest became us. No other priest could, with our sins upon him, have stood before the angel. He only was able to bear the storm of wrath which was due to our transgressions, as none but Jesus was able to lay down his life and then to take it again. Not all the blood that flowed from Hebrew altars, nor all the sacrificial offerings made by Aaron and

his sons, could have purged our hearts from an evil conscience, or qualified us to serve the true God acceptably, but he was delivered up for our offences and raised again for our justification, and so we are freely justified through the redemption that is in him. The brand is rescued from the burning, the fire of righteous indignation and wrath is quenched by the one offering which Jesus Christ, through the eternal Spirit, made of himself unto God, and by the which he has obtained eternal redemption for us. Can we contemplate the subject without feeling emotions of love and gratitude to him who hath loved us and given himself for us? He endured the cross, he despised the shame, he suffered without the camp for us, and shall we, can we, feel reluctant to go unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach? He has redeemed us unto God with his precious blood, plucked us as brands out of the fire, called us by his grace, quickened us by his Spirit and assured us that we shall reign with him in glory. Then what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? No service by him enjoined can be too hard, no sacrifice of ease or wealth, of time or substance, can be too great. If indeed we love him let us keep his commandments.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 15, 1867.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. M. Fenton, at his home, 5128 Master St., Philadelphia, Pa., June 5th, 1918, George E. Cassel and Mary E. Hansell, of Philadelphia.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Elder J. M. Fenton, Pa., $4.00; G. W. Horner, Canada, $2.00; Miss Emma Birdsall, N. Y., $2.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Myrtle Beauchamp was born to Mr. and Mrs. Ely Mitchell in Bell County, Texas, August 14th, 1880, and was married to brother S. J. Beauchamp Dec. 1st, 1895, soon thereafter moving to Coleman County, Texas. To that union were born twelve children, six boys and six girls, three children dying in infancy. An aged mother, sad husband and nine children, together with a host of relatives and friends, mourn her sad demise. Sister Beauchamp professed a hope in Jesus when quite young, and united with the New School Baptists. She became dissatisfied with them and joined the Old School Baptist Church at Hords Creek, in Coleman County, Texas. Brother and sister Beauchamp moved from Coleman County to Runnels County, thence to Tom Green County, thence to Crosby County (on the Texas plains), thence to Wichita Falls, where she contracted pneumonia, and after several days of suffering she fell asleep in Jesus April 26th, 1918. Sister Beauchamp's health had been delicate for years, but she bore her afflictions with fortitude characteristic of a christian. While in her usual health she had a premonition that she was soon to die. Loved ones tried to persuade her to dismiss that impression from her mind, but she could not, and when she arrived in Wichita Falls (coming by rail, while brother Beauchamp came overland by wagon), she stopped off with her niece, Mrs. G. C. Beauchamp. Being in usual health, she told her niece she had come to her house to die. Her niece told her to dismiss that thought from her mind, but she would not, and I feel like saying she could not, for certainly her impressions were of the Lord. All that loving hands, nurses and doctors could do was of no avail; she died at the home of her niece before her husband and children could reach her, which added sorrow to sorrow to the bereaved family. The Lord was with her until death, and enabled her to talk freely of the past, present and future. Well might we adopt the language of David: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Job said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Dear loved ones, I know your hearts are sad; I know from sad experience that I am unable to comfort you in this time of trouble. I commend you to Jesus, who knows your sorrows and who alone can comfort you in your sad bereavement. To the precious children who are bereft of mother I will say, Try to perpetuate the memory of mother, who was your best friend, always ready to sacrifice to your comfort. To the bereaved mother and husband I will say, adopting the language of Paul: But we would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that you sorrow not even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them

also which sleep in Jesus God will bring with him. We feel sure sister Beauchamp is sleeping in Jesus, and our hope is that in the Lord's appointed time this dear sister, together with all the redeemed of the Lord, shall awake with the likeness of Jesus, when mortal shall have put on immortality, and will be wafted home to heaven, to sing redemption through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus our Lord, to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

By request. JOHN R. HAVENS.

Thomas Barton Grafton, my dear brother, and son of the late Elder Wm. Grafton, died May 1st, 1918, at a Baltimore city hospital, under circumstances which were particularly distressing. Thomas was in the best of health, as far as any of us knew, and much pleased over the good position he had secured in the city, having but recently moved to the city from Glen Arm, Baltimore Co., Md. The morning of his death he arose at the usual hour to go to his work, and from some cause which none of us will ever understand he fell down the steps. His daughter, awakened by the awful crash, ran to her father immediately, and found him lying at the foot of the steps in an unconscious condition, from which he never rallied. About four hours later he passed away. The doctors who attended him were of the opinion that he suffered a stroke of paralysis, which caused him to fall, though of course of this we can never be certain. Thomas was 47 years of age, just in the prime of his manhood. We can but wonder why he should be thus early cut down, yet we know that the Lord has done it, and we dare not murmur. Our belief and comfort are that he is forever at rest in the presence of his dear Savior, where sin and sorrow can no more annoy. Though not a member of the visible church, yet Thomas had been for years a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. Indeed, his chief delight was in the house of God, and no one was more ready than he to do their part when help of any kind was needed. All of his life, until a year ago, when he moved to Glen Arm, he had lived in the neighborhood of the Harford Church, Harford Co., Md., and his seat in that church was never vacant except when providentially hindered. He will be missed in the church and in the community. I think those who knew Thomas well will bear me out in saying that he was indeed a man of sterling worth, upright and honest in all his dealings with his fellow-men, faithful and true in every relation of life, a devoted husband and father and a loving brother. I have never known any one who had stronger convictions of right. No amount of money could have tempted him for one moment to step aside from the path of rectitude and honor. Thomas leaves to mourn their loss his widow and two daughters, together with five sisters and one brother, yet we sorrow not as those without hope.

The body of our loved one was brought from the city to the old home of his boyhood at Forest Hill, Md., where the funeral services were conducted by Elder J. G. Eubanks, after which the mortal remains were laid to rest in the cemetery at Harford.

May the Lord bless all who mourn, and reconcile us to his will in all things.

JENNIE GRAFTON.

Mrs. Ann Elizabeth Tucker (nee Fisher) was born July 30th, 1832, and died June 20th, 1918. She was married to Hamilton Miers March 10th, 1850, who died in 1873. They were the parents of eleven children, of whom five survive: sister Sophia Livingston, of Albany, Mrs. Chester H. Foland, of Florida, Mrs. Edgar M. Dietz, of Sloansville, N. Y., Addison Fisher Miers, of Gallupville, and Milton Miers, of Esperance; also twenty-one grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, one brother, Albert L. Fisher, of Central Bridge, and one sister, Maria Fisher Hervel, of Moderto, Cal. Sister Tucker united with the church at Schoharie, N. Y., and was baptized by Elder Loren P. Cole June 15th, 1856. She was married to brother Isaac Tucker, of the same church, in 1892, who passed from earth in 1910. She was a faithful and true christian woman, wife and mother, and those of like precious faith who were favored to visit her home always received a cordial welcome. She was kindly and tenderly cared for in her last long illness of heart failure, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. E. M. Dietz, Sloansville, N. Y., where her pastor, Elder J. M. Fenton, officiated at her funeral June 22nd, ably declaring the truth which she loved so long and well and so consistently lived, from Revelation xix. 8, and spoke many words of comfort and encouragement to the bereaved family and friends, and made a prayer at the grave in the Lutheran Cemetery at Schoharie, N. Y., where her remains were buried.

EVERETT R. KINNEY.

Taylor Blevins was born in the State of Alabama May 10th, 1849, and died April 15th, 1918, aged 68 years, 11 months and 5 days. He was married to Sarah Elizabeth Blevins, in Dade County, Ga., Sept. 18th, 1868. They moved to Texas in 1873, and put their letters in Denton Creek Church, but in a short time took out their letters and were in the organization of Liberty Church, near Grapevine, Tarrant Co., Texas, where they remained worthy members until death. His wife died March 1st, preceding him just six weeks. He was taken suddenly ill with something like paralysis of the brain. His children gathered around him and told him they would send for the doctor. He told them they could do as they liked, but the doctor could do him no good. He said, "O, I will soon be with Elizabeth." He was taken sick about five o'clock in the morning and died about

9 o'clock. O how we miss them! He was clerk of Liberty Church and also clerk of Trinity River Association. He was always an obedient servant in anything his brethren put upon him, and his comfortable home was always a home for God's servants. The writer had known the dear brother for over twenty years, and he certainly was a worthy member of the Old Baptist Church. We can say with Paul, He fought a good fight, finished his course and kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give him at that day.

May the good Lord bless all who mourn.

SOLON GIPSON.

APPOINTMENTS.

PROVIDENCE permitting, Elder D. M. Vail will fill the following appointments: Friday, July 19th, 117 South Montgomery St., Trenton, N. J., 8 p. m.; Saturday, 20th, Stockton, N. J., sister Horner's, 2:30 p. m.; Sunday, 21st, Locktown, N. J., 10:30 a. m.; Frenchtown, N. J., 4 p. m.; Monday, 22nd, Grandon, N. J., A. J. Demot's, 8 p. m.

Elder George Ruston will, the Lord willing, preach as follows: Friday, August 16th, 117 South Montgomery St., Trenton, N. J., 8 p. m.; Saturday, 17th, Stockton, N. J., at sister Horner's, 2:30 p. m.; Sunday, 18th, Locktown, N. J., 10:30 a. m.; Frenchtown, N. J., 4 p. m.; Monday, 19th, Grandon, N. J., at A. J. Demot's, 8 p. m.

The following appointments are for Elder J. M. Fenton:

Jefferson, N. Y., July 21st, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.; Spencer Mead's, 22nd, 1:30 p. m.; George Mead's, 8 p. m.; Cobleskill, Dow Borst's, July 23rd, 10:30 a. m.; Howe Cave, D. H. Nethaway's, 1:30 and 8 p. m.; Central Bridge, July 24th, 10:30 a. m.; Schoharie, 1:30 and 8 p. m.; Middleburg, July 25th, 1:30 p. m.; Ecker Hollow, July 26th, 1:30 p. m.; and regular fourth Sunday and Saturday before meeting at Schoharie meetinghouse.

The Lord willing, Elder D. M. Vail will fill the following appointments:

Saturday, August 17th, Kingston, N. Y., 8 p. m.; Sunday, 18th, Ashokan, N. Y., with the Olive and Hurley Church, 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m.; Monday, 19th, Margaretville, N. Y., at brother Faulkner's, 8 p. m.; Tuesday, 20th, Roxbury, N. Y., at sister Mead's, 11 a. m.; Wednesday, 21st, Halcottville, N. Y., sister P. O'Connor's, 8 p. m.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Pa., has appointed a meeting for Saturday and Sunday, August 10th and 11th, 1918, beginning Saturday at 2 p. m. Sunday meeting morning and afternoon. Those coming on the D., L. & W. R. R. will be met at Clarks Summit station Friday afternoon or Saturday morning by writing to C. E. Miller, Clarks Summit, Pa., R. F. D. Those coming to Olyphant on the O. & W. or D. & H. R. R. will be met at Olyphant station by writing to G. W. Goodrich, Olyphant, Pa., R. D.

G. W. GOODRICH, Clerk.

THE Second Roxbury Old School Baptist Church, Roxbury, N. Y., will, the Lord willing, hold a two days meeting on the second Sunday in August and Saturday before (10th and 11th). Trains will be met at Roxbury on Saturday morning. We extend a cordial invitation to all who love the truth to meet with us.

GEO. RUSTON.

THE thirty-seventh annual session of New Hope Association of Primitive Baptists will meet on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1918, with Sabine Church, six miles north of Greenville, Texas. All trains will be be met at Greenville Thursday. Any coming later than Thursday phone J. I. Money at Tidwell. All sound, loving Baptists are invited, especially ministers of our faith and order.

S. M. DICKENS.

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THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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(Judges v. 11.)

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1918. NO. 15.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HOLINESS—WHAT IS IT?

"FOLLOW peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."—Heb. xii. 14.

If we be sincere searchers for the truth we ought not to pass over lightly or try to avoid any passage of Scripture that seems to oppose our ideas of what the Scriptures teach. The Scripture quoted above will bear close examination. While it is important that we follow peace with all men, the most important is to follow holiness. The comma after the word "men" is evidence that the word "holiness" is not directly connected with the former clause of the sentence. The real meaning is, that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. The key to this most important subject (that of holiness) is often searched for in vain. How many stumble and fall to make out what such language means! Children of God, believers in Jesus, are made to mourn when reading this text and other passages of Scripture which seem to teach the same important fact, such as: "Be ye holy; for I am holy." They know that God is holy in every respect; then their inquiry is, How can I be holy? They also know that they may be at peace with all men and yet not be holy, which would not admit them to see the Lord. The word "holy" occurs five times in the book of Hebrews, the word "holiest" occurs three times, the word "holiness" once; all these have special reference to the worship of God. Idolatry is opposite to the worship of God; the word holiness is opposite to the word idolatry. Idolatry being the greatest sin charged against the family of men, holiness, or the worship of God, is diametrically opposite. None can be holy but those who worship God in spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. Very many fanatics in religion have taught gross errors in regard to holiness, their confusion being taken by many people as the truth of the Scriptures. This confusion has spread all over our land; blind leaders of the blind, they are all in the ditch of idolatry, worshiping the creature more than the Creator. I am now speaking in regard to the modern error of individual or personal holiness. This is not really a modern doctrine, for there were self-righteous, self-made holy people thousands of years ago. However, the modern holiness people claim to be supported by the testimony of the apostles.

Even here, as elsewhere, they fail to establish their claim, as they have no right to the tree of life, because the word of inspiration is not directed to any except those who are quickened by the Spirit of God. The very language of these self-righteous people condemns them. They get their holiness by and through their good works; they worship a god that tries, but who cannot do all that he wills to do. The workmonger's god is willing to do many things, but some things that he wants to do he cannot do, because the will of man obstructs him. I ask, Is the worship of such a weak god idolatry? If not, what is it? This kind of a holy people worship their own try-god, one that is weaker than man, and say, "We see; therefore your sin remaineth."—John ix. 41. These do not follow holiness in the sense of the text, for they are idolaters. Idolatry is the worship of any false god, for one false god is just as good as another. It seems evil for them to serve the omnipotent, all-wise and unchangeable God, so they are free to choose whom they will serve of all the little gods in the imaginations of men; being dead in sins, and ignorant of the grace of God, they cannot follow holiness nor see the Lord of hosts. God's people are "the holy people," (Isaiah lxii. 12,) "an holy nation." (Exodus xix. 6; 1 Peter ii. 9.) Many places in the Old Testament as well as in the New the word "holy" is used, which most often relates to the worship of God, or to his worshipers. If the true worship of God were exterminated from among men, then nothing would be found holy on earth. Men in olden times were holy, because they worshiped the true God, and Jesus Christ whom he had sent. It is impossible to conceive of a holy man or woman on earth, unless that person be a worshiper of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. To worship the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, is to worship Him who does his will on earth and in heaven, and whose will is perfect, so that nothing whatever can ever thwart that holy will. In speaking of the worship of God, it does not always mean the public worship in the meetinghouse, but that all in every place that do worship God must worship him in spirit and in truth. This worship is done more often outside of a meetinghouse than in one. The subjects of God's grace are exhorted by the apostle to "pray without ceasing." Can it be supposed for a moment that God's people must be continually in the meetinghouse? I know that such an inference might be possible, though not according to reason. A better conclusion of Paul's meaning about constant prayer is found in 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile [or destroy] the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." The temple in olden times was the principal place of worship. The importance of the temple and its worship increased to such an extent that it was considered as the only place for the worship of God. This practice was installed by God himself. It pointed to the better way, when his Son should come with power over all flesh and tune every elect vessel of mercy to worship God in the power of his grace. As Jesus met the woman at the well of Samaria she spoke of the Jews, teaching that men ought to worship in Jerusalem, which means that the tradition of the Jews was so well established that no other place, except in Jerusalem, was the holy place of worship; even the hill of Samaria, which

Jesus spoke of as "this mountain," was not excepted by the carnal Jews. Quoting from John iv. 21–24, it reads: "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet in Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." In the above, as Jesus was talking to the woman of Samaria, saying, For salvation is of the Jews, he emphasized the fact that the carnal worship of the Jews was according to the law, and at the proper place, while the hill of Samaria was wrong, the wrong place for worship; so in a law sense "salvation is of the Jews." Jesus was a Jew, and at Jerusalem was the grand center of the worship of the patriarchs and prophets. God gave that country to Abraham by promise, secured by his oath, two thousand years before the coming of Christ. This sacred place secured to the Jews before they were born was to be the beginning place of the gospel. "For the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."—Micah iv. 2. "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem: * * * Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."—Luke xxiv. 47, 49. Jerusalem was called the holy city from the fact that the Lord had chosen it that he might have his name recorded there in the worship which he prescribed for the children of Israel. It was sometimes called Zion, the city of the living God, and sometimes it was called the city of David, though it was the city of David only by adoption, Bethlehem being the real city of David. Is it saying too much to say that Jerusalem of Judea was only the city of God by adoption? The old Jerusalem certainly was a figure of the heavenly Jerusalem, the new Jerusalem that came down from God out of heaven. This city is holy in that God gave it its worship. None but the one true God is worshiped there. The first sentence written by the finger of God on stone is the supreme order of that beloved city: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." This worship is not slavish, compulsory, nor to get a reward, but it is beautiful in holiness, lovely in the sight of God, lovely in the praises of God and lovely in the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory. "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."—2 Cor. vi. 16. It stands true that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. This holiness is the true worship of the great Redeemer of the bride, the Lamb's wife, who also is her maker as well as her husband. None can worship him but those who have eyes to see, ears to hear and hearts to understand the hidden mysteries of his kingdom. Those qualified by the Spirit are "the holy people," the royal priesthood and the holy nation, and their spiritual worship does show forth the praises of God, who hath called them with an holy calling. These alone have right to the Tree of Life which is in the midst of them. No one dares condemn them, for Jesus died and rose for them, and for none other. Nothing can frustrate the will of God from making his people willing in

the day of his power, for they shall be willing in all the beauties of holiness to worship at his feet and cry, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." No weapon formed against this holy people shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against them in judgment they shall condemn. This is the heritage of the saints of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.

Having said a few things in this letter about "the holy people," I do not want the brethren to surmise that I am trying to make the situation of God's people higher by my efforts, but I do want them to know that though they are a "poor people," yet they are "the holy people." They are an afflicted and poor people, yet rich in faith and heirs of the greatest kingdom that ever existed or that shall ever exist. It is a happy non-coincidence that the poor sinner who receives the eternal life principle sees more of his mortal imperfections than he can see of his spiritual gifts. This fills him with distress, and he cannot understand how that he ought to be called holy in any sense whatever. His humility is such that he dare not look up, while his mind is filled with sacred thoughts of the high and lofty One. If any of the Lord's people are humble they are made so by the Spirit revealing the deformities of the flesh. This is really a holy frame of mind, it is a prayerful condition, a worshiping mood; it is fellowship in the sufferings of the Lord Jesus. He said, "I am meek and lowly in heart." Is it not for our good to be lowly in heart? Abasement is one of the valuable teachings of the Spirit; without it no man can see the Lord. Can any one get lower than Jesus was in humility? No, no. O, to think how he was portrayed by the word of inspiration in regard to his suffering and humility. We may well say that we are "worms of the dust." Hear the Son speaking through the prophet: "But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him."—Psalms xxii. 6–8. Abasement, lowliness, humility, trust, may we know all these to the upbuilding of our faith in the Lord Jesus.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

CLAREMORE, Okla., May 20, 1918.

PSALMS XLII. 7.

"DEEP calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me."

The forty-second Psalm, written by David, tells of the experience of the Lord's people. As the hart panteth after the waterbrooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God, seems as though David was talking to himself, as we might say, and yet David was wrestling, as did Jacob of old, with the angel, and in the end of it all is to be blessed, even though he goes halt and lame all the remainder of his days. This wrestling and talking with the angel is the experience of the subjects of grace. Though Christ is the Son of David, yet David calls him Lord, and says, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool. David in his lifetime was encompassed with enemies, even his son Absalom revolted against him. The opposition and distresses David passed through brought forth the testimony of Christ in David. If we read the Psalms, seeing Christ as the very essence of the

expressions declared, then we see a beauty that is hid from the wise and prudent.

"Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts." The deep in David is calling unto the deep in Christ, and is always heard. In thinking of the Savior while upon earth, he said on one occasion, I know that thou hearest me always, but because of these that stood by I said it. Many times in public prayer I have thought of this: I know that thou hearest me always, but because of those who are assembled in the order of thy house I will go on and speak. The deep in Jesus was heard of the deep in God. There is a kindred relationship that hears its own. The Father hears the Son and the Son hears the Father; the mother hears the babe and the babe hears the mother. My sheep hear my voice and I know them. Yes, I know them, even before the foundation of the world I knew them; thine they were, and thou gavest them me. I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one. The Savior's prayer, recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, is where deep is calling unto deep at the noise of the waterspouts. The waterspouts present a drawing from earth to heaven by forces controlled in heaven, and have a tendency to draw upward. These waterspouts are the avenue whereby the deep in earth ascends and reaches the deep in heaven. The spirit returns unto God who gave it, and the dust returns to the earth as it was. It is dust unto dust and spirit unto Spirit, and yet the sinner is saved. These waterspouts are controlled and directed from heaven, and are a way whereby there is communication from earth to heaven. It seems to me the waters are necessary to the noise, for it is in the waters of tribulation and affliction that the waters find their way to the waterspouts, and on up to the throne of grace, and we are heard (as was Jesus) in that we fear. The apostles were found in these waterspouts in their travels and feared destruction, but in the appointed time (not too soon nor too late) the Savior awoke and rebuked the winds and the sea and there was a calm. At another time the apostles were in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves and the wind contrary, (it takes all of it to be effectual) and Jesus appeared, saying to them, Be of good cheer; it is I, be not afraid. Nothing short of the voice of Jesus can still the waves and the storms and we find rest to our souls. Jonah was not only upon the rough and stormy voyage, but must go down to the bottom of the sea and have seaweeds wrapped about his head, and out of the belly of hell "deep" in Jonah is calling unto deep, and is heard and delivered. Jonah was a figure of Christ, for as Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Jesus was crucified and buried, but rose again the third day. In these three days we have presented Christ in the three dispensations: legal, prophetical and gospel. In the days of Seth, when Enos was born, then began men to call upon the name of the Lord by virtue of these waterspouts.

"All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." While David spoke these words, it was not David, but Christ, whom all the waves and the billows went over. In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them. True, the experience of David was the experience of Christ, and the experience of Christ was the experience of David, but it was Christ that the waves and billows passed over, completely

submerging him, and carrying him even below Jonah, for Christ was delivered from the lowest hell. Those waves and billows present the broken laws and transgressions of his people, for he was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. The wrath of God is against all unrighteousness. These waves and billows were in full force until Christ came to redeem his people from their sins. Death, hell and the grave went to make up the waves and billows and overwhelmed and swallowed the Savior, as it were, to the eyes of the world, for when he was lain in Joseph's new tomb that was the closing of his mission upon earth to the natural mind. The waves and the billows had all gone over Jesus, but way back in prophecy comes the voice over the waters: Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Jesus arose from the dead the third day. He is head over the church in all things. He arose triumphant and victorious over all his enemies; death has lost its sting, the grave has lost its victory; together with my dead body shall they arise. Christ the firstfruits from the dead, afterward they that are his at his coming. The head (Christ) never separated from the body (the church). In the resurrection of Jesus from the dead every member of his body was justified before God, and each in their own order shall be brought to know their victory through our Lord and Savior. Paul realized this, for he said, If Christ be not raised your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins, but now is Christ risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for all live unto him. J. M. FENTON.

MATTHEW V. 44; LUKE VI. 35.

"LOVE your enemies."

The words of Jesus to his apostles. I am satisfied that what Jesus commanded is being fulfilled in those who receive his word. The sayings of Jesus are hard sayings to the carnal mind, and would seem to be impossible of obedience, but with every command of the Savior there are also supplies of grace given for the fulfilling of it. The Savior loved his enemies, for every subject of grace is an enemy by wicked works. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."—Rom. v. 10. We can see how it might be reasonable for God to love us, and the Savior to love us while we are enemies, but for us to love our enemies is only by the relationship that God has wrought in us as members of the mystical body of Christ: members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. In this relationship we love one another. Paul says that no man ever hated his own flesh; neither do we hate members of the body of Christ. When David was king, Absalom, his son, revolted against him, and sought to take the kingdom from him. In the battle Absalom was slain and David mourned for him: "O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" All that Absalom had done against him was swallowed up in the love he had for him. Absalom was an enemy to David, David loved him and mourned for him. Joab, captain of the host, reproved David, and said, "Thou hath shamed this day the faces of all thy servants, which this day have saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons and of thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives, and the lives of thy concubines; in that thou

lovest thine enemies, and hatest thy friends." David loved Absalom because of the relationship God had made. In the household of faith there is a relationship that is of such virtue that we love our enemies, but it is only by the grace of God and his Spirit that it is wrought in us. J. M. FENTON.

FOLLOWING JESUS.

FROM the cradle to the cross it was not an easy road that Jesus traveled. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. His visage was marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: for he bore in his body the burden of the sins of many. He is despised and rejected of men, and we hid as it were our faces from him. He was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted; but he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. He said to his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. To follow him is to go where he goes, and to do so necessity is laid upon us. To deny ourself is to take up our cross. Ourself (that is, our own flesh,) cannot follow Jesus. Our carnal mind and all our natural fleshly sensibilities are antagonistic to him who came from God and who was God manifest in the flesh. Neither desire nor love for the holy child Jesus is inherent in our flesh. To take up our cross is to willingly deny and turn away from the things dictated by the carnal mind. The following of Jesus is exclusively a heart work, wrought in us by the Spirit of God. We cannot exercise the faith of God, but overshadowed by the Holy Ghost, which takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us, the table of divine grace is spread in our heart, and we crave and desire the heavenly food. Jesus said to Nicodemus, Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The angel said unto Mary, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee, and that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. To true believers the apostle declares, But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God. Do not we therefore follow him into the womb of the earth, quickened into divine life, born of the Spirit, receiving the wisdom and knowledge and understanding of the things of the kingdom of God? Do we not follow him, guided by the star (Jesus our faith) down to Bethlehem (heavenly bread), obedient to the law that the taxes must be paid, to be rejected of men, shut out from the inn, stabled with filthy beasts and vile, coarse-natured men? In all this we are looking down into our own vile and deceitful hearts, but with eyes alight we look upon the holy child who was born king, and see him, do we not (like dear old Job) abhor self and repent in dust and ashes? and fearing the rulers of that place, go down into Egypt (darkness), yet safe, being led by the Spirit, following, following, blind and helpless, led about and instructed, and like the little child we lay passive in the lap of our mother (the church), drawing from her breasts the sincere milk of the word (Jesus) until twelve years have passed, and we say again with Job, I know that my Redeemer liveth. All this time we are stricken with grief and sorrow because of sin, marred in form and feature to the world, dying and yet we

live, denying self and taking up the cross. Through all this darkness and depth of woe the Sun of Righteousness shines in our heart, and we sing with joy, The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. We come to the end of the law, for we see Jesus (by faith) suspended upon the accursed tree, with the joyous, wonderful words blazing forth the tidings, It is finished; the law is satisfied and put under our feet. Three days and three nights darkness, dense darkness, reigns, for Jesus having laid down his life to redeem us, now when the sabbath is past he takes it again and we are freely justified. God has moved in a mysterious way his wonders to perform in our hearts, giving us the light of life in the face of Jesus Christ. Is it any wonder then that we abase the creature and exalt the Lord of life and glory? What a wondrous following! He was meek and lowly in heart, and we long to be like him and to follow him all our days.

B. F. COULTER.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., June 12, 1918.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending you the inclosed letter from our highly esteemed Elder and brother, W. J. May, which I think will be of interest to many of the dear readers of the good old SIGNS. I have thought much of the minute description of creation and beginning of time, that the record was not given us simply that we might know something of how the world was created, but implies greater things in a figurative sense; all from the beginning of creation to the end of the prophetic age was typical of the gospel age, a parable, as it were, that we might better understand the things of the Spirit. Experience is the only real knowledge of the things of the Spirit. Without an experience of grace and salvation one knows nothing of it; unless one is brought to feel the exceeding sinfulness of sin in his own heart he knows nothing of its power or nature. Wisdom placed the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden, and no one has any sense of good or evil until he eats of the tree, then he sees his nakedness and flies to the Mosaic law to amend, or cover, his nakedness, as he sees himself exposed and fears almighty God. What fearfulness and trembling when he hears the voice of God: Adam, where art thou? Truly where were you, dear reader, when the Lord found you? All defiled with sin, totally depraved, but did not know it until the fatal moment. Drawn out of that garden (satisfied state) you have been a wanderer ever since, an exile, as it were. He now knows good and evil, abhors the one and loves and desires the good that comes not from the earth that is cursed for man's sake, but from above. In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat thy bread. What was written aforetime was written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

I would like to say a little more about creation, but am rambling on too far. You will see by this that my eyesight is much impaired, and I am yet nervous and write but little. Love to all the household of faith.

Yours in afflictions and gospel bonds,

P. W. SAWIN.

SHOCK, Ky., April 21, 1918.

DEAR ELDER SAWIN:—I am thinking of you to-day, and am writing you. I would like very much to hear from you again. Although I am writing you I feel so poor and needy, and so destitute of spiritual light and understanding, that I am afraid to write, but I am restless and

of a heavy heart, and often feel to say, Lord, if it be so, why am I thus? why am I cast down, in such a horrible pit of doubts and gloomy fears? for I do not remember of ever being so low down in gross darkness and distress of mind, in regard to being called of God to preach the blessed truth of the gospel of grace, as I have been for the past three days. I have been and am very much discouraged of late in different ways. I have been sick for five weeks, but am able to work some now, and went to meeting last Sunday down at the old Pon Creek Church. I awoke some time last night with the following Scripture in my mind: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,"—Gen. ii. 17, so I have concluded that inasmuch as I am writing you I will suggest some few thoughts which have occurred to my mind with much interest since last night, but, my dear brother, you need not think that I shall even presume to speak of the transgression and awful consequences that followed it, and this wonderful and mysterious line of thought, for this is too wonderful and deep for me, but shall mostly speak of it where it seems that we realize these things in our own experiences. Whether a garden the Lord God planted eastward in Eden, and put the man there to dress and keep it; I say, whether this was really a literal garden, or just metaphorical, is not mine to know or say; however, it was the first residence, or state, of man; and man remained in that quiet and peaceful state, satisfied and contented in mind, until he had eaten of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and of evil. When he ate thereof he died to all that state of ease, satisfaction and contentment of mind. The Lord drove the man out of that pleasant state to till the ground from whence he was taken. It seems to me that this state of Adam in the garden of Eden represents the condition of all the election of grace, God's redeemed family, in their first standing in this life. We, Adamlike, are contented, satisfied and at ease until we eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and the Lord for our good and his glory drives us out of this state of ease and contentment, and then we go to work tilling the ground from whence we were taken, pinning figleaves together to hide our nakedness and shame, for a truth this was the first time we ever did or could know that we were naked; yes, by the law is the knowledge of sin. For without the law sin was dead. The apostle Paul said in telling his experience along this line of thought, For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. Furthermore, the law entered that the offence might abound, but where sin abounded grace did much more abound. Sin doubtless exists in all mortal beings, all the Adamic progeny. (Rom. v. 12.) But I do not believe that sin abounds with any but the chosen family of God, for the word "abound" means to overcome, and sin overcomes all the elect family, hence the elect family is saved by grace.

"In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." I would not be understood to intimate even that God's elect family did not all sin in Adam; no, in very deed, but I mean in our experience, when the law, which is light, entered, sin revived and became exceeding sinful, and we died to all our ease and contentment in our garden in Eden, and were driven out to till the ground. Dear brother, this is when we know that we are naked, for we had the thought hitherto that we could do better, and

some time in the future would serve the Lord; but alas, we are naked, and are afraid, and want to hide.

Excuse this long and wearisome letter, and remember us to your family and all.

Yours truly, W. J. MAY.

SALISBURY, Md., March 28, 1918.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—I am inclosing for you to read a letter I received from sister Ella Barfield, of Macon, Ga., this morning, and to me there seems to be much beauty in it, many expressions which no doubt would be comforting to many others.

Your unworthy brother,

F. SELBY FISHER.

MACON, Ga., March 24, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER:—Brother in the kingdom of Jesus. What a precious thought: Brother in Christ. What a wonderful thing if true. How utterly unworthy the flesh feels of claiming this sacred relationship, yet how like Mary, a poor trembling sinner feels to hope, and desires to be willing to bear that precious fruit, to be as the bride of the Lamb. What a marvelous union! What a loving family! May I put away all memory of the mystery, all the differences of views, all the everything but love, and write you a really, truly sisterly letter? Just the kind of a letter that I feel filling my heart for you just at this very moment, and not only for you, but for every other member of this dear family, loved of the Father? Is not the Song of Solomon wonderful? The mutual love of Christ and his bride. How hopeful and happy she feels to be able to say, "My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land: the fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away." "My dove, my undefiled is but one: she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her." "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned." What wonderful love is this. Love like Jonathan and David, love passing the love of woman. God is love. Love is God in the life of his chosen ones. What a wonderful union. Why is it that not having ever seen you, or Elder Ker, or Elder Lefferts, yet I feel the deepest love for you? I feel that I would like to sit at your feet and listen all day, even on and on, to your words of Jesus; even to listen as long as the words were of his wonderful love, his great power, his mercy, his pleasure concerning his people, anything of him, Jesus, the dear Master, our Shepherd, Husband, Friend, Prophet, Priest and King. I love his very name, Jesus. I love you because you love him. Even the word, the name, Jesus, seems to have beauty in it. In it I seem to see all beauty, all goodness, all truth, all righteousness, all salvation, all in all. Please do not think I am beside myself; I am just forgetting for a brief space that I am vile, unclean, blind, deaf, dumb, lame, full of wounds and bruises and putrifying sores, with no soundness in me, trying to forget that I am only a vile worm of the dust, suffered to crawl upon earth by the mercy of the all-wise God, until, I hope, if it be his will, I shall come forth in the resurrection with his likeness, then shall I be more glorious in comparison than

is the beautiful moth that comes from the creeping, crawling worm, and then I know of a truth if I am in it at all I shall be satisfied.

Your dear letters are wonderful to me. Since receiving your first letter I had gotten the SIGNS, and read again your experience as written to sister Thetford, and I felt to be much closer drawn to you than at the first reading. Then I took all of my old SIGNS and read many of your letters, and to me they were all good. Truly the Lord has wonderfully blessed you, and I am persuaded that whatever he may demand of you, whatever his will may be concerning you, he will give you strength to go on. Whatever deep waters he may call you to go through, he is ever with you, leading, guiding and keeping you by his mighty power, love and mercy. I read and reread your article you inclosed, on the subject, "Christ in you," &c. Can you not write an article on Adam as a type of Christ? I would like very much to see an article from you on that subject in the SIGNS. Please do not take time from other things to write me, but I do enjoy your letters.

As the associations are to be held after school opens, I am afraid I shall not be able to go as I was thinking, so I suppose I shall not be able to hear and meet those I hoped to. Elder Lefferts is to visit Georgia next summer (1919). Sometimes I wish I did not have to be confined so closely to work, and was financially able to do many things that I desire to do, but then I suppose God knows best. These things may not be best for me. I shall be glad to meet Elder Lefferts when he comes.

I hope I am your sister in Christ,

ELLA BARFIELD.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., July 8, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—In looking over some old letters written by sister Attie A. Curtis before I had met her, I found such jewels that I feel like sharing them with those who love the same things, but the number is such that I cannot. She afterwards visited us at our home, and we all enjoyed it very much. It was when sister Clarice was with us, and was a season that we never can forget. From here she visited Philadelphia, and our dear kindred there will remember the pleasant season they had in her company, for Jesus was all her theme. From there she visited Hopewell and Middletown, and after she reached her home in Maine it was refreshing to read her report of these visits. Although it was many years ago, yet it seems good to live it over again. It is now a long time since I have heard from her, and I fear she is ill and unable to write, but I hope not. Her name will always be sweet to me for the heavenly words she has written, filling my heart with melody.

I will now give some quotations from her pen: "Dear sister, I thought of my brethren all day yesterday in their conference meeting, and this morning it was raining, but such joy filled my heart it has been one of the pleasantest days. I have been writing to sister Mary about it. I have felt very glad that I have traveled in darkness and distress, finding no evidence that I had been born again, mourning an absent God, for if I had not I never should have known how sweet the light is, and how pleasant it is for the eyes to behold the sun. I have seemed to be filled with joy, because all I need in this life, and in that which is to come, is found in one sweet, precious name, Jesus. He is my wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. I have been

thinking how correctly we sing that new song, even praise unto God; when he puts it in our mouth not a single discord can be heard, because his work is perfect.

This has been a very stormy day outside, but, my dear sister, it has been a most beautiful day within my heart. I do not expect they have had any meeting to-day, but I have thought of the church at Bowdoinham many more times than usual yesterday and to-day, and have been made to feel that the Lord will surely care for us. I never can find anything in this world like the comfort and joy that come from God. I have felt to-day as if I had been raised above temporal things, and time looks so short it seems only a moment before I shall be free from this body of sin and death, but when darkness comes again, and the wild beasts of my heart creep forth, I shall be terrified, and think, Now I shall surely perish; but I know the Lord will bring me out of it, and lead me so I shall praise him, even while I am feeling the weakness of the flesh. O, dear sister, those words of Jesus, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' coming from the flesh, have been brought to my mind in times past in a way that I never expect to express with tongue or pen."

"Dear Bessie, I have been busy, and my pen has had a rest, now I will talk a little more with you. I do know what it is to feel I ought to answer letters and could not even think of one sentence to write concerning spiritual things, and could not help weeping as I laid my pen down, and now to experience such a season as I have this winter, and made to feel it was the Lord's work, and not mine, makes me feel that I cannot write about it as I wish to. I do feel glad that the Lord has enabled me to write so that you feel my words to be real, for the experience has been real to me, and so were the blackness and distress."

I hope these few quotations from the letters of this beloved sister will reach other hearts as they have mine. How often I think of our dear kindred who have enriched the SIGNS with the fruit of their pens, and of those far and near who love to read its pages. Though we cannot meet naturally, we can meet in spirit, and speak together in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody in our hearts unto the Lord.

With love to all those who love the name of Jesus, your unworthy sister,

BESSIE DURAND.

MACON, Georgia.

DEAR EDITORS:—The inclosed letter was of great comfort to me. I am sending it to you with her permission to use any part or all of it if you feel it would be of comfort to those situated as we are.

ELLA BARFIELD.

COLUMBUS, Ga., Oct. 4, 1917.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—Pardon me for thus addressing you, but it seemed I could not help it. I have just read your good letter in the October 1st SIGNS, and most assuredly did enjoy it. Just to know that there is even one in Macon who contends for the faith once delivered unto the saints, the blessed truth as it is in Jesus. How my poor heart rejoices when I read or hear of one of the so-called "absoluters," for if I know anything or believe anything it is God's absolute predestination of all things, that he is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, Ruler over all things. He says, "I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no savior."—Isaiah xliii. 11. Also, "That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none

besides me. I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things."—Isaiah xlv. 6, 7. These and many, many other portions of his word plainly show his absoluteness in all things; and these are in perfect harmony with our experiences, for we feel our utter helplessness and dependence upon his love and mercy for salvation, both for time and eternity. Then where can conditional time salvation upon the merits of the creature come in? My dear sister, how glad I am to know that there is even one "absoluter" in Macon, for I was under the impression that the Baptists there were like they are here. We have in and near Columbus two kinds of Baptists: the "progressives" and another faction that split off from these on account of innovations, &c., still will not have the absolute sovereignty of God over all things. I do get so hungry for preaching, as I love it, the kind it takes to satisfy my hunger and thirst, but my correspondents and the dear old SIGNS are what I feel the Lord has prepared for me along this line, and I feel to know there is much good preaching in the SIGNS, which often feeds my hungry soul and makes my heart rejoice. I never knew until this year what comfort, what joy was to be found in corresponding with the saints of God, but will say that God has hedged me in (it seems completely from the world) and given me sweet, religious correspondents, besides his word, the Book of books, and other sound religious reading to comfort me. I get some very comforting letters from our dear sister Bonnie Chick, also from our indeed faithful brother F. Selby Fisher, and also from another brother, A. J. Dogget, of Alabama, who has never written for publication, but who is a reader, lover and subscriber of the dear SIGNS, and we know to be thus one has been taught of the Lord. He is not a member of the visible church, and like we are, situated where he cannot hear the gospel preached. Dear sister, we know that God has a wise purpose in all things; by faith we know this, even though we cannot see and understand his ways, or why things are as they are; but we are continually begging him to reconcile us to his will. What a blessed feeling to feel to be perfectly passive in the mighty power of our God, which we know we are, but the more completely he makes us to feel and realize this truth, the more blessed are we. O that our vain hearts could cease to struggle against his will, but we know that it is our flesh, our carnal nature that rebels, causing a continual warfare in our hearts between the flesh and the Spirit. This is also as it should be, for Jesus will fight our warfare for us and bring us off more than conquerors in the end. How comforting to be enabled to believe and to feel that God's blessed will is done—that there is no such thing as failure of the least portion of his will or plan or purpose in all things. How blessed you are in having even a few who love and believe the truth as you do with whom you can meet and talk of God's wonderful plan of salvation for poor, helpless sinners. Dear sister, I have not that privilege. With the exception of my mother and sister, whom I see only occasionally, I get to talk with none with whom I feel to agree or for whom I can feel full fellowship. This in itself is a cross to bear, to suffer, but it is through suffering that we feel to be brought near to our precious Savior, for we know that he suffered untold agony for the sins of his people, that he might show them the way they must

come, that he might redeem them unto the Father. As he suffered so much, can we not suffer a little for his sake, for his truth's sake? My heart aches now, and well may it. I often feel: "Could my zeal no respite know, could my tears forever flow," even then I could not touch the debt that I hope the blessed Jesus paid for me. I will tell you right here, and perhaps should have told you sooner, that I am not a member of the visible church, but have a hope that Christ the Lord revealed himself to me, giving me a precious hope in him as my Savior about nineteen years ago, when I was twenty-five years of age; but for some reason best known to himself it has not pleased him for me to be a member of the visible church; nevertheless he has often caused me to rejoice in him and hope I am a member of his precious body, the invisible church. I have often felt drawn to the church, felt to miss and long for the companionship of God's dear people, church privileges, &c., but it seems that these blessings are not for me. I have never been situated near any church in which I felt I could find a peaceful home. As you said, I have always felt something prevented me from uniting with any church here, and I feel sure it was or is the hand of God that keeps me; but if the way were opened for me, and my unworthiness did not prevent, I often feel I would happily and gladly ask for a home with those I love, although I know my unworthiness. Then again, perhaps those I love more than myself could not receive me as one of their number upon what little I could tell them, and that would be very hard to bear. So perhaps God in his mercy saved me thus suffering, as it is indeed suffering to feel cut off and forsaken by those we feel to love and esteem to be the children of the living God. I have had some bitter experiences along that line. Though not forsaken and utterly cast off, I was made to feel it was thus, hence the most bitter experience I ever had. I thoroughly enjoyed your telling us the way by which you had come, and how I feel to shake both your dear hands and say "sister" in that most beautiful faith, the greatest and deepest love ever known by human beings, the same love that exists between Christ and his church, his bride. Such love is heavenly, not earthy, although it exists between those who are in the flesh and are dwelling temporarily upon the earth. Is it not marvelous that people who have never met can feel to love and understand one another as do the people of God? Great and marvelous are the works of our God! Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. What comfort we find in these words: We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. These words apply to our hearts as a sure testimony unto us that we are alive for evermore. Ah, little does the world know that this small, weak, (apparently) peculiar, hated and most persecuted of all people are the subjects of God's all-saving grace, the recipients of such wonderful love and mercy, unto whom belong all the precious promises of God, and for whom the ever-blessed, exalted and risen Savior shed his precious blood; who were forever redeemed when he said, "It is finished."

Please forgive me for writing so much. I always feel when writing of these sacred things that I might do violence to them, for I am so ignorant and unworthy to mention such high and holy things. I have not written as I thought, for I only wanted to tell you that I believe your position to be according to truth. Dear sister, I feel that you are walking

in that "strait and narrow way" which leads to rest. I do not know that you will get this, as I have no address other than Macon, but if you do, and ever feel to write to me, for my condition is very like your own, do so. May God enable you and me and all of his helpless ones to feel to trust him in all things.

With love, from your sister, I hope,

(MRS.) C. M. THETFORD.

OSKALOOSA, Kansas, June 16, 1918.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I wish to submit the inclosed manuscript, which was written by my dear brother, Firman Schenck, of Tonganoxie, Kansas, a short time before his death, which occurred very suddenly of heart trouble May 15th, 1918. He had long been afflicted from leakage of the heart, and we had known for years that such an event was likely to occur, yet it seemed that we were not prepared for the shock of his sad death, for though he had lived in Tonganoxie and vicinity over forty years, and was known far and near, yet when the final summons came it seemed a mysterious and very afflicting dispensation of Providence that he should fall several miles from home in the presence of no one but a total stranger, a new comer, who did not know who he was, and who by his own confession went on with his work and made no attempt to minister to his necessity for some time after he saw him fall. Brother would have been sixty-three years old the 8th of this month. He was the third of eleven children of John and Mary Schenck, who were all born in the same old log house near Whitestown, Boone Co., Ind. A little brother died in infancy, and of the remaining ten his is the first death for nearly half a century. Mother died in 1869, and with our father, the late Elder John Schenck, we came to Kansas in 1870, and settled on a farm near Springdale, Leavenworth County, where father died in 1879. Just a day or so before brother's death I remarked to my older sister that in one more year it would be fifty years since mother's death and forty years since father's death, and how remarkable it was that we had all been spared to one another so long, and how thankful we had been for such a favor, not knowing that the grim monster was even then so near. November 7th, 1878, brother was married to Miss Kizzie D. Hatchell, of Tonganoxie, and moved to a farm there, where they lived until her death, Nov. 2nd, 1913. In April, 1915, he was married to Mrs. E. V. Jolley, of Wellington, Texas, who, with his four children, survives him. One son, J. Earl Schenck, lived near him, Walter R. and Clella N. Griffith near Kane, Wyoming, and Clarence Firman, the youngest, in the U. S. service at Fort Bliss, Texas, all of whom were present at the funeral. He was well aware of his dangerous condition, and had all his affairs as nearly in complete readiness for such an event as is possible for any one to have, and had said that all he wanted when the time came to answer his Master's call was time enough to smite upon his breast and say, "God be merciful to me a sinner." He was the worst afflicted with sleeplessness of any one I ever knew, often passing whole nights without sleep. In his younger days he would sometimes get up and work about the farm in the hope that a weariness would come on that would induce sleep. Of late years he often got up and while others slept would read, write or memorize hymns. He received a hope in Christ in his early youth, and ever lived a very humble, conscientious, christian man. He was unusually sensi-

tive and tenderhearted, diligent and successful in business, neat in his personal appearance, upright and honest in all his dealings—a model citizen. It was said of him that he was a clean man in every sense. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church in Kansas City, and remained a loving, faithful member there until called to dwell with Christ at home. It was his request that Elder S. Ketchum, of Kansas City, or Elder J. T. Brown, of Richland, Mo., conduct the services at his funeral, and that as many of his brethren as could attend would do so. Elder Ketchum was unable to attend, but Elder Brown came, and several members from Kansas City were present, much to our comfort, and on Sunday evening, the 19th, his precious form was laid to rest beside the wife of his youth, there to await the resurrection morning, when, as he often said, he would be satisfied when he awoke with the likeness of his Redeemer. Say ye to the righteous, It shall be well with him. We sorrow not without hope, for we feel that an humble follower of the meek and lowly Lamb of God is gone to his reward. "For so he giveth his beloved sleep."

"In hope of life eternal given,
Behold, a pardoned sinner dies;
A chosen blood-bought heir of heaven,
Called to his mansion in the skies.

'Twas through the strength of Israel's King
He proved a conqueror when he fell;
'Tis to the praise of grace we sing,
Though of the dying saint we tell."

Following is the manuscript of the beautiful prayer which he penned a few nights before his death, while others were wrapped in slumber, and which, with the approval of the editors, I with many others would like to have recorded, together with this brief sketch of his life.

I remain, unworthily, a sister in hope of a better life,

MARY ELLISON.

"O THOU in whose presence our souls take delight, thou who art from everlasting to everlasting, the same yesterday, to-day and forever, it is before thee, and, as we humbly hope and trust, in thy sweet presence, we desire to humble ourselves and render thee praise and thanksgiving for thy loving-kindness and tender mercy to us throughout the uneven journey of our unprofitable lives. We feel that we are but poor, unworthy worms of the dust, as prone to sin as the sparks are to fly upward; and we must acknowledge, dear, blessed Lord, that hadst thou entered into strict justice with us according to our deserts, instead of being here enjoying the fruits of thy love as we are, we would long since have been cut off as useless cumberers of the ground and cast into that pit of woe and misery from whence no traveler has ever returned. But thanks be to thy blessed and holy name, thou hast not delighted in our destruction, but in the midst of deserved wrath thou hast remembered us in mercy; and though our sins be as scarlet and crimson, and our garments stained with iniquity, thou art able to wash them and make them whiter than snow. And now, O heavenly Father, as poor, helpless children, in tatters and rags, with no worth or merit to commend us to thee, we come as to a kind, loving Father, rich in mercy and full of tender compassion, and entreat thee in the name of our blessed Savior to have mercy upon us and forgive us of everything thou hast seen amiss in us. The mistakes of our lives have been many, but thanks be to thy holy name, where sin abounds grace doth much more abound. And now, dear Lord, inasmuch as it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, do thou take us into thy sacred care and keeping. Keep us, as it were, in the hollow of

thy hand, as the apple of thine eye. Let us not go astray; let us not turn to the right nor to the left. Make us willing to follow thee at all times, through evil as well as through good report. Bridle our tongues, subdue our thoughts, and let the words of our mouth and the meditations of our heart be acceptable unto thee, O Lord, our strength and our Redeemer. We pray thee, dear, blessed Lord, to remember our dear children and our children's children in mercy. Though scattered from the roaring banks of the Shoshone River to the sunny climes of the far distant south, thou knowest the many snares and pitfalls that beset them in the journey of life. O that the Lord would be pleased to guide and shield them from all harm and lead them in paths of righteousness; hedge them about with thy love; let thy richest blessings rest upon them, both temporal and spiritual, and if any of them are mourning on account of sin, O that thou wouldest reveal thyself unto them as the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely, and enable them to take up their cross and follow thee. Give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Finally, dear Lord, when time shall be no more with us, O that we may awake with thy likeness in that goodly land where moth doth not corrupt and where thieves do not break through and steal, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest, there to join that blood-washed throng which John saw coming up out of great tribulation, having their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb, there with crowns of glory upon our heads and palms of victory in our hands, to walk the golden street of the new Jerusalem, there to sing the sweet song of redeeming love to him who lived and died for us, there to see him face to face and tell the story saved by grace, there to spend an endless eternity where sickness and sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more. There all tears are wiped away and the sad farewell is never spoken; there to ascribe all honor, praise, might and dominion to Father, Son and ever-blessed Spirit in that world that shall never end.

These have been my comforting thoughts while others sleep.

FIRMAN SCHENCK.

ATLANTIC, N. C., June 26, 1918.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I feel that I want to send a little message through the SIGNS to the brethren, sisters and friends who read the paper, among whom I recently traveled, and with whom I had such pleasant visits. It was one of the sweetest visits all the way that it has been my pleasure to make. I was generally given fair liberty in speaking and in hearing others speak, and the visits in the homes were sweet and entertaining. I feel that I have reasons to believe that the mind I had to go on that visit was of the Lord, and I am glad that he was so mindful of me. During my stay from her my dear wife was not at all well, and this took much from my comfort, however she was with our daughter, where I knew she would have the best of attention. Since our return home she is in about her usual health.

I want to say to the brethren with whom I was yoked in the ministry, that things were as pleasant toward you in my poor heart as at any association I ever attended. I feel that they were all mercies to me. I am not worthy of anything from the Lord, nor his people, therefore all I receive is in mercy given. I desire to pray that the goodness and mercy of God shall follow us all the days of our lives, and that we shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Your poor brother, in hope and love,

L. H. HARDY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1918.

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PSALMS XI. 3.

"IF the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?"

Every government and every branch of business is founded upon certain foundations, often called "principles." The strength and safety of every government, as well as every branch of business, are in its foundations. All things must be done and transacted according to the foundations or principles upon which it is founded in order to safety, prosperity and duration. Failure to move according to the principles, or foundations, means rupture, hence defeat. At this time the strength and victory of our nation depend upon the strict adherence to the foundations, building upon, and relying upon, or trusting in, the principles by which we are so well fortified. Perhaps if we were to ask the question, If the foundations be destroyed, what can the nation do? it would emphasize the point we are trying to bring out: that everything depends upon the foundations, in the plan of salvation as well as in all other things. Many claim, however, that there are no certain, or fixed, foundations in the Lord's kingdom. How strange, as well as absurd, for men to think God works in no certain or decided way in his affairs, when everything in nature declares his perfect order in the arrangement of all things, and that all things work perfectly in the order prearranged for them. We can set up an hour or two the timepieces, but cannot change the rising of the sun nor the going down of the same. The names of the months and seasons can be changed so that the names of June, July and August take the places of December, January and February, but if it were done snow would fly, ice would form and we would find ourselves hovering near the fire during the months of June, July and August. Likewise in the months of December, January and February we would either be enjoying the warm weather or seeking refuge from the burning heat. The reason for this is, the Lord said in the covenant that as long as time lasts there shall be summer and winter, cold and heat, seedtime and harvest. Therefore as everything in the vegetable, mineral and animal kingdoms works according to the principles, or foundations, laid by the Lord, man can change nothing, nor can he destroy the foundations. All the systemizing of the earth combined cannot compare with the systematic plan with which God controls and "works all things after the counsel of his own will." The foundations of the spiritual world are as certainly and substantially laid as those of the material world, and everything is working as perfectly and harmoniously in his spiritual kingdom as do all things in nature. If men are settled in their convictions that "nature will have its course," why not be settled in the truth that all things in grace are as sure? Simply because they cannot. If strong delusion be sent them, that they believe a lie, how can they be-

lieve the truth until born of God? If this be true, let us not censure them, but rather pity them because of their blindness. If the eyes of our understanding have been enlightened let us rejoice and be glad. The immutability of God has ever been the foundation of faith, and because of it the saints have strong consolation and good hope through grace. He, who cannot lie, promised eternal life before the world began, and he tells us that because he is God, and changes not, that we, the sons of Jacob, are not consumed. If man could put his finger on one promise made and afterward broken by the Lord we could never be sure of anything, but he has ever been faithful to his word. "Even though we believe not, he is true." David, surrounded by enemies, Saul seeking his life, seems, by the reading of the first verse of this Psalm, to have been told to flee as a bird to the mountain that he might find a safe refuge, but remembering God's word, that they which trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion which cannot be moved, but abideth forever, answered, "In the Lord put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?" His trust in the Lord was a strong tower, a safer place of refuge than all mountains of the world, high places of men. Such faith as David exhibited was wonderful, and foreshadowed the faith of Jesus, the man of sorrows. David said, as recorded in Psalms xlvi., "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; * * * There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." O that we all could have such faith when storms of persecution, sorrow and affliction come upon us. If not so great, we have always had sufficient to carry us through, in fulfillment of his precious promise: "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." How wonderfully blessed it is that God is a very present help in trouble. Often when affliction comes to the children of God they are obliged to send for their friends to aid them, and must wait for them to arrive, if indeed they can respond to the sad call; but God is an ever-present help, and in his strength we endure and by his grace press on. In the question: "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" there is not the slightest possibility of such a thing suggested, but rather the contrary, establishing the fact that the foundations abide forever, and because of that the righteous trust in God and fear not what man can do unto them. Were it not for the foundations of our nation to-day we would be without hope of maintaining our freedom. How easy to see, therefore, that we as a nation trust in the foundations of our government, confident of ultimate victory. Just so the spiritual nation of God trusts in the foundations that he planned, laid and established before the world began. Yes, the saints trust for time and ultimate victory over all enemies; even to-day the redeemed enjoy perfect liberty under the banner of God, which banner is love.

Perhaps some of our readers will be anxious to know what we consider the foundations of God's kingdom. First we would say, the omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence of God; then his eternal purpose, which he purposed in himself; then each fundamental principle of his doctrine, such as predestination, election, redemption, justification, effectual calling and final perseverance of the saints unto glory. Such are the foundations of the faith and hope of the chil-

dren of God, and not one of them can fail or be destroyed. No, the devil with all his power and cunningness can never mar one of the strongholds of the blessed assurance that God reigns and that salvation is sure to all the seed.

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!
What more can he say, than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

May we all, like David, put our trust in the Lord. K.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Sallie Triplett was born February 26th, 1843, and departed this life July 1st, 1918, of internal tumor, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Ray Ward, near Elkins, W. Va. She was the daughter of Elijah and Lucinda Kittle, was born Feb. 27th, 1843, and reared to womanhood at their farm home near Elkins. Her father's family have all gone before her to the other world. She was married to Randolph Triplett Nov. 10th, 1861. They moved to Barbour County, but later bought their home at Kerens, living there until last autumn. She then became too feeble to attend her household duties, and they sold their home and lived during the winter with their daughter, at Buckhannon, W. Va., but returned to Mr. Ward's in April. In a short time she grew more feeble, and continued to grow worse until death released her. She was the mother of nine children: Floyd, near Pittsburg, Pa., Page, Baltimore, Md., Forris, Cumberland, Md., Mrs. John Bolton, Buckhannon, W. Va., Mrs. Talbott Chenowith, Montrose, W. Va., Mrs. Ray Ward, near Elkins, W. Va., and Bee, Daniel and Ethel, who passed away before her. She professed a hope in Christ and joined the Leading Creek Old School Baptist Church forty-seven years ago, and remained an active and consistent member until her death. She will be sadly missed by the church, for she always attended the meetings unless providentially hindered. Those of the sister churches who visit there will miss her kind face and godly conversation. She was indeed a mother in Israel, and did her part well in helping to support the church and meetings. She possessed the spirit which Christ taught us is pure and undefiled religion before God the Father: visiting the widows and the fatherless in their affliction and keeping herself unspotted from the world. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace and in all the doctrine of Christ her Savior believed in by the Old School Baptists, and showed her faith in God by her daily walk through life. She read her Bible through many times, and received comfort from the precious promises of God to his people. She was a good mother, such a mother as the Bible tells us, Her children arise and call her blessed. She was a loving and devoted wife, a kind friend and neighbor, and beloved by all who knew her. She left a devoted husband, six children, twenty-six grandchildren and many other relatives and friends to mourn their loss, but their sorrow is lessened in believing that she has gained the rest for which she longed. She realized that she was nearing the end of her earthly journey and spoke of it without fear. I visited her near the time for the May meeting at the Valley Church. She said: "Tell Elder Bartlett I do not think I will be able to attend meeting any more, but hope soon to be where congregations never break up and sabbaths never end." May God comfort her aged companion and children.

After a short service conducted by Mr. Barron at the home of her daughter the remains were taken to the Leading Creek Church, where the funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder J. S. Murphy, in the presence of a large congregation of friends and relatives. She was then laid away in the cemetery beside her children to rest until her Lord shall come again and call her forth to reign with him in glory.

Her niece, (MRS.) E. E. WORKMAN.

C. Jacob Byrd, my dear father, died June 7th, 1918, at the age of 58 years, 3 months and 6 days. Father had been in poor health since about the middle of January. At that time he had a deep cold, which left him in a miserable state. He remained in that condition for about a month, when he was taken to his bed. The doctor at home attended him faithfully, and a specialist was called, but nothing seemed to do any good. Finally he regained his strength a little, and was able to be around the yard, and sometimes would want to work in the garden. We were all delighted at that, but were afraid his mental condition was not improving. For the last three weeks Ora, the youngest daughter, had been taking him up town Friday mornings to be shaved. O what a terrible feeling it gives me to tell of that Friday morning. He seemed much quieter than he had been for some time, but seemed to want to stay near mother. About half-past nine they went up town as usual. He told her to go home and he would come with Mr. Colmore Byrd when he went to dinner; so thinking he was improving, and wanted to be with people more, she did as he told her. When twelve o'clock came and he did not come home they telephoned to Mr. Byrd, and he said he had not seen him. They at once telephoned for us, and his brothers and sisters, friends and neighbors searched the town, but no trace of him could be found. Circumstances then pointed to the river, as he was seen about twelve

o'clock going that way. Diligent search was kept up Friday afternoon and night. Saturday morning his hat was found. Of course that served to verify what had first been our fears. All means that could be thought of were used to find the body, but on Sunday morning it came to the surface and was taken to the undertaker's to be prepared for burial. Because of remaining in the water so long we were compelled to bury him Sunday afternoon. Funeral services took place at the house, conducted by Elder B. F. Coulter. The text used was Hebrews iv. 12, a verse he was found reading the first part of his illness. Interment was made in Greenville Cemetery, at Temperanceville, Va.

I feel I want to say a few words about him personally. As husband and father he was all that could be asked for; his thoughts and interests were always for his family. He was kind and obliging to every one, and always ready to give his services whenever needed. During his illness he would be found praying; many times did he say, "Thou great, adorable God, have mercy on me;" always dissatisfied with himself, saying he felt he was nothing but a hell-deserving sinner. In this trying hour we are tempted many times to say, Lord, why is it thus? but may we be enabled to say, Thy will, and not mine, be done. We have sustained a loss that can never be replaced, but we feel that our loss is his gain, as I do feel that he is at rest. He leaves mamma and two single daughters, May and Ora, and the writer, one grandchild, Lucille Pilchard, besides four brothers and one sister, to mourn their loss. May we be given strength from the blessed Master to endure until the end.

His daughter,

GEORGIA BYRD NORTHAM.

Miss Sallie Ruth Holloway was born April 16th, 1891, and entered into everlasting rest at the Garretson Hospital, Philadelphia, Pa., April 24th, 1918, aged 27 years and 8 days. Sister Ruth was the daughter of the late J. C. and Gertie Holloway, of Salisbury, Wicomico Co., Md., and was born in that county. She was baptized into the membership of the church at Salisbury by Elder Silas H. Durand, Nov. 17th, 1912, and continued her connection with that church until her death. About two years before her death she entered the Garretson Hospital to take training as a nurse, for which she was well suited by natural disposition, and was there when called away. She was a noble woman, of amiable disposition, and made friends wherever she went. She was a faithful disciple of the meek and lowly Jesus, and faithful in all her relations in life, as daughter, sister, friend, and also as a member of the church. She leaves to mourn, three brothers and two sisters, with numerous other relatives, besides the church, by all of whom she was greatly beloved, but we mourn not as those who have no hope. Just before going to the table to be operated on she said to her sister Bertha, who was with her: "Sister, do not worry, the Lord's arms are underneath." To her sister Grace she said: "I would like to get well, but if I do not it will be all right." She was like a daughter to me, and I miss her sadly, but feel to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." It is a sad bereavement to her family, of whom she was the baby, and by all of whom she was dearly beloved. May the Lord reconcile all to his will and prepare them for the hour when he shall say to them, Child, your Father calls, come home.

In sadness and sorrow, A. B. FRANCIS.

Israel Vannoy was born April 29th, 1862, and departed this life Jan. 31st, 1918. He was married to Emma Wyckoff, to which union were born two sons, Albert and Hartwell Vannoy. He also leaves seven brothers and sisters to mourn their loss. He united with the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, N. J., in June, 1896, and was elected deacon shortly afterward, which office he filled with zeal and earnestness, always contending that all things should be done decently and in order, being slow to act, but very firm, always ready when called upon to speak in prayer or give expression to his thoughts. The church recognized a rare gift in ministering to them of the things of the kingdom of God, he ascribing all power to God, and none to man, but thinking and feeling he was the least among them. He is greatly missed, not only by the church, but by all the brethren who knew him.

Written by request of the family.

EUGENE P. DRAKE.

Ivory H. Ford, of Berwick, Maine, departed this life June 7th, 1918, aged 73 years and 8 months. He was married to Affa Butler about fifty-five years ago. When young in years God called him by his grace and gave him a good hope in Christ Jesus of his eternal salvation. On Sept. 4th, 1864, he told the church at Oak Woods, North Berwick, Maine, the dealings of the Lord with his soul, and was received in their fellowship and baptized by Elder William Quint. One month later his wife, sister Affa Ford, united with the church and was baptized October 16th, 1864. Our dear brother was very deaf for many years, so that he could hear no preaching, but he was a subscriber of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years, and took a great deal of pleasure in reading it. I have enjoyed many profitable conversations with our departed brother upon the things of Christ, and it was manifest that he was taught of the Lord and had gracious and deep experiences in the doctrine of Christ. He was stricken with paralysis some months before he died, from which he never

fully rallied. But with the dear saints not a single shaft can hit till the God of love sees fit. And who would wish to ward off such a shaft? He has gone from the evil to come to be with Christ, which is far better. Our dear sister Ford with her daughter (Mrs. Wilbur Spencer) and grandchildren mourn their loss.

At his funeral the writer preached from the words: "We spend our years as a tale that is told."—Psalms xc. 9. FREDERICK W. KEENE.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Frank G. Scott, Md., $2.00; H. G. Garrett, Ky., $3.00; Mrs. Spencer Nethaway, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. Lydia B. Stewart, N. Y., $3.00; A Friend, N. Y., $1.50.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Liberty Church, of the Pocatalico Association, at her regular conference meeting in June, felt that owing to the present shortage of flour, sugar and other necessities for taking care of the association it would be best to postpone for the present year.

Done by order of the church.

C. H. CASDORPH, Clerk.

APPOINTMENTS.

The Lord willing, Elder D. M. Vail will fill the following appointments:

Saturday, August 17th, Kingston, N. Y., 8 p. m.; Sunday, 18th, Ashokan, N. Y., with the Olive and Hurley Church, 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m.; Monday, 19th, Margaretville, N. Y., at brother Faulkner's, 8 p. m.; Tuesday, 20th, Roxbury, N. Y., at sister Mead's, 11 a. m.; Wednesday, 21st, Halcottville, N. Y., sister P. O'Connor's, 8 p. m.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Pa., has appointed a meeting for Saturday and Sunday, August 10th and 11th, 1918, beginning Saturday at 2 p. m. Sunday meeting morning and afternoon. Those coming on the D., L. & W. R. R. will be met at Clarks Summit station Friday afternoon or Saturday morning by writing to C. E. Miller, Clarks Summit, Pa., R. F. D. Those coming to Olyphant on the O. & W. or D. & H. R. R. will be met at Olyphant station by writing to G. W. Goodrich, Olyphant, Pa., R. D.

G. W. GOODRICH, Clerk.

THE Second Roxbury Old School Baptist Church, Roxbury, N. Y., will, the Lord willing, hold a two days meeting on the second Sunday in August and Saturday before (10th and 11th). Trains will be met at Roxbury on Saturday morning. We extend a cordial invitation to all who love the truth to meet with us. GEO. RUSTON.

THE thirty-seventh annual session of New Hope Association of Primitive Baptists will meet on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1918, with Sabine Church, six miles north of Greenville, Texas. All trains will be be met at Greenville Thursday. Any coming later than Thursday phone J. I. Money at Tidwell. All sound, loving Baptists are invited, especially ministers of our faith and order.

S. M. DICKENS.

THE Lord willing, the Clovesville Old School Baptist Church will hold a two days meeting on the first Saturday and Sunday following in September (7th and 8th), 1918. Trains will be met at Fleischmanns station, on the Ulster & Delaware Railroad, the first day of the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus to meet with us. A special invitation is extended to brethren in the ministry of our faith and order.

O. F. BALLARD.

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IN

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1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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(Judges v. 11.)

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1918. NO. 16.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CHRIST AND THE CHURCH.

(Ephesians v. 32.)

CHRIST, who is the Head of the election of grace, was in the counsel of Jehovah set up from everlasting, and in this counsel, this eternal purpose purposed in him, his "goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."—Micah v. 2. This eternal purpose embraced that the Son of God should become incarnate and take upon him the seed of Abraham. So when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, and thus viewed, the Word made flesh, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth."—Isaiah xlii. 1. Thus contemplated in the eternal mind of God, the Son of the Father in truth and love in fashion as a man, he was ever the Father's delight. "I was daily his delight." And the church given unto Christ, chosen in him, given grace in him, promised and given life in him and blessed in him with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, was Christ's delight. I was "rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men."—Prov. viii. 30, 31. Christ is the delight of his people. "I sat down under his shadow with great delight."—Song of Solomon ii. 3. "The messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in."—Mal. iii. 1. The highest grace, that which is above all other demonstrations whatsoever of Jehovah's grace, is found in Christ Jesus; that the Son of God, who in the beginning was with God, and is God, who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, who is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person, upholding all things by the word of his power, should be made man; that that Holy Thing, which was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the virgin Mary, should be taken hold of, taken into union with the Word, and be the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts. (Zech. xiii. 7.) The grace and glory of this union impregnable, indissolvable and eternal, are such that Christ hath the preeminence, even unto all eternity, above his fellows, his church; for no other save Jesus, the son of the virgin Mary, has such ineffable union with God. But, beloved of God, this is our unspeakable

blessedness that we are Christ's, and Christ is God's. Christ Jesus, the head and the foundation of the church, is the elect head and foundation, and all the lively stones built upon him are chosen of God, and precious, too. God the Father in the eternal counsel of his will first chose that human nature; that "Holy Thing," which the virgin Mary conceived by the Holy Ghost, and which in that moment of its conception the Word, the Son of God, assumed, and then gave the church unto him, chose them in him and blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in him. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, is the chosen Head, and they with and in him the chosen members, his fullness, the fullness of him who filleth all in all.

"In God's great will the scheme was laid,
Before his hands the mountains weighed,
Or spanned the unknown seas.
Then did his arms of love embrace
A seed elect of Adam's race,
His glorious name to praise."

"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."—Eph. i. 5, 6. Thus in the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure the elect of mankind were, in God the Father's foreknowledge of them, accounted one with Christ, the incarnate Son of God, and loved with an everlasting love. For Christ Jesus saith, Thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me. Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. (John xvii. 23, 24.) They are chosen persons given to Christ before the world was made, espoused to him in the covenant of Jehovah's gracious will. All this was embraced in the eternal purpose which was purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord while as yet God had not given us being. But our God in declaring unto us the eternal thoughts of his heart concerning Christ and the church "calleth things that are not as though they were."

"'Twas he eternal ages past
Formed the great plan from first to last;
And what his arm would e'er fulfill
Stood ever present to his will."

So God the Father in the election of his elect had his Son in his eye verily foreordained in the eternal counsel of his will to become incarnate, and he chose them for his sake to be his fellows, his companions, his brethren; and as foreknown, predestinated, the Word made flesh, full of grace and truth, there was a glory given unto him before the world began; a glory which in the fullness of times and unto all eternity he gives unto all that the Father giveth unto him. The Holy Ghost in the Scriptures of truth testifies of Christ unto the church in such manifold characters and offices which he sustains unto his people that Jesus is in truth precious to them that believe.

"In every office he sustains,
In every victory he gains,
In every counsel of his will,
He's precious to his people still."

Christ, our covenant Head, is our Savior and Friend, our Surety and Mediator, Emmanuel—God with us; he is our Daysman, that can lay his hand upon both God and us and bring us together in judgment. He stood in the breach between us vile transgressors and the holy and just God. He is God the Father's equal and man's fellow; yes, very blessedly so, the Word made flesh, the great Shepherd of the sheep, is the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts. (Zech. xiii. 7.) When Jesus was born of the virgin Mary he was the mighty God, the Savior, Christ the Lord; he was the Prince of life when crucified, and when in the tomb he was the Holy One who

saw no corruption. He was the Lord of glory when his tormentors crowned him with thorns, blindfolded him, spit in his face, mocked and crucified him, and when he was received up into glory he was God manifest in the flesh; the Lord of hosts the King of glory when he entered there. Truly there is comfort and blessedness to us vile transgressors when by the power of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, we by faith contemplate Christ and know him to be ours, the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see, to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen. Our Lord Jesus Christ was received up into glory, and he shall come from heaven at the last day in all his glory, and the holy angels with him, and when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is, and we shall be glorified together with him. The elect of God, as viewed in their fallen estate, were from the beginning chosen unto salvation, not according to their good works, whatsoever they may have been when in the first man Adam they stood in him in his uprightness, in which he was created; neither are we saved according to our evil works, but God saves his people and calls them by his grace unto the fellowship of his dear Son, our dear Savior, according to his own purpose and grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

"O love, beyond conception great,
That formed the vast stupendous plan,
Where all divine perfections meet
To reconcile rebellious man!"

The mystery of Christ, which from the beginning of the world was hid in God, but in due time was revealed unto the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, is exceedingly glorious and comforting when we are led therein by the Spirit of truth, who takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto us. "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."—1 Tim. iii. 16. In viewing the relationship of Christ and the church the apostle Paul exclaimed, "This is a great mystery."—Eph. v. 32. Christ Jesus our Lord nourisheth and cherisheth the church; "for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." A taste of the glories and consolations of this union is known by the believer when experiencing that nourishment, that cherishing which only our beloved Christ, our Head and Husband, affords us. He is the Savior of the body, the church, and for the church, which is his body, he gave himself an offering and a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savor; and in his love for the church he also gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. (Eph. v. 2, 25-27.) O the blessedness! Can it be that I am embraced in all this? Is such an heritage mine? Christ saith, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage."—Psalms xvi. 6. He has riches of glory in his inheritance in the saints. O what a goodly heritage! What everlasting blessedness, immortal glory, is ours in him, "in whom we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." God hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, vessels of mercy afore prepared

unto glory. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory. O precious Savior, dwell in my heart by faith, live in me, O Christ, the hope of glory. (Col. i. 27.) At present we only know in part, we see as through a glass darkly, but then face to face. Until then let glimpses be given us, let foretastes be ours, and these shall be our solace in all the tribulations that we are called to endure in the house of our pilgrimage.

The church of Christ is predestinated to be conformed to the image of God's dear Son, to be found in all the beauty and glory, immortality and incorruption of the glorified Savior. We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. To this end the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, according as he hath chosen us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Thus in the fulfillment of this eternal purpose, purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, the church shall be in every respect suitable and meet for Christ, presented faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. She shall be a bride adorned for her husband, in perfection of beauty, in the beauties of holiness. The beauty of the Lord her God in the face of Jesus Christ, her Husband and Head, shall be upon her. Thy God, O Zion, shall make thee an eternal excellency; thy God is thy glory.

"O wondrous grace, and mystery profound,
In God's eternal purpose I was found.
His sovereign love, his grace, his deep decree,
In some mysterious way included me."

But what scriptural right have I or you to hope this is so blessedly true? Let us look into this matter, it is of eternal importance. The Greek word *Ekklesia* (the church) signifies, "That which is called out," and this is expressive of who they are that compose the church of God. They are the called of God, the called of Jesus Christ, chosen out of the world, redeemed to God out of all nations and kindreds and tongues and people; and their calling in Christ Jesus is unto all the heights of eternal glory and blessedness with God. Well may the apostle call it the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. View the elect in their natural estate before they are called by God's grace. We see them to be enemies of God, vile transgressors of his law, alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their hearts. They are by nature children of wrath even as others, bent upon their own destruction, But,

"The people of Jehovah's choice
Are registered on high,
And they shall hear his sovereign voice,
And by his grace draw nigh.

Far off, depraved, and prone to stray,
But they shall surely come;
For covenant love marks out the way,
And brings the outcasts home."

O why, O Lord, was I called out from the world unto the fellowship of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior? Ah, I see so plainly I should ever have wandered an alien from thee, going on in the frowardness of my vile nature; I should have gone on into the everlasting perdition of the ungodly, who know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power. The apostle Paul speaks of a time when the Lord called him by his grace to reveal his Son in him. (Gal. i. 15, 16.) Before that time, though after the straitest sect of the Jewish religion he lived a Pharisee, yet he thought he ought

to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus Christ, and like a savage, wild beast he was exceeding mad against believers in Jesus, and breathing out threatenings and slaughter he made havoc of the church. (Acts viii. 3; 1 Tim. i. 13.) But God called out this sinner to obtain the rich mercy of God, and that "Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting." The awful fact is this: that all the chosen of God before they are called out by grace are dead in trespasses and sins. The very name "church" (that which is called out), given to those who are Christ's, is declarative of the purpose of God to separate them from the rest of mankind unto himself. We read that God visits the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name. He forms them for himself to show forth his praise. "Know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself."—Psalms iv. 3. The apostle Paul said, "I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."—Phil. iii. 12. Very dreadful was this at first to him as he was smitten down in his highhanded persecution of the saints, but the purpose of Christ in it all was in all graciousness toward him, and the fruits pardon, salvation, blessedness, eternal glory.

The church, the called out of God, are called to know, in the first steps they are made to take, terrible things in righteousness; they are convicted of their sins, and feel in their consciences to be under the just condemnation of God's holy law, and they fear they are on the road to endless woe. How shall they escape the damnation of hell, which they are made more and more to see they have justly merited by their transgressions against God, with whom in their sin-distressed, condemnation-burdened hearts they feel they have to do? Then mingled with all this there is springing up within them a fountain of life, hungerings and thirstings after righteousness, for the Holy Spirit is beginning that wonderful transforming writing of the law of Mount Zion in their hearts. "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."—Jer. xxxi. 33; xxxii. 40. There is a power, there is a teaching, there is such writing in the heart and mind going on that this God called out sinner finds longings within him for forgiveness, reconciliation, for friendship with the Lord. But how can this be between a guilty, hell-deserving sinner and the Holy One who inhabiteth eternity? This is the distressing perplexity of the quickened, called out sinner. These are the called of Jesus Christ; called that they may know him, whom to know is life eternal. Where shall the perishing sinner begin to know Jesus, the dear, almighty Savior? It is on the cross at Calvary. There hear the cry of the crucified One: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else."—Isaiah xlv. 22. Jesus said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die."—John xii. 32, 33. Before the eyes of our faith, by the revelation of the Holy Ghost, Christ crucified is evidently set forth. God of old met with typical Israel at the blood-sprinkled mercy-seat, and when a poor, sin-distressed soul and bleeding, dying Lamb of God meet, what a meeting! The serpent-bitten Israelite looked to the brazen serpent and lived. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be

lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."—John iii. 14, 15. Christ crucified draws his people unto him, and to them he makes a show openly of his triumph over sin and over all principalities and powers that oppressed them, triumphing over them in his cross. O, we learn wonderful things at the cross of Christ, and the following mellifluous hymn is no exaggeration of the sensations of the soul of that poor sinner who, in the riches of Jehovah's mercy, becomes intimate with the dear, suffering, crucified Redeemer:

"Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,
Which before the cross I spend;
Life and health and peace possessing
From the sinner's dying Friend.

Here I'll sit forever viewing
Mercy's streams in streams of blood;
Precious drops my soul bedewing,
Plead and claim my peace with God.

Truly blessed is this station,
Low before his cross to lie,
While I see divine compassion
Floating in his languid eye.

Here it is I find my heaven,
While upon the Lamb I gaze;
Love I much? I've much forgiven;
I'm a miracle of grace.

Love and grief my heart dividing,
With my tears his feet I'll bathe;
Constant still in faith abiding,
Life deriving from his death.

May I still enjoy this feeling,
In all need to Jesus go;
Prove his wounds each day more healing,
And myself more deeply know."

"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Amen. Let me ask, O sinner, What can you know of Jesus if you have never been, as a poor, lost sinner, with a broken and contrite heart, in faith and love intimate with him in Gethsemane and Calvary? O sin-distressed heart, ponder over the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and may the Holy Spirit console thee with the comforting heights and depths and lengths and breadths of the love of God in Christ Jesus revealed therein.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

ROMANS IV. 8.

"BLESSED is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."

This is the greatest blessing ever bestowed upon the human family. God has never imputed sin to his elect, and never will; they never have and never can sin against the Holy Ghost. The greatest of all gifts to the people of God was that of Him who was made to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Paul told the church at Corinth that first of all he delivered to them that which he also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures. The only question in this is, Who does the "our" represent? Paul's letters were all addressed to the churches. What applied to the churches then applies with equal force now; each of those letters belonged to the church to whom it was addressed. Well, then, he died for the sins of his chosen people, the debt was paid, and in consequence the law had no further demand on the principal. The wages of sin is death. We were given eternal life in Christ before the world began. His people were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, to the end that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. God reveals himself to his elect of all nations, climes and conditions of men; without, or independent of, that revelation no one ever has or ever will know God, whom to know is life eternal. To reveal anything to any one is to inform him of something he did not formerly know. Outside of divine

revelation no one ever realized himself a sinner in the true sense. He that commanded the light to shine out of darkness must shine in the heart of the sinner before he or she can ever know Christ; that, and that alone, can give knowledge of his glory. No man knows who the Son is but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. There are three that bear record in heaven: Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and these three are one. The Father chose the Son to redeem, the Holy Ghost makes the application. The Savior said, It is needful that I go away; if I go not away the Comforter will not come; but if I go away I will send the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost; he will take the things of mine and show them unto you. Peter addressed the strangers of seven provinces of Asia as an elect people, who were blessed with an incorruptible inheritance, which was reserved for them in heaven, and told them they were kept by the power of God. What can be surer or safer than anything that is kept by the power of God? He also told them they were a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, to the end that they should show forth the praises of Him who called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. This is what the Savior called the light of life. Paul said, It is Christ in you the hope of glory. Hope is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and entereth into that within the veil. Peter said we receive the end of our hope, even the salvation of our souls. These Scriptures are very plain and comprehensive to the children of God, and when faith is in exercise they can grasp them as God's eternal truth, and rejoice in them as being full of glory. In the presence of God there is fullness of joy, and at his right hand pleasures for evermore. It should be the sincere prayer of all God's called people to be reconciled to his will concerning them. The dear Savior said in the most trying hour of his life on earth, Not my will, but thine be done, O God. God's purpose or will has and will be carried out, the will of man to the contrary notwithstanding. He works all things after the counsel of his own will, without the let or hindrance of any. He has all power in heaven, in earth, in the sea and all deep places.

Love to the household of faith.

JAMES M. SIMMONS.

PARIS, Texas.

GRAND SALINE, Texas, July 4, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—As I have been feeling much better for the past few days, I had them bring me here for a short visit among my stepchildren, and am writing you as I see my subscription is past due. I sent you one dollar the first of May, and wrote you a lengthy letter, telling the reason for my delay, which was that I had been in much pain for many months, caused by a fall I had last November, when I dislocated my left hip; but it has pleased the good Master to still keep me here for some wise purpose best known to himself. I can at times go on crutches and do a little housework, while at other times I cannot even rest nights; but when not so bad I do want to read and write when sitting up, so do not wish to miss a copy of the good old SIGNS, which still comes to me through the kindness of my good friends, for which I am thankful. The letter I wrote you was not for publication, with the exception of a few texts of Scripture, which I requested some to give their views upon

at their convenience, either through the columns of the SIGNS or by private letter to me, as I have been so long cut off here in this far away and desolate place, where I cannot even see any of our precious faith; and not only so, but I have not been able to hear preaching in many long years. Do not think I am murmuring, or in anywise complaining of my lot, as I know it is best for our dross to be consumed and the trial of our faith made pure as gold. O, dear Lord, do increase our faith, and multiply thy pure love and free grace in our hearts until we may be made perfect in love, which casteth out all tormenting fear, and makes us, as Paul, to rejoice in all our trials and tribulations here in this life, for it all will soon be over. The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope. I have read lengthy articles on the one clause of this sweet text, but never a word on the good and wise reason of our God making him first a subject of, or subjected in hope.

Dear brother, please excuse me for anything I may write, and remember I do not ask you to publish anything from me you do not wish to. I do feel that pure love and pure fellowship in the Spirit of our dear Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, our only High Priest and Advocate, by whom only can we send up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to the Father by and through him, for he is our light and life, as he is the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, and his own precious words are, And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me. It is written that he came not to condemn the world, but to save; also he is the propitiation of our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world. The great mystery of God is in all his wonderful works among all nations of men here on earth. He has always furnished himself with witnesses to prove his great love and tender mercy and work of grace. He has power over all evil to subdue it in his own time and purpose, as in the case of Jacob and Esau, and many other places giving his reason, but I will call attention to Cain after the image of his father Adam, who slew his righteous brother. Think how fearful he was to go to a land where God's name was not known. He said it was more than he could bear, until God avenged him sevenfold, and put his mark upon him, then we hear no more complaint until the last. Lamech seemed in great trouble and called his two wives and rehearsed his troubles to them, but if Cain was avenged sevenfold truly Lamech was seventy times seven. I understand this to be the hosts of the earth, and the glory of it just what Satan showed and promised to our beloved Lord in his temptations in the wilderness, but when Eve bare Seth (I think the name was, he was over a hundred years of age when he begat his first son) then it was that the name of God began to be called upon by men. This race seems to represent the heavenly hosts.

Well, it seems I love to think upon these things, and could write about them the whole of the evening, yet it is very seldom I can tell where to find passages of Scripture, but those who love the truth and keep His commandments know how to find them.

I will close for this time, and hope this will reach you in due season, and that you will excuse me for all you may find amiss, and correct me in my many errors, and I will take it as a great kindness. Let us not despise prophecy, but prove all things, hold fast that which is good,

denounce every appearance of evil, and the very God of all peace shall sanctify us. Then truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. Will you all think of a poor lonely one in your prayers? May His reigning grace ever be our strength and hope. He is over all godliness forever. Amen.

SARAH A. CARTER.

CALION, Ark., July 7, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will try and write just to tell you how much I enjoy reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and can say of a truth that I cannot see how I could do without the paper, although I am well aware that I am not worthy of the least notice of any of God's people, but as long as I can pay for the SIGNS I want to take it, so find inclosed two dollars, for which send it on to me. I know that with the high price of everything it is hard for you to go on publishing it, but hope times are not as hard for you as they are for me. I believe that when God gives peace to his church, notwithstanding all the confusion, and even death itself, they are silent, knowing he doeth all things well. The prophet Isaiah says, For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood, but this shall be with burning and full of fire, &c. Of course I believe this whole prophecy, signifying and pointing to the true warrior and the shed blood of Christ, with all the fury of the law upon him, for we know he was slain from the foundation of the world, bearing the sins of his people. I wonder if it is with me as it is said: He sets the lawful captive free. I do feel that I am a poor captive, and he says, If I make you free ye are free indeed. I know that if I am free it is of his goodness and mercy, and not because of anything that I have done, or could do. I feel sad, but am glad because of the SIGNS, which my father took for many years, and after he had gone to his reward my dear mother took it for twelve or fifteen years, and now I am taking it, and it surely is a welcome visitor, and is read and reread with all the care and love I have at my command. I hope you will not think hard of me for not remitting sooner, for I assure you it is as soon as I could.

Dear friends, editors and writers of the dear old SIGNS, remember me when it goes well with you, and pray for me and mine. I feel to be an unworthy friend, and hope I am at least that much, though I have never united with the church, although I hope I do desire a home there, and have for a long time. The greatest trouble is that I am not worthy to unite with the good Old Baptists, although I assure you I would love to if they would receive me and let me sit at their feet. My wife is a member, and a confirmed believer in the doctrine that the SIGNS advocates, and, if I believe anything, so am I. As I have often said, and still say, if they are not right, just throw the Bible away, for they teach and preach just as I see it there. I get comfort from nearly every one of the writers of the SIGNS. They speak of being the chief of sinners; O, I feel to be that, and many times worse. Poor old sinner that I am, I sometimes feel the presence of the Lord, but often feel that I am the greatest hypocrite on earth; it is only once in a great while that a little spark shines in my heart; I then just only hope that it so for me, a poor sinner. I seldom miss taking my wife to her meetings, and while listening to her preacher (Elder J. T. Evers) I hope the little spark shines brighter as he declares the greatness of the great and powerful God, who in mercy cares for

and protects sinners. I hope you will excuse my ignorance and unworthiness, and trust that God will continue to bless you and the writers of the SIGNS in all things, and may we always praise his holy name.

Will Elder F. W. Keene please give his views upon the Scripture found in Genesis iv. 3–7?

As ever, your unworthy friend,

J. C. DAVIS.

CLARKS SUMMIT, Pa., March 28, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The inclosed letters are at your disposal, to publish if you desire. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES is excellent reading for hungry souls, those who hunger for the truth as it is in Jesus, living souls.

Yours in hope, but walking in darkness, D. M. VAIL.

WHITE PLAINS, N. Y., Aug. 3, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—If one as vile as I feel myself to be may thus address you. I have written many letters to you in mind, and have been thinking of writing to you ever since you were here and preached such a good sermon for us, but have failed to, as so many things have taken place with me, and as I now make the attempt my mind is barren, but I trust the Lord will direct me to try in much weakness to write you. Your sermon was very comforting to me, and I feel that the Lord was with you, and I also feel he has wonderfully blessed you to comfort his dear children. Sometimes I feel that I am one for whom Christ died, but when I see so much vileness within I say, O how can I be one of the chosen? Then these words come to me: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Then I am happy to know I am so helpless; without him I can do nothing. If not deceived in the whole matter, I do love this doctrine and people above any earthly joy, because there is no real comfort to be found besides this blessed truth of salvation alone by divine grace. I was at my home church, in New York city, last Sunday, and the dear pastor preached a good sermon in the morning, and in the afternoon he baptized that dear lady, Mrs. Smith. It was beautiful to see her go down into the water, and my heart felt glad that there is a time fixed by the Lord to favor Zion. I hope and trust that the Lord will still bless you to comfort his poor helpless children, and when at the throne of grace remember me. If a subject of grace, I feel to be the vilest of all, and long to feel as in time that is past and gone.

You will see from this letter how dark my mind is, but I wrote to let you know how much we enjoyed your visit, and I do hope you will come again some time.

Yours in many conflicts,

MELISSA GRIMES.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Feb. 5, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—I have been reading your letter in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for February 1st, and feel it was good and the truth. The last part seems to have a resting-place with me, where you say you are going about the same as usual, and that the churches remain about the same, a few additions and a few deaths. Spiritually I feel twice dead, plucked up by the roots, no good anywhere, but God reigns, and the purpose is in his word, and will be accomplished. Elder Vail, I can agree with you in this and in many other things. I often wonder what good I am in the church, if in the church. I have my name in the church-book at Hopewell, and was re-

ceived by the brethren, but the question with me is, Have I a place with the church of God? Has my name been written there since the foundation of the world? As I view myself all is dross, rooted up, but then the thought comes, A stump may be torn from the earth, all roots may seem taken up, but always there is a little fibre or small root left that the eye can hardly see, but something left there is life and will grow again. This has been my experience. Spiritual life almost gone, and then some brethren tell me their trials and troubles, and as I muse the fire burns, and I say, Yes, that is so. How do I know it is so? Because I can feel it, and can say it is the truth. I have not gotten so I do not like to hear preaching, but I do not always feel it; it seems I am lifeless, dead, as you say. We have lost one brother, Israel H. Vannoy, who was buried Sunday, February 3rd. Elder Vaughn preached the funeral sermon. Elder Fenton was with us, by request of Mrs. Vannoy, and spoke with comfort to living souls; it is not for the dead. As I looked upon his face what a sinner left I thought myself to be. He looked peaceful and happy, calm, at rest, and I thought, This is nothing but flesh and bone; it is finished, as Jesus said upon the cross, all cares are gone, all trials are passed, and he is at rest with his Master, God seeing him as he is in the fullness, nothing more to take from or add to, he is with the great I AM, the resurrection and the life. We mourn because we will hear his voice no more; no one to fill his place. There are no two alike, each branch bears its own fruit, but all are from the same root: God. Brother Vaughn said in his sermon one night that we seem as in a dream, we look beyond David. That is true. We read the Scriptures, which are truth, but there is something beyond it all, and we must be given the understanding from God, the living fountain of living waters. If I take a drink from a running stream I would like to see the fountain or spring.

I have written along in a rambling way, just like myself. I could not write like some one else, but have to write just like I am myself; I cannot put on some other person's armor, for it would not fit me. I have often thought of you, and there still lives a sweet remembrance of you. I have come to the conclusion that my writing is of no account.

Some time ago, while at Elder Vaughn's home, he asked, Is there not a place in the Bible which reads something like this: If the foundation be removed, what shall the righteous do? I said, There is one, and on arriving at home took my Bible and found the words in Psalms xi. 3, which reads, "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" and these words have been with me since.

I will leave this for your consideration. May you be able to go forth many years, if it is the Lord's will, feeding the poor and hungry. You may travel through the wilderness many times, but the light shines bright on the other side. You know this by experience.

This afternoon I have been at home, as it is too cold to work on the farm, but did not expect to write to you, for I thought I would like to read. What poor mortals we are, so prone to wander.

Your brother in tribulation,

GEORGE M. CONNER.

SALISBURY, Md., Feb. 21, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—I have for some time felt that I would like to write you, but I do very little writing, owing to a felt sense of my inability to write on

things that are of the most interest and value to those who have been made to know their own vileness and nothingness and God's goodness and greatness. Sometimes it is indeed pleasant to meditate upon these things, and to have sweet communion with that Being who is infinitely holy, perfection in all his ways and attributes, who is from everlasting to everlasting, the only all-wise Creator, who hath created all things for himself by the word of his power, who hath made even the wicked for the day of evil, who controls all things; having power to create, surely he has power to control what is created. Brother Vail, if I know my own heart, I surely believe he is the supreme Ruler of the universe, and that there is no power but what is ordained of him and subject to him. If it is different from this, then I know not God, whom to know is life eternal. It is now nearly forty-eight years since I was first made to trust in the God of all grace and comfort, and in that time I have passed through many conflicts, have had many trials, both of a temporal and spiritual character, yet God is the same, abiding with me, notwithstanding that much of the time I mourn his absence, that I do not always enjoy his felt presence, but there have been short seasons when I could testify to the truth that in his pressence there is fullness of joy, and at his right hand pleasures for evermore. Yes, all the real pleasure I have is when I am made to trust in his power, knowing that he is infinitely good, having witnessed these things time and again in my own life's experience, for it is he only who hath delivered and saved me out of all my distresses, both temporal and spiritual. I know but one Savior for time or eternity, here or hereafter, him only do I desire to praise, adore and worship, the only all-wise, true and living God, Jesus Christ the righteous. But alas, how far short do I fall of honoring him as I should. I can only honor him as he enables me to. I know this is so, for I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwells no good thing. If there is anything good in me, it is Jesus Christ himself. Sometimes I am made to hope that he has taken up his abode with me, else how would I know of the existence of such a cage of unclean birds? Unless his Spirit of holiness made these things manifest no other power could or would have done such a thing. But O how much of the time we are made to doubt; just as Peter did, so do we; we have no power of our own to withstand the rough, stormy sea.

Now I must close. I have not written as I intended when I commenced, but have just wandered along as my mind led, and if you become weary of reading it just cast it aside, and forgive me for the trespass, but I felt that I wanted you to know that we still have you in kind and loving remembrance. If I do not write often still I think of you.

Your unworthy brother,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

WALLACETOWN, Ontario, July 7, 1918.

DEAR ELDER KER:—As you have been on my mind very much for the last few weeks, I feel as though I would like to write a few words to you, for I am passing the time in a very lonely way. My health is not good, and I have not been to meeting for over a year. Elder Fenton, when he comes to Canada, preaches at my home, and quite a number come in to hear him. At the time of the May meeting Elder Vaughn and Elder McConnell preached at our home Sunday afternoon, which was a great comfort to us

all, so you see we are favored more than we deserve. We are poor unworthy worms of the dust, but the Lord has promised he will never leave nor frsake his own.

I enjoyed your editorial in the SIGNS very much, and wept while reading it. I also enjoyed Elder Lefferts' editorial. I take great comfort in reading the SIGNS.

I am inclosing three letters which I took great comfort in reading, and if you see fit to publish them all good and well, and if not, all right. I trust this letter may find you all enjoying good health. I hope to see you once more in Canada. My husband joins me in sending you our warmest love.

From your unworthy sister,
(MRS.) DONALD McWILLIAMS.

MAYFAIR, Ont., Oct. 13, 1912.

DEAR SISTER McWILLIAMS:—I want you to know that you have the heartfelt sympathy of my husband and me in this your sore trial. Our hearts ache for you and your husband, for we realize that the death of your son must cause you great sorrow. May God in his mercy comfort you and give you to feel resigned to his will, feeling that it must be right, hard as it seems, because he who doeth all things well hath done it. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but he will deliver them out of them all. We are glad to know that Elder Lester was there, and trust that he was given a word of comfort for you. I often have you in loving remembrance. May the dear Lord support and comfort you, and give you to feel in all your trials that the everlasting arms of love and mercy are underneath, so that you cannot sink in despair.

Affectionately your brother and sister,
MR. & MRS. T. A. ARDIES.

VANNECK, Ont., Oct. 16, 1912.

MR. AND MRS. D. McWILLIAMS—DEAR COUSINS:—It was with feelings of deep sorrow that we learned of your son's death by drowning, and now as an expression of our feelings permit us to convey to you all our heartfelt sympathy. We know that human sympathy is nothing compared with the sympathy which comes from above, yet we feel it our duty to send you this letter of condolence, hoping it may in some measure comfort you in this your hour of bereavement. May the God of all comfort and love look upon you with compassion, and comfort and sustain you in your hour of trial, and may he give you grace and strength to say from true and sincere hearts, Thy will be done.

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

"Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face."

Yours with sympathy,
COLIN, DONALD &
ARCHIE JOHNSON.

WEST LORNE, Ont., March 23, 1917.

MY PRECIOUS SISTER:—Jesus promised that if we suffer with him we shall reign with him. Your good letter was received, and I felt humbled that such a dear old mother in Israel should remember me, a poor worm of the dust. How good that it is promised he will change our vile body and fashion it like unto his glorious body. When he who is our life shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory.

Dear sister, after I read your letter, and was meditating upon it, and wanted to answer it right away; I took up my pre-

cious mother's Bible to see what would direct my mind, and I opened at the fourth chapter of Philippians, and read it, and found many good things there. Read it, my dear, and I hope the Spirit of the Lord will be upon you while you read. You say you sigh for home; so do I, and many times think the end is near, even at the door. To-day these words seem to be on my mind:

"The Lord that died shall be our song,
To cheer the night of time;
Nor will the painful night seem long,
Through this unfriendly clime."

I remember dear sister Cassie Stevenson once wrote me she dreamed that she and sister Jessie Gillies were getting ready to go to hear Elder Carnell, and she was singing those verses. I was at the Duart meeting, and there was a little preacher there who told me my travels better than I could tell them myself; he was George L. Weaver, of Cleveland, Ohio. When I heard that Elders Coulter and Lefferts were not coming I was sorry, and wondered who would be there. I asked Mary Bell and Mrs. McWilliams, and they said Elder Weaver. I was sad, for I never had heard him. What poor weak worms we are, to be looking to the preacher for food. I was made to remember dear Elder Ker's words, they are: Look beyond the watchman, and remember that the power of the excellency is not in man, but in the Lord. Dear Elder Chick said once, It may be from the one you think the most insignificant that you receive the message, but I must be taught this time and again.

I have some good letters from sister Mary Gosnell and sister Jessie Gillies, of Muirkirk. Sister Jessie's sister, Mrs. Willey, will be baptized perhaps in May. I will get my letters when I go to the meeting. I shall try to go. I hope you can come. Write soon. We are very lonesome for our darling. My health is not very good, but I should be thankful that it is no worse. Duncan is writing, so I must close. Sister Mary Gosnell is coming to the meeting, and we will come and see you if I am able. I would love to hear dear Elder Fenton, for I do love him for the truth's sake, and so do many, many others. I heard Elder McConnell once at Dunwich. Give my love to sister Lena, and remember me to Mr. McWilliams, Jack, Andrew, Mrs. McWilliams and the children. Good-by.

I remain your lonely sister,

ANNIE MURRAY.

MUIRKIRK, Ontario.

DEAR EDITORS:—These morsels of food for the weary are at your disposal.

In gospel bonds, J. GILLIS.

PARRY SOUND, Ont., Jan. 12, 1897.

DEAR BROTHER BARTLEY:—I have been about to write you, your dear wife and many others of "the flock of slaughter" there may be at McKellar for a long time, but have been hindered hitherto by what appears to me a two-fold cause: first, the almost unconquerable natural indisposition I have against writing at all, and, secondly, from a felt sense of my own ignorance and utter unworthiness, as well as the darkness of mind, in relation to divine and heavenly things, I seem to be so very much the subject of. I know that by searching no man can find out God, neither by taking thought can he add one jot or tittle to his spiritual stature, and although it is now half a century ago since the Lord was pleased to call me by his grace and manifest himself as the chiefest among ten thousand and the One altogether lovely, yet in myself, that is, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing, the motions of sin still work powerfully

within me, so that I cannot do the things that I would. Oftentimes I find the things of time and sense gain the ascendency in my feelings, and I am made to realize that to be carnally minded is death. I would be spiritually minded, but have no power or might to attain that cheerful, blessed state, but find myself shut up, feeble and sore broken by reason of my sin, the law, unbelief and the ten thousand infidelities of my very nature, so vile, so corrupt, so utterly unworthy to lift my eyes to the place where His honor dwelleth, that I have, like the poor leper, continually to cry, Verily guilty and unclean. Still I have a vivid recollection of how, when and where the dear Savior first manifested himself to my poor soul as the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person, as the consummation of everything that was lovely and delightful to my soul. I know that there have been many, many blessed seasons of refreshing since then, when the candle of the Lord shone brightly upon me, and once or twice have I been caught up to the third heaven, where I have seen things and heard words that it would be not only unlawful, but utterly impossible to give utterance to. I know that there have been many times when by reason of vile unbelief I have almost come to the determination that I would speak in the name of the Lord no more, and on account of my loneliness and desolation, as a sparrow alone on the housetop, I would hide myself, as it were, under a juniper bush, or under a rock, and remain hidden once for all, but the powerful voice has been heard, What doest thou here? O Lord, I have been jealous for thy name, for thy truth, the sovereignty of thy love, but I am left alone, they will not hearken, they have cast them aside, and even me they persecute and speak evil of. I am going to give up altogether, but the word has been again heard: Is not my word as a hammer that breaketh the rock asunder? Is it not as a fire that devoureth all the hard thoughts, indolence, enmity, formality and opposition of the ungodly? Arise, stand on thy feet. I will be with thee. I will do all my pleasure. I have yet seven thousand men of Israel that have not bowed the knee to Baal. Withhold not thy hand. Sow thy seed beside all waters, for thou knowest not which shall prosper, whether this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.

I am afraid I am troubling you to read a lot of emptiness, or not much else, but, the Lord willing, I will be at McKellar, and try and do my poor best, Sunday, January 23rd. I hope that will be agreeable to the friends. Pray for me.

With love to all, I am, I hope, yours in the bonds of an everlasting covenant,

WM. KNIFTON.

BALTIMORE, Md., Feb. 5, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I feel like writing to let you know how I enjoy reading the SIGNS, with the many good letters from the brethren and sisters throughout this broad land, telling what great things the Lord has done for them, and when the poor and humble are given to feast upon them it appears like one happy family, and we have the witness within ourselves that the word of God does drop as the rain and distil as the dew. I often feel if I could write as they do I would try to write much oftener than I do. After writing I do not always send the letter, for it appears too much like the writer, and I cannot see anything in it to edify any of the Lord's people; for when I look within all is so dark and wild I fear I have not been born again, and can

hardly deem myself a child. I wish to speak of the editorials in the two January numbers, yours in the 1st and Elder Lefferts' in the 15th in particular. I feel they are worth the price of the paper for a year, for it appears the grace that Elder Lefferts spoke of stands forth in both of your writings. If some one differs with you in their opinion you do not say they are not Old School Baptists, or not fit to be Old School Baptists, but try to show them why you hold such views as you have, thereby showing that love to your brethren which Christ told his disciples about. Paul said, Admonish with all longsuffering. Also, If I speak with the tongues of men or of angels, and have not charity, I become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. So if one has been with Jesus and learned of him, and become as a little child, been in the depths, as it were, they should try, as much as in them lies, in speaking or writing about the views of their brethren, to speak in love or not speak at all, for soft words turn away wrath, and love maketh not ashamed, but harsh words gender strife, and make the little ones cry, and keep some away from their meetings; they ask for meat, and are given a stone. It is apparently dividing the body of Christ, which is the church, and Jesus says a house divided against itself shall fall; yet with all wicked men can do, we know that there will be faith found on the earth at His coming, and those who contend for the truth as it is in Christ Jesus and love to hear it preached, also those who like to read it, that is, God's predestination of all things, it is their meat and their drink. To say God only predestinated what we with our carnal minds call good, and the rest is left to man, is no food for a poor sinner like me; or to say the Lord has made you alive, now it is up to you to do the will of the Lord and to keep his statutes, I would starve to death on that kind of doctrine. Jesus says, I will go before my sheep and lead them, and they shall follow me, for they know my voice; but a stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers. I will be unto them a sure abiding place. The whole Scripture abounds in God's wills and shalls, and I am glad we have such able editors and writers, whom God has raised up to contend in love for these glorious truths to the edification and comfort of those who are of a broken heart and contrite spirit.

I am sending check for another year's subscription, as I do not want to miss a number. Write, you of a ready pen, also you, Elder Ker. May the Lord keep you all in an humble spirit, that the church of God may be built up and dwell together in harmony.

From one who needs Christ's leadership every hour and every moment.

L. C. GODWIN.

La Grande, Oregon, July 29, 1918.

Dear Brethren Editors:—To-day, while thinking of the approaching session of the Siloam Association, which is soon to meet at Chehalis, Wash., I am reminded of the fact that there may be but one living member who was in the organization of that association: Mrs. S. J. Cummins, of Chester, Montana, who is now nearing her ninetieth birthday. It is also coincident that in looking through my desk to-day I read many pages of the old church-book recording the call for an association in the year 1847, by the members of the Siloam Church, of Salem, Marion Co., Oregon. In those early days the church and association were oftentimes entertained at my father's house, and precious to me are the

memories of those whose speech and manner were evidence that they had been with Jesus and learned of him by the exercise of patience, charity, brotherly love and preferring one another, according to the unction of the Spirit. This day is made memorable to me by yet another unusual event. I read a letter from my mother, wherein she says: "Only a few spears remain of what was our promising crop. The wheat is dried and the straws are like dust; only now and then one stands that a cow can nibble a little. Starvation stares us in the face here in northern Montana. Several teams leave each day for some place where food may be obtained; but this is not so grievous as to be where there is not a sound of the gospel and no place of worship. May the Lord enable me to keep my mind in resignation to his will." As mother's birthday occurs on Sept. 16th, I feel like asking any one who may feel so inclined to write to her, or in any desired way remember her by showering some token that will strengthen her flesh and mind by way of encouragement, for it is so depressing to be alone and feel to be forgotten on that great treeless plain where the expanse of beautifully located farms lies bleached and withered in the scorching sun. Mother has always possessed a heart of tenderness, and felt so anxious in the past scores of years to minister to whoever was in need or in pain, and it is her special gift to see the beauty of giving or grieve at the sense of cold neglect; so I shall hope and pray that a measure of comfort may come to her on Sept. 16th, her birthday. How I would like to take her to this meeting, knowing that she would appreciate every word, text and hymn; but I must abide the will of Him who directs my way. The governor of our State and many others have in the past sent mother the price of her little book, and in that way helped to give her some of the necessities of life that her immediate surroundings could not provide, although Mr. and Mrs. Bassett attempt to do every possible thing, but in some things human effort becomes almost futile, especially in times of drought and famine in the land.

This letter may not be advisable, but I have suffered so much that it is the chief exercise of my soul, and I hope it is only filial duty that calls attention to this precious old mother of mine, whose life has ever been a willing sacrifice to what she felt was her duty to the cause of Christ and his kingdom on the earth. When I was with her last winter she said that she had never dreamed of living until the infirmities of age would prevent her from earning an independent living, and for that reason she had ever been enabled to pass lightly over troubles, and out of all God hath ordained a great triumph of grace, for mother reads daily and prays unceasingly, not for her own exclusively, but for all those whose names appear before the throne in the Lamb's book of life, which was before the foundation of the world. Mother took away some of my vain imagination when she said: "Is not the love of God shed abroad in the hearts of his children a chain that is endless, having neither beginning nor ending?"

The address for the birthday shower to Mrs. Cummins is Mrs. S. J. Cummins, Box 193, Chester, Hill Co., Montana.

In great tribulation this is submitted to your better judgment.

MARTHA J. ALLEN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1918.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 TIMOTHY VI. 10.

"THE love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

This text is seldom used, either in writing or preaching, but inasmuch as all Scripture is profitable to the household of faith we know of no reason why it and relative texts should not be used both in preaching and writing. The writings of a man should not be directed in a personal way at any one, nor should preaching, except it be in love and gentleness. Harshness, abuse and criticism will never reach the mark at which they are aimed. In fact, our opinion is that the gospel cannot be preached except in the Spirit of God, which Spirit is love. If one man rebukes or exhorts another because he loves him, such service will be rendered in love, with all gentleness. While we feel impressed to write upon this special text, we are frank to confess we have no special individual in mind, but rather we desire to remind all who may read what we write of the truth of the text, which truth they know fully as well as do we. Peter thought it right to stir up the pure minds of his brethren by way of remembrance; John wrote the things he did, not because the brethren were ignorant of them, but because they knew them already. According to Paul's definition of the word "gospel," we question whether the text under consideration can be termed "gospel." He said the gospel of Christ is the power of God; but be that as it may, of one thing we are very sure, that is, this statement, "The love of money is the root of all evil," is as true as any statement he ever made. In every sermon preached by the servants of God there is much said which is not gospel, but is good and profitable to the hearers. So with the text at the head of this article, it is good for the children of God or else it would not be in the Scriptures. In this connection there are many things of importance to us all, and it is our purpose to call attention to several of these things in order to put proper stress upon the direct words of the text before us.

In the beginning of the chapter the apostle sets forth the relation between masters and servants and the duty of the one to the other by saying, "Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit." The teachings of the Scriptures are to render honor to whom honor is due, and to pay tribute to whom tribute is due. The servant should honor his master above all others, being respectful and faithful in the discharge of every duty. On the other hand, the master should honor his servant in giving him the full worth of his labor. This is only right and just between man and man, hence Timothy was commanded to teach

and exhort these things. How many in generations past have become rich through the labor of servants who remained poor! How many are doing the same thing to-day! Thousands the world over are reaping hundreds of dollars a day or season from the labor of servants, who receive for their labor sums ranging from two to six dollars per day. The master is growing richer and richer, while the servant is growing poorer and poorer day by day. Is this just? Is this right? By no means. Then why do such conditions exist? Because of the love of money. The evil of poverty, distress and sorrow is the result of the love of money on the part of those who can and do grind the faces of the poor.

In verse three the apostle continues by saying, "If any man teach otherwise [than that which is right between man and man], and consents not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself." This shows that eaching contrary to right between man and man is wrong, selfish, covetous, and done because of the love of money. The love of money therefore is the root of the evil of false teaching and false doctrine. While many teach and preach that gain is godliness, it is as false as the ocean, and from such Timothy was commanded to withdraw himself. If such company was bad for him, is it good for the children of God to-day? There should be no progression along these lines. Covetousness is said in the Scriptures to be idolatry, and surely nothing worse than idolatry can overtake a subject of grace. Jesus said, Where your treasure is, there will be your heart also, hence he commanded the disciples to lay not up treasures, on earth, where moths destroy, rust corrupts and thieves steal. In these words he taught that all earthy treasures fade and pass away. How true and how often we all have seen this verified. The labor and savings of a lifetime can, and often do, pass away in a few hours. But Jesus also said, Lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven (church), where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt nor thieves break through and steal. The treasures of the church, such as love, fellowship, confidence and unity, are worth more than all treasures of earth; they never pass away, but abide forever. Yet because of the love of money such treasures are often neglected for fear of losing a few dollars in business pursuits. Really there is nothing so much against the spiritual prosperity and comfort of a subject of grace as the love of money. Worldly prosperity causes neglect of church privileges, creates carelessness and indifference to the things of the house of God, takes possession of the mind, planning, arranging and executing plans to the end that more money be made this year than last. We would not be understood to suggest that man should be indolent, careless and neglectful of his duty to self and family; we admire industry and thrift in any man. Paul exhorted the brethren to be diligent in business, but he also exhorted the saints not to forsake the assembling of themselves together, and he did not fail to tell them the consequences of neglect of such duty, hence the vital importance of seeking first of all things the kingdom of God and his righteousness. This being done,

we all have the word of Jesus that all needful things shall be added unto us. Sometimes because of the love of money men have sought influential company, anything but good company for any man professing godliness, and more than once have been led into wrongdoing, and at last pierced themselves through with many sorrows. How very slow we all are to learn the truth of Solomon's words: gold and silver satisfieth not. It makes no difference how much a man accumulates, he is never satisfied, but wants more and more. The richest men of the world to-day are more eager to make money than when they started in business life, and strange, but nevertheless true, that the more prosperous a man is, the more penurious he becomes. This is another evil growing out of the love of money. Another evil which is the consequence of money is pride, which we are told goeth before a fall. The most humble and lowly of men have often become proud and haughty because of worldly prosperity. Paul tells us that "they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." But in contrast he says: "Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can take nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content." When we contrast worldly prosperity and gain with eternal things the comparison is indeed nothing. When we are in our right minds, clothed by the Lord, and think of the riches of glory by Jesus Christ, for the time being, at least, we realize, as did Solomon, who had all that heart and eye could wish, that all things of earth, together with all their glory, "are nothing, less than nothing and vanity." He came to the place at last that he could say with all the force of his powers that the rich in death are no better than the poor, nor is a wise man better than the fool, for all is vanity and vexation of spirit. To fear God and keep his commandments is the whole duty of man. This, he said, is the conclusion of the whole matter.

May the Lord not suffer any of us who hope in his mercy and profess his name to be overcome in these days with the love for money to the extent that we forget Zion, which was David's chief joy and should be the chief joy of all the redeemed to-day. How good it must have been for him to say in truth and love, Let my right hand forget its cunning and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy. May the household of faith in these trying times love the house of God and the goodness thereof more than the treasures of Egypt. K.

BOOK OF EDITORIALS.

We have on hand a number of copies of the Second Volume of Editorials. This book is made up of editorials written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the Signs of the Times from March, 1842, to March, 1847, and contains 768 pages, neatly bound in cloth.

This work originally sold at two dollars per copy, but as a few of the pages are stained by water we will, as long as the supply lasts, sell them at the extremely low price of seventy-five cents per copy. Postage paid by us. All who wish this book should procure it now, as we will have no more after these are sold.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

We have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Caroline R. Bainbridge, daughter of Absalom and Eliza Morse, was born April 14th, 1832, and died Tuesday, June 18th, 1918. She was married to Wm. T. Bainbridge Jan. 23rd, 1861. To that union were born five children, three boys and two girls; two boys died in infancy, the remaining son, Morris, was killed by lightning July 17th, 1901. Mary, the second daughter, died July 6th, 1907. Mr. Bainbridge is still living, but very feeble. She leaves one sister, with whom she lived, two grandsons, one granddaughter and three great-grandchildren to mourn. May God's rich grace be given to each as he sees needful. She united with the Harbourton Old School Baptist Church, N. J., May 12th, 1883, and was baptized by Elder Wm. J. Purington, remaining a loving, steadfast member and lover of the precious gospel of the Son of God until her heavenly Father called her to her heavenly home. I have had good spiritual visits with sister Bainbridge, and found her to be of deep christian experience.

Her pastor, Elder C. W. Vaughn, of Hopewell, N. J., and the writer were present at her funeral, and spoke with the ability God gave us, and we hope it was to the comfort of the friends. The body was laid to rest in Harbourton Cemetery. She is eternally with Jesus.

ALSO,

L. Hecker died June 19th, 1918, at his home, 272 Clinton St., Albany, N. Y., aged 83 years. He was a Catholic in his younger days, but when he became a man he experienced a hope in the mercy of God and united with the Old School Baptist Church in Middletown, N. Y., and was baptized by Elder Gilbert Beebe. He was clear and strong in the doctrine of salvation by grace. The writer of this notice was personally acquainted with him and his wife, having been entertained by them many times and held a number of meetings at his home. They were both experienced people, which made their company desirable. He leaves his sad, lonely widow, with a number of children and grandchildren, brethren and friends behind. God will give all needed grace. The cause of death was old age.

The German New School Baptist minister officiated. I was present and spoke a few minutes to the friends at the close. He was buried near the city.

ALSO,

John S. Sperling was born May 15th, 1857, in Montgomery township, Somerset County, N. J., and died March 7th, 1918, near Locktown, N. J. He was baptized by the writer of this notice July 16th, 1905, uniting with the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church at Locktown, N. J., remaining in that connection until he left the shores of time for eternity, faith and hope ending in death. He is not waiting for the resurrection morn, but is now in glory, satisfied. He has left to mourn his absence a sad, lonely widow, sister Sperling, who was baptized at the time he was, one daughter, two grandchildren, two brothers, two sisters and many friends, but he is not absent from his dear Savior. May God bless with all sufficient grace each mourning soul.

Elder C. W. Vaughn, of Hopewell, N. J., preached to the comfort of the friends, using as a text 1st Corinthians, also read two hymns, one of which, No. 501 (Beebe's collection), was a favorite of brother Sperling's. He was buried in Sandy Ridge Cemetery.

Written by request of sister Sperling.

D. M. VAIL.

Mrs. Sarah C. Leigh, daughter of Charles and Catharine Stout, was born near Hopewell, N. J., Sept. 16th, 1834, and died at the home of her son-in-law, Paul T. Leigh, near Pennington, N. J., Dec. 30th, 1916, aged 82 years, 3 months and 14 days. She was twice married; her first husband was Jefferson B. Drake, to whom she was married Dec. 3rd, 1853. To that union were born five children, three of whom are living: Mrs. Price Golden, of Yardville, N. J., Mrs. Wesley Wert, of Hopewell, N. J., and Mrs. Paul T. Leigh, of Pennington, N. J. Mrs. Albert Stout died some years ago and their son died in infancy. After losing her first husband she remained a widow for nearly eight years. She was married to Isaac Leigh Sept. 20th, 1873. In each marriage she was a kind and loving wife and mother, always ready to care for her loved ones, always having that beautiful smile on her face which all who knew her can never forget. She was baptized October 25th, 1886, with two of her daughters: sister Golden and sister Wert, by Elder William Purington, of Hopewell, N. J., who was pastor of the Baptist Church at that time. A short time before that her daughter, Mrs. Stout, was baptized by the same pastor; a few years later her youngest daughter was baptized by Elder Chick at Hopewell. I know mother felt very thankful that her children all believed the same doctrine: salvation by grace, and grace alone, and how thankful her children were that they were given such a good christian mother, for we surely believe she was one of the little flock that Jesus came to save. She was entirely blind for several years, yet she never complained. She was always glad to meet at our place of worship or to hear the brethren speak about Jesus and what he did for poor sinners. In her home she was like the sunshine of a beautiful spring morning, always patient and kind, looking on the bright side of everything, and always had a pleasant word for every one she met. How often we think of her loving ways and miss the dear, kind voice. We do not mourn for her as though we had no hope, for we believe she is at rest, where there is no more sin or sorrow, but all is joy and peace. May the dear Father comfort all who mourn.

The funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder C. W. Vaughn, at Hopewell, who spoke very comfortingly to friends and neighbors.

Written by request. Her son-in-law,

PAUL T. LEIGH.

Henry Wright Main was born in Troy township, Delaware County, Ohio, Dec. 5th, 1838, and departed this life June 1st, 1918, at his home in Leonardsburg, Delaware Co., Ohio, aged 79 years, 5 months and 27 days. He was the third son of James and Anna Main, one of the pioneer families of the county. He was united in marriage to Minerva Bishop Feb. 9th, 1862. To that union were born three children: Elwin, Anna and Ernest. Minerva Main departed this life Jan. 23rd, 1884. April 8th, 1888, the deceased was united in marriage to Mary J. McCreary, who survives him. To that union was born one child: Jewel W. Besides the widow and four children there are four brothers and one sister, also thirteen grandchildren and three great-grandchildren to mourn their loss. Brother Main was received by the Old School Primitive Church called Pleasant Hill October 5th, 1867, and baptized the next day. He was chosen trustee Nov. 2nd, 1878, and chosen deacon the same day, and ordained deacon Nov. 30th of that year. He was chosen clerk Dec. 3rd, 1870, all of which offices he filled with credit. Brother Main was always in his place; he was strong in the order of God's house, and as a faithful servant and wise counselor had few equals. While we shall miss him at our solemn feasts, yet we feel that our loss is his eternal gain. May we bow in humble submission to the will of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

The writer tried to make a few remarks, after which the remains of our beloved brother were laid to rest to await the glorious resurrection morn.

C. E. JACKSON.

Nancy Fox departed this life Jan. 18th, 1918, aged 69 years. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Maple Creek Old School Baptist Church of the Redstone Association by Elder H. Zinn, October 16th, 1891, and retained her membership with that church until her death. Sister Fox was peaceful and quiet, always manifesting love and fellowship for the brethren and sisters, and loved the peace of Zion. She was sound in doctrine and faithful in every sense of the word. She leaves to mourn their loss two brothers and a host of brethren, sisters and friends, who sorrow not as those without hope. Sister Fox was not married. She was highly esteemed by all Old Baptists who knew her, for she was a great lover of the truth.

Written by request.

S. A. CLEVENGER.

APPOINTMENTS.

Elder George Ruston will, the Lord willing, preach as follows: Friday, August 16th, 117 South Montgomery St., Trenton, N. J., 8 p. m.; Saturday, 17th, Stockton, N. J., at sister Horner's, 2:30 p. m.; Sunday, 18th, Locktown, N. J., 10:30 a. m.; Frenchtown, N. J., 4 p. m.; Monday, 19th, Grandon, N. J., at A. J. Demot's, 8 p. m.

The Lord willing, Elder D. M. Vail will fill the following appointments:

Saturday, August 17th, Kingston, N. Y., 8 p. m.; Sunday, 18th, Ashokan, N. Y., with the Olive and Hurley Church, 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m.; Monday, 19th, Margaretville, N. Y., at brother Faulkner's, 8 p. m.; Tuesday, 20th, Roxbury, N. Y., at sister Mead's, 11 a. m.; Wednesday, 21st, Halcottville, N. Y., sister P. O'Connor's, 8 p. m.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Liberty Church, of the Pocatalico Association, at her regular conference meeting in June, felt that owing to the present shortage of flour, sugar and other necessities for taking care of the association it would be best to postpone for the present year.

Done by order of the church.

C. H. CASDORPH, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

THE thirty-seventh annual session of New Hope Association of Primitive Baptists will meet on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1918, with Sabine Church, six miles north of Greenville, Texas. All trains will be be met at Greenville Thursday. Any coming later than Thursday phone J. I. Money at Tidwell. All sound, loving Baptists are invited, especially ministers of our faith and order.

S. M. DICKENS.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, on Friday before the second Monday in September, and continue three days (Sept. 6th, 7th and 8th, 1918). We extend a cordial invitation to all who love the truth to meet with us.

GEO. R. TEDFORD.

THE Lord willing, the Clovesville Old School Baptist Church will hold a two days meeting on the first Saturday and Sunday following in September (7th and 8th), 1918. Trains will be met at Fleischmanns station, on the Ulster & Delaware Railroad, the first day of the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus to meet with us. A special invitation is extended to brethren in the ministry of our faith and order.

O. F. BALLARD.

THERE will be, the Lord willing, a two days meeting held with the Cammal Church on Saturday and Sunday, September 28th and 29th. We expect Elder Fenton to be with us. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

Done by order of the church.

J. T. BADGLEY, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m

ALL WELCOME

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

"IN PLACES OF DRAWING WATER."

(Judges v. 11.)

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DEAR EDITORS:—Please allow me to say in your valuable paper that I have a few copies of Benedict's "FIFTY YEARS AMONG THE BAPTISTS," which I am offering at $1.00 per copy, postage paid. Every one knows what this book is worth to the student of Baptist history. Send all orders to

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1918. NO. 17.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JOHN I. 1.

"IN the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Proverbs viii. 22–31, Colossians i. 16, 17, and many other Scriptures testify of the divinity, humanity and office of Jesus Christ. There is but one God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost; these three are one. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made; for by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers, all things were created by him and for him. (Col. i. 16.) He hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. (Prov. xvi. 4.) By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens, his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. (Job xxvi. 13.) Lo, these are parts of his ways, but how little a portion is heard of him, but the thunder of his power who can understand? The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations. (Psalms xxxiii. 11.) I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. (Isaiah xlvi. 9, 10.) I have used these Scriptures showing the perfections and the sovereign sway of the mighty God, and could use many more, but if these are not believed, neither would they believe the whole sacred testimony. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."—John i. 14. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."—Gen. i. 27. "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."—Gen. ii. 15–17. And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and the Lord God made a woman. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones and

flesh of my flesh. Now I wish to ask a few questions of those who seem to want to make apologies for God and are so afraid of the "absoluters," as they are pleased to call us who believe in the perfections of God and that he has a purpose in all things, and that all things will and shall answer in and to the very purpose which God intended they should. Now we have proven that God made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil. Who is that wicked one? There is none good, no, not one. We learn that the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. The Lord God with his hand formed the crooked serpent, and the old serpent the devil, and the serpent being more subtle than any of the beasts of the field which the Lord God had made, he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die, for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof then your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. We find here two statements, and which of them is the more believed, what God hath said or what the serpent said? Whatever is believed the more is and will be preached more, and as the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them, because they are foolishness unto him, so no one believes that he is dead until he is made alive, and then he is afraid that he is dead, and that he is deceived, and that he has only caught the shadow and missed the substance, for he is continually doing that he would not, and what he would he doeth not. I have heard some preachers of our people say, Dying thou shalt die, and some of our historians give that interpretation of the death of transgression; but Paul said to the Ephesians: "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." God told Adam, Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. The Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this thou art cursed above all cattle and above every beast of the field. Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Here we see the everlasting wills and shalls of Jehovah, showing that he hath all power, and hath commanded the serpent, the devil, or Satan, saying what he shall do and what shall be done unto him. To Adam he said, Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." "Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men."—Prov. viii. 22, 23, 31. In this we see the perfect foreknowledge and purposes of the Lord God in all things, even commanding the serpent what he shall do and what shall be done unto him, establishing his bounds and putting enmity between him and the woman, and between his seed and her seed. Here are two seeds, the Seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. We have proven that the Lord God cre-

ated all things visible and invisible that are in heaven and that are in earth; all things were created by him and for him, and he saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. So we must believe that they are good, and shall fulfill every purpose that God decreed they should to a jot and tittle. "Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him."—Eccl. iii. 14. Now every one who believes these sacred truths will and does fear before him. Adam told the first experience of grace that is recorded. When he heard the voice of the Lord he was afraid, because he was naked, and hid himself; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons—a fine sample of man's righteousness; but unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothed them. So we see both the works of man and of God. In Adam and his wife is the type or figure of Christ and the church, for Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived. The woman was created in Adam, and was bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, so he loved her with such love that he was willing to die with her. The church, which is the bride, the Lamb's wife, is God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Here we see very plainly that we only walk in good works when we walk in Christ Jesus, for he is light, and we only have light when we are in him. "The Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: * * * he drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." Here we learn that the way hath been kept since the beginning.

I will now call your attention to Revelation v. 1–5: "And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." So we see very plainly that the purposes of God in the salvation of his people were complete before the beginning of the world, and that the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. Jesus said, Thine they were, and thou gavest them me. The Word was made flesh, but not of man's works, for he is the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; and of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. Here we understand the Seed of the woman should and did bruise the head of the serpent, for he was born of a woman but begotten of God, and of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. This clearly proves that it is not of works which we have done or can do, but according to his own purpose and grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. This Word that was made flesh is the Lion of

the tribe of Judâ that was worthy to take the book and loose the seals thereof, for he was a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and all that dwell upon the earth shall worship the beast whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb. Jesus was made sin, though he knew no sin, bearing in his own body the sins of all that the Father gave him. He came not to do his own will, but the will of the Father who sent him, that of all which he had given him he should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. Yes, power was given him over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him; for by one offering he hath for ever perfected all them that are sanctified. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. Here is one of the many instances that we could mention where the Lord God had a purpose in or for the serpent. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have tâken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."—Acts ii. 23. He died to redeem his people, he rose from the grave to justify them, and now he is exalted at the right hand of the majesty on high, where he ever liveth to make intercession for the saints, according to the will of God. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."—Romans v. 10. So we see that we have a living Savior who dwells in us by his Spirit. Seeing it is one God which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith, which is of his fullness; for of his fullness have we all received, and faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Without faith it is impossible to please God, and faith is the gift of God. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, and that life is in his Son Jesus Christ.

I must close, for I fear my letter is longer than interesting, but I submit it to your judgment to do with as you think best. It is poorly written, for I am only able to sit up a part of the time, having been afflicted for two years with chronic bronchitis.

Hoping that God may be glorified and his poor, afflicted people comforted, I am your poor, unworthy brother in hope of mercy, J. H. RAWLS.

CLOVIS, N. Mex.

FELTON, Del., Dec. 14, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Inclosed is a copy of a letter from sister Mary Justina Gruwell, which I would like to see published in the SIGNS if it meets with your approval. Her membership is still at Cow Marsh, although she resides in Wilmington. There are a number here, as well as elsewhere, together with her children, who will appreciate such an expression of faith from her, and I feel like sharing it with them. I have her consent to its publication.

May the Lord bless the SIGNS and the full staff to comfort the little ones scattered abroad.

Unworthily yours,

W. S. CUBBAGE.

WILMINGTON, Del.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER CUBBAGE:—I have been impressed for some time to write, and now, according to promise,

will endeavor to send you a few lines, expressing some of my experience, as I hope, of my travel from nature's darkness into God's marvelous light, if the Lord will direct my pen. I know not if there be any living now who know the way in which I have been led. When I was a very small child I wanted to be good so the Lord would save me. I was raised by Methodist parents, my father being a class leader. I would go with them to meeting, but there was something that always puzzled me: the preacher would say the Lord would forgive our sins, then he would tell us if we sinned we would be lost. I thought that was a very poor Savior, though I was a very small child. When I was about twelve years old my father died. In a very short time after his death there was a revival meeting where he had been a class leader, and the members came to me and my older sister, asking if we did not want to meet our father in heaven. Of course we did, and were persuaded to go to what was called the mourners' bench to seek religion. I tried to pray as best I knew how, but could not get religion. As time went on I at times was very much troubled. A few years later we moved to a small town called Magnolia, and soon after there was a revival meeting started there. I still had a desire to be saved, and went to the mourners' bench again. I tried to pray the Lord to have mercy on me, but could not get what I thought was religion; if others could I could not. I thought that surely I had committed some unpardonable sin, so I gave up there and sat still. I told some of the members who came to me that it was no use for me to try. They said the darkest hour was just before the dawn. I thought perhaps they knew, and was persuaded to try again. They went to my mother to have her come and talk to me, but she refused. They insisted that she should come and kneel by me, thinking perchance that might help me, so she did, and when I found mother at my side I could not bear it, I became excited and nervous; then they came to me and told me to get up and praise the Lord, that I had religion. I got up, but did not feel any more like praising the Lord than I did at first. Walking home that night there came into my mind very plainly, as if some one had spoken to me, If there were a party tomorrow night, to which would you want go to, the party or church? The answer followed: I would rather go to the party. I then saw there had no change taken place. On Sunday following they expected all who had professed, to join the church, but I did not go. That afternoon my grandmother came to me and asked why I did not go and join the church. I told her if I never felt any more like joining the church than I did then I would never join. I had told her before that I wanted religion that would last until death; I did not want religion that I could get one day and lose the next. She said, "Well, you can keep it until death if you will do your part." But that made matters no better for me, for if it depended on me I knew I could not keep it until death. I thought it very strange that others could get religion and I could not; surely I had committed the unpardonable sin. Then I would look back on my young life and try to think over what I had done, but could not think of any great crime, yet I knew I was a sinner. In a few years I was married to a man of a Baptist family. After we were married my husband told me he would go with me to the Methodist meetings, and I could go with

him to the Baptist, so that is what we did for some time, but I could not understand one thing about what the Baptists believed. I would ask my husband, and he would try to explain some things, but I could not understand him. The Methodist preaching got to be chaff to me, and I did not care to go to their meetings; this troubled me more than ever. I had done all I could, and felt there was no place for poor me anywhere. I went on in this way for some time, wondering what would become of me. I cannot tell how long I was in this state of mind. My husband and I attended a yearly meeting at Cow Marsh Church on Sunday. Elder George Staton, Elder Durand and Elder Rittenhouse were there. Elder Staton preached the first sermon, and the first hymn given out was:

"When thou, my righteous Judge, shalt come
To fetch thy ransomed people home,
Shall I among them stand?
Shall such a worthless worm as I,
Who sometimes am afraid to die,
Be found at thy right hand?"

I thought, O, is there a people that feels this way? Those very thoughts had been mine many times, but I did not know such words were in print. I trembled and shook like a leaf, and could not hold back the tears from my eyes; they flowed freely. Every time I went to meeting after that there would seem to be a crumb fall for me. I went on in this way for some time, when I became troubled about going to the church to be baptized. That was a great trial, and I tried to shake it off my mind, but could not, it only grew greater. I tried to keep it all to myself, but the trouble became so great I felt I must tell some one. I had always told my husband everything, but kept this from him; I did not want to deceive him or any one. I thought if I should tell my husband, he knew me, and what a sinner I was, and would tell me I was not fit, they would not receive me in the church. Then I would try to throw it all away. One day he came home and handed me a letter, saying, "Here is a letter from State Road." I took it and left the room to read it. It was a letter from our pastor, Elder Rittenhouse, relative to my experience. When I had read it and returned to the room my husband was still there, and said, "Well, what was your letter about?" I replied, "It is about something I have never told you," and gave him the letter to read. When he had done so he said, "It is no more than I expected." I was surely surprised, for I could not see how he could know anything about it, as I had never told him. He was very kind and considerate, and said, "I will take you to Saturday meeting any time you want to go." Accordingly the next Saturday meeting he asked me if I wanted to go. I told him I did, so we went. Elder Rittenhouse preached, and the sermon seemed all for me. When the invitation was given I could not sit still. I tried to say a few words, but could not talk much. To my surprise I was received, and baptized the next day by Elder Rittenhouse, and when I was raised out of the water my burden was all gone and my heart was light.

"O how happy are they
Who their Savior obey,
And whose treasures are laid up above!
Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

That sweet comfort was mine, but since then I have had many trials, yet I still hope in the precious promises.

Your unworthy sister,

MARY JUSTINA GRUWELL.

GALESBURG, Ill., Aug. 7, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It is with shame that I am sending you my overdue subscription to the SIGNS. I am thankful that no calamity has overtaken us that has prevented my attending to this matter. I have no better excuse to offer than that we have been establishing a new home in the city of Galesburg, a place of about thirty thousand inhabitants in central Illinois, and also have been raising a large war garden on the farm, about thirty miles out. This has proved a more arduous undertaking than we thought it would be, but once having put our hands literally to the plow we could not turn back. We have found every minute occupied, while many things we ought to have done we put off until a more convenient season, among them sending my subscription for the SIGNS, but it has been coming regularly, and I thank you for your liberality. I am also sending one dollar to aid in sending the paper to those unable to pay for it.

There are three Baptist families that we know of in Galesburg, and it is our practice to meet at one of the homes Sunday afternoons, where we sing the songs of Zion, exchange experiences and strive to be of what comfort we can to each other. Of course we also read from the Book, and from our periodicals. Once this summer we were favored with the presence of Elder Downey, of Kansas City, who talked to us, and we hope we may have others with us. I had thought to write you at greater length, setting forth some of the things that sorely perplex me in these days of fiery trials. Out of all the horrors and infidelity of this time I doubt not that our God will work wonderful things to his own glory, but my heart is heavy and I am fearful of unknown and hitherto unheard of ills.

I find I must stop now, for we are not at the place indicated in this heading, but at the war garden, and I find I have no more paper.

Old School Baptist preachers passing through Galesburg, Ill., will be gladly entertained at 1127 N. Broad Street, and at 130 Arthur Avenue. It will be appreciated if notice is sent in advance so that arrangements may be made for preaching.

Your sister in fear, with hope,

GRACE VEECH SMITH.

MEXIA, Texas, July 9, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I see by the date of my paper that my time has expired, and I thought I would try to write a few lines and renew my subscription. Inclosed you will find two dollars for another year. I like to read the paper well; it does not seem that I can do without it, for it contains nearly all the preaching I get, and it advocates the doctrine I believe first, last and all the time. I, a poor old sinner, was made to believe the old "Hardshell" doctrine, as it is called. I lived with the Missionaries fifteen years, and was satisfied for awhile; I had never heard an Old Baptist preach. I would go to meeting, but they did not preach what I believed. I did not know any one who believed as I did; I was one alone, and in trouble for a long time. Finally I went to hear an Old Baptist, and to my surprise he preached just what I believed. I kept on going to hear them, and at last I asked for a home among them, and was received, and have been at home among them almost forty years, but I am nothing but an old sinner, and if saved at all it is by the grace of our dear Savior. He is all in all to me. I am now in my seventieth year. I used to think when I got older I would serve the Lord better, but I find that it is not

in man to direct his steps; it is all of the Lord. I know I can do nothing, and the older I get the more I see I am nothing but a sinner still, and will remain so as long as life in this sinful world lasts. The Savior said, Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. I have a hope that when I am done with time and time things I have a home not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Farewell.

(MRS.) S. H. BEENE.

GIRDLETREE, Md., June 18, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a check for two dollars to pay for the SIGNS. I do not know how much I owe you, as I have been crippled for over two years and have not been able to attend to my affairs. I am thankful to say that I can move around with the aid of one crutch, but feel very feeble in body. I beg to be excused for not sending my remittance sooner. I was eighty years old the 4th of last April. I was baptized fifty-three years ago. This hymn was so sweet to me: "O how happy are they who their Savior obey," &c. I wish I could tell you, but it is with great fear that I attempt to write you these few lines, I am so sinful, but I hope I do understand the truth published in the dear old SIGNS; the dear brethren and sisters give God all the glory. I feel he has all power in heaven and in earth. I do love the dear brethren and sisters and the sweet letters they write. O how I feast on the word. I did feast on the sermon preached by Elder Ker at Wilmington May 23rd, 1918. I read it over and over again. I think of you, dear editors, many, many times, especially brother Lefferts. I have known him since he was a young man. My love to him and his dear family. I have written many letters in my mind while lying in bed at night. I am with my oldest daughter. They want me to stay here through the summer, and if it is God's will I hope to go to Philadelphia to see my sons in the fall. Please excuse the length of my letter, also my delay in sending the check.

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

MARTHA J. BAILEY.

TAMPICO, Ill., July 30, 1918.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—We have been silent readers of our dear family paper for a number of years, but so engrossed with the things of this world I am afraid our minds are cold concerning spiritual things. This afternoon I felt a longing to associate with our dear people. We live alone, and as for church privileges, we have none. We would like to attend some association if we can find out where and when held. We expect to go to Enid, Okla., and I thought by writing maybe we could find an oasis in the desert. If any one sees this and can tell us of any association on our route we would be pleased. We go through Kansas City.

Love and kind wishes for the welfare of Zion. We enjoy reading the SIGNS, have read it thirty years, and would not know how to do without it.

ANNIE HOPKINS.

CLAREMORE, Okla., August 8, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please say through an early issue of the SIGNS that I expect to leave here on the 10th inst. for Ohio, Pennsylvania and several southern states. The only announcements I desire now to make are that I will be at the Redstone Association, which meets near Grafton, W. Va., August 30th, and I expect to be with the church in Roanoke city, Va., on Sept. 14th. From there Elder Simpkins, of Raleigh, N. C., has arranged for me throughout his state for about two months.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1918.

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MATTHEW XXIII. 37-39.

"O JERUSALEM, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

In the verses preceding this Scripture we find these words: "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation." The above words of the Lord plainly state that it was the purpose of God to send unto the Jews prophets and wise men and scribes to speak to them in his name; that it was further the purpose of God that the Jews should not receive these men cordially, but that they should crucify some, that they should scourge others, and that they should persecute still others from city to city. The manner in which these messengers of God to the Jews were to be treated by the Jews was as much in God's predestination as that their being sent to the Jews was before purposed of God. Further, this had all to be just as it was in order that all the righteous blood shed upon the earth from Abel to Zechariah should fall upon the heads of that Jewish generation then living in the days of Jesus, no matter whether the Jews then living had actually shed that blood themselves or not. The justice of God is not after the order of human justice, and the human mind can never comprehend God's way of doing things nor fall in with God's law. "The carnal mind is enmity against God." The portion of Scripture which heads this article must be read in connection with the verses which precede it, which verses we have just quoted, showing the purpose of God in sending his messengers to the Jews, his purpose in their receiving evil treatment at the hands of the Jews, both purposes combining to bring the Jews to the bar of divine justice, that God might require at their hands all the righteous blood ever shed upon the earth. The Scriptures abound in instances where God sent messengers to certain ones, and then stopped the ears of those to whom the message was sent, in order that they should not receive the message. For instance, God sent Moses to Pharaoh demanding the release of the Israelites from bondage in Egypt, and then hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he should not heed the message, nor let Israel go. This was both to try the faith of Moses and to show God's power in Pharaoh. "For this same purpose have I raised thee [Pharaoh] up, that I might shew my power in thee." God's power was demonstrated in the hardening of Pharaoh's

heart, in that his omnipotence was thereby shown to be sufficient to deliver his people in the face of the greatest opposition the greatest absolute monarch of his time might bring against the execution of God's will. Had Pharaoh been willing to fall in with God's demands, how then would God's power have been evidenced? But in hardening Pharaoh's heart, that he should not listen to Moses, the Almighty revealed to Israel that he is King, even of all kings, and that none have power only as it is derived from Jehovah, and that he was abundantly able to release them from bondage, even in the face of the sternest opposition that Egypt's monarch might bring to bear against it. Also, God sent his prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah and others to show unto Israel her transgressions, and to warn them against the approaching Babylonian captivity as the consequence of their sins, but Israel paid no heed to the words of the prophets, because God had stopped their ears that they should not hear, blinded their eyes that they should not see and hardened their hearts that they should not understand. All this was by the before-ordained purpose of God, to manifest his glory and power in the nation of Israel. God does not always will that his people shall hear the message he sends them; indeed he has often willed that his message and messengers should not be heard, in order that condemnation might appear and God's justice be manifested. In Matthew xxiii. 37, quoted at the head of this article, we have a striking illustration of the difference between the will of God and the will of the natural man. Naturally men have no inclination toward God whatever; they have no longings of soul for divine things until quickened by the Spirit of God. Jesus said to the Jews, Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life. This plainly showed that Israel as natural beings had no will whatever toward God. Had they possessed a will to come to him it would have shown them to be already in possession of spiritual life. The fact that they had no will to come to him proved they had no spiritual life whatever. Again, Jesus told them, Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep. They to whom he was speaking were not of his sheep, because they had not been given him of the Father before the foundation of the world, were not chosen or elected in him from eternity. Not being thus the chosen of God, they did not and could not believe in Jesus, nor did they have the least will to come to him. The will or desire to come to Jesus, and the power to believe in Jesus, are all the effect and fruit of election, and not the cause thereof. The sinner cannot elect himself into the favor of God, cannot of himself come to Jesus or believe in Jesus. All these things come because God chose his people in Christ before the foundation of the world. In that covenant of electing love entered into between the Father, Son and Spirit before the foundation of the world are embraced repentance, faith and love of every sinner predestinated unto salvation by Christ Jesus according to the will of God. How often would I have gathered thy children and ye would not, says Jesus, apostrophizing Jerusalem. This does not mean that Israel succeeded in thwarting the Lord's will and overthrowing God's purpose, it simply shows that God's will was in one direction: that is, toward the gathering of the children of Israel, and that Jerusalem's will had been in an exactly opposite direction, namely, that the children of Israel should not be thus gathered. In other words, there can be no doubt but that Jesus had reference

to the covenant which God made by the hand of Moses with the children of Israel after he had delivered them out of Egypt, which covenant was delivered to Moses at Mt. Sinai, and which covenant Moses was commanded to declare to Israel when he came down out of the mount. This covenant said, If you will I will. That is, the Mosaic law embraced certain commandments enjoined upon Israel, certain ceremonies to be observed by them, certain sacrifices to be offered by them, certain feasts and fasts and sabbaths and jubilees to be hallowed by them. After God had given these things to Israel he told them that if they would walk in his precepts and obey his statutes he would bless them in basket and in store, meaning that they should be free from the sword of their enemies, they should dwell in peace and safety, they should abound in plenty and prosperity, be free from pestilence and famine; their vineyards should be heavily laden with fruit and their harvests be bountiful. On the other hand, God told Israel if they did not walk in this law delivered to them by Moses on God's authority he would curse them for disobedience, they should experience famine and pestilence and war and dearth and adversity of divers kinds. Therefore it will be readily seen that this Mosaic covenant was made contingent upon the obedience and disobedience of Israel. If they obeyed they would be blessed, if they disobeyed they would be cursed. Also, it will be noticed that this Mosaic law embraced nothing more or less than temporal or earthly blessedness for obedience, and temporal or earthly punishment for disobedience. The Mosaic law nowhere promised eternal life for obedience, nor did it anywhere threaten eternal torment for disobedience. It was law involving temporal matters only. In this law the central theme was, The Lord will if you will. This is what Jesus referred to when he said, How often would I have gathered thy children and thou wouldst not. This law never did gather Israel, it never did justify the ungodly. That Jewish altar never did make the comers thereunto perfect. The two thousand years of Jewish history proved over and over again that man was not able by nature to measure up to the requirements of God's law, even when that law embraced nothing further than temporal things. How then can man obey a law involving eternal and spiritual blessedness? If man cannot adequately fulfill the whole of God's requirements with reference to the lower life, how then can he ever expect by his own efforts to reach out to grasp eternal blessedness? The law of Moses revealed the infinite distance between God's published will with reference to Israel and the will of the Israelites themselves, which was contrary to God's revealed will. Instead of abiding in God's commandments, and walking in the ordinances of the sanctuary, Israel wanted to be like the nations round about them; that is, like the Gentiles; they wanted temples and gods like other nations, and to worship seen things like other nations. This was the history of Israel over and over again, showing that if God's Israel is ever to be gathered it would have to be on another basis than the Mosaic law, on other grounds than on man's own obedience. Therefore Jesus came into the world and was manifest in the flesh, to put away the legal covenant that he might establish another and a better and infinitely more effectual covenant, the gospel covenant, which is based not in, I will if you will, but in, I will and you shall. In other words, the covenant which comes to God's people in

the blood of Jesus Christ is hinged, not upon the will of the creature in any sense whatever, but upon the wills and shalls of God's omnipotence. The Lord said, After those days I will make another covenant with the house of Israel, not like the old covenant, but I will take out of them the stony heart and give them a heart of flesh; I will write my law in their hearts, imprint it in their minds and put it in their inward parts, so that they shall no more teach every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; and I will be their God and they shall be my people. It will be seen at once how the wills and shalls of God run all through this new covenant, and that it in no way depends for fulfillment upon the will of the people themselves. This is the covenant ordered in all things and sure, everything in it and every one embraced by it is in the grasp of God's foreknowledge and predestination, being predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto the Father according to the will of God. Therefore, in the words of our text, Jesus said of the Jews, Your house is left unto you desolate. Inasmuch as the Mosaic covenant was never intended by the Lord to save sinners, but simply to prove to Israel her utter inability to save herself by obedience, even in earthly things alone, therefore there must of necessity be a better and surer covenant in order for the Israel of God to be eternally saved from sin and death. Therefore the first earth and the first heavens were made desolate, the Jewish nation and the Mosaic law which they were under came to an end. The work of Jesus in his life and death and resurrection and ascension to glory made an end to all the order of things, so leaving their house, or Jewish kingdom, unto them desolate, and dispersing the Jews throughout the world. Having thus left their house unto them desolate, having made an end of the law and legal ceremonies and offerings, Jesus brought in through the sacrifice of himself a new and better covenant, made effectual through his blood, a covenant which saves forever all elected before time by the Father in the Son, and so predestinated unto glory. Jesus told the Jews they should not see him again until they should say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." We believe this to refer to the time when the Jews shall be gathered by God's power from among the nations whither they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day, when the Gentile world power shall have run its course, when the visibility of the church among the Gentiles shall end and go to be manifested among the Jews who shall be gathered to Jerusalem, and, by the operation of the Spirit of God, be brought to believe with their whole heart in Jesus Christ, and him crucified, even as do we among the Gentiles to-day. This restoration of Israel to that land which God promised to Abraham and his seed forever must as surely come to pass as that God sits forever on his throne and rules the nations by the rod of his power. When this gathering of the Jews to their own land shall have been effected by the display of God's power, and when they shall be made to believe in the Christ of God with all sincerity of true and living faith, then shall they say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Then shall every eye behold him, even those also who pierced him; then shall he come in the clouds of heaven, and all his saints with him; then shall Israel be manifestly saved. The old covenant was ineffectual to the gathering of Israel as a hen gathereth her chickens under her

wings. It takes a better and more powerful covenant to do it, a covenant according to which God's people shall be made willing in the day of his power. This new covenant shall and does gather every one of God's elect from the four corners of the earth whither they have been scattered. It says to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth. This gathering of the Lord's people together from among all the nations of the earth is not to make them children of God, but because they are already children of God, just as a hen gathering her chickens is not to make them chickens, but because they are chickens. Do our readers catch our meaning?

Written at the request of brother D. J. Adams, of Mansfield, Ga.

L.

NOTICE.

OWING to the constantly increasing cost of everything used by publishers, and to comply with the order of our government to reduce the size of publications, we are compelled to cut down the number of pages of the SIGNS for the present, but expect to return to our regular number of pages when times are again normal. We hope our readers will bear with us during these trying times, and feel that this is one of the sacrifices they are glad to make to help win the war.

LOST IN THE MAIL.

WE have received a number of complaints of late from subscribers who have failed to get their paper, and we wish all to know that it is not through any lack of care on our part, as all papers leave this office securely wrapped and plainly addressed.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Levi T. Heath was born Feb. 22nd, 1838, and departed this life March 25th, 1918, making his stay on earth 80 years, 1 month and 2 days. Uncle Levi Heath, as we all called him, was a licensed minister of the gospel of Mud Creek Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church of Christ, Fulton Co., Ky. He was married to Miss Margaret Sellf in 1865, who preceded him in death about seventeen years. They had no children. He left no brothers or sisters, nephews or nieces to mourn. I will say that he left a vacant place in the church, but we sorrow not as those who have no hope; our loss is his eternal gain. The tongue is still that had given the church so much comfort and pleasure in expounding to them the gospel as he believed it. He believed in a sovereign and all-powerful God, who rules in heaven and earth, and gave God all the glory, to whom it belongs. He believed in salvation by grace, and grace alone, and that Christ is the only Savior of sinners. It pleased the Lord to sorely afflict this old servant, but gave him grace to endure as a good soldier, ever looking to the God who makes no mistakes for his deliverance. I have often heard him say so. He expressed a willingness and readiness to hear the Master's final call: Come home. Brethren, it is sweet to write of one who has left such evidence behind that he has gone to that blissful home prepared for the redeemed. Weep not, for it is only a member taken from our body, the church here on earth, to fill its place in heaven. I will say to the friends and neighbors of his vicinity that they have lost a kind and generous-hearted man, a good citizen, highly esteemed by all who knew him.

The funeral services were conducted by Elders A. J. Luther and T. J. Prince. The preaching was of much comfort. After services the remains were quietly laid away by the side of his loving companion in the Antioch Cemetery. May the Lord bless, support and sustain, and at his appointed time give us all an abundant entrance into the joy of his love, is the sincere prayer of the writer.

Written by request of the church.

W. A. EDWARDS, Church Clerk.

Mabell H. McKee was born August 21st, 1887, near Bowersville, Greene Co., Ohio, and died May 26th, 1918, at the Paris hospital, Paris, Ill. She was married Feb. 5th, 1906, to Marion McKee. To them were born three children: Robert Freemont, Pauline Verna and Ruth Amanda. Mabell had been failing in health over a year, and was operated on in Laporte, Ind., October 1st, 1917, but did not seem to entirely recover from the operation. In January, 1918, she began to fail rapidly, and it seemed the doctors could do her no good. We thought perhaps if she was brought to Paris to my (her mother's) home she

could be built up and perhaps get well; but no, her poor, frail form was marked for death. She was quiet, sweet and patient, although suffering all the time; would not let me or any one do anything for her that she could help, and made no complaint, just seemed to gradually fade away. We called a doctor, who said she could not be helped by medicine, but surgery could cure her. We were much encouraged, and insisted on her going to the hospital. She was at times very much averse to going, saying it would be useless, but finally consented to go. She was operated on May 22nd, stood the operation well and seemed to be doing well until Sunday morning, when she began to sink rapidly, passing away at 4:10 p. m. While I feel that my only and idolized daughter is at rest, I cannot be reconciled to it. I am so grieved and shocked that I scarcely can feel to survive it, yet I do not wish to murmur or rebel against God's will. Mabell was very much concerned about her condition the last few months of her life, and told me she had not lived as she ought and was so sinful; she said, "Ma, I cannot pray." I tried to tell her as best I could that prayer is not a form of words, but the sincere desire of the heart, and told her I was glad to hear her talk as she had. I also told her that I was not uneasy about her soul's salvation, for it was in God's hands. I do not know whether she was comforted a little or not. In death a sweet smile was upon her dear face, where such a look of pain and care had rested for many weeks. She leaves her husband and three children, mother, stepfather, two uncles, several cousins and many friends to mourn their loss, but we have a sweet hope that she is resting in Jesus. She was the joy of my life, such a comfort to me; I never can tell how I miss her. She never wanted me to know she suffered—did not want to worry mother. May the ever wise God keep me from murmuring against his will.

Her heartbroken mother,

ELLA R. SHIELDS.

Mrs. Augusta Vail, daughter of Sumner Hubbard, was born Nov. 16th, 1837, and died at her home Tuesday, July 30th, 1918. She was born, lived and died in Scott township, Luzerne Co., Pa., I believe. She leaves a lonely, sad husband, Micah Vail, (who is my cousin, 85 years old) two children, a daughter, Mrs. Gardner, and a son, Sumner, with several grandchildren and great-grandchildren, to mourn her absence. May God grant them every needed comfort, both spiritually and naturally, is my desire for them. Augusta gave clear evidence of having a good hope through grace. She had been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for nearly sixty years, and a real lover of the doctrine it contains. The writer spoke at the funeral to a large company of friends Thursday, August 1st. Interment in Brown Hollow Cemetery.

D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

F. H. Richardson, Iowa, $3.00; Mrs. Grace Veech Smith, Ill., $1.00.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS has changed his address from Riverside, Cal., to Claremont, Cal.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Liberty Church, of the Pocatalico Association, at her regular conference meeting in June, felt that owing to the present shortage of flour, sugar and other necessities for taking care of the association it would be best to postpone for the present year.

Done by order of the church.

C. H. CASDORPH, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, on Friday before the second Monday in September, and continue three days (Sept. 6th, 7th and 8th, 1918). We extend a cordial invitation to all who love the truth to meet with us.

GEO. R. TEDFORD.

THE Lord willing, the Clovesville Old School Baptist Church will hold a two days meeting on the first Saturday and Sunday following in September (7th and 8th), 1918. Trains will be met at Fleischmanns station, on the Ulster & Delaware Railroad, the first day of the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus to meet with us. A special invitation is extended to brethren in the ministry of our faith and order.

O. F. BALLARD.

THE Roxbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to meet with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Ashokan, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 11th and 12th, 1918. Both up and down trains will be met at Ashokan, Ulster & Delaware R. R., on Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning. Those coming from New York city Tuesday morning by rail take 11 o'clock a. m. train at Cortlandt St. (West Shore R. R.) Those coming by boat take boat for Kingston at Desbrosses St at 8:40 a. m. or West 42nd St. 9 a. m. All who come will be made welcome.

JOHN J. SECOR, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Jefferson, N. Y., will hold its yearly meeting, the Lord willing, the

third Sunday and Saturday before in September (14th and 15th), 1918. Those coming by train to Stamford will be met on Friday before on the 11 o'clock a. m. train. We extend an invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet with us, especially brethren in the ministry.

G. E. MEAD.

THE yearly meetings at Messongoes, Nassaongo and Indiantown for this year have been changed and are appointed as follows:

Messongoes—Third Sunday, and Saturday before, in September.

Nassaongo—Fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, in September.

Indiantown—Fifth Sunday, and Saturday before, in September.

At each of these appointments the service will begin at 1:30 Saturday p. m. and continue all day Sunday.

J. C. MELLOTT.

THERE will be, the Lord willing, a two days meeting held with the Cammal Church on Saturday and Sunday, September 28th and 29th. We expect Elder Fenton to be with us. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

Done by order of the church.

J. T. BADGLEY, Clerk.

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All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

"IN PLACES OF DRAWING WATER."

(Judges v. 11.)

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Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1918. NO. 18.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JOHN VI. 44.

"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."

I wish to offer some thoughts on the above text. A short time before Jesus used the above words he had miraculously fed the multitude, and that multitude still followed him, not because they saw the miracles, but because they did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Their motives were mercenary. In all ages of the world the pretended followers of Jesus have by far outnumbered the true. Even now it is popular to unite with some church; the offence of the cross, in a great measure, has ceased; but when the discriminating doctrine of Christ is preached, when persecution arises, the professors of popular churches are ready to say, "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" It is still true, as then, that "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." It matters not how pious the training, what good impressions are made on the young mind, how many means and auxiliaries are brought into requisition, still all this is unavailing, except the Father draws. The popular doctrine of the day is that man can come if he will; but according to our text, no man can come; he has not the ability, the power nor inclination. Man, naturally, is of the earth, earthy, an enemy to God by sin and wicked works. He is satisfied with his condition; all he wishes or wants he finds in the earth. It requires divine illumination to show him the vanity and emptiness of all things below the sun. When this is done by the quickening Spirit, then there is a desire to come. But the distance is so great, and there is such utter helplessness and inability, so much guilt and condemnation, that to come, even if he had the power, would be, he thinks, but to be consumed by the wrath of God. The awakened sinner has no idea that the Father is drawing him. He believes that his sins are so great there is no mercy for one so vile; but in due time, being sufficiently humbled, realizing the exceeding sinfulness of sin, his own strength and hope all gone, Jesus is revealed as his Savior. Faith, joy, love and hope are in exercise, and he that was in the pit is raised up above the curses of the law, no longer a servant, but a son. The doctrine taught in a large majority

of pulpits, and believed by all natural men, is that if the sinner will do good to get good, if he will pray and repent, agonize—all presupposing a living being (when the Scriptures positively assert that he is dead), that when these conditions are complied with the Father will draw him. This is palpably absurd. "The dead know not any thing." They do not know how to perform any conditions, either good or bad; and even if they knew, they have no power to act. All that we do as natural men results from life in us. Even our common law claims no jurisdiction over dead men, and does God require dead sinners to quicken themselves, as a condition, before he draws them? Do not reason and revelation both teach that sinners come to or are drawn to Christ by virtue of life, that life is the cause and action the result? But to put it in even a stronger light: "And ye will not come to me that ye might have life." No man can come, because he has no ability. "And ye will not," because he has no inclination. Now if salvation depended on the power, will or ability of the creature, then none could be saved; but as it depends entirely and alone on the will of God, all are saved that he wills to be saved, be they many or few. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me," regardless of man's will; for God takes away man's will, which was to go astray from his youth, and gives him another will—a will to come to him. "Shall come" is now softened down to mean if they will, making God's eternal purpose dependent upon man's perverse will. All the natural will of man is a will not.

"Except the Father which hath sent me draw him." We have already said that man is of the earth, earthy, made of it, clings to it, it is his natural element. He is as much and entirely of the earth as any created thing or being on the earth; no more, no less. We all know that all things on the earth are held to the earth by some power that they cannot resist; call it attraction or what you please, the fact exists. In the very nature of things nothing on the earth can of itself rise above the earth. For it to leave the earth, or to be raised above its level, all will admit that force or power must be used; it must be drawn. No one will take the position that it is the attraction of all the bodies on the earth that holds the earth in its place, that would be too ridiculous; and no one would say they could do so if they would. Reason says that the earth is so infinitely larger than any and all bodies on its surface that its power keeps them stationary. The power that raises or draws bodies up from the earth must be greater than the earth's attraction. Now what is it that disengages or draws any one from the earth, its affections, lusts and desires, but the Spirit and power of God? That is almighty power. Sin reigns unto death, but here is a power that reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ. A strong man keeps his palace, and his goods are in peace, but here is a stronger who casts out the strong. The earthy attraction ceases the moment the drawing of the Father takes place; from that moment there is a desire for things above; we are drawn out in affection and desire; we long to be with Christ. This earth, our former dwelling-place, which once looked so gay and fascinating, has lost its charms; the goods that we had laid up for many days to come, upon which we expected to eat, drink and be merry, are all taken from us; our beautiful garments, fit, as we thought, to appear before the King, are nothing but

filthy rags; the doctrine of free will, human agency, creature merit, man's sovereignty, are all weighed in the balance and found wanting.

What a blessed consolation to be drawn of the Father! Drawn into his service, having ceased from the works of the flesh, drawn up, opposed to nature, to his visible church, finding sweet fellowship and communion with the saints. While "no man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him," none so drawn will or can refuse to come. Power is in his voice; all power is in his hands. There is willingness to be drawn, and great anxiety for fear they are not drawn. The common idea is that God stands ready to draw all men unto him, and that when the sinner will be in the use of the means, or begins to work, that draws God on the side of mercy. He was ready and willing on his part all the time to draw, but the sinner was not willing, and unless he becomes willing now or soon God will quit drawing and leave the sinner to perish. Is not this system based upon the will of the creature, and not on the power of God? Does it not represent the sinner as drawing God?

"And I will raise him up at the last day." I must necessarily be brief upon this point, and may not be correct in my views. I understand this to refer to the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ as the Head of his church. At the time this expression was used he was not himself raised up in this sense. He was under the law, though fulfilling the law. When he expired on the cross, was raised up, then the law could demand no more; it was fulfilled in his body, and by his death it was satisfied. He died for our sins, but without his resurrection we never could have been justified, never could have been raised up. He said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. (This he said signifying what death he should die.)" The church is resurrected by virtue of his resurrection; he was lifted up on the cross as her atoning sacrifice; because he has ascended to his Father as the Head, the members of his body are also raised up together with him. The Father accepted the offering, justice is satisfied, the Head and all the members of his body are raised up, to be in the presence of God forever.

Raised who up? All that the Father draws. The church in her militant state is raised far above the world and all its corruptions, having her conversation in heaven. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Our text says, "I will raise him up," and the quotation above says he has done it. Some say, If we will hold out faithful he will raise us up.

But our text may have more immediate reference to the final resurrection of the body, as it is called. "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." Of one thing we are confident, that is, the Lord will never leave his people, even in the last day, under the most severe trials, the most cruel mockings. The church of Christ is a place raised up. The world has places of honor and preferment, it has its high places, but the most feeble saint is raised infinitely higher than any position the world has to give. They are kings and

priests unto God; they have promise of this life and that which is to come; all is theirs. When the poor tempest-tossed child of God is cast down under a sense of his own unworthiness, it is the pleasure of his Father from time to time to appear for his raising up, enabling him to go on his way rejoicing.

Brother Beebe, this is submitted to you for insertion or rejection. I shall take it kindly from you, or any of the brethren, to correct any errors.

Yours sincerely,

WM. S. MONTGOMERY.

BRICK STORE, Ga., Oct. 21, 1870.

[REPUBLISHED by request of Elder H. H. Lefferts.—ED.]

COLUMBUS, Ga., August 11, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—To-day I have been thinking of the beautiful texts you preached from, and recall many precious truths you spoke when we met at the general meeting near Covington, Ga., the last days of July, and I am made to exclaim, All praise to the Lord, to whom all glory belongs, for it is he who fills his ministers with truth and wisdom, giving them understanding, teaching them to rightly divide the word of truth and to feed the flock with wholesome food. If I had the gift of writing perhaps I could express some of the sweet thoughts which came to me while listening to you and Elder Irwin preach the unsearchable riches of our Lord. I love the doctrine you set forth: salvation by grace alone, predestination of all things, both good and evil, election, special atonement, man's total depravity, perseverance of the saints and the resurrection are grand and glorious truths, the hope, the meat and drink of God's children, and they love it. Language would fail to express to you what a feast of joy it was to myself and daughter. We were hungry for the truth, and were filled; yes, our cup was full and running over. Our hearts were so thankful to the gracious God that he directed our steps to that pleasant place, there to meet face to face many of the household of faith and mingle our voices in songs of praise unto him who loves us always. It will ever be a sweet memory. How wonderfully blessed to listen to the truth as it is in Jesus, of his wonderful works and ways, his glorious plan of salvation, his power, love and mercy to his chosen generation, spoken by God's own ministers, giving him all the glory, proclaiming him sovereign, the God of heaven and earth, who doeth all things after the counsel of his own will, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed, so shall it stand. This wonderful plan of salvation is exactly suited to the condition of poor, lost sinners. Truth, wisdom, justice, power and love were shining in their glory when our Jesus died to redeem his bride (the church), and are shining now just the same, for Jesus is our Head. Oftentimes I feel so sinful and weak, so unworthy, filled with doubts and fears. Can one so vile presume to raise a trembling eye to blessings so divine? No voice but my Savior's can raise these fallen hopes and cheer the faint heart, speaking his salvation to my soul. He turns my prayer to praise. Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity and passeth by the transgressions of the remnant of his heritage? Our God is bountiful in love and delighteth in mercy. We take courage, believing in his holy word. We go to him with all our complaints, looking unto him. God's chosen people are his peculiar care, and we shall not seek his face in vain, but receive comfort, our hope re-

newed. If once we feel the love of Christ impressed upon our hearts it can never be erased. He may afflict us and wound us with distress, but will never take away his covenant of peace. I am glad we are passive in the hands of our Lord, receiving his blessings of love, joy and peace just as he in his wisdom sees fit; and when he sends afflictions and sorrows upon us, which are for the time grievous to be borne, they are for good; we are drawn unto our Jesus, and are enabled to say, Thy will be done. Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you, is a sweet exhortation or command of the apostle. Ye are the light of the world. They are therefore light in an otherwise dark and sinful world. Jesus tells us why the church is the light of the world: because out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. God is hidden in his people and shines out of them.

Pardon me, dear brother, I did not intend to write so long a letter; I simply wanted to tell you how I enjoyed knowing you and hearing you preach the gospel of our Lord. I will now ask an interest in your prayers when at the throne of grace. God keep and bless you.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

QUAKER, W. Va., July 21, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I do not know that I can say anything that will be worth space in the SIGNS, but many times the contributors to its columns have served me the tongue of a prophet, inasmuch as they have touched my case, though I sometimes am made to doubt that any of them feel to be so depraved and as low down in the world as I do. I am fully aware that such symptoms as these have always accompanied the people of God, yet I am so far from what I would be that it seems to be a continual source of doubts and fears quite unsatisfactory to my better senses. I have often feared that if my brethren (if brethren I should say) should act upon duty and truth, they would have no fellowship for me. I am satisfied they would not if they had the estimate on themselves that I have on them. Sometimes it occurs to my mind if I only would and could go and tell the brethren what a sin-cursed wretch I am they would not have any use for me, so I have been made to feel deeply concerned about this matter of confession. It comes to me that the Scriptures say, With the mouth confession is made unto salvation, and I wonder if one might have salvation and not confess, but I rather conclude that confession is a part of the divine arrangement. Most assuredly the apostle Paul was an inspired man, and he confessed that there was no good in his flesh, and if I understand it aright, after he was so miraculously called to preach the everlasting gospel he confessed that he was carnal, sold under sin. (Romans vii. 14.) Then if so great a man as he must make such confession, it seems to me that there could be no language found strong enough to express the real condition of my life. This matter betook me so forcibly that one day not long since I was riding along the road, and it occurred to me that there was a Scripture which read, "They shall speak with new tongues." Well, the impression was such that I began to search for it, and after several attempts found it in Mark xvi. 17. This is one of the signs that should follow the believer, and I had it (or perhaps I should have said it had me) that when a man is possessed of the good Spirit his tongue becomes new to that of its former expressions, confessing sin in self, acknowledging the truth

in Christ, who is the foundation of self-denial religion. No wonder then that we should love our neighbor as ourselves, not so much concerned about finding and confessing his faults, and is it not new to the flesh that one should have no railing accusation against his enemies? Our enemies might be our neighbors, but how could we be a neighbor to self? "They shall sing a new song." Brethren, I am made to feel that his people are constrained to give him glory, however new and strange it may seem to this world.

I have come into possession of the little book, "Feast of Fat Things," and read Elder Beebe's "Riddle." I think surely he had my experience, but my fears are that the "old man" has the ups with me most of the time. It seems pretty hard, but I reckon that the elder shall serve the younger. At this point I found something that is deep water for me. You remember that the children of Israel murmured while they were being delivered, for the natural things of Egypt, where they were in bondage, and, brethren, I have often thought that this murmuring is one of the most heinous sins that ever mortal man indulged in, and feared that it would be my own destruction.

The subject of "Fatalism" is treated much better, to my notion, than I could have thought of, although it is a frequent occurrence that I hear people making such remarks as, If predestination be true, no use to try, and if I had Bible evidence that there is any spiritual good in the natural man I would be afraid, but I feel that our God has power over all, and works all things after the counsel of his own will first and last in all things, and that for good. One consolation to me, a poor, weak sinner, is that I am trying to serve a God who has all power, and while I do not expect to fathom the depths of the mysteries of godliness, I think I can often see the good that comes out of evil. It seems to me that any Bible reader would have to admit that God has power over Satan, and so if man has power over him, why it seems to me that he would not need the power of the Almighty. I reckon he thinks within himself that he is doing many wonderful works, for we read of some who claimed that they had.

Yours with only a hope,

J. A. PRESTON.

ISAIAH XL. 1, 2.

"COMFORT ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

After reading so many good letters written by the editors and the dear brethren and sisters, I feel impressed to write a few lines, notwithstanding I feel so unworthy and imperfect, not able to write anything to the comfort of the dear brethren whose letters have been of so much comfort to me, but the Scripture says, "Comfort ye my people," and that has been the keynote of the letters we have been reading. The Old Predestinarian Baptists are the only people I have ever heard preach the doctrine found in the Bible: salvation from first to last by grace, and grace alone; not by works that we have done, but by his mercy he hath saved us. I well know that if I am what I hope I am it is as Paul said: "For we are his [God's] workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." That work was done before we were in existence, for we hear that man proposes but God disposes, for it is not in man that walketh to direct

his steps; not of him that willeth, but of God that sheweth mercy. We hope we worship a God who has all power in earth and in heaven, a God of purpose, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and he does not consult man in regard to any of his works. Our blessed Savior said to the Father just before he was crucified, I thank thee, O Father, that thou hast given me power over all flesh, that I should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given me. Not that he was going to try, if they would let him, for we read, My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power.

Dear brethren and sisters, my mind has wandered far from what I had in mind to write when I commenced, but I have been comforted so many times in reading your letters, with what I believe to be the faith once delivered unto the saints, that I wanted to tell you of it. I do not expect my letter to be of as much comfort to you as your letters have been to me.

Dear brethren editors, if you see fit to publish this, all right; if not, all right, for it is like the writer, very imperfect.

A poor old sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all,

J. F. KINKADE.

ADAMS, Tennessee.

DENTSVILLE, S. C., May 3, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending a two dollar money order in this letter to renew my subscription to the dear old paper, for I appreciate it very much for the grand truth it contains. I was well pleased with brother Lefferts' views on Sampson's Riddle. I am an old man, in my eighty-second year, but that was the first time I ever heard it explained. I also enjoyed his editorial in the April 15th number and brother Mayfield's article in the same number was surely good.

Brother Ker, I am of your opinion concerning the fulfillment of revelation, it has never all been fulfilled. I am of the opinion that when the present war commenced Satan, that old serpent, the devil, was loosed for a little season, according to God's eternal purpose, to punish the nations of the earth for their awful wickedness, and if Satan is loosed for a little season the sovereign God did it, and he is the only one who can bind him, and when God's purpose is accomplished he will cause the war to cease.

Brother Ker, I would very much like to have your views upon the fourteenth chapter of John, especially where Jesus said, "Greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." Dear brother, I ask for information, for I never heard it explained to my satisfaction. The fact is I have heard but very few try to explain it, though I have been greatly blessed to spend a long life among able and faithful ministers of the gospel, and have in days past been so favored of the Lord as to have had the blessed opportunity of reading after many able expounders of the word of truth, as I commenced reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES soon after the Civil War. It makes me feel sad at times to know that nearly all of those old veterans of the cross are gone. I see that our dearly beloved brother, Elder S. H. Durand, is still living, and I trust that God will still give him grace for his declining days, for I have often been edified and instructed by reading able letters from his pen, and my heart has been made glad. I think Elder Gilbert Beebe was one of the greatest men of his day, but the sovereign God has raised up other able defenders of the truth, for which we should feel thankful.

Dear brethren, you may publish this if you wish, so the dear saints may hear from me, and that those who are acquainted with me in Mississippi and Texas may know my whereabouts, as we have often in days past taken counsel together. Those days are to me a green spot in my memory, but now in my last days it is very different, for there is no one near us who is interested in hearing Old Baptists preach the live and do system, but they want the do and live system preached. They are good neighbors and kind people, but my wife and I are very lonely in this desert land.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

W. B. McADAMS.

MARSHALL, Va., Jan. 18, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—In this I am sending you my remittance for the ensuing year, and I cannot let it go without trying to tell you in a small measure how comforting and precious the dear SIGNS is to me as I am far away from any visible church and very seldom see any one who believes as I do. I have not heard a gospel sermon since October, 1915, when I attended the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, and heard Elders Ruston, Fenton, Eubanks, Lefferts, Vail and Cockrill, and O it was a rich feast. I have been reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for forty years, though not all that time a subscriber, and I feel as though I never again want to be without it as long as I live. May you all be kept by the power of the almighty God, is the prayer of a poor sinner.

HATTIE L. WALKER.

SALISBURY, Md., April 18, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I wish I could write you an interesting letter, but I cannot do that. I hope and trust that I am interested in the things of the kingdom of God's dear Son, and sometimes I have some very sweet meditations, but to give expression to them I find I cannot. You know I always was one of the dumb ones who has to go halting all the way; that which I feel I would delight in is far from me. I am one who has to be fed, lame on both feet; one thing though I am glad of: I have an appetite, that must be an indication of life. I feel that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been a great help to me for the last thirty years. I do not set it up as my standard, but I have been strengthened and comforted by reading the communications from the different ones scattered throughout the land, also the editorials, and often in reading I feel that even one is worth more than the price of the paper for a whole year. But the truth is not to be compared with silver and gold; no, by no means; money will buy things to sustain the old man, but with the new man that is a different case altogether. May God bless you and all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in truth and sincerity.

Your little brother,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

SLOCOMB, Ala., August 12, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—Do you know of a little book entitled "Universal Charity," by William Huntingdon, who published the little book in England in the year 1783, and was republished in America by William Moseley, of Macon, Ga., in 1840? If you know of the book please let me know by card or letter. I will greatly appreciate any information.

Your brother, I hope,

D. F. CREEL.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in September (29th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1918.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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1 TIMOTHY I. 17.

"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen."

After Paul had called attention to his former life as a persecutor of the church of Christ, and how the abundant grace of God had been bestowed upon him as a pattern to them which should afterward believe in Christ to life everlasting, he penned the words of our text, seemingly filled with thanksgiving and praise. He felt, doubtless, as all subjects of God's mercy feel, that he least deserved mercy, and had received it more abundantly than any one else because he needed it more, being in his own feelings "the chief of sinners." It seems that as we begin to write, the subjects embraced in the text are high, wonderful and too profoundly deep for us. Who can ascend into heaven to bring Him down? Who can descend into the deep to bring Him up? O how little man knows of the King eternal! Man, who is mortal, finite, a creature of time and circumstances, cannot enter into eternal things even in his imaginations. Therefore it is impossible to fathom the mystery of godliness, yet there is a desire, a longing to know God, whom to know is life eternal. The very name "God" is higher than the heavens, deeper than both earth and sea, and exceedingly broader than the space between the east and the west. The expression, "eternal God," conveys to the believer the ever existence of the "eternal Spirit." How God could exist without beginning is known only to him; the mystery has not been revealed to man, who is of few days and full of trouble. More than that, man could not possess such knowledge, as it belongs alone to God. Even the Son of man, while in the flesh, had not perfect knowledge of the eternal God and his infinite works. As the Father showed him he understood, as he prompted him he moved and acted; the words he spake were not his, but rather the words of God. Notwithstanding these facts, men in this age of the world talk of God as though they had made him and understand him perfectly, and that he is subject to them and dependent upon them for strength and wisdom. This all proves, however, their utter ignorance of him and the absence of grace in their hearts. The expression, "King eternal," not only suggests, but establishes the truth that there is and ever has been a King of kings, the ruler of all powers and principalities. He has from the beginning set up kings and dethroned kings, because he is "the King eternal." He is also King immortal. The word "immortal" means "not subject to death." He only then hath immortality dwelling in the light. Man is mortal, subject to death, the exact opposite of God, hence dies because of sin. The doctrine taught that every man has an immortal soul is false. Immortality being in and with God alone, man can have immortality only as he is a part of God. To be a part of God is to have his life and be a partaker of the divine nature, and this is

because of the sonship of the children of God, and we read nothing in the Scriptures of man becoming a child of God by his own works, nor through the labors of others. The truth of the matter is, except a man be born again, born of God, he can neither see nor enter the kingdom of the King eternal, immortal.

God is also the King invisible, or the invisible King. As we write, the mystery deepens, and language is inadequate to either describe or express the wonders we even so faintly behold. Jesus said of God, Ye have neither heard his voice nor seen his shape. Again, "No man hath seen God at any time." He did speak in an audible voice to the Israelites from Mount Sinai, but they saw no form. This brings us to think of the testimony of Paul when he said, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit. Even the things of God, prepared for them that love him, are invisible to the eye, not comprehended by the natural mind nor heard by the ear of man. This cuts off all natural intellect, all earthly powers, from entering into the things of God, because they are, like him, invisible. While invisible, he, or his power, is seen in all things, both animate and inanimate. Every leaf of the trees, every blade of grass, every grain of sand and every drop of rain gives glory to him, as his mighty power is seen in them. The lion, the king of beasts, as well as the smallest insect, gives praise and honor to the invisible God. The lofty mountains and the sandy desert were planned and formed by the invisible King. The sun, moon and stars show forth his handywork, and the waters of the sea roar to the praise of their King. While so great, invisible and immortal, he dwells with the lowly and contrite, and his tabernacle is with men; and while all human powers fail, there is a something within that beholds the King in his beauty and the city afar off.

To "the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever." Wisdom is with God, he is its source of whatever kind the earth has ever known naturally, from the wisdom of man, who was made in the image of God, to the wisdom of the little ant that lays up her store in summer for winter. He is the author of wisdom, as he is the author of faith. Surely when God is glorified as he should be, man has nothing to boast of, as though he by his own efforts had acquired anything. Man is the only creature of God, however, that boasts himself against the only wise God. It may be thought by some that Paul meant to suggest that while there were gods many and lords many, there was but one wise God. That is true, but our understanding of the text is that he meant to declare that God is the only wise, hence all wisdom proceeds from him. In Paul's letter to the Romans, when language failed to reach the height, depth, breadth and length of the wisdom of God, he said, O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! However wonderful all earthly wisdom is, or in other words, the wisdom of God displayed in nature, including the sun, moon and stars, how short it is when compared with the wisdom of God in the plan of salvation, that guilty mortals can be clean and as pure through the blood of the Lamb as though sin had never entered the world; that men and women, the sons and daughters of Adam by nature, should be the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty. Glory and honor shall be his for ever and ever, here and hereafter. Amen. K.

1 JOHN V. 10.

"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself."

There is but one witness to things eternal whose testimony is to be taken wholly without reserve. This witness is Jesus Christ, the anointed One of God. No man hath seen God at any time, but the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. It is only, therefore, by the declaration of Jesus Christ that we can know anything about the hidden wisdom of God. The revelation of truth is given unto Jesus Christ for him to reveal unto his servants. In the book of Revelation Jesus Christ is called the faithful witness and the first begotten of the dead and the prince of the kings of the earth. In another place Jesus Christ is called the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God. This same Jesus has borne witness to his people in all ages of the world and has revealed unto them the secret things of God. This witness, or testimony, was given to Adam and Eve in the garden when God, banishing them therefrom, declared the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. There, at the very beginning of sin, the end of sin was declared. So it is that sin finds its end, or destruction, when Jesus died for sin and arose from the dead, thus vanquishing forever the power of Satan, and delivering the elect of God from the dominion and reigning power of sin. The witness was borne to Abel when through faith he offered a lamb, the firstling of the flock, as a sacrifice, showing forth his belief in Jesus, God's Lamb, who stood as slain from the foundation of the world. This witness was borne to Noah when he was commanded to build the ark after the pattern that God showed him, with its window in the top, its door in the side, having three stories, and all made of gopher wood pitched within and without to render it absolutely waterproof. This ark was the salvation of Noah and his house, because God, not man, shut them in there. This witness was borne to Abraham in the mount, where he was about to offer Isaac and the Lord stayed his hand and commanded him to offer the ram caught by its horns in the thicket. This witness was borne to the brethren of Joseph when they were compelled to go down into Egypt to obtain help of the very one whom they had despised, rejected and cast out. Jesus Christ preached in the Spirit to the spirits in prison for hundreds of years before he was manifest in the flesh to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. It was he who testified as a true and faithful witness concerning the things of God to all and in all the holy men of old. He was the witness to Daniel in the dream of the king of Babylon, where it was shown that all the kingdoms and powers of the world should fall and be blown away as chaff of the summer threshing floor and the kingdom of God should increase and fill the whole earth. Christ bore witness of divine truth unto Isaiah, Jeremiah, Zechariah, and a host of others whom it is not needful that we mention in detail. Now, in our text at the beginning of this article, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." This does not mean that he who will try to believe, or will agree to believe, or who will by any effort of his own bring about belief, may thereby secure this witness within himself, but he that "believeth;" that is, the one who is right now believing has the witness in himself. In other words, Jesus Christ, the faithful and true witness, is in the one who believes, and it

is because Christ is in that one that he does believe. Every true believer is the workmanship of Deity. Paul says in the second chapter of Ephesians that believers are the workmanship of God, being created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath predestinated to the enjoyment of those who believe. Further, he tells how that workmanship is brought about. That it is the same power that raised Christ from the dead that works in sinners, causing them to believe. Thus belief is an evidence of the power of resurrection dwelling within one. Jesus told the Jews, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. Therefore it is not the preacher's work to make believers, it is not the sinner's own work to make himself believe, but it is the work of God to cause, or bring about, belief. This is done by the Witness, Jesus Christ, dwelling within one. It is plain, therefore, that all who truly believe have Jesus Christ, God's witness of himself, dwelling within them. Thus the tabernacle of God is with men and within men. Jesus Christ is not only the christian's hope within the christian, but he is that christian's everything and all things, he is the All in All. Not having Christ, we have nothing; possessing him, we have all things. When the eunuch declared to Philip that he believed Jesus Christ to be the very Son of God, it was plain the eunuch had the true witness within himself. It was equally true also of Peter when he confessed to Jesus, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. There is also another side to this matter. Not only does every believer have the witness within himself, but every believer is himself a witness, being made so because Jesus Christ dwells in him. Thus, though we may live hundreds of years after the lifetime of Jesus here in the flesh, yet the very resurrection power of God which causes one to believe makes that one himself a witness to the things of God, even though the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, neither hath there entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love him. So while one's natural powers fall infinitely far short of apprehending the slightest thing of God, still the very principle of belief, owing to the lifting-up power by which it is brought about, causes one to be within himself, and within his own experience, a witness of the life and sufferings of Jesus, of his humiliation and of his victory, by the very things one is made to suffer within one's self. The Bible is a great source of comfort and instruction to God's people, but even if there were no Bibles every believer would still be a witness within himself of the power and salvation of Jesus Christ by the very power within that makes one to believe. Therefore he that believes has both the witness within himself and is himself a witness of the things of God.

Written at the request of brother L. C. Godwin, of Baltimore, Md. L.

BOOK OF EDITORIALS.

We have on hand a number of copies of the Second Volume of Editorials. This book is made up of editorials written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the Signs of the Times from March, 1842, to March, 1847, and contains 768 pages, neatly bound in cloth.

This work originally sold at two dollars per copy, but as a few of the pages are stained by water we will, as long as the supply lasts, sell them at the extremely low price of seventy-five cents per copy. Postage paid by us. All who wish this book should procure it now, as we will have no more after these are sold.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. N. Bartlett.)

The Tygarts Valley River Association of Old School or Primitive Baptists, now in session with the Leading Creek Church, Randolph County, West Virginia, to the several churches of which she is composed, and to all of like precious and God-given faith, sendeth christian salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Once more a few of us are permitted to meet together for the purpose of worshiping God in an associate capacity, and as this letter is to the churches, to them we write. We wish to commend you for your faithfulness, and that amid all the strife, war and bloodshed going on in the world you are meeting together peacefully and regularly in your places of worship, maintaining preaching and contending for the same old doctrine of grace that the church of Christ has always believed.

It is pertaining to your worship of God we wish to write. The Lord has always had a people who worshiped him, and he always will be worshiped, adored and praised by his elect and his redeemed. "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."—Phil. iii. 3. The circumcision spoken of by the apostle here has reference to that which is of the heart in the spirit. As God's national Israel was separated and set apart by circumcision of the flesh, so God's spiritual Israel is separated and set apart by the spiritual circumcision of the heart, and when so separated and set apart are qualified to worship God in the spirit. They have the spirit of worship and true devotion given unto them, and they worship God in spirit and in truth. Brethren, you worship God because you love him and love to worship him. The Spirit of God is in your thoughts, in your singing, in your prayers, in your preaching, in all your worship, and that same Spirit enables his people to rejoice in Christ Jesus. When you have that fruit of the Spirit: love, joy and peace, then you can worship God, and what a great blessing it is to so worship him. Well doth the prophet Isaiah describe this rejoicing. "How beautiful upon the mountains [mountains of rejoicing] are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that publisheth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion."—Isaiah lii. 7, 8. Then he said, "Break forth into joy, sing together, * * * for the Lord hath comforted his people." When we are thus made to rejoice in Christ Jesus we are given such confidence or faith in God and his word of truth that we have no confidence in the flesh, and have no desire to worship God in teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. No, brethren, we want to teach the doctrine of God our Savior; we want to rejoice and praise God only. He alone is worthy of all our praise. Yes, dear brethren, we rejoice to preach the unconditional election of the church of God in Christ, and the redemption of all his people to God and from sin, death, hell and the grave; yes, from all these to God and everlasting bliss. All this is according to the predestination of the God we worship, and according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Yes, we worship a God of purpose, who says, I will do all my pleasure. And he

hath saved and called us to worship him according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. All this is also according to his choice or election. Those who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world are made manifest as the elect according to the foreknowledge of God, and they are called to serve and worship him in his holy temple, or church. He is the God of our fathers, whom we worship. We want to praise him while we live and forever and forever. Brethren, continue thus to worship God, and may God enable us to thus worship him. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching. And when gathered together in the name of Jesus preach no other gospel only that which was preached by Christ and his apostles; for those who do that Paul said, "Let him be accursed."

Finally, brethren, "Love one another with a pure heart fervently." "Let brotherly love continue." And may the dear Lord keep you faithful to the end. Amen.

J. B. CROSS, Moderator.
J. N. BARTLETT, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder George Ruston, at the home of the bride's mother, Mrs. Bertha J. Sanford, Margaretville, N. Y., August 28th, 1918, Casper S. Bellows and Myra E. Sanford, both of Margaretville, N. Y.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at his residence, 118 Forest Ave., St. Thomas, Ontario, July 29th, 1918, Arthur Thomas Surbary, of Walkerville, Ont., and Marguerite Meta Sinclair, of St. Thomas.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

D. S. Koontz, Ill., $1.00; Mrs. F. J. Norris, Ga., $1.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Morris L. Tator died August 3rd, 1918, aged 44 years, at his mother's home, our dear sister Linda Tator (whose only child he was) at Middleburg, N. Y., leaving also a wife and four children residing at Albany, N. Y., and one son in the service of his country. He merited the respect and confidence of his fellow-men, and held a position of trust as cashier of the Middleburg Bank for some years, until the sad affliction of locomotor ataxia took this and most of the comforts of this world from him, yet in all these severe trials he was the most patient and uncomplaining man I ever met, seemingly sustained in his pitiful helplessness by the mighty God of Jacob. Sister Tator says that he enjoyed a visit and prayer from Elder Clark very much just a few days before he died, and when I visited him in company with Elders Vail or Fenton, or alone on several occasions, there was always a cordial welcome, an interest in the truth, and an expression of faith and hope in the grace of God. May our sister find comfort in the thoughts of his gratitude and appreciation for her faithful care. She has the sympathy of many friends and the church in her grief for him and for her husband, Hiram Tator, who died Dec. 9th, 1917, aged 71 years. We pray that the Lord will sustain and comfort her in every lonely hour.

EVERETT R. KINNEY.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER J. R. HARDY has changed his address from Haviland, Kansas, R. 3, to Wellsford, Kansas.

MEETINGS.

THE yearly meetings at Messongoes, Nassaongo and Indiantown for this year have been changed and are appointed as follows:

Messongoes—Third Sunday, and Saturday before, in September.

Nassaongo—Fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, in September.

Indiantown—Fifth Sunday, and Saturday before, in September.

At each of these appointments the service will begin at 1:30 Saturday p. m. and continue all day Sunday.

J. C. MELLOTT.

THERE will be, the Lord willing, a two days meeting held with the Cammal Church on Saturday and Sunday, September 28th and 29th. We expect Elder Fenton to be with us. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

Done by order of the church.

J. T. BADGLEY, Clerk.

THE Ebenezer Church in Baltimore will hold an all day meeting on the third Sunday in September (15th). A hearty invitation is extended for all to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will convene according to appointment with the Olive and Hurley Church, Ulster County, N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday in October (2nd and 3rd), 1918. All are cordially invited to attend. Those coming by rail will stop at Ashokan, via U. & D. R. R.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

THE Juniata Association is appointed to meet with the Sideling Hill Church, Fulton Co., Pa., Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 11th, 12th and 13th, 1918. We want all to come and be with us at this meeting who have the desire and love in their hearts to come. Ample arrangements will be made to meet all who come. Those who come by rail will use either the Baltimore & Ohio R. R. to Hancock, W. Va., or the Western Maryland R. R. to Hancock, Md. Those coming via Baltimore & Ohio R. R. will walk across the river to the Maryland side, where all will be met. Trains will be met Thursday only. As the meetinghouse is twenty miles from the station, we ask all who wish us to meet them to please drop a postal card in plenty of time to either J. C. Mellott, Needmore, Pa., or Dennis Mellott, Plum Run, Pa.

DENNIS MELLOTT, Church Clerk.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 16th, 17th and 18th, 1918. Those coming by rail will use the Washington & Old Dominion Electric Ry. to Herndon, Va., where they will be met on Tuesday before the meeting. Trains leave 36th and M Sts., N. W., Washington, D. C., at 2, 4:45, 5:30 and 6 o'clock p. m., though this time-table is subject to change. From the Union Station in Washington, the Georgetown electric cars run directly to the W. & O. D. depot. We want all to come who can and will and want to come.

R. L. SPINDLE, Church Clerk.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m

ALL WELCOME

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,
PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1918. NO. 19.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PSALMS I. 3.

"AND whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

It is pleasant to think of that man; not to think of such a man, for there is but one. It is restful, comforting, peaceful to find ourselves contemplating that man and his doings. We cannot come at them by wisdom and power of our own. In this busy world occupied by natural men there is to be found no one who by any natural power of his own is engaged in the works of this blessed man, or even having a desire toward them or a care for them. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." They are known only by revelation, and that revelation is to babes; that is, there must be a birth. In that birth there is made manifest a new life, and the principles of that life will be made to appear as soon as he who is the possessor of it begins to walk. If the life is evil, the tendency of the one who possesses that life will be toward the counsel of the ungodly, and he will be found walking in the counsel of the ungodly. That is the condition of all men. All the race of Adam are sinners in the sight of the holy God. There is but one source of true holiness, and that is the true and holy God, and that holy and righteous God, the true life, is Jesus. "In him was life, and the life was the light of men."

How wonderful it is that in the very beginning of the Psalms, in the very beginning of the form of the true worship of the true and living God, the line of distinction is made known. The one true and blessed and perfect man is described in the negative by a declaration of what he is not and what he will not do. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly." He is holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. He takes no step in the direction of evil, however, whatever attractive or fearful appearance it may assume. While the natural man will walk along easily with the ungodly until the attraction causes him to pause and stand in the way of sinners, proud and satisfied with what it promises, the eyes and heart of the man of godly life find no attraction in that company, but turn at once away.

The natural man is so well suited with

his surroundings and attractions of the world that he soon sits down with the scorners of all who are truly righteous; while the man spoken of in this Psalm is as far away from ungodliness as he can become, and finds sweet and holy delight in the law of the Lord, meditating therein day and night. He hates sin and abhors iniquity, and yet in doing the work, in which he always prospers, he was made sin, who knew no sin, that his people might be made the righteousness of God in him. In his work, in which he shall and does always prosper, he is compared to a tree planted by the rivers of water. Its growth is so wonderful that it is always full of water. It is the only tree known among men whose fruit shall be brought forth in his season while its leaf shall not wither.

Here are absolute circumstances which appear to the wisdom of this world as contrary to prosperity, yet are taken by the Lord to represent that true spiritual growth and prosperity. From the beginning of the inspired Scriptures of truth the statements and prophecies and histories and songs of praise have been contrary to the wisdom of this world, and the contradiction still continues. In the preaching of the word the apostle declares a mystery, which was hid from past ages, but is now made known unto the saints, to whom the Lord would make known the riches of the glory, which is Christ in them the hope of glory. To-day the mystery continues, so that to-day the gospel cannot be preached or understood except by the teaching of the Holy Spirit. To-day true prosperity is not understood by the natural man. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, because they are foolishness unto him." But to the spiritual man the gospel is "glad tidings of great joy." It is the power of God unto salvation. Therefore in the beginning of this letter I said something about how restful and sweet and pleasant and good it is to meditate upon the things of the kingdom of God. But the dear Savior, while he was doing his prosperous work, was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. So must his people be, in a measure, as they are here in the flesh, looking for his coming and glory. He is above all sorrow now, enthroned in eternal glory. But in their experience they are with him, as they need him in their suffering and tribulation, and the Holy Spirit takes of the things of their risen and glorified Lord and shows them unto them; therefore they glory in tribulation. This is their source of true heavenly comfort, and in their great afflictions their tribulation worketh experience, and makes their saddest trials sweet to them.

I am using the word "them," as if they were away at a distance; but O how dark and fierce have been the storms that have from time to time swept through my soul. I have had such acquaintance with grief and soul trouble as has made me cry out of trouble and say, Who hath sorrow like my sorrow? But sometimes a brother has told my own trial, or the dear Savior has given me to feel the fellowship of his suffering, and I could rejoice that "December's as pleasant as May."

In the thirty-second Psalm this same blessed and infinitely holy character is spoken of: "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." Holiness is shown here. The ungodly are not as presented in the first Psalm, but are light when compared with true righteousness, as the chaff which the wind driveth away; there-

fore the ungodly shall perish. How trifling, how silly do the works of the flesh appear when one stands before the Lord. They shall not stand in the judgment.

My desire for the Lord's humble poor is that they may be kept free from the errors and delusions of the world about them, and not be found walking in the counsel of the ungodly; that they may not stop in their spiritual walk to stand in the way of sinners, to contemplate their inventions and worldly works, nor sit in the seat of the scorners, who are often, or always, scorning the way and work of the Lord's people. I have of late found in my heart a desire for a revival of the Lord's work in the churches and people of his pasture. "The work of the Lord is glorious, sought out by all them that have pleasure therein." I am thankful to the Lord that there is no attractiveness for me in any religious works or doctrines but those given us in the Bible. I do love them, and all those whose enjoyment is in them.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Sept., 1918.

STANTON, Okla., March 3, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending a letter I received from brother C. M. Hood, of Tennessee, which was as sweet as honey in the comb to my soul.

Your sister in Christ, I hope,

NANCY CREEL.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Oct. 16, 1917.

DEAR SISTER CREEL:—I have just received your good and most welcome letter, which I have read, and I do not know of any better time to answer than now, as I have a little time. You say that I will be surprised at getting the letter from you. Well, I confess that I am, but I assure you that it is very agreeable to me. I am glad to know you in the Spirit, if not in the flesh; the flesh profiteth nothing anyway. When I get a letter from one of God's little ones, after I have read it and heard what they had to say in regard to God's dealing with them I always feel as if I had known them personally all my life. I am more of a stranger to myself than I am to any of God's humble poor from my standpoint. You seemed to be a little afraid that I would not be able to read your letter. I will say that I was able to read every word, and that without any trouble at all. You also refer to our natural connection. I will say that there are a number of Hoods in the south, some I have met and some I have just heard of, but I do not know about our kinship. However, let that be as it may; all our natural affections must fade away when we die, that ends all nature with us; we will never know about that any more; it is the one thing that separates the strongest earthly ties one from the other, never to be joined together again. But not so in a spiritual sense; our spiritual kinship will never end, either in time or in all eternity. The tie that binds us together here as members of the living family of God is like to that above. So closely are we connected that we are accounted as one in Christ. That certainly is a grand union, it is of God. The apostle Peter said that we are made partakers of the divine nature; we are one body and one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling; one Lord, one faith and one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and in you all, and through you all, God blest for evermore. We are told by the apostle Paul that there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female, but all one in

Christ. It seems to me that these scriptural proofs are enough to convince the most skeptical of the close fellowship one with the other of God's living family and of their Head, the Lord Jesus Christ. I cannot see anything else than what the Bible says about him: he is the fullness of all in all. I declare to you that so far as I am concerned I cannot see anything in the salvation of poor, lost and ruined sinners only in Christ and him crucified, buried and raised up again on the third day and ascended to God a live Jesus for evermore. I mean by that, salvation for time as well as for eternity. In fact, there is no salvation outside of the one atonement that he himself made, and as the Scriptures say, once for all. I do not want any other, because no other will ever reach my case. When I am clothed and in my right mind, and sitting, as I sometimes humbly hope, at the feet of Jesus, I find that his salvation is the only thing suited to my need, and I try with all the power that he sees fit to bestow on me to lay hold of it with all my heart. I am a poor beggar here in this world, with not a single thing to trust in except the tender mercy of God through Jesus Christ. That is my daily experience, I cannot get away from that. I am so poor and needy that I scarcely do a thing but that I am able to see there is something wrong about it. If others can live right, if others can do right, I am truly glad for them, because if they do they have nothing that they can boast of save the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. I surely do love a good man or a good woman; I love their walk, I love their lives, and above all I love their sweet fellowship, though the most unworthy of all God's creation. There is something about me, and it is not human nature, that hates evil and loves righteousness, and that very thing, whatever it is, pronounces me the greatest sinner on earth and the most vile of all God's creation. I did not put that principle there, it came into me independent of any effort of my own, and I cannot get it out of me, either. Everything that I have ever done has been a perfect failure, but I feel that what God has done, is now doing, and I hope will yet do, is not a failure, but sure. I am not looking at what I do for salvation. Like Jonah, I have learned that it is of the Lord, and I am hoping in it. That hope is a strong hope; it looks little and weak sometimes to me, but when I am able to see Jesus as my only hope, then I see that it is as strong as God himself, hence I call it strong because Jesus is strong, and all his humble poor are strong when it is in the power of his own might. When I read my Bible I find all of God's Bible men and women whose characters and experiences are recorded talking just like I have to talk if I tell the truth. They say about the same things I do, if not in words, they do in meaning, and I find it to be very good evidence, and am encouraged along the way as I go groping along. I have to lean upon Jesus, just as Jacob had to lean on his staff. He by faith leaned upon his staff. I hope to be that way when I come down to die. I want the faith of Jesus, if it be the will of God, to possess my whole soul and body, that I may be able to lean in that last time hard upon him for my transport from this life into his immediate presence, while my old body goes down to be hid away in the grave, there to wait until God shall call it forth in a new and living life. These sweet things occupy most of my mind; even at my work, when I am the most busy, they are there, and meditation is sweet to me and helps me work easy

and good and pleasant, feeling sure that it will soon come to an end. I want to appear before God even now in this time world, not in my own name nor in my own strength, but in the name of Jesus and in his strength and merit. When I come to die I want him there, I certainly do, I cannot die without him. Lord, do save us; we are not worthy, we have no right to ask of ourselves, we are criminals standing before thee, and in thy pure and holy eyes guilty sinners. We acknowledge all this, and more, but O, do give us Jesus. If we have Jesus we have life; if we have Jesus we have salvation; if we have Jesus we have all that salvation means, but if no Jesus, no life; if no Jesus we are lost and ruined forever. But I read in the word of God that it is these characters God makes sensible of this awful condition, that Jesus came to save, and God did send his angel down from heaven to earth to tell us that Jesus would save his people from their sins. I fully believe that he did do that very thing; that is what he came to do, no more, no less; that very thing was the full purpose of the offering that he made on the cross of Calvary when he died there to appease the wrath of God against the sins of all his people in all the world in all ages of the world, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, without the loss of one. That atonement was special, it was for a special purpose, it was the elect of God, and none else. Jesus did not pray for the world, but for his people that God had given him out of the world. These people are already saved, and it yet remains in many cases for the Holy Ghost to come at the appointed time and communicate salvation to them, whoever they may be. God knows them all in every country under the sun, and he knows their names, and they will be found written in the Lamb's book of life. This is my hope, and the only hope I have.

Now may the Lord Jesus Christ be with you in these your last days, and while you are isolated in this world from gospel preaching may he be with your spirit and manifest himself to you as the Savior of sinners in his sweet love and by his felt presence. I ask an interest in your petitions when it goes well with you, and I would like to hear from you again if it be the Lord's will. Farewell in the Lord.

Yours in many conflicts,

C. M. HOOD.

THE FORTY DAYS' FAST.

THE saying in John ii. 1: "And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee," does not prove that that forty days' fast was not a literal fast in the body of our Lord Jesus. John does not tell us of the order of Jesus' baptism, nor of the descent of the Holy Ghost on him, nor of his being driven or led away into the wilderness to be tempted of Satan. In Matthew iii. 11, 12, also Luke iii. 16, 17, we have the teaching of John the Baptist before the baptism of Jesus: "I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable." In John i. 15, John the Baptist gave the record that all this had been done, saying, "This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me; for he was before me." Then in verses 32, 33: "And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descend-

ing from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." We are not told how long a time transpired between the baptism and this teaching of John the Baptist. Matthew and Luke gave it in that which should be, and John gave it in that which had been; all gave the words of John the Baptist spoken of the same event at separate times, the one calling attention to and declaring the fact that what he had told them would come to pass had come. This was his evidence that this Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Beyond a question in my mind this occurred after the forty days' fast, and at the time when our Lord came to begin his ministry. Luke tells us: "And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered. And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God."—Luke iv. 1–4. In Matthew iv. 1–4, we have practically the same. What of man is there that eats bread? Is it not the man? Then it was the man that fasted and was tempted to make a stone bread. Could he not do that? Was there anything too hard for him to do? But he did not come to show his power by submitting to Satan's ways and temptations. He came to overcome and destroy him with his works, his words and his ways. Our Jesus is the only one who ever fasted forty days. Elijah went forty days in the strength of the food he had eaten. He was not fasting as long as the strength of that food held out. Moses was in the mount with God forty days and did eat nothing, but he is not said to have been hungry. He was with God, and that was enough. Our Lord absolutely fasted forty days. It was he in the flesh, the man, the heel which Satan was to bruise, that was led by the Holy Ghost, who had descended on him and abode in him. It was he that fasted from natural food, and who hungered for natural food to sustain the body which had been prepared for him and which he was then occupying. It was in this body, this man that could and did partake of the weaknesses of his people, suffer for them and with them, fast, hunger, eat and drink, be tempted in all points as we are and overcome those temptations, be crucified, die, be buried, dead, rise again from the dead in the same body, live in it free from Satan and all temptations and sufferings of every kind, and ascend up into heaven and live forever with the Father to intercede for his people; I say it was in this body that he fasted and hungered and overcame Satan there in the wilderness. Then he came back to Bethabara, where John was still preaching. John saw him and knew him, and bare witness of him that he was the same on whom he had seen the Holy Ghost descend like a dove and rest on him—he who coming after him is preferred before him. There was one day; the next day, which is two, John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and he bare this record. (John i. 29–34.) The next, or third day, after John stood and two of his disciples, &c. (Verse 35.) The following day Jesus would go into Galilee. This was four days. (Verse 43.) He went into Galilee,

and the third day there was a marriage in Cana. (John ii. 1.) Now I have shown that that was not the third day from his baptism; therefore this is no proof that he did not fast the forty days, as recorded by Matthew and Luke. The day, the day of the marriage in Cana, was three days after he had gotten into Galilee or something else, and not after his baptism. There is no hitch in God's word, it is truth. If we cannot reconcile Scripture with Scripture it is our weakness, and not any fault in God's word. It is all given for the edifying of the church, and she cannot afford to do without every portion of it. The Lord bless us to understand it better and receive it as he has given it to us.

Yours in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Sept. 5, 1918.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., August 28, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing two letters, from brother Henry Rounds and his wife, which I would like to see published in the SIGNS if you think best. They were very encouraging to me, and I feel they will be to others. The church at Salisbury has been lately blessed by the addition of two new members. It was my privilege to baptize brother Wm. J. Holloway on the fifth Sunday in June. As I was about to return home brother Rounds came to me desiring to be baptized, and Elder Francis administered the ordinance on the second Sunday in July. May the Lord continue to bless this church and all his people who look to him.

Yours in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

SALISBURY, Md., July 26, 1918.

DEAR ELDER DURAND:—I feel like writing a few words to you. I felt for years that I was wandering in the wilderness. I was trying to find some way of myself. I could not see the need of being baptized. I feel as if the Lord found me and led me out while I was wandering about. Monday morning after the baptism of brother Will Holloway on the fifth Sunday in June, the words of John, tenth chapter, part of first verse, came to me very forcibly: "He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." Immediately afterward the words came: "My yoke is easy and my burden is light." I believe the Lord showed me I had nothing to do but stand still and know that salvation is of him; I had become as a little child. Then I was made willing and glad, and not ashamed. Do you remember my telling you about that beautiful tree? I believe the Lord showed me his people as a beautiful tree. To my mind the tree is his people. No twigs had broken off; all there seems as one, combined, perfect. I was shown the strait and narrow way; it seemed to point to this same tree. I went before the church Saturday before the second Sunday in July and was received, and baptized on Sunday by Elder Francis. When I came up out of the water surely the Lord must have been shining on their faces. It was a beautiful sight to me. I was given the right hand of fellowship at the water. The baptism was very pleasant, and I was made glad. It has seemed like a well of water springing up, until one morning last week I felt like a dry well. I told sister Dellia how I felt, and she said it would spring up again. I believe it has already.

I went to the Rewastico meeting yesterday. Elders Francis, Vaughn and

Mellott were there, and preached to my comfort. Last night Elder Vaughn preached in Salisbury; his text was Isaiah lv. 1, 2. It was a wonderful sermon; and Elder Francis added a few words which were so beautiful; I was glad I could hear it.

Dear brother, you can send this letter to the editors of the SIGNS if you think it fit. The hymn commencing, "Happy the birth where grace presides," tells my experience better than I can.

I must close. I would like to see your face. Come if you feel able, for I want to hear you preach.

Unworthily,

HENRY ROUNDS.

SALISBURY, Md., August 2, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—If you will allow me to call you by that name of brother; I am too unworthy to do so. We were glad to hear from you. I have been very sad most of the time this year. I could not sing much of the time since this war drafted our eldest boy Harry. It is very hard, but that promise of the Comforter: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also," was given me before I was baptized, and it has been a great comfort to me this year, and since Henry has been given that lovely hope it has been a joy unspeakable and full of glory. I see him so beautiful. He seems to enjoy spiritual life so much of the time. It is a great comfort to me to have so much Scripture given him. I was almost taken up when he was baptized; I felt like singing:

"O how happy are they
Who their Savior obey,
And whose treasures are laid up above
Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

I get down very low sometimes, my hope is so little. I have always felt as if I were left out of that worldly company, separated from father, mother, brother and sister. One Methodist preacher said to me, "You have gone astray;" but if I have I hope the Lord led me out. These words came very forcibly: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." When I am weak I am strong, and when I am strong I am weak.

From an unworthy sister,

LAURA H. ROUNDS.

COLUMBIA, S. C., Sept. 15, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please say that my address is changed from Dentsville, S. C., to Rock Hill, S. C. This change is caused by our home being burned, with everything we had in it, and no insurance. Wife and I are old. Next Sunday, the 22nd, will be our birthdays; I will be eighty-two and wife seventy-five years old.

W. B. McADAMS.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1918.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JAMES V. 7.

"BE patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain."

The first six verses of this fifth chapter of James are taken up with a warning to the rich, those who have heaped to themselves worldly goods against the coming of the day of the Lord, who have oppressed the poor, defrauded the laborer of his hire, lived in pleasure, nourishing their hearts, and who have condemned and killed the just. From this warning to the rich James turns to comfort his brethren, exhorting them to wait with patience the coming of the Lord, who will surely come, though he seems to their anxious hearts to tarry. The epistle of James is addressed to the twelve tribes scattered abroad, whom he addresses as "brethren." By the twelve tribes scattered abroad we do not understand him to address the Jews dispersed by the Roman destruction of Jerusalem, and the consequent termination of Jewish nationality, for this did not take place until some years after James' letter was written, but we understand him to mean the christian Jews who were scattered abroad from Jerusalem owing to the terrible persecution which arose in Jerusalem against all who believed and preached Christ. The first such persecution of the believing church at Jerusalem is recorded in Acts iv. The second persecution is told in Acts v., from verse seventeen to the end of the chapter. The third persecution was that of Stephen, set down in the sixth chapter of Acts. The fourth persecution was that of which Saul of Tarsus was the chief instigator. The fifth persecution is related in Acts xii., in which Herod reached out to vex certain of the church and killed James and put Peter in prison. One of the ends of the fourth persecution mentioned above was to scatter the christians, and they went everywhere preaching the word. We understand it to be the christians scattered abroad as the result of these persecutions whom James addresses in his letter as "brethren." This dispersion was prior by several years to the final dispersion of the Jews by the Romans. The warning to the rich, with which this fifth chapter of James begins, might be thought by some to refer to the rich ones among the christians, but we do not agree with that thought, because the condition of the early church at the time James wrote was such an unrest, owing to the bitter persecution which the preaching of Christ awoke, believers being hunted from place to place by their enemies, that no one among them had time to remain long enough in any one place to amass any great amount of this world's goods. We believe that James foresaw the coming destruction of the Jewish nation, and that many who were rolling in wealth and ease would soon gnash their teeth and howl in exile, that God would avenge the blood of the just, that is, of Christ and the church, upon the head of that wicked people, in causing them to lose

their identity among the nations of the earth, in being scattered abroad to the four corners of the world. In the midst of all this trouble and persecution which the church endured in contrast to the flourishing of the unbelievers in wealth and ease, James exhorted his brethren to patience unto the coming of the Lord. The message of James to the brethren of his day has its meaning for us also of this day; for as the Jewish world came to an end, so must the whole world at the appointed time come to an end; and as God gathered his children out from among the Jews before scattering the remainder into outer darkness, where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, so will God gather all his elect children out from among all the nations of the earth before winding up the affairs of time and scattering to destruction the unbelieving chaff. The endurance of the saints in these last times is compared by James to a husbandman, or farmer, awaiting in much anxiety and longing through many and varied discouragements the fruition of harvest. The farmer tills the soil and plants the seed, he tends it and cultivates with care. Often all his pains go for nothing, meeting with loss and disappointment where he hoped for bread and gain. So many obstacles beset the way of the husbandman: the weather is not perhaps propitious, blight and insects trouble the crop, perchance drought falls upon it; a thousand different things may come up to render the harvest far short of expectancy. In all this is seen the endurance of the husbandman, to which James likens the endurance or patience of the saints. But there is this very vital difference between the patience of the husbandman and the patience of God's people: that whereas the crop of the husbandman may utterly fail and come to naught, the hope and desire of God's people shall not be disappointed, for God will surely fulfill all his promises. Hope may be long deferred, and the heart be sick therefor, but the fruition of that hope will certainly come, as surely as God is in heaven and ruling in all things. Sorrows and crucifyings may be among the lot of the brethren here below, but God will deliver them out of them all, though he may seem to our anxious hearts to tarry long. In the enduring of sorrows and afflictions, in bearing crosses and being crucified with Christ, in being always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, in all these things is the patience of the saints made to appear as fine gold tried in the fire, the glowing of that faith that looks for the coming of the Lord. God himself is said to endure with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. Notwithstanding he created the wicked for the day of evil, and with his hand formed the crooked serpent, even though he himself for his own purpose sent the wicked strong delusions in order that should believe a lie and all be damned who had pleasure in unrighteousness and loved not the truth, yet he is said in the Scriptures to "endure" these things. That is, God is himself patient; and, then, there is no more striking example of patience than our Savior, the holy Son of God. He undured the contradiction of sinners against himself, was tempted of the devil in the wilderness, whither he had been led by the Spirit. He endured the shame and contumely of those who hated him and his truth; he endured the cross and despised the shame thereof, because he was looking for and hastening unto that day when he should be with the Father in that glory which he had with him be-

fore the foundation of the world. In all these things is seen the patience of Jesus. Then, too, there is the patience of that man Job, a striking figure of the church. Though Job endured the loss of all things that he held dear unto himself, yet his patience shines forth out of it all, declaring that, Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." This same mind that was in Christ and in Job is to-day in the elect of God as they are made manifest here in time. By the stirring up of this mind they are made willing to call all things dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. By the activity of the Spirit within them they count not their lives dear unto themselves. In these last days the saints endure many dire things from within and from without. Without, they see seducers waxing worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived; many false gods and false christs are abroad on every hand. Men are lovers of self, swallowed up in the race for wealth and popularity; they wax boastful of themselves and their achievements, they are proud, covetous, breakers of truces, disobedient to parents, having a form, perhaps, of godliness, but surely denying the power thereof, ever filling themselves with learning of various kinds, but none ever being able thereby to come to the knowledge of the truth. War and desolation, hunger and deprivation, hate and jealousy stalk naked through the world, swallowing the innocent and guilty alike. All these things the saints of God are called upon to endure. Then, looking within, the things outside of us are not to be compared with the terrors we are called upon to endure in our own souls. What coldness and indifference we experience toward those things of the Spirit we once so dearly loved! What sad fallings away we see among those whom we esteemed as bright examples of our youth! The love of many of the children of God is waxing cold toward our beloved Zion. This is the apostasy that must be seen before the coming of the Lord, and is accompanied by the full and complete revelation of the man of sin. Many of God's people will not endure sound doctrine. We see them showing animosity toward the doctrine of God's predestination and of his election of grace; we see them trying to mix creature works with the glorious doctrine of God's free and unmerited grace; we see them scouting the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead and the second appearing of our Lord. On every hand there is among God's people the forsaking the assembling of themselves together, the going after the gods of the heathen and the running after money and pleasure and ease. All these betoken the approach of the end, showing that we are hastening unto the coming of the Lord. In our own soul's experience what desolation has been wrought! What hideous doubts arise, what vile imaginings trouble our thoughts, what sinful temptations threaten to sweep us aside from the path of rectitude and soberness! Like the farmer awaiting anxiously the outcome of his labor, that he may rejoice in the fullness of harvest, yet often cast down amid dire discouragements, so God's people travel through deserts dark as night; footsore and weary, their souls faint within them. They wait for the Lord more than they who wait for the morning after nights of pain and tossings to and fro; and the promise is that God, no matter how dark and devious

be the way we tread, will make good all his promises to his people. He will bring them to their desired haven, will give them that rest which remains for all the people of God. In the end of the world as a whole, as in the end of the Jewish world, there shall be a separation of the tares from the wheat when the wheat shall be gathered into the garner of the Lord and the chaff burned with unquenchable fire. This shall be when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." James is comforting the brethren with this glorious promise when he asks them to be patient unto the coming of the Lord, that coming which shall be unto the longing saint as the coming of the fruit of harvest to the expectant, toiling husbandman. However much one may try to draw experimental lessons from all those Scriptures which declare plainly the end of this gospel age and the appearing of Christ to gather his people home, there is certainly much more ahead of us yet to be realized by all who hope in the mercy of God than has ever yet been experienced by any of us. These gracious foretastes of the Lord's coming which God is pleased to vouchsafe to us here below do but whet our spiritual appetite for more such divine visits and make us to say, "If such the sweetness of the streams, what must the fountain be?" Suffice it to say that the glory of the coming of the Lord, when it shall finally dawn upon us in all its fullness, shall outdo all man has ever said or written, and shall fill all the church with that joy which shall be inexpressible and full of God's glory. For ourselves, we do not doubt the truth of these things, but we very much fear that personally we may be left out from among that redeemed throng. If left out, it must be because we have not been numbered with the elect of God from before the foundation of the world. There is no reason why God should ever have elected us to glory aside from the good pleasure of his own will. If saved, it is assuredly all of grace from first to last. Grace alone can present us faultless before the throne of God when the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls shall come to take his ransomed people home.

Requested by sister Nannie Edwards, of Lagrange, Ga. L.

BOOK OF EDITORIALS.

We have on hand a number of copies of the Second Volume of Editorials. This book is made up of editorials written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the Signs of the Times from March, 1842, to March, 1847, and contains 768 pages, neatly bound in cloth.

This work originally sold at two dollars per copy, but as a few of the pages are stained by water we will, as long as the supply lasts, sell them at the extremely low price of seventy-five cents per copy. Postage paid by us. All who wish this book should procure it now, as we will have no more after these are sold.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, at Delmar, Del., March 12th, 1918, John S. Hastings and Lillian W. Williamson, both of Delmar.

By the same, at his residence, Delmar, Del., April 2nd, 1918, James P. Hastings and Clara W. Boyce, both of Sussex Co., Del.

By the same, in Salisbury, Md., August 26th, 1918, Cliffe Ratliff, of Morven, N. C., and Myrtle Ethel Adkins, of Salisbury, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Nettie Porter, wife of John Porter, of Garber, Okla., and only daughter of sister Lizzie Garton and her husband, Mr. Roy Garton, was born near Williamstown, Kansas, May 7th, 1886, and departed this life on her mother's birthday, Feb. 28th, 1918, near Garber, Okla. She was married to John Porter July 30th, 1902. To that union were born five children, one of whom died in infancy. Her four remaining children: Agatha, aged 15, Chester, 13, Muriel, 9, and Lee, 4 years of age, her father and mother, three brothers and an aged grandmother are left to mourn their deeply felt loss, which is shared by many sympathizing friends; but they sorrow not without hope, for our dear sister was one of the highly favored ones who in their youth are brought to know and love the truth. She was blessed to receive a good hope through grace when about fifteen years old, and was received in the fellowship of West Union Church, of the First Kansas Association, located in Topeka, Kansas, an arm of which was extended to the vicinity of her home, and was baptized by the late Elder A. D. Jones the fourth Sunday in May, 1908. She was stricken with appendicitis, which necessitated an operation, which was followed by a complication of diseases, which made a second operation necessary, from which she never recovered. She was aware of her very serious condition, and before leaving her home to go to the hospital she called her children to her and told them should she never come back she was ready to die, if it was the Lord's will, and for them not to worry. When her mother reached the hospital she called her to her and told her not to worry, that she was ready and willing to go. "O, mamma," she said, "death is such a little thing—such a little thing to die." The nurses were compelled to unclasp her hands from her mother's neck. Her last words to her mother were: "Mamma, do not worry." Truly to her it was not death to die, to leave this weary load, and with the brotherhood on high to be at home with God. She realized that her earthly house of this tabernacle was being taken down, that she was only leaving a tenement of clay for a better home, a house not made with hands, where pain and sorrow never come. She told her husband that the Nettie he knew was not going to the grave, that it was only the clay, and her spirit was going home, where she longed to be. She retained consciousness and knew her loved ones to the end. Her christian life was worthy of imitation. Even as a child she was remarkable for her womanly ways, a great help and comfort to her family. With the memory of such a life, may the Giver of every good and perfect gift temper their sorrow with thankfulness for bestowing such a blessing upon them as the few short years of her life has been to them; and now that he has seen fit to take his own unto himself, may he give them reconciliation to his will and help them to submissively say, It is the Lord, let him do as seemeth him good. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.

Elder L. L. Schenck, of Williamstown, Kansas, was called to speak upon the sad occasion of her funeral, using these words: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me."

MARY ELLISON.

Ursula Sanford, widow of Albert Sanford, who died in 1888, and daughter of Jeremiah and Olive Birdsell, was born in New Kingston, N. Y., April 17th, 1840, and died Sept. 8th, 1918. She was the eldest of nine children. She is survived by one daughter, Olive, one sister and five brothers. She was baptized by Elder Isaac Hewitt about forty-five years ago, uniting with the Old School Baptist Church in Middletown, Delaware Co., N. Y. She brought a letter from there to the church at Otego, N. Y., in February, 1876, where she lived twenty-eight years. She died in the triumph of a living faith in her dear Savior and Redeemer. She was strong and clear in every principle of Bible doctrine, and was highly esteemed by all who knew her as a kind neighbor and friend. Her life was orderly and her conversation godly. She loved her brethren, appreciated her home in the church, and showed it by attending all of the meetings unless prevented by illness. I never knew her to stay home from meeting on account of company or to go any other place on that day. She died in the full and complete fellowship of her brethren. She was blessed with a peaceful mind much of the time in her sickness, trusting sweetly in the Lord, and is now eternally happy in the Lord.

The writer spoke at the funeral at her home. Burial in Walton, N. Y. D. M. VAIL.

Mrs. M. A. Beene, wife of G. K. Beene, was born in Itawamba County, Miss., Jan. 24th, 1859, and died Dec. 2nd, 1917, making her stay on earth 58 years, 10 months and 26 days. Mrs. Beene was married to J. H. Gregory in March, 1877, who preceded her to the grave about fourteen years. To that union were born six children, two boys and four girls. After Mr. Gregory's death she was married to brother G. K. Beene, October 7th, 1903. She never made a public profession by joining the church, but was a strong believer in the Old Baptist doctrine, and through the grace and mercy of the crucified and adorable Savior she was blessed with a good hope of christian experience. The writer often conversed with her in regard to the exercises of her mind. She delighted to talk of the goodness of God toward his poor and afflicted people, and the precious promises contained in the gospel to strengthen the weak and to confirm them in the faith of God's elect, and to realize that

all the days of her life were in the hands of a just and holy God. Her husband, being a member of the old Salem Church, near Freestone, Freestone Co., Texas, at association meetings and communion seasons would generally have preaching at his house, which endeared her to the church. It was a joy to her to wait upon all who came, thus giving evidence of her love for the truth. Her house was a home for the Old School Baptists. Mrs. Beene died four hours after taking to her bed.

She was buried in the old family cemetery of Salem Church to rest in the glorious immortality beyond the turbid waves of sin and sorrow. The funeral sermon was preached by Elder I. W. Bowers, pastor of the church, to a large company of relatives and friends that had gathered to witness the last solemn rite and tribute of respect to the deceased.

May the dear Lord give grace and courage to the bereaved husband to endure and bow in humble submission to the divine will.

Written by request.

ASA HOWARD.

Mr. Creel, my dear husband, was born in Rankin County, Miss., Sept. 13th, 1833, and died June 11th, 1918, aged 84 years and 9 months, lacking two days. He was a member of the Mission Baptists, and also a Mason, but was a good man in every respect; he was honest, good and kind to all. He believed in God as the ruler of all things, and his only trust for eternal life and salvation was in Jesus. In his nature he believed in the Lord giving him strength to work and make a living for his family, and gave the Lord the praise in all things, both spiritual and natural. He was very industrious, never idle, and always ready to help any one needing help. I believe he is now resting in Jesus, the dear Savior. He was confined to his bed four months, but bore his suffering with great patience.

NANCY CREEL.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, It has pleased Almighty God in his wisdom to remove from his earthly labors our dearly beloved brother, **Elder T. R. Pittman,** therefore be it

RESOLVED, That we, the members of Bethlehem Church, at Havana, Kansas, extend our heartfelt sympathy to our dear sister, his widow, and family. The church which he so faithfully served for many years will miss his wise counsel and true teachings of Christ's holy word. He was ever an humble and conscientious minister of the gospel, a kind husband and father, and will be missed by all who knew him. Be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this memorial be written in the church-book and a copy given to the family.

JULIA E. BROWN.

APPOINTMENTS.

Appointments for Elder D. M. Vail:

Schoharie meetinghouse, October 26th, 2 p. m.; 27th, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.; Ecker Hollow, 28th, 1:30 p. m.; David Nethaway's, Howe Cave, 7:30 p. m.; Albany, 29th, 1:30 p. m.; Jefferson meetinghouse, 31st, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.

E. R. KINNEY.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ON and after October 1st my address will be 306 East 163rd St., New York city.

JOHN McCONNELL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Reuben C. Clark, Maine, $1.00; Elder W. B. Chilton, Tenn., $1.15; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $1.00; E. R. Myers, S. Dak., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will convene according to appointment with the Olive and Hurley Church, Ulster County, N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday in October (2nd and 3rd), 1918. All are cordially invited to attend. Those coming by rail will stop at Ashokan, via U. & D. R. R.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

THE Juniata Association is appointed to meet with the Sideling Hill Church, Fulton Co., Pa., Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 11th, 12th and 13th, 1918. We want all to come and be with us at this meeting who have the desire and love in their hearts to come. Ample arrangements will be made to meet all who come. Those who come by rail will use either the Baltimore & Ohio R. R. to Hancock, W. Va., or the Western Maryland R. R. to Hancock, Md. Those coming via Baltimore & Ohio R. R. will walk across the river to the Maryland side, where all will be met. Trains will be met Thursday only. As the meetinghouse is twenty miles from the station, we ask all who wish us to meet them to please drop a postal card in plenty of time to either J. C. Mellott, Needmore, Pa., or Dennis Mellott, Plum Run, Pa.

DENNIS MELLOTT, Church Clerk.

THE regular yearly all day meeting of the Snow Hill Church, at Snow Hill, Md., will be held on the second Sunday in October, 1918. All brethren and friends cordially invited.

JOHN H. TRUITT, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa, N. Y., will hold its yearly meeting on Saturday and Sunday, October 12th and 13th, 1918. Those coming from the east or west on the U. & D. R. R. stop at Grand Gorge, where they will be met. We extend a cordial invitation to ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

H. J. LEONARD, Church, Clerk.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 16th, 17th and 18th, 1918. Those coming by rail will use the Washington & Old Dominion Electric Ry. to Herndon, Va., where they will be met on Tuesday before the meeting. Trains leave 36th and M Sts., N. W., Washington, D. C., at 2, 4:45, 5:30 and 6 o'clock p. m., though this time-table is subject to change. From the Union Station in Washington, the Georgetown electric cars run directly to the W. & O. D. depot. We want all to come who can and will and want to come.

R. L. SPINDLE, Church Clerk.

THE Welsh Tract Church expects to hold her yearly meeting on Saturday and Sunday, October 19th and 20th, 1918, services to begin at 10 o'clock a. m. Those coming from Philadelphia and Baltimore will please come via B. & O. R. R. to Newark, Del. Train leaves Philadelphia at 7:45 a. m. and Baltimore (Mt. Royal) at 8:40 a. m. Ministers, brethren and friends of our faith are cordially invited to meet with us, and will be welcomed to our homes.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church in Broad Creek, Sussex Co., Del., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 23rd, 24th and 25th, 1918. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially those who minister in word and doctrine. Friends from the north will take the Norfolk Express, which leaves Broad St., Philadelphia, at 10 o'clock a. m. on Tuesday, 22nd, ticket to Seaford. Those coming from the south take the Philadelphia and New York Express leaving Cape Charles, Va., 10:55 a. m. same day, ticket to Laurel, Del. Those trains will be met, and all who come will be provided for. The train leaving Salisbury at 7:39, and Delmar 7:56 a. m. Wednesday morning will be met at Laurel. We hope to see a goodly number of our brethren and friends at that meeting.

In behalf of the church.

A. B. FRANCIS, Pastor.

J. H. MESSICK, Clerk.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,
PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1918. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CLAREMORE, Okla., June 21, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Speaking along the line of God's independent work among the children of men, I want to bring some of the best proof to show that God does not consult man, and that he is not influenced by the actions of men to give blessings to whomsoever he will give blessings. I shall take for this proof the plainest Scriptures that testify of God's way of revealing himself to the saints in the olden times. To reassert the positive fact set forth by the apostle to the Hebrews shall be my safe guide in speaking of God's independence above all the thoughts and actions of men. This truth set forth by Paul is all-important to the understanding of the Scriptures; it reads: "Without faith it is impossible to please him." Now faith being the evidence of things not seen, and that it is not the product of the receiver, but comes by the absolute will of God, a free gift, to poor helpless sinners, this is a positive proof that God cannot be hindered in his work among the children of men, and that he will have mercy on whomsoever he will have mercy. We have the record of patriarchs being suddenly shocked by the unannounced appearing of the Lord Jehovah, making known to them what a merciful and gracious God had in reserve for them—a free bounty; not in exchange for their pious living, nor because they were so very obedient; not at all, for they had been strangers and aliens to the knowledge of the blessings of God. I am assuming that the gift of faith is the gift of grace, and that the manifesting of it to poor helpless sinners is not preceded by any active work whatever on the part of those sinners; they, being dead in sins, cannot work. I am asserting that this is the true position of the sinner previous to his knowledge of spiritual things. Referring to Abraham, the record does not show that he did anything whatever to merit God's blessing, for the Lord of his own accord said to him that he would make of him a great nation, and further: "And I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."—Gen. xii. 2, 3. To the natural mind of man it seems incredible that God would elect to pour blessings upon Abra-

ham or any other man simply for the seeming pleasure of exalting him above his fellow-creatures. As far as I can find from the record, up to the time that God first appeared unto Abraham he was not a whit better than his brethren, but it pleased God to make a choice, a selection of Abraham to be the head of his typical people. We are fully satisfied, however, that God had prearranged that such a man as Abraham should be born, and that he should be ignorant of his Creator until the appointed time of his calling, when the Lord blessed him of his own free favor. There is no record that Abraham ever worshiped the Lord in any way whatever previous to God's appearing to him; but after the Lord had blessed him in the knowledge of God's holiness and power, then we find that Abraham built altars to the Lord and offered sacrifices unto him. He exceeded in his zeal, by living faith, any of the men of old in offering his only son, in whom was stored all the future posterity that was to carry blessings to unborn generations; hoping against hope, believing that the Lord was able to raise his son from the dead. The Lord has ever been careful with his elect, that they shall be preserved to carry out his purpose and fulfill every design that was foreknown by him. Not alone in Abraham's case does it appear that the Lord is exceedingly full of mercy, but many more instances we find that the Lord of his own will and pleasure appeared unto his chosen ones freely, not waiting for their cry for mercy, but anticipating their dire necessities, giving them an urgent want, a holy desire from under the pressure of the burden of sin, which of a sudden had "become exceeding sinful," though before it had not been seen at all. Here the wonder world was first seen, as the mountains of sin shot up to the sky, revealing unspeakable wonders, not lawful for man to utter. How wonderful is that word that searches; it "is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God. It is truly the deep things of God when the Spirit gets into the conscience of men and reveals the hatefulness of sin, which was totally unobserved by the sinner until the Spirit dropped a live coal from off the altar right into his being. The cry of the "afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted," goes out in the language of the prophet: "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."—Isaiah vi. 5. "Woe is me! for I am undone," is a key-word for all the saints, a confession of guilt, for none can see the King until they have first felt the guilt of sin. A spirit broken, a contrite spirit! How does it come about? Only by the piercing power of the Word, who has power over all flesh to judge his own people in righteousness, who is fearful in praises, doing wonders. He tells "all his bones," and tells all the secret sins of his elect; for, "Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance." This tells the secrets of the heart, indicates that the spirit is broken and contrite, and though it is a sorrowful state to be in, yet it is a happy one; for "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit."—Psalms xxxiv. 18. The Lord's dwelling-place is not a house made with hands,

but the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, saith: "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."—Isaiah lvii. 15. How blessed it is to know that the Lord afflicts his saints with the knowledge of their sins, that this knowledge breaks their spirit, makes them mourn, repent in dust and ashes; they feel to be undone, disgusted with their best efforts to obtain righteousness; they feel to be poured out like water, too weak to even cry for mercy, the Lord himself putting the cry for mercy in their hearts for them. Realizing that they have passed between the upper and nether millstone, is it any wonder that they ascribe all, yes, all their salvation to the Lord of hosts? That every deliverance from the consequences of sin is by the unseen hand of the almighty God of Israel? If (as the Scriptures declare) the Lord dwells with him of a contrite and humble spirit, which the Lord himself hath broken and made humble, may I ask, Where is heaven, the place of rest and enjoyment, except as the Lord dwells in his saints? Does the Lord Jesus and his apostles teach anything to dispute this fact? Jesus saith, "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." Surely every soul that has tasted of the heavenly gift feasts upon the body and the blood of the Lord Jesus when he hears the gospel of peace declared, for the gospel, or glad tidings, has no other food to give except the flesh and blood of Jesus; so he that doth eat that flesh and drink that blood dwelleth in Jesus, the Mediator, and he in him. Paul is in full agreement with the Lord's words, he is positive: "For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."—2 Cor. vi. 16. We have no record that Moses was a worshiper of God previous to God's sudden appearance to him in a flaming bush, but there is a record that he was a murderer, and that because of his guilt and fear he fled from the face of his avenger. We see what a great man the Lord made out of a murderer. Not only did the Lord make him a true worshiper, but counted him to be worthy to ascend into the mount of holiness and receive the holy oracles from the hand of the Lord. He made of him a great prophet; he was a great prophet, as the Lord did raise up one "like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken." Coming down to Saul of Tarsus, what did he do to induce the Lord to bless him? Nothing, but instead he fought against the Lord with mind and hand, trying to put the religion of Jesus out of the world. In that condition, also a murderer at heart, the Lord arrested him and bound him safely. Hear him testify: But when it pleased God to reveal his Son in me, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood. In his experience we see the perfect and sure work of our Prince and Savior.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., July 12, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am inclosing a letter from sister Catharine Starr, a dear mother in Israel of the Springfield Church, Pa., Juniata Association, which I would like to see in the SIGNS if you consider it profitable. There are some SIGNS OF THE TIMES' subscribers in the churches of the Juniata Association, and I often remind them of its value as a medium of correspondence among us.

I was down to Hopewell Church, at Poca, W. Va., on the first Sunday, and Saturday before, at a two days meeting, with Elder McClanahan; he sent for me by order of the church. I found them a lovely band of believers. Elder McClanahan is in a part of the country that has considerable of the do and live system among those who claim the name of Old School or Primitive Baptists. Elder McClanahan is a strong, able defender of the docrine of salvation by grace, and a good subscriber of the SIGNS.

I hope to see you and hear you preach some time in the future.

In best of bonds,

J. M. FENTON.

THREE SPRINGS, Pa., July 7, 1918.

ELDER J. M. FENTON—MY DEAR PASTOR:—I will try to write you a few lines this lovely Sunday, and hope it will find you and your dear family well. I have been troubled with rheumatism this summer, but surely feel thankful that the Lord has blessed me in many ways in my old age, for I know my sun is fast going down, yet I know I have it better than I deserve, and hope often that God will keep me from finding fault with my lot. I have had some sad and lonely hours in the last few years, and know not what is in the future. I feel so low down sometimes I do not know where to go, then I think, The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want, for I know it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Some time ago these words came into my mind: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him." My hope is in him who doeth all things well; outside of that I have none.

Well, I have written my paper nearly full, and if you can read it please excuse poor writing. Remember me in your prayers. I feel too unworthy to ask such an interest, but hope I am made to sit at the feet of my dear Redeemer.

Well, I must close. I hope you will get to Springfield in August. The brethren and sisters are well, so far as I know. If it will not take up too much of your precious time write me a few lines.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

CATHARINE STARR.

ALBANY, N. Y., June 18, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS OF THE SCHOHARIE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH:—I am writing you a few lines to let you know I am thinking of you all at this meeting time, and want to be remembered in your prayers. It will be impossible for me to come to the meeting I am very sorry to say. It seems since I joined the church it has been my cross to be kept from meeting so many times. I sometimes think I am not one of God's children, but still I have a hope. I know he doeth all things well, and never makes a mistake. Last night I was reading the SIGNS, and thought, How good every one writes; it is just what I believe, and nothing else, but I am a poor writer; others tell my mind better than I can.

"A few more days on earth to spend,
And all my toils and cares shall end,
And I shall see my God and Friend,
And praise his name on high.

No more to sigh or shed a tear,
No more to suffer pain or fear,
But God and Christ and heaven appear
Unto the raptured eye."

Some time during the meeting sing hymn 1298. This is one of my favorites. May God bless you all, and be with you at this time, is my prayer.

Your sister in hope,

MERTIE E. BAILEY.

REVELATION II. 10.

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

John in the isle of Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. John was banished to the isle of Patmos for his faith. It was death or separation from his loved ones, from the churches he served, from his little children, as he called them. John had taken Mary, the mother of Jesus, to his own home. This relationship of mother and son between John and Mary was made by the Savior while Jesus hung upon the cross. Mary may have died, or she may have still lived, however, John was separated from her. "Be thou faithful unto death," unto these separations, be reconciled to death (separation), "and I will give thee a crown of life." There is one who was faithful unto death and received a crown of life, and that was Jesus. He left the glory that he had with the Father, bowed the heavens and came down. He was faithful unto death; his whole life was living faithful unto death. He was born a Jew, circumcised the eighth day, disputed with the learned men at the age of twelve years, and at the age of thirty was baptized of John in Jordan. In the travel of Jesus in the world he was continually being separated from the things of the world. He knew that he was to be the sacrifice that the offering upon Jewish altars pointed to, still he was faithful unto death. When Judas and the band of men and officers came to take Jesus, Simon Peter drew his sword and cut off the ear of the high priest's servant. Jesus said, Put up thy sword; the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? Jesus was faithful unto death. Jesus was faithful unto death to his last cry unto God and gave up the ghost. Jesus received the crown of life, which is the gift of God. He is crowned with glory and honor above every name that is written. As Jesus was crucified, so every member of his body is crucified with Christ. The nails through hands and feet and the spear thrust into the side were the actual portion of the Savior from the hands of wicked men, but there was more than that which Jesus suffered while in the work that the Father gave him to do. He must be set at naught, mocked, spit upon and crowned with thorns. Herod and his men arrayed him in a scarlet robe and put a reed in his hand. In all this Jesus was faithful unto death. When the Savior came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day. He read a few verses from the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah and began preaching. They rose up and thrust him from the city; he, passing through the midst of them, went his way. Jesus is a divider every time, but he was faithful unto death.

If we are followers of Jesus it will be our lot to be faithful unto death. If we are set at naught, evil entreated, driven from home where we are brought up, we are to be faithful unto death, and with it there is the crown of life. That crown of love, joy, peace, meekness, temperance and faith is the heritage of every follower of the Savior. If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.

John in the isle of Patmos was faithful unto death in all the way that was appointed unto him. May we as professed followers of Jesus be faithful unto death and in the end receive that crown of life that awaits all the redeemed of the Lord.

J. M. FENTON.

SOME FOR CHRIST.

WHO were for Christ? Are not all the followers of Christ for Christ? It seems they are not. When Paul, Apollos, Cephas (Peter) and others visited the church of God at Corinth there were divisions among them. Paul calls this carnal, or of the flesh. (Read the third chapter of 1st Corinthians.) Paul asks the question, "Who then is Paul, and who Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?" It is true that God's little ones are drawn to some of God's ministers more than to others, because the Lord has made the relationship, and what God has joined together let no man put asunder. But we are not to worship the angel (minister), but worship God. There were divisions among the members in the church at Corinth. Paul realized this and wrote to them. It was his desire to find them in peace, loving and forbearing with one another, and not envying and hating one another. Paul admonishes them, is faithful to speak plainly to them and tell them of their faults and shortcomings, and says, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." It would seem that Paul wanted them to follow him, even though there were those who were for Cephas and those who were for Apollos, but it was that they were to follow Paul only so far as they saw that Paul followed Christ. That was the way they were to judge every minister. They were not to follow them as men, but as the ministers following Christ. They also were to be drawn to them, and in doing so they were for Christ. A man may be ordained to the work of the ministry and serve the devil. If he is serving Satan, and has followers in what he is serving, they who follow him are the servants of Satan. Paul wanted them to watch over him, pray for him and follow him only so far as they discerned that he followed Christ. Paul saw there were those who went to hear Peter (Cephas) preach and were edified, they went to hear Apollos, who was eloquent in oratory, but were edified, and they went to hear Paul and were comforted. Paul's consolation was to see them approve that which was of Christ in the ministry and condemn that which was carnal in the ministers, even though it be in himself. Paul would say, Follow me only as I follow Christ. This would prove them to be the "Some for Christ."

J. M. FENTON.

HOPEWELL, S. Dak., Sept. 19, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—Herewith please find money order for five dollars to renew my subscription for one and one-half years from June 15th last, the other two dollars you may place where you think it will do the most good. This September 19th is my seventy-first birthday, and fifty-two years since I was baptized by Elder Gabriel Conklin and received into the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, N. J. Many ups and downs I have seen since then, and I often wonder why I have been kept and blessed in many ways as I have. I was married in 1871, and lived in Delaware, New Jersey, Nebraska, and have now lived fourteen years in South Dakota. I have seven children, all grown, and twelve grandchildren; we are all in good health and all comfortably situated. Surely these are great blessings, and I often wonder why it is so when I see so much trouble and misery around, and we no more worthy than others, and not half so much so as many, for we find the good we would we do not, and the things we would not we do. The preaching we get is through the SIGNS, except once in

awhile we get to our home (church), in Loveland, Iowa, when we have a feast. The SIGNS has been in the family since (I think) the third volume, and has been read and enjoyed, and I can see no difference in it now from the time I first saw the light that was in it. Since I came to Nebraska, in 1877, I have met many Baptists. Elder James M. True was the first one. Where I have found the SIGNS I have never met any isms of any kind. At some other places I have found a little universalism, or "could not quite believe in predestination," or some other "little foxes" were spoiling the vines. It has been a great comfort to me that all these fundamental principles of the gospel have always been so clear, though sometimes I have feared I may have learned them, or come by them naturally. There have appeared in our family paper many articles by brethren and sisters I would like to mention as being especially good and comforting to me, but there are too many to mention them specially; and the editorials, there are no poor or indifferent ones, but there are some wonderfully good, and so many are soul-stirring, wonderfully comforting. In looking back over them from the "sixties" until now they have been the same. When Elder Gilbert Beebe was getting along in years I remember the older ones in the church were wondering who could fill his place, and, as impossible as it then seemed, his place has always been filled, and it looks to me as though with different gifts that were fitted to the different times the church was passing through. Another thing, the SIGNS has always been kept clean of advertising; clean of everything. I have picked up some Baptist papers with one column good reading, the next some nostrum advertisement; maybe I am wrong, but it disgusted me.

Well, I, like some others, have not written as I intended, but if I undertake to write it over it will probably go into the fire, and that is where you can throw it if you wish, and no feelings hurt.

Love to all the brethren and sisters everywhere. E. R. MYERS.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., July 2, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—I intended to write you last month, but owing to darkness of mind I did not do so. In every number of the paper I get there is some dear one who says something I especially wanted to say, and something I was glad to hear, and while reading the June numbers I felt to respond to all with tears. What a precious letter dear brother Fred Simmons wrote! How truly he said, "No one knows how helpful such letters are to one in trial but those who are passing through trial." O, his confidence in God to shield his dear son who is in the war is wonderful. Who of us has not a dear, precious one in danger? I for one have two dear grandsons in the training camps at Camp Meade, Md. Now this is the 15th of July, and I suppose they are sailing for France. I do hope and pray from the very depths of my soul that the angel of peace will spread its wings over the land. I wish all the parents, grandmothers and other relatives and friends would join me in a solemn, sincere, loud amen. Let your moderation be known unto all men, the Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made unto God. Brother Ker, you have so truthfully said, "The life the saints live in the flesh is a sealed book, and understood only as the seals are loosed." So say I; praise God.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

SAVANNAH, Mo., Oct. 3, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been wanting to write you a few lines in appreciation of the SIGNS, which you have been sending us for so long, but do not know how to thank you enough for your kindness. It was such a comfort to my dear husband during his illness; he was sick a long time with bronchitis and lung trouble. I do not know just how long you have been sending it, but will send in my remittance, and you can send it in my name. I will send two dollars now, for which please send it one year more, and I think in a few months I can send you some more money to help send it to others who love the truth in all its fullness. I very often see where some one sends some money for the poor of the flock, and think it is just right to do so, for there are so many shut-ins who have not the privilege of going to meeting as we have. If I could write such letters as the brethren and sisters do I would tell you something of the dealings of the Lord with me. Others tell my feelings better than I can myself. I hope they will continue to write for the good old SIGNS, and that God will strengthen, encourage and bless the editors in their work. May God bless you all, is my prayer.

Your sister in hope of eternal life,
SIOTHA J. MOFFITT.

ATTENTION!

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting, appointed to be held with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va., October 16th, 17th and 18th, will not meet this year, owing to the influenza epidemic, which has caused the State health authorities to request that all public gatherings be called off for the present at least.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
S. B. PAXSON, Clerk.

MESSAGE OF THANKS.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Hunting Quarters, Carteret Co., N. C., to the Signs of the Times, Zion's Landmark and Gospel Messenger, and to our brethren, sisters and friends who so graciously came to our help in the rebuilding of our meetinghouse, which was taken from us by a cyclone on the 15th of last January, Greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We do now send to you this, our message of thanks, as we hope in the fear of our God, for your kindness in remembering to help us in the rebuilding of our meetinghouse, which was destroyed in said cyclone. We are glad to tell you that we have gotten our meetinghouse nearly enough finished that we held our first meeting in it this day. Also, we think that when we have finally finished it we will be but little behind with our payments. We cannot tell just how much shortage, but not more than one hundred dollars. We do feel to thank our dear heavenly Father for his abundant goodness to us, and we pray him to remember you all in his many blessings and comfort you in his love. Our first meeting was one of comfort and peace, conducted by our pastor and Elder J. P. Tingle. The Lord bless you all.

Done in conference this 24th day of August, 1918.

L. H. HARDY, Moderator.
J. D. SMITH, Clerk.
ATLANTIC, N. C.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.; OCTOBER 15, 1918.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ISAIAH XXXIII. 20-22.

"LOOK upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our King; he will save us."

Sister Margaret Williams, of Vienna, Va., has requested us to write our views on the above Scripture, as she heard Elder W. J. Purington preach from it some years ago, and desires to have it set forth again. We approach this subject with trepidation, because while personally we do not remember Elder Purington's preaching, we have always heard of him as having been a most able expounder of the word of God, and believe we shall not be able to go into the depths of this subject as he did. However, we can but give such as we have according to the ability given us, and will have to stand in our lot, not trying to minister in another man's line of things.

The whole picture of Zion, the city of God, as depicted in the text, is a scene of peace and restful quiet. How good it is to contemplate such wonderful peace in these times, when the world is so full of turmoil, sorrow and pain. The church of Jesus is an island of safety and quiet in a beleaguered world. Her chief joy is to sit at the feet of the Master and learn of him, heeding not the currents of discussion and strife blowing hither and yon midst the masses of men.

"The city of our solemnities." It is a solemn, sacred city, where are to be found the upright and pure in heart engaged in the reverential worship and service of their God. The word here translated "solemnities" is from a Hebrew word literally meaning "appointments." The divine and blessed things which God has appointed or predestinated for his people are are all in Zion, his holy city. Here is the sacrifice of the Lamb of God appointed to take away the sins of all the people of God; a solemn sacrifice indeed when we remember that the Lamb was without spot in himself, but had imputed unto him all the spots and blemishes of all his sheep. The innocent suffering for the guilty and made to become sin for the guilty, how solemn is this divine appointment of God for the salvation of his people; with what terrible things in righteousness has God answered the cry of his holy prophets. Here are the solemn feasts which God has appointed for his people's delectation: his body and his blood, each inhabitant of the city made to partake of the fellowship of his sufferings and of his triumph. Here in Zion is the solemn assembly or congregation of the Firstborn, whose names are written in heaven, each member of that assembly being there, not of his own natural will or inclination, but by God's appointment or predestination, having been chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Surely Zion is, we see, the city where are those things which God has appointed for his people, the city, therefore, of our "solemnities" or "appointments."

This Jerusalem which is from above, not the old Jerusalem of the Jews, is a quiet habitation. There is here no noise or confusion of the babel of the world nor of the works of men. All speak one language: the pure language of Canaan, so we hear no jargon of tongues. The inventions and machinery of the world are not to be found in this Jerusalem. As God did all his work of creation in six days and rested on the seventh day from all his work, never resuming that creative work again, so all the people of God in this spiritual Jerusalem have ceased from their labors as God did from his, and have entered into that finished and perfect work which God has wrought for their salvation in the death and resurrection of his Son. Here, in this Jerusalem of God, is the eternal sabbath day of eternal love and life. Christ said there would come after him many who would come in his name, saying, Lo, here is Christ, or, Lo, there is Christ, yet these are all false christs, after which his people are not to follow. Just so there are churches many and Zions many in these days, but there is one essential difference between the real Jerusalem and all the would-be cities of God, that is, the peace and quiet of the Holy Spirit is to be found only in the real Jerusalem, while the imitations hum and buzz with the business of men, with their inventions and machinery for the salvation of mankind, with their endless working for this and for that, all which is guaranteed by them to usher in the millennium and hasten forward the perfect day. All the while this ceaseless industry of the natural world is going on in the name of the Christ to take away its reproach, the perfect day has already begun in the Jerusalem of God, where the work of salvation is already finished.

The tabernacle which the children of Israel had with them in the forty years in the wilderness was a moving place of worship which sojourned permanently nowhere, but which moved about from place to place, for there, under the law, the Israelites had no continuing city. Brought into the land of Canaan, the promised land, the children of Israel began to possess settled abodes, the tabernacle transformed into the temple remained stationary in Jerusalem. All this prefigures the church of God in its gospel standing in the finished work of Jesus, no longer roving about as when under the law, but settled and established in the doctrine of God as it is in Jesus, fixed in the hope of salvation through his blood. This tabernacle shall never be taken down; this church of God's elect is forever settled on the rock Christ Jesus, which Jesus is revealed in her the hope of glory. The stakes which hold this church of God in place are these: predestination, election, effectual calling, preservation unto glory, resurrection. None of these elements or principles of the doctrine of God shall ever be relaxed or loosened; the strength of omnipotence is in them; they shall forever maintain the church or tabernacle in its place; not one of these stakes shall ever be removed. Nor shall any of the cords thereof be broken. The cords are literally what hold the tent or tabernacle fast to the stakes. That which has fastened the church of God to his predestination, his election, &c., are the cords of God's love, mercy, justice, immutability, &c., in fact all and every attribute of God has and does bind the church to his eternal purpose and will. Nothing in man can ever serve to bind the sinner to God. That which so binds sinners to God is his own love and mercy, which before time in-

cluded the elect in his purpose and will. The love and mercy and all other attributes of God which bind the church fast to its stakes shall never be broken.

In this Zion of God, the "glorious Lord," that is, the Lord in his resurrection glory, is a place of broad rivers and streams. It is by the power and Spirit of Jesus' resurrection that believers live spiritually and move and have their being spiritually. All preaching of the gospel, all obedience manifested in believers to the order and ordinances of this Zion, are by the Spirit and power of the "glorious Lord." The Spirit is likened unto water: it is a broad stream or river of life, having branches derived from it which water the city. We believe our sister Williams, in listening to Elder Purington many years ago, was enjoying one of these streams derived from the main river of the "glorious Lord," which was water clear and cool and refreshing to her thirsty soul. All the ministry gifts which are raised up for the comfort and edification of God's people are but so many branches of this "glorious Lord," just so many manifestations of the spirit and power of his resurrection. We see this made plain in the preaching of Peter at Jerusalem during Pentecost, in the preaching of Paul, and, in short, in the exercise of every gift which God has given his people. In these streams are no galley with oars nor gallant ship. The ordinary signs of man's activity, of the hustle and business of his commerce and worldly transactions, are excluded from this Zion of God. These gifts of the Spirit are not to be made merchandise of, not to be bought and sold, or to be shipped about here and there, as is the wont of the world. All the intercourse going on in this Zion is actuated by the still small voice of the Holy Ghost, which is as the wind blowing where it lists. No galley with oars nor gallant ship is seen on these waters; all the gallantry and pride and glory of the flesh is excluded from here.

Now, the last verse of the text gives the four great relations which the Lord bears to his Zion: Judge, Lawgiver, King, Savior. He is their Judge, and what a blessed judgment comes from him to their longing hearts, not saying, "Depart from me, I never knew you," but, "Come, thou blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." What a judgment it is when the sinner hears instead of the awful voice pronouncing dreadful doom, the blessed judgment: "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." This their Judge says: Their sins and their iniquities will I remember against them no more forever. Because Jesus was made a scapegoat for God's people and bore all their sins away into the wilderness of eternal forgetfulness, whence they can never be recalled, so the Judge, viewing the perfect atonement which Christ has made, sees no spot in any of his children, and judges them perfect in Christ.

The Lord is our Lawgiver, not reviving or restoring the old law of Moses, which law neither we nor our fathers were ever able to live up to, but having fulfilled the old law and taken it out of the way, Jesus says, "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another." This law of love he writes within them, imprinting it in their new mind, putting it in their inward parts: the hidden, new man of the heart. This law of love is the uniting force that brings all together as one in all the confines of the holy city.

And the Lord is our King. He rules in the hearts of his people and in all the

affairs of his church. Her doctrine, her precepts, all her deliberations, all her regulations, are dictated by the Lord as King in Zion. He is her triumphant and ever-living head.

"He will save us." What simple words, and yet what wonderful and glorious consummation of all our text. "He will," yes, his will is in our salvation, and makes it secure. 'Not our will, but his will, the will of the Lord, which is forever one will, never changing, so that none of the sons of Jacob shall ever be consumed. This will of the Lord wills to save his people; to save them not merely after life here below is done and the fullness of eternity entered upon, but saving us now as we thread life's narrow, devious and dubious ways, saving us every moment of every day, and every day of every month, and every month of every year, and every year of all our lives here on earth, from dangers we know and those we do not know, from the unseen and the seen. One of old was made to know that "salvation is of the Lord;" not that salvation would be of the Lord, or that it had been of the Lord, but was right now in this present time of the Lord. This salvation is ever-present with us, never becoming a has-been or an about-to-be. Salvation in all its depth and height and length and breadth can never be known by us while here below, yet it is this salvation which fills all the lives of all God's people; so whether worlds tumble to their ruin or the seas roar and be troubled, nothing shall destroy one of God's little ones. They dwell forever safe and secure in the salvation which is the Lord's. They are just as safe in the furnace of fire, in the waves that threaten to overwhelm them, in darkness so dense they cannot see before them, as though they were finally anchored in that haven of rest for which all our souls yearn. "He will save us." What reassuring words are these from the inspired pen. If only we could feel sure we are one of these that are so saved. All we have is a hope, and that hope is in Christ. It has anchored us hitherto when nothing else could, and we must trust to it to anchor us through all we may yet have to face and endure. L.

BOOK OF EDITORIALS.

We have on hand a number of copies of the Second Volume of Editorials. This book is made up of editorials written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the Signs of the Times from March, 1842, to March, 1847, and contains 768 pages, neatly bound in cloth.

This work originally sold at two dollars per copy, but as a few of the pages are stained by water we will, as long as the supply lasts, sell them at the extremely low price of seventy-five cents per copy. Postage paid by us. All who wish this book should procure it now, as we will have no more after these are sold.

NOTICE.

Of late we have been receiving more complaints than usual from subscribers missing one or more numbers of the Signs, and we wish them to know that it is through no fault of ours, as we are very particular to have each paper securely wrapped and plainly addressed before it leaves this office. We ask our subscribers to please not censure us, but if they do not receive their paper to notify us, and we will gladly mail them another copy free of charge.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by J. M. Cate.)

To the Elders and messengers of the churches composing the Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, and all the faithful in Christ Jesus.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Another year has come and gone, with its joys and sorrows, and we are permitted to meet together again as an association to worship that God who is too wise to err and too good to do wrong, and to transact the business of the association.

Dear brethren, according to long established custom, and your action at your last annual session, you expect something in the form of what we call a Circular Letter to accompany your Minutes, and it seems the duty of writing it has fallen on me, so I will make the effort, fully realizing my weakness.

We read in John v. 39: "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." The word "Scripture" generally stands for the sacred books of the Old and New Testaments, written by holy men of old as they were inspired and enabled by God himself. There was a difference of opinion among the people in Christ's time about the mission of the Scriptures, and there still exists a difference to-day. Let us search the Scriptures and I think we can find out God's purpose in giving them. In the first place, we find the Old Testament Scriptures were given to the Jews, and the Jews only, national Israel, a chosen people of God. Were they given to the Jews to make them a chosen people? Every one says, No, but they were given to them because they were his chosen people. Then they must have been given to govern national Israel and teach them that Christ was coming into the world to die for fallen man and give him eternal life. Many of the Jews failed, just as many do to-day, to understand the object or mission of the Scriptures. Let Christ give us a little light upon this subject. He says, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life." Notice, "Ye think ye have eternal life." That is, in reading and obeying them ye think ye have eternal life, but you have not, for he goes on and says, "They are they which testify of me." That is, they tell of my coming, and the purpose for which I am coming. We also find he says, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life."—John xiv. 6. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." "By grace are ye saved," or obtain eternal life. We also read that when national Israel obeyed the laws of Moses they were blessed in natural things, but were chastised when they disobeyed. Now we all agree that national Israel was a type of spiritual Israel. What is the difference? Well, the Scriptures say that which is born of the Spirit is spirit and that which is born of the flesh is flesh. Likewise God gave the new Scriptures (Testament) to spiritual Israel, and I think those born of the Spirit realize more forcibly that in obedience they are blessed than national Israel did in natural things. To spiritual Israel, likewise a chosen people, Jesus says, You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you. He also says, Fear not, I have redeemed thee; thou art mine. "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." God says, I will write my laws in their minds, and imprint them in their hearts. Now if God does all these things, what are the Scriptures for? Paul says, "All scripture

is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." If they had been profitable to read and obey in order to obtain eternal life Paul would surely have told us. He surely did not think so, for on that subject he says, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." We also read, My delights were with the sons of men, when as yet there was none of them. You love me because I first loved you. As the poet says, "What wondrous love is this." "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Amen.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator.
J. M. CATE, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon Oliver Robinson, of Burdett, N. Y., son of Sabin and Charlotte Robinson, was born in the year 1834, and died Sept. 23rd, 1918. His wife, sister Robinson, whose maiden name was Sprague, preceded him to the grave six years. He was born in the town of Hector, and lived there or in the vicinity all his life. He was baptized by Elder S. H. Durand October 31st, 1875. He lived with his daughter, Mrs. Lina Williams, for many years; she and her husband did all that loving hearts and hands could do, ministering gladly to all his needs. Brother Robinson was a quiet, peaceful, christian man, a good husband, father, neighbor and brother in the church, sound and firm in the faith and doctrine of God's elect people, but never contentious. He leaves to mourn, one son, two daughters, nine grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, one sister, many other relatives and a host of friends.

Elder Bogardus not being able to attend the funeral, a minister near his home officiated. He was buried in the cemetery at Logan, N. Y., Sept. 25th. God bless the mourning ones with sustaining grace, for Jesus' sake.

Written by request of the daughter.

D. M. VAIL.

APPOINTMENTS.

Appointments for Elder D. M. Vail:

Schoharie meetinghouse, October 26th, 2 p. m.; 27th, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.; Ecker Hollow, 28th, 1:30 p. m.; David Nethaway's, Howe Cave, 7:30 p. m.; Albany, 29th, 1:30 p. m.; Jefferson meetinghouse, 31st, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.

E. R. KINNEY.

MEETINGS.

THE Welsh Tract Church expects to hold her yearly meeting on Saturday and Sunday, October 19th and 20th, 1918, services to begin at 10 o'clock a. m. Those coming from Philadelphia and Baltimore will please come via B. & O. R. R. to Newark, Del. Train leaves Philadelphia at 7:45 a. m. and Baltimore (Mt. Royal) at 8:40 a. m. Ministers, brethren and friends of our faith are cordially invited to meet with us, and will be welcomed to our homes.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church in Broad Creek, Sussex Co., Del., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 23rd, 24th and 25th, 1918. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially those who minister in word and doctrine. Friends from the north will take the Norfolk Express, which leaves Broad St., Philadelphia, at 10 o'clock a. m. on Tuesday, 22nd, ticket to Seaford. Those coming from the south take the Philadelphia and New York Express leaving Cape Charles, Va., 10:55 a. m. same day, ticket to Laurel, Del. Those trains will be met, and all who come will be provided for. The train leaving Salisbury at 7:39, and Delmar 7:56 a. m. Wednesday morning will be met at Laurel. We hope to see a goodly number of our brethren and friends at that meeting.

In behalf of the church.

A. B. FRANCIS, Pastor.
J. H. MESSICK, Clerk.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

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EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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(Judges v. 11.)

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

BY J. E. BEEBE & COMPANY

MIDDLETOWN, ORANGE CO., NEW YORK,

To whom all letters should be addressed, and

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1918. NO. 21.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HOPEWELL, New Jersey.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—If I am worthy to address you by that dear name, for I am so sinful and so far from what a child should be. I have some good letters from Elder W. W. Meredith. He was a dear brother, and was also a brother-in-law to me, and I was always glad when he would come to visit us, which was not very often, for he always lived so far away. He had so many friends I feel it may be a pleasure for them to read the letters, but do as you think best and all will be right. The dearest place I can go is to meet with the little children of God and hear them tell of his love to poor sinners, such as I feel myself to be, for I can do nothing good and my thoughts are evil. I feel we cannot control our thoughts, but that we can keep our feet from the vain and sinful places of this world, and if we have the living Spirit and grace of God in our hearts we will want to be free from them, and my prayer is that the dear Lord will keep me in the right and narrow path that leadeth to life, if I am one of those he came to save, but feel sometimes I am not. Hope is as far as I can get. There are many sweet promises in the Bible, but are they for me? It says we know we have passed from death unto life if we love the brethren. It was thirty-five years the 23rd of April, 1916, that I have had a name with the dear ones at Hopewell, and what a wayward child I have been. I do not feel right when I am away and cannot meet with them whenever they do to praise God and talk of his love to sin-sick souls, such as I am. I am in my seventy-ninth year, and feel that my time is short in this world.

Dear brother, I do feel thankful that the dear Lord has blessed us with such a good, sound preacher as Elder C. W. Vaughn to try and keep things in gospel order in the church of God. He is a dear brother. The order is in the Bible, as dear Elder Purington used to say, and there is where it should be kept. Do not think we can go on in all the pleasures of this world, for the Lord says we cannot serve two masters; we will love one and hate the other. I feel that if we have the love of God and his Spirit in our hearts we will not want to mingle with the wickedness of this world; this is the way I feel about it.

I did not intend to write so much. I hope to see you at our association. Some of the Hopewell folks and Elder Vaughn have gone to Black Rock this week. I am with them in mind, and would like to have been there in body, but it has not been the good Lord's will that I should attend many associations but the Delaware River, and I should not complain, for I have had the privilege of not missing one of them in thirty-five years. There are many who do not get to meet with the dear little children of God, and when I read their letters in the SIGNS I think how hard it must be if they have the desire to go. Some of them write they do not get to hear any preaching, but have the SIGNS to read, and it is so good. When I go away from Hopewell I always take some of them with me, for I do not want to hear any other kind of preaching, and I feel as if I had no right to go without them.

Well, dear brother, I will bring this poor letter to a close, for it is like the writer, no good in it, and I fear you cannot read it. If I could write like some whose dear letters I see in the SIGNS I would like to write, but the dear Lord's will was not to bless me to write or talk of spiritual things, but to feel thankful he has brought me to see his love for poor sinners like I feel to be, and it is by the grace of God I am what I am. I hope you will excuse all mistakes. I am ashamed to send this to you. It would be better if I should burn it, but brother Elijah Leigh told me once that after I wrote them they were not mine to burn, so I will send it.

Dear brother, I do feel thankful to you for sending me the SIGNS, for it is the best Old School Baptist paper I know of, and tells my feelings better than I can sit down and tell them to any one.

With love to you, and hoping to see you at the association, I am the least of all your sisters in hope,

SARAH E. GOLDEN.

FELTON, Del., April 19, 1903.

DEAR SISTER GOLDEN:—This is a beautiful day, and as I expect to remain at home all day I will try to improve the time by writing to you and other loved ones. The God of love and mercy is good to me, and his loving-kindness and tender compassion exceedingly far beyond what I feel to deserve at his hands. My health is excellent and my strength, physically, is unusual for one of my age, for I am an old man now, having passed the period of threescore years and ten, yet I cannot say with Moses, Mine eyes are not dim nor my natural strength abated; but I can say with Jacob, Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life. Truly I have cause to rejoice and be thankful that it is as well with me as it is. The Lord sent a word unto Jacob and it hath lighted up Israel. Therefore if Jacob (our old Adam) murmurs and complains let Israel (the new man) rejoice in the Lord, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.

In your good letter to us you complain of your faults and failings, and manifest a loathing and hatred of sin. I am glad it is so, because it makes an echo in our ears and reminds us of who and what we are. There are two classes of sinners in the world, which includes all mankind. All know they are sinners, and I cannot from my own experience agree with the idea that the unregenerate, or ungodly, are sinners and do not know it. Satan himself knows he is a sinner, and he delights in it, because it is his natural element. The unregenerate sinner knows he is a sinner, loves its fleeting joys, and takes

pleasure in unrighteousness. On the other hand, God's children know they are sinners, but they by grace have been made to hate sin and love righteousness. Therefore the line of distinction between God's children and those who are not consists and is manifested in this fact: God's children know they are sinners, and have been made to loathe and hate sin, and earnestly desire to avoid and be free from it, while the unregenerate know they are sinners, and do not care if they are, but love sin and delight in unrighteousness; they love the world and the things of the world, and the world loveth its own. The children of God's kingdom love the kingdom and dominion of God, their affections are set upon things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of the Father in glory. They love God, and God loves them with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness he hath drawn them. The apostle Paul says, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." I would not say I am by my natural conduct a worse or more wicked man than any one else, but I feel a sense of my own sinful nature, I know my own faults and failings by experience as I cannot know others. For illustration, I feel to know I am not as good of myself as your excellent pastor, but I presume if I were to question him upon the subject he, like myself, would no doubt say, Ah! my brother, you do not know me as I know myself. Yes, my sister, it is my poor sinful nature that troubles me and gives me inward pain, and rises up before me so as to exclude the view of others' faults and feelings, and often compels me to cry, I am the chief of sinners; O save a poor sinner like me. Only a sense of our own condition will ever lead us to esteem others better than ourselves. It is a source of rejoicing to me, even in the midst of the troubles, trials, temptations and disappointments of this mortal life, that Jesus came into the world to save sinners. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. God commended his love unto us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. He died for our sins and rose again for our justification, having rendered a full atonement for all our sins, past, present or to come, so that our boast may be: A sinner saved by grace.

Here we have no continuing city. We removed from Petersburg last Thursday to Felton, Delaware, but are not completely fitted up yet. We are spending our first Sunday in our new house. It makes it more convenient for me to attend my two churches, Cow Marsh and Bryn Zion, and to get the trains, telegrams and mail; but in the course of nature it can be but a short time before we will remove for the last time on earth. I feel to say with Job, When a few more days and years are come I shall go whence I shall not return. O how sweet if we can only say with him, All the days of my appointed time will I wait until my change comes. Waiting, yes, waiting for that which we see not, but faith is the evidence and substance of things unseen, the guiding star of our hope. If we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Waiting for the redemption of our body, when mortality shall be swallowed up of life. This mortal shall put on immortality, this corruptible shall put on incorruption, saved with an everlasting salvation through and by him who loved us and gave himself for us.

We are both well, and desire to be

thankful, and in love we desire the sweet fellowship of all the household of faith.

In love and fellowship, your brother,

W. W. MEREDITH.

FELTON, Del., Aug. 31, 1905.

DEAR SISTER GOLDEN:—In reply to yours of the 13th I want to confess my fault in not being more prompt in replying to my correspondents. I own that I rather receive and read a good letter than to write a reply. I cannot write as I wish I could, and it makes me hesitate about writing, for fear I will not satisfy either myself or those to whom I write, but I presume this is more pride than prudence. You seem to be complaining of your condition because you cannot get to meeting at Hopewell as often as you desire. Now I want to say it is better to be deprived of the privilege of meeting with the church because we cannot get there, and yet have the earnest longing desire to go to meeting, than to be near the meeting-house, and free opportunity to go to the meeting, yet have no desire to attend, no heart in the matter. The psalmist David desired to build him a house for the Lord, but he was not permitted to build it, but the Lord said to David, It is well for thee that the desire is in thy heart. Dear sister, it is well for you that it is in your heart to obey your Lord and Master in love to him and his people. Paul, the apostle, after severe trials and privations in this life, exhorts us, saying, Having food and raiment, let us therewith be content. It is of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, but they are new every morning. So says Jeremiah the prophet. Therefore we should be glad it is as well with us as it is. While I am thus writing to you I hope I am also taking some of it to myself, for I am sure I need admonition, instruction and comfort as much as you, for I feel to be a poor sinner, dependent upon the grace and mercy of the Lord for life and salvation. Sometimes I feel to say, The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want, but it is only when I trust he shows me in the spirit just what kind of a Shepherd he is: one who will follow a poor, lost, wandering sheep in the wilderness, and take it upon his shoulder and bear it in love and pity to the fold. There is no place so low to which a sheep may wander, or so dark and gloomy as to change it into anything else, but in all its wanderings it is ever under the watchful care of the great Shepherd of the sheep, and we hear him saying, All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out, but will raise him up at the last day.

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word."

The oldest male member and deacon in our home church was buried last Saturday: Deacon Benjamin C. Cubbage, Elder Cubbage's father. We are as well as usual and hope you are well and happy.

With love and fellowship to you, yours in christian unity,

W. W. MEREDITH.

FELTON, Del., Jan. 4, 1906.

DEAR SISTER GOLDEN:—Your last letter found us as well as usual, and glad to know you remember us so kindly. How rapidly the time of our life passes by. The old year, with all its changes of seasons and our varied experience, is past, and truly we should be glad it is as well with us as it is. With all our faults and failings our heavenly Father continues to manifest his eternal love and unchangeable purpose in the preservation of his people according to his own sovereign will. This truth I firmly believe and

cannot doubt, but the great and important question with me is, Have I right and title to a name and place among his people? Is my spiritual name written in the Lamb's book of life? Am I entitled to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away? Is it reserved in heaven for me? Am I being kept by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time? These are questions that are constantly arising in my mind, and if they were depending upon my own strength of will, or my own good works and merit, surely I would be of all men most miserable. Sometimes I find myself depressed in mind, and harassed with doubts and fears, until it pleases the Lord to deliver me, and then it is revealed to me that I was not doubting the love, faithfulness and purpose of God, or his longsuffering and tender compassion, but I was doubting my own strength, faithfulness and endurance, which leads me into a sense of fellowship with David. You remember that he sometimes gives expression to our experience. We hear him saying, Will the Lord cast off forever, and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah. (Psalms lxxvii.) He immediately answers all his questions by saying, "This is my infirmity; but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High. I will remember the works of the Lord; surely I will remember thy wonders of old. I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings."—Psalms lxxvii. 10-12. Therefore let us remember that our troubles, trials, doubts and fears are our infirmities, our weakness and helplessness, and, like David, remember the days and years that are past, when the goodness and mercy of the Lord led us in tender mercy and loving care. Let us remember all the way in which the Lord hath led us, and humbly acknowledge that his way is the right way, and that not one good word of all his promises has ever failed, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds you so much dread,
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head."

With love to you all, your brother in christian fellowship,

W. W. MEREDITH.

FELTON, Del., Sept. 3, 1906.

DEAR SISTER GOLDEN:—I suppose you think me very slow about answering letters. I know it is so, and am sorry for it. I would be glad indeed if it were my only and greatest fault. I am always pleased to get an encouraging letter from you, and wish that my poor efforts were appreciated, as I prize the good wishes of you and others; but I sometimes feel undeserving of any and all the blessings I receive, and as I now write it seems to me I should be glad that it is as well with me as it is. I feel to indorse the language of Jeremiah in Lamentations iii. 22-24: "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him." As I contemplate my perishing nature and temporal dependence I become more and more sensible of my helpless condition, and feel to say with Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am;" but of myself I am not what I want to be. There is in me a desire for more liberty and a brighter hope, and in trying to preach the un-

searchable riches of Christ it seems that I come so far short of expressing what I wish that I get discouraged. The subject is so great, grand and sublime. Even the name of Jesus is a great text of itself, and expresses more than our tongue can tell or thoughts can grasp. "For there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Clustering around and in that dear name are all the glorious things of the gospel. Sometimes when I am permitted to feel the inspiring influence of that name which is above every name I feel to exalt my Savior, and would sing that expressive song:

"O could I speak the matchless worth,
O could I sound the glories forth
That in my Savior shine,
I'd soar and touch the heavenly strings,
And vie with Gabriel while he sings
In notes that are divine."

But in this mortal life we can only know in part and see through a glass darkly, hoping that in the Lord's good time we shall see as we are seen and know as we are known, free from sin and sorrow, doubts and fears, sickness, pain and death. Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

We are having our usual health, and both of us have great reason to be thankful. I do not want to murmur or complain, but desire to say with Paul, Having food and raiment, let us therewith be content. We do not expect to go north this fall, and shall not get up in New Jersey before next spring, when we hope the Lord will enable us to attend the Delaware River Association. Our Baptist people here are living in peace and harmony, feeling that if we must needs glory, let us glory in the Lord. We extend our best wishes to you all.

I am, I hope, your brother in christian fellowship,

W. W. MEREDITH.

GRAHAM, Texas, August 14, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Mt. Zion Association of Old School Baptists met on Friday before the first Sunday in August, 1918, near Graham, Texas. The meeting was largely attended, notwithstanding the extremely hot weather and severe drought prevailing all over western Texas, on which account many who expected to attend failed to get here who lived quite a distance in other parts of the State and Oklahoma. Preaching, singing and praise to God characterized the meeting throughout the entire session. Elder J. H. Fisher conducted the service, being the moderator of the association. The introductory sermon was preached by Elder Richardson, of True, Texas, after which the body proceeded to transact their business in the ordinary way. Heard the report of the churches read, which indicated that peace and harmony reigned among the churches, which was good news from a far country. All seemed to be actuated by a spirit of brotherly love and forbearance with each other, desiring to walk in the old paths, to stand fast in the liberty of the gospel, ever affirming the Bible doctrine, evincing the fact of their faith in the Lord of hosts, the foundation of their hope, in the promises of an unchanging, almighty God. The preaching was Jesus and the resurrection and salvation by grace, unconditional on our part, carrying with it exhortation to obedience and faithfulness in the house of God; to have all things done in decency and good order, to the building up and confirmation of the saints in the truth as it is in Jesus, and in this precious service rejoice in God, our holy Redeemer.

A strange coincidence took place at this association of an old family reunion of earthly kinship, to wit: Elder W. L.

Rogers and wife, who live in Cleburne, Texas; brother Samuel Rogers and wife, who reside in Blanco County, southern Texas, near the coast, some three hundred miles distant, and sisters Bettie Medlin, Ann Brogden, Sarah Ragland, Margaret Turner and Nan Carlton. All the sisters reside in the vicinity of Graham, Texas, and a kinsman, Mr. Willis, from Alabama, and other relatives and old friends were gathered together here once more to enjoy the blessing of greeting each other in the sweet relation of brothers and sisters in the flesh while the association was in progress, which perchance may be their last meeting on earth, as they are very aged and by the course of nature must pass from this transitory life into the haven of rest and final repose in the harbor of endless peace and glory in the world of eternal light beyond this vale of tears. These are all members of the Old School Baptists, and glory in the doctrine advocated by them. A family reunion is very sacred and pleasant, but the gathering together from north and south, east and west, of the heavenly or redeemed family of the Lord far exceeds all earthly ties when death is swallowed up in victory, when Jesus makes up his jewels of the kingdom and presents them to God the Father in the final consummation of all things.

The association closed with demonstrations of joy, realizing how good it is to wait upon the Lord. Elder Fisher is a gifted man, an expounder of the Scriptures, plain and unassuming. Refreshments were served on the grounds each day. Three services were held during the day, and again to assemble at the stand to hear the soul-reviving doctrine of Christ and the apostles proclaimed in its purity and simplicity, "all for the lifting of Jesus on high."

In a very special manner the brethren and supporters of the dear old SIGNS asked me to write the above account of the association and said incidents, and forward the same for publication in the SIGNS, providing your better judgment should so dictate. We feel such meetings will be of vital interest to the readers. I should have written more frequently, but lack of light on the Scriptures is one cause, and traveling to preach to the churches is another, also negligence.

Dear editors and publishers, the Lord bless and prosper you in your arduous labors, is my prayer.

ASA HOWARD.

CLAY, La., Sept. 28, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—As the time is drawing near for me to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, I inclose post-office money order for two dollars for 1919. I have been a subscriber for five or six years, and have not missed a single copy. It is a great comfort to me to hear from so many who are strangers in the flesh, all testifying that salvation is of the Lord, which I hope I have been taught is true. It gives me a love for them which I hope is not of this world. I would like to say a few words to the readers and writers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, although I feel ignorant and unworthy, yet this does not remove the impression, but I fear it may not be of the Lord, and if it is not I know it will not be interesting to any of his children. I am now sixty-eight years of age, and know I have hated my sinful nature ever since I was twelve years old, but what I am it is hard to know. I am so vile, so prone to sin, I fear I am not born again. Sometimes when I look back over my life and view the deep afflictions and sorrows I have passed through, I am made to cry, Surely the Lord has been

with me and has kept me, or I never could have endured all my trials. I feel sure I have more dark days and lonely hours to pass through than any one else who hopes in God's mercy. I sometimes feel to be a poor, ignorant castaway, not worthy of a friend, and O how I desire to go to God and beg for mercy; but when I try to pray to him my heart is too hard to pray aright; my prayers fall to the ground, and something says to me, If you were a child of God you could pray at any time. I want to ask, dear child of God, Is it thus with you? If it is not so with you, O be plain with me and tell me, and I will try to keep to myself. But thanks be to God, I sometimes feel to hope that the Lord speaks and the dark clouds roll away, the sun shines brightly, and I feel that Jesus is my Savior. Though my sins are many, his grace is sufficient, and O how I want to deny myself and give God all the praise. Sometimes when the SIGNS comes to me I feel low down in the dark, and feel that the paper could not be any comfort to me, but I must read it, and I begin to read some brother's or sister's letter telling of their trials and dark days, and giving God all the praise; then the tears begin to run down my cheeks and my love flows to them, and I feel for a little while that I must write to them and tell them how sweet to me their letters are; but before I get ready to write I feel my inability to write anything that would be of comfort to any one. I sometimes feel to hope that the Lord enables me to feel that he has all power, and works, and none can hinder, and how sweet it is to be enabled to trust him and feel that his loving grace is sufficient for me. I feel my race is very nearly run in this sinful world, and sometimes feel to say, Roll on the wheels of time, and bring the hoped for joys of the Lord. I believe God has a people in every nation, and will bring them all to the knowledge of the truth in his own time. They shall all know me, from the least to the greatest. Who is this that cometh up out of the wilderness leaning upon her beloved? It is sweet to me to read letters from all over the United States and Canada, all the writers leaning upon Jesus for hope of salvation.

I must bring this to a close, but I want to say that we are living in a dark time, and it seems that great trials await us in the future, but one thought is precious to me: "The more we suffer here below, the sweeter rest will be." May God give us grace to bear up under all that he sees fit to suffer to come upon us, and may we be enabled to say, O Lord, thy will be done, and not mine. I want to say to all the poor and afflicted, that our trials are great here, but sweet is the hope that they will soon be over, and we shall be gathered together beyond death, sin and sorrow, to sing God's praise for ever and ever, where the fear of parting is known no more. When we've been there ten thousand years we've no less days to sing God's praise. It is wonderful how strong our love can be for those we have never met in the flesh, yet have just as strong love for them as though we met monthly. It sometimes revives my hope, and enables me to feel that surely it is of the Lord. Now I want to say to all who often feel cast down, yet trust in the sweet promises of God, Farewell. I hope I truly love you with true christian love.

Dear brethren editors, I have written this with fear, but having confidence in your judgment as to what would be interesting to the readers of the SIGNS I will send it to you, and after you have read it, if you feel it would crowd out better matter, please withhold it and forgive me, and all will be right with me.

A poor sinner saved by grace, I hope,

J. R. CHANDLER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1918.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

DANIEL II.

THERE are dreams and dreams. Some arise from one cause, some from others. Some are merely the wandering of the mind at random, with no restraint imposed by the dreamer's will; others are wrought by the Spirit of God, and carry with them important spiritual meaning. The Bible is full of dreamers who dreamed dreams, and takes pains to give the interpretation of those dreams. "In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men and sealeth their instruction." So it came to pass that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, had a dream, "wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him." His spirit was troubled upon awaking to know the dream and the meaning of it. Though the trouble of mind caused by the dream remained with him, he could not remember the dream itself, so he called the magicians and the astrologers and the sorcerers and the Chaldeans, in short, all the wise men of Babylon, to interpret to him his dream. Of these men he demanded that they both tell him the dream that he had dreamed, but which he could not remember, and the interpretation thereof. This thing the wise men of Babylon could not do. Had the king been able to remember his dream and to have told it to them, they might have been able to put some interpretation upon it to suit their own convenience. This is generally the way of the worldly wise men. Rather than admit their ignorance they will put some construction upon matters, however wide they may miss the mark. But to tell both the dream and the interpretation thereof was an unheard of thing to these wise men of Babylon. Now when Daniel, who was a captive in the land of Babylon, heard of the decree that had gone forth from the king that all the wise men should be put to death because they could not tell and interpret the king's dream, he went in unto the king and "desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would shew the king the interpretation."

"Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision." So Daniel was brought before the king and said, "The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king; but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days." Thereupon Daniel proceeded to tell the king the dream and the interpretation thereof. Now there is an important spiritual truth revealed in all this matter: that the God of heaven does not reveal any of his secrets to self-constituted wise men, but only to those whom he himself has made wise. Daniel was an Israelite, one of the chosen of God; the others were wise men of Babylon, or of the world, wise in their own conceit and in the opinion of their fellows. The things of God are hidden from those who are

strengthened by their own wisdom and prudence, and revealed unto those who are babes, weak and ignorant in themselves. The wisdom of God is known only to those who are Israelites; that is, those who are circumcised inwardly, of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God. To these of the spiritual circumcision God reveals his plan of salvation and the mysteries of his will. When the Lord begins his revealing work in the heart of a poor sinner, teaching that one the vanity of all flesh, the depravity of human nature and the need of salvation, that sinner in whom this work is going on knows not what it all means. His thoughts trouble him, and he turns here and there in the hope of finding some one who can explain to him what these things mean. Naturally, he first goes to those whom he has always been used to considering as wise, to those who profess themselves to be wise, and who are popularly acclaimed to be wise. He turns to the lo heres and lo theres, but finds none who understands his case or who can afford him satisfaction in interpreting to him the exercises of his mind. But should this inquiring one in his journeyings to and fro in search of understanding come in touch with one of God's Israelites who had himself been circumcised in the heart by the Spirit, then he finds one who can tell him all his thoughts and feelings, and can interpret to him what these exercises mean. Many a poor child of God captive in Babylon has never found rest nor peace of mind until, in the providence of God, their path led them to where they found God's people, his Israel. Here they found a people who could understand and interpret these spiritual dreams or exercises of mind. Jesus told the woman at Jacob's well in Samaria all things that ever she did. By this she knew that he was the Christ. He told her thoughts and feelings infinitely better than she could ever have told them herself. Well do we remember the first time we heard a gospel sermon with spiritual ears. It was a new and beautiful language, and laid bare all the exercises of our own mind with such force and conviction that we had to confess that the man who told us these things was beyond doubt sent and taught of God. But let us proceed with Daniel and his talk with the king. "Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Now, as to what this image means is given further in this second chapter of Daniel, and we shall glance at it briefly, for it would take volumes to get at it in detail, since it covers the whole history of kingdoms and governments from the time that then was until the end shall be. The head of gold represented the kingdom of Babylon, the empire of Nebuchadnezzar himself. This king of Babylon then ruling the greater part of the earth was to be succeeded by the breast and arms of

silver, which was the kingdom of Cyrus, so-called the Great, the empire of the Medes and Persians. This great power was in turn to be followed by the "belly and his thighs of brass," which was the Greek-Macedonian kingdom of Alexander, the man who, having conquered the world, wept because there were no more worlds to conquer. This great empire of the Greeks was followed by the legs of iron, which were the Roman Empire, that during its prime ruled over the whole known world and subjugated to itself all tribes and peoples then existing. This kingdom was divided into the Western Roman Empire, with its capital at Rome, and the Eastern, with its capital at Byzantium, now Constantinople. This was shown by the two legs of iron. The feet, part of iron and part of clay, with their ten toes, show forth ten kingdoms, partly strong and partly weak, that were to follow in succession to the empire of Rome and growing out of it. These ten kingdoms include all the various kingdoms, empires and governments that have been in the world since Rome fell, and many of which exist at this present time. The nations of the modern world are all to be seen in these ten toes. All these kingdoms now existing in the world are outgrowths of the old Roman Empire. Seventy-five per cent. of the words in the English language are derived from the Latin, the language of old Rome. Many of our customs have come down to us from the Romans. Much of our method of legal procedure, such as trial by jury, &c., comes from the Roman Empire. Study of the classics of Greece and Roman are still kept alive and encouraged in our schools. Thus the image that Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream showed forth the succession of the kingdoms and governments of the world as they rise, mature and fall in succession. The stone cut out without hands which smote the image was the power of God manifested in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is that stone, the elect and precious one of God, the foundation of the church, the corner-stone of the building of God. The whole work of Jesus Christ in bringing to naught and destroying all the kingdoms of this world, and in setting up his own kingdom, which shall fill the whole earth, is "without hands;" that is, it is without the help of men, without human means or agencies. Jesus Christ is manifested to carry out the whole will and purpose of God, to show forth his predestination and to manifest God's electing love. In all this he needs not the hands, the strength nor power of men. The kingdom of the Lord's Christ is set up not by might, nor by power of men, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts. The kingdom shall fill the whole earth, for the elect of God are not confined to the Jews, nor to any one nation, but God has a people in every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue under heaven. Jesus spoke a parable, in which he said the kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is planted, is the smallest of all seeds, but when it is grown it is a tree so large that the fowls of the air lodge in its branches. From Jesus springs the whole church; the manifestation of the church in the world is the effect of Christ's work and of his resurrection from the dead. Jesus was lowly, gentle and meek, ranked by the world of his time as obscure and of little account. Nevertheless this One who was esteemed as naught by the world of his day is the King of kings and Lord of lords, the founder and the life of a kingdom that shall break in pieces and destroy all other kingdoms, and shall fill the whole of that

new earth for which we look, in which dwelleth righteousness. There is not a power nor a throne in all the world today but what shall eventually perish and pass away. The kingdom of heaven is alone eternal, and it alone shall exist and flourish when time and all time things have served the purpose for which the Almighty brought them into existence.

Written by request. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Deacon Orville Winchell.)

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Ashokan, N. Y., September 11th and 12th, 1918, to the churches composing the same.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—We have been kept through another year and permitted to meet in an association. Surely our meeting together is an evidence that the Lord is still with us, directing our hearts and minds to want to meet with the brethren and to feast on the good things given to them by God through his servants, whom he has called, qualified and placed on the walls of Zion to preach the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ.

In the tenth chapter of Hebrews, twelfth verse, are found these words: "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." The apostle Paul, in writing this epistle to the Hebrews, dwelt upon the Levitical priesthood, as contrasted with the priesthood of Jesus, who was a priest after the order of Melchisedec, who was without beginning of days or end of life, made like unto the Son of God. This Jesus, the man spoken of in our text, was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, that could be touched with a feeling of our infirmities. He was tempted in all points like unto us, yet without sin; therefore he is able to succor those who are tempted. This man, brethren, who has by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified, is now sat down on the right hand of God. He is the life and only hope of all who fear God; he is our comfort, and his name is sweet to a believer, but to no one else. To others he is as a root out of dry ground, but to his children he is the altogether lovely. This man, after he had offered one sacrifice. What a sacrifice, my dear brethren—the sacrifice of himself for our sins. Surely it was wonderful love that made the spotless Son of God lay down his precious life for sinful man. Well might the sun in darkness hide, and shut his glory in, when Christ, the mighty Maker, died for man, the creature's, sin. This one offering of the Shepherd for his sheep has furnished the way of salvation for all who come unto God by him. He is not only our Priest, but our King, and he has said: "I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Showing that whom he once loves he loves unto the end. What a mercy it is if indeed the Lord has put his law into our hearts, showing us our true condition; for by this law we see what wretched sinners we are, and are made to cry for mercy to God on high. If the Lord did not at first put this law into our hearts we would never know what wretched sinners we are. This same apostle says, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." Thanks be to Almighty God that this is true; for, brethren, if we had to depend on our works we would all come short of the

rest that God hath prepared for them that love him. For is it not written, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him"? This is a positive declaration; not what he is going to prepare, but what he hath already prepared. There is no place so dear as the place where God's little ones meet, and we trust that this is the place where God's honor dwells: the church of the true and living God, the sweetest place on earth to his children.

"Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

My dear brethren; the evidence of Jesus reigning in our midst is clearly seen when we are kept from strife and vainglory, and each esteems the other better than themselves. For by this we know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. This love is not for a day, a week or a year, but for ever and ever.

GEORGE RUSTON, Moderator.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

(Written by Elder G. B. McClanahan.)

The Pocatalico Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Association, in session with the Providence Church, Lincoln County, W. Va., September 6th, 7th and 8th, 1918, to the churches composing her body, and the associations with which she corresponds, sendeth salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has once more by the order of this association fallen upon me to write a Circular Letter for your consideration, and if approved by you it will be printed in the Minutes of this association. I will call your attention to the words of our Lord, Matthew xvi. 18: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." All Bible readers know that these are the words of Jesus, spoken to his disciples after he had asked the question, "Whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."—Matt. xvi. 15, 16. Jesus said, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." And this, brethren, is the only way that Jesus is known today; it is through revelation that poor sinners know anything of the love of God; it is through the teaching of the Holy Spirit that they know him, whom to know is life eternal. All that have heard of the Father come to me, said Jesus; for they shall all be taught of the Lord, and great shall be their peace. The strength and durability of a building depends upon the firmness of its foundation. Jesus is the firm foundation stone upon which his church is built, and therefore it shall stand forever. For in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall break in pieces all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. (Daniel ii. 44.) The church of Jesus Christ is built of lively stones, chosen, fitted and prepared to fill the very place the Father ordained that each one should fill in this glorious building. This church is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. The members of his body were chosen in him before the world began, and through the quickening power of the Holy Spirit in time they are brought to know that they are sinners doomed to death by the holy law of God. They cannot yet see Christ formed in their hearts the hope of glory, but praise be to his holy name, by and

by he reveals himself to them as their Savior, and O what joy is theirs the hour they first believe.

Dear brethren, comfort each other with these words.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Moderator.
J. R. BECKETT, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Roxbury Association of Old School Baptists, in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, Ashokan, N. Y., September 11th and 12th, 1918, to the associations and churches with which we correspond sends christian greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—We will address you by the way of a Corresponding Letter. It has pleased the Almighty God in his all-wise providence to spare our lives another year in this pilgrimage journey here below for a purpose unknown to us, and has brought us together as an association, in which have come to us servants of God proclaiming the unsearchable riches of God's grace, declaring the blessed truth as it is in Jesus, giving him all honor and glory and all power, to whom they belong, and surely we can say it has been a feast of fat things to poor hungry and thirsty souls who desire the crumbs that fall from the Master's table. Our meeting has gone on without a discord in any way, so we can say, How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. We desire a continuance of your correspondence in the future as in the past.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the First Roxbury Church, Vega, Delaware Co., N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday between the second and third Sundays in September, 1919, commencing at 10:30 o'clock a. m.

GEORGE RUSTON, Moderator.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

John T. Lee, the subject of this notice, was born in Prince William County, Va., Sept 17th, 1853, and died in Fairfax County, Va, October 16th, 1918, making his stay on earth 65 years and 29 days. The deceased was a brother of sister Kate Lee. He never united with any church, but was a firm believer in the predestination of all things, also vital unity of Christ. Unable to secure a minister of our faith and order to conduct the funeral, by request of sister Kate the unworthy writer tried to speak a word in prayer at the grave. Having known the deceased for thirty years, I feel to say he was a man without enemies, also that his life was spent for those around him. Any favor asked of him was freely and willingly granted. In his last hours he expressed a desire to leave this world of vanity and dwell in that blessed abode which has ever been, even before time was. May the all-wise, merciful and only living and true God reconcile those left to mourn to his just and holy will, and give sustaining grace to say, Thy will be done.

K. C. SPINDLE.

Johnson Phillips was born October 28th, 1846, and died August 5th, 1918, aged 71 years, 9 months and 8 days. He was married to Abigail Poling, March 10th, 1870. To that union were born two sons and four daughters, one son and one daughter deceased. He professed a hope in Christ about thirty years ago, and lived faithful to that hope to the end of his life. He never attached himself to the visible church, but we believe he was a child of God and a member of the invisible church of God. He loved the truth, and was kind and good to all, although he was a poor man in this world's goods. Now he is at rest, we firmly believe, but while here he had much pain to endure; so let his dear family rejoice that he is gone from sorrow and from the evil to come, from many sorrows which others will see. He desired to be baptized, yet was so afflicted that he was not. He was a kind husband and father, and all that could be done for him by his dear companion and children and friends was done. Our loss is his eternal gain, we firmly believe. He requested that the church sing, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow," &c., at his funeral, and his desire was that Elder Murphy, Elder Cross or I should preach. The family called dear brother Cross, as he was the nearest and well acquainted with him. Elder Cross used as a text at brother Phillips' request, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," &c. While here on earth he was led to see how he should suffer because of the temptations of Satan; then again he would be delivered and led to see the beauties of the heavenly kingdom. At the time he received a hope this Scripture was presented to his mind: "Come

unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." While Satan annoyed him here, he has now no power over him in the glorious world beyond the grave. He suffered greatly from dropsy, but endured all the pain patiently, and is at rest forever with those who sing, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow." May the dear Lord and Savior Jesus Christ bless us and keep us, with his dear family, and the church, is my prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen. JAMES W. LINN.

APPOINTMENTS.

Elder John McConnell will preach at Locktown and Frenchtown, N. J., Sunday, November 17th, nothing preventing. D. M. VAIL.

Appointments for Elder D. M. Vail:

Schoharie meetinghouse, October 26th, 2 p. m.; 27th, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.; Ecker Hollow, 28th, 1:30 p. m.; David Nethaway's, Howe Cave, 7:30 p. m.; Albany, 29th, 1:30 p. m.; Jefferson meetinghouse, 31st, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.

E. R. KINNEY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

C. A. Davis, Ill., $1.00; Mrs. M. Perry, Ark., $1.00; Laura R. Elgin, Va., $1.00; J. D. Lake, W. Va., $1.00; Wm. Darby, Md., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

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(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.

Owing to excessive war prices we will not issue any more hymn-books for the present. We still have a few round note books on hand, which we are selling at the same price, $6.50 per dozen or 70 cents per single copy. Send orders to Elder S. H. Durand, Southampton, Pa., or to Elder P. G. Lester, Floyd, Va.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

BY J. E. BEEBE & COMPANY

MIDDLETOWN, ORANGE CO., NEW YORK,

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EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1918. NO. 22.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MALACHI III. 16.

If our own righteousness were the ground upon which we should hold along our way, we would fall a thousand times a day. But there is a higher righteousness than ours which has made all imputations. The righteousness of Christ has been imputed unto us through his sufferings, death and atonement, and those to whom his righteousness is imputed shall most certainly hold on their way.

I read the third Sunday here to the very few who were present from the last chapter in the Old Testament, which is a short chapter, and commented awhile upon the second verse of that chapter. I am going to read this morning from the next to the last, which is the third chapter of the prophecy of Malachi: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name."

This word, my friends, is precious to us without any remarks being made in regard to it or upon it. First, it is the word of God. Malachi was chosen of God as a mouthpiece for him, to speak God's will and God's word to the people. It was not optional with him as to what he would speak, but the Lord gave him the word. It is said of the Lord of Isaiah, The Lord gives the word, and many there be that publish it. It is the given word of God. If we do not acknowledge this truth we might as well throw the Bible away and take the infidel's stand that there is no God. If we acknowledge the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the word of God, we must take them for what they say and believe them truth, whether we can comprehend their meaning or not; shut our mouths, bow our heads and say, Lord, it is the truth, if I cannot comprehend it.

I was talking to an Elder some time ago, a very bright-minded man. He said in his talk, in reference to the mysteries of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, that it was a mystery that no man on earth could explain. I told him I was glad that he had gotten that far along with it, and I said that that was not all, that it was a mystery which no man on God's earth with the Bible open before him could explain away. It is there; we

have to believe it whether we understand it or not. So is all the testimony of God that way. We do not want to say that anything is true unless we know it to be so. If we have to take the statement of others we want to know it to be true. That is what we would naturally say, and Paul, the inspired writer to us, noted all such things as that, and tells us that we do know some things. We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Well, how do we know that? We simply know it by what the Spirit has taught us, and what daily observation has proved to be true. You cannot point back over one single event in all the history of the world and say that it was wrong; it has come out right. Our aftersight is always better than our foresight, because we cannot penetrate the future; we have not been given a mind to do it. But our aftersight is all right; we see that up to this very moment where we are now in this meetinghouse that there is an unseen hand and unseen Providence which has brought us to this morning. But for that Providence which watches over us every moment and hour we would not be here. When we are unaware of God his blessings are showered around and about us, and like the swine that goes and fills his stomach under an acorn tree, which never looks up to see where the acorns fall from, we are showered with blessings, and we never look up to see from whence they are coming.

I do not think that it would be prudent for me this morning to enter into a detailed investigation of what I have read in your hearing, but I want to make a few pointed remarks if I can in regard to it. All the way throughout the Old and New Testaments there is a class of people designated as a people that feared the Lord, really and truly feared him, and trembled at his word. There is also a people that does not fear the Lord, else Paul was mistaken when he gave a detailed account, analyzed man, as it were, that his throat is an open sepulchre, with his tongue he has used deceit, the poison of asps is under his lips, whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; destruction and misery are in his ways, and the way of peace he has not known; there is no fear of God before his eyes. What a serious inquiry should arise in our mind, Lord, have I feared thy name and feared it properly? Has it ever been given me to fear the Lord? I sometimes try to console myself personally in reference to the matter. My mind was inquiring when I was but a small child living in the country of the Cherokee Indians. Most of our neighbors at that time were Indians, such neighbors as they were. I wanted to know the cause of things. I often cried to myself because I did not know where I was or what I was looking at. I said to my father a little after I was four years old: "Father, you make the corn; who made the trees?" Mother died long before I remembered her. He stopped his horses suddenly, with a look in his eyes that I had never seen before. He looked around at me and said, "My son, God made the trees." If ever I had heard the name of God before I have no recollection of it. I had never heard of any such thing as meeting, or any such thing as preaching or praying. I had committed to memory some songs which mother sang, but she died before I was old enough to know the meaning of them; but that was the first time the name of God attracted my attention. Then my father added: "He is in the clouds all the time, and he sees

you all the time. If you do bad things and are a bad boy and tell falsehoods he will send you to the bad place when you die; but if you do good and tell the truth he will take you to a good place when you die." Now that was all my father knew. I, of course, believed that was true; I believed that he had told me the truth, and I instantly said to him, "But, father, I am going to be a good boy." I left him and went direct to a thicket of bushes close by, trying to hide from the sight of God, and stayed there until the sun went down and it became dark, then I went to the house. I started out upon that basis of doing good and going to heaven when I died. I made a complete failure—failure after failure. As I grew up I still resolved and determined that if I were spared until to-morrow I was going to live one day so that I could feel in my heart that God would approve of that day; but not one day could I live and realize when night came that I had pleased the Lord by that day's work until all hope was gone. I could not do the things I wanted to; I could not live the way I wanted to live. This was my sad experience; but I feared the name of the Lord throughout it all. Finally I was brought to see without a preacher, without reading the Bible, without anybody to guide me; that I had no more to do with my salvation than I had with my creation first into this world; that it was wholly and entirely of God; that if he saved me he would receive all the honor and I would have no honor in it at all; that if I were lost it was just and right for me to be lost. I was brought to see this, and carried it in my heart for several days, when the sweet words flowed through my soul: "Created in Christ Jesus." Still I had not read the Bible, I could not read then. I never went to school much in my life. That was the way I was brought to my experience. Allow me just to say this: The Lord is God manifest in the flesh, and outside of Christ there is no human being that can approach God. Christ is the only medium through which mortal beings can approach God. He is always called "Lord" in the Scriptures, although in separate conversations manifested in the flesh he is not called "God," but "Lord, Lord." Kings of the earth have been called lords; the parliament of England are called lords to-day, but it is nothing compared with the name and the fear of the Lord that is named here in this text: "And the Lord hearkened, and heard it." What condescending mercy is this! Think of it, that the great God who made this world and perhaps millions of other worlds equally as large as this, possibly floating in space as this earth does, hung upon nothing (the Bible says so), a God that could and may have made a million worlds a million times larger than this world and placed them entirely out of our sight, and have people on them to suit him just as well. You would be astonished if you took the common Concordance, as I said in the beginning, and see how often that "fear of the Lord" occurs in the Old and New Testaments; it is full of it, and you all should be indeed. When the shepherds were keeping watch over their flocks by night, at midnight, the darkest hour, so to speak, of the night, when the moon is giving no light, at midnight suddenly the glory of God shone round about them, and the angel of the Lord came upon them, and what was the result? The result was that fear filled their hearts; they were sore afraid. The first words that escaped the lips of the angel were, "Fear not." He knew that they were filled with fear,

for the glory of God was sufficient to do that, without there being one word spoken. "Fear not." What strange language there was spoken in the darkness of that night: "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Remember, my friends, that in the glorious gospel of God there is no night whatever, it is perfect day all the time. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not." Think of these things, and may the Lord guide you and me and bless us with his Spirit, for his holy and righteous name's sake. Amen.

[SERMON by Elder J. G. Eubanks, at the Welsh Tract meetinghouse, Newark, Del., Sunday, January 6th, 1918.]

MONROE, Ga., August 29, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have been thinking of trying to write again for the SIGNS, because of my knowledge of it so long. We have had recently a union meeting at Harris Springs, my grandmother's old church, and going back sixty years in my memory it caused me to feel the truth that the Lord has been our dwelling-place in all generations. I felt while at the meeting that I knew personally four generations that had dwelt in him, trusting in his teachings of the doctrine of salvation by grace, unconditional upon our part. I associated two generations that have gone to enjoy that rest that awaits all the children of God. First, my grandmother's generation. The apostle Paul mentioned the faith which dwelt first in Timothy's grandmother, Lois, then his mother, Eunice. I felt to know the faith of my grandmother when she worshiped on the same holy ground, remembering Elder Gilbert Beebe, of New York, being there, showing that it was his dwelling-place, and absolutely sure for all the elect in all generations. Then my mother's generation, who worshiped there with Elder Joseph L. Purington, from Maine, who contended for the same doctrine that shall drop as the rain. Then seeing my own generation upon the ground with Elder H. H. Lefferts, of Virginia, preaching the very same doctrine to me and my children, mixing with other ministers of the same faith, we could but behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. We felt that there was a waiting upon the Lord, because surely our strength was renewed. We had some from a distance there who read the SIGNS and enjoy the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things. Some of our brethren are a little tender on that point, wanting to limit it to the good things that come to pass, as, The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord. We notice the word "good" in this sentence is supplied, and should be left out. Surely if God works all things after the counsel of his own will, and does as he pleases among the inhabitants of the earth, he must use all of them, even the devil, the serpent, which is crooked, made crooked, and his work is crooked. God had a special purpose for him in the garden, and he did his work well. He also used him in Job's case, in the work of Judas also, to accomplish his purpose or pre-

destination, and he is being used now for the accomplishment of his purpose. He has him under good control; he is limited, so he cannot pass his bounds. We rejoice in the truth that God is a sovereign, controlling the hearts of kings as the rivers of water; even his name is a strong tower, and the righteous run into it and are safe. We have a dwelling-place walled in, secure from all danger, knowing that our keeper is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. His hand is not shortened that he cannot save. Kept by his power, not a shaft can hit until he sees fit. We rest in this faith, hope and charity, for if indeed we are dwelling in him there is no power that can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me peace. Be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world, said Jesus. Let us take heed unto ourselves and the doctrine, and continue in them, that salvation may be ours because of his working in us to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Yours in hope,

J. M. ADAMS.

FORDYCE, Ark., Nov. 3, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Owing to the quarantine that is on because of the Influenza epidemic, and as I cannot get to my appointment to-day, and having just been informed of the death of Elder Thomas Peterson, I feel that I want to send notice to the SIGNS, in order that his brethren, sisters and friends with whom he was acquainted and associated may know of his death. A gloom comes over us to hear of his departure, yet we feel to hope that we are reconciled to the will of God, for we feel sure it is far better for him, and we feel assured it is the Lord's way, since he has appointed man once to die. Elder Thomas Peterson was one of the older sons of the well known Peterson family. His father, Deacon Thomas Peterson, was one of the most prominent men of Dallas County, having served as County and Probate Judge for many years, and was a pillar in the Chapel Hill Primitive Baptist Church. Elder Thomas Peterson, together with all of the Peterson family, was blessed with the riches of God's grace and to trust in the Lord's mercies, and their father and mother were blessed to see them all members of the old church in which was the delight of their souls. Elder Peterson joined the church in his early days, and soon was impressed with the duty of declaring the riches of God's grace to these people who were so gracious to him, and I feel that I only hint at the true facts, for he was one of the ablest and best preachers I ever listened to. He was deep in the great doctrine, and in experimental godliness he had no superiors, and few equals. He was mentally one of the greatest men Dallas County had, and represented said county in the State Legislature, and was regarded as one of the safest men in its councils. He represented his people's interest, and was regarded as a safe man, even by those who opposed him in his religious views. He did more in the service of the churches of the South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association than any minister since it was organized, and had baptized more members than any servant in it. He was one of the greatest men to gain the confidence of his brethren I ever knew, and was the most highly blessed with the spirit of meekness and of peace-making among brethren of any minister I ever knew. When I came in among our people there were two factions in the South Arkansas Association; they had divided over some minor matter, and had been in

this condition for some years, with good brethren and sisters on both sides, and Elder Peterson went to work in the spirit of love and meekness and soon got both sides to agree to meet and discuss the matter of differences, and I was blessed to be present at this meeting when the reconciliation was completed, and I felt sure it was truly a meeting with the Lord, and that the Lord had used Elder Peterson and Elder George R. Hathcock as the instruments in his hand that brought them into this blessed union, and this association is living to-day in that same blessed union and fellowship. We are sad to-day, for we feel the association has lost one of its great men in the Lord. His counsel was often sought by us, even though he had been sorely afflicted, so that he had done no active service for the churches for some few years. The last service I heard of his performing was to preach to his brethren and sisters at his home while sitting in his chair. While death was a relief to him, yet we can but miss him, although we mourn not as those without hope. For Elder Peterson I feel that the language of Paul is a fitting expression: that he had fought a good fight, that he had kept the faith, and that he has now gone to his great reward, and to the enjoyment of his Lord he so much loved to talk of and to preach to poor sinners. I feel sorrowful to see so many of our ministers passing away, as there are now but three ordained ministers in all this big association who are in active service. Brother J. H. Rawls is so afflicted with bronchial trouble that he has to be in Texas or New Mexico most of the time, and the other is too old for active service, but I feel that all required of us is to pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his vineyard. The harvest is his, the vineyard is his, and all I feel our duty to be is to pray him, and O how I wish I knew how so pray aright, and in an acceptable manner to him for this. But, summing up the whole matter, we find we cannot pray for anything, for the heart of prayer is from him, and the sending of his laborers into his vineyard is of him, so we see there are no grounds for us to glory save in him, therefore we can only say, Lord, give us grace and faith to say, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. We can therefore only look to him to raise others up to fill the vacancies of those who have gone. I do not know, but it looks to me that the harvest is almost over. It does seem that the love of many has waxed cold, that the love of this world has carried many after the things that perish, and that the world loves its own, and it is because iniquity hath abounded that the love of many has waxed cold. All these things make us feel sad, yet we know as Bible truth it must be so, for the Bible has declared that it shall be.

May the Lord remember us all in his mercy, and keep us by his everlasting Spirit, and lead, govern and guide us in the way of all truth, and enable us to endure as good soldiers to the end.

I suppose a suitable obituary of Elder Peterson will be prepared and sent in by some of the family, so I will close by saying, May God's grace reign in our hearts, and enable us all to say, Thy will be done. Amen.

V. R. HARRIS.

EDITORIAL.

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GODLINESS—A MYSTERY.

"AND, without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."—1 Timothy iii. 16.

There are some things that, to the spiritually-minded, admit of no argument. Of these, one is the absolute sovereignty of Jehovah; a second is that he is assuredly God of the sinner's salvation; a third is that godliness is a mystery; a fourth is that iniquity is also a mystery. Our subject this time has to do particularly with the mystery called godliness. Human minds have ever, and will always, cavil about these points, but, as already affirmed, to the spiritual there is no room to deny that godliness is a mystery. What is mystery? We could easily go to the dictionary and find what Webster or some one else says about it. That we do not want. We want to know the biblical definition of "mystery." Are our readers aware that the word "mystery" does not occur in the Old Testament, that it is confined to the New Testament? In every case in the New Testament where this word occurs it comes from the Greek word *musterion*. It literally means to shut the mouth, largely involving the idea that silence is imposed, therefore when this or that subject is said in the New Testament to be a mystery, it directly means that the mouth is shut upon that subject, that silence is imposed thereon, that the matter is not to be explained, not to be reduced to terms of human understanding. We have said that "mystery" is not an Old Testament word. This is true, but we do not mean that, therefore, nothing in the Old Testament is a mystery. This would be far from true. The Old Testament equivalent for New Testament "mystery" is "secret." The word "secret" in the Old Testament comes from the Hebrew *cathar*, literally meaning to hide as by a covering. When, therefore, in reading the Old Testament we come to expressions like, "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God," we are to understand that there are things covered up from human prying and knowledge, that these are God's. Coming now more directly to this matter of "mystery" as treated in the New Testament, when Paul says, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed," the thought is that here is something that defies expression or elucidation, the mouth is shut upon this subject, or silence is imposed upon this matter, inasmuch as it is concealed from human understanding, and not to be brought down upon a finite plane where little minds can grasp it. These things are to be clutched only by faith, that faith which God alone can give. When faith takes hold of these things we believe them, but believing them we cannot understand them nor explain them to others. So with godliness, it is a mystery and will remain a mystery forever, so far as the human mind is concerned. Our writing upon this subject now is not to try to explain what cannot be explained, but to emphasize what

Paul says about it in his letter to Timothy. He desired to remind Timothy of certain things necessary to Timothy's proper behavior in the house of God. This is something of which all of us need to be reminded: how to behave ourselves in the church; not simply how to behave when we are at meeting, that is not the thought, but how to behave in all our church life, in all our walk and conversation as professed believers in the Lord. Many, no doubt, will feel as ourselves: that they do not know how to conduct themselves properly as christians in this present evil world. We doubt seriously if any know how to properly conduct themselves as true children of light, only as the Holy Ghost teaches and leads. To this proper behavior the prime essential is godliness. This Paul asserts to Timothy. Now, this godliness, Paul further declares, is embodied in the manifestation of God in the flesh. Where there is not this manifesting of God in the flesh there is no such thing as godliness worthy of the name. Godliness, therefore, finds its embodiment in Jesus Christ, for he was God manifest in the flesh, and only to the extent that the Holy Ghost tabernacles in the people of God is there attainment of or unto godliness.

From the reading of the text it will be seen that Paul considers godliness to consist of six main principles. The first of these is, "God was manifest in the flesh." To realize how unutterable is this matter of God being manifest in the flesh one must be brought to realize, on the one hand, some idea of the greatness and infinity of Jehovah, and, on the other hand, the vanity and nothingness of flesh. This calls for the experimental work of the Holy Ghost in the sinner's soul, and none but those so exercised can know how great is the mystery of God manifest in the flesh. Two spheres of being could not be at greater extremes from each other than that of God and of the flesh. There is no affinity or congeniality between them, yet the higher descended to the lower, the infinite to the finite, the eternal to the temporal, one might almost say to the ephemeral. Not only descended to it, but took up its abode within it and became manifested in it. Jesus was both God and man, he was God at the same time that he was man, and man at the same time that he was God. This was covered up, and is still hidden from finite minds and human reason. None knew him to be verily God but those to whom he revealed himself by the Spirit; so it is now, and shall continue to be. In Christ's day many notions prevailed as to who Jesus was, and many theories as to the same float about in minds of men to-day. To some he was merely the carpenter's son, to others he was a reincarnation of Elijah, to yet others he was a babbler, or an impostor, or an heretic, but to his chosen he was the Christ, the Son of the living God. They knew him to be so through no apprehension from flesh and blood, but by having had it revealed unto them by their Father in heaven. Nearly always after Jesus had performed a miracle of healing he would say to the one healed, See that thou tell no man. Being thus commanded, it was never possible for them to tell others how the miracle had been wrought. It was a mystery, and their mouths were closed from telling it. It is equally true to-day that true religion is the secret of the Lord, can only be revealed from God the Father, and when so revealed cannot be communicated to any one else. As the innumerable multitudes of the human race are but Adam multiplied, so it can truly be said that all the children of God

now living, or who have ever lived, or who shall hereafter live, are the progeny of Christ, all are born of God, and have Christ in them the hope of glory. In this way God is manifested in the flesh of his saints. They bear in their bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Christ may be manifest in their mortal flesh. All this can be known only through faith. Human intelligence scoffs at it, and no wonder such is the case, for our mouths are closed from ever being able to communicate this truth to others save only as they possess like precious faith with us.

Second. "Justified in the Spirit." The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. The law, taken in the letter, holds no hope of salvation for any sinner. Jesus came into the world to obey the law, but, be it remembered, not merely to obey it in the letter, but in the Spirit. The law of God is spiritual and demands spiritual obedience. This Jesus rendered. The Pharisees and others held to the letter of the law, Jesus held to it in the Spirit. This caused the worldly religious to denounce Jesus as a blasphemer, because he had little use for the law as a literal thing, while this was the very point others held so strenuously. For instance, they found fault with him for plucking ears of corn on the Sabbath. Taken literally, this was no doubt a breach of the law. However, when Jesus gave sight to the blind, or healing to the sick, or cheer to the faint, or life to the dead, on the Sabbath day, he was fulfilling the law in its spirit, and in doing so was justified before God, in that he obeyed the law spiritually though not literally. When Jesus declared, "I and my Father are one," it was looked upon as blasphemy by the seemingly religious, because the law said that any man calling himself the equal of God was a blasphemer, and must be put to death. Those, therefore, who could see no more in the law than the mere letter condemned Jesus as being worthy of death, inasmuch as he seemed to them to blaspheme, but in the Spirit he was justified in saying that he and God were one, for spiritually they are one. So it becomes a component part of the mystery of godliness that Jesus was justified before God in the Spirit and not in the letter by the spiritual obedience he rendered rather than the literal. Also, by his resurrection from the dead he justified himself and all his elect before God, so that all redeemed by him are before God as though Adam had never plunged us all into transgression. This resurrection of Christ from the dead, while we thoroughly believe it to have been a literal event, took place, nevertheless, through the work and power of the Spirit. Thus in his life here in the world, and also in his life from the dead, Jesus was justified in the Spirit.

Third. "Seen of angels." All God's ministers are angels, and are sent forth to minister unto the heirs of redemption. The holy men of old were angels sent of God to testify comfortingly to his people. They also minister to us in the Spirit, though they, as men, are long since dead. Abraham saw Christ's day and was glad. God was, therefore, seen of this angel. Noah also saw Christ, so, too, did Abel and he testified of Christ in his offering of the Lamb, which thus bespoke the faith that was in him. Of all these angels Christ was seen. He was seen of Daniel, of Isaiah, of Ezekiel, of Rahab, of Ruth, of Deborah and of a host of others too numerous to mention. Now, how these could see a man who had never as yet been in the world, how they could view as complete a work not yet begun, is

more than tongue can tell, more than it has ever been intended tongue should tell. Jesus was "seen of angels." The fact we know and believe, the how of it remains a mystery.

Fourth. "Preached unto the Gentiles." Preaching itself is a mystery. How God can and does endow the speech of his ministers with convincing power to circumcised hearts is ever a mystery. How a minister of God is enabled, even in weakness and infirmity, to declare the truth, with no forethought or preparation of his own, is unreasonable to the world. We cannot explain it. Our mouths are stopped from doing so. But the thought in the text is not so much that preaching is a mystery, but that God was preached to the Gentiles. It had seemed to the Jews that none but they could inherit Messiah's kingdom, that they should come into it, being children of Abraham, and therefore heirs according to the flesh. It was a contradiction of all their theories when John asserted: "God is able of these stones [Gentiles] to raise up children unto Abraham." That those are children of Abraham and heirs according to the promise, whose circumcision is not outward in the flesh, but who are circumcised in heart by the operation of the Spirit; this was a truth far from the comprehension of Jewish minds. It is equally hid from men to-day how poor sinners are saved through not the slightest merit of the flesh, but wholly through the grace of God. That the gospel should be preached to strangers from the commonwealth of Israel, that the kingdom of God should be taken away from the literal descendants of Abraham and given to another nation altogether foreign to Israel is a mystery, part of the mystery of godliness. The human mind can understand how traits of one generation can be handed on through descent to the generation next. A salvation which came to Abraham, and which might be transmitted through descent from him to future generations, would contain no mystery for any one. But here was the virtue of faith in Abraham, a virtue which he was helpless to exercise or control of himself, a something not resident in his blood, which could not be handed on by him to Israel as a nation. How this virtue was to leap over the barriers of race and prejudice and come to light in the islands of the sea, and in the uttermost parts of the earth, is an inexplicable mystery. It comes about through God's diffusion of himself throughout every nation, kindred, tribe and people, and through the infusion of himself into quickened souls. The preaching of the glad tidings of the victory of Christ is thus to all the elect of God everywhere; that is, unto the Gentiles, who were without the oracles of God, and who had never been under the law of Moses, nor had ever held any affiliation with Abraham, to whom the promise of God was made. How Lazarus, the Gentile, could be transported into Abraham's bosom, and the rich man, the Jew, be thrust into the hellish torments of world-dispersion, is a component part of the mystery of godliness.

Fifth, "Believed on in the world." If belief be the work of the creature, and as easy as turning over one's hand, where is the mystery? If one can as easily give his heart to God as his stomach to the reception of food, where is the mystery? On the other hand, belief being not the work of the creature, but the work of God, and the human will being wholly inactive in the work of belief, belief being the result of the communication of the heavens with the earth, we see at once belief to be a mystery. Instead of its

being a usual, every day occurrence, as common as the making of money in the market-place, belief takes on a mystical meaning, something unearthly and incomprehensible, as the glories of the sun from the womb of the morning. We believe according to the working of that same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead. Wherever there is one who truly believes in God, there has been the passage from death unto life, there life is being lived by the power of the faith of the Son of God. Shall we say this is not a mystery? Indeed, such a life of believing is like Enoch being translated that he should not see death, it is walking and communing with God. Believing is being in union with God and with the Lamb. It is the work of reconciliation, not our work, but the work of the Holy Spirit in the people of God.

Sixth. "Received up into glory." The culmination of all Christ's work, of all his suffering, humiliation and death, was in his being received into that glory which he had with the Father before the world was. The end and crown of all godliness is the glory of God. The godliness of Jesus, and that of every saint of his, is unto the glory of God. It cannot possibly be unto one's own glory, for one's own traits enter not into it at all. All true godliness is the result of God's being manifest in the flesh, therefore must redound unto his glory, since all fleshly glorying and human boasting are excluded. As Jesus found no satisfaction in the flesh, nor in his life here in the world, but looked forward to when he should awake with the likeness of his God and be forever satisfied, so every follower of Christ hopes for the resurrection of the dead, and longs to be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, but clothed upon with that righteousness which is of God. Christ was received up into glory out of what seemed to the world to be defeat and an ignoble end. So it shall be that all the woes and trials, all the crosses and humiliations which God's people are called upon to endure, shall end in infinite glory. Glorification is the predestined end of all the elect of God. All shall be brought off more than conquerors through Jesus Christ, who has loved us and given himself for us. The disciples stood on Olivet and saw Christ go up from them until a cloud received him out of their sight. Thus was he received up into glory. How it was done we know not. That it was done just so, we believe. So, also, it shall be that we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air, and so forever to be with the Lord. How, we know not. When, we know not. It is a mystery we treasure by faith, the culminating part of the mystery of godliness, which finds its truest exponent in Jesus Christ. L.

A SAD ANNOUNCEMENT.

JUST as we were printing this number of the SIGNS we received the sad news that Elder Silas H. Durand passed away Tuesday morning, November 12th. An obituary notice will be published later.

BOOK OF EDITORIALS.

WE have on hand a number of copies of the Second Volume of Editorials. This book is made up of editorials written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES from March, 1842, to March, 1847, and contains 768 pages, neatly bound in cloth.

This work originally sold at two dollars per copy, but as a few of the pages are stained by water we will, as long as the supply lasts, sell them at the extremely low price of seventy-five cents per copy. Postage paid by us. All who wish this book should procure it now, as we will have no more after these are sold.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, October 2nd and 3rd, 1918, sends christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN BELOVED IN THE LORD:—In the providence of God we are favored with the blessed privilege of once again meeting and greeting each other in sweet bonds and fellowship in the Lord, and to join in praise to him for such assuring evidence of his good pleasure. Our hearts have been made glad by the coming of his servants among us laden with their messages of heavenly food from the Master's table, declaring none other things than the Spirit did signify, love, joy and peace in the Holy Ghost, giving all power, majesty, honor and glory to him to whom all majesty belongs, speaking to us in no uncertain tones of what the Master has in his love and mercy done for his children.

We have appointed our next session to be held with our sister church, the Second Roxbury, at Halcottville, N. Y., at the usual time next year, the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, 1919, where we hope to meet your messengers and hear their messages of love as in former years.

JOHN CLARK, Moderator.
JAMES AVERY, Clerk.
O. F. BALLARD, Ass't Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at his residence, 1910 N. 22nd St., Philadelphia, Pa., October 14th, 1914, Benjamin G. Ford, of Philadelphia, Pa., and Ella M. De Myer, of Cleveland, Ohio.

By Elder D. M. Vail, at the home of the bride, in Otego, N. Y., Nov. 2nd, 1918, Abner B. Leonard and Miss Rosabelle Tamsett, both of Otego, N. Y.

By Elder J. M. Fenton, at 5134 Master St., West Philadelphia, Pa., Rudolph Charles Kline and Anna Murray Hansell, both of West Philadelphia.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon L. S. Beene was born in Itawamba County, Miss., Dec. 5th, 1834, and passed to his final rest beyond this vale of tears July 1st, 1917. He came to Texas with his parents in 1859, and settled near Jewett, in Leon County. He united with the Old School Baptist Church called Salem in 1862, where he remained a member until his death, some fifty-five years. His age was 83 years, 6 months and 26 days. He was one among the pioneer citizens of Leon County. He was married to his first wife at Centerville, Texas, June 7th, 1865. To them were born seven children, four of whom survive their parents. He was married to his second wife Nov. 16th, 1878. To that union were born three children; his widow and these three children survive. The subject of this notice had seven brothers and two sisters, all gone to the great beyond except one brother: S. H. Beene, of Mexia, Texas. Through industry and economy brother Beene accumulated quite a little of this world's goods, leaving a considerable estate to his family. He was a prominent business man in his neighborhood, kind and generous to the poor and needy, ever ready to visit them in their afflictions, a safe counselor, ever ready to defend the right and condemn the wrong. He had brilliant talent, but never aspired to any office from the people. To be truly and sincerely a member of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ excelled all the treasures of ten thousand worlds like this to him. He desired rather to suffer reproach with the people of God than to enjoy sin for a moment. As a deacon in the church he had but few equals; he discharged the duties of that office to the full satisfaction of his brethren. He was faithful in attendance and devoted to the cause of his heavenly Master, looking well to gospel order and every precept of gospel discipline. As Paul said, he purchased to himself a good degree and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. Nothing was ever more soul-cheering to him than to sit under the preaching of a sound ministry. I knew brother Beene personally for years, and these statements of the character of the brother are true. He was held in high esteem for the truth's sake wherever he went among the brethren, being firm and established in the doctrine of God our Savior and the predestination of all things, a lover of the cardinal principles of salvation by grace, as published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, founded by Elder Gilbert Beebe, of which he was a friend and supporter. He traveled extensively, visiting associations and other meetings. We all keenly feel the loss of this amiable servant in the house of God, but the Lord has called him to a higher sphere, to rest in the haven of eternal peace, to praise God throughout never-ending eternity.

He was buried in the family cemetery at Concord,

by the side of his first wife. Elder I. W. Bowers, his pastor, and a lifelong companion in religious work, delivered a funeral sermon on the occasion to a large concourse of relatives and sorrowing friends; but the dear ones weep not as those who have no hope. May it please the Lord to bring all his children to the same banqueting-house of everlasting joy and peace in the bright mansion of that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

ASA HOWARD.

Elder E. A. Norton, long time resident of Hampton, Iowa, and one of the most active Grand Army men in the county when his younger years permitted, died at his home in that city, following a two weeks' illness. He had not been in the best of health for several years, but was able to get around most of the time until lately. The deceased was born in Crawford County, Ill., October 8th, 1840. His parents went to Beloit, Rock Co., Wis., in 1846, and in 1852 moved to Lafayette County, in that state. In 1863 he enlisted in Company E, 43rd Wisconsin Volunteers, and served for two years, when he was discharged, his health having been permanently injured. Following his service in the war he came home, and when his health would permit engaged in work as a carpenter and builder. He went to Hampton in 1876, and had since made that city his home. He was twice married, and had one child by his first wife, Sybil, deceased. August 15th, 1865, he was married to Catherine A. Taylor, of Platteville, Wis., who passed away June 14th, 1914. To that union seven children were born, four of whom survive. The living children are Mrs. John Haring, of Hampton, Iowa, Mrs. G. A. Frink, of Ft. Collins, Colo., George I. Norton, of Salt Lake City, Utah, and Andrew J. Norton, of Traer, Iowa. He is also survived by a sister, Mrs. H. D. Brown, of Hampton, and a brother, F. N. Norton, of Kansas City, Mo.

An Old School Baptist minister could not be reached, so Mr. Richardson, the Baptist minister of Hampton, made a short prayer, and the funeral services were conducted by the G. A. R.

(MRS.) G. A. FRINK.

[ELDER E. A. Norton, the subject of the above sketch, was well and favorably known to the readers of the SIGNS, he having for many years contributed to its columns. He had been in the ministry many years, had served several churches as pastor, and in earlier life traveled, preaching the gospel which he loved. We corresponded with him for almost twenty years, and were very much attached to him and shall miss his good letters. Not long ago we had a letter from him, in which he said: "I am lonely and sad since the death of my companion, and am only waiting for the time of my departure, which will not be long." We extend our sympathy to the family and brethren in their sad loss.—K.]

Edward James Gilliss, my dear husband, passed away June 7th, 1918, at his home in St. Martin, Worcester Co., Md. He was the son of Dr. John P. R. Gilliss and Anna C. Fassitt, his wife, and was born Feb. 22nd, 1838, making his stay on earth 80 years, 3 months and 15 days. We sadly miss his dear presence in our home, and feel sad and lonely since he left us, but we sorrow not as those who have no hope. We desire to be resigned to the good Lord's will, for we feel and believe our loss is his gain. We feel thankful he was permitted to die as he had often expressed the wish, as one going to sleep. He died of heart failure, only living six hours after being attacked. He was a member with the Presbyterians, where he joined in early life. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace alone, and often read my SIGNS and seemed to enjoy the contents, and attended Old School Baptist meetings with me when convenient to do so. He lived a humble christian life. He was married to Lizzie A. Hall Nov. 19th, 1884, who survives him. He leaves to mourn their loss, his wife, one daughter, Mary A. F. Gilliss, on son, John H. F. Gilliss, and two little grandsons, also one brother, Robins Gilliss, of Crescent City, Okla., one sister, Mrs. Kittie Warren, of Huntingdon, Mo., and two half-brothers, Alfred Gilliss, of Philadelphia, Pa., and Irving Gilliss, of Norfolk, Va.

Funeral services were conducted at his home by Dr. L. T. Bowen, a Presbyterian minister, and a schoolmate of his. We desire to bow in humble submission to the divine will.

(MRS.) L. A. GILLISS.

J. P. Fields, of Sadieville, Ky., was born Sept. 15th, 1844, and died Sept. 16th, 1918. He was married to Mary J. Leach, of near Cameron, Mo., Nov. 25th, 1869, where they lived four years, then returned to his father's farm at Sadieville, Scott Co., Ky., where he was born and where he resided until the day of his death. Our dear brother united with the Elk Lick Church, near that place, the second Saturday in July, 1883, and was baptized by the late Elder J. M. Theobald. Brother Fields lived a most faithful and devoted Baptist in every way that was necessary to promote the interest of the church in her spiritual and temporal welfare. It has been my privilege to visit often at the home of brother and sister Fields, where I always found a hearty welcome and kind hospitality, and a ready ear for the things of the Spirit. I well remember my last visit at their home, some two years ago, the little meeting, the sweet union and communion; we felt the Son of peace was there. Brother Fields had been in declining health for some months, and often expressed a willingness to depart and be at rest, abiding the Lord's time. The end came suddenly, without a struggle; he fell asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep. A call was made for

me to attend the funeral, but I was attending a meeting in Barren County, so could not get there, which I deeply regretted. Short services were conducted by a nephew of sister Fields, and the body was laid to rest in the grave in hope of the resurrection of all the redeemed to life and immortality.

To our dear sister in her sad bereavement we extend our deep heartfelt sympathy. May the God of peace and love comfort your heart by the way as you continue on through life's journey.

P. W. SAWIN.

Lawrence Preston Hales, son of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Hales, died at his home in Piney Grove, Md., Thursday morning, October 17th, 1918, aged 16 years. After a week's illness of Spanish influenza pneumonia developed and he died on the twelfth day. It was a terrible shock to his family, he being the youngest boy, the other three being grown. He leaves, beside his father and mother, three brothers and four sisters, as follows: Reuben L., of Camp Meade, Md., Herman R. and John W., Mrs. E. S. Matthews, Mrs. H. W. Powell, of near Salisbury, Mrs. L. M. Dennis, of Baltimore, and Lucinda R. He suffered untold agony. He called his mother every few minutes, and just before he died he took hold of her hand and said: "Mamma, my dear mamma, come and go with me." It comes to my mind often, if we could see beyond, would we wish him back, sad as it seems to part with our dear brother? May we be given strength to endure from that all-wise God who thought it best to take him, and who never, no, never, makes a mistake.

He was buried Friday, October 18th, at Mt. Olive.

His sister, CORA POWELL.

APPOINTMENTS.

Elder John McConnell will preach at Locktown and Frenchtown, N. J., Sunday, November 17th, nothing preventing. D. M. VAIL.

THE following appointments are for Elder J. M. Fenton:

Albany, N. Y., November 22nd, 1:30 p. m.; Howe Cave, 7:30 p. m.; Central Bridge, 23rd, 10:30 a. m.; Middleburg, 1:30 p. m.; sister Kinney's, 7:30 p. m.; Schoharie meetinghouse, 24th, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.; Charlotteville, 25th, 1:30 p. m.; Jefferson meetinghouse, 26th, 10:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.

E. R. KINNEY.

NOTHING preventing, there will be meetings as follows:

Casper Fetter's, 117 South Montgomery St., Trenton, N. J., Friday, December 13th, 8 p. m.; Stockton, N. J., Saturday, 14th, 2:30 p. m., Mrs. Horner's; Locktown, N. J., Sunday, 15th, 10:30 a. m.; Frenchtown, N. J., 4 p. m.; Grandon, N. J., Monday, 16th, brother Demott's, 8 p. m. D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. W. B. Bond, Texas, $1.00; Mrs. L. J. Randolph, Texas, $2.00; Mrs. J. H. Hurley, Mich, $5.00; Milton Maddock, Ont., $1.00; F. V. Hudspeth, Okla., $2.00.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk,
CLAREMONT, Cal.

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1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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(Judges v. 11.)

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DEAR EDITORS:—Please allow me to say in your valuable paper that I have a few copies of Benedict's "FIFTY YEARS AMONG THE BAPTISTS," which I am offering at $1.00 per copy, postage paid. Every one knows what this book is worth to the student of Baptist history. Send all orders to

A. H. RODEN.

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THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,
PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1918. NO. 23.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HEBREWS II. 9.

"BUT we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor: that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

DEAR EDITORS:—I have heard the above portion of Scripture so often used in a way that seemed to me to be gross perversion, that I have become somewhat interested in writing you, not in order to rectify the wrong, however, if so be the way I have heard it used so often be wrong, but to simply give some views of this wonderful text as my mind has been and is exercised on the subject. Those whom I have heard use it so deliberately against the doctrine of sovereign grace generally affirm it this way: Christ tasted death for every man, trying to make the impression on the mind of the Lord's people that Christ suffered and died for all the progeny of the earthy Adam and atoned for all of them, but that the application of the atonement was and is special, and applied on the ground of their personal obedience and their acceptance of it. This is as near the way they construe it as I can understand. But the apostle in this wonderful letter to the Hebrew brethren, and at this peculiar point, called attention to the resurrected and exalted state of the Lord Jesus Christ, who in his death and suffering had put death, hell and all the opposing powers under his feet, and now in strong exultation of the Spirit of Christ Jesus, who had fought the great battle, gained an everlasting victory over all the powers of darkness, says, "But we see Jesus * * * crowned with glory and honor: that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." The great question of this text is, Who are embraced in this short clause, "every man"? It seems to me that the context, especially the following, makes the matter so clear that he may run that readeth, or understandeth; for the apostle goes right on and says in the tenth verse: "For it became him [Christ], for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." The many sons whom Jesus, the captain of their salvation, is bringing to glory, are the identical "every man" that he by the grace of God tasted death for, or was delivered for their offences and raised again for their justification; there-

fore being justified by faith, we (the many sons) have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Hence the apostle continues this unbroken chain of living testimony and says: "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." So it seems clear to me to-day, and has, lo, for many years, that these sanctified ones whom God gave his Son Jesus Christ in the eternal covenant of grace, ordered in all things and sure, and the many sons whom Jesus is absolutely bringing to glory, and the "every man" whom Jesus by the grace of God tasted death for, embrace the identical children whom God gave his Son in the covenant of eternal love, as is said in verse thirteen: "Behold I and the children which God hath given me." All these constitute the family of brethren of whom Jesus, their elder Brother and covenant Head, is not ashamed, saying, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." Therefore the every man that Jesus tasted death for, and the many sons he is bringing to glory, and the sanctified ones, are one with him, and are the identical children that God gave him; they are his brethren. O how wonderful the thought that he is not ashamed to call them brethren. Inasmuch as these children are partakers of flesh and blood, he (Christ) also himself likewise took part of the same (flesh and blood), that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. So it seems clear by this Scripture that the "every man," (verse nine) and the many sons (verse ten), and the sanctified ones (verse eleven), and the children which God gave his Son Jesus Christ (verse thirteen), are the identical and selfsame people, embracing every heir of promise, all the election of grace in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame in Christ, who for his great love, wherewith he loved them, gave himself for them, died for their offences and rose again for their justification; therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, who tasted death for every one of us, and is bringing us home to heaven and immortal glory. Hence all Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. This chosen and redeemed family composes the Israel of God, a people saved by the Lord.

Yours to serve,

W. J. MAY.

SHOCK, Ky., August 17, 1918.

OTTAWA, Kansas.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I would like to write something for the SIGNS so that my spiritual kindred, if I dare claim that relationship, may know how I am progressing. I am such a wanderer, and am always getting into such deep, dark places, that much of the time I cannot tell where I am, except that I am on the verge of despair and tempted all hope to resign. Like Israel of old am I, my soul is at a stand, a sea before, a host behind and rocks on either hand. If you see fit to publish these letters, to those who read I would say, Think of me as one with them, for they have told my thoughts better than I could. For several days these words have been following me: Verily thou shalt be fed. I much enjoyed your editorial in the last SIGNS: "Rest."

Yours in hope of a better day,

ANNA McKINNEY.

WHEELING, W. Va., Oct. 20, 1916.

DEAR SISTER ANNA:—I feel that I want to commune with you of all that is

in my heart, and when I would search it I find nothing but misery to speak about. I cannot help but see that I am greatly blessed in many things. When your and sister Ellison's good letter came yesterday I felt that I was richly blessed in having two such favored sisters to write me. What more could have been said in the way of truth and righteousness than was said in her letter? and wonder of wonders that this poor old sinner, saved, as I hope, by free and unmerited grace, should be so taught by this same grace as to know and fully understand everything she set forth. You, dear humble sister that you are, cannot deny that you have been in all the places she so ably described, and yet if you feel as I do you cannot raise yourself any higher in your own estimation from the knowledge of this. Our God will not suffer any flesh to glory in his sight. This seems entirely as it should be to us, yet there is a continual hastening unto—we hardly know what. Sometimes I wonder if my physical condition has something to do with this unrest. I am so tired of battling along through life I have to give up; my hold on life is growing more feeble each day, and as increased afflictions in the flesh are continually gnawing at my vitals I am persuaded that I must cease to hope to meet with the dear elect on earth. It has been hard for me to give up this one prospect in life. I may truthfully say I have no other, and this has been my one earthly ambition for the last sixteen years. I have been complaining of ill health a long time, even until I feel ashamed of it. Sometimes I long to be free from all labor, but have found that this does not satisfy, I am so restless that I am glad to get back at the work (what little I am able to do). Once in a while I am given a sight of the goodness and mercy of God, and then I go along in some degree of satisfaction for a little while, but these seasons are short and far between. I must forbear to dwell on my poor affairs longer. I am truly glad that you were permitted to attend the association and you and dear sister Mary Ellison met. God bless you both; I would like to have been present. You were mutually attracted to each other. I am blessed with good correspondents, but have come to feel that all my efforts are vain. I feel so deeply impressed with this that I am losing much of the usual satisfaction in writing. I think most of my mental misery is caused by the effort to beat down self. When I regard myself I experience a sickening sensation, and often I give vent to an audible No, no, and cry to God to save me from myself and sin. Sometimes I fear I offend God by telling of his drawings in love, of his felt presence in my soul, as I have at times thought and hoped; still I remember that his people were instructed to tell of his mercy. Now for several days I have had no abiding place; I cannot go forward, and I have no fleshly arm that I desire to rest upon; and if such were the case, what is it? It is as a vapor that passeth away, yet human love and sympathy are sweet to our hungry souls.

Dear sister, this is Sunday, the 22nd. I had to lay my writing by. Our son and his wife came Friday, and are here yet. Wayburn is not well; he looks so frail and thin in flesh I feel worried about him. Surely we can see that we have many tribulations in this world. I feel that I do not deserve anything better, and I am quite sure that pleasure and ease in this life would not do for me; I am scarcely held down as it is. Last night after the family had all gone out for the evening I felt a desire for my

Bible; I read several chapters in Isaiah and was made to say, How wonderful. In the forty-ninth chapter, sixth verse, I had to read it aloud, my heart could not contain it; and the fiftieth chapter moved me to tears, I read and reread it, and I said in my heart, What is there on earth that can yield such sweetness as this? In the fifty-seventh chapter, fourth verse, I felt that we are living in the midst of a people like that to-day. Many are they who would make a wide mouth and draw out the tongue at the name of Jesus as our guide. I think their faces will gather blackness when our Savior comes with ten thousand of his saints to execute judgment in the earth. Dear sister, do you feel that my hope is set on a myth, that he will never come again? This is my earnest hope, and I hope the day is not so far off. I look for something far better than this life of sorrow and tribulation. We are promised that if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him in glory. A brother sent me these verses in one of his good letters, which my heart warmly responded to:

Above the wars of earthly strife,
Above the ills and cares of life,
Where all is peaceful, bright and fair,
My home is there, my home is there.

Away from sorrow, toil and pain,
Away from worldly loss and gain,
From all temptation, tears and care,
My home is there, my home is there.

Take away this hope and we had better never been born. We see as through a glass darkly here, and it does not satisfy; we long for a sight of the glories that await the elect without a vail between. It is this Adamic flesh we are so tired of, the image or likeness of the man of sin. We long to be clothed upon with our house from above. In it we will have no consciousness of sin, or rather there will be no sin to be conscious of. It seems that to know good and evil is to be like God, for he said, The man has become as one of us. The difference was that God, who was from above, could not sin, but man from beneath loved sin and lived in it as soon as he had knowledge of it. But I need not speak of these things, for you know all about them. When I read sister Ellison's reply to what you said about faith without works being dead, and you had no works to bring, I wept. Well and fit was her reply in the words of an inspired saint: "Vainly we offer each ample oblation," &c. I sat down and wrote her a few lines, as she had not yet answered my last letter to her; but now I have her good long letter, and I am so glad that she shared it with you. I feel that I have nothing to draw from to-day, I am helpless and lame and poor. It is a great blessing if we can stay ourselves upon the Lord when we have no light. How very true it is that we will lie down in sorrow if we try to warm ourselves by coals of our own kindling. It must be a live coal from off the altar of God that can yield us any comfort wherewith we can comfort others. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, and it is a great blessing if we are entirely reconciled to his will regarding us in all things. There have been seasons when I have felt my heart glow and burn with love at the thought of being entirely in his hands in all things. Every way I turn he meets me there in the power of his might, saying, I am the Lord, and beside me there is no Savior. He is there if I turn to the right; he is there if I turn to the left; he is there if I go forward, he is there if I turn back. I am surrounded on all sides by his power. I have at times felt the sweetness of this enveloping power, and would break out in a hymn of praise and thanksgiving; but

this is only a faint taste of heaven. I would be so glad to feel this power always. December would be as pleasant as May were he always thus nigh. O how sweet if we can trust him in every case, look to him for every help, carry every burden to him, and leaning thus move along. What a cold and dreary thing religion would be if we must always worship the Savior afar off, but bless and adore his holy name, he draws near to them who are afflicted and that mourn in Zion. There comes an assurance from within that he has all power, and we have nowhere else to flee. He has taught us that there is no help outside of him, and although we do feel so helpless and dead to the things we so earnestly crave, yet we cannot give up crying to him for mercy and for forgiveness of our sins. Now I am again reminded that you know all this for yourself.

I will close; I feel that I have gone beyond my measure. Please excuse me, I feel to be so foolish. I hope this may find you in health, also your loved ones. Write when you feel to. Truly I feel that this line of communication is being cut off from us. There is some hindrance, what is it? We long to do the will of God if we only knew what it is concerning us. Dear sister, I hope you may feel to pray for me.

Your very unworthy sister,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—The SIGNS OF THE TIMES for December has fallen into my hands, and I read with much inter and fellowship your letter therein. A dear afflicted old sister Simmons, of Horton, Kansas, sends me her SIGNS to read. I do appreciate her kindness, and feel that I have been edified and instructed a great deal by its perusal. I have become very much interested in the correspondence between you and sister Pultz, with your loving messages to each other. You will surely realize that it is as bread cast upon the water, that is borne you know not whither. Often I have restrained myself from taking my pen to try to write to you or to her, for I thought it would be so sweet to join myself to your company, but I am too unworthy of such company. But in this last letter, when you spoke of your loneliness in having no one to whom you could speak of these most precious things, it struck such a responsive chord in my heart that I said to myself, I will just try to write to her and let her know there is another not so very far away who has spent so many lonely days and months in the same condition. I love my relatives naturally as well as any one can and as much as I ever did, but I trust that there has been given me a love for my kindred spiritually which transcends that natural love as the brightness of the sun outshines the pale light of the moon. Life has been a long, dark day of sorrow and disappointment naturally to me, with just a rift in the clouds now and then to give me a glimpse of what a bright, happy life might be, and often when I have felt that I must sink in despair a strengthening word of comfort from God, spoken by some dear brother or sister in Christ, has given me courage to struggle on and try a little longer. A word spoken in due season, how good it is! Lonely and desolate as this life is, I have the past winter been given more quiet inward enjoyment of the things of the Spirit than usual for me, for unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given, which has enabled me for a time to look not on the things of my own, but on the

things of another, and that other is Christ. I do feel that, unworthy as I am, he has taken of the things of his and shown them unto me, and has given me sweet meditations on portions of his word. When my two little ones were at school and I was here alone from morning until evening, I was sometimes made to feel that I was not alone, that his actual presence was right here in the room with me. Such seasons are indeed precious and rare with me, so rare that it seems presumptuous, and I fear misleading to speak of them, but,

O never should it be concealed
He has his love to us revealed;
Of all my sins a pardon sealed,
I see his precious favor.
O may I still in him rejoice,
And praise him with a cheerful voice,
Until the theme my tongue employs
In heaven above forever.

We think how pleasant it would be if it had pleased the Lord to set the bounds of the people so that the children of God might all have been near each other and able to speak often one to another, instead of being scattered abroad, one of a city and two of a family among those that hate them and would banish them from the face of the earth if they dared; but ye are "the salt of the earth," and it is not good for the salt to be all in one place, but must be distributed throughout the whole earth to properly preserve it. We are to be as the dew and as the showers upon the grass. We read of the terrible havoc wrought by the rushing of many waters in the dreadful floods that have overwhelmed some cities in the east. It is very destructive for so much water to be all in one body, but how refreshing are the showers upon the grass and the gentle dew that extends over the whole earth, as the dew of Hermon, for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore. In our loneliness and longing for the companionship of those of like precious faith we do not realize what we are to those about us, for wherever the salt is there will be a blessing, even life for evermore; not eternal, but for all time to come, until the salt, the elect, is gathered in; then it will be preserved no longer, for it is only for the elect's sake that the world stands. Dear sister, I am a living verification of the truth of the words: There is none that doeth good, no, not one. For I know that in my flesh dwells no good thing; but poor, weak and worthless though I am, I have a rich almighty Friend, and it has pleased him to bring me through great tribulation and bitter sorrow, and place me where I hope to have more church privileges in the future. I have been blessed to attend our little association nearly every year, though often enduring heavy persecution on account of it, and once in a great while I get to attend church meeting. I have tried to enjoy the world and striven for domestic peace and happiness as much as any one ever did, but it was not for me.

MARY ELLISON.

POCA, W. Va.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find a letter written to me by our highly esteemed aged brother, Elder P. W. Sawin, of Shelbyville, Ky., which I would be pleased to have published in the SIGNS if it meets your approval. He is almost blind, and his articles for the SIGNS will be missed by all lovers of the truth. I learned to love him long before I met him. His writings have been, and are yet, comforting to me, and no doubt to hundreds of others.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., October 16, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER MCCLANAHAN:—You no doubt think you have passed out of my mind—forgotten, but I can truly say you have not, though my silence would indicate it. We did regret your failure to get to Turners, and more greatly your illness. I left from there for Canada on a five weeks' trip, and thought I would surely write you from there, but it was almost impossible, going from place to place as I did. I had not been there in over four years, and it seemed everybody claimed a visit, if only a short one, so in the five weeks I visited over seventy homes, and then did not get around; so you see my chance for writing was small. Since I came home I am inexcusable in part, but have often had a mind to write, and a little ground for excuse, one of which is my impaired eyesight, as you will see by these lines. I can barely see to get around; in strange places I must be led. I desire to be thankful that it is no worse, though I now seem to be losing ground. Brother Billy Baird was here three or four days (left yesterday). He was inquiring after you and has much love for you for the truth's sake. He is a noble, good brother, a real true friend to the cause. He came up to be at the Turners meeting, but all public places are closed on account of Spanish influenza; nine deaths in and around Campbellsburg. We are reasonably well, but I am sad and lonely, and time hangs heavily on me, as I can neither read nor work. My visit in Canada was very pleasant indeed; for a time I was favored to forget the things that are behind, and in spirit lifted above the things of time, and so built up spiritually and physically, but since my return I am much cast down, and long for mortality to be swallowed up of life, or the end of this life, having hope of a better life. I feel that I fill but a very small space here, and am of little use. I sincerely hope this will find you much better, or back to your normal state, and the rest of the family in usual or reasonable health. I shall always remember my pleasant visit with you and at your home.

I will close, as it is very difficult for me to write. I am writing under a strong reflector desk lamp (electric), otherwise could not read what I write. I humbly beg your forgiveness for not writing sooner. The God of love be with you.

With much love and very best wishes for you all, I am, I hope, yours in Christ,

P. W. SAWIN.

GRAFTON, W. Va., Oct. 31, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I left Terre Haute, Ind., October 8th, and arrived the next morning at Hancock, W. Va., and from there was taken twenty miles across the Potomac River into the mountains of Pennsylvania, where I met with a goodly number of sound Old School Predestinarian Baptists. These brethren are strongly entrenched in the doctrine of God our Savior as it has always been held and firmly maintained by the Old School Baptists. They rejoice in the truth of absolute predestination, salvation by grace alone, and the final perseverance of all the elect of God through grace to glory. They have no fellowship with the heresy of conditionalism, nor with any other type of Arminianism. They have always had sound teachers, and they know the truth, and the truth has made them free. They gave me a most hearty welcome, and entertained me as though I were a prince of royal blood. I was among them about ten days, and preached every night but one, and twice in the daytime. I shall never forget the manner

in which they received the truth. While there I met Elder Henderson, of West Virginia, and was invited to visit the churches among which he labors, but I decided to go on, while I was so near, and visit the oldest Baptist churches in America. Therefore when I left Pennsylvania I went on toward the sun rising as far as Washington, D. C., and Baltimore, Md., but when I reached the latter city I was told that, owing to Spanish influenza, all public meetings were forbidden, consequently I immediately turned about, and came directly to this place, arriving here on a Saturday. The following day I attended the meeting at the old Amnon Church, and there met Elder Henderson again. It rained all day, and only a few of the brethren were at the meeting, however we had a blessed time. The next night I preached in a private house to a small congregation, composed largely of Methodists, and they did not seem to appreciate the truth. A few nights later they made an appointment for me at brother Corder's house. About fifty of his neighbors and friends were present, and all seemed to enjoy the truth. It was a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. After that I went up to Indian Creek Church and spent Saturday and Sunday, preaching both days. Owing to the prevalence of the influenza but a few were out—five on Saturday, and the same number on Sunday, yet the Lord blessed me in preaching his word. I was forcibly reminded of hearing Elder Isaiah Guymon, thirty-nine years ago last summer, preach for three and one-half hours to the same number. I have always considered that the ablest sermon I ever heard. From Indian Creek I returned to Grafton, stopping over night with a precious brother in Fairmont. I am now at this writing at the Baltimore and Ohio depot, waiting for my train to carry me back to the glorious Southland, "the land of the wreck and the tomb," where I go to spend the winter in trying to rest, read and write. I am weary and exhausted, physically, and need rest. The blessed Lord has put it into the hearts of some precious brethren, whom I have never seen, to offer me a place of rest and quietude during the coming winter. To Him be the praise, yet I would not fail to thank the brethren in advance for their unexpected kindness toward me. I have been in meetings almost every day, and much of the time at night as well, for many months, and as a result am well-nigh exhausted. Physicians have lately told me that unless I take some weeks of absolute rest my preaching days will soon be over, but that if I rest a while I may hold out for several years to come.

Before I close this rambling letter I want to say through the dear old SIGNS that in my heart I feel to thank all the precious brethren and friends whom I have met during this eventful year, and among whom I have labored, for the great and unmerited kindness to me. I realize that I have done nothing to deserve their uniform kindness, nor can I see how one so vile and unworthy as I am could be the recipient of so much and so great consideration as I have enjoyed during the present year. It would afford me pleasure to speak of them all by name, but time and space will not allow of this, and, lest some one might think me invidious, I shall not do so, but I carry them all in my heart, and shall until my dying day. It may be that later, and in another place, I shall mention most or all of them. However, their names are in the book of life, and this is far better.

I beg an interest in the earnest prayers of all God's true and humble saints whose eyes may be permitted to fall upon this poorly written letter.

BEN H. IRWIN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1918.

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ZEPHANIAH I. 7.

"HOLD thy peace at the presence of the Lord God; for the day of the Lord is at hand: for the Lord hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid his guests."

The word of the Lord came unto Zephaniah declaring wonderful things shortly to come to pass, yet several hundred years elapsed before they took place. To the prophet the time seemed long, and the promise much delayed, but with the Lord the time was as one day. The word of the Lord, which is quick and powerful, has continued from the beginning of the world to come unto man, and never has failed to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart and mind, nor has it failed to turn the world upside down, so far as the thoughts, imaginations and plans of the head or mind of man are concerned. A revelation of God's power and will contrary to every imagination of man always accompanies the word of the Lord. The man or woman to whom it comes is made to stand still, amazed, being filled with wonder, admiration and praise. One of old said, I was dumb, I dared not open my mouth. Indeed, many references are made of silence at the coming of the word of the Lord unto man in old testament times. Zephaniah was only one of many who were made to be dumb at the appearance of the Lord God. The effect is the same now, and ever will be while the world stands. Man has always had a will, mind and thoughts of his own, especially with reference to salvation, and no power of nature can change man's ideas along this line; not even the most powerful arguments of Paul ever caused one to lay down the natural notions of the salvation of man. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and they have his covenant shown to them. Well is it said, Vain is the help of man, and he who makes man his trust is cursed, because he is still under the law, having neither knowledge of God nor conception of his word.

By reading the preceding verses to our text it will be seen that every thought, every imagination and every work of man, on which so many depended, should be brought to naught, and pass away as the dew before the morning sun. This embraces the revelation given Zephaniah in the coming of the word of the Lord unto him. It may be that the command to hold his peace brought him into fellowship with Job, who put his hand over his mouth, or, in other words, held his peace, when the Lord spake to him out of the whirlwind, when all things were dashed to pieces before him, when brought to know how far he was out of the way when he verily thought he was right. How well we remember when at the presence of the Lord God that our mouth was closed, and all our natural hopes of heaven blasted, and from that day to the present moment our mouth has never been opened to speak the things as before, nor has the slightest hope of peace with God by our own works ever returned. Our experience therefore teaches us that the silence of man at the presence of the Lord God is forever, and that the spider-

web hope is destroyed forever. How utterly silent was Paul on justification before God by the deeds of the law after he had the revelation of the Lord God and his sacrifice: the Lamb. Zephaniah was told that the day of the Lord was at hand, even though, as already said, it was hundreds of years in the future, if the day in which the Sacrifice was to be offered was the day meant, and we have no doubt that it was. A day in which there are no clouds, no darkness, no setting Sun, but one day, the day of the Lord God, the day of salvation, the acceptable day. In this day there are no types, no shadows, no new moons, no sabbath days, no Levitical priesthood, no blood of goats and calves offered for sin, no ark of the covenant carried from place to place by men, no law written upon tables of stone, but instead we have the antitype of all types, the substance of all shadows, the Sabbath, or gospel rest, the High Priest after the order of Melchisedec, without beginning of days or the end of life, this Priest abideth forever; we have the new and everlasting covenant by which sinners are made nigh to God, the blood which redeemed us from death and forever justified us in the eyes of God. Such a day is surely the day of the Lord, and in speaking of it one of old said, This is the day the Lord hath made, in it let us rejoice and be glad. Yes, the Lord has made all the days, or light, that man has ever or can ever know. Uuderstanding of the mysteries of God is light—day. How merciful the Lord God is to shine in the hearts of his people to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, while darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people. What a blessed comfort in these trying times of war, disease and death to be settled in faith, to know that the Lord God is above and under all things, and that not a sparrow can fall to the ground without him. To know that the fall of every one of our sons, as well as the fall of principalities and powers, is acccording to his will and purpose, for his glory and for the benefit and uplifting of man. To know that he is God, and doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, is indeed a solid foundation. The Lord will not forsake his people, nor will he forsake our nation, which he hath blessed above all nations of the earth. May we all be still under the weight of his mighty hand, knowing that he is God.

"The Lord hath prepared a sacrifice." The word "sacrifice" means more than the shedding of blood, it means to give up that which is most precious to the holder or owner of the thing given. In days of old when the lamb, kid or bull was to be offered, the very finest and very best, the most valuable of the flock or herd was the one, or ones, selected. Nothing faulty in any sense could be accepted as a sacrifice. To more fully emphasize the word "sacrifice" we will mention the giving up of our sons in this present war as the sacrifice, not only of our homes, but of the nation, for the peace and freedom of our land. Many are the fathers and mothers who know to-day better than ever what "sacrifice" means, and can understand more fully the sacrifice the Lord God made in the gift of his only begotten Son, that sinners might live and have peace with God—the peace which passeth understanding. This Sacrifice God prepared. Jesus said, In burnt offerings and sacrifices thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart. A body thou

hast prepared me. This Sacrifice of necessity had to be made in order to be one with his people under the law of sin and death, to be tempted in all points like as they are, that he might bear their sins in his own body, that he might suffer, bleed and die that they be sanctified unto God by the one offering. On the other hand, it was necessary that he be God in order to perfection—without spot or blemish, without sin, holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. No sacrifice of earth could take away sins, therefore God sent his Son, God manifest in the flesh, to do what the blood of goats and calves could not do, what the law could not do, it being weak through the flesh. The law could not make the comers thereunto perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, by the which we are sanctified. This was the Lord God's work, and it is marvelous in our eyes. After the Lamb was slain, the offering made, the sacrifice complete, the Lord "bid his guests," and there was such power in the bidding that from the ends of the earth his sons and daughters came, and continue to come, to the marriage supper, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God. They are his guests, his fellows. His law is within their hearts, and their delight is to do the will of their God and King in his house with believers enrolled, with believers to live and to die, and through death to enter the glorious presence of God and the Lamb, there to enjoy the fullness of salvation through the Sacrifice prepared of the Lord God.

K.

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Middletown, N. Y.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Lexington Association, in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, October 2nd and 3rd, 1918, to the Elders and messengers composing the same, and to those of like precious faith with us, greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN:—"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." So then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. "And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." "And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight." "And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales; and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized." "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures; and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." "For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

JOHN CLARK, Moderator.
JAMES AVERY, Clerk.
O. F. BALLARD, Ass't Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Anna McColl, widow of Duncan B. McColl, died at her home in Ekfrid, Ontario, May 20th, 1918, after a long illness. Sister McColl had been a great sufferer from rheumatism for two years, although she was able to be about and attend to her household duties until August, 1917, when she took to her bed and was unable to be up except to sit in a chair for a change of position. She was born in 1850, making her stay on earth 68 years. She was married to Duncan B. McColl in 1870, and to that union were born three children, two sons and one daughter, all of whom are still living. Her husband preceded her in death forty-three years. Her long widowhood has proven the word of the blessed Master that he will never leave nor forsake his children. Truly the promises of the holy Scriptures have been fulfilled to her that he will be a Father to the fatherless and the widow's God and portion. Sister McColl was received in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church July 12th, 1905, and baptized by Elder W. I. Carnell. She lived a faithful and devoted life to the church and her many friends, to whom she was ever ready to do deeds of kindness. Her home was a welcome place to her kindred in Christ, whom she loved for the truth's sake.

The funeral was held from her late residence, and was largely attended by her brethren and sisters of the church and her many friends, who came to show their respect for one who was truly worthy of their highest esteem.

May the dear Lord bless her kind and loving children, who mourn the loss of a faithful and devoted mother. J. B. SLAUSON.

Mrs. Lina W. Beck, pioneer resident of Montgomery County, Ind., died October 30th, 1918, at her home on East Market St., Crawfordsville, Ind. She was the daughter of Chilion and Anne Johnson. She was born in Crawfordsville March 20th, 1832, and was one of the first children to be born in Montgomery County. The deceased was a lifelong resident of Crawfordsville and vicinity. Her early life was passed in a cabin on the site of the present Y. M. C. A. building, and she lived during the principal part of her married life in the house in which she died. She knew well and loved deeply the city of Crawfordsville. She was united in marriage to Robert F. Beck March 20th, 1858, and survived him almost sixteen years. The children born to that union were Walter, who died in infancy; Lucy C., deceased June, 1891; Anna M. and Susan K., of Crawfordsville, and Mrs. Gertrude Beck Weaver, of Rockford, Wash. In her youth she united with the Primitive Baptist Church, which she attended regularly, and lived an exemplary christian life. She loved her church and was a constant reader of the Bible. She was a writer for the periodicals of the church, especially for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and was known to the readers of that publication as an excellent writer.

DEAR EDITORS:—I send you a clipping from the Crawfordsville Journal of October 30th. Sister Beck was ripe for the harvest. She was a faithful servant. She gave directions as to her funeral, selecting the text, which was 1st Thessalonians iv. 13, 14. The hymns she selected were: "Tarry with me, O my Savior," and "O where shall rest be found?" I tried to preach from the text to a company of her neighbors, brethren and sisters. At meetings she would speak of the goodness of God to us all, and would often ask us to sing, "Hungry and faint and poor, behold us, Lord, again." She loved to hear preaching. She was born the year the SIGNS was established. I think she and her father were readers of the SIGNS from its first issue. She was a close friend of Elder Durand, and admired Elder Chick as a precious gift to our people. We shall miss her in our meetings, but are sure our loss is her gain.

J. H. OLIPHANT.

Benjamin Roosevelt Kissam Burke was born at Bound Brook, N. J., Feb. 18th, 1850, and met a sudden and violent death at the N. J. Central R. R. station in that town June 24th, 1918. He was traveling from his home in Hopewell to his place of business in Dunellen, N. J., when the accident occurred. Mr. Burke was twice married, his first wife being Miss Mary Bloodgood, who died in 1890, leaving two children: Marjorie L. and Louis L. Burke. In 1895 he was married to Miss Kate Fisher, daughter of the late James S. and Catharine L. Fisher, of Ringoes, N. J., who survives him, as do his son and daughter. He was a devoted husband, a loving father and a faithful friend. His genial disposition, absolute honesty and integrity of character and his upright life won him many friends, who deeply sympathize with his afflicted and sorrowing family.

The funeral, which was conducted by Elder C. W. Vaughn, pastor of the Old School Baptist Church of Hopewell, assisted by Mr. A. S. Phelps, of Netherwood, took place at the residence of his brother-in-law, Dr. C. R. P. Fisher, of Bound Brook, on June 27th, and interment was in the Burke family plot in the Bound Brook Cemetery.

Sarah Ellen Gott, daughter of James and Elizabeth Busenbark, was born near Crawfordsville, Ind., April 29th, 1834, and died October 17th, 1918, aged 84 years, 5 months and 18 days. She was united in marriage to Willis S. Gott, of Marion, Linn Co., Iowa, August 21st, 1861. Eight children were born to them, two sons and six daughters, three daughters and her husband preceding her in death. She pro-

fessed a hope in Christ and with her husband was baptized in May, 1879, by Elder E. Ping, uniting with the Greens Grove Church of Old School Baptists, and was ever a faithful member. Her home was always a home for the church, and many times the regular church meetings and associations have been held there. During the last year she had regular meetings at her home, as she had become too feeble to go away. It was ever a pleasure and comfort to her to meet with the church. Often when the children came to visit her she would ask them to sing the good old hymns she loved. She was a true christian woman, giving evidence of a good hope through grace—a kind and loving wife and mother.

The funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder B. L. Nay, who spoke very comfortingly to the relatives and friends. A vacant place is left in the home and church, but we sorrow not as those who have no hope; our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by her son, DAVID GOTT.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

J. H. Rockafellow, N. Y., $8.00; "Contributor," N. J., $2.00; L. D. Rose, Texas, $1.00; Miss Margaret Williams, Va., $5.00; Mrs. Nettie Rogers, Ky., $2.00.

APPOINTMENTS.

NOTHING preventing, there will be meetings as follows:

Casper Fetter's, 117 South Montgomery St., Trenton, N. J., Friday, December 13th, 8 p. m.; Stockton, N. J., Saturday, 14th, 2:30 p. m., Mrs. Horner's; Locktown, N. J., Sunday, 15th, 10:30 a. m.; Frenchtown, N. J., 4 p. m.; Grandon, N. J., Monday, 16th, brother Demott's, 8 p. m. D. M. VAIL.

MEETINGS.

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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(Judges v. 11.)

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THE

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SEMMA E. CORDER,
PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 86. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1918. NO. 24.

CORRESPONDENCE.

1 SAMUEL VII. 12.

"THEN Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

From a careful reading of the scriptural account of Israel for several years prior to this time as recorded here, we find idolatry, greed and much evil practiced in Israel. It seems to have been a time when men little regarded the name of the Lord and lightly esteemed his guardian care. Such times have ever come, and I suppose will continue with time. It shows that what God does is forever, that the changeableness and waywardness of man remain the same, also the unchangeableness and faithfulness of God remain unchanged.

In the first chapter of this book we are given an account of the birth of Samuel, how Hannah, his mother, prayed to the Lord while she stood in the temple that she might be given a son, and vowed a vow that if the Lord would look on her affliction, and give her a man child, she would give him back to the Lord all the days of his life, and that no razor should come upon his head, which prayer the Lord did answer, and which vow she most faithfully kept, and when the proper time came she brought Samuel to Eli, the priest, in the temple and left him there, "and the child did minister unto the Lord before Eli the priest." About this time the sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, committed many sins with the Lord's people, and caused them to transgress, which was displeasing to the Lord, so much so that he called Samuel, who was yet but a child, and revealed to him that which he would do unto the house of Eli, and in the fulfillment of which much trouble was come upon Israel, for they had sinned greatly, and the Philistines prevailed against them, and the ark of God was taken and carried to Ashdod and set in the house of Dagon, a god of the Philistines, whereupon much evil and grief came upon them by reason of the ark of God being among them, and the people begged that it might be sent back to Israel with a trespass offering, and it was sent to Kirjath-jearim, which was in the land of Judah, where it abode for twenty years, and all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord. It would seem that there had been quite a change come over the people during this time. Samuel was about thirty years old, presumably,

and was a recognized prophet in Israel, and one on whom Israel relied. Often in reading the Scriptures we lose sight of the fact that years of time elapsed between different accounts given, which causes us at times to feel that maybe each miraculous event happened in rapid succession, but men had to be raised up and fitted for certain things in those days as much as now, and as much so now as then. God is unchangeable, he remains the same, and without doubt many and startling changes had worked among the children of Israel in the intervening time of the departure of the ark out of Shiloh into the hands of the Philistines, where it remained seven months, and its twenty years stay in Kirjath-jearim, and in this time Israel repented, or turned from the evil of the way they had gone in, now seeking the Lord in sorrow, in humiliation and contrition of heart and spirit. The Lord does not bless us because of, or for the reason, that we repent, or turn from our evil ways, but the blessing is in the repentance, and we turn because of the blessed feeling of sorrow that the Lord gives. Upon the instruction of Samuel the people were gathered to Mizpeh, which place is the watch-tower of the Lord, as the name signifies, a place where faithful ones stood on guard as watchmen of the Lord for Israel, watching for the approach of the enemy, to warn Israel of their coming so they might be prepared. Samuel, being the prophet, stood, as it were, between the people and their God. In those days there were ones raised up to stand between the people and God, as an ambassador or an interpreter, also to offer the offerings of the people as sacrifices before the Lord. Now they were all come unto Mizpeh, and while they were fasting and acknowledging their sins, and Samuel judged Israel in Mizpeh, it was made known to them that the Philistines were come up against them, and Israel was afraid, and besought Samuel to "cease not to cry unto the Lord our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines." We have here manifested repentance and an acknowledgment of the power of God as being able to save them from the enemy. Samuel took a sucking lamb for a burnt offering and offered it wholly unto the Lord, and cried unto the Lord for Israel, and the Lord heard his cry, and while this was going on the Philistines drew near to the battle against Israel. The time for deliverance had now come for Israel, but they were afraid, they realized their helplessness and could not fight, "but the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel," who followed them and smote them. But the victory was the Lord's, which Samuel, the prophet and judge of Israel, acknowledges in the words of the subject, when he took a stone and set it up between Mizpeh and Shen. In this incident it would seem that Samuel is a striking type of Christ, and in his offering the lamb as a sacrifice wholly unto the Lord typifies Christ in his great sacrificial offering of himself wholly unto the Lord for the sins of his people, for he poured out his soul unto death and the enemy was overcome. The setting up of the stone by Samuel between Mizpeh and Shen typifies Christ after his resurrection, a monument of the Lord's faithfulness, a stone of help, standing forever between God's people and the enemy. The word "Shen" equals "tooth," which would signify destruction. So the stone Samuel set up stood between the people Israel in Mizpeh and destruction. Therefore in the death of Christ he

conquered him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and forever discomfited him, and he (Christ) is the stone raised up to stand forever between the Israel of God and destruction, an insurmountable barrier standing forever between us and the archenemy. The Lord be praised for his mercy, which endureth forever, for this unspeakable gift. Samuel called this stone "Ebenezer," which means "stone of help," saying, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." That is, thus far the Lord has helped us. All the days of our life he has been our help, even when we were unmindful of it. He has brought us all the way, to this stone of help which stands between us and the enemy, an acknowledgment that the Lord has done all. At this time the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more unto the coasts of Israel, for the Lord's hand was against them all the days of Samuel. None of the priests or prophets abided forever, for they were men the same as we, but were raised up for a purpose, to show forth the power, love and mercy of God to his people, in that they were types of and pointing to Christ who was to come, and the prophets and priests whom the Lord raises up to-day point to the Christ which is come. As it is to-day so it was then, each had his day and filled the place the Lord designed for him. From that time Israel had rest all the days of Samuel, and now when One who is greater than Samuel is come, he whom Samuel and all types and shadows pointed to, has by his one great offering answered every demand of the law, forever satisfied justice, effectually overcoming the enemy, forever perfecting us, making us kings and priests unto God; and as Israel had peace and rest from the enemy all the reign of Samuel, so shall we have rest forever, for the reign of Christ is forever, and because he lives we live. Samuel appears plainly as a type of Christ in many instances. His birth was peculiar; in the temple of the Lord he was a prophet and a deliverer, standing between the people and God, crying unto God for them, setting up a stone of help to stand between the people and destruction. Can we not say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us"? Has he not helped us to feel that Christ stands for us and against our enemies, between us and destruction? Is he not the Stone of help, an ever-present help in the time of need, the chief stone, the head of the corner? Has not his goodness and mercy followed us all the days of our lives? Can we stand without him? The chiefest among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely.

I have written this for publication in the SIGNS at the special request of a dear sister, who prefers her name withheld. If it is the Lord's will, may she find a morsel of comfort, and give God the praise. "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

Your unworthy brother,

F. SELBY FISHER.

HERNDON, Va., Nov. 4, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I received your card, and thought to have answered it before this, but have been so busy I put it off until now.

In regard to you coming to preach for us this month, I will speak for myself, (and I think it will be the mind of the brethren at Frying Pan), Come, for the epidemic is abating, and we long to see you and hear you preach again. Still, I feel to be such a castaway I fear that preaching will not reach my case, for it seems to me that the Lord has cast me off forever, and I feel to be alone, as

the sparrow upon the housetop, yet this morning, and no longer than this morning, the following Scriptures came into my mind: "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not." Again, "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Again, "For the Lord's portion is his people: Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." Now after musing over the meaning of the above named Scriptures the thought came, Am I one of the Lord's portion? Am I a part of the lot of God's inheritance? If so, then I will be kept by his almighty power, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Now another comes into my mind: I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy sins; return unto me, for I have redeemed thee. With all of my unbelief, and the spirit of infidelity, must I contradict the holy word of God, which says, For I am the Lord, I change not? No, not one shadow of his turning. He changes not, and the sons and daughters of God's inheritance can never be consumed, for it is of the Lord's mercies they are not consumed, because his compassions fail not, and he changes not. While I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me, I am made to feel as Paul did when he said, For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing. Again, For to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. Yes, I find nothing good in my flesh, still I seem to have a little hope, yet at times it is hope against hope, and I am at a loss just now to know why I am writing this poorly composed letter to you, for you heard that I had stopped writing letters on Scripture many months past. I hope you will excuse me in my poor efforts to jot this much down. I am still troubled with rheumatism; I have it in both arms and it gives me much pain to work, still I am trying to do a little every day.

I hope this will find you and yours well, and that you will be able to come and serve us next meeting day.

Sincerely yours,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

BY GRACE YE ARE SAVED.

THIS is admitted by all of the different orders or so-called religious denominations that are common among us. This being true, then why are we so much divided? Is it because of a misunderstanding of the meaning of the word "grace," or is it because of unbelief? Do we understand what grace is? There is one thing that is true: grace saves. Then let us search the Scriptures to find out what grace is. Paul says that it is the gift of God. Webster says it is the free, unmerited love and favor of God, the spring or source of all the benefits men receive from him. We find that there is perfect agreement in this; then the only reason that we all are so divided is because of unbelief. Paul enlarged on the words at the head of this article by saying: "Through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." At this point is where all unbelievers undertake to set up a conditional theory, and by so doing deny the plain wording of the text. They admit that salvation is by grace, but faith is not; that faith is the act of the creature, and by so doing frustrate the grace of God. (Gal. ii. 21.) It is most commonly believed that faith, repentance and belief are necessary to salvation, and are required of man in order to eternal life. I want to say just here that life precedes all and every ac-

tion of man, both in nature and in grace, either in time or eternity, and that all men live natural lives and can understand natural things just as God is pleased to give them understanding, but they do not understand the things of the Spirit until they are quickened by the Spirit. So then if faith, repentance and belief pertain unto life and godliness, it is true that the living repent, believe and have faith. Faith is the fruit of the Spirit. (Gal. v. 22.) It is the substance of things hoped for. (Heb. xi. 1.) Jesus is its author and finisher. (Heb. xii. 2.) I cannot see how Jesus could be the author and finisher of anything that depended upon man to perform. Faith is the victory that overcometh the world. God giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the living that repent; godly sorrow brings it. Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in Jesus' name among all nations. Why not preach it in the name of the creature? Jesus is exalted to give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel. Belief is given to the living. "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."—Phil. i. 29. We believe according to the working of his power. It is by him that we believe in God. He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. To be a believer in Jesus is to believe what he says, believe that he saves, believe that grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life through him, believe that the gift of God is eternal life. This no man can teach. To know God is life eternal. All such knowledge is given by revelation. The word "grace" is consoling to him who has hope in God, but grace is not all included in five letters. Purpose and grace were of God in eternity given in Christ before time began. With us everything that makes for our peace and happiness here and hereafter is grace. Is this putting it too strong for you? If so, please let me still believe it. I can neither tell when it began nor when it will end. O how little we knew when we were sorrowing on account of sin that it was God's mercy leading us. We wanted our way about these things, but God was leading us in the way that we knew nothing of. O how we still hope for his love and mercy to follow us through this life to life eternal.

As ever, yours in hope,

D. R. TURNER.

CERULEAN, Ky.

MASON CITY, Iowa, July 3, 1918.

DEAR ELDER KER:—The following lines were penned by Mrs. Harriet Harding Penny, who celebrated her ninety-second birthday, and she recalled the memory of this event. I am sending them on to you, as her heart and thoughts are always with her Old School Baptist friends, and consider it worthy of notice that her memory is so clear to recall this bit of history of the New Vernon Church and written by her at this remarkable age. She sends her greetings this morning, and is well, and happy to be in the care of her heavenly Father, and awaits his will.

Respectfully, a niece of Mrs. Penny,

FANNY H. ARTHUR.

MASON CITY, Iowa, June 15, 1918.

MY DEAR OLD BAPTIST FRIENDS:—Ninety-two years ago this day the Old School Baptists were holding their first association at New Vernon, N. Y. They had organized the church and built them a house to worship in, and enjoyed it. After services were over many of them came to my grandfather's home. He

was afterward Elder Amos Harding. That night my grandmother was called to the home of her eldest son, Harvey Harding, and there came a little girl, who is now writing to you. I have walked with a crutch for the last fifteen years, and had many sorrows and cares, but my heavenly Father still leadeth me. Mine eyes are very dim, but I can see to read the Old School Baptist paper most of the time, which is a great comfort to me. Those old soldiers of the cross carry me right along with them, and the editorials are very good. What has become of Elder Durand? I have been looking for a letter penned by his hand. How well I remember when he came to the church. I was not a member, but had a listening ear, and much enjoyed his talks. What a sacrifice for a young lawyer to come among the poor Old Baptists.

I had better close for fear I will say something wrong.

(MRS.) W. PENNY.

[SINCE the above letter was written Elder Durand has been called to his great reward, mention of which was made in the last number of the SIGNS, but we have not as yet received his obituary notice for publication, although we are expecting it daily.—ED.]

BIVINS, Texas, Oct. 10, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find check for five dollars, which pays my subscription for another year, and for one of your Bagster Bibles, which you will please mail to my address. I have a desire to say that I have received a great deal of consolation and encouragement from reading the SIGNS, and I think sometimes that I will try to write a few words by way of encouragement to the dear brethren and sisters who contribute such soul-cherishing articles to its columns, but when I begin to consider myself, who I am and what I am, I shrink at the idea. When I first united with the church, in the year 1890, and viewed the dear old brethren and sisters, how good and sweet they looked, the thought entered my mind that when I became old I, too, would be good; but O my soul, as age comes on, instead of reaching that perfection I saw in those dear old souls I am continually growing worse. My life has been an entire failure, and now I will soon reach my sixty-first year in life, and cannot for my life look back and view myself except as the greatest sinner that was ever born of woman. I feel to know that if I am permitted to reach that haven of eternal rest it certainly will be alone through the goodness and mercy of an eternal and all-powerful God.

J. S. McLEOD.

FORT WORTH, Texas, Oct. 21, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I just want to write and tell you (or try, for I cannot begin to tell you) how much I appreciate the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It is such a dear, good paper to me I do not see how I could do without it; it is about all the preaching I get, as I am getting old, and so much of the time I do not feel like going out, and then the weather keeps me away many times. I take cold so easily that my children are afraid for me to go out unless the weather is fair and warm. I am seventy-seven years old, so you can see that I am not long for this old sinful world. I want you to know that I heartily indorse everything that is published in the SIGNS, and do not want to have to do without it as long as I live. You will find inclosed check for six dollars, two of it for the renewal of the SIGNS for myself, and two for the renewal of my sister, Mrs. M. M. Culwell,

1401 Grand Ave., Fort Worth, Texas. The remaining two is a gift from me to the SIGNS. I wish I had more to give. I have been taking the SIGNS for thirty years; too long to try to do without it now, when it seems to me I need it most. Love and best wishes to the SIGNS and all of its readers. Pray for me when all goes well with you. I am a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

Yours in hope of a brighter day,

(MRS.) L. J. RANDOLPH.

HAYMARKET, Va., May 19, 1917.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will inclose check for two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES another year, as I am so well pleased with it that I do not wish to do without it. I hear from many dear brethren and sisters in different parts of the world whom I seem drawn to, I hope, by the spirit of love, and many I never shall see in this life. It seems strange indeed that they tell my belief and my feelings better than I can myself. I would like to write you a letter to-day and tell you how much I love you all and how I have enjoyed reading your many good letters, but I feel destitute of all spiritual things, and unless God directs my pen and gives me something to write it will be impossible for me to write, for without him we can do nothing; all our dependence is in God. I have had many ups and downs in this life, but hope I have been enabled to feel and know what God does is just and right. May I ever be willing to submit to his holy will, and not murmur or complain at trifles, which I so often find myself doing. I am a poor, weak creature, with no strength of my own. My trust and hope are in God, who knows my every fault. I feel that we have been blessed with two good editors, and I have enjoyed their writings very much. Will brother Lefferts or Ker please give their views on the words found in Ecclesiastes iii. 22? I see I have made many mistakes, so will close by asking you to excuse all I have written amiss.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

L. S. UTTERBACK.

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110 ARLINGTON AVE., PITTSBURGH, Pa., Nov. 19, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have just finished reading the book I ordered from you—"Feast of Fat Things," and it was indeed a feast to me. God has been good to me, and I hope I am thankful to him for his goodness. I have been searching it seems a long time for such. Now I am still begging for more of his wonderful truth. I wish you would publish this, if space permits, and if there are any Baptists in or around this city who read it and know of a church within one hundred miles of here, I would appreciate hearing from them in regard to time of services, &c. I am not a member of God's visible kingdom, but have a hope that I am a member of the invisible. I enjoy the SIGNS OF THE TIMES much, and am proud to note you keep advertisements out. I feel sad over the news of Elder Silas Durand's death. I have heard of him and read after his pen a little as far back as memory will help me.

Respectfully,

SADIE M. PRICE.

BRIDGEPORT, W. Va., May 22, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find check for five dollars, two dollars of it to pay for the paper another year, and the rest to use as you see fit. I know everything is high at this time, and labor high and scarce, so I think it no more than right for the brethren who are able to give a little extra toward paying for the SIGNS, for I feel it would re-

lieve you a great deal under present circumstances. I should have sent this a month or two ago, but have been very busy putting in my crops, and kept putting it off until the present. Please excuse delay.

Your brother in Christ, if one at all,

A. B. CORDER.

[WE thank brother Corder for his kindness, and assure him we much appreciate his thoughtfulness, for, as he says, the price of everything is very high; but such letters as the above are very encouraging, and make us feel to thank God and take courage.—ED.]

1310 S. FIFTH ST., SPRINGFIELD, Ill.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Deeming it best for my health to spend January, February and March in a milder climate, I would like to ask through the SIGNS if any know of a place in Florida, southern Georgia or Alabama to board, with one or two rooms, or one room with screened sleeping porch, for light housekeeping, near a place where meals are given, or with family who will furnish a meal or two daily for two women with references, for three months after January 1st, in village, city or country.

(MRS.) E. J. BOLTON.

WINDSOR, Mo., Sept. 18, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed I send a draft of two dollars, for which you will continue to send me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES another year to the same address: Judge M. B. Merritt. I am his widow, and want to take it as long as I live; I prefer it to any other paper of its kind. The editorials and correspondence are splendid, and in accord with the Scriptures, so far as I can understand. I am in my ninety-fourth year since June 18th last, and very feeble, walking about some in the house with the use of my cane. My head and heart almost fail to serve me, and I am liable to pass away at any time. God grant that I may be ready when I am called, is the greatest desire of my poor sinful heart. I have three daughters and one son living; he is my youngest child, and is forty-seven years of age. I have twenty-one grandchildren living, also twenty great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild a year old. I hope you will excuse me, old as I am, for trespassing on your time, writing so much that is not of interest to you. It may be the last that you will ever hear direct from me. I am a friend of the SIGNS, and the printing is so plain and correct that I can read most of it without glasses.

(MRS.) S. A. MERRITT.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in December (29th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

BOOK OF EDITORIALS.

WE have on hand a number of copies of the Second Volume of Editorials. This book is made up of editorials written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES from March, 1842, to March, 1847, and contains 768 pages, neatly bound in cloth.

This work originally sold at two dollars per copy, but as a few of the pages are stained by water we will, as long as the supply lasts, sell them at the extremely low price of seventy-five cents per copy. Postage paid by us. All who wish this book should procure it now, as we will have no more after these are sold.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1918.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

CLOSE OF VOLUME EIGHTY-SIX.

WITH this number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the eighty-sixth volume closes, and as our long-established custom has been to make a report of its condition at this time of year, we shall not depart from the custom at this time. Many of our readers are interested in the paper's welfare, and it is a pleasure to give them any information necessary to establish the fact that the SIGNS is likely to continue to visit the many homes where it has so long been welcomed by its readers. Many papers of all descriptions have suspended during the war because of high prices of labor and materials, but the SIGNS has struggled along against the tide, and now hopes conditions may soon improve. Our subscribers have been kind and faithful, to which we ascribe our continuance during these trying times. Our subscription list is about the same as last year at this time. Some have been compelled to discontinue temporarily on account of the high cost of living, but increased wages have enabled others to subscribe and help the poor of the flock. We have had many letters of encouragement during the year, which have helped us greatly, and our appreciation of such kindness is in no small measure. Our correspondents have been faithful and kind in writing, and we want to assure them of the appreciation, not only of ourselves, but also of our readers. This is one of the greatest helps the SIGNS has, as it could not exist without communications for publication. Some of our old and able writers have gone the way of all the earth during the year. They will be sadly missed, and we have been often saddened by the announcement of the death of this and that one. Elder Silas H. Durand, one of our oldest and ablest ministers and writers, was called from earth to his eternal reward a few weeks ago. He had written for the SIGNS for more than fifty years, and perhaps no writer was more appreciated than he, nor will any communications be missed more than his. This office feels its loss greatly in his death, and extends sympathy to the dear family. This cruel war, now ended, and the influenza epidemic, have been the means of making thousands of sad homes among our nation and many of our kindred in Christ, and our hearts go out to them, and to all, in their sorrow and grief, and we pray God's grace to rest upon them, that they may be enabled to bow to his will and ways concerning them.

We now wish to thank all who have in any way contributed to the help and support of the SIGNS during the present year, and hope that the same kindness and forbearance may be continued during the year to come. We have all tried our best to make the SIGNS pleasant and profitable, and shall continue along this line while connected with its publication.

We now say farewell for 1918. K.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, Nov. 8th, 1918, at his home, Leesburg, Va., John Claude Marshall and Miss Grace Lee Walker, both of Arcola, Va.

By the same, Dec. 4th, 1918, at the home of the bride's parents, near Herndon, Va., Jether Dove and Miss Edna Lee Thompson.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at his residence, 118 Forest Ave., St. Thomas, Ontario, Dec. 4th, 1918, Ardah McCallum, of Dunwich, and Flora E. Shaw, of Dutton, Ont.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Benjamin Coulter Disharoon, beloved son of Mr. T. L. and Florence Disharoon, died October 9th, 1918, of influenza, aged 21 years, 4 months and 12 days. He was an unusually bright and intelligent young man, and highly esteemed by all who knew him. He was an advanced student in the University of Pennsylvania and an assistant instructor of Botany. He held an average of over 90 in his studies for three years, was elected a member of "Phi Beta Kappa," an honorary fraternity, at the end of his junior year, was also president of "Alphi Phi Delta," and president of the Naturalists Field Club of Pennsylvania; also for several months before his death he was a member of the Naval Reserves. He was a dear young man, with bright prospects in the world before him. During his illness he set forth to his sorrowing parents many sweet evidences of his acceptance in the Beloved. Shortly before he passed away he said to his father and mother: "See! he is here in the room; do you not see him?" His mother said, "Who?" and he solemnly answered, "God." He passed quietly away after kissing his parents good-bye.

He was buried in the Old School Baptist Cemetery in Salisbury, Md. Elder A. B. Francis read a hymn and spoke in prayer at the grave. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." May that blessing rest upon the family. B. F. COULTER.

Abram L. Boice died Nov. 11th, 1918, at his home in Loomis, N. Y., aged 81 years. He was the second son of Jacob and Mary Winchell Boice, and was born July 8th, 1837, at Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y. When three years old he moved with his parents to Tompkins, Delaware County, and in 1862 he was married to Betsey Wakeman, who died in the year 1875, leaving one daughter, now Mrs. Theron Hewitt. Three years later he was married to Henrietta Austin, who survives him, together with one daughter, Mrs. Vera Howes, of Trout Creek, N. Y., and two sons, A. J. and June C., both of Loomis, also five grandchildren and one sister, Mrs. Edwin Wakeman, of Walton, N. Y. The greater part of his life was spent on the farm where he ended his days. He was a good husband and loving father, and was very highly esteemed by those who knew him. For some years he had shown an interest in the things of God, attending the Old School Baptist meetings whenever possible. He loved to hear Jesus exalted, but felt too unworthy to ask a name with the visible church of God. His health failed for the past two years, but through all his sufferings he manifested a patience that made it a pleasure for his dear wife and children to minister to his necessities, and all that loving hands could possibly do was done for him. The day before he died he tried with his daughter to sing the beautiful hymn commencing, "Jesus, lover of my soul."

The funeral was held at the home and was very largely attended by those who knew and respected him. The writer tried to speak to the comfort of the bereaved ones. Interment was in the Walton Cemetery. The Lord bless the sorrowing ones with resignation to his will. GEO. RUSTON.

Robert B. Bowden, our dear little boy, was born Dec. 10th, 1913, and died Nov. 5th, 1918, aged 4 years, 10 months and 25 days. His stay on earth was short, but he was precious to us, and O, we miss him so much. He was well and playful all the time and never gave us trouble. One thing noticeable and dearer than all earthly things was that sometimes he seemed to have a knowledge of spiritual things, as he was easily affected when we would sing the sacred songs of Zion, and he could sing any of our songs mostly used in church services, and would usually go to the stand with me. In natural development he was more like a child seven years old than four. It just seemed that he displayed in his sweet countenance an expression of love, faith and hope to the last. O, it did me so much good to see the expression on his dying face of the manifestation of divine grace, and to realize that, All thy children shall be taught of God, and they shall all know me, from the least unto the greatest, and that in righteousness shall they be established. Dear Robert is not dead, but sleeps the sleep from which none ever wake to weep, but shall awake with the likeness of Jesus, who was with him in the last moment of his earthly stay and received his spirit unto himself to rest. There is a rest that can never come in its fullness to the children of God while they travel here in this low ground of sin and sorrow. We feel to know that our dear little Robert is at rest in the Lord, where no tears are shed, where there is no disappointment. Dear brethren, pray the Lord that he may reconcile us to his providential dealings with us, and that we may be given to say, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

Written in much sorrow and affliction.

J. B. BOWDEN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Margaret B. Tiebout, N. Y., $24.00; Miss Ella James, Va., $1.00; John F. Oliver, Va., $1.00; Mrs. T. H. Young, Ohio, $1.00; H. J. O'Bannon, Va., $1.00; Mrs. Daniel Shields, Ill., $1.00; John C. McAlpine, Ont., $1.00; Miss S. I. Rittenhouse, N. J., $3.00; M. M. Rounsavell, N. Y., $5.00; "A Friend," N. Y., $2.00; G. C. Jordan, Mo., $1.00; Joseph F. Hall, Maine, $3.00; Mrs. Joab P. Stout, Ill., $3.00; Mrs. Rebecca T. Stout, S. Dak., $1.00; Sarah A. McColl, Ont., $2.00.

APPOINTMENTS.

NOTHING preventing, there will be meetings as follows:

Casper Fetter's, 117 South Montgomery St., Trenton, N. J., Friday, December 13th, 8 p. m.; Stockton, N. J., Saturday, 14th, 2:30 p. m., Mrs. Horner's; Locktown, N. J., Sunday, 15th, 10:30 a. m.; Frenchtown, N. J., 4 p. m.; Grandon, N. J., Monday, 16th, brother Demott's, 8 p. m. D. M. VAIL.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.

Owing to excessive war prices we will not issue any more hymn-books for the present. We still have a few round note books on hand, which we are selling at the same price, $6.50 per dozen or 70 cents per single copy. Send orders to Elder S. H. Durand, Southampton, Pa., or to Elder P. G. Lester, Floyd, Va.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

UPTON, N. Mex., Nov. 8, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—The prophet said, "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted." "O thou afflicted." The Bible says, Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. Again it is written, I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. These poor people are poor in spirit, they are all alike. The Lord says, I will give them one heart, and I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. God said to Eve, I will greatly multiply thy sorrows and thy conception. Then it is true we cannot prevent being full of sadness. Multiply thy sorrows and thy conception. One definition of conception is, "to form an idea in the mind." How often do these afflicted people form in their minds dire trouble for themselves in the future! How many times do they fear and tremble on account of their sins! Like David, who said, I will fall some day by the hand of Saul, so they think they will be destroyed because of their sinful flesh, and they cry out, "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

"Dangers of every shape and name
Attend the followers of the Lamb,
Who leave the world's deceitful shore,
And leave it to return no more."

You ask worldly people, Do you suffer, are you afflicted on account of your sins? They always answer, No; but the children of God realize this world is not their home, they are pilgrims and strangers in the earth. How many times have you been in a crowd when they were especially merry, laughing and enjoying themselves to the fullest extent, and your heart was breaking with affliction and sorrow. You could not take part in their joys, you are not like they are, you are like all Primitive Baptists, think like they do, talk like they do, feel like they do, sigh like they do, love the same kind of food spiritually, enjoy the same company, love the same people they do. My son wrote me to sell all I have and go see the wonders of this world and spend what I had made and enjoy life. I told him I would rather attend one Old Baptist meeting than go to Europe and visit all the curiosities of the world. Job said, Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of

trouble. His flesh upon him shall have pain and his soul within him shall mourn. Tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope. The Savior said, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace.

"Afflictions, though they seem severe,
In mercy oft are sent;
They stopped the prodigal's career,
And forced him to repent."

Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. Our sorrows and sufferings are for our benefit, and it is written, If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him. Your sorrows come and you cannot prevent them; they come when you least expect them. David said, Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts; all thy waves and thy billows have gone over me. When you were born of the Spirit you came in possession of a mind that could comprehend how unworthy and polluted you were, and how you justly deserved eternal banishment from God and the glory of his power, and you called to him for mercy. An unusually intelligent man is called a deep man. God is unlimited in wisdom, so he is indescribably wise, wonderfully deep. You called and said, "God be merciful to me a sinner." You said, like David, Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me. And I said, O that I had wings like a dove, for lo, then would I fly away and be at rest. I would wander far off and remain in the wilderness. But go where you would, still your burden remained, your affliction was with you, and after you were relieved and thought the sin all gone and you were so overjoyed you never expected to have an enemy nor a sorrow, still you found you were mistaken, for the waves of sorrow and billows of distress came from time to time rolling over your defenceless head, and you found your hand was too feeble to stay them; so now you can say, All thy waves and thy billows have gone over me. Were these great sorrows painful and hard to endure? This text refers first to your blessed Savior. Deep calleth unto deep. Hear him in the garden: O my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me, yet not my will, but thine, be done. Listen as he cries on the cross: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? He said, I thirst, and they gave him vinegar to drink. You go to one of the world thirsty, and say something about your sorrows and thirstings, and they will give you vinegar to drink. They have told me when I was famishing for a cool draught of the water of life that I did not pray enough. The fact was every breath I drew was a prayer. Then you must go on and on in affliction greater or less until the time comes for God to call you home to rest. This is Zion, that is afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted, and the Bible says, Zion, the people of God. Jesus came to save them, and he did what he came to do. Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins All your distress is for your good.

"In all thy distresses thy head feels the pain,
Yet all are most needful, not one is in vain;
In love I correct thee, thy soul to refine,
To make thee at length in my likeness to shine."

"Tossed with tempest and not comforted." It takes wind to cause the waves of the sea to roll and toss about. When the bitter, briny waves of the flesh toss you, and when the winds of adversity

beat upon you and you have no rest in your spirit, how awful is your distress; and when you try to find Him who is a covert from the tempest and he hides from you, then you say, O that I knew where I might find him; I would come even to his seat. All through the dark, tempestuous night you look and listen and wonder and wish for the morning, and cry out, Is his mercy clean gone forever? Many a poor shipwrecked person has been on the sea looking, wishing, longing for a ship, and passed through long, dark nights, and may have perished for food. It is just as true that the children of God as they cross the rough sea of this life are tossed and long for a place to rest, and for comfort and the water of life. So Jesus said, Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Often I have said, God does not love me, or I would not be so forsaken, and I could not see how he could love one so sinful. When tossed I have said, God hates me, and he ought to. Many, many times have I waked in the morning so distressed I would say, O why did I ever wake again? Why could I not have slept on forever and forever? Why do I have to go out again in this old sin-cursed world to struggle with the affairs of this life? You, little children of God, started out like all other people: joyous, with high hopes, building castles in the air, enjoying gay company, sailing along across the placid sea of this life with not a care, hardly a thought of trouble, but all at once the waves began to toss you and it grew dark and threatening, the lightning flashed and peal after peal of thunder burst above you and you thought, Surely I will be lost, and, like Jonah, for the first time in life you were made to say, I am the cause, my sins like mountains high appear to me. In Revelation it is written, Out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices, and you heard, The soul that sinneth it shall die, the first time you had ever heard a voice say that. You may not have heard this in audible language, like we talk, but away down in your heart there crept a sadness you had never felt before, and you realized you must have help or sink. David said, They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, these see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths, their soul is melted because of trouble; they reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven. Little children, this is your experience. God commanded and raised the stormy wind, which lifted up the waves; they mount up to the heaven. The waves of the sea are salty and slimy; so when God convicted you for sin the nice ballroom became sickening to you. Salt water makes you sick. These waves lashed over every place of amusement you frequented, and you became sick of them all. They go down again to the depths. Ah, yes, you were let down, down, and thought, Surely I am gone and none can help me. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them into their desired haven. Yes, you were tossed until you rocked to and fro and staggered like a drunken

man, and got no rest until you went home to your friends and told them what great things God had done for you. So far as my case is concerned, it took many a wave to cause me to be willing to go home to the church of God, which is a haven. And he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant. But I could not see this until God made darkness light before me and crooked things straight. He says, I will bring the blind by a way they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known. He does not say, I will leave it to you whether you come or not. Every thief, every murderer, every robber, every natural man, child and little negro, and big ones who have not been brought by a way they knew not, that believe in a hereafter, will tell you the way just exactly like the Arminian preacher does. They all think they can and are going to get salvation some time, and that it rests with them whether they do or not, but the Savior said, No man can come unto me except my Father which hath sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day. This tossing is experienced not only by the children of God individually, but is applicable to each church. Often the awful waves of contention arise in the church and it is terribly tossed, like the ship Paul was on when the storm struck it. That was a natural ship and a natural storm, but here is a lesson for us. Some of the sailors took the lifeboats and started to leave the ship, but Paul said, Except these abide in the ship ye cannot be saved. Possibly more churches are destroyed by division than any other cause. A house divided against itself cannot stand, so said the Savior. Forbear one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit. There is no unity of the flesh; all the discord, trouble and dissension come from the carnal mind. James said, But if ye have bitter envying and strife among you, glory not and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. But the wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, &c. The prophet said, O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself.

"And not comforted," comes next. We all love comfort. Ministers whom God has called and sends sometimes comfort the weary pilgrim, but the greatest comfort we have is derived from the holy presence of the Savior. When he comes and rejoices over you it calms all your fears, gives you beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. The word says, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. The purpose of the gospel is to relieve the fears of the people of God. The first proclamation of the gospel after the Savior was born was by the angel of the Lord. The Bible says, There were shepherds keeping watch over their flock by night, and the angel of the Lord came upon them and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. The angel did not tell them anything to increase their fears, nor try to impress upon them the necessity of getting religion, but said, Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people; for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. Not comforted? You will be. It is written, Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Do you mourn?

Then you shall be comforted. Mourn because you are a sinner. If you had no spiritual life you would not mourn nor even know you were a justly condemned sinner. If you had no life you would have no light, and if you had no light how could you see yourself a lost and ruined sinner? The Bible says, In him was life, and the life was the light of men. Nearly all my time is spent in sorrow; seldom do I see a moment free from deep sadness. Sometimes a little comfort comes into my spirit, but long and cold are the times of my journey; yet we sorrow not as others who have no hope, for if we believe in Jesus some day we shall leave all sorrow and sighing behind and go home to enjoy the glory that awaits the children of God.

"There everlasting spring abides,
And never withering flowers;
Death like a narrow sea divides
This heavenly land from ours."

Not comforted. The prophet goes on in this chapter and tells what God is going to do for Zion who is not comforted. I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires, and I will make thy windows of agates and thy gates of carbuncles, &c. All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. Great shall be your peace, greater shall be your joy. Zion, said the Lord, hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me; but God says, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." He will never leave, never forsake one of these afflicted ones. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

I have written too much, and hope if the editors see any part or all of it to be of no profit they will throw it into the wastebasket and I shall be satisfied.

ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

CLAREMORE, Okla., Nov. 21, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Having been requested by brother C. M. Turner, of Roanoke, Va., to write my views on Romans v. 6–9, I shall now try to comply with his request. He is desirous especially to know the real meaning of the seventh verse, which reads: "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die." This verse seems to be used as the logic of the world of reason, which the apostle is now contrasting with the wonderful and unreasonable fact recorded in verse six, which reads: "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." I understand that the word "we" are the ungodly spoken of in this verse; that we in a state of death were the ungodly—unlike God. Notwithstanding our ungodly state the Lord loved us with a great love, even when we were dead in sins. Being dead in sins, we certainly were the "ungodly" spoken of in the text. The human mind cannot conceive the right, the justice nor the wisdom of God in doing such (to the mind of man) foolishness, but the world by wisdom knows not God, because the foolishness of God is wiser than men. It is a settled fact that God does not judge according to man's wisdom, nor work according to man's rule, nor give rewards for doings as man does. The apostle having this in view, and to show the almost impossibility for man to do anything like it in an opposite direction, he wrote as he did in the seventh verse: "For scarcely for a

righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die." The word "scarcely" signifies that it would be an unusual event for any one to die for a righteous man even, to say nothing about offering to die for a sinner. "Scarcely" in this connection may, and perhaps does, mean that it would be the greatest difficulty on earth to find one to die even for a righteous man. To make his illustration clear to our minds he continues by saying: "Peradventure," which means by chance, or in great doubt of being that way. So we may say that the apostle in using the word "peradventure" would mean like this: yet it is very doubtful for a good man that some one would even dare to die. Summed up, we conclude that we could not find one person, when it came to the trial point of execution, that would risk dying even for a good man, to say nothing about dying for a sinner. The argument might go further, that it would be horrible, to the natural mind, to die even for a good man, and no words in our language can express the shock to our feelings to think about dying in the stead of a bad man, or transgressor. A few months ago, while I was waiting for a train in Weston, W. Va., two men were talking about Jesus dying instead of or for sinners. One who ridiculed the teaching of the Scriptures tried to show the inconsistency of the Scriptures by illustrating it this way: "Now if a judge of our court here would allow another man to die on the gallows instead of the criminal who was pronounced guilty of murder, that judge would be mobbed in less than twenty-four hours. Away with such nonsense, Christ dying for sinners." We know that the true message of the gospel is not according to human reason, but it is mysterious, and to the unlearned a "hidden mystery." It has worried the natural mind of man for centuries when reading the letter of the Scriptures, setting forth the truth of God, as not according to the way man would have it. Man would have the intrinsic value of virtue manufactured by himself, then God could easily make choice of the good and severely pass by the bad. Man's thought is that God looks on things just as he himself does. Man by nature does not want to entertain a single thought in comformity to the way of salvation, while the letter of the word plainly reads that God does justify the ungodly without works, and that he that believeth it that way, that man's faith is counted to him for righteousness. This to natural reason is stunning, so much unlike the things of the earth. If I see a man who is a transgressor, sinner, ungodly, not like God the least bit as far as I can see, who will not read the Scriptures nor talk about the mortality of man or the power and wisdom of God, and as a fellow-creature what we call bad, could I justify him in any way? Not at all. God can justify such an one. By what law? the law of works? Nay, but by the law of faith. How wonderful! It is all done for him in the "role" of mercy, and this mercy is older than the sinner himself. O what wonders mercy has done before the sinner called for it! Mercy is granted to the sinner without his call.

Coming to the eighth verse: "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." So while we were sinners God loved us, and Christ died for us while we were sinners—ungodly. In due time (at the right time) Christ died for the ungodly. Surely if they had been godly it would not have been necessary for Christ to have died. To accomplish the purpose

of the Father mercy must show the power of God and be an important part in the work of redemption which it was, for, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us." So in the ninth verse of the text it is well said by the same writer: "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." The phrase, "we shall be saved from wrath," has to me great meaning. We talk much about salvation, being saved, &c. I often ask myself the question, What is salvation, or what are we saved from? Here is one of the best answers to the question: "Saved from wrath through him" (Jesus). Saved from what wrath? The wrath of God that hangs over all transgressors—the sentence of death. Do the saints die like other people? No, they simply fall asleep in Jesus, their Lord and Savior, because the sting of death (sin) is taken away from them; hence they escape the consequences of death, saved from it—the wrath of God.

If this is published I hope it may be some comfort to my dear brother Turner and the readers of the SIGNS.

All yours, in hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

IONA STATION, Ontario, Aug. 17, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am inclosing a letter I received from Elder P. W. Sawin, which I, and no doubt many others, would be pleased to see published in the SIGNS. I feel that the spirit of love and humility which appears to characterize it makes it worthy a place in the columns of our dear medium of correspondence.

Unworthily yours in hope,

J. T. KERR.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Aug. 1, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER KERR:—I have been delayed in writing you on my return home from Canada. The visit with you all will be one long to be remembered by me. I cannot tell you the joy of soul to know that after an absence of nearly five years I, a poor worm, was yet remembered and held in love and fellowship. Your kindly, loving greetings everywhere filled my cup often to overflowing. How true the blessed words, There my best friends, my kindred, dwell, there God, my Savior, reigns. In the many meetings I was much reminded of the years gone by, in dear Elder Pollard's day (a dear man of God). O how good and pleasant it is when brethren dwell together in unity, when the heavenly dew falls upon Zion, or He makes the place of his feet glorious. It did seem to me that the meetings were much that way. While I did not enjoy the liberty of soul in my little preaching that I feel to hope I do sometimes, I was content with such as the dear Lord gave me. It is always a wonder to me that I am ever blessed to speak a word to the weary in due season, for I am a worm and no man. I can never forget my feelings as I sat in the stand with your dear pastor and dear Elder Coulter; I saw myself just as a little child in their midst, and there was a sweet feeling of rest that I did not want to get beyond, and I wish I could always feel that way, but I am still here in the flesh, and it gets very prominent, of which David feared. How needful that grace keep us every day, or at least it is needful for me, for if retained in your fellowship it is by the grace of God. I do feel, dear brother, you are wonderfully blessed in the gift of Elder Slauson. I must believe the Lord has sent him there, and that he is a blessing to the church. I feel he has a won-

derful gift in pastor, prayer and preaching, all of which it was mine to enjoy. His prayer at Aldboro to me was wonderful; it seemed to me he was given to make mention before the Lord everything needful in praise, prayer and thanksgiving. I was rejoiced to find the church so wonderfully blessed, and the deep, profound interest of so many. I do hope and pray that all guile, evil speaking and fleshly feelings may be laid aside, and, as new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby. I do feel the church ought to be a unit under his labors. He endeared himself to me more and more as I was with him, so that I felt in our last parting at Ridgetown a feeling akin to that of David and Jonathan. I have been closely identified with you now for thirty-two years, and have loved you all for your steadfastness in the faith and doctrine of God our Savior, and in your deep trials and afflictions have felt deep sympathy and interest in your welfare as a church, and in all these years my feelings have never been marred or hurt toward any one; I have ever had them all in sweet fellowship and gospel bonds, and should I never visit you again I shall hold each one with whom I met in fellowship dear, and pray, though feebly, for their peace and prosperity. Like dear Elder Durand, (excepting once) I have never visited you only by invitation. That has always been your custom (and not a bad one), and I have always felt to abide by it, granting that a church knows best how to arrange for her own interest. I feel my trip did me much good physically, and, best of all, spiritually, as my afflictions and trials have been heavy indeed, but this is the portion of our inheritance here below, and we must bow to it, desiring to feel it is of the Lord, let him do whatsoever seemeth him good. My constant desire is that he may keep me every hour, and make a plain pathway for my feet, and lead me in the path of righteousness for his blessed name's sake.

I arrived home safely Monday the 29th, and found all well, for which I desire to be grateful unto the Lord.

Thanking you all for so much kindness and for favors shown, both to my daughter and myself, and with love to all as you see them, I am, in sweet gospel fellowship, yours in Christ,

P. W. SAWIN.

SOUTH BIRMINGHAM, Ala., Nov. 29, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you my sister's obituary, also a letter she wrote me a year ago last May, which was a great comfort to me, and I thought that it might be a comfort to some one else if you deem it right to publish it. I have read many good letters in the SIGNS, as I have been a constant reader for over twenty years. When I was seeking the true church of God an old blind brother of the Baptist church came to my house to spend the day, and he asked me if I ever read anything, and I told him not much of anything but the Bible. He said, I have some papers here I want you to read for me, as I cannot see to read, and he took two copies of the SIGNS out of his pocket. I began to read, and O how I did rejoice in my heart, for I found many experiences that told my own better than I could tell it myself, and from that day I always believed that my heavenly Father sent those to me, for I was settled in my mind that those people were God's people, and I wanted to be one among them, but felt to be too unworthy. I desired to go before the church and ask them to let me come in and dwell with them, and the time did come in about a

year after when I did go. Brother Lively was preaching that day, and before I knew it I was up before the church giving my poor experience. I was received, and baptized the same day, and have been satisfied in my mind ever since that the Primitive Baptist Church is the true church. I bear that name, but O am I a child of God? All I can say is, I have hope, but that hope gets very small sometimes, and I fear I have not been born again. I read many good letters in the SIGNS, and I, like Ruth, want those people to be my people. If I am saved it is by the grace of God, for it is not of any merit on my part. I am glad that we are saved by grace, through faith, which is the gift of God, and not by works, lest any man should boast. No man can keep any one out of the church, nor can any add one to the church, for our Savior said, All that the Father gave me shall come unto me, and I will in no wise cast them out. Again, he said, No man can come unto me except my Father draw him. I cannot attend my meetings, as there is not a Primitive Baptist Church in this city.

Well, for fear of wearying you, I will close, for I have written more than I intended. Pray for me. May the God of Isaac and Jacob be with you editors, and guide the many gifted writers' pens, is the prayer of an unworthy sister,

(MRS.) M. N. DUNNAVANT.

ELKMONT, Ala., May 13, 1916.

DEAR SISTER DELIA:—I feel like writing you this morning, but am not feeling very well. Hope you are all well. This week I have enjoyed the nights when I could not sleep. I hope I was made to walk about Zion. O how pleasant it is to feel that you can realize the love of a dear Redeemer; it is then we can meditate on his word and seek to know the truth as it is in Jesus. If it is not that way that we learn of him I am deceived in this poor sinful heart of mine. I wish I could tell how I enjoyed our good meeting. I thought when we were talking about having it, if God was not in the arrangement it would be nothing; but I do believe that he was with us, for it seemed that every one enjoyed it. I wish all of them could know how I enjoyed having them with me. I told some of them the preaching reminded me of Christ feeding the multitude with the loaves and fishes. They all feasted on the loaves and fishes, but I got the fragments, for my cup has been running over. It was like the bread that was cast upon the waters to be gathered many days hence, for I am still gathering crumbs. I hope it is thus with all of us, and I think how unworthy I am to have the blessing of assembling with the children of God, for I do believe that the Old Baptist is the church of Christ in this world, even if I am not one. I hope I am, and that I see and understand as they do. If it could be the Lord's will, I wish we could all see alike. If I am wrong, I pray the Lord to show me, for he is all I have to teach me. Sallie says the written word is all we have to go by, but I understand they only testify to the Spirit that dwells within us. She said the old Scripture was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. I have never read that, but the Bible says the law and the prophets were until John, and Paul in his letter to the Galatians, third chapter, says the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, but after Christ came we were no longer under a schoolmaster. I wanted to ask her if she had come to Christ, why was it she still went and taught Sunday-school? for Paul exhorts us to stand fast in the liberty

wherewith Christ hath made us free from the law of sin and death, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage, which is the works of the law. I used to go to Sunday-school, but when I saw Christ as my Savior I did not go any more. I cannot see how they can read the writings of the apostles and still trust in their own works for salvation. I can only trust in God and beg his mercy on a poor sinner like me. I wish I could have been with you this week to have talked about the things of God, but it seems it has all left me this morning. If I could write well I would have written to the SIGNS this week, as sometimes I can talk and then again I cannot. You know the Lord says he opens and none can shut, and shuts and none can open. Jeremiah says it is not in man to direct his own steps, and I have found that it is not in woman either. People tell me, If I believed like you do I would do anything, but they must remember that the Lord said his children are kept by his power. My God is a God of power and love; so his children are kept and preserved and called with an holy calling, and they are exalted in his word to make their calling and election sure. So it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. I had a little talk with old brother Tyler. He said his subject for to-morrow was, Why people do not enjoy their religion, and he was going to tell them what the bitter herb was, and asked me if I knew what it meant. I told him if it were not the fruits of rebellion I did not know, and he said that was it. He said the church members were all so worldly-minded they did not want to talk about the works of God; said there were so few who knew anything about an experience of grace, and would not talk on the subject. He said he surely knew what it was to be lost, that he was under conviction over twelve months, and people said he was going crazy. That was after he had been preaching for some time. The preachers of God preach the power of God to save men, and that is the gospel, and they that believe in Christ hear it, while those who do not cannot, for men cannot make believers, but can only instruct them that have been made alive by the operation or revelation of the Spirit, which was given them in covenant in Christ before the world began, and is now made manifest by the Holy Ghost, which Christ said he would send for a Comforter. Paul says, You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and in sin, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. I believe that is where the church of God meets together in unity of the Spirit and in one mind to worship him. Sallie said the other day we did not believe any were saved but the Old Baptists. I told her if we believed in a God like theirs we could not help believing it, but our God is able to save without our help, and we are not questioned in the matter, for he says, Ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. If the whole world of mankind is his, why did he make a choice of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their seed after them?

I think what I have written is no good, but I just had to write to relieve my mind, but it is so badly done I do not know as you can read it.

With love and best wishes for you and yours and all inquiring friends, I will close.

As ever, your sister,

DELLA JAMES.

(*See obituary on page 14.*)

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1919.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

It has been the custom of the editors for many years to, at this time, address the readers of the Signs by way of what is called a "New Year's Greeting." We become encrusted with various forms and usages as the years pass. Not one of us but who, to some extent, is custom's slave. Many forms and customs we accept without question, without stopping to ask ourselves why we observe them. One of the editors of the Signs many years ago felt, as the end of the year drew nigh, that he would like to address the readers by way of a greeting for the coming new year. The following year he felt the same desire, and so did he the year after that, and on and on until it became his established habit so to do. The next editor to follow took up the example of the previous one and kept it going, and so the usage became a settled thing in the conduct of the paper. Now, is this worth while? Simply following a form for form's sake amounts to nothing; it neither benefits the editor himself who writes nor his readers who may read what he writes. But if the heart be in what we do, if following a custom becomes a convenient vehicle for the expression of what is within one, then we are justified in falling in line with previous usage. Thus it is with us at this writing. We feel to greet our readers in this way, not because some former editor did it, but because it suits our own mood just now.

It is well to pause here and there along the pathway of life to survey the past and to consider the future. In the last issue for 1918 the editor surveyed the year just closed, so we need not do that; but it becomes our pleasure now to look ahead, if we may, to what is to come. Of course no one of us knows exactly just what this year now opening holds in store for us before its close, but one thing is sure: God knows. He knows it now, and has always known it from before the foundation of the world. Nothing can possibly come to pass with God's people in all the days to come but what God has known it altogether and always. Nothing too insignificant to escape his eye, nor too small to fill its niche in his divine plan and purpose. We may rest in this strong confidence: that God has made provision to supply every need of every one of his children during this year and all the years to come. Our wants are legion, and God has not guaranteed to supply them, but not one real need as God knows it shall go without being provided for; and God is infinitely a better judge of what we need than we ourselves. What a grand provision of Providence is it that the future is veiled from our eyes. Humanity could not endure the knowledge of what is to come. Could we lift that veil and see the trials and losses and crosses and griefs, in short, all the woes and pains that are to be ours, we should sink at once in utter dismay and be wholly unfitted to enjoy the blessings and privileges that may be ours at this present moment. If there is any better way in which this world and our lives in it could

be arranged than the way in which God has arranged them, we gladly confess we do not know what that better way might be. We are persuaded within ourselves that God's way in having things as they are is infinitely better than having them as science and philosophy and reason might aim to have them. The will of God is ever best.

However, amid all the uncertainties of the year as yet unrolled before us there looms the certainty of death. Death is one of the unescapable things of human existence. Before this year shall have come unto its close some of the writers and readers in the ranks of the SIGNS shall have passed away from earth and the scenes of time. One needs not to be much of a prophet to state this with certainty. Another certainty, if we may judge from the years gone before, is that during the coming year there will be new names added to our list and new friends brought to us by the power of the living truth. This has already been so for eighty-six years, and we have no reason to conclude it will be otherwise in the eighty-seventh year. Another certainty that looms up before us out of the coming future is that mistakes will be made, sins committed and errors of one kind or another ensnare us. As long as we are in the flesh and human nature is what it is, we shall be certain to have sin and all that accompanies it to contend with. The readers of the SIGNS in the past have been very patient with those who edit and who publish the paper. Your charity has flown out to us in the past. May we count on it for 1919? Surely we hope so, and shall go forward counting on your leniency and love. You may rest assured that we shall do all in our power to give you an interesting and edifying paper twice every month. However, the grace of God alone can enable us to do this; we can do nothing of ourselves to gratify the desires of God's people; but with such ability as it may please God to afford us we promise you we shall endeavor to serve you. However, there are two things our readers can do which would materially aid in getting out the SIGNS more efficiently. One is to see that all subscriptions are paid up promptly as they expire; the other is to contribute articles yourselves for the paper. The SIGNS cannot be sent forth unless we have goodly matter to put in the paper. Especially we would like to urge the preachers to write more than they have been doing. Give us your views and expositions of Scriptures for publication. We need more of this kind of thing in the paper. Without your cooperation and help along these lines the SIGNS cannot be maintained. May the Lord inspire your hearts to write often to God's hungry flock through its pages.

Glad and thankful as we are that God saw fit to close the great world war in 1918, and not to carry it over into this opening year, yet let us remind you that every one of God's people is engaged in a war that shall not end this year nor any other year until it pleases the Lord to release us through death. This warfare is the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit, which wages in every believer's soul. The flesh is lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, so that we cannot do the things we would. This is a fight to the finish, and Jesus is its victorious finish, for he shall bring us off more than conquerors through his great love for us. But until that glorious finish many are the dark and trying hours we are bound to have, many and poisonous shall be the darts of the adversary hurled at us. It is good to think

that our sufficiency for this combat is not of ourselves, but wholly of the grace of God treasured in his Son for us. The armor we wear shall be the same as that of little David: trust in the Lord. Equipped with the whole armor of God, believers shall be qualified to withstand the fiery darts of the wicked, the cunning wiles of the adversary. Not only is there this inward conflict in the soul, but then there is that outward conflict with error and false doctrine on every side. Many false prophets are in the world. Now, if ever, is the time for plain speaking. It is the duty of every truly called and qualified servant of God to earnestly contend for the truth of God with all the power that is in him. Now is the time for plain, clear and fearless preaching of the gospel, and for the careful and discriminating exposition of the Scriptures that God's humble and trembling ones may be shown where they stand and be established in what they believe. Fear not to declare the whole counsel of God, whether men hear or forbear. Doing this you shall be free from the blood of all men.

In conclusion, we wish you all a happy new year; not in the trite and ordinary sense of happiness, but in that happiness which only God's people know—that happiness fraught with sobriety and reverence which springs from a sublime trust in the living God. May this be for all of you a year of strengthened fortitude and confidence in God. May you live near him and he near you. May the banner of his love be spread above you, the arms of his love encircle you, his free Spirit uphold you. L.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

W. M. LITTLE has changed his address from Ouachita, Ark., to Buckholts, Texas.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at his home, Dec. 14th, 1918, Arthur C. Longerbeam, of Purcellville, Va., and Miss Anna Marie Shetter, of Round Hill, Va.

By the same, Dec. 17th, 1918, Claude F. D. Jacobs, of Lovettsville, Va., and Miss Esther V. Cooper, of Purcellville, Va.

By the same, Dec. 18th, 1918, Frank G. Polend, of Purcellville, Va., and Miss Ethel O. Embrey, of Waterford, Va.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, Dec. 11th, 1918, at the home of the bride's mother, in Dutton, Ontario, Garfield Edward Ross and Effie Jane Graham, both of Dutton, Ontario.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Silas H. Durand, our beloved brother in Christ, departed this life at his home, Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., Nov. 12th, 1918. He was the son of Daniel and Asenath Durand, and was born in Bradford County, Pa., Jan. 5th, 1833. He was the eleventh in a family of fourteen children. His father was born in 1793, in Middletown, N. Y., when there were only two houses there, and was a descendant of Dr. John Durand, who came to this country from Rochell, France, during the Huguenot persecution in 1685. His mother was born in Bellvale, Orange Co., N. Y., and was the granddaughter of Elder James Benedict, under whose ministry was organized the church at Warwick, N. Y. The young Silas worked on his father's farm in summer and went to school in the winter until he became old enough to teach school. Some of his young years were spent in New Orleans, La., with his brother James. There he was part of the time a teacher and part of the time a bookkeeper. In 1858 he went to study law in Wilkesbarre, Pa., and entered the law office of the Hon. Hendrick B. Wright. In 1860 he was admitted to the bar and began the practice of law, which he continued for four years, never dreaming he ever would have to give it up. In 1863 he united with the Presbyterians in Wilkesbarre, but tarried not for long with that people, for his mind soon became exercised with regard to religion, and he gradually but surely drifted out of fellowship with the Presbyterians. In May, 1864, he received a hope of eternal life in Jesus Christ, and was baptized in June of that year by Elder Gilbert Beebe into the Middletown and Wallkill Church, at Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y. He soon became burdened with the import of the Scriptures, but was unaware that his exercises of mind meant he would have to preach. However, the church saw his gift before he did, and recognized it by giving him license to speak in September, 1864, and ordaining him to the full work of the ministry

in December of that same year. The Elders present at his ordination were Schoonover, St. John, Smith, Cox, Beebe and Holister. The first church to call for his services as pastor was the church at Salisbury, Md., in 1867, of which church he remained pastor until the time of his death. He was called to the pastoral care of the church at Southampton, Pa., in 1884, retaining that charge until his death. Other churches served by him in this pastoral capacity at different intervals were Vaughn Hill and Grover, Pa., Otego, Utica, Waverly and Burdette, N. Y., and New York city. In Elder Durand the Old School Baptists have had one of the most able and devoted gifts pertaining to the ministry of the gospel ever given us of the Lord. He was wonderfully gifted in the Scriptures, and few things annoyed him more than to hear them misquoted or misapplied. From north to south and from east to west, throughout the United States and Canada, he endeared himself to all God's people through his spiritual writings and preaching. He was regarded among us entirely sound in doctrine and practice, and he abhorred anything in the way of false doctrine and hated every false way in the practice of that doctrine. He was entirely in accord with the preaching of Elder Gilbert Beebe and with the principles set forth by the SIGNS in its prospectus of 1832. He preached and contended for the absolute predestination of all things, and for salvation wholly by grace, whether for time or eternity. In 1882 he was married to Miss Clarice E. Pusey, in Baltimore, Md. To them were born three children, one dying in infancy. Sister Durand died in 1912, on the thirtieth anniversary of her wedding day. Elder Durand is survived by one sister in the flesh, sister Bessie Durand, who is widely known and well loved on account of her spiritual writings. He is also survived by two daughters: Mrs. Gilbert McColl, of Winnipeg, Canada, and Mrs. C. B. Gordy, of Southampton, Pa. In the words of one who knew him well: "If ever any one gave himself, he did. He first gave himself to his father's family, caring for his father and mother, invalid brothers and sisters and his orphan nieces and nephews, and afterwards he gave himself to the churches." In his last days, when his mind was not clear regarding natural things, he was continually repeating Scriptures and explaining and expounding them with as much beauty and power and sweetness as he ever had before, and his whole theme was Jesus as the only way by which a sinner is saved.

The following Elders attended his funeral and all took some part in the last services: A. B. Francis, J. G. Eubanks, D. M. Vail, H. C. Ker, John McConnell, B. F. Coulter, J. M. Fenton, C. W. Vaughn and H. H. Lefferts. Of him it can truly be said that he finished his course, fought a good fight and kept the faith. We laid him to rest in the graveyard at the Southampton meetinghouse, in the shadow of the place he had loved so well and served so faithfully for over thirty-four years. May the Lord comfort the bereaved churches and the family of our dear brother Durand. We know that our loss here is his eternal gain beyond this vale of tears. L.

Mary O'Della Bates James was born October 2nd, 1868, and died October 11th, 1918, aged 50 years and 9 days. She was married to W. R. James Nov. 24th, 1886. To that union two children were born: Tera Agnes and Meda. Meda, the youngest, only lived to be eleven years, when the great God who doeth all things well sent the death angel to carry the precious one home to himself. In dear Tera's twenty-sixth year she was called to join her sister. She had grown to be a lovely girl, and to know her was to love her. She taught school for several years, but was stricken with that dreadful disease, consumption, which claimed her for its victim, leaving the dear father and mother childless, with the exception of an orphan child they had taken to raise. Now dear Della has been called to join the dear departed children. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Antioch, Elkmont, Ala., in October, 1894, and lived a consistent member until her death. Her life aim was to be of service to others. Her home was a home for the Baptist people. She had been a sufferer for over twenty years with a complication of diseases, dropsy being one, which she bore patiently for eight years. She never complained, but always praised the name of the Lord. On October 6th she was taken with influenza, and her many years of suffering had so weakened her constitution that she was not able to combat the disease. She was a dear mother, wife and sister. She leaves her husband, five sisters and one brother, with a host of other kindred and friends, to mourn her death. I, one of the sisters, feel that I have lost the best friend as well as sister on earth, but can say to the weeping husband, Weep not, for our loss is her eternal gain. O how we miss her godly conversation, and how I miss her dear letters of comfort, which always brought joy to my poor soul. She had written to the SIGNS for publication once or twice. She gloried in nothing save in the Lord Jesus Christ and in hearing his word preached. She went far and near to preaching, and her husband, being one of the best men in the world, always took pride in going with her to the associations away from home as well as to services at home. It was their greatest pleasure to care for visiting brethren and sisters who attended their home church. Often she would not be able to go to meeting and they would have services at their home.

The funeral service was held in her home church, conducted by brother John Christopher, who spoke comfortingly to the bereaved family.

Written by her sister,

(MRS.) M. N. DUNNAVANT.

William Marion Bowden was born June 17th, 1843, in Henry County, Tenn., near Cottage Grove, and died Feb. 6th, 1918, in Graves County, Ky., being 74 years, 7 months and 20 days of age at the time of his death. He was married to Miss Leammie Ridgway, daughter of Esquire Bill Ridgway, May 5th, 1870, near Fulton, Obion Co., Tenn., by brother N. W. Little. To that union were born nine children, two of whom are dead. Five boys and two girls are living. The boys are as follows: Edd, Guss, Vinus, Homer and Bonnie. Homer is in the navy, and is now in Company J, 1st Regiment, Great Lakes, Illinois. The girls are Hattie, who married Jess Hudson, and Dollie, who married Wess Godwin. Brother Bowden joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Shady Grove, and was baptized the third Sunday in July, 1875, after which he placed his membership at Boaz Chapel, near Fulton, Ky., where it remained until the autumn of 1891, when he moved to Graves County Ky., and placed his membership at Mt. Zion, where he lived a faithful and consistent member until his death. He served four years in the Civil War in the Confederate Army, being a member of Company H, 5th Tennessee Infantry. He was wounded in the battle of Perryville, but served through the entire war. Brother Bowden was one of the most highly prized members of the Primitive Baptist Church, and was a noted singer among us.

The writer was called to officiate at his funeral, but was unable to attend on account of the distance and condition of the roads and weather. This fact was very much regretted by the writer, as he was glad to claim brother Bowden as one of his best friends and most beloved of brothers. His body was laid to rest to await the resurrection morning, when it will be reunited with his spirit, and we hope to meet him in that world which hath no end.

H. N. OLIVER.

Duane D. Drake, son of Mr. John R. Drake, of Ingleside, Steuben Co., N. Y., died somewhere in France Sept. 28th, 1918, of wounds received in action, aged 23 years, 6 months and 6 days. He joined the army of the United States March 23rd, 1917. From my acquaintance with him I will say I believe that he was a redeemed child, for he expressed a love for the doctrine of salvation by grace and a love for the saints, although not a professor, and while it is a great and sore affliction for father and mother, brothers and sisters, I feel it is eternal joy for him, for I believe he is with Jesus. May God bless the sorrowing father and mother, who are both believers in Christ, and all who mourn, with grace to help in their sorrow, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

D. M. VAIL.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT.

WHEREAS, It has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst our dearly beloved pastor and very highly esteemed brother, Elder Silas H. Durand, Nov. 12th, 1918, in the midst of a host of friends, relatives and the members of the Southampton Church, therefore be it resolved:

1st. That we bow our heads in humble submission to Almighty God, who doeth all things well.

2nd. That we feel we have lost a pastor who was loved by all who knew him, and extend to the family our deepest sympathy and prayers.

3rd. That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family, a copy be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and a copy be sent to the Landmark for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference Saturday, December 7th, 1918.

J. M. FENTON, Moderator.

WM. HOBENSACK, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $8.00; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $3.00; Mrs. J. W. Parker, Ill., $3.00; Lieut. Col. Knifton, Ont., $2.00; Lillian Ashurst, Ill., $3.00; Elijah Triplett, W. Va., $1.00; "Subscriber," Va., $1.00; J. K. Yerkes, D. C., $2.00; Miss Josephine Culpepper, Texas, $2.00; Mrs. Jasper Seale, Ark., $1.00; Henry C. Merryman, Md., $1.00; Mrs. T. R. Pittman, Kansas, $1.00; Elder Geo. L. Weaver, Ohio, $1.00; Wm. B. Ennist, N. Y., $2.00; N. A. Simmons, Ala., $6.00; L. O. Garrott, Ky., $2.00; George Harryman, Md., $1.00; Mrs. Edwin H. Young, Canada, $2.00; W. T. Hughett, Ill., $2.00; Mrs. Fannie Muir, N. Y., $2.00; Mrs. Maria Rees, Ky., $3.00; J. C. Nelson, Ky., $1.00; Lewis Ford, Mass., $2.00; M. A. Chaney, Texas, $1.00; J. D. Welborn, Ind., $12.00; L. C. Godwin, Md., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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To whom all letters should be addressed, and money orders made payable.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 87. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1919. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

1 TIMOTHY II. 15.

"STUDY to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

These words have been impressed upon my mind of late as never before. If Paul's admonition to Timothy was heeded to-day by all of God's ministers, there evidently would be more agreement as to what the Scriptures do teach than there is on many subjects. While I believe that the great majority of God's ministers are honest in their different beliefs concerning the different subjects taught in the Scriptures, yet being honest does not make them right. To be approved unto God we must rightly divide the word of truth. That should be our study —a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. There is no occasion for being ashamed if we rightly divide the word of truth, for we will be approved unto God, therefore nothing to be ashamed of along that line. On the other hand, if we fail to rightly divide the word of truth, and yet insist on forcing our views upon others, we will not be approved unto God; and besides this, we should feel ashamed of ourselves for failing to rightly divide the word of truth, and then teaching others wrongfully, even going so far as to induce God's people to openly persecute those who do rightly divide the word of truth on some particular subject as taught in the Scriptures. These things would not be if all of God's people were rightly dividing the word of truth. The Scriptures are, if rightly divided, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Cor. iii. 17.) To the extent that we fail to rightly divide the word of truth, to that extent to us the Scriptures are not a thorough furnisher unto all good works. There is something lacking on our part, but nothing lacking on the part of the Scriptures, for all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Peter said: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." —2 Peter i. 20, 21. O how wonderful and also how solemn these things are!

Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. This is the word of truth that Paul would have Timothy to study to shew himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. Jesus said, Matt. x. 10: "The workman is worthy of his meat." Jesus here calls his disciples workmen. Paul said, 1 Cor. iii. 9: "For we are laborers together with God." Paul here referred to God's ministers as laboring together. It is when God's ministers are laboring together with God that in truth it can be said the workman is worthy of his meat. Evidently no minister of God is worthy of his meat unless approved of God; neither are they laborers together unless they are workmen approved of God, rightly dividing the word of truth. James said to his brethren: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." I think all of God's ministers know there is a lack of wisdom manifest when we do not rightly divide the word of truth. We also know some one is not rightly dividing the word of truth whenever serious differences do exist between brethren over any portion of the word of truth. We also know that if we lack wisdom to enable us to rightly divide the word of truth, the fault is in us. Notice James said: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men [of his people] liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." O how joyous to know that God has promised such things to his believing children; and of a truth he upbraideth not, but in fact will give the sweet assurance of his approval to those who ask in faith, nothing wavering. John said: "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."—1 John v. 14, 15. O what a blessed condition to be in, to have confidence or faith in the Son of God; that if we ask anything according to his will he heareth us. Also how blessed it is to know these things. Note John said: "And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." Just so regarding studying to shew ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth; we will know when we are approved unto God. The sweet approval is by day and by night, and we know this is of God as truly and the same way as we know that we have the petitions which we desired of him. Such studying is an evidence of felt need of wisdom. Paul said, Hebrews xi. 6: "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." It would be vain on our part to study to rightly divide the word of truth, and at the same time not believe that we would receive instruction. To thus do would be to show a lack of faith in God, and in such a condition it is impossible to please him, therefore would not be approved unto him, all our claims to the contrary. Paul said, Hebrews iv. 15, 16: "For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." He continues: "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." There evidently has never been a greater time of need than

now. Whether we feel our need is another question; the need exists just the same; we need both grace and mercy. Note Paul said that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. It would not be rightly dividing the word of truth to say that Paul here referred to the unregenerate dead in trespasses and sins, for Paul is not writing to such, nor about such, but is writing to God's people. Neither would it be rightly dividing the word of truth to say that Paul meant here as for eternity when he said: "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." We know in our own experience as well as by the Scriptures that we need grace to help in time of need. We also know it is a continued time of need with us. Therefore with Paul we can say, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." We need grace to rightly divide the word of truth. Paul said: "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Yet with all this grace, which enabled Paul to labor more abundantly than all the apostles, he yet did say to his Hebrew brethren: "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Paul yet felt the need of mercy and grace. These feelings kept him humble at the feet of his brethren. Paul said, 1 Cor. xiii. 13: "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." In this same chapter we learn that to have the greatest gift in understanding the mysteries of God, and to have all faith so as to remove mountains, and have not charity, Paul said, "I am nothing." From this we learn there is much required in order to be approved unto God. We may be enabled to rightly divide the word of truth on some certain subject taught in the Scriptures, and yet fail to manifest any charity toward those who have not the ability given them to understand that certain subject as we ourselves do. On the other hand, this same person may be blessed with charity, which is the greatest of these. This one so blessed evidently would not persecute any one because they lacked in the greatest of all, which is charity. The fact that any one is a persecutor is an evidence manifest that such person has not charity. If we rightly divide the word of truth we will learn that it is (to say the least) as necessary to teach and practice along that line as any other subject taught in the Scriptures; that should be our study. We cannot be approved unto God, workmen that need not to be ashamed, without charity. Even if we have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and have not charity, we are nothing, as Paul said.

Submitted, I hope, in love.

JOSEPH FORD.

SENECA, Kansas, Oct. 12, 1918.

LA GRANDE, Oregon, March 4, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—I inclose a letter written by Elder G. E. Mayfield on the gospel application of the narrative of Abraham's servant seeking a wife for Isaac. He has made such a splendid application of this in setting forth gospel truth that I believe it will be appreciated by the readers of the SIGNS, and so place it at your disposal. The thoughts set forth in this letter were called out by a discussion by some brethren as to what

gospel personage was represented by Abraham's servant, some applying it to represent the Holy Ghost. I think brethren should be very liberal toward each other's views in applying the historical events of the Old Testament to the gospel dispensation. The gospel in all its applications is such a vast subject that nothing but the wisdom of God can comprehend it in its fullness, and we can see but little of it at a time, so that one brother may see a similarity of some portion in a certain event or personage, while another would not, and at the same time they both would be perfectly agreed as to the principle of truth under consideration. Most controversies have their origin either in ignorance or narrow-mindedness. When we are endowed with that wisdom which is from above we shall be fully qualified to judge rightly in all things. May we all desire this heavenly blessing, and when it is kept from us let us be careful lest we fall into error.

Yours in hope,

C. W. BOND.

ELGIN, Oregon, Feb. 24, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER BOND:—Since you and brother Amsberry were with us I have read the twenty-fourth chapter of Genesis several times, and have concluded to give you some of my thoughts in regard to the things there written. There is no doubt they were written for our learning, for Paul tells us the things written aforetime were written for us, and I think I can see some things in the lesson given of God's overruling and guiding hand, and that Isaac and Rebekah well represent Christ and the church, and that Abraham in some things may well represent the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in that Isaac, the only son, inherited all that the father possessed. "And unto him hath he given all that he hath."—Verse 36. As to the eldest servant, he represents the gospel ministry or minister. "And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had," &c. The apostle said unto the church, Obey them that have the rule over you. I understand Abraham's servant had the care of and looked after Abraham's business, or had the oversight of it. So I understand it is with the gospel ministry: they have the oversight of the flock. Abraham made him swear that he would not take a daughter of the Canaanites for a wife for Isaac. All this charge to the servant shows he was fallible and liable to err. The servant said, "Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me into this land: must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest? And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again." This again shows the fallibility of the servant. If the woman of thy kindred will not follow me, then shall I bring thy son thither? His thought seems to have been, If the woman will not follow me, maybe if Isaac was presented to her and she could see him for herself she would go. Here, dear brother, we see that feeling that may sometimes take possession of the minister's mind: that if the Savior is presented to the world he will prove attractive enough to please the world, and he can get a bride from thence. But Abraham forbade this procedure, and said unto his servant: "The Lord God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, * * * he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence." This angel I understand to be the Holy Spirit, that goes with his servant to guide as well as prepare the

bride and make her manifest as well as willing to go. "And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again." Here we have another lesson. If the servant does his duty, though the bride may not go he is free from the oath, he has done his duty. The accepting and going is not his part of the work; he need not try to make his mission successful by presenting the Savior to the world. Thou shalt not take my son thither. Nor would it be faithful in the servant because the prospect seemed doubtful, to say, I will not go. His duty is to go, but go with the prayer of the old servant: "O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham." Now we see his prayer was to give him evidence of the one to be the bride, and when this evidence was given by Rebekah he knew his prayer was answered, and then he put upon her the jewelry of his master. This shows the old servant did not know who the bride to be was. This could not be said of the Holy Ghost, for God, who is a Spirit, knoweth all things; but the old servant must have these evidences before he knew who she was. Here we have a truth taught us to heed. The old servant did not teach the maid what she should say or do in order to be the bride. Words were not put into her mouth like a parrot; she was not taught the "creed" so that she could repeat it and thereby make herself acceptable. She did not know what was in store for her, she acted out that "will and do" which God had wrought within. So the gospel minister prays for the evidence—fruits meet for repentance, and when these he sees he says, Blessed art thou, and he assures such ones they are the blessed of the Lord. More than once Abraham said he must not take Isaac back to the country from whence Abraham came out. That country represents the world, from whence all God's people are called. So that is what is taught us in the lesson. Do not take Christ to the world, from whence you have been called, for the bride of Christ must leave the world and go to Christ. As to the servant representing the ministry, we see that Abraham's servant only had the care or oversight of all his master's goods; they were not his, only the care of them. So Paul said to the ministry: Take heed to thyself and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers. Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. Here we see the minister has the care of the flock. Among the many cares that Paul had on his hands to endure, one was the care of all the churches. Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls as they that must give an account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief. Do not ministers have and feel a responsibility for their flock? If they are what they should be they greatly desire their welfare and prosperity. The Lord Jesus told Peter, Feed my lambs; feed my sheep, without seemingly leaving any other consideration for him to follow. Paul tells the minister to take heed to himself (first), and then to the flock, and Peter tells him to do this without an eye to filthy lucre. I do not know just what the ten camels may represent. Would it do to say they represent the law contained in the ten commandments? You know Paul said, The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ. When Rebekah came to Isaac she alighted off the camel. I do not know that it is

necessary to spiritualize everything given in the connection. We have the main truths presented here in this narrative, but the most prominent points in it to me are the directing hand of the Lord in leading the old servant to the proper place, and the evidence given by Rebekah that she was the chosen one, and her willingness to go with the man. My people shall be willing in the day of my power.

Now, dear brother, you and brother Amsberry are given the privilege of showing me wherein I am wrong, if you see that I am. I know I have made a weak effort to explain my views, and cannot say I know I am right in my conclusions. As Abraham's servant had freely received and just as freely given, so do ye; if you have views give them to me. We hope you may be able to visit us quite often and bring along sister Bond with you.

As ever, unworthily,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

JOHN XI. 44.

"AND he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go."

This is a description of him that was dead as he lay in the cave, his hands and feet bound, his face bound, his action and senses bound up and held fast from going forth in any sense; no intercourse, only as between Jesus and himself. That intercourse can never be hindered, for as soon as ever Jesus "cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth," there was a response on the part of him that was dead. Its proof is that those dead in trespasses and sins are subject to the almighty power of God, and that death does not separate those whom he loves from him, but it does separate them from all others except from those of like precious faith. It was not only death that did it for this one, but the graveclothes and the napkin separated him from his loved ones. Even though he had come forth from death he was still in the cave and bound with the graveclothes, and might as well have been dead, so far as the company and fellowship of his loved ones went. He had come forth from death, but a living subject of grace is one thing, and loosing from graveclothes, napkins and all that goes with death and walking and seeing in the things of the kingdom are more of the same things. It is not only having life, but having it more abundantly. Had there been no command from Jesus to "loose him, and let him go," the coming forth of the dead would have been no comfort to himself or the others; in fact, the last estate of such an instance is worse than the first. It is very little comfort to find one with just life and no joy in it; no profit to just behold life and no going out and coming in in company and fellowship with those of like precious faith. Such ones are little if any comfort to themselves or any one else. We only enjoy the things of the kingdom of God and its subjects so far as the graveclothes and napkin have been removed from us. This is the work of the gospel ministry. It is not to be done until after "he that was dead came forth," and it is not to be done then until Jesus bids the ministry to do it. Both he that was dead and those who are to loose him are as powerless in one instance as the other. The whole thing in a word is, "Without me ye can do nothing." We will not go a step or see a thing beyond that which Jesus speaks. If we have life at all it is because Jesus gives it, and its abundance is regulated and controlled alone by him. "No man taketh this honor to himself" of either imparting life to the dead in trespasses and sins, or of imparting it more abundantly. Life was not simply given Laz-

arus and he then left to shift for himself, for "he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ;" and we must consider the hole of the pit from whence we are digged, that the digging is at no time an effort of ours or any one else, else it is of works, and not grace. We must be given to see it is all a gift; everything that pertains to heaven and heavenly things is not by works of righteousness which we have done. If he that was dead had the power to loose himself and go forth from that cave after Jesus had called him to "come forth" from death, then it is in man that walketh to direct his steps. Another thing, those who loosed him and let him go (do not forget that they did it only at Jesus' command) did the work, and no doubt they were to observe certain sanitary regulations as to washing, disinfecting, &c., in operating with the dead, so as not to become contaminated with any deadly substance. Just so the minister with meekness, fear and trembling goes about whatever task the Master assigns him, considering himself, lest he also be tempted and fall into the snare of the devil. So we compare spiritual things with spiritual. This one dead assures us of the power of God over those dead in sin, and shows us how all the way the Lord made him that was dead to come forth in newness of life, and to come forth in it so far and so abundantly as to afterward be "one of them that sat at the table with him." It is very comforting to us to follow the life of Mary and Martha and Lazarus, and see that His love for them was the same in life or death, and that he was not separated in death from either the living or dead.

As ever, yours,

EVERETT R. KINNEY.

ASHOKAN, N. Y., Dec. 8, 1918.

2 CORINTHIANS V. 1-4.

"FOR we know that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."

It seems as though all the above Scripture needs to be quoted and much more to arrive at what was in the apostle's mind when he wrote it. Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. The earthly tabernacle used by the Jews was to perish, and a spiritual tabernacle be erected. To my view and understanding that is a building of God not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. This building of God is eternal, and eternally existed and eternally exists in all the heavens, legal, prophetical and gospel. Every subject of grace from Abel to the present day has realized this in their experience, that there is a house not made with hands, a building of God. Abraham sought a city which hath foundations. He was groaning in his earthly tabernacle, desiring to be clothed upon with that house from heaven. Prophets searched diligently to know what the sufferings of Christ in them did signify when it testified beforehand of the suffering of Christ and the glory that should follow.

"For we know." There are some things that we know, and this is one of them; we know we groan, being burdened. Every one who realizes this burden on account of sin and depravity, of their shortcomings, of the pains of hell, of the sorrows of death, is a groaning subject. We cannot pray as we should, but only groan and are burdened. In this experience there is a dissolving of

our earthly house of this tabernacle, our former views of our own goodness and righteousness and wisdom and knowledge of the Scriptures are dissolved, the outer man, natural, is perishing day by day, but the inward man, spiritual, is renewed day by day. How often we have looked upon the aged pilgrims and seen their natural man passing away—memory failing, steps faltering, eyes dimmed; and on the other hand, the eyes of their faith would seem to be looking into heaven itself, their faith unshaken and their hope holding them steadfast in that blessed assurance that they were hoping and trusting in the sure mercies of David, that they knew in whom they had believed and were persuaded that the Lord was able to keep that which they had committed unto him. No dim eyes of faith, but a clear view that salvation is by grace from first to last and eternally. Paul realized that he must depart, knew the day of his departure by execution at the hands of Nero was at hand. Read his letter to Timothy, second epistle. Paul knew in whom he had believed. What a blessing of God to be a believer!

A word or two about being unclothed and naked, and being clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. To be unclothed is to be found naked. There is vileness, corruption and depravity in all of us; out of our heart we are judged. God looks upon the heart, and not on the outer appearance, as was the case of Jesse's sons. David was the last one called before Samuel the prophet, and the Lord said, Anoint David. So it is sometimes now the case that a vile, polluted, hell-deserving wretch, the last one on earth one would think that God would call and anoint, is the very one God does call. Their nature is not changed, the same evils and lusts are still there, but by the grace of God this one is clothed upon with the house from heaven. Meekness, kindness, brotherly love, charity, forbearance and love of God so clothe them that mortality is swallowed up of life. What life? Christ's life, for he is the life of men, the light of men, and when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory; now in glory while we are in this tabernacle groaning. Our house from heaven envelops us and the dews of heaven distil in our soul; mortality is swallowed up of life. What a blessing of God to at times enter in beyond the veil before God and from the depth of our soul pour out our petition before his throne.

These things are the things not seen, eternal in the heavens.

J. M. FENTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 1, 1918.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Oct. 27, 1918.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—My mind has been on writing you again for a long time, but feeling my unworthiness to such an extent has prevented me from writing; also I have had much fear that I am not strong in the faith, for I have seemed to be so wavering, and not really submissive to the terrible things of today, and my constant desire has been, and still is, that the Father of all mercies will give me submission to his will in all things. Sometimes I have felt strong in the faith, but soon I find I totter and am liable to fall, but with it all I do know the Father is at the helm, and nothing can be only as is his pleasure, and while sadness of different natures surrounds us, yet I have no other trust, only in his mercy and love. I cannot realize how I, a poor one, of low estate, should or could bring forth the Father's notice, only as

is his will. First of all, I was made to think of him when a mere child, and had knowledge that I was helpless to do good, or to please the Lord, for I felt condemned in my sins, and unto this day have I felt, The mistakes of my life were many, but the sins of my heart they were more. I feel there have been times lately when from my heart I could and did sing, Father, I will rest in thy love, and it quiets the sadness to think of such a sweet resting-place. I know sadness extends from shore to shore of this country, because of the war and this terrible epidemic, O so many sad homes, robbed of their dear ones, but I know it must be all right, for it must seem good in the Father's sight or it would not be that way; the Father makes no mistakes, for he is all-wise, and knows the end from the beginning, while we are selfish, and our feelings are to have things our way, and as far as we can we have our way, but the Lord knew, even before we were formed, how as nothing we are, and so knew our worth then. We seem as though we owned much, and knew much, but when we come to sift it down what a little we own; in fact nothing, so how can we be so heady and so highminded, not even owning the breath in our nostrils or one minute's time? How gracious the Father has been to us all our days, giving us here and there some sunshine of his love, rays of hope and comfort without number, and we nothing to pay, always in poverty. When we would do good, evil is present with us. Do we obey his commandments? I find I do not; far from it. My flesh seems to prevail much of the time, and I find myself judging and condemning another for the very things I have myself been guilty of. I am glad the Father has said he does not judge as man judges, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart, and what a comfort that is, for the Lord knows us altogether and we cannot deceive him.

Our pastor (Elder C. W. Vaughn) has been very sick, but is much improved, and as our Board of Health felt to close all places of gatherings, we have had no meeting for three weeks. I thought I would spend the Sundays calling on the brethren and mingle with their joys and sorrows, but I am ashamed to say I have done very little of the calling, and have tried to keep away from the homes of sickness for fear of my own sufferings. O, but I am a cross to myself, and should think I would be to my brethren, and promise I will do different. But do you all know the amount of a promise to self? The Lord said, It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. When the Lord directs our steps we do as he bids.

I have now written a long letter, I fear entirely too much, so will close by wishing that you one and all may be comforted of the Father as you have need, and may you comfort others with the comfort wherewith you yourselves have been comforted. May you be given faith to trust all your journey through, and may you give all honor and glory to Him, for to him they belong.

With love to all,

MARY HILL TERRY.

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EDITORIAL.

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CAVE ADULLAM.

"DAVID therefore departed thence, and escaped to the cave Adullam: and when his brethren and all his father's house heard it, they went down thither to him. And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men."—1 Samuel xxii. 1, 2.

Cave Adullam was the place of David's hiding from his enemies, the secret place where God's anointed dwelt safely, to which his pursuers did not penetrate. To him here in this secret place came the needy, and over them he became captain. What a singular army was that made up of the distressed, the debtors and the discontented! There are few incidents in David's life that more beautifully and wonderfully prefigure the Christ than this of David's refuge in Cave Adullam. But a few in each age of time have appreciated the true character of Jesus. The popular conception of Jesus and his work has never been the truth. Jesus' real character has been known in the past, and is known now, only by those to whom faith has been given to penetrate to his secret dwelling-place. This is the result of revelation from the Father to his gracious subjects, for it is only by revelation that Jesus can ever be properly believed in. Jesus while in the world himself had two natures: the human and the divine. As a man among the men of his day he was known as being the son of a carpenter of Nazareth. His humanity was apparent to all men, and those who saw nothing but the outward man of him regarded him as a blasphemer, or as a fanatic, or as a heretic, or as an impostor, depending upon the individual viewpoint and judgment of those criticising him. In his essential character as the Son of God, the Word made flesh, the Savior and Redeemer, but few comparatively knew and loved him, and these because they had been taught of God to know and love him. Jesus, in his spiritual life, was a stranger to the world, and the world a stranger to him. The world could not penetrate beneath the outward mask of his humanity and discover the spiritual man hidden there. This was his Cave Adullam. That is, his Spirit self was his refuge from those pursuing and hating him, for this Spirit self was the God in him, and God kept him from being touched until his hour had come, and even when his hour had come to make the supreme sacrifice the persecution vented upon him bruised and wounded his body, but could not by any possibility damage his spiritual self. In order to come at the Cave Adullam, which is Jesus' real self, and there find the Captain of our salvation, one must be distressed, or he must be in debt, or must be discontented. Then, too, one must belong to Jesus' Father's house and be one of his brethren. This takes us back to before the foundation of the world, when God chose or elected his people unto salvation in Jesus Christ, the period known only to God, when he wrote their names in the Lamb's book of life. To have been thus chosen of God in his Son before the world began means

that some time or other, according as God has fixed, he will reveal himself to us. This revelation is the assurance of our pre-world election in Christ. One of the first-fruits of this revelation in the sinner's soul is distress. He is made to see himself wholly a sinner, without one good thing in him, full of wounds and bruises and putrefying sores from the sole of the foot even unto the head, the whole man is sick, without one spot of soundness in him. This causes sharp distress to the conscious sinner, making him to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The sincere, heartfelt cry of the soul penetrates unto Jesus' real self, it finds him in his Cave Adullam. The sinner, thus made sensible of his sins, realizes that he is ten thousand talents in debt without one farthing to pay. He sees that he has never kept one single commandment of the law of God, and never can, that he has never done anything but transgress God's law in thought, word and deed. So he sees himself a debtor to the law. These are the characters to whom God gives the spiritual discernment of living faith to cause them to seek him whom their soul loveth and to find him in that cave retreat hidden from the gaze and understanding of all men. Another mark of the election of grace is to be discontented. That is, to be discontented with self, with sin, the flesh and the world. God's Spirit working in the subjects of his grace brings about this dissatisfaction with self. It is a mark of true discipleship that one hates his own life. Very few of those who openly and loudly declare their zeal for God really know what it means to hate one's own life. This Spirit-begotten discontent with self urges one on and on in quest of that which is infinitely higher than self: the selflessness of Christ. Thus do the discontented come unto him in his Cave Adullam, or the real inner self and character of the real Jesus Christ. When John the Baptist was in prison and sent messengers to Jesus to ask whether he was the Christ or should they look for another, Jesus sent back the messengers to tell John again those things in which Christ is seen. The first of these evidences of the Christ is that the blind receive their sight. Has one ever been blind to the things of God? Yes, all of mankind are thus blind by nature, not one of them able to see God or to make themselves see him. But the Christ of God comes unto the elect of God from among all mankind and gives them eyes to view him. Then these say, Once I was blind, but now I see. To have been blind and to have been made to see the things of God as they truly are is to have been visited by Christ, and to have gotten acquainted with him in the very essence of his being. To have had that lameness which makes one unable to walk the way of God's commands, and so to have been disobedient, and then to have had that lameness cured by the imputation of Christ's obedience, is to have known Christ. To have known the fearful loprosy of one's sins, and then to have had those sins washed away in Jesus' blood, is to have known the true Christ. To have been deaf to the sound of the gospel, and then to be given ears to hear the joyful sound, is to have known Christ. To have been dead in trespasses and sins, and then to have been quickened by the Spirit and raised to the newness of spiritual life in Christ, is to have been brought into communion with our spiritual David in Cave Adullam. Have you ever been poor in spirit? That is, have you ever felt that you were lacking in all the things of God's Spirit? Have you ever in this poverty-stricken condition had the

gospel preached to you with such power that you could not gainsay your interest in it? If so, you have seen and known the Christ. You have heard the call of your Captain from his Cave Adullam, that pavilion where he hides you in the day of trouble, that secret of his tabernacle.

"From every stormy wind that blows,
From every swelling tide of woes,
There is a calm, a sure retreat,
'Tis found beneath the mercy-seat."

But for the mercy of God to usward in Christ we should be without any refuge in the day of trouble, any shelter in the time of storm. So, in the days of David, the poor and the sorrowful and the unhappy found a safe retreat with David in Cave Adullam. Infinitely better than that cave of old, but, nevertheless, foreshadowed by it, is that wonderful virtue and power of Jesus' real inner Spirithood to shelter his people in all their woes, to save them from all their sins, to protect them from all the poisonous, fiery darts of the world and the flesh, which constitute the adversary of our peace. We do not think one has ever found the secret of true living until he has been to Cave Adullam and has had fellowship and communion with Jesus in his true inner self. Men of the world and of the worldly churches have various and peculiar ideas as to what constitutes true living. From the scriptural standpoint, the true life is to know one's self as one really is. Thus, it is to know that one is a sinner, in debt, and extremely miserable therefor, then to be driven by the lash of one's very extremities to seek out Christ in the safe and sure retreat of the Cave Adullam of his inner and true oneness with God; this, we feel sure, is the essence of all true living. Those who, by the grace of God, have known something of this true life shall never really die. They may appear to die, but death can never really touch them, for they are God's anointed, and Saul cannot touch God's anointed. For them death is abolished and the resurrection assured. Every child of God lives two lives: the outer or fleshly life, which all men see, and by which men mostly know us; the other the inner or spiritual life, the Cave Adullam life, which is secret from the gaze and understanding of all around us. This inner life is often to the tired soul a restful retreat from the storm and stress of the outer life. It is in this inner life that one holds sweet fellowship with God. It is with this life that we lay hold on more life to fight the good fight of faith, if we fight it at all. It is in this inner life that the Captain of our salvation trains and disciplines his followers to endure that hardness which is the lot of all the soldiers of the cross.

L.

PRICE OF BIBLES AGAIN ADVANCED.

BECAUSE of another advance in the cost of Bibles to us, we are compelled to again raise our price, and will have to charge $3.50 instead of $3.00 per copy. Any one wishing to secure a Bible as a premium will now have to send us six new yearly subscriptions instead of five.

We hope our subscribers will not think we are trying to take advantage of the unsettled times to make extra profits, for such is not the case, and whatever changes we have made in our business have been forced upon us by the high prices we have had to pay for everything used in publishing the SIGNS.

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OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Thomas Peterson died October 31st, 1918, after a long and lingering illness of catarrhal consumption, aged 66 years, 2 months and 12 days. He united with Chapel Hill Church by experience in September, 1870, at the age of eighteen years. He was liberated to preach in September, 1871, and ordained the fourth Sunday in August, 1874. He had been pastor of Chapel Hill Church from that date until his death, forty-four years, and O how we miss him. His was a wonderful gift, not only to Chapel Hill Church, but to all the churches within his bounds. He was a peacemaker, but never a peacebreaker. His preaching, writing and talking were heartfelt, was why he was a peacemaker. He assisted in the constitution of Sardis Church in July, 1876, in the ordination of Elder Alex Mason September, 1877, Elder J. S. Lee July, 1878, assisted in the constitution of Little Cypress Church and became a member of the same by letter in August, 1892, in the constitution of Friendship Church 1893, in the ordination of J. D. Best November, 1894, received back into Chapel Hill Church by letter July, 1895, assisted in ordaining Elder M. C. Johnson, of Bonham, Texas, November, 1900, in constituting Hot Springs Church March, 1903, was dismissed by letter from Chapel Hill Church in November, 1907, and joined Decieper Creek Church, where he remained until his death. He had not been able to attend Chapel Hill Church for over a year, but wrote us comforting and instructive letters; he was absent in body but present in spirit. He was twice married. His first wife was Martha A. Hudson. To them were born ten children, five of whom are living, one son and four daughters. His last wife was a widow with one child, Mrs. Rena Hudson Hanold, a most faithful, loving and attentive wife. His first wife was a noble woman, too, loved by all who knew her. Our loss is more than we can express, but we cannot grieve; he is done with suffering, sorrow and sin. We as a church have been wonderfully blessed in a good, sound, faithful, peaceloving pastor, and I feel to say, Not my will, but thine, be done, and to thank the great Giver of all good gifts for sparing our pastor and dear brother to us so long.

ALSO,

Mrs. Ruth J. Walker, our eldest sister, died October 25th, 1918, aged 73 years and 2 days. She was twice married, first to Jeremiah Hern. To them were born four children, two of them dying in infancy. The two living are George Hern, of Ouachita, Ark., and Mrs. Ella Williams, of Holly Springs, Ark. After the death of her first husband she moved back to our father's, and remained several years. She was then married to brother James O. Walker, who only lived a few months. To them was born a son, who died at about one year of age. Sister Ruth professed a hope in Christ when quite a small child. In later years she came to the church, I think while she was a widow the first time, still clinging to that little hope she received when a child. She had been a widow forty-one years when she died. A sweet woman has gone from the toils, trials, sorrows and sins of this world. We are sad and lonely without her. I love to think of her at rest; asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep. She had been in feeble health since early spring, yet had never been confined to her room. She visited among us six weeks in the summer, and was planning to come again on Saturday, but died suddenly Friday night at 10 o'clock.

ALSO,

Mrs. Leona Seale Moffett, my dear niece, died Oct. 30th, 1918, of Spanish influenza, aged 19 years and 5 months. She was the youngest daughter of Jasper and Eliza Seale. She was married to Fulton Moffett Feb. 10th, 1918. She was a bright, cheerful child, loved by all who knew her. As she grew to young womanhood she became more tender and lovely. She professed a hope in Christ and united with the Missionary Baptists four years ago. She showed by her daily walk that she had been blessed of God, ever ready to speak a kind word or do a good deed. When her husband had to go to the war she tried to look on the bright side and trust in God to bring him back to her, saying, "God is good, and we must submit." Even in her last sickness, of pneumonia, she was cheerful. What a great loss to us all, and especially so to her dear old mother, but what a great gain for the dear ones gone to rest. I hope the dear Savior will be with us all our few remaining days, and cause that each and all may be enabled to look up to him from whence cometh our help.

LUCY A. SEALE.

Charles Stokes Bond died at his home, 3315 Uber St., Philadelphia, Pa., Friday, Nov. 29th, 1918, in his 61st year. He was born in Salem County, N. J., Dec. 17th, 1857, and was united in marriage to Annie M. Duffield Nov. 22nd, 1882, by Elder Wm. J. Purington. Mr. Bond was a man of sterling qualities and pleasing personality. Having an experimental knowledge of the Scriptures and being a good conversationalist, his talk was with convincing power. While a resident of Bethayres, Montgomery Co., Pa., he was elected Justice of the Peace, in which capacity he served for over a period of ten years. He was also in the livery business in Bethayres, and had occasion oftentimes to convey the Old School Baptist minister from one station to another. One Sunday morning while driving along the road he plucked a branch from a tree, and as he was holding it in his hand the thought came to him, I am the tree, ye are the branches, and it matters not what I do with this branch, it will still be a branch of that tree. Mr

Bond wrote a letter to Elder Purington regarding this, and in reply was told to read the tenth chapter of John: My sheep know my voice; they know not the voice of a stranger. From that time on he was a regular attendant at the Southampton meetings until in December, 1901, he was baptized by Elder Silas H. Durand. Mr. Bond was very industrious, always striving to make a good and comfortable living for his family. He had the faculty of making many friends, and expressions of sympathy which the family has received have assured us of the fact that he was held in the very highest esteem by those with whom he came in contact. Mr. Bond was well versed in the Scriptures, and it was his delight to defend the doctrine advocated by the Primitive Baptists. He was free spoken on the vital principles of christianity, so that none needed to be kept in suspense. He will be greatly missed by the Primitive Baptists and his sorrowful family, but we feel to rest in this: that our loss is his eternal gain. He is survived by his widow and three children: Horace S., of Springfield, Mass., Mrs. Wm. Taylor, of Pattenburg, N. J., and Bertha P. Bond. None knew him but to love him.

His daughter, BERTHA P. BOND.

I desire to add that brother Charles S. Bond united with the Salem Baptist Church of Philadelphia (by letter from the Southampton Church) several years ago. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of God our Savior. He was faithful in attending his meetings when his health would permit. We shall greatly miss him, remembering our many visits together. May heavenly blessings attend his dear family.

Elder J. C. Mellott and the writer conducted the services at his funeral. B. F. COULTER.

William L. Rose, second son of William H. and Fannie Rose, was born in Gilboa, N. Y., April 5th, 1848, and died at his home October 7th, 1918, aged 70 years, 6 months and 2 days. He was ill of pneumonia less than one week. He made no profession, yet seemed interested in the meetings when he took his wife to her meetings. He left to mourn, his wife, daughter, sister brother and nephew. His funeral was held at his late home. Elder John Clark conducted the services and preached the word to us.

ALSO,

Mary E. Leonard Rose, widow of William Rose and eldest daughter of Daniel C. and Esther A. Cole Leonard, was born in Sullivan County, N. Y., August 6th, 1852, and departed this life October 14th, 1918, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Elwin Shoemaker, Prattsville, N. Y., where she went after her husband's death, aged 66 years, 2 months and 8 days. She survived her husband one week. She was tenderly and lovingly cared for by her daughter and son-in-law, but so sudden and unexpected was her departure it seemed she was snatched from us. She united with the Old School Baptist Church at Gilboa, N. Y., Sept. 11th, 1870, and was baptized by Elder A. A. Cole. She was married to William L. Rose Jan. 14th, 1873. They had one daughter. She leaves her daughter, sister H. J. Leonard, the church and many relatives and friends to mourn. She was a loyal, loving, devoted wife, mother and sister, a faithful member of the church forty-eight years, ever filling her place when her health would allow, and tried at all times to do her duty. She was of sterling character, true to every trust. While on her sick bed she said, "My work is done." We miss her in the home and church. We would not murmur nor complain; God gives, God takes away. While we are mourning she is enjoying the rest that remains for the people of God. May God, in whom she trusted, draw near to comfort and support us.

Her funeral was held at the home of her daughter. Her pastor, Elder John Clark, was present, and spoke words of sympathy and comfort to us. Her body lies in the cemetery in Prattsville, by the side of her husband. HER SISTER.

Millard Fillmore Culver, son of Charles and Elizabeth Culver, was born in Otsego County, N. Y., March 21st, 1850, and died at his home in St. Joseph, Mo., Nov. 18th, 1918, aged 68 years, 7 months and 27 days. His mother's maiden name was Sabin; she died when he was four years old. He grew to young manhood in the home of an aunt, Mrs. Amanda Holmes. He came to western Missouri in 1869, and was married to Rebecca Jane Groom Feb. 10th, 1874. Eight children were born to that union, four sons and four daughters: Edwin, of Denver, Colo., James, of Plattsburg, Mo., and sergeants Charles and Benjamin, of the U. S. Regular Army in France; Mrs. B. F. Wilson, of Savannah, Mo., Mrs. Thornton Cash and Misses Elizabeth and Ina, of St. Joseph, Mo. All the above named children, except the sons in France, were at his bedside when death came, which was caused from Bright's disease. He met death as one departing on a pleasant journey, without a murmur or complaint. He was given a good hope in grace through the blood of Christ, and together with his beloved companion was received in the fellowship of Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, near Gower, Mo., in March, 1878, and was baptized by the late Elder Wm. W. Tillery. He remained steadfast in the faith of God's elect to the day of his death. I was permitted to spend the last Sunday of his life at his home, and he never seemed more hopeful, more buoyant, more completely resigned to the will of God in all his life. Brother Culver was dignified and gentlemanly in his manner to all men, but when new and strange doctrines and evil practices were sought to be forced on the dear people of God he boldly denounced the same and refused to give such departures his sanction. He labored for peace always, but

made no compromise with error. He was taught well in the school of Christ. His fireside was sought by those weary ones to whom he was able to give cheer and comfort. In the past thirty years I have spent many spare hours in heavenly conversation with him.

Elder G. E. Higdon, of Richmond, Mo., was called by the family, and spoke very comforting words to the bereaved family and friends. His body was laid to rest in Ashland Cemetery, St. Joseph, Mo.

A. W. BLOOMFIELD.

Mrs. Ella Lorane Williams was born April 30th, 1904, in Hickman County, Ky., and departed this life Dec. 6th, 1918, at the age of 14 years, 8 months and 7 days. Her home was in Clinton, Ky., at the time of her marriage. She was married to John Milburn Williams July 10th, 1918. She was the daughter of Edward and Katie Freye. Her father preceded her to the grave. She professed a hope in Christ at the age of thirteen years. She never united with the church, but lived a consistent christian life, was kind, and all who met her loved her. She bore her sufferings for about four weeks with patience. All was done for her that kind hands could do, but the Lord thought best to take her. Although we are lonely and miss her dear presence, we mourn not as those who have no hope, for we feel that she is in the arms of her dear Savior, and is free from sorrow and pain, and that our loss is her eternal gain. She came to Ripley County, Mo., with her husband soon after they were married. She is survived by her husband, mother, two brothers and host of other relatives and friends.

Her sister-in-law, AGNES.

Clinton Edward Williams was born October 26th, 1894, near Neelyville, Butler Co., Mo., and died Nov. 4th, 1918. He received a hope in Christ in 1916, and lived a consistent christian life. He was married to Miss Myrtle White Dec. 20th, 1916. To that union one child was born. He leaves his wife and child, father, mother, one brother, three sisters and other relatives and a host of friends to mourn their loss. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

I was called to conduct the funeral.

B. H. YATES.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

J. A. Tandy, Okla., $3.00; Elder I. W. Bowers, Texas, $3.00; G. A. Dundas, Cal., $1.00; Mrs. Duncan McCallum, Ont., $2.00; C. Carter, Canada, $3.00; Mrs. Eliza Jones, Ill., $2.00; Miss Semma E. Corder, W. Va., $5.00; O. F. Ballard, N. Y., $1.00; Miss Emma Birdsall, N. Y., $2.00; J. C. Armistead, Ga., $2.00; E. M. Kuehne, N. J., $2.00; A. T. Benson, Pa., $1.00.

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MEETINGS.

THE Second Roxbury Church will hold their meetings for the remainder of the winter on the first Sunday (instead of the second Sunday) at sisters Mead, Roxbury, N. Y. All who love the truth are invited.

G. RUSTON.

THE Middletown and Andes Church will hold their meetings for the remainder of the winter at Halcottville, N. Y., on the second Sunday in each month. All who love the truth are welcome.

G. RUSTON.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

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1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 87. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1919. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HOPEWELL, N. J., August 28, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN AND FRIENDS:—I feel like writing a few thoughts for publication in the good old paper, the SIGNS. I do not know what I may say, but hope it will be a thus saith the Lord. I am sure I can say one thing: that there dwells no good thing in me, that is, in my flesh, all polluted, a poor, trembling worm of the dust. When I would do good, evil is present; the good that I would I do not, evil thoughts crowding out good thoughts, as prone to err as the sparks are to fly upward. There is only one good, that is God; he is precious to them that love his name. The name of Jesus, how sweet, how lovely, how pure. Man in his best estate is but vanity, a lump of clay in the hands of the Potter. The Lord's portion is his people, chosen out of every kindred, tongue and nation; not many mighty, not many noble, but the poor of this world. Forty-nine years ago to-day I tried to tell the brethren here at Hopewell what great things the Lord had done for me. I could say but little about this wonderful salvation through grace, faith and hope through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior. I thought I must tell the brethren how worthy I felt, but hope I was made to see that there was no salvation in that way. I was received, and have been greatly blessed to have the privilege and to be able to be in my seat at the most of the meetings. Sometimes I ask, Am I a child of God, or have I deceived the brethren? So many misgivings and failures to do the good I would. He said, There is none good, no, not one. That encourages me at times. The thief on the cross repented at the last moment and was saved. He is merciful, he will not chide, neither will he keep his anger forever. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. Whosoever confesseth me before men, him will I confess before my Father which art in heaven. Whosoever denieth me before men, him will I deny before my Father which art in heaven. We love to praise him and crown him Lord of all, giving him all the glory, honor, dominion, power and majesty. A poor babe found in a manger wrapped in swaddling clothes grew up the wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, and died that ignominious death

on the cross. He was made a little lower than the angels, died and rose again for our justification. I feel that I can praise him for all his wonderful works and trust him for all that is to come. If I could only feel sure that I am numbered with his chosen ones. I fear at times that I have not been born again, forgetting spiritual things and clinging to worldly things. That good hope is an anchor of our souls, sure and steadfast; not like the anchor of a ship, but a sure anchor, a sure foundation, that will stand. My sheep hear my voice, I know them; not one shall perish. Other sheep have I, which are not of this fold. He gathers his sheep in his arms and carries the lambs in his bosom; he will never forsake one of them, they are his. Blessed are they that do his commandments; they shall have right to the tree of life and enter in through the gates into the city. Fear not, little flock, for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. We hear much about worldly inheritance, but we seek that inheritance which fadeth not away, but is from everlasting to everlasting. O the depth of the riches, both of the knowledge and wisdom of God! Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor? Is not God wiser than the wisdom of men? No flesh shall glory in his presence. The foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of men. Paul said, By the grace of God I am what I am. I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. He told his Philippian brethren to rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice. "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." The mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but my loving-kindness shall not depart from thee. The words of the prophet were: Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed, neither confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame, for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy maker is thy husband, the Lord of hosts is his name, and thy redeemer the holy one of Israel. The God of the whole earth shall he be called. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy redeemer.

I fear I have written more than I should, so will close, hoping that some one of the little ones may get a crumb of comfort from this poor letter. I wish I could write like other of my brethren.

From a poor worm of the dust,

D. L. BLACKWELL.

CLARKS SUMMIT, Pa., Jan. 2, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—You will find inclosed a letter from sister Helen Kinney, formerly of Schoharie, N. Y., but now with her stepson, E. R. Kinney, and wife, at Ashokan, N. Y. Although in her eighties, and badly afflicted with rheumatism, she seems bright and young spiritually.

I will say in regard to our son, after waiting more than two months for word

from him we have learned from a soldier with him that he was alive Dec. 5th, but has been in a hospital. He did not state the trouble with him. We are living in hope of seeing him some time, and we hope soon. God's will be done, but O so little of the time do I feel it as I wish. Will I ever be reconciled to God's works and ways? What a puzzle I am!

Elder Durand's death came like a thunderbolt to me. I had known him forty-seven years; he baptized me and my wife about that time and was our pastor for years; a faithful shepherd of the flock, a great expounder of the word. He has gone to his heavenly home above. God bless sister Bessie and the two daughters with sustaining grace, and give the Southampton Church another undershepherd to comfort them, for Jesus' sake.

I am still serving several churches as usual; very poor service. Had eighteen appointments in December, which is about the monthly average. We have had very few additions the past year; the congregations are about the same numerically; all seem to be quiet. Several ministers have visited the churches the past year; among them were Elders McConnell, Fenton, Ruston and brother Dodson. All preached salvation by grace, which is the fodder that the sheep and lambs thrive on. I want to say to the ministering brethren, Come and preach for us; we are hungry for good, sound, old hard corn preaching. Love to all.

Fearing, yet hoping,

D. M. VAIL.

ASHOKAN, N. Y., Dec. 22, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—My mind is with you and my home church this morning. I wish I could just be seated with you all. I feel homesick, for there is no place like home. I was thinking last night of how we enjoy our natural homes, and thought it was more so in our home church. Although we are one family, still it seems more like home where we have been brought up. Last Sunday I listened to two good sermons by Elder Ruston, and felt glad that my Father had given me the privilege of being with those of like precious faith, as long as I could not be in my own home. The Lord is good, and I feel I have more than I deserve, and wonder many times why I have had all these blessed privileges for so many years, while many are so situated that they cannot meet with their dear kindred. Surely not for any goodness in me, but because it has seemed good to Him to make pleasant paths for my feet. Yes, for almost sixty years I have lived in the fellowship of my dear kindred in Christ. O why should I doubt his love when he has led me by the hand thus far? As the poet has it: "What cheering words are these? Their sweetness who can tell?" I think you, too, can look back over the way you have come, and with all that you have had to pass through you can see the hand of the Lord, that he has given you strength, so at times you could say, Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. I often think of the way he has led you and prepared you to feed the flock. Yes, dear brother, I feel that we can witness to your being called to feed the flock, for what a comfort you have been to us in all of our trouble. We have often said, Where would we as a church be if the Lord had not given us a father that he through you fought our battles for us? To-day I am thinking of you handing out the rich food to those who are privileged to listen, and surely I am with you in mind. I am wondering if you and dear sister Vail have heard of your dear boy. I

have thought so often of you both, and hoped that he might return to you safely. Of course, we who have had no sons in the war cannot know the feelings of those who have. I feel so glad that the Jefferson folks can have you with them this week. I will close, hoping this finds you and yours well. Remember me to dear sister Vail. I wish she might visit us next summer.

Your sister in hope of a better life,

HELEN KINNEY.

OSKALOOSA, Kansas, March 31, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—By request, and also by my own wish, I am sending you this copy of a letter, which was begun by our late sister Nettie Porter, of Garber, Okla., and sent to me after her death by her parents, sister Elizabeth Garton and Roy Garton, of Lakemp, Okla. I read it with a solemn thrill, as a voice from the dead; then I thought, No, not from the dead, but the living, for Christ said, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." If it meets your approval please publish it in the SIGNS.

Unworthily,

MARY ELLISON.

DEAR SISTER IN HOPE:—If you will allow me to so address you after this long silence. I have thought of you, and I hope of all the dear kindred in Christ, often, but I am so slow to perform my duty that I have put off writing the letter which I know ought to be written. We are well and getting along very well, but I, as usual, am unthoughtful of God's goodness to me until I feel his presence in this cold and stony heart. I am very unprofitable in the things of God; I am never able to observe his kindness and loving care until I feel that "something" which makes me thank him for the sunshine and beautiful day. I feel my heart overflowing this morning, hence this letter to you. Do not think I am always at the feet of Jesus, for I am not. Most of my path lies in shadows and doubts, and there are times when I fret and plan for to-morrow, forgetting there is One who has already provided for the morrow. This is my great grief, that I cannot always feel the assurance that he has provided a way. True, I believe it and think it, but when clouds gather and there is no light ahead I wonder how it is all going to come out—wonder how to-morrow is going to be provided for, when he has left so many assurances that he has us in his loving care. When I look back and count my blessings and think how unthankfully I have received so many of them, it makes me wonder at the unreasonableness of my own nature, and in my heart this morning I cry, and long to cry with my lips, O for a closer walk with God. My mind has gone back on the path I traveled when I first began to think on the things of God, and I remember how impossible it looked for me to ever own my God and Savior and live in peace at home. Then I remember how that still small voice urged me on, with a blessed assurance that all would be well. When things were the darkest, in my heart I was willing to give up all and go the way I felt drawn, and then the thought and the feeling would come that God was able to make all rough places smooth, and there would even be good in what then seemed hard to me. Now, when husband and I sometimes grasp a thing of God together, I recall my doubts and fears, also the suffering I then had to bear, and I think that the burden I then had to bear is nothing, and not to be compared with the grace and comfort I

get out of God's word, and the unity of feeling that exists between my husband and myself. That is one of the blessings I thank God for, and feel ashamed of the doubts and fears I felt; but I thank him for the strength that enabled me to bear my burden. I recall how I wandered in darkness, and how I would carry some little portion of my burden to my husband, and how like Job's comforters he was, and I know it was only the blessed work of God, to plant my feet on a firm foundation, and every shred of hard feeling has long ago left my heart, and I feel that spirit which prayeth, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. I can even say I am glad that it was so, for in it I can see that it was only a work to show forth the glory of God. There was always a desire to talk more with God's people about my travel before I came to the church, but there was always a something that kept me from it. I always loved the Baptist people; even when a child I loved the sound of their voices when giving thanks unto their God; but there was one thing that always grated on my nerves, even when a child, when I heard them tell of their experiences, and they would in any way connect a dream. It always made it look queer and superstitious to me. When I was fifteen years old I began to be worried about death and the hereafter. I wanted so much to do what was right, and tried that hopeless task of trying to merit salvation. When I was in the most hopeless state of mind I dreamed that I was riding on horseback over a desolate, hilly country. The hills were bare of vegetation, and even the sun was hid behind a cloud. I thought the path I traveled was so rough I might be killed at any moment, and just as I thought I was about out of the bad country I came to the end of my path, or road. I was on the top of a high hill that there was no visible way of getting down and going ahead. There was a valley that commenced right at the foot of the hill, with beautiful green grass, and a beautiful stream of water that ran very smoothly and wound prettily through the valley. There were a few clusters of trees, and over it all the sun shone so prettily that it made me shudder with dread as I thought of turning back over the desolate road I had traveled. I awoke with that awful feeling of dread, and try as I might, and tell myself as often as I could that there was nothing in a dream, that dread and awful feeling stayed with me for seven years. Often I prayed to God to take it away, just to remove that dread and harrowing feeling. Once as I went alone out into the orchard I prayed for some kind of a token, to relieve my bruised and burdened heart. As I looked about me there came a feeling with these words: Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. The thought was in my mind that surely I could take hold of that, because I was hungering and thirsting after righteousness. For a few months I found relief from the awful burden, and thought it was gone, when it came anew and seemed much worse than before. For a year I wandered and sought God in vain; but one morning as I went about my household duties I felt the loving-kindness of God, and I worshiped as one who has no hope himself when I stood in my kitchen doorway and prayed God if it were his will to take away my burden and remove the dread produced by the dream, and it came as a voice, though I heard no sound, O, have you not yet suffered enough to know that it is not on a

high hill of pride where mercy is to be found, but low, low down at the feet of Jesus? and the peace, the sweet peace of God, so filled my heart that it shut out everything else, removing all doubt, all fear; even the horror of the dream, that had hung over me, went, never to fill a moment of my time again, lifted as a mist before the sun. I am sometimes in doubt and in trouble, but not the kind that lays hold—

Here the pen was laid aside, and the hand of death intervened before it was lifted again. The beautiful song of praise was interrupted, to be resumed in the midst of the heavenly choir, before the throne of God and the Lamb, where throughout an endless eternity she will join with them in sweet anthems of praise, singing, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory, because thou hast redeemed us by thy blood. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by his mercy he saved us. The dear sister died about the last of February, leaving her husband, John Porter, and four little children, besides her parents and three brothers. I presume a suitable obituary notice will be sent to the SIGNS. Though rejoicing in such precious testimony of such a favored witness to the goodness, mercy and peace of God, which passes the knowledge and understanding of the worldly-wise natural mind, I am made to feel very humble and deeply sensible of my unworthiness to have been the recipient of this letter. Surely it is because He is of one mind, and none can turn him, that I am not consumed; and though I deplore the expression of even an implied doubt of his mercy and favor to one who surely is less than the least of all saints, yet I am tempted to say, if one at all.

Submitted. M. E.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 9, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I would like to say through the SIGNS that we deeply appreciate the many letters of sympathy and love that have come to us. They were of great comfort, and we would like to acknowledge each one individually, but there are so many that we cannot do so at present. We appreciate Elder Ker's words of sympathy in his editorial and Elder Lefferts' obituary notice, the resolutions drawn up by the Southampton Church and all the messages from the brethren and friends everywhere. I feel that no greater privilege could have been vouchsafed me than to be in the presence of my father and mother during their last days on earth. Just a few days before mother died she said that she wanted to tell me, although she knew she could not make me know it as she knew it, that she knew then as she had never known in her life before, that there was nothing of any value and nothing real but the things of Jesus. Now, as then, through the loneliness and grief, there flows a stream of joy when I think of such an ending to so beautiful a life. During the last few days as father lay on his bed he was almost continually repeating portions of Scripture and expounding them. One morning he repeated the fifty-first Psalm, commenting on each verse and dwelling especially upon the last verse. I wish I could remember it all, but my mind was so full of grief and care for him that afterwards I could not recall clearly much of what he said. A short time ago father said in one of our meetings: "I am living in the Psalms now," and his Bible is almost worn out in that part. In his days of illness he showed so clearly that he was living in the Psalms. He would ask me to read one after another, or else repeat them himself and

talk about them. Once we heard him singing clearly and sweetly, "My God, the spring of all my joys," &c. He spoke of the sixth chapter of 2nd Corinthians, and once for several hours he talked about the lilies. I think the last portion that he spoke of was, Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. Over and over again he would repeat the words, and sometimes it was just a whisper: Wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. At the time of father's ordination his brother James wrote an ordination hymn. In it he says:

"But when his onward path grows rough and dim,
And trials crowd his way,
O then, thou God of comfort, comfort him
With thine own peace, we pray.

Thus shall he learn to comfort such as be
Through darkened pathways led,
With the same consolations wherewith he
Himself is comforted."

It seems to me that I can see the fulfillment of that desire; for in the letters that have come, each one tells of comfort received from his ministry; and he was giving comfort to us who were near him to the very last. He was with his brethren all the time in mind, at Middletown, Salisbury, Winnipeg and elsewhere, talking with the brethren, and always upon the theme of Jesus and his love. "You must see," he would say, "the necessity of the blood of Jesus. There is no other way of salvation." I have often heard him say that to him, as to nearly every one, death was the king of terrors, but he felt assured that when death came the passing away would be but the drawing aside of the veil which hides from us here the glory to come. The closing verses of Uncle James' last poem, "Songs in the night," which father felt described the ending of his brother's life, apply as truly to the close of his own:

"The silent, shadowy hours move onward slowly,
But a sweet sense of joy abides with me;
One thought alone makes the night watches holy:
The blessed thought that I am still with thee.

And morning cometh! soon these watchings ended,
Soon all these earthly nights and vigils o'er,
On the freed soul shall break the radiance splendid
Of perfect day upon the sinless shore.

O, there shall be no more of restless sighing,
No more of sorrow and of blighting care;
For in that glorious home of bliss undying
No shadow falleth, and no night is there.

Wrapped in such thoughts, peace floweth like a river,
Filling with voiceless songs the silence deep;
Songs holy as the angels sing forever;
And thus thou givest thy beloved sleep."

MILDRED DURAND GORDY.

PRAYER.

"AND in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you."—John xvi. 23.

We all know that it is customary for people of the Protestant faith to close their prayers and supplications by saying, We ask it all in Jesus' name, or, We ask it all for Jesus' sake. The common teaching is that all should pray that way, whether they are christians or sinners, unchanged sinners. The question now is, Have all a right to pray in Jesus' name? Should we all say, For Jesus' sake? Do some have that right and others not have it? Who has that right, and who has no such right? Have you such a right? Have I such a right? Has any one? Yes, some have a right to say, We ask it all in Jesus' name and for his sake. I was more than fifty years old before that question demanded an answer from me, so if you have never solved that question I cannot blame you. Some three and one-half years ago I was by myself, and was in meditation and silent prayer, when a very strong impression, like a voice,

said, Have you a right to ask a blessing in Jesus' name? The question was new to me, and so impressive I could not put it by. I soon feared I had no right to pray in Jesus' name, but after serious meditation and reading I arrived at an answer like this: All that the Father gave the Son, and had been quickened by the Spirit into divine life, had that right, and those who had not been given by the Father to the Son had no such right. Two different peoples, with different rights. Christ's people have a right to pray in his name, no others. The worldly sinner has no right, neither has the church member who has not been quickened by the divine Spirit. They are of the world, and Christ said in his great prayer, John xvii. 9, "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." Now if the unregenerated are not his, and he does not pray for them, why should they pray in his name? Those who choose Christ, accept him, and go to him of their own power, pleading self-righteousness by the works of the law, are not his, and have no right to pray in his name. Christ says in John xv. 16: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you." If the wicked sinner presumes to ask in Jesus' name when he has no right to do so, it is a wicked prayer, and availeth nothing. It is hypocritical to claim a right you have not. Woe unto you, hypocrites, &c. If Christ is your intercessor he pleads with the Father for you and you may ask in his name, and you will be blessed according to your needs, but if no part in the great atonement you are too full of sin to approach him. If you are eating your own bread and wearing your own apparel you cannot take away your reproach by asking in his name. I often fear I have no right to pray in his holy name.

M. N. WEBB.

SALT ROCK, W. Va., Dec. 26, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—I received your welcome card of the 21st instant, and am truly thankful for its contents. I hope the Lord will continue to supply you with means to send the SIGNS to just such characters as poor unworthy me, who does appreciate the joyful sound of the gospel in its purity. I will now ask you to change the address of my paper from Sheridan, W. Va., to Salt Rock, W. Va., Box 33.

Dearest friends on earth, I will inform you that I long and look earnestly each moment for my departure from time to eternity, and I will request those with whom I reside to inform you when my summons comes so you can discontinue the paper.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

PRICE OF BIBLES AGAIN ADVANCED.

BECAUSE of another advance in the cost of Bibles to us, we are compelled to again raise our price, and will have to charge $3.50 instead of $3.00 per copy. Any one wishing to secure a Bible as a premium will now have to send us six new yearly subscriptions instead of five.

We hope our subscribers will not think we are trying to take advantage of the unsettled times to make extra profits, for such is not the case, and whatever changes we have made in our business have been forced upon us by the high prices we have had to pay for everything used in publishing the SIGNS.

Now that the war is over we hope that prices may soon start to go down, and when they do we shall be glad to give our brethren the benefit therefrom.

Address all orders, and make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1919.

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EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

DESOLATION—THE WORK OF THE LORD.

"COME, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth."—Psalms xlvi. 8.

Peculiar notions float in the minds of most men as to what constitute the works of the Lord. The shining of the sun and of the moon, the blossoming of trees and flowers, the falling of the snow and the rain, the singing of birds, the blowing of the wind, the birth of a child, the bestowal of happiness and of prosperity, all these most people would say are the works of God; but when it comes to the reverse of all these pleasant and cheerful things, to the things that produce pain or sorrow, death or disease, these things most people prefer to ascribe to some other power than that of God. The truth is, that all these things come from the Lord, both those things that bring peace in their train as well as those things that leave a streak of fire behind them. War, famine and pestilence are a trio that go together, and rarely ever are separated; where we find one we are very apt to be able to discover the other two. A terrific world war has just spent its force in taking its terrible toll of the blood and treasure of the nations. Accompanying this whirlwind of destruction and following upon the heels of it comes famine, taking its toll of precious lives throughout Europe and Asia, many persons starving to death for lack of the wherewithal to sustain life. Probably even in our own land, and perhaps not far from our very doors, scores, and maybe hundreds, are suffering for the lack of the necessities of life. Hard upon war and famine comes the third of the trio: disease, or pestilence. The present epidemic of influenza raging all over the United States is really a pandemic, because it is worldwide, prevailing in the countries of the old world as well as here. The total of those who succumb to the pestilence will exceed in number the victims of the war. Thus we find ourselves in this present generation living in the midst of these monsters of destruction, things we have all read about in the history of the past, but which we ourselves hardly expected to see for ourselves. These are not the agencies or instruments of Satan, they are the works of the Lord. As it has been in the past, so it is now, and so shall it ever be as long as this old world remains constituted and organized as it is. The Lord in the days of Noah saved eight persons in the ark from the flood; all others living at that time were swallowed up in the deluge. Many people expressed themselves during the last four years that this war was the worst thing that has ever come to pass, but we think they must have forgotten about the flood in the days of Noah, which desolation must have been terrible to those who perished in it, but which nevertheless was the work of God. Again, what desolation was that which God wrought when he overwhelmed Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, thus delivering his own elect people. Again, what desolation was the work of God when the earth opened and swal-

lowed those who replied against Moses and Aaron, and two hundred and fifty men who offered incense were consumed by fire from the Lord. The word of the Lord by Ezekiel declares, "So will I send upon you famine and evil beasts, and they shall bereave thee; and pestilence and blood shall pass through thee; and I will bring the sword upon thee. I the Lord have spoken it." You will notice it is not Satan who says this, but the Lord himself. In the ninth chapter of Ezekiel we have the vision given the prophet of the slaying to occur in Jerusalem: to six men who came from the way of the higher gate with slaughter weapons in their hands, the Lord commanded, "Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women." This is by no means the only place in the Bible where the Lord commanded the killing of women and children. The Lord is not only a God of construction, but also of destruction; he both kills and makes alive as he sees fit.

But let us come to the forty-sixth Psalm and consider the desolation there spoken of. The first thing mentioned as being destroyed is war: "He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth." And, by the way, the Lord is the only being that can effectually make an end of war. Some doubt the success of the attempt that is being made to make war obsolete. The world to-day is trying to devise a league of nations to establish worldwide peace. We hope for success. This plan may not succeed, and we do not have to be a prophet to make such a statement. One needs only to carefully read the Scriptures to learn there that God alone is the author of peace, and that only the peace of God can endure forever. As long as human nature is what it is, and as long as the governments of the nations are organized as they are, there can be no worldwide permanent peace. However, the Psalm says that to the ends of the earth the Lord makes wars to cease. This does not convey the idea that God makes wars to cease all over the earth, but to the ends of the earth. The ends of the earth are the Lord's people. Every subject of God's grace is brought to the end of all earthly things, to the end of his strength, to the end of his wisdom, to the end of all confidence in himself or in the flesh. Thus, by the revelation of God's Spirit, the sinner finds he is full of all that is earthly, sensual and vain, and that there is no hope of salvation coming through the help or power of man. He finds the end of a man, and that the end of a man is vanity. This, the end of a man, is the end of the earth. Here is where the war ceases. Whereas before the sinner was fighting against God, at war with heaven and in league with hell, now by the work of the Son of God, and the death which Jesus suffered, this war or opposition against God is ended, and he is reconciled to God through the mediatorial work of the Redeemer. This is the war that ceases, and it ceases only to those who have been brought to the end of the earth. He takes from us all our weapons of warfare so that we can no longer struggle against him. "He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder: he burneth the chariot in the fire." The reason many believe that their works save them is because they have never experienced the destruction of their weapons of war at the hands of the Lord. No one can believe in salvation by works who has witnessed the Lord making wars to cease to the end of the earth. The Lord strips the sinner of all his works, he humbles his pride in the dust, he destroys all self-confidence and all fine spun theo-

ries and philosophies which have for their aim the elevation of the creature in the place of the Creator. It is no wonder the Lord's people believe wholly in salvation by grace, for the Lord has wrought a work of desolation in them, a work in which he has destroyed their spears and bows and chariots, so that they no longer can trust in their own defences, but must be still and know that he is God. No one is ever still, that is, ceasing his own ineffectual efforts, until the Lord makes him to be still, and creates within him the knowledge of God, through the destruction of all creature fortresses and self-sufficiency. The Lord destroys as he builds up. There is no such thing as growing in grace without at the same time growing out of self. In order to be built up in the faith that is God's elect's one must have had faith in one's own self destroyed. Those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, but one never waits upon the Lord until he gets to that place where he can no longer wait upon himself. This, for that one, is the end of earth. Here every vain imagination is cast down, every idol shattered; the sinner is abject in the dust, wholly surrendered to the King of heaven, for God has destroyed all his weapons whereby he might longer fight, and has consumed all his strength, so that he could not fight had he still the weapons. Thus does God exalt himself among the heathen. One who is an unbeliever in God is a heathen, whether he dwell in Asia, Africa, Europe or America. None can convert the heathen but God himself. He does it through the operation of the Holy Spirit and the revealing power thereof in the soul and the life of the one who is a heathen. Self, and all the things of self: the mind and the will and the affections of self, are abased, that God shall be all in all. This is the way God exalts himself among the heathen. It is through these bitter things that God's people are taught to lie passive in his hand and know no will but his. Thus comes into the soul that final abolition of all war, the peace that passes all understanding, the peace that the world can neither give nor take away. Experimentally, God's people are taught that God's glory is advanced through their self-abasement. That which is exalted must be abased, and that which is abased must be exalted. God's plan of salvation leads downward instead of upward, downward into the abysmal depths of self-knowledge, that one may know what is the height of that wisdom and knowledge that is of God. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder M. J. Hicks.)

The Mt. Enon Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the church at Little Flock, to the churches of which she is composed sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—It has pleased the God of our hope, with whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning, to bless us to meet in another association, for which we desire to praise and adore his holy name. We note with pleasure that the churches are in peace one with another. While we are few and scattered, we are reminded that "the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong," so "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Now may the love of God continue with you all, is our prayer.

To those associations of like precious faith we solicit correspondence.

Our next association is to be held with Mt. Enon Church, four miles east of Plant City, Fla.

W. O. FUTCH, Moderator.
J. H. MILES, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, at the residence of Mr. J. M. Holloway, in Delmar, Md., Dec. 14th, 1918, Clifford I. Twilley and Lida May Rounds, both of Wicomico County, Md.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, Jan. 21st, 1919, at the home of the groom, Waxpool, Va., C. J. Gheen and Mrs. Sarah Paxson, of Ryan, Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Edith Ensminger, my eldest daughter, wife of Joseph Ensminger, of Harrisburg, Pa., departed this life on the evening of Dec. 31st, 1918, at her home in Harrisburg. She was taken down with that dread disease which has made desolate so many homes throughout the country within the past three months (Spanish influenza) on the 23rd of December, developing pneumonia four days later, from which she passed away Dec. 31st. She leaves her husband, two sons, mother-in-law, father, stepmother, three brothers and three sisters, by all of whom she was greatly beloved. She was born Feb. 26th, 1879, married to Joseph Ensminger June 19th, 1902, and spent all her married life in Harrisburg, Pa. She was a woman of lovely traits and warm sympathies, a loving, dutiful daughter, a faithful wife and devoted mother. She never made a public profession of religion, but was a lover of the truth and had a hope in the mercy of God and the forgiveness of sins through the Lord Jesus Christ. It is hard for us when these afflictions come upon us to say, Thy will be done, and we are prone to ask, Why? yet we know that He doeth all things well, and desire to be reconciled to his will. She is gone from us, and we shall never see her face again on earth; the home is left desolate, the light has gone out. May the Lord show his loving-kindness even when he afflicts, and may we all be ready when the summons comes to us and be enabled to say, Come, welcome death.

ALSO,

Mrs. Effie E. Johnson died at her home in Wicomico County, Md., Jan. 2nd, 1919, of the same dread disease, from which she suffered about eleven days. She was the daughter of George and Rebecca Leonard, and was born May 24th, 1880, in Wicomico County. She was married to Elmer Johnson some twelve or thirteen years ago, who was killed by train August 1st, 1911, leaving her with one child, a boy, who is now left an orphan. Besides her son she leaves an aged mother, two brothers and one sister, who were devoted to her and to whom she was devoted. It was my privilege to baptize sister Johnson in the fellowship of the Old School Baptists at Salisbury, Md., Oct. 12th, 1918, thus she had been a visible member less than three months, but in that short space she proved her faith by her works and gave promise of great usefulness in the church, and we feel our loss greatly, but believe our loss is her eternal gain. She was a woman of great energy and business tact, a very successful farmer, and one admired and esteemed by her neighbors and friends; a devoted mother, kind and affectionate daughter and sister, a warm friend and a good neighbor. I feel her loss next to that of my own daughter, for she was my daughter in the gospel, and I feel that it is hard to give her up, but must bow to Him who had a superior claim and saw fit to take her from us.

May the Lord comfort the son, mother, brothers and sisters with the consolations of his word.

A. B. FRANCIS.

Deacon S. B. Minton was born in Cherokee County, Ala., March 13th, 1842, and departed this life Oct. 16th, 1918, making his age 76 years, 7 months and 3 days. Brother Minton was married in 1860 to Martha Bently, and to that union were born five sons and three daughters. Not knowing their full names, I will give the names they are commonly known by. The sons are: Morris, Lee, Sidney, Charley and Vernon. The daughters are: Mrs. Alice, Kirk, Mrs. Mattie Fortune and Mrs. Mary Grady, all of whom are living. His wife having died about three years ago, brother Minton made his home with his children from that time until his death. Brother Minton and wife moved from Alabama to Arkansas just before the Civil War, and in 1862 he enlisted in the Confederate Army under Captain McCoy, and served in the army the remainder of the war. In 1870 he united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Mt. Zion, and was baptized by Elder W. S. Helm. In 1871 he was in the constitution of Mt. Pleasant Church, Prairie County, Ark., and lived a constant member of that church until his death. About thirty years ago brother Minton was ordained deacon in his church, and served the church faithfully the remainder of his life. He was a prominent man in his neighborhood, kind and generous to the poor and needy, ever ready to defend the right and condemn the wrong. To be truly and sincerely a member of the church of Christ excelled all the treasures of the world to him. He desired rather to suffer reproach with the people of God than to enjoy sin for a moment. As a deacon in the church he had but few equals. He discharged the duties of that office to the full satisfaction of his brethren. He was faithful in attendance and devoted to the cause of Christ, looking well to gospel order and gospel discipline. Nothing was more soul-cheering to him than to sit and hear the gospel preached in its purity. He was held in high esteem for the truth's sake among his brethren wherever he went, being firm and established in the doctrine of God our Savior, a lover of the doctrine of salvation by grace from start to finish. We all keenly feel the loss of this servant of

the house of God, but the Lord has called him to a higher sphere to praise him throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. May it please the Lord to bring us all to the same banqueting-house of everlasting joy and peace in the bright mansion of that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

G. L. PILKINGTON.

Miss Margaret Chiswell, our sister in Christ, passed from this life Jan. 11th, 1919, at the home of her parents, John and sister Sue Chiswell, Tuscarora, Frederick Co., Md. Her death was due to pneumonia, following an attack of influenza. She was born in Dawsonville, Md., Dec. 7th, 1888. Besides her parents, she is survived by three sisters in the flesh: Misses Eleanor and Eugenia and sister Mary Chiswell. After these there are several aunts, uncles and cousins, besides a wide circle of brethren and friends, who deeply mourn the death of sister Margaret. She was baptized into membership with the New Valley Church, in Virginia, by the late Elder E. V. White, in May, 1902, when she was not quite fourteen years of age. Not often is it that one is brought into the Old School Baptist Church at such an early age, but her experience of grace was a very clear one, and she was enabled to give a good reason for her hope of salvation in Jesus Christ. She had no confidence in the flesh nor in the wisdom of men, but her whole faith was in the power and love and mercy of God revealed through the blessed Savior. Her whole life was spent in the service of others, it being her chief joy to do things and say things to make life pleasant for those about her. A more self-sacrificing disposition than hers would be hard to find. While at her work in Washington, D. C., she contracted the influenza, but forbore to leave her work and go home, fearing she might give the disease to loved ones at home, none of whom had had the disease; but when pneumonia developed she believed that death was inevitable. Wishing to be at home when she died, she left Washington and came home, though ill of pneumonia. As long as consciousness lasted she was cheerful, and never showed the slightest fear of the approaching end. While at home on vacation during the Christmas holidays she was talking of death, and wondered why anybody should be afraid of it. For herself, this fear had all been taken away through the blessed work of Jesus in her soul, Jesus, who had abolished death and had brought life and immortality to her understanding through the gospel. We shall miss sister Margaret greatly in our meetings, for she loved the meetings of the brethren and the preaching of the gospel. May the dear Lord dwell comfortingly with the bereaved family, church and friends, reconciling us to his will as only he can.

Burial took place in Monocacy Cemetery, Beallsville, Md.

ALSO,

Mrs. Mary Shoemaker, our sister in Christ, departed this life Dec. 28th, 1918, some few weeks past 63 years of age, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Nellie Jones, in the vicinity of Dickerson, Md. She was the daughter of John and Sarah Waters McKimmy, both deceased. Two brothers and one sister survive her: A. G. McKimmy, F. E. McKimmy and Mrs. Jesse Shry, all living in the vicinity of Lucketts, Va. The death of her first husband, Edward L. Titus, left her with a family of several small children to look after and with little or no means of support. None but her God and herself knows what a struggle was hers. It was during the illness of her first husband and at the time of his being taken from her that she was in great exercise of mind spiritually, and laboring under the heavy burden of her sins, the Holy Ghost having brought her to a consciousness of her true condition before God. About this period of her life she experienced also deliverance from sin and received the sweet and precious gift of a good hope of salvation by grace. Sept. 21st, 1884, she was baptized into membership with the New Valley Old School Baptist Church, by the late Elder E. V. White. To the day of her death the church has not had a more faithful nor more devoted member than sister Shoemaker. She went to meeting because it was her life, and because she received there that gospel which was food from above to her hungry and thirsty soul. The following children of her first marriage survive her: Mrs. Nellie Jones, Mrs. Alice Haller, of Poolesville, Md., Mrs. Nora Trittipoe, of Jefferson, Md., Frank Titus, of Dickerson, Md., and Thornton Titus, of Lucketts, Va. No children ever had a better mother or a more self-sacrificing one. She was always ready not only to minister to the needs of her own family circle, but equally willing and ready to do anything in her power to help the afflicted and needy anywhere. Some years after the death of her first husband she married George W. Shoemaker, who died a few years ago. One child of this union survives her: Mrs. Mary Armstrong, of Milton, Pa.

Funeral services were held in Leesburg, Va., reading the twenty-seventh Psalm. Burial in Union Cemetery. We believe she is at rest in the bosom of her glorious Lord. May God comfort all who mourn, especially those who mourn for their sins. L.

John Barklay Dawson, only son of Thomas H. and Louann Dawson, was born in Kentucky Nov. 10th, 1830. With his parents he lived in Kentucky, Arkansas and California until early in the fifties, when he moved to Texas. In 1867 he settled in New Mexico, and lived on his ranch home there for many years, and in 1903 moved to Colorado. In both of these last named states towns by the name of Dawson remain and stand as monuments to his memory. God blessed brother Dawson with an active mind and strong body, and his achievements were above that

of the average man. He was interested in cattle raising, coal mining and railroad building while a pioneer in the great west. In 1912 brother Dawson retired from business, and with his wife came to California, where he lived until Dec. 27th, 1918. Several years ago he was stricken with paralysis, and little by little his strength failed. When he did go from us in death it was like one falling peacefully asleep. He was 88 years, 1 month and 17 days a sojourner here, and then was gathered home. In 1873 he was married to Miss Laviana Jefferson. Six children were born to them; Mrs. Edwena Whitney, of Los Angeles, and Mrs. Laura Wilkins, of Colorado, only are left. Besides these two daughters he is survived by two sons of a former marriage: B. A. Dawson, of Colorado, and S. M. Dawson, of Brazil, South America, and by sister Dawson, now 77 years of age. She and family never ceased in their faithful vigils over him, and all was done that mortals could do to make him comfortable. In the year 1907 our aged brother was baptized by Elder D. B. Nowels and received in the fellowship of Bethel Church of Old School Baptists in Colorado. In the faith of this people, a firm believer in salvation by grace alone, he lived and died. His family and the church in Los Angeles will miss him much, but we desire to bow to this act of our Father in heaven, and feel that what he does is right. He was indeed a kind husband and father and an exemplary member of his church.

At the request of our precious sister Dawson the writer spoke briefly to the friends who met to show how much they loved him. Elder Rice Harris spoke in prayer. "Ah! lovely appearance of death" was a favorite hymn of our brother, and we sang it at the funeral. At the grave we sang the stanza beginning, "When the spirit is broken with sorrow and care," after which we turned from the grave, leaving him resting in hope while we must struggle along here until we, too, are called away. May our Master give the afflicted ones a place to rest in his bosom. Brother and sister Dawson were subscribers to and readers of the SIGNS for many years. I most willingly grant sister Dawson's request to pen this brief obituary of this dear man of God.

GEORGE A. BRETZ.

Mary Catherine Faulkner, wife of Morris Faulkner, died at her home, Margaretville, N. Y., Nov. 8th, 1918. She was a daughter of Jeremiah Faulkner, was born March 10th, 1846, and married to Morris Faulkner March 22nd, 1865. She leaves three daughters: Mrs. Bertha J. Sanford and Mrs. Nora M. Sanford, of Margaretville, N. Y., and Mrs. Annie O. Kiff, of Bloomville, N. Y., also eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild. A sister, Miss Phebe Faulkner, of Margaretville, N. Y., and a brother, Silas Faulkner, of Long Beach, Cal., also survive her. Sister Faulkner united with the Middletown Old School Baptist Church, Andes, N. Y., in 1894, and was baptized by Elder John Hubbell. She had a sweet and unobtrusive disposition, and above all loved the truth. She loved to meet with the brethren, and along with her faithful companion was always in her place until sickness prevented. It was her delight to entertain her brethren, especially those in the ministry. Throughout her illness, which lasted about nine months, she showed great patience, although often suffering great pain. A few days before she passed away she expressed a desire to be taken home, which the Lord sweetly granted her. May the Lord bless brother Faulkner and all the bereaved ones with submission to his will.

The funeral was held at her late home, where a large number of her brethren, relatives and friends met to show their deep respect to her memory. Interment was in the Kelly Corners cemetery.

GEO. RUSTON.

Mrs. M. A. (Moore) Whitenton was born Nov. 6th, 1851, and died Feb. 22nd, 1918, aged 66 years, 3 months and 16 days. She was the daughter of Stephen and Sallie Moore. She leaves seven children, several grandchildren and her companion (the writer) also brothers and sisters. She was a devoted wife and mother and true Old School Baptist, believing in the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things and salvation by grace alone, both for time and eternity, unconditional election and the final preservation of the saints in glory. She first joined the Campbellites, but left them because of their doctrine and joined the Old School Baptists. She suffered several years from ulceration of the stomach and bowels, but bore her suffering with christian fortitude.

Written by her broken-hearted husband,

J. M. WHITENTON.

APPOINTMENTS.

Elder J. M. Fenton will hold meeting, the Lord willing, in Brantford, Canada, Tuesday, Feb. 18th, 1919, 7:30 p. m., wherever brethren may decide; also with the Beulah Church, Aberfeldy, Canada, Sunday, Feb. 23rd, 10:30 a. m. and 3 p. m.

D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Wm. R. Davis, Del., $2.00; Mrs. W. C. Stevens, Ga., $3.00; F. S. Shelton, Va., $1.00; Mrs. Kenneth Finlayson, Canada, $3.00; Mrs. Catherine Walker, Ont., $1.00; Mrs. M. A. Somers, Va., $2.00; E. F. Readhimer, La., $2.00; Mrs. W. W. Readhimer, La., $.50; I. H. Harris, N. C., $1.00; Mrs. Allie Davis, Ky., $1.00; W. K. Baird, Ky., $5.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Second Roxbury Church will hold their meetings for the remainder of the winter on the first Sunday (instead of the second Sunday) at sisters Mead, Roxbury, N. Y. All who love the truth are invited.

G. RUSTON.

THE Middletown and Andes Church will hold their meetings for the remainder of the winter at Halcottville, N. Y., on the second Sunday in each month. All who love the truth are welcome.

G. RUSTON.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,
1315 Columbia Avenue
(Park Avenue Hall)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.
ALL WELCOME

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1304 Jefferson Street
WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

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(Judges v. 11.)

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SEMMA E. CORDER,
PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.

Owing to excessive war prices we will not issue any more hymn-books for the present. We still have a few round note books on hand, which we are selling at the same price, $6.50 per dozen or 70 cents per single copy. Send orders to Elder S. H. Durand, Southampton, Pa., or to Elder P. G. Lester, Floyd, Va.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 87. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1919. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ECCLESIASTES XII. 1.

"REMEMBER now thy Creator in the days of thy youth."

By the approval of the editors I will offer a few thoughts to the readers of the SIGNS for their consideration upon the above words. These are the words of the wise man, addressed to the wise, and since this is true this commandment has always been obeyed. This Scripture, according to my understanding, does not apply to the boy of sixteen, when he feels youthful and strong, but to the youthful in the church. Remember, the Scripture is written for the church, and not to those who have not and do not want any understanding of the Scriptures. How foolish it would be for me to say to a youth, "Remember now thy Creator." In fact, it would be just as foolish to quote these words to an adult, if he had never tasted that the Lord is gracious. No natural being can be interested in the Lord unless the Lord makes him interested. When this is done, then such an individual remembers his Creator. This word "Creator" demands our careful attention. Something beautiful seems to appear as we meditate "Creator." Brethren, consider with me what it means. Does it not mean to form something from nothing? The Lord formed man from the dust of the ground, and he formed the dust to form the man. Then the Lord is a creator. (I will arrive at what is in my mind later on.) Let us go back to the very beginning, so that we can build upon a solid foundation. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Keep in mind the fact that the Lord is doing these things, and not man. This is very necessary for us to remember. We are to remember further that he is creating things from nothing. This brings us to understand that our God is a creator, bringing into existence creatures and things from nothing; so we will say of our God the following words:

> "Eternal Power! whose high abode
> Becomes the grandeur of a God;
> Infinite lengths beyond the bounds
> Where stars revolve their little rounds."

The Lord also formed the sun, moon and stars and set them in their places. We cannot understand how the Lord did those things, but we have these created things around, above and under us to prove that things were created. While these things are wonderful for us to consider, there is something still more won-

derful for us to consider. What is it? The Lord has made or formed a way by which miserable and hell-deserving sinners can be saved. What is that way? The answer is, Jesus. I am the way, the truth and the life, said Jesus. To prove that man is incapable of coming to Jesus I will quote from the Messiah again: "No man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Here again is proof that the Lord of hosts does all things after the counsel of his own will. The Father sent the Son. Brethren, consider this well, that we do not forget to give the almighty God credit and praise for all things. Remember thy Creator. Why remember him? Because he has remembered you. When you were in your mother's womb he knew you; he it was that caused the bones to form therein. But you say, Why did the Lord bring me forth to see trouble and sorrow? The answer is, Because it was his will. You say again, I am no profit in the earth, and I am sorry I ever came into existence; but you are praising the Lord unconsciously, you are worshiping him in spirit and in truth, because he seeketh such to worship him.

We must consider the word "youth," as mentioned in the subject. As stated before, it is the youth in the church. What is this first experience in the church like unto? It is like unto heaven below; everything is beautiful and lovely, the singing is grand and thrilling, everything is calm, the gentle breezes and the singing of the birds praise the Lord. "Tongue cannot express the sweet comfort and peace of a soul in its earliest love." But this is not to last. How strange that evil days must come, and the clouds not to return after the rain, and even the grinding is to be low. What does all this mean? It is my desire to try to interpret these last words, though as a rule I try to refrain from trying to interpret or expound the Scripture, because I feel to know but little if anything about it; but I will only give my views. As stated before, the clouds fail to return after the rain, and the sound of the grinding is low. To my mind this Scripture has a deep spiritual meaning. To illustrate the spiritual meaning I will do so in the following manner. The writer of this book, Ecclesiastes, knew something (knew much) of christian experience. He tells it by natural illustrations. The clouds return not after the rain, and the sound of the grinding is low, &c. How well does each subject of grace remember his youthful days in the church, when the clouds soon returned after the rain and when the sound of the grinding was strong. The preacher in this book is calling our attention to natural things to reveal the spiritual. You know that our Creator, of whom we have been writing, sends rain often sometimes, and at other times withholds the rain, and for many long days at times there is not the least sign of a cloud in the sky, and the streams which our Creator has placed in different parts of the earth become short of water, so that there is not sufficient force in the water to turn the upper upon the nether millstone. Those living in rural districts will better understand what I mean by the force of the water, but that I may be better understood, will say that when there is a full head of water in a stream, that is, when the water is high, all will understand that there is more power in the water when the gate is hoisted from below than when the water is only twelve inches above the bottom of the gate. This is due not only to the amount, but the weight of the water, and when there is a head of water it is then the grinding

is strong and the upper millstone moves with great rapidity. But the preacher is talking about a drought, when the clouds return not after the rain, and when the streams are dry and the sound of the grinding is low. How many are there to-day who have gotten into this condition spiritually. They feel they are famishing because of the drought; the clouds are not returning, they have almost forgotten when there was a shower, their heart seems to have turned to stone, love has gone, there is a coldness indescribable, foolish and vain thoughts only are passing through the mind, and we try to go back and get into the condition of mind we were in when we first came into the church, or even later. As for myself, I wonder what has come over me. Only a few years past I was continually writing to some one concerning things which I then thought were spiritual, but now all is changed, I have gone down into the depths, shut up entirely, not a sign of a cloud. If I were called upon to read a hymn in the meetinghouse I do not feel that I could do it. Hence the clouds are not returning, and the sound of the grinding is low, the streams are almost dry, my heart is out of tune, I cannot sing with any satisfaction, there is no life back of it. How different from the days of my youth, when I could hardly wait from one meeting day to the next. I often find myself studying a way to make more money. How long is this terrible condition of mind to last, and what does it all mean? Who can tell me? One of our poets tells us his experience in the following words: "I sometimes go where others go, but find no comfort there." He is not finding fault with the preacher, it is himself that is in a dead state, and the dead know not anything. Just now I am reminded of another poet, he tells us: "Something yet can do the deed, and that dear something, Lord, I need." Again I am reminded that clouds and rain come very unexpectedly sometimes, and this brings to my mind an experience that had entirely gone from me, and I am wondering in amazement right now why I am thinking about it. I almost tremble to tell it, yet feel that I must. Some years ago when I lived in Cannon, Del., there was a long dry spell in the summer time, and it looked as though crops would be destroyed. On a certain day I walked out to a neighbor's field near by. I felt I wanted to get out of the post-office for a little while. Everything looked desperate; the melon vines were scorching, the corn blades twisting and the sun was shining very hot. A strange sadness came over me. What if the Lord should will to withhold the rain? I knew he had a right to do this. Then it seemed I could see how the people would suffer. I stood in silence a little while, and there came over me a strong desire to ask the Lord to send rain upon the scorching vines and crops. This I did in a very few words. I did at that time seem to be in possession of a little faith. I remember that a man came into the office and said something about the dry spell, and I replied that while there were no visible signs of rain, yet I believed it would rain soon. He said he hoped I was right. Not long after that I heard it thunder. I wanted to look for the cloud, but for some reason, I know not why, I was not allowed to look. I cannot describe my feelings at that time. The following is the best that I can explain: a simple trust, the thunder continued, and in due time the sun was hid by the cloud and then I was allowed to go out and look. In a short time it was raining hard and it thundered loud. At that particular

time the thunder sounded musical to me; it seemed to me the Lord was speaking to the earth, demonstrating his wonderful power. O how good to think of the Almighty doing his will! We fear him and we adore him in songs of sublime adoration and praise. O, if our minds could always be in this pleasant condition.

Brethren, after considering this experience which I have just related I feel like telling you that we have not a God that is afar off, but a God at hand; that he is ever near, and his ear is ever open to our cry. I cannot understand how this can be so, but it is. The natural mind says, It would have rained had you not asked for it. My reply is, It did not rain until after I asked. I must be careful here, lest I am misunderstood, and I may be anyway. There is no virtue in me to bring rain. If I had or have faith it is the gift of God. It is like the dew upon the grass, it comes down upon me and us, and in such a quiet way that we hear no noise, but we feel its power and influence. In this respect we are like the grass: the dew nourishes the grass, causing it to grow; so the heavenly dew comes down upon us, causing us to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. So the clouds return after the rain, though it seems to us to be long sometimes. A. T. BENSON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 11, 1919.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am inclosing an extract from a recent letter of sister Florence Pultz, as I desire to share it with our kindred in Christ who read the SIGNS. How many years has that dear paper been a blessing to those of like precious faith, and especially to those shut in from the assembly of the saints. To such how good to read messages from dear ones far and near, telling of their joys and sorrows, trials and afflictions, and of a blessed hope beyond this fading scene. To me the editorials have been unusually rich of late, filled with truth that is comforting.

Unworthily, your bereaved sister,
BESSIE DURAND.

WHEELING, W. Va., Jan. 7, 1919.

MY DEARLY BELOVED SISTER:—I have been sitting here by my fireside reading your brother's book, "Meditations;" it is very precious to me. I rose up quickly and laid it aside, so that I might commune awhile with you. I would that I could give utterance to what my heart feels. To me he is not dead; his thoughts as he wrote them are the fruits of immortal life, and will live on and preach the word of truth as long as there is a hungering for the Bread of life. His works do follow him. I feel the force of his words more now than I did while he lived in the flesh. What a power for good the Lord made of him in this life, and now more so in the life to come. My dear sister, I have never felt to grieve about his departure from this life. Precious to me is the death of a saint. I have only thought of his glorious entrance into the glories of our Lord. I have thought much about his kindness to me in making me a present of three of his books: "Meditations," "The Trials of Job" and his hymn-book. When I take them in my hand tears start at the thought of his kindness. I have his picture setting on the top of my folding-bed, and often gaze upon it. I think I must regard it something as the Shunamite woman did the prophet Elisha. I regard him as a holy man of God, and it seems good to me that his picture sets over my head while I sleep. Elder Lef-

ferts has written a very good obituary of him, yet I feel that the half can never be told, but it is written in the book of life. We poor finite creatures cannot sum it up in order and tell it as the heart feels, but we are blessed with the comforting assurance that God knows. I know he is sadly missed in his home, and I hope the Lord will fill his place in your hearts.

My dear sister, I have copied some verses which were given me, I hope, from the Lord, and will inclose them. If they seem weak and foolish to you throw the mantle of charity over them and remember that I am the weakest of all saints, if one at all. I think I can never forget the feeling that set them attuning in my heart. A dear, kind neighbor woman called, and we had some talk on spiritual things, she being an active church worker. After she had gone, and I considered the difference between us, my heart burned and swelled with love for our religion, as we have been taught it, how that it is not in word, but in power and demonstration of the Holy Spirit, and ere I was aware those words which I have penned were flowing into my heart with a power that made me tremble. I send them, hoping they will help you to pass a lone hour. Give my love to sister Mildred.

Yours with much love,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

While in thy school I lessons learn,
  Unfolding as I go;
My heart uplifts in praise to thee;
  My God has willed it so.

My heart would speak thy praise aloud,
  Would sing it as I go,
At home, abroad, in jostling crowd;
  My God has willed it so.

His love saw fit to raise me up,
  To share in human woe,
By drinking from the bitter cup;
  My God has willed it so.

Like oil of gladness on my head,
  He sweetens all my woe,
Restores the life that's almost dead;
  My God has willed it so.

And when I pass beneath the rod,
  His hand upholds, I know;
I see my Teacher, love his rule;
  My God has willed it so.

My life is hid with Christ in God,
  He is where'er I go;
Nor would I from my Savior flee;
  My God has willed it so.

And when my race on earth is run,
  My body buried low,
I'll rise again, bright as the sun;
  My God has willed it so.

Sing blessings, blessings to the Lamb,
  We'll start the theme below,
In rapture to the great I AM;
  My God has willed it so.

NEW HARTFORD, N. Y., Nov. 14, 1918.

VERY DEAR SISTER FLORENCE:—I feel to acknowledge your very kind letter immediately, and also to thank you for remembering me on my birthday anniversary. I feel as though my years have been spent but poorly (have accomplished not anything) and can see how many things I have left undone. The time passes along and I do not improve. I find I cannot do the things I would, and do things I would much rather leave undone. I often think of brother Hait: I once heard him say that he tried to think one good thought and that all sorts of wicked thoughts came up instead. I feel that I am related, and know whereof he spoke.

I was sorry to learn that Elder Durand had left us, though he had grown old and feeble. I hope he is with the blessed in Christ Jesus, whom he preached for many years. Some of his letters I have read in the SIGNS lately have been so very good, and as I have been looking through quite a number just now might be able to tell you where to find them.

One is in the November 1st, 1918, number, in which he writes of his experience, and the words came to him with assurance, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness," and he said, "Perhaps I am one of those for whom Jesus died," and the word "perhaps" seemed to assure him. Now with me it is just that word "perhaps" which I stumble over. I am as a doubting Thomas. Satan and unbelief rob me, and I am left destitute and afraid to own His sacred name. But the words do live.

In the March 1st number he speaks about faith, and in another he wrote about being led in paths we know not, and of darkness being made light, and crooked things being made straight, and mountains being removed, all of which seem to keep hope near me and help me along my dark way, as a candle burning in the night. I have listened to the Elder since I was quite young, and he always said something of interest to my dull ears, and sometimes I could remember. Our parents always attended the meetings, and the children who were old enough to sit still were taken with them. One Sunday the Elder (Elder Hill, who was the pastor for years) was preaching, and had his right hand upraised (as our teacher when she was trying to teach us, and which I thought he was doing) and he asked my father something. My father answered, Hebrews. Then I heard that he was saying something about the Hebrews. I was alarmed from that time, fearing I would be asked a question and would not be able to give the proper answer, and thought how mortified I would be, and so would my father. I listened and listened, and gradually I found that we all must be born again to enter the kingdom, and that all are sinners before God. I became afraid to live, and did not know where to find relief or where to flee. I became anxious to go to meeting, and when I learned to read I would read, and then when I discovered the communications of experience in the SIGNS I could hardly wait until it arrived, hoping some one might write something that would relieve me. I had trouble enough, but not of the right sort, for all complained of their sin and wrong doings, and then a relief. I did not do such dreadfully bad things, being disobedient and wilful, as many I saw, but my cry was, Am I his, or not? The doctrine of election seemed to be the way, and I felt that there was nothing I could do. I lived in that fear many years. Then as I grew older I was always found at the meetings and where the church friends gathered. I also attended the covenant meetings to hear the experiences. Then some one would talk to me and I would be much alarmed and begin to fear that I was attracting attention. I wanted to go, still did not want any one to think about me. It was hard to break off. Then the meetings became less and less, then the little church became few in number, and finally extinct; not exactly extinct, for they consolidated with the Otego Church. I thought many times that I wished I never knew the Old School Baptists, for perhaps then I would know. Now I felt to have learned it all. I never could feel that anything was for me. That seemed too presuming, and even now I feel that way. I attended an evening meeting at brother Hait's, at the association in Middletown, N. Y., I think seventeen years ago. Elder Eubanks had been speaking, also Elder Keene, I think, and Elder McConnell got up and spoke a few words, and said, "Tribulation worketh experience, and experience hope." I felt that there was a ray of hope, for certainly

I had experienced much trouble. The next day Elder Hardy spoke of the honey and the comb, and later an old Elder, I think his name was Cole, spoke of the breaking day, and of seeing so imperfectly at first, "men as trees walking," really "poor sight," he said, which seemed to open my eyes. I had always been frightened away when any one approached me on this subject, and when Elder Ker spoke to me I felt a great awe come over me and the assurance that I might yet hope in God. Dear sister, I have had many doubts since that time, but those times and seasons are still alive within me. Then I began to hear some of the truths with a little understanding; but how ignorant I am of spiritual things.

I have wandered on, and you will be tired of me. My pen does not always follow, and I see many mistakes, which I hope you will pardon.

I think Elder Lefferts is a good writer, and you are favored in being able to hear him preach.

I think I must close for several reasons, one is it is getting too dark to see. Write soon, for you are my dear sister, if I may call you so. CLARA BOES.

[THE above letter was written to sister Florence Paxson, of Leesburg, Va., and sent on by her for publication.—ED.]

TO THE CHURCH AT FRYING PAN, FAIRFAX COUNTY, VA.—DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—The time is fast rolling around for your January meeting, and I do hope you are all able to meet and worship God. How I would love to meet with you, but that is impossible. I do want to be there one meeting this year, if it is the Lord's will, either in May or October at the association; I have not yet decided which, but rather expect to go down at the association time, as my husband, who is a lover of the truth, can get away better in the fall. I often mourn because we are so far from our people, and it seems to be the Lord's will concerning us that we stay here; so if we are what we profess to be, sinners saved by grace, then must we believe that we are in this place because it is the Lord's will and purpose concerning us, for it was to such that the Savior was talking when he said, "Ye are the salt of the earth." We all know that salt is a preservative, therefore his mercy to his people keeps those among whom it is their lot to live within bounds, for their sake, or so it looks to me. Two dear good Baptists, sister Lizzie Himes and her father, old brother Wm. Mellott, did live fourteen miles from us, but the dear old brother is dead now, and she is alone, too, as far as the church members are concerned. We were over to see them in August, when Elder Lefferts was here, and we were at the May meeting in Fulton County, Pa. We feel that we are blessed in the good sermons we get in the SIGNS. The January 1st issue came to-day, and I read it about through aloud before I stopped, and we felt that it contained some good things. That is the way I generally do when it comes. How often I think of the Saturday meetings which we used to have at Frying Pan. It was like a family together in the home, and no strangers there. O how I used to feed upon the grand preaching that I heard there, and the talks among the brethren were sweet to me, too, but now I often feel that I do not even know the truth, yet I still have a hope in the mercy of God; I never quite lose that.

Excuse all that is amiss, and remember the least of the flock, if one at all, when you come together.

Your little sister,

MATILDA T. STARR.

JUSTUS, Pa., Dec. 16, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find a letter written by sister Carrie Eaton to the church at Justus, Pa., for publication in the SIGNS, if you think best.

G. W. GOODRICH.

SMITHBORO, N. Y., Nov. 6, 1918.

MY DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—As the time for our meeting is drawing nigh I feel like writing a few lines. I find my mind drawn toward Justus, Pa., although I have nothing in my mind but the old and sweet story of salvation by grace alone. The God that we love to adore is an all-powerful and merciful God. His promises are sure; they are yea and amen to them that believe. He is unchangeable, the same yesterday, to-day and forever.

I would much like to meet with you again, and hope to some time in the future, if my unprofitable life is spared. I hope to be with you in spirit, and hope you will have an enjoyable meeting, for we have the precious promise that where two or three are gathered together in the Savior's name he will be there in the midst. We had a very good little meeting at Waverly, September 26th, when our beloved pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, met with us. It was the first sermon I had heard in a year, and I was hungry to hear the truth preached again. It was wine upon the lees well refined to unworthy me. Dear kindred, may the Lord give us all a meek and quiet spirit, that we may esteem each other better than ourselves, that we may live in sweet fellowship, and be humble and submissive to the Lord's will in all things, as our rebellion causes much sorrow, as many of us can testify. I, like Paul, feel myself to be the chief of sinners, and the prayer of the publican is often in my lips, as that prayer seems the best suited to my case. My hope seems very small at times. If I am saved at all it is through rich and unmerited grace.

Dear ones, will you please read hymn 1032? It is one of Cowper's beautiful hymns which I enjoy very much.

I will close, trusting you will cast the mantle of charity over this, as it is like the writer, very imperfect.

Your unworthy but loving sister,

CARRIE EATON.

DUTTON, Ontario, Jan. 3, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—Allow me to apologize for neglecting to send in my remittance. Our home was destroyed by fire in early spring. It was hard to be reconciled to the loss of many good books of Old Baptist doctrine, as well as many other things. With all we hope to replace it is not home without the good old SIGNS. It is good to see the names of those we have clasped the hand of fellowship with in the precious name of the Savior. Although we do not see them face to face, we read their notes of praise to God and know they are journeying to the bright beyond.

Please change my address from Wallacetown, Ontario, to Dutton, Ontario, as that is where we live now. I hope that any of our people coming to this town will come and visit us.

Find inclosed an order for five dollars, as I wish you to send me another of those Bibles.

Unworthily, yours in hope of a better life,

(MRS.) J. D. McWILLIAMS.

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Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1919.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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CONVERSATION.

It is astonishing the force that certain words have as used in the Bible. Take this word "conversation," for instance. This word to-day, as used among men, means the interchange of thoughts and ideas between two or more persons by means of spoken language. This use of the word is very limited, as compared with the sense in which it was employed in ancient times. Biblically, the word referred not simply to personal social intercourse by means of language, but it meant the whole behavior, conduct or character of the individual. This is the primary meaning of the word wherever it is used in the Scriptures, with the exception of Paul's use of the word in his letter to the Philippians, in which letter the word "conversation" is used twice, and means "citizenship," or to behave as a citizen. "For our conversation is in heaven." We do violence to this expression, and sadly limit its meaning, if we say simply that our conversing or talking together is in heaven. But the word is given its full force when we understand it to mean that every true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is a citizen of the kingdom of heaven, and that therefore his citizenship (conversation) is in heaven. Enoch was translated that he should not see death, and it is true of every subject of God's grace that they are translated from the kingdom of nature's darkness, in which they had been born dead in trespasses and in sins, into the light and liberty of the kingdom of Christ by his Spirit's regenerative work. They had been the slaves and servants of sin, but now are they the Lord's freemen, having and enjoying that freedom the truth of God alone can give. Being thus translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, the children of God cannot eternally die, for death is abolished through Christ's victory over death and the grave, and life and immortality are brought to life, that is, into evidence and to our understanding, through the gospel. All subjects of the new birth, or of that birth which is from heaven, are citizens of the kingdom of heaven. They are governed in their hearts by the spiritual law of this heavenly kingdom, which law emanates not from the law of Moses as of old, but from Him who is forever King of kings and Lord of lords, and this law says simply, "Love one another." This is the love of God shed abroad in every citizen's soul, which love radiates toward all the household of faith. The citizens of this holy land are under the constant care and keeping of Him who never slumbers nor sleeps, and as the mountains are round about old Jerusalem, so the angel of the King's presence encompasses each and all the citizens of this better country. As far as the church of God is concerned, heaven is begun below; that is, if it is right to speak of anything eternal having a beginning. At least, there is a beginning to our knowledge of it. Every spiritually quickened and heaven-born soul breathes the atmosphere of heaven while yet dwelling

here in this time state clothed in flesh. Also, the kingdom of heaven is within every one of them. Now, in the first chapter of Philippians we find "conversation" used thus: "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ." Again, this does not simply mean let our talking together be according to the gospel, but, if we give the word its full force, it signifies, Let your behavior, or life, as citizens of heaven be as becometh the gospel of Christ. A man may talk one way and do another, but God's people are not simply to talk of the gospel, but to live in it, and act according thereto. We have tried all our life since coming into the church to live and act according to the gospel, but without success; that is, if we have ever done the thing we ought to have done it has never been the result of our trying to do so, but always the effect of some power other than self. We hope this other power has been the grace of God. Indeed, if it has not been the grace of God that has kept us upright, provided we have been upright, then we do not know to what to credit the power. There is but one principle that can instruct the people of God in the matter of right living. For that, see Paul's letter to Titus, second chapter: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." Thus it is very plain that the very same grace of God that reveals to God's people the way of salvation is the very same principle that does not leave them after effecting that revelation in them, but keeps on abiding within them, to cause them to deny the flesh and all its lusts, to the end that they are thus enabled by grace to live and to behave as citizens of heaven should, soberly and righteously and godly while yet in this present time world. If there is any man but Christ in the soul that can teach us how to behave ourselves as citizens of that better country, we quite certainly do not know who it is. It is a sure thing that if we try to rely on our own strength and wisdom in this matter we are doomed to be ashamed of ourselves later on.

So much for Philippians. Now let us look at "conversation" in other places where it is used. In the letters of Peter, both in the first and in the second, we find the word used several times. Space forbids quoting all, To take a few, let us notice: "Be ye holy in all manner of conversation." "Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, * * * from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers." Here, in these two Scriptures, we have "holy" conversation and "vain" conversation. Again, it is not that talking together is meant, but one's whole behavior or conduct. The conduct of God's people before redemption, and while still under the law walking according to the traditions and doctrines of men, was a vain or empty conduct. The conduct of believers in the Lord, who are risen with Christ from under the law, and who are seeking those things which are above all law and condemnation, is a holy conduct. God's people have been redeemed from their former vain or unsatisfying behavior under the law by the precious blood of Jesus. Redemption by the blood of Jesus is the one essential thing unto holy behavior.

In Peter's second letter, second chapter, we find it written that God delivered just Lot, who was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked. This does not mean that Lot was vexed simply by the

filthy language of the wicked, but by their filthy behavior. To prove this read the eighth verse: "For that righteous man [Lot] dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds." In one verse we are told Lot was vexed by the filthy conversation of the wicked, in the next verse, by their unlawful deeds. Therefore conversation means not simply talk, but deeds. Further, he was vexed not only by what he heard, but by what he saw, more proof that conversation scripturally used means the whole behavior of a person.

Turning back to the Psalms we find this: "The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation." It was in olden times quite the usual thing for highwaymen or robbers to lurk in secret along the beaten ways of travel to waylay travelers and to despoil them of their goods. Remember the man who went down the road from Jerusalem to Jericho and who fell among thieves, who was robbed and beaten and afterward visited by the good Samaritan. Such cases often occurred along the roads of the ancients. God's people in this world who are effectually called by grace unto a godly life, walk in the strait and narrow way that leads unto life. But along this way are many pitfalls and dangers: the wicked with drawn sword and bent bow, who try to cast down the poor in spirit and those who feel their need of God, and who endeavor to slay those of upright life (conversation). The first man Adam fell in sin, the second Adam, who is the Lord from heaven, is the man of upright life. Jesus raised up his elect whom Adam had prostrated. Those justified before God in the resurrection of Jesus Christ are the ones of upright conversation or life, for the word conversation here means a course of life. Jesus lived a godly course of life while here in the flesh, so he was of upright conversation. But evil men beset his way on every side, tormenting him with all manner of temptations, and the wicked finally killed him, not knowing that in killing him they were defeating their own expectations. The life of a true christian, the course of the upright life, is beset with manifold temptations. At times it seems the evil triumph over one. One sees the prosperity of the wicked, and even at times envies it, but when the Lord brings the poor and needy into his sanctuary, out of the dangers of the trodden road, then is revealed the end of the wicked, which is inevitable defeat and perdition, then the upright's envying the wicked ceases.

Psalms l. 23: "To him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God." Again in the word conversation is presented a course of living. To him who orders his course, or manner of living, correctly will God reveal his salvation. Who is the one that orders his course of life aright? It is not you. It is not ourself. Who is it then? It is not, cannot be, any mortal man. Who then? None other than our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He, being God tabernacling in the flesh, had the power to order the course of his life aright, and he did it, not making a single misstep, nor uttering one idle word from the manger to the cross. To him, Jesus, is shown the way of salvation. From him to his people and down into their hearts and souls distils this knowledge of the way of life. All God's people are taught of Jesus, so that their peace is an abiding peace. He reveals to them that this sal-

vation is wholly of grace, and not at all according to creature works. None can teach this truth except Jesus, for he is the one and only man who ordered his life aright, so that to him alone is revealed the way of salvation in order that he should reveal that truth within every one of his children.

The word "conversation" occurs in various other places that we have not space to mention. Look them up and read them for yourselves. L.

NOTICE.

FIFTH LOAN EMBODIES THE IDEALS OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

THE Administration, having completed successfully its task of winning the war through the agency of the War and Navy Departments, has called upon the Treasury Department to write the last chapter in its work of financing the struggle.

A campaign to float the last big war loan will be started in April, the exact date to be announced soon. This issue will be called the Victory Loan, and, according to an estimate of the Secretary of the Treasury, may be for $5,000,000,000.

The new loan, fifth in the series of war bond issues put out by the Government, will mark the final effort of the American people as a whole, in the world struggle. With a million American soldiers to maintain in Europe, considerably more to be discharged and reabsorbed in the industrial life of the country, and outstanding expenses to be met, the need of the projected loan is evident.

The United States, whose people by nature are given to planning, executing and carrying out plans to a final conclusion, is bound to finish well what it is so gloriously planned and so splendidly executed up to the actual conclusion of hostilities. Writing "finis" to the world struggle means more than giving the command, "Cease firing" to our soldiers, particularly while the Army of Occupation is to be kept fed and clothed.

The ideals for which our young men fought, suffered and in so many instances died, must be perpetuated. Their companions in arms must come back to a country resting on a firm, prosperous basis. Their mothers and fathers and friends, for whom they made the Supreme sacrifice, must be guaranteed a life of tranquility, in a nation of concord. The bringing about of this happy condition depends largely upon the flotation of a loan adequate to meet the demands of a Government under heavy expense.

There is a constructive appeal to American patriotism in this new Victory Loan. Of course there is not the thrill of impending battle in the air, or the terrible anxiety of loved ones on the battle line, but subscribers to the new loan have the glorious purpose before them of aiding in the upkeep of the Federal Government for which those who went to France fought so valiantly. Now that the conflict is over, America cannot fall from the roadside. The highway of peace, with prosperity, is before us all, but to travel it we must start with our war ledger clean. Oversubscription of the Victory Loan will insure us a clean slate.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Uriah Garton, Okla., $1.00; Mrs. M. J. Miller, Ill., $2.00; H. C. Woodward, Mo., $3.00; Attie A. Curtis, Maine, $1.00; Robert Turner, Cal., $1.00; Lester F. Livingston, N. Y., $1.00; Geo. H. Merryman, Md., $1.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at the home of the bride's parents, Samuel McLean, in Ekfrid township, Ontario, Jan. 1st, 1919, Dugal Patterson and Catharine McLean, both of Ekfrid.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

John P. Light, son of David and Sarah Page Light, was born Dec. 30th, 1841, in Clermont County, Ohio, and died at his home in Greenville, Ohio, October 12th, 1918, aged 76 years, 10 months and 13 days. When quite a small boy he with his parents moved to Darke County, Ohio, then a wild and rugged country, where he continued to live until his death. He volunteered his services in the War of the Rebellion, and served more than three years in the 89th Ohio Regiment. He was married to Louvenia Peters Jan. 24th, 1867. To them were born five children, two sons and three daughters: David, Herbert, Dellove, Mary and Emma. On their farm near Lightsville, Ohio, on Feb. 19th, 1902, the death angel entered the happy home, taking the wife and mother from its midst. The home was again saddened Jan. 22nd, 1906, when death called the daughter Mary from the family circle. Since then the two remaining daughters have been homemaker and companion for their father. Owing to his declining health the family left the old home farm and moved to Greenville, Ohio, nearly ten years ago. After leaving the farm his health continued to gradually fail until he suffered a paralytic stroke, which rendered him almost helpless, and in which condition he lived for more than two years, being confined to his bed a part of the time. Being weakened in both mind and body, he was able to read or talk but very little, and suffered much at times, but he bore it all with patience and christian fortitude. All through his sickness he would often repeat the text in part in Eccl. vii. 1: The day of death is better than the day of birth. The same text was used at his funeral. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church more than forty years ago, and lived a dutiful, faithful and exemplary member. His home was always open to the people of his faith, with whom he loved to mingle. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace and the predestination of all things. He was meek and humble in spirit, ever trusting in an all-wise Providence. He derived much comfort in reading the Bible and conversing on the Scriptures. He was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for more than thirty years. He was a man of marked integrity, cautious and careful in business, a loyal citizen, having at various times held offices of trust in the community of his old home. He was greatly devoted to his own home and family, always providing for their welfare. He was abundantly blessed with all the comforts of life in his infirm years. He leaves in sorrow, besides his own family, two small granddaughters, Ruth and Mary Jane, four sisters and a host of relatives and friends, by whom he was held in the highest esteem. His two sons and two daughters will sadly miss the wise counsel and loving companionship of a good and noble father, but since "by their fruits ye shall know them," they feel assured that their earthly loss is his eternal gain. His family were all at his bedside when at the dawn of the morning he gave up life's struggle and peacefully fell asleep to awake in the realization of the blessed hope he had of the glories beyond the grave.

The funeral was held from his late home, conducted by Elder H. J. Adams, of Franklin, Ohio. He was tenderly laid in the Rose Hill Cemetery with his loved ones who had preceded him, there to rest in the love of his Savior.

DELLOVE LIGHT.

Helen Frances Utterback, beloved daughter of Clarence S. and Mary Welby Utterback, departed this life at her home near Hickory Grove, Va., Dec. 20th, 1918, aged 2 years, 5 months and 9 days. She is survived by her parents, one brother and her grandmother, with whom she had lived all her life, besides many other relatives and friends to mourn the loss of this precious little jewel. She was one of the brightest of children, very intelligent for her age. Her affectionate disposition endeared her little self to us all, especially her grandmother, to whom she was much devoted; but our precious one is gone and the voice we loved is still. May we be reconciled to God's holy will, knowing he doeth all things well, and may he give us strength to bear this sad affliction and comfort all who mourn.

She was laid to rest in Mt. Zion Cemetery, Loudoun County, Va.

ALSO,

Thomas Milton Utterback, son of Mrs. L. S. Utterback, departed this life in Georgetown University Hospital Dec. 5th, 1918, after a short illness from abscess of the liver and operation for gall-stones. He survived the operation, but grew weaker until the end came, passing away quietly as if going to sleep. His age was 40 years and 3 months. He is survived by his wife and one daughter, mother and two brothers. He had an affectionate and forgiving disposition and was a very dutiful son, never disobeying me or giving me an unkind word, but always willing to aid me in any way that he could. His many deeds of kindness and upright walk in life won him many friends, who will regret to hear of his death. He was not a member of the visible church, but loved the truth and often attended meetings with me at Mt. Zion and seemed to enjoy what was said, especially a sermon preached by Elder E. V. White, who took for his text Philippians i. 6: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." After the meeting he said, "Mother, that was a good sermon." I said, "Yes, did you hear it?" He said, "Yes, every word of it; it was the best sermon I ever heard. He preached the truth; he is a good preacher." That sermon

seemed to be impressed upon his mind more than any other, as he often spoke of it and would repeat the text. He would often ask me about certain passages of Scripture, and what little I could say about them he seemed to enjoy. Many little things he said to me are fresh in my mind since he passed away. May we not hope that the text and sermon which he so much enjoyed were performed on him and that he is at rest? We know whatever God does is for the best. May we be reconciled to his holy will and be enabled to say, Thy will be done.

He was buried in Bethesda Cemetery Dec. 8th.

Written by his loving mother,

(MRS) L. S. UTTERBACK.

George W. Craig died suddenly of heart failure at his home near Middleburg, Va., Jan. 20th, 1919. He was one of the children of the late James and Louisa Craig, and was born Nov. 20th, 1841. Mr. Craig is survived by two brothers and one sister, all living in Virginia: J. F. Craig, at Airmont, Henry Craig, at Fairfax, and Mrs. Annie Nichols, at Woodburn. Forty-eight years ago Mr. Craig was married to Miss Emma Dodd, who is now left alone, their only child, George F. Craig, having died in 1912, leaving a widow and two sons, who make their home with sister Craig in her widowhood. Mr. Craig was a Confederate veteran, having fought through the Civil War four years under the leadership of the late Col. E. V. White. A gentler, kindlier disposition than Mr. Craig's it would be hard to find; a man quiet and unassuming, hospitable and generous, always ready to help any who needed help to the very best of his ability. While Mr. Craig never made any open profession of religion, he attended the meetings of the Old School Baptist Church for many years, loved the doctrine preached by them and loved to entertain the brethren and friends in his home. Many who read this notice will doubtless recall the free and generous hospitality they have received at the hands of both sister Craig and her husband when visiting here at associations or other meetings. We shall miss him in the home and at our meetings, for he attended regularly unless providentially hindered. We feel that Mr. Craig was truly a good man—good not simply in the moral sense as men judge one another according to human standards, but good in that infinitely better sense of goodness through the imputation of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. May the presence of the Lord dwell very comfortingly with our dear sister Craig, with the daughter-in-law whom he loved as his own daughter, and with the two little grandsons, who lovingly found in him some measure of recompense for the loss of their dear father a few years ago.

All that was mortal of our dear friend was laid to rest in Sharon Cemetery, Middleburg, Va. L.

Elwood G. Gilbert, son of Joseph and Clara Gilbert, was born in Frenchtown, N. J., Nov. 30th, 1889, and died at the same place Jan. 14th, 1919, making his appointed days upon earth a little over twenty-nine years. He leaves a wife and two small children, father, mother, sister and others near and dear to mourn their loss. He was not a member of any church by profession, but believed in God and that he ruled. During his illness there was a letter read that charged God with being asleep during these times of war and epidemic, and he replied: "God is not asleep. God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." He realized and told his people that he would not recover from his sickness. His mother is a member of Kingwood Church, Locktown, N. J., and wrote me as follows: "We cannot help our hearts from aching, but there seems to be an upholding within us that I hope and trust is of the Lord. We know at least that the world cannot comfort us in this place in which we find ourselves." The dear father was in bed sick at the time of the funeral. There is a yearning in our hearts for some words of comfort to the dear father, mother, wife and sister, not forgetting the two little children, but we feel that about all we can do is to mingle our tears with theirs and pray the Savior to heal their broken hearts. There is love and fellowship in some degree for those who are without. They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and they that thought upon his name were to be his jewels. We believe Elwood thought upon his name and is in glory with the Savior as one of the jewels, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.

Services were conducted at his late home by the writer, using hymns, "God moves in a mysterious way" and "There is a place of hallowed peace." The text used was 2 Cor. iv. 6, 7. Burial in cemetery at Frenchtown, N. J. J. M. FENTON.

Elder Lewis M. Chandler, our beloved fellow-laborer in the gospel of Christ, departed this life at his home in Madison County, Ga., April 22nd, 1918. He was the son of the late Elder William Chandler, and was born March 7th, 1860. He united with the church in August, 1878, and was ordained to the ministry April 4th, 1903. The Elders present were N. B. Hardy, J. R. Chandler and M. J. Okelly. He was chosen moderator of the Oconee Association on October 8th, 1915. His wife and several children survive him. His death was caused by an auto wreck on his way to his appointment with his son driving, who lost control of the machine as they entered a bridge, running off and falling seven feet, crushing his breast. He contended for the doctrine of absolute predestination. His last words were: "I am sorry to leave my sickly wife, but it is as God would have it. With us it is called an accident, but with God an eternal purpose." He was held in high

esteem by his brethren and friends. He was serving four churches at the time of his death; they feel that their loss is his eternal gain. Our sympathy is extended to his widow, sister Mary, and the children, feeling as he said, it is as God would have it.

He was buried in the churchyard of his father (Union), in the presence of perhaps more than a thousand. The following Elders were present and took part in the funeral services: R. L. Cook, L. D. Allen, J. B. Upshaw and J. M. Adams.

J. M. ADAMS.

George Boyd Stafford, "Uncle Dock," as he was called by his many friends, departed this life at his home in Greenfield, Tenn., Dec. 18th, 1918, in his 84th year. When a young man he was married to Miss Martha Jane, eldest daughter of James and Judda Ann Moore, who survives and assisted in ministering to his every need during his long and painful illness, which was caused by heart dropsy. Besides his faithful companion his five children were with him in his last sickness: Walter F., John A., Edd, Mrs. R. C. Mosely and Mrs. Walter Holt, also one sister, Mrs. Susan Hill. He was a faithful husband and a kind, indulgent father. He was a hard worker, but suffered much misfortune and loss in his life, having lost his left hand by a mill accident in the fall of 1882, which of course rendered him a cripple, though he worked on; in fact he never quit his work until last August. He professed a hope in Christ during the summer of 1876, and joined the Missionary Baptists at old Mt. Airy. Some years later, together with his companion, he united with the Primitive Baptists, and remained a faithful member until his death.

His remains were carried to the old meetinghouse, where the funeral service was conducted by his faithful pastor, Elder J. C. Ross, assisted by his brother-in-law, Elder T. F. Moore, who spoke very comfortingly to the bereaved family and many friends, after which his body was conveyed to the Patterson graveyard near by and tenderly laid in the grave to await the resurrection morn.

WALTER F. STAFFORD.

Mrs. Mamie Halman, wife of L. J. Halman and daughter of J. J. McLeod and wife Eugenia, was born in Cass County, Texas, Jan. 13th, 1890, and died near Winnsboro, Texas, Dec. 28th, 1918, making her age at the time of death 28 years, 11 months and 15 days. The deceased was married to L. J. Halman July 12th, 1909. To that union was born one child, a daughter, now about eight years old. This daughter and the deceased's husband, together with father, mother, two brothers and three sisters, are left to mourn the departure from this life of this dear sweet woman. She also leaves a host of friends to mourn, for she was a friend to and was loved and respected by every one who was so fortunate as to meet her. The deceased professed a hope in Christ and joined the Missionaries August 12th, 1909, but she never seemed to be satisfied; she could not indorse their doctrine of salvation by works, but believed that salvation comes alone through the atoning blood of Jesus. She had several letters clipped from the SIGNS OF THE TIMES filed among her other papers, which proved that she loved the doctrine of God's people. The writer of this notice during the last session of the Sulphur Fork Association, held near the deceased's home in October, 1918, had the great pleasure of spending one night at her home, and took cognizance of the fact from her conversation that she had been with Jesus. She had pneumonia following an attack of influenza, and for twelve days suffered intense pain. She seemed to be unconscious for two days and nights before she died, but just before she passed away a sweet smile came over her face, which remained after death. She was buried in the Smyrna Cemetery, there to rest in peace until the resurrection day. It is our heartfelt desire that our Lord may comfort the dear sorrowing husband and his precious little daughter, together with the dear father and mother, brothers, sisters and friends.

One who dearly loved her.

J. S. McLEOD.

APPOINTMENTS.

Elder J. M. Fenton will hold meeting, the Lord willing, in Brantford, Canada, Tuesday, Feb. 18th, 1919, 7:30 p. m., wherever brethren may decide; also with the Beulah Church, Aberfeldy, Canada, Sunday, Feb. 23rd, 10:30 a. m. and 3 p. m.

MEETINGS.

IT has been arranged to hold an all day meeting at the "Grange Hall," Halcott Center, N. Y., on Sunday, March 16th, 1919. All who love the truth are welcome.

GEORGE RUSTON.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,
1315 Columbia Avenue
(Park Avenue Hall)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.
ALL WELCOME

THE Second Roxbury Church will hold their meetings for the remainder of the winter on the first Sunday (instead of the second Sunday) at sisters Mead, Roxbury, N. Y. All who love the truth are invited.

G. RUSTON,

EBENEZER

OLD SCHOOL

BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Middletown and Andes Church will hold their meetings for the remainder of the winter at Halcottville, N. Y., on the second Sunday in each month. All who love the truth are welcome.

G. RUSTON.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at 5 cents per copy. Address,

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

BY J. E. BEEBE & COMPANY

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Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 87. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1919. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THROUGH FAITH.

NOT long since, as I lay on my bed, racked with pain, and yet trying to read a little in an old religious book published in England about three hundred years ago, my mind was powerfully drawn to the words which stand at the head of this article. They were in nowise connected with what I was reading, but the Spirit, as I believe, impressed them on my mind and heart. Immediately I laid aside the old book, interesting as it was to me, and took up my Bible and began to look up those passages of Scripture in which the words are found. The day was dark and gloomy, the clouds hung low and heavy, the cold winter rain was coming down upon the earth and everything without seemed cheerless and uninviting. I was deeply oppressed with a strange feeling of utter aloneness and desolation; my faith, if indeed I had any at all, was almost entirely gone, and my hope, if hope I had at all, was dim and shadowy, and great billows of discouragement and despondency, one after another, swept over my spirit, and at times seemed to completely overwhelm me. I do not know if others have such experiences as this or not, but I can say for myself that I am frequently beset in this way. At such times I am powerfully tempted to cast away my confidence altogether, to burn my Bible and to disappear forever from those whom I believe are the true people of God. I am made to doubt that I am a child of God, that I have ever been born again, and that God has ever called me to preach the gospel. Yet in these most dreadful and darkest moments of my experience, when everything about me seems as blackness itself, and I am wrapped in the black folds of hopelessness and despair, always there come to my mind some precious words, sometimes but a single word, from the holy oracles of God, and these words enter into my very soul and anchor themselves in the inner depths of my spirit, and then oftentimes for days and for weeks I cannot put them away nor get them out of my mind. I can even taste them and feast upon them. On such occasions they are sweeter than honey, yea, than honey in the honeycomb. Then, all praise and glory be to His matchless name, the darkness disappears and the shadows flee away, and every doubt seems gone for-

ever, faith lifts up her head and easily grasps the promises, and hope, without a fear or the least misgiving, mounts up on wings of triumphant victory to the very height of heaven. Then, many times, immediately after such victorious experiences, distressing doubts and tormenting fears beset me on every side, and I am made to feel that I have sinned the sin of presumption, and again I am plunged into darkness and despair. Are there any among God's people who have experiences similar to these? Are these the experiences of a child of God?

On the occasion above referred to I was led to ask these questions:

1. What do these words mean: "through faith"?

2. Whose faith is referred to here?

3. What do the Scriptures teach us on the subject?

In the first place I find a number of passages in which these identical words are found. In Ephesians ii. 8, God's people are said to be "saved by grace through faith." In 1 Peter i. 5, they are said to be "kept by the power of God through faith." This expression, "through faith," is found five times in Paul's letter to the Hebrews, chapter eleven, and in the same chapter the similar expression, "by faith," occurs fifteen times. These two expressions, "by faith" and "through faith," seem to be identical in meaning, notwithstanding the apparent difference which at first view seems to lie in the words of the apostle in Romans iii. 30, where he says: "Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith." For I do not understand that God has two different ways of justifying sinners, but that all are justified exactly alike. In the apostle's letter to the Galatians, ii. 15, 16, where the subject is considered in all its relations, the inspired writer says: "We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Here we have the plain, unequivocal and unqualified statement that God's people, both Jew and Gentile, are justified by the faith of Christ, not by their faith. It is not their faith in him, but the faith which is inherently in him. It is his faith, and not theirs, which justifies sinners. Moreover, this truth is clearly set forth in several other passages of Scripture, two of which occur to my mind at this moment. Our apostle, in relating his experience to Agrippa, declared that Jesus appeared to him on his way to Damascus, and said to him: "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."—Acts xvi. 16–18. Here the faith which sanctifies is not the faith of the individuals who are sanctified; not their faith in Jesus, but his faith, the faith that is in him. Again, in the third chapter of Ephesians, where the apostle, in speaking of the grace which was given him and which enabled him to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, declares that it was "according to the eternal purpose

which he [God] purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: in whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him," the word is used genitively, and signifies, not our faith, the faith which originates in us, but his faith, the faith which is inherently in Jesus. If our salvation, justification, sanctification or our access to him were conditioned upon our faith, or upon anything whatsoever in us, then we would be utterly without hope and lost to all eternity; but the truth is, according to the uniform teaching of the Scriptures, that the salvation of God's people in its entirety, from beginning to end, for time and eternity, is absolute, unqualified, and not conditioned upon anything whatsoever in the creature. As Augustus Toplady declares, it was not conditioned even upon the obedience of Jesus Christ, for if such had been the case his disobedience would have frustrated the eternal purpose of God, and there could have been no salvation for fallen man. We are told in the Bible that God is faithful. Man is altogether unfaithful, untrustworthy and unreliable. All creatures, even the holy angels, are untrustworthy, hence not to be depended upon, except so far as they are upheld and sustained by the grace of God. For the Scriptures inform us that God charged the holiest of his angels with folly and put no trust in his servants. If this be the case, and it certainly is, then in whom can we place our confidence? In God only. Yes, God is faithful; his faithfulness never fails. Jesus obligated himself in eternity, before the foundations of the world were laid, to redeem his chosen people from the bondage and thraldom of sin, and from the power of Satan. He did not place himself under obligation to his people, the sheep of his pasture, for it was in the very nature of things impossible for the eternal, absolute One to put himself under any obligation to any creature; but he was obligated to his Father in the stipulation of the covenant of grace, that everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure. This eternal obligation he kept, and this absolute faithfulness, or fidelity, on the part of our great Daysman and Surety makes absolute and eternal the complete salvation of all the elect of God, and forever excludes all creature works and all conditionalism whatsoever. "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

BEN H. IRWIN.

AMOS V. 18-20.

"WOE unto you that desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?"

I have not quoted all this long text from the prophet Amos with the view of bringing out its full meaning, but, if the Lord will, I desire to drop a few thoughts that those who run may read. The prophet was at the time of this prophecy among the herdsmen at Tekoa, which word literally means the sound of a trumpet. God gave him knowledge to speak concerning Israel in the days of King Uzziah, king of Judah, and Jeroboam, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake, at the time when the Lord would roar from Zion and utter his voice from Jerusalem, when the shepherds should mourn and the top of Carmel wither, all of which is highly figurative to my mind.

The first thing that the prophet tells is what the Lord will do because of transgression. He says God will send his fire into the house of Hazael, which shall devour the palaces of Benhadad. He also

will break "the bar of Damascus, and cut off the inhabitant from the plain of Aven, and him that holdeth the sceptre from the house of Eden: and the people of Syria shall go into captivity unto Kir, saith the Lord." I have referred the reader to the above prophecy to show that the day of the Lord, as in the text, is a day of darkness, and not light. There is more in the prophecy to show us what is meant by it, which you can read for yourself if you have a mind to do so. Those whose hope the Lord is will do well if the Lord is pleased to enlighten us to consider what he by the mouth of the prophet is speaking to his people Israel. The prophet further says, "Hear this word that the Lord hath spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family [no one exempt] which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying, You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." Then God asks the question, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" God and his people whom he hath known, as in the language above, of all the earth these two, God and his people, must and will eventually walk together fully agreed. But before they do they must be agreed. God's people in their nature are of the earth earthy, while their God, with whom they are to walk, is the Lord from heaven. Sin has separated them. By the transgression of one man, Adam, a great breach was made between them, and hence we find the Lord telling his people in these words, Had it not been for Moses, my servant, whom I have chosen to stand between you and me in the breach, I would have destroyed you long ago. So we see from this that the Lord himself before all time protected those whom he foreknew, Jesus, the chosen servant of God, standing in God's own arrangements, as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, before ever the breach was actually made by the transgression of one man. God said that it was he, and he only, that brought his chosen people up out of Egypt, which figure means, up out of the fall. It is the work of the Lord from first to last. He has begun it, and he will finish it in the day of Jesus Christ. This one thing the apostle Paul was fully persuaded of, and so am I. It is my first experience that God began the work, for at the time I was doing every other thing but that, and delighting in those things that I was at the time fully absorbed in. God began the work, as I have since that eventful day hoped, in my soul. The exercises of the soul under the power of God's Spirit find out sooner or later what the day of the Lord means to him as an individual member of the family of Israel. God begins the work with him at the time earthly power, or the power of darkness, represented to us in the prophecy by the two earthly kings, rules in the heart of the dark and benighted Egypt. As Jesus said, When a strong man is armed he keepeth his palace, and his goods are in peace. Yes, in peace and in love with all the things of time and sense, until one stronger than he comes upon him. When the stronger, the Holy Ghost, comes upon him the poor sinner, now enlightened to a degree, is arraigned at the bar, not of human reasoning as he was before, but at the bar of the eternal God's divine justice. There he first hears the trumpet sound. The Lord begins to roar out of Zion and utter his voice out of Jerusalem in his wrath against sin and transgression. Thus for three transgressions, and for four, yea, and many, many more than the poor sinner can number, God's holy law from Sinai roars and

thunders in his ears, and deep down in his poor sinful heart, as he stands before the piercing eye of the just and holy God. No one else knows its terrors but those whom the Lord knows, and has ever known. The awful judgment of God sets on fire the soul of the poor trembling criminal, for it is a fiery law, going forth from God as he is, as with an iron pen of his holy and divine law and justice writing in the heart and putting in the mind. It is the work of the law bringing in before God a guilty criminal condemned. God is chastening in the conscience of his chosen and elect child for every sin and every transgression, and making him see and feel sensibly that he is lost and ruined forever without Jesus Christ, God's chosen One, who stands between him and God in the awful breach that sin has made between himself and the just and holy God. The poor sinner reaches a spot in his own mind where he feels very sensibly that it is almost impossible for him to ever be able to walk with God in peace. The poor soul desires to see the day when the Lord, for Jesus' sake, will pardon, wash away in the blood of Jesus, all his many, many sins. The poor soul, distressed as never before (and no person can help him), begs, pleads of God for mercy; he sees the lion, the strength of the law, his inherited sin, the sin of Adam that condemned the world, it is the lion, and O how strong it is against him. He begins to speak as did Job: How can a man that is born of a woman be just with God? O what a strong lion, in whose grasp the poor soul finds himself, and unable to get away from it. The lion (the law) condemns him and sends him to the lowest hell, both soul and body. This is the day of the Lord with him, the day of God's power. Before this he had had his own day, rolling sin under his tongue as a sweet morsel, enjoying the pleasures of sin for a season down in the land of Egypt; but now things have changed, God begins to bring him personally up out of Egypt, light hath shone in, and by this light he sees something he had never seen before: he sees God, the great God whom he had ignored all his life; he views him just, holy and pure, and himself a vile wretch, a guilty sinner, condemned by a just and holy law. Hence, as Paul says, "The law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin." It is the day of the Lord with him, it is truly God's time now, he says in his poor heart. In his humble nature at times he may in a way desire to see the day when he would be a christian, like all the Arminian world has it, but he has no idea of what it would mean to him, as the world said it would be a day of joy and gladness, and the sinner would become sinless and holy, sanctified and be happy, as he sings all the day long, but instead he finds it a day of darkness; it is as the Bible says: The light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not. The poor sinner tries in his own strength, first of all, to flee from the lion, but he finds himself facing a bear, just as bad, if not worse. In fact, he goes from worse to worse, instead of, as he had always thought, from worse to better. He gets worse and worse in his own estimation with every move that he makes, not anything bright in him, all is darkness, and no light at all. Finally he gives up, disgusted with himself and all his past life; he turns and thinks to hide in his own house. He goes in, as it were, tired, crippled and completely worn out, disgusted, and almost in despair and ready to faint, he reaches forth his trembling hand and places it against the wall (the fast fading wall of his own carnal

self) for support, and a serpent bites him. Satan, that old serpent, which is the devil, lays hold of him, and, like the prophet, the terrors of hell get hold upon him, all is utter darkness with him, there is no brightness at all to his poor mind. Here the poor guilty criminal gives it all up, he falls unreservedly at the feet of mercy, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Here in this epoch of his experience judgment runs down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream, his heretofore ideas all go, he turns loose all the false refuges of lies behind which he has tried to hide, which the hailstorms of God's eternal wrath against sin has swept away, as God by his Spirit lays judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet; the bed of nature on which he has been lying all his life, feeling safe there, is now too short, he cannot stretch himself on it; the covering of human will and ability, self-righteousness and all such things, under which he has been hiding, are now too narrow, he cannot cover with it any longer, it will not do, he finds himself naked, poor, blind and undone in every sense of the word. It is the work of the Lord bringing him out of Egypt, and as he travels under the direct leadership of God's rich grace he buys of God gold tried in the fire, and white raiment that he may be clothed. From the very first God by his Spirit and the indwelling of his rich and free grace has been day by day stripping him of all his filthy rags and clothing him with the robe of righteousness wrought out by Christ on the cross, and, as the poet has it, Lest upon my soul the shadow of a spot be found, he took the robe the Savior wrought and wrapped it all around. In this robe he is "agreed with God," and hence, experimentally, having a true knowledge of Jesus Christ his Redeemer he walks with God, he talks with God and he has his conversation in heaven, from which the new born soul looks. John in Revelation saw they were clothed in white, for they were worthy. John saw the same people God has always known of all the families of the earth, those who were chosen in Christ before the world began. These people stand before God holy and without blame, perfect in his love. Here they are "agreed," and will ever walk together in eternal joy. They are the people who were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, and finally fully revealed, that much more shall they be saved by his life. Jesus says, As I live, ye shall also live.

Yours in humble hope in Christ,

C. M. HOOD.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Jan. 3, 1919.

SALINE, La., Jan. 13, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription to the SIGNS is nearly due I am renewing for myself and my dear mother, and will try in my weakness to write a few lines by way of remembrance, but cannot tell whether it will be worth anything to God's dear saints or not. If my thoughts are not directed by the Spirit of truth they will not be worth anything to them that love the Lord, for every good and perfect gift is of the Lord, and is freely bestowed on them that are enabled by his grace to walk in the paths of obedience. His people are a poor and an afflicted people, and realize that they cannot do anything good of themselves; all goodness comes from him, and he will receive all the praise. Man is ever trying to receive the praise, but in God's own good time he will bring him down into the dust of humility, for every mountain and every hill shall be brought low and every valley shall be exalted. The

mountains of human wisdom, their vanity and pride, shall fall before him who has all power both in heaven and in earth. The grass withereth and the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it. No one knows anything about the power of the almighty God except those to whom his power has been manifested. He works in them to will and to do according to his good pleasure. I hope that power has been manifested in me, a poor worm of the dust, who am not worthy of the notice of his dear saints, and if I have any worthiness it is in Christ Jesus the Lord, for he is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end; he is the life, the light and the strength of his people, and without him they can do nothing. It is certainly sweet when we are enabled to trust in him and to be reconciled to his holy will, but we cannot trust unless it is given us, for we are weak and prone to evil. I very often feel of late to sin is all I do, and surely a child of God could not be as corrupt as I am, for sin is mixed with all I do. I cannot be what I would like to be. My nature is so corrupt that it makes me fear and tremble. I fall far short of what it seems to me a true follower of the Lamb of God should be. I sometimes decide that I had just as well give up and let my old nature take its course, as there is nothing but it in me, and I am only acting the hypocrite in professing to be a believer in God; but God, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, knows my weakness, and if I am a child it is according to his love and mercy, and I am safe in his love, for his love never changes, no matter how far we may go in the paths of disobedience. He is ever watchful over us, and we can go no farther than it is his holy will for us to go. We are often turned loose to our own ways to work out our own destruction, as were the children of Israel when they thought they could fight their own battles; God turned them over into the hands of their enemies to consume them. So it is with spiritual Israel; they very often get to thinking that they are able to do for themselves, and it takes suffering and tribulation to keep them humble and make them know that God only is their keeper and their salvation. Great is the mystery of godliness! It is so great that the natural or carnal mind knows nothing about it. The only way that the children of God know anything about his mysteries is by revelation. He reveals to them such things as are needful for them to know, no more, no less. They will receive everything that is for their good and his glory. We very often think our lot is hard and grievous to be borne. I believe we all have an inheritance here on this earth, and when we have received all of that inheritance we shall leave this world of sin and sorrow. We will suffer every pain and every sorrow that is for us to suffer, and we shall receive every joy. God has a glorious purpose in it all. David said, He brought me up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock and established my goings. He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God. David was certainly a sweet singer in Israel, for his songs of praise are in accord with the experiences of the children of God, for they do know what it is to be in that miry clay where there is no place to stand. They also know that they cannot get out until God takes them out to place their feet upon that rock which cannot be shaken. O, is it not glorious to be enabled sometimes to hope that David's God is our God? for if he is we have nothing to fear. He hath put a new song

in our mouth, even praise unto our God. That new song is the sweetest song that ever was sung; it is the theme of his people to praise his holy name, and they will never get through singing that sweet song, which song is sung in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES by its editors and many writers, and also our preachers, whom God has blessed us with, are enabled by his grace to declare the unsearchable riches of our risen and exalted Savior, who was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Their preaching is not according to man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit. They do not preach for filthy lucre. Paul said he had nothing to glory in, for necessity was laid upon him, and "woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel." Whenever God calls his preachers he qualifies them to do the work he has for them to do, and they will do that work when the time comes, not one minute too soon nor one too late. They will fill the ministry wherein he sends them; no one can fill another's place, but can fill his own, for every member of the body of Christ is needed in that body and will fill its place. So may we be bound together in one bundle of love, which no one knows anything about but those born of God. Where that love is there is peace and harmony. It is certainly sweet for love to be manifest in the church, then there is union and communion and sweet fellowship for one another. It is a blessing that this world cannot give, and worth more than the gold of Ophir or the cattle on a thousand hills. What will it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? What would it profit the children of God to lose their spiritual enjoyments or if they could give them for the vain and perishable things of this earth? All that it contains will not compare with the sweet enjoyments his people partake of in the Lord's bountiful store. What is of God is perfect, and he is from everlasting the same true and living God. What his people receive here is only a foretaste of heavenly bliss; we only see in part and only know in part here, but when raised with the likeness of the dear Savior we shall be perfect as he is perfect, for we shall know as we are known; no more doubts and fears, no sighs and tears, for he will be our song; no more of the cares of this vain world to hinder us in that perfect praise to the holy triune God.

It made me feel sad when I read that Elder Durand was dead. I certainly did enjoy his writings, for he was an able writer; he could expound the Scriptures and make them so plain. He finished his course here below, which we all will soon do. A few more days on earth to spend and all our toils here shall end. May the God of all grace sustain and uphold his people in every trial, for in him they stand and without him they fall.

Do with this as seems best to you, and it will be all right. If I have written anything amiss it is because of my ignorance.

Your little brother, I hope, in Christ Jesus the Lord,

E. F. READHIMER.

BALTIMORE, Md., Dec. 21, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am writing to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, for I do not want to miss a number. If I could write like most of the brethren and sisters I would write oftener, but each child of God is filling the place the Lord made for them. They are lively stones, fitly framed together, and if they should hold their peace then the stones would immediately cry out. As this year draws to a

close I feel I have a great many things to be thankful for. I had a son in France, and the Lord brought him through safely without even a wound, for which I am thankful. I have felt all the time that he was just as safe in France as though he were home. Last winter before he went across I became very much depressed in spirit over the war and other things, and was ready to say, All these things are against me, and while at work there was a still small voice came to me, saying, I am God of the universe, I rule in France as well as in America; I am able to take care of your boy in France as well as in America. I am in this war, also in all things that trouble my people in the earth. This war is for the good of my people and for my glory, and it will cease at my command. Dear brethren, there was healing to my poor soul in those words, and it made me believe, if possible, more firmly that God directs all things, both wars and peace, and blesses them to the comfort of his people as it pleases him. I trust that the editors and writers of the SIGNS may be guided by the Holy Spirit to contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

Brethren, I will close, wishing you all a happy Christmas and a prosperous new year. Advance my subscription one year and apply the rest where you feel it is needed. Do with this as you think best.

Your little brother in Christ, I hope,

L. C. GODWIN.

HERNDON, Va., Jan. 4, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter I received from dear sister Semma E. Corder, of Philippi, W. Va., which I would like to see published in the dear old SIGNS, if it meets with your approval. She sent me her book, a sketch of the life of her dear father, Elder J. S. Corder, which I have read with much comfort and satisfaction. I would be glad if many of our Old School Baptist brethren would send and get the book, for I feel satisfied they would be glad to read it and have such a book in their homes.

Your brother, I hope,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Dec. 30, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER OLIVER:—Your very kind letter at hand. I am glad you were pleased with the book; it was a gift to you, but of course I thank you very much for the money you sent me. I love to read your published letters in the SIGNS. Your personal exercises of mind and soul have found a deep response in my poor heart, and I did not know how to manifest the drawing christian love I felt toward you except by sending you a book, though I admit it was with no little embarrassment that I did it. I have felt so much of late my proneness to wander in forbidden paths that I have felt within an earnest begging to be controlled in all things and every action by the great controlling power of the blessed Lord Jesus. When I cannot by faith see his hand I am miserable, but there are times when I feel that he is near me, then the vain world is put under my feet, and I can face its frowns; then joy cometh in the morning. O the preciousness of Jesus, our great High Priest, touched with a feeling of our infirmities. How wonderful to meditate upon, and more wonderful to feel that we have access through him unto the Father, that he has passed into the heavens and ever liveth to make intercession for us poor, helpless, needy creatures. We are full of sin and sorrow, but the sacrifice on the cross was not in vain.

Dear brother, I have written too much, and fear it will weary you. I wanted to let you know I received your kind letter and contents and thank you for the same. Remember me at the throne of grace.

Your sister in Christ Jesus, I hope,

S. E. CORDER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1919.

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ACTS XX. 37, 38.

"AND they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more."

This text and its connection embodies an interesting subject, as well as one of importance, from many standpoints. Some things embraced in the Scriptures are seldom mentioned, perhaps for various reasons, and we confess our own omission of some such things. Often they are reckoned unimportant, hence unnecessary, but is there really anything in the "holy book" unnecessary? All must have its place and its application in its season. The weaknesses of man, as well as the power of man, through grace, are often shown clearly and in a decided way through the inspiration of God, and in the text above quoted this is done. But before taking up that side of the subject it is our desire to make mention of the strength of Paul, as a man of God, and his faithfulness to Him who called him unto glory and virtue. We have no reason to believe that any other apostle suffered as many hardships, privations and persecutions as did he. Perhaps one reason for it was the promise of God that he would shew him what great things he must suffer for the name of Jesus Christ. Be this as it may, no other apostle suffered more bravely and patiently than did he, no one of his brethren in the ministry served more cheerfully, nor worked harder to do so than did he, and, if we be allowed the term, no one accomplished more in the apostleship than did Paul. In the service of God he was seeking a clear conscience before God, and seemed ever to have it. He called to the attention of the elders of the church of Ephesus his manner of life among them from the first day he came among them, at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, with many tears and temptations. It must have been good for him, and to him, that he could conscientiously call attention to those things as he was taking his last leave of the church of Ephesus. His entire life among them had been as becometh the gospel of Christ. Again, he had kept nothing back that was profitable to them, whether it suited their feelings, notions or ideas or not. This is one point of his strength. We would that all of us who are in the ministry could be strong in this direction. He taught them publicly, and from house to house, testifying to all classes repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. He said at one time, "For to me to live is Christ," and whether in life or death Christ should be glorified in his body. As we think of this holy man of God, and his manner of life, we feel ashamed of our unprofitable existence, lo these many years, in the house of God and in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. We wonder, with fear, if it will ever be any better than in the past. What little testifying we have done has been publicly, surely not from house to house.

The apostle then told the elders that he was going, bound to Jerusalem, not know-

ing what things might befall him there, save the witness of the Holy Ghost that in every city bonds and afflictions awaited him. But brave and fearless he said, "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." Here again is his strength made manifest in his determination to finish his course in testifying the gospel. At last he could say before God and his brethren that he had finished his course, had fought a good fight and kept the faith. The good work that the Lord began in him He finished, or performed. Perhaps it would not be out of place to say that Paul was twice a soldier. First, in nature's army, fighting in the armor of Saul, with all the strength and zeal possible for a natural man to possess, believing he was doing God service, but when the commandment came the battle was against him; his strength failed and his armor proved worthless. After that he was pressed into the service of God and became "a soldier of the cross," clothed with the authority and power of the Captain of our salvation, having upon him "the whole armor of God." He obeyed every order and the armor never failed him, though he died, or finished his course, in it.

The Holy Ghost made known unto him that the elders and brethren of Ephesus would never see his face again, and during this wonderful talk to them he told them that they would see his face no more, and in the parting forever he declared unto them that he was pure from the blood of all men, having fully and faithfully discharged his duty, both to them and to God. It will be seen by reading the Old Testament that the watchmen placed upon the walls of Zion were to take the oversight of the inhabitants of the city. If when they saw the enemy approaching and gave the alarm and the people did not prepare to meet the enemy, the watchmen were pure, or free, of the blood of those killed. But if they saw the enemy coming and did not warn the people, and the enemy caught them unawares and slew them, then the blood, or responsibility, of the death of the people was upon the watchmen. Paul, therefore, not having shunned to declare unto them all the counsel of God, and to warn them night and day, was pure from the blood, or responsibility, of what might take place after his departing if they kept not in mind the things he had declared unto them during his stay with them. Hence he said unto them, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." Then came his farewell benediction: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." He then kneeled down and prayed with them all. "And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more." We can readily understand how the love, honor and re-

spect the elders had for Paul caused such deep sorrow at parting with him forever, but surely their weakness was greatly manifest in sorrowing most of all for those words: Ye shall see my face no more. It is perfectly natural, and when we say "natural" we mean natural, for a church of God to feel sorrowful and weep when a faithful, loving and true pastor takes his leave of it to serve in some other part of the vineyard, even though that church has no thought of never seeing his face again, but sometimes there are greater reasons for weeping than the parting with the man, let his faithfulness be ever so great and their love ever so strong, and in this the natural weakness of that church is made manifest. It should be remembered that the leaving of a pastor is not always the greatest calamity that can befall a church, and surely the final farewell of Paul to the church at Ephesus was not the worst thing to come upon it, but in its love for the man everything else was overlooked, and they sorrowed most of all that they should see his face no more. In reality what did that amount to, when compared with other things he said to them? He told them that grievous wolves should enter in among them, not sparing the flock. When the nature of the wolf is considered, and the certainty of their entering in among the sheep of God, not sparing the flock, but rather to devour, wound and scatter the sheep and lambs, in other words, making havoc of the church of God, what a small thing the parting with Paul was, yet they sorrowed most of all for that. What a frail weakling man is, and in how many ways it is made apparent, more to others perhaps than to himself. There seems no reason to think that the elders of Ephesus realized their weakness when sorrowing more for the departing of Paul than for the sure entrance of wolves in among them who would not spare the flock. Again, Paul told them that of themselves men should arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Instead of each one asking the questions, Lord, shall I depart from thy truth and speak perverse things? Shall I be a wolf among thy sheep? those grave questions and the vitally important matter weighed very lightly upon their minds, if at all, but they sorrowed most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. Paul's parting with them did not strike him with much force or significance, but the dangers to which the church was to be subjected, the troubles and divisions, were uppermost in his mind and feelings. No doubt he felt sorry to leave forever the brethren, but he sorrowed most of all for the things which were sure to come upon that church. In this again his wonderful strength was made manifest. He doubtless loved them as well as they loved him, perhaps more, but the parting did not hurt him anything like as much as those things he knew would follow his absence.

May we all ever be given to weigh the matters that may come upon us with carefulness and prayer, always considering the most important points first, and not make our weakness known through our natural feelings and emotions. Let us stand up for the right, and bravely meet every loss and cross as it comes to us, and above all things consider the peace of the church first of everything in this world. The parting with pastors, whether by death or otherwise, is severe, and hard to bear, but not to be compared with divisions and other church troubles. To have to give up our sons and daugh-

ters, fathers and mothers, crushes us to the earth, but the grace of God is sufficient for us. The chief desire of all the people of God should be to dwell in the house of the Lord, to behold his beauty and to inquire in his temple.

"My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life or breath remains;
There my best friends, my kindred, dwell,
There God my Savior reigns."

K.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Callie Sparkman Lunn, wife of brother J. A. Lunn, was born Feb. 15th, 1858, married to brother Lunn Dec. 16th, 1880, joined the Primitive Baptist Church some time in 1883, and died Jan. 15th, 1919. Sister Lunn was an ardent believer in Christ Jesus, and loved the doctrine of divine grace as it is in Jesus our Lord, and few Baptists have a better understanding of the teachings of the Scriptures than she had. She was a loving mother, a good neighbor and a useful citizen. She was afflicted for many years, but bore her sufferings with that patience characteristic of God's people. Dear children, your loss is her eternal gain. What mother suffered will be crowned at the resurrection with glory of unspeakable bliss. To you that remain may God in his goodness supply your grief with confidence in him who doeth all things well. I feel unable to express the worthiness that belongs to the good name of your dear mother, and am sure that she is far from pain and her troublesome cough. May you therefore be reconciled to this dispensation of God's will. Brother Lunn, your good wife you will now miss; her gentleness will no more comfort you here, but you have comfort in knowing that another angel has gone home, and may God fill your poor heart with submission, that you can say as one of old: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." You are soon going over, and I feel to say that heaven was prepared for the dear people of God. Heaven, sweet heaven, the saints' delight. O, could all men see the salvation of Jesus and the justice there is in death. Sister Lunn leaves her husband, brother J. A. Lunn, Mrs. J. H. Putman and Mrs. J. E. Fulmer, of Nashville, Tenn., Frank O'Connell, of Los Angeles, Cal., H. H. Lunn, of East St. Louis, Ill., P. H. Lunn, of Little Rock, Ark., B. N. Lunn and S. F. Lunn, of Dickson, Tenn., and J. P. Lunn, somewhere in France, to mourn their loss, together with her many friends in Dickson, Nashville and other parts of Tennessee.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral services by request of sister Lunn.

A. L. STANSELL.

Emily Nailor, widow of Lemuel Nailor and daughter of Peter and Lucinda Dalrymple, was born October 16th, 1841, and died Jan. 9th, 1919, aged 77 years, 2 months and 24 days. Her husband died many years ago. She had lived in the home of her sister, Mrs. Asa Hockenbury, Stockton, N. J., where she died, ever since I knew her. She was of a family of five children, three girls and two boys, only one of whom remains, Mrs. Hockenbury. She was baptized by Elder Balas Bundy Oct. 16th, 1892, uniting with the Old School Baptist Church called Kingwood, at Locktown, N. J., remaining in the love and sweet fellowship of the brethren while her natural life lasted. Sister Nailor was a quiet christian woman, sound in the faith of God's elect, and whatever she said on the subject of religion was to the point. She lived but a short time after suffering a paralytic stroke. Her remaining sister, who is a believer in the precious truth, feels her loss very much, but she is with Jesus in heaven. May the dear Lord bless all of the mourning ones with reconciled minds, for Jesus' sake.

The writer officiated at the funeral Saturday, Jan. 11th, 1919.

ALSO,

Cornelius O. Hoff, of Frenchtown, N. J., was born Nov. 11th, 1834, and died Jan. 30th, 1919, at the age of 84 years, 2 months and 19 days. He was born on his father's farm in Alexandria township, N. J., near the old Episcopal meetinghouse, two miles from Palmyra. Like most young men of that period, he assisted his father with the farm work. In 1859 he was married to Sarah Jane Seals, daughter of Archibald and Rachel Seals. He leaves of his family an invalid widow, three daughters: Mrs. J. C. Hough, Mrs. O. R. Kugler, of Frenchtown, N. J., and Mrs. Oscar Rittenhouse, of Clinton, N. J., one son, Cornelius S. Hoff, of Frenchtown, N. J., one son dying in infancy. Colonel Hoff, as he was familiarly called, was greatly esteemed by all of his friends and acquaintances as an honest, upright man and citizen, a kind and affectionate husband and father. He lived to a good ripe age. He and his wife and family were formerly connected with the Presbyterians, he being an elder or deacon, I believe, but after being brought to know the truth and hearing Elder Balas Bundy declare it he and his wife and children broke off their connection from them, and from that time have been regular attendants at Old Baptist meetings, two girls having united with the church at Locktown. The colonel was a stanch believer in salvation by grace. I knew him personally for several years, and have had many a good visit with him and his family at his pleasant home; he always seemed so cheerful. I believe he is with his dear Savior in glory, and his dear afflicted companion, who has a good hope through grace, is anxiously looking forward to the time when she, too, will be freed from the infirmities

and perplexities of this mortal sinful life to dwell forever with her dear Savior and Redeemer. The Lord bless her in her lonely hours with his sweet presence, with all of the dear mourning ones, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

The writer spoke at the funeral, which was held at the residence Wednesday, Jan. 8th. Burial in cemetery at Frenchtown. D. M. VAIL.

Vernon Lee Somers was born March 23rd, 1889, and was killed in the battle of Chateau Thierry, France, June 6th, 1918, aged 29 years, 2 months and 14 days. He was a 2nd Lieutenant in the U. S. Marine Corps, and proved himself a brave, gallant and worthy son of America, as attested by the following letter, received by his mother a few days ago:

Washington, D. C., Jan. 13, 1919.

My Dear Mrs. Somers:—I take great pleasure in transmitting herewith the Distinguished Service Cross, which has been posthumously awarded your son, Second Lieutenant Vernon L. Somers, Marine Corps, for his gallant and conspicuous conduct in action against the enemy at Chateau Thierry, France, June 6, 1918. I am sure you will cherish the possession of this Cross in memory of your son, who so nobly gave his life while fighting for his country's cause.

Signed, A. S. McLEMORE.
Colonel, Ass't Adjutant and Inspector.

Vernon was a noble specimen of young American manhood, a devoted son and brother, and is sincerely mourned by his father, mother, brothers and sister, besides a host of friends, which his manly qualities drew about him.

ALSO,

Gay Patterson Somers was born October 22nd, 1898, and fell a victim to that dread disease, influenza, followed by pneumonia, October 21st, 1918, lacking one day of 20 years of age. She was visiting in Lynchburg, Va., at the breaking out of the scourge, and having entered training for a nurse was induced by a physician of her acquaintance to take charge of a serious case of the "flu," and herself fell a victim. All was done for her that loving hearts could devise, but it was in the order of God's purpose that she must go. Her mother and a brother were with her, and brought the mortal body to the darkened home in Accomac County, Va., where on the 22nd, in the presence of a large assembly of relatives and friends, after a short funeral service it was committed to the grave in the Bloxom Cemetery to await the trumpet's sound.

There is left to mourn in this sad bereavement, the father, Capt. W. J. Somers, the mother, sister Maggie A. Somers (who is a faithful member of the Messongoes Old School Baptist Church), three brothers: Elmer, Grover and Christopher Somers, and one sister, Mrs. Lola Browne, besides numerous other relatives and friends. Gay was a girl of loving and lovely disposition, and being the youngest of a family of seven was a pet of them all.

May He who is a very present help in trouble, be with and comfort them with the blessed hope and sweet assurance of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began. They have my heartfelt sympathy as one who has experienced the same sad trial. A. B. FRANCIS.

William H. Mellott was born June 3rd, 1838, and departed this life Nov. 20th, 1918, making his age 80 years, 5 months and 17 days. Brother Mellott was baptized on the fourth Sunday in April, 1872, by Elder Thomas Rose, in the fellowship of the Wells Valley Church, Fulton Co., Pa., and later was received by letter in the fellowship of Providence Church, Bedford Co., Pa. His dear wife passed away several years ago in the triumph of a living faith. Nine children were born to that union: Mrs. James F. Bore, McClellan Mellott, Mrs. John Himes, Abraham Mellott, Mrs. Samuel Wills, Arthur Mellott, Elder J. Corder Mellott, Verna Mellott and Loyd Mellott. He died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. John Himes, after several weeks of severe abdominal pain. He was lovely and lovable in his life, having a clear insight in the Scriptures and in the knowledge of the truth. He contended earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. He was a pleasant companion and a profitable fireside talker.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at the home of his daughter, after which his body was quietly laid away, while his spirit had gone to God who gave it. B. F. COULTER.

Darthula Cox McMahon passed away at her home, 309 Trinity Ave., Cleburne, Texas, Dec. 12th, 1918. Her death was due to an attack of influenza, followed by pneumonia. She was born Dec. 17th, 1880, in Marshall County, Miss. She was married to Fred M. McMahon Dec. 15th, 1901. In 1902 they emigrated to McLennan County, Texas, and in 1906 they settled in a nice home in Cleburne. Her dear mother, sister Eliza Cox, and her two brothers, Jim and George, moved from Oklahoma to Cleburne, and made their home with Fred and Darthula up to the time of the death of her dear mother, nine years ago last June. Sister McMahon was baptized by the writer in the fellowship of the church in Cleburne the first Sunday in April, 1912, and she was very faithful in all things pertaining to her duties as a member in the church, and was a good wife and mother. Her noble character and sweet disposition endeared her to many brethren, sisters and friends. Her house was an excellent home for Old School Baptists and other friends to visit. There was great lamentation over the death of dear sister McMahon. She is survived by her heartbroken husband and fifteen year old son

Ralph, also the following relatives, brothers and sister: George Cox, of Pottsboro, Jim Cox and Mrs. Pennie Cox, of Whitesboro, H. S. Cox, of Bells, B. Cox, of Muskogee, Okla., who is now in France, and Mrs. Nannie Isom, of Byers, Okla. Two of the brothers, George and Jim, were with their sister during her last days.

The writer was requested to conduct her funeral at the residence, but as the influenza was contagious there were not many present. The body of our precious sister was laid to rest beside her sainted mother in the Cleburne Cemetery.

We shall sadly miss our dear friends, Fred, Ralph and sister Darthula, as they seldom failed to come to our meetings in their car, and kindly conveyed others to and from the meetings. May the Lord comfort all who are in grief and sorrow.

W. L. ROGERS.

Nellie Pierson, our beloved niece, of Huntingdon Valley, Pa., was buried Dec. 24th, 1918, her death being caused by dilitation of the heart. She had been in declining health for nearly two years, and for the past year her physician warned her to take only short walks, as she had two leaking valves of the heart, thus making her very weak. This condition she bore with sweet resignation, never complaining. She had an unusually lovely disposition, and all her acquaintances, which were many, loved her and loved to be with her. The work of her hands was always deft, and seemed without labor to her. Her advice was always good, and was sought for by her friends, and most particularly in her home. How they miss her, words cannot tell. For years we had felt she would offer herself to the church at Southampton, that being the home church, her grandmother, mother and an uncle being members there, but she always felt her unworthiness too much. The second Sunday in December she was there, and Elder Fenton preached. She enjoyed it very much, and told her mother she had been shown the difference between the Old Baptist and other denominations, and spoke of how she wanted to go to meeting the next second Sunday in January (since Elder Durand's death there has been meeting only once a month). What an ornament she would have been to the church, so true and sincere. We feel we can truly testify that she loved the truth, having heard her give many expressions of her belief. The family always gathered home for Christmas, but this year they were gathered home the day before to pay their last tribute to the dear one. She left a devoted father and mother, two married sisters and two sisters at home, a nephew and three nieces and a dear friend, who felt the stroke keenly, besides many relatives and friends. May it be the will of the Father to make each submissive to his will, so that they can say, Thy will be done. We have met a great loss, but know it is her eternal gain.

Elder Fenton preached the funeral sermon, and she was laid to rest in the family plot in the Hatboro Cemetery.

F. S. & M. H. TERRY.

INASMUCH as it has pleased Almighty God to remove from his earthly labors our dearly beloved brother, **Elder Silas H. Durand,** therefore be it

Resolved, That we, the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada, extend our heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved children, and would remember also in sympathy the churches bereft of his pastoral care. We earnestly and fervently pray that each and all who mourn the loss of so noble a man and so excellent a gift be sustained by sovereign grace. We, as a church, sorrow that we shall see his face no more. For fifty years he visited us once or oftener each year, with scarcely an exception, always bringing soul-cheering messages to the poor and needy, thereby comforting many with the comfort wherewith he himself was comforted of God. He always came bringing no new doctrine, nor was his preaching with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and with power. His kind and fatherly advice was always in accordance with the New Testament Scriptures. We feel and believe that our dear departed brother lies sleeping in the embrace of a loving Savior, whose name he delighted to exalt, and that his gain is vastly greater than our loss. May God bestow upon the bereaved ones and the churches bereft of so faithful an undershepherd that heavenly grace which is able to comfort them and supply all their need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Read and approved by the members present at the regular meeting in Dunwich, January 12th, 1919.

J. T. KERR, Church Clerk.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, Elder D. M. Vail will visit and preach to brethren and friends as follows:

Jefferson, Sunday, March 30th, 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m.; Howe Cave, Monday, 31st, 8 p. m.; Schoharie, Tuesday, April 1st, 1:30 p. m.; Central Bridge, 8 p. m.; Albany, 272 Clinton Ave., Wednesday, 2nd, 1:30 p. m.

E. R. KINNEY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. M. E. Kuns, Cal., $1.00; W. M. Smith, N. C., $1.00; H. L. Noblit, Ore., $1.50; J. C. Chester, Ky., $3.00; Wm. B. Bizzell, Tenn., $2.00; J. H. Lanier, Tenn., $1.00; Mrs. G. W. Bradshaw, Va., $1.00; Mrs. U. K. Hamilton, Mo., $1.00; R. L. Spindle, Va., $3.00; David Serviss, N. J., $1.00; Mrs. Chas. B. Rittenhouse, Man., $3.00; A Friend, N. J., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

It has been arranged to hold an all day meeting at the "Grange Hall," Halcott Center, N. Y., on Sunday, March 16th, 1919. All who love the truth are welcome. GEORGE RUSTON.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,
1315 Columbia Avenue
(Park Avenue Hall)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.
ALL WELCOME

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1304 Jefferson Street
WILMINGTON, DELAWARE
All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.
J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

EBENEZER
OLD SCHOOL
BAPTIST CHURCH,
IN
NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

The Middletown and Andes Church will hold their meetings for the remainder of the winter at Halcottville, N. Y., on the second Sunday in each month. All who love the truth are welcome.
G. RUSTON.

THE
"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"
(ESTABLISHED 1832.)
DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,
PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.
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Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 87. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1919. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE COUNSEL OF PEACE.

AT a time in the affairs of the nations and governments of the earth, when the world's greatest thinkers are occupied in devising and developing a plan whereby the liberties of all peoples may be safeguarded while they enjoy a lasting peace, my mind has been led to contemplate the nature and character as well as the durability of the peace which is secured unto the children of God, the citizens, both in actuality and in contemplation, of that kingdom and government which is not of this world; and in order to get a comprehensive view of this peace it will be necessary to consider—

1. The purpose of the Counsel of Peace.
2. The time of its assembly.
3. The accredited representatives present and participating.
4. The judgments and decisions announced, and
5. The means employed to effect the judgments of this counsel.

1. The purpose of the Counsel of Peace, as signified by its name, was to settle the plan and declare the principles upon which peace could be established. The phrase, "Counsel of Peace," implies that there was a discord somewhere—there were parties at variance, and the design of this counsel was to settle a plan whereby all discord would cease, reconciliation would be effected and a resumption of hostilities would be rendered impossible.

2. The time of its assembly can be defined only in its relation to something else. Reference is made to it in 2 Samuel xxiii. 5, when the Rock of Israel said to David: "Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." This language sets the date of this covenant, which I understand to be the Counsel of Peace, before a covenant had been made with the house or people of God. Before the covenant that was made with Israel, when God took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, before the covenant with Abraham, before the covenant with Noah, was this covenant made with the Rock of Israel; for he said to David: "Although my house [people] be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant." Again, the time of this as-

sembly is intimated by Wisdom personating the Son, the second person in the Trinity. Wisdom says: "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his work of old," and then proceeds to narrate some incidents that were subsequent to that time, saying, "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled; before the hills was I brought forth. While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world," &c.—Prov. viii. 22–26. Here it is affirmed that the Son, presented as Wisdom, "was set up from everlasting," set up as the peace, salvation and security of his people, and that, too, before any of the things above mentioned were given place. Then we conclude somewhere in eternity, before the creation of the earth or man upon it, back at a place called "the beginning of his [God's] way," his way of grace, is where the "Counsel of Peace" had its sitting.

3. Those present and participating in this peace counsel were the Father and Son, for it is written in Zech. vi. 13: "And the counsel of peace shall be between them both." God, in the infinitude of his character, called the perfecfections of his being into exercise in the development of this peace. His wisdom dictated only such things as were right, such as would reflect the highest honor upon himself and issue in the greatest good to those whose interests were being considered; such things as would certainly and effectually accomplish the state of peace and reconciliation sought. Divine justice approved the whole plan, and infinite power pledged its execution. So sure of execution were the terms of this peace, and so perfectly timed in every manifestation, that it was said by inspiration: "For ever, O Lord, is thy word settled in the heavens." Again, the Lord said, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

4. The decisions of this counsel announced were that man by transgression had involved the human race in sin, the just penalty for which is death; that man's nature is enmity against God, not subject to God's laws, neither indeed can be; that he loves darkness (evil) rather than light (good); that he has neither will nor power to reject evil and choose good; that it is as easy for the Ethiopian to change his skin or the leopard his spots as it is for those accustomed to do evil to do good. (Jer. xiii. 23.) Not only was it declared that man would not and could not retrace his steps or place himself into favor with God, but it is also written that, "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him."—Psalms lix. 7. On the other hand, it is announced that God is unchangeable, that he is the same yesterday, today and forever.

Let us pause here long enough to reason on the preceding observations, i. e., that man, one of the parties whose interests were settled in this counsel, is in love with sin, is in debt to the law, with neither ability nor disposition to abandon sin, and entirely void of means or power to pay his debt; therefore, left to himself, peace or reconciliation to God and righteousness is impossible. And God, the other, whose honor is involved in this counsel of peace, is the fountain of righteousness, is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and cannot look upon sin. He cannot change nor be changed in nature, way nor thought, and he has said, "Without holiness no man can see God."

The scriptural analysis of the natures and characteristics of the two parties considered reveals an irreconcilable antagonism. To the natural mind or carnal reason no means or way of peace or reconciliation seems possible. It was when these very difficult conditions were being announced by the Savior that his disciples in wonder asked the question, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus answered, "With men it is impossible, but with God all things are possible." And that very thing which is impossible with man is the thing God has engaged in the Counsel of Peace to effect; and now we come to consider

5. The means employed to effect the judgments of this counsel. As it was the violation of law in contravention to God's command, divine justice demanded both perfect obedience and full satisfaction for man's violation. Man could not meet these demands. In the Counsel of Peace he was viewed as a bankrupt, therefore a surety was found; not a security, not one who obligated himself if man tried and failed, but one who assumed the obligation as his own and was accepted as the lawful debtor, while those for whom he became surety were freed both from the law and from its penalty. Jesus, the Son of God, was made the surety for his people in this Counsel of Peace, and this instance of the greatest magnitude and importance to those whom he represented was attended with the most sacred and most binding formalities. His acceptance as surety was sealed by an oath, and when all the stipulations, terms and conditions of this counsel were settled it is said, "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath." This was done to afford an enduring consolation to those whose hope is in Christ their surety. But it was humanity that violated the law, and in accordance with the demands of divine justice humanity must now both keep the law and receive its penalty; therefore it is written: "A body hast thou prepared me. * * * to do thy will, O God." This was a human body. This is the body which was made of a woman, made under the law, and in this body he was kept in all of his ways, obeyed every precept and injunction of the law and then submitted to its penalty —death. This was in fulfillment of his promise and oath as surety. He declared many times while discharging his obligation to the law the certainty of his success. He said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one jot or tittle of the law shall fail until all be fulfilled." Before launching the undertaking he sat down and counted up the cost, so to speak, and was sure he had sufficient to finish it. The prophet said of him, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged until he hath set judgment in the earth, and the isles [people] shall wait for his law." It would be far easier to move heaven and earth out of their places in the universe than that one word of Christ should fail. His solemn oath is back of every promise, every purpose, every thought, to guarantee its fulfillment, for it is written: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." The oath of Jehovah is unimpeachable. Paul said he cannot lie. The testimony of Jesus as he approached the hour of his death was: "I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." And before he expired upon the cross he said, "It is finished." His work as Surety was done, the task he assumed in

the Counsel of Peace was completed; every legal barrier to reconciliation and peace had been removed when he became obedient unto death. Not one jot or tittle of the law had failed, its every claim had been satisfied. But Jesus was more than a surety; he was the life of his people. God is not the God of the dead, says Jesus, but of the living. His people were dead, under the curse of the law by reason of sin. When Christ died their hope of life must forever perish unless he triumphed over death; but this he did, and rose from the place of his interment as the first-fruits of the resurrection, thus gaining a complete victory over death and the grave and insuring the gathering of a full harvest of those of whom he became the first-fruits. He said to John, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." And he said to his disciples, "Because I live, ye shall live also." All of this must be completed, must be fulfilled in Christ, before peace could be established. It was and is possible to cry "peace, peace, when there is no peace," but upon these principles alone can poor sinners have peace with God. Jesus says, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me peace." There is no peace with God outside of the provisions found in Christ. To his disciples he said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you." It was Christ's peace, because he procured it. He did not sell it, he gave it to his disciples, and he did not give it to them as the world gives. The world in making gifts expects something in return—worldly honor or applause, or a gift of value or some other remuneration. Jesus expected nothing and desired nothing. It was his delight to render just the service which he did, for he said, "I delight to do thy will, O God." Again, he said of himself when he was with the Father before time, "My delights were with the sons of men." He delighted to perform these covenants for his people and manifest his grace to them and confer it upon them, because he had set his love upon them. The satisfaction of performing his obligation as Messenger of the covenant and the glory of his achievement is the greatest reward he could have, and all he desires. Therefore Christ did not come seeking a reward, but he brought his reward with him, for it is written, "His reward is with him and his work before him." God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself (legally), not imputing their trespasses unto them. Christ comes into his people and reconciles them unto himself experimentally and actually by giving unto them eternal life, which is his own life, by which they are made partakers of his divine nature, made to look by faith upon heavenly things, made to hunger and thirst after righteousness, made to pant for God as the hart does for the water brooks; their thoughts are led into new fields, they speak the praises of God with new tongues, they sit down under his shadow and his fruit is sweet to their taste; old things are passed away, and behold, all things are become new. They are new creatures in Christ Jesus; they are overwhelmed by that peace which passeth understanding, are in love with it and are ill at ease when confusion and strife approach. When Jesus, the Prince of Peace, comes into their lives he subdues their fightings, breaks every weapon they employ in their defense, takes away from them all the armor wherein they trusted and renders a resumption of hostilities by them impossible. When poor sinners have been

thus subdued they cease to be boasting Pharisees and become beggars at mercy's door; and when peace and pardon are granted the spirit of arrogance departs, and they can truly sing:

"Poor and afflicted, Lord, are thine,
Among the great unfit to shine."

In Christ Jesus they have been made free from the law of sin and death, and can no more involve themselves under its curse by a breach of its precepts. John said, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." In the new life and nature derived from their relationship to Christ they cannot perform acts of hostility against God, because they are one with him. This peace will endure through all the varying scenes of time; it will preserve when the passions of men inflame and jealousy and hatred arise; it will triumph when nations bankrupt and governments tumble in ruin; yes, when the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and the firmaments are melted with fervent heat, this peace shall flow on, bearing its voyagers like a placid river into the ocean of eternity, where chilling winds and boisterous storms shall disturb their peace no more. This peace is perfect and enduring, because it is established upon perfect principles and executed by divine power. God alone is the giver of this peace.

J. R. HARDY.

WELLSFORD, Kansas.

JACKSONVILLE, Ill., Dec. 16, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The time has rolled around for me to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, as another year, with it joys and sorrows, has passed away. I have never attempted to write anything for publication, believing that others were more competent than I. We have some good writers for the SIGNS, fulfilling the command Jesus gave to Peter when he said, "Feed my sheep," and, to my understanding, most of their writings agree with the teaching of the Scripture. While we cannot all agree upon what the Scripture teaches, we should endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Paul said, "Who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead." So no man can believe anything spiritually, only as that power is made manifest in regeneration, that raised Christ from the dead. My mind is called to a passage of Scripture recorded in the fourth chapter of Romans, fourth and fifth verses: "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Paul is telling the Roman brethren how they are justified, and how they are not. He tells the Corinthian brethren, "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures." Now the first thing he told them was how Christ died for our sins. He said again, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." So we see we were made just in the sight of God without works. One of the writers said, Was not our father Abraham justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? Paul answers the question, If our father Abraham was justified by works he has whereof to glory, but not before God. He might be justified by his brethren, but not before God. Why? Because he was justified by faith before

he was called to sacrifice his son. Therefore he had the faith to believe that if he took his son's life God was able to raise him from the dead, because the Lord had told him he would make a great nation of him: In thee and thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed. What is faith? Paul said, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." What is the gift of God? Jesus Christ was the gift of God. It is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Paul said, Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. When we say a man works, we mean there is an end to be reached by his work. Can a man in the state of nature work to please God? No. Why? Because his mouth is an open sepulchre, with his tongue he uses deceit, the poison of asps is under his tongue, his feet are swift to shed blood, the way of peace he has not known and there is no fear of God before his eyes. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. Paul said, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by his mercy he saved us. Paul was a good example, before he was regenerated, when he had letters of authority to bind all he found calling on the name of Jesus. I am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. He thought he was doing a great work when he was casting the people of God in prison, and binding them. He also said he held the clothes of them that stoned Stephen, and was consenting unto his death. In all his work he proved he was dead in trespasses and sins. Therefore Christ said, I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Now to him that worketh was the reward not reckoned of grace. Who was Paul talking to? He was talking to the church at Rome. He said, "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." What is the gospel? He said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God." So if a man preaches the gospel he preaches the power of God, and not the power of man. A reward in natural things is something we strive to win. Is this reward Paul is talking about won by works? If so, there is no grace about it. There is no doubt in my mind that Peter was speaking of the same thing when he said we are begotten unto an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. None of our works change that inheritance. Why? Because Abraham received it by promise. There is where the gospel, or power of God, was preached to Abraham. When did Abraham receive the promise, in circumcision or uncircumcision? In uncircumcision. The Lord told him, I will make a great nation of thee; in multiplying I will multiply thee, and in blessing I will bless thee. Abraham did not do these things in order to receive a blessing, or to be justified, because he had already been blessed and justified before God. In the old law covenant there were no spiritual blessings promised, but all were natural blessings. But in the new covenant things have changed, the Lord no longer says, If you will I will, but says, "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to

the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Now under the old law the people had to be taught what God's law was, but now he says, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. So in the gospel day we do not have to have somebody tell us what God's law is, because it is written in our hearts. Christ told his disciples before he left this earth, If I go not away the Comforter will not come, but if I go away I will send him, and he shall take of the things of mine and shew them unto you. The Comforter is the Spirit of truth. The Spirit never teaches you that you can work and obtain that reward, but it is the flesh that teaches you that you can be justified by the deeds of the flesh. Paul said to the Galatian church: "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" He wanted to know of them if they were so foolish as to say their spiritual blessings came through the flesh.

These are a few of my rambling thoughts as they came to me. I feel I have barely touched the subject. I leave it to you to do with as you see fit. I hope it is the Lord's will to give you both strength, and bless you according to his will, that you may still edit the SIGNS for the comfort and edification of his people here on earth. Earnestly contend for what you believe to be the truth, and the faith that was once delivered unto the saints.

Now may the grace of our once crucified but now risen Savior rest upon you and all the household of faith, is the prayer of your humble servant,

W. T. HUGHETT.

COLUMBUS, Ga., Feb. 18, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel a desire to write you, also to renew my subscription to the dear old SIGNS, which I feel sure has been kept by the power of God, to the great comfort of his children wherever they are, for surely if it were controlled by the power of man, and for man's own pleasure, it never would have stood the crucial tests that have been waged against it, for it gives God all the glory. We know by experience that in vain we meet and in vain we try to worship him unless his divine presence is with us, and vain is the help of man, therefore we are made to say the Lord's hand has upheld it; to his glory. We who live so far away from our kindred in Christ that most of the preaching we get is through the SIGNS, and the letters and editorials come to us laden with precious messages of love, are made to weep for joy, and say, Surely the Lord knoweth our hearts' desire, and hath put it in their hearts to write for our comfort. Oftentimes I am puzzled over some portion of Scripture, and some one will write in the SIGNS on that very subject, and explain it to my great comfort, and then I feel I want to write to the editors and tell them how I appreciate their labor of love and patience of hope, but O my leanness. I have come so far short of what I hoped and desired, and what a true follower should be, yet there is ever with me a longing desire and trembling hope that I have experienced the things which to know is life eternal. Sometimes a brighter view of these blessed things is given me, a calm trusting that underneath are the everlasting arms, and feel my feet are on the rock. Sweet meditations in the silent watches of the night are given, and I feel the Lord is leading and teaching me. Scripture after Scripture will be brought to my mind, and I

feel the blessed Lord is very near, all earthly fears and sorrows are hid, and I am made to rejoice in spirit, having no confidence in the flesh. The love that passeth all understanding fills my soul, and I feel, If the streams are so sweet what must the Fountain be? My heart is full of love to all the dear ones everywhere, and I long to sit down at their feet. I feel to be the smallest and poorest, and if one at all an uncomely one. We think of the sheet let down from heaven, showing what vile creatures we are by nature, yet the Lord said they were cleansed. There is nothing impossible with God, the author and finisher of our faith and hope, which is an anchor both sure and steadfast. But I am often cast down and filled with unbelief, questioning, Do I truly love the Lord? and oftentimes begging my Savior to give me a meek and lowly mind, and stamp his image on my heart, often hungering and crying for bread, even a crumb from my Master's table. Like the prodigal, I know there is plenty in my Father's house, but I must wait. I am weak and lame and cannot walk until strength is given me, and I shall receive all that I need. Our Savior says he knows our sorrows, and pities us as a father pities his children. He has said he would not leave us comfortless, but would send the Comforter. Precious promise.

"Our bless'd Redeemer, ere he breathed
His tender last farewell,
A guide, a comforter bequeathed,
With us on earth to dwell."

A poor, afflicted and persecuted people, who love not the world and its vanities, a people who seek a city whose maker and builder is the Lord. This God says, I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. We know that the poor have the gospel preached to them. The Lord formed this people for himself, and they shall shew forth his praise. They shall come with weeping and supplications, but he is leading them and will cause them to walk by rivers of water, in a strait way; they cannot stumble, for he is their Lord, their life, their way. Our God is the rock, our sure foundation. I will, saith the Lord, make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. In John Christ says, These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; when men reviled him he reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not, but committed himself unto God who judgeth righteously. Many great and precious promises he left in his will to his church, members of his body, even of "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." When we are enabled to grasp them as ours it is then we feel our spiritual strength renewed, and we go on our way rejoicing. I am often in the depths, and cannot see my way, and fear I have never walked in the exalted highways cast up for the redeemed of the Lord. Happy art thou, O people saved by the Lord. Is this my portion? I can say from the depth of my heart, I hope above all things I love the Lord and only Savior Jesus Christ. "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear." I love the brethren who by their walk and ways

show they have been with Jesus and learned of him, sojourners here, looking and waiting for a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. The Lord is the light and salvation of his chosen generation; whom shall they fear? He is the strength of their life, of whom shall they be afraid? He says, I am God, and besides me there is no other. His love is from everlasting to everlasting. Paul says, For I am persuaded that nothing shall separate us from this love; not tribulation, nor distress, nor persecution, nor famine; nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us.

Pardon this wandering and imperfect letter. May the Lord bless you and keep you, and all the loved ones everywhere.

Yours in hope of a better world,

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

FAYETTEVILLE, Ga., Feb. 13, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I am sending the obituary of my brother-in-law, Rupert Hartley, I will try and write a little. He was as dear to me as my own brother. I did not realize his condition until a few hours before he died. He would ask me what I thought about certain passages of Scripture, or something he would hear said or preached, and it seemed he had confidence in what I said, but I did not think much about it while he lived, and now I have to bear great regret that I did not voluntarily talk to him more than I did. It was said that he was the best boy in the community, and was his mother's constant companion during his sickness, and wanted to help her so as to lighten her work, and that is one reason she is heart-broken. She looked forward with pleasure to the time when he would be a grown man, believing he would be an Old Baptist, but it was not God's will. She feels that all earthly joy is gone, and looks forward, hoping for that rest promised to the weary. She thought it would kill her to have to give him up, but she had to suffer what tongue cannot tell, yet could not die. Only those who have traveled this way can sympathize with her. We often wonder why it is that the dealings of the Lord are so hard (seemingly) to some and so light to others. Those who have so much sorrow and suffering feel that God does not love them, while others who do not have so many trials feel that they are left out, because they do not have evidences like those who suffer so much. God says he chastens those he loves, so when one is burdened with trouble it is not for sin every time, but to try their faith, and it takes suffering and sorrow to try our faith, for who knows what they can endure until the test comes? I have many times thought I could not, or would not, endure some things I saw others endure, but I find it is not what I think, that I do every time. The thought of burning at the stake seems to be awful, but we read that it was the greatest joy to some who died that way for Christ's sake. God in his wisdom kept these things from us. We cannot walk by sight, but by faith. He has promised grace sufficient, so that is our hope and stay when we see the black, heavy clouds of sorrow and despair rolling over us.

It seems that I cannot think of more to write. There have been times when it seemed that I could write on and on. I have many times wanted to write to some of the writers when I read their good letters in the SIGNS, but I cannot write with as much confidence as I did in my younger days.

In hope of a better life,

GEORGE W. JACKSON.

(*See obituary on page 94.*)

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Dec. 24, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We are coming to the close of another year, one to be long remembered by us. What shall we say concerning it? Desolation and deep sorrow have entered many homes and hearts because of war and pestilence. Spiritual decline is the record of many branches of Zion throughout the land. Antichrist has been active with seductive influences, which chill the spiritual mind. In the days of darkness and uncertainty have we not asked, Is God's mercy clean gone forever? With Job our heart cries out: "O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness; as I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle." Do the conditions and events of the year give evidence that God has forgotten to be gracious? Do we forget the promise of God, who said: "For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel"? Do we forget that when the Lord afflicted the nations he sent Joseph to interpret the dream of Pharaoh, telling him there should be seven years of plenty, followed by seven years of famine, and through all the famine Israel was preserved? Has the arm of the Lord been shortened that he cannot save and preserve his people through this year of spiritual famine and natural war and pestilence, and fulfill his promise that he will hold them by their right hand in every trial? In all the economy of God's grace, as wrought in the heart of his people and made manifest in their lives, there has run through those lives both trouble and sorrow, in contrast to a vein of pure joy, lighted up by the sunshine of God's love, running through all their life, in the streets and within the walls of Zion. Like the natural ozone in our atmosphere, which purifies the poisonous gases from the earth, so also the pure word of God purifies our heart, and unbelief is scattered with the winds of all false doctrine. For the Lord said: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."—Isaiah i. 18. In looking back over the events of this year our natural mind says, These are signs that the end of the world is at hand, but our pure mind remembers the words of Jesus when his disciples privately asked him: "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Jesus said, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." Our faith then readily answereth, Lord God, thou knowest. If Jesus did not know, dare we presume to foretell? Historical and scriptural research by the carnal mind answereth nothing, while the beholding of faith shows us those things which are sufficient for us to know. Let us then watch and pray and wait with patience for the certain and appointed end. Again our faith declares, Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that we love thee. "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places."

B. F. COULTER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1919.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

LIGHT.

WOULD light continue to exist should the sun be blotted out of existence? This is an interesting question, absurd as it may appear on the face of it. Human reason may say the existence of light without the sun is impossible, but, then, human reason denies the record of creation in Genesis, preferring to believe that man is evolved from apes, rather than that God made him out of the dust of the earth. It takes faith to accept God's word as recorded in the Bible, and that faith which is required to believe God is not historical or natural faith, but that faith which is the gift of God and the fruit of his Spirit. According to Genesis, God said, "Let there be light: and there was light," and this was said to have been on the first day. The sun, however, was not made until the fourth day. One explanation that we have heard given of this matter is that the sun must have been made the first day, when God said, "Let there be light," but that the event was not recorded until the fourth day. This has seemed too fanciful for us to fall in with, and it seems best to us to take the record as it is: that light was commanded into evidence the first day and that the sun was not made until the fourth day. In other words, light shone forth for three days before the advent of the sun, therefore that light is independent of the sun, and did shine forth before there was any sun. It nowhere says that light was created, and we do not believe that light was created. It always was, just as God always was, but there was no manifestation of it, or showing forth of it, until God said, "Let there be light." Even as God is self-existent and eternal, so light is also the same. This must be so if God is light, and we cannot deny that. God is light, and when he said, "Let there be light," it did not mean the creation of light, but that light, which was in God, and which was God, began to shine forth from him over the face of the deep and to discover the void and darkness that was over all. It is said by Paul in his second letter to the Corinthians that God commanded the light to shine out of darkness. That being so, then the light must have been in the darkness, else it could not have shined forth out of the darkness. The light was not off somewhere external to the darkness, but was in the darkness itself, and shone forth out of the darkness. We understand this to be the light that was in God himself, that was God himself; that God was in the darkness, not somewhere outside the darkness. "Clouds and darkness are round about him." He is a God that hides himself, and until it is his appointed time, and his purpose to reveal or discover himself, he cannot possibly be known; and when he does discover himself to us, it is always in that light that shines forth out of himself, and not in any light that human mortals have inherent in themselves. There is no light in the natural man by which he can reach forth and appropriate to himself the knowledge of God. It is only in God's

own light that God can be seen. We look up to him along the very same beam of light that comes to us from him.

But, to go back to Genesis, light was in evidence for three days before the sun was placed in the heavens to shed light upon the earth. Herein is a spiritual truth. If we consider, for a moment, that the natural sun placed by God in the heavens the fourth day represents Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, set in the midst of the gospel heavens, then it follows that as light was in evidence for three days before the sun was made, so Christ was in evidence in the world long before he actually made his personal appearance upon earth and accomplished his rising from the dead. If we count from Adam to the deluge as one day, from the deluge to Moses, or the law, as a second day, and from Moses to Jesus as a third day, then we have hereby three days during which Jesus was in the world in types and figures, and by his Spirit in the hearts of men, though he did not actually make his advent into the world until born of the virgin Mary. After his resurrection from the dead he became the Sun of the gospel heavens, and so continues to light his followers on their way. If, therefore, light existed for three days before the sun was made, we must conclude light would still exist even should the created sun be blotted from the sky. Just how this would be, and what it would be like, we cannot tell any more than we can tell what it was like for the three days before the sun appeared. In order to destroy light God himself would have to cease to exist, so we have reduced the proposition to absurdity, for God cannot cease to be. In the holy city, as set forth by John in Revelation, there is no sun to shine by day nor moon to shine by night, since there is neither day nor night there, and it is always light. Now how can it always be light there if there be neither sun nor moon? Having Him, the holy city has all the light it needs, such light as infinitely outdoes all the light that ever was on sea or land here below. Referring again to what Paul says in second Corinthians, that the same God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness is the same God who shines in the hearts of his people. If he shines "in" their hearts, and not "into" them, then he must be in their hearts himself, and this is wonderfully true. Few things give us more comfort than to think of God associating himself with his people in such a blessed way as to himself be in them so that they are thereby partakers of the divine nature, a very part of God himself. This is the living or vital union of God and his people, the evidence of that eternal vital unity which they always had with him, even before the foundation of the world. God, the light, shining in their hearts gives them their spiritual understanding, or knowledge, of divine things, and gives it in the face of Jesus Christ; that is, teaches them that all godliness is not in man, but wholly in Jesus. Is it any wonder we preach Christ, and him crucified? How can we preach anything else when the light of God has shown us all excellence, whatsoever, wholly in Jesus? How can we ever believe anything else? Indeed, we cannot. May his Spirit continue to show us more and more of himself embodied in Jesus, that we may continue to receive of his fullness, and grace for grace. L.

JANUARY 1ST NUMBER EXHAUSTED.

OUR supply of the January 1st, 1919, number, containing the obituary of the late Elder Silas H. Durand, is exhausted, but we have printed some extra copies of the obituary itself, which may be had on request. If any have copies of that number they are willing to part with we would be very glad if they would send them to us.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in March (30th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Feb. 25th, 1919, at the home of the bride, in Salisbury, Md., Harry E. Rounds, of Wicomico County, Md., and Ethel M. Russell, of Salisbury, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon D. W. Campbell was born Feb. 20th, 1852, and died Jan. 12th, 1919, after a lingering illness of nearly two years, making his sojourn here 66 years, 8 months and 22 days. Brother Campbell was born in Oxford township, in the county of Kent, Ontario, and lived on the same farm where he was born for forty-nine years. Being afflicted with asthma, he was not able to continue the arduous labors on so large a farm, so he sold it and settled in the village of Duart. After living three years in Duart his health improved to some extent, and he bought a small farm near Duart, where he lived the remainder of his days. Deacon Campbell was married to Mary J. McArthur Dec. 21st, 1880, and to that union were born four daughters, one dying in infancy. Those still living are Mrs. May Strauch, of Waltham, Mass., Mrs. Bella Cantor, of Detroit, Mich., and Mrs. Veda Guyet, of Duart. Brother Campbell was received in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada at the May meeting in 1885, and baptized by Elder William Pollard. It pleased the Lord to bring into the fold our dear brother and his devoted companion at the same meeting, and they were both baptized the same day, which was a blessing bestowed upon them by the kind hand of Providence. They not only traveled through life in the sweet bond of wedlock, but also in the sweet bond of christian love and fellowship. Shortly after our dear brother came into the church there was manifested in him the gift of deacon, to which office he was appointed and which he filled until his death to the satisfaction of his brethren, who held him in high esteem. Brother Campbell was a faithful and consistent member, one who loved the church and cause above every earthly thing. His walk through life was adorned with a godly conversation, and his mind seemed centered upon heavenly and divine things. He was kind-hearted and hospitable, and loved to have his church friends visit at his home, where they were always made welcome by both him and his dear companion. During his lingering illness his mind was clear, and he loved to talk of the goodness of God to him, a poor sinner. As the end drew near he longed for the hour to come when he would be at rest in his blessed Savior, whom he loved and adored. The end came very peacefully; he closed his eyes in death and passed from the shores of time into that sweet peace and rest which remain for the people of God. In the death of our dear brother the church has met with a great loss, but will have to bow to the divine will of our heavenly Father, who has taken but his own. He leaves his dear companion, three daughters, the church and many friends and relatives to mourn their loss.

The funeral service was held in the church-house at Duart. Interment was in the Duart Cemetery. The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the mourning friends and relatives, using as a text Isaiah xl. 1, 2. May our heavenly Father comfort his lonely companion with that comfort which the world cannot give, and may his dear children, who were devoted to their kind and indulgent father, and who did all that kind and loving children could do for the comfort of their dear father, be comforted by heavenly grace. J. B. SLAUSON.

M. J. Lester, the subject of this sketch, was born Sept. 30th, 1845, and died Dec. 10th, 1918, aged 73 years, 2 months and 10 days. He was the youngest son of a family of eight children born to William and Frances Lester, of Figsboro, Henry Co., Va. He lived with his parents until the Civil War, serving more than half the war. He was a good and brave soldier. His experience during the war was very interesting. After the war he went to northwestern Missouri, working for wages at first, but afterward engaged in farming. The remainder of the fourteen years spent in Missouri he was quite successful. In the meantime he was married, his wife dying about three months after their marriage. At his father's death Uncle Jock, as he was usually called, came back to Virginia to look after his mother, and cared for her devotedly until her death, at which time his widowed sister-in-law and her son moved into the house with him, making it a pleasant and hospitable home for all visitors until his death. Uncle Jock was a true type of an old Virginia gentleman, thoughtful of the needy, ready to minister to his fellow-men in their misfortune, and was especially mindful of the widows and orphans in their afflictions. An excellent neighbor, a man of sound mind and wide experience, his advice and admonition will be greatly missed. To know him well was to love him. Uncle Jock was a good business man and industrious, and by the sweat of his face accumulated quite a nice little fortune, which he left for equal division between relatives. He was especially fond of talking

of the unlimited sovereignty of God; an absolute predestinarian, loving the theme of salvation by grace, and grace alone, relating a beautiful experience, which gave him hope in Christ and was to him the anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. He spent much of the time after retiring from business in reading the Bible and Primitive Baptist literature. He was a great sufferer from asthma most of his life, which deprived him of many hours of rest. The greater part of these restless nights, when in usual health, was spent alone in his room reading his Bible, which was much comfort to him. In all of his afflictions he was seemingly perfectly submissive to God's will, having a desire to unite with the church and be baptized, but a felt sense of unworthiness rendered it such a cross that he never united with the church, yet especially wanted to be baptized, and would frequently say in excuse that he was afraid he would bring reproach upon the Baptist cause. Death was caused by pneumonia. All that could be done by loving relatives, friends and physician to stay the icy hand of death was done, but to no avail. He leaves one sister and a host of relatives and friends to mourn his departure. To the bereaved I would say, Weep not for him as one without hope; I feel sure your loss is his eternal gain. He was buried by the Masons in the family burying-ground Dec. 11th, in the presence of a large gathering of friends.

Written at the request of his sister, by one who personally knew and loved him for more than twenty-two years. JOHN E. BURGESS.

Rupert Hartley, my dear son, was born in Fayette County, Ga., Sept. 21st, 1901, and left this world of sin and sorrow August 16th, 1918. He had been in poor health for a year; four doctors treated him. He would seem to improve, then grow worse, but we did not give up hope until a few hours before his death. Rupert was quiet, obedient and loving, and respected and loved by all who knew him. He never made a public profession of his faith, but his life spoke louder than words. He dearly loved to attend Old Baptist meetings, and paid strict attention to preaching. He was deeply interested in his Bible, and had several texts marked unknown to us until after his death. I am perfectly satisfied that when his gentle spirit left his body it returned to God who gave it, and at the resurrection his body will be brought forth, fashioned like unto the dear Savior. But O the heartaches I have suffered and the tears I have shed. My home is so lonely without him. I feel that it is foolish for me to grieve as I do, but my joy and hope of his beautiful manhood have perished. He was so much like his father, who died when Rupert was four years of age, so he knew but little of the love of a father. I have one son and three daughters, but they cannot fill his place. Thanks be to God, I do not grieve as those who have no hope, for I have hope of meeting him, his father and other loved ones gone before.

Elders B. C. Caldwell and F. L. Fuller conducted funeral services on Saturday of the yearly meeting, August 17th, 1918, at Hopeful Primitive Baptist Church. The preaching was comforting, and my boy was laid to rest in the cemetery there.

Written by his heartbroken mother,

LULU M. HARTLEY.

Sallie Frazier Hearn died at her home in Clayton, Del., Jan 21st, 1919. She was born at Law's Chapel, near Frederica, Del., August 31st, 1860. Her parents were Joseph and Susan A. Mason Frazier. April 6th, 1898, she was married to Luther M. Hearn, in Wilmington, Del. Although she had been a sufferer for a number of years, she never complained, but always had a bright smile and cheering word for her many friends. As one of them has said, "Her life has been like a book to me, each page of which opened upon some new act of loving-kindness." She was always an active worker; nothing was too much for her to do for her fellow-beings. Besides her husband and a number of relatives she leaves a host of friends to mourn their loss. May they be comforted in the belief that their loss is her gain.

I desire to add to the above submitted. Mrs. Hearn was wonderfully kind to the Baptist friends whenever she was able. She attended our meetings frequently with her husband, and we held meetings in their home. She enjoyed the preaching of the Baptists, and told her husband that our ministers testified of her experience. Her great devotion for and humble submission to God's will are unmistakable evidences that the grace of God reigned in her heart and life. May the Lord sustain and keep her husband and all those who mourn their loss.

B. E. CUBBAGE.

John W. Weaver was born Sept. 1st, 1848, and departed this life Feb. 14th, 1919, at the home of his son, Elder George L. Weaver, Cleveland, Ohio, after an illness of several weeks. There are left to mourn, his widow, two sons, one daughter, five grandchildren, one brother and one sister, besides a host of friends. Almost all his life was spent near Galion, Ohio, where he endeared himself to many of the community. Mr. Weaver was a man of sterling character, one above the average, always willing to lend a hand to those in distress, and by his honorable and fair dealing his name was known to all. He never united with the church, but it was plainly evident from his conversation that he had been given an understanding of the Scriptures, and his love for the meetings of the Old School Baptists and his zeal in wishing to assist and encourage them were plainly manifested. One thing in particular, he saw a beauty in God's absolute predestination of all things, and

was ready to defend it on all occasions. He felt all through his life that there was a power which ruled, and that all things would be done well and right. All through his last sickness he never complained, everything was all right, his only trouble was his own unworthiness. As the family stood at the bedside and saw the life leave the body they felt to say, Well done; a life well lived the allotted threescore and ten years, and in the triumph of living faith leaving this world of sin and sorrow, entering into the joy of the Lord. We feel our loss is his gain, and bow in humble submission to the will of God, who doeth all things well. His wife, Emily S., and son George, of Cleveland, are members of Beulah Church, of Cleveland. His son, Homer J., of Filer, Idaho, his daughter, Ida E. Sherer, of near Galion, and his brother, Peter I. Weaver, of Holgate, Ohio, were present at his funeral, also his nephew, Elder C. E. Jackson, and wife, of Bucyrus, Ohio, and many of the friends of Galion, also Deacon Cyrus Cross and wife, of Beulah Church, who accompanied the family on the 16th to Galion, where the funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Snyder and Westerman Undertaking Chapel, after which the remains were placed in the vault at the Fairview Cemetery to await the summons from on high.

L. E. STEPHENS.

Mildred A. Vance was born March 4th, 1849, and departed this life Jan. 27th, 1919, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. H. H. Chandler. She was a daughter of Andrew and Elizabeth Kingery, and came to New Mexico in the sixties with her mother and family, her father having answered the summons to come away. Her father was a minister of the gospel; he and herself were members of the Primitive Baptist Church. On October 3rd, 1869, she was united in marriage to William A. Vance, at Pueblo, Colo. To that union were born five sons and four daughters, six of whom survive her. Her husband and three sons, Robert F., Orin O. and Noel E. Vance, have gone before. Those left to mourn her departure are Mrs. H. H. Chandler, Mrs. L. A. Chandler, Mrs. I. E. Shahan, Mrs. E. W. Davis, William J. and Ralph J. Vance, all of whom were present at the last sad rites except one daughter, Mrs. Davis, who lives in Broadview, Montana, who, owing to sickness and the long distance, was unable to attend. My mother, of whom I am writing, had been a great sufferer for the past ten years. In 1911 she had a severe spell of sickness, from which she never recovered. She longed to pass away, and during her last illness said, "I want." I stepped to her bedside and asked her what she wanted, and she replied, "I want to pass away and be at rest." She has that rest now, which can never be disturbed. Blessed are they that die in the Lord. She took great comfort in reading the Bible and SIGNS until four years ago, when her eyesight failed her, so she did not have that comfort except as some one would read to her. As I saw all that was mortal of one so dear to me lowered in the grave a part of an old hymn I have heard her sing came into my mind: "Why should you weep, dear friends, for me? for I am wayworn, sad and anxious to go." I felt so calm, and if I could have kept that feeling I would not weep and mourn as I do to-day; but I do not mourn without hope, for I feel assured she has gone to that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. She was a faithful and loving mother. When this life is ended O may I meet her in that bright world above, where all is peace and love and parting is no more, is the great desire of her daughter.

LIZZIE CHANDLER.

J. M. Huff, eldest son of John S. and Elizabeth Huff, was born Nov. 3rd, 1847, near Millgreen, Harford Co., Md. He was married to Miss Cassie D. Pyle (now the widow, and a member of Harford Church), to which union were born four children, the eldest, Della, departed this life when but two months old. Two sons survive: Ellsworth, of Philadelphia, and Lester, at the old home at present, also one daughter, Edna. He passed away suddenly Dec. 23rd, 1918, and was buried at Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa., the 26th. Brother Huff died as he lived, unchangeable in his ways and habits, always the same to those with whom he associated. If man could be said to be good in the flesh, brother Huff came as near living the life of the righteous as could well be done. "Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth." In this case it was the godly man that ceased to live any longer in this earthly tabernacle, and he is relieved of all pain, sorrow and tears, and we who knew him feel assured that his spirit has returned to God who gave it. He has but fallen asleep. "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." Thus one of the faithful died in this hope, the hope of life in Christ beyond the grave, and while we mourn our loss on earth, it is his gain.

JOHN G. EUBANKS.

Stella Staggs, eldest daughter of brother and sister W. L. and Ada Staggs, was born in May, 1894, and died Jan. 11th, 1919, of influenza, making her stay on earth about 24 years and 9 months. She never united with the church, but expressed a desire to be baptized. She was industrious and always cheerful. She leaves father, mother, three sisters, two brothers and a host of relatives to mourn, but we hope our loss is her eternal gain. May God comfort and bless the bereaved family, is the prayer of one who loved her.

LUCINDA REED.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, Elder D. M. Vail will visit and preach to brethren and friends as follows:

Jefferson, Sunday, March 30th, 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m.; Howe Cave, Monday, 31st, 8 p. m.; Schoharie, Tuesday, April 1st, 1:30 p. m.; Central Bridge, 8 p. m.; Albany, 272 Clinton Ave., Wednesday, 2nd, 1:30 p. m.

E. R. KINNEY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. F. J. Norris, Ga., $2.00; Allie Gooch Reid, N. C., $1.00; Mrs. Kate Lunsford, Ky., $1.00; W. A. Thompson, Va., $3.00; Wm. T. Yard, N. J., $3.00.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER W. B. MCADAMS has changed his address from Rock Hill, S. C., to Columbia, S. C.

MEETINGS.

THE Middletown and Andes Church will hold their meetings for the remainder of the winter at Halcottville, N. Y., on the second Sunday in each month. All who love the truth are welcome.

G. RUSTON.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 87. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1919. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JEREMIAH XII. 8.

"MINE heritage is unto me as a lion in the forest; it crieth out against me; therefore have I hated it."

Wonderful indeed are the holy Scriptures, the revealed word of God, wonderful in their description, or illustration, of that which is, or to be. Note the beginning of this twelfth chapter, read all the way down. Let us especially keep in mind the sacred, solemn, reverential words at the beginning of the chapter: "Righteous art thou, O Lord," &c. Righteous in all his works, in all that he does, though

"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his works in vain."

The Lord ever has had a people to whom he appeared manifestly unto since the days of righteous Abel. In creation darkness was first, covered the earth, then at the word (command) of God there was light—shined out of darkness. By contrast we now see what each is, so all the way down, Cain and Abel, Isaac and Ishmael, and so on. The wonderful wisdom of God is displayed in it all when we poor creatures can see in it all the embodiment of the work of the perfecting of the saints, for whatever light and darkness, Cain and Abel, were, so are all the saints, or children of God. As we come on down to the prophetic age, the second period (dispensation), we see a much greater display of his majesty and glory, a looming up of greater brightness, as he shines forth in the offerings and sacrifices made by that people that the Lord God had chosen as a nation, or people, to whom he would make a display of his power and glory. God made a covenant with them, gave them laws and blessed them above the nations of the earth, but they hardened not unto the Lord, because arrogant, vain, lifted up, and forgot the Lord God that delivered them from the yoke of bondage. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" As a nation they were an heritage unto God, and in whom were reflected the life and character of Christ and the church. It has seemed to us the church is prefigured or shown under the law and under grace, as in Job; his first afflictions were outward (temporal), in the second he loathed himself and repented in dust and ashes,

When Jesus, the blessed Son of God, came to his own, as a nation they rejected him, crying out, We will not have this man to rule over us. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become (manifestly) the sons of God; and the gospel church set up, as a nation they forgot God, their great benefactor, and it seems a more corrupt, wicked nation could not exist, manifesting all the ferocious nature and character of the lion as set forth by the prophet. Therefore in righteous judgment he destroyed them as a nation, and they were scattered among all nations, became a lie and a byword, the law righteousness a failure, yet the purpose of God accomplished.

"Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird; the birds round about are against her." What a contrast! In the former a lion, the king of beasts, here a speckled bird. In my early years in the ministry all the old elders referred to Cain, Ishmael and Esau as representing the world (unregenerate). While it is true they do characterize them in nature, yet the record was not given for that purpose, but that a child of God might know what he is by nature and grace. Under the law there was nothing but that which was natural, but under grace there is both natural and spiritual, hence Jacob and Esau, or Cain and Abel, clearly show the two natures in the child of God. Howbeit, says Paul, that which was first was natural, afterwards that which was spiritual. Adam was first in manifestation, then Christ; so in every experience the warfare is the result of two opposing powers, Solomon says, as the company of two armies. I said before that darkness covered the earth; this is true with every son and daughter of Adam until God commands the light to shine; until then there is no conflict, no warfare, all is blackness and darkness, without form and void. It is light that makes manifest. It can truly be said we were all pharisees, children of wrath, without feeling or sense, and ignorant of it until light shone in our hearts, as Paul has well said; then like Paul and Job we fell to the earth and cried, guilty and unclean. Before that righteous God and Judge all our righteousness is as filthy rags and as a very unclean thing. Dear reader, do you not well remember when you were turned from that satisfied condition, or a whited sepulchre, into the blackness and darkness of the night, with a feeling that if your soul were sent to hell, His righteous law approved it well? This is the work of grace, the office work of the Holy Spirit, or the work of Jesus. He taketh away the first that he may establish the second. The first covenant was found faulty, therefore the new; first natural, second spiritual; first written on tables of stone, second in the heart. Man in nature is all defiled, not capable of any good act or thought. Paul says, Ye who sometimes were darkness, are now light. Light in the Lord, a speckled bird. In the work of regeneration our nature was, or is, not changed. We thought for a time it was, and that our whole being was swallowed up in that blessed and holy life, and what doubts, fears and sadness when we found to our amazement the Canaanite (evil nature) was yet in the land to harass and torment. Paul found the thorn in the flesh (the knowledge that sin yet dwelt in him) and prayed that it might be removed. It was necessary that he feel thus, lest through the abundance of revelations he be exalted above measure. We are no better by nature, therefore have the same gracious and ever-blessed promise of a sufficiency of grace. Dear one, if you are like this bird, a true

figure of the church, and each saint of God, you must have the human and the divine natures. It takes two or more colors to be speckled. Now I want to identify you with the church. There is no greater contrast in colors than in black and white. Are you black? Unhesitatingly you answer, Yes. The pharisee or hypocrite would say, No. How do you know you are black? It is light that makes manifest. The bride, personating the church, says, I am black. She says again, But comely, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon. The curtains were clean and white, the tents were black, hence the complex nature and life. Solomon, personating Christ, says of the church, his bride, Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin, therefore if he is mine and I am his what can I want beside? In him there is righteousness and peace, and we stand justified through the merits of Jesus' blood. If Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. In our nature we are black, but in Christ and his righteousness we are white, speckled, but we hope by the power of the divine life we shall ere long be swallowed up, see him as he is and be satisfied.

Volumes might be written on this wonderful subject by a gifted pen, and I hope some gifted brother may feel to write. I have written but little in the past three years or more, from the fact that there were many better writers and my letters were not needed, though a few by tongue and pen have expressed comfort in reading my feeble productions, and have asked me to write oftener, but I have felt that the columns of the SIGNS were filled for the general good and not the few. Our dear brother McClanahan's kind and encouraging words stirred me and encouraged me to make this poor attempt to write again. I tried to preach from the above Scripture some months ago, and it has seemed to linger with me, also a feeling to write, but I have put it off from time to time, and as I am home (the time of our Turners meeting) because of the influenza epidemic, I have written, which I submit to the editors and publishers to use or cast aside as they think best.

January 2nd completes my seventy-fifth year. Physically I am as well as I could expect, but my impaired eyesight is my infirmity. I desire to be submissive to my portion and lot, for surely, Righteous art thou, O Lord, in all thy judgments. To all the dear saints, whom I love, I send greeting in the Lord, and feel that I can truly say, On earth peace, good will toward men.

Dear brethren, I want to say that I heartily join with the many readers of the SIGNS in the feeling that in the death of our highly esteemed Elder Durand we have lost one of our most gifted preachers and writers. We shall miss his dear comforting and instructive letters that have appeared in the columns of the SIGNS. I have often said that if we had a real gospel minister Elder Durand was one. He made full proof of his ministry, gave himself wholly to it. In all my association with him I never heard him make or utter a light, trashy sentence or create levity in the position he occupied as a servant of the Lord Jesus. When he went into the stand he went there to deal with sacred things. I wish I could say that of myself, and of every one else. He filled his place, the Lord hath taken him. Though he be dead he yet speaketh, can be truly said of him.

In hope of life eternal,

P. W. SAWIN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Dec. 7, 1918.

DELMAR, Del., Feb. 27, 1919.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES: —It has been on my mind for some time to write something of my experience and call to the ministry for publication in the SIGNS, if you think it profitable to publish.

I was born in Fauquier County, Virginia, May 14th, 1842, as witnessed in the old family Bible. My parents were Robert H. and Susannah E. Francis. My mother was a member of the Upper Broad Run Old School Baptist Church, having been baptized by Elder Gilbert Beebe (who at that time lived in Alexandria, Va., and was serving that church as pastor) the third Sunday in November, 1837, the day that church was constituted. Elder Beebe also married my father and mother November 14th, 1838. My first thoughts of my standing before God were when I was about six years of age. One bright afternoon in September, 1848, I was at play with my little sisters out on the lawn, and had occasion to go apart from them for a few minutes to get some plaything. As I returned to where they were there seemed a voice within me saying, You are a sinner. An awful feeling came over me, and I could not engage in play any more, which caused one of my sisters to say to the other, "What is the matter with brother?" I, of course, could not explain to them, but O, how wretched and miserable I felt no tongue or pen can describe. A sinner against a just and holy God, condemned to die and be banished from his presence forever. "What shall I do, or whither flee, to escape the vengeance due to me?" Soon I began to think of some way of escape, and I found myself inquiring, What is a christian, and what do they do? Surely christians are not wretched as I am; what is it to be a christian? So I thought if I would only do as they did perhaps the Lord would be merciful to me and not send me to hell. I then set about to do what to my childish mind appeared to be the right thing to do: I took up a course of duties, fixing times to pray and read the Bible and other religious books, if I might learn from them what was necessary for me to do. Well, I went on in that way for a short while, until the strong impressions wore off, my mind became calm, and I returned again to my childish diversions with all my former zest. But I have a hope that the Lord had begun a work in me that he will perform until the day of Jesus Christ, and will not let me go. During the years which followed, those impressions would return again and again, and I would have seasons of deep depression and find an inquiry, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" When I was in my fifteenth year I again became greatly exercised in regard to my condition, and formed many resolutions, but only to find that I completely failed in the performance, that my poor weak mind was too unstable to follow any line of conduct that I planned, and I could not do the things that I would. I was, or tried to be, very careful of my speech, and not use any profane or lewd language, and at one time I found a boastful spirit within, boasting that I had been able to live as I felt I ought to live for about three months, and I began to feel very good. I was a boasting pharisee, but all at once I was put to the test, and my Babel toppled to the ground. In an unguarded moment I used an oath, and sank down into the depths, and for a time hardly dared to raise my head to look up to the sky. Well, I had many ups and downs, and always looked to myself to do that with which God would be pleased, realizing the need of a change, but thinking that I must work

that change myself. I went to meeting a great deal, but chiefly among those of Arminian belief, hearing constant exhortations to sinners as to what they must do to be saved, but it seemed that, much as I wanted to, I could not take hold of those things. They would tell me that if I would only live right it would be all right with me in the end; that if I would do the best I could in sincerity of heart and believe on the Lord Jesus he would supply all deficiency; yet I did not find comfort, I could not do those things to the satisfaction of my mind. It just seemed to me that I was born to trouble and doomed to everlasting pain. Truly I was "subject to bondage through fear of death."

About the time I was eighteen I began to be interested in the preaching of the Old School Baptists, and at an association at Upper Broad Run in 1860 Elder St. John preached the introductory sermon, and I felt that he "told me all things that ever I did." From that time I felt that I wanted to avail myself of every opportunity to hear an Old School Baptist. I could not explain why it was, only that it seemed to give me some comfort, and I think I had at least begun to realize that I could not do anything to satisfy the demands of the law, that some one else must do that for me, but as yet I did not see and could not think who that some one else was.

When I was nineteen the great war between the States broke out, and I went into the service. During the first part of it the excitement and bustle, with all the exacting duties of a soldier, seemed to drive all serious thoughts from my mind, they only recurring at brief intervals, more especially at times of apparent danger, but would only last for a short time. However, I found myself believing in the sovereignty of God, and in this belief that all would be well. I also felt that I was under his care and that he would bring me through safely. During the war I had many opportunities of hearing preaching, but mostly of the "do and live" kind. However, I heard a few sermons that suited my case, and once Elder Robert C. Leachman visited our regiment and preached for us one night, and O how good it seemed to me; but no savior had as yet been revealed to me. Early in the spring of 1864, Pickett's Division, to which I belonged, was operating in North Carolina, and while encamped near the town of Goldsborough an Elder Puckett came and preached at the camp, using as a text Ecclesiastes ix. 14, 15. He told of the "poor wise man" who by his wisdom delivered the city, preaching Christ as the "poor wise man." I saw then that salvation is of the Lord alone, and from that time I found no pleasure in the world, and all the worldly skies were wrapped in gloom to me. While I felt that salvation was in Christ alone, yet I did not feel him to be my Savior. Some time after this I found myself in great darkness, feeling that I had no hope and was without God in the world. I was one day out in the woods not far from camp, sitting on a log, my mind as dark as midnight, when there came a light as the sun at noonday, breaking through the clouds, and then to me was opened the way of life and salvation through Jesus Christ, and I said, He is my Savior, blessed Savior; he is able to save unto the uttermost, and can save me. Then sprang up in me a hope, which has been with me these fifty-five years, and is an anchor of my soul. "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"

Soon after this deliverance came I began to be exercised on the subject of baptism, and the duty of confessing Christ before men, and one day I was lying in my tent reading when I fell asleep and dreamed that I was at a meeting at Upper Broad Run, and saw the little band of old, gray-haired men and women, as I had often seen them, but now they looked to me to be the loveliest company that I had ever seen in all my life. A voice said, These are my people, and here shall your lot be cast. I awoke, my soul rejoicing and full of love. I felt that I had found the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife. At the close of the war, in June I attended the monthly meeting at Upper Broad Run and saw my dream fulfilled. There sat those old, gray-haired people that I had seen in my dream, and when Elder Leachman gave the invitation to such as might wish to talk to the church I went forward. Brother Thomas E. Hunton went up at the same time. We were both received by the church, and next day, the third Sunday in June, 1865, we were both baptized. Brother Hunton has been dead these many years, but I am here still, waiting the days of my appointed time, till my change come.

I will here relate two incidents which occurred when I was in great trouble of mind. One happened when I was about fifteen years of age. My father sent me out to a small farm that we tilled, about two miles from home, to look after some cattle we had there on pasture, to salt and see that they were all right, &c. After I had salted and counted them I stood for awhile looking at them; they looked so peaceful and happy that a feeling of envy sprang up in my heart, and I thought if I could I would gladly exchange places with one of them, for they had no sins to answer for, no soul to be lost forever, while I, miserable outcast, must go into everlasting punishment, be banished forever with those on the left hand. The other incident occurred a year or so later. My mother was a subscriber to the SIGNS, and I found some comfort in reading the experiences published in them. One day the question of christian experience came to me, and I wondered if the exercises of my mind were a christian experience. At once I concluded they were not, because christians are good people, while I am a vile sinner; but the hope of salvation is assured by the knowledge of sin; the law entered that the offence might abound, but where sin abounded grace did much more abound, and where sin reigns unto death grace reigns unto eternal life through Jesus Christ. "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

I have here penned a brief synopsis of the exercises of my mind from the time I first saw myself truly reflected in the holy law of God to the time when I hope Christ was revealed to me as an all-sufficient Savior; but this is only the beginning of christian experience. Nor is this all that a child of God has in evidence of his childship. The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

At some future time I will try to pen some of the exercises of my mind about preaching, and how I came to make the attempt.

Your brother in hope,

A. B. FRANCIS.

TILBURY, Ont., Jan. 3, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I read the New Year's Greeting to-day I felt a desire to add my mite, let it be ever so small, by way of encouragement to the dear editors, who contend so faithfully for the faith once delivered unto the saints, the household of God. We who are so weak need a word of encouragement and instruction to strengthen us for the warfare in which we are engaged, for the enemy is ever ready to cast us down and destroy us, and, like David of old, we are ready to say, I shall fall by the hand of Saul. But our Captain is a mighty conqueror, and will not suffer the weakest lamb of his flock to perish. It is now over fifty years since I first had a hope in his mercy, yet I need his mighty arm every moment to support me. As the new year dawned upon us I was given to feel the sweet drawings of his love and mercy to my soul, and I rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory. The winter that I was passing through for a season was past and gone and the spring returned, the singing of birds was heard in the land that was so cold and barren before, so that I could say, My Beloved is mine and I am his; he feedeth among the lilies. Those lilies grow in the garden of his grace and love and are watered in due season, they are not left to perish.

How much I miss dear brother Durand. He was present when I came to the church, and ours was unbroken fellowship all those years, as he said in a letter to me some time ago. He was a faithful servant in the house of God. May the Lord in mercy raise up faithful servants to the bereaved ones who were under his watchful care. He who keepeth Israel slumbers not, sleeps not. With me I feel the time is short, and sometimes long to depart and be with Christ, which is far better, but desire to wait my appointed time here below. My health has not been good this winter, but most of the time I have been able to be around, but at present am in bed with a cold. I am feeling better to-day, and felt like letting you know I am thinking of you. My little grandson has been very sick for two weeks, but is now improved, and we hope will soon be well.

Elder Ker, I will be glad to hear from you at any time, and hope you may yet visit us here.

Now I beg the dear Lord to be with the editors of the SIGNS and their families, and all the household of faith. May the blessing of the Most High rest upon and abide with each and all for his own name's sake.

I do not wish this to appear if not in accord with your mind and judgment.

Your sister, I hope,

SARAH A. McCOLL.

SALISBURY, Md., March 12, 1919.

DEAR ELDER KER:—Will you kindly say for me, through the SIGNS, to my correspondents throughout the country, that I have come to the point where I cannot write, and the fact that any or all letters may remain unanswered is not through any lack of appreciation I have for such messages, or of the christian love and fellowship felt for the children of God who have so often comforted me with the messages the Lord so graciously gave to them for me? I feel that I have acted unwisely, and, no doubt, in a certain sense I may have appeared presumptuous in doing the volume of writing I have, and in tendering my views on so important a matter as that of the hope and salvation of God's children, and in that in which I have erred I crave forgiveness, but

"My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life or breath remains;
There my best friends, my kindred, dwell,
There God my Savior reigns."

Your unworthy brother, in fellowship of the sufferings of Jesus, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

F. SELBY FISHER.

IONA STATION, Ont., Jan. 20, 1919.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have much hesitation about thus addressing the brethren, especially those in the ministry, fearing as I often do my right or claim to the blessed privilege. I feel to be a weak and ignorant one, entirely unfit and unworthy of the position I occupy as clerk in the church, and would be pleased should any of the brethren be kind enough to relieve me by taking the position, which of course would have to be done by an act of the church. I realize so much my lack of qualification, owing to lack of spirituality of mind, which often brings me low through fear that I have deceived the brethren. For months previous to last June a stanza of one of the hymns was much in my mind, which says:

"How long, dear Lord, how long
Deliverance must I seek,
And fight with foes so very strong,
Myself so very weak?"

So low did I get that as I lay awake one night about the middle of last June it seemed as if my natural reason was about to leave me. I was made, like Jonah, to cry by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and I believe he heard me, for a sweet peace came over me, and the words, He restoreth my soul, came with great comfort, and from then until now I have had rest from the fiery darts of the enemy, if so be that I am not deceived.

Hoping you and all your dear ones are well, I remain, unworthily, your brother in hope,

J. T. KERR.

PORTLAND, Ore., March 12, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN:—About two years ago I had some correspondence with some of the readers of the SIGNS regarding a large tract of cheap land near Palmer Junction, in northeastern Oregon. I am satisfied now that this land is best adapted to sheep or goat farming until the native forage is disposed of, after which one can grow most any crop he chooses. Plenty of buildings, fences, running water, wood, &c., for this purpose, a model church, owning her own house, at Elgin, about twelve miles away, good country school, rich district, centrally located. The price of this land ranges from ten dollars to thirty-five dollars per acre, according to improvements, very easy terms. My son, Roy F. Amsbary, lives on an eighty acre tract, and will be pleased to show the land to any one interested. All the settlers have tried out general farming, and they are ready to sell to the sheep men.

J. M. AMSBARY.

NEW YORK, N. Y., March 14, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—The Victory Liberty Loan, which will be launched April 21st, will be the last big popular bond issue floated in connection with the war, according to a recent statement by the Secretary of the Treasury. Publications throughout this district have been cooperating so splendidly with us during the four preceding Liberty Loans, that we feel convinced you will want to help us finish the job by placing this now issue before the public.

Yours for the Victory Liberty Loan,
JOHN PRICE JONES,
Assistant Director of Publicity,
Second Federal Reserve District.

[THE above is an extract from a letter received by us, and as we are anxious to do what we can to assist the Victory Loan we gladly give it space.—ED.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1919.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

"THE WORD."

THIS subject is not only infinitely deep, but sublimely glorious, and we shall only be able to give a hint here and there in calling attention to "the word" from several standpoints. The apostle John tells us that "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." From this statement we understand "the word" to mean the sovereign, invisible power of God, displayed in the creation and formation of the world and all things in it, for immediately John said, "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." It is too much for us to separate between the Father and the Son in the two above statements from the apostle John. Hence in speaking of the Word, "in the beginning," we have always had in mind the unity of the Father and the Son as the Savior put it when on earth: "I and my Father are one." Really we have never been able to separate between them, except in the different offices occupied by them: the three one God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Therefore in speaking or writing of the Word, in the beginning, we always mean the one sovereign, omnipotent God, who spake and it was done, who commanded and it stood fast. The infinite power of the Word therefore was made manifest in the creation and formation of the world.

Now that we have ascribed power and wisdom to the Word as mentioned by John: "In the beginning was the Word," we desire to present the same Word in the person of the Son, or "Word made flesh." The same Word, or one God, who in the beginning so wonderfully and unquestionably displayed his almighty power, in the days of those men who should afterward be his witnesses, took upon him flesh and blood, being born of a woman. This Word was "God manifest in the flesh," called in that office the Son of God. First, in the beginning, all power was in him, the Word, to create, or bring into existence, this world, with all its glory in nature. Second, as the Word made flesh, the incarnate Son of God had power to make the dead live, and to give salvation to all the chosen of God in him before the world began. As no sacrifice of earth could take away sin, God, the Word, became a man, the God-man, that he might, by the sacrifice of himself, pay all the debt (once for all) the elect of God owed to both law and justice. He was justified in the Spirit, believed on in the world, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, received up into glory. The above was the complete and glorious work of the Word made flesh. Third, the same three one God, "the Word," in the person of the Holy Ghost, is the Comforter and teacher of the Lord's people to-day, and shall ever be while the world stands.

We have now tried to present "the Word," or one God, in three different offices, or persons, but we desire to make further reference to the terms "word" and "word of God." Often when the

expressions "the word" and "the word of God" are used there is no direct reference intended to the incarnate Word, power and Godhead, but rather to the written word, or Scriptures. The Scriptures are the word of God. In this written word the Lord spake by the prophets to his people of his love for them, making many precious and gracious promises to them of salvation through the Seed of the woman, the Branch, the Blessing in the cluster, and so on. The New Testament Scriptures are God's word to his people now, declaring that his love was made manifest in the gift of his Son when all were dead in sins, and that all promises are fulfilled in Christ.

There is still another "word" we shall mention before closing, and that is the "preached word" by the called servants of the Lord. This word, or gospel, was designed by the Lord to comfort his people, and to establish them in the truth of the word; to separate them from Babylon with all her abominations, saying unto them, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord."

We felt impressed to write briefly upon the different phases of "the word," and hope it may help to avoid confusion sometimes when the terms "the word" and "the word of God" are used. We do not need to be told that the subject is too deep for us, and that we have only touched it here and there, but we know that along these lines, as touching the mysteries of God, a hint to the wise unto salvation is sufficient. K.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

ECCLESIASTES XI. 1.

"CAST thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days."

This Scripture is often quoted by the world to urge the giving of money for so-called charitable purposes, the giving of money to the missionary cause in order to facilitate the conversion of the heathen to christianity, and the giving of money for other kindred purposes. We feel that all such constructions placed upon the text are very wide of the truth and a violation of the Scripture. We have been told by Mr. Gadsby, and others who have traveled in Palestine, the land of Canaan, that there are rivers in that country that flow only through the rainy season, and that dry up during the dry season, that these rivers become a flood at certain seasons of the year and well-nigh disappear at other times. Upon these overflows the fertility of the soil adjacent to the rivers depends. Were it not for these high waters, we are told, the land in those neighborhoods would be barren and desert. Travelers there have further brought home to us the information that the farmers sow their seed as the waters recede or diminish, thus often casting their seed literally into the waters, losing it apparently as it sinks beneath the stream, to see it no more until it comes back to them many days afterward at the harvest, when it returns to the husbandman many fold. From our own direct observation we cannot vouch for the correctness of the above information, but it appears to us likely that it is true. If so, then it beautifully illustrates the meaning of our text. As the husbandman would go forth to sow his seed upon the waters as they recede from the land, leaving behind them a rich alluvial deposit, so Christ sends forth the preachers of his gospel to cast their bread upon the waters

of affliction, or upon the waters of adversity, or upon the waters of any woe or sorrow that may come within the line of their ministry. Isaiah says, "Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters," and this applies, we believe, to the preachers of the gospel who are called and sent forth by the Spirit of God to declare his word and to comfort his people. These go forth to sow the seed beside all waters. In the journeyings to and fro of the ministry they come in contact with all sorts and conditions of men, they meet among the flock of God all sorts of afflictions, and an infinite variety of trials, sorrows, difficulties and burdens. They preach the gospel to all. In the congregations to whom they preach there may be, and often is, a variety of individuals, all believing in the same glorious truth of God as it is in Jesus, yet no two exactly alike, each one having his or her own life to live, and his or her own temptations and afflictions to endure. But no matter how varied the experience of the Lord's people, the same gospel preached by the power of God reaches down into all their hearts, so that the seed is sown beside all waters, and the preacher, or sower, who is sent forth to sow the word, is not able to see what becomes of his message, often feels discouraged, and tempted to think his ministry is of no profit to the Lord's people, often seriously questions whether he himself really adequately knows anything of the truth he is laboring to set forth. But no real gospel sermon is ever preached in vain; some one gets it, if only one person, and if even one of the Lord's little ones has been fed the ministry has not been in vain. It may be days, and even months and years, before the pastor of a church can see any fruit of his labors. Sometimes a pastor dies, and is removed thus by death from the care of churches, and another man is sent of the Lord there to reap what the other had sown. In any case, preaching breath is never spent in vain. Whether the preacher ever or never sees any good come of his ministry the Lord sees it and knows it, and the labor is not in vain unto him. We have known and heard of churches declining in membership so as to appear as though they were becoming extinct, and then to take on new lease of life, new zeal and new spiritual energy, because of the fruitfulness of the ministry of some servant of God sent among them to declare God's word, and to sow the seed beside all the waters that might be inundating the souls of the flock in that particular place. L.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in March (30th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Mary Isabella Peck, our sister in Christ, died at the home of her brother, John C. Bennett, near Vale, Fairfax Co., Va., March 8th, 1919. She was the daughter of Hudson and Lucy Ann Moxley Bennett, both deceased, and was born in Vale, Va., March 29th, 1840. About the year 1880 she was married to Julius J. Peck, who died in 1907. No children were born to them. She is survived by only one brother, John C. Bennett, at whose home she passed away. May 12th, 1901, she was baptized by Elder E. V. White into membership with the Frying Pan Church, and to the day of her death was respected and esteemed by her brethren. Her walk was above reproach, and worthy of the vocation of a child of God. During late years she was afflicted with deafness, which prevented her from much social intercourse with those she loved and hindered her from enjoying the preaching; nevertheless she often attended the meetings to be in the company of the church, even though she was not able to hear what was said.

Funeral services were held at the home of her brother, speaking from the words in John xiv. 28. Burial in Flint Hill Cemetery, Oakton, Va. L.

J. M. Nolan was born June 16th, 1846, and fell asleep in Jesus Jan. 6th, 1919, making his stay on earth 72 years, 6 months and 20 days. Brother Nolan was received in the fellowship of the Old School Baptists at Holly Springs, Ga., when he was thirty-five years old, where his membership remained until he moved to Oklahoma a few years ago. He was received in the fellowship of Liberty Church, in Grady County, Okla., on recommendation of a letter from Holly Springs Church. He was making his home with his married daughter, who resides in Eastland County, Texas, when he passed from this time world. Brother Nolan had been in failing health for several months before he died. While the writer of this is unable to give many dates and names connected with the history of brother Nolan's life, I can truly say that he was a lover of gospel truth, a faithful, loving brother in the church, a good citizen, a kind and loving father. Brother Nolan was a quiet, peace-loving man. He leaves several children to mourn the loss of a dear father. The church has lost a true brother. I desire to say to the bereaved children of brother Nolan in the language of the apostle Paul, I pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

This is written by request of brother A. R. Nolan, a son of the deceased, who is a reader and lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

L. E. SKINNER.

Jane Kepner Varnes was born in Pennsylvania August 8th, 1835, and died Feb. 5th, 1919. In early life she moved with her parents to Ohio, and later to Indiana, where at the age of twenty-three years she was married to the late Deacon E. D. Varnes. She lived the life of a faithful, loving and most devoted wife until his death in November, 1914, after which she spent much of the time at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Ella Prior, in Carthage, Ill. Early in life she received a hope in Christ, and with her husband united with the Primitive Baptist Church, and remained a faithful and consistent member until death. They were widely known and highly esteemed among the Baptists of the United States. They will be remembered by the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, his name having appeared many times in its columns, which paper had been coming to their home for sixty years or more. To their union were born ten children, five sons and five daughters; two passed away in infancy. She was stricken with pneumonia, and after five days of suffering, patiently borne, she closed her eyes in sleep; blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep. As her children watched her expiring breath and I counted the last throbs of a failing heart my heart was filled with sorrow. Her age was 83 years, 5 months and 29 days.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder L. E. Frazee Feb. 7th, at the home of the writer, after which the funeral party departed by rail for her former home, Farmington, Ill., where on the following day brief services were again held. There many of her old friends assembled to pay a last tribute of respect to the departed, and there the silent tear and lovely flowers, accompanied by a card of sympathy for the bereaved family, said louder than words that the neighborhood had lost one who was loved and highly esteemed by those who knew her best. A little light has flickered out, but its reflecting rays shall shine on, a light to guide our wandering feet, and we have all been made better by having been blessed with her presence in our homes. She leaves to mourn their loss four sons, four daughters, twenty-six grandchildren, fifteen great-grandchildren and a host of friends. She was buried by the side of her companion, and the faith of her many loving friends is that she is now with him in the presence of God, where sickness and sorrow shall be no more.

C. E. PRIOR.

Deacon W. R. Savage was born in Jackson County, Mo., May 10th, 1833, and died at his home in Dayton, Wash., Feb. 9th, 1919. His parents died when he was a small boy and left him an orphan. He crossed the plains with his uncle when twelve years of age, settling in the Willamette valley, Oregon. In 1863 he was united in marriage to Mrs. Sarah J. Byrd. To that union six children were born, two dying in early life. The living are George, of Moscow, Idaho, Lewis and Jack, of Dayton, Wash., and Mrs. W. D. Chard, of Jackson, Wash., all of whom were present at the funeral. Brother Savage's first wife died Sept. 11th, 1880, and Sept. 5th, 1887, he was married to Mrs. Martha J. Hunacutt. He moved from the valley in 1872, settling near Dayton, Wash., and in 1893 he and his wife united with Harmony Church of Old School Baptists, Dayton, Wash., and were baptized by Elder Columbus Wisdom. In 1894 brother Savage was ordained deacon of Harmony Church, which office he filled to the full satisfaction of the church until about three years ago, when the members had moved or died until they were not able to hold regular church meetings. The writer, being intimately acquainted with him, having jointly served the church with Elder B. S. Pate, was called to attend his funeral Feb 10th. While it was a very sad occasion to me, yet I felt to rejoice in spirit and thank God that one so unworthy as I should be blessed with the privilege of speaking to the bereaved of the wonders of grace which were so wonderfully displayed in the life of this father in Israel. I would pray to God that we all who have confessed the Lord could show our faith by our works as dear brother Savage did. Elder B. S. Pate was present with me at the funeral, but feeling very poorly took no part in the service. May the blessings of heaven rest on the bereaved, especially dear old sister Savage, who is now left alone in her old age, is my prayer.

J. T. BARNES.

Susan A. Rouse, daughter of the late Edward and Minerva Rouse, was born August 20th, 1851, and departed this life Feb. 2nd, 1919, aged 67 years, 5 months and 12 days. She was born on the old home place five miles northeast of Danville, Ill., where she remained until the death of her parents, about ten years ago. She afterward built her a home in Danville, where she lived until death. Aunt Sue, as she was familiarly known, was never married, but was like a mother to all her nephews and nieces, and was ever ready to help all whom she could. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church some thirty years ago, where she remained a faithful and true member until the end. She was devoted to her church, a true friend and good neighbor. Much more could be said of her good qualities, but her life was an open book. She leaves to mourn their loss two brothers: John Rouse, of Nebraska, and Dennis Rouse, of Danville, Ill., and six sisters: Martha Mackin, of Rossville, Ill., Rose Stewart, of Kansas, Rebecca Walker, Julia Long, Minerva Adams and Sarah Long, of near Danville, also sixteen nephews and nineteen nieces, besides a host of relatives and friends. Two brothers and one sister preceded her in death.

The funeral services were conducted in the M. B. meetinghouse of Danville by her former pastor, Elder J. H. Oliphant, of Crawfordsville, Ind., after which the body was laid to rest beside her parents in Spring Hill Cemetery to await the resurrection morn. We feel that she is not lost, but gone on to join father, mother, brothers and sister.

(MRS.) W. B. CANINE.

Sarah May Carrell, beloved daughter of Will and Mary Hobensack and wife of Harry M. Carrell, was born June 13th, 1889, and died October 29th, 1918, at their home in Ivyland, Pa., after an illness of about four days of pneumonia. May was the eldest daughter, and was like a mother to her brothers and sisters and a burden-bearer with her father and mother, the Lord having blessed her with that precious gift of being more exercised for the welfare of those about her than for herself, living the life of the Savior wherein it is more blessed to give than to receive. She was married October 25th, 1911, to Harry M. Carrell, of Ivyland, Pa., the Lord blessing them with two boys: William, aged six years, and Franklin, aged four years. She was a lover of the truth as it is in Jesus, and attended services whenever it was her privilege at Southampton Old School Baptist Church, and was one who possessed faith, hope and belief in the Lord, which identifies the Lord's elect. The last day of her illness she asked after each one of the family, and said, "Papa, I am very sick," and cried. Her father gave up all hope of her recovery from the first, and in his distress these words were given him: "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Elder Durand preached a very able and comforting sermon to those gathered at the funeral held Nov. 1st, it being the last sermon our dear brother preached before the Lord called him home. Hymn, "A child of Jehovah," was read. Burial was made in the family plot at Southampton Old School Baptist burying-ground, adding one more to the number that makes the place of meeting solemn.

May the sustaining grace of God comfort the bereaved. J. M. FENTON.

Horatio Grant, of Springvale, Maine, died Dec. 2nd, 1918, aged 74 years. Our brother was a native of Acton, Maine, being the son of Daniel and Olive Joy Grant. He was married to Almeda J. Ham, of Shapleigh, Sept. 4th, 1869. To that union were born three sons and two daughters: Orrin, of Rochester, N. H., Charles, of Somerville, Mass., Augustus, of Springvale, Maine, Jennie, wife of H. P. Trafton, of Springvale, and Flora, who married J. H. Libby, died July 4th, 1897. Our departed brother also leaves two sisters: Mrs. Dana Merrifield and Mrs. Charles W. Merrifield. His first wife, and mother of his children, died March 15th, 1891. On Sept. 26th, 1893, he was married to Lucinda Grant, who died Sept. 2nd, 1916. Our dear brother in his early days was exercised about his sinnership before the Lord. In due time it pleased God to reveal Jesus Christ, the dear Lamb of God, in his heart as his hope of salvation and eternal glory. I might say that in all the twenty-six years I knew him we never met, even though it were but for a few minutes, but that we had some communications one with another upon the things of Christ, and when speaking of his personal knowledge of the preciousness of Christ it was ever in the most endearing terms he would speak of our beloved Redeemer. In the last ten years of his life especially he frequently conversed upon his living in hope of the resurrection of the dead. It was with him a matter of "earnest expectation," waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body; that he then would be like Christ, raised immortal and incorruptible, conformed in his whole spirit and soul and body to the image of Jesus Christ, God's dear Son. He would express his faith in the words that he was "looking for that blessed hope, and glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." Our brother confessed his hope in the Savior and united with the church at North Berwick, Maine, Nov. 26th, 1871, being baptized by Elder William Quint, and was ever held in the highest esteem by all the church. His life and walk were such that he commanded the respect of the community in which he resided. His last illness was of short duration, only two days, and until a few minutes before his departure it was not thought that he

was very seriously sick; but the appointed time of his sojourn upon the earth was finished, and he departed to be with Christ, which is far better. His industry, his kindliness, his godly walk and conversation in this present evil world will ever remain a cherished memory by all of his family who survive him. FREDERICK W. KEENE.

Simeon Sales was born in Perry County, Ohio, May 17th, 1839, and departed this life Feb. 17th, 1919, at his home in Ashley, Ohio, at the age of 79 years and 9 months. He enlisted in Company B, 48th Reg. Ohio Infantry, and served his country until wounded and sent to the hospital. He was married to Rachel Biggs, of Delaware, Ohio, April 2nd, 1865, who preceded him to the great beyond May 27th, 1911. To that union were born seven children, four sons and three daughters: John B., of Ashley, Ohio, Emma A. Eckrote and Milo, of Geneva, Ind., Lucinda Yader, of Ft. Wayne, Ind., Chester H., who died May 11th, 1885, Violet, who died April 20th, 1885, and Otto L., who still resides on the old home farm. He is survived by twenty-three grandchildren, seventeen great-grandchildren and one brother, Philip, of Oklahoma, together with his second wife, Mrs. Dorothy Strawser Sales, of Delaware, Ohio, to whom he was married in July, 1914, also two stepsons: J. E. Strawser, of Marion, Ohio, and E. E. Strawser, of Delaware, Ohio, and one stepdaughter, Mrs. D. A. Parks, of Delaware, Ohio. These, with a host of relatives and friends, are left to mourn, but not as those who have no hope, for while he was not a member of the visible church, he gave every evidence of being a member of the body of Christ and of possessing that hope which is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and entereth into that within the veil. May we all bow in humble submission to the will of Him who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, and may we be enabled by his grace to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Services were conducted by the writer at the home of his son, Otto L. Sales, Geneva, Ind.

C. E. JACKSON.

Sarah Almira Davis, daughter of Gersham and Laura M. Baird, was born July 31st, 1850, and died at her home near Goodnight, Barren Co., Ky., Feb. 12th, 1919, in the 69th year of her age. She was united in marriage to John M. Davis Feb. 26th, 1874. To that union were born seven children, one son and one daughter dying in infancy; three sons and two daughters with the husband survive. Sister Davis, together with her aged mother, united with the little church in Barren County in 1897. She lived a faithful, devoted member, well grounded in the faith and doctrine of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the ground of her hope. Hers was a life of many afflictions and sorrows, but she bore them all in the full assurance of that faith which overcometh, with patience, without murmur or complaint, to the magnifying and glory of God's grace. She was taken ill with influenza and pneumonia, but was thought to be out of danger until the night of the 11th, when she began to sink rapidly and soon expired, her sufferings ended. But one brother remains of her father's family, our dear brother Billy Baird. Another brother, Mr. Eugene Baird, was critically ill at the time of her death, and died a few days later, leaving our brother alone, and yet not alone, for Jesus said, "Lo, I am with you alway," &c.

I was called to the home of the dear mourning ones, and with the ability that God gave spoke words of comfort to the broken-hearted. May the Lord in his tender mercy remember each of the sorrowing ones and grant them that faith which was in their mother and grandmother. After the services at the home that which was mortal was laid to rest in the family burying-ground near the home. To each member of the dear family I again extend the deep, heartfelt sympathy of one who has drank deep of the cup of sorrow. P. W. SAWIN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Decatur Mouser, Ohio, $3.00; James J. Clark, Okla., $3.00.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, Elder D. M. Vail will visit and preach to brethren and friends as follows:

Jefferson, Sunday, March 30th, 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m.; Howe Cave, Monday, 31st, 8 p. m.; Schoharie, Tuesday, April 1st, 1:30 p. m.; Central Bridge, 8 p. m.; Albany, 272 Clinton Ave., Wednesday, 2nd, 1:30 p. m. E. R. KINNEY.

MEETINGS.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church holds her regular meetings at 13th and Lexington Sts., Sellwood, at 2 p. m. on the fourth Sunday in each month. Sellwood is a suburb of Portland, Oregon. Take any outgoing Sellwood car. S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

Newberg, Oregon.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Middletown and Andes Church will hold their meetings the first Sunday in every month at their meetinghouse, Union Grove, N. Y. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

There will be meeting every first Sunday at Halcott Center, N. Y., in the Grange Hall. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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(Judges v. 11.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 87. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1919. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TITUS II. 1.

"SPEAK thou the things which become sound doctrine."

The above Scripture applies to ministers of the gospel of all ages since it was written. Doctrine is something taught. The doctrine of God our Savior is always taught by divine revelation. The learned men of the world, as regards the wisdom of the world, knew not God nor his Son. When the apostles were interrogated by the Savior as to whom men said he, the Son of man, was, none of them gave the correct answer, because they knew not. When the apostles were asked whom they said he was, Peter, though unlearned as to the literature of the world, gave the correct answer, that he was the Christ, the Son of the living God. The Savior told him that flesh and blood had not revealed it to him, but his Father who was in heaven. That is the only way any one ever has or ever will know God, whom to know is life eternal. Paul said none of the princes of this world knew Jesus; had they known him they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. Paul told the church at Corinth, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but he hath revealed them to us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. That is the only way we know the things which are freely given us of God—by his Spirit that dwelleth in us. Paul said, When it pleased God to reveal his Son in me, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood. He also tells us the gospel he preached he learned not of man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ; and though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel than that we have preached and you have received, let him be accursed. I have asserted many times in word and by pen that no religion, except revealed from heaven direct from God to man, will ever affect any one's eternal destiny, and I still hold to it with the greatest tenacity. No man speaking by the Spirit can say Jesus is accursed, neither can any one say Jesus is the Lord, save by the Holy Ghost. This language is very plain and easily comprehended, even by the unlearned; but theologians, who have learned to preach in schools of men, teach that God cannot save a sinner except the sinner will let him, that he must ac-

cept. What power save that of God could cause one to love that which he hates and to hate that which he rolls under his tongue as a sweet morsel and drinks down greedily as the ox does the water? God kills to the love of sin, and he also makes alive to the love of righteousness and true holiness, by causing that light which shines out of darkness to shine in the heart, giving the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Paul said, If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his; that is, manifestly. All believers have once been unbelievers, as all are born in sin, yea, conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity. Mankind in an unregenerated state is represented in the Scriptures as being less than nothing, in that if he does not belong to God's elect he had better never been born. Why God elected a portion of the human family to grace and glory is known to him alone. He appeared to one of old and told him he loved him with an everlasting love, and for that reason with loving-kindness had drawn him. That is the reason all his chosen, from Abel down to the last one, are drawn by his love. God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, hath made us alive with Christ; and not only so, but he loved us before the foundation of the world. They were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, to the end that they should be holy and without blame before God in love. But the Arminian asks, Why choose some and not all? The Son said, Even so, Father, because it seemed good in thy sight. Secret things belong to God, revealed things to us and our children forever. When we read in holy writ that the carnal mind is enmity against God, not subject to his law, neither indeed can be, and that the natural man understandeth not the things of the Spirit of God, that they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned, need we be surprised that ninety-nine per cent. of professed christians in the world are aliens to the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenant of promise? The new covenant tells us that God puts his law in the minds of his redeemed people and writes it in their hearts, and that he will be to them a God and they shall be his people, and that they shall not go about teaching their neighbors, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know him, from the least of them to the greatest of them, and their sins and iniquities he will remember against them no more. On a certain occasion the Savior said, No man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. This Scripture, with those already quoted, proves to a certainty that the religion of Jesus Christ is revealed directly from God to the hearts of his believing children. This is the way the vulture's eye hath not seen nor the lion's whelp trodden.

May God bless his chosen in all conditions of life, is the sincere prayer of the writer.

JAMES M. SIMMONS.

PARIS, Texas.

HAMMOND, W. Va., Jan. 10, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—At the request of Elder Lefferts in his "New Year's Greeting," concerning preachers writing more on Scripture, I will try and write to the readers of the SIGNS. In the first place I want to say I do not know that I am a gospel preacher, but hope I am. I have many doubts concerning my calling, also

many doubts about having an experience of grace, yet I would not take all this world for the hope that I have.

I will try to confine my remarks to Jeremiah xxxii. 38–40, which reads as follows: "And they shall be my people, and I will be their God: and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." This Scripture is given by inspiration of God, as is all Scripture; it is to the people of God, or the man of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for instruction and correction. This address was made by God himself to the children of Israel after he had chosen them as a nation to be his peculiar people and brought them out of bondage from the cruel hand of Pharaoh and given them the law covenant, which none of them kept. The covenant of works did not promise them heaven and immortality, but the Lord promised them the good of the land and the blessings of this life, because if there had been a law that could have given life, verily righteousness would have been by the law. Again, there was a mixed multitude that went up with the children of Israel, and they are not all Israel that are of Israel, for the true Israel, the spiritual Israel, are those who are born by promise, as Isaac was, and not after the flesh, like Ishmael; and they persecute those who are born of the Spirit. Now to come to the subject which the Lord is speaking of in this place in Jeremiah xxxii. "They shall be my people, and I will be their God." This is plain and sure, and why do not the people see it? There is not a single word said about their doing anything in order to become his people, but he says, "They shall be my people, and I will be their God." The first covenant was not kept by them, which was the law that came by Moses, and was holy, just and good, as Paul said, and which none of them kept, because they were sinful and vile, and could not through the weakness of the flesh. Paul said when he would do good, evil was present with him; that the good he would do he did not, but did that which was evil, which he hated, and this was because of sin, for in his flesh there dwelt no good thing. Can we not daily realize this fact in our own selves? Just before this Scripture in the thirty-second chapter of Jeremiah was spoken of God's children they were very corrupt; they had committed many sins and had not hearkened to God's law, but caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto Molech. "Which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin." Here we see how they sinned a great sin, which was an abomination in God's sight, which he said had not come into his mind that they should do it. He did not say that he did not know they would do it, but he did not cause them to do it nor command them to do such a thing; but he had not forgotten to be true to his promise to them. Moses told them that God would raise up unto them a prophet, and every soul which did not hear that prophet should be cut off from among them—a division, a separation in this new covenant, of which God spake that he would make with the house of Israel after those days. I will write my law in their hearts and put it in their minds, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God; and I will give them one heart and one

way, and that is Christ, the prophet of which Moses spoke, for he is the truth, the life and the way, the only way to come unto God; not one of the ways of which men speak, but the way and the only way whereby we must be saved. "And I will give them one heart," a right heart, a new heart; Christ in them, the inner man, the man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, and then they will fear him. "That they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them." "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." What strong language this is, and this refutes the ways of the children of the flesh yet to-day, and ever will, because they teach that they can fall away and be lost, and they also teach that the children of the flesh can do something in order to become a child of God; that God will save them if they perform such works, and unless they do they will be lost. It cannot be found either in this Scripture or any other Scripture in the Bible. What did Christ tell the impotent man who lay at the pool of Siloam to do in order to be made whole? When he asked him, Wilt thou be made whole? the man replied, I have no man to put me in. He had tried to perform the condition for a long time, but had failed; no man helped him that he might get into the water. Surely there was no conditionalist there at that pool. You hear them now saying, We are helping them, we are helping the Lord to save sinners, we are saving souls for Christ. Jesus did not tell him anything to do in order to be made whole, but he did command him to take up his bed and walk, and he did not fail to do it. Why? Christ made him whole first, enabled him, strengthened him. He speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast; so the man could walk in the one way in the strength of the Lord.

"For the good of them, and their children after them." Now let us not conclude that this Scripture includes all of our children. Let us get the true meaning. This is God speaking, and his ways are not our ways. His ways are as high as the heavens above our ways. You are the Father's children; not children of the flesh, but children of promise. "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." —Acts ii. 39. No more, no less; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. So the promise is sure to all the seed, and the holy seed is Christ.

"And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." This is an everlasting covenant; this is that covenant which is established upon better promises than that of the covenant of works, which they broke, and the Lord regarded them not. He did not recognize them by their works, he did not regard them as his spiritual people that way. So I will give them one heart and one way, and then I will regard them as my people by the new and living way, which is Christ Jesus. I will regard them as mine, and will not turn away from them to do them good; but when they transgress my law I will be merciful to their sins, I will not make a full end of them, but will correct them in a measure for their good, because I will not turn away from them to do them good. O yes, he will do them good. Look what he has done and will do for them. He will not turn away from doing us good, because heaven is promised us, and Christ

prayed for us that we might behold him with the glory which he had with the Father before the world began. This will forever refute the workers, the conditionalists, who have many ways, but God's children have but one way, and that way was given to them. The workers have conditions to perform in order to be saved, the children of God have none, Christ did it all. They say and do not, but God's children go at his command. So Christ says, Take up thy bed and walk, and it is done; walk in the good old way. When you turn to the right hand or to the left your ears shall hear the voice saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, and O how sweet that voice is, because it is the voice of Christ. My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me; they go in the one way, walk in Christ, abide in him, because they were created in him, and they walk in the good works which God hath before ordained that they should walk in; they keep his commandments.

Yours in hope,

JAMES W. LINN.

NEW YORK, N. Y.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Believing the inclosed choice letter from sister Ruston will be as sweet and helpful to others as it was to me, I send it for publication, if you favor so doing. The language of our sister is so pure and clear concerning the Lord's dealings with his children it seems important that many may be comforted by it.

Since many know of my husband's illness I am glad to say he is much more comfortable than for some time, and is at his business again.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) J. C. BEARD.

KELLY CORNERS, N. Y., Feb. 21, 1919.

DEAR SISTER BEARD:—You and your dear family have been much on my mind of late (in fact you always are, I think I may truthfully say), and I have felt I wanted to write you, even before receiving your last letter, so now feel I will not delay longer. George is away for about four days on his Jefferson trip, and I had thought I would go to bed a little earlier than usual this evening, but have changed my mind, thinking I shall enjoy writing to you more. To-night the words, "The shadow of a great rock in a weary land," seem continually in my mind. What that means only those can realize who experience a weary land and know what it is to find shelter in the shadow of that Rock, the Rock of our salvation. You often mention in writing us what a comfort you and sister Ruth find in God's predestination of all things. I think I can say I do not know how I could live if I did not believe it; not believe it just because it is so, but as a living principle in our lives; not a mere theoretical belief, but feeling that all things work together for good to them that love God and are the called according to his purpose. It almost seems like presumption for me to think I am among that number, yet when we do feel the Lord's presence comforting us in even a small degree I suppose it must be right to declare it. I think lately, perhaps as much as ever I have, I have realized the merciful care shown toward His children, and I hope to me. It seems so many times lately when my heart has been full of murmuring, something has come to my mind to show me my weakness and unworthiness of all the Lord's mercies, and I have felt much ashamed, and seem to have been made to cry out, Lord, how canst thou have mercy on one so vile, so undeserv-

ing of thy love and care? I know I can say, "I am poor and needy," and hope I may add, unless greatly deceived, "yet the Lord thinketh upon me." How humbling it is to feel that the great, all-powerful God, who made and has sustained everything, can condescend to have mercy on such an insignificant one as I. At times though I do feel my heart flowing out in love to the Lord and his people, and even though it may only be a little touch, and perhaps only of short duration, its preciousness cannot be described. I feel it now as I write, and I would not part with it for anything; it certainly is the pearl of great price. Is it not true though that we have to sell all that we have before we can become possessors of it? The Lord is a jealous God, and will not share his honor with another. We have to be emptied of self and all dependence on the things of this life before we can experience the riches of Christ our Lord. I have thought very much lately about suffering. My mind seemed drawn to think about it by noticing how, when Ananias was sent to Paul, it was to tell him what great things he must suffer for Jesus' sake. Any one would be apt to think it would have been to tell him what a wonderful work was before him, and the glorious future he had, so that he would be encouraged to set out on his work; but no, the Lord saw differently. For it is given to us in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. What is suffering for Christ's sake? I often wish I knew, but the things of the kingdom seem so inexpressible, we only see through a glass darkly. There is so much in the Bible about suffering that it is evident it must be the lot of God's people. I have often found myself saying, when feeling myself content with this life and finding it easy sailing, Lord, keep me close to thee, for I feel I do desire to be kept from departing from him, but immediately the thought would come, You know you cannot appreciate the Lord's presence except through suffering, and O how I feel myself shrink from it, and when it comes it seems so hard to bear; but we are made willing in the day of his power, willing to bear all things he may see fit to lay upon us, if only he will keep and support us. I do trust at times I feel that underneath are the everlasting arms, for if it were not so I feel I should surely sink, sink below all hope. "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe." How many years I hope that has been my prayer, for I know I have no power or will to hold myself and must utterly perish if it were not for the wonderful love of God, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Do I know what I am writing about? Can it be possible that one so unholy, so devoid of anything good, has ever experienced anything of the love of God? Such things are too wonderful for me, but I do hope I have gratitude in my heart to the Lord for his wonderful mercy to me. I know if I have it is implanted there by himself, for as you said in your letter, "all my springs are in thee." There is nothing but pollution in that which springs from our own nature.

I fear I have let my pen run too far, and will tire you; forgive me if I have. I have enjoyed your loving forbearance so long I know you will. We were glad to know of the improvement in our dear brother Beard's health. We have thought and talked so much of you all during the trying time you have been passing through, and do hope the improvement may continue. Tell Ruth that she must not worry because she did not answer me herself; your letter told me what I wanted

to know, and I took it as an answer from her. Our little ones have been asleep some time, I suppose I ought soon to go and join them. The weather has been beautiful this winter, it has made it so much easier for us in many ways. I, like you and Ruth, appreciate the meetings. I find myself restless and uneasy on the Sundays I am obliged to spend without the communion with the Lord's people. I should indeed feel I lived in a barren land without such a privilege. I have been unusually favored this winter. I had expected to be deprived of them very much on account of having a little baby and having to travel quite long distances, but through the weather being so pleasant I have only had to stay home once, and have occasionally been able to go three times a month; it has been such a pleasure to me. When there comes a Sunday without a meeting near enough for me to attend I find myself thinking how nice it would be if I could meet with you dear ones in New York at such times, for we love you as much as ever, and would appreciate your meetings as much as ever. I have certainly missed Elder McConnell's preaching, and have been much disappointed that he has been unable to come up here for so long, but live in hope of hearing him declare the precious things of the gospel again. I really do enjoy our meetings up here, and feel that the Lord has prepared a place for us in the hearts of his people, for they prove it by their solicitous care of us. I am often deeply touched by some kind action of the brethren and sisters, and their manifestations of love to us. God is love, and inasmuch as his people are partakers of that love we cannot help but see it in them if we are taught in any measure by him. I am glad you are comforted by brother Dodson. We have much enjoyed his visits among us.

With much love to you all and the other dear ones, I am, I hope, your sister in precious bonds of fellowship,

ESTHER RUSTON.

NEWARK, Del., Aug. 20, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—My mind has been led to rest upon these words this beautiful morning, and with God's blessing I feel I would like to write a few lines in connection with the Scripture that follows: "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."—Heb. x. 26, 27. This whole chapter leads up to these words, and one cannot appreciate these two verses without reading it all, even to the last verse. It is surely a warning to God's little children to endeavor to walk in his statutes and keep his commandments, for, as Paul says in verse thirty-one, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." The law was only a shadow of the good things to come, for in the blood of bulls and goats, burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin, God had no pleasure. "Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God." He taketh away the first that he may establish the second. The law, with its carnal offerings for sin, was abrogated, and the body of Jesus was the atoning sacrifice for the sins of his people, by the which will we are sanctified by the offering of this precious body of Jesus once for all. This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God. Therefore, if we sin wilfully after that we have

received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins. There are many temptations in our lives on earth that make the fleshly man sin, and for a time we suffer through our different weaknesses, but if we sin wilfully, after knowing the truth as it is in Jesus, do we not defile the temple of God? "Ye are the temple of God." We, his children, traveling around this earth in an earthly tabernacle, in the face of God, knowing all this, what else can we expect but a fearful looking for of judgment? For instance, we grow cold toward each other, forsake the assembling of ourselves together, talk about each other's failings, plucking the mote from our brother's eye before we cast away the beam from our own, and many other sins to which we are heir. Perhaps we, in a sense, do not wilfully commit these sins, but when we do we shall expect to be corrected, for God's fearful judgment and fiery indignation shall surely visit us in some form or other. Many of us perhaps forsake the assembling of ourselves at meeting, which surely is, in my humble judgment, a wilful sin. There is nothing that should keep us away from meeting Sunday except the providence of God, which perhaps occasionally is his will and good pleasure, he having a purpose or design in it if he appoints it, but the continual remaining away from meeting is not one of God's designs, that is a giving away to the flesh, and if we become so careless and indifferent about it Satan has full control of the body. Is that keeping the body under, or the body keeping us? We might as well be in the world (and we are while in this darkened condition). No wonder Paul continues with, "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" Listen to these words, this dreadful warning to those who commit sin wilfully. "Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people." Do we not deserve this vengeance? When we trample under foot the Son of God, who gave his life for us, do we not deserve even hell forever? Can we conscientiously say that we love Christ and the brethren and sin wilfully before God and man? Are we not vile hypocrites? Have we any respect for his blood and love? He loved us and this is what we give in return: wilful sin. This brings to me the words of James, in speaking of one member of the body, the tongue: out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing, blessing Him one minute and cursing man the next. No wonder God had to make a new covenant to save man from his sins, for he was disobedient from the start, in Adam, could not even obey the first law that was given him, therefore no flesh shall be justified in the sight of God. It is too polluted and corrupt to be even considered, but that went with the first law and covenant, but now, even under the law of Christ, or the second covenant, man is still wilfully sinning, in the sight of God, which proves man cannot change his vile nature, which nature has no part with the Spirit of Christ. It is only in Christ that there is no condemnation, for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the law of sin and death. When we sin wilfully in these things of which I speak, and our conscience does not prick

us, and we are happy in the world, going side by side with them that are dead in trespasses and in sins, with those without hope, is this not a dangerous place to be? Is it not on the brink of hell, in the shadow of that "lake of fire?" "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." So let us call to remembrance the former days. In our early love we loved to assemble at meeting, to be near each other, to hear the preaching and to exchange greetings of love and joy, or sorrow and mourning. Let us hope the "falling away" of each individual is not altogether a "wilful sin" and let us remember how our dear Redeemer suffered for us, hanging on the accursed tree to save us from our sins. Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

J. B. MILLER.

NEWARK, Del., March 18, 1919.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I received a splendid letter from brother Vaughn this morning which revived my drooping spirit, for of late my most vicious enemy has been evil within myself, and I am growing every day to fear myself more than the evil which surrounds us daily, and have been made to feel the warning: Fear not them that can kill the body, but rather Him who can destroy both body and soul in hell.

I would like to see the inclosed clipping in the SIGNS.

A brother, I hope,

J. B. MILLER.

ELDER Charles W. Vaughn, pastor of Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, recently read to his congregation an interesting bit of history concerning the baptism of George Washington. It was from "The Witness of Spirits," by James W. Zackery, in part as follows: "George Washington, the father of our country, was reared an Episcopalian, but had learned the way of the Lord more perfectly, and when he saw Elder Gano, his chaplain, who was holding a meeting with soldiers, and taking candidates to the river to baptize them, he exclaimed, 'I have never been scripturally baptized,' and demanded immersion at the hands of his chaplain. Elder John Gano immersed George Washington in the Potomac River in the presence of about forty persons."

Elder John Gano was born in Hopewell, N. J., July 22nd, 1727. He was of French descent, and received his education at Hopewell Academy. He was ordained to the ministry in Hopewell Church May 26th, 1754. From there he moved to Morristown, and after two years to Yodkin, N. C., where he succeeded in establishing a large church, which was discontinued during the war of 1756. Elder Gano then returned north with his family, owing to the ravages of the Indians. Mrs. Mary Gano, ninety-nine years old, the great-grandmother of former Secretary of State William J. Bryan, is a granddaughter of Elder Gano.

CHARLOTTEVILLE, N. Y., Oct. 9, 1918.

MRS. HELEN KINNEY—DEAR FRIEND:—As Delbert has answered your lovely letter I feel that I must write you a few lines. I would have liked to have been down when Mr. Dodson was with you. I enjoyed hearing him at Ashokan, although I feel I am not fit to be with such people; vile and full of sin I am. I have

attended Old School Baptist meetings ever since I can remember, but more frequently since I have been married, for we both love to be in their company. If I know my own heart I love to hear the truth.

"A crumb of mercy, Lord, I crave,
Unworthy to be fed
With dainties such as angels have,
Or with the children's bread."

This verse has been a comfort to me many times, and others also when I am alone, also,

"Alas! and did my Savior bleed,
And did my Savior die?"

I have often thought if there were some one that I could tell how I felt, as I have heard people do, what a relief it would be. I have heard Elder Vail tell my feelings better than I could tell them myself. Elder Vail and Elder Fenton expect to visit us in this part of the country. I am always glad to see them, also Everett and wife. I hope they can come, it always seems as if they must come, as they seem so near to us.

I have written more than I thought I would when I commenced this letter, and it seems I cannot stop now. I am alone; how I would like to come down to your next meeting. I love to hear the dear ones sing; it seems as if my heart is melted, it sounds so sweet to me. I wish I could understand things better than I do, but I am so hard to teach.

Thursday morning. I feel as if I must write a few more lines. I have been reading your letter over this morning, and it seems so good to me. When I am here alone my mind seems to be on the Lord, and it seems as if I am not alone. I know he has blessed me, but for my part I do not see how he could, a poor miserable creature as I. I have often thought I would like a home in the church, but never could see my way clear to ask for it. I cannot see anything good in me, but there is where I long to be. O, if I could only speak my mind; it seems to keep me down, but I am still living in hope that he will bring things brighter to me some day. I often pass by streams of water, and they seem so beautiful to me I wish I could go down in and be baptized. O Lord, take me as I am. Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling.

I will close for this time. May the Lord have mercy on me, a poor sinner.

(MRS.) DELBERT MEAD.

I baptized this sister and her husband at Jefferson Church, N. Y., on Tuesday, Nov. 26th, 1918.

J. M. FENTON.

BOOK OF EDITORIALS.

We have on hand a number of copies of the Second Volume of Editorials. This book is made up of editorials written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the Signs of the Times from March, 1842, to March, 1847, and contains 768 pages, neatly bound in cloth.

This work originally sold at two dollars per copy, but as a few of the pages are stained by water we will, as long as the supply lasts, sell them at the extremely low price of seventy-five cents per copy. Postage paid by us. All who wish this book should procure it now, as we will have no more after these are sold.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the Signs of the Times will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1919.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PSALMS LXXXIV. 11, 12.

"FOR the Lord is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee."

It is by request that we attempt to take hold of this portion of Scripture, and to write upon it, not knowing whether what we shall be led to say will be of any benefit to any one. We think the key of this text lies in the expression, "Them that walk uprightly." Who is it that walks uprightly? The Psalms, as well as all other portions of the Old Testament, have for their main object to testify of Jesus: his life, sufferings, death, resurrection and glory. This is especially true of the Scripture we have taken under consideration here. Christ is the upright man, and they only are upright who are in him, and who, through him, are raised above the power and dominion of sin, and above the condemnation of the law. God made man upright, but he did not remain upright. Adam fell from his uprightness and became prostrate under the sentence of God's holy law. All the children of Adam are alike fallen in sin. All remain in sin except those who are made upright in Christ and through the power of his resurrection. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Not one of us is able to walk uprightly before God in Adam. It is only as we are in Christ that we obtain any uprightness in the sight of God. That which man considers upright is often mistaken as being acceptable in the sight of God, but men can never be any judges as to what is right in God's sight. Let us walk ever so uprightly in the eyes of the world, that does not say that our uprightness is the kind that God approves. In order to be approved in God's sight we must be accepted in the Beloved. It is not a question of whether we accept God, but whether God has made us accepted in Christ. Since, then, Jesus is the key of our text, as he must be of every text if we are to declare the truth, it follows that no good thing will God withhold from them who are in Christ Jesus, that to them God is a sun and a shield, and that to them he will give grace and glory. The Lord God is a sun to his people, he is their light, their understanding, and they walk in the light of this understanding, which the Lord God sheds within their hearts and souls. He is the light of his holy city, the church, so that no sun by day is needed there, nor any moon by night, for there is no night there. The reason there is no night there is because the church is no more under the law (the night dispensation), but under grace. In our article a month ago we tried to write on this subject of "light." We cannot write more now than we wrote then upon this subject. We tried to show at that time how the Lord God is the sun of his people. But he is also a shield to them. This shows him as their protector. The shield, in olden times, was held between the warrior and the enemy. The darts

of the assailers fell upon the shield, leaving the warrior himself unharmed. How wonderfully this shows what the Lord is to his people, in that all the temptations of the adversary were hurled at the people of God, but were caught by the Lord God, who, in the person of Jesus, stood between his people and all danger, receiving in himself all their afflictions, and bearing in himself the penalty of all their transgressions. The angel of his presence is ever about those who fear his name. Nothing shall hurt nor destroy one single one for whom Christ died. For them he has taken from death its sting and from the grave its victory, so they do not even need to fear what the last enemy may do to them. The gifts of the Lord to his people are grace and glory. The text says he gives them. If he gives them, then they do not earn them. If they receive them as the reward of their merit, then they are not gifts. Anything that one pays for, and which comes as the reward of service rendered, is not a gift. The grace and glory of God are bestowed upon his people as wholly free and unmerited gifts through Jesus Christ the Lord. This is the grace, or free favor of God, in which our salvation for time and eternity is all bound up. The glory which he gives is that glory which Christ had with the Father before the foundation of the world, and which Jesus prayed to the Father his people might enjoy with him as the outcome of the death and resurrection of Christ.

Then, in the last verse under consideration, we see the expression, "O Lord of hosts." "Hosts" means an immense number, a great multitude. God is the Lord of a great multitude, which no man can number. The "hosts" are those, an innumerable company, redeemed unto God by the blood of his Son, out of every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue and people under heaven. As a holy benediction comes the conclusion of the Psalm: "Blessed is the man that trusteth in thee." To have that trust and confidence in God which is alone the product of God-given faith is to have that treasure laid up above, where moth and rust cannot corrupt, and where thieves cannot break in unto and steal. We cannot tell any one how to trust in the Lord, and it is not possible, we think, for one to tell another how to do this. It is easy to trust him when God gives us faith to trust him, but it is impossible to bring about that trust of ourselves. One essential to trusting in the Lord is that all confidence in self must be destroyed. Not until the flesh and sense and self have betrayed us, and shown themselves as no longer worthy of our trust and confidence, will we turn therefrom by the grace of God unto that perfect trust in God which nothing but grace can bring about in us. It is infinitely blessed for a poor sinner to have this trust in God, for it is a perfect trust, which can never be betrayed. All of us, perhaps, have had friends who have failed us in times when we most needed friends, but here is One that sticketh closer than a brother, a rich and almighty Friend; he is not slack concerning his promises toward us, who has promised to be with his people always, even unto the end of the world, and beyond. Those who trust in Him are founded upon a rock; like Mount Zion they shall never be moved, nor ever be ashamed. We are made ashamed of those among men in whom we have misplaced confidence. Never shall God's people be ashamed for their trust in him. He is our strong tower and rock of defence, a very present help in trouble.

L.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at his home, 118 Forest Ave., St. Thomas, Ontario, March 29th, 1919, Duncan M. Gillis, of Muirkirk, Ont., and Jennie A. Bateman, of Iona Station, Ont.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Jacob H. Dubois was born March 1st, 1836, in Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., and died Feb. 8th, 1919, at his home, 53 Emerick St., Kingston, N. Y., of heart failure, making his stay on this earth 82 years, 11 months and 8 days. He was married to Sarah M. Buley March 20th, 1862, and to that union were born four children, two boys and two girls; one boy and one girl died when quite young; one son, one daughter and our dear sister survive him. He united with the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church in the year 1878, and was baptized by Elder Swarthout, of Cement City, Mich., and continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone, until his death, which was very sudden, falling dead by the side of the chopping-block after he had cut off a chicken's head. He was a faithful attendant of the church he loved as long as his health permitted, and loved to hear the name of Jesus exalted as the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

The funeral was held from his late home Feb. 11th, and was conducted by Elder George Ruston, of Kelly Corners, N. Y., who preached an able sermon to the comfort of lovers of the truth from the text given him by our dear bereaved sister: "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." The hymn, "Asleep in Jesus," was sung. The writer helped lay the remains to rest in the Winchell Cemetery, at Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y. May God comfort and sustain our bereaved sister and all the household of faith, is my prayer.

ORVILLE WINCHELL.

Sterling Bliss Turner, son of George W. and Mildred C. Turner, was born April 27th, 1902, and departed this life August 8th, 1918, making his stay on earth 16 years, 4 months and 11 days. His death was not due to suffering nor disease, but in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the summons came with the lightning from above and snatched him from the earthly home and friends he loved so well. He and his father had gone to the cemetery to clean off our lots, when business called his father away for a few hours, leaving the child alone. When clouds began to gather and it threatened to rain he sought his horse to come home, when lightning struck the tree under which he and his horse were, killing them both. When his father, in company with two neighbors, returned, he was found lying on his face with his eyes closed and hands folded under his breast. A more dutiful and obedient child was never given to parents. His last words to me were noble intentions for future manhood life. He was kind and gentle, and seemed to be happy when serving his parents and five sisters. Those who knew him best said he was too good a boy to stay in this world.

By request of his parents the fourteenth chapter of Job was read, and the text was: "He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down." Brethren Ira Harryman and Ford conducted the funeral service, and the cherished form was laid to rest in the New Hope Cemetery to await the final resurrection of the dead. When this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

Written by his sad and broken-hearted mother.

MILDRED TURNER.

Mrs. Martha R. Hutchison, our beloved sister in Christ, departed this life March 30th, 1919, at her home in Washington, D. C. She was the daughter of John W. Thomas and Emily Owens Hamilton, both deceased, and both of whom had been members of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in Loudoun County, Va. Sister Hutchison was also a member of the Ebenezer Church, having been baptized by the late Elder J. N. Badger some eighteen or nineteen years ago. She was born May 22nd, 1852, at Circleville Mills, Loudoun Co., Va., and married to Wm. N. Hutchison about 1871. To them were born four children, only one of whom survives sister Hutchison: Dr. Claudius P. Hutchison, of Arcola, Va. Her husband died in 1908. She is also survived by one and only brother, Dr. I. H. Thomas, of Aldie, Va., deacon of the Mt. Zion Church. Sister Hutchison had a warm place in the hearts of her brethren, for she was truly devoted to the cause of God's truth and to the welfare and prosperity of Zion. She was a woman of a deeply spiritual mind, with whom it was always a delight to me to hold conversation upon those topics which lie nearest our hearts, but which we so often allow to lie submerged beneath lighter and more trivial intercourse. I mean by this that when we Old Baptists get together we so often spend our time talking of worldly affairs, when we might better be talking of those things which ought to, and I am sure do, lie nearest our hearts—the things of the kingdom of God. But sister Hutchison was one who would not let you talk much about the world, for after being with her a few moments she would lead the conversation into spiritual channels. She was a stanch believer in predestination of all things, salvation by grace and all these fundamental principles of the doctrine of Jesus Christ. No minister of God has ever been able to lay down the doctrine too

strongly and positively to suit her. She was a good singer, and had one of those high, melodious, soprano voices, which rang out clear in the praise of her God. We miss her, but are assured she is at rest. May the Holy Spirit comfort the bereaved brother and son, as well as the bereaved church. She was buried at Ebenezer. L.

Robert E. Bailey died at his home near Salisbury, Md., Jan. 10th, 1919, after a brief but severe attack of influenza followed by pneumonia. He is survived by his devoted companion, three children, two sons and one daughter, the children all being under eleven years of age, his father and mother, brother Wm. E. Bailey and sister Mary J. Bailey, and his sister, Mrs. Charles Hayman. He will be greatly missed by them all, and many others who loved him for his excellent qualities. Just a few days before the end came he said to his father, "Are you afraid to die?" and when he replied, "No, son," he said, "Neither am I, though I have much to live for."

The funeral was held at his late residence and was largely attended. Services were conducted by the writer, who deeply sympathizes with them all. Burial in Parson's Cemetery, Salisbury, Md.

May the Lord, who is able to comfort all that mourn, be with this dear family in their sorrow, and by his wisdom and power reconcile them to his will in this as in all things else.

J. C. MELLOTT.

Daniel Thomas Pitchford was born in Illinois Aug. 18th, 1831, and was married to Miss Amanda L. McGowan in 1850. To that union were born eight children, five of whom are now living: C. C. Pitchford, of Rich Hill, Mo., Mrs. Bunavista Bailey, of Alton, Ill., W. Paul, T. J. Pitchford and Mrs. Laura Kane, of St. Johns, Oregon. His wife died in April, 1871, and in November, 1871, he was married to Mrs. Elizabeth Yarbrough. To that union were born four children: Edward L. Pitchford, Mrs. Lydia Burr and Mrs. Ida Nielson, of Portland, and J. J. Pitchford, of Lebanon, Oregon. He also reared two stepsons: Franklin D. and Gordon C. Yarbrough, of Ashland, Oregon. His wife died in 1899, and he was married to sister Sarah Jarnigan, widow of the late Elder James Jarnigan, who survives him. In 1873 he moved to Rich Hill, Mo., and in 1884 moved across the plains to Oregon, settling on a farm near Scio. He sold his farm about ten years ago and bought a home in Lebanon, Oregon, where he died Feb. 20th, 1919, at the age of 87 years, 6 months and 2 days. In early life brother Pitchford experienced deep conviction for sin, but was in due time delivered from the rigorous and exacting demands of the law through faith in the crucified and risen Savior. He offered himself to the church, and both he and his wife were baptized, neither knowing of the other's convictions and consequent troubles, and arose to walk in newness of life. How well he kept that sacred trust delivered unto him for nearly seventy years his host of friends well know. If he had an enemy I never heard of it. He had held membership with the church at Rich Hill, also at Scio, Oregon, but his membership at the time of his death was with Bethel Church, meeting at Tallman, Oregon. His last illness was of short duration, only about ten minutes; he quietly fell asleep. As he had previously asked sister Pitchford to call the writer to take charge of the funeral services, I tried to speak words of comfort, using as a text 2 Cor. v. 1, after which the remains were laid beside his second wife in Providence Cemetery to await the coming of the Master.

A. HORNER.

Robert Fuggles, of Delphi Falls, N. Y., died March 13th, 1919. He was born in England May 23rd, 1844, and came to this country when five years of age. He was married to Mary Day in January, 1868, who died nine years ago. He leaves behind to mourn his absence two sons: John, at Delphi station, and Edwin, who lives near Delphi village, two brothers and five sisters. He was sick five days of influenza and pneumonia. I have been personally acquainted with him and his family nearly forty years, and can say he loved the truth as it is in Jesus, and his house was a home for God's people. He never united with the church, his excuse being that which is common to all the redeemed of the Lord, saying he was too unworthy and unfit to unite with christians. We believe he is with his dear Savior and is satisfied. May the dear Lord bless the two sons, brothers, sisters and mourning friends with all needed grace, is my prayer for Jesus' sake. He was buried at Woodstock May 16th. D. M. VAIL.

G. W. Jones was born in Bibb County, Ga., Jan. 26th, 1850, and died March 27th, 1919. He came to Texas in 1877, and in 1881 was married to Miss Lottie Herrin, who lived but one year. In August, 1884, he was married to Miss Ella Wright. To that union were born eight children; his wife and six children survive him. All the children were with him when the end came except one, who is now in Germany. Mr. Jones raised an honorable and intelligent family, and had the respect of the entire community, as was evidenced by the large concourse of friends at his funeral. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace and the sovereignty of God, though he never united with the church. His house was a home for the Old Baptists. I would say to the bereaved, Weep not as those who have no hope. May God's richest blessings rest upon his aged companion and the entire family.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort on the resurrection. W. W. SLAUGHTER.

Mrs. Emma Parks, my dear cousin, wife of Lennie T. Parks and daughter of Francis and Bertie Holland, was born April 24th, 1884, and departed this life Feb. 23rd, 1919, at her home in Pocomoke City, Md., at the age of 34 years, 9 months and 29 days. She died from a complication of diseases resulting from an attack of influenza and pneumonia. She leaves her husband, father and mother, one little boy two years old, three brothers and one sister, besides a large number of relatives and friends, by whom she was greatly loved. Emma was a woman of lovely traits, kind, even tempered, and always carried a smile. She was a loving wife, devoted mother and dutiful daughter. She was a member of the Pitt's Creek Baptist Church, Cedar Hall, Md. We are prone to ask, Why should such a beautiful character be taken away just in the prime of life? but may we be enabled to say, Thy will, and not mine, be done. May the Lord comfort the bereaved husband and the aged father and mother in their hour of affliction.

Her cousin,

GEORGIA BYRD NORTHAM.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. H. H. McGee, Ill., $1.00; C. H. Byrnside, W. Va., $1.00; Sallie R. Powell, Va., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church expects to entertain the Warwick Old School Baptist Association on June 4th, 5th and 6th at Ocean Grove, N. J. A more definite notice will appear later.

CYRUS RISLER, Jr., Church Clerk.

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church holds her regular meetings at 13th and Lexington Sts., Sellwood, at 2 p. m. on the fourth Sunday in each month. Sellwood is a suburb of Portland, Oregon. Take any outgoing Sellwood car. S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

Newberg, Oregon.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Middletown and Andes Church will hold their meetings the first Sunday in every month at their meetinghouse, Union Grove, N. Y. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

There will be meeting every first Sunday at Halcott Center, N. Y., in the Grange Hall. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

BY J. E. BEEBE & COMPANY

MIDDLETOWN, ORANGE CO., NEW YORK,

To whom all letters should be addressed, and money orders made payable.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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(Judges v. 11.)

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By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at 5 cents per copy. Address,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 87. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1919. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD:—More than a month has passed since I received your letter. That month has been one of burdens, temptations, discouragements, but I have been waiting upon the Lord. What a kindness is this from the Lord to have my heart inclined unto him, and mercies, new covenant mercies, have been my heritage from the God of our salvation. The people of God are such as "know me," saith the Lord, "from the least of them unto the greatest of them." —Jer. xxxi. 34. "They shall be all taught of God."—John vi. 45. There is so much spurious, shallow profession of the name of Christ that it becomes us to examine ourselves whether we be in the faith, whether we are Christ's or not. "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."—Romans viii. 9. "Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"—2 Cor. xiii. 5. Many who give their assent to some scraps of doctrine imagine themselves believers. With their mouth they show much love to God, to Christ and his people, (Ezek. xxxiii. 31,) but they have no heart toward Christ crucified, and have never known the experience of a broken and contrite heart. They draw nigh unto God with the mouth, and with the lips profess to worship him, but their heart is far from me, saith the Lord. (Matt. xv. 8.) O, I feel to crave a heart near to the Lord, that I may be of that people near unto him, and that he may be nigh unto me. O the blessedness of a poor sinner who is made nigh by the blood of Christ. O to know God, or rather to be known of God. "I know my sheep, and am known of mine."—John x. 14. Now, dear sister, those who are of God cannot be satisfied with anything less than this experimental heart intimacy with Jesus Christ our Lord, whom to know is life eternal. This knowledge of him in his all-preciousness, all-sufficiency and suitability is best known in our straits, our trials, conflicts and sorrows. "I did know thee in the wilderness, in the land of great drought." —Hosea xiii. 5. "Thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities."—Psalms xxxi. 7. Many can be found in their demonstrations of intimacy while we are smiling, in prosperity, but when troubles come, when our sore

runs in the night, friends stand aloof from our sore, refuge fails us. "No man cared for my soul."—Psalms cxlii. 4. Ah, cisterns may be broken and creatures all fail, we may have many enemies, but we have one Friend.

"There is a Friend that sticketh fast,
And keeps his love from first to last,
And Jesus is his name.
An earthly brother drops his hold,
Is sometimes hot and sometimes cold,
But Jesus is the same."

The Lord will not forsake us, though he sometimes hides himself in time of trouble and suffers us, amidst our afflictions and conflicts, to sink very low, and he sees that our power is gone. We have to learn that our hewed-out cisterns become broken and can hold no water. Our God only is the Fountain of living waters. The water that our dearly beloved covenant Head gives us is in us a well of living water springing up into everlasting life. I find no companionship with the easy-going, unexercised professors of Christ's name; for the communion of saints one with another is in their union to Jesus Christ, the dear Savior, and thus in him with one another. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."—1 John i. 3.

In your letter you speak of sorrows and sufferings given you to endure, in which you have been, you judge, prepared to enter into some of "the deep things of God." Yes, afflictions, temptations and conflicts are the Lord's school in which his children are taught. "Who teacheth like him?" Hezekiah exclaimed, "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live."—Isaiah xxxviii. 16. Through the waters and through the fires the pathway lies, and there is no way for the ransomed of the Lord to evade those peculiar trials and afflictions which our heavenly Father has appointed to each one in weight and measure as seemeth good in his sight. All the paths of the Lord are judgment and truth unto those who fear him, and all the discipline, the chastenings that we endure at his hand, are for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. (Heb. xii. 10.) Surely we shall prove this to be so, though we now find it to be very true that no chastening for the present is joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby. All our vexations and sorrows are to show us the vanity of all earthly things, to make us sick of self, of the world, to wean us from all earthly dross and to make us fond of and to find our all in Jesus Christ, our covenant Head. "Christ is all and in you all." There are times in the dispensation of our heavenly Father when some dear child of God is found in great tribulation, passing through great and sore troubles of soul; and these inward tribulations may also be attended with outward providential afflictions. The apostle Paul said, "Without were fightings, within were fears: but God who comforteth those that are cast down, comforteth us by the coming of Titus." Sometimes while in the deeps we are overwhelmed with darkness and confusion, and are at "our wits' end. But God hath his path in the deep waters, and he will guide and sustain us there, for "underneath are the everlasting arms," and there it pleases him to instruct us and discover to us deep things of the riches of his grace unto us in Jesus Christ, and bring out to light the shadow of death. There is (truly we

prove it to be so) in Christ Jesus our dear Savior a balm for all our wounds; there is consolation in him strong and deep, reaching us in all the deeps of our woes, yes, sustaining and refreshing us when fainting and ready to die. The deeps are the places where groans and fervent supplications are made unto our God. When my heart is overwhelmed, unto thee will I cry, Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I. (Psalms lxi. 2.) "I cried unto the Lord out of the low dungeon."—Lam. iii. 55. "I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice."—Jonah ii. 2. If we are to know the lamentations and triumphs of Zion, if we love and mourn with Jerusalem and are glad and rejoice with her, then it will be our experience to be brought "low in a low place," and our God shall comfort us with the sure mercies of David, even as one whom his mother comforteth; and we shall ascend, and sing in the heights of Zion; we shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd, and our soul shall be as a watered garden, and there we shall not sorrow any more at all. (Jer. xxxi. 12.) O how amiable thou art, dear Savior, thou art altogether lovely; so suitable to me, a frail mortal, so precious, comforting and satisfying to me, a vile transgressor. The satisfactions of time, of the earth, of the flesh, are vanity; none, however pleasing, are enduring; they are fleeting, they fade, they decline and pass away. Ah, earthly sweets are often turned into bitterness, but in the covenant of grace every bitter thing is sweet. There is a sweetening of all things there. There are bitter herbs to be eaten with Christ, our Passover, sacrificed for us, and to have a broken and contrite heart at the mercy-seat is sweet. Our tears there are sweet. How sweet were the tears of that sinner who bathed Jesus' feet with tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head. The waters of Marah are made sweet unto us when the tree of the cross of Christ is cast in.

"Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,
Which before the cross I spend;
Life and health and peace possessing
From the sinner's dying Friend.

Here I'll sit forever viewing
Mercy's streams in streams of blood;
Precious drops my soul bedewing,
Plead and claim my peace with God."

Though Christ Jesus is to the Jew a stumbling-block, and to the Greek foolishness, yet how altogether essential to our hope and comfort is Christ and him crucified. The bitten Israelites beheld the serpent of brass and lived, (Numbers xxi. 6–9,) and as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so our precious Christ was lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have eternal life. (John iii. 14, 15.) Have we not been drawn to the crucified One? The only begotten Son that is in the bosom of the Father declares the Father unto us. So, dear sister, I may say that it was in Christ crucified that first I knew our God. O, there was given a heart to know him, eyes of faith, of all entreaty, of all confiding trust and love to look unto him on Calvary's cross. "Look unto me and be ye saved," is the cry of the crucified Savior.

"Bought with the Savior's pains and blood;
Amazing love! What tongue can tell
The glory which I saw in God
When at his bleeding feet I fell?"

"Love and grief my heart dividing,
With my tears his feet I'll bathe;
Constant still in faith abiding,
Life deriving from his death.

May I still enjoy this feeling,
In all need to Jesus go;
Prove his wounds each day more healing,
And myself more deeply know."

On to the end of our pilgrimage we are journeying, and the Lord, who has taught us to trust in his name, has not brought us thus far to put us to shame. Christ is in our hearts the hope of glory; we shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end. Our life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall appear with him in glory. O the unspeakable blessedness of our hope in our dear Redeemer.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Dec. 11, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—If this letter of Elder McClanahan's is of any value to you, you may use it,otherwise lay it aside. I hope you and yours are well.

Yours in best of bonds,

J. M. FENTON.

POCA, W. Va., Nov. 17, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER FENTON:—I will try to answer your letter, which came to hand some time ago, also the card I received yesterday bearing the sad news of the death of Elder Durand. Sickness in my family was the cause of my not writing sooner. I was sorry to learn of your sickness, but rejoice to know that you are living, and able to inform me of brother Durand's death. Truly we have to say, A noble man has fallen. The editors of the SIGNS will miss him, and those who read that noble paper will also miss him, for he was one of God's chosen and qualified servants to preach the gospel of the Son of God, and his writings were well seasoned with the experience of God's little ones, who so often are seeking comfort. While sorrow fills our hearts, we must say, Thy will be done, O Lord God of heaven and earth.

Since I received your good letter the words "eat and die" have been ringing in my ears every day. It is not that I feel competent to write upon this all-important subject, but just to ease my mind. I have been very much cast down in my feelings since returning from the three associations that I was blessed to visit this fall. O how true it is, as Solomon has said, A word fitly spoken is as apples of gold in pictures of silver. You said in your letter to me, It looks like eat and die pretty often with us. As lifeless as I was at that time I got comfort from those words eat and die. How often have we feasted on the bread of life, broken by the servants of God, and felt that such refreshing seasons were from the presence of the Lord. The Lord knows altogether our uprisings and downsittings which must work for our good. The life of Elijah, when viewed in the light of the Spirit, is of great comfort to the church, which the widow prefigured. When in a spiritual sense our brook seems to be dry, and we are ready to cry, Where is the blessedness I knew when first I saw the Lord? Where is the soul's refreshing view of Jesus and his word? when zeal in the cause of Christ abates and our devotion dies, when we feel no sensible delight in prayer, and the spirit of praise and thanksgiving is gone, when we see nothing around to awaken and encourage us, and the love of many has waxed cold, these are seasons of darkness, and very trying indeed, but in the midst of this gloom we are made to remember him who has said of his vineyard, I, the Lord, do keep it. I will water it every moment. I will keep it night and day. Night and day includes all the time. The God of our salvation will certainly keep his word, therefore let us be of good cheer, for spiritual drought and barrenness of soul shall be turned into a blessing. The Spirit of the Lord com-

manded Elijah, "Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee." As I have already stated, this widow prefigured the church. Elijah is ordered upon a long and tiresome journey, through a wild and barren country, in a time of great famine and extreme drought, but the One who keeps Israel was Elijah's guide, and he was sure there was no mistake in the command of his God, for, As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my Beloved among the sons. Zidon lay beyond the border of Israel, among a heathen people enslaved to vile idolatry, the native country of Jezebel, the prophet's bitterest enemy, as a lamb among wolves. Thus was Elijah placed, but he was as wise as a serpent and as harmless as a dove. "I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee." Among so many widows in the land how is this widow to be found? This indeed was bringing the blind by a way they knew not. But be still, and know that I am God. In following after this wonderful man of God we soon find him in the neighborhood of Zarephath, which was midway between Zidon and Tyre, which signifies a smelting furnace of affliction, whereby the Lord tries and purifies his people; the hand of God was his guide, which is the power of God. The Lord, who was there before him, had prepared and arranged all for his reception; truly the Lord had gone out before him. We see this wonderful man of God as he comes near the gate of the city, and lo, the widow woman was there gathering sticks for fuel. The unerring Spirit of God revealed to him that this was the widow, and he therefore called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. She readily started for the water, when he added, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand. With this request she brought from the depth of her heart her concealed feelings, and answered, As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not even the smallest loaf of bread, all I have is but a handful of meal in a barrel and a little oil in a cruse, and lo, I have been gathering a stick or two for a fire on my hearth that I might dress it for myself and for my child as our last meal in this world, that we might eat it and die. Truly in many respects the prophet Elijah typified Christ, but more particularly John the Baptist. "No prophet is accepted in his own country, but I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow." The church of Jesus Christ is brought to view under the appellation of a widow, her first husband being dead. Yes, my brother, we eat of the bread of life, and rejoice while feasting, but ere we are aware we have become lifeless, dead, groping in darkness.

I will close this imperfect letter; it is so much like the writer I hesitate to send it. I hope to hear from you soon. My wife is very sick at this time. My daughter has recovered from influenza.

Your brother, I hope,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

BALTIMORE, Md.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I feel a desire to write you a few words of commendation, that if the Lord wills it might be of some comfort in your dark hours of trial. I wish to say that where a brother has differed with your views on any portion of God's word or the meaning thereof, you have shown that meekness and love which both Christ and Paul taught, both by word and deed. You have tried to show them by the Scriptures that your views are correct, yet with no malice on your part against them because they appear to differ with you. When some of the disciples told Christ they had seen some worshiping who did not follow them, that they forbade them, Jesus rebuked them, saying, They that are not against us are for us. It appears that the flesh was made manifest in the apostles' act, and I feel sometimes it is the flesh getting in the ascendancy that causes so much trouble and confusion in the church of the living God. Some want everybody else to follow them. The apostle Paul said, Though I speak with the tongue of men or of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. It appears to me that he was speaking this not only for that particular time and occasion, but exhorting the preachers, exhorters and writers of future generations that though they might be able to proclaim the glorious doctrine of God our Savior in all its beauty, and did not show forth charity, or love for their brethren, they would become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal to those who heard them or read their writings. Dear brother, it appears that charity is shown forth in all of your editorials which I have seen where some brother has taken exception to what you have set forth. The word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword. Dear brother, stick to the word of God in season and out of season, and let that do the dividing; preach and write salvation by free and unmerited grace, both here and hereafter, and thereby exalt the name of Jesus and build up, strengthen and comfort the poor of the flock, those who feel unable to even think a good thought or do a good act unless it is prompted by the Spirit that they are born of, and which dwells in God's little ones; for he said, I will lead them and they shall follow me, and I will never leave them nor forsake them; I will be their God and they shall be my people, showing that he leads and directs them as it seemeth good in his sight.

Dear brother, I do not know why I have written as I have, only I felt to write, and just recorded my thoughts as they occurred to me. I hope to always be able to take the SIGNS, for I think it is the best Baptist paper that I ever read. If there is anything in this worth publishing you may do so, if not, throw it into the wastebasket and it will be all right with me. May it please the dear Lord to bless the editors and publishers of the SIGNS and send peace in Zion.

From one of the least of the flock, if a sheep at all.

Your brother, I hope,

L. C. GODWIN.

KENDALL, Wash., Jan. 3, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—Another year has passed with all of its joys and sorrows, and still God rules, as he always has and always will in all things, whether we or any one believes it or not, for he says so, and he never said there was any other creature, man or being helping him, or ever would be called upon to help, for God is the same yesterday,

to-day and forever, declaring, I am God, and there is none else. Although there are gods many and lords many, yet there is but one true and living God. It seems to me that they have lately greatly multiplied their false gods, entirely ignoring the true and living God, though no more than they who trust in and worship the gods of this world have always done, for they know no other God; to know God is to love and worship him. Who of all the host engaged in the recent world war ever gave God the honor or glory of a single victory gained? when in fact all honor and all glory in every victory belongs to him; and while the loss of life was appalling, and grief and suffering beyond description, I dare not say God did not ordain it so. Some blame President Wilson for not going into the war sooner, declaring that so many lives could have been spared, because the war would have ended sooner; but not until the last shot was fired and the last life sacrificed could it have stopped. How different we would have things if we could, and we think sometimes that we are neglected and badly used, and we (or at least I do) think some hard and rebellious things against our kind and merciful heavenly Father, who is only leading me about and instructing me, and I find to my great joy that there is no strange god with me, but the same God that led about Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. I often feel like poor old Jacob when he said and verily believed, "All these things are against me," and in His own appointed time I, like Jacob, find it to be a glorious dispensation of Providence, for we cannot see his face, but we see his hinder parts, and if this is so glorious to us what will it be to see him face to face and tell the story saved by grace? Is it possible that I, so full of sin and uncleanness, shall be permitted to see him face to face? I do not know, but know I love him and the suffering sons of sorrow, and at times I get so cast down and discouraged and sick of this world and this old body that I long to go home, for there is such a great love in my heart, like a well of living water springing up unto eternal life, it envelops my whole being, soul, body and spirit, and I long to fly away and be at rest.

Well, I see I have rambled on and on, just followed the lead of my mind, hoping to comfort others with the comfort wherewith I have been comforted. It is so sweet to trust in Jesus, just to take him at his word; just to feel that he is with us, just to know thus saith the Lord. I just wanted to tell you how much I appreciate the SIGNS. I hope the Lord will give the editors and correspondents messages of love and good cheer to lighten the paths of the weary pilgrims on their way through this vale of toil and tears.

DAVIS BURCH.

COLUMBUS, Ga., Oct. 27, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have read and reread your last editorial in our family paper, the dear old SIGNS, and I desire to tell you of the joy and comfort it gave me. I felt greatly edified, and I felt my heart go out in love and praise to the blessed Savior who in love and mercy prepared these glorious things for his own: a city whose inhabitants are all in harmony and love, all is peace and rest, a place of safety and quiet. The people who inhabit this city are a chosen generation, an holy nation, who shall evermore sing God's praise. O what happiness and joy, no tongue can tell, to sit at the Master's feet and learn of him, heeding not the things of this world, looking unto Jesus, who loved us and gave himself for us.

"Zion's a city God hath blessed
With peace and everlasting rest;
A glorious city, strong and fair,
And Jesus dwells for ever there."

I feel to thank the Lord that he has freely given you, and all his ministers, wisdom and understanding concerning the things of his kingdom, which things you come telling, teaching the weak ones, for comfort and instruction, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth. How lovable for those whom our Lord has given much to write often about these glorious things, that they may divide with one another, for all are one family. Each little one can read these beautiful texts of Scripture and meditate upon them, deriving joy and benefit; then another is given to write or speak on them, showing other things of consolation, thereby adding to each other's happiness. Those whom God hath called and fitted to expound his truth to us are helps and blessings. Paul said unto the elders, "I have shewed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." I know that our God is unchangeable, aboundeth in mercy and is ever watching over those who love and trust him, but sometimes he seems so far away we need all the light and truth we can get. I could ask no higher earthly privilege today than to be so situated that I could hear you (or any other minister sound in the doctrine) proclaim the riches of God's grace. I am sometimes cast down and disquieted because of my isolation, yet I know that our God is good and kind, and rules all things for the best, and that this can all be overruled to my good, but I long to hear the preached word, for the companionship of a few kindred souls; yea, to hear the truth preached in love, for if the truth is preached at all it must be in love, for the God of truth is love, and Jesus is the expression of that love in the highest, and the truth is that in which the fellowship of the people of God lives and abides. Fellowship is but another name for love of the brethren. But, brother, if this unrest, this hungering and thirsting, means that I am alive in Christ, then I am blessed beyond all I deserve. It is a precious consolation that God has predestinated all for good to the church, his body; that none of the principles of this glorious doctrine shall ever be changed or removed, held in place by the cords of his love.

Now, brother, I will close lest I weary you. I am sure you will throw the mantle of charity over my imperfections, knowing I am a poor, weak worm of the dust. I hope you will write often for the good old SIGNS, and that God will strengthen, encourage and bless the editors in their work. May God bless you all, is my prayer.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

HERNDON, Va., Nov. 25, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am now renewing my subscription to the dear old SIGNS for another year by inclosing check for three dollars, two dollars for the SIGNS and one dollar to aid in sending the paper to the poor of the flock. I would be glad at this time to write you a short letter telling you how well I like the coming of the SIGNS, but alas, I still feel to be a blank as to letter writing, and try to be content in meditating on some portion of Scripture, which sometimes gives me a little ray of hope that I, even I, a poor, worthless sinner, may be included in that family of children chosen in Christ before the world was made. O what a sure

foundation is this for poor weary pilgrims to rest their little hope upon. Chosen in Christ before the world began, and the Lord knoweth them that are his. The nature of the old man in me causes me often to say within myself that I am not one of those chosen in the Savior of sinners before the world began. O, I am so weak, I am not able to say as did the Savior to Satan, Get thee behind me, Satan. I have not the power to do, and there is but one power that can set Satan in his bounds, and that power is the power of God.

I will now leave off writing about myself and Satan and turn my attention to a few lines regarding the very sad news of dear Elder Silas H. Durand's death. Dear soldier of the cross of Christ, he is gone, but will never be forgotten by those who knew him and loved him for the truth's sake. In thinking now of Elder Durand's death I am reminded of dear old Paul's words: I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. (2 Tim. iv. 6-8.) Again Paul said: For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. David speaks often of tabernacles, and he also speaks of holy hills. Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He answers the questions by saying, "He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart."—Psalms xv. 1, 2. Jesus is the only man who ever lived on the earth that could do the things spoken of by David which I have referred to above. Paul speaks of our earthly house of this tabernacle, then he speaks of a house we have after death—a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. He says we know; his faith led him to confirm the matter. We know after we leave this earthly tabernacle we have a building which is of God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. O for such faith as Paul had, and such faith as dear Elder Durand had. Such faith would cause us all to exclaim in the language of the poet:

"O land of rest, for thee I sigh;
When will the moment come
When I shall lay my armor by,
And dwell with Christ at home?"

I must close, for I have written too much already. Love to the editors and publishers and all the household of faith.

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,
JOHN F. OLIVER.

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., Nov. 17, 1918.

DEAR FRIENDS AND KINDRED IN CHRIST:—Wife, mother and I have been going over some old letters, and I inclose one with this received from Elder Vail fifteen years ago for your disposal. From the tone of it my letter to him must have been about the same as I would write tonight—the same doubts, fears and questionings, and so very often feeling the force of hymn No. 1251, which we have in these past fifteen or twenty years sang together: "If a moment in praising of God I employ, I have hours again to complain." I am sometimes encouraged by the thought that it is a trait of children to murmur and repine with blessings in their hand, so that seasons are given to rest in the midst of darkness and distress of mind, when the assurance comes with power that such frames of

mind are the peculiar lot of all who are taught of the Lord to know that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked."

Please remember us to all in christian love.

Sincerely, in hope,

EVERETT R. KINNEY.

WAVERLY, Pa., March 6, 1903.

DEAR BROTHER KINNEY:—Your letter of recent date came to me all right. You wrote just as I have felt most of the time for the past twenty-two years, and I can say I truly sympathize with you. I am full of darkness, doubts and fears, and often think what a poor deluded mortal I am; I have grasped the shadow and missed the substance. What an awful state to be in! O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I hope I do know that none but God Almighty can help me, for everything else has failed me. We read in the good book, When father and mother forsake thee, I the Lord will take thee up; which means, I think, when all earthly comforts and prospects are blasted the Lord will appear, but O how long he seems to wait to be gracious. In his time, not mine, he will come; yes, in the very clouds that surround us on every hand is the chariot in which he rides; he maketh the clouds his chariot. Dear brother, you remember that when Jesus was taken up from the earth a cloud received him out of their sight. The dear disciples were gazing up into the heavens, but he was gone. Two men clothed in white standing by said to them, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. That means as he left in a cloud he will return in a cloud, and might it not be that the dark, heavy cloud in which you are now engulfed is his chariot, and will break with blessings on your head? God knows it all. Think of poor old Jacob; his son Joseph is dead, he supposes; then comes the famine, then his son Benjamin is a prisoner down in Egypt. What a dark cloud in the poor man's life. In despair he says, All these things are against me. I have no doubt he longed to die. Think of Elijah at the brook Kedar, having nothing, yet well provided for. So cheer up, dear brother who knows but it is the third watch of the night? If so, the sun will soon appear, then like Jacob (Israel) you can say, It is enough. Remember me kindly to your wife.

Your unworthy brother,

D. M. VAIL.

CANON CITY, Colo., April 6, 1919.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am writing a short note to ask you to please change the address of my paper from 3506 Garner Ave., Kansas City, Mo., to this place, as we have thought it advisable on account of Mrs. Ketchum's health to move to a higher altitude. If this should be read by any Old School or Primitive Baptists in this part of Colorado we would be glad to hear from them.

Your brother,

SMITH KETCHUM.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

GENERATION.

A READER of the SIGNS, living in Connecticut, has asked us to give our views on the meaning of the word "generation" in six passages of Scripture, each of which she cites. The first is Luke xxi. 32: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled." In the verses preceding this expression of the Savior he had been foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem, and of the signs and events that should accompany that destruction. Some of our excellent brethren have referred these declarations of Jesus to the end of the gospel dispensation; that is, to the end of this material world, and to the winding up of the events of time at the conclusion of all worldly things. These brethren understand the word "generation" to mean, not a generation of men, but the generation, or offspring, of Jesus Christ, that the word means the people of God, and that they are not to pass away until all these things told by Jesus in the twenty-first chapter of Luke should come to pass. However, carefully as we consider this view of the word "generation" as it is used in Luke xxi., and greatly as we esteem the brethren who thus view it, we do not agree with it ourself. We understand the incidents portrayed by the Savior in this instance to refer only to the coming to an end of the legal dispensation, to the end of Jewish nationality and to the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem, which embodied all the rites and ceremonies of Jewish worship. We do not understand that any of these things are yet in the future before us now, still to be fulfilled, therefore the word "generation," as used in this instance, does not mean the offspring, or children, of Jesus Christ, but it means that the generation of men living when Jesus spoke those words were not to pass away until they should see all those things come to pass. In other words, that these calamities should befall the Jews within the lifetime of some of those then living. In Matthew xvi. 21–27, Jesus foretells his death and resurrection and that which was to follow, though not as much in detail as in Luke. However, in Matthew he says, "There be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." There can be no doubt but that Jesus meant that some of those very ones to whom he was then talking should not die until the fulfillment of those things. The same thing occurs in Mark ix. 1, where Jesus assured those then living that the kingdom of God was to come with power before they should taste of death. If the setting up of the gospel kingdom, as recorded in the early part of the Acts, is not the coming of God's kingdom with power, then we are at a loss to know what the coming of the kingdom with power does mean. Taking all these Scriptures together and comparing them, we must aver that the word "generation," as used in Luke xxi. 32, means a generation as reckoned

among men, and does not mean the offspring or children of God.

The second Scripture is Psalms xiv. 5: "There were they in great fear: for God is in the generation of the righteous." This means that God is in the offspring, or children, of Jesus Christ. That One born of the virgin, and who himself was the only begotten Son of God, is the righteous. No sinner ever is righteous in God's sight except as the righteousness of Jesus is imputed unto the sinner. So, Jesus being that righteous One of God in whom all the elect are made righteous, it follows that the "generation of the righteous" must mean, and can only mean, the elect of God in Christ Jesus who became actually his in generation, or in being quickened by his Spirit into divine life and born in due time according to his will, and not the will of men. God is in them. He makes his tabernacle in his people. Their bodies are the temple of the living God.

The third Scripture cited by our inquirer is Psalms xxii. 30: "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." This seed that shall serve him is the seed, not of David, Jesse's son, but the seed of the spiritual David, our Lord Jesus Christ. Those born, or begotten, of Him are all one generation, though they may be scattered over long ages of time, and live in and among successive generations of men. All the Lord's people are his generation, one generation, not many generations. Thus, the Lord counts them, or reckons them, as being one generation, no matter whether his people lived ages ago, are living in the world now, or whether they shall live here many years hence.

The fourth text is Psalms xxiv. 6: "This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah." Previous to these words in the twenty-fourth Psalm, the question is asked, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?" The answer is: "He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully." Immediately we see this cuts us all off from ever standing in God's holy place if we expect to come there through any works or merit of our own, for there is not a member of all the race of Adam in all the history of the world whose hands have been wholly clean, or whose heart has been pure; not one but who has at some time or other lifted up his soul unto vanity, or who has sworn deceitfully. This forever excludes human nature from ascending the hill of the Lord. The only cleanness, purity and sincerity in which a sinner shall ever ascend unto the Lord must be the perfect excellence of Jesus, which God gave to his people in his covenant of election before time began. Therefore the word "generation," as used in this Psalm, since it is in the singular and not in the plural, must mean one generation. It is the generation of Jesus Christ running through all ages of time, and composed of those who seek the Lord.

The next Scripture offered by our reader for our consideration is Isaiah liii. 8: "Who shall declare his generation?" As the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah wonderfully foretells the sufferings and humiliation of Jesus, this verse asks, Who is able to tell the generation? that is, Who is able to tell who are the people of the living God? His offspring are those born of the Spirit, hence a spiritual heritage not discernible by men. The Lord knows his people, who they are and where they are, but who among men is there that can number them? Men can write the gene-

alogies of their fellows, can tell who their children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren are; but here is Jesus, who was cut off out of the land of the living, who was taken from prison and from judgment; therefore who is there that is able to tell his generation, since it is a spiritual lineage, and not one of flesh and blood?

The last text is 1 Peter ii. 9: "Ye are a chosen generation." This, too, means the children of God, who were chosen in Christ before the world began, afterward to be generated or made manifest here in the world in their being translated from darkness into His marvelous light.

Now we have answered these questions the best we could, conscious all the time that there are those among our brethren who know vastly more about these things than we do, and who are far better able to write more clearly, but we have given the best that is in us. L.

NOTICE.

WE were compelled to leave out several obituary notices this number, on account of lack of space in this department of the paper, but will publish them as soon as opportunity will permit.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at his residence in Philadelphia, Pa., April 9th, 1919, Eustace B. Cooper and Ethel Davie, both of Washington, D. C.

By Elder Asa Howard, April 6th, 1919, at the home of the bride's parents, Mr. Barney Lee Johnson and Miss Audrey Frances White, both of Keller, Texas.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

John Wren, Ill., $1.75; Mrs. C. A. Wren, Va., $1.00; Mrs. P. Allison, Ont., $1.00; Mrs. Mary E. Wright, Cal., $5.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Ephraim Manning passed from earth to the beyond March 8th, 1919, at his home near Otisville, Orange Co., N. Y., in the 80th year of his age. Mr. Manning had been in failing health for several months, and a few days before the end came he suffered a stroke of apoplexy, never regaining consciousness. He was born in the township of Greenville, N. Y., Dec. 11th, 1839, a son of Joseph Manning and Evaline Blizzard. Mr. Manning was united in marriage Nov. 21st, 1861, with Caroline A. Rundle. He was a prosperous farmer, retiring a few years ago when he sold his fine homestead to his son, Albert Manning. He is survived by his widow, sister Manning, a member of the Old School Baptist Church at New Vernon, N. Y., one son, Albert, and one daughter, Mrs. Eva K. Wyckoff, of Roseville, N. J., also by one grandson, Leroy Manning. Mr. Manning was well known among Old School Baptists, having visited associations and other meetings of that denomination from Maine to Virginia. Many will remember having been entertained at his home, where he never failed to make them feel welcome. He was a good, kind-hearted man, a loyal friend and an excellent neighbor, jovial in disposition, yet ever thoughtful for the welfare of those about him. He never made a public profession of religion, but attended the services of the New Vernon Church regularly for many years, and was always attentive and acute in discernment, a real lover of the gospel of grace. During his declining health he confessed that he had a hope in the mercy of God and that death had no terror for him. Mr. Manning will be much missed by the church, by his neighbors and close friends, but most of all by his family, especially by sister Manning, with whom he had lived in happy wedded union for more than fifty years. We all loved him, and all mourn because we shall see his face no more, but we know he is at rest, where we shall be not many years hence.

The funeral was one of the largest ever held in that neighborhood, and the writer used John v. 24, as a text, speaking with such ability as the Lord gave. The interment took place in the family plot in the New Vernon Cemetery. May grace as their day be given the family. We feel that our personal loss in the death of Mr. Manning is very great. K.

Catherine Graham McAlpine was born October 10th, 1847, and died March 19th, 1919, aged 72 years. She and her husband, the late Deacon Duncan McAlpine, were members of the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, and were baptized by the late Elder Pollard, who also married them about forty-four years ago. They lived upon a farm near Iona until the death of brother McAlpine, about three years ago, since which time sister McAlpine had made her home with her son-in-law and daughter,

Mr. Alex Pollard and wife, in London. Their home upon the farm was a place of welcome for all their dear kindred in Christ, and when she was with her children it was her delight to have her brethren and sisters in the church visit with her and converse upon heavenly things. She was a mother in Israel to many, and it could be said of her that she endeavored to follow her Lord and Savior and sought to do that which would be wellpleasing in his sight. The welfare of the church was first in her mind and prayers, the Lord having blessed her in wisdom to know what was gospel order; she sought to please Christ, her Lord and Savior, and not man. On Tuesday night, March 18th, she was as well as usual, and called attention to the beautiful sunset, saying it made her feel sad and lonely and made her think of her departed husband. Early Wednesday morning she was taken sick and soon lost consciousness, passing on to the realms of eternal glory Wednesday night. Sister McAlpine was not only a mother in Israel in the church, but was a mother in all that the word implies to her six children who survive her: Mrs. Samuel D. Campbell, Mrs. Alex Pollard, Dan A. and Dugal D. McAlpine, Mrs. Peter A. McPherson and Duncan G. McAlpine. These all rise up and call her blessed. She also leaves three sisters: sister Nancy Johnson, Mrs. Connor and Mrs. Dan Johnson, besides many others to mourn.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral, using two of her favorite hymns: "And must it, Lord, be so?" and "Father, whate'er of earthly bliss." Text, Galatians iv. 26: "Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." Burial was in Fairview Cemetery, at Dutton, beside her companion.

May the dear Savior comfort all who mourn.

J. M. FENTON.

Edward Heard was born Nov. 24th, 1847, and died March 13th, 1919, making his stay on earth 71 years, 4 months and 19 days. He united with the church at Holly Springs, Newton Co., Ga., Nov. 11th, 1865, and was baptized by Elder Joseph L. Purington, who was pastor at that time. April 11th, 1879, he was set apart to the office of deacon at the request of the above named church by the following presbytery: Elders Isaac Hamby, J. T. Jordan and J. G. Eubanks. Nov. 2nd, 1882, he was united in marriage to Miss Lucy Simms, and to them were born four children, three of whom preceded him to the grave. He leaves a loving wife, one daughter, Miss Hyde Heard, one brother and one sister, brother Wilks and sister Susan Heard, and several nephews and nieces to mourn his departure. We feel that they can say with Job of old: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Brother Heard was as fine a character as has ever been our privilege to meet. He was as true to his convictions as is possible for one to be. You could always find him on the right side of every moral question. He was a true Old Baptist, ready at any and all times to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. He most sincerely believed in the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone; it was his meat and drink. I feel to say to the bereaved family, I know that it is sad to have to give up your loved one, yet you have great consolation in knowing that he died in the triumph of living faith. Death hath no dominion over him. His hope was in Jesus, who died that he might live, so death is swallowed up in victory. May his God be your God, and may he keep you by his almighty power. I feel that I have lost a true friend in the death of brother Heard. I had known him for a long time, and to know him was to love him. He was a constant visitor to our church at Harris Springs. He talked in public, and his talks were always enjoyed by the brethren and sisters; we all miss him.

The funeral was held at his residence in Covington March 14th, conducted by the unworthy writer. Prayer was offered by Mr. T. J. Christian, pastor of his wife and daughter. His favorite hymn was sung: "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord," &c. We tried to speak some words of comfort from the text: "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." His body was laid to rest in the new cemetery in Covington in the presence of his sorrowing relatives and friends.

May the God of all grace comfort his dear sorrowing companion, daughter, brother, sister and sorrowing relatives and friends, is my prayer.

R. L. COOK.

Lillie B. Drake, wife of A. Russell Drake and daughter of David M. and Anna S. Voorhees, died at her home near Ewingville, Hopewell township, N. J., on Sunday, April 6th, 1919, aged 25 years, 4 months and 14 days, leaving to mourn their loss her husband, three children: Kathryn, aged six years, Helen, aged four, and Maud, aged one year, her father, mother, one brother and one sister. Lillie had an attack of influenza last October, and from that time went into decline, suffering from gathered glands of the throat, which gathered and broke but never healed. She could take but very little nourishment, and gradually wasted away until her death. Lillie was a kind and indulgent wife and mother and had three lovely girls, but was called away to leave them early in life. Surrounding circumstances made it impossible for her to attend her meetings. While our sorrow is great, we cannot wish her back, for we feel that she is called from a world of sin and is now at rest.

Elder Vaughn conducted the funeral services at the Hopewell Old School Baptist meetinghouse at Hopewell, speaking to a very large gathering of people.

Her father, DAVID M. VOORHEES.

George W. Hancock, a lifelong resident of Worcester County, Md., was born Dec. 8th, 1830, and died March 31st, 1919, aged 88 years, 3 months and 23 days. In early life he was a well to do farmer; later he moved to Pocomoke City, Md., where he practiced veterenary medicine. He served one term as County Commissioner about thirty years ago. He was highly esteemed in the community where he resided. He voted sixty-eight times in his long, useful life. He leaves to mourn their loss three daughters and one son: Mrs. Wm. R. Payne, of Stockton, Md., Mrs. Silas R. Payne, of Welbourne, Md., Mrs. John H. Truitt, of Indiantown, Md., and W. Bates Hancock, of Pocomoke City, Md., fourteen grandchildren, nineteen great-grandchildren, two sisters: Mrs. I. D. Pilchard and Mrs. Zadock Blades, and one brother, Robert Hancock. The last three years of his life were spent with his son-in-law and daughter, brother and sister John H. Truitt. Mr. Hancock was not a member of the visible church, but a firm believer in salvation by grace alone. He was a man of few words, yet in his last sickness he clearly made manifest that his hope was a good hope through grace. We believe he has now entered into that rest which remaineth to the people of God.

Funeral services were held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Snow Hill on Wednesday, April 2nd, conducted by the writer, after which he was laid away in the adjoining cemetery beside his wife.

B. F. COULTER.

Mrs. Nancy Ritcor Gulick, our beloved sister in Christ, passed away at her late home, Lenah, Loudoun Co., Va., April 10th, 1919. She was born near Aldie, Va., March 3rd, 1828, and lived all her life in that neighborhood. She was the last one of the eleven children of the late William Gulick and Mary Hixson. She was married to Sandford Gulick Nov. 24th, 1853, who died Nov. 14th, 1878. To them were born seven children, three daughters and four sons. The three daughters and two of the sons survive their mother: Misses Ella, Mary and Alice Gulick, who lived with their mother and devoted their time to her care; Robert Gulick, of Lenah, and Sanford Gulick, of near Aldie. It has rarely been my good fortune to see five children more devoted to their mother and more tender and thoughtful in their regard for her than these have been to our aged sister Gulick. She was baptized into membership with the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church by the late Elder Joseph L. Purington, in 1872. She was beloved by all the church, who felt that she was a true mother in Israel. By all who knew her she was greatly respected and esteemed. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone, in the absolute predestination of all things and in election. On all these points she was clear and firm. Of late years sister Gulick had not been able to attend the meetings much, owing to increasing age and feeble health, but her heart was with the church, and she loved to have the brethren and friends entertained in her home. She will be greatly missed, not only by her immediate family, but by the church and the large circle of relatives and friends.

Funeral services were held at her home, using the words: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Her favorite hymns were sung: "Jesus, lover of my soul," and "Rock of Ages." Burial took place in Sharon Cemetery, at Middleburg, Va.

May the God of all consolation and comfort bless those who mourn.

L.

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the church at Black Rock, Md., on Wednesday, May 14th next, and continue three days. Visitors will be met on Tuesday p. m. at Cockeysville, on train leaving Baltimore at 3 p. m. We wish a good attendance.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to meet with the Cow Marsh Church, near Petersburg, Kent Co., Del., commencing on Wednesday, May 21st, 1919, at 10 o'clock a. m. All lovers of the truth, brethren and friends will be made welcome. We desire to have the presence of the ministering brethren, all who can come. South bound train connecting all points from New York and Washington, arriving at Viola station, Delaware Road, at 4:27 o'clock p. m., will be met at Viola station. North bound train from Harrington, arriving at Viola station 4:15 p. m., will be met at Viola station. Passengers south of Harrington will change cars at Harrington, as the Norfolk Express does not stop at Viola station, and wait at Harrington from 3:05 o'clock until 4 o'clock, and then come on up on train arriving at Viola station at 4:15 o'clock, as above named. Passengers from D. M. & V. Branch Road coming on an earlier train can wait at Felton station for this same train.

THOMAS L. COOPER, Clerk.

THE Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church expects to entertain the Warwick Old School Baptist Association on June 4th, 5th and 6th at Ocean Grove, N. J. A more definite notice will appear later.

CYRUS RISLER, Jr., Church Clerk.

There will be meeting every first Sunday at Halcott Center, N. Y., in the Grange Hall. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 87. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1919. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GOSPEL WARFARE.

"THINK not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword."—Matt. x. 34.

"Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division."—Luke xii. 51.

This war and this division do not mean a carnal warfare, as nations war, but as war in the families of earth, which might be called a civil war, a division of family sentiment, a war of words about the worship of God. Many people point to the song of the angels that gave notice to the shepherds in the mountains of the birth of a Savior, when they said, "On earth peace, good will toward men," as though the coming of Jesus was to establish peace between all people and all nations. It is plainly evident that the peace on earth referred to was the same peace that Jesus spoke about: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." Also, again: "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace." This peace is not a carnal peace, but "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding." This is essentially "the saint's peace," no peace like it. Though the saints get that holy peace from Jesus, yet they must endure afflictions, afflictions of the gospel, or because of believing in Jesus. "In the world ye [the saints] shall have tribulation."—John xvi. 33. "Yea, all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—2 Tim. iii. 12. The outward warfare of the children of God in this mortal life is not a carnal warfare. "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds)."—2 Cor. x. 3, 4. This warfare is called by Paul a "good warfare." (1 Tim. i. 18.) The fighting in this war is summed up in the words of Scripture by Jude: "Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Contention for the truth is therefore a "good warfare." "War a good warfare, fight the good fight of faith," were the words of Paul to Timothy. This fight is essential to the true followers of the Lord Jesus. Patriarchs, prophets and the apostles had war with their fellow-creatures because of their belief. They did not seek after war, but their enemies forced war upon them. Shall we be

weak-kneed in advocating the truth, that we may have peace with our fellow-creatures? Must we dodge the truth, or compromise with error to have peace with the enemies of truth? Paul contended with his brethren in regard to what was good order for believers, who were formerly both Jews and Gentiles, and that the brethren of the Jews should not compel their Gentile brethren to live as they did. Paul said, "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed."—Gal. ii. 11. Was it right for the apostles to have contentions with one another, or for brethren now? To correct errors in the teaching of brethren it seems to be right to contend, and "earnestly," too, against all error, even if error is found among brethren. However, this contention must be in the spirit of peace, with meekness "forbearing one another in love." For the sake of Jesus, or because his people believe in him, they are hated. Jesus declared that this should be so, hear him: "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake."—Matt. x. 22; Luke xxi. 17. Is not this hate the spirit of warfare? Have not the enemies of God's people used carnal weapons against the saints in their warfare? They have, but the saints fighting against this oppression use other kind of weapons. It does look like an unequal fight to find on one side carnal weapons, on the other side spiritual weapons. For our weapons are not carnal, "but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds." Even if the real steel sword is not used against the saints to-day by their enemies, yet all their mental arguments are carnal weapons, though not such as to kill the body; but they are such, if their teaching be true, that they would dethrone God and the Lord Jesus Christ. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." For this warfare we are to put on the whole armor of God, and having done all, to stand. It seems that it is of great importance to believers to stand firm, and it is a great and blessed privilege to be permitted to wear the armor of God, which provides completely for a defensive and an offensive warfare. "Stand therefore, having the loins girt about with truth." Second: "Having on the breastplate of righteousness." Third: "Your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." Fourth: "Above all, taking the shield of faith." Fifth: "Take the helmet of salvation." Sixth: "The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."—Eph. iv. 11–17. It would take time and more space than the confines of a letter will admit to speak in detail of all these arms, for there is room for a great range of thought. The best that I can do is to hint at some of the grand things signified by this holy armor of God. The first, having the loins girt about with truth, is very important, and it seems most important, too. This girdle of truth around the most sensitive part of the body (or what was considered the most sensitive part of the body in old times) is of great meaning. Look at a man standing girdled with a broad girdle, having the word "truth" in a circle round his body. This girdle and its inscription is all-important, for the first thing in the kingdom of grace is to know the truth. This of itself makes the believer in the truth free, and he is free indeed; he is Christ's free man, as nothing but truth can grow in the garden of grace. No real believer in Christ wants anything but the truth; all wisdom is founded on

truth. No man can have the truth as it is in Jesus except he has the fear of God in his heart. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom in every soul, and God will shew his covenant unto him. That one-sided contract (or made by One, that is God) contains no error or falsehood, but everything promised in that covenant will surely be brought to pass: quickened by his Spirit, law written in the mind, placed in the heart, a veto placed on him that he cannot give the secret of the Lord to another person, for he shall not, and cannot, teach his brother or his neighbor to know the Lord. This secret shall stay with them "that fear him." He teaches all of them, from the least even to the greatest. That girdle of truth contains many precious jewels, such as the sovereignty of God, his foreknowledge, predestination, election, quickening, sure calling and the preservation of the saints against the wiles of the devil, "until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

Second: "Having on the breastplate of righteousness." This breastplate is one of the most important things in the defensive armor; its position is significant, on the breast, covers the center of life, the heart, it protects the whole body; figuratively, the breastplate of righteousness protects the whole being of the child of God. The great Head of the church displayed his power to the prophet with insignia upon his garments, which taught the same truth more than seven hundred years before Paul's day: "For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak."—Isaiah lix. 17. The followers of the Lord Jesus have the same impregnable breastplate, viz., the perfect righteousness of the Son of God. It is a solid bulwark against the devil, hell and all that can ever be the enemies of the truth. Having such a permanent breastplate they are able to stand against all the fiery darts of every enemy of the truth, and to be able to stand before the judgment throne of Christ and his Father. Being the real children of God, the law of imputation gives them an exclusive right to stand "under the shadow of his wing." The watchword of the saints from of old has been, and will forever be, "The Lord our Righteousness."—Jer. xxiii. 6; xxxiii. 16. How blessed it is to know that the redeemed of the Lord stand in the light of the Sun of Righteousness, and that his wings are full of healing for poor sinners.

Third: "Your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." It seems to me that I cannot write on this subject as I would like; the meaning is deep, the mystery is high. This part of the armor, though defensive, bears the name of peace, which is opposed to warfare. Shoes protect the feet, not only in giving warmth, but the soles are often the most important part, especially in traveling over stony places; and as "the mountain of the Lord's house is established in the mountains," and the feet of the saints are "beautiful in the mountains," it is presumed that the soles of their shoes are a great protection in the "stony places," for the travel of the saints leads through "rough places." But as "the Lord will keep the feet of his saints," they are shod with the shoes of gospel preparation, which speaks peace in all the courts of the Lord. "His foundation is in the holy mountains." It is here where the beauty of the saints' feet is seen, for as the feet bring the body, honor is given to the feet even before the message is de-

livered, the feet, as it were, being a telltale in advance of the "good tidings of peace" that will certainly be given after the journey is ended. All who have these shoes are led by the Spirit of truth. These shoes never come where the gospel of peace is not welcome. They are specially made, and can never fit an unbeliever in the Lord Jesus.

Fourth: "Above all, taking the shield of faith." The shield is a broad piece of defensive armor. Faith is the broad shield of the spiritual warrior, and is a sure protection against all the darts of the enemy of souls. Faith is powerful to the child of God, it makes him understand that God made the worlds by the breath of his mouth; it "is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Without it it is impossible to please God. It is the gift of God to his people, by which they are justified. God is the author and finisher of the faith of God's elect, so it is an holy faith. There is a great cloud of witnesses that testify through faith of God's faithfulness in keeping his elect unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. The shield of faith goes hand in hand with the grace of God.

Fifth: "Take the helmet of salvation." A helmet is a defensive armor for the head. The saints' helmet is "the hope of salvation." The great Redeemer, in his offering for sin, "put an helmet of salvation on his head." He was perfectly secure from his enemies, for his own arm brought salvation unto him, and his fury upheld him. Our helmet is "the hope of salvation." The worldly religionist has no helmet, for he would not give a cent for the hope of salvation; he just knows that God has to save him, because he has been so good and dutiful. "We are saved by hope," said Paul, and hope is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and reaches out to Jesus, who is on the right hand of the Father.

Sixth: "Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." The sword is a weapon of defensive warfare as well as offensive. The sword of the Spirit is the testimony of Jesus. To fight our enemies we are authorized to use the beauful words of the Lamb of God. Both the Old and New Testaments testify of our dear Lord Jesus, who was a man of sorrows and well acquainted with all our grief. I think that the word of God sometimes means the Scriptures, and it must be evident that this is the meaning in the above. To wield the sword of the Spirit is the work of all the armored children of God. This is the testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." No saint can wield the real word of God, which is spoken of in the fourth chapter of Hebrews. That is the all-powerful word, which has power over the soul, spirit, heart and the thoughts and intents of the heart. No, no, we have no control over that word, but we may cry: "We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks."—Isaiah xxvi. 1. We may also shout: "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

Dear editors of the SIGNS, having tried to preach on the subject here presented, I thought to write about it, but have not succeeded as I expected; however, I send it for you to do with as you see proper.

All yours, in hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

CLAREMORE, Okla., July 17, 1918.

PALESTINE, Texas, Jan. 5, 1919.

BELOVED EDITORS AND READERS:—For many months, yes, a few years, I have been reading this precious little pamphlet, which is one of the greatest means, it appears to me, of the national communications of this wonderful and mysterious household of faith we read so much about. I find in its pages news and messages from all parts of the country from some of the blessed people and ministers of God that otherwise we never would hear anything from. Seldom I receive a copy but I find something from some dear brother or sister we have known personally, and as we all appreciate the scattered condition of the genuine Primitive Baptists, I, for one, feel it our duty, as well as a most glorious privilege, to keep up this means of communicating through such an interesting source one with another. During the many months I have been reading the SIGNS I have had many desires to write to the brethren through its columns, thinking, while yet I was only a babe manifest in the church, that there is some one who reads the SIGNS who would appreciate seeing a few words from me. Though not many years identified with the church, at no time since I have been able to understand, even in my feeble way, any of the teachings of our blessed Savior and the inspired apostles could I ever view the doctrine in any other light than that set forth by the Primitive Baptists as far back as the record furnishes us light. My life so far has been spent among the Baptists. My father, Erscin Rose, a licentiate preacher among the Primitive Baptists for many years in western Kentucky, will be remembered by most of the Baptists in that country as one who stood very firm in the doctrine of election and predestination, (absolute, if you wish to use the term,) and salvation by grace, and not by works of the creature. If the brethren will pardon me for referring to the sad conditions which existed in a number of the churches at that time in that part of Kentucky, I will state an occasion when a certain conditional preacher was about to visit my father's church. The question arose as to whether the church would invite such doctrine in its pulpit, whereupon the vote was taken, my father being the only member who stood up as opposing inviting the doctrine in the church, which at that time numbered nearly one hundred members, but later other members declared themselves against it, among whom was brother R. J. Hill, who is remembered by all who knew him as a very strong advocate of that same old doctrine which characterizes all the true children of God who have lived to realize their lost condition before the just God. Brother Hill is another one of the dear old saints whom the Lord has called home since those days of sorrow.

I have just received the copy of the SIGNS in which appears the obituary of dear brother Elder S. H. Durand, also the letter from brother P. W. Sawin, of Kentucky. Brethren, these are men whom the churches have greatly appreciated, and who we truly believe have tasted of the goodness of God and have been commissioned to preach the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ, and to minister to the flock of the sincere milk of the word, thereby have caused many poor in spirit to rejoice in the fullness of God's love, and seemed to rekindle that little hope we have in Jesus that we may be numbered among the redeemed of the Lord. These are, I believe, the true missionaries of Jesus Christ manifest in the flesh, and these dear men of God should

receive the approbation of all the saints wherever they may be, for it is truly manifested in these men of the present day that they have been led by the grace of God through faith to go forward strongly and firmly by virtue of the Spirit of God, contending for that faith once delivered unto the saints. I say, brethren, that nothing short of grace can carry us over, and it is nothing new, the world has always been against us, and it takes the grace of God to overcome the world. The doctrine of Jesus Christ has always been unpopular, and a stumbling-stone to the world, but the blessed thought follows, But to them that are called it is the power and wisdom of God.

I heard a Missionary Baptist preacher define the word "church" a few days ago. First, it was a calling out, and second, an ingathering above. I thought, Very good, the calling of God is without repentance, and we read, God effectually calls, and as such is heard, and when heard we see the response. He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. He also represented Christ as a magnet, which I accepted, that in his second coming into the world he would, as a magnet, draw the church to him, which I think correct. But lay a match down by the side of a piece of steel of similar size, and pass a magnet over them, the piece of steel will very readily yield to the power or influence of the magnet, while the match lies dormant. The steel, in my opinion, represents the church, and the match the world, or the unredeemed. Neither can change its nature, nor is held responsible for same. So it is not of him that runneth, nor of him that willeth, but of God that showeth mercy.

Since uniting with the church, about six years ago, I have visited several different churches and associations, and found all the churches in this part of the State very firm in the doctrine, and we have in our association some very able gifts, as well as some in our corresponding associations. While a great many of the churches seem cold and show little interest, others seem to be alive and enjoying spiritual growth, and are in peace.

Brethren, this is my first attempt to write for our paper, and it is done in fear and trembling, and I hope that if you see proper to publish, it will fall as a crumb to some heart, who, like myself, is always anxious to get anything spiritual to fill the hungry soul. The SIGNS comes to us as a great feast. I will ask to be remembered in the prayers of all who read the SIGNS, that the Lord may guide my mind, and direct me in the paths of truth.

Your brother in hope,

L. D. ROSE.

MR. J. F. OLIVER—DEAR SIR:—I feel inclined to write to you, thinking maybe you would like to hear from me. I feel like I am living in the wilderness down here, as I scarcely know any one. I have not been very well; I feel more and more the weight of my declining years. You know after I returned from the war (Civil War) my health was so bad that for about two years I was not able to sit up all the time, but was up and down. O those weary nights, O those weary days; each day I wished for night, each night I wished for day. I thought then that if I could be like some of the men in the neighborhood who had become nearly grown while I was in the war, they were so full of hope, so full of life, so full of health, and yet they have nearly all of them passed away, while I have been permitted to live on and on, until more than seventy-six years have passed. I

feel to say, Surely the mercy and goodness of the Lord have followed me all the days of my life. Yes, even me, poor sinful me.

After my health was better, I remember there was an appointment for preaching at a little schoolhouse down in the pines, and I remember the supple form and, as I thought, delicate features of the preacher, also I remember the eager upturned faces of that little band of hearers. That preacher was Elder F. A. Chick. He was a young man then, and I do not think he had been preaching very long, but how wonderful that the Lord would send his messenger from a distant State with the words of his gospel to a little band of hearers in the pines of Virginia. But the Lord will send his gospel to whom he will, and none can stay his hand. When that voice was stilled in death many readers of the SIGNS felt (as far as the publication of the SIGNS was concerned) that their hopes lay buried in his grave. No wonder that Elder Ker felt to be "alone." But God did not leave him alone, for he raised up a wonderful and able minister in Elder Lefferts to proclaim his great truth.

I read a letter in the SIGNS from a lady who said she did not feel so much afraid now when lightning flashed through her room at night. I want to tell you of an incident that happened in my life. Some years ago, while I was living at Pleasant Valley, there was a thunder storm just after dark, and I was leaning against a post on the back porch, singing to myself these words, "O to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be," when suddenly there was a crash, and a bolt from heaven struck through the roof about five feet from where I stood. The lightning came down a rafter to where a little wire (God's little wire) was around the rafter which ran back to the side of the house, and though the wire was burnt into where it was around the rafter, it carried the current back to the side of the house, and it ran down the side of the house, and great balls of fire fell to the floor at my feet. Surely the Lord was in that place, and I knew it not. Since then when storms come I look back to that time and place when and where I felt the love, mercy and protecting care of the Lord were around about me.

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

Yes, he holds the lightning in the hollow of his hand. Thus far thou shalt go, and no farther.

I think about Herndon people a great many times, and hope the time may come when I shall be with you again.

Remember me kindly to Mrs. Oliver, and to all who inquire after me.

With best wishes, your friend,

J. M. HUTCHISON.

CHICAGO, Ill., Sept. 4, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—You will find inclosed five dollars, for which please renew my subscription to the SIGNS, also send me one of the Bibles you advertise. How I look forward to the coming of the paper. Just twice each month am I made to lie down in green pastures and am led beside the still waters, for that is all the real true preaching I ever get. There are many times when I feel so alone. I mean in the sense that there is no one like me; I do seem so unthankful for what the Lord has done for me.

Please pardon this little reference to myself. I have an institutional position as a trained nurse here in Chicago, and about three months ago I received a telegram saying my dear father was not ex-

pected to live. When I arrived home, which was a three days journey, I did not believe he could possibly live two hours. From what I have seen of diseases and their terrible complications, I despaired of his recovery. I hastily gave him a heart stimulant, then went out, and if I ever begged for anything in my life, I begged for father to be spared, and if he could not be spared, to please give him just enough strength to make it known to the family that it was well with him in his Savior. Father had never made a profession, but notwithstanding all my forgetfulness and repulsive attitude to our dear Master, I feel that he answered my prayer. The next day father raised up on his pillow unassisted, and said, "Daughter, I have seen the whole plan of salvation," and, despite my protestations for his strength, he told O the sweetest story. "And he turned himself about from them, and wept; and returned to them again, and communed with them, and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes." And if we follow this wonderful ruler a little further he takes Benjamin. Brother Ker, I praise God's holy name for the bags of money and the silver cup we often find in our sacks. Strange as it may seem, I know he loves us still with a love that cannot be explained. Can you imagine what a concourse of people that would be gathered in the land of plenty and in the presence of the great ruler that held the keys, as it were, to the bounteous graineries, and a famine in all the world? What a wonderful opportunity for a demonstration to the world of that great forgiving spirit he had; but just see how he did it: "Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren." Father is fast regaining his strength, and is to be baptized just as soon as he is strong enough. "He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." Can you wonder then, brother Ker, that scarcely a day passes that I am not made to weep over my sinfulness when so much has been so bountifully given me? How tired I used to grow over one certain old brother's sermons when I used to go with my grandfather Medlan. His text was, "By grace are ye saved," &c., and he always concluded his sermons with, "What wondrous love is this!" I have heard some of the greatest opera singers, but now as I remember that dear old brother as he raised his trembling voice in that wonder hymn it seems to eclipse any music in my memory. Then I did not understand (spiritually) one word he said, but now as I remember that saintly face singing that hymn I think I understand what he felt. "Wondrous" is the only word we have that will in any way approach it.

How I love to read Elder Durand's letters in the SIGNS. Is he too feeble to write now? I have often thought what a great opportunity it would be to meet him.

Pray for me, dear brother Ker, that I may not get so engrossed with the things of this life as to forget what great and glorious things the Lord has done for me, for there are times when I cannot even pray. O, is any one ever like that? Maybe you will understand.

With love for all His dear children, I remain most unworthily,

JULIA TIMMONS.

CARSON, Wash., April 16, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN;—It is with a feeling of sadness that I announce that it is not likely I will be permitted to attend the next meeting of the Cedar Creek Church,

as I have taken a position at the above named place that will keep me constantly at my post. The church will have an all day meeting, with lunch in the hall where the meetings are held, on the fourth Sunday of each month. It is likely that this arrangement will be permanent, for the summer at least. Preaching at 10:30 a. m., and after lunch. I have certainly enjoyed my church privileges since I came to Portland, a year ago last March. Not a sentence have I heard from any of the witnesses to which I could not say, Amen. Brother Moffitt is a splendid pastor and a faithful servant of the Master. There is joy in duty, there is grief in store for him who walks according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. These are perilous times, brethren, let us beware. Watch as well as pray. Farewell.

J. M. AMSBARY.

HERNDON, Va., April 6, 1919.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I feel impressed to write and tell you some of my feelings, and hope you will pardon me for anything you see that is not according to the truth as it is in Jesus. I seem to be low down in darkness of mind, and do not know which way to go. I am a poor sinner, leaning and depending upon Jesus. He is my All in all, my rock and my shield; he is altogether lovely. When I look back to the second Sunday in July, 1882, the day I was buried in the liquid grave of baptism, it seems a lovely season. Little did I think then that I would ever pass through such dark seasons of mind as I have. I thought then that I would become better, but instead it seems that I get worse and worse. I am a stranger here below, and what I am is hard to know. One night while in great distress of mind everything seemed to be turned against me, the bed on which I lay seemed to rise up, a door opened and I saw Jesus for the twinkling of an eye, and then saw him no more. O how glad I was to see such a lovely One, and so sorry that I could not see him more and more. Pray for me, a poor sinner.

LIZZIE SPAGNER.

WOODSTOCK, Ontario.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed two dollars, one dollar to send the SIGNS to some poor one who cannot pay for it, and one dollar for my own subscription for six months. I am an old man and may not need it long, but want it as long as I am able to read it, for though a vile sinner, cold hearted, barren and unfruitful, yet sometimes I hope I love the Old Baptists and their cause, but I do feel so prone to go astray, and to do those things that I know are wrong, that it makes me fear I am not in the secret of God's people, but I must leave it with Him who knoweth all things, and he surely will make no mistake, for he knoweth them that are his, but if I could only honor and obey him I feel that I should be satisfied.

Yours unworthily,

R. SCATES.

JACKSONVILLE, Ark., Oct. 15, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed I am sending you two dollars to renew my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for one year. I find I cannot do without it, for it is all the preaching I get. No one lives near me of our faith, and I get very lonely, and would be glad to have some of them visit me.

Yours in hope,

S. E. BUNDY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1919.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ISAIAH LXI. 3.

"CALLED Trees of righteousness, The planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified."

While all the prophecies are wonderful, it has often seemed to us that the declarations of Isaiah are, if possible, more wonderful and profound than those of any other prophet. The text quoted above, together with the context, is one of special interest to the church in this gospel age of the world. Indeed, the whole book of Isaiah has more direct reference to the gospel dispensation than to the legal covenant, and many expressions are so suited to the understanding of the Lord's people that it seems they cannot err in their spiritual interpretation of them. Yet as simple as they seem, and are, to the wayfaring man, even though a fool, they cannot be properly interpreted by the wise of the world, for the reason that the world by wisdom knows not God; hence all sorts of constructions are put upon the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments by the untaught of the Lord to please the carnal mind and to tickle the ear of those who cannot and will not endure sound doctrine. The figures employed by the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures convey to the spiritual mind or man the truth of the doctrine of grace, just as a good teacher conveys by simple figure or illustration to the mind of the child the very essence of knowledge. Hence when God's protection of his people is presented mountains are used as a figure, David saying, As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people henceforth and forever. When the everlasting love of God was preached it was done by the figure of a woman's love, the Spirit saying by the prophet, A woman may forget her child, to have compassion upon her offspring, but I will never forget thee; thy walls are ever before me, and thy names are graven in the palms of my hands. When the chosen family of God and all that belongs to his children in the covenant of grace were distinguished by Solomon, the figure of a garden inclosed was employed; so in our text, when the righteous in Christ Jesus, the work of God through him, are mentioned by the prophet, the figure of trees is used. When the unity of Christ and his people and the steadfastness of the gospel government were preached in the days of old, the illustration of a tree was brought to view: They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat; for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the works of their hands. In our text the elect are spoken of as trees of righteousness. There are many kinds of trees in nature, the Lord giving them to man to meet his needs and tastes. Each tree has its own name and each has its own peculiar value. The mahogany the walnut, the oak, the chestnut, the poplar, the pine, and we might mention hundreds of other kinds, but these are sufficient to illustrate our thought that each is absolutely distinct from the other and is valued according to its kind. The

mahogany is perhaps the most valuable tree in nature, so far as the wood is concerned, and likely in the order that we have mentioned them the value of the tree decreases. Then fruit trees have their own peculiar nature and value according to their kind. More than likely the orange tree is reckoned about as valuable as any fruit tree. Each and every fruit tree has some value owing to its fruit, every tree bringing forth after its kind. If it be a bad tree bad fruit is sure to be made manifest, and a good tree cannot bring forth bad fruit. The first named trees grow without cultivation, but the fruit trees named are planted and cultivated by men, and men reap the benefit. Often after years of toil and expense, however, crops are sometimes utter failures, owing to certain conditions, and the owners of such trees suffer great loss, but such is not the case with the Lord, he can suffer no loss. The trees he plants are ever-living, ever-bearing or fruitful. Man has no hand in the matter. The Lord prepares the ground, plants the trees and gives them his personal care, so to speak. The cold of winter does not affect them, the heat of summer does not harm them, the floods do not uproot them, the fires do not kindle upon them, tornadoes and hurricanes never disturb them. They are simply proof against all powers, against all elements and every enemy, even death itself. As trees in nature are called by their names, or each given its name according to the wood or fruit, so the trees, the planting of the Lord, are called, or named, "Trees of righteousness." This name is given because of the nature and fruits of the trees. An orange tree bears, or brings forth, oranges, because it is an orange tree. The same is true of the lemon tree, it bears fruit after its kind, and every other fruit tree brings forth the fruit characteristic of its nature. So in grace the Lord named the trees of his planting, Trees of righteousness, hence because of their divine nature they bring forth righteous fruits, or the fruits of righteousness, which are faith, love, joy, peace, gentleness, longsuffering, kindness, meekness, temperance, charity, sobriety, truthfulness, honesty, in short, everything characteristic of the Spirit of the Planter and Dresser. As the owner of the orange, apple, peach or any other orchard is honored and enriched by the fruits of his trees, so the Lord is glorified through the fruits of his trees of righteousness. The owner of the orchard, literally, cares for it, that it may be protected from all enemies, that it may bring forth abundantly, so the Lord keeps his trees as the apple of his eye. He who keeps them neither slumbers nor sleeps, lest any should hurt or destroy one of his trees. Hence how secure, how sure to do the bidding of the Lord.

These trees of the Lord's planting are peculiar characters, such as "the meek," "broken hearted," "captives bound in prison," "they that mourn." Their work, or fruit, as declared, shall be to build the wastes, raise up the former desolations of many generations. The gospel ministry among the Gentiles is presented in verse five, which reads as follows: "And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen, and your vinedressers." These are all included in the trees of righteousness, and shall be named, "The priests of the Lord," and shall be called, "The ministers of our God." "Priests of the Lord" is only another name by which the trees of righteousness are called. Made priests unto God through the blood of Jesus Christ to offer spiritual sacrifices unto the Lord, even the fruit of our lips. The priests of the Lord have access to God through Christ, and each one offers for himself in the temple of the Lord and is

heard, the Lord never turning any empty away who come unto him through Christ, the Head of this living priesthood. He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Therefore the trees, the planting of the Lord, are righteousness itself in him who knew no sin.

In the first Psalm Jesus, the man who was never found in the way, or path, of sinners, nor in the seat of the scornful, but whose delight was in the law of the Lord, and in his law did he meditate day and night, is compared to a tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season, his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. Thus is Christ preached by the figure of a tree. The tree planted by the river of waters is fruitful, and it flourishes because of being well watered. It is said to live forever, in that its leaf shall not wither, and all his works shall prosper. This is just as true of each tree of righteousness as it is of Christ, the Tree of trees. God's work nor his word returns unto him void, but accomplishes his purpose, and prospers in the thing (tree) whereunto he sends it. The house of the Lord is spoken of as a well watered garden. Each tree of righteousness has in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life, hence can neither wither nor die, but must bring forth fruit unto the praise and honor of God, through which he is glorified and his grace magnified.

May the God of our salvation continue to plant trees of righteousness in his gospel kingdom, and give those long planted there daily tokens of their acceptance in the Beloved, and that they shall continue to bear fruit to his honor and glory until gathered at his right hand to join in the song of the servants of God and the Lamb. K.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. M. Fenton, at the residence of the bride's parents, Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., April 24th, 1919, Joseph W. Noble and Marguerite T. Fetter, both of Southampton, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Silas N. Stephens was born March 12th, 1854, and was the youngest son of Elisha and Mary Stephens. He was left an orphan at the age of eleven, having lost both parents and an only brother, all having died of smallpox in Meridian, Miss., in 1865. He was taken in charge by his sister, Mrs. Mary Gladden, who took him back to the old home near Cartersville, Ga., where he stayed with her and her husband for a few years. As soon as he was large enough he left them and went to Alabama, finally stopping in Morgan County, near Falkville, where in 1873 he was married to Miss Fannie Chaney. To that union there was born one son, Walter J., who resides in Blum, Texas. He united with the United Baptists before he was married, and was a member of Bethany Church, which church was a member of the Muscles Shoales Association. At the age of twenty-two he was ordained to the work of the ministry, and continued in that work until his death. Soon after their marriage his wife lost her health, and for the last three or four years of her life was practically an invalid, and the many hardships which he underwent can be realized only by those who have had the same misfortunes. She departed this life August 20th, 1883, leaving him and his little boy alone in the world. He was later married to Mrs. Mollie Partain, a widow with four children, all of whom are living. In 1886 he moved from Alabama to Arkansas, stopping the first year in Johnson County, near Cabin Creek. There being no Baptists of his faith there, he preached in the schoolhouses and other places as opportunity was afforded, and in the fall of 1886 he moved to Yell County, Ark., settling near Ola. He continued to preach as often as he could, and finally, not being able to find any Baptists of his faith, he joined the Missionary Baptists on his letter from Bethany Church in Alabama. He soon became sorely dissatisfied with the Missionaries, having been called to the pastorate of four churches as soon as he joined them. He soon saw that he did not believe their doctrine nor indorse their practices. He became very much disturbed in mind, realizing that he was not affiliated with the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, and his soul's desire was to find the true church and to be identified with it. He became so troubled and distressed that he could not eat or sleep, and for some time it seemed that he would lose his mind; he was continually begging the dear Lord to direct him to his church.

Finally, while plowing in the field the Lord answered his prayer and directed him, as he always believed, to his church, and to one of his old servants: Elder John Q. Brinson, who lived near Dardanelle, Ark. Like Saul, he conferred not with flesh and blood, but went immediately to the home of Elder Brinson and told him what the Lord had shown him, and they had a glorious meeting there together. Bethel Church, of near Morrilton, Ark., extended an arm up to near Casey, where he lived, and on Saturday before the fifth Sunday in May, 1888, he and his wife, Elder James West and his wife and some others were received in the fellowship of Bethel Church, and all were baptized the next day by Elder J. C. Hendrixson, and he was immediately ordained to the full work of the ministry and began to serve churches at once. Bethel Church was a member of the Point Remove Association. In November, 1890, he moved with his family to Texas, locating in Comanche County, in which county he lived until 1913, when he lost his second wife. He joined Bethany Church, which was located some ten miles south of Dublin, Texas, by letter soon after he arrived in Texas, and was called to serve it as joint pastor with Elder J. B. Taylor. Elder Taylor soon moved away, and he continued as pastor until 1898. In 1894 he moved to a farm which he had bought near De Leon, Texas, and he and his wife moved their membership to Ephesus Church, in De Leon, he having been pastor of Ephesus Church for some three years before moving to De Leon. He also served as pastor in Texas, Bethany, Damascus, Ephesus, Concord, Union, Shiloh, Shiloh No. 2, Antioch, Willow Springs, the church in Ft. Worth, Moccasin Rock and some churches in southern Texas during the last years of his life. He was clerk of the New Harmony Association for ten years prior to his death. After the death of his second wife he made his home with his son, W. J., in Blum, Texas, until he married again. He was married to Mrs. Mary Buntyn, widow of Elder J. B. Buntyn, with whom he lived until his death, which occurred on Feb. 13th, 1919, in their little home at Rockdale, Texas, surrounded by a band of loving brethren and sisters.

The remains were laid to rest in the cemetery at Rockdale, there to await the voice of the blessed Son of God. A good man in Israel has fallen.

W. J. STEPHENS.

Charles Harvey Dykes was born June 9th, 1882, and departed this life March 27th, 1918, making his stay on earth 35 years, 9 months and 18 days. He was always an obedient boy, a good husband and father and an honored citizen; he counted his friends by his acquaintances. Charley was a God-fearing man; he loved to sing the good old sacred songs when alone with his family, and enjoyed hearing the Old Baptists preach the only true way of salvation. He leaves father, mother, two brothers and four sisters, besides two small children and a host of relatives and friends to mourn his death. His wife died June 1st following his death. He was taken with measles, which later developed into pneumonia. Everything that loving hands and human skill could do to restore him to health was done, but to no avail, he had lived out his allotted time, he had fulfilled the purpose for which God had fitted him, and must go up higher to answer another purpose in God's great eternal plan of events. He came into this life without his consent, and when time rolled around he left this life without his consent (naturally), though we believe God's own are made to feel willing to go before death claims them. We all miss him much, but feel reconciled to our loss in the thought that God rules and disposes as it seems best to him, and that we, too, will ere long be called to go to that beyond from whence none ever return, but where all the chosen of God shall live and sing praises forever. We feel from the evidence he left that all is well with him, and can say with one of old, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord," and the death of his saints is precious in his sight. We know that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are the called according to his purpose, and one of these all things is the taking away of our loved ones, that our thoughts may be turned from earthly things and rest and dwell on things in heaven, where all is love. Thus we are drawn nearer heaven as our loved ones are called away.

ALSO,

Ola Porter Dykes, wife of the above named, was born March 25th, 1887, and died June 1st, 1918, making her stay on this sinful earth 31 years, 2 months and 5 days. Ola was a good child, wife and mother, and was liked by all who knew her. She was a member of the Missionary Baptists, but I feel that she was a child of God, for she loved to hear salvation by grace preached, and went with her husband to his meetings. She endeared herself closely to me while Charley was sick, and when requested to give her preference as to who should preach the funeral sermon, she asked that we get Elder H. B. Jones, as he was Charley's choice and that made him her choice, also had them sing his favorite hymn: "O sing to me of heaven." Ola leaves a father and mother, two sisters and two brothers, besides her two sweet little girls, aged seven and eleven years, and a host of relatives and friends to mourn her death. We all miss her, but we do not weep as those who have no hope. May God give the bereaved ones strength and grace sufficient to bear their loss, which is only temporary. If it be God's will, may we be reunited with her in that upper and better world, where there is no sickness, no parting and no pain, but where all is peace and love.

ALSO,

Bessie Ruth Holly, niece of the above named, was the little daughter of Wallace and May Holly. She was born Sept. 30th, 1917, and departed this life March 27th, 1918, thus she was permitted to make her abode with loved ones only about six months. This makes four little infants that Wallace and May have given up. It seems that they have seen their share of trouble, but this only makes heaven nearer and dearer to them. They know that they have four little babes in immortal bliss who had been blessed in never knowing the evils and heartaches of this sinful world; and while it is natural to feel that God has dealt hard with them, yet when we look at it in the light that God dealt kindly with them in removing them from sin, we can rejoice that it is so. When your work on earth is done, may it be yours to see her and be reunited where there are no family ties to be broken, where all will be one great family of God and where all can say, O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? May God in his infinite wisdom see fit to give you a happy life yet, and may you be submissive to his dealings with you. RICHARD W. DYKES.

Lavinia Morgan passed away October 15th, 1918, in her 80th year. She was born and raised in Missouri. Her maiden name was Plank. I have no dates, but will speak of her noble and exemplary life, as I personally knew her. She was a woman of rare talent and ability. None knew her but to love her. She was so humble and unassuming it was an inspiration to be with her. She was a member of Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church, near Independence, Mo., and adorned the profession she made by an orderly walk and godly conversation. She was an earnest contender for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and few Baptists have a better understanding of the Scriptures than she had. The Bible and the SIGNS were her companions. She passed through many hard and sore trials, having lost an only son thirty years ago, which was a grief to her, and twenty years ago her husband was taken, which seemed more than she could bear, but the everlasting arms were underneath her and bore her over the rough sea of life. She was the last of a large family of children, but she filled the measure of her days and obeyed the summons, Child, come home. I feel that too much could not be said of this good woman. I am not able to do her justice, but felt her departure ought to be honored with an obituary in the SIGNS, which she loved and enjoyed, and often contributed to its columns. She loved her church above everything else, and wou d make any sacrifice to get to her meetings, often filling her seat when hardly able to sit up. Her house was a home for the Baptists. She was truly a mother in Israel, ever ready to help those in need. She will be greatly missed, but we hope and believe that she is now enjoying the full fruition of that hope which was as an anchor of her soul, both sure and steadfast, while sojourning here in this vale of tears, and we bow in humble submission to Him who doeth all things well, knowing that he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind.

One who loved her.

(MRS.) W. L. HALL.

Etna T. Foster, wife of F. P. Foster, was born Nov. 23rd, 1864, married to brother Foster Nov. 6th, 1872, joined the Primitive Baptist Church Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1886, and was baptized by Elder J. P. Jenkins; she departed this life Nov. 28th, 1918. She lived a faithful member of the church, being a strong believer in salvation by grace. She was kind to all, ever ready to lend a helping hand to the needy. She was a devoted wife and mother, ever ready to make any sacrifice for her dear ones. Eleven children were born to them, nine of whom survive her, together with dear brother Foster, who feels his loss deeply, yet knows that God is good and does all things for the good of those who love him. I feel to say that brother and sister Foster truly loved the Lord. The church has lost a faithful member, as her seat was always filled if she was able to go. I want to say to brother Foster and children, Weep not as those without hope, for sister Foster's hope was so bright that all could see it was an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast. You should rejoice instead of weep. May God in his goodness and love be with dear brother Foster in his last days to comfort him, and may the children also be blessed with his presence to the end. May God be with us all in these most trying times. L. D. SEALS.

David Owen Johnson was born June 19th, 1903, in Knox County, Texas, and died August 25th, 1918, making his stay on earth 15 years, 2 months and 6 days. He moved to New Mexico March 3rd, 1916. He was always kind and loving to all, and had a kind word for every one; a good, obedient child. He was a great lover of the Primitive Baptists. August 20th he was stricken with peritonitis. He was cheerful all the time. We did all we could to relieve the dear one, but death came. A little while before his death he said, "Father and mother, you are grieving too much over me. I am all right; I am going home to Jesus, so do not grieve for me." But O, we feel so sad and lonely that we can hardly live, he being our youngest child and the only one at home. We have to bow in submission to the great God, because what he does is just and right, and this is his holy will. I had him in my arms, and he told me to lay him down; I laid him down and his breath left him. He sweetly fell asleep in Jesus' arms. O what a blessing to die in the Lord! Dear household of faith, pray for us that we may live uprightly, and when the time comes to lay down this life may we pass peacefully from this sin-cursed earth to heaven

His father, J. L. JOHNSON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. G. E. Anderson, Va., $1.00; Elder C. W. Anderson, Ark., $8.00; Levin Hastings, Del., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the church at Black Rock, Md., on Wednesday, May 14th next, and continue three days. Visitors will be met on Tuesday p. m. at Cockeysville, on train leaving Baltimore at 3 p. m. We wish a good attendance.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to meet with the Cow Marsh Church, near Petersburg, Kent Co., Del., commencing on Wednesday, May 21st, 1919, at 10 o'clock a. m. All lovers of the truth, brethren and friends will be made welcome. We desire to have the presence of the ministering brethren, all who can come. South bound train connecting all points from New York and Washington, arriving at Viola station, Delaware Road, at 4:27 o'clock p. m., will be met at Viola station. North bound train from Harrington, arriving at Viola station 4:15 p. m., will be met at Viola station. Passengers south of Harrington will change cars at Harrington, as the Norfolk Express does not stop at Viola station, and wait at Harrington from 3:05 o'clock until 4 o'clock, and then come on up on train arriving at Viola station at 4:15 o'clock, as above named. Passengers from D. M. & V. Branch Road coming on an earlier train can wait at Felton station for this same train.

THOMAS L. COOPER, Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will hold its session with the church at Hopewell, Mercer Co., N. J., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 28th, 29th and 30th, 1919. Trains will be met at Hopewell Tuesday afternoon before the association, and those coming at that time will be cared for. Those coming Wednesday morning will come direct to the meeting. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

THE Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church expects to entertain the Warwick Old School Baptist Association on June 4th, 5th and 6th at Ocean Grove, N. J. A more definite notice will appear later.

CYRUS RISLER, Jr., Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

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Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church holds her regular meetings at 13th and Lexington Sts., Sellwood, at 2 p. m. on the fourth Sunday in each month. Sellwood is a suburb of Portland, Oregon. Take any outgoing Sellwood car.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

Newberg, Oregon.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

BY J. E. BEEBE & COMPANY

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To whom all letters should be addressed, and money orders made payable.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Middletown and Andes Church will hold their meetings the first Sunday in every month at their meetinghouse, Union Grove, N. Y. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

"IN PLACES OF DRAWING WATER."

(Judges v. 11.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 87. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1919. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

IONA STATION, Ont., April 9, 1919.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am inclosing two letters written by Elder John McConnell for publication in the SIGNS, providing you approve. I feel they are worth preserving, and having them published in the SIGNS is the best way I know by which that may be accomplished. I have not asked his consent, but feel confident he would not object.

With kind regards and best wishes for the welfare of you and yours, I am, I hope, your brother in fellowship,

J. T. KERR.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Feb. 19, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER J. T. KERR:—Your letter of the 9th inst. was received yesterday at the meetinghouse, to which address it had been mailed. I appreciate the invitation of the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada to attend their next quarterly meeting at Dunwich in May. The goodness and pleasantness of the meeting at Lobo last October abide with me in sweet remembrance, and I am more than pleased with the prospect of renewing my acquaintance with you all. The Lord willing, I shall be with you at the time appointed. I can truly say that the meeting at Lobo was, to me, an enjoyable one, yet there is mixed with its remembrance great fear that I deceived you all by appearing to be what I know I am not. Those who know me best know that I am far from being humble or meek, in a gospel sense, yet I found it pleasant to hear you and others say I manifested such a spirit in my writing and preaching. Surely there was something wrong in taking to myself any comfort in such approval. Christ Jesus "made himself of no reputation," and therefore the mind which was in Christ could not have been in me. I want that grace of humility which is "with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." Sincerity of heart is what I need assurance of. I want to live Christ, not pretend possession of that grace which comes by him. Pretended humility is one of the proudest things in the world. A man may be full of pride when he thinks he is emptied of self and abased in the dust. It is the nature of pride to boast of possessing humility, but, "If any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know."—1 Cor. viii. 2. To be

truly emptied of self—poor in spirit, broken in heart, has far different effects. The deceitfulness of the heart appears in nothing so much as in pride and self-righteousness, and we are often deceived when we imagine we are very, very humble, when we are really proud of our humility. Pride usually appears under a pretext of humility, and there is needs be to diligently "try the spirits whether they be of God." Under the influence of pride a man is inclined to compare himself with others and think highly of his own attainments in knowledge and understanding, &c., thereby saying, "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men."—Luke xviii. 11. Under the influence of humility, however, the heart is of a contrary disposition. The subject of that grace is inclined to regard his attainments as small, and to esteem himself as the least of all saints. Lowliness of mind disposes him to esteem others better than himself, (Phil. ii. 3,) and to think that the lowest place belongs to him. (Luke xiv. 10.) The greatest in the kingdom of heaven humble themselves as little children. They regard themselves as little children in grace, and their attainments as those of babes in Christ. They are ashamed that they feel so little love toward God and have so little knowledge of him. After speaking with God in the mount Moses' face shone so bright as to dazzle the eyes of others, but Moses "wist not that his face shone." The nature of humility disposes the saint to regard his goodness as little and his imperfections as great, and growth in that grace is growth in that disposition; he cannot conceive that anything similar has ever occurred in the experience of others; that his is a strange and solitary instance of insensibility and ingratitude. The subjects of God's grace never have such clear spiritual views of their vileness and depravity as when they are most exercised by the grace of God; they are never so much disposed to place themselves low among the children of God as when they are living near to God. He who is greatest in the kingdom of God is the least in his own estimation. I know that exalted frames and feelings in me have a tendency to hide the depravity of my heart, or dull the perception of my poverty and need, so that I often fear the light that is in me is darkness, when it fails to discover my deficiency—my want of love and humility. If the grace or love of God is in my heart, it is small indeed to what it ought to be, for of all men I have most reason to love God for his never-failing goodness and mercy to me. Those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, are called spiritual, because they are born of the Spirit of God, and because they are under the influence of that Spirit. "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you: now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." The Spirit of God is given his people to dwell in them; to animate and influence their minds as a new nature and life; to abide in them as his temple and everlasting dwelling-place. In the communication of that Spirit they become new creatures. It is the communication of the divine nature, for holiness is the nature of the Spirit of God, and is called the Holy Spirit. Holiness is the beauty of it, and the grace of God which bringeth salvation is of the same nature. "That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit." In this way God communicates himself to the creature, and thus "being made partakers of the divine nature," they are "the temples of the living God." Grace in our hearts is the work of God

in communicating the holiness of his nature. "Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." The faith of God's elect is to "believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Such exercise always attends growth in grace, is characteristic of the life the saints now live in the flesh, and is in obedience to the commandment of our Lord. "He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not,"—Psalms xv. 4, identifies that one who dwells in God's holy hill, so I am glad you are still writing bitter things against yourself. Passing the time of our sojourning here in fear is not satisfying to the flesh, "because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."—Matt. vii. 14.

Anticipating much pleasure in meeting you again, I am, I hope, "your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ."

JOHN McCONNELL.

NEW YORK, N. Y., April 14, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER KERR:—Your letter dated April 11th was received to-day at the meetinghouse. I am sorry indeed to hear such an alarming report of Deacon D. W. Campbell's health, and sincerely hope it is the Lord's will to spare him to the church for some time to come. He would be sadly missed from among you, for his faithfulness and labor of love has extended to all his brethren. From what I know of him personally, with what I have heard of him from those who know him best, his gift in the church was in making for peace, praying for the peace of Jerusalem. The memory of that man is blessed whose life breathed, "Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek thy good."—Psalms cxxii. 7–9.

Your kind invitation to attend the May meeting, 11th, 12th and 13th, I will gladly accept. Remembrance of former meetings, and my enjoyment of them, is frequent with me, and I have hoped that perhaps I might have another opportunity to visit among you, but I did not know how much I wanted to go until I received your letter this morning. The gladness in my heart made me conscious of that. Sister Jennie Bateman was standing by me when I received the letter. After reading it I handed it to her. She inquired, "Will you go?" My answer was, "The Lord willing, I surely will go." It will please me also to be with you at your home one night, as suggested. Perhaps brother Slauson will advise me when and where I am to come first.

Your question, "Do I love the Lord or no? Am I his, or am I not?" is the constant inquiry of all the saints. They confess that their greatest happiness would be to glorify God in their body, soul and spirit. Is not this the fruit of love? A man must first love God, or have his heart united to him, before he will esteem the cause of God as his own, and before he will desire to glorify and enjoy God as his happiness. The thirsting of the new man is after God and holiness, for ardent desire after holiness is as natural to the new creature as vital heat is to the body. Holiness or sanctification is more directly the object of these desires than any manifestation of the love of God. Where we read in the Scriptures of the desires, longings and thirstings of the saints, righteousness and the

law of God are much more frequently mentioned as their object than anything else. The saints desire the sincere milk of the word, not so much to testify the love of God toward them, as that they may thereby grow in holiness. Grace is the good man's treasure. Godliness is the gain of which he is covetous. The distinguishing mark of loving God is earnest desires after holiness of heart and life. It is a good thing, spiritual blessing, to be sensibly poor in spirit, needy and unprofitable; of such are the kingdom of heaven. Those who are thus blessed are endued with that wisdom which cometh down from above, "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." Such are they that dwell in Zion—a quiet habitation; such are the streams that make glad the city of our God; they are the palaces in whom God is known, the tabernacles of the most high God. Surely we know something of the glory of God and the excellency of his power here in earth, even as it is in heaven; and you have testified again and again, "Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts," though your face was in the dust, saying, "Woe is me, for I am undone, I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." Surely the name of our God is "Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

There has been much sickness among our people the past winter, but the Lord has mercifully preserved us thus far from any loss in membership. War conditions here are such that we have been obliged to withdraw the appointment of the Warwick Association to be held with this church, but we hope to entertain it next year.

With love to all, I am, unworthily, your brother in hope of life in Jesus,

JOHN McCONNELL.

WEISER, Idaho.

DEAR EDITORS:—The mission of the Savior was "to seek and to save that which was lost."—Luke xix. 10. Lost, and dead in sin, are conditions that describe God's children whom Jesus came to save, and if one ever goes to heaven above that Jesus did not save, he (Jesus) cannot possibly be that one's Savior. In Adam all died. Now, if there is one exception the Scripture is perfectly silent about it. The prophet says, There is none good, no, not one. (Psalms xiv. 2, 3.) Let us turn to the third chapter of Romans, commencing at the eleventh verse: "There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God." If you can find a single person of Adam's race that is not included in this I would like to know who it is. Further, it is said of the whole number, verse seventeen: "The way of peace have they not known." Why do we say there is none good, and that every single one of God's children must be saved? First, verse ten: "There is none righteous, no, not one." Can you not see if there is not one good or righteous, if there ever is one good or righteous he must be made so? This reaches every one, little or big, old or young. But, says one, the little babe is not a sinner. Well, where did you learn that? Who is your authority? But first listen to mine, and consider whose words they are before you answer. Psalms li. 5: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." Job xiv. 4: "Who can bring a clean thing out of an

unclean? not one." Put these two quotations together and see what you have. We might add as proof, the child's fruit, which is speaking lies as soon as it is born, &c., but let this suffice, for they as well as we need a Savior; none is good, no, not one. Is there any one who can find two ways to heaven? I can only find one way. "I am the way." Jesus is the way; not a way, but the way, and there is no other name under heaven given among men but just this one name. We cannot go in the name of infantile purity, they cannot go in that name; every one, small and great, must go in the name of Jesus, he alone is the Savior. If any ever go to heaven independent of the blood of Jesus they will have no Savior there to praise. Luke xix. 10: "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Jesus was called the Son of man, and his work was to seek and to save that which was lost; so if there is one of the whole family that was not lost nor needs a Savior, Jesus cannot possibly save such an one, for he came not to call the righteous, but sinners; he came not to save them (if there are such) that were not lost, so if any one gets to heaven any way but by the blood of the cross, such an one has proved that he (Jesus) is not the way, but a way, and such an one would be lonesome in heaven without a Savior, could not sing one song of salvation, for they never were lost. God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful man, for he was made in all points like unto man, yet without sin. He was the only one born of woman that is and was without sin, to save sinners, to save all the Father gave him. John saw them that were so saved, and he said there was an innumerable host that no man could number. This Jesus was given power to save, yes, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father gave him. Now what is eternal life? Jesus says it is life eternal to know. How? As the Savior. But this again shuts the door on any that are not sinners. I am glad I am a sinner, and I am also glad the two little ones I buried were sinners, and I am O so glad Jesus is the Savior of sinners. Jesus came to do the will of the Father, and that was to save all the Father gave him, and they are among every kindred, tongue and people under heaven. Jesus came to save them that there was no arm to save, and he came fully qualified, for all power was given unto him. He was a pure offering, for he was without sin. Listen to old Simeon: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Dear child, when Jesus is present with you you can often say, Whither thou goest I will go. It is wonderful to be in the presence of Jesus, all fear gone, nothing but sweet peace. How was Jesus to save? You can see how he was to save when he made his soul an offering for sin on the cross; so if he came to save sinners, and that by his death on the cross, then we can rejoice in his words: "It is finished." The salvation of sinners is accomplished. Who did it? God the Father through his Son. "Comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned," &c. This is great news to them whose hope the Lord is. There is no doubt about it, the eternal God planned it, the Son finished it. Hear the blessed Son on the cross: "It is finished." Not just started or commenced, but finished. No wonder the Old Baptists preach a finished salvation for all God's people, old or young, great or small; it is all a finished

work, and only needs to be made known to the saints; this is done in time. We have a few records in the Bible which show how different ones were given a knowledge of salvation. One of old time said, He (Jesus) found me in a waste howling wilderness, he led me about and instructed me, and there was no strange god with me. We might stop here, for this is the history of every heaven-born soul. Jesus finds them, they do not find him; he chooses them, they do not choose him; he leads them, they do not lead him, and it is not the way they know, but in a way they knew not. The woman of Samaria said, He told me all things that ever I did, and I do not reckon there was a good work in the whole lot. Can you not, dear one, remember when the true light shined in your heart how desperately awful the condition was? You might have been like Saul of Tarsus, thought you were doing God service, but lo, you were a vile sinner. There is a way that seems right to man, and man will always go that way, but the end thereof is the ways of death. Saul was in that way, and every sinner realizes he is in that way when he is arrested by that heavenly power which kills to the love of sin and makes alive to righteousness. This is the work of Jesus. He comes where we are and shows us we are his, that he is our salvation. Two in one bed, one taken, the other left; two at the mill, one taken, the other left. I do not mean to say the one is left to eternal destruction; they may be left a day, a week or a year. I have known of some that received a hope, and for a time their companion had no use for their hope, but after a while they had a little hope of their own, so it is not for us to say; but the heir, so long as he is under age, differs nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all, but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

Brother Ker, I think I had better stop. Use your judgment in disposing of this.

Yours, T. E. ATTEBERY.

1 JOHN III. 1.

"BEHOLD, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."

John here exhorts the brethren to look, see what manner (way) the love of God was bestowed upon "us," his elect. By the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God (in love) he chose his people in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world. By the transgression of Adam sin entered the world, and death by sin, yet God so loved the world, i. e., his people, that he sent his only begotten Son (in love) into the world, that we might live through him. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, born of the virgin Mary, in the likeness of sinful flesh, was without sin, that he might take in his flesh the sins of his people, and by his death destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and by his own resurrection from the dead bring again his people unto the Father. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Who are the friends of Jesus? "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."—John xv. 13, 14. Again, we might ask, What did Jesus command his friends to do? Save one another. Brethren, love one another, for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." The word "bestowed" means unmerited gift, so it is no act on the part of the creature that causes God to love him, nor can the creature love God until God sheds abroad his love

in the heart of the creature. God is love, and Christ is God's love to his people, and, brethren, ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's, thus being knit together in love. The word "us" in the text means the people of God, it expresses unity, oneness. God said in the beginning, Let us make man in our image. Again, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."—Isaiah ix. 6. "That we should be called the sons of God," sets forth predestination—predestinated to be called the sons of God. "Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." Brethren, can we not say with the apostle, And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us? God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. In this is our love made perfect.

K. C. SPINDLE.

CLIFTON, Va., Jan. 23, 1919.

SHOCK, Ky., Nov. 15, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending you a good letter written me by sister Laura Essie Odell, of Harrisonville, Mo., one whom I had never seen or heard of until I received her much encouraging letter, and I have read it again and again with such inexpressible comfort and consolation that I desire to have it published in our dear old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, provided it meets with your approval. Of course it is quite personal, but there are so many good points brought to our understanding that all the readers of the SIGNS may be benefited by reading and considering them. During my almost fifty years of trying to preach the gospel of the grace of God I have often feared, and feared greatly, too, that I was and am a poor deceived mortal, and that my efforts have been more than a failure; therefore when I receive such letters from those whom I never have and never shall see in this world of toils and tears, it is of inexpressible comfort to me in my declining years. I would be very glad to have many more such letters, for this is a time of great trouble and deep distress, and as it is written: "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." What a wonderful and mysterious gathering together of these precious and redeemed jewels of the Lord Jesus Christ, for unto him shall the gathering of the people (jewels) be.

W. J. MAY.

HARRISONVILLE, Mo., Oct. 24, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER MAY:—No doubt you will be surprised to receive a letter from a poor and afflicted one you never saw. When you cast bread upon the water it is written, Thou shalt find it after many days. Many times have I been comforted by your writings in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I never get the paper without looking for your name and many other names. I remember how you have written of experiences that found response in my poor, often worried and cast down heart, yet through my unworthiness I have been silent, for it seemed it would be presumption to try to tell you what comfort I received. This time you came in my soul's experience in ways

I never saw in print nor heard explained. Your letter was to Elder Sawin in the SIGNS of August 1st, 1918. You put it that Adam was to till the ground from whence he was taken, as I feel to believe it, and began to sew fig leaves together. We learn by bitter, yet sweet lessons. We learned as did Cain that our best works were of the ground, to which God had no respect. We learned he was God, and his glory he would not give to another. We, too, were glad there was a high and cast up way, and the redeemed shall walk there; so we have passed from the covenant of works unto the covenant of grace, which is, I will and you shall. The first part of your letter drew my attention: "Although I am writing you I feel so poor and needy, and so destitute of spiritual light and understanding, that I am afraid to write, but I am restless and of a heavy heart." I was in just such a place, yet with a desire to write to my aunt. I was afraid, as you express it. I could find something to do about the house, but I picked up the SIGNS and came to your article, which has been great to me. Before I had finished reading a desire came to write you how comforting your letter had been. I often have views on Scriptures, and they do me much good when I find some one expressing the same view, because it encourages me to think that I have been taught in the same school, where Jesus is the teacher.

This is poorly expressed. May it serve as an encouragement to you, causing you to feel that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. I will close, hoping to rejoice in many more of your letters in the SIGNS, the best Baptist paper I know of.

Unworthy and least, if one at all,

LAURA ESSIE ODELL.

SMYRNA, Ga., April 21, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I feel unworthy to thus address you, but if we are the children of God we ought to be kind and loving to each other, and speak often one to the other, visit, pray with and for one another, visit the sick and afflicted, and in so doing we would be fulfilling the command of our blessed Savior, and to visit the widows and orphans in their lonely condition. Of course this applies to the children of God as well as to the natural widow. O that the children of God would wake up to their duty and honor the profession they have made, it seems to me that the Baptists would not be so lifeless as some of them seem to be, though the fault may be in unworthy me. I know that I do not live as I desire to, and I do ask an interest in the prayers of God's children in my afflicted condition, that I may not murmur, and that I may be kept humble and at the feet of Jesus and my brethren. Dear editors, and correspondents of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, may the good Lord long spare you to edit the paper, and write on, for you do not know how many of the little children of God you comfort. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Stand upon the walls of Zion and cry aloud, and spare not, and ever contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, which, dear editors, I do believe you are now doing.

As I think of it, you address me as Elder G. W. Almand. I am not a preacher, so leave off the Elder. I have been trying to serve the church as deacon for about thirty-four years, but have

never felt fit to fill that office. I often fear that I am not a child of God, for it seems I have so little evidence of being born again; it seems I fall so far short of living the life of a christian. John says, We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. I can say of a truth that I love the dear children of God, and I do hope it is the love of God. It seems to me that if I am one of his I would not have to suffer so much here in this time world. I have been suffering almost untold pain with rheumatism night and day for fourteen years. I have to go on crutch and stick, but I am not alone, for I read of many of God's little children who are badly afflicted in this life. It is declared in holy writ that in this world we shall have trials and troubles, and many are the afflictions of the children of God. It is through great tribulation that we enter the kingdom of heaven.

Dear brethren, I felt that I wanted to let you know I am yet alive, and receive the SIGNS, which I surely do appreciate, as it contains so much good preaching. Write on, dear friends. If this does not crowd out better matter you may publish it, but correct mistakes. If it goes to the wastebasket, it will be all right with me.

I will close for this time by asking an interest in the prayers of God's people. I am a poor sinner, and if saved at all it is by the grace of God. I do feel at times that the dear Savior is with me, and I do hope he will be with me in the trying hour of death, which time I do not feel is far off.

With love to all, from your little brother, I hope,

G. W. ALMAND.

DU QUOIN, Ill., April 20, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I have just returned from one of my meetings I am mindful of the great God as the author and finisher of our faith, and feel that much of my time I am very forgetful of this blessed fact. I am inclosing herewith a short sketch of the life of old brother Parrott, of Jacksonville, Ill. I was called there to preach his funeral, and never before in all my earthly career did I approach a task when I felt so empty and so blank as upon this occasion, but God would not leave me alone, and if I was ever blessed to preach his truth it was upon this occasion. Brother Parrott was an elderly man, and had never united with any church, and of course some of our Arminian friends were anxious to know what a "Hardshell" would do with him; but I preached Christ to them with such grace as God gave me, and of course that was something they did not often hear or know very much about, therefore they marveled at the preaching of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. Brethren, I will thank you very kindly if you will publish this obituary, as there are many sound and noble Baptists in that community who love the truth and love to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and in that way they can get it. I try to go there once a month to meet with this little band of God's chosen people, and I never met with sounder and nobler brethren or sisters in all my life. The Baptists in our immediate vicinity are all sound in the faith of our forefathers and in the doctrine of God our Savior, and the SIGNS is always welcome in our homes.

Trusting that it will not be asking too much to publish this obituary, I am your brother in the fellowship of the truth,

L. P. HARRISS.

(*See obituary on page 173.*)

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1919.

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ISAIAH XI. 6, 7.

"THE wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a young child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox."

Pursuant to a request from a reader of the SIGNS, living in Chicago, Ill., we will try to give our views on the above subject. Like so many other prophecies in the book of Isaiah that looked forward through unborn time to the gospel age, this text quoted above also describes in figurative language that which the Lord's people in the gospel dispensation were to witness and experience, but which was never apprehended by those who lived under the law, except by faith. Here we have set forth that which is contrary to nature, which the nature of men can never bring about, but a condition which, in the kingdom of Jesus Christ, is to be the fruit of the Holy Spirit and the effect of the grace of God. It is not natural for a wolf to dwell with a lamb, nor for a leopard to lie down with a kid, neither for a calf to dwell with a young lion and a fatling. Further, it is not natural for the cow, which enjoys the vegetarian diet, to eat with the bear, which loves to devour flesh; nor for the lion to eat straw like the ox. All these incidents, though contrary to nature, are to be effected, because "a little child shall lead them." This means that nature is to be brought into subjection, and held there, by the Spirit of Christ Jesus, by his meek and lowly and gentle Spirit, which shall subdue the vile passions of men and shall cause them to dwell together in gospel love and fellowship as they shall be brought by the power of God's grace to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God. We have been hearing a great deal for the past few years about an era of worldwide peace to soon be ushered in, when the nations of the earth shall learn war no more, when the swords shall be beaten into ploughshares and the spears into pruninghooks. This is an outcome, no doubt, devoutly to be desired, for we all agree that war and strife are dreadful things, but these things which have been resident in the nature of man from the first of his creation can never be abolished through human inventions and man's ingenuity. If worldwide and everlasting peace is ever to prevail over a world weary of war, we must look to a higher power than our own. Such an age can only dawn upon us through the victorious operation of God's holy Spirit subduing evil and vanquishing all that is opposed to godliness, and giving rise to righteousness and wisdom that must prevail in and through all who inhabit the earth. There never can be any compromise with evil, nor any treaty with antichrist; these must be utterly destroyed if righteousness and peace are to prevail unmolested. So the prophet Isaiah through the divine telescope of faith was looking down the years seven hundred years beyond the period in which he was living, and beholding the spiritual kingdom of the Lord and Savior

Jesus Christ, the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. In this church of God is that peace that passes understanding, the peace which the world can neither give nor take away, but which is eternal to all the elect of God, through the atonement made for their sins in the sacrificial work of Jesus. In this church are both Jews and Gentiles, Greeks and barbarians, bond and free. The Lord himself, not the Missionary societies invented by men, brings his sons from afar and his daughters from the ends of the earth and calls them by effectual grace unto godly repentance, working in them by his resurrection power to believe on Him who raised Christ from the dead. In this way all the nations flow up unto the house of the Lord, and the mountain of the Lord's house is established in the mountains. This is something that is going on to-day, though men cannot see it with their natural powers. The kingdom of heaven is in the world and is within the subjects of divine grace. Jesus is living and reigning in his kingdom in the hearts of his elect, gathered from every nation which is under heaven. He has been gathering them into his gospel kingdom, he is now so gathering them, and he will continue so to gather them until the last vessel of mercy, beforehand chosen unto glory, shall have been brought into this church of our God, and with this gathering men have had nothing to do. It has been all the result of that still small voice which, like the wind, blows where it lists. It has not been by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts. As for man, he is altogether vanity, and all his works are a vain show. All of them are utterly contemned before God. God made man upright, but he has sought out many inventions. He has invented ways to save the heathen from their sins and to bring them to God, he has schemed to win the whole world for Christ, and now he is scheming to abolish war and to usher in the millennium. All these inventions are a vain and idle show, and shall pass away into nothingness when the breath of God shall blow upon them. It will be noticed in the words of our text at the beginning of this article that, in the list of animals given, a wild animal is coupled with a tame animal. From the Jew standpoint, the Gentiles were to them aliens and foreigners, without any right to participate in the services of the legal sanctuary, and strangers from the covenant made with them by the hand of Moses. Therefore, in Isaiah xi. 6, 7, the Gentiles are represented by the wild animals and the Jews by the tame ones. The declaration, therefore, is that the time was to come when the barrier, or middle wall of partition, between Jew and Gentile was to be abolished through the work of Jesus Christ, his death and resurrection, and of the twain was to be made one new man. The Gentiles were no more to be strangers and foreigners from the commonwealth of Israel, but fellow-citizens with the saints and with the household of God. (See Eph. ii. 12–22.) These wild ones were to be brought into close spiritual relationship with the elect of God among the Jews, so all would be one body through one Lord, having one hope, one faith and one baptism. The gospel was first preached to the Jews. After this, the gospel was declared to the Gentiles. In the Acts we see many striking instances of God's work among the Gentiles, how that true believers were raised up among them, how that the prejudice between Jew and Gentile was overcome through grace, and all lived together in the church of God, forgetting

their past differences and forgiving one another their transgressions. Peter, the Jew, was sent for to preach the word of the kingdom to Cornelius, the Roman. We doubt if he would have gone on this errand had he not been prepared thereunto beforehand by the vision of the sheet let down from heaven, knit at the four corners, containing all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. Herein was revealed to Peter the truth that in God's covenant of election were included all the peoples of the world, that election is not confined to the Jews, but that God has a people among all kindreds, tribes and tongues that dwell on the earth. Having had this matter shown to him, Peter's prejudice against the Gentiles was overcome, and he was ready to preach the gospel to Cornelius. Here we see the wolf and the lamb dwelling together. Cornelius belonged to a nation that then dominated the world and ruled over the Jews, who to the Romans were a subject people. However, here we see an individual of a world-ruling people made willing to sit at the feet of a disciple of the meek and lowly and despised Jesus, anxious to hear the word of truth, and believing in it with all his heart. Again, Saul of Tarsus, like a lion, went about the country hunting down and persecuting the christians. But the time came when this roaring lion was subjugated by the mighty hand of God and brought under the sway of divine grace. He then was made to eat straw like the ox, to desire the same spiritual bread of life as the Jews whom he had been persecuting for believing in Christ. The little child Jesus led Saul and changed him into the humble Paul; the same little child Jesus brought Peter to preach to Cornelius, and caused Cornelius to embrace the formerly despised Jew in gospel love and fellowship. We believe, therefore, that the words of our text apply not to some far distant millennium framed in human dreams, but we think the spiritual meaning of Isaiah's words are realized in the gospel kingdom of the Lord, where dwell his honor and glory, and where is the habitation of his throne. What a great variety of natural dispositions and temperaments there is among the members of Christ's body. Some of us are like lions, others like wolves, and so on. But all are chastened and subdued by reigning grace and made to dwell together in unity, when if left to ourselves, to act our individual likes and dislikes, we would be quarreling and contending all the time. All these strifes and contentions are annulled by the reign of the childlike Spirit of Jesus, causing his people to pray for one another, to bear one another's burdens, to esteem others better than themselves, all because he has taken out of them the stony heart and has given them a heart of flesh, wherein he has written his royal law: Love one another. The kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation. Though we may long look for some outward sign of approaching worldwide peace, we may never see it so long as man's nature remains as it is and earthly governments continue to be organized as they are. However, in the realm of Spirit, in that world which lies beyond the reach of all mortal senses, in that church of our God which is in the world, but is not of the world, peace has already come through the death of Jesus. This is a peace which passes understanding and abides world without end. L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon C. H. Casdorph was born Jan. 19th, 1835, and was killed by a passenger train at a crossing of the K. & M. R. R., in West Charleston, W. Va., Nov. 19th, 1918, making his stay on earth 82 years and 10 months. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church called Liberty, of the Pocatalico Association, at the age of eighteen, and was baptized by the late Elder William Martin. He faithfully served his country throughout the war between the States, being a brave soldier and 1st Lieutenant of his company. Returning home at the close of the war he was married to Elizabeth Edens. To that union were born eleven children. His wife and two children, also his second wife, preceded him to the grave, leaving nine children and his third wife to mourn their loss. Brother Casdorph was industrious and saving, having through life accumulated considerable wealth. He was prompt in attending his church meetings, and went far and near visiting the churches of the Pocatalico Association. The writer of this notice feels sad as he pens these few lines in memory of his faithful traveling companion over the mountains of West Virginia on horseback through heat and cold, wet and dry. None will miss him more than myself. He often remarked that he wanted his funeral preached, if he should die first, by the writer, but his last wife, who belongs to another order of people, procured one of her preachers to conduct the funeral. Brother Casdorph had attended fifty-two associations. The hymn selected by him to be sung at his funeral was: "In all my Lord's appointed ways my journey I'll pursue," &c.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

Mrs. Louisa Robertson Sikes, wife of Elder J. C. Sikes and daughter of Robertson and Louisa Jones, was born in Tennessee March 13th, 1863, and died April 13th, 1919, at her home near Greenville, Texas. She was married to J. C. Sikes August 29th, 1880. One son was born to them, W. W. Sikes. She professed a hope in her Savior when very young, and united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Piney Grove, Ky., in November, 1887. She moved with her husband to Texas and located in Hunt County. Their membership was placed in Sabine Church, where it was at the time of her death. Her husband, son, two brothers: V. T. Jones, of Talco, Texas, and J. C. Jones, of Mt. Vernon, Texas, and five grandchildren survive her. Sister Sikes was one of those lovely characters that compelled respect and admiration from all who knew her. She always held at a premium an orderly walk and godly conversation among the brethren and sisters. She was very frank and outspoken against any digressions in order or doctrine from the plain rules laid down in the Scriptures. She was a devoted wife and mother, loved home and made it a welcome and inviting place, not only for her family, but for her brethren, sisters and friends. In her death brother Sikes has sustained an irreparable loss that can be realized only by those who have endured a like trial; her family has given up a sacrificing mother, and the church of her membership, as well as the many others she has visited with brother Sikes, will feel keenly their loss. Elder S. M. Dickens, who frequently visited sister Sikes in her last sickness, writes as follows:

"I want to say, while her death was not unexpected, it was quite shocking to the family, to the neighborhood and to the churches of our faith and order, not only at Sabine, where her membership was, but throughout all the churches where she was known. I was not present when she passed away, but brother Sikes said she died as easy as anybody he ever saw. On Friday night before she passed away on Sunday night, she was thought to be dying, but with brother Sikes' assistance she recovered from a sinking spell. She then called Willie (her son) and his family around her bed and kissed them all good-bye and said, 'I love all these,' then she threw her arms over brother Sikes' head and said, 'Above all this is my loved one.' She seemed to be reconciled to die, insomuch that she had her shroud made and brought to her so she could see it. Some time before her death she told me and others whom she wanted to serve at her funeral. She named Elder W. W. Slaughter and myself; this request was carried out. We feel sad at the loss of sister Sikes, but while it is our loss we hope and feel sure it is her eternal gain. We do not weep as those who have no hope, for we believe that if Jesus died and rose again, God will bring with him them that sleep in Jesus, and we believe and feel sure that sister Sikes in spirit is resting in him, and that she is secure in the resurrection of Christ."

Dear brother Sikes and all who mourn, I desire to commend you to God for the comfort of the Spirit. He alone can give you beauty for ashes and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Cast your care upon him, for he careth for you. He has promised to be with us in six troubles, and not forsake in the seventh.

J. R. HARDY.

Samuel Parrott, son of Dudley and Sarah Bond Parrott, was born about two miles south of Prentice, Ill., August 13th, 1841, and died at his home, one and one-half miles west of his birthplace Saturday, March 22nd, 1919, after an illness of four days following a stroke of paralysis, being at the time of his death 77 years, 7 months and 9 days of age. His entire life was spent in this community. He grew to young manhood sheltered by affectionate home surroundings. Under such influence, together with his own kind and cheerful disposition, he won and retained the friendship of all who knew him. On January

13th, 1876, he was united in marriage to Miss Mellvina Stiltz, daughter of Moses and Elizabeth Stiltz, of Ashland. To that union were born two children: John Wesley and Gracie May, both residing at home. Besides the grief-stricken widow and children he leaves one sister, Mrs. Amanda Carpenter, of this neighborhood, and three brothers: Elias, of Jacksonville, Ill., Jefferson, of Polk County, Mo., and Cyrus, of West Plains, Mo. Two sisters: Elizabeth and Mary, and five brothers: William, John, Tyra, Buchanan and Stephen, preceded him in death. He also leaves many other near relatives and a large circle of friends, who will long cherish his memory as one of the links in the golden chain of friendship. He leaves a home where perfect love and confidence prevails; never were parents and children more devoted to each other. Those beautiful home ties are broken, but that love born of heaven will live beyond the grave. He with his family often attended the services of the Baptist Church in Yatesville, taking an active interest in the welfare of the cause. A devoted husband, kind and loving father and good man has gone to his reward. He will be greatly missed in his own and surrounding communities, but our loss is his eternal gain. The sincere sympathy of their many friends go to the bereaved family in this their darkest hour.

Funeral services were held Monday afternoon from the Baptist meetinghouse in Yatesville, conducted by Elder L. P. Harriss, of Du Quoin, Ill.

Lucy J. Guernsey Borst, daughter of John and Eva (Hoose) Guernsey, was born August 25th, 1850, was married to Dow V. Borst Jan. 21st, 1875, and died April 9th, 1919, of pneumonia, at their home in Cobleskill, Schoharie Co., N. Y. Sister Borst united with the Old School Baptist Church at Schoharie Hill in August, 1875, being baptized by Elder Balas Bundy, and remained firm in the faith and a regular attendant at the meetings when health and circumstances would permit. For over twenty years she lived fifteen miles from the place of meeting, but her seat was never vacant when circumstances would allow her to be there. In the year 1915 she submitted to two operations in the hospital, from which she never fully recovered, and the winter of 1916-1917 she was very ill of pneumonia, from which she recovered sufficiently to look after her household duties, but health and strength failed until another attack of pneumonia, when doctors and nurses, loving hearts and willing hands were powerless, for God said, Child, come home, and she fell asleep like one tired and weary. Her work is done and her sufferings over. We believe for her to die was gain, but for those who are left sadness and lonely hours. She leaves to mourn their loss, her husband, brother Dow V. Borst, three sons, who are all married and have homes and business for themselves, also twin grandsons, for whom she had cared from birth (their mother dying at that time). She brought them from Jersey City, a distance of two hundred miles, in a market basket to her home, where she loved and cared for them as her own. They are now nearly sixteen years old. Truly her whole life was devoted to her family and in doing good to others. Besides the above mentioned are four other grandchildren and a host of relatives and friends, but we believe our loss is her eternal gain.

Elder John Clark, of Halcottsville, N. Y., was called to officiate at her funeral, which was held from the home April 11th, using as a text Phil. i. 6, with the connections, after which her body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Lawyersville, N. Y.

Written by request by one who will miss her much.

ADDIE C. LIVINGSTON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Dr. D. M. Leonard, N. Y., $8.00; Archie McAlpine, Ont., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will hold its session with the church at Hopewell, Mercer Co., N. J., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 28th, 29th and 30th, 1919. Trains will be met at Hopewell Tuesday afternoon before the association, and those coming at that time will be cared for. Those coming Wednesday morning will come direct to the meeting. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held at Ocean Grove, New Jersey, June 4th, 5th and 6th, 1919, to which the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, of New York city, will welcome the attendance of all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Upon arriving at Ocean Grove our friends should go directly to "THE SAXENHURST," 56 Asbury Avenue, where they will be cared for.

The present time-table of trains from New York is as follows: West 23rd Street ferry, Central R. R. of N. J.,—8:00 a. m., 12:50, 4:30, 5:20 and 6:15 p. m. Liberty Street ferry, Central R. R. of N. J.,—8:15 a. m., 1:10, 4:40, 5:30 and 6:30 p. m. Pennsylvania R. R. Terminal, 7th Avenue and 32nd Street,—9:04 and 11:12 a. m., 3:47 and 5:12 p. m.

The summer time-table of trains will be issued May 25th, in which the schedule of additional trains will be listed.

JOHN McCONNELL, Pastor.

THE Lord willing, there will be a meeting held with the Beulah Old School Baptist Church, near Aberfeldy, Ontario, the third Sunday in June (15th). Conference and business meeting 3 p. m. Saturday; preaching on Sunday 11 a. m and 3:30 p. m., old time. All are welcome who desire precious love and fellowship to abound in the church of Jesus Christ.

ARCHIE McALPINE, Church Clerk.

THE Woburn Old School Baptist Church will hold a two days meeting Sunday and Monday, June 29th and 30th. Meetings each day at 10:30 a. m. and 2:30 p. m. We expect Elder J. M. Fenton, of Philadelphia, with our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, on this occasion, and cordially invite all who can attend to do so. The meetinghouse will be found on Main St., Woburn, No. 452. L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church holds her regular meetings at 13th and Lexington Sts., Sellwood, at 2 p. m. on the fourth Sunday in each month. Sellwood is a suburb of Portland, Oregon. Take any outgoing Sellwood car. S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

Newberg, Oregon.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Middletown and Andes Church will hold their meetings the first Sunday in every month at their meetinghouse, Union Grove, N. Y. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE of JOSHUA S. CORDER.

PRICE REDUCED.

I will sell the remaining copies I have on hand of this little memorial book for seventy-five cents per copy, postpaid. And I want to say to you of the household of faith who wish this book and are too poor to pay for it, if you will send me your name and address and ten cents to cover postage, I will gladly mail you a copy. The sweet expressions I have received concerning this little work have more than doubly paid me for the anxious hours I spent over its publication, not knowing whether He from whom all blessings flow would bless it to his saints or no. I thank every one who has ordered the book, and kindly solicit further patronage. Send all orders to me.

SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

BY J. E. BEEBE & COMPANY

MIDDLETOWN, ORANGE CO., NEW YORK,

To whom all letters should be addressed, and money orders made payable

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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(Judges v. 11.)

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Owing to excessive war prices we will not issue any more hymn-books for the present. We still have a few round note books on hand, which we are selling at the same price, $6.50 per dozen or 70 cents per single copy. Send orders to Elder S. H. Durand, Southampton, Pa., or to Elder P. G. Lester, Floyd, Va.

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By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at 5 cents per copy. Address,

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 87. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1919. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SALISBURY, Md., July 21, 1918.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I am inclosing a recent letter from Elder L. H. Hardy, which seems to contain some special thoughts, and no doubt would be of interest and comfort to many of the readers of the SIGNS. We had a pleasant visit from him here the first Sunday in June, when he spoke twice to a goodly sized congregation, who manifested interest by their quiet attention. I feel so dead and lifeless these days that I wonder if I have ever known anything at all of these sacred things. Possibly I am that stony ground which lacks depth of soil, is the reason there is no manifest growth.

Your unworthy brother,

F. SELBY FISHER.

ATLANTIC, N. C., July 17, 1918.

DEAR BROTHER FISHER:—Your good letter came, and I was glad to hear from you and all the rest at Salisbury. I have not yet lost sight of the comfortable visit I had there with the church and in the homes, and would love to accept the invitation to visit you in October, but I cannot do that and attend our own association. I have not been well for a few days, and have been somewhat reviewing the travels in my pilgrimage pathway. It wounds me afresh to see the many dark places and scars, and then to feel that the wounds are freshly opened and the old corruption all ready to come out. Just now I laid down to rest a little, and my thoughts ran out toward the leper spoken of in Matt. viii. 2, and I wondered if there were any scars left of his old leprosy, that he would see and remember the days of his afflictions. Now this thought comes to me: How did that poor man know that the Lord could make him whole, or how did he know that it was the Lord? He appeared to know much more than those who were whole and allowed to go freely into the temple worship. It is not supposable that some one had made a missionary visit to him, for those who would have made such visits were afraid of him because of his disease. They would have been among the first to stone or to keep him at a great distance from them; therefore his information that this was the Lord, and that he possessed such wonderful powers as to heal one so afflicted as was he surely came from another source. We can readily see that his afflictions would tell him of the neces-

sity of being healed, and would make him want to apply to a physician, but his knowledge of the law would tell him of the danger he was in if he came near a physician; therefore his case was a hopeless one and he was a helpless one. Such, my dear brother, I have been made to see as my own case. But who taught that leper that the man he was approaching was the Lord, and that he possessed such healing powers? It could not be that the sermon which He had just preached on the mountain had been heard by the leper, for before he went up into the mountain there was a great multitude thronging him, and that leper could not have come into that multitude; he would not have dared to attempt such a thing, for fear of being stoned. Therefore if the multitude were near enough to hear his words as he preached to the disciples, this leper could not have heard him in that oral way. Then if we should suppose that it might have been possible that he was in some very secret place in the mountain and heard him, we cannot suppose that the words of the Lord would have had so much greater force on him than it did on any other person of that great throng of people; therefore from that standpoint we are left at sea to know how he knew that that man was the Lord and that he had such wonderful power as to cure a poor leper and heal him of all his disease. Peter knew the Lord and said to him, Thou art the Christ, the Son of God. He not only believed that, but he was sure it was true. How did he come by that knowledge? The Lord told him. "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: [son of Jonah] for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Therefore He who knew the Son had taught his servant Peter who that Son was. Then see that as soon as the revealing power was withheld that same Peter cursed and swore that he did not know the man. It would appear from this that one might know now, and if left to himself in a minute he might deny him. That would prove there was remaining some trace of the old things which had given trouble in the past. It tells us that even one so afflicted and in such a hopeless case as this leper could receive this wonderful divine revelation that this Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, and that he had power to heal one so filthy as he, who had been altogether driven out from men. Not even a preacher in a protracted meeting would have allowed his approach to the mourner's bench to be prayed for; but our dear Lord heard him when he said, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." How wonderful are these words! Not an expression to give the idea that he doubted this man had the power; "thou canst" are his words—solemn and powerful declaration. What wonderful faith was moving the poor man! But he was not entirely without doubt. "If thou wilt" expresses the doubt, and where that doubt lay. Is this One willing to heal one so filthy as I? Will this high and holy Lord look on such a wretch as I and heal me, or will he cast me off as others do? I am not clean, I have no right to come into such holy presence, but my case requires it and I must come. My disease is death anyway, and it can be no worse if I come. I desire to be healed, and there is no other one who possesses this wonderful power. Lord, thou canst make me whole. He also knew that the Lord could do nothing which was against his own will. He would not violate the holy law of God to take a leper in to infect the others of the multitude, but he would cleanse him

of his leprosy and no one would be afraid of him then, for he was no longer a leper. How wonderful is the power of our God to show us our great sinfulness and to lead us directly to Jesus, who alone has power to forgive sins. As I am brought to look back over the sixty-five years which are behind me I see so many scars that I stop and think, Can I be a cleansed leper, or am I yet dead to the knowledge of God and of myself? You may be sure, my dear brother, that this is a serious thing with me. It has been serious to-day, so I thought I would write to you about it. The Lord bless you.

Your brother, I hope,

L. H. HARDY.

KELLER, Texas, March 20, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you herein a copy of a letter written by our beloved brother, Elder W. S. Bourland, of Vernon, Texas, for publication in the SIGNS, if convenient. I feel his letter will be of interest to the readers. He is a true admirer of the SIGNS, and a strong believer and supporter of the doctrine advocated therein.

ASA HOWARD.

VERNON, Texas, Jan. 24, 1919.

DEAR BROTHER HOWARD:—Since supper I have read your good and comforting letter, so rich in praise and adoration of our King, who is Lord of all, and here I am now, trying to put a few thoughts on paper for you in reply. Yes, I would loved to have been with you at brother Eddy's (brother in the flesh) at the old place, where you and dear old father, together with many of our dear brethren who have gone on ahead for a season, sat, and many were the times when it seemed that was a heaven below; but now they are gone, their comforting words are hushed, the rooms in the house seem vacant, the trees and rocks are in solitude, and when I return thither I am but a wanderer and pilgrim; my fellow-travelers have been called away from me to their reward, and I now in loneliness, with my harp upon the willows, am seeking a city, the city of our God, with the little hope that I have to lean upon, which at times is so weak and insufficient, and again it is an anchor of the soul, and enters even to that within the veil, whither for us hath entered Jesus Christ the righteous. If indeed, my brother, we are strangers and sojourners, and are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and have an inheritance that fadeth not away, and our Elder Brother, King, Mediator and High Priest has gone to prepare a place for us and will come again and gather his poor from the toils, sorrows, sufferings, pains and death that here they are incident to, into that celestial haven where only the redeemed of the Lord can come, then our hope is that we shall no more be strangers, but that we shall be citizens and that we shall be joined again to those with whom we talked, sang and prayed, and shall hear our King saying, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Blessed thought, the eternal, merciful, loving Father, who gave his only Son to die for us, the blessed Redeemer and High Priest, who hath redeemed us unto God without spot, by the one offering hath perfected forever them that are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ and called with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world was. Yes, dear brother, our little hope is based upon who Jesus is and

what he did for us, he being God, Mediator, King, High Priest, Redeemer, Elder Brother and all in all to the poor wanderer, and we are told that he laid aside the glory he had with the Father and gave himself a Ransom for sin, that he bore our sins and carried them all the days of old, that he put them away by the sacrifice of himself. Then if we are lost sheep of the house of Israel, if we are strangers scattered abroad, if we are pilgrims and wanderers seeking the city of our God, we have this to encourage us, for the Son of man is come to save that which was lost. Blessed is the man whose hope the Lord is. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Depending on his majesty, on his victorious conflict with Satan, on his life of obedience to the law, on his sufferings, his shed blood and death, his resurrection, ascension and intercession for the saints; depending on all as a prerequisite for the atonement of sin.

My wife is still poorly, up a part of the time. I am about as usual. It is our meeting day, but raining and no congregation. Bad weather and so much sickness and death I suppose are the causes of no gathering. O, I am so hungry to have some of our brethren come and preach for me, as my little efforts are so weak.

Yours in hope of a better life,

W. S. BOURLAND.

LAMBERT, Okla., March 19, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—If one so unworthy as I may be permitted to call you brethren, for I feel to be so unworthy of a place among God's people that I sometimes fear I am not born again, yet I cannot give up that little hope which I have cherished for so long a time. It is now fifty-three years since I professed a hope in Jesus, yet at times it appears so little that I have to hope that I have a hope; but there is none else to look to except Jesus, for it is said in the word of God, Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. It is also said in the word of God that man cannot teach his brother or neighbor to know the Lord, for they shall all be taught of him.

I have been reading many of the old numbers of the SIGNS over lately, and I find many good things in them. O, I wish I could write something that would be interesting to others as theirs are to me, but I am not gifted as others, and I will try and be thankful to the dear Lord for what he has blessed me with. I hope the good Lord will bless you editors and all who write for the good old SIGNS, that you may write on, for it is a great comfort to those who are scattered over the land and are so situated that they cannot hear the word of God preached very often.

What I have written appears to be much like the one who wrote it, very imperfect. Dear brethren, if you think this would be of interest to any one you are at liberty to publish it, but do not let it crowd out better reading. I only thought to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, for it will not be long until the time paid for will pass away, and I do want it as long as I can read and pay for it. I will send you a post-office money order for five dollars; you can extend my time for one year from the time of expiration, the other three dollars is for the benefit of the SIGNS. If you never hear from me again, when the time is out that it is paid for you must stop it, for I am growing in years and cannot expect to be here much longer, but the good Lord only

knows my time. Thanks be to God for the many blessings he has bestowed upon us all along the journey of this life.

Yours in hope of a better life beyond,

JAMES J. CLARK.

HAMILTON, Texas, Nov. 29, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The time has come for me to renew my subscription. I feel utterly destitute of fitting words to express the gratitude of my poor, sinful heart for the great privilege of being permitted to read and rejoice in such a glorious medium of correspondence as the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been and still is to me. Forty years experience of the sweet enjoyment I have had makes it hard for me to understand how many Baptists able to take it can afford to do without it; but the Lord only can lead us to see and do what is best for us and make the path plain, so we have no reason to complain if we do not feel persuaded alike in all things. When we differ, may it ever be in love, knowing it is God only who can bless whom he will to see eye to eye and speak the same thing. I am so glad to see the SIGNS free from wrangling and striving over words to no profit, and yet so firm and unwavering in the faith and doctrine of God our Savior. Inclosed find two dollar money order for my paper another year. I am old and afflicted, and it seems that my afflictions have to some extent paralyzed my mind. I often think in truth I ought not to impose my writing upon any one, especially when the wise man Solomon, I believe it was, said, Man at his best estate is nothing, and less than nothing and vanity. That describes man without a good hope through grace.

Pray for me if you can, and believe me yours in hope,

W. D. WOOD.

GOD MAKES THE WRATH OF MAN TO PRAISE HIM.

WHAT things in the Bible are the most talked of, written about and dwelt upon as being the greatest of all God's works? Are they not those things brought about by the acts of wicked men? Take, for instance, the act of the king issuing a decree that all the male children under two years of age should be killed. On the one side of the scales we see the death of little children, the anguish of the mothers, heartrending scenes throughout the world; on the other side we see the babe in the manger, the little ark (hidden in the bulrushes) containing Moses, whom death, the king and all the powers of wickedness could not find. Were the scales balanced when Jesus sat thereon holding far from the maddened crowd his babes? On another pair of scales we see Joseph sold into Egypt by his brethren only because of God's revelation to him. Could anything balance the scales? Let us see. There is a live Joseph storing up corn for those who sold him. Which was greater, God through Joseph, or the devil through the brethren of Joseph? Take Daniel in the lions' den. On one side of the scales let us place the king, with those who obeyed him; on the other side, God commanding the lions. Did they hear him? Do we not find a great obstacle in our way when we place the fiery furnace into which the Hebrew children had been cast on one side the scales? We need here One who can quench the violence of fire, One who can walk right into the furnace with his children and speak to the fire. Did the fire hear? Again, I see mighty Pharaoh and his vast army pursuing the Israelites on one side the scales. What can weigh down the other side, when we see the Red Sea in front, the mountains on either side

and the enemy behind? Could a simple word do it? Hear this: "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward." Where? Into the deep waters? Yes, because they shall not overflow them. They shall be driven back. Haman sits on one side of the scales, planning death for Mordecai, Jesus sits on the other, who wins? Delilah sits on one side, striving with all her might to take away Samson's strength. His hair is cut off and his eyes put out, surely now his side is too weak to have any weight; but see him in the temple, bowing himself as he holds to the pillars, asking God's help, and then answer. I can picture a prison, with the disciples of Christ bound with chains, on one side, what do I see on the other? A great quaking of the earth, and the prisoners set free. Now place Judas, Herod and the entire world on one side of the scales and the crucified Son of God on the other. Is there a balance here? He is risen a mighty conqueror over death, hell and the grave.

PATTIE WOODARD ANDERSON.

LAURELVILLE, Ohio, Oct. 27, 1918.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been very negligent in remitting to you, and have no excuse to offer but my extreme carelessness and coldness regarding all things spiritual. I have just read the SIGNS for October 15th, and find in it many precious thoughts on scriptural subjects. I must acknowledge that some of the copies of the past summer lie here without my ever reading a word in them. My precious mother passed to the world of eternal bliss on the 24th of last January, and it seems that life has been so different since then. I am thankful to the great God for the fact that she was enabled by the blessings of God to live faithfully in the church of God almost fifty-nine years. She was a little past eighty-one years old when paralysis ended her earthly activities. Although of a ripe old age she never showed any signs, to my mind, of mental decay, commonly called childishness, and always took a keen interest in the affairs of the church, and also in the affairs of nations, especially in this present war. She applied herself busily in the early part of the winter knitting for the soldiers. She told me many times that she had passed through one (the Civil) war and saw its evils, and she hoped never to see another. Her prayer has been granted in part. Our church looks very lonely without her. I never was there that she was not there also, if bodily health permitted. She never allowed any worldly matters to keep her from occupying her seat in meeting. O that there might be a larger proportion of us alike zealous. We are truly thankful to the Giver of all blessings that we were permitted to enjoy her companionship, fellowship and counsel so many years. She always highly appreciated the SIGNS. Please find inclosed money order and check, which will extend my subscription.

Yours in bonds of christian love,

GEORGE W. HARTSOUGH.

INDEPENDENCE, Mo., May 19, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a copy of a poem written by Mrs. Lavinia Morgan after she joined the church at Pleasant Grove, and if you feel disposed to publish it in the SIGNS I feel sure it will be appreciated by the members of the church that loved her so much. On the 21st day of October, 1904, at Pleasant Grove Church, Jackson County, Missouri, she related her christian experience, and was received by the church, and baptized the same day by her pastor, Elder W. T.

Brown, and on the 23rd of the same month composed the poem.

I try to keep tab on the subscribers I send you and have them renew, but those from a distance I may never see again, and make the suggestion that it might be well to send them notice a short time after their subscriptions expire if they fail to renew. I do not know why it is so many who enjoy reading the SIGNS are negligent about renewing unless their attention is called to the fact, notwithstanding the little pink slip pasted on their paper shows when their time is out. Of all the Old School Baptist periodicals I have ever read the SIGNS is the strongest in Bible doctrine, and the most ably edited, and I think more fully indorsed by the many able correspondents.

With best of wishes to the editors and publishers for the future success of the SIGNS, I am, as ever, your friend,

THOS. W. RECORDS.

Dear christian friends, is it true
That I have found a home with you?
I've been an outcast for fifty years—
No resting-place, and full of fears.

I lingered round the shepherd's tent
Till my days were almost spent;
I could not ask an humble place
With those who sing "Amazing grace."

O tell me now, you happy band,
That's on your way to Canaan's land,
Can you help one the way to find?
For I am poor and weak and blind.

Can you see the footprints clear,
Where Jesus went when he was here?
One mark I've found I long did crave—
Lo, it was in the liquid grave.

LAVINIA MORGAN.

ELBA, Ala., Dec. 16, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel this morning like writing you a few lines to let you know how I enjoy reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It contains what I believe to be the written word of God. My grandfather took it back in the sixties, when I was a boy. I enjoyed reading it then, and more so now. I firmly believe the Primitive Baptists to be the people contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints. I believe that God has all power, both in heaven and earth, and the powers that be are ordained of him. I was taught this lesson thirty-eight years ago, not by man, but by Him who doeth all things well. I was made to know that of myself I could do nothing, but O how often I have to be shown those things again. John, after being with the Savior and seeing him raise the dead, unstop the deaf ears, heal the sick and perform other miracles, was cast into prison, and he sent two of the disciples and asked, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached unto them. We hear no more from John, he seemed to be satisfied. So it is with the children of God, when he visits them with his Spirit they are satisfied for the present and all is well.

I did not intend writing all of this when I commenced. I thought of writing a few lines, as I was sending a money order for five dollars for some of my neighbors who want the paper.

Yours in hope, G. BRYAN.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1919.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JONAH III. 10.

"AND God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not."

A sister living in Cobleskill, N. Y., has asked us to give our views on the above. This Scripture, like some others elsewhere in the Scripture, has seemed on casual reading to refute the idea of God knowing beforehand what is to come to pass. However, the Bible from first to last is one harmonius whole, and no one part of it contradicts some other part. If it seems to us to do so, the contradiction is owing to our inability to understand, and not because there is any lack of unity in the word itself. The word declares that God is of one mind, that he changes not, indeed, that with him there is not the least shadow of turning. It will not do, therefore, for any man to explain the Scriptures as to imply that God does change his mind, or that he ever turns from his purpose. God commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh and preach against that city. Jonah thought not to go, and so set sail for Tarshish. In this was he thwarting God's purpose? No, for the farther away from Nineveh he thought he was getting, the nearer he was unwittingly coming to that fish which God had prepared to carry him straight to Nineveh to obey God's command. To men, and even to Jonah, perhaps, it may have seemed that he was contradicting God, but not so, all of Jonah's steps, as well as those of all men, were included in God's divine arrangement. God knew beforehand exactly what Jonah would do, and God knew beforehand exactly what the Ninevites would do at the preaching of Jonah. The word that Jonah preached was, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." At the preaching of Jonah the people of Nineveh believed God and proclaimed a feast. They put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least. Even the king arose from his throne, laid aside his robe from him and covered him with sackcloth and sat in ashes. Here we see repentance on the part of the Ninevites, in that they turned away from their wickedness, and appeared to fast and sorrow for what they had done. In Jonah himself, though he had but lately tried to go against God, there was no sympathy for the Ninevites in their repentance, and he still thought that God ought to destroy them. When he saw that God did not destroy them, as he had understood God to say he would do, Jonah was very angry. There is less mercy with our fellow-man than with God. God is infinitely more charitable toward the shortcomings of his people than man can be. No wonder that David said he would rather fall into the hands of God than into the hands of men. When it says that God repented of evil, it means that it seemed to Jonah that God had repented, or had turned away from doing what he said he would do. As a matter of fact, a day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a day does not always signify in God's dealing with men

twenty-four hours as it does with us. History shows that the city of Nineveh was destroyed just forty years after the time of Jonah's preaching, therefore the Lord meant forty days to be forty years. Jonah, however, evidently had his own idea as to what God meant, and became angry when things did not turn out as he thought they ought to. This reminds us of the time when Hezekiah was sick and the Lord sent him word by the prophet that he should die and not live. Hezekiah thought the Lord meant that he was to die immediately. But the Lord had not said when he was to die. He told him simply to set his house in order, for he should die and not live. How was Hezekiah to set his house in order if the Lord had meant that he was to die at once? Evidently Hezekiah did not think about this, but construed the message of the Lord to mean that he was to die right away, hence he prayed to the Lord to spare his life. The Lord sent the prophet again to tell to him, I have added fifteen years to his days. Notice that the Lord had added nothing to Hezekiah's life really, but added fifteen years to what Hezekiah thought was his term of life. In this the Lord changed his mind not at all, but the Lord changed Hezekiah's mind in answer to his prayer, and showed him that death was not as near, by fifteen years, as Hezekiah thought it was. The Lord is certainly not to blame for the false conceptions that men place upon his word. If Jonah thought forty days to mean days of twenty-four hours each, as men reckon days, whose fault was that? The Lord intended to destroy the city in forty years evidently, for it was overthrown in that time. The Lord meant a day to be one year. This is not at all strange, since God dwells in infinity, and what seems like years to us are but as moments or days to him. God did not change in his purpose, although Jonah thought he had. It seemed to Jonah that God had changed his mind, that he had bidden him preach against the city and then had failed to make his word good. This was not true, but God did not do what Jonah thought he ought to do, and this is not strange, since God has nowhere and at no time guaranteed or promised to fulfill all our ideas of him. But even if God had changed his mind, and had really turned away from doing the evil that he said he would do, who was Jonah to say that God had not a perfect right to do it? This, God showed Jonah in the gourd which grew up and covered Jonah. When God destroyed this gourd Jonah was angry because God had destroyed it. Why should Jonah be vexed at the withering of the gourd, when he evidently would not have cared had all Nineveh been destroyed. Now, if Jonah thought the gourd ought to have been spared, why should God not spare Nineveh if he pleased? This was a demonstration to Jonah that he had better put his hand over his mouth and keep silence than to enter into judgment with God. God had not changed his purpose in the least with regard to Nineveh, as was proved forty years later, when the city actually was overthrown. But even had God determined not to do as Jonah thought he would, who was Jonah, or who is any man, to say that God has not a perfect right to do as it pleases him?

L.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

E. B. Ault, Texas, $3.00; Franklin Terry, N. J., $1.00; Mrs. Sarah Gandy, N. J., $1.00; L. Z. Ross, N. Y., $1.00.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the Black Rock Church, Baltimore County, Maryland, May 14th, 15th and 16th, 1919, to the several churches of which this Association is composed, sendeth greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As another year has passed since our last meeting as an association, and as is our custom, we address you in what is called a Circular Letter. In these dark days of trouble and perilous times, delusions and errors, when men will not listen to sound doctrine, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, what a comfort it is to know there is a God who rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and whose foundation standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his, for the Scriptures firmly declare that the Lord has a people in every kindred, tongue and nation, and to them Jesus says, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."—Luke xii. 32. They are a chosen and elect people, zealous of good works. Jesus calls them a little flock. They were not counted with the nations round about. As in those days, so it is to-day. We see but few worshipers of the true and living God, a remnant, as it were, and to that little number Jesus said, "Fear not." Why should they not fear? Because they are kept by the exceeding great and precious promises of God. "When thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior." Many times we feel to doubt, and fear that we are not of that little flock that Jesus came to redeem, but we have the assurance that he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself. Precious promises by a covenant-keeping God to an afflicted and poor people. Then happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord? Though few in number, we are reminded that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, for a remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people, as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men. So it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. Then the flock that Jesus bids not to fear will, according to our Father's good pleasure, possess the kingdom, and not one for whom Jesus died shall be lost. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Moderator.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.
EDWARD A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

(Written by J. B. Miller.)

The Delaware Association of Old School Baptists, in session with Cow Marsh Church, May 21st, 22nd and 23rd, 1919, to the several churches, brethren and messengers, greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the mercy of Almighty God, our Maker and our Redeemer, in hope, we are again permitted to assemble in his name, that name which is above every name, and to whom every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess, to worship in spirit and in truth,

for he has said, Where two or three are gathered together in my name, I will be in their midst. In these perilous times of war, riot, confusion and chaos in general the world over, struggling for the mastery, and the end of which is known of God; and hand in hand with this condition false doctrines and commandments of men and devils are being promulgated and inculcated in the hearts of millions of unbelievers, children of disobedience led by the prince of the power of the air, helpless and blinded, yet we hope there is left a remnant who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal, even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. Therefore the election hath obtained this grace, and the rest were blinded, for God hath given them the spirit of slumber. There are but two classes of human creatures in this world: believers and unbelievers. The first mentioned are under the law of grace, and the last are those who have been given the spirit of slumber and exist by the law of works; but if it be of works, then it is no more grace, otherwise work is no more work. Therefore the children of hope seek after the gospel of Christ, but if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. His elect people were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved. Thus the unity of Christ in his people is established before all worlds were made, in eternity, for he saith in eternity, I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment, that I may cause those who love me to inherit substance. The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was, rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men. It would seem the habitable part of his earth was in the hearts of his elect then, as well as now; if it were not established then, where would our hope of relationship in Christ stand now? Paul says that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost. Ye must be born again, born of the Spirit; it must be of the heart, and not of the head; Jesus must change that stony heart to one of flesh, as he prepared the eunuch to receive himself. The eunuch had been sent to Jerusalem to worship by the same God that sent Philip toward the south to meet him, and that same Spirit put the words in the eunuch's mouth when he replied that he could not understand, except some man should guide him, and after that he believed with all his heart (not head) and was baptized. A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven. No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day. Ye must be born again; the relationship in Christ must exist before the new birth obtains in a sinner, for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth

confession is made unto salvation, for the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed, for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him (relationship in Christ) of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and who is this preacher but Jesus our Redeemer, in hope? and it all cometh by faith in Christ. By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves. So it is in Christ, of Christ, Christ in us the hope of glory. Yes, verily their sound went into all the earth on the day of Pentecost; therefore salvation was finished to all that believeth when Christ expired on the cross. He was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. Ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, and also, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory. So then with the mind, in the new birth, we can say, There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. Here the law of grace reigns supreme, for his death and resurrection abolished the law of works. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life; for if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. If ye be led of the Spirit ye are not under the law. It would seem to many the church is passing through a wintry season, yet it must necessarily pass through the furnace of affliction in our time as well as our forefathers'; it must be purged by that same Refiner as of yore, as Solomon says, Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this. This applies to the church as well as to the individual, for no branch of the visible church is exempt from sin, and we are no worse or better than the Israelites that crossed the Red Sea. The perseverance of the saints, or those whom God hath accepted in the Beloved, effectually called and sanctified by his Spirit, are undergoing the same temptations and lusts of the flesh, but this in nowise affects their eternal destiny. Through the merit and efficacy of the blood of Christ, their Mediator and Intercessor, this unity existed before time was, and will be in eternity. Though the raging billows of sin have rolled and overrolled them and enmeshed them, yet God has preserved in them his holy doctrine in all its bearings. As a church, or body, they have sinned, but have not departed from the doctrine of Christ, still believing it and upholding it; and salvation by grace through faith, which came through the death and resurrection of Jesus, our Lord and Savior, is the keystone of this precious doctrine given us by the new covenant, even the resurrection of the dead. Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit,

the redemption of our body. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. For if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. Father, we would rest in thy love.

May the grace of Christ our Savior, and the Father's boundless love, with the Holy Spirit's favor, rest upon us from above. Thus may we abide in union with each other and our Lord, and possess in sweet communion joys which earth cannot afford.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Moderator.
J. B. MILLER, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Cow Marsh Old School Baptist Church, at Cow Marsh, Kent Co, Del., May 21st, 22nd and 23rd, 1919, to the associations and churches with which we correspond sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once again our heavenly Father hath gathered us to mingle one with another, to talk of his glory and to behold his majesty and power as manifest in his people here below, and to receive your epistles of love and hear your messengers talk of Jesus and his love, for which we feel to say, "We thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

We have appointed our next session to be held with the Salem Church, at Philadelphia, Pa., between the third and fourth Sundays in May, 1920, where and when we hope to again meet and receive your ministers and messengers.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Moderator.
J. B. MILLER, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder R. S. Oyler, at the parsonage at Williamsport, Pa., May 26th, 1919, Guy Clifton Hunter, son of Mrs. Blanche Veley Hunter, of Jersey Shore, Pa., and Vinnie Alberta Myers, daughter of George Myers, of Phillipsburg, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Frank E. Robey, deacon and clerk of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun County, Va., passed away from earthly life at his home near Bluemont May 21st, 1919. He had been declining in health for some time, nevertheless the end came as a shock to all, since he had appeared to be improved in health but a few days before. He was born May 4th, 1844, the son of William T. Robey and Mary S. Hibbs. Brother Robey is survived by one sister in the flesh, Mrs. George W. Bradshaw, of the Frying Pan Church. He was married to Miss Martha E. Gaines in 1865. To them were born nine children; six are still living, two having died in infancy, and one son, George W. Robey, died in 1906. The surviving children are as follows: Mrs. Francis Earl Whitman, who, with her husband and family, lives not far from her father's home; William T. Robey, of Buena Vista, Va.; Ernest F., of Charlottesville; Edgar L., who, with his family, lives on the old home place, not far from the Ebenezer meetinghouse; James E. P., of Lynchburg, and C. L. Robey, of Purcellville, Va. Brother Robey was baptized by Elder J. N. Badger in 1878, and ever since lived a life of devotion to his brethren and to the truth. His house has ever been open to entertain his brethren from far and near, and many no doubt who read these lines will remember his kind and generous hospitality. Some few years ago the church licensed him to speak in public, and it can be truthfully said of him that he was not ashamed of the doctrine of salvation by grace and of the omnipotent sovereignty of God. He was an humble, God-fearing child of God, and always seemed to esteem his brethren better than himself. His wife, sister Martha Robey, died in 1910. In 1912 he was married to sister Rachel E. Baker, of Baltimore, Md., who survives him. He fought through the Civil War in the Confederate Army under Col. Moseby, and acquitted himself bravely. Though under fire several times, it was not intended that he should be killed, God having a place for him to occupy in the church, as was to be made manifest later. Brother Robey was held in high regard by the whole community. He had held positions of public trust, having been deputy sheriff and tax collector. As a man and neighbor and friend he will be greatly missed by all who knew him. To the Ebenezer Church the loss is great, but we feel his work was done or he would not have been called

home. The bereaved widow and children have had taken from them a most kind and loving husband and father. May the God of all grace through the work of his Holy Spirit comfort all who mourn.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the meetinghouse at Ebenezer, using as a text John xiv 2. Burial in the cemetery at Ebenezer. L.

John Edward Buckner departed this life Feb. 12th, 1919, at the age of 65 years, 3 months and 16 days. He was the son of Arthur W. Buckner, deceased, and Murtis E. Buckner, who survives him. They were pioneer citizens of Texas, having moved here from Georgia in 1849. Our father came in January, 1849, and in July of the same year went to Claiborne Parish, La., and married our mother, who was Murtis E. Kilgore, daughter of Allen Kilgore. They came immediately to Texas, and resided at Pine Hill until father died, June 22nd, 1894. Mother still lives; she is in her ninety-second year and in excellent health. She made her home with my brother until his death, in the house where she lived when she first came to Texas. In the passing away of my brother the country lost one of its most estimable citizens. He was a man of sterling qualities, as honest as Paul and as charitable as his means would allow him to be. He would and did deprive himself of money and other things in order to help his fellow-men. While giving, he did it in a quiet way, not letting his left hand know what his right hand did. He never united with any church, but was a true believer in election and predestination, and had he joined any denomination it would have been that of the Primitive Baptist. He liked to read the Scriptures and was quite a scripturalist. He always kept the New Testament at his place of business and read it frequently. It was his delight to find out from men of other faith their interpretation of some passage of Scripture and take issue with them. His friends were all who knew him, and if he had an enemy I do not recall who he can be. He left a wife and two children, a boy and a girl, both of whom are married. Between the two they have nine children, all of whom are girls. He also leaves three brothers and two sisters, namely: Allen K., and May B. Hillin, of Pine Hill, Texas, Arthur C., of Brownsville Texas, Thomas J., of Moody, Texas, and Fannie B. Adams, of Overton, Texas. I have already mentioned his mother, who is living at Pine Hill with Allen K. My brother's health was not good for several years, and with a stroke of paralysis he passed away peacefully within a few hours. In my last talk with him last Christmas week he told me that he could not live long, and spoke of death as if it were just a journey. I am sure that God is taking care of him, for I believe that he is one of his elect. He is gone, but the world is better for having had him in it, even the short time that he was here.

A. C. BUCKNER.

Tillie Ramey McAlister was born in Washington County, Ark., Sept. 15th, 1873, and died Jan. 16th, 1919, in Amarilla, Texas, where she had gone for treatment of diabetes, but all that could be done for her was of no avail. John M. Ramey, her father, emigrated to Rusk County, Texas, when she was five years old. The death of her mother left her an orphan at the age of sixteen. She came to Johnson County, Texas, and was married to W. A. McAlister Sept. 10th, 1892. To that union were born three sons and two daughters, all of whom are living at home. The eldest daughter, Julia, who had been married to Bennie Thompson about one year, was deprived of her husband, who died of a wound inflicted by an automobile striking him. He left poor Julia and a baby girl and many friends to mourn their loss. Sister McAlister was raised by Methodist parents and sprinkled when an infant, but in 1899 she professed a hope in Christ and by mistake joined the Limited Baptists at Joshua, Texas. After learning the real cause of that division she became dissatisfied and attended the association of Old School Baptists held at Blum, Texas, in August, 1903, and by her confession of the true faith was received, and baptized by the writer in the presence of a large concourse of people in the midst of much rejoicing. She became a reader of the SIGNS sixteen years ago. The family moved to the Panhandle Jan. 10th, 1910, away from her church and people that she loved, and she heard no preaching except what she read in the SIGNS. She leaves a kind husband and good, obedient children, two brothers and one sister to mourn the loss of a precious wife, mother and sister. Her life and home were made happy by her lovely disposition and beautiful character.

Her remains were taken to Maud, Texas, where the funeral service was held, and the body laid to rest in the cemetery near by.

May the Lord comfort all who mourn.

W. L. ROGERS.

Martha Randall was born June 4th, 1847, and died March 26th, 1919. Her maiden name was Ott. She was married to R. L. Randall August 12th, 1865. To that union were born eleven children, five boys and six girls; one daughter and two sons departed this life before her, leaving eight children, her aged husband and one brother, with the church, to mourn their loss. She received a hope in Christ in early life, and was baptized by Elder A. D. Holingsworth in Newton County, Miss. She moved to Laurel, Miss., in 1897, and with her husband united by letter with the Ralston Church, where several of her children joined later. It can be said of her that she lived her profession, always filling her seat unless providentially hindered. She was loved by all who knew her, for she always had a kind word for all.

Her body was taken to the Hickory Grove church-

house, where the writer tried to preach to a large congregation, after which it was laid beside her dear ones in the Randall plot in the cemetery.

Written by her pastor, L. F. EASLEY.

MEETINGS.

THE Lord willing, there will be a meeting held with the Beulah Old School Baptist Church, near Aberfeldy, Ontario, the third Sunday in June (15th). Conference and business meeting 3 p. m. Saturday; preaching on Sunday 11 a. m and 3:30 p. m., old time. All are welcome who desire precious love and fellowship to abound in the church of Jesus Christ.

ARCHIE McALPINE, Church Clerk.

THE Woburn Old School Baptist Church will hold a two days meeting Sunday and Monday, June 29th and 30th. Meetings each day at 10:30 a. m. and 2:30 p. m. We expect Elder J. M. Fenton, of Philadelphia, with our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, on this occasion, and cordially invite all who can attend to do so. The meetinghouse will be found on Main St., Woburn, No. 452. L. B. FORD.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

There will be meeting every first Sunday at Halcott Center, N. Y., in the Grange Hall. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church holds her regular meetings at 13th and Lexington Sts., Sellwood, at 2 p. m. on the fourth Sunday in each month. Sellwood is a suburb of Portland, Oregon. Take any outgoing Sellwood car. S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

Newberg, Oregon.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Middletown and Andes Church will hold their meetings the first Sunday in every month at their meetinghouse, Union Grove, N. Y. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

"IN PLACES OF DRAWING WATER."

(Judges v. 11.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

DAWSON SPRINGS, Ky., March 10, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter received from brother C. M. Hood, of Nashville, Tenn., which I have enjoyed reading very much, and feel that I would like to share it with the readers of the SIGNS, if you see proper to publish it. I have not his consent to publish it, but know well enough that he would not object.

My mind has for some time dwelt on the subject of salvation. How are we saved, is it by doing the law, or is it by grace? Law demands the utmost farthing, it is cold and unmerciful. You are demanded all, and if you fail in the least you are guilty. With guilt you cannot enter in at the gate, and to enter any other way is not possible. I have lived past the allotted time to man, and have practiced medicine for forty-nine years. During all these years I have been associated with all kinds, classes and nationalities of people, except it be the immensely rich and the upper four hundred, and as a doctor I have been brought very close to them, for the doctor comes nearer the people than any one else. The lawyer sees the mad man; the evil of his nature is always predominating when he consults a lawyer. The preacher sees the good side; when he is around we all have our Sundays on, and are trying to be or appear to be very good. This sometimes is actuated by respect for his calling, at other times from the various causes that make up life, and so on through all the different avocations of life. The doctor is called when in distress, either in mind or body. He gets our secrets, he knows of all our shortcomings, we confide to him such things as we do not want other people, be they lawyers or preachers, to know, and to the honor of the profession I am glad to say they are seldom betrayed. On this account I feel that I am in a position to render a just and true verdict in the case. I have found some good in everybody, and I have not yet met with that perfect person—one who commits no sin. Now therefore if there is no one who sins not, then all are under sin and condemnation. A sin once committed can never be recalled, it stands, and it is not a matter of debt and credit; we cannot do something to offset the crime done, but it stands against us, with no power on our part to remove it. Therefore the only remedy

is grace through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Grace means unmerited favor; nothing that we can do will remove the stain, so the whole matter stands on the mercy of grace, through the merits of our crucified Redeemer. No matter how badly we feel, how much we would like to recall the act, how we would like to go to the injured one and ask forgiveness (something when it is possible we should do), nothing save the blood of Christ will remedy the case. Then it must be through his mercy and grace that we are saved, either in this time world or in that which is to come.

I have not essayed to quote Scripture, much of which could be used to sustain what I have said, for I have taken a natural view of the matter altogether. I have written this to relieve my mind; if it is worth anything, all right; if not, let it go the way it should.

Yours in hope of life eternal,

BEN P. EARLE.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Dec. 25, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER EARLE:—This so-called Christmas morning I am thinking of you and many others of the dear family of God whom I have had the privilege of knowing and meeting with in the service of the holy Son of God, whose birth into this world was, or is said to be, December 25th. Thinking of all these sacred and solemn things with a very shallow mind, I have thought of trying to drop you a word, if so be the Lord is willing. First, I want to acknowledge to you that I find myself just as vile a sinner this morning in my sixty-third year as I ever did in all my life. I can surely say with the apostle Paul, In me, that is, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing; but I find deep down somewhere in my poor understanding a feeling of hope in the tender mercy of God through him who was born in the city of David, wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. If I am mistaken in this little hope then I am ruined, for God says there is salvation in no other, but there is salvation in him; he is God's salvation. I am feeling sensible of my sins and my lost condition, but from what I understand his coming into the world to mean, I find it the only thing that can possibly reach my case, it is so suitable to my need; in fact, it is just what I do need, and nothing else but Jesus will satisfy God's holy justice. I am made so sensible of this that I have reached a point to find that I am not satisfied with anything else but Jesus and him crucified. It seems to me that it is one thing to think of Jesus and just that, and it is quite another thing to know him crucified. This is the way that Paul fixed it to the church at Corinth: Jesus Christ and him crucified. That is my mind. Paul said again to the church of Galatia, Who gave himself for our sins. This is what Jesus did, and it certainly does mean something to us when we are by God's rich and free grace made able to understand it. He was not only born for us, but he gave himself for our sins. Do you, do I, know what that means? That was the great price paid to God's divine justice to buy the church of God from the wrath of a sin-avenging law and redeem her from all her sins. It certainly was a price, and when we are told in God's word, Ye are bought with a price, it means Jesus and all that he was in the presence of the Father before time began. In giving himself he gave it all; he did not hold back a single thing. When he became sin he gave up all the glory that he had with the Father and

came down under the curse and wrath of God's law against sin. We read from the pen of Solomon, The Lord possessed him in the beginning of all his ways, before his works of old. He was as one brought up with him, rejoicing always before him. This means, to my poor mind, that the holy Son of God when he was made under the law, gave up all this inexpressible glory, glory that we as poor sinners cannot realize. Paul says he became poor. He certainly did become poor, if it be a fact that he ever became me. He who was rich; yes, no tongue can ever tell what it all means until we reach the glory land with him, as he will be in the presence of the Father in the eternal home of the saints in the ages to come. Hence he gave himself for our sins. They were our sins, not his sins, but he took them on himself and became us. O how poor then he was under the law of God. It is horrible indeed to think about. What love, what condescension was manifested in his giving up all to save us from all our sins! Every sin, every imagination and evil thought of our poor hearts he took, not a single thing left out. He gave himself, all that he was before the Father. O the awful price, the deep justice of the holy God against sin and the wickedness of man. It took himself in the person of his own Son; it took all the Godhead bodily to satisfy the justice and law of God. Words cannot be found, the human tongue is too feeble to ever be able to tell here in this world what it all means. What do we know about it? It is a wonderful thing with me. Men think it an easy matter to know the things of Jesus, but O my soul, it takes God the Spirit to show them unto us, and when we are wrought upon by the Holy Ghost we are brought into very close touch with the sufferings and agonies of the Lord Jesus Christ, for they are the things of Jesus, if I know anything about it. I will send the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, and he shall take the things of mine and show them unto you. Then if you and I have seen Jesus in this sense, we have seen him in his suffering, we have heard him in his agony in the garden, we have seen him bleeding and dying on the cross for all our sins, we have seen him in the power of his resurrection, and as Paul says, We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the sufferings of death, now crowned with glory and honor. We have seen him in his birth, we have found him just as the heavenly messenger said, wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger; seen him in our flesh, seen him deep down in agony in our vile hearts under the wrath of God's holy law; we have seen him living the life of holiness before the Father, we have seen him before the courts of men, we have seen him led away in shame and ignominy to the rugged cross, we heard the sound of the hammer as the nails were driven through his hands and feet, we have seen the sharp spear that pierced his side, and we have seen the blood and water that flowed therefrom, and we have felt the power and realized the efficacy of his shed blood to cleanse us from all sin; we have seen him taken down and laid in the grave, we have seen the angel come down from the throne of God, despatched by the Father, and we have seen the stone rolled away, and by the power of the eternal God we have seen him arise from the tomb alive evermore; we have seen him from Mt. Olivet ascend upward, back to the glory that he in love, mercy and pity gave up to become the Savior of poor lost and ruined sinners. For this purpose he came into the world, for this

purpose he was born in Bethlehem, and it does not make any difference whether it was in December or May; he was born, and that is enough. Now that was a morning of good news to all who had the heavenly message sent to them; so it is to-day, God sends the message home to the hearts of his people, they hear the news, and it is great joy to every one who by God's rich grace is given an ear to hear, hence, Blessed are they that know the joyful sound. The messengers from heaven declared this: Behold, we bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. The heavenly choir caught up the strain and sang, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

May the Lord bless you and your family with a feeling sense of these things this day, and all the dear family of God in all the world. Pray for us. Farewell in the Lord.

Yours in humble hope,

C. M. HOOD.

COLUMBUS, Ga., June 15, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a good letter written by one whose writings have often appeared in the dear old SIGNS. His letters need no introduction to the readers of the SIGNS, but being in possession of many good letters from his pen, and believing them to be too good to keep all to myself, I am sending this one to the dear medium, and feel there are others who will be fed from the blessed truth contained therein. I have not his consent, but feel he would not object, but would be willing to abide by your judgment. It never will cease to be a wonder to me why such graciously taught children of God can afford or desire to write to me, who, if one at all, am the least of all, and not worthy to receive such precious and priceless fellowship and confidence in the love and mercy of God; but it appears that in the love and mercy of the Father he has directed some of his worthy and holy saints to write to and comfort me, whose pathway is through the wilderness. I am so situated that I never hear the sound of the gospel of Christ, the Son of God, but often feel to be almost starved for that precious sound. I cannot feed and live upon the sound of Babylon, which completely surrounds me, hence the love and mercy of God in causing his loved ones to direct their messages of love and truth to me. Brother Fisher says God is able and will keep and sustain us, though we never hear the vocal sound of his gospel or have the privilege of associating with his people in the flesh and while on earth, and though I often hunger and thirst for these things, I know he has already blessed me with this hunger and desire, and sometimes feel that the greater blessing is in the desire and hunger; nevertheless, we know those who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled. He is able to keep and sustain his people in all seeming isolations and under all conditions. How glorious to know that the power of his word will not allow any earthly power to separate us from the love of God. O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! How miraculously he brings his children into the realms of his love and mercy, into the kingdom of his dear Son, and feeds them with this bread from heaven, even when in the remotest spot of the desert. As Moses fed the hungry children of Israel in the wilderness, so is spiritual Israel fed with that holy Manna from above and given to drink of the water from the Rock of salvation.

I much enjoyed the sermon by Elder Ker published in the June 15th SIGNS. Through faith it seemed as if I were sitting under the sound of his voice while reading it. It was with a solemn feeling of awe and wonder that I read the truth contained therein. With that sweet power from above was the truth as he spoke it applied to me, and I felt I knew I could say that his words were not in vain, but that he had performed by the words he spoke his whole duty to God and man. What a treat that this sermon was published for the benefit of those poor hungry ones who had not the privilege of attending those good meetings. I was selfish enough to believe while first reading it that it was especially for me.

Pardon me, for I have written altogether too much, and you may be compelled to throw this into the wastebasket, but please publish brother Fisher's letter.

Yours in love for the truth,

(MRS.) C. M. THETFORD.

SALISBURY, Md., June 4, 1918.

MY DEAR SISTER:—Your good letter has been received and read and reread with special interest. There is much in it for me, and I would certainly love to take this letter and sit down with you and go over each phase of your feelings therein expressed. You seem inclined at first to doubt your acceptance in these precious things because you do not doubt more. I feel as much fellowship for the expressions of this last letter as any you have written, even as much as the one you wrote me last summer, when you told of such terrible darkness and deep anguish. I am glad you took my last letter as I meant it, I was sure you would. I felt a confidence in you, such a clear evidence of a work of grace in your heart that you would not mistake my intention, and not feel that I felt to be a master dictating, but an humble brother, less than the least, writing with the ability which I trust was given me. There is no serious difference in our views, and I am so glad. I love union, and not dissension. You and I are agreed as far as vital points are concerned, and your letters are much to me; would that I were worthy of such.

It was my privilege to attend the Baltimore Association, then to Black Rock on Sunday, then to the Delaware in Wilmington. I was taken sick then and had to return home, and could not attend the Delaware River Association at Southampton. I met Elder L. H. Hardy, of Atlantic, N. C., and had him at my home last Tuesday night, and he preached here for us Sunday a. m. from Song of Solomon ii. 14: "O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock," &c., and again Sunday p. m., from Psalms xlvi. 4: "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." Both were very able sermons. Take it all together the associations were most pleasant. In the last two weeks I heard twenty-five separate discourses. I thought of you many times, and wished that you might be so privileged. Still our God is not confined to the limits of meetings or associations; he can and will comfort you in your isolation equally as he does in other places.

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." I do not feel anyway equal to taking up this subject for a thorough consideration, but it has been on my mind of late, and came again to me in connection with my

last sentence. This "word" is both quick and powerful, a noteworthy combination. A thing might be quick, many things are quick, but not powerful. Again, many things are powerful but not quick. A humming-bird is quick, but not powerful, and an elephant is powerful but not quick. A lion might be termed as both quick and powerful. "The Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." He prevailed because he is both quick and powerful. He is the Word of God. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."—John i. 1. "As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." This word, being quick and powerful, accomplishes all things designed, there being no power superior so that it may prevail over the word. This is a wonderful thing to think about, the quickness and the power of the word of God; for by the word of God the worlds were made. It took but the word, his word, to speak into existence the worlds. His word is creative, it is the word of a monarch, supreme, an unlimited sovereign. Men, angels and devils alike obey this word. God called Abraham. This word was quick and powerful in this instance. Abraham obeyed, the waters obey. The Master had but to rebuke the tempest and there was a calm. The instances of the demonstrations of the word are so numerous in the Scriptures it seems needless to make mention of them, they are so familiar to Bible readers. All things are upheld by the word of his power. This word comes to us quick and powerful; as the lightning shineth out of the east unto the west, so is the coming of the Son of man. Though it may seem to have taken years, yet there is an instant when this word reveals to us our sins. How quick and powerful this came to me as I frolicked with my gay companion on the dance floor—the terribleness of my condition revealed in an instant. I had felt a long time to be a sinner, but now how terrible was my condition shown to me; with such power this terribleness dawned in on my otherwise peaceful existence. Many times this comes to one seemingly in degrees, a gradual thickening of the clouds of distress, even as a heavy storm which seems to be days in gathering. I used to observe this kind of storms when I lived in the middle west. We feel the dread of the approach of the storm, but are unprepared for the quickness and powerfulness of this storm when in all its fury it breaks in upon us. So with the child of God; he begins to see a thickening, a feeling of oppression, a feeling of awe and approaching dread. While this may be going on for years, there comes a time when this awful tempest bursts in all its fury, and he finds his old home and shelter swept away, and instead his former habitation is but a mass of debris, of which he can fit no two timbers together to reconstruct a home. The word of God, which is quick and powerful, has wrecked his security and destroyed his peaceful home and made of him, who was a rich and strong man, now a poor helpless beggar, not boasting of good deeds done, but like the poor publican, not being able to lift his eyes toward heaven, smites upon his breast

in the anguish of his condition, crying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." This word has come quick and powerful, accomplishing its work. It is sharper than any two-edged sword, it is cutting, it cuts any way it is turned. There is nothing in nature to which we can compare the cutting ability of this word; it is sharper than any instrument of man. This same word which is so sharp both kills and makes alive. It kills first, then makes alive, and makes alive all it kills, for where he has begun a good work he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. This word is a divider, it separates people, one of a family, two of a city. Two are raised up under the same teachings and environments, yet this word makes a division, one goes one way, the other another way; it separates the nearest of earthly ties. Our near and dear ones are good and kind and upright, morally speaking, but oftentimes this word has divided asunder soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and as touching spiritual things we are separate. Nothing but the word of God did this. You can understand this, you have it in your home. It is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, and with all this quickness, with all this great power, there goes with it discernment. It does not go out promiscuously, cutting and slashing, but is a discerner of our thoughts. One says, O Lord, thou understandest my thoughts from afar off. Our thoughts, even the secret thoughts, whether evil or good, are not hid from him with whom we have to do; even the intents of our hearts, all things are naked and open, nothing hid. How great, how terrible, what power, and how unmindful is man of this power. No one knows of it until the word comes to him. These things cannot be taught. The Master thanked the Father that these things are hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes, that creature of all creation the most helpless; every other creature has strength and can help itself as soon as born. Creatures of the lower order of creation are cast upon their own resources at the time of birth, but a babe, the young, the offspring of proud, boastful man, is most helpless, the most helpless of all creation. But even in this helpless state, that is, when we have become as a babe, our weakness manifest, then is the revelation of Jesus Christ, the word of God, discerning our thoughts, which he has graciously turned toward himself; even the intents of our otherwise vile hearts are changed to him, for a division has taken place, our heart is divided asunder, killed and made alive, alive unto God now, and instead of a heart of stone we have a heart of flesh, and he discerns his Spirit in us which he has manifested there. All creatures are manifest in his sight, both clean and unclean, but he is the divider, separating the good from the evil. He sits as a refiner of gold and a purifier of silver, blowing the fire under the crucible in which we are placed, where we are thoroughly purged, our dross consumed, our tin taken away, and we come forth as gold tried by fire. His fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, the wheat and the chaff separated, the wheat garnered, the chaff burned. He is the divider. This word of God is quick and powerful, sharp, dividing and discerning; even though we are subjected to an intensity which seems well-nigh unbearable and we often feel we will surely be consumed, yet this word is "not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet

without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not." The Word, the divider, has separated us unto himself. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

May the Lord bless you and cause you to feel his presence with you. I trust I have not said anything to cause you to attempt to withhold your thoughts, feelings and views on these high and sacred things, and that you will continue to write freely. I shall be glad to hear from you. The word of God is not a divider of itself, therefore there is no division between us.

Your unworthy brother,

F. SELBY FISHER.

DAYTON, Washington.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I am herein sending my subscription I will try and write some of the impressions that are on my mind. I have been a reader of the SIGNS for about forty years, and have seen but little therein that I could not fully indorse, and when I read the oneness in sentiment, in doctrine and daily experience, all speaking in substance the same things, I am encouraged to believe that they are the blessed people spoken of by the prophet, saying, All thy children shall be taught of God. It does seem to me that they have all been taught the same lesson. The first great lesson is their total depravity, to know that in and of themselves they can do nothing, and then to know their daily dependence on their Lord. So when I read in the SIGNS the many good letters all speaking in substance the same things, surely they are that people, and I am encouraged to hope that I have been taught that great lesson, for they in doctrine speak my belief, and in experience speak my mind much better than I can tell it.

Do with this as you think best.

Yours in bonds of love and fellowship,

B. S. PATE.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Ebenezer Church, of New York city, to the several associations and meetings with which we correspond sends love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We are glad to report a pleasant season of love and fellowship in the Lord. Owing to the crowded and congested conditions of New York hotels we were compelled to hold this session of our association outside the city, and with the exception of the inconvenience of some of our churches in getting here we feel that Ocean Grove has proven a pleasant place to meet. The attendance has been large, and your messengers have been gladly received and have presented the unsearchable riches of Christ to our comfort and upbuilding. We have again failed to receive some corresponding Minutes. We ask a continuance of your valued correspondence

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Warwick Church, at Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., to begin Wednesday after the first Sunday in June, 1920, where and when we shall hope to meet your messengers again.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

R. LESTER DODSON, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1919.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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ISAIAH LI. 1, 2.

"HEARKEN to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him."

A few words on this text will not be out of place, perhaps, at this time, when so much discouragement is felt by the church throughout the land. Surely it is a day of adversity and depression. Such Scriptures are intended for the comfort of Zion, hence it is our desire to give its true import, if blessed to do so, to the end that the church everywhere be reminded of its faithful Builder and Keeper, his omnipotent power and Godhead. The key to the subject is found in the two last verses of the preceding chapter and the following verse to our text. By reading the last two verses of the fiftieth chapter it will be seen that in that age of the world, and at the time our text was written, there were two classes among the Jews. One who feared the Lord and obeyed the voice of his servant, or, in other words, kept the law given by Moses. That class walked in darkness and had no light, which means that they walked by faith, as there is no sight in the walk of faith. To this class the word was: Trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon your God. The other class had kindled a fire and compassed themselves about with sparks. They walked in the light of their fire and in the sparks that they had kindled. In them was no obedience to the law, nor fear of God, their walk was by sight, hence no faith in it. They did not trust in God for the fulfillment of his promises, nor was their hope in him of salvation. They composed "Jerusalem, Jerusalem," and the Lord said, "This shall ye have of mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow." To the same class, in fulfillment of this condemnation, Jesus said to them, "Your house is left unto you desolate." To the other class all promises are now kept through Christ.

In that dark age of the world the faithful among the Jews often became depressed and discouraged. The promise of salvation and deliverance from sin, through "the Seed of the woman," seemed long delayed. Centuries had elapsed, millions had died and all things continued as they formerly had. Where is the promise of his coming? was the question often with those who trusted in the Lord. Time after time the Lord sent renewed promises to his people and gave them renewed tokens of his faithfulness to them. At the time of our text he was gracious in reminding them of marvelous things with which they were well acquainted, but of which they lost sight now and then. We should not forget the fact that those who feared the Lord and obeyed the voice of his servant were the ones called upon to hearken to Him. He had something to say to them that followed after righteousness, or, in other words, desired righteousness and peace with God. They were "hungering after righteousness," and in verse three the promise is that

they should have it. Calling their minds to his wonderful work, the Lord commands them to look to the rock whence they were hewn and to the hole of the pit whence they were digged, then called their attention to the fact that Abraham and Sarah, their father and mother, were represented by the rock and hole of the pit. He said, as it were, If when there were none known of my people, all living as they listed, like Sodom and Gomorrah, for instance, I could call one man, Abraham, alone, just one man, and bless him and multiply him until his seed were like the sand of the seashore and as the stars of heaven for multitudes; if I could cause Sarah, a barren woman all her life, at the age of ninety years to conceive and bring forth a son, can I not now bless and multiply my people? There was one rock, but many chips; one Abraham, but many children. Every chip that falls from a rock being hewn is a part of that rock, so every Israelite was a child of Abraham. Paul tells us that from one man, Abraham, and he as good as dead, sprang an innumerable host. Sarah laughed at the very idea of her conception at the advanced age of ninety years, thinking it impossible, but Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.

After reminding those who followed after the things of God of his wonders performed through Abraham and Sarah, establishing thereby his sovereign power to do his will, he renewed the promise to comfort Zion and to build her waste places that she might be like the garden of the Lord, wherein are rejoicing and the voice of melody. This message has been heralded since the ascension of Christ. Comfort ye my people, saith your God, speak comfortably unto Jerusalem, cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. In these trying times of darkness, depression, falling away, the love of many waxing cold, when men are lovers of pleasure more than of God, when death to the church seems sure, when discouragement is on every hand, it is still good to be reminded that God is at the helm, able to accomplish his will both in heaven and in earth, that if of one man he could, in the days of Abraham, develop the greatest nation the world has ever known, he can now of one man, even Christ, if it pleases him, develop the children of his love into the largest number that earth or heaven has ever known. But if it is not his will to do so, do we as his followers want it done? Should we not be content with his work, let it be what it may? If it be his purpose to add to the church of such as shall be saved, all would be glad. On the other hand, if such be not his will, why should any of us be faint-hearted and feel like giving up the ship while he is our Captain? May we all be reminded often of his wonderful works to the children of men. We, many of us, have reached "the haven of rest," where our souls are anchored, and He will bring every one of his redeemed to the same haven, where they shall find rest to their souls. Let us remember the things of old, when God worked and none could hinder. K.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder John McConnell.)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church of New York city, convened at Ocean Grove, N. J., June 4th, 5th and 6th, 1919, to the churches composing the same sends love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."—John xv. 12, 13. If this determines the extent of all a man can know or feel of love, how can we comprehend the manner of Jesus' love bestowed upon enemies? It is impossible. Only the mind which was in Christ can understand it; only in being rooted and grounded in love can we comprehend the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, when we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."—Romans v. 7, 8. Surely love so amazing, so divine, demands our soul, our life, our all. Let us consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, "who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." Not in the likeness and form only, for as in the beginning the Word that was with God was God, so the Word that was made flesh and dwelt among us was flesh—very man no less than very God. It is not left to us to speculate concerning the significance of Jacob's dream of beholding a ladder set up on earth, and the top of it reaching to heaven, and of beholding the angels of God ascending and descending on it; for upon Nathanael's confession, "Thou art the Son of God," Jesus replied, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." Had the ladder Jacob saw come short of heaven, or come short of earth, it would not be a figure of him who said, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." The faith which was once delivered unto the saints, the gift of God, which flesh and blood cannot receive, alone can comprehend the mystery of God manifest in the flesh. Upon this rock the church is built. The longing desire of all those who have a right to the tree of life is to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, and in the spirit of the exhortation, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves," they work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. No slavish fear of future punishment animates them, but fear lest they fail of the grace of God, come short of the glory of God. They love righteousness and hate iniquity. Whatever was the knowledge of good and evil gained by Adam in eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the good has not been loved nor the evil hated by any one begotten in his likeness; the children have preferred the pleasures of sin to the fruit of holiness, because it is more suitable to their nature. Place the present evil world, its pleasures, its profits, its wisdom on one hand, the gospel, with its spiritual and eternal bless-

ings on the other, and man will take the former, because its suits his natural disposition. There is but one remedy: "Ye must be born again," for it is a new creature only that can "hate the evil, and love the good." This doctrine of the new birth is the one the enemy of our soul hates most for us to be right in. His utmost endeavor is to deceive us into seeking the knowledge of God where it cannot be found; to persuade us to rest and be contented in other than entering in at the strait gate, the narrow way which leadeth unto life. It matters not to him what we believe, so long as he can keep us from the discovery of life as it is in Christ Jesus. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit: marvel not therefore that I said unto you, Ye must be born again." To be born from above is accomplished entirely on earth, and in being born, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," power is given to become the sons of God. We are then no longer carnal, but spiritual, in a state of grace, a state of absolute salvation. If we are not born again, then we are what we were by nature—flesh, a corruptible and corrupt seed, the natural born state of every man, which waits no judgment and needs no execution. Being born dead in body, soul and spirit, it needs no further exercise of the wrath of God to destroy either. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither can corruption inherit incorruption." There is no other state but one of these; to be carnally minded is death, to be spiritually minded is life and peace. "They that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." And this is his commandment, the message that ye have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. The only knowledge we have of having passed from death unto life is in loving the brethren, and "he that loveth not his brother abideth in death: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." Love is the clearest embodiment which we can vision to ourselves of the incomprehensible God. God and love are coincident terms. "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." The peace and prosperity of churches are manifest only where unity of spirit in unfeigned love of the brethren exists. Increasing membership is not always an evidence of prosperity, no more than a failing membership is an evidence of decay in a church. It is right to deplore the fact of infrequent additions, especially when there are some standing without whom we would gladly welcome to a home with us. But is it right to fold our hands and wait for an expected end of the church's visibility? Would it not be hearing what the Spirit saith unto the churches to take heed unto ourselves, examine ourselves individually and be assured, if possible, that we have not forsaken our first love; that we are not lukewarm, but have in deed and in truth committed our souls to God in well doing? That there is a cause for seeming decay in churches is unquestionable. Responsibility rests somewhere. Members who forsake the assembling of themselves together are not guiltless, nor can ministers who neglect or resign the care of a feeble church justify themselves with the plea that their work is ended in that church.

At times differences have arisen between ministering brethren which affected the churches they served so seriously that, though they were agreed in preaching the same doctrine, their churches would not commune together. Happily this association has never been thus tried. Such things ought not to be. Such a walk does not testify to the closeness, unity and oneness of believers in Jesus with each other, as it is set forth in the Scriptures. Paul, in speaking of the body and blood of Christ, says: "We being many are one bread: for we are all partakers of that one bread." The same feeding which makes of the believer one body and one soul with his risen Lord, figuratively "one bread," makes of the participants, being many, one bread also. It would be hard to say how there can be too much sympathy, too much love, in a body like this. By this "we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." It is so impossible that persons united together for eternity in such a bond should not be dear to each other as they are to Christ, it may safely be assumed that where this attachment is not felt they are in great danger of deceiving themselves. "He that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth." As Jesus loves as his own soul the weakest member of his body—"the least of these little ones that believeth in me," are we so little of his mind as to say we do not like the special objects of his love, do not like his choice, his own peculiar portion? This would be too strange for belief if God had not decided it; but he has decided it, for it is written, "He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death." Jesus' commandment is, "That ye love one another as I have loved you;" and unto his Father he prays, "That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them." Until we so love the brethren we shall come far short of bearing the image of the heavenly. Jesus did not come into the world to build up parties, to set brother against brother, but to make peace in setting up a kingdom of love. His is a kingdom that suffereth violence, into which none can enter but the violent in dealing with the contradiction of their fleshly nature. He had no atonement to offer for sin that did not crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts. "Being found in fashion as a man, he became obedient unto death." For what? For something worth the sacrifice? He thought so. How wonderful, in that while we were yet enemies, hateful and hating creatures, he could so love us. "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our life for the brethren."

H. C. KER, Moderator.
R. LESTER DODSON, Clerk.

BOOK OF EDITORIALS.

WE have on hand a number of copies of the Second Volume of Editorials. This book is made up of editorials written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES from March, 1842, to March, 1847, and contains 768 pages, neatly bound in cloth.

This work originally sold at two dollars per copy, but as a few of the pages are stained by water we will, as long as the supply lasts, sell them at the extremely low price of seventy-five cents per copy. Postage paid by us. All who wish this book should procure it now, as we will have no more after these are sold.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Littleton C. Godwin, son of Obadiah and Elizabeth Blozom Godwin, was born in Accomac County, Va., Feb. 10th, 1863, and fell asleep in Jesus March 20th, 1919, at his home, 18 N. Stricker St., Baltimore, Md. Brother Godwin was united in marriage to Olivia Martin about thirty-five years ago, to which union were born nine children, one of whom preceded him to the grave in infancy. The surviving children are: Mrs. N. C. Turnage and John, of Washington, D. C., Willliam and Martha, of Mandan, N. Dak., Clara, of Baltimore, Md., Mrs. Warren Chesser and Mrs. Clarence Deshon, of Wilmington, Del., and Harry, now in France. His brave little widow, three brothers, one sister and many relatives and friends mourn their loss. Brother Godwin had been in failing health for the past several years, but it was only a short time before the end that his many friends became alarmed about his condition. In early manhood he was a man of unusual strength, but the dreadful disease made rapid progress. All that medical skill and loving hands could do was done for him. Unto this end was he born, and this hour he must die, so he passed out of life as a little child that had fallen asleep. Brother Godwin felt the power of God about twenty-five years ago, and for seventeen years he longed to have a home with the people he loved so well, but felt to wait upon the Lord, believing that the Lord had a time for all things, and he was given strength to come and was gladly received by the church and baptized June 11th, 1911, by Elder J. T. Rowe, and lived out the life that Christ had wrought in him. He was a faithful brother, loved his church and seldom missed a meeting unless providentially hindered. He was a firm believer in the predestination of all things, and many times during his last illness he told me what a comfort this precious doctrine was to him. He was blessed in his last days with many manifestations of God's love, and always said that he was willing to go at any time when it was the Lord's will. The church has sustained a great loss, but we feel that our loss is his gain. His dear widow and sorrowing children have our heartfelt sympathy. We commend them to God, who is able to sustain them in every dark and trying hour. Outside of his family, none will miss him more than the unworthy writer of this notice, who had been associated with him for many years. I know that one of life's dearest friends has gone.

Funeral service was held at his residence, a large number of sorrowing relatives and friends being present. His pastor, Elder J. T. Rowe, officiated, assisted by Elders J. G. Eubanks and W. S. Alexander, after which his body was laid to rest in Lorraine Cemetery to await the resurrection morn.

D. L. TOPPING.

Mrs. Susan Ann Merritt was born in Rockingham County, N. C., June 18th, 1825, and died March 21st, 1919, at the age of 93 years, 9 months and 3 days. She was a daughter of Mason C. and Malinda L. Wall Fewell, who died in North Carolina Sept. 17th, 1829. Her father and family came to Missouri with quite a colony from North Carolina, arriving in the vicinity of Sardis Church Nov. 22nd, 1839. They traveled the whole distance in wagons. She was married to Milton B. Merritt, of Tennessee, Sept. 25th, 1844. Her father's gift to her was three hundred and twenty acres of land, where they made their home until death. The first house they built is a part of the old home to-day. Her husband, Judge Merritt, died March 14th, 1906. She was the mother of eleven children, eight daughters and three sons. Nine of the children were reared to manhood and womanhood; four are now living: Mrs. C. E. Avery, Mrs. R. W. Avery, Miss Dona and Milton Edwin. She left twenty-one grandchildren, twenty-two great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandson. Some years ago she received her second eyesight, and could see to read fine print without her glasses for several years. Until too feeble to be up she took great pleasure in writing to her many relatives and friends and in looking forward to hearing from them. In reading her letters one would never think of her school days ending at eleven years of age. Early in life she learned to card, spin and weave, and at the old home to-day may be seen pieces of her work in linen, cotton and wool. She never united with the church, but was a Primitive Baptist in belief, and passed away with full faith in her Redeemer.

After an impressive discourse by Elder Cash she was laid to rest by the side of her husband in the Sardis Cemetery. The pall-bearers were her grandsons.

Her daughter, (MRS.) C. E. AVERY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Miss Lizzie L. Davis, Va., $1.00; Jennie M. Avery, N. Y., $3.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Woburn Old School Baptist Church will hold a two days meeting Sunday and Monday, June 29th and 30th. Meetings each day at 10:30 a. m. and 2:30 p. m. We expect Elder J. M. Fenton, of Philadelphia, with our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, on this occasion, and cordially invite all who can attend to do so. The meetinghouse will be found on Main St., Woburn, No. 452. L. B. FORD,

MELROSE HIGHLANDS, Mass.

THE Siloam Association of Old School Baptists will meet with the Pleasant Grove Church, at Yakima, Wash., beginning on Friday, August 8th, 1919, and ending on Sunday, the 10th. Those coming by train will take the Fruitvale car and get off at the Garfield schoolhouse, the place of meeting. All lovers of the truth will be welcome. For further particulars inquire of Mrs. Sonora Hess, 201 So. Nachez Ave., Yakima, Wash.

MARY HUGHETT, Church Clerk pro tem.

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IN

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THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

There will be meeting every first Sunday at Halcott Center, N. Y., in the Grange Hall. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

The Middletown and Andes Church will hold their meetings the first Sunday in every month at their meetinghouse, Union Grove, N. Y. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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(Judges v. 11.)

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 87. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1919. NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

UPTON, N. MEX.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The psalmist says: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." By the Spirit of God in him David was enabled to know that the Savior would come and suffer and die for his people, rise the third day, as shown by the sign of Jonah, raise his loved ones above the law, bring all of them to him and finally land them all in glory. "He that goeth forth and weepeth," whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Again, the prophet says, Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord; his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth. If we follow on to know the Lord. Most people have not followed on to know the Lord, and have dried up for the lack of rain and perished, and you will hear them singing, We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves, claiming to do what has already been done by the great Redeemer. People tell us the Primitive Baptists are an ignorant people. They honestly think this is true, because they do not know, and have been taught from their infancy that it is so.

"He that goeth forth and weepeth." Before the world it was arranged, and when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. When the appointed time came for him to suffer and to go into the garden and weep, they came to a place called Gethsemane. He began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy, this one who did no violence, neither was guile found in his mouth; who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. He said to his disciples, Tarry ye here and watch, and he went a little farther and fell on the ground. Matthew says, fell on his face and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt. He said, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. He came back and found them asleep, and said, Could you not watch with me one hour? The spirit

indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Then while he was in the garden there came an angel the third time and strengthened him. Brethren, have you not experienced the same: been so distressed, so awfully pressed down with the weight of your sins that you gave up to die, and something would strengthen you? The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. Paul says, That ye may know him, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and the power of his resurrection. He suffered for us, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. Then they came out against him in the night, and Jesus said, This is your hour, and the power of darkness. Then the appointed moment had come, so they took him and crucified him.

"Bearing precious seed," is the next clause. The Bible says, A seed shall serve him, and it shall be accounted unto the Lord for a generation. Again, He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. Again, I will make Christ's seed to endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me. Paul says, If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Abraham was a type. Again, The children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are accounted for the seed. Because they were the natural children of fleshly Abraham it did not make them the children of God; the relation must be in the Spirit. Paul says, Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed. Peter says, Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. So he bore all this seed, and not one was left out. He is the head, ye are the body, and members in particular, from whom all the body, having nourishment ministered and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. They were all there. Were they always in him? Was that incorruptible seed they are born of always in him, or are they baptized into him, or does the preacher sow the seed and in this way they are born and get into him? If this seed the preacher sows is what causes the birth, none but those who hear the preacher are born of the Spirit, every one else is lost. We had a member who was convicted in Africa, brought to America after she had received a hope, and when she joined the church she said, "Master, what you preach I felt in my heart in my own country." Primitive Baptists never did believe the birth is caused by seed sown by the preacher. This is like their bringing in the sheaves, they leave too many out. Billions they never even see, much less bring in.

"Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing." Paul says, And the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, make you perfect to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight. Peter says, Begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The prophet said, After two days he will revive us, in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. He came again with rejoicing. Isaiah says, Sing, O barren, that didst not bear; break forth into singing, thou that didst not travail with child; for the desolate hath many more children than the married wife, saith the Lord. Yes, brethren, there are many more Gentiles that are manifested as the children of God than

there are Jews. Isaiah says, For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake will I not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee; and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee. Here you have been trembling and full of fear, saying, My God hath forgotten me and the Lord hath forsaken me. A woman may forget her sucking child, yet will I remember thee, is what God says. O, says every poor little trembling one, I do not see how the great, wise and wondrous Savior could even look at such as I, much less rejoice over me. O, I want to hide my homely face, I want to go away in some dark hollow, in some dense forest, and lay me down and mourn always because I am so black and so polluted. It cannot be that the one Isaiah says is glorious in his apparel and travels in the greatness of his strength could love me. I can see so clearly how he can banish me from his presence and the glory of his power. There is every reason why this should be my lot, I deserve it so much, and I cannot see how he could love such a polluted sinner as I know myself to be. If I only knew he rejoiced over me as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride I would be the happiest mortal on earth, and willing to bear any loss, or any cross, or any trial or disappointment. That is what all of his loved ones say. If you had no spiritual life you could not see your blackness. You do not look black to him, for you are washed, you are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

"Bringing his sheaves with him." The angel said he would, and we believe the angel told the truth. Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. Peter says, For Christ hath also once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. His power is sufficient, for he said, No man taketh my life from me; I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. Again, All power, both in heaven and in earth, is given into my hands. His arms are long enough to embrace every one that ever did or ever will live; not only long enough, but reached out backward and forward and lifted every one above the law. For Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. Again, it is written, The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. It only took Jesus three days to reach out and get every sheaf and bring it back with him. Isaiah said, Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. The world, from Abel down to the last one to be born, is the field where these sheaves are, embracing all nations and all people —a big field. Now, brethren, look at these people that sing, We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves. How few they bring; what great multitudes they have never even seen. According to their theory nearly all the sheaves are lost. If I were to raise a great crop of grain, and when it was ripe if I were to do all I could to save it and fail as completely as they have, I would think myself a poor manager. In 1880, according to their own statement, nearly seven-tenths of the human race had never seen a preacher or a Bible. Then nearly all the sheaves are lost if their doctrine is true, but thank the Lord it is false. People say to us, You do not save any

one but a few Old Baptists. You never heard an Old Baptist say that. Benedict, the Missionary Baptist historian, says all the old divines taught that all the Savior died for he saved. God said to Abraham, I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven. Paul takes this up and says, Therefore there sprang even from one, and him as good as dead, as the stars of the sky in multitude and as the sand of the sea innumerable. Can you count the grains of sand in a peck? John saw so many no man could number them, out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people. They said, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to loose the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood. That is how many the Old School Baptists believe are saved. Paul says, As is the offence, so also is the free gift; for if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many, not unto a few. When we treat on the subject of those God has chosen out of the world for his witnesses and to suffer for his sake, we say few, very few. So it is written, Many are called, but few are chosen. Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leads to life, and few there be that find it. Gideon had only three hundred out of all Israel to fight that famous battle, but all the balance of Israel shared in the spoils. God chose the three hundred so he could show what he could do. He said, The people are too many, lest Israel should vaunt themselves, and say we, yes, we have gained this battle by our might. So it is here and there we find a few like Gideon's three hundred, ready to suffer and fight for the truth as it is in Jesus. Those who went lapped the water as a dog lappeth. A dog is the most faithful animal to his master we know, and will follow him through rain and snow, heat and cold, and if his master is so poor he cannot give him a crust of bread the dog will go and hunt something to eat, and come back and follow his master. So it is with God's true and tried people, they follow Jesus through evil as well as good report, follow him through sneers, jeers and all kinds of abuse. Preachers will, when the church is too poor to help them, earn their own living, and then come and preach to them. Bringing his sheaves with him. The satisfying of the law, the saving of his people, and the place and time, are one thing, and the manifestation of it is another. The place where he saved his people was on the cross, and when he came out of the tomb; the manifestation of this is in all time and places. The Bible says, The redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads, &c. Again, I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him. They shall show forth my praise. Again, In that day shall the great trumpet be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mountain at Jerusalem. Now, brethren, come and stand right here on this tower and look. See away yonder in the east in China. See them coming from away over there where there are no ministers of the gospel and no Bible. Bring my sons from far. How, you ask,

were they saved? The same as yourselves. As Paul says, Therefore being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. Now turn toward the frozen regions of the north. I will say to the north, Give up. O look! See them coming. The ransomed of the Lord shall return. Hear them shout the victory through Jesus. Now, brethren, turn with me and look over there at that dark place, that is Africa, that is south, and to the south God says, Keep not back. No place too black, no one too poor. Do you know that Jesus was born in a stable, among the beasts of the stall? Does not the Bible say, Out of every nation? Surely it does. Then there they come, millions for whom Jesus died and saved, according to our doctrine, which is true Bible doctrine, yet, according to the teaching of the Arminian world, are lost for the want of the gospel. Ah, yes, coming. Glory to God, coming, in spite of error, regardless of all the carelessness, corruption and neglect of men. Coming, and praising Jesus for saving them. Not a few Old Baptists, but as the sand of the sea, innumerable. Jesus said, And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This "all" embraces all the Father gave him before time began. O how grand and glorious, how wonderful. Saved and coming, regardless of their ignorance, imperfections, mistakes and wrong doings. Coming singing:

"All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all."

Coming, money or no money. Coming if all preachers die. Coming if no one gives a cent to foreign missions. Wonder of wonders, glory of glories! This is the most wonderful doctrine ever preached. No wonder Paul wrote, Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed. Coming, even if they are deceived and do not believe, for Paul says, If we believe not he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself. For the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. O, brethren, am I one, poor, little, sinful thing that I am?

The editors can do as they like with this. I have written too much.

Your unworthy, brother, if one at all,

ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

INDEPENDENCE, Mo., June 27, 1919.

DEAR KINDRED:—I am inclosing some lines I wrote you nearly eight years ago, expecting at that time no one would ever see them but you, unless you decided to publish them, feeling sure at that time that my unworthiness was so great that I would never offer myself to the church I loved so well; but "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," so on the 22nd of this month I related part of what I wrote you nearly eight years ago, to the church at Pleasant Grove, and was received, and baptized the same day by Elder W. L. Hall in the fellowship of the church I so dearly love. Though feeling to be so unworthy, it was a source of great comfort to me to be received in the loving fellowship so freely given me. If in your judgment there is nothing in this that will be profitable to the household of faith, please destroy it and I will approve your better judgment.

Your weak brother in hope,

THOS. W. RECORDS.

DEAR FRIENDS:—I have long felt a desire to relate to the spiritual family the

reason of my hope (if it really is a hope), and have decided on leaving a few brief lines with my private papers, sealed and addressed to the SIGNS, and if my executor should mail it as I have left instructions you will be the only ones that have ever seen it but myself, and if in your judgment there is anything in it of a spiritual nature that would be of any comfort or encouragement to the poor and afflicted people of God, you can use your judgment in publishing it; if not, destroy it, for I hope there is no selfish motive I have except for the comfort of some poor sinner who has been led by the same God of providence and grace that I hope has been my case.

I was born in Sussex County, Delaware, May 13th, 1841, and have now passed my threescore and ten years, and according to the laws of nature my remaining days, months or years are very few at most, and if this ever reaches your office it will be after my flesh has been consigned to the dust from whence it came and my spirit returned to God who gave it.

At the close of the Civil War, in 1865, I came west and settled in Jackson County, Mo., where I have made my home since that time. I had two objects in life; the first was that I might acquire a competency of this world's goods, so that I would not be dependent in old age, which object I greatly feared I would not be able to accomplish. My next object was to "get religion" (as it was called by all Arminian worshipers), and this undertaking I did not have the slightest doubt about accomplishing when I became situated in my worldly affairs so as to give it my attention. I prospered in my first object beyond my expectations, and was often reminded at protracted meetings the necessity of "getting religion," and promised myself that I would give it my attention as soon as I could spare the time from my business so I could give the matter my full time, for I did not intend to make a failure in so important a matter. In fact, I expected to be a model christian; I considered my advantages were better than many, for I flattered myself on my morality, honesty, truthfulness, and in fact felt myself much better than many who made a profession of christianity. I thought all this would be a good start toward "getting religion." I had never been troubled on account of my sins, but thought it would be a fearful thing to neglect "getting religion" and die and be lost, as I had heard preachers relate death-bed scenes where persons had been implored and begged to "get religion," and refused and were suddenly stricken down with fever and became delirious and died in that condition and were lost. I would resolve again in the near future I would "get religion," or as soon as I could give the matter my whole attention, but if the reality of future punishment could have been removed I would have had no use for religion, as I felt perfectly satisfied with my condition.

I now wish to relate the most important time in all my life. In the fall of 1871, about sundown, after putting feed in the trough for my team I turned to go out of the door, and as suddenly as an electric shock the words, You promised to get religion, seemed to shock my very soul, and there for the first time in all my life I felt to be a lost and ruined sinner, without a single ray of hope, and the very breathing of my heart was, Lord, be merciful to me, a lost and hopeless sinner, though I did not think there was any hope for such a sinner as I knew I was. While in that condition I did not want to see any one, for I felt sure they would

realize the condition I was in. I continued to work with my team so as to be alone, all the time meditating on my lost and ruined condition. In about a week or ten days, while driving along the road, as suddenly as a flash of lightning joy sprang up in my heart, and I was made to rejoice and thank God that I was born to die. I felt so happy that guilt and condemnation had given place to such joy as I had never experienced before, and all nature seemed to be rejoicing with me; but soon doubts came, and I feared my experience was all a delusion, but my hopeless condemnation has never returned without leaving me a ray of hope. After this I had a great desire to know the true church, and went to hear Methodists, Presbyterians, Missionary Baptists and Campbellites, but they all preached good works in order to salvation, which did not agree with my experience, though I believed they were christians. I had a great desire to talk about christianity, but did not want any one to know I was interested. One day, in conversation with a friend, he asked me if I had a hope. I said I did not know. He seemed astonished and said I had a right to know, for he knew he had a hope. This caused me to doubt my experience, as I thought my friend a christian, and he knew he was one and I did not. I had often heard the Old School Baptists preach and talk while growing up, as my father was a member of the church and they made his house a regular stopping-place. I thought they had a great deal of Scripture to sustain their doctrine, but could never see any beauty in it, as it seemed a very arbitrary doctrine. As I could not fellowship the Arminian doctrine, I would go to hear the Old School Baptists occasionally, and they would preach my experience so plainly I would think to myself, I did not know that was their belief. Were I able to write all my experience of doubts, fears, hopes and joys during the last forty years it would fill a volume, and from my experience for the last forty years I have not a shadow of doubt about the Old School Baptist being the church that Christ told Peter, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." O how sure and safe! In some of my joys I have a humble hope that I am builded upon it, though very unworthy; so much so I have never felt worthy to offer myself to the church, though they are the dearest people to me on earth, and I have a humble hope that when done with this world it may be my happy lot to meet all the redeemed family where doubts, sorrows and afflictions will never be known. As doubtful as my hope sometimes seems, I would not, if I could, exchange it for all the wealth and honors of this world, with a thousand years of health and happiness to enjoy it, for that would soon flee away, but if not mistaken in my humble hope it will be as lasting as eternity.

I have been a subscriber and reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the most of the forty years of my experience, and can say I fully indorse the doctrine it advocates. Election and predestination are glorious things to meditate upon, and I expect to take the paper as long as I live. If you ever receive this at your office it will notify you to discontinue the paper when the time expires, unless some of my family desire to continue to take it, which I hope they will, but have no encouragement at present that they will.

I will close this imperfect article with love and fellowship to any of the household of faith who may ever read this.

Your friend in hope,

THOS. W. RECORDS.

MATTHEW XXIV. 14.

"AND this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

This has already been fulfilled. The gospel has been preached to all nations and the end has come. What end is meant here? The end of the law worship; for on the day of Pentecost every nation was at Jerusalem and heard the apostles preach in their own language. So we see the gospel has been preached to all the world. (Acts ii. 1-17.) There are people to-day who believe this means when the gospel reaches all the heathen then the end of this world will come. But it does not mean that at all. "Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains." Now you know if this meant the final resurrection there would be no use in telling the people to go to the mountains. Read all of the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew. "But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day." This means the destruction of Jerusalem. "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven." This is what this means in a gospel sense. About seventy years after Christ, Titus destroyed Jerusalem, and Christ told them that were in Judea to flee into the mountains because Jerusalem was going to be destroyed; and those who were in Judea feared the Lord, and the Lord told them what to do. This was when the Lord scattered the unbelieving Jews. The sun shall be darkened, which means the brightness of God's glory. The Jews to-day believe the Old Testament, but do not believe the New. They believe Christ will come, but do not believe he has come. So the sun is darkened (not totally dark), and the moon shall not give her light. The moon here means the law light or law worship. "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." What does all this mean? That generation should not pass away until the gospel should be preached in all the world. If it meant the end of all things, then people are living on earth now that were living when Christ spoke the words. "Heaven and earth shall pass away." If this means after the windup of all things, heaven has passed away; but it means the law heaven shall pass away and all earthly worship. All of this came to pass long ago. "But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken." Yes, the unbelieving Jews say the Lord delays his coming, and they begin to smite those who say Christ has already come, and they eat and drink with the drunken; not drunk on wine, but drunk on unbelief, and eating that bread which just satisfies the lustful, carnal mind. "The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." This is the condition the Jews are in to-day; some are weeping and some are gnashing and devouring every one that believes in Christ. You know the Scripture says, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom." This kingdom of heaven here means the gospel church of heaven, not of the law. Five of these virgins were wise and five

were foolish. "While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept." The children of God are his bride, and Christ is the husband, or groom. While Christ tarried here on earth they were all just as if they were asleep, for the Jews paid no attention to the Groom and the Gentiles were not awake, for Christ was sent to the lost sheep of Israel. "At midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh." Up to midnight it gets darker and darker, but after midnight it gets lighter until the sun rises. "The foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out." A lamp must be burning before it can go out. Now all the light the Jews had, or wanted, was the law light or lamp, and as the gospel light came in the law light went out. So the wise virgins received the gospel. We find midnight means the line between the law and the gospel. It was very dark to the Jews when law worship was taken away from them. After the wise virgins were received the foolish came and said, "Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not." So Christ does not know the Jews in the sense of the gospel church. This does not mean that Christ does not know the Jews as a nation, but he was speaking about not knowing them as gospel worshipers. There are people to-day who think they will get to heaven by their good works; they are the ones that are called foolish virgins; while those who say that we will be saved and go to heaven by the goodness of the Lord Jesus Christ are called wise virgins.

I will close. If you think this is worthy of being published, all right; if not, it will be well with me.

H. A. SILLS.

LAKE, Miss.

HERNDON, Va., May 14, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find check for two dollars, for which please give credit for another year's subscription to the SIGNS to Mrs. William E. Hall, of Vienna, Va.

Elder J. M. Fenton just left Herndon this morning, on his way to attend the Baltimore Association. He preached for us last Saturday and Sunday at old Frying Pan, and he came well shod with the preparation of the gospel, and I do not think I ever heard him preach better. I think he felt just like Paul did when he said, I am determined not to know anything among God's little ones save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. For a little moment I was made to feel that the Lord had again restored unto me the joy of his salvation, and that I could claim Jesus once more as the chiefest among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely. But alas, to-day before the sun went down Satan crossed my pathway and threw his bitter pangs at me and poisoned all my joy.

I would love to write a letter for the SIGNS, and may do so in the near future if I have the light.

Your brother, I hope,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

WILMINGTON, Del., June 23, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a money order for twelve dollars, ten dollars for advertising the meetings of the Wilmington Church, and two dollars to pay my subscription for another year. This will make fifty-three years that I have been taking the paper, and I feel like complimenting both editors and publishers on their faithful services by stating that I do not remember that I ever missed a number in all those fifty-three years. My father was taking the SIGNS

when I was a boy of twelve years, and I began reading it then; that was seventy-three years ago, i. e. 1846. In all those seventy-three years there have, of course, been several changes in the management. The Lord in his wisdom has seen fit to call one after another of the faithful editors to come up higher, but has always been graciously pleased to raise up others to take up the burden. May his blessing rest on those he has called, or may call, to the work of ministering to the comfort and encouragement of his scattered and afflicted people.

WM. B. TAWRESEY.

CALALLEN, Texas, May 18, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I notice that my subscription expires with this number, so inclose remittance of five dollars, two dollars for one year's subscription, and the balance to aid in sending the paper to others.

It has been nearly a year since I have heard any Old Baptist preaching, but I still feel thankful that my family and I were permitted to take about a month's trip last summer to northeast Texas to a real Old Baptist association, the first I ever attended, and we are planning to take another trip this summer if possible. How the Lord seemed to pour out his Spirit upon those there, all as one large family gathered together from far and near to sing praises to his great and matchless name. O what a glorious meeting it was for me. Yesterday when I came in to dinner I took the baby to rock while my wife put the meal on the table, and I began to sing some of the good old songs that were sung at the association and could not keep my face straight, for the tears commenced to flow down my cheeks, and I was made to exclaim, I know that my Redeemer liveth. How near he felt to me for a short time. O if I could only feel that way all the time, but those seasons are short and far between. I seem much of the time to be absorbed in worldly things, very cold and indifferent. O this stony heart of mine. I often get very low spirited and long for some one to converse with on the Scriptures. There are very few Old Baptists in this section, and those that are here seem to be like I am, dormant. O what is the matter with us?

I will close, praying that the SIGNS will be spared yet another year to the upbuilding of His little ones here on earth.

From a poor unworthy brother, if one at all, E. B. AULT.

PHILLIPSBURG, Mo., Dec. 29, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been reading your good paper for some time, and wish to become a subscriber and help to aid in the continuance of its publication. I love the doctrine it sets forth, for to my understanding it is all just as true as the Bible, and my experience responds to those who write: that without God we can do nothing, and that salvation is wholly by grace. This is my only hope, for in me dwells no good thing, and if I am saved it is by the unmerited favor of the Most High, and not by what I have done.

Dear brethren, I just wanted to tell you that I appreciate your paper, and why I do, but I find that if I did I would perhaps weary you, so will say that I inclose two dollars for a yearly subscription, and if the price has advanced I will forward you the balance at my earliest convenience. Please let me know the present subscription price, also inclose a subscription blank and I will try and get some subscribers.

Your little sister in many trials and sorrows,

(MRS.) GEORGE TURNER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1919.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT NOAH.

NOAH was preacher, head and priest. In these things, we may say without offense to the Scriptures, that there is a striking likeness to Jesus the Christ, who is preacher, head and priest in an infinitely greater sense than Noah ever could have been. Nevertheless, Noah is a shadow of the character of Jesus, and it may be worth our while to spend a few moments in pursuing this likeness. In 2 Peter ii. 5, Noah is declared to have been a preacher of righteousness. We have heard it said by Arminians that Noah went about the antediluvian world warning people of the coming flood, and exhorting them to repent of their sins that God might turn from his wrath. This is not so, and there is not one word in the Bible in support of such an imagination. We have not on record any sermon that Noah ever preached with his lips. His preaching consisted in that he, through faith, believed in Jesus and worked in the building of the ark strictly in accord with God's commands. Every act of Noah in this work on the ark was an expression of absolute faith and trust and hope in God. He added nothing to nor took anything from the word of God as it came to him ordering him as to every detail in the shaping of the vessel that was to be their security from the flood. The greatest sermons ever preached are often not those that come from the lips, but those which are preached with the hands and feet, that are lived out of the life of the believer. This is the kind of preaching Noah did. Could all of us let our lips and lives express the holy gospel we profess, then all would be preachers. We doubt not that every one who believes in God through the divine gift of faith is a preacher to the extent that faith moves them. Whose righteousness did Noah preach? Not his own, but the righteousness of Jesus. Abel, in offering the sacrifice of the lamb, was showing forth the righteousness of Jesus, the Lamb of God. He, by his offering, preached the righteousness of Christ. So Noah in building the ark with its three stories, with its window in the top and with its door in the side, all made of gopher wood pitched within and without, was preaching the all-sufficient righteousness of Jesus, who is the ark of salvation in whom all the elect of God are saved. In this Noah is a shadow of Christ, who is the great Preacher of all preachers. "I have preached righteousness in the great congregation." As Noah preached not his own righteousness, but the righteousness of Christ, so Jesus declared not his own righteousness as a man, but the righteousness of his Father, the Almighty God. As Noah did his preaching more in his living (that is, in his doing) than in his merely saying it, so Jesus' every act and every work and every step were a profound preaching of the righteousness of that Father who had sent him into the world to do all his will. The great congregation in which Jesus does his preaching is that great body of the elect effectually called to hear his word out of every

nation under heaven. By his Holy Spirit he reveals his power and his truth in the hearts of his people, wholly unaided by the many devices men have set up for the regeneration of mankind. Man can never preach the gospel of the grace of God except as he is called, qualified and sent forth by the great Preacher.

Noah was the head of all that were saved in the ark, he was head over his family, and over all the beasts and other living things that were there, all were subject to him. Here, again, he is a shadow of Christ, who is head over all things to his church. (Ephesians i. 22.) All the church, both of the Jews and of the Gentiles, God's elect everywhere, are subject to the dominion of Jesus, the head of the church. All the life of the body, every member, comes from the head; all her power and direction come from the head. From Christ is delivered to the church her doctrine, her order, her ordinances: all her gevernment and discipline. Even the apostles themselves could not add to nor take from the gospel rule as delivered to them by Christ himself. Even they were not lords over the heritage of God, but servants of the church, having no dominion over the faith of the members.

Noah was a priest in that, when the ark rested upon Ararat, he came forth and made a sacrifice to the Lord. In this sacrifice he used nothing but clean things. He took of every clean beast and of every clean fowl and offered it as a sacrifice. This sacrifice was a sweet smelling one unto the Lord, because it was the fruit of Noah's faith. Without faith no one can please God. This faith is the fruit of God's Spirit, and God never fails to recognize the work of his own Spirit, and to accept the work his Spirit produces, but he will not accept the offerings which men make of themselves and in their own fancied merit. Noah offered what he did in the faith that God had wrought in him. For this reason it was a sweet smelling savor to God, a fragrance given off by the faith that was in Noah's soul. As a token of his covenant which God made with Noah in acceptance of the sacrifice which he offered, God promised not to curse them again, that he would no more smite the earth with woe for man's sake. Noah in his work here as a priest is a shadow of Jesus the great High Priest of our profession, the Priest after the order of an endless life. Jesus offered to God a clean sacrifice for the ransom of his people. This clean sacrifice was not the blood of beasts, but his own spotless body, which he took as Priest and offered upon the altar of Calvary for the sins of his people. Jesus combined in himself both Priest and offering. Such a thing was never seen before, nor ever will be again. No man took his life from him, but he laid it down of himself, which act it became him to do as the Captain of our salvation. In view of the clean sacrifice which Jesus has made of himself God has declared he will never count our sins against us any more. That is, there shall be no more curse. There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. They are delivered from under the curse of the power of sin, from under the condemnation of the law of sin and from the captivity of death, the wages of sin. All the flood of God's wrath against sin was poured forth upon the Ark of our salvation. He endured it all. The day of vengeance was in his heart and he paid all the debt we owed. We try faintly to portray the wonderful offices of our Savior in his relations toward his God and his people, but we can only glimpse the glory of his being, and words are futile to set forth all he is to his people, for he is their All and in all.

L.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, June 21st, 1919, at the home of the bride's parents, Silcott Springs, Va., Willoughby L. Pugh, of Washington, D. C., and Miss Mary Kathleen Shoemaker.

By Elder George Ruston, at his home, Kelly Corners, N. Y., June 2nd, 1919, John B. Hinkley and Prudence O'Connor, both of Halcottville, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

James C. Beard was born in 1847, at Newfield, Chemung Co., N. Y., and died May 27th, 1919, at his home in New York city, after a long and painful illness. A little over fifty years ago he was married to Watie A. Vail. To them five children were born: Curtis J., George H., Fred. S., Nellie E. and Ruth F. His wife, three children, four grandchildren and one great-grandchild survive him. On Nov. 22nd, 1872, he was baptized by Elder S. H. Durand in the fellowship of the church at Waverly, N. Y. Elder D. M. Vail, his brother-in-law, was baptized at the same time. June 4th, 1899, brother Beard and his wife were received by letter from the Waverly Church into membership with the Ebenezer Church of New York city. Brother Beard was a truly humble man, never disposed to think himself as having attained to any growth in grace. He was poor in spirit, and in esteeming others as better than himself he was always ready to spend and be spent in the service of his brethren. His gift as a deacon was a blessing in our church, and in shewing all good fidelity he adorned the doctrine of God our Savior in all things. His life among us was distinguished by the meek and loving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and as many as are in Christ have put on Christ. They are not only clothed with his righteousness, but adorned with his grace. We shall sadly miss him in our assembling together and in our life, for in both he was a helper of our joy. God blessed his work and labor of love, which he showed toward his name, in a ministry of comfort to the brethren. May the Lord graciously reconcile the family of our departed brother and the church he so dearly loved to this dispensation of his will.

The funeral service, held at his late residence, was largely attended. Elder George Ruston and the writer were present. Interment at Waverly, N. Y.

ALSO,

Lillie Udy Shepherd Rittenhouse, wife of James Judson Rittenhouse, was born at Ringoes, Hunterdon Co., N. J., Dec. 14th, 1859, and died in Sergentsville, same county, June 18th, 1919. She was married to Mr. Rittenhouse Nov. 26th, 1884. Their only child, Irma, died quite young. Mrs. Rittenhouse was not identified with any church organization and made no public profession of religion, but in her latter days she gave evidences of sorrowing on account of sin after a godly sort, and of having no confidence in the help of man to deliver her out of her distresses. There is comfort in believing that sorrow of this sort is wrought in us only by God's power, and where God begins a good work he always performs it unto the praise of the glory of his grace. The love, esteem and respect felt for her and her husband were testified to by a very large attendance of the funeral services held at her late home. Interment was in the Frenchtown cemetery.

JOHN McCONNELL.

Polly K. Stewart departed this life March 12th, 1919, at her home, Vega, N. Y. She was the daughter of Ira and Mary K. Slauson, and was born May 8th, 1870. She was married to George A. Stewart Sept. 15th, 1893, and to them was born a son, Harry Stewart, of Vega, N. Y. She is survived by her husband and son, also two sisters and one brother: Mrs. Walter Harrington and Mrs. Ed. Lawrence, both of Vega, N. Y,, and Mr. Sylvanus K. Slauson, of Fleischmanns, N. Y. Mrs. Stewart was not a member of the visible church, but she loved the truth and those who professed it, and her pleasure was in the assembly of saints. It was the writer's privilege to visit her a number of times during her illness (which lasted the greater part of a year), and her mind and conversation gave abundant evidence of the place where her hope was centered. In being ministered unto she ministered, and her memory is precious among those with whom she associated. In spite of all that medical aid and loving hands could do her sufferings were intense toward the end, so that her loved ones were made willing for her to go rather than see her suffer. Her home was always open for the brethren, and we all miss her.

The funeral was at her late home, and the interment was in Vega cemetery.

ALSO,

William B. Ennist departed this life at his home in Kingston, N. Y., April 10th, 1919. He was the son of John J. and Rebecca Ennist, of Shokan, N. Y. Mr. Ennist was the last remaining member of a family of fourteen children. He leaves to mourn his departure a widow and three daughters, three grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. He was not a member of the church, but had a hope in the mercy of God and was a firm believer in salvation by grace. In his sickness, which lasted several months, he was very patient, and all that those near and dear to him could do for him was done. A few days before his departure he turned to his beloved partner in life and said, "What are these light afflictions compared with the joys above?" We believe he has entered into those joys and is satisfied.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer, who tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved ones. Interment was in the Old Hurley Cemetery.

GEO. RUSTON.

J. Frank Robey, our brother in Christ, passed away from earthly life June 26th, 1919, at his home near Clifton Station, Fairfax Co., Va. He was born August 10th, 1846, the son of Gabriel Robey and Harriet Huntt. He was married to Miss A. E. Robey in 1906, who survives him to greatly mourn her loss. He is also survived by his brother, George Robey, and by two sisters: Miss Jennie Robey, of Oakton, and Mrs. J. W. Buckley, of Legater. He was the last person baptized by the late Elder J. N. Badger before his death. Brother Robey was a member of the Bethlehem Old School Baptist Church, near Manassas, and was baptized the first Sunday in September, 1911. He loved and firmly believed in the doctrine of the salvation of sinners through the grace of God in Christ Jesus, and was established in the absolute sovereignty of God, that he rules in heaven and in earth and in all deep places, doing his will in the army of heaven and no less among the inhabitants of the earth, so that all things whatsoever come to pass are according to the divine counsel and immutable purpose of God. Our sympathy goes out to the bereaved church and to the sorrowing family, but we believe brother Robey is better off out of this vale of tears, and that for him to die was gain.

The funeral services were held at his late home, the words, "Death is swallowed up in victory," being used as a text. He was buried in the cemetery at Fairfax Court House. May the consolations of the gospel abound in the souls of those who mourn.

L.

Sarah E. Davis Burgess was born in Scott County, Ky., July 19th, 1841, and died May 21st, 1919, in her 78th year. She was united in marriage to Edward Burgess April 21st, 1861, who died in 1898. To them were born four sons and four daughters; three sons and three daughters survive, who deeply feel the loss of a dear devoted mother; also twenty-one grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, one brother and one sister, together with many neighbors and friends, are left to mourn the loss of one who was dear to them all. Upon confession of her faith and hope in Christ she was received in the Elk Lick Church, near Sadieville, Feb. 13th, 1869, and was baptized by the late Elder Theobald. It can be truly said of her that she was devoted to the church and firmly established in its faith and doctrine, and loved to hear the word preached; it was her meat and drink, it was her solace in life and in death, when she peacefully passed away in its glorious triumph. "Woman, how great is thy faith."

I was called by the family to attend the funeral at the old homestead on Friday, May 23rd, where a large gathering assembled in sympathy and sorrow. Elder Moore, of Missouri, was present, and took part in the service, presenting the consolations of the gospel in the sweet assurance of that faith which overcometh. May the family be given grace, faith and strength according to their days. Their mother's life was a pattern of good things in faith, patience and endurance. May they follow on in hope of the same great victory. Burial was in the old cemetery near the homestead.

P. W. SAWIN.

Mrs. Sarah Elizabeth Chamberlin, of Locktown, N. J., died May 26th, 1919, of paralysis, aged 80 years and two months. Her father's name was Mahlon Strymple, her mother's maiden name was Deborah Lake; her husband's name was John M. Chamberlin. She had always lived in or near Locktown, N. J. At the time of her death she was with her brother, Jonas Strymple, and sister, Mrs. Horner, in Stockton. She leaves two brothers, one sister and other relatives to mourn her absence. May the God of her salvation comfort them with his felt presence, is my desire. She was not a member of the church, but had been a true believer and an attendant of the Old School Baptist meetings many years. She is at rest with Jesus.

The writer spoke at the funeral at Stockton. Burial at Ringoes.

D. M. VAIL.

Martin B. Borst died at his home in Ecker Hollow June 14th, 1919, aged 83 years, 1 month and 1 day. June 8th he was stricken with an epileptic fit, from which he never rallied, although all was done that medical skill and kind relatives and friends could do. He was a member of the Old School Baptist Church, having united with the church at Schoharie Hill in 1874. He was baptized by Elder Balas Bundy. He is survived by his widow, whose maiden name was Elizabeth M. Nethaway, they having been married sixty-two years on Decoration Day, one daughter, Mrs. I. L. Willsey, of Schenectady, four granddaughters and two great-grandchildren. He was the last of the children of Benjamin B. Borst and Catharine Livingstone. He was always a great friend to the poor, charity being one of his many qualities. We trust that he is at rest and what is our loss is his eternal gain.

HIS DAUGHTER.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, Elder J. M. Fenton will visit brethren and friends as follows:

Jefferson, N. Y., July 19th and 20th; Otego, 21st; Howe Cave, 22nd; Central Bridge, 23rd; Broome Center, 24th; Middleburg, 25th; Schoharie, 26th and 27th; Troy, 28th, 1:30 p. m.; Albany, 28th, 4 p. m.

E. R. KINNEY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

E. G. Webb, Kansas, $1.00; Elder W. L. Rogers, Texas, $1.00; Mrs. Donald McWilliams, Ont., $1.00; Lydia B. Stewart, N. Y., $3.00; W. E. Blue, N. Y., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Siloam Association of Old School Baptists will meet with the Pleasant Grove Church, at Yakima, Wash., beginning on Friday, August 8th, 1919, and ending on Sunday, the 10th. Those coming by train will take the Fruitvale car and get off at the Garfield schoolhouse, the place of meeting. All lovers of the truth will be welcome. For further particulars inquire of Mrs. Sonora Hess, 201 So. Nachez Ave., Yakima, Wash.

MARY HUGHETT, Church Clerk pro tem.

THE Second Roxbury Old School Baptist Church, Roxbury, N. Y., will hold a two days meeting on the second Sunday and Saturday before in August (9th and 10th). The morning train will be met at Roxbury each day. All who love the truth are cordially invited. GEORGE RUSTON, Pastor.

THE New Hope Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will hold their thirty-eighth annual session with Mt. Pisgah Church, in Hopkins County, three miles northeast of Como, Texas, beginning on Friday, at 11 o'clock a. m., before the third Sunday in August. All trains will be met on Thursday at Como. All who are searching for the truth are invited, especially ministers of our faith and order.

S. M. DICKENS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

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1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

There will be meeting every first Sunday at Halcott Center, N. Y., in the Grange Hall. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

The Middletown and Andes Church will hold their meetings the first Sunday in every month at their meetinghouse, Union Grove, N. Y. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 87. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1919. NO. 15.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE COUNCIL OF GOD.

In that great first council, in view of all the events that should ever take place, and in view of all the consequences, it was mutually understood and agreed that all things should be created at the appointed time, by the word of His power; that Satan, in the form of a serpent, should deceive the mother of all living, and that man should thereby become involved in sin and condemnation; that the Father should make an unconditional donation to the Son of all his chosen people, who are variously called, "The Lord's people," "My sheep," "The sheep of his pasture," "The little flock," and so on. He gave to his Son the entire flock, every sheep and lamb in the pasture, not one was left out. The Father which gave them me, says Jesus, thine they were and thou gavest them me, and on his part the eternal Word obligated himself, not to the sheep, but to the everlasting Father, to lay aside his glory, which he had with the Father before the world was, (John xvii. 5,) to leave the shining courts of ineffable glory and come down into these low grounds of sin and sorrow to take on him the seed of Abraham, and to suffer and die the shameful death of the cross, to meet the enemy on the battle field of the wilderness, Gethsemane and Calvary, and to pay the last farthing which stood against his captive bride, to satisfy forever the broken law of God, and to obtain eternal redemption for us. (Heb. ix. 12.) These mutual covenant obligations, and all others entered into by the high contracting parties, were kept and fulfilled to a jot and tittle. God's people had become hopelessly involved in sin, and were under the curse of the law, without hope and without God in the world. (Eph. ii. 12.) They could not extricate themselves from the hopeless thraldom in which they were. They were all in that "horrible pit and miry clay," and it required an omnipotent Savior to deliver them from that condition. Jesus, the mighty to save, was made sin for them, and by his absolute, universal, voluntary obedience (not on the cross alone, but during the entire course of his earthly existence) they were made righteous, (Rom. v. 19,) holy and without blame before him in love. (Eph. i. 4.) Thus we see that the entrance of sin into the world, and the consequent

fall of man, were an essential part of the great scheme of redemption, and therefore absolutely necessary. Of course the Lord could have prevented the entrance of sin into the world, and could have kept Adam from falling, if it had been his pleasure to do so, for he is omnipotent, but in his infinite and inscrutable wisdom it was not his will to do so. He could have made Damascus, and not Jerusalem, the city of the great king, he could have prevented the humiliation and death of Jesus Christ, but such was not his good pleasure. The entrance of sin into the world was included in the will of God. He predestinated that Adam should fall into sin, because it was his will that he should fall into sin. The entrance of sin upon the broad stage of this world, with all the fearful consequences which have followed, or shall hereafter follow, was foreordained of God, and was an essential act in the divine drama of the universe. God's people are a chosen people. He chose them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. They were chosen "to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth." Nor was it because they were more in numbers or greater in other respects that the Lord chose them, for they were the fewest, and the most hated and despised of all people. It was because he had loved them with an everlasting love, and because of the oath which he had sworn to their fathers. He is a covenant-keeping God. He will not break his word. Rather would he blot the stars out of the heavens, or turn the rivers backward, than to break the word of his promise and his oath. Neither was it because they repented, or believed his word, or performed good works, that he chose them. His choice depended upon nothing in them either seen or foreseen. That choice antedated all created things; it dates from eternity, and was for that very reason not conditioned upon anything in the creature. Its roots lay deep in the everlasting love of the Father, and it was manifested in the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The love of God for his people is an everlasting love; it had no beginning and can have no end. It has never increased nor diminished, and it never can, for the reason that it is absolute and perfect. It is not conditioned upon the obedience of the creature, nor upon anything else. The Lord loved Saul of Tarsus when he was persecuting and wasting the church of God, compelling men to blaspheme, and when he was breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the people of God, as much as he did when he wrote the Ephesian letter, or the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians. He loved Peter just the same when he was cursing and swearing, and denying his Lord, as he did when he was preaching on the day of Pentecost. He loved David exactly the same when he was committing murder, adultery and perjury as he did when he wrote the twenty-third Psalm. Not because he loved or had fellowship with their sinful deeds, for he did not, neither was he the author of their sins, but it was because his love for his chosen people is absolute, unchangeable and unconditional. It is not, and in the very nature of things cannot be, conditioned upon anything whatever that they may do. If such were the case it would destroy the perfection and immutability of God. The perfection of God is absolute, and cannot be improved upon nor changed in any way whatever.

BEN H. IRWIN.

CASEY, Iowa, May 9, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—"For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I [Christ] will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. * * * My substance [Christ's people] was not hid from thee, when I [Christ] was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book [of life] all my members were written."—Psalms cxxxix. 13–16. When the seventy returned saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name, Christ said, Rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven; which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there was none of them. Well might Paul say, And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh (when he was curiously wrought in the lowest pasts of the earth, at Bethlehem, formed in Mary's womb by God's eternal Spirit), justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. That Scripture can be applied to no one except the man who was God's fellow. (1 Tim. iii. 16.) Christ had a Father, Almighty God was his Father, the virgin Mary was the mother of his fleshly body. There is where he was covered, in his mother's womb. No wonder Christ said by the prophet David, I am fearfully and wonderfully made. The first Adam had no father or mother, God made him of dust. My substance, not the first Adam's substance, not the prophet David's substance, but Christ's substance, the ones his Father wrote in the book of life and gave to his Son, Christ, not David. And in thy book all of my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. The prophet David was one of the members of Christ's body, the church, Christ gave his life for. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it (she was his substance), that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. (Eph. v.)

By request of the members of the thirty-sixth General Assembly of Missouri, when I was also a member, I was the second man that was ever called on to preach in the hall. My subject was the mystery of godliness and Christ's mysterious birth, using as a text 1 Timothy iii. 16. It was the first Sunday in March, 1891, so I had hearers from every county in the State. I was considered one of their best speakers. Attorney General Wood said that I made the best speech he ever heard made in that hall. I mention this to show why I was called on to preach that discourse at that time.

Jesus said unto the Jews, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. He spoke of the temple of his body, which was fearfully and wonderfully made. Christ said he came down from heaven. Neither Adam nor David ever came down from heaven. You cannot come down from a place you were never in. Christ came down to be fearfully and wonderfully made flesh; not to do his own will as man, but the will of his Father that sent him. He said, This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. (John vi. 38–41.) The

Word that was in the beginning and was God was made flesh and dwelt among us (the apostles and writers of the New Testament), and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, when he was fearfully made in the lower parts of the earth. He (Christ when on earth in the flesh) shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation. Also, I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth; my mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven. (Psalms lxxxix. 26–30.) I will bless the Lord. I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand I shall not be moved, therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul (Christ's body) in hell (the grave), neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. (Psalms xvi. 7–11.) Peter said, Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know. Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. David speaketh concerning him: I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved. Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover, also my flesh shall rest in hope; because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (in the tomb), neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne, he, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul (or body) was not left in hell (the grave), neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens, but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom you have crucified, both Lord and Christ. This is the mystery of godliness. David said of himself, Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. (Psalms li. 5.) David wrote of Christ. The apostle John wrote, Hath not the Scripture said that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? (John vii. 42; see Acts xiii. 22, 23.)

With this I send you one dollar for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for six months. I have taken it most of the time for the past sixty years. I am now past eighty-eight years old, and can still see to read without glasses. My eyes, not my body, are like Moses' was.

Yours for the truth's sake,

R. S. BANKS.

POCA, W. Va., Dec. 25, 1918.

MRS. FLORENCE PULTZ—DEAR SISTER: —From time to time since reading your good letter in the SIGNS of December 1st I have felt impressed to write you a few lines. Not that I feel able to speak a word that might be of comfort to you, or to any of the household of faith, but will try, though feeling lonely and much cast down, realizing my imperfection, and seeing that iniquity doth abound, and the love of many has waxed cold, some departing from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. But we feel to thank God and take courage that we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. We have that hope which is as an anchor of our soul: that Jesus hath saved us and called us with an holy calling. Then, if not deceived, we are his, and he is ours. O happy thought! Ye are not your own, but are bought with a price. The blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin, so we are not ashamed to own our Lord or to defend his cause. It seems at this present time there are very few earnestly contending for that faith once delivered unto the saints, just a remnant. As it was when John wrote to the angel of the church called Sardis, so it is now, just a few names who have not defiled their garments, who are standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free. I often tell the people that we Old Baptists are the only people who preach a free salvation. Nothing can be freer than a gift. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. We often think it strange to see people who have good natural sense running after the false theories and institutions of men, but that is the best nature can do. We well know that the natural mind cannot grasp the things of the Spirit, for they are spiritually discerned; then it is not so strange, after all, to see all the world wonder after the beast, whose names are not written in the book of life. I have an old sister-in-law, who came to see me a few years ago, when I was very poorly with an abscess in my side. She said, Jim, I want you to prepare to die, for that is going to kill you. I told her I had nothing to do with preparing to die, that Adam had prepared us all to die. Then she said I must prepare to live. I told her I had nothing to do with that either, that if I were one of God's children he had made all necessary arrangements for his people in Christ, he had chosen them in Christ, had given them grace in Christ Jesus before the world began, so truly I can say with Paul, By the grace of God I am what I am; that grace given us in Christ before the world began is sufficient for every emergency. The prophet Samuel said, or the Lord by the mouth of the prophet Samuel said, It must needs be that we die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again. But the Lord doth devise means that his banished be not expelled from him; the means devised is grace, through faith in Christ Jesus, given us in Christ before the world began. Hence it is a comfort to God's children to know that

"In union with the Lamb,
From condemnation free,
The saints from everlasting were,
And shall forever be.

In covenant from of old
The sons of God they were;
The feeblest lamb in Jesus' fold
Was blessed in Jesus there."

O happy thought, that we are numbered with those chosen in Christ, and grace given us in Christ before the world began.

If you have a mind to write me a letter I will be glad to hear from you and Mr. Pultz.

Your unworthy brother,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

QUINCY, Ill., Dec. 12, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—It has been impressed on my mind of late, and I cannot get away from the impression, if you think it is worthy a corner of your, or I might say our family paper, to write a few lines to the fellow-pilgrims journeying, we hope, to a better country, yea, an heavenly country. Feeling my utter inability and lack of education and the weakness of the flesh to write after the wisdom of this world, I pray for that wisdom which cometh from above to guide my pen in what few words I write. May they be for the glory of God and cheer some brother pilgrim going home. I have been reading the many able editorials and loving, soul-stirring letters, and it comes to my mind, What am I here for, to receive all these good things and not to give? My wife and I hold our membership with the good brethren at Bentley, Ill., and owing at times to the weakness of the body, being in my seventy-ninth year, cannot meet with them as often as we wish. We are now at the home which the people of Illinois has so generously provided for those who rallied around the starry flag in the sixties. "He maketh wars to cease." Who but the christian that has living faith in the risen Christ can lift up his eyes and say, Our Father? O for more of the Spirit of the Master. Sometimes we get weary, but let us remember the many precious promises he has left us in the holy Bible; they are an everlasting comfort to me. Weary one, wake up, the day of our redemption draweth nigh. We send our christian love to all the brethren of Liberty Church, Los Angeles, Cal., also of Riverside; may God bless you all. One thought cheers us as a bright light: that when he cometh with that innumerable host we shall all be there and sing the song of the redeemed: Saved, saved by grace.

Yours in a lively hope,

B. F. & M. L. MEHEW.

PORTLAND, Oregon, May 25, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is always interesting to me to read what the churches are doing in other parts of the world, therefore I ask you to publish the report of the last meeting at Thirteenth and Lexington (Sellwood), where Cedar Creek Church meets on the fourth Sunday in each month. An all day meeting was held to-day, with a lunch at noon. Four ministers were present, to wit: S. B. Moffitt, pastor, Newburg, Ore.; Rice Harris, Denver, Ill.; A. Horner, Waterloo, Ore.; W. H. Shields, Portland, Ore. Brother Shields was a resident of Bedford County, Va., until he came west, about eight years ago. My deceased mother, whose maiden name was Lucy Caroline Beard, was born there January 12th, 1827. The fourth Sunday in June we expect Elder G. E. Mayfield, of Elgin, the Turnidge brethren and perhaps other visiting ministers. To-day's services were in honor of a departed sister, Mrs. John C. Martin, who died something over a year ago. Elders Moffitt and Horner preached the memorial sermons in the forenoon, and Elders Harris and Shields conducted the afternoon services. There was a large congregation of interested listeners present, and the occasion was enjoyed by all. Visiting brethren are welcome. Take a Sellwood car to Lexington St. Meeting in the hall where the cars stop.

Sister Hannah Clapp, of Oregon City, reports the death of her mother, sister Phebe Waggoner, at Kearney, Nebr., in March. Let brotherly love continue.

J. M. AMSBARY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1919.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

LUKE X. 2.

"THEREFORE said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest."

Not long ago we used this text and tried to tell those present a few things regarding it, as they had come to us. An afflicted sister, who has not been able to attend any service of the church for a long time, heard of our remarks, and has requested that we write as nearly as possible what we said on that occasion concerning it. We feel willing to comply with her request, but to recall past views and expressions has always been for us a very difficult task. Some texts have seemed full and wonderful at the time when used, but later we have wondered what we could have seen in them, while others have lingered in our mind for days and weeks. The wonder and mystery of both preaching and writing are too deep for us, and often we have been amazed when listening to gospel preaching and when reading expositions of God's word as given by the pen of some one of his ready writers.

Now to the subject embraced in our text. As usual, the context gives us light, and it would be unwise to consider the text without its connections, as there was always a cause for every expression the Savior used and for every step he took. His life was one of cause and effect; he never talked for the mere sake of talking, nor did he take journeys for the sake of exercise. The words of his mouth were not his, but the Father's who sent him, and every step in his holy life was ordered of God. It will be found by reading the latter part of the ninth chapter of Luke that when the time came that he should be received up he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, and he sent messengers before his face, and they entered into a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him, and they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem; and when his disciples, James and John, saw this they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, even as Elias did? But he rebuked them and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of, for the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. An important lesson is here taught the ministers of Jesus Christ. It was in the heart of James and John to kill those who did not agree with them and did not receive Jesus, but he told them that his mission was not to kill men, but to save them, and as they were of his Spirit they should be kind and gentle, loving and forgiving, saving their brethren from the error of their way instead of destroying them. The gospel cannot be preached except in the spirit of love, and love must prompt every act of the servants of Jesus. When anger, malice, envy or jealousy is manifest in the course of a minister of Jesus Christ, it may be known at once that he is guided by a spirit other than that of the Master.

It came to pass that as Jesus and his

disciples journeyed, a certain man said unto him, "Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." He was a volunteer, and such service has always been a failure. While it is true, literally, that volunteers have been as good soldiers as others, it is also true that men have to be drafted or pressed into service, and it is the right of any government to so do when necessary. It is also the right of the Lord to press men into his service, and we feel safe in saying that no volunteer has ever served acceptably in the army of God. Our government was very glad to have volunteers only a short time ago, but that system failed, and men were drafted to make up the army required. But Jesus did not, nor does he now, accept any volunteer service. He said to the man who seemed so willing to follow him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. We hear nothing further of that man. If nothing is to be gained by following Jesus, he would say, then I must seek some other occupation. The world is full of such persons to-day, and it is just as true that men are now pressed into service by the Lord as it was when Jesus lived on earth as a man. Immediately after that man turned away, Jesus said to another, "Follow me." This is what we call pressing men into the service of the ministry. That man said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Here is presented the most reasonable excuse a man could give for not entering upon the work at once, or at the Lord's time, but it was not accepted, Jesus saying unto him, Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. The dead in trespasses and sin could bury bodies literally dead, but they could not preach the kingdom of God. The Lord of the harvest was then sending forth laborers into his vineyard, or harvest, and he continues to do so. Jesus said, No man having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God. In this is shown the importance of the work, and that as his face was set toward Jerusalem when the time came for the great work of redemption, so should the face of every servant be turned toward the kingdom of God, and not turned away by any worldly avocation or advantageous pursuit in life. A man at the plow, to do good work, must have his eyes on his work. All these lessons are taught in this wonderful text and its connections.

In reading and applying the Scriptures we should be careful not to overreach and apply things which had their special or only application in times past to this present age. When Jesus said, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few, conditions and circumstances were very different from those of the present time. The words of our text were spoken by him a short time before the middle wall of partition between the Jew and Gentile should be removed by the shedding of his blood, when of the twain he should make one new man, thus making peace. The time was near when thousands, and tens of thousands, embraced in God's love and purpose should be preached to by the laborers of the harvest and be gathered into the fold of the great Shepherd of the sheep, when there should be one fold and one Shepherd. The harvest in those days truly was great and the laborers few. Tens of thousands to hear the word of God and only a few laborers. Jesus, knowing perfectly the purpose and plan of the Father, commanded the disciples to pray

the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into his harvest. The Lord of salvation, grace and mercy was King and possessor of all. The harvest was his; in other words, all those to be gathered into the garner were his by purchase, and the laborers were his, drafted soldiers of the cross, to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ to them.

When in Samaria, after the woman had gone into the city and said to the people, Come, see a man who told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Christ? and the people came to see Jesus, he said to his disciples, as the people came, Is it not yet four months until harvest? Lift up your eyes, for, behold, the fields are now white unto harvest. The literal grain fields had not become prematurely ripe, the season had not changed, but the Lord's harvest was even then ripe, ready to be gathered. This was made manifest in the coming of thousands, likely, of the Samaritans to see and hear Jesus, and his mercy and salvation had already been displayed in the revelation of himself to the woman who came to him at the well. Thus the harvest was truly great. On the day of Pentecost, through the operation of the Spirit of God and the preaching of the laborers of the harvest, three thousand souls were added, or made manifest, to the church of Christ, and the work of gathering all nations into the garner continued, and still continues, in a measure, to this present day. The harvest is not great in these times, very few are now being gathered in in any civilized country, and there seems to be a sufficient number of laborers for all the harvest—no real lack anywhere. Thus it seems that the application of our text has more direct reference to those days when the apostles and early ministry lived, yet the harvest is still the Lord's, and no man is allowed to volunteer, but rather all who labor are pressed into service. Some serve willingly, and have their reward, others against their will, and to such a dispensation of the gospel is committed.

Doubtless in the future, and no man knows how soon, there will be another great harvest, and other ministers, or laborers, will be needed and pressed into service. This will be when the fullness of the Gentiles is brought in and the Lord turns again to the Jews to graft them again into the tame Olive Tree, when they shall have their eyes opened to see the Lord Jesus as the Son of God and their ears unstopped to hear the glad message of salvation, in his name, to all the seed, "so all Israel shall be saved." How great that harvest will be when they shall be restored to the kingdom of God. Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou Lord of the harvest.

K.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in August (31st). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

INFORMATION WANTED.

DEAR EDITORS:—I wish to buy a little book, "A Concise History of the Kehukee Baptist Association, by Elders Lemuel Burkitt and Jesse Read, published or printed by A. Hodge in 1803, Halifax. Anybody having one will please write me, naming the price. I will buy or rent, but would rather buy.

G. T. POWELL.

306 E. HARGETT ST., RALEIGH, N. C.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder C. W. Vaughn.)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the First Hopewell Church, at Hopewell, Mercer County, New Jersey, May 28th, 29th and 30th, 1919, to the several churches of which she is composed sends greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—The time has again come, according to our custom, to address you by way of a Circular Letter. We feel it a very great blessing bestowed upon us to have this privilege granted that we may address you, but feel a deep sense of unworthiness to undertake to lead out your minds in connection with the sacred word of God. The chief thought in our mind is in connection with the expression of John in the book called Revelation, seventh chapter, ninth and tenth verses, but we will only quote the latter part of the tenth verse, viz.: "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." When we think of this quotation we are made to consider all the redeemed of the earth of every land, kindred, tongue and nation under heaven. They are given the eye to behold the glory of God and feel the strength of his power that saves a poor sinner. They cry, "Salvation to our God." The word "salvation" is quoted by the apostles and prophets in many places in the Old and New Testaments, and all of them are embracing the thought of salvation by grace. The word "salvation" signifies the very act of saving, and a spiritual deliverance from sin and death. The salvation of God's people is a glorious salvation (his glory is great in salvation), and beyond the utterance of any mortal tongue. The power of this salvation being in Christ Jesus, the Lamb of God, that bore the sins of his people in his body and put them away forever, and having Christ in them, they are made to realize his power to save a poor sinner such as they feel themselves to be. The child of grace, having the realization of the strength of sin, and the great and almighty power that made the law, and the sentence of a justly condemned sinner being under that power, and the sentence being death, nothing being able to rescue him from it, he realizes death is his portion, and God, having infinite wisdom, knows all his transgressions, and no way to escape the sentence of his decree; then when mercy is revealed instead of justice, as he feels is due him, and the way of this mercy coming through Jesus from God the Father, he is made to sing a song to God for the glorious salvation through Jesus bestowed upon him. How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, the glad tidings of great joy to men. In their preaching is this salvation, and the power of God unto it declared. Those who preach this gospel of love and mercy bestowed upon a poor sinner must be mouthpiece for God, and by their proclamations those who have hope are strengthened, and Jesus is glorified in them. We note since our last meeting that we have lost one who stood in the midst of the Lord's people for about fifty years, and feel according to the words of his mouth this salvation awaits him, and no doubt many poor sinners were built up and strengthened in the most pure and holy faith, and in their realization they are given to know Jesus, whom to know is life eternal. This salvation is a wonderful thought; as we pass along and see them fall a victim of death, then this salvation is brought to our hearts in meditation as we are made to hope for while in this life of the joys beyond; that crown of right-

eousness which the Lord our God will put upon us at that day. Some of our brethren are different in thought as to when that day comes to the saints of God, which matters not to them, for they shall enter into that glorious rest at the appointed time of God. When death has passed upon this body and we are corporally dead, sin can reign no longer, and reigneth in this body no more, but is forever freed from the power of death and hell; and in God's predetermined counsel that his work should praise him, is not one thing as much included as another? and we feel that whatsoever is his will that will he do, and none can change it. If we bear the image of the earthy we shall also bear the image of the heavenly, and in our hope we are waiting for the full deliverance of this poor sinner from the power of death (that is, the devil) and be brought off more than conquerors in Christ Jesus; and as he arose from the dead and led captivity captive, all that were in him came forth in him, and in his resurrection they are borne forth in him (as their Head), and by his power they shall triumph gloriously over the powers of death, hell and the grave, and be like Jesus, as an heir of God and joint-heirs with Christ Jesus. Then, and not until then, will the children of God be like Jesus, and go out no more from his presence forever; the salvation for all of the redeemed of the earth being wrought by the power of God through Christ Jesus, which secures that treasure for all for whom he died. Jesus being pure and having all power, nothing can separate us from it, and no corruption can enter into that treasure and corrupt it. This salvation is so far beyond our natural comprehension our mind is lost in meditation, and the expression that says, When we see him we shall see him as he is, and when we awake with his likeness we shall be satisfied. Brethren, may we press forward toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, ever looking unto him who is the author and finisher of our faith, and comfort one another with these things wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God, and may we desire to embrace each other with that love which is shed abroad in our hearts, which cheers poor pilgrims here below while journeying through so many tribulations, and when we pass from this world may it be felt that we have fought a good fight and have kept the faith, therefore there is laid up a crown of righteousness, which the Lord our God shall put upon us at that day; and when we are thus gathered unto him we shall be crowned with that eternal righteousness and salvation and go out no more from his presence forever.

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.
D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, convened with the church at Black Rock, May 14th, 15th and 16th, 1919, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—It is through the goodness and mercy of our High Priest and King in Zion that we have been favored with the unspeakable privilege of enjoying another one of our annual meetings. We feel to rejoice together that we have been enabled to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, to enjoy the sweet communion of the saints of God, of hearing the precious gospel of Christ our Savior, who has saved us with an everlasting salvation,

as has been declared by your messengers' who ministered the word to the little flock which Jesus has purchased with his blood. We solicit a continuance of your correspondence by messengers and Minutes.

We have appointed our next session to be held with the Harford Church, Harford Co., Md., at the usual time, May, 1920.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.
EDWARD A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, convened with the First Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J., May 28th, 29th and 30th, 1919, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond sends greeting and love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We are glad to say to you that we are having a pleasant meeting, and the Lord has seen fit to send us a goodly number of his ministers laden with the blessed gospel of Jesus Christ our Savior, and we feel that he has graciously given us an ear to hear and a heart to understand, and we do rejoice by the manifestation of his goodness to us once more, for all these things come from him through the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

Our next association is to be held, the Lord willing, with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, N. J., beginning on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1920, at 10:30 a. m., when we hope to meet your ministers and messengers in love and fellowship of the people of God.

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.
D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Frank G. Scott, Md., $1.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, at the home of the bride, April 19th, 1919, Walter Franklin Perdue, of Snow Hill, Md., and Wilsie A. Truitt, of Willards, Md.

By the same, at Salisbury, Md., June 21st, 1919, John W. Devereaux, of Girdletree, Md., and Mattie A. Byrd, of Pocomoke City, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

George C. Nethaway was born in Schoharie, N. Y., Jan. 27th, 1847, and died at the same place in the home of his daughter, Mrs. George Miers, July 6th, 1919. He was married to Ella Kniskern June 16th, 1869, and lived to celebrate with her the fiftieth anniversary of their wedding. In 1875 he was baptized by Elder Balas Bundy in the fellowship of the Schoharie Hill Church. Upon establishing permanent residence in Brooklyn some years ago he and his wife united by letter with the Ebenezer Church of New York city. The immediate cause of death was heart disease, from which he had suffered some time. In hope of being benefited by change of scene and air he and sister Nethaway were visiting their daughter, sister Miers, wife of Deacon George Miers, at Schoharie. Recently his health seemed somewhat improved. Old home associations, rest and the watchful care of his devoted wife and family appeared to be doing what was hoped for, and we all were encouraged to hope he soon would be well enough to return home; but the end came suddenly, without warning or suffering. He is survived by his wife, sister Nethaway, four daughters, eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. All who knew brother Nethaway, or had any association with him, will deplore the loss of his good, kind and helpful life, for he did good unto all men, "especially unto them who are of the household of faith." If anything could convince men that there is a reality in religion, the life and walk of our brother would win them to a sense of its excellency. It did not consist in weak and lifeless inclinations, in forsaking the assembling together of the saints, in having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof, but in fervency of spirit he served the Lord with fear and rejoiced with trembling, committing the keeping of his soul to God in well-doing. In unconscious humility he heard and did the commandment of Jesus: "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." May the God of all comfort be with our sister Nethaway, her family, the church and all who mourn this bereavement.

The funeral service was held at the home of deacon and sister Miers, and was largely attended. Interment was in the Schoharie cemetery.

ALSO,

John Newton was born in Orange County, N. Y., July 31st, 1841, and died June 26th, 1919, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Lucy T. Smith, in New York city. On Feb. 14th, 1860, he was married to N. Maria Terry, and to them three children were born: William R., John Ira and Lucy T. The only surviving member of the family is his daughter. Brother Newton and his wife were both members of the church here. He was baptized by Elder Jenkins March 15th, 1896, and continued a faithful member to the end. For some years past he suffered from paralysis, and was unable to attend meetings of the church as regularly as he desired. He loved the doctrine of God our Savior and delighted in the company of those who believed it, and the occasions when his daughter or some of the brethren could bring him to meeting were happy times to him and us. During the long confinement at home his Bible and hymn-book were constant and well read companions, and he loved to talk of how good and merciful the Lord was to him. All the attention a loving and devoted daughter could minister was given him; there was lacking no service she could render to make him comfortable

Text for remarks at the funeral service was Luke xvii. 20, 21. Interment in Philipsburg cemetery, Orange Co., N. Y., in the family plot.

JOHN McCONNELL.

Mrs. Salina Putman (nee Hulbert) was born in Atlanta, Ga., August 1st, 1830, and died at Hersman, Ill., May 24th, 1919, aged 88 years, 9 months and 23 days. She was married in Georgia to George W. Price March 19th, 1848, who died in 1860, leaving her with five children. She moved with her children to Illinois in 1863, locating at Mt. Sterling, where she reared her family, but all preceded her in death except one daughter, Mrs. Salina C. Wilson, who, with her four children, all grown to maturity, are the only near relatives known to the writer. December 17th, 1885, she was married to Daniel Putman, who was blind, and for whom she cared most faithfully until his death, which occurred August 2nd, 1892, and who left an afflicted son by a former marriage, for whom she cared until her death. In March, 1909, she fell, injuring her left hand and arm, which gave her much pain and was of but little use to her afterward. In May, 1910, she fell again, injuring her right hip, which caused her great and continued suffering, and with which she could not take a single step. Throughout all those years she endured with remarkable patience the great pain, as well as the inability to attend her church meetings, (but one-half mile away), and to care for her home with her own hands. Her granddaughter, sister Delia Wilson, was her constant companion, attending to her necessities, assisting her in her Bible studies and in arranging for the meetings at her bedside, which were many and profitable to all who were privileged to attend. In early life she united with the Missionary Baptists, but Sept. 18th, 1892, she united by experience and baptism with Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church, and had been one of the most faithful and exemplary members. Cheerfulness was the rule of her life, and faithfulness a most prominent characteristic. She was a great Bible student, and often appealed to her pastor for instruction on any point not clear to her mind. Such a christian is always a great help and courage to the pastor, as well as an example to others. She had a good voice, and assisted in the songs of praise until the last service at her bedside, at which time she could not pronounce a word, but her lips moved in unison with those who were singing.

Funeral services were conducted at Mt. Gilead church-house Monday afternoon, May 26th, by the writer, and the remains were tenderly laid away in the Putman Cemetery, near by.

D. W. OWENS.

Nancy Eveline Williams, wife of Silas Williams, was born in Ray County, Mo., Nov. 14th, 1842, and died at her home, a few miles west of Lebanon, Ore., at the age of 76 years. When a girl she crossed the plains with her parents to Oregon, and spent the rest of her life in Linn and Benton counties. She was married to John Green, who died forty-three years ago. Four children by her first husband survive her. She was married to Silas Williams about forty-two years ago. Besides her husband she is survived by four children: Mrs. Anna Berwick, who resides at the home place, G. N. Green, of Albany, Mrs. Katharine Bosquet, of Eugene, and Mrs. Louie Wooten, of Portland; also three stepchildren: Mrs. Addie Short, of Dallas, Mrs. Jed Ross, of Albany, and E. D. Williams, of Portland, two brothers: Lou and Robert Williamson, of Wells, one sister, Mrs. Martha Holman, eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. She received a good hope when young, and united with the Evangelical Church. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace. Their house has long been a home for the Baptists, and she was ever ready to minister to them, as all Baptists that ever visited at their home can testify. She will be greatly missed by us all, but none will miss her like her aged companion and dear sister Anna, who has been unable to speak for a number of years, but we feel our loss is her eternal gain. She was a great sufferer, but said she did not want to complain. She arranged her funeral, picked out the hymns to be sung and the one she wanted to preach. She asked him if it would be asking too much of him to preach her funeral; he replied, "Dear sister, I would not want a better subject." She was heard to say she did not mind going, but for dear old brother Williams' sake, who is now in his eighty-fifth year and

very feeble, she would like, if it were the good Lord's will, to help take care of him.

Funeral services were held Monday afternoon at North Palestiner Cemetery, Benton County, and was conducted by Elder A. Horner, of Waterloo.

NANCY D. HORNER.

Mrs. Mildred Hurst Danniel was born May 21st, 1849, and died May 26th, 1919, at her home in Bremen, Ga. She was married to brother J. B. Danniel in 1867, which union was blessed with eight children, six of whom survive her. She had been in poor health for more than a year. Her beloved husband preceded her to the grave one month and two days. Heart dropsy was the cause of her death. In the year 1872 she was received in the fellowship of Harris Springs Church, but later moved her membership to Mt. Olive Church, in Haralson County, where she remained until death. She passed through many trials and tribulations, but remembered that her blessed Lord had said, Be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world. She was one of the most lovable christian women that ever lived, kind to every one she met. She had passed her golden wedding day and has left a good name. She was faithful in all her duties and never forgot her pastor. Her home was made sweet by her thoughtfulness of those who visited her. She was blessed with a sweet, gentle spirit that made all love her. All was done for her by her loving family of children, brother, sisters and neighbors.

She was laid to rest by her husband in Bremen. Her pastor, Elder T. B. Chandler, conducted the funeral service, assisted by Elders T. G. Layton and J. M. Adams, in the presence of many relatives and friends. Beautiful flowers covered her grave, where she was left to await the morning of the resurrection. May the Lord comfort the bereaved.

J. M. ADAMS.

Deacon Willard S. Cubbage died March 28th, 1919, at his late home in Felton, Kent Co., Del., of heart trouble, at the age of 55 years. His death was a great shock to all who knew him. He lived but three hours after being attacked. He had suffered some from what was thought by his physician to be acute indigestion, but was not believed to be so serious. He is survived by the widow, whose maiden name was Miss Sadie Meredith, one son, Clifford S. Cubbage, of Wilmington, Del., the son of his first wife, who was Miss Lena Meredith, and one brother, James F. Cubbage, of Willow Grove, Del. Brother Cubbage was baptized by Elder W. W. Meredith in 1904, and soon after his baptism was made a deacon in the Cow Marsh Church. He was one of the good gifts in the church of Christ, a deacon in deed as well as in name, who was faithful, loving, just and true, never shunning a duty or privilege. In his cheerful, sunny personality he was a welcome visitor and a warm and hearty entertainer. Many Old Baptist friends have enjoyed the hearty welcome of his home, in which he was so estimable and hospitable. A devoted and faithful companion, whose home, work and church, with its church relations, filled his day. He was sound in doctrine and good authority on scriptural subjects; gave ear to all men, hearkened to none, but waited upon the Lord. He wrote many beautiful poems and acrostics.

Elder George Ruston, enroute to Salisbury, stopped at his home to visit with him on the day of his death, and at our request returned on Monday for the funeral and spoke very comfortingly from Paul's language: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" &c. Interment in Cow Marsh Cemetery. He died as he lived: in life he cast no burden upon any one, but rather love and cheer; in death he left no burden; he left sorrow and mourning in all our hearts, but no burden; it was gain for him.

B. E. CUBBAGE.

Gilbert D. Scudder, Jr., died near his home at Coopers Plains, N. Y., April 15th. The subject of this notice was killed by being run over by the cars while returning from the station with his milk truck. He was the son of Gilbert and Mary Scudder and grandson of Deacon David Scudder. He leaves father, mother, brothers, sisters and many friends to mourn, but not without hope, as he left good testimony of a hope in Jesus.

ALSO,

John Bostic Owen died of measles and pneumonia. He was a son of David and Lottie Owen and grandson of Fred and Nancy Owen and great-grandson of David Scudder. He was eight months old, and leaves a broken-hearted father and mother, brothers and sisters and many mourning friends.

ALSO,

Mrs. Cora Fitzwater, wife of Ray Fitzwater and daughter of Mrs. Cora Scudder Morgan and granddaughter of David T. Scudder, died at her home in East Canton of influenza and pneumonia. She was twenty-one years of age, and leaves her husband and four little ones and many relatives to mourn. One child preceded her to the grave.

NANCY OWEN.

MEETINGS.

THE Siloam Association of Old School Baptists will meet with the Pleasant Grove Church, at Yakima, Wash., beginning on Friday, August 8th, 1919, and ending on Sunday, the 10th. Those coming by train will take the Fruitvale car and get off at the Garfield schoolhouse, the place of meeting. All lovers of the truth will be welcome. For further particulars inquire of Mrs. Sonora Hess, 201 So. Nachez Ave., Yakima, Wash.

MARY HUGHETT, Church Clerk pro tem.

THE Second Roxbury Old School Baptist Church, Roxbury, N. Y., will hold a two days meeting on the second Sunday and Saturday before in August (9th and 10th). The morning train will be met at Roxbury each day. All who love the truth are cordially invited. GEORGE RUSTON, Pastor.

THE New Hope Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will hold their thirty-eighth annual session with Mt. Pisgah Church, in Hopkins County, three miles northeast of Como, Texas, beginning on Friday, at 11 o'clock a. m., before the third Sunday in August. All trains will be met on Thursday at Como. All who are searching for the truth are invited, especially ministers of our faith and order.
S. M. DICKENS.

AN all day meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the Pitts Creek Church, near Pocomoke City, Md., on the fifth Sunday in August, 1919. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.
B. F. COULTER.

THE Maine Association of Old School Baptists will meet with the Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, on Friday before the second Monday in September (5th, 6th and 7th), 1919. All who love the truth are cordially invited.
GEO. R. TEDFORD.

There will be meeting every first Sunday at Halcott Center, N. Y., in the Grange Hall. All who love the truth are cordially invited.
GEORGE RUSTON.

The Middletown and Andes Church will hold their meetings the first Sunday in every month at their meetinghouse, Union Grove, N. Y. All who love the truth are cordially invited.
GEORGE RUSTON.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.
OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.
A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church holds her regular meetings at 13th and Lexington Sts., Sellwood, at 2 p. m. on the fourth Sunday in each month. Sellwood is a suburb of Portland, Oregon. Take any outgoing Sellwood car. S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
Newberg, Oregon.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.
JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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(Judges v. 11.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 87. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1919. NO. 16.

POETRY.

ALONE—NOT ALONE.

In solitude the traveler waits
Some token of the distant gate;
Seeks rest to find from journey done,
As low descends his evening's sun.

None other knows the devious road
By which thus far he's borne his load;
None understands the heart-throb's pain
By which at last he's gained the plain.

None other, so? but ah, there is
One other who all true knows this,
And knows all else that ere befalls
Such pilgrims whom this journey calls.

This traveler who, with eager eyes
Of faith uplifted to the skies,
Awaits some sign of peace and rest,
As tired he seeks his journey's quest,

Is one whom Christ has called alone
To tread the road of thorn and stone,
As all his followers thus are called
By grace to feel what him has galled.

Through fellowship of storm and stress,
Of fiery darts and deep distress,
Each follower so must undergo
Some taste of God's incarnate woe.

By valleys dim and darkness deep,
O'er torrents mad, where dangers sleep,
Through tempests sharp that try the soul,
The pilgrim mounts toward the goal.

His comfort all along the way,
His sure support and one mainstay,
Has Christ, the Man of sorrows, been,
Who as Forerunner succored him.

Tempted in all points without sin
Has Jesus the Christ already been,
So that the pilgrim he secures
From being lost while he endures.

Tired, worn, exhausted, sinking low,
With hope undaunted, faith aglow,
His life's sun sinking fast to rest,
The pilgrim waits to know he's blest

With love and everlasting life,
Above the whole world's din and strife,
Where peace and plenty always reign,
Without sin's taint or crimson stain.

Awaiting thus, his faith aglow,
The signal comes to him below,
That Christ the Savior for him reigns,
That hell and death are bound in chains.

Because I live, you, too, shall live,
This heavenly message angels give,
And hope's aspiring wings make bold
To bear him upward to his goal.

Thus those who suffer too shall reign,
For Christ himself has felt the pain,
Has healed the hurt that sin has made,
When deep within the grave he laid.

When he up from the grave arose,
And triumphed over all his foes,
Up, too, his members all as one
Arose with him, the journey done.

This truth shall live when all else dies,
Shall brighten many pilgrim lives;
The Way and Resurrection he,
Of grace the Fount, of life the Tree.

May this grand truth on me impressed
Bring me to mount my journey's crest,
That when my nature dies, all worn,
I may in spirit be heavenward borne.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

CORRESPONDENCE.

1 PETER III. 18.

"CHRIST also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God."

The apostle Paul says, "I speak concerning Christ and the church,"—Eph. v. 32, and the believer in his contemplations of the things testified in the Scriptures concerning Christ and his people finds to his soul's comfort that they are blessedly wonderful. Christ, the wisdom and power of God, the hidden wisdom whom God ordained before the world began unto our glory, says, "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was."—Prov. viii. 22, 23. "His goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."—Micah v. 2. When Christ was set up in the eternal counsel of Jehovah he was chosen, appointed the husband of the church, the chosen daughter of God the Father. For the elect being predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, and thus viewed, in the eternal counsel of God, one with Christ, the incarnate Son of God, they were, in their election in him, blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. The covenant of grace is a covenant of eternal wedlock. Jehovah the Father made a marriage for his dear Son, (Matt. xxii. 2,) and as the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the one eternal God, have eternal delight in the church, she may well be named Hephzibah. (Isaiah lxii. 4, 5.) As God brought Eve to Adam and she was a helpmeet, formed for him, so the church is drawn and taught and brought to Christ by the Father, and she is welcomed by Christ, who saith, "I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord."—Hosea ii. 19, 20. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." As Adam and Eve are said to be one, much more Christ and the church are one. He that is joined unto the Lord Jesus is one spirit with him, and we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. When Adam and Eve sinned their marriage was not made void, and when the elect fell by transgression in Adam, Christ did not disannul the covenant of wedlock in which he held them unto himself; but in everlasting love, and according to the purpose and grace given to the elect church before the world began, he gave himself for her redemption, an offering and a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savor. He "gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."—Eph. v. 25–27. The apostle Peter declares, "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." Christ the anointed. This name peculiarly declares the relationship of the incarnate Son of God unto his people. Prophets, priests and kings were anointed, and as such our Lord Jesus Christ is our anointed. He declares, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me." Christ suffered for sins, the sins of his people imputed to him. His name is Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. The whole story of redemption is wonderful indeed. That

Christ should suffer and be the first to rise from the dead; that the Word made flesh, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, should be in this world a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, is a sacred, deep and glorious mystery. The elect fell by transgression, and were under the curse of the law, but when the fullness of the time was come God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. It was therefore as the Husband, Head and Surety of his church that Christ gave himself a sacrifice for our sins. "He gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. All we like sheep have gone astray, but the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He bare our sins in his own body on the tree." Christ suffered for sins, but he had done no violence, neither was deceit found in his mouth; yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief. When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sins of many, and made intercession for transgressors. (Isaiah liii. 9–12.) Upon reading these prophetic utterances it is no marvel that the dear saints of old were found searching diligently concerning the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow; for all their hope of salvation and eternal glory was wrapped up in the suffering and death, the resurrection and ascension to heaven of the promised Messiah, in whom they trusted. He is the consolation of Israel. (Luke ii. 25.)

"Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the saints thou art;
Dear desire of every nation,
Joy of every contrite heart."

The fact that in the eternal purpose Christ should suffer, that it behooved Christ to suffer, shows God's abhorrence of sin, that he is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look upon iniquity, and that in his eternal justice in the law, which his creatures have transgressed, he will punish sin. But "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us."

Christ "once" suffered for sins. As our great High Priest and Sacrifice he needed not daily, as the typical high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people; for this he did once when he offered up himself; and after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever he sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. O the blessed all-sufficiency of the atoning sacrifice of Christ, the Lamb of God. Christ suffered for sins, the just for the unjust. Christ, the incarnate Son of God, was ever in his person the holy, just One. Even while he bare our sins in his own body on the tree he was still the Lamb of God without blemish and without spot. "He through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God."—Heb. ix. 14. We are the unjust, we have done iniquity. How shall we, such vile transgressors, be just with God?

O, our precious Christ, our Husband and Head, our Surety and Redeemer, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, the just One, was made sin for us, and suffered the just for the unjust to bring us to God. We are cleansed from our sins and justified from all our offences by our Emmanuel's precious blood. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." What wondrous mercy to have the power to sing:

"Fully I am justified,
Free from sin, and more than free;
Guiltless, since for me he died;
Righteous, since he lived for me."

God is the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, who is he that condemneth? Such are accounted unto God "just men made perfect." Christ suffering for the sins of his people was to bring them to God. We were indeed dreadfully, wretchedly far off, but are made nigh by the blood of Christ, and when this is shown to us poor sinners by the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, how blessed, how comforting it is; so near, in such sweet reconciliation, in such friendship with the Father are we in faith in Christ Jesus, our Husband and Savior. His work and sufferings, as the Captain of our salvation, are unto the bringing of the many sons unto glory. (Heb. ii. 10.)

"Far off, depraved, and prone to err,
But they shall surely come;
For covenant love marks out the way,
And brings the outcasts home."

"No man [saith Christ] cometh unto the Father but by me." By Christ we are brought into the household of God. Yes, Christ will bring his ransomed bride home to eternal glory, a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish. O may it be our portion to be presented faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

PRAYER.

WHAT a solemn occupation to be engaged in! The Scriptures contain many narratives of prayers and answers to prayers, but I need not make mention of them, as they are upon record. In prayer we come unto God, and he that cometh unto God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Every one who prays must be born again, born of God, and every one born of God cries unto God, and God hears the cry. God told Hagar that he heard the cry of the child, and I have felt that the mother also was in bitter anguish of soul when she cast the child from her sight so as not to see its death, and I have reasons for believing that prayers or cries from deep distress are heard of God. God heard the cry of his people Israel and told Moses of it, and said he had come down to deliver them. God did not say that Israel cried unto him, but that he heard their cry. I have wondered at God's ways, and how unsearchable they are and past finding out. The Savior was a man of prayer. When he began I do not know, but at the age of twelve he was about his Father's business, and at the age of thirty or thereabout was baptized and came up out of the water praying. I have felt assured that Jesus prayed without ceasing, and that his was the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man that availeth much; for we believe that God heard him and also answered him, and when we are blessed to read the record of the Savior's petition in the seventeenth chapter of John, and that he was heard and answered of God, we have hope; for Jesus is the Intercessor between God and man, and it is the Spirit that maketh intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered. Then it is possible that prayer

may be made and not a sound heard. The disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray as John taught his disciples, and I believe they then were praying subjects, though not themselves conscious of the fact, for every follower of Jesus is a praying subject; they cannot be followers of him unless they are. Jesus did not say, I will give you a form of words to repeat, but said, After this manner pray ye: "Our Father which art in heaven," &c. The first sentence to a circumcised heart causes them to examine themselves. "Our Father." No one can say that in the true sense of it except they are born of God, and if born of God they will in spirit say, "Our Father." Deep calleth unto deep, and is heard. A hawk may call unto chickens, but they will flee and scatter, whereas the mother hen calls and they all run and find refuge under her wings. How oft would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings. Jesus said this when looking over Jerusalem, his people, national Israel. They would not have him, so their house was left unto them desolate. We have a custom of prayer in our worship, and many times we are fearful in coming before the Lord in this attitude. First, we realize our weakness and sinfulness and need of cleansing, and must trust alone in the Savior to cleanse us by his Spirit and wash us by his word and put upon us heavenly garments (humility, meekness, brotherly kindness and love), and be brought into the presence of Jesus, beyond the vail of this flesh, for flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God; and if our petitions are actuated by the flesh, or if we want to be heard for our much speaking or to be seen of men, we will not gain admittance before the throne of grace. In our petitions there is no necessity of trying to call the Lord's attention to everything, for he knows what we have need of before we ask him, and it is well to be brief and speak such things as are brought to our mind. Peter, when sinking in the waves, cried, "Lord, save me." The thief said, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." The publican said, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Jesus cried with a loud voice when expiring upon the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Brethren, I have only dipped a very little out of this vast subject.

J. M. FENTON.

HOPEWELL, N. J.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—Once more I will make an attempt to write you a few lines, but know if I am to guide my pen it will not be of much interest to any of you. I come so far short of the better things, it seems to me I just stumble along from one thing to another, more dead than alive. How I do grieve over my walk, so very unprofitable to any one, and most to myself. Last Sunday I commenced a letter to you, but it was not finished. Then I had just been measuring myself by myself, and came far short of measure or weight, really less than the dust of the balance. I found myself wanting in it all—too short, too narrow, too far from what I profess. How can the brethren greet me as they do, and welcome me with them, and make me feel at home with them? They do not know how small, sinful, weak and hypocritical I am, nothing, less than nothing and vanity. I find myself living farther and farther from the way I would like to live. I am so burdened with the cares of the day; my employment takes some of my time, my household duties

come in for time, so when these are done how much have I visited the sick, or helped to raise the cloud of sorrow from some poor soul, or helped the needy, or helped to pass some of the lone hours with the afflicted, or given encouragement to the weary, or handed a cup of cold water to the thirsty, or strengthened the lame, or led the blind, or rather tried to keep them in the strait and narrow path? When we came to Hopewell to live I seemed to feel there was a work for me to do, but if there is I do not seem to know it or do it. I just pass on from day to day, and wonder what I am and where I am; my time so taken, and no heed to the inward longing to do something for the brethren. O, you do not know me, or else I do not know myself. A year ago, when the dear boys were being called out all the time, I seemed to be continually praying for their safety, for their return, for the dear ones they left, and it seemed that was the only comfort I had, and if they ever came home again how thankful I would be to the Father of all mercies. They have mostly come home in this section and many others. Now am I thankful? I am afraid to say I am, but can say from my heart that I am glad to have them back, and may they never have to go again, but how little we know about that. This shows me how unthankful a person I am. To be thankful is a great thing, coming right from the heart as the Lord has given it, but to be glad seems different. I know we read about being glad in the Lord.

Our association has just been held, and while it was a pleasure to have the many dear ones with us, I was not permitted to enter in the preaching as I had hoped I might. I seemed so dull and lifeless, but know the Lord rules and reigns, and when it is his pleasure he will give me the hearing ear. If I could be more trusting, and feel more anxious to know and search the word, but I understand so little when I read. At times I am anxious to know just how such Scripture reads, so leave my work to search for it, but that has not been lately. Some who do not know these things say, Why are you Old Baptists always on the lookout for sadness and darkness? If I believed as you do I think I would always be happy, for I would know my way is all in the hand of the Lord. That shows just how much is known by them; it also shows to us that if we try to follow Christ, in sadness it must be, for he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Only one place is recorded of his rejoicing, and that is where he thanked the Lord that he hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes. I do truly hope I am a babe in Christ; I desire his love and mercy, for I have nothing except as he gives me; for I am flesh, and in it are only fleshly things, and I cannot serve him or love the good except as it is revealed by the Spirit. I can truly say, "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling." I desire to grow more and more in Christ, that I may be of some use to the brethren. May I be kept in sympathy for those who need it. Some may ask what I mean. I mean to be ever ready for a word in season, ever ready to listen to the ones with contrite hearts and to try and comfort all who mourn. I feel my sympathy goes out to them. I know what that is right at this minute. O Father, that I might rest in thy love.

Love to you all, and when well with you remember me.

MARY HILL TERRY.

WOODSTOCK, Ont., July 6, 1919.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Your letter received, and it was so comforting and consoling for a short time that I feel I must write and tell you how I appreciated it, and how glad I was that you wrote it, even if I do seem to be forcing my troubles and afflictions on your notice. You said you were always glad to hear from me, so I will venture to inflict a few lines on you again, if only to tell you how much I appreciated your letter and how it eased my heart for a little while, for I thought, Here is a minister of the gospel, whom I firmly believe to be a sent servant of God and an experienced man in the grace of God, who has the same doubts and fears I have, so I can still hope on; but O, that is not like the sweet presence of Jesus coming to our hearts and saying, I am thine and thou art mine. That is what I want, and only that will satisfy my longing, hungry soul. O, do I long, do I hunger for the bread and water of eternal life, or is it all imagination? Where is the blessedness I once enjoyed when I could read the Bible and good books with comfort and satisfaction? Now I can get no comfort nor even interest in reading the Bible, and I may say it is a neglected book. O how sad for a professor of nearly fifty years to get into such a state. What is the matter with me? I think I can feel what the psalmist said and which was said of Jesus: Save me, O God, for the waters are come into my soul, &c. O yes, it seems as if the waters of trouble, sorrow, doubt and fear have overwhelmed me, and I sink in deep waters where there is no standing, and the dear Savior's words seem so applicable to me: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? You say I am a good man compared with you. O, if you only knew me you would not say that, for I am as vile as the vilest, and even in acts, in conversation, in my daily walk, I am anything but a consistent follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, whom I profess to love, and every day and every hour I say, I will try to live and act better, only to be again thrown into the ditch of my own filthy nature. O, do not say I am good compared with you when I know I am not. If I could only live and walk aright for one day even I would be glad; and yet after all this your words were soothing to my sin-oppressed soul, for I felt, Here is one who feels as I do the oppression of sin and depravity, and I felt the meaning of the wise man's words: As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man. I have thought, too, of the dear Savior in the hour of his deepest sorrow in the garden, where I think he suffered more than on the cross. He seemed to look for help and sympathy from his disciples. Could you not watch with me one hour? I have thought, too, of his prayer; he prayed the same words three times, and this has been some comfort to me when I have felt I had no prayer but, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and when in asking a blessing at the table I could only say the same words over: O God, bless me with a thankful heart, and bless me with thy presence and grace. And he went away and prayed the same words. O yes, it is the same thing; we always need mercy, salvation, forgiveness, and, above all, justification, to be made as free from sin as though we never did sin. This is what I want; not merely forgiveness, for then I would still be a sinner, but to be justified, to be made free from sin, that is what I feel I need more than anything. What a wonderfully precious thing, to be free from sin. How it permeates

every fibre, as it were, of our very being, and destroys every hope of being able to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world; but God can subdue it, I do believe, for I have known the time when its power over my soul seemed to be gone, and I was full of peace, love and good will toward all, but now it is the opposite.

You will be tired reading all this, and be saying, I wish he would stop, but you know your own letter was pretty well filled with self-abhorrence and mourning over your own lack of goodness and holiness. I thought when I sat down to write I would be able to write something that would commend itself to your liking, but alas, I find I am a very poor writer. If I could only express many things I feel I could do better, but thoughts will not impress themselves on paper, so I better lay down my pen with regret and sorrow. You spoke of sister Manning. I well remember a very pleasant visit at their place, and I never had conversation with any one whose views and thoughts were more in unison than ours were, and we talked until far into the night in complete accord on every subject we talked about. O how pleasant such interviews are, but all these things are bygones, never to return. May it be our happy lot to have a bright future in that home of the soul, where sorrow and sin are forever done away. I was sorry indeed to hear she had lost her husband. He was a quiet but good man. I wish I had the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, loving and kind, but I have not, to my bitter sorrow. I hear Deacon McIntyre is very low, if not gone to his long home. Deacon Gillis is very poorly with heart trouble. Surely the deacons of this church are passing away. Elder Fenton made us a pleasant visit, which I enjoyed as much as possible under our afflicted circumstances. I hope you will excuse this long letter with nothing of interest in it. Let me thank you heartily for answering my last letter so promptly.

Your brother in sorrow and tribulation, if nothing else, R. SCATES.

INDEPENDENCE, MO., March 11, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have just been reading the beautiful letters which our dear paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, contains. I have often thought that I would write, especially when I would get through reading the letters expressing my thoughts and feelings much better than I probably could do myself. It makes me think of the day of Pentecost, when every kindred and tongue was made to understand each other and glorified God. There is not anything that can equal the strong arm of Jesus, knowing that he is all in all, the great King of kings and Lord of lords. I feel that I am one of the most dependent ones, though when I read the holy word of God it seems so plain and so clear, thinking of my own experience, seeing where he tells us to search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me. What a blessed sweet thought, that having hope in Jesus makes us not ashamed of the gospel of our Lord and Savior. I see many beautiful letters from my native State (Kentucky), as well as many from other places. I read Elder P. W. Sawin's writings. Shelbyville, Ky., is not very far from my dear father's home, where I was raised, down on what was called Lower Howards Creek, in Clark County. James Noland was my father's name. He attended all of the Old Baptist meetings. My father and mother's membership was at what was called Cane Spring Church,

in Madison County, just across the river from Clark. I have gone many times with my parents, especially with my father. In those days it seemed as though both could not leave together very often. Since living here in Missouri, probably sixteen years, I joined the Old Baptist Church called Pleasant Grove, near Independence. The Lord tells us to go home to our friends; I found them there, though I feel I am the least of them all. Brother William T. Brown, of Richmond, Mo., is our pastor, and has been for several years, though the time seems short. I believe I can speak for one and all of the members that we all love him. He gives us such great comfort and consolation. He has a talent that God has given him from on high to console the children of God here below, which causes us to lift up our heads and praise God, the only one to serve. A dear old sister passed away from this life October 8th last, Mrs. Lavinia Morgan, whom I know had been a reader of the SIGNS for many years. I do not know of any one who knew her but what loved her; in fact I felt that she was a dear old mother to me, so firm in her ways and such a good christian woman. It is not for us to judge, but we are told that the tree by its fruit is known. She was kind and good to every one. She was spared to attend the association the fourth Saturday and Sunday in September, also Monday, for which she said she was thankful. During the time of meeting she had the brethren and sisters go to her home and had preaching, which she much enjoyed. It was a time she had looked forward to all that year, and she said her prayers had been answered and she was willing to go. She would have been eighty years old Jan. 11th, 1919. She was a remarkable woman, such a model. Our loss is her gain. She is now at rest beyond this vale of tears, where there will be no more sorrow to pass over her peaceful breast. May we all be found in the path of righteousness, and may God bless the editors and enable them to perform their duty here in the world. May we all be led by God's own hand into that upper and better kingdom, where his blessings will be for evermore.

I will close this writing with much love to one and all of the readers of our most interesting paper.

(MRS.) T. C. GAINES.

BACHELOR, Mo., March 17, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I am not due another of our dear papers until the figure is changed on my little slip, will write and send subscription fee before time for another to be sent, and to thank you for the change you made in sending my paper to the above address since last June. I have not missed a number, and request you to continue until my return to Washington, D. C., of which I will notify you. No one, only by experience, can realize what the contents of our paper has been to me while so far from my home church people. It has brought me great pleasure in reading the letters from the many members I have been associated with and love, because they bear witness of my own feelings, and experience the same unworthiness that is mine. Sorrow has been intermingled with the joy. When reading obituary notices my eyes fill with tears, and I have had to read of quite a number who have been called from this world of sorrow by our all-wise Redeemer to that land where sorrow is no more, yet I feel sad, even though in many cases it seems a great blessing to receive the summons to come home, and sorrow creeps in at the thought that if I am spared to return I will meet them no

more. Just last week word came to me of one being called from dear old Frying Pan, my home church. But that is one thing we know about as soon as we know anything: that we were born to die. I felt sad over the death of our dear brother Durand, who had been such a standby to so many, and all will miss him who were among the many to hear him preach the sweet and sound doctrine we all believe and love. He was one of the first to speak a word of comfort to my aching heart and hungering soul when sitting off alone, trying to hide myself from every one, but he, like the good Samaritan, passed my way and took notice of me in my lonely condition and stopped and tried to heal my wound, but it had to come through our ever kind and heavenly Father, from whence all good and mercy come. O for a sure foundation that his mercy will be mine in my dying hours. The words come to me, O you of little faith; but when I know myself so well how can I expect anything when I am so full of wrong?

I have had the privilege of attending two Old Baptist meetings since being in Missouri, which afforded me great pleasure. The preaching was good, if I am any judge, and there were quite a number of members in attendance, who gave me a warm welcome.

I will return my paper containing brother Durand's obituary notice, at your request, though I appreciate it, but I want another to share it with me.

I have done differently from what I intended, for I was not going to do any writing except about my paper, but excuse me, for I know there is plenty of room in your wastebasket for it.

With sincere love, I am the least of all sisters,

(MRS.) B. F. BENNETT.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., Dec. 2, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—I see that my subscription to the dear old SIGNS is due the 15th of this month, and as I do not want to miss a number I will send two dollars in this letter. I hope I may be able to read it as long as I live. It is very precious to me, there are so many able writers to read after. Elder W. J. May's article was very interesting to me. I had often wished that some one would write on that subject: "That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." I wish you editors would write on that, too. I am so nervous that I can hardly write so one can read it, and so many are looking for an article from my pen; but brethren Sawin and Irwin, sister Pultz and all are better writers than I, and their writings are food to my weary soul. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak, and I feel that I am of little worth any more, if I ever was. I would love to write some about the good things they have all been handing out to us; every one handed out a crumb for me. I cannot get out to meeting much any more, and it seems hard to me. Elder L. E. Frazee still takes care of all four churches, and is an able defender of God's word. He has been preaching for these churches for twenty-five years or over. We esteem him highly for the truth's sake, and hope he may be spared to us yet many years. Pray for me when at the throne of grace.

Love to all the household of faith, and may the God of all grace be with you all, is the prayer of one of the least, if one at all.

BELLE FRAZEE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1919.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

A REPLY.

As we write, a letter lies before us, recently received from one of the subscribers to the SIGNS, asking us some questions about the signs of the times in which we are now living. It is with hesitation that we attempt to answer some of these questions. What makes us pause in the matter is that it is never very easy to gather from a question just what is in the mind of an inquirer, neither is it at all possible to adequately satisfy at all times the one who asks the question. However, these questions have stirred a chain of thought in our mind, and we will attempt to give some thoughts about them, even at the risk of not giving the information that is most desired. We make no claim to being either a prophet or the son of a prophet, and what we shall say will not be worth much unless we can support it by the Scriptures. Our opinions are worth only as much as those of any other man, no more, no less.

We quote from our inquirer as follows: "Shall truth again be crucified? Is there no resurrection without crucifixion? Shall we yet see the terrible beast (antichrist) completely overcome truth? Shall we (the church) suffer a period of total darkness before the light of the blessed truth shall arise? Shall the horrible beast of antichrist and all its vile helpers in my own unclean heart finally overcome the little, precious hope which I had felt might have sprung from the gift of the life of Christ planted within my heart?"

The first thing we shall say in trying to answer the above is that we shall use the name of Jesus Christ as being exactly synonymous with the word "truth." If, in the above questions, we use the name of Christ wherever the word "truth" appears, we think the right answer will appear quite readily to our readers. Our reason for using the name of Christ for the word "truth" is because the Bible plainly declares that the truth of God is in Christ Jesus, and that he is the fullness of God's truth, also that he came into the world to bear witness to the truth. Whatsoever is to be known of truth must be known through Christ, it cannot be known in any other way. Men know nothing of truth only as they have been taught it through the revelation of Jesus Christ. No matter what various things may pass current in the world as being truth, it is all "bogus" wisdom unless perfectly in harmony with God's word, and by God's word we mean not only the Scriptures, which are God's written word, but we mean especially the testimony of the living Word, the Word made flesh, in the lives and experience of the saints of God. Then, in answering the first question, "Shall truth again be crucified?" we may well ask, Shall Christ again be crucified? No, never. He suffered once in the end of the legal world, once for the sins of all his elect, chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and by this one offering of himself perfected forever them that are sanctified. Then, if the one offering of Jesus

was sufficient to forever perfect the church in God's sight, why need he suffer again, that is, be crucified again? That which is perfect cannot be made more perfect. To attempt to make perfection more perfect would but make it less perfect, since any addition to perfection is but a detraction from it. Christ positively will never come down on earth again to be made an offering for sin, nor to suffer again the ignominious death of the cross. He came the first time with all the sins of all his people imputed unto him, to be put to an open shame for the atonement, but when he comes the second time it is without sin unto salvation. His second coming is to gather out of the world all who are sealed by the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption, to administer unto them the new covenant which became effective in the death of the testator, the death of Jesus. The will of God was made in Christ before the world began, and in that will all the heirs of glory were specified. (See Psalms cxxxix. 16.) But, a will is of no effect until the one who makes the will dies. Therefore God was made flesh in the person of Jesus for the suffering of death. Thus, is it any wonder that Jesus said, "This cup is the new testament in my blood"? A will is not in force while a man lives, but only after he is dead, therefore the Godhead bowed its head in death. Who can deny it? Jesus gave up the ghost, or spirit, before he died. He did this because the Spirit of God, and God as the Spirit, can never die. Jesus could not die as long as he retained the Spirit. Thus it became him to bow his head and give up the ghost, showing that he died willingly, and that no man took his life from him by force, but he laid down his own life and took it again when it came God's time for him to take it. Having died, Jesus brought into effect to all the heirs of glory the new testament or covenant. Having suffered once for sin he never will suffer that way again, but when he comes again the second time it is as the messenger or administrator of the new covenant of the grace of God, apprising each and every called subject of God's grace of the inheritance undefiled which is reserved for every one who is being kept by the power of God through faith, ready to be revealed in the last time.

"It there no resurrection without crucifixion?" Again, we say that Christ was not raised from the dead until he had first been crucified. Therefore there was no resurrection without crucifixion, and we have no right to say that there could have been a resurrection without crucifixion. It was as it was to be, and we cannot say how it might have been had it not been as it was. Experimentally, each and every child or God is called in his or her own life to know something of the fellowship of Christ's sufferings. Actually, none of the Lord's people will ever be called to suffer as Jesus did. It is not possible for them to so suffer. Could they have been able to suffer as he was compelled to suffer it would never have been necessary for him to suffer for them. But in the experience of the children of God they are called to know these things in a measure, and in a measure only. Paul said that he was crucified to the world and that the world was crucified to him. There can be nothing known of the spirit and power of the resurrection while we are here on earth, only as we are called to suffer with Christ, for it is in the weakness of his saints that His strength is made perfect; it is in the infirmity of the believer that the glory of Christ is manifested. But all this is ex-

perimental. As for any of us ever having to be actually crucified as Jesus was crucified, we cannot see it. The historical report that Peter was crucified head downward is simply a matter of profane history, and we have to take the historian's word for it. Really, we do not know whether Peter died that way or some other way.

The next question asked is whether antichrist shall ever completely overcome truth? Just put the name "Christ" where the word "truth" is, and see instantly how foolish the question becomes. Shall antichrist ever overcome Christ? Certainly not. Is not Jesus said to be, by his resurrection from the dead, the Son of God with power? Did not he himself after his resurrection say, All power in heaven and in earth belongs to me? Then, if in his hands is the "all power," where can there be any other power? Whatever power antichrist may have it must have it of God; that is, according to the purpose and will of God, and the truth can only be fought against so far and to that extent that God sees fit for it to be opposed in order to make manifest the excellency of truth in overcoming all its enemies. Christ has overcome all the enemies of truth, and their doom is sealed; the church waits but to see the judgment executed.

"Shall we suffer a period of total darkness before the light of the blessed truth shall arise?" is next asked. The light of the blessed truth has arisen. Therefore why say, "Before the light of the blessed truth shall arise?" Is not Christ the bright and morning star? Is he not the Sun of Righteousness? Has he not arisen already, scattering the gloom of the law and bringing in the new day of the gospel? and is not the church to-day living in the daylight of the gospel? We had thought these things were so. Then why infer that the light is yet to arise? It is true that all outside the church is in darkness, and if our inquirer has been delving around among the doctrines and philosophies of the natural men of the world, even if they be ever so learned, we are not surprised that it seems that the light is yet to arise. But look away from the religions of men, if you can, and behold the Zion of God as she is here in the world made manifest, and you will see that Christ has arisen and become the first-fruits of them that slept, that he has scattered the night of Egyptian darkness and caused the glory of his truth to shine within the souls of his redeemed. We are ready to admit that we are living in a time of great declension from the truth; spirituality seems at a very low ebb; even some of God's own children will not stand for the truth, will not endure sound doctrine; the love of many has and is waxing cold, and many seem to be lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. All this is certainly true, but true as it is, we do most emphatically say that truth shall never die. We may become cold and indifferent to it, but that is not saying that all God's people are in like condition. There is some true zeal for the truth somewhere if it is not in one's own self. Because the visible organization of the gospel church dies out in one place does not mean that it has died out everywhere. Was there not a time in the days of the apostles when churches of the saints were to be found at Ephesus, at Galatia, at Cappadocia, and at other places in the east? Where are all those churches now? They have all passed away, and the visibility of the gospel church is not to-day to be found there, but in other places far to the westward of those localities. Then why say

that because the church seems to be waning on the eastern coast of America that it is languishing also on the western coast? Who knows but that long after we are dead and gone the truth of God may be preached and believed in apostolic churches yet to be raised in Japan and China and in India? Of one thing we are sure: the truth of God, nor the church of God, shall ever die, nor shall they be totally obliterated in darkness.

Now we come to the last question, and that expresses a fear lest the hidden evils of the heart shall eventually prevail over the better part and totally eclipse one's hope. The devil would like to have it come to this if he could, and he tries to tempt us to believe at times that we shall finally be swallowed up in defeat. But the devil has been found to be a liar and Jesus has trodden upon all his high places and destroyed him that had the power of death. Satan is vanquished. We may not see yet all things put under Jesus' feet, but all things are put under him, and we shall some time come unto this perfect knowledge, and shall wonderfully realize afterwhile that all things, yea, even Satan, are indeed put under him. God will never disappoint the hope which he himself has wrought. This hope is based upon the oath and promise of God, two things in which it is impossible for God to lie. It shall never fail until that time when it shall give place to fruition. L.

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Extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be mailed, postage paid by us, at the following rates: 1 copy, 10 cents; 3 copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, 50 cents; 12 copies, $1.00. This does not include our subscribers' papers lost in the mail, as we supply these free of charge.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

D. T. Gillis, Ont., $1.00; Mrs. L. C. Ray, Texas, $3.00.

MEETINGS.

THE New Hope Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will hold their thirty-eighth annual session with Mt. Pisgah Church, in Hopkins County, three miles northeast of Como, Texas, beginning on Friday, at 11 o'clock a. m., before the third Sunday in August. All trains will be met on Thursday at Como. All who are searching for the truth are invited, especially ministers of our faith and order.

S. M. DICKENS.

THE New Harmony Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will hold their twenty-fourth annual session with Hords Creek Church, in Coleman County, two and one-half miles southwest of Silver Valley, Texas, beginning on Friday at 11 o'clock a. m before the fourth Sunday in August, 1919. Trains will be met at Silver Valley on Thursday. East bound train due at 6:05 p. m.; west bound train due at 10:10 p. m. All lovers of the truth are invited.

P. J. SAUNDERS, Clerk of Hords Creek Church.

AN all day meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the Pitts Creek Church, near Pocomoke City, Md., on the fifth Sunday in August, 1919. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

B. F. COULTER.

THE Maine Association of Old School Baptists will meet with the Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, on Friday before the second Monday in September (5th, 6th and 7th), 1919. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEO. R. TEDFORD.

THE Clovesville Old School Baptist Church will, the Lord willing, hold their yearly meeting the first Saturday and Sunday in September (6th and 7th), 1919. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus to meet with us. Trains will be met at Fleischmanns station on Saturday, the first day of the meeting.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

The Middletown and Andes Church will hold their meetings the first Sunday in every month at their meetinghouse, Union Grove, N. Y. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

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Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

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1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church holds her regular meetings at 13th and Lexington Sts., Sellwood, at 2 p. m. on the fourth Sunday in each month. Sellwood is a suburb of Portland, Oregon. Take any outgoing Sellwood car. S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

Newberg, Oregon.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

There will be meeting every first Sunday at Halcott Center, N. Y., in the Grange Hall. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE of JOSHUA S. CORDER.

PRICE REDUCED.

I will sell the remaining copies I have on hand of this little memorial book for seventy-five cents per copy, postpaid. And I want to say to you of the household of faith who wish this book and are too poor to pay for it, if you will send me your name and address and ten cents to cover postage, I will gladly mail you a copy. The sweet expressions I have received concerning this little work have more than doubly paid me for the anxious hours I spent over its publication, not knowing whether He from whom all blessings flow would bless it to his saints or no. I thank every one who has ordered the book, and kindly solicit further patronage. Send all orders to me.

SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

DEAR EDITORS:—Please allow me to say in you valuable paper that I have a few copies of Benedict's "FIFTY YEARS AMONG THE BAPTISTS," which I am offering at $1.00 per copy, postage paid. Every one knows what this book is worth to the student of Baptist history. Send all orders to

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EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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(Judges v. 11.)

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 87. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1919. NO. 17.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LUKE XIV. 24.

"For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper."

Dear Editors and Readers:—After long delay and serious meditations I have taken my pencil in hand to write a few lines for the columns of the dear old Signs of the Times, if you judge them worthy, and while writing shall say something about the Scripture at the head of this article, and the context thereof, especially the line of discrimination that is so clearly manifested in the writings of both the Old and New Testaments, and yet misunderstood by many of us, I believe, and I may be one of the many, and I often fear that I am. Doubtless some of the Lord's dear children in their explanations of the sacred Scriptures do not divide them rightly, or the apostle Paul would not have written Timothy to "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."—2 Tim. ii. 15. So if I am blessed to write correctly of this text, and other portions I may refer to in line with it, it will be of the Lord's mercy and wisdom, for I am a poor, weak, short-sighted mortal, wholly dependent upon my dear Redeemer. We know that according to the custom of our people supper is the third and last meal of the day, after which we retire to rest. It seems to me that the Scriptures represent time in three dispensations, and that we are now living late in the evening of the third and last dispensation, and to me it seems at this present time to correspond to what we usually call dusk. It is a dark time on the Israel of God. This great supper represents to us the rich, bountiful and glorious blessings of the gospel of the grace of God, with which Wisdom has so wondrously and lovingly furnished her table for her children, and says unto them, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled; and the Lord our God so blessed the prophet Isaiah that he proclaimed to Israel these wonderful blessings and privileges of this great supper, seven hundred years before they were manifested, as a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ships pass thereby; but the Lord, our Judge and Lawgiver, brought them out into a wealthy place, where they are feeding or feasting in a good pasture, and

upon the high mountain of Israel they are resting in a good fold, a glorious resting-place, that remaineth for them, where they are finding rest to their souls, or life.

There is one phase in this wonderful parable that I wish especially to call attention to, and that is, where we are strictly forbidden when we make a dinner or supper to call our friends, or brethren, or kinsmen, or rich neighbors, lest there be a recompense made us, showing plainly that all the election of grace, God's redeemed family, were poor, helpless, dependent sinners, being ten thousand talents in debt and not a farthing to pay, and that God, for his great love wherewith he loved them, prepared this bountiful feast of fat things for them, and not one of them can recompense him one iota. How glad we poor helpless mortals are when we are exercised by the Spirit of love, and the knowledge of sovereign grace, that our Redeemer was and is rich in mercy, and loved us with an everlasting love, and therefore with lovingkindness called them to the marriage supper of the Lamb. Dear brethren, I do not believe the Scriptures teach that all the elect family of God are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb and enjoy the blessed privileges thereof, but through the provisions of sovereign grace every one of them will be housed in heaven and immortal glory, and live and enjoy heaven, with all that heaven means. These of God's people who are typified by those who were bidden (legally) to the great supper of the glorious fullness of gospel blessings, and all with one consent excused themselves; I say not one of these has ever, nor ever will, taste of this blessed supper, but shall all enjoy heaven and immortal glory just the same as those who were and are called to the marriage supper, although it is an unspeakable favor bestowed upon this remnant of the Israel of God to be called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. (Rev. xix. 9.) They were not just called to come to this blessed and bountiful supper, but the call was holy and effectual, and in no instance ever fails, therefore these blessed guests eat at the King's table in his kingdom, this glorious gospel kingdom, a peaceful habitation and quiet resting-place, where they cease from their labors, and their works do follow them.

Now, dear readers, I want to say in conclusion, that I cannot believe that the discrimination so clearly taught in the Scriptures is between God's chosen, redeemed family and the nonelect, but between those of God's elect family whom he ordained to walk in the strait and narrow way to life in this gospel kingdom of light, who do not live after the flesh, nor receive the mark of the beast, &c., and those of God's people who do live after the flesh, walk the broad road, bow the knee to the image of Baal, and receive the mark of the beast, and make war on their brethren, the remnant of the woman's seed (Rev. xii. 17), which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ; and as is so often said in the Scriptures of some entering in, while others could not, or were not admitted, does not mean heaven and immortal glory, but has reference to this glorious gospel kingdom of light and liberty, as in the case of the ten virgins. The door being shut against them, has no reference whatever to the heaven of heavens, but to the gospel heaven at the end of the legal services, that the door to the entrance of this glorious gospel kingdom, or marriage supper, was forever shut against all legalism, law righteousness, or creature goodness, or the legal claim

of Abraham being their father, and all similar Scriptures, having no reference to heaven and immortal glory, but to the blessed privileges here in the kingdom of light and liberty, and my heart rejoices in the thought this evening while I am writing that the people who are represented by the text at the head of this article will all enjoy heaven and immortal glory through the righteousness of their dear Redeemer, whose hand hath divided the inheritance here to his children, set the bounds which are immovable and cannot be passed, but they shall possess it forever while they sojourn here. May God be praised, and we poor mortals be more and more resigned to his will.

W. J. MAY.

SHOCK, Ky., Aug. 7, 1919.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., July 28, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more in the providence of God I attempt to address you, but unless moved by his Spirit I can write nothing worthy of your attention. This morning I was grieving over my sins, especially those which I have committed since I professed a hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord, and as I grieved my mind wandered back to the time when I was first awakened to the knowledge that I was a sinner; and it went beyond that—to the time when I loved the Lord, loved his people and desired to be numbered among them, without feeling that I was a sinner, thus precluding the need of repentance. I lived that way several years, being surrounded by an atmosphere which seemed sacred and holy, but which I could not comprehend, and the thought was, You are not good enough; still I did not feel myself a justly condemned sinner. But in due time I found that without holiness no one could ever be accepted into his kingdom. Was I holy? By and with the aid of the Spirit of God I began to search myself, and I saw then what he had seen from the beginning, and I went to him daily praying for forgiveness, praying that I might have strength and faith to trust him for his grace, and one day I left the grove to which I had gone, rejoicing in soul and in mind, and it was an exceedingly happy time for me. I had been lifted from darkness and doubt into light and life; I experienced a joy, and a love for his people (different from my first love) that was unspeakable and full of glory. I heard those whom he had called and qualified speak of his goodness and greatness, his unalterable purposes and his ability to save to the uttermost all who believed on his name, until I could no longer keep my seat, and in the presence of God and the congregation I literally prostrated myself before them, begging that they would not refuse to number me among them, saying, Your God is my God and this people is my people. I can remember every specific manifestation of his love for me then, now more than fifty years ago, and how precious they were to my soul, coming to me without warning, frequently without solicitation on my part, and I was carried in spirit beyond this vale of tears, beyond all doubts and fears, until I stood in his courts, as it were, and I esteemed those moments more than all the pleasures of sin for a season. Who but God himself could have wrought such a miracle, and whom do we desire in earth beside him? Who has promised that if he begins a good work he will finish it, and who but him is able to do it? Now, when I sorrow for sins committed since then, and wonder when I cross the bar if it will be well with my soul, I remember him in the days of my

youth, for on that remembrance my hope of eternal life depends; on that remembrance the word and working of God depend, for he is faithful who promised.

"My lips with shame my sins confess
Against his law, against his grace;
And if his judgment grows severe,
I am condemned, he is clear."

But that his word might not return unto him void he has not suffered his faithfulness to fail, has not withdrawn his loving-kindness; and that the purpose of election might stand, he has fanned the coal from his altar, which he laid on my heart in the years that are gone, into a flame of hope, faith, belief and joy, and I bless and praise his holy name that he has not dealt with me according to my sins, but according to the love he had for me in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. I praise him for all he has spoken and all that the prophets and apostles have spoken and written concerning the coming, life, death and resurrection of the blessed Jesus, for it came to pass literally, thus establishing us in the firmness of the foundation which was laid for our faith in his excellent word. I thank him that he said on the cross, "It is finished," for the redeemed of the Lord believe that their salvation was secured for time and eternity when those words were spoken, and they have been an anchor of their souls, sure and steadfast, ever since. I give thanks to my Father each day for every word of testimony that I have heard from the lips of his children, for I have traveled the same road, have doubted and feared with them, have hoped and believed as they have, have handled and tasted the same gracious things, and I was comforted, constrained, confirmed, a peace that passed understanding took possession of me, and I was glad that I was counted worthy to be a witness for him. Now, I fear I am presuming; if so, it is not for works of righteousness which I have done, but because I have felt the power and sweetness of his works and ways. Why should the children of a King go mourning all their days? Why not sing the song of their deliverance? Why, when their hearts are full of joy, should they hesitate to make it known to their fellow-travelers, to those who are pilgrims and strangers here, even as I? Why should we be sad when nearing the end of our journey, if the end is to be sleep in Jesus, from which none ever wake to weep, and where we hope to see him and be like him?

Now, I trust all my brethren have found out by this time that I am writing more of my Savior than of myself, though so intimately associated. You know that I am a sinner, and that I could know nothing of his saving grace unless I felt myself to be such, but when I did, and called on him for help, he drew me very near him, so near that I saw only him, forgetting what I was, with the rejoicing that comes with the truth which makes us free. If there is one bit of good in me God placed it there; if I am one of his children it is by his grace; if I write one word of comfort it is through the operation of his Spirit. I have read many beautiful things in the Bible, but failing memory will not allow me to quote them correctly, yet I know they are there, that they testify of him, and it satisfies me. I have heard sermons which I long to hear again, though I cannot remember one word of them, but their sweetness lingers around me until I am lost to the things of time and sense. I have heard His voice when all was dark and wild, and immediately there was a brightness exceeding that of the sun, and a calm too holy to dwell very long with one so vile and full of sin. So that which gives me

the greatest pleasure comes from the remembering of better things; comes from the looking away from self to the Author and Finisher of our faith.

I must close, for I am writing at random, yet it is the best I can do, I have given of my mite. I will be seventy-two years old next month, and am not of ready speech. Sometimes when the desire to pray is strong within words fail me, but our Redeemer is mighty, and he will plead my cause. His word is pure, and he is a shield to those who put their trust in him. It is better to say too little than to add too much. My apology for writing must be that I was constrained to do so. I wanted to let the editors of the SIGNS know how I appreciate their efforts to comfort and uplift the brethren, for when I read I rejoice in the truth as it is in Jesus. I want all of God's family who may see this to know that I love them, although the story is as old as my first writing for the paper. I want all to know that I am still firm in the faith once delivered unto the saints, and though we may never meet here, I hope to meet them in heaven. Until then may we look unto the rock from whence we were hewn, and to the pit from whence we were digged, that everlasting joy may be upon our heads. I pray that the words of our mouth and the meditation of our hearts may be acceptable in the sight of our Lord, our strength and our Redeemer. I ask an interest in the prayers of all who love him.

From a lonely wayfarer,
MARY E. WRIGHT.

CLAREMORE, Okla., April 17, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—Some time has elapsed since anything from my pen has appeared in the SIGNS, though brethren seem to think that I ought to write more for publication. There seem to be two very good reasons which have caused me to be silent. One is that I seem to be so dull in mind regarding the expounding of Scripture; and, too, since the publishers of the SIGNS had to reduce the number of its pages because of war prices for printing material, the pages have been amply supplied with good reading. This morning in reading from the pen of brother Miller on the text: "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth," &c., my mind reverted to the views of some brethren a few years ago as expressed through the SIGNS, and as there was a difference of opinion about the meaning of this Scripture, and as I have had some doubt for many years in regard to its meaning, I wish to speak of it in connection with Paul's words in Eph. iv. 30, which read: "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." I am writing the words and capital letters as found in most of our Bibles. I wish to notice other places in Paul's writings where he speaks of that same Spirit, the Holy Spirit of God. I may be a "stickler" for being so particular about what the holy spirit in these places means. Referring to Eph. i. 13, 14: "In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." In this last Scripture the meaning is: "that Holy Spirit" is the very same as the "earnest of our inheritance." Paul in speaking on the same subject in 2 Cor i. 22, says: "Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." It does seem plain that Paul understood that the "holy Spirit of promise" is the "earnest" in our hearts, as he refers to the same in 2 Cor. v. 5, and states it this

way: "Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit." That means the same as "the Spirit's earnest," or "the first fruits of the Spirit" —a pledge given for a promise made, an advanced payment. What is that earnest? Answer, just as Paul said in Ephesians, it is "the holy Spirit of promise." Notice the words: "Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."—2 Cor. i. 22. Notice the word "and" above, which means an addition to the "sealing." This to my mind indicates that "earnest" is a spirit, too, and a holy spirit, common to all of the saints. I have several reasons for believing this to be true. Referring to the words of Jesus in John iii. 6: "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." In Romans viii. 16, Paul speaks of "our spirit," a spirit common to all the saints: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." "The Spirit" as designated above is the Holy Ghost, or the Holy Spirit, as often spoken of in the Scriptures. What is "our spirit," I ask? Is it the natural spirit that came through Adam? If so, it is of the world, a worldly spirit. In 1 Cor. ii. 12, Paul is very positive on this subject of "our spirit." It ought to be convincing that God gives the saints a spirit to lead them into all truth. To me it seems wonderfully clear in these words: "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." Nowhere in the Scriptures do we find assertions that the wicked, or unbeliever, has the spirit which is of God; neither can any man successfully argue such a thing, basing his knowledge upon Bible testimony. Whereas, on the other hand, as I have cited, and in many more places, it is declared that God imparts virtue and knowledge to the children of men; not for their good deeds (how could they perform any action when dead?) but simply because it pleases him to give grace and glory.

I want now to refer to a passage of Scripture that has no parallel anywhere in the Bible; it reads: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."—Eccl. xii. 7. The writer of this had the wisdom of God. Would it be a fair argument to say that unbelievers in Christ have "our spirit" in them; that is, "the spirit which is of God"? No, no, that cannot be, because they are led by "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." It is not saying too much to say that when God's people are manifestly called by grace they "are made partakers of the Holy Ghost." (Heb. vi. 4.) If they are made partakers of the Holy Ghost (it is true that they are), have they not a "spirit" that belongs to them, a gift from God? The Lord Jehovah promised to give his people a spirit, so Paul used the right words when he said, "The holy Spirit of promise." The promise made to the fathers was that he would "put my law in their inward parts," and, "I will put my fear in their hearts," and, "Yea, thy law is within my heart," and, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you;" also "it is written in the fleshy tables of the heart." With such proofs as the above how dare we to say that the called of God have not a holy spirit within them? Believing that God does give his quickened children a spirit, and that spirit is a holy spirit, and viewing this subject as the great apostle to the Gentiles did, I can see the sense and the meaning of his

exhortation as quoted at the beginning of this letter, to wit: "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."—Eph. iv. 30. That holy spirit being in them, they can take heed unto their ways. This holy spirit cannot mean the Holy Ghost, for he is One that bears record in heaven, is really God, and we know that it is impossible for the very best saint to control the Holy Ghost, or in any sense, as our understanding will permit, to quench him or grieve him. If any believer in Christ transgresses against his brother the holy spirit in him is grieved, and if the transgression becomes known in the church the holy spirit in all the members is sorely grieved; if "one member suffer, all the members suffer with it;" if peace does not abound in the body all the members mourn, are grieved. Exhortations are essential for the orderly walk of the believer in Christ, and to heed them is, "that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men." Also it is good for us to read such as these: "Even so we should walk in newness of life." And, "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." Are the children of God in their experience harshly bounded, hedged in, impotent, so that they cannot take heed to the commands of their Lord or obey the exhortations of the apostles? Surely the Lord gives them strength to walk worthy of their holy calling; if this were not true we would not find so much written about the orderly walk of the believer in Christ. In reading the twelfth verse of the sixth chapter of Romans we know that it means us: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." Again, if we cannot successfully combat the spirit which is in us, which God has put in us, then Paul would have no need of saying, "Quench not the Spirit," and, "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God." In the above quotations I am willing to say that the word "Spirit" ought to be written with a small "s" to correspond to our language, for it undoubtedly means the spirit elsewhere called "our spirit." In looking over a number of the English editions of the Bible printed in the last century I find considerable difference in the use of capital letters where the word "spirit" occurs. The text in Hebrews x. 26, which reads: "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth," &c., seems to imply that we can sin wilfully having the knowledge of the truth in our minds. However, the word "if" does not always signify a possibility, but more frequently it means an impossibility, and used in the way to illustrate a fact through supposition, as in the sixth chapter of Hebrews, where it reads, "If they shall fall away," does not express nor imply that those who have tasted the good word of God shall fall away. Paul's illustration is only supposing an act that cannot be done, just as he spoke about the resurrection of Christ after he was already risen: "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." Again, on the same subject: "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins. * * * But now is Christ risen." So the little word "if" is not absolute; that is, the meaning of a sentence cannot always go one way because it precedes it.

Perhaps this will be the last that I shall write for the SIGNS for several months, as I expect to start in a few days on a tour of preaching in the east and south. From my observation it seems that the SIGNS is holding its own among the Old Baptists.

All yours, in hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

LOVE.

THE prophet Jeremiah said: "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." That is and has been and will be the case of every one of God's children, or elect, from righteous Abel until the last one is called, then shall the end be. God's love for his people had no beginning, neither ending. I have thought the love God has for his children is altogether different from that which natural parents have for their children and that people have for relatives and friends, for the reason stated above: one has neither beginning nor end, the other has a beginning and often an ending. We are told in holy writ that God loved his chosen even when they were dead in sin. Paul says, Let love be without dissimulation. Peter says, Let it be unfeigned. Paul told the church at Thessalonica that it was needless for him to write them to love each other, for they were taught of God to that end; but he said to his Hebrew brethren, "Let brotherly love continue." It does not require much time for one child of God to identify another, their speech betrays them. John says, We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. John wrote a great deal about love. Not a few Arminians quote the Scripture which says, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The whole thing hangs on belief. Philip told the Ethiopian eunuch if he believed with all his heart he would baptize him. The eunuch said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. No one can believe anything in nature or grace without evidence. For one to believe that Christ is the Son of God, that one must be born of God, or regenerated. Of course many of all ages have a historical knowledge of God; that knowledge is natural, and like all natural things will perish with the using. The Savior said, Without me ye can do nothing. Paul said with Christ he could do all things. "When we were yet without strength, in due time [at the proper time] Christ died for the ungodly." In the Scriptures of the New Testament all nations are comprehended in Jew and Gentile. The Jews did not believe, until the middle wall of partition was broken down, that the Gentiles had any interest in Christ, and from a human standpoint had good reasons for not believing. Unto the Jews were committed the oracles of God, or Old Testament Scriptures, the prophets were Jews, Christ was a Jew, and his apostles also were Jews. Paul tells us, "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." He further says, "We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." "Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Charity, which is synonymous with love, as before said has neither beginning nor end. Hope is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. Peter says the end of our hope is the salvation of our souls. If one has the love of God shed abroad in the soul it enters into heaven with them, where the Forerunner has for us entered, even Jesus, our great High Priest, who was not made after the order of a carnal commandment, but after the

power of an endless life. Paul says, I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. John says, If any man love God, the same is known of God. Paul says, If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his. Christ in his elect the hope of glory is the christian experience. Before I was made to see myself a vile sinner, by divine light shining in my heart (as I hope) I hated the doctrine of election as much as any one living, though my father was a Primitive Baptist minister from my earliest recollection. It requires divine light to convince one of sin. To easily admit one is a sinner, and to feel the conviction of sin, are two and very different things. Love is a grace, and no graceless person ever loved God. We love God because he first loved us, and not only so, but that love must be made manifest before one can love God. Love is a thing of the Spirit, or a spiritual thing, and the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. To love God is to know God. This, the Savior said, is life eternal. The mystery of godliness is great. No one, reasoning from a natural standpoint, can harmonize the doctrine of election and man's accountability to God. That God's elect were chosen and given to Christ before they were created is just as sure as the Scriptures are of divine origin, and, too, from the sons and daughters of Adam's fallen race. They were chosen to the end that they might be holy and without blame before God in love. The scriptural reason or cause is because it seemed good in the sight of God. The Primitive Baptists have many enemies because they preach the truth. Paul asked the church at Galatia if he had become their enemy because he told them the truth. He told the truth in love. What the Lord does is forever; there can be nothing added to it or taken from it. God gave Christ power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as God had given him. Isaiah the prophet said His train filled the temple. The temple here represents the church in its broadest sense, which takes in all of God's elect, from Abel to the last one that will be called. John says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he [that is Christ] shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Paul says, We see, as it were, through a glass darkly, see in part and know in part, but when that which is in part is done away, and that which is perfect is come, then shall we see as we are seen and know as we are known. God is a God of purpose, he reveals such things to his children as he designs them to know. God has and will reveal himself to all his elect, because he loves them with an everlasting love. John asks the question, If any man love not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?

Love to all who love our Lord and Savior, the three-one God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. These three bear record in heaven.

JAMES M. SIMMONS.

KOSCIUSKO, Miss.

BEMENT, Ill., Nov. 14, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If you will allow a poor old sinful cripple like I am to claim kinship with you. As I am trying to write you on a little matter of business, I feel like telling you how much I appreciate the good letters from the dear saints of God that are scattered all over the world, from north to south, east to west, and all speaking the same things in sentiment and claiming the one great theme: salvation by grace, and grace alone, as the only means of salvation. That is the dear people I want to claim as my people, for they are the only people that take the Bible and its teaching for their guide, and do not depend on the works of poor sinful men and women to get to heaven. If my salvation depended on my good works I would be lost world without end. This doctrine gets sweeter and dearer to me every day of my life, and as I am nearing the end of my eighty-first pilgrimage in this life, and have had a home with the dear Old Baptists for sixty-one years, I do not feel that there is any other people as near and dear to me as they are. Now I am situated where I cannot meet and associate with any of them, and it makes the dear old SIGNS more dear to me than ever. My health is so poor that I have had to quit keeping house and living alone, as I had done most of the time for twenty-five years, and have come to live with my only daughter, which is almost sixty miles from my home and church. You have been very kind in sending me the SIGNS so long at Westfield, Ill. Now if you please I would like to have it sent to Bement, Ill., R. R. 3, and oblige one of the poor of the flock, if I am one of them. My dear old brother, Elder James M. True, sent me the SIGNS for a number of years, but he was called home several years ago, and the paper has come as to one of the poor of the flock, and none but the dear heavenly Father knows how I would love to clasp hands with every one of the dear brethren and sisters who have donated funds to the SIGNS to help pay for them to be sent to the poor of the flock, but as I cannot shake hands with them I do in my poor heart feel thankful to our heavenly Father, and try to ask him to bless every one that sends help to the SIGNS and to all who contribute to its support. I am thankful that Elders Ker and Lefferts are blessed with such spiritual gifts as to be able to write such good editorials, and hope they may live many years to edit the SIGNS. May the dear Lord bless the household of faith everywhere, is my prayer.

Dear kindred in the Spirit, I am not writing this missive for publication, but merely to thank you for your kindness in sending it to me so long without any remuneration from me. Thanking you again, I will close.

Your most unworthy sister,

(MRS.) M. J. PETTY.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in August (31st). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

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EDITORIAL.

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HEBREWS II. 8.

"BUT now we see not yet all things put under him."

The inspired writer to the Hebrews declares that all things are already put under the feet of Jesus Christ. While he states this wonderful triumph of righteousness to be a truth accomplished and finished, still to those of us who are yet in the flesh living here on earth in this state "we see not yet all things put under him." By Jesus' resurrection from the dead he is declared to be the Son of God with power. He himself told his disciples after his resurrection, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Therefore Jesus is now exalted at the right hand of God, having awakened from the dead and ascended up on high in the image of the invisible God, the very equal of the Father in power, that is, in omnipotence; indeed, he is the very God himself, for they are the three in One and cannot be conceived as separate. God has put all things in subjection under the feet of his Son. The word does not declare that God is yet to do this, but that he has already done it. We love to think of the salvation of the Lord's people as being a finished, perfect and complete salvation: nothing yet to be added to it, nor yet can anything be subtracted from it. All that remains is for the Holy Spirit in these last days to take of the things of Jesus and show them unto the heirs of glory until they all come, each man in his own order as God has arranged, to the perfect man—the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. In considering the things that are already put under the feet of the victorious Christ we first think of the law. God placed the first man in the garden and put him under law. Had God not given Adam the law, then nothing that Adam might have done could have been sin, for sin is never imputed where there is no law. As sin is a transgression of the law, thus where there is no law there can be no sin, for there can be no transgression in the absence of law. This is one point in which God can never be the author of sin, because he is under no law, cannot transgress law, so that whatever he does is right and just. God created the wicked for the day of evil, so he declares, yet in doing so he committed no sin, for he transgressed no law. No higher being than himself exists to whom God could be held amenable. God could, as he says, make peace and create evil, and is perfectly justified in doing so, since he breaks no law in doing so, therefore commits no sin. But with Adam and with Adam's posterity it is infinitely different. God placed all under law. This law Adam and all who followed him transgressed; not only transgressed it in Adam, but have transgressed it actually each one themselves. Now, as the elect of God, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, were all involved in Adam's transgression, therefore were all held under the captivity and dominion of the law, there was no possible way by which the elect of God could be released

from under the law except the law be fulfilled in very minute particular, in every jot and tittle. As fulfillment was utterly impossible in and by the elect themselves, there was nothing that could be done but for God in the person of Jesus to come down under the law and fulfill the obligations which the people owed to an outraged law. This Jesus did, and he fulfilled the law in all its demands; not one thing that all the law required was left unsatisfied when Jesus poured forth his blood upon the cross. Having then come under the law, having kept the law perfectly, having paid its demands in his own precious blood, the law then had no further claims upon him nor upon one of all his elect. Therefore he could not be held in death, and so arose from the dead, thereby coming up above the law and raising his people with him from under the curse and condemnation of the law to a state of justification before God. Thus we see that the law is put under his feet and under their feet, for the church is not any more under law, but under grace, no more subject to the law of sin and death, but subject to the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

Second. Sin is put under him. This must necessarily follow as the consequence of his having put the law under his feet, because the law is the strength of sin. Since, as we have said, sin is nothing more or less than the transgression of the law, then the elect of God risen in and with Christ, not now being under the dominion of the law of sin and death, cannot break that law. A citizen of Great Britain cannot break the law of the United States, since he does not live in the United States and is not therefore under its jurisdiction. So God's people have been by Christ raised from under the dominion of the former law, are not now living under it, but under grace, which is another country, therefore they cannot sin against the former law, as it no longer has any jurisdiction over them. Thus sin is one of the many things that are put under the feet of the victorious Christ. Also, this is one of the things that we, who are yet in the flesh and in the world, do not yet see as being put under him, only as we apprehend it by faith. We see so much sin in ourselves continually, and so much sin in all flesh, that it appears to us now as we journey here below that sin is very much in evidence, and very far from being in subjection to righteousness. Really, however, from the standpoint of God, and as he sees it, the work is all done, the law has been satisfied and sin has been washed away so far as the elect are concerned. What a glorious day that will be for every one of God's children when they can see it as he sees it and know it as he knows it, and not any more simply in part and as through a glass darkly.

Third. Death is put under his feet. This is not yet to be done, but has been done. Of course we see it not yet under him, only as we glimpse it by faith. But death is the wages of sin, and sin is death's sting. When a serpent's poison, or sting, is extracted it is then as harmless as a lamb. Now, Jesus fulfilled the law. When he did that he took away sin's strength. When he took away sin by the sacrifice of himself he extracted the sting from death, or, as the Bible says, abolished death. Thus he declared himself to be the resurrection and the life, and that any living and believing in him should never die. What does this mean but that death is done away in Christ, and by him, that it is entirely put under his feet? To us who are still here in the world it seems death is in evidence all around us.

Really, though, as God sees it the work is done; there is no death to the people of God since it is already put under the feet of the Conqueror, Christ.

Fourth. The devil, or Satan, is put under the feet of Jesus. The devil, or Satan, is the one that has had the power of death, the Bible says so. Jesus came down to earth and bearded the fearful lion in his den; that is, he went through death in order to destroy him that had the power of death. He slew Satan with Satan's own weapon, even as David cut off the head of Goliath with the giant's own sword. He did this in order to deliver his children, who through fear of death had all their lifetime been subject to bondage. Thus, we must conclude, were we able to see these things with the eyes of the Spirit from the standpoint of eternity, we would see that there is no devil, that he is destroyed. Far be it from us to say Satan is not destroyed when the Bible says so plainly that he is destroyed. However, to us who are yet veiled in the flesh, we cannot attain unto such wonderful knowledge, and we see not yet Satan put under Him only as we are given to see little by little by faith. He seems to us to be very much alive, both in the world and in ourselves, sometimes, but this is just seeming and not really being. A thing may seem to be so and yet not really be so. These evils all seem to be very much alive in us and around us. We need only the perfect vision of the Spirit to behold that things are not what they seem, that our senses and our reason deceive us all the time, and that in reality God reigns and rules among the inhabitants of the earth no less than in the army of heaven, that his divine will and eternal purpose are being accomplished in earth and seas and in all deep places. God through the humiliation of his Son has highly exalted him from the regions of the dead and has given him a name at the which everything in heaven, in earth and under the earth, does bow. This name of the glorious and eternal Victor and Conqueror is the only name given under heaven among men whereby the elect of God must be and are saved. L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Duncan McArthur departed this life in the 75th year of his age at the Victoria Hospital, London, Ont. Brother McArthur suffered a stroke on Saturday night and passed away on Tuesday morning following, March 11th, 1919. He had been in his usual health, and the stroke came without any warning. Brother McArthur was baptized by Elder W. I. Carnell in 1902. He leaves his wife, sister McArthur, (who at the present time is very low and not expected to last many days) two sons, two daughters, two brothers, beside other relatives.

His funeral was held from the home of his daughter in London, Ont. Burial was in the cemetery beside his first wife.

May the Lord comfort our dear afflicted sister and the children of the departed.

ALSO,

Mary Black departed this life April 3rd, 1919, in the 91st year of her age, after a short illness. Sister Black was the widow of Daniel Black, and for many years resided on Queen St., London, Ont. She was united in marriage to Daniel Black Nov. 22nd, 1848. She was the daughter of Malcolm and Mary McBrain, who were among the first settlers in Ontario. Sister Black was received in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church at the quarterly meeting held in Dunwich in the year 1874, and baptized by Elder William Pollard. Her long life and the many years that she was a member of the church she continued steadfast in the doctrine of God our Savior. During the last year of her life she was quite infirm by age, but whenever able she was at the meeting, and as far as in her lay she endeavored to fill her place in the church, which had been her home for many years. Her last sickness was not of long duration, but she suffered intensely at times. She longed for death to come and end her suffering, that she might sleep in Jesus, that blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep. She leaves three sisters, beside the church and other relatives to mourn their loss.

Her funeral was held from her late residence; burial was in the St. Thomas cemetery. The text used by the writer was 1 Cor. xv. 19.

May God's blessing rest upon all that mourn, is my prayer. J. B. SLAUSON.

Sarah E. Frankland was born in Warrenton, Va., Jan. 11th, 1831. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., Sept. 25th, 1870, by the late Elder W. J. Purington, and lived a worthy member until her death, which occurred July 9th, 1919, at the home of her brother-in-law, brother John K. Yerkes, of Washington, D. C. Sister Sallie was a lovable christian character, always attending her meetings when able to do so, and it was her delight to talk and sing of the love and grace of God, manifest in the salvation of poor sinners. It was the privilege of the writer to know and serve sister Sallie as her pastor for twenty years, and I feel to say that a faithful sister has gone to her reward. The Lord loved her, and she loved the Lord, and this union with Christ Jesus was manifested in her long and devoted life.

The writer spoke on the occasion of her funeral of these blessed evidences, and of the surety of her resurrection from the dead in the image of her glorified Lord. May we never forget but ever imitate her faithful examples.

Written by the request of brother Yerkes.

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

Mrs. Tressa Elston Yerks died April 4th, 1919, at her home in Unionville, Orange Co., N. Y., aged 82 years. She was a daughter of Asa and Catharine Casad Elston. Dec. 22nd, 1881, she was united in marriage to Mr. Yerks, who died July 2nd, 1888. She is survived by one sister, several nephews and nieces. The sister, Miss Hannah Elston, made her home with Mrs. Yerks, and feels the loss of her sister very much; they were inseparable and very much devoted to each other. Mrs. Yerks was not a member of any religious organization, but was in full sympathy with the Old Baptists. She was kind to all classes, and never missed an opportunity to do good—a true and thoughtful friend.

The funeral services were held in her home, conducted by the writer, assisted by the Presbyterian minister of Unionville, where the interment took place in the family plot.

May grace as their day be ministered to the family.

By request. K.

Mrs. Jane Leatherdale, my dear sister, was born Dec. 14th, 1849, in the township of Ekfrid, county of Middlesex, Ontario, and died July 5th, 1919, at her home in Dresden, Ont. She was a daughter of the late Thomas and Eliza Hamilton. October 12th, 1876, at Ekfrid, she was married to Thomas Leatherdale. To that union were born six children; two boys died in infancy, one daughter, Annie, at the age of twenty-two, and a son, Alfred, at the age of twenty-two. The two living are Mrs. Graham Neilson, of Walkerville, Ont., and Warren of Dresden. She also leaves to mourn their loss her husband, who will miss her very much, and three sisters: Mrs. Stevens, of Chatham, Mrs. McGregor, of Chicago, and Mrs. Campbell, of Northwood. She was a member of the Old School Baptist Church, and lived in the love and fellowship of the church. She had been in poor health for many years, suffering from bronchitis. Many times have I heard her say: "How many strong ones have been called home since I have been sick; but I am just waiting my appointed time." I believe she has now gone to join that heavenly band where there is no more parting, to be with those dear ones she mourned the loss of so much.

(MRS.) JOHN CAMPBELL.

MEETINGS.

An all day meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the Pitts Creek Church, near Pocomoke City, Md., on the fifth Sunday in August, 1919. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

B. F. COULTER.

The Maine Association of Old School Baptists will meet with the Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, on Friday before the second Monday in September (5th, 6th and 7th), 1919. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEO. R. TEDFORD.

The Clovesville Old School Baptist Church will, the Lord willing, hold their yearly meeting the first Saturday and Sunday in September (6th and 7th), 1919. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus to meet with us. Trains will be met at Fleischmanns station on Saturday, the first day of the meeting.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., will hold an all day meeting on the third Sunday in September. All brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Church of Roxbury, at Vega, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 17th and 18th, 1919. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. Those coming by rail will be met at Roxbury, N. Y., Tuesday p. m.

V. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

The Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church will hold their yearly meeting the last Saturday and Sunday in September (27th and 28th), 1919.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

THE seventy-third annual session of the Sulphur Fork Association of Old School or Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held with the church at Prospect, Bowie Co., Texas, commencing on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1919. All brethren who love peace and believe that God is a sovereign and rules and controls all things are cordially invited to meet with us. Those coming from the west will be met at Carbondale, on the Cotton Belt R. R., Thursday p. m., and those from the east Friday a. m.

R. E. WHITE, Moderator.

J. S. MCLEOD, Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Second Roxbury Church, at Halcottville, N. Y., on the U. & D. R. R., at the regular time, first Wednesday and Thursday in October (1st and 2nd), 1919. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

JAMES AVERY, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

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(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church holds her regular meetings at 13th and Lexington Sts., Sellwood, at 2 p. m. on the fourth Sunday in each month. Sellwood is a suburb of Portland, Oregon. Take any outgoing Sellwood car.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

Newberg, Oregon.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

There will be meeting every first Sunday at Halcott Center, N. Y., in the Grange Hall. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

The Middletown and Andes Church will hold their meetings the first Sunday in every month at their meetinghouse, Union Grove, N. Y. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

BY J. E. BEEBE & COMPANY

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EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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(Judges v. 11.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 87. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1919. NO. 18.

POETRY.

ALONE.

It was alone the Savior came,
The blessed Son of God;
Come view with me the rugged path
The dear Redeemer trod.

It was alone the Spirit led
The Savior into where,
With Satan, he might overcome
Temptations with him there.

It was alone the Savior prayed
Three times in agony,
My Father, if it be thy will,
Let this cup pass from me.

It was alone he sweat as though
It were great drops of blood,
In bitterness and anguish of
His soul before his God.

It was alone the angel came
From God with heavenly aid,
To reconcile the Son of man,
The burden on him laid.

Alone the Savior was arraigned
At Pilate's judgment-seat;
The thorns, the robe and reed attest
Humility complete.

It was alone the Savior bore
The cross on which he died,
Until the same on Simon laid,
That it might be our guide.

It was alone the Savior cried
To God, who heard the same;
The earth did quake, the rocks were rent,
The sun did hide for shame.

It was alone the Savior hung
Upon the accursed tree;
'Twas there he shed his precious blood
For our iniquity.

It was alone the Savior wrought
Salvation for his own,
When by obedience unto death
His blood did sin atone.

It was alone in Joseph's tomb
They laid our precious Lord,
Until the time appointed was
That he came forth of God.

It was alone he did reveal
Himself unto his own
Disciples, who were sent to preach
Free grace, through Christ alone.

It was alone he did ascend
Up to the eternal throne;
Forever interceding there
Till all be gathered home.

J. M. FENTON.

HE KNOWS.

He knows the bitter, weary way;
He knows the endless striving day by day.
The souls that weep, the souls that pray,
He knows.

He knows how hard the fight has been,
The clouds that come our lives between,
The wounds the world hath never seen;
He knows.

He knows when faint and worn, we sink;
How deep the pain, how near the brink
Of dark despair we pause and shrink,
He knows.

CORRESPONDENCE.

COLUMBUS, Ga., July 15, 1919.

ELDER H. H. LEFFERTS—DEAR BROTHER:—Last night I was reading the editorials in some of the back numbers of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We never tire of reading about these glorious things, for they never grow old, and every time we read them we are made glad; yea, filled with joy unspeakable. It is indeed comforting to have the under-shepherds write on these wonderful things of the kingdom whose King is Jesus, instructing and comforting the Lord's humble poor. Our hearts go out in praise and love to Him who is love, and giveth his lowly followers all good gifts; yea, all that they need.

First I read an editorial written by Elder Ker, in the number for October 1st, 1916. The verse of Scripture he wrote about is found in Luke xix. 7, telling about the blessed Jesus while here on earth visiting and keeping company with sinners, and how in this his wonderful love and grace were made known. How wonderful when Jesus is revealed to us the Savior of sinners! Our sufficiency is as nothing; as a flower we fade away. Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost. How astonished and yet how glad must have been Zacchæus to hear the Savior say, Come down, for today I must abide in thy house. Zacchæus was given the desire to see the Savior, but did not feel that Jesus would look on him. Thus it is with a poor sinner who feels his guilt before the righteous God: he desires to see his Savior, but feels so sinful and unworthy that he cannot raise his head until Jesus in love and mercy bids him. His words are spirit and they are life, a living law in the hearts of his people. How true if Jesus abides in our house he becomes the guest of a sinner.

I turned the page, and next read an article from your pen on John xv. 25. They hated him without a cause, in that Jesus was holy, harmless and undefiled; not the shadow of a fault could be found in him. He was God's beloved Son, pure and perfect. They could give no reason why they hated him. All this had to be, in accordance with God's eternal purpose and plan to bring about the death of Christ and the salvation of his people. How glorious the doctrine of predestination, and how beautifully you bring this doctrine to bear in your writings. May the Lord long spare you and Elder Ker to write on these glorious things of the kingdom, comforting and instructing the weak ones. I would say to all who write for the SIGNS, Write on, dear ones, for you know not the many poor downcast souls you feed. The Lord says, Comfort ye one another; and again, Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. I have met but few of those who write, but O how I have been comforted by their God-given messages. I beg you all to remember me in you petitions. I know that the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has a people here upon the earth, a chosen and peculiar people, a royal priesthood, who give honor and praise unto the Lord and who glory in his name. But here come my doubts and fears: Am I one of that happy number blessed eternally, one so poor, weak and helpless as I? We read in the blessed word, testifying of him and his grace and all his goodness to the children of men, that Jesus cares for the doubting ones. Our Savior prayed for his chosen generation. He prayed not for the world, but for them that the Father gave him, and said, I am glorified in them, and asked the Father to keep them through his own name, that they might be one, and have his joy fulfilled

in them. O the love of Jesus and the works of his wondrous grace.

"He sends his Spirit from above,
To call the objects of his love;
Not one shall perish or be lost,
His blood has bought them—dear the cost."

The Lord's little children are indeed precious in his sight; he says so, and his word is truth, and are ever his tender, peculiar care, their shield and hiding-place, and when they feel his divine presence all doubts and fears are removed and we are filled with peace, that peace which passeth understanding. Hold thou me up and I shall be safe. Teach me, O Lord, thy way; give me understanding, that I may keep thy law and observe it with my whole heart, and praise thy holy name acceptably. The Lord nourisheth and cherisheth the church; not one thing that is needful for her welfare and growth, her comfort and consolation, is lacking. We read in the word that all things are given us in Christ Jesus; in him all fullness dwells. Christ loved his bride (the church) and gave himself for her. Never was love like this. She is without spot or blemish, no blame rests on her; nothing is chargeable to the elect, Christ paid all her debt, took all her blame. Christ is the head of the church (his body), in him we live and move and have our being. As he is, so are we in this world. We love him because he first loved us. He who loveth God loveth his brother also. Every one that loveth Him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. The Lord is their King and reigns in righteousness, and his law is the law of love. He says, Fear not, I am with thee. These loved ones are resting under the shadow of his wing. To them he is as a great Rock in a weary land. He says, My peace I leave with you. My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places. The joy of this meek and lowly people is increased in the Lord, and the poor among men greatly rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

"Behold the sure Foundation Stone,
Which God in Zion lays
To build our heavenly hopes upon,
And his eternal praise."

From the depth of my heart I hope above things I love the Lord, the only Savior, Jesus Christ, and I love the brethren, I love the doctrine they advocate and the songs they sing. Glorious things are spoken of this chosen generation, Zion, the city of our God. He formed them for his glory, and nothing can shake or move them. Jesus is their Savior; though foes assail them they need have no fear, for Christ has overcome all for them.

"Savior, if of Zion's city
I, through grace, a member am,
Let the world deride or pity,
I will glory in thy name."

I desire to tell you of the good meetings I have attended this summer, and hope I thank as I should the heavenly Father, the giver of all gifts, in directing my steps to be with the dear Baptists at Monroe, Georgia, and surrounding community, once more. I was permitted to be with them at their regular meetings, the fourth Saturday and Sunday in April, May and June, and it was indeed a feast to me. I heard the truth proclaimed in its beauty and holiness, giving God all the power and glory in all things. I surely enjoyed being with those dear children of the heavenly King, and felt that I was greatly benefited. The little flock that gathers there seems so peaceful, and in sweet union, praising the Lord and singing hymns unto him. In company with some of the Baptists of Monroe, my daughter (Mrs. Thetford) and I attended the district meeting at Lystra Church,

about fifty miles from there, and we met many more Baptists, and were very glad to know them and to be with them in their homes. My whole heart with rapture glows when I consider the boundless goodness of our God. The Lord willing, I shall be at Monroe the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, in August, at which time I hope to see you and hear you preach again, and I am looking forward to that time with joy. All there are anxiously looking for you.

Pardon me for this long, rambling letter, and forgive all that is said amiss. May the Lord keep you and Elder Ker, and sustain you by his grace, and all the dear ones everywhere. I desire an interest in your prayers.

Your little sister, I humbly hope,

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

PLYMOUTH, Illinois.

EDITORS AND READERS OF THE DEAR OLD SIGNS:—I am sending a good, interesting and comforting letter from Elder Lewis T. Ruffner, of Millersport, Ohio. I wrote to him about the association at Newark, Ohio, as my stepdaughter, Mrs. Emma I. Clary, lives in Coshocton, not very far from there, and I wanted to find out when it was, so I could write to her about it. I thought she would like to go, as she is an Old Baptist of the faith once delivered unto the saints. She has never been to an association out there, and I want her to get acquainted with the Baptists there, so she can mingle with them in their meetings. Brother Ruffner asks me to come, too, but my health is not good enough and the distance too great. I would gladly go if it were so I could. I was there once about twenty-three years ago, and enjoyed those two associations that I was permitted to attend, although every one there was a stranger to me in the flesh, but I felt drawn toward them in christian love; for if I know what they believe they are my people. They all believe in salvation by grace if they are true Baptists, and that God is the sovereign ruler in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and made all things after the counsel of his own will. Some say that he wants to save men but they will not let him. I do not think that is the kind of God our God is, who works and none can hinder, and hinders and none can work, who trod the wine-press of his Father's wrath alone, and of the people there was none with him. I made a mistake in not telling brother Ruffner my daughter's name, as you will see in his letter to me, and I am ashamed of it, but that only shows I am a failure in everything; but not so with our God, he never makes mistakes; everything will come to pass just at his own time and pleasure, and every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that he is Christ the Lord.

Well, I must stop. I did not aim to write at such length. Excuse me and pardon error, is the wish of your unworthy sister, if one at all,

BELLE FRAZEE.

MILLERSPORT, Ohio, May 7, 1918.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I received your good letter in due time, but have had many things to hinder me from answering. I remember meeting you once, but long ago. There have been many changes, and many of our loved ones have gone over the river, so many that sometimes it seems the most of them are on the other side. I do not doubt for a moment but what you are one of the redeemed of the Lord; you give the unmistakable evidence of being born of the Spirit of God, which the Savior taught

was essential both to see and to enter into the kingdom. We have no doubt but what you enjoy the things of the Spirit above the things of the world. While we cannot go to any particular time or place when we felt our sins forgiven, yet we believe we do know there has been a change with us and in us. It is said, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Again, John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Sometimes I feel I do love the dear people of God; they are my people, and I have professed to love them for almost forty-seven years, and for that length of time have had a home among them, and have in my weakness been trying to serve them for thirty years, and they will have to be the judges as to how well I have done it. I am not a judge as to how well I have served them. Sometimes the service has been sweet, and sometimes very dull indeed, so far as my feelings were concerned. Yes, I am, if not deceived, trusting alone in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus being imputed unto me. It is written, Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord will not impute sin. Blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered. How are they covered? With the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. The poet has expressed it in the following beautiful lines:

"A debtor to mercy alone,
Of covenant mercy I sing;
Nor fear, with thy righteousness on,
My person and offering to bring.
The terrors of law and of God
With me can have nothing to do;
My Savior's obedience and blood
Hide all my transgressions from view."

This tells it all; so my soul shall make her boast in the Lord. "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."—Isaiah lxi. 10. This is sometimes very sweet to me, and so you need not wonder that I am interested in the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I am the one that lives near Millersport. My brother, J. A. Ruffner, lives near Thornville; he often writes for the papers. I am going to send your letter to brother T. D. Lawrence, 25 North William St., Newark, Ohio, and let him write to your stepdaughter. You did not give me her name, I suppose, however, it is Frazee, but we want to be a little definite about her address. Elder C. F. Stuckey is the pastor of the church in Newark. You come to the association, too. I believe it is Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the fourth Sunday in August. I expect to hand your letter to brother Lawrence, of Newark. You will have to give him her address, and he will look after her. The Lord's blessings be upon you.

Your poor brother in hope of eternal life through Christ,

LEWIS T. RUFFNER.

MONROE, Ga., July 9, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—The gospel according to Luke begins, "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us," and it seemed good also for him to write (and how beautifully he did it) the very things which we surely believe to this present day, telling of Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, and what the angel said unto his mother, and the many wonderful

things that he accomplished while in the flesh, his life, death and resurrection, as a link of the whole chain from Genesis to Revelation, being wounded for our transgressions, and with his stripes we are healed; who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, but was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him; and became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich, by that inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price, and that price was the shedding of the blood of the Lamb that taketh away the sin of the world. The apostle said, We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. He is the power of God and the wisdom of God. Every order of religion is preaching Jesus in our land except the Jews, but we are the only people who contend that salvation is of grace and not of ourselves, but is the gift of God, wholly unconditional on our part, though we in nature want to claim some part in it and call it our common salvation, not fixed, not of grace, but of works, left discretionary with us. Surely we do not believe this declaration, but look back to the Vine and be satisfied with being one of the branches of that Vine, hoping for the fruit of faith, which is good works. With all the exhortations to love and good works, if God does not work in us both to will and to do, it will not be done. When Jonah said, Salvation is of the Lord, we surely believe he meant his own salvation, as he said, For thou hast cast me into the deep, teaching him how helpless he was to save himself. David surely believed that God brought him up out of the pit and placed his feet upon a rock and established his goings and put a new song in his mouth, and we surely believe that Daniel's salvation from the lions was of God, also that of the three Hebrew children was of God. Paul and Silas were delivered from prison, also Peter was saved by the power of God, and I can say of a truth that my salvation (if indeed I have any) was and is of God. I can look back over sixty years and see the hand of God in many things, and surely believe it was all predestinated—all the causes and effects, and if there is anything else, he had a purpose in that. There is but one way for us in this life, and every step of it is known to him before it comes to pass, and all the men and devils combined cannot hinder it one moment nor bring it to pass one moment sooner. The sovereign God does as he pleases everywhere, working all things together for good to them who are the called according to his purpose. He is not waiting to see what his children are going to do so he can give them grace if they do good. Grace is not purchased with money or good works. We love to think of the doctrine, just the one doctrine of God our Redeemer. Then let us take heed to ourselves and to the doctrine, for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee. If we do this, it is God working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

We are looking for Elder H. H. Lefferts here in August, and shall enjoy his expounding the Scriptures. I hope it may be the will of the Lord for us to visit your association again next spring. Now these are some of the things which we believe and declare to be the truth.

I remain your brother in hope of life,

J. M. ADAMS.

SULLIVAN, Ill., Aug. 2, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—When I became a subscriber to your paper, about six months ago, I told you that unless your paper held to the doctrine of predestination (absolute and unconditional) I did not want to take it. I am writing to tell you I am more than pleased with the many good articles published therein. I am very glad that brother Ben H. Irwin felt to give us the kind of article he did in the August 1st issue, entitled "The Council of God," and through your columns (as I do not know his address) I want to express my sincere indorsement of his views. This article expresses, as I understand, just the kind of doctrine the Old Baptists have believed through all ages. Such articles build up and bring us to see our God as he really is; not a God who loves us when we do good and hates when we do wrong, but a God who loves us with an everlasting love. I am very thankful there are good brethren left who yet promulgate or preach God's eternal truth, and at least one paper that is not afraid to publish it. This is the kind of doctrine that kills the root and bud of all forms of conditionalism and Arminianism, and I want to say to brother Irwin, and to all other good writers, Cry aloud and spare not.

Your brother in hope,

E. D. ELDER.

CHICAGO, Ill., June 1, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Being at present and for six weeks past on sick leave from my office, I have been reading a great deal, and also the SIGNS. It is twenty-five years last October since I had my eyes opened to the truth as it is in Christ, and I remember yet how beautiful all nature appeared and seemed to be praising the Creator. Some seven years after this I had an idea that I was called to preach the gospel. At the time I spoke to my pastor about it. He was eighty years old at the time, and did not begin preaching until he was fifty-two years of age. He told me to resist the "call" as much as possible, and if I really had a call, in time I would be made to know it. The feeling passed away until recently, like eighteen years ago, that impression has come to me again. My first thought is, Let no man take upon him this honor except he is called as was Moses and Aaron; and like the prophet of old I must say, "I am a man of unclean lips." I look at myself and my life, not only before conversion, but since I was made to know the truth, and think how far short of a believer's walk and conduct mine has been, worldly minded, vain, frivolous, talkative and so on, and in contradistinction to this I hear Paul in one place saying to the brethren, You know how holily and justly I behaved myself among you, and in another, The things you have seen me do, do ye, &c. Now I could not say that of any period of my life, for I doubt if a single day passes over my head but that I do or say something I should not, or in some way come far short of the glory of God. A minister should be an ensample to the flock. I do not really think there is any more obligation resting on a minister to walk worthy of the vocation to which he is called than there is on any other believer. But, Be an ensample to the flock, for in so doing thou shalt save not only thyself, but them that hear thee. Candidly, my dear brother, had I ever so great knowledge of spiritual things, still I would distrust myself. The thirteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians seems to apply peculiarly to me; that is, I seem just such an one as Paul described, who did not have charity, or love, as given in some versions. Some-

times, like the Savior on the cross, I am made to cry, My God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why am I left in this cold, barren world with so little grace, so little of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit? I cannot doubt my experience, it was too bright, too vivid for me to ever doubt it; but why, why must so much brightness be given, and then the Sun of Righteousness be withdrawn? Like David in the fifty-first Psalm, I am made to say, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit." We have no church here, but a few believers, some eight or ten in all. At times we have had a few meetings, Elder Durand for one, and others, but for a year we have had none.

I am going to close. I know if the Almighty intends I shall preach, some time I will have to. "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel," said one who was certainly called to the ministry, but to me the most awful blunder one could make would be to try and fill the sacred office unworthily. There is not, to my mind, any earthly ruler or official who occupies as high a position as he whom God has called to break the bread of life to his children. How beautiful are the feet of them that publish glad tidings. I do not wish to dishonor my God (already too much dishonored by me) by taking upon me an office he never designed I should fill. If you can find time from your many duties to reply I shall appreciate it.

Unworthily yours,

W. C. COX.

[THIS letter was mislaid, hence neglected. We know some of the peculiar exercises of mind of brother Cox, and can sympathize with him. The church is the judge of all its gifts, and will deal righteously with him. We are all glad when the gifts are made manifest.—K.]

EDGE MOOR, Del., Aug. 11, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—For more than four months I have been so afflicted with rheumatism that I have been unable to do any work, and during that time I think I have learned more thoroughly than ever the bitter warfare between the flesh and the Spirit. It was my plan last February to have good health and strength for the work of the coming season, but instead the pains of rheumatism left me so weak I was dependent on others for help. If we have been born of God how many times our plans have been opposed to the purposes of God. Right here is where the unequal warfare begins, and in my case it was long and bitter. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."—Gal. v. 37. When this contest is over I do believe that the natural man is no more reconciled to the plans of God than he was before. He has been mortified, as we learn from Scripture: For if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. Then in the Spirit we can say with Paul, For I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. In this trial I found again the truth of the Scripture: Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Let us remember that it is afterward we get the fruit of righteousness, and it is for them that are exercised thereby. After all contests it is sweet to rest; so our Savior tells us: Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. What a comfort it is to rest in the mercy and goodness of God, who has delivered us from our trials. It is also a comfort to learn the precious truth: "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

B. F. HAMILTON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1919.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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1 JOHN V. 16.

"THERE is a sin unto death."

We have a request from a brother to write on this subject who says that in his part of the country there is much confusion of mind on this text, and also states that much trouble in the churches exists because of the course of some in dealing or not dealing with some offenders or transgressors of what, in their opinion, is the "sin unto death." In attempting to give our view of the subject we have no thought of pleasing all our readers; in fact, we have little expectation of pleasing the brother who made the request of us; however, we shall grant his request and leave the matter with the Lord. We have been more distressed and perplexed during our life in the church because of the decided differences of interpretation of the Scriptures than from any other cause. The question with us has been: If the ministers of the gospel are led into the things of Jesus, why should one man be led in an altogether different direction from another and each minister have a following? We have never questioned the sincerity of any in matters of discord, but have often doubted that the Lord was in the matter at all, and we feel sure that had we not been held by some unseen power or influence we should long ago have given it all up as a delusion of the mind. When Jesus sent the disciples out to preach, the identical words were put in their mouth: "Preach saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." In reading the prophecies we find no discord among the true prophets. When Jesus came he corroborated all they said; they all testified of him. In all the doctrine of God the apostles were a unit. If, therefore, moved by the same Spirit to preach the doctrine of God, why such wide differences of interpretation? This question has sometimes been met with the following answer: "The prophets and apostles were inspired, hence there could be no discord in their doctrine." It seems to us that inasmuch as "no Scripture is of any private interpretation," it must be understood by the same Spirit that gave it to holy men of old, hence when the children of God differ so widely as they often do there must be something radically wrong, and surely the wrong is not with the Spirit of revelation, consequently it must be with those of us who differ. No two can be correct on any text if they differ in their interpretation of it, and the only way to decide which is right, if either be, is to compare their views with the word of God honestly and sincerely, without respect of persons.

It is evident that there is a sin unto death, because the record says so, and it should be the desire of us all to know what that sin is, and also what death is meant because of that sin. Some say fornication, or adultery, some say one thing and some another; all cannot be right. Again we ask the question, If we all be led or taught by the Spirit of God why the many views and so much confusion? While on this subject we desire

to affirm that fornication and adultery are not one and the same thing, nor can they be dealt with alike in the church, nor by the husband of the wife who sins. Fornication is the sin that takes place before marriage, while adultery is the sin of unfaithfulness after marriage, and fornication is the only sin for which a man is justified by the word of God in putting away or divorcing his wife. We have a very striking example of this in the case of Joseph and Mary. We are told that before they came together Joseph discovered that she was with child, hence in his judgment had been guilty of fornication, and he, being a just man, thought to put her away privately, but the Lord spoke to him and said, Think not to put away Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost, and that holy thing which shall be born of her shall be called the Son of the Highest. Jesus said that for fornication only should a man put away his wife. Any sin committed by the married wife is the sin of her husband, otherwise the marriage union, or unity, set forth in the Scripture fails. First of all this unity of husband and wife existed between Christ and the church before the world began. It was impossible therefore for the bride of Christ to be guilty of fornication, but in the Old Testament she is spoken of as an adulterous woman, and the Lord said to her, Return unto me, for I am married unto thee. What the Lord had joined together man could not put asunder. Her sin was his sin, and instead of putting her away he bare her sin in his own body. The union between Adam and Eve was so complete that her sin was his sin, and they were not separated in life nor in death. It was also impossible for Eve to commit fornication, because no other man lived prior the existence of their marriage union. This distinction between fornication and adultery is very seldom made, but should always be made. Paul said, To avoid fornication let every man have his own wife and every woman her own husband. According to the law of commandments adultery is only one of the sins mentioned, and if any one transgressed the least of those commandments he was a sinner, for sin is the transgression of the law. It is true, however, that the sin of adultery under the Mosaic law was a sin unto death, but under grace there is but one sin, according to the word of Jesus, not forgiven, and that is "blasphemy against the Holy Ghost," in other words, unbelief, from which proceeds everything contrary to God. When the adulterous woman was brought to Jesus her accusers knew that the law said such should be stoned to death. But, bless his holy name, he did not say so; he came not to destroy the lives of men and women, but to save them, hence under grace, or in this age, the sin of adultery is not the "sin unto death." There is forgiveness of the sins of the Lord's children, and freely, too, without money and without price. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin. Some have the idea that for some special sin we must be cut off forever from all church privileges, while others do not agree with that idea. The law of Christ is that if our brother sins against us seventy times seven and repents that we shall forgive him. Repentance is not mourning and making an ado about a thing, but the actual turning away from the course pursued. We have every reason to believe that the woman brought to Jesus verily turned away from her course and never sinned again in that respect. There can be no forgiveness by the church of a sinner, let the sin be what

it may, until that one proves to the church that his life is godly and his walk circumspect. When this is done there is no ground upon which to forbid restoration to the privileges of the house of God. As already said, in our view of the Scriptures, unbelief is the only sin unto death, and this death only means to the privileges, fellowship, confidence and esteem of the church of God. "Neither death nor life" shall separate us from the love of God which we have in Christ Jesus our Lord. Many of the Israelites were unbelievers; that is, they did not take God at his word, which true faith does, and because of this unbelief the Lord opened the earth and swallowed up twenty thousand men in one day, and the writer of Hebrews tells us that such happened unto them for an example to us, that there should not be in us a heart of unbelief to depart from the living God. In departing from the doctrine of God our Savior, in continuing not in the fellowship of the apostles, unbelief is made manifest. In such a course such an one denies the God who bought him, and tramples under foot the precious blood of Christ Jesus, hence is a cloud without rain, a well without water, a tree without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots. For such a character we are commanded not to pray. Like the dog returned to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire, he or she has become a stench in the nostrils of the church of God, the pillar and ground of the truth. The sin of unbelief (blasphemy in ascribing the works of God to the devil, or any other power,) shall not be forgiven men in this world, neither in the world to come, said Jesus. We should always remember that Jesus came in the end of the legal world, hence the legal dispensation was in full force when he uttered the words above. We have already proven that the sin of unbelief was not forgiven during that age, but rather was severely punished; even so in this gospel world, which was to come, there is no forgiveness for it, therefore it is unto death. We want it understood that we admire and advise church order and discipline, and every transgressor should be dealt with according to the rule given the church in the Scriptures. No man has right to say this or that should be done unless the Bible says that thing. The laws of the church are very clearly and wonderfully recorded. On the one hand the church should not overreach, and on the other it should not be short in meting out the full penalty to the transgressor. Nothing should be done by partiality, treat every man and woman alike, let them be whom they may. If the pastor sins, deal with him according to the law of the church; if the deacon sins, treat him likewise; if the poor sin, mete out to them according to their sins, and if the rich sin, never think nor say, It will not do to deal with brother John, or brother James, or sister Rachel, or sister Jane. In the church no one man or woman is better than another. Position in life, riches or influence, can never excuse any one for wrongdoing, and just as sure as a church winks at the sins of such, just so sure that church will sooner or later become a reproach to the cause of Christ, and also to the community in which it is located. A clean house with two or three godly men or women in it is far better than hundreds with sin covered or in any sense tolerated. No church should, however, be hasty in its judgment, nor in its actions; let our moderation be known in all matters of the church. To five of the seven churches of Asia messages were sent, to the effect

that unless they repented of their sin, or wrong course, the candlestick would be removed, and we think the same God demands order in his house to-day. How often many of us have wished that John and the other apostles had been a little more explicit in some of their writings. On the one hand it would have settled us on many such subjects as we are now writing, but on the other hand it would have prevented much reading and searching to know what they did mean.

In conclusion, we confess our fallibility, as likely to misunderstand the Scriptures as any one, as liable to mistakes as any one, and the best we can do is to give that which seems right to us, and not condemn the views of others. We hope our brother who requested us to give our view on the text at the head of this article may be given its true import, and believe that we have done willingly and gladly our best in trying to comply with his wish in the matter. K.

BOOK OF EDITORIALS.

We have on hand a number of copies of the Second Volume of Editorials. This book is made up of editorials written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the Signs of the Times from March, 1842, to March, 1847, and contains 768 pages, neatly bound in cloth.

This work originally sold at two dollars per copy, but as a few of the pages are stained by water we will, as long as the supply lasts, sell them at the extremely low price of seventy-five cents per copy. Postage paid by us. All who wish this book should procure it now, as we will have no more after these are sold.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Sarah Jane Hoff was born February 25th, 1842, and died July 7th, 1919, at her home in Frenchtown, N. J. She was the widow of Cornelius C. Hoff, who died six months previously. One son and three daughters survive her: C. S. Hoff, Mrs. J. C. Hough and Mrs. O. R. Kugler, of Frenchtown, N. J., and Mrs. Oscar Rittenhouse, of Clinton, N. J. She was a lovely character, devoted to her family and very much beloved by all who knew her. She never united with the church, but was a firm believer in salvation by grace and interested in the welfare of the Old School Baptist Church, always for many years being present at our meetings here in Frenchtown unless providentially hindered. We miss her very much. With her we believe the fullness of all her hope embraced is realized. By faith she was made to know and understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. Her faith was the gift of God, by which she obtained evidence of all that she now has in the full measure of the glory that Jesus had with the Father before the world was. The blessed inheritance of the saints can never be fully told by mortal tongue.

Elder D. M. Vail preached a very comforting discourse at her funeral. She was buried in the cemetery in Frenchtown. O. R. KUGLER.

J. D. Staples was born in Monroe County, Ala., April 5th, 1841, and died March 23rd, 1919, at the age of 77 years, 11 months and 18 days. He was married to Amanda C. Ward Feb. 22nd, 1870. Three children were born to them: John Lee, Zettie Amanda and Rachel Elizabeth, all deceased. July 17th, 1881, he was married to Mrs. Mary Ann Hoffman, who preceded him in death five years and three days. For several years he was taken care of by his daughter-in-law, sister Alta Staples, and her three children, who seemed to be untiring in caring for him in his last days. He was a member of Bethel Church, of the Predestinarian faith and order, for many years, which the writer has been trying to serve as pastor for eleven years. He had been a reader of the Signs of the Times for many years, and often expressed to me what sweet comfort he received in reading it. He served during the Civil War, and often expressed himself as feeling that God had taken care of him. He was untiring in his efforts to make his brethren and many friends enjoy themselves at his lovely home. Every comfort that mortal hands could give was given by him. I think of the saying of the Savior: Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

The unworthy writer tried to speak words of comfort to his dear relatives and many friends at his funeral. His remains were laid to rest in the ceme-

tery near by, and as his body was lowered in the grave I felt reconciled, fully believing that God, who watched over him all his life and gave him a good hope in Christ, will in the resurrection speak, and he shall come forth to see his Savior as he is and be like him and be satisfied. We bow in humble submission to the will of God, who doeth all things well. T. J. EVERS.

Deacon Malcolm McIntyre died in Winnipeg, Man., June 29th, 1919, in the 87th year of his age, and was buried in the Winnipeg cemetery the 30th, Elder Smallbone, of the Particular Baptist Church, officiating. He had lived all his life in Lobo, Ont. He was appointed deacon of the Old School Baptist Church over fifty years ago, after the death of his father, who was one of the pioneers of the church. As his health began to fail him, and his wife also being aged, Mrs. Gale, his daughter, of Winnipeg, came down last fall and took them with her, as they could not get proper attention at home, and she and his other daughter, Mrs. Haws, of Gary, and his son Archie from the west, cared for him until he passed quietly and peacefully away. His wish that he might die in June was granted. He enjoyed the confidence and warm regard of all who knew him, as a peaceable, upright man, and was especially beloved by those who, like himself, hope for salvation through the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom he confidently trusted to the very last. He leaves an aged widow, three sons, two daughters and one sister. Thus the Lord is taking from our midst those we love, but thanks be to his name he will fill the vacancy.

JOHN McFARLANE.

J. C. Smith, son of Marion and Maria Smith, was born April 13th, 1848, and was married to Miss Martha M. Jinner Sept. 13th, 1867. To that union were born eight children, seven of whom survive him: Marion Smith, M. T. Smith, Mrs. E. H. Lawrence, Mrs. S. M. Wamack, Mrs. Alice Phillips, Mrs. T. E. Phillips and Mrs. M. O. Smart. A daughter, Mary C. Smith, died Sept. 14th, 1890. He provided for his family by hard labor on the farm. The Lord gave him average strength and an energetic disposition. He united with the Old School Baptist Church at Good Hope, near Oakland, La., August 4th, 1867, where his membership remained until 1894, when he moved it to Concord Church, Lincoln Parish. He was faithful in word and deed, and was established by the grace of God in the doctrine and order of God our Savior. His brethren felt that he was in possession of a gift to preach, which he exercised in public for awhile, then stopped, saying it was not his place. He served the church as deacon for many years, and in my judgment was a deacon of the Lord. He was gifted in prayer and exhortation, and loved to talk of God's word. Many times when the writer was small he visited our home. When he felt anything to be right he was not afraid to contend for it; even though the majority were against him, he stood firm. He died in full fellowship with the Predestinarian Primitive Baptists. He always filled his seat in the meetings of the church unless prevented by illness. His first wife died in March, 1900, and he was married again in December, 1904, to Mrs. J. A. Hellams, near Upland, Ark., where he moved and lived until she died, in 1917. While living with his second wife his letter was taken to Smyrna Church, where it remained until his death. After the death of his second wife he made his home with his daughter, Mrs. Alice Phillips, which was too far from the church for him to attend, he being in poor health. He was isolated from his brethren in his last days, and did not hear any preaching. The writer was requested to have an appointment near his home on the fifth Sunday in June, but brother Smith sent me word on Saturday before the third Sunday that he might not live until the appointment, and he did not, but died June 25th, 1919. He is gone from a world of sorrow. Dear bereaved ones, we should not mourn as those who have no hope, for we fully believe he was in possession of a sweet hope beyond the grave. The days of sorrow and pain are over; his mortal body is silent in the tomb, his spirit has gone to the blessed Giver. O glorious day, when freed from sin, when mortality is swallowed up of life, yea, eternal life in the holy presence of Almighty God, beyond the dark and stormy sea of sin and trouble. I will say in memory of dear brother Smith, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, and we feel sure he died in the full triumph of living faith. May the Lord bless all who mourn, and reconcile us to his holy will, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Written by one who loved him for the truth's sake.

R. W. RHODES.

David Catt, son of Wilbur and Myrtie Catt, was born August 4th, 1911, and died July 10th, 1919, aged 7 years, 11 months and 6 days. David was a bright and loving child, the joy of the home, as he was the youngest of four boys. We miss him, we mourn, his place is vacant. O that we could say, Father, not our will, but thine, be done. No living soul can say, Not my will, in truth, except by the Holy Spirit. Well do I remember many years ago, when loved earthly ties were severed. I sorrowed even unto death, for I cried, O Father, let this poor life go out. A voice spoke to me saying, Which is the most to you, these earthly ties or Jesus? I was made to cry, O Father, take all else, but give me Jesus. My sorrowing ceased, and I went on my way with a light spirit. Now our God has hid himself from us; he has taken our loving boy from us and has not sent the Comforter, but I know he will not

tarry too long, but will come to us in this dark hour. Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. We trust our child has fallen asleep in the arms of our great Redeemer. May God cause us to bow to his dealings with us.

His grandfather, J. W. LAWS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Mary E. Seid, Cal., $1.00; G. D. Peters, Ohio, $1.00; Mrs. E. J. Bolton, Mo., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., will hold an all day meeting on the third Sunday in September. All brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Church of Roxbury, at Vega, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 17th and 18th, 1919. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. Those coming by rail will be met at Roxbury, N. Y., Tuesday p. m.

V. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Jefferson, N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting to be held on the third Sunday and Saturday before in September (20th and 21st). The morning train will be met at Sanford on Friday before the meeting. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE E. MEAD.

THE yearly meeting of the Messongoes Old School Baptist Church, near Hallwood, Va., is appointed to be held on the third Sunday and Saturday before in September. A cordial invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. Service will begin at 2 o'clock Saturday and continue all day Sunday.

J. C. MELLOTT, Pastor.

THE yearly meeting of the Nassaongo Old School Baptist Church is appointed to be held on the fourth Sunday and Saturday before in September. Service to begin on Saturday at 2 o'clock and continue all day Sunday. All who have a desire to meet with us are cordially invited.

J. C. MELLOTT, Pastor.

THE Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church will hold their yearly meeting the last Saturday and Sunday in September (27th and 28th), 1919.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Second Roxbury Church, at Halcottville, N. Y., on the U. & D. R. R., at the regular time, first Wednesday and Thursday in October (1st and 2nd), 1919. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

JAMES AVERY, Church Clerk.

THE seventy-third annual session of the Sulphur Fork Association of Old School or Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held with the church at Prospect, Bowie Co., Texas, commencing on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1919. All brethren who love peace and believe that God is a sovereign and rules and controls all things are cordially invited to meet with us. Those coming from the west will be met at Carbondale, on the Cotton Belt R. R., Thursday p. m., and those from the east Friday a. m.

R. E. WHITE, Moderator.

J. S. MCLEOD, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church will be held on the first Sunday and Saturday before in October. Service to begin on Saturday at 2 o'clock and continue all day Sunday. All who desire to meet with us are cordially invited.

J. C. MELLOTT, Pastor.

THE Juniata Association, discontinued last year on account of the influenza, will meet, the Lord willing, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 10th, 11th and 12th, 1919, with the Sideling Hill Church, Fulton County, Pa. All lovers of the truth and ministers of our faith and order are invited to meet with us. Those coming by rail will be met Thursday before the meeting at Hancock, W. Va., if coming by Baltimore & Ohio R. R., and at Hancock, Md., if coming by Western Maryland R. R. Please notify in advance either Dennis Mellott, Plum Run, Pa., or Jefferson C. Mellott, Needmore, Pa.

DENNIS MELLOTT, Church Clerk.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting, discontinued last year by the influenza, will meet, the Lord willing, with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Va., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 15th, 16th and 17th, 1919. Those coming by rail will be met Tuesday afternoon before the meeting at Herndon, Va. Trains leave 36th and M Sts. N. W., Washington, D. C., at 2 and 5:30 o'clock. Forty minutes should be allowed to get from the Union Station in Washington to the terminal where trains leave for Herndon. We want all brethren and ministers of our faith and order who feel it in their hearts to meet with us, to do so.

R. L. SPINDLE, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church holds her regular meetings at 13th and Lexington Sts., Sellwood, at 2 p. m. on the fourth Sunday in each month. Sellwood is a suburb of Portland, Oregon. Take any outgoing Sellwood car.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

Newberg, Oregon.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

There will be meeting every first Sunday at Halcott Center, N. Y., in the Grange Hall. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

The Middletown and Andes Church will hold their meetings the first Sunday in every month at their meetinghouse, Union Grove, N. Y. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

BY J. E. BEEBE & COMPANY

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To whom all letters should be addressed, and money orders made payable.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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(Judges v. 11.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 87. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1919. NO. 19.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Feb. 1, 1917.

DEAR SISTER:—I am glad you enjoyed the meeting at Duart, that it was "the time of the singing of birds" with you; and I am especially glad your sister was given strength to tell her friends how great things the Lord hath done for her and ask for a name and home with that afflicted and poor people who trust in the name of the Lord. My attendance at the Lobo meeting last October will never be forgotten by me. My mind is often stirred up in remembrance of it with a feeling of love and fellowship for those I met, that makes them near and dear to me. That is the kind of love and fellowship I want to always be exercised by—of abiding effect; the kind that leaves a sweet savor and relish of goodness and pleasantness experienced in the assembly of the saints. I liked the way you concluded your letter, as craving the assurance of a good hope through the merits of a crucified Redeemer. That is what I long for above all else. Fearfulness that I am a hypocrite often seizes me, and yet there is some comfort in believing that Satan does not assault the hope of the hypocrite as he does the hope of the true believer. A hypocrite may retain his hope unmolested; the devil never attempts to molest it; but I am confident there is no true child of God whose hope is not assailed by Satan. He tempted Christ, and the servant is not above his master, nor the disciple above his Lord. He who entertains a false hope has not that conviction of his depravity which the saint possesses of his. His sins appear to him with all their aggravations, and it often seems a very mysterious thing to him that any grace can be consistent with such depravity; but a false hope hides corruption, so that the hypocrite appears clean in his own eyes.

In the love and fellowship of gospel bonds I am, I trust, your brother,

JOHN McCONNELL.

NEW YORK, N. Y., March 17, 1917.

DEAR SISTER:—Your good letter came to hand in due time, and should have been replied to at once, but many things came in the way of its prompt acknowledgment. Not the least of these hindrances was the consciousness of being destitute of spiritual mindedness, of lacking knowledge and understanding of heavenly things, and it is of these things,

I am sure, you want to hear most. I would gladly comply with your request to write, for publication, my views of the Scripture you quote, had I any views worth while submitting. The SIGNS needs no space writers while it has so many able gifts to draw upon of profit to its readers. The Song of Solomon, to which you referred, is the Song of songs. The strongest and tenderest passion God has implanted in man is mutual love of husband and wife, and in the highest and holiest sense this is manifested in the relation of Christ to his church. Solomon's Song is of the inseparable unity of Christ and his church, and of confident assurance that what God hath joined together no man can put asunder. "The love of Jesus, what it is, none but his loved ones know." Theirs is the song of love, their tongue the pen of a ready writer. In a living way the melody of this song is in their heart and in their tongue. Whether it be a song in the night or in a day of gladness, it is a song of their Beloved. They sing praises unto his name, "upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound." The low, sad notes are there, with the high, exulting ones, making melody in their heart to the Lord.

Among the many good things you wrote was of desire for greater love of God. Such a desire can only be in an humble and contrite heart. It is the language of all growth in grace and in the knowledge of God, for undoubtedly the grace or love of God in our hearts is in proportion to our knowledge of God. But, you might say, if that be so, then why is it that an increase in the knowledge of God makes my love appear less to me in comparison with what I know of God? I would answer, when something of God is presented to our view we are convinced of much more than we see. What we perceive is wonderful, but this view brings with it a strong conviction of something vastly superior to what is seen; so that, at the same time, we are astonished that we know so little, as well as that we love so little; and as we are convinced of the existence of infinitely more than we yet perceive, so we are convinced that we possess a capacity of knowing vastly more than we yet know. In consequence of this the child of God complains greatly of spiritual ignorance, poverty of spirit and want of love, and longs and strives for more knowledge and more love. He who grows in grace is more and more convinced of the height to which his affections should ascend, and is more and more affected with the low degree in which they are exercised; he is feelingly poor and needy. There are different degrees of grace, or growth in grace means nothing. Some subjects of grace are but babes in Christ, in whom the exercise of their affection for heavenly things is comparatively weak, yet every one who possesses the power of godliness in his soul will be inclined toward heavenly things far above all carnal and natural affections. Nothing is more manifest than that heavenly things engage our minds no further than as they affect us. Many attend preaching and hear of things infinitely important, but all that is heard seems ineffectual, makes no alteration in their disposition and life. The reason is, they are not affected by what they hear. There never was any change wrought in the mind or deportment of any one, by anything of a heavenly nature, which did not move his affections. No one was ever humbled and brought to the throne of grace by anything he ever heard or conceived respecting his own destitution

of any righteousness, while his heart remained unaffected. In short, there never was anything brought to pass in the heart or life of any man, by the Spirit of God, without the mind being deeply affected. Those things which we show by our actions a preference for, are what we do really prefer in our hearts. All men, when left to follow their own choice, show by their actions what they do really prefer in their hearts. When God and mammon appear in opposition, spiritual blessings on the one hand and worldly interests on the other, a man's behavior in forsaking the one and cleaving to the other proves whose servant he is. Circumstances in our life put us to the test whether we prefer the approval of God or the approval of man; the reality and sincerity of our love to God is brought to the test of experiment and fact. The Scriptures speak of trying the goodness of our profession in the same way as gold or silver is tried. That which has the appearance of gold is put into the furnace, in order to discover whether it is what it seems to be or not. Pure gold comes through the fire in full weight, and "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus" will lose nothing in the furnace of affliction; they will come forth as gold. God does not try his people for his own information, to obtain evidences of their sincerity, but for their satisfaction, and to furnish evidence to their own conscience. The difficulties which Israel experienced in the wilderness and by their enemies in Canaan was God's way of making them know what was in their hearts, whether they would keep his commandments or not. When God tempted Abraham it was not for his own satisfaction, but for the satisfaction of Abraham, that he might have a clear manifestation of God's favor toward him. Under this trial Abraham proved faithful, and God said to him, "Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." This implies that in the exercise of grace the existence of that grace is rendered more evident.

I have written at greater length than I had any thought of when I began, and you will, perhaps, be wearied in reading the letter. I have been interrupted by visitors twice this evening, and lost the thoughts I had in mind to express. Your letters comforted me. In them you gave "a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." So much of my time is spent in fear, questioning and longing to know the only true God that it is good news to me to hear the language of my heart spoken by others. How mysterious it is that while we are sighing and mourning, our soul thirsting for God, for the living God, his song is with us, and our prayer is unto the God of our life. Just a thought here and I will close. The apostle says, "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit."—1 John iv. 12, 13. As no man hath seen God at any time, the only assurance we can have of his dwelling in us is through love, for God is love. No man has ever seen God by the bodily sense of sight; he is the invisible God, and the church is united to him only by a spiritual bond—love. The God of love is manifest, rules and reigns in her; and as he is love, we are assured of dwelling in him and he in us, by his abiding self-revelation among us as love. Only through love can we be convinced of the reality of his being and nature. The indwelling and vital-

izing love of God means the same as that his Spirit dwells in us; for his Spirit, of which we are partakers through Christ, is itself the fountain of love, which can only originate in God. We cannot be conscious of fellowship of spirit with him if love, the mark of that spirit, does not manifest its life among us. The necessary working and effect of the revelation of God's love to his children is the mutual love of his children for each other. "Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit."

I am pleasantly anticipating the meeting at Dunwich in May. Many of the members and friends seem very near and dear to me, and it will be a pleasure to meet them again; but I cannot understand why the church should care to have me come, for I am an unprofitable servant to the Lord's dear people, and were it not for their forbearance and love I would long since have ceased to be recognized as a gospel preacher. If this is my honest and sincere conviction, I ought to stay at home and not intrude my unprofitable service; but I am selfish, I want to meet you all again for the good you do me as helpers of my joy.

My wife unites with me in assurances of love and fellowship.

Your brother in faith and hope,

JOHN McCONNELL.

MURRAY, Ky., May 5, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a letter from Elder F. P. Chandler, which I would be glad to have you publish, it is so full of God's love. I feel many of the readers would enjoy reading it. Many know him, and know him as a true and faithful servant of God, a chosen and qualified servant to preach the gospel of the Son of God. Brother Chandler is in very feeble health, unable to serve any of the churches he has in his care.

Also, inclosed you will find a letter on the Sabbath, by Elder A. L. Stansell, which I have enjoyed very much. It has given me much light on the Sabbath question. Perhaps others would like to read the same.

Yours through much tribulation,

FANNIE HENDRICKS.

PARIS, Tenn., April 30, 1919.

DEAR SISTER HENDRICKS:—Many are the afflictions of the righteous. In this world ye shall have tribulation, but in me peace. Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. As many as I love I rebuke and chasten; be zealous, therefore, and repent. Sufferings for his sake are appointed the heirs of promise in this life, yet they are light afflictions compared with the suffering of Jesus in the garden and on the cross, when he suffered the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. What love, what compassion to poor ruined sinners! But our pains must work for our good, if so be we love him, attended by the Holy Spirit to sanctify, to comfort, to give life, light, love, faith and patience. So, then, under afflictions how one does mourn because of indwelling sin. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Then to those is repentance, and confession of sins to God, and crying for mercy. The Father hears the prayers and cries of his children; so, then, if he answers the prayers of his children they experience salvation and the joy of it, and the forgiveness of sins, though at times they must wait for it, yet give joy, peace and rest that is full of his glory. I am sure when we consider our sorrows soberly we will be ready to acknowledge all are most needful, not one in vain. If we

have no sorrows and no chastening, then there is no salvation, no comfort or peace in Jesus, and if we be without chastisement, then we are bastards, and not sons; but he chastens in love and in due season, for our profit. Has the rod been laid on a poor sinner, it yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby.

Yes, I have been sick indeed, with many fears. The Lord sent his word and comforted me; through much mercy I am spared. God forbid that I should murmur. Great is the Lord our God, and greatly to be praised forever. I am able to be up around the house and yard. I fear you speak too highly of me. In me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing. I do pray to be better, and an ensample to the flock. Pray for me for Jesus' sake.

F. P. CHANDLER.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Dec. 15, 1918.

VERY DEAR SISTER:—Perhaps you have decided that I did not intend answering your letter of October 26th, but it came at a time when I was compassed about with great trouble. However, it was very much appreciated, because you had remembrance of me and my affliction, and I assure you that the delay in answering was because of lack of time to stop and consider the questions arising in your much appreciated letter. My dear wife had influenza, followed by a severe attack of pneumonia, and for several days it seemed that she could not live, but the good Lord was on our side and she is slowly recovering her strength. The Lord be praised. I lost five weeks from my work, and doctor bills and other bills have put me close to the straits, but I hope in God that all temporal things are his, and that he will give them to whom it pleases him.

I was made to feel tears of joy because of the questions you inquired about. The Sabbath contained in the Jewish law was a command given to an elect family, and to no one else; for he called Abram in Haran and told him, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee."—Gen. xii. 1. This Abram did, and God made a covenant with him, so that God called him Abraham and promised him that he would make a great nation of him. We find that in process of time God brought the children of Abraham, or Israel, out of Egypt, into which he had sent them, with a high hand and an outstretched arm, and put them in the wilderness. Here in this wilderness God gave them a law by the hand of Moses on tables of stone. One of the laws was: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy."—Exodus xx. 8. This holy day, one day in seven, was a day or time in which men under that law were commanded not to do any servile labor. This law was to the Jew only. The Gentile (which was every other people) had no right or promise to any penalty or reward attached to this law, except those who were circumcised, thereby becoming dwellers in the land. (Exodus xii. 48.) So we find that the Jewish or Israelitish law was a law to the naturally circumcised, which law is called the law of circumcision. So then we may safely say that no man is embraced in the covenant of the natural or carnal law except that he has been naturally circumcised. I want to say just here that Seventh Day Adventists, the Christian Scientists, the Catholics, Campbellites and all other people that have adopted the laws of circumcision are a long way ahead of the crowd, for the law of Moses did not affect any but those who were of

the circumcision, or who had been naturally circumcised. So when you hear one vaunting his circumcision, or do system, there is but one conclusion: they doubt the sacrifice Jesus made. The man or woman holding to the law for justification, and failing to make burnt offerings and burnt sacrifices, is not approaching the law of circumcision, but ignorantly cleaving to the letter, which thing they do not understand. The man or woman who has no more confidence in Christ's offering than to think that their salvation is conditional, always seeks a doctrine that in its face seems to establish that fact. They are likewise not particular which conditional theme they subscribe to, but take the one that best suits their whims or social surroundings. As the law concerning the Jewish Sabbath, just so with all of the ten natural Mosaic laws. The truly convicted son of God loses to a great extent the obligations he feels toward the law of carnal commandments when he can see that the offering of Jesus was a complete and perfect sacrifice. The Jewish Sabbath was a day or time for rest to a circumcised, elected people. The Sabbath of our God is to an elect, a spiritually circumcised people —rest itself. God commanded some to be stoned that broke the Sabbath of Moses' law, for he had said, Ye shall keep it holy. Jesus while on earth was a Jewish law or Sabbath breaker in respect to days and customs. See Matthew xv. 1, 2. Again, he broke the Jewish Sabbath when he healed the hand of the man in the synagogue on the Sabbath day. (Mark iii. 1–5.) Not only so, but on many occasions he sanctioned the acts of his disciples regarding their breaking the Sabbath day. You will also find that in most every reference to the Jewish Sabbath the Scripture reads "Sabbath day," and not Sabbath. Sabbath day is one meaning, Sabbath is another. A true conception of holy writ shows that while Jesus seemed not to have regard for the Jews' law or ordinances, he of all men was the only keeper of the law; for we find by the mouth of Jesus that he trod the wine-press of the wrath of God alone, and of the people there was none to help. The law was commanded to be read in the synagogues on the Sabbath day, and men learned by hearing the law and customs expounded, and the men best qualified to keep the law and perform ordinances were those who best understood it, hence the Pharisee. If God had not done away with such formality it would be reasonable yet, but as he said he took away the first that he might establish the second, it does not remain. There remaineth a rest to the people of God, but it is Sabbath, and not Sabbath day. Men are instructed as of old on the Sabbath, and the perfect law of liberty is given then, but it is a time of rest, in which we are drawn by the everlasting cords of God's grace and love. The position that men must do in order to receive the blessings, is not to be criticised any more in one kind of religion than another, neither will one of them get any nearer God than the other, whether it be the man that makes a hobby of keeping the Sabbath day or respecting the Roman Catholic priest's robe, being baptized in water or any traditious example, whether they be Jews or Gentiles.

I shall feel amply paid for this long and seemingly useless letter when I hear from you again.

Yours in hope,

A. L. STANSELL.

ROGERS, Ky., August 2, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I should have sent in my remittance at the beginning of the year, and it was through thoughtlessness that I neglected my duty, for which I ask your pardon. I can see my shortcoming in many other things as well as in this. I like the SIGNS for the glorious doctrine it sets forth and the precious communications from the brethren and sisters throughout the land; they all write as I see it—salvation by grace, and grace alone. By my own experience and the teaching of the Scriptures it is the only doctrine that will stand. There are many Arminians who teach that the unregenerate must do something or make the start in order to bring themselves into favor with God, but the Scriptures teach that a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit, neither can a good tree bring forth corrupt fruit. Paul says, By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast, and he gives the reason why: For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. So it is not left for us to choose whether we shall walk in them or not, for Jesus says, Without me ye can do nothing, and Paul says, In Christ Jesus I can do all things, yet not I, but the grace of God that dwelleth in me. We receive not these things of ourselves, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ, who declared, Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain. Not for just a short time, and then vanish away. We have many doubts and fears while here in this life, not doubting in the least the power of God to save sinners, but the doubts are in ourselves. While roaming in the dark wilderness I fear, at least with my carnal mind, that I have been mistaken in what I thought was done for me; then the Scripture will come to me, Christ in you the hope of glory, which hope is the anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is entered for us.

I will close, as I have written more than I intended. I only expected to write and send in my remittance, but my mind has run on in these scattering thoughts, which I fear you will be wearied in reading. Excuse me.

Your sister in hope of eternal life,

(MRS.) N. C. SPENCER.

WINNSBORO, Texas, March 17, 1919.

DEAR BROTHER GREATHOUSE:—Your kind and brotherly letter came to hand a few days ago. I was glad to hear from you again, but sorry to hear you are so afflicted. I surely can sympathize with you in your sufferings, for I, too, am a great sufferer. I am almost entirely confined to the house and yard, and have to go on crutches all the time. I have not been to meeting since our association, the first of last October. All the churches I have been trying to serve so long are being supplied by others. This is perhaps to their advantage, but you may know it is pretty trying on me to be cut off from all my former privileges of that kind; however, it is all right. The Lord is just and good, I am a hard-hearted, sinful rebel. As you say, it takes all my sufferings and afflictions to humble me, and then it seems that I will not stay humbled. Afflictions and trials, however, should not discourage us. God's true worshiping people have always been a poor and afflicted people. Look, for instance, at Job. John the Baptist must

languish in prison and at last have his head taken off. The apostles must suffer imprisonments, banishments, stripes, being stoned, perils by land and by sea, cold and heat, hungerings, &c., but he who suffered most of all, and whose sufferings alone atoned for sin, was the blessed Son of God and our Savior and Redeemer. Our sufferings are small affairs when compared with his, "who drank the cup with stifled groan, and said, My Father's will be done." But still our little share of sorrow and suffering is necessary for us.

"Thou givest with paternal care,
Howe'er unjustly we complain,
To each his necessary share
Of joy and sorrow, toil and pain."

You know the Scriptures teach us, if we are God's children, that we are members of Christ's body, bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, so we must suffer with him. But for our consolation it is written, If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him. Our sufferings bring us into closer fellowship with him. All our sufferings are in some way the result of sin, the transgression of law. We suffer for, or because of, our sins. Jesus, who had no sin of his own, suffered for all the sins of all his people, the Just for the unjust. Here I think of one of your favorite hymns, or rather a verse or two, that you sometimes quote:

"Forget thee I will not, I cannot, thy name
Engraved on my heart doth forever remain;
The palms of my hands, whilst I look on, I see
The wounds I received when suffering for thee.

I feel at my heart all thy sighs and thy groans,
For thou art most near me, my flesh and my bones;
In all thy distresses thy Head feels the pain,
Yet all are most needful, not one is in vain."

The only question in my mind (and it is sometimes a very serious one) as to all things working together for my good, my afflictions and sufferings included, is, Am I one of that blessed number who love the Lord, who are the called according to his purpose? I, who have been so ungrateful, so wanton, so wayward, can I claim things so great, so wonderful? If so, what great praise is due the sovereign grace of God, which alone is sufficient to reach and save a case like mine. Since my afflictions and sufferings have been so great, my hope has been so strengthened that I have been able to praise his holy name, both in prayer and in song. Many times in the dark hours of the night, when all around me is wrapped in slumber and my suffering is so great I cannot sleep or find an easy position, my poor heart is filled with his praise, and I am constrained to break forth in the form of some old familiar hymn, singing his praises. Of course in my case I am not yet given to know what the will of the Lord is, whether my present affliction will end my career in this world, or whether he will restore me again for a little season; but one thing I have to be thankful for: I have never felt to cast any blame upon the Lord for his providential dealings with me. I know he is just and righteous in all his works and ways, and I know that he works all things after the counsel of his own will.

But I must desist. I had no idea of writing so much; I fear it will weary you to read it and get any sense out of it. I feel sure the brethren and sisters will enjoy a visit from you, so come ahead when it suits you. As I am so closely confined at home, and am not able to give the matter the proper attention, I am going to turn the arrangement of appointments over to brother J. S. Robbins, of Scroggins, Texas. I will send him your letter and he can write you, and you can correspond with him about the matter.

Hoping you may be fully restored to health, if it is the Lord's will, and that

his choicest blessings may rest upon you and yours, I am your poor afflicted brother, if one at all,

H. B. JONES.

[WE are very glad to publish this letter from our brother, Elder Jones, and are sure our readers will be glad to hear from him again, but, like ourselves, will be extremely sorry to hear of his affliction. We sincerely hope he may soon be restored to health.—K.]

JACKSONVILLE, Ill.

DEAR BRETHREN:—After my day's work was done and the shades of evening gathered around me, my mind was drawn out in christian love for each and every one while reading our dearly loved paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I cannot find words to express the comfort your dear letters gave me, so unworthy, many doubts and fears, so cast down. At times all seems dark, winter is with me so long, and it seems that I never knew the Savior's love. Dear ones in your far distant homes, can I not walk and talk with you? You can understand me when I tell you of the comfort your dear letters are to me. When God gives that sweet peace of mind can we praise him enough while reading our dear paper? Years have past, but I want to tell you all I never knew there was such a paper until a friend gave one to my father and he brought it home and told me to read it to mother. I commenced reading, and could not believe there were people so far from me who could tell the same experiences I had passed through. I could not sleep, for I felt so near to them. I kept the paper and read it until it would not hold together. In all that time I never told any one, not even my precious mother. I could not tell how I felt, but expressed it in my humble way to Elder Wm. Beebe, and to my surprise he wrote me a comforting letter. It was then I knew the Savior's love. He made me to lie down in green pastures, he led me beside the still waters. O how sweet it all comes to me as I try in my weak way to talk with you. I would have many dark hours, when I would think there was no one to fill Elder Beebe's place. He could send me the dear paper, just what I wanted to read; I could walk with the dear ones and talk with them, no one else could understand me. God was so good, his care is always sure. A dear brother filled the place, I could still walk with the people I loved; Elder Chick could speak the same comforting words. Years have passed, and God in his mercy has given us dear ones who to-day write with the same spirit, so deep and comforting. May it be God's will to spare them to us and comfort them with his own dear presence; for we know without God's love and care they could never send his messages to cheer and comfort his people. Elder Ker, I want to tell you I dearly love to read what you and Elder Lefferts write. Since I first read our dear paper none could write better on any subject. I do hope God will bless you both.

Dear brethren and sisters, may God bless you all with his Spirit. I cannot find words to express how dear you all are to me. I often wish I could meet each and every one. You write just what I believe and love.

Your little sister, the least of all,

ELLA M. PARROTT.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

W. M. LITTLE has changed his address from Buckholts, Texas, to Thornton, Texas.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1919.

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JOHN XIII. 36.

"SIMON Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards."

There is a vast difference between the understanding of truth possessed by people of God before the resurrection of Christ from the dead and that which they have had since his resurrection. During all the time that preceded the resurrection of Christ, from the days of Adam to the end of the legal dispensation, even though holy men spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, yet none of them had full and complete understanding of the things they said and recorded. It is much like the case of the blind man whose eyes Jesus anointed, and asked him if he saw, and the man replied, I see men as trees walking. This man, after the first anointing which he received, had his sight, but not clearly. He could not discriminate; trees looked like men and men like trees. His vision was not clear, nor did he possess the gift of adequate discernment. Again Jesus anointed his eyes, and asked him if he saw, and he then said, I see clearly. The second anointing gave him perfect vision. There is this great difference in the understanding which the disciples had prior to the descent of the Holy Spirit at the time of Pentecost, and that which came unto them as the result of the coming of the Holy Spirit at that time. During the lifetime of Jesus here on earth those with him had received the first anointing, but not the second; the second anointing came, as we have said, at the coming of the Holy Ghost as recorded in the second chapter of the Acts. By this second anointing Peter was able to preach the gospel and to interpret the prophecies and the Psalms of David, something that no man up to that time (excepting Jesus) had ever been able to do. We are told in the first verse of the thirteenth chapter of John that Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world. While Jesus knew that he was born to die, and that without death and the shedding of his blood there could never be any remission of the sins of his people, yet the disciples, though they loved Jesus and believed sincerely in him, could not understand the necessity of his death, and did not comprehend how that the whole of the law and all the prophets showed forth beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. Jesus showed unto his disciples that he must go unto Jerusalem, suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, be killed, and raised again the third day. This the disciples never understood until the Holy Ghost came and took of the things which Jesus had said and revealed unto them their true meaning. Peter even rebuked the Savior for thus declaring beforehand his sufferings and death. We suppose Peter thought the idea of suffering and death to be inconsistent with his belief in the perfection of Jesus. At any rate, whatever was the idea in Peter's mind that

caused him thus to rebuke Jesus, the Savior rebuked him, and said, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Three verses ahead of our text Jesus had said, "Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you." He meant that none but he, and he alone, could tread the wine-press of the wrath of God, none but he could pay the great price of their redemption, none but he could drink of the cup that he was to drink to the very dregs. All the judgments of God against the sins of the elect were to be visited upon Jesus because he was the eternal Security and covenant Head of the church of God. He, who knew no sin, therefore was made sin for his peeple in order to make them the righteousness of God in himself. It was not possible for any of his people to go with him in that journey down into, and through, and up from, death: the wages of sin which Christ had to pay for his people's salvation. None could ever be able to suffer what Jesus did and live through it or come out of it alive. He had power to lay down his life and to take it again. This does not at all contradict the doctrine of the eternal vital unity of Christ and the church. As members of his body, in a mystical and spiritual sense, they were in him when he died, and in him when he arose from the dead. But what is meant in the thirteenth chapter of John is that as men and women, and as individuals, not one, nor all, of the Lord's people could ever be able, nor shall they ever be required, to die the death he died, nor to suffer the extremes of agony endured by him.

Evidently Peter, nor any of the rest, understood what journey Jesus meant when he told them he was going away from them. Possibly Peter thought the Savior was simply going into some other town or country, and Peter saw no reason why he could not accompany him. When Jesus told him, "Thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards," it was all Greek to Peter, for he understood not at all what Jesus meant. The disciples might follow him to the cross and witness his terrible death, but further they could not go at that time. However, they had the promise from Jesus that he would come again unto them and receive them unto himself, that so they should be together. This he verified afterward, after his rising from the dead. He appeared unto them, spoke to them, called them by name, showed them his wounded hands and side, opened to them the Scriptures, ate with them and finally was received up in a cloud out of their sight, having told them to wait in Jerusalem until power from on high should come upon them. He did come again unto them, then, receiving them up unto himself where he was. When he had gone from them unto death he and they all were then under the condemnation of the law; when he came unto them after his resurrection he was free from condemnation and the sentence of death, and so were all his people. All that was needed was for them to be made aware of his victory, that they might come unto him in that liberty wherewith he had made them free. It was after Jesus' resurrection that he spoke to Peter and showed him how he was to follow him, commanding him to feed the sheep and lambs of God. Peter's following Jesus had been interrupted by the death of Jesus, into which Peter nor any one else could follow him. In John xxi. 18, Jesus shows Peter how his following is to be resumed, and to continue as long as

Peter shall be on earth: "When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not." Some think that Jesus meant here to show Peter that he was eventually to be crucified and to meet his death in that way. We do not think so, but Jesus showed him what kind of death it was to be through which Peter was to glorify God, not a physical crucifixion, but that Peter was to find his work in the vineyard of the Lord to be such that he would continually be going where his own natural inclinations would never lead him, that his work in the ministry was to be opposed to the human nature of him. Therefore Peter was to be crucified for Christ's sake, not so much actually as spiritually and experimentally. The apostle Paul knew something about being crucified with Christ, and so did Peter, and so does, we believe, every God-called servant in the vineyard of Christ. In other words, the Spirit of Christ was to take Peter and bind him and carry him wheresoever it listed, without any say-so of Peter whatsoever.

In Revelation viii. 1, it says, "There was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour." We understand this half-hour of silence in the church to mean the period elapsing between the last breath of Jesus upon the cross and his coming forth from the tomb very early in the morning of the first day of the week. This was a time of complete silence, in that, so far as we have any record in the Bible, there was not a single spiritual emotion in the heart of any single soul. The hearts of the women were stirred to go down to the tomb, and this emotion in them was coincident with Jesus' rising from the dead. Not until he had arisen had they had any such inclination. Of course the women themselves did not know that their wanting to go to him was the effect of his resurrection power already manifest in them. But every spiritual feeling or thought is based upon Jesus' resurrection. There could be not a spark of spiritual vitality in any soul had Jesus not arisen. Thus the death of Jesus eclipsed all spirituality in his people; his resurrection revived them. The truth will never be eclipsed again as long as time lasts. We may get terribly discouraged at times; if we do not, others may, but total darkness, amounting to utter despair, shall never overtake the church as long as God is on the throne.

Written by request. L.

BOOK OF EDITORIALS.

We have on hand a number of copies of the Second Volume of Editorials. This book is made up of editorials written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the Signs of the Times from March, 1842, to March, 1847, and contains 768 pages, neatly bound in cloth.

This work originally sold at two dollars per copy, but as a few of the pages are stained by water we will, as long as the supply lasts, sell them at the extremely low price of seventy-five cents per copy. Postage paid by us. All who wish this book should procure it now, as we will have no more after these are sold.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

F. H. Richardson, Iowa, $3.00; Mrs. Elvira T. Koebig, N. Y., $1.00; W. I. Stewart, Texas, $1.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Miss Bessie Durand was born in Bradford County, Pa., March 30th, 1828, and died at Southampton, Pa., July 19th, 1919. She was the eighth of a family of fourteen children. It was a family wonderfully blessed of the Lord, for father and mother and the eleven who lived beyond babyhood were all bound together in that closest of unions—spiritual love, and all but three were members of the church at Vaughn Hill. Their home was a home for Old Baptists, and from her childhood it was her greatest pleasure to entertain and minister to the Baptist friends who came there. She received a hope in Christ in 1852, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Vaughn Hill in April, 1853, by Elder Harvey Alling. There was a great deal of illness in the family, and she was untiring, never ceasing in her devotion in caring for and nursing her father and mother, brothers and sisters to the end, until finally there was none left except herself and brother Silas. When he married and moved to Southampton to take the care of the church there, she went with them and made her home with them. During the latter part of her life she suffered severely from rheumatism, and for several years was almost entirely confined to the house; but she had a wide correspondence, and ministered to many of the family of God by her pen, comforting them with the comfort wherewith she herself was comforted of God. Last spring her heart began to give out, and she had times of very great suffering. The last attack was just two weeks before her death. During the last few months since her brother died she had many wonderful experiences in her loneliness, and she had no mind for any but spiritual things. Her Bible or hymn-book was most always in her hand. A few days before she died she said that whatever she was thinking of, always like an undercurrent there was passing through her mind the words: One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple. Many hymns were precious to her. One that was especially sweet to her she repeated near the last: "There is a land mine eye hath seen," &c. The day before she died I was sitting near her thinking she was asleep, when she opened her eyes and said, "I do not suffer any and I do not want anything, only to go and be with my Savior." When the time came to go she slept quietly away without suffering.

The funeral was held on Tuesday, July 22nd, in the Southampton meetinghouse. Elders Coulter and Fenton preached comfortingly to those who were present, after which Elder Vaughn made appropriate remarks.

She leaves many nephews and nieces, who, with her many friends and brethren in the church, mourn for her, but rejoice that she has entered into the presence of her Savior to go no more out forever.

MILDRED DURAND GORDY.

[At the request of sister Mildred, I will just add that away back in childhood I can remember sister Bessie as long as any I can remember, and I have never known one who loved her family, her church and her God more than she. She lived out in life the profession so dear to her heart, always spiritually-minded and ready to talk of the better things. If it can ever be said of any one, it can truly be said of her that she is "at rest."—L.]

Robert H. Turner was born June 8th, 1857, and departed this life July 13th, 1919, making his sojourn here 62 years, 1 month and 5 days. He was one of seven children born to Robin and Elizabeth Turner, of Figsboro, Henry Co., Va., and was married to America F. Lester April 20th, 1892, to which union were born six children. His parents preceded him to the grave, leaving his wife and six children, five sisters and a host of friends and relatives to mourn his departure. He and wife united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Camp Branch by experience Nov. 25th, 1905, and was baptized by Elder Isaac Jones Nov. 27th. He was chosen clerk of Camp Branch Church April 20th, 1909, and made an efficient clerk, serving until the October meeting in 1918. He always filled his seat unless providentially hindered. As the hemorrhages became more frequent and his cough severe, he weakened fast, and was never able to attend meeting again. He was confined to his bed for more than six months with consumption. He knew his condition, that life was short here, but bore his afflictions with the greatest of patience, and would say to his friends, "I do not mean to murmur by asking for something to be done to relieve my suffering." He would frequently say that he was submissive to God's will; separation from family and friends and the sting of death were all that he dreaded. All that could be done by his affectionate wife, children, friends and physician was done, but to no avail. He passed away as he had lived, quietly, about 7:30 o'clock. We miss him as an excellent neighbor, friend and brother. He was a devoted husband and father. He was especially fond of entertaining his brethren and friends in his home. He seldom missed a meeting or an association if within reach. He died on the farm where he was born. The church has lost a faithful member.

Elders P. J. Washburn, John E. Burgess and N. C. Young conducted the funeral services July 14th, to the comfort of the bereaved, in the presence of a large attendance of relatives and friends, after which his body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Camp Branch Church.

Bereaved, weep not for him as for one without

hope. Your loss is great, but to him it is gain; he is now enjoying that blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep. O Lord, wilt thou be pleased to fill the vacancy with thy presence, and make us more hopeful that we shall meet at the right hand of Him who doeth all things well. I have lost a father, companion and adviser, as we traveled together going to meeting for the last nine years.

Written at the request of his wife, by one who loved him. JOHN E. BURGESS.

Mrs. Agnes McGugan departed this life at her home in Duart, Ontario, March 25th, 1919, in the 68th year of her age. Sister McGugan was received in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada in May, 1890, and baptized by Elder Pollard. Her life was an exemplary one; she lived and died in a precious hope in her dear Savior. She leaves two daughters and one son, besides the church, to mourn their loss.

The funeral was held from her late residence, and was largely attended. Burial was in Duart cemetery.

May the blessing of God rest upon the children and all who mourn.

ALSO,

Mary Currie McAlpine, widow of Neil McAlpine, was born in Wallacetown, in the township of Dunwich, Ont., in the year 1837, and departed this life July 22nd, 1919, at the home of her son-in-law, Dr. Thomas McColl, Tilbury, Ont., in her 82nd year. Sister McAlpine was married to Neil McAlpine in May, 1856. To that union were born thirteen children, two dying in infancy; eleven are still living, four boys and seven girls. Sister McAlpine experienced a hope in her blessed Savior when quite young. She was received in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church at the quarterly meeting held at Dunwich the second Sunday in May, 1874, and baptized by Elder Wm. Pollard. Sister McAlpine lived a devoted life to the church and to all her kindred in Christ. She was kind-hearted, loved and esteemed by all who knew her. Her last sickness was of short duration; for thirty-six hours she suffered intense pain; medical aid seemed to be of no avail, the time of her departure from this world had come, and she sweetly fell asleep in Jesus.

The funeral was held from the home of her son-in-law, Dr. Thomas McColl, in Tilbury; burial was in St. Thomas cemetery. A large company of relatives and friends awaited the arrival of the train at St. Thomas, and there joined the friends in the large procession following to the last resting-place of our dear departed sister. A few remarks were made at the grave by the writer, after which her body was lowered into the grave to await the glorious resurrection morn, when that mortal shall put on immortality, when she shall awake with the likeness of her blessed Savior. May the dear Lord comfort the mourning ones. J. B. SLAUSON.

Elvina S. Barger Epperheimer, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Abraham S. Barger, was born in Pope County, Ill., May 25th, 1849, and died at her home in Eddyville, Ill., June 29th, 1919, aged 70 years, 1 month and 4 days. On October 8th, 1867, she was married to Samuel Epperheimer, who had lately returned from the bloody battlefields of the war of the rebellion, where he had offered his life as a sacrifice on the altar of liberty, and their happiness continued unbroken until death came suddenly without a moment's warning and laid its icy hand upon her. Their marriage was blessed with four daughters: Mary Florence, Emily Alice, Ida May and Bertha Ellen, who during her lifetime received the constant and untiring devotion of all that a mother's love can mean, and they greatly feel this great loss. She believed in the doctrine advocated by the Primitive Baptists, and for more than forty years had been a member of old Grand Pier Church, having been baptized and married by Elder Richard Fulkerson, who for more than fifty years was pastor of that church. Her home was always open for the entertainment of the ministers and members, and many were the saints she ministered unto. Though we miss her greatly we cannot call her back, but will say, Sleep on in peace, thou dear one, and some day we hope to meet in the country beyond the grave, where the sun never sets and the leaves never fade.

Her daughter, A. B.

MEETINGS.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Second Roxbury Church, at Halcottville, N. Y., on the U. & D. R. R., at the regular time, first Wednesday and Thursday in October (1st and 2nd), 1919. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

JAMES AVERY, Church Clerk.

THE seventy-third annual session of the Sulphur Fork Association of Old School or Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held with the church at Prospect, Bowie Co., Texas, commencing on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1919. All brethren who love peace and believe that God is a sovereign and rules and controls all things are cordially invited to meet with us. Those coming from the west will be met at Carbondale, on the Cotton Belt R. R., Thursday p. m., and those from the east Friday a. m.

R. E. WHITE, Moderator.
J. S. McLEOD, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church will be held on the first Sunday and Saturday before in October. Service to begin on Saturday at 2 o'clock and continue all day Sunday. All who desire to meet with us are cordially invited.

J. C. MELLOTT, Pastor.

THE Juniata Association, discontinued last year on account of the influenza, will meet, the Lord willing, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 10th, 11th and 12th, 1919, with the Sideling Hill Church, Fulton County, Pa. All lovers of the truth and ministers of our faith and order are invited to meet with us. Those coming by rail will be met Thursday before the meeting at Hancock, W. Va., if coming by Baltimore & Ohio R. R., and at Hancock, Md., if coming by Western Maryland R. R. Please notify in advance either Dennis Mellott, Plum Run, Pa., or Jefferson C. Mellott, Needmore, Pa.

DENNIS MELLOTT, Church Clerk.

THE annual all day meeting of the church at Snow Hill, Md., will be held on the second Sunday in October, 1919. All lovers of truth are cordially invited.

JOHN H. TRUITT, Church Clerk.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting, discontinued last year by the influenza, will meet, the Lord willing, with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Va., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 15th, 16th and 17th, 1919. Those coming by rail will be met Tuesday afternoon before the meeting at Herndon, Va. Trains leave 36th and M Sts. N. W., Washington, D. C., at 2 and 5:30 o'clock. Forty minutes should be allowed to get from the Union Station in Washington to the terminal where trains leave for Herndon. We want all brethren and ministers of our faith and order who feel it in their hearts to meet with us, to do so.

R. L. SPINDLE, Church Clerk.

THE Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church will hold their annual meeting, the Lord willing, at Ashokan, N. Y., on Saturday and Sunday, October 18th and 19th, 1919. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. South bound trains will be met Tuesday p. m., and trains from Kingston will be met Wednesday a. m.

JOHN J. SECOR, Church Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Welsh Tract Church is appointed to be held on the third Sunday and Saturday before in October, 1919, service to begin on Saturday at 11 o'clock a. m. Those coming from Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore will come via Penna. B. & W. R. R. to Newark, Del. Train leaves Philadelphia, Broad St. station, at 9 o'clock a. m. Saturday, and Baltimore, Union station, at 8 o'clock a. m., and on Sunday, from Philadelphia, Broad St. station, at 8 o'clock a. m. Those coming on the Delaware Division will take train leaving Delmar at 7:54 a. m. Saturday. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us, and we hope to have a good attendance from sister churches.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to meet with the Little Creek Church, in Delmar, Del., October 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1919. All trains on the Delaware Division of P. R. R. and the N. Y., P. & N. R. R. stop at Delmar. Those coming on Tuesday, 21st, take train leaving Philadelphia (Broad St.) at 3 p. m. From the south, day express due at Delmar 3:25 p. m. Wednesday morning trains will be looked after also. All lovers of the truth are invited.

A. B. FRANCIS, Pastor.

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IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

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WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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(Judges v. 11.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 87. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1919. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PENNINGTON, N. J., Feb. 23, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel glad that there is a God, and beside him there is no other; neither does this God change, with him there is not the shadow of turning. What a comfort it is at times to feel and know this for ourselves, but as a rule it is when we are cast down under a load of sin; but how sweet his promises seem when they come either on the mountain top or in the valley. I think when in sorrow and raised up we do not forget so soon. God has promised that he will never forget his chosen, but we so often forget him, and like Peter deny him. It is so easy to go astray, as easy as it is for the sparks to fly upward, which is natural; so we are natural, and if not led by the Spirit and kept by that almighty power we, like sheep, wander in by and forbidden paths of unrighteousness. He is the good Shepherd, and has prepared a way for his own to walk in; it is called a high way, which the vulture's eye hath not seen nor the lion's whelp trodden, but the redeemed of the Lord walk therein. Yes, it is hid from the eye of man and the sharpest eye of birds, but to them that are given to know the mystery of God it is salvation to their feet, and they walk in peace in that high way which the Lord has cast up; nothing there to harm them or give them fear. Dear brethren, when raised up by him the whole world is put under our feet, and we see ourselves as nothing, but Jesus most glorious. I sometimes think then is when we are guests, and have on that robe of righteousness, and do come into his banqueting-house and the banner of his love is over us. O, then how we are made to praise his great and matchless name, and to take courage and go on our way rejoicing in the strength of Israel's God, not in our own strength. The Scriptures are full of sweet and precious promises to his children, and happy are they if they walk in them. Broad is the way and wide is the gate that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat, but strait is the way and narrow is the gate that leadeth unto life everlasting, and few there be that find it. If the righteous are scarcely saved, where shall the ungodly appear? If his children are brands plucked from the burning and bought with a price, what have they to do with their own salvation?

Nothing, surely nothing, for they were living in sin and satisfied, their goods were in peace; but this strong man was bound by a stronger, which is the Lord, and cast into prison. Did we not feel to be in prison, having no strength of our own to free ourselves from this load of sin, and are we not the Lord's prisoners still? Most certainly we are. Well, then, if our hearts were burning after sin and the Lord snatched us from the fire, are we not a brand plucked from the burning? Indeed we are, and one of the greatest evidences was told by a child of eleven years, when she offered herself to the church. A deacon had some doubt as to her hope, and asked her this question: "Do you feel to be a sinner?" The little girl replied: "Yes; I was once a sinner running after sin, but now I am a sinner running away from sin." That is the point: do we want to go back to the beggarly elements of the world? Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, are the words of the apostle. The apostles were ensamples to the flock, so we do well to heed them and walk carefully. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. There is no other gift so much to the child of God as the gift of Jesus, which is Christ in you the hope of glory, and our walk should be as Ruth of old, our faith must be proven by our works, as James has it. Christ said on one occasion, Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, but they are they which testify of me, showing that we do not get eternal life out of the Bible, but it is a true witness or proof of Christ's wonderful works in the hearts of men. So if our experience of grace is in accord with his word we have been born again and are strangers here below, traveling home to God; and while traveling in Christ's hidden mysteries we often come to where John was and where the eunuch was, and would love to know which is the right road to take, because we get so hungry for the truth or understanding of the right way to go. Surely we have gotten in the wrong road, our feet are deep in the mire, our hope is almost gone and the Scriptures are a puzzle. Go tell John again the lepers are cleansed, the lame walk, the blind see and the poor have the gospel preached unto them. Philip began at the same Scripture and preached unto him Jesus. This is how God's ministers save his children. They point out the right road, and they go on their way rejoicing. This is God's plan of bringing them to glory. First the life, which never dies; then comes the growth, which is our faith in this life wrought by our works; then comes the fruit, which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, meekness, patience, against such there is no law. Yes, his children are like trees by the watercourses, or calves of the stall, or lilies that grow. These depend upon something besides themselves for growth, and so do we. He waters his garden, dresses his vineyard, gathers the lilies, and they are beautiful, without blemish or wrinkle or any such thing, complete in him. In fact there is no end to this theme; the half has never been told, and it is ever new, never gets old. O that I may be one of this fold. My membership is at Hopewell, N. J., but I am often made to doubt its value in heaven before the great Judge, and can only live in hope, which is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. Our preaching is good, sound and to the point, and we must thank God for Elder Vaughn's gift among us,

trusting that we shall be blessed in having him long with us, and we as a church stand by him in faith and practice. You, too, dear editors, I will not forget, for your paper is clean and the doctrine it advocates pure. I cannot describe its worth to me, but must say it comes like a preacher to a great many, and the letters fit our thoughts and minds and tell our travels better than we can tell them. No one can pick out some one article and say it is better than another. I am comforted by each of them for a season. We are God's plants, and he says, Comfort ye one another with the things wherewith ye are yourselves comforted, so if we write the truth it is in season for some of us. Our minds are not always led one way; the word might be budding forth in our minds and we feel alive, spring has come. Some dear brother or sister writes that way and we agree and comfort one another, and lo and behold we are made to bask in the warmth of His love until the bud blooms, which seems like summer to us; we are just drinking of his sweet fragrance. Some one is with us there when we read it over. O how good, we say, but ere we are aware the autumn frost nips the tender leaves of the plants; then we doubt, and feel that we will die if not revived; but here is another letter, we are not alone, and again take courage. Likewise when the cold blasts of winter almost kill the plants and our souls are in "Doubting Castle," some one has written our thoughts. Now we are made to believe that we are all one in Christ Jesus; there is no strange god with us, all are led by the same Spirit, no big ones, no little ones, but rejoicing together in one Lord, one faith, one baptism. We are told that they which are chief among you shall be your servants, not lords over God's heritage. You know in the parable of the laborers in the Lord's vineyard the one that came in at the first hour was no better in the Lord's judgment than the one who came in at the eleventh hour; so we in this day are no better than our fathers were before us, who bore the persecution of the church of God, or the heat of the day, and we should not murmur one with another. Jesus said to them, Have I not given you all that I agreed to? Why find fault? Have I not the right to do as I please with my own? The harvest is great; plenteous grace in him is found, but the laborers are few. The flesh wants a little extra pay for what it does more than another. What a blessed thought, that it is not left to man, but the good Lord will judge us all; he makes no mistakes, is too wise to err and too good to be unkind.

Your labors with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to-day are the same as Elder Gilbert Beebe's in defence of the truth, and that is why it is published. The truth will stand, it changes not, and that truth is God manifest in the flesh. He says, I will put it in their minds and write it in their hearts, so out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

I appreciate the obituary notices in the SIGNS; the faith given in death is wonderful to me. I will be with thee in six trials, and in the seventh I will not forsake thee; so when I read their last words I am made to believe that not one of his wills shall ever fail. I will send you a small check; credit me on your paper for another year, the rest use for the cause as you see fit.

Now, dear editors, may God bless us all to his service wherever our lot is cast, that we may come forth with our robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb, jewels in his sight, children of

light, is my sincere prayer to God, who is able to keep us from falling and to present us blameless before his throne in love.

A sinner in hope of eternal life beyond the grave. WM. T. YARD.

SOME THOUGHTS BY THE WAY.

God is love. But do I love him? What evidence have I? It is said again, Love is of God. The origin of all that is good is from above. Man is corrupt in all his ways, he cannot attain unto anything good. A bitter fountain cannot send forth sweet water. John says, We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. Why and how do I love the brethren? It is because of the imputation of the divine life, the love of God shed abroad in the heart. Paul says, And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and in sins. What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dreadful curse for my soul? Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. If sons, then heirs of God and joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ. We love him because he first loved us and gave himself for us —died for the ungodly. If God so loved us, we ought to love one another. Do we do this? do we love the church? do we love his blessed cause? do we prefer Jerusalem above our chief joy? are we willing to make sacrifices for the cause, forsake father and mother, wife and children, home and lands for his dear name's sake? If God so loved us that we should be made the rich recipients of all the fullness of the riches of his grace, is it not but a small sacrifice upon our part to attend to the things spoken in his word, and not give heed to seducing spirits, fleshly feelings and hatred one toward another? By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another. I know of no other way of manifesting the love of God and serving him acceptably with reverential fear except as we love and serve one another.

"Do not I love thee, O my God?
Behold my heart and see."

ISAIAH XXI. 11.

"The burden of Dumah. He calleth unto me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night?"

Well may we pause, and with reverence and solemn awe cry from the depths of our poor laboring hearts, Watchman, what of the night? With our beloved Zion, the silence of Dumah thus crieth out of Seir. "The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night." Yes, the day of rejoicing has been in Zion, when we could indeed look upon Zion, the city of our God, and see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, where the glorious Lord was unto us a place of broad rivers and streams, a fruitful field indeed, when saints did long for the courts of the Lord and count it all joy to forsake all and follow the commands of their Lord and Master and meet in the assembly of the saints, when love reigned supreme; but a sad reverse has come, her glory has departed, few come to her solemn feasts. One of old said, Is there not a cause? We answer, Yes, the love and glitter of the world, loving the wages of sin rather than the riches of the kingdom, sowing to the flesh, and of the flesh reaping corruption. The apostle has well said, If ye live after the flesh ye shall die. This is inevitable. May each of us ask ourselves the momentous question, Am I living after the flesh? May we find the response in our own hearts. The dear Redeemer said, Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all

these things shall be added unto you. God grant that we all do this, that it may be our meat and drink to do our heavenly Master's will, that our daily inquiry may be, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? May each feel the solemn pledge when received in the church, and the joy of soul, and to feel as David, A day in thy courts is better than a thousand in the pleasures of sin (the world). Then will Zion's courts be filled again, and the voice of singing songs of praise unto him who loved us and gave himself for us. "If ye will inquire, inquire ye: return, come."

MARK VIII. 36.

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

These are the words that fell from the lips of the dear Savior prior to the setting up of the church, or gospel kingdom, were needful then, and as much so now. Human nature, depravity, is the same today, the riches of this world as alluring as then, and many are swallowed up in the dark vortex of worldly pleasures. The dear Savior called the people unto him, with his disciples also, and said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. Evidently there were among the people those who had been quickened into life. It is also evident that the doctrine of the cross was as unpopular then as now, and the fleshly powers of the saints, the chosen vessels of God's mercies, were yielding to its persuasion; hence this important, searching declaration. Again, Jesus says, Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. These sayings might appear to some of the dear saints a contradiction to the doctrine of salvation by grace, but no, it will ever remain a truth, salvation is of the Lord. Jesus is here teaching his disciples regarding the life they live here in the flesh. Many of God's dear children to-day are living (or rather dying) in the flesh, are swallowed up in the world, and are dead spiritually, dead to the church, caring more for the things of this world than the things of God. It seems clear to us this way: in the measure we are (our minds and thoughts) swallowed up with the world, in its every phase we are dead to the things of the Spirit. One cannot lose what he has not, and one cannot die except he has life. It is lamentable that many of the dear saints are walking in the broad, the wide way, which is the way of death, loving the wages of unrighteousness. Where are you, dear reader? Are you forsaking the right way, the courts of the Lord? Do you prefer Jerusalem above your chief joy? If you love the courts of the Lord and delight in his way, forsaking not the assemblies of the saints, or have taken up the cross, then you have saved or delivered yourself from the unfruitful ways of darkness. May we ever keep in mind, If ye live after the flesh ye shall die. The gift of God is eternal life; this cannot be forfeited. It does seem to me the church is a most blessed home indeed, and ought to be more to us than all this world, but denying self and worldly pleasures are stumbling-blocks to many.

"O that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still;
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will."

I want to commend brother Miller's article in April 15th number, also sister Ruston's; all are good. I have written these very scattering thoughts at the request of a dear friend in Barren County.

I fear my letters make extra work in preparation for the publishers, and feel reluctant in sending them. Love to all the household of faith and greeting in the Lord.

Submitted. P. W. SAWIN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky.

QUAKER, W. Va., May 18, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been impressed several times to write you, but have procrastinated until to-day, and now it seems to me I cannot think of one thing that so actuated and prompted me then, so there is no doubt in my mind at this time that if you deem this as worthless as I feel at present you will throw it into the wastebasket. I have read some letters in which the writers have expressed such feelings, and I was made to feel strengthened and benefited by their letters, so I am still inclined to make an attempt. Strange indeed that we take consolation in our infirmities by the testimony of like experiences in others, but did not Paul say that he gloried in his infirmities, and another place in the cross? It strikes me that such infirmities are good symptoms of grace. My mind is directed to John vi. 44: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." It seems to me that the conclusive thought herein conveyed is that of the resurrection. Jesus declares that he is the bread of life, and that no man can come unto him except it were given unto him of his Father. From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no longer with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. This part of the subject seems to be of more concern to me at this time than any other. Some called it a hard saying, and it appears that Peter did not deem it otherwise, and the Lord did not say that it was not a hard saying. It was manifest there that there were some that did believe and there were some that did not believe, and now this matter of depravity is the most hated doctrine of any other in my country, I think. It occurs to my mind to give my experience, sentimentally, whether any one else is wrought upon in like manner or some other manner. The Scripture says, Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. This is consistent with my own experience, and I take it to embrace all of Adam's race. Though a man appear to be something, yet he has no more sovereign power than the dust under his feet. Let our attention go to Matthew xxv. 24, 25: "He which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed: and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine." Now let us consider just what the Lord taught in this parable. Men seem to have that which they have not, and we do not understand that the Lord surrenders his rights of sovereignty over the work of his own hand, because he was accused of being hard. Jesus is all to his people; they could not do anything whatever toward their soul's salvation without him. It seems to me that if we could do one thing that would be of any merit in our soul's salvation the Lord would not have told us that some would come up and claim that they had done many wonderful works in his name. If our understanding is right there is a death to die, and we infer that no man can approach it of himself; and a

birth to take place, then what could a man do in the begetting and birth of himself? So may we well conclude that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, and that the Lord works in his people. Philippians ii. 13, reads: "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Now I think it a plain proposition that the apostle put to the Philippian brethren, and they had no right to claim any of the honor for their well-doing, for all the honor and glory belong to the God of all creation. There are many other references in the Scriptures, both in the Old and New Testaments, which space will not admit, since I would like to say a few words about the latter part of the passage: "And I will raise him up at the last day." There seems to have been people in the days of Christ and the apostles who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. The Sadducees were grieved that the apostles taught the people and preached through Jesus the resurrection of the dead. (Acts iv.) I reckon that the world is no better now than it was then, for they not only had the Savior face to face to correct or rebuke them, but they had more than five hundred witnesses, and when the apostle recorded the incident he said the greater part of them remained, and a study of the resurrection of Jesus himself seems to give us a hopeful anchor; the victory is all in Jesus.

I think I had better stop here. If the Lord will, I want to attend some of the associations this fall, and I hope I may find the brethren in preaching spirit, for I believe it is now nearly two years since I heard any of them. If it were not for the SIGNS I hardly know what would become of me. I am miserably lonesome, depraved and sinful.

With only a hope,

J. A. PRESTON.

PREDESTINATION.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Having recently become a member of the SIGNS family by subscribing to your paper, I thought this morning to write you a few lines upon the above subject.

We, as great American people, have been made to realize that God is at the helm of our great nation, and is steering her through the tempest to the desired haven of rest. How true that he ruleth in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. I do not believe he is just ruling a part of the things, as some of our good brethren would like to have us believe, but I understand that he is a complete sovereign, and what his soul desireth even that he doeth, and our victory over death, hell and the grave is complete through him. The salvation of his people does not hang upon some kind of conditions that may or may not take place, some act which must be performed by some little grasshopper of the earth, the whim or caprice of some kind of earthly organizations, or so-called churches. His salvation is eternal and everlasting, and he is the author and finisher of it, inasmuch as he is the author and finisher of our faith. We had absolutely nothing to do in the matter. Where is boasting then? There is no doubt in my mind but he will be glorified in his people. "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." He is of one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth even that he doeth. He is now at this present time working all things after the counsel of his own will. I am surprised that some good brethren who go by the name of Predestinarian Baptists will deny this great truth, and yet we hear them say that he is just allowing some things to come to pass, as though he could not prevent

them from so doing. To me this is a God-dishonoring doctrine, and savors very strongly of the will and do system of mankind, which we generally call Arminianism; it stands opposed to all forms of predestination. But I am convinced by the reading of your paper that the SIGNS is yet contending for the same principle that it has been contending for ever since Elder Gilbert Beebe's time: the absolute and unconditional predestination of all things, both spiritual and natural. I am glad that we have one organ of the press left in the United States that is yet unfurling that glorious banner. I do not know of any other but what is trying to modify that some way to suit the people. I would like to see that in bold type on the front page, so that brethren may know just what we do believe. Why should some good brethren want to modify the word? The idea that God just rules some things is pure and simple Arminianism; he has never taught us that way in his word. The evil is used as a sword in his hand to accomplish his general plan. Of course we, like the prophet of olden time, are made to exclaim at times, "O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear?" and yet we know that at times we feel the chastening hand of God upon us.

Now I do not wish to weary you with so long a letter, yet I do want to thank the brethren who are writing so many good articles for the paper, and tell them they need not be afraid to uphold the truth as they are doing, and they can preach God's power just as strong as they want to and I, at least, will read it with interest, for I have continually told the brethren that whatsoever did not come by predestination must have come by chance, for predestination is the opposite of chance. Now if this is a truth, and I believe it is, we are brought to the dilemma of believing in God, or disbelieving in him. Does he rule, or does he not rule? Does he rule just a part, and not all? If so, I ask you to show me the line; I, as a seeker after truth, implore you to show me where God's power, or predestination, leaves off and some other power begins. "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Does this just apply to a part of the program, or events that do come to pass? Shall we preach that the salvation of God's people is all that was ever predestinated, and other things just happen to take place by some kind of a chance or fatalism? The salvation of God's people has been secure in all ages, and other events are just as sure to take place as this salvation is secure. The prophets told us of things which should take place upon the earth, and surely they were not mistaken.

But I perceive that I am making my letter too long. Do with it as you please. If you think there is any comfort for the brethren in it, and wish to publish it, all right; if not, consign it to the waste-basket, and spread the broad mantle of charity over the writer. I realize my own imperfections, and can only trust Him for such blessings as he has in store for me, knowing as I do that I have in no way merited them.

I wish the brethren generally would become readers of the SIGNS; it is a happy medium.

If any of the brethren know where I can get a copy of Hassel's Church History I would be pleased to hear from them.

Yours to serve,

E. D. ELDER.

SULLIVAN, Ill., Nov. 28, 1918.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1919.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ACTS XII. 5.

"PETER therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him."

Concerning the matter of prayer there seems to be much confusion in the minds of many people. Some seem to think that the Lord can be and is influenced by prayers, that the will of God is determined by prayers, that the Lord waits to hear the petitions of men before deciding in his own mind what he will or will not do. This confusion of thought regarding prayer arises from the human error of trying to conceive of the Almighty as being one like ourselves. This is an entirely wrong idea of God, but one which is characteristic of all human thoughts of God. God being infinitely above the comprehension of the human mind, it must be that the human mind by no sort of effort of its own can possibly grasp one right thought as to who God is, or as to how he works. The Scriptures declare that God is of one mind and none can turn him, that he is the same yesterday and to-day and forever, that he changes not. Any idea of prayer which implies that God can be influenced by prayer, which seems to indicate that God is subject to change because of prayers, does violence to numerous declarations throughout the Bible concerning the true character of God. On the other hand, concerning prayer itself, it is not a matter within the control of mortals to know when to pray, or what to pray for. We cannot appoint times and seasons for prayer ourselves, for no one of us knows when or where it may please the Holy Spirit to indite its petitions in our hearts, and without the Holy Spirit leading and teaching us in this matter of prayer no prayer can be made. If the apostle Paul himself confessed it to be his infirmity that he knew not what to pray for as he ought, and if he even went so far as to include the Roman brethren as being in this same weakness with himself, we are confident that not one of all the Lord's people since Paul's time has grown any stronger in this regard, and that it is still the weakness of every child of God that they cannot pray of themselves. The work of the Holy Spirit must be going on in the believer's heart if true prayer is ever offered up unto God. Since, then, prayer in no wise has any influence with the Almighty so as to in any sense change his plan or purpose, and since true prayer must always be, and is, the fruit of the Holy Spirit in the believers' souls, then prayer is not for the instruction of the Almighty to instruct him in his people's needs, but it is for the instruction and edification of those who believe in God. It is through the experience of prayer that believers are shown their spiritual need of, and their entire dependence upon, God. If God has not all power in heaven and in earth what would be the need of prayer? Would it be worth while to petition a god that could not grant our petitions? We mention this because our enemies have said, and do say, that Old School Baptists have not

much use for prayer. They say this because they think that the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God does away with the necessity for prayer; that if God has purposed all things whatsoever come to pass, and that all things shall come to pass just as God wills, whether we pray or not, or whether we want it to be so or not, why pray at all? Well, if prayer, as said before, be for the purpose of telling God what to do, then there is no sense in it, for whoever prays with the thought in his or her mind that God is in anywise to be influenced by the prayer is not really praying at all. Prayer arising from any such wrong notion of God is the fruit of nothing but the flesh, and has not the Holy Spirit for its cause. But, to come at the matter rightly, predestination is the very backbone and sinew of prayer. It is because God has purposed from eternity to do certain things for his children that he does by the intercession of the Holy Spirit cause them to pray for and to desire the very things which it is his eternal purpose to give them. Every true prayer, the fruit of the Holy Spirit, is in entire harmony with the will of God, never in harmony with the will or lusts of the flesh. The experience of real prayer cannot be otherwise than a crucifixion to the flesh, a humbling of our carnal nature. That is why, in ancient times, the posture of kneeling or prostrating the body was generally considered the right position for one to be in when praying. It showed outwardly the humiliation and self-abasement that was felt, or ought to be felt, inwardly in the soul by the one praying. As it is impossible for us with our finite minds to know what is the will of God, and since every prayer worthy of acceptance with God must be in accord with his divine will, how necessary then, if we are ever to pray, that we be taught in some way what the will of God is in order to pray. Inasmuch as the Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God, and since nothing in all the will and purpose of God is hidden from the mind of the Spirit, how well it is that God has ordained his Spirit to help us in this our infirmity regarding prayer, and to teach us how and what to pray for.

All this leads up to the subject of our text at the head of this article. The church suffered great persecution for Christ's sake during the days of the apostles and of the early church. The twelfth chapter of Acts records one of these persecutions. During one of the Jewish passovers, the authority of Herod, ruler over Judea as the representative of Rome, arrested Peter and put him in prison. This, of course, distressed the brethren greatly, and they prayed unceasingly for Peter's release. Did the prayers of the church cause or bring about Peter's release? No, positively not. Prayer never causes anything unless it may be the comfort and edification of the Lord's people, but as for prayer being the cause of any event in the history of men, or of the church, it is not so. Prayer is itself an effect or fruit of the Spirit, as we have said, but prayer itself is not a cause. It was all in the purpose and will of God that Peter was to be released from prison, and his release did not wait upon, nor was it caused by, the prayers of the church. How do we know this? Simply because Peter was one of those selected by Christ to preach his gospel, thus to feed the lambs and the sheep. Having thus a work to do in the vineyard of the Lord, he was perfectly safe from any vital injury until his work should be accomplished. It was just as impossible for Peter to die before his work was

finished as for the sun to be blotted from the sky. The prayers of the church did not lengthen Peter's life, nor did they effect his release from prison. His marvelous escape when an angel came to him and bade him follow, when the chains fell from his hands, when the iron gate opened before him and he went out safely into the street, all this was a demonstration of the power, not of effectual prayer, but of the power of almighty God, who alone is wonder-working. The prayers of the church were spiritual, because the Holy Spirit indited this prayer for Peter's safety in the heart of the church. Had not the Lord before determined upon the release of Peter the Holy Spirit would not have put it in the minds and hearts of the brethren to pray for him. True prayer invariably asks for what is already God's will to give. When the late president Wm. McKinley was shot it will be remembered how special prayer services were held all over this country, and by various religious denominations, asking the Lord to spare his life, but he died. The will of God was not that McKinley should be spared. This proves that in all the so-called prayers that were offered up for his recovery there was not one single spiritual prayer. Had there been one true prayer in all that multitude his life would have been spared; not that the prayer would have caused God to spare him, but the true prayer would have been the fruit of the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit never gives rise to a prayer contrary to the will of God. Had it not then been the will of God to release Peter from prison the brethren would not have found themselves able to pray for his release. They would have been, no doubt, crushed with sorrow for Peter, but as to prayer, would have been dumb. We met a mother this summer who had suffered the loss of a dear child, and through all this child's illness she was convinced it was going to die, simply because she found herself unable to pray for its recovery. The fact that she could not pray for nor desire its recovery was an evidence to the mother that it was God's will for the child to die. Had it been God's will for it to live doubtless she would have had in her heart a petition for it to live. This is an instance proving how prayer runs counter to one's natural inclinations. We are glad we have been made to believe in the immutability of Jehovah. What comfort to a poor soul could there be in a God who could be led about willy-nilly by the desires of now this one, now that? Prayer is an experimental exercise of the Spirit by which the believer is brought around into harmony with the will of God, not a process by which God is brought into our way of thinking.

Written by request. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. W. Linn.)

The Tygarts Valley River Association of Old School or Primitive Baptists, now in session with the Little Bethel Church, Barbour Co., W. Va., to the churches of which she is composed, and to all of our faith and order, sendeth christian greetings.

DEARLY BELOVED CHILDREN OF OUR HEAVENLY KING:—Once more we are permitted to meet together for the purpose of worshiping God in an associate capacity, and as this letter is written to you, I want to say with the apostle, Let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; and so much the more as we see the day approaching. I want to say to you all that these are days of trials. Many have lost their lives, many new things

are taking place, and the end is nearer than when we met last. There are but few who regard the truth, yet there are a few and will be a few, and those who do are those whom God Almighty keeps by his own power and causes them to walk in his statutes and his judgments, to do them, and they are his chosen children, chosen in Christ Jesus by the will of God before the world began. In his will their names were written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world, and that will is the same to-day as it was then, and they shall walk in his name because he is God, and changes not. They were in him then, and they are in him yet, because all that were in him shall be made alive, and then if made alive one thing is sure: that they were dead; and if dead one thing is sure: that the dead cannot give themselves life; but ye who were dead in trespasses and in sins hath he quickened together with Christ. You who were dead, your life is hid with Christ in God, and when Christ, who is your life, shall appear, then ye shall also appear with him in glory. So now God's children walk in newness of life, and their conscience is purged from dead works to serve the true and living God. Our works are dead works, but the good works which we are commanded to walk in are the works of the Spirit; good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. I will cause them to walk in my statutes, and my judgments ye shall do them. So it is all by God's eternal will, and if by his eternal will it is not by law. All our blessings were in his will, and it is by his will we obtain them; not by law nor by works of righteousness which we have done, but because it was written in his will and was for us to have, and that to be given to us by Christ and by the Spirit, of which it takes the things of God and shows them unto us. Dear children, how thankful we should be to him for all that he has done for us, and having it all written in his will before we were born; and he has obtained eternal redemption for us; that is, Christ hath obtained this eternal redemption for us. Then will he not freely give us all things with his Son, whether it be life or death? Now remember this, that he hath obtained eternal redemption for us, the children of God everywhere; then they stand eternally redeemed from all iniquity. No wonder Paul said, Who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again for our justification. So then we shall live because Christ lives, so we live by the faith of the Son of God, who gave himself for us, and not by our faith nor by our works. Then, Christ having obtained eternal redemption for us, what can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? because it is eternal love, eternal redemption. Can God eternally love us and eternally redeem us from all iniquity and then send us to torment on account of sin, when he redeemed us from all iniquity? O no; God is love, and his love is eternal love, and his redemption is eternal. So let all the combined powers of earth and hell, with all denominations, prove if they can that one of the children who has been redeemed with an eternal redemption by the blood of Christ can ever be lost, because Christ himself has said, As I live, ye also shall live, and he is alive for evermore, world without end. He hath obtained eternal redemption for us, already done, Christ hath done it already. Then we are already redeemed, and if already, then it is an evident fact that it is not left to us to do something in order to redeem ourselves, neither is it left to us to do something in order for Christ to redeem us, because he did it when he died on the cross and rose for our justification, and that forever freed us from all sin and condemnation, for we are bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. Fare you well.

J. B. CROSS, Moderator.

J. N. BARTLETT, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder W. S. Alexander, at Butler, Md., Sept. 24th, 1919, William Delamere Akehurst and Grace Fowble.

By Elder S. H. Humphrey, in Galesburg, Ill., Sept. 10th, 1919, Griffith C. Gardner and Mary C. Hopkins.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Charles Carter, my nephew, died July 14th, 1919, in the 52nd year of his age, at Montreal, where he carried on a large mercantile business. His death was sudden, being stricken with apoplexy and lapsed into a state of unconsciousness, from which he did not recover, but died the same day. Though his death was so sudden and he left no dying testimony of his salvation by grace, yet I am satisfied he was one of the Lord's redeemed ones for whom the Savior shed his blood. He told me some eighteen years ago what a sinner he felt himself to be, and that he was perfectly helpless and unable to do the least thing to effect his own salvation, but he had been given a hope that Jesus died for his sins. He was very clear on the doctrine of salvation by grace and on election and predestination, and said he loved to talk on these things and loved those who believe in the doctrine of the sovereignty and supreme power of God. I had a long talk with him about a year ago, and he was firm and strong in the same truths that he was made to love many years ago. What a comfort and consolation to those he left to mourn his sudden departure from this world of sin and sorrow, which is their loss, but we hope is his eternal gain, and we most surely hope and believe he is now in the presence of his Savior whom he loved, while the body of dust and clay has returned to the dust from whence it came. His sister told me he wrote some wonderful letters before he died. He leaves a widow and one daughter, three sisters, two of whom are members of the Old School Baptist Church and the other a believer, though not a member, and one brother, who is a believer, though not a member of the church. He was buried at Melbourne, the home of his youth, where he was born. He took the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years.

ALSO,

Amos Carter, the father of Charles, also died very suddenly a week after the death of his son. He was talking to his daughter, when suddenly, without any warning, he fell from his chair and in a moment expired. It was a terrible shock to his daughter, Mrs. Jones, at whose home he died and where he had made his home for some years before his death, but as in the case of his son, they have a blessed hope that he has gone to glory to be forever with the Lord. He was in the 76th year of his age, and had been quite feeble and in rather poor health for several years, but was up and around until the day of his death. What a consolation to the friends left to mourn that he left evidence that he was called by grace and made to love the things he once hated. He told me how he once disliked the Old School Baptists and their doctrine, but there came a time when he found himself a poor helpless sinner, and the only way he could be saved was by the free grace of God. He said from that time he loved the Old School Baptists and their doctrine and preaching, and gave evidence of it by going to hear them when he could and by helping them financially and in every way he could. He was a very kind and loving parent, and was beloved by his family, who mourn for and miss him very much, and he was worthy of their love. He was an honorable man, noted for his honesty and integrity, and his word was always taken without a doubt; he was respected by all who knew him. I do not think he had an enemy. Pardon this tribute to his memory, but it is only what I feel is his due. He left one son and three daughters to mourn the loss of a loving father: J. W. Carter, of Pontiac, Mich., Mrs. William Tanner, of Melbourne, Mrs. W. C. Young, of Toronto, and Mrs. W. A. Jones, of Straffordville; also two brothers-in-law and a sister-in-law, to whom he was dear. I feel my loss very much, also that of his son, Charles Carter; how must his own children miss him.

He was buried at Melbourne. Elder Slauson officiated at his funeral. I was very sorry I was unable to attend. R. SCATES.

Mrs. Sarah Jane Cummins was born Sept. 16th, 1828, and died August 11th, 1919, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Mary Bassett, near Chester, Montana. She was the daughter of John and Jane Crocker Lemmon, and was born in Sangamon, Ill. At the age of eight years she with her parents went to Indiana for two years, then to Oxford, Ohio. When she was fourteen years of age they moved to St. Joseph, Mo., where on April 16th, 1845, she was married to Benjamin Walden, and on May 3rd of the same year they started across the plains to Oregon, arriving at Oregon City about October 12th of that year. Later they settled in the Waldo Hills, near Salem, on land adjoining the home of Elder John Stipp. Here the old Siloam Church was constituted Feb. 27th, 1847, and on the first Sunday in December, 1849, father was baptized (the old record does not state by whom), and on the first Sunday in August, 1850, mother was baptized by Elder William Simpson. In 1870 the family moved to western Oregon, where on Nov. 27th, 1886, father was buried. October 8th, 1894, she was married to Dr. Cummins, of Touchet, Wash. His death occurred Dec. 8th, 1912, since which time she resided with her children, going to Chester, Mon., in 1915 with her youngest living

child, Mrs. Mary Bassett. When only seven years of age she heard a voice speak in audible tones, "Ye must be born again." She had been taught to read the Bible, and found the words to be those spoken to Nicodemus. She felt the burden of sin and desired to know more of these eternal truths, and in great tribulation sought the people who know the joyful sound of salvation by grace. During those early years of her life she read the Bible through nine times. It was her daily companion in early life as well as in her declining years. Sister and I found her Bible on her window open and marked at 1st Samuel xvii. 45, and on finding the old family Bible that had been her text book in reading many times during her early school days the book opened to the same text with marks to designate: "But I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied," and those words were used by her pastor, Elder J. C. Barnes, as a text for the funeral sermon, which was preached in the home of her son, John E. Walden, in Weston. The date was necessarily changed from August 24th to August 21st, the earliest date on which he could reach Weston from Montana. A large congregation assembled, especially from her church at Touchet. Her passing away was a wonderful demonstration of God's mercy. About the first days of August she began to grow weary of the long continued heat and drought, and when sister would ask her if she was sick or in any way uncomfortable, she would reply: "No, I am not sick, I am just wearing out." She was up part of each day until the last day or two, and preferred to wait on herself, yet her failing strength was evident, and as the days went by she continued to say, "I am just wearing out." As sister sat by her a day or two before the last, she told of having seen a wonderful vision of angels, saying it was the most wonderful of all sights that she had ever viewed. She listened to the reading of a letter from her only sister, and said she heard it with interest. During that day she remarked that her prayers were being answered. Soon after eating an orange she asked for a drink of water, and said she did not need assistance to rise from her pillow. Sister said, "Mother, you are sweating." Mother replied, "Yes, I know what it is." Half an hour later she asked to have her pillow removed, then made every preparation and went peacefully to that rest which awaits the redeemed of the Lord. She was the mother of ten children, four of whom survive: Nathan B. Walden, of Canada, John E. Walden, of Weston, Mo., Martha J. Allen, of La Grande, Oregon, and Mrs. Mary Bassett, of Chester, Montana; also twenty-one grandchildren and sixteen great-grandchildren. Her only sister, Mrs. Elizabeth C. Davis, came from Hood River to attend the funeral. She was eighty years of age last July 27th, and has been a Baptist since early in life. Mother was a member about sixty-nine years, and moved her membership but once, which was from Siloam Church to the constitution of Mizpah Church, at Weston; it was later moved to Touchet, Wash. Sister was prevented from accompanying me from Montana on account of a severe accident to her husband, being struck by a horse. We are widely separated, and our mother had been able to share our mutual woes. How lonely and bereft we are. Neither of us has learned to do without a mother's tender care and words of consolation. We trust our friends will remember us at the throne of grace.

MARTHA J. ALLEN.

Mary S. Reeves Yerkes, daughter of brother Caswell and sister Anna Reeves and wife of George H. Yerkes, was born Sept. 15th, 1889, and died June 27th, 1919, aged nearly 30 years. Sister Mary was baptized in the fellowship and love of the Old School Baptist Church by Elder S. H. Durand, at Southampton, Pa., July 4th, 1909.. Her life in the church and among all who knew her was adorned with the ornament of a meek and humble spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price. The church, as well as all who loved her, has met with a great loss, but for her it was far better to depart and be with Christ. We pray to be submissive to the ways and providence of God, who doeth all things well. She was one of those whose mind was occupied for the welfare of others, and had felt deeply exercised to care for her parents as well as for her husband and daughter, but found the Lord had ordered it otherwise, that she was the one to be cared for. I visited her at the sanitarium; she was alone, a heavy thunder shower had passed over before I arrived, the windows in her room were open, and I asked her if they were not closed during the storm. She replied: "No; I wanted them open so as to see the mighty power of God," and repeated the words, "Not a single shaft can hit till the God of love sees fit." I knew she was aware of her serious condition, and asked her if she was reconciled. Her reply was, "I cannot say that I am, but I want to be." I told her this was in substance the words that Jesus spoke: "Not my will, but thine be done." She told of the Lord having spoken the words, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want," and said with emphasis, "They were for me." I visited her at her parents' home a few hours before her departure, and read in the fourteenth chapter of John where Jesus spoke of going into death, and was convinced that she comprehended by faith that death was abolished; that they who live and believe in Jesus shall never die. Such scenes and visits are impossible of description, but are known to those who have traveled in these paths. Brethren and sisters, visit God's little ones; your presence gives them comfort and is wellpleas-

ing in the sight of the blessed Redeemer. May God give strength and grace to the bereaved.

The funeral service was held June 30th, from the home of her parents, conducted by the writer. Text, John vi. 38, 39. Four young ladies sang some hymns. Burial was in the Old School Baptist burying-ground at Southampton, Pa. J. M. FENTON.

Norma Faye Culpepper was born March 30th, 1913, and died August 21st, 1919, making her stay on earth 6 years, 4 months and 22 days. She was the third child of six children of Mathew and Lela Culpepper, and had a very bright mind. Death relieved her from suffering. The good Lord did not leave us comfortless. Her mother heard her twice speak of wanting to be an angel. One of her brothers told her if she was in heaven she could not come back here any more. She said, "Well, I would not want to come back; then I could see the good man." She loved sacred singing, and her parents and other relatives kept a song book on her bed most of the time and sang to her for several days before she died. Her mind seemed to be settled on her heavenly home. May her parents be consoled with the thought that they have one child in heaven, who will never know sorrow or trouble any more. Her parents had several doctors attend her, and sent their babies away from home for a week so they could give her all their attention. May they be reconciled to the Lord's will, for it will not be long before he will take them to her, never to part any more. Happy thought! to meet in heaven never to part again.

Written by her grandmother,

MATTIE HAWK.

MEETINGS.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting, discontinued last year by the influenza, will meet, the Lord willing, with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Va., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 15th, 16th and 17th, 1919. Those coming by rail will be met Tuesday afternoon before the meeting at Herndon, Va. Trains leave 36th and M Sts. N. W., Washington, D. C., at 2 and 5:30 o'clock. Forty minutes should be allowed to get from the Union Station in Washington to the terminal where trains leave for Herndon. We want all brethren and ministers of our faith and order who feel it in their hearts to meet with us, to do so.

R. L. SPINDLE, Church Clerk.

THE Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church will hold their annual meeting, the Lord willing, at Ashokan, N. Y., on Saturday and Sunday, October 18th and 19th, 1919. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. South bound trains will be met Friday p. m., and trains from Kingston will be met Saturday a. m.

JOHN J. SECOR, Church Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Welsh Tract Church is appointed to be held on the third Sunday and Saturday before in October, 1919, service to begin on Saturday at 11 o'clock a. m. Those coming from Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore will come via Penna. B. & W. R. R. to Newark, Del. Train leaves Philadelphia, Broad St. station, at 9 o'clock a. m. Saturday, and Baltimore, Union station, at 8 o'clock a. m., and on Sunday, from Philadelphia, Broad St. station, at 8 o'clock a. m. Those coming on the Delaware Division will take train leaving Delmar at 7:54 a. m. Saturday. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us, and we hope to have a good attendance from sister churches.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to meet with the Little Creek Church, in Delmar, Del., October 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1919. All trains on the Delaware Division of P. R. R. and the N. Y., P. & N. R. R. stop at Delmar. Those coming on Tuesday, 21st, take train leaving Philadelphia (Broad St.) at 3 p. m. From the south, day express due at Delmar 3:25 p. m. Wednesday morning trains will be looked after also. All lovers of the truth are invited.

A. B. FRANCIS, Pastor.

EBENEZER
OLD SCHOOL
BAPTIST CHURCH,
IN
NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.
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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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(Judges v. 11.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 87. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1919. NO. 21.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"EXCEEDING GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES."

My afflicted daughter often asks me my understanding of various passages of Scriptures which are impressed on her mind, and as I was reading to her the first chapter of the inspired apostle Peter, fourth verse, these exceeding great and precious promises, as recorded in the Scriptures of truth, gave me comfort, so with the ability that God giveth I will attempt to pen some of these great and precious promises for the comfort of the strangers and pilgrims scattered abroad over our land. Surely we are in need of comfort in this age of strife and turmoil. God has given us great and precious promises, that we should trust in his name and not faint, but endure hardness as good soldiers of the cross. As it is said, we suck honey out of the rock, and Jesus is the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, and when blessed to rest under the shadow of his wing we have peace and quiet from the turmoil abroad over the earth, when our heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord, who is above every name, and the only name given under heaven whereby we must be saved, even the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. "And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."—Matt. v. 2–12. I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. We love Jesus because he first loved us. I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. This love does not spring from the flesh, nature's barren soil, but

is the love of God shed abroad in the hearts of his people. A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another. Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee. Jesus has removed the sins of his bride as far as the east is from the west, so that his bride, his church, is pure and spotless, and will ere long come into her inheritance, which is incorruptible, undefiled and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, ready to be revealed in the last time. His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Wonder, O heavens, and be astonished, O earth. The Father sent his beloved Son into the world at the appointed time, that the world through him might be saved—the world of his people, from Adam on down through the ages, all that believe on his name, to the last vessel of mercy brought into the fold by the quickening power of God's Holy Spirit, and through the power of reigning grace, even the free and unmerited grace of God. For by grace are ye saved, one and all, even as many as God gave to his Son. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me; they constitute that innumerable company of the redeemed, who are blessed with God-given faith. These are children of Abraham, who is the father of the faithful, even the father of many nations, and shall be as the stars of heaven, innumerable. When Jesus makes up his jewels not one of them will be missing. Here, Father, am I, and the children which thou hast given me. A bruised reed will he not break, and smoking flax will he not quench, until he send forth judgment unto victory. These bruised reeds are sure of victory, as Jesus will bring them off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him that loved them and gave himself for them. Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter i. 13.) Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous. (1 Peter iii. 8.) Finally, brethren, farewell. Live in peace, and the God of love and peace be with you. The grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ be with you all.

In affliction, yet in hope,

WM. F. SLOAN.

LEXINGTON, Ky.

OSKALOOSA, Kansas, Jan. 5, 1919.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—"'Mid scenes of confusion and creature complaints," I feel that nothing would be so soothing to my soul as the communion of saints, from which I have been debarred for some time, except, as I hope, in some brief moments in spirit. For though I am led away captive by the devil at his will, and unable to set my mind on spiritual things, as I long to do, yet in spirit I hope I am often with the people of God, especially those of membership in the same church with me, when meeting time comes and I am unable to meet with them, and fear that I cannot during the cold winter which is now upon us. But worse than that, it seems so much of the time that it is winter in my soul. No matter how much I read, and for the time being enjoy the good things at hand, hoping thereby to warm myself into the same sweet spirituality evidenced by the writers, yet I am only made to lie down in sorrow, for as soon as the paper is laid aside the devil catches away the good things I had hoped to retain, and my

mind is again engrossed with the cares and perplexities of worldly affairs, and only evil is present with me. I have been very sick, having been a victim of influenza and malarial fever, which attacked me in October. I have wished that the dear ones who in times past have so kindly ministered to my needs with their good letters, might know that is one reason I have not been able to answer and so keep up the prized correspondence. The weeks I lay upon my bed I did long for a repetition of the precious tokens of God's love which were sent by their hands, for I felt that I was made to realize the verity of the line, "Sometimes I am oppressed by Satan's cruel hand." The day I was taken sick I received a letter from Elder J. H. Hammons and wife, of Junction City, and was enjoying it when the misery of that awful scourge suddenly came upon me. In my feverish tossings I was sometimes inditing answers to them, which seemed a pleasure to me. Again, ere I was aware, such thoughts had all flown, and I was encompassed by such swarms of "fiery, flying serpents," which would sting me with the most unprofitable, hateful, sinful thoughts, and I could not drive them away. I think I could say truly that the christian was "the neighbor I longed the most to see." Maybe I look too much to an arm of flesh for comfort, for it seems that I still am left most of the time at the mercy of Satan's cruel hand. Sometimes when expecting the SIGNS I think, shall I call it a prayer, that it might please the Lord to send me, by the hand of his faithful ones, food and raiment, even a crumb of comfort as a token for good, that I may be once more warmed and fed, clothed and in my right mind, the mind of Christ. For having once tasted the good word of God, as I am still undeservedly permitted to hope that I have, though I must eat it with the bitter herbs of evil propensities of my carnal mind, yet nothing else will satisfy. Even as I write the tempter is constantly suggesting that I am trying to deceive the people of God, who know all spiritual things better than I can ever hope to know. O, you who love the Lord indeed, tell me, is it thus with you? Do you ever fear that what you write may only serve to deprive you of the fellowship of those you esteem more than all the world beside? Yet there is a longing to pour out your heart-cries to them, for they only of all the world can understand. When the January 1st SIGNS came yesterday I opened it with a kind of apathy and discouragement, as though it were of no use, I must just wait the Lord's time to drive the dark clouds away and restore unto me the joy of his salvation. Yet there was an eagerness to see what it might contain, and wonder of wonders, before I had read the first column I felt that my prayer was answered, and I rejoiced in spirit, for it surely was more than a crumb I received. I feasted on Elder Greathouse's definition of the conception which the Lord would multiply in Eve, who was a figure of the church in all ages. How often have we used the expression, I cannot conceive of such a thing, which would mean of course that it is impossible to form such an idea in the mind; but to give the word "conception" that definition in the connection in which it is used in that Scripture had never entered my mind. I saw, as a flash of light, how fitting and appropriate it is to give it that meaning. I started to lay the paper aside, desiring to just try to think of all it embraced, but I read on, and as he commented on the many afflictions of the righteous, and his own sorrow and conceptions, and remember-

ing the mournful way in which I have been led so much, I thought of the text, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." For is there any class of people on earth more miserable than an Old Baptist when he turns his eyes within and begins to look only on the things of his own, and sees nothing but the corrupting fruits of the flesh? The wicked are not in trouble as other men are. Their sins and the death in which they live do not oppress them. They go through life boasting of their happiness and scorning hope. So if our hope did not reach beyond this life, surely we would of all people on earth be the most miserable. But our dear Elder Brother said, "I will not leave you comfortless." He comforts us with a hope of a better life in the world to come, where he, our Forerunner, is already gone, that where he is, there we may be also. Yet in our sorrows and the conceptions of our feeble minds we often esteem our hope as little and insufficient, and if it were not that the Lord is with us when the enemy comes in like a flood, as the many afflictions of the righteous fall on us, tempting us to lay it aside and try to obtain a better hope, if it were not the Lord who is on our side, holding us with his own right hand, we would, if left to ourselves, cast off the anchor of our souls; for we are saved by hope. But we must be kept humble, and nothing better is given; and little as it sometimes seems, yet when in our right mind we prize it more than the choicest treasures this earth can afford; we would not exchange it for all the pomp and splendor of kings. What a puzzle we are to the world, and to ourselves also; for while we go mourning all our days, yet we would not give up our little hope or exchange places with the happiest worldling in existence. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of the wicked. We would go farther to clasp the hand in the humblest abode of the feeblest lamb in Jesus' fold, than to obtain the highest seat in the gorgeous panorama now being enacted for our president. Of how little value it would all be when compared to a little glimpse of the eternal joys that await us when done with the sorrows and vain imaginings of this fleeting life. When I reflect on how nigh overwhelmed I so often am by worldly cares and anxieties, and find myself so full of nothing but complaints, how marvelous it seems that I should have been permitted the enjoyment I experienced in reading this last number, and felt that I would love to answer each letter personally. How sweet it would be to be spiritually minded and enjoy life and peace. The psalmist said, Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee. I long to have my mind on him. I dreaded to lay the paper by, fearing to lapse again into the same coldness. Often in my many wakeful hours I try to pray to him to collect my wandering thoughts and set them on the precious things of his, and help me to not look so much on self and selfish things. I hate vain thoughts. How sad and solemn, and yet how true, are Elder Lefferts' words, that many who are now valued writers, before another year has passed will have gone the way of all the earth. We can only bow in submission to God's will. We know he will not leave himself without witnesses as long as there is a people who need testimony of him.

In love, I humbly hope, to the household of faith, I now submit this letter, already too lengthy, to the disposal of the editors, and if published let it not

crowd out anything that is written to the praise of grace.

I remain your unworthy sister, I hope, in that bond of relationship which can never be broken, for once a child of God always a child of God, and nothing, not even our own lives, shall ever be able to separate us from the love of our Father in heaven.

MARY ELLISON.

RUTH IV. 11.

"THE Lord make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel."

While the story of Ruth is a wonderful example of the working of God's Spirit in a human being, it is just as wonderful when worked out in every sinner saved by grace. The desire to know the Lord's people, and to dwell with them, the gleaning after the reapers, the welcome she found when she came to the Israelites, all these evidences are being manifested in our day. In herself Ruth had nothing with which to claim the favor of those with whom she was seeking a dwelling-place. She came out of an idolatrous nation which dated back to an incentuous beginning. All she asks is to gather a portion of what grain falls to the earth (apparently as waste, or that would otherwise be lost) that her hunger might be satisfied without any cost to those who have a right to the bread of the land and to dwell therein. Her desire and humble spirit make a welcome for her, her former nationality has nothing to do with the matter. After making her welcome, both to glean after the reapers and to share his own noonday meal, Boaz later makes her his wife. Thus she becomes an Israelite, and is entitled to all the rights and privileges of the Israelites, as much as if she had been born of their kindred; her former nationality, with all its idolatry, is left behind. Boaz in making her his wife makes her his equal in every respect, "and they shall be one flesh."—Gen. ii. 24. He has given her his name, and made her an Israelite. But some say the stain of the sinful parentage of the Moabites still remains and taints the future generations. If that is sometimes so in nature it is not so in grace, nor is there anything on record to show that any after outcropping of evil had its origin from the union of Ruth with Boaz. I believe that these characters are types of the Lord's people, and his way of calling them to know him in a personal manner, as well as serving their own place in the world's history, and the purpose of God in the plan of redemption. Taking that view, Boaz represents the Lord of the harvest of human souls, or the Lord Jesus Christ, and Ruth represents those of whom the Lord speaks when he says by the mouth of the prophet, "Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears."—Isaiah xliii. 8. When any came to Jesus asking to be healed, he cured so that they were whole; in no case on record did he leave one trace of the infirmity. If a sinner is saved by the blood of the Lamb the taint of evil is washed away. As his bride, the church is cleansed and pure, and no charge of former life or sinful ancestry can ever be charged against them collectively, nor individually, and of such sinners redeemed is the house of spiritual Israel built. Just as much in our time as it was in Ruth's every sinner called by grace as much fulfills their place in the purpose of God in building his church as they do in the world's history, and the history of the world is very closely connected with the history of the Lord's people. Boaz did not marry Ruth and

leave her of the family of Moab with a tainted reputation, nor did Jesus Christ espouse the cause of sinners and leave them unchanged, but saved them from their former condition and gave them a hope in his mercy. As the marriage rite creates the nearest kinship on earth, so also does Jesus raise sinners to sit with kings and princes, above all taint of the past, for, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?"

A. E. RITTENHOUSE.

STATE ROAD, Del., Sept. 13, 1919.

CLAREMORE, Okla., Oct. 5, 1919.

EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS: —While I was preaching to-day it occurred to me that fifty-nine years ago today I was led down into the water of a brook and baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. As I spoke of it I said that it seemed wonderful to me that the Lord had kept me so long believing in the one and only way of salvation. Now, in looking back over those fifty-nine years I have one very sweet consolation, and it is this: I cannot remember since then of one whole day that I was permitted to put my trust for a hope in the salvation from the consequences of sin in my hands, or in the hands of any, save in the hand of Jesus, my only Savior. I have greatly lamented, however, that I could not exalt the power, wisdom, greatness and love of God as I desired to do. I have had a desire above many things to be able to extol the great riches of God's grace. His grace has certainly been rich to me; yes, to me, a sinner, who has many times (I cannot number them) felt wretched through all these years. Mercy, yea, mercy, has been my portion all the days of these years. Evil has always been creeping through my mind, but it does seem that grace did much more abound. However, when I look at my attempt at what some call "right living," I mourn, and think of Jacob's words: "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been." I have many times wanted what is called prosperity "to dawn on me and remain." I thought if that could come to me, then I would be equipped to serve the Lord better and praise him more. I believe that in all these years the Lord has been teaching me, not that his Spirit has been with me so much, but in the many changing things of this natural life, which seemed to be against me, and I was weak and faint, his providence came to my relief, so when sore trials were gone I could read a good lesson out of the book of God's grace. Then it was that I knew the Lord did have power over my surroundings. My conclusion then was, if God controlled some things which I saw, then he must control all things that exist, and I had Scripture for it, too. At no time was my belief so strong in the predestination of all things that I felt to charge God with folly, by saying that God compelled man to sin, or that he was the author of sin. To my certain knowledge an unjust inference like this has been drawn against those called "Absoluters" for many years by those who strenuously oppose the doctrine of God's sovereignty, predestination and foreknowledge. I have thought it to be safe to say, and near the truth, that God created man a conditional creature and placed this conditional creature under law, but that God was not at all disappointed in him, for he did the very thing that God knew he would do. There is conclusive proof of this, because a Surety existed by the power of the Father before creation and transgression. There are so many strong points of doctrine along the

line of predetermination, expressed by God through the Scriptures, that I do not get shocked in my feelings at all when brethren talk sensibly about "absolute predestination of all things." What is more full on that subject (cutting out pronouns) than this? For of God, and through God, and to God, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen. (Rom. xi. 36.) I shall not submit further proof of the great wisdom of God in doing just what he willed to do. However, I wish to say as my experience seemed to grasp many things that involved the wonderful power of God's grace, combined with God's reigning over all things of earth and everywhere else, which in all these years has made me satisfied in the Lord's way of saving sinners, and that it is far-reaching, embracing the very lowest and the very highest in the kingdom of grace, "to the uttermost," and displays the wisdom of God, that it is superb, honorable, just and right. Quickened sinners that are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ and called, may praise God with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto him.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

KINGSTON, N. Y., Dec. 16, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed two dollars to renew my subscription to the SIGNS for another year, as I am still in the land of the dying, and cannot get along without it. I was out to meeting last evening to hear Elder Ruston, and I felt that I was in company with the living, but whether I am a living subject, or not, is what troubles me. I enjoyed the preaching, and also the singing, but not with the same animation that I have in times past, and I grieve that I cannot, and the words of the poet come comfortingly to my mind:

"Where is the happiness I knew
When first I knew the Lord?
Where is the soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus and his word?"

But O the darkness and heaviness; neither hot nor cold. What a fearful state to be in; but who can tell me how I can get away from myself and obtain what I so long for? The command was, Look unto me and be ye saved, for I am God, and beside me there is no Savior, and I firmly believe that, but how can the blind look to him? Yet there is nowhere else to look, so all I can do is to continue looking and waiting and hoping for a glimpse of heavenly day to take this stubborn stone away. How I long to be wholly changed and made a new creature, for it seems to me that I am all vile, and sinful throughout. I wonder if Paul felt like that when he said, O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The natural death would lose its terrors were it not for the solemn thought, What if my name should be left out in that most solemn day? But if he saves me I must trust in his mercy and trust in his righteousness, for I have none of my own, and my fig leaf garment was torn from me long ago, so I have no covering for my defenceless head but the shadow of his wing; but I am thankful that I have life enough left in me to feel a desire for the truth and a love for them that I think know the truth and proclaim it without fear or reward. That is all the preaching I want to hear, for they are the ones that point me to the God of creation and the upholder of the universe, who puts down rulers and kingdoms, and uses his own power and wisdom to bring about all his designs. All I desire is the lifting of Jesus on high, and have all power ascribed to his name, both now and for evermore.

I have been quite sick again, and wonder why so many young and useful should be taken and I left to grope and blunder on, when I feel that I am so unprofitable to any one, yet God's ways are not our ways, and his ways are the ways of peace, blessed peace. The sound of peace is sweet to me, also rest. It is beautiful to think of rest, the rest that remains for the child of God that many are entering in, and I hope it remains for poor sinful me through his mercy.

Pardon me for the length of this poor attempt.

Yours unworthily,

(MRS.) G. H. FAULKNER.

FAIRVIEW, Ky., Sept. 10, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please change my address from Prescott, Ariz., to Fairview, Ky. I wish I could send you some new subscribers, for I love the dear old SIGNS, also the messages its pages contain, for they are to me as good news from a far country. I am past my eightieth birthday, and frail both in body and mind. The road may be rugged, but it cannot be long. Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to the cross I cling.

Yours unworthily,

HARRIET UNDERWOOD.

GALESBURG, Ill., July 14, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Reading in the first chapter of Colossians this afternoon I came upon a passage that I would like very much to have your opinion upon. It is in the twenty-third verse, and reads, "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven," &c. In the two verses preceding Paul speaks of the reconciliation and cleansing (spiritually) of the Colossians through the sacrifice of Jesus. The "if" here seems to introduce a condition upon which they shall be presented holy, unblamable and unreprovable in his sight. Also I would like to know your opinion as to when it was that the gospel was preached to every creature, as is stated in the latter part of this verse in these words: "The hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister." If you feel moved to write in the SIGNS on these questions I will be deeply grateful.

Unworthily, your sister,

GRACE VEECH SMITH.

(See editorial reply on page 329.)

NOTICE TO WRITERS.

WE wish to request our brethren and friends, when sending us obituary and other notices for publication, to please write with ink, on good paper, and to be particular to have all names, initials and dates written plainly, as it reflects on us to have a name or date printed wrong, when it would have appeared correctly had it been written plainly. Also, please be particular to have names spelled correctly. If our correspondents will use care in these things they will be of great assistance to us in publishing notices correctly.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in November (30th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1919.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

COLOSSIANS I. 23.

IT would be a pleasure to comply with the request of sister Smith, on page 328, could we but feel the guiding Spirit of the Lord inditing the matter. Many such requests come to the office, and some of them are not granted because of lack of understanding, never because of disregard for the wishes of those who make such requests. While it sometimes seems that an editor is expected to know all things, and ready at all times to expound the most difficult questions, we are frank to confess that there is much more we do not know than there is that we understand, and it is always with a feeling of fear that we approach any divine subject. We therefore trust that no one will feel that their request is wilfully ignored.

The Scripture, and its connections, suggested by our sister proves that the very thing all missionary systems are trying to do was accomplished by the apostles almost two thousand years ago. In this subject is also encouched the work of salvation wrought by the Redeemer of sinners two thousand years ago, but which is now supposed to be brought about by the combined efforts of the Arminian world. False prophets were numerous in days of old, and since the gospel dispensation was ushered in, the world has never been without false teachers. The word of God is the man of our counsel, and if men do not write, speak and think in harmony with it it is because they have no light in them, and it makes no difference whatever about their intellectual ability. Some of the apostles were not reckoned as being very intellectual, but they had the truth of God, and testified to it, which no mortal could except he had been with Jesus and learned of him. Such testimony was better then than all the wisdom of the world, and the same is true to-day. Coming more directly to the subject, we will say that Paul, having heard of the faith in God, and love to the brethren of those at Colosse, wrote this wonderful letter that they might know of his love for and joy in them, and to confirm them in the faith and exhort them to faithfulness and steadfastness in the gospel of Christ, which gospel he clearly defined as the power of God, and the message of salvation to both Jew and Gentile. He told them of the wonderful mystery and secret of God in the redemption of all nations, that while all were enemies to him by wicked works, he had mercy upon all, that then salvation might be reckoned of grace rather than of debt. This secret was made known in the gift of Christ, the anointed of God, who blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was contrary to them, and spoiled principalities and powers, triumphing over them, that the dead might live unto God, justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law. Having therefore been quickened together with Him they had become subjects of grace, and subjects, therefore, for gospel preaching, the message of salvation, which they joyously received and believed. In the

body of his flesh, through death, Christ had reconciled them to present them holy and unblamable and unreprovable in the sight of God the Father. This means "without fault before him in love." The word "if" referred to by our sister, does not, in our understanding, present a condition upon their part as to whether or not they could be presented in His sight holy and unblamable and unreprovable, but rather, like all his exhortations, and those also of the other apostles, he warned them against those who would subvert the gospel of Christ and carry them away in their minds, through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ, in whom dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and in whom they were complete. The Galatians after being manifested as the children of God, and had received Paul as an angel of God, even as the Lord Jesus, and had it been possible would have plucked out their eyes and given them to him, became bewitched by false teachers who preached to them that except they were circumcised and kept the law of Moses they could not be saved. Paul, therefore, knowing the weakness of babes in Christ, and the cunning craftiness of those who lie in wait to deceive, impressed upon them the importance of steadfastness in the faith, that they might grow in grace and in the knowledge of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The work of God in regeneration and justification was as complete when Christ rose from the dead as it will be when worlds are no more; if his children are not pure and holy in his sight now they never can be. The efficacy of the blood of the Lamb was so wonderful that not a shadow of guilt remains upon one for whom he died, but the lives of men and women are not always spotless here in the eyes of the world, nor in the eyes of the law of his church. In those days many by their walk denied the Lord that bought them, while on the other hand many were steadfast, and commended for it. This will be seen by reading the messages to the churches of Asia. It is a wonderful thing to be grounded and settled in the faith of God and to rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. The apostle told those brethren that the same gospel which they heard had been preached to every creature under heaven. Our sister asks, When was that done? It will be remembered that when Christ came he came unto his own, the Jews, of which nation he was, being of the house of David. When he preached it was to the Jews, when he sent his disciples out to preach they were restricted to the Jewish nation; his manner of life was that of a Jew, and the manner of his burial was that of the Jews. His choice of apostles was of the Jews, the church was established among the Jews, but just before his ascension to the Father he commanded his disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. It should be remembered that this commission was given to the apostles, and it is natural to suppose that they obeyed the Lord; at any rate, Paul said they did. First, on the day of Pentecost we find Jews, devout men of every nation, kindred and tongue under heaven there, and when the apostles preached in the power of the Holy Ghost every man heard in his own tongue, wherein he was born, "the wonderful works of God," meaning the salvation of sinners, wrought through his Son, Jesus Christ. While on that day all were Jews, they represented every nation under heaven. Inasmuch as the middle wall of partition that separated between Jew and Gentile had been re-

moved, the mystery of God that he had a people among all nations was revealed in the command to preach the gospel to every creature under heaven. The preaching of the gospel is simply delivering the message of salvation. All nations being included in God's plan and purpose, all embraced in his love and mercy, it was necessary that the message of salvation be sent to all nations, or, in other words, to every creature. That work, therefore, was done by the apostles, they went everywhere, preaching to the Gentiles as well as the Jews the unsearchable riches of Christ. Preaching the gospel to every creature means nothing more or less than preaching to both Jew and Gentile. May we all who love his name be grounded and settled in the faith, growing in grace and knowledge until "the hope of the gospel" be swallowed up in fruition.

K.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder N. J. Jones.)

To the Elders and messengers of the Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, and the churches they represent, and to all with whom we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED OF THE LORD:—By the tender and everlasting mercy and love of our covenant-keeping God we have been spared to meet again as an association, and we hope we feel thankful to that God who rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou? for from him cometh all good gifts. The brethren at our last meeting said that I should write a letter, commonly called a Circular Letter, to be printed with the Minutes of our meeting, and for a starting point I will call your minds to Isaiah xliii. 25, which reads as follows: "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Brethren, this Scripture is found in prophecy. It was written about seven hundred years before Jesus was born in Bethlehem. It was your Savior talking when he said, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Now who was he talking to? He surely was talking to his people. Why did he speak of their sins? It was because it is natural in man to sin and transgress God's just, holy and good law. Your Savior is not as man; he fully knows all things without learning them. He saw his loved ones when they were in the garden of Eden, when the first man brought sin into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned. Yes, he saw these things without learning; he saw them all the days of old, and before the day was he saw them. He saw them when they were a stiffnecked and haughty people, and he saw them when they were full of bruises and putrefying sores from the soles of the feet even unto the head, and he saw without learning his people when they had before proved, both Jews and Gentiles, that they were all under sin, when none understood. "There is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their way: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no

fear of God before their eyes." He loved them all the time with an everlasting love; yes, I say he loved them. Christ the Lord is not like poor, weak and sinful man; he did not need to learn anything to see the end from the beginning. He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. What he doeth he doeth forever; there can be nothing added to it nor anything taken from it. Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being his counselor, hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him and taught him knowledge and showed him the way of understanding? Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance. Behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. All nations before him are as nothing, and vanity. It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in. Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching his understanding. Let us hear from the prophet David; he says: "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; thou understandest my thought afar off. * * * For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether."—Psalms cxxxix. 1, 2, 4. He said much more that space will not allow. It is no wonder that he broke forth in language like this: Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. King David was taught of God, and he knew what man was. Now, the Redeemer saw them in their sins and loved them with an everlasting love. He knew that God's just, holy and good law stood out boldly against them, and as they were his he agreed to redeem them from under the curse of the law. This is why he said, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake." They were his, God the Father had given them to him. There was never another character that could redeem them. God had given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as were given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. This is why he left heaven and all that heaven means, came to this low ground of sin and sorrow and made himself a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He bore their sins all the days of old, and taught them both in word and precept how to act. They were his, he chose them in himself before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. He did not chose them if they would be holy and without blame before him in love, but that they should. Their holiness is not of themselves, it is of their Savior; in him all fullness dwells. O think of the time Jesus was born! There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. The angel of the Lord came unto them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them. The angel said unto them, Fear not, for I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, Christ the Lord. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest,

and on earth peace, good will toward men. O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of our God. He belongs to you and you belong to him; he redeemed you. He was bearing your sins all the days of old. He has made you free from the law of sin and death. Not only this, but he has conquered death for you, because you are his and he loves you with an everlasting love. There is not anything that can separate you from his love. Everything that can be named in this world or the next cannot separate you from his love. You are his, and he said, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Brethren, your Redeemer has sweetened the grave, he has been there; yes, he was dead, he had his side pierced with a spear and had nails driven through his hands, and hung on the cross, but there was not a murmur. He went down into the grave, but he is not dead now, he is alive. O no, your Savior is not dead, he is alive to die no more. He is the first-fruits of the resurrection; yes, your Savior is the first-fruits, afterwards them that are his at his coming. You know he is coming again to receive you unto himself, that where he is, there you may be also, to enjoy the everlasting eternity given you by your Redeemer, and you will see him as he is and be like him.

Now, brethren, I feel to close. May the Lord bless you and keep you, and may he see fit to give you of his Spirit's power, so you may worship him in spirit and in truth, and save us all in that home where there will be no sorrow, and where Father, Son and Holy Ghost reign. Amen.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator.

J. M. CATE, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Jasper Richardson departed this life October 1st, 1919. His last sickness was stomach, kidney and bowel trouble. He had three doctors and a trained nurse, and all was done for him that willing hands could do, but all failed to restore him. When the summons came he passed away as one going to sleep, without a struggle. He had been preaching about twenty-five years, and was an earnest contender for the doctrine of God our Savior, salvation by grace and grace alone. He made friends wherever he traveled; all who knew him loved him, as he was kind and affectionate to all. We can truly say a great man in Israel has fallen. It was hard to give him up; we shall miss him so much at home and at our meetings, but it is the Lord's will, and we must bow in submission to this our sad bereavement, as in all things else.

Elder J. A. Collins, of Cleveland, Texas, conducted the funeral services in the midst of a large concourse of relatives and friends, using the fourth chapter of Job to speak from. Our brother had selected hymn 623 (Lloyd's hymn-book) some time before he passed away, to be sung at his burial. He was buried in the Antioch Cemetery, near the old churchyard, where he had so often spoken words of comfort to the dear brethren and friends.

May God heal the wounded hearts of the bereaved ones and bless them with such things as will be for their good, is the prayer of his sorrowing brother,

AMOS RICHARDSON.

Mrs. Ida Dyson White, our sister in Christ, the wife of our brother, Deacon Harvey J. White, died suddenly at her home near Poolesville, Md., of cerebral hemorrhage, Sunday morning, October 19th, 1919. She was a daughter of the late Benjamin and Catherine Dyson, of Dawsonsville, Md. Three sisters and five brothers survive her: Misses Mamie and Matilda Dyson, of Dawsonsville; Mrs. Kate Darby, of Beallsville; Messrs. Joseph, Frank, William and Paul Dyson, of Dawsonsville, and Dr. Vernon Dyson, of Laytonsville, Md. She was born July 24th, 1872, and was married to Harvey J. White Nov. 30th, 1893. They were blessed with two children, both now grown and both at home with their beloved father, all three to bear together the sad bereavement now laid upon them by our heavenly Father's hand. The son is Dr. Byron Dyson White, recently returned from war service in France, the daughter is Miss Kathryn Elizabeth White. It was my privilege to baptize sister White Sunday morning, June 21st, 1914, into the membership of the New Valley Church, Va. She was a most devoted and conscientious member of the church, a splendid hostess, as many who read this will affirm who have shared the generous hospitality of her home when attending the meetings at Broad Run, Md., a loving and faithful wife and a most self-

sacrificing mother. Personally, I have lost one of the best friends a pastor ever had. The last sermon she heard to enjoy before her death was upon Luke xx. 37, 38, preached by Elder H. C. Ker at the Virginia Corresponding Meeting October 16th, 1919. Of this she spoke to me after the meeting, expressing her complete satisfaction in the doctrine presented in that sermon. In every sense sister White filled the scriptural requirements for a deacon's wife: "grave, not slanderous, sober, faithful in all things." Words fail to express how we shall miss her presence in her home and in the meetings of the church which she loved. May the consolations of the gospel of Jesus and God's sustaining grace ever abide with the dear bereaved family.

The body of our loved one was laid to rest in the family plot in Monocacy Cemetery. L.

Mrs. Laura M. Bailey was born July 16th, 1832, and died Sept. 7th, 1919, at the home of her son, Dr. M. L. Bailey, of Carbondale, Pa. She was born in Liberty township, Susquehanna Co., Pa., where she lived the greater part of her life. Her maiden name was Turrell. Her husband, Deacon Wm. Bailey, died several years ago. She leaves one son, Dr. M. L. Bailey, of Carbondale, one brother, D. D. Turrell, of Westfield, N. Y., with many other relatives and friends. She died of diseases common to old age. She and three others were baptized by Elder Balas Bundy June 2nd, 1874. Sister Bailey was a loving and living christian, sound in the faith of God's elect. The poor weary child is at rest with her heavenly Father in the home of the eternally blest.

A few remarks were made at the grave, after which her remains were buried in the cemetery at Lewisville, Pa. D. M. VAIL.

Susan Ann Mildred Vick Meek was born in Nash County, N. C., April 21st, 1842, and died March 21st, 1919, making her stay on earth 76 years and 11 months. Her father moved to Georgia when she was small. She received a hope in about her fifteenth year. August 12th, 1858, she was married to L. E. Durham. To that union were born six children, four daughters and two sons. Her husband was born Feb. 8th, 1829, and died Sept. 24th, 1871. She joined the Primitive Baptists after her first child was born. The two sons and one daughter died while young; the other three girls lived to be grown and married. Two of them joined the Old School Baptist Church. Sister Durham was married to J. O. Meek in 1875. To that union were born four children, all dying in infancy except one son, Wiley F. Meek. Mr. Meek died March 7th, 1915. Sister Meek and her two daughters joined Providence Church, Lincoln Co., Ark. She held membership about a year at Cane Creek Church, Cleveland Co., Ark., after which she moved back to Providence. The writer had been acquainted with sister Meek since about 1884, and baptized sister Hodges about twenty years ago. Sister Meek was beloved by all in and out of the church, and was a faithful mother in Israel. She grieved much at the desolation of poor bleeding Zion, but her hope and trust were in her God, that he would bring his people off triumphantly in the end. We mourn not as those without hope, for we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. May sister Meek's God be our God throughout the remaining days we have to spend in this sinful world, until our time comes to lay aside this tenement of clay, to wait until our Lord comes the second time without sin unto salvation to gather his jewels to himself. May we be numbered with that happy throng to praise him forever and forever. J. H. BLYTHE.

Birmah Collins, nee McClurg, wife of T. M. Collins, was born October 24th, 1872, and was united in marriage to T. M. Collins Nov. 28th, 1886. To that union were born ten children, eight boys and two girls. Mrs. Collins never united with the church, but was a strong believer in the sovereignty of God and salvation by grace, always filling her seat when her health would permit. She was very ill for several years, but bore her afflictions with patience. Her home was a home for the Primitive Baptists.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort from 1st Thessalonians iv. 13-15. Her remains were laid to rest in the Judson Cemetery to await the resurrection, when this mortal shall put on immortality and ever be with the Lord. I would say to the husband and children, Weep not as those who have no hope. May you feel deep in your hearts that the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. W. W. SLAUGHTER.

Amanda Nosler was born in Worth County, Kansas, June 10th, 1859, and died in Coquille, Oregon, Sept. 25th, 1919, at the age of 60 years, 3 months and 15 days. She was married to W. H. Nosler about twenty-five years ago, and to that union one son was born, who survives her. Her husband, W. H. Nosler, died about four years ago. The deceased is survived by one brother, three half-brothers and two half-sisters. She moved from Kansas into the Willamette Valley in 1865, and from there to Coos County in 1868. She was a member of the Baptist Church, and lived a devoted christian life.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Lena Langford, Texas, $17.00; M. Hockenberry, N. J., $2 00; A. M. Bourland, Texas, $8.00; Mrs. Mary Ferguson, W. Va., $1.00; Julia C. Wilmoth, W. Va., $1.00; Mrs. M. Perry, Ark., $1.00; Elder J. H. Fisher, Texas, $1.00; J. L. Deshong, Fla., $2.00; A. J. Harville, Tenn., $1.00.

POETRY.

ENTREAT ME NOT.

ENTREAT me not to leave thee, Emmanuel's little flock,
Whose names are sealed in heaven, engraven in the Rock—
The Rock of Ages, smitten, to wash our sins away;
I want to travel with thee to everlasting day.

I see thy altar burning, and goodly is the sight,
The incense sweet ascending unto the God of light.
Entreat me not to leave thee, but by the maidens fast
I'd glean the little handfuls till harvest sure be past.

You are my close companions in tribulations great;
In past severe afflictions and trials that await;
We have together tasted the goodness of the Lord,
And given consolation and comfort in his word.

Thy people be my people, although I am the least;
Thy God is my Savior, Redeemer, Kinsman, Priest;
I want to praise him with thee, his holy, reverend name,
For Jesus' sake, the scapegoat, who bore away our shame.

I'd hasten where thou lodgest, sweet Bethels by the way,
And dream of our Messiah until the dawn of day;
And when the journey's ended, O with thee I would die,
And there would I be buried, I lift my voice and cry.

SEMMA E. CORDER.

PHILIPPI, W. Va.

MEETINGS.

BECAUSE of the property of the Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa being taken by the Board of Water Supply of New York city, the Gilboa Church will hold their yearly meeting at the Baptist church-house in Halcottsville the third Saturday and Sunday in November (15th and 16th). We extend a cordial invitation.

H. J. LEONARD, Church Clerk.

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1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church holds her regular meetings at 13th and Lexington Sts., Sellwood, at 2 p. m. on the fourth Sunday in each month. Sellwood is a suburb of Portland, Oregon. Take any outgoing Sellwood car. S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

Newberg, Oregon.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

There will be meeting every first Sunday at Halcott Center, N. Y., in the Grange Hall. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

The Middletown and Andes Church will hold their meetings the first Sunday in every month at their meetinghouse, Union Grove, N. Y. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."—1 Thess. v. 21. "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it."—Deut. xii. 32. cf. Eccl. iii. 14; James i. 17; Matt. xxviii. 20.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 87. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1919. NO. 22.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BRYCELAND, La., April 20, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter I received from a dear brother, and it was so comforting and consoling to me I would be glad to see it in our dear paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if you think it worthy a place. I am sure it will be enjoyed by others as much as by me, but I leave it entirely to your better judgment.

Your sister in Christ, I hope,

(MRS.) M. B. BRYAN.

ALBERTA, Louisiana.

DEAR SISTER BRYAN:—I have been so despondent, so blank, so unprofitable and so oppressed I have had nothing to write, so have not written you for a long time, and I am now at a loss to know what to write. I sometimes think that I am the greatest mystery that ever did exist, and am often a wonder to myself, and wish I could know what I am, or who I am.

This is enough of complaint, but it seems that I cannot think of anything to write except my own woes and misery. I sometimes wish I had never existed, yet know that God knows best, and always does the right thing at the right time.

Now, dear sister, I want to speak of a wonder I saw on Monday night before the first Sunday in February; I will call it a dream, for want of a better name, but I was as wide awake as I ever was in my life, for it was one of those sleepless nights that I so often have. I was so miserable I could not rest, filled with unbelief; O how wretched and despairing I was, wishing that I were dead. All of a sudden it came to me just as if some one had spoken, saying, Behold, I will show you a mystery. I turned around, for it seemed as if the speaker was behind me, and I saw a great rope, with both ends extending down toward the earth, and I heard the voice again, saying, This is a ladder let down from heaven, fastened in a secure place. The ladder had three rungs, or cross bars in it. Then I saw him who did the talking descend the ladder, and when he was on the first rung I heard him say, This is faith, and was accounted unto Abraham for righteousness, and is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. My mind went back to my life that had passed, fifty years or so ago, when one night while eating supper the thought came to me, If you should die as you are

what would become of you? I tried to put the thought from me, for I was only a child, but I could not get rid of it, for it kept ringing in my ear, and grew to great magnitude, until it distressed me so I could not rest day or night, yet I kept it to myself, did not tell any one of my trouble, and tried to connect it with something that I had done, but could not. It kept getting worse and worse, and the thought grew to such proportions that I thought I must mend my ways, but instead of improving I grew worse all the time, and I learned I could not appease the wrath of the just and holy God. O how wretched I was, for I could not understand how God could remain just and justify vile me. I began to search the Scriptures in order to learn how to be saved, for, like the unbelieving Jew, I thought in them there was everlasting life, but I found such Scriptures as those written by Habakkuk: God is too pure to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity. O how wretched I was by this time, for I was without God and without hope in the world. I gave it all up, and felt to realize that I had sinned away the day of grace, and fully believed that I had transgressed the law that demanded death. I realized that death was the end of all earthly things, and I had sinned away the day of grace, the innocent life that man had in the garden of Eden. There may be some of my brethren who will differ with me on this point, so we will examine it closely. What is grace? Free favor, unmerited. Now what had man done to merit his creation and the innocent life that he was given in the garden of Eden and the beautiful home that he had there? Everything that was pleasant to the taste, and good to look upon, was there in the garden. Man was surrounded with everything that his heart could wish for, and when he (man) violated the law he forfeited all his rights to it. Of course he could not sin away a day that he had not yet received, for that day was preserved for the heirs of promise by Jesus Christ, the righteous man of God, Savior of sinners, in the language of Paul, "Of whom I am chief."

My dear sister, if what I have written is not the truth I am mistaken in the matter. But I must hasten, for there are two more parts to consider, yet it seems to me I have left out all the best part of the subject, yet I went over all of my past life that night, and after I had gone through all of my convictions, and had given up for lost, and was trying to beg God to let me go to hell praising him for his mercies to others, I heard a still small voice say, All your sins, which are many, are forgiven you. I arose singing, "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me!" and the heavens seemed to be filled with sweet singing. O how happy I was then, but that did not last long, for there came an impression to go and tell the dear saints of God, and then I heard a still small voice say, Preach Jesus, and I could but say, Impossible, impossible. Then I cried, Lord, I am a child, and am so ignorant I cannot even speak in school. I went on for some time, pleading for relief from the burden, and finally I pleaded that I was just a child and my father would not let me go. The burden began to lighten some, but was making me feel that I would have it to do; I have vowed that I would die before I would attempt it. I saw Him who stood on the first rung descend to the second, and my mind went back to a time in my life that is so sacred to me that it makes me quake and fear. It was the day before our mother died. I was seated at the foot of her bed when

she called me and I went to her, then she told me she wanted to talk a little to me. I bent over her, telling her to say all she felt like saying. She began back when she was a little girl, and told me of her travels and deliverances. O how sweet it was to me, for it filled me with rejoicing and praise to our God. After she had finished I kissed her. Then she said, Son, have you a hope? I told her about what I have already written concerning my conviction and deliverance. I stopped for a moment, and she said, That is not all; tell me all of it. Then I told her of my impression, just as I have written it to you, and she said, Son, you have never told the church this, why do you not? Is it not enough? Dear sister, as you know, this was twenty-nine or thirty years ago.

I will only have space to speak of the third, or last bar. After bitter rebellion and positive avowal that I would die before I would submit, I left the church with brother White, went to your house to spend the night, and I fell and was badly hurt, the fall making me unconscious. The last thought I remember after the fall was, Now you are dead. The next I remember as I revived was, You have not preached yet. You can see that it is not a matter of choice with me. The lesson I learned was that I had no power to lay down this life, so I understood that God had preserved this natural life until the fulfillment of his purposes in me.

As ever, your brother in the flesh, and, I hope, in the Spirit,

M. E. HAMNER.

ASHOKAN, N. Y., July 15, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—The SIGNS for this date is indeed worth while. The good letters of brethren Records and Sills have again awakened an impression to write, which I will attempt, if the Lord will, from the question of Jesus to the "impotent man" at the Bethesda pool: "Wilt thou be made whole?"—John v. 6.

How are we to reconcile the almighty, omniscient God of the whole earth with the asking of any question, especially one so seemingly needless, as to whether this man would like to get well or not? If it is true that we have a part to do in our salvation; if the Lord has done all he can for us, and the final result depends on our efforts, then it may logically follow that, just like any fallible physician, Jesus was trying, as best he could, to make a diagnosis of the symptoms, to discover a desire for recovery, which desire is considered a factor. If one desires to get well, what we call "the chances" are much better. On the other hand, if the patient has lost all hope and desire "to be made whole," then the ministry of the most faithful and loving hands is quite discouraged. It is written, "The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me." Now if this is any cooperation, or the doing of any part, it is the pitiful confession of his complete helplessness. Thirty-eight years of this infirmity seems to have settled it with him that of himself he could do nothing. It takes some of us some years to learn that "salvation is of the Lord." But he was "coming," all the time "coming" to know over and over again that it is "not of works, lest any man should boast." Why did he not give the direct answer, yes or no? According to reason, naturally, should he not have answered, Why certainly, with all my heart? But this cure is not effected according to natural reasoning. All those cured in the pool stepped

"down," but this man rose up, just contrary to all the others. So do not get discouraged if your case seems hopeless; no matter of how long standing, no matter how unlike every other case you may feel that yours is being handled, if you, like the "impotent man," have come under the treatment of the great Physican there can be no question of your ultimate recovery, for healing was not a practice of medicine with him, it was a foregone conclusion; every life saved was "sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." Of all the wonderful cures, he never asked nor received one penny, a feature very uncommon among physicians, so that he might well say in every act of his life, My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways. We are just as powerless to pay for the healing as we were to effect a cure. How very becoming, then, it is that we show some gratitude and appreciation for the hope that "the life which I now live in the flesh" is "the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." "Wilt thou be made whole?" was never to be answered so as to help the Lord along in his work, but asked to give occasion for the testimony of the lost and undone condition, and such a relief it is to confess that in us, that is, in our flesh, dwells no good thing. All glorying and all boasting is excluded, for no flesh shall glory in his presence. The impotent man had experienced that he could not effect his own salvation, and that there was no man to help him, so that in his confession to Jesus he said in substance, "There is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved." There was no help from man for him. Had Jesus come to this pool and found this man saved and gone, by so much he would have failed to perform the work which his Father gave him to do, and the person or persons who had performed it would have robbed him of that much glory. Or had he failed to heal him when he did come, or had he failed in one jot or tittle in any act, by so much we might doubt his saving power in our own salvation. Some claim that we at least must ask the Lord's help. This man did not, nor did he do or claim that he did one thing toward his healing. The healing was accomplished when he took up his bed and walked. In his long years of impotence his faith had become so weak, the hope for deliverance so small, that as to his mind in the matter he just stated the case to Jesus, having no will of his own, for it was lost in that will of him who subdues all things unto himself.

Sincerely yours,

E. R. KINNEY.

ST. JOSEPH, MO., Jan. 12, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—This morning in looking over some old keepsake letters I found the inclosed private letter written by dear brother M. F. Culver, whose obituary I forwarded to you a week ago. This letter was probably written five years previous to his death. Should you concur with me that it contains food for the saints of our most high God, you may publish it.

Your brother, I trust, in like precious faith, A. W. BLOOMFIELD.

DEAR BROTHER BLOOMFIELD:—I think you will pardon me if I write my views of the subject we were talking upon: "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven."

Just previous to the utterance of these words Peter had answered Jesus, saying, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus had answered that flesh and blood had not revealed it unto him, but his Father which is in heaven; and it was upon this rock—the revelation of Jesus Christ, Jesus said he would build his church. Jesus said upon one occasion, "The kingdom of heaven cometh not by observation;" that is, it must be spiritually discerned. "For the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit." You will notice that the keys of the kingdom are the gift of Jesus Christ, for he says, "I will give unto thee the keys." Jesus told his disciples that except he go away the Comforter would not come, and when he came he would take the things that are his and show them unto them. So I take the ground that the revelation of Jesus Christ, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, are the keys to the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. We see that when the Holy Spirit came upon the day of Pentecost the deep things, the hidden things of God, were boldly declared in many tongues. Now, as to the remainder of the quotation: "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven," I feel bound to take a different view from the generally accepted version, and will say first that I feel sure it does not mean that any minister shall exercise authority or dominion over the brethren. The teaching of Jesus forbids such a view. In Luke xxii. 25, he says, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them." "But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth?" I think, brother Bloomfield, you can see at a glance that the idea that the text gives authority to the ministry, or the individual members of the church, or the church as a body, to exercise lordship or dominion over the conscience of any member, is entirely foreign and in direct opposition to the teachings of our Lord. It seems evident to my mind that in this text Jesus was speaking of spiritual gifts that he would give to Peter, and not only to Peter, but to all of like precious faith. I cannot believe that he had reference to bestowing upon Peter and the ministry that should follow, a club or any other carnal weapon with which to subject his brethren. One of the apostles said, "Try the spirits, whether they be of God." Now, I am inclined to think this binding and loosing has reference to the spiritual gift of discerning the things of the Spirit, for without this gift the church would be filled up with unworthy characters. Jesus was talking of building his church, and of the gifts he would bestow upon her. O how the right ways of the Lord have been perverted by designing men! Jesus says, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." The pope says all power is given unto him in the earth. Some ministers say all power is given unto them in the church. There be lords many and gods many, but unto us there is but one Lord, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and these three are one.

In conclusion, the kingdom of heaven being a spiritual kingdom, the keys of the kingdom must needs be also spiritual, and are the spiritual gifts which unlock the mysteries of the kingdom and enable us to behold the riches of his grace to usward through the merits of his Son. The language of our Savior: "For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth?" forever cuts off the idea that the keys of the kingdom are an insignia of ecclesiastical authority, or that

the ministry is set in lordship over the church, but rather they are given, or set apart, as servants; for the servant is not greater than his lord. I am bound to think that the truly called minister feels himself to be a servant, and not a lord, even as Paul did: "less than the least of all saints." Even Jesus set this example. In Luke xxii. 27, he says, "I am among you as he that serveth." It is too bad that some of our ministers by their acts say, We are greater than our Lord.

This subject has been on my mind several days, and since you spoke of it I thought I would put down on paper the few weak thoughts which occurred to me, and realizing their weakness, I beg of you to cast the mantle of charity over that which is imperfect.

Your brother, I trust, in a good hope beyond, M. F. CULVER.

HARRISONVILLE, Mo., Sept. 20, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed a money order for two dollars for a new subscriber for the SIGNS. It is a great pleasure to send in new subscribers for the SIGNS, as it advocates what we believe in such a mild and gentle way, giving all a right to their views as long as it is done in the right spirit and without controversy. We have been missing many of the writers' names and soul-cheering writings. Hope they will have a refreshing season of the Lord, and find their pure minds being put in remembrance of God's wonderful work among the sheep of his pasture, and they will yet praise him and write their uprisings and downsittings for the SIGNS, that others seeing by faith, and having handled of the Word of life, may see his wonderful work and rejoice with them all for his dear name's sake. We rejoice to feel that God does quicken and teach his own dear children in the way of all truth, and they love to have a paper coming in their homes contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Brother and sister Odell joined here at Little Flock, Mo., during our regular meeting, second Saturday and Sunday in August, and were baptized by our pastor, Elder W. L. Hall. Many of the SIGNS readers will rejoice with us in their coming home to their friends, not ashamed to confess His name. We have been blessed with lovely meetings, and blessed of the Lord with wonderful preaching from visiting Elders. May we all feel encouraged in God's promise that he will not leave himself without witnesses.

Wishing the editors and writers of the SIGNS boldness in godly fear to rightly divide the word of truth, all to his praise and glory and the comfort of his poor and afflicted people, I am, unworthily,

LAURA ESSIE ODELL.

LANCASTER, N. Y., Sept. 20, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—If one so vile as I dare claim so blessed a kinship with you. I am inclosing two dollars by post-office money order for a year's subscription to the SIGNS. It has been my privilege to read the precious truth the dear paper contains while visiting my mother at various times, and she recently sent me the September 1st issue, and I found much comfort in reading the excellent editorial by Elder Lefferts. What comforts he tells to the weary sinner, and what joy to know that in Christ is the law fulfilled and the sins of his people completely atoned for. I have known Elder Ker for a number of years, and it has been my privilege to listen to some of the excellent sermons he has preached, but whether I may ever again an all-wise Providence alone knows. I

hope I may. There are times when I feel that it is impossible for one so vile as I to dare utter the name of the blessed Savior, but without his love I am utterly lost, and I know that I love him and all his dear people. He has said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," and I do hope and pray he may give me strength to keep from evil and pursue the truth. I have found so much comfort in reading the experiences of those who write for the SIGNS that I feel I want to receive the paper regularly, and hope my subscription may begin with the September 15th issue.

Asking an interest in your prayers, and hoping to receive the SIGNS in due time, I am, I hope, one of the Lord's little ones.

Yours in fear and trembling,

W. T. GUERNSEY.

LITTLESTOWN, Pa., July, 1919.

DEAR FRIENDS:—As I am still in this sinful frame (it seems to take a long time to consume the dross), I desire to thank you for the comfort the SIGNS has afforded me as with pleasure I have perused it. I cannot add a word of comfort to its pages, but, blessed thought, God can raise up those who can and will comfort Zion. He is an all-powerful God, and by his power are all of his little ones kept; that is why the sons of Jacob are not consumed. O that I could walk in that faith, but, like Martha, I feel to be cumbered by many things, and worldly sorrow worketh death. I feel that I am entirely cut off from those of like precious faith, but the precious thought still remains, God is omnipresent, limits the bounds of our habitation, will be with us in six trials, and will not forsake us in the seventh (which I presume is death). While the outward man is perishing, God grant that the inward man be renewed day by day, if I am his and he is mine. A hope is all I have, but I am more than glad to tell you that it is steadfast, and I sorrow that I cannot walk more softly and be more thankful for his mercy and the blessings of this life. The words so often come to me: "Be still and know that I am God." I wish to still be remembered in love and fellowship by God's people. Thank you kindly for changing the address. I wish you all a prosperous and happy year, both naturally and spiritually. Please pardon my seeming neglect; writing grows more difficult each year.

I remain your sister in hope, and am grateful to you all for your kindness, and to God, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift.

GEORGIA D. ENGLAND.

SHERIDAN, W. Va., Oct. 1, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will try by the help of Almighty God to write you once more to let you know I am yet alive, and want you to change my address from Salt Rock, W. Va., to Sheridan, W. Va. When I wrote you last winter I think I told you how poorly I was, and had no idea of living until spring, and that I would leave my last request with those I resided with for them to inform you of my departure, so you could discontinue my dear old paper, which has come to me laden with precious food for my poor hungry, thirsty and tired soul. If I should live and be able to write more, I surely want to write a short letter to my dear brethren and sisters who read the SIGNS.

I will have to quit, as I am very feeble and my thoughts scattering. I will bid you all a loving farewell for the present, trusting in God to sustain you all many years hence in the good work you are engaged in, conducting the SIGNS and sending it to comfort God's humble poor people.

Yours in sorrow and severe affliction,

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1919.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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ISAIAH VI. 1.

"IN the year that king Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple."

From a reader of the SIGNS in Arkansas comes the request that we write upon the above subject. We have quoted but the first verse of this sixth chapter of Isaiah, because that is all our subscriber refers to in his letter, but it will be impossible to express our views upon this matter without taking into consideration what follows. Isaiah, being inspired by the Holy Spirit of God, is recording here a most wonderful revelation of the glory of Christ and his redeemed church. There are several other revelations throughout the Scriptures that run in accord with this one here. For instance, the captain of the Lord's host (the church) revealed to Joshua near Jericho. Joshua looked, and beheld "a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come." Very similar to these revelations to Joshua and to Isaiah is the one that came to Daniel by the river Hiddekel: "Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz. His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in color to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude." A peculiar fact about all these revelations is that the effects upon the prophets who received them were strikingly alike: Isaiah, when he saw the Lord upon his throne, high and lifted up, and all the church, or followers, filling the temple of God, was moved to say, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." Joshua, as the result of the revelation coming to him, fell on his face to the earth and did worship. Daniel, amazed at the glory of Christ, said, "There remaineth no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption." Ezekiel fell upon his face when there came to him the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. Job says that he heard of the Almighty by the hearing of the ear, but when he saw the Lord for himself he abhorred himself, and repented in dust and ashes. From these various accounts of the revelations of God to his servants we deduce the doctrine that it is impossible for any flesh, even the flesh of a saint, to glory in the presence of God; and further, that every revelation to man of the glory of God unavoidably carries with it an extreme sense of self-abasement and depravity in the one receiving the vision. We can safely conclude, therefore, that a boastful, self-righteous spirit, or profession, on the part of of any man is practically a confession of total ignorance of

the glory of God; while, on the other hand, a meek and lowly spirit, accompanied by a confession of sin and unworthiness, is practically a safe evidence of sanctification through the Spirit unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.

Isaiah fixes the date of the vision which came to him as being in the year that King Uzziah died. We wonder if the time of the vision had anything to do with the vision itself. Without doubt it did, for God fits everything together, working them all together according to the counsel of his own will, so that the result is to the good of his people and to his own glory. The way the Almighty arranges everything is most wonderful indeed, too grand for our little minds to take it in, but he gives his people faith by which to view it, though it may only be as through a glass darkly. There is an eternal fitness of things in the mind of God: a time for everything, and everything in its time. Isaiah could not have had this view of the glory of God and of his own abasement at any other time than when he did; that is, in the year that King Uzziah died. Rightly to appreciate this let us look a little into Uzziah's reign, the kind of life he lived, and what was remarkable about his death. Uzziah became king of Judah upon the death of his father Amaziah, and was but a boy of sixteen years when he took the reins of authority in his hands. Throughout his long reign of fifty-two years prosperity for the most part attended the affairs of the king and his people, though this prosperity was not good for them, as was seen in the end of Uzziah's life. The tribe of Judah being typical of the gospel church, a remnant according to the election of grace, the record of Uzziah's reign, being mostly a prosperous one, proves that material prosperity is often a bad thing for the church of God. At the outset of his reign, and for some years thereafter, Uzziah did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father Amaziah had done before him. Uzziah also treated the prophet Zechariah, who was living at that time, with great reverence, going to him for advice and counsel when necessary. "As long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper." We suppose some conditionalists might conclude from this that the way for a man to prosper is to seek the Lord. But the seeking the Lord which Uzziah did as king was not spiritual at all, but simply looking to Zechariah, the Lord's prophet, for advice in perplexing matters of state. It was no unusual thing in the history of both Judah and of Israel for the prophets to be counsellors of kings in matters of government. Indeed, any king who flaunted or despised the advice of God's inspired prophets was inevitably headed for ruin. This was simply to show over and over again that what God says is right and bound to come true, while human wisdom, even though enthroned in the highest office of the state, is invariably opposed to divine counsel and leadership, unless under the restraint of grace. Uzziah waged successful war against the Philistines, not from desire of conquest so much as to free his people from their continual menace, for the Philistines had been age-long enemies of the elect of God, and their threatening shadow was always troubling the land. Uzziah built cities, too, so that he was as fond of construction and improvement as he was of going forth to battle. The ites of the land sent their tribute to him, for they feared him, and well they might, for the Lord was with him. He built several watchtowers about the walls of Jerusa-

lem, thus furthering the defences of that city, showing his wisdom in preparing for war in the time of peace. He also built towers in the desert, and digged many wells, doing this to encourage the raising of cattle in the low country and the plains, and furthering the spread of vineyards on the slopes of the mountains, especially on Carmel. Uzziah loved husbandry; that is, farming. He was, first of all, a man of peace, but not afraid to fight if he had to, and took care to be ready for the emergency. He raised and equipped a large army, and for this he encouraged manufacturing. There were made, shields and spears and helmets and all sorts of weapons. Skilled men invented engines of warfare, and the ammunition was arrows and stones. This is a summary of the reign of Uzziah as found in second Chronicles, and from it we can readily see that Uzziah was what would be called a good king, as kings go, that he seemed to labor conscientiously for the good of his people, and earnestly tried to do what was right. All this was because the Lord was with him. The secret of his success was not in himself, but in the Lord. Had Uzziah been given grace enough to always bear this in mind all might have gone well with him, but, as has been the case over and over again with just such men as he, in his prosperity he began to forget what manner of man he was, and, probably unconsciously to himself, he gradually drifted away from his habit of seeking unto the Lord to know what to do, and grew to trusting more and more in himself. His prosperity went to his head and made him drunk, and men can certainly get drunk on success fully as well as on wine. This king of Judah got to thinking more of himself than he should have thought, and then the climax came. From being king, Uzziah got to thinking he could be priest, too, and just there he overstepped the mark. Let us tell it just as the Bible does: "But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense. And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the Lord, that were valiant men: and they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the Lord, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed: neither shall it be for thine honor from the Lord God." But even though the priests rebuked him for his intrusion into the sacred privileges of the Levitical priesthood, this did not bring Uzziah to his senses, so drunk was he with his self-importance, but the words of the priests made him angry, and while he had a censer in his hand to burn incense, and while yet in the height of his anger, the Lord smote him with leprosy as he stood at the altar. From that day until he died Uzziah was a leper, and shut away from everybody in a separate house to himself, a solitary prisoner, he who had once been so great and prosperous, at the head of all his people. Thus he died. Now it was in the year that this king died that Isaiah saw the Lord upon his throne, high and lifted up, and all his train (church) filled the temple. In the humiliation of Uzziah, therefore, Isaiah saw the exaltation of God and of Christ and the beauty of the church following him, and corresponding humility filled Isaiah's soul as he beheld the wonderful vision. No truer words can be found in all Scripture than those of Jesus which declare that he who

abaseth himself shall be exalted, and that he who exalteth himself shall be abased. The one who abased himself is Christ, who condescended from his equality with the Father to stoop down to our low estate. Him has the power of almighty God highly exalted at his own right hand a Prince and a Savior. The one who exalts himself is Adam, the first man of the earth earthy. He is always intruding himself into things he has not seen, vainly puffed up in his fleshly mind. This man God brings down, causing him to return to the dust whence he was taken. The reign of Uzziah plainly shows these two opposite principles. Christ-likeness is seen in Uzziah's seeking unto the Lord for wisdom and in his anxiety for the safety and welfare of his people. Then comes to the surface for a season the vanity of the Adam-mind which caused Uzziah to usurp the priest's office, in which he had no business, and which was consecrated to the sons of Levi. Following upon this temporary triumph of the Adam nature comes the final triumph of righteousness, in which Uzziah is smitten with leprosy, cut off from his people, going down to the grave in self-abasement. What a wonderful allegory of the travel of the church! Can you see in it the Lord high and lifted up? Isaiah did. We hope you do.

L.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in November (30th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by J. H. Dickson.)

The Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the First Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, at Vega, N. Y., September 17th and 18th, 1919, to the churches composing the same sends christian love and fellowship.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As our annual gathering has again returned, we would stir up your pure minds by quoting some of the blessed truths recorded in the Book of books. Among the many exceeding great and precious promises left on record for the comfort and instruction of the heirs of promise not many appeal more to us, when passing through deep waters, than the fourteenth chapter of John: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." The disciple said unto him, "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." It appears that at some time in their experience the followers of the meek and lowly Savior have all felt the truth of that assertion, He is the way, the truth and the life. What consoling language to the tempest-tossed, burdened souls who have searched far and wide for the blessed truths of the gospel, and what a glorious thing it would be if at all times we could feel to embrace this Scripture: "Let not your heart be troubled." For myself, I am so

fearful about many things, and am so much inclined to put up my hand to steady the ark; but I have, I think, for short intervals felt to leave everything with my heavenly Father, and could say with the poet:

"Not a single shaft can hit
Till the God of love sees fit."

This I call perfect happiness—a sip from the Fountain-head.

"My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this,
And sit and sing herself away
To everlasting bliss."

Though we have not been blessed with many additions among our churches, we rejoice that we are in peace among ourselves, and we have the gospel preached unto us in its purity by our beloved pastor, Elder George Ruston. I feel assured it is the prayer of each member that the Lord may revive his work in the midst of these years, and add to our numbers of such as should be saved, help each one to fill our place and to walk circumspectly before him all our days.

GEORGE RUSTON, Moderator.
A. J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

(Written by Elder R. W. Sanford.)

The Elders and messengers of the Lexington Association, now in session with the Second Church of Roxbury, at Halcottsville, Delaware Co., N. Y., October 1st and 2nd, 1919, to one and all, greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is written in Romans viii. 14: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." A son of God is one born of God, inheriting a spirit life, a life that cannot die, as eternal as God himself. By that life the kingdom of heaven is seen and assured to all for whom the Son of God came in the flesh to save. His children were here in the flesh; he came to redeem them from sin and death and deliver them from the power of darkness into light. We are free from sin and death in him, knowing that our old man is crucified with him henceforth. "For he that is dead is freed from sin."—Rom. vi. 7. This same Jesus was one with the Father before ever the earth was or the mountains were brought forth. His delights were with the sons of men while as yet there was none of them; in continuance they were fashioned. John saw or beheld that beautiful and glorious sight, the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Her Maker is her Husband, the Lord of hosts is his name, the God of the whole earth. The church, his bride, is a part of himself, dwelling in a kingdom that is not of this world. Fleshly or human vision never has seen a spiritual kingdom, nor could the Jews see Jesus as the Son of God; they despised him, not knowing they were doing God's will when they put him to death. Think it not strange concerning these trials in your experience, as though some strange thing had happened unto you. You are to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in your flesh for his body's sake, the church. (See Col. i. 24.) Let us endeavor to be patient. "In your patience possess ye your souls."—Luke xxi. 19. Many trials come upon you, doubts and darkness, the Bible is a sealed book. Think it not strange you are to fill up the measure of the sufferings of Christ for his body's sake, the church. You should rejoice that you are counted worthy to suffer for the Captain of your salvation's sake. Put off the old man, put on the new man, which is exalted of God in righteousness and true holiness. Be strong in the Lord. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. (Eph. vi.) Finally, brethren, be of good cheer. Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.

JOHN CLARK, Moderator.
JAMES AVERY, Clerk.
O. F. BALLARD, Assistant Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Second Church of Roxbury, at Halcottville, Delaware Co., N. Y., sends greeting to the churches with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We are a little band of pilgrims permitted to assemble and to communicate one to another of the travel which at times seems very dark, and yet we trust that there is a God who can lead us through all the dark places and reveal unto us that his tender care is continually around and about his people wherever they may be led, and to teach them that they shall have no other God before him, for he is all and in all, and who can harm them when his rod and his staff shall comfort them that put their trust in him, and who shall be able to separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? Paul gives us a plain description which cannot separate us from this love who are kept by his power unto salvation, for he creates in them a willing mind to serve him with that reverence which becometh his people, and they shall shew forth his praises; and when he sees fit to reveal the precious light, then they are made to rejoice that their God reigneth. They that wait on him shall renew their strength, that put their trust in him, for he hath said, I will be their God and they shall be my people. When he commands them to stand still they fear and tremble, and he tells them, Fear not, I have redeemed thee, thou art mine; I will send a deliverer out of Zion, who is able to stand on the walls that are around and about this people, to proclaim the everlasting gospel of the Son of God, to comfort them and strengthen them, to rejoice with that joy unspeakable of the glory that was set before him, endured the cross that he would bring them off conquerors and deliver them out of all their trouble. These people have a record of being poor and afflicted, and they have the promise of being faithful unto death, even the death of the cross, and if they suffer with him they have the promise that they shall reign with him, for he is able even to subdue all things unto himself; therefore they rejoice in hope of everlasting life.

JOHN CLARK, Moderator.
JAMES AVERY, Clerk.
O. F. BALLARD, Assistant Clerk.

The Roxbury Association of Old School Baptists, in session with the First Church of Roxbury, N. Y., September 17th and 18th, 1919, to the associations and churches with which we correspond sends christian greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Through the love and tender mercies of God we have been permitted to meet together in an association, in which your messengers have come to us bearing the testimony to the gospel. Wherefore, laying aside all malice and all guile and hypocricies and envies, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby, if so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto living stones, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious. Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the Scriptures, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious, and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious. There has been no discord in the message you have brought, and we long for the time to come when we hope to meet you again.

Our next session is appointed to meet with the Second Roxbury Church, Roxbury, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, between the second and third Sundays in September, 1920, at 10:30 a. m.

GEORGE RUSTON, Moderator.
A. J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, at the home of the bride, near Salisbury, Md., October 8th, 1919, Leroy Morgon, of Seaford, Del., and May Hall, of Salisbury, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Abbie King Thomas, daughter of J. M. and Rebecca King, was born Nov. 26th, 1882, in Bullock County, Ala., and came to Texas with her mother in 1891. She was married to Bruce Thomas October 2nd, 1899. To that union nine children were born, one dying in infancy. She was taken ill about three years ago, and gradually grew worse, taking to her bed in January preceding her death. She died Aug. 16th, 1919, making her stay on this sin-cursed earth 36 years, 9 months and 10 days. She was laid to rest in Welland Cemetery. Funeral services were conducted by Elder Perry, of Cash, Texas, to the comfort of sorrowing friends and relatives. Dear Abbie leaves mother, one sister and two brothers, her own family and a host of friends. She was an obedient child, a loving mother and a faithful wife. She was true to her friends, kind to her neighbors, who knew her only to love her, and we are led to believe that she was a believer in the everlasting mercies of a living God. While she never made an open profession, yet she told her mother about two years ago that she felt her sins were forgiven, and this is a great comfort to us. This dear one suffered greatly in her last years, yet she bore it all in silence. Why we are thus made to suffer is hard to understand, yet we can see the hand of God in it all. To the bereaved ones I would say, Weep, but not as those who have no hope, for the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord. To him alone can you look for comfort. We are human, thus we mourn for our loved ones gone on before. When death visits our home we wonder why they could not have been spared awhile longer. God holds all power in his own hand; he saw the end from the beginning, and thus saw the very event of our loved one's departure; thus it had to be, to make his great plan perfect. This is the God I would point you to; this is the God I sometimes feel that I love. Thanks to his name, we believe in this God, and we believe dear Abbie trusted in this God. I will now admonish the relatives and friends that they will find comfort in no God that can be moved about by our natural entreaties, but only in a living, perfect God.

May the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ be with you all forever, is my prayer.

RICHARD DYKES.

Mrs. Susan J. Shearer, my dear sister, departed this life October 11th, 1919, aged 64 years and 27 days. She was the eldest daughter of T. G. and E. J. Flanary that reached maturity. She was born in Marion County, Oregon, later moving with our parents to Washington County, where she united with the New Hope Church when fifteen years of age, and lived a faithful and consistent member of that and Pleasant Grove Church until her death. She was married to T. M. Shearer October 5th, 1872, and to that union were born nine children, three boys and one girl dying in early childhood, three within one week. Two sons, Charles and Orin, live in Tacoma, and Glenn in Snohomish; the eldest daughter, sister Josie Mitchell, lives near Sunnyside, and Mrs. Eunice Byrd, the youngest daughter, near Yakima, all in Washington. She also leaves two grandchildren, two brothers: Wm. P. Flanary, of St. Johns, Oregon, and Jasper G., of Tacoma; two sisters: Mrs. Letitia Bonebrake, of Goldendale, Wash., and the writer, at whose home she spent the last few weeks of her life. She was of a cheerful disposition, and made many friends. Her home was always open to the needy, and she was "mother" to several orphans and homeless persons. After her husband's death, four years ago, she made her home with her children and me. She had been ailing for several months, and about three weeks before her death her physician advised her to lie in bed because of a weak heart, so it might gain strength, which it did to a great degree, and she was much relieved of the shortness of breath, although the doctor gave us no encouragement of her recovery. About 1 o'clock October 10th she suffered a stroke of apoplexy. She was able to say a few words to Eunice, who was the first of her children to arrive, but soon fell into a stupor, only rousing enough to show she knew when Charles and wife and Orin came. Her children were all present when the end came.

The body was taken to Tacoma and laid to rest beside her husband in the beautiful cemetery near there. Elder A. Wilson, of Oakville, Wash., spoke words of comfort to the sorrowing family and friends.

SONORA A. HESS.

Deacon Isaac W. Sirman, husband of sister Martha E. Sirman, was born Feb. 18th, 1844, and died at his home near Salisbury, Md., Nov. 27th, 1918, after a lingering illness. He is survived by his wife, one son and six daughters. On March 28th, 1880, he was baptized in the fellowship of the Nassaongo Church, and remained a devoted and consistent member until his death.

Elder A. B. Francis, of Delmar, Del., conducted the funeral services, after which the body of our dear brother was laid to rest in the family plot in Parsons Cemetery.

J. C. MELLOTT.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, I will visit as follows:

Schoharie, N. Y., Nov. 22nd and 23rd; Troy, N. Y., at Powers' home, Nov. 24th, 1:30; Albany, N. Y., 272 Clinton St., 4:30; Brantford, Canada, 25th; Woodstock, 26th; London, 27th; Alvinston, 28th; Aberfeldy, 29th and 30th; London, Dec. 6th and 7th.

J. M. FENTON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Spencer Nethaway, N. Y., $1.00; John W. Rockafellow, $8.00; Mrs. S. D. Harp, Texas, $2.00.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

W. M. LITTLE has changed his address to Kennedale, Texas.

MEETINGS.

BECAUSE of the property of the Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa being taken by the Board of Water Supply of New York city, the Gilboa Church will hold their yearly meeting at the Baptist church-house in Halcottsville the third Saturday and Sunday in November (15th and 16th). We extend a cordial invitation.

H. J. LEONARD, Church Clerk.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church holds her regular meetings at 13th and Lexington Sts., Sellwood, at 2 p. m. on the fourth Sunday in each month. Sellwood is a suburb of Portland, Oregon. Take any outgoing Sellwood car. S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

Newberg, Oregon.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

There will be meeting every first Sunday at Halcott Center, N. Y., in the Grange Hall. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

The Middletown and Andes Church will hold their meetings the first Sunday in every month at their meetinghouse, Union Grove, N. Y. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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The claim that the wine approved by the Bible was not alcoholic this book proves is false, and that equally false is the claim that Jesus deceived his disciples, the governor of the feast and the guests at the wedding in suffering them to believe that the wine he made at Cana was not the character of wine they thought it was.

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."—1 Thess. v. 21. "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it"—Deut. xii. 32. cf. Eccl. iii. 14; James i. 17; Matt. xxviii. 20.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 87. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1919. NO. 23.

CORRESPONDENCE.

EZEKIEL XIV. 10.

"AND they shall bear the punishment of their iniquity: the punishment of the prophet shall be even as the punishment of him that seeketh unto him."

TO THE READERS OF THE SIGNS:—If approved by the editors, I will submit a few thoughts for your consideration regarding the above Scripture. The Lord, in calling Ezekiel to prophesy, addressed him as the "son of man." This son of man was among the captives by the river Chebar, and in his captive state he saw the heavens opened and visions of God. Now here is a lesson for the Lord's afflicted people. You are to remember that you can only see the heavens opened and visions of God when you are in captivity. Jesus, when he ascended on high, led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men. I will try to explain what is meant by leading captivity captive. I will use the armies of the Allied and Central Powers as an illustration. At the beginning of the world struggle it seemed that the armies of the Central Powers would soon overcome the armies of the Allied Powers, because they were capturing guns, men, ammunition and land, and for a time it looked gloomy for the Allies. But the Lord reigns over a battlefield; he had raised up a John J. Pershing. This man Pershing was chosen of the Lord to lead the American expeditionary forces in France against the armies of the Central Powers. Now I feel that some may disagree with me in this assertion, and if they do will you allow me to ask this question: What is meant by the words, The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, and as rivers of water he turneth it whithersoever he will? Now another quotation from the inspired word: Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might make my power known in thee. I just call attention to these quotations to try to convince that the Lord's hand is in the affairs of nations. When Pershing led the American army against the Germans, notice how quickly the morale of the German army was changed; they soon realized they were beaten; but every American with true understanding must not forget to give credit to the Lord for this wonderful victory. Now the Germans began to retreat, the land, guns and ammunition which they had taken from the Allies they had to surrender. Pershing led captivity captive; he recaptured the land which the

enemy had before taken. So Jesus led captivity captive, or recaptured and took away what the devil thought he had in his possession. Now, trembling one, you thought the devil had you in his possession; you were led captive by him for awhile. Jesus is greater than Pershing, he shall rule all nations with a rod of iron. This rod of iron means strength and endurance. He has recaptured you who through fear of death and hell were in bondage. So when Ezekiel saw the heavens opened and visions of God he was in bondage by the river Chebar. This prophet was chosen of the Lord to accomplish the Lord's purpose. He was in a certain sense a warrior, he was a soldier of the Lord. It seems to me there is a lesson in this book of Ezekiel for all the Lord's people. There is something in this book for those who minister in doctrine. I have a mind to call attention to some things which seem to me to be embraced in the words under consideration. You will notice that the Lord has recognized the fact that the prophets and priests have set up idols in their own hearts, and the Lord begins to talk to Ezekiel about it, and also tells him what to say to them. Now we are to keep this fact ever before us, that Ezekiel is not to deliver his own message, but the Lord's. Ezekiel refused to deliver the Lord's message and assigned his reason for it. What was the reason? you ask. Answer: The people will not hear me, will not believe what I say. Can we not sympathize with this son of man? The hand of the Lord was heavy upon him, prompting him to speak. Can we not also imagine Ezekiel's condition of mind? What shall I do? we hear him say. I am in great heaviness, my heart is full; yes, I even love this people; I have no desire to wound their feelings, but they do not believe what I say. So Ezekiel wants to be excused. Is he excused? No, and this adds to his sorrow. Hear what the Lord said to Ezekiel: If thou warn not this people, and they die in their sins, their blood will I require at thine hands, or, in other words, I will hold thee responsible for their behavior. But if thou warn them, and they repent not, and they die in their sins, thou hast delivered thy soul, thou art free. This is the substance of the command of the Lord to Ezekiel. The Lord also asks him what it is to him whether they hear or forbear? I have said somewhere in this article that there was a sense in which Ezekiel was a warrior. I want to say a little about this. No soldier is prepared to fight when he is first inducted into the service of his country. First he must be drilled, and this is very hard. Think for a moment how hard it would be for one accustomed to sleeping in a feather bed to have only a blanket, and perhaps have to spread it out on the ground to sleep on, and having to learn discipline, get up when he hears the bugle and take different kinds of exercise. Many become discouraged, and statistics show that many have committed suicide rather than endure this drilling. How strikingly this applies to a soldier of Jesus! Many have wanted to die, Jonah for one; he told the Lord it was best for him. But Jonah did not know what was best for him; neither do the Lord's servants know to-day what is best for them, but the Lord knows. I know of two men who are living in these days who have had suicidal thoughts in order to get rid of this burden, and I would not be surprised if there are many who have had such thoughts, but they are all prevented from executing this thought; the Lord has ordered it otherwise, hence the continuance in the serv-

ice. You see they are being drilled. What is the last thing the Lord does for his soldiers? He makes their foreheads as flint. This means that if they are ridiculed or evil spoken of they go on, the Lord having already told them that they should suffer. By whom shall they suffer? I am going to be brief here and just say that Jesus came unto his own, and they received him not. If they were his own they certainly belonged to him. How strikingly this applies to the Lord's servants. They come to their own sometimes, but are not received; that is, their word is not, and they know it. They can read facial expressions; certain looks in the face reveal the thoughts of the heart. There was one particular reason why it was hard for Ezekiel to deliver this message, and that was because the rulers were guilty of setting up idols in their own hearts, and the Lord would have them understand that their sins were just as black in his sight as the sins of the common people, and that their punishment should even be as those who sought unto them. Men have favorites among their fellows, but in this subject under consideration we are shown that the Lord has no favorites; hence Ezekiel's message is to the whole house of Israel.

There are many thoughts I have left out, because it would make the article too long to tell them, and it may be possible that they are not worth telling, but I had to write this letter, because I have been haunted with the word Ezekiel until I took time to write. It is not pleasant to do what one does not want to do, and yet when one suffers for disobedience there is a rest in yielding. Though Ezekiel suffered much, I believe there were times when he rested.

A. T. BENSON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 4, 1919.

WEISER, Idaho, July 4, 1919.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I find myself with the mind to write you a line this morning. I have been trying to preach for a few years, but am not satisfied to say that my efforts have really been gospel preaching. There are many things that could be said about preachers, there are so many different kinds, yet only two: those God calls and those who have run without being sent. But I wish to speak of the truly called, those whom God in his mercy has placed on the walls of Zion. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."—2 Tim. ii. 15. This is addressed to Timothy, a God-called preacher, and is an admonition to every truly called preacher to-day, and they are glad of it, for their mind is to study. They read because they have that hunger for truth; they study because the One who has called them gives them the mind to study, and if they are blessed with a retentive mind much that they read stays with them. Then if they are blessed with light and liberty they tell it to the brethren, and the brethren realize God has blessed them with an able and useful gift. But if, on the other hand, they do not retain what they read, and only once in a while, or say once in a dozen efforts, are able to comfort the children by setting forth the glorious gospel of the Son of God, shall we say they are not called? or shall we say if they studied the Scriptures more they could be of more benefit to the church? If we say they are not filling the place God called and qualified them for, we acknowledge God has not succeeded with them in his expectation, and this I shall not say. God is the fountain of knowledge, and if he desires me to remember or understand more of

his truth he will enable or give me the mind to do so. Job xi. 7: "Canst thou by searching find out God?" Romans xi. 33: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" That being the case, I reckon there is no preacher who will learn or find out any of the things of God except what he is pleased to give him. Every man must preach the preaching God bids him. So poor old Jonah must pass through sore trials, and yet at the right time go into Nineveh and deliver his mite. Not a very long sermon; here it is: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." God works, and none can hinder. So, my brother, if the Lord wills you to preach you will preach; if he wills you to be what we call "an able preacher," that is what you will be, but if one is to be a little preacher, with a stammering tongue, he is sure to fill the bill. This we know: every man has his proper gift of God, one after this manner and another after that. Timothy did not neglect this gift to the extent that God's will was not accomplished. I believe God has given big gifts and all grades down to the very smallest in the church, "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body," &c. Does any one think for a moment that we can add to the efficiency of the ministry by our efforts? If so, God has failed just to the extent that we have added to it. I do not care to say God's will was for brother B to do a certain work he had called him to, but brother B was so stubborn, or lazy, or ignorant, that he could not qualify, so the work was not done. I would just as soon say God tried to save a sinner but the sinner would not let him. Then study. Why? Because God has given you the inquiring mind, the love of his truth, and as soon as you are qualified you will preach, and preach the preaching he bids you. There will always be room; a man's gift makes room for him. This is the will and work of God.

Yours in hope,

T. E. ATTEBERY.

BUCYRUS, Ohio, Oct. 19, 1919.

DEAR BROTHER ELDER:—I just finished reading your good letter in the SIGNS on predestination, and enjoyed it much, as it is just in accord with my views. I also noticed your request for Elder Hassell's Church History. I have a copy, but would not part with it, but would be willing to loan it to you, if that would suit your purpose; if so, let me know, and I will be glad to send it to you. I would like a letter from you. We have never met, yet you seem to me as an old acquaintance. There is something in the experience of the Lord's people that not only proves the unity of the Lord's chosen, but also the predestination of God. He says, Ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world; and the Son prayed the Father that they might be one, even as he and the Father are one. So we see why there is a unity between them, even though they have never met. They are all led by the same Spirit, and are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones, so there is a complete union of all the members of the body of Christ, and just as much union, spiritually, in the body of Christ as there is naturally in our body. The apostle takes the natural body as a figure to represent Christ's body, or church, and says, The eye cannot say, Because I am not the ear I am not of the body, for the members are all necessary, and all

set in the body as it has pleased God, each having its proper gift of God, so none can exercise the gift of another. As you say, dear brother, God's predestination is full and complete, for says the Scriptures, Being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. God is a sovereign, an unchangeable God, declaring the end from the beginning, &c. Now, I cannot see how any one can find comfort or have faith in a halfway god, one who allows things to go by chance, for to my mind just as soon as God ceases to rule and control all things he ceases to be God. To be God he must be a complete sovereign. Paul said, By him were all things created, and by him all things consist. Just to suppose the case, there was one atom in the whole of creation that was allowed to go at random, or by chance, that surely would come in contact with something else and throw it out of balance, and so on until there would be no order in any of God's arrangements, and we would be compelled to say with the fool, There is no God. But God be thanked, we have a more sure word of prophecy, for Paul was sure of his ground when he said, Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. There is no doubt in my mind as to God's control of all things, or of his predetermining all events, for he says by the prophet, I create the waster to destroy and the wicked for the day of evil. Again, The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain. So we see his power and restraining hand even over the wicked, controlling the wrath of man unto his own praise. I can say with you, I have no doubt about God's predestinating, or ruling all events, both in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, but there is much of the time that I fear I am mistaken, and not only deceived myself, but have deceived the people of God; but there is one consolation even in the darkest hour, and that is, the Lord knows.

Well, I must close, or I shall weary you. I only intended to tell you how I enjoyed your good letter and to offer to loan you my book, and here I have written a letter, and do not know that there is a thing in it to comfort or interest you or any of the Lord's people, but there is one thing I do know: it is just what I believe. If after you read this you think there is anything in it that would comfort any one, and you so desire, you can send it to the SIGNS, with instructions to publish it if they think it fit.

With love and best wishes, and hoping to hear from you soon, I beg to remain your brother in hope, and either saved by free, unmerited grace, or eternally lost.

C. E. JACKSON.

SHOCK, Ky., Oct. 12, 1919.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have had a desire for some time to write you, but through timidity and shamefacedness have deferred until now. I was born January 10th, 1836, making my age this day eighty-three years, nine months and two days, therefore cannot much expect to ever see you in this life, although I have been thinking of asking you to come and see us this fall, providing that I shall be spared until then. I am well and hearty now, can and sometimes do walk eight or ten miles in a few hours, but this does not mean that I shall live any longer than if I were more feeble, but it does mean that it is a wonderful blessing to me now, so wonderful and so gracious that I would be glad to praise and extol the name of my dear Redeemer.

Well, the object I have particularly in writing you is to mention one point in your editorial in October 1st number of the SIGNS; not that I find any fault whatever, but on the point of the silence in heaven for about the space of a half hour. As your view of this peculiar point was the first I have heard from any one, either by tongue or pen, and as I had some thoughts about it a little different, and have had them for many years, I thought I would briefly outline a few of them this dark evening and send them to you for your consideration. I have thought for many years the heaven mentioned in Revelation v. 3, was the legal heaven, and also that the heaven that the silence was in was the legal heaven. It seems clear to my mind that the opening of the sixth seal has direct reference to the crucifixion of Christ, when the heaven (legal heaven) departed as a scroll when it is rolled together, when the great day of the wrath of God was poured out on the sin-bearing victim, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, which took away the sins of the Israel world, bore them in his own body on the tree of the cross. So I have thought that the opening of the seventh seal had reference to the time when Christ rose from the dead, and this silence was in the legal heaven, and when Jesus rose from the dead, this silenced these rulers, scribes and Pharisees; they were dumb, they were speechless, they were beaten. They, after (seemingly) holding a secret caucus, or council, decided to give large money to the soldiers to go and tell that they came and stole him, &c. You can get my idea, brother Lefferts, from what I have written, without writing any further to tax your patience. I often speak to the brethren, sisters and good friends of the clearness and accuracy of your writings on the Scriptures.

This is badly written, as you will see; the day is so dark I cannot follow the lines.

Yours to serve, W. J. MAY.

MARSHALL, Va., May 19, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—My subscription is due, and I am sending it in this, but I do not feel like sending it without also making some acknowledgment of what the paper means to me. It is all the preaching I get. O how doubly blessed is that church and that individual that has the blessed privilege of sitting under a sound ministry.

I am also sending some thoughts that came to me once while I was sick; not ill in bed, just not able to go about. If you think them worth using, do so; if not, all is right with me.

THE HOUSE I LIVE IN.

IT suited me very well once, and for some time I was quite satisfied with it. It was not as fine as some I saw around me, neither seemed as poor as some I saw, but there came a time when it did not entirely suit me. I realized that it needed some improvement, but I thought I could very easily fix it up all right. I went to work, and, as I thought, improved the outside of my house, but still it was not as good as I wanted it to be. It seemed to be the worst house in the neighborhood, and try as I would it did not get any better. I began to see, too, now that the inside was worse than the outside. If I brushed some of the cobwebs off my windows I only saw more plainly the filthy condition of the interior. All manner of loathsome creatures lived in it, and seemed to be perfectly at home. Here indeed was need of work and cleansing. I set to work with all my strength to improve my house without and within.

I thought I could cover up some of the unsightly places on the outside with flowers and vines, but try as I would it was still nothing but a filthy hovel. Sometimes I would give up, and say, It is no use; I will just shut my eyes and not see this loathsome place. But I could not even keep from seeing it; the light would come and show what condition I was in. I went for help to those who professed to be able to help me, and they told me to just get busy and clean the inside and then all sorts of good things would come in and take the place of the bad, and I, poor, silly creature, tried to follow their advice. They said, Cast in your lot with us, it will help you to be with good people. I could not purify my house, but I did try to take their advice, and went to live with them. They seemed to be entirely satisfied with their houses, both inside and out. In truth, their houses looked much better to me than my own, but it was entirely out of my power to make mine any better. I was finally made to see that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin; that all my help must come from outside of myself; that there was no help except from God. I am still in this house, but I hope I have been taught to look only to Jesus. O how I hope that the dear Lord dwells in my vile, polluted heart. Sometimes I think I can see his lovely face and feel his beloved presence even in this polluted earthly tabernacle. The house I live in is beginning to show signs of approaching dissolution, yet it is just as vile and loathsome as ever. I am persuaded that He can change this vile body and make it like his own glorious body, not for any of my good works or efforts at being better, but just because it seems good in his sight to do it.

(MRS.) A. E. WALKER.

The Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun Co., Va., to her sister churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 15th, 16th and 17th, 1919, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We greet you with love and in the fellowship of the gospel of Christ Jesus. We thank the Lord for the privilege of writing to you one more time. Many we have not met since the meeting with the New Valley Church two years ago, and some we shall never meet in this world again, as some who were at that meeting have passed away, and, no doubt, some who will be at Frying Pan at this meeting will never meet again. Who it will be, God alone knows. We have the promise of Israel's God that when this earthly house of our tabernacle shall be dissolved, we have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. O how good it is for brethren to meet together to tell of the joys and sorrows of the past, looking forward to the good things God has in store for those who love him. Although there may be many doubts and fears and losses and crosses, we have the word that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Let us be in sickness or in health, in poverty or in wealth, all is according to God's purpose. The soldiers of the cross of Christ are expecting to have a reunion at Frying Pan. Jesus will be the commanding officer in the Spirit. The Lord will spread the table; his servants will serve forth the good things with which God has filled their hearts and minds—the bread of eternal life. It will be a love-feast for all the soldiers of the cross. The Bridegroom

says, "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." Jesus is the treasurer in his Father's house; he pays all bills for the soldiers of the cross. Fear not, Jesus gives you, in his name, welcome to come to the Father's house. You may feel ever so unworthy to partake of the goodness of the Lord's house, but were the servants of God required to wait until they had gotten fit of themselves, then they could never come to the love-feast which God has provided for them. Your worthiness is not in yourselves, but in Jesus. He makes you fit to come to the house of God. It makes no difference how poor you may feel to be, Jesus is rich. Jesus said to the poor, the lame, the halt and the blind, Come. How good Jesus is! He leads just such ones to his Father's house; he makes them welcome at his expense. All honor and praise and glory to his holy name world without end, for evermore. Amen.

[THE above extract is from the church letter of the Ebenezer Church to the Virginia Corresponding Meeting. It was written by our brother, Deacon F. E. Robey, before his death, and several have expressed a desire to see it in the SIGNS.—ED.]

MILAM, TEXAS.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—When I read the good letters in the SIGNS it seems to draw me near the foot of the cross, realizing my nothingness in myself, and knowing I am entirely dependent upon God's free grace and mercy, without any merit of my own, for I know that in me dwelleth no good thing, and when I would do good, evil is present, so that I cannot do the things I would. I am one who can see no righteousness in self, but, on the other hand, see a great sinner; as Paul said, "of whom I am chief." I love the Old Baptists wherever I find them. I am limited, but I do not believe in a limited God. I am just what God made me, and I have no right to say, Why hast thou made me thus? God says he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

Dispose of this as you think best. If you think it may contain a crumb for some one, you may use it; if not, throw it aside, and it will be all right with me. God bless you all.

Your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord,

W. H. CONN.

SULLIVAN, Ill.

DEAR EDITORS:—I wish to thank you for kindly publishing my article on predestination and requesting a copy of Hassell's Church History. Since my article was published I have received personal letters from brethren in the states of Ohio, Washington, Texas, Oklahoma, Georgia, Alabama and Kentucky. This shows what a wonderful circulation the SIGNS has. These letters to me were from strangers in the flesh, but it seemed like getting letters from home folks. I inclose one from brother C. E. Jackson, which shows the kind of brotherly fellowship that exists among the brethren from every state. You can publish if you like. He has sent me the history I inquired after. It is surely a great privilege to be able through your paper to converse with the brethren in every state in the union. I do not want to do without the paper, so when my time expires kindly notify me and I will remit. I can say that I think you are contending for the same doctrine as taught by the apostles and prophets, and also as Elder Gilbert Beebe advocated.

Yours to serve,

E. D. ELDER.

(See C. E. Jackson's letter on page 356.)

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1919.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

OBEDIENCE AND DISOBEDIENCE.

A READER of the SIGNS, living in North Dakota, asks us if we believe that the disobedience of the Lord's people is predestinated: do we believe that both the obedience and disobedience are ordered of the Lord, and independent of our volition? We have no hesitation in trying to answer this request to the best of our ability, but we cannot hope to satisfy all who read. God is equal in all his ways. His justice is equal to his wisdom, and his love is equal to his mercy, and all these attributes of God are infinite. Following out this thought, if the omniscience of God comprehends all things, then his omnipotence is equal to his infinite knowledge, and must comprehend all things also. If it be granted that God foreknew before the foundation of the world all things that ever come to pass, then his predestination must be just as extensive as his foreknowledge, and the things he so wonderfully comprehended in his infinite foreknowledge he must certainly have predestinated should come to pass. The word "omnipotent" can be applied to none but the Lord, and to him it applies in all its breadth. All power belongs unto God, and there is no power but of God. Men, nor angels, nor devils, have any power whatever except as it is given them of God. It is not possible, therefore, for anything to take place contrary to God's eternal purpose. It does occur that the Lord's people are sometimes found walking in obedience to the precepts of grace, and again they are found walking contrary thereto. Neither the obedience nor the disobedience of the children of God are matters of chance, nor do they occur accidentally, but take place according to God's eternal purpose, he having predestinated all things whatsoever come to pass. This plainly answers the question of our inquirer, but we do not want to leave the subject at this point. While we believe that nothing takes place but what God has predestinated, it is not strictly following the Bible language to say that God predestinates the disobedience of his children. We do not like to say it just that way, for the reason that no text directly warrants the assertion, while we do believe that disobedience and obedience are among the "all things" that work together for good to the people of God and to God's glory. All obedience to the precepts of the gospel of Christ comes by grace, and is the effect of the indwelling power of the Spirit of Christ. When the Lord's people are so blessed as to be enabled to walk in obedience it is no credit to them, but the praise and glory thereof are unto the Lord, from whom comes the strength unto obedience. The power of God working in his people to will and to do of his good pleasure is the secret of their being able to work out their salvation with fear and trembling. God is the custodian of his own free grace, and gives it as he will, when he will and to whom he will. Only by the gift of God can there be a walking in obedience by the people of God. This being so, and the

Scriptures abundantly substantiate it, then obedience can never be a mere happen-so, but must always come to and into the believer by divine intention, since it is always the fruit of divine grace, which God alone can give. God declares that he is himself the light, that he creates darkness. Darkness is nothing more or less than the absence of light. The light being withdrawn, darkness abounds. Correspondingly, obedience is due to the presence and operation of the Holy Spirit in the believer. Disobedience is just the opposite. Grace being obedience, then disobedience is the absence of grace. Grace being actively present, the people of God walk obediently; grace being absent, or being inactive, they walk in disobedience. Whenever the restraining power of grace is removed from the Lord's people the floodgates of the depravity of their nature are opened, and there is no telling what iniquities are let loose. All guilt is chargeable alone to our fallen human nature. It cannot be charged to the Almighty, for he is justified in all that he does. We do not have to be compelled to sin, we do that fast enough without being made to do it. Just let God for one moment withdraw his restraining grace and into disobedience we plunge at once, to be swallowed up in it until grace shall again deliver us. This is our fault, not God's. Nothing is ever his fault, for there is no fault in him. "Fault" or "blame" and "God" are terms that cannot be associated together. It is our fault when we disobey the precepts of the gospel, it is to the praise of the glory of his grace when we obey. Yet all things whatsoever that come to pass are predestinated of God. There is an inward monitor in the souls of the children of God that tells them what to do and how to do it. The same grace that brought you salvation is the principle that abides in your hearts, teaching you the denial of worldliness and ungodly lusts, and thus showing you that you ought to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world. The church needs not that any man or set of men teach what they ought to do. The grace of God in the heart teaches that. In exhorting his flock unto righteous living the pastor is but stirring up their minds to remember the teachings of grace already in their hearts. He cannot tell them anything but what they already know. If he does they will not receive it; they cannot. Happy is that believer who can heed the teachings of inward grace and walk obediently thereunto. The wonder is, not that we ever disobey, but that we do not disobey all the time. Man is such a vile sinner that it is naught but in accord with his nature that he should disobey, and keep on disobeying; the marvelous thing is when we find the sinner a subject of grace and mortifying his nature by that grace so as to live in accord with the law of the kingdom of God, which is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. This is nothing short of a miracle, and wonderfully shows the power of God working in sinful man. That obedience itself is a blessing from God cannot be denied. That blessing follows upon blessing is equally true, for obedience is a tree of life (Christ) to him who has it, and it reaches out and blossoms in different directions just as a tree does, so that the believer goes from strength to strength, as the Bible says. It does not matter whether we say that blessings are found in obedience or follow upon obedience, for instances of both can be plentifully found in the Bible. It does matter though whether we say and whether we feel that obedience is of our-

selves or not of ourselves. If of grace, then to God all the glory belongs; if of self, then self ought to get the praise, and then we shall have somewhat to glory of in the presence of God, and that flatly contradicts the Scriptures.

Before we close we must say that the doctrine of predestination has been our solid comfort since having been brought into the Old School Baptist Church, and for some years previous thereto, and we fully believe that the will of God is done among the inhabitants of the earth, as well as in the army of heaven. However, we have never felt that we could ever excuse our disobedience upon the ground that God predestinated it. The glorious doctrine of God should never be used as a cloak to hide our sins. Never should we excuse our failures or weaknesses on the ground that God predestinated them, therefore we could not help them. It seems to us that such expressions from the lips of God's people bespeak a seared conscience, and show that the spiritual sensitiveness to sin has become terribly blunted. All our life, and we are now past forty years of age, has been spent among Old School Baptists who believed in the absolute predestination of all things, and never once so far have we ever heard one excuse his or her disobedience on the ground of its having been predestinated. Further, any member of the church who would excuse his or her sinful conduct because it had been predestinated we feel sure would not be continued in church fellowship. Such a declaration would be well-nigh blasphemy, not that it is not literally true, but that the spirit of such a declaration would be casting blame upon the Almighty, and therefore blasphemy. We have never been among a people who were more God-fearing and more careful of their walk and conversation than absolute predestinarians, though their enemies are continually charging that they are lax in their lives and disorderly in their churches. This is because their enemies do not know them nor understand them. The doctrine of our God rightly believed always begets sanctification and a life of obedience, never the contrary. It becomes us to mourn and repent of our sins and weaknesses, and to seek unto that grace that alone can rescue us from our depravity. We know that God is all-powerful, and that in his might he has appointed all our times and seasons. When it is ill with the spiritually-minded child of God will not that very illness of soul drive him to the throne of grace to find strength to meet that very need? God has a purpose in all that befalls his people.

L.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANKS.

As the majority of our subscribers' time expires with the end of the year, we inclose in each paper of this issue a subscription blank, as a convenience to them in sending new subscribers, as well as in paying their own subscriptions. Will you please make a special effort to send one or more new subscribers when you renew your subscription for next year?

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

PLEASE publish my change of address from Oskaloosa, Kansas, to 1267 Polk St., Topeka, Kansas, where I am now, I hope, permanently located, and hope that my correspondents, both old and new, will address me here.

MARY ELLISON.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Wm. Osborne.)

The Elders and messengers composing the First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Baptists, when convened with our sister church of Good Hope, in Coffey County, Kansas, sendeth greeting and much love.

DEARLY BELOVED OF THE LORD:—According to our annual custom you will expect a Circular Letter, setting forth some points of doctrine to which we hold. The Lord being our helper, we will try to go forth, trusting in him who is a help in every time of need. We will call your attention to Mark x. 26, 27: "And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved? And Jesus looking upon them [his disciples] saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible." Now, brethren, there seems to be so common an idea in the world that one can save himself, and so many erroneous doctrines intended to deceive, hence our text. The Lord by the mouth of the prophet saith: "I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images."—Isaiah xlii. 8. Now, we believe the glory of the Lord was to do his Father's will. "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing." "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." "All that the Father hath given me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."—John vi. 39, 38, 37, 44. A little predestination, brethren. But they will tell you that you can be a child of God to-day, and by some act or deed you can be lost to-morrow. But how does this compare with divine writ? Let us see. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. * * * But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord."—Jer. xxxi. 31–34. "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."—Matt. vii. 20. Where are the Sunday-schools, theological seminaries and other modern institutions, where they are trying to teach the unregenerate to know Christ? But, brethren, be not deceived, we have this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." He hath said, I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather them from the west. I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back. Bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth, even every one that is called by my name. So we see the work is of the Lord, and not of man, for with man it is impossible. So let us ever look to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, asking him to deliver us from the evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

By order of the Association.

L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at the home of Mr. Charles Chandler, Sharon Hill, Pa., Nov. 15th, 1919, Calvin Cubbage and Miss Margaret T. Dance, both of Philadelphia, Pa.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at his residence, 118 Forest Ave., St. Thomas, Ont., Nov. 5th, 1919, Daniel Ferguson, of Highgate, Ont., and Isabelle Maddock, of Alvinston, Ont.

By the same, at the home of the bride's parents in Ekfrid, Ont., Nov. 5th, 1919, David McColl and Margaret McLean, both of Ekfrid.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Charlotte E. Robey, our sister in Christ, widow of brother Lewis H. Robey, who died Jan. 2nd, 1911, departed from this earthly life at the home of her son, Early L. Robey, at Navy, Fairfax Co., Va., Monday morning, October 6th, 1919. She was the daughter of Gurton Huntt and Susan Kitchin, and was married to Lewis Robey Jan. 1st, 1866. To that union were born six children, three sons and three daughters. One of these, sister Zorah Robey Collins, is a member of the Frying Pan Church, to which her father and mother belonged. Others of the family attend the meetings at Frying Pan, and we believe are sincerely interested in the truth. Sister Robey was baptized by the late Elder E. V. White about the year 1890, but we have not the exact date. She was in the 75th year of her age at the time of her death, and had been regularly attending the meetings of the church up until some months before, when she was hurt by falling, and lay a helpless invalid a long time. Recovering sufficiently to be able to get around, she was at the home of her son Early, not far from the church, so as to attend the Virginia Corresponding Meeting about a week later, when she fell again and sustained a fracture, from the effects of which she never recovered. How mysteriously the Lord directs the feet of his saints! We sometimes wonder why this or that takes place, but God gives not the answer. Happy is the believer who has faith to accept whatever comes from the divine Hand, doubting not, but knowing that all things work together for the good of the elect of God and to God's declarative glory. Sister Robey was a bright and shining light to the rest of us, because she lived her profession as the effect of God working in her to will and to do of his good pleasure. Religion was not to her a mere form, but a blessed reality, and she was never better contented than when in the company of the people of God. A true christian, one of the best of mothers, a stanch friend and one of the readiest of neighbors has been called from the field of her labors to her eternal rest. Would that God might grant us who are left behind the ability of grace to walk as she did: worthy of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. May the Holy Spirit dwell with all who are in trouble. L.

Samuel Butler was born near Ervil, Muskingum Co., Ohio, August 9th, 1842, and departed this life at his home in Hampton, Iowa, October 23rd, 1919, following an illness of five months duration, making his age 77 years, 2 months and 14 days. He was a son of John and Ann Butler. When a child he moved with his parents to Monroe, Wisconsin. December 1st, 1864, he was married to Miss Nancy E. Bailey, who preceded him in death on March 6th, 1914. To that union were born eight children, six of whom are left to mourn his death: Mrs. John Eitel, Dennis Franklin Butler, Mrs. Albert Woodley and Clifford Butler, all of Hampton, Iowa; Lloyd Butler, of Cedar Falls, Iowa, and Mrs. L. E. Rowson, of Geneva, Iowa. Two children preceded the father and mother in death. He is also survived by three brothers and two sisters, twenty grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. In the spring of 1868 he moved to Franklin County, Iowa, locating in Ingham township, where he lived until 1901, when he moved to Hampton. He and his wife united with the West Fork Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists in June, 1885, and were baptized by Elder A. J. Norton. In February, 1895, he was ordained deacon of the church, which place he held until his death. He was always a faithful and devoted member, one never to be forgotten by all who knew him; a man of good and sound mind, always ready to lend a helping hand to the poor and needy. Surely a good man has gone from us. His house was a home for his brethren and the church, as he took great pleasure in caring for them, and the meetings were held at his home until the time of his illness.

Funeral service was held from his late home, conducted by Elder Robert Keeton, of Grinnell, Iowa, assisted by brother Wm. Holmes, of Newton, Iowa, his three sons and three oldest grandsons acting as pall-bearers. Interment was made in Hillside Cemetery to await the coming of the resurrection morn.

ALBERT WOODLEY.

Elizabeth Munday McWilliams, daughter of Reuben and Elizabeth Munday, was born in Madison County, Ky., May 8th, 1832, and passed from this life July 27th, 1919, aged 87 years, 2 months and 19 days. She was married to James H. McWilliams October 8th, 1850, and moved to Missouri in 1855, where they resided until 1872, at which time they removed to Douglass, Kansas, and later to Oklahoma. Eleven children were born to that union, nine of whom lived to be grown; two boys died in infancy and three daughters after they were married. All three had a hope in Christ and were baptized in the fellowship

of the Primitive Baptist Church. Her husband died July 17th, 1897. Mr. and Mrs. McWilliams received a hope in Christ and were baptized and united with the Primitive Baptist Church in 1887. They were sound in the faith of our Savior and believed in salvation by grace. Mrs. McWilliams was a widow twenty-two years, during which time she lived with her children. She was at the home of a daughter in Douglass, Kansas, during her last illness, and was tenderly cared for by her children, everything being done that could be to relieve her suffering. She lived her religion in her daily life, and no one questioned her sincerity. When her last illness came, though suffering intensely, she was patient through it all, and her faith in Christ never wavered. She would often say, "One moment in glory makes up for it all." She loved the old hymns, and would ask us to sing, "O sing to me of heaven," "My rest is in heaven," and others, and would join in the singing as long as her voice was strong enough. To know her was to love her, because of her beautiful christian life, which was spent in ministering to others. She looked forward with joy to the time when she would be with her Savior and her loved ones gone before, and spoke words of comfort to her children. On one occasion the children were all standing around her bedside thinking the end had come, but she rallied and said, "I did not think I was dying then; I have got to see heaven before I go." The next morning when she awoke she said she had seen her father, and appeared anxious to say more, but was too weak. A sorrowing host of relatives and friends will miss her, but it is a comfort to know that our Savior has said, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

The funeral was held at her daughter's home in Douglass, Kansas, and she was laid beside her husband at Eddy, Okla.

James T. Bandy was born near White Hall, Greene Co., Ill., Dec. 13th, 1823, and died at the home of his daughter, in Dallas, Texas, Dec. 2nd, 1911, making his stay upon earth nearly 88 years. He had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church since early manhood, and was baptized by Elder A. W. Murray. He was married the first time when but eighteen years of age, his wife living only a few years. By this union he had one son, who is still living.

ALSO,

Ellen Bandy, wife of James T. Bandy, was born near White Hall, Ill., March 8th, 1831, and died at the home of her daughter, in Hubbard, Texas, Jan. 9th, 1918, making her stay upon earth nearly 87 years. Her maiden name was Lemmon. She was the daughter of James and Amy Lemmon, and was married to James T. Bandy in 1848, near White Hall, Ill. To that union were born eight children, only five of whom survive. They had thirty-eight grandchildren and many great-grandchildren. In 1854 they emigrated to Texas, and in 1855 she united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Hutchins, Texas, and was baptized by Elder Green. They lived long and useful lives, firm in the faith of salvation by grace, and grace alone. Their home was always open to the brethren and sisters, and many times services were held there. They loved to attend the meetings of the church, and always did so when possible. Their work upon earth is done, and we hope and believe they are at rest. Their bodies lie side by side in the cemetery at Palmer, Texas, there to await the resurrection day. "The Lord knoweth them that are his."

S. E. BANDY.

James Porter Townsend, husband of Marion B. Townsend, daughter of sister Edna M. Baker and granddaughter of Elder B. F. Coulter, died on Nov. 1st, 1919, at 1910 N. 22nd St., Philadelphia, Pa., aged 23 years. He contracted tuberculosis two years ago while in the government service. He was the son of the late James Porter Townsend, of Snow Hill, Md., and was buried at that place Nov. 5th. He is survived by his wife, mother, one brother and four sisters. Possessing a mild and happy disposition, he endeared himself to all his friends. His meditations concerning his standing before his God were kept secret in his own heart, yet almost his last spoken words were: "Lord, have mercy on me."

Elder J. G. Eubanks spoke words of comfort to the friends assembled on the evening of Nov. 4th. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

B. F. COULTER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. M. E. Smith, N. Y., $1.00; Wm. Darby, Md., $1.00; John F. Oliver, Va., $1.00; Mrs. W. W. Howard, Texas, $5.00; John C. McAlpine, Ont., $1.25.

APPOINTMENTS.

PLEASE publish appointments for Elder J. M. Fenton as follows:

Dec. 19th, No. 27 N. Eastfield St., Trenton, N. J., 7:45 p. m.; 20th, Stockton, N. J., 2:30 p. m.; 21st, Locktown, N. J., 10:30 a. m.; Frenchtown, N. J., 4 p. m.; Grandin, N. J., A. J. Demott's, 7:30 p. m.

D. M. VAIL.

THE Lord willing, I will visit as follows:

Schoharie, N. Y., Nov. 22nd and 23rd; Troy, N. Y., at Powers' home, Nov. 24th, 1:30; Albany, N. Y., 272 Clinton St., 4:30; Brantford, Canada, 25th; Woodstock, 26th; London, 27th; Alvinston, 28th; Aberfeldy, 29th and 30th; London, Dec. 6th and 7th.

J. M. FENTON.

MEETINGS.

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IN

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Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

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WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

Cedar Creek Church holds her regular meetings at 13th and Lexington Sts., Sellwood, at 2 p. m. on the fourth Sunday in each month. Sellwood is a suburb of Portland, Oregon. Take any outgoing Sellwood car.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

Newberg, Oregon.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

There will be meeting every first Sunday at Halcott Center, N. Y., in the Grange Hall. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

The Middletown and Andes Church will hold their meetings the first Sunday in every month at their meetinghouse, Union Grove, N. Y. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE of JOSHUA S. CORDER.

PRICE REDUCED.

I will sell the remaining copies I have on hand of this little memorial book for seventy-five cents per copy, postpaid. And I want to say to you of the household of faith who wish this book and are too poor to pay for it, if you will send me your name and address and ten cents to cover postage, I will gladly mail you a copy. The sweet expressions I have received concerning this little work have more than doubly paid me for the anxious hours I spent over its publication, not knowing whether He from whom all blessings flow would bless it to his saints or no. I thank every one who has ordered the book, and kindly solicit further patronage. Send all orders to me,

SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."—1 Thess. v. 21. "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it"—Deut. xii. 32. cf. Eccl. iii. 14; James i. 17; Matt. xxviii. 20.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 87. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1919. NO. 24.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FEAR NOT.

For some time my mind has been resting upon the above Scripture, it having left a deep and lasting impression from a dream. I will try and write a few thoughts as they may be presented to my mind. "But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." Sometimes a dream may be like angels' visits, and leave a lasting impression on the mind, and cause deep and anxious thoughts. We find that in all this Joseph did not act hastily. Had the angel said no more to Joseph his fear would have continued, but he now let Joseph know some of the things that God had spoken through prophecy, hence the glorious news breaks forth with joy: "She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife. He called his name Jesus. Neither Joseph nor Mary had anything to do with naming him; they might have called him something else, but his name would still be Jesus. At the birth of this child, Jesus, God sent forth his angels with words of joy: "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." Surely such things had been promised and looked for, through prophecy. "Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." At this announcement there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." He is our peace, he is our Savior, our Redeemer, he came to save his people from their sins. Did he save them?

> "Keep silence, all created things,
> And wait your Maker's nod;
> My soul stands trembling while she sings
> The honors of her God."

He shall not fail, he shall save his people, for that purpose he was born; he came to put sin away by the sacrifice of himself. (Heb. ix. 26.) He bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye are healed. (1 Peter ii. 24.) By his own blood he

entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. (Heb. i. 12.) In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. (Eph. i. 7; Rom. v. 8–10; John vi. 37–39, 45–47; Matt. i. 21; John xvii. 4.) The work of redemption is done, it is finished, he hath saved his people. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9. The man is not living who can lay a foundation for his hope this side of that. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. iii. 11. He shall save his people. Listen: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

"O tell me, Lord, that thou art mine,
What can I wish beside?
My soul shall at the fountain live,
When all the streams are dried."

Jesus died, arose and ascended up on high, and gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, until we are come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Then we shall know as we are known. He shall save his people from their sins. This is my hope.

A poor sinner saved by grace,

D. R. TURNER.

CERULEAN, Kentucky.

COLUMBUS, Ga., Sept. 23, 1919.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—You remember when I saw you and heard you preach in Monroe, Ga., in August, I told you the Lord willing I desired to attend the Mt. Zion Association, in south Alabama, so my daughter (Mrs. Thetford) and I did so. The association convened at Shiloh Church, situated near Roy, Ala., commencing on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, closing Monday at noon. We met with Predestinarian Baptists of the soundest type, all in union and sweet fellowship, not a discordant sound. There were ministers and many visiting brethren and sisters present from the sister churches in that and corresponding associations. Elder B. Sawyer, of Roy, Ala., is moderator of this association. We also met at this meeting Elders Hattaway, Little, Richards, Owens and others, all of south Alabama. Elder B. H. Irwin was also with us, coming there among those Baptists recently from Texas. I wish you could have been there with us, for I feel you would have feasted on the glorious things spoken of our Lord and Master. My cup was full to the brim; yea, running over. We felt the Lord was in our midst blessing his truth to the comfort and joy of his people gathered there praising and adoring his holy name. What excessive joy to sit and listen to the undershepherds telling of the glorious things of Jesus and his kingdom, rightly dividing the word of truth, preaching the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, giving us instruction in the way of truth and righteousness and in the order of God's house, proclaiming the sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfection of the great Jehovah, the predestination of all things, eternal, unconditional election, the total depravity of man, that the

atonement or redemption of Jesus Christ is for the elect only, the effectual work of the Holy Spirit in regenerating and quickening the elect of God, the final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God by grace. This is the doctrine that God's dear children love and firmly believe; it is their bread and meat, their life. This poor and afflicted people love to meditate on this glorious doctrine, the salvation of sinners through the grace of God in Christ Jesus, and the absolute sovereignty of God, that he rules in heaven and in earth and in all deep places, doing his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, so that all things whatsoever come to pass are according to the divine counsel and immutable purpose of God. They with the poet can sing,

> "How can I sink with such a prop
> As my eternal God,
> Who bears the earth's huge pillars up,
> And spreads the heavens abroad?"

These dear Baptists bear the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, &c., poor in spirit, each esteeming others better than self, full of meekness and lowliness. As many as are in Christ have put on Christ, they are clothed with his righteousness and adorned with his grace. We were instructed and greatly comforted there among that band of precious believers, listening to God's ministers tell of the Master, giving us messages of comfort, telling us of the gracious truths he taught, of his mighty works of healing, his love and mercy, his compassion and care of his chosen generation, that he never turns unheeding from the poorest suppliant's prayer. These messages are of great comfort and consolation to the Lord's humble poor, our spirit is renewed, strength is given us and we go on our way rejoicing. They are like healing balm, and breathe a peaceful calm and rest to the tempest-tossed child of God, who knows that he is love and full of mercy, and that our faintest whisper will reach his listening ear. He knoweth and pitieth all. What a wonderful consolation to the poor, weary, sin-burdened child of God, who is full of weakness and foolishness, to know that he is the object of the Savior's care and love, who will never suffer him to perish. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." O what a peaceful rest fills our bosom when we view Jesus as our Savior in the free pardon of all our sins. Salvation is not of works, but alone through the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Then our theme is a sinner saved, and we praise redeeming grace. O may we be enabled to praise acceptably the great God who gave to us our life and being, who governs all things according to his will, whose wisdom is inconceivable, who fills the heavens with the glory of his majesty and the earth with the influence of his goodness. The Lord keep and bless these dear Baptists in southern Alabama, and all his people everywhere.

According to promise, I desired to write you about my visit to this association of Predestinarian Baptists, and now I will close, knowing you will throw the mantle of charity over all. Remember me in your prayers. Love to Mrs. Lefferts and your dear ones. May the blessing of God rest upon you and all the household of faith.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

JUSTUS, Pa., Oct., 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending you a letter written by sister Carrie Eaton, for publication in the SIGNS if you think best. G. W. GOODRICH.

BARTON, N. Y., Sept. 8, 1919.

TO MY DEAR BRETHREN OF THE CHURCH AT JUSTUS, PA.:—Although I have been silent for a long time I have not forgotten those whom I hold in sweet fellowship and christian love, and trust they hold the same for poor unworthy me. I would say with the poet,

"My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life or breath remains;
There my best friends, my kindred, dwell,
There God my Savior reigns."

I had hoped to meet you all face to face this summer, but the dear Lord willed it otherwise. Our God is a wonderful God, full of love and tender mercy to us poor, weak, dependent worms of the dust. When I look back over my long and unprofitable life and see how wonderfully and graciously he has led me, and is still leading me, I am filled with wonder, love and praise to his great and holy name. I well remember after my loved ones were taken from me (nearly five years since) when I felt utterly alone, how I felt the presence of that dear Savior in a way I cannot tell or describe. As he came to me with the precious promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," my grief was turned into joy, and I exclaimed, What a precious promise, and what a precious Savior! That promise has been a great comfort to me in what otherwise would have been many lonely hours in the years that have passed. I pray that I may be kept meek and humble, always resting at the feet of that dear Savior; I find it to be a comfortable resting-place.

Our beloved pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, was with us in Waverly, N. Y., August 26th, and came to us well laden with gospel truth, which was to us a rich feast, to me especially, as I was starving so long, while I was away, where I could not hear the gospel preached. I hope the Lord will be with you when you meet for his worship, and I hope to be with you in spirit to join in praise to his great and holy name. Remember me in your petitions at the throne of grace. Please sing hymn number 609.

Your little sister in hope, unworthily, but affectionately,

CARRIE EATON.

POCA, W. Va., May 22, 1919.

DEAR BROTHER FENTON:—My heart is aching yet over my failure to visit you dear people, but my health was not sufficient for me to make the trip. I should have written brother Jeff. Mellott, but flattered myself with the idea that I might be able to go until two days before the meeting, when I had to give up all hope. Now, my brother, I cannot be with you dear people as soon as you have requested. Our communion meeting is the first Sunday and Saturday before in June, and I am compelled to be there; that is with my home church, called Hopewell. I want to try and visit you some time this summer, but cannot set any time yet. We want you to be at our association the second Sunday in September, commencing on Friday before. I hope you may be spared long to cry aloud and spare not. O how I long to hear that voice again declaring the glorious gospel of the Son of God. I hope you will pardon me for not writing you sooner. May the God of peace and love be with you in all of your deliberations.

It seems that I cannot quit. I would like to write you a long, interesting letter, but am not prepared to do so, neither can I prepare myself for the task. I am poor as to the goods of this world, yet I hope that I am rich in faith and an heir of the kingdom. There is that which maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing.

They are the people whose eyes stand out with fatness. They claim to know that they have religion, and that they are bound for heaven; hence it is that they are living without hope and without God, having no grace, making themselves rich, yet have nothing. There is that which maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches. The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. God's people are a poor and afflicted people, poor in spirit; though they may be well to do in the goods of this world, they are needy creatures. God, be merciful to me, a sinner, is the cry of the poor trembling child of God, a beggar for mercy when at the throne of grace. As poor as they may feel to be, their hope in Christ is worth ten thousand worlds like this. Its worth to a child of God cannot be estimated. Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God, who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that therein is, who keepeth truth forever.

From your old sinful brother,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

BOOK OF EDITORIALS.

We have on hand a number of copies of the Second Volume of Editorials. This book is made up of editorials written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the Signs of the Times from March, 1842, to March, 1847, and contains 768 pages, neatly bound in cloth.

This work originally sold at two dollars per copy, but as a few of the pages are stained by water we will, as long as the supply lasts, sell them at the extremely low price of seventy-five cents per copy. Postage paid by us. All who wish this book should procure it now, as we will have no more after these are sold.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder H. H. Lefferts.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 15th, 16th and 17th, 1919, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

Dearly Beloved:—It may not be necessary, and yet it may be well at this time, to reiterate the principles of doctrine for which the churches of this Meeting stand. We believe in the foreknowledge of God, that this foreknowledge, like all other attributes of Jehovah, is perfect, comprehending all things. Inasmuch as God is equal in all his attributes, we believe his predestination of all things is as extensive as his foreknowledge of all things; that all things whatsoever come to pass are included in the eternal mind and purpose of God from before the foundation of the world. We believe in election, that God chose before the foundation of the world his people in Christ Jesus, and that these, and these only, are benefited by the redemptive work of Christ Jesus: the shedding of his blood and his resurrection from the dead. These whom God has chosen unto salvation are effectually called by grace unto that salvation and the knowledge of the truth, each in God's own order, and in his own time and way. We believe that justification of the saints before God is alone by the resurrection and blood of Christ, the good news being borne in upon them by the operation of the Holy Spirit acting by faith. Glorification is that every child of God shall be conformed to the image of Christ, that when Christ, who is their life, shall appear they shall also appear with him in glory, they shall see him

as he is and shall be like him, no more bearing the image of the earthly, the first Adam, but bearing the image of the heavenly, the Lord from heaven. We believe that every child of God chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world is and shall be raised with him from death in Adam to life and immortality in Christ, that the whole body of our glorious Lord shall come up from the dead, yet not so that flesh and blood shall inherit the kingdom of God, but so that "this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality," for we believe with all our hearts that death shall be swallowed up in victory; that sin, which is the sting of death, has been washed away in Christ's blood, and that the law, which is the strength of sin, has been completely satisfied in the atonement which Christ made in his own sufferings and death. What a wonderful victory is this which Jesus has accomplished for his people, and to think that this victory is the gift, the free gift, of God to his people, solely on the basis of his own good pleasure, and without works and merit on our part. "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Love and peace and fellowship abound throughout the bounds of this Corresponding Meeting; that is, so far as we are capable of summing up the matter. Some of our meetinghouses are closed and no meetings being held in them, owing to their being deprived of a minister, or ministers, to labor among them. We live in the hope that the time may come when it will be possible to again open up these meeting places and resume regular meetings in them, but no way thereunto appears as yet.

The next session of this Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the third Sunday in October, 1920. At that time we hope again to receive your correspondence and your messengers.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
K. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

(Written by Elder A. B. Francis.)

The Salisbury Association of Old School Baptists, in session with the Little Creek Church, at Delmar, Delaware, October 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1919, to the several churches composing the same, Greeting.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—In this our annual Circular Letter we desire to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance, declaring to you those things that we trust we have seen and heard, and you, having seen and heard the same, know them to be true, and receive our testimony. The apostle John, first epistle, first chapter, first and third verses, writes: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us." Fellowship means companionship; that is, traveling in company, seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting and handling the same things, and thus having like experience, are all witnesses together in full agreement and harmony, minding the same things, and thus able to call up to the remembrance of each other and encourage and comfort one another; not by calling up and declaring that which is unknown, but that we do know. But why and wherefore is the need of "putting them in remembrance"? Because of the weakness and frailty of our poor carnal na-

ture, and that we are surrounded by temptations and burdened with the cares of this world, that we forget the more important and valuable things, the things that pertain to our eternal welfare, by which we are comforted in the many tribulations affecting us while we are journeying through a strange land, an enemy's country, whereby our minds are turned away from a contemplation of the things that are so trying to us, to look at the things that are not seen, (with the natural eye) but seen by faith, brought near, and felt in our hearts. So Paul writes: Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen, for the things that are seen are natural, [temporal] but the things that are not seen are eternal. There is no contradiction between John and Paul. Paul is here referring to the things surrounding and affecting us here, seen with our natural eye, while John refers in the quotation we have made to spiritual, heavenly and divine things, revealed by God to his children, provided for them and made manifest to them by the appearing of Jesus Christ, by whom God is pleased to show forth his love and mercy, purpose and grace given unto his people in Christ before the world began. The revelation of Jesus Christ to a poor sinner is an assurance to that poor soul that he is an object of God's love and mercy, and is the beginning of that work in him which will be completed when the finished work of Christ is made manifest at his second and final appearing, "without sin unto salvation." "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."—John i. 1. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth."—John i. 14. This is God manifest in the flesh, the Word made flesh, made of a woman, (the son of a virgin) made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. In this adoption we shall be made like him, as pure as he is pure. In his flesh he gave himself for his people, taking away their sins, cleansing them from all sin and purifying them unto himself. Thus he appeared to you, first under the law, as you saw yourself, under the law and under its curse, an enemy to God, a sheep astray, without God and without hope; but Jesus, able to save unto the uttermost, was manifested to you, and brought you near, making you no more a stranger, but one of his household. There are things we are liable to forget, and the tempter would have us forget, and so we need be continually reminded of them. Peter would write to stir up the pure minds of his brethren, and Paul earnestly exhorted them to give earnest heed to the "things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." So, brethren, in this Circular Letter we would earnestly exhort you to give heed to the things you have heard, and remember that those things are spoken to you by Him who speaks from heaven, whose voice shook the earth, who also saith, "Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven," signifying the removal of earth and earthly things, but heaven and heavenly things cannot be removed. So, brethren, your hope can never be taken from you, you have God's word for it. "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever."—Psalms cxxv. 1.

A. B. FRANCIS, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1919.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

CLOSE OF VOLUME EIGHTY-SEVEN.

WHILE days, years and dates have an end, how thankful the children of God are that the truth continues forever. No closing up, no end. It is true that each volume of the SIGNS, from its first, is in a sense a thing of the past, yet the truth for which it has ever contended is as new, fresh and glorious as ever. Volume after volume has been laid away, and likely many never referred to, but the doctrine of God our Savior has not been buried, laid away nor forgotten. This truth lives in the hearts of His people, and shall continue to live to the praise of God when books of all kinds are no more forever. The doctrine of God, like his righteousness, is not something that can be locked up to-day and unlocked to-morrow, put on to-day and put off to-morrow. How wonderful that the things of God, like himself, abide. All the glory of this world fades like the flower and passes away. Nature can give nothing except that which must die; there is nothing but vanity in all things here below. Riches fail and perish, honor, it matters not how great, comes to naught, and at last is absolutely meaningless, family rank is less than a bubble, life itself is only as a vapor, and soon vanishes away. Therefore were it not for the word of God, which abides forever, what could man have hope in or hope for? The former editors of the SIGNS have gone the way of all flesh, their years of service and ardent labors all have come to an end; thousands of its readers have closed their eyes forever, yet the same truth, the gospel of grace, advocated in its prospectus, is as much alive, as glorious and full as ever. Thanks to His name for such life.

We can say many things at the end of the year that could not be said at the beginning. We know nothing of a future day, but often know well the days past. This year has brought, like all others, many changes, some extremely sad, others exceedingly pleasant. On the one hand the grace of God has been displayed, on the other the goodness of God in giving us things to enjoy.

The editors and publishers of the SIGNS have done their best to make it profitable and pleasant, and if we have failed it has not been due to lack of care and desire. Nothing of an unpleasant character has appeared in its columns—no controversy. The editors have served with such ability as the Lord gave in writing, judging and preparing copy. Many requests for views are still unattended to. It is impossible to answer all such requests, even had we the ability to do so, in a paper published only twice a month. Often we have requests in one month sufficient for one volume, hence we ask our readers and friends to be as charitable as they can along this line and not think we mean to wilfully neglect them. We thank all who have in any way contributed to the support of the SIGNS during the present year, and sincerely hope that all subscriptions and other kindnesses may be continued for the year 1920. There has been very little change in our subscription list from that of last year.

With all good wishes, and good will, we say, Farewell for 1919.

K.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Lucinda Lawson Van Meter was born in Hardin County, Ky., October 21st, 1820, and died at the old family home six miles northeast of Macomb, Ill., Nov. 20th, 1919, aged 99 years and 1 month. She was married to the late Elder Isaac N. Van Meter, in Kentucky, Jan. 22nd, 1839. In 1856 they moved to McDonough County, Ill., and settled on the farm where they spent the remainder of their lives. Elder Van Meter died Dec. 13th, 1895. Eleven children were born to them, five of whom are living: Cyrus and Hyram, at or near the old homestead, David, at Abingdon, Ill., Mrs. Sarah E. Runkle and Mrs. Hattie Fuhr, of Macomb. There are also living twenty-three grandchildren and twenty-one great-grandchildren. Hyram, whose home for many years had been at Gunnison, Colo., returned to his mother twelve years ago to be with and care for her, as she was not willing to give up the old family home where she had reared her children and spent more than sixty years of her life. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church in Kentucky Feb. 28th, 1838, and was baptized by the late Elder Benjamin Keith. It was not long after the family came to Illinois until they became acquainted with the Primitive Baptists, who were scattered over the sparsely settled country, and the churches at once recognized the excellent gift the Lord had bestowed upon the young Elder, so that his services were in almost constant demand, and he spent his life in the Master's cause, finishing his course with joy and to the satisfaction of the brethren. None but those who have occupied the position in home and church relationship of a minister's wife can appreciate fully the weight and burden of her responsibilities. The large family she reared, the scattered position of the churches her husband served, the slow, primitive methods of travel, all contributed to her burdens, but through it all her faith in Jesus sustained her, even to the end. Four years ago she was stricken with paralysis. All, including herself, thought the end was near. At that time she said: "I have thought my time is probably at hand," and raising her hand she added, "Farewell, vain world, I am going home." She also gave directions regarding her funeral. She afterwards rallied to a degree that she could walk about a little, and at a time when she heard of the departure of some one from the faith she raised her hand and said, "If every one should depart I would have to remain firm and walk in the old paths." About a year ago she began to fail visibly, but no decided change came until the evening before her death, when another stroke rendered her unconscious, in which condition she remained until death came twenty hours later. Her final passing was as one falling asleep. During all the years of her affliction she never failed to express her gratitude for even the slightest kindness or assistance rendered by her nurse or others. Thus afte almost a century of life in this poor world, and almost eighty-two years a member of the church, this dear faithful sister was taken from the storms of earth to the tranquillity of the great beyond, for which she longed.

The remains were brought to the home of her daughter, sister Sarah E. Runkle, in Macomb, where funeral services were conducted by the writer at 2:30 p. m. Saturday, Nov. 22nd, and interment was made in the city cemetery, beside the grave of her husband and others of her family.

D. W. OWENS.

Mrs. Mary Dutcher died Dec. 12th, 1918, at her home in South Fallsburg, Sullivan Co., N. Y., aged 61 years. She had been in failing health for more than a year prior to her death, and the best of physicians and specialists failed to help her. She was a most patient sufferer, never complaining, but rather often saying, "It is all right and for the best." Sister Dutcher had been a faithful and beloved member of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church for more than thirty years, attending services whenever it was possible to do so. She loved the truth of God in its purity, and could not tolerate anything short of the gospel of grace. The companionship of the saints was most dear and sacred to her. Her home was open to the church, and any who were so blessed as to be entertained by her could feel the presence of the Spirit of God. Her friends were numerous and true to the end.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer, her pastor, and was an occasion of much sorrow, as we all felt that our loss was very great. She is survived by her husband, our good friend, Henry Dutcher, an adopted daughter, Alice, and one brother, Thomas Broom. She was the daughter of Philip and Phœbe Broom, who were firm and substantial believers in the doctrine of grace. We shall continue to miss her at New Vernon, but are sure for her to die was gain.

K.

Franklin O. Frasher, Jr., only son of Franklin O. and sister Rose Frasher (deceased), was born in Philadelphia, Pa., Nov. 4th, 1895, and died March 16th, 1919, at the home of his grandfather, Alexander C. Frasher, in Petersburg, Del., aged 23 years. While he grew to manhood, he was very frail physically, and suffered from tubercular trouble several years before his death. He was an unusually bright boy and very energetic, always manly and good in character and purpose, possessing rare cheer and buoyancy in his personality. To those of us who witnessed his failing health it was a sad experience to note, and sad to him, for youth in him passionately desired its own; but our heavenly Father, who is too

wise to err and too good to be unkind, gave to him in his youth, and for it, we believe, a better and more abiding life, wherein physical afflictions and youthful disappointments no longer count, but in the likeness of the risen Redeemer, a man of God. He told his father that it was the will of his heavenly Father to take him, and that it was well with him if taken by the heavenly Father; satisfied if the divine hand of God be with him. As all natural and earthly things were removed from him there was that left which none but God can give: faith in Israel's God.

The writer was in charge of the funeral service, and interment was made in Cow Marsh Cemetery.

B. E. CUBBAGE.

Mrs. Sallie Riticor Thomas, our beloved sister in Christ, passed away from her earthly home near Watson, Loudoun Co., Va., Nov. 28th, 1919. She was born July 25th, 1851, the daughter of the late Charles and Susan Riticor, and was the widow of the late W. P. Thomas. She is survived by three brothers: John Thomas Riticor, Charles F. Riticor and E. V. Riticor, all the heads of families and all living in the vicinity of Oatlands, Va. Sister Thomas was the mother of seven children, four sons and three daughters, all of whom survive her: John G. and Susie R., living at the old home; Mabel E. in Leesburg, Henry P. in Washington, D. C., Margaret and Clarence R. in Charlottesville, Va., and Charles W. near Aldie, Va. Sister Thomas was baptized in September, 1877, by the late Elder J. N. Badger into the membership of the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church. She was devoted to the cause of truth and to the church, which she so dearly loved, and a good hope through grace had been her mainstay these many years. Her heart and her home were alike open to welcome and to entertain the Old School Baptists and all who loved that faith. The cheering grace of hospitality beautifully shone forth in her life and walk and conversation, and she never seemed happier nor more contented that when in the company of her kindred in Christ. She never absented herself from the meetings of the church unless unavoidably compelled to do so through untoward circumstances over which she had no control. It can be unqualifiedly said of sister Thomas that she was one who worked out her salvation with fear and trembling, because it was God who wrought in her to will and to do of his good pleasure. This was the secret of her christian obedience, even as it is of the uprightness of every true christian.

We read and tried to comment upon the fourteenth chapter of John at her funeral, at the request of the family, the same portion of Scripture as was used at the funeral of her husband, by the writer, a few years ago. She was buried in the graveyard adjoining the Mt. Zion meetinghouse, by the side of the body of her husband. She will be greatly missed, both in the family and in the church. May the good Lord, who doeth all things well, comfort all who mourn, especially those who mourn for their sins.

L.

Mrs. Cora L. Kunkle, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. L. T. Hawthorne, was born Sept. 17th, 1886, was martied to Mr. J. A. Kunkle July 1st, 1912, and departed this life October 18th, 1919, making her stay on earth 33 years, 1 month and 1 day. To that union was born one child, a girl. She was a good companion, a kind mother and affectionate daughter, and was loved by all who knew her. She made friends wherever she went. Just before she passed away she called her little girl and told her not to cry, she was going home. She leaves a good, kind and loving husband, one child, father and mother, seven brothers, one sister and a host of relatives and friends to mourn for her, but we feel that our loss is her gain.

Her body was laid to rest in the graveyard near Provencal, La., in the settlement in which she was raised, in the presence of a large gathering of relatives and friends. Her father, mother, brothers and sisters were all present. The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved, using as a text Luke xxiii. 28: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. She never joined the church, but was a lover of the doctrine of salvation by grace and loved to sing and hear sung the songs of Zion. The writer has been sweetly associated with brother Hawthorne and family for forty years and spent many happy hours in their home, and received much kindness and sweet words, which comforts my poor heart. May the God of all grace bless them, with the dear bereaved husband and little girl, is the prayer of the unworthy writer.

J. J. WHITE.

APPOINTMENTS.

PLEASE publish appointments for Elder J. M. Fenton as follows:

Dec. 19th, No. 27 N. Eastfield St., Trenton, N. J., 7:45 p. m.; 20th, Stockton, N. J., 2:30 p. m.; 21st, Locktown, N. J., 10:30 a. m.; Frenchtown, N. J., 4 p. m.; Grandin, N. J., A. J. Demott's, 7:30 p. m.

D. M. VAIL.

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J. C. Clark, Maine, $1.00; H. J. O'Bannon, Va., $1.00; Mrs. S. D. Campbell, Ont., $2.50; Margaret B. Tiebout, N. Y., $24.00; Miss Emma Birdsall, N. Y., $2.00; J. D. Lake, W. Va., $1.00.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

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PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 88. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1920. NO. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"I WAS LEFT."

(Ezekiel ix. 8.)

THE sovereignty of Jehovah's grace so explicitly declared in the holy Scriptures is acknowledged by those who are the taught of the Lord. This grace that so distinguishes those in whom it is revealed from all others is signally portrayed in many instances recorded in the word of God. I will (saith the Lord) be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. (Exod. xxxiii. 19.) Of Abraham it is written, "I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him."—Isaiah li. 2. And of Israel it is recorded, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."—Amos iii. 2. Do not we, who are made to taste the exceeding riches of God's grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus, often find springing up in our souls the inquiry, Why have I found grace in the eyes of the Lord? We may trace this grace to its eternal source, and say, This grace was given me in Christ Jesus before the world began, but still our hearts may inquire, Why was grace given me in Christ? We conclude it was according to the election of grace, (Rom. ii. 5,) according as the Father hath chosen us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, (Eph. i. 4,) and yet I ask, Why was I chosen? and the only answer I know is found in the language of our beloved Savior: "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight."—Matt. xi. 26.

> "O wondrous grace! O mystery profound!
> In God's eternal purpose I was found.
> He in his love, his grace, his firm decree,
> In some mysterious way regarded me."

There are times of the dreadful manifestations of God's righteous displeasure, and if our lives are amidst such judgments of the Almighty we may well be made to exclaim in our amazement, in adoring gratitude, "I was left." In these sacred moments it will be very manifest to us that we are vessels of mercy, monuments of God's everlasting love, to the praise of the glory of his grace. When the Lord sent the flood upon the world of the ungodly Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. So, by faith, Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by which he condemned the world, and became heir

of the righteousness which is by faith. (Heb. xi. 7.) The Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thine house into the ark. And it came to pass after seven days that the waters of the flood were upon the earth; all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. The waters prevailed, the mountains were covered, and all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beasts, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man; all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died. Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark. The favored ones in the ark rode upon the face of the waters in blissful security, and in rehearsing the story each one could say, "I was left." Noah was in the ark, shut in with the Lord; for in the day that he went into the ark the Lord did not say, Go into the ark, but, Come thou and all thine house into the ark; and when Noah went forth of the ark God did not say, Come forth of the ark, but "Go forth of the ark."—Gen. viii. 16. All the while that Noah was in the ark the Lord was in there with him. The ark went upon the face of the waters, the waters bare up the ark, and it was lifted up above the earth. It had no sails, it had no mariners, it had no rudder for human hands to handle, it had no chart, or compass to consult, by which this voyage on the great deep should be steered, and Noah knew not where the haven or resting-place for the ark would be. He was not the master of the vessel, he was not his own pilot; the Lord was shut in with him, and this was all that was needful. "With Christ in the vessel I smile at the storm." O the blessedness to be in the ark of the everlasting covenant of God's grace; with Jesus Christ shut in. "And the Lord shut him in." —Gen. vii. 15. The language of Lot as he fled from Sodom is very expressive: "Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life." When Lot was about to separate from Abram he lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan. (Gen. xiii. 10.) But this rich, fertile region, this garden of the Lord, was peopled by such whose sins were very grievous; and Lot in dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds. God overthrew the cities Sodom and Gomorrah, and they are set forth an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. God delivered Lot; he found grace in the eyes of the Lord. And the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters which are here, lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city. He would have perished but for the riches of the mercy of God, for he was hesitating, lingering, and so, left to "the will of the flesh," he would have perished; but the Lord in his great love had riches of mercy treasured up for this man on whom he would, he determined to show mercy. "And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the Lord being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city."—Gen. xix. 16. Ah, this lingering in Sodom! What a dreadful, humili-

ating thing is the consciousness of this lingering! Ah, left to myself, to the lusts of the flesh, I should have lingered until overwhelmed in perdition. But the men laid hold upon Lot, and brought him forth, and the Lord rained down upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire, and the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace. But Lot could say, "I was left." The Lord hath magnified his mercy in saving my life. The Lord our God is mighty to save and mighty to destroy. "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."—2 Peter ii. 9. O, that was a terrible and bitter cry throughout the land of Egypt on the night of the exodus of Israel; "for it came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat upon his throne unto the first-born of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the first-born of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt: for there was not a house where there was not one dead."—Exod. xii. 29, 30. But all the firstborn of the Israelites could say, "And I was left." The Lord put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel. (Exod. xi. 7.) The especial manifestation of this difference was the passover Lamb. "And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you when I smite the land of Egypt." How happy is that sinner who in his heart can say, "Even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."—1 Cor. v. 7. David, King of Israel, in his fleshly pride commanded Israel to be numbered. "And David's heart smote him after he had numbered the people. And David said unto the Lord, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O Lord, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly. For when David was up in the morning, the word of the Lord came unto the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying, Go and say unto David, Thus saith the Lord, I offer thee three things; choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee. So Gad came to David, and told him, and said unto him, Shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land? or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee? or that there be three days' pestilence in thy land? now advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me. And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the Lord; for his mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man. So the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time appointed: and there died of the people from Dan even to Beersheba seventy thousand men. And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thine hand. And the angel of the Lord was by the threshingplace of Araunah the Jebusite. And David spake unto the Lord, when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house."—2 Sam. xxiv. 10–17. Seventy thousand perished in the pestilence under the righteous judg-

ment of God, and King David, the great transgressor, could say, "And I was left" a monument to the praise of the marvelous mercy and grace of the Lord. How confounding is this to self-sufficient, self-righteous Pharisees! The prophet Ezekiel was taken by a lock of his head and brought in the visions of God to Jerusalem, and there he was shown the image of jealousy at the entry of the temple. Then he was made to turn, and brought to a hole in the wall, and there in the chambers of imagery he was made to witness the delusions, the wicked abominations that were done by Israel; and still greater and greater abominations were shown him. Then at length he beheld men with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east, worshipping the sun. "Then he said unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose. Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them. He cried also in mine ears with a loud voice, saying, Cause them that have charge over the city to draw near, even every man with his destroying weapon in his hand. And, behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth toward the north, and every man a slaughter weapon in his hand; and one man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side: and they went in, and stood beside the brazen altar. And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side; and the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house. And he said unto them, Defile the house, and fill the courts with the slain: go ye forth. And they went forth, and slew in the city. And it came to pass, while they were slaying them, and I was left, that I fell upon my face, and cried, and said, Ah Lord God! wilt thou destroy all the residue of Israel in the pouring out of thy fury upon Jerusalem? Then he said unto me, The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceeding great, and the land is full of blood, and the city full of perverseness: for they say, The Lord hath forsaken the earth, and the Lord seeth not. And as for me also, mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity, but I will recompense their way upon their head. And, behold the man clothed with linen, which had the inkhorn by his side, reported the matter, saying, I have done as thou hast commanded me." If we have only a superficial knowledge of our heart's depravity we may wonder that a nation so highly favored as Israel should wander away from God into such vile, degrading wickedness, and possibly we may think, How

could I ever sink into such abominations? Ezekiel exclaimed, "And I was left." The man with the writer's inkhorn by his side had put the mark upon his forehead. He sighed and cried because of the abominations in the midst of Jerusalem. These sighs and cries unto the Lord were all of the graciousness that was wrought in his heart by the Spirit of the Lord. He knew the grace of God in truth. Do we in truth know the grace of God, then the fruits of his graciousness wrought in us will be found in our lives, and part of this graciousness will be declared in the sighs and cries of our hearts over all that is abominable unto the Lord our God. In the foregoing illustrations of the goodness and severity of God there is a field for profitable meditation. Amidst the righteous judgments of God how resplendent are the glories of our God in the grace that is brought unto poor vile sinners in Jesus Christ our Lord. "I will sing of mercy and judgment; unto thee, O Lord, will I sing."—Psalms ci. 1. No one can learn and sing this song but the redeemed of the Lord. If judgment without mercy were our lot, then there could be no hope for a sinner like me. The law written upon tables of stone was glorious, but it was only the ministration of condemnation and death; the curse was upon the transgressor. But, O the blessedness to be given an entrance by faith into the glorious, God-gloryfying mystery, and to say with the apostle, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." —Gal. iii. 13.

"Mystery of redemption this,
All my sins on Christ were laid,
My offence was reckoned his;
He the great atonement made."

We have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. (Heb. vi. 19, 20.) If thus we are anchored, we shall not be shipwrecked, but we hope to arrive in heaven itself, where Jesus, our Redeemer and Forerunner, has gone.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

WARTRACE, Tenn., May 4, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed is a letter written to myself and wife by Elder C. M. Hood, of Nashville, Tenn., which is very full of comfort to me, and I feel like sharing it with the readers of the SIGNS. Brother Hood is a very humble, good man, and an able defender of the truth. I have not asked his consent to have it published, but feel that he would not object, as I believe it will be read by many of God's humble poor who will get the same food from it that we did. I am glad to know that brother Hood thinks of one who feels so poor and unworthy as myself. My wife's health is very poor at present.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

W. B. CHILTON.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., March 25, 1919.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER:—As we are so situated that we cannot meet together, and as I miss you all so much, I want to try to ease my trouble by writing you a few lines, if I can have a mind to do so given me of the Lord. I am just as feelingly and sensibly dependent on the Lord for words to write that will give honor and glory to him and edify his children as I am to speak in his name in a public way. I do not know what message he has for me to deliver to you, but

I can only trust that he will supply all our need according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ. If he sees fit in his goodness, mercy and love for poor sinners to do that, then we can feel safe in saying that we will need nothing more. I believe that is what David had reference to when he said, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." What else in all this world can poor sinners need when they have as their all Jesus Christ and him crucified? In him all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily. If he is that, then we have the fullness when we have him, and so when we have the fullness there is no room for anything else to come in. John said, He is the fullness, and of his fullness have we all received, and grace for grace. John here, you see, has it all grace, and men have it part works and part grace. But such an idea as that will not suit a poor sensible sinner in the sight of God. He cannot afford to risk any of his own works, they are but filthy rags and not fit for anything, and the poor thing knows this well, and hence he is glad that God has fixed it so his works are not counted in the way at all. But instead of it being man's way, it is God's own way, and nothing unclean, he has said, shall ever enter that way. That being so it stands to reason that if you are in the way you are clean every whit. How have you been cleansed? Not by works of righteousness which you have done, but by "the washing of regeneration," which he has shed on you abundantly through our Lord Jesus Christ. Not only has it washed you, but it has been shed on you abundantly; that is, there is enough of this Holy Ghost washing to make you "holy and without blame before him in love." Then, Jesus can take you at the right time, when the time comes, and present you before the majesty of his glory without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. Is not that most wonderful when you come to think about it? You who were once in nature so unclean, the whole head sick, full of wounds, bruises and putrifying sores from head to foot, and no soundness in you could be so operated upon by the Word of God as to be brought forth perfectly spotless and white. No wonder the question is asked in the sweet Song of Solomon: Who is she that cometh forth as the morning, as fair as the sun and as clear as the moon and as terrible as an army with many banners? Is not this the church? and does she not come as does the morning, out of darkness? She does, and like the morning, she comes forth not in her own strength, but in the strength of the great luminary of the day, the sun in all its radiant glory, as God himself by the word of his own sovereign power hung it in the heaven above to shine and light up this natural world. So it is the church of God, the pillar and ground of the truth, comes up and out of darkness into God's marvelous light, and into the liberty of the saints, not by her own strength, but in the strength of the blessed Savior, the Sun of righteousness, as he shows his everlasting light in her and through her. Hence by this light she gives light to all around her. She is called in the Bible, "the candle of the Lord." God simply lights up his candle, and she shines as God shines, and out of Zion, the very perfection of beauty, God doth shine. Here then, we see where perfection is: it is in Zion, and nowhere else, for God dwelleth there and shines there, and, in his light we see light, for the light makes manifest. David calls him the light of his countenance and the strength of his soul, and I feel that he is

the same to me. There are more glad tidings of great joy than I can tell about. It is wonderfully sweet to be enabled by the Spirit and grace of God to meditate on it as God gives the mind and the strength. Like the apostles James, Peter and John at the mount of transfiguration, they saw nothing but Jesus. Moses and Elias had disappeared; they had gone back; Jesus dwelt alone. Peter wanted to build three tabernacles, one for Moses, one for Elias and one for Christ; but that was not the thing to be done, God passed by Moses and Elias and said, This is my Son, in whom I am well pleased. Not Moses, not Elias; they were all right in their place, but it was nothing else but Jesus. Peter wanted, like men do to-day, to give poor puny man a part in the salvation of sinners, but God did not have it that way; nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified could fill the demands of a broken law, and it was he alone that tread the winepress of the wrath of God, and of the people there was none to help; and I will add, none that could help, for they were all sold under sin, dead in sin, and there was none found good, no, not one. So God laid help upon One (not two) that was mighty and able to save. Paul puts it, Able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, seeing that he ever liveth to make intercession for them according to the will of God. So, then, from this we learn that he is yet about his Father's business, and his Father's business was and is yet to save his people from their sins. This is the will of the Father, and Jesus came for that sole purpose, nothing more or less; so if it is like the majority says it is, that many are lost for whom he died, he then, according to that, has failed to do what he came to do, and if that is so, how is it that God could say, "In whom I am well pleased"? How could he be as Paul says, "Crowned with glory and honor"? What a shame some men would put our blessed Savior to even now in these over-zealous times, when most everybody you meet is so full of religion, if they could only have it their way. But it is not their way, it is God's way, and no man can come to God only by this way. That is why the apostle Paul was determined to know nothing among God's humble poor but Jesus Christ and him crucified, the Way, the Truth and the Life. I do not want any other way; if I can just feel that the holy Son of God is my way, and that I am in that way, I will become as one said, The Lord is my help, and I shall not fear what men can or may do unto me. Bless his holy name for such a sweet hope beyond this vale of tears, for it certainly is a vale of tears. I do not think that I have ever in all my long life seen so much sadness and distress on every hand, and what would God's poor, little, helpless family do if it were not for the strength of the great Jehovah, on whom they lean? I feel that I know this: we are poor, having nothing; we know it, hence all our help cometh from thee.

May God in his rich mercy be with you all, to keep you and help you and save you, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Yours in love,

C. M. HOOD.

HERNDON, Va., Nov. 18, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription expires with the next issue of the SIGNS, Dec. 1st, 1919, I herein inclose check for three dollars, two for renewal of my subscription, and one dollar to aid in sending the paper to the poor of the flock. Just now, while I am seated at my desk, I would like to say to my kindred in

Christ (if I am a kin to them), that I am still in the land of the living, and am often comforted by their dear letters in our family paper, the SIGNS. Some days ago the following Scripture flashed into my mind which reads: Jesus "hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." Dear brethren, if I should continue now to write, my desire is to give some of the outlines to the subject of the fullness of Christ and his bride, the church. Some men calling themselves Old School Baptists, do not believe in the doctrine of the vital unity of Christ and the church. Take away the doctrine of the vital unity of Christ and the church, then the whole foundation of God would be destroyed, and we would get no sense out of the words of Paul, who said, "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Separate a man's head from his body and the body dies, also the head cannot live without the body. Thus we see without contradiction that Christ still lives, and so does his body, the church, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. Christ said, I am the head and ye are the body. Again, I am the vine, and ye are the branches. The branches cannot live without the vine, neither can the body live without the head. When Eve was brought before Adam after being made of his rib, Adam said, She is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh. For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother and cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh. In like manner, Christ is the husband of his bride, the church, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. O the fullness of Jesus! Could I now but drink from that living fountain, that well of living water springing up unto everlasting life. This well of living water is continually overflowing with the power of Jesus for his bride, the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. His bride says, He is mine, and I am his. He feedeth among the lilies. O what a sweet place to stop and feed with Jesus, where the sweet smell of the lilies flows out; and more than that, to sit down under his shadow with great delight, where his fruit is so sweet to the taste, and then be led to his banqueting-house, where his banner over her is love. I can now imagine I see his banner with letters of gold inscribed upon it, which reads, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." No separation with Christ and his bride, the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. I in you and you in me. Christ in you the hope of glory. What God hath joined together let not man put asunder. As Christ and his Father are one, just so Christ and his bride are made one. No power in heaven or on earth shall ever be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. O the fullness of Jesus! The Old Testament Scriptures testify to his fullness, as well as the New. David in the twenty-third Psalm testified to it when he said: "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." Job said, I wash my steps with butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oil. Not a river of oil, but rivers of oil, showing the fullness of Christ to his church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. Oil signifies joy. Isaiah said, To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give

unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, &c. This oil is like the precious ointment poured upon the head, even Aaron's head, that ran down to the skirts of his garments, covering the whole body with the robe of righteousness of Jesus, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. No more fig leaf aprons to hide our shame and nakedness, but clothed with the righteousness of Jesus, who is head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

Dear brother Ker, I submit this letter to your better judgment. Do with it as you think best, and all will be right with me. I have been for a long time in darkness, led away captive, but it seems to me here of late I have been made to return to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon my head.

Your brother, I hope,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

McCOYSVILLE, Pa., Dec. 16, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am renewing my subscription to our dear paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as I do not feel I can do without it, for it contains all the preaching I have now, and I surely do enjoy reading from the pen of my dear brethren, for they tell my experience better than I can myself, and it is a great comfort to know others feel as I do.

I have just received a letter from a dear afflicted sister, Lizzie Grafton, asking me to send to our good paper the notice of her husband's death, who died four years ago. No obituary was sent for publication, as she was in a hospital at the time, and for some time after. Her husband was a brother of our dear brother Wm. Grafton. I will send the notice to you and you can publish it when convenient.

Your sister in hope,

IDA M. HART.

(*See obituary on page 14.*)

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Association, in session with the Little Creek Church, Sussex County, Delaware, October 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1919, to the associations and churches with which we correspond sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—We consider it a great blessing, for which we trust that we are truly thankful to Almighty God, that we have been again privileged to hold our annual meeting, to receive your messengers and to hear their messages of love and fellowship.

Our next association is appointed to convene with the Snow Hill Church, Worcester Co., Md., on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1920, where we hope to meet you once again.

A. B. FRANCIS, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, in Woburn, Mass., the second Sunday in January (11th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

TAFT, Tenn., R. 1, Dec. 10, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—I see some inquiry through your paper for Hassell's Church History. I have one that I would sell or exchange for a Bible. It is in very good condition. If any one should want one write me at the above address.

M. J. TOWRY.

FROM now until March 1st Elder H. C. Ker's address will be Pocomoke City, Md., where his correspondents will please address him.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1920.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

ALL restlessness is not aspiration. We hear on every hand that the world is aspiring after better and higher things than anything the past has ever known. On every hand we are bidden to observe how everything and everybody is growing better, how everything is improving, advancing, progressing. As proof of all this we see plenty of discontent with things as they are—any amount of restlessness and strenuous striving after what are called higher ideals, but aspiration which is spiritual and divine needs something more to prove that it is divine than simply mere restlessness, mere movement. Much that is called progress is not really advancement at all, but like a kitten chasing its tail, a running around in circles. Vice-president Marshall said the other day that what is needed is more of the Nazarene and less of Congress. This expression from one so high in public office comes near diagnosing the disease of the age. There is prevalent to-day in the minds of the men who are leaving their impress on the trend of the times, the one dominant idea that righteousness, with all its attendant virtues of peace and love and salvation, can be obtained by legislation, by putting new laws on the statute books which shall compel a man to be good whether he wants to be good or not. Losing entire sight of the truth that human nature is human nature and never can be anything else, they seek continually to transform men into angels by applying external influences, not to say compulsions, much the same as we put a bit in the horse's mouth and harness upon him to compel him to go hither and yon subject to our will, whether the horse wants it so or not. And there is just as much likelihood of making the horse other than a horse by putting harness upon him as there is of making men divine through the enactment of laws compelling them to be good. To-day it is not the substance and truth and power of religion which are moving men's minds, but the mere form or shell of religion. They have and struggle for the form of religion, but are ignorant entirely of the power of godliness. This is the matter not only with men "higher up," but it is the matter with the churches, schools and colleges all over the land. Men seem to have no idea of the essence of truth, but are continually grasping at its form and shadow. During the war we were in the throes of drive after drive to raise money, not only to carry on the war, but to relieve the suffering incident to it. This was commendable, and we heard no word of condemnation from any one; but now the churches have caught the idea of having drives to accomplish the salvation of mankind. They saw how easy it was to raise money during the war, and now they adopt the same means to secure funds for denominational purposes. One denomination seeks in this way to raise $75,000,000, another an amount very similar, a third a nearly equal amount, and so goes on to a sickening grand total this mad chase for money. For what pur-

pose? Presumably to save souls, to redeem the world, to regenerate mankind. The dollar is exalted to the throne, and becomes the god to which this age bows the knee. The real God is absolutely ignored, delegated to be merely an assistant in the matter, called on only when the instigators of the gigantic crime need him to bless their schemes. Think not there will be a day of reckoning? As surely as God reigns in heaven and in earth and in all deep places, he cannot be mocked with impunity. The funds collected during the war were for the relief of the temporal needs of men, to save their bodies, not their souls, to feed the hungry, clothe the naked and to stop the ravages of disease. This was but rendering unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's. But when dollars are contributed to send the gospel to the heathen and to redeem the world from sin, this is not rendering to God the things that are God's, but is substituting for the precious blood of Christ, which alone can and does redeem from sin, the corruptible silver and gold minted by men as a medium of commercial exchange among men. This is a disastrous putting of natural things for spiritual things, and of spiritual things for natural things—a mix-up which is bound to get the nations of the world into such a tangle as their own ingenuity cannot untangle. The secret of the whole matter is that we are living in a time of great spiritual declension, as the Scriptures have plainly indicated would be the case. The churches have lost their power, their hold and influence over the minds of the great majority of men. The different denominations are waking up to this fact, and they see that something must be done or go into the discard. Of course, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and not knowing that the Holy Ghost alone is the one Leader who can guide believers in the way of all truth, they have recourse to their own inventions and schemes to prop up the tottering structure of christianity, as they call it; but it is only man-made religion they are trying to bolster up, not pure godliness at all. For the pure and undefiled religion of Jesus never needs any steadying at the hands of puny man. It is ever eternally strong and upright through the ever-prevailing and all-conquering omnipotence of God. All these millions of dollars now being raised are not to be spent to relieve the woes of mankind, the suffering everywhere. O no! Not to relieve the poor, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, warm the freezing ones; not to stay the massacres of human beings in foreign lands, not to stay the awful onward march of famine and pestilence. Not for these are the millions being collected. For what, then? To erect more and more colleges and schools at which young men may be prepared for the ministry, because the denominations are alarmed at the fewness of the young men of ability and force, who are being attracted away from the ministry through inability to make a living at preaching. Again, this money is to be applied to raise the salaries of men already in the ministry, so as to keep them from being tempted into more lucrative positions. Further, the money is to be expended in building and enlarging denominational hospitals. This may seem practical on the face of it, but upon examination we find these hospitals when erected will not be open for the free treatment of disease, but all patients who go into them will be charged for all service rendered. Where is there any charity in this? Portions of this money are to be spent for the extension of foreign

missions. Just what does this mean? It means the erection of fine homes in foreign lands to house missionaries, beautiful buildings in which the heathen are to be beguiled to worship, to say nothing of salaries and commissions to be deducted between the time the money leaves the pockets of the donors here until it reaches its destiny in some far off land, an expenditure of which we who stay at home need never expect to see a reckoning.

This shows something of the restlessness which passes current in religious circles to-day for divine aspiration and spiritual progress. Really it amounts to nothing but the restlessness of distraction at the waning of denominational prestige, the substitution of dollars for divinity; all due to the one dominant idea that men can be made good through colossal monetary drives which stagger the imagination, as though a horse can ever be other than a horse by making the bit in his mouth of gold and having his harness mounted with silver and brass.

Let us, who hope we are the children of the day, not of the night, who profess Jesus as our head, desiring to walk alone in his counsel and by the leadership of his Spirit, have no communion with the craftiness of men who lie in wait to deceive. There is, my brethren, such a thing as divine discontent, a restlessness that leads at last to eternal peace and satisfaction in the things which God has wrought through his abounding grace in Christ Jesus. This discontent is begotten not by external machinery contrived by men, as the harness is put upon the horse to control him, but by the regenerating work of God's Spirit in the hearts of sinners. When the Lord begins the work of grace in the sinner's heart, that sinner becomes conscious of his depravity and is made to mourn on account of his sins. This we call a divine discontent, a restlessness with self. The sinner, having been made alive to his sinful condition, straightway tries to find refuge in the law. He sets to work to obey its mandates. The harder he struggles to obey the law the more his rags and wounds appear. At last his strength fails him, he comes to the ends of the earth, he sees himself utterly wretched. All hell is in league against his soul and the heavens are brass above him. He cannot satisfy the law, nor hope nor comfort from it draw. Here, where his soul is sinking down beneath God's righteous frown, he cannot help but cry out to God for mercy, even though feeling all the time there cannot be mercy for such a wretch as he. But no sinner ever yet perished at mercy's door, for God never yet began a good work in a sinner's heart but what he carried it on to the day of Jesus Christ, the day of salvation. Jesus is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Here, where the sinner feels he must give up all hope, where he feels that such a sinner as he can never be received into favor with the Almighty, as despair seizes the soul and Satan seems at last to laugh in triumph, appears heaven's one astonishing miracle: Jesus, the Savior, comes sweetly with divine power into his soul, saying, Sinner, thy sins are all forgiven thee. What sacred surprise gladdens the sinner as he lifts up his eyes by faith unto the crucified Lord and beholds there the one atonement for all his sins! This ushers the sinner into the never-ending sabbath day of the Lord: the rest which knows no end, the peace which passeth all understanding. Thus does the sinner, through the experimental work of the Holy Spirit, become a true believer in the Lord Jesus

Christ. This is the only way in which sinners can be saved. Sinners can never be legislated into goodness, nor ticketed through to heaven by monetary drives. Not by painting can the Ethiopian change his skin, nor by wearing a disguise can the leopard change his spots. There is but one real regenerating force in the world, and there never has been but this One: the personal and internal, spiritual work of the Holy Spirit of God. No true believer is satisfied with himself, nor should he be, nor can he be. Jesus, the sin-bearer, was never satisfied until he awoke in the likeness of the Father, until he was with the Father in that glory which he had with him before the world was. Nor can any of his followers be satisfied either here or hereafter, only as they see Jesus and behold his glory. "Do I love the Lord or no? Am I his or am I not?" expresses the restlessness of the heaven-born soul seeking its rest in Christ. This is the aim of the divine discontent which drives believers to press forward for the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. This is as different from the restlessness that is in the world to-day as day is from night. The one is the struggling of lost souls in a pit; the other is the upward soaring of doves to their windows, the winging of angels to their heaven on the pinions of divine aspiration.

As a new year's greeting to the spiritual family in which the SIGNS circulates, we desire nothing better and wish nothing more than that you with us may have your and our minds and hearts, by the grace of God, kept free from the distracting restlessness that is in the world, and that all of us together may ever be actuated through the Spirit by those holy aspirations which lift us upward to God.

L.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at his home, Leesburg, Va., Dec. 17th, 1919, Enoch Burns Seaton and Mrs. Nena Craig, both of near Middleburg, Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Eliza Eaton departed this life Sept. 18th, 1919; at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Dugald Campbell, in her 85th year. Sister Eaton was the daughter of Philip and Letitia Corneil, who emigrated from Ireland in the late twenties, coming first to Montreal, then a few years later to Hamilton, where sister Eaton was born. Soon afterward her parents moved to Ekfrid township, where sister Eaton lived continuously until within a few months of her death. On Dec. 5th, 1854, she was married to Philip Eaton. To that union were born seven children, of whom four are still living, two daughters and two sons: Mrs. Dugald Campbell, of Dunwich, Mrs. J. J. Wrinn, of Detroit, Mich., Fred J. and Richard P., of Ekfrid. Sister Eaton was received in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church at the regular quarterly meeting at Dunwich in May, 1877, and baptized by Elder Pollard. She lived a life of faith in her blessed Savior. Her life was also adorned by a well ordered walk and godly conversation. Her home was a welcome place to all her kindred in Christ as long as her bodily strength would allow. She was never absent from her meetings, showing her appreciation of her home among the Lord's poor and afflicted people. Sister Eaton was severely afflicted, but bore her affliction without a murmur. While she longed to depart and be at rest, yet she patiently waited the Lord's will to take her unto himself.

Her funeral was held from the home of her daughter, Mrs. Dugald Campbell, and was largely attended by relatives and friends. Burial was in Longwood Cemetery. May the blessing of our heavenly Father rest upon the sorrowing children, who mourn the loss of a kind and devoted mother. May the church, to which her life was a blessing, be reconciled to its great loss of such a devoted member.

ALSO,

Emma McArthur died at her home in London, Ont., Nov. 15th, 1919, after a long and painful illness. Sister McArthur was born in England, coming to Canada when about six years of age. Her maiden name was Maurbridge. About fourteen years ago she was married to Duncan McArthur, who passed away March 12th, 1918. Sister McArthur united with the Covenanted Baptist Baptist Church of Canada in the year 1884, at the quarterly meeting held at Lobo the first Sunday in October, and was baptized by Elder Pollard. She was a woman firm and kind, faithful and devoted to her church. Her home was a welcome place for her kindred in Christ. She

was firm in her convictions, and loved to see all things done decently and in order. During her illness, which lasted over a period of two years, I visited her often, and always found her trusting in her blessed Savior. Her faith never wavered, although clouds would often obscure her bright sky, and she would say, "Will he leave me at last to perish? No, never; my blessed Savior." So she passed from the shores of time into that sweet peace and rest, in full assurance of faith. She leaves to mourn their loss, besides the church, two brothers and two sisters and other relatives and friends.

Her funeral was held from her late residence in London, Ontario, conducted by the writer. Burial was in the family plot in St. Mary's Cemetery. May that comfort which comes only from our heavenly Father be bestowed upon all who mourn.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Henry W. Cockrill departed this life at his late home near Colvin Run, Va., Dec. 16th, 1919, within exactly one month of his 91st birthday. He was born January 16th, 1829, the son of John Cockrill and Sarah Thompson. His first wife was Miss Eliza Money, and of that union one daughter, Mrs. Victoria Thompson, is still living. His second wife was Mrs. Lucinda Allen, and of this marriage there are six children living: Messrs. Mark, Holly, Stonewall and Henry Edward Cockrill, the latter living in Georgia; Mrs. A. Lucinda Trickett and Miss Ida Cockrill. Besides these seven grown children surviving Mr. Cockrill there are living thirty-eight grandchildren, forty-three great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild. Therefore he lived to see five generations in his own family, an exceptional record in these rapid days of strenuous and nervous living. While Mr. Cockrill never united with the Old School Baptist Church, he was a firm believer in the absolute predestination of all things and salvation by grace. From a letter to me by Mr. Mark Cockrill I quote the following with reference to his father: "As I sat by my dear father's bedside and saw his life pass away it looked to me that it surely must have been planned ahead by some power higher yet than man. I do not believe one moment could have been added to his life. He always told me he believed in the predestination of all things. I could hardly agree with him, but now my doubts seem to have passed away. He had the greatest confidence in Jesus Christ, and in his last suffering it seemed to comfort him to call on the Lord for mercy." His favorite hymn, one to which he often referred, was No. 563 in Beebe's collection, beginning, "Show pity, Lord, O Lord, forgive."

Funeral services were held in Andrew Chapel, near Kenmore, after which he was laid to rest in the family plot in the cemetery adjoining. May the Holy Spirit, who alone knoweth all our hearts, comfort all who mourn in truth.

L.

Lee Grafton, my dear husband, died Dec. 6th, 1915. I wish all to know that the Lord's work in him was marvelous. O what a consolation it is to know that a great change was manifest in him before he left this world. I am satisfied he is asleep in Jesus. In my afflictions for many years he waited upon me with faithful and loving care. I feel he is resting in that home far away. His hope was in the Savior's love, and he was not afraid to die. Our home is lonely without him. He was a loving and devoted husband and father, but the Lord saw fit to call him home, and we are left to mourn.

Written by his widow,

(MRS.) LEE GRAFTON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

A Friend, N. Y., $1.00; G. C. Jordan, Mo., $1.00; Mrs. Josephine Culpepper, Texas, $2.00; Mrs. Maria Rees, Ky., $3.00; Lieut. Col. J. H. Knifton, Ont., $2.00; Mrs. L. J. Randolph, Texas, $1.00; W. T. Hughett, Ill., $3.00; Miss Anne Parker, Md., $3.00; Mrs. Nancy Hutchison, Va., $1.00; A. C. Holloway, Md., $1.50; J. A. Tandy, Okla., $3.00; Elmer Botts, Mo., $1.00; M. M. Rounsavell, N. Y., $5.00; Sarah I. Rittenhouse, N. J., $3.00; Rebecca T. Stout, S. Dak., $1.00; Wm. K. Baird, Ky., $2 00; James Ashurst, Ill., $3.00; Mrs. T. R. Pittman, Kansas, $1.00; Sarah A. McColl, Ont., $2.00.

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OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 88. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1920. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JOHN XVII. 1, 2.

"THESE words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."

If there is one expression that impresses me more than another at present it is the first of the second verse. In the first verse he says, "The hour is come; glorify thy Son," and in the second verse he gives the reason for asking to be glorified, and says, "As thou hast given him [Christ] power over all flesh." Now there are none of us who will not grant the theory that God creates everything, and has power over the sun, moon and stars, and that he gives the seasons in order and controls the mighty waves of the sea. Then if we believe that, why not believe him when he says that power is given him over all flesh? and if we acknowl- that, we acknowledge that every step of man is ordered, from the cradle to the grave. But some think if they hear one speak of God having anything to do with some things that take place he is accusing God of doing wrong. "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?" It is hard for man to realize that God is under no law, and therefore can do his will in the army of heaven and among the habitable parts of the earth without injustice to any man. I do not know how old Elijah would have gotten anything to eat if God had not had power over the ravens. God said to Elijah, "Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there." So we see that he has power over the fowls of the air; not only the ravens, but over all. If he had not had power over all, some other might have come with something that would have been noxious or destructive to life or health. But he has power to shut, and none can open, and to open, and none

can shut. He also has power over the fish of the sea. You remember it is said that the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. When he and Peter were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? He saith, Yes; and when he was come unto the house Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute, of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. So here they are over here in Capernaum, and have nothing to pay tax with. But Jesus said, Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money, that take and give unto them for me and thee. Suppose he had not had power over all the fish in the sea; there might have come up a fish without any money, and then Peter would have been disappointed and would have wanted to keep on fishing. But we see that he has power over all things; he has only to speak, and it is done, command, and it stands fast. He had power to say to the man that was sick of the palsy, Be of good cheer; arise, take up thy bed and go unto thine house, and he arose, and departed to his house. He cried with a loud voice, that is, with a powerful voice, to Lazarus, and he that was dead came forth. May we ask with one of old, What is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward, who believe according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come? He has put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. Some believe and teach that if we will do good and comply with some conditions God will bless us for it; but they have forgotten the words of him who spake as never man spake when he said, Without me ye can do nothing. It is said that he came unto his own, and his own received him not; but as many as did receive him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Power is strength, and these people were taught an experience that is not in the power of man to teach. They were taught as they believed in God to believe also in Christ. This, man cannot teach. They were taught to come out from the old law or work system, and man still likes to hold on to the system of works. So we see that it took the working of the mighty power to manifest who these people were. Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith your God. Mind you, these people could not have come out, even though they were not born of blood, flesh or man, had this power or strength not been given them of God. The devil has no power except it be given him of God, and neither have we. All power in heaven and earth is given unto him, and neither we nor the devil have any strength except it be given. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made. They are not made and let

loose to do as they please; he guides them. It is not in man to direct his steps. The preparation of the heart in man is of the Lord. The heart devises the way, and the Lord directs his steps; so we see the Lord does it all. The Lord had power to keep Adam from falling under the law with Eve, but that was not his will, and if that was not his will it must have been his will for Adam to go where his bride was. God's purpose in this was not that Adam should sin, but it was his purpose that sin should be made manifest in the world. He made man, and made him subject to vanity; that is, under power or control of another. Vanity is a fruitless desire, pride or conceit, and in order that this weakness might be made manifest, God gave Adam a law, for where there is no law there is no transgression. Now, it is said that the serpent was more subtile than any beast of the field, but surely God had power over him. He was cunning and artful, therefore he deceived Eve, the mother of us all, and led her under the law that God had given. Eve was deceived, but Adam was not deceived. Eve had fallen under the law, and could not come back; she did not have the power that Adam had. Paul said that Adam was a figure of him that was to come; therefore Adam manifested the power that was in Christ that was to come, and who was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Adam was carrying out the purpose and design of God when he went with his bride under the law, for he was a figure of him that was born of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. Adam was a figure of him who was to taste death for every man. God told Adam when he ate of the forbidden fruit that he should surely die. This sentence was passed not only on Adam, but the human family. As Jesus did not take upon himself the nature of angels, but was born of a woman, upon whom the sentence of death had already passed by reason of her relation to Adam, therefore he did not have to do something wrong in order to fall under the law and have the sentence passed upon his body. He was born under the law, and therefore the sentence was passed upon him. We hear him in the garden asking his Father if it be possible to let the cup pass. But it was not possible; there was a decree gone forth from God, saying, Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. The lowering clouds gathered thick and dark around while the sentence was being executed; but it was a willing death. Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. How shall he not with him freely give us all things? His life was not taken from him; he had power to lay it down, and he had power to take it again. To those who believed in his work and power he said, Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. These are comforting words to those who believe in the finished work. It does not do me any good to go and hear preaching when they tell me of things to do in order to receive a blessing; and yet they tell me I have nothing to do with my eternal salvation. Now suppose for a moment if we could do enough good things to put God under obligation to bless us with one of his blessings which he has for his people here in this life, we could by the same method do enough to obligate God to give us a home where the wicked cease

from troubling and the weary are at rest. But God does not give his blessings that way; he does not get angry with his children when they do wrong, as some suppose and teach, but on the contrary he shows himself so good and kind it makes us sorry for every sin and wrong we ever did, and makes us feel that we want to live right, because of his blessings, and not in order to receive them. In this we see we are blessed in the deed, and not for or because of the deed. When we feel this way it is because power has been given us to become the sons of God, and not the sons of the law by works.

In conclusion, I want to say with the apostle, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Your brother in hope,

H. O. NASH.

ATLANTA, Ga., Dec. 15, 1919.

ST. THOMAS, Ontario.

DEAR SISTER BALLARD:—It is a long time since I heard from you, so have concluded to write, hoping that I may get a few lines in reply. I have often wondered if you all escaped the influenza, and how you all got through the winter. With us there has been a great deal of sickness. We ourselves have been fairly well, except that Harold has never gotten over the influenza, and is not as strong as before he was sick. It weakened the muscles of his heart, and he has to be careful about overdoing. The doctor says that if he is careful he will be all right in time. We are having a very cold, backward spring. The winter was very mild, but the spring so far has been cold and wet. Wheat is looking fine; I have never seen it look better during the five years that I have been here than it does this spring. It looks as though it would be a bountiful crop this summer.

Well, dear sister, I could write a long letter on such as the above, but what can I write on spiritual things? for I know you will enjoy something written upon spiritual things better, but how am I to write upon things which I fear I know very little about, if I have any knowledge of them at all? I often try to bring the branches of the olive, pine, myrtle and palm trees to build a booth that I might dwell in during the days of solemn feasting. These branches seem very small at times, yet they are all the evidence I have of my hope in Christ. If the Lord will, I will try and pen a few lines regarding these branches, or, as the margin reads, fruits. You will find it recorded in Nehemiah viii. 16. This proclamation was to Israel after their deliverance from Babylonish captivity. After seventy years the Lord was pleased to send a deliverer, who was Cyrus, to deliver the Lord's people from their bondage. This Babylon is not only when we are dead in trespasses and in sins, but when a child of grace that has once felt the freedom of the Spirit, which has brought him from the bondage of sin and iniquity into the glorious light and liberty of the gospel kingdom; but whenever we are led captive by the flesh and dwell in that fleshly spirit we are captives of sinful flesh with all its propensities, there to dwell until deliverance comes by the hand of our heavenly King. How often would we place our minds and affections on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, but are held in bondage by the strong hand of the strong man; but

when the blessed Deliverer comes how sweet is the deliverance; then we hold a solemn feast to the Lord for all his mercy shown. Now, dear sister, if the Lord will, I will bring a few of the fruits of these trees, which to me imply the evidences of our hope. The olive tree comes first, which carries my mind back nearly twenty years, when under a great burden of sin and bowed down with many cares, which oppressed me sore, I was constrained by some unseen power to wend my way toward the one sacred and solemn place, the meetinghouse in Vega, where the saints of a covenant-keeping God were about to assemble; and during the association the proclamation went forth from the Lord's servant, Elder H. C. Ker, and found a poor downtrodden worm of the dust, and the fruit of the olive tree was sweet to my taste, for it brought comfort to my troubled soul and rest to one who was weary and heavy laden. Many times have I hovered under that branch when blessed to recall the blessing and joy that filled my soul. Jesus preached the sermon on the mount of Olives, which to me is emblematic of the fruitful mountain of the gospel. Whenever the Lord's saints are enabled to exalt his blessed name they are raised above earth and earthly things. Here I bring in fond memory the branches of the olive tree to build a booth to rest under while I hold a solemn feast to the Lord. Dear sister, we have to go to the mountain. The trees are not found on every mountain, but only on the mountain of God's holiness, where spiritual fruits abound; they do not grow in nature's barren soil.

Branches of the pine tree. This tree is an ever green tree, which shows life during all the seasons of the year; so as we pass through all the seasons here, spiritually as well as naturally, we have the everliving tree, which change of season cannot affect the fruits thereof. These are the fruits of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the garden, and yields its fruit every month in the year. So we know the promises which have come to us in the dark watches of the night and have cheered our drooping spirits are branches of fruit from the never-dying tree. The blessed Word says, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. In six troubles I will be with thee, and in the seventh I will not forsake thee. So many are the words of comfort that my blessed Lord has spoken to my poor troubled soul, at times I can bring these branches and build a booth to dwell in, together with the branches of the olive tree.

Myrtle branches. O here, dear sister, is a tree which I am more acquainted with than any of the others mentioned, for it grows in low places where I dwell, cast down most of the time. To bring the branches of this tree is to tell of the trials by the way, and also tell of the sustaining grace of God, which bore me up as I traveled in the low, marshy places, often feeling that I must sink down to utter ruin and be eternally separated from God, for where God and Christ are I cannot come. Here I travel the greater part of the time, finding many reptiles ready to strike me with their poisonous fangs, but I also find protection in One who never slumbers nor sleeps, who has thus far brought me on the journey. When I reflect on the many sorrowful seasons that I have passed through here I bring the fruit of sustaining grace, which has upheld me in many trials.

Now the branches of the palm tree, which is emblematic of the Lord's mercy and grace. Under the cooling shade of this blessed tree I have found rest to my

weary soul, and have been able to lie down and rest in the sweet assurances of my blessed Lord. O how sweet are the promises of grace when they are applied to our weary souls! How easy to lie passive in his hands and know no will but his!

And branches of thick trees. These are the daily evidences that come to us by the way, and when we can bring them all up in our mind what a pleasant place to dwell in. Here we hold a solemn feast, feasting on the goodness and mercy of God, which has followed us all our days.

Well, dear sister, here I am still writing, and yet I have not touched the wonderful fullness contained in the subject. I thought I would just write a few lines, saying that the clerk of the church here had neglected to write you of your being accepted by the church. I think you will soon get a letter from our clerk. I am looking forward to Elder Ruston's coming, and hope he will be blessed of the Lord in preaching. I hope to be able to make his visit pleasant.

Hoping to hear from you, and that you are all well, sincerely your brother in hope of life eternal,

JOHN B. SLAUSON.

NOVEMBER 4, 1913.

As I sit here to-night I am thinking of the incident that took place with me forty-seven years ago, maybe at this very hour, for it was night. The place and the circumstances that surrounded me are all plain in memory. Was it a dream, or was it reality? Was it imagination, or a real fact? It has not been a dream, nor imagination, as to the effect it has had over my life. It has been a beacon to my path, an inspiration to my life, and the moving cause of all my acts as a professed christian. It gives the reason why I went to the church and was baptized. Were I to be asked to give a reason to-day why I am still a member of and love the church, I should say the reason was given me forty-seven years ago this night, in Barry County, Missouri. And now what is it all? Well, I will tell you. This night forty-seven years ago I was given a hope that God for Christ's sake had forgiven my sins, and I had no doubt of it then, for the joy of that moment I remember to this night, saying, My Father and my God, and then "I could not believe that I ever should grieve, that I ever should suffer again." But O how different from what I then expected has been the life I have lived. I did not then expect it would be through much tribulation that my pathway would lie, and while my pathway has been one of trials and doubts, yet truly I can say in all my weakness, His grace has been sufficient for me. Now

"Would he have taught me to trust in his name,
And thus far have brought me to put me to shame?"

May I say with David, "O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now also, when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not, until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come"? Amen.

G. E. MAYFIELD.

DEAR EDITORS:—This writing was found among Elder Mayfield's papers, and the family request its publication in the same number of the SIGNS the obituary appears, if you see proper. Elder Mayfield had been a correspondent of the SIGNS for many years, and through this he was known and loved by many brethren who only knew him in this way. The brethren of the northwest especially miss him, but they feel their loss is his eternal gain.

C. W. BOND.

(*See obituary on page 29.*)

EXODUS XXXIII. 18.

"AND he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory."

Moses talked face to face with the Lord. The Lord called him to be the leader of his people Israel. The Lord dealt with him in proportion as was necessary to instruct and qualify him for the work he had for him to perform; he had spoken to him out of the burning bush and had taken him to Mt. Sinai and given him the two tables of stone, with the commandments written thereon by the finger of God. Moses had come down to the children of Israel to deliver the commandments, only to find that they had already broken them, and Moses in anger cast the tables out of his hands and broke them. In his distress Moses returned unto the Lord and said, "Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written." The Lord did not blot Moses out of his book, therefore was favorable unto him. Later on Moses asked to see the glory of the Lord. The Lord said, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee. * * * There is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock; and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: and I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts; but my face shall not be seen." This reply of the Lord was far in excess of what Moses expected. The Lord works that way. When the thief asked to be remembered the Lord told him, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." The answer to prayer is far above what we are able to ask or think, and often by terrible things in righteousness. Moses was to stand upon a rock by the Lord while his glory passed by. The rock and the cleft in the rock was all one rock, presenting the Rock Christ Jesus. It is when we stand upon the Rock, Christ Jesus the Lord, the glory of the Lord passes by. Moses was made to remember all the way the Lord had led him and overshadowed him. He remembered how it was recorded regarding his coming into the world, and there was a decree by Pharaoh, king of Egypt, that all male children should be destroyed. His mother hid him three months, and when she could no longer hide him she made an ark of bulrushes and cast him in the water by the river's brink. His sister stood afar off to see what would become of him. What anxiety was in the heart of the mother and this sister and all who loved him; but God's mercy and glory were to be made known. Pharaoh's daughter came down to wash in the river, saw the ark and sent her maid to fetch it. When the ark was opened the babe wept, and the tears of the babe reached the heart of the daughter of the king. What wonderful provisions of God's glory! She knew it was a child of the Hebrews, and Moses' sister asked if she should get a nurse of the Hebrew women, and she was told to go, and she went and called the child's mother. I question whether Pharaoh's daughter ever knew that she paid Moses' mother to nurse her own child. What mysteries, what wonders shine in God's ways! This was the beginning of the glory of the Lord that passed by Moses as he stood upon the rock by the Lord. Moses' life until he was forty years old was spent in Egypt in learning, and that wisdom and his love and ambition were for his people, the Hebrews, in bondage. When forty years old he smote an Egyptian that was striving with a Hebrew and slew him

and hid him in the sand. How often we, like Moses, think the way to rid ourselves of those we are opposed to is to slay them, but the Lord will teach us that it is he who fights our battles, and Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. It required forty years more for Moses to know this, and he was taught it in a strange land and away from his people. The glory of the Lord passed by him in all this travel, and he was made to remember all the way the Lord had led him. When the time came for the Lord to send Moses to deliver Israel it was to be by the power of God, and not by Moses' power. At the age of eighty the Lord appeared to him on Mount Horeb in a burning bush and called him and qualified him to do the work he would have him do. All this I understand was the glory that passed by Moses as he stood upon the rock. Then the Lord put him in the cleft of the rock and put his hand over him and covered him from all light or remembrance of his goodness. He was in darkness, gross darkness, no light in the cleft of the rock, could not see one step before him; and it was in the darkness he was made to know that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. He must abide there and remain there until the Lord removed his hand, then he could see that the darkness and the light were both alike to the Lord, but not to him. He could then know that God dwells in thick darkness and in all deep places. When the Lord's hand was removed Moses could see his back parts.

I have a hope that I have known somewhat of Moses' experience, and have seen the Lord's back parts, and trust I shall see him face to face.

J. M. FENTON.

GILBERTSVILLE, Ky., Dec. 23, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find money order to pay for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for one year; that was the price of the *Gospel News* when brother Perkins was publisher, which paper I used to take.

Dear editors, I have a desire to write a few lines, if the good Lord will take the lead of my mind, for I realize that I cannot order one thought aright. I feel lonely, and hungry to hear the gospel, for I live a long way from where what I believe to be the gospel is preached, if I am not deceived in what I hope has been revealed to me. For a long time I tried to be satisfied with the husks that the swine left. I lived with the Missionary Baptists for thirteen years, and if I ever was changed from nature to grace, killed to the love of sin and made alive to the love of holiness, it was before I joined them. I tried to be satisfied and to think they preached the gospel, but finally decided something was wrong with them or with me. I could find much about men's failures, and it seemed to me that God was of one eternal mind, and changed not, and if their doctrine were true I could not see how God had power over all flesh, nor how he worked and none could hinder, so I just read, and tried to pray to the Lord to reveal these things to me, and I feel to hope it was the Lord's will to send some dear preachers to do what he told the disciples to do: Feed the sheep. I went to hear them, thinking I would hear something dangerous, as I had been taught the Primitive Baptists preached dangerous doctrine. But O I thought they talked very humbly, and claimed no honor to themselves, and I was surprised, so I just continued reading and trying to pray. After seven years had passed I was feasting on the good preaching I had been listening to and went up and related

my little experience, and was received in their fellowship. Now I feel to hope I am writing to friends in a far country who will understand me. I think the dear Old Baptists are friends of Jesus, and Jesus is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. I am getting old and never have learned of any other name, or power, or wisdom to trust in, for all power is of God, and the powers that be are ordained of him. Men's wisdom fails, for it is foolishness with God.

Now, dear brethren, if any of you read this poor attempt you will see I am poor and unlearned, but when our Savior left this world to go to his Father he left a poor and afflicted people who trust in the name of the Lord, so I pray it may be the Lord's will that I am one of that number.

Your poorest sister,

AMANDA HAMILTON.

SULPHUR, Ky., Dec. 16, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—If one so sinful as I may be permitted to address you thus. I am sending my remittance for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which is long overdue, and I want to thank you for your kindness in sending me the dear paper. I should have ordered it stopped when I found I could not pay on time, for I think every one should keep their subscription paid up. I used to think I would never let my subscription go over that way, but this shows how little I know as to what I will do, but I do know the things I should do I do not. I know when prices on everything are soaring it costs much to publish a paper like the SIGNS. It is a source of great comfort to me, for it comes laden with good news from a far country. The writings are all good, but the editorials are especially sweet and comforting; they make everything so plain. It shows who their Teacher is, and they give him all the praise. Although I have never met either Elder Ker or Elder Lefferts, yet I believe I love them both for the sake of the truth they so ably set forth Yes, they surely have been led into deep waters. Often I pick up the SIGNS and read an article from one of its many good writers which tells my feelings and my uprisings and my downsittings much better than I can. I would love to take each writer by the hand and tell them how they have comforted poor me. They all tell the same sweet story and sing the same sweet song, even praise to God for evermore for his wonderful works to the children of men. O that I might praise him as I ought, but I am too sinful to take his dear name on my lips. I have been low down in the valley, barren and destitute, in darkness that could be felt; it was midnight in my soul until he, the bright Morning Star, bade darkness flee. I have been made to realize more and more that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing, and am made to cry, Unclean, unclean; no good in creatures may be found, but may be found in Thee. Yes, in the most glorious Lord are found all good things, and in no other, for he says, I am God, and beside me there is no other. I hope I know in whom to believe and in whom my trust is.

Dear friends, I did not mean to weary you with my rambling thoughts, but only wanted to thank you for the SIGNS. May the dear God in whom I know you believe be your help in every time of need, and be to you as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, a covert from the storm, where you may find rest and peace, the peace that passeth understanding.

From one of the very least of the flock, if one at all,

ADDIE CHANDLER.

MACOMB, Ill., Dec. 18, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find one dollar, for which please extend my subscription to the SIGNS six months. I have been a subscriber for thirty-four years continuously, and feel I do not want to do without it while I live and can pay for it. It is a great comfort and satisfaction to me, and I do not know how I could do without it. The editorials of Elders Ker and Lefferts are always edifying and comforting, as are the letters from the correspondents. I was made sad over the news of Elder Durand's death, and also of dear sister Bessie Durand. They will be greatly missed in the columns of the SIGNS, especially he, who was such a great writer. You see from the obituary that our dear precious mother, Mrs. I. N. Van Meter, has passed away. She lived to a ripe old age, past ninety-nine. She was a firm, unwavering Baptist for over eighty years, and hers was a Baptist home many years. She was the oldest person in this county, and was loved and respected by all who knew her. I think I am the only one who receives the SIGNS now at this office, as you will now discontinue it to her address. She ever appreciated your kindness in sending it to her. My father, Elder I. N. Van Meter, during his lifetime sent many subscribers to the SIGNS, and at his death Elder Beebe insisted on still sending it to my mother. I am the only Baptist in this city of seven thousand, and feel to be utterly "alone" as to communion with the saints, as no one in this city that I have knowledge of believes in salvation by grace alone; but the Lord knoweth them that are his. May his blessings rest upon all connected with the SIGNS.

Your sister in tribulation,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

CANON CITY, Colo., Dec. 27, 1919.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am inclosing money order as payment for 1920 subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I think I am a little late, but think I have a reasonable excuse. On December 10th our home was partially burned over our heads, but the main part was saved, but we are living with our sons, who live on ranches near the city. My wife is almost totally blind and the fire gave a severe shock to her nerves, but with God's help we are trying to be reconciled to our light afflictions, hoping it will be for our good in the end. We have found a few Primitive Baptists here and have had two meetings, with what we thought were good prospects for the future, but since our last meeting we have buried one member and one prospective member, so we feel that man may propose, but it is God who orders our steps.

We hope to get back to our home in a few days, as the insurance people are repairing the damages.

I am your brother in tribulation,

SMITH KETCHUM.

BOOK OF EDITORIALS.

WE have on hand a number of copies of the Second Volume of Editorials. This book is made up of editorials written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES from March, 1842, to March, 1847, and contains 768 pages, neatly bound in cloth.

This work originally sold at two dollars per copy, but as a few of the pages are stained by water we will, as long as the supply lasts, sell them at the extremely low price of seventy-five cents per copy. Postage paid by us. All who wish this book should procure it now, as we will have no more after these are sold.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1920.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SIN.

THIS subject has been dwelt upon since the beginning of the world, and we are sure that we shall say nothing new about it. It is good, however, to be reminded now and then of the things we know. Knowing that we had to make another attempt to write, a few moments ago just the one word "sin" came into our mind, and with it came some reflections, some experiences and revelations, as we hope, of the past. There was a long time that we did not know sin, inasmuch as we were without the law, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. Thousands have lived and hundreds of thousands are living to-day without the slightest knowledge of either sin or righteousness; yet this class verily believes it has decidedly more understanding of sin and holiness than the poor and despised Old School Baptists. There are many things which can be learned by man in the schools of men, and by giving time and attention to investigation. Many men have become exceedingly wise by such course, and have shone as lights in the world; but there are some things not attained unto that way. Children are taught not to sin, or not to do bad things nor say bad words, and that if they abstain from such things they are not sinners, and that God will love them because of their goodness. Their teachers are as blind as they, having utterly no knowledge of sin. If the Lord loved only those who are good, his love from the beginning of the world would never have been bestowed upon man, save the man Christ Jesus. "There is none good, no, not one." The apostle tells us that sin is the transgression of the law. We must accept what he says. Hence when Adam transgressed the law sin entered the world, and from that day to the present time not one son or daughter of Adam has been born free from the sting or poison. The child does not have to grow to manhood or womanhood and commit some crime before it is a sinner. "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Such testimony shows man up in his true light and condition. The babe is not long in the world before the disease, sin, is made manifest, and in some of these little creatures there seems more devil than angel. This statement is true, whether believed or not. The smallest sprout of a poison tree is as poison as the large tree, because it had its life in the seed, hence is sure to bring forth the same poison fruit. It is not what the man or child does that makes them sinners, but they are sinners because of the transgression of the law in Adam, hence their deeds only manifest the disease and are the effects rather than the cause of sin. How then can man be just with God? How can the guilty be clean? When the Ethiopian can change his skin and the leopard his spots, then they who are unholy can make themselves holy and the guilty can justify themselves in the sight of God. But this Bible statement removes forever the very shadow of possibility of their ever doing such a thing. If the Ethiopian could

change his skin he would no longer be an Ethiopian, and if the leopard could change his spots it would no longer be a leopard, but because of the utter impossibility to make such change the Ethiopian remains an Ethiopian and the leopard remains a leopard. Taking this scriptural doctrine of the matter we conclude that man can no more change his nature from sin to holiness than he could make a world. Really man is much more helpless than he realizes, even from a natural standpoint, though he boasts great things. This sort of doctrine is credited as making man a mere machine, having to be acted upon at all times in order that he perform the works of God. It is also claimed that it does away with "free will." If the Lord tells us by the apostle that he works in his children both to will and to do of his good pleasure, shall we dispute it? If he tells us it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy, shall we insist that the will of man is free to accept or reject the works of God? Let God be true and every man a liar. That the children of God are sinners by nature, and that sin continues to manifest itself while life lasts, will be affirmed by the heirs of glory until time shall be no more. In the days of Job the devil always presented himself with the children of God, and if we know, experimentally, anything about the matter, there is never a time when sin is absent from the children of God, except in the sense of having been redeemed from it by the blood of the Lamb. We are acquainted with a man who not long ago related an experience to which every subject of grace can testify. The story was about as follows: A certain thing, absolutely wrong, had been in his mind for some time, and he knew that he could accomplish that thing if he would. In a sense it meant much to him; on the other hand, he knew it would mean disaster and ruin should not everything turn out as he had planned. For weeks, he said, I traveled night and day with, as it were, the virgin purity on the right hand, and sin or Satan on the left. "Sin" prompted him to go on and do that which would gratify and please his carnal appetites, such as covetousness, greed and desire. Purity, on the right hand, would say, Why sell yourself for naught? Sin would say, What is this life without the things your nature desires? Why be a fool and deprive yourself of the very things you so much desire? Purity would say, What would you be profited if you should gain the whole world and lose your own soul, or be a castaway? This man answered sin at every suggestion, I will do that which will gratify me and satisfy my natural propensities. I am fully persuaded to go on in this matter. Immediately he would turn to the promptings of purity and answer, I know you are right, what you tell me is good and true and best for me, even though I die as I am. I will heed your words, your warning, and live. This fight kept up for weeks, the man just hanging in the balance, when at last purity asked, What is of more real value, comfort, satisfaction, joy and peace than the fellowship of saints, a clear conscience before God and man? Would you take chances of sacrificing all this and your standing as a citizen for all that could be gained by the course sin suggests? Just at this point, when sin was about to prevail, there seemed, he said, some unseen power felt within which made clear the power of God over "sin," and that power reigned in the deliverance of the man. That man knows "sin" and its power perhaps better than ever before, and no

mortal, having never experienced such warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, knows anything of "sin." The lusts of human nature are the besetting sins of the redeemed, and such evil longings make one feel unfit for the company of the children of God and unworthy a name and a place in his kingdom. Sin, the horrible monster, has caused all the sorrow, sickness, disgrace, war and death that the world has ever known or will ever know, but thanks to the grace of God, by it all his children shall come off more than conquerors and at last shine in the righteousness of God and the Lamb. "Sin" shall forever be left behind, and purity reign in all eternity. K.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

OWING to another increase in the cost of Bibles, we are again compelled to advance our price from $3 50 to $4 50, and it will now be necessary to send us eight new yearly subscribers instead of six to secure a Bible as a premium. We are very sorry to have to make this announcement, and hope our subscribers will not credit us with profiteering, for we are not, and have only advanced the price when it was absolutely necessary. This advance in price is to take place immediately, and is now in force, notwithstanding the fact that the advertisement on the cover of this number offers Bibles at the old price. The reason the price was not changed in the aforesaid advertisement is because the covers were printed before we sent in our order for more Bibles, and so we did not know what the price would be for them.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER J. F. BEEMAN has changed his address from Claremore, Okla., to 184 E. 5th St., Riverside, Cal.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder George E. Mayfield, our beloved pastor, departed this life Nov. 7th, 1919, at his home in Elgin, Oregon. He was born in Washington County, Ark., October 29th, 1846, and while an infant moved with his parents to Missouri. He served a few months in the Union Army during the Civil War. His parents were Primitive Baptists, and raised him right, but this early training did not make him love their doctrine. In April, 1867, he united with the Missionary Baptists, and about that time he was married to Miss Frances Ray, of Missouri. The great strife among the inhabitants of Missouri caused by the Civil War moved many peace-loving people to emigrate to Oregon in the latter sixties, and among that number was the subject of this sketch, with his young wife, accompanied by his parents, six brothers and two sisters. Of this number four brothers and the two sisters are still living. In the spring of 1867 they started on the long journey to the Willamette valley, Oregon. This was made by ox-teams, and required about six months. The early pioneer life they found in the far west was full of hardships and many disappointments, and Elder Mayfield told us of that time, that the long distance and hard journey were all that prevented him and his father's family from returning to Missouri; but with the true pioneer spirit they all went to work to make homes in the new country, and were soon successful and satisfied. Soon after coming to Oregon he was occasionally thrown in company with the Baptists of Clackamas County, and attended their meetings. His experience and the doctrine of the Scriptures soon convinced him that the Primitive Baptists were his people, and in April, 1869, he and his wife united with them, and were baptized by Elder J. P. Allison. In 1873 he was licensed to preach, and in October, 1876, he was ordained by Elders John Stipp, George Wells, M. Loveridge, J. P. Allison and R. Thank. His wife died in 1875, and the following year he was married to Miss Amanda Westerfield, who survives him. In 1878 he was in the constitution of the Big Spring Church, of Union County, Orgon, and had since then served that church continuously as pastor. Elder Mayfield was a humble and earnest minister, always ready to make sacrifices for the services of the church and the good of the doctrine he loved. He traveled much among the churches of the northwest. These churches are small and far apart, so that the expense of visiting them was necessarily great, and often the larger part was paid out of his own hard earned means, but this never stood in the way of what he considered his duty. He had been in failing health for more than a year, and realized that his work was almost done. He arranged his business and church affairs so that no responsibility would be upon him and no disap-

pointment result in his taking away. A cold contracted the latter part of October while visiting with his relatives brought on the fatal attack, and he lived two weeks, suffering much but bearing it with patience and true christian resignation. He prayed continually for the Redeemer to come and take him home. He had visions of glory, and at one time called his family and friends who were present and told them he was ready to leave them, that heaven had come down to him and he was glad to go. He requested the singing of his favorite hymn: "How firm a foundation," and joined in singing much of it. At times while apparently in a stupor he would hum church tunes, and his words indicated that his mind was viewing the invisible kingdom. He lay for a week in this way, with his every expression a desire to depart and be at home. At the beginning of his sickness he wrote me of his condition, and requested me to preach his funeral in the little church-house, and preach Jesus the way, the truth and the life. This I did with the ability the Lord gave me, from the text: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith," &c. Elder J. T. Barnes conducted short services at the grave in the Elgin Cemetery, where were laid to rest the mortal remains of this faithful minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, who shall be with him at his second coming, shall be resurrected in his likeness, and shall praise him throughout eternity for the perfect redemption he wrought for his people.

He is survived by his widow and six children: George B., of Bend, Byram, of Enterprise, Mrs. O. C. Maxwell, Misses Jennie and Stella Mayfield, of Elgin, and Mrs. W. R. Geekeler, of La Grande, all in Oregon. These all ministered faithfully to him in his last illness. None of his children are actual members of his church, but all honor and respect his strong faith and see more than merely the end of this life in his death. May the faith of the father also be precious to the children, so that death to them when it comes will be but the door to endless joy.

C. W. BOND.

John Francisco died at his home, 45 Down St., Kingston, N. Y., Nov. 27th, 1919, after an illness of about five weeks. He was the son of Jared Francisco and Adelia Fuller, both natives of Delaware County, N. Y. His father, who was a Civil War veteran, passed away the 14th of June last. He leaves his widow, who before marriage was Sarah Hubbell, and many friends to mourn their loss. He was in the service of the Ulster and Delaware R. R. for many years, and at the time of his death was trainmaster. He was a man of high moral integrity, and was greatly respected by all who knew him. Mr. Francisco was not a member of the church, but he attended our meetings when possible and was ever ready to help or entertain those who love the truth, and his home was always open to receive them. May the Lord in his mercy reconcile the bereaved to this dispensation of his will.

The funeral services were held from his late home, where a large company of relatives and friends gathered to show their love and respect to his memory. Interment was in the cemetery at Kelly Corners.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Elder B. S. Pate was born near Memphis, Tenn., Jan. 5th, 1843, and died Nov. 10th, 1919, at the home of his daughter, Della Pate, in Dayton, Wash. At the age of five years he moved with his parents to Missouri, and when he was fifteen they moved to Kansas. April 16th, 1865, he was united in marriage to Elizabeth Hooper. Seven children were born to them, four of whom are living. Sister Pate died Nov. 24th, 1909. Brother Pate moved with his family to Washington in 1891. He professed a hope in Jesus when young (I do not know the exact date) and united with the Regular Predestinarian Baptists, and when about thirty-five years old began preaching for them. I was intimately acquainted with brother Pate, he being one of the first Elders I became acquainted with when I moved to this western country, and I can truly say our acquaintance proved to be one of sweet fellowship. Brother Pate did not only speak the love of God with his tongue, but his walk and acts all bore testimony to the doctrine he loved above all. He possessed the spirit of charity, which is the greatest gift the church has. He traveled much among the churches here in the west, and was loved by all. It is by his request that I try to write this to his memory. He requested me to conduct his funeral, but on account of a dislocated arm I was not able to attend. I had just returned from Elder Mayfield's funeral when the message came of brother Pate's death. I feel very sad as I write this notice, as there were seven ordained Elders on this side of the mountains, and now Elder James Turnage is the only one left.

J. T. BARNES.

ORDINATIONS.

PURSUANT to a call regularly made by the Eden Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, in Pike County, Ala., the following named Elders and many brethren from different churches met with said Eden Church on Saturday before the first Sunday in December, 1919, for the purpose of considering the matter of ordaining Benjamin Hardin Irwin to the full work of the gospel ministry, namely: Elders B. J. Wilson, James A. Mills, R. J. Hataway and John Wright McLeod. Elder Wilson was chosen moderator of the presbytery and conducted the examination of the church as to her orthodoxy and order. Elder Hataway examined the candidate and Elder Mills delivered the charge, after which the presbytery unanimously proceeded to the ordination of the said Benjamin Hardin Irwin to the full functions of the gospel ministry by prayer and the laying on of their hands.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 88. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1920. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

(SERMON by Elder John Eubanks, delivered in the Welsh Tract meetinghouse Sunday, August 17th, 1919.)

After singing hymn 1022, Elder Eubanks made the following remarks:

Fifty, one hundred, and even two hundred years ago there were many who sang these old sentiments with joy to their souls. There are not so many now, compared with the population of the country, but there will be a few as long as time remains who will love the sentiment of that old hymn. That hymn is doubly interesting to me, on account of an occurrence that took place some years ago in Georgia, but I will not take the time to relate it.

I am led in my mind from some cause to read in your hearing a text of Scripture recorded in the first chapter of Philippians, twenty-seventh verse: "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel." I have often stated and will say again that all the glorious doctrine which God showered down like a shower of rain in the mind of the apostles, accompanied by loving exhortations, was always directed toward a specific people. In another chapter of this same epistle we read: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

Let us take and examine the word "conversation," which occurs in this text and frequently in the Scriptures, and we will find that the conversation of the Lord's people, as represented here by the church of Philippi, is different to that of the world. The world cannot converse as they do. The natural man unchanged by grace knows nothing of that conversation, and if he were to attempt to be a witness of it he would be like the witness in the court that I heard testify once in connection with a case where a certain man had been murdered. All that the witness said was true, but when the opposing lawyer rose in cross-examination his queries ran like this:

"Now, Mr. Williams, did I understand you to say so-and-so?"

"Yes, sir, you did."

"Now, Mr. Williams, I am going to ask you a fair question. Did you see with your own eyes, or did you hear with your own ears, the things of which you have testified here to-day?"

The witness was speechless. Finally, however, he stammered that he had not; that while he had not been present, his father and other relatives had seen and heard the things he had related. What was the result? His testimony was stricken from the proceedings; he had not been an actual witness to the occurrence, consequently his testimony could not be accepted.

I want you to consider this illustration carefully. We must be witnesses ourselves; we must converse of the things concerning the kingdom of God from a knowledge of them in our own heart, from what God himself has revealed to us, else our conversation will not be in heaven. I think this is a reasonable conclusion for us to come to.

I knew another man who professed the doctrine of God our Savior, and who advocated election and predestination in every crowd possible. He was well versed in the letter of the Scriptures, yet, while I could not precisely define it, there was something wanting. Finally, however, the test came. He was called upon to relate some experimental knowledge of what he had been talking about, and he made a lamentable failure; he knew absolutely nothing about it, and as a consequence his conversation was not in heaven.

The apostle here admonishes the church at Philippi and all the saints (of all ages) to "only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ." See that it is in perfect harmony with that gospel, and if it is such it has experience in it, as well as the glorious doctrine of God our Savior, and is honey and honeycomb to the believer. I have often thought of that expression in the Song of Solomon: "I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey." You know that the bees deposit their honey in what is known as a honeycomb, and after it is gathered many people prefer to eat the comb with the honey. The glorious doctrine of God our Savior might therefore be called the comb in which the sweet honey is deposited, which is the every day experience of the child of grace. I repeat, the apostle here admonishes the church to "let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ." If I were to ask every one of you in this house to-day, What is the gospel of Christ? how many of you could give me a biblical answer to that question? Some might say it is going out among the multitude and telling them to stop being bad, to be good and go to heaven. Some might say that Christ Jesus came into the world to shed his blood equally for every one, and leaves it entirely to them to come unto him and be saved. Others might say that Jesus observed the law contained in the Bible strictly from day to day, and that is the gospel. Men are honest in these convictions, but men can be honestly wrong, and I wish to say without the fear of successful contradiction that not one of the above answers is true. The gospel is defined by the inspired apostle in this way: I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, because it is the power of God unto salvation. That is the gospel, it is the power of God unto salvation; that is, the power of God is made manifest in the salvation of any sinner that is ever saved. His own power, his own choice or option

in the matter has nothing whatever to do with the power of God. If you will read and trace the word "power" from place to place in the Scriptures you will find that the same power which brought forth from the dead our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is the power of God, and it is called the gospel. Consequently, when the arm of the Almighty is laid bare in the midst of the people with ruling power, he rules not in the natural mind, but in the heart of the sinner to will and to do of his good pleasure. Here the gospel is manifested. Take another expression of the holy apostle of our Lord. He congratulated the church upon having walked uprightly in the name of the Lord since it had been declared the church of God, and after saying that he had heard of their affairs and that they were walking uprightly before Him, he tells them that it is God that worketh in them to will and to do. He adds, You have been walking obediently as a church; you have been living in the commandment of the Word, not in my presence only, but also in my absence. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you (not with you) to will and to do of his good pleasure. I want to be particular, my friends, upon this point, because the inquiring mind wants to know the truth, whether it be an angel or a man; they want the truth, and nothing but the truth. You would think it very wonderful if a man had genius enough about him to construct a plow-stock so that it would go into the ground from day to day and work without the aid of man or beast to carry it. It would attract much attention, but it is no more wonderful, my friends, in nature, if we could only understand it, to see a sinner working according to the works of God's mighty power to will and to do of his good pleasure. It is God that worketh in you to will and to do. This gives our God the glory; this is the gospel, the power of God unto salvation. Jesus Christ was declared to be the Son of God with power by his resurrection from the dead, and anything short of this, my friends, in our conversation one with another, is not according to this text. Do you not see that? "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ," and in harmony with the gospel of God our Savior. All our experience upon religious matters should be in harmony with that gospel which is the power of God; that whether I be absent, says the apostle, or present with you, I may hear of your affairs one with another, whether you stand firm in one spirit, abiding in one faith, &c. If you do you are honoring and glorifying God in heaven as a bright and morning star. I might go back in the Old Testament and bring up many who testified to this same truth, but I will only call your attention for a little while to one prominent witness in reference to the matter. In the fifty-third chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah the prophet of God was carried away in the spirit of the word, and commenced that chapter in a beautiful way: "Who hath believed our report?" As much as to say, The report which we make, as prophets of God, is in harmony with the ancient pilgrims before the flood, and it is in perfect harmony with the apostles who shall live after us, so that there can be no misunderstanding in reference to it. You will note a question is asked: "Who hath believed our report?" and if this had been answered truthfully they would have said, Very few believed. The prophets in those days were often abused because they prophesied of the reign of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

in the souls of men. This same doctrine to-day is not loved by the natural mind of men, and never will be loved. I might pause here for one hour and discuss this question which is asked. However, the simple truth of the matter is this: not one fallen son or daughter of Adam's race could possibly believe it unless an inward working of the Holy Spirit begets that belief in them. You recall that the eunuch said to Philip, Here is water; what doth hinder me from being baptized? Philip was too well versed in the Scriptures to let that query pass without a direct answer. Believest thou with all thine heart (not head) that Jesus Christ is the Son of God? The eunuch replied in the affirmative, and they went down into the water and Philip baptized him. This was the work of God; he brought them together, and it being the work of God, the belief that was in the soul of the inquirer after truth was begotten there by the Spirit of God. I love my children about as well as any man, yet I could not sit down and convince one of them, even though I talked for hours, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. If I cannot do it myself, can the sabbath schools, theological schools, seminaries or man-written books accomplish this? No, my friends, there are no means on the face of God's green earth whereby this belief can be obtained, except those employed by God's grace, or the Holy Spirit. The Spirit brings them to this belief. In the case we spoke of the Spirit was working in them to bring them together as one spirit; they understood one another, and their conversation was in heaven. If this is not giving God the glory, my friends, I will be thankful if any one in the house will tell me what would be giving God the glory that belongs to him. The apostle goes a step further: "To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" When that arm is laid bare in the midst of the people it is a mighty arm, which can bring a sinner to the knowledge of the truth. There is nothing in the Savior that attracts the natural mind of man. He has no form nor beauty for which we should desire him. He was despised and rejected of men—a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. There is nothing in the Savior that invites the natural mind of men to follow him. He made himself of no reputation among men, and if there is anything in the church of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ that has attraction for men I do not know it. Jesus is no more attractive to-day to the natural mind of men than he was in those days. But O how attractive he is to the poor sinner; what wonders they behold in him, which is the power of God unto salvation, that is, the gospel.

We will now contrast for a few moments the opposition to the gospel. The gospel is one system of religion taught in the Bible; the law is also taught. Both are carried side by side throughout the Scriptures. The insufficiency of the law system is clearly demonstrated; it is shown to be a failure on account of the imperfection of the flesh of the people to whom it was given; they were sinful and imperfect. Therefore there was no salvation to be found in the law, it was a failure, and God had designed it as such, legally and morally. It may be observed, and people do observe it sometimes legally and morally all the days of their lives, but after doing so what does the law give them for it? Did you ever hear of a man that had never been in court on account of any trouble for the whole of his life appealing to the legislature for a thousand dollars, or two thousand, as the case might be, for being a good citizen? The

law demands all, but gives nothing; there is nothing to be obtained from it, consequently the observers of the law cannot expect salvation on the grounds of being law-abiding citizens. That system is a failure; it was a covenant which was made with the house of Israel and the house of Judea, which covenant they regarded not, and God regarded them not. God knew it would be a failure, and he made a new covenant with them. He said, I will write my law in their hearts (not their brains) and I will print it in their minds. They cannot burn that up and get rid of it as they destroyed the tables of stone upon which it was first written, and later upon steel, an emblem of a little better covenant, and if they observe it they shall be blessed in this life. So God put his word in the hearts of men, and wherever that has been done you will find praying men. Why is this? The Spirit of the Lord hath written a sentence in the mind and in the heart which shows you that you are a sinner in his sight. Did you ever hear of a law subject asking God to be merciful to him? No, indeed. I will call your attention to one law worshiper that represents a law worshiper on earth. Two men went up into the temple to pray. Both had the same object in view. One was a Pharisee, the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself: God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are; extortioners, adulterers, unjust, or even as this publican. I am thankful I am not like him. I pray three times a day, I give tithes of all I possess. That was the prayer of the Pharisee; he was living every day so as to feel better the next. But there stands a publican, a tax-gatherer. They always selected a man that had no soul for such positions, so that they would take the bed from under a poor widow. But from some cause or other there is an iniquity felt, a sense of guilt before God comes over him, and he stands with his head down, afraid to lift his eyes to heaven. What is his prayer? "God be merciful to me a sinner." Jesus said, I say unto you that that man (the publican) went down to his house justified, rather than the other. The parable shows the difference between self-righteousness and a condemned sinner before God. The publican asked for mercy when he could see by no means then presented to him how God could be merciful to him. If a man who has transgressed the law to a great extent, and the penalty for that deed is death, asks the judge to be merciful to him, what does the judge do? He simply points to the law and says he is powerless to save him. Yet that man asked mercy. Let me say to you, my friends, that through the atoning merits of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who satisfied divine justice for that man, who died for him, had suffered and gone down into death, through his merits mercy was extended to him, and he went down to his home justified through the blood of Jesus Christ, consequently the conversation was in heaven. "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel," to see that the faith of the gospel is never infringed upon in any of our conversations at public meetings. This is an injunction that rests upon us, as well as the church of Philippi. Be of one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel.

I do not feel that it would be prudent for me to talk any longer this morning.

I hope what I have said will give you food for meditation, and I hope and pray with all my soul that I have said nothing to hurt one of the congregation. Now may God bless and save us, is my desire for his righteous name's sake. Amen.

HOPEWELL, N. J., June 7, 1919.

DEAR PEOPLE OF THE LIVING GOD:—I have been attending our association at Hopewell, and also at Ocean Grove, and can say they were good meetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I was treated with kindness and witnessed love and fellowship. I met many brethren and sisters, and was asked why I do not write any more for the SIGNS. One sister said, I have looked the SIGNS over often for your writing, but do not see it. I answered, I have said many times that I would not write again, as I feel it is of no profit. I have been reading several portions of Scripture, and have turned to the forty-third chapter of Isaiah, beginning at the eighth verse, which reads thus: "Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears." It seems to me this is from God to his only Son Jesus Christ. There are in the world to-day those who think they can make men see and behold the glory of the Lord, but this is their vanity, there is no truth in it. All have eyes and ears naturally. I knew a man who had eyes, but went some forty years blind, and had ears, but never heard a gospel sermon preached, yet heard many sermons of the world. There came a time and place when the ears were unstopped, and a still small voice spake (not of man) with power. As he sat by the dearest on earth to him, his wife, cold in death, the voice said: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." He never knew it was in the Bible, but on searching the Scriptures found the words were those of poor Job when all had been taken away. Then there was an opening of the blind eyes, and the deaf ears were unstopped; then he could read the twenty-fifth Psalm with a little understanding, saw as he never did before. I am only touching these things, only giving a glimpse, for I thought I would not write much, but there are many things I would like to say. I can only write in my own feeble way; each one of us can only write in his or her own way. Matthew, Mark and Luke spoke in their own way. When I was a young man my parents gave me a Bible to take with me when I went from home to work upon a farm. I put it in the bottom of my trunk, but somehow I would think of the Bible, and would turn to the Scripture of the sower by the wayside and read, beginning with Matthew and then turning to Mark and also to Luke, then throw the Bible in the bottom of my trunk again and say, There is no truth in it, for one contradicts the other. After many years Elder Chick took this same Scripture in Matthew to speak from, and that was the first time I saw it as I do now. Matthew, Mark and Luke spoke the same truth. On that very same day I heard another so-called preacher take the very same text, but what did he give me? A report of the world and the harvests of different states. This is of the world, no gospel in it. Let us read on a little further in Isaiah: "Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this, and shew us former things? let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, It is truth." Often in my home I hear my brethren and sisters speak of Jesus as their all and in all,

talk of their travels and experience of the grace of God, how he has led them, and have often thought, I know nothing of these things, but I am a witness to their conversation and can say with all my heart it is the truth, so that gives me comfort, and I think, Well, the Lord does surely visit me, and I am a child. If we are brought before the judge of this state we must know for ourselves; we cannot say, So and so said so, but must have seen with our own eyes and heard with our own ears, or it is not lawful, as that is the law of the land; but what a child of God knows is from the Spirit, and is not of the head. All comes from God the Father. So we are witnesses of God and are his servants.

Now I will close this rambling letter. If it is ever published may God be with my readers, and may they get a crumb that will be of comfort to those who have asked for my writing. I have written in my own feeble way, as I can write in no other.

Hoping I am a brother,

GEORGE M. CONNER.

DRAIN, Oregon, Oct. 27, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—I once more make the attempt to write a few lines, not that I feel worthy or competent to say anything to the edification of the household of faith, for the dear old SIGNS is always filled with good reading matter from the more able writers, who can tell of the glorious truth as it is in Christ Jesus so much better than I can tell it that I refrain from trying to write, yet I want to tell all lovers of Jesus that I am by the power of his strength still trusting in the same God that spoke peace to my soul in the year 1871; that hope still stays with me. When all is dark, and I almost sink in despair, I am made to go back to that place and time where and when I felt my sins forgiven. I fought the Old Baptist doctrine up to that time, but after that everything was made clear, and I saw that God worked all things after the counsel of his own will, that he was a sovereign God. I stood in amazement and wonder at the beauties that were revealed to me. He established my goings and put a new song in my mouth, and I hope the Savior will still keep me in that faith to the end of my journey. He is our Savior, and none other can we look to; he is our all and in all.

When I read the able writings from the pen of those who write for the SIGNS I want to take the writers by the hand and tell them how I have been fed.

We still hold our church meetings at my home, and surely do feel the presence of our Savior with us. My son preaches regularly for us. Sometimes he is in the dark when he begins to talk, and I am afraid he cannot say anything to our comfort, but soon the light begins to shine in his heart, and before he gets through he has fed the lambs and sheep. My son-in-law, G. O. Walker, is with us often. He has a good gift, seasoned with spiritual food. As he could not be with us at our last meeting he wrote a letter to the church which we are sending to you for publication, if in your judgment it would be profitable to the household of faith. The dear brethren he speaks of were baptized at our last meeting.

Dear brethren and sisters all over this broad land of sin and sorrow, I hope I have true love and fellowship for you all, and I hope our blessed Savior will keep us all in the strait and narrow path which leads to eternal joy.

From one of the least of all God's children, if one at all, saved by grace, if saved at all,

S. MORNINGSTAR.

To Coast Fork Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, saints of the most high God (what a high and holy calling), heirs of God and joint-heirs of the Lord Jesus Christ, heirs to the only inheritance holy and undefiled and that fadeth not away.

DEAR BRETHREN:—My soul rejoices and leaps with joy to soar even for a few moments to contemplate the wonderful hope that Jesus, God's very Son, who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, has freely, and without recompense from us, bestowed on us such unbounded love that we should be called the sons of God. What a world! What a life of sin and sorrow! Sodom and Gomorrah of old could hardly be worse. But we have a hope which tongue cannot express. O may it please him that we walk more and more circumspectly day by day, redeeming the time, for the days are evil. O that we may be strengthened to keep our bodies in subjection, ever wise as serpents and harmless as doves., that we may fight the good fight of faith. The warfare is fought, the victory is won, the legal captive is free, free to rejoice with the Victor when we stand by his side by faith, bruised and wounded, but trusting in our armor-bearer, the Captain of our salvation. See him tread the wine press alone when all our enemies rise up as a host of mighty warriors to tempt him in every point with every carnal weapon, and yet he opened not his mouth. How weak, how puny we would feel if he should needs turn an anxious look and appeal for help. But he is sufficient; ten thousand worlds and hells could not kindle fire to tarnish one stitch of his perfect garment. No, my dear, confiding brethren, he has borne all in his own body, he will never appeal to you to help him, nor to help yourself. Humble, confiding faith is our sweetest and dearest attitude, and, like everything else that is good, it is his free gift, bought with the great price of suffering Gothsemane and agonizing Calvary, reserved in heaven (a thousand times above Satan's loftiest abode) for you. Jesus paid it all; all to him I owe.

Our precious brother Hubbard has long been exercised in heart, quickened by the word of God. He was found in a waste howling wilderness, led about and instructed and kept as the apple of God's own eye. I have often desired to do or say something to raise the burden from his mind, but only God knows, and he is ever closer than any other can be. His communications are not confined to tongue or pen, but the still small voice that is his operates on the fleshly tables of the heart, and blessed is the soul that is moved to rejoice in those things. His ways are past finding out. No doubt brother Hubbard has many times received wholesome food to his hungry soul at our meetings that caused him to say it was good to be there, and again perhaps he has gone away hungrier and sadder, but, after all, "by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better," and fools are found in the house of mirth. I have no doubt he has been led by the Spirit of the living God to desire to say to the world, I hate you, with all your vanity and vexation, your gaudy show, pomp and pride. Yes, with Moses to choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to inherit the throne of Egypt, or the greatest kingdom of the world.

But I am wandering at random, and when I stop and think, Who am I that I should try to add praise to God's holy name? I am reminded that the help of man is vain. I feel to be with you all in heart, including several others who are

without the gate feeding by the shepherds' tents. May God speed the time that they, too, must meekly follow Him who bore their sins in his own body on the tree openly and exposed to shame. May brotherly love abound.

Your brother, in hope of a better world,

G. O. WALKER.

BERWICK, Maine, Dec. 15, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I love the truth that is so ably set forth in the columns of our family paper, and love those who love the truth as it is in Jesus. I often feel I would like to write of this precious truth in such a way that those who read would be comforted, even as I am comforted, of God. We are called narrow-minded, but it seems to me that nothing can be broader than God having all power in heaven and earth, declaring the end from the beginning, the salvation of his people all finished and complete, nothing can be added to it or taken from it. There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. We have been made to rejoice in a risen Savior, victorious over death, hell and the grave, and all of his chosen people with him, and they can never be separated from him. The thought comes, Can I be one of them? Can I, who am so very sinful, have any reason to think I am included among them? This Scripture comes to my mind, and enables me to look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." It is over forty-seven years since I was given a home with this people and united with the church at Bowdoinham, and the preaching is the same to-day it was then. The name of Jesus is exalted above every name that is named. He is the way, the truth, the resurrection and the life. It pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell in Jesus. He of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

May God enable his children to walk together in love, esteeming others better than self. I hope you will be spared many years to edify and comfort God's people, as you have done in the past, by knowing nothing among them save Jesus Christ and him crucified.

I wish this were a more interesting letter, but must leave it with you whether to publish or not. Love and fellowship for all the household of faith.

Your unworthy sister,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in February (29th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER J. E. THORNBURY has changed his address from Grayson, Ky., to Glenwood, Ky., and desires his correspondents to address him there.

THE address of Elder Asa Howard for the present will be Kingsville, Texas, care of J. W. Staggs, Box 965.

W. M. Little has changed his address from Kennedale Texas, to Lawn, Taylor Co., Texas.

INFORMATION WANTED.

IF any one knows of any Baptists near Pocatello, Idaho, we would be glad to hear from them.

LEWIS BROWN.

POCATELLO, Idaho.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1920.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ROMANS XI. 1.

"HATH God cast away his people?"

It seemed that the nation of Israel had failed of realizing the promises which God had made to them. It seemed this way because the gospel at the time Paul was writing this letter to the church at Rome was being preached to the Gentiles, and the Gentiles were flocking to the standard of Jesus held aloft by the apostles. The apostasy, or falling away of the Jews, and the ingathering of the Gentiles, caused the spiritual in the true church to ask the question: "Hath God cast away his people?" that is, the Jews. Paul, knowing this question was in the minds of the brethren, was moved to ask it, and then to answer it by saying, "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew." The whole theme of this eleventh chapter of Romans is that Israel has not forever been set aside, that God has not cast off his people foreknown in Christ before the foundation of the world. The confusion in the minds of the brethren of Paul's time was in the fact that they mistook national Israel for spiritual Israel. The term "spiritual Israel" comprises the whole redeemed host of God chosen in Christ before the world began. The definition of a spiritual Israelite is: "He is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." On the other hand, national Israel was the lineal descendant of Abraham after the flesh, and included no persons other than natural Jews. The fact that Israel as a nation was meeting with severe reverses during the early days of the gospel church, at the same time that the Gentiles seemed to be flourishing and prospering, disturbed the minds of some believers who were not well grounded enough to know the distinction between natural or typical Israel and spiritual Israel. National Israel had declined from the time when she came through the Jordan under Joshua, from the days when King David ruled triumphantly over all his enemies. Now, Israel had no ruler of her own, but was a tributary of Cæsar; she was torn internally with various strifes and dissensions, her political and social life was woefully corrupt. This looked as though surely God had cast off Israel, and indeed he had, so far as his favoring that nation above any other nation, but God had not cast away his covenant of election made in his Son before time. National Israel was never intended to be preserved eternally as a nation on earth. She was to serve simply as a type of the true church during the legal dispensation. Jesus, having now come into the world and suffered, died and rose again, there remained in the purpose of God no more need for the preservation of the type, so, as a nation, Israel was to be cast off. Inasmuch as God's spiritual Israel is confined to no one nation among all the nations of the earth, but is to be found among all nations, the Almighty having in each and every nation a remnant according to the election of grace, therefore even though

Israel nationally was cast away, the spiritual remnant in that nation, as well as in every other nation, was not cast away. As proof of this Paul brings up his own personal experience: "For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin," and the fact that he and others of the Jewish nation were being brought by grace into the gospel proved that God was not casting away his people foreknown in Christ before the the world began, but only that God was terminating the typical Israel, since the type had served its purpose and there was not any more need for the type, since the true church was now gospelly set up. Further substantiating this doctrine that God had not cast away his people, Paul reverts several hundred years to the time of the prophet Elijah, the time when Israel was passing through a period of corruption somewhat similar, though not by any means as final, as in the days of Paul. The prophet Elijah felt that God had turned his back upon Israel, and had cast her off, because they had digged down God's altars and slain his prophets, and even sought the life of Elijah himself. But God spoke to Elijah, comforting him with the doctrine that God had reserved unto himself a remnant that could not be cast away. "Even so then at this present time," Paul says, "also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." He says, following up the matter, "What then? Israel [nationally] hath not obtained that which he seeketh for [that is, justification by works]; but the election hath obtained it [not by their own works, but through the work of Christ]." Thus, further on in the chapter, we are told that this fall of the Jews was for the purpose that the kingdom of God should be taken from the Jews as a nation, so that salvation should come to the Gentiles. But we Gentiles are warned not to boast of this, since God, who cut off the natural branches, is able to graft them in again when the fullness of the Gentiles shall have been brought in, and in this year of our Lord 1920, it looks, and has for some time looked, as though the fullness of the Gentiles had almost been brought into the gospel, that whatever remnant according to election there is in these United States, for instance, had very nearly been gathered in. For just as Israel as a nation was an apostate from her former prestige in the days of Paul, so we witness to-day error, delusions, selfishness, greed and corruption of every sort rampant among the nations of the earth. Religion is nowhere respected as formerly, but men are lovers of self, setting up their own standards by which to regulate their lives, with no regard for any authority higher than themselves. Nowhere is this more plainly seen than in the proceedings of a Conference which met four days in January, at Atlantic City, N. J., and mapped a plan to raise five hundred million dollars in the next five years to "save the world." This Conference is by no means an isolated instance, but is symptomatic of the disease of the times. This movement to "enlist the spiritual and physical resources of American Protestantism" in saving sinners everywhere, is a direct and glaring subversion of all Scripture: Scripture which plainly says again and again that beside the Almighty there is no Savior; that the name of Jesus is the only name given under heaven among men whereby the children of God must be saved; that salvation is not of works, but wholly of grace; that salvation is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God who sheweth mercy; that God's people are saved with

an everlasting salvation and called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to God's own purpose and grace, given them in Christ before the world began. The price of one sinner's salvation, or of every sinner's salvation, is not five hundred million dollars. No, the price is not to be reckoned in silver or gold, nor in corruptible things that perish, not even all the material wealth of the world piled to the skies; the price is the precious blood of God's only Son Jesus Christ. He paid it over nineteen hundred years ago. The sinner's debt was paid then. Jesus said so. His words were: "It is finished." If any man, or set of men, such as this interchurch Protestant conference, says that Christ did not finish the work of salvation and that we to-day must contribute sordid dollars to finish it, there remains for us to say simply, "Let God be true, but every man a liar." We wish our readers would take time to read the forty-ninth Psalm, especially from the sixth to the ninth verses inclusive. It undeniably affirms the impossibility of saving sinners with dollars. The redemption of souls is precious, too precious indeed for God to entrust to dollars, so precious that nothing short of Christ's blood could accomplish that redemption, and when once Christ had paid that price with his own blood the redemption ceased forever; the work was done once forever, salvation was finished and complete. It is nothing less than the work of folly to in this year 1920 take up, or attempt to open up again, a case which is closed, which was closed nearly two thousand years ago. So the mad delusion goes on, and the whole world is caught in its train. Is it any wonder the spiritually-minded ask, "Hath God cast away his people?" just as the apostasy of Israel caused the spiritual to ask the same question in the days of Paul. Then, in the midst of corruption, the church stood in the dawn of a new age. May it not be that now with the whole world lying in wickedness all about us we may unwittingly be upon the threshold of a better day? God grant, if it be his will, that we may yet witness a glorious revival in our hearts, truly a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, assuring our doubting hearts that God has not cast away his people whom he foreknew.

Written by request. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. M. Fenton.)

The Juniata Association, in session with the Sideling Hill Church, Fulton County, Pa., October 10th, 11th and 12th, 1919, to the churches composing the same and to all with whom we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We rejoice in the Lord that we are able to write you that there is no departure by us from the principles of doctrine, order and faith of the gospel as it is given us by the Savior and his apostles. How good it is when brethren dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head of Aaron, as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion. How necessary to take heed unto ourselves and unto the doctrine, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Feed the flock of God, which he has purchased with his own blood. Feed them with strong meat, as well as the sincere milk of the word. Be instant in season and out of season, declare the doctrine of God's love, mercy, compassion, pity, long-suffering, kindness. Hold fast the form of sound words, as recorded in Scripture. For the grace of God, that bringeth sal-

vation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world; looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

J. M. FENTON, Moderator.
H. H. LEFFERTS, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Sideling Hill Church, Fulton County, Pa., October 10th, 11th and 12th, 1919, to the associations and churches with which we correspond sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We trust our hearts are filled with gratitude to our God that we have the privilege of communicating with you all. What a blessing it is to have the privilege of meeting our ministering brethren, who have come speaking the same things, which we hope is the work of the Lord, for it is salvation by grace from first to last. The Lord by the sweet singer of Israel hath said, Walk about Zion, and go round about her, tell the towers thereof; mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following. May the Lord guide and direct us in all things.

We regret to state that for several sessions we have not received any Minutes from our sister associations. We want no interruption of your correspondence, and suggest you have your clerks investigate this matter.

The next session of this association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon County, Pa., Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1920, when and where we hope to receive your Minutes and messengers.

J. M. FENTON, Moderator.
H. H. LEFFERTS, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, at Salisbury, Md., Dec. 9th, 1919, Walter Samuel White and Lennie Aydelotte, both of Salisbury, Md.

By the same, at Salisbury, Md., Jan. 17th, 1920, Willis E. Bratten, of Willards, Md., and Mattie H. Parker, of Pittsville, Md.

By Elder B. Sawyer, Dec. 18th, 1919, at the home of the bride, Jones Mill, Ala., Andrew J. Douggette, of the same place, and Mrs. Carrie Frye.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at the home of the bride's parents, Northwood, Ont., January 15th, 1920, John McClarine Carey and Mamie Campbell.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Sarah Anna Banister, wife of Amos Banister, of Forest, Ont., died at her home New Year's morning after an illness of only a few days. Sister Banister had been in failing health for several months, but was able to be around and attend to her household duties until a few days before her death. She was born near Toronto in the year 1856, making her age at the time of her death 64 years. She was married to Amos Banister October 22nd, 1874. To that union were born five children, three sons and two daughters. Sister Banister was received in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada in July, 1906, being baptized by Elder S. H. Durand, and lived and died in full assurance of faith in her blessed Lord and Savior. She was a faithful and consistent member, and we feel our loss very keenly, but have to bow to the divine will of him who doeth all things well. Our desire as a church is to be still and know that he is God.

Her funeral was held from her late residence, where many friends and relatives gathered to extend their sympathy to the bereaved family, which showed the esteem in which sister Banister was held in the town in which she lived. Interment was in Forest Cemetery. May the Lord comfort and sustain her lonely husband by his grace, and may the children who mourn the loss of so kind and devoted a mother find solace in their heavenly Father, who knows their every need, is my prayer.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Melissa E. Slauson departed this life at her home in Halcott, N. Y., July 4th, 1919. She was a daughter of John and Ellif Craft, and was born Nov. 9th, 1858. Her husband was Orrin Slauson, who died over six years ago. She leaves to mourn their loss one son and three daughters: Wilbur Slauson, Mrs. Marshall Bouton and Mrs. James Peet, of Halcott Center, N. Y., and Mrs. John Walker, of Kelly Corners, N. Y., also four grandchildren. She was a worthy member of the First Roxbury Church, Vega, N. Y., and was held in high esteem by all who knew her. The many trials she was made to encounter caused her to rightly esteem the Rock of her salvation, and her feelings often found expression in the hymn: "Amazing grace! how sweet ths sound, that saved a wretch like me." The Lord in his mysterious providence saw fit to lay the hand of affliction heavily upon her, and for some months before she died she was confined to her bed and suffered much bodily pain. Her desire was for God's will to be done, and though suffering much she did not want to complain. It was my privilege to visit sister Slauson a number of times during her illness, and the remembrance of those visits is still sweet to me. We miss our dear sister much, but are comforted with the thought that she is absent from the body but present with the Lord, which is far better. Interment was in the Vega Cemetery, Vega, N. Y.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Hannah E. Tilton died Nov. 19th, 1919, at her home in Lowell, Mass., aged 77 years. She had been a great sufferer for years from rheumatism, and the last year or so of her life was compelled to use a wheel-chair in getting around, but the immediate cause of her death was acute indigestion, which took her away in a few hours. Her mother died leaving a large family of children when sister Tilton was a mere child, and therefore the burdens of life fell upon her in childhood, but she was blessed to endure to the end all that came upon her. She united with the North Berwick Church, Maine, in October, 1864, and was baptized by the late Elder Wm. J. Purington. In October, 1896, she united by letter with the Woburn Church, located in Woburn, Mass., and was ever steadfast in the faith, attending our meetings when it was necessary for her to ascend the stairs on her hands and knees. Such devotion to the house of God is seldom seen. She was well indoctrinated, and held in the highest esteem by all who knew her. She is survived by two daughters, her husband having died several years ago. The daughters were devoted to their mother, and exceedingly kind and thoughtful during all her affliction. Brother John Ham, of North Berwick, Maine, and one sister also survive her. Brother Ham says of her: "She had been all her life very self-sacrificing, a meek follower of her Lord and Savior, very submissive to her seemingly hard lot in life. Nothing short of devotionship could make one feel to praise the Lord under such afflictions as she had." Instead of complaining she was always counting her blessings.

The funeral was largely attended, and the floral offerings many and beautiful. May the grace of God keep and sustain the daughter, the brother and sister in their sorrow.

K.

Elder D. A. Wilbanks, one of our most active ministers, died October 10th, 1919, after a long illness of typhoid fever, aged about 60 years. He was a member of Pilgrim's Rest Church, in Franklin Parish, La., where he also resided. He left a widow, mother, one brother and other relatives and a host of friends to mourn their loss. I think all his children preceded him to the grave. The church has lost a precious member as well as a loving pastor; he was an able defender of the gospel of truth. I was well acquainted with him, and to know him was to love him. I visited his family twice, and met him and sister Wilbanks several times at our associations. She was a great help to him in all his ministerial work. Dear relatives and friends, do not mourn as those who have no hope. Dear sister Wilbanks, remember that God is good, true and just, too wise to err and too good to be unkind. Remember that Jesus can fill your lonely hours with sweet meditations of his love. I want to say to his aged mother, The Lord knows what is best for his children and always does things for the best, for he says that all things work together for good to them that are the called according to his purpose.

M. E. HAMNER.

Lucinda J. Cook was born in Dorchester, N. B., October 27th, 1845, and died Nov. 4th, 1919, aged 74 years. She had been in failing health for a little more than a year, the immediate cause of her death being acute indigestion, followed by heart failure. On April 2nd, 1866, she was married to the late Capt. William E. Buck, who was lost at sea between New York and Halifax, N. S., in December, 1887. To them ten children were born, two of which survive. In 1891 she was married to the late Capt. John R. Cook. In 1882 she was baptized in New York by Elder Silas H. Durand. She dearly loved to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and was a firm believer in election, predestination and salvation by grace.

The funeral service was held in Dorchester, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. N. P. Ward, who faithfully cared for her in her declining years. Interment was in Dorchester Cape Cemetery.

ETTA M. COLE.

Mary L. Henderson, widow of brother James N. Henderson and eldest daughter of Nathan and Barbara Grafton, died Dec. 31st, 1919, at her home in Towson, Baltimore Co., Md., aged 68 years. She was a member of Harford Church at the time of her decease. Her membership totaled about forty years

she being twenty-eight years of age when baptized. She was not only loved by the members of our faith and order, but highly esteemed by her many friends outside of the church with whom she came in contact. The floral offerings, particularly from these friends, were profuse and beautiful. She loved the truth as it is in Jesus, and was always present when possible at meeting, either at her home church or elsewhere. She leaves a son and a daughter to mourn her departure, but their loss and ours is her eternal gain. Her son is a successful business man in New York city, and her daughter, Mrs. Rozilla L. Jones, resides in Washington, D. C.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor.

J. G. EUBANKS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Joab P. Stout, Ill., $3.00; Mrs. Nettie Rogers, Ky., $2.00; Mrs. M. B. Dykes, Texas, $1.00; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $3.00; Mrs. Allie Gooch Reid, N. C., $1.00; Mrs. Duncan McCallum, Ont., $2.00; Huldah J. Leonard, N. Y., $1.00; Joseph F. Hall, Maine, $3.00; E. M. Kuehne, N. J., $1.00; Mrs. Eva Hughes, Wash., $1.00; J. C. Chester, Ky., $4.00.

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CLAREMONT, Cal.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 88. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1920. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ACTS II. 23.

ALL my preaching, and anything I write, is intended for the comfort, edification or enlightenment of God's holy people. I neither preach nor write for the purpose of awakening dead sinners, the Lord alone can do that, and he will do it as it pleaseth him, in his own time and manner, and that without any assistance from me. Neither do I seek to enlighten or convince those whose eyes the Lord has blinded and whose hearts he has hardened; that would be the height of presumptuousness and folly. Such can neither see nor understand, neither can they believe; they do not belong to the sheep family, and therefore they cannot believe. They belong to the genus capra, and they have hollow, scabrous horns. The gospel was never intended for them, neither can they receive the love of the truth in their hearts. But we do not know who these are, neither have we the right to sit in judgment upon others and declare that they do not belong to the election of grace. This also is exclusively the work of God. He knoweth them that are his, and when the truth goes forth in the power of the Spirit he will carry it to the hearts which he himself has prepared to receive it, and in these divinely prepared hearts the seed thus sown will bring forth fruit, some thirty, some sixty and some an hundred fold.

I have been thinking for a day or two about that celebrated statement of Peter in his great Pentecostal sermon, found in Acts ii. 23: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." One of the things which many of God's little ones who have not yet passed in their experiences out of the milk stage do not understand, and are often troubled about, is this: How is it possible for God to have predestinated all things whatsoever come to pass, both good and evil, including the entrance of sin into the world, and the fall of man, and yet not be the author of sin? This is a question which disturbs many minds among God's saints who have not yet learned to digest the strong, solid meat of the gospel. Now a right understanding of the remarkable passage above quoted will entirely clear up this difficulty. The text naturally falls into

two distinct and separate divisions. The dividing line is to be found where the comma is, between the word "God" and the word "ye," in the latter part of the verse. The pronoun "him" refers to Jesus, and Peter tells the Jews on that memorable occasion that God had delivered Jesus into their hands. This deliverance of Jesus into the hands of wicked men was for the express purpose of his being crucified by them. He was not taken against his will, nor against the will of his Father and put to death, for Jesus himself says, in speaking of his life, "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." —John x. 18. The crucifixion of Jesus was one, and only one, of the "whatsoevers" (Acts iv. 28) which God's hand and counsel had "determined before to be done" on that occasion. These things were all included in the great scheme of redemption, and were incorporated in the terms of that "everlasting covenant," which was made by and between the everlasting Father, the uncreated Word and the eternal Spirit, in eternity, before the foundations of the world were laid, and which covenant was ordered in all things and sure. Therefore it must and does inevitably follow, from these and many other Scriptures, that nothing, not even the most apparently insignificant, trivial circumstance, took place in the matter of the crucifixion of our Savior which was not foreknown, foreseen, foreordained and immutably fixed and settled in eternity. Nothing was indefinite, nothing uncertain, nothing unexpected, and nothing which was not in absolute accordance with the eternal purpose and unchangeable will of God, yet everything which was done by the Jews and by the Romans in that matter was sinful and wicked in the extreme. All their unspeakable malice, hatred and revenge, all their malevolent and triumphant speeches and all their malignant acts and doings lay strictly within the perview of the eternal purpose and absolute decree of God. (Acts iv. 27, 28.) Still, notwithstanding all this, God was not the author of their wicked deeds. Though impelled, as it were, driven forward, by the eternal secret counsel of God, to do what they did, yet they acted voluntarily, and of their own will, and were therefore responsible for their doings. Just as many wicked men to-day by their wicked acts fulfill the predictions of God's holy prophets without knowing they are executing God's will and fulfilling his word, so it was with these men, familiar with the Old Scriptures, but utterly ignorant of their spiritual meaning, they went on in their malicious course, and murdered the immaculate Son of God and fulfilled to a jot and a tittle His will in that matter, and never once realized that they were executing His counsel. (Isaiah xlvi. 11.) The word "determinate" in this place is a very strong word, and it means settled, fixed unalterably; and the word "foreknowledge" signifies not only that the matter was foreknown, but that it was also predestinated. Every detail and minute circumstance in connection with the crucifixion of Jesus was foreknown, immutably fixed and prearranged by and between the persons of the Holy Trinity in that first great supreme council which was held in eternity. This is the sense of the first portion of this wonderful passage. The latter clause conveys the idea that those wicked Jews crucified the Savior, as the lawyers say, "with malice aforethought," in an unlawful manner and without mercy. The judgment of Pilate was, "I find no fault in him," and yet, in

order that the Scripture might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, it was necessary that his judgment should be taken from him. (Isaiah liii. 8.) This actually took place at the time of his crucifixion. Notice that while Jesus was delivered into the hands of those wicked Jews by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, yet it is expressly said, "Ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." The wickedness did not attach to God's hands, but to theirs; from God's viewpoint (if I may be allowed to use the expression) it was in the fulfillment of his eternal purpose, the complete and everlasting salvation of his chosen people, and for his own glory, that Jesus was delivered into the hands of his enemies to be slain. Herein we begin to see the unsearchable riches of God's superabounding sovereign grace.

B. H. IRWIN.

SOCIAL CIRCLE, Ga., April 3, 1919.

KELLER, Texas, March 6, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—The inclosed letter was written to me by sister Charlotte Price. She and her husband are both members of the Old School Baptist church near Grapevine, Texas. This dear little sister has written as she talks: in a plain, child-like simplicity, as she terms it, A babe in Christ. Her words have been edifying and interesting to me, like apples of gold in pictures of silver. In her walk and godly conversation I can see the blessed image of Christ. In her countenance the fruits of the Spirit. Through babes and sucklings God has perfected praise. Her hope in the blood of the Lamb is her meat and drink. Though she is poor in this world, her treasure is in heaven, beyond the bleak, chilly winds of time, and the buffeting waves. He in the thickest darkness dwells and performs his work. The cause he conceals, and though his methods are unknown, judgment and truth support his throne. I believe her letter will be read by others of like precious faith with interest, so, dear brethren, I request its publication in the SIGNS, if convenient.

Affectionately yours to serve in gospel bonds, ASA HOWARD.

GRAPEVINE, Texas, Feb. 2, 1919.

DEAR ELDER HOWARD:—I will try to write some of the travels of my mind, as you request, but if there is nothing given more than I now see I do not know that I will send it. I wrote a letter before, but did not send it, and have had no peace of mind since, so the impression continues to prompt me to write again, trusting God may enable me to pen a few lines and tell of the dealings I hope have been God-given. I feel very much cast down at present. I have been so long deprived of the privilege of attending meeting that I lose sight of the blessed hope, which at times almost drives me to despair. Sometimes I am made to wonder whether or not I was ever an acceptable member, but if I am not, I will linger about the blessed fold of God and beg to share some of their blessings. When I call to mind my past experience I can see things I have tasted, and can still feel it was God with me, and pray God to help my unbelief, and hope he will ever make me able to believe in him through all my weakness and short comings. I often feel to be in darkness, and realize the need of my dear Savior and the prayers of the saints. The Scripture comes to me, Draw near to me and I will draw near to thee. May God enable me to ever stay near him, as there is so much temptation and danger in the way, which often causes me to get among wolves that

seek to devour the sheep when they have been drawn away from the great Shepherd. But if I am cast out I can only say, It is justly deserved. The cause of God has been my only care since I have felt to be changed from nature to grace, and I sincerely desire that you old brethren and sisters, who have (as I see and realize) gone on honestly serving God, will be given grace to bear with me, and pray that I may be blessed to go on bearing the cross of Christ. I know that if we would reign with him we must partake of his sufferings. My afflictions have been great, and it seems that they will never cease, although at times I feel that I have been enabled to bless and praise God's holy name through my trials, and say, Thy will be done. At times I feel to rejoice that I have been made a partaker of Christ's sufferings, but because of doubts and fears have failed to give my Savior praise for his mercy and love toward me. I know my utter helplessness of hindering or bringing into being anything, leaving all with him, believing in God through all things, and I have to say repeatedly, Thy will be done, not mine. Now, brother Howard, I hope by revealed faith in Christ to see myself as I am, only a babe in the sweet embrace of the loving Savior. We can by the Spirit see the way of life and salvation when we are led by him and can by grace serve the law of Jesus Christ. But we are as babes beginning to learn to cry, walk and talk. I know you who have traveled the journey so long have learned many things I have yet to learn. I do not feel I can say anything to interest you, though it is true that every believer likes to talk with and watch over helpless ones to encourage them to become useful and faithful in the church. I hope it may please God to ever make me able to serve him and his cause in an acceptable manner. When I look back over my christian life I see I have only been an infant, and a very troublesome one I must be, and I want to thank you dear old soldiers of the cross for your patience and willingness to ever bear with me. Pray that I may be permitted to meet with you all again and become useful, as I feel we all have our duty to perform, and no one else can fill our place, but I feel that my past life has been almost, if not a complete failure. Although I realize that we all have sinned, and come short of Christ's bidding, it is my only hope that God is merciful, gracious, ever bearing with our weakness. We suffer for our weakness according to our sins, and my sins must be very great, as it seems I have to suffer so much, but I hope when we have filled our cup of suffering we may sweetly and peacefully reign eternally with our much loved and adored Savior. We mourn to lose sight of the hope that saved us. That little hope is all we have; it is precious to our lonely souls while we are strangers here below. We cannot always feel our hope, and when I lose sight of mine nothing else holds any charm to cheer my drooping spirit. My lot is a mixture of joy and sorrow, and I have all kinds of severe trials to try my faith. If I could feel as I see my brethren and sisters I would rejoice in hope of the glory of my blessed Savior. I am glad my brethren tell the same experience that I try to tell. O that I could at all times live in the faith to the end of my pilgrimage journey, and realize the blessed saying of Jesus, Well done, thou good and faithful servant.

Brother Howard, I do not see much in this letter, so will not weary you longer, though I want you to write us a long letter, for we would be very glad to read

one of your good letters. Much of the time my weakness is nearly all I can think of to write about. My thoughts and little ideas have been scattering, but I will send this to you, as I remember your request. If the Spirit indites, some time I will tell you more of the travel and exercise of my mind.

I remain as ever, a weak sister, in hope of the Savior's love,

CHARLOTTE PRICE.

THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST.

PAUL, standing on Mars' Hill, the highest court of Athens, at that time the center of the world's civilization and learning, said, "I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious." Speaking to Gentiles, who knew not the law of Moses, he declares in few words the folly of superstition and idolatry. Again, in his letter to the church at Corinth Paul says of the Jews, But even unto this day, when Moses is read the vail is upon their heart. To-day superstition and mysticism are as rampant as ever in the world, not merely with the unlearned and ignorant, but among men of the highest learning as well. Let us examine ourselves and see if we also are not subject to superstition and mysticism in reading the word of God. At the end of the book of Revelation is a solemn warning not to add to or take away from the testimony it contains, and this, together with the fact that it is largely written in figurative language, has caused many to avoid it. It is well to tread carefully when approaching the word of God, not only in the book of Revelation, but in every part of the holy Scriptures, for they all testify of Jesus Christ. It is well to consider our holy calling, to try the testimony we give, to partake tremblingly of the bread and wine, lest we be puffed up and be found unworthy, not beholding the Lord's body. But shall we avoid the testimony of Jesus Christ because it is holy and true? Would we flee from the face of the Lord at his appearing, or rather would we watch and pray, crying, Even so, come, Lord Jesus? I would not presume to interpret the hidden things of God, but desire to point out certain things which appear very plainly if we compare Scripture with Scripture. "The revelation of Jesus Christ;" "The word of God;" "The testimony of Jesus Christ." Let us bear this in mind as we read. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein." First, let us note the names that the Lord is called: "the faithful witness," "the first begotten of the dead," "the prince of the kings of the earth," "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, * * * which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Mark also the description of the Lord in the vision as the same is carried on throughout the book. John is told, "Write the things thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter." In his first epistle John speaks of "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life." He is not to write a history of the world, but the testimony of Jesus. Let us read carefully what the Lord has to say to the churches to whom the testimony was sent and we will find what follows to be more clearly the same testimony. I will only note a few instances where prophecy plainly referring to the Lord in his office has been misapplied by men to temporal things. We find the Lord himself unsealing the testimony which no man was

worthy to unseal, and as he said of the Scriptures in which the Jews thought they found eternal life, They are they which testify of me. In the sixth chapter, on the loosing of the first seal John saw "a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer." Now turn to the nineteenth chapter: "And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew but himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God."

I hope it is not presumption for me to write of these things, for they have been a comfort to me in these times of strange doctrines and mysteries which do not testify of Jesus. May his dear people be led to look to him and shun profane babblings of those who think they are wise. This knowledge is from beneath, but the testimony of Jesus is from above. "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

WHEELING, W. Va., June 1, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—Did you ever feel a desire to let the readers of our good family paper hear from you, yet feel crushed under a deep sense of your unworthiness to appear among them? This feeling hinders me from attempting to write. I am sending two letters from Elder J. F. Beeman, who lodged two nights with us last summer when on the trip which he describes. He came laden with the truth as we have been taught it. My only regret was that household cares kept me from being more in his good company. I will say to the many loved ones that I am yet here, and as a monument of God's power, upholding me from day to day and enabling me to keep up and about my daily work. I often wish I could praise him for the mercy that is meted out to me every day of my life, but I feel so barren of the things I love. I am thankful that brother J. T. Kerr sent Elder McConnell's letters, which were published in June 1st number of the SIGNS, volume eighty-seven. I see so much solid truth in them, which I hope is written in my heart, although I am unable to express it. I wish he would write often.

With unbounded love to all the members, I am, as ever, your unworthy sister,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

CLAREMORE, Okla., Dec. 6, 1918.

DEAR SISTER PULTZ:—Knowing of your loneliness because the Old School Baptists are so few in your city, I am sending you a few words of my own breathing, which may be appreciated by you, for I know that often a few words from brethren which set forth the wisdom, power and goodness of God are to me like "apples of gold in pictures of silver." I arrived home safely on the 13th of November, after being absent three months and three days, finding all well. I attended five associations and many other meetings, preaching fifty-two times, and though the influenza raged while I was in North Carolina, yet I was going most of the time, passing through it in many homes, attending some funerals of persons that had died of it, but I was not sick one day while I was gone. I found a great many Old School Baptists in Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina, compared to many other

localities, and most of them enjoying peace and prosperity. From this do not understand me to mean that the brethren where I visited have no "jars," for this would be rare experience for me among the Old School Baptists in the more than fifty-eight years that I have been among them. Almost every place I visited I found some coldness, but not that kind to seriously hamper the travel of the churches. It seems that the few churches in Oklahoma with their small membership are in a cold state, much indifference, taken up with the world, small attendance, so that the preachers get discouraged. This is not the complaint under the ministry of one or two preachers, but it seems to be general. This great war has broken families, some of the Old School Baptists as well as others. This has had its results, has made a showing of the kind of zeal that some of our brethren possess. Fleshly feelings do take possession of the minds of the brethren, so that they do not do as they ought. I have seen this to be a lamentable condition for many years; it still exists, and we well know that the Lord alone can revive his own people so that they must worship him in private and in public.

I hope that your health is much better, and that your family is in prosperity.

All yours, in hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

CLAREMORE, Okla., Feb. 9, 1919.

DEAR SISTER:—The words found in Romans xi. 33, have had more meaning to me, it seems, than ever before. Here they are: "O the depth of the riches." Here I pause, and as mortals think they know what riches is, I, too, have had ideas of earthly riches, and a very faint idea of eternal riches. Naturally, the word "riches" denotes something possessed, and this something the possessor makes above his fellow-creatures, so that, in one sense, he is the master, his fellow-creatures servants, or slaves. To be rich in this world, or have considerable property, is the aspiration of almost every mortal, and many false ways are set going to delude the simple out of their rights. God has made it possible for mortals to be rich without deluding or defrauding others of their race. Not the gold and the land of this world, which all the human family have a natural right to, one as much as another, but the riches that no man has a natural right to in any way whatever—riches that in every sense is a gift, and it is recorded in the fifth chapter of Romans at least five times as a gift: "the free gift," "the gift by grace," "the gift of righteousness." This riches bestowed upon undeserving sinners did not impoverish the Lord in the least, for he holds all things in his own power; but the apostle, speaking in regard to our dear Savior's grace, as being such, (O the beauty of that grace, the power of that love!) says, "That, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."—2 Cor. viii. 9. According to Jesus' own testimony he was very poor in this world's goods. "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."—Matt. viii. 20; Luke ix. 58. That the riches of God are deep and everlasting is abundantly set forth throughout the Scriptures.

Now I will quote more of the holy testimony that I started with. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" The riches of God are deep, cannot be measured, both in wisdom and

knowledge, and he is so wise and has so much knowledge that his judgments cannot be searched out, they are hidden, and no power can find out his ways. He has a way of salvation; that, too, is unsearchable, though men and devils lie, and say they know the way, and that they can show the way to others. Not long ago I heard a popular preacher in this town publicly assert that man had the power and privilege to reveal God to others. When I think of the depravity of man in all his generations from the beginning of the world, his continued sins, his continual mistakes, his deep deception ("The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?") and his vile and corrupt condition, then I am glad to know that God has put an everlasting and eternal veto upon man's searching to find out God, where he is, or what he does. It is impossible for man to know the greatness of God until the Lord shows it to him by revelation. That revelation comes to the dead sinner by the Revelator; then the sinner, who is alive from the dead, can see the beauties of holiness, and not until then.

I wish to call your mind to the last verse (Rom. xi. 36), which seems to be far reaching and absolutely sweeping, showing God's jurisdiction over all worlds and things: "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen." Now to make this passage look stronger, and not change the sentiment one bit, I shall write it with the name, and not use the pronoun, like this: For of God, and through God, and to God, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen. From this Scripture we surely have the meaning that: All things are of God, all things are through God, all things are to God, and Paul in view of this wisdom and power did say, "To whom be glory for ever. Amen." In your lonely hours read this and compare it with the infallible testimony. All yours for Jesus' sake.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

HAMMOND, W. Va., Dec. 16, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will try in my weak way to write to the readers of the SIGNS, as my time has about expired and I want to renew my subscription for another year. I have been a reader of the paper for about twenty-five years. Now let us look to the Scriptures and see what they teach. They tell us to deny ourselves; they tell us of grace, for the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching them (or us) that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. Grace teaches us how to live in this present evil world, and it is the grace of God that does all this, not the teaching of man, neither the work of man, but the grace of God, and it has appeared unto all men, not only the Jews, but unto the Gentiles also, and where it has appeared it teaches them how to live and what to deny; so by their fruits ye shall know them. Christ said, Other sheep I have, and them I must also bring. If he must bring them, can he fail? So this grace has not only appeared unto the Jews alone, but also unto the Gentiles. When it appeared unto the Gentiles did it appear unto every creature of them and cause them to live godly and soberly in this present world? O no. Well, then, let us see who is meant by all men. All who were ordained to eternal life, they were the ones who believed, no more, no less, for the promise is unto you and unto your chil-

dren, and unto all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. They are called by this grace appearing unto them. Paul said, He called me by his grace. Then are we included in this number, and what are the feelings of those who are included? Well, this is their feeling: I will put my fear within them, and they shall not depart from me. Now turn to Titus ii. 11, 12, and you will find my text telling you how you should live, and who should live this manner of life. The apostle was speaking to the church, teaching us, the saints, the children of God, for in the fourteenth verse he says, "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." He obtained eternal redemption for them, so they are eternally redeemed from all iniquity; and he hath given them eternal life, and they shall never perish. God has not sent his grace in vain, because God is holy and all his works are holy and perfect. As he sends the rain and the snow down to the earth to water it, so as to give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall his word be that goeth forth out of his mouth; it shall not return unto him empty nor void, but shall prosper in the thing whereunto he sent it and shall accomplish his design—will not fail. I will give him a portion (not all, but a portion) with the strong, and Jacob is the lot of his inheritance and his portion. Let us see something more about the feelings of God's children. I will lead them with weeping and supplication. Have we traveled this road? Have we been made to weep on account of sin? Have we made supplication at the throne of grace for God's mercy and love? Grace teaches them to love God and to love his children. So it is no wonder that the Savior said unto his disciples, If ye love me keep my commandments, and teaches us that we should forgive our brethren their trespasses, confess our faults one to another, and live in peace with all men inasmuch as in us lieth. O, are we living righteously in this present world? By their fruits ye shall know them. A good tree cannot bring forth corrupt fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. The good fruit is love, joy and peace in the Holy Ghost. The fruits of the flesh manifested are hatred, malice, envy, strife, confusion, &c. When we are not led by the Spirit we will not do what God commands us to do, but when led by his Spirit we will do as he commands, and then we will not say there is nothing in confessing our faults, because Christ taught his disciples to forgive. When brethren come repenting even unto seventy times seven, how then can we say we do not much believe in asking forgiveness? Our text teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. Confession is from the heart, and it is the work of grace, and there is all that fullness of God's grace in it when they come with godly sorrow for sin. Look at the prodigal son; see and hear what he said when he remembered his father's house: I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight. O, see what a joyful time there was. What if his father had said to him, I do not believe there is much in it? would there have been any rejoicing? I think not. We surely have a case before us, and that was his other son, who did not believe there was much in his brother's return and confession, and who wanted forgiveness from his father because his other son was angry. Yes, he was angry instead of rejoicing; but the father's love was toward the son

that returned home. So there is much in it, because repenting and asking for forgiveness is the work of the Lord, because he works the will and the do of his own good pleasure. So there is much in the grace of God teaching them to do what he designs them to do, because the Savior taught his disciples his Father's will, and he showed that there were some who did not hear the voice of God nor see him at any time. So his grace did not appear to them and bring this salvation to them. O no, because the apostle was speaking to the brethren, and not to the world, teaching us that it was the church of God Christ died and gave himself for, and not for the wicked world, who hath the devil as their father. He said, John viii. 44: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." God is the Father of his children, and is love, and every one that is born of God loves him and his children, and they obey him because he will cause them to walk in his statutes and his judgments to do them.

Yours to serve,

JAMES W. LINN.

GREENWICH, N. Y., Dec. 28, 1919.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER:—This beautiful Sunday morning I am thinking of you, and can see you standing before my dear kindred and feeding them with the rich provisions our Father gives you to hand out for their comfort, and, dear brother, I feel as near homesick as one old as I can feel in being so far from my dear home. Yes, the tears will come as I think of you all, still I know I have great reason to rejoice in that I have been given the love I have, and the desire for the things of the kingdom; one thing I do know: I love the brethren. That being true, I can say with one of old, I know I have passed from death unto life. O how sweet that sounds to me this morning. I think I know something of what it is to have the Sun of Righteousness shining in and around me with healing in his wings. I feel there is nothing to be compared with the love of God shed abroad in our hearts. When I look back over the way you and I have come, the many years we have traveled together in the things of the kingdom, with not one jar between us, it causes me to realize that we have been taught by the same Teacher, who teaches as man never taught. So we see the things of the kingdom can never be taught by man. This is the longest time I have ever been separated from those of my kindred in the sixty years I have had a home with them, it being two months that I have been away, but I have had many letters which made me glad. I still have one comfort, and that is I feel I am of some use here with my two children, Helen and Frank, who have had to drink of the cup of sorrow.

Well, I think I better close. I hope this finds you and yours well. Remember me to sister Vail, and tell her this letter is for her as well as you. I hope to hear from you, for remember I am lonely up here.

Your sister in hope,

HELEN KINNEY.

TAFT, Tenn., Jan. 11, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I desire to say through the SIGNS that I have received so many letters from the brethren wishing the copy of Hassell's Church History which I had that I cannot answer them by private letter. I have disposed of it to brother John D. Wood.

M. J. TOWRY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1920.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JEALOUSY.

HAVING no recollection of ever seeing an article on this particular subject, we have concluded to offer a few thoughts for the consideration of our readers, hoping our effort may be blessed to us all in causing us to examine ourselves and take heed to our ways. In using the pronouns "we" and "us" we do not mean to use them editorially at all times, but to include both writer and readers. In all our efforts, both in writing and public speaking, we have always endeavored to speak to the brethren rather than at them, and shall not depart from that rule at this time.

Jealousy is an innate principle, not only in man, but in all flesh. Beasts and birds fight, and often devour one another, because of it; from the ant to the elephant, and from the child to the aged it is seen, and it abides while life lasts, even though it may at times seem dead. It is evidently more prominent in some persons than in others, and, as dispositions vary, jealousy is made manifest. There are very mild dispositions, and there are very ugly ones. Some persons can keep under their body, as Paul did, while others are never as happy, so to speak, as when fighting, cutting and slashing other people, and sometimes, too bad to say, their very best friends. In such dispositions the cruel principle, "jealousy," is more marked, for lack of self-control. The quiet, mild disposition is a blessing wherever bestowed; such persons are kind in thought, word and deed, peacemakers rather than fighters, yet in the mildest and most loving disposition the same jealous principle exists, but not to the extent along some lines as is manifest in the disposition above described. We have often heard persons express themselves as being absolutely void of jealousy, and we are sure that such expressions were honest and sincere, so far as they understood themselves, but all who think they are void of the hateful principle are most sadly deceived. Every principle of human nature is in each son and daughter of Adam, though less pronounced in some than in others. We feel almost safe in saying that jealousy is the underlying principle of malice, hatred, envy, murder, and thousands of other evils of man's nature. When man fights against his nature it is a very peculiar warfare—a house divided against itself. This kind of warfare is next to impossible, but by the Spirit of God such evils as jealousy, murder, envy, hatred, &c., are overcome, at least in a measure. Jealousy was the direct cause of the murder of Abel by his brother Cain. The Lord accepted the offering of Abel and rejected the offering of Cain, hence jealousy sprang up, or made itself manifest, and murder resulted. Jealousy caused Hagar and her son to be cast out of the house of Abraham. Jealousy caused Esau to seek the life of his brother Jacob. Jealousy caused the brethren of Joseph to ill treat and sell him. Jealousy caused Saul to seek the life of David. Jealousy caused Herod to order the murder of

many male children, hoping to by such course kill the Christ. Thus we trace the hateful principle from the beginning of the world as innate with man. Those of us who have lived long have witnessed many sad and very sorrowful things as the result of jealousy; homes have been destroyed, lives sacrificed, churches rent asunder, loving brethren separated, feelings wounded and many other hurtful things. Shall such things continue? Yes, but could we not modify them by taking heed unto ourselves and unto the admonitions of the Scriptures? Could we not refrain from things prompted by jealousy as well as from drunkenness, lying, stealing, cheating and many other ungodly things which war against the soul? Do we really try to curb the despicable principle? It seems that many of us rather cultivate or encourage it, and it predominates until it reaches the extreme, then we stop at nothing that is likely to cast reflection upon a brother and injure him in the estimation of others. This is not far short of murder. Often in company we will speak favorably of a minister or a brother; immediately some one will reply, Yes, but I like So-and-so much better. Yes, he is a good preacher, but cannot be compared with Elder A. or Elder B. Sometimes those of us in the ministry are not anxious for other ministers to visit (at least some ministers) the churches in our charge, or even those of our associations, and efforts have been made to keep some ministers from visiting churches when they were really wanted as visitors. In inviting preachers to attend yearly meetings, and so on, often the lesser gifts are invited lest some of us be put into the background. Sometimes home ministers have sent appointments to churches at the time of yearly gatherings when visiting ministers were in the field, simply because they did not want visiting ministers to get a foot in edgeways into the field or some special church. Such doings are hateful in the extreme, and any of us who think we can blind the people by such a course are surely much deceived. Why should one minister be jealous of another? Why should he in any sense or way try to hinder his ministry to the saints? How much better it would be for all concerned if ministers would receive each other with open arms and hearts, when agreed in the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God. How much better it would be sometimes if churches would act upon their own authority and responsibility, instead of depending so much upon their pastors, who often seem of all men to be the most jealous. Often such men encourage the jealous spirit in the church, or churches, they serve, not thinking that it means death sooner or later, for just as sure as they kill off others they themselves will meet the same fate. Jealousy is cruel, it knows no mercy; will not stop at anything to satisfy hateful desires. The apostle says, If a man see his brother in need and shut up his bowels of mercy against him, how dwelleth the love of God in that man? Might we not well ask the same question of the man who would in any way injure, illtreat or put a stumbling-block in his brother's way? Love worketh no ill, is long-suffering, gentle and kind. This principle (love of God) should cover faults, hide sins and bear a part of the burdens, sorrows and afflictions of one another. Love always speaks well of the object loved. Love never backbites, never murders, never slanders. The commandment given the children of God is, "Love one another." If we all could love instead of being

jealous, hating, backbiting and murdering one another, how much more we would manifest that we have been with Jesus and learned of him. In our service to the churches we should first of all have the good of such churches and the glory of God at heart. No selfish motive should be allowed to prompt us, no spirit of lordship should be exercised, nor should such be tolerated. Such spirit will not be in evidence where the love of God is. Love is the fulfilling of the law, all things included, but really in some quarters, and with some of us, there seems more jealousy than love. "Brethren, such things ought not to be." How shall we praise God and curse man with the same tongue? How can we claim that which is sensual and devilish as being from above? If not from above it surely is of the earth, hence no part of God, and we all should flee from such things as we would from a ravenous beast. Let us read more God's word and talk less. Let us depart from evil and every snare. Let us be kind and gentle one toward another, loving and forgiving, confessing our faults one to another, praying for each other, defending each other rather than doing harmful and hurtful things, praying the Lord to subdue the hateful spirit of jealousy within us, that brotherly love may continue. Were there no commandments against such things life is too short to be spent in warring, backbiting and devouring one another. May the Lord graciously forgive our sins, and lead us all in the way everlasting. K.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, in Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in February (29th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

A. Johnson Drake departed this life Nov. 30th, 1919, aged 54 years, 11 months and 15 days. He was the son of the late Wilson and Hannah Drake, of near Pennington, N. J. He was united in the holy bonds of matrimony to Miss Elizabeth M. Sked, Dec. 18th, 1885, and to that union was born one son, Wilson Drake, of Pennington, N. J., who, with his wife and little son, Donald Drake, together with his mother, survives to mourn the irreparable loss. He was a kind, affectionate husband and father and an honest, upright citizen, and was much loved and respected by all who knew him. He never made an open confession of faith, but was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and would accompany his wife, sister Elizabeth Drake, to her meeting, and talk of his appreciation of the doctrine preached. He was a man of good example, and all who knew him would do well to think of such men as examples of morality. His last illness was of short duration, he being stricken with pneumonia.

His funeral was conducted by the writer at his late residence, Pennington, N. J., and the high esteem in which he was held was manifested by the large concourse of relatives and friends that attended his funeral. His body was laid to rest in the family plot in the Old School Baptist Cemetery at Hopewell, N. J. We are made to say in regard to such as Mr. Drake that our loss is his eternal gain. Rest on, dear one, in the beloved embrace of your Redeemer, and when he makes up his jewels and all the redeemed of the earth are gathered, may it be his lot to be thus glorified together with him, soul, body and spirit, to praise God for ever and ever. Mr. Drake will be greatly missed by us all, but none will miss him as much as sister Drake and his little grandson, Donald Drake, as Donald and grandfather were much of their time together, living on joining lawns in town.

ALSO,

Mrs. Ruth A. Sked, widow of John Sked, departed this life Dec. 15th, 1919, aged 80 years and 11 months. The day of her death was the birthday of her son-in-law, Johnson Drake, and the day of her funeral was the thirty-fourth wedding anniversary of Mr. A. Johnson Drake and sister Elizabeth Sked Drake. She had been in delicate health for several years, and was quite a care, but there has never been a mother that received greater devotion from her children than did sister Sked. She was the mother of eleven children: C. Howard, Homer H., John H., Walter W., Alfred R. and Clarence G. Sked, Mrs. Elizabeth M. Drake, Mrs. Ettie May Reed, Mrs. Florence L. Atchley, Mrs. Anna Ruth Blackwell and Mrs. Edith L. Blackwell. All the above named children are prominent citizens of New Jersey except Walter W., who resides in California, and all except

he were present at her bedside at the time of her departure and together with their companions attended the funeral of their dear mother except Mr. A. Johnson Drake, who preceded her in death Nov. 30th, 1919. Sister Sked's kind and motherly devotion, manifested in her life to her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, was reacted upon her in her associations with them, which makes life pleasant for both youth and aged. While her life was so devoted to her children and all of her household, there were other things which were precious to her, and they gave her great concern. These were the things which pertain to the house of God. She united with the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, N. J., at their June meeting in 1869, and lived a true, devoted sister in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and when visited by her pastor he was always greeted so pleasantly that the opportunity of calling on her never came too often. She was not only loved by her brethren, sisters and family, but by all who knew her. Her husband preceded her to the grave several years, after which she made her home principally with her youngest child, Mrs. Edith L. Blackwell, and her husband, Mr. Robert Blackwell, formerly of Pennington, N. J., but now of Trenton, N. J., who always bestowed upon her such as was for her comfort and pleasure. Space is too short to say all that might be said in connection with the life and character of sister Sked, but we can only think of her as she lived, and bow in submission to the will of God, who gave and took away, and we feel our loss is her eternal gain.

The funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder C. W. Vaughn, at the home of her daughter and son-in-law, Theo. Reed, of Pennington, N. J., where she was stricken with her last illness on the night of December 2nd, when she came to Pennington to attend the funeral of Mr. Johnson Drake. Her body was laid to rest in the family plot in the Old School Baptist churchyard at Hopewell.

Written by request of her family.

C. W. VAUGHN.

Mrs. Mary Gunnell, our sister in Christ, departed this life Feb. 1st, 1920, at her home near Vienna, Fairfax Co., Va. She was born Jan. 30th, 1841, the daughter of Edmund and Annie Elizabeth Powell. In 1859 she was married to Arthur Gunnell, who died several years ago. Sister Gunnell lived with and was cared for by her widowed daughter-in-law, Mrs. Annie Gunnell. She was baptized many years ago by the late Elder E. V. White into membership with the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church. Never since the writer's being associated with that church as pastor has she been at any of the meetings of the church. This was due not to wilful neglect, but to her inability to get there, owing to the condition of her health and to the fact that she lived quite some distance from the meetinghouse. It was my privilege to visit her in her home twice; once simply to have a talk with her, and the second time to hold meeting there. Upon both occasions she manifested a deep interest in the truth as it is in Jesus and a deep love for her brethren in Christ. In a letter to a member of her family written a few days before she died she said: "I long for rest, sweet rest." We believe she is at rest eternally in the sabbath day never ending of God's infinite love. She believed wholly in the finished, perfect work of her Savior, and we trust now enjoys the full fruition of all she hoped for here below.

L.

Elder Silas Williams died January 16th, 1920, aged 85 years. He was born in Missouri and crossed the plains to Oregon in 1852, locating on a farm in Linn County, where he resided fifty-six years. He was a minister of the gospel for sixty-five years. The Primitive Baptist Church at Tallman, Oregon, was organized by Elder Williams, of which he was pastor for forty years, preaching his last sermon shortly after his eighty-fifth birthday. He was loved by all his brethren in the faith, for which he so earnestly contended; pure in heart, strong in character and of good citizenship—a prince in Israel. Like Peter, he believed in the work of the Holy Spirit; like Paul, he believed Jesus Christ to be the Son of God; like Enoch, he walked with God and is not, for God took him. He is survived by three children: Edward Williams, Mrs. C. E. Short and Mrs. J. E. Ross.

(MRS.) C. E. SHORT.

Jesse N. Casey was born October 13th, 1844, and died Jan. 3rd, 1920, aged 75 years, 2 months and 20 days. He had suffered for years with kindey trouble, but it had yielded to treatment so that he could do a good day's work, but one night was taken down and seemed to know he would never get well, and wanted to arrange all his earthly affairs. He died in full triumph of living faith. He enlisted in the Confederate army in 1862, and served until the end of the war. He professed a hope in Christ while in the army, and was baptized by an old Primitive Baptist minister, who gave him a certificate recommending him to any Old School Baptist Church. He came home about the first of July, 1865, and was married to Mary Jane Defriest July 16th by Elder David Nichols. To that union were born six children, four of whom survive him, one son and one daughter dying several years ago. None of the children was at home at the time of his death. His youngest son, from Texas, arrived just as we were about to leave the house. Brother Jesse joined Enon Church soon after he came home from the war, and was ordained deacon of that church, which office he filled to the satisfaction of the church. His wife died in 1897, and he was married to Mahala Roberts July 18th,

1897. They had no children. She was a member of Enon Church, but when they moved near Little Hope Church both took letters and joined that church. He honored his profession by an orderly walk and godly conversation. We were brothers in the flesh, and I trust also in Spirit. He practiced medicine some before his health failed, and was very successful. He was charitable and kind, and loved by all who knew him. He was a firm believer in the predestination of all things, and was well versed in the Scriptures, and his whole trust was in Jesus. His home was a home for his brethren, and they were always welcome.

His brother, WM. J. CASEY.

INFORMATION WANTED.

Is there any reader of this paper who has, or who knows of any one who has, a complete or partial file of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES from 1832 to 1850? If so, I would be very glad to get in correspondence with the same. Please write to me at Social Circle, Ga., Route 1. BEN H. IRWIN.

COPIES OF JANUARY 1ST WANTED.

If any of our subscribers have a copy of the SIGNS of January 1st, 1920, which they are willing to part with will send it to us we will appreciate it very much, as we have none of that number left.

J. E. BEEBE & CO.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. M. E. Furman, N. Y., $1.00; W. E. Ellis, Texas, $1.00; C. Stevens, Ark., $2.00; L. B. Ford, Mass., $3.00; Robt. Turner, Cal., $1.00; E. F. Readhimer, La., $2.00; A North Carolina Friend, $2.00.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, I will be at Jefferson, N. Y., Feb. 18th, 19th and 20th; Schoharie, 21st and 22nd; Albany, 23rd, 272 Clinton St., 10:30 a. m.; Troy, Powers' home, 2:30 p. m.; Greenwich, at night; Brantford, Ont., 25th; Aberfeldy, Ont., Saturday, Feb. 28th, 2:30 p. m., and Sunday, 11 a. m. and 3 p. m. J. M. FENTON.

MEETINGS.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

BY J. E. BEEBE & COMPANY

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Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

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"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."—1 Thess. v. 21. "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it."—Deut. xii. 32. cf. Eccl. iii. 14; James i. 17; Matt. xxviii. 20.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 88. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1920. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ROANOKE, Va.

DEAR EDITORS:—I copied my grandmother's experience for publication two or three years ago, but fearing it might get misplaced I did not send it, for I value it most highly. Grandmother was the wife of Elder E. B. Turner, of Henry County, Va. Both of them were most highly respected in their church and community; in fact, grandfather was widely known. I am very anxious to have it published.

Respectfully,

JANIE TURNER.

REED CREEK, Va., April 26, 1856.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Having had it in contemplation for some time to give a relation of the gracious dealings of my God with my poor soul, I embrace the present opportunity of so doing, believing that the Old School Baptists are a people who see eye to eye, and with the tongue speak the same things wherever found, if indeed they are Old School Baptists, and feel desirous of saying something to you, my brethren, on the subject. I shall only attempt to relate it in part, for my tongue and pen would both fail in giving a full relation of the exercises of my mind while under conviction for sin, if I have been convicted, for I am often made to fear that I have missed the substance and only grasped the shadow, and that I am yet out of the ark of safety. O, if this be the case how awful is my condition; but there are times when I am enabled with confidence to say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and what joy that sweet sentence gives.

It is nearly seventeen years since I trust it was the will and pleasure of my blessed Lord to give me to see and understand my lost and helpless condition as a sinner in his sight, and without his sovereign grace and mercy, this grace and mercy unmerited by me. I was at church meeting when I trust it was the pleasure of the Lord to clothe the words of the text with divine power to the awakening of my soul to a sense of my lost and undone condition as a transgressor of God's holy and righteous law. The text reads thus: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"—Matt. xvi. 26. O what horror and distress filled my poor

soul when I thus viewed myself as a sinner in the sight of a righteous and sin-avenging God, and I so unprepared to meet him had he at that time called me from the scenes of time. The words which I have just quoted rolled through my mind with such awful reflections that, had I been possessed of this world, yea, of ten thousand worlds like this, I would have given them all to be relieved from my distress and anguish. I heard two sermons preached on the same day by the same man. The second text was: "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!"—Deut. xxxii. 29. This seemed to add more and more to my gloom, and I returned home in the afternoon much distressed indeed. I had heard a great deal said about what the creature could or must do, and in my distressed condition I was anxious to do all in my power to make amends. I began to pray to the Lord to have mercy on me, but instead of growing better by my own good deeds I grew worse and worse, and soon found that in me there was no help, and that vain was the help of man. I remained in that state of mind for some time, then my trouble seemed to wear off for a season, but only to be renewed with double weight, if possible. I did not know what was the matter with me, but it was plain to me that I was a vile sinner in the eyes of my Maker, and justly sentenced to eternal woe and banishment from his presence. O what a poor creature I was! I would try to pray, and then sin time after time, so willing to obey my sinful nature, which led me directly to sin and folly. So I went on, sometimes cheerful and lighthearted, and it appeared all things were well with me; but O, how my conscience would smite me for it, and my distress, if possible, became more keen and severe than ever. I would go to church meeting sometimes and my heart would seem as hard as a stone, and if my soul's salvation had depended on my repentance I would have sunk into unutterable woe; at other times I could scarcely speak to friends without shedding tears, and would often feel as if I could not leave the place without falling on my knees and imploring the prayers of those whom I believed to be God's people in behalf of my poor sinful soul, for I could read that the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much, and indeed I felt that I was in need of prayer; but the wicked one would persuade me that it was all hypocrisy and pretension, and that there was no reality in it. In this condition I would return home sorrowful and in much distress, and would often retire to some lonely place where I thought no eye could see or ear hear me and try in my feeble manner to pour out my soul to almighty God for the forgiveness of my sins, but it appeared to me that everything I did was adding sin to sin—that I continued to grow worse and worse. I found that in me indeed there was no help. So with this heavy load I traveled on until the summer of 1852, when it seemed to me my trouble, if possible, was tenfold heavier than ever. I thought I could plainly see that time and time things were fast winding up with me, and that I was unprepared to meet my God. O, with what distress was my poor soul filled at the thought of being forever banished from the peaceful presence of Jehovah. I would go to meeting as often as I could, but in this I found no relief; it often seemed that every word I heard only pronounced woe against me. I would read the Bible, but it afforded no relief. I could read the promises precious to souls who hungered and thirsted

after righteousness, but the awful fear with me was that I was not of that number, so there was no rest for me. My tongue will ever fail to describe my wretched condition, nor can my pen write it, for it seemed mine was an outside case, and there was no pardon for me. I was certainly the vilest sinner in the world, and, believing in the justice of God, I could not see how he could remain just and save such a sinner as I was, for every prayer seemed a sin, and it was sinful for me to call upon God to have mercy on such a sinner as I was. I could hear of others around making a profession of religion, and I was yet left out. The thought would sink to my very heart, there was mercy for everybody else, but not for me. I was often made to cry out, "God be merciful to me a sinner." These lines appeared applicable to my case:

How often have I seen
The healing waters move,
And others round me, stepping in,
Their efficacy prove.

But my complaint remains,
I feel the very same:
As full of guilt and fear and pain
As when at first I came.

I felt though it might never be the Lord's will to grant pardon to me, yet I must die begging and pleading for mercy; my last breath must be a prayer to God, and I was ready to acknowledge that—

"Should sudden vengeance seize my breath,
I must pronounce thee just in death,
And if my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well."

In this sad and distressed condition I went on until the 3rd day of October, 1852. It was Sunday morning, and my husband (who is a member of the church) and myself were on our way to meeting. My troubles became so great that I could not conceal them. I told him if I remained in that condition (and my awful fears were that I should) I never would be any more comfort to him nor to the rest of my family, that I had been for many years laboring under such a load of sin and guilt. I felt that I was friendless and forsaken, and if it were not for my family the things of this world would concern me but little. When I looked around me I felt it was a duty I owed to them and my Maker to labor for the comfort of my family. I cared nothing for the gain of this world, and thought that all this world called good and great was gone from me forever, for to me it had lost all its charms. He replied to me that I was mistaken, that the Lord never turned any away empty who came to him aright. I knew that it was not right, that God alone was able to set me right, if I ever should be brought in the right way. This was keen and cutting to me, for I had great confidence in him and believed he knew what a great sinner I was, that God could not pardon me and remain just. We reached the house of worship; I felt I could not raise my head, and took a seat upon the ground, for I felt the lowest seat I could find was too high for me. When the service was over the congregation repaired to the water, where several were to be baptized. I went with them, but it would be vain for me to attempt to describe my feelings during the services. I could see others walking in the footsteps of their Savior, and where was I? O wretched state of deep despair! I felt if the world and all it contained was before me it would be nothing, for it was all lost to me. I felt as if I had no friends on earth or in heaven, that I was forsaken by all and that all hope was taken from me. In this situation, when I was low sunken and it seemed sinking deeper and deeper beneath a load of sin and guilt, when no creature arm could have brought relief, I

trust the Lord revealed himself to me as my Savior, the fairest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely. He pardoned my sins and all tears were wiped away. There were a great many singing at the time, and I desired to join with them, but did not, for I was almost afraid that what I felt was not religion; so I did not sing, but these lines were presented to my mind:

"Then will I tell to sinners round
What a dear Savior I have found."

In a short time we left for home. We had not gone far before my husband asked me how I felt. I knew not how to answer him, but tried to relate some of the exercises of my mind. He asked if I yet felt like singing. I told him I did not know whether it would be right for me to sing or not. When we reached home it was night, and we soon began to sing. I felt it was singing indeed to me. I felt that the love of God had been shed abroad in my heart, and I loved every one, but felt a special love for those whom I believed to be the children of God. O, my blessed Jesus! I hope I was enabled to praise him for his dying love and redeeming grace, and it was a night of rejoicing to me. Sleep fled from me; I commenced singing, "O how happy are they who their Savior obey!" I thought I could understand every line of it; but the next morning I began to think perhaps I was deceived and possibly this was not religion. I thought I would go to a place I had so often gone before and pray to the Lord that if I were deceived I might continue to beg for mercy, but instead of begging I began to praise God for what I hoped and believed he had done for me. The next morning I truly believe I received another manifestation of the love of God in the assurance that my sins were washed in the Redeemer's blood. It was a morning never to be forgotten by me while memory lasts. The sun seemed to shine with greater brilliancy than ever before. All nature seemed clothed with beauty as far as my eyes could see, and I could behold the power and goodness of God displayed in all his works. O, it was a new world indeed to me; old things had passed away, behold, all things had become new, and all that this world calls good and great I felt was put beneath my feet. I could rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. My tongue can never express in appropriate language the joyful emotions of my heart, and I felt as though—

"On the wings of his love
I was carried above
All sin and temptation and pain;
And I could not believe
That I ever should grieve,
That I ever should suffer again."

The following Friday I went to a meeting several miles from home, where I met many of my friends and acquaintances, a number of them professors and members of the Old School Baptist Church. O what love flowed from my heart to them! I felt as if I could clasp them all in my arms in one fraternal embrace, and the preaching had altogether a different sound to me. I believe through divine grace I could understand it and partake of some of the crumbs which fell from the Master's table. It was quite a lively meeting, and I could rejoice with my friends in their religious exercises. It was a feast of fat things to a soul that had been bowed down beneath a load of sin and guilt so long; but thanks be to God, I could rejoice in the hope that my sins had been washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb of God. Blessed be God forever, whose infinite wisdom devised the plan of redemption, for he wore a crown of thorns that we might

wear a crown of glory. O, was love ever like this, which brought Jesus down from the shining courts of heaven?

"O for such love let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break,
And all harmonious human tongues
The Savior's praises speak."

O, my brethren, and sisters, when we take a view of frail nature and see how sinful, how depraved and how far we have wandered from God, requiting his goodness, continued mercies and blessings with so much ingratitude, we may well adopt the language of the psalmist and say, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thanks be unto God for the gift of his dear Son, who bore the sins of his people in his own body on the tree of the cross.

I could say a great deal more, but must soon close lest I weary your patience. I was soon received in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Reed Creek, Henry Co., Va., near my residence, and was baptized by Elder A. Walker, the beloved pastor of that church, who is precious to me as a servant of the Lord, for he has labored long and faithfully in this part of the Lord's vineyard. We have great reason to thank and praise the Lord that he has revived his work in this vicinity, and has added to Zion of those whom I trust he will have to be saved. My prayer to God is that his work of grace may spread far and wide throughout the land, and that we may hear on the right hand and on the left from quickened sinners, saying, What must we do to be saved?

Brethren and sisters, if I may so address you, I often fear and am full of doubts, and view myself not worthy to call you who believe brethren and sisters, and feel unworthy of a place and name among you; but whether I am a child of grace or not, I believe it is the sincere desire and prayer of every saint that Zion may arise, shine and be in prosperity, and that her cords be lengthened and stakes strengthened, and that the Lord will add unto her such as he will have to be saved.

I must stop, for the half cannot be told.

Yours in bonds of love,

ELIZABETH C. TURNER.

LUKE XIII. 34.

"O JERUSALEM, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wing, and ye would not."

The gospel sets forth the power of God unto salvation in the exhibition of his power. There is nothing impossible with God; he has but to speak and it is done, command and it stands fast. That he accomplished his divine purpose with Israel we cannot question. Let us always keep in memory that whatsoever he hath purposed that will he bring to pass. God chose Israel as a nation, separated them unto himself and from all others, that he might manifest his work or power, for the same specific purpose which he raised up Pharaoh. The apostle declares, That which was written aforetime was written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. How good and comforting it is to read in the old Scriptures of his mighty works in the overthrow of the works of men, the power of darkness, and his glorious triumph in the rescue and deliverance of his people. He was with Daniel in the lions' den, the Hebrews in the fiery furnace, and so all the way down through the age of types, shadows and figures, showing the mighty power of God in Christ Jesus, the Savior of sinners. The prophetic age shone much more in brightness than the period just before. God

preserved Israel as no other nation was. Their laws were rigid in their demands, and as a nation their blood was kept pure, as it is to this day (prefiguring the gospel church). God gave them the law of commandments, a covenant written upon tables of stone; temporal blessings were promised upon condition of their obedience. If you will I will. O what a failure, what a dark picture, what corruption and depravity are shown here! Poor old Elijah in his lamentations said, Lord, they have digged down thine altars and killed the prophets, and now they seek my life. Yet the power of God was made manifest in the reservation of seven thousand that had not bowed their knees to the image of Baal. All goes to show the covenant of works was a failure; all the offerings and sacrifices that were made could not make the comers thereunto perfect—did not perfect anything. The law made nothing perfect (but the bringing of a better hope) for by the law is the knowledge of sin. So when Jesus came once in the end of the world (law dispensation) for the putting away of sin he found man corrupt in all his ways; none righteous, no, not one, none seeking after God. He came to his own as a nation and they rejected him (Jesus) and cried out, We will not have this man to reign over us. Yes, they had killed the prophets and stoned them that were sent unto them, proving the law upon tables of stone a failure, as every chosen vessel of mercy must experience. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second, so saving the debauched, wicked, sin-ridden and sin-stained city (as we are in our law-righteousness). He cries out in agony and in pity, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wing, and ye would not." Like Noah before the flood, the prophets had warned, but they continued on in every wicked way until the doomed city was overthrown, and the nation scattered and become a byword. This Scripture does not in the least express the idea or thought that Jesus would have saved them if they would let him, but it does show the corruptness of mankind under the law, and they will not come unto him until divine light illuminates the heart, as is clearly shown in the case of Saul of Tarsus. Every son and daughter of Adam is in a satisfied state until light shines in the heart at God's command. So before the final destruction of Jerusalem God did manifest his power and mercy in warning the election of grace to flee, and they fled to the mountains for a literal refuge; the rest were left in their own satisfied state. It seems clear to my mind that every dear child of God must test all the rigid demands of the law and find it a complete failure before he will ever desire or seek after holiness in Christ, or come to Christ. He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. When stripped of all self-righteousness there will be a diligent seeking, as the new covenant declares, I will, and, They shall. Whoso shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

I desired to write something of the beautiful figure: As a hen gathereth her brood under her wings. Just a brief word, or this article will be too long. The hen and chickens in nature display more sense, or wisdom, than Israel did as a nation, or in nature. The hen sees the approach of danger and the warning sound is sent out, and the living chickens heed the cry and are safely sheltered

under her wings. So every child of God (spiritual Jew) hears the voice of Jesus, saying, Come unto me, and they come. The words I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life.

This was written by the request of a dear sister in Mississippi, and is submitted to the editors, but I fear it will be disappointing. To the household of faith, whom I hope I love for Jesus' sake, I send greetings in the Lord.

"Thou knowest I love thee, dearest Lord,
But O, I long to soar
Far from the sphere of mortal joys,
And learn to love thee more."

In sweet gospel bonds to all of like precious faith, though I am the least of all, P. W. SAWIN.

JOB XVII. 3.

"LAY down now, put me in a surety with thee; who is he that will strike hands with me?"

DEAR EDITORS:—I find myself this day with some impressions of mind to write a short article for the good old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and send to you, and it shall be wholly at your disposal, and I have decided to express some thoughts that are in my mind now, which I hope are of the Lord.

In this wonderful text of holy writ we have the idea plainly manifested of a principle or people entirely insolvent, ten thousand talents in debt, and not a farthing with which to pay, and the creditor, the law of divine justice, demanding payment in full, and viewing the principle entirely insolvent, demands a surety, and says, Put me in a surety with thee. Who will strike hands with me? That is, who will give his hand to the creditor, in order to make the payment sure, full and complete payment for every farthing this poor, insolvent family owed, and this poor, insolvent family consisted of the whole elect family of God, chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began; and Christ Jesus, the Surety, is called the Surety of a better testament, or covenant (Heb. vii. 22), and was the one, and the only one, who gave his hand in covenant obligations with the creditor, the law of divine justice, in order to release this poor, insolvent debtor, and thereby obtain eternal redemption for us; and eternal redemption means eternal deliverance, or release. I do not mean eternal deliverance from a state of sin while we are in the flesh in our time state, but from the clutches and demands of the inflexible law of God. To speak of this wonderful mystery of infinite wisdom after the manner of man, when Christ, the Surety of all his people, entered into this relation he was one with them according to the order of justice, and thereby bound in covenant obligations for all that justice demanded for their transgression. Our blessed Surety and dear Redeemer is rich in mercy and infinite in wisdom, and for the great love wherewith he loved us stepped in between us and death, and says, "Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom."—Job xxxiii. 24. He is the blessed one who stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, but was manifested in due time, and died for these ungodly sinners. Due time means the appointed time. Christ Jesus came into the world in due time, the author and finisher of our salvation. He was, and is, our atonement, our propitiation, our dear Redeemer, and both our ransom and our ransomer, our High Priest and the offering, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God to purge our consciences from dead works to serve the living God; in fact, he is the everything that the justice of God required or the law demanded for all the elect family, both for

time and eternity. How wonderful are these great things which the Lord hath done for us, how unsearchable and full of glory.

Dear readers, while I am writing these few lines this beautiful morning, and my heart rejoicing in God my Savior, many Scriptures occur to my mind relative to this wonderful subject, showing plainly the mercy of God in Christ Jesus interceding between the law of divine justice and the church and people of God under the just condemnation of sin and death, but I can mention only a few of them now, but will call your special attention to one that animates my feelings and rejoices my heart while I am writing, which is, the pleadings of Queen Esther for the life and deliverance of her people: "For how can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?"—Esther viii. 6. The Lord Jesus Christ, our surety and covenant head, gave his life for the sheep, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. He delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust that he will deliver us. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, and surely he finished the work he came to do, therefore the salvation of all the Israel of God is an absolute certainty—saved by sovereign grace. All the promised seed, God's chosen and redeemed family as viewed by the covenant of grace, are spiritual Israelites, regardless of their nationality, for they are all one in Christ, their great Head and Law-giver, who chose out their way, and sat Chief and dwelt as a King in the army. Then may we be glad, and rejoice in reading the gracious words of our Surety, who stood for all his Father's family, who opened his mouth and pleaded the cause of his kindred who were appointed to destruction. (Prov. xxxi. 8, 9.) O how sweetly and lovingly we hear him say, I delivered the poor that cried, the fatherless, and him that had none to help him; I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame.

May God bless us, the weak and helpless children, to keep ourselves from idols.

W. J. MAY.

SHOCK, Ky., Sept. 30, 1919.

RUSHSPRINGS, Okla., Nov. 10, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The time for my renewal on subscription is past. I realize that I am again tardy in sending my renewal; I thank you for being so forbearing with me. The SIGNS has made its regular calls at my humble abode, and, as heretofore, laden with good news from a far country. Elder Lefferts' words on the fifth chapter of James in the last issue of the SIGNS were good reading to me. There is food and comfort for the heirs of promise in such letters. No doubt many of God's humble poor while reading the many good letters from brethren and sisters scattered over the country which are published in the SIGNS are made to rejoice. I desire to keep in touch with God's chosen, elect people while I sojourn on earth, so I must have the SIGNS continue to come to me, bringing messages of love from many I have never met. Their expressions, telling their sorrows and afflictions and times of rejoicing, make me know that their God is my God. Often when I am cast down, being overshadowed with doubts and fears, the SIGNS comes to me with expressions of love, which seem to light up my pathway, thus exposing my ingratitude, showing me that the mercies of God follow people through fiery trials and deep waters. This seems to be a

time of coldness, a time that indifference has in many localities taken hold on Zion. There seems to be a bowing to idols getting in among us. Spiritual zeal is weakening, while nonconfidence and nonfellowship are growing; divisions are springing up, hence it seems that Zion in some localities is in the midst of a spiritual winter time. Jesus said, It must needs be that offences come. He also said, But woe unto them by whom they come. Our God is a consuming fire. There is nothing hid from Zion's God, for it is said of him that he searches and tries the hearts and reins of men. Again, it is written, Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. In the above Scripture there are, it seems to me, two sowers, two minds, two wills, two soils and two harvests. Dear brethren, it is possible for man to deceive man, but no man can deceive God. Knowing that it is impossible to deceive God it seems to me should make every man careful about what he sows. He that sows to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. There is no soundness in the flesh; every whit of the flesh (the carnal mind is the mind of the flesh) is corrupt. The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be. The carnal mind is the citadel, the home, of malice, envy, hatred, jealousy, &c. Good fruit cometh not from carnality. The fruit of the Spirit is love, peace, joy, kindness, forbearance, forgiveness, longsuffering, brotherly kindness, fellowship, &c. The carnal mind, being an enemy to God, seeks its own glory; not being subject to the law of God it ignores God's house, denounces the order and discipline of the church of the Son of God, thus making shipwreck of the faith of some. Where and when men sow to the flesh they reap a harvest of corruption to themselves; they become greatly attached to themselves; faultfinding soon becomes a delight to one that sows to the flesh. Good brethren often for a time get caught in this net of corruption. The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that we cannot do the things that we would. The apostle Paul said it behooved him to live in all good conscience toward God. When we walk in harmony with the flesh our conscience condemns us. The Spirit of God reveals to God's humble poor their wrongs, thus they repent, confessing their faults to God and to one another, begging God for mercy. It is better to be persecuted than to be a persecutor. If we live in all good conscience toward God we are sure to be at peace with the brethren. I love the editors and contributors to the SIGNS for their works' sake. I have never read from the pen of either of the editors of the SIGNS anything mixed with strife. They have proven themselves to be lovers of peace. Dear brethren and sisters who read the dear old paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, may God bless and comfort all of you, ever keeping you humble, holding you up by his own strong arm, giving you grace for your every need. Dear brethren editors and readers of the SIGNS, when it goes well with you remember me, a poor, weak sinner, trusting alone in the meritorious blood of the Son of God for peace, rest and joy beyond this vale of tears. I am herewith sending money order for two dollars; please credit me on subscription for same. I hope and pray that God will continue to bless Elders Ker and Lefferts in sending to his scattered people a clear gospel paper. I am sure that our good editors have their sore trials, like the many readers who read their messages of truth and brotherly kindness. God help us all to prove to these good, faithful editors that we love and esteem them highly in the Lord for their works' sake. I wish that every member of our little church were a reader of the paper.

Dear editors, if you think this letter fit for the columns of the SIGNS, use it, otherwise consign it to the wastebasket. Farewell for this time.

I am, as ever, yours in brotherly love and fellowship, I hope, in the Lord, though unworthy. L. E. SKINNER.

EDITORIAL.

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SPIRITISM.

LEVITICUS XIX. 31; 1 SAMUEL XXVIII. 7–14; 2 SAMUEL XII. 23; ACTS XVI. 16–18; ROMANS XVI. 25, 26.

As if there were not already enough fallacies floating about in the world, another, not altogether new by any means, but recently gaining rapid headway in this country, is the cult, or doctrine, of "spiritism," the newly coined word for "spiritualism," the theory of the communication of departed spirits with the inhabitants of this earth, the doctrine that the personality of human beings persists after death, and that these disembodied entities are capable of sending messages to whom they will here in the world through peculiarly "sensitized" individuals called "mediums." God grant that none in the Old School Baptist ranks throughout the country, however we may be divided among ourselves on doctrinal points, may fall from our steadfastness in the truth. Our words in this article are not directed against any special individual, any more than in opposition to all and sundry who stand for "spiritism." For ourself, we believe they are all perfectly sincere in what they advocate. We are certain that they unreservedly believe what they teach. They are not "fakers," in the sense that they are out simply for the money that is in it, but undoubtedly think they are doing humanity a service in spreading what they believe in the occult. The money collected from the admission to lectures, &c., will not go into their own pockets, at the most not all of it any way, but go to enhance the coffers of spiritistic societies who are extensively advertising. We have not the slightest doubt but that they really believe every word they write or say; at least, if we have a doubt we are willing to give them the benefit of it. But sincerity is never in itself righteousness. Saul of Tarsus was perfectly sincere in his persecution of the followers of Christ, and really believed he was doing God's service in helping to wipe out this, as he thought, heretical sect. But with all his sincerity, he was absolutely wrong in the course he pursued, and it took the Lord alone to show him his error. When the Lord did unmask him Saul could not plead his ignorant sincerity as righteousness. We say this because we have heard so many, many persons say that it makes no difference what any believe so long as they are sincere in it. This may salve their conscience, but it certainly will not pass current in the presence of the Almighty. For ourself, we do not believe that it is possible for the dead (those who have gone on beyond us) to communicate with us who are left behind. We do not believe it for two sets of reasons: one set taken from the Scriptures, the other set taken from purely common sense. There have always been those who professed to have occult powers in all ages of the world. These powers, they said, enabled them to communicate with the spirit world. These singular persons have always been able to bring about manifestations that convinced

others of the validity of their claims; but what has seemed to them and to others to be messages from another world have simply been, to our mind, mental pictures, or experiences, communicated from mind to mind by those who have peculiarly developed minds, and singularly endowed with controlling power over other minds. In other words, what passes current with many as being spiritual, or other-worldly, is nothing more than psychal or mental influences of a strong mind upon other weaker or easily impressionable minds. From the Scripture in Leviticus noted at the head of this article, we see that the Mosaic law forbade Israelites to seek unto them who had familiar spirits, who practiced wizardry or witchcraft. If it was wrong for Israel in the type to do so, assuredly it is infinitely more an error for a spiritual Israelite in this gospel dispensation to have anything to do with those professing to possess occult powers. As every breach of Moses' law brought with it its own penalty, much more shall we suffer in doing despite unto the Spirit of grace in going against the precepts of grace written on the fleshly tables of the heart of our new man.

Turning to the Scripture in 1 Samuel, we find narrated Saul's experience in seeking counsel of the witch of Endor, a woman possessing powers of sorcery and witchery. Saul wanted to communicate with the prophet Samuel, and sought to do so through this Endor woman, much as people to-day seek unto a medium to get messages from the other world. That the witch of Endor possessed some mysterious power, we do not doubt. The Bible says so, but so has the devil much mysterious cunning, and we all know it. That the eternal rest of the prophet Samuel was really disturbed, and he literally brought back to earth, we do not for a moment believe. But the witch thought so, and so did Saul think so. Even were it so, what good did it do Saul? He knew when he disguised himself to go to this woman that he was doing wrong, and going contrary to Moses' law, and what did he get for his trouble? Nothing but condemnation. The message he got from Samuel, even granting it was the real Samuel he talked with, filled him with consternation and woe, and, mark what we say, should any child of God in these days seek counsel at the hands of these professedly spiritual (?) people, he does so only to reap condemnation. No true child of God need ever think he can obtain substantial comfort at the hands of "mediums." Believe us, they will, figuratively speaking, bleed him and strip him, starve him and leave him for dead, much as the man on the way to Jericho who fell among thieves.

Turning further, to the Scripture we have noted from 2 Samuel, we see David, much as he loved his child whom death had snatched from him, did not believe it possible for the child to come back to him from the other world, and David was a man after God's own heart. His faith was a right faith, a God-given faith, which made him satisfied to know only so much as God wanted him to know, and made him perfectly willing to wait for further revelation until God's own pleasure to grant it to him. David had no disposition to pry into things he had no business to know. The things God had revealed to him were for him, but the things kept secret from him he was perfectly willing to leave with the Lord.

In the Scripture from Acts xvi. the apostles in the primitive church condemned the spirit of divination and soothsaying in a young girl who followed them

for the truth's sake, and commanded the evil spirit to come out of her. The occult sciences of this present day are all of them to be classed with the divination and soothsaying in this young girl. All of these are what Paul calls "profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called." They are all evil spirits, the work of Satan himself, the archenemy of all godliness.

The Scripture we have cited from Romans xvi. ought to satisfy any Old School Baptist that whatever is to be known of the mystery which God has kept secret from the foundation of the world, is made manifest in the preaching of Jesus Christ, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God. Hold fast the Scripture, test all professions and teachings of men by this precious word; if they contradict this testimony they are in darkness and under bondage to Satan. Does spiritism contradict the Bible? We have tried to show from the above few Scriptures, chosen at random, that the spirit of the occult was denounced in the Mosaic law, and also by the apostles in the primitive church, and in their inspired writings. But further, "spiritism" openly denies that human nature is essentially depraved. It affirms that men are not perforce sinners, that total depravity is untrue. It denies the blood atonement of Jesus Christ, that he came to save sinners and to raise the dead. It affirms that all human beings have a personality that persists after death. This flatly contradicts the Bible, which says that Christ alone has immortality dwelling in the light. Jesus says he is the resurrection and the life. Spiritism has no use for Jesus at all; rarely will you ever find his name in spiritistic writings, and rarely upon the lips of those believing in the occult. Though Jesus plainly said that those who live in him and believe in him should never die, but have everlasting life, spiritism says nobody ever dies, and that everybody lives forever, or, at least, can live forever if they will but exercise their latent occult powers, which, they say, everybody possesses in more or less measure. The Bible declares eternal life to be the gift of God to his elect through Jesus Christ. Spiritism avows eternal life to be inherent in all men by nature. We know of no fallacy in the world today that more flatly denies the Bible than spiritism, yet it has deceived its thousands, and will deceive thousands more. But, leaving the Scriptures out of the matter, spiritism is absurd from the viewpoint of common sense. We do not know why this sense is called "common," for, indeed, it is most rare. Even supposing the dead could communicate with us, would they be likely to say such silly things as the "mediums" make them say? As, for instance, Tell mother not to worry; Tell father I am happy, or, Tell the family I am alive and well. The silly, preposterous things which we are asked to believe come from the other world are nonsensical beyond belief. We have read a great deal, but in all the messages that purport to come from the other world not one have we ever seen that told the slightest thing of any importance, but always some trifling thing that meant little or nothing. If you have a friend that goes away on a pleasure trip, and goes to some new country where they have never been, is it not true that when he or she writes you a letter it is full of the good times they are having and the wonderful sights they are seeing? Well, then, if heaven is the wonderful and infinitely blessed place we believe it is, if it were possible for the dead to send

word back to us would we not expect them to tell us of the wonders of that world and its ineffable beauty? On the contrary, in all the writings of spiritism we have ever seen not a word have we ever seen describing the country, or telling us of its joys or blessings. Always it is some insane, foolish, trifling thing that amounts to nothing and proves nothing. Why, then, has spiritism made such rapid strides in the last few years? Simply because the condition of the times provides a fertile soil for it to spread in, and because there is in our fallen human nature a depraved principle which it feeds. The recent world war left in its wake a wrack of broken hearts and shattered lives, thousands in the old country, but many also in this. Here is the soil in which spiritism takes its root. Thousands being without the comfort of real religion, having had their loved ones torn away from them by the cruelties of the war, having no refuge unto which to flee, have sought surcease from sorrow in the occult, because it professed to bring them into touch with the departed, and to receive messages from them. Thus these broken-hearted ones took to the occult much as a frenzied man takes to drink or drugs: to drown their distress. It is said that since the close of the war in London alone one hundred thousand persons have gone insane through study of the occult and the pursuit of spiritistic philosophy, and now comes the spread of the poison here. From all such may the good Lord deliver his people. We are persuaded better things of you, dear readers. You are not of those who draw back unto perdition, but ye are of the day, the glorious day of the Sun of Righteousness. We say unto you, Have no fellowship with the hidden things of darkness, but as ye are of the day, and not of the night, walk in the light. As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him. Avoid men-pleasers, who lie in wait to deceive. Follow your Standard-bearer. Let Christ be lifted up as an ensign for the people. Hold fast in a good conscience the faith once delivered unto the saints, and may the Lord Jesus be with all your spirits.

L.

AN EXPRESSION OF THANKS.

In our last issue we published a request for copies of the January 1st number of the Signs, to which appeal we have had a generous response, and we take this means of thanking all who so kindly came to our aid in sending us the papers wanted.

BOOK OF EDITORIALS.

We have on hand a number of copies of the Second Volume of Editorials. This book is made up of editorials written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the Signs of the Times from March, 1842, to March, 1847, and contains 768 pages, neatly bound in cloth.

This work originally sold at two dollars per copy, but as a few of the pages are stained by water we will, as long as the supply lasts, sell them at the extremely low price of seventy-five cents per copy. Postage paid by us. All who wish this book should procure it now, as we will have no more after these are sold.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, at Salisbury, Md., Feb. 12th, 1920, Edwin H. Morris, of Pittsville, Md., and Maude Brittingham, of the same place.

By Elder J. McConnell, in New York city, Feb. 14th, 1920, Stanley F. Karasick, of New York city, and Lucy Elizabeth Epperson, of Hurdland, Mo.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at his residence, 1910 N. 22nd St., Philadelphia, Pa., January 15th, 1920, Henten Monroe Dennick and Miriam Lawyer, both of Ohio.

By the same, at the home of the bride, Snow Hill, Md., February 8th, 1920, Edward Lee Adkins and Edith Glenia Adkins, both of near Snow Hill, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Effie Linda Wood departed this life March 9th, 1919, at her home in Fleischmanns, N. Y. She was born in the year 1848, the daughter of Joseph E. and Delight Scudder. She was married to Uriah Wood in the year 1868, and some years later united with the church at Halcott, N. Y., and was baptized by the late Elder Maben. On Sept. 2nd, 1911, she united with the First Roxbury Church, Vega, N. Y., and was in the fellowship of that church until she died. She leaves to mourn their loss an adopted son and three grandchildren, also two sisters: Mrs. Olive Slauson, of Vega, N. Y., and Mrs. James Sherwood, of Denver, N. Y. It was my privilege to visit sister Wood frequently the last two years of her life. She was unable to attend meeting owing to pressing home duties, but her mind dwelt much on spiritual things, and whenever I called on her she would bring out the Bible and hymn-book. She was very humble, often confessing how vile she felt herself to be. She had a life full of trials, which made her sigh for a land of rest, and we believe she has entered into that rest to be forever with the Lord.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Theodore Shirley Walker was born January 13th, 1908, and died February 9th, 1920. He had poor health all his life. He was fond of reading and liked to attend school, but had never been able to go a complete session. He greatly enjoyed hearing stories told, particularly Bible stories. The story of Joseph was his favorite, and he nearly knew it by heart. One day about a year ago he asked me how to pray. I told him the best I could in my poor, imperfect way, and always after that he knelt by his little bed at night and said his prayers. What they were I do not know, but God knows. He had been sick about three weeks, but had gotten well enough to dress and leave his room for one day. The next day pneumonia set in, and he lived nine days. His oldest sister and brother (both graduated nurses) attended him faithfully and devotedly, and he had the attention of two of our best physicians, but God called and he went away. He leaves a father, mother, five sisters and two brothers to mourn their loss, besides a large number of friends who loved him. O heavenly Father, give us grace to say, Thy will be done.

HIS MOTHER.

Idenza Virginia Hess, beloved wife of Deacon David Hess, of Three Springs, Pa., was born Dec. 12th, 1857, and died Nov. 25th, 1919, aged about 62 years. Sister Hess was baptized by the writer of this notice in the fellowship of the Springfield Church about two years ago, and lived an exemplary life in every way. She felt to be less than the least of all saints, and often said she feared that she was not a subject of grace. There are some who are able to express in words their exercises of mind, but sister Hess never felt that she could do so, yet she surely did express her faith by her works in ministering to the saints and in her home. Her place in the assembly of the saints was always filled unless she was prevented by circumstances unavoidable. Her husband's heart did safely trust in her, and her children rise up and call her blessed. She adorned her faith by a well ordered life and a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is commendable. I was in Canada at the time of her departure, and Elder Cubbage conducted the funeral services to the comfort and edification of those present, using the hymn, "If I must sing, I'll sing of grace. Text, 1st Peter iii. 4, 5. She leaves her husband and four children: Lula May, John, Elizabeth and Orpha, besides many others to mourn their loss. May the dear Savior comfort each as they stand in need, and reconcile them to his will.

J. M. FENTON.

Pleasant Bailey, the subject of this notice, was born Sept. 5th, 1836, and departed this life January 30th, 1920, at the age of 84 years, 4 months and 25 days. He was baptized by the writer in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Hopewell, of the Pocatalico Association, on the first Sunday in July, 1919. He was married about the year 1860 to Miss Melissa Lanham, to which union were born four daughters. His wife and four daughters preceded him to the grave. After the death of his wife his daughters grew to womanhood and two of them married, but they had no heartfelt care for their father, and he had to seek a home in the Soldiers' Home at Richmond, Va., he having served in the southern army. A despatch was sent to Dr. D. V. Bailey that his old uncle had died very suddenly of heart failure, and the doctor had him brought home for burial. The writer spoke to a large number of anxious listeners from 2 Samuel xiv. 14, after which he was laid to rest in the Bailey cemetery.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

R. L. Turner, Ky., $2.00; Mrs. Ella Rittenhouse, Manitoba, $3.00; H. C. Woodward, Mo., $3.00; Mrs. U. K. Hamilton, Mo., $1.00; R. L. Spindle, Va., $3.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 88. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1920. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DELMAR, Delaware.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—About one year ago there was published in the SIGNS a short article from my pen, in which I tried to relate something of the exercises of my mind in passing from nature to grace, or from death unto life, as it may well be termed, for in nature all of Adam's race are "dead in trespasses and sins," but in a state of grace are alive unto God, hence have "passed from death unto life." In nature man knows nothing of spiritual or divine (heavenly) things, but being "born again," made alive from the dead, he has all knowledge. "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." He has a revelation from God, the Son of God is revealed in him, God shines in his heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; and as in Jesus Christ all fullness dwells, so all knowledge of heavenly things is communicated by the revelation of him in his people, which means salvation, and the way of salvation, for he is the way, the truth and the life. God hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing (revelation) of our Savior Jesus Christ. So we may well call it a passage from nature to grace, or from death unto life. As one in traveling meets many difficulties, sees, feels and learns many things, so in this travel one meets many trials and hardships, by which he learns that which is necessary for him, for his comfort and the upbuilding in the faith; is what is properly called christian experience. But the early travel of the child of God is but the beginning of his experience that follows all his journey here; he meets difficulties, is beset with many temptations and is in much heaviness, all needful for him, for thus is his faith tried and proven. There was a needs be that Peter should deny his Lord, his faith was thus tried and he was taught that the just shall live by his faith, and that a man should be justified by faith, and not by the deeds of the law. Before that Peter had great confidence in himself; he said to his Lord, I will lay down my life for thy sake. But his Lord said, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake?

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice. And so it was, so it must needs be, but when the cock crew Peter remembered. Jesus said, I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not. Peter then knew that it was not in himself that he must stand, but in the power of God through faith. So we learn by our failures to do what we think we will do to know that we are without strength, and when we realize our weakness, then we learn where our strength lies; then is the perfect strength of God manifest to us; then we glory in our infirmities; then we have strength, being upheld or kept by the power of God through faith. Our salvation is sure, for this keeping is "unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time," when he shall come "without sin unto salvation."

In the article above referred to I promised at some future time to write of my call to the ministry. This has been unavoidably delayed. A short while after that I was laid on a bed of sickness, and for four months was unable to even raise myself up in bed, but for the past six months have been slowly improving, and am now reminded of my promise and feel a disposition to try and fulfill it.

I will have to say at the beginning that it has always been a question with me whether I have ever been called to that great work. I have never had any of the strong impressions which I have heard others relate; have never felt that I would die if I did not preach, nor that I must (Jonah-like) flee to Tarshish to escape the burden laid on me. My feeling has rather been something like I think Paul's was: If I do this thing willingly I have a reward, but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me. I have often gone much against my will, then at other times willingly, gladly and joyfully, and had my reward, but willingly or unwillingly, there has always been a feeling of necessity. As I have before stated, I began to be exercised at a very early age about my sinful condition. Those exercises continued for fifteen years or more, and then hope came to me—a hope of salvation from sin by Jesus Christ. During that time I had some exercises about preaching, but now I view those exercises as only of the flesh, a natural desire for notoriety, an ambition for publicity. It was in the early part of 1864 that I began to hope in the mercy of God to me, a sinner, and I was shortly afterward impressed to tell my comrades what great things the Lord had done for me, and how he had had mercy on me; to tell to sinners round what a dear Savior I had found. I was deeply impressed by the answer of Jesus to the young man, to whom he had said, Follow me; but he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. I pondered in my mind as to the meaning of the saying, but not feeling that it was addressed to me personally. I was then in the army (it was during the Civil War). I found myself in conversation with others contending for the doctrine of God's sovereignty in the salvation of his people, and the helplessness and entire dependence of the sinner upon a higher power, that "salvation is of the Lord." On one occasion, in company with three of my comrades, all of whom were very religious, one said, "I like to hear people tell what they are doing for the Lord." I answered, "I would rather hear them tell what the Lord has done for them." Man can do nothing for the Lord; the cattle upon a thousand hills are his, and every

beast of the forest, all the fowls of the mountains and the wild beasts of the field are his, and he says, "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof." —Psalms l. 12. Thanksgiving and praise are his due, and he requires that only of his subjects. "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me." "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." These meditations continued in my mind, and I also hope in my heart. In the spring of 1865, at the close of the war, I returned to my home in Fauquier County, Va., and on Saturday before the third Sunday in June I offered myself to the church at Upper Broad Run, was cordially received by them and baptized by Elder R. C. Leachman the next day and inducted into the church. Soon after my baptism I was again exercised on the subject of testifying to the power and goodness of God, but not in a public manner. I was also assailed with severe temptations, feeling that I had added sin to sin by making a public profession of something I did not possess; that I was a hypocrite, just as much a sinner as ever. I was being shown that there dwelt in my flesh (or natural being) no good thing. All my exercise was as to being a witness, and Jesus said, "Ye are witnesses of these things." But when I thought of the public ministry there was a drawing back. I was very timid, feeling exceedingly ignorant, an untutored boy with but little command of language and almost afraid to talk of those things, even in private conversation, for fear the brethren would consider me forward. Then these words came with force and seemed to apply to me: "That servant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes." The question now was, Do I know his will? My inquiry was, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" I received no answer, only to be greatly troubled and perplexed as to the meaning of all this. About this time I dreamed of meeting an aged minister, and that we sat on a log and he talked to me a long time about the things of the kingdom. When he arose to leave me he said, When I am gone you will have to preach the gospel. It so happened that the same old minister preached his last public discourse three days before my first attempt to speak before a congregation. I must remark right here that my poor efforts have never borne any comparison to the great gift that was in that able and fearless soldier of the cross. On the fourth Sunday in May, 1866, (I was then living near Mt. Zion, in Loudoun County, and was attending meeting there) in the absence of the pastor I was requested by the brethren to take part in the service. I read the last verse of the sixteenth chapter of the gospel by John, and spoke a few minutes of the comfort to the disciples in the assurance of Jesus that he had overcome the world. After the congregation was dismissed one of the aged sisters said, "I know you have got to preach." I was alarmed and filled with fear, and thought, What have I done? Yet I realized some relief and comfort from the effort. At the next meeting of the church of my membership a license was extended to me to go as a door might be opened to me to speak in the name of the Lord. A short while afterward I was invited to supply the Frying Pan Church, in Fairfax County, they having just buried their old pastor. Besides this I was invited to make appointments in destitute neighborhoods where there were those who gladly received the word. I went halting

and stumbling, ofttimes saying, I will speak no more in his name, and was even tempted to tell the church that I was not fit (I felt that I was not) to have a name among them, and even thinking that they must know just what sort I was, and would feel duty bound to cast me out as an unclean thing. Instead of this, however, they continued to give me expressions of their love and confidence, and at the July meeting in 1868 voted (against my protest) to call for aids to form a council to consider the propriety of ordaining me to the full work of the ministry. On the third Sunday in August following the council met, and after hearing my experience and what little I could tell them of a call to the ministry, decided to proceed with the ordination by laying on of hands of the presbytery and prayer. The presbytery was composed of Elders G. Beebe, R. C. Leachman and Wm. J. Purington. Soon after my ordination I was called to the care of the church at Frying Pan, and the following spring to the Quantico Church, in Prince William County. I continued to serve those two churches until the autumn of 1870, when, having received a call from the church at Kingwood, N. J., I resigned those churches and settled in New Jersey with the Kingwood Church. I continued with that church about eleven years, in the meantime supplying other churches that were without pastors. In or about the year 1875 the church at Tuscarora, Juniata Co., Pa., requested me to serve them as pastor, to visit them on fifth Sundays, which I did for about twenty-four years. In the year 1882 I moved back to Virginia, settling with my family on a farm in Loudoun County, where I remained until the end of 1897. During the time until 1889 I traveled quite extensively throughout the states of New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky and Ohio, but still retaining the pastorate of the Tuscarora Church in Pennsylvania. In the summer of 1888 I was called by the churches of Broad Creek and Little Creek, in Sussex County, Del., and Forest Grove and Rewastico, in Wicomico Co., Md., all in the Salisbury Association, to serve them as pastor. In February of the following year I began my service with those churches, which relation continues to the present. I am also supplying the Salisbury Church, in the city of Salisbury, Md., as I have for more than twenty-five years. I am also pastor of the London Tract Church, in Chester Co., Pa. Thus my labors have been abundant ever since my ordination, nearly fifty-two years ago, and now I am about worn out and know that I am near the end, and hope I may say with Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." It has been my privilege to baptize about two hundred candidates and marry about two hundred couples, assisted in the ordination of eleven preachers and attended the funerals of thirteen ministers. It has been my high privilege to be intimately associated with a large number of able ministers of our order, which I trust has been profitable to me, but the highest privilege of all is to know my sins are all forgiven; that is best of all. It is not the labors of my hands could fulfill the righteous demands of God's just and holy law, but that Jesus the Savior stands in my law place as my advocate, pleading his death in my behalf and by his blood

cleansing me from all sin, forgiving my sins, blotting out all my transgressions, and though, in his law, they be as scarlet, yet in him as white as snow.

I am, I hope, your brother in the kingdom and patience of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the hope of the resurrection of the dead. A. B. FRANCIS.

FRAGMENTS.

(FOUND among the papers of the late Elder Silas H. Durand.)

Why are people everywhere so anxious to live a long time? "What is your life?" asks an inspired apostle. "It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away." Yet all the efforts of even the wisest and best of men are directed to the lengthening of these mortal days, which are regarded as of so little value. Everybody wants to live as long as possible, and every one is considered as doing valuable work only in proportion as his work tends to prolong this life which is declared by divine authority to be a vapor. And yet all these efforts are so futile that instead of growing longer during all these ages of time, the term of human life has been steadily decreasing. How quickly this mortal life passeth away; how soon it is gone! And is this all? Is this great mystery all? Of to-morrow what does any mortal man know? Absolutely nothing, so far as time and the things of time are concerned. It is concerning the affairs of this mystery of time that the Savior said to his disciples, "Take no thought for the morrow," as they went forth in obedience to his command to do apostolic work. They were to remember that they were in no sense dependent upon themselves for what they should eat or drink or wherewithal they should be clothed. "Your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." Take, therefore, no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. But "length of days" is spoken of as a desirable thing, a blessing. Solomon was commended because he had not expressed a wish for length of days when given the privilege of asking what he would, as though long life were a thing to be desired and he had repressed the natural desire to ask it, as the fleshly nature would have moved him. It is said of Wisdom: "Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honor."

"IN me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." The apostle said this in the goodness of his heart. He was thinking of the great company of the redeemed, whom no man can number, who come up out of great tribulation, and with whom this is more or less common experience. It is a great trial to them to realize the truth of this from day to day. The apostle realized it in measure from day to day, and to feel it and to refer to it was to him, as to them, a cause of daily suffering. His desire was to be free from evil. His desire was the same as that of Jabez, who prayed the Lord would keep him from evil, that it might not grieve him. The apostle had in mind the Lord's people, who hate evil and are sorely grieved by the felt presence of sin in their flesh; and though it was a sore discomfort to him to even refer to it, he felt a desire to comfort them with the consolation of the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

WHAT a great difference there is between "then" and "now"! However

short the distance in time may be expressed by the word "then," if even it takes back only five years, yet as we contemplate even that short space of time we are forced to express wonder at the great changes that have taken place: changes in the personal circumstances of people individually and changes in all that pertains to nations in what belongs to them in their governments, in their relations with other nations or in their own internal affairs. In times of greatest quietude we cannot turn our thoughts in any direction within the short space of time mentioned without noticing astonishing changes which affect the world's life and history, and which cause us to pause and wonder as we look deeper and deeper into the affairs of the world about us and notice the great difference between "then" and "now" in so many things.

WHO is to judge of the gifts in the church? Who shall decide concerning any gift, where it belongs, in what church it is manifested, in what place it is located? Such questions have been raised, and will continue to be raised, often of a very perplexing nature, wherever a spiritual interest exists. The decisive answer to every such question has ever been found in Jesus, and will continue to be found in him. These gifts were received by him when he ascended up on high, and were given unto the men of God, to the rebellious also. These gifts, including apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, are for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, and in their true and proper exercise show the church to be a perfect man, even the perfection of beauty. The life of the church is a perfect life, and there can be no imperfection in it, "for God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." These earthen vessels are the cause of the great trouble and affliction which the Lord's ministering servants have. These gospel gifts, or those who have them, are assailed on every hand, and are tried within and without. In the beginning of their exercises concerning the preaching of the gospel, each one of them will be deeply stirred as to the necessity of that work being done, seldom thinking of the possibility of himself being the one who must do it. When that comes to his mind, then the real trouble begins. It is the church which first recognizes the gift and calls for it. It is seldom that the preacher has to let it be known that he is exercised that way. The gift will make itself known, and the gift will at once, as a general thing, make room for itself; both church and gift will feel the power of the apostolic command, Covet earnestly the best gift. Every gift is needed by the church, and the need will surely be felt and made known, but what deep and sore trials will be felt by both church and gift as they are brought to their places and work. The Lord does not work at random, nor is any gospel sermon ever preached in vain. The messages which the Lord sends to his hungry and thirsty poor will not fail to reach those to whom they are sent though they are scattered throughout the world. The dear Savior says, My sheep hear my voice. That voice may be heard and felt with power while one of the followers of Jesus is listening to a gospel sermon being

preached by an unlearned servant of God. The message will come with love and power to one to whom it is sent, and will give him encouragement and comfort.

WHO are the election of grace? How are they manifested? When the devil had ended all the temptation (Luke iv. 13), and in the power of the Spirit Jesus had returned into Galilee, and thence into Nazareth, where he had been brought up, there he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day and stood up to read. He read the Scripture as it is written in Isaiah lxi. 1, 2, and he began to say unto them, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth." In this grand and glorious language the Jewish worshippers in the synagogue understood him to be exalting all that belonged to that nation and all that belonged to that legal system, looking forward to when that proud city, with all that was represented by it, should be exalted above all the conceptions of their imaginations. It was this understanding concerning their present and future national glory that caused them to wonder and to regard his words as gracious and glorious. But now by reference to the circumstances of the widow of Sarepta, and to Naaman the Syrian, both of them Gentiles, the dear Savior shows them that personal merit of any kind has nothing whatever to do with the salvation of the Lord's people. The widow of Sarepta was not only a Gentile, but on the verge of starvation. Naaman was not only a Gentile, but a leper. Neither of them had any right to anything belonging to the nation of the Jews. The Savior calls attention to the fact that there were many widows in Israel, and many lepers, but the Lord did not send to any of them but to these two absolutely helpless ones. Now what a change of sentiment on the part of the Jewish people. Here is election that passes by the needy and helpless among the Israelites and which makes the cause clearer by the choosing of Gentiles. The antagony of the case against the worshiping in the synagogue is much more pronounced by this. It enraged the Jews to be thus set aside, it filled them with wrath of no ordinary kind, but how wonderful, how unexpected, it is to those who find themselves the subjects of this election of grace. The prophets never find these characters, they are especially sent to them. The condition of the elect vessels of mercy is so marked that they cannot but be at once discovered. Elias is sent by especial command of the Lord to Sarepta, a city of Sidon, but he only knows that he is to be fed by a widow woman. For a long time he has been fed by ravens and has drunk of the brook. Now he is on his way to the city, having commanded by the word of the Lord a drought in the land. We are told by the apostle James that Elijah prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it rained not by the space of three years and six months. What a mystery is prayer! At Sarepta Elijah saw the widow woman who had been commanded to feed him during the rest of the time of the famine. She seems to be in absolute fear of death, but she is doing all that she can to preserve the lives of herself and son.

[AT this point the manuscript is left unfinished.]

LOS ANGELES, Cal., July 19, 1918.

TO THE BETHEL CHURCH, LAMAR, COLORADO—DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—I feel a desire to greet you all at this time; if to edification, is with the Lord. My mind being directed by the Spirit you may be comforted by what I write, otherwise the chill of disappointment will be felt by you all. I hesitate to take my pen to write to the dear children of the household of faith, yet there is a cord which draws, and I have many times asked myself this question: If I have no part or lot in these things, why is it my mind so constantly dwells on them? and I am constrained to take courage by the way, for we read, Where the treasure is, the heart will be also. So if our hearts are established with grace we will think on these things, and speak one to another, to edification. Paul, in his letter to the Philippian brethren, said he thanked God upon every remembrance of them, and he had them always in his heart, and I think how sweet that is when we can have our brethren always in our hearts, remembering each other at the throne of grace. Could we always, as Paul says, think on the things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report, it would be profitable.

Things that are true. We cannot look to man to find true things, but the fruit of the Spirit is in all truth, therefore to think on things that are true we must have the presence of the Spirit, that we may look away from earth and all therein, beholding the glory of God. John says, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Marvelous indeed to us are the ways of the Lord, we cannot fathom the depths nor reach to the heights. These are true and just things to think on. Could I write always of his wonderful works I could not tell it all in a lifetime, and I fear I make nothing plain, for I do all in fear and trembling and much weakness. In God alone is strength; we can of ourselves do nothing. This has been on my mind much of late, to think on these things Paul enumerates. I see that little trouble would be in the house of God, and no hard feelings among brethren; if we could bear in mind to think on these things with praise and thanksgiving to the Lord, with an eye single to his honor and glory, we would have no time to look for a mote in our brother's eye, for if there was one it would be so small to us we could not discern it, but could only see the image of the Master reflecting there, that covers up all the motes.

Things that are lovely. What is more lovely than to see brethren dwelling together in love, keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace? Then we have things of a good report, for where there is love there is peace, and where the truth as it is in Christ dwells all things are true and we can think on these things, there is a good report within and a good report goes out, that others seeing our faith may take courage by the way. Our dear Savior in his sermon on the mount said unto his disciples, Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. We know that all things work together for good to them that are the called according to his purpose. He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. Was ever love so great? Not in man, therefore when we think on these things that are true and lovely we must set our thoughts above this earth, for when we look at the earth and earthly things we only see cor-

ruption; there is nothing good to look upon.

I fear you are all weary.

Sister Nowels wrote me last week that dear brother Butcher had been ordained deacon of your church. Dear old brother, may the Lord be with him. I know he is a man of good report, and one who will do his duty to the church, and be an honor to the church.

Our little church is in a fairly prosperous condition. Last month we had six additions; one by experience and baptism, one by relation and four by letter. We feel to thank God. If it is all of his adding we rejoice, for he adds to the church such as shall be saved. We look upon those who came in as being sound in faith and doctrine.

Now, dear kindred, if I have written anything that you can fellowship, and you are comforted thereby, give God the glory. Please cast the mantle of charity over all errors, for I am full of error, but thanks be to God we have an Advocate with the Father who tasted death that we through his sufferings might live.

Remember me and mine when you meet around the throne to give praise to the Lord and ask his blessing on his people.

(MRS.) J. B. DAWSON.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Elder Frederick W. Keene has changed his address from North Berwick, Maine, to 501 Cleveland St., Raleigh, N. C., and requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

Elder J. B. Slauson has changed his residence from 118 Forest Ave. to Wellington St. East, R. R. 2, St. Thomas, Ontario, Canada.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder H. A. Sloan.)

The Mt. Enon Primitive or Predestinarian Baptist Association, now in its forty-eighth annual session, sends greeting and salutation to all whom it concerns of like precious faith.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We feel that it is through the tender mercies of our covenant-keeping God that we have been blessed to meet again in an associate capacity, for which we thank and adore his great and holy name. All orderly churches are represented by letter and messengers, stating that perfect peace and love abound among them, for which we feel thankful to the Lord.

In conclusion, we wish to say that we have a good representation from other associations of our faith and order with us, laden with good news from a far country of the wonderful works of a great God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will. We solicit not only their presence again, but all others that are sound in doctrine and order.

Our next association will be held with Salem Church, eight miles west of Plant City, Hillsboro County, Florida, the second Sunday in November, 1920, and Friday and Saturday before.

W. O. FUTCH, Moderator.

J. H. MILES, Clerk.

NOTICE.

I HAVE a copy of Hassell's Church History which I am willing to dispose of.

L. S. CAMPBELL.

150 SEATON PLACE N. W., APT. 3, WASHINGTON, D. C.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1920.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

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Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
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JOHN XXI. 15.

"LOVEST thou me more than these?"

This question asked Peter by the Savior suggests a very interesting and important subject to all who profess to love the Lord Jesus. It causes self-examination, and less criticism of others. Peter was an impulsive man, and often made speeches without due consideration, and while perfectly sincere was often wrong, because his understanding of God's works and ways was not clear. This same thing has caused us all more trouble in the churches than any other one thing. If we understood perfectly the things of God there would be no misunderstanding among us, nor divisions upon doctrine and order. It seems natural for us all to think we are right, and of course that means that others are wrong in our judgment, while often others are right and we wrong. When this matter is reduced to a fact, no one knows enough of God and his mysteries to cause us to boast, or in any way become puffed up. The real truth is that the wisest man knows very little of God. He is too infinitely high and too profoundly deep for man in his best estate to comprehend. Peter, therefore, is not to be censured for his lack of knowledge pertaining to the things of God. Jesus told him that he understood the things of man, but he did not understand the things of God. Had Peter understood what the going of Jesus to Jerusalem and his sufferings and death there meant he would not have said, It shall not be so unto thee. No man can be more sincere than was Peter in what he said, yet what he said was all wrong, and an offense to Jesus rather than a pleasure. Here we see that sincerity without knowledge is not reckoned by the Lord as worship.

When Jesus told his disciples he must go up to Jerusalem and suffer many things, and be put to death, and that they should be offended because of him, Peter, not knowing himself, much less understanding the things of God, said, "Though all men forsake thee, yet will I not." The Savior, having perfect knowledge of Peter and his utter inability to perform the things he said he could and would do, said, Peter, Satan hath desired to have thee, that he might sift thee as wheat, but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not, and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. It was therefore in weakness, not in power, that Peter was to strengthen his brethren. More often than otherwise the exact opposite of what the children of God think and feel is right. Hence when one feels he is preaching, more than likely he is not, when one feels he is praying, he is not likely approaching the throne of grace, and when one feels so sure of his love for the brethren he may well examine himself; and it is just as true that when any of us feel so positive about our understanding of a portion of God's word as being absolutely correct, it is well to approach that subject with fear and trembling.

Not long after Jesus said to Peter,

Satan hath desired to have thee, that he might sift thee as wheat, but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not, Judas came, with the band of officers, to betray him, and while Peter resented the attack and defended the Savior in the use of his sword, in a little while he denied him. The Lord uses Satan to sift his people, but has promised that not one grain shall fall to the earth, and we see this promise verified in the experience of Peter. If the children of God were not sifted and shaken almost from their very foundations they could never know the power and faithfulness of God and their own weakness and inability to perform their vows to God. In order that Peter should be tried, his flesh failed, but his faith was proven strong. He followed Jesus into the judgment hall, where he was asked if he were not a disciple of Jesus, and also accused of being with him in the garden. All this Peter denied, and to strengthen his denial did it with cursing and swearing. Just here is shown the fallibility of man's judgment, hence how careful we should all be in judging and censuring the children of God for what may be said or done by them. More than likely any subject of grace would, not knowing the circumstances, have condemned Peter, and accused him of hypocrisy, because of his cursing, swearing and denying the Savior, but Jesus, knowing the purpose of God in it all: that Peter might be tried as gold, in the fire, and be converted from his proud and boastful spirit to that of a creeping child, prepared to minister to his brethren, did not condemn him nor accuse him, but looked upon him with an expression of love and pity. Likely the other apostles felt illy toward Peter for what he did, at the same time guilty of the same thing. "They all said the same things" with reference to not forsaking him, but when the time came "all forsook him and fled." It therefore behooves us all to be careful how we pronounce judgment upon our brethren, for more than likely we ourselves are guilty of the same thing. Perhaps many of us will remember of having said at times, "I would not do what brother A. did, nor say such things as brother B. said," when ere long we had done even worse than brother A., and had given vent to language far worse than brother B. used. It is seldom, if ever, that our judgment of others is just, not being fully acquainted with all the conditions and circumstances in the case. We all have one Judge and Lawgiver and to him alone are we accountable. He judges not after the seeing of his eyes nor the hearing of his ears, but in righteousness he judges the poor. Peter was not alone in thinking that if all men should forsake the Lord he would not. Many of us, like him, have thought we loved the Lord better than others loved him, but have been tested by the Savior and found no more loving, no more faithful, no more sincere than others. When Jesus stood on the seashore in the morning after the apostles had fished all night and taken nothing, he addressed them, saying, Children, have ye any meat? and they answered, No. He then said, Cast the net on the right side of the ship and ye shall find. They did so, and took a number of great fishes, one hundred and fifty and three, and notwithstanding there were so many, yet the net was not broken. Evidently they had worked from the left, or wrong, side of the ship, and in consequence had taken nothing, or, in other words, their labor had been in vain. Might not this be applied to a man's labor in a field where the Lord has not directed him? and, on the other hand, to the labor of a servant

when ordered of the Lord? Might we not apply the net to the gospel which has been sufficiently strong, since the world began, to hold every man, woman and child caught in it? And also the hundred fifty and three fishes to the definite number of the election of grace? When the apostles had come to shore they found coals of fire, with bread and fishes laid on them, and the Savior said, Come and dine. In this is shown the sure provision of the Lord for all his servants called to feed the sheep and lambs of his fold. The disciples had nothing to do with the provision of the fire, the bread and fishes, but rather the Savior had provided them. In this is taught the lesson that to seek the kingdom of God first of all things is what the Lord requires of all those called to preach the everlasting gospel.

After they had dined the Savior addressed Peter as Simon, son of Jonas, and said, Lovest thou me more than these (other disciples)? Peter understood perfectly what he meant, he had not forgotten his statement that though all men should forsake Jesus yet he would not. He knew well how unfaithful he had been to that promise, yet notwithstanding his unfaithfulness he replied, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus replied, Feed my lambs. Then the second time he asked Peter the same question, if he loved him, and received the same reply: Thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus said, Feed my sheep. Again, the third time, Jesus asked, Lovest thou me? and Peter was grieved because he asked him the third time, and answered, Yea, Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee, and again Jesus said, Feed my sheep. Asking the same question three times reminded Peter of his thrice denying the Master, and he said, Thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I said I loved thee more than any of the other disciples, or any other man. Thou knowest that I forsook thee, thou knowest that I cursed and swore and denied thee, thou knowest my weakness, my unfaithfulness, and thou knowest that notwithstanding all this I love thee. In sifting and trying Peter he was prepared to feed the Lambs and sheep. To strengthen his brethren was to feed them, or in other words, feed the sheep. His own strength and self-importance gone, he was prepared to minister to the household of God, and though dead he is today feeding the sheep through his testimony of Jesus. K.

BOOK OF EDITORIALS.

We have on hand a number of copies of the Second Volume of Editorials. This book is made up of editorials written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the Signs of the Times from March, 1842, to March, 1847, and contains 768 pages, neatly bound in cloth.

This work originally sold at two dollars per copy, but as a few of the pages are stained by water we will, as long as the supply lasts, sell them at the extremely low price of seventy-five cents per copy. Postage paid by us. All who wish this book should procure it now, as we will have no more after these are sold.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at his home, Leesburg, Va., March 3rd, 1920, Everett H. Smith and Miss Bertha Kidwell, both of Sterling, Va.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Feb. 24th, 1920, at the home of Mr. J. M. Holloway, Delmar, Md., Johannes F. Byrd, of Pocomoke City, Md., and Mrs. Augusta C. Benson, of Laurel, Del.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at his residence, 118 Forest Ave., St. Thomas, Ontario, Feb. 26th, 1920, Peter M. Campbell and Altha Ann Walker, both of Lawrence Station, Ontario, Canada.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. George M. Barbarotto was born near Barryville, N. Y., the daughter of John H. and Katie Kerr, and died Feb. 6th, 1920, at her home, 650 East 181st St., Bronx, N. Y., aged 20 years, 2 months and 27 days. She was married by the writer October 15th, 1919. Her body was brought to Barryville, N. Y., where she was buried Sunday, Feb. 8th. She leaves to mourn their loss her husband, a poor broken-hearted man, father, mother, one brother, six sisters, with many friends. May God bless the dear sorrowing friends with reconciled minds to his will. She loved the doctrine of grace, loved God's people, and when I saw her last she said she expected to go to Middletown, N. Y., soon and unite with the church if they could receive her. She is now in glory, eternally happy.

ALSO,

Mrs. Jennie H. Britton, wife of A. J. Britton, of Richmond, Va., died Feb. 1st, 1920, aged 47 years, 1 month and 29 days. She had been in failing health for more than a year previous to her death. The best of physicians and specialists failed to cure her. She was a most patient sufferer, never complaining, but always appeared happy, even when suffering greatly. She showed great evidence of her faith in Jesus, always saying, The will of the Lord be done. The Lord favored her with wonderful revelations of his mercy, love and salvation, and she was enabled to declare them, which was a great comfort to her husband, his mother and friends. Neither she nor her husband belonged to the church, but loved the people and doctrine as held and proclaimed by God's servants. She requested that John xiv. 17, and hymn No. 20 (Beebe's collection) be read at her funeral. The funeral was held at the home of her husband's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Britton, Justus, Pa., Tuesday, Feb. 3rd. Her husband, one brother and many friends are left to mourn. The writer of this notice spoke with the ability that God gave, desiring to comfort the mourners. The body was taken to the cemetery near by and buried according to our custom.

D. M. VAIL.

Mrs. Eliza Slack died August 28th, 1919, aged about 78 years. She was baptized April 19th, 1908, in the fellowship of the Salem Church, Philadelphia, Pa. She was firm and consistent in her belief in the faith of Jesus Christ.

ALSO,

Mrs. Margaret Norris died Feb. 21st, 1920, aged 80 years and 10 months. She had been a member of the Episcopal denomination, but never felt it to be her home. After remaining there thirty years she was baptized in the fellowship of the Salem Church, Philadelphia, Pa., May 2nd, 1909, where she remained a faithful, devoted and happy member until her death.

B. F. COULTER.

Mrs. S. E. Roberson was born April 24th, 1850, and departed this life Feb. 20th, 1920, making her stay on earth 69 years, 9 months and 26 days. She was born in Georgia, and when a little girl moved with her parents to Alabama; in December, 1861, she moved with her family to Louisiana, settling eighteen miles southeast of Winnfield, afterward moving near Gansville, where she united with the Missionary Baptists. She was married to Benjamin Franklin Roberson, who died about the year 1890. To that union were born three children, two daughters and one son: Ida Evens, Mrs. Jessie E. Williams and J. W. Roberson, all of whom are living and were in constant attendance during their mother's illness except Mrs. Williams. Sister Roberson left the Missionary Baptists and together with brother Frank Roberson joined the Primitive Baptists at Mount Olive in the seventies, being baptized by Elder Zackary Thomas, and remained consistent members as long as they lived. She was as well beloved by her neighbors as any one I ever knew, judging by the interest manifested while she was sick. They would come every day to see if there was anything they could do. Her brothers, sister and children will never be able to express their appreciation for the kindness shown her. She was the most unselfish person I ever knew. In her younger days she was always found waiting on the sick, when there was any in the community in which she lived. I want to speak of her faith, for she believed in a sovereign God, who rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. She believed in salvation by grace, having lost all confidence in the flesh. I will say to her children, Weep not for her, but rather weep for yourselves, for she has gone from this world of sin and sorrow, and we have reason to believe that our loss is her eternal gain. Dear sister, as you are the only sister left, mourn not as one without hope, for we feel sure she has gone to be with God in that world where there is no more sorrow, for there is no sin there.

Written by one who loved her; her brother in the flesh and I hope in the Spirit.

M. E. HAMNER.

Sally J. Ferguson was born Nov. 13th, 1842, and died Dec. 23rd, 1916, aged 74 years, 1 month and 10 days. She was married to R. E. Ferguson in 1883. No children was born to them. She was a daughter of Allen and Elizabeth Weeks. She united with the New Providence Primitive Baptist Church, in Attala County, Miss., August, 1903, and lived a faithful member until death. She was a good neighbor, ever ready to visit and attend the sick and afflicted, and was loved and respected by all for her upright walk and godly conversation. She was a true Primitive Baptist, often confessing her unworthiness and saying she was saved by grace, if saved at all.

H. C. FERGUSON.

Mrs. Rebecca T. Guyman Stout was born in Hancock County, Ill., April 5th, 1850. She was a daughter of Elder Isaiah and Hannah Guyman. She moved with her parents to Missouri, where she grew to womanhood. She was married to Richard Newton Stout March 23rd, 1865. To that union twelve children were born. Those surviving are J. B., of Lake Andes, S. Dak., Mrs. Andrew McKenna, Mrs. W. W. Price and Mrs. Charles Dahlberg, of Wagner, S. Dak., James M., of Stickney, S. Dak., I. G., of Woonsocket, N. Dak., and George O., of Sidney, N. Dak. One son was drowned in the Missouri River in 1898 and four died in infancy. She and her husband moved to Tyndall, S. Dak., April 5th, 1883, from Taylor Co., Iowa. She was left a widow August 20th, 1900, and died Jan. 10th, 1920, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Andrew McKenna, in Wagner, S. Dak. She was a dear lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and often in her letters to me would say how much she enjoyed the letters and writings of the ministers, and that she wanted to take the paper as long as she lived. She had no church privileges, but wrote me in one of her letters last summer that she would be happy to be baptized if a church should consider her worthy to be a member. I feel sure any Baptist Church would have accepted her after hearing her relate her experience and spiritual exercises. She loved her Bible and read it a great deal. She desired to know and do her Master's will. She was a devoted mother, and held in high esteem by all who came in contact with her; to know her was to love her. I shall miss her good letters; she was related to me as cousin, aunt and sister in the faith once delivered unto the saints.

Services were held in the Methodist church-house Jan. 12th, Mr. George Hassel officiating. The hymns sung were, "Some time the silver cord will break" and "The ninety and nine."

MINA HANSON.

John W. Robbins, son of J. S. and Dora Robbins, was born July 7th, 1904, and died July 4th, 1919, making his stay upon earth 15 years, lacking 3 days. Johnnie came to his death by what we call accident, yet it was the way which the dear Lord had purposed. On June 26th he, in company with three other boys, went in bathing. They all ran and were to jump at the same time, when Johnnie in some way slipped and fell and injured the lower part of his spine, completely paralyzing him all but his neck and head and partly his shoulders and arms, which he could move a little. He lay a week and one day in that condition; he knew everybody and would talk to them. He said that he would never get well, but seemed to be reconciled. The morning of the day he died he sang a song, I am going to live with Jesus; what rejoicing there will be. He was a favorite among the neighbors, and many tears were shed even among men. Everything was done for him that could possibly be done. Our neighbors and friends were very attentive, and part of the time our house was filled with friends. Johnnie always attended Old Baptist meeting, both Saturday and Sunday, and was a favorite among our preachers. He loved the hymns, "What wondrous love is this," "Sweet rivers of redeeming love," and "How tedious and tiresome the hours when Jesus no longer I see," and when we would sit down at home to sing he would most always ask us to sing them.

On account of poor telephone service we failed to get any minister, so brother W. H. Cannaday conducted the service and brother J. D. Robbins offered prayer, after which the remains were laid away in the cemetery at Good Hope, there to await the coming of the blessed Son of God. We should not weep for him, as I am sure he is with the redeemed of the Lord. O how we miss him, yet God's will be done in all things. May it be his will to reconcile us to him in all things, and may we be able to say with one of old, Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. We have had six children, three of whom died in infancy. Johnnie leaves father, mother, two sisters and a host of friends to weep for him.

Written by his father,

J. S. ROBBINS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Gene Cobb, Texas, $1.00; Mrs. L. N. Henry, Miss., $2.00; W. A. Thompson, Va., $3.00; E. M. Murdock, Mo., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

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SEMMA E. CORDER,

PHILIPPI, W. Va. R. 1.

[THIS book was printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, and we think will prove of interest to any of our people who may read it.—ED.]

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 88. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1920. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CLAY, La., Dec. 8, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars, for which you will please renew my subscription for one year. I have an impression to speak to the household of faith through the SIGNS, though it makes me hesitate to begin, for fear it is of the flesh, and I know that in my flesh there dwells no good thing. I can only say, Lord, guide my mind in what I may say, that it may be to the praise of thy holy name and to the comfort of the poor and afflicted people of God, of which I hope I am one, although my hope, the most of the time, is very small, and I am the least of all, if one at all.

We see in the eighteenth chapter of John Jesus says, "My kingdom is not of this world." Now what do we believe is taught here, and where does this belong? Jesus says, My words are spirit and they are life, and Paul says, The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Then we must say this kingdom is a spiritual kingdom. We cannot work ourselves into this kingdom. One man cannot teach it to others, for the world by wisdom knows not God, and man cannot work men into it. Jesus says the good seed are the children of his kingdom. The Scripture says, Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Then I understand that we must be born into this kingdom before we can hope that God is our Father. I believe we are all in nature just as dead to the knowledge of this kingdom as the dead body is to natural things, and if we are born into this kingdom it was given us in Christ before the world began, and love is the moving cause of it. Nothing we have ever done or ever can do can bring it about. Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. Jesus says in the sixth chapter of John: "Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." I well remember one day about fifty years ago all hope was gone from me; I saw God's justice in my condemnation, and felt it would be a sin to ask God to forgive me, for I saw he would be unjust to do so; yes, he could not remain just and do so. How man could be just with God was yet as dark as midnight to me, so I

felt to give it all up and sink down in woe, confessing God's justice in it all. All at once these words came to my mind: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." O how sweet it was to my poor soul to see a little light by which God could remain just and save a poor sinner like me. Then I am bound to believe that it comes to us by revelation; hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. No man can say that Jesus is the Christ but by the Holy Ghost. Then I could sing:

> "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
> In a believer's ear!
> It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
> And drives away his fear."

The blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin. The Lord hath brought forth our righteousness. Come let us declare in Zion the work of the Lord our God. Dear brethren and sisters, we do not wonder at our being called "Hardshells," for all the wisdom of the world cannot search into it. Paul says he did not receive it of man, neither was he taught it, but by revelation of Jesus Christ. Man has never believed it except by revelation of Jesus Christ.

It seems that I have just begun, but I must close for fear I make this letter too long. I want to say to you who write for the SIGNS that when you feel the impression to write withhold it not. Do not say that you are too little and weak to write, for those little people are the ones I enjoy reading after. Jesus says, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings I have perfected praise. Yes, sometimes when I read after these little babes in Christ tears fill my eyes and I have to stop awhile to see to read, and if I do not love them I wish I could; yes, if I knew I loved these little babes in Christ with a pure love it would be worth more to me than all the friendship of the world. I am most of the time low down in the dark, but sometimes I hope the Lord drives the dark clouds away, and then it seems my mind goes to all the poor and afflicted in love in every nation, feeling that the time is coming when we will be gathered together to sing his praise forever where sin and sorrow are no more. I want to give God all the praise for salvation for time and eternity.

Dear brethren editors, I have written this feeling that after you have read it over if you see it will crowd out better matter you will withhold it, and all will be well with me.

Hoping the Lord will enable you to send out messages that will be comforting to his poor and afflicted people, as you have done in the past, I am a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

J. R. CHANDLER.

CERULEAN SPRINGS, Ky., June 29, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—If the Lord so directs, I will offer a few thoughts for your consideration upon the first chapter of Ephesians. It begins by saying, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus." Paul gives his authority for his apostleship (the will of God) not of men, nor by men, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. In Gal. i. 16, 17, he says, "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen [Gentiles]; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." Of course things have changed; there are schools of training to fit men for the gospel ministry; but Paul, who said he was less than the least of all saints, was given this

grace. Why did he need grace? He needed it to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. So, then, Paul was called to be an apostle, not called on to be. Then this letter is to the saints at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus.

Verse 2: "Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."—John i. 16, 17. "For he is our peace."—Eph. ii. 14.

Verse 3: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Here we are taught that the saints and the faithful are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ, not one left out. Just look anywhere in the New Testament and you will find them recorded.

Verse 4: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." We believe that men hate the doctrine of election, or choice, above all things; they go so far as to say that if such a thing be true God is unjust. Well, let them think as they may, the prophets and apostles taught it, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, taught it, to the end that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Paul met the objection of men as is recorded in Romans ix. 11. Men may bring up the case of Cain and Abel, Isaac and Ishmael, the old covenant and the new, Jacob and Esau, or anything they choose, it will still remain truth that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, he said, Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated.

"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." God is a God of purpose. Were it not for his predestination where would be our hope of the resurrection? (See Romans viii. 15, 23; ix. 4; Gal. iv. 5; 1 Cor. xv. 19.) If in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable.

Verse 6: "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." This is consoling to those who have hope in Jesus and feel that he is their only refuge in time of need.

Verse 7: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." "By grace ye are saved."—Eph. ii. 5. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."—Romans iii. 24.

Verses 8–11: "Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Here seems to be the key to the whole thing; after summing it all up everything is included in the inheritance, wisdom, knowledge, sanctification and redemption, righteousness, justification, forgiveness of sins, repentance, belief in the Spirit with all its bearings, love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

Verse 12: "That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ." It has been said that there are many men of many minds, many birds of many kinds, but there is one thing sure: that the saints and the faithful in Christ should be to the praise of his glory. Let him that glorieth glory in the Lord.

Yours as ever, in hope,

D. R. TURNER.

LA GRANGE, Ga., March 3, 1920.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—This evening, while lying on my bed of affliction, musing in the twilight hour (my favorite hour of the day), thoughts of you and dear brother Ker, together with many other writers of the SIGNS, came before my imaginary vision, and I wished from the depths of my soul that every one could realize how comforting their precious words have been to me, and how dearer every day becomes the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but my heart grows sad when I see no longer the names of those whose rich messages once adorned its pages. There are two names especially that I desire to mention: Elder Durand and sister Bessie, whom I believe the Lord sent into my shut-in life as a blessing. How lonely dear Mildred must feel since losing so many loved ones. I am very thankful that the Lord has blessed her with a good companion and a precious child. And there is sister Mary Pittman, who still mourns the loss of her husband, Elder T. R. Pittman, who a short while before he died wrote me a very comforting letter. I want to say to all who are passing through deep waters that I, too, have felt the billows. During the year 1918 my husband lost two brothers, and I, in much suffering, also lost a brother and sister. My parents, one brother and a sister had already preceded them to the grave. But I am reconciled, for they all died in the sweet hope of a glorious resurrection.

See how I have digressed from what my intention was in writing you. My dear brother, a few nights ago, after suffering intense pain, I dropped into a doze, and on awaking there came forcibly into my mind these words: "I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion." For some time I beheld with an internal eye a snow-white lamb standing upon the summit of a mountain, whose gradual incline, verdure and smoothness presented a scene of indescribable grandeur. Since then I have thought of asking you to tell me through the SIGNS more of this wonderful scene. Was not this lamb the blessed Son of God, which John says was slain from the foundation of the world? and was not this mountain the one that filled David with such inspiration he was forced to say, Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion? O the rapture that fills my soul when I think of this mountain in all its pristine loveliness. What a precious name is Zion, but how varied the changes associated with it. How my poor heart is made to weep when I think of the children of Israel who were carried away captives. How tantalizing it must have been when their enemies required of them a song. I can almost hear them say, We wept when we remembered Zion. Who can fathom the depths of sorrow which caused them to ask, How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? Thus it was, and thus it will ever be with the Lord's people. How shall they sing the Lord's song in a strange land? "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

Brother Lefferts, I have written this at intervals, and in much suffering, but every word is an expression of my love for God's people, and a prayer for the welfare of Zion. If you see fit to publish it you can do so; if not, it will be all right.

We are anxiously awaiting the coming of the SIGNS, and I want to tell you that my husband enjoys its precious tidings. My love to all the household of faith. To the dear saints in Canada I would say, You are still cherished in my memory. May the Lord bless you, dear editors, and may you never shun to declare the whole counsel. Please remember us at the throne of grace.

Unworthily,

NANNIE B. EDWARDS.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Nov. 12, 1919.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—My desire is to write a few lines to you; not to tell you any new thing, for the new things I know very little about, and do not interest myself to find out about them, but the old things, the old, old story, suits me and is my theme. Where would I be roving to-day if it were not for Jesus and his love? A few days ago I was made to think about being wise above what is written, and looked for it and found it in 1st Corinthians iv. 6; it reads thus: "That ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another." I feel there is a lot in these words, for as Elder Purington used so often to say, Take not another's word for it, but look and search for yourselves, and be sure of the true Scripture. I am not inclined to search as I should, but when I am given words as these were how quickly I search for them. How gracious the Lord is to me, feeding me so often out of his own hand. "Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood shall never lose its power." How gracious and how glorious art thou, Lord God Almighty. Sometimes my mind is taken up with the way we should live, and I do try to live that way, but find myself wanting. We should esteem others better than ourselves, but if they seem more ignorant than ourself do we have that esteem, or do we feel ourselves raised up a little and find a little more in our own polluted self? Another thing, we are told to be not weary in well doing. Do we search it out to find the well doing to suit ourselves? If we do not see any good results should we stop doing? The word does not say anything about our stopping, but to continue, for we are told to not be weary, so we must continue. What is well doing? I do not know whether I know just the way this is applied, but feel all the commands to us are included both natural and spiritual. How much good we often think we could do if we only had lots of means to do with, but I am sure this Scripture has no "ifs" in it, but that we are to do these things with whatever we have to do with. See a brother in need, go help him, and go again if necessary. If he sits down, seeming as though his hands were folded from helping himself, does that relieve you in any way of the command? He may be in need just the same. His heart may be full to overflowing, causing his hands to drop for a time. Now I do not think the well doing is always need of money, or need of labor or of advice, but words of cheer, and always a manifestation of love, as well as what we are shown he is in need of. We might give him a lot of money and give it in such a way that the well doing would be entirely left out, but a word of encouragement and a

touch of real love with it might fill his need; so trust the Father for the need, as he will show it to us. We do the well doing, have sympathy, love and humility for the brethren in all conditions. I cannot write this as I wanted to, so one of you editors please give your views on it.

I must stop, for this is already too long, but there was much else I wanted to say. Will sister Helen McCormick send me her address? as I fail to find it.

Love to all.

MARY HILL TERRY.

EROS, La., August 3, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am not a subscriber to your valuable paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but brother Chandler is a subscriber and shares his paper with me, and my poor soul is made to rejoice sometimes when I read the sweet messages of love from the dear brethren and sisters, some expressing my feelings better than I can express them myself. Verily my heart goes out to them, I hope, in christian love, for the things I once loved I now hate, and the things I once hated I now love. I had the least confidence in the Old School Baptists of any people on earth until I hope God taught me that salvation is by grace, and grace alone. A great change has been wrought in me; whether it is of God I know not, but I know I have seen myself to be the vilest of sinners, and most of my time I feel myself to be the most corrupt being on earth, and am made to cry out in my feelings, Was there ever any one like me? I try to pray, but seem to be too vile to call upon His holy name. But O, when it pleases him to give me a little season of rejoicing how I long to sing praises to his matchless name all the days of my life, and crave to serve him as becomes a child of God, but I am so vile I cannot perform one good act, for evil is continually present with me. So it has been all the days of my life, but I hope I can say with David, Truly my soul waiteth upon God; from him cometh my salvation. Upon that Rock my hope is stayed, for to us who are God's chosen people there is only one true and living God. On his precious promises we can rely, for he speaks and it is done, he commands and its stands fast; surely he does not need the help of poor weak mortals to carry out his plans. Dear saints, I am glad everything is fixed just as it is, and that our God rules and controls all things. To deny a poor sinner his little hope, he is of all beings most miserable; but hope reaches beyond this life and embraces a holy life, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest, O sweet rest. Dear household of faith, are we hoping for this blessed state? What a glorious thought for the poor trembling child of God who is bowed down with doubts and fears, and whose little hope seems almost gone, that there is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother, and one who is able to save to the uttermost; for verily there is but one that can heal, and that is the one who inflicts the rod. May he enable us to bear all our trials while here in this world, and when our days here are over may it please him to give us an inheritance in that city whose builder and maker is God.

Dear brethren, I did not intend to write so much, and really cannot understand why I have written at all. You may do as you like with this. Please pray for a poor sinner.

With love to all the brethren and sisters, I am your unworthy sister, I hope,

LULA PRICHARD.

SALISBURY, Md., Feb. 10, 1919.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am taking the liberty of sending you a letter I received from Elder D. M. Vail. The reading of it did me so much good that I felt I wanted others to share it with me, provided you see fit to publish it.

With love to all who love the truth, your little brother,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

CLARKS SUMMIT, Pa., Feb. 6, 1919.

DEAR BROTHER FISHER:—Yours of Feb. 3rd received, and was enjoyed very much by both of us. You seem to know from your experience just what to say to comfort a poor, helpless, hell-deserving sinner like me. I am sure you could not say the things you do if you did not know the way, and when I say the way I mean Christ, for he is the way, the truth and the life; yes, he is the only way of life and salvation. He says, I am the door of the sheep; not, I will be one of the doors, but, I am the door, absolutely, positively; there is no other door. I am the resurrection and the life, not will be, but "I am;" he is the very thing itself. Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation; not, I will be, but, I am; he is all there is of it, he is the one and only salvation. The Lord is my Shepherd; not will be or is one of them, but he is the only Shepherd, or provider, and he looks after and cares for his own sheep. He laid down his life and shed his blood for them and redeemed them, for they had all gone astray, ten thousand talents in debt and not one farthing to pay, and he paid it with his blood, or life. He says, I lay down my life for the sheep. I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again. This commandment I received of my Father. He died for our sins and rose for our justification. What more could he do? Nothing more is demanded. In this work he secured and eternally fixed the redemption of his sheep, and all the powers of hell cannot affect it one iota, and heaven will not. He says, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. He is the first and last and all there is of our salvation, our Righteousness, Sanctification, Redemption, Propitiation, High Priest, High Tower, Shield, Buckler, Defence, Hiding-place, Refuge, Mediator, Intercessor, or Advocate. Time would fail me to speak of all he is to his people, so I will say he is our heaven and hope of eternal joy, peace and happiness in this world and everywhere else, and I will say with you I cannot render unto God the praise I so much desire and have desired for sixty years or more, and I cannot help it, can you?

Yours as ever, a stranger here below, and what I am it is hard to know.

D. M. VAIL.

TEHUACANA, Texas, Dec. 21, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will write you a few lines to show you my thankfulness and appreciation of your kindness in sending me the dear family paper, which has been a great satisfaction and comfort to me in my lonely hours, as I do not get to hear preaching. I would love to write something to the readers of the SIGNS, telling them how much they have comforted me. I sometimes feel almost like giving it all up as a delusion when I find my old sinful mind traveling in so many forbidden paths; it does not seem reasonable that one who has passed from death unto life in Christ could have so many foolish, wicked thoughts as run through my mind; then I think, How can it be that one who has had the experience I hope I have deny the work of the Spirit

in their heart? I find that sin is not eradicated from this old tabernacle of clay, and the things that I, the inner man, would do, I do not, but the things which I would not, I do. O the dark seasons I have to pass through, and the bitter trials I have to endure, but when the Lord sees fit to make darkness light and the bitter sweet, how pleasant it is. So I conclude that the darkness and the bitter are just as necessary as the light and sweet, for without the darkness and bitter we would not know anything of the light and sweet.

Well, I just thought to write and thank you for your kindness in sending me the paper, and I will close, praying the Lord's blessings upon the editors and contributors of the SIGNS. My financial condition is the same that it was a year ago, but my son has been permitted to return home from France, for which we feel thankful to that great God from whom all blessings flow.

J. H. BOZEMAN.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Nov. 20, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am writing to thank you for your great kindness to me in sending my paper during my long visit, never missing a number. Now I am going to ask you to send no more papers to Bachelor, Mo., but return to above home address. I look for each one with anxiety, especially when away. It was one way of hearing from the people I love, and I am so glad to be back where I can sometimes be among them, for no other preaching or people fill the place. I left my papers out among Old Baptists I met in Missouri, and they told me how much they enjoyed reading them. I truly hope they may bring you some new subscribers, for to me there is no other paper published like it, nor any other people like the Old Baptists. I am so glad they are peculiar and different from others in belief. Each and every other denomination can mingle together and see no difference, but we cannot; it is our people or none. It makes us appear selfish, but God said, Come out from among them and be ye separate. Other denominations appear to me only as worldly organizations; I could not abide among them, could find no home; there could be no love like knowing we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren.

This is a simple note, but written with love and thanks, and I believe will bring my paper home to me. I hope I am worthy of your kindness, but fear is my great trouble.

BETTIE BENNETT.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 17, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN AND FRIENDS:—Before my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, was taken away he was preparing for publication a book containing an account of his life and ministry. He was doing this in response to the urgent request of many of his friends. The book was never published. Now we are preparing to publish his autobiography, together with the writings of the last twenty years of his life, supplementing his book "Meditations." The book will contain about 300 pages, will be bound in cloth and illustrated. Before we can publish the volume we would have to form an idea of how many books would be wanted. If any of you who would care to subscribe for the book at $2.50 will send me your names and state how many copies you want, as soon as I receive enough names to make it possible I will immediately publish the book and send you your copies in a short time.

MILDRED DURAND GORDY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1920.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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INNER DISCIPLINE.

At the outset we assure our readers that this is not an article on church order, nor the practice of the gospel church in its visible organization, either as it is or ought to be. Rather it is our thought to consider discipline from the standpoint of christian experience: that discipline of the soul by which the believers in and followers of Christ become trained in soul to obey him. The two words, "disciple" and "discipline," are very closely allied; the first signifying one who believes in and follows, the second meaning the training to which a follower is subjected in order to obedience, that training which comes to him and within him, not to bring about discipleship, but because he is already a disciple. A parent disciplines not some other parent's child, but his own, and not in order to make the child his, but because the child is already his, and to bring the child into obedience. Now, that teaching of the heavenly Father by which he produces obedience in his children is invariably the product of his own Holy Spirit, and nothing short of the operation of the Holy Spirit within the soul of the believer can effect obedience. Works of the creature, as they are unable to bring about salvation, so also they cannot produce obedience; but gracious works, as they are the outflowing evidence of salvation, so are they as well the outflowering of christian obedience. We want to try in this article to set forth some ways in which the Lord effects experimental or soul discipline of his people, after which to contrast therewith some ways in which christian obedience can never be effected, but ways in which men and worldly organizations are continually trying to bring it about. It was said of Jacob many centuries ago that the Lord found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness, "he led him about, he instructed him." Now, how did the Lord instruct him? That is the point. Was it by delivering Jacob over to other men that they might teach him true religion and obedience thereunto? Indeed, no. Such instruction of Jacob, God's child, was too precious for the Lord to delegate to other hands than his own. "So the Lord alone did lead him." Notice it says the Lord alone did it. No man or men helped him to lead Jacob, nor did the Lord ask him for any suggestions as to how it ought to be done. "And there was no strange god with him." Since the Lord was the only leader and teacher Jacob had, it resulted in Jacob's having no other god to worship but the one true and living God. He could not turn aside unto idols, because the discipline to which he had been subjected in his soul by the direct leading and teaching of the Almighty had purified him from idolatry. The reason the world is so full of idols to-day, and so many thousands bowing the knee to them, is because men in the mass are strangers to the internal spiritual work of God. They are being led and taught by men of their own selves, and not by

the Lord alone, as was Jacob. Now, as to the manner of the Lord in teaching Jacob, the inspired record likens it to an eagle's training of its young. "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings." The eagle builds its nest only in mountainous districts, carrying a few sticks and brambles to the inaccessible shelf of a rocky precipice, where the eggs are deposited almost on the bare rock. Here the eagles are born and nurtured until ready to fly. Then the parent bird puts them through a course of instruction which appears cruel, but is for the young's good. The mother proceeds to stir up the nest by removing first one stick and then another; that is, she takes the very foundation from under the little ones. As this goes on, the young, not knowing what to do, begin to fall off the shelf, and down, down, down. But the alert eye of the mother is ever upon them. She does not intend her young shall fall so far as to be dashed to pieces. As they fall she swoops under them and catches them on her wings, to bear them to a place of safety. This process is repeated again and again, until the young, in fluttering, learn to use their wing muscles, and so to fly. This training of the eagle's young is employed by the spiritual writer to convey some idea to us as to how it is the Lord disciplines his Jacobs: all his followers. The Lord removes the very foundations from under his people and lets them sink down so far, until they think death and obliteration their very sure portion. By the inner teaching of his Spirit he makes them to know the hidden evils of their heart, he shows them their sins, revealing the utter depravity of their human nature. Everything in which they ever trusted for salvation is taken away; their good works, if they ever thought they had any, are stripped from them; their wisdom becomes foolishness, their righteousness filthy rags. Their refuge of lies is taken away, their garments of fig leaves shriveled up by the scorching rays of the law's condemnation. Stick by stick the nest in which they so securely trusted is swept from under them, and they find themselves sinking down, sinking down beneath God's righteous frown. The teaching of the Lord is such that he will not share his throne in their affections with any rival power. He is a jealous God, and will not allow that his children shall serve any but himself. Through great tribulation he engraves this precept in the fleshly tables of their new heart and implants it in their spiritual mind: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." No truer words are to be found in all Scripture than those of the apostle that it is only through great tribulation that the disciples of truth enter into the kingdom. One of old said that it was good for him to be afflicted, for before he was afflicted he went astray, but "now have I kept thy word." Every new appreciation of divine things comes through some measure of affliction. This is the internal or soul discipline by which the Lord leads his people in obedience to his truth. It is only as we are taught the vanity and weakness of ourselves over and over again that we can be made to flee the corruption that is in the world through lust. Only by being taught experimentally the folly of trusting in an arm of flesh can we arrive at that trust alone in God which shall never make ashamed. Society has its moral code, according to which its members must live if they expect respectability. Nations have their laws, which their citizens must

obey if they expect to stay out of jail. But neither morality nor obedience to man-made laws constitute christian obedience. No outside authority, either of society or of church or of state, can tell one how to obey God, or compel one to be a child of God. The authority of God, that is, his irresistible power, working in the souls of his people disciplines them in the way they should go. In the absence of any heart knowledge of true religion, no amount of outside influences can effect regeneration. There is a world of difference between "reformation" and "regeneration," between the devil going out of a man and his being cast out of a man. "When the unclean spirit is gone out of man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first." Here we have a picture of moral reformation, which is often mistaken by the world for spiritual regeneration. Persons sometimes make up their minds to reform their manner of living, sometimes even resolving to leave off swearing and other forms of wickedness, in order to get religion. By this means the unclean spirit voluntarily agrees to go out of the house instead of being cast out. For a while all goes well, and the house really seems much cleaner, more swept and garnished, than ever before. But, in the absence of any work of the Holy Spirit in the heart, this cannot last, there will be a gradual slipping back into the mire of wickedness, and the man will eventually be worse than ever before. The world is all the time looking for external influences to bring about an internal work. It can never be. One must be born of the Spirit and of the blood before there can be any entering of the kingdom. In the absence of this work, which is always spiritual and internal, there can never be any effective substitute devised by men. Sinners must be born of God in order to be righteous, they must experimentally be taught of God's Spirit in order to be disciplined into obedience unto the truth. All the laws and compulsions of men can never force one sinner into being truly good. We have frequently reminded our readers in these columns that God's people need not that any man teach them, for they have an unction from the Holy One and know all things. There is in the soul of each believer an inward monitor, an abiding grace, which teaches them the denial of worldliness and ungodliness, that they should live soberly and righteously in this present evil world. The best we can say to you is to heed this still small voice that speaks in your heart, and to walk in accord therewith as the Lord may measure unto you sufficient grace. One of us cannot be a rule for another, one cannot tell another what to do, one cannot lord it over another's conscience. Let each walk according to the light that is in him. If that light be darkness, so much more the pity. The nation of Israel of old seemed to repent of their transgressions again and again and turn unto the Lord, but it turned out to be only "seeming" and not reality. They were always doing contrary to the law and going after strange gods. When some great disaster overtook them then in their fright they would seek the Lord in a formal way and seem to turn over a new leaf of reformation. Sometimes it looked like real regeneration, but soon after the

danger passed away they were as wicked as ever. The Bible proves that where the Spirit's work is in the soul true obedience will be prompted through love, and not through fear of any threatened evil. A so-called preacher said the other day, "The passions, the appetites and the desires of men made it necessary for the promulgation of the ten commandments. Yet they still stand and are obeyed by the great mass of the American people." This preacher may have studied theology, but he surely never studied his Bible. God's promulgation of the ten commandments by Moses certainly was never made contingent upon the passions, appetites nor desires of men. The wickedness of men never made it necessary for God to do anything. Whatever God has been pleased to do for the salvation of sinners, he was never impelled thereto by any considerations outside himself, but induced solely by his infinite mercy and the good pleasure of his will. The promulgation of the Mosaic law, instead of being compelled by the wickedness of men, was but one of the several links in the chain of God's plan of salvation decreed in his eternal counsel with and in himself before time began. According to his plan, first came the counsel in eternity founded in God's foreknowledge, election and predestination. Then came the creation of the world. Next the formation of man out of the dust of the world. Then God put the man under law. Following came the transgression and the entrance of sin into the world, and then death by sin. The sending of the Mosaic law was another link in the great chain, for no other purpose than to show the impossibility of man's being saved through any obedience of his own. Yet the so-called preacher quoted above has the audacity to say that the ten commandments still stand, and are being obeyed by the great mass of the American people. The ten commandments certainly do not stand to-day as a spiritual code, for they, with all the rest of the law, passed away, with all that old covenant, in the death of Christ. To say that they still stand is to say that Christ did not finish the work the Father sent him to do. But more amazing it is to say that these commandments are being obeyed by the American people. The first and greatest commandment of that law was, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind and heart and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself. It is news to us to hear that the great mass of the American people are doing this. We had not noticed it. Indeed, labor troubles everywhere, with increasing unrest and strife on every hand, the rich getting all the time richer and the poor all the time growing poorer, does not have the appearance to us of loving the neighbor as one's self. Possibly it is like that young man who asked Jesus what he should do to inherit eternal life, and when he told Jesus he had kept all the law from his youth up, the Savior told him to go sell all he had and give to the poor. The young man went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. The world, as the so-called preacher says, may boast in its self-righteousness that it is keeping the ten commandments, but may the Lord have mercy on them if the great searchlight of his truth shall ever shine in their souls to bring them to real knowledge of themselves before his great throne of judgment.

Yesterday we came across another choice bit of literature from the pen of a modern writer, and we cannot resist handing it to our readers. Speaking of the recent world war and its attendant

misery, he says, "The war can pay its measureless cost only if the world is shocked into change of heart." Now, did any one ever hear of anybody being "shocked" into a change of heart? As we have said before, true godliness can never be imparted by any outside influences whatever. Earthquakes, whirlwinds, fires, plagues and wars can never produce spiritual changes at all. The Lord does take out of his people the stony heart and does give them a heart of flesh, thus effecting a real change of heart in his people, but he never employs calamities to do this work. It is invariably the fruit of his own Spirit's work. You know the old prophet looked for the Lord in the wind, but he was not in the wind; then he looked for the Lord in the earthquake, but he was not in the earthquake; then in the fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. After all these calamities, came a still small voice. That was the Lord, and that is the Lord. No amount of external troubles and influences can bring one person to know the Lord. True spiritual discipline, true religious training, true christian obedience unto the truth, are the fruit of nothing short of the still small voice of God in the soul, which is the Holy Spirit's teaching. Just as the wind blows where it lists, and we hear the sound of it, but cannot tell from where it comes nor to where it is going, so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Multitudes from all the coasts of Judea went out to see John baptizing in Jordan. What did they expect to see? Surely not what they did see, for what John was doing was very simple and unpretentious, not at all spectacular. He was only a reed shaken by the wind. Only a poor frail piece of humanity being blown here and there by the dictation of the wind of God's Holy Spirit. So is every one that lives in obedience unto the truth through the discipline of God in his soul. Just reeds shaken by the wind.

L.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, at his home, Salisbury, Md., March 17th, 1920, Lawrence L. Adkins and Miss Maude Belle Bethard, both of Wicomico County, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Amanda Hackworth Wright, widow of George S. Wright, was born in Shelby County, Ky., January 20th, 1834, and departed this life Feb. 5th, 1920, in the 87th year of her age. She was married to George S. Wright Nov. 1st, 1860. To them were born three sons and one daughter, the two youngest children, a daughter and son, preceding them both to the grave. "Uncle George," as he was familiarly called, died June, 1913. Sister Wright was received and baptized in the fellowship of the old Beech Creek Church, Shelby County, about twenty-five years ago, and lived a true and faithful member to the profession she made. She grew stronger and stronger in the faith, and longed for the summons to depart this life and be at rest. She had been a great sufferer for the past yes ' or more, but was kindly cared for by her son, J. H., and his dear wife and daughter, the latter being her only grandchild. She leaves two sons: J. H., of Shelbyville, Ky., and David C., of Omaha, Nebr.; also two aged sisters: Mrs. Kate Ware, of this county, and Mrs. Helen Jones, of Louisville, Ky.

Funeral services were held at the late residence 2:30 p. m., the 6th, conducted by the writer, the text being these words: As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. To live is Christ, and to die is gain. Burial in Grove Hill Cemetery, Shelbyville. May the dear Lord remember us all in his mercy.

ALSO,

Sue Catherine Ware Robertson was born in Shelby County, Ky., Feb. 4th, 1840. She was married to George T. Robertson Feb. 6th, 1862. To them were born seven children, four of whom survive her, three sons and one daughter having departed this life several years ago. Sister Robertson united with the old Beech Creek Church about thirty years ago, and it can be truly said of her that she loved the church and loved to meet with them there and elsewhere. She had been a reader of the SIGNS for many years, and was unwavering in the faith and doctrice advocated in its columns. She had been a great sufferer for several years from rheumatic trouble, and was unable to attend the meetings, but her faith and hope remained steadfast. I well remember my last visit with her, while she was under treatment here in Shelbyville. Her face brightened as we talked of the dear Savior and his sufferings for poor sinners. But this life of suffering is ended; she sweetly fell asleep in Jesus Feb. 24th, 1920. O what a blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep. She died

at her old home near Waddy, this county, and was buried in Grove Hill Cemetery, Shelbyville. On account of the epidemic of influenza the funeral services were conducted at the grave.

May the dear Lord in his love and mercy remember each member of the family, and bless them with all things needful in this life and that to come.

P. W. SAWIN.

Murinda E. Burch Watkins was born Dec. 23rd, 1834, near Glasgow, Ky., and passed away Feb. 4th, 1920, aged 85 years, 1 month and 11 days. She bore her suffering with great patience, expressing a desire to go home. She moved with her parents to Iowa in May, 1853, was married to James Watkins in 1857, and moved to Oregon in 1870, settling near Philomath, placing her membership with Luckimute Church. Brother Watkins united with and was ordained deacon of that church, passing away in 1903. Sister Watkins then placed her membership with Bethel Church, meeting at Tallman, Oregon. Her home was a home for Baptists, having entertained the association twice at her house, and was a regular attendant of the association while it held its meetings in Oregon. She united with the church early in her married life, and was a useful and faithful member, always present at the meetings if possible until stricken with paralysis. Sister Watkins was truly a mother in Israel, greatly beloved by all, and will be greatly missed by all. She leaves five sons and one daughter: Ben and Marion, of Portland, Oregon, Albert, James and Ezra, of Philomath, Oregon, and Mrs. Jennie Smith, of Des Moines, Iowa, with other relatives and many friends to mourn their loss.

Agreeable to her previous arrangement, the funeral services were held at her home in Philomath, Elder A. Horner officiating, after which the remains were placed by the side of her husband in the cemetery near Philomath to await the coming of the Lord.

NANCY D. HORNER.

Robert E. Mathis was born January 15th, 1855, and died March 9th, 1920, aged 65 years, 1 month and 24 days. He was married Feb. 3rd, 1880, to Emma Chester. To that union were born four children: Annie, who died in infancy, Florence, Everett and Metta, who are left with their heartbroken mother, two brothers, two sisters, ten grandchildren, an uncle, aunt and a host of other relatives and friends to mourn the loss of this good and very useful man. Brother Bob professed a hope in Christ several years ago, and after lingering around the fold for some years he joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Soldier Creek, Marshall Co., Ky., where he lived a faithful and devoted member until God removed him from his field of labor. His work as clerk of the church, as well as other stations in life, was so efficiently done that none but the great God can raise up another to fill his place. His was a model home, where he and his loving companion had walked for more than forty years, fighting life's battles that they might shelter and feed their relatives and friends, who were always welcomed in their home, or accommodate a neighbor in need. As a husband and companion he was equal to the most loyal and devoted; as a father ever gentle and kind, though firm; as a neighbor and friend he was ever faithful and true, never shirking his duty as a citizen. His many friends were always glad to meet with him; even the children were always glad to see "Uncle Bob" come. It was indeed pleasant and instructive to converse with him on the teachings of the Bible or on current events. We all miss him, yet we sorrow not as those who have no hope, but would meekly say, God's will be done, and would enter into the force of John's language: Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.

After funeral services conducted by Elder H. N. Oliver, his mortal remains were gently laid to rest in the Soldier Creek Cemetery, there to await the resurrection morn.

J. C. CHESTER.

Chester E. Buker, eldest son of Charles and Annie E. Buker, was born near Prentice, Ill., March 19th, 1903, and passed away at the Passavant hospital in Jacksonville Friday, January 30th, 1920, being at the time of his death 16 years, 10 months and 11 days of age. He leaves his parents and the following brothers and sisters to mourn their loss: Mabel, Everette, Cecil, Mildred, Carrol and Alpha, besides a number of other near relatives and many friends. Chester was a boy who by his kind and cheerful disposition won and retained the friendship of all who knew him. Though no more than a child, he displayed in his daily efforts the true ambition of a man. The love and attention he gave to home is worthy to be spoken of as most beautiful. His useful life, with the exception of a short time in Kansas, was spent in and near the Yatesville community. He obtained an excellent education at the Yatesville school, where he endeared himself to teachers and playmates. He was practically in good health until a few weeks ago, when it became necessary after other treatment to be taken to the Jacksonville hospital, where he underwent an operation. He rallied for a time and returned home, but it soon became evident that he would have to again be taken to the hospital, where everything that skill and loving hands could do was done for him, in a last fond hope of relieving him, but all to no avail; he quietly and peacefully passed away as above stated. The parents have lost an obedient and dutiful son, the other children a kind and loving brother, and the community a highly esteemed boy, who bade fair to be a useful man, but

the loss to all is an added treasure in heaven and his eternal gain.

Funeral services were held Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock in the Yatesville Baptist church-house, conducted most impressively by L. P. Harris, of Duquoin, Ill., in the presence of a large number of relatives and friends. Burial was in Yatesville cemetery.

ERRATA.

IN the SIGNS for March 1st, current volume, page 75, first column, eleventh line, the word "psychal" should be "psychical," and on page 77, first column, eighth line, the word "insane" should be "inane."

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

I. H. Evans, Md., $1.00; Decatur Mouser, Ohio, $3.00; Mrs. F. J. Norris, Ga., $2.00; Dr. W. R. Presley, Texas, $1.00; Mrs. I. R. Blythe, Pa., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 88. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1920. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SACRIFICE.

"AND almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."—Heb. ix. 22.

When sin entered into the world sacrifice was a close follower. Sacrifice has two purposes, the one to pay a debt the transgressor owes to a broken law, and the other to please or appease the wrath of the lawgiver or ruler. Most all laws have the penalty attached which the lawbreaker is required to pay. In the early history of man we learn that he sacrificed goats, lambs and bullocks from his flocks and herds, or the product of the soil. Cain was a tiller of the ground, and offered the fruit of his own works, which was not acceptable, while Abel was a keeper of sheep, and offered the firstlings of his flock, lambs, which required the shedding of blood, and typified the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Sacrifice must possess two qualities: it must be a sacrifice to fit the offence, and must be given with a pure motive. In other words, the offering and the one making the offering must be counted worthy. All sacrifice should be without blemish, perfect of its kind. This was a requirement under the law of Moses and under God's great law of redemption by a holy sacrifice. The Israelites sacrificed offerings of doves, lambs, goats, bullocks and things which required the shedding of blood, and were only made as temporal offerings, products of a corrupt and cursed world. The heathen nations offered various sacrifices to their gods and expected all kinds of blessings from them. These temporal offerings were usually limited as, a weekly offering, a yearly offering, an individual offering or a national offering. Christ's offering was limited to God's elect. When the Israelites observed the law of Moses and offered proper sacrifices to God they prospered in temporal things, but when they transgressed grievously they were punished with famine, pestilence and wars. All temporal offerings, temporal blessings and temporal punishments are only typical of the one great and only offering that reaches into eternity. While we live in the same world that the Israelites lived in, we are not under the law. Christ fulfilled the law, made it holy and did away with it. It was only a temporal law. When Christ fulfilled the law the law dispensation was

done away with and superseded by a new dispensation, the grace dispensation. Old things have passed away, and behold all things have become new. Christ fulfilled the one and put it under his feet; he gave the other and put his people under it. The first was temporal and faulty, the second spiritual and perfect. God's people are now under the grace dispensation. It is pure and holy and requires a holy sacrifice. Man, who lives in a corrupt world, possessed of only temporal and corrupt things, cannot make a suitable sacrifice to entitle him to this holy and eternal kingdom. Flocks, herds, crops and money are corrupt things of the earth, and cannot be used to blot out one single sin against the just and eternal laws of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast. Man may do penance in the most humiliating way, or he may give his mite or millions, or strive his best to live right, yet with these impure things he cannot satisfy a holy law, a spiritual law. They are not spiritual. Neither can he so act as to put God under obligation to blot out his sins or give him the spiritual kingdom. Man is corrupt, and from a corrupt fountain cometh forth that which is corrupt. He cannot purify himself by any work or sacrifice. There must first be a pure fountain before there is a pure stream. Christ is that pure fountain. He alone was found worthy to open the seals of the Lamb's book of life and behold the names of God's elect which were written there before the foundation of the world. He alone was without sin, he alone could make a holy offering, one that could blot out sin. Christ was without sin of his own, the sins of his people were imputed to him. His righteousness is imputed to his people, and justifies them before God unto eternal life. Christ died to save sinners. His death was effectual, his sacrifice was holy, not a drop of his blood was lost or shed in vain. He is the one and only Savior. No other sacrifice would or could do the work. Without his holy sacrifice all sinners would be condemned; by it his people (those who by covenant God gave him before the world was) are saved. Corrupt man cannot obtain this eternal salvation by his own works or sacrifices, but all whose sins were laid upon Christ obtained it by free grace, the gift of God, not in any way a reward of wicked man's works. There are two kinds of righteousness: self-righteousness, which is as filthy rags, and will not hide sin, pharisaical, and the righteousness of Christ, which is a perfect covering for the sins of his people. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are spiritually discerned. Neither can the natural man make spiritual sacrifices. Man, with all his scientific knowledge, has not been able to put life in dead things. Man is dead in sin, dead to spiritual things, condemned to remain so, like the dead man in the grave must remain dead until the Author of all life says, Wake up and come forth. Man cannot make one hair black or white, but he can cover it with paint; so can the pharisee put on his cloak of relf-righteousness, but he is still a pharisee, a hypocrite. Christ said to Nicodemus, Ye must be born again. A spiritual birth. As a natural man will not claim that he brought about his own natural birth, then why, of all strange things, will he claim that he can bring about his spiritual birth? Do not mock God; he is the only Creator of life. Christ calls his people new creatures: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." —2 Cor. v. 17. The old creature has something added, the man born of the

flesh is now born of the Spirit, and is a new creature in Christ. God, the only Creator, made both the natural and the spiritual man. If our sins were with Christ on the cross, and doing their part in causing that great agony which shook the earth and darkened the sun, they are atoned for, all necessary sacrifice is made, and we are free; but if our sins were not there we are without hope, for Christ made the one and only offering for sin that cleanseth; all others are failures, worthless, hypocrisy. When he said, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost, the only atoning sacrifice was made. If my sins were there on him on the cross I shall see Christ and be (holy) like him. If my sins were not there as part of his burden I am still in my sins, and corrupt things cannot enter the (spiritual) kingdom of God. Man may offer all his possessions, flocks, herds, lands, money, his life's labors, and even his own life, but as they are only temporal and corrupt things of this world there is no spiritual cleansing virtue in them. Why will men pretend to equal Christ's sacrifice? Why will men speak lightly of Christ's offering by saying man must direct it, add to it, assist it or choose it? Those quickened by the Spirit of God, born again, will give God all the glory for so great a salvation and render good works of obedience, while others may offer the works of man as a means of their salvation. Where is your hope, in man or Christ? The chance system says send the gospel to the heathen and give him a chance for salvation, while we know the world was four thousand years old before Christ's gospel was preached, to give any one a chance, and that millions of infants, feeble-minded and heathens never heard the chance-giving gospel. Christ's atonement reaches from Adam to the day of judgment, in all nations, kindreds, tongues and peoples. It is free grace, unmerited gift, and in no way a reward for man's work, the only salvation for all times, places and peoples. God's people are born in the flesh, in sin, and so remain until they are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, according to the will of God. They will still live in this sinful body and sometimes follow the lusts of the flesh, but their sins have been atoned for. Christ said, I am the vine, ye are the branches. The branches grow on the vine, receive all their life from the vine, and if other branches are by any way grafted on, the newly added branches will still bear nothing but the original fruit of its kind. If you know its kind, you know its fruit.

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness."

M. N. WEBB.

WEISER, Idaho, February, 1920.

FORDYCE, Ark., Dec. 19, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Awaking this morning in the knowledge of things pertaining to this life, I am reminded of the fact that according to the computation of time I have just passed my fifty-third milepost; the matter coming upon me as it has I am brought into a great inquiring. This investigation into my life reveals to me the fact that I, just like all humanity, or Adam, am full of sin. I am the son of Wesley Harris and Elizabeth Ann (Stover) Harris. My mother was twice left a widow. My father died some two months prior to my birth, and left mother a poor, helpless widow with three children (two by a former marriage) and nothing to help raise them on, as there was nothing left in our country as the result of the horrible war. My first recollection of things relative to this life

I suppose dates back to something like three years from my birth, and I remember quite well the first stubborn rebellion that arose in my wicked disposition. Mother had gone for a visit at a neighbor's, some little distance from home, and had gotten me to sleep so she could go without me, and after she had gone I woke up. I was just old enough to talk, and understand things, and I started in search of her. My half-sister began to try to quiet me with the assurance that mother would return soon, but this did not satisfy me, so trouble began, and I fought with all the strength I had, but of course was conquered, but not subdued in feelings, and that first manifested spirit of rebellion and wickedness has ever been with me, and I suppose will be as long as I live here in this sinful nature in which I am now dwelling. While I remember this first act of rebellion almost as well as though it happened yesterday, yet all that has bothered me along life's journey has been that the road was not smoother for me to do more and have my own way, and now when I look back to this first act, and the powers that were over me, I can only say, Surely the hand of protection has been with me to care for me when I doubtless would have destroyed myself in my wild and wicked course. In looking over my past life I can see nothing but sin and rebellion, loving darkness rather than light, disobedient, wanting things after my own choice, loving the wages of unrighteousness in all things, and now at fifty-three years of age when I sum up all my course in life I am brought to the same point as was poor old Job: "I have said to corruption, Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister." I lived the life of loving sin, as it did not appear to me so exceeding sinful, and I was disturbed in such actions only when the fear of punishment overtook me. I want to say right here that I believe this is all the disturbance wicked men ever have for their crooked deeds, they fear that they will be caught, punished and exposed to the world, and the reason I say this is because those were my feelings and experience along this line, and I judge other people by myself. However, when the Lord came and gave me understanding as to who and what he is, then I saw my sins as I never saw them before, and O my poor soul, the things I did before without one particle of trouble or distress now tore me asunder and made me so fearful that I felt I surely was gone eternally, and the knowledge of the justice of it was what hurt so. In looking over my life from the first disobedience, as before mentioned, all my wrong doings were heaped upon me and seemingly were crushing me out of existence, and I could not offer a word of protest, for surely I felt that the ground to cry for mercy was "forbidden ground," and I could only say, It is just if I am lost, for I am sold under sin. But God, who is rich in mercy, did visit me with his mercy in the personal manifestation, I hope, and an inward feeling spoke to me, and said, This is Jesus Christ, the Savior of sinners. While I stood amazed at this wonder of wonders the elements seemed to burst forth into the most beautiful light, and the whole of the earth, trees and plants were covered with the softest and most beautiful light that these poor eyes of mine have ever beheld. The young man who was accompanying me along the road, and who I had left as this feeling came over me, followed me, and just at this time of my great rejoicing came up and stood by me and I told him what I had felt and seen, and right there so long

as this poor mortal life of mine shall last will be a memorable spot to me, and to him also. Now what shall I say? I can say but one of two things, and that is, Salvation is all of the Lord, or else the thing called salvation is all a delusion of the mind. But I have this hope: that the Lord has come and manifested himself in the hand of mercy, and that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us, and in his death we were reconciled to God. I know full well that we have this great High Priest, who can be and is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and who actually bore our infirmities in his own body, and in the bearing of them he became the author of eternal life, for that was the record, that God gave eternal life, and that life was in his Son. That life was always in his Son, and that life was righteousness, as the natural life that was in Adam, and was but natural. Every tree brings forth fruit after its kind. So we see that after the goodness and mercy of God toward man appeared, and the giving of eternal life (that is, by a spiritual birth, as Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again") then we brought forth fruit according to the principle that was in the new Tree, which was eternal life, which Christ, who was the promised life before the foundation of the world, according to God's promise, which Paul said he promised before the world began, and God, who cannot lie or change, carried out his promise and did accordingly send forth his only begotten Son to die, the Just for the unjust (Adam's sons and daughters), and in so doing did redeem us from all iniquity, to the end that we were made to the praise of the glory of his grace; not our works, but his grace. Then when we stop, look and think, what shall we say? Why, surely it is the grace of God that bringeth salvation. Then, that being true, we see that it is God's works, and not our works or obedience. As I look back over my life I see how perverse and wicked it has been, all of self, and the thoughts and imaginations of my heart have been nothing but deceitful and wicked, then who am I that I should rise up and say that God should bless me? In looking through the catalogue of all my deeds in this life what will I find listed? Sin, foolish and wicked thoughts, a heart desperately wicked, and who can know it? I do not, for it deceives me and leads me into doing things strictly wrong and forbidden of my dear Lord. Then why do I do them? I can only say, as did Paul, It is sin that dwelleth in me. I am corrupt, as the result of the inheritance of sin from Adam. I hope I am righteous according to the inheritance of eternal life given me through Jesus Christ. I am just as well assured as I can be that if I have any righteousness it was given me, just as was eternal life. All righteousness grows out of the Tree that produces righteousness according to that life, for every likeness begetteth its own. What has troubled me most is, I cannot live the life I so much desire to, and I am forced to the conclusion that if I do one thing righteous, or even have one good thought, it is all because of the fruit of his Spirit producing it, and not because of any good act or obedience of my own, for if that were so then we would have whereof to boast, and then the Lord would actually owe something to us for services rendered. Then if that is actually the case, why should we have those dreadful feelings of unworthiness and sinfulness? Why not live right up to his requirements and be happy all the time, and drive away these gloomy feelings, and never have this unworthy feeling? We need not if they

are conditional upon our part, and I am sure I would not, for they are surely terrifying to me. I am again brought to Job's feelings about myself: that corruption is my father. Yes, I feel so corrupt in my nature, and so unworthy, that I am made to feel there is good hope for others, but I am not worthy of the least of God's mercies. I feel to be a true companion of the apostle Paul when he said, If a saint, the least of all. I know I would like to feel differently, and wish I could feel that I knew I was a true follower of the meek and lowly Nazarene, and that I could live close to my brethren and sisters, and be sure when I go to fill my appointments that I would feel sure I was preaching the riches of God's grace. But O that horrible sense of unfitness, and worst of all, what seems to "grind me to powder" is to go to the water to baptize those who look so good and feel I am so sinful and unfit for such godly service, and sometimes I almost faint at the thought of the undertaking. The people of the world tell me there is no use of such feelings, to live right up to God's requirements and I will not have this trouble. O how can it be done? I wish I knew how, but I must confess that from my first recollection I have not known how to do good. I know how to live morally, and how to make a good citizen, and hope I have made such an one here in the community in which I live, and am thankful that I have the record I have as a citizen, but natural things are not spiritual things, and morality is not christianity, and this I fear is what the people of the world speak of when they are talking of living up to these requirements. They are like Paul was before his conversion: the things he thought were life he found to be death. I am quite sure this is my experience, and the more I try to live up to these requirements the more I get into doubt. I see, too, that if it be by the deeds of selfworks it makes grace and mercy void.

Now, to sum up the whole matter, and to bring my letter to a close as soon as possible, I want to say that if I am anything above what I received in my first birth, and the relationship I have borne to the first parents, I am quite sure it is just what grace has made me. If I have had a single good or righteous thought, done a good or righteous deed, it has been grace that prompted it, as it had to come from the good Tree, and as natural things are those that proceed from nature, then spiritual things are such as spring from God as the true Vine. The branch has to get all its life and fruit-bearing power from the vine, as the branch cannot bring forth fruit of itself; and, further, the branch cannot bring forth fruit out of season, as the vine must produce as the great Creator has set the seasons. You have never seen the vine growing grapes during winter weather, so then you will never see God's children producing grapes (righteousness) when they are cold and during their winters, and to tell us we can do this is an evidence to me that they know nothing of this true Vine, or they have forgotten the fact that without him they can do nothing. The facts are these: we are all dependent upon him for the giving of his Spirit, for the body without the Spirit is dead, being alone, and we know nothing, being both dead and alone, which is surely a dependent state. Well, what is the reverse of this? Why, we must have him and his Spirit, then we can do all things through him that strengtheneth us. Yes, we can do all things when he is strengthening, but just as soon as his Spirit is withdrawn we can do nothing. Dear brethren, do you

not know this? Have you not tried and failed? Surely you have. Preachers, have you not tried to preach, and many times to large congregations, and were so dull you could not quote the Scriptures correctly, and even when you did get them right they were dead and lifeless, and you just worked and worried, and finally had to give up and sit down in disgust, and felt you had made yourself a subject of public condemnation, and felt sure you would leave that place and go where you were not known as a child of God and a preacher? Why was this? Why did you not preach? I am quite sure that if these things were controlled by us there never would be another failure, for it is indeed terrifying and humiliating. I am sure I would never experience another failure if I could help it. Do not these things prove to us that our salvation and preaching and spiritual services are not conditional on our part? You know how sweet it is when the dear Savior comes to us and gives us of his Spirit, and what a great sweetness it is when we have that precious fellowship for him, and for each other, and we are made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

In conclusion, I want to say that this poor, unworthy, helpless worm of the earth looks back over his fifty-three years of life and can see nothing but the son of corruption, the relationship of worms after the manner of the natural fruits, but is to-day living in the hope of blessed immortality and eternal life beyond the grave.

Dispose of this as you think best and all will be right.

V. R. HARRIS.

EPHESIANS II. 8.

"By grace are ye saved."

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is understood, or comprehended, only by divine revelation. Three things are essential to the proper understanding of any instrument of writing. First, note who is writing; second, who is addressed; third, what the subject is. Paul's letters are all addressed to the church; people who are called of God, with a holy calling, according to his purpose. God is the God of purpose, and works all things after the counsel of his own will. There are no conditions in eternal salvation, neither are there any conditions in grace. One asked the Savior what he should do to work the works of God. The reply was, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom God hath sent. The whole matter is hinged upon the work of God. Divine light must shine in the heart before one ever realizes he or she (as the case may be) is a guilty sinner in the sight of God, after which that one has no need for any one to tell him to repent or pray, for the very breathing of the soul is prayer to God for mercy for the removal of the load of guilt and condemnation. He then, as never before, can see the inbred corruption of the heart, and bear witness with the prophet that the heart in man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and that none but God can know it. Some will say, Does not Paul tell us to work out our own salvation with fear? Now is the time to notice who are addressed. He addresses them as brethren, the organized church at Philippi. This then certainly is a different salvation. Paul admonished Timothy to take heed to himself and the doctrine, by doing this he would both save himself and them that heard him. Surely no one who has been taught of the Lord

believes that Paul meant to convey the idea that Timothy could save himself or any one else eternally by obedience. David said, He that is our God is the God of salvation, and to God the Lord belongeth the issues of death. Again, He hath all power in heaven, in earth, in the sea and all deep places.

May God give his dear people the world over to understand the word of eternal truth, is my prayer, if I know myself.

JAMES M. SIMMONS.

KOSCIUSKO, Mississippi.

KELLY CORNERS, N. Y., Jan. 14, 1920.

DEAR FRIEND EVERETT:—I thank you very much for your kind and encouraging letter, and also the inclosure of Orville Winchell's letter, all of which I very much appreciated. I am glad to tell you that I appreciate the interest of the Old School Baptists in me, and I wonder at their expressions of fellowship for me; I do not deserve it. I feel that there is no other people like the Old Baptists, and find much pleasure in their company. I have enjoyed many talks with Elder Ruston, and regard him with a love and esteem that I feel for no other minister of the gospel in these parts, for his life is a splendid sermon, and his generosity shows that the man subordinates self to serve the people of whom he is the pastor, and also the community. He has a worthy helpmeet, and he and Mrs. Ruston are getting on fine. They are doing much to help the cause of the Old School Baptists in this part of Delaware County. I frequently go to their home, and have some of the finest visits there that one can imagine. I have thought quite a bit on spiritual matters in my discussion with the Elder, and the truth seems to me more beautiful than ever before. I feel that I really know little about spiritual matters, and am awaiting the guiding hand of the Lord in revealing to me and in giving me evidence so that I may feel I am taught of the Lord, and not of man. All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. This sentence is one that you know well, and which must give you comfort. Heart knowledge, not head knowledge, is one of the desires of my heart.

I am sorry to say that I cannot accept your kind invitation at this time, much as I would like to, but it will be impossible now, as I lost two days when the association was at Vega last fall, and an entire week when the N. Y. State Teachers' Association was held in Albany, as I was sent there then as a delegate to represent the teachers of the towns of Roxbury, Andes and Middletown. I had a good and profitable time naturally, but I had to lose time, and I did not want to lose time for this. Then I had a very short vacation at the holidays, and will probably have to lose a little time later in the year, as I usually have in the past, so I could not well get away at this time, as I cannot close school when I wish. I was sent an extra day to one of the teachers' conferences, so all in all you see how things stand. I tell you this because I want you to know that I very much appreciate your kind invitation, and the time may come when I can accept it, if not now or in the immediate future. I am well, and we are as usual at home. Mother has been troubled some with neuritis this winter, but she is better now. She has to work too hard. I wish that I could make it easier for her in this respect. I am pleased to read your articles when you write for the SIGNS, and am glad to have met your mother personally. Mr. Winchell is a man whom I very much

admire, is spiritually minded and enjoys the meetings immensely. He is a man firmly grounded in the truth, and I am glad to know that the people remembered him as they did. It shows the kindness of God in taking care of his children.

I must close. With kindest regards to you and Mrs. Kinney, I am, as ever, your friend,

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

ASHOKAN, N. Y., Jan. 19, 1920.

MY DEAR ARNOLD:—Your good letter of the 14th inst. was most welcome, and I will at least attempt an acknowledgment, and say that it is a pleasure to me to know that any line of mine, all of which always seem to fall so far short of that which is embraced in the subject, I am sure, has proved of interest or encouragement to you. When you say that you have enjoyed many talks with Elder Ruston, we are confirmed of your part and interest in the things of the kingdom of our God, else you would have little use for his conversation on spiritual things. We also enjoyed this subject with him this last week end, and when brother Winchell was called upon to read a chapter he read from, or rather all of the fifth of Romans, an old stamping-ground of yours and mine. This and the second chapter of Ephesians are my two favorites, and I told them that whenever I was among those whom I felt had some love and charity for me I seemed to take delight in making mention of what they mean to me. Now, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." That is why I am confident that yours is not merely a natural interest. "Things." What are these things, and how many are there of them? I am going to say two, that is, two heads, which embrace the two conditions of a subject of grace, under the law and gospel, and these two embrace all that is contained in the travel from nature to grace. None save subjects of grace is ever under either of these; there are no bands in the death in any save those who sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression; there is no fall for those who never stood up, so that the earthly, sensual and devilish sons of Adam were not one with him as "the figure of him who was to come," and these were never but of the earth earthy, in the creation or at the present time. But the people of God were supernatural; they were living in Christ, complete, as now, before the world was, and being alive, were subject to the law of sin and death, while the subsequent sons of Adam did not begin to live and could not be amenable to any law until after Adam was driven from the garden and "knew Eve his wife." That is why "when the fullness of time was come God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." Does not this plainly indicate that there are those who are under the law (of sin and death) exclusive of those who were left out in making of the Lamb's book of life before the world was? When he came to save that which was lost—to save sinners, the most extravagant view must discern two classes, having nothing in common save the things natural. We are so strenuous that none but the elect shall enjoy the redemption, then why so zealous that the nonelect shall suffer the transgression? Why not be fair, so that the books will balance, so that the same "many" who were disobedient in Adam were and are obedient in Christ; are one and the same "many," and not all in either case? But it reads, "Avoid foolish and unlearned questions," and all questions having to

do with spiritual things are foolish alike to the child of nature and grace until revealed to gracious subjects by the Spirit of truth, and any to whom truth is revealed are not to gender strife in pressing some point on any weak in the faith. For what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Neither is any Scripture of any private interpretation.

Please write again. Yours sincerely,

EVERETT R. KINNEY.

CALL, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have thought many times that I would write for publication, but I am so ignorant I have put it off. It makes me rejoice to read the letters of others; it makes me want to say something; it builds me up in our most holy faith. Now I speak as unto wise men; judge ye what I say. We understand that national Israel was typifying spiritual Israel, and he taught them that if they would obey him he would bless them, and we think that his children should strive to enter in at the strait gate. There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Now listen: you cannot serve two masters; a fountain cannot send forth both sweet and bitter water. This is to the saints, and not to the world; there is no life to the saints in sin. How can he that is dead to sin live any longer therein? Sin is death to the child of God. Brethren, I do not think there is one heaven-born soul that sins but what his conscience forbids. To live in this world is not to sin, for he that sinneth shall die. As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his ways and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die, O house of Israel? Now, brethren, our life is with God, and to live is to love God, and to love him is to obey him. We are in that glorious war, and we must fight and we shall gain the victory through Christ. There is nothing we can do that will help us to get to that blessed kingdom on high, but thank God, Jesus has made that sure.

Well, I thought I would write a little, but I have written too much. Forgive me this wrong.

J. A. MARZE.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April 6, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In 1916, when my father was preparing to publish his autobiography, which I mentioned in the last number of the SIGNS, material and labor were increasing daily, so he felt he must wait until conditions improved. But high costs have come, it seems, to stay, and the price quoted now for publication is more than double the last estimate in 1916. The cost of the book when delivered to subscribers will be within three cents of the publisher's price, no margin for any extra expenses. Therefore, since I am not able to finance the publication myself, I shall have to ask for cash with every order. It is of course understood that in the event of failure to obtain sufficient subscribers within a reasonable time all advances will be refunded.

MILDRED DURAND GORDY.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER J. F. BEEMAN has changed his address from 184 E. 5th St., Riverside, Cal., to 6217 Sycamore Ave., Seattle, Washington.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1920.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 KINGS XVII. 6.

"AND the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening: and he drank of the brook."

A brother living in New Jersey has written to us asking that we write something on the above passage of Scripture. We shall try to do so, but feel that he himself could better have done so, inasmuch as his mind seems to have been exercised upon it. In the law of Moses there were certain things named which were to be considered by Israel as abominable things, things which should not be eaten. The abominable or unclean things among the fowls included the raven, the flesh of which was never to be eaten by Israel. It is said that the smell of death is so grateful to ravens that when, in passing over a sheep, they perceive a tainted smell they will cry and croak loudly. Also, in passing over a human habitation, if they detect a sickly or deathly odor they make it known by their cries. Thus the croaking of ravens has come to mean a sign of death. For three years and six months it rained not in Israel. During this time death was plentifully in evidence and the ravens were abundant. These birds fed on death. Dead things pleased them. Nevertheless, contrary to the raven's nature, God made them to carry bread and meat to his servant, the prophet Elijah. However, it was impossible for the servant to eat aught but what was clean. In having the ravens to carry this clean food of bread and meat to Elijah God showed his power, in causing the ravens to do that which their nature contradicted, in order to feed the prophet. Through all the wonderful way in which the Lord provided for Elijah during that long drought we see confirmed the promise that God will never suffer the righteous to fail, nor allow his children to beg their bread. The Lord will provide. Not in our own time and way, but in his own good time and according to his pleasure, the Lord will feed the souls of his famished saints. Though Elijah was all alone, so far as human or spiritual companionship was concerned, yet the Lord caused unclean birds to feed him. Now, to draw a spiritual lesson from this, let us first note that the doctrine of salvation as preached by worldly religionists is the doctrine of death. Salvation by works, based on the merit of man, is a corrupt doctrine. Unclean birds feed upon it. Ravens love it, doves hate it. All the works of fallen man are dead works. Any tower of Babel erected out of the brick and slime of man's ingenuity in order to get into God's favor by their own good works, is doomed to end in failure and a temple in ruins. We know that God has people scattered everywhere, they are in every nation under heaven. Among the ranks of the Arminians God has his people. These are in captivity to Babylon, but the root of the matter of a gracious experience is in their souls. We believe that true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are scattered among the various religious denominations of men; many

perhaps have never heard the true gospel fall from the lips of men truly called to the ministry. These are alone, as Elijah was alone, in the midst of a spiritual drought. Yet they must be fed, and God sees that they are fed, even if he has to compel the ravens to carry them food. By the ravens we mean so-called preachers, men not called and qualified by the Holy Ghost to preach, but men who are the product of the colleges and schools endowed by worldly wealth to turn out these duly certified preachers: preachers who preach their own righteousness and that of their fellow-men, but who are entire strangers to the righteous of God by faith. Now, it so occurs at times that these "ravens," who love "dead works" and dead doctrines, do unwittingly preach the truth. The reason of this is because God has some of his sheep ensnared in Babylon and he compels these "ravens" unconsciously to themselves to carry clean food to his isolated and lonely children in the midst of the drought spiritually prevailing in the world. Several years ago, while living in the city of Philadelphia, a brother in the church and ourself took ourselves one night to a church service in one of the largest edifices in that city. The congregation thronged it to the doors. Seats were hardly to be had, and many stood. The minister arose to preach, and we expected to hear nothing but the usual exhortation to creature works in order to obtain the favor of God. He read for his text in the Lamentations of Jeremiah, first chapter, twelfth verse, what startled us as being a very strange text for an Arminian to select, and we asked ourself how he expected to preach salvation by works from such a Scripture: "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger." He started in, not preaching Jeremiah, but Christ, and kept on preaching Christ from first to last. Not once, that we remember, did he refer his text to Jeremiah, but throughout expounded the text as a prophetic portrayal of the sufferings of Christ that were to come. He showed how that Christ's sufferings were not like any other suffering, that those sufferings of his were all for sins, not his own, but those of his people. He traced the path of the Savior from the manger to the cross, showing the burden becoming greater and the pain more terrible the nearer the end came. The day of God's fierce anger was the day that Jesus hanged upon the cross, nailed there through hands and feet, paying the penalty of his people's transgressions. The day of vengeance was in his heart, he was repaying to his Father all our debt. Nowhere through all the sermon did this preacher have anything to say about what sinners must do to be saved. He told simply and beautifully and with power the old yet ever new story of redeeming love. Yet, notwithstanding all this, we happen to know that this preacher was a full-fledged Arminian. He did not always preach as he did that night. He was telling the truth, but did not realize the full meaning of what he said. Had he done so, he could have never again preached any but that doctrine the rest of his life. Our explanation of this remarkable occurrence is that God had some of his sheep in that corner of Babylon and he was causing that raven to carry bread and meat to them that night. The preacher was declaring what his own nature, and what his own preaching at other times, contradicted. God will see to it that his people shall be fed, and,

when necessary, will feed them by the ravens, as he did Elijah. On the other hand, if we consider the prophet Elijah as a type of Jesus in his humiliation while here below, then we shall conclude that though the world was a most unfriendly place to him, and while all the dominant powers of earth were against him, yet all things and all persons among whom he moved were being bent to his will and were serving his purpose, even though in their own natures they were opposed to him. Men and devils were made to minister to the accomplishment of his purpose in the work of salvation, though being unconscious of it themselves all the time. And as Elijah drank of the brook, so it is declared of Jesus that he drank of the brook in the way. (Psalms cx. 7.) As a brook is a stream of running or living water, so the river of water of life flows from the throne of God. By this river of God, this living water, the tree of life (Jesus) is established. Because it never goes dry his leaf never withers. He brings forth his fruit in his season. Then Jesus, though in the midst of a cold, unfriendly world, a world in which of itself there was no room for him, was fed continually by the supplies which omnipotence afforded: the living water of life from the throne of God, and the bowing to his will of all things in earth and under the earth, unclean as ravens though they might be. L.

STOCK OF HYMN BOOKS EXHAUSTED.

OUR supply of Hymn Books (Beebe's collection) is exhausted, and, owing to the unsettled state of the business world, cannot say just when we will have more for sale, but hope we may have them ere long, and when we do receive a new supply of the books will announce the fact in these columns.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, at his residence in Delmar, Del., April 3rd, 1920, Thomas M. Hearn and Elah Lee Bailey, both of Sussex County, Del.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon W. J. Majors was born in Chattahoochee County, Ga., June 20th, 1841, and died at his home in Bonham, Texas, Feb. 2nd, 1920, after an illness of several months, aged 78 years, 7 months and 13 days. He was married to Lucie J. Sherrer Feb. 17th, 1861, to which union were born seven children, two boys and five girls. The two boys and two of the girls preceded him to the grave. Brother Majors united with the Old School Baptists at County Line Church, in Marion County, Ga., in 1868, and was baptized by Elder J. R. Respess. I do not know the date of his ordination as deacon, nor when he came to Texas, but when I came to Texas in 1888 I found him here, and he participated in the ordination of the writer in 1889. He was a believer in and lover of the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God, eternal and unconditional election, salvation by the free, sovereign and reigning grace of God through Christ Jesus, and the resurrection and change of these mortal bodies from natural to spiritual. He was a devoted husband, a kind father, a good neighbor and a faithful member of the church. We mourn our loss, but rejoice to believe that our loss is his eternal gain. He leaves a devoted wife, three daughters, one daughter-in-law, fourteen grandchildren, three great-grandchildren and a host of friends to mourn their loss of him. May the grace of God be with them.

J. C. SIKES.

Mrs. Sarah Catharine Short died at her home near Georgetown, Del., October 16th, 1919, after a lingering illness, aged 60 years, 8 months and 3 days. All that loving hands could do was done, but she grew weaker and weaker until the end came. Her life was always quiet, but being possessed of many of the christian virtues, she was a great friend of all who walked through troubled paths, and in her home the loss is greater and deeper than any one could have foreseen. Not one of the family could have told before how much they depended upon her—upon her good judgment, faithful counsel, tender care and unfailing devotion. Her very presence made home bright, cheerful and happy because of the remarkable patience and sweetness which she manifested amid the toils, cares and misfortunes of life. She met her own disappointments and trials with great courage and uncomplainingly. While mother was not a member of the church, she was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and attended the meetings when possible. She was a firm believer in the absolute

predestination of all things and salvation by grace. She had the greatest confidence in Jesus Christ, and in her last illness it seemed to comfort her to say these words: "Lord, have mercy on me." Though her sufferings were intense, yet relief and peace were given her, and the end was peaceful; life just seemed to go out as a burned out candle.

The funeral services were conducted at the home by Elder J. C. Mellott, and burial was made in Union Cemetery at Georgetown. She leaves to mourn their loss, her husband, Peter C. Short, two sons and two daughters: Harold, Alden, Helen and Mabel, and one grandson, Henry Short.

I will only add to to the above well expressed tribute of her daughter that I have known Mrs. Short about thirty years, and had satisfactory evidence that she was a "child of Jehovah, a subject of grace, and of the seed royal, a dignified race," and that she is now entered into the fullness of the joys of her once crucified but now risen and exalted Savior, at the right hand of God for evermore.

In loving sympathy for the bereaved husband and children, A. B. FRANCIS.

Emily M. Caples Rushing, wife of brother Frank M. Rushing, was born October 24th, 1846, in Scott Co., Miss., and died March 23rd, 1920, aged 73 years, 4 months and 29 days. She professed a hope in Jesus in the early seventies, and joined the Primitive Baptist Church in September, 1876, being baptized by Elder J. W. Owen in the fellowship of Macedonia Church, in Henderson County, Texas. Sister Rushing lived a life that manifested or characterized a true child of grace, and was loved by all who knew her. She often expressed a desire to die without a struggle. She was as well as usual throughout the day, except that she complained at intervals of a pain in her side, and about 12:30 at night she was found dead in bed. She leaves a husband, several children and a host of relatives and friends to mourn her death.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral service, and used as a text 1st Corinthians xv. 35, 36, after which her remains were laid to rest in the Smith graveyard in the presence of a large concourse of people.

Weep not for her as those who have no hope, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. Yes, dear mourning ones, weep not, as she is only asleep in the arms of the crucified and risen Jesus, and this same Jesus that lived, died and rose again shall come again and gather his children unto himself at the sound of the last trumpet. May God give us all grace sufficient to reconcile us to his providential dealing, is the prayer of your brother,

J. B. BOWDEN.

Deacon Charles Elmer Prior was born near Nashport, Ohio, Feb. 13th, 1872, growing to manhood there. He passed peacefully to the great beyond at his home near Carthage, Ill., January 6th, 1920, from complications developing after an operation the 17th of last September. About the year 1895 he came to the state of Illinois, locating near Farmington, where he met and married Miss Clara E. Varnes. To that union six children were born, the eldest preceding him in death. Five children: Mildred E., Elmer V., Orvel B., Mary E. and Veva F., together with their dear grief-stricken mother, mourn his death. He is also survived by his aged mother, four sisters and three brothers, all of Ohio except one brother living in Iowa. Brother Prior professed a hope in Christ during the tender years of his boyhood, and at the age of sixteen years united with the Primitive Baptist Church in Ohio, to which profession he lived faithful to the end. About nine years ago they moved to their present home near Carthage, Ill., after which he and his wife united by letter with Smyrna Church, at Bentley. He was held in high esteem by the church, and in November, 1917, was ordained to the office of deacon, and faithfully discharged the duties of his office until death. We feel the church has sustained a great loss in the death of this good man, but it is his great and eternal gain, and we are commanded to sorrow not as those who have no hope.

The funeral was held at the home, conducted by his much esteemed pastor, Elder L. E. Frazee, in the presence of a large number of sorrowing friends and relatives, after which his body was laid to rest in the Moss Ridge Cemetery at Carthage, Ill., to await the second coming of the Lord. May the dear Lord comfort the bereaved family.

(MRS.) H. W. McPHERSON.

James W. Duffill, of Comer, Madison County, Ga., was born March 10th, 1848, and died March 3rd, 1920. His wife, who was Miss Sarah Dudley, died Sept. 21st, 1899. Four children were born to them, all of whom are living: George and Thomas, Mrs. Hurldy Kidd and Mrs. Molly Wood. He made his home with his daughter, Mrs. Wood, who cared for him until he died. He was in the war of the sixties. He lived near old Lystra Church, and was a regular attendant during life, and enjoyed the doctrine of grace. He never united with the church, though we learned to love him for the truth's sake. May the Lord lead his children in the good and right way, is my desire.

J. M. ADAMS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. M. J. McKinnie, Tenn., $1.00; Elder I. W. Bowers, Texas, $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to convene, the Lord willing, and continue in session three days, May 26th, 27th and 28th, 1920, with the Salem Church, at Philadelphia, Pa., in Apollo Hall, 1710 North Broad St., just above Columbia Ave. To all lovers and inquirers of the truth, "salvation by grace," the doctrine of God our Savior, is extended a cordial invitation to be present with us, and especially the ministers from afar or near. We hope for a goodly attendance.

By order of the Delaware Old School Baptist Association. JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk.

THE Hopewell Church of the Primitive Baptist faith, in Kanawha County, W. Va., expects Elder H. H. Lefferts to be with us at our June meeting, first Sunday and Saturday before. Both days are to be all day meetings.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

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WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

BY J. E. BEEBE & COMPANY

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"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."—1 Thess. v. 21. "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it."—Deut. xii. 32. cf. Eccl. iii. 14; James i. 17; Matt. xxviii. 20.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 88. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1920. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

INHERITANCE.

In writing on this subject I cannot present all that the Scriptures say about it. The word itself bears important thoughts, and no investigation can darken its meaning. On the other hand, the more we trace the meaning of this word the stronger is the evidence shown of the consistency of "salvation by grace." In fact, not one soul is secured to immortality except by inheritance. Really, if we desire to investigate the "way of salvation," we must begin at the very foundation. That there is but one foundation in the way of holiness set forth in the Scriptures, is clearly established. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. iii. 11. Other Scriptures show that there is absolutely no other foundation in the kingdom of God, or in the kingdom of grace, except the one laid in the Son of God. Jesus is the Son of God, descended directly from the Father; it is he whom the Father "hath appointed heir of all things." This only begotten Son hath the preeminence above all worlds, all creatures and all things. For, "He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than the angels." Inheritance is the only channel by which eternal life is transmitted to mortals. It is through this channel that "the heir of the world" came. It is the only channel of mercy opened to any one of Adam's race. Eternal life comes only by inheritance, by birth. Natural life comes only by inheritance, by birth. Natural life existed in Adam, the head of his family, and that same life is given to all that ever descended, or shall descend from him, his children; they get the same life from him by inheritance. This fact is easily understood, and it is positively true. Hardly any intelligent person will attempt to dispute this fact, yet when we speak of the inheritance of the saints all opposers of the way of salvation by grace are ready to oppose the doctrine of inheritance through Christ, the anointed Savior. This opposition is right in the face of positive declarations of Scripture. "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little." These precepts and these lines which occur in the testimony of truth, "here a little, and there a little," ought to be

sufficient proofs against all opposers of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, yet while men are guided only by carnal reason they cannot recognize the depth of the riches of God's grace. The heathen are given to the Son for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession. This may not mean heathen as we use the word, but it surely means all who were formerly called Gentiles. In the days of the prophets it was a surprising story for them to tell Israel that the Lord would send his servant for a light to lighten the Gentiles, as well as to lighten the Jews; and all that men now call heathen shall, no doubt, be enlightened by the Spirit of God's grace. That the missionary propaganda of men, which has been exploiting all the foreign regions of the earth, has successfully planted the grace of God in the hearts of those heathen, I shall not admit; but that God is able, and will do his work in his own way and in his own time, I do not doubt, for "the isles shall wait for his law." His foundation is sure, having this seal: "The Lord knoweth them that are his." God has no lack of opportunities to reveal himself unto the very uttermost from him in the darkness of heathenism. Not one can leave this world who is God's heir and joint-heir with Christ until he is sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, and that seal secures him "until the redemption of the purchased possession." The gospel day is the judgment day for the Lord's people; it is the day that the Executor seals the heirs of heaven unto the day of redemption. Some men express fear that the Lord will be slack about giving his grace unto sinners in time to save them, so men have concluded that the safest way is to "help the Lord." God's servants are willing to express themselves this way:

"God's seal is sure to reach the just
In time to land them safely home;
The sure foundation is God's seal,
The Lord Jehovah knoweth his."

"In the beginning" it was God's way, after creation, to bring every man and every woman into this world that must come into it by generation and birth. No creature in this natural world generated himself, or gave himself birth. In like manner spiritual life comes by generation and birth. Naturally, we are heirs of Adam; our life in the flesh and all its accompaniments are by inheritance. We inherit our life, we inherit sin, we inherit all kinds of physical diseases, deformities and everything that flesh is heir to. This fact is admitted by all consistent Bible readers, yet many are loath to believe that a "seat in heaven" is by inheritance. No fact is set forth in stronger terms than that Jesus is "the heir of all things," that he is the heir of the heathen and the uttermost parts of the earth, "all the ends of the world" and "all the kindred of the nations." He is heir of all dominions, "from sea to sea, and from the rivers unto the ends of the earth." Jesus by inheritance is the Firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth; also by inheritance he is the Firstborn of every creature, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. In the kingdom of grace Christ is set forth as "the firstborn among many brethren." The Son of God, the Savior of sinners, the Anointed of the Father, the Lamb of God, the Redeemer of mankind, is by inheritance the heir of God. So also in like manner are all "who shall be heirs of salvation" the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. Christ's heirship is a joint-heirship with his people who shall be heirs of salvation, and because of this fact "he is not ashamed to call them brethren,"

The mansions in heaven can only be filled by the "heirs of salvation." Not one shall ever be there except such as are born of incorruptible Seed, by the eternal Word. The kingdom of grace cannot possibly be a shelter for any not born in it. By way of illustration, I may use the language of men and say that the heavenly mansions are filled "automatically," as the decrees of God come to pass, and with God this is no difficult matter, as he hath given power to his Son over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as he hath given him. The Executor of his own will and testament shall by his power manifest all the heirs of salvation as the Father's decrees unfold, for this Jesus hath the Father "made both Lord and Christ." He is King eternal, immortal, invisible, "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen." Now, having all this testimony from the Scriptures before us in regard to the Mediator, who shall by his mystical work prepare his train to fill the temple, why should we doubt his power, love and mercy and his oath of promise? Knowing as we do that we have a noble King, a merciful High Priest, a perfect Mediator, an unfailing Intercessor and an everlasting Redeemer, we look forward with hope, and even now we see the "beauties of holiness." We are made to trust him for what he has done for us, and what he has said to the patriarchs, prophets, apostles and saints. If God be for us, who can be against us? since his Son is heir of all things, and we joint-heirs with him in his life and glory, his life being eternal, immortal life, his glory the same as his Father's glory. "For he is the brightness of his Father's glory and the express image of his person." The children of God being so highly exalted with God's only Son, it is no wonder that the redeemed are called kings and priests unto God, since they are made partakers of Christ's holiness, with the certain promise that we shall be, at his coming, partakers of his glory. May we be comforted by his precious promises.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

RIVERSIDE, Cal., Jan. 10, 1920.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Sept. 11, 1919.

DEAR SISTER EDWARDS:—I am now almost ashamed to try to write to you, because it has been so long since your appreciated letter came to me. However, I know that if you knew how I have been situated you would be willing to excuse me for the delay. I never see an expression of loneliness made by one of the Father's children because of their being so isolated from one another and the preaching of the blessed gospel, that my heart does not go out in love and pity to such an one, and I feel that I would be glad to go there and speak some word of consolation to that one. However, I know that it is not of the Lord I have that desire, for if it were I would surely go. Nothing of his words or impressions ever fails to carry to the end to which he has appointed it. I do not believe in God-desires, God-wants nor God-failures in anything. What he purposes is sure to come to full maturity and accomplish everything he pleases.

I feel that there are many others who might give you better understanding of the text upon which you requested me to write. However, I will give you such understanding as I may have, and then

you can do as seems good to you with what I may write. "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow."—Isaiah l. 10, 11. As men would take things from natural observation these things appear to be contradictory. The idea that it is he who walketh in darkness and hath no light, that feareth God and obeyeth the voice of his servant, would not appear so very true from a standpoint of nature. However, here is the strength of the little ones of the Lord. They are the people who fear the Lord; not from a standpoint of his punishment of them, not that that would be to fear his wrath, to fear him as a very tyrant. The wicked fear him that way. There is nothing in their fear of God. Their fear does not tell of wisdom, nor does it lead them to wisdom. It would induce them to try to hide their evil designs from him and to hate him. The fear of the children of God is a fear of love. They fear him as a good and obedient son feareth his father. The love he has for that father leads him to desire to do all the father's will. Not that he expects the father will frown on him, but because he loves that father because he is his father. So the children of the Lord desire to walk in his way in a perfect light. But these are ignorant and dependent, they know not the way of the Lord. The apostles did not know; they said, Lord, teach us to pray. If they had known what that was before why did they come with this request? They were walking in darkness, so far as that knowledge was concerned, and because of this they came with this request. They had no light in themselves; but did they have no light? What led them to come to Jesus with such a request? We are told that that which maketh manifest is light. Something had manifested to them that this was the Lord, and that he had the power to teach them to pray. Their coming to him with this petition is evidence of this fact. What was it that gave them this teaching? was it not the light they had received from him of whom they now made the request? Surely so. It was that light which had now manifested their darkness. Out of this darkness they were now crying to him; they were calling to him out of the deep places. They were in the mire and clay, and were crying, Help, Lord. They were the people who feared the Lord; they were the people who obeyed the voice of the Lord. The Lord Jesus is this servant referred to in the text. It is his voice that speaks to direct the steps of his love, his bride, that she go not astray to some other bridegroom. She is crying, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?"—Song of Solomon i. 7. She has no other one in whom she can trust, and no other one to whom she will dare tell her complaints or desires. A loving wife will tell her desires of the most private nature to the husband she loves, but from any other she will keep them a profound secret. Her husband has the right to know, and he alone has that right. It is his right to speak comfortingly to his companion, and their love is mutual. Even so with the dear Lord and his bride, and he has so taught her

that she will come to him in the darkest hours of the night, and will uncover herself, even in the most secret things in her heart; uncover his feet and lay down by his side. This is the word which he has spoken in her heart, and she has the true desire to obey the voice of her Beloved, the Servant of her Father. All her walking is in darkness, for she is blind. She cries to her Beloved for sight. He is her light and her salvation. His ear is open to her cries, and he will hear all her groans. Her very thoughts are ever open before him, and nothing of all her necessities are hid from his eyes. This is the one who will trust in the name of his God and stay upon him. He has no other in whom to trust. If he looks about him for something in which he may find strength he will find nothing but weakness and sin. One of these will fail him in time of need, and the other will condemn him in judgment. He cannot come before the Holy One with these, therefore he is compelled to cry unto him in whom is everlasting strength, and who has the power and will deliver to the utmost them that come to the Father by him, seeing that he ever liveth to make intercession for him. Ah, the voice of this wonderful Servant; how perfect and precious it is to such poor little ones who are given to believe in him and to trust him! But there are some who kindle a fire and compass themselves about with sparks. They are told to walk in the light of their own fire, and in the sparks which they have kindled. They have the promise that they shall have this at the hand of the Lord, and that they shall lie down in sorrow. How very different from the other ones, who had no power to kindle a fire nor to cause the sparks to fly upward to give the light they so much need and must have. This people do not know to trust the Lord; they do not know him, nor do they know themselves or their necessities; they are blind to their own condemnation. No one has instructed them, and they are wise in their own conceits. Even if the Lord were here as he once was they would not learn of him. They would say to him, "Thou wast altogether born in sin; dost thou teach us?" O how terrible is their dead state! But they are ignorant of it. So very different from those who feel the need of him every day, hour and minute, and who cannot go alone at all. You know that the Lord would not let his people Israel go through the wilderness alone. He gave them his cloud to go before and over them. In that cloud there was the angel of the Lord. When the cloud moved Israel moved; when the cloud stayed Israel stayed in their tents. To get in a hurry did no good. God had his time and his way to do things, and he did them at his time and in his way. When he had cut them off from all their works, and from Moses, in whom they had trusted and whom they had disobeyed so much, and caused him so much sorrow, he gave them Joshua to be their leader and at once brought them into the promised land. Even so it is to this day; when it is the will of the Lord to deliver us from any kind of trouble he cuts us off from the law and everything else and gives us to trust in the living God as our strength and our salvation. From then on we are as Jacob, leaning on a staff and never able to walk alone. We are murmurers in ourselves and at ourselves, for all we can see in ourselves is sin, iniquity and such weakness that we cannot come to God nor dwell in his presence even if we were already there. We need him always to keep us; we will never be able to live and go without our Beloved.

It is a glorious thought that when he shall have done his will with us here he will call us up to do his will in a perfect way which will be altogether acceptable to him, for it will be in our holy Lord Jesus that we shall do it then. All that he does and all that he represents is perfectly wellpleasing to the Father, and we are accepted by him and in him.

The article on spiritual adultery which I wrote a number of years ago, I do not know just where it is. I may write again on that subject; there is need of it, it appears to me. I feel glad and thankful to the Lord that he has given you comfort in the things which he gave me to write. May he ever comfort you in his love and by his presence, is the desire of your brother in a good hope.

L. H. HARDY.

BENTON, Ky., Nov. 9, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a letter of experience written by a very dear aunt of mine, which I feel some others would enjoy reading, and would be pleased to have you publish it, if you feel likewise.

EFFIE BLAGG.

PRINCETON, Ky., Nov. 5, 1919.

MY DEAR NIECE:—I received your kind letter a few days ago, and certainly enjoyed it. I can rejoice with you sometimes, but most of this life seems dark to me. "I am so vile, so prone to sin, I fear that I'm not born again." It was forty-one years last August since, I hope, the Lord revealed himself to me. I was all alone, and was very happy, and thought I would tell your uncle when he came in, but all seemed to be gone before he came so I said nothing about it, but tried in my weak way to ask God to show me what to do to have a happy reflection again. O the ups and downs that I have gone through. I sometimes almost give up, for it seems I am the most miserable human being on earth.

I have just finished reading the November 1st number of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I enjoyed it very much, and hope I can feast on its contents. I have not been to meeting since the association, for I have to go alone on the train, leaving in the dark in the morning and returning in the dark in the evening; but all the pleasure I now have is being with the dear Old Baptist people and hearing them preach. I do hope in the near future you will be permitted to mingle with the dear ones at Soldier Creek. I suppose I would not know many of those I would now meet there, but I would enjoy being there and hearing a sermon at the place once more. It was forty years the second Sunday in October since brother Perkins baptized me at that place. I felt when I came up out of the water that I would never have another doubt, sorrow or fear, but I have found life full of them. They so soon returned that I felt deceived, and feared I had deceived the people at that place, and I have found all along something to worry over. One thing is sure though: The Lord knoweth them that are his, and I can rest assured that I nor any one else can deceive him.

I am glad you found something in my last letter you rejoiced in; I could not see anything in it myself. I read it and thought it contained nothing, but I would send it anyway. I am glad it pleased the Lord for me through his kindness to revive your thoughts toward heavenly things, if I did. I would enjoy a talk with you again, for I am persuaded that you have at least tasted some of the blessings of God's poor and afflicted people.

I sometimes get to studying and wonder why I am where I am. None of my people were Old Baptists, and I was raised to believe that when I got ready to be a christian all I had to do was to go the mourners' bench and ask God to help me be good; but May 14th, 1876, I found out quite differently. My father died, and just before leaving he called us to his bed and told us to be good and meet him where there would be no more sad parting. When he called my name I thought of all sinful people I was the worst, and left the house and went off by myself and tried to pray. That was the first time I had ever gotten ready to be a christian, and all I could say was, Lord, Lord, have mercy upon me. Sometimes after that I would get to feeling as good as any one, but most of the time I was breathing the Lord's name and calling on him for mercy. The home folks would often ask me if I were sick, or what was the matter, but I never told any one, for I did not want any one to know how I felt. July 20th, 1877, I had a chance to hear an Old Baptist preacher. I had often heard of such people, but had never heard them preach. My sister and I, with your dear uncle, went to Sugar Creek. I took a front seat, and when the preacher came I thought of all the preachers I had ever seen he was the plainest looking. His hair was not brushed, his shoes looked as if they had never been shined, but as he got up and sang, "Amazing grace," O how sweet it did seem to me. I had often heard it before, but never like that. He read a portion of Paul's epistle to the Ephesians, second chapter, and seemed to preach to me, and to no one else. He stood a long time, and sister would say to me, "I am starving to death, wonder when he will ever close," but I made her no reply; I did not know the time was long, for I was so interested, and I knew she would laugh at me if I told her. On going home the young man with sister laughed, and said, "Well, how did you all like the sermon?" I made no reply, but your uncle said, "That was fine; I am used to such preaching as that." I kept my thoughts to myself, feeling that I would always feel that way. I would steal off by myself and ask God to help me, a poor sinner, and August 20th, 1878, I hope I was blessed with an understanding, to some extent. I was reading, and thought surely my time had come and I was going to die. All at once I heard some one speak, and say, My grace is sufficient for you. How happy I felt; and such, dear child, has been my life: sometimes rejoicing, but more often I cannot.

I must close. I have made this too long.

With love, and hoping for a better life after the toils of this evil world are over, your aunt,

(MRS.) W. E. McGREGOR.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Feb. 1, 1920.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS, AND ALL THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—As I write this I find myself questioning if I know anything about this household of faith, and something tells me I do, and a joy comes with the thought that I do know about it, and the feeling of love that goes out to them is strong, and very different from any other love, but I see no one in that household so ignorant, so unworthy, so prone to wander or so undeserving as I myself am. Nothing to boast of, continually in debt, and nothing to pay, and no one can say more firmly than myself, "The good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do," and so often knowing at the time I should

not, then must suffer for wrongdoing; this seems a continual trial of my life. I want to do good things, and not see good in them of myself, as to feeling, That was good, and now I will receive a reward for it. I want to do unto others as I would that others do unto me. My walk seems so full of turnbacks, slips and turnouts that when I look back over it I feel glad only He that knoweth all things can see it; and how merciful he is to me in my wanderings, and gives me so much comfort by the way. Only his eye can see my secret faults, and I desire that he cleanse me of them; they seem so many and his lovingkindness is so good. I feel to trust him all the way, knowing at all times that I am so undeserving of his notice. O that I could love him more and serve him better. I feel there is nothing in the Scriptures that is dearer to me, or more my continual desire than the singer "He" sang in the one hundred and nineteenth Psalm. The words are my continual desires. At times his words are more to me than my necessary food, then again I do not seem to think of them as I wish I could, the flesh seems to be having full sway. I often wonder if it is so with the dear ones, and when I hear them tell of their troubles and griefs I look at them in surprise, for it does not seem as though it could be so.

I am sending you two good letters, I think, from two dear sisters, and hope you will see fit to publish them. I hope you and family are in usual health, and that it may be the will of the Father to continue to bless you and strengthen you in your work, and may many continue to be comforted thereby.

Love to one and all. Do with this as seems best to you.

Adieu for this time.

MARY HILL TERRY.

NEWARK, Del., Jan. 28, 1919.

DEAR SISTER TERRY:—Since I read your letter in the last SIGNS I have wished to have a talk with you in regard to your confession that you had condemned others for the very things you have been guilty of. This confession is very unusual. I have known for some time that persons did it, but thought they did not realize they were guilty of the same things themselves. If they would admit that they had faults that might be just as grievous to some one else, I would feel more comfortable toward them, but if we are condemning ourselves at the same time we are condemning others, we certainly will do by them as we wish to be done by. Church order should be observed. Admonitions were given in Bible times. There is a law written in the heart of the believer and it judges us. When we are weighed in the balance we are found wanting. We pray for the dear Lord to help our infirmities, and when we are thus engaged we are not apt to be condemning others, but rather praying for them. When we live in the fear of God we can rest in his love; we can trust him. Natural fear is the dread of being injured, but the fear of God is attended by peace, calmness and rest. There are many gifts in the church: speakers, writers peacemakers, singers, listeners, &c. Some receive and receive, feel that they are ten thousand talents in debt and with nothing to pay. I feel that I am in debt. When I try to tell my meditations I cannot begin to do justice to them. We have such a kind heavenly Father we should praise him for our many blessings, instead of rebelling against what we have no power over. The wonderful part is that his light ever shines in our darkness. No two persons are alike in nature, and grace in the heart does not cause our natures to be more

easily understood by others. Charity of thought and love and forgiveness make life worth living. I could not be happy with a person so sensitive that I would be in constant dread of offending. I do not want to live with one who is so good that others are always at fault when anything goes wrong. We should be willing to "stand corrected" in nature, and certainly we should rejoice for some one to "wash our feet" spiritually if need be. I have had deep and prolonged thought on these matters, and your honest confession caused a response. If we all try to live up to the standard we set for others we do well.

January 20th, 1920.—You see I started this letter nearly a year ago. It relieved my mind, and now I want to talk a little more. Changes come in time things, and they affect the church to some extent, or my perception is not correct. Sacred things are sometimes attended by unbecoming remarks, much to the discomfort of more consistent minds. We hear the term "old fogy" notions applied to views of things once considered improper, but we are admonished to avoid the appearance of evil. Old School Baptist members are getting so they differ widely in regard to what is becoming their walk in the church. Each seems to decide the matter for himself or herself. I feel glad that I am thus far to the end of this time state. Here we see as through a glass darkly, then face to face. I rejoice that it has been my privilege to mingle with the firm old fathers and mothers in Israel when I was young.

With love,

LUCY M. ROUNDS.

REISTERSTOWN, Maryland.

DEAR SISTER:—I cannot resist beginning an answer to your letter, for it sounded so good to me, and I feel it is wonderful the way you are given the desire to do for others. I am so prone to shirk the things that I feel will be a little trying for me, always wanting to do that which seems easiest, yet we know that we cannot escape one trying place that is marked out in our pathway. I have been thinking much to-day of how wonderfully blessed I am, and it really seems as if I am having things too easy. I have been having sweet times reading in my Bible and hymn-book, and I feel glad I have been lifted out of the dark place I was in when I wrote to you last. No great joy in the deliverance, but a feeling of rest and reconciliation.

I was able to go to Baltimore last Sunday, and saw many I knew. Elder Rowe spoke from the first chapter of Genesis, about the greater light and the moon and stars. He applied these to the spiritual life of the Lord's children. I hope to go in again next Sunday. I usually get there about half an hour before meeting, so last Sunday I picked up a hymn-book and found some enjoyment in reading. This hymn seemed to stay with me:

"Lord, how many are my foes,
Many they that me oppose;
Thou my strong Protector be,
All my safety is in thee.

Satan and my wicked heart
Often use their treacherous art;
Fain would make my soul to flee,
But my safety is in thee."

O to realize that at all times my safety is in Him. I have been reading some in Job. Surely his trials were sore and many. These words just came to me: Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all. It is as you say: we know not what bitter trials or afflictions we are asking for when we long to walk nearer to God. Surely deep calleth unto deep. Some are

called upon to do business in deep waters. They see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep. All of the one hundred and seventh Psalm seems good to me. While He is leading his children through these terrible storms they cry unto him and he delivers them out of their distresses. He makes the storm a calm, and they are glad, because they are quiet. He will ever bring them into the haven of rest. There are times when this all seems very wonderful and beautiful to me. How sweet and true are these words of the poet:

"Herein his wisdom and his love
Will God to me unfold;
And from the furnace I shall prove
He'll bring me forth as gold."

I expect you will think I am writing quite often, but there will be times when I cannot. I was thinking to-day of how very unprofitable my life has been, and selfish, too, for when I do things for others it is because it gives me pleasure. I am never ready to do the things that do not. I am surely having things pleasant and easy here. It seems too much for one like me. I often recall an incident in one of Elder Popham's letters to my father. He and his daughter went to call on a sick woman who had no comforts whatever in this life; even her bed was hard. They took her some things, both to make her more comfortable and to eat. She looked up at them, and said, "O, I hope I am not one of those who are having all their good things in this world." This always seemed very wonderful to me. God moves in a mysterious way. We know though that each dark and bending line ends in the center of his love.

I must stop, as this letter is already too long, but I have felt like talking to you very often.

My love to each one in your household, and much for yourself, from

BONNIE CHICK.

ARDMORE, Tenn., March 28, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed check to pay my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for 1920. I feel very sorry to think I have neglected it so long, but it seems that the things I should do I leave undone, and the things I should not do are the things I do. I am so imperfect that I cannot do as I would like. I ask you to pardon me, and I thank you for your kindness in sending the paper to me this long, for I cannot give it up. I dearly love to read the many good letters it contains, and I dearly love the many dear writers. Sometimes I think I am deceived in the whole thing, but I feel to know that God has a chosen people, and these are a part of that people, for I am sure they have the truth, and I hope I love them all for the truth's sake. There are many of the writers I have never seen, and may never see, but they are very near and dear to me, because they have traveled the same road I have, but yet are not half so vile and sinful as I, for sin is mixed with everything I do, and I am full of deceit and hypocrisy, and yet all these things I hate and am made to mourn on account of them. So all the hope I have is in the free and unmerited grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who died to save sinners.

Yours in hope,

W. G. PYLANT.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in May (30th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1920.

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EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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2 CORINTHIANS XIII. 8.

"FOR we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth."

Having been requested to write on the above text, we shall endeavor to suggest a few thoughts for the consideration of our readers generally. It seems evident from the reading of this chapter and the one preceding that neither the apostles nor the church at Corinth were in full fellowship and agreement. The church, or at least some of that church, rather doubted the divine authority of the apostles by which they wrote and spoke, and the apostles were not altogether satisfied that those who doubted them were altogether what they professed. There were those of Corinth who sought a proof of Christ speaking in Paul, while he demanded godly lives in and of them, that he might know they were operated upon by the same Spirit. There is always unity in the Spirit's work. It never influences one man in the direction of right and another in the opposite direction, nor does it teach one man the doctrine of salvation absolutely by grace and another that salvation is a mixture of grace and works. It never moves a man to love a church or people and at the same time move that church to hate him, and whenever such conditions exist it is evident that another spirit other than that of God is operating. There is no such thing as hatred in the Spirit of God.

The apostles had many hardships to endure in their ministry, many that would in this day and generation crush to the earth the ministers of the gospel. The apostles were, however, as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves. In the case before us the people doubted the apostleship of Paul, and sought a sign by which they might be convinced that Christ was in him speaking to them. Godly living, unselfishness, his ardent desire for their welfare, was the proof he gave them. He and other apostles often spoke of their lives as being blameless and their ministry unselfish. They had coveted no man's silver and gold; with their own hands they labored to help themselves and others. They sacrificed all things of a worldly nature for the church and kingdom of God; yet many doubted their sincerity and authority. In the chapter preceding our text Paul tells the church of an intended visit to them, and assures them that he will not be burdensome to them, because he sought not what they had, but them. Again, he said, "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved." He also reminded them of former visits, and of having sent to them Titus, and asked if he sought gain of them, and if he and Titus did not walk in the same spirit and in the same steps? This was to establish the truth of God's ministers being led by the same Spirit, taught the same things, hence had mutual interest in the church and that their labor was not for gold and silver. In the beginning of the thirteenth chapter he again calls attention to a third visit to them in contem-

plation, and said, In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. Speaking, as it were, of each visit as a witness, that each time he had and would tell them the same things pertaining to God, his house, the order thereof and of his apostleship, and also of their ungodliness in word, thought and deed. Their doubt of him, their seeking a proof of Christ speaking in him and their lack of love for him did not discourage him nor turn him aside from the truth nor from duty. He called upon them to examine themselves, whether they were in the faith, saying, "Prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" The argument the apostle presents here is that if those of the church at Corinth who doubted Christ speaking in him had hope and faith that Jesus Christ was in them, without such presence they would be reprobates. Why should they doubt the presence of Christ in him? Nevertheless, even though they were not fully satisfied about Paul and Titus and perhaps others, his desire was that they do no evil; not that the apostles should appear approved, but that they should do that which is honest and upright. Then added, "For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." It seems to us that the pronoun "we" in the text refers particularly to the apostles, making the distinction between "ye" and "we." Surely they could do nothing against the truth, in the sense of injuring the truth or in bringing the truth to naught. In both life and death the truth was magnified by them, and all was for the advancement of the truth, so to speak. Truth is truth, cannot be anything else, hence anything done or said would not be against it nor in any sense change it into error. The fact of men having denied the doctrine of God has never changed the doctrine. The Bible traces the origin of sin to man. By the transgression of one man sin entered into the world. Sin is the transgression of the law. This is truth, and the truth is not hurt when man says God is the author of sin; his saying so does not make it so. The fact of man saying Christ died to open the way by or through which man can be saved does not change the truth that by the one offering Christ perfected forever all them that are sanctified. It is just as impossible to change a lie into truth as it is to do anything against the truth. Truth stands now and shall stand forever, as solid and firm and unmovable as God its author is unchangeable. He is our immutable God and Savior. Christ came into the world to bear witness unto the truth, and of himself he said, I am the truth, the life and the way. When men gathered together to condemn and put him to death they thought they were working against him, truth, but it all worked for good; and so it was in the days of the apostles, all things worked for the good of truth, and no harm was ever done it. Their persecution and at last death, as horrible as it seemed, all was "for the truth," in that it established the truth and magnified the grace of God. When driven from place to place, stoned, shipwrecked and imprisoned, it was all for the furtherance of the gospel among nations and classes that could not be reached in any other way. Through hatred and malice John, the apostle, was banished upon the isle of Patmos, but there he was given the wonderful revelation of Christ and the church and the messages to write unto the churches. Thus it is seen how that nothing could be done "against the truth, but for the truth."

In this day and generation a little criticism, a little doubt as to the call to the ministry, a little inquiry as to the life of a minister, does not do him nor the truth any harm. It causes more study to show himself approved unto God; it causes self-examination to know if he be in the faith; it makes him more careful in word and deed, and is always for the truth, never against it.

You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

K.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. M. Fenton, at 5128 Master St., West Philadelphia, Pa., April 7th, 1920, Howard E. Huntsman and Blanche Fenton, both of Philadelphia, Pa.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at the home of the bride's parents, Narberth, Pa., April 7th, 1920, William Wicks Day, of New Jersey, and Miss Linda Town Kirk, of Narberth, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Smith Hawkins was born Nov. 12th, 1825, departed this life March 25th, 1920, in the 95th year of his age, in the full triumph of that precious faith he had so long professed and preached. He was united in marriage to Miss Margaret Barnes in 1846. To them were born eight children, of whom one son and three daughters survive: John, of Ludlow, Ky., Mrs. Oscar Barnes, Mrs. Sallie Slonse and Mrs. T. P. Hanks, of Anderson County. He finished his days at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Hanks, where he was kindly cared for, his wife having preceded him to the grave several years. He leaves thirty grandchildren and eighteen great-grandchildren, together with the church and many friends. As a full ripe sheaf he was gathered home, freed from the suffering and turmoil of this life, and we bow to the will of our dear Father in heaven. He united with the old Salt River Church, of Anderson County, Ky., in July, 1846, and was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry the second Saturday in August, 1878; called to the care of the church as pastor November, 1881, and faithfully served until September, 1907, when, because of the infirmities of age, he was released. Brother Hawkins was a meek and humble man, walking in the fear of the Lord. He was one of those servants that desired to fill his own place with the ability which God gave him, entirely free from a jealous spirit or of envy, always welcoming visiting ministers and glad to sit and hear them. He became almost deaf and blind several years ago, so was cut off from meetings and conversation he so much loved, but bore all without complaint. O what a blessing that death comes as a release from all pain and sorrow in this life. While we feel the loss of our dear ones, we cannot wish them back to suffer more. May this be a comforting thought to the dear children and grandchildren.

The writer was called to attend the funeral on the 26th, when a large assembly met at the old Salt River Church, evidencing the esteem in which he was held. I tried to present the consolation of the gospel from the words, "I go to prepare a place for you."—John xiv. 2, after which the remains were laid to rest in the cemetery near the church, there to await the blessed and glorious resurrection.

May the dear Lord bless and comfort each mourning one. P. W. SAWIN.

Mrs. Deborah Coulson, widow of Joseph Coulson, was born Feb. 3rd, 1830, and died at her home in Delta, Pa., Dec. 30th, 1919. Her maiden name was Jenkins. She was born in the neighborhood of the Rocksprings Church, Lancaster County, Pa., where she spent all of her young life, being for several years a teacher in the county. Since her marriage to Mr. Coulson she had resided in Delta. Since the death of her husband, about thirty years ago, she had lived most of the time alone in her home. After she became somewhat feeble her relatives wanted her to sell her house in town and live with them, but to this she would never consent. No doubt she was happier in her own home than she would have been elsewhere, and indeed she wanted for nothing, for she had a host of kind friends in the town, who were ever ready to do her a friendly turn. Her gentle, lovable disposition and kind, unselfish nature, together with the fact that she was a person of rather more than average intelligence, endeared her to every one, old and young alike. Mrs. Coulson never identified herself with the church, but was a firm believer and lover of the truth. When questioned as to her reasons for remaining outside the church, her reply always was: "I am not fit; I am such a vile sinner." She loved the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which paper and her Bible were her constant companions. During the latter years of her life she had but few opportunities of hearing preaching or of mingling with those she loved for the truth's sake, and when occasionally some kind friend would take her to her beloved home church, Rocksprings, her joy knew no bounds. There was a gladness of heart to which she seemed unable to give expression, but which was

very manifest to all about her. Her last illness was of short duration, and was perhaps more the infirmities of age than disease. She passed away quietly, as one going to sleep. Her niece, sister Maggie Moon, was with her during the last few months of her life, and she, together with other kind friends, did all that was possible to make her comfortable.

In the absence of Elder Eubanks, who was providentially hindered from being present, the Presbyterian minister spoke briefly at her funeral. Burial was in Rocksprings Cemetery, the place she loved so well and where many of her kinsfolk lie buried.

Written by request.

JENNIE GRAFTON.

Edith Alumbaugh Dryer died January 5th, 1919. Influenza, followed by pneumonia, claimed her shortly after midnight Sunday. She was born to G. W. and Mary J. Alumbaugh Dec. 25th, 1889, near Odessa, Mo. Having been raised in Lafayette County, she was well known and a favorite in many ways among young and old. She was married to John L. Dryer on her twenty-second birthday, Dec. 25th, 1911, and immediately took the train for Oklahoma City, where they made their home. Prosperity and happiness reigned until death claimed this wonderful little homemaker, that being a word of praise uttered by all who knew her in her new home. She will be greatly missed, not only by loved ones, but by a large circle of friends, as was shown by a bountiful floral remembrance and attentiveness during illness. To Mrs. Dryer was born one son, which death claimed on the birthday, Jan. 18th, 1917.

Funeral services were held at the home of this devoted couple in Oklahoma City January 7th. Elder Allen, of that city, conducted the services, Predestinarian Baptists being the people whom she loved. She found great spiritual comfort in the hymns, "When sorrows encompass me round" and "Jesus, thou art the sinner's friend," which were sung during the services. She was laid to rest by the side of her infant son in Fairlawn Cemetery, in the heart of Oklahoma City.

Besides the devoted husband, John L. Dryer, her parents, Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Alumbaugh; five sisters, Hattie Hoelmel, of Lexington, Nora Blair, of Independence, Eliza Flournoy, Aultie Thomas and Miss Maude Alumbaugh, of near Wellington, and two brothers, Bethel Alumbaugh, of Independence, and Forest Alumbaugh, of Wellington, are left to mourn their loss.

HER SISTER.

Aultie Lee Thomas was born January 18th, 1892, in Bates City, Mo., and departed this life January 28th, 1920, at the home of her parents, near Wellington, Mo. She was the daughter of G. W. and Mary J. Alumbaugh. She was married to Arthur Thomas Sept. 10th, 1914. To that union one daughter was born, who is now four years old and with us in our home, as requested by her mother before she was taken to the hospital, where she underwent an operation for appendicitis on New Year's day. She grew weaker and weaker, notwithstanding the efforts of a skillful physician. She expressed a great desire to come home, and an ambulance was provided and she was brought here. She knew each and every one of the family, and said, "Now let me see my sweet baby before I go to sleep, and you all go out of the room and let me rest, for I am very tired." I know she was, for it is forty miles from the hospital to our home. Within eight hours it pleased the dear Lord to call her spirit back from whence it came. While on her bed of affliction she expressed a desire to die in her husband's arms. She bore her suffering with meekness and patience, and when asked how she felt would say, "All right, considering; you know we have to consider my condition." She was not a member of the church, and when asked why she did not join (as she seemed to love the doctrine of our Lord and Savior, also the songs of the Primitive Baptists) her answer was, "I do not feel worthy," although when she heard the gospel preached in its purity and power as it is in the Lord Jesus her countenance and expression would show that she had been made to love and believe in the Lord and Savior, who came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. She asked to hear "All hail the power of Jesus' name" sung while on her bed of affliction." She chose the place where she wanted her body laid to await the Savior's coming.

Funeral services were conducted by our dearly beloved Elder W. L. Hall, of Blue Springs. Hymns sang were "All hail the power of Jesus' name" and "By nature born to pain and death." After her body was lowered into the grave the brethren and sisters sang, "Tarry with me, O my Savior." Tokens of love were shown by a large congregation and a beautiful collection of flowers left on her resting-place in the cemetery at Lexington, Mo.

Her mother, MARY J. ALUMBAUGH.

Fannie Grigsby was born April 24th, 1851, in Rappahannock County, Va., and died there Nov. 18th, 1919, of pneumonia, after an illness of eleven days. On April 18th, 1872, she was baptized by Elder Jesse Lee in the fellowship of Ebenezer Church, Baltimore, Md. June 6th, 1897, her membership was transferred to the Ebenezer Church of New York city, by letter of dismission from the Baltimore Church. From the beginning to the end of her life in the church militant her walk and conversation were as becometh the gospel of Christ, in all things shewing herself a pattern of good works. She delighted in association with those of like precious faith, and sought every opportunity to meet with them. Several years ago she returned to Rappahannock County, and denial

of the church privileges she so keenly appreciated was a source of much sorrow, but in unabating love and fellowship she faithfully maintained correspondence with the church of her membership to the end. Of her immediate family three sisters and two brothers survive, all of Rappahannock County. She was loved by all who knew her, and we who knew her best are thankful to God for having blessed us as a church with a gift so profitable to our peace and prosperity. May the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort make known the glory of his power in a ministry of comfort to them that mourn.

JOHN McCONNELL.

Mrs. Rebecca Sturkie was born in Arkansas in 1861, and died Jan. 26th, 1920. She was married to L. O. Sturkie June 3rd, 1883, to which union were born five girls, all of whom are living: Mrs. R. H. Isham, Mrs. G. D. Isham, Mrs. I. B. Wilhelm, Misses Fannie and Florence. She united with the Old School Baptist Church in 1889, at Antioch, in Comanche County, Texas, and was a faithful member, always present at the meetings if possible. She was an invalid the last two years of her life, and suffered a great deal, but bore her affliction with much patience and was cheerful. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, both for time and eternity. To know her was to love her. Her daughters did everything they possibly could for her, but she was willing to go and be at rest. We hope the dear Lord will reconcile each one of her children and bless them with all things needful in this life and that to come.

W. R. HARDIN.

We are very sorry to announce that Elder A. B. Francis departed this life suddenly Saturday morning, April 17th, 1920. We have heard none of the particulars regarding his death, but a suitable obituary notice will be published later.—Ed.

MEETINGS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Harford Church, Harford County, Md., May 19th, 20th and 21st, 1920. To all who love the gospel's joyful sound is given a cordial invitation to meet with us. We especially request the ministering brethren to remember us by their presence. We hope for a good attendance. Those coming by way of Baltimore will take the 3:20 train on the Md. & Pa. R. R. Tuesday afternoon for Forest Hill, where they will be met. The train from Baltimore Wednesday morning, arriving at Forest Hill about 9 o'clock, will also be met, providing those coming on Wednesday will so notify Mr. Abel Wilson, Forest Hill, Md.

(MRS.) M. F. WHITAKER, Clerk.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to convene, the Lord willing, and continue in session three days, May 26th, 27th and 28th, 1920, with the Salem Church, at Philadelphia, Pa., in Apollo Hall, 1710 North Broad St., just above Columbia Ave. To all lovers and inquirers of the truth, "salvation by grace," the doctrine of God our Savior, is extended a cordial invitation to be present with us, and especially the ministers from afar or near. We hope for a goodly attendance.

By order of the Delaware Old School Baptist Association. JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Church, of Warwick, Orange County, N. Y., regrets exceedingly to announce the postponement of the Warwick Association, which was appointed to be held with the Warwick Church this coming June. Owing to illness in some homes, the breaking up of others and the utter inability to secure help, together with no surety of hotel accommodations, it is impossible for us to entertain the association this year.

Done by order of the church.

ISAAC S. BAIRD, Church Clerk.

Warwick, N. Y.

The Hopewell Church of the Primitive Baptist faith, in Kanawha County, W. Va., expects Elder H. H. Lefferts to be with us at our June meeting, first Sunday and Saturday before. Both days are to be all day meetings.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Pastor.

The Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 694 E. 125th St., or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Elder George L. Weaver has changed his address to 1309 East 114th St., Cleveland, Ohio.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 88. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1920. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DELMAR, Delaware.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will try to present a few thoughts on Hebrews xiii. 10, for your consideration, and, if you think proper, for publication in the SIGNS. "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle." The tabernacle represented or embraced all that form of worship which was delivered to Israel at Sinai by the hand of Moses, and was written on tables of stone; a covenant of conditions. God said, "If ye do these things ye shall live by them." "Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do them, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers giveth you."—Deut. iv. 1. Israel was required to live strictly by the law written on the tables of stone, the ten commandments, or failing even in the least of them they were transgressors and must die. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." But it was provided in that covenant that the transgressor by an offering of or from his substance, brought to the priest, could thus make satisfaction to the law, and thus be absolved from the punishment or penalty of the law. Hence he obtained salvation (not eternal) or justification by the deeds of the law, or by his own works; his offering, whatever it was, represented his own ability; that was according to the requirement of the law, as he was able, a lamb, a kid, a turtle dove or two young pigeons. Whatever was offered was food for the sustenance of nature and for the maintenance of life; hence that by which they obtained absolution from the penalties of the law was their food by which they lived. Thus they ate of the things of the tabernacle. The tabernacle was only a temporary structure for the housing of those things that pertained to that service during the journey of the Israelites in the wilderness. After they became fully established in the land, and all their enemies (the Canaanites) were subdued, and they obtained full possession of the land under King David, the temple was built by David's son and became the permanent abode of all the things pertaining to that worship. The temple built by Solomon was a type of the church, of which Jesus, our spiritual Solomon, is the builder. The apostle in the letter to the Hebrews compares and

contrasts the two covenants, showing that they do not and cannot exist together. When the Son of God came into the world he saith, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me." He came to do the will of his Father, and in the doing of that will "he taketh away the first, [covenant] that he may establish the second," thus sanctifying his people and making manifest their salvation; not of works, but of grace; not for works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, by the washing of regeneration. The cleansing by the blood of Jesus Christ, who by the sacrifice of himself has made atonement (that is, satisfaction to law and justice,) for the sins of his people, he is the propitiation for our sins. He was not laid on the altar of sacrifice, presided over by the Jewish priesthood, he was both the offering and the Priest. He through the eternal Spirit offered himself to God, thus purging the conscience of his people from dead works (the works of the law) and inducting them into the service of the living God. The works of the law sufficed until Christ came, but since his coming they are dead works, there being no life in them or by them. Jesus said to the Pharisees, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."—John v. 39. The law and the prophets testified of him, all the offerings under the law were types of him (or shadows). "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect."—Hebrews x. 1. But Jesus, the antitype (the substance), has by one offering (himself) "perfected for ever them that are sanctified." This is the food that we now eat, being new creatures. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."—2 Cor. v. 17. Under a new covenant, with new life, born again, the conditions are altogether different from those surrounding those who served under the old covenant. Their food is entirely different; they do not eat of or depend upon the flesh of those beasts that were offered under the old covenant; they eat the flesh of Christ. He said, "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life."—John vi. 54. They walk by faith, by faith they see his bleeding body on the tree. This is the altar of sacrifice of which they eat, and those who think to obtain salvation by the service of the tabernacle have no right; that is, have no desire for such food. They are trusting in themselves, in their ability to serve God acceptably by the things pertaining to the tabernacle; they think by their dead works to serve the living God; they say, We will eat our own bread. The poor soul who has learned the barrenness and insufficiency of his own works, and seen the end of all human perfection, is hungry and thirsty, and nothing but the flesh and blood (atoning sacrifice) of Jesus can satisfy him, and he has a God-given right to eat of that precious, soul-satisfying food, and he eats immortal meat, the living bread from heaven.

Yours to serve,

A. B. FRANCIS.

[THE last article ever written by our brother Francis, who now rests from his labors, but his works will follow him.—K.]

PHILIPPI, W. Va., March 22, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—By the divine will of our Savior I, a poor, weak and trembling sinner, will attempt to express to you my thoughts and experience as God wills. I am a stranger to many of you, but, God willing, I hope to impress upon you that, though strangers in a natural way, you are my most precious friends. Though I feel myself unworthy to write, I cannot repress the longing of my soul to relate my experience of the grace of God, if it be thus recognized by you, to the dear brethren of the Primitive Baptist churches.

About four years ago I became interested in the word and love of God. I felt myself to be a lost, ruined sinner, without any hope in life whatever. The things which I once loved (worldly things) I then hated, and the things which I had hated (divine things) I then loved, though I knew not why. I desired to become a christian, but could not. I denied myself of my friends and all places of enjoyment, and was continually mourning over my terrible sinful condition. I read and reread my Bible, but without understanding. This condition continued for months, and I became more and more despondent until I felt that my life must be taken and I not prepared. One night as I lay upon my bed thinking as usual upon this subject, and no doubt shedding tears, I saw a glorious vision, which to me is life, for without the hope given me in this vision my life would be forever darkened. I saw in this vision a road which resembled our average country road, and which led to a large open spot, upon which a number of people were gathered. I seemed to be standing aside, alone. I looked to my right, and saw another road leading away from where I was, which was very rough and rocky, and led down a steep hill to a terrible fire, which seemed to envelop the whole horizon and scenery beyond. Immediately my sinful condition seemed to be impressed upon me more than ever, and I felt that there was no hope for me except to go down this terrible road and enter that great fire, which to me represented hell or destruction. As I stood in this condition I slowly looked about to my left, and there, praise God, I saw another road leading away from me, which was broad, smooth, and with a gentle rising slope, and which led to a beautiful mansion, so beautiful that its beauty was far beyond expression. Through the great doors I beheld my Savior in all his radiance and glory, surrounded by a multitude of angels. O how my heart longed to go toward him. As I stood overpowered by the great beauty of the mansion, and the tender expression on my Savior's face, he seemed to look toward me with much tender love and compassion. He turned away and spoke some word, then looked at me and said, Come unto me, for thou art mine, and I beheld a beautiful angel coming down the road toward me, and I was lost to the sight of everything. When I came to myself the angel was leading me toward my Savior, who was watching me and repeating what he had said before. I soon fell to rejoicing and praising my Savior's name, and was so happy that I wanted to go shouting through the house, but because of a dear sick father, who was sleeping, I remained still. Since then that vision has always been bright in my memory as the time when I was first given faith and hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. I struggled a long time over what church I must join, and finally joined the Missionary Baptists, though I know not why. I took no interest in them, and upon hearing my grandfather

preach from Isaiah xlvi. 10: "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," I became very much dissatisfied. I felt a great love for the Primitive Baptists, and wished to be among them. Now again I was in despair. I was cast down in sickness, and felt that my life must surely be lost. I again denied myself of friends, and when I went to the Primitive Baptist Church I could not conceal my emotion, and many times the loved ones told me that they knew why I was so depressed. I could not conceal my feelings toward them, and they grew very near and dear to me.

After nearly two years in this sad condition I saw faintly a vision which opened the way for me. In this vision I saw the Missionary Baptists and the Primitive Baptist Church. About the Missionary Baptists was gathered a large congregation, but I could not see Christ. About the Primitive Baptist Church there was a very small congregation gathered, but in their midst I saw our Savior, and the brethren and sisters seemed to be united in one feeling, that of love and peace toward him. After this I knew that I was only obeying the lusts of the flesh by staying away, and I knew that God in time would bring me into the church which he had intended for me. I write this just as it was given me by God, and not with reproach toward any Missionary friend who may read it, yet I cannot refrain from the truth for any man. God leading me, I went the fourth Sunday in October, 1919, to the Mt. Olive Primitive Baptist Church with the intention of going before the church. I became very nervous, and feared that I would be forced to give up. This continued until the opening of the second hymn, which was, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds," then all fear left me, and I saw the vision which had been before very dim grow brighter and brighter. I arose before the church without a fear, and tried to speak some words to the church. Before relating my experience I expressed my feeling toward the members and the doctrine of the church as best I could. I especially asked the church body not to take me into their church if there was the slightest doubt among them of my experience. I related my experience as God enabled me, and as I faced the congregation the members were to me as a parent is to the child; yes, even more so. I had never seen that church so beautiful nor loved its members so deeply. My heart throbbed with love for each member in the congregation and elsewhere, and my soul was filled with praises for our Master. Although I am a very unworthy, sinful creature, I was taken into the church, and on Sunday was led into the shining waters by my grandfather, Elder J. N. Bartlett, who baptized me in obedience to the command of our heavenly Father. How touching and joyful the scene was to me to be led into the waters of baptism by an aged grandfather, who is very dear naturally, but O so much more so in the love of God.

Although the above is a true relation of what I hope to be a christian experience, I feel that I have failed to express myself as I wished. I can only trust the grace of God to convey to you my thoughts and love for the Primitive Baptists. I am a firm believer in election, predestination and salvation by grace. If I am saved it is by grace, and not by any good works I may have done, for I have done no good thing of myself. I feel myself to be the most unworthy of your number, and can only ask your prayers. May God be with us in life and lead us in the true way, and may he in

death save us. If we never meet upon earth may we one and all meet in heaven, there to praise our Redeemer's name.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

GERTRUDE E. BARTLETT.

ATHENS, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have had a desire to write to the SIGNS for a long time, to tell the dear ones what I hope are the dealings of the Lord with me, and how much comfort I have had in reading the dear old paper. I believe this is one way the Lord has of comforting me in my dark and lonely hours. My husband is away nearly every Saturday and Sunday, and then it is I read the messages in the paper. The dear ones tell my travel better than I can tell it myself, and it causes love to flow from my poor heart, and I want to meet with them face to face and hear them talk of the goodness of God. Sister Mary E. Wright, of California, I hope the Lord will give you a mind to write to the SIGNS again. I have had a feast while reading your letter in the April number. I have wished several times that I could write you a personal letter. It seems to me that you have traveled in a way which I hope I have been and am still traveling, if I am not deceived. If it be the Lord's will to direct my mind, I will in my weak way try to write of some of his dealings with me, knowing that without his guidance I can tell nothing of what I have experienced. In the fall of 1907 there was a myterious power that took hold of me and caused me to fear, and made me see myself a sinful creature. I felt to be the vilest sinner that lived. I felt that if I died hell was my doom. I was taught from my childhood that if I did anything wrong the devil would get me. I could not believe these things except for a few minutes at a time. I was made to know it was God that ruled, and not the devil, and if hell was my doom it was the Lord's will, for the Scripture says, He doeth his will in heaven and in earth, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say, What doest thou? But after being made to see all of this I was led to doubt, and saw myself growing worse all the time. It seemed that all the sins I had ever committed rose before me, and I thought I would live a better life, read my Bible and pray and get forgiveness for my sins and be saved. But I found this to be in vain; it seemed that the utterance of the words I prayed rose no higher than my head, and I saw that there was nothing I could do to save myself, but if I was ever saved it would take a higher power to save me. I would read my Bible and try to find some comfort, and in two places where I was made to read I did find it, in the fourteenth and fifteenth chapters of John, where Jesus was talking of love to the disciples. O how I desired this love, and how I desired to be one of those he had gone to prepare a place for, and that he would come again and receive me. In this condition I did not want to be in company with any one, I wanted to be entirely alone. At night I seemed to fear worse than in the daytime. I was afraid to look at the sky at night, for it seemed that the heavens and stars were going to fall upon me. I often wished I could have a light at night, but would not say anything about my condition. This continued with me from the fall of 1907 until July, 1908, when I hope I was made to rejoice in a Savior's love. I was in a Methodist meetinghouse, and it seemed to me that I could see Jesus in his purity coming down from above, and the words rang in my ears, Thy sins are

forgiven, go thy way in peace. I was made to rejoice and praise God, and wanted to sing, "Jesus, lover of my soul." I hated sin and desired to be baptized, but did not know where to go. I did not want to go to the Campbellites, Missionaries nor Methodists, but being burdened to go to the church and be baptized I joined the Methodists, and the day they sprinkled me as a mode of baptism O what an awful condition I got in. I was made to see, I hope, that those so-called churches were not the church of the true and living God, and this true church was the one I wanted. I did not know anything about the Old Baptists except what I was told by others, and they said that they preached terrible doctrine, so I thought I could not go to them. I became so burdened about baptism that one night on going to bed I tried to pray God to direct me to the true church, where I could discharge my duty and be baptized. That night I dreamed I was in a field, and doves were fluttering around me. I thought they were the prettiest things I had ever seen. I caught one of them, and loved it better than the rest. I believed those doves were the Old Primitive Baptists. A short time after this I was married, and both my husband and myself were baptized the second Sunday in August, 1909, by Elder M. T. Pace, in a lovely stream six miles from Athens, and so joined the Old Baptists. My husband was Elder Glover Rushing.

Farewell. Yours in hope of a better life, MARY RUSHING.

SALINE, La., Jan. 28, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I address you once more, and I hope it is with love that I greet you. If the love of God is not in my heart what I write will not be worth anything to the household of faith. The flesh profiteth nothing, but the Spirit maketh alive. So every good act or thought comes from the Fountain of life, which is pure and holy. Man has not a thing to boast of, for every blessing that he has ever received was unmerited, and if he should get his just deserts he would go to endless woe; but God has been merciful to the unrighteousness of his people, for they by nature are just as corrupt as they can be, and they are the only people that can feel the blackness and hardness of their sinful hearts, which makes them groan and mourn on account of sin. It is the life of Christ in them the hope of glory that makes these things manifest. One who is dead in trespasses and sin cannot see the corruption that is in his heart, neither can he see God a pure, holy and perfect God in every sense, but the god he serves is only a god of his imagination, which can only do if man will do, so his god is weaker than man, and is no god at all. But the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob has all power, both in heaven and in earth, and none can stay his hand or say, What doest thou? In him alone is perfection found, and they that fear the Lord can trust in him for their salvation in time or eternity. He has said, Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be saved, for I am God, and beside me there is no other. This is not an invitation, but a command. He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. There never has been one of Adam's creatures who has come to the ends of the earth of his own free will, but had to be brought there by suffering, and it takes suffering to kill us to the love of this world and make us know that vain is the help of man. Every child of God has to be brought to his wit's end before he can trust in God Almighty, and when one

is brought to the end of all creature help and enabled to trust in the salvation of the Lord, which was wrought on Calvary's cross, it is sweet then to trust in his holy name. Jesus Christ was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Such love was never known, a love that caused the dear Savior to come down here in this low ground of sin and suffering and keep the law in every jot and tittle, and to suffer the horrible death of the cross, and then to be raised for our justification. It sometimes seems to me that it is too good for such a sinner as I am to be embraced in that glorious kingdom of God which is within his people. In that day (which is the gospel day) a king shall reign in righteousness and princes shall rule in judgment. And they shall no more teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. He will be their teacher and lead them in righteousness, and their desire will be to do his holy will and to be submissive to him who is the author and finisher of their faith. For by grace are we saved, through faith; not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. Again, the Scripture says, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to thy mercy we are saved, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit. So it is plain that man has nothing to do with his salvation, neither in time nor eternity. The salvation that is enjoyed in time is eternal salvation, for it reaches from time to eternity, as it is from God, who is eternal. We only have a foretaste of that salvation while here on this earth, which is sometimes to us inexpressible and full of glory, but when we are resurrected with his likeness we shall then know as we are known; we shall be pure, as he is pure, no more sin to contend with, no more doubts and fears. O glorious thought, when we are enabled by the eye of faith to look away from the vain and perishable things of this earth and view the sweet promises of God to his people and to have hope that those promises are unto us. If we are his we need not fear, for he is our Shepherd and we will not need anything, but all will be for our good and his glory. I do not believe that anything ever came to pass by chance; no matter how great or how small, he has a purpose in it all. Every doubt and every fear and all our sorrows are ordained of God and will fill the purpose and place he has for it. I will suffer every pain that is for me to suffer, and have every joy that is for me to have, and when the purpose that God has in me on this earth is fulfilled I will leave this earth, not one second before my time nor one after. O if we could always trust in him who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, but I am poor and weak and prone to go astray. I can never follow him unless he is my leader, for this flesh is corrupt, and it is just as possible for the leopard to change its spots or the Ethiopian his skin as it is for man to do one good thing of himself, for there is none good but God, and true holiness in the people of God is the fruit of the life of Christ in them. He directs their steps in paths of righteousness. There are things that come in their lives they cannot understand, such as unbelief, and some of the most horrible thoughts, which make them fear and tremble and doubt that they were ever born of God, but I do believe that the children of God have to be shown from time to time the exceeding sinfulness of this old flesh. If

they were not made to see that sin is in this mortality they would soon get puffed up and be pharisees, hypocrites, for this old flesh wants to claim some glory, and would if it were not kept in subjection by the power of God, who giveth us humility by the things we suffer. It certainly is sweet to see brethren dwelling together in humbleness and in unity of the Spirit, for God is love, and when we love one another it is because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, and then we cannot help loving, and we do not want to help it.

May the grace of God be with the editors, and all true lovers of God, that they may be enabled to go on in the paths of righteousness, and to trust in him who is full of grace, mercy and truth. Now I will say with Paul, Now unto the King immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever.

Do with this as you think best; if it is of the flesh it is of the earth, and is earthy, but if it is of the Spirit it is a gift from God, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift.

Your little brother, I hope, in Christ Jesus the Lord,

E. F. READHIMER.

ALBANY, Ore., Jan. 24, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It is time for me to renew my subscription for the SIGNS, which comes to me regularly, bringing the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace, which is a great comfort to me in my declining years, and when it comes I often examine it to see if I can find something written by the Primitive Baptists with whom I am acquainted on this far off Pacific coast. I have visited many of the churches in both Oregon and Washington, and they are all sound in the doctrine of grace, and have able ministers of the gospel. I wonder they do not write oftener, but I suppose they feel their weakness, as do all of God's people, but the apostle says for our encouragement, I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. We need His help in all we do. In regard to spiritual things, we know nothing only by revelation. I once labored hard under what we call the "do and live" system of religion. I did not have to learn it, it was already in me; I received it from father Adam when he sewed fig leaves together to hide his sin. Blessed be God's holy name, he showed me that my fig leaf coat would not hide my nakedness from his all-searching eye, which caused me to cry for mercy. How natural it is for us to cry when we are in trouble. In the fortieth Psalm is clearly shown the awful condition in which we were in consequence of sin. He figuratively represents it as a horrible pit. Let us think for a moment how awful it would be to be cast into such a pit as this, where every effort of our own would sink us deeper. But David says, "He heard my cry." What a mercy it is that we have such a God as this to look to when we feel cast down and driven from the presence of the Lord. Jonah while in the whale's belly said, I am cast out of thy sight, yet will I look again toward thy holy temple. God not only heard David cry, but brought him up out of the pit and set his feet upon a rock and established his goings. Upon a rock! What a sure foundation this is, for this rock represents Christ. It is written, The stone that the builders rejected has become the head of the corner. He not only set his feet upon a rock, but established his goings. He now sings a new song, one that he never sang before, a song that none can sing but those who have been taught of the Lord. This song

gives Him all the honor which is due to his name, and none but the child of grace can sing it. There is no worship that is acceptable to God that is not prompted by the Holy Spirit. This we all learn by experience. I am now in my eighty-ninth year, and have been trying to serve God from my youth, but I must say with the apostle, In me (that is, in my flesh) dwells no good thing. I know this is true: that Christ came into the world to save sinners, and if he came to save me I am saved. He never tries to do anything, but speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast; and when he cried, It is finished, he paid it all, and if he died for me I am saved. The apostle asks the question, Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is Christ that died and rose for our justification.

Dear editors, dispose of this poorly written letter as you think best; you must be the judge.

SILAS WILLIAMS.

CALION, Ark., Feb. 9, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I have not been able to pay for the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I thought I would try to send in some new subscribers and assist in that way to help carry it on. I feel that it is of so much comfort to me and all of the household of faith I want to do what I can to help.

The new year 1920 finds the three little churches which I try to serve in peace and fellowship with each other, for which I hope we are thankful to the Giver of all good and perfect gifts. We have had to give up several of our precious brethren by death the past year.

Please find inclosed post-office money order to pay for your valuable paper for Mrs. S. A. Fillingame, Rawls, Ark.

Yours in a sweet hope,

T. J. EVERS.

POCOMOKE CITY, Md., Feb. 2, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing two dollars to pay for the dear old SIGNS for the year 1920. I do not want to be without it as long as I can pay for it, as it advocates the doctrine I believe. I tried to live with the Missionary Baptists for a number of years, but I could not tolerate some of their doctrine. I have discontinued attending their meetings, for they depend so much on man's work. I do not believe as they do; I believe all power is of the Lord. He has spared my unprofitable life for some purpose, what it is I do not know, but all things are known unto him, the giver of all good gifts.

We have preaching occasionally at Pitts Creek Old School Baptist meeting-house by Elder B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia. I am glad to see the church revive, for it has been closed the past six or seven years. The hand of the Lord is manifested there, for there have been three new members added to the church within a few months.

I must close.

Yours unworthily,

PARKER PRUITT.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meeting-house, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in May (30th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

STOCK OF HYMN BOOKS EXHAUSTED.

OUR supply of Hymn Books (Beebe's collection) is exhausted, and, owing to the unsettled state of the business world, cannot say just when we will have more for sale, but hope we may have them ere long, and when we do receive a new supply of the books will announce the fact in these columns.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1920.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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EZEKIEL III. 20.

"WHEN a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling-block before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand."

A sister of many years and of long membership in the church requests that we give our view of the above text, and we feel willing to grant her wish, hoping that our effort may, in some small way at least, meet with her approval, and that also of others.

First of all, we shall call attention to the fact that primarily the text has its application to and in the old covenant; secondly, it has its bearing upon the gospel age of the world. The dealings of the Lord with his people under the law were very different from his dealings with his spiritual house or kingdom. The apostle tells us that as there was a change in the law, there was also, of necessity, a change in the priesthood. These changes make all things different. Because of this fact we should all be careful how we handle matters of the old and new covenants. The law had a shadow of better things to come. The commandments were carnal, the sanctuary worldly, the priesthood composed of natural men; the offerings could never take away sin nor purge the conscience from dead works. The gospel has the very image of heavenly things. The commandments now are written in the heart by the Spirit of the living God. The sanctuary now is spiritual, the pillar and ground of the truth, the priesthood a living priesthood after the order of Melchisedec, priests unto God through the Son of God, the Priest of the most high God. The offering of Jesus Christ, without spot unto God, took away forever the sins of the chosen of God, and the blood of the everlasting covenant purges the conscience from dead works to serve the God of our salvation. Thus is seen the wonderful contrast between the two dispensations, and inasmuch as God spake unto the fathers by the prophets, but in these last days has spoken unto us by his Son, we should all endeavor to keep his dealings with his people in the two ages distinct one from the other.

In verses seventeen to nineteen of this same chapter the Lord said to Ezekiel, "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul." Inasmuch therefore as the prophets were chosen watchmen of the house of Israel they were accountable to God for their stewardship, so to speak, and were dealt

with according to their service in their office, or position, in which the Lord placed them. The watchman occupied, as it were, the place of a shepherd to watch over the flock and to warn them of any approaching danger. Among the Israelites there were many wicked men; in other words, transgressors of the law of Moses, and these needed to be reminded of the commandments and of the penalties for transgression. Ezekiel, having been made a watchman unto them, was to warn them, delivering such messages to them as the Lord gave. If he faithfully warned a man of his wickedness, and the man continued in his wickedness, that man should die in his iniquity, but the soul of the prophet was delivered. On the other hand, if he warned not the wicked, and the wicked died in his sin, the blood of the wicked man would God require of the prophet. Here distinction should be made between condemnation of the law and justification by grace. For certain sins under the old covenant men and women were stoned to death, and for certain other transgressions they were put to death in other ways. For the sin of adultery, particularly, stoning to death was by the law prescribed. If, therefore, Ezekiel knew a man to be guilty of that sin, and did not warn him, the man should die in his sin, or be condemned for the transgression, but the blood or life of that man would God require at the hand of the prophet. Bear in mind that we are now dealing with legal matters. All punishments for sins under that covenant were exactly as prescribed by the law of Moses, and all rewards, or blessings, were temporal. Hence, on the one hand, if a man saved his life, or delivered his soul, it only meant that such man lived up to the requirements of the law and enjoyed all that the law promised for obedience. It absolutely had no reference to salvation beyond this life. On the other hand, if a man lost his life through disobedience, or failed to deliver his soul, it had no reference whatever to eternal condemnation, or banishment forever from the presence of God and the Lamb. After giving commandment to the prophet regarding wicked men, and pronouncing judgment upon them, according to the law, the Lord tells him what shall be the end of a righteous man who departs from his righteousness. The word was, He shall die in his iniquity, and his blood will I require at thine hand, because thou didst not warn him; and the righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered. In this is shown the guilt of both the righteous man who turned from his righteousness and the prophet who failed to warn him. There is also shown here the power of the law in the condemnation of the once righteous man. It mattered not how much legal righteousness he had possessed, nor how strictly he had lived as touching the law and its precepts, if he transgressed in one point he was guilty of all, and his former life of righteousness could not in the slightest degree excuse him for the sin committed, hence was not, could not, be remembered in his favor.

Inasmuch as the death the sinner was to die seemed particularly in the mind of our sister who requested us to write on the text at the beginning of this article, it seems expedient that we call attention to a few things along that line. The words "die" and "death" are often used synonymously with the words "condemn" and "condemnation." For instance, the Lord in giving the law to Adam said regarding the forbidden tree, In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. The word "die" in this place means

condemned by the law, as though he had said, Thou shalt be condemned for the transgression. Adam lived nine hundred and thirty-five years, yet dead in sin, he and all his posterity under condemnation. Again, when Paul in writing to the Romans said, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death," he meant there is now no death to them who are in Christ Jesus, because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made them free from condemnation—sin and death. Again, to the Ephesian brethren he said, You hath he quickened, who were dead (condemned) in sins, but now are ye alive unto God by his quickening Spirit, raised up from the curse and condemnation of the law. They had been before quickening living men and women, yet dead because of sin. Jesus said, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation (death), but is passed from death (condemnation) unto life. To Martha Jesus said, He that believeth in me, though he were dead (condemned), yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die (be condemned). By reference to these Scriptures we have tried to show how men could "die," condemned by the law, and yet live as the sons of Adam in ancient times. Death therefore did not always mean dissolution of the body, though in some instances it did.

Coming now into the gospel covenant we shall try to show the application of our text in this age of the world. The Lord called men, when in the flesh, and appointed them overseers of his people, called the elect of God. The prophets were made watchmen unto the Israelites only, and the apostles were made watchmen of the spiritual house only. One of them said, We watch for your souls as those who must give an account, hence responsible to the great Shepherd of the sheep. Paul said, I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God, therefore I am free from the blood of all men, meaning by this that he had faithfully discharged his duty, both to God and the brethren, and in that service had a good conscience toward God. We have no record that any one of the apostles failed to warn, exhort, reprove and rebuke any one or all of any church when it was necessary. Such was a part of their ministry. If in those days a man professing Christ was found guilty of wrongdoing he was dealt with according to the law of the church, not the law of Moses. The law of the church demands righteous living and godly conversation, and for disobedience to that law many were put to death in the sense of condemnation, being turned over to the devil for the destruction of the flesh. Many who had professed to love the church and doctrine of God departed from the strait and narrow way, and all their profession, good works and righteous living were never once reckoned nor remembered in their favor. The most horrible death we can imagine is to be cut off from the church of God, severed from the fellowship and confidence of the household of faith. In this way the gospel covenant transgressor dies, but when warning is heeded a soul is saved from death, or condemnation. In the days of the apostles if "the right hand," meaning the most prominent member of any church, offended it was cut off, and if the right eye offended it was plucked out. We hope that none of us who labor in the vineyard in these days

shall have the blood of any man required at our hands. It is a serious and solemn matter to take the oversight of the flock of God, to show no partiality, to be faithful at all times and under all circumstances to the Lord, who separated us unto the gospel, and faithful also to the sheep. Warning, reproof and rebuke are not reckoned, generally speaking, as faithfulness in a gospel minister, and censure often results instead of an awaking to righteousness. But if the minister discharges his duty he delivers his soul, in the sense of not being held accountable for the death of the transgressors. It is understood that this death is the condemnation of the church, and has no reference to final banishment from God. There is no such thing as that to a child of God, but he must give an account of the things done in the body. On the other hand, all his good works never save him with an everlasting salvation, but they can and do save him from death in the church. How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, striving together for the peace of the gospel. May it be so, then there will be no death or condemnation in the church, no need of reproof and rebuke.

Thus we conclude our feeble effort to comply with the request of our sister who wishes her name withheld. K.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

R. LESTER DODSON has changed his address until further notice to Danville, Va., R. D. 3, care W. L. Ferguson.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at his home, Leesburg, Va., April 26th, 1920, Harry C. Hawley and Miss Leah B. Hutchison, both of Arcola, Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Ann Belle Bartlett, wife of Elder J. N. Bartlett and eldest daughter of the late Elder J. S. and Virginia A. Corder, was born April 2nd, 1851, and departed this life March 28th, 1920, aged 69 years, lacking five days. On February 24th, 1870, she became the happy wife of J. N. Bartlett. To that union were born five children: E. M., the eldest, preceded her mother to the grave three years; W. P., of Gassaway, W. Va., Corder and F. E., of Barbour County, W. Va., and Mrs. Virginia D. Chenoweth, of Randolph County, W. Va. The subject of this notice professed a hope in Christ in the pardon of her sins about the year 1875. I herewith copy an extract from a letter she wrote to our mother: "Something seemed to say, Cheer up, thy sins are forgiven thee; rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven. Then I was delighted, and wanted everybody to know it, for I loved everything, and rejoiced and praised the Lord all night. It appeared to me that I could view Christ on the cross for several days, and was perfectly devoted to him. Mother, I used to think I knew pleasure, but my pleasure was nothing to what it is now, thinking how good the Lord has been to poor unworthy me. I know my hope is small, and if I am a christian I am the least of all, yet I would not give it, little as it is, for ten thousand worlds like this." On the 27th of April, 1878, she was enabled by divine grace to go before the Mt. Olive Primitive Baptist Church, related a bright christian experience, was joyfully received and on the following day baptized by her father. As a "keeper at home" we think our sister had but few equals; she was a good wife and sacrificing mother. In the former years of her life she was considered a woman of very bright intellect and quick of apprehension, but when the years came when the "daughters of music shall be brought low," she began to show symptoms of dementation, which came to a crisis May 29th, 1919, at her farmhouse near Philippi, W. Va. On June 27th she was taken to the Relay Sanitorium, in Maryland, for treatment. She remained there until Sept. 2nd, when she was brought home much improved, but as the days went by she suffered a relapse. She was the victim of many delusions, which her physician pronounced incurable, and she was placed in the hospital for the insane at Weston, W. Va., Dec. 16th, 1919. The immediate cause of her death was thought to be paralysis. Her remains were brought home for burial in the Mt. Olive burying-ground. Elder J. S. Murphy was with us on the solemn occasion, and preached very comfortingly to us from 1 Cor. xv. 29. She leaves her bereaved husband sad and lonely, her children, twelve grandchildren and two sisters, Mrs. T. E. Cole and the writer, to mourn, but they are comforted to know that she is released from her sufferings. We

have indeed been led into deep waters during the past year, and brought very low before the cloud-covered mercy-seat of our God, as poor beggars to behold the "light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." May we be sustained for Christ's sake by the same almighty power which wrought a great work in our dear departed one, so that she could not hold her peace, but confessed her Lord when in a demented condition by occasionally crying out, "I trust all to God."

Her sister, SEMMA E. CORDER.

Cassandra D. Huff was born Nov. 12th, 1858, near Chestnut Hill, Harford Co., Md. She was married to the late brother John M. Huff March 7th, 1883. She was a member of Harford Church for a long time, but the date of her baptism seems unobtainable. She passed from among us January 25th, 1920, and her remains were interred in Rock Springs Cemetery January 29th. She is survived by two sons: Ellsworth, of Philadelphia, Pa., and Lester, at the home place near Street, Harford Co., Md.; also one daughter, Edna, is living at the homestead with her brother Lester. She was not only the daughter of sister Cassie, but her faithful companion, always accompanying her mother to the associations and yearly meetings, seeking the truth as it is in Jesus, both believing in salvation by grace and hungering for gospel tidings wherever they were led. Sister Huff enjoyed the companionship and communion of the children of the little flock of God's elect, and distance did not deter her from going during association seasons. She provided well in entertaining the brethren during her life in the church.

ALSO,

Annie E. Jenkins was born May 27th, 1842, and died January 6th, 1920, at the Jenkins homestead, where she was born, located near Peach Bottom, Lancaster Co., Pa. She was baptized by Elder Barton Nov. 17th, 1867. This old homestead was willed by her great-grandfather to her grandfather in 1789, but earlier records passed into another branch of the family and are not obtainable. It has ever since been in the Jenkins name, she owning it at the time of her death, and we are informed she willed it to a sister and still in the same name. When young she left the home to teach, and after thirty-eight years of teaching she returned in 1899 to the place of her birth, and there lived the remainder of her life on earth. Rock Springs meetinghouse stands on the original homestead tract, and ground was deeded to the church Dec. 23rd, 1808, by the Jenkins family. Elder Gilbert Beebe stopped regularly on his trips between Middletown, N. Y., and Alexandria, Va., years ago. At that time the only conveyance or mode of travel was on horseback. Since that time this place has been the home of the Baptists during association seasons and church meetings, the ministers and brethren being entertained continuously. Sister Annie was the eldest of a family of thirteen, of whom but one brother and five sisters survive: David and Lillie M. Jenkins, Mrs. Emeline Wicks, Mrs. Milton Wicks, Mrs. Scott Dance and Mrs. Maggie B. Day. Their brother Beebe passed away but recently, Sunday, April 11th. Sister Annie was an unassuming person during all her life, living the simple life of a virtuous christian woman, a womanly woman and a friend to all with whom she came in contact. She lived and died in the faith of the Son of God, believing through this faith in salvation by grace. Almost her last words were: "If the Lord's will be that I must leave this earth, I am satisfied to go; his will be done." The substance of this expression was communicated to her pastor just before she fell into unconsciousness, a few days before her death, his last visit to her sick bed. She will be missed and mourned for days to come, particularly by those in her immediate neighborhood, and more than all by the little flock at Rock Springs meeting, and by the members and friends as well of the Delaware Association as a whole. She was a strong, faithful character in the church, one of the main props, as it were, always interested in the welfare of the little flock, ready and prepared at all times to entertain and provide for all who came that way in their pilgrimage to hear the truth as it is in Jesus. She was a friend to the orphan as well, a friend in need and in deed, and her right hand never knew what her left hand performed. But why should we be grieved and sorrow concerning them that are asleep, even as others which have no hope? For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. She has entered into that rest; our loss is her gain. It was this hope of life in Christ through his grace that strengthened her to live the life she did on earth, and the same grace that strengthened her in her dying hours, which revived that hope, that she should see him as he is.

JOHN G. EUBANKS.

George Brazeale, son of Marion and Addie Brazeale, was born August 12th, 1876, in Dallas County, Ark., and died October 16th, 1918, aged 42 years. He had the influenza, followed by pneumonia. He was married to Miss Nettie Everett Dec. 20th, 1903. To them were born four children, all boys: Malcolm, Joe, Wiley and Doyle, who are left, with their mother, to mourn the loss of a loving father and kind husband, also his widowed mother, one brother and one sister and many relatives and friends. He received a hope and joined the Missionary Baptists before his marriage, but in later years told his wife he had never felt at home there. He loved to hear Old Baptist preaching. A short time before he was taken sick he told his wife that he felt he would not live long,

and that he did not fear death, his only desire to live being for her and the children. She said he seemed so well that she thought surely he was mistaken. The Lord knows best, and he has taken him to himself, where there is no more parting, and sickness, sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more.

ALSO,

Jerome Everett, eldest son of Thomas and Pamelia Everett, was born January 11th, 1868, and died January 9th, 1918, aged 50 years, lacking two days. His death resulted from measles. He was married to Miss Kate Dunlap about twenty-six years ago, and to them were born eight children, four girls and four boys: Ruby, Irene, Albert, Tom, Wilbur, Orland, Leland and Bertie, all at home with their mother. He was a member of Chapel Hill Primitive Baptist Church. He was a kind husband and loving father, loved by all who knew him. We could not wish him back, but hope to meet where sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more.

Written by request. Their aunt,

LUCY A. SEALE.

Mrs. Lucy A. Tamsett was born August 20th, 1854, in the town of Gilboa, N. Y., and died Saturday, April 17th, 1920, in Oneonta, N. Y., of a complication of diseases. Her maiden name was Brewster, the daughter of the late Daniel and Lucinda Brewster. Of her immediate relatives she leaves three children, three grandchildren and three brothers. She was baptized by Elder Balas Bundy in October, 1894, uniting with the Old School Baptist Church in Otego, N. Y., and remained in fellowship with them until death. Sister Lucy was sound in the faith of God's elect, trusting alone in the Lord for salvation. She will be missed by her many friends and relatives, also by the church friends. May God bless all who mourn with sustaining grace.

The writer conducted the funeral, which was held from her home Tuesday, April 20th. Interment in the village cemetery. D. M. VAIL.

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Harford Church, Harford County, Md., May 19th, 20th and 21st, 1920. To all who love the gospel's joyful sound is given a cordial invitation to meet with us. We especially request the ministering brethren to remember us by their presence. We hope for a good attendance. Those coming by way of Baltimore will take the 3:20 train on the Md. & Pa. R. R. Tuesday afternoon for Forest Hill, where they will be met. The train from Baltimore Wednesday morning, arriving at Forest Hill about 9 o'clock, will also be met, providing those coming on Wednesday will so notify Mr. Abel Wilson, Forest Hill, Md.

(MRS.) M. F. WHITAKER, Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to convene, the Lord willing, and continue in session three days, May 26th, 27th and 28th, 1920, with the Salem Church, at Philadelphia, Pa., in Apollo Hall, 1710 North Broad St., just above Columbia Ave. To all lovers and inquirers of the truth, "salvation by grace," the doctrine of God our Savior, is extended a cordial invitation to be present with us, and especially the ministers from afar or near. We hope for a goodly attendance.

By order of the Delaware Old School Baptist Association. JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk.

THE Delaware River Association will hold its regular session, the Lord willing, with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., commencing Wednesday, June 2nd, and continuing three days. All those of our faith and order are invited to visit us, especially ministering brethren. Those coming from east and south will be met at the train leaving Broad Street station, Philadelphia, on Tuesday, June 1st, at 3:25 p. m. at Stockton, N. J., and Frenchtown, N. J. Those coming to Frenchtown can come by any train convenient, as accommodations will be arranged in Frenchtown.

O. R. KUGLER, Church Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Church, of Warwick, Orange County, N. Y., regrets exceedingly to announce the postponement of the Warwick Association, which was appointed to be held with the Warwick Church this coming June. Owing to illness in some homes, the breaking up of others and the utter inability to secure help, together with no surety of hotel accommodations, it is impossible for us to entertain the association this year.

Done by order of the church.

ISAAC S. BAIRD, Church Clerk.

WARWICK, N. Y.

Elder H. H. Lefferts will not be able to visit Hopewell Church, Kanawha County, W. Va., the first Sunday in June, owing to more urgent appointments which have first claim upon him.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 694 E. 125th St., or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

FREEWATER, Oregon, Dec. 16, 1919.

DEAR EDITORS:—The close of this year reminds me that it is time for me to renew my subscription for the SIGNS, and in sending in my renewal I would like to offer a brief sketch of my experience from the time I was ordained to officiate in the sacred things of the church of Jesus Christ. In doing this I will have to go back thirty years. On Saturday before the second Sunday in June, 1889, a presbytery composed of Elders John Moore, John Coplen and Deacon Griffith, in accordance with the wish of Zion Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, laid their hands on me. I want to say first of all that my travels have not been what I then thought they would be. My mind in reviewing the past thirty years can and does enter into the spirit of that soul-cheering hymn: "Mixtures of joy and sorrow I daily do pass through." The cause of the greatest sorrow has been my inability to fill the office as I wished to, but in all my shortcomings the dear Lord has mixed or seasoned that sorrow with his divine grace, which comes to me as I am nearing the end of my pilgrimage as buckler and shield. In my early ministry I realized I was very weak, but would console myself with the thought that I would apply my mind to the Scriptures, which were my meat and my drink, and by this means overcome that weakness. But what a sad mistake! If ye sow to the flesh ye shall reap corruption, and all of our vain imagination is of the flesh. We see that Peter's experience was not what he thought it would be. I believe that the spirit which deceived Peter is the same spirit that deceives God's little ones to-day, and that spirit is of the flesh. God's ministers have to be converted before they can strengthen the brethren. Jesus places his yoke on his saints. Some may object to this expression, as Jesus says, Come, take my yoke. He says, My words are spirit and they are life. So the Spirit and life in Jesus is the cause of the work manifested in his saints. It is under the yoke we learn of him, and the more we learn of Jesus the more we know of self, and the more we know of self the more we feel the need of grace. So we learn that God's way is not our way. This has been my experience. Now as the end of 1919 has come, so has the end come to those who set me apart to

the ministry, and not only them, but many of the members of the little church which called for the act are gone from the evil to come. Among the Elders that then stood on the wall very few remain. Elder R. M. Ogle is the only one now living who was in Mt. Zion Association at that time, of which Zion Church became a member. I served the churches of Mt. Zion, Panther Creek and Lamene associations for twelve years, and while this service was very poor, the dear Lord, who I hope called me by his grace, blessed these churches with an abundance of charity, which is the greatest gift bestowed on the church, and under the influence of this gift the brethren covered all my weakness and mistakes and loved me for Jesus' sake and encouraged me in many ways, for which I feel thankful to our heavenly Father. If it had not been for this encouragement from the brethren I know I would long ago have fainted and fallen by the way. The last year of my labors in Missouri I was often interrupted with a mind to go west. Under these impressions I labored for a long time, wondering why my mind was exercised to leave my dear brethren, who had been so loving and kind, and go to a strange land where all were strangers, and not knowing whether I would meet any Baptists. Brethren, it was to me as the command to Philip: Go toward the desert country. It seemed to me that I was leaving all, but the impression was such that in the latter part of August, 1901, I boarded the train for Washington, landing at Prescott, where I met brother Albert Hays and sister Mary Hays, the only ones I met for three months. While there I heard of Elder Mayfield, of Elgin, Oregon. I had made up my mind to go back home, but having a desire to meet a congregation of Baptists before I returned I wrote Elder Mayfield of my wish, and he wrote me that they would be glad to have me visit them. Brother and sister Hays wanted meeting at sister Hays'. She was the wife of William Hays, who was not a member of the church, but a believer. I had an appointment at their house Sunday.

I am making this narrative longer than I wish to, but here it seems was the first evidence that the Lord was with me. The poet truly says, "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." On Saturday before the meeting at sister Hays', Miss Baset, a daughter of sister Cummins, came to visit sister Hays, who told her of my being there and was going to have meeting at her house Sunday, and Thursday was going to start home. Miss Baset said she wished that her father and mother knew it, they were both Baptists. So sister Hays made arrangements for me to visit them Tuesday and Wednesday. I found three members there belonging to Mizpah Church, one of the oldest churches east of the Cascade Mountains, but for some cause had become so weak they had no pastor, but were very anxious to meet in church capacity again. We held meeting with them Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning and evening. Thursday morning Mr. and sister Hays took me to Walla Walla, where I took the train for Elgin. I had a pleasant meeting with Elder Mayfield's Church, and Monday morning took the train for my home in Missouri, sold my little holdings and returned to Washington and took the care of Mizpah Church, at Touchet, Wash. The Lord prospered the church. There were seven ordained Elders this side of the mountains then that visited us, and now all three of the members that were here are gone, and one Elder left of the seven. I

would like to mention all the Elders' names, but my letter is already too long. While the dear Lord has called so many of our brethren to their eternal home, he has blessed us with other good brethren to cheer our drooping spirits while we travel the dark and thorny road. May the dear Lord be praised for his mercy to his creatures.

J. T. BARNES.

WORKS.

"If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God."—Rom. iv. 2.

"Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?"—James ii. 21.

Paul and James were both apostles of the Lord, and each testified to the truth as it is in the gospel. By reading that which precedes the above texts we will find that each apostle is treating upon works diverse one from the other. Paul, writing to the Romans in the second chapter, is telling them that they are trusting in the law of rites and ceremonies, as given by the Lord to Moses upon Mt. Sinai. Abraham lived and died before the giving of the law to Moses for the children of Israel to observe, but Abraham was commanded of God to be circumcised and all his household. Abraham, the father of the faithful, was told to take Isaac, his only son, whom he loved, and get him upon a mountain that God would show him. Abraham believed God and also obeyed him, and God counted his belief for righteousness. Abraham believed before he was circumcised and received the sign of circumcision—a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all them that believe, whether Jew or Gentile, as God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him. The true worship of God is in spirit and in truth. The worship of God under the Mosaic law was a shadow of things in the gospel. The carnal Jews trusted to the observing of the law of rites and ceremonies to justify them before God, but Paul tells them that they can never make the comers thereunto perfect. They were dead works, as were all offerings upon their altars. Circumcision, commanded as a part of the observance of the Mosaic law, did not justify Abraham before God. If it did, he would have had whereof to glory, but not before God. James, when writing that Abraham was justified by works, was not writing to the brethren about rites and ceremonies, as observed by the Jews, but was telling the household of faith how they should live in this life. They should show their faith by their works, as faith without works is dead, being alone; and calls attention to Abraham when called of God to offer Isaac as a sacrifice, believed and obeyed God, and made preparations to carry out what God had commanded him to do, thereby showing his faith by his works. In reading the Scriptures we find that each one called of God was commanded of God to perform that which he would have them do. Abel was moved by faith to offer the firstling of his flock; he showed his faith by his works. Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him. Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Rahab and the great cloud of witnesses that are recorded in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews all show forth their faith by their works. Jesus, the Son of God, prayed all night unto God, and was heard in that he feared. The work of Jesus was a work that no man was ever sent to do, neither before nor after his time upon earth. He came to save his people from

their sins; to satisfy the law by being obedient unto death; to destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; to shed his blood for the remission of sins, and God raised him from the dead for the justification of his people. Let it ever be remembered that there is no justification from sins except by the blood and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, gave commandments to the apostles; they were to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them. James was one that Jesus so commanded, and tells the household of faith that they are to show their faith by their works. No commandment was ever given by the Savior to the apostles, nor by the apostles to the subjects of grace, but what there was ability by grace to obey. Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden." He is addressing those who are laboring to keep the law and are heavy laden on account of sin. They find Jesus in the church, in the assembly of the saints; they go home and tell what great things they hope the Lord has done for them, and has had mercy on them. This is showing their faith by their works. "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me." A yoke is placed upon the oxen that they may labor; so also those who are received by the church are taking the yoke upon them that they may labor in the vineyard of the Lord. They come in as little children and go from strength to strength. They grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord. They show their faith by their works. They are translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son, and are under law to Christ. They are not called upon to do other that what is commanded in the apostles' doctrine. Many of the Lord's commands were to the apostles, and did not go beyond their day. The apostles were to heal the sick, raise the dead, cast out devils. Freely they had received, and freely they were to give. This power was given them to show forth the power of God that was with them in the beginning of the gospel dispensation, but did not extend beyond the apostles. The instruction by the apostle James is as important to observe as any portion of the New Testament, and may we all profit thereby. Each one of the household of faith is to show their faith by their works, as faith without works is dead, being alone.

J. M. FENTON.

MONROE, Ga., March 17, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been trying to study some of the things taught in the Scriptures for many years, and also many things taught by those who claim to be Old School Baptists. We attended eight associations last fall, and enjoyed most all of them. The apostle Paul, in writing to Titus, said, There are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake, exhorting him to speak the things that become sound doctrine. This is what I want to do, and want to hear when I go among our people. Some of us seem to differ as to what this doctrine is, and some want to cover up, or hide, the differences between us, and others want to expose them; others seem to want to unify them and make it all become sound doctrine. Now anything that is becoming to this doctrine must suit, fit, be appropriate and graceful. I think that the counsel of God will be be-

coming to this doctrine through all time, for it embraces his will, decree, purpose and design. As he works all things after the counsel of his own will, it would not be becoming to this doctrine to take out "he works all things," and say he only overrules most all things for good; he suffers or permits men to work things that are not in his counsel and he has not thought of. No, but this is becoming: seeing the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure, and, As I have thought, so shall it come to pass. Then the question arises, Has anything ever come to pass, or ever will come to pass, that he has not thought of, or was not in his counsel? I answer, No; and more, all the consequences that ever have or ever will come out of the things that did come to pass were also thought of by him, and he works them after the counsel of his own will, too. His ways are past finding out. What he does is right. If we could try him by our law we would condemn him in many things, but he is above all law. His loving Jacob and hating Esau before they were born, neither having done good or evil, not giving Esau a chance, and also taking the land of Canaan from those who inhabited it and giving it to the seed of Abraham, also not giving Pharaoh a chance to keep from getting drowned in the Red Sea, also hiding these things from the wise and prudent, the reason was because it seemed good in his sight. It surely was in his counsel for his only Son, Jesus, to come into the world to save his people from their sins, and the way to do it was in his will, for Jesus asked for this cup to pass, yet not his will, but the Father's will, be done. So he was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, being made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Our iniquity was upon him, he giving himself a ransom for his people, coming forth from the grave for their justification, his righteousness being imputed to us, his blood cleansing us from all sin, some say up to the time of regeneration, then we atone for them by suffering, hence he has done his part, and now we must do our part. We were passive in his hands up to this time, now we are turned loose to provide salvation for ourselves; it is our salvation now if we accept the terms offered us. All the grace necessary for us in time was treasured up in Christ Jesus before the world was, and all we miss will be in vain, our eternal life is fixed and secure in Christ, but our life in time is in our hands, and is uncertain, being on conditions: resist the devil and he will flee from you, no need to be troubled with him; that you would do, do, and that you would not do, let alone. Now I cannot unify this with sound doctrine. It must be vile doctrine, and opposite to the truth. You are not your own, you are bought with a price. It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. The steps of a man are ordered of the Lord. We are kept by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Jonah said, "Salvation is of the Lord," for he had just realized it. Daniel found it true in his case, the three Hebrew children found it so, Jacob's family realized it, and we feel assured that salvation is by grace in time as well as eternity, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. I love to think of how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity; no calling each other hard names, no casting stones at one

another, such being the fruit of the flesh. Make the tree good and the fruit will be good, such as love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law.

J. M. ADAMS.

PENNINGTON, N. J., April 25, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—I often think that the good Lord deals very kindly with his children as they journey along in this strange world of sin and sorrow, and how little it appears to his saints when compared to that better world of glory, yet when they cast their eyes at the great blue sky, and hear the noise of the city and the sound of the great engine dashing through the distant hills they are made to wonder and wonder, and are soon lost in the thought of God's great power even in this world of creation, and of how he formed man to control, subdue and put in action the things necessary for this life; that is as far as man ever gets, to do God's bidding. He cannot make one hair black or white, nor add one cubit to his stature, no more than the leopard can change his spots. God is the only one who can give life, either natural or spiritual; that is why they are wholly in his hand, and he has power of the same lump of clay to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. Who can stay the hand of God, or say, Why hast thou formed me thus? Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Let God be true and every man a liar, is the Bible expression. Could his children daily realize this truth what a blessing it would be to each one here below, but they are carnal, sold under sin, and the things they would not they do, and the things they would they do not. But Paul says, It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. The children of God are told that they shall come off more than conquerors through Him that loved them and gave himself for them. Who knows anything about this love only those to whom the Father has revealed his Son Jesus Christ? He says he will bring them from far, and from the ends of the earth, but to the child of grace it is a long, weary journey to come to the end of the earth, or his own righteousness, but, like poor old Jacob, he is led about and instructed, a new song is put in his mouth and his feet put upon a rock. Surely the Lord was in this place, and I knew it not. That is always the way, it comes after he passes by. No man shall see his face and live, but they behold his hinder parts. It is just beyond the watchman where she finds Him whom her soul loveth. So from Genesis to Revelation they are told about this wonder-working God, and while it is not a very large book, still the half will never be told; it is only here a little and there a little, line upon line, precept upon precept. God gives the increase in grace. He waters his plants, opens the prison doors, causes the lame to walk, the blind to see, the deaf to hear and the poor have the gospel preached unto them. They are given to understand this Book of books. He is the only one who can loose the seals and reveal his glory unto men. The most of the time it is a sealed book to us. I am sure it is that way to me, but, dear editors, I feel most thankful for a crumb now and then. A crumb of mercy, Lord, I crave, unworthy to be fed with dainties such as angels have. I could write my name "unworthy" the year around when I think of eternal salvation for a sinner like me. I am so vile, so prone to sin, I fear that I am not born again. But when we examine the Bible it is the sin-

ner that Jesus came to save, and it is the children of God only who feel themselves to be sinners, so we are given hope through our unworthiness. Though our sins be as scarlet His blood can wash them white as snow.

Now to you both, who know these things far better than I do, I submit this letter, trusting that in all of your labors on the SIGNS, or preaching, this most wonderful and powerful Creator will be your mediator and guide unto the end of life's journey, and after death eternal life beyond the grave, then we shall be satisfied.

I will mail you a check to renew my subscription for another year, the balance you can use wherever is best in your judgment.

With kindest wishes for you both, and your families, I remain, I trust, yours in gospel bonds, WM. T. YARD.

CLARKS SUMMIT, Pa., Jan. 10, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am still going about as I have been for the past forty-three years and a few months, and have used nearly three clergy certificate books the past year, one hundred tickets in each book, but what it all amounts to I do not know. The question is often asked, Do you Old Baptists believe in missionaries? I answer, Certainly we do. All of the disciples of Jesus were God-sent missionaries, and every minister of the gospel is a God-sent missionary; his mission is to preach the gospel, not a gospel. God says, Go, and they go (notice, not send); they go and preach the preaching that he bids them. What is that? The power of God unto salvation. To all the world? No; to every one that believeth, and to no one else. The preaching of the gospel does not make dead men alive nor sheep out of goats. The command of Jesus is, Feed my sheep; feed my lambs. God made all of the sheep and all of the goats, and he never intended them to amalgamate, or they would—no half goat and half sheep. Jesus says, My sheep hear my voice, and I know them. Paul says, The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. Are they not all his? he created all. Where does he say, My goats hear my voice? Forty-three years ago last October I was licensed by the church to speak in public. Forty-one years ago I was ordained to preach wherever there was in the providence of God a door opened for me, and I have endeavored to do so. I have preached three or four times in waiting rooms in hotels by request of members of the church; have spoken on a steamboat by request of brethren, in Arminian meetinghouses by request of brethren, a great many times in halls, many times in private houses by request, and the only way I have of knowing God has a door open for me to preach is that the people assemble together where I go and request me to preach, and I have the church which ordained me, with God's command, to back me up in preaching there; but if I overstep my authority or privilege it is the duty of the church of my membership to call me to account, as is the case with any member who is disorderly. I have never felt any inclination to try to push myself or open a door for myself. At present I am trying to serve eight churches. There have been two deaths and several additions the past year. I have no regular appointments in Canada now. The Brooke Church has no pastor. Elder J. M. Fenton supplies the brethren in Brooke and Brantford. I hope to visit them in June at their yearly meeting. Last month I visited churches in Dela-

aware and Schoharie counties, N. Y., served by Elders Ruston and Fenton, and found them enjoying peace and harmony. There were a goodly number of additions in some of them the past year. Elders Ruston and Fenton stand well among the churches that they serve and are highly appreciated. We have many excellent ministers in the States, but I mention these as I am more intimately associated with them in our travels among the churches near here.

I will now say I have written this to be published. I know it is not an experimental letter, and I do not know that any one will read it with profit. Publish it if you feel like it.

Love to all the household of faith. Farewell.

Yours as ever, D. M. VAIL.

DURHAM, N. C., June 17, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I see my subscription for the dear old SIGNS has expired, and I feel I cannot do without it, for every paper is a feast of fat things to my poor hungry soul, so I am always glad to receive it and hear from the far away brethren and sisters, as they can tell my feelings better than I can myself. I often wonder why I am kept in the dark so much of the time, and then I am made to feel that it is best for me; we cannot be in the light all the time. I feel to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, yet the flesh is so weak I often murmur and complain over my fate, and I am filled with doubts and fears. I have one son in the training camp at Freestone, California, and it is hard to give him up. I have one more son within the war age; he is now working for the government at Chester, Pa. I pray our heavenly Father to have mercy on them and guide and direct their steps, that they may not go astray. All things are known to our God, who rules both heaven and earth, and none can stay his hand, nor say, Why dost thou allow these terrible wars and the terrible things we are daily passing through? All is known to him. While we cannot see the outcome, God has a wise purpose in it all. While our poor hearts are bleeding at seeing our dear boys leaving for the battle front, we know that the good Lord is able to protect them, and can teach them to put their trust in him, and in him alone. He is an all-wise Parent, and nowhere absent. O how thankful we ought to be that the people of God are kept steadfast in the faith while the rebel world of unbelievers has run wild after other gods. Where will all this end?

I am writing too much, but I feel I cannot say or do as I would like to. I sometimes feel that my time on this earth is short, and all I can say is, Dear Lord, have mercy on us all; thy will be done, O Lord, not mine.

Loved ones, remember me in your prayers.

Your sister, saved by grace, if saved at all,

(MRS.) O. R. FERRELL.

RIVERSIDE, Cal., March 22, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find money order for two dollars for subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. There are a few here who love the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS: the absolute predestination of all things and the eternal vital unity of Christ and his people. This is a mild, healthful and pleasant climate to live in. We would be pleased to entertain in our home any coming this way.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

C. G. MILLER.

WEST CHESTER, Pa., March 2, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel glad to inclose you the copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES requested. It is pretty well worn, for it is all the preaching I have been able to get since November, so I read it from cover to cover as soon as possible after it arrives, and then reread again. In the days of my childhood I can remember files of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES kept by my grandfather, Wm. Drake, of Hopewell, dating back to its first issue. Afterward my father was a subscriber for years, and now I should feel lost indeed without it. I have often felt I must write and tell you what it means to me, especially now that I am so far from meeting, and continued disability prevents me from going to Philadelphia, except at long intervals. I most earnestly desire to keep in touch with God's dear people, and the SIGNS is a precious medium, for often when cast down and almost in despair along comes my copy of the paper, and I find therein the experience of some dear child of God that tells my own travail of spirit better than I could tell it myself, and I am builded up in hope again that I have passed from death unto life. I have often been impressed to write you, but feel myself too barren, and if saved at all surely I am less than the least; yet my heart feels full of thankfulness for all of God's rich mercies and blessings, which continue to follow me through fiery trials and deep waters of affliction. But what are these things? Paul says, Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. How I feel to rejoice that only by grace can we be saved, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, for what could we poor sinners offer? Nothing, less than nothing. May God bless us all and keep us humble, walking according to his will and purpose in Christ Jesus, and may we ever trust alone in the meritorious blood of the Savior for peace and rest beyond this world of sorrow.

JOSEPHINE DRAKE HAVILAND.

MT. STERLING, Ky., April 11, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—As the time has expired to renew our dear family paper, will ask your pardon for delay, but will now remit the amount for another year, as we feel we cannot do without it, for we scarcely ever hear gospel preaching. Our dearly beloved brother, Elder P. G. Lester, comes about twice a year, and that is all the gospel preaching we hear, so you see our hearts are made glad when the SIGNS comes to us. Through it we hear from all parts of the world, and the many good letters from the brethren and sisters beautifully set forth the doctrine of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The editorials are also good. Dear brethren, let the paper continue to come to the same address. I also send you one new subscriber, my brother, C. S. Ratliff, Irvine, Ky. I would like to send you more.

Your brother, I hope,

T. J. RATLIFF.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in May (30th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1902.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 29.

"ELSE what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?"

Having been asked to write upon this subject, and having had some reflections upon this text, we shall proceed to lay our views before our readers for their consideration, hoping for the favorable guidance of the Holy Spirit in the matter, the only Spirit that can guide us into all revealed truth. We think that no subject should be entered into without due consideration being given to the passages of Scripture surrounding the text. Beginning at the first verse of the chapter, and reading down to the passage quoted, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that Paul is contending for the truth that Christ has risen from the dead, a truth that was being denied by some in the apostolic church. We believe the main purpose of this fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians to be to establish beyond all successful controversy the indisputable evidence of Christ's resurrection from the dead; and, further, that the resurrection of the dead is so indissolubly linked with the resurrection of Christ that without the resurrection of the one there cannot be the resurrection of the other; that if Christ be risen from the dead, then the dead are risen; and if Christ be not risen, then the preaching of the gospel, and also the faith and the hope of the gospel, are all vain and without meaning, and the church of God is still in death and not redeemed from sin. Our readers will doubtless remember that after the body of Jesus was taken down from the cross and laid in the new tomb of Joseph of Arimathea it came to the mind of some of the chief priests and Pharisees what Jesus had said about rising again after three days, and they went to Pilate to ask him to have the tomb so securely guarded that the disciples of Jesus might not come and steal the body away, thus to make it appear that he had arisen, so that, they said, the last error should be worse than the first. Therefore the Jews took every precaution possible to prevent Jesus' body from leaving the tomb. In spite of the watch which they set, however, Christ arose exactly at the time appointed of the Father. None of the sentinels beheld him leave the tomb, for at the time of his coming forth they became as dead men. Much alarmed when they discovered the body lay no longer there, they hurried to the chief priests with their report. These priests, taking counsel with the elders as to what should be done in the matter, all agreed to pay the watchmen money to hire them to say that some of Jesus' disciples had come in the night and stolen the body away so as to make it appear that he had risen from the dead as he had declared he would do. Thus the lie started, and the falsehood has persisted to this day. It is not to be wondered that this denial of Christ's resurrection menaced the church in the days of the apostles, and called forth from Paul the incontrovertible proofs of that resurrection given by the apostle in his letter to the church at Corinth. He calls their attention to those who witnessed the ap-

pearing of Jesus after his resurrection. He was seen first by Cephas; secondly, by the twelve disciples; thirdly, by over five hundred at one time, most of whom were living when Paul was writing this letter; fourthly, by James, then by all the apostles; and lastly, he was seen by Paul himself. In the face of all these witnesses how dared any deny that Christ had risen from the dead? Apart from all these living witnesses, there were in the souls of all true believers the divine gifts of living faith and of release from the condemnation of sin, gifts which could not be in exercise had Christ not risen, thus making each individual believer a witness in himself, apart from any external testimony. Now, to argue that Christ had not risen was to make themselves false witnesses, since they had testified that God had raised his Son from the dead. Further, had Christ not risen, then they must still be under condemnation for sin and must still be without faith, conclusions which contradicted their own spiritual experience. Also, to say that Christ had not risen was the same as saying the dead were not raised, and to deny the resurrection of the dead was to say that Christ had not risen. To any unbiased reader of this chapter in first Corinthians it must be perfectly plain that if the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of the dead are not one and the same thing, they must at least have been so closely tied together that one could not take place without the other. We know of no part of the Scriptures that more closely shows forth the oneness of Christ and his people than this where the apostle so clearly establishes the coming forth of the Savior as being the coming forth of the dead unto life. Continuing this line of thought, comes the question: "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?" After his resurrection from the dead Jesus (because all power in heaven and in earth had been given into his hands) commanded his disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel unto every creature, baptizing those who believed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Thus it will be noticed they were not sent to baptize in their own name, nor in the name of those whom they baptized, but in the name of Him who sent them. Now, why baptize them in the name of Christ if Christ be not risen? The believer receives immersion into or burial in water as an emblem of the death of Christ, and he receives emersion from or coming out of water as an emblem of the resurrection of Christ. Why, then, are we baptized for, or in the name of, the dead, that is, of Christ, if the dead (Christ) rise not? It will be seen from this that it is the resurrection of Christ, or of the dead, that gives meaning to all the ordinances of the church, and without his resurrection baptism and all other ordinances are rendered empty of meaning and of vitality. Any person who, in the days of the early church, was led to cast in his lot with the christians, by being baptized into church-membership with them, brought down on his head all manner of persecutions, because the church, in those days, was continually being baptized in floods of affliction and of suffering. John the Baptist had prophesied that Christ should baptize his people not only with the Spirit, but with the fire of affliction and of persecution. Jesus had said to his followers that they should indeed drink of his cup and be

baptized of his baptism; that he had a baptism to be baptized with, concerning which he was straitened until it should be accomplished. Beyond a doubt, Jesus was not then speaking of being baptized in water, but of being buried in death. The travail which fell to the lot of the primitive church proved that its members, too, were always being delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, not experimentally merely, but literally. Since any who were baptized into the church in those days became targets for antichristian persecution, they stood in jeopardy; that is, in danger of their lives, every hour. What was the use of all this dangerous living if Christ had not risen from the dead? Why had Paul fought with the beasts in the Roman amphitheatre at Ephesus if the dead (that is, Christ) had not risen? In some way or other Paul was in danger of his life every day because of the Christ he preached. Now, why all this daily dying in behalf of the truth if there be no truth? That is, if Christ be not risen. Paul's whole thought throughout this chapter is to prove to the christians that without the resurrection of Christ (that is, of the dead) their spiritual life is but a lie. It is his resurrection from the dead that is their resurrection and that fills their whole lives with such eternal vitality that all the legions of hell cannot withstand them, since the saints are, by the grace of God, on the side of truth and truth must prevail, as God has raised truth from the earth and it must push its mighty conquests on until every knee shall bow to Him who sits upon the throne. He hath put all things under his feet. When all things shall be subdued unto Christ, then Christ shall himself be subject unto the Father, who put all things under him in order that God may be all in all. L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Joel Henry Crissey departed this life April 8th, 1919, at his home in Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., in his 78th year. Mr. Crissey had been in failing health for some months prior to the attack of illness which took him away. He was the only son of the late George A. Crissey and Mary Elizabeth Forshee. Mr. Crissey was a great lover of nature, and spent much time roaming the hills and valleys, and wrote many beautiful poems upon the wonders of God in nature. He was possessed of rather unusual literary ability, though modest and retiring in disposition. He made his friends feel at home when visiting him, the writer having often enjoyed the kind hospitality of his home. He made no public profession of religion, but was a good man and verily believed in God. He often attended our meetings in Warwick, and at times seemed interested. We have every reason to believe that he was one of God's sons, and that he now rests with him. He is survived by his widow, who was Martha Sayer, and two daughters: Elizabeth C., wife of George M. Van Duzer, and Genevieve, all of Warwick; also by four grandchildren and one sister, Mida, wife of Theodore L. Lutkins, of New York. December 21st, 1918, Mr. and Mrs. Crissey celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of their marriage, which occasion was attended by many friends, both old and young.

The writer conducted the funeral service of Mr. Crissey, and interment took place in the Warwick cemetery.

ALSO,

Mrs. Mary M. Rittenhouse Rounsavell, wife of Wm. J. Rounsavell, died at her home in Warwick, N. Y., April 8th, 1920. Sister Rounsavell suffered an attack of pneumonia in the winter, and at that time very little hope was entertained of her recovery. She rallied, however, and had been out several times as far as her store. The writer visited her the first Sunday in April, and she seemed bright and cheerful and looked as well as she had for some years. That night she was taken suddenly ill, and passed away the following Thursday morning. Sister Rounsavell had been a faithful member of the Warwick Old School Baptist Church many years, and she is sadly missed by us all. Her kind spirit and thoughtfulness of those in need caused every one to love and appreciate her who knew her. It would be impossible to mention the deeds of kindness of her life, and we feel sure she would not want such mention made of her, but it is right and just to say she was one of the salt of the earth. In early life she was a schoolteacher in Flemington, N. J., and for several years was clerk in the county clerk's office in that town. For many years she had conducted the largest stationery, novelty and school supply store in Warwick, and to both old and young was known as "Aunty."

Her funeral, conducted by the writer, was one of the largest ever held in the town of Warwick. She is survived by her husband and three nieces. Interment took place at Mt. Pleasant, N. J.

ALSO,

Catherine Elizabeth Osborn, widow of William M. Osborn, died Wednesday morning, April 27th, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Darwin E. Musgrave, 10 Monhagen Ave. She was born in the town of Wallkill, October 31st, 1839, a daughter of Noah Kirby and Catherine Van Ness. She was in her 81st year. On March 1st, 1871, she was united in marriage to William M. Osborn at the old homestead. Mrs. Osborn was the last of a family of ten children. She is survived by one daughter, Susie, wife of Darwin E. Musgrave, and one grandson, Everett Musgrave, of this city. She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church of Slate Hill. Mrs. Osborn was one who was always blessed with good health. For the past ten years she had made her home with her daughter, Mrs. Musgrave. She came from Revolutionary stock, her great-grandfather, William Kirby, having been one of the pioneers of this section, settling on the hills about three miles southwest of this city, and known locally as Kirbytown. She always attended the Old School Baptist Church until unable to do so by reason of age.

The above clipping is from the Middletown Times-Press of April 28th, 1920, and we feel to add a few lines. Sister Osborn was well known to us in Middletown, having attended our meetings as long as she was able to do so. She was a substantial woman in every way, and sound in the faith. Quiet and unassuming, she endeared herself to all who knew her. The Slate Hill Church, of which she was a member, feels its loss greatly. There are only a few left of that once large church, but the Lord is still the Builder of the house and Keeper of the city, and we must all trust in him.

We conducted the funeral service of sister Osborn at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Musgrave, where many gathered to pay their last tribute of respect to our sister. Interment took place in Pine Hill Cemetery. K.

Mrs. Sarah Lee was born in Orange County, Va., and died May 2nd, 1920. She was married to George Lee, and they lived happily together many years. To that union were born five children, all grown; two are married and one is a member with her of the Old School Baptist Church of Burdett, N. Y., where she had been a member for twenty-four years, always present at their meetings. She was reconciled and willing to go when the Lord called. She was baptized by Elder C. Bogardus, of Brockton, and loved the truth, rejoicing when she heard it.

Elder D. M. Vail was present at the funeral, and preached comfortingly with the spirit from the Lord.

NORMAN BROWN.

Mary W. Burgess was born March 20th, 1843, and died April 7th, 1913. She was united in marriage to Mr. Wm. P. Burgess October 7th, 1875. To that union were born five children, two boys and three girls: J. E. and A. J. Burgess, Mrs. W. P. Jamerson, Mrs. A. P. Turner and Mrs. J. M. Boudurant. Sister Burgess bore her suffering with much patience, was seldom heard to complain. Often she would ask those sitting with her during the night to go to bed and rest, that she would call them if she wanted anything. She was blessed to have all her children stand around her bedside and wait on her. As good doctors as we had were called, but the disease was beyond their skill. All that kind and loving friends could do could not stay the hand of death. She was one of the best of neighbors, always ready to help those in distress. She was a very intelligent woman, and raised up her children in honor. In fact, she was all that a faithful companion and devoted mother could be. Being taught of God, she came to Christ confessing faith in him openly before the Primitive Baptist Church at Camp Branch Saturday before the third Sunday in May, 1909, and was baptized the following June with five others, by Elder Z. T. Turner, one who preached the gospel in its purity and shunned not to declare the whole truth. Sister Burgess received a hope some twenty years before she united with the church, but like many others stayed away because of a feeling of unworthiness. The writer was present when she came before the church and gave evidence of her hope in Christ, and O how bright and cheering it was to the church. She lived a faithful member, always filling her seat when not providentially hindered. Mr. Burgess is bereft of a kind and faithful companion, the children of a tender and loving mother, and the church of a true and devoted sister, but we cannot weep as those without hope, for we feel sure that our loss is her eternal gain, and she is now in the enjoyment of that inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away. May God bless husband, children and grandchildren, whom she dearly loved. She also leaves two sisters: Mrs. Lucy Wingfield and Mrs. Wm. Lester. The writer often remarked to this dear sister that she was one of the most blessed mothers on earth, because all of her children were married and comfortably situated with homes of their own, and so near that she could visit them all in one day if she felt to do so. The last hymn sister Burgess ever sang was, "O when shall I see Jesus?" just a few days before she died, and the last words she spoke were, "Lord, have mercy." O what a glorious promise to them that call on the Lord in their last days!

The funeral services were conducted by Elder M. P. Moran at the home, in the presence of many relatives and friends. Her remains were laid to rest in the family burying-ground near the home. May it please

God to reconcile us to our lot, so that we can say, The Lord's will be done.

Written by one who loved her.

MARY E. CARTER.

William P. Burgess departed this life February 8th, 1920, aged 71 years and 8 days. He was the son of John W. and Martha Burgess, of Figsboro, Henry Co., Va. He was united in marriage to Miss Mary W. Lovell October 7th, 1875. To that union were born two sons and three daughters: John E. and A. J. Burgess, Mrs. W. P. Jamerson, Mrs. A. P. Turner and Mrs. J. M. Boudurant, all of Figsboro, Va. His children and three brothers: J. C. M. and M. E. Burgess, of Martinsville, Va., and J. N. Burgess, of Spray, N. C., survive to mourn their irreparable loss. He was an affectionate husband and father, an honest, upright citizen, and much loved and respected by all who knew him. He never made a confession of faith, but was a firm believer in salvation by grace. He attended Old Baptist meeting as often as possible, and told the writer a few hours before his death that he was perfectly resigned to his condition. Father had been a great sufferer for the past ten years from consumption, but was never heard to murmur or complain. His last words were, "Lord, have mercy," and he was perfectly conscious until the end. He was a strictly moral man, and respected by all.

The funeral was conducted by Elder P. J. Washburn and U. C. Young at his home, in the midst of a large gathering of relatives and friends. His body was laid to rest in the family burying-ground Feb. 9th. Father will be greatly missed by us all, but we desire to be submissive to God's will, feeling that our loss is his eternal gain. He is at rest, never to suffer more.

His son, JOHN E. BURGESS.

Mrs. Louvina Baird Nuckols, widow of J. A. Nuckols, departed this life at her home near Cave City, Ky., April 20th, 1920, in the 87th year of her age. She and father were united in marriage May 13th, 1855, and lived happily together, sharing each other's joys and sorrows for a little over sixty-one years, when father was called to his reward, August 25th, 1916. Mother still remained at the old home, being tenderly cared for by her two youngest children, James and Lelia. She was possessed of a cheerful and amiable disposition, ever ready to greet her children, friends and neighbors with a bright and winning smile. She was thoughtful, kind and considerate of others, a faithful wife and a most tender and loving mother. O how we miss her dear presence in the old home. We desire to bow in humble submission to the will of God, who gave and hath taken away. Mother professed a hope in Jesus in early life, and had a sweet and abiding faith in her heart, although she never united with the church. I have often heard her say in the last few months that she desired above all things to know the truth, and nothing but the truth. Her sufferings, which were intense, were endured in sweet submission, without a murmur, just calmly awaiting the call to her heavenly home, there to dwell with Jesus, whom she had loved and trusted for many years. Just before she expired she bade us good-bye, saying, "God bless you all." She leaves to mourn their irreparable loss five children, two sons and three daughters: J. R. and Dr. O. P. Nuckols, Mrs. G. W. Ellis, Mrs. O. P. Owens and Miss Lelia Nuckols. She is also survived by one brother, J. C. Baird, of Glasgow, Ky.

Funeral services were held in the Baptist meeting-house in Cave City, conducted by Elder P. W. Sawin, of Shelbyville, Ky. Her remains were tenderly laid to rest in the family plot in the Cave City cemetery, there to await the resurrection morn.

Written in loving remembrance of my precious mother. Her eldest daughter,

(MRS.) O. P. OWENS.

Mrs. R. S. Banks, my dear wife, departed this life April 7th, aged 87 years and about 5 months. She was born in North Carolina Nov. 17th, 1832, and moved to Iowa in 1854, settling east of where Casey now is in 1855, where she lived continuously until death. She leaves seven sons, thirty-two grandchildren and about fifty great-grandchildren. We were married July 23rd, 1903, and lived very happily together for nearly seventeen years. A kinder or more faithful wife never lived. She belonged to the Primitive Baptist Church about fifty years. No one ever called at her house and asked for bread and went away hungry. She showed her faith by her works. To such Christ said, Come unto me, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom. For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; thirsty, and ye gave me drink; a stranger, and ye took me in. Forasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these little ones, ye did it unto me.

My eldest son died the evening of the same day my beloved wife died; he died of heart trouble, only living a few hours after he heard by telegram of his mother's death. His home for the past forty years had been near Bismark, Mo. He was born in Marion County, Iowa, Nov. 6th, 1865. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace alone.

My loss is great. They are gone, but I hope we shall meet never again to part in that blissful home above. Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, for they rest from their labors and their works do follow them.

R. S. BANKS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Annie Watt, Ont., $1.00; G. M. Janes, Cal., $1.00; Mrs. Sirena Bowen, Ill., $1.00; S. G. Lomax, Ind., $1.50; Rebecca Stone, Ind., $1.50; Wm. T. Yard, N. J., $3.00; S. J. Rogers, Ky., $2.50; Mrs. Simeon Hiltabrand, Ill., $3.00; Martha Beardsley, Ill., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to convene, the Lord willing, and continue in session three days, May 26th, 27th and 28th, 1920, with the Salem Church, at Philadelphia, Pa., in Apollo Hall, 1710 North Broad St., just above Columbia Ave. To all lovers and inquirers of the truth, "salvation by grace," the doctrine of God our Savior, is extended a cordial invitation to be present with us, and especially the ministers from afar or near. We hope for a goodly attendance.

By order of the Delaware Old School Baptist Association. JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk.

THE Delaware River Association will hold its regular session, the Lord willing, with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., commencing Wednesday, June 2nd, and continuing three days. All those of our faith and order are invited to visit us, especially ministering brethren. Those coming from east and south will be met at the train leaving Broad Street station, Philadelphia, on Tuesday, June 1st, at 3:25 p. m. at Stockton, N. J., and Frenchtown, N. J. Those coming to Frenchtown can come by any train convenient, as accommodations will be arranged in Frenchtown.

O. R. KUGLER, Church Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Church, of Warwick, Orange County, N. Y., regrets exceedingly to announce the postponement of the Warwick Association, which was appointed to be held with the Warwick Church this coming June. Owing to illness in some homes, the breaking up of others and the utter inability to secure help, together with no surety of hotel accommodations, it is impossible for us to entertain the association this year.

Done by order of the church.

ISAAC S. BAIRD, Church Clerk.

WARWICK, N. Y.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 694 E. 125th St., or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Elder H. H. Lefferts will not be able to visit Hopewell Church, Kanawha County, W. Va., the first Sunday in June, owing to more urgent appointments which have first claim upon him.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

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1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

HILLSBORO, Texas, March 4, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you under separate cover a letter that my son, Willis, who is just eighteen years old, wrote to a lady friend in defence of the Old School Baptist doctrine. When I found and read it my heart leaped for joy. If you see any good in it I ask you to publish it. His age, and the fact of his not having the opportunity of hearing a Baptist sermon once a year, make it the more precious to me. He is a student in the Tyler Commercial College.

His father, JOHN C. GUNN.

HILLSBORO, Texas, Oct. 10, 1919.

DEAR FRIEND:—I am going to write you some of the Old School Baptist belief, as you do not know any of it. We both know that this is a very deep subject for a person well posted on the Bible. I am going to ask you to go with me into this important question and these thoughts, and closely study them. They are not man's works and sayings, but God's. Before I start I will tell you that I am getting much advice from writers from different parts of the United States. I do not expect you to agree with me very much. As I write this I hope that you will not become in the least angry at me, even though you do not agree with me. First, I will give the Primitive Baptists' belief about some things and the belief of other denominations. The Primitive or Old School Baptists are a peculiar people, and their peculiarities are mentioned in the Bible.

1st. They are few in number. Strait and narrow is the way that leads to life, and few there be that find it. The Old Baptists do not boast of numbers. The Lord makes the increase. No big revival meetings to persuade the Lord to add many to his elect. The Lord had a prophet, Elijah, while Baal had four hundred prophets, but Elijah's sacrifice was accepted.

2nd. The Old School Baptists admit they are sinful, and are continually bemoaning their carnal nature, but not able to overcome it. They, like Paul, have the thorn in the flesh, feel their depravity, no inherent merit. Others claim complete ability to do as they please in spiritual things; self-righteous, no thorn in the flesh.

3rd. Another peculiarity: the Baptists

are continually telling what the Lord has done for them; how that he found them deep in sin and folly and showed them the end thereof; how all human efforts to overcome sin are a failure; how God's Holy Spirit quickened them and enabled them to behold Jesus Christ as their Savior. Others are telling what they are doing for the Lord, what good christians they are and how much they are helping in the great work of christianizing the world; how they have done this and that, and will do much more; how they expect to work out their salvation; asking all to pray for them, that they may hold out faithful and win a crown.

4th. Baptists depend upon God, wholly dependent. All they have is given to them by the Giver of all good gifts. Born of the Spirit, not of man. Thank the Lord for food, clothing, health and spiritual guidance, for the plan of salvation not dependent upon poor, weak, sinful man. Others depend upon man. When they want religion they go get it; when their preachers want them to be religious they tell them how they can get saved or save themselves; can put God under obligation to save. God is dependent on man; that is, he stands ready to save, but cannot do it until man gets ready and puts God under obligations to save, according to his promise to save if man accepts Christ as his Savior.

5th. Baptist preachers are called of the Lord and preach God's word to his people. Christ said to Peter, "Feed my sheep; feed my lambs." This is what Baptist preachers try to do: preach to the church, preach for the comfort of those who have been quickened into life by the divine Spirit; to those who have eyes to see, ears to hear and hearts to understand. They do not wait nor work for a stipulated salary. Others are called by a conference of men, preach for a stipulated salary and watch for a place of larger pay. They preach to wicked sinners, telling them how to make God save them. If the salary should fail, many of them would not think enough of the sinner or the Lord to preach, and thereby show their calling.

6th. Old School Baptists become religious by being born again; spiritual birth of divine origin. Man has no more to do with his spiritual birth than with his natural birth of the flesh. Religion is God manifest in man. This work of the Spirit is like the wind, which bloweth where it listeth; you hear the sound thereof, but know not whence it cometh nor whither it goeth. Others become religious by accepting Christ as their Savior, which the preacher tells the sinner is his own work, the work of man. The one who got religion according to the preacher's instructions is now told that he can lose his religion, and is in great danger of losing it.

7th. Baptists believe that all the names of Christ's redeemed were written in the Lamb's book of life before the world was made—none added since and none erased. When one is quickened by the divine Spirit, and this Spirit reveals Christ to him as his Savior, he is saved by grace, and no power can separate him from God's love. Others believe that names are being added and erased to suit poor, weak, sinful man's whims. The recording angel will write your name in the book of life when you go to Christ, and draw a line through your name when you backslide. John's name was entered and erased four times, and finally the poor fellow died at the wrong time. Mary had about the same experience, but was lucky, so they say.

8th. Baptists believe in only one Savior,

Jesus Christ the righteous. Christ came to do his Father's will, and this is the Father's will, that of all the Father gave him he should lose nothing, but raise it up at the last day. He will do this without man's help or hindrance. Others believe in many saviors: the church, the preacher, the priest, the Sunday-school, the mission system. Parents save their children, children save their parents and church members save their friends. But, dear friend, God saved those who are saved.

9th. Baptists believe in one complete atonement, completed when Christ said, "It is finished." All the sins that Christ atoned for on the cross are blotted out of God's book of remembrance, and will be remembered no more forever. Christ's atonement is not a failure, it is sufficient. Others believe that the atonement does not save anybody, but that it was made, and, as it were, laid up for all who want it bad enough to accept it and live religiously until death; that Christ died, but you are not saved by his agony and death, burial and resurrection, yet you may be saved by your works, by accepting Christ, by living right until death.

10th. Baptists claim no righteousness of their own, but depend on the righteousness of Christ for justification before God. Christ's righteousness will be of use before the great Judge. Others believe in self-righteousness—that man must justify himself before God. You must work yourself into favor with God, put him under obligation to bless and justify you. Christ's righteousness is not enough.

11th. Baptists believe in salvation by grace, by divine power. This salvation, coming from God through Christ the Son, is sure and steadfast. No power can hinder, there will be no failures; this salvation is sure. Others believe in salvation by chance. Christ died, but you may be saved and you may not. You have a chance to be saved, but all depends on what you do. Chance.

12th. Old School Baptists worship a God who is all-wise and all-powerful. He knows the end from the beginning, knows who are saved before they are born; no guesswork with God, no salvation laid up that will not be used, no chance. God is able to do his holy will without help or hindrance. I believe God to be an all-wise God, with all power both in heaven and on earth. "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass."—Isaiah xiv. 24. I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it. In creating heaven and earth he saw the end from the beginning. He not only viewed it, but purposed it, yet time and time things were not yet in existence. Wisdom, or foreknowledge, looking upon a creation that was not as though it were, and declaring the end from the beginning, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." I have purposed it, I will also do it. God created heaven and earth and all therein; he has all power to save. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him."—John vi. 44. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."—Psalms cxxvii. 1. Now, unless the Lord saves you with his divine power (not of your power by asking him to and accepting him) you labor in vain, and except he keeps you, at the last day you will awake in vain. You cannot keep yourself for him by your works. I believe God knew before the world began who would be saved and who would not. "Yea, I have loved thee

with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."—Jer. xxxi. 3. He did not say, I love you now and will draw thee, but he said, "I have loved thee;" and as he is an all-wise God he knew who would be saved even before the world began. The Bible tells us that God loves his people, therefore he says, I have loved thee, and in Paul's writing he said, It is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by his mercy he saved us. "Saved" means of the past; hence God's children were saved in purpose before the world began, but on earth they have to be regenerated by the Spirit of Christ. You believe in regeneration, do you not, dear friend? "Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"—2 Cor. xiii. 5. So when you wrote me that you knew you were going to that great home above you were mistaken, were you not? You are only living in "hope" of it.

I have just finished supper, and father has been telling of some of the old times back in Alabama. He has had some times both good and rough. I am a little off of my subject since I ate supper, although I am going to try to put my thoughts together so you may get the meaning. To get started again I will say God chose his people, all the members of his body, which is his church, before the foundation of the world. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."—Eph. i. 4. You may have doubts or do not believe that God's people were chosen in him before the world began, but the above verse says he hath chosen us, meaning his people, and there is no way out of it. Therefore, as he has already chosen his people, none can be added nor one taken away. In the world they are to be regenerated and born again, not of the flesh, but of the Spirit. So these big meetings, Sunday-schools, socials, a certain church member saving a certain friend, and so on, are all a fake; there is nothing to it when it comes to saving people or helping to save them. "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."—Rev. xxi. 27. We have already been told that God has chosen his people, none added or erased, and the above verse says none shall enter except those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."—Eph. i. 5. Therefore it is according to the good pleasure of his will that we are saved.

I have been trying to show that it is only through God's will we are saved. Now I hope I have offered sufficient proof of the Bible. There are going to be many strive to enter through the strait gate and fail. "Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto him, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."—Luke xiii. 23, 24. "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."—Matt. vii. 14. Now I am going to ask you to go with me to the second chapter of Ephesians, also read the first chapter. The second verse tells how they walked in sin. Third verse: "Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of

the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, [when?] even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." The fourth verse says he loved us. When did he love us? It was before the world began when he chose his people, and now he has quickened them together and made them sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. He did not ask them if they wanted to sit in heavenly places, it says he made them sit in heavenly places. So it was not man asking God to save him that saved him, but it was God's great love wherewith he loved him. It does not matter how many big meetings, how many Sunday-schools, socials or what, unless it is the will of God that a man shall be saved, all the teaching, preaching singing and praying absolutely will not lift him up and put him into heaven. If it is God's will that he shall be saved he will be saved, for God's will shall be fulfilled to a jot and tittle. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. ii. 8-10. It is not by accepting Christ, not by having faith, not by the work of man, or a Sunday-school, or any religious meeting of any kind, that man is saved. He is saved by grace, through faith, and it is not of himself, it is the gift of God. One Lord, one faith, one baptism. But unto every one of God's people is given grace according to the measure of the gift of God. Your works on earth (as you say, trying to save souls) will not measure your grace, for it will be measured by the gift of God. Also asking, begging and praying for a person to be saved is all in vain; unless he was chosen before the world began he will not be saved, for none shall be added or erased. That is why I say I do not believe in any of your societies to save souls, for in the sight of God they are nothing. He does not need help in redeeming souls from their lost condition, for he has all power even over all who are claiming that they are trying to save souls. I happen to think of one of Moses' commandments: Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Here is some Scripture telling of those who claim to do God's work. "And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness."—Ezekiel xxxiii. 31. "Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men." God says they do worship him, but it is in vain, they are called hypocrites. Up here at Mayfield there are many who with their mouth draw nigh to God, and with their lips they honor him, but they are far from him. I could name some who act very religious, yet are far from him, but will not. The Old Baptists say there are black sheep even among them.

I started to write on this just after dinner to-day, and have written ever since, and it is now 11 o'clock. I did not think I would finish it for two or three

weeks, but I had nothing else to do, so I have written a great deal, and I think enough for this time. If you do not see and understand this as I do I will not be angry, for I wrote it of my own accord, so you may know more of my belief and views. I hope you may receive much benefit from this, and if you have any friends you wish to let read this you have my permission. My dear friend, I hope you more clearly understand why I do not believe in your socials, &c., although I do not blame those who do if they see and understand that way, but it is always better to be guided by the Scriptures than to go according to the way some people think. I enjoy reading the Bible and talking on it as far as I know it. If you wish to write me of your belief I will surely appreciate getting it. This is a world of hope, and I will close, hoping God will have mercy on me, a sinner.

J. WILLIS GUNN.

POCA, W. Va., March 4, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter from brother John D. Wood for publication, if it meets your approval. I fully intended to send it when I first received it, but laid it away and forgot it. To-day while looking over the many letters from the dear ones far and near, I ran across it. Brother Wood is a promising young man, with liberty to exercise in public.

Yours in gospel fellowship,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

CABIN CREEK, W. Va., May 10, 1919.

DEAR BROTHER McCLANAHAN:—I was surprised and very glad to get your letter upon my return from Roanoke. I have often wondered about you since last fall, and am very glad to know that you are yet spared by the gracious hand of God to be able to continue to labor among his people. I was sorry to learn of the illness in your family, and trust that all are well and strong again. I attended the association in Roanoke, and can truly say that I enjoyed it more than anything for many a day. There was much preaching, and all in harmony. It seemed to me that surely the Spirit of God was among his people. I often think how good it is that God is with his children even yet in this late day. Does not our faith and hope assure us that he will never forsake us? It was not long ago that I was told by a man, when he learned that I was a "Hardshell" Baptist, that he had heard of the "Hardshells," but thought none of them existed now. How glad I was to know that they yet exist, and could know with assurance that they would always exist. I thought while listening to the wonderful preaching, how glad and thankful we poor creatures should be to God that we, through his mercy and grace, are made to believe in him. O how thankful I sometimes am that, if I am not greatly deceived, I have been made to know the voice of the Shepherd; that he has called me out of darkness into his marvelous light, and that instead of being ignorant of my sinful condition I am made to see myself as I am, and above that he has had mercy upon poor me and given me a hope that I shall be among the redeemed. How softly do I feel to speak of these things as they are concerned in me, for how much of the time do I have anguish in my soul which none other, it seems, can know. I feel to be the very least, if one at all, of God's children. I am often brought to task for having the belief I do. Natural friends often like to point out where I am wrong, but secretly in my heart I know I am not. I do not question whether or not

the Old Baptist doctrine, which is the doctrine of the Bible, is right, but I do often question whether I am one among the redeemed family. It is well that I do not know beyond a hope, for then I might become exalted.

Brother McClanahan, I would like above a great many things to come to your June meeting. I love to be where the people of God are. I find, however, that the first Sunday comes on the first day of the month, and upon that day I am generally expected to work up some reports for the company, and I do not know as yet whether I shall be able to be with you or not. I will let you know later, and if it is at all possible I will try to be there on Sunday. I am glad you wrote me, for I feel the need of correspondence with the brethren, and if you feel to do so I hope you will write me again soon.

Yours in hope,

JOHN D. WOOD.

SIDNEY, N. Y., April 18, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I see my subscription expires with this number of the SIGNS, and as I do not want to miss a number I inclose two dollars, for which please extend my subscription one year. It seems strange there is no one within several miles of here that I know of I can talk with on spiritual things with any comfort, as they are so different: they have their good works, while I have none. They rejoice in the good they are doing, while I do no good; all my works are as filthy rags. They say they can do good or evil just as they choose, which seems strange, for, as Paul said, The good that I would I do not, but the evil I would not that I do. They glory in their strength, I mourn in my weakness, realizing that in and of myself I have no power. How then could I give my heart to God and believe on him, as they tell me to do, only by his almighty power working in me both to will and to do of his own good pleasure? So it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God, that showeth mercy.

As I started to say, it seems strange when in the SIGNS I read from so many different writers what seems good to me, and with which I feel in complete harmony. Who has taught me this way? Surely it was not man, for it is not man's way. Then I have been led by another power, which I humbly hope and trust is Jesus, that power which none can stop, for he speaks and it is done. O what a privilege to be made to believe in such a power and to put no confidence in the flesh, but all confidence in that Power who made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

Why I have written this I know not. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." O that I could write or say something that would comfort God's people as I have been comforted by hearing them talk and in reading their writings, but it seems it is not to be so. God knows why, I do not.

Excuse this poor letter.

E. C. BIRDSELL.

SILVERTON, Texas, May 22, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—If you will allow me just a little space I will say to the beloved and scattered "few" of my Father's house that I have met in days gone by, that I yet hold them in sweet remembrance as I journey on toward that city not made with hands, to that home beyond the river, where there will be no more sorrow, no more grief, but one eternal rest, sweet rest. O how sweet that rest will be.

Yours in a blessed hope,

LYDIA C. RAY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1920.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

COMMUNISM.

(ACTS IV. 32-37.)

SPACE forbids us to set down all the Scripture noted above, but our readers, should they be interested, may turn to their Bibles and read it for themselves. Such a wonderful outpouring of the Holy Spirit attended the setting up of the church in its gospel faith and order at the beginning of the gospel dispensation that there has been seen since nothing like it, nor can there ever be again until such urgent need shall again arise as then existed to call forth such a remarkable manifestation of the Spirit of God. The nature of man is such, and has always been such, that all men are selfish, envious, greedy, ambitious, lusting for the exaltation of themselves, seeking to lord it over their fellows, full of strife in order to obtain fame or honor or glory at the hands of the world. Therefore when we read of such a condition as existed in the gospel church in its early days, all the multitude of them that believed being of one heart and one soul, and none saying that anything which he had was his own, but all who had houses or lands selling them and all turning the proceeds of such sales into a common fund for the support of the whole church, to be distributed as the apostles might see fit, we must immediately conclude that here is something radically contrary to nature, something certainly springing from no inherent principle in man's fallen nature, to be accounted for only upon the basis of that power and that thought which as far exceeds all the conceptions of fallen man as the heavens are higher than the earth. The members of the church were not ordered by the apostles, nor by any individual man or set of men, to sell their possessions and to contribute their money to a common fund for the support of the church. The church did not hold a meeting nor call a meeting at which they either voted or agreed to do this thing. It was by no act of their own, nor by any act or acts of others, that they were made to be of one heart and one soul, nor were they compelled by any law-making body, either in or out of the church, to sell their property and give the money to the church. Further, the church did not appoint the apostles a committee to receive and distribute this money. The Holy Ghost directed the whole matter. The thirty-first verse tells that they were "all filled with the Holy Ghost;" not simply that the apostles were filled with the Spirit of God, but all the church were so filled. When either an apostle or any one else is filled with the Holy Ghost there is no room for anything else. Every principle of the fleshly nature, at such a time, is in complete subjection and abeyance. This being the condition of the apostolic church (though dissensions crept in afterward, they did not come in then), there was no room for jealousy or selfishness nor envy or greed. Being all of them filled with God's Spirit, they all felt that anything which each of them had belonged not to themselves as individuals, but to the whole church, and were gladly willing to be consecrated to

the body for the good and welfare and service of the whole. Personal or individual ends and aims were lost sight of, because each and all were so completely baptized or immersed in the oneness of heart and soul which prevailed throughout the whole church that there was no occasion or opportunity for self to intrude. For this reason it never occurred to any of the members of the church to question the ability or fairness of the apostles in making distribution of the common fund for the needs of the church. Ordinarily it would be impossible to get together twelve men to justly distribute such a fund among a multitude of thousands without some one raising the charge of fraud and graft against the men entrusted with such a charge. However, in the early church at the time noted above, no such charge did any one make against any of the apostles, nor, since all were filled with the Spirit of God, was there in the minds of any room for such a thought. On the other hand, the apostles themselves never so much as had a thought of appropriating so much as a penny of the fund to their own uses, since they, too, were filled with the Holy Ghost, which, for the time, left no room for selfish thinking. Thus both the second and the fourth chapters of the Acts of the Apostles record instances of successful community-living prevailing in the apostolic church, and such condition prevailed just so long as self was entirely subdued, and self was subdued just so long as all were filled with the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost filled them and consolidated them in one heart and soul just as long as there was a needs be for it. God never wastes his Spirit nor his grace, he never pours it out profusely nor excessively, but gives it just in the measure it is needed, and he, not ourselves, is the one competent Judge of what our needs are: their quantity, quality and duration. No community life can ever be successful where self is allowed to assert itself. Hence, communism for its success requires regeneration in order to the conquering and harnessing of self, so that the Christ nature shall be uppermost and prevail to the end that each and all may be willing to spend and be spent in the service of the whole. Russia to-day is trying to establish communism. Land and all forms of private property are being confiscated and distributed professedly among the long oppressed and downtrodden peasantry. The working class is taking into its own hands the reins of government, uprooting all the long established institutions and traditions of the country, driving the prosperous and property-owning middle class and autocracy out of their belongings. The whole procedure is a wild and fantastic effort to reduce all humanity to one common level, so that one individual shall have no more than another. Nor is the doctrine of communism confined to Russia. Not a country in all Europe but feels the danger eating into its very organs and threatening its very life. Republics, monarchies, empires and kingdoms are all threatened with the insidious disease. This condition arises because the long established governments of the earth have unceasingly abused their powers and privileges, have paid no attention to the cries of the burdened and oppressed. These submerged classes now think they see in communism the promise of the coming of the kingdom of God, that kingdom in which there shall be no rich nor poor, nor high nor low, but in which all shall dwell together on an equal standing. But the doctrine and practice of communism, though professing to be

a light shining in darkness, shall turn out to be nothing but an *ignis fatuus*, or witches' light, luring the world to its ruin. Not simply in Europe, but here in our own country where prevails so much unrest, communism has its preachers and its adherents. The proud display of riches on the part of the wealthy, the profligate waste and extravagance broadcast throughout the land, have filled many restless breasts with desires to be rich also that they might spend and have a good time. Thus hours of work and of production are steadily coming down, while the demand for more and more money, more and more leisure, more and more pleasures and luxuries, is steadily rising. All springing from the one rooted idea which is the mainspring of communism, that A has no right to more money than B, and if A will not voluntarily share what he has with B then there must be instituted some government or some law that will force A to do it whether he is willing or not. Thus we have what is called the dictatorship of the proletariat, or the domination of the few over the many, only that this time it means the domination of the working class, instead of an aristocracy of wealth or of pedigree as formerly. But communism reduced to its simplest terms means nothing more or less than autocracy in an ancient and ugly form. Communism, like all other fantastic dreams of the natural man, fails to take into account human nature. The nature of man is essentially earthly and sensual and devilish, it thinks of self and its own ends first, last and all the time. The only successful community-living, where each and all had no thought for self, and where all delighted in the service and welfare of each other, was a veritable and living fact in the apostolic church prior to the destruction of Jerusalem. Such a community proved successful because men did not begin nor carry it on either by their own force or ideas, but prospered because the Spirit of God filled the whole church, merging them into one body, with one heart and one soul, so that no one took any thought for the things of self. The reason the Holy Ghost so welded them together was because there existed a necessity for it, and the necessity was two-fold. First, the apostolic church lived in a time of most terrible persecution. These persecutions were from two sources; that is, from the Jews zealous for old rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic law, and from the Romans because the early christians would not confess the divinity of Cæsar or his divine right to rule. The Jews hated the church of the apostles, and persecuted it because the church professed to be free from the law, and in no sense obligated to it, and because they taught Christ's doctrine and followed his commandments, ignoring Moses entirely. Thus we see the early church caught between two blasting and withering winds of persecution which would surely have wiped them out had not God been in their midst so that they could not be moved. Thus arose the necessity for their being filled with the Spirit of God, to the end that they should live together, eat together suffer together, rejoice together and die together. In such dangerous days it would not do for a man to think of his own safety or convenience, else he would become faint-hearted and recreant to the truth. Hence the necessity of all of them being filled with the Holy Ghost, that self should be completely in the background. The second necessity for their being thus spiritually filled and welded together was because the idea prevailed in the early

church that the world was soon coming to an end anyway, and therefore what was the use of owning lands or houses, or possessing any property whatsoever, since it was all so soon to be taken from them? This belief that the end of the world was upon them the christians themselves did not understand, but afterwards they must have seen that it referred to the destruction of Jerusalem and to the end of the Jewish world, the world in which this community-living fell to the lot of the early church, the world which God knew he would shortly destroy, and therefore filled the church with his Spirit that they might rid themselves of earthly encumbrances against that day.

In conclusion, community life, where each and all are to share and share alike, a dwelling together that involves the comfort and well-being of thousands of persons of an infinite variety of likes and dislikes, of differing dispositions and temperaments, can only be successful where God engineers it and imbues it with his all-pervading and all-conquering Spirit, that self may be entirely lost sight of. Such a condition does not exist among God's people in this age of the world. It does not, simply because there is no need for it, and God gives the Spirit of grace only in measure sufficient to meet the needs of the time. We do not claim to be a prophet, or the son of one, but should persecution for the truth's sake ever arise against the church as it did against the apostolic church, God will not fail to pour out his Spirit upon his people to enable them to withstand the blast. We shall then see such oneness of heart and of soul and such unselfishness on the part of the members of the church as we certainly do not see in these days of easy and comfortable and luxurious living now prevailing in our midst. Many, we feel sure, will flock to the defense of the truth who are now perhaps cold or indifferent or lukewarm in the matter, thinking more of their own ease and prosperity than of the prosperity of Zion. God brings all these things to pass in a most marvelous way, and it is very noticeable in tracing the travel of the church that rarely ever indeed do spiritual growth and prosperity go hand in hand with material or worldly advantages and prosperity. We must be killed on the one hand in order to live in the Spirit. It is as true of the history of the church as it was in the experience of David: "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word," and, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." L.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Harford Church, Harford County, Md., May 19th, 20th and 21st, 1920, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have been spared by the kind providence of an all-wise God to meet again in sweet fellowship. The gospel has been preached with power during our meeting to our comfort, assuring us that the foundation of God standeth sure. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth.

Our next session will be held with the Baltimore Church, Baltimore city, Md., next year, where we hope to meet your messengers again, if it is the Lord's will.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Moderator.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.
EDWARD A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. T. Rowe.)

The Baltimore Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the Harford Church, Harford County, Md., May 19th, 20th and 21st, 1920, to the several churches of which this association is composed sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—"Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee."—Song of Solomon iv. 7. This doubtless is Jesus, the beloved and only begotten Son of God, speaking to his bride, redeemed by and washed in the blood of Jesus Christ. How wonderful the thought, that vile sinners, spotted within and without with sin, black as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon, not caring for the things of the kingdom or desiring the knowledge of the ways of the King, should be washed in the blood of the Lamb and made white as snow, all glorious within and her clothing of needlework; and when the marks of the Lord Jesus are seen in mortal men how attractive they are and how we desire them as companions, unworthy though we feel to be of the fellowship of such blest persons; and as they are blessed to be thus clothed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ, so those who see them as the bride of Christ are equally blessed, for "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Jesus said, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see." How good it is to have natural sight, so that in the springtime when the sun by its light and heat has brought forth the beautiful and fragrant flowers we can rejoice in their beauty and fragrance. So when the Sun of Righteousness shines upon his garden and causes the plants to grow, bloom and bear fruit it is a good place to linger and associate with those who love the Lord and the word of his salvation. Jesus' bride is clothed with the sun, the light of which would reveal the spots, if there were any, but he says, There is no spot in thee. The Father with his all-seeing eye beholds the good and the evil, and says, I see not iniquity in Jacob nor perverseness in Israel, and seeing her in the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ she is beautiful in his beauty, lovable because of his love, and brought to see these wonderful mercies and blessings upon the church, which is her beauty, we say with Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee."

May God bless and keep us unto his everlasting kingdom. Amen.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Moderator.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.
EDWARD A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

STOCK OF HYMN BOOKS EXHAUSTED.

OUR supply of Hymn Books (Beebe's collection) is exhausted, and, owing to the unsettled state of the business world, cannot say just when we will have more for sale, but hope we may have them ere long, and when we do receive a new supply of the books will announce the fact in these columns.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder George L. Weaver, at his home, 1309 East 114th St., Cleveland, Ohio, Donald W. Leitch and Miss Olive B. Weaver, both of Cleveland.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Frances Fuller, Ohio, $2.00; Thomas H. Scott, Md., $1.00; O. F. Ballard, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. Jennie M. Avery, N. Y., $3.00; L. Z. Ross, N. Y., $1.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder James L. Lindsey departed this life at the home of W. O. Beene, October 3rd, 1919. He was a son of Elder A. J. Lindsey and the grandson of Elder James Lindsey. At the time of his death he was about forty miles from home, attending the Big Creek Association. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of election, predestination and salvation by grace. His age was 61 years, 7 months and 28 days. He was known far and near for preaching just what he believed to be the doctrine of God our Savior, without the fear of man. He often made the remark that the salvation of God's people was all centered in Jesus. He joined the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, Freestone County, Texas, on Saturday before the third Sunday in July, 1881, and was baptized the next day by Elder Samuel Bryant. Just three months later he made his first attempt to preach, and was ordained in September, 1883, by Elders Samuel Bryant and J. S. Collins. He was an ardent admirer of the writings of Elder G. Beebe, and considered them next to the Bible. Just before his death it was arranged for him to preach that night, but just before the time came he was talking on the subject of the resurrection, which was his most delightful theme, for that was all of his hope. He leaves a faithful wife, who is a consistent member of the Old School Baptist Church, and four children to mourn his death.

A cousin, J. D. SAWYER.

Mrs. Sarah Maria Pitchford passed away at her home in Waterloo, Oregon, Saturday, April 17th, 1920, at the age of 75 years, 10 months and 29 days. Her maiden name was Porter, and she was born in Illinois June 19th, 1844. She moved with her parents to Missouri, and from that state to Oregon by ox-team in 1864. She was married three times, first to James Tennis in 1865, to Elder J. A. Jarnigan in 1874, and to D. T. Pitchford in 1905. Mr. Pitchford, who was a well known resident of this section, died Feb. 20th, 1919. She was the mother of one son, James Henry Jarnigan, who passed away in early life. One of her nephews, Ewen Lafayette Skaggs, made his home with her from infancy until he grew to manhood. She leaves one sister, Mrs. Cordelia Patterson, of Lebanon; two brothers: J. H. Porter, of Douglas County, and M. P. Porter, of California, a half-brother, Mac Porter, of Corvallis, also several stepchildren and a number of nephews and nieces. She embraced christianity in early life, uniting later with the Primitive Baptist denomination. She fell peacefully asleep in the triumph of faith.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at her late home Monday at 1 o'clock, after which the remains were laid to rest in the Providence Cemetery.

A. HORNER.

Mrs. J. M. Walker, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. R. D. Surles, of Crenshaw County, Ala., was born March 5th, 1851, joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Bethlehem, Montgomery County, Ala., at the tender age of sixteen, being baptized by the late Elder Wm. Findley; was married Sept. 17th, 1868, and died August 11th, 1919. She lived a faithful and devoted Baptist until death, ever adorning her profession by an upright walk and godly conversation. She lived a beautiful christian life, always kind and gentle in her home and to every one with whom she met. She was so afflicted during the last years of her life that she could not attend her meetings, but she bore her afflictions with that christian fortitude and patience which so beautifully characterize a christian life. To know her was to love her, and though dead she yet speaks. Those surviving are her husband, J. M. Walker, two children: Mrs. Lena Brooks and Mrs. B. G. Hilliard, two grandchildren: Lillian Wynette and John William Hilliard, of Rutledge, Ala., and one brother, R. L. Surles, of Lapine, Ala. To her bereaved husband I wish to say, While storms of sorrow and bereavement terrify you, and the darkness of bereavement is hovering around you, your Father is at the helm. Soon the conflict will be over, and the joyful news will come, Child, your Father calls, come home. Children and grandchildren, may God help you to imitate her christian example and heed her many godly admonitions. May your hearts and hands and homes be ever open to the Old Baptists; they were your mother's people.

The funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder A. H. Williamson, at the Rutledge churchhouse. Many sorrowing relatives and friends were at the cemetery.

Written by request of the bereaved children.

A. H. WILLIAMSON.

Ralph W. Fisher was born October 7th, 1857, in Oregon City, Oregon, and died at the home of his son-in-law, L. Van Horn, in Portland Oregon, Sept. 29th, 1919, aged 61 years, 11 months and 17 days. He was married June 1st, 1882, to Miss May A. Parish, to which union a son and daughter were born: Claud M., of Tacoma, Wash., and Mrs. Leroy Van Horn, of Portland, Oregon. He is survived by his wife and children, his aged mother, four brothers and three sisters; all except two sisters and one brother were in attendance at the funeral. Brother Fisher moved with his parents to Linn County, Oregon, in 1867, where he resided until the fall of 1901, when he came to Portland. He was the son of brother and sister E. T. T. Fisher, who were well known throughout the Willamette valley, he having been clerk of the Siloam Association for many years before his death, which occurred twenty years ago. Brother Fisher experienced a hope in Christ many years ago, but a feeling of unworthiness kept him

from joining the church until the fourth Sunday in July, 1919, less than two months before his death. It was the sweet privilege of the writer of this notice to lead him down into the baptismal waters near Sellwood and baptize him, thus constituting him a member of Cedar Creek Church, of which I am the unworthy pastor. His dear wife and mother told me they never saw such a change in any one as came over him after he was baptized; he seemed perfectly happy, and the Scriptures were constantly on his mind. He had been in poor health a long time, but no one, not even the doctor, thought of the end being so near. He was confined to his bed only a few days.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral service, which I tried to do, using for a text 1st Cor. xv. 21, in the presence of a large congregation of relatives and friends, after which the remains were laid to rest in the Rose City Cemetery, there to await the resurrection. S. B. MOFFITT.

Mrs. Sallie L. Hogg Howell, nee Taylor, was born in Georgia Sept. 23rd, 1850. She was married to Robert O. Hogg Feb. 26th, 1871, to which union were born six children, two boys and four girls, all of whom are still living. Mr. Hogg died April 11th, 1882. She was married to Willis Howell October 10th, 1896. Mr. Howell died May 11th, 1909. On the night that brother Howell died, sister Howell had a vision, or presentiment, in which she was shown that she would live eleven years. She told her people that she would die in eleven years, which proved to be true, for she died at the home of her son, George Hogg, in Fate, Texas, April 22nd, 1920, which only lacked twenty-one days of being exactly eleven years. Sister Howell joined the Old School Baptist Church at Ramah, in Monroe County, Ga., about thirty-five years ago, and was baptized by Elder Head. She came to Texas in 1888, and settled near Fate, in which community she lived until the time of her death. She was strong in the faith of God's elect, and delighted to meet with her brethren and sisters and talk with them of the goodness and mercy of God to poor sinners. She lived a faithful and consistent member of the Old School Baptist Church, and died in the full assurance of a living faith. She leaves a large number of relatives and friends to mourn their loss, to whom we would say, Weep not as others which have no hope.

The writer tried to comfort the bereaved ones at her funeral. J. C. SIKES.

Davis D. Terrell was born in the year 1838, died April 29th, 1920, at the home of his son, Dr. R. L. Terrell, Cleveland, Ohio. Brother Terrell united with the church about forty years ago, as near as I was able to ascertain, joining the Otego Church, being baptized by Elder Vail. For several years he was afflicted with rheumatism, and was unable to attend the meetings, but bore his affliction with patience. His widow, sister Terrell, and two sons, Dr. R. L. and David O. Terrell, both of Cleveland, survive.

I was called to conduct his funeral, and spoke briefly to the sorrowing widow and friends. May the Lord bless and reconcile them and enable them to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

Martin V. Drake, of Ingleside, Steuben Co., N. Y., son of Cornelius and Polly Drake, was born April 4th, 1837, died May 17th, 1920. He was married to Julia Hill Nov. 13th, 1869. Two children were born to them, both dying in infancy. He leaves his wife, one brother, one sister and many friends to mourn. He had lived nearly all his life near where he died. He was a steady attendant at our meetings, and would often come to me with tears in his eyes after I had spoken, saying, "That is God's truth, and will stand." He was not a member of the church, but we believe he was God's own child, and is now in glory.

The funeral was held at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse, the writer officiating. Burial in the cemetery at that place. D. M. VAIL.

Ross Sparks was born Dec. 28th, 1880, in Prairie County, Ark., the son of Jonas and Anna Sparks, and died Feb. 13th, 1920, of influenza and pneumonia. He was married to Addie Minton in 1904, I do not know the exact date. To that union were born four boys: Noble, Renel, Jonas and Frank. His wife died Feb. 17th, 1916. He was married to Mrs. Lula Rogers Feb. 14th, 1918. To them was born one daughter, Julia Thresa. He leaves a widow and five children, one sister, Mrs. Pearl Phiefer, of Little Rock, and a host of relatives and friends to mourn his death. He was loved by every one who knew him.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. H. West. He was laid to rest in Mt. Pleasant Cemetery.

EVA SPARKS.

MEETINGS.

THE Lord willing, there will be a meeting held with the Beulah Old School Baptist Church, near Aberfeldy, Ontario, the third Sunday in June (20th). Conference and business meeting 3 p. m. Saturday. Preaching on Sunday 11 a. m. and 3:30 p. m. All are welcome who desire precious love and fellowship to abound in the church of Jesus Christ.

ARCHIE McALPINE, Church Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church at Ingleside, N. Y., will hold a two days meeting Saturday and Sunday, June 26th and 27th. Elder J. M. Fenton is expected to be with us. We hope to see a house full of brethren, sisters and friends present. Those coming by rail will please write to Harvey Graves, Naples, N. Y.,

R. D. 7, or Nelson Nickles, at the same address, who will meet them at Atlanta, N. Y., and convey them to place of meeting. The D., L. & W. R. R., also the Rochester Branch of the Erie Railroad, runs through Atlanta. D. M. VAIL.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect to be with the First Roxbury Church, Vega, N. Y., of which Elder George Ruston is pastor, Wednesday and Thursday, June 23rd and 24th, at a two days meeting appointed by said church. H. C. KER.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.
JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.
S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.
S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.
OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 694 E. 125th St., or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 88. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1920. NO. 13.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DOUBTS AND FEARS.

THERE are in the world carnal professors of Christ's name, presumptuous men who never question their standing before God and their title to everlasting glory, and yet they have no gospel foundation for their confidence; they are without God and Christ in the world. They proclaim themselves believers, they have no doubts, have no misgivings, but account themselves children of God and sure of heaven. But those who are called by God's grace, the taught of the Lord, are not like these self-sufficient, self-confident hypocrites. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God; and these loved and called ones learn in due time that God is their salvation, that he is the confidence of all the ends of the earth and of them that are afar off upon the sea. They have been taught to have no confidence in the flesh, but in the gospel of the grace of God is their confidence; and thus they are instructed to hold fast, not to cast away their confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. (Heb. iii. 6; x. 35.) From whence come those distressing, buffeting doubts? those fears that contradict the evidences of grace in the soul, that mar the rest and blessedness of the children of God? Do they come from the Comforter, the Holy Ghost? Are they his work? Are they the effects of divine teaching? Are they marks of God's grace? Is God's grace the source from whence they spring? Are doubts and fears, misgivings, unbelief, gracious things, lovely, things to be desired, to be cherished? Do they show forth the praises of the Lord? Are they honoring to our gracious God and Savior? Who or what is the promoter of doubts and fears and unbelief in the child of God? They all arise from our flesh and the devil. "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end."—Heb. iii. 12–14. Christ Jesus is the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, and how graciously instructing is that word in Hebrews iv. 14–16: "Seeing then that we have a great high priest,

that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." It is the very desire, the breathing of the soul of a child of God, that he may have those evidences of his acceptance with God, that he may cry, Abba, Father. O to be in nearness, in companionship with Jesus, that our Savior's dear voice may be saying in our hearts, When ye pray, say, "Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name." For it is only in our intimacy with our Beloved, only by faith in Jesus Christ, that we have the right, the power to believe ourselves to be the children of God. But the child of God finds himself at times assailed with insinuations, with reasonings, with vain imaginations, with thoughts that exalt themselves against the knowledge of our God and Christ, and these opposing things bring forth in us doubts, questionings, unbelief, and they come from the flesh within us and from the devil without. I wish to distinguish between the soul's inquiries after God, the searchings of heart, the yearnings after those tokens of our acceptance, of our sonship, of our election, and the other, that dreadful, deceitful, "evil heart of unbelief." For this deceitful, evil heart can be disguised, can be dressed up as though it were modest, lamblike and beautiful. Yes, an evil heart of unbelief can talk chidingly or commiseratingly, as suits its treacherous designs; but no matter, all the while it is nothing but an "evil heart of unbelief," alluring or driving us to turn away from the God of our mercy, departing from the living God. "Take heed, brethren," said the apostle. There is a warfare within between the flesh and Spirit, and unbelief and doubts are our foes and war against our souls' rest and blessedness in Christ's gospel. The believer in Jesus is plagued with unbelief, and in these times he is brought into such distress that he is made to entreat the Lord to have mercy upon him in his conflicts with his misgivings, his fears, his doubts, and like to one in Mark ix. 24, to cry out, even "with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."

Doubts and fears are vexing enemies. O how they plague some dear children of God! Let us not think of them as pretty things, and talk about our doubts as though we were proud of them, and as though the more we had the greater were our experiences, better than the experiences of others; and let us not have mistaken ideas of the origin of these doubts and unbelieving fears. Our tasting, handling, entering into, our experimental knowledge of the things of Christ, is in faith in him. Our doubts starve and famish the soul, rob us of our peace and strength to pursue our pathway; but in believing in Jesus we sit with our King at his table, in his house of wine. For when he comes knocking at the door and our heart waketh, then responding in faith and love our heart is saying, "It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh." Faith opens to our Beloved, and our dear and lovely Savior comes in to us, spreads the table with delicious food, and he sups with us and we with him; and while the King sitteth at his table my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof. O, the child of God often has to fight his way through a troop of doubts and fears, and many are the cries of his harassed soul unto the Lord in the battle, and by the

Lord our Savior appearing upon the field to our succor our doubts and unbelief fall down slain; for the war is of God. (1 Chron. v. 20.) There is a conflict between faith and doubt, as in the case of Peter. Let us read the beautiful, instructive narrative: "But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me! And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God." O, little faith can cry, and prevail, too, for Jesus stretched forth his hand and caught him. So little faith was heard and walks with Jesus, held up by the gracious, almighty hand of the Savior, and doubts sink beneath the waves of the troubled sea. Unbelief and doubts go together, and are not fruits of the Spirit. The child of God is made to know the fact that there is an old man and a new man; there is grace and there is corruption; things of faith and its precious fruits, and wretched unbelief, breeding doubts, imaginations and thoughts that deceitfully, yet arrogantly exalt themselves against the knowledge of Christ. O, it is a mercy indeed that the Holy Ghost in covenant graciousness moves the called of God in this war between the flesh and Spirit to cry, "Lord, increase our faith;" to pour out our confession and petition, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." The counsels of unbelief and Satan are in agreement; what one says the other corroborates, and between these foes the subject of God's grace is troubled on every side. If we are to grow, to become stablished, strengthened, settled, there must be a being nourished up in the faith and of good doctrine, and blessed are we to be found looking unto our Head and Savior, who loveth, nourisheth and cherisheth the church. (Eph. v. 29.) "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."—Heb. xii. 2, 3.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, N. C.

SANTA CRUZ, Cal., May 20, 1920.

DEAR SISTER RUSHING, THE CHURCH AT LOS ANGELES AND ALL WHO LOVE THE LORD:—I have thought many times recently that I would never write for publication again, but in reading the last number of the SIGNS, this forenoon, there came a long-distance call from Texas, worded this way: "I hope the Lord will put it in the heart of sister Wright, of California, to write again for the SIGNS," and all the love I had ever experienced for His cause and his people surged through my soul, and I thought, Why

should I refrain from writing, when prompted by the Spirit, and when I was told that it was gladly received by some of the little flock who worship Him in spirit and in truth? Her letter was read by me with interest, and I walked with her to the end of it. I sat musing for a while on the mysteries and the goodness of God, of the wonderful love his people feel for the brethren, and of the comfort I had derived when reading their writings, until I reached for my pen, trusting that He would give me a message. If he does not, it will be as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. I do not claim to be well versed in the Bible, nor to know one thing which the saved of the Lord do not know and feel, but it may help some poor, doubting, trembling soul to read how I am trusting and rejoicing in the love and promises of our Lord and Savior, and how my love increases for his people as the end grows nearer. Like the rest of you, I tried to be good and to do good, and in the eyes of the world I succeeded, but there came a time when my eyes, by God's grace, were opened to the truth. I found myself in despair, and, actuated by his Spirit, I began to search myself, and to search the Scriptures, to see if I could find the cause. As I read, I found myself a justly condemned sinner, without God and without hope in the world, and I knew not what to do, but I prayed that if it was his will he would show me the way, and this is what he taught me: that the road to eternal life was rough and steep, and that none but the redeemed walked there; that it was through great tribulation that they entered the portals of rest; and, Who could hear these things? Surely not one whose life had been a pathway of roses, who had known no sorrow, and I found that I was not worthy to be numbered among them. But the roses faded and died, and I found myself in a horrible pit, unable to extricate myself, my good works availed me nothing, and I sorrowed for my sins, which arose like mountains before me, until it was sanctified unto me for my good and his glory; for in his own way and his appointed time he caused me to die to natural things, to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ with all my soul and to love his people with a love which even yet I fail to understand, but it is tender and sweet, assuring me that I have passed from death unto life, and my belief is so well grounded, so firmly fixed on the rock Christ Jesus, that though the world, the flesh and the devil array themselves against me I know that my Redeemer liveth, that he will be with me in deep waters, in fiery trials, and that he will help me to overcome to the end. I have no confidence in myself; by nature I am as sinful as any of Adam's race, but when I was condemned for my sins, when I was helpless, and my case seemed hopeless, I was given evidence, which will last me while reason remains, that I was one for whom Christ died, and it was then that the still small voice spoke in great power, I will be with thee, even unto the end. What most of the children of God need in order to rise above the things of this world is to look away from self, and to him who is the author and finisher of our faith. We are nothing but poor, sinful mortals, and will be until we put on immortality. God is great, is merciful and unchangeable, and will remember us with loving compassion though our sins be as scarlet, and our harps shall not hang on the willows, though Israel may weep beneath the trees. The rejoicing and the weeping are of God; the latter to bring us nearer to him, for when the storm is at its height we

look away to Calvary and remember the precious words: If I be lifted up I will draw all men unto me. O ye of little faith, know ye not that Jesus' love is greater than our sins, that the power of the world is broken, that the yoke of the wicked is cast down, that Jesus hath conquered death and hell, that he alone is wearing a crown of righteousness, but that he has reserved one for all who love his appearing? My constant prayer is that he will tune my heart to sing his praise, that he will consecrate my whole life to his service, that I may not dishonor nor displease him.

I am old; my dear husband was called away nearly four years ago; my children are scattered all over the State, and in a worldly sense I am alone, but thanks be to God, I can see his mercy in it. I am not alone, I am being kept by his power day by day; have more time to reflect on what he did for me in the days of my youth; have realized the certainty of the promise that he would be a present help in time of trouble; have remembered and appreciated more fully that with which he fed me when hungry for the bread of life; more time to give to him in prayer, and a greater willingness to lay down life's heavy burden. Yet I come a long way from walking as becometh my holy calling, far from serving him in spirit and in truth, though I greatly desire to do so. So many times my prayers seem lifeless, almost a mockery, yet it is in my heart to make the attempt. I do not know why these things are, nor do I dare to ask. I must believe he has a purpose in all things, that he does what seemeth right to him, and be willing to lay my mouth in the dust in submission and resignation. Yet I know only too well what it means to fight against the flesh, and if I did not have the promise that as my days so should my strength be, I could not have continued the warfare. Again, if there were not life in me I would know nothing about such a condition, nothing about the life that is the light of men, nothing about the promise that our light should shine more and more unto the perfect day. The more we know of him the more we love him; the lower in the valley we find ourselves the more we know of his power when again we are raised above the things of time and sense, and the more we desire to exalt him, to crown him Lord of all, to bless and praise his holy name that he is from everlasting to everlasting, and that there is no other but him. Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, and thy ways past finding out! Thy people glory in their nothingness, in being clothed in filthy rags, in being willing to lie at thy feet, because thou didst send thy Son to die for such, promising that thou wouldst make them meet for thy use, promising them a robe of righteousness, and to exalt all those of an humble and contrite spirit. Help us to believe, dear Lord, and to run the race with patience; break down every barrier that would keep us from thee; imbue us with thy love, and make us willing in the day of thy power.

Now a few words to the dear brethren of Liberty Church, in Los Angeles. It is not a year yet since I severed my connection with the church in Virginia to join the one nearer me, and although at present I am separated from them by many miles my heart overflows with love for them, for they took me in and ministered unto me, even as God had done to them. The hearing of the word there, and the meeting and mingling with the dear people, have been a pleasure and a comfort to me, and my love for them increases as I think of the length of time

that must intervene before visiting them again, and it is only by the grace of God that I hope to do so, for life's shores are shifting every year, and the old know that they are drifting with the outgoing tide, but Jesus is at the helm and he will see us safely moored. When I left Los Angeles the church was living in peace and harmony, and I pray that He will command the light to shine upon their paths unto the eternal day; that he will visit them with the outpouring of his Spirit, and continue to add to the church such as shall be saved. May our pastor, with the members, know nothing but Christ crucified; may they realize that if they have been born of God they are a holy, peculiar people, chosen, consecrated and set apart, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, that they are heirs of promise, and that their heritage can never be wrested from them. Understanding the foregoing, and believing it as God has given it to us, we can glory as those never can who contend for a conditional salvation. Let us, as a whole, desire to be as a sheaf of wheat, bound together by the cord of his eternal love.

But I am making this too lengthy for the value it contains, therefore will ask God's richest blessings upon the editors of our family paper, and close. I love both of them, and greatly desire to see them. May they be spared a long time to declare the riches of His glory, and may all who hear be comforted.

In conclusion, may the grace of God rest and abide with each one to whom this is addressed, for his name's sake, and when life's last night shall have come may we feel that it is better to depart, for we shall be with the Lord forever and forever.

Please overlook all that I may have said amiss. If I have given you the shadow instead of the substance it is not in accordance with what I feel, but in the manner of expressing it.

With love to all the dear household, your sister,

MARY E. WRIGHT.

SEATTLE, Wash., June 7, 1920.

EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—While visiting on the Pacific coast I am traveling among the Old School Baptist churches as much as I can. I shall be going the rounds on this work of the ministry most of the time while I remain in this northwest country, the Lord willing. Yesterday in this city I preached on my fifty-first anniversary of my ministry, using the same text which I used fifty-one years ago: John xiv. 1. It was in Warren County, Ohio, on Saturday before the first Sunday in June, 1869, that my uncle, Elder J. C. Beeman, first led me into the high pulpit to speak in the way of preaching. He had been preaching at that time since 1829, forty years. This, added to my poor efforts, reaches back ninety-one years of preaching in the same family, of the same kind of preaching, to wit: predestination, election, vital oneness of Christ and the church, salvation by the grace of God alone, the preservation of every member of "the body" by the power of the Head, and the sure calling of every one included in the everlasting covenant. This same "sure word of prophecy" was publicly declared by my grandfather, Elder Elijah Beeman, of West Virginia, and by my great-grandfather, Elder Amos Mix, a Revolutionary soldier of New York, later of Pennsylvania and Ohio, who was preaching this same old-fashioned doctrine before the year 1800, so that this doctrine has been continually preached

by some member of the same family for more than one hundred and twenty years. I do not expect to repeat here what I said last Sunday, but to-day in reviewing the years of my feeble ministry I cannot say that it has been a success, but as the Lord has preserved my life and given me physical strength above most persons of my age, and hath kept me in fellowship with my brethren for almost sixty years, and permitted me to speak in the way of preaching in his great name for fifty-one years, a longer time than many of my brethren have endured, I do feel grateful to him for his abundant mercy; and now for the last three years I have met many strange faces of the saints of the Lord in different states, which a few years ago I had never expected to see, and for this precious privilege I am made to know and feel that the Lord has favored me specially. This ought to be enough to melt my hard heart and fill me with grateful praise, because I am mindful of the fact that I am an unworthy wretch, that I have a corrupt and wandering mind, full of deceit, "secret sins" and wretchedness, so that daily I cannot do that which I would. I cannot tell in this letter in detail of the churches and brethren I have met on the Pacific coast; however, I may in a general way. I was with the two churches in California. These are the only churches of the Old School Baptists that we know of in that state. I met three Elders while there; two of these I think are "tourists" at present; also I met three licensed ministers. There were a few additions in those churches, and prospects for more. Coming to Oregon two months ago, I have visited a number of places in Washington and Oregon where meetings are held, and though the churches are small in membership, oneness and fellowship seem to abound and there have been a few additions. Our brethren are much scattered in these two states, but brethren here, as elsewhere, are in the habit of making long trips to get to the kind of meeting that suits them. I have met nine Elders and four licensed ministers in these two states, and six Elders I have not met yet, so if I have counted right there are fifteen Elders in the two great states of Oregon and Washington. Three Elders have died during the past year. As far as I know there are seven churches in each state. The only association is the Siloam, which has five churches. The great distance between the churches in these states prevents the churches from meeting together in associational capacity, yet, "Old Baptist like," most of them know something about one another, although living so far apart. An enemy to the Old School Baptists once said of them, "Why, they have the habit of hunting one another up." I find that it takes a great deal of traveling for me to get to all the churches and scattered brethren. I expect to stay here until about the middle of August, then return to Oklahoma.

A servant, I hope, in hope of immortality, J. F. BEEMAN.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Jan. 2, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN AND FRIENDS:—As I take my pen to write a few lines I think of these words: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." What a blessing to have such love bestowed upon us! There is nothing to be compared with such love, that love which binds our christian hearts together in one bundle of love, that chain which cannot be broken. It is sweet, it is strong, it is high, it is rich; although we be poor, we are rich in that love. I

love to meditate both day and night upon that great and wonderful love. He hath loved us with an everlasting love, and with loving-kindness he hath drawn us. The mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but my loving-kindness I will not take from thee. O, if I could but touch the hem of his garment or dwell under the shadow of his wing how happy I would be. He said, I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." I hope I have remembered him for over fifty years, but have I remembered him as I should? I fear I have not, although I know that my happiest days have been with the brethren and friends. Jesus said, Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. He said, Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you before the foundation of the world. The Lord's portion is his people, a chosen generation out of every kindred, nation and tongue. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. He is a God of truth, without iniquity, just and right is he. He makes no mistakes, we make many; he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? I love to praise him for his wonderful works, and for giving me all things that I need, and for blessing me with good health these many years, nearly eighty-eight. I cannot realize that I have seen so many years. I often think I would like to look back and remember all that has happened in that time. We cannot do that, nor can we look into the future, but can say with Paul, I have learned how to be content in whatever state I am in and through Christ's strength. Without him I can do nothing. Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to thy cross I cling. He restoreth my soul, he leadeth me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment that ran down from Aaron's beard to the skirts of his garment, like the dew of Hermon and like the dew descending from the mountains of Zion, where the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore. Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom; not like the kingdoms of this world, which crumble or are shaken with earthquakes or explosions, such as shake the foundations of men's works. We seek a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, where moth and rust doth not corrupt nor thieves break through and steal. At the name of Jesus every knee must bow and every tongue confess. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that confesses against thee shall be condemned, but there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. We love to worship him in spirit and in truth and have no confidence in the flesh. The carnal mind is enmity against God, but the spiritual mind is joy and peace, that peace which passeth all understanding. How wonderful is the sovereignty of God; he made all things that were made, and they did not have to be altered in any way, they were perfect, the sun, moon, stars and all creeping things. Great is the mystery of godliness; no man can fathom his mysteries. Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty;

just and true are thy ways. His ways are not our ways. As high as the heavens are above the earth, so are his ways above our ways. All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

To the editors, brethren and friends, a happy and prosperous new year. May you all be blessed with good health. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

With christian love,

D. L. BLACKWELL.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., June 18, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—I wish to say through the SIGNS that I deeply appreciate the prompt and kind replies that I have received to my notice of father's Autobiography and Later Writings. I wanted to acknowledge each one individually, but there have been so many that it is impossible to do so at present. I want you all to know how much they meant to me. For a long time I had felt so lifeless, and as if all hope were dead, then these letters came from all over the country, all speaking the same sweet language. As I read them they revived my hope and brought to my mind again a realization of that blessed tie which binds us all together, we hope, in the bundle of life. I have been filled with wonder and thankfulness that the Lord has bestowed such mercy on the one least deserving of that mercy, as to cause me to rejoice in the truths which I have read in those sweet letters.

The book is now in the hands of the publisher, and will be ready in a few weeks. There will be a limited number of copies, so any who wish the book and who have not ordered before should send in their orders now. The price is $2.50; Canada, $2.75.

Unworthily yours,

MILDRED DURAND GORDY.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware Association, convened with the Salem Church, at Philadelphia, Pa., May 26th, 27th and 28th, 1920, to the churches and associations with which we correspond sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more, according to the abundant mercy of our heavenly Father, we have been gathered together, and have been blessed to have the gospel preached, and in it to rejoice to receive your messengers and messages, and have been encouraged thereby.

Our next session, the Lord willing, will be held with the Bryn Zion Church, Kent County, Delaware, between the third and fourth Sundays in May, 1921, where we hope to meet again and receive your messengers and gospel messages once more.

B. F. COULTER, Moderator.

J. B. MILLER, Clerk.

HYMN BOOKS READY.

WE now have a supply of the small cloth Hymn Books on hand, which we will mail post paid to any part of the United States or Canada for one dollar a copy. These books formerly sold for seventy-five cents per copy, but because of the big advance by the binders we are forced to charge one dollar each for them, whether sold singly or by the dozen.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

AS we now have to pay three and one-half times as much as we formerly did to have the "Feast of Fat Things" bound in cloth, we are forced to increase our price of the cloth bound book from fifty cents to seventy-five cents. We will for the present continue to supply the book in paper covers at the original price of twenty-five cents.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1920.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MARTHA, MARY AND LAZARUS.

LUKE X. 38-42.

WE shall not occupy space to quote the Scripture cited at the head of this article, but those who desire may read it in connection with what we write. Indeed, it is well at all times to read the chapter in which any text is used, either in writing or preaching, not only for the good and satisfaction of those who read and hear, but it will convince one as to whether the man knows what he is writing or talking about. No one can read the Scriptures too much, but many of us read them too little.

The subject suggested by the three names above is one of interest, and the story is often told children, and it is our desire now to tell it to "little children," the children of God. Such children are anxious to hear of the wonders of God in salvation.

In the lifetime of Jesus as a man he made many journeys on foot doing good, healing the sick, giving sight to the blind and preaching the gospel of the kingdom. As a man he hungered, was often thirsty and often became very weary. His work was arduous and his life a busy one. Sometimes when hungry and weary he was not received into some cities, nor did any home open its doors to him. Often the questions arise, How could such things be? Who could refuse to take him in? Yet such was the case, and such treatment went to make up that sorrowful life. Now and then, however, he found a pleasant resting-place, and in Bethany the house of Martha was his stopping-place. Evidently the three of that home were believers and were glad to have that strange man come under their roof. We have used the term "strange man," for he was strange, in every sense of the word, and those who followed him and those who entertained him were strange also, and this peculiarity has followed to the present day all who believe in him. On this special occasion when he entered the village this woman named Martha received him into her house, and her sister, called Mary, sat at Jesus' feet and heard his word. How gracious it must have been to Mary to sit at his feet and in the spirit of a little child listen to him tell of the Father sending him into the world to be rejected and despised of men, to suffer and die that sinners might live, and while he may not have told her plainly that she should have part in that salvation, there was, no doubt, something within her that told her he was her Savior. Judging from what Martha said, Mary had forgotten everything else, and seemed to have no interest in anything save the things of Jesus. Such a thing is possible, and many can well remember when such was the case with them, but as we grow older in years the cares of this life occupy much of our time and attention and the things of Jesus are many times last to be considered, and often (how sad to say) the least in our thoughts. O that we all could get back to the place where Mary was, and where we all were in our "first love." Martha seemed more or less vexed because Mary had left her to serve alone, and she came to Jesus and

said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. Jesus answered and said, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her. It can be readily seen that while Martha desired that Mary help her she recognized the Savior's authority, and that if she did help Martha it must be at the command of him. The one thing Martha lacked, Mary had chosen: rest in the word and power of God. It is sometimes said that Marthas are as necessary in the church as Marys. Speaking in figures this is true, but the text does not mean anything of that kind, in our understanding of it. In the church, however, it is always necessary to have some who are anxious about the things of the house and to see that all things needful are attended to. Such characters are called by some Marthas, while on the other hand there are those who seem to have little interest except in the preaching. These are called Marys. But in our understanding Martha, Mary and Lazarus were representative characters. Martha represented the church under the law, Mary represented the church of the gospel dispensation, and Lazarus represented the dead sinner, made alive from the dead, of which characters the gospel church is composed. Martha, or the church under the law, was "cumbered with much serving," observing the rites and ceremonies, feast days and fast days, new moons, sabbath days, and such like. No one was allowed to be idle, but every Israelite pressed into service, beginning with the male children at the age of eight days. In those things the Jewish church had more pleasure, or joy, than in hearing the word of the Lord by the prophets. The one thing needful for that generation was grace by which it could serve God in spirit and in truth, and rest in Christ was never given it, but God reserved that better thing for the gospel day. Therefore the church under the law, Martha, never ceased to labor and to press others into service. The world is filled with workers to-day, not after the order of the Jews of the old covenant, but those who verily believe that in order to "get right with God" they must work, and after getting right they must continue to work in order to keep right, or to live. This class finds as much fault with those who have ceased from their own works and rest in the finished work of Jesus as did Martha with Mary because she had left her to serve alone. There are those to-day who would press every man, woman and child in the universe into service if they could, but when one reaches the end of the law for righteousness no mortal can ever again induce or compel that one to work, hoping thereby to please God and bring him under obligations to save him. Just now the religious fanatics of this country are trying to make men religious through legislation, taking intoxicating drinks away from them and planning, it is said, to do the same with tobacco, and no doubt later on our diet will be regulated by the same set. It may come into the mind of some one before long to revise the once glorious old song: "The land of the free and the home of the brave." However, all these things are not mere happenings, but are in the number of all things that work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to his purpose, yet the flesh rebels at bondage. If it were possible to remove every temptation and evil, so that man could not possibly sin with his hands, feet, tongue

or lips, he would still be a sinner in heart, justly condemned, except saved and justified by the grace of God. Sin is inherent, and can never be eradicated by persuasion or law. Yet Martha could not understand this truth, nor can the fanatics of this day, who in a sense are Martha, and will continue to ask the Lord to bid others help. The name Martha signifies that which becomes bitter, and we know of nothing more bitter than the experience of the church of the old covenant, being turned down, trodden underfoot and forsaken of God.

The name Mary signifies exalted. She was found at the feet of Jesus hearing his word, his voice, his doctrine, his commandments; not the law of Moses nor the ten commandments of that covenant. Mary, or the gospel church, is seen in her exaltation having the moon (law) under her feet, clothed with the sun and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. This is her appearance in heaven, the gospel dispensation. She has chosen, as did Solomon, the very thing the Lord prepared for her: rest at his feet. There she abides forever in the bosom of his love. How pleasant to rest from our labors, to have good hope through grace that we have received of the Lord's hand double for all our sins. In John xix. 25, it will be seen that three women named Mary stood by the cross as Jesus was being crucified. They represented the entire church of God being exalted at the same moment. In other words, they represented the whole family of God in Christ Jesus, ordained unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ. In being raised in him, the law thus being satisfied, they were exalted in the presence of God without spot or blemish.

The resurrection of Lazarus sets forth the work of God in quickening dead sinners into life and the removal of the fetters, that they may go free from bondage. The Son quickeneth whom he will, hence if he wills not to quicken a dead sinner that man will die in his sins. With God are the issues of life and of death. After Lazarus was made alive he was found at the table with Jesus, where all his saints are found. The sickness of Lazarus was not unto death, but that God might be glorified through his life-giving power. So the condemnation of the elect was not unto everlasting death, but that God might be glorified in their resurrection from the dead. He hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

We leave the subject with you. K.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Elder W. B. McAdams has changed his address from Columbia, S. C., to Jonesboro, Texas, Route 4, care of C. B.

Elder J. M. Fenton has changed his address from 5128 Master St., Philadelphia, Pa., to 27 S. Maryland Ave., Atlantic City, N. J. Canada address, No. 2 Picton Apt., London, Ontario.

After June 25th, the address of Elder W. S. Alexander will be 233 Concord Ave., Wilmington, Del., instead of Elsmere, Del.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. S. F. Gandy, N. J., $1.00; Franklin Terry, N. J., $1.00; Miss Julia Timmons, Ill., $2.00; E. B. Ault, Texas, $3.00; Sarah E. Runkle, Ill., $1.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder C. W. Bond, at his home, La Grande, Oregon, June 14th, 1920, Thomas Williams and Miss Audra Cummins, both of Union County, Oregon.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

William A. Edwards was born in Henry County, Tenn., November 11th, 1841, and moved with his father to Fulton County, Ky., when very young, where he grew to manhood. In 1863 he was married to Irene Roper, sister to the writer, to which union were born six children, five of whom survive him. His wife died in 1880. A year or so later he was married to a sister of his first wife, to which union was born one child. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church of Mud Creek, Fulton Co., Ky., the first Sunday in September, 1869, by Elder D. Murchinson. He departed this life February 19th, 1920, at the age of about 79 years. He was a great lover of the truth, and always contended for the unlimited power of God in the salvation of his people, having no compromise with those who might differ on the subject of God's predestination and final preservation of the saints unto glory. He was a greatly beloved, useful and faithful Baptist. His house was ever a home for the Baptists, and many of those who have visited old Mud Creek in the last fifty years will remember his loving hospitality and cheerful manner of dispensing it. He left a poor, feeble and disconsolate companion and children, many friends, with the church, to mourn the loss of one greatly beloved, but we sorrow not as those who have no hope.

The funeral services were conducted by Elders J. T. Prince and A. J. Luther, after which he was laid to rest in Rush Creek Cemetery with father, mother, wife and other friends.

ALSO,

Lucretia McClellan, sister of the wives of the above named brother, was born August 1st, 1841, in Fulton County, Ky., and died March 15th, 1920, aged about 79 years. She was married to A. J. McClellan in 1865, he dying in 1875. Four children were born to that union, three of whom survive her. She joined the Methodists in early life, but in God's time saw her error, and had not for many years affiliated with them. Though she never united with the Baptists she was a firm believer in salvation by grace and grace alone, and seemed to always feel her imperfections and unworthiness. She made her home at our house the greater part of her time for a year or more. She had been in feeble health for several years and suffered a great deal, but murmured little, and seemed to be resigned to the will of the Lord. She loved to go to Old Baptist meetings, enjoyed the preaching and the company of the Baptists, and in many ways gave evidence of the love she had for the doctrine as taught and believed by Baptists of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES order. The brothers, sisters, children and many friends and numerous relatives feel that she has gone home to her reward, never to know any more grief or sorrow. W. B. ROPER.

Troy Mordecai was born August 19th, 1916, and died June 8th, 1919, making his stay on earth 2 years, 9 months and 20 days. Little Troy was sick eleven days, and all was done for him that loving hands could do, but it pleased the Lord to take him from us. God's will be done, not ours. He leaves father, mother and one sister, together with a number of relatives and friends, to mourn for him. He bore his suffering with patience, and talked sweetly most all of his last fifteen hours. He called his father and mother, grandfather and grandmother, and said, "Come and go home with me." Loved ones, your loss is his eternal gain, for we know Jesus said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven. We know it is hard to give him up, but God is able to do better by him than you could. He took him home to heaven. He died begging to go home. He was like a beautiful flower springing up, but was soon cut down and withered away.

The funeral service was conducted by Elder E. J. Sanders, and his body was laid in Walnut Cemetery to await the resurrection morn.

ALSO,

Zell Mordecai was born March 14th, 1911, and died June 24th, 1919, making her stay on earth 8 years, 3 months and 10 days. Little Zell was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Mordecai, of Melborne, Ala. She was sick only three weeks of influenza, as was her little brother, who preceded her on the 8th of the same month. She bore her sufferings with patience, and said she would not get well. All was done for her that loving hands could do, but God, who knows best, called her from us; so we weep not, but try to say with Job: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." She was a beautiful little child, and will be missed in her home and by all who knew her. Jesus took the little children in his arms and blessed them. Dear father and mother, loved ones and friends, this should be a comfort to you all, for she is gone from the evil to come. A few minutes before she died she called her Aunt Lula to wash her face, and said to her little brother, who died sixteen days before, "Troy, I will soon be there." She fell asleep in Jesus at 5 o'clock. Her mother was unable to go to the cemetery.

The funeral was conducted at the home by Elder W. M. Dorris, after which her body was laid in Walnut Cemetery, by the side of her little brother, to await the resurrection morn, when they shall come forth to meet the Lord in the air.

Her uncle, JOE MORDECAI.

Emma J. Kelly, daughter of the late John P. and Sarah J. Kelly, was born Sept. 15th, 1857, and died Nov 20th, 1919, aged 62 years, 2 months and 5 days. Her mother, three brothers, a half-brother and half-sister survive her. Sister Emma united with the Old School Baptist Church at Black Rock, Baltimore Co., Md , and was baptized by the late Elder F. A. Chick the first Sunday in July, 1889. She was a beautiful christian character, and manifested the same by her walk and conversation. She was a constant sufferer for more than two years before her death, yet in it all she showed that patience which can only be manifest in those who have a precious hope beyond all the cares and trials of this life. It was indeed a pleasure to meet and converse with her. Her mind seemed to be constantly on things above, and even though she was a sufferer, as long as it was possible she would ride seven miles to meeting and back in order that she might mingle with those of like precious faith. It was my privilege, in company with brother Frank Scott, to visit her just a few days before the end came, to talk with her, sing with her, and to behold in her that patient waiting for the end which she knew must soon come. She realized that the time had now come for her to lay down this life. In the same quiet manner she gave directions as to how she wished to be laid away, who the bearers should be, and in fact made all the arrangements for her own funeral. In evidence of the high esteem in which she was held, not only by the members of the church, but by neighbors and friends, was the large gathering that attended her funeral, mourning the loss of a friend indeed.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer, and I feel to say with them all, We miss her, but are sure our loss is her eternal gain, and that she has gone to be where Jesus is, where there is no more sorrow or pain. May the gracious Master bless and comfort those who are left to mourn, and grant them that consolation which only is his to give.

W. S. ALEXANDER.

Mary A. Ransdell Chilton was born in Henry County, Ky., March 7th, 1835, and departed this life May 10th, 1920, in the 86th year of her age. She was married to B. F. Chilton December 22nd, 1857. To them were born two children, one son and one daughter, Robert and Dora, the latter having preceded her to the grave some thirty or more years, leaving one son, Mat Lindsey, of Des Moines, Iowa. Our dear sister united with the church at Turners the second Saturday in October, 1885. I think she and our dear old brother were received and baptized at the same time, and they were true Baptists indeed, walking hand in hand in the real faith of the gospel, always at the meetings unless providentially hindered, and their house was a precious, dear home for the Baptists and all lovers of the truth as it is in Christ. For the past thirty years or more it has been my sweet privilege to mingle with them at the dear old home. It can be truly said of them that they were given to hospitality. Our dear sister was of a meek, humble, contrite spirit, adorning the profession she had made. She had been a great sufferer for the past few years, but bore all with becoming patience, bade the family farewell and calmly and sweetly fell asleep in Jesus. She leaves to mourn their loss our dear aged brother, with whom we deeply sympathize, his only son, Robert J., and his wife, one sister and eight grandchildren. May the dear Lord comfort their hearts and instruct them in all the way.

The funeral was largely attended at the meeting-house in Turners on the 12th, conducted by the writer. Burial was in the old Turner family burying-ground.

P. W. SAWIN.

George W. Simson was born August 8th, 1842, at Zanesville, Ohio, and moved in early life to Nebraska, where he resided until 1902, when he moved to Bolivar, Mo. About the year 1905 he was baptized in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church called Harmony, by Elder Agee. In 1905 he was united in marriage to Mrs. Mullen, who, with eight children by a former marriage, survives him. Soon after moving to Riverside, in 1913, he united with the Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of southern California by letter, where he lived a life consistent with the faith of that order until the time of his departure, which occurred on the 28th day of November, 1919. He was laid to rest in the cemetery at Riverside, there to await the coming of the Lord and his angels, in accordance with the convictions he earnestly contended for.

By request of his bereaved widow.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS.

Jacob L. Rounds was born February 15th, 1863, and died at his home near Salisbury, Md., May 22nd, 1920, aged 57 years, 3 months and 7 days. He was united in marriage to Ella M. Givan January 14th, 1890, who survives him, together with five brothers and five sisters, to mourn. He was a kind, affectionate husband. O how I miss him wherever I go, but I hope to meet him in heaven. He never made an open profession of religion, but was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and was always ready to go the meetings and talk of his appreciation of the doctrine preached, and enjoyed the hymns very much, and had talked to me of going before the church. During his last illness he would look at me and smile, and seemed to lay all his cares aside. He had had stomach trouble since he was nineteen years of age. He bore his sufferings with much patience.

His widow, ELLA M. ROUNDS.

Mr. Rounds was a fine man, and stood high in his community, respected by all who knew him. He

came of Old Baptist stock, and was proud to be associated with that denomination, though not a member. He knew the joyful sound, and walked uprightly before God and man. Two of his brothers are deacons of the Salisbury Church, Maryland, which church our esteemed friend attended. The writer conducted the funeral services in the Salisbury meetinghouse, assisted by Elder J. C. Mellott. The text used on the occasion was 1 Cor. xv. 57. One of his favorite hymns, No. 68 (Beebe's collection), was read. The services were largely attended, thus showing the esteem in which he was held. Interment took place in Parsons Cemetery, Salisbury, Md. May the Lord sustain the family, especially the lonely widow.

K.

Mrs. Mary H. Crowder, nee Loving, was born near Huntsville, Ala., July 2nd, 1833, and died at her home in Quanah, Texas, April 15th, 1920, aged 86 years, 9 months and 13 days. Her mind was perfectly clear until the end, and her last words were a prayer for all of her relatives and friends. She came to Texas with her father, Migginson Loving, in 1840, and settled near the town of Dangerfield, Morris Co. She was married to Jesse Moon about the year 1843, to which union several children were born, all of whom are deceased except S. L. Moon. Her husband joined the Confederate army in 1860, and died while in service in southern Louisiana. Her second marriage was to T. M. Crowder, December 27th, 1866, to which union several children were born, all deceased except Mrs. J. W. Bolin and R. V. Crowder. Besides these she leaves several grandchildren and a host of relatives and friends to mourn her death, but we mourn not as those who have no hope. She received a hope during the Civil War, and soon thereafter united with the church at Spring Hill, where her membership remained until her death, and where she was laid to await the resurrection after funeral services conducted by her pastor, Elder W. B. Robertson, April 17th. Sister Crowder was always faithful to every duty, was a devoted member of the church and much loved by all who knew her. It is our desire that the rich blessings of our heavenly Father may rest upon all who are left to mourn.

W. B. ROBERTSON.

Mrs. Matilda Brown Buck, widow of Captain Chas. Albert Buck, died at her home in Hartford, Conn., December 7th, 1919, after a long sickness. She was born in Maromas, Conn., February 8th, 1853, and was married to Captain Buck in 1872. They lived in Dorchester, Canada, where she joined the Old School Baptist Church. In 1887 they moved to Hartford, Conn. She is survived by one son and three daughters. Until her death she was a devoted reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and a sincere believer in the teachings of her church.

Her daughter, LILLY BUCK.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, it has pleased our heavenly Father to call our beloved brother, **Elder A. B. Francis,** from his labors to rest with Jesus in the paradise of God, the Baltimore Association desires to give some expression of their appreciation of his many visits to us for more than fifty years, and also of our sorrow that we shall see his face no more on earth nor hear his voice, to which we have many times listened with delight as he so ably preached Jesus and the resurrection. Truly a man of God has fallen, one who ever earnestly contended for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints without new or disturbing things. He was content to teach according to the word of God as given in the Old and New Testament Scriptures. We extend sympathy to his churches whom he faithfully served, and trust the Lord will give them another who will be true and faithful. We sympathize also with his children, but most of all with his bereaved widow, our dear sister, and pray our heavenly Father to comfort her in this great sorrow.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

EDWARD A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

MEETINGS.

THE Siloam Association of Predestinarian Baptists will be held with Sulphur Creek Church, near Riffe, Wash., beginning Friday, August 6th, 1920, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continuing the two following days. All lovers of the truth are invited. Those coming via Morton will be met Thursday p. m. with conveyance. Those coming via Chehalis take auto stage leaving Chehalis 7:30 a. m. and 2 p. m., arriving at Riffe 1 and 5 p. m. For further particulars write me.

ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk.

RIFFE, Wash.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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'Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."—1 Thess. v. 21. "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it."—Deut. xii. 32. cf. Eccl. iii. 14; James i. 17; Matt. xxviii. 20.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 88. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1920. NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MATTHEW XIX. 16.

"WHAT good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?"

Many of us have asked this question. We want a hard and fast rule between right and wrong. We complain that the Scriptures are not explicit enough on some point that is troubling us. Do we realize what such thoughts mean—that we desire to be brought again into bondage? Jesus answered, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Did he mean that a formal observance of these commandments would bring a reward of eternal life? "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees." "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Do we ask, "What good thing shall I do?" How much shall we give to the Lord? Will it suffice to lay aside one tenth of our wealth, or part of the surplus we do not require, as a sacrifice? Is that self-denial? Let us read on in the chapter, Romans xii. 3: "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think." Pride is as inherent in man as any other fleshly lust. Do we think to say to ourselves that we have done such and such a good deed and are better than others who have not done it, or perhaps with more apparent humility, we are better than we would be if we had not done it? This, brethren, is the leaven of the Pharisee; it is pride before God, self-righteousness, which is an abomination in his sight. If we want to set limitations on what is required of us we find little satisfaction in the word of God. How much shall I give? Give all that thou hast. To whom shall I lend? To every one that asks, and that with no security or thought of receiving it back. How often shall I pray? Pray without ceasing. How much shall I render to the Lord? All. "Present your bodies a living sacrifice." Do you feel this is more than you can do? I hope so. The Lord intended that you should realize this very thing. Do you begin to feel as did the disciples, "It is

not good to marry"? Do you feel the fear that fell on those around when Ananias and Sapphira were carried out? Brethren, you cannot live too soberly, too temperately, too righteously. You cannot be too hospitable, too charitable, too full of unfeigned love for your brethren. But does the Lord require hard things of you? O no, he is teaching you, who would be under the law, who want to become righteous through the deeds of the law, who would pride yourselves that you are not as other men, a lesson you have not yet fully learned. The last verse of the thirteenth chapter of Romans sums up the matter in few words: "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof."

Is nothing then required of God's children? We can hardly think that. But one thing is not required, and that is self-righteousness. Have we not all realized that the cares of this life, the lusts of the flesh and all things which are of our carnal nature are barren of spiritual fruit? This is not confined to the "thou shalt nots" of the law of Moses. There are many things which are lawful in themselves, which are not condemned, yet they do not profit us spiritually, but rather tend to rob us of the joys of heavenly things. Eating and drinking are not forbidden, marriage is honorable, honest labor and diligence in business are commended, but soberness, temperance in all things, continuance in prayer, assembling often for the worship of God, brotherly love, and everything that is holy and good and true, are especially enjoined on believers. We are children of the day; let us not walk as in the night. The true light now shineth; let us not think to stand on the bare ground of our church membership. Were we obedient in baptism? That is well, but it is only the beginning of our profession of Christ. O that we were more faithful in prayer. Do we lack wisdom? Let us ask of the Lord. Are we dull and lifeless? Do we feel enmity and bitterness toward a brother? Is our life so taken up with worldly cares and enjoyments that we find neither time nor inclination to attend to the worship of God? Go into the secret chamber, where none but God can hear, and pray for forgiveness, confessing our sins. Do not wait until we are clean and free from sense of guilt. Pray always. Nothing is too trifling, nothing too great for the Lord's direction. If we only could live more in prayer we would find more sweetness in it.

Dear brethren, when I write to you it is not through a sense of superior knowledge, but to tell you what I myself have experienced, with the hope that you may find comfort in having your pure minds stirred up by way of remembrance, that the name of Jesus may be exalted among us, that we may rejoice in him and give him all the honor and glory forever.

Your brother in hope,

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

WARFORDSBURG, Pa., June 9, 1920.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—Answering yours of May 13th, we were glad to learn you all reached home safely and well, and we hope all of you are enjoying the blessings of life. I feel at home when in the company of Old Baptists, where one can talk of the church and of God's power, of his wisdom and his plan of salvation by grace, of his foreknowledge and predestination of all things, for it is all so true and so plain. There are many enemies to that doctrine around here. As for my experience, I must go

back about fifty-two years. I was about eighteen years of age when the Lord gave me to see and to know that I was a sinful creature in his sight. I felt I was the most wicked of all creatures in the whole world, and thought, What can I do to be saved? I thought to be saved I must do it all myself, for I could hear no other preaching around me than that which said, Repent, believe and be baptized. Feeling to do anything if only I could rid myself of sin, I would set times to be baptized, but would fail when the times came. Several times I did this. At last it seemed to me that if I should make another promise to God and not fulfill it he would surely cut me down in my sins, for I thought I was lying unto the Lord, which seemed infinitely worse than lying unto men. There was to be a big meeting at a certain place, and I made up my mind that I would no longer lie unto the Lord, that this time I would be baptized. I remember yet the text that was taken that night: "That servant which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes." —Luke xii. 47. This seemed to strike me so forcibly that when the invitation was given I was the first one at the mourners' bench, where they were said to pray their sins away. But I could not pray mine away. I could think of nothing but Lord, save a poor sinner; Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner. I knew not what was my Master's will, unless it was to be baptized, so I allowed myself to be baptized into membership with the Christian, or Campbellite, denomination, remaining with them for several years. I soon came to see, however, that their foundation was all made up of their own works. They taught that they themselves had power to convert sinners. They told me to go out in the congregation and talk to sinners and convert them, but I told them I could not and would not do it, for some one else must do that, though I did not tell them who that some One else was. I remained with the Christian people as long as I could, but the longer I stayed there the more and more I became convinced I could not believe with them, they had so much of worldly things mixed up with their church order. I came to a standstill for about ten years, wondering where I would find the true church of God's doctrine. I went to several different denominations, but theirs was all that self-saving religion, and made me think of what I had read: "And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." I did not know what to do. I could not find the true church myself, and I asked the Lord if it were his will to show me the right way and lead me in it. He answered me, and led me to the Old School Baptists. I had long felt a warmth in my heart for the Old Baptists, and it would kindle whenever I heard them preach. I desired to be with them, but felt for a long time it would be wrong for me to be baptized again. I was shown, however, that my former baptism was no baptism at all, that it was even as the doctrine of the Cambellites, altogether of self and not of grace. Now I wanted to be baptized by the Old Baptists and live with them, and I felt willing to go down into the water the coldest day that ever was if I could only be one with them. I feel that in God's own appointed time and way he did grant me that blessed privilege, and though it was winter, he cleared the water of all ice, and it seemed to me did not leave it even cold.

From one who loves the truth,

MARY GARLAND.

COLUMBUS, Ga., June 21, 1920.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS AND FAMILY: —I am thinking to-night of you all, and of what a pleasant stay we had in your home. You so kindly entertained us and were thoughtful of our every comfort. I am thinking, too, of all God's dear people who are scattered throughout the different States, especially those I met face to face and abode with in their pleasant homes while attending the associations convening the last of May and the first of this month (June) in the States of Maryland, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. I shall ever remember those dear brethren and sisters, and the joyful time spent among them. There is no place one-half so dear to me as to be in the company of this favored people. There was much preaching, all in harmony, proclaiming the gospel's joyful tidings, sweetly sounding salvation by grace alone, cheering and comforting the Lord's afflicted and poor while sojourning here. I feel utterly destitute of fitting words to express the gratitude of my heart for the privilege of meeting so many dear Old Baptists and, I hope, joining with them in praising our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and mingling our voices in singing the songs of Zion. It was soul-cheering so see such sweet fellowship and unity, so firm and unwavering in the faith and doctrine. May one so unworthy as I call these precious children of the Most High my brethren? I feel so unworthy a place among God's people that I sometimes fear I am not born again, yet I cannot give up the little hope I have cherished so long a time, though at times it appears so little that I have to hope I have a hope. But there is none other to look to except Jesus, for it is said in the blessed word, Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. O how sweet if we can trust him in every case, look to him for every help, carry every burden to him and leaning thus move along. Kind are the words that Jesus speaks: My grace is sufficient for you, though nature's powers may faint. There have been times with me that I have felt my heart glow and burn with love at the thought of being entirely in the hands of the Lord in all things. Every way I turn he meets me there in his power, saying, I am the Lord, and beside me there is none other; and I have at times felt the sweetness of this enveloping power, and been constrained to sing a hymn of praise and thankfulness, feeling the blessed assurance within me that he hath all power, and we have nowhere else to flee. He has taught us there is no help outside of him. We think how pleasant it would have been if it had pleased our Lord to set the bounds of the people so that the children of God might have been near each other, and able to speak often one to another, instead of being scattered abroad, two of a city and one of a family, among those who hate them and would banish them from the face of the earth if they dared. But they are kept by God's power and love. "Ye are the salt of the earth," and it is not good for the salt to be all in one place, but to be scattered throughout the whole earth to properly preserve it. In our loneliness and longing for the company of those of like precious faith we cannot know what we are to those about us. We know that wherever the salt is there will be a blessing, even life for evermore; not eternal, but for all time to come until the salt, the elect, is gathered in, then it will be preserved no longer, for it is only for the elect's sake that the world stands. How

grand and wonderful are the ways and plans of almighty God, who works all things for his glory and for good to his chosen generation.

Now, dear brother, I will close. I only felt to tell you how I enjoyed the meetings, and being with you all. It may be I shall never meet with you all again, but I hope it may be the Lord's will that I may some time again go to the same associations; but if not, the past meeting will be an oasis in memory, refreshing, so long as I shall live. Remember me to the dear Baptists at Mt. Zion Church. I shall think often of them. I was glad to be with them at their meeting.

"I hope you'll all remember me
If you on earth no more I see;
An interest in your prayers I crave,
That we may meet beyond the grave."

May God bless us all, keep us humble, walking according to his will and purpose in Christ Jesus, trusting alone in the blood of our Savior for peace and rest beyond the grave. Love to all your dear ones.

Yours in christian love,

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

ELKINS, W. Va., Feb. 29, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending you two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I used to take it years ago, and while visiting one of my old aunts, who is now in her ninety-fourth year, she handed me a copy, and I read so many precious letters and truths in them from our brethren and sisters, especially some I know well, it made my heart leap for joy to hear from them from all parts of the country. I have belonged to the Old School Baptist Church for twenty-four years, and have for twenty years been clerk of the Valley Church, and ordained deacon since my dear old father died, who belonged to that church for about fifty years, and was a faithful member until his death. I believe God has a people chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and they will follow him whithersoever he goeth, for he says, My sheep know my voice, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life—a life his own, that never dies. Dear brethren and sisters throughout this wide world, I am glad to see so many writing for the SIGNS, and know that I am not left alone. O how I would love to visit my brethren and sisters in all parts of the country, but I am getting old, will soon be sixty-two years. When I read the many precious letters in the SIGNS it makes me want to see all the writers. I feel sometimes that I have no hope at all, that I am a poor lost sinner in the sight of a holy and just God, but the blessed Savior says he is the Shepherd of his sheep, and he is able to take care of them, no matter where they are. Many doubts and fears come to me, but at times I can lay aside all of this in my weakness and look to Christ as my Lord and my Savior, who says, By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, and if he gives us this gift no one can take it from us. Every good and perfect gift cometh from God. When I am at my daily work I often think of the blessed Savior saying, Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. I have had many ups and downs in my life, but praise the Lord both day and night that I stand firm in the faith of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and of the dear Old School Baptists, whom I believe to be the planting of his right hand. There was no other people with whom I could find a home, and I hope to live and to die with them. I think Christ's sermon on the mount is very profitable to read.

Dear brethren, you can publish this in the SIGNS if you think it worthy, or cast it into the waste-basket and all will be well.

May the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

D. B. CANFIELD.

CLARKS SUMMIT, Pa., June 28, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—In my letter in the June 1st SIGNS I said I had no appointments in Canada now. The Brooke Church has no pastor at present. I sent my resignation to them a long time ago, and supposed they had accepted it, but when I was at their two days meeting this month I was told they had not, therefore action is deferred until later. The meeting was well attended, and all seemed to have a good, quiet, peaceful, happy time, and the little Brooke Church desires it known that their meetinghouse and their homes are open to any God-called, qualified and sent preachers who come that way to come and preach for them. This is a standing invitation to those who are thus minded. Elder Fenton supplies them on the fifth Sundays, and they greatly enjoy his preaching. God bless the little church in well doing and in doing well, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

Yours in hope, D. M. VAIL.

POCA, W. Va., June 7, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find four dollars and twenty-five cents, four dollars for a new subscriber for two years, and twenty-five cents for a "Feast of Fat Things." I try to get a new subscriber every time I get out, for I feel it to be my duty, as you have been so kind to me, and not for that alone, but to get the SIGNS out among our people.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

3804 65th ST., PORTLAND, Ore., June 14, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN:—"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." With this Scripture in mind I have set about the task of providing a permanent meeting place for old Cedar Creek Church, in which I was received at the April meeting, by letter from Elgin. With the Lord's help I hope to accomplish this task although my means are limited. Pray for me, brethren, that my efforts may not be in vain.

Our all day meetings, with lunch at noon, have the Master's sanction, as the church is prosperous and in peace.

J. M. AMSBARY.

INFORMATION WANTED.

I WOULD like to inquire through the SIGNS whether there are any Baptists of our order in the lower Rio Grande valley of Texas or anywhere north near San Antonio. I would like to meet or communicate with any Baptists of our order. My post-office address is Mercedes, Texas.

CHARLES C. CONAWAY.

HYMN BOOKS READY.

WE now have a supply of the small cloth Hymn Books on hand, which we will mail post paid to any part of the United States or Canada for one dollar a copy. These books formerly sold for seventy-five cents per copy, but because of the big advance by the binders we are forced to charge one dollar each for them, whether sold singly or by the dozen.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

As we now have to pay three and one-half times as much as we formerly did to have the "Feast of Fat Things" bound in cloth, we are forced to increase our price of the cloth bound book from fifty cents to seventy-five cents. We will for the present continue to supply the book in paper covers at the original price of twenty-five cents.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1920.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MALACHI III. 17.

"AND they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

There are so many opinions of the Scriptures in these days, and so many seem possessed with the spirit to antagonize every suggestion that does not coincide with their view, that really there is left but little pleasure in writing for publication. However, we can only do our best, as we see and understand, and leave the result with the Lord. Ministers and good brethren often condemn the views of others without careful examination of the subject, clinging to some traditional idea. This is unfair and unjust both to themselves and the writer or speaker with whom they disagree. At other times the views of writers and speakers are criticised because they differ from those of Elder So-and-so, in whom the critics have utmost confidence. Let none of us think man infallible, the wisest and greatest err, and we all are more often in error concerning the Scriptures, perhaps, than in anything else, yet each one thinks his view correct. We have thus prefaced this article because of the different views held of it, and whatever we may write will not be in the spirit of controversy, but rather to give a plain, simple exposition of the subject as it seems to us, and hope that no one will feel we mean to hurt them by what we say. Neither writing nor preaching should be done in the spirit of lordship, nor with effort to display superior knowledge or wisdom, but in the spirit of love, with desire to comfort the children of God and establish them in the truth, regardless of any pet hobby any of us may have. Hobbies long ridden become rickety and often bring disaster to the rider and also to those who hear him.

Now to the subject, with the desire above expressed. This text is in the last book of the Old Testament, and next to the last chapter of the old Bible; this however makes it no less prophecy than though it were in any other part of the Old Testament, and should be regarded as such or its import will be lost. No prophecy should ever be considered from the standpoint of a New Testament declaration. "The law and the prophets were until John, since then the kingdom of heaven is preached." Hence it matters not what part of the old Bible is used, either in preaching or writing, it must be treated as prophecy, concerning the coming of Jesus, his sufferings and the glory which followed. There is a vast difference between prophecy and the fulfillment of it, and it behooves us all who handle the word of God to rightly divide that word. Everything had, and still has, its time and place. Winter does not take the place or exchange seasons with summer; seedtime and harvest are different, and it is just as impossible to make law and gospel one as it is to change the seasons. If any one will take the time to read this short prophecy by Malachi it will be seen very readily what he was writing about as moved by the Holy Ghost. In the third chapter and

first verse, the coming of John the Baptist is declared, in the office of the messenger of God, to prepare the way before Jesus Christ, the messenger of the new covenant, who should suddenly come to his temple. Because of sin and iniquity in the hosts of Israel the questions are asked, "Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' sope: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." This quotation establishes the fact that the book of Malachi is a testimony of the coming of Jesus and what he should do in accomplishing the will of the Father who sent him.

In this third chapter it will be seen that some of that age of the world among the Jews were stout against the Lord, saying it was vain to serve the Lord, and that others who did not serve him at all were blessed above them who had served him, and they considered the wicked happy, or, in other words, prosperous. The Lord rebuked those who thought they had been serving him, and told them they had robbed him, in that they had not brought all the tithes into the storehouse. Even then, however, there were those who feared the Lord and spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and thought upon his name. Regardless of what any of us think, write or preach, the above characters were those who should be his when he made up his jewels. The special difference of opinion in this matter is the time when the jewels were or are to be made up. Some take the matter even beyond the gospel dispensation to the end of the world, but for our part we shall continue to affirm that the text is prophecy and declares the work that Jesus should do in the flesh as the Redeemer of sinners and as the purifier of gold and silver. He should purge the sons of Levi, the priesthood, that they, all the children of God, priests unto him through the blood of his Son, should offer sacrifices in righteousness; something never done under the law. The term, "They shall be mine," signifies that Jesus would pay the price with his own blood, redeeming them unto God. Paul tells us that we are not our own, but are bought with a price, the precious blood of Jesus. Therefore the whole man, soul, body and spirit, belongs to the Lord in fulfillment of his word, "They shall be mine." The term, "In that day," means the same as in most every other place where it is used in the Old Testament. For instance, It shall come to pass in that day that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they which are ready to perish shall come and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem. So far as we know no one doubts the above expression as referring to the gospel day, in which the Lord gathers his sons from far and his daughters from the ends of the earth to sit down in his kingdom with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Therefore in that day he, Jesus, the messenger of the new covenant, should come to make up his jewels, gathering them of all nations under heaven, putting his law in their hearts and minds, making another covenant with them, thus manifesting them as his children (jewels), partakers of the divine nature and possessors of eternal life. So the church is a royal diadem in the hand of God. Therefore the text before us, being prophecy concerning the work of Jesus in his

incarnation, full of grace and truth, has no reference to the resurrection of the dead except in the sense of lifting sinners up from the curse and condemnation of the law. The doctrine of the resurrection is New Testament doctrine, and is full of comfort and assurance to those who have hope therein. Jesus taught it, the apostles affirmed it; we need not go to the Old Testament to find it, whether in Malachi or elsewhere.

The latter part of our text: "And I will spare them as a man spareth his son that serveth him," establishes the fact that the Lord by Malachi was declaring gospel things, including the service of the jewels, are gospel subjects. The law of Moses did not "spare" any one under it, but exacted the last farthing, full payment for every transgression, and full six days labor without cessation; nothing could be omitted demanded by that law, no mercy whatever in it. Even Jesus must fulfill, or keep, the law in every jot and tittle; his service was unto death, no sparing, because the law demanded it. But now in the gospel dispensation the children of God are not under Moses, or the law, but are under law to Christ, and as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him and serve him. Surely it is now, not after death, that the subjects of the kingdom of God serve him, and his sparing them (having mercy upon them) as a man spareth his own son that serveth him, is made manifest in the forgetfulness, backslidings and wanderings of his sons and daughters. The man in sparing his son never exacts more than he is able to perform, so the Lord exacts nothing more of his jewels than he gives them strength and grace to perform, working in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

In conclusion, we will say that while we believe in the resurrection of the dead, and that we wait, to wit, the redemption of our body, and are sure that the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God, we would not select the text at the head of this article if we felt impressed to treat upon that subject, but we have had some comfort and pleasure for many years in believing and finding that the Old Testament Scriptures are the testimony of Jesus, as he said they were, and when led by the Spirit into the things written by holy men of old, one always beholds Jesus the Son of God coming as was declared of him, to bring life and immortality to the objects of God's love. The Lord keep us all in his love and in the order of his house blameless.

K.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Thomas Meredith.)

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Salem Church, at Philadelphia, Pa., May 26th, 27th and 28th, 1920, sends love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED IN CHRIST:—In compliance with an order of the association at her last session, and in accordance also with previous custom, we select for the theme of our Circular Letter, Grace and the love of God, believing it to be calculated to comfort and encourage the children of Zion. "Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father." It is grace that first must be received, then comes peace which passeth all understanding; not for extra obedience of the sinner as a debt due him, but it comes from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle says, God sending

forth the Spirit of his Son into the heart, crying, "Abba, Father;" for without this the awakened child dare not claim the relationship. Carnal professors, ignorant of themselves and God in his divine perfections, may presumptuously call God "Father," but for a soul quickened by God's grace to call God "Father" is more than he could presume to do; his language is, I am not worthy to be called thy son. The law brings him to the knowledge of sin, and what he in his native ignorance thought was ordained to life he finds to be unto death. To believe there is hope for him he dare not; he sees no way of escape; he strives with all his might to better his condition, yet when he would do good he cannot, for nothing but evil is present with him; he feels unfit to appear before the throne, nor can anything give him peace without coming from God his Father through the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus the poor soul is tossed until his only plea is, "God be merciful to me a sinner." All hope is cut off from any other quarter. He knows it must be an act of free grace or he is lost forever; the demands of justice are great, and he has nothing to pay, nor prospects of getting any. Now when the Holy Spirit breathes into his soul, "Grace be unto you," there will be peace in a moment, causing him to love, wonder and adore; he finds hope springing up in his mind that he is a child of God, not by works of righteousness of his own, for he is led to see the channel through which the mercy proceeds, and that it is the Lord Jesus Christ; he is filled with love, joy and peace. How surprising that God, whose purity cannot behold sin and who is independently happy in himself, should set his love on such poor, vile and sinful creatures, who were by nature children of wrath and enemies to him by wicked works; who never sought his favor until conquered by his grace and drawn to him by cords of love. They were predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace. This love is free; not free to all the human family to take up or lay aside at pleasure, as some have vainly asserted, but free because it is freely bestowed without price upon all for whom it was provided. He never loses sight of the objects of his love, not even when in their lost condition running in the broad road with the giddy multitude, pursuing the desires of the flesh and of the mind. He always delights in the children of his grace, and calls his church his love, his dove, his undefiled. It is written, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son. It was love that moved the Father to give his beloved Son that he might redeem his church and save his people from their sins. What heavenly beauty we see in this glorious plan of salvation, which flows from the fountain of God's everlasting love, through the precious Redeemer, to lost and perishing sinners. Dear brethren, we feel that this is a comforting and consoling doctrine, though it discovers to us what poor self-nothing worms of the dust we are under the care of an all-wise God, who has so wonderfully displayed his wisdom, power and love in the plan which he has devised for the salvation of his church and people on earth. We are led to honor and adore the riches of his grace, who devised the plan for such poor helpless creatures as we are.

As the conclusion of our remarks we will quote the precious words of the disciple Jude: "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present

you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

B. F. COULTER, Moderator.
J. B. MILLER, Clerk.

(Written by Elder C. W. Vaughn.)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., June 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1920, to the several churches of which it is composed, greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—In thus addressing you by way of a Circular Letter, we desire to express the love and appreciation we trust is in our hearts for you and the saints everywhere. In this meditation we have the quotation which is quoted in the gospel according to Luke, fourteenth chapter and eleventh verse: "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." This was quoted by Jesus while in conversation with the Pharisees and lawyers, who were in conversation with him at the time a certain man was healed of dropsy. The two characters herein under consideration bring to mind the sinner dead in trespasses and sin and also the sinner that is afflicted because of sin. The first is the one who exalts himself, and represents the first Adam. We note according to the Scripture he by the conception of iniquity desired to be as wise as God, knowing good and evil, and exalting himself to take of the forbidden fruit, and the result was death. In this conception we find man continually exalting himself, and would if possible take the kingdom of God and thereby dishonor God and take the glory to himself. We note, as is quoted by Jesus in the parable just previous to the above quoted, he speaks in few words the fruits of the carnal man, in quoting in regard to doing things by which we would have a rebound to himself equal to that he bestowed, if not greater, and thereby he would be exalted. The one that is born of the Spirit is made to see and know the end of this one which is to be abased.

Now we come to consider the one that humbleth himself. It is not in the first Adam to humble himself, but all the time exalt himself. So there must be a man that is not of the first Adam. We come now to Jesus, the He that humbleth himself, and the humility he expressed in all he manifested and taught. In the expressions of doing to others that we thereby would be profited, we know is in a true sense the nature of all men, but Jesus took the lame, the halt, the blind, the sick and all manner of afflicted, especially when they were poor and had nothing to pay. In this we see the wonderful way by which he was made poor that we should be made rich. We are made to realize the afflictions of the Lord's people, which afflictions are so great that there is no soundness in them. We might enumerate many expressions which would show his humility, but the quickened sinner magnifies him humbled to come into this low ground of sin and sorrow to suffer, bleed and die for his people, and then by the glorified power of the Father exalted at the right hand of the Father a Prince and Savior to make intercession for all whom he died, and by the power of him the poor sinner is raised up and glorified together with him. How wonderfully we are made to see the humbleness of Jesus manifested in his children as they are led by the Spirit. The Spirit humbleth, but the flesh puffeth up. When the Spirit is leading the children of grace, humility, meekness, gentleness and long-suffering are manifested, and then we are made to say, "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Christ Jesus being in them

brings them together in a oneness in spirit and truth as the bride of Christ.

Dear brethren, we are made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ and rejoice together in hope of salvation through Christ Jesus. This association, together with its correspondence, has been wonderfully favored of the Lord for many generations past, and we hope by the grace of God to press on toward the mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus, ever looking unto him who is the author and finisher of the christian's faith. Brethren, we as soldiers of the cross and followers of the Lamb are to press on because of his love that constraineth us. May it please him to thus manifest his power in us now and evermore.

D. M. VAIL, Moderator.
D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, convened with Kingwood Church, Locktown, N. J., June 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1920, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond sends greetings and love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We are glad that by the love and mercy of a covenant-keeping God we are again permitted to meet in the capacity of an association, and that his messengers have been sent to us laden with the good things of the kingdom of God, and that we have been made to sit down together in the kingdom of our God with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Our next meeting of the association will be held at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the first Sunday in June, 1921, at 10:30 a. m., when we hope to meet you all again in love and fellowship of the people of God.

D. M. VAIL, Moderator.
D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Cornelia Harvey was born June 21st, 1836, and departed this life December 17th, 1919, aged 83 years, 5 months and 25 days. She was married to Z. Harvey Feb. 8th, 1854. Fourteen children were born to them, seven of whom are living, four boys and three girls. For several years before her death she was a believer in the Old School Baptist faith, but never joined the church. Often have I heard her speak of the mercies of Jesus. She was a firm believer in the eternal purposes of the great King of kings. Her house was a home for the children of God. I was called to conduct the funeral of brother Z. Harvey, also that of her son, brother James Harvey. She is done with trouble here. How sweet to realize that Jesus came to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. If Jesus put away sin who can condemn? It is said in holy writ, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, and that all his people were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world. He is God, and changes not, but controls all created things. In every thing he has a purpose; he works all things after the counsel of his own will; created all things, from the smallest insect to the angels around his throne. He predestinated all things, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. It is the will of God that all the Father gave him shall come unto him, and he that cometh will in no wise be cast out. This is the doctrine she loved and firmly believed. Much more might be said of her, but space will not allow. May God be with the children and lead them to glory, and with their dear mother join that blood-washed throng and sing the song of sweet deliverance to all eternity.

J. R. HATCHER.

Joseph Theodore Hastings was born near Delmar, Del., September 22nd, 1857, died at his home in New Castle, Del., May 11th, 1920, aged 62 years, 7 months and 19 days. Though far from well, he started to his work as usual on Tuesday morning, and before reaching the trolley line he was suffering with a hard chill, so turned back, calling at the doctor's office for medicine. He prescribed for him, then took him home, as he was too sick to walk. Though he watched the case closely, in two days pneumonia developed, and he advised notifying his people, which was done. But the doctor's skill, with all that loving hearts and hands could do, could not stay the hand of death, for his days were numbered, so he passed away the following Tuesday, just one week from the day he was taken with the chill. The subject of this notice was twice married, first in February, 1882, to Miss Ella Matthews, an estimable young lady, who lived less than a year to bless their happy home. After more than three years of loneliness he

was again married, on April 4th, 1866, to Miss Mame Melvin, who is left to mourn an irreparable loss, also one son, Theodore Hastings, Jr., and one grandchild. He also left three brothers: James, Minos and Ananias, and two sisters: Mrs. A. C. Holloway and Mrs. J. B. McGee, many nephews and nieces and a host of friends. While Theodore did not have a name on our church-book, we feel to hope he loved the assembly of the saints, and we do know he had nothing against the doctrine of God our Savior. He was an exceptionally kind and affectionate husband and father, poor in this world's goods, but we feel to hope he had treasures in heaven. His trials were many through life. Four times his wife has been laid upon the operating table, and he likewise had four times suffered from the effects of the surgical knife, but was always patient; a meek and lowly spirit always manifest. Indeed, his very life said, "I am dumb before thy throne, nor dare dispute thy will." It was my privilege to talk with him about two years ago, and to hear his own lips make this confession: "I love to go among this people, and believe they are the Lord's people, but have always been given to feel that I am not worthy to have a place among them; not worthy to be called thy son, but let me be as one of thy hired servants." Precious testimony indeed.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral service by his request. We were friends indeed. May the gracious Master comfort those who are left to mourn with these thoughts. The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. W. S. ALEXANDER.

Sarah Francisco departed this life at her home, 45 Down St., Kingston, N. Y., April 22nd, 1920. She was the daughter of David W. and Hulda Hubbell, late of Halcottville, N. Y. She was 52 years of age, and survived her husband, John Francisco, just four months. She leaves to mourn their loss, two sisters and two brothers, one sister, Miss Mary Hubbell, having cared for her during her long and painful illness. Mrs. Francisco was a great sufferer, having been afflicted for over fourteen years, yet through it all she tried to be cheerful, and though she had much to distress and discourage her, yet she bore it patiently, and ever had a heart to listen to and sympathize with others. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and found comfort in an exalted Savior. Her patience and resignation to her heavenly Father's will have been a living testimony to the efficacy of his grace. She had a lively hope, and was turned from the things that are seen to look upon the things that are unseen, and when the writer visited her a few days before she passed away she was sweetly resting upon all-sufficient grace.

The funeral was held at her late home, and interment was in the cemetery at Kelly Corners.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Mrs. Nancy Johnston was born in the township of Lobo, Ont., in the year 1836, and departed this life May 8th, 1920. She was the eldest daughter of Donald and Catherine Graham, who came from Scotland many years ago. She was married to my father, Richard Johnston, of Highgate, in April, 1884, by Elder William Pollard, living happily together. Father died in 1897, leaving her with two stepchildren. My brother was married in June, 1905, and died in August, 1908. Mother and I came to London, where we lived at our home until her death. She was in excellent health until a short time before her death, when she contracted pneumonia and only lived a short time. During her illness mother made all her own funeral arrangements and requests, one of which was that Elder J. M. Fenton conduct the funeral services, which he did, and spoke comforting words from the twentieth chapter of Revelation. On Thursday night before her death she prayed and praised her Savior from 12:30 a. m. until 5 a. m., and the last we understood her to say she was repeating the last of the Lord's prayer, and at 9 o'clock she passed peacefully away. She had been a member of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada for over forty years. My father was also a member, both being baptized by Elder William Pollard. Mother loved the company of God's dear people, and her door was always opened with a smile and cheery word of welcome to all her brethren and sisters in the church, as well as her many friends who loved her. She was of a bright, sunny and cheerful disposition, making friends wherever she went. Her Bible and the SIGNS were her constant companions. She is survived by her stepdaughter, Catherine, who lived with her, also her two sisters, Mrs. Thomas Comer, of Poplar Hill, and Mrs. Dan Johnston, of Curlew, Iowa.

Interment was made in Mt. Pleasant Cemetery, London, Ontario.

CATHERINE JOHNSTON.

Vienna Solt, wife of the late John R. Solt, was born February 22nd, 1848, and died in the township of Walnut, Ohio, at the home of her daughter, Laura Baker, April 10th, 1920, at the age of 72 years, 1 month and 17 days. She was the eighth daughter of the late Absalom and Famah Peters. On September 1st, 1867, she was married to John R. Solt, who died January 6th, 1911. That union was blessed with eleven children, ten of whom are living. She lived a true, exemplary life, always scattering sunshine that those about her might be happier. The deceased was a long and very patient sufferer, never complaining, but bearing her suffering with the greatest fortitude, exemplifying our Savior, Christ the Lord, who suffered and died that we might live the life eternal. One daughter, Louie Alice Nicholson, died ten years ago last December. Ten children are left to mourn

the loss of a loving and affectionate mother. Thirty-seven grandchildren will miss their dear grandmother. She also leaves three sisters and many other relatives and friends to mourn her departure. She was not a member of the church, but enjoyed reading the SIGNS, giving evidence of understanding the things of the Spirit.

Funeral services were held at Hedges Chapel, conducted by Elder W. H. Shoemaker. Burial in Reber Hill Cemetery. EDWIN NEWTON.

Alvin Holloway Johnson, son of B. A. and Ethel F. Johnson, of Salisbury, Md., was born July 31st, 1916, died Dec. 7th, 1919, aged 3 years, 4 months and 7 days. We visited the family the fifth Sunday in November, and Alvin went with us to meeting and seemed well and happy. That evening he was taken with a fever and a doctor was called; measles developed, complications followed and another doctor was called in consultation, but their combined skill, with all that loving hearts and hands could do, could not stay the hand of death, and early Sunday morning, just a week from the day he was taken sick, his little form lay cold in death. We believe he was taken from the evil to come, and that his spirit is now with God who gave it. Jesus said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." He was an unusually bright child, a favorite with all who knew him, and had so entwined himself about our hearts we find it hard indeed to say, Thy will, not ours, be done.

Elders A. B. Francis and J. C. Mellott spoke words of comfort on the following Tuesday at the home to a large gathering of relatives and friends, after which the little body was laid to rest in Parsons Cemetery by four little boys, playmates of Alvin's.

MARTHA E. HOLLOWAY.

William J. Snoddgrass passed away at the Lebanon hospital April 26th, at the age of 57 years and 9 months. Death was caused by a stroke of paralysis received about eight days before. The deceased was born in Texas, but moved to Oregon with his parents when quite young, and had been a resident of Lebanon and vicinity for a number of years. He was long engaged in the stock business, both as buyer and raiser. He leaves a wife and daughter, who reside in Seattle. His widow, Mrs. Mae Snoddgrass, was with him when he passed away. He also leaves his mother, Mrs. Eunice Snoddgrass, who resides in Tallman, and two brothers and five sisters: Robert, of Clackamas County, Roy, of Lebanon, Mrs. M. W. Yeoman, of Brogan, Mrs. M. E. Jarnigan and Mrs. Lee Jarnigan, of Coburg, Mrs. W. D. Busey, of Lebanon, and Miss Rose Snoddgrass, of Tallman.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder A. Horner, after which the remains were laid to rest in the Masonic Cemetery. A FRIEND.

Jesse Elmer Strawser, son of Samuel and Dortha Strawser, was born in Delaware County, Ohio, January 28th, 1867, and died April 30th, 1920, at the age of 53 years, 3 months and 2 days, of a complication of diseases. He leaves to mourn their loss, a wife, one son, one daughter, a daughter-in-law, one granddaughter, his mother, one brother, one sister and a host of relatives and friends. He was a loving son, husband and father. He was a contractor and carpenter at Marion, Ohio, and many buildings stand as monuments of his conscientious dealings with his fellow-men. While he never united with the church, he was a lover and ardent reader of the SIGNS, and gave every evidence of being in possession of that faith which was once delivered unto the saints. May we be enabled to bow in humble submission to the will of Him who rules all things after the counsel of his own will and for the good of them that love him.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Pleasant Hill meetinghouse. Burial in Pleasant Hill Cemetery. C. E. JACKSON.

MEMORIALS.

(DELAWARE ASSOCIATION.)

WHEREAS, God in infinite wisdom has by death called to a close the labors of our beloved brother and minister of the gospel of Christ, **Elder A. B. Francis,** and

WHEREAS, this Association feels the loss of a brother so esteemed for the truth and so beloved of the Lord; be it

RESOLVED, that we spread upon our Minutes an expression of our deep sympathy for the churches in their loss, and for his family in their deep bereavement, and of our deep appreciation of the all-wise purpose of a covenant-keeping God that our loss is gain to our brother. And be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution be sent to his family and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Adopted May 26, 1920.

B. F. COULTER, Moderator.

J. B. MILLER, Clerk.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, Elder J. M. Fenton will visit and preach among brethren and friends as follows:

Jefferson, N. Y., July 17th and 18th; Charlotteville, 19th, 3 p. m.; Howe Cave, 20th, 3. p. m.; Middleburg, 21st, 3 p. m.; Central Bridge, 8 p. m.; Albany, 22nd, 11 a. m.; Troy, 2 p. m.; Greenwich, 8 p. m.; Schoharie, 24th and 25th.

E. R. KINNEY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Elder S. M. Dickens, Texas, $1.00; Mrs. L. Stewart, N. Y., $3.00.

MEETINGS.

THE twenty-fifth annual session of the New Harmony Association of the Regular Predestinarian Baptist faith and order, will be held with the Macedonia Church, seven miles southwest of Rising Star, Eastland County, Texas, commencing on Friday before and embracing the second Sunday in August. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend. Those coming by rail will please notify J. I. Foster, Rising Star, Texas, at which point conveyances will meet train on Thursday evening before.

J. C. KILGORE, Moderator.

W. G. GREEN, Clerk.

THE Siloam Association of Predestinarian Baptists will be held with Sulphur Creek Church, near Riffe, Wash., beginning Friday, August 6th, 1920, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continuing the two following days. All lovers of the truth are invited. Those coming via Morton will be met Thursday p. m. with conveyance. Those coming via Chehalis take auto stage leaving Chehalis 7:30 a. m. and 2 p. m., arriving at Riffe 1 and 5 p. m. For further particulars write me.

ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk.

RIFFE, Wash.

THE Old School Predestinarian or Primitive Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, on Friday before the third Sunday in August with Elm Ridge Church, at Elmo, Texas, on the Texas and Pacific R. R., seven miles east of Terrel, Texas. The church-house is about three hundred yards southeast of the depot. All God-fearing people are invited, especially ministers of our faith and order.

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"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."—1 Thess. v. 21. "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it."—Deut. xii. 32. cf. Eccl. iii. 14; James i. 17; Matt. xxviii. 20.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 88. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1920. NO. 15.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PREDESTINATION.

THERE is a diversity of opinions in regard to God's predestination even among Primitive Baptists. Some believe God predestinated all things, some think he predestinated some things, others do not think he predestinated anything, but that all things happen by chance. Israel's God is a God of purpose, and holy writ teaches us that he works all things in all worlds after the counsel of his own will. David, who was a prophet and king in Israel, said that whatsoever the Lord pleased that he did in heaven, in earth and all deep places. Man, like the balance of God's creation, was created good, but not perfect. By the disobedience of one man (Adam) sin entered the world. Adam's Creator gave him a law, the violation of which meant death; he violated that law willingly, knowing the penalty would be death. One of the most mysterious questions of this or any other age is, Did God predestinate that Adam should violate said law, and that sin, with its ruinous consequences, should enter the world? This is the subject on my mind for discussion, or consideration, at this time. We learn in the word of truth that Christ came into the world to save sinners; we also learn by the same authority that the covenant ordered in all things and sure antedated the creation. Christ was God manifest in the flesh. In the great plan of redemption there was a counsel held in eternity before the foundation of the world, in which God resolved himself into a three-one God which should bear record as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and these three should be one. In the creation God said, Let us make man. The pronoun "us" evidently means the second person in the Trinity. The Father chose, the Son redeemed, and the Holy Ghost has in all ages made the application, or quickened into life. The Son said, I must go away, that the Comforter may come and take the things of mine and show them unto you (his people). There would have been no need for a Savior if there had been nothing to save. An angel sent from God said to Mary, the mother of Christ, before he was conceived, His name shall be called Jesus (the same is Christ), for he shall save his people from their sins. Just before the crucifixion the Son said to the Father, Glorify thy Son, that thy

Son may glorify thee, as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him; and this is life eternal, that they might know thee, whom to know is eternal life. The inhabitants of the entire world sprang from the first Adam. Paul says, Of one blood God made all nations of people to inhabit all the world. Climate, habits, and perhaps other things, have caused the great difference in color, and otherwise, consequently one is just as good as another by nature. It was by a decree from God that Joshua destroyed Jericho, men, women and children; by the same authority Saul, the first king of national Israel, destroyed Ai and Amalek, two wicked cities, with all their inhabitants. God rained down fire from heaven and burned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all the regions round about, for their sins, or as a punishment therefor, and who will venture the assertion that they were more wicked than the world is to-day? I hold that the Scriptures teach God's predestination is just as broad as his purpose, and that his power is as wide as his knowledge. Known unto God are his works from the foundation of the world. He saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the foundation of the world. The word of God is not bound, neither is it limited; it is sharper than a two-edged sword. When God called Abraham out of a heathen country he showed him the land he would give him for his posterity, and told him that they would be in bondage four hundred years before they would come into possession of it. Abraham had no children, but God gave him faith to believe all he told him; even so when he calls one of his elect out of the same kind of a land he believes, and that, too, by the same kind of faith: a God-given faith. All unregenerate people are heathens, in a gospel sense, no matter how much they know of the wisdom of the world. The way God protected Joseph, and his purpose in the same, and also Moses, is beyond the comprehension of human wisdom. But there is a hidden wisdom which the wise of this world have never known, which is only known by divine revelation, a highway that the lion's whelp has never trod, nor has the vulture's eye ever seen. The lion is the king of beasts and represents power. The vulture, though now extinct, had the keenest vision of anything. The prophet uses the figure to prove what the apostle Paul afterwards by divine revelation wrote, to wit, The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. From a natural, or human, standpoint it cannot be seen how that God in justice should or did have the land of Canaan or Palestine depopulated and put the descendants of Abraham in possession of the same, but there is one thing we do know: that it was the purpose of God to do that thing when he gave the land to Abraham. We also know that it was the purpose of God to destroy Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea. They could have gone a nearer route and evaded the Red Sea, but God had said to him, For this same cause have I raised thee up, that I might show forth my power in thee. On one occasion I asked a man who hates the doctrine of predestination as much as any one I ever knew, if God could have prevented sin from entering the world, and in consequence thereof all the heinous crimes that have been perpetrated in all ages of the world. His

answer was that if it had been his purpose he could. That is just what I believe in, his purposes, notwithstanding he was a full-fledged Arminian and I an absolute predestinarian. The Savior said, nearly two thousand years ago, There shall be wars, and rumors of wars, but the end is not yet. We should remember that God's ways and thoughts are as high above ours as the heavens above the earth. We only know in part and see in part; see, as it were, through a glass dimly, but when that which is in part is done away we shall see as we are seen and know as we are known. I have wondered many times why African slavery was tolerated in the United States when it was the cause of so much bloodshed, but God evidently had a purpose in it; the same way with the world war which lately came to an end. Secret things belong to God, revealed things to us and our children forever.

May God bless his dear people the world over with a proper understanding of the Scriptures, is my sincere prayer.

JAMES M. SIMMONS.

PARIS, Texas, May 14, 1920.

BISMARK, Missouri.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I was born in the city of New York, March 14th, 1831, and remember going from there to Cleveland, then to Zanesville, Ohio, in the spring of 1834, on a canal boat, a slow way to travel compared to railroads, automobiles or airships. I lived in Zanesville six years, then moved to Meigs County, on the Ohio River, and lived there for fifteen years; then moved to Marion County, Iowa, in May, 1855, and lived there twenty-two years. In September, 1859, at the Western Association, in Watkin's Grove, I met with the Primitive or Old School Baptists for the first time in my life. I heard Elder John Shanks first, then Elder Cobb, then Elder D. S. Tannehill, next and last Bonham M. Hester, and they were able preachers. I knew the ring of the apostles' doctrine. David said, Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound. In the spring of 1860 I joined the Little Flock Church, at their first meeting. After I joined I was licensed to preach. In 1866 I was ordained; the presbytery consisted of Elders David Wortman, Bonham Hester and David Layman. I first joined the Free Will Baptists, in Ohio, but did not believe their doctrine; I was deceived in them. In 1852 they gave me license to preach. I preached three Apostolic Baptist sermons, the last one my text was, "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." —1 Cor. i. 23, 24. One of the Elders found fault with it, and another said the members did not like it. Well, I said, did I not prove what I preached by Scripture? He said, Yes, you preached too much Scripture. I left them and never went back to their "do and live" meetings any more. I plainly saw they could not endure sound doctrine; they liked the old Babylonish doctrine much better. From the time I left the "Free Willers" until I joined the Primitive Baptist Church I felt it to be my duty to preach wherever I had an opportunity. I preached the same as I do now: salvation through Christ alone; immortal and eternal life comes through Christ alone. God Almighty made me a minister of Jesus Christ, and only the Old Baptists indorsed and approved of what God had done; they simply said, Amen. Before I went to Missouri I for many years regu-

larly visited six churches in Iowa, two in Marion County: Little Flock and North Cedar; Ebenezer, in Mahaska County; Harmony, in Warren County; Providence, in Polk County; Zion, Jasper County. In October, 1877, I, at the earnest call of five churches in southeast Missouri, went there with my family, bought four hundred acres of land in Saint Francois County and lived there twenty-five years. I had the care of five churches all that time, they were located in Iron, Reynolds and Madison counties. I came back to Iowa in 1902 and united with Sharon Church, Guthrie County, where my membership now is. I never kept account of the number of miles I have traveled in Missouri and Iowa by private conveyance, but it would amount to many thousands. Ever since I commenced preaching I have had plenty of this world's goods. I made my financial start in this world by hard work and good management. The Lord has always blessed me with plenty, and I never had to beg, or in any way ask for help. On leaving home I always left plenty for my family and had money enough with me to take me wherever I was going and return. If the brethren gave me anything (which they seldom did) they did it voluntarily and of their own good will. The brethren generally paid my traveling expenses when I went by railroad. I have visited churches in Iowa and Missouri through cold and heat, rain and snow. I am now nearly ninety years of age, and feel as if life's journey is nearly through, but I have a hope through Christ alone of eternal life in the next world. Eternal life, immortality, Christ gives to his sheep alone, so they will never perish. He never gave the goats eternal life, so they will all perish, they will be punished with everlasting destruction. (See John x. 28.) "For, behold, the day cometh, [at the end of this world, not in the next] that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, [so it must be true, for God cannot lie] that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. [What does he say of his sheep that fear his name?] But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness [Christ] arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." There is no uncertain sound in what the Lord of hosts says. Christ has put the amen to this in Revelation xx. 14, 15: "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire." Christ says, "This is the second death," so it must be so. Who are put into that lake? "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."—Rev. xxi. 8. "And to you who are troubled, rest with us; when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." "Let no man deceive you by any

means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth, will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: [If Satan be consumed and destroyed, how much of him is left?] even him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all [that were not written in the book of life] might be damned who believed not the truth." We get natural, mortal life from the first Adam by natural birth, without our consent; we had no choice, were not consulted whether we were willing to be born or not. We knew nothing of this world until we were born of the flesh, so likewise we knew nothing of a spiritual birth until born of the Spirit, born of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, not part flesh and part Spirit; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Christ said, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, [the way God sends it] and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Nothing can be plainer than this; then what presumption in man to try to explain what Christ made so plain that a wayfaring man, though a fool, cannot err therein, and he that runneth can read.

I came here the 17th of April. As I wrote you before, my wife and eldest son died on the same day, April 7th. I now feel that this is my last communication for the SIGNS. I thank you for publishing my writings in the past.

Farewell. Yours truly,

R. S. BANKS.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

DEAR EDITORS:—Will you let me address you by letter, one so ignorant as I feel myself to be, on a Bible subject which is found in 1st Corinthians iv. 20? "For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." If the kingdom then is of God, it is not of man, and if it is in power, then it is not in weakness. God has all power, both in heaven and in earth, so the kingdom is his, the power is his, and he is the Governor, the Ruler and the Builder of his own kingdom. It cannot help being in power, because God has all power, both in heaven and in earth. There is no more power than all power, and the powers that be are ordained of God. He is above all, he rules over all, and what he doeth is forever. He saw all things, he knew all things, he was before all things, he created all things, and by him all things consist. He made a choice, and selected his own bride. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and then he will say, Here they are, those whom thou hast given to me. Thine are mine, and mine are thine. What is the kingdom of God? Behold, the king-

dom of God is within you. It is Christ in you the hope of glory, the work of God in the hearts of his children. I will write my law in their hearts and put it in their minds, and I will be to them a God and they shall be to me a people. I am King, and I work in you to do of my good pleasure. I gave my dear Son for you, to save you, and he is the Builder of my church, or my kingdom, as I showed my servant Daniel. In the days of these kings the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, and it shall stand forever. It is not left to other people, for this is God's kingdom, and it is for those for whom it is prepared, and it is not left to other people to do something, as we are often told they must, in order to receive it. O no, because this kingdom of God is not in word, and what they say about it is only in word, and not in power at all, because they say and do not; but God's kingdom is in power. He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast; he just writes his law in their hearts and puts it in their minds. He does his strange work, his mighty work, in them; he does terrible things, and his servants shall see his strange and mighty works, because the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him. Here is his kingdom within you. The fear of the Lord is within you, that ye shall not depart from him. His dwelling-place is within you. I will lead you by my Spirit, and I will cause you, O house of Israel, to walk in my statutes and my judgments; ye shall do them; and be it known unto you, O house of Israel, that I do not do this for your sakes, but for my own sake, even for my mercy's sake. So the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. I will bring the blind (and the blind are the subjects of this kingdom) by a way which they knew not, I will make rough places smooth unto them and crooked things straight; these are the things I will do for them, and not forsake them. Now read the eighteenth verse of this chapter: "Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you. But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power." Then comes my text: "For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." There are many to-day who are puffed up and say as those did then, that Paul did not come alone by the power of God, and what they do is only in word; they just say, but they do not, but Paul said, I will come if God will. See how he showed wherein his power was: it laid in the will of God; not in word, but in the power of God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will and none can hinder. Those who are puffed up do not know his mighty power in his children's hearts, and that they must obey his command, because the kingdom of God is in power, and not in word. The eternal God called Paul and chose him for to preach his power, and to testify of his kingdom, and to reprove the people of their words that the kingdom of God does not stand in these things, but in his everlasting power. He is the Savior of all them that do believe, he hath obtained eternal redemption for those who are the subjects of his kingdom. Where is the beginning of God's everlasting kingdom? His kingdom began before the foundation of the world. Who began the work of his kingdom? God himself. He first made choice of his subjects, then he sent his Son into the world to save, and set up his kingdom; he chose a certain part of the human race, and those whom he chose were in his Son before the foundation of

the world, and are the same people that Daniel spoke of when he said, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed;" and that kingdom should not be left to other people, but be given to that certain people who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began. So the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. He began the work, and he will finish his own work, and it is so strange that the world cannot behold it. We enter into it by the power of God. The kingdom of God is within you, and yet ye are in it, and here are the mysteries of the kingdom, which were given unto the disciples and unto God's children. This is strange and mighty, and it is God's work; for it shall be said that this man and that man were born in her—in Zion. This is the work of God, the power of God, the wisdom of God, this kingdom of God which is not in word, but in power. It is in you, it is round about you, and you are in it. His power is everywhere. David said, "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me." The word of man says, Ye are not dead, but have a spark of life. There is no truth in the words of man. Christ said of them, Ye are of your father the devil, and the works of him ye will do. He told the woman in the garden that she should not die, and his children are still following in his footsteps, saying unto the people that they are not dead, but that they have a spark of life within them, and all they have to do is to kindle it into a flame. All this is only in word, and not in power, because they are without strength, without power; and they know not what is right, because they set evil for good and good for evil. "Some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you. But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power. For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." The wicked go forth speaking lies as soon as they are born; the wicked shall do wickedly, and none shall understand; but my children shall understand, for unto you it is given, but unto them it is not given, and all they say or all they do is only in word, and not in power, and if the blind lead the blind they both shall fall into the ditch. "Ye must be born again." This is in power, and God is the only power.

Yours, JAMES W. LINN.

SUMAS, Wash., Jan. 17, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—"It is finished," said Christ, "and gave up the ghost." What was finished? His life's work here on earth was finished, and there was nothing left undone that should have been done of the work which he came to do; and we find by reading the Scriptures that his work was to seek and to save that which was lost. Now, to find out what was lost we must go to the root of the matter, and we find that by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. Now, this covenant was entered into between the Father and Son in the ancients of eternity, as we can see by reading Ephesians i. 3–5, which reads: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: accord-

ing as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." O how comforting it is to know that this is God's testimony, and not man's. What he has said, will he not do it? or is his arm shortened, that he cannot save, or fulfill his promises? Let us see. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me: and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." —John vi. 37–39, 44. The forty-seventh verse is the capsheaf that covers it all, and is the foundation of our hope, for he says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life," or eternal life. My dear brethren and sisters, do we believe on him? Is there a secret joy within which sometimes causes tears of joy to flow, when that something within us like a well of living water overflows, causing us to praise God with all our heart, soul and body? a love over which we have no control, nor do we wish to have, but wish it would flow on and on forever without ceasing. There is an overwhelming love for the children of God, no matter how poor or weak they are, and there is a feeling that we are the poorest in spirit and weakest in faith of any, even so weak that we fear we are not of his, yet we love him and wish we could praise him as we ought, but fear our praise is so contaminated with sin that it is not acceptable; and when he leaves us to ourselves, and we seek him, but cannot find him, do we mourn and sometimes weep because he tarries so long? If we do, there must be a reason. Is it not because we love him? For if we did not love him we would not want him near us. Were you ever sick nigh unto death and he came to you in the dark hours of night so close that you could feel his very presence, causing a great love to envelop your whole being and your tears of joy to flow, and you to forget your pain and suffering? Dear ones, do you know him? Sometimes I think I do, and can testify to his comforting presence when none but God is nigh, and when I am happy in him December is as pleasant as May. Do we believe on him that he finished the work of redemption, that every one for whom he died is saved with an everlasting salvation, without anything for us to do? and do we believe that Christ is coming again, and although our body may have lain for thousands of years in the tomb, it will by his power be raised an incorruptible body, like unto his glorious body, and that we shall see him as he is and be satisfied? Now, if we do believe on him there must be spiritual life dwelling in us, for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them; they are foolishness unto him, for they are spiritually discerned.

In conclusion, I will say that my mind has been a blank in spiritual things so long that I have been afraid to try to write for the SIGNS, and even now I would not have made the attempt, but wanted to send in my remittance to the paper, which comes to me regularly, laden with precious food to me, who am the least of all. DAVIS BURCH.

GREENWICH, N. Y., June 13, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed two dollars to pay for the dear SIGNS, which has been of much comfort to me for more than sixty years. I realize that half of the year has already passed, and feel to ask your pardon for my delay in remitting. It has been a great comfort to me for the last seven months, as I have been far from any of like precious faith, and have heard but one sermon in that length of time, but have had many precious sermons from the pens of ready writers which made me feel that my Father hath given me many tokens of his love. In looking over the way I have been led, I feel that he has been a present help in all he has called me to pass through. Many have been the bright spots along the way, and I can say, I know in whom I have trusted and believed. He will be with me to the end of my journey in this world, which I feel will be but a little while at the longest, as I have already passed my eighty-third birthday. What a long life, but how quickly passed, as a tale that is told, and how little of it has been passed to the praise of him who has been, as I hope, my Savior; but one comfort is, he knows me far better than I know myself.

I will close by again thanking you for sending my dear paper. Please continue sending it to the same address.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) P. S. KINNEY.

DELANSON, N. Y., June 23, 1919.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel I cannot do without the SIGNS while I can read, which may not be long, for I feel my race is nearly run, as I am nearly eighty-four years of age. The writers tell my mind better than I can, and it is all the preaching I have, and what my soul craves, if I know anything about it, as I hope I do. I have experienced that in my heart which is not of nature, I am persuaded, but feel poor, needy and ignorant, and need His loving and guiding hand every hour. His watchful and loving care has been over me from youth to old age, blessings without number are showered upon me, and what do I render to my God for all his benefits to me, unworthy of the least of his mercies, if indeed one of his children, the least of all? Underneath me are his everlasting arms that have sustained and supported me through all the vicissitudes and trials of this life, and my trust is in him who is able to save; to him be all the praise. It has been fifty years since he was revealed to me as my Savior, the One altogether lovely. I love his name, I love his cause and desire to live as a follower of the lowly Jesus' blessed name.

(MRS.) P. L. BILLINGS.

HYMN BOOKS READY.

WE now have a supply of the small cloth Hymn Books on hand, which we will mail post paid to any part of the United States or Canada for one dollar a copy. These books formerly sold for seventy-five cents per copy, but because of the big advance by the binders we are forced to charge one dollar each for them, whether sold singly or by the dozen.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

AS we now have to pay three and one-half times as much as we formerly did to have the "Feast of Fat Things" bound in cloth, we are forced to increase our price of the cloth bound book from fifty cents to seventy-five cents. We will for the present continue to supply the book in paper covers at the original price of twenty-five cents.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1920.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

RESURRECTION.

It seems necessary at this time that the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES reaffirm their faith and hope in the resurrection of the dead, as we see and hear from some quarters false statements and accusations of us regarding this subject. But of two things we assure our readers: we absolutely refuse to be drawn into unpleasant controversy on the subject, and to adopt the phraseology used by some in expressing themselves. Our objection to controversy is because the resurrection is a mystery known only to God, hence it is foolish for men to fight and try to kill each other about it. The prophets, when testifying concerning the coming of Jesus, did not understand how such things as they declared could be, nor did they know when those things should take place. (1 Peter i. 10–12.) That glory, or knowledge, was reserved for those who lived and now live in the gospel dispensation. So also the resurrection being glory beyond this life, all men must wait until it is experienced by them before they can understand how it shall be.

Our reason for refusing to use the language adopted by some of our brethren is because such language is unwarranted by the Scriptures. We cannot therefore consistently nor conscientiously use it in expressing our views of the resurrection. It does not seem enough to some for the editors of the SIGNS to constantly affirm their belief in the resurrection of the dead, but our false accusers want us to declare that we believe in the resurrection of a "natural" or "mortal body." This we now, once for all, refuse to do, let the result be what it may. Whatever the resurrection is, or shall be, it is entirely spiritual, nothing natural or mortal about it, if the Scriptures be true, and we believe they are, and shall stand unmovable by them, regardless of what any man since the apostles' day has said, does say or shall ever say. The "body is sown a natural body: it is raised a spiritual body." "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption." "It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory." These statements are by Paul, the servant of Jesus Christ by the will of God the Father. He makes the distinction very positive between the natural body and the spiritual, saying, "There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body." There is no connection, or relation, between the natural body and the spiritual body. There is no relationship between corruption and incorruption, nor is there likeness between dishonor and glory. While the editors of the SIGNS object to being told over and over again that the dead are raised natural, both in body and form, (which assertion cannot be sustained by the Scriptures) they make no fuss about it, never make the slightest reference to it, except when driven to do so by persecution and false accusations. We do not like to fight, but when there is no way out of it we can and shall, and our enemies may depend upon it. We do not propose to sit idle always and allow ourselves to be misrepresented and slandered to the sacrifice of ourselves and our subscribers, who love us and the SIGNS for the truth's

sake. We are glad to say to our readers that most of the hard and hateful things said of us are said by those who are either very friendly toward or editors of some other paper published in defence of the Old Baptist cause, so said. These are enemies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and would gladly sacrifice it and its editors in building up the publications with which they are associated. This is the underlying principle that is prompting much of the persecution of the SIGNS and its editors, and not that they care so much as to what the editors believe, preach or write. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES has lived longer than any medium of correspondence of its kind in this country. Many others, like gourds, have sprung up, as it were, in a night, and been cut down in about the same length of time. The chief reason we have for believing the Lord is with the SIGNS is that it stands and has ever stood all the assaults of its enemies. There are some at the present time who are connected with other Baptist papers, either as editors or often contributors, in different parts of the country, who have never stood for the declarations of the Black Rock Convention in 1832, nor have they stood with the "SIGNS Baptists," but are known as "Clark Baptists," who would now champion the doctrine advocated by Elder Gilbert Beebe on the resurrection of the dead, but they are quite silent on the doctrine of "absolute predestination of all things," "eternal vital unity of Christ and the church," "the new birth," &c., as Elder Gilbert Beebe believed, wrote and preached. Their leader, Elder John Clark, of Virginia, long since dead, and Elder Gilbert Beebe declared nonfellowship for each other because of differences of opinion on such points of doctrine long before some of these, now wise men, were born. Bars of nonfellowship were raised by these people many years ago against the Beebe or SIGNS Baptists. Because of the wide differences on doctrine not one of these men would be received, nor put up to preach, in what are call by them Beebe Baptist churches, anywhere from Virginia to Maine. How strange that they should persecute the editors of the SIGNS when they have no use for them nor for the principles of doctrine they advocate! One of these men, now located in California, wrote us last spring, asking if we subscribed to a certain editorial written by Elder Gilbert Beebe on the resurrection of the dead. We, in reply, asked him if he subscribed to the views of Elder Gilbert Beebe on "absolute predestination of all things," "eternal vital unity of Christ and the church," "the new birth," and so on, and remarked that when he answered us we would answer him. When he acknowledged our letter he said if we did not care to answer his question we need not do it, and that he was not alone in the desire to know, but he failed to make mention of our questions, much less to answer them by saying one thing or the other. He never has stood with the "SIGNS Baptists," though now, strange to say, is preaching for some of them. We wonder how long they will stand "Clark Baptist doctrine." We have no pleasure in writing such things, and have tried our best for several years to avoid it, but when pressed, repressed and trampled upon we have to defend ourselves, and shall endeavor to do so in such a way that there will be no mistake as to where we stand and what we believe.

Regarding the resurrection of the dead, all men should remember that it is but one point of doctrine, and if all who do not use Elder Gilbert Beebe's words in

presenting their view are heretics, let it be remembered that all who deny other fundamental principles of the doctrine advocated by him, and sustained by the word of God, are heretics also, hence why should one heretic denounce another? "Consistency, thou art a jewel." Why should men declare nonfellowship for each other because they cannot see and understand the unfathomable mystery? Another thing that should be remembered is that because a man preaches the resurrection of "the natural bodies of the saints," it is no reason that he should be regarded as being an overly sound Old School Baptist, because the rankest Arminians in the world believe it and preach it. If the resurrection is a literal thing, in other words, if a natural body is raised, then the Arminians are not dead in sins and to the doctrine of God, for they have sight to behold what Paul and John did not see, therefore must be regarded as the children of God with special revelation.

We, the editors of the SIGNS, object to the expressions, "this identical body" and "this mortal body" in speaking of the resurrection of the dead, and absolutely refuse to use them in expressing ourselves on this subject, for the reason that the Bible nowhere uses them when speaking of the body that shall be raised. The word "identical" means "the same, not different;" hence the resurrected body is not the identical body that is sown, because it is changed and raised spiritual. The word "mortal" means "subject to death, destined to die; as, man is mortal." Therefore the body after death is not mortal, for the reason the life that made it mortal, subject to death, has taken its flight. The definitions of the above words are not a fancy of the mind of a heretic, but that of authority on the English language. When Paul in Romans viii. 11, speaks of the Spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead quickening the mortal bodies of the saints, if so be that God dwells in them, he had in mind an experience in time, as it seems to us, more than the resurrection of the dead at some future time. None of us should forget his statement in chapter seven, verses eighteen to twenty-five inclusive. Here he speaks of the two men, inward and outward man; that he, according to the flesh, and with the flesh, served the law of sin, but with the mind (of Christ) he served the law of God. He longed to be delivered from the body of death, or, in other words, "the dead body because of sin." The body of Paul and the bodies of the Romans were then dead because of the sentence of death upon them, and the bodies of the saints now are no less dead for the same reason. When a man is condemned and sentenced to die by the law, in the eyes of the law he is already dead; so also the sentence of God's law being upon sinners, their bodies are dead (yet mortal) as Paul said, because of sin, condemnation and judgment of the law. But he said the Spirit is life because of righteousness, and by the Spirit those dead bodies should be quickened that they should serve God and rejoice, as Paul did from time to time, in the hope of the glory of God. David in his day realized the deadness and nothingness of the flesh, and asked the Lord to quicken him that he might be quickened and run after God.

It is because the editors of the SIGNS do not use the expressions, "identical body" and "this mortal body," as being raised, that we are accused of not believing in the resurrection of the dead. We do, however, believe most firmly and assuredly in the resurrection of the dead,

for without it there can be no salvation; but we much prefer the use of Bible language in expressing ourselves. Such language will stand all the assaults of our enemies. If some of them dared they would accuse Paul and John of being nonresurrectionists, inasmuch as they use the "identical" language we adopt. The resurrection was a mystery to Paul, and it is to the editors of the SIGNS. John saw and handled the resurrected body of Jesus, yet he said, It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is; not as when he saw and handled him. It has not appeared as yet to the editors of the SIGNS as to what we shall be, hence we must leave it to those to whom it has been revealed to tell the people how the dead are raised. Paul, however, stamped the man who would ask such a question as a "fool."

It has been, and still is, our desire to give our readers a clean sheet of unadulterated gospel, not one of strife, contention and bloodshed. The SIGNS is about the only paper of its kind in the United States to-day that is free from controversy, backbiting and murder. We desire to continue along the same lines of love, peace and unity. Truth always condemns error, and to contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints, means to continue in the doctrine, to be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, preach the truth, write the truth and stand pat on Bible language and proper definitions of language; and inasmuch as our Bible is written in the "English language," let us at all times give to the people what the language means, regardless of men's notions and ideas, let them be what they may. K.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, it has pleased divine Providence to remove by death **Elder A. B. Francis,** for thirty-one years a supply and pastor of this church, and for twelve years the president of our board of trustees; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that while we bow in submission to the divine will, we mourn the loss of one whose devotion to this church and whose wise counsel will be sadly missed.

RESOLVED, that this resolution be entered on our minutes, and a copy sent to the family of our dear pastor and fellow-worker, and to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Done by order of the London Tract Church at her church meeting June 26th, 1920.

M. B. GALLOWAY, Church Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder A. B. Francis was born in Fauquier County, Va., May 14th, 1842, and died April 17th, 1920, making his stay on earth 77 years, 11 months and 3 days. He grew to manhood and was drafted and served his State during the Civil War as a soldier. During the time of the war he professed a hope in Christ and united with the Upper Broad Run Church, being baptized by the pastor, Elder R. C. Leachman, about the year 1864, after which such a great love for the service and worship of God was manifested in his heart that he would often speak to his soldier companions of his feelings. In a short time he was licensed to exercise in a public way the gift his brethren felt God had committed to him, and he was ordained to the full functions of the gospel ministry the third Sunday in August, 1868. He served different churches as a minister, and was either pastor or supply, always doing his duty faithfully, preaching the truth without the fear or favor of men. The churches of his last charge were served by him for thirty-one years and eight months, and the high esteem in which he was held was manifested the day of his interment, the brethren, sisters and friends coming from far and near, together with the large floral tribute which decorated his casket, principally the flowers of his choice. Thus ended the long and useful life of a man who was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. The doctrine he preached was salvation by grace, the foreordination, predestination and election of God and the full redemption of all for whom Christ died. He proclaimed the full redemption of the sinner, embracing soul, body and spirit, in that glorification of the saints. His life was one above reproach, as to morals and uprightness. He was twice married, his first marriage being to Miss Laura P. Middleton, of Loudoun County, Va., August, 1870. To that union were born eight

children, five of whom survive their father, the other three and their mother preceding him. Mrs. Franci died Sept. 15th, 1897, and in January, 1899, he was married to Miss Fannie Cole, of Black Rock, Md., and to that union was born one son, Lewis Francis, who, together with sister Francis and the five children by the first marriage, survives to mourn, with the brethren and sisters of the churches he served and all who knew him best. Much more could be written to his memory, but to be brief I will close by saying to all younger ministers, May we desire to thus walk and talk, that we shall be regarded faithful in the gospel of Christ our Savior.

C. W. VAUGHN.

M. B. F. Jones, of Decatur, Texas, departed this life July 8th, 1920, at the age of 75 years, 4 months and 23 days. He united with the Primitive Baptists in early life, and was baptized by Elder Potter, of Perry County, Ill., his membership being with the old Nine Mile Church. Later on he moved to Texas, and united with the Primitive Baptists at Garretts Creek Church, in Wise County, known as the Predestinarian Baptist Church of Christ. He was a lovely brother, always esteemed others better than himself, and as a believer in the doctrine of predestination and salvation by grace there were few his equal. His greatest delight was in hearing and talking of God's loving and tender mercy to poor sinners. His house was a home for the Baptists, and nothing that he possessed was too good for them. He was an exceptional father, and as a citizen of his country there was none better. It was the pleasure of the writer to know him many years, and to know him was to love him. He was an old writer for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He was able in the Scriptures, and his articles were read by many of the saints with much comfort and pleasure. We mourn our loss; we have lost an able defender of the truth, but we should sorrow not as others which have no hope. We pray God's loving and tender mercy upon his children. May it please our heavenly Father to remember them in this hour of deep mourning, and comfort and keep them as he did their father.

A. M. McDONALD.

George E. Mills departed this life June 1st, 1920, aged 69 years, 7 months and 11 days. He was the son of Bradley and Rebecca Mills, of Marion County, Ill. He was united in marriage to Nancy E. Alvis April 22nd, 1875. To that union were born nine children, one dying in infancy. Curtis B., George Edker, Jr., Tyra A., Cloyd, William Norman, Hattie Ethel, Clarence Arthur and Nettie Orra, with the devoted wife and mother, a sister, Mrs. Elizabeth J. Atteberry, of Marshall, Mich., and one brother, W. J. Moore, of Dahlgren, Ill., survive to mourn their irreparable loss. He was an affectionate husband and father, an honest, upright citizen, and much loved and respected by all who knew him. Father obtained a hope in Christ at the age of twenty-seven years. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone, and was a member of Little Flock Primitive Baptist Church of Wayne County, Ill., at which place he heard such able ministers as Elders Joe Dobbs, Lemuel Potter, B. F. Querry and others. He very much enjoyed the fellowship of his beloved brethren and sisters in Christ, and faithfully attended the Regular Baptist associations within his reach. He was a constant student of the Bible, which he firmly believed. He was a reader of the SIGNS for forty years, and it was his favorite paper. Father had been a sufferer for nearly a year, yet complained but little, and was perfectly conscious until the end. He told his family a few days before death came that he was perfectly resigned to his condition, and wished only to go home.

The funeral was conducted at the home by Elder George W. Inyart, of Olney, Ill., who spoke on the resurrection of the body. His words were indeed comforting to the bereaved. Brother Inyart was a much esteemed personal friend of the deceased, and one whom father regarded as eminently worthy of his calling. The body was laid to rest in the family burying-ground June 2nd. Father will be greatly missed by us all, but we desire to be submissive to God's will, feeling that our loss is his eternal gain.

His son, CURTIS B. MILLS.

Catherine Dooley was born October 4th, 1879, and died January 29th, 1920. She was the daughter of brother and sister G. A. Dean, of Stephens County, Texas. This dear sister Dooley was a very lovely, mild and timid woman. She was baptized by Elder S. N. Stephens during the session of Mount Zion Association here at my home church several years ago. She often expressed a feeling of unworthiness to be counted among the saints of God. She was greatly loved and respected by all her neighbors and acquaintances, and probably there never was a woman more confided in as a true christian than Catherine Dooley. She leaves a husband and several children to mourn her departure. We believe that her purified spirit is at rest with God, while the body is sleeping in the grave; yet also we believe that the body will be brought forth in that great reunion morning in the image of Jesus. She was a member of Shiloh Church, in Stephens County, to which I preach in my weakness, and it is with sadness that we give her up. She was living at Gerrard, Texas, when she passed away.

J. H. FISHER.

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, Elder J. M. Fenton will preach at Justus, Pa., my home church, Sunday, August 8th, at 11 o'clock a. m.

D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

W. E. Blue, N. Y., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

THE twenty-fifth annual session of the New Harmony Association of the Regular Predestinarian Baptist faith and order, will be held with the Macedonia Church, seven miles southwest of Rising Star, Eastland County, Texas, commencing on Friday before and embracing the second Sunday in August. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend. Those coming by rail will please notify J. I. Foster, Rising Star, Texas, at which point conveyances will meet train on Thursday evening before.

J. C. KILGORE, Moderator.
W. G. GREEN, Clerk.

THE Siloam Association of Predestinarian Baptists will be held with Sulphur Creek Church, near Riffe, Wash., beginning Friday, August 6th, 1920, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continuing the two following days. All lovers of the truth are invited. Those coming via Morton will be met Thursday p. m. with conveyance. Those coming via Chehalis take auto stage leaving Chehalis 7:30 a. m. and 2 p. m., arriving at Riffe 1 and 5 p. m. For further particulars write me.

ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk.
RIFFE, Wash.

THE Old School Predestinarian or Primitive Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, on Friday before the third Sunday in August with Elm Ridge Church, at Elmo, Texas, on the Texas and Pacific R. R., seven miles east of Terrel, Texas. The church-house is about three hundred yards southeast of the depot. All God-fearing people are invited, especially ministers of our faith and order.

S. M. DICKENS.

THE Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet in her sixty-sixth annual session with Providence Church, about five miles northwest of Plano, Appanoose Co., Iowa, on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1920, and continue the two following days. Those coming by rail will be met at Plano, on the Burling R. R., on Wednesday.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator, Stahl, Mo.
J. M. CATE, Clerk.

THE sixty-first annual session of the Trinity River Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association will meet with Salem Church, at Godley, Johnson Co., Texas, beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1920, and continuing three days. All lovers of the truth, and especially ministers of our faith and order, are invited to attend.

W. W. COCHRAN, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Second Church of Roxbury, at Roxbury, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, September 15th and 16th, 1920. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. Trains will be met Tuesday night and Wednesday morning at Roxbury and Halcottville.

MARIETTA MEAD, Church Clerk.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

MYSTERY.

"BEHOLD, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed."—1 Cor. xv. 51.

The subject of this sentence is preceded by the word "behold," calling special attention to the important fact of a mystery yet in the future, which he is able to show by words setting forth two conditions of the saints in future ages, or in a certain age, which age has never been revealed to men; "even angels have desired to look into." This mystery is shown by the words of the apostle, which tell us of the things that shall come to pass, yet the mystery remains unexplained, and shall forever be a mystery unto mortals, for this is one of "the secret things [which] belong unto the Lord our God."—Deut. xxix. 29. The words of Paul on this subject do not explain the mystery; he does not tell us why the Lord makes such a vast distinction between saints, that some are to be highly favored, while others are very much less favored. This looks like a "choosing by the Lord," an election within election. As all are elected to eternal life, some of these are elected to "remain" on the earth, and are the real "salt of the earth," keepers of the earth, in the last dispensation given unto the children of men on earth; but these keepers, or "salt" of the earth, have the "one likeness" of the others that have preceded them, and they are "as if a wheel had been in the midst of a wheel," for they are the very elect who hold on their way, that shall not be deceived by the power of men and devils. It seems plain that there is no doubt in the mind of Paul about these that shall not sleep as being specially elected to "remain unto the coming of the Lord," and the fact of their being alive in the flesh "shall not prevent them which are asleep" from rising to immortality. I feel sure that Paul was speaking to believers and of believers, for they all have "one likeness" and are of the same family. He stands solidly on this ground, and no argument is able to move his words from this line of thought. He uses the pronoun "we," meaning all saints, himself included. "We shall not all sleep." He speaks of that sleep to be in the future, and he does mean nothing else, only the death of the bodies of the saints. Some places in his writings he has softened the word "death" by using the word "sleep," in connection with the

death of Lazarus, telling the disciples that Lazarus "sleepeth;" and when his disciples understood him not he plainly told them that he was dead. Nowhere do the holy writers speak of the death of the wicked as a sleep, but many times it is recorded of the saints as falling asleep and sleeping, which shows the condition of the "dead in Christ." Let me ask myself, What is this mystery of the text? Can I answer it? No, I cannot tell it, but I may use Paul's words, which show the conditions surrounding the saints "at the last time." They are, that we shall not all sleep; that is, we shall not all die a mortal death. Not all the saints are going to die. This of itself is a mystery to every mortal that has been quickened by the Spirit of God. We all are taught by Scripture, and know also by observation, that every descendant of Adam has the seeds of death in his body. Our ancestors have all died except Enoch and Elijah, but we now have the words of Paul, who says, "We shall not all sleep" (die). Something out of the ordinary is going to take place, and this is a mystery. This makes it look to me that some of the saints are going to be more highly favored than a great majority of other saints. Many thousands of saints, yea, millions, have died (are sleeping) through the ages that have passed. These all fell asleep in Jesus; "these all died in faith, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth," and rested in "the hope and resurrection of the dead;" they hoped for "a change," a glorious change. Holy men in the centuries that have passed looked for this change to come, a most wonderful change that shall bring them into the glory world. It is glorification, the last and crowning work of the great Redeemer of men. These all knew that a certain sleep must fall over them, and that they had no power to prevent it nor any power to waken out of that sleep, but realized that the seal of God had been placed in their consciences, which they believed shall hold them secure "until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." This is "the faith of God's elect." No faith or belief can be like it: to believe that God shall change "dust" into "glory;" change mortal bodies into immortal bodies. Natural minds cannot comprehend nor believe anything like this, but faith can, and those who have the faith of God's elect rest in the sure mercies of David and sleep sweetly in the embrace of Jesus until the "appointed time of the Father." It is mysterious that God should decree that some of his saints, who are no better by nature or practice than others of his children, should be spared the pains and pangs of death, to live a natural life and never sleep at all, while their fathers shall sleep for thousands of years, some for hundreds, some for tens and some for a few years only, and perhaps some for a few days only; for until his coming the world keeps on its natural course the same as in the days of Noah. It is God's way to come suddenly upon the children of men; however, there is going to be a rich display of his mercy and grace to mortals, who carry the seeds of death in their flesh, that they shall not taste death nor see corruption. This is the mystery: elected to the end of time, while millions are sleeping. I have no doubt in my mind about that sleep as being anything except a peaceful rest in the Lord. Time as a weary waiting shall not be marked on our minds, consciences, souls or spirits—whatever it is that exists after our bodies die. There is "a set time," set by the Father, and it is not for men or angels to

know when it shall come to pass. Among the last words of Jesus after his resurrection is a positive assertion to his disciples: "It is not given for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power."—Acts i. 7. This "set time" shall come exactly in the order that all things do, as this was as well known before the world began as anything else, and it is by God's decree. It is a mystery to us that some of the saints shall not sleep, while so many shall sleep, but this is according to the arrangement of the Lord, and I believe it is by his decree that a "remnant" shall remain unto his coming. Are these the very elect? Happy are the few who remain until His coming, until the "last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Those who are specially blessed shall not realize that they were specially elected to not see death until the day is dawned upon them. Grace shall make them faithful to watch and pray for his coming, also it makes them "ready to be revealed in the last time." We cannot go beyond what the Scriptures teach, but we may consistently use Scripture that is left for us on this subject and do no violence to the written word. I have no disposition to make all Scripture have a spiritual interpretation, as some seem to try to do. I feel sure that I have only one "if" in regard to this subject, and that "if" is, if the Scriptures be true, there is a set time for Christ's coming, and he is sure to come, else Paul would not have said, "We shall not all sleep" (die). Saints from old have lived as if they were "waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." "Christ the first fruits: ["of them that slept"] afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." Again, "And to wait for his Son from heaven;" and, "At the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints;" and, "We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord;" and, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: [before the living are changed] then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." These words are to be words of comfort, they belong to the gospel of Christ, so the apostle continues, "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Peter bears testimony of that day by saying, "Which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." It does not seem necessary to refer to any more Scripture for proof of Christ's coming, because the proofs submitted are clear, without a cloud of doubt in the teaching of the apostles, for the saints shall not receive their full inheritance until that day comes, which is, "That in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him."—Eph. i. 10.

As ever, firmly in hope that I shall hear the "last trump," and "my eyes shall behold, and not another," to "see him as he is, at his appearing and his kingdom," for I am now looking for "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ."—Titus ii. 13.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

EUGENE, Oregon, July 20, 1920.

HEBREWS VII. 4.

"Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils."

DEAR EDITORS:—I am thinking of some few features in the above text; they have been lingering in my mind for several weeks, but I did not get full consent of my mind until this evening (July 8th) to express a few of the many thoughts and send them to you to publish in the SIGNS, if you should judge them worthy. Of course, owing to my age (eighty-four), shortness of sight in the Scriptures and spiritual things, no one can expect much from me, neither in matter nor manner, for I am poor and imperfect, so that I cannot do the things which I would or the things I wish to do, but have had a mind for some time to write at least one more article for the dear old family (the family of God) paper, but having so many and such great fears that I was being actuated by the flesh, I have put it off until now, and even now I have doubts attending me; for it is with me a matter of great seriousness to presume to unfold the Scriptures, or to speak or write of their blessed truth and sacredness. Notwithstanding all these things, I hope the Lord in his wonderful mercy will give me light and liberty to write a few thoughts of this great man Melchisedec in harmony with the teaching of the Scriptures of eternal truth, for I have heard so many different views of this great man whom we are told to consider, with which views I shall not aim to interfere, but just simply suggest some of my own of this typical man Melchisedec, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, and without all contradiction the lesser is blessed the greater. We will first consider this great man as a man, but shall not attempt to trace his ancestry, yet want to consider him in his typical character, and will say that I hope to prayerfully consider that Melchisedec is the type of which Christ is the antitype. Well might we say, What a wonderful type, a type of Christ. It is said of this great man, this wonderful type, that he was without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually. (Verse 3.) "Not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life."—Verse 16. I cannot believe for one moment that this Scripture means this typical man, Melchisedec, had no earthly father, mother, descent, &c., but that he had no priestly father, priestly mother, no priestly descent, no beginning of priestly days nor end of priestly life, according to the law regulating the priesthood, but had an earthly father, mother, descent, beginning of days and end of life the same as we have. The sixth verse of this seventh chapter is the key to this point of the subject: "But he whose descent is not counted from them [that is, from the Levitical priests and priesthood, verse 5,] received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises." This wonderful and great man Melchisedec was a bright and shining type of the Lord Jesus Christ, our dear Redeemer, the High Priest of our profession, who by one offering, when he offered himself without spot unto God, perfected forever them that are sanctified, or set apart (Heb. x. 14,) unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, (1 Peter i. 2,) but was not a priest after the order of Aaron, therefore had no priestly father, mother, descent, &c., neither did he ever officiate as a priest,

except that one time, in which he offered himself without spot unto God.

Now, as I have briefly suggested some thoughts of this great typical man, who was great in very deed, yet a type or shadow, therefore I want to speak a few things of the superiority of the antitype, Christ, over the type, Melchisedec. Christ, according to the covenant of eternal redemption, was our Surety and covenant Head, and thereby stood good for, or rather bound in covenant obligations for all the Father's family's dealings, and in this relation was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame and a Father to the poor; in fact, he was the everything that any or all of the elect family did or could need, both for time and eternity, and did amply satisfy every jot and tittle that the law required or justice demanded for the transgression of all Israel. Well might it be and is said in the Scriptures, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who [none] is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord?" Dear brethren and readers of the wonderful medium of our long and lasting correspondence, there is no people in existence like the Israel of God, a people saved by the Lord; therefore they are without fault before the throne of God, but poor, helpless sinners while on time's side of eternity; that is, in our Adamic nature.

Yours unworthily,

W. J. MAY.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., July 6, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter from brother Gilbert McColl. It was so great a comfort to me that I want to share it with the readers of our family paper.

Yours in a precious hope,

MILDRED DURAND GORDY.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, June 7, 1920.

DEAR MILDRED:—Your letter reached me to-day, and I will try and answer briefly to-night, or at least start a letter to you. Charity is the first and all-important gift, without which all other gifts are unprofitable, and it is not so much in evidence as I would like to see it among the brethren. It is not necessary that all should see eye to eye in every point of doctrine or order. No man has a full and complete knowledge of all things pertaining to Jesus Christ, and if one thinks he has full understanding he knows nothing yet as he ought to know it. I would not have any man violate his own conscience in order to agree with my views, nor do I feel that I have the right to force my opinions on another in violence to his own conscience before God. If I speak of the things of Jesus I desire to speak to his honor, and I am not ready to compromise the truth to please anybody; but though I may be sure and zealous after my own belief, and endeavor to point out what I feel to be true, it is not to injure or destroy my brother. I have good reason to know I may be wrong, and when I am wrong I will be the most emphatic. We often learn much from a gentle answer. I recall a letter I wrote your father when I was much wrought upon over certain questions, and his mild, kindly answer, confessing that he might be wrong, yet telling what he believed to be right and true. Such a spirit is the most effective in turning a brother from error and in establishing the truth in love. I have never felt angry at a sincere rebuke, given in love, but rather humbled and ashamed of my own hasty action. How often a spirit of bitterness creeps into the church, and it is the cause of most of the trials the church has to pass through. I

do not feel inclined to judge our brethren one way or the other on hearsay evidence. False witness may be borne on both sides. Our personal likes and dislikes are a big factor. I am sure of one thing, however, and that is, if our hearts and minds are fixed on the Lord Jesus there will be less room for faultfinding among ourselves. Doctrine should be sound, the testimony of Jesus Christ as recorded in the Scriptures of truth and written in the fleshly tables of our hearts. We should be careful to observe the order he has directed us in, remembering that the root of the commandment new and old is to love God, and our brother as ourself. You cannot love and hate at the same time. I often think we (remember I include myself in all these things) do not take our religion seriously enough. We neglect prayer and thanksgiving in a most shameful way. We do not give enough time to assembling ourselves for worship, to reading and meditation, to the works of love and righteousness. The knowledge of God's eternal power and purposes, of his unchanging love, of the sufficiency of his work of salvation in Jesus Christ, is not a reason to forego prayer, but is the very reason for prayer. The knowledge that the blood of Christ cleanses us from all sin is no reason for carelessness or license, but is a great reason for holiness of walk and desire. Antinomianism is not to be tolerated by a christian, for it is dishonoring to the Lord, who bought us with a price. There is too much neglect among us of sound doctrine in our walk and conversation. The Scriptures are full of warning and admonition on these points. Perhaps I am falling away myself from the truth. I have had some sweet evidences of God's mercy, and would bless him for his goodness to me. When Annie was sick every one was hopeless of her recovery, yet I had such a feeling of assurance in prayer that I had to speak of it at Reed's. I could but feel that all was well, though my reason doubted and denied the possibility of what I felt. It was another occasion that I have proved that He would not cause me to seek his face in vain. I kept thinking of the words, "Be not faithless, but believing." I see a wider horizon at times than I have in the past; a universe filled with God's love and mercy. I find myself a poor sinner, weak and dependent on him for everything, but I also see him a glorious God and Savior, and in this I rejoice. I want to praise and bless him forever, but know without the Spirit's guidance I can do nothing but evil.

With love, in gospel fellowhip your brother, GILBERT McCOLL.

HOPEWELL, N. J., July 4, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have said within myself, I will never write a letter for publication again, but somehow I am starting to write, and do not know whether it will be finished. I have in mind a people who, I believe, are God's own people, called by grace, a peculiar people, chosen in Christ. Some time ago I opened to this Scripture, which you will find in Luke ix. 62: "And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." At that time I thought I could probably write something about this Scripture, and the Bible laid open upon my desk for some time, but at last I closed it. The brethren, and also ministers and myself, are continually looking back, more so to-day than did those forty years ago. Is not this so? It seems so to me. I have read of the old members years back going through thick and

stormy trials in all kinds of weather. This kingdom is not far above our heads; Jesus is speaking of the kingdom within us. Now I will leave this for you to think upon and go to another portion of Scripture found in Song of Solomon i. 8, 9: "If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents. I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots." This text also was in view upon my desk, and I would read it over and over, and think I would like to have one of the editors of the SIGNS write upon it, it would make no difference which. If I should say one of the readers, probably one would wait for the other. The Old School Baptists are of an inquiring mind, are continually wanting to know the way, and also those not in the church, but all of the church, whether baptized or not, are a chosen people. It is good to see them following in the footsteps of the flock. Now I will go back to Genesis iii. 19. This, too, has been before me to-day, and I have been studying it and pondering it over in my heart: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground: for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." I have thought upon this Scripture often during the past week, and it seems a blank to me. I know what it is to earn bread naturally by the sweat of the brow, but it seems here to be setting forth something spiritual. We, in nature, want to do something that is forbidden. We ask, Why did not God make man different, to be at all times upright, reaching out for good and not evil? But that is the mysterious way of God. God's thoughts are far from man's thoughts. In our experience we eat our spiritual bread. Some one will say, How is this? Dear child, have you not been cast down, troubled in all points, almost felt lost, at the point of giving up, but could not give up, for God kept you? You have eaten of the forbidden fruit, and through trials and tribulation you are forgiven. If at all times we walked right and did right then it would not be necessary to be in the Scriptures, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." This is a command from God, our loving Father, to his children. Through love we obey, not of ourselves, but it is worked in us by his power. What is natural man in his best estate? Nothing but dust, and he returns to the dust from whence he was taken. Man in nature wants to cover himself and hide his sin from God, but what a poor covering is a fig leaf; nothing can be hidden from God. We are of the earth, earthy, and have two natures, one of earth, the other of the Lord from heaven; so this makes the warfare, the one against the other. This at times gives me some comfort, to know a great battle is being fought within me. I believe every child of God has this trouble, and will ask, "Am I his, or am I not?"

I have only hinted at these things, they are too deep for me, I cannot reach the depth. As I have been writing I have thought it a shame to waste so much paper to try to express my thoughts, but God's will be done.

I will close and leave this with the brethren. Love and fellowship to you all, and may there be some word for those who have asked me to write for the SIGNS. I hope I am a brother; it is sweet to be in the fellowship of the brethren.

GEORGE M. CONNER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1920.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

RESURRECTION.

DESIRING to follow brother Ker on the subject of the resurrection, that our readers may see and know that we stand together, have decided to republish the following article, which was first published October 1st, 1915. The views therein set forth are what we believed then, and what we believe now, and we doubt if we could make ourself clearer should we attempt to write an article now on the subject. Brother Ker and ourself have long been persecuted and ridiculed by some who differ with us, in expression at least, if nothing more, but we have borne it in silence. Now, however, we feel that we must defend ourselves, and the many subscribers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES who agree with us, that the Bible declares plainly and positively that "the body sown natural" "is raised spiritual," that "mortality is swallowed up of life," and that "he who hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God." We have so affirmed always, and shall continue to affirm exactly what the Bible says about the resurrection, and leave it to our brethren generally to decide whether the Bible is right, or the views of a few men of this day who seem to have set themselves up as judges in Israel. We are willing to, and verily shall, take the word of God as the man of our counsel, let others do and say what they may. L.

"The faith of God's elect viewing the resurrection, as described by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians xv., your views in connection therewith, on a better resurrection, as in Hebrews xi. 35, and the first resurrection as in Revelation xx. 5, 6, are solicited through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

A brother who lives in Texas sends the above request to us. This is not the first request of this nature we have had, but have deferred complying with any of them until we felt more at liberty to write upon this subject of the resurrection. The brethren, we feel, have a right to such views as we have upon any subject, and such views as we have we hope we are willing to share with the brethren. If any one has sent us a request for views upon any subject with which we have not complied, it is because we have no views to give them. It is not worth while for us to try to write about something that we know nothing about. As to the resurrection, it is a most glorious subject, and one that we love to think and to talk about, always to edification, never for the sake of argument or controversy. As to our having any cast-iron, unbending opinions or views to lay down upon this subject for the consideration of our readers, we have none. It is comforting to walk round about this glorious truth of the resurrection and to survey it in its various aspects, but to plunge into the depths of it and to fathom its mysteries, no mortal ever has done it, nor ever will this side of eternity. So much of the resurrection as we have already experienced, we are thereof a witness and are free to talk about; so much of it as is yet beyond our present experience we know nothing, except as it is set forth in the Bible. Right here we want to say that we positively do believe all that the Bible says

upon the subject of the resurrection, but we do not claim to understand it all, nor to be able to explain it all. In speaking or writing of this matter we have wanted to adhere closely to the Scriptures and the scriptural manner of expression. One of the things about Old School Baptists that first drew us to them in our early experience, was that we saw they were the people that adhered strictly to the Scriptures in all matters of doctrine, faith and practice. Thus it has always been our desire to reject anything in the way of doctrine that did not have a "thus saith the Lord" for it. When we endeavor to clothe scriptural truths in phraseology of our own, we very often change the import of a text by using our own modes of expression instead of quoting the exact Scripture language. This often leads to confusion in the minds of the hearers as to just what this or that preacher means upon any given subject. We would like our readers to know just how we feel about this matter of the resurrection, and shall try to be clear in our expression, but if any one reads this expecting to have the "mystery" solved for them, they will be disappointed before they read very far. We deem it is a mistake to think that nothing is known of the resurrection until after we pass out of this life, that it begins simply with the ending of mortality. If we know nothing of heaven while here in the flesh, what assurance or hope have we that we shall ever hereafter know anything about it? Upon what is our hope based if not upon the earnest of the Spirit, that earnest which the Spirit brings to the subjects of grace of that inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, reserved for the elect of God? It is a heaven below the Redeemer to know, and when the knowledge of Christ and his salvation is revealed to our faith it is a foretaste of glory. It is then that heaven comes down our souls to greet. These revelations which God brings by the Spirit unto his people, afford the basis of their hope. Therefore it seems to us that the hope of heaven is based upon heaven itself, the hope of the resurrection is based upon the resurrection itself. Jesus says, I am the resurrection and the life. This being so, then every manifestation of Jesus in the lives of his people is a manifestation of "the power of the resurrection," and just as we can never know all about Jesus until we see him face to face, without a veil between, just so we shall never know the fullness of the resurrection until then. The life that we now live in the flesh, we live by the faith of the Son of God. This life of the christian being the manifestation of the life of Jesus in his mortal body, then it must follow that God's people, even while in this world, live the life of the resurrection. "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." With what did he quicken them? He quickened them by the Spirit and with the life of Christ. This quickening of the Spirit is the entrance of eternal life. Is not this eternal life the very life of Christ, and is not Christ the resurrection? Then that which quickens those who were dead in sin is the power of the resurrection. If we may be permitted to speak of such things having a beginning, we would say that the resurrection life begins with each individual subject of grace the very moment he is quickened by the Spirit, and from that moment it continues on and on and on through all the travel of the believer, until it is consummated, or shall be consummated, in the full revelation of the infinite glory of God beyond the bounds of mortality. Belief itself is a manifestation of the power of the resur-

rection. Does not Paul say we believe according to the working of the mighty power which raised Christ from the dead? (See Ephesians i. 19, 20.) Thus, it takes the same power to make one a believer that it took to raise Christ from the dead. Is not, then, belief an effect of the resurrection power? What did God do with those whom he quickened from the death in sin? He raised them up together and made them sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Are not these heavenly places all the privileges and the blessings of the gospel covenant? It seems so to us. Then to enjoy the gospel in any sense whatever, and to whatever extent, there must be a raising of the subject up from death in sin and from under the curse and dominion of the law of sin, and what is this raising up but a further manifestation of "the first resurrection?" The more we think about this matter the more we feel the impossibility of setting bounds to the resurrection, and saying it begins here and ends there, it includes this or does not include that. The whole life of the believer as a believer and as a manifest child of God is based upon the fact that Christ is risen from the dead, and not only risen himself, but came forth bringing his sheaves with him; that is, all that the Father gave unto him before the foundation of the world. The head did not rise without the body, but both the head and the body, so Christ rose from the dead with all his church. "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." Had Christ not risen from the dead there never could have been the gospel, the church, faith, hope, love, prayer or praise. All these things have their roots in "the first resurrection," and the very resurrection life maintains them. Peter never could, at the day of Pentecost, or any other time, have interpreted Joel's prophecy and the Psalms of David had he not been partaker of the life of the resurrection. Read the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, and the list there given of all the trials of the people of God. These things they never could have endured except they had that victory that overcometh death. This victory Jesus is, so by faith in him they counted not their lives dear unto themselves. It seems that here must have been a sense, at least, in which mortality was swallowed up of life, since they lost their interest in their mortal lives through the measure of the Christlife given unto them. We have derived great comfort in cloudy days from being able to think that even now Christ is with and within his people, and that having Christ in them, they are already the "children of the resurrection." But we must not lose sight of the fact that there is a future aspect of the resurrection. As regards this futurity of the resurrection we must let the Scriptures bear witness. God has left on record by the pen of inspiration such information concerning what is yet ahead of us as he deemed necessary for us to know, and what God has not disclosed in his written word regarding this matter it is not worth while theorizing or speculating about. We can now know no more about it than the Scriptures declare. "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool! that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. All flesh is not the

same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." Note how all through this language the Spirit is all the time distinguishing between the earthly and the heavenly, the natural and the spiritual. Never are the two confused or mingled, but always kept separate and distinct. The same "it" that is sown a natural body is raised a spiritual body. Then in the forty-fifth verse we are told what these two bodies are: "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." "The first man is of the earth, earthy [the natural body]: the second man is the Lord from heaven [the spiritual body]." "And as we have borne the image of the earthy [the first man Adam], we shall also bear the image of the heavenly [the Lord Jesus Christ]." The same "we" that bear the first earthy image shall bear the second heavenly image, but there are two distinct images. "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." No need to cavil over these words, for nothing could be more distinct than the separation made by the Spirit in this fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians between flesh and Spirit. Now comes the mystery which no man on earth can ever explain: "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed," &c. All of this language we do most certainly believe with all our heart, but as Paul did not go on and explain it, neither can we. John says, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." What more can we wish to know than this: that we shall be satisfied, when we awake, with His likeness? Whatever it takes to make up that complete and infinite satisfaction we are assured God will give us. But as to what that spiritual body is, how it looks, how it is made, who knows? We do not, and we do not care for any one to try to tell us. Why try to pry into that which God has not seen fit to disclose? The time is coming when we shall know as we are known and see as we are seen, when that which is in part shall be done away and we shall see face to face. Until then, let us wait. "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Very often brethren in quoting this, say "vile bodies," instead of "vile body." We do not know why they persist in doing this, for the Spirit doubtless used the right word in saying "body" instead of "bodies." "Our vile body," signifying many members, but all one body. Something like it it occurs in Ephesians iv. 13: "Till we

all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Notice that the "all," meaning many, are to be conformed to the one end: the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, the perfect man. Nothing is said about their ever becoming perfect men or perfect women, but coming unto the "perfect man." This agrees with Romans viii. 29: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." Here, again, the all or many are to be brought forth in the one image. Again, in Romans viii. 23, we have: "Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Here it is also "our body," not "our bodies," as is so often quoted. It sets forth the many in one, the many members of the one body. As to the "better resurrection" in Hebrews xi. 35, the connection is, "And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection." To be delivered from torture meant that they would have to die again at some later time, and they preferred to have it all over with at once in hope of that "better" or real resurrection in all its fullness which can never be broken. Lazarus was raised from the dead, but he was simply brought back to natural life, and had to die again at some later day, therefore his resurrection was not unto eternity, and was not spiritual. The "better" resurrection is the resurrection of the spiritual body which Paul talks about in Corinthians, which is unto eternal glory, and which death can never end. Thus these martyrs for the faith described in Hebrews xi. 35, who were delivered over to be put to death for the truth's sake, did not wish to be delivered from that torture at the hands of men, and thus receive a temporary resurrection, but preferred to depart and be with Christ, which is far "better." As to the "first resurrection" in Rev. xx. 6, this reads, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." Christ was the firstborn from the dead, the first to rise from the dead to die no more. The resurrection of Christ is, therefore, the first resurrection. Those who have part in this resurrection are those who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and for whom he died and rose from the dead. These are risen with Christ and cannot die any more, because he has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Those for whom Christ died cannot die, they have everlasting life. The second death, the death of the mortal body, has no power over them, for while their mortal bodies do die and return to dust, the spirit, or life, cannot die. He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die, but hath everlasting life. When the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, they shall be clothed upon with that building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Two different houses, but the same child of God that now lives in this earthly house shall also dwell in that other house not made with hands, the building of God. "But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him."—Matt. xxii. 31, 32. Thus we see that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, while dead to us as men, are living unto God, and are not really dead at all. All God's people are just this way: none of them die. Christ having risen from the dead, and they being partakers of this "first resurrection," the second, or corporeal death, can have no power over them. L.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in August (29th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder John L. Scott died at his home, 125 West Adams St., Springfield, Ill., June 9th, 1920, aged 55 years. He was the son of the late Francis M. and Mary Scott, of Pleasant Plains, Ill. The parents passed away some years ago. The subject of this sketch grew to manhood on the old homestead, commencing his education at a country school nearby. From there he passed on to the Springfield High School, the Indiana Normal and Millikin University of Decatur, thus qualifying himself for educational work, with which he was identified up to the time of his last illness, which terminated fifteen years of satisfying service in the Springfield High School. In the early nineties he was united in marriage to Miss Emma Barker. To that union were born Jessie, wife of Orville C. Smith, of Mt. Vernon, Ill., and Mary E., wife of M. Everett Mills, of Divernon, Ill., who, with the faithful wife and mother and grandmother, survive and will greatly miss the tender, watchful care of the husband and father. Brother Scott received a precious hope in Christ quite early in life. This good hope, through grace, became to him an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, and realizing his duty to his heavenly Master, at the July meeting in 1884 he offered himself to the church at Yatesville, Ill., near his old home, was received, and baptized by the late Elder C. C. Purvines. His sister Anna, who saw the ordinance performed, said as he was being led up out of the baptismal water his face was aglow with a divine or heavenly radiance. This reminds the writer what he and others have seen in his preaching when the Spirit gave him utterance, and his very soul seemed lifted above the earth at the transcendent beauty of things heavenly and divine, while his face would light up with a translucent fervor that told the story of his inner or soul thoughts better than words could. His mind became exercised on the subject of the ministry soon after or about the time he united with the church. These impressions continued, and led up to his ordination at the January meeting of the church in 1893. The writer's personal acquaintance with him began nearly twenty-five years ago. During this time it was my privilege to be often in his company at meetings in many sections of the country. His labors of love in preaching Christ and him crucified were always attentively listened to by lovers of the truth. Notwithstanding the heavy demands on his time, occasioned by his school work, he found time to answer many Macedonian calls for the word of truth and righteousness. In 1904 he was called to serve the Salem-Sugar Creek Church, the home of the late Deacon Philemon Stout, as pastor. He served the church faithfully up to the time he was prevented by his last illness. He was loved and esteemed by all who heard his earnest advocacy of the sovereignty of God and the blessed truths of the Bible. He is greatly missed by the church.

At the request of the family the writer conducted the funeral service at the Central Baptist churchhouse, Springfield, in the afternoon of June 11th, in the presence of a large gathering of relatives, friends, neighbors and associates in educational work, who came to pay their last tribute of respect to one whose life had been an open book before them. The text for the occasion were the words of Paul in 2 Timothy iv. 7: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." Next to the last time I saw him alive he assured me of the comforting presence of that faith which had stood for his spiritual welfare all his life. That he kept the faith and died in the faith we have no doubt, and the words in Rev. xiv. 13: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them," seem very appropriate.

May God enable us all to bow in meek submission to his divine will in all things, and be a very present help in every time of need, is the sincere desire of the unworthy writer. JOHN G. SAWIN.

Mrs. Susan Lane was born Feb. 15th, 1835, and departed this life March 31st, 1920, at the advanced age of 85 years. She was the sister of the late James W. and Newton C. Ratliff, of Bath County, Ky., and was married to the late James G. Lane July 4th, 1849. To that union were born thirteen children, ten of whom were living and present when she passed away. Sister Lane professed hope in Christ and joined the church while yet in her girlhood years, and as the years passed on she grew and strengthened in the principles of the doctrine of salvation by grace, and for many years maintained in faith and verity a place among the chief women and mothers in Israel. As she passed along through the different degrees in the progress of life she measured well up to the apostolic standard. As a young wife she loved her husband, as a mother and keeper at home she loved her children, and in their rearing so imbued them with the principles of correct living, as reflected in her own life and character, as to make of them honorable and useful men and women, and to her a crown of rejoicing as she sat in their midst in

the full ripeness of old age. It was my appreciable privilege to know sister Lane and to be nominally her pastor for more than thirty years, and for a number of years preached to the little church at Mt. Sterling as it gathered in her home. She was clear and firm in the doctrine and faithful and true to her profession. For several years she left off housekeeping and dwelt with her daughters, and in the affections of all, and in the sweetness and beauty of godliness with contentment, which was to her great gain and to them great pleasure. To those who love the beauty and charm of a life well rounded up and bringing forth fruit in old age, it was a great pleasure to visit with her in her absolute retirement from the cares of life to a peaceful waiting to be gathered with the saints in the paradise of God. No doubt she has realized this gracious gathering and has entered into everlasting rest. I love to linger in memory with such gracious characters and treat of those characteristics in them which so beautifully portray and so richly magnify that grace by which they are what they are: sinners saved by grace. But mortal powers fail and spiritual gifts only serve in part in describing the manifestations of the riches of grace in the salvation of sinners.

It was my privilege to join with the family and brethren and friends in worshiping God in memory of this dear sister, and to bury her remains with those of her loved ones who had gone on before in the beautiful grounds at Sharpsburg. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." P. G. LESTER.

Elizabeth McTaggart was born December 18th, 1855, in the township of Southold, Ontario, Canada, the daughter of Alexander and Christena McAlpin, and departed this life January 22nd, 1920, in the 65th year of her age. Sister McTaggart was received into the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church May 9th, at the quarterly meeting held in Dunwich, and baptized by Elder W. I. Carnell. She lived a devoted life to the church, and her faithful walk showed the fruits of the Spirit of her blessed Master. She was sorely afflicted, being sick for three years, but bore her affliction without murmuring and always had a pleasant word for those who came to visit her during her long illness. It was my privilege to visit her often, and nearly every time found her mind exercised upon God's word, and she would talk of his goodness to her, a poor sinner. Her faithful and dutiful daughter did everything that could possibly be done for her mother's comfort, and did it cheerfully. They were very near each other, being not only mother and daughter, but companions in the hope and faith of the saints of God.

The funeral was held from the home of her daughter, 46 Mitchell St, conducted by the writer, and was largely attended. The three deacons of the church and her three nephews bore her body to its last resting-place in St. Thomas cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change and raise her vile body and fashion it like unto his spiritual body, which is the final victory over the grave. May the dear Lord comfort her lonely daughter by his presence, and give unto all who mourn their loss reconciled spirits.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Helen Merne Remington was born in Lima, Montana, March 17th, 1902, and after a brief illness of meningitis passed away at her mother's home May 30th, 1920, giving her but 18 short years with us here. When she was about three years of age her parents moved to Marion, where she later entered the public schools, completing the grammar course most creditably. Merne possessed qualities of character and grace far beyond her years. She was kind and true, sympathetic and thoughtful, always thinking for the best and looking on the brighter side of life, therefore to know her was to love her. She was especially devoted to her widowed and heartbroken mother and a great comfort to some who survive her. The father and an older sister, Norma Lucille, preceded her in death. Three sisters, Blanche Elizabeth, Carol Louise and Cecil Margaret, a half-sister, Mrs. Hazel Carpenter, a half-brother, Elton Remington, together with uncles, aunts and cousins and a host of loyal, brokenhearted friends share the grief of this irreparable loss. Merne never made a public profession of Christ, but privately expressed a desire to follow her Savior in the beautiful ordinance of baptism, thus testifying to the Spirit's silent, sovereign work of grace in the heart, fitting the soul for peaceful entrance and presence in the Father's house and the Father's home.

Funeral services were conducted at the home in Marion Tuesday, 1:30 p. m., by Elder B. L. Nay, of Waterloo, Iowa. Pall-bearers were cousins and half-brothers of deceased, also six girl friends acted and preceded as honorary pall-bearers.

Her mother, LURA REMINGTON.

Siotha J. Moffitt, daughter of Josiah and Martha Ann Van Buskirk, was born near Fillmore, Mo., Sept. 26th, 1869. She was married to J. M. Moffitt Dec. 8th, 1887, to which union was born one son, Levi B., who survives her. She also leaves her mother, one sister, Viola Brand, of Savannah, Mo., and two half-sisters, Katie Howard, of Yoncalla, Oregon, and Alice Watts, of Allen, Kansas. She with her husband united with the Three Forks of Nodaway Primitive Baptist Church, in Nodaway County, in 1893, under the pastorate of the late Elder R. M. Simmons, and was baptized by the late Elder R. M. Thomas. She was taken ill Saturday, Feb. 21st, 1920, and passed away Wednesday at the Noyes

hospital, in St. Joseph, after three days of intense suffering.

The funeral was held in the Primitive Baptist church-house in Savannah, conducted by her pastor, Elder C. C. Ware, and the body was laid to rest in Mt. Carmel Cemetery to await the resurrection of the just. May we be able to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Her son, LEVI B. MOFFITT.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

AFTER August 1st, Elder J. F. Beeman's address will be Claremore, Okla., instead of Seattle, Wash.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

G. D. Peters, Ohio, $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Predestinarian or Primitive Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, on Friday before the third Sunday in August with Elm Ridge Church, at Elmo, Texas, on the Texas and Pacific R. R., seven miles east of Terrel, Texas. The church-house is about three hundred yards southeast of the depot. All God-fearing people are invited, especially ministers of our faith and order.

S. M. DICKENS.

THE Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet in her sixty-sixth annual session with Providence Church, about five miles northwest of Plano, Appanoose Co., Iowa, on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1920, and continue the two following days. Those coming by rail will be met at Plano, on the Burling R. R., on Wednesday.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator, Stahl, Mo.
J. M. CATE, Clerk.

THE Maine Association of Old School Baptists will meet, the Lord willing, with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, on Friday before the second Monday in September (10th, 11th and 12th), 1920. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEO. R. TEDFORD.

THE sixty-first annual session of the Trinity River Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association will meet with Salem Church, at Godley, Johnson Co., Texas, beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1920, and continuing three days. All lovers of the truth, and especially ministers of our faith and order, are invited to attend.

W. W. COCHRAN, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Second Church of Roxbury, at Roxbury, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, September 15th and 16th, 1920. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. Trains will be met Tuesday night and Wednesday morning at Roxbury and Halcottville.

MARIETTA MEAD, Church Clerk.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 88. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1920. NO. 17.

CORRESPONDENCE.

UPTON, New Mexico.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In 1 Samuel xvii. 29, it is written, "Is there not a cause?" This was David's reply to his brother Eliab when Eliab and all Israel were afraid and dismayed at the challenge Goliath gave to Israel. "And Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle." David answered and said, "Is there not a cause?" A cause means the same as, What made you do that? What reason have you for acting as you do? I do not see what caused you to go there or come here. Before this time Samuel had anointed David to be king over Israel in Saul's place. As soon as David was anointed, the Bible says, "And the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward." This Spirit caused this boy to be willing and anxious to go fight Goliath, and he said, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" Again he said, "Let no man's heart fail because of him: thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine." Saul said, "Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth." Then David told Saul how he slew the lion and the bear, and took a lamb out of their mouths, and said, "The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine." Then Saul said, "Go, and the Lord be with thee." David gave all the glory to the Lord. He heard Goliath tell how he would kill him and give his flesh to the beasts of the field, but this almighty Spirit caused David not to fear, and he answered and said, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand," and so he did. David took Goliath's own sword and cut off his head. Certain conditions surrounding us, or some power in us, causes us to act the way we do. "Daniel was preferred above the presi-

dents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him." Because what? "Because an excellent spirit was in him." The text is, "Is there not a cause?" "I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."—Ezekiel xxxvi. 27. Again, it is written, "I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring thee into the bond of the covenant." I have no doubt that thousands of good brethren think it is just with them whether they will sow to the flesh or sow to the Spirit, whether they will neglect their duty or not, and many use such texts as this to prove it: "If the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" Paul says, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Just as long as God leads you, that long you will attend to your duty, and no longer. It is just as true that if you neglect your obligations you will be chastened; if you go astray you will be punished, for it is written, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." We differ honestly, and there is a cause for that. Some say the Lord foreknew all things, great and small, but did not predestinate all things, and that we could leave off doing a great many sins if we would. If God foreknew you would do a certain thing you will surely do it, or he was mistaken and did not know it would be done. If he foreknew an act would be committed by you, do you think you could do something else? Others say God predestinated all things, but predestination is not causative. When the Savior was crucified it reads, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." The predestination did not cause these wicked men to kill the Savior, but they "hated him without a cause," and their hatred caused them to take him and crucify him, and while they were doing that which they delighted to do, they were carrying out the purpose of God. One party says, God foreknew all things, but does not cause men to do those things he knew they would do, and others say God predestinated all things, but does not actuate, influence or cause them to do those things which carry out his purposes. James says, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lusts, and enticed." Now how much difference is there in the two positions? One says God foreknew all things, but does not cause men to do wickedly, and others say God predestinated all things, but does not cause men to do wrong. I am sure there is not a child of God on earth but what would be free from sin if they could, but they are like Paul: "I am carnal, sold under sin." Then if you are "sold under sin" you surely are not free. He says, Romans vii. 15: "For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I." Again, "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." The Savior said to the disciples after he came back in the garden from praying, "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Again, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness

of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." If you walk after the Spirit it is because God worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure; then do not take the credit to yourself. Let us have another witness, Hebrews xiii. 20, 21: "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight." What does Paul say in this text? "Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight." Then God works in you, causing you to do his will. What does Peter say? "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away; reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God," &c. God leads by his Spirit and love; God works in us, and sometimes when in our stiffneckedness we go on in our hardheaded way under the influence of Satan, it becomes necessary for God to use his rod. In Psalms lxxxix. 30–32, it is written, "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes." Sometimes he is slow to manifest his anger, and lets us go a long time, but he knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation, only I do not seem to be one of the godly. Severe enough is the chastening, and lasts for years and years. Hear David as he laments having Uriah killed. He says, "My sore ran in the night." Yes, David, all of the people of God have sores on them. That old sore never healed, but sent forth an offence in your nostrils as long as you lived, and caused you many a sigh, and when it was dark as midnight to you, and your hope seemed to be gone, you would cry out, Is his mercy clean gone forever? Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious? Will he no more be entreated? I am cut down and withered like grass. There is a great cause for our getting out of the way. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." We are as helpless in his hands as a new-born babe in the jaws of the most terrible tiger or lion. In Job it is written, "He esteemeth iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood," and Paul says he transforms himself into an angel of light. Do you wonder now that we get in error and do wrong, and that God watches over his people and protects them? The Savior said to Peter, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he might sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Peter said, "Though all men deny thee, yet will I not," then denied him. There is a cause for your wanting to be free from sin. You mourn on account of your unworthiness. That is the best evidence of a child of God I know. You would not dislike sin, nor grieve because you realize that you are a sinner, and would not know you are a sinner if you had no spiritual life. John says, "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." Jesus says, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." God terrifies by the threatening of his law, leads with his love and spirit and drives with his rod when it suits him to do so. Paul said to Titus, "Who gave

himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." What! redeem us from all iniquity? Yes. That all? No, but also "purifies;" yes, "purifies unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works;" causes you to behave yourself, and causes you to be zealous of good works. It is God who delivers us from Satan and from ourselves, and causes us to walk in his statutes. Did I hear you say, It is just left to us whether we will serve and obey? You will do just like the children of Israel did when Moses went up into the mountains to get the law, if you are left to yourself. They had crossed the sea, had seen the water stand up like a wall on either side of them, and saw it drown Pharaoh's hosts, and sang, The Lord hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and the rider hath he thrown into the sea. They saw Moses smite the rock, drank the water, stood at the foot of Mount Sinai, witnessed the fire and smoke as it enveloped the mountains, and the whole mount quaked greatly, and there were thunderings, and lightnings, and when the voice of the trumpet sounded long and waxed louder and louder, and the Lord came down upon the mount, and Moses said, So terrible was the sight that I greatly feared and quaked. They saw and witnessed all of these things, the most wonderful and terrible their eyes ever beheld, and when Moses went back up in the mountain to get the law he had only been gone a short while until they said, "Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him." So Aaron took golden earrings and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf, and they said, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." "These be thy gods." They must have thought there were a lot of these calves, for they said, "These be thy gods." These were the Jews; they were not ignorant nor stupid people; they were like we are when we are left to ourselves, turned away to vain imaginations. All the gods that are trying and failing are imaginary beings. If God delivers, if Jesus died and saved us and keeps us always in the way that is best for us, sometimes leaving us to ourselves to teach us our helplessness, if he purifies us and causes us to walk in his statutes, he certainly deserves all the glory. If we do a part in our salvation, or in keeping his statutes, or in any obedience, and he does the rest, we certainly deserve a part of the praise, each according to the amount he does. "Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep."—Psalms cxxi. 4. "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world."—Gal. i. 4. The poet says:

"What was there in you that could merit esteem,
Or give the Creator delight?
'Twas even so, Father, you ever must sing,
Because it seemed good in thy sight.

'Twas all of thy grace we were brought to obey,
While others were suffered to go
The road which by nature we chose as our way,
Which leads to the regions of woe.

Then give all the glory to his holy name,
To him all the glory belongs;
Be yours the high joy still to sound forth his fame,
And crown him in each of your songs."

Brethren editors, do as you like with this.

Your brother in hope of mercy,

ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

LAMONTE, Mo., Feb. 29, 1920.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I am sending the inclosed interesting letter for your inspection; if you think it worthy, please give it room in the SIGNS. I feel sure it speaks for itself, and is too good for others not to share it. The church our dear sister speaks of is Little Flock Church of Predestinarian Baptists of Cass County, Mo. They are a lovely band of Baptists. To them there is but one true and living God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. We almost universally love the SIGNS and the doctrine set forth in its columns. We think it ably edited, and love it for its firmness on the fundamental principles of Christ and his apostles' doctrine, upon which the church of Jesus Christ is built. Dear brother Hall, the pastor of Little Flock, as stated by sister Prine, is very unassuming, humble and faithful; we all love him for the truth's sake.

I will close, with earnest prayers for all connected with the SIGNS and God's glorious Israel.

J. A. TEAGUE.

ADRIAN, Mo., January, 1920.

DEAR BROTHER TEAGUE:—We received your kind letter, but were sorry to hear you and family were not well. I have not been well all winter, but, my dear brother, I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us, if we are what we profess to be. While sitting alone this afternoon meditating upon the goodness and mercy of God toward poor unworthy me, I was made to realize that his loving-kindness and tender mercy were still with me, and that to own and bless. I was made to feel sweet communion with my blessed Redeemer until my cup was running over with joy and tears ran down my cheeks, and my mind and heart went out to all the saints of God who have been bought with his precious blood. O what sweet communion I had in mind with the loved ones of Little Flock Church, where I have been permitted to have a home, and could almost hear you and brother Hall proclaiming the sweet truth of our Lord and Master as it is in Christ Jesus. You and brother Hall have both been true and faithful servants of Little Flock Church, and I for one, though a very weak one, do certainly appreciate your labors, and hope to be enabled to meet with you all at our next meeting. If I am, it will be through the mercy of our blessed Master, for this life is so full of disappointments that I cannot promise I will do this or that. Dear brother, while we have rejoicing seasons, we also have dark seasons, more, seemingly, than the bright ones, and the way seems so dark at times that we are made to feel our God has almost forsaken us and is clean gone; but at a time unexpected to us he shows his smiling face in our very darkest hour. As the eagle stirreth up her nest and beareth away her young, so the Lord reaches down and lifts up his faltering ones and causes us to soar above our troubles on his everlasting arms of love. My dear brother, what a precious Savior we have. He can feel our every sigh and hear our every groan, and suffered and died that we might live, poor unworthy creatures that we are, not worthy to lisp his name. Through his mercy I have a sweet hope that I received forty-four years ago, and I would not exchange it for this world and the fullness thereof. It is as precious to my soul as it was the day I received it. Although I have seen

many sore trials, I feel that my Savior has been with me, and his promise is that he will not leave or forsake his children. With these promises we are made to press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling as it is in Christ Jesus. My prayer is, Lord, lead us, strengthen our faith, revive our hope and direct our steps in the way of righteousness, and in the trying hour of death be with us. I have no desire to have the uppermost seat in heaven; if my blessed Jesus will only permit me to lie at his feet in humble submission, there to praise his holy name through all eternity, it is enough for poor unworthy me, through his reigning grace to awake with his likeness and be satisfied. This is my blessed hope.

I must bring my letter to a close, begging you to throw the mantle of charity over my imperfections. I hope this will find you and your family well.

As ever, your sister in hope,

MARY E. PRINE.

FLEMINGTON, N. J., July 1, 1920.

DEAR SISTER TERRY:—I received your letter and promised to answer soon, but it seems I am very slow in getting at it; not that I do not want to write, but I feel that my letters are not interesting like yours. You said you might surprise me by coming to see me. It would be a happy surprise to have any of the sisters walk in and visit me. Once sister Sheppard came. I hear there was baptism Sunday; I would loved to have been there. I do not get out, but I still love the church, and am always glad to hear of any one coming into the visible church, and am glad sister Jennie is interested in the meeting, and I know she cannot help but find comfort, for the Elder speaks plainly, and if God gives one an ear to hear and a heart to understand, that one will go away comforted. I love to hear the Elder sing, for he always seems to sing with the spirit, and I am fond of singing. We live up here in the mountain and have a nice little home. Many say, I do not see how you can like it, but I sometimes feel like saying, Jesus was very often found in the mountain, it was one of his favorite places. I think of Moses, how he went to Mount Pisgah and saw the land which was promised to Abraham, and wonder if I am one who was chosen, or only one that should view the beauty of them that are chosen of the Lord. All our life we shall have doubts, until this old tabernacle is dissolved, then we shall see as we are seen and know as we are known. I have to confess that I have nothing to boast of myself, only in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Without that hope I am lost, for I have no one else to go to. He is my Sun and my Shield.

Your unworthy sister,

ADELIA HOAGLAND.

SYRACUSE, N. Y., July 15, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—The July 15th number of the SIGNS just received, and I surely feel mortified that I have not sent the two dollars to renew my subscription. It is all the preaching I have, and is much enjoyed by me. If there are any of our faith and order near me I do not know it. A neighbor was talking religion the other day. I said a little and she seemed much surprised; she wondered how it could be I pretended to have faith and did not believe in the Sabbath schools. I loaned her the June 15th copy of the SIGNS and referred her to the article written by J. Willis Gunn, and told her she would find it there. She kept the paper some time, and when she gave it back said she did not understand it. I

often wonder if I understand it. I do know there is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of him. The chief desire of my heart is to trust God in all things. I do believe that all things, not this thing or that thing, but all things, work together for good to them that love God, to the called according to his purpose. God promises never to forget his children, nor to leave nor forsake them. I feel so often alone, which causes me to doubt. One thought: God knows me as I am; nothing is hid from him.

Your unworthy sister,

AGNES B. GOODRICH.

CLAREMONT, Cal., June 13, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Having occasion to write you in a business way, I take this opportunity to write you a line. Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of southern California still holds regular meetings on the third Sunday of each month, at the corner of Fifth St. and Park Ave., commencing at 10:30 o'clock, with song service until 11 o'clock, then preaching, reassembling after lunch for afternoon service. At our last meeting (the third Sunday in May) a brother, W. I. Holford, and his wife, Mrs. C. A. Holford, were baptized in the fellowship of the church. May God's choicest blessings rest upon them. All lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus, who know no salvation but that of Jesus Christ and him crucified, who know that they are miserable sinners, lost ruined and undone but for the goodness and mercy of a crucified and risen Redeemer, who loved his people whom the Father gave him before the foundation of the world, and who is now sitting at the right hand of God, all such we earnestly invite to assemble with us.

We love to grasp a brother's hand
  Who knows a Savior's need,
But cannot tolerate the man
  Who discards love for creed.

We love to see the eye o'erflow
  When Christ's great love is shown,
But cannot bear contention's glow
  Of eyes to such unknown.

We love to hear the lips proclaim
  The gospel—how Christ saves us,
But scorn the man with selfish aim,
  And strives o'er words to cleave us.

Who gropes about with fault to find
  With this one or with that;
Who thinks there's no one right but him,
  And gives no thanks for that.

Of such beware, my brethren dear,
  Who know of Christ's great love,
Who died for you—I hope for me,
  And then went up above

To plead our cause with Father of light,
  And in mercy makes us know
That if we're saved 'tis by his right,
  And not by what we do,

Or say, or think, or with words strive,
  'Tis foreign to salvation;
For Christ is risen—is alive
  To every tribe and nation.

He'll find them all, and no mistake,
  Nor will there be one over;
All who are bidden will partake,
  And a garment that will cover.

Praise his holy name.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS.

TO THE DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS OF THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH AT HOPEWELL, N. J.:—Once again the time of the Saturday appointment has come, and while we cannot meet with you personally, we are thinking of you all in love and wishing every one present may enjoy the privilege of being present at this time. With us it is much the same naturally; brother Sheppard has not been as comfortable for nearly four weeks, but says he knows he might suffer much worse, and is thankful that things are no worse with him than they are. His development of bad attacks of the

heart are more trying on his strength than any symptom that has before developed, and that is worse in hot, oppressive weather. He told me to say for him that if it were only this present state to think of while sitting in his chair day after day it would be much more tiresome, but he feels and knows that God is good and a very present help in trouble. With me naturally, I am in quite good health, but grow very discouraged and tired, but that is not to be thought of when one feels they are doing their duty, which I try to do cheerily, knowing that in much weakness God's strength is so great, and that his promises are sure. As thy days, thy strength shall be. How true, for of myself I can do nothing, but every day, like the manna, my strength seems renewed. Spiritually, it seems little but night with me, yet still a little spark of hope and faith always seems to be bubbling up in my breast, which again makes me to think on the Scriptures and know his promises are sure, for my faith, though small as a mustard seed, grows, like the seed, to a great tree, which seems to fill my whole being with praise and thanksgiving. I often think of these verses of a hymn composed by Elder Durand:

"O, weary winter of my soul,
How sad and full of gloom!
The heavy hours, how slow they roll,
While griefs my heart consume.

And must I thus fore'er remain?
Will the sun shine no more?
May I not hope that yet again
His beams will warmth restore?"

We are always glad for any of you to come and see us, and you are always welcome. If we know anything about holding up the weak hands and confirming the feeble knees we have found that you have done that for us by your acts of kindnesses done, and the tender expressions of our many friends, which to us for the past two years have helped us along more than any of you can think, and which to us seems like it must be God's love shed abroad in the hearts of his people.

May the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, rest and abide with you all.

Very lovingly,

MR. & MRS. D. W. SHEPPARD.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, convened with Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, September 5th, 6th and 7th, 1919, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond sends greeting and love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We are glad that by the love and mercy of a covenant-keeping God we are again permitted to meet as an association. Elder F. W. Keene was with us and preached Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Our next meeting as an association will be held at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 10th, 11th and 12th, 1920, where we hope to receive your Minutes and meet your messengers once more.

F. W. KEENE, Moderator.

G. R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in August (29th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

EDI[illegible]AL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. [illegible]BER 1, 1920.

EDI[illegible]

Elder H. C. Ker[illegible] N. Y.
Elder H. H. Le[illegible]rg, Va.

All letters for this [illegible] be addressed, and money orde[illegible]able [illegible]
J. E. BEEBE [illegible] CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SALVATION.

SURELY no more important subject ever occupied the minds of the children of God than this of salvation. There are three matters to be considered in taking up this subject. First, there must be some object or objects to be saved; second, there must be one able and willing to save; third, there must be something from which to be saved. First, then, from the testimony of the Scriptures, the only word we have to guide us in this matter, the objects saved are sinners. These sinners are individuals descended from the man Adam, whom God made of the dust of the earth. This Adam was given a law. This law he transgressed. Thus Adam became actually a sinner. The penalty of the law visited upon him for sin was death. This death involved both spiritual and physical death. The spiritual death, or separation from God, took place immediately upon Adam's eating the forbidden fruit at the hands of Eve, and even before that, when Eve herself ate of it, as she was really Adam, since she was bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. The physical death of Adam took place when he was nine hundred and thirty years old, and was a consequence of his transgression. The whole human race, being the children of Adam, all are dead spiritually and all die physically. Involved in this death in trespasses and sins are the elect of God whom he chose in Christ before the foundation of the world. This election does not include the whole race of Adam, but only so many of it as God in his infinite wisdom and good pleasure has seen fit to give his Son in the covenant of grace in eternity before time began. How many these are, and who they are that are thus chosen unto salvation, none but God knows. The elect ones, so far as we know, had no existence except as they were in Christ and as he was their Society, their covenant head. They were [illegible]viously chosen in Christ and [illegible] in him unto salvation because [illegible]s dead in sin, separate[illegible]gression and alienated [illegible]orks. As sinners, th[illegible] and women and children [illegible]part of Adam that sinned, b[illegible] Consequently sinful men a[illegible] It is not the soul or spirit [illegible]nite something or other in the [illegible] that is saved, but it is the individual [illegible] self or herself.

Second, the Bible being true, we certainly are not left to guess who it is that does the saving. The one great object of all the Scriptures is to testify of Jesus, to declare his life, obedience, sufferings, death and resurrection, in order to save his people from their sins. His name is called Jesus for no other reason than that he shall save his people from their sins. Neither is there salvation in any other, for the name of Christ is the only name given under heaven among men whereby the people of God must be saved. That Jesus is abundantly able to save there can be no doubt, for he is the bodily incarnation of all the fullness of the Godhead. In him dwelt the fullness of the power, love, wisdom, mercy and all other

attributes of the Father. The Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save, and Jesus was in a sense the Lord's hand, because he came into the earth not to do his own will as a man, but to do the will of God, which was to save all the Father had given him, and to raise them up from the dead. Thus God was the hand of Jesus and Jesus was the hand or power of God down here among men performing the work of salvation. This Lord's hand never failed to reach each and all [illegible] chosen of God and to deliver [illegible] was never shortened that [illegible] save. No matter how vil[illegible] deep-dyed his sins, how [illegible] state, Jesus is abl[illegible] save to the utterm[illegible] ve him. To say the[illegible] other is to try t[illegible] own, and denies th[illegible] the sinner after re-[illegible] having been born from [illegible] ore able to save himself [illegible] day than before he was [illegible] by the Spirit of God. There [illegible] comes a time in the experience of the believer when he can say, God's salvation is finished and passed and now I save myself from day to day. Have you ever noticed how many times in the New Testament the writers speak of salvation in the present tense, as a matter not past, but as continually going on in their lives? and always this salvation ever present with them is ascribed unto Jesus, or unto God, or unto grace, never unto themselves. "By grace are ye saved," says Paul to the Ephesians. He does not say that they have been saved by grace, but they are being saved by grace, a matter going on with them all the time and saving them daily. "Work out your own salvation," Paul says to the Philippians, but he is careful not to leave the brethren with the impression that they are to do this [illegible] mselves, for he clinches his exh[illegible] with the words, "For it is God [illegible] orketh in you both to will and to [illegible] his good pleasure." Many pe[illegible] of quoting the first part [illegible] to finish it, but true believer[illegible] whole word of God. In Ro[illegible] 4, we find, "We are [illegible] Here again Paul does [illegible] have been saved by hope, as [illegible] were something over and done [illegible] are to be saved by ourselves, [illegible] are being saved by hope daily [illegible] all the time, something going on all [illegible] time in the lives of the children of God. We have never been able to find any scriptural justification for dividing salvation into time salvation and eternal salvation. It is all one salvation, and it is all of grace, and through faith, and it is not of ourselves. God's people are saved with an eternal salvation (See Hebrews v. 9), and this salvation is revealed within the children of God by the Holy Ghost. Really all the salvation we know anything about here is a time salvation, which is nothing more or less than salvation by the grace of God made manifest to us and in us as we go along life's road daily and hourly and every moment being kept by the power of God through faith unto the eternal salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. When Peter said on the day of Pentecost in the city of Jerusalem to those who were pricked in the heart, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation," he certainly did not mean that those who heard could perform that saving act themselves. He was speaking to convicted sinners who were anxiously inquiring the way of salvation. Peter recognized that God had begun in them a good work, and just as surely as he saw that, he had confidence toward God that he

would perform that work until the day of Jesus Christ. Therefore he said, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation," really the work had been begun right and would certainly be wound up right. These [illegible] thus commanded to save the[illegible]re added to the church by ba[illegible]oes not say they added themse[illegible]urch, but that they were add[illegible]rch. Hence something other [illegible] the adding, and what was it if [illegible] of God? That our conclusion [illegible] Acts ii. 47: "The Lord ad[illegible] the church daily such as should be saved." Before we leave this point, let us remember Peter said that the long-suffering of God is salvation. "Is salvation," not was or has been salvation, as though it were passed away from us and now we are saved some other way, perhaps by ourselves. Any salvation that does not keep its hold on the sinner all the time will not, cannot, save effectually. It must be a constant, ever-present salvation, and, thank God, it is.

Third, What are sinners saved from? (1) From sin. "He shall save his people from their sins." "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." "Washed us from our sins in his own blood." (2) From death. "I will redeem them from death." "Who hath abolished death." (3) From the grave. "I will ransom them from the power of the grave." "O grave, I will be thy destruction." (4) From under the law. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Time and space and ability would fail us to tell all from which sinners are saved by the power of God. Never will this matter of salvation be fully comprehended this side of eternity.

In conclusion, then, God's children are human beings here on earth, individuals of Adam's fallen race. It is the sinful man that is born again, not some part of him that is born again. The sinner being born again, that is, born of the Spirit of God, the man becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus. The saved man still retains his human nature unchanged, but is now partaker of the divine nature of Christ, having been begotten of him. This same man who is a descendant of Adam, and who in Adam fell under the curse and condemnation of the law of sin and death, is quickened and made alive by the Holy Spirit and becomes a new man in Christ, is preserved body and soul and spirit unto the coming of the Lord, is then taken home to glory clothed in the likeness of the glorified [illegible] and is housed eternally in heaven, [illegible] work from first to last is of [illegible] power of God in Christ, and is [illegible] work of men, or of the sinn[illegible] this is not salvation we kn[illegible] the matter. One frequent[illegible] that the sinner is passive in [illegible] and active in obedience. [illegible] made phrase and is very a[illegible]. It gives the impress[illegible] can do nothing tow[illegible] can do something for [illegible] of obedience. The trut[illegible] liever at no time can do anything [illegible] able unto God without Christ. Christ plainly told his disciples that without him they could do nothing, that only as he dwelt in them, and as they dwelt in him, could they bring forth fruit. Since the obedience of the believer is bringing forth fruit unto God, it cannot exist otherwise than as the effect of the living union between the believer and his Savior. Whatever activity there is on the part of the believer when walking in obedience to

the precepts of the gospel is altogether of grace. The human nature of the sinner never walks obediently to the gospel only as it is held in subjection by the higher nature of Christ within the sinner. Thus obedience never flows from the will of the sinner himself, but from the will of God working in and through the sinner.

L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Z. M. Beal.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the church in Whitefield, Maine, September 5th, 6th and 7th, 1919 to the several churches of which she composed, greeting, grace to you, and peace from God and from the Lord [illegible] Christ.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD: [illegible] writing you this annual e[illegible] we desire to be exercised by that [illegible] that cometh down from he[illegible] fear of God. In the [illegible] chapter of Job, last thre[illegible] se words: "When he [illegible] decree for the rain, a[illegible] lightning of the th[illegible] see it, and declare [illegible] yea, and searched it [illegible] he said, Behold, the [illegible] that is wisdom: and to [illegible] from evil is understanding." It is not the wisdom of this world, which is foolishness with God. The wisdom that cometh down from above is pure, it is made manifest in a pure heart. God hath said that he would put his fear in the hearts of his chosen people, and they should not depart from him. Dear brethren, our God is a wonderful being, his ways are unsearchable and past finding out. In the first chapter of the epistle of Paul to the Hebrews, first two verses, we find the following: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all [illegible] by whom also he made the w[illegible] brethren, we would call your [illegible] to the three last words of t[illegible] while in the flesh, which [illegible] it is finished." Now the o[illegible] to us, What did Jesus me[illegible] ee words? Surely there [illegible] eaning in them, and in al[illegible] of Jesus throughout th[illegible] When the Spirit that [illegible] eep things of God is mani- [illegible] heart the pure heart of the [illegible] od is made to cry, "O the depth [illegible] riches both of the wisdom and [illegible] ledge of God! how unsearchable are [illegible] judgments, and his ways past finding [illegible] ut." It is finished. Yes, dear children of God, all that the Father gave him to do was finished, and he bowed his head and gave up the ghost. He came not to do his own will, but the will of the Father that sent him. He came to save his people (his bride) from sins. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."—Matt. i. 21. He was delivered for their offenses; he rose again for their justification. They are justified by faith, and have peace with him. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. It is Christ that died; yea, rather that is risen again. These things are written for the comfort and consolation of all who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."—Isaiah xl.

"He is brought as a lamb to the ter, and as a sheep before her s is dumb, so he openeth not his —Isaiah liii. 7. "When thou ke his soul an offering for sin, he his seed, he shall prolong his the pleasure of the Lord shall his hand. He shall see of the his soul, and shall be satisfied." ished. The will of God has ed, the Lord has bruised the body, which are his members, of the first-born. It is writ- wicked shall be turned into the nations that forget God." 17. Dear brethren, please chapter of the second epis- and compare it with the his ungodly world at this With the last two verses of will conclude this letter: "Ye beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory, both now and for ever."

F. W. [illegible] Moderator.

G. R. TEDFORD, [illegible]

HYMN BOOKS

WE now have a sup[illegible] all cloth Hymn Books on h[illegible] will mail post paid to any [illegible] United States or Canada for o[illegible] copy. These books formerly s[illegible] seventy-five cents per copy, but bec[illegible] of the big advance by the binders we a[illegible] forced to charge one dollar each for them, whether sold singly or by the dozen.

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OBITUARY NOTICES.

Francis Marion Sawin died on the morning of June 1st, 1920, at the home of his son, A. W. Sawin, near Edinburg, Ind., aged 80 years and nearly 6 months. He was the fifth son of the late James H. and Caroline Harvey Sawin, who settled on the farm occupied by the deceased nearly a hundred years ago. They were pioneers, and the country was an almost unbroken wilderness of heavy timber. The work it took to open a farm where a growth of heavy timber had to be disposed of would stagger the younger generation of to-day. Father and mother Sawin were not of the class that yielded to discouragements. They were Primitive Baptists, and maintained a home for the faithful in Christ Jesus. The writer well remembers when the Conn's Creek Association met with the old Lewis Creek Church, only a mile and a half away, seventy-five years ago, and of the large number that was entertained under the parental roof. Elders Wilson Thompson, Morgan McQueary, Ransom Riggs, A. B. Nay, Benjamin Jones, Willet Tyler and others whose names cannot now be recalled, were present, and preached each evening in front of the house. These defenders of the faith have long ago finished their course and entered into the joys of heaven and the perfect rest that remains to the people of God. This Baptist home was kept up during the lifetime of the parents, when the son and family, who lived on the old place, followed in the footsteps of the sainted parents and kept open house for all lovers of the truth that came that way, for he and his beloved companion, who preceded him to the grave some three years ago, were both faithful members of the Baptist Church, and knew how to entertain their friends and kindred in Christ. Here I might mention that the subject of this sketch was the fifth son of a family of ten children, six sons and four daughters, all of whom grew to manhood and womanhood, and every one in the course of their lifetime became members of the Baptist Church, eight of whom have died in the precious faith. The writer and brother P. W. Sawin, of Shelbyville, Ky., are the two left, and our days must soon be num- [illegible] On February 25th, 1864, brother Marion and [illegible] Hill were united in marriage and settled on [illegible] the old homestead, as already mentioned, [illegible] years of his life were spent. Of [illegible] two sons and one daughter [illegible] parts of the old place. [illegible] and companion, who w[illegible] fell heavily on our [illegible] ture he only lived [illegible] ed land where so[illegible] and su[illegible] as a living faith, an uncreat[illegible] vincible faith, the blessed gi[illegible] and it was through this faith tha[illegible]

of the joy of the world to come. He was only confined to his bed a little over a week. Everything was done for his comfort that love and devotion on the part of children, friends and neighbors could prompt. Brother Peter and myself reached his bedside in time to be recognized, and he was very happy that we were present, as was indicated by the hearty reception he gave us. This was near sundown. He wanted us to sing his favorite hymn, "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!" This done, he asked us to bow in prayer at his bedside. His wish was complied with. With an animated expression on his face he grasped our hands, as if in acknowledgment that all was well—that faith enabled him to see beyond the valley of the shadow of death into the haven of immortality. A few hours later his suffering became very acute, and continued until consciousness was only slight at intervals thereafter for thirty hours, when his spirit took its flight and mortality was swallowed in life. Yes, he fell asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep. Knowing his sufferings and earnest desire to go, we could not wish him back.

It was the wish of the family that brother Peter and myself should conduct the funeral service, which we accordingly did on the afternoon of June 3rd, at the house, where a large gathering of friends attested the esteem in which he was held in the community where his entire life was spent. May God direct the children and grandchildren to profit by the exemplary life he lived. Brother Asa W. and Anna Riggs Sawin, whose fathers and grandfathers were Baptists, are themselves members of Bethel Church, Johnson Co., Ind., and will no doubt continue to keep "open house" for those of the household of faith who come that way, as parents and grandparents did for over three-quarters of a century. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

JOHN G. SAWIN.

Harley W. Plummer, son of Deacon Hudson D. an[illegible] Miranda Plummer, was born February 28th [illegible] and died at his home in Laurel, Del., June 20[illegible] aged 48 years, 3 months and 23 days. H[illegible] mourn their loss one brother, George [illegible] New York city, and five sisters [illegible] Miss Lena Plummer, of L[illegible] Frazier, of Delmar, Del. [illegible] home is near Laurel [illegible] ter, Pa. He ma[illegible] Miss Lena P[illegible] during his last illn[illegible] a member of any chu[illegible] the three in one, Father, Son [illegible] chief delight was in reading his [illegible] delighted in reading the SIGNS OF [illegible] During his recent sickness he was heard by those who cared for him to repea[illegible] press such sentiment as the following: "L[illegible] mercy on me." "O Father, have mercy [illegible] sinner." On one occasion he asked for [illegible] when it was handed to him he said, "Not [illegible] your hands, but from the pool." Then a[illegible] his hand said, "I am coming."

The funeral took place at his late [illegible] Laurel, Del., conducted by the writ[illegible] special request of the family, read the fif[illegible] and spoke from the seventeenth verse. [illegible] were then conveyed to and laid away [illegible] Creek Cemetery.

May the Lord comfort and console [illegible] family, is the prayer of the writer.

J. C[illegible]

MEETING[illegible]

THE Maine Association of Old Sc[illegible] meet, the Lord willing, with the Bo[illegible] at Bowdoinham, Maine, on Friday [illegible] Monday in September (10th, 11t[illegible] All who love the truth are cordial[illegible]

GE[illegible]D.

THE sixty-first annual session [illegible] River Old School Predestinarian Bap[illegible]on will meet with Salem Church, at G[illegible]son Co., Texas, beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1920, and continuing three days. All lovers of the truth, and especially ministers of our faith and order, are invited to attend.

W. [illegible]OCHRAN, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Second Church of Roxbury, at Roxbury, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, September 15th and 16th, 1920. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. Trains will be met Tuesday night and Wednesday morning at [illegible] Grottville.

MARIETTA MEAD, Church Clerk.

[illegible]ool Baptist Church of Jefferson, N. Y., [illegible] a two days meeting to be held on the [illegible]day and Saturday before in September (18th [illegible]). The train will be met at Stamford Friday [illegible]ning before the meeting. All who love the truth are cordially invited to be with us.

GEORGE E. MEAD, Church Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Mossongoes Church, near Hallwood, Va., will be held, the Lord willing, on the third Sunday in September and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Vaughn, of Hopewell, N. J., is expected to be with us. All who desire to meet with us are cordially invited.

J. C. MELLOTT, Pastor.

meeting of the Nassaongo, Church, n d., will be held, the Lord willing, on nday in September and Saturday befo sire to meet with us are cordially invit

J. C. MELLOTT, Pastor.

THE of the Indiantown Church, near Pow l be held, the Lord willing, on the firs ber and Saturday before. All who do h us are cordially invited.

MELLOTT, Pastor.

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Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1304 Jefferson Street
WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. x 177.

ock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of rnia, meets every third Sunday at 11 rk Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, ting awaits all lovers of the afford to associate with us.

SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLARE

THE Beulah Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets d Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. invitation is extended to all lovers of the with Strangers in the city can call 125th St., or Elder George L. Weave St.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Ba more, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND LATER WRITINGS

OF

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EDITOR

Elder H. C. Ker, Midd Y.

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"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."—1 Thess. v. 21. "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it."—Deut. xii. 32. cf. Eccl. iii. 14; James i. 17; Matt. xxviii. 20.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 88. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1920. NO. 18.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE RESURRECTION.

"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."—Romans viii. 11.

When I was at the Lower County Line Association I used the above words as a text. Then several of the brethren and sisters asked me to write a communication from the same text so they would have it to read. I promised them that I would do so if the Lord would so direct me. Now I feel that I want to comply with that request and to fulfill that promise. My letter will necessarily be long, because the subject is so great, even the crowning point of the glorious gospel of the Son of God. There is but one question that confronts us: Does the Spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead dwell in us? As sure as he does he shall quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in us. That is a settled fact. That Spirit gave Jesus to see his resurrection, and the very day he should be raised up. "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." "But he spake of the temple of his body."—John ii. 19, 21. Therefore destroy this body and in three days I will raise it up again. It. The same temple or body which they would destroy, therefore that identical body, and not another body. Some one, speaking for himself and another, said, We object to the terms "identical body" and "mortal body." Now what difference does it make as to what one objects? Is not the truth that for which we are seeking? and is not the Bible, and not the objections and opinions of men, to be the deciding judge? To that testimony we flee for strength. If they speak not according to that word it is because there is no light in them. Then it was the identical body of our Lord Jesus which was crucified and died that rose from the dead. The power by which he arose was the same by which he lived here in the body. When he was baptized the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, came down on him and remained there. It was by that Spirit he was led, driven into the wilderness. That was the Spirit which made him of quick understanding in all of his ministry, and by whom he offered himself without spot to God. When he cried, "Eli, Eli, Lama Sabacthani," that Spirit had forsaken him, and he trod the wine-press alone,

That body died. He had said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."—Luke xxiii. 46. Therefore when that body died his spirit returned to God; but it was by that same Spirit that crucified and dead body, that identical body, rose again the third day. It was not another body, but that "identical body." How do we know? Because, first, when the women came to the sepulcher on the morning of the third day that body was not there. Mary thought that the gardener had taken him away, and asked that she be allowed to take him. She thought she was speaking to the gardener, but upon his uttering the word "Mary," she saw and knew that it was Jesus, and said, "Master." O the heart-throbs of solemn joy that she felt when she saw her Lord and Master alive! Peter and John ran to the sepulcher and went in. They saw the linen clothes, but not the body of the Lord. Why? Because he was risen from the dead, even that identical body, and not something else nor some other body. They had destroyed the temple and he had raised it up again on the third day, as he had said to them. The word "mortal" applied to him; it is the Greek word *thnay-tos*, and means, liable to die. He was also mortal when he was in the tomb, for the word is from the Greek word *thano*, which means to die, be dead, die. Therefore he went into our mortality. He did not enter into our corruption. That word is *dee-of-thro-ah*, and means to rot thoroughly, decay. Our Lord could not enter there. Psalms xvi. 10: "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." (See Acts ii. 31.) This is conclusive proof that our Lord did not see corruption, and that that identical body which was crucified came forth in his resurrection on the morning of the third day. Then as further proof of that fact he showed them the prints of the nails in his hands and his feet, and the spear hole in his side, and told Thomas to put his hands in them and to be not faithless, but believing. Thomas was ready to cry out, "My Lord and my God;" and yet a blessing is conferred on him who has not seen, yet believes. What confirming testimony is this! With this evidence of the actual resurrection of the identical body, the mortal body of our Lord Jesus Christ, what shall we say? If this is done to Jesus, the first fruit, how shall it be with the rest of the harvest? "Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's, at his coming."—1 Cor. xv. 23. Now what shall we say? As is Christ, so are they that are his at his coming. Is not that it? As is the first fruits, so shall the whole harvest be. For this cause Paul used the term, "your mortal bodies." Was he correct or not? He was a poor sinful man, and subject to be mistaken and to do wrong, but the Holy Ghost, by whom he wrote, was not. His letters are the inspired word of God, and if we do not believe them it proves beyond a doubt that we are not reconciled to God, and we are unsafe as teachers of his people. The bodies of our Roman brethren were mortal bodies, or they were liable to die when they lived. Those very mortal bodies were the identical bodies that should be quickened by the Spirit of Christ who dwelt in them. They were the Adamic bodies. On no other bodies did the sentence of death ever come. The Lord said to Adam, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." "In the day that thou [Adam] eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." This body of Adam and of his posterity is where the curse fell; that is the body which became

liable to die, it is the mortal body. Now if there is any other body for the child of God, from whence came that body? Did Adam have two bodies? If he did, where was that other body when he received the law and when he violated that law? Was that other body liable to die? If so, in whom did it become liable to die? The Greek word *somah* means the body as a sound whole. That is the word from which we have the words "body" and "bodies" in these texts. He did not mean, nor did he convey any such an idea, that when this mortal body died and took on its decay these Roman brethren would enter another body and be taken up to glory. That would by no means be a resurrection; it would not be a quickening of "your mortal bodies." Those other bodies would not be mortal and could not be quickened. "Thou fool! that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die." There is a very great difference between a resurrected body and an exchanged body. There is not one word in the Bible which gives us any promise of an exchanged body; indeed, we do not want any such thing. We want to be glorified as our Lord was glorified. He was glorified in the very identical body in which he met all of his sufferings and persecutions here. He is the first sheaf; he has been gathered and waved before the throne of God, and is accepted; he has entered into the holy of holies, and is our hope, our anchor. By faith we see him, we are made partakers of his intercessions. As the golden streams of love and mercy are poured out in our poor souls we look up by faith and see the Fountain-head. Our very souls are filled with joy in blessed hope that we shall be quickened by the same Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead; that our mortal bodies shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body and be made meet for his use in his kingdom. By faith we hear a song, and we get hungry to join in the singing. We shall join in it. When, ah, when? The inspired apostle tells us: it is when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal (dead) body has put on immortality; then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. Yes, that is when we shall sing the triumphant song of redemption through our Lord Jesus Christ. Now, brethren, if there are any of you who will have another body, and not be raised in that day, you will never sing that song. That is the way our Jesus went, and all of his sheep shall follow him. He is the Door, and by him we must enter, or not at all. One said, "Don't tell me that I have got to lie in the grave for thousands of years, as badly as I hate it." Yes, if you are a child of God, and I believe you are, you have got to go there and lie there until the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.) Therefore if there is no such thing and time of his thus coming, there will be none of these promises fulfilled to the saints, for this glory of dwelling forever with the Lord and singing the song of triumph over death and the grave will be given to us then, and not until then. We do feel and sing very fully now as we are given to feel the earnest of this great triumph, but how quickly we do fall back into despondency. Then, however, we shall feel and see that monster no more, because

we will dwell in the eternal glory of God forever.

Now I want to consider the words of Jesus for a short time, and I am done. In John v. 25, our Lord tells us of his quickening us here, and of the renewing of the Holy Ghost which we receive. He said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." We know the truth of this in his daily dealings with us. He gives us to see our darkness and sinfulness, and gives us the spirit to mourn and repent. There is therefore a continual death working in us, and we feel it and know it. What has shown us this truth? Surely it is the Spirit of God that dwells in us. It is light which maketh manifest, and it shows us our sins, for which we mourn and from which we desire to turn away. Herein has the Lord shown us our folly and weakness. We are so foolish that though we are constantly brayed in a mortar with a pestle we will not depart from our folly. Thus we are made partakers of the afflictions of Christ. He predestinated us to be conformed to his image. His image here was an image of suffering. The apostle tells us that all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. This therefore is a part of their inheritance, and no child of God can live without it. If any be without chastisement he is a bastard, and not a son. The Lord's eye is ever over his people, and his everlasting arm is underneath them. He did not stop at telling us of what would be our present experience in this pilgrimage. He said, "Marvel not at this, [there is something so much greater] for the hour is coming, [he does not say in this connection, "and now is"] in the which [a definite, special, appointed, one hour] all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Is not this clear testimony? How much more evidence can we want that the just and the unjust shall rise from the dead, the unjust unto everlasting punishment and the righteous unto life eternal? Note, the duration of everlasting and eternal is the same; the same original word, *ahee-o-nee-os*, is used and has the same meaning: "perpetual." Therefore by the words of Jesus we have set forth the final resurrection of the bodies of the saints and of the wicked. The saints will sing the song of triumph, while the wicked will go into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

I feel that what I have written is the honest truth before God, and I am sure that it will stand the strongest tests; therefore I invite criticisms and the objections of the enemies of truth. The Lord bless us to be reconciled to him and to receive his word with joy.

Your brother in the blessed hope of the resurrection of the dead,

L. H. HARDY.

ATLANTIC, N. C.

[WE have willingly given Elder Hardy space to express his views on the resurrection of the dead. Elder Lefferts and ourself have very recently given our views, therefore so far as we three are concerned this ends the matter, at least for the present. We told our readers in the August 1st SIGNS that we absolutely refuse to be drawn into controversy on this subject, and we shall be faithful to that promise. We shall grant space for the present to ministers who may desire to write on the subject, but nothing in the way of a reply to another, or, in other

words, in the way of controversy, will be published in the SIGNS. No one is more willing that the brethren should judge as to whether the Bible is right on the subject, without added language, than we are.—K.]

ORTH, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending an address written by Elder C. T. Richardson, which I would like to have published in the SIGNS if you see fit.

(MRS.) E. J. LARIMORE.

"AND in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."—Daniel ii. 44. "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." —Matthew xvi. 18. Is not this that kingdom which the God of heaven should set up in the days of these kings? For Jesus, who is the God of heaven, says to Peter, verse 19, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Are not the church and kingdom of heaven synonymous? I think this is often the case. The church is said to be the body of Christ, Eph. i. 23: "Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ." "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."—1 Cor. xii. 12, 18, 27. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling." "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."—Eph. iv. 4, 7, 11, 12. To you pastors: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."—2 Tim. ii. 15. To the pastors or "elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."—1 Peter v. 1–4. Is not this enough? So your pastor or Elder must not lord it over you, God's heritage; neither must he take the oversight for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. Now let the church take heed; we should in love bear with and forbear one another and forgive one another. Jesus says, "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."—Matt. vi. 14, 15. "Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and

seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him." —Luke xvii. 3, 4. "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."—Eph. iv. 32. "If any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."—Col. iii. 13. "If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."—Gal. vi. 1, 2. To the pastors or Elders: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. [We may shed too few tears.] And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. [All this you may in truth apply to the unworthy writer.] I have shewed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."—Acts xx. 28-35. The above is the duty of your Elder or pastor, according to Paul. Then let the church hear him in regard to its duty: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account; that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you." Again, "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation: Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."—Heb. xiii. 7, 8, 17. "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves."—1 Thess. v. 12, 13. Again, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine."—1 Tim. v. 17. If your pastor should depart from the faith and order of the gospel, the church is not bound to so honor and obey him, but she has the sovereign right, privilege or authority to discharge him as her pastor. For, though the church be required to love, honor and obey him, as just quoted, on the other hand, he is forbidden to lord it over the church, or God's heritage. The church is to obey him, not as a lord or master, but as a laboring, serving, ministering, comforting, teaching, edifying and presiding officer, who points out and insists upon an observance of her own rules; and so long as she (the church) retains him as her pastor she is to honor his counsel, advice and admonition in preference to that of other ministers not sustaining such relation to her. The church at Corinth was to covet earnestly the best gifts; the church should desire the best gifts in its own body. A

church with such gifts is greatly blessed with loved and able ministers, of good report of them that are without. Such a church is blessed of the Lord, and is steadfast, unmovable, rooted and grounded in Christ. It is not that a minister should desire to be the best or biggest preacher, and so regarded to covet such a thing is wrong. Churches are liable to overlook the greatest gift, and think it too small to meet their vanity. They feel that they must have the most learned and eloquent—cannot endure a feeble gift. We are not to mind high things, but condescend to men of low estate. We should love the minister if he is meek and lowly. The Savior was gifted in meekness; John was plain in his dress, and we should be content with such men. No matter how eloquent or learned one is, he is worthless unless he possesses charity (love). A little pride and self-conceit ruin all he does. Charity gives value to everything we do and everything we say. An unlettered minister who loves the cause and the people is a precious gift. Love does not hide itself, it comes to the surface and lights and blesses the church. Love can endure great hardships and bear great burdens. A minister must possess love to do the work assigned him. Jesus says, "Lovest thou me?" For one to be a good member he must have a heart full of love to the cause he serves. One who loves truth believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth; learning will fail. When men grow old they fail in memory and in their knowledge, yet their love remains. When one is old and worn out his love to the church yet remains, and he weeps over the sorrows of Zion, and even in death he is happy to learn of good to the church. So charity never dies, but endures to all eternity. A church of loving members with a loving pastor, all in agreement, is a sweet place to be, where each hides his brother's faults and shows a brother's love. We may find strife and vainglory in the church and in ourselves, but it will not be so in heaven.

The duties of the church: "And let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching."—Heb. x. 24, 25. This neglect of assembling seems the most hurtful of all others. Satan claims this his master weapon against the church of our Christ. He tells you that you had best go to town to-day, for if you go to meeting there will be no one there but you. All with one consent began to make excuses. One bought a piece of ground, and must needs go see it, and wished to be excused. Another had bought five yoke of oxen, and would go to prove them, so he prayed to be excused. Another said, I have married a wife, and therefore cannot come. (Luke xiv. 18–20.) When you should not neglect to assemble is your excuse as good as the above? Were they sufficient? "I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper." "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."—Luke xiv. 26. "For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it."—Luke ix. 24. Therefore we should not neglect to meet frequently, as often as we can, in our public assemblies, in our church gathering, to worship the God of our salvation,

and encourage one another to give continual proof of the loving and holy character of the one true faith which we have professed. If we are the children of God we belong to the same heavenly Father; then let us prove our faith by not neglecting the assembling of ourselves together on our meeting days. Say to Satan, Get behind me, I will go and worship the God of my being, for he hath done great things for me, whereof I am glad. So let us worship our God in spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh; for if ye live after the flesh ye shall die. If when you come to the place of meeting you find none, then kneel at the altar of your God and thank him for the privilege of coming to the house where prayer is wont to be made, and for all spiritual blessings, even for life, breath and all things. Hence we should worship the everlasting God, for beside him there is none else. Now, when the time for our assembling comes, and our mind is at sea, so we cannot decide what to do, then say, O that I may have the Spirit of Christ to lead me in the way of truth. O Father, hide thy face from my sins, and blot out mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit. (Psalms li. 9–12.)

In conclusion, let me say I feel that I am almost ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is almost at hand. I hope I have fought a good fight, I have almost finished my course, and I feel that I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. C. T. RICHARDSON.

INDEPENDENCE, Mo., August 5, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—Often I think of writing, though I know it would be of very little interest to any one, but I feel very much impressed when I read the many letters from all parts of the world seeming to point in the same direction, expressing each other's feelings so plainly. We are told of a oneness in heaven; we shall all be of one spirit and all be taught of the Lord. The Lord does his work in a mysterious way; his ways are past finding out. Sister Mary E. Wright, of Santa Cruz, Cal., wrote a very sweet letter after being reminded of writing in such a good way, giving all of us something to share. I certainly much enjoyed my share, and I feel sure others did the same. We all need something to cheer us, and nothing is more helpful than to feel that we are being led by God's hand; without him we can do nothing. My greatest desire is to love the Lord and to do the things which are pleasing in his sight. May it be my lot to be ever found at his feet pleading for his mercy. May God have mercy on our dear children, and have them to realize that we are going on step by step to that great eternal day when all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Lord, and those who are not clothed in righteousness will be cast down into everlasting ruin. We are all in the hands of an all-wise God, who knoweth all things and doeth them well. His love must be shed abroad in our hearts before we can enter that city not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. We are told to remember our Creator in the days of our youth, and all these earthly things shall be added. I know that these earthly things have been added unto me, though I feel that in my hands I have nothing to bring. The blessed Lord

knows my heart. If I ever felt that the Lord blessed me with that holy light to shine down from on high it was when I was a little girl not more than nine or ten years of age. However, that little heart of mine was made happy, though I was easily intimidated, and felt that older ones would say, That child does not know; but that beautiful sight is still in memory, though it was all of fifty years ago. May the Lord brighten my last moments sweetly in the arms of Jesus. I love to attend preaching, it does me good to see the brethren and sisters and to be in fellowship with them all. I have not time to be hunting up any one's faults, for thinking of my poor self doing so many wrongs. We lost our dear minister of the gospel, brother William T. Brown, of Richmond, Mo. He preached at our church, Pleasant Grove, near Independence, Mo., twenty-two years, which I know we all enjoyed and appreciated, but now we know he has gone that long road, and it seems so sad for us. We miss the kind, expressive way he had, and his great ability in proclaiming the gospel. His work is done here below, and those who fall asleep in Jesus, will He bring with him when he comes. That is the sweetest of all. The last time he was at the church was the third Saturday and Sunday in April. On Saturday he preached from the first chapter in Revelation and gave us a beautiful discourse. On Sunday he preached from the second chapter of John. Both sermons were excellent. I have given him the SIGNS to read sometimes here at my home, and he enjoyed reading the paper very much. I can fully sympathize with sister Brown and family, as I have lost my dear companion and other very near and dear friends very recently. Though the Lord has promised to hear the cries of the orphans and the widows, I often feel very lonely and heartbroken. But we, too, must soon lie in our graves. May we pray to be submissive to God's will, and for our hearts not to be troubled or afraid. May we have courage and strength to press on to meet our dear Savior, who has gone to prepare a place for those who love him. Brother Hall, of Blue Springs, Mo., has been very kind to be with us and preach for us, and to make our hearts glad, knowing him to be faithful and a true minister of the gospel. May God bless him in performing his duty and be with his dear family in all their trials in this life. We all have a great many trials, but the Lord will never forsake his people. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

I hope that this letter will not be burdensome to any one. I hope that those who have the ability to write for the dear SIGNS will be encouraged to still continue. May the Lord bless us all and save us in heaven, where sorrow will be no more.

Yours lovingly,

(MRS.) J. T. GAINES.

HYMN BOOKS READY.

WE now have a supply of the small cloth Hymn Books on hand, which we will mail post paid to any part of the United States or Canada for one dollar a copy. These books formerly sold for seventy-five cents per copy, but because of the big advance by the binders we are forced to charge one dollar each for them, whether sold singly or by the dozen.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1920.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PSALMS XL. 6, 7.

"SACRIFICE and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me."

That the above Scripture, though written by David, cannot apply unto David we know for a certainty, because the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews quotes these expressions in the tenth chapter of that epistle and says they refer to Christ. There are some things which certainly cannot please God. Among these things displeasing to him are the burnt offerings and sacrifices of the old legal covenant. It was not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin. The altar of that legal sanctuary was wholly unable to make the comers thereunto perfect. The question may arise here, If these offerings and sacrifices could never remove sin, then why did God command by his servant Moses that the Jews observe them? The intent of the divine mind of Jehovah in all these offerings was that they should serve as types and shadows of the one true offering of Jesus, the Lamb of God, which should take away the sin of the world. The Jews as a nation being without faith and having not the vision of the Spirit, mistook the shadows for the substance and worshipped the figures, being ignorant of their meaning and knowing nothing of the true purpose of God in them. Therefore Jesus told the Jews that they thought they had eternal life in those legal things, whereas all those legal and prophetic things testified of him; that is, of Jesus. With all these offerings under the law, then, God was not pleased; he would not accept them as an effectual taking away of the sins of the people. Contrasted with these things which were not acceptable with God we have presented the one and only sacrifice which God does and will accept for the atonement of the transgressions of his people. This was the body which was prepared of God for his Son to take upon himself. This body was fearfully and wonderfully made, curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Never was there another body exactly like that of Jesus. It was not conceived and formed after the ordinary manner of human generation. The Holy Ghost overshadowed the virgin Mary, she who was espoused to Joseph, and her conception was the fruit of the Holy Spirit of God. Into this body, thus specially prepared, entered the Son of God: all the fullness of the Godhead dwelt in that body. It was a body which knew no sin, it was pure and holy and without blemish. It was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, but without sin. Had there been the slightest blemish in Jesus or his body it could not then have been fit to be offered for sin. Jesus in this body bore the sins of all his people, he suffered the just condemnation which all their sins deserved. Jesus comprised in himself both High Priest and offering. As the great High Priest of his church he took that body which was pure and spotless and without sin and offered it upon the tree of the cross as the one great and only sacrifice for sin. His was a living

sacrifice. He did not take the bodies of beasts and offer their blood, nor yet the blood of doves or pigeons, but he took his own blood and offered it without spot to God. This is the sacrifice which well pleases God and which God accepts. This is the way of atonement for all the chosen of God. There is no other way nor any other offering. By this one offering of his own spotless body Jesus has forever made perfect all whom the Father had sanctified or set apart unto himself before time began. Now, in thus speaking of the body which Jesus took and offered a sacrifice for sin we must not confuse it in our minds with the mystical body of Christ, which is the church. The church in the Scriptures is often called the body of Christ, but this is not the body which was born of the virgin as the result of a divine operation. The church was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and each and every member of that election is a member of his mystic body in a very wonderful way that no earthly mind can comprehend. But in thus speaking of his body, the church, we must keep it distinct and separate in our thoughts from that sacrificial body which God prepared for him to take and offer upon the altar of Calvary as a sacrifice for sin. To overlook this sacrificial work of Jesus is certainly to miss the very kernel of salvation. The world speaks of Jesus as a great teacher, or as a great example; they often call him a reformer, and sometimes call him Physician, but very rarely indeed does one ever hear him spoken of as Sacrifice: the one and only satisfactory offering for sin. No matter what men may believe him to be, if they see him not as offered for their sins, and as effectually and forever washing away those sins and once and for all justifying them before God, they may as well not profess to believe in him at all. The suffering of death was the end and aim of Jesus' coming into the world. It was for this very special purpose that he took not on himself the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, that he should, by the grace of God, taste death for every man. We would give everything we possess in the world could we but be assured beyond all possible doubts that the blessed sacrifice which Jesus made of himself was offered for our own personal sins. As it is, we have a hope, and that is all we have. Such hope as it is, it is not based in anything we have or are of ourself. We can remember a time when we possessed no such hope nor even cared to. Later there came a time when sin awoke in us by the entering in of the commandment or law of God. Then we died. We saw ourself guilty and undone before God, the weight of woe pressed us down, we thought never to rise again. As we were sinking down thus beneath God's righteous frown, crying out in despair for God to have mercy on our soul, to our sudden and sweet surprise a voice spoke within, saying, "Peace." At once all was calm, the trouble was gone, the burden was removed. It was Jesus, the best friend a sinner ever had. From that time, twenty-four years ago, unto the present we have had a hope of salvation alone through the sacrifice which Jesus offered (himself) upon the cross. Many doubts, dark and gloomy days and nights and overwhelming discouragements have attended our way, but we trust it has been by the grace of God that we have continued thus far, and that sustaining grace is our only confidence from now on unto the end.

L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. R. Dennison.)

The Tygarts Valley River Association of Old School, Primitive, Predestinarian Baptists, now in session with the Amnon Church, Marion County, West Virginia, to the several churches of which she is composed, and to all the faith of God's elect, sendeth christian salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Through the kind providence of the ever-merciful and most gracious God we are again permitted to meet as an association of churches, messengers and brethren for the purpose of praising, worshiping and glorifying the name of the great immutable God, and of comforting and strengthening each other in the grace and faith of God's elect. Dear brethren, there have been many, and some very sad and trying, changes and circumstances in our temporal worldly affairs since our last assembling together as an association, but doctrinally and practically we have made no change, no innovations among us, but we still stand firm on the doctrine of the apostles and the prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, on whom all the building fitly framed together, having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. "Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building," built together for a habitation of God through the Spirit. Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, temperance societies, mission systems, and the many worldly organizations, schemes, plans and devices of the humanly devised effort system, after the commandments and doctrines of men. No, brethren, "But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you." Ye then, dear brethren, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, and in this house, the church, the mystical body of Christ, which is the pillar and ground of the truth, God hath placed every member of the body as it pleased him, having given them eternal spiritual life through Christ Jesus in his mediatorial work, in his active and passive obedience on earth in his suffering, death and resurrection. By the one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, set apart to be heirs of his kingdom. Then, dear brethren, all the humanly devised efforts of all Arminianism, in all of its carnal, pharisaical blindness, can never add one to the number of God's elect chosen people, members of the body of Christ which he hath perfected, made complete through his suffering, death and resurrection, and which God has placed in the body. No, they must have life, spiritual, eternal life, and Arminianism, with all its vain boasts and formal works, cannot give it. No, indeed, for it has none to give. "But of him [God] are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." But Arminianism is compassing sea and land to make proselytes. They, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. Then, dear brethren, where will you find another so-called christian organization as the old order of Baptists, who are contending for the doctrine, order and practice of the house of God as set forth by Christ and his apostles, in acknowledging

God as the righteous and rightful Sovereign of the heavens and the earth? Where is the society to-day separate and apart from the old order of Baptists who preach and believe the doctrine of election, predestination, special atonement, effectual calling, salvation by grace alone through the imputed righteousness of Christ, without works or merit by the creature dead in trespasses and sins, the total depravity and just condemnation of all Adam's fallen posterity, and of the final perseverance of all the elect through grace to ultimate glory, and of the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust, as Christ hath said all that are in their graves shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation? Then, dearly beloved, let us stand firm and ever contend for the doctrine once delivered unto the saints, that we be not children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

J. B. CROSS, Moderator.
J. N. BARTLETT, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. A. F. Jones, Georgia, $1.00; Milton Maddock, Ontario, $1.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

William Arthur Hilton was born in Wright County, Mo., March 5th, 1870, and died May 11th, 1920, of Bright's disease. Brother Hilton came to Hill Co., Texas, with his parents in 1882, and was married to Miss Hettie J. Kemp in December, 1901. To that union three children were born: Myrtle, Annie and Arthur. Brother Hilton joined the Old School Baptist Church of Blum and was baptized by the writer in 1903. He was clerk of the church until he, with his family, moved to Lockney, Texas, in 1909. His dear, faithful wife died some time in 1915. On the 17th of April, 1917, he was married to our sister Garret, widow of brother Garret, both of whom were members of the church at Clairette, Texas, before they moved to Lockney. Sister Lizzie Hilton, a lonely widow again, is living with brother Hilton's children at Lockney. She is the daughter of the late Elder John H. Weeks, of Navarro County, Texas. A great man in Israel has fallen, and will be greatly missed by the Old School Baptists and many kind friends. He is survived by his dear mother, one brother and one sister. Just before he died he sang a hymn about the home beyond this world of sorrow and trouble. We sorrow not as those without hope, for we are sure our loss is his great gain.

One who loved him dearly.

W. L. ROGERS.

James P. Lanham, the subject of this notice, was born April 18th, 1844, and departed this life August 16th, 1920, at the age of 76 years, 8 months and 28 days. He was married to Martha E. Bailey October 24th, 1865. To that union were born nine children, six boys and three girls, two of whom preceded him to the grave, leaving seven children, with his widow, to mourn their loss. He never made a public profession of religion, but was a firm believer in the doctrine advocated by the Primitive Baptists, and always ready to contribute when there was a call for contributions for printing Minutes, helping keep the church-house in repair or helping our traveling ministers on their way. He was the only child of his father's family who contended for the doctrine of the Bible, and neither of his parents was with him in the faith. Who maketh thee to differ from another? Surely God's unmerited grace makes the difference.

The writer spoke to a large congregation of friends and relatives, using for a text, Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power. Two of his old Confederate companions who had fought shoulder to shoulder with him in many battles during the war between the States spoke for a short time of his bravery and obedience to his officers who were in command. He was then laid beneath the sod in the Bailey Cemetery to await the resurrection morn.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

John B. Sorrells was born July 4th, 1830, and died at his home in Monroe, Ga., July 11th, 1920, aged 90 years and 7 days. He was married to Miss Jane D. Triblo, who died July 3rd, 1916. Several children were born to them, only two of whom survive him: Joel, of New York, and William, of Monroe, Ga., who lived with him in his last days. He and his wife lived together over sixty-four years. He united with the church at Sorrells Springs about fifty years ago. He had been a subscriber of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years, and held to its doctrine as the doctrine of the holy Scriptures, absolute predestination of all things. He served his day and generation well, represented his county in the Legislature, served as Sheriff for many years and in the Civil War between the States. He had a good name among all who knew him.

The funeral service was conducted by his pastor, Elder Joe James, and the writer. He was laid to rest in the old Sorrells Cemetery in the presence of a large congregation. Many of the old veterans of the Civil War showed their appreciation of him by their presence. We shall miss him, as he had a wonderful memory, and was relied on for facts dating back over eighty years. We feel that he fought a good fight and kept the faith to the end, and is now realizing what the Lord Jesus had done for him. Our loss is his gain. May the Lord bless his family in their sorrow and lead them in the good and right way. J. M. ADAMS.

Deacon A. Adams was born November 8th, 1833, and died December 24th, 1919. He was born in South Carolina, lived in Georgia and afterward moved to Texas in 1873. He joined the Old School Baptists in Georgia in 1856, and was ordained deacon in Williamson County, Texas, in 1876, moved to Stephens County in 1879, and joined Shiloh Church by letter, of which church he was a member at the time of his death. Brother Adams was a very plain man, and loved quietness and peace. He died at the home of his son, Thomas Adams, who is also a deacon in the same church. Some of his children live in Georgia and some in Texas. I am sorry I cannot give all their names. We feel that we are made weak in the loss of this dear servant of God.

J. H. FISHER.

Mrs. Ella L. Raymond passed away July 30th, 1920, after a few hours illness at her home in Bowdoinham, Maine. She was born March 16th, 1851, and married to Elbridge Raymond in 1867. She was a faithful wife and a devoted mother. She leaves three sons, two daughters, seven grandchildren and many relatives and friends to mourn their loss. She united with the church at Bowdoinham over thirty years ago, and was baptized by Elder Hiram Campbell. She was firmly established in the truth, steadfast in the doctrine of God our Savior, never absent from our meetings except when illness prevented her from attending. Her house was a home for all lovers of the truth, and she could not do too much for their comfort.

Elder Z. M. Beal conducted the funeral services at her home August 2nd, where many relatives, friends and neighbors were gathered. The church has met with a loss which words cannot express, but we are sure it is her gain. May God comfort the afflicted family and reconcile them to his will. May we of the church be made to realize that underneath are the everlasting arms and God doeth all things well and changes not. ATTIE A. CURTIS

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Jefferson, N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting to be held on the third Sunday and Saturday before in September (18th and 19th). The train will be met at Stamford Friday morning before the meeting. All who love the truth are cordially invited to be with us.

GEORGE E. MEAD, Church Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Messongoes Church, near Hallwood, Va., will be held, the Lord willing, on the third Sunday in September and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Vaughn, of Hopewell, N. J., is expected to be with us. All who desire to meet with us are cordially invited.

J. C. MELLOTT, Pastor.

THE yearly meeting of the Nassaongo, Church, near Salisbury, Md., will be held, the Lord willing, on the fourth Sunday in September and Saturday before. All who desire to meet with us are cordially invited. J. C. MELLOTT, Pastor.

THE Sulphur Fork Association of Old School, Predestinarian Baptists, of the Primitive faith and order, is appointed to be held with the church at Beech Creek, Cass County, Texas, beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1920. Beech Creek is three miles east of Atlanta, Texas, on the T. & P. R. R., and five miles west of Bloomburg, on the K. C. S. Those coming on the T. & P. had best take the six o'clock morning train out from Ft. Worth, which reaches Atlanta about three o'clock p. m., Thursday. Those coming on the Cotton Belt take the early morning train Friday, which makes connection at Texarkana with the K. C. S. to Bloomburg. All who love the doctrine of the blessed Son of God are cordially invited.

H. B. JONES, Moderator.
J. S. McLEOD, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Indiantown Church, near Powellville, Md., will be held, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday in October and Saturday before. All who desire to meet with us are cordially invited.

J. C. MELLOTT, Pastor.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Primitive Old School Baptist Church of Olive and Hurley on the first Wednesday and Thursday in October (6th and 7th), 1920, the Lord willing. Those coming by rail will come on the U. & D. R. R. to Ashokan, Ulster Co., N. Y., where they will be met and conveyed to the meeting-house.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 13th, 14th and 15th, 1920. W. & O. D. Ry. electric trains will be met at Leesburg Tuesday evening. These trains leave 36th and M Sts., N. W., Washington, D. C., at 2 and 4:45 p. m. All lovers of the truth and ministers of our faith and order are invited to meet with us.

I. H. THOMAS, Church Clerk.

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(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 694 E. 125th St., or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

JOHN III. 16.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

There has been much thought in my mind on belief since the death of my little one. I have hesitated to write, especially on Scripture, because I know so little about anything beyond nature, and much fear that it may be presumption on my part, yet I am persuaded that all things are possible with God, that out of this stone (self) God is able to raise up seed unto Abraham. A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. Should I write anything that savors of the truth, then it is not of myself. This third chapter of John is the teaching of Christ of the necessity of regeneration, that is, second birth. How does the second birth come? "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Yet as plain as this reads to the natural understanding, without travail the Arminians are giving birth to what? Bastards.

"For God so loved the world." The word "so" expresses manner; "so," but how? "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Then the finite mind cannot by searching find out or even picture the faintest imagination of such love. Man by nature has love which he bestows on visible (earthly) things, but (by nature) for the invisible things of the Spirit has no love. Why? The flesh rebels against the Spirit and the Spirit rebels against the flesh, hence no love can exist. We have by the love and through the mercy of omnipotent God been at times given a glimpse of his love for his people. Again, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." There is no love like unto this love, hence Christ is God's love to his people. Who can comprehend the love of God? While I feel God has at all times reconciled me to his holy and righteous will, the flesh has at all times rebelled. Who can know and feel the love of God? Only those who have the Spirit of Christ. Christ says, "Without me ye can do nothing." Then it is in Christ we live, move and have our being. While I feel the hand of affliction has been laid

upon me, have I not more fully felt the Lord has been gracious? Then I am made to say with the apostle, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." The flesh must be purged, that Christ may shine forth. Brethren, we cannot look through the flesh and see Christ, he is beyond the flesh. God "gave his only begotten Son," hence there is no love from the creature (man) to God, but the redeeming love of Christ is shed abroad in the hearts of his people, and thereby returns to God.

"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The Arminians tell us the word "whosoever" is conditional; that is, any one can believe or not believe. Belief is the gift of God. If we have that belief, what then? It is Christ in us. Then Christ being the power of God, of necessity we believe. Who can resist the power of God? Abraham by faith believed God. Since faith is the gift of God, and belief is the exercise of faith, then Abraham by works showed his belief. We may take any man (Adamic) and make him believe most anything, false especially. Why? Because like begets like. "No man knoweth the things of a man save by the spirit of man that is in him." What is the spirit of man? "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him."—John viii. 44. On the other hand, we cannot make one single man on earth believe in Christ. Why? Like begets like. No man knoweth the things of God save by the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Then each and every one who believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of the only true and living God has Christ in him the hope of glory. Thus it becomes a secret, individual matter, and cannot be taught. "Though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Jesus Christ I have begotten you through the gospel" (power of God, Christ). Hence nothing short of the power of God will ever make one believe. When one is made to believe, he is raised from death in Adam to life in Christ. Yet we see on every hand missionaries carrying Christ to the heathen. "Whosoever." Who is the believer, and how many? As many as were ordained unto eternal life. Thus we see it is just as easy for one a day old to believe as it is for one a hundred years old. If we know anything about the Scriptures this is according to Scripture. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be [not made] perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." This sets forth clearly that God predestinated or ordained these good works before the foundation of the world, and in the creation of the world he created man and furnished him unto these works to make them manifest.

These few feeble thoughts have been a comfort to me in my affliction. If after reading this you find it a failure cast it aside and it will be well with me. I would ask that you excuse mistakes, which are many, and I might add that my entire life has been made up of mistakes.

Brother Lefferts, in nature I am the older, but spiritually you are to me a father in Israel.

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

K. C. SPINDLE.

OSKALOOSA, Kansas.

DEAR SISTER:—I wrote to you a long time a few nights ago, but I was so clogged with the load of clay I have to contend with that when I quit I felt it was not fit to send, and have not looked at it since. I desire to try again, though I still feel fettered with the same carnal mind, and fear I cannot write anything that will bring a response from you, and that is what I crave. Selfish, is it not? But for so long I have felt such a lonely longing for a fresh token of God's love, which I always feel that he has sent me when I receive a message of remembrance from one of his little ones. Yet when I think how poor and hard-working they nearly all are, and how unworthy I am of their notice, I know I ought not expect anything from them. I wonder why I do not feel the blessing of the poor in spirit, for I think in that respect, as well as every other way, I am poorer than any, and instead of possessing the kingdom of heaven, feel that I am altogether unfit for a place in it. Surely there is no one there who has more cause for love and gratitude to the children of the kingdom than I have, for their kindness and forbearance in allowing me to dwell among them. I have not heard from sister Pultz with the usual promptness she has shown in sending her loving messages to me, and I am wondering if her health is much worse and she is too sick to write. Again, I think I have perhaps offended and tired every one, and it is no matter of wonder I am left to feel so lonely and forsaken. I do know that the Lord has been good to me beyond what I can ever expect or deserve in this life, and sometimes as I am rushing here and yonder about my work I think I have wonderful things to write when I have time, but often when an opportunity presents itself I seem to be completely blank and shut up, and while I may say, "I'm fettered and chained up in clay, and I struggle and pant to be free," I have to learn over and over again that when He shuts, none can open. I may go ahead and try to write any way, but it will be like this and the other, unfit to send to any one. O, what must a poor, hungry, weary sinner do?

"Friend of the friendless and the faint,
Where shall I lodge my deep complaint?
Where but with thee, whose open door
Calls the helpless and the poor?

Did ever mourner plead with thee,
And thou refuse that mourner's plea?
Does not the word still fixed remain,
That none shall seek the Lord in vain?

That were a grief I could not bear,
Didst thou not hear and answer prayer.
A prayer-hearing, answering God
Supports me under every load.

Poor though I am, despised, forgot,
Yet God, my God, forgets me not;
And he is safe, and must succeed,
For whom the Lord vouchsafes to plead."

O, must I not endeavor to wait patiently for the Lord, in the hope that he will incline unto me and take me up out of the low, dark places, and, as I have hoped in times past, set my feet upon the Rock of my salvation and establish my going in the highway where none but the redeemed of the Lord shall ever walk? So I can only hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord, then, if it is his will, he will enable me to write something that will be a message of cheer and comfort, as I long to do, for there is nothing so dear to me as the communion of saints; and they, being made in the likeness of a tender and merciful God, are ready to hear and sympathize with the cry of the destitute.

The day is nearly here that the world calls Thanksgiving day. Sometimes I think it is as much or more of a mockery

than Christmas day. A few will go through a special form of worship, but most of them will make it an occasion of riotous living and indulge their lust even more on that day than any other. I sometimes feel sad to see the Lord's people fall in and help celebrate their man-made feast days, as I have often been guilty of doing myself, but sincerely hope it is only an outward form, and not of the heart, any more than we can observe their pretended sabbath day. As law-abiding citizens we must lay aside our work on the day that was set up by a pope as the sabbath, yet we are told to let no man judge us in respect of holy days or sabbath days, which at best are only shadows. Sometimes I think when we are thus subject to ordinances after the doctrines and commandments of men is when the Lord's people play the harlot and worship strange gods. Well may the Lord say, "For of old time I have broken thy yoke, and burst thy bands; and thou saidst, I will not transgress; when upon every high hill, and under every green tree, thou wanderest, playing the harlot. Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed; how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?" I have thought a great deal on this of late, and I have thought that these special high days are the high hills, the many special feast days are the green trees, and whenever we wander among them or help observe any of the institutions men have set up in the name of God, then we are joining ourselves to idols—to a degenerate plant of a vine that is not recognized of God to be of him; it is showing love to strangers. I sometimes reflect on the absurd way in which Easter is celebrated. A special form of worship is to be gone through, and all must have new hats and fine clothes, or they are ashamed to go to commemorate what they vainly suppose to be the anniversary of the resurrection of One who was born in a stable and laid in the ox-stall. There was no room for him in the fine inns, any more than there would be among them in their fine church-houses to-day if he should come among them as he was while here, a poor wayfaring man of grief, with not even a place to lay his head. Could he feel that all this finery was a fitting tribute to the memory of one so poor as that? It seems to me that to remember and act upon the suggestion in his words when he said, "The poor ye have always with you," would be more pleasing in his sight. How can they think that a movable feast day, which comes sometimes in one month and sometimes in another, could be the anniversary day of His resurrection? Christmas used to be observed at different times, so I have read, but the pope decided that as it was a celebration of the birth of Christ it would be more consistent to have it on a certain day of the year. It was the pope Constantine, I think, who decided that the first day of the week should be observed as the sabbath, and how strange it is to think how nearly all the peoples of the world have allied themselves with this "degenerate plant of a strange vine" unto the Lord. He says, "Bring no more vain oblations: incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with: it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear." Then think of the word Christmas, or Christ mass, as

the Catholics say of other masses. When their friends die they must have mass. I was present once at a funeral when they had what I think they called "high requiem mass." They must pray for the dead, that they may pass safely through purgatory. I lived by a Catholic old lady who lost her only daughter. She would often come to me with her grief, and when I tried to comfort her she would say, "O, drop a prayer for my poor child, won't you?" O, dear people of the one true God, does the Lamb of God, the Savior of sinners, need any mass, any prayers to be said by poor sinners for him, when he said to the thief on the cross, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise," not in purgatory? Yet I presume we all join in this form of mockery to a greater or lesser degree. Even the sending of gifts is carried to extremes. It is true that some little trifle often shows a loving remembrance which touches a tender chord in the heart more than all the "vain oblations" that could be brought; but the ones who are able to make gifts give nothing very expensive to any but those who are able to make expensive returns, and sometimes they will sit down and calculate what may be the cost of each article, and they are valued accordingly. Is there anything Christlike about it, or anything that is of honor to him? If there is, and it is right to do so on one day, it is equally applicable to every day. But the great question with me is, Ought the people of God to join in these things, "which things indeed have a show of wisdom in will worship"? Paul said to the foolish Galatians, "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire to be again in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain."

Dear sister, these things have been much on my mind, and I have longed to ask some one if I am right in thinking of them as I do. Does it not seem to us, who have been taught better things, that those who are thus partakers with the old mother of harlots of these things, these ordinances which all are to perish with the using, have missed the substance and are grasping at shadows? Behold now the accepted time; behold now the day of salvation. (I have left out the supplied words.) Is not this the day of salvation to us, the day that the Lord, not man, has made? In it we will rejoice and be glad with constant thanksgiving and praise, because it is the antitypical sabbath of rest to us, a rest that remains to us. We will never have to go to work again under the beggarly elements of the law, for unto us "is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord," and with continual thanksgiving and adoration we would commemorate his birth by singing, Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; the Dayspring from on high hath visited us, walking and dwelling in us to guide our feet in the way of peace. That is the kind of sabbath day I believe in, a sabbath that remains. It is also a day of thanksgiving and praise to every weary, heavy laden soul that is brought into such a glorious rest. O, I wish I could write, but

> "Weak is the effort of my heart,
> And cold my warmest thought,
> But when I see thee as thou art
> I'll praise thee as I ought."

Now, dear sister McKinney, if I do not look at this too much maybe I will send it to you to read and throw into the wastebasket if you wish, and it will be

all right with me, but will you in christian charity and faithfulness write to me and tell me all that I have said amiss? for I know I cannot write as I wish, and I often wonder if the thoughts I have are right, or if it is right for me to have such thoughts. I shall have to still say I am, I hope, your unworthy sister in love of the truth as it is in Jesus, but O so little and poor.

MARY ELLISON.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, July 25, 1920.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have had a desire to write you for some time, and at last am making the attempt. So often our intentions are very far from the results of our actions. In the attempt to reassure ourselves, to overcome the assaults of unbelief we may easily overreach the mark and wound a friend. If there were perfect understanding, if all things were manifest and plain, how different would be our judgments. Earnestness and zeal for a cause may be evidence of sincerity, but they are not proof that the cause is right. A brother may feel that to lose a certain point in his doctrine means the loss of everything. He may cling to it to a finality, and yet he may be wrong. I know how hard it is to give up beliefs which are firmly established through custom and tradition. In your position you must find great discouragement through criticism which appears personal. Few have policy or tact in presenting a difference of opinion. In fact, the very honesty of intention often causes a bluntness and directness of speech which is painful. I do not think the brethren really mean to hurt you; I know I had no such thought. My struggle was against the unbelief in my own heart. Remember that we love you, dear brother, for the truth's sake, and if we behave like fretful and foolish children try and overlook it as far as you can.

I am sending you a few pages which you can use as you see fit. In a desire to set things right I find we may only make matters worse. If you publish this please put it near the back of the paper. I am not entitled to a first place by any means, and I feel ashamed to find myself given it.

With love, in christian fellowship,

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

"AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?"

THESE words of the first murderer in trying to hide his guilt from the Lord are often quoted. They are used as a defence for those teachings which maintain that a man is held to account for the sins of his neighbor. This forms not only a basis for proselyting, but of religious coercion, and has resulted in grievous persecutions and even death for those who were being "kept." The Scriptures of truth do not, however, sustain such doctrine. "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand." The world is too much taken up with his brother's sins, and too little with his own. But there is an application of the above text which we may do well to consider. "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness, is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." If we love our brother we will not seek his hurt, but

if we hate him and have enmity and strife in our hearts we do well to take heed. Some think it their duty to tell their brethren what they shall eat and drink, when and who they shall marry; yes, even what words they shall speak in prayer and how they shall frame their lips in praise when the Lord fills their hearts with rejoicing. What avail is all this formal righteousness if the chief thing is wanting? "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." The same applies to the forbearance we should show our brethren. "I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven." The order of the church in dealing with a controversy between brethren is given as a last resort, not to be used on every slight occasion or difference of opinion. "Why do ye not rather take away? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded? Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren." The love of Christ will make us zealous for his truth, but it will never make us hate our brother. We, all of us, have a near neighbor who is ever ready to falsely accuse our brethren, to stir up enmity in the church, but we should shut our ears against him, for he is the great adversary of our Lord, and has no part in him. If you are afflicted, if you feel wronged, keep it in your own heart, lay it before the Lord in secret. Can you pray without first being reconciled in your heart to your brother? I think not. See Matthew v. 24. "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God."

Your brother in hope,

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

NEEDMORE, Pa., March 19, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed is a letter written by Elder McClanahan, and he gave me permission to send it to the SIGNS for publication, if you think best. I appreciate the letter very much, and believe it will be a comfort to others. I trust he may be permitted to visit us again. We appreciate his visits, for he comes among us preaching the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ.

Yours in hope,

JEFF. C. MELLOTT.

POCA, W. Va., Feb. 18, 1920.

DEAR BROTHER MELLOTT:—I received your good letter and was truly glad to hear from you and your family. Much of the time you all are with me in my mind and heart. I thought best to answer you at once, as I am not very well. There is in my heart a feeling of love for all who know the truth and love it. We may know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren, and this often gives me comfort, for of a truth I do feel to love them who love our Lord Jesus Christ, the friend, lover and Savior of sinners. Sometimes the question presents itself to me, Do I love them with the right kind of love? O, Lord God, thou knowest my poor heart, if not deceived I surely love them. How peculiar we are, and there is none like us, a people saved by the Lord Jesus Christ. Dear brother, if we are the sons of God there never has been a moment of time that we were not the sons of God. In the wisdom and foreknowledge of God we were the objects of his love and choice. He graciously and lovingly gave us grace in Christ Jesus before the world began. So we have fellowship with the apostle Paul, in that we, too, can say, By the grace of God I am

what I am. After the order of ordinary generation we know that we are sinners by nature, for we are the multiplication of Adam, and with Paul can say, In my flesh dwells no good thing, so with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with my flesh the law of sin. I am persuaded that every child of God is either rejoicing or sorrowing, just as the ocean ebbs and flows, rejoicing in spirit, feeling to trust God for all things, and are at times reconciled to his will, but ere they are aware their poor hearts that were full joy are now full of trouble, sorrow has taken the place of joy. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. In many instances David is a beautiful type of Christ, but in the quotations above I think it more applicable to the church, which is the body, of which Christ is the head. Again, we hear David saying, Do not I hate them (more than one), O Lord, that hate thee, and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? He says further, I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies. I am persuaded that David's feeling of hatred was against the doctrine of men and devils, for they are many, and every one of them is arrayed against the church of Jesus Christ, hence David could say, I hate them that hate thee, with perfect hatred, and so do you and I, for the institutions of men are false, and are set up in opposition to the church and her doctrine, which is the doctrine of Christ and his apostles.

I hope you may be able to get a word of comfort out of this poorly written letter. Cast the mantle of charity over my imperfections, for I am a poor old sinner, saved by the grace of God if saved at all. Love to you and family, and all the saints composing the Juniata Association. My prayer to God is that we may be found at all times earnestly contending for that faith once delivered unto the saints. I hope, if it be God's will, to see you all some time this coming summer.

Yours in the best of bonds,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

TULSA, Okla., March 7, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I am at home to-day laboring under a feeling of sadness and loneliness, I desire to write some of my feelings. I have been living in this city since December 13th, 1919, and can say with the poet, "Like one alone I seem to be; O, is there any one like me?" I have visited five so-called churches since I arrived here, and heard men who were called smart talk in a way they called preaching, but have not heard a gospel sermon nor received a crumb to comfort or satisfy my poor hungry soul. I have heard more about money than I have about Christ Jesus our Lord, but money is the god of this city, and strange it seems to poor me to hear people set forth something which the Bible says the love of is the root of all evil, and claim that God requires it to accomplish the salvation of poor lost sinners, when we read that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom the apostle said he was chief. Can it be possible that any who believe in conditional salvation are believers in Jesus? We read, His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. If he saved his people, why tell the peo-

ple that Christ is trying to save them and will save them if they will let him? We read again where Christ said he came into the world not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him. And this is the will of him that sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up at the last day. Again, he thanked the Father that he had given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as he had given him. The question that most interests me is, Am I one of that number? If so, all is well with me, for we read that God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. So if I am saved at all it must be by the grace of God. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Brethren editors, if you see anything in this that would be of comfort to one of God's dear children you may publish it; if not, cast it into the wastebasket and all will be well with me.

J. F. KINKADE.

CLARKS SUMMIT, Pa., Sept. 9, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Seventy-five years ago this first day of September I, D. M. Vail, was born. I was a sinner when I was born, I am a sinner now, and will be a sinner to the end of my natural journey. I needed a Savior then, I need a Savior now, and will need a Savior to the end. I was no more prepared for heaven then than I am now; I am just as fully prepared now, as far as anything I can do, as I was then, and just as well prepared now as I will be at the day of my death. I cannot make one hair white or black nor add one cubit to my stature. My eternal salvation, with all of my blessings, both spiritual and temporal, were decided or fixed by Jehovah in eternity, and what I do or do not do will not change them one iota. Salvation is of the Lord first, last and all the way through. This being true, it will all come out just as God designed it should. I for one am glad that my time salvation was just as much fixed as my eternal salvation. It would surely be a failure if left to myself, and I know that this is the doctrine of the Old School Baptists, east, west, north and south, as far as I have seen. I also know that the Arminians all believe in a "conditional time salvation" and identity of their families in heaven. Such doctrines belong with the world, and it is welcome to them, we do not want them. The editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES have told my mind exactly. We need nothing outside of the Scriptures to prove the truth. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God might be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. We do not want anything more or less. If we had needed anything more the good Lord would have given it to us. I have been trying to preach forty-four years next October, and am willing to leave it to the judgment of the various churches that I have served whether I have preached the doctrine of the Bible or not. If they think not, they have been very foolish for having me impose upon them so long. I feel to bid all that preach the truth and all that love the truth God speed.

Yours by the grace of God to serve,

D. M. VAIL.

DRAIN, Oregon, June 13. 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will try to draw in the many wanderings of my mind long enough to renew my subscription to the dear old paper that I have taken so long and feel I cannot do without as long as I live, although at times I do not feel worthy to read it. It fills my thoughts with great searchings of my old sinful nature. I am so worldly minded, and let the things of this world come between me and my Savior, that I many times fear I am not one of his chosen vessels whom he died to save, yet I have a hope in his mercy. I think every true child of God has such doubts, but all the loved ones with whom I am acquainted seem to show more of Christ's Spirit than I have. "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling." I have no place to go except to the feet of my Savior. When I think all things work against me I sometimes stop and count up all the blessings I have received at his hand, and am ashamed of myself and my complaints; I am not deserving of them all.

We still hold our church meetings at my home, and had the pleasure of having Elder J. F. Beeman with us at our April meeting. He surely is an able expounder of the Scriptures, and speaks in such a mild but firm manner that all lovers of the truth can understand. We all hope he can make us another visit soon.

Well, I only intended to renew my subscription, as I am a poor writer and do not want to crowd out the more able writers. I love to read after them. According to nature I will not have many more years here on earth. I am willing to leave it all with the Lord. During the past year we have lost three of our most able ministers: Elders Mayfield, Williams and Pate. O how we miss them, but our loss is their eternal gain. They were sound in the faith, and never shunned to declare the whole counsel of God. We ought to be thankful we can understand the truth when we hear it. The natural mind cannot attain to the great mystery of godliness.

I will close with christian love to all the household of faith. If I am saved it is by grace, and not of works.

S. MORNINGSTAR.

EROS, La., Feb. 1, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—My mind is burdened with a desire to write to the dear brethren and sisters in Christ, but feeling my inability to write anything of comfort I have tried to put it off. However, I will make the attempt, and trust the dear Savior will guide my mind, for if left to myself to pen my thoughts they will be worthless. I am too vile and sinful to do anything good. My way in this sinful world is dark and gloomy; sometimes it seems the little hope I have is clean gone, and then I think of His sweet promises to us, his chosen ones, and my hope is revived and I try to press onward; but am I one to whom those sweet promises are given? I often fear I am not, for, dear brethren and sisters, if I am, what wonderful love he must have to look upon poor me with an eye of pity, a poor, lost, undone wretch. My finite mind fails to grasp the depths of such wonderful love, but I trust my poor soul is sometimes permitted to feel and enjoy this great love. I mourn because I cannot praise the dear name of Jesus as I should, but am too corrupt, and all I can do is to beg for mercy, for I know he has all power and holds the brittle thread of my life and can do with me as he pleases. I feel glad that I am in his hand, and I trust and beg that he will keep me humble at his feet and from going astray after

the sinful things of this world, and when this warfare is ended and our souls wend their way into the presence of a just and holy God, may we hear the welcome call, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord, there to sing praises to his holy name throughout eternity. O happy thought!

Dear ones who may read these few lines, when it goes well with you remember this poor sinner in your prayers.

Written by a poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

LULA PRICHARD.

ALTON, Kansas, May 24, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I see that I am behind with my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so inclosed please find check for three dollars to apply to it. I am sixty-eight years of age, and the only member left of what was once a prosperous church, but all have died or moved away, so I hear no preaching except what I get out of the SIGNS, which comes laden with precious meat. I believe in the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things and the vital unity of Christ and his church, in which doctrine rests my hope of a blessed immortality beyond the grave. Destroy the purposes of Almighty God and the unity of Christ and his bride and you destroy all the hope of a poor sinner saved by grace through the will and purpose of a covenant-keeping God, who works all things (not a part) after the counsel of his own will. I believe the SIGNS to be sound in the faith, and truly hope it will ever contend earnestly for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints. May the God of all grace be with the editors to guide and direct them in all truth.

Your unworthy brother in a precious hope, JOHN L. BECK.

ODESSA, Del., August 31, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed two dollars to pay for the SIGNS for the year 1921, which has been of much comfort to me for more than forty-seven years. I feel I cannot do without it while I can read, which may not be long, for I feel my race is nearly run, as I am nearly eighty-two years of age. The writers tell my mind better than I can, and it is all the preaching I have in the winter time, and what my soul craves, if I know anything about it as I hope I do. I have experienced that in my heart which is not of nature, I am persuaded, but feel poor, needy and ignorant, and need the loving, guiding hand of the Father every hour. His watchful and loving care has been over me from youth to old age, blessings without number are showered upon me, and what do I render unto my God for all his benefits to me, unworthy of the least of his mercies, if indeed one of his children, the least of all? Underneath me are his everlasting arms, which have sustained and supported me through all the vicissitudes and trials of this life, and my trust is in him who is able to save; to him be all the praise. It has been forty-seven years since he was revealed to me as my Savior, the One altogether lovely. I love his name, I love his cause, and desire to live as a follower of the lowly Jesus' blessed name.

(MRS.) S. E. GREENE.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in October (31st). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1920.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
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ROMANS VIII. 20.

"FOR the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope."

In the preceding, or nineteenth, verse of this same chapter we read, "The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." The creature spoken of in the nineteenth verse is the same creature spoken of in the twentieth verse, so the creature who was made subject to vanity is the creature who earnestly expects the revelation, or making manifest, of the children of God. What creature is it who expects earnestly the manifesting of those who are the sons of God? Is it the unregenerated man or the man born again? The Scriptures declare that the natural man knows not the things of God, and that the things of God are foolishness to the natural man; further, that the eyes or ears or heart of the natural man have never seen or heard or imagined the things that God has prepared for his people. Therefore it certainly is not man in a state of nature who earnestly expects the manifestation of the sons of God, for this is a matter in which unregenerated man is not at all interested and which is infinitely above his comprehension. Then if it is not the natural man who looks for the appearing of the sons of God, certainly it is not the natural man who was made subject to vanity. The first man Adam was made of the dust of the earth. His being natural, and his life natural, there was nothing about him that was spiritual. He did not possess eternal or spiritual life. Adam was not made subject to vanity, but he was vanity. There is a very great difference between a creature being vanity itself and a creature being made subject to vanity. Adam was vanity. We know this because the Scripture says, Verily man at his best estate is altogether vanity. Adam as he stood in the garden before transgression was man at his best estate. He was vanity then, so the natural man must assuredly be vanity now, since his estate since the fall is vastly inferior to what it was before. So the natural man being vanity, he certainly was not made subject to vanity. Also, the phrase "not willingly" will not apply to the first Adam, because Adam in partaking of the forbidden fruit and following Eve in the transgression simply did what he wanted to do and he realized no compulsion or coercion of his will in doing so. Although the entrance of sin into the world and all the consequences of that entrance were included in the eternal will and purpose of God from before the foundation of the world, yet Adam did what he was willing to do and what his nature bade him to do, not knowing anything whatever about God's purpose in the matter. It must be evident to our readers then that the twentieth verse of this eighth chapter of Romans cannot refer to the human, fleshly nature. Let us look further for this creature who was made subject to vanity, and made so not of his own will. When the child of God, a sinner by nature in Adam, is quickened into divine life and born from heaven, he becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus. In this wonderful work of

regeneration the human nature of the sinner is not changed, but he becomes the possessor of a new or spiritual nature. Hence arises the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit. The strong man of the fallen human nature is bound (not cast out or changed) by the stronger man of Christ Jesus now made manifest in the sinner by the new birth. This man born again a new creature in Christ Jesus is the one who earnestly expects the appearing of the sons of God. He anxiously wants to know the marks of sonship, and whether he possesses those marks within himself. "Do I love the Lord, or no? am I his, or am I not?" is the query, not of the natural, but of the spiritual man, and this, the new man in Christ Jesus, is the creature who was made subject to vanity, not because he wanted to be, but because of God's reason or purpose, who has made this same new man the subject of hope. Paul, describing this new man, says, "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven." This is the exaltation of the new creature in Christ Jesus, lifted up from under the bondage of the second or legal heavens into the liberty and salvation in the third or gospel heavens. Paul goes on further to state that this new man in Christ could not remain in this exalted state. "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure." Thus the new creature was made subject to vanity in that he was sent a thorn in the flesh, the flesh being the vanity, or the old nature, which was not changed in the new birth, but which continues in the same house with the new man. The reason given for this new creature being made subject to vanity is lest the believer become exalted above measure. Now, the new creature did not want to contend with this vanity, was not willing to have it that way, as Paul goes on to say: "For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." In spite of the fact that no believer or new creature in Christ Jesus ever wants to be made subject to vanity, yet God, who has made this same new man a prisoner of hope, has a reason for it, and that reason is that the power or strength of God may be made manifest in the believer's weakness. Were our old human nature changed in the new birth there could be no such expression as, The good that I would I do not, and the evil that I would not that I do. There could then be no spiritual warfare. The error of conditionalism arises out of the idea that the human nature is changed in regeneration, and it overlooks entirely the fact that all the exhortations of the New Testament are addressed to the new or spiritual man and not at all to the human nature. The latter never can nor does obey gospel precepts only as it is subdued and carried about by the new man.

We have written these thoughts at the request of a brother in the ministry, and have simply given the best that we have in the matter. L.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER J. F. BEEMAN has changed his address from Claremore, Oklahoma, to Larkins, Florida.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, Sept. 8th, 1920, at his home, Leesburg, Va., Ralph MacNair Cornell and Miss Helen May Lefferts, both of Philadelphia, Pa.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, Sept. 1st, 1920, at the home of the bride's parents in the township of Dunwich, Ontario, Harry Young, of Toronto, Ont., and Mary Bell Blue, of Dunwich, Ont.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Aaron H. Cortright departed this life July 24th, 1920, at her home in Unionville, Orange Co., N. Y., after a long illness. She was born March 22nd, 1846, making her age 74 years. Her maiden name was Hulda A. Quick. In November, 1867, she was united in marriage with Aaron H. Cortright, who survives her, together with one daughter, sister Flora Titus, and two grandchildren, of Paterson, N. J. Sister Cortright was baptized by the writer in the fellowship of the Middletown and Wallkill Old School Baptist Church some ten or twelve years ago, and lived a consistent life to the end of her pilgrimage here. She loved the doctrine of God our Savior, and attended meetings whenever she could. A faithful wife and devoted mother she always was, and is sadly missed.

The writer conducted the funeral service at her late home, where many gathered to pay the last tribute of respect to their true friend. Interment took place in the Unionville cemetery. K.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

F. H. Richardson, Iowa, $3.00; Mrs. M. Perry, Ark., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting of the Indiantown Church, near Powellville, Md., will be held, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday in October and Saturday before. All who desire to meet with us are cordially invited.

J. C. MELLOTT, Pastor.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Primitive Old School Baptist Church of Olive and Hurley on the first Wednesday and Thursday in October (6th and 7th), 1920, the Lord willing. Those coming by rail will come on the U. & D. R. R. to Ashokan, Ulster Co., N. Y., where they will be met and conveyed to the meeting-house.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

THE Juniata Association is appointed to meet with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 8th, 9th and 10th, 1920. Those coming by rail will travel via Pennsylvania R. R. to Mt. Union, Pa., where they will change to the narrow gauge line for Three Springs. Train leaves Mt. Union 5:30 p. m. and will be met Tuesday. All lovers of the truth, and especially our ministering brethren, are invited to be with us.

M. F. STARR, Church Clerk.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 13th, 14th and 15th, 1920. W. & O. D. Ry. electric trains will be met at Leesburg Tuesday evening. These trains leave 36th and M Sts., N. W., Washington, D. C., at 2 and 4:45 p. m. All lovers of the truth and ministers of our faith and order are invited to meet with us.

I. H. THOMAS, Church Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Old School Baptist Church in Wilmington, Del., will be held, if the Lord so wills, in their meetinghouse, 1304 Jefferson St., on the third Sunday in October and Saturday preceding, commencing at 2 o'clock p. m. Saturday and continuing all day Sunday. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially brethren in the ministry. Those coming via B. & O. R. R. take Delaware Ave. car at the depot going east. Those coming on the Pennsylvania R. R. take Delaware Ave. car at the depot going west, get off at Jefferson St. and walk north two squares on Jefferson St.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

THE Olive and Hurley Church of the Roxbury Association will hold its annual two days meeting, the Lord willing, October 16th and 17th, 1920. Trains will be met at Ashokan as follows: east bound train will be met Friday night and west bound train will be met Saturday morning. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us at this time.

JOHN J. SECOR, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to meet with the Snow Hill Church, in Snow Hill, Md., October 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1920. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. Those coming from the north will take train at Broad St. station, Philadelphia, on Delaware Division of the Pennsylvania R. R., at 7:25 a. m. and 3 p. m. for Snow Hill. Those coming from the south, via Washington and Baltimore, change at Wilmington, Del. Passengers coming north on the Delaware Division from Norfolk change at Harrington.

JOHN H. TRUITT, Clerk.

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S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 694 E. 125th St., or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 88. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1920. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NASHVILLE, Tenn.

DEAR BRETHREN:—While sitting here in the factory office this morning, the 1st day of April, 1920, it was raining outside, and had been almost continuously since noon the 31st of March. Naturally I was rebelling and complaining in my feelings about there being so much rain, and in my mind I was saying, I wish it would stop raining. Immediately the answer came back to me, There has never yet fallen on this earth one drop of water that was not for some purpose best known unto Him who sends the rain. My heart grew hot within me, and while I was musing the fire burned; then spake I with my mouth, Lord, teach me my end, and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how frail I am. Instead of fuming and fussing about the mighty and marvelous ways of God, the most important thing of all is to know how frail we are. How quickly we come into the world and how quickly we go out. We come into the world at first not only frail, but guilty sinners, condemned by the holy law of God to the regions of an eternal hell. We are by nature aliens to the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, and at that time we are without hope and without God in the world. If by the eternal decree of Almighty God we are left to die that way the end will be eternal woe and misery, and the worst of it all is, that we are in nature ignorant of it all, and none but God himself can give us any knowledge of it. We will live and die ignorant of the awful consequences of sin. Then my mind went out to those words of God by the pen of inspiration, found in Isaiah lv. 10, 11: "As the rain cometh down, and the snow, from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." O how much there is in this text! It is higher than the heavens, I cannot reach it; it is deeper than hell, I cannot go down into it. But I want to say a few things about it, if the Lord be pleased to give me the heavenly light that lets us into the sweet things of God's word.

First, I will ask, Who ever yet has lived and seen the rain come from any place except from above? Who ever yet among all the human family, or all combined, has sent the rain or caused it to rain? Who ever yet lived that has seen the rain and the snow fall when either of them failed to wet the earth wherever it fell? We all know that all the rain and all the snow that has ever fallen came from above, and in every instance without the help of man. Then, that being so, the first thing we see in this text is God's sovereignty in sending the rain and the snow. Certainly it is a sovereign act of God, with none to help or counsel. Let us then say with the heavenly host, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Now then I will ask again, Who has ever yet seen the rain fall when it failed to wet the earth? That is the sovereign purpose of God in sending the rain, to wet the earth, with much or little, as it pleases him. The earth, then, is made wet by the coming of the rain; it causes the earth to bud and bring forth those things which are necessary for the living things that be on the earth. God alone knows how to supply them out of his unwasted fullness. Paul said to the Philippians, But my God shall supply all your needs according to the riches of his glory by Jesus Christ. The Arminian says, This God will do according to our works. How different; but one of these sayings is the saying of men, the other is the word of God. The sayings of men have no foundation in truth, and will not stand, but will with the sayer go down in death. God's word will stand forever. Just as the rain and the snow come down, sovereignly, so is God's word; there is absolutely no power or influence connected with it but the power of God; man is just as passive as any rock or clod upon which the rain or snow falls. Then God will, according to his own word, supply all our needs; not all we want, that is not his word; he has never yet sent that down, but, all our needs, and it is not left for us to do anything to assist it in the least; it is the sovereign act of God, and not of men. Now, will he fail in the least bit? If you can figure out when the rain and the snow have ever failed to come down and wet the earth and cause it to produce, then you can expect a failure in God's word; but men may say just what they please, God's word never fails. Let the poet tell us about it:

> "Deep in unfathomable mines
> Of never-failing skill,
> He treasures up his bright designs,
> And works his sovereign will."

Now that is it, and it is so suited to me, a poor sinner. He sent his Word down to this world in the flesh, and the purpose he had in that was to save his people from their sins. Is it not something awful the way Arminians are now by their sayings as well as by their actions giving this the lie? According to what they say and what they are doing God's Word did not do that, but it is left for them to do, and in order for them to do what God failed to do they must have plenty of money, and every sect of them has been and is yet putting on, as they call it, "drives," in order to get this money, and they have heaped together treasure and are still piling it up. Now all that is the work of men, and the money and love of money is at the bottom of it all. This will not fail to make them rich in this world's goods, but it will utterly fail in the salvation of sinners. That is their way, but it was not and is not now God's way. Their way did not come like the rain and the snow,

but it is all of the earth, earthy, and dry earth at that; it never had a drop of rain from heaven on it. But God's word came down from heaven like the rain, and it will accomplish fully in every sense of the word, to the complete satisfaction and in the fulfillment of the will of the sender, and save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him; and they will all come, every one of them, from the four corners of the earth. "For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, [the lot] and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all." This is God's word. Will they come? God says they shall. Who can hinder them? It is he who has scattered them, and it is he who will bring them. He says to the north, "Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth." These Arminians are sending men and women all over the world, claiming that they are going to bring the whole world to Zion. God says, "With weeping and with supplication will I lead them." These Arminians say, If they will accept and be willing to be saved. God says, "My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power." They put into their business the "if," but God puts into his business, I will and they shall. Their affairs are ifs and ands, God's yeas and amens. Theirs are to their own glory and praise, and God maketh the wrath of man to praise him and the remainder he restrains. That which God does not will never shows up, but that which he has eternally willed never fails to appear, and God never fails to direct it to the end before determined to be done. So it is a blessed thing to believe on the God of Israel; not the god of the Amorites or the fathers before the flood, but the God of Israel. This was Paul's God. He said, My God. Paul knew the God of heaven, for he was most wonderfully introduced to him on his way to Damascus. Who art thou, Lord? What wilt thou have me to do? Paul was made willing in the day of God's power, and he is set up in the Scriptures as an example to all that shall follow after to eternal life. Now as I am writing and musing on these things I am able to see the Word. Paul says, "We see Jesus, [the Word] who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor." How could that be possible if the salvation of sinners had not been accomplished by the holy Son of God? He would be put to shame instead, and the Father would not be pleased. But God has said, and it will stand the test of time and eternity, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." God is well pleased, and the word of God by the prophet will not fail: "The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his [the Son's] hand." Then all that has been, all that now is, and all that will yet be, has and is and will yet prosper in the hand of Jesus, who says, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore." The Arminians say, We have begged out of the people plenty of money, and we have plenty of means; go ye therefore. O what a difference! One has all power, the others none. The Old School Baptists are the people who to-day stand on the foundation of God, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. I

hail them, happy through suffering, and the God of all grace, who has called them unto his eternal glory, will keep them, establish them and settle them in their eternal home without the loss of a single one. May God open the eyes of our understanding more and more to his own glory and our good. Amen.

Yours in hope,

C. M. HOOD.

TEHUACANA, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will try to write a little for your consideration, and if you deem it worthy its room in the family paper you can give it space; if not, just cast it into the wastebasket and I will be none the worse nor think the least hard of you. I learn that we as the children of God are admonished to speak often one to another, and again we are admonished to forsake not the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is. Now I am so situated that I can neither speak often to my brethren nor assemble with them in person, but as we have this great medium of correspondence with each other I feel that I want to speak, and feel impressed to approach you with one of the grandest subjects that ever occupied the mind of mortal man. The subject is concerning the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. Before I go further I want it understood that I understand national Israel is a type pointing to spiritual Israel, and all the blessings promised to national Israel were pointing to the spiritual blessings of spiritual Israel, and all the curses and chastisements promised national Israel were pointing to the curses and chastisements of spiritual Israel. The question is, Who is it that blasphemes the Holy Ghost? I read an article the other day from one of the world's great men, who said when the Spirit of God had done all that he could with the alien sinner, and he (the sinner) would not heed, nor accept the terms of salvation, that he had blasphemed the Holy Ghost and had committed the unpardonable sin. I do not believe any such thing, and realize I am treading upon holy ground, too sacred for a poor finite creature like me to tread upon, but I hope I have my shoes off; that is, I hope I am actuated by the Spirit of God. Now I will make an assertion which may appear to some as being a broad one, which is this: that there has never been any one who blasphemed or sinned against the Holy Ghost who was not in possession of it. The alien sinner cannot sin against the Holy Ghost, for he knows nothing about it; he is not under its dominion, and a man cannot transgress any law that he is not subject to. It appears that the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost constitutes the unpardonable sin that is talked so much about by the religious world. I want to let it be known here that I do not understand the word "world" spoken of in the Scriptures as referring to this material world every time it occurs in the Scriptures; neither do I believe it has reference to the eternal world in the far beyond. It is said in Matthew that all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men, and it is also said, Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man it shall be forgiven him, but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come. Now the words "this world" here, according to my conviction, have reference to the old Jewish world, or church, and the words "world to come" have refer-

ence to the gospel world in which we are living. I read of some that I understand blasphemed the Holy Ghost, and thereby committed the unpardonable sin. We read in the thirteenth chapter of 1st Kings that the prophet called the man of God heeded a false prophet, and sinned in doing just what the Lord told him not to do, and he was slain by a lion. He had blasphemed against the Holy Ghost, and it was not forgiven him in the world in which he was living, that is, the old Jewish world. Just so concerning Baal's prophets that Elijah slew, which we read of in the eighteenth chapter of 1st Kings, also in the case of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, which we read of in the sixteenth chapter of Numbers, where the earth opened and swallowed them up and all that pertained to them. We come on down to Ananias and Sapphira his wife, in Acts v. 1. I understand all of these to be children of Israel, subjects of God's grace, who had gone into such grave disobedience that there was no forgiveness for them in this world nor in the world to come; but I do believe they were saved with an everlasting salvation, and while they are destroyed in this life, I believe they will be housed in immortal glory with the Father and Son.

Brethren, you can do with this as seems right to you. I have written from a pure motive, if I am not deceived by a false impression, which we are subject to. I hope you will pardon all amiss, for I know that it is written by an imperfect old sinner. I desire a remembrance by all the family. Pray that I may be given grace in every time of trouble to stand firm in the love of the eternal God, that I may be always ready to give a reason of the hope that is in me, and that I may never sin that unpardonable sin. May God bless us with every needed blessing that he sees fit in his wisdom to give us, is the prayer of this old sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all.

J. H. BOZEMAN.

WEISER, Idaho.

DEAR EDITORS:—The following letter from my daughter, Mrs. Eva Hughes, of Wenatchee, Wash., instead of a disappointment, brought joy and gladness unspeakable. Her mother and I are praising the Giver of all good gifts for his mercy to our beloved daughter, made more dear to us by this unmistakable evidence of her acceptance with God.

M. N. WEBB.

WENATCHEE, Wash., Feb. 10, 1919.

DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER:—I believe I will bother you a little while, if you have no objections. I am going to try to tell you something, but doubt if you can get any meaning or sense out of it, but will do my best. The summer after I was eighteen years old I was very much interested in what Mr. Weaver would say in his sermons. Sometimes he seemed to talk especially for my benefit, and sometimes I would be so miserable I would sit and cry nearly all the time he was preaching. One day, I very well remember, it seemed he talked for me especially, and I felt so happy and so much better that I could hardly keep my seat. After meeting I went up and shook hands with him, and wanted to thank him for the sermon, but could not say a word, and he only looked at me as if he understood how I felt. Then more of the people took my hand, and I felt so much like shouting that I hurried away for fear they would see how I was acting, for I did not dare let them think I thought I was good enough to be with them; but O how I did wish I could be one of them.

Ever since then I have been hoping that some day I will be fit to join their company, and at other times I doubt it very much. I came very near telling Mr. Attebery some of my troubles, but did not have courage to bother him with my little self. The folks used to ask me how I could keep from worrying when Wanna was so sick. I told them I could not worry about her, as I guessed it was all right, but sometimes it was awfully hard to say, "Thy will be done." This is the first time I have ever given such thoughts to any one, but felt that I wanted you two to know. I wished afterwards that I had talked with you when you were here last August about some things, but was afraid to. Your article in the February 1st SIGNS about prayer was very good. I do not suppose I have any right to bother the Lord with my troubles, but very often try to send him a silent prayer, and sometimes it is a great comfort to me anyway.

Your letter was almost as good as going to meeting. Yes, I certainly know I am a very sinful sinner, and that if I ever see Jesus it will be by his goodness and mercy alone, for I know I am too sinful to help myself even in this life, without his aid. I have often wished I could be as good as I always felt mother to be, and have asked Jesus many times to have mercy on my poor sinful soul. Sometimes I would feel for a little while as if I had to tell some one my troubles, but then I would lose courage before I could get a letter written and mailed. I have written a few times and then burned the letters, for I would feel so little and unworthy I could not burden any one. Then I would try to tell the Savior, and sometimes would receive a little comfort.

I know this is a very meaningless letter, but it is the best I can do, and I felt like trying to tell you a few of my troubles. I expect you will be more disappointed this time than you were with my other, but you see I cannot help it. I sometimes wonder if I do worry enough, but then I am as I am.

EVA.

KELLY CORNERS, N. Y., Feb. 5, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It was with sorrow I read in the SIGNS of sister Effie E. Johnson's death. The inclosed letter was written the day after she was baptized, and might be of interest to the readers of the SIGNS if you should see fit to publish it.

Yours unworthily,

GEORGE RUSTON.

SALISBURY, Maryland.

DEAR ELDER RUSTON AND WIFE:—No doubt you think I am never going to write you again, but often have I tried, and nothing could I write, but I hope you will be glad to hear I have been given strength to go before the church and tell them what comfort and peace I have been given by our blessed Redeemer. I was received and baptized yesterday, and what a beautiful day it was to me, though it was raining. Dear Elder Francis was so beautiful to me. I went feeling very unworthy, but I just could not stay away any longer. I looked anxiously for Saturday to come, and, as you know, the churches have been closed, as influenza is raging, and I cannot tell you how I felt when I got there and learned they did not think the house would be opened. I felt that I never could come home without telling them how I longed to be with them, and when they did open the door I felt like saying, It is all for me, and I must go and tell them; if they do not receive me it is all right; I hope I

will be guided and directed by my dear Savior's right hand. O how I long to be like him. He is all and in all to me, and without him I can do nothing. How I have tried to be found doing the right thing, but find myself in things I hate. Do pray for me that I may be kept at my Savior's feet pleading to be guided by his dear right hand.

I was hoping to meet you at the association at Broad Creek, but to my grief it has been postponed, but, on the other hand, I feel it is for some good purpose. This world is full of trouble, and we have many sick, some of whom are almost destitute.. How I long to see you, for I feel I could tell you much.

My little boy and I have not had the influenza, but are liable to take it I suppose. I am glad I feel no fear of it. I hope you and all are well.

Write me when you find time.

Unworthily,

EFFIE E. JOHNSON.

CARTHAGE, Mo., March 7, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The pink slip on my SIGNS admonishes me that my subscription has almost expired, and, contrary to my habit of late, I am forwarding renewal before falling behind. It was very kind of you to keep sending it to me when I so carelessly omitted payment, and I thank you. Circumstances compelled me to be a traveler much of the time between January, 1917, and October, 1919, but we hope we have now found a place where climatic conditions will be such that we can keep our home here as long as we live. There are many flourishing organizations in this little city doing much in the way of attempting to improve physical conditions at home and abroad, and if not coupled with the doctrine that they are "winning souls for Christ" one could readily join in with them. In many ways they seem more zealous in applying the principles of christianity to the every day affairs of life than our own people, and we have "Christian Scientists," and not far away disciples of Pastor Russell, so that those who are advertising this Ozark region so extensively might truthfully say that here one can have religion "to taste." I feel that in the midst of so many isms nothing but the Spirit of Christ shed abroad in the heart can keep us in the narrow way. The Quaker poet, Whittier, realized this when he said,

> "From books and men apart,
> I turn to the still witness in my heart,
> Waiting with reverence to behold
> The eternal beauty new and old."

So did the inspired writer when he said, The carnal mind is not subject to God's law, neither indeed can be. This Scripture is especially applicable when we consider the doctrine of predestination. Philosophers, moved only by the carnal mind, among heathen as well as among christian nations, have accepted this as the only logical explanation of the universe and its attendant phenomena. The carnal mind, ever inquisitive and presumptuous, goes on and says that if God is the author of all events he has brought sin into the world and the sinner is blameless. The carnal mind cannot extricate us from this dilemma, for there is no law of human reason more fixed than that where there is no volition there is no responsibility. But what says the broken and contrite heart, into which the light of gospel truth has shined? "God be merciful to me a sinner;" "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." Many more passages of divine truth express the self-loathing of those who have been quickened into spiritual life. In the moments of grief

for the sins we have committed never once do we say we were moved by God to do wrong; we feel the guilt upon ourselves, and that only God's free pardon can reach our case. The carnal mind and its conclusions are entirely forgotten. Trying to solve spiritual problems by carnal reason leads many into sorrowful and useless controversies.

There are a few Primitive Baptists in this region, and an organization of them that has been holding its meetings at Joplin, which is in the neighborhood of twenty miles from here. It may be reached from Carthage by an interurban electric car line. A movement is on foot to bring the meetings much nearer this place, to a point where more people would be accommodated. The Baptists seem to be most whole-hearted in the welcome they give to strangers. Elder Odell, of Oklahoma, serves this congregation.

The editorial in the last SIGNS on the subject of "Spiritism" certainly is timely and correct in its conclusions as to the bad and dangerous effects of that science, or whatever it is.

Your sister in hope,

GRACE VEECH SMITH.

LANCASTER, N. Y., Sept. 25, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription to our dear family paper has expired, I am sending a post-office money order for two dollars for renewal. It is a great comfort to receive the paper twice each month and read of the Lord's dealings with his people, of whom I hope I am one, though the least of all. I am so located that I have no opportunity of hearing the gospel I love preached, so I doubly enjoy the splendid editorials and letters written by those of like precious faith. Doubts and fears often possess my mind, and I seem so full of all that is worthless that the hope I have seems at such times so small that I wonder whether I am one of the Lord's chosen ones at all; but when I seem to be in the depths of darkness and can only cry out, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner, then the light shines out of the darkness and that still small voice says, Be of good cheer; be not afraid, it is I; then I can rejoice, for I know that my Redeemer liveth. Then the clouds roll away, and he maketh me to lie down in green pastures, he leadeth me beside the still waters. My hope is revived and my cup runneth over. Then I wonder why these joys should be mine, for the good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak, but his grace is sufficient for us, and by his strength are we kept from falling. In fear and trembling we journey on, fearing lest we fall into the pit and not daring to take one step alone. But his grace is our stay, and by faith we shall run and not be weary, walk and not faint; and as faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, by our faith we rejoice in him who endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now seated on the right hand of the Father, there to make intercession for his people.

I have written more than I intended when I began, so will close.

Hoping the Lord will prosper you both in your labors, and bless you with many years in the service of his people, I remain your unworthy brother in a precious faith, W. T. GUERNSEY.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in October (31st). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1920.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

VITAL UNITY.

"AND Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man."—Genesis ii. 23.

"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"—Luke xxiv. 26.

Having been requested to write upon the subject embraced in the above Scripture, we shall endeavor to do so with such ability as the Lord may give us. The subject is vast, sublime and of the greatest importance to the Lord's children, though many of his children have failed to see clearly this vital relationship between Christ and his people, so wonderfully set forth in the Scripture at the head of this article. That lack of sight, however, does not make them less the children of God, nor does it make this point of doctrine less God's eternal truth. The truth of God is an endless chain, so to speak, taking in every point of doctrine, order and practice. Anything, therefore, outside of this chain cannot be connected thereto, nor can anything of the chain be taken from it. It is just as the Lord made it, and will stand as made.

Adam was created and made according to God's purpose and plan, regardless of desire, willingness or objection upon his part. He was "the figure of him that was to come"—Christ. It is perfectly understood that Adam in his creation and formation knew nothing of Christ, hence it was not by choice upon his part that he was the figure of Christ. It should be remembered that the definite article (the) is used in that record of him; not a figure, as one of many, but "the figure." "So God created man in his own image, in the likeness of God created he him; male and female created he them," "and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created." There has been much discussion with reference as to the image of God in which man was created and made, but there seems no room for debate on that subject, as the Scriptures just quoted declare plainly that the union between Adam and Eve was the likeness of God, and in that union, or unity, was Adam, male and female, the likeness of Him that was to come. In their creation they were one, and their name one—"Adam." In formation they were one, male and female, or, in other words, Eve was in Adam; hence one life, making separation between them impossible, either in life or death. Eve being in Adam when the law was given, received that law and was as much accountable to the law as was Adam. When she, therefore, ate of the forbidden fruit she transgressed the law. The unity between Adam and Eve, his wife, was so complete that her sin was his sin, and had not Adam partaken of the fruit personally he would have been responsible for her sin and one with her in the transgression. The union between Adam and his posterity was such that his sin was their sin, or, in other words, when he transgressed all his children transgressed in him and all were under the same curse. Adam and Eve were one in creation, one in formation, one in life, one in receiving the law, one in transgression and one in death, hence the figure of Him that was to come. God, the eternal Spirit, had chosen in

Christ his people, or bride, before the world began, unto salvation, that they should live with him in glory, rather than in Eden. The choice of God of his people in Christ, thus giving them to Christ in union, to be his bride, made them one. In order that the world be peopled and the choice of God be manifested, the creation of Adam and Eve was necessary. In order that those ordained unto eternal life be saved and become manifestly the sons and daughters of God, sin must enter the world and death by sin. Hence the law was given, temptation came, the law was transgressed, and in consequence the bride, or God's chosen people in Christ, were condemned and the children of wrath, by nature, even as others. These things are all links in that endless chain mentioned already. The unity of Christ and the church (bride) as between Adam and Eve, was so complete, inseparable, that her sin was his sin, though he personally sinned not, and was responsible to the law for her debt. This we have shown in "the figure," that had Adam not partaken of the fruit himself, he would have been responsible for the sin of Eve. The law demanded perfect satisfaction for the transgression. That satisfaction meant perfect obedience to the law, even unto death. Adam transgressed and brought death to his race, or children; Christ was obedient even unto death, the death of the cross, and brought life and immortality to the chosen of God. He was made of a woman and made under the law of sin and death, to redeem them that were under the same law. In the coming of Christ the love of God was made manifest, yes, love to sinners, not because they were sinners, but because he loved them in Christ before the world began, and his love changed not when they were dead in trespasses and sins. Inasmuch as the children of God were sinners, the law demanded the life of Christ, the husband. Paul, in speaking of the unity of Christ and the church, calls attention to the union of husband and wife, the two being one, then adds, This is a great mystery, but I speak of Christ and the church. We are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. At the appointed time of the Father Jesus came to do the will of him that sent him, and that will was that of all which he had given him he should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day. Therefore because of the unity of Christ and the church, and in obedience to the law, Jesus died upon the cross, paid the debt his bride owed to both law and justice with his own life, or blood, was buried and arose for their justification, and presented them without spot, blemish, wrinkle or any such thing to God the Father. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" It was his obligation as the husband of the church, it was the Father's purpose, plan and will. Inasmuch therefore as it was according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, the whole church must answer his question and say, Yes, Christ ought to have suffered and to enter into his glory. The church is the glory of Christ, and in the midst of her he sings praises to God for the gift and for the purpose he purposed in himself before the world was, that through his blood she should be holy and without blame before the Father in love. These glorious matters of redemption were not revealed to Moses, the Israelites and their children, but were secret things known to God in that age of the world. They had the law, and legal things were revealed that they should do all the works of that law,

but the redeemed bride has the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It was because the old covenant did not have and reveal gospel things that the disciples were fools and slow of heart to believe what the Scriptures declared, in prophecy, of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. The term "fools" means without understanding. After saying these things to them, Jesus began with Moses and opened the Scriptures, which had been hid from the beginning, to their understanding. In this he made darkness light, crooked things straight and rough places smooth.

Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways. How good it is to see the life-standing of the Lord's people in Christ, while in Adam they die. K.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder L. L. Schenck.)

The Elders and messengers of the First Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association called Kansas, unto the churches composing her body, greeting and christian salutation.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—In presenting this, our annual Circular Letter, we hope we do it in the fear and love of Israel's God, whom we presume to worship. We can feel within us no inclination to depart from our former custom or doctrine, which we have practiced and preached ever since our organization as an Association, to wit, the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things, of eternal union of Christ and his people, of election, of salvation by grace, and all other principles of Bible doctrine, as have been promulgated by Old School Baptists throughout all ages.

As a starting point we will refer to the language of the apostle Paul in the first chapter of his letter to the church which is at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children."—Eph. i. 3-5. The doctrine afore mentioned is all set forth in this Scripture, and is clearly borne out by other and corroborating expressions of prophets and apostles, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Let us notice briefly each expression of the apostle herein set forth. He breaks forth with an expression of praise and gratitude to God for the blessings he hath so freely bestowed on us. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." In addressing the Corinthian brethren he speaks of him as "The Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort,"—2 Cor. i. 3, and again bursts forth with, "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. i. 3. The apostle Peter in speaking of his abundant mercy is also filled with the same spirit of praise, and uses the same words to express his feelings: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Peter i. 3. These apostles are voicing the feelings of every heaven-born child when led to meditate upon the blessings and the unspeakable mercies of our God, and in effect are speaking as the psalmist when he said, "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad."—Psalms cxxvi. 3. The mode of the apostle in treating upon this point is conspicuous in the fact that he is telling the brethren, not what he has done for the

Lord, but what the Lord has done for us: "Blessed us with all spiritual blessings." This means that there is not one blessing overlooked or omitted which God the Father saw was for the good of his people whom he loves. All blessings, all things, he says are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. The blessings of life and salvation, the blessing of liberty to speak forth his praise, of preaching his everlasting gospel, the privilege of worshipping him under our vine and fig tree. These are not all, but they are some of the blessings with which God's people are blessed. The "all" may be briefly comprehended in the words of Jesus, when he said, "All thou gavest me," for he is our all.

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." The word "according" no doubt signifies, "in accord." All of God's works are in sweet accord. All things must work in perfect accord in order to fulfill God's eternal purpose. There can be no jar, no discord, no miscarriage in the purpose of God, else it forever disproves his claim to omniscience and omnipotence. How unseemly it would be if one of God's works should be out of harmony with his other works. The salvation and calling of his people are in accord with, or according to, his own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. They are "the called according to his purpose."—Rom. viii. 28. "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world." —Acts xv. 18. His works in this present day are the fulfillment of, or according to, his eternal purpose. Hence the "all spiritual blessings" of which the apostle speaks are in accord with God's eternal choice, "not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ."—2 Tim. i. 9, 10. God blessed his people with spiritual blessings because they are a spiritual people. It would be out of harmony with infinite wisdom to say a natural man is blessed with spiritual blessings. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—2 Cor. i. 14. They, the spiritual people, are in union with their spiritual head, Christ. In him and of him, and as a spiritual house are built upon him, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. (1 Peter ii. 5) Time cannot record the choosing of this people. They were chosen before time began. Eternal union and eternal election are in evidence here, and are in accord with God's eternal purpose. It is indisputable that if there be any union between Christ and his people it must be an eternal union or a time union. If it be a time union, it began in time and must also end with time. If it be an eternal union, it originated in eternity and it will endure throughout eternity.

"Chosen us." The field is too great to dwell in full upon the election of God in the limits of a Circular Letter, but from this apostolic phrase it is evident that God has chosen his people, and that in so doing he acted independent of any human means or instrumentalities, as has been said before, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace. This is the elect. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."—1 Peter i. 2.

"Sanctified;" that is, set apart by the Spirit. This alone is sufficient proof that the choosing of this people is alone through the wisdom and mercy of God. The obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ has effected the salvation of all his elect, for he was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. The sprinkling of his blood upon them is a token of their ultimate safety. "And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are."—Exodus xii. 13. The destroying angel can never enter where the blood of Jesus is in evidence.

"That we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Wonder of wonders, that we, a sinful race, should be accounted holy and without blame! We are not so vain as to suppose this is because we are better by nature than others, but contrariwise, we were by nature the children of wrath, even as others, but God, who is rich in mercy (here is the secret, brethren, God's mercy,) even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved). The washing of water by the word has made his elect clean, that he might present them unto himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. (Eph. v. 27.) "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow."—Isaiah i. 18. It is alone through the efficacy of his shed blood that his people are accounted holy and without blame before him in love. In this light the apostle addresses some as "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus."—Heb. iii. 1. Why should they not be accounted holy and without blame, since Christ, the antitypical scapegoat, has borne their sins quite away, and declared he would remember them against his people no more forever? O the wondrous display of love! "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."—John xv. 13.

"Predestinated us unto the adoption of children." In this expression is the indisputable evidence of God's predestination, setting forth in a word his foreknowledge and almighty power. All things were predestinated, because all things are foreknown of him, and he works all things after the counsel of his own will. It is not given to finite man to know the workings of infinite wisdom, only as

> "His providence unfolds the book,
> And makes his counsels shine;
> Each opening leaf, and every stroke
> Fulfills some deep design."

Each day brings its own developments. Thus "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge."—Psalms xix. 2. To predestinate is to predetermine or prearrange any time or event. Adoption is the process of making one an heir that is not born into the family. One that is a natural heir requires no adoption, and indeed the law would recognize no effort on the part of a father adopting his own child. "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."—Rom. ix. 8. The fleshly man then being not a child of God, is not an heir to his kingdom. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."—1 Cor. xv. 50. Briefly stated then, this adoption applies to the bodies of the saints of God. They are born of the flesh and are flesh. They can be made heirs only by adoption. The consummation of this event is predestinated.

It is fixed for some future time, and we are "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."—Rom. viii. 23. It is then when our vile body shall be redeemed from the grave, and it will be redeemed. As well might we expect the wheels of time to turn backward as to presume that God's predestination can be thwarted. The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. Then this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. xv. 52–57.)

L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator.
MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists, to the saints scattered abroad, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus.

WE desire to extend an invitation to brethren of our faith and order, who are in good standing at home, to visit us. And that you may know of our belief in the truth, we will say that we are a people who believe in the predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass; that our Lord Jesus Christ is God, Man, and the only Mediator between God and man, and that without any means or instrumentalities of men's inventions he works and none can hinder, doing his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. We believe in personal, unconditional election of the saints in God before the foundation of the world, and their spiritual life is hid with Christ in God, and as his body they are in eternal vital union with him, their Head. We believe in the total depravity of human nature, from which there is no recovery, save in the atonement of Christ Jesus, which was made exclusively for the heirs of promise, and they will be preserved through grace unto eternal salvation. We believe in the resurrection of the just and the unjust, all of which we find fully proven in the Scriptures. We have no fellowship for the many inventions sought out by men, no matter by what alluring or enticing name they may be called, or for what laudable purpose, in the minds of men, they may be intended.

Done by order of the Association.

L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator.
MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER J. M. FENTON has changed his home address from Atlantic City, N. J., to 5128 Master St., Philadelphia, Pa.

MEETINGS.

ON and after September 26th, 1920, the meetings of the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, of Hopewell, N. J., will begin at 10:30 o'clock, standard time.

Done by order of the church.

DAVID M. VOORHEES, Church Clerk.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 13th, 14th and 15th, 1920. W. & O. D. Ry. electric trains will be met at Leesburg Tuesday evening. These trains leave 36th and M Sts., N. W., Washington, D. C., at 2 and 4:45 p. m. All lovers of the truth and ministers of our faith and order are invited to meet with us.

I. H. THOMAS, Church Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Old School Baptist Church in Wilmington, Del., will be held, if the Lord so wills, in their meetinghouse, 1304 Jefferson St., on the third Sunday in October and Saturday preceding, commencing at 2 o'clock p. m. Saturday

and continuing all day Sunday. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially brethren in the ministry. Those coming via B. & O. R. R. take Delaware Ave. car at the depot going east. Those coming on the Pennsylvania R. R. take Delaware Ave. car at the depot going west, get off at Jefferson St. and walk north two squares on Jefferson St.

WM. B. TAWRESEY, Church Clerk.

THE Olive and Hurley Church of the Roxbury Association will hold its annual two days meeting, the Lord willing, October 16th and 17th, 1920. Trains will be met at Ashokan as follows: east bound train will be met Friday night and west bound train will be met Saturday morning. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us at this time.

JOHN J. SECOR, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to meet with the Snow Hill Church, in Snow Hill, Md., October 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1920. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. Those coming from the north will take train at Broad St. station, Philadelphia, on Delaware Division of the Pennsylvania R. R., at 7:25 a. m. and 3 p. m. for Snow Hill. Those coming from the south, via Washington and Baltimore, change at Wilmington, Del. Passengers coming north on the Delaware Division from Norfolk change at Harrington.

JOHN H. TRUITT, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 88. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1920. NO. 21.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PREDESTINATION.

I AM sending you a short article on the following text: "And he wept aloud."—Gen. xlv. 2. This is the language concerning Joseph, after all the bitter experiences he had undergone, from the humble shepherd boy to the place where he was exalted by the power of God. Is it any wonder that he should weep aloud? Joseph said, Cause every man to go out from me. The time had now come when he was going to manifest himself unto his brethren, and it was no wonder that he should want to be alone. God had brought him through all of the dangers and troubles to a place that he could now no longer refrain from telling his brethren who he was, and he said unto his brethren, I am Joseph, doth my father yet live? His brethren could not answer him. No wonder, for we must know that all their wicked conspiracies against him came again to their mind. They remembered of lowering him into the pit, of stripping him of his coat of many colors, dipping it in the blood of the kid and then showing it to their father to deceive him. The struggles of Joseph's resistance from being lowered into the pit, as well as all his wails and cries when being sold to the Midianite merchantmen, and being separated from his relatives whom he loved, now all came afresh to their minds, and we cannot wonder that they should be troubled at his presence. Joseph said unto his brethren, Be not grieved nor angry with yourselves. It would be very strange according to natural reason that he should use such language, but the natural man cannot understand it, and so he says to them again, For God did send me before you to preserve life. This was the truth of the matter, God had been using these brethren of Joseph's to accomplish his plan. They did not know it. They had no knowledge that Joseph was yet alive, but now after he tells them who he is he says, God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth. The years of plenty had preceded the years of famine, the dreams of Pharaoh had been interpreted by Joseph, enough was stored up that all should have a sustenance; God was causing all this to come to pass. Shall not the God of all the earth do right? There can be no doubt that all this was predestinated, and all came to pass just

as it had been foreordained. It is very hard for us to reconcile ourselves to God's power; in fact, of ourselves we cannot, but when taught by the Spirit of God we can then see the beauty of all his wondrous works, and are made to exclaim, as did the apostle, He doeth all things well, also, He ruleth in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. I am inclined to ask, Was it possible for this deliverance to be brought about without these wicked acts, these evil conspiracies of Joseph's brethren? Was there some other way that Joseph could have been exalted? In fact, we are made to wonder why the famine should have taken place, just the same as we are made to wonder at God's dealings with his people in the work of salvation. Was there some other way? The natural mind says there is another way; in fact, many other ways: develop the will, strengthen the judgment, cultivate the reason, lay hold upon God, and you will be saved. We as a people in nature are inclined to ignore God's work in salvation and come to the conclusion that it might have been some other way, and yet He says, I am the way. He has predestinated from all eternity the salvation of his people, just as he has predestinated all things that have already, or ever will, come to pass, and now he is manifesting unto them their deliverance. When holy men of God spake they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and they told of things certain to come to pass. This deliverance is according to the counsel of His own will. He says, I will work and who shall let it? Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or being his counselor hath taught him? Not one atom of the entire universe but what fulfills the exact sphere for which it was predestinated. You may call it purpose if it breaks easier with the brethren, as a Presbyterian minister once said to the writer, but it is predestination just the same. "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."—Acts iv. 26–28. Joseph's rule was revealed by dreams, Christ's rule is made known unto us by the sure word of prophecy. I heartily agree with brother Adams that we cannot unify any doctrine that denies God's sovereignty. I was much pleased with his and brother Vail's letters; in fact, they are all good. Let me say, brethren, Cry aloud and spare not. Deceivers are waxing worse and worse, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

If it seems this article is worthy to be used in the SIGNS and may be of comfort to the brotherhood you may publish it. Spread the mantle of charity over the writer, for I realize my own imperfections. May God bless you, with all of like precious faith.

Respectfully, E. D. ELDER.

SHOCK, Ky., Sept. 22, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—I see in the September 15th number of the good old family paper that while it columns are closed against controversy on the subject of the resurrection, they are open to any of the ministers to express their own individual views on that subject; therefore, after considering the matter prayerfully, I hope, I have decided that owing to my age (eighty-four) there would be nothing amiss for me to give my own individual

views in a plain, simple way on the subject of the resurrection of God's people, so as to let the Lord's people know my views on this subject, right or wrong. I do not flatter myself with the idea that every phase of my views which I shall set forth will be right; I am too imperfect for that, but they will be that which I verily believe to be right, or I would not advance them. However, in writing and expressing my views on this mysterious subject I shall have to give some negative declarations, and will say here for the first one that I do not believe there is a person on this earth who knows any more about the resurrection of God's people to a state of immortality beyond time than is written in the Scriptures; neither can they know any more about it than is written until they experience it. One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day; there are no yesterdays nor to-morrows, no succession of years with God. Jesus said to the penitent thief on the cross, This day shalt thou be with me in paradise (third heaven, see 2 Cor. xii. 2–4). This day, not to-morrow or next day, but to-day, for no such thing is with the Lord. There is only time and eternity, and we are on time's side of eternity, or a measured portion of duration; therefore we are possessed of mortal faculties, and cannot see any further into these mysterious things than it pleases God to reveal to us by his Spirit for our good. God reveals to his children in time everything that they need to know in time, therefore we know as much as we ought to know, but not as much as we want to know. There are things that God does not allow us to know while in this mortal state of existence; therefore to see or know how God's people look or are, or to enjoy that state or condition, we must be in the same like condition; we must be in an immortalized state also, for the apostle John said, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he [Jesus] shall appear, we shall be like him; [Jesus] for we shall see him as he is."—1 John iii. 2. It seems to me that the apostle here has made it as clear as the sun at noonday, that in order for God's children to see Jesus as he is they must be made like him. So, upon the same principle, in order to see and enjoy anything more than is taught in the Scriptures on the subject we must be immortalized also. I cannot believe for one moment that Jesus ascended to his Father with that spear hole in his side and the nail prints in his hands and feet. Jesus was crucified under the charge or accusation of being an impostor or deceiver, and not as being the very Christ, and when he rose from the tomb it seems that he said, Here I am according to my word, the same Jesus that was crucified and slain as an impostor. Handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have; thrust your hand into my side and your fingers into these nail prints, and see for yourselves that I was no impostor, but the very Christ. Jesus said to those cunning Sadducees who asked whose wife the woman should be who had had seven husbands, Now whose wife of the seven shall she be in the resurrection? for they all had her to wife, The children of this world marry and are given in marriage, but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more, for they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the Resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is both

our Resurrection and Life. That wonderful miracle of raising the dead daughter of the ruler of the synagogue. When Jesus came to the house where they were weeping and crying over and around the dead daughter, like we do over our dead people, he said unto them, "Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead."—Luke viii. 52, 53. I cannot discern any contradiction in this whatever, for she was as dead to her people and to everything earthly as she ever was or ever could be, but was as alive to Christ and in Christ as she ever was or ever will be; both are established scriptural facts. One was viewed from a natural or mortal standpoint, on time's side of eternity, and the other viewed from a spiritual and eternal life standpoint, in and on the eternity side; one viewed in the Adamic life, and the other in Christ and the Christ life. Again, the inspired Paul said, "For we know that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."—2 Cor. v. 1–4. Now all these wonderful things as contained in the Scriptures prove conclusively that God's dear children while they sojourn in these low grounds of sin and sorrow are possessed of two natures: human and divine, and when they have filled up the number of their days, this human life, with all its faculties and powers, is dissolved, and is no more, but this divine or eternal life goes on and continues everlastingly, forever and forever. Mortality is swallowed up of life, therefore there is no more mortality, but all is life—all swallowed up in the ocean of eternal life and love through Christ Jesus, our dear Savior, the hope and resurrection of all Israel, both the just and the unjust Israelites. This is a great mystery; we shall not all sleep (in death), but we shall be immortalized.

W. J. MAY.

INDEPENDENCE, Mo., October 5, 1920.

DEAR KINDRED:—I am inclosing you a copy of a letter containing the christian experience of sister Edwards, of Georgia, which I requested her to write me some weeks ago, and as it has been edifying and comforting to me I thought it might be to others who have been led from nature to grace by God's predestinating grace, which he so graciously bestows on the heirs of salvation. There is nothing more comforting to me than the experience of those to whom God has revealed his Spirit in their salvation, and thinking the household of faith who read the SIGNS would also enjoy her experience, I have her consent to send it subject to your approval, if it does not crowd out more interesting matter.

Your brother, I hope,

THOS. W. RECORDS.

LA GRANGE, Ga., Sept. 12, 1920.

DEAR BROTHER RECORDS:—Your letter received, and was a great comfort to me. The verses are beautiful; I do not remember ever having seen them before, and would appreciate the others if they are not too much trouble. In regard to writing my experience, I do not feel equal to the task in any way, spiritually, physically or mentally. Perhaps you would like to know something of my ancestors,

but all I know about them I learned from my parents, as my grandparents died before I had an existence. However, I know enough to thank God for such a heritage. My paternal grandfather was Nathan Woodall, and married Catherine Wall, both of Rockingham County, N. C. My father, Passens Woodall, was one of their children, born and raised in North Carolina. My maternal grandfather was William Wilson, of Scotch-Irish descent, who at the age of fourteen, with his parents and brother, came to America and settled in Virginia, then moved to Stokes County, N. C., where he married Elizabeth Vaughan. My mother, Prudence Matilda Wilson, was one of their children, and was also born and raised in North Carolina. After my parents were married they moved to Troup County, Ga., where they remained until called to "come up higher." They were members of the Primitive Baptist Church, and died in the triumph of a living faith. They never taught us to join the church and be saved, but by both precept and example they taught us there was a God and that we must be truthful, honest and obedient. They never taught us that works or deeds would save us, but that it was our duty to live right. They were blessed with three sons and four daughters, and more love and affection between parents and children would be hard to find. Blessed memories. My two oldest brothers and two oldest sisters have fallen asleep in Jesus, leaving a widowed sister older than myself, who lives with us, and a younger brother, who also lives in our town. From my earliest recollection I was a merry, happy-hearted child, while at times a pathetic feeling would come over me, especially if I heard a sacred song or was told some one was dead. My parents being christians and church-going people, I learned a great deal about the Bible literally. I entered school at the age of six, and was a lover of books. How often have I found myself standing in a chair by the bookcase, pulling down the books to see what I could find, and thus I spent many hours. Sometimes I would step to the table, open the Bible and read about the crucifixion, and thought what a terrible thing for anybody to be killed that way, but did not know the reason why. At the age of eight years I had read through the New Testament and learned many beautiful quotations, and could repeat nearly whole chapters. Not long after I had passed the age of twelve, our pastor, the late Elder A. B. Whatley, and a sister in the church, spent the night with us, and while sitting around our family altar this sister related her experience. After she had finished talking this thought came to me: If it takes that to get to heaven I will never get there. After I retired I tried to pray all night, not sleeping until nearly day. When I awoke the sun was shining everywhere, and I felt ashamed to think I had tried to pray all night, so I at once banished it from my mind, and it being Sunday, and our regular meeting day, all went to meeting as usual, and not once did I think of the previous night until the next day after I had come home from school. While preparing my lessons I felt awfully depressed, as though something was going to happen. I always had perfect lessons, but a greater problem, deeper than I could ever solve, was before me now. From then on for three months I felt so depressed that it seemed I could not live. My every thought was, Lord, have mercy on me. While at school I would try to forget it and be the same merry child, but when I started for home it would come into my mind, and I could

not dismiss it. One morning just as I awoke these words came to me: Ask, and it shall be given you. I wondered what more I could say. One afternoon while thinking over everything I stole softly into my parents' room and let the leaves of the Bible fall apart, and the first thing I saw was, "Bow down thine ear, O Lord, hear me, for I am poor and needy." I hastily closed the book, and knew it expressed the sentiments of one who was in great trouble. One afternoon a few days after this my sister, who now lives with us, proposed a walk, to which I consented. We had gone but a short distance before I was surrounded by such an intense gloom that I suggested we return. She seemed to be happy, and I tried to be, but it was impossible. In passing near the garden I called her attention to some peach trees which were in full bloom, and while I stopped to break off some of the blossoms she went into the house. My object was to pray once more, and while standing there pleading to the Lord for mercy I felt so depressed it seemed I could not bear it any longer, so I turned away and went into my mother's room, where she and my sister were sitting. I never spoke, but dropped into a chair. It was growing late, and I never saw a more glorious sunset. While the last rays were passing out of sight an impenetrable gloom settled over my whole being, and I felt that I was dying, and with hands uplifted exclaimed, Lord, have mercy upon me. My precious mother ran to me, and while bathing my face tried to console me. In a few minutes my father came in, and my oldest brother, who lived a short distance, and although not a member of the church at that time, I heard him in a whisper say to my parents, "She is under conviction." Still that was no comfort to me. When he left for home my parents followed him out in the yard. Now comes the most important part in my life. While still sitting there trying once more in silence to plead for mercy these words sounded through my internal ears, Your sins are all forgiven. I arose from my chair, and in outward exclamations tried to praise the Lord. My parents hearing me, came at once into the room, and taking me in their arms poured out their souls in gratitude to our dear Redeemer.

> ""Twas a heaven below
> The Redeemer to know,
> And the angels could do nothing more
> Than to fall at his feet,
> And the story repeat,
> And the Savior of sinners adore."

I then told them that I wanted to be baptized that night, that I could not wait until morning; but after telling me that it was impossible for me to be baptized that night I became reconciled to wait until our next meeting. Something strange had come into my life, until not a wave of trouble rolled across my peaceful breast. O the joy, the heavenly joy that filled my heart when I tried to express my feelings, but "tongue cannot express the sweet comfort and peace of a soul in its earliest love." Time passed on, and while I loved the people of God, all thought of uniting with the church left me until the following August, when one day after preaching, and while they were singing, "Come, we that love the Lord," the door of the church was opened for the reception of members. I was standing by one of my classmates when I saw two go up and offer themselves for membership, and the scene touched me as it never had before. While I had not the least thought of offering myself, all at once before I knew it, and while they were singing this stanza: "Let those refuse to sing who never knew our God,"

an inexpressible feeling came over me, and before I knew it I had extended my hand to Elder Whatley. I know not what I related, but was told afterwards that there had never been such a manifestation of the Lord's presence in our old church as on that day. O, is it true that I was "gathered into the fold, with believers enrolled, with believers to live and to die"? Baptism was arranged to be in Chattahoochee River at 9:30 the next morning, and never will I forget how I felt when we came in sight of the river. How placid its waters and inviting its appearance! The sun shone in all its splendor, and the very atmosphere seemed to be filled with the glory of God. O the precious saints that greeted me on that lovely summer morn. Even now I seem to hear the voice of our beloved pastor when he read the beautiful hymn, "Why tarriest thou? arise." I can almost hear the music as it floated out on the mellow air, mingling sweetly with the rippling of that sparkling stream, and while they were singing, "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand," my soul was lifted up, for I was going down into the water. The song ceased, but the ceremony, sweeter than music, fell upon my attentive ears. Soon all was over, I had been buried in the liquid grave and raised to walk in newness of life. Beautiful emblem of the grave and the resurrection.

My dear brother, the above is part of my early spiritual life, and now in brief I will give you a glimpse of what we call our natural life. When grown I married G. M. Edwards, a most worthy young man, whose love, sympathy and fidelity can never be excelled. About five years after we were married he joined our church, and again I was made to rejoice. Several years after our marriage the Lord sent us a beautiful little girl, whom we call Vera, and when she was quite young I became an invalid. She grew up by my bed, and was like a ministering angel. About six years ago she married, and has a most devoted husband, and one that we love, but how sad that she lives nearly two hundred miles from us; but the Lord in his wonderful mercy has reconciled us, and I have long since realized these precious words: "Be still and know that I am God."

I know you are tired reading this article, but please cover it with the mantle of charity. Mine has been an eventful life of afflictions and bereavements, as you already know, but I am trusting in the sweet promises of our blessed Savior. Please pray for us that "at evening time it shall be light."

In hope of a glorious resurrection,

NANNIE B. EDWARDS.

JOHN XI. 25.

"JESUS said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life."

Jesus and Martha, with her brother and sister, had doubtless talked of the resurrection before they were intimately associated together, and Martha had no doubt of Jesus' power. She had said, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Lazarus, a descendant of Adam, brother of Mary and Martha, dead four days, was restored to them as before, and Martha knew he would rise again in the resurrection at the last time. God had given Jesus power over all flesh. When born again of the incorruptible Word of God Christ is in you the hope of glory, Jesus being the resurrection, hence born of the resurrection, as well as all other graces of the gospel or testament of Jesus, which is the earnest of our hope. Jesus was made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law. When he

came forth from the grave and went home to the Father he became the firstborn from the dead of every creature, the first-fruits of them that slept. Having this faith and hope we groan within us, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body, knowing that the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption. All this is a glorious mystery; none by searching can find out God. I received it not of man, neither was I taught it, but by revelation of Jesus Christ, said Paul of the gospel. We may consistently in charity and love comfort one another with this hope, the end of all hope. The patriarchs, prophets, Jesus and the apostles spoke quite freely of it as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. We may not analyze the process of life, regeneration or the resurrection; that is the work of Him who has power over all flesh. In the new birth we are changed, become new creatures in Christ, hating the things we once loved and loving the things we once hated. With Christ in you the hope of glory you are possessed of and he is your life, redemption and resurrection. Your life is hid with Christ in God, and the world cannot search it out; secure in Jehovah, but weak in the flesh. We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be of God, and not of us. The same person is born of the flesh, born of the Spirit and resurrected from the grave. Although flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, "we shall all be changed." It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. Eternal life is a gift to the chosen vessels of mercy; it is not a spark of life that may be kindled or extinguished. When he gives it they shall never perish, says Jesus. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. The flesh and the Spirit are contrary the one to the other. The children of the flesh they are not the children of God. It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. We need not know how it shall be done, but he has promised it, he will also bring it to pass. He hath created all things for himself, and for his pleasure they are and were created. I am God, and there is none else; there is no God beside me. My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Dead in sin or laid low in the grave, there is no hope or help but in Jesus, the resurrection and the life. I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. I am God, and I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. Speaking of the new birth and the resurrection, Jesus said, Verily, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead (in sin) shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. As the Son of God, then as the son of man, bringing to light life and immortality. Marvel not at this, for the hour (one hour) is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man what great things the Lord hath prepared for them that love him.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

"Weak are the efforts of my heart,
And cold my warmest thought,
But when I see thee as thou art,
I'll praise thee as I ought."

Submitted in love, I hope.

G. O. WALKER.

POCA, W. Va., Sept. 28, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have a desire to write a few lines for publication, if it meets your approval. I have been blessed to attend two associations this month: Mates Creek, the first Sunday, and Friday and Saturday before, then my own, the Pocatalico, the second Sunday, commencing on Friday before. The preaching was good and God-honoring at both associations; there was no discord, but all of one mind, determined to know nothing among the people but Jesus Christ, the Friend, Lover and Savior of sinners. O what a pleasure it is to meet in an associate capacity to hear from all the churches which compose the same. Not to control the church of God, nor bind nor rule her sons, but to associate below with Zion's little ones. We do feel to thank God and take courage for such refreshing seasons coming from the presence of the Lord. O what a feast of fat things full of marrow when the called servants of God come from our sister associations laden with the good things of the kingdom of our covenant-keeping God! They are messengers bearing the tidings of good news to the hungry, thirsty, wayworn children, who often feel almost ready to perish. Solomon said, Strong drink belongeth to them that are ready to perish. It is true indeed that a good draught of the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things is very stimulating to the wayworn traveler as he plods along, most of the time down in the ruts of despair. The Arminian world thinks this to be a very dangerous doctrine, but, dear child of God, it is the most consoling thought of our minds when we can feel that our God is a God of wisdom, purpose, love and mercy, and that all things work together for good to them that love him. The workmonger says they will work for good if you will help him. We feel that the God we worship needs no help; he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. From generation to generation he is in one mind, and none can turn him.

In my concluding remarks I want to say to sister Mary Ellison that her good letter published in the October 1st SIGNS was surely a feast to this poor old mortal. Write on, dear child of God, for you feed the children who are hungry. I read your good letter twice before I went to bed, and felt to thank God for giving you such a message of comfort to the household of faith.

October 12th.—Find inclosed four dollars for two new subscribers. It does this old sinner good to get new subscribers for the dear old SIGNS. Yesterday I tried to preach from Psalms xl. 4: "Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies," with the ability that God gave, and preached a sure foundation for all the chosen in Christ blessed to that end, that they stand firm on the Rock, our Rock not being like their rock, our enemies themselves being judges.

Yours in hope of life eternal,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please change my paper from Seneca, Kansas, to Uni Place, Nebr., Box 176, and also please announce in your paper my change of address, and that I desire brethren to visit us or write to us. House number is 216 West 18th St. Phone number is Uni 332 W, if any one should desire to call us by phone.

Yours in hope,

JOSEPH FORD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1920.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

A MYSTERY.

THERE was a mystery which was kept secret from the foundation of the world, "hid in God," a mystery which was revealed to none of the sons of God before the gospel age, a mystery of which Paul alone of all the apostles was made a minister. This dispensation of the gospel was committed unto him, that whether he preached willingly or by constraint, still it had to be preached. Necessity was laid upon him, and there was a woe unto him if he preached it not. The whole work of salvation is a mystery, and no part of it can be understood with the natural mind. But there was a special feature of this great work of salvation which had been hidden until the gospel age, and this special feature of the work of grace was given to Paul to preach unto the Gentiles. It was for the Gentiles' sake that Paul was a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and while there were twelve apostles unto the Jews, we, the Gentiles, have Paul, who is the thirteenth apostle. This mystery of which Paul was made a minister he tells us about in his letter to the church at Ephesus. Now, the church at Ephesus was a Gentile church and Paul was a Jew. The same truth which was revealed in Paul was also revealed in these Gentile brethren. These Gentiles knew nothing about Judaism, and were strangers to that covenant which God gave Israel by the hand of Moses. This Mosaic covenant forbade the Jews to deal with the Gentiles. According to that covenant no Gentile had any right to the feasts or the solemn assemblies of the Jews; they could not partake in the temple service, nor in any of the sacrifices or holy things. From all these the Gentiles were shut out. He did not have the oracles of God, he did not have the prophets, none of the types or shadows, was indeed barred from all the blessings and privileges of the Israelites. Consequently the Mosaic law constituted a barrier between Jew and Gentile, it was a "middle wall of partition" forbidding intercourse and fellowship between them. It was a handwriting of legal ordinances enjoined upon Israel for their obedience, carrying with it blessings for the observance and punishments for the breach. But none of these blessings or punishments could ever be the lot of the Gentiles, for the Gentiles were never under the Mosaic law. If Jesus, therefore, were made under the Mosaic law he would be the Savior of none but Jews, no Gentile could ever benefit by the shedding of Jesus' blood. When the Scripture says that Jesus was made of a woman, made under the law, it is not the Mosaic law which is meant, but the law under which Adam fell in condemnation, which fall embraced all the elect of God in Adam. This fall embraced both Jew and Gentile, for there was yet no difference between Jew and Gentile when Adam transgressed. The obedience of Jesus was not confined to the law of Moses, but his obedience was unto the law of God, of which law of God the law of Moses was but a faint shadow, portraying in the temporal blessings which fell to the lot of Israel the spiritual blessings which under

the new covenant fall to the lot of spiritual Israel. Indeed, literally, Jesus did not keep the Mosaic law at all. That law forbade any work whatsoever on the sabbath day, and Jesus did pluck ears of corn on that day. That law said, Honor thy father and mother, and Jesus never did honor Mary as his mother nor Joseph as his father. That law said that any man calling himself equal with God was a blasphemer and was to be put to death, and Jesus did say, I and my Father are one. All these, and other acts which Jesus did, were looked upon as literal breaches of the law. But in the spirit Jesus did keep the law, and fulfilled to every jot and tittle its spiritual import; but he did far more, he obeyed the law and the will of God, so that his salvation is not confined to Jews, which it would have been had he obeyed merely the law of Moses, but reaches out and takes in both Jew and Gentile: all his people from the four winds of heaven and from the four corners of the earth, in every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue. Thus we see that the Mosaic law comprised a "handwriting of ordinances" which was against the Gentiles, being contrary to them, because they were barred from the observance of it and from the blessings or privileges or punishments of it. This Mosaic covenant made an enmity between Jew and Gentile. So when Jesus died it ended the old covenant. He took away the handwriting of ordinances, nailing them to his cross, thus abolishing the enmity. This expression, "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity," and that other expression, "Having slain the enmity" by the cross, both found in the second chapter of Ephesians, do not refer at all to the enmity of the carnal mind and the mind of Christ, nor to the enmity between the flesh and the Spirit, but to the enmity between Jew and Gentile, which enmity arose from the makeup of the Mosaic covenant which excluded Gentiles from participating in it. This enmity, this old covenant, had to be abolished before Gentiles could come into the kingdom of God. This abolition Jesus performed by the death of the cross. Resulting from this death of Jesus comes the revelation of the mystery kept hid from the foundation of the world, and it is thus: the church, or body of Christ, composed of both Jews and Gentiles, all one in the kingdom of God. Having broken down the middle wall of partition Christ made of the twain one new man. The "twain" means two, and the two are Jew and the Gentile. Of these two he makes one new man, or one new body, the body of Christ. All are members of his flesh and of his bones, all fitly joined together, growing unto a holy temple in the Lord, builded through the Spirit for the habitation of his honor and glory. The children of God are not destined to become perfect men and perfect women. No, never. The gospel holds forth no such promise, but we all shall, that is, all his people from among both Jews and Gentiles, shall ultimately come unto the one perfect man, and that one perfect man is the measure of stature of the fullness of Christ. We shall all become as we already are, molded into one body, the body of our Lord. Paul says somewhere in writing to the church at Corinth, Ye are all one bread. No loaf of bread can by any possibility be resolved back into its original grains of wheat. Each grain and all the grains lose their separateness when in the loaf of bread. Just so, only infinitely more so, the body of Christ while composed of redeemed sinners of Adam's fallen race can never be resolved back again into the individual men and women whence it came. Now this is the mystery which Paul particularly refers to

in his letter to the church at Ephesus: "That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body [with the Jews], and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel." This doctrine of the new man; that is, of the body of Christ, made of Jew and Gentile, a wholly new thing until the resurrection of Christ, that is the special dispensation which was committed unto Paul to preach. It was not in other ages made known unto the sons of men, but it is now in the gospel age revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. In some of the prophecies of the Old Testament, to be sure, there is abundant evidence of the bringing of the Gentiles to the light of the truth. Especially is this true of the prophecies of Isaiah. But that One body, or one new man, was to be formed of the hosts of the redeemed from among both Jews and Gentiles, that both were to be quickened together with Christ and to be raised up together with Christ, and both to be made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ; we say all this had been kept hid throughout all the ages heretofore to be revealed and made known in these last times, and was first made known in the ministry of Paul, the Gentiles' apostle, and was the special dispensation of the gospel committed unto him. This, the unity of the whole church of God in the one body of the new man, Christ Jesus, is the "unsearchable riches of Christ" which Paul says he was especially called to preach among the Gentiles. This oneness of Christ and his people, whosoever they may be in the flesh, whether Jew or Gentile, bond or free, Greek or barbarian, is the gist and kernel of the whole gospel matter. It is the fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined, on which God feasts his children in his holy mount. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. W. McClanahan.)

Dearly Beloved Brethren of the Pocatalico Association, and our sister associations with which we correspond.

By the request of our Association at her last session I am presenting to you this letter for your consideration, and as it may be my last opportunity of coming before you as the writer of a Circular Letter I hope to be guided by the unerring Spirit of God, as at all other times in my efforts to preach the gospel of the Son of God.

The Scripture I shall use as a foundation for a few remarks will be found in the second epistle of John, tenth verse: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." John's first and second epistles were on the subject of love, stirring up the mind of the children of God to love one another, they being the children of the elect lady. This love is by no means natural, it is a spiritual relation, or love. These children are the subjects of God's everlasting love, and they are the children of the free woman, the elect lady. Paul in speaking of her says, She is the mother of us all. The pronoun "us" just means God's children through all time. The Lord's portion is his people. He loves them with an everlasting love, and for this cause he draws them. Draw us, O Lord, and we will run after thee, is the language of one of old, and did not Jesus bring the same doctrine when he said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day"? How important for the servants of God to preach the power of God, and not the power of man. His unchangeable and

overlasting love for poor lost sinners is what brought our blessed Redeemer to this world. Brethren, I feel to say that God's qualified servants will preach the power of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God. We are taught to love the brotherhood by the spirit of love that God has given us to love one another, that by this we may know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. How comforting it is to see the children of God bound together by the cords of love; that brings them out on their church meeting days to meet their pastor and the members who compose the body, the church, to give to each other good measure, pressed down and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. To relate the dealings of the good Lord in the ears of each other is giving good measure to those of like precious faith with us, and let him that hath an ear hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. The bosom is the seat of reception. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." These are the words of Jesus to his disciples, in the way of a command. Now, dear brethren, do not we believe that our God is omnipotent, almighty, omniscient, all-knowing, omnipresent, in every place? Then is it not a fact that all things are working together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose?

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Mod.
J. R. BECKETT, Clerk.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in October (31st). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Pocatalico Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Sarah Church, Boone County, West Virginia, September 10th, 11th and 12th, 1920, to the sister associations with which we correspond, sendeth greeting, and love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED:—We rejoice at the coming of your messengers laden with the good things of the kingdom of our covenant-keeping God, who continues to remember us in mercy. We are but few in number, eight churches with a small membership. We trust it may be God's will to keep us bound together in unity of the Spirit and bonds of peace, and that our correspondence may continue in the future (in love) as it has in the past. We are anxious to keep up a correspondence with all orderly Baptists who are sound in doctrine, faith and practice. Our hearts are made to rejoice at the coming of God's servants, who he has placed on the wall of Zion to cry aloud and spare not, and to preach Jesus Christ the only and all-sufficient Savior of poor lost and ruined sinners, without conditions on the part of the sinner, for time or eternity.

Our Minutes will tell you where our next annual meeting will be held, and there we hope to meet you again.

Adopted, and ordered to become a part of our Minutes.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Mod.
J. R. BECKETT, Clerk.

HYMN BOOKS READY.

WE now have a supply of the small cloth Hymn Books on hand, which we will mail post paid to any part of the United States or Canada for one dollar a copy. These books formerly sold for seventy-five cents per copy, but because of the big advance by the binders we are forced to charge one dollar each for them, whether sold singly or by the dozen.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Sarah Elizabeth Woodell was born in Jasper County, Texas, August 16th, 1862, and departed this life Sept. 11th, 1920, at the age of 58 years and 25 days. She was the daughter of William and Susan Singletary, and was married to brother T. L. Woodell in Sept., 1882, and emigrated with her husband to Comanche County, Texas, in 1884. She professed a hope in Christ and united with the Missionaries, but became dissatisfied and united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Willow Springs about the year 1892. They lived for fourteen years near Sipe Springs, Texas, moving to Eastland County, near Nimrod, and put their letters in the Pioneer Church at that place, then moved with her family to their present home, near Rising Star, where she lived at the time of her death, having moved their church membership to Macedonia Church March 9th, 1918. She was a great lover of the truth, and was always present at her meetings if possible, going at times fifteen miles through snow and ice, saying it was meeting day and her duty to go if possible. Through the dark and trying times the churches have passed through she was faithful, and always ready to speak a word of comfort to the saints. Her house was always a home for the Baptists, and she seemed tireless in her efforts to make them welcome. She was a loving wife, a fond and tender mother and a faithful member of the church, but as the Lord thought best to take her away, let us bow in submission to his will, trusting he will give each of us grace to live as she lived, depart as she departed, sleep as she is sleeping, and be raised together with her in that great day to praise the Lord throughout eternity. She leaves a husband and nine children, five boys and four girls, together with a large number of friends to mourn their loss, but not without hope.

Services were conducted at the grave, where the writer, assisted by Elder G. M. Jones, tried to speak words of comfort to the sorrowing family and a large number of friends, using the fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians to speak from. Her mortal body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Sipe Springs to await the coming of the Lord, when it shall (as she trusted) be raised a spiritual body, to be forever with the Lord.

C. B. TEAGUE.

Mrs. Mary Megeath, our sister in Christ, departed this natural life October 15th, 1920, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Gabriella Leith, Aldie, Va. She was born July 7th, 1828, the daughter of Thomas G. and Phœbe Humphrey. Her membership was with the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, having been baptized the fourth Sunday in October, 1877, by the late Elder J. N. Badger. To the day of her death she was a consistent member of the church, and thoroughly indoctrinated in the faith and doctrine of Jesus Christ. Owing to advanced age and failing faculties she had not attended the meetings of the church for some time prior to her death. June 3rd, 1850, she was married to Alfred Megeath. Our sister leaves seven children, twenty-six grandchildren and seventeen great-grandchildren. The surviving children are the three sons: Herbert G., James Robert and Alfred Purington Megeath, and four daughters: Mrs. Ida Blanche Furr, Mrs. Leila A. Ferguson, Mrs. Flora O. Ferguson and Mrs. Gabriella Leith. Mrs. Olivia H. Lacey, of the Ebenezer Church, is an own sister in the flesh of our sister Megeath. Sister Lacey writes me of her sister thus: "She made her home with her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. J. Morven Leith, and both did all they could for her comfort. The last person she called for was 'Gabey,' as she called Mrs. Leith. I do feel so lonely. All my family gone, but two children left. Yet I am blessed; the Lord is good to me, so much better than I deserve. He knows best, while I know nothing."

At the funeral my mind was led to read the last half of the fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians, and to comment upon it verse by verse. The doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is the foundation of the christian's hope; it is the very fatness and marrow of the gospel of Jesus.

L.

Deacon R. McCorkle was born in Marion County, Ga., August 24th, 1851, and died at his home in Cash County, Texas, April 16th, 1920. He was married to Melissa Spinks Nov. 6th, 1873, to whom were born eight children, four boys and four girls, seven of whom are yet living. He united with the Old School Baptists at Rama Church, in the same county in which he was born. He moved to Llano County, Texas, in 1886, and in October of the same year he moved to Hunt County and placed his membership with Mt. Zion Church, where he remained a faithful and consistent member until removed by death on the day and date above mentioned. His first wife died July 11th, 1900, and he was married to Mrs. Ellen Webb Dec. 8th, 1902. He was a lovely brother and is greatly missed by the writer, but I shall not weep for him, as I feel sure that he is at rest where the wicked cease from troubling.

May grace, mercy and peace attend his loved ones left behind.

J. C. SIKES.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

John K. Yerkes, D. C., $1.00; Mrs. M. E. Bentley, Ga., $1.00; Mrs. W. J. Hardy, Kansas, $10.00.

MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting of the Broad Creek Church, near Laurel, Del., will be held, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday in November and Saturday before, Saturday meeting commencing at 2:30 o'clock p. m. All who desire to meet with us will be welcome.

J. H. MESSICK, Church Clerk.

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(Park Avenue Hall)

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Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 694 E. 125th St., or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

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OF

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."—1 Thess. v. 21. "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it."—Deut. xii. 32. cf. Eccl. iii. 14; James i. 17; Matt. xxviii. 20.

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Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 88. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1920. NO. 22.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MARK XVI. 3.

"AND they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?"

The Scripture referred to above is of vital interest to the people of God. It is in my mind at this moment to first consider the condition of the mind of Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James, as they journeyed toward the sepulchre of Jesus early in the morning of the first day of the week. When we read the chapters preceding this one, in which are recorded the trial and sentence of Jesus by Pilate and his accusers, one is thrilled with the wonderful forbearance of the Savior of sinners. All through this trial of Jesus the hearts of his followers were sad. They had witnessed his power in raising Lazarus from the dead, also the daughter of Jairus, and the healing of the sick, but now he is in the hands of wicked men and seems to be powerless to extricate himself. Is he going to allow those brutes to take his life? It seems to me these were some of the thoughts which passed through their mind. Peter would not allow such a thing to come to pass, because he cut off the ear of the high priest's servant in defence of Jesus, but Jesus said, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" In this we see what the will of the Father was concerning him. Now, as stated before, Jesus was tried, yet the judge said he found no fault in him; even the wife of Pilate called him a just man, and Pilate washed his hands in the presence of those howling Jews, indicating his innocence in the matter, as he thought, and told the Jews that the blood of this just man was upon them; and they agreed that this should be so, that his blood should be upon them and their children, and it was, and is so even to this day, though there may be coming a time, and I am inclined to think there is, when the Jews will again be gathered together; but this will not be until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. The Lord has directed the time of these events. The trial was ended and Jesus sentenced to death, and was obedient unto it. He was crucified and buried, laid away in Joseph's new tomb. Can any one imagine the heartaches of the disciples? We are deceived, we thought it he who was to redeem Israel, but now our hope is blasted, he is dead; but those miracles he did while he was yet with us, there

certainly was more than natural power within, or he never could have done those things, and we remember he said once, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again. He meant his body, thought the disciples, and we remember he said, "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again." Who can tell, thought the disciples, but he may return to us again? and there was a faint hope, but again they remembered he was dead, and a great stone at the entrance. Here are two Marys, who had brought precious spices to anoint the body of Jesus. This is all we can do for our loved one, and we will do this; but as they journeyed to the sepulchre on this memorable day they remembered also the heavy stone, and they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone? Now remember, they had no idea as they journeyed that the stone was already rolled away, hence the question; but when they looked they saw the stone was rolled away, for it was very great. Now as I have been writing there has been one main thought in my mind, but it seems I have had to write what I have written before I could make mention of it. This Scripture is to be applied to the Lord's people in this day and time. Are there not times when you feel that all this emotion is imagination? and do you not sometimes voice the sentiment of the poet when he said, "Where is the blessedness I knew when first I saw the Lord?" &c. It seems the poet had once seen him, but now he is not to be seen, and my hope is gone, sighed the poet, and you sometimes do the same. But the stone was rolled away, we are told. By whom? The record is that an angel from heaven came down and did this. Now the two Marys are invited to inspect the grave where the Lord lay, and they saw and were told, He is not here, but is risen, as he told them; and they were told also that he goeth before them into Galilee, where they should see him, and they did, and not they only, but the disciples also. To them he expounded the Scriptures, commencing at Moses, and their hearts burned within them as he did those things. With what did they burn? My answer is, with heavenly zeal. They realized that his resurrection meant theirs, that without his resurrection they were yet in their sins, as the apostle has written. But how do we know Jesus has risen from the grave? There is just one way we know it, and that is the way of faith. What is faith? It is the gift of God, and it tells us Jesus has risen from the dead and hath conquered death, hell and the grave for his people. What is it that strengthens us sometimes when we are almost overcome with trials, if it is not Jesus? I believe it is he. But you say, Is it possible that Jesus lives within me? I say, Yes, it is possible, and it is so; the stone has been rolled away, your sins have already been blotted out and you had no more to do with it than Mary had in rolling away the stone from the door of the sepulchre.

A. T. BENSON.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

SULLIVAN, Ill., June 18, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—At the request of a very dear sister of our church, Martha J. Miller, I am sending you this article written by her brother, William Jeffris, in 1858. She is eighty-eight years old, has taken the SIGNS for years, and desires to see this article in your paper if you deem it suitable. While we may not all agree with the ideas of the writer, they furnish food for thought.

Your brother in hope,

E. D. ELDER.

SPRINGVILLE, Ill., Feb. 2, 1858.

BROTHER BEEBE:—I see in the SIGNS that the subject of the sin against the Holy Ghost appears in some degree to agitate the minds of the brethren, and several of them have given their views on that subject, until it is thought the matter has been investigated far enough. Those who have written are brethren that I esteem highly for their works' sake, being able ministers of the word and feeders of the sheep and lambs of Jesus. Nevertheless, as I do not view the matter altogether as my brethren do, relative to who is capable of committing sin against the Holy Ghost, I hope it will be no breach if I should send you some of my thoughts on the subject. It is not intended for publication, knowing your columns are filled with good news from many brethren and sisters, who are the excellent of the earth. I had occasion to examine that subject nearly forty years ago. Suffer me to say I tried prayerfully to examine the word which I consider to stand in connection with the text the brethren have had under consideration, and if I did in a proper manner ask the Lord to show me the true meaning of it, and also if it was of the Lord, in answer to my desire, that it was opened up to my view in the light that I thought it did, then surely it is correct, for his ways are always right. I will not say it was, though at the time I received it as such, and now many years have passed and I have often tried to look into the matter since that time, and have found nothing in the book to cause me for a moment to doubt it; if I had I should not attempt to write to you the views I have on the subject.

I shall make some quotations which I conceive will go to show who were the characters alluded to by our Savior, for the words were his own words, and if it were impossible for such a sin to be committed, surely there would have been no need of saying so. Therefore I conclude there is such a sin, whether I shall be able to point it out or not. The Scripture I shall first notice is 1st Samuel ii. 24, 25. The words appear to be spoken by Eli concerning the wickedness of his sons. Verse 24: "Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the Lord's people to transgress." I view this people who are called the Lord's people in some way to represent the church of Christ. Verse 25: "If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?" I suppose the judge here brought to view is the militant church of Christ, for the Savior has said, "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault." Here is one man sinning against another; it is now between them, and they are admonished to settle it themselves. If they cannot, it is to come before the church, which is to decide the matter. But if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him? As much as to say there is more to entreat for him who sins against the Lord. Now this agrees with Numbers xv. 29, 30: "Ye shall have one law for him that sinneth through ignorance." I consider this to bring to view the same sin as one man sinning against another. "But the soul that doeth ought presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people." The Savior says, Let him be unto you as a heathen man and a publican. Now if the Jewish dispensation, or Jewish church, or church in the wilderness, was in any sense a type of the church of Christ's

militant kingdom, then surely the same instructions given to them will in some degree apply to the church under the gospel dispensation; and it appears that under that dispensation it was possible for them to commit sins which would cause them to be cut off from their people. They that were capable of doing this were Jews, and were cut off for doing presumptuously and reproaching the Lord. Verse 31: "Because he hath despised the word of the Lord, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him." Now, my brother, you may suppose I am going to try to establish the heinous doctrine of falling from grace. I have no such idea that one for whom Christ died will or can ever be lost. I shall make the matter clear if I can, and, as I said, if it is of the Lord it will be true, but if of myself it will be doubtful if there is any truth in the matter. We read in 1st John v. 11: "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life." The apostle is here speaking to the church and of the church, for he says, "given to us," and verse sixteen reads: "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death." This I view the same as one brother trespassing against another, of which instruction is given in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew. Then says the apostle, "There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it." Here mention is made by the apostle of the same sin of which the Savior was speaking in the twelfth chapter of Matthew, which is surely the sin against the Holy Ghost. It does appear to me, brother Beebe, that John was speaking to the church and of the church, even the members of Christ's militant kingdom. As I have intimated that it is the child of grace alone that is capable of committing sin unto death, bear with me while I try to show in what way it can be committed by the christian, and what effect it will have upon him. Nevertheless, I shall leave that part for my position, and proceed to examine some other portions of Scripture which I consider to be of the same purport and stand in connection with those already mentioned. The Savior, seeing the multitude, taught his disciples saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."—Matt. v. 3. Verse 12: "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets." He was here, according to my conception of the matter, addressing all those who had an interest in him, to whom grace was in Christ before the world was. To them he said, verse 13: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing." I understand "thenceforth" to mean from the time the salt lost its savor; it then has no more seasoning in it, it is cast out and trodden under foot of men; they are lost to the church, their usefulness is forever lost, they in that sense are dead. I do not know anything that will authorize me to believe that that salt which has lost its seasoning nature can ever be resuscitated, renewed or brought to life again; it is evidently dead, and cannot be restored so as to have its seasoning quality any more to the earth or to those who live on the earth, and perhaps the church has no right to pray for their restoration again to the fellowship and communion of the church. They have destroyed themselves relative to their claim to the militant kingdom, and are to be given over to the buffetings of Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved,

I am aware my letter will be so lengthy you will scarcely have time to spare to read it, yet I cannot feel satisfied to stop until I have made a few more quotations. John xv. 1, 2: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away." Now, in what sense are we to understand those branches to be in Christ? We know his people all have a standing in Christ, and are united to him as their head and grace given them in him, but is this the sense in which we are to understand this? If so, then what becomes of our standing in the Savior before all worlds? for if they bear not fruit the Husbandman taketh them away, they are cast forth, wither, become dry and are burned; but when we view them united to him as members of his militant kingdom, his church, and that they by their act have disqualified themselves to remain as church members, we see the application of the fifth verse: "I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." This makes it all easy. Hebrews x. 26: "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." Now we are shown that one may sin wilfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth. This in my estimation also shows the same sin against the Holy Ghost. It is now with them that have the knowledge of the truth. Verses 28, 29: "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" Now, it does appear from this to be possible for one to receive the knowledge of the truth and then count the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and despise the law of the Lord and die without mercy, having done despite unto the Spirit of grace. I hope you have understood me what death they will die, and it seems that those (under the gospel) who do those things will be thought worthy of a much sorer punishment than those under the law dispensation. Hebrews vi. 4–6: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." From this it appears that some may be enlightened, and taste the heavenly gift, and be made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and may taste the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, and yet after all fall away. Now there must be something they can fall from. I have told what I think it is; for the apostle said, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." Now what did Paul see he might be cast from? Not from the union and love of God, which existed between the Head and members of Christ from all eternity. What then? Only from the ties of love which united him and his brethren in the militant church of Christ. Paul said, "I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." That is, he persecuted the church of Christ. This is what he did in ignorance and unbelief. Did he intend to be understood that if he had

been a believer in Christ at the time he first persecuted the church he would have been finally and eternally lost and banished from the presence of the Lord? This surely will not do, for he tells us (the church) there was grace given us in Christ before the world was. Of course he did not intend to be understood that this grace could be taken from us by or for anything we could do, or the union dissolved, which union made us his from all eternity. What then did he mean by the expression? I suppose no more than that he could not have been a member of Christ's militant kingdom, or will some say, a christian? could not and would not persecute the church. Look around you, my brethren, and see how many you have known who have given evidence to the church that they have been with the Lord, and have known him that was true, and the church has received them.

WILLIAM JEFFRIS.

HUNTINGDON, Pa., Oct. 14, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed money order to pay for the SIGNS. I notice I should have sent this before, but I overlooked it, so I will now remit for the remainder of the year. I feel I must have the SIGNS, for it brings such precious food to a poor hungry soul. It makes us rejoice to know that all those who write from afar tell the same things, showing that all God's people have eaten at the same royal table, and that they have all been taught by the same great Teacher. They all know him to be love, and they know that every good and perfect gift comes down from God. They are made to rejoice together because of his love, given to them, yet unmerited on the part of the creature. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. God's kingdom is not afar off, it is within the hearts of his people. God is infinite, beholding the end from the beginning, and he doeth all things according to his own good pleasure.

October 8th, 9th and 10th my wife and I attended the association at the Old Baptist meeting-house in Springfield Township, Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania. Elders Fenton, Lefferts and Ruston were there, and it was a royal feast of good things. O to see the joy and love of those dear people, to see the tear of joy flow from eye to eye and from heart to heart. It was not that tear of natural affection, but love that the world knows not of. O that I could always be with such lovely people, but it has not been my lot for many years to be where I could be much among them. I am not a member of the militant church, but have been, as it were, I trust, a lamb around the shepherd's tent bleating, but not feeling worthy to enter. Is this the Lord's work? Am I one, or am I not? That is the greatest of all questions to me. God knoweth them that are his. He chose them in his Son Christ Jesus before the world was. When he sat in council with his Son in the annals of eternity he chose the church triumphant, the bride in Christ, the anointed. Christ died for our redemption and arose again for our justification.

I must close. I did not intend to write as I have when I sat down, but just to send my subscription, and why I should write this is strange to me; I know that my own will did not prompt it.

May God bless you, is my heartfelt desire.

ALLISON WIBLE.

ORTH, Texas.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—Will you allow a few thoughts from an old worn out minister of the gospel space in your

most valuable paper? I have passed my eighty-first mile-post and cannot travel and speak to the Israel of my Father, yet am not satisfied to fold my arms and sit down, but when I lift my eyes and the fields are white unto the harvest, and prayer for the Father to send laborers does not satisfy, I want to go forth with admonition to Jerusalem that her warfare is ended, that she hath received at the Lord's hands double for all her sins, invite her to "look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us." Let us tell them of the beauties of their mother, Jerusalem, which is above, and is free, she is the mother of us all. Tell them that "the wilderness, and the solitary place, shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God." Let us tell them, "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim: and the ears of them that hear shall harken." And when "the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest. Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field." So God said, "My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." O what a wonderful counselor, mighty God, everlasting Father and Prince of Peace! who would not fear thee and keep thy statutes?

C. T. RICHARDSON.

MARSHALL, W. Va., June 21, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—The time to renew my subscription has arrived. The dear family paper comes regularly, always filled with good things for the Lord's dear people, the poor and needy, the lame, the halt and the blind, all who are entirely without power to do anything for themselves. How I do wish I might say some little word of comfort and cheer to even one of the dear ones of the flock, but it seems that I am always receiving and never giving anything. Well, I have nothing to give but love, and I do hope I sometimes feel a desire to love all the Lord's dear people. I have not heard a gospel sermon for years, except once last spring I was privileged to hear Elder J. T. Rowe, in Washington. O, I did esteem it one of the great blessings of my life to sit once more under the sound of the gospel. The members were all very kind to me, and as soon as I told Elder Rowe I was a member and had often heard him preach they came and spoke to me, and gave me a seat up close where I could hear, as my hearing is very bad. They also gave me a hymn-book (Beebe's collection) just like my own at home. The singing was sweet music to my poor ears. They invited me to come and meet with

them again, and even gave me the communion just on my word that I was a member. May the dear Lord bless them for their kindness to this poor old pilgrim. Did not the blessed Master say, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me? I am the very least of them all, if one at all.

HATTIE L. WALKER.

CLINTON, N. J., Oct. 27, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed two dollars to pay for the SIGNS another year. It has been a great comfort to me from a child. I have taken it for five years, and my father took it as far back as I can remember. His name was Mahlon Hulsizer. He has gone to his eternal home. O how I do miss him, but I know my loss is his gain. I feel I cannot do without the SIGNS while I can read, as my hearing is getting very poor, and I am getting old, nearly seventy-seven years. The writers tell my mind better than I can, and I enjoy the good preaching; that is what my soul craves, if I know anything about it, as I hope I do. I feel so poor, ignorant and needy that I need His guiding hand every moment. His watchful and loving care has been over me from youth to old age, but I feel unworthy of the least of his mercies; if I am one of his children I am the least of all. Underneath me are his everlasting arms.

"Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound) that saved a wretch like me." My trust is in him who is able to save. O how I love Jesus, because he first loved me. I pray he will keep me humble. Remember this poor sinner in your prayers.

Your unworthy sister in a precious hope, (MRS.) E. J. DEMOTT.

TECUMSEH, Okla., Oct. 11, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—How glad I would be to meet you all and shake your dear hands, and perhaps get a few crumbs from the Master's table to satisfy my hungry soul. I thank my dear Redeemer for all the messages of love, and I also wish to thank you for sending the dear old paper to me so long. I am sending two dollars for another year, for I do not feel I could do without it, although I cannot see to read a word. My daughter or dear old sister Myers reads it for me, and it is all the preaching I have had for five years. Many of the writers tell my travels much better than I can myself. Write on, dear able writers, your words are to me as a cup of cold water in a weary land, and as good news from a far country. Pray for me. May the Lord be with all the household of faith, is the prayer of a sinner saved by grace if saved at all. I am nearly blind, and shut in, but still I have much to be thankful for.

Your sister in hope of eternal life,
MALINDA FREEMAN.

LONDON, Ont., July 5, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will please find two dollars to pay for the renewal of our subscription to the SIGNS. I have many times been fed and comforted by the letters and editorials, and often feel as though the writers and myself were holding sweet communion together, though they may be far away from me in body. Sitting together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Sweet bonds that unite all the children of peace. O that we might cease from striving and caring for the lesser things in life, and be in truth the children of peace, that those who see our light shining may glorify our Father in heaven. May the Lord be with you all and strengthen you in your efforts to serve his cause, is my prayer for you.

Your unworthy sister in hope,
ANNIE M. BLACK.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1920.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

EXTREMES.

OF late, more than for several years past, the word "extremes" has appeared in the writings of many of our brethren in different parts of the country, and in the sense in which it is used, almost invariably carries with it the suggestion of overreaching. Some say we should, in our presentation of truth, avoid extremes, but give us no just reason for doing so. We have had some meditation upon this subject, and have carefully examined the word "extreme," and our conclusion is that grave and disastrous mistakes occur in trying to make the doctrine of God our Savior appear smooth, plausible and attractive to all classes, both in and out of the church. Not since 1832 has the church of Jesus Christ had as many "feeble," "lame," "sick" or unestablished ones to trouble her as at the present time. Is it because "extremes" have almost ceased to be preached? Think seriously upon this question, brethren.

Some young men, within the last few years, have united with the Old Baptist Church in different parts of the country. They were zealous; manifested what was thought a gift to preach; were ordained; labored far and near; were never considered "extremists;" pleased many; after awhile indulged in exhortation to the young to follow Christ and consecrate their lives to the Master's cause; later were found holding protracted meetings, singing pathetic songs and gathering in many young, giddy people. These men became high-minded, thought Old Baptists were slow and should be stirred up to be more progressive, and advised that they have a supreme council to adjust all matters of difference in churches which could not be settled at home; they also said that the commission to preach the gospel to all nations was given to the church, therefore the church should send the gospel to alien sinners. These men continued for awhile, but are now with the New School Baptists, some of them having been rebaptized and reordained, thereby absolutely renouncing the Old Baptists as the church of Jesus Christ.

Just here, brethren, let us all engage in a little sober thought. Why is all this? We answer, Because "extremes" were avoided. These men, and many others who have gone to their own place, as Judas did, were never established in the doctrine of free, unmerited grace, effectual calling and justification by faith; had they been, "the gates of hell" could not have prevailed against them. In the face of these undisputed facts, will the ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ continue to oppose and avoid "extremes"? The word "extreme" simply means: "utmost point; edge, or border; outermost; greatest; highest." Therefore it does not signify beyond bounds or without authority. Consequently to "go to extremes" in preaching the gospel does not mean to get beyond the truth of God; and since it has no such meaning why should any mortal saved according to the foreknowledge, predestination and grace of God object to "extremes"?

We shall now try the word "extreme" in connection with some points of the

doctrine of God. Peter uses the expression, "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." We shall therefore take up the doctrine of foreknowledge first. Do we, as a people, believe it? All answer, Yes. To what extent do we believe it? as regards the salvation of the church only? or do we believe that it embraces all things in eternity and time, even the thoughts of men? David said, "Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; thou understandest my thought afar off." This is very minute; it is an extreme. Do we believe it? If so, why not preach it? Do we believe in predestination of all things? O yes, is the answer. What term of language then is too strong to use in setting it forth? Some one replies, The term absolute predestination of all things is too strong. This is another extreme. If God did predestinate all things, surely it is absolute predestination, and absolutely sure to come to pass as predestinated; but if he did not predestinate all things, whatever is not predestinated happens by chance only, and God is not in it at all, either in purpose or decree. The wisdom of all the world could not make it appear otherwise. Paul said, He "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." This is another extreme. If any one thing is not included in this declaration, Paul was mistaken. Why credit, therefore, anything he said? since he might be mistaken in all that he said. Again, in Romans viii. 28, we read, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." Some say this text refers only to the sorrows and temptations in the lives of God's children, that their faith may be tried; others say it refers to the things of salvation only. The epistle to the church at Rome is one letter, and in it the apostle clearly and definitely sets forth sin through the disobedience of Adam; the reign of sin unto death; that those brethren had been the servants of sin, and he thanked God that it was so; the weakness of the law through the flesh, and the utter inability of man to lift himself above the law of sin and death. All these things, and many others are embraced in the text: "All things work together for good." Together does not mean apart or separate; as one link of a chain supports and strengthens another, and many make the chain, so Paul said, "All things work together for good;" the disobedience of Adam and the reign of sin, as well as the obedience of Christ that grace might reign through righteousness. If we believe Christ's testimony, is it wrong to use terms of speech which set forth the "utmost points" of the predestination and sovereignty of God? If the Bible teaches special atonement, which unquestionably it does, is there any language too extreme which declares that truth? If "by grace ye are saved" be true, can it be declared by the servants of God in terms too positive? If not, why not employ plain, positive language to set forth the doctrine in the extreme, that no one mistake our meaning? How would it do to say Paul went to an extreme when he said, By grace ye are saved? No term could be more so, and carries with it power and positiveness which men or angels cannot refute. In reaching this point the apostle presents the doctrine of foreknowledge, election, predestination, redemption, resurrection of Christ and adoption to show his authority for the extreme language: "By grace are ye saved," in which short sentence is cut off every idea or avenue to salvation by creature works. The same authority abides for each servant of God

and for the faith of the election of grace. Salvation, and all that brought it about, and all that pertains to it, is according to God's eternal purpose; no language therefore can be employed which is too positive, in declaring the counsel of God. The children need to be instructed in every point of doctrine; the fathers and mothers in Israel need to be reminded if established, and if not established they need to be instructed also. One of the qualifications of an Elder or Bishop is, "apt to teach." To impart knowledge it is necessary to be clear in expression, using such words as can easily be comprehended, and as few of them as possible to convey the thought in the mind of the instructor. We have no thought of suggesting by anything we have herein said, that the ministers of Christ should be railers, or abusive of other denominations, but to the contrary, to be gentle, kind and considerate. But if foreknowledge be our subject, use such terms as set it forth in the extreme or fullest sense. If predestination be the subject, use such language as will most positively declare that nothing takes place by chance, but that "all things" are in God's purpose and fulfill some design known to him. If the sovereignty of God be the subject, use terms of speech to so positively declare it that the hearers may understand that not a hair of our head can fall except God so directs it. If salvation by grace be that which we are dwelling upon, do not hesitate to so declare it, breaking down every imagined stronghold of salvation by works, showing the weakness of the law through the flesh and the power of grace through Jesus Christ.

Jesus nor the apostles ever avoided "extremes," we therefore have tried to show the authority of the ministers of the new testament for going to extremes or serving the children of God in the fullness of the gospel of Christ. All desire, we are sure, to be charitable and to live peaceably with all men, but none should be willing to sacrifice one iota of truth in order to do so. If any servant of God has ambition to be reckoned with the nations of the earth or to be popular in the world, he must "round the corners," "speak smooth things," or in other words, compromise with error. If not willing to do this, he may as well forever give up the thought of being popular with the world. One of the infallible evidences of the sonship of God's children is, that they are hated by the world, because God hath chosen them out of it. The world loves its own, therefore the man who seeks this love needs to carefully examine his heart. Jesus commands his followers to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. Do we do it? Not if we seek the friendship of the world at the expense of God's eternal truth. Let no man be afraid of "extremes," since in them God is glorified and his people edified and established.

The foregoing article was first published in our issue of October 1st, 1907, but by request we republish it this number. K.

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CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by T. L. Rosebury.)

To the Elders and messengers of the Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, and the churches they represent, when in session with Providence Church, Appanoose County, Iowa.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD:—We realize it is through the loving-kindness and mercy of an all-wise God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will, and none can stay his hand or say, What doest thou? that we are once more permitted to meet in council and try to worship his most holy name. We realize that time is swiftly passing, and that another year has come and gone, with its joys and sorrows, and we are permitted to meet again as an association to try to worship that God who is too wise to err and too good to do wrong.

Dear brethren and sisters, by your action at the last session of the Association, and according to previous custom, you will expect a Circular Letter to attach to our Minutes, and it seems the duty of writing it has fallen on me, a poor weak lay member, so I will make the effort, fully realizing my weakness. I will try to write something about the children of God, or his chosen people. Christ said, I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. (John x. 28.) If eternal life is a gift from the Father, which Jesus says it is, and they shall never perish, then none of those in possession of eternal life shall ever be lost. If eternal life is a gift it does not cost anything, and no one can receive eternal life except it be given them from the Father. Paul said, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."—Titus i. 2. We do not receive eternal life for anything we have done, or can do, but God gives eternal life to his chosen people, because he promised to do so before the world began. (2 Peter iii. 9.) "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed."—Rom. iv. 16. "All the seed" means all the children, his portion, all that the Father giveth him. The promise was made to Abraham and his seed. "He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."—Gal. iii. 16. Inasmuch as Abraham is representing Christ the seed represents the children of Christ. God sent his Son into the world with power over all flesh, "that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."—John xvii. 2, 3. Paul says, "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, * * * who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 8, 9. The above Scripture says God does the saving and calling according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, man's work was left out all the way along. Again, Paul says, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we

are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Amen.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator.
J. M. CATE, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at the home of the bride's mother in the township of Duart, Ontario, June 23rd, 1920, James Driver and Lewella Sinclair, both of the township of Duart.

By the same, at the home of the bride's parents in the township of Harwich, Sept. 29th, 1920, Malcolm Small, of Dunwich, and Jennie K. Campbell, of Harwich.

By the same, at his residence in Ridgetown, Ont., October 20th, 1920, Duncan McMillan and Helen McPhail, both of Muirkirk, Ont.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Swan Alvin Hutchins was born June 27th, 1845, in Gwinnett County, Ga., and died August 1st, 1920, at his home in Rockport, Texas, making his stay on earth a little over 75 years. He was reared in Georgia, later going to Mississippi, where at the age of sixteen years he volunteered to his country's call and served through the Civil War. At its close he again volunteered, and served nineteen months on the frontiers of Wyoming and Omaha fighting Indians. No men ever suffered more hardships than those gallant soldiers, already warworn and homesick from the four years of Civil War. Shortly after returning home he was married to Miss Lucinda Caroline Lesley, Sept. 8th, 1867, to which union were born twelve children, four dying in infancy. Those surviving are: J. F. Hutchins, Jourdanton, Texas, A. E. Hutchins, Rusk, Texas, Mrs. P. M. Crouch, Austin, Texas, C. L. Hutchins, Forrest, Texas, E. V. Hutchins, San Antonio, Texas, W. T. and J. E. Hutchins and Mrs. J. R. Kinsel, Rockport, Texas. He received a hope at about the age of twenty and united with the Missionary Baptists, but very soon became dissatisfied. He united with the Old School Baptist Church known as Bethlehem, at Martindale, Texas, about the year 1890. After being with them about two years he was ordained to the ministry, at about the age of fifty, and continued to preach the gospel until sickness prevented. Through all of his sickness (he being confined to his bed about seven months), he would often ask some one to read some Scripture, never getting tired of the old, old story of Jesus and his love. One of his last requests was that an emblem be placed at his grave to show to the world that he had contended earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, which is a great comfort to those left behind. How we miss him no tongue can tell. His voice is hushed, we hear his gentle steps no more. He was a devoted husband and father. The writer well remembers when brother Hutchins visited us at Corpus Christi, and I went with him to Rockport when he was looking for a place to locate. I was about sixteen years old, and very hungry for some one to talk to on the Scriptures, but did not want it to be known. We got off at Engleside and walked about ten miles to Aransas Pass, and he preached all the way over there, it seemed to me. I could not keep from crying, but kept my head down so he could not see me. I was warned in a dream to visit him in his afflictions last winter, and never enjoyed a trip so before. O how we miss him! May the Lord comfort and console his bereaved family, is the prayer of the writer. E. B. AULT.

Thomas W. Runyon was born March 8th, 1843, and died February 18th, 1920, aged 76 years, 11 months and 10 days. Brother Runyon was married to Permelia E. Lowe June 15th, 1860. To that union were born twelve children, five boys and seven girls, five of whom preceded their dear father to the glory world when young. The remaining seven are Charity Scott, Nancy J. Scott, Pricy A. Alley, Elizabeth Elswick, Arminda Scott, Polly M. Hatfield and John C. Runyon, all of Pike County, Ky. Brother Runyon was again married, to Mary E. Bevins, Nov. 19th, 1891, and to that union were born three children, two girls and one boy, all living: Hettie Murphy, Hattie Runyon and Irvine J. Runyon. He left ten children, seventy-three grandchildren, seventy-seven great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild, with the dear widow, sister Mary E. Runyon, and a number of brethren and sisters with her in their dear home church, the old Pon Creek Primitive Baptist, which church brother Runyon joined and was baptized on the second Sunday in August, 1892, by Elder A. Hatfield. He was a worthy and upright member for twenty-eight years, and never defiled his professional garment nor had any trouble in the church or neighborhood, for he was blessed of the Lord to lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. He owned a beautiful farm within one-half mile of the church where his membership belonged, where he lived and died, and was buried in the family graveyard to mingle with his kindred dust. We have no doubt but that brother Runyon fell asleep

in the arms of his dear Savior, who is the hope and resurrection of all Israel. At the time of his burial the preachers and other relatives and friends were very ill of influenza, so they could not attend, therefore the funeral or memorial meeting was appointed for the second Sunday in October, and the unworthy writer and Elder H. W. Blair were selected by the widow and children to preach on the occasion, which we did as the Lord gave ability, to a large and well-ordered congregation, who showed great respect to the family. The dear widow is bereft of a kind and faithful husband, the children of a tender and loving father, and the church of a true and devoted brother. Truly our loss is great, but great gain to him. Brother Runyon will be greatly missed by us all, but we desire to be submissive to God's will, for he is at rest, never to suffer more. W. J. MAY.

William Saxon was born in Talladega County, Ala., March 31st 1841, and departed this life May 23rd, 1920, aged 79 years, 1 month and 22 days. In 1851 he moved with his father to Scott County, Miss., where he resided the greater part of his life. In 1864 he was married to Miss Mary Ann Knowles. To that union were born four children, two dying long ago; those living are Mrs. Belle Robinson and Elibe Saxon. His first wife died in 1908, and he was married the same year to Miss Martha A. Knowles, sister to his first wife. He was a kind husband and loving father, and was loved by his friends; we all miss him. He bore his painful illness with the utmost fortitude. All was done for him that kind hearts and loving hands could do. He talked but little after he was taken sick. Before he was taken sick he would often tell me he did not have long to stay here, but said he had nothing to dread. I feel assured he is now enjoying that sweet rest prepared for the saints. He was always good and kind to his fellow-men. He united with old Antioch Church of the Primitive Baptist faith and order in 1873, if I am not mistaken, and lived a consistent member until his death. He was ordained deacon, and served as long as he was able. I am sad and lonely since he is gone, this world is naught to me, for the one I loved and cherished is gone from me; we had lived together almost twelve years.

Elders S. J. Hollingsworth and W. Jusry conducted the funeral service, and spoke words of comfort to the bereaved, after which his body was conveyed to the narrow tomb in Antioch Cemetery and laid by the side of his first wife. He leaves a broken-hearted wife, two children, eight grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and a host of other relatives to mourn their loss, but we mourn not as those who have no hope. May the Lord help us all to bow in humble submission to our sorrow. May we be enabled to pray God to reconcile us to his will.

Written by his broken-hearted wife,

MARTHA A. SAXON.

Seely Slauson departed this life May 8th, 1920, at the home of his son, Amasa J. Slauson, Vega, N. Y. He was the son of Hiram and Asenith Slauson, and was born March 5th, 1850. He leaves to mourn their loss his wife and two sons, Amasa J. and Orley H., both of Vega, N. Y., also two brothers and one sister: Elder John B. Slauson, of Ridgetown, Canada, Samuel J. Slauson, of Bridgeport, Conn., and Urmunda Todd, of Binghamton, N. Y. Brother Slauson attended for many years the Vega Old School Baptist Church, and on Nov. 16th, 1914, he and his partner in life were baptized by Elder J. B. Slauson. He was a farmer, and most of his active years were spent in Vega, where his father also farmed before him. About five years ago he came to Halcottville, N. Y., to live, only occasionally visiting the scenes of his earlier life. He left Halcottville for Vega about three weeks before he died, and then expressed the thought that he would never return, which was true. Thus ended the course of a brother who was a good father and husband, and he is greatly missed. He was regular in his attendance, and loved to hear the truth preached.

The writer conducted the funeral services and spoke from Romans viii. 38, 39. The Lord bless and comfort all that mourn.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Mrs. Susannah Adaline Farmer was born Sept. 18th, 1833, and departed this life May 5th, 1920, making her stay on earth 86 years, 7 months and 16 days. Sister Farmer was born in Sequatchie County, Tenn., her maiden name being Griffith. May 6th, 1850, she was united in marriage with James S. Farmer, to which union were born four children, three daughters and one son. One daughter, Mrs. Mary Milmu, preceded her mother to the other shore. Her son, G. W. Farmer, and a daughter, Mrs. J. M. Beard, were present when she was laid to rest in the family cemetery. About the year 1864 she united with Bethlehem Church, in Tennessee, and was baptized by Elder George Walker. She lived a devoted member of the church until her death, although she was very feeble during her last years. Many times I have heard her express her love for the Baptists, and of her desire to meet with them. Sister Farmer moved to Arkansas in 1872, and to Texas in 1889. She spent her last days with her son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Beard, near Silver Valley, Coleman Co., Texas.

MARTIN STONE.

Annie B. Rittenhouse was born July 7th, 1864, was married to A. E. Rittenhouse Nov. 19th, 1893, and died Sept. 28th, 1920. While yet a single woman she frequently attended Baptist meetings, and one Sunday Elder Joseph Staton said something to her about being there quite regularly. She replied that she

did not know whether she had any right there or not. Elder Staton replied, "You are counted in the Welsh Tract congregation." That seemed to give her encouragement, and she was baptized a year or so afterward by Elder Staton, whom she dearly loved as long as he lived.

A. E. RITTENHOUSE.

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S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 88. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1920. NO. 23.

CORRESPONDENCE.

[SERMON by Elder J. G. Eubanks, at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 13th and Jefferson Sts., Wilmington, Del., Sunday, January 13th, 1918.]

Some time this morning (I do not think I could connect the circumstances) a portion of holy writ dropped into my mind, and it seemed that the first brother I met made a remark that was in harmony, and I readily take it for granted that perhaps my mind was directed to it by a higher power. I would believe that if I could, for I know that there is not a man living on God's green earth who can preach the gospel in the absence of the Lord to enable him. He may speak words for an hour and a half, words in harmony with the truth, and yet not have one sentiment of gospel in them. Why do I make this remark? I do it in order that you may know how dependent we are upon God. There is not a man living on the earth to-day who can preach the gospel in the absence of the Spirit of God to direct him. He can say words, but Paul says that our gospel comes not in words only. The question would be then, How does it come if it does not come in words only? All you hear naturally are the words. If it comes not in words, Paul, please tell us how it does come. Our gospel comes not in words only, but in demonstration of God's Spirit. What else, Paul? In power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; that is gospel. It comes from God, and I am well satisfied that I have stood before congregations and talked for one hour with not one sentiment of gospel in it. Furthermore, I am satisfied that I have stood before congregations and talked for an hour, perhaps, and but one or two in that congregation (who were prepared by the same Spirit to hear the truth) heard what I said. I am not condemning the truth, do not misunderstand me; it is better to have only a few hearers than none at all. But words do not satisfy the hungry soul, they do not feed the sheep, and in singing the little song, "That little one whom Jesus feeds, dismiss your anxious cares," Jesus alone can feed his people, he reserves that right to himself, and a shepherd can do nothing unless the good Shepherd gives him the food for them. This seems to me to be so clearly taught in the Scriptures that it does not require any argument to prove it to be true. I have been speaking to

congregations before now, and would notice, perhaps, some one in the congregation, not a regular attendant of the meetings, who would sit lost in contemplation of what I, a mere babbler, was saying, and knew not where they were. It was not the oratory, it was not the argument, but it was the Spirit that took the things of Jesus which I was speaking about and showed it right to their faith. O what a God have we to worship!

The portion of Scripture which I am going to read and talk about for awhile, if the Lord wills, is 2 Peter iii. 9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." What a precious promise! I will say without the fear of successful contradiction that you may commence with the first promise that God made to man in the garden of Eden, and may search all the Old Testament through and the prophecies up to the New Testament, and come to the very last chapter of the promise that God made man in the twenty-second chapter of the book called Revelation, and I will venture to say that you can trace them all through and you will never find any of them where the Lord was the least slack concerning one promise. That is very consoling to me. Every promise that he has ever made he has fulfilled. Though during dispensations of his providence mortal lives, and even the saints of God themselves, have grown forgetful of his promises, that did not hinder the Lord from moving undisturbed direct to the fulfillment of that promise, whatever it was. Some instances of this kind I want to call to your attention. I will not commence too far back, for I know I cannot talk long. When God made a promise to Abram he called him out of the air of the Chaldeans. He was a Chaldean by nation; as yet there was no Jewish nation. God called him out of the air of the Chaldeans, and under very peculiar circumstances. We are not told how many were around Abram at the time God called him, but if there had been forty immediately around him God could have called him, and not one of the others have heard the words. God simply said, "Abram," for he was not called Abraham until afterward. Now, my friends, was that call effectual or ineffectual? You who are versed in the Scriptures know that it was effectual. What I mean by that, Abraham had no power to resist, God was too mighty for that. He instantly answered, "Here am I, Lord." He realized that the One who called him was the Lord above him. "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." "And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered." O what a glorious promise. One thing I wish to call to your attention. In that time offspring were desired beyond anything else. When men and women married they prayed, they longed for children, for the earth was unpopulated. Here God gives his promise that Abraham's seed shall be as the dust of the earth. O what a gracious promise under the circumstances. Before the Lord's sweet and precious promise he kept right on, and the Lord said further unto Abraham, Thy seed shall be

a stranger in a strange land, and they shall afflict them four hundred years. O, if that is the case, give me no children; take the blessing of children away from me, if they must be strangers in a strange land to be afflicted four hundred years. But the Lord is not slack concerning his promise; just as sure as the Lord made that promise his word must be fulfilled. I cannot go into a detailed account of the history and show how it was all fulfilled. Those who read the Bible know that every promise made was fulfilled. Well, it was a very gloomy affair indeed to poor old Abraham, who married Sarai, a cousin. Relatives married in that day and time, for Jesus and the church were related. I say this for you to think about. Abraham married his cousin; God did not object to it, and all the rest did not, in order that it might be a fixed and established fact that Jesus Christ came into this world for the people that were his own by gift of his Father, by purchase of his blood, and by relationship, and that being the case, they were his. But I cannot talk long about that. Time rolled on, and every prospect under the shining sun that was visible to man's eye, everything that Abraham could possibly reason about, made it impossible for him to think that promise would ever be fulfilled. He was stricken in years, and knew the condition of Sarai, his wife. At that time years had passed beyond the time of child-bearing, and that promise certainly could not be fulfilled by any way he could see. God called him and told him he would bless his families of the earth. He staggered not at the promise through unbelief. Sarai was a very old woman, Abraham was stricken in years, and when suddenly the angel of the Lord appeared unto him and said, Thy wife shall bring forth a son, Abraham, of course, staggered not at the promise through unbelief, but Sarai heard what the angel said and laughed at it. The idea of my bringing forth a son at my age—foolishness. The angel visited her and told her that it should be so, and, said the angel, You laughed at the promise. No, I did not laugh. O yes, you did laugh, but you shall bring forth a son; and the result of it was that Isaac was conceived and brought forth in the ordinary generation, like the dear Redeemer came into this world, for he was the same type of man, and when Isaac was born into the world he was the heir of promise. I cannot take the time to talk about all of this, beyond the fact that he was the heir of promise. Lo, here was the child in whom all of the families of the earth were to be blessed, but Abraham, every time he thought of his child, thought of God's promise that his offspring would be a stranger in a strange land, and be afflicted four hundred years. It was a bitter thought which was mixed with the sweet; and I want to say there has never been a promise made but what there were some things connected with it bitter to the natural taste. What is the result? The result was that Isaac grew up to be a lad of promise, of course, and just as suddenly as a peal of thunder from a clear sky there came the voice of God to Abraham saying, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of," without assigning one reason under the shining sun for it. Where is that faith now? He can but say, I had hoped that Isaac was the one in whom all the families of the earth were to be blessed, but now God tells me to go and offer him as a

sacrifice. What a trial for Abraham! The result of it was that in obedience to God's command he started with the boy to go to Mount Moriah. Where he lived, on the map would be perhaps a little over two days' journey. He immediately set out. If the neighbors had known the purpose which was in his mind they would have arrested the poor old man for insanity and sent him to an insane asylum, but they did not know anything about it. Only God and Abraham knew about it. The one lingering hope which was in Abraham's mind was this: God is able to raise him up again from the dead; he has made a promise to me, and he is not slack concerning his promises. He journeyed on until he came in sight of Mount Moriah. He said unto the young men who had accompanied them on the journey, Tarry ye here while I and the lad go yonder and worship. How would you like to enjoy such worship as that? It was worship to the best of his ability; and so he went on. Isaac in innocence of mind said, Here is wood for the fire, and here is the altar, but where is the lamb for the sacrifice? Never mind, my son, God will provide the sacrifice. How he would do it Abraham did not know, but he knew that God was never slack concerning his promises, and he clung to it, held to it as something sacred to his own heart. The result was that he bound Isaac (Isaac now knew his doom) and laid him on the altar, and he raised his left hand to sacrifice him, when suddenly the angel appeared and said, Stay now thine hand, I have seen that thy faith is perfect before God. Here is work produced, for that faith was a perfect gift of God, and works never amount to anything except under such circumstances as that. When you make works the product of a love for him it is works that are acceptable in the sight of God. Think of these words, my friends, which were spoken to Abraham: Thy seed shall be a stranger in a strange land. What man has not thought about them? Generations had arisen and had forgotten about them, but God did not forget, for he is not slack concerning his promise; and when the time came for it to begin to ripen and the first steps were being made in the divine arrangement, Joseph, a favorite boy of Jacob's, and the son of Rachel, dreamed a dream one night; he dreamed that he was binding sheaves with his brothers in the field, and that the sheaves of his brothers made obeisance to his sheaves, and bowed to his sheaves, and he had no more sense than to tell his dream to his brothers, who consulted together and said: That dream portends that Joseph, perhaps, is going to reign over us, and we are not going to suffer any such thing as that, so they began to plot. Joseph dreamed another dream (he had no more control of his dreams than you have of your thoughts), that the sun, moon and stars made obeisance, and he again told his brothers of his dream, so they plotted together again and said: We will put an end to him, lest he do great things, and the result of it was when Joseph was engaged in his work they seized him and sold him to some caravan travelers. Now what became of his dreams? Poor Joseph asked himself the same question. So they took him away, and he was made a kind of servant in the land of Pharaoh, king of the Egyptians, and there a vile and hateful woman became infatuated with him and wanted to lead him astray; but Joseph, being a type of Christ, refused to listen to her, and it made her angry. Joseph was a bound man, a servant, and had no redress at law. What was his doom? This woman, who was

the wife of Pharaoh, told the king a hateful falsehood about Joseph, which enraged the king, and the king said unto Joseph, Into the darkest prison you will go, and remain there the balance of your days, for insulting this woman, my wife. Joseph knew he was innocent. Do you see anything in this, my friends? What had he ever done to deserve this punishment? He was a type of our Savior, who was made to bear sin for us. Mark you, it was not said that he was to be a sinner, but to bear our sins for us, that is, to suffer the penalty of sin, but it was the sin of others, not his own. Joseph knew that the woman had spoken a falsehood, but he did not get a chance to talk about it. Into the darkest prison he was cast with two other men. There he remained year after year, until eighteen years had rolled by. I wonder if the Lord was slack concerning his promise in this. No, God had achieved his purpose; he was busy upon Joseph in the darkest hour he passed through. Lessons were being imparted to him that would be useful to him in after days. It was a school which was of God, and I want to state to you that there is not a school on earth where knowledge of that kind is imparted. Earthly schools can impart useful knowledge while here below, but not one earthly school can impart a divine idea. Here he was getting education which would be useful to him many a time. Finally the great king dreamed dreams; dreams which could not be interpreted by all the learned men of his court, and at last he was told of how Joseph had interpreted the chief baker's dream, so he called upon him to interpret his dream. After Joseph had done so, the king made him ruler over all during the years of plenty.

Note—Elder Eubanks then spoke concerning a neighbor who had lived near his family in Georgia. She was a Methodist, and a very good woman, as far as works of the earth is concerned. She had had a talk with him concerning the text of the above sermon, which she had misquoted, and after the truth had been shown her she could not sit and listen to the preacher who had so thrilled her before their conversation.

NEWARK, Del., Nov. 11, 1920.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—On October 18th brother Eubanks was stricken, lightly perhaps, with apoplexy, affecting his right side, his voice, and made him generally nervous. He has recovered his voice, partly the use of his right hand, and can walk around the house slowly, but by support of crutches or cane. He is slowly and substantially improving, we believe, and hope it is the Lord's will, if consistent with his designs and purposes, that he is to be restored to us for a time, but I believe his preaching days are about over. He is seventy-seven years of age, I believe, and we think he had a slight attack in the head for about twenty-four hours last year. I have been endeavoring to keep his friends informed, and one at a time I hope they all will soon know of his condition.

I am sending you a copy of a letter sent him by brother Keene, and it is brother Eubanks' desire and request that it be published in the SIGNS. He desires to keep the original letter of brother Keene's, so I have copied it just as it was written. Write to brother Eubanks for the truth's sake. He loves you for the truth's sake, and I feel his mind will rest better during his short stay on earth if all the brethren greet him with some

words in his affliction. He surely is a father in Israel to us all.

Your brother in hope,

J. B. MILLER.

RALEIGH, N. C., Nov. 10, 1920.

DEAR BROTHER EUBANKS:—I received a few lines from brother J. B. Miller, in which he tells me of the affliction that has fallen to your lot. By whom is this allotment yours? Did you have the power to appoint this as your portion? Did your friends? Did your enemies? Did the devil? Is all this the providence of Satan? Well, our tried, deeply taught, graciously disciplined, blessed humbled brother Job declares the matter as it is in my faith, and to which I desire grace to be in acquiescence, saying, "He performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him."—Job xxiii. 14. David exclaims, "My times are in thy hand."—Psalms xxxi. 15. There are times when by the kindness of the Lord toward us that "we glory in tribulations." There have been seasons with me of adversities, afflictions, sore dispensations, and yet our God did so sustain me, so cause me to cleave to him, that amidst my conflicts and griefs I have sung,

"Sovereign Ruler of the skies,
Ever gracious, ever wise;
All my times are in thy hand,
All events at thy command.

He that formed me in the womb,
He shall guide me to the tomb;
All my times shall ever be
Ordered by his wise decree."

O how true it is that we need very much grace and continual supplies from the Lord to say, "Thy will be done." I look over the years of our intimacy one with another, in the things of Jesus Christ, and they are pleasing, comforting remembrances, and I ever think of you and speak of you in utmost affection, and my heart's longings to the Lord are that he will comfort and sustain you in your present affliction. Its weight and measure and duration are in the hand of our covenant God. The cup given us to drink is held to our lips by the hand of our heavenly Father. Do we shrink, draw back from drinking the cup? Do we say, Let this cup pass from me? The Head of the church in Gethsemane prayed, and he was heard in that he feared. The cup passed from him in the drinking of it, to the last drop. "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done."—Matt. xxvi. 42. It came to him full and it passed away from him empty. "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"—John xviii. 11. So every cup that our heavenly Father giveth us to drink passes away in our drinking it. Our heavenly Father often sweetens our cup, puts a dash of his covenant everlasting love therein, and then, though bitter, it is sweet, bitter sweet. Do you believe that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose? There are many who say they do when everything is pleasant, when prosperity is smiling upon them, but when trouble comes, not unsent, as Job saith, The Almighty hath afflicted me. Job was in submission, he appears very good to me, graciously lovely when he exclaimed, "What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?"—Job ii. 10. We have heard of the patience of Job. Yes, and it appears that in the record of his afflictions we can hear his murmurings, too, the dear old patriarch even got to the stage of cursing. (Job, third chapter.) O, my brother, we need our gracious, almighty Friend in prosperity, and

truly we need him in our afflictions, and this we shall find: that he in whom we trust is faithful and true, and in the floods, passing through the rivers, in the fires, he is with us. "Wherefore," saith our God, "glorify ye the Lord in the fires."—Isaiah xxiv. 15. "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be."—Deut. xxxiii. 25. You have found it so, and so have I, blessed be the name of the Lord. We have the hope that Christ so loved us that he gave himself a ransom for us. What, such vile transgressors? Why to thee, thou sweet Lord Jesus, every mercy I owe, and shall I not sing as I journey along, My Jesus does everything well? Yes, I would sing his praises in the rough places, in the darkness, in painful dispensations, but if there be a syllable of worship, if there be one note of praise in my heart, the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, must create it and put it forth in me, or else I am dumb, I am barren, I am worse than that, I murmur, I fret, I complain, I rebel. O what a miserable, vile sinner I am. A wretch undone without the sovereign grace of God. There must be "streams of mercy never ceasing," or else we languish, we perish. Now that you are afflicted will the Lord forsake you? Never. He that hath showed you great and sore troubles will quicken you again, sustain and comfort you. I am assured of this in my heart, for

> "His love in times past forbids us to think
> He will leave us at last in trouble to sink."

My dear wife has just said to me to give her love to you. I can assure you we both love you, and you are now with much affection in our hearts.

With love to yourself and to all your dear family, I am your brother in Christ, the hope of glory,

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

TO THE CHURCH AT FRYING, PAN, VA.—DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I am reminded this morning that the coming Saturday and Sunday are your meeting days, also that it has been quite a long time since I wrote to you. I would assure you though that it has not been from lack of love and interest in your welfare, but because of the imperfections to which the flesh is heir in myself. It has not been my privilege to listen to preaching since August, when Elder Fenton was with us and preached for us. Circumstances over which we had no control prevented us attending the association this fall. We get many good sermons in the SIGNS, but how we miss the assemblies of the saints only those who have experienced the same can know. I would love to be with you and hear the good preaching you will undoubtedly be given to hear, man abased and Christ exalted. As we go on through life's journey how much more we are brought to see the utter depravity of the flesh and Christ as the only Savior of sinners, how utterly helpless and lost we are without his love and grace and mercy, and why he should be merciful to us is a mystery, for we have done nothing good, and can do nothing good, because there is no good in us. How can anything good come from a corrupt source? No, it is not any good of our own, but Christ in us the hope of glory. He has taken upon himself our cruel sins, and we poor beggars have not enough good in us to even be grateful. It is too wonderful for me to understand, too sublime, yet by the grace of God I am what I am: a sinner saved by grace, I hope, and I hope he will ever keep me humble at the Master's feet. May the Lord bless your coming together to his honor and glory. Love to all in Christ.

Your sister, I hope,

MATILDA STARR.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Oct. 23, 1920.

MR. W. F. STAFFORD—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I am now going to try to answer your letter of a few days ago. I am glad to hear from you, and to know that I was made able through the Spirit to say something that would give you or any one else a little comfort. There is plenty of comfort in God's plan of salvation, which he alone has made to save poor lost and ruined sinners of Adam's fallen race, such as myself, who feels to be the least of God's creatures. But I have a little hope in his rich mercy, through our Lord Jesus Christ. The prophet says that the Lord told him to speak comfortably unto Jerusalem, and there are great reasons for it, because she has received at the Lord's hands double for all her sins. Every sin of all the people of God has been atoned for by the sufferings and death of the holy Son of God; there is nothing lacking about that, it has been done, it is finished, satisfaction has been made and the law has been honored and set up in all its divine majesty, not a jot nor tittle was left unfinished. We have a finished salvation for every one. What we need now is to know it, feel it and realize it. This is freely given us by the direct operation of God's Spirit manifesting to us just what Jesus did do for us, even while we were yet sinners. Not after we became good and sanctified, but while we were sinners; not only sinners, but enmity to God, against God and all that was righteousness and truth. Never was such love as this anywhere manifested. This is God's own way, not our way, neither is it the way of man. The way of man is death, the way of God is life and peace. O what a difference is this, and yet most all the religious world is following man, and displays ignorance of God's ways and God's righteousness, but they are doing just what the Lord said they would do, hence they are carrying out God's will now just as they did when they crucified Christ. It was done in ignorance then, and to-day they are ignorantly worshiping the unknown god, but all of God's taught children are worshiping him in spirit and in truth, and these are the people God says he seeks. You will find them few, and scattered over the earth, kept by the power of God through faith, and they are ready, and will be ready at the last day. Why? Because God will keep them ready. May the Lord bless you out of his unwasted fullness, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

We meet every Sunday at two o'clock, on University Street. Take a car out of the transfer station, called Fairfield, and tell the conductor to put you off at the corner of University and Hazel Streets. You are then within a stone's throw of the meeting-house, a little brick building just to the right as you get off the car. Come and see us. Pray for me.

Yours in humble hope,

C. M. HOOD.

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As the majority of our subscribers' time expires with the end of the year, we inclose in each paper of this issue a subscription blank, as a convenience to them in sendihg new subscribers, as well as in paying their own subscriptions. Will you please make a special effort to send one or more new subscribers when you renew your subscription for next year?

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1920.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

2 CORINTHIANS IV. 17, 18.

"FOR our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Having been requested to write for the SIGNS upon this subject, we feel to comply with such as is in us, though at the outset we must state that we have not seen in our own personal life as much affliction as have many of the readers of this paper. But of the affliction incident to the service of churches and to the labors of the ministry we have seen enough, and this affliction has all been on account, not of any lack on the part of any of the churches, or of the members composing them, but of the fearful lack in one's self: the constant failure to measure up to the requirements of the gospel ministry. The afflictions spoken of in this second letter of Paul to the church at Corinth we believe not to be such afflictions as the generality of mankind suffer, such as afflictions on account of disease, poverty, disgrace, the loss of health, wealth, property or other temporal cause, but the afflictions that come unto the children of God and which are the trial of faith. We read in Genesis that among the things which God did in the beginning, he divided the waters above the firmament from the waters below the firmament, so we believe that the afflictions of the world are not the afflictions which are sent to the children of God. The sorrow of the world works death, but the sorrows of the believer are unto life everlasting. The afflictions of the child of God may be of a temporal kind, and in that way may be of the same sort as come to unbelievers, but if so, such afflictions are sanctified by the Spirit to the believer's good and to the glory of God, while there is no such spiritual sanctification to the unbeliever, even though in the case of both believer and unbeliever the affliction may be of the same temporal kind. On the other hand, there are afflictions which are endured by none but the Lord's people, afflictions of which the world knows nothing. These, we think, are more especially the afflictions being considered by the apostle Paul in the above letter. When he says "our light affliction," he does not mean that there are some afflictions which are light and others that are heavy, but he means that all the afflictions of the people of God, no matter what they are, are all light. This is true only as we have faith to look away from the things which are seen to the things which are not seen. The seen things are temporal, and press us on every side. The unseen things are eternal, and can only be apprehended by faith. Now, no matter what the follower of Christ may be called upon to suffer, no matter how sharply his faith may be tried, all is light if we but have the ability of the Spirit to behold the invisible things of God. Paul, the other apostles and all the early church, never could have endured the hardness of their way had they not been inspired by a lofty faith which refused to count the cost so that they might win Christ; that is, so that they might realize for what they had already

been apprehended of Christ. It was this wonderful exercise of faith in them that made them count all things but as dung and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. These apostles remind us of pioneers blazing the way in a new country. The first settlers that came to this country faced all sorts of odds that would have daunted men who were less brave and fearless, and there were many who succumbed to the perils of the new land, or else became homesick and returned home. But there were other courageous ones who knew no failure, but who persisted until land was cleared, enemies subdued and settlements made. We might think of the apostles as pioneers of the gospel church, men who through the persistency of divine faith preached the Word against all odds in the midst of nameless perils. No afflictions could swerve them from the faith that was in them. They laid down, through the teaching of the Spirit, the doctrine, order and practice of the church; such as cannot be added to nor taken from to this day, and which we do well if we can walk in uprightly. We who live in this present day can have no adequate conception of what those men suffered. They were persecuted not only from without by avowed enemies of the truth, but also by members of the churches professedly in sympathy with them. We imagine these sufferings on account of false brethren were the hardest of all to bear. One expects the enmity of the world when drafted to serve under the banner of truth, but to meet coldness and discouragement in the ranks where one expects love and sympathy, this is the cruelest of all. Paul gives a very remarkable list of what befell him in the ministry: "In stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches." The more closely you give attention to the above recital of Paul's sufferings the more you cannot help being impressed with the fact that he has about told it all; one could hardly think of any affliction he has not named. Now all these afflictions suffered by Paul, and all the afflictions that have ever been or that shall ever be suffered by the children of God, are "light," and the only reason they are light, and the only way they can be light, is because God bestows within his children that faith which is the fruit of his own free Spirit, and which takes their eyes off the things that are seen and fixes their attention upon the things of the kingdom of God. A dear sister, now gone, but during her life a member of the Ebenezer Church, here in Virginia, was bereaved of a son, a young man just on the threshold of maturity. As she stood by the grave into which the body was being lowered she felt like singing. She refrained however on account of those standing around, but her heart sang the song her lips did not frame. She afterwards, in telling of it, said she lost sight of her affliction for the time and felt like praising God. She was caught away in the Spirit from the things which were seen, the open grave and the presence of death, and realized the victory which Jesus had accomplished over sin and death. She felt to praise God for the unspeakable gift of his dear

Son, who has put all things under his feet, has taken from death its sting and from the grave its victory. By faith, looking at the invisible things of God, she felt indeed her present and temporal affliction was light. Now, when further Paul says our light affliction is "for a moment," he certainly does not mean a moment as men reckon moments. He means that if our whole lives were crowded full of pain and suffering every moment, and even should we live to be an hundred years old, still all the suffering, agonizing though it might be, would still be but a moment, for what is the longest life here on earth, when compared with an endless eternity, but a moment? It will be noticed in the text that Paul is comparing time things with eternal: the one temporary, but the other abiding forever, therefore the joy yet to be realized by the saints of God will so far overshadow all the suffering that the latter, by comparison, is but for a moment. The weight of exceeding glory which shall ensue from this light momentary affliction, and with which the suffering is not worthy to be compared, is that all the redeemed are predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ, to be glorified with him, to awake with his likeness and be satisfied. As all the suffering is the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, that they may realize his companionship with them while in the valley of the shadow, so the glory which is the consummation of all the suffering is the coming of all the saved unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of the perfect man: Christ Jesus. When that end shall be attained all shall agree with Paul that all the suffering, no matter how severe, has been, after all, light, and however prolonged at the time the suffering may have been, after all, was but a moment. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder H. H. Lefferts.)

The Juniata Association, in session with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., October 8th, 9th and 10th, 1920, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In Ephesians iv. 15, the apostle Paul, after setting forth the gifts given by Christ for the edification of the church, after declaring the unity of faith and of spiritual knowledge which pervades the church, and after reminding those to whom he writes that they are no more children "tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive," he tells the brethren that they are to grow up into Christ in all things, "speaking the truth in love." This expression, "speaking the truth in love," we desire to express some thoughts about. To speak the truth is not to set forth personal theories or speculations, but to declare the truth as it is revealed in believers by the Spirit of Christ. There is but one truth: the truth of God as it is in Christ. All else is false, and in no wise to be depended on. The apostles did not follow cunningly devised fables when they made known to the churches the power and coming of the Lord, but declared that which they had seen, felt, heard and tasted of the Word of life. The testimony of a witness is of no account if he tells nothing but what he has read in books or has heard some one else say. To be valuable and of comfort to the flock of God the truth must be declared out of a pure conscience and out of a circumcised heart; it must be the declaration of things which the faith of the witness has beheld and felt and known

for himself. Therefore the truth of God is the only truth, the Spirit of God is the only Teacher and Revealer of this truth, and to declare the truth as thus revealed in one is to tell the truth. The truth when thus declared will be in entire harmony with the Scriptures and with the experience of the saints. Further, the apostle not only mentions "speaking the truth" in his letter to the Ephesians, but says that the truth is spoken "in love." Without this love exercising the one speaking the truth we doubt if much benefit is derived by the hearers. Love is the mainspring of all spiritual activity; it is the divine energy permeating all true christian living. Without love, religion is but a theoretical system and worship but a form. To speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and yet to lack love, is to be no better than sounding brass or tinkling cymbals. To have the gift of prophecy and to understand all mysteries and all knowledge, yet to be without love, is to amount to nothing. How necessary, therefore, that one have not only the revelation of the truth within his soul in order to declare it, but that the truth be held and be spoken in love in order that the ministry be profitable to the edifying of the body. No amount of argument and logical reasoning will ever convince one of the truth of God. Controversy and debate are of no spiritual benefit to the children of God. God is love. All the intercourse of the saints of God must be dictated by love to be of any good. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." How gratifying to ourselves and to the church when we prefer others before ourselves, when humility dictates our acts, placing us at the feet of our brethren, causing us to esteem others better than ourselves. Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, the Bishop of our souls, came from heaven not to give men the opportunity of doing something for him, but that he might serve his people. This he did even to the laying down of his life for them. His life-giving Spirit in his people at the present time teaches self-denial, and through his love abiding in them makes this self-denial effective to the laying down of their lives for the brethren.

May love and peace and unity abound throughout all your borders for Jesus' sake.

J. M. FENTON, Moderator.
H. H. LEFFERTS, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., October 8th, 9th and 10th, 1920, to the associations and churches with which we correspond sends greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—In the providence of God we have met once more in an associate capacity, we trust gathered in the Spirit of the dear Savior. Our meeting has been to our profit and comfort, and, we hope, to God's glory. Our messengers report peace and harmony, and in this letter of correspondence to the sister associations we desire to name the name of Christ Jesus the Lord above every name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. Our ministers have come declaring God's power to save and salvation by his grace, in the fullness of the gospel. We have been made to sit down together in the kingdom of our God with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Our next meeting is appointed to be held with Trough Creek Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., beginning Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1921, and continuing three days.

J. M. FENTON, Moderator.
H. H. LEFFERTS, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, Nov. 13th, 1920, at the home of the bride's parents, near Floris, Va., Willie Fenton Mathers, of Willard, Va., and Miss Hazel G. Davis.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Eliza Kugler, widow of Deacon Wilson R. Kugler, departed this life May 28th, 1920, at Frenchtown, N. J., aged 85 years, 3 months and 22 days. She was ill but a few days with bronchial pneumonia. On February 27th, 1835, she was born in Hunterdon County, N. J., and on January 1st, 1861, was married to Wilson R. Kugler. Three children survive her: Mrs. Martin (Susan) Bellis, Oliver R. Kugler and Mrs. Katherine Bellis, all of Frenchtown. In 1858 she was baptized by Elder Gabriel Conkling, in the fellowship of the Kingwood Church (Delaware River Association) and continued a faithful member to the end, "diligently following every good work: following after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." To "do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith," was her delight. She and her husband were given to hospitality; far and near their home was known as always open with a warm welcome to all lovers of the truth. She was truly a mother in Israel, "of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord," and a wise counsellor in the order of the church she so devotedly loved. In word and deed her life was as it becometh the gospel of Christ. Surely "the memory of the just is blessed." Her departure we mourn, yet we would not bring her back. To depart and be with Christ is far better. To see Jesus as he is and be like him was her earnest expectation and desire for over sixty years, and now, having fought a good fight, finished her course, contended for and kept the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, she has entered into the blessed fullness of the joy of her Lord.

The funeral was largely attended. The preaching of Elder D. M. Vail and concluding remarks of Elders H. H. Lefferts and H. C. Ker were comforting and appropriate. Interment in the Frenchtown cemetery.

All who knew sister Kugler loved her, and their sense of personal bereavement in this sad hour is sincerest sympathy with the sorrowing family and friends. JOHN McCONNELL.

Mrs. Martha Ann Matthews, our sister in Christ, departed this life Nov. 4th, 1920, at her home located on the historic Bull Run battlefield. She was born March 10th, 1840, in Prince William County, Va., and was the daughter of Bayliss and Icy James Foley, of Loudoun County, Va. She was the widow of Martin V. Matthews, to whom she was married in March, 1865. She was the mother of five daughters and three sons, all living, as follows: Mrs. Mamie Davidson, Mrs. Icy Hawkins and Mrs. Laura Moncrief, all of Washington, D. C.; Mrs. Ada C. Houl and Robert M. Matthews, of Roanoke, Va., Miss Mattie S., at home, Benjamin F., of Manassas, and Joseph P. Matthews, of Nevada. Sister Matthews was baptized over fifty years ago into the membership of Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, by the late Elder Joseph L. Purington. About five years ago she had a severe illness, and her recovery then was scarcely thought possible. At that time she expressed a great desire to depart and be with Christ, saying she had no fear of death and felt ready and anxious to go to her eternal home. Upon improving, she said she could not understand why the Lord was keeping her here. From that time she was not able to attend the meetings of the church, but her heart was always with the brethren, and her affections were now centred in the things of this life, but being risen with Christ, she sought those things which are above. Death at the last was due to pneumonia, and she was acutely ill but a few days before she passed away, conscious mentally unto the end.

Short funeral services were held at her home by Mr. T. D. Clark, the Missionary Baptist minister of Manassas. The services at Mt. Zion were conducted in accordance with sister Matthews' request, made known by her before her death, by her pastor, the writer of this notice. I felt some liberty of mind in speaking to the assembled bereaved family and friends from the words: "They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." L.

Deacon George Schade was born in Freudenthal, Germany, and died in Albany, N. Y., Nov. 11th, 1920, of chronic kidney trouble, in the 76th year of his age. He came to America in 1866, and was married to Miss Amelia Argow, which union was blest with nine children, five sons and four daughters, all of whom survive, with several grandchildren, one sister, Mrs. Jacobs, of Cohoes, N. Y., and one brother, brother Charles Schade, of Albany, N. Y., also several nephews and nieces. The religious convictions of brother Schade came early in life, and he first united with the German New School Baptists. After years of great trial and distress of mind he could no longer endure their perverse doctrines and practices, and at last found a settled rest in the Old School Baptist Church in Middletown, N. Y., years ago, and was baptized by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and remained a faithful member until the planting of the Albany and Troy Church, under the ministry of Elder Vail, when he was given a place with them, and soon

chosen deacon, which office he used well in deed and word, purchasing to himself a good degree and great boldness in the faith, for brother Schade was all that Paul indicated in his letter to Timothy regarding this office. He was clear and firm in the truth, according to the Scriptures, honest, upright and faithful in his life among his fellow-men in his home, where christian hospitality abounded, and in his membership attendance and office in the church, and his death marks the passing of a noble christian gentleman.

Elders Fenton and Vail were wired to serve at the funeral, which was made impossible by previous appointments, so that Mr. Brooks, of the New School Baptist faith, officiated on that occasion at his late residence, 472 First St., Albany, on Sunday, Nov. 14th, at 2 p. m., and the remains were buried in the cemetery at Eagle Hill, near the city.

EVERETT R. KINNEY.

Helena Vandewater Wolf was born in Holland, March 6th, 1830, and died at the Albany County Hospital, Albany, N. Y., on Sept. 22nd, 1920, and was buried in Albany Rural Cemetery. Sister Wolf had been an inmate of the hospital for about five years, and was alone when she passed from the scenes of this life, excepting the inmates of the place. Her maiden name was Helena Vandewater. She was married to Herman Wolf, also a native of Holland, in 1852, who died some years ago. Sister Wolf was baptized by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe in 1876, and was a faithful member of the church at Albany, N. Y. I have had many rich and precious meetings with her alone; also the brethren and sisters have been faithful to her, and we have held meetings at the hospital for her benefit. While she possessed nothing of this world's goods, she did possess a rich inheritance in Christ Jesus the Lord. Although over ninety years old, her mind was clear upon the doctrine of grace, and she loved to hear the name of Jesus, for it was sweet in her ears. Her favorite hymn was, "O land of rest, for thee I sigh."

Written by request of the brethren and sisters of the Albany Church. J. M. FENTON.

Laurence Edward Dickerson, son of Charley and Maggie Dickerson, was born in North Carolina January 3rd, 1910, and died of pneumonia at his home near Snow Hill, Md., February 25th, 1920, aged 10 years, 1 month and 22 days. He was an unusually quiet, good natured, contented boy; unlike other children, he first considered the welfare of those around him, especially his mother, forgetting self in such a measure that he would not speak of it if he was sick until his mother saw such was the case by his looks. In his last illness, which lasted several days, he talked to her a great deal about going home, and did not murmur or complain at his suffering, although we know it was intense, as he did not close his eyes in sleep for two days and nights before he passed away. There was no funeral service, as all the family were more or less afflicted with influenza at the time of his death, so his dear body was laid to rest in Mt. Olive Cemetery, not far from his parents' home, where two sisters and a brother preceded him. Laurence leaves father, mother, a twin sister, two younger sisters who are twins, and a little brother, who is also a twin, to mourn. May all who mourn be comforted, is the prayer of his aunt.

MARTHA HOLLOWAY.

Samuel Preston Rogers was born in Jackson Co., Ala., August 16th, 1840, united with the Primitive Baptist Church in 1867, was married October 13th, 1870, to Bettie Wagner, the eldest daughter of the late Elder James Wagner; came to Texas in 1872, where he resided until his death, which occurred July 31st, 1920, at the age of 79 years, 11 months and 14 days. He is survived by his widow and seven children, three sons and four daughters, five sisters, one brother, twenty-seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Two brothers preceded him in death: James, who lost his life in the great battle of Chickamauga, and John, my youngest brother, who died in Young County, Texas, in 1883. Brother Samuel was in the battle with brother James, but came through without getting hurt. He was for many years a devoted patron of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and a true believer of the doctrine it advocates. He was true and faithful, and had the love and respect of all who knew him. He had a complication of diseases, and lingered for months and suffered much, but bore it all with great patience, and when the end came he died without suffering, quietly falling asleep.

A large audience attended the funeral service, which was held in the Medlan chapel, conducted by Elder J. H. Fisher, pastor of the church, who used the following Scriptures: Eccl. xii. 3–7, and 1 Thess. iv. 13–18. Our five sisters, though old and more or less afflicted, were able to attend the funeral, also many other kinsfolk were there. My sisters regretted very much that I could not be with them.

W. L. ROGERS.

Tryphena Webb Thorne was born in Schoharie, N. Y., June 7th, 1830, died in Fort Collins, Colo., October 2nd, 1920, at the ripe age of 90 years, 3 months and 25 days. On February 3rd, 1854, in New York, she was married to L. H. Thorne. Two years later they moved to Michigan, where they made their home until 1880, when they moved to Nebraska, where they resided until 1897, when they came to Colorado, and in 1898 to Fort Collins, where she had lived ever since. The husband died seventeen years ago. The writer conducted the funeral services of

both husband and wife. Mrs. Thorne had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for many years, and a constant follower of her Lord and Savior all that time. She suffered much by ill health the past few years, but always with patient fortitude, watching, waiting and praying for the time to come when she should be released from mortal pain and take her flight to that place where they never say, I am sick. She leaves three sons: L. O. and S. P. Thorne, both of Longmont, Colo., and Wayne Thorne, of Fort Collins, with whom she had made her home during all her widowhood. She also leaves a sister, Mrs. Helen Kinney, of Schoharie, N. Y. There are ten grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

The funeral services were held at the home, 601 Garfield St., October 4th, and the burial was in the Grandview Cemetery. L. C. WOODFORD.

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THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 694 E. 125th St., or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

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S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

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"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."—1 Thess. v. 21. "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it."—Deut. xii. 32. cf. Eccl. iii. 14; James i. 17; Matt. xxviii. 20.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

SAVED BY BAPTISM.

"THE like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."—1 Peter iii. 21.

The leading subject here before the mind of the apostle Peter is salvation. He shows us the positive way of salvation, and that way is firmly established by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and without Christ's baptism into death there could not be any occasion for his resurrection. The Lord's death and his resurrection are so inseparable that in speaking of one the other is plainly understood to be a fact. Going back to the testimony of Jesus, long after he had been baptized by John in the river Jordan, we hear him say, "But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished."—Luke xii. 50; Matt. xx. 23; Mark x. 39. I have no doubt in my mind about Jesus referring to this same baptism into death when he speaks of it by using the word "regeneration," for he himself is in the regeneration as well as his people. His clinching words are firm: "Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration," are sufficient on this point. (Matt. xix. 28.) More references in scriptural words could be shown, but I want to speak directly to and of the text as quoted above. I have never heard this text explained, according to our use of words, since so many readers lose the main subject intended to be impressed upon the mind as soon as the eye rests upon the subservient clause inclosed by the parenthesis. It seems an easy matter to point out the main subject in my text, this I have already spoken of, and is "salvation." The preceding verse (twentieth) declares that "eight souls, were saved by water." "The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Any English scholar must admit that I have quoted correctly the principal part of this twenty-first verse, that conveys the leading thought of the writer, and the primary meaning of that verse. I feel certain of this, if I have learned anything of my mother tongue, and that the words included within the parenthesis, are secondary, submissive; that the inclosed words are a sentence within a sentence, therefore it is a subservient

clause, which means inferior, submissive. Being parenthetical, it is secondary; that is, a sort of explanation, that should not divert the mind from the leading thought in the principal sentence. Bringing the words of Jesus as I have already quoted about his baptism, which no doubt means his baptism into death, as the waves of death overflowed his soul, and joining them to the words about the resurrection, spoken of in 1 Cor. xv. 20, and in other places, as well as in the text, present the only way of salvation unto the church of God. This text is peculiar in its formation, and in a sense it is unique, in that it has not quite a parallel in expression anywhere, so that an ordinary reader is liable to be confused, because it seems to have two meanings: in one breath it says "save," and in the next (not reading it right) only the answer of a good conscience toward God, thus teaching that two things are evidently spoken of: one is real salvation, the other pointing to that salvation. In speaking of salvation here I mean the real work that Christ did, which forever put all his people out of danger; not his call to them which makes them believe, but Christ's sacrifice, which is salvation. There can be no doubt that water baptism to the believer satisfies the conscience, pointing to the baptism of our Lord into death, and his rising from that state of death. Thus the baptized believer should walk in newness of life, this outward evidence of his indwelling testimony that he believes that Jesus died and rose again according to the Scriptures. See Romans viii. 11; 1 Cor. vi. 14; Eph. i. 20. These are not all the Scriptures that testify of Christ's coming from the tomb. Paul tells us that it is all important in our salvation that Christ should be raised from the dead, and that he has risen from the dead he has asserted as a fact: "according to the scriptures."

In Paul's argument to illustrate the weighty importance of [the resurrection, hear him say: "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept."—1 Cor. xv. It is not necessary for me to quote more Scripture here as proof of our Lord's resurrection, but I do want to emphasize the greatness of that work, and my text is not a whit behind other scriptural proofs that Christ's resurrection is the salvation of the church, which is his body. As eight souls were saved in the ark from destruction in the great flood of water which bore the ark on its bosom, and in a sense the element that destroyed the world saved the eight souls, so in a like figure death, which destroys all outside of "the ark of the covenant of mercy," bears our ark through the baptismal waters of death (hear Jesus: "How I am pained!"—Margin, Luke xii. 50,) and "doth also now save us by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." It is a clear fact, not only from our text, that Christ's baptism unto death and his resurrection from the dead did save us, but also from many more Scriptures than I have cited here.

From these few hints of holy writ may we rest in our great Redeemer, feeling a security in his love and that "he hath triumphed gloriously" who died, according to the Scriptures, and rose from the dead, according to the Scriptures.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

CLAREMORE, Okla., August 30, 1920.

WOODSTOCK, Ontario, Sept. 12, 1920.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I inclose one dollar for my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as I see my subscription has expired and I feel like taking it as long as I live. I will be seventy-five years old if I live until next week, five days more. I have been a reader of the SIGNS about sixty-five years, and a subscriber for more than forty-five years, perhaps fifty, and now as I look back over my life I can say, Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and as I look over my life I cannot say that I have ever done one good deed in all my life; everything is mixed with sin, and if saved, it is all of grace from first to last, and now in my old age, when I thought I should be better and more free from sin, I seem to be worse, and do not serve God with a pure heart, and can only say, I hope I desire to do so, but all my actions seem wrong, and I can truly say with the apostle, How to perform that which is good I find not. As far as I know I am all alone in this city, as far as having any companions in my belief of the doctrine of God our Savior, and O how I long for some one to talk to. My poor dear wife is almost entirely out of her mind, and O it is so sad, so lonely, so distressing; only those who have had the same trial can tell how sad it is. The apostle says that tribulation worketh patience, but with me it seems to work rebellion, distress, fretfulness and death to all spirituality of mind, and often do I wonder what the end of it all will be. How often I feel to say with Job, "O that I knew where I might find him," but the more I cry and pray the farther he seems away, and sometimes I cannot even think upon his name, and sometimes in the long dark night my mind longs so hard for the presence of the dear Savior, but all in vain.

I read with much satisfaction your article on the resurrection. Jesus says, I am the resurrection and the life (not will be, but am), and O if I could only feel he is such to me I would not worry or fret or be disturbed about the future. This poor body of clay grows old and feeble and ready to decay, and sometimes I feel it would be a welcome day if I could put it off, lay it aside, and have my spirit, my life, changed from sin to holiness, from corruption and death to immortality and eternal life, eternal happiness, and be made holy as God is holy. In fact, it is only my nature, my inward nature, that is vile, not this clay, for when the spirit is gone nothing is left but dust, and it returns to dust as it was, but the life that animated it we hope is changed in a moment and goes to join the blessed throng in immortal glory and behold the Savior that we hope we love, and will be like him, and be satisfied, but very often I fear it is all a delusion, or if true that I know nothing about it. O how I long to know Jesus and the power of his resurrection, to feel he is mine and I am his, then I could wait in patience and be resigned to his will, and come life or come death all would be well. I am not fit to write.

Unworthily, R. SCATES.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—Custom and tradition are powerful influences in our life. We are creatures of habit. Some traditions are good, but the fact that the preceding generation has held certain ideas is no guarantee that they are right. So we must have another means of testing our beliefs, and this is found in the revealed word of God. Traditions which do not measure up to its precepts are to be rejected. "Prove all things; hold fast

that which is good." Several hundred years ago a wave of puritanism swept over England. Its effect was not confined to any one class or denomination, but in certain quarters it was more pronounced than in others. John Bunyan in his allegory describes the change which took place in "Vanity Fair" during this period. Formality and legalism gained a very strong hold on the professing world, and the Old Testament in its literal rendering became the rule of life. The leaven of the Pharisee was at work. Undoubtedly the Baptist Church at that time was influenced to some extent as it was in the early ages by the legalism of professing Jews. From time to time it is needful to "purge out the old leaven." We must bear always in mind that the Old Testament in its literal meaning pertained only to the Jews. True, many things which were good for the Jewish race would also be beneficial to the world at large, but that does not justify a wrong application of the Scriptures. As pertaining to the gospel day, the Old Testament Scriptures, "Moses and the prophets," are the testimony of Jesus Christ, and only insofar as they can be shown to testify of Jesus are we warranted in applying them to the church of God in the new dispensation. "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." The observance of sabbath days, restrictions on meat and drink and the forbidding of marriage all proceed from a wrong understanding of the Scriptures. The Roman Catholics have long held to such traditions, but that is neither here nor there. The early church was troubled over such matters, and sent to the apostles and elders at Jerusalem for a decision. Their verdict was, "That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication." We must remember that the Gentile peoples knew nothing of the law of Moses. The Greeks were in a decadent state, and their moral life was at a low ebb. The marriage relationship was very loose, with practically no penalties for its infraction, and the grossest idolatry existed everywhere. We in this present age can hardly realize the position a christian was placed in with such surroundings, right in his own home. Small wonder that Paul found it necessary to continually admonish these churches against such evils. By that we are not to understand that he held that legalism, as applied to marriage or such matters, was part of the gospel order, for he clearly states to the contrary, and where he gives his judgment on certain matters he makes it clear that he is not speaking as from the Lord, but simply giving advice as to the present necessity. Paul's judgment as a faithful servant of the Lord was good for the church to whom he was writing, but he was not laying down, as the oracle of God, an infallible rule for the guidance of the church in all ages. So he says, "I speak this by permission, and not of commandment;" and again, "But to the rest speak I, not the Lord." Indeed, wherever he speaks of matters of temporal concern to the church he turns it again to the testimony of Jesus Christ, drawing figures from our natural relationship for the edification of the church in the faith which was delivered to him to preach. It is clear that he would gladly have them free from those things which interfered with their enjoyment of gospel peace, and especially the filthy abominations which were altogether incompatible with a christian life. It was for this reason that he admonished them, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellow-

ship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" In writing to Timothy he speaks of those who should "depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils;" "forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats," so that his meaning in other epistles is clearly not intended to justify such doctrines. The children of God have been called unto liberty, but they are not to use that liberty as an occasion to the flesh. "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." Whenever we attempt to restrict the liberty of a brother we violate our own liberty, walking after the flesh, but if we walk after the Spirit we are free indeed.

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Oct. 7, 1920.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I deeply regret that I have so long neglected to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, and now to try to make amends for so doing will forward you a check for five dollars, four dollars for two years' subscription, and one dollar for the poor fund, and I trust you all will once more pardon me for my gross negligence.

I have been reading for some time past with deep interest and much comfort your good editorials on the various and all-important subjects on which you have written, also those written by Elder Lefferts, and, if I have any christian experience to be my guide, would say that I heartily indorse what you both have written, and above all admire the spirit of meekness and love which you so plainly manifest in all your writings. May the dear Lord be with you at all times, and guide and strengthen you for the task or duty laid upon you, and spare you both for many years to come, to the comfort and rejoicing of his dear people.

With love to all, your brother in hope,

J. K. YERKES.

MEXIA, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As my subscription expires with the July 1st number I thought I would try to write a few lines. I do not want to miss a number of the dear old SIGNS. It is a great pleasure to me to read it, as I cannot hear well, so it it is a great satisfaction to me to read the good news that it brings. I do not know why I love the SIGNS so well, for it seems to me that I am the most sinful creature on earth, and to do good or live any better I do not know how. Sin is mixed with all I do, and I find I am one of the "can't help its." I have had a mind to try to write for some time, but felt I was too sinful and unworthy to write anything for the dear people of God to read. If I know myself I know I dearly love the Old Baptist "Hardshells," as they are called. I think sometimes if the dear brethren and sisters could see me as I see myself they could have no fellowship for me. I love God because he first loved me; I love the doctrine of foreknowledge and predestination, election and the final perseverance of the saints. Who taught me to love such doctrine? It was not man. I have a hope I was taught by a higher power.

Well, I have just rambled on and perhaps said nothing of interest. Love to all God's people. If I am one I am the least of all.

MARY Z. BEENE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1920.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

CLOSE OF VOLUME EIGHTY-EIGHT.

WITH this number we close the eighty-eighth volume of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Another year's labor is finished, and all connected with the publication of the SIGNS feel that we have great reason to thank the Lord for his mercy in giving us health and strength to perform the arduous labors of such a publication. As the SIGNS grows older we realize that we all grow older with it, and while it in doctrine is as strong as at first, we have grown weaker in body as the years have passed, and are less able to perform our duty in its publication; yet the brethren have been kind and forbearing, seldom making complaint about anything, for which we thank you sincerely. At no time during the year have we been short of articles and letters for publication, and it seems to us that they have been good and to the point. Such features should be remembered in writing. To be clear and to the point, that all may understand what we mean and where we stand, means everything to the readers of the SIGNS, yet we should avoid harsh and unkind expressions, which wound rather than edify. We thank all who have contributed along the line of communications and private letters. Without such help the SIGNS could not exist. The editors have done their best in trying to write upon various subjects, some by request and others otherwise. We both realize how short-sighted we are in understanding and knowledge relative to the doctrine and mysteries of God. We have done what we have, however, gladly and willingly, and fully appreciate every word of commendation. Many requests for views have not been complied with, but not because we have meant to be neglectful, but rather because of lack of understanding and space. We shall hope to attend to some of these during the coming year, should it be in the purpose of the Lord that we remain on the earth and continue our connection with the SIGNS.

We have lost some subscribers by death during the year, and a few otherwise, as is always the case, but our list has gradually grown, so that we have more subscribers at the end of the year than we had at the beginning. We feel much encouraged, and are glad to make this report. We feel assured also that our subscribers will be glad to know that the SIGNS is more than holding its own. We thank all who have continued their subscriptions, and also all new subscribers and those who have aided us in securing new subscribers. We shall do our best to serve you in making the SIGNS profitable and pleasant. The contributions for "the poor of the flock" have been very substantial during the year, and in behalf of those who have thus received the SIGNS we thank you, and would not fail to thank you in our own behalf. There are hundreds of our people in different parts of the country who are not able to pay for the SIGNS who love the doctrine it advocates, who are good, sound Old School Baptists and worthy of such kindness as is bestowed upon them through those who assist in sending them the SIGNS.

In conclusion, we thank again each one who has in any way contributed to the help of the SIGNS during the present year, and ask that the same kindness continue during the coming year.

With all good wishes for health, prosperity and every needful blessing, we say farewell for 1920. K.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Washington Riggleman.)

The Redstone Old School, Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the Indian Creek Church, Monongalia County, West Virginia, September 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1920, to the churches composing the aforesaid Association, and to the associations with which we correspond, sendeth christian greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As it was your request for me to write this letter, though I feel my unworthiness and inability to attempt it, if the dear Lord will enable me I will write a short letter, as it has been our custom for many years to address the dear followers of the Lord Jesus Christ by what is called a Circular Letter. Another year with all the trying scenes of life has passed, and may our meeting together be for the good of the churches and the honor and glory of God, and if this be the earnest desire of every messenger of this Association all will be well. Dear brethren, God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth, and it is our imperative duty to take the word of God for our guide and not depart from it for any man or any set of men. We should contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, not seeking to please men. The Lord Jesus said, I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you; if ye were of the world the world would love its own. We cannot serve two masters: God and mammon. Jesus says, "Follow me," therefore it is our whole duty to go by the command he has given. God's chosen people have always had many trials, the world, the flesh and the devil have always been against them, and nothing but the grace of God could enable them to endure. The Lord was with the three Hebrew children in the furnace of fire, where their enemies expected them to be consumed, and he kept them from all harm. Daniel prayed to his God and his enemies determined to destroy him when he would not bow to their golden image; he was thrown into a den of lions, but God protected him there, but when his enemies were thrown in the den of lions they were at once destroyed. If God be for us, who can be against us? Read the travels of the patriarch Joseph and we will find a pattern to go by. When our brethren treat us badly we are often like Jacob of old when he was in trouble about his children, Joseph and Benjamin, not knowing our troubles are working for our good and God's glory. Trust in the Lord, he is the only sure refuge. When Joseph made himself known to his brethren what love was made manifest none but the people of God can understand. Such love is a likeness of the love of God, which is in the hearts of his children. When Jacob saw the wagons which were sent by his son Joseph his heart revived, and he said, I will go and see Joseph before I die. What love filled the heart of old Jacob when he saw his son whom he had mourned as dead; no wonder he said, It is enough. The Lord gives his poor afflicted children a feast at his own appointed time, and none can hinder, for all power, both in heaven and on earth, is in his hand, and he has power to bind Satan and cast him into the bottomless pit and shut him up. The Lord's people are a chosen generation, a peculiar people, and they ever contend that by grace they are saved; they believe in election, predestination, foreordination and the final perseverance of the saints. What church on earth besides the Primitive Baptist preaches and contends for this doc-

trine? I say, None other. Then we are alone, and the people of God are to dwell alone; so, dear brethren, may God enable us to stand firm while we live, stand for the truth, and not sacrifice one word of it, for it will stand forever. Dear brethren, I will say to you, as Joseph said to his brethren, See that you fall not out by the way. Let brotherly love continue. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God. The blessed Savior came to save his people from their sins. O how he loved his people, and he has commanded us to love one another as he has loved us. There is nothing more pleasant than to see the church of our Lord Jesus Christ in peace, love and union. Dear brethren, the enemies of the truth are all around us, and they say the Old Baptists ought not to be allowed to preach. They said the same of the apostles, and therefore we may look for persecution. Jesus said, They persecuted me, and they will also persecute you. He called his people a little flock, and said, Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. When we go back to the days of the old prophets we see the love God's people had for one another. Joseph said to his brethren, God will visit you and deliver you, and when you go into the land of Canaan take my bones with you. Moses spent his last days exhorting the children of Israel as to their duty to God and to one another. The apostle Paul before his departure called the Elders of the church together, and said unto them, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock." Dear brethren, God knew in eternity what man would do, and made provision in his Son for all whom he predestinated unto the adoption of children. Grace was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began, to be made manifest in them in God's own time, in calling them out of darkness into his marvelous light, to make them know the riches of his grace and the power of his love, for there is one God and Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. The words "every man" here mean all of God's elect, and all who are in the covenant of grace, those whom Christ shed his blood for, all those whose names were written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Paul makes it plain where he says, "Warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." His address was to the church of Christ, and has direct reference to the believers in God, who were redeemed from all iniquity by the precious blood of Christ, for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. But Christ hath by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified. Dearly beloved, the promise is to you and your children, and to all them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. This means a holy calling, for those who are called with a common call will not come to the light. Paul said to the Jews, "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou

shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed." "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he, being dead, yet speaketh. By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death." "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed." "Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised." "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off."

Now in conclusion, dear brethren and sisters, let us ever contend for that faith once delivered unto the saints, and may we not neglect the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, and may we ever feast upon the Bread of life. Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life, he that cometh unto me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. Dear Lord, keep us together, and when we come down to death take us into that beautiful home whereof thou hast said, Eye hath not seen, neither hath it entered into the heart of man what God hath prepared for them that love him.

Farewell, dear brethren.

S. A. CLEAVENGER, Mod.
J. S. C. HENDERSON, Clerk.

(Written by Deacon I. H. Thomas.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 13th, 14th and 15th, 1920, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Another year has come and gone forever, with its joys and sorrows, and we are permitted to meet together again as an association to worship that God who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, and to transact the business of the association. According to a long established custom and your action at your last annual session, you expect something in the form of what we call a Circular Letter to accompany your Minutes, so we shall make the effort, realizing fully our weakness.

We read in the third chapter of John these words spoken by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ: "I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This remarkable and seemingly strange assertion was made by our Lord and Savior to Nicodemus, who knew that Jesus was more than an ordinary man, for he said, "No man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him," yet he could not understand the meaning of the words of the Lord when he said a man must be born again before he could see the kingdom of God. This misunderstanding leads us, naturally, to inquire what the spiritual birth is.

"Except a man be born again." To our mind God's elect, his chosen ones—the church and all its members, virtually received that birth when God in his wisdom and mind fixed, purposed and predestinated all things before the founda-

tion of the world. To be born again is the result of having been elected unto salvation. That birth was already a decreed fact before time was, yet that birth had to be made manifest in the coming of Jesus, his life on this earth, his sorrows and trials, his conviction and crucifixion. God's elect were spiritually born in the mind and purpose of God at the beginning of all things, and really it was the first birth, for then were they chosen in the Lord and made part of his body. "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." The Lord came on earth in both the flesh and the Spirit. He had eternally the Spirit, so had the elect in him. He came to make manifest his people's spiritual birth even before we had our natural birth. So while Nicodemus did not understand the Lord, yet the Lord told him only what was assured and settled. To be born is to manifest life. As our natural life is manifest by being born of woman, so is our spiritual life manifest when born spiritually, because the God of heaven first purposed it, as he did all things, and predestinated them to come to pass, as we all believe. Being born again means eternal life—salvation, and Jesus told Nicodemus that except a man be born again spiritually, or already saved eternally, he could not see the kingdom of God. This shows very plainly that we receive the new birth because our Lord received for us life from God at the very beginning, and as it was received or given us by God it was spiritual and eternal, for God is a Spirit. Dear brethren, how glorious, how exhilarating is the truth when realized. How it makes our poor, helpless, sinful hearts rejoice when we can be given a belief or feel assured that our birth is spiritual and cometh from God out of the very beginning of all things, and that our eternal happiness is in no way, nor ever was, dependent on anything we may or can do. This same consolation which we have in the absolute predestination of all things here on earth and in heaven is the greatest joy we have or ever can have to our poor sinful hearts. May the God who rules all things guide, protect and keep you in unity and brotherly love in our deliberations, and at last receive his people to himself for evermore.

The next session of this Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Ebenezer Church, Loudoun Co., Va., beginning on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1921, and continuing three days. At that time we shall hope to again receive your ministers, messengers and correspondence.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
K. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Robert E. Hawthorne, son of Mr. and Mrs. T. T. Hawthorne, was born April 25th, 1895, and died Sept. 14th, 1920, making his stay on earth 25 years, 4 months and 20 days. He died of tuberculosis, which he contracted while in the U. S. Navy during the late war. After the war ended he received an honorable discharge and came home, but continued to get worse. He then went to Fort Bayard, N. Mex., where he died. He was brought home and buried in the cemetery near Provencal, La., in the community where he was born and raised, in the presence of a large number of relatives and friends. The unworthy writer tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved. Robert was a true and faithful son, brother and citizen, true to his country. To know him was to love him. He never joined the church, but loved the doctrine, order and company of the Primitive Baptists. The writer has been closely associated with the family for over forty years, and it is sweet to meditate upon their kindness, love and care during those years. My poor heart goes out in sympathy for the family, especially our dear brother and sister, the father and mother, in their bereavement. May the God of all grace fill the vacancy in their poor hearts with his presence and sweeten their afflictions with his mercy. J. J. WHITE.

George D. Conklin was born near New Vernon, Sullivan Co., N. Y., October 11th, 1837, and died in Jersey City, N. J., October 22nd, 1920, aged 83 years. He was the son of the late Elder Gabriel Conklin and Catherine Waldron. In 1870 he was united in marriage with Margarette Arnvine, who died Sept. 11th, 1895. Brother Conklin united with the Warwick Old School Baptist Church by letter April 29th, 1871. We are not sure, but we think he was before that time a member of the Locktown Old School Baptist Church of New Jersey. He was widely known among our churches from New York to North Carolina, and loved and highly respected by all who knew him. In early life he was a teacher of vocal music, and was a good singer and loved to sing the songs of Zion. He was usually leader of the singing when attending associations and other meetings. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace—a genuine Old School Baptist. He loved the assembly of the saints, and never missed an opportunity to attend meeting, whether at home or elsewhere. We all miss him in our services at Warwick, where he attended so many years, but feel assured that he has been gathered into the heavenly kingdom, where parting is unknown and the song of praise never ceases. Brother George, as we all called him, was a great sufferer the latter part of his life, but endured with much fortitude, seldom complaining of anything.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer, his pastor, in the meetinghouse at Middletown, and the interment took place in the family plot in the New Vernon Cemetery.

Brother Conklin left no relatives nearer than cousins that we know of, with whom he made his home the last two or three years of his life. Their kindness to him was very marked, and we desire the blessing of God upon them. K.

Joseph Jenkins, ripe to the harvest, at the close of a long and busy life, passed to his reward Sept. 4th, 1920, at Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa. He was the last of a family of seven children, and was born on the home farm ninety-three years ago, where he had resided ever since. His wife passed away two years ago, they having spent sixty-three years together in their hospitable home. He is survived by four daughters: Mrs. Ella Anderson, of Oxford, Pa., Elizabeth at home, Mrs. Edwin Gregg and Mrs. John Cauffman, of Lancaster County, Pa.; also four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

The above is copied from the Oxford Press. In addition, I will say that I have known Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins all my life, having been much in their home, and am perhaps as well qualified as any one to testify to their worth. Plain and unassuming in manner they were, but representing all that is truest and best in human nature. Neither of them ever united with the church, but among the members and congregation at Rocksprings none was more faithful or more regular in attendance than Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins, and I am certain that none was held in higher esteem by the church. For many years their home had been a place of entertainment for Baptist friends. It was a home that all delighted to visit, there being an atmosphere about it particularly attractive. But they are gone, and will be greatly missed by the little church at Rocksprings, as well as by the community in which they lived. There is no doubt at all but that they were both hearers of the word. The last time I visited Mr. Jenkins, two years ago, he with considerable emotion repeated to me an expression he had heard Elder Grafton, his former pastor, use in the pulpit many years ago. This expression had seemed to make an impression upon his mind, and had remained with him.

In the absence of the pastor, Elder J. G. Eubanks, who was providentially hindered from being present, the funeral service was conducted by Mr. George Leukel, a Presbyterian minister, with interment in Rocksprings cemetery. May the Lord bless the children and all who mourn.

Written by request.

JENNIE GRAFTON.

Mrs. Catharine Starr, one of the most highly esteemed women, was born November 26th, 1844, and died October 31st, 1920, at the home of her son, M. F. Starr, near Three Springs, Pa. She was sick but a few hours, sitting in a chair when the end came. She was a daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Lake, of Fulton County, Pa., where she spent her early life, later moving to Huntingdon County, Pa., with her husband and family. Her husband was Silas Starr, who died many years ago. She was a faithful member of the Old School Baptist Church of Springfield township, Huntingdon County, for fifty-five years. She never missed the meetings when it was possible for her to get there. She had a kind and noble disposition, and was highly esteemed by all who knew her. Her life was one of loving service among her children, who rise up and call her blessed. She is survived by one son and four daughters, namely: Mrs. E. E. Gutshall, near Orbisonia; Mrs. M. A. Harper, of Huntingdon; Mrs. Annie E. Chilcote, near Rockhill; Mrs. W. H. Grove, of Williamsburg, and Mr. M. F. Starr, near Three Springs. Mother loved to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which she did for many years. She will be greatly missed, but we know that our loss is her eternal gain.

The funeral service was held at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse Wednesday morning. Interment in the cemetery beside the church-house.

Written by her daughter,

(MRS.) M. A. HARPER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

J. L. Deshong, Fla., $2.00; Mrs. Wm. Brayton, Iowa, $.50; Elder J. M. Adams, Ga., $1.00; Mrs. Ella Jones, Ga., $1.00; John F. Oliver, Va., $1.00; John W. Rockafellow, N. Y., $8.00; Margaret Tiebout, N. Y., $25.00; Mrs. Sarah McColl, Ont., $2.00; Robert Harris, Sr., N. C., $2.00; J. C. Nelson, Ky., $1.00; David Serviss, N. J., $2.00; J. D. Welborn, Ind., $7.00; Emma Birdsall, N. Y., $2.00; L. B. Moffitt, Mo., $1.00.

TO OUR CANADIAN SUBSCRIBERS.

As some of our subscribers in Canada send us Canadian money, we wish to call their attention to the fact that the exchange on it is now very heavy, and we cannot afford to pay it, but can only give them credit for the amount they send, less the exchange. The SIGNS is the only paper we know of that does not charge extra postage for Canadian subscribers, so if convenient please send money orders or express orders.

AN EXPLANATION.

FOR many years it has been our custom to inclose a subscription blank in each copy of the SIGNS of the December 1st issue. These blanks are not to be regarded as bills, but are just reminders that the end of the year is near at hand, and as the majority of our subscribers' time expires with the close of the volume, they make a convenient way of remitting for next year, or for sending us new subscribers. Those whose subscriptions are paid in advance are not to think we are dunning them for money, but we would feel very thankful to any who would use the blanks in sending us new subscribers. If any of those whose subscriptions expire with the end of the volume do not wish the paper continued will so notify us we will appreciate it, as we do not wish to force the SIGNS on any who do not care to read it.

THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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EBENEZER
OLD SCHOOL
BAPTIST CHURCH,
IN
NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 89. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1921. NO. 1.

POETRY.

"PEACE, BE STILL."

(Mark iv. 39.)

OVER the sea wild winds sweep,
  Lashing waves to fury now;
Over the ship rude waves leap,
  Fiercely leap from stern to bow,
While the Savior rests asleep,
  Peace upon his gentle brow.

Waken, Master, waken quick!
  Haste, O haste, we perish, Lord!
Mighty tempests gather thick;
  Look, O look, with one accord
Waters leap across the deck.
  Still the Master speaks no word.

Now they view the distant shore,
  Terror fills their hearts with dread;
Waken, Master, they implore;
  Hope hath vanished, faith is dead;
Dost thou care for us no more?
  "Peace, be still," the Savior said.

See the roaring wind doth lay!
  Ruled by Jesus' stern command,
Wind and wave his words obey;
  Holding safety in his hand,
While the seas their fury stay,
  Calmly doth the Savior stand.

Thus, O Savior, rule my heart,
  As thou didst that tempest wild;
Let me know thee as thou art,
  Just and humble, meek and mild;
Let thy grace to-day impart
  Peace unto thy trembling child.

As thou didst the winds control
  On the sea of Galilee,
Still the tempest in my soul,
  Calm the passions of life's sea;
When the foaming breakers roll,
  Lamb of God, O look on me.

Fools who jest when others pray,
  Fools who scoff and scorn thy will,
Let the tempest blow their way,
  Then their hearts with terror fill;
Fainting, they would hear thee say,
  "Peace, be still;" "Peace, be still."

HAL MORETON.

ST. JOSEPH, Mo.

HAMAN.

AH, Haman, you've a gallows built,
  'Tis fifty cubits high!
You plotted and you planned it well,
  For Mordecai to die.

He, in whose balance lords of earth
  With justice have been tried,
Sees plainly that your heart is filled
  With jealousy and pride.

With frightened look you stand and gaze
  Upon the spot of doom;
You seem like one all filled with dread,
  In some deep forest gloom.

'Twas ordered thus that you should die
  Just where you planned to kill;
So God, who sends his vengeance down,
  Has wrought his sovereign will.

NANNIE B. EDWARDS.

LA GRANGE, Ga.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BLIND BARTIMEUS.

"AND they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimeus, the son of Timeus, sat by the highway side begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way."—Mark x. 46-52.

In this narrative of the miracle wrought by Christ in giving sight to blind Bartimeus we have a beautiful picture of the transactions of the Lord with his called and chosen people; how they are wrought, how they are moved to yearn after, to call upon him, and very blessedly there is portrayed Christ's tender compassion toward his people, poor, blind sinners. Contemplating the narrative of the healing of this blind man, it is quite evident he had heard of Jesus, and was so wrought by the gracious operations of the Spirit of God that his heart believed in Christ and longed after him. Accounted as an outcast, for the blind and the lame and the leper could not enter into the house of God. (2 Samuel v. 8.) (Look for a moment at this scene. There is being carried a certain lame man to the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful. There he sits, and, like Bartimeus, a beggar, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple. But in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth he is cured of his lameness. Then he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered in with Peter and John into the temple, walking and leaping and praising God; and all the people, filled with wonder and amazement, saw him walking and praising God. He had been an outcast, but he is so no more. The doorkeeper in the house of the Lord no longer frowns, but smiles upon this walking, running, leaping man that uses his legs so merrily. He that was lame now leaps as the hart, and his tongue sings praises to the Lord.) Bartimeus. Poor, blind beggar. There he sits by the highway side imprisoned in the darkness of his blindness. To be conscious of all this would make him a wretched man. Have we been quickened by the Holy Ghost to spiritually know that we are miserable and poor and blind and naked, wretched outcasts from the Lord? All the taught of the Lord are made in some measure to know themselves such. Once we were content in our darkness, in our ignorance, because of the blindness of our heart; we were not disturbed over our alienation from the life of God. (Eph. iv. 18.) We did not know that we were poor. Ah, we were dead in our sins, and yet all the while we were poor, guilty, lost sinners, but we felt not our destitution. But when the Lord quickened our souls, called us by his grace out of the world, we were convicted of our sins, and our iniquities prevailed against us, and destitute of righteousness we found that we were naked in our shame and uncleanness before God. This is no fiction, an idle tale, but a momentous reality in the hearts of the called of God; and no relief is found, there is no salvation for us save in the cross of Christ, in Jesus' blood and righteousness. O Savior, thou art precious to poor, famishing, naked, blind sinners. Thou, in thy compassion, in the riches of thy grace, "raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up

the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory."—1 Samuel ii. 8. Bartimeus, the poor, blind beggar, had heard of Jesus. The renown of Christ had reached him, and he was moved toward him. Perhaps he would have compassion upon me, for I hear tidings that the lame walk, the blind recover their sight, lepers are cleansed, the dead are raised; surely this is the promised Son of David, Christ the Lord. O that I could find him, that I knew where he is. He journeys from place to place, and how could I, a poor, blind beggar, find him? I have no one to take me by the hand and guide me to him; I am a poor, blind beggar. O that he would come along where I am, where I sit day by day, by this highway, a blind beggar. Will he ever come this way? O Jesus, Son of David, come this way, come to me and have mercy upon me. Poor, vile sinners, called by God's grace, wrought and taught of the Lord, find, as this poor blind man, longings springing up in their souls after Jesus Christ, whom they are persuaded is the Savior, the only One able to save poor, guilty, hell-deserving sinners; and as they learn that others are saved from their woes by him, there are inquiries mingled with their yearnings, O, will he ever come to wretched, sinful, guilty me, and will he have mercy upon me, a vile transgressor? Poor sin-distressed one, perhaps thy heart is saying, Day after day passeth by and he cometh not; I fear he never will come and save me, but my heart sigheth, yearneth for him, that I may know him mine; he, the mighty, gracious Savior, I, the miserable, unworthy transgressor.

Christ came to Jericho, came to Bartimeus. Jesus knew all about him, for it was he himself by his own divine power that had begotten in the blind beggar faith and longings after himself. So it is with you, poor sinner; Christ is the inspirer of all the outgoings of thy sin-distressed heart after himself, and he bids you still seek. He will, as he journeys, surely come along that highway where you sit in your poverty and blindness, while your troubled heart is saying, "Remember me, O Lord, with the favor that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation; that I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance."—Psalms cvi. 4, 5. There sits the blind beggar, but the time of love, (Ezek. xvi. 8,) for love's deeds to be wrought, draws nigh. The set time to favor Zion is come, and along that highway there are more than the usual passers by Bartimeus. Doubtless he is at his usual trade, begging alms: Have pity upon a poor blind man. There they are, "a great number of people" passing by. But while he is begging he wonders why this day so many are passing along the highway, and "he asked what it meant. And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by."—Luke xviii. 37. The One whom I have desired is come. (Haggai ii. 7.) He no longer begs of the passing multitude; the longed for One is come, and his thoughts are centered upon him. Jesus only can give what he craves. He singles him out of all the multitude, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby this poor blind beggar can be saved from his blindness. Bartimeus began to cry out, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." The blind man knew Jesus better than the passing throng, for though Christ was brought up at Nazareth, and was called a Nazarene, the blind man knew him to be the Lord's

Christ, the Son of David. He cried out; that is an urgent cry, it burst forth from his heart. He began to cry out, and he kept it up. It is written, "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord."—Gen. iv. 26. (The rendering that our translators have put in the margin is also expressively blessed, "to call themselves by the name of the Lord.") Those who are the Lord's, whose name is named upon them, have in all generations called upon his name. "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?"—Luke xviii. 7. The chosen of God are described as "my suppliants," (Zeph. iii. 10,) for the Lord has poured upon them the spirit of grace and of supplications. (Zech. xii. 10.) That sinner who cries for mercy is wrought with very graciously by the Lord, and though his heart be bruised and humbled, and contrite over his sins, he is moved with all graciousness unto God, he craves for reconciliation, he yearns for friendship with God. O that the Lord in the riches of his mercy were my everlasting Friend. But how can it be? Will he abundantly pardon such a vile transgressor? for abundance of pardon I need. Ah, I feel my sins to so abound that only abounding grace can reach my case. When it pleaseth God to call a sinner by his grace, by this graciousness of the Lord we are graciously formed, fashioned, exercised in all graciousness unto the Lord; even though we are in sore distress, burdened with sin, and mourning our iniquities and trembling at his word. Truly blessed is that poor sinner who has such a gracious new heart. Know you anything of having such a heart within you? There sits blind Bartimeus, the multitude passing by talking concerning Jesus of Nazareth, and in my heart I am speaking for Bartimeus, saying, Jesus of Nazareth passeth by. O, he is come this way, this is my longed for opportunity. I do not see him, I know not where he is, whether near to me or yet far off, but he journeys along this highway, he is come, unto him will I cry. O, I cannot, I will not let him pass me by. Will he pass me by? What claims have I, a wretched, blind beggar, upon him? Might he not justly, sovereignly pass me by? O, he will not pass me by, for he is Christ the Lord, the Son of David, his name is Jesus, and with all my heart unto him will I cry, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." To his feeble, piteous cries for alms the passing crowd was indifferent; a few may have cast him a mite or two. But now he cries out, not unto them, but unto Jesus. His loud tones they could not endure, it interfered with their chatterings one with another; it disturbed, displeased them, and looking down upon him as a wretched, ill-behaved beggar, "many charged him that he should hold his peace." "Charged him," as though they were his lords that had dominion over him. They were higher than he, and what was he? A miserable outcast, a blind beggar. Their voices are harsh, unkind, unfriendly; there are no tones of pity from their tongues. "Many charged him." More than one, one after another, or all together their tongues rise up against him and pour down upon him their displeasure. "Many charged him that he should hold his peace." Have we not encountered these voices charging us that we should pray no more? Have not unbelief, our sins, yes, and the insinuating voice of the devil, transformed as an angel of light, said we should hold our peace, that it is useless to cry to the Lord? How can you, a vile transgressor, expect Christ will hear you? He has

heard others, he attends to their cries, but your supplications are passed by, says unbelief. It is useless to pray any longer, you had better give it up and pray no more. The poor sinner, the child of God in his straits, trials and conflicts, is both driven and drawn to cry to the Lord, but the powers of darkness are in array against the voice of his supplications, and we find it no small matter to have to battle with the many tongues that would silence our cries, telling us it is useless, presumptuous of us to think that the great and holy God will hearken to our petitions. But he who is the inspirer and hearer of the prayers of his people is greater than all the condemning, unmerciful, unpityful voices. It is a cheering sight to see the behavior of the poor blind beggar while these many tongues are charging him to hold his peace. His faith in Christ caused him to disregard all those voices that rose up against him; he was not going to be silenced by them. Though they were many and powerful, some of them perhaps were rich, and he only a blind beggar; though their voices were many and harsh, he would be heard, he would not yield to their demands, he would not be silenced. Such was the urgency of his felt need that in his vehement longings, in his faith in Jesus, he cried out the more a great deal, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." He could not be stopped, he would not give it up, he was saying within him, I will not hold my peace. He fought the whole of these many tongues. His was a fighting faith, an overcoming, prevailing faith, and he fought a good fight. He had faith in Christ Jesus, the Son of David, now passing by, and he was saying, I must not, I cannot, I will not let Jesus pass me by. It was in his heart as it was in Jacob of old, and he was saying, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me."—Gen. xxxii. 26. So he ran through this troop, brushed aside and leaped over all these opposing voices, and cried out the more a great deal, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." It is written, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."—Isaiah liv. 17. This heritage Jesus gave to this importunate beggar, Bartimeus.

"And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called." Christ will not pass by this poor blind beggar, and, poor sin-distressed, ye burdened, weary souls, he will not pass thee by, for he will regard the prayer of the destitute and not despise their cries. "He shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper."—Psalms lxxii. 12. Christ commanded him to be called. Those whom Jesus commanded to go to the blind man went to him with glad tidings. In the kingdom of Christ the apostles, the ministers of Jesus Christ, are able ministers of the new testament. They are made so by the grace of God, by divine instruction, through afflictions, in tempests, in conflicts, troubles and sorrows, and they are very graciously nourished up by their God in the words of faith and of good doctrine, that they may be able to come unto the called of God in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

"And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee." These are kind voices; in compassionate, cheering tones they are saying, Be of good comfort, there is hope for thee; Jesus, the Son of David, has

hearkened to thy cry, rise, he calleth thee. Where are now those harsh tongues which a moment ago charged him that he should hold his peace? They are silenced, confounded, condemned, they are ashamed and fade away. The blind beggar in his faith in Christ has triumphed over them. "Against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue."—Ex. xi. 7. No dogs are barking now against Bartimeus; they are silenced, they dare not, they cannot move their tongues against the poor blind beggar who has been called into the presence of the King. So, poor supplicating sinner, sighing, pleading, crying for mercy, for deliverance, light and salvation, crying unto Jesus, though harsh voices would discourage thee, keep on crying, Christ hearkens to thy cries, and the time to favor thee will come, and not a dog shall move his tongue in the day of salvation and forgiveness of sins.

"And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus." How eagerly he responded to the gracious call; he laid aside every weight, he cast away his garment, all those "filthy rags," and rose, and went to Jesus, who had called him. Blessed attraction drew him on, moved his feet to go straight to Jesus. A way is made for him through the multitude, and if there are voices they are all saying to his yearning heart, Be of good comfort, he calleth thee. So on he speeds his way to the gracious Savior. It is the King's highway cast up, and the stones gathered out, that the blind man, yes, that the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein. (Isaiah xxxv. 8.) Is it not written, "Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumblingblock before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I am the Lord"? Lev. xix. 14. "Cursed be he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way: and all the people shall say, Amen."—Deut. xxvii. 18. Christ Jesus with cords of love drew the blind man to himself; he came to Jesus. "And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight." The dear Redeemer knew what Bartimeus wished for, but he graciously drew it forth from him. So all thy cries, poor perishing sinner, unto the Lord are inspired and drawn forth by the blessed operations of the Spirit of grace and of supplication, which God hath poured into thy troubled soul. What was the first thing Bartimeus saw when Jesus gave him sight? He saw Jesus' kind and smiling face looking upon him, and that face looking upon him immediately transformed, illumined Bartimeus' face, and he in return smiled upon Jesus. O, I cannot but smile upon Jesus when he smileth upon me. We all with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. (2 Cor. iii. 18.) There are many things that believers in Christ love to see. They read with unspeakable consolation their names in the Lamb's book of life, written in heaven. (Rev. xxi. 27; Heb. xii. 23; Luke x. 30.) How blessed it is to see the beauty of the Lord in the house of the Lord, to see the King in his beauty and behold the land that is very far off. (Isaiah xxxiii. 17; Psalms xxvii. 4.) Perhaps you are saying, My eyes are weak, and very much of the things of Christ's kingdom I see but obscurely, I am in much darkness; I need some eyesalve from Jesus, our dear Physician, and then I shall see better. O that the eyes of my understanding might be enlightened, that I might know what is the hope of his calling and what is the riches of

the glory of his inheritance in the saints. (Eph. i. 17, 18.) Then also, child of God, how instructive and comforting to have our eyes looking into the perfect law of liberty. (James i. 25.) Blessed indeed it is to see with eyes of faith that worketh by love Christ crucified, and blessedness is in our hearts when we see him crowned with glory and honor. (Heb. ii. 9; Gal. iii. 1; vi. 14.) O Bartimeus, blessed are your eyes, for you see, you see Jesus.

"Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way." He did not go out on a sight-seeing excursion, away from Jesus. Doubtless he beheld the glories of the visible creation, and was astonished and delighted and filled with adoring wonderment; but it was in companionship with Jesus that he looked upon all things, he followed Jesus in the way.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, N. C.

MONROE, Ga., Dec. 15, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—I sometimes feel that I would like to contribute a letter for the columns of the SIGNS, knowing so many of its readers, feeling that they belong to that royal family begotten of God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, having a name among them, that we are no more strangers, but fellow-citizens of the household of faith. How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, all being taught of God, led by the Spirit, hoping that we have been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of his dear Son, and that he has been our dwelling-place in all generations, being our strength and ever present help in trouble. Then we inquire what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. This love is like himself, unchangeable, and nothing can separate us from it, life nor death. We dwell together as children, loving each other with that same love which is bestowed upon us by the Father. Our fellowship is gained by talking and maintained by walking. Our friendship is often renewed by our meeting together and being made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and our relationship is not being born of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; hence he works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. We are not our own, but bought with a price; not turned loose in the world to do or not do of our pleasure. We must confess that the way of man is not in himself, for He knows every step that we shall take all the way through life, and even the consequences of all of them, and if it were not in accordance to his will and pleasure as it is, he would have had it different, because he does as he pleases in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. Now all of this dwelling together is while we are bearing the image of the earthly, and it is a pleasant thought that we shall bear the image of the heavenly, be like him and be satisfied; that is enough for you and for me. We sometimes ask, Who hath believed our report? or to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? We must say it is those in whom the light has shined in their hearts, and those who have felt his power in bringing them up out of the horrible pit, placing their feet upon a rock, establishing their goings and putting a new song in their mouth, even praise to God. To believe this report that salvation is by grace through faith, must surely be the work of God. Jesus said, He that believeth on me hath ever-

lasting life. Some believed not, because they were not of his sheep. To believe that Jesus is our Redeemer we must not have any confidence in the flesh. We must believe that he finished the work which his Father gave him to do, and not what we can or must do to inherit eternal life. Our destiny in time and eternity is all in his hand, because we live, move and have our being in him. May he lead and guide us all in the good and right way, is my desire.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

JAMES M. ADAMS.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder George Ruston.)

The Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, at Roxbury, N. Y., September 15th and 16th, 1920, to the churches composing the same sends christian love and fellowship.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In writing this our Circular Letter we desire to stir up your pure minds, that ye might remember what is the hope of your calling and what the fellowship of the saints really comprehends; for there is that which hath a form of godliness, and many are deceived thereby, but it lacks the conformity to the image of God's dear Son. With many who name the name of Christ to-day there is very little of an endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace Some are rather endeavoring to stir up strife and division. Such things ought not so to be, for ye are called with a holy calling to be strangers and pilgrims on the earth, and all are journeying to a better country, that is a heavenly. At most we are only sojourners upon earth for a brief season, and how blessed it would be if we could always remember that the beauty of the Lord rests upon Zion, and say with the psalmist, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" The Lord's people are the only family of brethren that can dwell together in unity, for their fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. Therefore, laying aside all bitterness and wrath, anger and clamor, and all evil speaking, walk in love. Heaven knows no strife, and as citizens of that blessed country may the Lord in his abounding mercy enable you as much as in you lies to cease from strife while here upon earth. The word of the Lord should be your only guide, for the Lord has declared his will therein plainly, so that the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. It is your duty to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, not with carnal weapons, nor as men beating the air uncertainly; neither let the means and ways common among men find place among you, for you cannot play politics in the affairs of heaven. In humility and weakness let each esteem the other better than himself. The calling of a christian is a heavenly calling; it is therefore unworldly and unselfish, separating and holy in its nature. It is not to earthly honors, riches in this world or vain pleasures, but it is to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. They who have this calling "declare plainly." Their lives are a plain declaration that they seek not their own, but another's wealth. O that self could be cast aside and Christ be exalted! Now, dear brethren, we are sure you will agree with us that in the present day we are in no small danger of losing sight of the real nature of christianity. Believing in the predestination of all things, or having sentiments in accord with those possessed by a child of God, does not make us christians, for

without holiness none can see the Lord. In contending that it is by grace ye are saved, through faith, let us remember that such a blessed doctrine can only rightly be understood according to godliness. Ye are called to be fellow-citizens with the saints. "For ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints and of the household of God." Therefore what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holiness of conversation. Moreover, how necessary and essential that in this day ye should not forsake the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is. Having meeting but once a month, and in winter, owing to the inclemency of the weather, meetings have to be postponed, you are seldom able to hold twelve church meetings in the year, yet many times brethren are missed from their places. Surely if in heaven there will be no parting, it should be the duty and privilege of all who fear God to see that nothing within reason separates them here upon earth. There was a certain day approaching the believing Hebrews, and Paul exhorted them not to forsake the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some was, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as they saw the day approaching. So we, too, my dear brethren, exhort you in all meekness not to forsake the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching. What day do some of you see approaching? Many of you are fearful that the houses where so many of your fathers met and held sweet communion and fellowship will soon be desolate, for but few seem to love the truth preached in such places to-day. If we see that day approaching, let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together; do not let anything hinder. For ye see your calling, brethren, it is away from the world, away from self to the companionship of the household of faith. Do not let us satisfy ourselves with the thought that we can read and meditate and obtain comfort when those we profess to love are met together in church capacity. Often the continued absence of a member from their home church will sorely grieve the brethren, and make their frequent expression of love and esteem appear as empty words. The Lord says, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." For the Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. We can read and meditate some other time, but we cannot always expect to hear and see our beloved brethren, whom we esteem highly for the truth's sake. Let the psalmist's words be ours, who said, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." And again, "Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honor dwelleth." If my best friends and kindred dwell there, let me be found among them, bearing their burdens and taking their lowest place.

GEORGE RUSTON, Moderator.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Clerk.

TO OUR CANADIAN SUBSCRIBERS.

As some of our subscribers in Canada send us Canadian money, we wish to call their attention to the fact that the exchange on it is now very heavy, and we cannot afford to pay it, but can only give them credit for the amount they send, less the exchange. The SIGNS is the only paper we know of that does not charge extra postage for Canadian subscribers, so if convenient please send money orders or express orders.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1921.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

WHEN Cyrus' army laid siege to the city of Babylon, so sure were the Babylonians that their city could not fall to the enemy that they took no precautions against attack, but spent their time in drinking and making merry. Thus were they surprised in the midst of their riotous reveling when suddenly the soldiers of Cyrus appeared in their midst, having marched up the bed of the Euphrates River, from which the water had been diverted into an artificial channel. Thus, with their loins loosed, the Babylonians fell an easy prey to the invading Persians. Josephus tells us in his history of the Jews that when the Roman army under Titus laid siege to the city of Jerusalem the Jews within the city were divided among themselves into troublesome factions; that these warring factions were not even willing to bury the hatchet in order to present a united front to the foe, but kept up their party struggles, oblivious to the fact that the dogs of war were about to be loosed to the destruction of their nationality forever. This carelessness in the presence of danger probably arose from the traditions of the Jews according to which they believed themselves to be the especially loved nation of Jehovah, whom they could not believe would desert them to their foes. In April, 1912, when the Titanic left Liverpool for its first voyage to New York, so certain was the captain his vessel could not be sunk that he scarcely heeded the warnings when told he was headed in the direction of floating icebergs, with the result that over sixteen hundred persons went to their death. From the above three instances, it not being necessary to multiply examples, it appears that human nature often becomes so sure of itself that it fears nothing. This is due to an inflated sense of one's own importance. It comes of thinking one is something when he is nothing. It is true, on the other hand, that a body of people will sometimes forget their internal dissensions and unite as one when threatened by outside danger. However, such was not the case with ancient Babylon; it was not the case with the Jews, and, sad to say, it is not true of God's people today. We live in the midst of a dying world, of a world dizzy with its speed, and lacking altogether leaders of sufficient wisdom to cope with ever increasing momentous problems. Multitudes of strange notions and ideas are current all about us, religion lacks all semblance of godliness, and has sunken, if not into gross materialism, at least into forms without feeling and rites without meaning. As opposed to all this condition of things, what are we doing about it? As the professed church of Jesus Christ are we presenting a united front to all this ungodliness? We think not. Very much as the Jews when besieged by ancient paganism, we to-day are engaged in bickerings and controversies about what this or that does or does not mean, while all around us the world is on fire with idolatry and sensualism. If ever we needed to stand for the plain, simple truth of God as it is in Jesus, it is now. If ever we needed love, more love, and

still more love to God and the neighbor, it is now. If ever we needed to cease making one another offenders for a word, to cease seeking occasions against each other for barring fellowship, it is most certainly now. So long as God's people are agreed on the great basic truth of salvation alone by the grace of God, other points upon which we may or may not agree should not be the occasion for casting one another away. There seems to be no lack of opportunities for the showing of forbearance and brotherly love, but there does seem to be a shortage of these virtues themselves. It is not worth while for any to ignore their faults by shutting their eyes to them, but infinitely better that all boldly face their deficiencies, that they may prayerfully seek to be rid of them. Upon the threshold of this new year let us hope that the coming months may not witness such arguments and contentions as were true of 1920. All ought to know by this time that divine knowledge comes by revelation, that no amount of argument can make another agree with one's point of view. It is our part to speak and write the truth as we are given to see it. If some other one sees it differently, we are scarcely to blame for that. As surely as we did not place ourself in the ministry, and so surely as no man power placed us there, so it is certain that we are not accountable to men for our stewardship. Each to his own Master stands or falls. We should each endeavor with all the might that is in us to study to show ourselves approved unto God, not unto men. It should be our chief joy to so rightly divide the word of truth as to have a clear conscience toward God and toward man. In every controversy the flesh is bound to intrude itself. Each party to the debate wants his own side to win, each wants, and is bound to have, the last word. Is this Christlike? By no means. In considering this matter, one cannot forget the quiet, sublime dignity of Jesus as he faced his accusers before being taken to Calvary. Did he defend himself? No, by not so much as a single plea. Did he seek to justify his acts and his words all the way from the manger to the cross? Did he stoop to explain to curious and sneering men the wherefore of this or that? None of these things did he do. He held his peace, knowing his conscience was void of offence toward God and man, knowing that while he never would experience justification in the flesh, assuredly God would justify him in the Spirit by his resurrection from the dead. It has seemed to us for a long time that a spirit of self-justification is a fleshly and not a godly one. A good conscience needs not to seek its own justification. Divinity will attend to that. But a good sign that a man is in wrong is that he invariably seeks to excuse and justify himself. If what we preach is the truth it needs no justification at our hands. If we must be always and forever underpinning it and bolstering it up we may well take heed whether it be the truth. Not so very long ago an Old Baptist preacher, being found fault with because of certain views he held, was asked by his friends why he did not make some reply to his accusers. He answered that God had called him to preach and not to fight, and that he had the promise that God would fight his battles for him did he but attend to his ministry. This is eminently more Christlike than to descend into the arena of debate to take up the cudgels of carnality in one's own defense. Whenever one becomes overmuch contentious for this or that view of Scripture he may delude himself into thinking he is zealous

for the truth, whereas he is really determined to have his own way and so silence his opponent. It is so very hard to discern between the flesh and the Spirit, so very hard to delimit the boundary between self and Jesus, that we should at all times examine ourselves carefully to know what manner of spirit we are of. A spirit of self-examination is always a safe guide for the servants of Christ. More often it is the beam in one's own eye that gives trouble rather than the mote in the brother's. If we have one desire more than another for this new year, it is that the serried ranks of the church may be made whole, that the unity of mind and of heart and of soul may truly abound. That if there be differences, forget them; if there be unity, emphasize it. Let us preach Christ first, last and all the time. Let us not fear to ascribe to him too much glory, too much power, too much grace, too much honor, for what this dying world needs is Jesus. If God has sent us to proclaim him, let us do it in season, out of season. The church is certainly a city set upon a hill. Its light cannot be hid. If God has illuminated us with this light, let it so shine, that men may see our good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven. No doubt there are numbers of people all about us who have never heard the truth and are hungry for it. Then preach it. Though it be like bread cast upon the waters, we have the assurance that not a crumb is wasted, that no gospel effort is ever spent in vain. Another desire we have for us all during this new year, is that God may be pleased through his Son to infuse us with the spirit of true christian service, to the end that we may live more for each other and less for self, that we may be at the feet of our brethren, submissive to their judgment, esteeming others better than ourselves. We are minded here of the work of Jesus in coming down from heaven, not in order to be served, but that he himself should serve sinners, even to laying down his life for them. Now may this mind that was in Christ be also in us, that we may delight to spend and be spent in the service of the children of God. May the Lord preserve us from every self-seeking principle and every false way; may he clothe us more and more with his own divine nature, that we may be more and more imbued with that pure and undefiled religion that keeps itself unspotted from the world. If we know our own heart at this time, this is our sincere greeting to all of you for the coming year.

L.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Lexington Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, October 6th and 7th, 1920, sends christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the providence of the all-wise God we are once more favored with the privilege of meeting in an associate capacity to join in praise and adoration to his great and gracious name. Love has abounded throughout our meeting, and may it continue to abound in the churches, that life, light and joy may also abound. We are glad to receive your messengers and messages, and hope you will continue to come in the spirit of love and fellowship, that God may be honored and glorified in all things.

Our next session is appointed to meet with the Second Church of Roxbury, at Halcottville, Delaware Co., N. Y.

JOHN CLARK, Moderator.
JAMES AVERY, Clerk.
O. F. BALLARD, Ass't Clerk.

NOTICE.

NEWARK, Del., Dec. 12, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is with affection and in affliction I desire in a public way to reply to the many letters I have received from the different brethren extending from Canada to Texas and California. It would be impossible to write individually to all. I appreciate to the depths of my heart the many comforting words which have reached me, and hope I may receive the strengthening grace to say, Thy will, not mine, be done, in these hours of separation from the brethren, but it is for a moment, a small moment—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. This change must come sooner or later with us all. The love and confidence of the brethren is precious to me while sojourning here on earth, and I feel I am unworthy of such blessings in my flesh. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not.

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen.

JOHN G. EUBANKS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

George M. Conner, N. J., $1.00; Mrs. Spencer Nethaway, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. A. F. Jones, Ga., $1.00; Maria Rees, Ky., $3.00; Miss S. I. Rittenhouse, N. J., $3.00; Miss E. Annie Parker, Md., $3.00; James Ashurst, Ill., $3.00; G. C. Jordan, Mo., $1.00; L. O. Garrott, Ky., $2.00; Mrs. L. J. Randolph, Texas, $1.00; Samuel W. Shipway, N. Y., $3.00; W. W. Hughett, Ill., $3.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder George Ruston, at his home, Kelly Corners, N. Y., December 8th, 1920, Harry Hubbell, of Kelly Corners, N. Y., and Bertha Harrington, of Vega, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Nancy Buller departed this life July 11th, 1920, at her home in Ridgetown, Ontario, in the 84th year of her age. Sister Buller was received in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church May 24th, 1880, and baptized by Elder Pollard. She was the granddaughter of Elder Dugald Campbell, who came to Canada in 1818 from Knapdale, Scotland, and settled in Albro, Ont. Elder Campbell was the first pastor of the Covenanted Baptist Church. Sister Buller was married to Thomas Buller May 28th, 1863, who preceded her in death about twenty-five years ago. To that union were born eight children, five of whom are still living to mourn the loss of a kind and devoted mother. Sister Buller for a number of years was in poor health, not being able to meet with her church people at the regular monthly meetings, which she greatly missed. She was kind-hearted, and her home was a welcome place for her kindred in Christ. She lived a faithful and devoted member of the church and cause, which was dear to her. For a number of years meeting was held at her home in Ridgetown once each month. These meetings she looked forward to with pleasure, and was favored of the Lord to feed upon the heavenly manna which the dear Lord has so graciously provided for his children. She leaves to mourn their loss five children, three daughters and two sons, three sisters and other relatives, beside the church.

Her funeral was held from her residence in Ridgetown, and was conducted by the writer. Interment was in the Ridgetown cemetery.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Carrie E. Griffin, wife of W. M. Griffin, departed this life May 18th, 1920, at her home, Halcottville, N. Y. She was the daughter of George W. and Roxy Davis, and was born October 2nd, 1850, at Otego, N. Y. Her parents moved to Roxbury when she was but a child. She leaves to mourn their loss, her husband, W. M. Griffin, and one son, Edward Griffin, also three grandsons. Mrs. Griffin never felt herself worthy of a name among the Old School Baptists, but was a believer in the truth and attended meeting when it was convenient. She was a good wife and mother, and is greatly missed by all.

The funeral services were largely attended, and were conducted by Elder John Clark and the writer, who tried to speak to the comfort of the bereaved. May the Lord sustain them under their heavy loss.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Henry J. O'Bannon, deacon of the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Va., died at his home, Pleasant Valley, Va., Thursday night, November 18th, 1920. He was born August 5th, 1832, on the same farm on which he died, and was one of the eleven children of Charles and Rosa O'Bannon. He was married to sister Martha E. Hutchison the second Sunday in February, 1884, in the Frying Pan meetinghouse. She died Sept. 12th, 1902. They had no children. A niece of sister Martha's, Mrs. B. G. Benton, and husband, lived with brother Henry, and were able to care for him during his last days. They were faithful and devoted. He was confined to his bed ten weeks before he died, not so much from any pain or disease, but through increasing weakness due to age and feebleness. Not once was he ever heard to murmur or complain. The late Elder E. V. White baptized him Sunday, July 13th, 1889. Brother O'Bannon was in the Confederate Army during the Civil War, in the 8th Virginia Regiment, under Capt. Smith, and was wounded at Ball's Bluff. He was a man of clean life, of temperate habits and of sober speech. He lived all his life in the neighborhood where he first saw the light, both naturally and spiritually, and not a taint was ever discoverable upon his uprightness of character. Loved and respected by all who knew him, he by the grace of God maintained a godly walk and conversation, ever faithfully attending the meetings of the church and punctually discharging his obligations to his brethren. I had a most delightful visit with him one Sunday afternoon in August last. Then, though somewhat forgetful of every day matters, his mind was bright and clear in the things of the Spirit. He spoke of his hope and faith in the Lord Jesus, and how they comforted him; he affirmed his love for the truth and for God's people, and testified that the doctrine of the unlimited sovereignty of God and of salvation by his free and unmerited grace was more essential to him than ever before, and that he believed it, if possible, more than ever before.

His funeral was held in the Frying Pan meetinghouse, conducted by Elder H. C. Ker, whose remarks were appropriate and comforting to all the mourning church and friends.

ALSO,

Dennis Mellott, deacon of the Sideling Hill Church, Pa., died at his home near Plum Run, Fulton Co., Pa., December 15th, 1920, after a painful illness extending over several months. He was the son of Samson and Rebecca Mellott, both deceased, and was born November 11th, 1859. He was one of several children, and is survived by four sisters and four brothers: Mrs. Sadie Turner, of West Falls Church, Va.; Mrs. Louise Godfrey, of St. Albans, W. Va.; Harvey Mellott, of Canada; Andrew Mellott, of Ohio; Mrs. Elizabeth Mellott, Mrs. Mollie Waltz, Gilbert and Ephraim Mellott, all of Fulton County, Pa. The four sisters are all members of the Old School Baptist Church. About the year 1883 brother Dennis was married to Miss Alice Funk, daughter of the late Eli and Rebecca Funk. To that union were born eight children, four sons and four daughters, all of whom are living, namely: Ira, Ralph, Rolla and Willie Mellott; Mrs. Bertha Daniels, Mrs. Etta Peck, Mrs. Lucy Haumann and Miss Mary Mellott. All eight of the children live in Fulton County. Two of the sons and three of the daughters are members of the Sideling Hill Church with their father and mother. Brother Dennis and his wife were both baptized the same day, by the late Elder E. V. White, about the year 1888. He is also survived by fourteen grandchildren. Brother Dennis was appointed deacon some years ago, and discharged the duties of the office faithfully. He was good to visit the sick and to look after those who were not able to get to the meetings. The welfare of the church, the purity of its order and doctrine, seemed to be his chief desire, and I have known him to sacrifice his own personal advantage for the sake of the meetings and of the brethren. He walked humbly before his brethren, never showing the least selfishness or fleshly pride or exaltation. During my pastoral care of the Sideling Hill Church he never failed to hold up my hands, to encourage me when I felt disheartened, and to cooperate with me in all business pertaining to the church. I have lost a true and faithful friend, and shall miss him sorely.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Sideling Hill meetinghouse, the place he so dearly loved. Burial in Sideling Hill Cemetery. L.

Mrs. Rebecca Slack Yerkes died October 7th, 1920, at Oreland, Pa., at the home of her son, John S. Yerkes. She was born July 8th, 1842, and married to Amos A. Yerkes November 15th, 1860. To them were born six children: Anna Mary, who died in infancy, Horatio G., Carrie W., Jennie M. Alfred L. and John S. In January, 1876, she lost her two little girls, one aged eight, the other four. This was a sore affliction to her, and it was nearly ten years before she could put her trust in God. In those years of suffering she strove against the power of God, but in time was made to bow in humble submission to his will. She received a hope while listening to Elder Durand explain the text, "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I." She came to the Southampton Church and was baptized by Elder Durand Nov. 29th, 1885. She vas a faithful member of the church, and was always at the meetings unless something very serious hindered. She was rich in experience, and how we all loved to have her come and to listen while she told of the way the Lord had led her. Two of her sons, Horatio and Alfred, died a few years ago. She bore her losses and afflictions with a beautiful spirit. For about two years she was unable to

come to meeting, owing to her failing health. It was a severe trial to her, and she was sadly missed in the meetings. During her last illness, which lasted about three weeks, she suffered very little except from weakness. On the morning of October 7th, about 4:30 she became a little restless. About six o'clock, when her son went in to see her, as was his custom every morning, he found her sitting on the bedside supported by her nurse. In that way she passed away so quietly that they could not realize she was gone. Her going was like a beautiful sunset. She is survived by one son, John S. Yerkes, who is a deacon in the Salem Church at Philadelphia, also by several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

The funeral was held at the Southampton meeting-house. The sermon of Elder B. F. Coulter and concluding remarks of Elder J. M. Fenton were of much comfort to the large number of mourners gathered there. Interment was in the adjoining graveyard. Every one who knew sister Yerkes loved her, and they all unite in sympathy with her family in their bereavement, while they rejoice for her that she has entered into the joys of her Lord, where sorrows and sufferings are ended.

MILDRED DURAND GORDY.

Mrs. Mary Mitchell, wife of Andrew Mitchell, was born in Liberty, Susquehanna Co., Pa., February 22nd, 1855, and died November 20th, 1920, at her home in Brookdale, Pa. She was married to Andrew B. Mitchell December 10th, 1876. Her maiden name was Mary E. Luce. Sister Mary was baptized by the writer of this notice nearly twenty years ago, uniting with the Brookdale Old School Baptist Church. She was held in the love and fellowship of her brethren until the dear Lord called her to her home above to dwell with Jesus eternally. She had been badly afflicted with rheumatism for several years. The cause of her death was a paralytic stroke. She had two slight strokes before. She was apparently unconscious five days before she died. Sister Mary was always ready to do all she could for her brethren, and delighted in the work. The meetings of the church have been held at the home of Mr. Mitchell since the death of Deacon Baily. She leaves a sad, lonely husband, two sisters and other relatives to mourn their loss, but they do not mourn as those who have no hope, for her husband and two sisters each have a good hope through grace, we believe. May God sustain and comfort them with his presence, is my desire for Jesus' sake.

The funeral was held at Stanfordville the 23rd. Burial was in the Baily Cemetery, beside her father and mother.

D. M. VAIL.

Howard W. Ross, son of George N. and Nora F. Ross, was born July 9th, 1916, and died October 6th, 1916. The funeral was conducted by Mr. Cooper, a New School Baptist, as an Old School Baptist could not be secured.

ALSO,

Frances V. Ross, youngest daughter of George N. and Nora F. Ross, was born May 8th, 1918, and died March 26th, 1920, of measles and pneumonia, at the home of her grandparents. The funeral was conducted by Elder A. B. Francis.

SUSAN E. FIGGS.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 89. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1921. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JOHN XII. 24.

"VERILY, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

The above portion of Scripture has lingered so much in my mind of late that I have decided to suggest a few thoughts concerning it and send them to the dear old SIGNS for publication, if you judge them worthy of a place in its columns. There is no doubt in my mind but this corn or grain of wheat mentioned here has direct reference to Christ, our dear Redeemer, the Root and Offspring of David, the bright and Morning Star; therefore, in order to more clearly elucidate this manifestation and fullness of Christ, the Head of the church, which is his body and fullness—I say, to be as plainly understood as possible, I will in the first place notice the nature of a grain of wheat falling into the ground and dying, and the fruit it produces, which in the order of things produces after its kind. Hence this grain of wheat that falls into the ground and dies brings forth a multiplicity of grains or corns of wheat of the same kind. This is verily true in nature, as most of us know, being eye-witnesses to the fact. We sow or plant this corn (grain) of wheat in the ground and it dies and springs up (though we know not how), first the blade, then the stalk, then the full corn in the ear. Sometimes there are perhaps seventy, eighty or more good grains of wheat in that one head of wheat or full ear, and all of them the offspring, issue or fruit of that one grain, which is its fullness. This proves conclusively that in some mysterious way which we poor mortals cannot understand this one grain gives to every grain or seed of its kind its own body. (See 1 Cor. xv. 38.) This illustration is from the common method of everyday life, which we are so well acquainted with, in order to illuminate and strengthen our minds spiritually, especially of the incarnation of Christ, who took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham, whom God made the father of many nations, saying, "I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after

thee."—Gen. xvii. 6, 7. This promise of God to Abraham included every heir of promise—all the election of grace, both Jew and Gentile, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, as it is written. (Gen. xvii. 5.) So as those many grains of wheat all had life and existence in that one grain which fell into the earth and died, and was but the fullness of that one grain developed or made manifest, the offspring and fruit thereof, so also all the election of grace, all the promised seed, comprising the church, the mystical body of Christ, is but the fullness or manifestation of that one spiritual Corn of wheat, who took on him a body of flesh (fell into the ground and died), and was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. I say this mystical body, the church, is the fullness of Christ, this Corn of wheat that filleth all in all; for it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell, and in order that a manifestation of this wonderful and mysterious fullness should be made, this Corn of wheat must fall into the ground and die; for if there had been a law that could have given life, verily righteousness would have been by the law; but this being the only way that salvation could come to poor helpless sinners, Jesus, their dear Redeemer, died for their offences and rose again for their justification. Therefore, being justified, by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

I will say in conclusion, had not this one bare grain or corn of wheat fallen into the ground and died, there never could have been so much as one of those numerous grains of its likeness made manifest. So in like manner, had not Christ, this Corn of wheat, come into this world and taken on him a body of flesh like ours, and in that body died, there never could have been so much as one of God's dear offspring made manifest in this world, for we are the offspring of God; therefore let us walk as the children of God, in meekness and fear.

W. J. MAY.

PINSONFORK, Ky., Nov. 4, 1914.

SHOCK, Ky., July 23, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—In looking in one of my cabinet drawers a few days ago I found the inclosed article, which I wrote nearly six years ago, as you will see by the date of it. I had entirely forgotten it, and was somewhat surprised when I found it. No doubt I had written it intending to send it to the SIGNS for publication, but after looking it over judged it unfit for its columns. Since I came across it I have read it carefully three times, and thought over it seriously, and so far as I am able to judge I believe identically the same to-day on the subject, yet my views may be wrong. However, I have decided to send it to you to dispose of as you deem best for the good cause.

Yours to serve, W. J. MAY.

IVYLAND, Pa., Oct. 18, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—After attending services at Southampton Sunday, September 26th, at 10:15, we left Wayne Junction at 12:36, and arrived at Washington at 4:10 p. m., and left Washington at 5 p. m. the same day for Atlanta, Georgia. We met Elder J. M. Adams and wife on the train at Winder, fifty-five miles this side of Atlanta, and they went with us on our trip. We arrived at Atlanta at 6:15 p. m. (eastern time), and were met at the station by Elder D. M. Matthews, brother J. H. Green and sister Ison, all of Atlanta, Ga. We went to sister Ison's for the night,

Tuesday, the 28th, all our party went to the Yellow River Association, held at Nances Creek, Ga. Elder J. A Jordan was moderator. Elder J. M. Livezey preached the introductory sermon. In the afternoon Elder J. J. Turnipseed preached, and was followed by Elder Prather, of Georgia. We spent the night with brother John S. Ball, as did also Elders D. M. Vail, of Pennsylvania, Gresham, of Texas, Colwell, Curtis, Moss, Adams, Jordan and Stephenson, all of Georgia. Wednesday morning Elder D. M. Vail preached from Zephaniah iii. 16, 17, followed by Elder I. J. Gresham, of Texas. In the afternoon Elder Wallace, of Kentucky, preached, followed by Elder J. D. Curtis, of Georgia. Wednesday night was spent at the home of brother John P. Ball, where Elders J. M. Livezey, Ga., D. M. Vail, Pa., and D. S. Gower, Ga., spoke. Thursday morning, Sept. 30th, Elder Morgan Williams, of Georgia, preached, followed by Elder W. J. Hull, of Alabama. In the afternoon Elder J. M. Adams, of Georgia, was followed by Elder D. M. Hembree, also of Georgia. After the association adjourned all our Pennsylvania party went to Elder D. M. Matthews' home for the night. Friday morning we started for the Marietta Association, twelve miles from Atlanta, in session with the Collins Spring Church. Elder Mitchel was moderator. Elder W. T. Walden preached the introductory sermon, and Elder E. T. Caldwell preached in the afternoon. We returned to Elder Matthews' home Friday night. Saturday morning Elder I. J. Gresham preached, and was followed by Elder J. M. Yarbrough, of Georgia. In the afternoon Elder J. A. Jordan preached, followed by Elder J. M. Adams. Saturday evening we went to the home of brother Walter Bartlett, Atlanta, and after supper Elder D. M. Vail preached, followed by Elder D. P. Smith, of Atlanta, followed by Elder J. A. Jordan. Elder Vail and wife spent the night with brother Bartlett and my wife and I went with Elder D. P. Smith. Sunday morning there was baptism at Collins Spring Church, followed by preaching by Elders J. H. Johnson and S. M. Cox. In the afternoon Elder D. M. Vail preached, using the twenty-third Psalm as his text. After the association closed our party started for Covington, forty miles distant, and spent the night with brother Lee D. Adams at his home. Monday morning we rode seven miles to Harris Spring, where services were held. Elder Vail preached, text Deut. xxxii. 1–14. Elders J. M. Adams, J. T. Moss and Robert L. Cook made some remarks. The party all went to brother John H. Adams' for dinner, at Social Circle, Ga., and stayed all night. We went to Elder Robert L. Cook's for dinner next day, and from there went to Elder J. M. Adams' home, in Monroe, Ga., ate supper with Elder Adams' son-in-law, brother Wm. Peters, and his wife, and spent the night with Elder Adams. Wednesday morning Elder Vail preached in the meetinghouse at Monroe, Ga., and was followed by Elder D. S. Gower. All took dinner on the lawn between Elder Adams' and brother Wm. Peters' homes. Elder Vail preached at Elder Adams' home at four o'clock that afternoon, followed by Elder Gower. We spent the night at Elder Adams'. In the afternoon of October 7th we went to the home of Elder Adams' son-in-law, W. L. Breedlove, to visit, and returned to Elder Adams' for the night. October 8th, at 7:30 a. m., we left for the Oconee Association (forty-seven miles distant), which convened with the church at Browns. Elder Vail preached the intro-

ductory sermon, using as a text Isaiah xii. 1–6. In the afternoon Elder Frank Chandler, of Georgia, preached. Brother Arthur Jones took us to the home of Oliver C. Porterfield, where we spent the night. Saturday morning Elder W. L. Allen, of Georgia, preached, followed by Elder W. W. West, also of Georgia. In the afternoon Elder S. A. Huff preached, followed by Elder J. H. Stewart, Ga. At night we went back to the home of Oliver Porterfield, Crawford, Ga. Sunday at 10 a. m. Elder Robert L. Cook preached from Philippians iii. 3. Elder D. M. Vail preached from the twenty-third Psalm, last three verses. Elder J. M. Adams closed the meeting. Brother Arthur Jones took us to Athens for the 3:15 train for Washington, D. C. Brother Adams and wife, brother Peters, wife, daughter and two sons-in-law, Elder Huff and wife, sister Ison and brother Jones were there to see us off. We arrived in Washington at 12:20 the next day, and left there for Leesburg, Va., at 2 p. m. Arrived at Leesburg at 4 p. m., and stayed all night with Elder H. H. Lefferts. The afternoon of October 12th we went to the home of sister Craig, Middleburg, Va., where we stayed that night. October 13th we went to the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the Mt. Zion Church. Elder J. G. Eubanks opened the meeting by singing and prayer. Elder Vail preached the introductory sermon from Psalms xxvi. 4, 5. Preaching in the afternoon by Elder J. M. Fenton, text Psalms l. 2, followed by Elder H. C. Ker, text Luke xv. 32. Thursday morning Elder J. G. Eubanks preached from Galatians ii. 19, followed by Elder D. M. Vail, from Zephaniah iii. 12–18. In the afternoon Elder H. C. Ker preached from Luke xvi. 9, followed by Elder H. H. Lefferts, from Esther ix. 2–22. We went to Leesburg and spent the night with Elder Lefferts, and left Leesburg at 5:15 Friday morning, and arrived at North Philadelphia at 11:17 a. m. Our folks met Elder D. M. Vail and wife and Wm. Hobensack and wife and we went on to Trenton, N. J. This finished a precious journey together.

WM. HOBENSACK.

EDGEMOOR, Delaware.

DEAR EDITORS:—My son was baptized by Elder Wm. Grafton. He was away from home at the time. He refers to a letter written at that time and his conclusions after twenty-five years. If it meets with your approval it can be published in the SIGNS.

B. F. HAMILTON.

WILMINGTON, Del., October 5, 1920.

MY DEAR FATHER:—I thank you for the letter dating back to my baptism. I have lived years since that time actually and in a figure. I shall write you some conclusions those years, as mortality measures time, have formed. In stating these conclusions, my dear father, think of two things. I am writing the things I know; I am writing them to you because you know. It is true that this life's journey is a passing to another phase of living. The word "trans" means across. We cross to another manner of life. In crossing we grow. In what? Remember now, we speak the things we know. I know that eternal life is the boundless gift of God. I know that he gives eternal life to his chosen. I know that in this gift we grow—grow in the grace (gift) and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, the Son of God. I know that my Redeemer liveth, and ever maketh intercession for me at the throne of God. I know that I know these wonderful things

only in the Holy Spirit. I know that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom (abode, manner of life) of God. I know that Jesus Christ is named Savior because of the absolute unfailing safety given us by his indwelling. I know that he saves his people from their sins. I know that no one or nothing else is able to save me from my sins. I know that I was born to glorify his great power. I know that I shall die to prove his great power to make me alive in him. I know that even now I am alive in him. I know that Satan and all the powers of darkness cannot prevail to enter into the knowledge of these wonders. I know that Satan and all the powers of darkness cannot prevent me from entering into the knowledge through the Spirit of Christ dwelling in me. I know that when I am in the darkness of this natural mind I cannot enter into this knowledge. I know that when the gentle wind "bloweth where it listeth" the Spirit comes as the Comforter, and I grow in this journey across to the land of the inheritance of the saints (set apart). I know that in due time (growth) I shall see these things in their fullness and shall see my Savior as he is. There will be no veil of flesh between. What say you, father? Do I say that I know too much? How do I know? By growth. Now faith is the gift of God. I did not find it of myself; I did not attain it by any of my deeds or ability. Having faith, we grow. The trial of our faith is more precious than the gold that perisheth. Trial—what is that? The years passed since the day of my baptism answer. We are not in a losing fight. It is the good fight of faith we are soldiers in. We fall by the way often. The course of the battle is always onward for all of that. The battle against the flesh and this world and the powers of evil is the battle of our Creator and his dear Son, and the victory is "Glory to God in the Highest." Can any other than glorious victory in his name be possible? What opine you, father? Are you glad that you are a soldier of the cross of our Lord?

Affectionately your son,

CHARLES W. HAMILTON.

CLARKS SUMMIT, Pa., Oct. 20, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—By request of brethren I will say wife and I left our home Friday, Sept. 24th, went to Ivyland, Pa., the fine home of brother William Hobensack and family, a lovely, orderly family; could not ask for anything better this side of heaven than we got there. Saturday went to the deacon's home in Southampton, who is blind, where we had a good dinner and grand visit. Stayed over night at the home of sister Mildred Gordy and family, the parsonage where her father, Elder S. H. Durand, lived so many years, and had an excellent visit there. How many good, spiritual visits I have had at that home with Elder Durand and family. He and sister Durand are in heaven now, at home with God. Sunday at 10:15 we had meeting at the church-house, and from there we started on our trip to Atlanta, Ga., in company with brother Wm. Hobensack and wife, and I want to say right now that they were just the kind of folks that wife and I needed with us on such a long trip in a strange country. We can never repay them for their great kindness to us in every way. And now, what about Old Georgia Baptists? I will say this: they almost buried us with kindness; and talk about hospitality, I was going to say Georgia leads; I will say she cannot be beaten. We heard some excellent preaching at all of the three associations we at-

tended in Georgia. We thank you all for your kindness to all of us, and invite you to come up north and visit us. We may not be as warm-hearted, as we live in a colder climate, but we will do our best to entertain you. God bless you all.

D. M. VAIL.

PETALUMA, California.

DEAR EDITORS:—I submit the following, if it is anything you can use.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." These words came into my mind while attending the Roxbury Association in September of this year. While thinking of the association to-day, and of being privileged to meet with the Lord's people while I was east, both in New York (my home church), also in Middletown and Roxbury, they came to me again, and I feel constrained to attempt to write a few lines for our dear family paper, trusting if it be of the Lord he will surely guide my pen, because I know he has all power in heaven and on earth, even power to resurrect the dead, so if he wills to roll the stone away he is able to give life and spirit to my otherwise weak words, and bid them come forth for his honor and glory. I have been wonderfully kept all these years that I have been deprived of church privileges. I know it is of his great mercy that he has not forsaken me, because I am not deserving of any good at his hand; I am just the least one of all, but unless I am deceived he has given me a hope in his mercy, and I would not exchange that hope for all the world has to offer. Where is my evidence? My heart goes out to those who show they have been with the Master and learned of him. I am drawn to those people. I know I love the preaching of our dear Old Baptists; I feel the tie that binds all together in the one body, and the head and life is Christ our Lord, and he will never leave nor forsake one of the least of his members, for the body would not be perfect without all. All are bought with a price, how great a price he alone knows; all are precious in his sight, and he will not suffer one to be lost, but will raise it up at the last day. Then we shall be satisfied. Is it not enough to know that we shall awake with his likeness and be like him? What more could we wish for? I feel I was greatly blessed in having the privilege of attending the meetings at Roxbury. It seemed good to meet with the Lord's people and to have a hearing ear given me for the preaching, which was indeed precious to me. I wish to thank all who were so nice to me in their homes while I was there. I had hoped to spend another Sunday with my home church in New York, but it was not to be. The one I spent with them will be a precious memory until we meet again. Now I am a long way from you all, but I have the SIGNS, and that is a great comfort to me, so I still have much to be thankful for.

Yours in hope,

NELLIE H. ARNOLD.

NEW YORK, N. Y.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As my subscription has expired you will find inclosed a money order for two dollars, which please place to my credit for 1921. I have read the SIGNS for the last thirty-three years, and still enjoy reading it, for it has been a comfort to me, and I want to continue taking it as long as I live if it continues to contend for the doctrine I love. How strange it appears to me that for the last fifty years I have been made to love that which I once hated. Please note my change of address, from Salisbury, Md., to 1033 Summit Ave., New York, N. Y. (Bronx).

MARTIN D. FISHER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1921.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

LAMENTATIONS I. 4.

"THE ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts: all her gates are desolate: her priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness."

We feel sorry to begin our writings for the year 1921 with Lamentations, but nothing seems as fitting when we cast our eye about Zion. Perhaps it is as good now that the pure minds of the Lord's people be stirred up as it was in the days when Peter wrote to that end. If the pure minds of the people were affected only, it would be a great pleasure to write, but so often the carnal mind seems more stirred, and discord rather than unity develops. However, the work of writing and preaching must go on, and the result left with the Lord.

Elder Lefferts in the "New Year's Greeting" expressed a desire that during the year 1921 there might be more unity, good feeling and forbearance than was the case during the year now past. We fully appreciate his feeling in the matter, and join in the desire for more charity. While this is the desire of us both, and while we labor to that end, not the least principle of doctrine can be sacrificed nor compromised. Firmness, yet kindness, must be the word. "Smooth things" will not do, rounding corners must not be indulged in, seeking to please man must be avoided. Hewing to the line, letting the chips fall where they may, must be our every day work. Two cannot walk together except they be agreed, and agreement in doctrine is the work of the Lord alone in the hearts of men. All efforts of men have utterly failed, and will continue to fail, to cement where no cement is. The SIGNS has never had any use for half-way doctrine, such as "limited predestination," "conditional time salvation," "the old man made over in the new birth," "the resurrection of spirit rather than body," the millennium or thousand year reign, as taught by the late "Pastor Russell" and now adopted by some of our people. Predestination is predestination, absolutely, or no predestination at all. If God rules the falling of a sparrow and the falling of the hairs of the heads of men, sets up kings and casts them down; if the powers that be are ordained of him, he must have predestinated all things and governs all things according to his determinate counsel and foreknowledge, even the wicked acts of men in the crucifixion of his only begotten Son. This is the foundation of the SIGNS on the doctrine of predestination. Salvation, absolute salvation, is of God, who feeds and clothes the fowls of the air as well as to work in the hearts of men to will and do of his good pleasure. The idea that the Lord, by grace, sets the object of his love in motion and then demands that he keep going, is altogether wrong. How long will a railroad locomotive run after the steam is exhausted? The steam is the power, and the engine cannot move at all in the absence of the power; therefore, that the machine be kept in operation, the steam must be ever in evidence. So also with man, the Power must be ever present in order that he do the commandments of God. "Without me ye can do nothing." Let us therefore

give all glory to Him to whom all glory belongs. This is where the SIGNS stands on salvation, and has no use for the kind that is partly of God and partly of man, or "conditional time salvation."

If "the old man" is made over in the new birth, surely many of us cannot claim, nor even hope, that we are "born again." Every atom of human nature is in evidence from time to time in us all, and but that the children of God were restrained they would go to as great lengths as those who have never known the Lord. The word "birth" means deliverance, and in that deliverance the eyes see, the ears hear, the tongue sings, the feet walk. Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. This birth, or deliverance, translates a man from the kingdom of darkness into the marvelous light of God; it manifests him a child of God and a joint-heir of Jesus Christ. The man is the subject of the new birth, or deliverance, but not made over, or, in other words, human nature changed. The man of God still possesses human nature with all its faults, and at the same time is a partaker of the divine nature. The resurrection is that of the body, "a spiritual body," and not spirit. The spiritual body has the likeness or image of the heavenly, or Christ. This image is not that of the earthy, which we all bear now. "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." This is the doctrine of the SIGNS on the subject of the resurrection. Beyond this all men are at sea.

The doctrine of the millennium, as adopted by some of our people, is very different from that of the Scriptures. The things John saw in the revelation and wrote in a book and sent to the seven churches of Asia were "things shortly to come to pass." Therefore, instead of looking into the future for Christ to come in bodily form and the dead to be raised and live and reign with Him a thousand years on earth literally, let us look back to the destruction of Jerusalem and all things pertaining to the old covenant, and to the beginning of a new day of light and liberty through the operation of the Spirit of God. A thousand years are as one day and one day as a thousand years with the Lord. Therefore the figurative language, "a thousand years," is used to denote the reign of Christ in the Spirit throughout the gospel dispensation, which has now endured almost two thousand years, and shall endure until time shall be no more. During all this time Christ reigns King of kings and Lord of lords, is raising men from the dead in trespasses and sins, to sit with him in his kingdom and reign with him, having been made conquerors through him. Be not deceived, evil communications corrupt good manners. This is the day of Jesus Christ; this is the day of salvation; this is the day the Lord hath made. In it let us be glad and rejoice.

Having now briefly established a few of the vital principles upon which the SIGNS was founded, and for which the editors will contend, and which seem necessary to the comfort of Zion, we shall examine the text in a more direct way. Why did the ways, streets, avenues, walks, ordinances of Zion mourn in the days of old? First, we are told, because the people, in the type, did not go to the solemn feasts. The prophets had become discouraged, false prophets were abroad in the land speaking smooth things to please the people. The shepherds had ceased to feed the flock, had ceased to take the oversight of them as they should. Warnings had ceased, pleasures abounded, the goodness and mercy of the Lord had been

forgotten, the solemn feasts had become tiresome. Because of all this the ways of Zion mourned, and for which transgressions the Lord punished the people.

In looking round about Zion to-day do we not see similar conditions? Surely there has never been a time when there was more lukewarmness than now. The solemn feasts are sadly neglected. Prosperity and pleasure produce coldness toward the house of God, and coldness produces indifference to the extent that many have little interest in the things of the kingdom. Have the prophets ceased declaring the word of the Lord? Are they discouraged and fainthearted? Have the pastors ceased to feed the flock which Jesus purchased with his own blood? Has the real doctrine of God our Savior, strong meat, lost its attractiveness, its sweetness? Have other things and other subjects taken the place of gospel preaching? Has the Zion of God made the fatal mistake of ordaining men to the ministry whom the Lord never called to feed the sheep, and thus the ways of Zion mourn? Have those called of God to the ministry ceased to warn, rebuke and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine the saints of God? There is a golden wedge and a Babylonish garment hid somewhere in the camp. There is a reason for all the unrest and strife and coldness throughout the world to-day. There is scarcely a locality where Old School Baptists are located that there is not a lack of interest, a lack of spiritual mindedness, a lack of zeal, a lack of brotherly kindness. War is more prevalent than the love of God one toward another. Men are striving for the mastery unlawfully; churches are rent asunder in different parts of the country; ministers and brethren are backbiting and devouring one another, seeming to care more for their own way than the peace and welfare of the church. Is it to be wondered at that "the ways of Zion do mourn," that her gates (entrances) are desolate, that her priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted and she is in bitterness? What is the remedy for all this? It seems to us that we have the solution in the messages to the churches of Asia. One special thing is, do the first works, get back to the first love, or, in other words, the love we first had, when we all were little children; so careful were we that we hardly dared venture an opinion, much less to take the lead, as some do now, and expect every one to follow on, and if any refuse to follow they are killed off like sheep for the slaughter. O that all of us could repent and do the first works, get back to the place where all was love, peace and joy, when the Zion of God was the most beautiful and restful place in all the world. There one brother could feel another's sigh and with him bear a part; there sorrow flowed from eye to eye and joy from heart to heart; there we were free from envy, scorn and pride, and our wishes were all above. May the Lord grant repentance and forgiveness of sins, that the desert may blossom as the rose and the garden of the Lord send forth its fragrance throughout the land of the living. Then Zion will rejoice instead of mourn, and her gates be no longer desolate. Those who see Zion in their first love see her "a quiet habitation" and long for a resting-place within her walls; but when they look upon the Old Baptist denomination to-day they do not recognize there the quietness and glory given them in their first experience.

"The ways of Zion do mourn."

K.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by George R. Tedford.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, Bowdoinham, Maine, September 10th, 11th and 12th, 1920, to the associations and churches with which we correspond sends greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—By vote of the Association at her last session I was chosen to write the Circular Letter for this meeting. I shall try, with the help of the Lord Jesus Christ, to write a few lines of the love of God for the church, or his people. In 1 John iii. 1, we find these words: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." 1 John ii. 15: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" In Jeremiah i. 3, we find these words: "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Here we have a sample of God's love; it is for all time, and has no beginning or end. It is very much different from natural love, or love of the flesh, for when our natural love is turned into hatred and jealousy it is one of the greatest sins of the mind. It will destroy the fellowship of God's people, but it cannot destroy his church, although it may seem so to us at times. We must remember the love of God and our natural love are two different things, they will not mix, they cannot be mixed. I sometimes think the love of God, the grace of God and the Spirit of God are all one. It is very evident to me that we must be blessed with all three to be in fellowship with the saints. We are told in holy writ that God loves his chosen even when they are dead in sin. Paul says, Let love be without dissimulation. Peter says let it be unfeigned. Paul told the church at Thessalonica that it was needless for him to write them to love each other, for they were taught of God to that end, but he said to his Hebrew brethren, Let brotherly love continue. It does not require much time for one child of God to identify another; their speech betrays them. John says, We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. John wrote a great deal about love. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. The whole thing hangs on belief. Philip told the Ethiopian eunuch that if he believed with all his heart he would baptize him. The eunuch said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. No one can believe anything in nature or grace without evidence. For one to believe that Christ is the Son of God that one must be born of God, or regenerated. Of course many of all ages have a historical knowledge of God; that knowledge is natural, and, like all natural things, will perish with the using. The Savior said, Without me ye can do nothing. Paul said that with Christ he could do all things. He further says, We are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Now abideth faith, hope and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity. Charity, which is synonymous with love, as before said, has no beginning nor end. Hope is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. Peter says the end of our hope is the salvation of our souls. If one

has the love of God shed abroad in the soul it enters into heaven with him, where the Forerunner has for us entered, even Jesus, our great High Priest, who was not made after the order of carnal commandments, but after the power of an endless life. Paul says, I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. John says, If any man love God, the same is known of God. Paul says, If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his. Christ in his elect the hope of glory is the christian experience. It requires divine light to convince one of sin. To easily admit one is a sinner, and to feel the conviction of sin, are two and very different things. Love is a grace, and no graceless person ever loved God. Love is a thing of the Spirit, or a spiritual thing, and the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. To love God is to know God. This, the Savior said, is to know God. The mystery of godliness is great. No one reasoning from a natural standpoint can harmonize the doctrine of election and man's accountability to God. That God's elect were chosen and given to Christ before the foundation of the world is just as sure as that the Scriptures are of divine origin. They were chosen to the end that they might be holy and without blame before God in love. The scriptural reason, or cause, is because it seemed good in the sight of God. The New Testament Scriptures are God's word to his people now, declaring that his love was made manifest in the gift of his Son when all were dead in sins, and that all promises are fulfilled in Christ.

As the conclusion of my remarks I will quote the precious words of John, fifteenth chapter, ninth to thirteenth verses inclusive: "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." The love of Jesus, what it is none but the loved ones know.

Love to all who love our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Our next meeting is appointed to be held with Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, beginning Friday before the second Monday in September, 1921, and continuing three days.

Z. M. BEAL, Moderator.
GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

(Written by Elder B. F. Coulter.)

The Salisbury Association, in session with the Snow Hill Church, Worcester County, Maryland, October 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1920, to the churches and associations with which we correspond sends greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—The Association in addressing you this annual letter is pleased to communicate spiritual growth and manifest vitality within our midst. Spiritual growth, or growth in grace, is not only invisible in its secret vital work, and unsurpassed in the wonder of it, but its springing into manifestation sets forth the hand of God in wisdom and power far beyond the finite wisdom and power of the creatures of earth in their pride and vanity. The powers of dark-

ness combined cannot stay or hinder or mar its astonishing growth. There cannot be growth without life. That which is dead cannot grow. A growth in grace necessarily means life in Christ Jesus. In him is life eternal. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." Wisdom and knowledge and understanding are the fruit of the growth within us, taking root downward in the darkness, and bearing fruit upward in the light, and the same light which gives us the knowledge of God also gives us the knowledge of our total depravity, showing us a heart that is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Our gracious Reedeemer in teaching his disciples admonished them to "consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." As the growth in grace is a secret, hidden movement in the life of the saints of God, so is the growth in nature, an invisible action in the darkness wherein the seed is planted, not by the volition of the seed (for it must die), for the lily toileth not, neither does it spin. It springs forth into its wondrous beauty and purity out of the blackness and darkness of the earth by the power and wisdom of its Creator. So the question is asked: "Can the rush grow up without mire? can the flag grow without water?" If the lily could with feeling and sensibility look down upon the earthy substance from whence it sprang into beautiful life it would be ashamed. So the children of God's kingdom by faith's view behold the pit of iniquity from which they emerge with shame and sorrow. The psalmist was given to consider with inspired rapture the growth in the flock of the fold of God, and said, "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon." The prophet Hosea also by the word of inspiration said, "I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon." So also the prophet Malachi by the same word said, "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." Now, dearly beloved, let us consider our growth, as compared to nature in the handiwork of God, and remember how we grow. Not by any effort of our own, but by the hand of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will. Let us also take heed to the words of the apostle Peter: "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory, both now and for ever. Amen."

B. F. COULTER, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER W. B. MCADAMS has changed his address from Jonesboro, Texas, to 2404 Laurel St., Columbia, S. C.

ELDER J. F. BEEMAN has changed his address from Larkins, Florida, to Limona, Florida, where he expects to remain for some time.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Roxbury Association of Old School Baptists, in session with the Second Old School Baptist Church, at Roxbury, N. Y., September 15th and 16th, 1920, to the associations and churches with which we correspond sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Through the kind providence and tender mercies of the covenant-keeping God our unprofitable lives have been spared to meet in an association, to which your messengers have come richly laden with tidings of great joy from the Master's storehouse, proclaiming to us the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ, and declaring his name as the only name under heaven given among men whereby guilty sinners must be saved. Our meeting together is an evidence of that love that John speaks of where he says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." O what a blessing it is to love and be loved by God and his chosen people.

"When each can feel his brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part;
When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart.

When love in one delightful stream,
Through every bosom flows,
And union sweet, and dear esteem,
In every action glows.

Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

Our meeting has been evidenced by this love, and has gone on without any discord, and we hope to meet your messengers another year; until then, dear brethren, farewell.

Our next session is appointed to meet with the Middletown and Andes Church, at Union Grove, Delaware County, New York, Wednesday and Thursday following the second Sunday in September, 1921, at 10:30 o'clock, a. m.

GEORGE RUSTON, Moderator.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Clerk.

The Salisbury Association, in session with the church at Snow Hill, Worcester County, Maryland, October 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1920, to the associations and churches with which we correspond sendeth love in the Lord.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST JESUS THE LORD:—We are indeed truly thankful to almighty God that our lives have been spared one more year and that we have had the blessed privilege of assembling ourselves together again in an associate capacity. We have only five ordained ministers with us, but they are richly laden with the precious things pertaining to the love of God our Savior toward his people.

Our next Association is appointed to convene with the church at Salisbury, Wicomico County, Maryland, on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1921, where we hope to again have the precious privilege of meeting with you.

B. F. COULTER, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

HYMN BOOKS READY.

WE now have a supply of the small cloth Hymn Books on hand, which we will mail post paid to any part of the United States or Canada for one dollar a copy. These books formerly sold for seventy-five cents per copy, but because of the big advance by the binders we are forced to charge one dollar each for them, whether sold singly or by the dozen.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, at his home, Salisbury, Md., December 29th, 1920, Lester Francis Hastings, of Parsonsburg, Md., and Lillian Pearl Ruark, of Salisbury, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

William F. Sloan was born May 8th, 1857, and died at his home, 325 South Spring St., Lexington, Ky., November 29th, 1920, in the 64th year of his age. Brother Sloan had been in declining health for the past year, and the last few weeks of his life was a great sufferer, but bore it all without murmur or complaint. He united with the old Bethel Church, Shelby County, Ky., early in the eighties, and was married to Miss Sallie Barger in the fall of 1886, I think. To them were born six children, four sons and two daughters, all of whom survive, together with the dear devoted wife. He was a devoted husband and father and genuine Baptist, faithful to the church. He had a clear mind in the Scriptures, and loved to talk on them. Many have enjoyed his writings in the SIGNS. He was very unassuming, quiet in his manner, attending to his own business. The grace of God was with him. I have been closely associated with the dear family, and their acts of kindness have greatly endeared them to me, and I deeply sympathize with them.

I was called to attend the funeral service at the home on December 1st, after which the body was laid to rest in the Lexington cemetery to await the resurrection. For the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall come forth.

I inclose a short sketch of his life written by himself. P. W. SAWIN.

I was born, like all of Adam's posterity, under the bondage of sin, yet have a good hope through the grace of God that Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, has released me from the bondage of sin. For if the Son of God make you free, ye shall be free indeed. I have faults, and do not claim to be perfect, as none of Adam's fallen sons and daughters are perfect in this time state, only as Jesus is pleased to clothe his people in the perfect robe of righteousness, which he wrought out by perfect obedience to the Father's will. I do not boast, as boasting is excluded on our part. All praise and all glory is due to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He paid it all, all the debt I owe. I expect to fall asleep in Jesus in hope of a glorious resurrection, with all of the Lord's redeemed people at the sound of the great trump at the last day, when his people shall be raised immortal and incorruptible.

My dear children who are living will please have this my obituary published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES after my death. WM. F. SLOAN.

Nov. 30, 1916.

J. K. Dennington was born October 4th, 1853, and departed this life December 18th, 1920, at 116 E. Nelson St., Denison, Texas. His suffering was of long duration of Bright's disease, which he bore with patience. He was born and reared in Clark County, Ark., and was married to Mary Jane Collum Dec. 4th, 1879. To that union seven children were born, five of whom died in infancy. Their son Frank reached the age of sixteen, departing this life July 24th, 1907. Mr. Dennington leaves a widow and Mrs. Rosa Erwin, the only surviving child, and five grandchildren to mourn their loss. He and his family emigrated to Texas about thirty years ago. He and his wife united with the Primitive Baptist Church about twenty-eight years ago, and he lived a devoted christian life until death. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of predestination, and was appointed from time to time by his local church as a representative to the New Hope Association. He was not only loved by his brethren, but was highly esteemed by all who knew him.

The remains were laid to rest in Hog Eye Cemetery, near Celeste, Texas, to await the morning of the resurrection.

Written by his son-in-law,

A. L. ERWIN.

MEMORIALS.

(Salisbury Association.)

WHEREAS, it hath pleased Almighty God to bring to an end the labors of our beloved brother, **Elder A. B. Francis,** an able minister of the gospel of Christ, by the sudden and unexpected approach of the messenger of death; and

WHEREAS, this Association deeply feels the loss of his wise and fatherly counsel and greatly misses his presence with us; be it

RESOLVED, that the following expression of sympathy be spread upon our Minutes: We sincerely, deeply and most affectionately sympathize with his relatives and friends, and with the churches he so faithfully served, who are heart-stricken at the loss we all have sustained. And be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution be sent to his family and to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

B. F. COULTER, Moderator.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

G. W. ADKINS, Assistant Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Attie Curtis, Me., $1.00; Mrs. Jasper Seal, Ark., 50 cents; Duncan R. Black, Canada, $3.00; Allie G. Reid, N. C., $1.00; E. F. Readhimer, La., $2.00; Eliza Jones, Ill., $2.00; Mrs. T. R. Pittman, Kans., $1.00; Mrs. C

M. Richardson, Va., $2.00; Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $10.00; A. B. Corder, W. Va., $1.00; Mrs. M. E. Drake, N. J., $1.00; Wm. K. Baird, Ky., $2.00; Mrs. Alice Wien, Cal., $1.00; Mary Barnett, N. B., $1.00; Mrs. Nettie Rogers, Ky., $2.00; W. E. McGregor, Ky., $1.00; M. A. Somers, Va., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

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IN

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Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 694 E. 125th St., or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 89. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1921. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CALALLEN, Texas, Dec. 10, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—It has been my mind for some time to write a short sketch of my imperfect life, and also a little of what I hope the dear Lord has done for me. I was born July 4th, 1871, in Henry County, Tenn., and moved with my parents to Graves County, Ky., in 1873, where I grew to manhood. In July, 1889, I hope the Lord led me to see and realize that I was a vile sinner in the sight of a holy and merciful God. I was ploughing in a tobacco field, and it seemed as if some one spoke to me and said, Where will you spend eternity? I could not think why such a voice or even a thought like this should enter my mind, so I kept on ploughing and wondering why such thoughts would enter my mind. I began to try to go back over my life and find if I had done any violence or had committed any sin that would condemn any one, and found I had not been guilty of very much sin, as I thought gambling, horse-racing and drunkenness were about all that constituted sin. The burden grew worse, and I would ponder over these things until I was made to cry out, O Lord, be merciful to me, a vile sinner. The dark clouds would gather over me thick, and I felt to be the worst sinner under the heavens. I could look on every side and see, as it were, great mountains of despair and gloom. I was made to realize that there was no perfection in the flesh. O, I could, as it seemed, see the flash of lightning, hear the awful peals of thunder, and the word "eternity." I went on in this way for some time, and finally the Missionary Baptists built an arbor within one hundred yards of my father's field where I was at work. Now I thought I would get some relief, therefore set about to get out of this condition. My father was a Primitive Baptist, and had no confidence in the flesh, yet he always tried to treat everybody with respect. He remarked, "Well, we will work until near their meeting time, then we will go and hear them preach." I of course was glad, for I verily thought I would find some relief, but it seemed that my doom was sealed. From my earliest recollection I never had any confidence in what was termed "mourner's bench." They would preach that Jesus died equally for all men, and that all men would be saved if they would try; that Jesus made

atonement for all of Adam's posterity, but it was applied only to those who would accept; Jesus had done all he could do. Now, dear sinner, if you will only accept him you will be saved; and told them just how to accept him: by saying, Here, Lord, take me as I am, and give your heart to Jesus. Now, brethren, I had been trying this for some time, and found no relief. I pondered over my condition one night as the meeting was nearing a close. I was sitting on a block. I do not believe the darkness was any greater in Egypt than it was with me. I could hear the preacher pounding the bookboard. I was sure I was going to die, and that hell was my portion, where the false prophets and all liars have their portion, where there is gnashing of teeth. Right here is where sin revived and I died. O my God, what an awful shrieking and shaking of the dry bones. A few minutes of time all was dark, but in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, the voice of dear Jesus spoke: Thy sins are all forgiven. O what a glorious light shone forth at 9 o'clock in the night, with a radiant glow much brighter than the sun. I shall never forget its brightness; all was peace. Here is where I was made to see the trees clap their hands for joy, and all faces did shine as an angelic host. Now I could say with the poet:

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see."

I went on for some time rejoicing, feeling that I would never have any more trouble, but ah, to my great surprise it was not long before I began to doubt whether this was of the Lord or not. Sometimes I would think, Now you have played the fool, you have deceived everybody and made a mockery of the whole thing; so it has been a cross all these years. I had heard many dear Old Baptists relate their travels, and thought I was no better than they. I joined the Regular Predestinarian Baptists the fourth Saturday in August, 1897, and was baptized by Elder J. P. Jinkins in the fellowship of Harmony Church, in Graves County, Ky., and then found relief. I felt as if I would have no more trouble, except such as my ever unworthiness, but to my surprise and indignation I had a dream one night that I could not get rid of. I had never read the Bible, and knew nothing of the letter of it. I dreamed I was called on to preach at a Mr. Charlton's, and used as a text Hebrews xiii. 2: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." I began to read, and finally found the Scripture. This gave me some trouble, but I would try to throw it off by thinking that dreams often come because of ill health. Soon I dreamed of traveling in Texas, and came to a little town, and just as I passed the town I crossed a small branch, and on my right I came to a church-house, and there were several standing about. An old man came to open the gate, and said, We are glad you have come, for we have no one to preach for us to-day. I went into the house, and they sang a hymn, and told me to go up in the stand and preach. I went up in the stand and used this Scripture as a text: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." I then awoke, and thought, O, what can all this mean? I could sleep no more that night. This rang in my ears for months. I had never

read any such Scripture, as I only had a New Testament, so I borrowed an old Bible from father and would read about as I would chance to open it until I came across the verses. I studied this over every possible way, but could not get it off my mind. I told a brother in the church, and he went and told the brethren. Nothing would satisfy them but for me to try and exercise; no kind of begging would excuse me until the church liberated me. I left that section and stayed away so as to let it die down, but when the time came I joined by letter another church of the same faith and order, and in 1909 they ordained me. I have tried in my weakness to tell of the wonderful works of God, but little do I know of his mighty works.

Dear brethren, many have been the trials and afflictions of my life. I have had the pleasure of baptizing many of the dear believing children of God. Now I am so afflicted that I cannot have the pleasure of being in active service, but I want to be ever at the feet of my brethren, humbly bowed in submission, ever contending earnestly for salvation by sovereign grace, never being guilty of limiting God's sovereign and universal rule over all worlds, creatures and things. Prior to 1880 the people of God were, it seemed, a unit on the doctrine of God's absolute and unalterable decrees, but of late it seems that some have departed from the doctrine of the predestination of all things, and substituted a limited decree, also a kind of time salvation, which they say is conditional; but according to my experience, and that of all from Abel to the present, and on to the final end, salvation is of grace. Brethren, pray for me.

Your brother in hope of life,

J. B. BOWDEN.

POCA, W. Va., January 14, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—While perusing my old family Bible this morning I found a letter I had written in 1916, and after looking it over have decided to send it to you for your consideration. I have never felt that my writing could be of much value to the household of faith, but have a great desire to let all who read the SIGNS know that I love them that love the Lord Jesus Christ and are glad to trust him for all things, both for time and eternity. May the God of our salvation continue to bless you with health and strength, and above all with spiritual knowledge in the future, as he has in the past. When the weather gets so I can get out I hope to get you some new subscribers for the dear old family paper, the SIGNS.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

POCA, W. Va., Dec. 17, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN:—This morning my mind was called to Matthew xi. 28: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." We often think of the way some handle this and many other Scriptures, to make it appear that an invitation is extended to the universal whole of Adam's posterity. This is not an invitation, but a command by that One having authority to say to one, Come, and he cometh, and to another, Go, and he goeth. Under the title of King he commands, and its stands fast. It seems to me the words, "all ye," will never leave a single one without this holy calling or command which the Father gave the Son. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." —John vi. 37. "Come unto me, all ye"—a definite, particular and peculiar people, sanctified (set apart) by God the Father,

preserved in Jesus Christ and called in time, called with a holy calling. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden." Come away from the beggarly elements of the law, which knows no mercy, has no pardoning voice for you; for by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. Paul owns the law or schoolmaster only to bring us unto Christ. He continues by saying, But after that faith is come we are no longer under a schoolmaster, no longer under the law, having passed from law to gospel; are now subjects of gospel address. All necessary preparations for coming, hearing and looking come about by the mighty operation of the Holy Spirit; for we read in the word of truth that the preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is of the Lord. Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved; for I am God, and beside me there is none else. This text is also referred to by those who claim the right of choice, not realizing that they are blind to spiritual things. God has never told one that was blind to look. He first opens the blind eyes, then commands instead of invites to look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities; for there you shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation. One thus prepared to see can truly say, Whereas I was once blind, I now see; I now see my precious Savior typified in righteous Abel and on through the law dispensation. I also see him and his church typified in the two birds. The one (Christ) slain in an earthen vessel, the other bird that was dipped in the blood of the slain bird and turned loose in the open field, to my mind is a figure of the church cleansed by the blood of Christ, who was put to death in the flesh but quickened by the Spirit. We also see him prefigured by the scapegoat, bearing the sins of Israel into the land of forgetfulness. Many are the types, shadows and figures, all pointing to Christ and his mission in carrying out his Father's will. We hear David speaking, or rather Christ speaking through him, saying, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God. Look unto me and be ye saved, is a command. All ye ends of the earth, out of every kindred, nation, tongue and people. God's chosen people are the subjects of his command. The Spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst come. Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. The word "let" is a command. By the Holy Spirit there is obedience to the command. They shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem. Many say the word "let" is optional, left to one's choice, but we notice when God said, Let there be light, his command was obeyed, and there was light. Paul, in addressing the brethren at Corinth, said, For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

POCA, W. Va., December, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—I trust that I may not weary you with my feeble thoughts on many portions of Scripture pertaining to the glorious theme so wonderfully advocated by yourselves and the many writers who contribute to the glorious cause of Christ and his kingdom (by rev-

elation only), being set up in the heart of his chosen people by appointment. We are often brought to remembrance of our Creator in the days of our youth, when the kingdom of God, as we have hoped, was set up in our poor hearts by appointment. The words of Jesus are, I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; and when the Pharisees demanded to know when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, neither shall they say, Lo here, or lo there; for behold, the kingdom of God is within you. Daniel had the secret of the whole matter in his heart, and said, In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. No doubt this inspired man of God viewed the church the visible kingdom set up in this gospel dispensation, which none can see except by an eye of faith. To them the command is to look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities. For behold, the kingdom of God is within you; for greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world, to the breaking in pieces and consuming all Arminian kingdoms. Behold, a King (Jesus) shall reign in righteousness, to the exclusion of all false doctrines and institutions of men and devils. "For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness."—Mal. iii. 2, 3. The children of God being in the way, their offering is in righteousness. For Jesus is the way, the truth and the life; he is in them, and they are in him, and he in the Father. God's chosen people, being in vital unity with the Lamb, makes their calling and election sure.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

GENESIS II. 1.

"THUS the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them."

The preceding chapter tells of the creation of all that was made or created, and the above Scripture more fully sets forth the fact (truth) that nothing more should or would ever be created. The word "thus" expresses (here) ended creation; that is, the bringing into existence any new thing whatsoever, heavenly or earthly. Howbeit the heavenly was created first; that is, God chose his people in Jesus Christ before they were created in Adam; hence when Adam was created the work was finished. Since all men partake of the nature, so also do as many as were chosen by the Father before time partake of the nature (Spirit) of Christ. So in the beginning God created one man, yet it will take until the end of time to make manifest all the people created at the beginning; even so will it take until the end of time (this material world) to make manifest all those chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Here, to my mind, is a wonderful illustration of election. The mighty towering oaks God gave to the world, bringing forth seed after their kind, yet we see with the natural eye thousands of acorns fall from those trees on fertile ground, and no doubt by our learned botanist would be pronounced all to contain a germ, that is, tree life, yet by the power and according to the purpose of God but one in a multitude brings forth a tree. Just so it is with the people of God; multitudes (acorns) have fallen or come from Adam,

and are pronounced by the so-called preachers (botanist) to contain life (spiritual), but again by the power of and according to the purpose of God only a few contain the germ (Christ) and bring forth a tree after the similitude of the tree of life (spiritual). In creation God said, Let us make man in our image; that is, in the image of him that was to come (Christ), formed and fashioned as a man, that he (Christ) should bear the image, earthy, yet only manifesting that which was spiritual. Then if we bear the earthy we shall also bear the heavenly. How does this come? Though you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have you not many fathers; for in Jesus Christ I have begotten you through the (power of God) gospel. Not of works, lest any man should boast. But contrary to the above Scriptures, we find the do and live people all around us. Brethren, if I know anything about what the Scriptures set forth, Christ and his people are inseparable, having been chosen in him before the world was, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Though having been separated from God by transgression, still in Christ, suffered with him, crucified with him, buried with him, brought forth from the dead in him and ascended up to (God) glory in him.

Submitted in love and much weakness.

Your brother in hope of the Christ I have feebly tried to set forth,

K. C. SPINDLE.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Jan. 7, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have not been very well for the last two weeks, and to-day I have been in the house most of the day, and have been reading the SIGNS and some other things. I am pleased with the matter contained in the SIGNS. It seems to me to have the ring of our Father's kingdom. I love to read when the reading is meat to me. When it is meat it is drink also, for the eating and the drinking go together so well that it is hard to distinguish them. Jesus Christ is our meat and our drink in this blessed kingdom. In the present slight sickness I have felt that I want to live and die in the fellowship of the church and doctrine of God our Savior. I cannot find anything else that is worth living for or dying for. It is all we can hope for here and hereafter; in it there is the fullness of the Spirit of God. He is indeed the head of the church, the church of the first-born. She is the fullness of Him that filleth all in all, and is so built on him that every member is built in him. There is no earthly house which can be so built that every piece of the material can be in the foundation, but this one is so built. Adam and Abel were no more in him, nor was John or Paul or Peter, than is each and every member of his body. If I am a child of God I am in him, and if you are children you are in him; in him to live here and in him to live on the other side of the grave. To live in him is to live forever, for he lives forever. God gives unto us eternal life, and that life is in his Son. Paul said unto one of the churches, Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. Therefore it is sure. For this cause the christian's hope is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and he has said, As I live, ye shall live also. None of us believe that he will ever die. He died once, to die no more; now he lives and intercedes above for those whose sins he bore. He being their attorney in that divine court the Judge is satisfied. Our Attorney says, Behold I, and the children that thou hast given me. The Judge says, Thou art all fair, my love, there is

no spot in thee. Thus our Advocate and Head presents us to the Father, not having spot, nor wrinkle, nor any such thing. All his work is acceptable to the Father, and we are received in him.

I will inclose check to continue my subscription another year. The editorial of Elder Lefferts' in the last issue is a most excellent letter, and full of the best of advice, to which all of us will do well to take heed. The Lord bless editors, publishers and readers with many rich blessings during this new year.

Your brother in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

TEHUACANA, Texas, Dec. 20, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will write you a few lines, thanking you for your kindness in sending me the SIGNS another year free of charge. Words fail to express my appreciation, as it is nearly all the preaching I have, for I do not get away from home much, so do not meet many Baptists to talk with. The writers of the SIGNS feed my hungry soul, often to the full, and my cup runneth over at times with rejoicing to know that there are others trusting in the same God that this old sinner is trusting in. There are times when I am reading the good communications that I feel I am directly in their company feasting on the good things prepared of our heavenly Father, and I have a desire to return thanks to the eternal God for putting it into the hearts of his servants to feed a poor, little, hobbling lamb. I would love to grasp the hand of each and every one of the writers and extend to them my love for the truth's sake. If I could write in a way to edify and feed God's little ones as I have been fed it would be a pleasure for me to do so, but it seems I travel much in the dark and can come forth only when it pleases the eternal God to give me a little ray of light, showing me a small portion of his abounding love and mercy; then I can rejoice for awhile in the light, but darkness soon comes and shuts me in again, but I guess my dark seasons are just as needful as my bright seasons. If we were never in the dark we would not know how to appreciate the light. I will say to one and all, Write on, for you know not who you are feeding when you send out your messages of love

I will close by asking the interest of you all at the throne of God's grace, and also ask you to overlook all imperfections in this letter, for it was written by an imperfect old sinner, now past his seventy-sixth mile-board.

J. H. BOZEMAN.

SWOFFORD, Wash., Jan. 9, 1921.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed find a money order to renew my subscription to your valuable paper, which now lacks less than twelve years of spanning a century of continuous publication. This may seem a small matter to the unthinking, but it is significant to believers, because in all this time it has never swerved from its original purpose of declaring the whole counsel of God, and of earnestly contending for the doctrine of the Bible, which always makes for peace and harmony among believers, while arousing hostility and persecution from those who would follow strange doctrines and seek to please men, which would enrich them in these days of evil and perversity. Had the SIGNS OF THE TIMES long ago hearkened to the voice of the charmers of this world it could, no doubt, have increased its subscription list, but it would have lost the support of those who believe in sound doctrine and practice. I remember that my father was a subscriber to the

SIGNS when its founder was yet alive, and when men like Elders Trott, Wm. J. Purington, E. Rittenhouse and many others of the old school were active writers and speakers. It seems sad that the hand of time should erase from our midst the lives of many of these brethren and sisters who have departed hence, but it is the will of our heavenly Father, and it is for our good and his glory. He is of one mind and none can change him. His purposes are as sure of accomplishment as if they had already transpired, but we in our weakness often find ourselves opposing the march of time, and thus admit ourselves as opposing the purposes of Omnipotence. Every day developments are only the unfolding of God's will, the manifestation of his purpose concerning men and things material. While we should bow in humble thankfulness and joyous submission to his will, we often complain and try to evade the necessary chastening, which works for our good. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."

Yours in hope,

E. D. OVERSTREET.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Nov. 21, 1920.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I have read for the third time your editorial, "Extremes," and feel it is good. I do not remember it when published before, but am truly glad it was published now, for I thoroughly enjoyed it. I did not want to change a word, or add to or take from it. How saddening it has been, and still is to me, to have Old School Baptists so afraid of having some one not of their faith and order hear a sound, strong and extreme sermon, fearing it would hurt their feelings. It does not worry me, for it took some hard sayings, some extremes, to open my eyes, even though I had been used to hearing Old School Baptists all my life. So if it took all that I heard from Elder Purington, which did so rasp my feelings, yet all the time I could see it was the real truth, and nothing but God's eternal truth, and would stand as long as time lasted, it might take just as much to bring some one else to repentance, and so I do not feel troubled to hear any of our ministers come out in as strong terms as language can express. I never did like rounding corners to suit the feelings of some, or to be popular with the world. I do not know why the Old School Baptists could be expected to suit the feelings and minds of those who do not believe. I do not want to hear any remarks of, or on, other denominations, for I do not think that is preaching the gospel. I am often made to think of Stephen, where he asked that his stoners be forgiven, and so with other denominations, I can but feel they cannot see the truth, and we should conclude they cannot do different if not given the power of light to see good and evil. May you continue to bring forth the true doctrine in all of its purity and strength. Yes, may you ever declare the whole truth. We all need to well consider the extremes, and be true and brave in it. Yes, fearless, with an eye single to the glory of God. I wish some time you would write an editorial on these words: The word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword, &c. Can a two-edged sword cut without hurting? or can it round the corners, or please the hearing of the unbelievers?

I hope you and yours are usually well. Sister Bonnie Chick called, and was telling about being at your annual visit. Elder Vaughn's was held the same evening, also Elder Coulter's. I hope all had

as pleasant and profitable a time as we did here. Elder Vaughn has been quite ill since, but was out to meeting yesterday and preached a good sermon. I was detained by sickness in the house.

I have not written this for publication, but wanted you to know how we felt about the "extremes." Brother Terry and I feel the same about it. Best wishes to you, and may God continue to bless you.

In love, MARY HILL TERRY.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 30, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—May I say through the SIGNS to its readers how much I wish to thank them for their kind and appreciative letters to me about father's book, "Fragments"? Those letters have abundantly repaid me for all the burden and anxiety of getting out the book. I wanted very much to answer each one personally, but there are so many that it is impossible for me to do it. For a very long time I have felt so far away from all things spiritual, so lifeless, that I have wondered if I ever knew anything of things above the earth, but as I read these letters speaking of Jesus and his love, and the love of the brethren, my heart throbbed in response, and I wondered if I could feel stirred that way if there were no little spark of life in me, and so I could not help taking comfort. The orders I have received for the book have all been filled up to the present, and if any have not received their books please let me know at once. I have been given some money to send books to those who want them and are unable to pay for them, so if there are any who desire books and cannot pay for them, if they will let me know I will send the books as far as I can. Elder Lefferts has said I might publish the kind letter he wrote to me.

With love to all the household of faith, your unworthy sister,

MILDRED DURAND GORDY.

LEESBURG, Va., Oct. 5, 1920.

DEAR SISTER MILDRED:—I was glad to get yesterday a copy of your father's book just received from the publishers. You are to be congratulated on this splendid achievement. The book is of convenient size and clear type, a joy to handle and to read. It is a fitting memorial to your dear parents, really spiritual literature. I hope you will receive orders for all the copies you have, and that the brethren everywhere may so perceive the book's undoubted merits that a second edition will be necessary to fill the demand.

Yours in christian fellowship,

H. H. LEFFERTS.

POETRY.

THE WATCH-TOWERS OF ZION.

GOD of all power, and wisdom, and glory,
Pray place on the watch-towers of Zion so high,
Men filled with thy message in song and in story,
From the fountain of Grace our needs to supply.

Men filled with thy charity, love and devotion,
Who forget not the beam which is in their own eye,
Who refuse o'er a mole-hill to stir up commotion,
Who forgive those in error and give sigh for sigh.

Who preach that alone by grace is salvation,
Through faith, which is truly the free gift of God;
That those who receive it pass through tribulation,
In the path which the fierce lion's whelps ne'er have trod.

May they lead thy dear flock beside the still water,
And preach Jesus Christ and him crucified;
That we're only as clay in the hands of the potter,
And that to redeem us our Savior has died.

Thus keep us from strife and needless contention;
May we ne'er try to pry 'twixt the leaves which are sealed
Concerning thy myst'ries which cause this dissension.
O grant it, dear Lord, that these sores may be healed.

ALFRED E. TITUS.

TRENTON, N. J.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1921.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

FELLOWSHIP.

FELLOWSHIP between the children of God is of two kinds. There is church fellowship and there is christian fellowship. Church fellowship exists between members of the church; that is, between baptized believers of the same faith and order. Christian fellowship is wider, and exists between all who are believers in Christ, whether baptized or not. Fellowship is always between equals. It cannot exist between individuals of different standing or of different experience or condition. There must be equality of condition in order for there to be true fellowship. For instance, fellowship cannot exist between an unbeliever and a believer, because there is a difference of condition between the two which cannot be bridged. Further, there cannot be church fellowship existing between one who has been baptized and is obedient to the ordinances of Christ and one who, though a believer, has never been brought into subjection to his brethren. Here, too, is a difference in condition, and while there may be, and truly is, christian fellowship existing in this last instance, there cannot be church fellowship. This matter of fellowship does not come and go according to our will; it is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, and not to be controlled by the human will. When one has ever had real fellowship for another it cannot be forfeited. To make our meaning clearer: if one is a member of the church and becomes guilty of some breach of church order, it may become necessary to set that one aside from the fellowship of the church, but if that one has ever been in the hearts and affections of the church he will still be loved, and for him there will still be christian fellowship, even though he be cut off from partaking of the privileges and ordinances of the church. Thinking of the church as the spiritual mother of us all, fellowship is the great, brooding, yearning mother-heart that watches over all her children. If they stray from the fold fellowship goes after them, seeking to reclaim them. If they behave themselves unseemly, fellowship seeks their correction, not their destruction. Mother-love is one of the most beautiful things in all nature. How insistently a mother will cling to an erring child, how longingly goes out her heart after the wanderer, earnestly desiring that he may realize his wrong and come back to her feet for forgiveness. If spiritual things transcend the natural (and we all believe they do), then how patiently and prayerfully should the fellowship of the church go out after that one who, pursuing wrong, seems blinded to his course. The fellowship of the brethren will long and gently labor with that one to endeavor to show him his wrong; they will pray the Lord to grant him repentance, that thus he may be saved to the church, and not be cast off from it. Exclusion is an ugly word. The church should not have much use for it. It is never to be employed except as a very last resort to keep the house clean after all efforts at reclamation have availed nothing. The whole purpose of Christ and his gospel is to save, not to

destroy. Christ himself sought the lost sheep to restore them to the fold. He himself says he came not to destroy the world, but that the world through him might be saved. No one ever loved the sinner more, or ever served the welfare of sinners more whole-heartedly than the blessed Jesus. He bared his back to the scourgers for sinners, he even gave his cheeks to the spittle of his enemies, that sinners through him should be cleansed from sin, raised from the dead and restored to the glory of the Father which they had with him before the world began. The gospel which Jesus sent his apostles to preach is filled with love and mercy and patience and long-suffering to poor, erring creatures. By no means did the disciples have the patience with men which Jesus himself had. The disciples rebuked mothers for bringing children to Jesus that he might lay his hands on them. But Jesus quickly showed them their shortness of sight when he said to them, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." Again, when the disciples came across a man who was healing in Christ's name they asked Jesus to command the man to stop it. Jesus, however, told them to let the man alone, that he who is not against us is for us. Thus we shall never while in the flesh be able to comprehend the great heart of Jesus. His love is high enough, deep enough, wide enough, to embrace sinners of every class and condition. Where once he bestows his love he loves unto the end. He never casts away. He does reprove our backslidings, corrects our ignorance, instructs us in righteousness and rebukes our sins. He chastens his children with his fatherly chastisements, but never with the rod of wrath or condemnation. Following out the great principle of the gospel of Jesus, which owes its vitality to the eternal love of God and his inexhaustible grace, what use can the church have for exclusion? Certainly it is so harsh, and an instrument of such severe discipline, that never should it be employed by any church until every shred of patience has been utterly worn out in seeking the restoration of the erring. If ever we need the mother-love of the church it is when we are weak and easily yielding to wrong. Should the brethren desert us in that cruel time of our deepest need, where then is the evidence that Christ is in their midst? By all we have said we do not mean to imply that the church should be slack in keeping its house clean, that it should cease to administer the discipline of the church to its members as laid down by inspiration. Of course all this must be done, but very many times churches are too quick to condemn a brother for a fault, without due examination into the matter; too quick to exclude without first laboring with the sinner and seeking to reclaim him or to save him to the church. Fellowship is a precious thing. It is not to be tossed about like a rubber ball, as though it were something to be treated with lightness and insincerity, yet at times we talk of fellowship, and about taking it away from this one or that one, as though it were something that we could handle, like sugar or some other commodity. The Spirit of Christ can alone give us spiritual fellowship for another, and when so given cannot be taken away. It has been our privilege to have this fellowship with the Lord's people, and we feel that no matter what they might do to us we could not cease to love them. It would be a shame could we not have like confidence that no matter what we might do the fellowship of God's people would still be ours. Nor does such confidence in the fellowship of the church encourage us to want to do wrong. No, but rather spurs us to maintain a good

behavior, that we may, in some slight measure at least, be worthy of their love and fellowship. Salvation is ministered through the fellowship of the brethren to each member of the church. Many things which one might do if one were not in the church one does refrain from doing because he fears to offend the brethren. This fear is not because one fears exclusion, but fears to hurt the feelings of those one loves. The more we reflect upon what fellowship means the more should we exercise great care and long-suffering in dealing with transgressions against the order of the church. Too much patience there cannot possibly be, but too much haste there certainly often is. As to what is the order of the church our people are not unanimous. Various constructions are put upon certain passages of the New Testament, which leads to variations in church order throughout the country. In view of this variation, whenever any one church is considering a matter of discipline or order, it is well to get the mind of the whole church before taking any radical action; not simply to be guided by the pastor, who is but a man and may err as easily as any, nor simply to be guided by a section of the church, but labor to get the minds and counsel of the whole church, and then in the light of such counsel proceed to act. Part of a church might not see any given matter in its right light, but the whole church, if left to act with perfect freedom, and without any coercion whatever, will seldom decide any matter wrongly. The Catholics have unbounded confidence in the infallibility of the Pope. We have no confidence in any man, but we do have confidence in the infallibility of the whole church, for the mind of the whole church is Christ himself. He never errs. L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Willis Johnson, our brother in Christ, passed away from this earthly life October 30th, 1920, at the home of his mother, near Manassas, Va. He was the son of Deacon George Johnson, of the Bethlehem Church, and of sister Hannah L. Johnson. Brother Willis was born July 29th, 1875. He was baptized into membership with Bethlehem Church by Elder C. W. Vaughn in August, 1914. For many years he was much afflicted in body, and it was a great cross to him, but he bore it patiently. The grace of God was sufficient for him, and his hope of salvation in Christ was surely an anchor of his soul. He was buried by the side of his beloved father in the cemetery at Manassas.

ALSO,

Mrs. Hannah L. Johnson, our dear sister in Christ, departed this life at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Minnie Harrell, near Manassas, Va., January 14th, 1921. She was the widow of Deacon George Johnson, who died in 1914. Sister Johnson was the daughter of Thomas K. and Louvisa Lamb, and was born August 1st, 1838. She has two brothers living: Lucien Lamb, of Albany, N. Y., and Thomas Lamb, of Michigan. She was first married to Luther C. Lindsley, who was a soldier in the Confederate Army during the Civil War, and was killed at the battle of Fisher's Hill. By this marriage there was one son, who is now dead, but who is survived by two children: Mrs. Virginia Hoxton, of Washington, D. C., and Luther C. Lindsley, at Cornell University, N. Y. Her second husband was brother George Johnson, to whom she was married in 1868, he also having been a soldier in the Confederate Army. To them were born five children, as follows: R. Lee Johnson, Mrs. Minnie Harrell and Ralph B. Johnson, of Manassas, Mrs. Maude Hutchison, near Aldie, Va., and brother Willis Johnson, deceased. There are also eight grandchildren living of this second marriage. Sister Johnson was baptized into the Bethlehem Church by the late Elder J. N. Badger, in May, 1888. Deacon George Johnson had been the clerk of the Bethlehem Church, but after his death this duty devolved upon his wife. Words cannot express the loss which the death of these two has brought upon the Bethlehem Church. Still we know the Lord reigns, and we know further that his will is being done both in the church on earth and in the church in heaven. The Lord is the keeper of the church and the builder of the holy temple. Without him the watchman waketh in vain and all our labors are naught. Nevertheless, our hearts are filled with sorrow for dear old Bethlehem. The cause of truth there now seems to sorely languish, but the Lord is able to revive it, and only he can. Ever since the death of brother George Johnson it seemed to be the one desire of sister Johnson's heart that the Lord might spare her life to outlive

the afflicted son, our brother Willis, so that she might care for him. The Lord heard her prayer and she did outlive him. After brother Willis was laid away a few months ago sister Johnson then began noticeably to decline rapidly. She felt that her work was done, and that there was nothing further for which to live.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse at Manassas, interment being by the side of her loved ones in Manassas Cemetery.

ALSO,

Addison G. McKimmy, our brother in Christ and a member of the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Va., passed away from this earthly life January 6th, 1921, at his home in the vicinity of Lucketts, Va. He was born December 23rd, 1849, the son of the late John and Sarah McKimmy, and was one of five children. His twin sister, Mrs. J. W. Shry, and his brother, Frank McKimmy, both living near Lucketts, survive him. His brother, W. F. McKimmy, and his sister, Mrs. Mollie Shoemaker, both of whom were members of the New Valley Church, died a few years ago. Brother McKimmy first married Miss Alice McGavick, who lived but a short time and died in 1882. In 1899 he was married to Miss Rosalie Apple, who survives him. To that union was born one daughter, Mrs. Raymond Carnes, of near Washington, D. C., who also survives her father. Brother McKimmy was baptized by the writer Sunday, June 15th, 1919. He had been an attendant at Old Baptist meetings for years, and for a long period believed no other doctrine than that of the unlimited sovereignty of God and salvation by grace alone through Christ the Lord. He was one who truly fed on the word, and hated to miss a single meeting; was always in his place among his brethren, esteemed others better than himself, had no confidence in the flesh, rejoiced in his Savior. His death was due to an internal cancer, and he knew perfectly what ailed him, knew that nothing could be done for him and that the end was inevitably near. With all this, however, he was undaunted, and approached the grave sustained and soothed by an unfaltering trust in his Redeemer. He talked of death as though it were a pleasant journey he was soon to take. Truly it could be said that for him death had lost its sting and the grave its victory. He was buried in the Union Cemetery at Lovettsville, and at his funeral we used the subject discoursed upon by Paul in the fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians, for we felt that certainly if there is comfort in any theme at such times it must be in the glorious doctrine of the resurrection of the dead through Christ Jesus our Lord.

ALSO,

Mrs. Miriam Mellott, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life January 9th, 1921, at the home of her son, Deacon Jefferson C. Mellott, near Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa. She was born April 17th, 1832, the daughter of William and Mary Hess. She was married to Dennis Mellott November 11th, 1849, and he died January 28th, 1899. To them were born thirteen children, six of whom, four daughters and two sons, are still living: Mrs. Sarah Hollinshed, of Greencastle, Pa.; Mrs. Tabitha Truex, of Breezewood, Pa.; Mrs. Elizabeth Tate, of Curwensville, Pa.; Mrs. Ella Walters, of Altoona, Pa.; brother Marcus Mellott and brother Jefferson Mellott, of Needmore, Pa. There are living eighteen grandchildren, thirty great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren. Sister Mellott was a member of the Fairview Old School Baptist Church at Needmore, having been baptized many years ago by Elder Joseph Correll. For more than twenty years this mother in Israel had made her home with her son, brother Jefferson Mellott, and no care was spared by her children in doing all possible for her comfort and well-being as long as she lived. It was always beautiful to witness the devotion and tenderness of every member of her family to their mother. As long as she had a home of her own it was always open for the entertainment of the Old Baptists, and many who read this notice will doubtless remember pleasant seasons spent beneath her hospitable roof. She was truly one who rejoiced in Christ Jesus and had no confidence in the flesh, always maintained good works.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Sideling Hill meetinghouse; burial in the cemetery there. Text used was Revelation xiv. 13.

L.

Mrs. A. E. Bowers was born in Alabama in 1849, and departed this life May 16th, 1920, near Fairfield, Freestone Co., Texas, aged 71 years. She was the youngest daughter of Reuben and Polly Chancellor. Her father and mother moved from Alabama and settled in Freestone County, Texas, in the pioneer days of this country, where she grew to womanhood and lived at the old homestead until her death. She was the wife of Elder I. W. Bowers, they having lived together some twenty-five years. When a girl she joined the Missionary people, but in after years became dissatisfied with their doctrine and practice, and was honestly and truly drawn to the Old Baptist Church and attended their meetings regularly as long as her health would permit, yet she could never make up her mind to join them, feeling too unworthy and unfit to be among such good people as she felt the Old Baptists to be. She attended the home church of Elder Bowers' faithfully, always taking a warm interest at all the meeting days of the church, preparing for the comfort and entertainment of the brethren, and delighted to see them come. From her youth she was a very delicate person. When she fell sick three doctors were summoned to her bedside, and after an examination her disease was pronounced

dropsy. Various remedies were applied, but to no effect, and therefore necessitated the use of the tapping needle twenty different times, causing intense suffering, yet she endured all these critical operations without a murmur, bearing all with christian fortitude and resignation to the divine will. She had no children. A few nights before her death she awoke her husband and asked him to stir up the fire, which he did, and carried her to a chair, as she wanted to talk to him. She began by telling the exercise of her mind, relating a precious hope in the Savior of poor lost sinners, saying she had a great Savior and was not afraid to die. Her only grief was for his lonely condition when she was gone. He replied that he had rather hear her talk of her blessed hope of a future reality of rest beyond the grave than to have all the riches of this sin-cursed world. Soon afterward she calmly fell asleep in Jesus, passing through the ordeal of death without a struggle, and as death came a halo of glory rested upon her countenance. Thus another jewel has passed into the heaven of eternal rest, freed from the turbid waves of sin and sorrow. Sister Bowers' mild and unassuming manner endeared her to all the community.

Interment took place in the family cemetery at Union church-house, where Elder Bowers preached and served as pastor for many years. As there was no Old Baptist minister near, brother Bowers called upon a minister of the New School to officiate at the grave, who gave a brief but impressive talk.

Now, dear brother, your dear companion is gone from the evil to come, to awake with the likeness of her dear Savior on the great resurrection morn. You are familiar with the precious promises of the gospel. Go on in duty and preach the glad tidings of great joy to comfort and edify the poor afflicted saints of God, and when the summons comes may you receive a crown of life that fadeth not away. Farewell until we meet again.

Written by request. ASA HOWARD.

Rebecca J. Byrd, my dear mother, was born August 1st, 1859, and departed this life August 22nd, 1920, death being due to a complication of diseases, developing at last into a severe case of Bright's disease. Her age at the time of her death was 61 years and 21 days. Mother had been in very poor health for a number of years, and since the tragic death of her dear companion, C. Jacob Byrd, two years ago, had been fast going into decline. She was the daughter of John R. and Othelia Duncan, both deceased. She leaves to mourn their loss three daughters: May, Ira and the writer; one granddaughter, Lucille Pilchard; one sister, Mrs. I. F. Holland, and four brothers: Meshack, Samuel, William and Letcher Duncan, besides a large number of friends. Mother was a consistent member of the Old School Baptist Church at Messongoes, Va., having been baptized in the early part of her life by Elder T. M. Poulson. She was a firm believer in the doctrine advocated by them, and was always present at her meetings unless sickness or some other dire circumstance prevented. She was a typical christian woman, a good mother, a devoted wife and a kind neighbor. She felt when she was bereft of her companion that it was more than she could bear, but said she was only living for her children. Her disposition was to take life seriously, and during the past thirteen years had had many trials to pass through, but she never lost sight of the blessed Redeemer, who is able to comfort at all times. She often made mention of the fact that she was sorry she could not at all times feel submissive to his will.

Funeral services took place at her late home in Pocomoke City, conducted by her pastor, Elder J. C. Mellott. Interment was made in the Greenwood Cemetery, by the side of our father.

May the Lord give the afflicted ones a place to rest in his bosom, is the prayer of her daughter.

GEORGIA BYRD NORTHAM.

[WE were well acquainted with sister Byrd, and knew her to be faithful in all the walks of life; have visited her home and been kindly entertained by her and brother Byrd. She was a genuine Old School Baptist, loved and respected by all who knew her. We deeply sympathize with the children.—K.]

Sara M. Post, wife of Edward Post, was born April 15th, 1872, and died at her late home in Kingston, N. Y., October 30th, 1920. Her maiden name was Winchell. Of her immediate family she is survived by her husband, daughter, father, three sisters and two brothers. Mrs. Post was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and her fellowship was with all who "worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Her name does not appear upon any of our church books, but we are comforted in believing that her name is written in heaven, in the book of life—the church of the firstborn. She loved that afflicted and poor people who trust in the name of the Lord, spoke their language, followed after them, and though feeling unworthy of a name with them they were her people and their God her God, and in the fellowship of like faith and hope she "served the Lord with fear, and rejoiced with trembling." She was highly esteemed and loved by all who knew her, and her departure is a sore bereavement. May the Lord graciously comfort them that mourn, and reconcile us all to his will in all things.

JOHN McCONNELL.

MEMORIALS.

GOD in his just and holy sight has taken unto himself our dearly beloved brother, **J. W. Carter,** of Covina, Calif. We mourn brother Carter, not only as a dearly beloved brother, but as one who in times past had been useful and helpful to us. He was good to advise, and his advice always proved wise and judicious. He was active in the organization of Little Flock Church, and the Articles of Faith were drafted by him and were adopted without change. The article, "We believe God controls all events for his elect's sake," expresses his views on this important question, and needs no explanation to know the meaning. Yes, we mourn him.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Joseph Hall, Maine, $3.00; D. K. Thomas, La., $1.00; Col. J. H. Knifton, Canada, $2.00; Ethel M. Kuehne, N. J., $1 00; Josephine Culpepper, Texas, $2.00; Mrs. C. B. Rittenhouse, Manitoba, $3.00; Wm. B. Bizzell, Tenn., $1.00; Robert Turner, Calif., $3.00; C. S. Stevens, Ark., $1.00; Wm. W. Darby, Md., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 694 E. 125th St., or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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To whom all letters should be addressed, and money orders made payable

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

BIBLE TEMPERANCE

IS NOT

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 89. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1921. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CANON CITY, Colo., January 7, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I inclose a letter written by brother L. E. Thompson, of Lamar, Colo. I would like to share it with the brethren and sisters who read our dear paper. I love the SIGNS, and much enjoy the many good communications in it.

Yours in hope,

SARAH V. CURRY.

EAST VAUGHN, N. Mex., July 5, 1920.

DEAR SISTER CURRY:—Your good letter was received by the church, and was accepted as words "fitly spoken." I volunteered to answer it, as I wanted to write you. I do not know that I can comfort you, but if the Holy Spirit leads my mind then I will comfort you to that degree. I am here at our sheep ranch for a week or two, and how lovely the country looks, grass and flowers everywhere, the lakes full of water and the sheep so contented. Over at the shearing plant last week, where they were shearing two thousand per day and slaughtering several each day for meat for the men, this Scripture was forcibly impressed upon my mind: "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." Among all those slaughtered and shorn not a sound was heard, and I thought how appropriate the comparison, and how well our God knows how to impress his teachings upon the hearts of those to whom he has imputed the righteousness of his dear Son. He uses sheep in the Scriptures to represent his people more often than all other representative terms combined, and often calls his ministering servants shepherds of his sheep. While sheep of the same breed all look alike to most people, yet we have one shepherd (a Frenchman) who can pick any one of his sheep out of a band of two thousand as easily as we could pick a person we know out of that many. That is a very unusual gift; not one in thousands who are with sheep all their lives can do it, and the singular thing about it is, he is by far the best shepherd we have; his flock is always the fattest, and there is a rivalry between them, but good naturedly. He goes before his flock and they follow him and are not afraid; when he breaks out in singing his French songs they look up at him and

listen, then go on eating again. There are many snake-bitten, but he is always on the lookout, and doctors them as best he can and saves many of them, as he finds them in time, and does not wait until they are sick and lag behind. When one dies, he shows he has lost something he cared for. In the winter time he has a few lambs that are not so fat as the others; these he feeds bread out of his hand every day, as those that were snake-bitten in the summer get thin, but by the next spring he is very proud of his "pets." When we class up the flocks in the spring and fall some of his sheep get in other flocks, and they act strange for some time, but after awhile they "forget" him, and do like those they are with. That shepherd has never had a "cut off" that I know of; all others have, and the wolves catch them and scatter them all over the country.

I am wondering if this is tiresome to you. I hope not. My experience and observation in handling sheep continuously since August, 1885, have taught me many wonderful and beautiful lessons, which I could have learned in no other way. My meditations are sweetest when I am on the sheep ranch (next to the church). My God has opened my understanding more when on the sheep ranch. It has been and is there that my heart is full of thanksgiving and praise, if indeed I ever praise him. It was with the sheep he taught me to pray, and instructed me in so many ways, and made me feel submissive to his will. There I first realized the office and finished work of the great Shepherd of the sheep of his pasture; how he goes before his sheep and calls them by name and leads them out and brings them to the fold; how he knows them every one, and they know his voice and follow him, and a stranger they will not follow, because they know not the voice of a stranger; how they love him because he first loved them, and has taught them all that they know and made them feel safe in his care, and to know that there is no other like him, who will leave the ninety and nine and go after the one that needs his care most because of sickness or distress. The great Physician carries it in his loving arms, doctors it and feeds it with proper food until it becomes strong again. What wondrous love is this, O my soul! I am not done with the beautiful picture, for the great Shepherd has done more for his sheep: he has provided a fold for his sheep (the church), and ordains, by setting apart, under-shepherds to feed his sheep with food that he always provides, and not man. They are taught of him to divide the word of truth, and rightly divide it, so they can relish it and feed upon it; and they also should feed the little lambs beside the Shepherd's tent, and tell them of him, and not drive them away and lie down and go to sleep and then wonder why the sick ones do not get well and fat and love him. They must be tenderly cared for; they always respond to such treatment, otherwise the type would not apply, and God made a mistake; but he made no mistake when he likened his people to sheep and lambs, and his Son as their great Redeemer and everlasting Keeper, both in time and eternity. Neither did he make a mistake when he likened his preachers and pastors to under-shepherds here in time, to take the care of his flock, or oversight of it, not for wages (filthy lucre), but of a ready mind and for love of the flock, meekly doing the very best they can, spending and being spent, toiling and laboring under all conditions, sometimes abounding and sometimes abased; when the

flock rejoices they rejoice with them; when any are distressed they "burn" with them; when any are sick they visit them; when any mourn they mourn. They have a hard lot at times, but Paul counted it all joy, that he might win Christ; that is, have his approval of, Well done, thou good and faithful servant. They have the satisfaction of knowing that after a few short days more they can say, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up in heaven for me a crown of righteousness, when they shall enter into the joys of the Lord, there to dwell with him with joy unspeakable and praise beyond our realization while here in time. Bless his holy name, I do not know why he pointed the "golden scepter" at me in acceptance, for I am nothing to be desired, and only by the grace of God am I what I am—a beggar before his throne of mercy, always asking, and nothing to give but a broken and contrite heart, and sometimes a little weak praise, and he causes that, and puts it in my heart; sometimes a lisping prayer, and he indites that. Sometimes I hope I do give a cup of cold water in his name, but the cup is his, and the water is his, and he prompted the desire in me to give it, so I cannot find one thing in me to merit my blessings here in the world, nor anything to fit me for a glorious, pure, perfect state after this life, yet some way I do hope to have just that; for I know that if the righteousness of Christ was imputed to me it is because my sin was imputed to him, and his righteousness was sufficient to atone for the sins of every one for whom he died, and their names were written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world, and though I am the chief of sinners, it took just as much righteousness to save me as the best person that ever lived, and no more, for our God is no respecter of persons, and all who call upon his name through Christ shall be saved, the thief on the cross, the murderer David and the good and kind person; all three classes and all other classes of sinners are saved through the atoning blood of the pure, sinless, righteous Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who loved his sheep so well that he laid down his life for them, for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins; and as the life is in the blood, so the shedding of it took his life, and death ensued, and his people were all baptized into his death. But he had power to take it again, so all who died in him live with him. When his spirit left his body it returned to God who gave it; that being eternal, it could not cease; when it came back to the body it took it again, not a spirit, but a spiritual body. So also his people are given spiritual life while here in the world and in these sinful bodies; when they are parted from that life it, too, goes back to God who gave it, and when that spiritual life comes to the body it, too, will be raised a spiritual body, and will go where Christ, their forerunner, has gone, and so shall they ever be with the Lord.

At our last meeting my wife and I went on Saturday. She had to go back home that evening, but seemed to want to go. To my great surprise and joy she offered herself to the church, dating her hope back about twenty-five years. She said she felt like one of the little foxes that Elder Perdue talked about in his preaching and warned against, because she was so afraid she did not believe all that the Baptists do; that was the last prop she had, and she could not lean on it any longer. She had been greatly

troubled for years, and laid plans to join an organization called Presbyterian Church by some, but when she was ready it seems they were not, and gave no invitation. She took that as a sign not to try further. She was still greatly troubled after she joined, for fear she had done wrong (a mighty good sign). She told me the next morning (she cried about all night) that all she could do was to keep praying. I told her that was a good state to be in, for God only can bind up the broken-hearted. I had to leave her the next day, but O, dear sister, I am not worrying, for God, our God, is her Husband, Friend and Keeper. So another blessing is added unto me, and I have already had more from Him than any undeserving mortal ever had. I wish I could be more thankful. Some sweet day I will be so I shall praise him and never cease, I hope.

Pardon this long letter. I seldom write much, but my heart is filled to overflowing. Write again when you have a mind to. May God's richest blessings continue to be yours, and may his presence be your comfort and sustain you through every trial until he takes you home.

With christian love and fellowship,

L. E. THOMPSON.

MONROE, Ga., Jan. 13, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—For some time my desire has been to write a few lines to the SIGNS by way of expressing my belief in the truth I believe is being set forth in its columns. I do believe I feel thankful to the Lord that he has given me a heart to understand and feed upon the things I believe his true followers place before his people each time the SIGNS comes to us. If it be truth, and I feel assured that it is, how wonderful to have the hope that it is food, life to one, to one even as I.

Just a few moments ago I opened the Bible at these words: "And Laban said unto him [Jacob], I pray thee, if I have found favor in thine eyes, tarry: for I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake." Some way I have felt to have some fellowship for Laban. I recalled Jesus spoke of his disciples as his mother and his brethren. Then the church is in one sense his bride, his mother and his brethren. Laban was the brother of Jacob's mother, and since Jacob is a representative character I feel that he could in like manner as the Savior say, These are my mother and my brethren. What a wonderful thing it was to the poor, weak, fearful followers of the dear Master to hear him say, These are my brethren. How they must have felt to say with poor Laban, Tarry: for I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake. How often have I felt that if I am his, if I can claim the precious relation of brother, he the Elder Brother, if indeed I can feel that I have his seed within this vile heart of mine, if the precious promise I felt the "hidden man of the heart" granted to me years ago: Fear not, I am with you always, is indeed true, then how surely do I feel with Laban to say, Tarry: for I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake. What a pitiful cry of weak, sinful flesh: "Tarry." How we long to hold him, to keep him with us. If we are truly his he indeed does not leave us, yet when we feel destitute, see our poverty without him, realize what "Christ in you" really means to a poor sinner, then we are made to fear lest he forsake us and leave us poor indeed. Then it is that we cry out with poor old Laban, Tarry: for I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake. We remember how vile

and poor we were before he came to us (as we hope). We know all that we have is ours for his sake. Without him we can do nothing, we are nothing, and are destitute, having nothing. How we hope, pray, that he may hear our cry and "tarry." What great peace, joy, love, rest, fills our souls when we are given to hear with poor old Laban, "I will again feed and keep thy flock," and truly it is a joy when we can feel that the witness is between us, "Mizpah * * * The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another." For with Paul, "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him." Blessed thought indeed, that Jacob tarried with Laban until he had been given all the goods of Laban. Truly it was God's purpose. Was not Rachel Laban's daughter? Were not the wealth and possessions of her father's house hers by right? Rachel and Jacob were of the same family. Then how right it seemed that Jacob should labor in the works of his bride's father until all the riches of her father's house be hers, and however much Laban rebelled in his heart when he heard the voice of the Lord he knew it was well, well that Jacob should go now. Joseph had been born, and he was the rightful heir to all the inheritance of Laban's house, increased by the labor of his father, Jacob. Jacob must go now into the country, where Joseph may be about his father's business in the land of Canaan, the promised land from God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and on the journey to this promised land is Jacob made to cry out, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant: for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands." But, merciful God, thou hast preserved both bands. His hand keeps the one band, his Spirit guides and protects the other. What a wonderful thing to feel assured that God rules. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without the Father. I am glad he has given me to feel that all things are in his hands. Whatever the saved, whatever the salvation, we know it was by his almighty power. I love to think of him as having all power in heaven and earth. I love to feel that if I am saved from any sin, saved from any error, saved from any affliction, saved from any harm, it is alone by the power of his amazing grace, his love and mercy toward the works of his hand and the fruit of his Spirit, for with my whole heart do I feel to say with Job, "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent." He did both, and for his own purpose and glory. He rules all. Glory and honor to his matchless name forever.

In hope of life eternal,

ELLA BARFIELD JONES.

MACOMB, Ill., Dec., 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As I am sending my remittance for the SIGNS, I have a desire to write a few lines for its columns, but I am so conscious of my weakness and inability that I feel to hesitate while attempting to write a word worthy a place in our dear paper, or for the perusal of my dear brethren and sisters. I have taken the SIGNS for thirty-five years, and have tried, in fear and trembling, to pen a few lines about once a year, adding my feeble testimony to the cause and to the doctrine it sets forth, and express my appreciation of the dear precious editorials and letters of the

correspondents, which have been of much comfort and encouragement to me. I know not how I could do without them. O, you do not know how much pleasure and satisfaction the SIGNS is to one like myself, who is almost entirely deprived of hearing gospel preaching. There is no Old School Baptist meeting near me, and very few within miles of me who know the truth as we believe it. It has been over a year since I heard a discourse or met with the brethren in church capacity, and O how I miss the assemblies of the saints, miss the grasp of their hands in fellowship, miss their kind and cheering words of welcome, miss the dear songs of praise, and so long for a crumb from the Master's table. How I long for the courts of Zion. In times past it was my greatest enjoyment to go to meeting, and "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." My health has been poor for the last two years and I have been close home, and therefore the SIGNS is more highly prized. None but those so situated can appreciate the loneliness which comes of being deprived of the inestimable privilege of meeting together, and how highly favored are those who are thus blessed. May they not forsake the assembling of themselves together, for where there are only two or three gathered together in his name he will be with them. It matters not how small the number, if they only meet in the name of Christ. I often feel as one alone in a desert land. My hope grows very dim, my faith seems so small, that I think I surely must fall by the way, yet I know that God still reigns. He knoweth them that are his. He will not leave nor forsake one for whom Christ died, and if I am one of that happy number how blest am I, he will keep me safe to the end. But am I one of those highly favored ones? I am so sinful, so unworthy, that I can scarcely claim a hope. How can I be a child of grace when I am so far from what I ought to be? I know that in my flesh dwells no good thing, and sin is mixed with all I do, so if I am saved it is through grace. "Grace all the work shall crown through everlasting days."

I have neglected answering some precious letters, among them being one from Elder P. W. Sawin, of Kentucky, and sisters Bonnie Chick and Florence Pultz. I hope they will not think they were not appreciated, for O they were, but I have been so very nervous that I have written but little for over a year. These letters are a great comfort to me, and I hope they and many others will still continue to write for the SIGNS. I am very thankful that the SIGNS is prospering, and pray God's blessings upon it, and upon Elders Ker and Lefferts, and may they long be spared to the comfort of God's people. I am glad to see that the brethren of late are writing more often on the subject of the resurrection. This is a soul-cheering theme, and one of great comfort to the saints while journeying here below. It is as plainly taught as any point of doctrine of the Scriptures. Almost the entire fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians is taken up in explaining this precious truth, and also many other portions of the holy Scriptures. Paul says, "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. And if Christ be not risen, then is your preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God." Paul says in another place, in speaking on this subject, Comfort one another with these words. Yes, the body that here is full of sin, suffering and death will in the resurrection be raised a spiritual body, be changed

and made like unto the glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is a great mystery, we do not understand it all; neither do we understand all about election, predestination, God's love to poor sinners, that he loved them when they were dead in trespasses and sins, yet enough is revealed to the saints to cause them to love these blessed truths. So with the resurrection, we do not know it all, it is too deep for finite minds, yet we love this glorious theme. It is the very culmination of the christian's hope that when Christ shall come again he will raise the dead and they shall evermore dwell with him and be satisfied. May he bless and sustain each and every one for his name's sake.

With love to all the household of faith, I am your most unworthy sister,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

LAURELVILLE, Ohio, Dec. 17, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am happy to inclose a check and the name of a new subscriber, brother Gale Hanover, Ashville, Ohio. Brother Gale is a grandson of the late Elder L. B. Hanover, and a son of the late Elder J. C. Hanover, both of whom were subscribers to the SIGNS, and a son-in-law of the late Elder Robert W. Peters, who was also a subscriber to the SIGNS. Notice the expression "subscriber to." Brother Gale has been liberated to speak in the great Name, and we feel that he undoubtedly gives evidence of the divine origin of his commission. One of our prayers we have breathed to the God of Israel for these several years is answered, namely: that he would send or raise up a preacher in this section of his heritage. We have great cause to rejoice and bless his holy name for his goodness and for his wonderful works among the children of men.

I am remitting my arrearages and amount to extend my subscription to February 15th, 1922, also the renewal of sister Amanda Schaal, Laurelville, Ohio. Our prayer is that God may prosper the SIGNS, its publishers, editors and contributors, also each individual subscriber and reader, and may he also see fit to bless our nation, that his people may be blessed in basket and in store, and that they may be permitted to worship God under their own vine and fig tree, and that none dare molest or make them afraid.

Again wishing all the household of God a prosperous and happy new year for 1921, I am unworthily yours,

GEORGE W. HARTSOUGH.

COLUMBUS, Ga., Jan. 20, 1920.

TO THE LITTLE CHURCH AT MACON, GA.—BELOVED PASTOR AND KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I feel impressed to write you a little letter, this being the time of our regular meeting. I am thinking of you all, and wish I could be with you; how pleasant it would be. Greetings I send to you all, wishing you all new covenant mercies. These are so needful to us as pilgrims and strangers on the earth. This vile world is not a friend to grace to help us on to God. It is written for our admonition, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." Our God is the rock, our unchangeable friend, our sure foundation and our everlasting consolation, and says, I will make an everlasting covenant with

you, even the sure mercies of David. As we journey on to that city not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, oftentimes our way is rugged and painful, temptations and sorrows are ours, but on through the desert wastes streams of mercy never ceasing shall flow to refresh our souls, to lift up our heads, and through the unfailing kindness and mercies of our blessed Lord we shall hold on our way. The blessed Redeemer said to his disciples, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." Tribulation then is sent upon us in such measure as our merciful God seeth is best for us personally, and collectively as a church, but we hear the gracious assurance from our Head, Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen. These blessed assurances are the ground we build our expectations upon, and know that in all things we shall be more than conquerors through him. "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious." Our life is hid with Christ in God. All the elect are bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord their God safe and secure; no harm can come to them, nothing can rise to overthrow them, for they are upheld by the strong arm of the living God. "Because I live, ye shall live also." Christ, the life, flows upward through all the lively stones that are built upon him a spiritual house, and it will flourish in eternal life. O how precious by faith to meditate upon the wonderful things given us in Christ Jesus, and feel that we experience this life of Christ anointing us and holding us fast to him, our sure foundation, causing us to rejoice in holy confidence, for if built on him we shall not be confounded. Time and climate cannot affect or deface this building. In all his ways and works he is precious to his children and supplies their every need. Jesus is our unfailing friend, and says, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Afflictions may come, floods may rise, but we are one in him, so nothing can prevail against us. Our Captain has gone on before, fought all our battles and conquered all our foes; yea, the last foe, even death, for we see him rise triumphant over death and the grave, leading captivity captive, giving gifts unto men, even eternal life. Jerusalem hath received all at the Lord's hand, and we have not whereof to glory, but we hunger and thirst after righteousness, and have the sweet promise that we shall be filled. Yes, dear ones, filled with the fullness that filleth all in all. Then let us suffer on a few more years, bearing our trials patiently, knowing that our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Children of the heavenly King everywhere, how I would love to meet you all and talk with you face to face, and I do hope to when the last trump shall sound and the dead in Christ shall rise, and those that remain shall be caught up in the air and ever be with the Lord. This is the full consummation of our hope, for we shall be like him and be satisfied. "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." This, dear brethren and sisters, is the sure foundation, and in these things rests our hope.

"There shall we bathe our weary souls
In seas of heavenly rest,
And not a wave of trouble roll
Across our peaceful breast."

Remember me at the throne of grace.

Yours in bonds of christian love,

F. J. NORRIS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1921.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 TIMOTHY II.

R. H. COOPER, of Social Circle, Ga., requests that we give our views of the above named chapter. He is a subscriber to the SIGNS, but does not say he is a member of the Old School Baptist Church. For this reason, and for no other, we did not speak of him as brother. We shall not take up space to quote the chapter in order, but here and there shall quote parts, and ask that our readers acquaint themselves with the chapter by reading it.

Paul was writing to Timothy, who was at that time a young man in the ministry, instructing him with reference to things important and necessary in the churches. The "first" thing in this chapter was that supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanks be made for all men, meaning that all men fill the places and fulfill the purposes of God. Therefore, inasmuch as they were, and are, the creatures and servants of God, the ministers and the churches should make supplications, intercessions and give thanks to God for them. All things and all beings are for the praise of God and the good of the church of Jesus Christ; hence nothing should be despised, but rather thanks be given to God for all men and all things. In verse two the apostle names kings and all in authority as subjects for whom prayer should be made, to the end that "we" may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. Kings in that day were not always friends to the church, but instead were bitter enemies, yet Paul exhorted that supplications, intercessions and prayers be made for them, that wisdom be given that through their government the church might be permitted to live in all godliness and honesty, rather than be compelled to blaspheme the name of Jesus and thereby deny the blood of Christ that bought them. Again, that they be allowed to work with their own hands and worship according to the dictation of their own conscience. It is right now for the church of God to pray for our president and others in authority, that they be given wisdom to so manage the affairs of our government that nothing come upon the church to mar her peace and quiet worship of God. Such supplications, intercessions and prayers as the apostle speaks of here are not commanded to be offered for the salvation of sinners, that "all men" might give their hearts to the Lord. There is no such commandment in the Scriptures. Verse three tells us that a peaceable and godly life is acceptable to God and our Savior, who (verse four) will have all men to be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth. The term "all men" here does not differ in any special particular from the same words in verse one. This means all nations. The purposes of God in men concerning the glory and good of his church is not confined to any special nation, even though Timothy and others might have thought so. The Jews filled, and do fill, their place in purpose and plan, and the Gentiles filled, and do fill, their place in God's plan for the uplifting and upbuilding of his spiritual house or kingdom. The church is not composed of any one nation

or people, but of every nation, kindred and tongue under heaven. The salvation of God, through Christ our Lord, is in this sense universal. Therefore He will have "all men," nations, to be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth. Had such not been his will, no man would ever have been saved, nor would any ever had the knowledge of the truth; and so verse five tells us there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. There is but one God, and but one way to him, and that way is through the Mediator Christ Jesus. This forever does away with the idea of other mediatorship: that men are saved by men, and that through the prayers, supplications and intercessions of father, mother, brother, sister or some fanatical evangelist men are brought to God. The one Mediator between God and men gave his life a ransom for all (nations), to be testified in due (proper) time. Then Paul tells us that unto such testimony was he ordained a preacher and an apostle, a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity. He being a Jew, of the strictest sect, was sent to testify the grace of God to Gentiles, among whom God would have some to be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth.

In verse eight Paul says he would have men everywhere pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. This differs from verse one in that men themselves are to pray, while in verse one Timothy and others were to pray for all men. Those whom the apostle says he would have pray were and are quickened sinners everywhere whose hands were, and are, holy; that is, hands not swift to shed blood, not swift to harm any man, especially the Lord's anointed. Praying was to be done without wrath and doubting, showing the Spirit a man must be of before he could pray. A man with wrath in his heart cannot pray, even though his language be sublime. If he doubts God, his goodness and his mercy, and that he will be slow in answering, or perhaps not answer at all, there is no prayer, and that man is condemned.

Verse nine tells the manner in which women professing godliness should adorn themselves. They should be modest in apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array. The women in that day dressed very differently from what they do in this age of the world, but what was good and right then is good and right now, and should be reckoned as applying to all women who profess godliness with good works. In verse fourteen he tells why women should be modest and shamefaced, saying, Adam was not deceived, but the woman, being deceived, was in the transgression. Verse fifteen says, Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety. Woman brought sin, destruction and death to man, yet the Lord said in the beginning that she should be saved in childbearing, meaning that she should be preserved. She, being the mother of all living, the world must be peopled by her. Hence the woman shall live as long as the world stands, and motherhood is woman's crowning glory. She should not therefore think dress, pearls and gold her glory, and through dress deny God's purpose in her, and through pride hold her head high, as though she had had no part in sin and death entering the world.

Verses eleven and twelve give the stations of women in the church of God, saying, Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. It is right for a woman to learn doctrine, the order of the

house and the ordinances, but without any disputation whatever. No argument should ever be advanced by a woman in church or elsewhere when men of the church are in conversation or in dispute. Silence is her dignity, particularly so when the word of God commands it. Matters of church order and discipline should never be transacted by women if possible to avoid it, and it is possible when a church has male members. In another place the apostle says, It is a shame for a woman to speak in church. In this chapter he tells us why: "Women should learn in silence with all subjection." We think, however, that Paul would say that in the absence of male members it would be lawful for women to attend to the affairs of the church. In this, however, we have not the word of the Lord.

Verse twelve tells us that Paul suffered not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. Men in that day were ordained to the work of the ministry. Jesus called, qualified and sent men out to preach and to occupy such places in the church as prophets, apostles, pastors, teachers and evangelists, all for the work of the ministry. Because of this Paul found no place for a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man. Because of this order of the house we would advise all women of the church to heed the law of the church, and be in "subjection," rather than desiring to rule. We would also advise all male members of the household of faith not to exceed their authority, let their office be what it may. The duties and privileges of a pastor should not be entered upon by any member of the church he serves, and surely not by one whose membership is elsewhere. The duties of the deacons should be performed by the deacons, no one interfering; the work of trustees should be attended to by the trustees, without interference of the pastor or deacons, should the trustees not be deacons. To attend every man to his own business, and the women keep silence in the churches, makes for peace and union, and thereby the ties of fellowship are strengthened. But one troublemaker in the church of God can make more pieces in a month than a dozen peace-makers can put together in a lifetime.

Our friend Cooper will by our effort know our willingness at least to comply with his request, even though he derives no benefit from what we have written. May the effort, however, not be altogether in vain. K.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Mt. Enon Primitive Baptist Association, now in its forty-ninth annual session, sends greeting and love to all whom it concerns of like precious faith.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We feel that it is through God's love and tender mercy that we have been blessed to meet again in an associate capacity, for which we hope to praise his holy name. All orderly churches are represented by letter and messengers, and report love and peace, for which we are thankful to the Lord. Also, we have a representation from other associations of our faith and order with us, laden with the gospel. We invite orderly Baptists to visit us, and especially at our association.

Our next association will be held with Bethlehem Church, four miles west of Brewster, Hillsboro County, Florida, on the C. H. & N. R. R., the second Sunday in November, 1921, and Friday and Saturday before.

W. O. FUTCH, Moderator.
J. H. MILES, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at the home of the bride's parents near Snow Hill, Md., January 7th, 1921, Albert P. Laws and Maude H. Perdue, both of Worcester County, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Josephine Ensor Fowble departed this life November 25th, 1920, at the St. Joseph's Hospital, Baltimore, Md., in her 65th year, having been operated on the Saturday before to relieve serious stomach trouble, but when the incision was made it was found that no earthly physician could give her aid, and although all that skill could give and loved ones could summon, a few days later, conscious until the last, resting in that peace which passeth understanding, she bade loved ones adieu, sweetly testifying that Jesus, the great Physician, had come unto her with healing in his wings. It was my privilege to visit her on Sunday at the hospital, and to have a precious talk with her. She told me of all that had taken place with her. I asked her how she felt in her mind. "O," she said, "I am perfectly reconciled; I have such sweet seasons. The Lord is present with me here." So wonderful was the peace, reconciliation and trust manifest in her in all she was called to pass through that doctor, priests and nurses exclaimed, How can this be? She passed away as she had lived, a beautiful example of those called by grace to be a living witness not only in the shadow of the valley of death, but in the valley of death itself; to say, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me. Those were almost the last words spoken by her. Sister Fowble was baptized by Elder H. C. Ker, and received in the fellowship of the Black Rock Church twenty-two years ago, where she was loved and looked up to as a beautiful character indeed. She was highly esteemed by all who knew her. This was attested to by the large gathering that came to pay the last tribute to her. She leaves one daughter, Nellie, one brother, Carrol Ensor, and one sister, Rachael Ensor, all well known to those who visit Black Rock.

The funeral was conducted by the writer, who tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved ones. May the Lord comfort them with the comfort wherewith she was sustained.

ALSO,

Franklin Pierce died December 15th, 1920, aged about 75 years. He was baptized August 1st, 1904, by the late Elder William Grafton, and received into the fellowship of the Harford Church, where he remained steadfast in the precious faith. He served many years as deacon, and both as member and deacon there was manifest unto the end in his quiet, unassuming and humble manner that mark which is in the forehead, by which men were enabled to see his good works, and did glorify the Father which is in heaven. His conversation was always sweetened with the desire to tell how good the dear Lord had been to give a precious hope to a poor sinner such as he. He left no family to mourn his departure. His wife, who was an esteemed member of the Harford Church, died several years ago. He was well cared for in his last days by his niece and nephew, whose thoughtful care for him was beautiful indeed.

The writer conducted the funeral at the Harford meetinghouse, where friends and neighbors gathered to show their respect for his memory.

ALSO,

Naomi Grafton, wife of William O. Grafton, died December 28th, 1920, aged 66 years. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Harford Church March 6th, 1881, by the late Elder William Grafton, where she continued faithful and steadfast to the end. In all the conflicts through which she was called to pass her testimony was that her strength was sufficient unto the day. Wherever her lot was cast she was ever given the desire to seek out and mingle with those of like precious faith. Sister Naomi was afflicted with that dread disease, cancer of the stomach, which no mortal hand could stay. When her time came she was given to know that the same gracious God who gave her a precious hope was with her then to bear her safely on death's cold flood. Besides her husband, she leaves two daughters and one son, two sisters and one brother.

The funeral was conducted by the writer at the Harford meetinghouse, where many relatives and friends gathered to pay the last tribute to her. May God be gracious to those left to mourn.

W. S. ALEXANDER.

David W. Sheppard died October 26th, 1920, at the age of 52 years, 11 months and 25 days. He united with the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, N. J., June 27th, 1898, and was held in the fellowship of that church the remainder of his life. Brother Sheppard was taken sick June 10th, 1918, with heart trouble, and had been confined to his home since that time. He had been unable to lie down from October 5th, 1918, until his summons came. He was a great sufferer, but bore it with as much fortitude as any one could, and often expressed to the writer that it was right, and he was willing to be submissive to the will of God. He often spoke of the sufferings of Job, but said, Mine are not as bad as Job's, for his friends all forsook him, but I have mine, as well as good, faithful brethren to console me. He was twice married; his first wife was Miss Elizabeth Hill, to whom he was married January 17th, 1889. To that union were born five children, viz.: Miss Permelia Sheppard and Mrs. Emma Cornell, both of Hopewell, N. J.; Mrs. Lewis Blackwell, of Rosedale, N. J.; Mrs. Henry

Rylander, of Allentown, N. J., and Charles Sheppard, of Trenton, N. J., all of whom survive him, together with their stepmother, to mourn their loss. His second marriage was to Mrs. Alva Hill Perrine, April 25th, 1918, a sister of his first wife. To that union he had no heirs. It might well be said God gave him these companions for his helpmates in life. The first was a faithful companion, and after she was taken the second was given, and the duties of a true companion were borne by her both to his children and brother Sheppard during all his sickness. Sister Sheppard did not shrink from anything that she could do for him, and did many things which seemed nearly impossible for human endurance, which proves to us the truth of the expression of the word of divine truth which says, As thy day thy strength shall be. So we can truly say sister Sheppard was indeed a great blessing, and no woman could have filled the place more completely than she.

His funeral was held October 29th, in the Old School Baptist church-house in Hopewell, N. J., conducted by the writer, and his remains were laid to rest in the churchyard to await the time appointed of God to raise him from the dead a spiritual body, and be glorified together with his Redeemer. The esteem in which brother Sheppard was held was manifested by the large gathering of brethren, sisters, relatives and friends in this last public tribute to his memory. We all mourn to give up those who are dear to us in the flesh, but the Lord gave and hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

C. W. VAUGHN.

Basil Grafton, son of the late Martin and Hannah Grafton, and brother of the late Elder Wm. Grafton, died at his home near Bel Air, Md., Sept. 29th, 1920, aged 87 years. In early life he was united in marriage with Miss Elizabeth Hines, who survives him, and who has indeed been a companion and helpmeet in the truest sense. Brother Grafton had long been a believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace and a lover of the same, but like many others, from a sense of unfitness he held back from openly declaring the faith that was in him until the fifth Sunday in August, 1910, when he was given strength to go before the little church at Harford, and in a simple, childlike spirit tell them what great things he hoped the Lord had done for him. The church gladly received him, and he was baptized by Elder J. T. Rowe. Owing to his feeble state of health, and also to the great distance he lived from the place where he united, he was unable to meet with us very frequently, but we believed him to be with us in spirit. He was always concerned for the welfare of the church, and never failed to remember her needs financially. His gentle, lovable disposition endeared him to all. Truly to know brother Grafton was to love him. During the past eight years of his life he was a great sufferer at times, and during the last few weeks his suffering was intense, but he was very patient. The family have the heartfelt sympathy of the church in their sad bereavement, yet in the midst of their sorrow they may well rejoice, because of the blessed assurance they have that their dear father is forever at rest in the presence of his Savior, where parting is unknown. Brother Grafton leaves, besides his widow, four daughters: Misses Jennie, Lillian and Edna, at home, and Mrs. Edward Hooker, of Bel Air, also one brother, now the last of his generation, about ninety years of age. The family, at the time of the funeral, being unable to secure a minister of their father's faith, the service was conducted by the Methodist minister; interment in the Methodist cemetery, near Bel Air. May the Lord's blessing rest upon the family and all who mourn.

Written by his niece.

JENNIE GRAFTON.

Robert Koebig, son of Elvira Koebig, died in Binghamton, N. Y., January 8th, 1921, aged 6 years, 3 months and 1 day, His father died four years ago last July, and another child was taken from them five years before the death of the husband and father, leaving sister Elvira with one son twelve years old, a lonely, sad widow, trusting alone in Jesus Christ, her Savior and Redeemer. May the God of all grace strengthen and sustain her in her great affliction, is my prayer. Little Robert was a lovely, bright child, loved by all who knew him. He was all affection, and his ways were very winning. He and I were close friends; we loved each other. It was in his mind that he would not get well when he was taken sick, for he told his mother he was going to die. The disease that caused his death was pneumonia. He was not sick many days. He is now with Jesus in glory. Sister Koebig's maiden name was Tuthill, a sister of sister George Genung, both members of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, New York city.

The writer of this notice tried to speak to the comfort of the friends at the home in Binghamton, after which we went to Waverly, N. Y., and buried the dear little boy in the Waverly cemetery.

ALSO,

David Nethaway died Saturday, January 29th, at a hospital in Binghamton, N. Y., aged 83 years, 5 months and 17 days. Death was due to old age. I think he had lived in Schoharie County, N. Y., many years. His home at the time of his death was near Howes Cave. He leaves a lonely, sad widow, sister Nethaway, to mourn as a dove for its mate, they having lived together so many years. Six sons with many other relatives and friends will miss him much. A daughter died some years ago. He with all of his family were believers in the Bible, therefore all enjoyed hearing the Old School Baptists preach and were ever ready to help the cause. Uncle David was a soldier in the war of 1860, served three years and

was honorably discharged. He is now beyond all strife and war, he is in glory.

Funeral services were held at the home of his son Jesse, February 2nd. A Methodist minister from Cobleskill said prayers and gave the eulogy, and the writer tried to preach the gospel to the comfort of the mourning friends. Burial near Howes Cave. God bless them for Jesus' sake.

D. M. VAIL.

Mrs. Elizabeth Guthrie was born February 16th, 1838, and died January 15th, 1921, aged 82 years, 10 months and 29 days. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church called Liberty, of the Pocatalico Association, at the age of nineteen, of which she remained a consistent member for sixty-three years. Six children survive her, four daughters and two sons; also four sisters, two brothers and many friends are left to mourn their loss, but feel their loss to be her eternal gain. She was well established in the faith and doctrine of the old order of Baptists. She stood firm while the church of her membership passed through a severe sifting a few years ago.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral, which was her request, being her pastor. A large congregation of relatives and friends was present to pay the last tribute of respect to the one they felt had been a mother to the rising generation, by way of giving them advice, which was always done in kindness and in love. On this memorable occasion the language of Job v. 26, was used as a foundation for a few remarks: "Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season." The remains were taken to the Guthrie cemetery and laid in the grave to await the resurrection of the dead. God alone can comfort the broken-hearted children.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

Chloe Mead departed this life at her home in Roxbury, N. Y., October 11th, 1920. She was the daughter of Erastus and Mary Mead, and was born in Vega, N. Y., February 20th, 1845. She lived and attended the meetings in that place until the year 1883, when she moved within the bounds of the Second Roxbury Church. She united with that church June 11th, 1892, and was baptized by the late Elder J. D. Hubbell. Sister Chloe lived with her two sisters, Marietta and Phebe, who deeply mourn their loss. It is unecessary for me to write a eulogy to our dear sister's memory, for she still lives in the hearts of all who knew her. To her two sisters that remain she was a faithful and affectionate sister, and her life, conversation and deportment, both in her church and the world, were exemplary. It was her delight to hear the name of Jesus exalted, and now we believe she is in the presence of her Lord.

The funeral was conducted by the writer at her late home; burial was in the cemetery at Vega., N. Y.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Mrs. Charity Campbell was born in Lycoming Co., Pa., in 1836, and was in her 85th year at the time of her death. She was the wife of William D. Campbell, who died July 30th, 1888. One daughter was born to them, who died at the age of twenty-one years. She leaves two brothers and two sisters, both brothers living near her home, one sister residing in Utica, N. Y., the other in the west. Sister Charity was baptized by Elder S. H. Durand August 4th, 1876. She was one of the oldest members of the Cammal Church, and always filled her place in the meetings when she was able to be with the little flock. She will be greatly missed in the church, but we hope our loss is her eternal gain. She was known and loved by all as Aunt Charity, and she was well named.

The funeral service was conducted by our faithful pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, in the presence of a very attentive congregation of relatives and friends. The remains were laid to rest in the Cammal cemetery, by the side of her husband and daughter.

J. T. BADGLEY.

NOTICE.

By an action of Oak Grove Church at our last meeting it was voted to say through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to all ministers of the Primitive Baptist faith who are in good standing, that we extend to them an invitation to visit us at Oak Grove Church, Jackson Co., Mo., at any of our meetings, the first Sunday and Saturday before in each month, as often as they can. We welcome them at all times.

W. T. WEBB, Church Clerk.

OAK GROVE, Mo., January, 1921.

INFORMATION WANTED.

I would be pleased to hear by letter from any Baptist living in or near the city of Davenport, Iowa. Is there a church in that city or vicinity?

(MRS.) MARTHA J. ALLEN.

FREEWATER, Oregon, Lock Box 53.

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 694 E. 125th St., or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 89. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1921. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PSALMS CXXXIX. 7.

WHITHER shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?"

Man at his best estate is altogether vanity. The most learned, the most sensitive cannot grasp omnipresence; the finite cannot grasp the infinite. We cannot understand how it is possible that a being can be present wholly and completely with us and be equally so with another thousands of miles away. While this is infinitely beyond the possibilities of the most perceptive mind, it is just as infinitely true of Almighty God. The grass flourishes and the birds are kept in one section equally as well as another at one and the same time. His guardian care is ever about us, at midnight on a stormy ocean or at noontime in the seclusion of our own homes when all is well. His protecting mercy reaches not only from the cradle to the grave, but it endureth forever. In the awful war through which we have just passed his guidance attended each and every bullet or other missile of death, causing it to hit or to miss as he saw fit according to his eternal design, which he purposed in himself before time began; for he is the First Great Cause, the Ruler and Disposer of all events, from the most trivial to the most gigantic, and "not a single shaft can hit till the God of love sees fit." Men have gone through the most destructive battles without a scratch, while death has overtaken others before reaching the scene of battle. Moreover, the hand of death has gathered thousands from the bounds of civilian life through the scourge of the epidemic of influenza, which has hovered over our land as a mighty vampire, sucking the life-blood of the nation, baffling the skill of the most learned in medical science, and in the face of the united and unceasing efforts of doctor and nurse death moved about its gruesome task and claimed its own. Surely he doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. A young man of my acquaintance acknowledged that he never realized or felt the need of prayer in his whole life until in the midst of the fury and roar of the battle, while bullets screamed and shells shrieked, while death-dealing machines of the most improved method of modern warfare belched out wholesale death and destruction in the last great drive of the Allies, when he

involuntarily stopped in the midst of this most cruel scene, where men were being literally torn limb from limb and blown to atoms, threw his face heavenward and begged for the protecting care of Almighty God, realizing God's presence and power to protect and safely deliver even from the very bowels of destruction, and were God not the omnipresent Being that young man would be the only and sole inhabitant of the earth to-day, for God did protect him and deliver him without harm or hurt; and had it been necessary to have withdrawn his presence from others in order to have gone to this one's rescue, the rest had perished. While our mind cannot grasp so mighty a theme, yet faith holds us and we believe. "Lord, help thou mine unbelief."

While the psalmist realized and believed the omnipresence of God from this view, yet there is a sweet experimental view that David also realized. We only know the Scriptures as we live them. There have been times in our lives when it would have seemed sacrilegious to say that we to-day experience or live the Scriptures; for by tradition we hold those holy men of old in reverence, forgetting that they were men even as we. The angel told Peter to stand up when he fell at his feet to worship him, saying he was of his brethren; and not only they, but Jesus himself knew all the weaknesses of the flesh, for he was not an high priest that could not be touched by the feeling of our infirmities, but was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin. Jesus told the Jews, Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they that testify of me. There is no eternal life for doing the commandments or observing the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic covenant. To do so with this in view is like eating the broken bread, not discerning the Lord's body. But the Scriptures are a testimony of Jesus Christ from his conception to his ascension, having his word that he will ever send the Comforter, and that he will come again. The life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. The life that Christ lived in the flesh he lived by faith—faith in God the Father. As the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, the man Christ Jesus lived by faith, and not by sight. As God, he unrestrictedly foresaw the end from the beginning, but as Jesus, the man, it was ever by faith; for in the weakness of the flesh he prayed in the garden, sweating, as it were, great drops of blood, begging in the extremity of the weakness of his flesh that the very thing which he came to do, if it were possible, might be taken from him, that he might escape the very thing for which he was born; but the faith which is in God said, Not my will, but thine, be done. Faith in the perfect work of God, faith in Him who knows no change, that whatever he doeth is right and is forever. The whole Scripture is a record of the life of Jesus, a diary, as it were, a record of each day and of each night; and even in our most lonely exile, shut out, as it were, from the presence of the brethren, no companionship, absolutely alone, ensnared with a perfect entanglement of doubt and unbelief, where all is darkness, hedged about by despair, with the pangs of hell upon us, even in this we have in no wise gone beyond the Master in that which he suffered; for we are the body of Christ Jesus, and he had to live this life in the flesh even as you and I must live it, living and walking by faith, not by sight; for it is written of him that "he must needs go through Samaria." Our finite minds can-

not grasp the infinite purpose of God in these things, but we do know that he was made like unto his brethren, coming in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, and we are made conformable to his death and have fellowship with his sufferings through the things we suffer. We do suffer with him, and if so we shall also reign with him; but he had to go through Samaria, he could not go any other way; notwithstanding the fact that Samaria and its inhabitants were an abomination in the sight of the Jews, yet he must go through there to reveal himself to the woman. He had a sheep there, a subject of the love and mercy of God, which was chosen in him before the foundation of the world was laid, and he as the Savior of sinners goes where the sinner is and reveals himself to him, he comes to his people. This woman is one of if not the most striking and complete types of the true church, which is composed of Jew and Gentile, which is neither Jew nor Gentile, but one in Christ Jesus. She by nature was a mixed blooded Jew, both Jew and Gentile, yet she was neither, but an outcast, still she was the first person to whom Jesus revealed his true self, and spoke plainly when she said to him, "I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he."—John iv. 25, 26. Therefore he must needs to, had to, go through Samaria. In other words, the path of his life was marked out, and from which no deviation could possibly be made. He must needs live, suffer and die, and could in no sense escape a single dreg of the bitter cup, which could in no wise pass except he drink it; for it, the cup of suffering, passes only with the drinking, even of the last bitter dregs. The purpose of God can in no sense fail; the absolute sovereignty of his being forbids this, the very name God forbids it; the name is sovereign, being applicable to no other, and his honor he will not divide with another; and as the subjects of his love and mercy were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began, it was also purposed in him that he should suffer pain and death for them; and as they are partakers of flesh and blood, he also partook of the same. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."—Heb. ii. 9, 10. In the great experimental sense we feel the omnipresence of Almighty God, for Jesus was God manifest in the flesh, and in the flesh he suffered every pain to which flesh is heir, and all the agony of which the natural mind is capable he endured to the uttermost. That tormenting and agonizing thought that surely God has cast off and forsaken us was his to know by experience in the things which he suffered in the flesh, in that awful hour when all men, even his bosom friends and his brethren, had left him, the earth wrapped in darkness from the sixth to the ninth hour, three hours of blackness during time that according to the natural order of things would be light, and in the blackness of this darkness he felt the separation from God, and could but ask, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" It is impossible that we suffer greater or deeper or have a more strange affliction than he, absolutely impossible; yet inasmuch as it is absolutely impossible

to separate him and his people, they suffer all these things together with him, but they cannot go beyond. No matter to what height or depth, length or breadth we go, or to what extremity we may come, the presence of Jesus goes before and he leads the way; he must have the preeminence in all things. Though we cannot imagine him as realizing his helplessness and dependence upon God the Father, his faith was in God, ever relying on the sovereignty of God, his loving-kindness and faithfulness, which endureth forever, and his unchangeable, unalterable purpose. We only know these things as we experience them; one cannot tell another in an understanding way. We can only have fellowship to the extent of our mutual knowledge, and knowledge comes only by experience. If we are faithful witnesses we testify to the sufferings of Christ in the flesh, in our flesh, and to be faithful witnesses we must speak of what we see with our eyes, and handle with our hands, and taste of the Word of life, and these things are experienced and declared only and alone by the power and mercy of God, that we may have fellowship one with another and that our joy may be full. If our testimony agrees with David, or if we understand and have fellowship for anything he says, just so far have we been with David. If we suffer the things which Christ suffered, just to that extent we are conformed to his image, and these things separate us from the world, even the nearest and dearest ties of nature. As He was not of this world, so are we not. The way is ever new and strange, for it is the new and living way. We are strangers traveling in that path, which no fowl knoweth. Though the way is lonely, yet he setteth the solitary in families, bringing them together in affliction and the things they suffer and binding them together in his love, and he will hear the prayer of the destitute and not despise their cry. We cannot go beyond his bounds in any sense whatever; he is Head over all things to the church, a faithful High Priest, the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

This is offered for publication in the SIGNS with the same hesitancy, with the same embarrassment and fear that has ever attended my efforts in this way, but being earnestly entreated by a dear sister to write an article along this line for publication in the SIGNS, I have endeavored to comply with her request. If it is the Lord's will, may her mind be freshened with sweet meditations of the mercy and goodness of our God, who hath provided all things in Christ for us, and may he bless his people everywhere to realize his omnipresence.

Your unworthy brother,

F. SELBY FISHER.

SALISBURY, Md.

BUCYRUS, Ohio, January 9, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have been requested by some of our brethren to write a letter for publication in our dear old paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. While I feel my nothingness, sinfulness and inability to write anything to comfort Zion, and know that none can receive anything except it be given from above, I have a desire to try and comply, and leave you to judge whether it will do to publish or not, and if not, it will be all right with me. The question on which I have been requested to write is, What constituted one a fit subject for admission into the church in the time of Christ and the apostles? There is only one question that I can find that was ever

asked, and only one satisfactory answer ever given, and that was, Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God? We find recorded in Mark xvi. 16: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Now the question is, What must he believe? We find the answer in John i. 12, 13: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Also see John iii. 15–18; vi. 69. In Acts Paul told the jailer to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in John xi. 25, 26, the Savior said to Martha: "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God." Again, the apostle said, Whosoever believeth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is born of God. Peter said, Thou art Christ, the Son of God, and the Savior said, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. Now, it seems in these days there are contentions among the brethren in a great many places that it looks to me there is no authority for in the Scriptures. Not that any brother or minister should shun to declare the whole counsel of God or soften any part of doctrine to please any one, but that we should not fall out by the way on some of the mysteries which God has not seen fit to reveal unto all of us, like the resurrection. Paul said, Behold, I shew you a mystery. Now we and all Old School Baptists agree that no one can know anything of the mysteries of God except as he sees fit in his wisdom and mercy to reveal them unto us. So then if he has seen fit to reveal some of these mysteries to one brother and not to another, I do not believe it is according to the Scriptures for either brother to say unto the other, This was revealed to me, and if you do not see it that way you are wrong. Now take it from my standpoint. I believe this vile body shall be raised and quickened by the Spirit and made spiritual. Another brother believes this same body shall be quickened and raised a spiritual body. Now what is the difference? One claims it is this same old body that is raised and quickened by the Spirit of God, the same Spirit that quickened the body of the Savior; the other claims it is the same old body quickened by the same Spirit and raised a spiritual body. Now, dear brother, I cannot see any difference, except in the times and seasons, which the Lord has put in his own power. When the Master and the apostles received any one into the church I cannot find anywhere in the Scriptures that they ever asked any one if they believed the body was quickened before or after the resurrection. It seems that in that day it was sufficient for them to believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God. John said, Whosoever believeth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is born of God. Would it not be better and more becoming if we, instead of fighting among ourselves about the times and seasons, which the Lord has put in his own power, would forbear one another in love and endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace? Is it not enough if we have that Spirit which teaches us to know Him whom to know is life eternal? The Savior says, I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and the old prophet said,

Happy art thou, O Israel, a people saved by the Lord. May we all be made to feel with the apostle: God be thanked for his unspeakable gift.

What I have written has been by request, and I hope if the editors see fit to publish it no one will take offence, as it is not written with that intent. I feel I love all of the writers of the SIGNS and all of the Lord's dear children; and although I do not feel worthy of a name among you, yet I feel to say, Entreat me not to leave thee.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

C. E. JACKSON.

LIMONA, Fla., Feb. 4, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am writing some queries about "that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world." Some of these questions are answered in the asking of them. My mind has never dwelt much upon what the devil is, or what he has done or is doing since I lost confidence in the Arminian way of salvation, and that has been over sixty years. Not until recently, by reading the Scriptures, did I realize how much Scripture is used to tell of the devil and his work; a work that is set forth as being opposed to God and the welfare of his people, and he is given another name that fits his calling, which is, "The Adversary," and as such he will always be the adversary of the saints of God. I do not know that what I shall write will be fit for publication, for many of our thoughts are not fit to be known by our brethren, but as I am referring to what has been written "aforetime" by men inspired of God to do the very writing that they did, this of itself will partly excuse me for talking about "the father of lies."

If a man be free after the Lord calls him, what was his previous condition? Was he in bondage? Jesus says, "The truth shall make you free." Also, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." This plainly admits the previous bondage of the believer. Paul's statement is this: "For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman." If he was made a free man by the Lord Jesus, was he a bond man before he was set free? If he was in bondage to the law of sin and death he was not a free man. God placed man and woman under the rule of prohibition, yet he turned the devil loose with the first man and woman—no fence between. (The devil must have been "a free agent.") Who says that the devil did not have influence over the first bride of the land? Who says that the devil had no legal right there? Who says that the devil had no claim on the family of man? Did not the God of heaven and earth give the devil the privilege to influence humanity? Did the devil forcibly break through any inclosure to get to converse with the first bride of earth? Was not the devil glad to be a stockholder in death's company and hold the bands for death? Was it true that the devil "had the power of death," or was Paul mistaken about it? How did the devil lose that power and get himself destroyed? Was it not Christ who "overcame" and broke the bands that Satan, the devil, held against the elect? Did not the devil show his cunning hand in many ages of the world in the hearts of the children of men? Was he not the first counsellor to Eve? Did he not move Cain to offer vain oblation? Was he not with the giants of old whose hearts were full of sin, and that continually, until God destroyed the world by water? Did not Satan "go and come" to Pharaoh, king of Egypt? Was he not

prominent in the hearts of Joseph's brethren when they sold Joseph? Did he not put up a good reason with the children of Israel in the wilderness why the calf should be made? Did he not move the king of Moab to hire Balaam to curse Israel? Was he not in the mouths of all the false prophets that are spoken of in Scripture? Taking all the testimony found in the holy Scriptures, do we not find that the devil was a very prominent factor in the records of holy writ? After all, is not the devil at the very bottom of the greatest of sins found among the children of men? Is not idolatry the greatest sin, and is it not chargeable to Satan, the devil? Seeing, then, he is found in the earth "walking up and down in it," and "as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour," should we not have a happy thought that God takes care of us and shields us from the haunts of the adversary, and that our God does confine the devil to certain limits such as the Lord himself dictates through his decree of old?

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

FREEWATER, Ore., Jan. 26, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—To-day I received the SIGNS for January 15th, and soon had read the editorial signed "K," and in my usual way of beginning the review of any sacred text I said, Am I one for whom the prophet was given that wonderful Lamentation, one among Zion's children languishing because none came to her solemn feasts? Then I said, By whom are Zion's children fed and clothed and comforted with all spiritual blessings? but there was only darkness and confusion. Later in the day I read of the travels of Elder Vail and others. I then selected the various texts used at the different meetings, and as I turned to each one and read it from the Bible I was led into that sweet source of comfort where Zion becomes the city of our solemnities. Time seemed to extend into one vast eternal hymn of praise. Hope was renewed and patience made perfect through the merits of Jesus, who bore our sins and perfected salvation through that great love made perfect in us that we may have boldness in the day of judgment (1 John iv. 18), and have the righteousness which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith, that we may know him and the power of his resurrection. For some time past I have had in mind not to put so much stress upon the duty to attend our meetings, as I got discouraged by the many disappointments that came to me, but the words of Jesus in John xii. 35, 36, seem to be addressed to just such as desire to be in the light, and the time came when all unexpectedly we went to hear Elder Barnes preach, and although two weeks have elapsed the words are still sounding forth in the hearts of those who were prepared to receive the message of that everlasting gospel. He read the fourteenth chapter of John, and then took as a text Psalms xxvii. 4: "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." How we are brought home to Zion, the city that hath foundations, as we come in touch with the world of inquirers that are employed in search of God's ways by poor finite beings, and then comes the sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts. (2 Peter i.

19.) For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. We read that all things work together for good, yet how can we look Zionward when there are so many ways that seem right unto us? Yet our hearts desire that steadfast place of abode, and we can but ask in faith. All things for our good will be revealed to us, and hope will arise to cheer us on our way. The cross must be borne if our steps are toward Zion, and one by one each earthly weight will be laid aside, until we are enabled to say, "Thy will be done" in all things.

I find this a poor letter, not worthy space in the SIGNS; it has been written as the thoughts came to me, and I leave it with better judges to decide of its fitness for publication.

MARTHA J. ALLEN.

"THOU SHALT NOT TEMPT THE LORD THY GOD."

"THEN the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

"Tempt" has two meanings of slightly different interpretations. One is in the sense of try, or test; the other means to entice, especially in the sense of enticing to do evil. It is evident that the former meaning applies here. As an example of the other meaning, James says, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." God never entices a man to do evil, but he does try the faith of his children to prove them. However, according to the words of our text, we are forbidden to try the Lord in this sense. A proper understanding of this truth throws a clearer light on the subject of prayer. James says again, "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick." Again, "But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord." A prayer uttered without faith, to try the Lord, will not be honored. It has the same source as the desire of those who asked for a sign, but Jesus said no sign such as they sought should be given. Their desire was not of faith, but of tempting or proving the Lord. A servant of the Lord may do wrong in this respect. Gideon recognized this when he asked for a double sign, for he said unto God, Let not thine anger be hot against me. We find also that the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses on a somewhat similar occasion. It is not the desire for anything, but the lack of faith which constitutes the sin. The prayer of faith may cry with a blessed assurance of God's power and grace, "Shew me a token for good; that they which hate me may see it, and be ashamed; because thou, Lord, hast holpen me, and comforted me."

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 19, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—Though the time for my SIGNS does not expire until March, I am sending you a money order for another year's subscription. It was sent me at Christmas by a very dear sister in Cali-

fornia to be used for that purpose, so I consider it yours, and instead of my keeping it lying around I want you to have the use of it, as I feel it takes all that is due you to carry on the great business you are engaged in for people who feel themselves unworthy of your great labor. I speak for myself, and feel sure it would be sanctioned by all our dear ones scattered throughout the United States, each receiving their paper in due time, and when it has been read a feeling of love goes out to the writers, for all in their sinful nature are much alike, but we would never know of others seeing themselves as we see ourselves were it not for the experiences we read in our family paper. I feel assured there is not another like me, and I grieve many hours over what I profess to be: a member of dear old Frying Pan Church, for I know I am unworthy and unfit for such a name. I know nothing, and can do nothing, and am not worthy to be among my brethren and sisters at our monthly meetings. It is one of my greatest regrets to have to be absent during the winter months, but the will of our heavenly Father rules all our ways, and every step we take must be in submission to his power. We would have more downfalls than we do if his arm was not forever around us poor frail mortals, who have no strength within ourselves. I hope the new year will bring you greater success in your business, and that all our writers will continue to write and cheer us, especially our editors, who write so well for us. When some have been taken away I have been made to wonder who would fill the places, but never more than with the present editors, and I trust it may be many years before another change has to be made.

Excuse my writing so much, when I should only have written a short business letter, but I felt "alone" and wanted a chat with my kindred, and you being the ones necessary for me to write to just at this time were the ones imposed upon by a most unworthy sister,

BETTIE BENNETT.

MYSTIC, Conn., Feb. 16, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—Whenever I renew my subscription I always feel I ought to give some word of encouragement to those engaged in this labor of love, for every one interested in reading the SIGNS knows that nothing but love to God and his people would sustain the publication of such a paper. While I seldom attempt to express all that is in my heart, the editorials of Elder Ker and Elder Lefferts in the last two numbers of the SIGNS so appealed to me that I felt I must try and show my fellowship, and say something to comfort the precious sons of Zion, though I realize I have no power to do so unless it is given me from above. Christ tells us that blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted, and that he will appoint unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. How blessed it is that these promises do not depend upon time, conditions or men, but upon the immutability of him who has promised.

Last October I was greatly refreshed in spirit by meeting with the church in New York city. God had called my dear father home the June before, and I was sad and lonely, but Elder McConnell so broke the bread of life to me that I went on the strength of that meat many days, even to Horeb, the mount of God. I also heard a young minister preach a short sermon. He did not have as much liberty as God will give him further on, but he showed what is better: humility, proving that his

calling was not of man, neither was he taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. In all this association with the Lord's people I have been made to walk about Zion, tell her towers, mark well her bulwarks and consider her palaces. If God so comforted me in Jerusalem I know he will comfort all his redeemed. They shall return and come to Zion with singing; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. EVA ASHBEY.

VIENNA, Va., July 8, 1920.

DEAR ELDER KER:—Ever since I read your editorial in the last SIGNS it has been on my mind to write you. I went to Frying Pan Church to-day and it is still on my mind. My experience from the first was about the things of which you wrote. From my earliest childhood days I would think of those things. I remember I would go to funerals and would think of the words, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" and would wonder what the meaning was. Time went on until I was married, and my oldest brother died, and when I looked on his dead face I knew there was a rest. What was that rest? I never rested a moment from that time in November until the following spring, when I believe God revealed those words unto me. I never thought or prayed for anything but a knowledge of the hereafter, but when I first felt God's presence the desire for such knowledge left me. "I am the resurrection," saith the Lord. "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." I have never since then given a thought of what my spiritual form shall be, neither do I care. When the time comes for me to leave this world will his presence be with me? A person might call me bigoted in my opinions. You remember the last day of our Association I spoke to you at the door about the Old Baptist Church being the true church. When I went to the Baptist Church I do not suppose I had heard three sermons in fifteen years, and had never heard more than two or three Old Baptists preach, but when I prayed to God to know what church to go to the answer was, The Old Baptist. I do not feel like going into details about my experience, but wanted to tell you about what I have written, as I never heard it preached. Elder Lefferts preached a good sermon to-day, but I am spiritually dead. M. M. FRENCH.

COTTONWOOD, Ala., Jan. 27, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—You will find inclosed a money order for two dollars, as my subscription ran out with the last issue and I do not want to miss a copy; it is good news from a far country. It is a great witness to us to read from the pen of each other the dealings of the Lord with us and find the precious evidence that all of his people are taught of him. Many of them have never met each other on this earth, yet they all tell the same thing: salvation by grace, in and through the merits of a crucified Lord, made manifest to us in due time. If we had the land flooded with tracts and catechisms then might it appear to the natural mind an easy thing that we all have the same witness, but we have instructions that the natural mind knows nothing of, and that is this: "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."

As ever, your brother in hope,

J. B. MURPHY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1921.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE BRANCH.

ISAIAH IV. 2; XI. 1; ZECHARIAH III. 8; VI. 12.

OF all the names given to the Savior this one of "The Branch" is probably the most mysterious. Surely, great is the mystery of godliness, of God manifest in the flesh. This title, "The Branch," has to do with the manifestation of God in the flesh. In the first of the Scriptures cited at the head of this article Jesus is spoken of as the branch of the Lord, and it is in this sense we shall try first to consider the subject. We must not think of Jesus simply as a man, but always bear in mind he was verily God. It is a mistake to say that Jesus was a man just like ourselves. We doubt if the Scriptures will bear out that assertion. We are born of flesh and blood, conceived in sin and shaped in iniquity. Our human nature is all depraved. Jesus was not born according to the ordinary laws of human generation, he was not shaped in iniquity, was not born in sin, did not come forth from the womb speaking lies, he was not a sinner and his flesh was not sinful flesh. He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, so says Romans viii. 3. There is a world of difference between being made flesh and being in the likeness of sinful flesh. Also, Jesus was made in the likeness of men, so says Philippians ii. 7. There is a difference between being a man and being the likeness of men. We know that our Savior was a man among men, but he was so infinitely more than a man, being verily God, that it behooves us not to say that he was a man just like ourselves, for if he was exactly as we are, then must he have been sinful and depraved. Perish the thought! It is a noticeable feature of much of the literature being written by the world to-day that it thinks of Jesus as a man, neglecting almost entirely the truth that he was God; that is, much emphasis is laid on the fact of his manhood, passing by the great essential truth of his divinity. This is a point of view Old Baptists cannot afford to take, for to do so denies the ability of Jesus to save sinners. Had he been merely man he could not have been the atonement for sinners, and himself, with all other men, would still be under condemnation. But he was God in the likeness of men, therefore abundantly able to save to the uttermost all the Father had given him before the foundation of the world. All the sins of his people were imputed unto him, but he himself had no sins of his own. He was tempted in all points as are his people, but never once yielded to temptation. We are tempted and do yield; he did not. God never suffered his Holy One to see corruption. Jesus never saw corruption, either during his life or after he died and was laid in the tomb. We do live with corruption in our very nature, and after we die, we are consumed by corruption; that is, so far as our human nature is concerned. The angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, and said, "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." Also the angel said to Mary, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of

the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." This wonderful language never could have been used of a mere man, and settles forever the character of Jesus as being truly God. Outwardly to the world Jesus looked like a man, but inwardly he was filled with all the fullness of God. It is a known fact that often those who cultivate fruit trees will take a branch, what might be called a bud or twig, from some choice kind of fruit tree and graft it on an insignificant stock of another tree. In such case the part grafted grows fast to the stock and partakes of the life and sap of the stock, but bears its own delightful fruit on itself. It will not leave off bearing its own fruit and take to bearing the fruit of the stock on which it is grafted, but it continues to bear its own fruit even though joined with the insignificant stock, or stock of poorer quality. So Jesus is called the Branch of Jehovah. Mary was the one woman of the seed of David chosen and prepared of God to receive this Branch within herself. It was born of her as the result of a divine conception. So, while partaking of her life and of her flesh and of her blood, as a branch grafted on another tree, yet Jesus never bore sinful or corrupt fruit, but always his own perfect, spiritual and holy fruit. Mary was a likeness of every one of God's people. Each one, by regeneration, brings forth Christ, at the same time keeping his or her own carnal nature without change. Mary possessed her own human nature, but at the same time held within herself that "holy thing" Jesus. Every true believer in Christ has two natures within himself. These two natures never blend or become one, but that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and that which is born of the flesh is flesh. So Mary had other children, but never such an one as Jesus. The others were children of the flesh, but Jesus was the Son of God. What a difference! So, we might say, every believer has children of his flesh, which are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings and such like. On the other hand, as the result of being quickened and born again of the incorruptible seed of the word of God, every believer has children of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. These two natures, of the Spirit and of the flesh, are contrary one to the other.

According to the second Scripture cited at the head of this article, Jesus is presented as the Branch of David. This presents the other side of the matter; that is, that Jesus was, according to the flesh, of David's royal line. At the time of Jesus' birth the land of the Jews was no longer their own to rule over as in David's time, but was under the sway of Rome, and ruled by a governor appointed by Cæsar. So far down in the social scale had the Jewish royal line descended that not even was there accommodation found for Joseph and Mary in the inn at Bethlehem, but they had to seek refuge in a stable. Nevertheless, this neglected branch of David's house found favor in God's sight according to his predestinated purpose so that to it and of it was born Jesus, the Branch.

The third Scripture cited at the beginning presents Jesus as the servant of God, as the Branch acting in that capacity. As the servant of God, Jesus came to do God's will, to accomplish the salvation of his people, to do all that the

Father gave him to do, to fulfill the law of God in every jot and in every tittle. He thus came to render his body a living sacrifice for sin, to shed his blood for the remission of those sins. All this is his work as the servant of God. A man's servant does not do his own will, but the will of his master. So Jesus delighted in the will of God, it was his meat and drink, not serving God for hire, but because he contained within himself all the love of God, and this animated him in this service and consecrated him wholly to it.

The final Scripture to which we referred at the beginning presents Jesus as "the man whose name is The Branch." Here again his character as a man is emphasized, and as a man he was the Branch; that is, the Branch of David.

It is a singular thing that in comparing these four passages of Scripture we find that the first and third have to do with Jesus as the Branch of Jehovah, manifested in the flesh to do God's will, to perform the work of service. The second and fourth Scriptures have to do with Jesus as the Branch of David. In Jeremiah, twenty-third and thirty-third chapters, we have the promise that God will raise up unto David a righteous Branch, and that God will cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David. Now, we know that David had no righteousness of his own, but his righteousness was of faith in the Lord. Therefore, if the Lord causes the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David, then this Branch must come from somewhere outside of David and be grafted unto or within David, and while partaking of David's nature, yet bear and continue to bear the fruit of righteousness. All this truly came to pass with Mary, as said before.

In conclusion, let us always bear in mind that the character of Jesus is a profound mystery; that it can be known by revelation, and in no other way; that this revelation is an experimental one, by which every believer knows he contains two natures within himself, giving rise to a warfare which knows no discharge so long as we are in the flesh. Thus let us never forget that while Jesus was in the likeness of men, he was verily God; that while he was verily God, he was also man. To see him only as a man is to not know him as one's Savior. To view him only as God is not to know him in his companionship with us and in the fellowship of his sufferings.

We have written this by request, and we trust by the help of the Lord.

L.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at 100 Wright Ave., Toronto, Ont., February 9th, 1921, John Melfrid McKay and May Mabel Sinclair, both of Duart, Ont.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

John Benjamin Williams was born February 8th, 1857, in Weakley County, Tenn., and died at Acorn, Ripley Co., Mo., December 6th, 1920, aged 63 years, 9 months and 6 days. In 1882 he was married to Miss Emma Nichols. They made their home in Hickman County, Ky., for two years, then moved to Missouri. To that union were born ten children, four of whom survive him. Brother Williams and wife united with the Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church at New Hope, Ripley Co., Mo., on the third Sunday in November, 1909, and were baptized by the pastor, Elder B. H. Yates, remaining faithful until death. He lay on a bed of affliction eight months, but bore his suffering with patience. All was done for him that loved ones and kind friends could do, but the Lord thought it best to call him home. Besides a wife and four children, he leaves three grandchildren, one brother and two nieces. We feel that he is at rest in that great beyond, where sorrow and pain can never come. Sleep on, dear one, and take thy rest.

Written by his daughter AGNES.

Francis Lemuel Woods was born in Henry County, Ala., November 16th, 1854. He was the son of John M. and Louisa (Byrd) Woods. His father died when the subject of this notice was about seventeen years of age. Thus it became his privilege to see that his mother was taken to her church meetings each month. When about eighteen years of age he united with the Missionaries, and nearly two years later was given a gospel hope. He then began to feel that he was not at home with the Missionaries, and as the preaching of the Primitive Baptists accorded with his inward teaching he diligently searched the Scriptures to see if these things were so. He was speedily convinced that his mother's doctrine and the Bible were in accord, and that his salvation was all of unmerited grace; so he requested that his name be erased from the Missionary records, which was reluctantly done. Having removed to Texas, he became a teacher in the public schools there, and held several positions of trust politically. He was married to Reuban Arcana Boatwright in 1893, to which union were born three children, one dying in infancy. The wife died in September, 1903. On March 29th, 1905, he was married to Joie (Ekelberry) Wickham. Two sons were born to that union. In 1918 he removed with his family to Ohio, where he was baptized in the fellowship of Mt. Pisgah Church, Morrow County, by Elder J. Harvey Daily. He was a faithful attendant until February, 1920, when he and wife and both sons were stricken with influenza and pneumonia and all drew near to death. While his family were too ill to attend his sick room, Jesus was his guest, and he seemed sweetly reconciled and eager to depart. He fell peacefully asleep February 26th, 1920. His mortal remains rest in Marlboro Cemetery.

ALSO,

Francis Jacob Woods, elder son of F. L. and Joie Ekelberry Woods, was born in Texas March 20th, 1906, and died February 29th, 1920, three days after the death of his father, of influenza and pneumonia. He was a good, bright boy, very affectionate, to his mother especially, to whom he gave evidence shortly before his illness that the light of God's grace was shining in his heart. How blessed to be permitted to so soon be called home to inherit the fullness of joy without enduring the long, trying wilderness journey of life here below. He was loved best by those who knew him best. His mother could not be near to comfort him, but Jesus could, and no doubt did, although he was irrational most of the time. His schoolmates brought a lovely floral tribute of love. His teacher said, among other expressions, "He was a very unusually good and gifted boy, the best reciter I had; I can never forget him." His body rests near that of his father in Marlboro cemetery. Of the immediate family the bereaved are the mother, one brother, Joseph P. R. Woods, of Ohio, a half-sister, Mrs. D. A. Fleet, and two half-brothers, Lemuel Woods, of Texas, and Dr. J. C. Wickham, of Ohio. We sorrow not as those who have no hope.

JOIE EKELBERRY WOODS.

Mrs. Anna Elizabeth Beauchamp Perdue was born February 28th, 1870, and died at her home near Showell, Md., January 21st, 1921. She united with the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church, Worcester Co., Md, and was baptized Sunday, April 1st, 1894, by Elder T. M. Poulson. On Wednesday, Nov. 14th, 1906, she was married to C. S. Perdue. She had been in declining health for the past six months, and her companion informed the writer that her sufferings were very severe much of the time. It was my privilege to visit sister Perdue only once during her illness. I found her very patient and exceedingly anxious to have me talk on those things which are most precious to the spiritual-minded. You may learn the travel of her mind by turning to hymn 526, page 209, hymn and tune book, which she requested to be read at the services, which were conducted by the writer. She was very devoted to her church, and expressed regret at not being able to attend more frequently. She leaves a companion, a brother and sister and other relatives and friends to mourn her departure. May God sustain and comfort them with his presence, is my desire for Jesus' sake.

The funeral was held at their late residence near Showell, Md. Interment was in the Evergreen Cemetery, Berlin, Md.

Mrs. G. W. Carlton was born November 7th, 1846, and departed this life December 3rd, 1920, at her home near New Castle, Young Co., Texas. She was Miss Nan Rogers, and was married to G. W. Carlton January 16th, 1868. To that union were born twelve children, six sons and six daughters, five sons and four daughters surviving. Mrs. Carlton united with the Primitive Baptist Church in October, 1867, where she ever lived a faithful and devoted member, and where in her old age we all esteemed her as a true mother in Israel. Mr. Carlton is also a devoted member of the Primitive Baptist Church, and their home has been open to the Baptists for more than forty years, a place where all could feel welcome. Besides her dear husband and children, Mrs. Carlton leaves four sisters, one brother, other relatives and a host of friends to mourn their loss.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. H. Fisher, and the body was laid to rest in the Oak Grove Cemetery at Graham, Texas, to await the morning of the resurrection.

Resolutions of respect by the church of Christ at True, Young County, Texas, for Mrs. G. W. Carlton.

Whereas, it has in the providence of an all-wise God seemed proper to call from our number at True Church, Young County, Texas, our well beloved and most devoted sister and deaconess, **Mrs. G. W. Carlton,** who departed this life December 3rd, 1920, and passed serenely and peacefully into that sweet sleep in Jesus, from which none ever wake to weep, whom she had so faithfully and devotedly served many years. She

stated at our last communion that she wanted us to be more faithful in our duty in showing forth the death of our beloved Savior; that we should commune at least twice each year. Both sister Carlton and her husband, who is now deacon in the True Church, were in the constitution of the church in which she lived a devoted member until her death; and

Whereas, our church at True has sustained a great loss in the departure of this good, faithful and devoted sister and deaconess; therefore be it

Resolved, that we bow in humble submission to the will of our heavenly Father and endeavor to bless the rod that smites and say, Thy will be done, with our sincere sympathy to the bereaved.

Resolved further, that a copy of these resolutions be spread on the church book, a copy sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, one to the New Castle Register and one to the Graham Leader for publication, also a copy to the bereaved family.

By order of the church in conference.

C. T. RICHARDSON, Moderator.

A. J. WHITE, Church Clerk.

Mrs. N. E. Little, my dear mother, departed this life December 16th, 1911, after a lingering illness of four years, caused from measles. She was stricken with paralysis six months before her death, during which time she was almost helpless and her suffering was great. A few hours before death came (which she so much desired) mother talked quite awhile with father of her God and Savior, saying that she remembered her happy acceptance with the church, referring to the place way back in Perry County, Ala., fifty years ago. Mother died in the full triumph of a living faith in Christ Jesus, her blessed Lord and Savior. She was a kind and gentle wife and mother, ruling over her house gently and tenderly. She was a true christian, and was appreciated by the people generally for her faithfulness and godly conversation. To know her was to love her. She was every one's friend. The little children loved her; she wronged no one. She walked through all her years without guile the broad and noble highway of a noble, generous and useful life. She waited patiently for the end. Death can have no terrors for the righteous; it had none for mother. Our loss is her eternal gain. She is in paradise, where all is peace and love, where troubles come no more. She has only gone on to receive the crown of righteousness laid up for her. She leaves a loving husband, three sons and three daughters: T. E. Little, J. C. Little, W. A. Little, Mrs. Laura Ray, Mrs. Naomi Weathersby and the writer of this notice, besides other relatives and many friends, to mourn their loss. She was the daughter of Green and Winnie Morton, and was born in Randolph County, Ala., April 4th, 1846. She moved with her parents to Perry County, Ala., where she was married to Wm. Little July 7th, 1868.

HATTIE L. GILLETTE.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. U. K. Hamilton, Mo., $1.00; Miss Nancy Kennedy, Ont., $2.00; R. L. Spindle, Va., $3.00; L. B. Ford, Mass., $3.00.

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ELDER J. B. BOWDEN has changed his address from Calallen, Texas, to Waring, Texas.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 89. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1921. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

2 TIMOTHY III. 16, 17.

"ALL scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

A wonderful subject is contained in these words. The holy Scriptures are a wonderful book. All mankind combined has never been able to produce such a book as the holy Scriptures. The reason this is so is because man is a fallible being, while God is all-wise. Man is mutable, therefore subject to change. God is immutable, therefore is unchangeable, and cannot lie. Man not only can lie, but he does lie. Paul said, Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar. David said, I said in my haste all men are liars. These Scriptures are true, because they are given by inspiration of God, and he cannot lie. It is recorded, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."—Heb. i. 1, 2. Also read 2 Peter i. 20, 21: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The best Scripture reason given that the Old Testament Scriptures are true, is because Christ quoted from them on many occasions, and on many occasions affirmed their truthfulness, by saying, Thus it must be, that the Scriptures may be fulfilled, as it is written. The apostles did the same on many occasions, therefore the man of God has no good reason for being a skeptic (an unbeliever) as to the Scriptures being given by inspiration of God. Also the man of God has no good reason for saying or believing that all Scripture is not profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. I repeat that none but God could cause such a book to be as the holy Scriptures; none but God could inspire Moses to write things that had taken place hundreds of years before he was born; none but God could inspire Moses to foretell events that would take place many hundreds of years after he

was dead. It was, and is yet, profitable to the man of God to know these things, or else God would not have inspired Moses to write them. Moses just wrote what God inspired him to write, and no more. God was judge as to what was profitable. Moses wrote many things said and done by evil men. Those who did those evil things were not inspired of God to do them, but Moses was inspired of God to write them, therefore the account is given by inspiration of God and it is profitable for the man of God to know. The false prophets did not speak as the Holy Ghost moved them to speak, for their prophecy was of private interpretation, yet the Holy Ghost did move holy men of God to record things said and done by false prophets, and that also is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. Not that it is profitable for the man of God to do as the false prophets did, but shun them, avoid them, do not pattern after them or follow them. Peter said, "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." Peter in the preceding verse tells of the true prophets, and how that they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Those true prophets under the law of Moses typified the true gospel ministers under the law of Christ. The false prophets of old typified false teachers, and just as sure as there were two kinds of prophets of old, just that sure there will be two kinds of teachers in this age of the world. All New Testament writers spake of these things, along this line, but I think Paul had more to say along this line than either of the other apostles, but Peter especially makes this matter very clear that there were two kinds of prophets, and that there would be two kinds of teachers; one would be true, the other false. Peter here spake of past events, he also spake of future events. One had come to pass, the other would certainly come to pass. Paul said, "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."—Acts xx. 30. Paul was here talking to the elders of Ephesus, and he told them what he knew would take place after his departing. He continued, verse thirty-one, "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." Also Peter told what would take place after his decease. Second Peter i. 15, reads, "Moreover, I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance." Peter, like Paul, was concerned about the future welfare of the brethren in his life, and each told what his own brethren would do. Notwithstanding their warning and earnest zeal for their welfare, they in faithfulness to God spake as they were moved to speak, both telling of the past, also of the present and the future. One would as certainly come to pass as what had come to pass. The apostles witnessed many things that came to pass in their day that had been prophesied many hundreds of years before they were born. They also foretold events that would take place in the near future, and they also foretold events that would take place hundreds of years in the future. Christ did the same in his teachings here on earth. He warned against wickedness, yet foretold of great wickedness that would come to pass, and he told them it would as certainly come to pass as it was

true of what had come to pass. He said, Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. Read Matthew xxiv. 35; Mark xiii. 31; Luke xxi. 33. Luke continues, "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare it shall come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." O how wonderful and solemn these things are. Our dear Savior warned his people to take heed to themselves. The holy Scriptures abound with similar teachings in way of warnings, also foretelling what God's people would do contrary to righteousness; they also foretell the sore judgments that will be meted out to them that forget God.

Now let us notice again the words of Peter concerning prophecy, where he says, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." This is most essential for the man of God to observe who is concerned in knowing the truth, that it is of first importance if God's people overlook the first and essential thing concerning prophecy they evidently will be deceived by false teachers. Peter here is trying to impress this most essential thing concerning prophecy: that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. Peter here referred to the present time; it was just the same in olden times as it was then in Peter's time. Knowing this first, keep this always in remembrance after my decease, that no prophecy is of any private interpretation. Then Peter assigns his reason for this: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."—2 Peter i. 20, 21. Peter's argument is that no prophecy is by the will of man now, and that it never was by the will of man, and no man of God has the right to say that it is not the same now as it was in Peter's day or in old time. Yet Peter knew there would be false teachers in the future as there were false prophets in old time, therefore he said, "But there were false prophets also [as well as true prophets] among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." None but God's people were ever guilty of denying the Lord that bought them. These false teachers even denied the Lord that bought them. These teachers had a selfish end in view, or else they would not privily have done what Peter said they would; if the Holy Ghost were in the matter they would not privily do these things. God does not require of his ministers to privily preach his everlasting gospel. Peter continues: "And many shall follow their pernicious ways: by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." This is the most sorrowful part of it all, that these false teachers will deceive many; yes, very many of God's dear people. Peter continues: "And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you." Peter here in these few words tells the real object of those false teachers, which was covetousness. Covetousness is the reason why they privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them. It is covetousness that causes them to use feigned words to make merchandise of

God's people. We all know that those engaged in the mercantile business are in the business for the expected profit of handling the merchandise. Just so with the false teachers who make merchandise of God's people, they do it for gain. They expect to realize a profit when they start out in business, and some are wonderfully successful, which is a great inducement to others to try the same occupation. It is all a private affair, according to the will of man. Peter continues: "Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Paul here in the sixteenth verse tells what the Scriptures are profitable for, and in the seventeenth verse tells who are to be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

In my next article, if the Lord so wills, I will try to give some Scripture reasons why the man of God is not perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, as well as to give a Scripture reason whereby the man of God is perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

JOSEPH FORD.

SENECA, Kansas.

BELINGTON, W. Va., Dec. 30, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Having been requested by some of my brethren to write out my experience and have it published in the SIGNS, I am now going to try by the help of God to do so, but before I try to give an account of my experience I want to say that I feel I cannot say anything unless I receive help from higher power than myself. First, I think, How can a child of God tell the way he was brought when the word says, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit"? We can only tell our feelings and know our grief and feel the hand of God upon us. The first time, many years ago, when I was made to know the awfulness of my condition was after I had come home from a protracted meeting, which was being held in a schoolhouse near my home by a German Baptist. I attended more to have company with my neighbor boys than anything I know of, and when I saw some of my schoolmates going to the altar I was made to know that God would save his children any place as well as at the altar, so I did not believe in their system, therefore did not go with my schoolmates, but after I came home I felt very deeply touched, and desired to be alone. I went into a room by myself, and to my surprise I broke down and wept as though my heart would break, and after that had left me I still sat by myself thinking, meditating on what caused me to do that, and indeed I was surprised at myself, and tried to console myself and banish the thought by saying it was just because I saw some one weeping in the meeting; but indeed I was very sorry in my heart, and felt that it was God showing me just how sinful and vile I was. Since that time I have found myself in a restless, sinful condition, and could find no relief. When I would read the Bible I could find nothing that would seem to soothe my troubled soul, and would close it and lay it aside. Many times I would wait for my father and mother to go to bed at night so I could peruse the Bible, which I did almost every night. I would read the SIGNS and sit

for hours feasting on some one's travels, and their experience would in many ways be like mine, but still I would think, I am just imagining it out of my own fancies. Dear brethren and friends, many times while I have been traveling along roads I would almost constantly pray for help, and my heart would be so that I would shed many bitter tears. My places of mourning have been along roads, in the fields at work, and especially when I would lie down at night. When I would get in my bed I would start praying for God to heal my wounded soul before I scarcely realized it, thinking it might be the last time I would ever get to pray. I believed that at some time God would bless me, and I prayed for a vision to come to me and speak peace to my soul. Many times I would be afraid to go into my room for fear of seeing something awful, believing myself to be very sinful. O how I would plead with the God of heaven to help me and remove the heart of stone and give me a heart of flesh, and my words would seem to have no effect and would scarcely leave my mouth; then at other times I would find some relief and could speak in prayer more freely. This went on for three years, and finally I attended a meeting in Marion County, where I heard Elder C. W. Vaughn, of Hopewell, N. J., preach, and I thought he was directing his whole sermon to me, and I would try to get behind some one to keep my face from being seen. I stayed all night with Elder James W. Linn, and that night I told a member from Montrose my feelings, which seemed to touch him very much. We talked and cried until late in the night, and when I went to meeting the next day I felt I ought not to have told him, for I thought all the members were watching me. In the winter of 1915–1916 I went to Randolph County to teach school, and to my surprise I got lodging with a member of the Old School Baptists, namely, Adam Findley. During the winter I believe there was never a time while walking to school that I did not pray, or try to, nearly all the way, and one time while I was grieved so much these words came to my mind: What manner of man art thou? It gave me much unrest, so when I came home I asked Mr. Findley about it, if those words were in the Bible. I thought they were, and he found them. I felt myself to be very sinful indeed, and often wondered why a young man should be going on like this. Still I believed and hoped that the Giver of all good and perfect gifts would bless my soul and set me free, which I believe he has done. O, is there any good in me? I will say that there dwelleth no good thing in my flesh. I feel so low and sinful that many times when I attempt to pray I put my hands over my face and ask for His truth and grace. When my school was over I went home, and one night, being distressed very much, and thinking of that place prepared for the devil and his angels, I dreamed of being taken into hell by a man. I was on his back, and when we had gotten in I could see the redhot doors opening into a hall, and I seemed to realize that I was going to be left there for my wickedness, but I do not think I was left, as I can remember. When I awoke I was afraid, and began to cry for mercy, believing this to be a warning that I was going to die and be cast into hell. I wept until my pillow was wet. Later on I met with an accident, in which a neighber accidentally shot me with a revolver, and when I had the bullet extracted, and while under the influence of ether, I prayed, as my nurse told me afterward. Dear people, if God visits us while we are

unconscious, is he not able to call a sinner to repentance when he is in his natural mind? He does not ask any weak, sinful preacher or any other person for help; he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. In October, when I was alone in my room preparing for bed, I was gazing around in the room, and I could imagine I saw the face of our blessed Master inclosed in a circle against the wall. This I could see before my face for many days. There I hope it pleased the Lord to give me a hope of heaven, which I feel I do not deserve.

Again I had a vision, which I hope answered and made clear my prayer. I was afraid I was deceiving myself and others, so I prayed for something to prove to me that I was truly seeking Jesus in the pardon of my sins. I dreamed of a narrow walk or path with a beautiful building at either end. I saw on the right a very steep slope covered with grass, and on the left a gentle slope of ground covered with something white like snow, in which I could see the tracks of two people. I was on the right side struggling to get up to the path, and when I would get almost up I would fall back again, until finally I succeeded in reaching the top and started to go forward, when I heard the voices of two girls, as if to turn away and leave, saying, Come on, it is Talbott. This troubled me, to think I was so low and sinful that people would shun me, but I felt assured that this dream meant what I said above. I am sure that if we could do as we please many would not join the despised Old School Baptists, but would join some denomination more popular, where they could work their way through, or try to at least, but these words should prove to any christian that works fall short in the sight of God: Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

One Sunday while I was alone, as my father and mother were away, I looked out and noticed the cattle quietly feeding, and I became very sorry and wept very much, and asked myself, Am I a child of God or am I not? I thought I would open the Bible, and the first verse I put my finger on I would read; I did so, and this is what I read: For we can but speak the things which we have seen and heard. When I went to meeting on the first Sunday in December I felt I could not withhold my feelings from the church, so when the door of the church was opened I, trembling almost from head to foot, offered myself, and was received, and baptized the next day, Sunday, December 5th, 1920, by Elder J. S. Murphy. I thank God for all things, even the breath I draw, and by his grace I am what I am.

Yours to honor God,

WILLIAM TALBOTT CROSS.

WHEELING, W. Va.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The inclosed letter from brother Burch was so comforting to me that I would be glad to share it with others of like precious faith, but leave it for you to decide.

Unworthily yours in hope,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

SUMAS, Wash., Nov. 15, 1920.

DEAR SISTER PULTZ:—You must pardon me for not answering your good letter, which I took much comfort in reading, and wish I could write in a way that would comfort you as much, but I come to the conclusion many times that I should not burden the dear children of God with my imperfect letters, yet, like

my preaching, I cannot quit, for fear of the stripes and the rod, which I have had applied to me so many times for disobedience that I go halting and stumbling along in much fear and trembling. When I am blessed with sweet liberty I come home rejoicing, with my cup running over with the good things from His rich storehouse of love, which are so strengthening to a poor wayworn traveler. At such times I think maybe the Lord has called me and given me a message to tell, but when I am shut up and cannot come forth I come home with my head hanging down like the bullrush. The last two meetings were sweet ones to me, although my physical strength was not sufficient for me to complete my discourse either time, and I had to sit down with many beautiful things in sight, yet there was great rejoicing with the brethren and sisters; but as I told them in regard to my bodily strength, that also is of the Lord, for without him we can do nothing, and I would tell all that he wanted me to tell.

You spoke of having Elder Durand's Biography. I was also reading it, and rejoiced with you in the kindness of the dear sisters who gave it to you. I will say further, that if you want to know my belief and understanding of the Scriptures, insofar as he wrote on them I can truly say that he told my belief and understanding better than I can. I read it through carefully, and it told of my travels of mind. Though I was surprised to hear him tell of his failures like mine, and his feelings of unworthiness so much of the time like I have, it gives me courage to press on toward the mark for the prize of our high calling of God.

You said you were afraid I would not have the same fellowship for you when I knew you were a Clark Baptist. Now, my dear sister, I am going to ask you to search your Bible and see if you can find where Christ ever gave a command to love one particular branch or body of his dear little ones more than another, and when you find it write and tell me, for I want to know all of his commands and wish I could keep them, but I fall so far short that I fear and tremble lest I have grasped the shadow and missed the substance. I have heard of the Clark Baptists, but do not know why they are denominated as such, but believe we should be just plain Jesus Christ Baptists, knowing no man after the flesh. Although the Bible asks the question, "How can two walk together except they be agreed?" and I know it is a greater comfort to me to talk with one who believes in the predestination of all things, still when one comes telling what a great sinner he or she feels to be, and begging the Lord to be merciful, I do not require that one to believe in the absolute predestination of all things before I can give the right hand of fellowship, for I truly believe our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. They cannot have that feeling of abhorrence unless the Spirit of God has shined in their hearts to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, having been born again of incorruptible seed, which liveth and abideth forever. If we are heirs of the same family, and some are weaker than others, shall the weak ones be crowded out that they get no food or drink, or shall we disown them because they are not as strong as we? Have we anything we did not receive? Have we anything to boast of, even though God in his wisdom sees fit to open our eyes to a deeper insight into his vast and unsearchable storehouse of knowledge? Should we not

bear the infirmities of the weak, just as we should a brother or sister in the flesh who is deformed or crippled, who calls forth our love and sympathy? It makes my heart ache to hear of the deplorable condition of Zion, even though I believe God in his infinite wisdom and power is ruling all things after the counsel of his own will, and nothing can come to pass contrary to his will, and it will all come out just as he with his all-seeing eye saw it in the beginning of time, when he created the heavens and the earth and all things therein. It is beyond the comprehension of mortals to search out the deep and infinite works of God, and what would it avail us if we could? Would heaven be any more glorious, or communion with saints be any sweeter? Would our hope be brighter or God's promises be any surer? No, no, a thousand times no. Then, dear sister, let us be content with such knowledge and understanding of his written word as he in his wisdom sees fit to impart to us, and not fall out over words to no profit. If we had wisdom so that we could interpret correctly the whole works of God, and had not charity, it would profit us nothing. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing; I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity suffereth long and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, &c. To get the full comfort of this you can read the rest of the thirteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians.

Well, as my letter is too long already I will close for fear of tiring you with my disjointed remarks. I hope you can understand what I have tried to tell, and will write me again when you have the time.

From one of the least.

DAVIS BURCH.

BIVINS, Texas, Feb. 6, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am reminded that I have let more than a month pass since I should have renewed my subscription to the SIGNS. It seems the older I get the more negligent I become in performing my duties. Since the sixth day of last December I have been in my sixty-third year, and as I view myself in this late day of life I am the greatest sinner that was ever permitted to have life and health, especially one who professes to know the Lord. Some time about the middle of January, 1886, I saw the blessed Savior of sinners lifted high and nailed to the cross, and since then to this blessed day that scene has been firmly fixed in my mind. Before seeing the dear Savior thus nailed to the cross I was made to see my sinful condition. I was lying beside a dark gulf, so miserably dark that, seemingly, if I should put forth my hand I could feel the darkness; all my sins were presented before my eyes, surrounding me, and mounting up as so many pyramids, and very rugged. I was reminded that this gulf was my doom, that these mountains of sin would fall upon me and crush me into this gulf. I felt it was too late for me to pray, but I desired some one whom I had confidence in to pray for me, and I could think of no

one except my dear old uncle, in whose house I had been lying on a bed of affliction for more than a month. I called my dear wife to my bedside and asked for my uncle. She asked me what I wanted with him, and I informed her I was going to die and wanted uncle to pray for me. She went for him immediately and returned and said he had gone to haul rails for a neighbor and would not be back until about sundown. All at once those sins seemed to come upon me and crush me into that awful gulf. I do not know how long I remained in that unconscious condition, but when consciousness returned then it was that I saw my blessed Savior thus nailed to the cross. He looked down upon me with much pity and compassion, and said to me, That was your doom, but I satisfied it for you over eighteen hundred years ago, when I expired upon the cross. There was a great brilliant light coming down, seemingly, through the housetop, brighter than any noonday sunshine, and O how my heart was filled with joy and gladness. I listened, and heard the birds, and the whole creation seemed to be praising God. I immediately was clapping my hands and praising him for his wonderful love and mercy to me. This Scripture was given me, Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you. I hope that I sought this kingdom (church) for five long years, and I am fully convinced that I found it. If I were as thoroughly convinced that I am a child of God as I am that the true Primitive Baptists constitute the church of Christ I would have no doubts; but as I grow old my days are filled with darkness, doubts and fears. I cannot account for this, unless it is that the older I grow the more I am confirmed in the doctrine of an all-wise and absolute God, who rules and controls all things after the counsel of his will. When I first joined the church (Saturday before the second Sunday in November, 1890,) my days were filled with songs of rejoicing, and I could sing thus as I followed my plow:

"O how happy are they,
Who their Savior obey,
And whose treasures are laid up above;
Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

All I cared to hear was something concerning Christ and his kingdom, now I go mourning on account of my extreme barrenness, and am compelled to sing thus:

"I am a great complainer,
And bear the name of Christ;
Come, all ye Zion mourners,
And listen to my cries.

I have many sore temptations,
And sorrows of my soul;
I feel my faith declining,
And my affections cold."

Now, dear brethren, while I can truly confess, as did old Jacob, Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and that I have not attained unto the days of the years of the lives of my fathers in Israel, still I am made to rejoice at times that I am made to keep the faith once delivered unto me. I believe the same doctrine to-day that I did thirty-five years ago, only am more confirmed day by day. I believe in the doctrine that gives God all the honor, praise and glory, and there is no sweetness in a song that does not so honor him. The doctrine may be ever so ably proclaimed by a gospel minister, and then followed by a song full of Arminian sentiment, which kills most of the sweetness of the preaching for me.

Your little brother, in hope of life beyond the grave,

J. S. McLEOD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1921.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MARK XVI. 1; LUKE XXIII. 56; JOHN XX. 6, 7.

WHILE visiting an association in Virginia last fall we were requested by an aged and highly esteemed sister to write on the three Scriptures cited at the head of this article. We were slow to comply, and she has reminded us of our duty.

It is not according to the wisdom and purpose of God that any one man understand "all mysteries," therefore we must be excused, as we have but little knowledge of them. Editors are often thought to have much more knowledge of and insight to the Scriptures than they really possess. We are frank to confess that we feel to possess less knowledge or understanding of the word of the Lord than we did in our childhood in the church. If it were possible we would grant every request for views, but where "little is given, little must be expected." Our sister who asks that we write on the texts cited above is sincere in her desire to know what they mean, hence it was not for mere pastime that she made the request, and we would gladly give their spiritual import, if indeed they have any, if we could. Many years ago, when young in the ministry, and much younger in years than we are to-day, such things occupied our thoughts much more than they do now. Then, as is usually the case with young ministers, most everything in the Old Testament appeared to us as a type, in some sense, of something in the New, and it gave us great pleasure to meditate upon those things and to compare and try to fit them in here and there in the things of the New Testament. In later years our mind has not been exercised very much along those lines, and many times we have thought that our conclusions were wrong, even though the truth in some small measure may have been seen here and there by us. Instead of types, it may have been a blending of testimony, an opening up of the Scriptures both New and Old. In those years of our youth we also thought we could see, now and then, here and there, wonderful things in such passages of Scripture as are named by our dear sister, but such visions have also vanished. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that we feel we know less than in our childhood days in the kingdom of God. We have learned that it is safe to confine ourself more closely to the declarations of the Savior and the apostles along such lines. Very few things are spoken of by them as types, but we are always safe in asserting what they assert. Those things are sure and necessary for the instruction of the church, and ministers should constantly affirm them.

With reference to the things our sister wants to know, we do not remember that either of the apostles speaks of them at all in any of their epistles, and having no expression from them we conclude that they were not considered of vital importance. The resurrection of Jesus was the all-important thing in their testimony, hope and faith, and it is to all the children of God the "one thing needful;" without it all is vain and sin reigns. "But now is Christ risen from the dead."

It is true that no record of the Scriptures is unimportant, but some are plain statements of things as they took place, and they fill their places in the testimony of Jesus, but were never intended, as it seems to us, to be spiritualized. In attempting to do so many mistakes are made and erroneous ideas imbibed. The apostles warned the brethren against such things, and none of us can be too careful in our interpretation of the word of God.

Now just a few things with reference to the texts suggested by our dear sister. First, Mark xvi. 1, which reads as follows: "And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him." Our readers will observe that those women were keepers of the law, as respecting the Sabbath day; not until after it was past did they come with their sweet spices and ointments to anoint Jesus. Remember he had been twice anointed before that. First by the woman who had the alabaster box of precious ointment. Jesus said she had anointed him for his burial. The odor of that ointment filled the house. We speak of this to show why sweet spices and ointments were used along such lines. According to the custom of the Jews in burying their dead, it is not reasonable to suppose that Joseph and Nicodemus omitted the sweet spices in preparing the body of Jesus for burial. There were two special reasons for using spices in preparing their dead for burial: first, as an embalming method, and second, to dispel ungrateful odors. Sometimes the sepulchre itself was anointed with sweet ointments to this end. The women having forgotten the word of Jesus, that the third day he would rise from the dead, but filled with love for him, even though dead, bought sweet spices and ointments on the day, no doubt, in which Jesus was crucified, and prepared them immediately. Their idea was perhaps to further preserve the body that they might have it to look upon as long as possible, thinking that some one would from time to time "roll away the stone" for them. But when they arrived at the tomb Jesus was not there to be anointed with sweet spices and ointments, but had arisen, anointed with the power and glory of God.

Luke xxiii. 56, does not differ materially from Mark xvi. 1, already quoted, but we shall give the credit in Luke also, which reads as follows: "And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day, according to the commandment." In commenting on Mark xvi. 1, we said about the same as we would say of Luke xxiii. 56.

The third Scripture is John xx. 6, 7, and reads thus: "Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself." John and Peter heard from the women that the sepulchre was empty and they ran together, but John outran Peter and came to the sepulchre first, but did not go into it. Peter, when he was come, went into the sepulchre and discovered for himself that it was empty of the body of Jesus, but the linen clothes and the napkin were still there. These were evidences that the body had not been stolen, else the linen clothes and the napkin would have been taken with the body. The linen clothes are called graveclothes in John xi. 44, the napkin, however, is called "a napkin," the same as in John xx. 7. We

remember that years ago we thought the graveclothes, with which Lazarus was bound hand and foot, represented the fetters of the law, as well as its traditions, and the napkin represented the vail that hid gospel things from the eyes of dead sinners, or national Israel in that dispensation. Now we wonder if they had any such significance. The linen clothes with which Jesus' body was wrapped were lying in one place and the napkin carefully wrapped by itself in another place. Concerning this matter, of one thing we are certain: that the graveclothes and napkin were left in the sepulchre, never again to be used in binding Jesus, nor one of his chosen vessels for whom he died, nor shall the napkin ever again be bound about the face to hide from the eyes of their understanding the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, nor is there any power in earth or hell that can confine the redeemed of God in the grave; they shall come forth by the power and glory of God.

What we have written may come far short of our sister's expectation, but we have written frankly, and confess that if the sweet spices, ointments, linen clothes and napkin mean anything more than what we have suggested we do not see it. Of one thing we are glad: that she has an inquiring mind. It is refreshing to find one now and then in these days of progression and forgetfulness of God whose mind is exercised in the things of Jesus. May He, who can, reveal such things to them as their hearts desire.

K.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Uriah Garton, Okla., $1.00; Etta Frasher, Del., $1.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Janet Burns (nee Hay) was born September 1st, 1849, and died October 14th, 1920, making her stay on earth 71 years, 1 month and 14 days. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church at New Hope on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1898, and was baptized by Elder J. H. Daniels. She was married to Kelly Burns about the year 1865, to which union were born twelve children, eleven sons and one daughter, all of whom are living except two sons. Only two of the children are married, one son and the only daughter. In the death of sister Burns New Hope Church has lost a precious sister, one who was unfaltering in the faith, being blessed with a lively hope, with the Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Sister Burns had many trials and tribulations and great temptations, which were for the trial of her faith, which is more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, that it might be found unto the praise and honor and glory of God at the appearing of Jesus Christ. She bore the image of the earthy, and shall also bear the image of the heavenly, having the faith of God's elect, which enabled her to endure with christian fortitude and resignation to the divine will of him who loved her and died that she might live. She sweetly and calmly fell asleep in Jesus. Death has lost its sting; the spirit has left it house of clay, but glory rested on her countenance. Death is swallowed up in victory. Another one of the blest has passed into the heaven of eternal rest. Sister Burns was humble, God-fearing, unassuming, gentle and kind, a regular attendant at the meetings of her home church and at associations when not providentially hindered. She has left a host of relatives and friends to mourn, as well as her kindred in Christ. While she is forever gone from us in this world of sin and sorrow, yet she lives in our memory, and while she is dead, she yet speaketh. May the Lord bless us all with the same spirit and enable us to live unto the Lord and for each other.

The unworthy writer conducted the funeral, using the Scripture, Blessed and holy are they who hath part in the first resurrection. She was buried in the cemetery at New Hope Church, where she first joined and lived a consistent member until death.

Written by request.

ALSO,

Mrs. Frances Temperance Curtis (nee Burns) was born March 18th, 1852, and departed this life January 31st, 1921, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Lillie Biddle, near Patmos, Hempstead Co., Ark. She was united in marriage to Wm. A. Curtis January 9th, 1866, and to them ten children were born, six boys

and four girls, six of whom survive her, three sons and three daughters. One son, brother Frank, joined the Primitive Baptist Church some years ago, and is a precious brother. The other children I am not acquainted with, except Lillie, who is a believer and lover of the doctrine of grace. Brother Wm. A. Curtis and sister Curtis joined the Primitive Baptist Church at New Hope on Saturday before the second Sunday in May, 1871, and were baptized by Elder D. B. Alman, and both lived a humble, exemplary christian life. Brother Curtis served as clerk of the church for several years. Such a life is far better than gold or fame or a great name. Dear children, how can you mourn with all this testimony and with such characteristic marks of faith, which purify the heart by love? But we cannot help mourning, for we miss her much, yet this sorrow is sweetened with joy, for we know that our loss is her eternal gain; she has entered the heaven of rest where sorrow never comes, but all is joy for evermore. While she was here in this earthly tabernacle she suffered many tribulations, trials, afflictions, persecutions and temptations, but had a lively hope, which enabled her to glory in the cross of Christ, by which she was crucified unto the world and the world unto her. While here she could only see in part, as through a glass darkly, and know in part, but now face to face. While here she only had the earnest of her inheritance, but now the fullness thereof. Here she had only a taste of joy, which made her hunger and thirst after righteousness, but now she is filled.

The unworthy writer conducted the funeral services, and tried to speak comforting words to the sorrowing ones. Interment was in the cemetery near the New Hope church-house, the place where she delighted to go. May God give grace to keep and comfort the sorrowing ones, that their hearts may be renewed and their spirits revived.

J. H. RAWLS.

Elder W. H. Shields was born March 16th, 1857, at Spring Garden, Va., and died at his home near Swofford, Wash., February 11th, 1921, aged 64 years, 10 months and 26 days. He was first married to Sallie A. Abbott, December 21st, 1876. To that union were born six children: Thomas W., Mrs. Leola Jackson, Mrs. Annie Bryant, Mrs. Lettie M. Howell, Dillard and Mrs. Rachel Thompson. In the year 1899 his wife died, and October 9th, 1899, he was married to Sallie A. Jones, to which union were born five children: Verna, Nora, Henry, Mary and Zora. He leaves to mourn their loss, his widow, ten children (his son Thomas having been killed in a railroad accident about three years ago) and twenty grandchildren, also many brethren and friends. He received a hope in Christ in 1875, and united with Banister Church of Primitive Baptists Saturday before the first Sunday in October, 1882, being baptized by Elder Wm. S. McDowell. In 1896 he was dismissed by letter from that church, and was in the organization of Mountain Spring Church, in Pittsylvania County, Va., and on the 28th of December, 1901, he was ordained to the gospel ministry. Later he joined Fairfax Church, in Virginia, by letter, serving churches in Virginia until 1910, when he moved to the state of Washington, settling near Swofford, later moving to Morton, Wash., later to Portland, Oregon, and again to Swofford. He united with Cowlitz River Church by letter in September, 1913, which he served as pastor about four years. He was dismissed by letter from that church in 1915, and was in the organization of a church at Puyallup, Wash., later got a letter from that church and again joined Cowlitz River Church in September, 1917, where he remained a worthy member until death. He was a great sufferer the last five or six years of his life, and all that could be done by his loved ones, physicians and friends gave him but little relief; he gradually grew worse until the end came. He firmly believed in the unlimited power and wisdom of God, and put no confidence in the works of puny man. Some time before his death he told me that he felt his labor in the ministry was done. He said: "I have tried to examine my past work in the ministry as best I can; I have asked myself if I could live my life over would I preach any other doctrine, and I have to answer, No, there is nothing else for a sinner like me; I only regret that I could not preach it a little stronger than I have done." His wife says he often awoke her from sleep praising God. His favorite hymn was, "Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song," which he asked to have sung at his funeral, and that Elders F. L. Riffe and I. F. Coleman conduct the funeral services, which was done. He will be greatly missed by the Baptists in this part of the country, and especially by his home church, but we mourn not as those who have no hope, for we feel that he is asleep in Jesus and awaits the resurrection morn.

ROSA COLEMAN.

Mrs. Mary Josephine Huf, daughter of Frederick and Martha Myers, was born March 2nd, 1866, in Brown township, Franklin Co., Ohio, and departed this life February 14th, 1921, after an illness of three months, aged 54 years, 11 months and 14 days. The earlier part of her life was spent in Franklin County, near her birthplace, she having moved to Madison County in the year 1896, where she spent the remainder of her life. She is survived by her husband, Mr. Frank Huf, one daughter, Mrs. Carrie Ethel Cormany, one son, Charles Francis Huf, and one grandson, Charles Emerson Huf, who mourn the loss of a kind, loving wife, mother and grandmother. She also leaves three sisters and two brothers: Mrs. N. E. O'Donnell, of Onarga, Ill.; Mrs. Elizabeth Wilson, of Warren, Ohio; Mrs. M. A. Daugherty, of

Columbus, Ohio; Mr. Fred Myers, of Camp Chase, Ohio; and Mr. Oliver Chauncy Myers, of Marysville, besides a host of other relatives and friends, who loved and cherished her very dearly, and to whom she was always kind and loving. Her father and mother, one brother and two sisters preceded her in death.

I will add to the above, by request, that she made her own arrangements for her funeral, choosing who she wished for her pall-bearers, and that the writer conduct the funeral services, which were held at her home February 17th. Hymn No. 141, in Goble's hymn-book, and No. 1228, in Beebe's collection, were read, and Ecclesiastes vii. 1, 2, was used as a text. Many relatives and friends were present, who gave evidence by their attention that they esteemed her much. Although she was not a member of the church, I hope she gave sufficient evidence during the time of my acquaintance with her that she was included in that number of which it is written, Happy art thou, O Israel, a people saved of the Lord. So when the body was laid in the tomb at Plain City it was not without hope, only to await the summons from on high. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and may her kind husband and family be enabled by God's grace to say, Blessed be the name of the Lord. L. E. STEPHENS.

Amelia J. Shockley was born March 10th, 1847, and departed this life December 23rd, 1920, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Willard Baker, of Claiborne, Md., where she had just been called a few days before to wait upon her daughter, who was ill. While about her work she was suddenly stricken, and lived only a few hours thereafter. Early in life she united with the Old School Baptist Church, and remained a consistent member until death came. She was baptized in 1867. Two years later she was married to Solomon B. Schockley, but was soon left a widow, as her companion was taken from her in May, 1882. It was my privilege to spend an evening in company with sister Shockley at the home of sister Ida Morris just about two weeks before her death. Her mind, as shown by her conversation, was upon the exceedingly great and precious promises contained in the gospel of our dear Redeemer, and she clearly showed that it was her chief delight. She left to mourn her death, Mr. Rome Shockley, of Atlantic City, N. J.; Mrs. Willard Baker, of Claiborne, Md., and Mrs. Samuel Brittingham, of Fayetteville, N. C.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Salisbury meetinghouse, where many relatives and friends gathered to pay their last tribute of respect to the memory of one they loved. The remains were laid to rest in Parsons Cemetery, Salisbury, Md. May the Lord comfort all who mourn.

J. C. MELLOTT.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, it has pleased our heavenly Father to call our beloved brother, **Elder J. H. Daniels,** from his labors to rest with Jesus in the paradise of God, the churches of the North Ouachita Association desire to give expression of their love and christian fellowship, and also of their sorrow in his death. We realize that a great and gifted man of God has fallen, one who earnestly contended for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, and that salvation is alone of grace; content to teach only according to the word of God, as given in the Old and New Testament Scriptures, having the gift to understand the sweet doctrine of Christ, which enabled him to rightly divide the word, separating the precious from the vile. He was a firm believer and an able defender of the predestination of all things, for which he was severely persecuted, especially by false brethren, who could not endure sound doctrine; but he remembered that the Lord said, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me they will also persecute you; if they have kept my sayings they will keep yours also; but all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not Him that sent me, showing that he had a friend which sticketh closer than a brother. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. He was blessed with a wonderful gift, which enabled him to bear all things without murmur or complaint; not fighting with carnal weapons, but mighty through the Spirit to the tearing down of strongholds, a man who lived what he preached, carrying about in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in his body. Elder Daniels was born April 28th, 1853, and fell asleep in Jesus January 21st, 1921. May the Lord bless us with the same spirit, to enable us to live not unto ourselves, but unto the Lord and for one another, that we may glorify God in our body and in our spirit, which are his. We deeply sympathize with his widow, our dear and precious sister, their only son, F. R., and his wife and children. We desire that this memorial be published, and believing that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is the oldest, soundest and most worthy of all papers published, we request that this memorial be sent to the publishers, with the request that it be inserted in its columns.

By order and in behalf of the churches of the North Ouachita Association.

J. H. RAWLS, Moderator.

W. S. GORDON, Clerk.

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A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

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Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 694 E. 125th St., or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 89. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1921. NO. 7.

POETRY.

THE DESTINY OF MAN.

(Romans viii. 29.)

PREDESTINED in a world of sin,
We move in harmony,
And what we are we've ever been,
And evermore shall be.

'Tis naught that we can say or do
Will change the way of God;
For He who cast us here foreknew
The path that man must trod.

The autumn seed, caught by the wind,
Is carried where he wills,
And balmy skies of April find
The life that stirs and thrills.

The law of God's omnipotence
In every field is rife,
But man, with mocking insolence,
Denies the truth of life.

'Tis found in rosy cheeks that catch
The smile of early dawn,
In weary steps that pause to watch
The hand of day withdrawn.

We drift upon the flood of years,
Guided by power divine;
Nor all our prayers, nor all our tears,
Can change a word or line.

'Tis by the grace of God man lives
And moves in harmony,
And what we know is what He gives,
So what we hear or see.

Predestined all things were and are,
According to his plan;
Fixed as the orbit of the star,
The destiny of man.

HAL MORETON.

ST. JOSEPH, MO.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DEUTERONOMY XXXIII. 29.

"HAPPY art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places."

I feel I would like to say just a few things concerning the Scripture I have quoted above, as the Lord may enable me.

First, this language is addressed directly to Israel. It seems to me then it is very important that we know who Israel is in her relations to the great God, who inspired the words spoken by Moses, his chosen servant. We find one of the prophets speaking of them on this wise: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth."—Amos iii. 2. Again, "At the same time, saith the Lord, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people."—Jer. xxxi. 1. Now I am sure that I have quoted enough to show how close these people stand in connection with the God of all the earth. We see that Israel, and Israel alone, is God's chosen people out of and separated from all the families of the earth. Let us remember that Paul says of them: "What advantage then hath the

Jew [Israel]? or what profit is there of circumcision [a true sign]? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God." These people had the advantage over all other people in that there were things committed unto them that other nations did not know anything about, and those things gave them advantage over all people on the face of the earth. The oracles of God, as I see them, were those things that exercised Israel under the law and by the law, which no other nation had given them. As a nation they served God under the law, and as the law could not make them perfect they were proven by the law to be very imperfect, thus manifesting that if it had not been the purpose of God, according to the election of grace, even a remnant could not have been saved. I have thought that God by giving his chosen nation a law service was proving that by the deeds of the law no flesh could be justified in his sight. At least that is one of the things that it did, hence, Who art thou, O people saved by the Lord, and not of yourselves through the law? Paul tells us, again, "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel." That is, the natural seed of Abraham are not all of them God's chosen people spiritually. "Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children [of God]: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." That is, all those who had been promised eternal life by God before the world began, these are the spiritual seed represented by Isaac, the child born according to promise to Sarah when she was ninety years old, and Abraham as good as dead. Paul could challenge the world, and say, Who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect, or who can condemn them? "For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son." Now out of this promise and from the loins of him to whom the promise was made was the child of promise, which was not Ishmael, but Isaac. In Isaac shall thy seed be called. Sarah, like all Arminians, would have had it some other way if God had just left it to her; but not so with Him who had purposed all things according to his own will before time began. They could not change the way of God, but only manifested by their way that what they did, not seasoned with grace (favor) mocked God instead of giving him glory and honor. Let us remember that not a thing that has ever happened, or will yet happen, will cause the word of God to be of none effect. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall stand forever. On this declaration from heaven is based all the hope the church has ever had, or ever will have. I want to say right here that all the happiness and joy a poor sensible sinner has ever had in this world is the faith he has had in God's word that it will stand forever. When enjoying sweet hope by the grace of God, and realizing the many precious promises by which he is made partaker of divine nature, he (or she, as the case may be,) is found happy. Happy art thou, O Israel. Spiritual Israel, God's chosen, elect children, who only have been known of him in all eternity, whom he has loved with an everlasting love, and with loving-kindness draws, and drawing them by his love and mercy they come, and you will find them coming just as God said they would, with weeping and with supplications, praying and begging for God's rich

and sure mercy, relying solely on God's eternal promise that he will save, with an everlasting salvation, his people from all their sins and blot them out as a thick cloud from before his holy eyes. All this to be done through the suffering Jesus, the holy Son of God, the Son of his love, who was ever with him, and rejoiced in the habitable parts of the earth with him when as yet there was none of them. In the types and shadows of the old Bible God is demonstrating the way that his people are not saved, and the way they are saved. The law could not do that, it being weak through the flesh, and it was fully tested by God's chosen people as a nation, and had it not been for God's special favors to them all the way through they would have all been destroyed from off the face of the earth. But during that law service there were a few who by faith saw Jesus afar off and embraced him. It was these who met often and spoke with one another, for whom a book of remembrance was written. It was these who, when he came to his own, received him and were manifestly declared to be the sons of God, who were born of God, just like all the balance of the elect family are born, hence they are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, their Elder Brother. These are happy people. Not in themselves; no, indeed, they realize too well what would become of them if they were dealt with according to God's holy law. They all see themselves just like Paul: The law is just, holy and good, but I am carnal, sold under sin. I see that as plainly as I ever saw the sun shine in all its glory, but my hope is through God's rich, free and reigning grace, which he treasured in Christ for all his family, and there is enough for all. There is no other way for a poor sinner to ever live with the eternal God, who to-day is, and ever will be, the refuge of his family, and his everlasting arms are underneath them, never to be removed until they are safe in the haven of eternal rest. Then I can say, boldly say, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." Have we not all found it so? He is the shield of our help, and he is the sword of our excellency, and it is in him, and him only, that we are delivered from the hands of our enemies. He says, Fear not, Jacob (Israel), for I have redeemed thee. Then Israel has been redeemed, and they will some day sing, "by thy blood," unto God. The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, has and will cleanse from all sin. This whole family will rise and sing, for the glory of the Lord will come upon them. They will come to Zion, and sing in the heights thereof, and flow together to the goodness of the Lord. They are to realize that it was by the blood, the wheat, the wine and the oil, all of the rich, free and unmerited grace of God, that they shall be as a watered garden, and their souls shall sorrow no more at all.

Yours in humble hope,

C. M. HOOD.

NASHVILLE, Tennessee.

CHICAGO, Ill., Jan. 6, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Having just read the editorial in the SIGNS of January 1st, by Elder Lefferts, I feel to express my approval and indorsement of the article. I have often wondered myself how the Ruler of the universe could be so patient with his chosen people, if we are what we hope we are. If the Bible is true, he has a chosen people, and if he has a chosen people, the Old School or Primitive Baptists are the only people who seem to come any where near the description. I

verily believe all the brethren would like to see us dwelling together in unity, but sometimes it would seem that some of us would only do so if we could have the other fellow give up his view and accept ours. I do not believe that will ever be accomplished, but I believe if we all had charity (love), which "abideth," the little differences would be but for a moment. Brethren, we have so many more things upon which we are agreed, and knitted together, a thousand to one. Read the last verse of the last chapter of John. John says, "There are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." This reminds me of an incident that took place a short time ago. In Chicago, where I live, I have found but a few members of the Old Baptists; however, I frequently find persons who ask me what we believe; some perhaps are very much interested, and others may like to argue. I never argue politics or religion if I can help it, and if I find one who seems interested I like to explain some of the beautiful things in the Bible that are as an anchor of the soul, and comforting beyond words. I seem to lack the peculiar gift, or faculty, in which although I know a portion of Scripture that would apply, when I try to recall it I cannot do so, but if any one should misquote it I detect the error. This has been one reason that I often am unable to give to others the reason of my hope, as we are told to always be ready to do. Therefore, a few weeks since, we were invited to the home of some friends, who are church goers, fine people, but know little, if anything, of the "peculiar people," and anticipating the subject might come up, before going I took my Bible, and beginning at Matthew i. 21, the three "shalls," I began to pick up a few texts that came to mind, especially in John, then Acts, Romans, &c. I soon was lost in amazement at what I was endeavoring to accomplish. It seemed that there was no end, not even a halting place, so many things that I would like to jot down. When my time had been taken up I held several pages of portions written down. Then I thought, How could the Old Baptists, with countless blessings given them in the Book divine, ever wish to go beyond what is written? All Baptists believe salvation is of the Lord; by grace, not of works, lest any man should boast. Whatsoever his soul desireth, that he also doeth. All that the Father hath given me shall come unto me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. He ruleth in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. All believe these things, and hundreds of others equally sure. One is lost in trying to enumerate them, yet there are churches broken apart by contention over something that should have been left unsaid. True charity would have prevented this. Here is a point in mind, if I may be excused in relating personal experience. Until about twenty years ago I did not know that there were any Baptists, but accepted the truth as expounded by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and when I heard that many were against the SIGNS I was sick at heart. It was a familiar article from my first recollection, and was regarded by me as almost sacred, although I knew nothing of the grace of the Lord. Eventually I moved to where several churches abounded, of the "limited" Baptists. I found them lovely people, and in time asked a home with them, unworthy as I felt. In the many years that have passed since, I

believe I never heard a sermon by one of our ministers but what he preached predestination as strongly as I had ever believed it. I love those brethren, many of whom have since passed away, and they did not ask me if I believed in predestination. I have always seen a beauty in it, but never heard of any one who got behind it for a cover. Whether I believe it limited or unlimited I do not know, and, furthermore, I care not whether a brother or sister believes it little or much. Why should any of us care, if we know they have been drawn by His loving-kindness? All have gone out of the way. There is none good; no, not one. Even after Paul's wonderful experience he felt to be (not was) the chief among sinners. He never was delivered from the thorn in the flesh, but was assured that he had been prayed for. Only about once a year am I given the opportunity of attending Baptist meeting, and I count it one of the greatest blessings I can have; the only sad part is that of missing the faces of the dear saints who have gone on before. The last sermon I heard was delivered by a young minister in his twenties. His text was, "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."—Heb. x. 14. This dear brother in humbleness showed with what security those who are sanctified (set apart) are kept by the power of God, ready to be revealed at his coming. I believe many who are blessed with being near the church do not appreciate the great privilege, and only by being separated will they know what a blessing is theirs, and would not make a brother an offender for a word.

Please pardon anything I may have said amiss, for it was not from the heart.

With love, I am, I trust, a brother in a precious hope, M. C. REAVES.

DOCTRINE.

PAUL'S admonition to Titus, to speak the things that become sound doctrine, has been applicable to all of God's ministers of the gospel since the day it was written, and will be until the end of time. There are several points of doctrine in the gospel; I will name some of them: the sovereignty of God, predestination, election, redemption, calling, preservation, resurrection. These are all one in a sense. The doctrine of God our Savior is always in the singular number, while the doctrines of men and devils are always put in the plural. God tells us by the pen of Isaiah the prophet that he is God, and beside him there is none else, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. This establishes the sovereignty of God beyond successful contradiction. In Paul's letter to the Roman church he tells them, as well as all God's people in all ages, that whom God foreknew he predestinated to glory. He told the church at Ephesus that they were predestinated and had obtained an inheritance in Christ. Peter tells us that that inheritance is incorruptible and undefiled, and reserved in heaven for God's elect. That being the case, it is sure. We are told by the same authority that God's elect are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ, according as he hath chosen them in Christ before the foundation of the world. The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, and if children, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. This is an inheritance beyond estimation, from a human standpoint it staggers belief. Redemption signifies a prior ownership. The elect of God were given Christ in the

covenant ordered in all things and sure, which covenant was made before time existed. Paul said to Timothy, Be not ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, or of me his prisoner, but be thou a partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God, who hath saved us and called us, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. This not only sets up the truth that Christ redeemed his people from the curse of the law, but calls them. The call of God is irresistible, and without, or independent of, repentance. "The gifts and callings of God are without repentance." Christ is exalted a Prince and Savior to give repentance to Israel and the forgiveness of sins. In Israel is embraced all the children of God. Godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation that needeth not to be repented of. Paul told the church at Corinth: First of all I delivered unto you that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and was buried and rose again for our justification. That being the case, the debt was paid, the law satisfied, therefore needed not to be repented, another evidence of our redemption. The elect are his (Christ's) by gift, and also by redemption; he paid the debt, thereby letting the captives go free. They had been in a state of slavery to sin, dead in sin. Again, Paul tells us that Christ delivered us from sin by giving himself for us, to purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. The Savior said, My sheep hear my voice, they know me; I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. Paul said, I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor principalities, nor powers, nor any other creature, can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Peter says we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. This and every other point of doctrine is so plain that the wayfaring man, thou a fool, cannot err therein. All who have not been taught of the Lord are blind to spiritual things, therefore the Savior said, Give not that which is holy to dogs. The Gentiles were called dogs by the Jews, because they (the Jews) did not think they had any interest in the Messiah, until the middle wall of partition was broken down. They were thereby taught not to call what God had cleansed unclean. The resurrection of the dead is so plainly taught in the fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians that it needs no comment from me or any one else of those who have been taught of the Lord. The spiritual import of the Scriptures is sealed to all others. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and can be understood only by divine revelation. Salvation is by grace, and grace alone, no conditions whatever in it. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

Love to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ.

JAMES M. SIMMONS.

PARIS, Texas, August 23, 1920.

TEHUACANA, Texas, Feb. 11, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will try, the Lord willing, to write a few lines for your consideration, and if you think they are worthy of space in the old family paper you can give them to the readers of the SIGNS; if not, just cast them aside. We are admonished in the Scriptures to not forsake the assembling of ourselves together; we are also admonished to speak often one to another, but I am so situated

that I cannot do either very often, and I love to talk of the goodness, love, mercy and power of God, who controls all things, and when I say all things I mean all things after the counsel of his own will. We read in Isaiah xl. 1, 2: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." We hear people saying that there has only been a way made passable and possible, and the sinner does not receive it all from the Lord's hand, but has to work hard to get the Lord to pardon and forgive all his sins and iniquities, and then has to work hard to hold that pardon, so the poor fellow never gets any rest. But thanks be to God, there is a people who preach a finished and complete salvation, and the subjects of that salvation have perfect rest in Christ Jesus, their Elder Brother, who cried on the cross, "It is finished." We read in the sixth verse: "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field." In the eighth verse it is said, "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever." Now, I understand that the man (grass) as soon as the Spirit of God blows upon him is helpless, and his good works, which he put so much confidence in, fade away. We read in 1st Peter i. 24: For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away. James i. 11: "For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways." I understand that rich man to be the man that is rich in his good works, and putting all confidence in his riches of good works, and as soon as the Sun of Righteousness, which is Jesus Christ, is risen with that burning heat of love, he is cut down and withers, and all of his good works fade and are blasted, and he, being as grass, could no more resist that Sun rising on him and wilting him than the grass can resist the natural sun rising on it and wilting it. I will say that he is just as destitute of strength to resist the power of that Sun as the grass is to resist the mower when the farmer drives into his meadow to cut it down and convert it into hay. After he is wilted or cut down he then has no more power to rise up and walk and get out of the hot Sun than the grass has to rise and go to the shade or prepare itself for housing. He has to be handled by his Master just as the grass has to be handled by its owner. Some say that after the sinner is cut down (which is conviction) and then delivered of that load of guilt and condemnation, he is able to take care of himself; he can do this or that, it is left with him to do as he will, and he can choose his station to stand in. I understand that the great God rules this great universe just as he sees fit. Yes, he says to one, Do this, and to another, Do that, and they obey him. Some are very stiffnecked and unruly and contrary, yet they have to obey. If there is one thing I glory in, it is the finished and complete work of salvation in and through the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and to hear his name exalted above every name and man abased in the dust of humiliation. In connection with the predestination of God respecting all things, both spiritual and natural, I could write some, but will not do so now.

I will bring this to a close, asking you to overlook all imperfections. May the love of God rest and abide with the Israel of God, is the prayer of this old sinner.

J. H. BOZEMAN.

HARDING, W. Va., Feb. 21, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a money order to renew my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I want to tell you the paper is a comfort to me, for our church members are few and live so far from the church that we cannot have preaching during the winter months. Sister Runkle's letter in the number for February 15th suits my case; she says the things I feel to say. With her I feel so sinful, so unworthy; how can I be a child of grace when I am so far from what I ought to be? But I have been taught again and again by experience that when I look within I see only darkness and confusion and I grow weary and heavy laden, and have sometimes heard the precious voice of our Savior saying to all those who feel that way, Come unto me and I will give you rest. I have then been made to feel that a rest which is sweeter than all the world can give us yet remains to the people of God. I sometimes feel that I have a hope which is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and enters into that within the veil, whither Christ, the forerunner, is entered for us, but much of the time I feel to be so far from God I find no comfort in spiritual things, and long to feel more love in my heart to God and his people, and that he may again restore to me the joy of his salvation. How true is John Bunyan's description of "the christian." We travel on and on, though the path is narrow, the scenes change and we pass through them but once; some of them are sore trials and afflictions. As we travel on we find some precious places and rest there a little while, and as the Spirit reveals the precious truths of Christ to us our hearts burn within us, as did the disciples' when Christ journeyed with them as they walked and were sad. How often though we seem cold and lifeless, and doubts arise, and those precious seasons are hidden from us; like John the Baptist, we inquire if he is the Christ, and long to hear him say, as he did to Mary after his resurrection, "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." O that he would give his people everywhere the blessed assurance that Mary must have felt in those precious words, that we may all be in harmony and fellowship, that there be no discord over the portions of Scripture which we cannot understand; but may we realize, as did Paul, that the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. If we can trust in the Lord we need not worry about the resurrection, for he has given us the precious promise that we shall come forth. Let us say as David did: When I awake with thy likeness then shall I be satisfied.

I send greetings to the brethren and sisters whom I have known for years and assembled with in the churches. Many of them are readers of your dear family paper.

My daughter and her husband are living in Coshocton, Ohio, and if any of the readers of the SIGNS know of any church or people of our faith and order in or near there I would be glad to know it before I visit her.

May the editors of the SIGNS long be spared to proclaim the truth of God, rightly dividing the word to his children, for Jesus' sake.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) E. E. WORKMAN.

WATERFORD, Ontario, Feb. 20, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—It is over a year since I wrote you last, from Dayton, Ohio, and since then I have removed from Brantford, Ontario, to the above address, so kindly send the SIGNS to the new address. I inclose two dollars for renewal for the year 1921.

Since I wrote you last I have been passing through much affliction in body and mind, and was forced to give up working where I had been employed since 1893. I am still on the staff of the bank, and have been granted an extension of leave until January, 1922, so have bought a farm near Waterford, and sold my home in Brantford. Mrs. Simmons and I were nearly down and out, so far as we could see, so had to make an entire change in our manner of living. The last twenty months have been very dark and mysterious, but our heavenly Father has never forgotten his promise to never leave nor forsake his people. I was taken ill in May, 1919, and was in great distress of body and mind, but through the early part of the winter of 1919 and 1920 I had hopes that I would recover my health, but God in his providence saw otherwise. On the last day of January, 1920, my son, R. L. Simmons, was taken sick with pneumonia, and passed away February 12th. It was indeed a great trial for us that he in the prime of life (thirty-two years of age) should be taken from us so suddenly, but we have been given grace to answer, "Thy will be done," but I dare not let my mind dwell upon it, for that old question, "Why?" will arise in spite of all the comforting blessings with which we have been surrounded through all these months. My health, and that of Mrs. Simmons, is much improved since we moved to this new home in May last. You no doubt have heard of my second son, and our only remaining child, who was away at the war for three years and returned to us badly wounded in his left arm, and now after thirteen operations upon it he is able to use it but very little. He and his wife came here to the farm with us, where we have very comfortable quarters, but miss the visits of the Elders very much, also my old friends in Brantford, but above all, the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother has not left us comfortless on cloudy and dark days, when no sun rises in our hearts, but we do at times see the bright light behind the clouds, and it gives us hope that the Sun of Righteousness will arise in our hearts. It has been truly said, The days of darkness shall be many, but at evening time it shall be light.

I only intended to send our renewal and notice of change of address, so must close.

Yours in christian fellowship,

FRED SIMMONS.

[WE are very sorry to learn that brother Simmons and wife are in poor health, and that their afflictions otherwise are so severe and many. We deeply sympathize with them, and desire the Lord's blessing upon them.—K.]

CLARKS SUMMIT, Pa., March 11, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I wish to say through the columns of the SIGNS to my many correspondents that I am not in a condition, either physically or mentally, to answer the many good letters I am receiving every day, but hope when weather conditions are better I may be able to do so. For over three months I have been afflicted with neuritis, or rheumatism. At times my hands and arms are almost helpless, and my joints and muscles are very painful, especially nights. I am taking three kinds of treatment: oste-

opathy, vibrator and electrocure; all three are recommended very highly. I am feeling some better. I have filled all of my appointments thus far, but with great effort. I am thinking that my days for taking trips of four or five hundred miles are ended, but one thing is sure: I will go to every place God has predestinated I shall and fill every appointment he has determined I should, not one more, not one less, and all the powers of hell, men or devils cannot change it. How few even among our brethren preach and practice this eternal truth.

Brethren, write to me when you can spare the time, if you think I am worthy of your notice. I love to get your letters, even though I may not be able to answer them, but I will do the best I can. Love to all the brotherhood.

Sincerely yours in faith and hope,

D. M. VAIL.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 28, 1920.

DEAR OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST FRIENDS AT NASSAONGO:—I have written and destroyed letters time and again ere this, but still have a desire to write you. Will ask you to bear with me in my weakness, which is great. First, I want to say I love you all, and wish I could be as I see you to be. I wish I could be always humbled at the feet of the precious Savior. I see such beauty in the Lord's dear children, his Spirit so plainly manifest in their countenances. I love to go where they meet together, where the crumbs are falling from the Master's table. I crave those crumbs, but feel very unworthy of them. I deem it a sweet and precious privilege to go where the name of Jesus is exalted and man abased. Salvation by grace—what a glorious theme! What a wonderful Savior to give his life, he who died to save sinners, the Just for the unjust. Nothing less than such love and power as he possesses could ever save poor undone sinners. I know I am a sinner, but it is an important question which most directly concerns me, Am I one of those little ones? Can I dare hope I will not forever be shut out from among them, the Lord's dear elect, the Old School or Primitive Baptists? I love them the world over with a love I have for no other people. One thing I do know, and that is, no matter what I am called to pass through, the Master has ordained it so. His ways are just, his will must and shall be done. While I am a vile worm of the dust, I know his grace is sufficient, yes, for even me. I am sick of self and sin, but of myself have no power to rid myself of them. I am more than satisfied with Christ, who has all power both in heaven and earth, to whom be all glory and praise forever.

Your unworthy friend,

GERTRUDE SHOCKLEY.

INFORMATION WANTED.

MY health has been such that I have recently decided to try to find a more favorable climate for scrofulous trouble. I would like to get in correspondence with some of the brethren who could give me such information. I have thought the vicinity of Ashville, N. C., would be most suitable.

Address, J. A. PRESTON.

KENOVA, W. Va., P. O. Box 322.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER J. A. MODLIN has changed his address from Carlinville, Ill., to Bunker Hill, Ill., R. D. 17.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1921.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PROVERBS XXIX. 18.

"WHERE there is no vision, the people perish."

Vision means spiritual insight, a looking into the things of God. Literally, vision means a seeing with the eyes. The eyes of our physical bodies behold the beauties of nature, the inner eyes of the human understanding survey the fields of philosophy and reason, the eyes of the imagination wander in adventures through the realm of fancy. Neither seeing with the eyes, nor with the understanding, nor with the imagination, can afford that vision essential to a people's preservation. That we perish not, we must have the vision of the Spirit. This is seeing with the eyes of faith, not that natural faith of which mental students write and study, but that faith of the Son of God, faith which comes by divine gift and is the fruit of God's Spirit. Whenever that seeing by faith fails us we perish. No people without it can live, no nation which has not in it a faithful people can continue to exist. When the prophets perished out of Jerusalem Jewish nationalism was doomed; when Rome nationalized the christian religion and substituted pagan rites for the simple order of the early church, and taught for doctrine the commandments of men instead of the precepts of Jesus and the apostles, Rome was bound to fall a prey to her barbarian enemies. It is good to sing in the heart, "O, for a closer walk with God." One's safety as a believer in the Lord is in dwelling near the Most High. It is dangerous to trust in human vision and to try to shape one's life by human reason and foresight. They who trust in man, and who make flesh their arm, are still under the curse which fell on our first parents because of transgression. They who trust in the Lord and who stay upon their God shall never be confounded. They live by Christ's life in them. There are times in the experience of God's people, seasons in the travel of the church, when clouds and darkness shut away the shining of God's countenance. As the mists which obscure the sun's light are thrown off from the earth, so the doubts and fears which obscure spiritual vision proceed from our own carnality. As the strong shining of the sun dispels earth's vapors, so the radiance of the Sun of Righteousness drives away all carnal illusions and sensual interferences. It can be generally stated as true that in proportion as we are deprived of spirituality, to that extent do we sink down in fleshly ease and carnal indulgence. Of the seven churches in Asia, Sardis had a name that she lived, but was dead. This was a case of the shell without the substance. Sardis had the reputation of being a living church, but was spiritually dead, professing without possessing. The church of Laodicea while being really wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked, thought herself to be rich and needing nothing. Spiritual vision leads us to see ourselves as we are in truth; it makes a man honest with himself, with his fellows and with God. The man who said, God, be merciful to me, a sinner, had true vision to see himself aright; while the man who thanked God for his superi-

ority to other men was self-deceived, and sure to perish. To truly know one's self, to truly know one's relation to other men and to realize one's standing before the Almighty, is to be possessed of that wisdom which is more precious than rubies, than much fine gold. There is no hope for a man without this vision which spiritual revelation gives. Peter, though unlearned in the schools of men, showed himself to be truly educated when he said to Jesus, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. All those however much educated in the schools of men, and who were enwrapped in theories and speculations about Jesus, were verily fools in God's sight. This is calculated to make a sensitive soul examine himself carefully to know where he stands. It is well to remember that a soul at ease is not a soul in exercise. If we are actuated by a heart-searching principle we are exercised about ourselves, and are not carelessly indifferent nor at ease. While heart examinations may disclose many embarrassing and shameful things about ourselves, things which we little knew were in us, while they may be humiliating, and lead to contrition, these things are safer for us than the lukewarmness of Laodicea. As the poet says, "More the treacherous calm I dread, than tempests breaking o'er my head." In the days when Samuel, the last of the judges, was a child ministering before Eli the priest, the Scripture says "there was no open vision." At this time the priesthood was without any vision of its high office. The sons of Eli were very immoral and corrupt and made the Israelites to break the law, instead of exhorting them to keep it. Instead of being to the people an example of sanctity and obedience, they debauched them with their evil practices and oppressed them with their unjust exactions. All this was because the priesthood of Eli was without spiritual vision. It was doomed to perish. So the Lord warned Eli that his two sons should die, both in one day, and that he would raise up a faithful priest to serve him. Thus we find Samuel becoming not only the last of the judges, but also the prophet and priest of Israel. In his turn Samuel made a mistake in trying to make the judgeship of Israel hereditary in his own family. This is where he lacked vision. When he became old he made his sons judges over Israel. Like all human arrangements made without recognizing divine providence, it failed. His sons walked not as Samuel had done, for they had not the faith by which their father had conducted himself. They went after money, sought graft and perverted judgment. This aroused the people so they refused to be ruled by such men, and said, Give us a king. This, of course, offended Samuel, so he prayed to the Lord. The Lord's way proved not to be Samuel's way, for he told Samuel Israel should have a king. Therefore as we have seen the family of Eli to perish from the priesthood because it lacked vision, so we see the judgeship passing from Samuel's family, and permanently from all Israel, through lack of vision. Prophetic vision was seeing Jesus by faith and testifying of him. Dearth of prophecy leads to a famine of hearing the word of the Lord. Plenty of bread there may be, of water also, but truth languishes. Such was the condition when the prophet Amos prophesied in Israel during the reign of Jeroboam the second. This king was an able man, but an idolater. He lacked vision; that is, he had no view of Christ whatever. Nothing seemed more improbable than the fulfillment of Amos' warnings, yet within fifty years the king-

dom was destroyed. History proves and experience proves that where there is no preaching of Jesus, where there is no walking in his precepts, no nation or people can survive. Paganism before the advent of the Savior dominated the whole world outside Israel. Being based wholly on superstition and falsehood, not being grounded in truth, paganism perished. If so-called christianity, which has well-nigh encircled the world, shall eventually fall, and carry with it our much vaunted civilization of these modern times, it will be due to the fact that the religion of Jesus as professed by the world at large holds within itself no true vision of Jesus and his salvation. The ministry of any servant of God which fails to preach Jesus, and ceases to hold aloft the banner of his truth, is bound to fail. The power of the apostles' ministry was owing to the fact they preached not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. Any church losing sight of the apostolic standard, and ceasing to walk in the doctrine of Christ, is bound to perish. Should Old School Baptists ever cease to preach Christ in all his fullness, should they ever cease to declare man's death by transgression and his salvation alone by grace, should they ever cease to declare God's sovereignty over all worlds, and his abounding love and mercy to hell-deserving sinners, then Old School Baptists shall lose their usefulness as such, and we should expect to see their candlestick removed and themselves perish. We hope the Lord may ever maintain within his people the true vision, that they may continue to fight the good fight of faith, laying hold on eternal life, that we may quit ourselves like men, be strong in faith, fearing naught, enduring hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Let us hold to the vision. L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Duncan M. Leonard, M. D., died at his home in Broome Center, N. Y., December 26th, 1920, aged 83 years. He was born at Roxbury in 1837, and was the last surviving member of a family of twelve children. He leaves his wife and three daughters to mourn their loss: Mrs. McClellan Steadman, of Broome Center, N. Y., Mrs. Frank B. Mackey, of Cobleskill, N. Y., and Mrs. Christopher Best, of Middleburgh, N. Y. Brother Leonard united with the Gilboa Church, Gilboa, N. Y., December 14th, 1862, and was baptized by Elder T. P. Cole, remaining a faithful member of that church until the time of his death. Brother Leonard was well known among the churches, and stood high in the esteem of those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Sound in doctrine and blessed with abundant evidence of the love of God to him, he could not help loving his brethren in return. It was often his fervent desire not only to know the will of God, but to do it. He loved to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and was always deeply interested in its welfare, also the welfare of all who love the truth it so ably advocates. His faithful companion is in failing health, so the care of him devolved on his daughter, Mrs. McClellan Steadman, who ministered to his every need with marked devotion. Brother Leonard began the practice of medicine at Broome Center, N. Y., January 1st, 1857, and was a good doctor, ready to go when called, day or night, to attend the sick far or near. He gave up practice a few years ago owing to advanced age and failing health.

The funeral service was held at his late home, where a large number of relatives and friends assembled to extend their sympathy to the bereaved and show their respect to the departed. Elder John Clark was called to attend the funeral, together with the writer, but was unable to attend. The writer tried to speak the truth to the comfort of the bereaved. May they look to the Lord, who alone can comfort those who mourn. Interment was in the family burying-ground near his late home.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Mrs. J. C. Paulk, wife of Elder J. W. Paulk, of Bloomburg, Texas, was born November 16th, 1855, and died December 14th, 1920, making her stay on earth 65 years and 28 days. She was married to J. W. Paulk in 1876, to which union were born six children, three of whom died in infancy. The three surviving her are Mrs. M. A. Daines, of Texarkana, Texas, Mrs. S. T. Ammons, of San Antonio, Texas, and Mrs. S. M. Blackman, of Bloomburg, Texas. These, together with their father and many other relatives, remain to mourn their loss. Sister Paulk was a true, consistent and devoted member of the Primitive Baptist Church for a number of years.

She was much devoted to the cause, and her house was a home for the Baptists. Several years ago, while living in Texarkana, where Elder J. E. Knighten and the writer had to pass through often, she set apart one room, well furnished, and told us that it was ours any time we came, which was a great accommodation to us. Such kindness is long remembered. She was a kind and loving companion and mother, and much esteemed by all who knew her.

She was laid to rest after the funeral services, which were conducted by the writer, in the presence of an attentive congregation of friends and relatives, who came to pay the last tribute of respect to one they loved. I hope the surviving children may be blessed to follow the example she has left. May the Lord bless and console the dear husband and father the few remaining days that he has to stay here.

W. B. ROBERTSON.

Emma Hill Garrison died in Hopewell, N. J., on January 18th, 1921. She was the daughter of Levi Lawrence Hill and Emeline Bushnell, and was born in Westkill, Greene Co., N. Y., where her father, who was a preacher of the New School Baptist faith, was pastor. After her mother's death, which occurred when she was a small child, she was taken by her father to Hudson, N. Y., and spent most of her childhood there, living in New York city, however, at the time of her father's death, after which she made her home in Kingston-on-Hudson with an uncle. On arriving at maturity she felt it her duty to do something for herself, and became engaged with a relative in a purchasing agency, developing much ability in her business. While in New York she was married to Dr. John B. Garrison, and to that union were born three children, two daughters and one son, one still living, Miss Hilda Garrison, who keeps the home in Hopewell for her father. For many years Emma had spoken of a desire to visit her old home and her mother's grave in Westkill, but something always came in the way to prevent until September, 1920, when, accompanied by her husband and daughter, she made the journey by automobile and keenly enjoyed the visit. On the last day of her visit she noticed a swelling of her feet, which was the result of a long diseased heart, and from that dropsy gradually supervened and she was confined to her room most of the time until she was called to her rest. She bore her sufferings with marked patience. She fulfilled every duty of this life conscientiously. She never united with any church, but often spoke of her desire to be a member, but could not feel that she was worthy. She had a firm faith in the power of God, and believed in the saving grace of Jesus Christ to the utmost, being the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

The funeral services were held at her home in Hopewell, Elder C. W. Vaughn speaking words of comfort to the family and friends, and she was laid away, all that was mortal, in the cemetery adjoining the meetinghouse to await the time when those who sleep shall rise to be made like him.

JOHN B. GARRISON.

Lucinda Harris Riley departed this life February 6th, 1921, aged 92 years, 6 months and 6 days. She was born in the state of Tennessee in 1828, and when a child migrated to Illinois and settled in Adams County, where she grew to womanhood and resided almost continuously. In 1848 she was united in marriage to John E. Riley, to which union were born seven children, five sons and two daughters. Her husband and three children preceded her in death. She leaves to mourn their loss, three sons: J. F. Riley, of San Diego, Cal., S. H. Riley, of Wichita, Kansas, and E. E. Riley, of Bowen, Ill., who was her constant companion in her declining years; also two brothers and one sister: Elder Rice Harris, of Hannibal, Mo., Clark Harris, of Bowen, Ill., and Mrs. Sarah Bryant, of Iola, Kansas, besides a host of relatives and friends. At an early age she united with the Primitive Baptist Church, of which she remained a consistent member all her long and useful life. She was a reader and constant subscriber of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for over fifty years, until her eyesight prevented. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone, and spent many happy hours conversing with her brethren and sisters upon the teachings of the Bible.

Her brother, Elder Rice Harris, conducted the funeral services at her late residence, making his remarks from the words found in the book of Psalms: "My Shepherd leadeth me," after which all that was mortal was laid beside her husband in the Ebenezer churchyard, there to await the judgment call.

E. E. RILEY.

Eliza Bundy Cartwright died December 4th, 1920, at the home of her granddaughter, Mrs. Joseph A. Russnell, at Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada, at the age of 83 years and 10 months. Her maiden name was Eliza A. St. John. She was born in Lexington, Greene Co., N. Y., February 7th, 1837, the eldest of three daughters born to Almiron and Louisa (Pettit) St. John. Very young in life she was married to George Garrott, who died soon after their marriage. In 1857 she moved to Otego, N. Y., where her father was then living, and was married to Elder Balas Bundy, of Otego, December 15th of that year, where she made her home ever after, he having died May 29th, 1899. One son was born to them, the late Clifford A. Bundy, who died January 23rd, 1894. She was again married July 3rd, 1902, to Eli Cartwright, of Oshkosh, Wis., who died a few years after their marriage. She is survived by one sister, Mrs. Mary Wilber, of Otego, a half-brother living in Illi-

nois, the granddaughter at whose home she died, and by two great-grandsons and several nieces and nephews. She was a consistent member of the Old School Baptist Church at Otego for over sixty years. She was tenderly cared for in her declining years by her granddaughter, at whose home she spent the last two years and seven months of her life.

The funeral was held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse at Otego Monday, the 6th, conducted by her pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, of Clarks Summit, Pa., who read hymn 1294 (Beebe's collection) and commented upon a few words of the ninetieth Psalm. Burial was in the Bundy cemetery.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Lester Huff, Md., $1.00; M. C. Reaves, Ill., $2.00; I. H. Evans, Md., $1.00, J. A. Tandy, Okla., $5.00; Mrs. Lucy C. Tandy, Okla., $5.00; Dr. J. B. Garrison, N. J., $3.00; Mrs. Duncan McCullum, Ont., $2.00; O. F. Ballard, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. F. J. Gray, Texas, $1.00.

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IN

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THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

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Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 694 E. 125th St., or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 89. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1921. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

UPTON, N. Mex., March 4, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have a request from brother J. S. McLeod, of Bivins, Texas, to write on Habakkuk ii. 19, which reads as follows: "Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it." The eighteenth verse reads: "What profiteth the graven image, that the maker thereof hath graven it; the molten image, and a teacher of lies, that the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make dumb idols?"

This is the subject of idolatry. More of us are idolaters than we think, for the Bible says, "Covetousness is idolatry." The Jews were commanded over and over not to worship idols, and to trust in nothing but the Lord. Psalms cxxv. 1: "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever." Isaiah xxvi. 4: "Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." The natural Jews' worship under the law was a shadow of that which we now have in the gospel dispensation. Hebrews x. 1, says, "For the law having a shadow of good things to come," &c. Colossians ii. 16, 17: "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." If this is true, the idols made of wood and stone and covered with gold and silver, and their making their children pass through the fire, all those abominations were typifying the wicked practices of this our day. Jeremiah xix. 5: "They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal," &c. In another place it says, "They make their sons pass through the fire." Four hundred and fifty false prophets that dined at Jezebel's table taught Israel that Baal was God. These false prophets were educated and nicely dressed men, knew how to pronounce every word in the latest fad, or the queen would not have had them in the palace and to dine at her table. I do not know where Longfellow got his knowledge, but he says they were dressed in "white stolls with red frontlets of gold." When God's prophet Elijah, under

the influence of the Spirit of God, met them at the foot of Mt. Carmel he made fun of Baal, he mocked them. Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is talking or he is pursuing, or peradventure he sleepeth and must be awaked. There never was a more zealous set than these false prophets, for they cut themselves with lances until the blood gushed out, but no answer, so their doom was sealed, and Elijah had all of their heads cut off. Psalms cxxxv. 15–18: "The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths. They that make them are like unto them: so is every one that trusteth in them."

"Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake." Wood can neither hear, see nor feel, neither can the sinner who is dead in sin hear, see or feel spiritually. John iii. 3: "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." If the sinner dead in sin cannot see, hear or understand, how are you going to teach him with the gospel? It is evident that this wood is typical, for in the eleventh verse of this same chapter it says, "For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it." Men are vainly calling on the dead sinner to awake before it is everlastingly too late, but when our God speaks and says to one of his people, Awake, thou that sleepeth, and arise from the dead, they never fail to awake, for he speaks and it is done. You may storm, shriek, shoot the largest cannon on earth right over the wood, but no moving, no hearing, no awakening. Mount Sinai may thunder, the fire and smoke may envelop the mountain, and it may tremble and rock, and the voice of the trumpet may sound long and wax louder and louder, until all the living Israelites tremble and beg for all of the noise to stop, but not a sound is heard by the natural man; he remains like the sphinx of the desert, not a move, not a wink of the eye, not a motion of the lips, no particle of breath, never a pulsation of the heart; he remains just the same, without understanding, unable to see or hear or receive spiritual things, for Paul says, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." But when our God says, "Awake, awake: put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city," &c., then there is an awakening and dressing up in those garments composed of fine needlework and wrought gold. The king's daughter is all glorious within; she shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework, her clothing is of wrought gold. All our righteousness is as filthy rags. If we were to prepare that raiment of fine needlework you could not stay in the room where it was for the offensive smell. When the Lord wants his people to move forward all he has to say is as it is written in Isaiah li. 9, 10: "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon? Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep," &c. When it pleases God for his church to prosper it never fails to grow in grace and in number, for "God giveth the increase." "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." "Vain is the help of man." When the appointed time came for the Savior to suffer

and die to redeem his people from the curse of the law the Lord said, Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn my hand upon the little ones. Not even the cries of the Son of God could put a stop to the work. If God had not been in one mind, and none could turn him, he certainly would have scattered the men that drove the nails through his feet and hands, and stopped the man that thrust the spear into his side. God had predestinated, had determined this before the world began. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."—Acts ii. 23. If it had been your son and he had called you to deliver him, and you could have had power as God has, you would have slain or driven the whole crowd away. When God said to the sword, Awake, it awoke, and the crucifixion went on as he had purposed. The wicked is the sword of the Lord.

"To the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach!" We have quite a number of idols now professing to teach; they go by different names—Sunday-school, Y. M. C. A., &c., and teachers galore. The sinner has eyes and sees not, ears and hears not, cannot understand, and he believes the same doctrine the multitude of teachers believe. Then it follows that teacher and sinner are in the same condition. You may ask the teacher how a sinner is saved, and he will tell you God will save him if the sinner will let him, and that it all depends on the will of the sinner. Ask the sinner and he answers, It is up to me whether I am saved or not. Then it follows one is just as much enlightened as the other; both belong to the same nationality, for both speak the same language. The prophet Isaiah says, "I will bring the blind by a way they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." If God brings the blind by a way they knew not, there must be a great change in their understanding and belief as to how a sinner is saved. If he thinks it depends on his will and what he does naturally, as all men in nature's night, teachers and all believe, they must be brought out of that belief into something different, if they ever enter that way they knew not. There is nothing darker to the natural mind than predestination, and if it had not been for predestination we would all have been lost.

When I first joined the church I thought that of all the long, harsh, ugly words I ever heard the word "predestinarian" was the worst. I had to be taught. You send your children to hear those teach who do not know the truth. Do you think it will be of any benefit to them? How would you like to send your children to a teacher of literature that did not know his letters? Before persons are allowed to teach in our public schools they have to be examined and get a certificate certifying their ability.

"To the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach!" How strange it was that intelligent men could honestly think that the stone could teach, yet they did. We are told the only way to know about God is to be taught the Bible, and if people never hear men preach they will be lost. Judson told the sisters they could not help what had been done, but to bedew their jewelry with the tears of contrition and hang them on the cross of Christ,

He said, "Many thousand souls are going to hell for the want of the gospel." By selling their jewelry they could use the money to save sinners. We did not know how to print until about 1450; we had no printed Bible until 1534 years after the Savior was crucified. Most people now living have not seen a Bible or heard a man preach. Where has this multitude of people gone? Men used for teachers that do not claim to have a hope in Christ. These latter day teachers are as dead spiritually as the idol is naturally. Paul says, Colossians ii. 18: "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshiping of angels, [preachers] intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind." Before God ever created Adam he filled the heavens with teachers that never cease to proclaim his glory. Day after day, night after night, week following week, year in and year out, always telling, never ceasing to proclaim the wonders of the Creator. David says, "The heavens declare the glory of God." It is true, to declare a fact is to preach. Paul came on Mar's hill telling of one of their inscriptions: "to the unknown God," and he said, "The God whom ye ignorantly worship him declare I unto you." Him preach I unto you, would be the same thing. Ah, yes, when the beautiful stars are seen twinkling in the heavens they declare the glory of God. Did not the moon as she shed forth her silvery light ever talk to you? Did she never hold your eyes spellbound and say to you, How do you think I came to be so quietly and so gently rising up into the starry sky? Whom do you think holds me up, that I fall not? From whence do you think I came? Is it not bound to be true that the wondrous Creator formed me and placed me here? Why do you think I do not crash into some other planet and tear up everything? O, little ones, lift up your eyes and behold the glory of your heavenly Father as the stars begin to appear in the heavens. See them as they seem to smile and laugh with joy as they shine and declare the glory of God. A Missionary asked what they call a heathen, "How do you know there is a God?" He answered, "How do I know which way my goats have taken themselves, but by their tracks?" Ah, yes, unchangeable, so high men's hands can never erase them from their lofty position while one of the children of God remains on the earth. Yes, David, I, too, thank God, have seen and realized that "the heavens declare the glory of God," when there was no one near me, at the dead hour of midnight, when nearly all the people in our part of the earth were wrapped in slumber. "And the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." So it is in your experience; when you go down into the awful darkness you dread so much, weeping endureth for the night, but joy cometh in the morning. When you pass through an exceedingly dark season you are made to look aloft to the Creator, and you learn your helplessness to deliver yourself. So when the natural sun sinks in the west the little stars that you could not see in the daytime are plainly visible. "Night unto night sheweth knowledge." There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Hear the voice? So still, so quiet, so gentle, saying to you, God is God; all his works praise him. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words. Only listen, poor little one: "and their words to the end of the world." How amazingly wonderful this is! How slow we are to learn

these glorious things! It took me nearly forty years to learn this. It was so plain when the Lord in his mercy showed it to me. No place where their voice is not heard. Far away, high or low, rich or poor, strong or weak, in the United States or in the jungles of Africa, there the voice of the heavens declaring the glory of God is heard. Every living, trembling child of God on earth beholds the glory of God in the heavens.

The "dumb stone" cannot teach the truth, but God can. He says in the eighth chapter of Hebrews in the new covenant: "They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." In Isaiah it is written, "All thy [Zion's] children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." Romans i. 20: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." "Being understood by the things that are made." It takes a teacher to cause us to understand. The things we see that God in wisdom hath created teach us of his power and glory. Speaking of the sun David said, "Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race." As the sun rises up into the heavens it teaches the people of God that none but an all-powerful Creator could produce and keep going such a wonderful world. All creatures would die if the sun should cease to shine. You ask, Why does it not burn itself out? Where does all that heat come from? So when your blessed Savior arises with healing in his wings he gives light, life, joy and peace to all of the children of God. The dumb stone cannot teach, but God has given gifts in the church to teach, and he qualifies them. Paul says in Ephesians iv. 11: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." God sends them, and they are bound to teach.

Do as you like with this; it will be all right with me.

ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

2318 N. 22ND ST., PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan. 24, 1921.

BELOVED IN CHRIST JESUS:—If I may be permitted to address so sacred a body. My pen has lain silent for quite awhile, but by some power inconceivable by me I am constrained to take it up again, and if it be the will of God try to interest you. Whether I shall succeed remains to be seen. I am such a complex being it is beyond my conception to know how to explain myself; I do not know myself. If that be true, how can you expect me to write entertainingly? It is in my heart to do so, but you know the old saying, When I would do good, evil is present with me. The things that I should do I do not. My friends, I am not writing to the unregenerate, but to those whom I believe think and believe as I do. It would be folly for me to attempt to please the ungodly; natural men are not interested in the things of the kingdom of God, they are foolishness unto them, they have no time for them; so I will not attempt it, I could not if I tried, and I have no desire to. In my medita-

tions I find myself wandering far from the kingdom, which I love. I am too prone to find fault with God's ways, I want things different, I want them to go my way, and after all I find God's ways are right. Then I am made to repeat the poem of Watts': "Keep silence, all created things," &c. It is very difficult to keep quiet unless constrained by Almighty God. It is not natural; nature wants to be doing something to help along God's work, but it never gets very far in that direction; about the time it thinks it is getting along nicely something turns up and spoils it all, all our vainglory is gone and we are made to bite the dust in despair. O how sad a calamity! such are all our efforts in that line. Then we are made to look back and say, Why did we not keep silence and wait our Maker's nod? But no, old nature wanted to help, must be doing something, and we are made to see how feeble is the arm of flesh. Could I but be kept at the feet of Jesus and made a meek and lowly follower of the Lamb of God. Could I but be made to sing the song of Cowper: "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform," &c. He has always done that, and will continue to do so as long as the world stands. I have just entered my eightieth year, and find I am just as great a sinner as ever; in fact, it appears as if I grow worse instead of better, and if it were not for the grace of God I know I would be lost. It is the gift of God, a free gift, I can do nothing, it matters not how much I try; in fact, I do not try, I would not know where to begin, I can find no starting-point, so I am constrained to say, O Lord, thy will, not mine, be done, both in heaven and earth. It is a hard thing to say at all times, when beset by dangers and perils on every hand, but behind the cloud that hovers over us the sun shines in all its glory.

"Salvation! what a glorious plan,
How suited to our need!
The grace that raises fallen man
Is wonderful indeed!

'Twas wisdom formed the vast design
To ransom us when lost,
And love's unfathomable mine
Provided all the cost."

Probably I am making this article too lengthy; that had not entered my mind until just now. I feel as if there is no end to these things. As the queen of Sheba said, the half was not told me, so if I should write as much more I would be no nearer the end than when I began. If, however, I have interested you, I claim no glory, as I have just penned it down as it was given me. I am just as apt to err as sparks are to fly upward, but, my friends, pray for me, as I do not know how to pray or what to pray for as I ought. If there is one thing I should pray for it is wisdom, as that is the most needful thing for me. I wish to know more about His kingdom, the great storehouse of knowledge, not worldly knowledge, but spiritual knowledge. Help, O my soul, and keep me steadfast in that holy faith once delivered unto the saints of the only true and living God. O what a wicked world we are living in, our surroundings are dreadful, but it is all for some good purpose known only to God; he will make it plain in his own good time, if it is his purpose to do so. Let us then be careful and not too hasty in our actions, go slow, watch well our steps, walk softly before the Lord; time will make manifest his purpose. Joseph was sent down into Egypt for a purpose: to save much people alive. He made it plain to him in his own time. It was a dark and gloomy road to travel, but it ended all right, just as the good Lord

planned. His plans never go astray, they go just as he plans, and for our own good and his declarative glory; and they always come "right early," not too soon, nor yet too late, just at the appointed time. We sometimes think our blessings are very slow in arriving, and wonder if the Lord has forgotten us entirely, but they come, more than we deserve. How prone we are to forget him, do not praise him as we should. We may be able to praise him in times of prosperity, when things are going favorably or our way, but let adversity come, then where are we? Do we praise him? I fear not. We certainly need his watchful care and protection every day of our lives, we cannot keep ourselves one moment; it makes me shudder to think of it. But I will ask you to sing with me the hymn:

"Where must a weary sinner go,
But to the sinner's Friend?
He only can relieve my woe,
And bid my sorrows end."

Please spread the mantle of charity over what I have here presented. If any one wishes to communicate with me, to cheer a poor weary sinner on the way, I shall be pleased to hear from such an one.

Your unworthy friend, I hope,

C. S. FETTER.

MIAMI, Florida, Nov. 20, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN:—While I was in the state of Washington, attending the Siloam Association, the only association on the Pacific coast, I was requested by many readers of the SIGNS, and other Predestinarian Baptists, to write something for publication regarding the Baptists of the northwest, and the meetings I had the privilege of attending, and of the sixty-ninth session of the Siloam Association. It seems to me that I am a poor hand to speak of Old School Baptist meetings as I should for my report to be of general and deep interest to the readers of the SIGNS. I shall avoid mentioning things which do not seem to advance the cause of our Lord and of his truth among the saints. In a former letter I spoke of some of the meetings in the Pacific states. I was permitted to be at all the churches and meeting places, and some special meetings among scattered brethren, in the states of Oregon and Washington, except the church in Elgin, Oregon. I intended to visit that place, but my time and arrangements were such that I could not, however I had the pleasure of meeting some of the brethren and the pastor of that church (Elder C. W. Bond) at a union meeting at Touchet, Washington, on the third Sunday in June. This union meeting gave me one more evidence of the firm tie that binds the brethren on the Pacific coast. Some of these brethren came over three hundred miles to attend this meeting. One brother came one hundred and sixty miles to be baptized, another one came three hundred miles; both were baptized on Sunday. At almost all the churches in these states at the regular meetings lunch is served on the ground or at the meeting place each day, and the service continued in the afternoon, even if only one preacher be present; they are not in a hurry to rush home, as is the custom in some places. The Siloam Association met with the Sulphur Creek Church, in Lewis County, Washington, August 6th, 7th and 8th. Elder A. Wilson being sick, Elder J. W. Peters was chosen moderator, and sister Rosa Coleman clerk. The meetinghouse of the Sulphur Creek Church is on the south bank of the Cowlitz River, forty miles from Chehalis, the main railroad town for that country. The associational meetings were held on a sand bar on the south side of the Cowlitz River, under

the shade of those large Washington maples peculiar to that country. Predestination, election, vital oneness of Christ and the church, and the resurrection of the dead was the doctrine set forth. The preaching at all times embraced the revelation of God and the experience of poor sinners after they are called of God to hope in his mercy. Brethren and sisters, other than ministers, came, some three hundred and fifty miles, some three hundred miles, some two hundred and fifty and some two hundred miles to this annual meeting. The Elders present were A. Horner, F. L. Riffe, W. H. Shields, L. F. Adkins, J. W. Peters, I. F. Coleman, J. F. Beeman and licentiate W. S. Inglent. Perfect harmony prevailed and a lovelier band I never have met. This association meets next year almost on the same ground, as the Cowlitz River Church is only one and one-half miles from the church where the meeting was this year.

I desire to add a few words about dear Elder Shields, a native of Virginia, who has been greatly afflicted for many months with a bladder disease. He had been confined to his bed continually for six months, but was some better, and was carried on his couch to the meeting, and was able to stand and preach for half an hour. He is firmly established in the doctrine, and patient in suffering.

After leaving the association I went direct to Portland, and from there to Weiser, Idaho, where our good brother, W. N. Webb, met me and took me to his pleasant home. In this town is a lovely band of brethren, and two resident pastors: Elders J. C. Turnidge and T. E. Attebery. Brother Attebery's wife has been greatly afflicted for about twenty years, for twelve years she has been helpless, and for the last eight years has been in bed and not able to raise her head from the pillow. She takes only scant nourishment, so that her friends wonder that she lives at all. This is a very great affliction, added to the fact that it is very rarely that any except the family are permitted to see her wasted form. No doctor has been able to diagnose her disease. Her very remarkable case causes brother Attebery and his family to be mentally afflicted, but in all these discouragements they have learned to rely alone upon the Lord. The writer and all the saints who know of this affliction deeply sympathize with dear Elder Attebery.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

FORSYTH, Ga., January 8, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am impressed to give expression to some of the things which we are to deal with while we sojourn here below. First, I wish to say that I am in full accord with the editors and contributors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; especially do I indorse the editorial in the January 1st, 1921, issue. We see all around us great numbers claiming to do work for the Lord to help him save the people, as though he did not have the power, or that sinful men could make his burden lighter by their help. We see that money is their god (golden calf). Is anything more prominent than money with them? I think not; to them it is a god that does not know his need until they tell him; they are trying to take the world for him. Give us a little more time and we will get money enough to convert the world and make them all get in line for the millennium. If this is not a fair type of their worship and practice I fail to understand the meaning of their words. It looks like Aaron's calf to me, but I can-

not express things as I see them. We have some ministers of our order who are not far removed from this same practice. We often hear the quotation, If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat of the fat of the land. This is time salvation. I do not understand this to apply especially to a regenerate subject; it looks as if the most vile person could be willing and obedient and eat the fat of the land. They are willing to do anything and be obedient to the law if it promises, as this does, to make them rich. The trouble with the natural man is that he will do anything that will give him pleasure and ease in this life, and he will obey that spirit which bestows on him filthy lucre and not criminate his lust. I do not condemn any one for being law-abiding, and would admonish all to obey the law, for this is the command, but I do not believe that this is offered as a premium for obedience. The record is full of incidents of the suffering Israelites who were willing and obedient and did not eat of the fat of the land. The question seems pertinent here to the case of Job, who was an upright man, but was made to suffer, not for his unwillingness or disobedience, but to show Satan that he could not take his life. This is also true in the case of Joseph and Daniel, as well as the apostle Paul; so it is not by works of righteousness, but by God's mercy. By grace are we saved through faith, not of works, lest we should boast. I know that much could be said on this question of time salvation that looks like obedience being it, but if we are enabled to live blameless in this life let us ascribe it all to grace, give Jehovah all the praise and count ourselves unprofitable servants, being full of wounds, bruises and sores from the sole of the foot even to the head. It looks as if we are drifting away from the doctrine as held by the Old Baptists and taught by the apostles, for when people assemble for worship and hear doctrine that does not give man part of the work of saving people but few will listen.

These are the views of a poor sinner depending alone on the mercy of a merciful God. J. W. NEWTON.

SULPHUR, Ky., July 3, 1920.

DEAR FRIENDS:—As I am sending my subscription for the SIGNS, I would like to say a few words, if the dear Lord will direct my pen, for I know that without him we can do nothing. We are only poor, weak worms of the dust. If I could write like others I would love to write, but I feel so ignorant and have so little understanding of heavenly and divine things. It must be because I am so sinful, yet I sometimes feel to have a precious hope in the great love and mercy of God, who loved us when we were dead in trespasses and in sin. If we love him it is because he first loved us, and with loving-kindness he hath drawn us and hath raised us up and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ. By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. I rejoice that it is that way; I want it all to be of grace all the way through. I enjoyed Elder Ker's article in the last SIGNS. Yes, they are trying all sorts of plans for saving souls, but all will fail except the one great plan. I also enjoyed Mary E. Wright's letter. She spoke of not writing for the SIGNS any more, but I want to say to you all to write on, for you know not the comfort your writings are to a hungry, thirsty soul. I thought, O, if I could write like she does it would be a pleasure and a comfort, but, like Moses, I am slow of

speech and cannot express my thoughts in writing. May each and every one of you be given grace and strength as the Father seeth you have need. As thy days, so shall thy strength be.

Dear friends, if you see fit to use this please correct all mistakes. It is a very poor effort.

Your sister in hope of a better life beyond this vale of tears,

ADDIE CHANDLER.

CLAY, La., Dec. 4, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing two dollars, for which you will please renew my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for one year. I know I am not worthy to write a word for the SIGNS, yet I have a desire to write a few words to the faithful in Jesus Christ, and if my desire is of the flesh, Lord, forgive me. I sometimes hope the Lord has given me power to approach unto him through his dear Son. Self being left out, then I can feel happy and rejoice in God my Savior; but sometimes I try to approach unto him and find shame and confusion, and feel that I want to creep off to some lowly place and mourn it out, and feel that I can never face the brethren any more, and feel that I want to go home and stay there. O, dear readers, do any of you have such feelings? If you do, you know how to sympathize with such a wretched sinner as I am, worthy of nothing except to be banished from God forever; but my little hope is still leaning upon Jesus, for we read that his blood cleanseth from all sin, and that is enough for me. Sometimes I am able to feel that Jesus is my Savior, and it causes my love to go out to all his people in every nation, and O how sweet it is to believe Jesus is coming again and will raise our body from the grave a spiritual body, just as glorious and holy as his own body, and will carry us to his Father, there to meet all the redeemed of the Lord, where we shall never part, but join in praises to our God, and sorrow, trials, sickness and pain be over forever. This is sweet hope for me, and if this meets the eye of any one who has a little hope in Jesus, and feels too little to go to the church, I want to say to you, I love you with christian love, and Jesus is your righteousness.

Farewell to all. I feel I will soon be done with this world.

J. R. CHANDLER.

LONG BEACH, Calif.

DEAR EDITORS:—I see my time paid for the SIGNS is past due, so will send my subscription for another year, and will add a little to the regular price, hoping you will receive it in the same spirit I send it. As the price of all materials keeps advancing I think it the duty of all to help bear the burden, and not put it all on the publishers, even though they do not complain. Each one helping a little makes the burden light for all. As for myself, I feel that I got the worth of my year's subscription in the last number. I not only gather crumbs from each number, but am fed for many days. Brethren, keep right on writing, and feed such poor old sinners as I feel myself to be. Best wishes to all.

May the love of God rule and guide the editors and all the correspondents of the SIGNS, is the prayer of a poor old sinner.

AMBROSE FLOURNOY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1921.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE KING'S HIGHWAY.

(ISAIAH XXXV. 8.)

STRETCHING away from old Jerusalem in various directions ran highways with which Isaiah, the prophet, must have been intimate: to the north the road to Samaria and Israel; to the east the road leading over Olivet to Bethany and the Jordan valley; to the south the way to Bethlehem, the select city of the Redeemer's birth; to the west the road to Joppa and the sea. To him who was inspired to foretell the coming of the Lord these ancient ways were every day matters; no doubt his feet traced and retraced many a mile over their winding lengths. For these highways of old Judea must not be confused in the mind with the roads of the moderns, nor even with the splendid roads built by the Romans when they achieved the mastery over the land of Canaan in the days of the imperial Cæsars. These old roads familiar to the prophet were, many of them, little more than paths, for the then prevailing modes of travel were very primitive indeed. The poorer people walked, the more prosperous rode in chariots or on the backs of asses or camels. The main thoroughfares were called "highways," and were wider and better built than the "ways" or paths narrower and less frequented. One of the marks which is peculiar to the beautiful simplicity of the Scriptures is that when the Spirit employs figures to express a spiritual truth these illustrations are never far-fetched, but ordinary incidents and common matters in the lives of the people to whom these messages of the prophet were addressed. Thus out of the every day life of Isaiah, in which he knew familiarly the ways and highways round about Jerusalem, his soul was caught up in a vision of faith to behold the "way of holiness," the way of the Lord cast up by the wayfaring men. It is surely needless for us to say that this wonderful language concerning the "highway" and the "way" has to do with the spiritual and gospel kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, that the prophet was having a faith's view of matters centuries ahead of his day, matters pertaining to the redemption work of Jesus, who is proclaimed to be the way, the truth and the life. The time when this highway and way of holiness are to be revealed is at the same time that the blind receive their sight and the deaf their hearing; it is when the lame man leaps as an hart and when the tongue of the dumb is loosed in song; it is when waters break out in the wilderness and streams rise out of the desert; when the parched ground becomes a pool and when the dwelling-places of the beasts whose haunts are desolation shall be turned into lush growths of grass, reeds and rushes. It will be noted that all the above are matters exactly contrary to nature. It is not natural for a blind man to see, nor for a deaf man to hear. It is not natural for a lame man to be leaping, nor for a dumb man to be singing. All the other things enumerated are also opposite to nature's ways, nevertheless all these things are coincident with the appearing of the "way of holiness," the highway of

wayfaring men. Being contrary to nature, they therefore are in harmony with the grace of God and with the work of the Holy Spirit; for that which nature cannot and does not want to do, God's grace and Spirit do perform. The fulfillment, therefore, of the prophecy in the thirty-fifth chapter of Isaiah has to do with the manifestation of God in the flesh and the gathering of all Israel unto the living God, into a kingdom not of this world, while it may be in the world, a community of one heart, one faith, one hope, one Lord, one baptism. By the manifestation of God in the flesh, we mean not simply the days or the time when Jesus was himself here in the world among men, the very incarnate Word, but the whole period of regeneration, reaching from the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and the organization of the gospel church by the spirit and power of that resurrection, to the end of the gospel age which witnesses the final consummation of the purpose of his grace in gathering out of all peoples, his people to dwell forever with him in glory. Running through all this gospel kingdom runs a highway, the way of God's holiness, a road in which all the redeemed travel, a road in which they all meet and hold intercourse, a way of communication between all parts of the kingdom. This way is the Word. Jesus, the Word, was in the beginning with God, and was God. This Word was made flesh and dwelt among us—Jesus. A word is the vehicle of an idea. We use words to convey ideas from our own minds to the minds we wish to inform. God, in bringing himself into communication with sinners, although incapable of knowing him, made use of Jesus, and through Jesus God makes known to his people what is the good pleasure of his will. Thus Jesus is the Word, the conveyer of God's thoughts to man redeemed. By the same truth, Jesus is the way. No man can come unto God except by the Son. Jesus is the only way to God. The law is not a way to God, but a condemner of man's ways. Many think to obtain godliness by the law, but it is a dead expectation. Though man thinks legality to be the way of salvation, the end of that way is death. Jesus is the way, the only way, of eternal life. He is a "highway," because he is too high for finite man's understanding, to be known only by revelation. Flesh and blood cannot teach one to know this high way. It does not appear to reason's keenest sight, nor to the most determined will of man. Thus the vulture's eye, quick to discern dead things, has never seen this new and living way, for there is no death in it; nor has the lion's whelp ever trodden this way. The lion being the strongest of the beasts, generally known as the king of beasts, does not walk in this way of holiness. The lion here represents the strength of man's will, showing that neither the will of man nor any offspring (whelp) of man's will can walk in the way of the truth and salvation of Jesus Christ. No one walks there by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of the living God. No ravenous beast shall walk in this holy way, nothing which seeks to prey upon another, nothing that loves to devour, to hurt, to destroy. This way of the salvation of Jesus Christ, the highway in which walk the redeemed, is not a way of death, but of life; not of destruction, but of edification. The unclean shall not pass over this way. No, for all who go herein are washed clean in Jesus' blood. Their sins are blotted out, washed away, and they are clean every whit in God's sight through the atonement made by Jesus Christ in the one great sacrifice of himself. This highway of God's redeemed, reaching from the lowest depths

of condemnation and woe to the infinite heights of salvation and justification before God, is for the "wayfaring men." Now, wayfaring men are more or less pilgrims. They have no settled abode, but fare along the way, taking things as they find them, whether it be winter or summer, tempest or sunshine. They are very much like Jesus, in that they have not where to lay their heads, nor anything to call their own. These confess that they are pilgrims and strangers on the earth and so declare plainly that they seek a country, desiring a better and an heavenly country. Wherefore, God is not ashamed to be called the God of these wayfaring men, and has prepared for them a city where they shall find rest from their labors in the paradise of God. These wayfaring men may be fools, and certainly are in their own estimation. The apostles were men who, by grace, became fools for Christ's sake. A fool means an ignorant person. Every soul exercised by the Spirit of God finds out however much he knows, he to himself knows nothing. Thus he sees himself as a beast, ignorant and foolish before God. Nevertheless, the wayfaying man along the King's highway, even though he be a fool, cannot become lost out of the way, cannot "err," go wrong. Having been redeemed by blood and called by grace, he shall by grace persevere to the end of the way. The predestinated end of the wayfaring men, though fools, is glorification at the right hand of God. This end cannot fail of accomplishment, for it rests not with the wayfaring men themselves, but with the omnipotence of God.

"The way the holy prophets went,
The road that leads from banishment,
The King's highway of holiness,
I'll go, for all his ways are peace."

Answering a request from an inquirer in Texas. L.

TO OUR CANADIAN SUBSCRIBERS.

As some of our subscribers in Canada send us Canadian money, we wish to call their attention to the fact that the exchange on it is now very heavy, and we cannot afford to pay it, but can only give them credit for the amount they send, less the exchange. The SIGNS is the only paper we know of that does not charge extra postage for Canadian subscribers, so if convenient please send money orders or express orders.

NOTICE.

POSTPONED.

ON account of serious illness in the families of some who entertain, the Ebenezer Church, of Baltimore city, Md., has decided not to hold the session of the Baltimore Association this year. We regret this, but feel it is best under the circumstances.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Moderator.

POETRY.

I WILL NOT FEAR.

I will not fear, though the night be dark,
And the thunder's peal is heard;
I will not fear, though my little bark
Be frail as a helpless bird.

I will not fear, though the lightnings flash,
And a storm is raging round;
I will not fear, though I hear the crash
Of the wind's tempestuous sound.

I will not fear, though the waves be high,
And my bark sways to and fro;
I will not fear, for my Captain's eye
Is with me where'er I go.

NANNIE B. EDWARDS.

LA GRANGE, Georgia.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, at his home, Salisbury, Md., March 16th, 1921, Ernest A. Hall and Martha J. Wharton, both of Salisbury, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Thomas W. Lee, our brother in Christ, died at his home near Chantilly, Va., March 16th, 1921. He was born October 14th, 1844, the son of William F. and Caroline Higgs Lee, he being one of ten children. He was married to Miss Margaret Haight, and to them were born ten children, of whom four daughters and two sons are living: Wesley and Miss Susie R. Lee, living at the old home; Thomas W. Lee, Jr., at Lincolnia, Va.; Mrs. Bettie Poston, at Bluemont, Va.; Mrs. David Pugh and Mrs. Harvey Cockrill, at Washington, D. C. Brother Lee was baptized some years ago, I have not the exact date, by the late Elder E. V. White, into the membership of the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things, man's depravity and total inability to save himself, God's almighty power and the infinite ability of grace, and grace alone, to save sinners in time and for all eternity. On account of failing health brother Lee had not been able to attend the meetings of the church for a long time. One by one our aged members are passing away, and we wonder who will be raised up to carry on the visible organization of the church. Our help can alone come from the God of all grace, who through his beloved Son builds and keeps the holy city.

ALSO,

Mrs. Nellie Mellott, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life a young wife and mother, at her home near Plum Run, Fulton County, Pa., March 17th, 1921, in the eighteenth year of her age. She was the daughter of Samson and Matilda Laneheart, and was born near Sir John's Run, W. Va. Her parents died when she was very young, and she was taken by an uncle to his home and grew up there. About eighteen months ago she was married to our young brother Rolla Mellott, who sorrowfully survives his young companion with their six weeks' old child. Up to about four years ago sister Nellie had never heard of the Old Baptists and knew nothing of them, she having been subjected to the teachings and influences of the denominations commonly current among men. However, the first Old Baptist meeting she ever attended made a profound impression, and, like Lydia of old, the Lord opened her heart to hear us. She found the doctrine of God our Savior to be the very meat for which her soul hungered, and the travail of her own soul echoed to the Spirit that testified out of the church. In the month of March, 1920, it was my privilege to baptize her into the membership of the Sideling Hill Church, little knowing then that I would be called upon to assist at her burial in a year's time. How inscrutable are the ways of Providence! Seldom has it been our lot to attend a sadder funeral. Besides brother Rolla and her young child, she is survived by one own brother, two stepbrothers and one step-sister, Mrs. Ira Mellott. We laid her body away in the beautiful cemetery at Sideling Hill, the spring of her life ended as nature's spring was just beginning. She leaves behind the refreshing evidence that her's was a good hope through grace. We should not mourn, for we believe she is at rest beyond all the sickness and the dying, in the paradise of God.

L.

Mrs. M. F. Lunceford departed this life December 10th, 1920, on her 73rd birthday, at the home of her son, Mr. W. S. Lunceford. She was married to Mr. W. J. Lunceford, of Newton County, Ga., about 1870. She lived in Newton County a few years and then moved to Monroe County, Ga., where she joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Smyrna, near Forsyth, Ga., and remained a consistent member until death. A more quiet, peaceable, upright member would be hard to find. She was never heard to utter an unkind word about any one; all who knew her loved her for her christian virtues. Sister Lunceford's maiden name was Adams, a cousin to our beloved Elder J. M. Adams, of Monroe, Ga. All who know Elder J. M. Adams can understand her christian qualities when I make the comparison that she was in spirit and practice such as he is, loving truth and uprightness better than even life itself.

Sister Lunceford's body was laid to rest in the Missionary Baptist cemetery near Forsyth, after a suitable discourse by her pastor, Elder T. G. Wright, of Macon, Ga. We miss her at our services, but trust that we may emulate her example.

Written by one who knew and loved her.

J. W. NEWTON.

Elder C. F. Reid died March 13th, 1921, aged about 70 years. He was a firm believer in the absolute predestination of all things, and had no compromise to make with any Arminian on the Bible. I traveled and tried to preach with him for over thirty years. He leaves his wife and five children, with many other relatives and friends, to mourn their loss, but they do not mourn as those without hope. Brother Reid was an able and gifted defender of the faith once delivered unto the saints, and will be sadly missed among the Baptists, as well as at home.

May the Lord bless all who mourn, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

R. R. CRAWFORD.

Mary Ann Winner departed this life September 10th, 1920, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Harvey Carr, Ivyland, Pa., in her 90th year. She was the daughter of Joseph and Jane Rutherford. She is survived by one sister, living in Jamison, Pa. In the year 1857 she was married to John Winner, who preceded her in death. To that union were born five children, four of whom are still living: Mrs. Harvey Carr, of Ivyland, Pa., Mrs. Rachael McCall, of West Phila-

delphia, Mrs. Mattis, of Jamison, Pa., and George B. Winner, of Richboro, Pa. She is also survived by eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. She was received in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Southampton, Pa., in June, 1876, and baptized by the late Elder Wm. J. Purington, and lived a life of faith upon the Son of God. She bore her affliction with patience, but longed to go home, yet she wanted to await the Lord's time to take her unto himself.

The funeral was held at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse on Monday, September 13th. Services were conducted by Elder C. W. Vaughn, of Hopewell, N. J. Interment in burying-ground adjoining meetinghouse.

Written by her daughter,

(MRS.) HARVEY CARR.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 694 E. 125th St., or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.

We are again prepared to fill orders for our Hymn and Tune Book, in either round or shaped notes. We regret that war conditions have compelled us to advance the price to $1.00 per single copy and $10.00 per dozen, postpaid. Send orders to Mrs. Chas. B. Gordy, Southampton, Pa., or P. G. Lester, Floyd, Va.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

BY J. E. BEEBE & COMPANY

MIDDLETOWN, ORANGE CO., NEW YORK,

To whom all letters should be addressed, and money orders made payable.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

BIBLE TEMPERANCE

IS NOT

TOTAL ABSTINENCE.

By George M. Beebe, L. L. B.

A book of over three hundred and sixty pages. Cloth binding. It proves that while the Bible strictly forbids excess and drunkenness it distinctly commends and commands the temperate use of some alcoholic drinks. It presents facts that cannot be discredited; conclusions that cannot be refuted; the zeal of bigotry, the arrogance of ignorance, the mendacity of hypocrisy, and the delusions of infidelity to the contrary notwithstanding.

The claim that the wine approved by the Bible was not alcoholic this book proves is false, and that equally false is the claim that Jesus deceived his disciples, the governor of the feast and the guests at the wedding in suffering them to believe that the wine he made at Cana was not the character of wine they thought it was.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

PROVERBS XXX. 25.

"THE ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer."

If approved by the editors, I will again address the readers of the SIGNS. I suppose the reason I am making this attempt is because an aged sister at our meeting yesterday spoke to me about not writing oftener. In fact, my attention has been called to the matter of writing quite frequently of late, but I have been reasoning with my own judgment that I knew nothing about writing; but the way this aged sister spoke to me set me to thinking; there was something in her words that influenced me. I began to make comparisons of myself. I said, I am as small as the little ant that crawls upon the ground; that is, as I stand before the true and living God. Yes, I feel as nothing in his sight. Then the thought came, The ants prepare their food in the summer. I then began to make other comparisons in my mind; I will now tell you about them. I saw a striking resemblance of the Lord's people in the figure of the ant, and I am now wondering if the writer of this chapter did not see the elect of God when he was thus writing. The living Spirit in prompting one to write does it in such a way that the world at large cannot get the true meaning of what is written, hence the reason for the many interpretations; but if the same Spirit that directs the one to write directs one into an understanding of what is written, then the understanding is complete. But what is the similarity of the ant and the Lord's people? First, the ant is a small creature; so are the Lord's people. A man may weigh three hundred pounds, but if he has a true christian experience then he will say as one of old, "I am a worm and no man." Another similarity is, they attend to their own business; their one thought is to build them a house. It is a pleasant thought to me now to remember my boyhood days, when I would watch the little ants bring up the yellow dirt and place it evenly around the little entrance which they had made into the ground. Here is another illustration. They work hard and systematically to build their house, and are contented; but alas, a rain storm comes along and beats down this dirt which they have labored so hard to bring up, but they are not harmed, they are

down in the ground out of the storm's reach. How easy it is to think of a child of God laboring under the law. He has kept the commandments, he has done the very best he could, but he finds this will not save him; his house of good works is torn down and he is cast down, but not destroyed. The ant prepares its food in the summer, we are told. Do the Lord's people do anything? I answer, Yes. What is it? They work out their own soul salvation. How? With fear and trembling, because God worketh in them to will and to do of his good pleasure. The apostle Peter, in addressing the church of God, which He has purchased with his own blood, said, Ye are a peculiar people, a holy nation, a royal priesthood. Now there is a reason for all this, and the reason is that God has made his church such, and it is to offer up spiritual sacrifices; not an earthly sacrifice, of a bull or goat or anything natural, because Christ's kingdom is not of this world, and because he is a Spirit, and can only be worshiped in spirit. The ant is not strong; the Lord's people are not strong, but one of them has said, I can do all things through Jesus Christ that strengtheneth me. Notice how this one was taught to talk, that his strength must come from Jesus Christ. The ant prepares its food in the summer. What is the spiritual significance of summer? The summer is a pleasant time of the year. At such time everything in nature smiles; the trees are wrapped in green, the clover field sends forth a pleasant odor, and a field of red top clover is a beautiful sight to behold. The summer brings the wheat crop, by which all mankind is sustained. The heat and moisture cause the buds of the fruit trees to burst and the blossoms shoot forth, then the small fruit appears, and by the same heat and moisture the fruit develops, and as it develops it changes in size and color until it is ripe and plucked; it is then fit for the use of the husbandman. Now there is a time in the experience of God's elect when it is summer with them. When is that time? It is when they sing:

> "'Twas a heaven below
> The Redeemer to know,
> And the angels could do nothing more
> Than to fall at his feet,
> And the story repeat,
> And the Savior of sinners adore."

This experience can never be erased from the memory of one who has had such. This experience is as food prepared or stored away; it is stored up in the memory against the evil day that is to come in the life of every child of God. Do not become fainthearted when your troubles come, for come they will, and there is no escape; but your food is laid up for this day of trouble, all you will need. Sometimes you think the supply is pretty well exhausted, you have eaten your last meal and do not know where the next is coming from, but the Lord rained or sent manna unto the children of Israel, and this was a type of the hidden manna which he has put in the hearts of his people in this and in other days. The writer of this chapter mentions four things which are little upon the earth, but they are exceedingly wise: they are the ant, the conies, the locust and the spider. "The conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks; the locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands; the spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces." The writer, who is Agur, the son of Jakeh, tells us that these four little things upon earth are exceedingly wise. Now we cannot pass by the word "exceeding" without considering it, or rather the meaning of it. It means to

excel in wisdom; that though they are small and feeble, yet they manifest more wisdom than some animals one thousand times their size. Take the Arabian horse or zebra as an illustration. They cannot be taught anything, so I am told; they eat, drink and sleep, and that is all can be said about them, except that they are pretty to look at. They do not know how to do anything, but not so with these four little creatures. The conies know enough to build their houses in the rocks. There is no animal strong enough to rend the rocks, and the conies know it, because of the instinct given them by the Lord Almighty. The locusts have no king, but they know enough to go in bands and keep separate from other creatures. Now come to the mysterious spider. How does it spin those silken cords and form them into a web? I cannot answer, except that it is wise and the Lord made it so. All of these things have a wonderful meaning in the gospel day. The locusts have no king, but go in bands. The Lord's people have no earthly king, but they also go in bands; their King is in glory, reigning forever, his love is an everlasting one. Well, what does the word band or bands mean? A band is as a ring, it has no end. There was an end until it was welded together, but now that it is welded you cannot tear it apart. An expert blacksmith can by taking a little pains weld a piece of iron so that no one can tell where it was welded. Jesus Christ can weld his people together in such ties that distance and time cannot remove; they cannot be separated. Sometimes some of the Lord's people get a little boisterous, but that love which is the gift of God continues. Our natural love does not amount to much, we can soon get offended, but this is Adam nature, we had better watch it; I see it is getting some into trouble now. I feel sure that the apostle James told the truth when he said, God tempteth no man, but a man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lusts and enticed. All confusion arises from one source—the flesh.

A. T. BENSON.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Feb. 28, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have read the SIGNS for February 15th with much interest, and no part of it more than your editorial. I love to see the spirit of true harmony which God gives to his children, and to see it manifest in all of us. I have much of the spirit of opposition in me at times, and am ready to find fault with what does not suit me. Sometimes I do this in silence, and then I let it be known. However, I do not believe that I do any of it out of a want of love for my brethren. If I see something I feel to know to be wrong, so as to cause hurt, and do not mention it, I feel that I have not done the part of a brother to that person. Probably I have too much of that feeling about me. I know that I am willing to grant to all the privilege which I take to myself: that of seeing with their own eyes and understanding with their own hearts. As I grow older I grow in the knowledge of my own weakness and shortcomings. I am daily taught that I am a poor sinner before God. I know that if it were not for his goodness and tender mercies I should be forever cast off. I feel that it is of him that I continue to this day. I sometimes fear that I do not know what love is as I ought to know, and then I do know that I love the brethren. If it is the love of God that I have for them, then I am born of God. Can I have a natural love for the brethren? That is often in my mind. Why should I love them from a natural

standpoint any more than any other people? There are some whom I never saw, nor did I ever hear of them until I read of the dealings of the Lord with them, and just as soon as I read that I love them with my whole heart. Can this be from a natural standpoint? I believe it is love that God has given to me for them and to them. I do know that the preaching of the word of God, as I understand it, is the sweetest thing I ever did. When I can feel that the Lord is directing me in his word I do not want to stop. When I first began in the ministry I would have feelings that I wanted to quit trying. The word was so great and I was so little that I felt I would not again try to tell it. But there has been a change in me in that particular. I realize more than I did then the greatness of the word of God; that I see more and more as time goes on, but I have got to feeling glad that it is so great it cannot be told, and at the same time I am made willing to continue to try to tell all of it that I may be given to tell. Sometimes I just stumble along in the dark, and find it hard work; then I would be glad if there were some good brother there to whom I could yield the time. At other times it is so sweet to me that I had rather try to preach than to hear any other one do it, and am glad of the opportunity to speak in the name of the Lord. I wonder if it is this way with all of my brethren.

In the winter of 1879 I preached in a Methodist meetinghouse. When I came out it was dark, and I heard three voices talking together. One said, "If that is the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists I am a Primitive Baptist. I really just hate that people. I would send every one of them to hell if I could, but that preaching is my experience. I cannot understand this." Two months later I preached there again. That night the same three men stood in the house near the aisle, and as I came down the aisle one asked, "Is that doctrine which you preached here some time ago and to-night the Primitive Baptist doctrine?" I answered, "I should hate to think that I preached a doctrine different from all of my brethren; yes, it is the Primitive Baptist doctrine." He said, "Then I am a Primitive Baptist." A little later I baptized all three of those men, and soon we organized a church there which is to-day a lively little branch. From that time I have loved the people of God if I find them in Babylon, and I have found so many of them there that I am convinced there may be many.

A few numbers back Elder Lefferts gave us a very sweet editorial on the difference between church fellowship and gospel fellowship. It was as I have felt it and explained it a number of times. I have felt it many times when I have heard one in an Arminian church tell of the goodness of the mercies of God. None but the children of God knows these things. The Lord alone has the dispensing of the bread from his house, and he has said, It is not meet to give the children's bread to dogs, and I do not believe that he does it. Again, he told the disciples, Cast not your pearls before swine, and I do not believe we can do that. We may feel that we have a desire to have one hear the preaching of the gospel, and may try to get that one to hear it. We may succeed in getting that one to our meeting, but we cannot get him to hear the word of God. The pearl belongs to those whom the Lord has chosen to be his children; the bread belongs to the children. God has provided it for them, and no man can take it from them, nor can any other eat it. It is the holy bread

of the kingdom. Whoever eats that bread has eternal life and shall never die. They are led to Christ by his Holy Spirit, who is their companion, and he will not let them go. It has been said that if this is true we had as well go our way and do as we please; that our destiny is sure, and it makes no difference what we do. All these things are said by those who do not love the Lord, nor do they know him or his way. The children of God are afraid to do wrong; they do not want to displease their Father; they want to do his will; they want to live a life of holiness to the Lord; they feel their inability to live as they wish; they cry to the Lord to lead them in his way; they are not afraid of "falling from grace," but they want to live in grace. God has given them a path to travel, and they desire to walk in that path. They cry, Lead me to the rock that is higher than I. They cannot put their trust in man. They feel the word of the Lord: Cursed is the man who puts his trust in man, and who maketh flesh his arm. Then we are hungry for the blessed evidences that we are the chosen of God. We know that if we are the chosen of God we are chosen to be holy and without blame before God in love. We are not chosen to see how far from God we can go and how much evil we can do. We are predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son. We are not predestinated to see how far we can go and God will yet own us as his children. We are just as much predestinated to bear the image of the earthy as we are to bear the image of the heavenly. The image of the Lord in this world was to suffer; he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. We are predestinated to this image of him as much as we are to dwell with him in glory and to bear the image of his glory. Thus all of our pathway is marked out by our Father, and it is he who leads us in it. Shall we fall? No; the Lord has us by the right hand, and though we stumble he will hold us up.

I thought only to let you know that I enjoyed the reading of the SIGNS, and have written all of this. The Lord abundantly bless you and all the readers and contributors of the SIGNS, that we may all love one another with pure hearts fervently.

Yours in hope and love of the truth,

L. H. HARDY.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Jan. 11, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find check for two dollars for one year's subscription for the good old paper that was established the same year I was established, 1832. I do not want to do without it, as it is good company for those who believe in God's wonderful and mysterious works that no man can fathom. Beyond the reach of man is that almighty Arm, which is neither too short nor too long, and is mighty to save his people from their sins. We are poor sinful creatures of the dust, helpless in our own strength. Nothing in our hands we bring, simply to his cross we cling. We have dear natural friends; so Job thought he had, but they proved to be his enemies. I feel to say as the psalmist David: "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord." Again he said, I will strengthen you, all ye that hope in the Lord. He said, "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings." As a father pitieth his children, so the

Lord pitieth them that fear him. If there ever was a time that we should stand firm in the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ it is to-day, but we need not be discouraged, for the Lord will and must rule; though the winds of adversity howl around us and the storms of persecution burst upon us, he will be a hiding-place from the winds and a refuge from the storms. Our God is the God of truth, without iniquity, just and right is he. He is the rock; his work is perfect. When we think of his wonderful power and wisdom it is marvelous in our eyes. He stills the great billows of the sea (that no man can do), raises the dead, makes the blind see, the lame walk, cleanses the leprous, and, just think, he had a people before the foundation of the world. I will be their God, and they shall be my people. I will leave in the midst of thee a poor and afflicted people and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. We can say with the psalmist, Whom have we in heaven but thee? and there is none we desire beside thee. In him we live, move and have our being. Without him we can do nothing; with him we can do all things. Paul said that through Christ's strength he could do all things, and he said, I have learned to be content in whatever state I am. We can say with Paul, By the grace of God I am what I am. I have labored more abundantly than you all; yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. A good man out of the treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; an evil man out of the treasure of the heart bringeth forth evil things. The ways of the Lord are right; the just walk therein, but the transgressor falleth. If there is anything I love it is to crown him Lord of all. Bring forth the royal diadem and crown him Lord of all. Love not the world nor the things of the world. God is love. We love him because he first loved us. The Lord's portion is his people, chosen out of every kindred and nation, chosen before the foundation of the world. We have not chosen him, but he hath chosen us. Whom he foreknew them did he predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. Whom he did predestinate them he called. Whom he called them he justified. Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit. Israel was promised blessings. "O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips." Ye are our God, for in thee the fatherless find mercy. I will heal their backsliding; I will love them freely, for mine anger is turned away. "I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon. Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found. Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein." "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will."

The axe is laid at the root of the tree for a purpose. He is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. We have a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Bartimeus, the blind beggar, found that friend in Jesus. Dear brethren and sisters, he is your friend; he is, I hope, my friend. Earthly friends sometimes get away from us, but our heavenly Friend will stay by us. We are told to follow him. "And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." I am the good shepherd; my sheep hear my voice and they follow me; not one shall be left behind. Sometimes wolves creep in and destroy the sheep. He said, I will discern between the wicked and the righteous. "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." The great question is, Am I his, or am I not? "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God." "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." If I could but touch the hem of his garment, or dwell under the shadow of his wing. O blessed thought! "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." This kingdom is not like the kingdoms of this world, which perish with the using, but a kingdom not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, where there will be no more sorrow, no more pain, but one continual state of bliss and happiness to be with him, which is far better. He died and rose again for our justification and redemption. He said, If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done. He had a work to do and he did it. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. The poor thief on the cross repented and was saved. The poor publican hardly did as much as raise his head, but cried unto him, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. He is merciful, good and kind, and will not chide, nor keep his anger forever.

From an unworthy brother,

D. L. BLACKWELL.

OTTAWA, Kansas, March 9, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have read your editorial for March 1st several times, and each time have found comfort in it, but having just finished reading it again it seemed so wonderful I am trying to tell you about it. I have no doubt in my mind that the Lord helped you write it; you could not have seen all in it you have except by revelation. I never could see Jesus as a man, to me he was always God. Years ago when trying to think of him as a man, that is, desiring to grieve for his sufferings as a brother or sister in the flesh, these words came with such power I never can forget them: Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and your children. In a moment my eyes were a fountain of tears as their condition appeared to me; it was pitiful beyond

description, and so I think now of all who are not saved; no matter what their station in this life they are objects of pity. Of late I have been enabled to see Jesus, at times, in his humanity. This morning these words were given me: O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thine help. At once tears sprang to my eyes at this tender assurance, as I realized what it all meant (at least in a measure), the awful depth to which all had fallen and the terrible price that must be paid for their redemption. You said, Jesus was tempted in all points as are his people, but never once yielded to temptation. We are tempted and do yield. Jesus never saw corruption, either during his life or after he died. We do live with corruption in our very nature. How truly this applies to me. A short time ago I felt so exceeding sinful that I could hardly raise my eyes to heaven; I felt too sinful to ask forgiveness. While in that state, after I had washed my hands, as I was wiping them on the towel the thought came that all the outside washing I might do could never wash away the stains. I saw more clearly than ever before how impossible the old covenant cleansings, sacrifices and burnt offerings were to make one sinner clean. Outwardly we may appear saintly, but to ourselves, if given a view of our carnal nature, we appear vile and loathsome. How beautiful and plain to me you show Jesus the Branch grafted on a sinful stock, yet never bearing sinful or corrupt fruit, but always his own perfect, spiritual and holy fruit. You say, Every true believer in Christ has two natures within himself. These two natures never become one, but that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and that which is born of the flesh is flesh. The knowledge that this is true in me is sometimes my one hope. How wonderfully you show the difference between Jesus and the other children of Mary, and also that of the quickened believer born of the incorruptible seed by the word of God. In my flesh I see all the first named, but the desire of my heart is for the last named, the fruits of the Spirit. How ardently I long to bear the incorruptible fruit cannot be told. The two natures are so opposite there can be no discharge in this war. Dear brother, I think I can truthfully say in every word of this written truth we see eye to eye, yet it is new to me in the beautiful, clear way you have presented it. I have indeed found much comfort in reading and rereading it. I also much enjoyed brother Fisher's article. It seems to me he should not have hesitated to send such a good letter to the SIGNS; it will help those who know by experience the things of which he writes, and I am persuaded there are quite a few to whom it will be meat and drink, and if so, he must needs have written it. He speaks the things he knows, and all who are taught in the same school will understand his language. I for one am glad he wrote, and am glad it was published, for I know by experience and know from the Bible that what he has written is the truth, whether all will receive it or not. All man's works are dead works, he can give life to nothing. He can make a statue or image so natural that having seen the man or woman you will at once recognize them, but to give life is out of his power. A picture may be a perfect likeness, yet there is no life there. All that I can do is to ascribe all power, honor and glory to God, for to him they all belong.

"Life, death and hell, and worlds unknown,
Hang on his firm decree;
He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be."

All things belonging to this life have an end, all must perish with the using; then why set our affections on things of this life, which may only endure for a moment? Even should we live many years, it will be as yesterday when it is past. Lord, teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.

I am afraid this letter will tire you. It is not often I can write; usually when I think of making the attempt I will be almost overcome with weakness.

Your sister in hope,

ANNA McKINNEY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1921.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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1 TIMOTHY VI. 20.

"OPPOSITION of science falsely so called."

A sister in the south, who has been a reader of the SIGNS for many years, says, "There are some people here of another denomination who claim that science knows more to-day than those who wrote the Bible. They say that the inspired writers believed the kidneys were the mind and the bowels the heart. They say that 'reins' mean kidneys. Will you please explain this in the SIGNS, without using my name; especially, 'Though my reins be consumed within me,' &c., also, 'bowels of compassion'?" We should love to comply with our dear sister's request, and shall lay before her and our readers such knowledge as we have of the matter. It is very distressing to hear the Bible criticized by those who profess to be the observants of religion. It is one of the most common outgrowths of these apostate times to hear men calling themselves the servants of God, who boldly cast aside this Scripture and that because it seems good to them to do so, setting up their finite judgment as to what is and what is not to be believed. It is well for us to bear in mind that the Bible is not to be compared with other books, for it is distinctly in a class by itself. It is the only book of unquestionable divine origin from beginning to end, it is the only book that is the infallible inspired record which God has seen fit to give us of himself and of his dealings with men. Men find fault with it to their peril, they reject it to their deserved condemnation. If, for one moment, we admit of any errors in the Scriptures, then we stand altogether on uncertain ground, and if there be an error in one part there may be in all parts. It will not do to depend upon human judgment in these matters; it will not do to reject any part of the Bible because of the discoveries of science, or because of any criticism which science may bring to bear upon the Scriptures. It is only false science that is contrary to the Scriptures, true science confirms the Bible. Science is the sum of human knowledge; it is the sum of all man has found out and of all he has learned through the centuries of time. Now, man thinks he knows more, a great deal more, than he really does. It is this fictitious knowledge, or "science so called," which opposes the inspiration of the Scriptures. Knowledge that is really knowledge, learning which is genuine, supports the record which the Scriptures give us. Our sister says that the religious denomination she refers to claims that science knows more to-day than those who wrote the Bible. It is a public disgrace for any sect claiming to be christian to make such a statement, for christians are supposed to accept without question the authority of the Scriptures, and such a statement from those claiming christianity may well cause others to doubt whether there is such a thing as christianity, since christians themselves openly avow what they call the errors of the Scriptures. The expression, "Those who wrote the Bible," shows ignorance, for the Scriptures were not written by "those," but by "One." The Holy Spirit is the author of the

Scriptures, and men had nothing to do with it other than that they were chosen of God as the channels through which the inspiration should flow. Men of old time did not write the Scriptures as they thought they should be written, but they wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, and were altogether powerless to write other than they did. The Scriptures were not inspired simply as to the substance of the truth they contain, but were inspired also in manner and form. We believe in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures; that is, the very words used by the prophets were the very right words to be used, and the words which the Spirit intended to be used. The original writings of the Scriptures were thus without error. Of course, in translating these Scriptures out of the original languages into the tongues of the modern world mistakes may have been, and doubtless were, made by the translators. We do not claim inspiration for the translators. There have been many translations of the Scriptures, and we have seen several, as for us we prefer the King James' version. It may contain errors here and there, but so do all the other translations, and we see no reason to discard the King James' for any translation of the present day. At least, the translators of the King James' version were honest, and that is more than we are willing to grant some of the more modern interpreters, who, we fear, are actuated by personal and selfish motives in translating the Bible to suit some bias of their own. Wherever the translators of the King James' version inserted language of their own they made such alterations in *italics*, so that the reader could see for himself just what the changes were and could use them or not just as he might see fit. This, we think, speaks well for the sincerity of their work. So, it may be true that science knows more to-day than it did when the Bible was written; it may also be true that science knows more than did the prophets and apostles who were the channels of inspiration, but science did not then, does not now, nor ever will, know more than the Holy Spirit, and it is this Spirit, and this Spirit alone, that is the author of all Scripture. The Spirit was not causing the Scriptures to be written for its own benefit, but for the instruction of believers; that is, for those who should afterwards by the power of that selfsame Spirit be brought to believe in God. Had the Spirit written the Scriptures in the language of the Spirit; that is, in the language of infinity, it would forever have been unintelligible even to redeemed men; but since it was God's purpose to give man an infallible record of himself, it seemed good to God's Spirit to adopt human terms in making this record known. God, in revealing himself to sinners, does so through Jesus Christ, who is the mediator between God and man. Likewise, the Holy Spirit in writing the record of God and his works made use of man's words and ideas in conveying to the minds of redeemed men some adequate knowledge of the eternal God and his wonderful works. This accounts for the fact that some of the expressions in the Bible are not in language that we ordinarily use to-day. It is true that the word "reins" in olden times meant what we to-day call the kidneys. Likewise, the bowels were supposed to be the seat of compassion or pity, and the heart the seat of the affections. All these terms and ideas must have seemed very childish to the mind of the Holy Spirit, which knew infinitely better, but nevertheless through the mercy of God the Spirit condescended to use these childish

terms in order to convey to the minds of God's people some conception of what God is, and of how he works. When Job uttered those wonderful words: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me," he perhaps thought his reins, or kidneys, to be the seat of his desires. t was therefore good to the mind of the Spirit to use that term in the inspiration which spoke through Job. The word "though" which precedes "my reins" is in italics, and was therefore inserted by the translators. Let us read it over omitting "though." We see at once that Job says he shall see God for himself, and not for another, his reins or desires being consumed within him. Now, let us ask our readers who have some experience of divine things, Did ever any one see God at any time or in any sense, even by faith, only as their desires were consumed within? Is it not true that a destruction of the desires of the flesh always accompanies the revelation of God? This has been our experience, and we believe yours, too. So whatever science may claim as its superior achievements, and however much it may vaunt itself as to what "reins" means or does not mean, it remains for experienced souls to fathom the spiritual meaning of this or any other Scripture, and science can never intrude itself sufficiently to set forth the spiritual application of the Bible. It would be interesting for our readers to take the Psalms and note wherever "reins" appears therein that "desires" can be read instead, and at once the meaning becomes clear. Who cares whether "reins" were the kidneys or the liver? Likewise, in times of old the bowels were the supposed seat of compassion. For science to say that they are not the seat of compassion argues nothing, and gets us nowhere. When Paul in writing to the Corinthians said, "Ye are straitened in your own bowels," he meant to tell them that they were lacking in compassion and charity. The important thing for believers is to know the spiritual significance of the Scriptures, it is not necessary to know the anatomy of the body. We are willing to leave physiology to science, satisfied that science will never enable us to know the true inner significance of the word of God. Let it be remembered that when the Holy Spirit caused the Bible to be written it was not God's purpose to write therein a physiology, a history or a geography. It is always away from the point for critics to point to scientific errors in the Scriptures as evidence that the Scriptures are not inspired. Had the Bible been intended as a work of science it would then be damaging for scientific errors to be found in it, but since it is a spiritual work, written by the one true and living Spirit, and in its loving condescension employing terms intelligible to the human mind and for the instruction of spiritual characters, it will always be time wasted and effort dissipated for men to criticise the Bible scientifically. The world has certainly come to a pretty pass when the very men professing to be the custodians and defenders of the truth point out flaws they have found in the one and only reliable written record of that truth. It is like soldiers revealing the weakness of their own defense to the enemy. It is nothing short of traitorous. Such men are not to be relied upon in the defense of the truth, they will run at the first alarm and hoist the white flag.

Such were not the noble army of martyrs, such were not the glorious company of the apostles who gave their lives for the truth, never doubting the integrity of the inspired record given by the Holy Spirit. May the grace of God keep us faithful in these degenerate times to the sacredness and truth of the holy Scriptures; may he make us bold in their defense. Let us count it all joy to be denounced as "unscientific ignoramuses" for the truth's sake. L.

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in May (29th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

POSTPONED.

ON account of serious illness in the families of some who entertain, the Ebenezer Church, of Baltimore city, Md., has decided not to hold the session of the Baltimore Association this year. We regret this, but feel it is best under the circumstances.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Moderator.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder John McConnell, April 14th, 1921, at the home of the bride, 308 Vanderbilt St., Brooklyn, N. Y., Arthur Burgess, of East Orange, N. J., and Berdella M. Moore.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at Snow Hill, Md., April 9th, 1921, Charles M. Littleton and Beulah C. Truitt, both of Snow Hill, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Anna (Retsher) Weber, beloved wife of Philip J. Weber, was born in August, 1865, and died at her late home in Sayre, Pa., February 10th, 1921. She was married in 1885 to Mr. Weber, who survives her. The only child born of this union, a son, was accidentally drowned at the age of thirteen years, and this bereavement saddened all her after life. For some years prior to marriage her home was in the family of brother and sister Beard, who loved and cherished her as a daughter. On June 14th, 1903, sister Weber was baptized in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Church of New York city, and continued a faithful member of that church to the end. She delighted in the company of them that fear the Lord, and sought every opportunity to be with them; for her brethren and companions' sake her prayer was for the peace of Jerusalem. The word of the Lord: "To do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God," spake by her, though she felt there was nothing belonging to her experience so much out of sight as this grace of humility. Like a little child, she was diffident and modest in her profession, and was therefore ready to give an answer of the hope that was in her with meekness and fear. She confessed to many misgivings of heart about her standing in the faith, "but to this man [saith the Lord] will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." She has finished her course in this world in the triumph of "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." All that loving hearts and willing hands could minister to relieve her suffering and prolong life proved unavailing, for it was the will of God to call her hence—to that only state of blessedness consistent with his purpose of grace in Christ Jesus, and that is, to be ever with him, to behold his face in righteousness. It is far better to depart and be with Christ; to be with him in a fullness and perfection of life in him, of which we have but a foretaste now; for now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face.

Funeral service was held at her late home; interment at Owego, N. Y. May the sorrowing husband, and the sister who so devotedly cared for her in her last illness, with all the mourning relatives and friends, be comforted of God in the assurance of his never-failing loving-kindness, for "He hath done all things well," and is faithful in all his ways.

JOHN McCONNELL.

William M. Winchell departed this life February 1st, 1921, at the home of his son, Stewart Winchell, Hemlock, Mich. He was the son of the late Elder Jacob Winchell, and was born in the year 1840, at Olive, N. Y. He leaves to mourn their loss two sons, three daughters, fifteen grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren, also a sister, Mrs. Delilah Bush. His wife departed this life in the year 1909, also two daughters and one son preceded him in death. Brother Winchell united with the Olive and Hurley Church October 9th, 1868, and was baptized by the late Elder John Badger. He was one of the oldest members of that church, where he was loved and highly esteemed for the truth's sake. Since the year 1910 he had lived with his son Stewart, at Hemlock, Mich., where he had a comfortable home. Although so far removed from the church of his membership, yet it could be said that his heart was with the Olive Church, and his constant desire was for her peace and prosperity. He would often write to the brethren, and his letters spoke plainly of his interest in his home church. Brother Winchell had been a reader of the SIGNS for many years, and derived great comfort from reading the many articles and letters it contains. He especially enjoyed the sermons by Elder Eubanks, which were lately published in it. He was a humble and sincere christian, a good and loving parent and a sterling and sympathetic friend. He is missed by all who knew him, especially by his dear family, who knew his worth. May the Lord comfort them and all who mourn.

His mortal remains were brought to Ashokan, N. Y., and laid in the Winchell family burying-ground, in the presence of many friends and relatives, who came to pay the last tribute of respect to one they dearly loved. The writer conducted the funeral and spoke from Revelation xiv. 13.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Amelia Ann Brayman Billings was born October 11th, 1835, being the oldest of nine children born to Benjamin and Nancy (Borthwick) Brayman, in the town of Broome, Schoharie County, N. Y., and died March 18th, 1921, at the home of her daughter, in Syracuse, N. Y. December 5th, 1855, she was married to Peter L. Billings, and to that union were born four children, three sons and one daughter. Sister Billings received a hope of the pardon of her sins, and with her husband united with the Middleburg Old School Baptist Church and was baptized July 19th, 1868, and remained a faithful and loved member and sister until God called her to enter into that rest which remains for the people of God. Sister Billings was not widely known among the churches, but was loved most by those who knew her best. Her neighbors were always her friends. Her walk and conversation were such as becometh a meek and humble follower of God. Her seat in the church was never vacant when circumstances would allow her to fill it, and she gave God all the praise and honor for all her blessings. Her husband died January 3rd, 1913, since which time she had lived with her children, who kindly and lovingly cared for her until the end. She leaves to mourn their loss two sons: Dr. E. E. Billings, of Kingston, N. Y., and Prof. E. B. Billings, of Delanson, N. Y. (twins); one daughter, Mrs. A. D. Palmer, of Syracuse, N. Y., at whose home she died. One son died when a young man several years ago. She also leaves five grandchildren and six great-grandchildren, three sisters and one brother, besides many relatives and friends and the church, but we mourn not as those without hope, for we believe that for her to depart and be with Christ is far better.

Her body was brought to the home of her son in Delanson, N. Y., where funeral services were held March 21st.

Written by request.

ADDIE C. LIVINGSTON.

Joseph Benjamin Johnson died suddenly of heart disease at his home near Manassas, Va., April 4th, 1921. He was born March 26th, 1852, in the same house where he died and where he had lived all his life. He was the youngest of the five children of Joseph and Emily Wheatley Johnson, both deceased. One sister, Miss Anna Johnson, is left to survive him. He himself was the father of five children, three sons and two daughters, all living: Joseph H. Johnson, in the forestry service in Arkansas; Wheatley M. and Joseph B. Johnson, Jr., and Misses Emily and Elizabeth, all at home. October 15th, 1883, he was married to Miss Fannie Simpson, who survives her husband. Mr. Johnson never united with the church, but the Old School Baptists never had a better friend than he, one who stanchly believed the truth of salvation by grace and who firmly stood for the sovereignty of God over all things. He and his family were much given to hospitality, and their home stood open for the entertainment of the brethren and friends. Many of those who in former years have attended the Virginia Corresponding Meeting when held with the Bethlehem Church will recall this large old home, which stands a short distance from the meetinghouse, and where numbers have been the recipients of Mr. Johnson's generous kindness. He was a kind and quiet, humble man, loved and respected by all who knew him. He was for years a trustee of the Bethlehem Church. The community and all of us have sustained a great loss, and we shall sorely miss him. His kind is rare and hard to replace.

The funeral was held from the home where he had lived all his days, and was largely attended by neighbors and friends, members of all denominations. He was buried in the family burying-ground a few

yards from the house, overlooking the meetinghouse and the baptismal place. We tried to speak from the last two verses of the ninth chapter of Hebrews. May God comfort the bereaved family and reconcile them to his will. L.

Stella Mabel Carr Fulkerson, youngest child of Thomas J. and Nancy C. Carr, was born in Pope County, Ill., December 31st, 1883, and departed this life, after a lingering illness from the effects of influenza, April 4th, 1921, at her home near Hartsville, Ill. She was married to Lemuel Fulkerson September 11th, 1904. To that union were born six children, to wit: Millege R., Neva M. Lemuel G., Lela F., Vida A. and Lester L., all of whom are living except Lester L., who died May 20th, 1920. She leaves, besides her husband and five children, an aged father and mother, three brothers: William H., of Golconda, Ill., Chester A., of Carbondale, Ill., and Elmer E. of Ottumwa, Iowa; one sister, Mrs. Olive M. Floyd, of Golconda, Ill., together with many other relatives and friends to mourn their loss. Mabel, as she was always called, was of a quiet, inoffensive habit, with small disposition to murmur or complain, yet she was at times heard to say, "Mama, I wish you might not have given me birth, since my life seems to have been filled with sorrow and trouble." She professed a hope in Jesus several years ago, and though she never joined the church, she was a firm believer in the doctrine and practice of the Primitive Baptists, and enjoyed very much the rich communications of the brethren and sisters as published in the columns of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Just a few moments before her death she called a lady visitor to her bedside and told her she was dying, then with a steady look toward heaven, a pleasant smile on her lips, she clapped and waved her hands and quietly passed away. It was her request that the following songs be sung at her funeral: "In the sweet bye and bye," "God shall wipe all tears away," and "Nearer, my God, to thee."

Funeral services were conducted by Elder N. A. Rodgers, and interment was made in old Grandpier Cemetery, in the presence of a large concourse of relatives and friends.

Her sorrowing father, T. J. CARR.

George Harryman, of Warren, Baltimore Co., Md., the last member of the Old School Baptist Church at that place, passed away April 7th, 1920, and was laid to rest near his home on the 9th to await the call of his Redeemer when he shall come again. Brother Harryman was past his fourscore years, and had been a faithful member of the church from his youth, and was an interesting talker on religious subjects. We feel he is at rest. The writer attended his funeral.

Written by request of his friends.

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

ACCORDING to previous notice, a considerable number of the Old School Predestinarian Primitive Baptist faith and order met together at Calallen, Texas, March 13th, 1921, for the purpose of constituting a church, and by mutual consent the following Elders responded: J. A. Campbell, of Corpus Christi, Texas, J. B. Bowden, of Waring, Texas, Asa Howard, of Keller, Texas, and C. Thomason, of Buna, Texas.

The council was organized by choosing Elder J. A. Campbell moderator and Elder J. B. Bowden clerk, after which proceeded in the regular way.

First, called for the reading of the articles of faith, whereupon agreed to fully adopt and confirm the articles of confession set forth by our brethren of London, England, in 1689, and reaffirmed by the old Philadelphia Association in 1742, after which by unanimous consent named the church Mt. Zion.

The church set apart the first Sunday and Saturday before in each month to meet.

Following are the names of the charter members who went into the compact: Elder J. A. Campbell and sister A. C. Campbell, Corpus Christi, Texas; brother J. T. Free and sister F. L. Free, brother E. B. Ault and sister S. E. Ault, Calallen, Texas; brother O. W. Shelton and sister Mary Shelton, Beeville, Texas, and Elder J. B. Bowden, Waring, Texas.

All being perfectly satisfied and of one mind on the cardinal principles of Bible doctrine of God our Savior, it was pronounced a regularly constituted gospel church in order.

Sang a hymn of praise to God and gave each other the right hand of fellowship. Chose Elder J. A. Campbell pastor and brother E. B. Ault clerk.

We extend a hearty welcome and invitation to any of our brethren who may contemplate coming to Texas who would like to reside on the coast. Do not forget to call on us at our regular time of church meeting in Calallen, Nueces County, fourteen miles north of Corpus Christi Bay, a fine climate as a health resort. We meet in the school building of the town. Many of our Old Baptist people seem to be gathering on the coast of Texas.

The Lord add his blessing to prosper the little church to his own glory and to the comfort of his poor and afflicted children.

ASA HOWARD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. May J. Ege, N. J., $6.00; C. S. Ratliff, Ky., $2.00; Mrs. G. W. Bradshaw, Va., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Delaware Association will be held with the Bryn Zion Church, near Clayton, Del., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 25th, 26th and 27th, 1921. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth of our faith and order to attend this meeting. We hope to see a goodly number of the ministers present also. All trains will be met at Clayton on Tuesday afternoon before the meeting from the north and south late as 6 o'clock p. m.; also train No. 453 coming south 9:40 a. m. at Clayton will be met on Wednesday morning, and train No. 458 coming north 9:51 o'clock at Clayton will be met on Wednesday morning.

J. B. MILLER, Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Warwick Church June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1921. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend. Directions will appear later.

H. C. KER, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 694 E. 125th St., or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."—1 Thess. v. 21. "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it."—Deut. xii. 32. cf. Eccl. iii. 14; James i. 17; Matt. xxviii. 20.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 89. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1921. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., April 12, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am inclosing two letters for publication in the SIGNS, if you think them worthy a place for its dear readers. I feel they are too good to file away, and would be enjoyed by many. Elder May's name is a very familiar one in its columns, and I feel this article will be read with deep interest as the true exposition or interpretation of the text. To my mind the revelations to John were clearly stated—things which must shortly come to pass, concerning the time state of the church, and are indeed great and marvelous things, as are all the works of God. The maintenance of his cause and kingdom in this very dark age is no less marvelous, and while the world stands there will be faithful witnesses to the precious and glorious truth that God reigns supreme and works all things after the counsel of his own will, and none can stay his hand or say unto him, Why or what doest thou? The knowledge of this truth is not gained by dint of study. No, the world by wisdom knows not God, men by searching cannot find out God; it comes only by revelation. The church was founded upon revelation, or revealed knowledge of God and his Son Jesus Christ, and Jesus said, Upon this rock will I build my church (the only church) and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Isaiah said, No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and the blessed promise is, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Then his church, his people, are safe, absolutely safe in his hands; hence, dear reader, can we not in sweet accord with John feel down deep in our hearts and say, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints?

I am extending this letter too far. These blessed truths are inexhaustible, and you know them and can write of them better than I. I want to say, however, the letter of our dear sister Chandler will find a sweet response in many a poor heart like my own. I was much cast down, shut in as I was for the winter, and to know that she or any one else thought of me, a poor worm of the dust, and to write me, and to find some one down in Lodebar like myself, did me inexpressible good.

My general health at the present time

is good, and my eyesight about as last year. I am now attending my regular meetings, and feel it a sweet privilege to meet and mingle with the dear saints, and send greeting to all who love our Lord Jesus.

Your little brother in hope,

P. W. SAWIN.

REVELATION XIV. 5.

"THEY are without fault before the throne of God."

DEAR BROTHER SAWIN:—I have heretofore intimated to you that perhaps in the near future I would write you on the above portion of Scripture, but have put it off from time to time until now, and even now I realize my weakness and foolishness in being so vain as to make such an impression on your mind, causing you to expect me to do so; therefore, feeling under some obligation to you, I am now making the feeble effort, with this Scripture confronting me: "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue, keepeth his soul [life] from troubles."—Prov. xxi. 23. Now, my dear brother, while I am writing in a dark and gloomy state of mind, I want to be understood that I do not think this text under consideration has reference to that great and eternal deliverance of all God's chosen and elect people, when Christ in covenant obligations stood good for all his Father's family's dealings, and entering into this relation, their Surety and covenant Head, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. Eternal redemption implies eternal release, not from the nature and terror of sin while here in the flesh, but from every jot and tittle of the inflexible law of divine justice. To speak of this in my way of expressing it, when Christ our Surety stepped in and gave his hand to stand good for all that justice required and the law demanded for their transgression, they were then everlastingly free from the claim of law and justice. Hence Christ our Surety and dear Redeemer stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, to be brought forth in due time (appointed time) and die for these poor ungodly sinners; delivered up to the law of divine justice for their transgressions or offences, and raised again for their justification. So doubtless, my dear brother, in this mysterious way all the election of grace are absolutely without fault before the eternal throne of God; but I do not believe the Scripture under consideration has reference to this state of God's chosen and redeemed people, yet I may be wrong, for I am so very gloomy minded, but feel sure that I am writing to one of his called servants, whom he has blessed to see the blessed truths more clearly than I and will correct. My conclusions have been and yet are that this text has reference to God's people in a church and disciplinary sense, and the throne here is the gospel kingdom, the great white throne. (Rev. xx. 11.) Again, "At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord, and all the nations shall be gathered unto it." These are very descriptive, for they are singing a new song before the throne in the heavenly Jerusalem, and are walking in the strait (strict) and narrow way unto life in this heavenly kingdom; therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple (gospel church). These are they who have not defiled their professional garments, (Rev. iii. 4,) and are walking with Jesus in the ordinances and precepts of the gospel kingdom blameless, or without fault, following the Lamb in all things whithersoever he goeth, and are not defiled with

women; that is, not defiled with anti-christian institutions or religious organizations contrary to sound doctrine and practice. Women, both good and bad, are spoken of in the Scriptures to represent religious systems, but these do not so much as come near the door of her house, hence are not defiled with women. They are redeemed from among men, (men of God) the reserved ones, whom the Lord their God keeps both day and night from bowing the knee to the image of Baal or taking the mark of the beast in their forehead or in their hand, therefore are they without fault before this great white throne in this heavenly kingdom (or gospel church), arrayed in fine linen clean and white, which is the righteousness of saints. So it seems to me, dear brother Sawin, that the Scriptures fully and clearly justify the idea that in all ages of the world and under all circumstances there have been a few of God's people that have not defiled their professional garments, as is said of Sardis, (Rev. iii. 4,) and they are walking with Jesus in white, for they are worthy—worthy members of the glorious gospel kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world.

Now, dear Elder, I want to say in my concluding remarks that if I am not deceived, the wickedness of this world, with all the Satanic influences that may be brought to bear upon it, will never be so great but what there will be a remnant that will not defile their professional garments, but will walk with Jesus through floods and flames, in doctrine, faith and practice, while many of God's dear children have and are going back and are not following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. So it was in the closing out of the legal world; some of God's dear children's lamps went out, and it is a matter of fact that if they had not been burning they could not have gone out. We see in like manner in this our day and time that many of the Lord's people's lamps have gone out, and many more are going out.

I must close this long and wearisome letter, which I greatly fear will burden you, but I hope you will bear with me. If I could see you, my dear brother, and talk with you face to face, I think I could make my view of this text more clear, for I cannot get my views on paper with which I am satisfied. I hope you will write me again soon.

Yours in sore trials,

W. J. MAY.

SHOCK, Ky., Feb. 23, 1921.

SULPHUR, Ky., Feb. 28, 1921.

DEAR FATHER IN ISRAEL:—I have had you in mind for a long time, and have had a desire to write you, but the fear that it was all of the flesh and not of the Lord has kept me from making the attempt. My one thought is, O that I may write something which will be of comfort to you in your lonely state, but unless the Lord has mercy on me and directs my mind in what I may write you will find no comfort therein, for without him we can do nothing. The dear Savior himself confessed that of himself he could do nothing, but the Spirit of the Father within him. Then how can poor weak worms of the dust do any good thing? For myself, I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. A bitter fountain cannot send forth sweet water. Yesterday I picked up a back number of the SIGNS and read an editorial from Elder Lefferts, in which he told of feeling so destitute of spiritual things, of having a barren mind, and I thought, Can it be possible that one so

gifted as Elder Lefferts can feel that way? and my heart went out in love and fellowship for him. I was glad he was led to write as he did, for it renewed my hope, as I have been in darkness so long, with only a bright ray here and there, that sometimes I almost give up in despair. Sometimes I think I am an Old Baptist just in a natural way, if such a thing is possible. I do not want to complain nor find fault with the dear Lord's work, for I know he makes no mistakes; he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind; but I wonder why it is, if we are all led by the same Spirit, that we are not all led in the same way. I see much beauty in the daily walk and conversation of others, and their life seems to be so calm and serene, while I am continually casting up dirt and mire. My thoughts are only evil continually, so I am made to know the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. I had hoped to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth, but very much fear I shall never be a better woman while I stay in the body of this flesh. When I am made to look away from self and behold some of the beauties of the Lord and to inquire in his temple, I can see something of his righteousness, his power and his wonderful love and mercy to poor lost sinners. He says, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you. Ye were in the world, and I have chosen you out of the world. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ the Lord. Then it is not through any of our good works. He says, Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated, before the boys were yet born, having done neither good nor evil, but that the doctrine according to election might stand. He rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and none can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou? I have been thinking of the man that was born blind and the Lord opened his eyes. After telling the people how it was done he could not make them understand, because they were unbelievers. He said, Herein is a strange and marvelous thing, that ye know not whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes. This man knew from whence his help came, and he could go and tell what great things the Lord had done for him, but not one thing does it say he had ever done for the Lord. So when the Lord opens the blind eyes and unstops the deaf ears we poor mortals are made to know from whence all our help comes, and we desire to give him all the praise. One said, He brought me up out of a horrible pit and miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock and established my goings, and put a new song in my mouth, even praise to his holy name.

Brother Sawin, please pardon me for writing you this long, rambling letter, but I have thought of you often during the long winter, wondering how it is with you. I know the loss of your eyesight is a great affliction, but feel it is the hand of a kind Providence. I have been wondering if we will ever have any more preaching at the dear old church. The Lord knows; he has promised to supply all our needs, and he knows best what we need and his promises are faithful. Sometimes I get hungry for some good preaching. O that he might build up the waste places. The SIGNS comes regularly, and

is filled with good news that is food for the hungry ones. I love to read the letters of the many good writers, for they are clothed in scriptural language, and that is a language very few can speak. None except the living in Zion can speak that way, and they did not learn it in the schools of men. They all have the same great Teacher, for they shall all be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children.

I hope that great peace which passeth understanding may be yours to enjoy through your declining days. May the felt presence of the dear Savior be ever near you, and may he lead you all the journey through. O that I, who am so vile and full of sin, and not fit to take His name on my lips, might be taught to love him more and serve him better.

Your very weak sister in a precious hope, ADDIE CHANDLER.

FREEWATER, Oregon.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been quite a long time since I bothered you with my poor writings. The reason is not because my mind has not been exercised to write, for I never get the SIGNS and read the comforting letters from the editors and other brethren but that I feel in my very soul like writing and telling them how my heart was drawn out by such unspeakable gifts, but the feeling sense of my inability to write with the comfort they do overcomes me, so I suppress my feelings and give the space to the more able ones; but the dear Lord blessed me with such a pleasant visit this summer with the brethren of my early love in Missouri and Kansas, that through the strong solicitation of many of them I feel to write once more. The subject in my mind is the church or kingdom that Jesus established while here on earth, and I desire to express my mind on the purpose of the setting up of his kingdom. I truly feel the greatness of the subject, and for this reason enter upon it with a prayerful heart. This kingdom is different from all other kingdoms, and its difference is that it is an eternal kingdom, a spiritual kingdom set up especially for the habitation of spiritual subjects. Jesus is the King sitting on his throne in his kingdom, and he is the light of it; it is set on the holy hill Zion, and the light of it cannot be hid. Jesus, in teaching his disciples of this kingdom or church, after calling for their understanding or knowledge of himself, and Peter as spokesman for all the inmates of this holy building said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, pronounced the heavenly blessing on him, which includes all the household of faith: Blessed art thou, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. God is a Spirit, and it is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom. Now comes the clinching of the nail, which is fastened in a sure place: Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. That is, all the powers of darkness can never prevail in tearing it down. It does not say that hell will not try to prevail, but it does say all its attempts will fail. O what a safe refuge for the blessed ones who have heard the voice of the King saying, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. O the blessedness, prepared in the everlasting covenant which is ordered in all things and sure. Not only prepared a safe place for the saints, but for a habitation of God in the Spirit. Dear saints of God, is not the word of our King fulfilled in your souls?

Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled; yes, filled with the riches of that divine grace which was treasured up in our King before the foundation of the world, and in the blessing bestowed on us the King says, I deliver unto you the keys of the kingdom. O such confidence, in the King, who has the key of David on his shoulder, Isaiah calls it the government on his shoulder; that is, the exclusive rule and control of his kingdom. We do not want to get the key of David, which is in the singular, only one, different from the keys he delivers unto us as the subjects of the King. The keys he delivered unto the disciples I understand include all the graces of the gospel, by which all the things the King has in store for the subjects are unlocked or made known to our mind. Jesus the King, in his last charge to his disciples, in the delivering of the keys, told them to go into all the world and teach all nations (for his kingdom covers all nations), not to the Jews only, but to the Gentile nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things he had commanded them, and "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world;" but they were to tarry at Jerusalem until the gift of the Holy Ghost was shed on them, which he had promised. On that notable day they were all in one place, of one mind, which was the mind of the King, for they had the mind of Christ. He and they were one, as he and the Father are one. Here begins the use of the keys, for the work of the Holy Ghost was to take the things of the King and show them unto them, and it was to guide them in the way of truth. So while here waiting on the King there came a noise as of a rushing mighty wind, which filled all the house, and they began to speak as the Spirit gave them utterance, and while some mocked there were some who were pricked in the heart and made to ask the apostles what they must do. So the apostle now uses one of the keys, unlocks the troubled mind and shows them what to do: repent and be baptized and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Not the Holy Ghost, but this key, unlocks the treasure of the kingdom to one of the grandest gifts the burdened soul ever enjoyed: the answer of a good conscience toward God; a perfect peace, a joy the tongue cannot express. This is only one of the many keys the saints of God have. They have a key to all the difficulties they have in this kingdom. Even while they have the thorn in the flesh and cannot get rid of it the grace of God in our King is sufficient to unlock the way out, and in all of our distress in trying to follow our King we have a key. We feel sinful and unworthy, but have the righteousness of our King to wear in his lovely palace; we have his grace to give us strength; we have a throne of grace to go to, where we get wisdom to keep us in the way; we have a Mediator to correct us when we stray and bring us back to the banqueting-house, and we have everything that is needful to give us a prosperous journey here under our King, and a blessed key that opens heaven to my enraptured soul and assures me that I shall see my King as he is and be like him. Dear companions, is it not enough? Yes, let us all sing, Hail the power of Jesus' name and crown him Lord of all.

May the blessings of God rest upon all the happy subjects of the kingdom, is the prayer of one of the least, if one at all.

J. T. BARNES.

INHERITANCE.

"In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

I am past seventy-four years of my life, and for some cause I feel like saying a few things through the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES on this very great and interesting subject. Paul had been leading up to this wonderful thought which gladdens the hearts of all true believers in Jesus Christ. This inheritance is incorruptible and undefiled, and fadeth not away; it is reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. (1 Peter i. 4; Psalms xvi. 5; Eph. i. 14; iii. 5.) Somewhere in the above text will be found a complete fullness from the early life of the heir of promise to the resurrection. To this heir is given life, (Eph. ii. 1,) repentance, (Romans ii. 4; 2 Peter iii. 9; Isaiah xlii. 16; xlviii. 17,) faith, which is a fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, and all things that pertain to life and godliness. For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Not only these, but more is found in the text and in the christian's life. Jesus said, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. O how we hate tribulation! We often think that if we were the children of God we would escape these things. Paul, who wrote our text, claimed to be a wretched man, yet he said, We glory in tribulation also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. Then in Romans v. 6–11, the complete redemption and salvation of his people. The children of God suffer. "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."—Phil. i. 29. Christ also once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds by Christ. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. So then it is written, Let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Until that light shined in our hearts we were in darkness; the way that seemed good to us was the way of death. We knew not that we needed a Leader; we did not know that we were blind; we did not know nor understand what the Lord meant when he said, I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them. Our hope is that we are not forsaken. He who was rich became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich. So poor was he that he had not where to lay his head. He paid our debts, made satisfaction for our sins and freely justified us by his grace through the redemption by his blood. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He is our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, our Mediator and Intercessor. My substance was not hid from thee when I

was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect, and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me. All mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them. I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. I believe in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ, so am giving nothing in the seventy-five million dollar drive in order, as its advocates say, to help put the crown on Christ. This we did once when we put the thorns on his head, nailed his hands and feet to the cross, pierced his side and spit upon him.

Yours in hope,

D. R. TURNER.

CERULEAN, Ky.

BUFFALO VIEW, Alberta, Canada.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—On receiving my SIGNS to-day, bearing date of January 15th, 1921, my heart was made sad upon reading Elder Ker's editorial entitled "Lamentations." O how I would love to write a message of love and exhortation to the dear saints of God that would be of profit to us and to the glory of God, who has done so much for us. But am I led by the right Spirit in this desire? God alone knows. Or can this poor rebellious worm comfort Zion? No, not unless governed by that blessed Spirit and those who read are blessed with understanding; all, from first to last, must come from the Giver of every good and perfect gift or all is lost. I might take up much space lamenting my weakness and inability, or incapabilities, both temporal and spiritual, which in themselves are evident enough without repeating here, but my love for the brethren and the cause is unfeigned. I want to with shame confess in the beginning that of a truth I am one of the most rebellious of God's children, if indeed I may claim that exalted relationship. I must give a short sketch of my travels, in order that those who are strangers to me in the flesh may get the full sense of my meaning. My experience does not differ greatly, I trust, from other of God's people redeemed from nature to grace. I was made to rejoice with joy unspeakable about twenty-six or twenty-seven years ago. Then, O then, with shame I must confess how shamefully I neglected the instructions of my blessed Master, and all the instructions so minutely described and recorded in his holy word by his inspired apostles. Now it seems very plain to me, after twenty-five years of a life wasted, as it seems, that I have a desire to warn others of the danger of falling into the pit wherein I wandered twenty-five years and suffering all the consequences of the error of disobedience. When I was born of incorruptible Seed, as I humbly hope, I was a child; I saw as a child, I walked as a child, I talked as a child, but as I grew I did not grow in grace and the knowledge of the truth. I had only the beginning of wisdom (the fear of the Lord). O wisdom, could I have embraced her, had I sought her counsel, had I bound her to my neck, had I said to her, Thou art my sister, my near kinswoman. Solomon, the wisest man that ever lived, except Jesus, devoted thirty-one chapters, directly and indirectly, to the subject of the importance of getting wisdom, and he also said, With

all thy getting get understanding. O if I had read every verse of the book of Proverbs slowly, carefully and prayerfully, and had I dwelt especially on the sixth chapter of Matthew, nineteenth to thirty-fourth verses, as was my Redeemer's instruction. Why did I not harken to that instruction? If I only had read with the wisdom and understanding (which our Savior has promised to give to them that ask him) the twenty-fourth verse of the sixth chapter of Matthew. Here is the whole cause of the lukewarm condition of the bride in this ungodly day. We are trying, right in the face of our blessed Master's instructions not to, to serve God and mammon, and the deplorable fact is we do not know we are doing it. You see I was ignorant, and the ignorant man of course does not know he is ignorant; if he did he would be wise enough to seek wisdom and understanding. I thought God was wisdom, or rather the fear of God, and when I was delivered from the fear of eternal punishment and felt my sins were forgiven I had wisdom, and, comparatively speaking, thought wisdom was possessed in a lump. O was ever any one so blind? "Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird."—Prov. i. 17. Therefore, being ignorant of the deception of the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience, and thinking that the Proverbs, and all the "thou shalt nots" were to the children of disobedience, or, as I interpreted the Scriptures, the unregenerate, and making the excuse that I must support my family, I set out with this in view, and as the Lord prospered me I in my ignorance never knew when they were provided for, thinking I must lay up for old age, and many other excuses that the flesh is clever in using to blind the children with, and instead of putting the service of God first of all I made his service a secondary matter, and soon I was worshiping the god of this world first and my Redeemer second. Finally I gave up all outward worship entirely, going away up into Canada, where there were no church privileges, no, not even brethren to associate with, under the delusion I was trying to provide for my family. Now during all this time I had lost none of my love for God, or my desire for spiritual things, but thought this was the lot of a christian in this world, going with head bowed down and suffering untold agony. O could I have embraced wisdom, could I have taken his yoke upon me and learned of him. His yoke is easy and his burden light, as I have learned after twenty-five long years of servitude under the yoke of mammon, and in disobedience to my blessed Master. The wages of sin is death. I have learned that the children of God do not have to be criminals to be sinners. Solomon says in Ecclesiastes xii. 13, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." O wisdom, thou art a jewel, and obedience is better than sacrifice.

Now, brethren, do not accuse this poor rebel of being weak in the doctrine of predestination. I believe it in its entirety; it is God-honoring, and without it there would be no haven of rest for our tempest-tossed souls. But let us show our faith by our works; let us be not only hearers of the word, but doers also. May it please God to awaken us to duty, and bless Zion as in days of old.

Dear brethren editors, I humbly submit this letter to your judgment as to whether it is worthy a place in the dear SIGNS or not. It of course is from my heart, but my heart is full of all uncleanness and

vanity, and I dare not trust it in the most trivial matters, much less in essaying to comfort, instruct or edify the children of God, whom he has purchased with his own blood. May our indulgent Father pardon our transgressions for Jesus' sake.

An ignorant rebel, awakened I hope,

G. W. HORNER.

ST. JOSEPH, Mo., Jan. 10, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for I feel it is about all the preaching I get, except occasionally there is service at the dear old church at Unity, in Platte County, (twenty-five miles from St. Joseph) where my membership is, and indeed it is one hallowed spot to me, for my father, Elder John T. Murdock, (who was a lifelong contributor to the SIGNS) and my mother both belonged there, as did also my husband's brother and father. I was raised under the belief and have experienced the ever-convincing proof that the only way we can be saved is by grace, and that by the determinate foreknowledge of God, and that he willed and planned it all before the foundation of the world. I, a poor unworthy child, am seeking and want to know and hear all of this truth. What a comfort the letters in the SIGNS written by the dear brethren and sisters are to me. Dear brother, it was a great pleasure to me to read your good editorial on that grand subject of the resurrection of the dead. I heard others speak of it also. How convincing its words were. I think this editorial was in the September 15th number. Amid the toils and encumbrances of this life we have the comforting assurance that we have one Friend to whom we can turn when we are truly humbled and penitent. Dear brethren, ask in his name that we unworthy little ones may ever be found in this humble and penitent condition, and we will be ever grateful.

Unworthily,

ELLA D. THOMAS.

GRANVILLE, Ohio, Jan. 24, 1921.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I want to tell you and Elder Lefferts how very much I enjoyed your editorials on the condition of the Old School Baptist churches to-day. I hope you will write again and again on the subject, if the Lord will. I believe all papers should publish it, and that the preachers should not cease to exhort the people to be diligent in every good work. The Bible says, In prayers and supplications make your wants known. There has been too much making compromise with error in dealing with wrongs in the church and evil doers; they had better hew to the line, as you say, and not make compromise with error. I hope you will continue to write on this subject as the Lord gives you liberty, for it seems to be a time when the people of the Old School Baptist churches should cry mightily unto God.

It seems as if I were taking liberty in writing to you and Elder Lefferts as I have about this, but when I read your editorial I wanted very much to talk with you both about it.

Sincerely, KATE RUGG.

MOUNT AYR, Ind., April 30, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please change my address from Bismark, Mo., to Mount Ayr, Ind., and much oblige your old friend, who has taken the SIGNS since 1860. I am ninety years old, and still able to write and preach. I have been preaching sixty-seven years in Ohio, Iowa and Missouri. Now I will preach here if they wish me to.

Yours for Christ's sake,

R. S. BANKS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1921.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JOHN V. 4.

"FOR an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had."

We are requested by a sister living in Texas to give some expression upon the above text, and we feel willing to do the best we can.

By reading the preceding chapter it will be seen that Jesus was performing miracles in Galilee, after which there was a feast of the Jews, and he went up to Jerusalem. He, being a law-abiding Jew, attended the feast days as well as the fast days, though not always, as it seems from careful reading. In fact, he came not to keep the law from a literal standpoint, but in the spirit of it. However, while at the feast at Jerusalem he was found in the temple, and no doubt took part in the feast. We are told that at Jerusalem by the sheep market there was a pool, called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches, and that in them lay a great multitude of impotent folk, blind, halt and withered, waiting for the moving of the water. This to our view sets forth the entire law, through which was the hope of the Jews. Of all the multitude waiting at the pool we have no reason to suppose that one was other than a Jew. Jerusalem was the pride and admiration of that nation, and outside of it little seemed worth while. Their worship was there, the law was read there, the fast days and the feast days were there and the pool through which, together with the work of an angel, healing was done. It was there also that the Jews bought and sold and got gain. Notwithstanding the fact that they made the temple "a den of thieves," to them Jerusalem was "the holy city." All things pertaining to the temple worship were according to the commandments of the law, and from that standpoint cannot be criticised, but all those things were mere shadows and soon to pass away. The term "five porches" seems rather odd, and particularly so if the pool was foursquare, but if round or octagon it could have had more if there be no significance in the number five. The number is full, as are the numbers three and seven so often used in the Scriptures, and may signify the five books of Moses embracing the whole law by which the Israelites were governed and through which they hoped and expected justification before God, and at last eternal life. But no law was given that could give life, if so righteousness would have been by the law. Therefore their hope was not "a good hope through grace," nor could they be justified by the law of Moses. It being all, however, they had, they had nothing else to hope in nor depend upon, hence the multitude of blind, lame, halt and withered were in the five porches of the pool waiting for healing, and some were literally healed of whatsoever disease they had. This brings us to consider the ceremonial cleansing of the Jews through the blood of goats and calves offered by the high priest. Such cleansing was only outward, and for one year only, then there was again a remembrance of sins and another offering neces-

sary. This shows that the law in its entirety, represented by the five porches, could never make the comers thereunto perfect; every ordinance showed in itself imperfection.

The angel that went down at a certain season and troubled the water, making healing possible, was not, in our understanding, such as is seen in pictures, with wings, sometimes called, without authority, "angelic spirits." According to the Bible definition of the word "angel," it means "a ministering spirit," or one sent to minister. Let us not forget that was an age of miracles, and some men who followed not Jesus had power to cast out devils and do many other wonderful works. We therefore conclude that the angel that troubled the water was a man, a ministering spirit, with peculiar power, no doubt of God, to give the water healing properties or powers, as it were. The term "an angel went down" simply means that he visited the pool at certain seasons, and has not a shadow of significance that he descended from heaven.

It is plain to be seen that all who were in the porches depended upon "instrumentalities"—the water, the angel and their own ability to get into the water when troubled, but there was one man there, a certain man, yet his hope was in the law, or, in other words, expected to assist in his healing by some day getting into the pool when the water was troubled. It matters not how undone one may be, he or she keeps on trying, hoping that some day they will be able to perform that which seems necessary in their salvation, but, as to that man, Jesus must come revealing his power and salvation. To the poor helpless man Jesus appeared and asked him if he would be made whole. The man replied, , "Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me." This demonstrates the utter ignorance of that whole nation of the power of the Godhead, gospel blessings and eternal salvation. Not a thought above the law, no hope except in works, no justification except through the deeds of the law. The man did not know Jesus, nor had he the slightest conception of what was about to take place, but Jesus knew him, and was there at the right moment to do the will of God in showing forth his power and his doctrine of election. He did not need the assistance of the angel, the water nor any man to put the object of his love into the pool, but simply "spake and it was done," saying to the man, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath." Marvelous power, infinite mercy and abounding grace. It was indeed sabbath to him, a rest from all his efforts to be healed, a day of strength in the Lord, able to do the commandments of Jesus, which are not grievous. How wonderful that the blind see, the lame walk, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and that the poor have the gospel preached unto them, and how glad poor sinners are that they are not offended in Jesus, but rather rejoice in his power and eternal Godhead.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear;
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

After the man was healed and took up his bed the Jews found fault with him, saying, This is the sabbath, it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed, but he said, "He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed and walk." Self-righteous men always find fault with those healed by the Lord for not doing

as they do in keeping the sabbath, praying three times a day, giving of all they possess, so they say, fasting and feasting, but they are, after being healed, under another law to God written in the heart and in the mind; no longer have they hope in the pool, nor are they found in the five porches, but rather in the temple of the living God worshiping him in the beauty of holiness, ascribing greatness to his name for their healing and eternal salvation through the blood of the Lamb. Well do they realize that an Angel indeed, God's only Son, his ministering Spirit, came down from heaven to minister and to give his life a ransom for them. The pool at Jerusalem is no more, but a fountain has been opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of spiritual Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness, and in this fountain the lame, the halt, the blind and the dead in sin are washed, healed and made clean every whit. K.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in May (29th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

POSTPONED.

ON account of serious illness in the families of some who entertain, the Ebenezer Church, of Baltimore city, Md., has decided not to hold the session of the Baltimore Association this year. We regret this, but feel it is best under the circumstances.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Moderator.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, March 2nd, 1921, at the home of the bride, in Duart, Ontario, Annie Campbell and Duncan Carmichael, both of Duart, Ontario.

By the same, at the home of the bride's father, in Palmyra, Ontario, April 13th, 1921, Christena Carey and John Clifford Sinclair, of Duart, Ontario.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Sarah Ann Rohrer Ford, daughter of Daniel and Elizabeth Rohrer, was born near Springfield, Ohio, February 27th, 1846, and departed this life November 28th, 1920, aged 74 years, 9 months and 1 day. At the age of twelve years she came with her parents to Putnam County, where she had since resided. She was married to Jonathan G. Ford in August, 1863, and to that union were born twelve children, two of whom preceded her to the grave. She also tenderly cared for seven stepchildren, who loved her as a mother. She was a member of the Sugar Creek Church. She is also survived by one sister, Mary E. Deffenbaugh, of Rimer, Ohio, and one brother, Wm. Rohrer, of Vaughnsville, Ohio, with a host of grandchildren, relatives and friends, who mourn their loss. Mother had passed on life's highway the stone that marks the highest point.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder A. F. Dove, of Van Buren, Ohio, who spoke comfortingly to those who know the truth, after which her remains were laid to rest to await the resurrection.

PERRY T. FORD.

Mrs. M. A. Stovall (nee Tinny) was born December 10th, 1832, and was married to J. C. Stovall August 10th, 1851. To that union were born six children, two dying in infancy and J. R. Stovall died at the age of thirty-five. Two survive her: Mrs. Katie Ussery and Mrs. Mattie Cathorn. Some time after she was married she received a hope in Christ and united with the Missionary Baptists, but remained with them only a short time, then came to the Primitive Baptists in the state of Mississippi and was baptized by Elder Huddleston, living a consistent member until the end. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of the predestination of all things and the sovereignty of God. She came to Texas in 1869, and settled in Kaufman County. About the year 1870 Elm Ridge Church was constituted, she being a charter member. She had been a member forty years, and missed but one meeting. On April 14th, 1921, the end came. A mother in Israel has gone to await the resurrection morn. We weep not as those who have no hope.

Her remains were laid to rest April 15th, in the presence of a large concourse of relatives and friends.

Her pastor, W. W. SLAUGHTER.

William Parker Hobensack, son of William and Mary A. Hobensack, was born June 25th, 1896, and departed this life February 19th, 1921, after an illness of only four days from diphtheria of a malignant form. The deceased was married to Elvie Y. Yeagle in his father's home, Ivyland, Pa., December 19 h, 1917, by Elder Charles W. Vaughn, of Hopewell, N. J. He was a firm believer in the doctrine which the Old School Baptists preach, and attended their meetings very often, of which some of our members know something about. He died in his own home in Ivyland, Pa., and on account of the dread disease there was no one present but his beloved wife and her mother, Mrs. Yeagle, at the time. He is survived by his wife, father and mother, two brothers and four sisters, five nephews and one niece. He was drafted in the late war and was in school service, but not over seas. He was of a very genial disposition, a loving husband and son. Nobody knows how much we all miss him. We wish to thank our brethren, sisters and friends for the one hundred and fifty or more letters of sympathy which we received after his death.

On account of the terrible disease of which he died he had to buried the next day, in the midst of a howling and blinding snowstorm. We could get no minister of our faith and order at the funeral, so the writer just said as the body was lowered in the grave, We commit our dear son's body to the grave. A loving husband, a good brother, and may he rest with his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ forever. Amen.

His father, WM. HOBENSACK.

[WE feel to add a few lines to the above obituary. It was our privilege to know William. He was a fine, handsome man, and loved by many. Brother Hobensack says, "Nobody knows how much we miss him." We think there is one man in the world who knows how much, and that enters into the feeling of loneliness and sadness of heart with our dear brother and sister in their great loss. May the Lord bless and sustain them.—K.]

Stephen Matthew Ball, our brother in Christ, died suddenly at his home in Buckeystown, Md., April 25th, 1921. He was born January 28th, 1877, the son of brother John L. Ball and of brother Ball's first wife, who was Miss Mollie Cawood. Brother Matthew Ball is survived by two brothers and two sisters: John Ball, of Frederick, Md., Garnett Ball, of Ijamsville, Md., Mrs. Mary Braden, of Paeonian Springs, Va., and sister Susie Dade, of Jefferson, Md. Brother Ball was married March 21st, 1900, to Miss Louise White, daughter of brother Bennie White, of Poolesville, Md. He was the father of eight children, one dying in infancy, and one daughter, Elizabeth, met her death by drowning last summer while attempting to save the life of a girl friend. The other six children, four sons and two daughters, are all living at home. On the third Sunday of last September it was my privilege to baptize both brother Ball and his wife into the membership of the New Valley Church. For quite some time before they came into the church and ever afterward both of them have been faithful attendants at all the meetings of the church, both at New Valley and at Broad Run, Md. He was faithful to all his obligations as a member of the church, had a kind, loving and generous heart, which won him a host of friends, and was very tender in his feelings toward the shortcomings of others. To me he was a personal and devoted friend, and as pastor I shall greatly miss him. It is solid comfort that we have the promise that God will not lay upon us more than we are able to bear, but that he will with every temptation make the way to escape, that we may be able to bear it.

At the funeral I used the words in Romans viii. 38, 39, hoping the Holy Spirit might apply the glorious truth therein to our afflicted sister Louise and her family, as well as to the bereaved church and to the comfort of all hearts who in the death of brother Ball have lost a loved one. God deals with his children in a mystery, his path we cannot trace with the aid of erring human reason. May he grant all the sorrowing ones faith to accept what he gives. We feel sure our God is not dealing with us in wrath, but in love and mercy. L.

Randolph Triplett, of Kerens, W. Va., died at the home of his son, Page Triplett, Baltimore, Md., March 15th, 1921, aged 83 years, 6 months and 17 days. He was married November 10th, 1861, to Sarah Triplett, and lived the greater part of his married life at Kerens, W. Va. After the death of his wife he visited among his children, and was with his son in Baltimore when he was taken ill with pneumonia; other complications set in, and after three weeks he passed peacefully away. He leaves six children to mourn their loss: Mrs. Talbott Chenowith, of Kerens, Mrs. Ray Ward, of Elkins, and Mrs. John Bolton, of Buckhannon, all of West Virginia; Forris, of Cumberland, Page, of Baltimore, and Floyd, of North Carolina. Three children preceded him in death. He also leaves several grandchildren, one brother and many other relatives and friends. He was a good, kind husband and father, friend and neighbor, and was widely known and highly respected as a citizen. He never made a public profession of faith, but his family and friends knew by his conversation and daily walk that he had a hope in Christ. For many years he was as faithful as the members in attending the meetings of the Old School Baptist Church at Leading Creek with his wife, not allowing his work to keep him from the Saturday meetings, and was ever ready to help entertain and support the church. He firmly believed in salvation by grace and all the doctrine advocated by the Baptists, and

spoke of it often in the last years of his life. His children may feel assured that he heard the Master say, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. May the Lord enable them to say, Thy will be done, and to realize that their loss is his eternal gain. (MRS.) E. E. WORKMAN.

Appleton D. Leonard, son of Peter and Malinda (Morse) Leonard, was born June 11th, 1855, in Prattsville, Greene Co., N. Y., and died April 16th, 1921. Two brothers and two sisters are left of the family. He had lived with his sister Mary, in Otego, N. Y., since 1910. Brother Peter Leonard's home was an Old School Baptist home, and the record has been kept good since he and his wife died. Brother Abner Leonard is a member of the Otego Church. The other three children are firm believers in the truth as it is in Jesus: John, Martha Cole and Mary. For some time Appleton had been reading some of the old SIGNS before it was published in pamphlet form, and would say, How new they seem, how good they are! He surely died in living faith in Christ. God bless all who mourn his absence.

Funeral services were held April 20th, at his home in Otego, the writer officiating. Burial was in Otego.

D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Catherine Walker, Ontario, $3.00; Mrs. Sirena Bowen, Mo., $1.00; Henry Merryman, Md., $3.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Delaware Association will be held with the Bryn Zion Church, near Clayton, Del., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 25th, 26th and 27th, 1921. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth of our faith and order to attend this meeting. We hope to see a goodly number of the ministers present also. All trains will be met at Clayton on Tuesday afternoon before the meeting from the north and south late as 6 o'clock p. m.; also train No. 453 coming south 9:40 a. m. at Clayton will be met on Wednesday morning, and train No. 458 coming north 9:51 o'clock at Clayton will be met on Wednesday morning.

J. B. MILLER, Clerk.

THE Delaware River Association will hold its regular session with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., commencing Wednesday, June 1st, and continuing three days. All those of our faith and order are invited to visit us, especially ministering brethren. Those coming from Philadelphia on Tuesday stop at Southampton and inquire for Deacon C. B. Reeves. Those coming to Ivyland from New Hope or Philadelphia inquire for Wm. Hobensack.

WM. HOBENSACK, Church Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Warwick Church June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1921. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend.

Those coming by way of New York will take train leaving Jersey City, Erie Railroad, at 3:35 p. m. Tuesday, daylight saving time, which is one hour faster than standard. Get tickets for Warwick, N. Y., and change cars at Greycourt. Those coming from the west will take train leaving Susquehanna at 6:30 a. m. Train leaves Port Jervis at 3:10 p. m., connecting at Greycourt. These trains will be met and friends cared for. Those leaving New York Wednesday morning will take train leaving Jersey City at 9:30. Those coming from the west Wednesday morning will take trains leaving Port Jervis either at 6:15 or 11:28. All arriving Wednesday will go to the meetinghouse from the trains.

H. C. KER, Pastor.

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"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."—1 Thess. v. 21. "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it."—Deut. xii. 32. cf. Eccl. iii. 14; James i. 17; Matt. xxviii. 20.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 89. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1921. NO. 11.

POETRY.

THE UNSEEN PATH.

THERE is a path which lies unseen
By fowl or vulture's eye,
Though seeking prey with sight more keen
Than all the birds that fly.

This path is known alone to God
And those whom he has led,
Where lions' whelps have never trod,
Though prowling to be fed.

This path leads to the holy ground
Of Him who is most high,
Which the fierce lion ne'er hath found,
Nor even passed thereby.

Though blessed with strength and keenest sense
To capture hidden prey,
'Tis seen alone by faith, and hence
They fail to find the way.

Eye hath not seen, nor hath ear heard
The things which are prepared
For those who know and love the Lord,
Whose arm of power is bared.

For those who trust and lean thereon,
He is our strength and shield;
He bids our anxious fears begone,
Our wounded hearts be healed.

He is our guardian, and he hath
Been our guide and stay;
He leads his children in this path—
'Tis found no other way.

ALFRED E. TITUS.

TRENTON, N. J.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PSALMS XXXIV. 19.

"MANY are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."

The above Scripture has reference to Jesus Christ the righteous, and there are many like passages. The next verse reads: "He [the Father] keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken." All the law and the prophets must be fulfilled, so we will go now to the first passover and see something that points to the subject (Jesus). "In one house [not in every house] shall it be eaten: thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof."—Exodus xii. 46; Numbers ix. 12. No stranger shall eat of it, thus showing that none but Israel shall partake of the ordinance. For some time I have had in mind to pen a few thoughts on the verse at the head of this article, also the connections, which are all according to the prophecy. It takes experience to teach us the truth of the Scriptures, hence David in speaking as he did in chapter thirty-four had been afflicted, not only bodily, but in spirit, for we hear him, Psalms xxv. 18, "Look

upon mine affliction, and my pain; and forgive all my sins." David, like all of God's humble poor, learned obedience as well as patience by the things he suffered. He said, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes."—Psalms cxix. 71. "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." Afflictions are a part of our inheritance. Bodily afflictions profiteth but little, yet they are as necessary as spiritual affliction. Paul said, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—2 Cor. iv. 17. We may now go back in our life and begin where we feel the Lord first made known to us our weakness and dependence, and come down this road. We can soon see by our experience the absolute necessity of all our affliction. We can say, as did David, "Before I was afflicted I went astray," and yet in all our affliction Jesus was afflicted. The prophet saw him in great affliction, and said, "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not."—Isaiah liii. 3. All this the prophet saw, as it had already come to pass. The spirit that was in them did testify to the truth that was fulfilled in the days of Herod. Jesus as a man suffered; he had sorrow, grief and forebodings of mind, afflictions. Surely he hath borne our pricks and carried our sorrows, yet we did (according to the foreknowledge and purpose of God) esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. Every pain we ever had Jesus had, every sorrow we ever had Jesus knew and suffered, for he bore them and carried them all the days of old. Often it seems that the afflictions of the body are relieved by medicine or change of altitude, for by experience I know. I have been, and am yet, badly afflicted in body and in mind, and my bodily affliction is such that the doctor said I must change climates, which I have done, and can feel a great relief. Of the three physicians only one has ever given me the right treatment and right advice, so I fully believe this certain doctor was the only one acting by divine Providence, as my present state and condition show improvement. I am here in the mountains, nourished and kept by Providence, and feel to soon be able to get out. The disease (tuberculosis) is generally incurable, but in the mountains of Judea the divine Healer sprang forth, the star of Bethlehem, so I love the mountains, and hope to soon be so I can visit the dear people of God in the land of Israel, there to relate the dealings of the Lord with his people. Being shut up and not able to be among those I love is a great affliction, but the dear Lord has a glorious purpose in all I (or any one else) have to undergo in this life. Many are the afflictions of the righteous. I say this because Jesus is the righteous, and all the Father gave him are righteous because of the righteousness of Jesus being imputed to them, not that they are righteous in Adam, the earthly Father, for first we bear the image of the earthy Adam, and all the inherent sin, and as we have borne the image of the first Adam we shall also bear the image of the second Adam, and all the inherent blessings in righteousness. I get lonely here, so far away from those of my experience, and have had to undergo hardships, having lost about all my holdings of earth, but the Lord has greatly blessed me in many ways. The dear old SIGNS comes laden with good things, my brethren and sisters are good

to me and write me often. I pray the Lord to be with them and bless them, and last of all, but not the least, may God grant that no isms or divisions get in among his dear children to mar their peace, and may they be a unit in doctrine and fellowship.

As ever, your brother in bonds and affliction, J. B. BOWDEN.

WARING, Texas, March 2, 1921.

HOPE HOUSE, ROCHDALE, England, March 23, 1920.

DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER:—Grace, mercy and peace be multiplied unto you. I was glad to receive your letter and to read of the spiritual interest you evinced in the welfare of the church at Hope Chapel. I read your letter to the members after the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and they expressed their pleasure in your interest, and decided that a reply should be sent you as from the church, signed by the pastor and deacons, which you will receive in due course. This letter is my own personal desire to communicate with you. I was glad to hear of the Lord's goodness and mercy to you and your dear spouse. May his loving-kindness still attend you both on your pilgrimage path and give you daily cause to raise new Ebenezers to his praise, and his blessing rest on your labors in the ministry, enabling you to preach the "unsearchable riches of Christ" on the basis of free and sovereign grace; on no other ground can they be called unsearchable. Anything that the so-called free will of fallen sinners can understand or frustrate is not unsearchable (1 Cor. ii. 14); but it is given to poor sensible sinners born of the Holy Spirit as objects of everlasting love and predestinating grace to know the things that are freely given them of God (Luke x. 21), and the Holy Spirit leads them and teaches them the deep things of God (Isaiah liv. 13), and thus they are made wise unto salvation. Now as in this way we have received the gospel and our commission to preach it, we are the servants of God, and say as did Paul the apostle, "For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."—Gal. i. 12. So we have this confidence, that the gospel which we preach, being yea and amen in Christ Jesus, shall not return unto him void; though we cannot always see it prosper, yet speaking the things we have tasted, handled and seen of the Word of life we can leave the issue with our covenant triune God. We are living in solemn times, the state of the world, upheaval and strife, murder and riot, selfishness, falling of kingdoms, utter disregard of God and his word, the spread of false doctrine, the worldliness of the professing churches, their denial of God's word, their outcry for reunion, which Scripture calls a "confederacy," (See Isaiah viii. 19), re-spiritualism, the remarkable movement of the Jews toward Palestine, all seem to point to the time of the Gentiles being nearly run out. God help us to be faithful and watchful to strengthen the things that remain, as shepherds to feed the "flock of the slaughter," as watchmen to warn, &c., so that when the chief Shepherd shall appear we may be glad, and not be ashamed at his coming. I have been pastor here four years the first Sunday in April. It has been a trying time in many ways, but hitherto the Lord has helped me, and at home and abroad he has been pleased to bless my feeble ministry from time to time so that I am helped to hold on my way, often faint yet pursuing. There are ten of us in family, two very delicate in health. I am fifty-four years of age and my wife is forty-nine. We celebrated our

silver wedding last August, so you are traveling some distance ahead of us. Whether we shall be spared to cover the same ground our gracious God alone knows, but we hope the end of the journey will be to meet where Jesus is, where pain and suffering, sin and sorrow are unknown. (I am writing this upon my bed.)

I smiled at the epithet "Hardshell Baptist." Does it mean your armor is too hard for them to crack? If so, good.

Excuse more, as I am tired.

With christian love, wishing you every new covenant blessing, and your wife the same, I remain yours in the gospel,

J. D. HUNT.

HOPE STRICT BAPTIST CHAPEL,
ROACHDALE, England,
April 14, 1920.

DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST:—The church at Hope Chapel, as above, sends love and greeting in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and desires to express its pleasure at your interest in its welfare as a church that maintains the glorious doctrine of free and sovereign grace as set forth in the holy Scriptures and proclaimed by the apostles sent forth by our Lord, and also proclaimed by the Puritan fathers, and later by such worthies as William Gadsby, J. C. Philpot, John Kershaw (for upwards of fifty years pastor of this church, whose memoir we are glad to know has been blessed of God to you, and we may say also to many thousands of God's saints. "He, being dead, yet speaketh."), and is now in our day proclaimed by a goodly number of godly men raised up by God to proclaim the "unsearchable riches of Christ." We rejoice to know that there is in your country a people taught of God who love these precious truths, and that you have men raised up by the Lord to proclaim them in your midst. We wish for you, and those associated with you in the bonds of Christ's love, that the great Head of the church may abundantly pour out upon you his Holy Spirit, and enable you to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, that he may bless your labors in the ministry to the comfort of souls and to the building up of the saints in their most holy faith. We pray that our gracious God may spare you many years to be a blessing to his church, and enable you to feed the flock of the slaughter which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Our church celebrated its centenary in 1910, and we send you a copy of the souvenir issued at that time, in which you will find a detailed history of God's cause here. We crave an interest in your prayers that God may continue to bless his word and uphold his cause here, and we pray our covenant God to bless you and your spouse and enrich you with every new covenant blessing in Christ Jesus.

With our united christian love, yours on behalf of the church at Hope Chapel,

J. D. HUNT, Pastor.

JOHN JAMES BOLTON }
WILLIAM RILEY } Deacons

[THE foregoing letters were written to Elder James M. Adams, of Monroe, Ga., and by him sent to the SIGNS.—ED.]

BELINGTON, W. Va., Feb., 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—After a long delay I am remitting for my past due subscription to your valuable paper, and I want to say I appreciate your kindness in sending it to me when I was so neglectful in sending my remittance. I surely enjoy reading the editorials and correspondence, and will say of many articles I read that

a single one is worth a year's subscription; so write on, as I feel sure you are feeding many who are deprived of hearing any preaching except through the SIGNS, and if you were able to look into each heart that is made to overflow with joy by reading the columns of the SIGNS you would be well paid for your labor. May God bless you all with such things as you have need of, and direct your minds and make you able to go down in deep waters and bring out the hidden mysteries of his word. I am deprived of church privileges in winter, as I live several miles from any church of our faith and order, and bad weather is a hindrance to me in getting to our meetings. I also live in a community surrounded by the do and live religion, and the foreordination and predestination of God is despised. They say that if God did this he is an unjust God, and that it is left to us to decide whether we will be saved, and whether we will accept Christ and do his commandments and live forever. We could blame God for many things if we dared to; for instance, we might say, Why did he predestinate man to die? Why did he not let him live to a ripe old age and then step over into glory? and why did he not speak us into existence grown up, with no sorrow or pain? He has all power, and could have made this world a paradise, but he is a God that created all things for a purpose, and as it pleased him. He is under no law, but is over all, and Ruler over everything, and works all things after the counsel of his own will and his own pleasure. His word says he has an elect people, and for their sake time is to be shortened, and there has to be something done for man besides what he is able to do for himself. He must be born again or he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. He is helpless in this spiritual birth, just as helpless as he was in his natural birth. It took the natural birth to make him an heir of his earthly father, and it takes the spiritual birth to make him an heir of the heavenly Father. He is brought by a way he knew not, and by revelation of God, so he travels that path which the vulture's eye hath not seen nor the lion's whelp trod. This path is seen only by the spiritual eye, and those who have been given an eye to see it and travel it have no honor of their own, all the honor is to God, who opened up their understanding and gave them eyes to see and hearts to understand. No wonder the apostle said, By the grace of God I am what I am; and that a good man's steps are ordered of God; and that those who are blessed of God shall inherit the earth. Yes, they shall continue to come in this world until all get here that are blessed of the Lord. There is no power to hinder their coming, for he says it is not his will that any of these little ones should perish. Then he will not fail, but is faithful to his promises. If things are as they tell us, what will they do with the Gentile nation when they lived and died out of the gospel dispensation? and what will they do with those who die in infancy and who are not able to give their hearts to God or accept him and his plan of salvation? John heard them all singing, Thou hast redeemed us, when he looked into heaven, and they all sang the same song. I believe every one has to see himself as helpless as a child if he ever enters heaven. I feel more helpless than a little child, and my trust is in God alone to save me or I perish, for none of my works will do it. When I look back over my life I see nothing I have done to deserve any blessing, and yet I have already received a thousand blessings. I

have now passed my forty-first mile-post.

Do as you deem best with this rambling letter, for I can only give such as I have. Asking you all to remember me at the throne of grace, I will close. If I am saved it is by the grace of God alone, who is able to save to the uttermost.

Your sister,

JUDAH PARSONS.

RECONCILIATION.

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

Reconciliation means to adjust, to settle, to bring together; restoration to harmony. Those who are not reconciled have a difference, or obstacle, or barrier between them. To reconcile them this must be removed. In common things with man some of these differences can be removed, as debts, misunderstandings, business differences, &c., and some cannot, as race differences. Now, in my opinion, there is a race difference between God's people and the world, the unregenerate. Goats or wolves in sheep's clothing cannot become sheep; neither can God's chosen sheep become goats, wolves or people of the world, for they are chosen out of the world. This is a race difference which remains; not as two seeds according to the flesh, but one natural and the other spiritual, very different. Now, sin destroyed the harmony between God and his people. They cannot be reconciled until sin is removed. A close study of the Bible will show us how sin was removed and God and his people reconciled. The plan is God's plan, not man's plan, for it was made before man was created. It consists of three parts or stages.

1. Away back before the world was, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, constituting the Godhead, formed the plan, or covenant, by which God and his people were to be reconciled. God in his foreknowledge foresaw the reconciliation before the world was. This is the first part, and may be called covenant reconciliation, the covenant to be fulfilled in time and reconciliation completed.

2. In the second part God is reconciled to his people. This is the work of Jesus Christ, the Son, who came to earth in the form of man, was a sufferer all the days of his life, had not where to lay his head, left the riches of heaven for the poverty of earth, left the association of God and the holy angels for the association of wicked men, and left glory and life in heaven for shame and death on the cross. He lived a pure and holy life, but suffered death for the sins of his people, for the sins of those chosen by the Father and given to the Son. By his life, death and resurrection the Son reconciled the Father and his people. By taking the sins of his people upon himself and dying in their stead and imputing his righteousness unto them, the atonement was made and accepted, reconciliation made. This work was done and this sacrifice made thousands of years after Adam and Abraham had returned to dust, and nineteen hundred years before you could help much, therefore not your works, nor theirs, lest any man should boast. Yet this work, atonement of the Son, reconciled God and his people through all ages, from Adam to the end of the world. "By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." This is the second part, but in no way the work of sinners.

3. The third part of reconciliation is the work of the Holy Ghost. This divine Spirit, or Comforter, which was promised by Christ to his followers, takes the things of Jesus and shows them to his people. This begins in regeneration, born of the Spirit, born again; as Christ said to Nico-

demus, "Ye must be born again." Spiritual birth. This change from nature to grace reveals to fallen man his sinful condition. It makes him hate sin and desire holiness; makes him want to flee the one and seek the other. He now strives to live a better life, he is a praying creature, but his prayers never seem to reach very high or very far away. His condition seems to him to grow worse and worse rather than better; his efforts to save himself by his own works finally prove a failure so sure and so plain to the poor, weak, sinful man that he falls down in despair and cries for mercy and help. Now, when his best efforts, which sometimes are prolonged for years, fail to reconcile him to God, the Spirit, which takes the things of Jesus and shows them to his people, speaks in a small voice saying, Thy sins, though many, are all forgiven. Jesus is your Savior. Glory to God, he sees Jesus as his Savior, and all is joy, peace, love and praise to God. The sinner is now reconciled to God, not by his own works, which he tried so long, but by the Spirit showing him that Jesus is his Savior, and the only one worthy to make the atonement or able to save. All glory to God, from whom all blessings flow. Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

My hope is in this reconciliation composed of the covenant, atonement and regeneration. M. N. WEBB.

COLUMBUS, Ga., March 20, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—It has been nearly twelve months since our little band of Georgia Baptists visited your states. To-day I am thinking of that pleasant visit among the dear brethren and sisters and the good preaching we heard while at the associations, and am reminded that the time will soon be here for these precious meetings to convene again. How I wish I could be with you all again this time, but I cannot; that is why I am lonely. I get to hear the preached word and be with the brethren and sisters very seldom, but I hope that I am not murmuring, for the Lord has placed me in this lonely place and I must be submissive. I know it is all for good, but I often feel that it would be a great comfort if I were so situated that I might go to hear the preached word and meet with the Lord's people once a month; yes, I hope you will not think me greedy if I say four times a month. I have been here in this city since December 1st. The last sermon I heard preached was in October last; but I am thankful I have much that is good to read: my Bible, the SIGNS, also many books written by Old Baptists years ago, and stacks of old copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES filled with the doctrine and wholesome writings which instruct, comfort and cheer us while journeying on through this wilderness world. I am slow to learn, memory dull, but now and then a little ray of light is given me, my soul rejoices, I feel Jesus is near, teaching and comforting and bidding me look to him and rest in his manifold precious promises. The Lord willing, I shall go to Monroe, Ga., next month, and hope to stay long enough to be with them two meetings. I am looking forward to the time with gladness of heart. I have in the last few days reread the editorials in the SIGNS of this year. They are full of instruction and wholesome admonitions. How truthfully you said in your New Year's Greeting, if ever we needed to stand for the plain, simple truth of God as it is in Jesus it is now, and the need of more and more love to God and our neighbor. We remember the command given us is, Love ye one another as I have loved you, and

his love is an everlasting love. Your article on "Fellowship" is only another name for this same love shed abroad in our hearts by the Spirit. We are commanded to be longsuffering, forbearing one another in love. Finding fault with another, ignoring our own faults, seeking to excuse and justify ourselves, are of the flesh. These things ought not so to be. Let us hope that these things will cease and brethren will dwell together in unity, and all will be peace and love; for if we love him that begat, we love those begotten of him. May our Lord fill us with the spirit of true christian service. May we live more and more for each other and less for self. The Lord preserve us from false ways and clothe us with his righteousness. Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost, to restore the lost sheep to the fold. We shall never while we live in the flesh comprehend the wonderful love of Jesus for poor sinners. My heart was sad, my eyes brimming with tears as I read brother Ker's writing from the text in Lamentations. I, too, cast my eyes about Zion, and thought how timely his admonitions to stir up the pure minds of the Lord's people. Let us watch and pray. May our pure minds be stirred up, then unity will develop. But my sorrow was healed and my tears wiped away as he wrote on, declaring the glorious doctrine of absolute predestination, no limiting, no conditions. Our God rules the falling of the little sparrows, sets up kings and casts them down. All power is of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. He predestinated all things and governs all things according to his determinate counsel and foreknowledge. This is the sure foundation: salvation is of the Lord. He feeds and clothes the little birds and works in the hearts of men to will and do of his good pleasure. The Lord by his grace and truth leads the objects of his love; the power is ever present that they do the commandments of God. Then let us give all glory to whom all glory belongs. Also, his article on "Extremes" was wholesome and strengthening. We love to hear the whole truth declared, just as our Lord left on record for his chosen people; nothing said to please men, no corners rounded for fear of hurting the feelings; only the truth is of any worth. Not long since, in looking over a lot of old SIGNS I found an editorial he had written on this same subject (Extremes) when Elder Chick and he were the editors, and in this one, as in the last, he admonished the brethren to stand for the truth, with no fear of overreaching; not endeavoring to make the doctrine of our Savior appear smooth and attractive to all classes in and out of the church. The doctrine of God our Savior as he taught it, and as his apostles preach it, is what we love to hear. It is the only doctrine that will save poor mortal man. Let our undershepherds hew to the line. Jesus commands his followers to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, for only the truth glorifies God and edifies and establishes his people. I thank God for those strong witnesses of his glorious truth who declared and spared not. Again, I thank the great Giver of all our many blessings that he still raises up those who are not afraid to publish the great and soul-cheering truth of the Lord Jehovah; that there are still those who will continue to proclaim his everlasting truth to wretched, dying men, worms of the earth, and who will still declare that his counsel shall stand and that he will do all his pleasure in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

Excuse so long a letter. Cover with the mantle of charity all my imperfections. May the Lord bless and keep you and Elder Ker and all the dear ones everywhere.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

LIMONA, Fla., March 31, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—It might be of interest to the readers of the SIGNS to know that I have been a reader of that Old School Baptist paper for sixty-eight years, and have been a member of the church over sixty years; that I have been preaching almost fifty-two years, and that perhaps I am the only minister now living in the United States that has perfect activity, physically, who has been preaching since June, 1869. I am not a retired minister, as some Arminians have expressed themselves about me, seeing that I had purchased a few acres and was planting it in oranges; supposing that no minister of my age would labor with his hands unless he be retired from preaching. One of these modern christians said to me a few days ago: "You are not a preacher now, you are a farmer." I replied to him, "If I ever was a preacher I suppose that I am yet one, having preached six times this month." Fifty years ago I was more familiar with the writings of Elder Gilbert Beebe than I was of any other among Old School Baptists. The first time I met Elder Beebe was in 1871, in Ohio. While I do not wish to look up to any man in such a way as to think that he is above human, still I had such a high regard and esteem for Elder Beebe that it seemed to me I must go to the place where he was expected to be. I had twenty-eight miles to drive to get there, and the only horse I had was a three-year-old colt that had never had the harness on his back but once, and had never been in shafts; but taking my wife and baby with me I drove him through. Sometimes I had to lead him up the hills, as he had not yet learned how to pull. I have often thought of my earnestness and determination to go in the face of obstacles, for I am certain that there was not another man at that association who would have attempted such a journey under such adverse circumstances. I met Elder Beebe several times after that in Virginia and Maryland. Every Elder that was in company with Elder Beebe in those days has fallen asleep. It seems so sad to me to think of the great number that have fallen since that time. I feel like saying in words of Scripture, "How are the mighty fallen!" Perhaps more than a hundred ministers I knew in those days have fallen asleep in the Lord. The thought of this sometimes brings tears to me. Their testimony was sure, bearing fruit on "the righteous branch," claiming nothing on their own righteousness, but pointing to the Lamb of God, who is "the Lord our righteousness."

I desire to say to the readers of the SIGNS that my health and strength have been wonderfully preserved, more so than I ever expected, as in early life when I joined the church I was a physical wreck, and no friend of mine ever expected to see me reach full manhood. For many years I have been foolish enough (some people call it foolishness to believe in God's providence) to claim that all my blessings came directly from the hand of the Lord. I have had many reverses in this life, yet they were all for some good, no doubt, but I always took them in bitterness of spirit.

In hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

PALO ALTO, Cal., Jan. 13, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—My subscription expires the 21st of this month, so I am sending two dollars for another year's subscription for our dear church paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Its sweet messages of truth are worth more to me than ten times its price. Brother Ker's editorial in the November 15th number is wonderfully good. I fully agree with him; we need more preaching like that. If we believe in predestination at all, then we must believe in the absolute predestination of all things. I fail to see it in any other way. This is the only perfect way, because it is God's way. Wonderful Redeemer! I do wish there were a real church and a real preacher here, so I could go and listen to the wonderful truths as they are told by the Lord's ministers, but there is not one here. The only gospel I get is through the SIGNS, that is why I love it so. I hope the Lord will give the writers strength and power to continue writing, and that the paper will continue just as long as there are Baptists to read it.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

EUGENIA F. SCHROEDER.

PARTLOW, Ky., Dec. 20, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—You will find inclosed one dollar for renewal of my subscription for six months. I have been reading the SIGNS forty-nine years, and it is a great comfort to me. I am eighty-six years old and keeping house by myself. The SIGNS is about all the company I have in my lonely days. I hope the brethren will still furnish you with good letters, as they have been doing. I may not live to read the paper more than six months longer; if I do I can renew again. I hope the Lord will bless you all.

Your sister,

HULDAH RATCLIFF.

THREE SPRINGS, Pa.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please forward our paper to Three Springs, Pa., which will be our future home. There we can attend meetings several times a year and see some of our dear friends often. We will be glad to have our Old School Baptist friends visit us, and we can talk on the things we not only read, but feel and know.

Yours in christian sympathy,

(MRS.) ALLISON WIBLE.

RULE, Texas, Box 187.

DEAR EDITORS:—I would like to correspond with some Primitive Baptists living in New Mexico, as I want to travel some out there this summer, about August. I would be glad to have some information regarding the farming part, price of land, &c.

Very truly, T. W. BOWERS.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in May (29th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

OBITUARY POETRY.

WE wish to again call the attention of our subscribers to the fact that owing to lack of space, and other reasons, we cannot publish poetry in obituary notices. We know some think it strange we do not publish such verses (which are often very good and appropriate), but if they were in our position we think they would see the matter in the same light that we do.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1921.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ROMANS V. 14.

"NEVERTHELESS death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression."

A brother in the ministry asks that we write upon the above text, and while willing to give such as we have, are sure that we shall not impart new light to him on the subject. More than likely he could do greater justice to the text than we; however, we shall try to comply with his request.

The first word, "nevertheless," implies connection and reason for the statement made. This fifth chapter of Romans is devoted to the utter depravity of man by nature and the justification of the sinner through Christ. It must be upon these principles, therefore, that the import of the text at the head of this article be found. We shall therefore take up the condition of man through sin first of all.

The law was given to Adam individually, and contained only two commandments: "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." "Neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." When Adam received this law no mortal was on earth other than himself, hence we say he received it individually. Nevertheless, he being the progenitor of all his posterity, his descendants being yet in his loins received the law in him. When Adam transgressed the law it was with full knowledge of the consequences, but his descendants being in his loins, were absolutely ignorant of the law and its demands, yet in that vital relationship sinned in his transgression. Therefore by the transgression of one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.

No other law was given until by Moses, written by the finger of God, and by Moses read to the Israelites. Notwithstanding the fact that no law was given from Adam to Moses, death reigned. In other words, death had already passed upon each offspring of Adam, who in him transgressed the law of God in the garden of Eden. No power of earth could make null and void the law of the Lord God. It had been violated, and each and every son and daughter of Adam was under its curse. The manner of life of the children of Adam, beginning with Cain to the giving of the law by Moses, fully demonstrated the fact that death reigned. The flood was visited upon the world because the imaginations of the heart in man were evil, and that continually. Men and women seemed to be utterly void of self-respect, yet there was no punishment for their unrighteous deeds. Sin is not imputed where there is no law. Therefore the descendants of Adam were ignorant of sin and of their lost and ruined condition.

There was not so much as a lamb offered for sin during that period—no sin-offering whatever. Death therefore reigned supreme from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression. The word "similitude" means image, likeness, or in like manner. No law hav-

ing been given the children of Adam, either in an individual or collective way, they could not sin after the similitude of his transgression: personally, wilfully, with full knowledge of the penalty.

We feel it equally legitimate to say that in the giving of the law from Mt. Sinai the children of Adam received that law after the similitude, or image, in which Adam was given the law in the garden, and that they transgressed the law given them after the similitude of Adam's transgression: personally, wilfully, knowing the penalties thereof.

We have long felt that Paul in saying, "Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," meant to emphasize the power of the law, that from its demands there was no escape. The law said, In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. Adam and all his posterity therefore were separated from God; death reigned.

Our text does not signify, on the other hand, that conditions changed, so far as the reign of death was concerned, when Moses gave the law. Death reigned from the transgression of Adam until the crucifixion of Christ, the atoning Lamb of God. For as by the offence of one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, even Christ Jesus, shall many be made righteous. Sin, and death by sin, entered by no means or way other than through the transgression of Adam; neither could righteousness come and grace reign except through Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness.

All law demands obedience. The first law was disobeyed by Adam; the second was disobeyed by the Israelites. Death reigned because of Adam's transgression; condemnation and literal punishments were visited upon Israel because of their disobedience. The law of commandments revealed the fact to the Israelites that they were sinners, and that all their lives had been spent in the very things the law forbade. Nor did that law change their mode and ideas of living, except in minor degrees. It was not intended to make them perfect, but to give them a rule of outward life.

In conclusion we shall say, the law given Adam had the seal of God's power and majesty upon it, and obedience thereto was absolutely sure, even though transgressed by Adam. That law was in full force when Christ came and demanded perfect obedience. He, the second Adam, came to render obedience even unto death. Therefore the law that said man should not eat, partake of nor even touch the tree of the knowledge of good and evil lest he die, was obeyed absolutely by the Savior of sinners. As a man he lived and died never having partaken of that tree, which tree is far from being such as thousands imagine. While verily man, with all the propensities and lusts of the Adamic nature, yet he never satisfied that nature, dying absolutely pure (virtuous), harmless and separate from sinners, not having touched the tree. Therefore the law Adam disobeyed, through which disobedience death came to him and all his descendants, was obeyed by Christ, "the Son of man," and through his obedience life eternal came to all the family of God.

The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord; and as sin reigned unto death, even so doth grace reign through Christ Jesus. Where sin abounded (in man), even so doth grace much more abound by the man Christ Jesus. These declarations confirmed the testimony of Paul, and we hope confirm ours also.

Now, dear brother, if anything here written can in any way be helpful to you we shall be glad and feel well repaid for the effort to comply with your request.

K.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder John Downey was born in Noble County, Ohio, November 9th, 1829, and died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. G. C. Jordan, in Kansas City, Mo., April 13th, 1921, at the advanced age of 91 years, 5 months and 4 days. The early part of his life was spent in Ohio, where he taught school in the western part of the state. He was probably the weakest one, physically, of a family of twelve children, but survived them all, unless possibly a sister, Mrs. Martha Beck, who was living in California. He moved to Illinois about 1854, and taught school near Magnolia. About 1856 he was united in marriage to Miss Elizabeth Lenox, in the western part of Ohio. They moved to Illinois soon after marriage, his wife's relatives predicting that she would return to Ohio a widow within two years, on account of the rather poor condition of his health, but he survived her by nearly forty years. They bravely endured the hardships incident to pioneer life on the western prairies. Two children were born of this union: Mrs. Hettie Wilson, who died in 1903, and Mrs. Mary Jordan, with whom he was living at the time of his death. There also survive five grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church in Ohio in early manhood, and lived a consistent member until the time of his death. He had a remarkably clear and vivid christian experience, fully realizing that salvation is by grace, and was enabled to recognize the true church at once. After moving to Illinois his brethren and sisters felt that he possessed a gift for the ministry, and insisted on his ordination, which he opposed with all his power, although it had weighed heavily on his mind for many years. Consequently a presbytery was called, and he was ordained to the full work of the ministry on the fourth Sunday in May, 1876. Deeply taught in the Old and New Testament Scriptures, and free from extremes on interpretations of them, he preached much to the comfort and edification of his brethren and sisters. He was a regular reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as long as he could see to read, and occasionally contributed to its columns. Among his favorite hymns were: "On the mountain top appearing," "A few more days on earth to spend," and "Glorious things of thee are spoken." He had been gradually failing for a long time, but more marked for the past two years, not having fully recovered from a sickness of two years ago. Since February he grew more feeble until the summons came to call him from his earthly trials and suffering, which he endured most patiently and with scarcely a murmur. In his last sickness he was overheard in prayer expressing his confidence in God by saying, "I shall see him [Jesus] face to face and be with him for evermore." With this hope as his only trust he passed peacefully and quietly from the shores of time into the sacred realities of eternity.

The funeral services were held in the Primitive Baptist church-house in Kansas City April 14th, conducted by Elders L. H. Clevenger and M. M. Shumate. The remains were then taken by train to Toluca, Ill., and from there to the Cumberland Cemetery on Sandy Creek, and laid beside his companion, who had long preceded him in death.

G. C. JORDAN.

Sarah Jane Lash was born in Green County, Ind., August 24th, 1828. Her maiden name was Elgan. At the age of nineteen she was married to Wade Lambert, of Washington County, Ind. Four daughters were born to that union, only one of whom lived to be grown, who reached the age of thirty-six, was the mother of six children and a member of the Baptist Church. Soon after her marriage she and her husband moved to the frontier of Illinois to make their home. He was stricken with heart failure at the door of home while yet a young man. Two years later his widow was married to G. W. Lash, of Christian County, Ill., and they raised a family of three children, two girls and one boy, to be grown and married. George L., the son, died at the age of thirty, the younger daughter, Dillie A., died at the age of twenty-five, the elder daughter, Sarah Jane Gutridge, of La Grande, Oregon, the only surviving child of this family, ministered faithfully to the needs of her mother in her old age, and is a member of the church at Elgin, Oregon. Sister Lash united with the Horse Creek Church of Primitive Baptists of Sangamon County, Ill., in 1873, and was baptized by Elder Allen Murry. Two of her children, George and Sarah J., were also members of this church. About that time she was left a widow by the death of her husband. In 1880 she moved to Missouri, and in 1899 to Union County, Oregon, where she had since resided. She placed her membership with the Big Springs Church, at Elgin, Oregon, and was a faithful member until her death. Sister Lash was a real mother in Israel, and a ministering angel to those of her acquaintance who were sick and afflicted. She was a mother to those of her age and generation, and the younger ones knew her as grandma. She enjoyed her church meeting and was present if possible, until she was almost blind and very feeble from the infirmities of old age. Even to the last she desired to be as little trouble as possible to those about her, never complaining of her afflictions, but desiring to be submissive to her Master's will. Her last sickness was of about four months duration, which she endured with christian fortitude, longing to depart and be at rest. She peacefully fell asleep in Jesus on January 8th, 1921, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Gutridge, and on the following Monday the funeral services were conducted by the writer at the home, and she was buried in the La Grande cemetery to await the resurrection. May we all be as faithful unto the end as was this dear aged sister.

ALSO,

Mary A. Long was born in Sullivan County, Mo., September 17th, 1843, and died at her home in Elgin, Oregon, March 14th, 1921. Her maiden name was Huffman. At the age of fifteen years she united with the Old School Baptist Church, and her whole life was devoted to its service. July 20th, 1860, she was married to Cyronis Cummins, and had one son by that marriage, J. W. Cummins, of Elgin, Oregon. She and her son came to Oregon in 1876, where her father and mother with their family had come eleven years before. In 1878 she was one of the members who constituted the Big Springs Church, and was the last survivor of that organization. Elder G. E. Mayfield was also in the constitution of this church, which now meets at Elgin, Oregon. This faithful and respected sister stood as a mother in Israel for over forty years. She was married June 20th to Solomon Sturgill, who died in 1897. In 1901 she was married to Jacob Long, and was left a widow in 1911, and lived until her death in the home provided by her last husband, caring for an afflicted daughter of his with motherly care and patience. She leaves three brothers and three sisters: Joseph Huffman, of Riverside, Cal., and a member of that church; John, of Williams County, Oregon; Sebed Huffman and Mrs. William Gordon, of Elgin, Oregon; Margaret and Eliza Hade, of California. She was in her place at meeting one month before her death, and was always present except when sickness prevented.

I tried to present the consolation of the gospel of her blessed Master at the funeral services at the little church, where her host of friends and relatives met in respect to her memory. We shall miss her, but we do not mourn as those without hope. Blessed are they who sleep in Jesus.

C. W. BOND.

Mrs. Mary A. Emory departed this life December 22nd, 1920, at her home in Middletown, N. Y., aged 72 years. She suffered a stroke two years prior to her death, and was never able to walk again without help. She gradually failed until the end came. She was ready, through grace, and willing to depart this life and be with Christ. Her maiden name was Seybolt. In November, 1891, she was united in marriage with Dr. Granville A. Emory, who preceded her to the beyond about seven years. She was one of the most faithful wives we ever knew, a lovely woman, a true and sincere friend. She was baptized by the late Elder F. A. Chick in 1897, in the fellowship of the Middletown and Wallkill Church, of Middletown, N. Y. She loved the household of faith, and never failed to do good whenever opportunity presented itself. We miss her in every way, but know she is better off. She is survived by one brother, living in California, together with several nephews and nieces.

The writer conducted the funeral service at her home, and the interment took place in the family plot at Otisville, N. Y.

K.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

W. E. Ellis, Texas, $1.00; L. J. Ross, N. Y., $1.00; Decatur Mouser, Ohio, $3.00; J. C. Clark, Maine, $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Delaware River Association will hold its regular session with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., commencing Wednesday, June 1st, and continuing three days. All those of our faith and order are invited to visit us, especially ministering brethren. Those coming from Philadelphia on Tuesday stop at Southampton and inquire for Deacon C. B. Reeves. Those coming to Ivyland from New Hope or Philadelphia inquire for Wm. Hobensack.

WM. HOBENSACK, Church Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Warwick Church June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1921. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend.

Those coming by way of New York will take train leaving Jersey City, Erie Railroad, at 3:35 p. m. Tuesday, daylight saving time, which is one hour faster than standard. Get tickets for Warwick, N. Y., and change cars at Greycourt. Those coming from the west will take train leaving Susquehanna at 6:30 a. m. Train leaves Port Jervis at 3:10 p. m., connecting at Greycourt. These trains will be met and friends cared for. Those leaving New York Wednesday morning will take train leaving Jersey City at 9:30. Those coming from the west Wednesday morning will take trains leaving Port Jervis either at 6:15 or 11:28. All arriving Wednesday will go to the meetinghouse from the trains.

H. C. KER, Pastor.

THE border churches of Washington, Oregon and Idaho will hold their annual union meeting with the Big Spring Church, at Elgin, Oregon, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in June, 1921. Those coming from a distance get tickets direct to Elgin. All trains will be met and visitors cared for. All brethren and friends are invited to visit us at this meeting.

C. W. BOND.

LA GRANDE, Oregon.

THE Beulah Primitive Baptist Church of Canada intends, the Lord willing, holding their annual meeting in the meetinghouse near Aberfeldy, Ont., the third Saturday and Sunday in June (18th and 19th), 1921. Our pastor is expected to be with us.

BARBARA A. MACALPINE, Clerk.

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 694 E. 125th St., or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 89. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1921. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MALACHI III. 6.

"For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

There has been much comment on the God of heaven, some claiming he is unlimited, others limit him; some say one thing, some another. This condition has existed all the way from Adam, and I believe will exist as long as Adam does. I believe some of the people of earth have understood, do and will understand the truth, but to others it is withholden. If we believe right, or truth, it does not change God, and if we believe error it does not change him, for he changes not. Let us get this truth imprinted on our minds and not forget it: "I am the Lord, I change not." Now, if the Lord wills, I shall find out what he has done in the past, and this will enable us to come to a conclusion about the present. If you will notice, I did not say if the Lord wills we will try to do thus and so, but if he wills we shall. Acts xvii. 26: "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;" so that there is no difference between any two human beings, for they are all "of one blood," God's literal workmanship, and he made them to dwell on all the face of the earth. Do they? He did not make North America just for the Indians, but for men of all nations, and so it is in all countries. This Scripture is literally fulfilled. Did God guess at it, or did he make all nations for to dwell on all the face of the earth? I believe he did. I also believe that he "hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." There is no happen so or guesswork. When God sends his Holy Spirit to quicken one, that Spirit does not have to hunt and find, but he will be in the bounds appointed for him. Do you think this a little too strong? If so, try Proverbs xvi. 9: "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps." "A man's"—any man's. Jeremiah x. 23: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." These quotations establish two things: first, that man does not direct his own steps; second, that the Lord directs man's steps. This was so at that time ("I am the Lord, I change not"), and I reckon it is so now,

Thus the Lord directs man's steps; he creates nations, overthrows nations, &c. "To the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men."—Daniel iv. 17. Now read the twenty-fifth and thirty-second verses. These affirm that the God of heaven sets up kingdoms. The purpose is that the living may know that the Most High does these things; and not only so, but he puts the basest of men over them. See the kaiser, Pharaoh and other tyrannical rulers. "I am the Lord, I change not." Proverbs xvi. 4: "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Did he make the wicked? That is just what the quotation says. He raised up Pharaoh for the very purpose for which he used him. "Both riches and honor come of thee," &c.—1 Chron. xxix. 12. It would seem that we must name something new if we get out of God's providence, works. To notice all Scripture on this line of thought would be impossible, so will just turn a little. I was once asked if God predestinated the killing of a child. I did not answer at that time, but maybe if one looks closely he can find an answer in what I write. We want to see if God had anything to do with wars, and the Scripture on this is so abundant we can only notice a few texts. Joshua viii. 1, 2: "And the Lord said unto Joshua, Fear not, neither be thou dismayed: take all the people of war with thee, and arise, go up to Ai: see, I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land: and thou shalt do to Ai and her king as thou didst unto Jericho and her king," &c. What was that? Utterly destroyed them, big, little, old and young. Who told Joshua to go? The Lord. Who delivered them into Joshua's hand? The Lord. "I am the Lord, I change not." Verse 25: "And so it was, that all that fell that day, both of men and women, were twelve thousand." Joshua x. 8; xi. 6, 20. This twentieth verse shows the Lord working on both sides. Now we will not follow Joshua, how the Lord stopped the sun and sent hail to help kill them. He (the Lord) was destroying nations here for the purpose of setting up nations, even the twelve tribes of Israel. My idea is that those who were destroyed were no worse by nature than those who took possession. David believed his course was ordered by the Lord. "And it came to pass after this, that David inquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah? And the Lord said unto him, Go up."—2 Samuel ii. 1. It seems we better conclude that God doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and that he works all things after the counsel of his own will. There might have been a few children killed when Joshua killed twelve thousand men and women. These are literal things. We have been trying to see if God works all things. We know he changes not, and if he did anciently work all things it is evident that he does to-day. We have not referred to Joseph, Job nor the blessed Son of God, and in all these there was power manifest, and there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. How many powers are there? Just enough to make the plural, two, the mighty and the almighty; one serves the other. You may ask, Which is the servant? Now turn and read the twenty-third chapter of Job, commencing at the thirteenth verse. I believe God does just this to-day. If he holds you or me up we will stand, if he

leads us we will follow after him. Do I believe in works? Yes, but God is the wisdom and motive power in every good work.

Yours in hope,

T. E. ATTEBERY.

WEISER, Idaho.

DOCTRINE.

PAUL says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine." He told Titus to speak the things that become sound doctrine. Doctrine is something taught. Everything has its opposite, as light and darkness, good and evil, cold and heat, white and black, and so on to the end of the chapter. The doctrine of God our Savior teaches that salvation is by grace, without any condition whatever; that unless a man is regenerated and born of the Spirit he can neither enter nor see the kingdom of heaven. Paul says, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to or by his mercy he hath saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. The opposite doctrine to that above mentioned is called in the Scriptures the doctrines of men and devils. The Savior said to the Pharisees (who were a very strict religious sect after the religion which was of the law), Ye are of your father the devil, and his lusts ye will do. He is a liar and the father of lies. When we consider the source from whence their doctrines come we need not marvel at the title. That same sect is in the world to-day in great numbers. One of their leaders, whom they call a Doctor of Divinity, told me not long since that God would save all sinners if they would let him. Another one of like character said in the pulpit that Christ came to make salvation possible. Such a Savior would be exceedingly small and quite as weak. Since hearing these assertions I have talked with many prominent lay members of both sexes, and they all drank it down greedily, as a thirsty ox doth the water. I have been asked by the said prominent members of the popular orders of the day, called churches, If sinners are not saved by preaching, what is preaching for? Paul told ministers of the gospel to feed the flock of God, over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers. The fallen race of Adam, when described by divine inspiration, presents a black picture indeed. The prophet Jeremiah says, The heart in man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. The apostle Paul says, His mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; his throat is an open sepulchre; with his tongue he hath used deceit; his feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in his ways, and the way of peace he hath not known. There never has been a man who believed before regeneration that God was or is unlimited in power, neither will there ever be. All who have not been born of the Spirit are dead in sin. Paul said to the church at Ephesus, You hath he made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sin; among whom we all had our conversation in time past, and were by nature children of wrath. When he who commanded the light to shine out of darkness shines in the heart of a sinner he sees himself as never before. When God begins a good work he performs it until the day of Jesus Christ (the day of salvation). There is a great deal of sport made by fashionable religionists about the new birth. I spoke to a local preacher in a town of the christian experience, and he did not know what I was talking about; also to a lady of the same order, who had reached or attained so

high a degree in their faith that a lady millenarian in the town remarked on a certain occasion that if when she came to die she could only have the privilege of looking on that lady's face she would be saved. She said one should resolve to live a correct life before joining the church. A large majority of professors of religion of this day take morality for religion. It is the duty of every one in a civilized country to live a moral life, it is commendable in all peoples; but we should remember the Savior said, Except a man be born again he cannot enter the kingdom of God. This decree has never been revoked, neither will it ever be.

JAMES M. SIMMONS.

KOSCIUSKO, Miss.

PENNINGTON, N. J., April 24, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is with love and dear esteem for the redeemed of the Lord, or children of the heavenly King, and I trust by the Spirit of the Holy Ghost, that I sometimes feel like telling them all how good he is to a poor sinner like me, and how he causes my love to flow out to the great God and his precious saints scattered throughout his earth. Though we are but vessels of clay, God has put life and feeling in our frame, praise be to his matchless name. If we are his children quickened by his grace to serve the living God, we will serve him in spite of all man can do. When the strong man is bound by a stronger he is made to cry out, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? What now is the trouble? Why, God has broken the earthen vessel. In the type the earthen pitchers were broken before the lights shone. The same God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Dear ones, I wish I could tell half of the beauty, love, compassion, mercy, forbearance, pity, kindness, wisdom, knowledge, blessings and truth that he has made me see in him, and how he reconciles me to all of his providences in my unprofitable life, and I in tears am made to kiss the rod and bless his holy name and say that what he does is ever best; yes, and feel content with such things as he in kindness has meted out to me, a poor worm of the dust. I say again, I know so little, that if I only could tell half of the many tokens of his goodness and mercy toward me to my kindred in Christ, I would be satisfied; but we never will be perfect, complete and satisfied until we awake with his likeness. Hence it all can never be told in this life. That is why Jesus and his love never get stale or old, but are ever new and refreshing to us. We cannot lay up for to-morrow, but the manna is fresh every morning. His word is never late, but always in the morning, and distils in our hearts as the dew upon the tender herb or grass, penetrating our hearts and causing us to grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. My mind to-night is running ahead of my pen in the thought of his greatness, and I feel that I have said but a drop in the bucket compared to the fullness of my mind at this time, which seems to be running over with joy unspeakable, and so, dear editors, it is a pleasure to write when my thoughts leave time things behind, and have Jesus in the front and my brethren above myself. Is not this one more favor from him who has declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure? Who can stay his hand or say, Why hast thou made me

thus? Is not God his own counselor? We are clay, he is the Potter, and he has power over the same lump of clay to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. He said, Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated, before either was born or had done good or evil. He formed the crooked serpent and said, I create good and evil; I the Lord do all these things. We can plainly see from Cain and Abel that men walked in two different paths. Does he not tell us about that narrow way that leadeth to life everlasting and that broad way that leadeth to destruction? There always have been two ways, and God will put his sheep on his right hand and the goats on the left. If we are saved we are saved by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. I am the good shepherd; my sheep hear my voice and they follow me. Again, I will allure them, and draw them, and bring them by a way that they knew not.

With christian love to you both, I remain, I hope, a true brother in Christ with you, WM. T. YARD.

FORDYCE, Ark., May 8, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am a little ashamed of being behind with my subscription, as I am fully aware of the fact that publishers of papers of any kind have been "hard hit" during the war because of the extreme prices that printing materials advanced to, but I am here at last, and also have a new subscriber for you. This, as you are aware, makes several I have gotten for you, and really my delay in sending mine in has been caused by waiting to get others. I hope to see the SIGNS' list increase, as I find that it is the only paper (according to my judgment) that is standing upon the old principles as contended for by the first American Baptists, and has stood in line with the original old school party, those who have ever stood firm on the doctrine of the apostles and prophets of old. I will say just a little further, if you will listen: If there ever was a time in this country that we needed men that are fearless, yet gentle, this is the time. Surely the falling away has come, and the man of sin is (must be) manifest. The wave of crime, the love of the world and the things therein, disobedience, unholiness and unthankfulness are in my judgment more manifest than one would have thought could develop in so short a time. These things, however, are only the fulfillment of the Book. They must come. They have come, and will get worse and worse to the end. I cannot tell how much that is to be, however we learn that history repeats itself, and if so we may expect a suppression of the truth to come. Jesus says, They hated me without a cause, and so they will hate you also. Some people in this country who claim the name Old Baptist are now saying that predestination of all things is a damnable doctrine and should not be allowed preached. This was the same old Arminian cudgel the enemies of truth held against the people who stood firm against Arminianism. Yes, history is repeating itself, but I hope God will bless us to stand firm and be gentle and kind, and may our weapons be not carnal, but mighty through God to the tearing down of strongholds. Peter thought to fight for the Savior, and drew the sword and cut off the ear of one of the high priest's soldiers, but he was told to put the sword in the sheath. Jesus said he could call for a legion of angels and they would fight for him, but the Son of man must go as it was written of him. Herod, Pontius Pilate and all should rise

up to do just what God's counsel and hand had before determined to be done. Yes, it was all fixed and determined, and could not be otherwise than it was. The Son of man must be crucified and slain, must suffer these things and enter into his glory. He must make good the promise his Father had made before the world began, and, too, according to the choice which was made before the world was, and to bring out the true facts of the case. He was their life, and when he came he abolished death, and destroyed the power of the devil in his death through the flesh; he had to be taken and slain. Peter did his best to stay with the Savior, and said though all men forsook him he would not; but he did, and he could not have done anything else, for Jesus told him that before the cock crew thrice he would make this denial. He said he should do it. Well, he did, and it was all meant to be just that way, and could not be any other way. Peter was the one who did it, and he was the one who repented and was sorrowful for his deed, realizing that he was justly guilty before his Savior, but could not help doing it, yet was responsible for it. Any one with common sense and reason knows Peter could not help it, because the Savior said he should do it, but that did not make the Savior, or God, the cause of that sin, but it was Peter's actions and he alone was responsible for the same. Joseph's brethren sold him, but Joseph said God sent him to preserve a posterity, and so it was; but look and see the crooked, wicked and perverse path or channel it came through; still we can see in this where all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Yes, it all worked together for good. It surely was hard for poor old Jacob to see this and never confess the truthfulness of it until he saw them coming with the wagons and everything ready to go to Egypt, then he could say, It is enough, my son is yet alive. O, when we have the evidences of God's everlasting love and his preserving hand, even when we have to pass through great trials, losses and crosses, doubts and fears, and feel that the Lord is clean gone forever, when, like old Jacob, we get these bountiful evidences that Jesus is yet alive, we feel that it is enough, that we will never doubt again, and can then say we see where all things work together for good, and wonder why we did not see this beauty before, but we were like old Jacob, we had to have the evidence before we could believe.

Well, I will close. I beg your kind forbearance, as I am so poor and ignorant, and O so little.

Yours in hope,

V. R. HARRIS.

EL PASO, Texas, May 8, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find two dollars to renew my subscription to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which is so much comfort and pleasure to my wife and me, for we have not heard the gospel preached since we moved from Ft. Worth, Texas, in December a year ago. There we enjoyed the opportunity of hearing the gospel of salvation by grace, which is the only hope of our salvation, for at my very best I am sinful and debased, deserving hell and to be separated from the presence of God and all that is good. So if I am saved at all it is by the mercy and grace of God, to whom be all praise, glory and honor. I do not belong to the dear old (yet hated by the world) Primitive Baptist Church, for I have never felt worthy of offering

myself for membership with them whom I hope I love, but sometimes I do hope I have passed from death unto life, because I hope I love the brethren. There is one thing I know: I have a feeling and love for the Old Baptist people that I have for no other people on earth, and O how I wish I could feel worthy of fellowship and being numbered with them, who are so near and dear to me, a poor sinner. There is no food or pleasure to me to go to the so-called churches here, where I hear nothing but what they are doing for God and for the salvation of the world. I never have done nor am I now doing anything for God or the salvation of man, and if man is to be saved by me, or I by the help of poor sinful man, then all are forever lost. I hope I am trusting in the God who is able to save even as great a sinner as I am, but if I lift up mine eyes in hell I can truly say it is just, for I have never done nor ever can do anything to merit salvation; so if I am saved it is by grace, and I hope I have been taught of God to know these things, and I cannot teach any one else to know them, for the Lord only teaches his people to know him, even from the least to the greatest, and he alone makes his people a willing people in the day of his power. Sometimes I am made to hope he has taught me to know some of these precious things. We live in a city of about ninety thousand population, and know of none who believes this precious doctrine. I do not know whether or not the gospel has ever been preached in this city, although they say the gospel is being preached here daily and they are winning the world for Christ, but I have not had the evidence. The idea of poor sinful man saying he is winning the world for Christ. I cannot believe a true believer in Christ can say that he has ever done anything for Christ, but that Christ has done everything for him. This is the Christ I am believing in and trusting for my salvation. Another hope for my salvation is that Christ came to seek and to save lost sinners, of whom I feel to be chief. I hear much about a man having to be wise in the flesh, and has to be educated and taught by man and live a sinless life to bring himself in favor with God that he might be saved. Now if I believed this I would be the most miserable sinner in the world, for I am ignorant, uneducated and sinful; but there is a precious Scripture to me, where Paul in writing to the church at Corinth said: For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. I know I am not wise after the flesh, not mighty or noble, but only an ignorant, weak, degraded sinner, hoping and trusting alone in God's mercy and grace for salvation. How comforting it is to me to read in the dear old SIGNS letters from others who can tell my own mind and feelings better than I could write them myself. O how I wish I could meet some of them face to face and talk with them of the mercies and love of God to poor sinners who are forever lost without the mercy and grace of God.

I had better close. I could write on and on, but my writing does not amount to anything, and is not worth publishing, but, dear editors, I do wish you would just publish my name and address, and if any dear Old Baptists ever pass this way I will give them a welcome in my home, and they can pay me for their lodging by talking to me about the love and mercy of God our Savior.

Hoping for the SIGNS and you all steadfastness and success, I am a poor sinner in hope, with love, C. M. ADAMS.

TOPEKA, Kansas, April 22, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—The inclosed letter was handed to me by brother T. C. Branscom and wife, of Topeka, and was written by his sister. They were made to feel that she was chosen as the King's cup-bearer to bear this cup of cold water to them in the name of Christ, and have kindly allowed me to feast with them on the good things contained in it. I have their consent to submit it to you for publication in the SIGNS, if you see fit, that others may also feast upon it; for no matter how much such a bounty is shared, the store is not diminished, but rather increased—more fragments and more baskets full to gather up as the mind is led in fellowship to her experience.

In hope that I also am a fellow-traveler with the saints and with the household of God, I remain as ever,

MARY ELLISON.

CAP, Va., April 13, 1921.

VERY DEAR BROTHER:—I will try in my weak manner to answer your good, but short letter. You spoke as if my letter was of some comfort to you. Now, I do not know what it was that was comforting, but I do know that if ever I write any comforting words to one of his little children I must first be given a spiritual mind, for the carnal mind knows nothing of spiritual things, and the food that feeds the spiritual mind would starve the carnal mind to death, for they are just as contrary to each other as light and darkness, and to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life, light and peace. I would love to be led by a right spirit, that I might tell you something which the pure mind might feast upon. It seems that every day I live I see more and more where the carnal mind leads us astray, or me anyway, and I find myself doing and saying many things which are entirely useless. I know Paul told my feelings when he said, That which I would not, that I do. I hear all Old Baptist preachers telling their experience in this way, until sometimes I can call them brethren. They say they cannot live the life they so much desire, and if one of God's called servants cannot do this, you need not expect a poor worm of the dust as I am to walk a straight line. I waver as easily as a leaf in the wind. But here is our worthiness: it is the Lord Jesus Christ. If he walks in us our walk is pure, and when he shuts out the light we go astray. We only live here by hope. If we could walk in the strait and narrow way as we would like to, we would not be living by hope, but by sight. God's people are only living by hope, and look for one minute to where this hope reaches. It is no wonder that the children of God, whether I am one or not, can sometimes say, There's nothing here to court my stay, or keep me back from home. Why, the grave is a resting-place for all of God's people. The graves of all the saints he blessed. He leads the way; he went to the grave first, and in going he blessed it and made it a resting-place, and wherein is our most glorious hope, he did not stay in the grave, but ascended to the Father and left the blessed promise behind with his children that it shall be sown a natural body and raised a spiritual body and be like Jesus. Is not this hope sufficient to go to the grave on, when he has said he is coming again to take his bride home? If I am one of the blood-washed throng, then the little sting of death is all it will be to me, and not only me, but all for whom Christ died. He will lose none, but they will all be housed in heaven and sing the same song: Salvation by grace. It is no

wonder he said, My grace is sufficient for thee. It will do to live by and it will do to die by, and waft our spirits home, where we will be free from mourning and all tears shall be wiped from our eyes; then all will be well and God's people satisfied.

You said I never told you who, in my dream, were to be baptized. You and Sena and myself were the candidates. You remember I told you the water was so clear and deep, and every time it pleases God to visit us with his blessed Spirit it is then we are baptized in the ocean of his love, and it is as clear as crystal and proceeds from God and the Lamb. There is no one under heaven can tell its height or depth. It is just as high as Jesus is, and it is underneath the poorest, little, feeble lamb of God that is here on earth. I would rather bathe in this ocean than to have the good will of all men or money. There is nothing to compare with it. I have thought many times how I would love to see you and Sena and talk with you on this glorious subject. If we never meet again here this is my hope and my life; I am never looking for any other way. Our way is fixed and sealed by the God of power, might and wisdom, and from my heart I can say many times, I do not want it any better. He is the God of mercy. Had he not been, I long since would have been cut off with the pale nations of the dead. I humbly hope and pray that the few days I shall be here he will so direct my steps that I can walk more orderly, talk more godly and live more and more devotedly to this grand and glorious cause. How easy it is for men who are called of God to preach when they are blessed with the spirit of preaching. They just open their mouths and they are filled, and some one is present to receive every word. Not a single word of the gospel has has ever fallen to the ground, but it is all received by the subjects to whom it is addressed.

Write soon. Your sister,

LINY STONEMAN.

BON AQUA, Tenn., Feb. 24, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—You will find inclosed money order to renew my subscription for the SIGNS another year, as I am reminded that my time expires March 1st. I have been reading the SIGNS for five years, and find it would be a hard task to be without it; would be almost like missing our monthly meeting to miss one copy. It seems to me our last three papers have been filled with some extra food. Brother H. O. Nash's article, from Atlanta, Ga., was worth the price paid for the paper, not to speak of the others, which were so rich and wholesome, not mixed with the impurities of the world. Paul says grace and works cannot mix, so grace is pure and works impure, for grace is from God, and man cannot mix his impurities with the purity of God; so we see very clearly why grace and works will not mix, for man is born into this world impure, dead in trespasses and in sin. This is man's condition in this world, and he is satisfied to remain so, and preach and teach that salvation is by works, if not reached by the purity of God. You must do something in order to be saved. Salvation is of the Lord, pure and complete; then where will we get room to help if it is complete? Jesus cried out on the cross, "It is finished." What is finished? The salvation of sinners. So we see why the Old Baptists stand aloof from all others who profess to be worshipers of Jesus. They say by works, we Old Baptists say by grace, for we know it is not by works of righteous-

ness which we have done, but by the complete atonement of Jesus. If we say it is by our works, are we not setting at naught the chief Corner-stone? Ye are not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ. Then if by our works we do these things has not the blood of Jesus lost its power?

With much love to all, your sister in hope of a better life,

ESTHER JENKINS.

BOOKER, Texas, May 19, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a check for four dollars to pay for last year and this year.

I was taken ill in January, 1920, and suffered greatly with gall stones, so went to the Liberal Kansas Hospital and was operated upon April 24th, which gave me relief. I have been passing through much affliction in body and mind, which rendered me physically unable to write letters. Since being operated upon I have been afflicted with rheumatism, and at times my hands and arms are almost helpless.

I want to ask if any of the readers of the SIGNS know of any church of our faith and order near here. I live in Beaver County, Oklahoma, two miles from the Texas line, known as the Panhandle Land. I am very lonesome without the Old School Baptists, the people I love. No matter what I am called to pass through, the Master has ordained it, and his will must be done. His grace is sufficient. The Bible tells us he has a chosen people. God has predestinated I should be here in life in the west, far away from his dear elect, the people I love with a love I have for no other people.

I will bring this to a close by asking you to overlook my tardiness, and I thank you for being so kind in sending the paper to me, for it was a great comfort all through my sickness, and I do not feel I could do without it. May the love of God abide with us all.

My address is changed from La Kemp, Oklahoma, to Booker, Texas.

(MRS.) L. R. GARTON.

FLORA VISTA, N. Mex., April 2, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed money order for two dollars, for which send me the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which I cannot do without. I live in a country where I have no church privileges; I do not suppose there is an Old School Baptist within one hundred miles of me, so the SIGNS is all the preaching I get, and it is good news from a far country. Please pardon me for not sending in my subscription sooner. May God ever bless and protect the dear editors and give them a fruitful mind, that they may be enabled by grace to feed the poor wayworn saints of God's elect. I feel unworthy of the least of God's blessings; I am an old beggar, continually begging God for his kind and loving protection, which has been with me lo these sixty years.

I will close. May God bless us all, is the desire of a poor old sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

J. L. JOHNS.

CHICAGO, Ill., Feb. 16, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending you four dollars to renew my father's and my subscription to the dear old SIGNS. Father's address is J. Worth Timmons, Havre, Montana. I wish I could tell you just how much the SIGNS means to me. Most of all do I appreciate that sweet unity of thought as expressed by the

various writers, all telling the same story, the foreknowledge and predetermined will of the Lord concerning his children. "I will cause you to pass under the rod, I will bring you into the bond of the covenant." Where is the invitation? Ye shall know that I am the Lord when I shall bring you (this wonderful gift) into the land of Israel. This country I gave your fathers. This hardshell doctrine, brethren, is what rules out all skepticism, concerning the overthrow of the church, that seems to have taken hold on so many of the various "popular congregations" all over the world to-day. O that his doctrine, either written or spoken, may be scattered.

With love to all his dear children, I remain most unworthily yours,

J. TIMMONS.

WITTER, Ark., May 19, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing herewith money order for five dollars, to be applied on my subscription to the SIGNS, of which I have been a subscriber for a little more than forty-nine years. There is no other Baptist paper published, that I am acquainted with, that advocates in full the doctrine set forth by the Baptists in 1689, when true christianity ceased to be an underground religion and came forth to the light of day; when Baptist doctrine began to be tolerated in England under the Prince of Orange and Bunyan was turned out of prison. I expect to try to take the SIGNS as long as I live, and hope my folks will continue to take it after I am gone. It was through the SIGNS that I first learned there was any one else in this world who believed as I had been taught in my experience. My race is nearly run; I am nearly sixty-eight years old, and cannot expect to stay many more years, even if I live to be very old, and I do not want to be without our family paper as long as I am able to pay for it.

In tribulation,

C. W. ANDERSON.

CRYSTAL CITY, Texas, Aug. 30, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed please find two dollars for the renewal of my subscription. We are down in southwest Texas, where we never hear the gospel preached, and the reading we get is all the satisfaction we have in that respect. I always enjoyed meeting my brethren and talking with them on spiritual things, and I miss them very much, but try to be reconciled to God's will. I was in poor health in northeast Texas, and the doctor advised me to come south, so I came here last winter, and have had as good health as I ever had in my life. I am one hundred and fifty miles southwest of San Antonio.

Your brother in Christ, I hope,

J. B. MOUNT.

CARTHAGE, Mo.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Please continue the SIGNS to me at the above address. I am thankful you are still able to send the paper with its messages of comfort and instruction to us. It is all the preaching many have. I am near enough to attend preaching once a month at a country church near this little city. Though few in number, this little band seems very zealous in the cause and firm in the faith.

Your sister in hope,

GRACE VEECH SMITH.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Wm. E. Gaines, D. C., $1.00.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1921.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

LOVE.

OF all subjects there is none greater, grander, higher or more glorious. It is God-given both to man and beast in nature, and is often the test that proves men when all things else fail. The Scriptures abound with examples, and we are told that love is the fulfilling of the law. It is the governing power of the whole world, and without it there could be no such things as happiness, union and forbearance. It will cause one man to die for another; it will cause parents to go through floods and flames for their children; it will cause beasts to put themselves between their young and any danger that may arise, and die to protect their offspring. These things are true in nature, and much more so in grace. It was because God loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son to die, that the world through him might be saved. Of all sacrifices this was the greatest ever made. The Lord spared not his Son, but delivered him up for us all, and with him freely gives us all things. When Jesus was in the world his very being overflowed with love, and he went about doing good in healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, raising the dead, through which works he made sad hearts glad. It was because of his love to the Father and to men that he made himself of no reputation, but ministered as a servant to them. The love that bound David and Jonathan surpassed the love of women, and caused them to live and die faithful to each other, though the love of women is compared with the love of God. The love that Ruth had for Naomi sets forth in figure the love that one has for the church of God. When Naomi left her native land to dwell in the land of Moab she went out "full," as she expressed it, having a husband and two sons, but while in that land all three of them died, after which she felt pressed to return to her own country. Her two widowed daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth, started to follow her, and when she reminded them of her destitution, that she had nothing to give and that there could be no gain to them in following her, Orpah kissed her and returned to her own people; but Ruth, filled with unselfish love, said, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me." Orpah manifested selfishness, while Ruth manifested more love to Naomi than for all the world besides. When one turns his or her back on the world and their own kindred for the love they have for the church, unselfishness is in evidence. Surely nothing of a worldly nature is to be gained. Hatred will be heaped upon us, popularity sacrificed and business prospects blasted. In the start of this journey all the Lord's people are willing to spend and be spent in and for the cause. No one seeks to make reputation for himself or for herself. All are willing to "follow," and could such conditions continue no trouble would ever enter the

church; but children grow to be men and women in their own estimation, selfishness increases, importance develops, things must go their way or trouble is the result. We feel sure that there is never a time in one's life when more joy and happiness abound than during the first few years in the church; then the soul is full of love and tenderness. It is too bad, so to speak, that any of us grow to manhood and womanhood in the church of God.

In the days of Solomon, when the two women who claimed the same child as being their offspring the Lord gave him wisdom to test the mother love of those women. He said, They both claim the child, each saying, "It is my son." Bring a sword and divide the child in two, and give half to one and half to the other. The one woman said, Divide it, that it neither be thine nor mine; but the mother of the child said to Solomon, Give her the child, and in no wise slay it. Solomon said, Give her the child, for she is the mother thereof. Love decided the matter. The mother of the child was willing to sacrifice her joy and comfort in order that the child be not divided. Let the child live, and all my own feelings in the matter shall be subdued. How clearly this presents on the one hand selfishness, desire to have that which does not belong to us (our own way in the church), and on the other hand the love of God, which cements rather than divides. The woman who was willing that the child be divided had no love for the child, but was selfish in the matter. The other woman loved the child above all things in the world, and would make any sacrifice rather than have it divided. There can be no greater test of a man's or woman's love for the church of God than this. If for any cause whatever any one would divide a church or churches, how dwelleth the love of the church in such an one? Love will always cement, selfishness will always divide. There is such a thing as men and women thinking and really acting as though the Lord is dependent upon them to arrange the matters of the church, to see to it that pastors are settled here and there, and that churches be established here and there. It seems to us that the Lord is as able to attend to all his business as he is to save sinners from their sins, and we are perfectly willing that he do all the work and have all the glory. If he needs the assistance of men and women in some things he needs assistance in all things. He is either sovereign or helpless—no middle ground in the matter at all. There can be, it seems to us, no greater proof of a man's or a woman's love for the kingdom of God than to desire peace and unity, and to manifest willingness to sacrifice his or her own ideas and notions, yes, even joys and pleasures, for the peace and welfare of Zion. The mother said, Do not divide the child, and the man or woman who has the right kind of love in his or her heart for the church will say, Do not divide the church, and if peace cannot be had otherwise, then I will step down and out, sacrificing all that is dear to me that the church suffer no division. This is "love." On the other hand, there can be no greater evidence of one's selfishness and lack of love for the church and cause of Christ than to be willing that division and strife come, if through the death of the church his or her own position stands and their own ideas and ways be established. It is seldom that one realizes that when he or she is willing to make a test case of any matter in the church, that they are making an open display of their lack of vital love and desire for the peace and prosperity of the church of God. No one

can wish ill to befall an object of his love. Love thinks no evil, is not puffed up, does not behave itself unseemly, is not easily provoked, rejoiceth not in iniquity; love never faileth.

May we all feel in heart and soul as did David when he said he preferred Jerusalem above his chief joy, and may we all endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. K.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Edith Lou Sheppard was born in Krebs, Okla., February 10th, 1916, and died May 7th, 1921, aged 5 years, 2 months and 27 days. Little Edith was a very bright, sweet little girl, the only child of fond parents. She was a victim of that dread disease, infantile paralysis. All that loving hands could do was done for her, but all in vain, God claimed his own, and after lingering only a few days the summons came, he plucked her as a rosebud to bloom beyond this vale of tears in the paradise of God, where sickness and sorrow never come. There we will never have to say those sad words, Good-bye, to loved ones. May the sorrowing ones be able to say, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. We know your loss is great, but her gain is far greater.

Written by her aunt,

(MRS.) I. M. MOUSER.

Mrs. Winifred Dove Perkins was born February 5th, 1852, and died February 19th, 1921, aged 69 years and 14 days. She was married to Elder J. M. Perkins August 29th, 1872, who passed into the great beyond April 20th, 1916. To that union were born ten children, three of whom preceded their parents to the grave. Mother professed a hope in Christ in her girlhood, and was numbered with the Missionary Baptists at Liberty, Graves Co., Ky., but was never satisfied with their doctrine, having never heard the Primitive Baptists preach until after her marriage. She finally found a home with an afflicted and poor people at North Mt. Zion, when she and her husband were baptized at the same time in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church about the year 1875, where she lived a devoted member until her death. Indeed, she was one of the helps in the church. May the dear Lord fill her absence with his presence in both the church and our home. O how we miss her, the dearest of mothers, always kind, gentle and patient, yet we try to be submissive to the Lord's will, knowing her life had been one of loneliness and sorrow since father passed away. Why should we mourn for father and mother, since we have great reason to believe they have only passed from this old sin-smitten world into blessed immortality, to praise the dear Savior for ever and ever. But O how we miss them, and the heartaches will come. We can only look to the dear Lord to sustain us in these saddest hours of our life.

After funeral services conducted by Elders J. T. Henson and J. C. Chester, kind friends placed the mortal remains beside our dear father in the cemetery adjacent to the church-house where they loved so well to worship that God who doeth all things well. They rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.

Written by her unworthy daughter, in sorrow.

LENA LACH.

John C. Graham, our brother, died at his home near Wallacetown, Ontario, April 8th, 1921, aged 78 years. He was married on February 20th, 1873, to Miss Isabelle Campbell, who, with three children, survives. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church by Elder A. B. Francis, who was visiting the church in Canada in May, 1908, and remained a consistent member until he was called home. His home was always open to receive his Baptist brethren and friends. His dear companion is a true, devoted lover of the Baptist Church and doctrine. Brother Graham leaves, besides his own family, three brothers, the church and many dear friends and relatives to mourn, but not as those who have no hope.

Our pastor, Elder J. B. Slauson, spoke words of comfort to the bereaved ones, after which his body was laid to rest in Fairview Cemetery at Dutton.

Written by request.

SARAH A. McCOLL.

MEETINGS.

THE border churches of Washington, Oregon and Idaho will hold their annual union meeting with the Big Spring Church, at Elgin, Oregon, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in June, 1921. Those coming from a distance get tickets direct to Elgin. All trains will be met and visitors cared for. All brethren and friends are invited to visit us at this meeting. C. W. BOND.

LA GRANDE, Oregon.

THE Beulah Primitive Baptist Church of Canada intends, the Lord willing, holding their annual meeting in the meetinghouse near Aberfeldy, Ont., the third Saturday and Sunday in June (18th and 19th), 1921. Our pastor is expected to be with us.

BARBARA A. MACALPINE, Clerk.

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 694 E. 125th St., or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 89. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1921. NO. 13.

POETRY.

WHATEVER COMES, 'TIS BEST I KNOW.

I KNOW that He who gave me life,
And breathed his breath into my soul,
Will not forget the child he made;
And as the years that swiftly roll
Bring joy, or grief, or weal, or woe,
No matter what, 'tis best I know.

Though clouds may gather in the sky,
And hide from me the light of day,
I know he made the stormy clouds
That cast a gloom o'er life's pathway;
No matter what the wind may blow,
Whate'er it be, 'tis best I know.

What! do we prize the rose that hides
The wicked thorn any the less
Because it wounds our thoughtless hand,
Or chides us for our selfishness?
The thorn may prick the flesh; e'en so,
It matters not, 'tis best I know.

For He who made heaven and earth
After his great eternal plan,
Made no mistake in his great work,
'Twas all for good of mortal man;
And as life's trials come and go,
Whatever comes, 'tis best I know.

HAL MORETON.

ST. JOSEPH, MO.

LORD, as to thy dear cross we flee,
And plead to be forgiven,
So let thy life our pattern be,
And form our souls for heaven.

Help us, through good report and ill,
Our daily cross to bear;
Like thee, to do our Father's will,
Our brethren's grief to share.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SHOCK, KY., Feb. 5, 1920.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you this good and timely letter which I received a few days ago, written me by Elder P. W. Sawin, of Shelbyville, Ky., which I hope you will publish in our dear old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for the benefit of the household of faith, especially the called servants of God, who should be an example to believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. The apostle Paul said on this line, Ye have us for an ensample. For our conversation is in heaven, &c. Not meaning that his conversation was in the heaven of heavens, or in the immortalized state, but was godly, as becometh the gospel of Christ here in the gospel heaven or kingdom. I am glad to believe that the Lord moved Elder Sawin to write on this subject at this, a time of great need, believing with all my heart that both the solemnity and sacredness of the high and heavenly calling should await our minds and interest our feelings, that we should so live that our example should be worthy of imitation. May God bless his little children. I have brother Sawin's

consent to send his letter to you, which you will dispose of as you deem best.

Yours in bonds and affliction,

W. J. MAY.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Jan. 21, 1920.

DEAR BROTHER MAY:—I have had a mind to write you ever since I received your good letter some time since, but many things came in the way, the most prominent of all being an unfruitful mind. I will not undertake to tell you all the way I have come in the past few months, it would be indescribable. Suffice it to say, sometimes I have sank down to the lowest depths of the sea, and the weeds were wrapped about me. I tried to cry mightily unto God, though often the heavens seemed brass or his ear was deaf to my cry. But if I am not entirely mistaken, the clouds seem somewhat scattered, the sky more clear, and I shall not likely write you the sad letter that I have to some of the dear kindred in Christ. Through it all there was one bright, cheering thought: that good hope through grace of the final victory over all the trials and conflicts here below, and I never saw the beauty and comfort in death and what it is as I did during that season of sadness and sorrow of heart. Death and the grave seemed to me a bright spot in the future before me, and as the door or entrance to eternal glory, and I only awaiting the call and longing for it. The past year has been a very peculiar one to me, it is wrapped up in mystery incomprehensible to my poor finite mind. I think I had in the fore part of the year some as sweet and heavenly spots in life as I have ever had, and some as dark and mysterious. I think there were times that I had as deep a feeling of the sacredness and reverence for the truth (God's eternal truth) as I ever did, much more, I am glad to say, (and yet with shame) than I had in early life, when I often, no doubt, dealt in them lightly, or with light mindedness. I often think of the word spoken, Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. How true; if the heart is filled with sorrow it is uppermost, and the dear one will speak of it; if joy fills the heart or soul there is a desire to talk of it; if there is a feeling sense of God's goodness and mercy we want to talk of it one to another, or declare it. So if we as his servants are carried away in the spirit on the Lord's day and see the bride, the Lamb's wife (the church), in all her beauty, and Jesus head over all things to the church, that filleth all in all, the heart will be filled with her beauty, grandeur and glory, and if we see Christ we see nothing else, but will preach the gospel of the Son of God. I attended an association not long since, where it seemed to me much of the time at least all feeling sense of the sacredness and reverence for the truth in the stand and out of it was lost sight of. Much of the time in the stand was spent in arguing or debating with unbelievers, or creating levity, and it seemed to me the one that could do the most fighting and create the most levity stood the highest. They are good brethren, and are in perfect accord with us in faith and doctrine, and it was indeed sad and lamentable, for the called servant is to be an ensample to the flock. The truth seems too sacred to allow of debate with unbelievers; there is but one side to it, it is not debatable, and nothing is gained by doing it, and there is no example laid down for it. Declare the whole counsel of God. I want to do this, whether men receive it or not, that is not my business. Our God, whom we preach, must open the heart, not until then will

they receive it, so why argue the point with them? We are no better than they when fighting them; they are in the flesh, so are we when doing it. I want to get up and preach as Paul said, determined not to know anything among them but Jesus Christ and him crucified, and if we see Christ and are preaching him in the spirit we see no one else. The servant must not strive, but be gentle, in meekness instructing them that oppose themselves, if peradventure God will give repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. When we meet it is for the worship of God, for sweet social, spiritual intercourse, or mingling together as believers in the Lord Jesus, and our conduct should be as becometh the gospel and our profession of faith in him. When our time is spent in jesting and levity is there any evidence that we have been with Jesus? No; we say by our conduct as much as Peter did, I know not the man. If these precious moments are spent in jesting and levity, what an empty thing. Where is the evidence of being with Jesus, who bore our sins and suffered on the shameful cross? How sweet and precious the moments when we meet and talk of the things by the way, or speak one with another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that thought on his name. No doubt they felt in their hearts, as does every one in whose heart is the fear of God, the blessedness of these words: "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in christian love." I want to here tell you what occurred with me forty years ago. I was helping my nephew in some work. A neighbor was there, a rather rough man, and he gave me an unintentional rebuke I have never forgotten. I told a joke of some kind; he laughed heartily and said, "I tell you if you want to hear hard jokes get with a lot of Hardshell preachers." I felt it a just rebuke, and God being my helper I would never tell another, and God being my witness I have not. Oh, with what shame I think of those days. Ensamples to the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers? Far from it. Now, my dear brother, I do feel the churches have been remiss; the deacons and the old fathers and mothers in Israel have been slow in correcting these things. It seems to me that instead of trying to correct evils and cleaning up other people's houses we had better try to get rid of the filth and rubbish in our own; for all that is outside of the real spirit of the gospel is fleshly, sensual, devilish and God-dishonoring, and never comforts, builds up nor strengthens the poor, hungry, famishing soul, and that which creates levity in the pulpit or out of it is not according to the gospel or the teachings of the meek and lowly Jesus. Oh, may his meekness be my guide, the pattern I pursue, is my chief desire. My dear brother, I wish you would take this subject up and write on it for the SIGNS. Your writings are far better and more acceptable to publishers and readers than my poor efforts. I do feel that it is needful for the well-being of our beloved Zion, that it might cause the good brethren everywhere to stop and think, Am I an ensample to the flock? Is this according to the pattern?

I had no thought of extending this so far. Pardon me.

In gospel bonds,

P. W. SAWIN.

CLARKS SUMMIT, Pa., April 12, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If these letters are suitable matter, and you need them, you may use them; if not, it will be all right. I have not said anything to the writers about it.

Yours as ever, a lover of the old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, D. M. VAIL.

LIMONA, Fla., April 3, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—I have read your letter in the SIGNS, that you are afflicted, that you cannot very well write, but that you are willing to receive letters, so I am writing to you. I know that you are not young any more. I see from the record that you are about nine months younger than I; both are at an age when feeble limbs and minds set in to mar our earthly enjoyment. I have kept track of you for many years, insomuch as I could hear of you through the SIGNS. The SIGNS entered my father's home sixty-eight years ago. I was small then, but I read it (the short articles). A few years after that I became greatly afflicted, then I read everything printed in it. If I ever saw the Lord, I have often thought that my affliction led me to Christ, the Savior of sinners. Not until death stared me right in the face (and there seemed to be evidence of it in my poor body) did I have a thought of a real Savior. Death with all its black terrors seemed to be right after me. This made me cry, for I was real stubborn, but the Lord can break down the strongest heart and make it willing; nor is Jesus short of "funds" or power to bring in those whose names he wore on his breastplate on the tree of the cross. He is not grieving because men are not coming in faster, he has no worry about that. Those people who seem so sad for Jesus and want to help him, and sing the song, "What are you doing for Jesus?" say that men and women can and do frustrate the will of God, and if we will help him break down the stubborn will of men he will pay us well for that cooperation.

I joined the church in 1860, so I have been a member over sixty years. The first sketch of my experience was published in the SIGNS in June, 1861. At that time in Ohio all the Old School Baptists that knew me were saying that I must preach. I suppose they thought of the time in October, 1860, when I sat up in bed and spoke for two hours to the friends that came in to hear my last words on earth. But when I regained my natural strength I was ashamed and began to run away, and kept on running for over eight years. The Lord had brought me to know the power of his grace without the help of man, and now he was giving me new trials to harden my heart and confirm my mind in the "hard sayings of Jesus." I felt if I must face the whole world in contending for the faith once delivered unto me that I must have a face like a flint to "cry aloud and spare not." I felt if I had to do this work that the Lord must break my spirit again, or like the colt that once had the harness on and pulled a load had learned nothing, and the next time he was hitched up he had to be "broken over." While I could see many things in the way of my beginning in the work of preaching, the time came when the way was open, and on Saturday before the first Sunday in June, 1869, I was led into the pulpit (it seemed a high place for me) and took my text from the first verse of the fourteenth chapter of John. Since then I have been "dodging around in the fold," and nothing was good enough for me that did not set forth Jesus as a full and complete Savior without the puny help of man. After all my trials

in the ministry, my earthly trials in this life, which take in much sorrow, I have passed my seventy-sixth year in safety, as regards my physical condition (have no real infirmity incident to old age), and can say that the Lord has abundantly blessed me above thousands of my fellow-creatures. I have a sweet consolation in this: in all the sixty years of my membership with the Old School Baptists in different states no charge has ever been brought in any church against me. For this clean record I feel to thank the Lord that he has kept me until this day.

My dear brother, may the Lord be with you in your affliction and heal you to be able to still wield the mighty sword of the Lord, which slays the enemies of the truth as it is in Jesus.

All yours, as ever, in hope of immortality, J. F. BEEMAN.

FLETCHER, Okla., April 4, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER IN GOSPEL FAITH, FELLOWSHIP AND SORE AFFLICTIONS:—I have read and reread your letter in the SIGNS of April 1st, current volume. I have a desire to write you a few lines, though I greatly fear that I shall fail to say anything to you worthy of your notice. As the great apostle Paul said, To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. I am a poor excuse at anything, especially letter writing. To begin with, I must ask you to make due allowance for my illiterate way of expressing my thoughts and feelings. There is something in all of the messages published in the SIGNS that appeals to my poor sinful heart. Many times have I feasted on messages of brotherly love. Dear brother Vail, this brotherly love, which is so often mentioned in the Bible, is the fruit of the Spirit of God, and brings many of the Adamic family together in a higher relationship than is known in the first Adam. All things belong to God, and there are no impossibilities with him. He works all things after the counsel of his own will. He has in his great wisdom and power created and set the bounds of all things, and none can go beyond nor fall behind the limits and bounds that he has set. There is but one true and living God, and he is an independent sovereign; there is not anything in his way, nothing can thwart one of his purposes or cut short one of his decrees. Israel's God does not try to do, for it is said of him, He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. Now what about man? He is a poor, depraved, sinful, ignorant creature. The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? Dear brother Vail, if the Bible gives a true description of the sovereignty of God and the depravity of man, and it does, how can a man do what he cannot do? How can a man get a clean thing out of an unclean thing? How can a blind man see? Again, if God is independent how can he be dependent? If God works all things after the counsel of his own will, how can he work some things after man's will? To be brief, I will here say that God is independent and man is dependent. God is holy and man is wicked. Let God be true and every man a liar. Not long ago out in Texas I was trying to preach this doctrine to a congregation, and after closing the service a man said, "If that old man preached the truth I am lost." I was made to feel that God stood with his poor ignorant servant, giving him a message for one of his hungering lambs. I had a conversation with the man the next day, and again I was made to rejoice in the very depths of my

heart, feeling sure that God was using his servant. I love the theme salvation by grace. By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Dear old brother in Christ Jesus, if I am not deceived I see an independent God and a poor dependent man in salvation by grace. God is the giver and his chosen people the receivers. Dear brother, we have never met each other face to face in this world, though I feel that I have met you many times in the relationship of God's Spirit. There are many miles between us, though I hope that we are close together. I, too, am getting old, and suffer from rheumatic pains in my hands and arms. I assure you that my heart burns with brotherly love and sympathy for you. I love God's servants, but feel unworthy of being permitted to sit in council with them. I know that I am not of any worth to them, though they are of great worth to me. I hope and pray that God will restore you to normal health and spare your life for many days yet, giving you grace for every need, that you may carry many sweet messages of brotherly love to poor suffering Israel.

Pardon me for wearying you with this long letter. Pray for me, a poor sinner, I trust saved by grace.

L. E. SKINNER.

COLUMBUS, Ga., January 8, 1919.

MRS. L. S. UTTERBACK—DEAR SISTER IN THE FAITH OF GOD'S ELECT:—I have read your good letter in the December 15th, 1918, SIGNS, and noticed where you asked Elder Lefferts or Ker to write on the words found in Ecclesiastes iii. 22. I read your text, and am inclosing some thoughts I have had upon it. If they can be of any interest or comfort to you you are welcome to them, but if they are not in accordance with the Spirit of truth then I know they are worthless, so if you find them thus commit them to the flames and all will be well with me. Of course my poor thoughts will not compare with those of our efficient editors, should they write for you and me upon this text, so please, if they should write, do not compare these thoughts with their editorials. I am also awaiting their reply to your request with interest, and a desire to know if I understand the meaning of the words found in this text aright. I think perhaps I have some understanding of it, but it is often difficult to express intelligently and comfortingly to those who love the truth what we feel to believe is the true meaning of the holy Scriptures, so if you find that these thoughts are not in line with God's truth and the witness within you, cast them aside as worthless. If you see anything in them to the glory of God and the benefit of even one of his children, give him all the glory, and for my sake cast the mantle of charity over all errors that may be found in my poor writing.

Yours for the truth's sake,

(MRS.) C. M. THETFORD.

ECCLESIASTES III. 22.

"WHEREFORE I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion: for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?"

True wisdom, which is the gift of God, teaches us both in his written word and in the many experiences through which we have to pass, that all things save one (the kingdom of God) are vain. The word "vanity" Webster says means worthless; vain; trifling; conceit; vain pursuits, and I know of no more true and fitting language by which I can better

express what I believe the Preacher, the man of true wisdom, meant when he said, "All is vanity," meaning that all earthly pursuits, worldly wisdom and knowledge, earthly riches and powers, are but vanities, mere trifles. The heart that is made to see and feel the vanity of all earthly riches and glory is filled with something that is far better, something that is so much higher and more valuable that there is no comparison. That heart which can feel the truth of the things written by the man of true wisdom and all of holy writ is the blessed recipient of the grace of God. It has seen and felt the brightness of the Sun of Righteousness and the glory of his kingdom, in whose glorious light all things of this natural or worldly kingdom are but vanities, vain pursuits, trifles. True wisdom, after revealing to us the vanities of all these things, in comparison with the things of that eternal, heavenly kingdom, also says that man can do nothing better than rejoice (be glad and enjoy) his own works (the labor of his hands for the things necessary for his sustenance and development of his mind and body). "For that is his portion." Man in his low, fallen, natural state verily thinks there is much more and better things that he can do than to rejoice in his manual labors. He thinks he can so live and do works for God, such as the uplifting of humanity and bringing souls to Christ, thereby saving souls from torment and meriting eternal salvation for himself and bringing the all-powerful Creator under obligation to save him. But not so, for true wisdom tells us in our text and all through the word of God that man can do nothing to extricate himself from under the curse of death. There is nothing better for man (within his power to do) than to rejoice in his works (labors). By "works" is meant no such thing as works of salvation, either for himself or for others, for salvation is not by works, but by grace. The works of man spoken of here are the same that God commanded when he said to the first man Adam, Thou shalt earn thy bread in the sweat of thy face. Therefore after God gave this law or command to man there is nothing better for him than to obey this law and rejoice in the fruits of his works, or labors. There is nothing better to be derived from these works than to enjoy them in this life and be content and happy in the comforts and pleasures gained by the labors of his hands and brow, which are all the gifts of God and the portion of man. "He hath made everything beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end."—Eccl. iii. 11. He hath made everything beautiful in his time and as it pleaseth him. He gave to man the portion that is his, he set the world in his heart, fixed all things and gifts, so that no man can change his heart or find out God or his works from the beginning of them to the end of them. There can be no change in the works of God, for he hath set them even to the hearts of men. He pronounced all his works of creation "very good," and all are good for the purpose and design for which each and everything was made. Wisdom says, "I know that there is no good in them, [the beautiful things that God maketh from the beginning to the end] but for a man to rejoice, and to do good [live honestly and uprightly] in his life. And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labor, it is the gift of God." For what hath a man of all his labor? What hath a man of man's labor that he can possess or carry with him when he is done with this time world? There shall be nothing after him. As he came forth naked from his mother's womb, so shall he return and shall take nothing

with him. For all his days are grief (trouble); his heart taketh (findeth) no rest. There is no rest in the darkness of nature, therefore there is nothing better for a man (natural man) than that he should eat and drink and make his soul enjoy the good (the benefits) of his labor. This also I saw was from the hand of God; not from or by the Spirit of God, but a gift from the hand of God. As before said, the works referred to here have no reference to salvation or the labor and travail of a soul, neither "good works," as the world has it, but are the works that God said in the beginning man should do, and the portion or lot of all men, and are from the hand of God to every man, both the elect and the non-elect. We have no better gift in nature than the fruits of our labors, and are blessed with the gift of enjoyment in the comforts and conveniences of them through this life.

"For who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?" Wisdom says there shall be nothing after him, and that it is better that a man should enjoy the benefits of his labor while he lives, for he can take none of these things with him. For what shall they be (to him) after him? Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter. The wisdom of God teaches us that all is vanity, except the love and fear of God and the keeping of his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. None except his spiritual children, to whom he has by his Spirit imparted true wisdom, know anything about the love and fear of God. Only those who have been taught in the school of Christ can understand why and in what sense all things outside of the kingdom of God are but vanities, although they are the work of God's hand and are good for the purpose for which they were made. The works of God man cannot by all his wit and study find out, but to that heart and soul who is the blessed recipient of his grace and the knowledge of the truth of God, though these vanities are all good in their place, they are but vanities, mere trifles. How often does the child of God feel to say of the things of this world, "All is vanity." Jesus has taken of the things of his and shown them unto us, in the light of which all else is vain. Paul says we, as others, are subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Our lives in the flesh are to more or less extent subjected to or controlled by things we feel are vain; not willingly so, for we do not enter into these things with heart and soul, as does the world, but it is by reason (will and purpose) of him who hath given us all things through hope. In a sense God hath subjected every man unto vanities, but unto his chosen vessels of mercy he hath subjected all things in hope. They are given sweet hope of a place in that kingdom which is eternal, ever looking forward to the time of their final deliverance from all trials, sorrows and afflictions, which are their portion while in the flesh; and not only hope of a final deliverance, but many blessings and deliverances while here in this time life. To love and fear God, to have hope in Christ the Lord (be it ever so small at times), and to love the brethren, are heavenly joys given us, a foretaste of that which is to come. These blessings are far above, and not to be compared with the blessings and rejoicings spoken of in the text quoted. We perceive that there is nothing better for man than to live honestly and morally, enjoying the fruits of his labors, but for the chosen of God, the subjects of his all-saving grace, we know there is something far better, viz.: free and unmerited salvation, both for time and eternity. Salvation is of the Lord.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1921.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ROMANS IX. 11–13.

"(FOR the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."

SISTER Martha Elliott, of Sciotoville, Ohio, asks us to give our views through the SIGNS on the above text, which we shall try to do if God permit. The text presents the doctrine of God's unconditional election of his people unto salvation, and election is, perhaps, of all the doctrine of the Scriptures the most offensive to the natural mind. Man objects to it, and cannot bring himself voluntarily to believe that God makes choice of some unto salvation and not others. However, it shall not be our purpose in this article to reconcile the ways of God to man, but simply to present as plainly as possible what the Bible says on this great matter. It is sometimes said that the doctrine preached by Paul was not the same doctrine preached by our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul is accused of coloring the teachings of Jesus with his own knowledge of Greek philosophy. To this charge Paul can easily plead not guilty. Though an educated man, Paul says plainly in his letters to the churches that he counted all things as dung and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, also that he was determined to know nothing among the brethren but Jesus Christ, and him crucified, and that he came not to the ministry with excellency of speech, nor with words which man's wisdom teaches. Paul did not preach the doctrine of election a whit more forcibly than Jesus himself taught it. It was this truth of election that more than any other matter preached by Jesus caused the Jews to take up stones to stone him. (See John x. 25–31.) "But ye believed not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." Here, in a very few words, Jesus tells the people that the reason of their unbelief is because they are not of the elect or chosen sheep. Again, in John viii. 42–47, he tells them the reason they do not love him is because God is not their Father, that they could not hear his words because they were not of God. It seems to us that certainly Paul nowhere sets forth election any more clearly than does Jesus in these texts we have cited, as well as in many other instances which our readers may look up for themselves.

But now let us come more directly to the text from the ninth chapter of Romans quoted at the head of this article. The reference is to Jacob and Esau, the children of Rebecca and Isaac, and the original narrative of which Paul gives a summary, may be found by referring to Genesis xxv. 22–26, and the twenty-seventh chapter of Genesis. It will be seen that though Esau and Jacob were twins Esau was born first, was therefore the elder of the two and was naturally entitled to the birthright. However, in the purpose of God Jacob became possessed of the birthright, though he had no natural right thereto, and though Jacob was the younger of the two, Esau, the elder, had to serve him and to bow down to him. Jacob stands for the man

of faith, Esau for the mere earthly man, or natural man. These two men are struggling in every heaven-born child of God, and the man of faith does subdue the natural man and does keep the mere man of earth in subjection. It is in this way that believers do render their bodies living sacrifices unto God and are enabled to maintain a godly walk and conversation. Before the children were born God made it known to the mother that his love was fixed upon Jacob and not upon Esau. This choice of God was made known before the children had done either good or evil. This was to show that God's choice of the one and not of the other did in no wise depend upon the works of either, but that it hinged solely upon God's own purpose according to his own election. That is to say, Jacob was in the love of God not because of any good thing he had ever done, and Esau's being rejected was not because of any wicked thing he had ever done. Sinners are saved not because of their good works, but because God chose or elected them unto salvation in his Son before the foundation of the world. Sinners are lost not because of their wicked acts, but because they were not chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. The whole matter of salvation, including the one to save, the ones to be saved and the way the saving was to be done, was all fixed and settled in the eternal mind and purpose of God before ever time began, and all the acts of men and devils can never change the matter the slightest iota. In Malachi iii. 6, we find the remarkable declaration, "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." The immutability of Jehovah is here put as the reason of salvation. When once the Lord had said he loved Jacob there was no change from it. No matter what Jacob might or might not do the love of God toward him was not changed. This love was not brought about in the first instance by anything Jacob had or had not done, neither could this love be changed in the last instance by anything Jacob might or might not do. Though Jacob deprived Esau of his birthright by taking advantage of Esau's hunger, though Jacob deceived his father Isaac, and told a falsehood in the matter to obtain the blessing, though Jacob dealt very cunningly with the cattle of Laban, none of these things caused God to turn away his love from Jacob. God continued to love Jacob the same as at first in spite of all Jacob's treachery and double-dealing. Had God been such as to have been influenced by Jacob's manner of life then surely Jacob would have been consumed, but God is such that he loves the sinner in spite of his sins, and loves him without change. Therein is the salvation of the sinner. On the other hand, no matter how well Esau might try to conduct himself, and we must acknowledge that as a man Esau had many characteristics superior to Jacob, yet he could by no means get himself into the love of God from which he had ever been rejected. Though afterwards he would have gladly received the blessing, yet it could never be his. All his tears of remorse for having sold his birthright availed him nothing. Hebrews xii. 16, 17, tells us that Esau "for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." We see, hence, that just as Jacob's lying and deceit could not change God's love for him, so Esau's tears and remorse availed nothing to take away God's rejection of him. We admit that all this is a hard doctrine to the natural mind, but we have no apologies to make for it. It is not our doc-

trine, we did not originate it. It is God's doctrine, the Bible is full of it. It needs no propping up at our hands. We have simply to declare what the Scriptures say, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. The Jews said of Jesus' sayings, These are hard sayings, who can hear them? No man can hear them except he be born of God and so find that these things are his very life and salvation. To the children of the living God there is no more comforting truth than that their eternal destiny is in no wise affected by what they do or do not do while here on earth. To the weak and needy sinner who knows his wisdom is foolishness with God, and that his righteousness is as filthy rags, to such an one who has fled for refuge to the fiery law and who has exhausted himself in trying to comply with its demands, how good to hear that blessed Voice from behind, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it; how good to find that salvation is not by the deeds of the law, but by the free and unmerited grace of God in the Lord Jesus Christ. Truly the weary sinner finds himself grounded upon a rock when he by faith realizes that God is unchangeable and that he is love, always has been love and always will be love where his people are concerned. To know that our destiny was fixed in the mind and purpose of God before time began, to know that we cannot change it for weal or woe, to know that election is not of works, but of the purpose of that God who effectually calls by his grace, is to have a good hope through grace. The only way to know these things is by that faith, the fruit of God's Spirit, by which God exercises us unto the knowledge of divine things. No man by searching can ever find out these things. They must come by revelation. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Wm. S. Bond.)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, June 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1921, to the churches composing the same.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—As the time is at hand for our Association, and as it is the custom, you will expect something in the way of a Circular Letter, so we tender to you this our annual epistle as a token of love and fellowship for the children of God, who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ. We call your attention to the words of David found in the one hundred and thirty-third Psalm: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." When we dwell together in unity we see eye to eye, and speak the same things, and declare the counsel of God as it is in Jesus Christ, and not try to please man, who is of the earth earthy. For Paul said, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." —Rom. xvi. 17, 18. The apostle said, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." May we then, dear brethren, build upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner. As ye are builded together an holy temple in the Lord, may we then be enabled by the grace of God to speak the same things, and there be no division among us, but that we be perfectly joined

together in the same mind and the same Spirit, which is the Spirit of Christ, for the Savior said, A house divided against itself cannot stand. May we then take heed to the words of Paul when he said, Let brotherly love continue. But let us see who our brother is. It has not always proven to be our brother whose name is upon the church book. But let us take the Savior's words when he was in the temple with the lawyers and doctors asking questions and answering them, and when they told him his mother was without and asking for him he said, Who is my mother? and he pointed to his disciples, and said, Behold my mother, my sister and my brother. Our brother, then, is that one who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, then he has the witness within himself and is made by the power of God to believe the same things in Christ our Lord. Then the time of the singing of birds is come and the voice of the turtle is heard once more in the land, and we are as one family, all trusting in that same God who doeth all things after the counsel of his own will. May we then trust in the Lord, for in him is everlasting strength, and if we are the children of God his indwelling Spirit will teach us to follow after peace and to pray for the peace of Zion, to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. "Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon."—1 Cor. iii. 9, 10. Talebearers, hypocrites, teachers of errors, do not belong to the Prince of Peace, and are not striving to keep the bond of peace, but are destroying the welfare of Zion. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God, for such have the Spirit of Christ and desire to walk in his law; they are not found turning aside to suit man, for Paul said, I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. Then we are continually seeking grace to walk humbly after the Spirit, and to seek for peace and holiness. Without such it is impossible to serve God in our spirit. How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things. The children of God should be as one family, dwelling together in unity, for their fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, and desire to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of their faith, for they are not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Think it not strange then, dear brethren, concerning the fiery trials that shall try you, as though some strange thing had happened, but rejoice, inasmuch as you are partakers of his sufferings, that if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him. We do not desire to follow Christ wearing the graveclothes, for when Jesus raised Lazarus from the grave he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth, and he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot, and the Savior said, Loose him, and let him go. We must be loosed from our graveclothes, which set forth our own works, and must be stripped from them, for they are as filthy rags, and must be made to look unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith. The Savior said unto his disciples, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that be-

lieveth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." When the children of God are quickened and made to believe they are then baptized with the Holy Ghost, being swallowed up with the power of God, being made to see that they are nothing, and even vanity, in the sight of God. But we can rejoice, because the Savior said, I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am there ye may be also. For he was caught up in a cloud and passed out of their sight and ascended unto God, there to make intercession for his people. "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." For we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed and awake with his likeness, then we shall be satisfied in him, for we shall see him as he is, and go out from his presence no more forever.

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.
D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in July (31st). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Sarah F. Gandey, N. J., $2.00; Franklin Terry, N. J., $1.00; Simeon Hiltabrand, Ill., $3.00; A. R. Elmendorf, N. Y., $1.00; Lydia B. Stewart, N. Y., $3.00; Lydia C. Ray, Texas, $1.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, at Salisbury, Md., June 8th, 1921, Ralph R. Gordy and Martha A. Pusey, both of Salisbury.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Margaret Campbell died at her home in the township of Lobo, Ontario, July 1st, 1920, after a short illness of heart disease. Sister Campbell was the beloved wife of Daniel Campbell, and resided on their farm near Komoka village. She was received into the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada at Lobo in 1909, and baptized by Elder H. C. Ker. She was a loving wife, devoted mother and kind neighbor. Her faithful walk and steadfastness in the church, of which she was a worthy member, was to be admired. Their home was a welcome place to all her kindred in Christ. She leaves her husband, four sons and one daughter, besides the church, to mourn their loss.

The writer conducted the funeral service at her late residence. Her body was laid to rest in the Campbell cemetery. May the Lord's blessing rest upon the family, and especially upon her son Russel, whose wife died so suddenly in the bloom of youth June 5th, 1921.

ALSO,

Margaret Sinclair died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Monroe, April 3rd, 1920, after a long and painful illness, which she bore with great fortitude. Her kind children ministered every earthly comfort that was possible to obtain. Sister Sinclair was a firm believer in the doctrine held by the Old School Baptists. She was received into the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada October 6th, 1888, and baptized by Elder Pollard. Her faithful and upright walk, which adorned her life, bespeaks of that true spirit which upholds and guides all true believers through this wilderness journey. She resided in St. Thomas for a few years, and it was my privilege to have many pleasant visits with her at her home and talk with her upon spiritual things. We mourn our loss, but not as those who have no hope, for we believe she is at rest. She leaves her husband, two sons and five daughters, besides other relatives and friends.

The funeral was held from the home of her daughter, Mrs. Monroe; burial was in the Gillis Cemetery.

ALSO,

Sarah Black departed this life at the home of her daughter, Mrs. T. H. Odell, 57 Portage Ave., Detroit, Michigan, March 5th, 1921, after a lingering illness, in the 82nd year of her age. Sister Black was the daughter of the late Malcolm McBrayne, of Yarmouth, and with her husband (James Black, who preceded her in death twenty-nine years) was

among the first pioneer settlers of the township of Dorchester, where she resided many years. Her late home was in the city of St. Thomas until she was obliged to give up her comfortable home on account of illness, and went to make her home with her daughter, where she passed peacefully away. Sister Black was of a sterling character, and her death cast a gloom over the community where she had lived. Sister Black was received into the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada in the year 1879, and was baptized at Ekfrid June 22nd, by the late Elder Pollard. Sister Black was of a lovable character, and lived very near her Savior. Her chief delight was to talk of Jesus and his love to poor sinners. Her walk and deportment were such as becomes the children of God. Her house was a pleasant home to visit in, and her kind and genial manner made all who visited her feel welcome. It can truly be said of sister Black that she lived and died in the faith of God's elect, and we feel to say, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them. She leaves besides the church, four sons, two daughters and many relatives and friends.

Her funeral was held from the residence of James Odell, 110 Forest Ave., St. Thomas, where the writer tried to comfort the sorrowing ones with such as the Lord was pleased to give. Burial was in St. Thomas cemetery. J. B. SLAUSON.

Mrs. Mary S. Croasdale was born in Ohio April 25th, 1848, and died April 22nd, 1921, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. H. T. Lefferts, Nutley, N. J., aged 72 years, 11 months and 28 days. She was the widow of Amos T. Croasdale and the mother of four children, three of whom survive: Mary Elizabeth, wife of brother H. T. Lefferts; Mrs. Emma Pickering and Stanley B. Croasdale, all of Nutley, N. J. Sister Croasdale was a member of the Ebenezer Church of New York city. With her daughter Emma she was baptized by the writer November 21st, 1909. Her life and walk in the church was in unfeigned love of the brethren; her delight was in their company and in observing the order of the house. While she humbly confessed to poverty of spirit, and to a feeling sense of having attained to little growth in grace, her hunger and thirst after righteousness was not in feeble, ineffectual desires; and the blessing, "even life for evermore," was hers; for it is the living who seek after growth in grace, and so much the more as they are healthy and thriving. For more than twenty-six years she was one in the family of brother and sister Lefferts and their daughter, sister Myrtle—a family of believers and all members of the same church. About a year ago she was very ill, but rallied and regained much of her former health and strength, and we were encouraged to believe she would soon be fully recovered. In a few months, however, the disease reasserted itself, and her decline was rapid. Her family were untiring in their efforts to relieve her suffering, and she often spoke of the comfort their presence and devotion was to her. Sister Croasdale was of a cheerful disposition, not inclined to despondency under any circumstance, and this disposition never forsook her. She will be remembered as one who never grew old, as the manner of some is. In all her suffering she was uncomplaining, patiently reconciled to the will of God; and as she lived she died, in the full assurance of a good hope through grace. The bereaved family have the heartfelt sympathy of all who knew sister Croasdale, and the church mourns with them in the departure of a dearly beloved member.

Services were held at her late home, and also at Somerton, Pa., where interment was made in the William Penn Cemetery.

JOHN McCONNELL.

Levi Sparks Bloomfield was born in Fulton County, Ill., June 4th, 1841, and died at his ranch home near Meeker, Colo., March 14th, 1921, aged 79 years, 9 months and 10 days. His disease was incidental to advanced age. His early life was spent with our father and brothers in developing a pioneer farm. In 1866, after passing through months of awakening experiences and the quickening power of the blessed Spirit of God, he was given hope through Christ in the mercy of a blessed heavenly Master. I remember when working with him in the fields at this time how he would plow all day long with tear-filled eyes, not venturing to explain the cause of his great sorrow. I thought he was ill, or had met with some keen reverses in youthful love affairs. One day I remember of his looking more sad than usual, and tying his team to the fence he sought a lonely wood nearby. I was alarmed, fearing he might do some bodily harm to himself. That evening I saw him slip a small Bible into his pocket and pass out of the house. The next morning I noticed a calm but serious look on his face, and felt some change had come over him. I was not mistaken in this. The following Saturday he and our mother related the dealings of the Lord with them to the Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, and both were received, and baptized the following day by Elder Peter L. Campbell, a pioneer minister of western Illinois. Brother's membership remained with that church until the day of his death, although he lived many years in Colorado, but never near a Primitive Baptist Church. Three years later brother was married to Miss Hilpah Younker, also a member of Mt. Zion Church. For more than fifty-two years they shared each other's joys and sorrows, loving the same blessed doctrine of free grace, which they tried to honor always by their daily walk. Besides his aged companion he leaves

two sons, one daughter and a number of grandchildren to mourn his departure. Brother took his family to Colorado in 1873 for the benefit of his companion's health. Several of his last winters were spent in Los Angeles, Cal., where he had the privilege of listening to preaching by Elder George A. Bretz and others, which privilege he appreciated much. Brother Levi was a subscriber and reader of the precious SIGNS for fifty years. Living in the recesses of their mountain home, this paper carried to himself and beloved wife many semi-monthly messages of comfort.

The following notice of brother's death was published in a Meeker, Colo., paper: "Mr. Levi S. Bloomfield died at his home east of town early Monday morning at an advanced age. He was a prosperous farmer and stockraiser. His noble character may well be an example to others for kindness, honesty and upright living. His devotion to his family was something to behold, and his thoughts were always for them, even to his last moments. He was a Primitive Baptist in religious faith, and wavered not in his trust in God when the end came. Funeral services were held on Tuesday afternoon, conducted by Mr. Coudry, a local minister. The pallbearers were all old-time pioneer settlers and friends of the deceased."

May the great Physician heal the mourning hearts of our dear sister and her children.

A. W. BLOOMFIELD.

Mrs. Bertha E. Kephart, daughter and only living child of brother John F. Oliver and of our late sister Mary D. Oliver, was born November 26th, 1883, and died at her home in Herndon, Va., June 4th, 1921. She was nine years of age when her mother died, but was reared to womanhood by her stepmother, our sister Margaret Oliver, who loved her and cared for her as though she had been her own child. She was married to Arthur W. Kephart, of Herndon, Va., Sept. 11th, 1907. Besides her sorrowing husband she leaves two little children to mourn her departure: Mildred, aged twelve, and Jerome, aged nine. Bertha was a devoted wife to her husband and a fond and loving mother to her children. She was not a member of any church, but was a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace only, which is the hope of every heaven-born soul. Regarding spiritual things, she did not open her mind much to her own father and mother, but to others outside the family circle she would speak of the religion of the Old School Baptists as being the faith of her soul, and would contend for the doctrine against any who ridiculed or tried to belittle it. Is it not strange how most of us hide our deepest feelings from those who love us best, and reveal them more easily to those who have little or no interest in us?

Brother Oliver requested me to attend the funeral, but I was from home when the word came, and by the time I returned it was too late for me to go. I regret his disappointment, but take it that the Lord for some reason did not intend me to be there. Our brother Oliver has now outlived his four children and their mother, and feels his grief is more than he can bear. However, we feel that the Lord is with him and giving him comforting meditations on the Scriptures, so that he is by no means alone in his sadness. May the presence of the Lord abide with both brother and sister Oliver, and may he reconcile them to his will.

Written by request. L.

MEETINGS.

THE First Church of Roxbury intends, the Lord willing, to hold their annual two days meeting in the meetinghouse at Vega, N. Y., the first Sunday and Saturday before in July (2nd and 3rd), 1921. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. Our pastor and Elder J. B. Slauson are expected to be with us.

V. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Siloam Association of Predestinarian Baptists will be held with Cowlitz River Church, near Swofford, Wash., August 12th, 13th and 14th, 1921. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend. For further information write me.

ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk.

RIFFE, Wash.

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SALLIE E. HOWARD, Church Clerk.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 89. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1921. NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE BRIDE, THE LAMB'S WIFE.

To the dearly beloved editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, brethren, sisters and kindred in Christ Jesus, our Lord and Master, whose eyes may behold this epistle of love, I hope, I desire, if God will be my helper, to present this beautiful bride. I do not desire to speak in the wisdom of men, just to fill up space, nor for pastime, but to speak in the wisdom of God for the comfort and edification of his humble poor, hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Not that I feel I am more able to do this than any of God's servants, for if I am one I am the least of all, but that it is my mind to do this, and I hope that it is given to me from on high. This bride is known by several different names, or, in other words, she has many appellations. I shall not give book, chapter and verse of all the Scriptures that I may use, for it would take up too much space and time, but if any wish to know their whereabouts they can hunt them up. As a man's wife is known and called by his name, so is this bride known and called by the name of her husband, The Lord our Righteousness. As a kingdom, she is known as the kingdom of God, or the kingdom of heaven; as a city, Jerusalem; as a building, a house or church; as a dove, a garden inclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed, the King's daughter, and as a nation, Israel; she is a rose, a lily. If I mention any of these names you will know of whom I speak. There are threescore queens and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number. My dove, my undefiled, is but one; she is the only one of her mother; she is the choice one of her that bare her. The daughters saw her and blessed her, yea, the queens and the concubines praised her. This bride is a chosen one, like all other brides. Most all men choose their brides because of the beauty they see in them. Not many men would choose one if they knew that she was badly afflicted, with no soundness in her, and greatly in need of a good physician. But Jesus chose his bride not because he saw any beauty in her, for she was full of wounds and bruises and putrifying sores from the soles of her feet to the crown of her head, and there was no soundness in her; therefore she was badly afflicted and had need of the Physician; and that is not all, she was so poor that she had no money to

pay her Doctor's bill, for she had sold herself for naught and had not wherewith to pay. The Lord says, I will leave in the midst of thee a poor and afflicted people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. So you see she was in a helpless condition as far as her ability was concerned. He did not choose her because she was a big, robust woman, like those queens. The Lord said to her, I did not choose you nor set my love upon you because ye were more in number than any people, for ye are the fewest of all people. This is what he said to Israel. So she was the least of all women; and not only this, her clothes, or garment, is said to be as filthy rags. The Lord did not choose her because she was poor and afflicted and filthy and wore rags, for he made this choice before she was born. She had not done any good or evil, but when he made this choice he in his wisdom saw that she would fall into this condition, and in his eternal counsel he determined to pick her up out of all this filthy, afflicted and poor condition, wash her in his blood, purify her from all iniquity and present her unto himself without spot or wrinkle, holy and without blame before him in love. He says to her, Thou art the fairest among women. Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee. So now she is fairer than all of those queens and concubines and virgins. No wonder they praised her. So then she was justified in saying, I am the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valleys. He brought me to his banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love. His left hand is under my head and his right hand doth embrace me. He said to her, I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse; I have gathered my myrrh with my spices; I have eaten my honey with my honeycomb; I have drank my wine with my milk. Eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved. Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners. O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock (Jesus), in the secret places of the stairs (Jesus), let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely. David said, The King's daughter is all glorious within, and her clothing is of wrought gold and her raiment of fine needlework. So her clothing is beautiful as well as herself. Jesus said, If I go away I will send you another Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, and he shall take of the things that are mine and shew them unto you. This bride is his. The Holy Spirit showed this beautiful bride in another beautiful attire to John in the revelation, when she was married unto her husband, Christ. The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready; and to her it was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. Paul said, But of God are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. As God clothed Adam and Eve with coats of skin, he clothed this bride with the garment of righteousness. Jesus says, Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. The old prophet said, Stand in the ways, and ask for the old paths, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest to your souls. Of course all orders claim to be the kingdom or church of God, but notice there are many queens but only one true bride. I will endeavor to show you how you may know this bride. Abraham had two sons, one by a bondwoman and the other by the freewoman (true wife). The one by the

bondwoman was born after the flesh, the one by the freewoman was by promise; which things are an allegory (figure), for they are the two covenants, the one from Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answers to Jerusalem, which now is and was in bondage with her children; but Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all (the promised seed). It is written, Rejoice, thou barren, that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not, for the desolate (bondwoman) hath many more children than Sarah, or the church, which hath a husband. We brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. Notice, the bondwoman had many more children than she which hath a husband. Notice, the bondchildren were born after the flesh, and those of the freewoman by promise. There are only two ways of salvation taught in our land or country: one is by works and the other by grace, and there are more people who teach the way of salvation by works than there are who teach the way of salvation by grace. So you can readily see that the grace people are the true wife or church. Remember, these two women represented the two covenants, the old and the new. The old was a covenant of works, the new is, I will and you shall, saith the Lord, which is grace. Paul said, For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. Paul said again, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. All people outside of the grace people say that you will have to do right or keep the commandments if you are saved, and this of course is works. The grace people say that you do not have to work in order to be saved, and this is the way of salvation: It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. This is grace. Paul said that it is either by grace or by works, and he said several times that it is not of or by works, and never did say it is not of grace. Christ said, Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. This gift is by grace. One never works for a gift, and this little flock is the bride, who has not as many children as the bondwoman. I heard a woman say that she belonged to the big flock (the Methodists). I told her she did not belong to the flock that Christ said he gave the kingdom to, for it was a little flock, and she stood dumfounded. The religious world is striving to see who can outnumber, and they bind their subjects to work in order to get to heaven and immortal glory. This means bondage. The grace people do not strive to outnumber anybody, and they do not bind their subjects to work in order to get to heaven and immortal glory. This means freedom. Christ said, If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed; not maybe so if you will work. This bride is said to be a great city (not great in numbers over other people, but great in character), the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. The Lord told the prophet Isaiah to comfort her, saying that her warfare is accomplished, her iniquities pardoned. Pardon means grace, and not works. If a man has to work to get out of prison he is not pardoned, but when the governor pardons a man he is set free without works or compensation. So Jerusalem is set free without works or compensation, by her governor (Christ). Thou,

Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah, for out of thee shall come a Governor that shall rule my people Israel. The church at Ephesus and the faithful in Christ, chosen in him before the foundation of the world, redeemed by Christ and received forgiveness of sins. This also means grace. If a man who is in debt has to work to pay the debt, it is not forgiveness, but if the man he owes gives him the debt then he has forgiven him. This is grace unadulterated. Christ did not require the woman that he chose to be his bride to work and pay her debt so she could sit by his side eternally in a heavenly mansion with all the beauty of holiness, but he forgave her the debt that she had contracted in the meshes of sin and washed her in his blood and cleansed her from all of her filthiness and clothed her with his own garment, which is whiter than snow, and will land her in his heavenly mansion with all the glory he has, singing to him, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to loose the seals, for thou hast redeemed us out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

A great deal more could be said, but seeing that this article is very lengthy I will close by asking the editors to correct all mistakes, if they permit this to go into their good paper.

Unworthily yours, in hope,

S. M. DICKENS.

GREENVILLE, Texas, June 10, 1921.

SULLIVAN, Ill., April 23, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel like writing you a few lines in regard to the doctrines as set forth in our paper. As far as we know, the SIGNS is the only paper the Baptist people have that fearlessly and courageously indorses predestination. Other periodicals that we know of put it out in a modified sense, i. e., God predestinated just the good things, and just suffers the evil to come to pass, yet has nothing to do with evil, not even controlling it by his laws, but simply allowing it to exist, as some say, as an eternal opposite to good. Now, I cannot view Jehovah as that kind of a being. I see God as a complete sovereign over all things. He says by one of the inspired writers that he ruleth all things. Now if he ruleth all things, how does he do it? How does he work? Does he just work a day at a time, a year at a time? I think not. He, being all-powerful, spake the worlds into existence; planets and solar systems sprang into existence by the majestic power of his eternal decree. He alone existed in the beginning, and with the three attributes existing in one planned just how all these things should come into existence. They came by no chance affair. No wonder the psalmist should say, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." Stand in the open some clear, beautiful night and gaze upward at the wondrous works of God, or look around you and view his beautiful works in nature. Every spear of grass, every flower, every tree, every animal, as well as every man, proclaims his wonderful and omnipotent power. Go upon the ocean out from the view of land, see how the waves rise and fall in accordance with his divine command. Or with all your imagination dig down into the laws of science, which are as old as time and have been in existence ever since he created them, and see what wonderful things may be brought forth. Not by man, nor of man, but of God, who ruleth all things. When the powder explodes, sending the deadly missile against an ignominious foe, it is he who hath ordained it so. Or

when the foe overcomes at the time it is all for his glory, and he will make his glory known later, that we may behold it. He says, I am God, and there is none else. Some would rather say "one else" just as big and just as eternal as God. I do not believe that doctrine is in accord with truth, and I cannot reconcile it with the truth which we know that God is sovereign. The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof, the world and all that is therein. Upholding all things by the word of his power. "He is before all things, and by him all things consist." All things were made by him, and without him there was nothing made that was made. Some say this last clause, "that was made," implies that those things never were made, but had an eternal existence. I cannot so understand language. Now, to show that he rules it all, evil as well as good, I want to quote from Jeremiah xxxii. 42, where he uses this language: "Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them." Read the entire chapter, and see the great evil that had been brought upon the people, causing their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto the false god Molech. (Verse 35.) We quiver, we tremble at such idolatry. We have the same idolatry now in a spiritual sense, worshiping according to men's ideas, setting up for doctrines commandments of men. Is there a purpose in this? Why should it be so? Yet God will bring upon us all the good that he hath promised us. We will be made to see the truth as it exists in him, notwithstanding all this idolatry. Not only in a spiritual sense, but in a natural sense as well, do we see God's power made manifest. God made the beasts after their kind, &c. I know this idea is controverted, and Darwin puts out eight hundred pages trying to prove that all animals sprang from one specie, which is false. When we view the variety of animals from the smallest insect to the great elephant and ferocious tiger and lion, we say, Surely how can these things be? Our only answer is, God has made them so. When we see man having dominion over all the beasts, &c., we instinctively say, Not by man's power, but because God hath said it should be that way. Now, in coming to the final analysis of these things existing as they do, we come to the proposition, Do we believe the Bible in regard to the creation, or are we going to do away with the teaching of the Bible and substitute falsely so-called science instead? This proposition now confronts us all. Educational leaders and professors are taking the position that the history of creation as given in Genesis is altogether allegorical. I am made to shudder at such teaching, because it strikes at the fundamental foundation of our faith and causes the man in nature to believe an untruth, naturally speaking. When we know as believers of God's word that Genesis is the best work on astronomy, geology, zoology and other sciences that has ever been, or that ever will be, all other works on these various subjects are only the think so's of men. They should have no credence, except when in accord with divine writ. I do not know why I should write so, unless it is because I have labored for twenty years in the schools and know to the extent these untruths are being taught. Let me sound a warning to our brethren everywhere of these false ideas which are extant everywhere, and all deny the sovereignty of God. If we want to know the truth about the origin of all things, "search the Scriptures." Entirely too lightly do we read and pass over the first verse of Genesis: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Now, the word "beginning"

is not used with reference to the existence of God, because he always was, "without beginning of days;" but it is used in regard to the existence or creation of this earth, which was first called earth when "God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas." All these Scriptures are sublime historical facts, and are as much the work of inspiration as any in the Bible. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The time is now when God's believing children should hurl these majestic truths against all the ideas to the contrary that magicians shall advance. This one text is all you need to put to rout their entire theory, as anything to the contrary is only a theory, and not truth. What do we care for all the useless fables of men about the stone age, the prehistoric man and all this "jingle," which is so much of man-made stuff? And yet do you know, dear brethren, that much of this same kind of erroneous stuff is being taught to our children by learned professors and educators as truth? Are we not allowing our children to go through the fire before the false God Molech? It is dishonoring to God's name to allow any such ideas to be advanced, and yet you and I countenance it in our schools and colleges. We should raise our voices in solemn protest against such untruths.

Brethren, I fear that I have written too lengthily. If you think it worthy a place in the SIGNS, all right; if not, toss it into the wastebasket. I would like to say something in regard to man being made in God's image, after his likeness, but will have to leave that for another time.

Your brother in hope,

E. D. ELDER.

[THE above article by brother Elder is good and timely. He sounds a warning note, to which we should all take heed.—K.]

SILVERTON, Texas, June 16, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed three dollars, two for renewal of my subscription and one to aid in sending the SIGNS to the poor of the flock. It has been one year since I sent a little message of love to the scattered flock through the SIGNS, for which I received several good letters, which comforted me greatly in my loneliness away out here in western Texas, where the true gospel is seldom heard. There is not a minister of the old order of Baptists nearer than two hundred miles of here that I know of. I note in the last SIGNS (June 15th) that a brother Mount, of Crystal City, Texas, also brother Jones, of Flora Vista, N. M., are in the same lonely condition that I am; also brother Adams, of El Paso, Texas, and sister Garton, of Booker, Texas, are in like condition. I am glad those letters were published, for I now see that I am not the only one who is all alone and greatly desiring the companionship of the dear children of the household. Were it not for my Bible and the SIGNS I could hardly live; at least I feel that way, yet I know the Lord could comfort me without either. I greatly enjoyed Elder Ker's editorial on "Love." I can say with him, Of all subjects there is none greater, grander, higher or more glorious. It was love that led me to the church, and it is love that holds me there.

LYDIA C. RAY.

INDEPENDENCE, Mo.

DEAR KINDRED:—I have delayed renewing my subscription, hoping to secure more subscribers for the indispensable SIGNS (to me). The SIGNS has been a source of comfort to me for nearly fifty years, and I expect to continue to take it as long as I live. The "Prospectus" that dear old Elder Gilbert Beebe established

as the doctrine of the SIGNS eighty-nine years ago has been strictly maintained by his sons, Elder William and Benton, and their successors as editors: Elders Chick, Jenkins, Ker and Lefferts. They have all been able defenders of the Bible doctrine of the predestination of all things, not finding fault with God or accusing him of injustice because he loved Jacob and hated Esau. God existed before all things and declared the end from the beginning, and being above all law he does all his pleasure, and none dares question his right to do his will. If it is God's will I hope the SIGNS may contend for the same doctrine so ably advocated for the past eighty-nine years to the edification of future generations. I feel the paper has been providentially blessed in having such able defenders of the truth as Elders Ker and Lefferts.

Yours in hope,

THOMAS W. RECORDS.

LIMONA, Fla., July 1, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please insert in the next issue of the SIGNS that I expect to be away from here (temporarily) for three months, in the north-west, north and east, visiting and preaching, and I desire that my correspondents direct no letters to this office after July 25th until November 1st, when, if the Lord will, I expect to be here ready to receive my mail as usual.

Yours as ever, in hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

POCA, W. Va.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please ask the readers of the SIGNS if there is any one who has a copy of Hassell's Church History that would be willing to sell it, and if so inform me of it and the price to be paid for it.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

LUCEDALE, Miss., R. D. 1, Box 22.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I desire to get in touch with the clerk of Little Flock Church, near Walnut Grove, Blunt Co., Ala. This church belongs to Fellowship Association, in north-east Alabama. Elder R. W. Breant and Elder John Bryant both lived near there a few years ago. Any one giving this desired information will oblige both J. N. Wimpee and myself.

Your brother in hope,

L. F. EASLEY.

WARING, Texas, May 17, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I would be pleased to know if there are any Baptists in Uvalde County, Texas. I am fixing to locate there or near Uvalde town. I thought perhaps you might have some subscribers there. My health is slowly improving.

As ever, your brother in hope and bonds,

J. B. BOWDEN.

DENISON, Texas, R. 5, Box 88.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am writing you to know if you have a copy of the Baptist Test, by Elder John Watson, that you would sell, and if you have not if you will advertise for one. I am willing to pay a good price for it.

Your brother in hope,

A. L. ERWIN.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in July (31st). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1921.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

LIBERTY.

THIS is the fourth day of July; guns are firing, stars and stripes are waving, bands are playing, soldiers are marching. These things remind men and women of the great event of 1776, and cause children to ask what it all means. Time and space would fail us to tell all its significance, but perhaps it would not be out of the way to mention the fact that liberty as a nation cost much life and bloodshed. Our fathers lifted the yoke of tyranny off the neck of our nation and gave us a free and glorious government. Therefore to-day the flag of our nation floats over our country, the greatest country of the world, the sign of independence, freedom, liberty. All true citizens rejoice in our liberty, and love, honor and respect the memory of those who through sacrifice brought to us freedom. But what was their sacrifice, and the liberty our land enjoys through their sacrifice, when compared with the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, and the liberty all nations have through him? It is good to celebrate the one and to commemorate the other, but the work of many through war to give us as a nation freedom fades into insignificance when compared with the work of one man in giving liberty to the whole world. Nevertheless every land where freedom exists hears more of national liberty, and really seems to appreciate it more, than the freedom from sin and death through the one man Christ Jesus. On the other hand, what was the bondage of America, and the tyranny exercised, when compared with the bondage of every son and daughter of Adam to the law of sin and death? Again, what is the 4th of July, a day of twenty-four hours once a year on which to float the flag, fire guns, march soldiers, make speeches, &c., when compared with the gospel day, from the death of Christ to the end of time, in which the banner of his love floats over the world, soldiers of the cross march and the great trumpet is blown? What are all the flags of the world, with all their significance and glory, when contrasted with the banner of God's love? What are all the armies of the nations when compared with the army of the living God? What is all the oratory and speechmaking of the noble and the great when contrasted with the simple "old, old story of Jesus and his love"? We do not mean in any sense to suggest disloyalty to our flag or nation; every citizen should be true, loyal and brave, but we do mean to call attention to the higher, grander and more glorious liberty, and sound forth the praise of the Captain of our salvation. The liberty our nation enjoys does not justify it in firing upon the flag of another nation, nor to deal unjustly with the subjects of another nation. Our liberty means independence as a nation, doing our own business, managing our government without interference. On the other hand, the liberty the children of God have means freedom from all powers and principalities—nothing can ever bring the redeemed again into bondage or condemnation. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." This liberty however is not a license to go as

one pleases. There are many laws of our government, all of which must be obeyed or condemnation results. There are also many commandments in the spiritual law which the subjects of God's kingdom are bound to honor and respect, otherwise condemnation of the church and of soul is the result. Having been brought into the light and liberty of the gospel of the Son of God, there is every reason that every subject of his kingdom stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free and be not again entangled with the yoke of bondage. If free from the law of sin and death the children of God are no longer under its curse. If free from the law of Moses they are no longer governed by it. There was a time when this land was under English rule, but not so now, because of our liberty; likewise the redeemed of God are no longer under law, but under grace, and instead of yielding their members unto the law they are commanded to yield them unto righteousness and eternal life. Each member of the visible church of Christ is subject to the church of his or her membership and should obey the rules and regulations of the church, otherwise disaster is sure to come to the transgressor. To maintain the honor of our government every point of law must be enforced; so with the church every point of law and order must be honored or her dignity becomes stained. It is just as necessary and important to continue steadfastly in the doctrine of Jesus as to maintain the order and law of his house. False doctrine is an abomination in the sight of God, and not a shadow of it should be tolerated by any body of believers. The doctrine of grace is fully and clearly set forth in the New Testament by Christ and the apostles, and the slightest deviation therefrom is false. The liberty of the ministers of the gospel does not mean absolute independence. The minister is the servant of the church or churches, and it is an erroneous conception for one to think the churches are subject to him or under his dominion. On the other hand, the churches should not forget their duty and obligation to their servants. Liberty does not mean that the church has the right to neglect its pastor, nor to treat him coolly and indifferently without just cause. Liberty does not mean that the pastor can remain away from his appointments on Decoration Day, July 4th, Thanksgiving or Christmas without the consent of the church he serves, nor does liberty mean that individual members have more privileges along this line than has the pastor. The meetings of the sanctuary should be considered first of all things in this life, though often most neglected. Private members attend meetings as suits their convenience. When too hot, when too cold, when rainy, when having company or being entertained, their absence is noticed, but should the minister exercise such liberty he would be considered unfaithful and censure would be heaped upon him. Liberty does not mean freedom to backbite and devour, but it does mean gentleness and brotherly kindness and forbearance. Christ, the spotless Son of God, was persecuted and put to death by his brethren, from whom he had every reason to expect love and faithfulness. If they so persecuted him, and the prophets before his coming, what need others expect?

In conclusion, we desire God's mercy upon the sins of his people everywhere, and that our eyes be opened to see ourselves just as we are. While outwardly we appear good in the sight of men, in the sight of God we all by nature are full of hypocrisy, and utterly unclean. If the mercy of God fails, all are lost forever.

K.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by R. Lester Dodson.)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Warwick Church, convened at Warwick, N. Y., June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1921, to the churches composing the same, Greetings.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—While pondering in our mind what we could bring for your consideration on this occasion, the Scripture in 2 Timothy ii. 19, came. It reads as follows: "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

First, let us begin with "the foundation." That is the all-important part of any structure, and the more important the building the more secure and enduring must be that which upholds and sustains it. Inspiration in this case has been clear, in that it has not left us to conjecture or speculate, but through the use of the definite article "the" has pointed out whose foundation it is, and declares that it "standeth sure." Because of there being those who were striving about words to no profit and were given to profane and vain babblings, the apostle Paul was admonishing his son in the ministry (Timothy) to study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. "Nevertheless," as much as to say, notwithstanding all denials and falsehoods, and all the argument which men and devils can bring to the contrary, "the foundation of God standeth sure." May we pause here and with one of old turn aside to see this great sight. Being surrounded on every hand with conditionalism and other isms, both within and without, could we do better than weigh well the inspired words of the apostle, and, whatever men may say, take the record found in holy writ as our guide and authority for all we do and say? In examining our hope, upon what does it rest? Is it builded upon hay and stubble, so-called good works of the creature? If so, be assured when the test comes, and come it will, like the house which was built upon the sand, it will go down; but if it rests upon the stone which the builders rejected, which has become the head of the corner, be not afraid, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." This foundation has weathered every storm; it has proved to be the foundation which God laid, and not man, and it shall ever stand as a monument to his honor and glory and to the praise of his grace.

Second, may we not only observe that the foundation is the Lord's, and that it standeth sure, but, also, that it has a seal upon it. The importance of this is reflected in some measure by the fact that it is now the custom of states, nations and countries to have seals affixed to, shall we say all valuable documents, covenants or treaties, and in most instances all such papers are without value unless they bear the official seal, which must be attached by a duly authorized ruler or official. Such seals signify authenticity and responsibility, and they are usually affixed in such manner as to make it almost impossible to remove or eradicate them. If this be true of earthly kingdoms, which at best must crumble, how much more is it true of the kingdom of our God, which shall stand forever and ever. Jehovah-jireh, the Sovereign over all worlds, principalities and powers, hath affixed his seal; it has been engraven upon the fleshly table of the hearts of his people, written there by the eternal pen,

and though they may feel it is seldom they have the witness within, it is none the less valid, and this is the seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." God's knowledge of his people, and their knowledge of him, which they receive by revelation, compose the rock upon which the church is built, and Jesus hath declared that not even the gates of hell shall prevail against it. What a consolation it is for the "little children" to realize that the Lord knows them that are his, and not only this, but through the work of the Holy Ghost reveals himself in the person of his only begotten Son as having done all things for them, whereof they are made glad. His work is effectual, and once he begins he carries on to perfection; he is the husbandman who directs all things to the end that the manifest child of God shall feel, It is "by the grace of God I am what I am." There are no conditions in the new covenant which the Lord made with the house of Israel, for he said, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." This covenant is sealed with the precious blood of his now exalted and ever-living Son, who has ascended on high and who holds the keys of hell and of death.

Finally, he says, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." What a big word these eight letters comprise. One authority gives as the meaning of "iniquity," "A want of equity, fairness, or justice; absence of just, fair or true dealing; a deviation from the right; unrighteousness, wickedness." The Lord's people have partaken of the tree of life and have that judgment-seat set up by God in their hearts, enabling them to discern between the spirits which serve him and those that serve him not, and we are persuaded that with the mind they serve the law of God they do desire to depart from iniquity and to be perfect even as their Father in heaven is perfect, but there is another law in their members, warring against the law of the mind, and bringing them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members, and this causes them to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Such an one knows something of the weakness of the flesh, and that with the flesh they serve the law of sin, but Paul said he thanked God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Can we do otherwise? There is no other way; Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. O that the Lord would search Zion with candles and show her her need to be clothed with his righteousness, that she might delight in the law of God after the inward man, and seek peace and pursue it; that each one might examine himself and see what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, remembering the commandment of Jesus, That ye love one another.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
R. LESTER DODSON, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware River Association, convened with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, June 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1921, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond sends greetings in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We feel it is through the kind providence of the all-wise God that we have been gathered together, and through his goodness and mercy towards us have had the pure gospel preached unto us, which we can but thank him for, and rejoice in it, feel-

ing that he is ever mindful of us; also count it a joy to receive your messengers' messages, and can but say, Truly it is edifying and encouraging to sit under such preaching.

Our next session, if God permit, will be held with the Hopewell Church, Hopewell, Mercer County, New Jersey, commencing Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1922, when we hope to meet again and gladly receive your messengers, and hear your rich gospel preaching and messages of lóve to us again.

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.

D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Warwick Church, of Warwick, Orange County, New York, June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1921, to the several associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We desire to be thankful to the God of all our mercies for the privilege of again meeting with our brethren, whose messages of love and fellowship have proved a great comfort to us. Your messengers have come to us in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel. We desire a continuance of your correspondence by messengers and Minutes.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the New Vernon Church, at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1922, where and when we shall hope to meet your messengers again. Until then farewell.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

R. LESTER DODSON, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. M. Fenton, at his residence, 5128 Master St., West Philadelphia, Pa., June 27th, 1921, Harry E. Lesher, Jr., and Marion E. Blemings, both of Philadelphia, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Roscoe Rogers was born in Washington County, Ala., September 5th, 1894, and died at Philadelphia, Pa., January 7th, 1921, aged 26 years, 4 months and 2 days. He volunteered his services to his country by joining the Marines at an early period of the war, reporting for duty at Paris Island, S. C., June 7th, 1917, where he was in training for two months, after which time he was in Quantico, Md., until he sailed for France. He landed in St. Nazaira, France, October 5th, and for the next few months was in training and on duty at many different points. On May 27th, 1918, Roscoe reached the Chateau Thierry front, where after eighteen days of hard fighting he was severely gassed and sent to a hospital, where he remained until December 19th, 1919, at which time he sailed for his home land, landing at Newport News on the last day of the year. Early in January he came home on a thirty days furlough, returning to Norfolk, where he received his discharge April 26th, 1919. When he came home all were hopeful that Roscoe would overcome the effects of the gas, but in this we were disappointed, as he constantly grew worse. On May 25th, 1920, he returned to the hospital at Biltmore, N. C., as a charge of the government, where he underwent an operation of the windpipe. He seemed to improve, and later he went to Philadelphia for further treatment under a specialist. While there he contracted a cold, which settled on his lungs, which were so badly affected that he passed away, as noble in death as in life. There is added another name to the long list of casualties, and the day that was so full of hope and promise closed ere the sun had reached its meridian. Roscoe was a dutiful son and an affectionate brother. Oh, how it grieves us to give up a dear young son, but we hope the good Lord will reconcile us to his will and enable us to say, "Thy will be done." He leaves father, mother, three brothers, three sisters and many relatives and friends to mourn his death, but we mourn not as those without hope. We trust that he is now at rest, asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep. Dear Roscoe bore his suffering with patience, never murmuring. He was far from home at the time of his death, but with good doctors and nurses to care for him. He was so hopeful of his recovery, and had just written us that he would soon be home. Joy for us, but alas, the end was near; he was sick but a few days, when the death angel came to waft his soul above. The sad

news came to us by wire. Roscoe never united with any church, but seemed to enjoy the preaching of the Primitive Baptists, and after attending an association with me in 1919 he remarked that as well as he knew they preached from the Bible, while others would just get up and talk a little and call it preaching. He also went to the Salem Old School Baptist Church last fall while he was in Philadelphia, Pa., and wrote me he heard good preaching, and the people treated him with much kindness and sympathy on account of the condition of his health. I am so thankful that he was permitted to go to the church, and hope the good Lord blessed him with a hearing ear and understanding heart. He seemed anxious about this doctrine, and asked me questions when he was here at home, which is a comfort to me now. We shall always miss him, but his loving memory will always live with us.

His body was brought home and laid to rest in the Pilot Cemetery, near Cullomburg, Ala., January 13th. Elder B. Sawyer, of Monroe County, Ala., conducted the funeral services and spoke very comfortingly to a large congregation of relatives and friends.

His sorrowing mother, L. E. ROGERS.

W. H. Taylor, the subject of this notice, was born May 27th, 1846, and died March 10th, 1921, at the age of 74 years, 9 months and 13 days. He was a firm believer in salvation alone by the grace of God, and was ready and willing at all times to do anything for the old order of Baptists, but could never get the consent of his mind to join the church. He felt unworthy to be numbered with a people that he believed was God's people. He served through the war between the States in the Confederate Army, running away from his father at the age of fifteen. He was a Virginian by birth, and at the close of the war came to West Virginia and shortly afterward was married to Mildred Lanham, who preceded him to the grave some ten years. Some time after her death he was married to the widow Goff, having no children by either marriage. He leaves his widow, some relatives and many friends to mourn their loss.

The writer spoke a few words to the many friends who had met, after which he was laid in the tomb to await the resurrection morn, when the graves shall give up their dead.

ALSO,

W. R. Lanham was born May 4th, 1867, and died June 10th, 1921, aged 54 years, 1 month and 6 days. He was a kind husband, and a loving father to his three daughters. He never made a public profession of religion, but had for many years manifested a warm feeling for the old order of Baptists. During his affliction this spring the writer visited him twice, and found him firmly established in the faith of God's elect. His hope for heaven and everlasting happiness was steadfast in what Jesus had done for him. By the advice of his doctor he was taken to a hospital in Charleston, where he died. He leaves his wife, three daughters, mother, four brothers and two sisters to mourn their loss. God alone can bind up their broken hearts.

The writer spoke awhile to a large number who had gathered at his home to pay their last tribute of respect to one they had loved so well. We pray God, who is able to comfort the poor broken-hearted widow and children, that they may also trust him for all things and be reconciled to his will.

ALSO,

John Franklin Williams was born July 31st, 1839, and died June 12th, 1921, aged 81 years, 10 months and 12 days. He was married to Elizabeth Goff about the year 1865, to which union were born nine children, his wife and three of the children having preceded him to the grave. He lost his eyesight while in the prime of life, to such an extent that he was not able to get about and perform manual labor, but had a noble-hearted father-in-law, who was able to help him to anything, and did so until the children grew up and were able to take care of him. He made his home with William, his eldest son, for several years before his death. He was a firm believer in the doctrine advocated by the old order of Baptists. The writer of this notice visited him a few times in his last days of affliction, and always found him steadfast in the apostolic doctrine.

I was called to conduct the funeral services, and used for a text the Scripture found in John xi. 11. A large congregation was present to pay the last tribute of respect to the departed one. His remains were laid to rest in the family cemetery.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

Ella D. Thomas, daughter of John T. and Amanda M. Murdock, was born in Platte County, near Platte City, Mo., May 6th, 1848, and died at her home in St. Joseph, Mo., May 12th, 1921, after having been stricken with paralysis on May 10th. She was married October 18th, 1870, to James P. Thomas, who died September 18th, 1904. She is survived by two sons and one daughter, also two brothers. She was reared in the Old School Predestinarian Baptist faith, her father having been an Elder of Unity Church, in Platte County, Mo., and she was a firm believer in that doctrine, joining the Unity Church in October, 1914, and was baptized the next August by Elder C. C. Moore. Her husband's father, Elder John W. Thomas, and brother, Elder R. M. Thomas, were regular ministers of that church for many years. Her illness came on suddenly, and she was unconscious almost from the time she was stricken. She had many times expressed her love for Christ and her heavenly Father, and her firm belief in salvation by grace. She lived a true, faithful christian life, ever unselfish and modest as to her own wants and

accomplishments, but those who knew her best knew her abilities and her charitable, forgiving spirit. She passed away as peacefully as one goes to sleep, and we try not to grieve, for we believe she had a blessed hope in Christ.

Elder C. C. Moore, her regular pastor, being in Kentucky at the time of her death, the funeral services were conducted by Elder J. C. Jones, of Little Flock Church, at St. Joseph, Mo., whose preaching she had enjoyed on several occasions, and who delivered a most comforting sermon, taking his text from 2 Corinthians xii. 9: "My grace is sufficient for thee," a text she loved and in which she firmly believed. As Elder Jones stated in his sermon, she had the utmost confidence in God, and was willing to leave it all with him.

Written by her children.

Emma Jane Leonard, wife of the late Dr. D. M. Leonard, departed this life April 8th, 1921, at her home in Broome Center, N. Y. She was a daughter of William and Ann (Furgeson) McHench, and was born in Broome Center, N. Y., June 13th, 1835. She was married to D. M. Leonard January 1st, 1879, and was his second wife. In early life she united with the Christian Church, but later began to attend Old School Baptist meetings, and was drawn towards the brethren in love. She was a firm believer in the doctrine and practice of the church, and ever availed herself of the opportunity to attend whenever able. She was not led to unite with the people she loved, through a constant feeling of her unworthiness. She was a faithful and devoted wife to the doctor as long as he lived, and delighted to accompany him on his journeys away from home. She lived a very exemplary life and was loved by all who knew her.

The writer conducted the funeral service at her late home, where a number of relatives and friends assembled to show their deep respect to her memory.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Mrs. Eva Walker, daughter of Charles and Lovey Tucker, was born in Lacomb, Linn Co., Oregon, in 1894, and passed away April 26th, 1921. She was married to Fred H. Walker October 1st, 1917. To that union was born one son, Darrell. Her last illness was of nine days duration, although she had not been well for two months. Blood poisoning was the immediate cause of her death. She leaves her husband, son, father, two sisters, two brothers and a number of relatives and friends to mourn her death, but we mourn not as those without hope. She received a hope when a girl, and joined the Old School Baptist Church called Bethel, at Tallman, Oregon, being baptized by Elder Amos Horner. She lived a consistent member until death, and it was always her desire to be with her church and brethren, but was deprived of that privilege, having moved with her parents soon after she joined the church to Crook County, Oregon, to take up claims and get homes, where she lived until death called her home. Her mother also passed away while on the homestead, after suffering untold agony from that dread disease, cancer of the stomach. She also was a member of Bethel Church, and was laid to rest on the homestead to await the resurrection morn. Brother Tucker has been called upon to pass through great trials, losing his wife, and last fall while helping to load a truck with rocks one fell off, knocking him down and breaking and crushing his leg below the knee. He was taken to the hospital at Bend, Oregon, where it was found that his leg would have to be broken again, so he was taken to Salem, Oregon, where he had the operation. He was called from there to his daughter's, but she had passed away when he arrived. He has the sympathy of his brethren. May the good Lord see fit to comfort and bless him, is the prayer of an unworthy sister, if one at all.

N. D. HORNER.

David B. Canfield, aged 62 years, died at 3:30 o'clock Saturday morning, February 19th, at the Davis Memorial Hospital, after a brief illness of pneumonia. Mr. Canfield became ill Monday evening, and his condition was not thought to be serious until Friday afternoon, when he was taken from his home in South Elkins to the hospital, where he died about ten hours later. He was a native of Randolph County, having been born over on Cheat. He had resided in Elkins for the past ten years, and for the past six years had been in the employ of the Elkins Refrigerator & Fixture Co. Surviving are his wife, four sons: Riley, French and Emmet, of Elkins, and Ray, of Fairmont, and daughter, Mrs. Russell Houston, of Fairmont.

Funeral services were held Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock, conducted by Mr. Jonah Murphy, of Montrose.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

J. L. Deshong, Fla., $2.00; Chas. Schade, N. Y., $3.00; E. B. Ault, Texas, $3.00; W. E. Blue, N. Y., $2.00; Mrs. Emma Ferris, D. C., $5.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Siloam Association of Predestinarian Baptists will be held with Cowlitz River Church, near Swofford, Wash., August 12th, 13th and 14th, 1921. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend. For further information write me.

ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk,

RIFFE, Wash.

THE Trinity River Old School Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, to hold its sixty-third session with Hopewell Church, four miles east of Rice, in Ellis County, Texas, beginning Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1921, and continuing three days. All lovers of the truth and of the old order are cordially invited to attend. All brethren and visitors coming south will come on the H. & T. C. R. R. or the Interurban to Rice. All coming north will get off at Rice. Conveyance will be at the station on Thursday.

ASA HOWARD.

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE First Primitive Baptist Church of Mineral Wells, Texas, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on S. W. 4th Ave. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

SALLIE E. HOWARD, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 694 E. 125th St., or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."—1 Thess. v. 21. "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it."—Deut. xii. 32. cf. Eccl. iii. 14; James i. 17; Matt. xxviii. 20.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

SALISBURY, Md., June 25, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a copy of a letter from brother Godwin, which is one of many good letters that he wrote me. Through like experiences he came very near to me, but I have never been able to manifest the humility, meekness and humbleness that I saw so plainly in him. It was my pleasure to spend a night with him and sister Godwin a short time before he died, the memory of which still lingers, and I count it as one of the pleasant places that God in his mercy led me. His whole conversation was on heavenly things, and I feel to use the words of Abraham's servant: And I, being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren.

F. SELBY FISHER.

BALTIMORE, Md., Jan. 12, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER FISHER:—Your good letter received some time ago. Will say that I do not feel equal to answering such good soul-cheering letters as you write, but it is just such letters that I need to cheer me when I am down in the valley of despair or the valley of death, feeling that my hope is gone, that I am sinking, as Peter did. When the Lord sends me a sweet message, either by letter or in preaching or some portion of Scripture to meditate upon, my poor heart is lifted up, and I am made to sing praise to his great name, made to rejoice in a lively hope. Dear brother, I cannot see how you, who are made able to write such letters as you do to the edification of the flock, can see anything in my poor writing to commend, for I feel most of the time that I am the least of all the children of God, if I am a child at all; yet I believe that God works all things after the counsel of his own will, and none can stay his hand. Therefore he is able to send a message to one of his little ones by me either by letter or by speech, for there is nothing too hard for our God, bless his holy name. He chose his people in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world; they were in the mind of God, therefore were children, and are made manifest in the fullness of time, some in childhood, some all the way through life, even down to old age, just as he has decreed, and we can neither hurry nor hinder. Some deny this glorious doctrine, and say we are not children

until we are born or made manifest, but Jesus says he came to save his people from their sins, showing that he had a people, though they knew it not, but he knew them, and said, Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them I must also bring, showing they were sheep, but they knew it not.

I have thought some of late about Mary and Martha. Martha went to the Master and complained that Mary was not helping her, but had left her to serve alone, for Mary was at his feet. Jesus said, Martha, thou art troubled about much serving, but Mary hath chosen this good part. It appears to me there is a spiritual lesson to be learned. Why should we be troubled about what our brethren do? Rather let us choose that good part, at the feet of our Master, who is meek and lowly in heart. If we are meek and lowly in heart, at the feet of Jesus, we are not troubled so much about what other people do. This is a work of grace in the heart. When Peter asked the Master about that disciple whom Jesus loved, Jesus answered and said, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me. When we are cast down and weary, feeling that we are far from God, then is the time that we are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, the righteousness of our Savior, and the prayer will rise up in our heart, Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner. Then are we serving God in spirit and in truth, we are following Jesus. His children must all be taught of the Lord and learn of him; but if we get lifted up and feel boastful, and say, If such an one does not believe as I do he is not a follower of the Lord, then we have the spirit of the Pharisee, we feel better than our brother, and cannot say with Paul that we are less than the least of all saints. It appears to me that the children of God are often led by the flesh and feel themselves to be something, wanting to rule, and when they cannot rule are willing to ruin. But thanks be unto our God, he is the one who rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou? We fight at times against things being as they are. I have had the words come to me, "Be still and know that I am God." Then I think I will doubt no more. I am in the valley of doubt much of the time of late, and have been for quite a while, and feel unable to write or speak any good thing. I fear at times that I may become a wanderer on the face of the earth, but if the Lord has ever begun a good work in my heart he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, and none can help or hinder. He has declared the end from the beginning, and is able to perform that which he pleases, whether it appears right to man or not. There is so much confusion in the church at times that it is bewildering to the little ones, to those who are looking for guidance in spiritual things.

I have tried to write of what I have experienced and seen. If we write or talk of things that we have not seen or felt we become as the blind leading the blind, and both will fall into the ditch; at least we will cause strife and confusion in the flock. So I try to write as I feel, and not to gender strife, but rather to give all glory and praise to God, to whom all praise is due. What have you that ye have not received? and if ye have received it why do ye glory, as though ye had not received it? All cannot understand alike, and we should be reasonable with those who do not see as we do, and if we cannot convince them by the Scrip-

tures leave them with the Lord; perhaps he will reveal unto them the true meaning when it pleases him. It may be that their eyes are holden at present, as the apostles' eyes were as they journeyed to Emmaus, and the Savior went with them and expounded the Scriptures by the way, and they knew him not until he made himself known to them in the breaking of bread. They had been sad and heavy-hearted as they walked along, for they had hoped this same Jesus should have redeemed Israel. So it is with the Lord's humble poor in this age, they have tasted God's pardoning love and are made to rejoice, but when dark days come they feel surrounded by pitfalls and snares, and know not which way to turn for relief, and say within themselves, I had hoped that this same Jesus had redeemed his people from all dangers and snares; but it cannot be, if so, then I am not one of them; but in due time the Lord begets them again unto a lively hope, and they see the Son of God as their Savior, and there is healing in his wings. So we spend our days between hope and despair, first up, then down, but we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

I will close now for fear I make you weary. Write when you have a mind, and remember me when at the throne of grace.

One of the least of the flock,

L. C. GODWIN.

CALALLEN, Texas, June 27, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I notice from the last SIGNS that my subscription expired last month. Inclosed find check for five dollars, two dollars for the SIGNS another year and three dollars to send it to some one else that would like to get it. Over three years ago I wrote you how dry it was here and how lonesome I was with no Old Baptists in this part of the country. The next summer after I wrote I felt that I could stay here no longer without hearing some preaching, so I fixed up my Ford truck and with my wife and children started out, going first to brother J. B. Bowden's, at Athens, Texas. The first night he sat out on his porch and preached, and it seemed to me the best sermon I ever heard. Oh how I did enjoy it. He lived several hundred miles from me. We all went about one hundred miles to the association. There were fifteen preachers, and more Old Baptists than I had ever seen before. Oh how my poor heart rejoiced to be with this dear people. I came home with the determination to sell out and move. I had already picked out a place to move while up there, for I thought there was nothing down here to stay for. I loved the Old Baptists better than anything else. But the harder I tried to sell and fix up to move the more things would come in the way. One night I had a dream; it would take too much space to tell it, but next morning I told my wife it was not for us to move, that God had people all over this country and that they were all kinds; this was our place to stay, he would bring them out and make them manifest just as he did in my dream. It was not two weeks until we had found several within sixty miles of here. An old brother had not preached in years, but he stood for two hours and preached to us few. A little later a brother came up to the house and said he was inquiring for some Old Baptists. Oh how glad I was; we sat up and talked all night. Then I dreamed I was sitting in the back yard, and a fowl came flying over from the north. I looked up, and just as it got about even with me it fell to the

earth about twenty-five feet from me; it came fluttering along the fence into the gate and up in front of me. I reached down and picked it up and it dropped its head over and died. I said, Lo, perfect food from above. A few months later I had a building erected where this bird fell, from the wreckage lumber of an awful storm that we had, and brother Bourland, of Vernon, Texas, preached in it; then was my dream fulfilled. When I finished this building I made a table that would hold sixteen people, and as I finished it I said, I hope to see the day when there will be enough Old Baptists present to fill it, and since then we have had it over twice full. Oh, if I could only tell you all the dreams I have had in the past three years, and have seen most of them fulfilled. What a gracious God we have! We now have a church constituted here and a lovely band of brethren. God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. Over two months ago I had a long dream one night while I was away from home. I cried for over an hour, caught the train home, and wife and I sat up until midnight talking about it. It seemed that we had to give up one of our children, and we decided it was the eldest boy, about eleven years, for he told his teacher that he felt he would not live to enjoy his education, and we would catch him reading the Bible, and one of the other smaller children dreamed that he died, so with all this we were expecting the good Lord to take him from us, but it was our smallest boy, next to the baby, about two and one-half years old. His uncle backed his car over him last Friday evening and killed him instantly. Oh how sad we all are, but I rejoice that he has gone to rest, as the Lord showed me over two months before. Trials and troubles have been coming thick and fast for the past year. Oh, may my faith be strengthened to ever trust him, and him only. May I be kept at the feet of my brethren, esteeming others better than myself; for I know when left to myself I am at once planning to make and worship a golden calf, the same as the children of Israel did when Moses left them.

I much enjoyed the editorial in the last SIGNS, subject, "Love." Oh, if we could only always be as little children, depending on our heavenly Father's guidance, and not get grown up in church matters; be ready to forgive, instead of ready to command what shall be done.

Your poor unworthy brother, if one at all, E. B. AULT.

LOVE.

LOVE is the highest theme of men or angels. It is the glorious sunshine which penetrates and cheers through the shadows of death and makes bright and glorious the realms of heaven, for God is all in all. God is love, and his message of love shines forth in all his handiwork and is reflected throughout all creation. Behold the starry curtain of the night, with its myriads of sparkling gems set in ethereal blue; his message of love is there. When we try to form a feeble conception of the infinite mind which planned and the unerring hand which fashioned this beauteous and wonderful panorama and hung it unstained by mortal touch far, far beyond the grasp and comprehension of finite minds, and said, As high as the heavens are above the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts, his message of love is there. When we are weary and seek refreshing in the arms of peaceful slumber, he watches over us and we are refreshed; his love is there. Then

when the night is spent and morn begins to loop back the curtain of night, and we are awakened by God's message from the silvery throats of merry birds, which flit among the verdant branches of the trees, which have been made beautiful and gay by the raindrops and the dew and the cheering rays of the king of day, his love is there. He says, As the rain cometh down from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, making it to bud and bring forth, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall my word be which goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish the thing whereto I sent it. His message of love is there. Even in the grateful refreshing which is found in a sparkling cup of cold water, for the Savior said, Whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward. What wonderful forethought, what wisdom, what loving-kindness, what protecting care is shown throughout all creation. Even the smallest want of the meanest creature is supplied, and all these things are prepared for the comfort and well-being of man. Therefore we hear this message warbled from the throats of birds and hummed by the busy bees, see it flitting past on wings of gay butterflies and blooming in beauty in the fields and gardens, breathe its sweet perfume as it is wafted on the air in the fragrance of flowers and blossoms, and taste it in the luscious juice and flavor of the fruits of earth; we feel it in the warming rays of the golden sunshine and the cool refreshing of the gentle shower. He says, My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb and as showers upon the grass. After the shower we read it with admiring eyes in his bow of promise, where every shade of beauty is portrayed in its perfection without the aid of painter's palette or brush. We see it in the peace and contentment of the flocks and herds grazing upon a thousand hills, for they are all his; it ripples forth in the merry laughter of little children, for Christ was pleased to take one of these little ones with their hope and faith and trusting and meekness and love as an example when he called one of them to him and set him in the midst of his disciples and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. Again, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Then if we leave these things of life and beauty and dig beneath the earth's crust, lo, there, stored away for centuries, we find his love forged in bands of iron and steel and copper and brass, and glittering forth in the beauty and brilliance of gold and silver and precious stones; yes, and the warmth stored up in the fuel of the coal, which reaches out into all lands, furnishes the heat and power and energy to lift its own kind from its sunless depths and the ore from its rocky bed, and radiates heat and light and comfort at ten thousand times ten thousand firesides. Yet all the glory of this love which is manifested in these temporal blessings is not to be compared with the glory, the splendor, the warmth and beauty which shall be revealed in us when the glorious Sun of Righteousness arises on the plants of grace, when his doctrine shall drop as the rain and his speech distil as the dew, causing them to bud and bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness; and when the light and warmth of this glori-

ous sunshine is shed abroad in our hearts there will be a manifestation of these fruits, which will show themselves in love, temperance, patience, forbearance, brotherly kindness, meekness, humility and charity, which bringeth peace, for these are the fruits of righteousness. John, in writing his brethren in the first epistle, fourth chapter, seventh and eighth verses, said, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love." John had this love when he said, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." This love was most beautifully manifested here upon earth in the life and example of our Savior Jesus Christ when he left the glory he had with his Father before the world was, took upon him the robe of flesh, was tempted in all points as are his brethren, yet without sin, bore their sorrows and carried their griefs in his own body upon the shameful cross and died to redeem his people from their sins through the transgression of Adam. He said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." It was this wondrous love which caused Jesus to say, Greater love hath no man than this, that a man should lay down his life for his friends. Love of self is not love, but vanity, for man at his best estate is altogether vanity; but they who have known Jesus' love can say, We know and believe the love that God hath to us. God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Here is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as he is, so are we in the world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear. Fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him because he first loved us. The world would have us believe that he loves us because we first loved him. This is not the teaching of Christ, for it was his love for his people, and not their love for him, that made him die upon the cross, and he is not only the author, but the finisher of our salvation; and when he cried, "It is finished," bowed his head and gave up the ghost (if we have known that love), then our title was made clear to that inheritance which neither moth nor rust can corrupt nor thieves break through and steal. For if God's love is shed abroad in our hearts, if he has put his law in our hearts and written it in our inward parts, then God is our Father and Christ our Elder Brother, and we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. Then our names are written in the Lamb's book of life, and all the powers of hell cannot prevail against us; for the beams of his love can illumine the walls of a gloomy prison until they shine with the glory of the portals of heaven. The poet was surely inspired when he wrote:

> "While blessed with a sense of his love,
> A palace a toy would appear;
> And prisons would palaces prove,
> If Jesus would dwell with me there."

Therefore, if God be for us, who can be against us? God is love.

ALFRED E. TITUS.

TRENTON, N. J.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1921.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
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FEET WASHING.

(JOHN XIII. 2-17.)

A SISTER who has long been a reader of the SIGNS has just recently moved from among Baptists who have never practiced feet washing as a church ordinance, to a section of country where Old School Baptists do, and have always, practiced the same as an ordinance of the church, same as the Lord's Supper or baptism. She writes asking our views on feet washing as a church ordinance, and as she has never been used to seeing it done, she finds it hard to adjust herself to an order of things to which she has never been accustomed. Now, we feel to give our views on this matter of feet washing, but first want it clearly understood by all our readers that we are not setting ourself as a guide, nor are we meaning to force our views on any who do not see with us. The SIGNS circulates among Old School Baptists all over the United States and parts of Canada, and we have friends, readers and subscribers among our people who do and who do not hold to feet washing as an ordinance of the church. Generally speaking, the churches in Canada and in the northern United States do not observe feet washing as an ordinance, but all through the southern United States it is widely observed and believed in, but, north or south, we know of no church which would make it a test of fellowship against a sister church whether they did or did not observe feet washing as an ordinance, and it is perfectly right that it should not be made a test of fellowship. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." "Why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." Ministering brethren from the south have freely visited among churches and associations in the north, those from the north have freely visited in the south. All in both places have been received, loved and appreciated for the gospel's sake, without question as to whether they have or have not practiced feet washing as an ordinance among their home churches. This, we believe, is the right and proper and brotherly attitude. In proceeding to give our convictions upon this matter of feet washing as a gospel ordinance, we state them because the brethren have a right to know how we personally feel in the matter, and the best we can we shall give our reasons for our belief, but we must have it emphatically understood that nothing we put down here is to be taken as criticising or finding fault with any who do not agree with us. Our life among the Old School Baptists has been passed with those who have never observed feet washing nor believed in it, as a gospel ordinance. We ourself do not so practice it nor believe in it as such. However, when visiting in those parts where churches do observe it, and when present at meetings where it is being observed, we have never felt like holding aloof from our brethren, but have felt to be subject to the church we were visiting and acquiesce in the order prevailing there. We have discovered that even

among Old Baptists different ideas and customs prevail in different sections of the country, and the little details of church order, and the manner of conducting church meetings and church business in different parts of the country vary. If any brother starts out from any one section with the determination to straighten out, according to his idea, the churches in other sections, he will have a gigantic and impossible task on his hands. Nor should any one have any such determination. It is wholly unbrotherly and unchristian. The test of brotherly love is as to how far we are willing to let our brethren have their own judgment and views in matters in which we ourselves are interested. Matters that do not interest us we have no business to meddle in. We do not say that any should make peace with error nor fall in with and agree with false doctrine. One should not be mealy-mouthed nor spineless in opposing that which denies the truth. But then there are so many details of church order in different sections of the country, localisms which prevail among our brethren, matters which do not involve their being true or their being false, which is not worth while to dispute about. So, in this matter of feet washing, we shall give our reasons for not observing it and for not believing in it as a gospel ordinance, not caring a whit whether others believe in it or not, and continuing to love and fellowship them just the same whether they do or do not. Our reasons are as follows: (1) The thirteenth chapter of John is the only Scripture that records the washing of the saints' feet by the Savior. Matthew, Mark or Luke say nothing about it. Neither is there any mention of it in all the writings of Paul. On the other hand, baptism is recorded by Matthew, Mark Luke and John, and the Acts of the Apostles contain numerous instances of baptism being observed by the whole apostolic church. The Lord's Supper also is recorded by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and amply verified afterward by Paul as a gospel ordinance. Now, it seems to us that if feet washing was meant by the Savior to be observed by the gospel church as an ordinance equally with baptism and the Supper we should have the matter not only stated by John but corroborated by the others, as in the cases of the Supper and of baptism. The Word says that in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. One witness is not sufficient to establish so important a matter as an ordinance of the church. As we have abundant testimony as to baptism and the Supper being ordinances enjoined upon the gospel church, so Jesus certainly would have inspired the writers to give us the same abundant testimony regarding feet washing had he regarded it to be equally as important as baptism and the Supper. That he did not so regard it and that he did not intend it as a gospel ordinance is proved by his giving us no other word than John's to securely establish the matter as a church function.

(2) Had Jesus intended feet washing to be observed as a literal ordinance would the Bible not record instances of its being so observed in the apostolic church? We think so. But, while the book of the Acts of the Apostles and the various epistles of the New Testament record abundant proof that baptism and the Supper were both observed in the apostolic church, there is not a single word or line anywhere in the New Testament to show that feet washing was ever observed as a gospel ordinance. Therefore, it seems sure that the early church

did not understand Jesus to have meant it literally, and did not practice it.

(3) The words of Jesus to Simon Peter in John xiii. 7, prove that it was not intended to be taken literally. "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." Here we have it clearly told by the Savior to the disciples at the time he stooped to wash their feet, that what he was then doing they did not understand, but that they should understand it later. Well, had Jesus meant it to be taken literally, then they did understand it, for they certainly saw what he literally did. But, he told them they did not understand it. Therefore the meaning of what he was doing, and Jesus' intention or purpose in washing their feet, did not appear to them at the time he literally did it. They did see him arise from supper and lay aside his garments, they saw him take a towel and gird himself, they saw him pour water into a basin and stoop down washing their feet. All this their eyes surely witnessed, but the import of it all was hidden from them. The time when understanding was given them of what this meant, and of what the prophets meant, and of what Jesus meant in other things he had done and said, was after his resurrection from the dead and when the Holy Ghost came upon them at the fullness of Pentecost, in the city of Jerusalem, at the time the gospel church was set up in its visible organization. Now, when understanding was thus given the apostles whose feet had been washed by Jesus they did not enjoin feet washing upon the gospel church as an ordinance to be literally kept, but they did deliver the Supper and also baptism to the gospel church as literal ordinances. They did not so command the church to observe literally feet washing, because the Holy Ghost had not given them to understand it literally. Thus we see that their literally seeing Jesus wash their feet was not the proper understanding of the matter, and that when the Holy Ghost did afterward give them understanding of the matter they did not enjoin it upon the church as a literal ordinance. So much for our reasons against the literal keeping of the ordinance. Now, if it does not mean that, what does it mean? Certainly Jesus meant something when he said, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." What did Jesus teach in his washing of the disciples' feet? He taught, first, humility; second, service; third, watchcare. (1) It is a solemn sight to see the Lord of heaven and earth, the pure and spotless Son of God, stoop down to wash poor sinners' feet.

> "Humility, how bright it shined
> In every act he wrought;
> What lowliness of heart and mind
> Appeared in all he taught."

The secret of humility is love. One cannot be humble without love, for to be humble is to regard others as better than one's self. Naturally one loves himself and his own, but to put one's self aside and in the background, to seek the joy and welfare of others rather than one's self, one must be actuated by the love of God which goes out to all the household of faith, and which so far puts one at the feet of the church as to be really called humble. Jesus, notwithstanding he was God incarnate, yet placed himself at the feet of sinful men, so far denied himself and his own pleasure and comfort and ease as to offer his body upon the cruel cross that rebel worms should be reconciled to and made one with God. This embodies the perfect humility, and we are perfectly humble only in so far as the indwelling of his Spirit brings us in line with his wonderful example.

(2) In addition to his teaching the lesson of humility, Jesus in washing the feet of his followers taught the great lesson of service, that we are servants one of another, and not of self; that we are not here to serve our own personal ends, but to serve the church. Jesus came down from heaven not to be ministered unto, but to minister; he came not that men might serve him, but that he should serve men; that is, sinners. He served his people in that he lived for them, suffered for them, died for them and rose again for them. His stooping down to wash their feet was an evidence of his desire to serve them, to do them good. Now if he, their Lord and Master, washed their feet, thus serving them, we ought to serve one another. The world is full of selfishness, every one living for self. This ought not to be among the people of God. He laid down his life for his people, we should lay down our lives for one another. It may be that we shall never be called to shed our blood for the church's sake, but most likely we shall find again and again that we shall have to deny self, and deny it completely, in doing things we do not personally care to do, and in living as we do not care to live, in order that God's people shall be served. Nor should we be surprised if our lives are thus laid down for the brethren, for is not this the way we walk in the example he showed? The church exists not only for the comfort and safety of the individual members, but, what is more important, the members each and all exist for the service of the church. Bad it is when we get the idea that the church ought to do thus and so for us; rather we should keep it in mind to look for opportunities to serve the church. Jesus, as he washed the disciples' feet, showed them that he was their minister, or servant, and this was the example they afterwards were to follow, and did follow, when they became apostles in the gospel church, for they afterwards reminded the churches that they were not lords over God's heritage, that they did not come preaching themselves, but preaching Christ, and were the servants of the church. These apostles afterward so far and so well served the church that they gave up everything they had ever held dear to themselves, even life itself, that the churches might be served.

(3) Finally, Jesus teaches the great lesson of watchcare, that the apostles, ministers and undershepherds should have the watchcare over the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers. If they see any member of the church getting his feet dirty with a disorderly walk they should wash his feet; that is, seek to show that one his error, labor to restore him to the proper gospel standing. If Jesus washed their feet, we should wash the feet of those whose feet are soiled with walking after the flesh or after the world, not condemning them and talking to others about them to their backs, but go to them in the spirit of love and meekness, seeking to cleanse them of their willful walk, thus converting a sinner from the error of his way, and so saving a soul from death; that is, from death to the fellowship of the church here on earth. If we could thus be humble, thus be the servants of one another, thus watch over one another, we should be following in the example which Jesus set forth in his washing of the disciples' feet, and for the doing of all this, grace is required. Without grace we cannot serve God acceptably, therefore it is our desire that God may grant us grace whereby we may be able to serve him with reverence, meekness and in fear.

Whether our readers will agree with us or not in our position of not believing in the literal observance of feet washing as a gospel ordinance, we feel sure they will agree with us in our understanding of the spiritual import of the matter, that it does set fort humility, service and love, and is it not chiefly important that these spiritual things be in us and abound whether we do or do not literally observe the matter? We hope our readers will not breathe into what we have written a different meaning than that we intend. We have wanted to write solely in the spirit of love and good will, not simply to satisfy the sister from whom the request came, but that our brethren everywhere might know just how we feel, that we have no quarrel with any one, but that we do have our convictions, and are willing to give our reasons for them. We have on two or three occasions engaged in the washing of feet when visiting with churches which practiced it, nor did our conscience condemn us for so doing. On the other hand, we enjoyed it and felt serious in it. No one, whether he believes it or not, can see it being observed among our people without being impressed by the solemnity and sincerity of it. Far be it from us to find fault with any church or brother believing in it. We have simply stated the matter as we see it. L.

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder B. F. Coulter.)

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bryn Zion Church, Kent County, Delaware, May 25th, 26th and 27th, 1921, to the churches and associations with which we correspond sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—Our correspondence one with another, and its continuance, is a sweet evidence of our spiritual fellowship with each other. Truly it is a blessing from the Lord that we dwell together in unity. Our God is one God, and there is none other. Our life is hid with Christ in God. Our dwelling-place in heaven. Our desire that we may glorify God in our body and in our soul which are his. These evidences of our sonship make manifest the work of the spirit of grace in our heart, revealing Jesus unto us as our Savior and our gracious Redeemer, who is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. His dwelling-place is within us, therefore he is our dwelling-place, from whence we receive instruction in righteousness from within. Our first estate in Adam can never show unto us Jesus, who is hidden from the world, for all secret things belong to God, and such as are revealed unto us are ours forever. Neither can we teach nor reveal to an uncircumcised world. In the great and wondrous love wherewith God has loved us, and shed its sweet and living influence in our heart, we are made to love one another with pure hearts fervently, because the love of God abideth in our hearts. The Lord inspired one of his apostles to record these words: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "Love is the fountain whence all true

obedience flows," says the poet. The love of God is as far above the affection of men and women as the heaven is far above the earth, therefore when the love of God is in lively exercise in our heart it is our delight to obey the commandments of God through instruction and impressions by the Spirit. By grace through faith the love of God inspires us to worship him who is able to save us even to the uttermost. As the heart of the mother is knit to her child all her finest feelings of loving sympathy go out to fulfill every desire of the little one, so our mother (the church) wraps the mantle of her love about us and fondles us with watchful care. With the broken heart and contrite spirit we worship God in spirit and in truth with holy love and in righteous judgment. The love of Jesus breaks the chain which binds us to the earth, and when he maketh us free we are free indeed and our heart is filled with holy zeal. Among the saints of God love flows from heart to heart, and faith answers faith, manifesting them as the family of God. Thus God has been our dwelling-place in all generations, by and through which we are kept from the pollutions of the world by the unsearchable love and riches of faith through Jesus Christ our Lord. We are yet in the world, but not of the world, for where sin abounds grace doth much more abound. May our hearts be attuned to the glory of His grace in the precious continuance of God's love.

B. E. CUBBAGE, Moderator.
THOMAS MEREDITH, Clerk.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in July (31st). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Margaret Hardesty Money was born in Clark County, Ky., May 24th, 1828, and departed this life June 15th, 1921, at the advanced age of 93 years. She was the last of a large family of children of William and Jane Hardesty. She was married to Milton V. Money in December, 1845. To them were born six sons and one daughter. Brother Milton died in September, 1890. It can be said of her that she was a widow indeed. The eldest son, J. W., of Kansas, and Mary Jane Duvall, of Shelby County, preceded her to the grave several years. She and her husband united with the Old Baptist Church and were baptized by the late Elder J. F. Johnson back in the seventies. It can be truly said that no more faithful Baptists ever lived than brother Milton and wife and the late brother Albert Money and wife. Though living fourteen miles distant, winter and summer they filled their place. Nothing but providential hindrance kept them away, which seldom occurred. They went far and near to associations and meetings as well. It was a saying of Elder Johnson's, when the weather conditions were bad, "The Moneys will be there," and it was true. Truly the love of many wax cold. Sister Margaret and sister Sally were indeed mothers in Israel to me. How we do miss them! Sister Margaret was a woman of wonderful character, strong in body and mind, retaining both to an advanced age. Space forbids me saying all I would like to say. She spent most of her life in this county, and was loved by all who knew her. She died at the home of her son, Jeff Money, where she was kindly cared for by him and his wife. The surviving sons: A. F., J. F., G. M., L. C. and U. N., were with her when the end came. In her last illness of ten weeks she failed rapidly, and passed away as a babe in that sweet sleep from which none ever wake to weep. She was unwavering in her faith, hope and confidence in the holy and divine purposes of God and his ability to carry them out.

The funeral services were held at the Grove Hill Cemetery chapel, conducted by the writer. The large attendance evidenced the high esteem held for the dear aged one and family. May the dear Lord remember us all in his mercy.

P. W. SAWIN.

Elder T. P. Chandler was born in Calloway County, Ky., September 19th, 1856, and died at his home in Henry County, Tenn., May 25th, 1921, aged 64 years, 8 months and 6 days. In his boyhood he went to the state of Missouri, but did not remain there long, then went to Texas, where the Lord was pleased to make known unto him the riches of his grace in the way of life and salvation when he was about eighteen years of age, and he united with the Primitive Baptists in

that state. Soon the church saw the Lord had a work for him in his vineyard, and he was liberated and ordained to the full functions of the gospel ministry while in Texas, but he returned to West, Ky., shod with the pure gospel of Christ, and proved to be an able minister of the new testament and the riches of God's grace, and adorned the doctrine of God our Savior by example and precept. In very truth he was a servant of the Lord, and as such heeded the admonition of the apostle to Timothy: The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle to all, patient. Brother Chandler was not a strong man physically, but was strong in the Lord and a great gift to the churches of his charge, and was enabled by the God whom he loved so well to serve to be of much comfort to the Baptists in preaching the pure gospel, also in his writings to his private correspondents and by public contribution, as he wrote a number of articles for the SIGNS and other Baptist periodicals. He traveled in several states, and in all his preaching and writing it was his sole aim to honor and extol God to the comfort of his people wherever he went. He was married to Mattie Elizabeth Snider, of Henry County, Tenn., December 18th, 1890. To that union were born five children, three boys and two girls, who, with their poor afflicted mother, (who has not walked a step for a number of years) are left, with other relatives and friends, besides the Baptists, to mourn the loss of this humble servant of the Lord. He was very pleasant and instructive in conversation, as well as his writings. God gave him a very active mind, and he improved his talent well by reading and searching after the things pertaining to life and godliness. We all miss him, yet we sorrow not as others who have no hope. Surely he is not dead, but sleepeth, and is resting from his labors, while his works will follow him.

After funeral services, conducted by Elder J. W. Linn and the writer, the mortal remains were laid in the Snider burying-ground to await the resurrection.

May the God of all grace comfort all that mourn, and may he raise up another to take the place made vacant.

J. C. CHESTER.

Joseph A. Clower was born August 31st, 1852, and died May 5th, 1921, making his stay on earth 68 years, 8 months and 5 days. He was the son of Lewis and Margaret Clower. He was married to Letitia Hale February 4th, 1877, and to that union were born five children, two boys and three girls, one girl dying in infancy, leaving four children to mourn. His wife preceded him to the grave more than four years. He also leaves two brothers and two sisters, besides many other relatives. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church several years ago by the writer, who has known him from youth. He lived blameless before men. His life and character as a citizen were as nearly perfect as natural attainments can be, yet God in his infinite mercy quickened him to the fact that he was yet a sinner, and by his loving-kindness wrought a miracle of grace in his heart and caused him to love the people he once hated and led him to seek a home among them, and although afflicted in body, he would come leaning on his cane to the different places of worship until a few days before his death, bearing his afflictions without murmuring. He was not a man of many words, but he came in the great mystery of godliness and was firm in the faith and a great strength to the church. We shall never be able to comprehend with our natural minds the fruits of the Spirit, which led him to the church, nor explain why we loved him so. We know that it was not in word nor in deed, but it was in truth that we loved him. While the church has lost a loving member and his dear children a kind and loving father, we sometimes look upward by an eye of faith and feel a calmness and reconciliation in our breast, realizing that God has taken him to himself, and we of like precious hope are made to feel that we will again be reunited, where we shall rest in the light of His countenance forever.

H. V. COLE.

Mrs. Helen Webb Kinney was born May 1st, 1837, daughter of Stephen and Anthy Crocker Webb, was married to Peter S. Kinney September 24th, 1882, and departed this life June 5th, 1921, making her sojourn upon this earth 84 years, 1 month and 5 days. She experienced a hope in Jesus and was baptized by Elder George W. Slater, and became a member of the church at Middleburg, N. Y., in 1861. February 10th, 1883, she was received by the Schoharie Church from the Middleburg Church. Sister Kinney loved the assembly of the saints, and would often say, "Why am I so highly favored to want to meet with my dear kindred, when so many do not seem to appreciate their blessings?" Her house was a home for our people many years, and a place for worship whenever it would be so we could meet with her, and it was her chief delight to talk of the goodness and mercy of God to his people. She found great comfort in doing good and communicating often with those who love the truth as it is in Jesus. Last fall she went to live with brother and sister Kinney, at Ashokan, N. Y. She missed her kindred in Christ very much, but the Lord blessed her with the desire that she might be with her home church at Schoharie, N. Y. She was visiting at Deacon Miers' home when she was stricken with pneumonia, and after an illness of but five days was taken from earth to be with her Redeemer. Her last words were regarding Zion and praying for her welfare. She mentioned Elder Vail and myself frequently, as though we were especially on her mind. About her last words were, "Dark only a little way over the waters." She was

conscious to the last. She is greatly missed by those of the church and the many friends that loved her, and my loss is great. Several nephews and nieces in the west survive, together with four to whom she was an aunt and a faithful stepmother for years: Everett, of Ashokan, Orson F., of Greenwich, Mrs. Helen K. Bouck, of Saratoga Springs, and Mrs. Everton S. Walrath, of Annapolis, Md.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at the home of Deacon Miers, at Schoharie, N. Y., on June 8th, before a large number of friends. Burial in the Schoharie Old Stone Fort Cemetery. May our lives and last end be like hers.

Her pastor, J. M. FENTON.

Albert Eugene Franklin Bozeman, son of Joseph Hill and Mary Frances Bozeman, was born April 11th, 1888, at Tilton, Whitefield Co., Ga., and died near Mexia, Limestone Co., Texas, April 21st, 1921, making his stay on earth 33 years and 10 days. He was taken sick with what the doctor called acute appendicitis on his thirty-third birthday, and acute kidney trouble developed, which the doctor could not control. We moved to Texas the same year that he was born, stopping in Milam County six years, then moved to Limestone County, where he grew to manhood. It is quite remarkable that he grew up in favor with all whom he formed an acquaintance. He was raised on the farm, but just before he was fully grown he went to work on railroad and county road building, acting several years as foreman in the district where he lived, where he won many lifelong friends. His friends were numbered by his acquaintances, which was shown at his death and burial. He served nearly eighteen months in the world war, spending nearly twelve months in France. He was in Company A, 22nd Engineers Corps. After his return from France in July he was married to Miss Clara Whissonhunt on December 14th, 1919. Some time before he was taken sick he told his wife that he would not be with her long, but not to worry about him, that it was all right, Jesus was with him. He joined the Missionary Baptists several years ago. He was the youngest child of nine, five boys and four girls; the youngest girl died in August, 1904. He leaves an aged father, mother, four brothers, three sisters and a host of relatives and friends, but above all he leaves a little weak, broken-hearted companion, who was never too tired to be at his bedside, ready and anxious to minister to his wants and needs, but thanks be unto God, who doeth all things well, we mourn not as those who have no hope, for he left good evidence that he had been washed in the blood of Christ and his robe made white in the blood of the Lamb.

After funeral services conducted by a Missionary Baptist preacher, his remains were laid to rest in the beautiful cemetery at Prairie Grove, Limestone Co., Texas, to await the resurrection morning, when the trumpet shall sound and the dead in Christ come forth and be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body.

Written by his sorrowing father,
J. H. BOZEMAN.

Malachi Mayfield was born in Green County, Mo., July 2nd, 1852, and departed this life May 20th, 1921, at the home of his youngest son, in Tumalo, Oregon. He crossed the plains with his parents in 1867, and settled in Clackamas County, Oregon. He was united in marriage to Miss Martha Allison, daughter of Elder J. P. Allison, in 1871. To that union were born three children, two sons and one daughter. He was a brother of Elder George Mayfield. He united with the Old School Baptists the same year he was married. He was a firm believer, and his trust was in the covenant mercies of God. His eldest son lives at Wamic, Oregon. He leaves his wife, two sons, fourteen grandchildren and four great-grandchildren to mourn their loss.

MARTHA MAYFIELD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

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MEETINGS.

THE Siloam Association of Predestinarian Baptists will be held with Cowlitz River Church, near Swofford, Wash., August 12th, 13th and 14th, 1921. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend. For further information write me.

ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk.

RIFFE, Wash.

THE New Hope Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will hold their next session with Little Flock Church, three miles southeast of Edgewood, Texas, on the T. & P. R. R., beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1921. All trains will be met on Thursday at Edgewood. We invite all Baptists of our faith and order to be with us, especially ministers.

S. M. DICKENS.

THE Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene in her sixty-seventh annual session with Spring Creek Church, near Stahl, Adair Co., Mo., commencing on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1921, and continuing the two following days. All lovers of salvation by grace alone are invited, especially ministers of our faith and order. Those coming by rail will be met at Stahl, Adair Co., Mo.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator.
J. M. CATE, Clerk.

THE Abbington Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting to be held on Wednesday and Thursday, September 7th and 8th, 1921. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend. We expect our pastor, Elder Vail, Elder Fenton, of Philadelphia, and Elder Alexander, of Wilmington, Del. Those coming on D., L. & W. R. R., will stop at Clarks Summit and go to Elder Vail's. Those coming on D. & H. or O. &. W. R. R. are requested to write to C. E. Miller, Clarks Summit, Pa., R. D. 1, so that arrangements may be made to meet them at Olyphant Tuesday afternoon.

G. W. GOODRICH, Clerk.

THE Maine Association of Old School Baptists will meet, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, on Friday before the second Monday in September (9th, 10th and 11th,) 1921. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.

THE Trinity River Old School Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, to hold its sixty-third session with Hopewell Church, four miles east of Rice, in Ellis County, Texas, beginning Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1921, and continuing three days. All lovers of the truth and of the old order are cordially invited to attend. All brethren and visitors coming south will come on the H. & T. C. R. R. or the Interurban to Rice. All coming north will get off at Rice. Conveyance will be at the station on Thursday.

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THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE First Primitive Baptist Church of Mineral Wells, Texas, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on S. W. 4th Ave. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

SALLIE E. HOWARD, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

BREAD CORN.

"BREAD corn is bruised; because he will not ever be threshing it."—Isaiah xxviii. 28.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I sat down this beautiful Sunday morning, May 1st, 1921, to write a short article on the above portion of holy writ, and send it to you for disposal, with scarcely any thought of its publication. I have not written much of late for publication, as I have been and am fully sensible that owing to my age (eighty-five), and weakness both in body and mind, I am not capable of writing for publication of such wonderful and mysterious things, the deep things of God, things that cannot be known except by divine revelation, and behold, how little portion of Him is known. So all the reason I can give now for writing in this condition of mind is the Scriptures and certain portions of them are on my mind almost continually, both day and night, when I am awake, with great interest and weight, and I become so wrought upon that I find no rest to my soul (life) until I write to some of the Lord's people or talk to some one on the subject in mind and heart. Therefore I am writing this morning to relieve my mind and heart, and if it is the Lord's will to bless me with light and liberty I shall write of Christ under the idea or notion of "Bread Corn," a special and selected corn, chosen and set apart for the special benefit of a peculiar family. This deep and profound narrative holds forth clearly the idea of prearrangement, which is predestination and special appointment, and all by the infinite wisdom and foreknowledge of the Owner and sole Controller of all things. This text, like other texts of the Scriptures, is drawn from things of every day life, in order to strengthen our minds in the understanding of such deep and mysterious things. In many of these scarce years for grain, I, and many around me, would store away bread corn for the family. The head of the family could and did estimate what it would take to bread or feed his family through the emergency. This amount he absolutely and unchangeably stored up for his family, not to be touched for anything else, for this is bread corn. Therefore it is clearly seen in this wonderful narrative that God in his infinite wisdom and foreknowledge not only saw the end from the beginning, but abso-

lutely and unchangeably fixed the destiny and circumstances of everything that he created and made, so that every thing created and made answered the exact purpose for which he created it, so that every corn of the appointed Wheat, Barley and Rye fell in their appointed places which were prepared for them, the principal (chief) wheat being Christ, that fell into the earth and died to make manifest his fullness, the church. It is said in John xii. 24: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." So this wonderful narrative, with its prearrangement and preappointment, leads our minds with inexpressible joy and delight to the earthly Adam, the first Adam, who was of the earth earthy, the prepared earth (or ground) for the principal Wheat, the heavenly Adam, to fall into and die in order to bring forth much fruit. For he took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, and was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them, who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."—Hebrews ii. 14, 15. The earth of itself is inert, that is, lifeless, but the germ or life is in the Seed, Christ, the heavenly Bread Corn, ordained for the heavenly children, who are blessed with all spiritual blessings in this heavenly Adam, a quickening Spirit, who falls or comes into this chosen and appointed earthly Adam and makes it in every part and particle fit for himself. It seems clear to my mind from the reading of the volume of inspiration that this choice of God in Christ of these earthen vessels was eternal, personal and unconditional. At the time appointed, this heavenly Adam, the quickening Spirit, lays hold of these dead, inert children of the prepared earthy Adam and quickens them and raises them up into a higher order of life, so that they are in their sojourn and pilgrimage in this world bearing the image of the heavenly Adam, their dear Redeemer. In their former life, until they are quickened they bear the image of the earthy Adam, who was made a living soul (person), but after they are quickened (given life) by Christ, the heavenly Adam, a quickening Spirit, they bear the image of the heavenly (which is far above that of the vulgar world in their Adamic life), having their conversation in heaven; that is, their conversation is godly, as becometh a heavenly family. Time, space and ability all fail me, or I would say something about the corresponding text, that wonderful narrative of the Lord's people down in Egypt, and of Joseph, who after the counsel of his own will stored up bread corn to last through the seven years' famine; but there are two more phases that I want to mention before I close. Jesus asked the question thus: Which is the greatest, them that sit at meat or him that serveth? One point particularly in this question is clear, and should call our attention to the present state of things in some of our churches and public services now, it seems to me; for when we meet in our church meetings and at other times and places for worship, the presence of God's dear children sitting at meat says that they are asking for bread, the Bread of heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ, and it seems to me that sometimes instead of feeding the flock, the children of God, with the heavenly Bread, the

Lord Jesus Christ, we give them a stone, so that there is great complaining in our streets, so much so that we cannot at this time realize the happy state or condition of God's church or people when he is their Lord. (Psalms cxliv. 15.) For of a truth the gods of this world, whom David calls strange children (God's children) are so ruling and overdriving the flock of God, with their countless thousands of tender lambs, that many, yea, very many, have died, so that there is great complaining among our people of the falling away of the Lord's people and of the few members in our churches now, which has caused me often of late to stop and think, Have we been taking care of the tender lambs, or have we been overdriving them, not in matter, but in manner? I do not understand that the servant of God has to preach false doctrine in order to feed the weak and tender lambs on the sincere milk of the word and take care of them so that they grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. May the Lord's wonderful mercy so bless the heart and mind of his servants and fathers in Israel to feed the lambs, taking heed to all the flock, the strong, the weak and them that are out of the way, that our sons may be as plants grown in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a palace; that our garners may be full, affording all manner of store; that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets; that our oxen may be strong to labor (in word and doctrine); that there be no breaking in nor going out; that there be no complaining in our streets. Happy is the church of God when in this blessed state; therefore may we be blessed of the Lord to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and remember that whosoever eateth of this living Bread which cometh down from heaven shall never die, but fall asleep in Jesus.

W. J. MAY.

SHOCK, Ky.

DOCTRINE.

THERE are only two kinds of doctrine: one true, the other false. The doctrine of God our Savior is always put in the singular number, and consists of several cardinal points, viz., the sovereignty of God, predestination, election, redemption, calling, preservation and the resurrection. The doctrines of men and devils are always in the plural number, and have only one source, and that is of evil, and that continually. I believe in the absolute sovereignty of God, because the Scriptures teach it from Genesis to Revelation. One "thus saith the Lord" is sufficient. We are told in the forty-sixth chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah that God said, "I am God, and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Also by the apostle Paul, in the first chapter of Ephesians, that the saints were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. God is unlimited in power. In chapter one hundred and thirty-five of Psalms we read that whatsoever he pleased that he did in heaven, in earth, in the sea and all deep places, and in the one hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm that he is everywhere present. David asked, Where shall I flee from the presence of God? If I ascend to heaven he is there, if I make my bed in hell he is there, if I take the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost parts of the sea he is there.

God foreordained, or predestinated, to speak the world into existence by the word of his power, and that it should be inhabited, and made choice of a portion of the inhabitants as his peculiar people. The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. When Jacob was born of the Spirit his name was changed to Israel; the people of the Lord have been known since by that name. The first man was given a law by his Creator, with the penalty annexed for the violation of that law; that penalty was death. He violated that law and fell under the penalty thereof, which entailed sin and death on all of his posterity. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." David said while wielding the pen of inspiration that he was conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity. This is true of every one who has been born, or ever will be born, in this world, except Jesus. The elect as well as the reprobate fell in the transgression, but there was a platform made before the world was created to catch the elect, which platform was the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."—Eph. i. 3, 4. The Arminian D. D.'s tell us that God would save all sinners if they would let him; that the alien sinner has to accept the offer of salvation; that the Spirit is knocking at the door of his heart for admission; that all the sinner has to do is to give God his heart. Divine revelation tells us that the heart in man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and who can know it? Again, his mouth is full of cursing and bitterness, with his tongue he has used deceit, his throat is an open sepulchre, his feet swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in his ways and the way of peace he has not known. This would be a mass of corruption indeed to offer to the Holy One for acceptance. We all had our conversation there in times past, but God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved his elect even when dead in sin, quickens them together with Christ. The Spirit quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. These D. D.'s also tell us that the atonement was made alike for all of the human family, and that God would be unjust not to give all men and women a chance of salvation. "O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" The Savior said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." The unregenerate sinner drinks down sin greedily, as the ox doth water, rolls it under his tongue as a sweet morsel, there is neither fear nor respect for God in his heart. As said before, all are in that condition by nature, but when that light which God commanded to shine out of darkness shines in the hearts of his people their course, as was that of Saul of Tarsus, is turned, they then see as never before, old things pass away, behold, all things become new. This is the work of God, and mar-

velous in our eyes. The love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost will never be eradicated. The Savior said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." Neither life, death, things present, nor things to come, principalities, powers, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate God's people from his love. There is abundant proof of the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. The Savior said, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." The apostle Paul says, "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." When the mortal bodies of the saints are quickened they will be spiritual bodies. It is sown a mortal body, it is raised a spiritual body. This is the final redemption of the saints which Paul speaks of, looking for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. The saints receive at the new birth the Spirit of adoption. "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." The devil preached lies to our mother Eve in the garden, deceived her and induced her to violate the law of God. The same kind of doctrine has been preached by his angels in all ages of the world, with the same effect, but the Scriptures foretelling that God would justify the heathen through faith preached before the gospel unto Abraham. God by the Holy Spirit called Abraham out of his native land, that of heathenism. Jacob was found of the Lord in a waste howling wilderness, the wilderness of sin. That is the way all of God's people have been called, and will be to the end of time. The religious world, or popular denominations of so-called christians, claims that God's plan is to save sinners by preaching the gospel to them. Paul tells us that the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness. A strange way indeed to save sinners, by talking foolishness to them. The preaching of the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven is to feed the sheep the Savior saved by the shedding of his own blood. The D. D.'s claim they will have a star in their crown for each sinner they save, and they claim to save many. God has never delegated to men or angels the power to save sinners. John, in the isle of Patmos, attempted to worship an angel. The angel said to him, See thou do not; worship God. Some attempted to worship some of the apostles, but they forbade them, and told them they were only men of like passions as themselves. There are many of this day who love the praise of men for their preaching, but they love money better. Preachers preach the power that sends them: if God calls and sends them they preach the power of God; if called and qualified in schools of men they preach the power of money, the love of which the apostle declares is the root of all evil. Paul was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, and taught to preach salvation by the keeping of the law, but after being taught of the Lord he conferred not with flesh and blood, neither did he consult his brethren who believed in Christ before he did. God made choice of all his elect at the same time, but their

inheritance in Christ is made known to them in their day. Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Peter says Noah was a preacher of righteousness. I am persuaded from the reading of the Scriptures that all the prophets preached as well as prophesied. Paul says he was not taught to preach by man, neither did he receive it of man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. It requires the same preparation to receive the preaching of the gospel as it does to preach it. Witness: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Redemption signifies a prior ownership. The elect of God were given to the Son by the Father before the foundation of the world, but being composed of the fallen sons and daughters of Adam were in the transgression. Paul says that was not first which was spiritual, but that which was natural, and afterward that which was spiritual. The elect are Christ's by gift and also by purchase, for he purchased them with his own blood. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."—Heb. ii. 14.

May Israel's God reconcile all of his dear people to his will, is the sincere prayer of the writer.

JAMES M. SIMMONS.

KIRKSEY, Ky., June 18, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a letter written by sister Gertrude E. Bartlett, of West Virginia. I have read it many times, and it seems too sweet and precious for no one but me to read; that would be selfish, so I want others to enjoy it. Her grandfather, Elder Bartlett, came through Kentucky with Elder Linn a year ago; they both are very dear servants of our Lord.

I enjoy the editorials very much. Poor and afflicted, yet in the Lord is my little hope.

FANNIE H. CHESTER.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., July 30, 1920.

DEAR SISTER CHESTER:—I received your very kind letter to-day, which I have read many times, and with a deep feeling of love for you as my sister in Christ, I hope. My dear grandfather has spoken of you often, and it did not seem that you were a stranger in a natural way, and I feel that in the love of the all-wise God we are not strangers, but, I trust, the most precious sisters. I am very glad to receive a letter from any of the dear brethren and sisters, and it gives me great pleasure to try to write to you all, though I feel very unworthy in writing.

I am glad you enjoyed my experience, but O I feel so unworthy to be among you. Many times I was tempted not to write, yet I felt such a love for you Primitive Baptists that I could not repress the longing of my soul to try to tell you of my love for you. I have many times felt that perhaps I never should have written, but when I get such letters as yours I cannot help feeling that my writing was not in vain.

Sister, since I commenced this letter it has so happened that I accompanied my grandfather to one of our sister churches (Little Bethel) and I did not get your letter completed. It is a great pleasure to go to our churches and be with our dear brethren and sisters in the love of

God. O how my heart rejoiceth to be in their presence. Elder Linn was also at the meeting, and he and grandfather preached some very touching sermons. I do not think my dear grandfather's voice ever sounded sweeter than it did yesterday, for I felt to be so cast down in sin and so unworthy of being there with him. O yes, dear sister, I very often fear that I am not born again. My heart is often caused to fear and tremble at my own sinful self, and I often think that I am not worthy of speaking His holy name. How can the dear brethren and sisters see anything in me to cause them to write so tenderly to me? I am such a poor, weak, sinful creature, lost forever without the grace of God; yes, without the grace of God my life is nothing but a blank. My hope often seems very small, but O how precious it is to me; it is my food, my drink, my life and my God. When this hope seems so small and I see myself such a sinner how precious it is to hear those tender words of my dear Savior, spoken to me when he saw me standing alone in the world, alone without a hope in life, a lost, ruined sinner: Come unto me, for thou art mine. When I hear those sweet words I am again strengthened and led to praise God.

My dear sister, I am only eighteen years old, and as my grandfather has told you, I have suffered much. I gave up my dear father, which was my first great sorrow in that way. I then gave up a dear girl friend who was very near and precious to me. Since then two of my grandmothers have died, and both were very precious to me. But, sister, this sorrow must come in every person's life, but O how much greater was the sorrow of being in the wrong church. Many times I lay on my bed sick, my doctor confessing he could do nothing for me, and it seemed that life must surely end, and all because of a weary soul. They could not know the cry and anguish of my soul and could not relieve me of my suffering. This awful mistake I made in joining the wrong denomination has wrecked my life, I fear as long as I live, but amidst it all I feel to say, Praise God, from whom all blessings flow, for it is through much tribulation that he has brought me to the most precious, the dearest and truest people on earth, a people for whom I would gladly give my life if it would benefit them. But, greatest of all, He has shown me that it is alone by his grace I am saved, if I am saved. By his grace we are saved, and not of works, lest any man should boast.

Dear grandfather is improving, and gaining some strength. He enjoyed being with you very much, and hopes to come again some time. O how dear and precious he is to me. I love him very truly in a natural way, but the love of God is much greater.

Dear sister, I am writing too much I know, but it is my delight to write, yet will close before you become weary of reading my letter, for I cannot write worthy of your reading. May God enable us to some day take each other in our arms in pure christian love, as you said in your letter. May his grace ever be with and abide with you and lead you in righteousness. May he save us in death, that we may sing his glorious praises in that world of heavenly bliss.

I hope to hear from you soon.

Your unworthy sister in hope.

GERTRUDE E. BARTLETT.

SALINE, LA., June 26, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have a desire to write a few lines to the SIGNS for your consideration, and hope that it is love or sweet fellowship for the church of Christ which causes me to have such a desire; for I know if I am not directed by the Spirit of God there will be no comfort to the saints of the Most High. According to nature I am one of the fallen race of Adam, dead in trespasses and in sin, and cannot think one good thought or do one good act. Sometimes I fear that I have never been born again and all I can do is sin. I sometimes feel that I have a hope in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who died for poor sinners, of whom I am one, then again it seems that the hope which I thought I had is not a true hope, but a delusion of the natural mind, which causes me to nearly despair; then again when I am low down some Scripture will come to me with so much comfort I can feast on it for days, and am enabled to exclaim with David, God has been good to Israel, and that all our trials and sufferings are in mercy sent to wean our affections from the vain and perishable things of this earth. We are not our own, but are bought with a price; so if we have been bought with the precious blood of Christ we are not our own, we are his, and our bodies the temple of the Holy Ghost. The things of this earth must be purged out of us before we will be enabled to serve God in spirit and in truth. It is said that we cannot serve two masters; we cannot serve God and serve the things of this earth at the same time, it is impossible. God is perfect in all of his attributes; he is perfect in love, in power, in wisdom, and it is a blessed thing and worth more than all this world contains to be enabled by his grace to serve him, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. Although we have to suffer here, if we be the children of God it is for our good and his glory. Oh how happy we would be if we could always be reconciled to his holy will, but we cannot be unless he gives us the spirit of reconciliation, and then it is easy, for it is easy to obey God in all things when the obedience is given in Christ. He is the life of his people, and when they obey it is because of the life of him in them that directs their feet in paths of righteousness. Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord? There is none like God's people, who feel to be poor, weak, helpless, undone and forever lost if not redeemed by the blood of Christ. They know that in their flesh there is nothing good, but to the reverse, sin and abomination, woe and misery. But God, who is merciful to our unrighteousness, gave his beloved Son to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. There never was such love known and never will be as that love which God has for his people, and no one knows anything about that love until it is shed abroad in their hearts; it is then that they are led in ways that they had never known and in paths they had never trod. They are a peculiar people, different from any other people; they are made so by the grace of God, which has been freely bestowed upon them. The God of heaven is a peculiar God, different from the gods of the people, who will save them if they will let them. Such a god is no god at all. The fool saith in his heart, There is no God, and that is what we all say when we are controlled by the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, not subject to his law, neither indeed can be; for to be carnally minded is death, but to be

spiritually minded is life and peace, and the only way that a man knows what is flesh and what is Spirit, he knows the things of man by the spirit of man that is in him and the Spirit of God that is in him. So the child of God is enabled by the Spirit of God to know the good tree from the corrupt tree. There are but two trees; one is of the earth, and is earthy; the other is of God, and cometh down from heaven, and it is just as impossible for the corrupt tree to bear good fruit as it is for the good tree to bear corrupt fruit. Well, how do the children of God know? asks some one. It is by being made partakers of both. Now, dear brethren, this is according to my experience, whether I am a child of God or not. I feel at times that the doctrine of God is sweeter to me than anything else could be, and I have a love for the Primitive Baptists that I do not have for any one else. I have been blessed many times with the sweet privilege of meeting the dear brethren and sisters in sweet union and fellowship, where the praise was unto God and not man, where love flowed from heart to heart, and I could see the love manifest in their faces and actions. I know that I am unworthy of such blessed privileges, for my heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it? I hope I have been made to know it by the Spirit of God. May the God of all grace keep his people in union and communion with each other. May they be as harmless as doves and bold as lions in declaring what great things the Lord hath done for them. May they not become swallowed up in the vain pride of this earth, which is waxing worse and worse, according to my belief; they are deceiving and being deceived, but God's will shall be done in all things, and he has a purpose n it all or it would not be as it is. May his saints be enabled to trust in his goodness and mercy, for their days on earth are few and full of trouble, and they will never be satisfied until they awake with the likeness of their Savior, to be forever with and praise him from whom all blessings flow.

Dear brethren, do with this as it seems best to you, and if you find any errors please forgive, as I am not perfect and will never be until I am made perfect in Christ. This is where my hope lies, with him, or I am lost forever.

I am, I hope, your brother in Christ Jesus the Lord,

E. F. READHIMER.

COLUMBUS, Ga., Feb. 9, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—My subscription to the SIGNS is almost due, so I will renew at this time, for I do not want to miss a number. I feel encouraged to write a few lines for the SIGNS, if in your judgment you feel it is right for it to find some humble place in our dear old paper. I read with joy and comfort the writings of the scattered ones. Many messages of love are borne to me, cheering and comforting and encouraging me in the way. Most of the writers are strangers in the flesh, but I hope kindred in Christ. I feel unworthy to claim this kinship, but with Ruth would say: "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." My sins are numberless as the sands of the sea; sin is mixed with all I do. The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. Jesus Christ canceled all the debt of his people, for he shall save his people from their sins. Our Lord prepared all that was needed for our en-

joyment of spiritual things. He gives us a new heart and a new spirit. I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes; and ye shall keep my judgments and do them. Ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. Sometimes I am so cast down that I begin to look and wonder, and say, Where is my hope? I cannot place it on anything good I have done. Sometimes my path is so dark I fall by the way and mourn like the dove. Oh where is my love, that I might find him. Oh that I could at all times feel to be one of the Lord's redeemed, the present trials I could count as small; heaven would make amends for all; but I am such a poor weak worm of the dust. For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. This causes me much sorrow and weeping. I have long known that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing; I cannot do the things I would. Oh that all christians would pray for me that the grace of God would keep and guide me in the strait and narrow way. Oh that I could follow in his footsteps, be always meek and lowly and humble, look to him in all trials and troubles, knowing that he doeth all things well, that all things work together for good to them that love him. Though we walk in darkness, doubts and fears, his hand directs the rod and all is in mercy sent. Our Savior was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, persecuted, reviled and shamefully treated, yet he bore all for his bride's (the church) sake. The dreadful cup could not pass from Christ; neither can the cup of suffering and sowing in tears pass away from the children of God. The Lord does not needlessly afflict his children; no, never, but every drop in that cup, be it joy or grief, life or death, the loving Father's hand gives it. In wisdom, goodness and mercy he gives it, for his own glory and for the good of his child. Oh, we adore and bless, love and trust this Father and God. Jesus Christ's work is a perfect and finished work; he is our High Priest. Our salvation is full and complete, both in time and eternity. With God there are no mistakes, disappointments or failures, for all he appoints fulfills his purpose. As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; as I have purposed, so shall it stand. While he is the God of such power, he is also the God of the most tender mercies, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. The apostle tells us to rejoice in the Lord always, be careful for nothing. Another says, Cast your care on Jesus, for he careth for you; he will abundantly pardon. So we find it. We cling with love to the exceeding great and precious promises. Our hearts are melted with gracious gratitude that our Lord hath remembered us in our low estate. Let us retire beneath the cross. Savior, at thy dear feet I'll lie. Blessed Savior, let me learn more and more of thee. May we hunger and thirst after righteousness, for the precious promise is we shall be filled. May our Lord strengthen us according to his mighty power to walk worthy of him, increasing in knowledge of him unto all patience and longsuffering, forbearing one another in love. My peace I leave with you, that your joy may be full. In this peace we find joy, love, comfort and complete rest. May we be enabled to praise him for his goodness and to render unto him all praise, honor and glory.

I hope you will throw the mantle of charity over my imperfections and remember me at the throne of grace when it is well with you.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1921.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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SOLOMON'S SONG VI. 8.

"THERE are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number."

By request we shall endeavor to suggest a few thoughts upon the above text, and first of all shall call attention to the fact that this Scripture, like all other, does not stand alone, hence not independent, but has its immediate connection, as well as other bearings, throughout the Scriptures. The testimony of Jesus is an unbroken chain. By this we mean that the entire Old Testament in its testimony of his coming and the glory that should follow is as a chain, one link linking into another, and as each link of a chain fills its place, and is a part of the chain, so every part of Scripture has its bearing upon another, and is not complete without each and every part. The text above quoted would therefore be without meaning should it be considered alone.

This song called Solomon's is a dialogue, and its language highly figurative, declaring divine things. Because of this its spiritual import is hid from the wise and prudent; they therefore not seeing its beauty and perfection have said it never should have been compiled as a part of the Bible. But as in the days of Jesus, some men strain at gnats and swallow camels. Those to whom the Spirit and the bride have said, Come, are seeking to find the hiding-place, as it were, and the dwelling-place of this altogether lovely One. They long for his gracious presence, which dispels the gloom of the soul, and fills the being with wonder, praise and adoration. Such desire is expressed in the first verse of this sixth chapter of Solomon's Song. Those seeking, asked "the fairest among women" whither her beloved had turned aside, that they might seek him with her. Herein are most strikingly presented Christ and his bride, and in all that we shall write it is our desire to keep him and the church before the eyes of the living.

In answer to the question in the first verse, the bride said, "My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies." This garden of the Lord is inclosed, these sweet spices grow and send forth their fragrance, and the lilies flourish in beauty and purity to the praise of their Husbandman. He only of all men has access to this fragrant and beautiful garden. He accepts the sweet savor of his spices and rejoices in the perfection of his lilies. He feeds there, and there only; no perfumes nor lilies outside of his garden are acceptable to him. There he feeds among the lilies of his grace. The bride said, "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine." How gloriously true that the church is Christ's and Christ is hers. The union is vital—eternal. Amen. The Bridegroom describes his bride as being beautiful, and addresses her as his "love." She is as comely as Jerusalem and without spot or blemish before her husband. After these affectionate expressions of each other and preceding other wonderful declarations are the words of the text: "There are threescore queens, and fourscore con-

cubines, and virgins without number." The queens, concubines and virgins suggest the thought of numerous women of all classes, but not one of them had the slightest attraction for the Bridegroom. All these women, doubtless, represent all false churches throughout the whole world. The church of God is set forth in figure of a woman, not only in the Song of Solomon, but in many other places in the Scriptures, and other churches are represented by women. Mark the singular number with reference to the church of God, the bride, the Lamb's wife, and the plural as regards the churches of the world. They are without number, while the true church is but one. A speckled bird (just one) against which all other birds are arrayed, yet its salvation is sure, because the Lord is with it to keep it, and in that he is for it he is against all other birds or women (false churches). In verse nine the Bridegroom speaks in contrast and says, "My dove, my undefiled, is but one." Queens, concubines and virgins are without number, but his dove, his undefiled, is but one. Here is set forth the doctrine of unity—one woman, or church, many members, but one body, his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. There are many branches, so to speak, but after all there is but one church, and its Builder hath established it upon a rock, and said the powers of darkness, or hell, shall not prevail against it. It is undefiled through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ, complete in him. "She is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her." Her children rise up and call her blessed. She provides well for her house, and her virtue hath gotten her the name of names: "The Lord our righteousness." She shall be called by my name, saith the Lord.

Now, after writing the above to the praise and glory of God, it is good to remember that all who have faith in the blood of the Lamb of God compose this beautiful and undefiled woman, the church of the firstborn, and though "black" in their own sight, in the righteousness of their heavenly Husband all are as fair as the moon, as clear as the sun, more beautiful and more precious to him than all things else, either in earth or heaven.

"Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God!
He, whose word cannot be broken,
Formed thee for his own abode."

K.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mary Elizabeth Scott Johnson, daughter of Thomas M. and Mary Elizabeth Shaul Scott, was born in Baltimore County, Md., July 11th, 1847, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Black Rock Old School Baptist Church September 16th, 1888, by the late Elder F. A. Chick. She was married to Edward A. Johnson November 1st, 1888, and came to live in Baltimore city. She retained her membership in the Black Rock Church until the year 1898, when she was dismissed by letter and joined the Ebenezer Church of Baltimore city. In November of the same year the writer became the pastor of the Ebenezer Church, and from that time to the close of her natural life was intimately associated with her in the church and in the home, and I can truly say I have never known a more faithful and useful member of the church, always interested in the affairs of her church, her pastor and all of her brethren and sisters. Sister Johnson was a bright, cheerful woman, a great talker, and loved to talk of Jesus and his wonderful works to the children of men. She suffered for twenty years with stomach trouble, yet kept going, and was faithful in her attendance upon all the meetings of the church and in the homes of brethren and friends until November, 1920, when her health gave way to such an extent that she could go no longer, but her interest in the church and its members continued to the last. She was a great sufferer the last few months of her life, but was graciously favored with the presence of her dear Savior, often telling the writer of this notice that Jesus at times was very near and gave her a view of that little company over there. I feel that she was perfectly reconciled to leave this world, and often prayed the Lord to take her out of her suffering. She loved her husband, sister and church people, but said the Lord would take care of them. It was sad indeed to see such a faithful and useful sister going down, down, and not be able to do one thing to stop it; yet it was wonder-

fully comforting to hear her talk of the sweet love and sustaining grace of an all-powerful God. The last time I saw her alive, as I entered her room she said: "My dear pastor, you have been a great comfort to me as a preacher, and the Lord will be with you. You have been called upon to pass through sore trials, but the dear Lord has blessed you with three good wives; I have loved them all, but I shall not be here very much longer." On the morning of May 26th, at 12:50 o'clock, she gently passed from this state of sorrow and suffering to that of perpetual health and eternal joy, to be forever in the presence of that Jesus whom she so devotedly loved in life, and on Sunday, May 29th, her mortal body was taken to Black Rock church-house, where in the presence of many sorrowing friends the writer read and commented upon a large portion of 1st Corinthians xv., also 1st Timothy i. 15, after which she was laid to rest in the family plot to await the coming of Jesus, when he shall call the sleeping dust to arise and ever be with the Lord. She will be sadly missed by fond friends and brethren and sisters dear, who for many years enjoyed her in her home and theirs, and by the church of her membership, where all who attended its services were sure to meet her and see the joy of her soul, which she so plainly manifested in her every action. Dear ones, I sympathize with you all. Her sister, Miss Johanna Scott, who for years made her home with her, will sadly miss her, but none so much and so sadly as her dear and devoted husband. May God's richest blessings attend him. Allow me to say for myself that I never had a dearer sister or a better friend. May God bless all the bereaved, is the prayer of her loving pastor,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

RESOLUTIONS.

The Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church of Baltimore city desires to express its feelings of sadness in the loss of their dear sister, **Mary Elizabeth Scott Johnson.** Therefore be it resolved:

1. That we bow with becoming reverence to our God, who is full of mercy and cannot do wrong.

2. That in the death of sister Johnson we have lost one of the dearest of sisters and one of the most useful of members of the church, greatly beloved by all who knew her.

3. That a copy of these resolutions be sent with the obituary notice to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and Zion's Landmark for publication, also a copy to her bereaved husband, our dear brother Deacon E. A. Johnson.

J. T. ROWE
H. C. CAINES
D. L. TOPPING
MAGGIE J. BYRD
ELLA R. CHILCOAT
ELIZABETH W. ROWE
MAMIE W. ROWE
} Committee.

Marshal B. Weedon was born April 21st, 1837, in Fauquier County, Va., and departed this life May 27th, 1921, at his home in Ft. Scott, Kansas. He was a graduate of the Baltimore Dental College, and practiced dentistry in Virginia before coming to Ft. Scott in 1871. He was united in marriage to Miss Mary Nelson, of Grinstead, Prince William Co., Va., February 17th, 1864, by Elder John Clark. Four children survive: William H., of Los Angeles, Cal., Misses Mary, Agnes and Annie at home. They have been devoted daughters. I will quote from the letter written me by his daughter Agnes:

"You probably knew of his failing health, not so noticeable until since Christmas. We had been fearful for some time that the end was not far distant. He failed rapidly the last two weeks. He had no disease, no sickness whatever, just a gradual wearing out, only confined to his bed one week. He was conscious to the last; he seemed to fall into a stupor on Friday morning, and at noon fell quietly and sweetly asleep, just as he wished to go. His life was remarkable, so true and firm in his belief and principles, with strength of character rarely surpassed, and in spite of hardships, trials and sorrows possessed the ability to see the bright side. He was by nature lively and happy, and got much from life which others miss. Words fail to express how much we miss him. Since our mother's death (eighteen years ago) he had been both father and mother to us, always so good and thoughtful, helping and advising us to the very last. Your last letter to him came the second day he was in bed; we read it to him and he seemed to enjoy it as he always did. I know of no one he held in higher esteem than you and Elder Pittman. I recall how he grieved over his fatal accident and truly missed him as a brother."

Brother Weedon and my late husband, Elder Thos. R. Pittman, were true and devoted friends. The subject of religion was near and dear to their hearts, both being thorough Bible students. In the last letter I received from him he said, "I do miss dear Elder Pittman so much." Brother Weedon cheerfully lived his unobtrusive life as it was meted out to him. I cannot command language to tell of his worth and excellence in every relation of life, yet having a very low estimate of himself. Early in life he was blessed with a sweet hope in Jesus and united with the Quantico Primitive Baptist Church of Prince William County, Va., being baptized by Elder Joseph L. Purington. He was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for more than fifty years, and read and loved it to the last, and in former years contributed occasionally to its columns. He was the last of a family of nine children. When his state joined the Confederacy he volunteered with the rest and served throughout the Civil War as a member of Company A, Fourth Virginia Cavalry. His Revolutionary ancestor was Sergeant Augustine Weedon, of West-

moreland County, Va. Brother Weedon was a highly esteemed citizen of Ft. Scott for fifty years. He was in the grocery firm there with his brother-in-law, the late Captain C. A. Nelson, for more than a score of years. He was 84 years old.

The funeral was held on Sunday afternoon at the family home. As there was no minister of his faith near, Mr. Allen, of the "Christian Church," a friend of brother Weedon's for many years, was called, who took for a text Revelation xxi. 1-4.

May God comfort the mourning ones and enable them to say, Thy will be done. It can truly be said he is at rest.

MARY E. PITTMAN.

Mrs. Jane Elizabeth Corby was born February 17th, 1842, at Carbondale, Pa., and died May 29th, 1921, while visiting at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Cora Markey, in New York city. She was the daughter of Margery Elizabeth and Daniel Slawson Vail. Her marriage to Ezekiel Corby was fruitful of nine children, four of whom survive: Harlow Corby, Mrs. Cora Markey, Fred and Andrew Corby. One brother and two sisters also survive her: Elder D. M. Vail, Mrs. Watie A. Beard and Mrs. Emma Butler. Elder St. John baptized her in the fellowship of the church at Waverly, N. Y. Some years later her membership was transferred to the church at Justus, Pa., of which her brother, Elder D. M. Vail, is the pastor.

The funeral service was held at the home of Mrs. Markey, in New York city, Elder George Ruston and the writer speaking of how the Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those who hope in his mercy. Interment was in Waverly, N. Y., the late home of the deceased.

Sister Corby will be remembered as one who was awake to righteousness, a lover of peace and a doer of the word, and her life was a communication of good, not only to those of like precious faith, but also to them which are without. In the way of life the Lord showed her many hard things, but he made her able to bear them, and by grace caused her to "lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty: good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior." Spiritually minded, her affection was set on things above; thinking upon and speaking of the things that pertain unto life and godliness was the matter in her heart and the manner of her tongue. Of a meek and quiet spirit, her life and conversation were as it becometh the gospel of Christ, and in this blessing of the Lord she blessed her brethren. Great physical suffering attended her last days, yet withal she was patient and uncomplaining A few days before she died it pleased the Lord to reveal himself so glorious in his love and holiness, so altogether lovely and precious, that all her afflictions were lost sight of in joyful expectation of soon being with him in that fullness of life "which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."

May the God of patience and consolation be with all them that mourn this bereavement, and reconcile us unto his will in all things by Jesus Christ.

JOHN McCONNELL.

MEETINGS.

THE New Hope Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will hold their next session with Little Flock Church, three miles southeast of Edgewood, Texas, on the T. & P. R. R., beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1921. All trains will be met on Thursday at Edgewood. We invite all Baptists of our faith and order to be with us, especially ministers.

S. M. DICKENS.

THE Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene in her sixty-seventh annual session with Spring Creek Church, near Stahl, Adair Co., Mo., commencing on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1921, and continuing the two following days. All lovers of salvation by grace alone are invited, especially ministers of our faith and order. Those coming by rail will be met at Stahl, Adair Co., Mo.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator.
J. M. CATE, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptists will hold a two days meeting at Cammal on Saturday and Sunday, August 27th and 28th, 1921. We expect Elder J. M. Fenton to be with us. House is near the station, on the New York Central Railroad. Ministers, brethren and sisters are invited to come and worship God with us. Elder D. M. Vail is our pastor.

SILAS HOSTRANDER.

THE Clovesville Old School Baptist Church will hold a two days meeting, the Lord willing, the last Saturday and Sunday in August (27th and 28th), 1921. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus to meet with us, especially ministering brethren of our faith and order.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE church at Otego, N. Y., intends, the Lord willing, holding a meeting Saturday p. m. and all Sunday, September 3rd and 4th, 1921. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. Our pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, and Elder J. M. Fenton are expected to be with us.

R. T. LEONARD, Church Clerk.

THE Des Moines River Association of Predestinarian Baptists will hold her seventy-eighth session with Harmony Church, near Winfield, Iowa, September 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1921. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend.

J. L. THURSTON, Clerk.

THE Abbington Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting to be held on Wednesday and Thursday, September 7th

and 8th, 1921. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend. We expect our pastor, Elder Vail, Elder Fenton, of Philadelphia, and Elder Alexander, of Wilmington, Del. Those coming on D., L. & W. R. R., will stop at Clarks Summit and go to Elder Vail's. Those coming on D. & H. or O. &. W. R. R. are requested to write to C. E. Miller, Clarks Summit, Pa., R. D. 1, so that arrangements may be made to meet them at Olyphant Tuesday afternoon.

G. W. GOODRICH, Clerk.

THE Pocatalico Association will convene September 9th, 10th and 11th, 1921. Those coming on the B. & O. or C. & O. come to Charleston and transfer to the Interurban (or street car) for St. Albans, where they will find conveyance. Those from the east, by way of C. & O., come direct to St. Albans, where they will find conveyance. It will be more convenient for brethren from the west to come by way of C. & O. to Hurricane and take conveyance from there. All trains and street cars will be met at the above places on Thursday, the 8th. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Moderator.
J. R. BECKETT, Clerk.

THE Maine Association of Old School Baptists will meet, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, on Friday before the second Monday in September (9th, 10th and 11th,) 1921. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.

THE Trinity River Old School Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, to hold its sixty-third session with Hopewell Church, four miles east of Rice, in Ellis County, Texas, beginning Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1921, and continuing three days. All lovers of the truth and of the old order are cordially invited to attend. All brethren and visitors coming south will come on the H. & T. C. R. R. or the Interurban to Rice. All coming north will get off at Rice. Conveyance will be at the station on Thursday.

ASA HOWARD.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Jefferson, N. Y., expects to hold their two days meeting on the third Sunday and Saturday before in September (17th and 18th), 1921. We expect our pastor, Elder J. M. Fenton, and Elder D. M. Vail to be with us at that time.

GEORGE E. MEAD, Church Clerk.

THE First Primitive Baptist Church of Mineral Wells, Texas, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on S. W. 4th Ave. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

SALLIE E. HOWARD, Church Clerk.

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 89. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1921. NO. 17.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"HE WALKED ON THE WATER, TO GO TO JESUS."

LOOK at the scene in Matt. xiv. 24–33. In our troubles we are sometimes like these disciples. Our ship is now in the midst of the sea, tossed with the waves, for the wind is contrary. We find it more than we are able to do, calm the storm or to be calm ourselves. Jesus is absent, and we fear that our trials will overwhelm us and that we must utterly sink in our adversities. While we were sailing upon a smooth sea we could sing with pleasure to ourselves:

"Begone, unbelief, my Savior is near,
And for my relief will surely appear;
By prayer let me wrestle, and he will perform;
With Christ in the vessel I smile at the storm."

But now that we are in a sea of troubles and no small tempest is upon us, what are we saying? Are we saying, "I smile at the storm"? I know it is not impossible to do so when Christ is felt to be with us in our tribulations. Then we can say, "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me,"—Psalms cxxxviii. 7, and even with the prophet sing: "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places."—Hab. iii. 17–19. In such divine confidence we are saying, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof."—Psalms xlvi. 1–3. But in the sea of afflictions, if alone, if our God is not feelingly present, then we are tossed with tempest and not comforted, for none can give us comfort, succor and endurance in "a great fight of afflictions" but Jesus Christ, the Captain of our salvation. Sometimes amidst the buffetings of our trials we find ourselves reeling to and fro, and we stagger beneath the blows of the waves of our troubles like a drunken man, and are at our wits' end. (Psalms cvii. 27.) We

come to the end of our resources, neither know we what to do. (2 Chron. xx. 12.) "I am shut up, and I cannot come forth." —Psalms lxxxviii. 8. Some of the children of God know but little of such adversities of soul; as yet they have not come into deep waters, and know but little of the furnace of affliction. (Isaiah xlviii. 10.) In Matthew xiv. 25, we read: "And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea." They were tossed with the waves, it was night, but Christ came to them. He comes walking upon the troubled sea, he treads it under his feet, he has dominion over it. O troubled child of God, he will come to you. Christ came to them saying, "Be of good cheer; it is I, be not afraid." The tempest still rages, the waves run high and they are tossed upon the troubled sea. Peter answered Jesus and said, "Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water." The voice of Christ had inspired his heart, and if this is Christ, the Son of the living God, walking upon the waves, then if he will bid me come to him I, too, can walk on this tempestuous sea; I can tread these afflicting waves beneath my feet; yes, with Jesus near I can walk even this dark night upon the deep. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego walked in the fiery furnace with the Son of God. (Daniel iii. 25.) Daniel spent a sacred night in the lions' den. They did not devour him, neither did they affright him with their roaring. He saith, "My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me."—Daniel vi. 22. Jesus said unto Peter, "Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus." Oh, it is comforting in our darkness to see Jesus, even though it be but dimly, and then to hear his voice. Surely it is the voice of our Friend, the voice of our Beloved; I shall not sink, I shall not perish, Jesus is coming; and as veiled in the obscurity of our night he approaches, we long for yet more assurance that it is our Savior. Is it thyself, dear Savior, that cometh to me? If it be so, bid me come unto thee, and I will tread everything beneath my feet with thee. Jesus said, "Come." That one word is sufficient. It is his voice. Peter knew the voice. The sheep know the voice of the Shepherd. Christ's voice strengthens us, puts away all our misgivings, all our unbelieving fears; it allures us, we are drawn forth to him with steps of faith that work by love; we come out of the tempest-tossed vessel and walk upon the water, to go to Jesus. How many steps did Peter take? While his thoughts were taken up with Christ he walked in the darkness upon the waves of the sea. "But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me." Ah, the boisterous, the angry billows have distracted Peter; he is not thinking of Jesus now, and he begins to sink. Then he remembers Jesus again, and cries unto him, Lord, save me. What changes! Faith and unbelief. Walking upon the waves, then he walked no longer, not another step toward Christ, but he is sinking down into the tempestuous sea. But poor, sinking, perishing Peter cries, "Save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Christ is near the sinking one, his arm is not shortened that it cannot save. His saving, almighty arm reaches unto the uttermost, to them that are afar off upon the sea. "He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters."—Psalms

xviii. 16. It looked as though Peter's faith was great when he stepped down out of the ship and walked in the darkness upon the sea. But the wind blew in his face; yes, he had to face that boisterous, windy storm as he walked; he was buffeted by the wind, he was afraid. Ah, those fears. "Wherefore didst thou doubt?" Those doubts have made his legs feeble, and he cannot walk another step upon such a sea. Jesus caught him, saying, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Jesus knows his name, Jesus saves Little Faith; and Jesus holding his hand, Little Faith walks with his Savior upon the waves into the ship. "And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God." I am sure that Little Faith was far from all fleshly boasting about his walking upon the water, but all his boasting concerning this exploit was in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The humble hear this and are glad. O, child of God, are you in straits, in afflictions, in temptations? The Lord knows the way that you take, and when he hath tried you you shall come forth as gold; and though you feel alone, and that yours is an isolated case, and in your sighing you are saying, No man cares for my soul, nevertheless he, thy covenant God, careth for thee, (1 Peter v. 7,) and he will know thy soul in adversity. (Psalms xxxi. 7.) God will befriend thee, sustain and succor thee, and carry thee through to the praise of his own sacred name. He will show himself thine everlasting Friend. This is his word: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."—Isa. xliii. 2. And he hath said, "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."—Psalms l. 15.

Thus in all our straits and trials and conflicts we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, N. C.

HAMMOND, W. Va., August 1, 1921.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I will attempt to write to you again, and I hope it may be written in the spirit of love.

"A certain man found him, and, behold, he was wandering in the field: and the man asked him, saying, What seekest thou?" Now this was Joseph who was wandering in the field. He was seeking his brethren, and could not find them, because they were not there, although they had been there. This Scripture was not written in vain, but it has its meaning, and is profitable for doctrine, for instruction, for reproof, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Let us see if we can find out anything from this Scripture that will benefit us. In the first place, Joseph was loved by his father, and he had two dreams, which did not come by chance, but by the eternal God, who rules and reigns and works all things after the counsel of his own will, both in heaven and on earth, and it was decreed from the beginning that Joseph was to go down into Egypt, for God sent him there to carry out his purpose, which he had decreed should come to pass, and he gave Joseph those dreams. When he told the dreams his brethren hated him, they hated him for the truth's sake. They were to bow and make obeisance to him. They

must sell him, and this was the time for it to be done, because there is a time and purpose for everything under the sun; a time to love and a time to hate. So his father sent him and he was seeking his brethren and wandering in the field, was lost, did not know where to find them, and while he was seeking them Joseph was found by a certain man. Oh, that "certain man" did not fail to find Joseph. There is a certain man who is verily God, but once was a man when he was here on earth, sent here to seek and save that which was lost. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief while here in the field, under the law, but now he is risen from the dead, fulfilled the law's demands, left the field and is gone to heaven. Then why seek him among the dead? As Joseph's brethren were not where Joseph was seeking, it was necessary for that "certain man" to be there to tell Joseph where to find them. So it was necessary for Christ to come into this world, made under the law, to suffer its penalty for his children, and when his Father called and sent out his sons and daughters to seek him that Christ should find them here in the field, under the curse of the law, and to ask them, saying, "What seekest thou?" They are lost, and the law condemns them, saying, The soul that sinneth it shall die. They are condemned by the law, for they have broken the law, and the penalty is death. Through that covenant of works they cannot find Christ by their good works, for by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight. Christ was there once himself while in the flesh as a certain man, therefore he knows where to find his Father's children and tell them how to find him, and puts his law in their hearts, writes it in their minds and directs them in the new covenant to the mercy-seat; there is Christ and there is mercy—none here in the field. While lost and wandering, the law shows no mercy; the law covenant demands perfect obedience. Here we are taught that we are sinners by nature. Paul said, Romans vii. 7: "I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." So, poor sinner, you will not find Christ, mercy nor grace in the law field; it is in the gospel field where Christ, mercy, grace and love are to be found. I will shew unto you my covenant, because you are seeking, and you must seek and find me, when ye seek me with your whole heart; but we must come to the end of the law. While Joseph was sent by his father to seek his brethren, you, poor sinner, are drawn by your heavenly Father to seek rest in Jesus. As Joseph when seeking his brethren was found by a "certain man," so you, poor sinner, are found by a certain one. God's ways are past finding out, and so it was in the case with Joseph; he could not find where his brethren were, he must be told. God had purposed that certain man to be there at the right time and at the proper place to find Joseph and instruct him on his way. So, poor sinner, when your heavenly Father draws you he will have everything at the right time and at the right place to direct you on your journey. As Joseph was sent down into Egypt, so, dear children, you must go where God sends you. Dear children, in this world you must suffer. See God's way which he decreed: I will shew him what great things he must suffer for my name's sake. Weeping endureth for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. Christ, the new covenant, where the law ends, and Christ, the morning light, is come; it brings joy in the morning, the

morning of the new covenant, when it begins to be opened up to you and the Lord is showing you his covenant. The light is springing forth, and joy cometh with it in the morning, after the night is past and gone with all of its weeping. Joseph found his brethren; so, poor sinner, Christ finds you, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. Oh how sweet and beautiful and glorious it all is.

Yours in hope,

JAMES W. LINN.

THE SABBATH—REST.

THE above words are synonymous, and to a child of grace they are inseparable. When viewed by faith there is but one definition for either or both, and but the one word expresses it—Christ. He is both the Sabbath and the Rest. "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."—Genesis ii. 1–3. For a time under the old covenant this day was set aside literally as a holy day to be observed and kept by the Israelites according to the law given from Mt. Sinai, and was so observed for a time; but the flesh could no more keep that law than they can at the present time. The masses in the world to-day endeavor to keep it as a matter of form, but it is fast becoming a day of pleasure, and what apology they have for saying it is a day of rest or religious worship, is beyond comprehension, for it is said the churches are practically empty and the people are enjoying the pleasures of sin to the fullest extent. Seven is a perfect number in holy writ, and anything perfect in this book is divine; it cometh down from above, from the Father of lights. He blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because that in it he had rested. This seventh day must surely be typical of the gospel day, the shadow of it, and the substance of it is Christ. God blessed and sanctified his Son in all that he performed on earth, and his last words were, "It is finished." He is therefore the Sabbath-Rest; the words are blended in him. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. What comfort to a child of grace it is to view by faith these words: He hath ceased from his own works. When we view this by faith we can say with the poet:

"To all God's people now remains
A Sabbatism, a rest from pains,
And works of slavish kind.
When tired with toil, and faint through fear,
The child of God can enter here,
And sweet refreshment find."

It is a peace that passeth knowledge when we are brought to that Sabbath-Rest, the Ark of grace. In the ark the weary dove found a welcome resting-place; thus my spirit longs to prove rest in Christ, the ark of grace. No person, not even a child of grace, can of their own will exercise faith to so rest. That condition of mind must come down from above; we must be lifted up from the earth to live in this Sabbath-Rest. Only at times are we given such a view by faith, by the faith of his Son, and as the poet pens:

"This, and this only, is the way
To rightly keep the Sabbath Day,
Which God has holy made.
All keepers that come short of this,
The substance of the Sabbath miss,
And grasp an empty shade."

Let us labor therefore to keep this new

covenant, this covenant of peace, if we shall enter into the fullness of it when we hope to see him as he is. This rest is our only hope, for if in this life only we have hope in him we are of all men most miserable. We require patience and endurance to perform or execute his works in us. They generally come through fiery trials, and we cannot even exercise our own patience, it must come from him. Yet he will make us obedient, by his grace he will strengthen us for the trial, and we will drink of the cup to the last dregs, bitter as it may be. We shall be made submissive to his will in all things, for if he has prepared the works, or rather ordained them, his grace will be sufficient to endure. We may be rebellious, but we cannot be disobedient, for he will not withdraw a pain or permit us to swerve from this line or path which he has marked out for us to follow. Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it. For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Seeing, then, that we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews iv.) I have been in deep waters for a long time, yet I praise him for sending me into the belly of hell, for it is through tribulation he will exalt us in due time. Tribulation is a blessing in disguise. How sweet the name of Jesus sounds!

I had these meditations on this Sabbath day, and may the household of faith be blessed with such food from the Master's table. J. B. MILLER.

NEWARK, Delaware.

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

WHY do you say the Old School Baptist is the church that Christ set up on earth? They are the only people that contend that all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, &c. They tell you that God chose his people in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. They tell you that the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal: The Lord knoweth them that are his. And after ye heard the gospel of your salvation ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, until the redemption of the purchased possession. God loved his people when they were dead in sin, therefore raised them up together with Christ. God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved), and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. They teach, as do the Scriptures, that we are his (God's) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them; as God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated

us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. This is to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. So if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? They also teach, as do the Scriptures, that Jesus and the branches are one. He is the true Vine. He said, My Father is the husbandman and ye are the branches. For both he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one, for which cause he (Jesus) is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. Again, I will put my trust in him. Again, Behold, I and the children which God hath given me (Jesus). Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. The God the Old School Baptists worship is not slack concerning his promise; he will fulfill all his promises if it takes the third part of heaven. Hence, know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. (Not raised from baptism, but death.) For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin; for he that is dead is freed from sin. Now, if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him; for through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. God dwells in them and reveals unto them the things needful for them to know, though they be deep things, as the king's dream. Paul said, The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. Daniel said, God revealeth the deep and secret things; he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.

When but sixteen years of age the unworthy writer witnessed the truth of the above, being in great trouble at the death of my brother, and in prayer God by his Spirit revealed unto me both the church and that my brother was at rest in heaven; and now, having passed my eighty-first mile-post, and never once been made to doubt the revelation, I conclude it was the work of God. These are but a few of the many reasons that might be given to prove the Primitive Baptists the church of God our Savior.

Very dear brethren editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, our most highly appreci-

ated paper, laden with good news from a far country, the above is submitted to you and your judgment. Do with it as seems good to you and all will be well. May God bless you both with a long and useful life.

Your brother, I hope, in Christ,
C. T. RICHARDSON.

MONROE, Ga., August 8, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel to contribute a mite by way of writing a few things on predestination. I never use the words "absolute predestination," as they seem to be offensive to some of our brethren and simply mean "positive" predestination. God is absolute, complete in himself, and the expression "absolute predestination" merely confirms the truth. God's laws are absolute and positive; he purposed that Adam should sin or he purposed that he should not sin, there can be no middle ground in the matter. To predestinate means to determine beforehand what shall be done, and God did predestinate that this world should be peopled through the transgression of his absolute law to Adam, so that our mother Eve should have the bringing forth of children in sorrow and travail. He surely did predestinate it, and said, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. As I have thought, so shall it come to pass. All of God's laws are positive or absolute, for the law of the Lord is perfect. If he did not purpose or decree all that took place in the garden of Eden, we would like to know which of the events that took place there he did or did not predestinate. There are those who continually try to convert us to the notion that God has two laws: a moral law which we may or may not obey, and an absolute law which it is impossible for us to break; and further, that God has two wills, a positive will and a permissive will, thus making it appear that we say God makes us sin, when we do not consent to any such distinction between two such speculative wills, but we insist that his will is one and his law in complete accord with his one will. As in the case of Joseph and his brethren, we feel to know the cause of their selling Joseph into captivity was the envy, jealousy and hatred in the brethren's hearts, but it was all predestinated and it was surely the purpose of God that Joseph should be taken into Egypt in just the manner he was. Some say that God by his "permissive" will decides to suffer sins committed, then afterward overrules them for good and to his glory. It is disagreeable, hateful and offensive to his "positive" will, but by his "permissive" will it seems to be all right. How these two wills work in harmony we cannot see. Suppose we say that we, as men, have two wills, and that by our "positive" will we absolutely give all of our children all of our goods, dividing them equally, and then by our "permissive" will we allow or permit one of our enemies to take or destroy all the goods of the oldest son, where is there any harmony between these two wills? Does not the permission in the second case altogether annul what was absolutely willed in the first case? Does this not make God contradict himself and bring all his purpose to naught? The end of such logic is to make all things uncertain, and utterly removes all certain ground of the sinner's salvation. We can but wonder which of God's wills (?) will prevail at the end. By one of these wills we are passive in regeneration and active in obedience or disobedience, just as we may choose to be; by the other will he overrules what he decides to allow. We wonder when

he made this permissive will and decided to let sin pass. We cannot harmonize these things nor unify them at all. I want it understood that I believe God is a sovereign, and works all things, not merely a part of them, after the counsel of his own will (not "wills"), and that all things work together for good to them that love God and who are the called according to his purpose. We are not our own, but are bought with a price, and that price is the precious blood of Jesus, which cleanseth us from all sin. If we sin, we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous, and all things were fixed and known in his eternal purpose from eternity. Nothing in time or eternity can take place except it be in accord with his counsel or will, decree or predestination, because he has all power in heaven and in earth, and none can stay his hand. He is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. We love to think that our destiny is in his almighty hand, and he will dispose of all men and devils according to his eternal will, and all men and devils combined cannot frustrate one item in that will, and the executor of the will, the Holy Ghost, will have no difficulty in setting it up in a solemn form in time or in eternity. I feel to say that if it had not been God's will for the devil and all wickedness to be in this world such would not be here at all, not even the devil. Long before time there was grace treasured up in Christ Jesus, and it was according to the good pleasure of his will, for it is a faithful saying that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Would it do to say that about two thousand years after his "permissive" will suffered sin to come into the world he decided to send his only begotten Son to save sinners? No, it is not the teaching of Christ. We surely need charity for each other when we meet to worship the true and living God, the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob. We know what it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, for we beheld it at your Warwick Association last spring.

May the Lord so direct us in all our ways that it may be said of us that we have fought a good fight and have kept the faith.

JAMES M. ADAMS.

MONROE, Ga., July 20, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—This is to send in some subscriptions to the SIGNS, which I am glad to do, and also thank you and all the brethren and sisters of your association, the Warwick, and Delaware River also, who extended so much kindness to my wife and me while we were among you. It was the most pleasant time of our lives to be permitted to partake of the sweet fellowship in the doctrine of free grace, unadulterated gospel of our fathers of long ago, and to think of you coming to Monroe next April to our union meeting gives us great pleasure. May it be the Lord's will. Much love to you and yours.

Your brother,

JAMES M. ADAMS.

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1921.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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2 THESSALONIANS II. 1–12.

HAVING been requested to write upon this Scripture, we feel to do so, hoping that what we write may be in line with truth and with the experience of the saints. In the beginning of this chapter we note there were those who were troubling the church with reference to the day of the Lord being at hand. These disturbers were circulating letters proporting to have been signed by the apostles themselves, and were declaring messages said to have been sent the churches by the apostles, to the effect that the coming of the Lord was immediately upon them. These rumors were false and these letters were forgeries. Paul tells the church "that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means." Then Paul goes on to enumerate certain things which must come to pass before the day of the Lord can come. The first is that there must come a falling away that the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition. This man of sin, or son of perdition, is not any one certain individual, but is the man of sin which dwells in every one of us. He is our old man, our depraved and fallen human nature. Sinners are redeemed from sin, but their sins are not redeemed. Men through regeneration are made partakers of the divine nature, but their human nature is not changed, nor shall it ever be changed or regenerated. This is the man of sin who must be fully disclosed before the day of the Lord shall come. This man opposes God and seeks to exalt himself in the place of worship to be known and worshipped as God. This we know is true of human nature, and of the natural, unregenerated man. God is not in his thoughts, but he thinks he is God himself and can do wonders. On the part of the professing church of Jesus Christ there is to be a falling away before the coming of the day of the Lord. Some of us think we can already see this falling away among God's people to-day. Neither preachers nor flocks have the righteous zeal for the truth and for the peace and prosperity of Zion as formerly. The zeal we have seems to be more of an effort to carry our own points and to gain our own ends instead of the unselfish zeal to preach the truth and to serve the church to the sacrifice of our own comfort and satisfaction. The love of many of God's people for one another and for the gospel seems to be waxing cold. This may be, perhaps, the falling away of which Paul writes, and which must be developed before the coming of the day of the Lord. If so, it has not reached its worst, for Paul further states that the mystery of iniquity is already at work, and will keep on working until he that letteth be taken out of the way, after which the wicked shall be fully revealed, such revelation to be followed up with the destruction of wickedness. The word "letteth" in this connection is used in the ancient sense of "hindereth" or "restraineth." Paul means that while the mystery of iniquity is already at work it is working under restraint; there is something holding it back, but there shall come a time when

this power that is restraining the man of sin shall be taken away. Then wickedness shall run rampant. Then shall be Satan's day, when the man of sin will show himself in his true colors and in all his diabolical terribleness. Wickedness thus unrestrained will rapidly ripen into its ultimate destruction, when "the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." Paul speaks in the seventh verse of this power restraining wickedness as "he." This "he" is to be taken out of the way in order that wickedness may go its limit. This "he" must be the Holy Spirit, for we know of no other power to restrain wickedness except the Holy Spirit. Then it must mean that before the day comes God will remove the Holy Spirit from the church, thus taking away him that letteth. We hate to meditate upon the consequence of this, and our comfort lies in passing over this dreadful time and in thinking of the ultimate appearance of the Lord to destroy all wickedness, his coming that is soon to follow the full revelation of the man of sin. Therefore, the order in which these matters seem to follow one another is as follows: (1) The working of the mystery of iniquity under God's restraint. This working, Paul says, was going on in the apostles' time, and would continue, but increase more and more. (2) The falling away of believers from the church, the love of many growing cold, seducers waxing worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. This we are already witnessing in our day, but it will sooner or later come to (3) God removing his restraint from the man of sin, which shall speedily give rise to (4) the full and awful revelation of wickedness, to be followed by (5) the day of the Lord, when Christ shall appear in his glory for the final and everlasting destruction of the man of sin, and for the triumph of truth and righteousness. This seems to have been in other ages the order in which sin has been revealed and truth made known. In the days before the flood it was not until wickedness was great upon the earth and that the imaginations of man's heart were evil, and only evil continually, that God brought to pass the destruction of that evil generation, and the deliverance of his people therefrom. Thus it will be seen that the ages before the flood had to develop, and did develop, a certain degree of wickedness before God made an end of it. The same is true of the legal age preceding this gospel age. From Malachi to John the Baptist the spirit of prophecy was mute. During this space of perhaps three hundred years the Holy Ghost evidently was withdrawn. Then there followed a general falling away of the Jews from the law of their fathers, the old covenant. They taught for doctrines the commandments of men, worshipped false gods in the way of the Gentiles. When Jesus appeared among the Jews to perform his sacrificial atonement for his people Jewish corruption and apostasy were unrestrained. This was followed a few years after the resurrection of Christ by the destruction of Jewish nationality and their scattering throughout the world. We have seen, therefore, the world before the flood end in unrestrained wickedness, and we have seen the Jewish world, or legal dispensation, end the same way. What has already been will be again, for God requires the thing that is past, and there is nothing new under the sun. Therefore we conclude, from the Scriptures and from the order in which these things have occurred heretofore, that this present age in which we now live, this gospel dispensation, will end finally in unrestrained wickedness, in the falling away of professed believers from the

truth. Spirituality will not be in exercise. This is awful to contemplate, and we personally hope we may be dead and in our grave before then, but how glorious will be the appearing of the Lord to make an end of all wickedness when he shall come in the brightness of his eternal beauty and power. The history or travel of the church repeats itself in each individual christian experience. The operation of the Spirit of God follows the same order in each experience as is outlined above. No sinner ever yet came to the knowledge of the power and glory of Jesus in salvation until he saw himself utterly lost. The sinner has to be shown that he is altogether and wholly a sinner before he can receive a hope in the glory of God and salvation from sin by Jesus Christ. We first have to see the man of sin fully disclosed in our personal lives and experiences before Jesus appears revealing our salvation through his own power and glory. This is the divine order in the history of the church, it is the divine order in each individual christian experience. We need not expect God to forsake that order now. He doubtless will continue to deal with us after the same order as already established in the counsel of his Godhead and as outlined by Paul in this second chapter of second Thessalonians. We may expect coldness and indifference to continue and grow worse, and for lawlessness, violence and crime to become more and more unrestrained. We may expect to see the man of sin continue to blossom and to ripen in his wickedness unto the coming of the Lord, which shall be his end and destruction. Thus shall our present gospel dispensation come to its end, to be followed by the undimmed radiance of the glory of God and the eternal age of truth and peace and righteousness. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, composed of her several branches, namely, Dunwich, Albro, Duart, Ekfrid, Lobo and London, now in session at our regular quarterly meeting at Ekfrid, June 25th, 26th and 27th, 1921, to the churches composing the associations with which we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Through the medium of correspondence, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, we address this our epistle of love, thereby recognizing you as participants in the faith of God's elect. We also recognize you as participants in all the trials common to the children of God while traveling through this world of sin. We as a church have been blessed of the Lord by having some of your ministers visit us from time to time, who have come among us laden with the good things of the kingdom of God. We as a church are still laboring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and are observing the same order and adhering to the same gospel principles upon which the church was constituted over a century ago. During the year past we have been blessed of the Lord by one being added to our number, and also have been made to mourn the loss of some faithful members, whom the Lord called from the shores of time to that rest that remains to the children of God. During the past year we have been visited by ministering brethren from the associations with which we correspond, namely, Elders Eubanks, Weaver, Coulter, Ruston, Johnson, Sawin, Vaughn and Rowe. All have come preaching Christ, and him crucified, the salvation of sinners. These seasons were refreshing and comforting to those who were given an ear to hear the gospel of the Son of God.

We desire to continue in your love and fellowship, and to be favored with your correspondence as in previous years. We as a church meet four times a year, for the transaction of church business and for the observance of the Lord's Supper, in May, June, October and November. We hope to be favored with visiting brethren coming among us preaching the gospel of peace, knowing nothing among us save Christ, and him crucified.

J. B. SLAUSON, Moderator.
JOHN T. KERR, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at his home, Leesburg, Va., August 15th, 1921, Oscar O. Ankers and Miss Mary E. Caylor, both of Sterling, Loudoun Co., Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Phœbe Ann McNally, aged 88, widow of James J. McNally, a former well known newspaper publisher, and daughter of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, founder and publisher of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, died at 6:20 Thursday night of a fractured skull, after having been struck fifteen minutes before by the automobile of Harry H. Bonaparte, of 2 Hillside Avenue, on South Street, near Franklin Square.

We desire to add a few lines to the above clipping. Sister McNally was well known throughout the states, having traveled more or less in company with her father, Elder Gilbert Beebe, during his long ministry, and besides met many at our different associations. All loved her and will be grieved to learn of her sad death. For more than fifty years she had been a faithful member of the Middletown and Wallkill Church, of Middletown, N. Y. She was baptized by her father in the fellowship of said church, and during all her long membership her walk was circumspect and her "conversation in heaven." She loved the doctrine of grace in every point, and rejoiced in the hope of the glory of God. The songs of Zion were precious to her. Often she attended meetings when really too feeble to be out of her room, but her will power was beyond her strength. She is survived by one brother, Hon. George M. Beebe, of Ellenville, N. Y., and one sister, Mrs. Virginia Bailey, of White Plains, N. Y., together with other near relatives.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer and the interment took place in the family plot at New Vernon, N. Y., by the side of her father.

The Lord reconcile us all to his will in all things.

K.

Joseph H. Jennings was born in Mississippi September 8th, 1846, died at his home, Lubbock, Texas, October 31st, 1920, making his stay on earth 74 years, 1 month and 23 days. He moved from Mississippi to Martindale, Texas, in 1852, where he lived the balance of his life until four years ago, when he sold his property at Martindale and bought at Lubbock, Texas, where he was making his home when death came. One more of our faithful ones has fallen asleep. He joined Bethlehem Church at Martindale, Texas, where his membership remained until death. He was a faithful clerk and filled the office well. He leaves his wife and nine children to mourn their loss, also nine brothers and sisters, three of the family of twelve having died. The writer joined Bethlehem Church fourteen years ago, at the age of nineteen, and was appointed clerk in brother Jennings' stead, at his request. Oh how little and insignificant I felt then beside my faithful brother. The dear brother is done with earthly trials and is with his blessed Redeemer. Oh what a blessed thought! We who are left are strangers here in the land, this is not our home, but we seek a city not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Brother Jennings' father, W. H. Jennings, was born in Virginia in 1809, and was a faithful Old School Baptist until his death. Five of his children have thus far joined the Old Baptists. The Jennings home was well known as an Old Baptist home.

May the good Lord comfort and bless all who mourn their loss, is the prayer of the unworthy writer.

ALSO,

Roscoe Carl Ault was born January 21st, 1919, died June 24th, 1921, making his stay on earth 2 years, 5 months and 3 days. Though young, he seemed to be different from any of the other four children. About two months previous to his death, while about one hundred and fifty miles away from home, I dreamed a dream that affected me more than any dream I had ever had, and I sat up in bed and cried for an hour. I told it to my sister and her family and said I was going right home. I arrived home about 10 o'clock at night, and wife and I sat up until midnight talking about the children and wondering which one it was we would have to give up. I shall never forget that night; it hurt us then, for we felt sure that the Lord had given us warning in advance. We thought it was our oldest boy, eleven years old, for his sister told his mother that he had remarked to his teacher that he never would live to enjoy his education, and we would find him at times trying to read the Bible. But when the time came it was our child next to the baby; his uncle backed his car over him, killing him instantly. Oh what a shock, even if we were expecting trouble. I will relate part of the dream that is comforting to us now in our sorrow. I dreamed that Elder J. B. Bowden and myself were on a bridge

over a clear stream of water. I said to him, Listen! I hear a child crying. We looked up stream, and there out in the middle of the stream I saw a lamb trying to cling to some sprigs of grass which had grown up there. After it cried several times the mother sheep came into the water from the east side of the bank, swam out to it and carried it safely back to shore. Then brother Bowden put his hand on me and said, See what mother love will do. Yes, the little darling has been carried safely from this old world to a bright home above, to praise his blessed Redeemer for evermore.

May the good Lord give us grace to press on the remainder of our days here on earth and finally save us in heaven, is the prayer of his heartbroken father.

E. B. AULT.

Martha I. Attebery was born in Illinois March 21st, 1864. She was a daughter of John Waggoner, who was a Baptist member. She was married to T. E. Attebery in February, 1881, while living in Illinois. Two years later she and her husband moved to Walla Walla, Wash., where they engaged in farming and followed that occupation ever since. During their stay in the northwest they lived part of the time in the states of Washington, Oregon and Idaho, near the border lines. She united with the Old School Baptists at Charity Church, Peck, Idaho, where her husband had been licensed to preach some time before, and was afterward ordained by the same church. Although she lived in the vicinity of other churches for a long time, she never moved her membership from the church she united with. Her health failed twenty-one years ago, and more than half the time for twelve years she was an invalid, gradually growing weaker until her health failed to the extent that she was confined to her bed and entirely helpless, in which condition she lived for nine years She was the mother of ten children living to be grown, two boys and eight girls. Her husband and children were faithful in ministering to her needs, but her peculiar afflictions were such that human strength and wisdom could not afford much relief. She often prayed to be released, but life lingered on. During those years of affliction she was willing for her husband to attend his ministerial duties to the churches as much as possible, but the burden of his wife's affliction greatly weighed on him, and I fear the brethren never knew the extent of it while he willingly served them. The last three weeks of her life she suffered greatly, until within eight or ten hours of the end, when she ceased to suffer and gently fell asleep on the morning of June 3rd, 1921.

She left a request that I conduct her funeral, which I tried to do to the comfort and consolation of our beloved brother Attebery and his children, also the brethren and friends at Weiser, Idaho, June 5th, after which the remains were laid to rest in the cemetery at that place.

Death may sometimes appear to be a cruel messenger, but to the Lord's people it is a call to better things, and especially when the afflictions of this life are so great, as in this case, why should one desire to live? or why should those who are left mourn when the sufferings are ended? By faith we see better things. May the Lord bless us with this faith.

C. W. BOND.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptists will hold a two days meeting at Cammal on Saturday and Sunday, August 27th and 28th, 1921. We expect Elder J. M. Fenton to be with us. House is near the station, on the New York Central Railroad. Ministers, brethren and sisters are invited to come and worship God with us. Elder D. M. Vail is our pastor.

SILAS HOSTRANDER.

THE Clovesville Old School Baptist Church will hold a two days meeting, the Lord willing, the last Saturday and Sunday in August (27th and 28th), 1921. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus to meet with us, especially ministering brethren of our faith and order.

O. F. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene in her sixty-seventh annual session with Spring Creek Church, near Stahl, Adair Co., Mo., commencing on Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1921, and continuing the two following days. All lovers of salvation by grace alone are invited, especially ministers of our faith and order. Those coming by rail will be met at Stahl, Adair Co., Mo.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator.
J. M. CATE, Clerk.

THE church at Otego, N. Y., intends, the Lord willing, holding a meeting Saturday p. m. and all Sunday, September 3rd and 4th, 1921. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. Our pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, and Elder J. M. Fenton are expected to be with us.

R. T. LEONARD, Church Clerk.

THE Des Moines River Association of Predestinarian Baptists will hold her seventy-eighth session with Harmony Church, near Winfield, Iowa, September 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1921. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend.

J. L. THURSTON, Clerk.

THE Abbington Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Pa., has appointed a two days meeting to be held on Wednesday and Thursday, September 7th

and 8th, 1921. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend. We expect our pastor, Elder Vail, Elder Fenton, of Philadelphia, and Elder Alexander, of Wilmington, Del. Those coming on D., L. & W. R. R., will stop at Clarks Summit and go to Elder Vail's. Those coming on D. & H. or O. &. W. R. R. are requested to write to C. E. Miller, Clarks Summit, Pa., R. D. 1, so that arrangements may be made to meet them at Olyphant Tuesday afternoon.

G. W. GOODRICH, Clerk.

THE Pocatalico Association will convene September 9th, 10th and 11th, 1921. Those coming on the B. & O. or C. & O. come to Charleston and transfer to the Interurban (or street car) for St. Albans, where they will find conveyance. Those from the east, by way of C. & O., come direct to St. Albans, where they will find conveyance. It will be more convenient for brethren from the west to come by way of C. & O. to Hurricane and take conveyance from there. All trains and street cars will be met at the above places on Thursday, the 8th. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Moderator.

J. R. BECKETT, Clerk.

THE Maine Association of Old School Baptists will meet, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, on Friday before the second Monday in September (9th, 10th and 11th,) 1921. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.

THE Trinity River Old School Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, to hold its sixty-third session with Hopewell Church, four miles east of Rice, in Ellis County, Texas, beginning Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1921, and continuing three days. All lovers of the truth and of the old order are cordially invited to attend. All brethren and visitors coming south will come on the H. & T. C. R. R. or the Interurban to Rice. All coming north will get off at Rice. Conveyance will be at the station on Thursday.

ASA HOWARD.

THE First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held with West Union Church, near Grantville, Jefferson Co., Kansas, September 9th, 10th and 11th, 1921. Grantville is a short distance from Topeka, on the Union Pacific Railroad. We would be glad to have ministering brethren and lovers of truth and order visit us. For further information write Elder L. L. Schenck, Williamstown, Kansas, or to me, or phone Black 2865 when you get to Topeka.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

1243 POLK ST., TOPEKA, Kansas.

THE Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Middletown and Andes Church, Union Grove, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, September 14th and 15th. All who love the truth are cordially invited to attend. Those coming by way of New York can come either by boat or train. Boat leaves New York on Tuesday, September 13th, Desbrosses St., 8 a. m., and 129th St. 8:40 a. m. Train leaves West Shore R. R., Cortlandt St., 10 a. m. and West 42nd St. 10:15 a. m. Get tickets for Arkville, and at Arkville change cars and get ticket for Union Grove. Trains will be met Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning.

GEORGE RUSTON, Pastor.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Jefferson, N. Y., expects to hold their two days meeting on the third Sunday and Saturday before in September (17th and 18th), 1921. We expect our pastor, Elder J. M. Fenton, and Elder D. M. Vail to be with us at that time.

GEORGE E. MEAD, Church Clerk.

THE Primitive Old School Baptist Church of Olive and Hurley will hold their annual meeting the last Saturday and Sunday in September, (24th and 25th) 1921, the Lord willing. Those coming by rail will get off at Ashokan, Ulster Co., N. Y., via U. & D. R. R., where they will be met and conveyed to the meetinghouse.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Cow Marsh Church, Kent County, Delaware, will be held the fourth Sunday in September and Saturday afternoon before. A cordial invitation is extended to those of our faith and order to meet with us. Trains will be met at Woodside station, Delaware R. R., on Saturday morning from the north and south.

THOMAS L. COOPER, Church Clerk.

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"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."—1 Thess. v. 21. "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it."—Deut. xii. 32. cf. Eccl. iii. 14; James i. 17; Matt. xxviii. 20.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 89. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1921. NO. 18.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

"IN that day." This is a term frequently used in Old Testament prophecy, preceding that of which the prophet is about to declare, and goes on to tell of things that will be "in that day." That great and dreadful day, the day of the Lord, and other like expressions, appeals to the natural mind as meaning and speaking of that time or season when all are called before God to give an account of the deeds done in the body. The natural mind seems to have conceived some kind of a general supreme court, where will sit a Judge, which is God, with Christ as an associate, while each individual is called up and gives an account of himself, beclouding his sins and shining his virtues, if by any means a way may be had to an entrance to heaven. These very ideas are signs of the times in which we live, proving thereby to the enlightened the terrible ignorance of the people and the gross darkness with which they are enshrouded; for "that day" spoken of so many times has no such meaning. Of that day and that hour no man knoweth; no, not even the angels in heaven. This is one of the secret things which belong to the Lord, and is securely locked and hidden from all prying eyes, who fain would in their ignorance pillage the secret precincts of the God of heaven and earth. For these hidden things have men searched since the olden days, but without any success other than fuel for imagination, which burns brightly and inflames the heart of the wise and prudent with pride, of whom Christ thanked the Father, while he rejoiced in spirit, that these things were withheld or hid from the wise and prudent, but revealed unto babes, and babes rejoice in the knowledge of the glory of "that day." For by the revelation of the glory of God revealed in the face of Jesus Christ we see the day of which the prophet spoke. We are now living "in that day;" to-day is the day spoken of, the day of Jesus Christ, the day of salvation, the gospel day. By faith Abraham saw this day and rejoiced and was glad, for he saw the day of salvation. Faith, which God gives, penetrates the thickest gloom, pierces impenetrable blackness, spans intermidable space, reaches from time to eternity, embraces the covenant of God in his electing and saving grace, cleanses

the vilest sinner and makes him whole, makes darkness light, the barren to be fruitful, saves our guilty souls and makes our conscience clean. "This day" is the beginning of days, the beginning of the new year, but all people who are living at this present time are not necessarily living in this day, the gospel day; for the natural man has not discerned these things, which come not by observation, but by revelation, and darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people. As it was with national Israel just before deliverance from Egyptian bondage, when darkness enveloped the whole land the Israelites had, every one of them, lights in their houses, so now, even if darkness does cover the earth, spiritual Israel has Light in his house. For unto us who have seen his star has the Sun of Righteousness risen with healing in his wings, bound up our wounds and made our faces to shine with gladness. There is no occasion for a man stumbling who walks in the day, but if one walks in forbidden paths, which are darkness, he shall stumble and suffer. "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."—Hebrews x. 26, 27. There is somewhat of consolation in this Scripture for the child of God. It is the adversaries that are devoured, and not us. Nevertheless we shall suffer in this, for the devouring takes place in us. It is a consuming fire that devours the adversaries. Our God is a consuming fire. Many things are revealed to and in us "in that day"—to-day, and there are signs to be observed and are observed by certain ones. There have always been "signs of the times," signs or forerunners of that which is to come, one event or thing preceding another. The twilight is a sign of approaching darkness, the breaking dawn a sign of coming day. There are signs of grief, of suffering, of joy, happiness and peace; signs of life, signs of death. The poet once wrote: "Of feeling all things show some sign but this cold, unfeeling heart of mine." The prophet and his prophecy were signs of this day. Some saw and observed it, many did not. Man is not careful to observe the signs given, and he must first be given sight, understanding, discernment, before signs are profitable to him, but if that sight becomes clouded with other things how can he see? To use a natural illustration. In 1849, when the rush for the gold fields of California was, men of keen sight and good judgment left that which they were doing and made a daring rush for gold, crossing what was then known as the American Desert with ox-teams. In those days that part of the country was desert and waste, dry and barren, but at certain places there was water, either a spring or a stream, and there was a sign or indication of this water. Trees would be one of the first signs observed, because of height. Other signs would be more luxuriant grass and vegetation the nearer one came to water. These were infallible proofs of water. So are all signs which God hath set true and infallible, but many men, men of keen intelligence, men who when rational understood all these signs, perished on the plains for want and need of water. The love of gold had blinded their vision to all things else, and in that insane rush for gold they gave their lives a forfeit to madness. The great Titanic on her maiden trip ran into unmistakable signs of an iceberg: floating ice and a sudden drop in temperature, which was a true

sign of the the nearness of an iceberg, to say nothing of numerous warnings from other ships; but through the insane madness of her owners and managers, who closed their eyes to all "signs of the times" and madly rushed on in their jealous desire to outrace and outshine all ocean travel, and in their blindness and thirst for gain, rushed headlong into the unobserved and sank, the greatest of ships, which was said to be unsinkable, carrying down hundreds of lives. Jealousy and greed blind men to all that is good, and in their folly they rush headlong to their doom, though plainly visible by foretelling signs which they fail to observe through madness of love for gain or honor. There are those to-day who have spiritual knowledge, for the light hath shined in their hearts and revealed many evils, so that they have hated their own flesh, who have later in these days of vanity been blinded by the glitter of gold and worldly prominence, refuse to see and observe certain signs on the road to destruction, where they shall see their folly and repent in bitterness of soul. The glitter of gold and love of show have hidden from many the glory and beauty of the church, and joys that are lasting are exchanged for fleeting moments of worldly pleasure. "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread?"—Isaiah lv. 2. Man spends not only money, but life itself for the idle things of this life. Many of the children of God have in a sense sacrificed their spiritual life with the incessant reaching, longing and working for worldly things. I do not mean eternally killed, for man has no power over the life of Christ, which we now live; that is, to utterly destroy it. Christ says of himself: No man taketh my life from me. I lay down my life, &c. But man kills or buries the love of these sacred things with worldly notions until he as a dead or unthinking one rushes on and on down the road to destruction unmindful of "the signs of the times," because he is blinded. There is a day or time or event spoken of which is yet to come. Of this and for this the child of God should watch and look unceasingly, with his vision unobscured and unblinded by the perishing things of this world. The child of God should spend his time in sincerity, and not in idleness. Our time is short, our day is swifter than a weaver's shuttle. What can we accomplish by spending our time and thoughts on the passing fashions of this fleeting life? An hour or a moment spent in idle or trivial conversation or gossip, or even in the contemplation of the glories of this world, is wasted, can never be regained nor reclaimed; though we do penance for an hour over a wasted moment we can in no wise reclaim or redeem that moment, for our every moment should be spent in sincerity and humbleness before our Maker. Oh, that we might all walk in a way becoming children, remembering the purchase price that placed us in the glorious light of the liberty of the gospel of Jesus Christ, having our whole mind centered on the love of God, for how great is that condescending love of God; the love that made him die for rebel souls, like you and me. We are vile sinners, conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity, but are now by his blood, which cleanseth us from all sin, brought nigh unto God, made holy as he is holy, through Christ, who is our righteousness, our sanctification, our justification. Therefore should we lightly esteem so great a sacrifice, befog our vision with perishing gold and neglect so great a salvation for a butterfly show? The adornments of the butterfly are

richer and more attractive than any other insect, yet its life is only for a day. There will be those found watching for the coming of our Lord; there are those who will be found asleep, who will awaken in shame and confusion. There are without doubt unmistakable signs of great changes to take place with the church, which to-day in many places is resting in fancied security. Wake up, my brethren, observe the signs and be ready against that day. There is a laxness, and the love of many has waxed cold, and some are left to smite his fellow-servant and to eat and drink with the drunken (enjoying the things of this life in preference to spiritual things), failing to see the signs of His coming, as many did nearly two thousand years ago; for "the signs of the times" now compare very favorably with the times then. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name."—Malachi iii. 16. Around those times political corruption was very great; morality had become so degraded that marriage laws in numerous cases were unobserved and the word of God was made into a lie. What of to-day? Those whose vision is unobscured, whose judgment is unbiased and he that is of a clean heart will say it is very much the same to-day as it was then. What was it then the sign of? Surely that which took place was proof that it was a sign of his coming. He who controls all signs and events changes not, neither do signs change, and he shall come again, but of that day and that hour no man knoweth, no, not even the angels in heaven. One who looks for a thing expects it, and there have been those from the time that he ascended and was received in a cloud out of their sight who have continued to look and with patience await his coming. There is another who is careless, who looks for nothing special and expects nothing particular, feeding on every pleasant wind, living in ease. "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria."—Amos vi. 1. We are apt to forget all that is of vital interest to us and reach out for those things which are not only unnecessary, but harmful, and all unnecessary things are useless, and all useless things are harmful to the child of God. There is, and has been since the beginning of the recent world war, a tendency on the part of many to study the thirteenth chapter of Revelation and other parts of the same book. While there is is no doubt that this terrible strife was a sign of that which is to come, and for the manifestation of the glory and power of God and the good of the church, for many things will happen to the church which will bring God's children closer together, and the word of God will be dearer to them than anything else, yet it was in no sense a spiritual war, for it was fought solely by the kings of the earth. We have no account that Christ ever called on any to draw the sword, but Peter was told to put up his sword, for all they that take the sword shall perish by the sword. It was fought for gain of honor and wealth. The glitter of gold had so blinded the people that they were insane with jealousy of and hatred for one another. It was purely a work of Satan, a demonstration of wickedness hitherto unthought or unheard of, and the King of glory had no more part or sympathy with it than he had with the Roman soldiers who crucified the Savior, or when Saul of Tarsus persecuted the church and quietly held

the young men's garments while they stoned Stephen, feeling he was doing God service, and all who felt they were doing God service by engaging in any way to encourage the recent strife were as far wrong as was Saul of Tarsus or the soldiers who crucified Christ. Without denial it was a thing that must be; God ordained it, and not a single bullet fired miscarried one hair's breadth of its mark as God foreordained it. God reigns and unquestionably carries out his designs, for he has developed along through the ages of time certain men who were so engaged in the management of the terrible war. It is written of the soldiers who crucified the Savior that by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God they with wicked hands took and slew him. Man is in no sense justified in doing a wicked act for the reason that it is by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Some were engaged in the recent war for one thing, some another, but all for gain and profit. It has taken since the creation, since the early morn of time, to develop a body of men who are efficient in the development of the most wicked acts to carry on wholesale murder and cruelty beyond conception. There has never before in the history of time been the opportunity for wicked man to make so gigantic a display of his total depravity and wickedness. Man has retrograded beyond the lower animals; the brute creation is not guilty of such atrocious acts as man has been during the war. There is one sign in all this that should be clearly visible: that money spent to make christians to bring about a united brotherhood is money spent in vain, money and time wasted. The promoters of such things have no such object or thought in view, as it is only for the gain of gold and popularity that they are engaged in such work, and by persuasive argument, well studied, and a sort of hypnotic power, they gull the people into giving, using certain Scripture for convincing argument, after having changed it to better suit their convenience, thereby changing the word of God into a lie, deceiving and blinding the people, which shows us the evil days are come near, even right here. Man sings of his righteousness and boasts of his power, and many of the children of God are asleep; but God, who is long-suffering to usward, will disturb the slumbers of the sleepy, for a grievous time will be; terrible winter will enshroud the church and coldness will be felt by all. Then will be an awakening for very coldness, and the word of the Lord will be precious. The church in this country has enjoyed peace and quietness for many years, and no doubt for a much longer period in the past than will be in the future; but as long as the world stands there will be faith, and as long as there is faith in the earth the earth will stand, for the life we now live in the flesh we live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us. The Lord's people are the salt of the earth, the preserving quality, and there is no soundness in all the earth except where the faith of the Son of God is. "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings." —Deut. xxxii. 11. In the process of time the old eagle stirs up her nest by removing a stick at a time, until there is no resting-place for the young eagle, and it must now find its wings, or the need and use of them. So with the church of God. Our nest is stirred up, stick after stick is removed which we have depended on, and destruction in the depths below

seems imminent. As the young eagle falls crying the old one swiftly flies underneath the falling one, catches it on her wing and bears it up. What for? Another trial of faith. In the evil days that will soon come we shall be cast down, but not destroyed; for if the eagle careth for its young, how much more so does our God care for us, and will sustain us, but there may be many trials of faith, and very severe trials. God reigns. "What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." Offences must come, but woe unto him by whom they come. Amen.

Your unworthy brother,

F. SELBY FISHER.

OTTAWA, Kansas, August 1, 1921.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—I feel this morning like writing you some of my experiences during the past few months. Whether I shall be enabled to do it or not I do not know; anyway I am making the attempt. I have no one to talk to of the things dearer to me than life, and which are mostly uppermost in my mind. I do often talk of them to my family, but I have no doubt they are often weary of hearing me, and would rather I discuss worldly topics, for I do talk and read to them quite often from the Bible, SIGNS and "Fragments," by Elder S. H. Durand. Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you; but who ever heard of any one asking for something they did not want, or seeking for something they did not desire? We must see the beauty and worth of spiritual things before we can truly desire them. One of old said, Draw me, and I will run after thee. Much of the time I am bowed down with such a sense of my unworthiness in the sight of a just and holy God that I am saying in my heart, I am too unworthy to receive a blessing, much less ask for it. All I can say is, Lord, have mercy. Once while begging God for mercy I was shown that mercy comes alone through Jesus. Without him there could be no mercy, for the soul that sinneth shall die. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. I saw clearly that he is our only hope, the only way. Again I was shown, and it seemed like a kind of vision as I sat alone, reading a paper sent me by sister Pultz, that when Jesus paid our debt we were free, and I saw the redeemed with their sins all cast off to one side; they were there, but separated from them completely through Jesus. Then I thought how ungrateful we are to forget him after he has done all these things for us, and try to climb up some other way. Then I was shown, oh so plainly, how we are thieves and robbers of the very lowest type. God forbid that I should ever forget how much I need mercy, and that the blessed Savior is alone the fountain and stream of mercy for such poor, helpless sinners as me. I must be continually saying, Lord, help me. Sometimes when begging for mercy I tremble at the thought of receiving the blessing, realizing I am nothing but a hell-deserving sinner, and a feeling of shame comes over me and I turn away and say in my heart, Oh, I cannot take it, I dare not ask it. In one thing we can make no mistake, and that is in ascribing all power, wisdom, honor and glory to God, for to him they all belong. Man in his best estate is declared to be vanity, and sometimes when thinking of the wonderful majesty of God I wonder he is allowed to continue in his vain presumption. When God's purposes are fulfilled with him he will be no more than the dust from which he was taken, no matter how great and powerful he may

have felt himself to be or how distinguished among his fellow-men he may have been. Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

I have made so many mistakes I feel I ought to write this over, but am afraid if I do I will not send it, and I do want to tell of the things I have witnessed. I wish I could tell it as I saw it, and as I see it now: the creature with his sins taken away.

Pardon all you see amiss, and believe me I desire to speak nothing but the truth.

Your very little sister, if one at all,

ANNA McKINNEY.

TEHUACANA, Texas, June 20, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel that I would like to have a little talk with the readers of our dear old family paper this morning if you, dear brethren, approve of what I may write. I know that I am not qualified to give the subject justice that has been exercising my mind for some time, but I would like to give some of my thoughts to the dear readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES if you see fit to give them place. The subject on my mind is one of the greatest, grandest, highest, longest, broadest and deepest that I think ever took possession of a poor sinful creature's mind, especially one so little and insignificant as I feel myself to be. The subject is the all-wise predestination, determination and declaration of the eternal God respecting all things, I care not what they may be. I will say right now that there was a time, if we should call it a time, before time began to be numbered by man, when there was not anything in existence but the all-wise, independent God, and if it had been his will he could have prevented the existence of anything else. Viewing God a sovereign over all worlds, things, times, beings, events and occurrences, it was his will that everything exist just as it does. It was his will and sovereign right to make this world out of nothing and hang the earth upon nothing and people the world with the creature man, who was made subject to vanity. I say with the authority of the Bible, if I understand what I read, that God had one great, grand and prime object in view, to wit, his own glory, which he says he will not give to another. Now God was not mistaken or disappointed about man or what he would do or what was in him; he saw it all before he made man. I am talking about an all-wise, sovereign God, not a little puny god, as some speak of, not a god that wants to do and we will not let him; our God speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. I view Adam a figure of Christ. Paul says in Romans v. 14, that he (Adam) was a figure of him (Christ) which was to come. I occupy the position that it was just as necessary for Adam, the type, to transgress and violate the law God gave him that he (God) should be glorified, as it was for Christ to be crucified to satisfy an offended law. It was God's way and will that sin should enter into this world to accomplish his own glory. I once heard a man who claimed to be a Primitive Baptist preacher say in the stand that Adam was not a figure of Christ in any shape, form or fashion; said he (Adam) was too corrupt a being to be a figure of as pure a being as Christ. I have heard that same preacher and others say that we, the children of God, could act in a way to cause God to bless us, or we could act in a way to miss a blessing that we might have received if we had acted differently to what we did. Now I believe that every blessing which I or any one

else receives, temporal or spiritual, was purposed and treasured up in the mind, wisdom and purpose of the eternal God in the annals of eternity before the world was, and there is nothing I can do to miss that blessing with which God designed to bless me. If I could act in a way to miss a blessing that God had set apart for me he would be disappointed and his purpose in that blessing would have to trail in the dust, for no one else could inherit a blessing set apart for me; one cannot inherit another's blessing. I understand the Scriptures to teach that the eternal God is the creator, builder, upholder, preserver and disposer of this world and the fullness thereof. He sits at the helm of all things, guiding all things after the counsel of his own will. I care not what God does, it is just and right. It was right in God to send Joseph to Egypt through the wickedness of his brethren, yet it was wicked in them to sell Joseph, and God caused them to feel the smarting rod for their wickedness. That was God's way; so we see that all things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to his purpose. I heard a preacher say that Scripture does not mean all things, it only means all spiritual things; said God and the devil did not work together in anything (and that preacher claimed to be a Baptist); but I say when the Scripture says "all things" it means all things, and when he said all things work together for good, God, who works all things, is excepted. I heard another preacher claiming to be a Primitive Baptist say in the stand that Jesus Christ was crucified according to the permission of God. These preachers are all what are called in this country limited predestinarians. Now I prefer to be guided by the Scriptures and what they teach. I believe predestination, determination and declaration all to mean the same thing. I think you can see by this time that I am what is called an absolute predestinarian. I believe that God absolutely predestinated, determined, decreed, declared all things to be just as they are. He made the great leviathan to play in the sea, he also made the little louse to plague the Egyptian with, and I say without the least hesitancy that he controls them, and neither of them can go beyond the bounds that the eternal God has set. Now I will give you a few Scriptures that I understand to bear me out in my position. Job xxiii. 13, 14, reads: "But he [God] is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me; and many such things are with him." Job xxvi. 6, 7: "Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering. He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing." Job xxxviii. 9–11: "When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it, and brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." The proud waves of sin can no more stop short of their bounds than they can go beyond. Psalms xxii. 28: "For the kingdom is the Lord's: and he is the governor among the nations." Psalms cxxxv. 6: "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places." Proverbs xxi. 1: "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will." Isaiah xlv. 7: "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord

do all these things." Daniel iv. 17: "The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men." Verse 35: "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Micah i. 12: "For the inhabitant of Maroth waited carefully for good: but evil came down from the Lord unto the gate of Jerusalem." Acts ii. 23: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Acts iv. 28: "For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."

As this is an inexhaustible subject I will stop, hoping if I have not done any good I have done no harm. I know I have hardly touched the subject, but will leave it with you, praying God to pardon all amiss. If I have said anything that is of any benefit or satisfaction to one of God's little ones give God all the glory, and if what I have said is not in accordance with the Scriptures charge it to my ignorance, for it is an error of the head, and not of the heart.

I will close, asking you to spread the mantle of love over all imperfections you find in this, for it is written by an old imperfect sinner past his seventy-sixth mile-board.

J. H. BOZEMAN.

BELLS, Tenn., July 20, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I expect to move to Hasty, Colorado, this fall. If there are any Old School Baptists in or near there, in Bent, Kiowa, Otero or Prowers counties, Colorado, please write to me at Bells, Tenn., Route 2, and oblige.

I wish to say that I indorse the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. In my weakness I have tried to preach Christ a complete Savior, salvation by grace and grace alone, both for time and eternity, the absolute predestination of all things, unconditional election and the final preservation of the saints to glory.

May God bless us all, is my prayer.

J. M. WHITENTON.

WESSON, Ark., R. 1, Box 114, August 30, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—My father, R. M. Britt, who is a reader of your paper, and some more Old School Baptists here are interested in the Lower Rio Grande valley of Texas. I wish to communicate with any Old School Baptists there, if any. I would rather hear from those around San Juan and Donna than any of the other places. Please state in your paper that my father and I would like to communicate with any member who lives in either Cameron or Hidalgo Co., Texas.

CHARLES B. BRITT.

6346 PARNELL AVE., ENGLEWOOD, CHICAGO, Ill.,
Phone Wentworth 5428.

DEAR EDITORS:—I was speaking to Elder Blair about the small flock of ten or twelve here in Chicago who have no regular services yet, and how hungry they are for spiritual food. At his suggestion and that of Elder P. W. Sawin I ask you to publish my address in the SIGNS, so that any visiting preachers or those who pass this way may stop and preach for this small but grateful flock.

Yours in a glorious hope,

A. P. SHELBURNE.

WANTED—A copy of Hassell's Church History. Will pay a good price for it. Address,

H. M. BOWDEN.

529 JEFFERSON ST., PADUCAH, Ky.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1921.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Middletown, N. Y.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JAMES II. 19.

"THE devils also believe, and tremble."

Brother W. M. Heard, of Covington, Ga., asks us to give our views on those various portions of Scripture where devils are reported as knowing the Lord and talking with him. If it is true that devils and evil spirits know the Lord, in what way do they know him? We have had some reflections on this matter, and do not mind giving them to our readers for what they are worth, they to be the judges as to whether they are worth anything or not. In the fourth chapter of Luke we have the record that while Jesus was in Capernaum on the sabbath day in the synagogue, a man possessed of the spirit of an unclean devil cried out with a loud voice, begging Jesus to let them alone. This man was certainly in need of salvation, but so completely in the control of the evil spirit that he preferred being let alone to being disturbed by Jesus. However, Jesus heeded not the man's plea to be let alone, but addressing the evil spirit instead of the man, commanded the unclean thing to come out of him. The evil thing obeyed the command of Jesus, and came out without hurting the man. Those who beheld this miracle were amazed at the power and authority with which Jesus commanded the unclean spirits so that they came out. Again, in Matthew viii. 28–34, we have the very wonderful narrative of the two persons possessed with devils in the country of the Gergesenes. In this case, as in the one in Luke iv., the unclean spirits, or devils, addressed themselves to Jesus, saying that they knew him, calling him "Jesus, thou Son of God," and begging him to let them alone. When he would not let them alone, they begged Jesus to let them enter into a herd of swine. This Jesus granted, and the swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea and perished in the waters. The outstanding features in these incidents are that the devils addressed Jesus by name, proving thus that they had knowledge of him, also asking him if he were come to torment them before the time, showing that they knew his presence did mean to torment them, and further, that there was a time when their sway would be over and they would have to be destroyed. A close reading of the Scriptures already cited will prove these points. Now the question arises in our minds, What kind of knowledge is this which the devils have of the Lord? First, then, we know what kind of knowledge it is not. Often it is easier to tell what a thing is not than what it is. It is not saving knowledge, it is not that knowledge which comes by the revelation of the Holy Spirit and which is unto salvation. Jesus came not to save devils or evil spirits, but to save his people from the devil. Therefore whatever knowledge wickedness has of the Lord it most certainly is not saving or gracious knowledge such as redeemed sinners have. But there is a knowledge which Satan has of God, just as James says the devils believe God and tremble. They do not believe and love, nor believe and follow, but they believe and tremble. There is a

holy trembling which saved souls know, a trembling due to their own unworthiness and God's amazing grace, but that is not the trembling wherewith Satan trembles. His trembling is one of terror and fright whenever the Lord opens his mouth against him and flashes out that sharper than any two-edged sword. The whole matter simply comes to this, that Satan knows that when God speaks he must obey, whether he wants to or not. Satan knows that God is his superior, and that God has complete power and authority over him. He knows it is useless to fight against God. Therefore, whenever the Lord commands Satan to cease his troubling, Satan can do naught but obey. Satan has no true conception of the character of God, nor of God's Son, he knows nothing about the saving power abiding in Christ, he knows nothing of the love and mercy of the Almighty, but Satan does know that he cannot effectually resist the authority of God. He hates God and all godliness, and delights to do his worst against both, but when the issue is flatly joined, and the opponents face to face, Satan knows his defeat is sure and his ultimate destruction inevitable. Perhaps we might better get at what we mean by a simple illustration. Have you not known men utterly without godliness to show fright in a thunderstorm? We have seen men who ordinarily could scarcely talk without swearing, become white with fear amidst the flashing of lightning and the crashing of thunder. They were utterly without any spiritual knowledge of God and knew nothing of his grace, yet they had a natural belief that there is a God, and believing the storm to be God's work they were frightened lest it might torment them and cut short their wickedness. This must be the sort of knowledge that devils have of God. All of you are familiar with the moral changes that sometimes follow in the wake of great calamities. After a terrible shock of some sort men will often seem to be better, will often leave off their former bad habits, and often make a profession of religion. As time wears on the new coat wears off and they are eventually as bad as ever; but the point is that the calamity or shock has shown them that there is a power above themselves, a power against which they are but reeds broken and bruised. They, of course, have no proper understanding of this Power unless at the same time the Holy Ghost is at work in their souls, but they realize an authority above themselves which is working its will with them without let or hindrance. This makes them afraid. They call this power "God," and set out to appease this wrath by changing their morals and becoming good, possibly by getting religion(?). This is an awful torment to them, their hearts are not in it, and just as soon as clear weather or ease sets in they gradually drift back into their former mire and slough. The Scriptures plainly declare that God is supremely Sovereign over all worlds, principalities and powers, over all angels, men and devils. He works his will and none can hinder. More than this, the devil knows it. He knows it in the sense that when God commands him to do anything he knows he has to do it. This is not the obedience of God's people. The Lord's people are not made obedient as are dumb brutes, by means of harness and straps fastened about them to turn them this way or that; the obedience of grace is a willing obedience, God's children being made willing in the day of his power, because he takes out of them the stony heart and gives them a heart of flesh in

which is his new law written: love. The obedience of Satan to the Lord is the obedience of a machine to its maker. The various levers, &c., turn the machine this way and that, there is no heart in it. So, Satan is dead to God and all that is godly, but when the Creator who made him commands him to do this or that, or go here or there, Satan affrightedly obeys, though filled with hatred against the Power that works its supreme will. A few days ago we saw an animal trainer in a cage with tamed wild animals. At his command these animals, naturally ferocious and man-hating and man-eating, would perform the prescribed tricks, but it was with snarls and growls and beastly unwillingness. Not for once did the trainer dare take his eye from them or turn his back upon them. In that case they would have been upon him to destroy him. The animals crouched in awe of the man and bared their teeth at him, but he had so impressed them with a sense of his superiority that they feared to attack him. There have been known instances where bad men have been held at bay in the presence of a man of superior moral and intellectual courage, afraid to attack him, notwithstanding they were stronger than he physically. A man of absolute sterling character and integrity, if he possess the courage of his qualities, can look a bad man in the eye and cause him to quail before him. Now, Almighty God is as infinitely superior to Satan as the eternal heavens are above the abysmal depths of sin, and whenever the holy attributes of God are in exercise against the devil he knows he must surrender and accept defeat, ultimately destruction. When Jesus sent his disciples out to preach to the lost sheep of the house of Israel he gave them power and authority over all devils. Obviously, Jesus could not have given that power to the twelve had he not first had that power within himself. Afterward Jesus sent other seventy men out to preach. When these seventy came back they reported that even the devils were subject to them in the name of Jesus. Then Jesus uttered the surprising saying that he saw Satan as lightning fall from heaven. By this meaning, we think, that Satan had no power to hinder the work of his disciples. Satan had not fallen "out of" heaven, for he never had been in it, but had fallen "from" heaven. His falling from heaven was seen in that even devils were subject to the disciples and could not resist them. Heaven, in this instance, meaning the church. There would be not so much glory to God in the overcoming of evil if evil did not in some sense know that it were conquered. The glory of God in the conquering and destruction of Satan is manifest in that Satan must know who and what it is that has vanquished him and must own himself beaten. Thus it is that even devils shall praise him. Not that they shall sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, the song of the redeemed of the Lord. No, never! But, consumed with hatred of the God that overcomes him, Satan must give way before him, must confess the supremacy of God, must withdraw from before him and must finally vanish in destruction.

These are strange thoughts upon a strange subject. At least, whether you agree with us or not, what we have written may stir you to thoughts of your own more valuable than these here given.

L.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder John McConnell, August 18th, 1921, in New York city, Mr. Valentine Werner and Mrs. Ethel Meredith Kuehne, both of Jersey City, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Olivia H. Lacey, our sister in Christ, departed this life at the home of her son-in-law, near The Trappe, Loudoun Co., Va., August 19th, 1921. She was born July 20th, 1846, the daughter of Thomas Humphrey and Phebe Ish, and was the last one of eight children, six sisters and two brothers. She was married to Dr. Joseph Berry Lacey, deceased, in December, 1870, and was the mother of five children, three sons and two daughters. One son and one daughter survive their mother: Mr. Powis Lacey, who lives near Unison, Va., and Mrs. Dr. Claudius P. Hutchison, of Purcellville, Va. In the month of October, 1870, sister Lacey was baptized by the late Elder Joseph L. Purington into the membership of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church. For more than fifty years she had been a faithful and devoted member of the church, maintaining by the grace of God a godly walk and conversation, adorning her profession with the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. She was a woman of even temperament, calm and deliberate; not one moved to act impulsively, but who weighed and considered, so that her counsel was worth much in times of perplexity. Once a friend, she was always a friend, true and steadfast. She was stable and well established in the doctrine of God her Savior, certainly not drifting here and there with the many strange ideas current in this present age. She was much given to hospitality, and loved to entertain and to serve her brethren. She was confined to her bed but little more than a week before her death, which was due to heart trouble, which prevented her lying down with any ease or comfort. Her faith in her Redeemer was constant to the end, and it was very gratifying to those at her bedside to witness her patience in suffering and her unwavering trust and confidence in Almighty God.

Her funeral was largely attended, because she was widely and favorably known and loved and respected by a large circle of relatives and friends. Text used was Revelation xiv. 13. From the meetinghouse at Ebenezer, the place that had known her for more than half a century, but which shall know her no more forever, her body was conveyed to its last resting-place in the cemetery adjacent.

May the Holy Spirit comfort the bereaved church and family and reconcile us all to his mysterious dealings with the children of men.

L.

Ellen C. Herndon Phelps, daughter of George and Frances A. Herndon, was born August 12th, 1838, and died July 11th, 1921, making her age 82 years, 10 months and 29 days. She lived with her parents in Logan County, Ky., until she was married to Dr. John Holland Phelps, of Christian County, Ky., where they resided until his death. To that union were born four children: Herndon, George William, Holland and Mignonette. She buried her husband, two sons and one daughter. She leaves to mourn their loss, one son, one sister, a niece, who had lived with her a number of years, besides a host of relatives and friends. Sister Phelps united with the Primitive Baptist Church in her early womanhood, and was baptized by Elder Earle. She was a consistent member until her death, always standing firm in what she believed to be the truth. Her membership was with Lebanon Church, Logan County, Ky., where she first united. She had been a widow nearly forty years. After the death of her husband she made her home in Hopkinsville, Ky., until November 1st, 1920. At the time of her death she was in Cincinnati, Ohio, with her only son, George W. Phelps. All was done for her that loving hands could do. She was sick only a few days. She had finished her work here on earth and was longing to hear the summons from on high: Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.

Written by a loving niece.

NINA WOOD SHEARON.

The above was written by her niece, who had made her home with the deceased sister for a number of years and knew her as a true christian and a true Old Baptist.' I was called by the friends to her burial, and tried to speak a few words of condolence to the friends who mourn her absence. She is gone from us, she has fallen asleep in Jesus, there to rest until the resurrection, to be raised from the dead to die no more, when this mortal shall be clothed with immortality, with all the redeemed family of God, to suffer and die no more. May the dear Lord keep us all unto that great day of everlasting happiness and bliss.

D. R. TURNER.

Mrs. C. T. Richardson was born September 16th, 1843, and departed this life April 25th, 1921, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. J. Blakney, of Wichita Falls, Texas. Mrs. Richardson was Miss Mary Elizabeth Brenier, and was married July 31st, 1861, to C. T. Richardson. To that union were born five children, two sons and three daughters, all living. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church about the year 1879, where she lived a consistent member until God in his all-wise providence called her home. She was very much afflicted for some time before her death, but bore her afflictions with patience. All that loving hearts and willing hands could minister to re-

lieve her suffering and prolong her life proved unavailing, for it was the will of God to call her from us. May the sorrowing husband (who is now moderator of our little church at True, and one of whom we can say with all sincerity that to know him is to love him) and children and all the sorrowing relatives and friends be comforted of God in the assurance of his never-failing loving-kindness, for he doeth all things well.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. H. Fisher, and the body was laid to rest in the True cemetery.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT.

Whereas, it has in the providence of an all-wise God, who has seen proper to call from our number at True Church, Young County, Texas, our beloved sister, **Mrs. C. T. Richardson,** who departed this life April 25th, 1921, and passed serenely and peacefully into that sweet sleep in Jesus from which none ever wake to weep. Both sister Richardson and her husband, who is now moderator of the True Church, were in the constitution of the church in which she lived a devoted member until her death. And

Whereas, our church at True has sustained a great loss in the departure of this good and faithful sister; be it therefore

Resolved, that we bow in humble submission to the will of our heavenly Father and endeavor to bless the rod that smites and say, "Thy will be done," with our sincere sympathy to the bereaved.

Resolved further, that a copy of these resolutions be spread on the church-book, a copy sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, a copy to New Castle Register and a copy to the Graham Leader for publication.

A. J. WHITE
MRS. J. I. NORRIS } Committee.
MRS. E. J. LARIMORE

By order of the church in conference.

C. T. RICHARDSON, Moderator.

A. J. WHITE, Church Clerk.

J. E. J. Walley was born December 9th, 1861, and departed this life September 17th, 1919, making his stay on earth 58 years, 9 months and 6 days. He was married to Nancy E. Meadows March 23rd, 1882, and to that union were born twelve children, eight girls and four boys, one daughter preceding him in death, leaving his companion, eleven children, several grandchildren and one great-grandchild, with the church and a host of friends, to mourn his death, but we mourn not as others, for he received a hope in our blessed Lord and joined the church in October, 1877. He was soon ordained to the office of deacon, which he faithfully filled until death, always filling his seat. His death was caused by a stroke of paralysis. He and one of his sons had started to their work in a car. His son discovered him lying over on the seat and stopped the car to examine him. He took him to the home of one of his married sons near by and a doctor was summoned, but could do nothing to help him and he soon passed away. Having been his pastor for several years, they telephoned me at once, and I reached there in time to speak on the occasion, using the words, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," to a large assembly, after which his body was laid in the cemetery to await the resurrection. Six of his daughters had the pleasure of living with him by faith in the church. May the Lord bless all of his family, and especially dear sister Walley in her old age.

Written by request of one of his daughters, Minerva Jones. L. F. EASLEY.

Mrs. Sallie M. Powell was born June 17th, 1855, and died at her home in Salisbury, Md., June 29th, 1921, aged 66 years and 12 days. All was done for her that loving hands could do, but it pleased the Lord to take her from us. God's will be done, not ours. She was united in marriage to Josiah Powell February 7th, 1872, to which union six children were born, five of whom are living. Four brothers, three sisters, ten grandchildren and one great-grandchild survive. Mother was a beautiful christian character, and manifested the same by her walk and conversation. She was a sufferer for six years from Bright's disease, yet through it all she showed that patience which can only be manifest in those who have a precious hope beyond all cares and trials of this life. We miss her smiling face, but are sure our loss is her eternal gain, and that she has gone to be where Jesus is, where there is no more sorrow or pain.

She was a member of the Methodist denomination, and her pastor, Mr. Herson, read from 2 Timothy iv. 6-8. Interment took place in Parsons Cemetery, Salisbury, Md.

May the Lord sustain our lonely father and sister Ida.

Her daughter, LAURA ROUNDS.

MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting of the Messongoes Church will be held on the third Sunday and Saturday before in September, beginning on Saturday afternoon at 2:30 o'clock. All day meeting on Sunday. Licentiate Wm. S. Bond, of Hopewell, N. J., is expected to be with us. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. C. MELLOTT, Pastor.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Jefferson, N. Y., expects to hold their two days meeting on the third Sunday and Saturday before in September (17th and 18th), 1921. We expect our pastor, Elder J. M. Fenton, and Elder D. M. Vail to be with us at that time.

GEORGE E. MEAD, Church Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Nassaongo Church will be held on the fourth Sunday and Saturday before in September, beginning at 2:30 o'clock Saturday afternoon. All day service Sunday. Elder John McConnell, of New York city, is expected to be with us. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. C. MELLOTT, Pastor.

THE Primitive Old School Baptist Church of Olive and Hurley will hold their annual meeting the last Saturday and Sunday in September, (24th and 25th) 1921, the Lord willing. Those coming by rail will get off at Ashokan, Ulster Co., N. Y., via U. & D. R. R., where they will be met and conveyed to the meetinghouse.

JAMES H. BEVIER, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Cow Marsh Church, Kent County, Delaware, will be held the fourth Sunday in September and Saturday afternoon before. A cordial invitation is extended to those of our faith and order to meet with us. Trains will be met at Woodside station, Delaware R. R., on Saturday morning from the north and south.

THOMAS L. COOPER, Church Clerk.

THE Olive and Hurley Church, of the Roxbury Association, will hold our annual two days meeting, the Lord willing, September 28th and 29th, 1921. Trains will be met as follows: Tuesday p. m., 3:31 west bound and 6:45 east bound; also both trains will be met Wednesday morning. All coming by train get off at Ashokan, N. Y. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

JOHN J. SECOR, Church Clerk.

THE Sulphur Fork Association, of the Old Primitive faith and order, will meet, the Lord willing, with the church at Hopewell, Wood County, Texas, eight miles west of Winnsboro, on the M. K. T. R. R., on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1921. All sound Predestinarian Baptists have a cordial invitation to assemble with us. All trains will be met at Winnsboro Thursday a. m. and p. m.

H. B. JONES, Moderator.

J. S. McLEOD, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Indiantown Church is appointed to be held on the first Sunday and Saturday before in October, 1921, services to begin on Saturday at 2:30 o'clock p. m. Elder C. W. Vaughn, of Hopewell, N. J., is expected to be present. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. C. MELLOTT, Pastor.

THE Lexington Association will hold its session this year with Second Roxbury Church, at Halcottville, N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday (5th and 6th) in October, 1921. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus.

JAMES AVERY, Church Clerk.

IT has been decided not to hold the session of the Juniata Association, which was to have been held with the Huntingdon Baptist Church of Trough Creek Valley, Pa., October 7th, 8th and 9th, 1921, but will appoint a two days meeting to be held Saturday and Sunday, October 8th and 9th. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to attend our meeting. We expect our pastor, Elder J. M. Fenton, Elder D. M. Vail and Elder W. S. Alexander, and hope other ministers will come. Those coming by train will come to Huntingdon, Pa., where they will be met with conveyance. Notify Laura Greenland, Colfax, Pa.

LAURA GREENLAND, Clerk.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Ebenezer Church, Loudoun Co., Va., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 12th, 13th and 14th, 1921. All those coming by rail will take train leaving 36th and M Sts. N. W., Washington, D. C., on Tuesday at 2 p. m. for Bluemont. Later trains will not be met. We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us. It may be that train schedule will change about October 1st. In that case take train nearest to 2 o'clock from Washington.

REBECCA NORMAN, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to convene with the Salisbury Church, in Salisbury, Md., October 19th, 20th and 21st, 1921. Those coming from the north take train leaving Broad St. station, Philadelphia, at 3 o'clock Tuesday p. m., and those coming from the south take train leaving Cape Charles at 4:45 p. m. Wednesday morning trains will be met. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. C. MELLOTT, Pastor.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

SUMAS, Wash., Sept. 3, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been some time since I have written anything for publication, but it has not been for lack of love or fellowship for the editors or correspondents, for there is not an editorial, or a correspondent whom I do not wish after reading their article that I could write and tell them of the joy and comfort I have received from reading their communication; but when I think of writing I get such a view of myself that I have not the courage to make the attempt, for there is something that whispers, Who would care to hear from you? and I turn away in sadness. How I do wish that I were a better man, more like the ones whom I know of God's dear little ones, and the ones whom I have never met in this world of sin and sorrow, but who see eye to eye and speak the same things that I have been taught; not as man teaches, for he teaches with outward signs and illustrations, but with the knowledge which comes from the fountain within. There is no feeling of doubt or uncertainty about this knowledge, for it comes with demonstration and with power, and while the Teacher is not visible to the natural eye, we do behold him with an eye of faith as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; and when we are so blessed as to behold him thus, our hearts are so full of love and adoration, and we receive the instructions and corrections with such joy and gladness, that it is indelibly fixed in our minds that it is the Comforter which Jesus told his disciples he would send and who would lead us unto all truth. Now this fact, brethren, is the reason why we see eye to eye and speak the same things, for they shall all be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of his children. Yes, dear ones, this peace flows like a river. Now a river as we watch it glide along is just one body of water so closely knit together that there are no separate particles; although made up of many creeks and small rivulets, still it is one water. How beautifully this portrays Christ and his church. The life that is in him is in them, and it is all one life, and it is all him, and we are all in him as the small creeks are all in the river, and we are as much hid in him as they are in the river, and just as inseparable, and our peace is in him, for

he is our Peace as well as our life, and in this are manifest the children of God and the children of antichrist. If the Spirit of Christ be not in you, you are none of his, but if his Spirit be in you and abound, it makes you so that you are neither barren nor unfruitful in the work of the Lord. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. He is our foundation as well as the foundation of the church, and this foundation differs from all earthly foundations, for they only support the structure from beneath, while he is underneath with his everlasting arms to uphold them, and round about them, a garden walled around with his salvation; for salvation hath God appointed for walls and bulwarks round about Zion, and this foundation is above us, giving us light and knowledge, drawing us upward away from earth, causing us to take root downward and bear fruit upward. As we go down into the fleshly recesses of our vile nature we find nothing but corruption, nothing but mire and clay, causing us to hang our heads in shame and cry, Unclean, unclean, until a beam of his glorious light shines into the dark recesses of our hearts, giving us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Then we are raised up and made to sit together in heavenly places, and we do praise him with fullness of joy. Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, for there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved, either in time or eternity; and when he gave up the ghost on the cross he paid the full price of the redemption of his people, and they are the only ones who were lost. Since salvation and redemption are synonymous, all his people were saved then and there, for there is no more sacrifice for sin, neither in this world nor the world to come, for Christ died and redeemed them, and hath by the one offering forever perfected them that are sanctified. So he has become our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, and through the cleansing virtue in his shed blood we stand justified before the throne of God pure and holy, even as he is holy, and without blame before God in love. This is what I deem holy, sanctified doctrine, and since it is upheld by the Scriptures I believe it; but it does not warrant any one in claiming they are or ever can be pure and holy in themselves, and that this natural body gets to that state of perfection that they live without sin while here in this life. I believe that the body is dead because of sin, and the spirit is life because of righteousness, but it is Christ's righteousness imputed to us, and this is the way I believe it is given to us. Now let us take a view of the flesh. It is truly said, The flesh profiteth nothing. It is the Spirit that quickeneth. Even in the state of nature there is no life in the flesh itself, but the spirit of life (natural life) quickens the body so that it has life in it, and it is this spirit that causes it to move. This is that breath of life which God breathed into the nostrils of Adam when he became a living soul. This life is in the seed, and has continued from Adam until the present time, and will continue until God's purpose is fulfilled, when time shall be no more, as regards this earth. As God said they should bear fruit or seed each after its own kind, so Adam's seed is corrupt or dead on account of his partaking of the fruit of the tree in the midst of the garden, as God told him, saying, In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die; and he did die just as certainly as that he did

eat, and as he died in trespasses and in sin, so the whole of his seed were included in the penalty, and death passed upon all, for that all have sinned. So while they are alive naturally they are dead spiritually; not partly dead and partly alive, as some affirm, but entirely dead, without a spark of life in them, without hope and without God in the world, without the knowledge or love of God in their hearts, rolling sin as a sweet morsel under their tongues; destruction and misery are in their way, and the way of peace they have not known. They glory in their strength and take all the glory to themselves, boasting of the great things they are doing and can do, also of the things they can prevent others from doing; as the strong man armed keepeth his palace and his goods are in peace until a stronger than he comes and binds him and takes away the armor in which he trusted, i. e., his boasted strength and ability to do whatsoever his soul chooseth. Right here there is a quickening of that same body into a different kind of life, and this life is the light of men, the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. This light has shined into a very dark place indeed, revealing all the hideous things secreted there, and as we dig and search, not one thing can we find to recommend us to God. We know him now, and we very much fear him in the frowning attitude in which he appears to us, and it is us alone that he is frowning upon. Oh that we could hide ourselves from his sight, for we have discovered that we are naked, and in the shame we feel we realize that we have sinned, and the penalty of death is passed upon us, and as a guilty wretch we want to get out of his sight, for we feel that the sentence is just and there is no reprieve or hiding from his all-seeing eye. Then we begin to beg for mercy, knowing that justice can never reach our case. We are in the pit indeed, where there is no standing, for under our feet is only miry clay and all around us slime and filth, and the more we try to get into a place of rest and safety the deeper we sink into the miry clay, until we exhaust all our strength and cry, "Lord, save, I perish." Then the time of love has come, for lo, in the twinkling of an eye all our mourning and laboring is changed to joy and rest, for the Sun of Righteousness has risen with healing in his wings, and instead of being in the pit of miry clay wherein there was no standing, with our garments smeared with the filth and slime of our own righteousness, with which we had been trying to appease an outraged law and a God in whose face we could only see looks of vengeance, now we look about us and find our nakedness and filthy clothing have been changed to beauty and loveliness, for Christ has lifted us out of the pit and washed us in his own precious blood, making us white as snow, and has clothed us with his robe of righteousness, and instead of mourning and begging for mercy we are singing praises to his matchless name, for he has redeemed us and cleansed us from all our sins, and he is ours and we are his. But I find that the strong man is not dead, as some affirm, but is only bound and is very much alive, and gets me into all sorts of trouble. He is the most subtle of any beast of the field which the Lord God has made.

I will leave this to your better judgment. If you deem it worthy a place in the dear old SIGNS, which I love and which comes to me laden with rich food from our Master's table, you can give it space, but do not crowd out other and better matter.

Yours in bonds of christian love,

DAVIS BURCH.

SULPHUR, Ky.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing two letters, which I think are too good to keep to myself, and want to share them with the readers of the SIGNS, if you see fit to publish them. Both letters are very precious to me, and I enjoyed them much. The names of both writers are familiar to the SIGNS. Elder P. W. Sawin, of Shelbyville, Ky., is my pastor, and a true and faithful soldier of the cross. Elder J. R. Chandler is a SIGNS acquaintance of mine whom I esteem very highly, I hope, for the truth's sake. I will not burden you with a letter of any length from myself, as my mind is so barren and destitute I could not write anything that would be of comfort to any one. Without Him we can do nothing, but where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.

May grace, mercy and peace be with the dear Lord's people everywhere. May he uphold them by his free Spirit.

Your sister, I hope,

ADDIE CHANDLER.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., March 4, 1921.

DEAR SISTER CHANDLER:—Your good letter came in due time, and I certainly appreciate your thinking of me, who am the poorest and least of my Father's house. I think I know something of all you speak, and have been over much of the ground this winter, and can truly adopt the words of the poet: Dark and stormy is the desert through which pilgrims wend their way. But the dear Redeemer has trod the road and marked the way. You complain of your leanness, and feel you have made no growth in grace. I thought of what John said: He (Christ) must increase, but I must decrease. This is true in our experience. In our early experience we thought to grow better and more wise, but what a wonderful failure on our part, what a decreasing in our expectation, less and less confidence in ourselves. On the other hand, our faith and hope in Jesus have increased from day to day as we realize in him that boundless fullness. Oh how much greater our esteem and feeling sense of our need of and in him than we felt in our early experience. So John's testimony agrees with ours, for Jesus has increased and we have decreased—no confidence in the flesh; therefore to grow in grace is to grow away from self. Jesus says, Consider the lilies, how they grow—grow away from the earth, above the earth; unconsciously they grow, no effort, just grow from or by an unseen power. So the farther the dear children of God get away from self, the earthy, the more is seen of the beauty of holiness, the real image of the dear Master. I think that but for the thorn in the flesh we would often be exalted above measure, and would no longer hunger and thirst after righteousness, or for the word of the Lord. Oh how blessed we are to have a name and place with those poor and afflicted people, for it is said, I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. Their only trust or hope is in the Lord for life and salvation. We have no fitness in ourselves, no righteousness, but filthy rags; it is all in Christ, who loved us and according to his mercy saved us. Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I, and it is a meeting.

I have had cold much of the winter, and it affected my eye; at one time sight was almost gone, and feeling I would be cut off entirely from mingling with the church I cried out in bitterness of soul, Is his mercy clean gone forever? But as I get stronger my eyesight is get-

ting back to about normal, and I now hope to get out, yet go with dread, and feel to be a great burden and care wherever I go. I often feel if they had a better preacher the church would be more prosperous, and I stand ready to give way to some one else. I think I love the cause too well to be a stumbling-block. Oh that the Lord would guide my ways; oh that my God would grant me grace to know and do his will, is my daily cry.

This is to Frank also, if there is a single crumb of comfort to be gleaned from it. I took up my pen yesterday to write, but felt so empty I could say nothing that would be of any benefit, and feel now it would have been better to have put it down again. May grace, mercy and peace be with you all.

Yours in gospel bonds,

P. W. SAWIN.

CLAY, La., May 5, 1921.

DEAR SISTER CHANDLER:—I received your most welcome letter and enjoyed it much. All the objection I had to it was, it was not long enough. You spoke so sweetly of Jesus fulfilling the law for poor sinners. It did my poor heart good to feel you could tell me where my little hope is. I do not know if we are kin in the flesh, but feel to hope we are in the Spirit, and kinship in the flesh is nothing to compare with that sweet love and fellowship we have for each other in the Lord, yet strangers in the flesh. It is wonderful indeed, and I sometimes feel it surely is of the Lord, and if it is that love will never die. All fleshly love will pass away, but the love we have for each other in the Lord will not; but the most of the time I am fearing my love for the children of God is not pure love, as it should be, and am saying, Am I his, or am I not? Lord, decide it for me. I am hoping in a God that is all-powerful, and works and none can hinder. He never tries to do anything, but speaks and it is done. Yes, his will shall be done. Oh how sweet his promises to poor beggars like you and me, who have never done anything to cause God to hear us when we cry, but know if he hears us it is all of his free grace, for God, that cannot lie, promised eternal life before the world began, and he says, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. Now, my sister, is this love to the whole world of mankind? I feel I hear you say, No; for if God loves the whole world and cannot or does not save the whole world he is no God to me, and his promises are no more than man's promises, and we know man's promises fail most of the time; but God never promised to save the whole world, yet I believe he saves every one he loved with an everlasting love. Yes, he is able to save the last one he loved, not one of them is left out. All that the Father gave me shall come unto me. Jesus says again, The Father hath given me power over all flesh, that I should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given me. The prophet said, The Lord hath brought forth our righteousness, now I believe. If the Lord Jesus had not fulfilled the law there would not have been one of the human family saved. He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and he opened not his mouth. I believe the prophet was speaking of when he was led to be crucified, and oh how sweet it is when we can see him by an eye of faith. He was railed upon, and they plaited a crown of thorns for his head, and he bore it like a lamb, that his people might be saved from everlasting

death, and the moving cause of it was love. He was made to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. I believe if Jesus had had one ill feeling towards his persecutors there would not have been one saved, for it took a holy offering to fulfill a holy law.

Now I hope you will overlook my blunders, and if you ever feel to write me I shall be glad to receive a letter from you. I have been afflicted with heart trouble for about sixteen months and can get about but very little. I get very lonely, and it does me good to get a letter from the brethren or sisters. I sometimes long to go home where Jesus is, but the Lord's time is best. Sometimes I look back over my past life and view the trials I have come through, and feel sure God has been with me or I never could have borne them; and when I come to die, if Jesus will be with me I shall be satisfied. "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear!" I hope it is christian love that prompts me to write you, and when you get low down in the dark, and feel your heart to be too hard to pray to a just and holy God, and feel to be a poor castaway, not worthy of a friend, then remember me and know I have traveled the same road time after time. May we meet in that happy world above where Jesus is, to sing his praises for ever and ever. J. R. CHANDLER.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, Sept. 4, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—Your editorial in the last SIGNS has caused me to give some thought to the questions under consideration and I want to write you today concerning them, not that I have any light to impart, but rather to get some expression from you on certain points which have often perplexed me. I do not feel it is advisable to speculate on the meaning of the Scriptures, and I know there is a great tendency in the human mind to do so. There are many who are bringing in strange doctrines and seeking to disturb the world with interpretations of prophecy. There are others, again, who are openly denying the Scriptures and teaching atheistic materialism. I do not wish to be influenced by any of these arguments, nor indeed have I any desire to hear either premises or conclusions which are not in accord with the faith once delivered unto the saints. At the same time I do feel that we should give heed to the words of our Lord, and prayerfully consider the many warnings left by him and his inspired servants concerning the latter days, that we be not found as the foolish virgins or slothful servants at his appearing. Our Savior referred his disciples to the prophecy of Daniel, which when written was a sealed book, so it must have been for their instruction that this prophecy was given. The epochs of time are not according to our reckoning, and yet Daniel was enabled to read in the book of the prophet Jeremiah the time of the accomplishment of the desolations of Jerusalem, and to give expression to a wonderful prayer for the restoration of Israel which was shortly accomplished, and what is more, he was given a view of the redemption of spiritual Israel in the coming of the Messiah, and the final destruction of the earthly sanctuary.

Do you consider that the Old Testament prophecies are all fulfilled at the coming of Christ? It seems to me they must be. Of course there is reference to events such as the destruction of the temple and scattering of the Jews which the ending of the first dispensation entailed, and also to the establishment of the gos-

pel church. These were all parts, and many of them minor parts, as it were, in the great event of Christ's coming, with all it involved. His birth, the taking on himself of a fleshly body, his works, his suffering and death, his resurrection and the establishment of his everlasting kingdom, were all part of the plan of redemption. How far the words of our Lord and his apostles have reference to past or current events I have often wondered. John, writing years after the destruction of Jerusalem, speaks prophetically of things shortly to come to pass. Prophecy, being the testimony of Jesus Christ, extends from the first to the last. The words, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty," are very significant. John was told, Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter. We are creatures of time, but God's ways are eternal. For some time I have felt, whether rightly or wrongly I do not know, that the revelation of the man of sin meant the uncloaking of antichrist, so that those who make a profession of Christ without true faith could cast off the pretence and would worship openly the "man of sin," and persecute those who still profess the name of Christ in sincerity and truth. Whether this is idle speculation you can say better than I. After telling of things which should come to pass, Jesus said, "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." In another place he says, "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

While I recognize that the many sects professing Christ have grievous errors, and that many who profess his name have no true knowledge of him, yet there are those among these various congregations who are true believers and mourn for the abominations seen around them. God takes account of every one, and churches which profess his name are not overlooked in the word of prophecy. Some of those to whom John wrote were in grave error, yet they were addressed because of the few who still remained faithful.

A week ago Wednesday we buried our brother and deacon, Arthur H. Reed. He died after a very brief illness from pneumonia, out near Prince Rupert, B. C., where he was attending to his work on the railway. He was very dear to me, and I feel the loss greatly in our little church, which seems almost completely bereft, but I feel glad of the record he has left, a man who lived his profession, and though quiet and unassuming exerted a marked influence among his fellow-men. The men who worked with him without exception speak most highly of him. One, a labor member in the legislature, remarked to a friend, "There was something sacred about that man." A next door neighbor, who was not at all a personal friend, said he had to go back and take another look at his face, for he said there was an expression on it no undertaker could put there. It surprised me to hear also that he and his wife always would go out on the porch when we were holding our meetings at brother Reed's house. He said he saw no use going to church when he could stay home and hear us singing. I wonder how many there are who would desire to hear the gospel in its purity in these days of skepticism and folly. It seems that we are so few, and yet there are evidences that the harvest is still great but the laborers few. How we need a minister with an eye single to the glory of God.

Ministers blame their congregations and congregations their ministers, but how few look to themselves. Whatever may be the interpretations of the warnings left us, it is a time for prayer and watching. Oh that the Lord will enable us so to do.

Affectionately, your brother,

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

POCA, W. Va., Feb. 28, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I thought I would write you a few lines to let you know I have not forgotten you. My limited education often keeps me from writing you and many of my precious brethren and sisters who write for the SIGNS. It is wonderful indeed to read after them, all bearing fruit, not a barren one among them, all taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of his children. All mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them. This should be and is satisfactory evidence why such a oneness on the fundamental principles of doctrine exists, kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Salvation is deliverance. There is not a doubt but that Jonah preached with power to the Ninevites that salvation is of the Lord, but he first had to be delivered before he could preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind. Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights, and said, "I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice." I have heard a great many of our preaching brethren compare their call to the ministry to the call of Jonah to preach to Nineveh, and have never felt to doubt its application; but more particularly was Jesus typified by Jonah being in the fish's belly three days and three nights. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. As I pen these lines my mind runs back to my first impression of having to stand before the people and in the presence of God to tell of his goodness and mercy, his power to save to the uttermost all that come unto him by his only begotten Son, full of grace and truth. For eight long years with all my natural power I tried to evade the impression, feeling, or rather thinking, I could and would drive away the impression, and did many things to that end, which pierced me through with many sorrows. The Lord's way of preparing Jonah to preach to Nineveh was not frustrated or thwarted by Jonah's rebellious disposition. In his disobedience to the command of the Lord he only brought himself into deep distress and anguish of soul, and from the depths of his heart he prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly, and said, "I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord." Every move he made in his attempt to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord was to the end that he should learn obedience by the things he suffered. "And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee." The purpose or will of God was now in Jonah to preach the power of God in the salvation of Nineveh. Jonah's sermon was short, but fitly spoken, his subject being indited by the Lord: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." We are poor fallible creatures, and make many mistakes, but our God is infallible, entirely exempt from liability to mistake, and when he calls one to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, who died for our offences and rose again for our justification, that one is as sure to preach the preaching that God bids him, to the comfort of the household of faith,

as did Jonah to that great city called Nineveh, who believed God and proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth, from the least of them even unto the greatest of them. It is written in the prophets, They shall be all taught of God. There is no doubt but many of the called ministers of God have an experience similar to that of Jonah's, but the best evidence that one has been called to preach is that he does preach.

Your brother,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Aug. 18, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I feel to-day like expressing a few of my thoughts for your consideration, knowing as I do that your judgment is sufficient to decide whether they should go into the waste-basket or not; if so, I shall not be offended, for I trust I have the welfare of the household of faith more at heart than my own personal feelings. I am now past my seventy-second year, and the blessings that have been mine in this length of time are innumerable, and every one of them has come from the same source: the Giver of every good and every perfect gift, and no blessing, either great or small, have I in any way merited, and I am glad that I am enabled to make such acknowledgment, for this of itself is a blessing, and this is my desire to acknowledge God in all his ways. Until I was twenty-one years of age I had no knowledge of God only traditional, or the evidence that I had from the creation of the natural universe, which I sometimes think is sufficient evidence to any intelligent being of the existence of an all-wise Creator, but to know God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, I had no knowledge of such a Being whatsoever, until he revealed himself to me the year I was twenty-one. Such a God is known unto us by revelation only, just as he reveals himself unto us and in us by his Spirit; no man knows anything of the true and everlasting God but by the Spirit of God that is in him. This I know to be true, that by searching God is not found; it is not by dint of study, yet I do not suppose there are any on this earth possessed of natural religion only but what God is found out in their minds by their searching. They cannot see the Bible (which they seem to reverence) teaches the opposite to this, not having the witness within testifying to the truth they deny the truth. But God says of his people that he will write his law in their hearts and put it in their inward parts, and they shall all know him from the least unto the greatest of them, and he will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and will remember their sins and iniquities no more forever; that he will be their God and that they shall be his people. O how good, yes, exceedingly good, are all his precious promises to his people, promises made by him who is ever-faithful, having all power, doing all his pleasure in heaven and in earth, there being none to stay his hand, or to say, What doest thou? These are things the world will not receive, being foolishness unto them, the carnal mind being enmity against these things, not subject to the law of God which he writes in the hearts of his children, a spiritual law, not discerned by the natural or carnal mind, which is sensual, devilish. God's children only receive the things, being spiritually minded; that is, having the mind of Christ, and there are times when they are privileged to sweetly meditate upon these things, also have a desire at times to communicate with each other, making mention of the infinite goodness and mercy of God, to recall what wonderful things God hath done for them, whereof they are glad, calling them out of nature's darkness into his wonderful light, showing them their sins and revealing to them the only remedy for sin. What an unspeakable gift this is. Language fails to tell the magnitude of guilt and our utter inability to extricate ourselves from such a loathsome, detestable state. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." What delightful language, just suited to our case.

Your brother,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1921.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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DEFINITIONS.

A SUBSCRIBER in the south asks us to explain the difference between the terms "redemption" and "salvation" from the scriptural standpoint. In replying to this inquiry we want to write plainly, so that our meaning may not be obscure, but it may be that our view will not agree with those of some of our brethren. However, we do not want to set forth anything which the word of God will not bear out, and should we make an error we shall be glad to be set right.

We shall first take up the word "redemption." The literal meaning of the word means the act or proceeding of buying back again, or restoring again to one's own possession. The very word therefore contains within itself the thought of prior ownership. Nothing can be redeemed that was not beforehand the property of the one doing the redeeming. One cannot redeem that which belongs to some one else. The very word therefore carries with it the doctrine and truth of election. If God chose not his people in Christ before the foundation of the world, thus giving them to his Son to be responsible for them, wherein, we ask, is Christ's right to redeem? Christ had the right to redeem his people, and was the only one having this right, because in him resided the prerogative of Lordship over the ones to be redeemed. The church belongs first to the Father, then to the Son. The elect are the property of Christ by gift from the Father before time began and before any of them were in material existence. The transgression of Adam involved the whole of the elect in sin and death and brought them under the condemnation of God's holy law. Divine justice therefore held the elect captives under the law until some one should come to redeem them by paying the penalty they had incurred. The one to redeem the elect of God and to buy them back by satisfying every demand of divine justice could be none other than Jesus Christ. Therefore, in the fullness of God's time, he was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. The penalty demanded by the law for transgression was death, because death is the wages of sin. This is the penalty Jesus paid. He died for them, shed his blood for them, in order to buy them back and to restore them into the favor of God. They could not redeem themselves, because they did not belong to themselves. Men could not redeem them, because they did not previously own them. Satan could not do it, for they were not by priority his. But to Christ, the Son of God, they did from eternity belong, because the Father had given them to him in the covenant of election. Thus it behooved Christ to suffer for them, inasmuch as he was their Lord and Master, their Surety and Covenant Head. The price which Jesus paid to buy them back and to ransom them from the power of the grave was not gold and silver corruptible, but his own precious blood imperishable. It took Christ's death to redeem them, and nothing more than his death, nor less than that, will suffice. Redemption required

Christ's death, but not his resurrection. It is necessary here to carefully divide the word of truth, and to give each term its proper value. The justification of the redeemed required the resurrection of Christ, but redemption did not require that. Redemption was completed when he had shed his blood and had died. This satisfied the demands of divine justice. But while this satisfied justice, it did not satisfy the mind and will of God, because God had predetermined that the elect should not only be redeemed, but also justified. Thus to justify his elect it must needs be that Christ rise from the dead. Therefore justification is by and through the resurrection of Christ, redemption is by and through the blood and death of Christ. But this brings us to our second word: "salvation." Salvation is a much broader term than "redemption," and means very much more than redemption. While salvation includes redemption, redemption is by no means the whole of salvation. Salvation is the act or proceeding of saving the elect of God from sin and death, from all the curse and condemnation of the law of sin. Salvation begins with the foreknowledge of God and ends in the glorification of the saints at the right hand of the Father in eternity after time shall have passed away. The first act of God in the work of salvation was when he wrote their names in the book of life before the foundation of the world, when the great Three in One, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, counselled with and in himself concerning the great purpose of salvation, when the Father chose his people in the Son, when the Son undertook to secure them forever, when the Holy Spirit undertook to seal each and every one of the elect unto the redemption of the purchased possession. This wonderful covenant of election which we talk and write about, but shall never wholly comprehend this side of eternity, was the first act in the work of salvation. Succeeding this, God created the world and all therein, above and below. He arranged for the entrance of sin into the world, and included in sin all his elect; thus sin brought them into condemnation and put them in such a state as to make necessary further acts of God in the work of salvation. Then came Jesus, the Son manifest in the flesh, and did the work of redemption as we have already outlined. After redemption came justification, which was taken care of in Christ's rising from the dead and ascending unto glory. Following upon this came sanctification by the Holy Spirit's taking of the things of Jesus and shewing them unto the elect of God, thus bringing them to know the truth, and the truth making them free indeed from all the things of the law, from the doctrines and commandments of men, thus sanctifying them. Closely associated with this work of sanctification is that of effectual calling by the grace of God, which calls sinners unto repentance from sin and to the belief of the truth. After this is the preservation of the saints by the grace of God through all temptations and trials to the end of the journey. Then comes glorification, by which all the redeemed shall forever be delivered from the bondage of corruption, and shall be glorified with the image of Christ, forever to dwell with him in the heavens of immortality. Thus, as we see it, salvation is the one big comprehensive word that includes the whole process of saving sinners, from the time they were chosen in Christ in eternity before time was, until their glorification in the presence of God in eternity after time shall be no more. Redemption

is a much narrower word as compared with salvation, since it refers to but one act in the whole work of salvation, that of buying back the sheep by the death of the great Shepherd. We are not undertaking to be dogmatic and to lay down hard and fast definitions for all these holy terms. The subject is too big to ever be staked out and limited within bounds by any of us. Such thoughts as we have here given are merely by way of setting forth our own viewpoint in these solemn matters, and any one who can do better is surely welcome to try. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. S. Murphy.)

The Tygarts Valley River Association of Old School, Predestinarian Baptists, now in session with the Mount Olive Church, Barbour County, West Virginia, August 26th, 27th and 28th, 1921, to the churches of which she is composed, and to all of the same precious faith, sendeth christian greetings.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Another year, with all its joys and sorrows, has passed and gone, and a few of us, through the goodness and mercy of God, are blessed with this another privilege of meeting in sweet fellowship in this another association, and we hope and trust that this meeting will be to the honor and glory of God and to the comfort and edification of his people who are present, so that they can say, It is good to be here.

Now, as it is our custom to address you by letter, we will call your attention to Psalms cxxxiii., first verse: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Dear brethren, these words were given to David by God, to be left on record for his people. For "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." So these words are not to any but the redeemed and called of God. So as far as the Lord will give us the ability we will write from this text. Now the word "behold" means to closely observe. "How good" means pleasant and agreeable; that is, nothing to disturb our joy and peace, and how pleasant it is for brethren. Now this word "brethren" in this text means more than natural brethren; it means those he (Christ) is not ashamed to call brethren. It is the redeemed of the Lord, those who are made heirs and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. It is those who are led by the Spirit of God. It is those who will awake in the resurrection with the likeness of the Lord Jesus, and be like him. So they are holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling. Now these are the brethren that David was talking about when he said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" The word "unity" is a oneness, whether of sentiment, affection or behavior. The unity of the faith is the same belief of the truths of God and the possession of the same faith in a similar form and degree. The unity of the Spirit is that oneness between Christ and his saints whereby the same divine Spirit dwells in them both—that is Christ in you the hope of glory, or as Christ has said, I in you, and you in me. The unity or oneness of the saints among themselves whereby being united to the same Head and having the same Spirit dwelling in them they have the same faith, hope, love, &c. This is what makes them love the gospel of Christ and have a mutual

love and care for one another. This is why they dwell together in unity. So, dear brethren, have we not learned by experience so that we can say in truth with David, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity"? for it proves that the love of God is in us, for the fruit of the Spirit is being made manifest, which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, &c. So when the Spirit is leading them they dwell together in unity, and oh how good and pleasant this is. John says, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." Dear brethren, the love of God that is shed abroad in the hearts of his people is what binds them together so that they can walk hand in hand and heart to heart. Well might the poet say,

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in christian love,
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

Dear brethren, may the God of all grace lead, guide and direct you so that you may walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Dear brethren, be ye therefore followers of God as dear children, and may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

J. B. CROSS, Moderator.
J. N. BARTLETT, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. A. E. Walker, Va., $2.00; Mrs. J. A. Hurley, Mich., $1.00; J. W. Hastings, Mich., $2.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

John William Carter was born August 27th, 1845, near Pleasantdale, W. Va., and departed this life October 19th, 1920, while visiting in Virginia. In 1869 he united with Union Predestinarian Baptist Church, in Hampshire County, W. Va., and was baptized by Elder B. W. Paneer. He was married to Jemima Taylor, of Purgitsville, W. Va., in March, 1873. To that union was born one son, William Carter, of Covina, Calif. Sister Carter passed away in October, 1918, and was taken by her affectionate husband and son to her old home in West Virginia for burial, at her request while she was visiting her old home church a few years before her death. Brother Carter taught school for several years, and afterwards was engaged in the mercantile business in Hampshire County, W. Va., for about forty years. At no time during his life was he too busy or too weary to uphold divine truth. He moved to California in October, 1906, and in June, 1907, located in Covina, where he lived a retired life. On August 15th, 1920, he left California for Hampshire County, W. Va., the object of this trip being to place a monument at the grave of his wife, and though very weak, he was given strength to see the work completed. He was liberated to preach the unsearchable riches of God's grace some years before coming to California. His gift was comforting and edifying to God's people, yet he never submitted to come under the hands of a presbytery to the full work of the gospel ministry, feeling his unworthiness to take such great obligation upon himself. He was loved by all the far western Baptists; his presence at Little Flock and Liberty churches was greatly appreciated. He assisted in the organization of these churches. He was kind and gentle as a little child, yet bold as a lion in defending the doctrine of God our Savior. He loved the church, and loved to defend its cause. He will be greatly missed by these churches, also by his son and wife.

Written by request of the son.

L. W. RIPPETO.

Mary Hill Terry, wife of Franklin S. Terry, departed this life July 7th, 1921, at the age of 65 years. She was married to Franklin S. Terry April 8th, 1901, and during the period of her married life was a true, devoted wife and companion. She leaves her husband, one sister, Mrs. David W. Shepherd, and many relatives and friends to mourn. She united with the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, N. J., July 26th, 1879, and was baptized by Elder William J. Purington. In this church she lived a true, devoted sister until after her marriage to brother Terry. Being in full fellowship and with the consent of the church she obtained a letter of good standing and fellowship and presented it to the Salem Old School

Baptist Church in Philadelphia, Pa., where she lived in fellowship until she and brother Terry came to Hopewell to live, six years ago, and bearing a letter, together with brother Terry, they were unanimously received, where she lived until God called her away. I feel to note the names of all ministers that served the churches of her membership: Elders Purington, Chick, Badger, Coulter and the writer, and I feel I can voice the heart expression of all, that sister Terry was ever faithful and a very devoted sister. Elder Coulter and the writer can truthfully say her company was sweet, her words were full of love for the brethren, and things that were faithful and upright were what she desired to uphold. We greatly miss sister Terry; her visits to call on her pastor were as frequent as she could make them, and her mind was continually upon the way of salvation. Her writings, both public and private, have been much enjoyed by all who have had the privilege of reading from her pen.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer July 11th, in the presence of a large gathering of brethren, sisters, relatives and friends. Her remains were laid to rest in the Hopewell Old School Baptist Cemetery. She rests from all her labors, and I truly feel to say to brother Terry, Weep not for her, as your loss is her eternal gain. Such as sister Terry live and speak in the hearts of God's people after they are gone. May we all strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

CHAS. W. VAUGHN.

Newton Jasper Jones was born in Appanoose County, Iowa, April 20th, 1876, and departed this life July 31st, 1921, at his home near Promise City, Iowa, aged 45 years, three months and 11 days. He was united in marriage to Clara Icis Adams December 1st, 1905. To that union were born three children: Mayon Jasper, Naomi Jane and Ruby Icis. He united with the Predestinarian Baptist Church called Providence March 14th, 1903, and was ordained to the ministry October 20th, 1917, which place he filled until death called him. He leaves to mourn their loss, besides his wife and three children, a mother, two sisters, five brothers and a host of relatives and friends. His father and one sister preceded him in death several years ago. The funeral service was held August 3rd.

W. T. WALTERS.

Edwin Parsons Phillips, son of Enoch and Jennie Phillips, was born March 16th, 1854, died September 8th, 1921, aged 67 years, 5 months and 22 days. In the year 1878 he was united in marriage to Mary Jane George. To that happy union were born ten children, seven boys and three girls; two boys preceded their father to the grave. He was a devoted husband and a kind and industrious father. Although he never joined any church, he was a believer in the doctrine held by the Primitive Baptists, and faithfully attended their meetings for many years. He will be missed in his family and neighborhood, also by the church, where he could always be found on meeting day. His home was always open to the brethren and friends. He and sister Phillips raised a splendid family of boys and girls, and I am sure they will make things pleasant in this life for sister Phillips. May God grant the children grace as he sees fit.

The funeral was held September 10th at 10 o'clock a. m., conducted by Elders J. J. Poling and J. B. Cross, and was one of the largest ever held at Little Bethel.

P.

MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting of the Indiantown Church is appointed to be held on the first Sunday and Saturday before in October, 1921, services to begin on Saturday at 2:30 o'clock p. m. Elder C. W. Vaughn, of Hopewell, N. J., is expected to be present. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. C. MELLOTT, Pastor.

THE Lexington Association will hold its session this year with Second Roxbury Church, at Halcottville, N. Y., the first Wednesday and Thursday (5th and 6th) in October, 1921. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus.

JAMES AVERY, Church Clerk.

IT has been decided not to hold the session of the Juniata Association, which was to have been held with the Huntingdon Baptist Church of Trough Creek Valley, Pa., October 7th, 8th and 9th, 1921, but will appoint a two days meeting to be held Saturday and Sunday, October 8th and 9th. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to attend our meeting. We expect our pastor, Elder J. M. Fenton, Elder D. M. Vail and Elder W. S. Alexander, and hope other ministers will come. Those coming by train will come to Huntingdon, Pa., where they will be met with conveyance. Notify Laura Greenland, Colfax, Pa.

LAURA GREENLAND, Clerk.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Ebenezer Church, Loudoun Co., Va., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 12th, 13th and 14th, 1921. All those coming by rail will take train leaving 36th and M Sts. N. W., Washington, D. C., on Tuesday at 2 p. m. for Bluemont. Later trains will not be met. We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us. It may be that train schedule will change about October 1st. In that case take train nearest to 2 o'clock from Washington.

REBECCA NORMAN, Church Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Welsh Tract Church is appointed to begin Saturday, October 15th, at 10 o'clock a. m. and continue two days. Those coming from Philadelphia and Wilmington will take train leaving Philadelphia, Broad St. station, at 7:20 a. m. Saturday and Sunday. Those coming from Baltimore and points south will take train leaving Baltimore (Union Station) at 8 o'clock a. m. Saturday, and all will be met at Newark, Del., and conveyed to the meetinghouse. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, also ministers who are in order and good standing with us.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to convene with the Salisbury Church, in Salisbury, Md., October 19th, 20th and 21st, 1921. Those coming from the north take train leaving Broad St. station, Philadelphia, at 3 o'clock Tuesday p. m., and those coming from the south take train leaving Cape Charles at 4:45 p. m. Wednesday morning trains will be met. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. C. MELLOTT, Pastor.

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 694 E. 125th St., or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 89. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1921. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SUFFERING FOR SIN.

THE sufferings and adversities of the souls of those who are called of God under the consciousness of their sins are varied. The first burden and sufferings of soul are that they are vile transgressors under the law, exposed to the wrath of the holy and just God, and not having as yet the knowledge given them by the Holy Ghost of Christ's atonement for their sins; their burden, humiliation, condemnation and sorrows are the sufferings of a guilty conscience under unatoned sins. They are feelingly under the law, and under God's curse therein; darkness and dreadful forebodings weigh down the soul, and our sins become more and more exceeding sinful, loathed and repented of, where they remain unatoned, unforgiven, a hateful load. But after that we have, through Jesus Christ, the dear Lamb of God, received the atonement, (Romans v. 11,) after we have been made nigh by the blood of Christ, and have been given a place in the household of God, oh then to be given to see the iniquity of our hearts, then to feel how vile and sinful we are, to see how we have sinned as children of God. Ah, there is a bitterness of sorrow, there is anguish of spirit, there is a brokenness of heart felt under all this that was not in our first trouble. The reason for the distinction in our soul's sufferings under our sins after we have received the atonement is, that in receiving the sweet evidences of the remission of our sins by the blood of Christ we have so much larger knowledge of God. Such sacred, comforting revelations are made to our hearts, in the new covenant, of the love and mercy and grace of God, and that we should sin against the God of our mercy, that we should sin against our heavenly Father, that we should wander away, be forgetful, backslide, be ensnared in unbelief, that our love should become lukewarm, that the corruptions of our flesh should in the least be indulged in—oh this is our shame, this is heinous indeed; our hearts are made to mourn unto our God. Oh the invisible depravity of the heart! (invisible to the eyes of our fellows, but in all hideousness and hatefulness seen and felt when God for a little moment sheds a little light in the dark crevices of the heart, deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.) Oh how

I have longed to be utterly free from sin, that never a sinful thought might arise. But God knoweth what is in the heart of sinful man, and for our humility, to bring us to sincere appreciation of his salvation, God makes his children to know the hidden evils of their hearts. "Thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart."—1 Kings viii. 38. This is "his own sore and his own grief."—2 Chron. vi. 29. Poor sin-sick child of God, do you shrink from taking God's healing medicines? Thou hast none of thine own. (Jer. xxx. 12.) You say, I have tasted a little of it, and it is bitter to my soul. Say, dear child of God, do you dread the furnace? Do you tremble at the thought of passing through the fire? Would you escape the fire? You dread to be put into the melting-pot. But, dear kindred in Christ, do we not long to be purged from our dross and tin? (Isaiah i. 25.) Ah, we are poor and frail and ignorant, often tossed about and know not what to say. This is true evidence that we are such poor ones that we shall need abundant mercy from our God to glorify him in the fires. (Isaiah xxiv. 15.) Our fleshly nature shrinks from affliction, and after the flesh we are averse to all discipline; we complain under the rod, we bemoan ourselves, pity ourselves, and say in our rebellious, hard hearts that God is ungracious, too hard, unmerciful to give us such a rugged path, such adversities, afflictions, trials. Oh the desperate, awful, inward language of the heart, deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Then (notwithstanding all the fretfulness, unreconciliation and rebelliousness of our flesh to trials, adversities and chastenings) after the new man, which is created after the image of him that created him in righteousness and true holiness, we sigh and moan and mourn unto our God over our sins, over our perverse way, and we thirst for God, for holiness, for communion with God at the mercy-seat. "There I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel."—Exodus xxv. 22. Surely our chastened hearts will be saying, It becomes me to crucify the flesh with the affections and the lusts; O Lord, enable me to do so. Deal with me as thou dealest with thy children, enable me to endure chastenings, bring me near to thyself, that I may walk as the dear children of God, that I may humbly walk with thee, my Father God. Well do I experience that the new, everlasting, covenant mercies of our God are the only healing of my soul, and these are shed upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior. We are repeatedly taught to know that Jesus, his blood and righteousness, his sacrifice of himself for our sins, and his high priesthood in the presence of God for us, are the ground of our hope and our acceptance before the Majesty in the heavens. This is so healing and uplifting, filling the soul with joy and peace in believing. We abound in hope by the power of the Holy Ghost. What a sacred mercy to be humbled and with a mellowed spirit to come before our God. We are before him just as we are, and we know we are altogether known to him; and the sacred, glorious hope that the creature shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God is our comfort, and we reach forth to it with earnest expectation. For the creature was made subject to vanity, or death, not willingly (for death in itself is repugnant

to the soul). But when with unfeigned faith we are clinging to Christ, and are held in his embrace, then, so apprehended, how blessed it is that death is ours. (1 Cor. ii. 22.) Death shall not separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans viii. 38, 39.) Oh the glory that shall be revealed in us. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." God hath subjected us to vanity in hope. "The righteous hath hope in his death." —Prov. xiv. 32. When that sacred moment comes, and we are departing to be with Christ, which is far better, our souls shall in that precious moment be delivered from all the bondage of corruption. Thus we have hope of eternal life and glory in death.

"Released from sin and toil and grief,
Death is our gate to endless life,
An open gate to let us fly,
And build our happy nest on high."

We leave the body to sleep in the dust of the earth, in hope of a glorious resurrection at the last day, when the Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ, shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For he shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. Oh sweet and glorious anticipation, the crowning act of our adoption, even the redemption of our body. (Romans viii. 23.) Very sacred is the thought that our "bodies are the members of Christ." —1 Cor. vi. 15. It is in expectation of all this that we live, it is Christ in us the hope of glory. We shall be glorified together with him; and though it doth not yet appear what we shall be, yet we have this hope in us, that when Christ shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is, and we shall appear with him in glory. (1 John iii. 2; 2 Col. iii. 4.)

"No more shall we mourn that thy face thou art concealing;
No Satan, no sin, base intruders below;
But ever behold thee, fresh glories revealing;
Amen, hallelujah! Come, Lord, even so."

The apostle Paul could say, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not unto me only, but to all them also that love his appearing." May not the believer, in whom Christ is the hope of glory, in the blissfulness of believing sing:

"Christ and I in that bright glory
One deep joy shall share;
Mine to be forever with him,
His that I am there."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

CHOUDRANT, La., July 31, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—If you will allow me a small space in your columns, I will try in my weak, ignorant way to tell some of my trials and afflictions, and what I at times hope to be an experience of grace. It has been my desire for the past three years to write a letter of inquiry. Does any poor, cast down, miserable wretch on earth have such travel of mind as I? More than three years ago, after several years of poor health, I began to feel that I could live but a short while, and that I was a sinner before an all-wise, just and merciful God. I tried to beg forgiveness, but my burden grew worse and worse. My past life stood before me day and night. God was just and right, but I was such a wretched sinner he had closed

his ear against hearing my pleading. One morning as I started to leave the house I embraced mother and asked her to pray for me, that I was lost. I felt that mother was so much better in the sight of God that he might forgive. Some time after, with no relief, as I walked between the plow-handles I felt that hell was my doom and God was just, pure and clean, and I was all to blame, I was getting what I deserved. But as I trembled at the thought I tried to ask forgiveness again, and it came to my mind if all the world were praying for me God could not forgive and be just, and I tried to ask, If it be thy will that I must sink down to destruction, suffer me, merciful God, to praise thy great name as I sink. If I know anything concerning God and his mercy to a poor helpless wretch, here is the school in which I learned it. Then it came to my mind that Christ suffered and died to satisfy the law which I could not satisfy, and took up the mortgage that bound my soul fast to hell, and it seemed to be handed over to me as a free gift, and I stood justified before the Lord. I believe if ever he was with me it was then. I was happy, and thought I always would be. My troubles were gone, and it seemed that I was in sweet communion with my God. I promised myself I would tell mother what I had felt, and the next opportunity I would go before the church and tell them what I had seen and felt; but as I went up the hill to the house a great shadow of dread came over my mind, and I began to feel that it was all a notion of mine to relieve me for a short time, that I might be able to stand more suffering, and that God was not in the matter. I had nothing to tell mother when I got there. Several days passed and meeting time came. Mother asked me if I were going to meeting. I told her no, I was going to plow, but before I reached the field I began to wish I had said I might go to meeting. As I plowed my desire was that I could live like the good Old Baptists, so that I would not disgrace them, for I wanted to be baptized in the name of the Lord, but knew I could not live like they did. I was ashamed of my past walk, and felt they would be ashamed of me. I felt that if I had a name among them communion would often be put off on account of some trouble I had caused. I had forsaken the promise I made when I seemed to be raised above my troubles. I feared to rebel, still I could not bear the thought of going before the church, I was so unworthy. Elder J. R. Chandler came home with father and mother for dinner, after which he came to the field where I was. I saw him coming slowly along, and his old gray head looked dear to me. Oh, if I were as innocent before my Maker as he I would be glad to carry out my promise, but I knew I was not. As he came nearer he crossed a little branch where there was a large hole filled with water, and I said to myself, I will go back with him to that hole, tell him all my troubles and ask him to carry me in and baptize me there, and thus save the church trouble. But as he drew near me I tried to disguise my feelings and sank back, as I feared he would refuse, knowing I was not fit. Time after time since that day my feeling was that it was my duty to join the church. I had no doubt where the church was, the doubt was all with me: was I fit? The answer was always no, yet how I craved to be, but each day made me less fit. When I finally joined the church I thought my troubles would cease, but I found they only heaped up the more. Sometimes as I plow the

ground, with a desire or prayerful mind and heart, I find I do something that causes me to doubt, so seldom can I feel myself as I desire to be. Sometimes I have no desire for even a thankful heart, neither can I be sorry I have not. If I know the Savior's love why am I thus tossed about? Sometimes it seems the greatest thought I can think is, God, keep me at the feet of my brethren. Often I can see that my way is wrong. It seems at times that all hope is gone. My brethren are all good and kind, and why I do not live like them I cannot tell. Sometimes I feel that my afflictions are all for my good; then no matter how rough the road it is all sweet to bear.

Before I close I want to ask all who know the Lord, and who have been taught of him how to pray, when all is well with you remember me, that I may always have faith and that my trust may not be in man, but in the living God.

Your brother in hope,

H. O. CLAY.

BRANCHLAND, W. Va., Sept. 20, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have for a long time desired to write once more a few lines for the SIGNS, and now the impression has grown stronger as my mind is joyfully stirred up by the reading of the last SIGNS, September 15th. Brother F. Selby Fisher's communication on the "Signs of the Times" has awakened my poor downcast soul to a better hope, yes, a lively hope that I have an inheritance reserved for me in heaven. He said what I have believed for many years, also many things I have experienced. My nest has often been stirred up, and stick by stick which I depended upon has been removed, and destruction in the depths below has seemed sure; but praise, glory and honor be to my great Preserver and Redeemer, he has brought me through much tribulation to write these lines on my seventy-seventh birthday. Seven years ago to-day I wrote my farewell (as I thought) and sent it to the dear old SIGNS. Why I am thus spared is a great mystery to myself and to many others. I have witnessed the great falling away and the man of sin being revealed, so ably handled by brother Lefferts in his editorial in the September 1st number. Ah, my brother, how I did appreciate your cheering words of truth. Also I am in possession of a record book, which I hold on my lap as I write these lines, of a dear old church called Olivet, belonging to the old Pocatalico Association. This church has long been extinct by death and other removals, and I am the only surviving member left alone. I have visited the association many times in company with my dear departed father. Now I am too feeble to go any more, and do not get to hear any preaching; all I get is from the SIGNS. I am thankful to tell the brethren and friends of the old association who so kindly entertained my brother and wife ten days ago at Providence Church, that I listened with satisfaction to hear them tell of the good preaching they heard; still better to hear my brother say that as long as he lives and is able to go he will try to go where he can hear the truth; for he says if any people on earth preach the gospel in its purity it is the Primitive Baptists.

I wish to say to brother E. B. Ault, of Texas, that his good letter in the August 1st number was very interesting to me. I much sympathize with him and family. I also looked up his letter of three years ago; I think I will write to him.

Now, dear editors and publishers, I ask you to read what I have written, and if you think it worthy of room in the SIGNS,

and you can have patience with me, please correct and publish as soon as convenient. May God's richest blessing remain with you all, is my prayer.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

HEAD AND HEART RELIGION CONTRASTED.

THERE are two kinds of religion prominent in the world, always have been, and I am persuaded always will be. Solomon says, What is now has been. Head religion is greatly in the preponderance. All head religionists are Arminians, contend for universal redemption; morality is their religion. Paul tells us that if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his. John tells us, He that believes that Jesus is the Son of God is born of God. No one can believe anything in nature or grace without evidence. The eunuch told Philip he believed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. Philip took that for a christian experience and baptized him. I had a preacher of note express surprise when I said something about the christian experience. For one to be meet for the Master's use divine light, which is the same as divine life, must shine in the heart, giving a knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. This is a knowledge that means eternal life. Head religionists (D. D's.) say Christ came to make salvation possible; that God will save all sinners if they will let him. Heart religion says he came to make it sure. Because I live ye shall live also, said the King of saints. Again, Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Heart religion teaches that God has all power. Whatsoever the Lord pleased that he did in heaven, on earth and all deep places. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." No one ever loved God before God's love was made known to him. John says we love God because he first loved us. God loved his chosen before they existed. When Adam fell his entire posterity (which is the whole human race) fell in him, therefore all were conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity. John also says, We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. We love them with all our hearts. We are saved by hope, says the apostle Paul. He also says, Hope which is seen is not hope, but if one hopes for that which he sees not, then with patience does he wait for it. I have heard good meaning people say they knew they were saved. I cannot say so much for myself, but I have had a hope for more than forty years that I am embraced in God's eternal love. If I knew it I would not wish or desire to live a minute longer in this world of sorrow. Job says, I know that my Redeemer liveth; and Paul says, I know in whom I have trusted.

Respectfully submitted.

JAMES M. SIMMONS.

KOSCIUSKO, Mississippi.

BUFFALO, Okla., Sept. 24, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—My time for the SIGNS expires October 1st, and as I am so situated that I cannot hear much preaching of the true gospel except through the SIGNS, I will send you a post-office money order for two dollars, that you may send the good old paper to me for another year. As I am writing for the dear old paper again, I thought I would write you concerning my wanderings here in this life. I was born Janu-

ary 9th, 1844, a little east of Dry Ridge, Grant County, Ky., and I grew up a sinner by birth and also by practice until I was about twenty-one years old, before I had much thought about what it was to be a great sinner. About that time my mind was troubled concerning the matter, and one day while in the field plowing, the words came to me, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I was made to look unto Jesus, who is the Savior of sinners, and knew that if not saved by his love I was a lost sinner. I had been in the habit of going to hear the different denominations preach, but from some cause I was drawn to the Old Baptist Church, and at the May meeting in 1866 I went forward and was received, and baptized by Elder William Conrad. On October 14th, 1870, I was married to Harriett W. Taylor, of Robertson County, Ky., and to that union were born seven children, four girls and three boys. One girl and two boys died in infancy. Four children are still living: one son, Robert T. Clark, living in the oil field east of Enid, Okla., one girl, George Emma Brown, near Aline, Okla., and two girls, Leuvena E. Harper and Edith H. Smith, near Buffalo, Okla. I have fourteen grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren living, also one brother living in Williamstown, Ky., who is a member of the Old Baptist Church at Williamstown. I attended four monthly Old Baptist meetings while I was in Kentucky. Elder Hutchison, of Ohio, preaches at Dry Ridge, Ky. After I came back to Oklahoma I went to Garber and heard Elder Beeman preach two sermons. I am now past seventy-seven years of age, and am lonely, except when I am reading the Bible or the SIGNS, for there are but few in these parts that I can talk to on things of a better life. My earthly companion died December 28th, 1910. Oh how happy I would be if I only knew that I were a chosen child of God, yet I have a small hope.

Yours in hope of a better life,

JAMES J. CLARK.

RIFFE, Washington.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending the inclosed letter by request of brother J. F. Smith, who wishes you to publish it if you think it is all right.

Yours in hope,

ROSA COLEMAN.

COLEMAN, Ky., March 20, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER SMITH:—I received your good letter and Minutes. I surely enjoyed reading your letter; it told my experience. If I know what I believe, you brethren out there in the west believe just what I hope is believed here by most all the Old Baptists. When I was reading the Minutes you sent me my heart was made to rejoice. I was bound to express my thoughts that God is everywhere, and has a peculiar people in every nook and corner of this world. You do not know how I want to see you, and crave to see you before I go the way of all the earth; and I want you brethren to write a letter of correspondence from your association to the Mates Creek Association, which you can have done by the next session, and then what time we are blessed to live on earth by the mercy of God we can keep up a correspondence one with the other each year by letter and Minutes. I do not know at this time just what to tell you about when I will be able to come out there, but expect to try, if it is the Lord's will, to make a trip out there and visit your association. I suppose you get letters from

Hiram Martin. He is a good old brother. He stayed three days and nights with me last September through the association time. He can talk on the doctrine of election and salvation by grace, which is what the children feed on. It is the free atonement made by Christ for his bride, his church, which is his body. Dear old brother, my lot seems to be a troublesome road. You knew me from the cradle until you left this country, which was in the twenty-third year of this life, and in the twenty-fourth year I have a morsel of hope that God showed me his glorious doctrine and his church on earth, and the impression became so great my mind was pressed for four years. I just thought that I was too poor and ignorant to stand before such blessed people as I saw his children to be. I could not tell them what was my trouble. After I was baptized, in the year 1906, for four long years nothing on earth was any comfort to me. I thought probably that impression would leave me, but it grew stronger and stronger. I studied myself almost to death, and actually wanted to die, knowing that I had to die some day. My flesh almost left me; the doctors told me I had consumption and was bound to die, but blessed be the name of Jesus, he was in my view day and night, and the Spirit was bidding me go and tell Zion that her warfare is accomplished, that Jesus died for her sins and arose for her justification, until at length I yielded to publish the name of Jesus; and, my dear brother and sister, if the sacrifice that was offered and accepted which Jesus offered to God for sin failed, there is none other to be offered; but it satisfied the demands of the law. Christ said, It is finished. O Father, glorify thou me. Dear brother, the time is at hand to awake out of sleep and let our light shine, which is Christ in his people the hope of glory. There is nothing to compare with the riches of this family. They are blessed in the earth to praise and honor God and have an humble hope of an unfading glory where it is one eternal day, no night there.

Yours unworthily,

G. H. COLEMAN.

KELLER, Texas, August, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—The Mount Zion Old School, Predestinarian Baptist Association met with the church of the same name on Friday before the first Sunday in August, 1921, and proceeded in the regular order of business. Elder J. H. Fisher presided over the meeting, and a brother White was clerk. A quorum of delegates, brethren and friends from the different parts of the country assembled at the Medlin Chapel, seven miles southwest of Graham, Young County, Texas, coming from two to four hundred miles to be at this Association. Letters were read from the churches, showing the statistics and condition of the churches, that all were in peace, enjoying a glorious union and sweet fellowship of brotherly love, and praising God for his mercy in permitting them to meet again in a worshipful capacity, to see each other face to face and to greet one another in love of the truth. The ministering brethren with one accord preached Jesus Christ the way, the truth and the life. The Author of eternal salvation permeated each discourse, promulgated throughout three services each day, vast crowds of people attending the meetings. During these exercises two applicants for membership came forward and were received for baptism, and some four or five others by letter. One of the two first ones was a young lady eighteen years of age, a niece of our beloved brother, Elder Solen Gip-

son. She was baptized by her uncle. The other, a young man, was baptized by Elder Fisher. Some twelve or thirteen preachers were present. Thus the Lord demonstrated his divine presence in the midst of the saints, comforting their souls with the sincere milk of the word, the gospel food from heaven, revealed by faith. The congregation was large, and a deep interest prevailed. Hence the Lord in his goodness and mercy crowned this occasion with success of glory and immortality beyond the grave, saints clapping their hands and rejoicing in the Lord God of Israel.

May the great Head of the church bless this meeting, as seed sown in the morning, that will redound to the glory and exaltation of God, the King of kings and Lord of lords. The blessings of heaven rest upon the poor afflicted children of God everywhere, that peace may reign as a mighty stream, and under the blessing of God be as bread cast upon the water, &c. The theme was the glory and eternal power of God, the salvation and resurrection of the saints. The service was solemn and impressive. The Lord bless and prosper all his chosen people, and finally house them together in that kingdom not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

If you have space, please publish this report.

Yours in the afflictions of the gospel, and the blessed assurance of the Holy Ghost, ASA HOWARD.

MARSHALL, Va., Aug. 16, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—My subscription is three months past due, and I thank you very much for having pity on me and not stopping it ere this. It is all the preaching I get now, and I do not want to do without it as long as my life is spared to read it. There are plenty of so-called churches, and plenty of preachers, but their preaching is no food for a poor old sinner like me. There are even preachers claiming to be Primitive Baptists who preach two kinds of salvation: conditional time salvation and eternal salvation. I do not know anything about any but salvation by grace. That is the only kind that would or could reach my case. They also say that God only orders the good things. I do not know how the bad things are accounted for. The Bible says, I do good and create evil; I have made all things, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. If God does not order all things then he is not all-powerful. I cannot explain how it is, but my belief that all things are ordered by him never yet seemed a fitting excuse to offer for any of my misdoings. Dear brethren editors, is this your belief? It has always seemed that way to me, and I think I have tried with all the power God gave me to understand predestination. It is the only doctrine that really saves any one.

I am sending you five dollars in this. Please credit two dollars on my subscription and send me a small hymn-book and the rest is to aid in sending the SIGNS to the Lord's poor.

Your very unworthy sister,

HATTIE L. WALKER.

BELINGTON, West Virginia.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I find my subscription for the SIGNS is past due. I feel I cannot well get along without it, as I enjoy reading both the editorials and the good letters written by the brethren and sisters who write for the dear old paper. I enjoy reading their articles, although I have never seen the writers, and I feel I would like to clasp their hands in

fellowship. They express my feelings so well that I often shed tears of rejoicing, and thank the blessed Lord that he is with them or they could not write as they do. O how often I have wished I could write as they. If I could I think I would spend the most of my time in writing; but I cannot, for I have not the education, and I am like Moses of old: slow of speech, but I have hope in the blessed Lord, which the Bible says is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. My hope is in the blessed Lord who created all things. I have many trials and troubles to pass through, and am the only one in the family who belongs to the Old School Baptist Church. I stand alone, but my trust and hope are in the great Creator who does all things well, and I can put myself in his hands, for I know he will do what is right, for he doeth all things well. I desire an interest in your prayers.

(MRS.) E. P. PHILLIPS.

McCoysville, Pa., Nov. 22, 1920.

Dear Brethren:—Please find inclosed money order to renew my subscription to our dear family paper, the Signs of the Times. I do not feel that I can do without it, for it is all the preaching I have had for two years. O how I do hunger to hear one of the dear Elders once more. We were never before without a pastor within my remembrance, and I am sixty years old, but the dear Signs is full of good news and glad tidings of salvation to poor sinners, and I feel that I am the chief of sinners.

Your sister, IDA M. HART.

Shelbyville, Ky.

Dear Brethren:—In renewing my subscription to the Signs of the Times I would like to say that I feel to rejoice in the fact that the editors have been enabled to so ably and boldly, yet so humbly, contend for the fundamental principles of the Primitive Baptist doctrine. May they long be spared to so continue, and may the Signs as it is now, and has ever been, continue to be published so long as time lasts.

H. L. VAWTER.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Elders and messengers of the First Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association called Kansas, unto the churches composing her body, sendeth greeting and christian salutation.

Beloved Brethren:—In presenting this, our annual Circular Letter, we hope we do it in fear and love of Israel's God, whom we desire to worship. We have no inclination to depart from our former custom or doctrine, which we have preached and practiced ever since the organization of this Association, to wit: The doctrine of predestination of all things, of eternal union of Christ and his people, of election, of salvation by grace, and all other principles of Bible doctrine as have been promulgated by the Lord's people throughout all ages.

Dearly beloved brethren, another year with its ever-changing scenes of thanksgiving and trials has passed into the annals of time, and we feel it a precious privilege to again address you according to our annual custom, speaking of our mutual welfare in Zion. Though our pathway often leads through the valley, and we are called to "pass under the rod," yet we are made to realize that our Redeemer liveth, in whom is our hope, which hope is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth

into that within the vail, and we know that he will in his own good time lead us out of darkness into his marvelous light, and as one of old has said, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Precious indeed is the sweet, abiding faith in these promises that he will never leave nor forsake his people. His everlasting arms are ever around and about us. Surely his mercy and his goodness have followed us all down through our journey of life. We are few in number, and scattered, but let us try not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together in church and associate capacity, to mingle our voices together in songs of adoration and praise to our glorious and blessed Redeemer, who is our strength and our guide while we sojourn here in this time world, who has blessed us daily with such blessings as he seeth we stand in need, who has been merciful to our shortcomings and blotted out our transgressions against him, unto whom be both honor and glory forever. Our prayer is that he who rules and governs all things after the counsel of his own will, continue with you, to guide and direct you in all things, for Jesus' sake.

L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator.
MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists, to the saints scattered abroad, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus.

WE desire to extend an invitation to brethren of our faith and order to visit us, who are in good standing at home. And that you may know of our belief in the truth, we will say that we are a people who believe in the predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass; that our Lord Jesus Christ is God, Man, and the only Mediator between God and man, and that without any means or instrumentalities of men's inventions he works and none can hinder, doing his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. We believe in personal, unconditional election of the saints in God before the foundation of the world, and their spiritual life is hid with Christ in God, and as his body they are in eternal vital union with him, their Head. We believe in the total depravity of human nature, from which there is no recovery, save in the atonement of Christ Jesus, which was made exclusively for the heirs of promise, and they will be preserved through grace unto eternal salvation. We believe in the resurrection of the just and the unjust, all of which we find fully proven in the Scriptures. We have no fellowship for the many inventions sought out by men, no matter by what alluring name they may be called, or for what laudable purpose they may be intended.

Done by order of the Association.
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator.
MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in October (30th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER J. B. BOWDEN has changed his address from Waring, Texas, to Sabinal, Texas.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1921.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MARK IX. 40; PHILIPPIANS I. 18.

"FOR he that is not against us, is on our part."

"What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice."

The above declarations, one by Christ and the other by his apostle Paul, reveal a remarkable broad mindedness and liberality of heart, they show forth that true charitableness which is an essential virtue of pure and undefiled religion. Misunderstandings are at the bottom of most of the troubles among God's people today, and lack of understanding on the part of the disciples of Jesus resulted in their uttering many foolish things of which doubtless they repented afterward. A dispute had arisen among them as to who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven. They understood not the secret of true greatness in the church of God, but had a more or less carnal ambition to be great in the kingdom, thinking perhaps that God's kingdom should be modeled after earthly kingdoms, among which it is no unusual thing for men to strive for the mastery. Jesus settled their dispute by telling them that greatness in the church is to him who is last of all and to him who is servant of all; and he took a little child and set him in the midst of them, showing that whosoever receives a little one, or one of the least ones in the name of Jesus, receives Jesus. It will be remembered that these same disciples had rebuked mothers for bringing their children to Jesus that he might lay hands on them, and Jesus had rebuked them by showing that the kingdom of heaven is composed of such little ones, and that they themselves could not hope to enter the kingdom except as little children; that is, feeling themselves to be the least of God's people. Now, therefore, true greatness in the church of God is in proportion as one has the disposition and the mind of Christ to be the servant of all, neglecting no opportunity to do good in the name of Jesus, spurning no little thing as too unimportant or insignificant to be attended to. Is there a lamb in all thy flock I would disdain to feed? is a question that may well search the hearts of those of us who in this day profess to be following in the footsteps of the Master. The disciple John told the Savior that he had seen a man casting out devils in the name of Jesus, but that this man was not a follower with them, and that, therefore, the twelve had forbidden the man to do any miracles in Jesus' name, on the ground that he was not a follower with them. Again, the disciples showed themselves to be victims of a misunderstanding of the truth as comprehended in the life and work of Jesus. Jesus told them not to forbid any man from doing miracles in his name, because any man having the ability to do good in the name of Jesus could not speak evil of the Savior, and that he who is not against Jesus is on the part of Jesus; that is, with him. There is no middle ground, either one is against Jesus or is for Jesus. If not against him, then must be for him; if for him, then cannot be against him. If, therefore, the man had the power to do miracles in Jesus' name, then he must be for Jesus

as none against him has that power. However, the man was not a manifest follower of Jesus and did not belong in the company of the disciples, nevertheless he had the power to do good in Jesus' name. The disciples being woefully narrow minded held that the man ought to be forbidden to do any healing simply on the ground that he did not belong to their number. This disposition in the disciples is the same carnal sense of exclusiveness that has in this age split the so-called christian world into innumerable sects and creeds and denominations, each holding that their own peculiar brand of religion is the best and only way to be saved. This same sense of exclusiveness has also, we are sorry to say, caused no end of trouble among the people of God from the apostles' day to this. The truth of God is not sectarian, and the people of the living God belong to no one sect or denomination. God has his people scattered among all the nations of the earth and he is no respecter of either racial or national or of denominational lines. Everywhere the people of God are one body, no matter in what nation or in what denomination they may be found. All have the one heart and one mind of Jesus, though they may not know it, for there is certainly such a thing as having faith and yet not knowing what one believes. Herein is the good of preaching, in that it shows them that believe what their faith is and saves them in it. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, so says Paul in Romans. Just as the disciples were prejudiced against the man doing miracles because he did not belong to their company, so Simon Peter was prejudiced as a Jew against the Gentiles, and would not have gone down to Cornelius' house had he not had the vision previously of the sheet let down from heaven in which were all manner of fourfooted beasts and creeping things, and had not the Lord told him that he must not call anything unclean which the Lord had cleansed. Therefore, obedient to vision, he went to Cornelius and preached in his house. Beholding the wonderful work of the Holy Ghost there wrought, his prejudice was overruled and he had to confess that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with him. The secret of really doing good is in having the grace and the Spirit of Jesus resident in us, and any man who thus does good as the fruit of true holiness abiding in him is not to be discouraged from doing what he can, no matter whether he belongs to our set or not.

Coming now to the text in Philippians, written by Paul, we see a wonderful breadth of mind and true-heartedness in the great apostle, which enabled him to rejoice whenever and wherever Christ was preached, no matter whether the preaching was done by those who loved Paul or was done by those who differed with him and who contended against him thinking to add affliction to his bonds. Paul cared nothing for himself so long as Christ was preached and exalted, and would to God we preachers of this day and time could be so wrapped up in the preaching of Christ, and him crucified, that we might not care anything about what became of us personally, or of our views, so long as Christ is preached. A great deal less of self and a great deal more of Christ is what the dear old church needs at the present time. Just as the Old Baptists of this age are split into parties contending for this or that point of view, so even in the apostolic church there was not always agreement among

the saints, and differences in the presentation of the truth arose among them. In the Corinthian church some were for Apollos and some for Cephus, and so on, but Paul thanked God that he had baptized none of them, save one or two, so that they could not form a Paul party. In the Galatian church preachers were seeking to enjoin legal principles upon gospel subjects and these Paul contended against. So we see that Paul had his troubles, not alone from without the church, but among his own brethren, especially with those who differed from him on some point or other of doctrine or of order. With it all Paul had such grace given him that he could look beyond self and his own injuries and rejoice in that Christ was being preached and that all these things were working out for the furtherance of the gospel. Some preached Christ in a contentious spirit, striving for their own views upon this or that portion of Scripture, and while this may not be a very excellent way in which to preach him, yet Paul rejoiced that even in this Christ was being preached. Others, through dislike of Paul, and in order to add to his troubles, preached also contentiously, but Paul had charity great enough to ignore his own hurts and to thank God that Christ was being preached. To be sure, there were those among the people of God who fully realized that Paul was set for the defense of the gospel, and these preached Christ through love to Paul, and this must especially have been very sweet and precious to the apostle in those trying days and very much helped him to bear with the contentions and strife of those who did not like him. Oh that each of us might be willing to preach the preaching that God bids us according to the measure of light given each of us, and remember that the judgment-seat of Christ is in the church and that the saints, not ourselves, are the judges of angels.

We have written on the above two Scriptures by request, and have but very briefly outlined the subject, hoping it might prove suggestive to our readers.

L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Josephine M. Barnes Haney, youngest daughter of Elder J. T. and S. J. Barnes, was born April 26th, 1896, in Johnson County, Mo., and moved with her parents to the state of Washington in 1901, locating in Touchet, Walla Walla County, where she grew to womanhood and was married to O. C. Haney November 11th, 1914. To that union were born three children, two daughters and one son: Delia J., Sarah Genevieve and Orlando Clarence. On the evening of August 28th, at 10:25 o'clock, the dear Lord called her to leave her husband and three little ones, father, mother, three sisters and three brothers on earth, to join the redeemed in that land of perfect rest where death with all its plagues can never come or ever sever that union which binds the heavenly family in one. While it is sad to me to record the death of our dear baby girl, yet my soul is made to rejoice in the blessed evidence that God, who is too good to be unkind and too just to do anything wrong, and whatever he does is right, gave to her a precious hope in him; and while she never made a public profession of the secret work of grace, yet her very expression spoke to my soul plainly that all was well, so I could but rejoice with her as her sweet spirit took its flight to the glory land, and I could truly say with Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Her funeral was conducted by Elder C. W. Bond August 30th, at the Primitive Baptist church-house in Touchet, before a large concourse of sorrowing relatives and friends, after which we laid her to rest in the peaceful Touchet cemetery, there to rest until the voice of her dear Savior calls her immortalized, to join the blood-washed throng, to sing his matchless praise in a world that shall never end. Elder Bond was highly favored by divine grace and the gift of faith, to lift our minds and troubled spirits far above the perishable things of this old sinful world and give us a foretaste of the joys of that peaceful land where nothing but joy is known.

May He who feeds the ravens and clothes the lilies of the field comfort and protect the little ones left in this cold world without a mother, for his own sake.

Her father, J. T. BARNES.

Wilbert Main, son of James and Anna Main, was born in Troy township, Delaware County, Ohio, May 5th, 1849, and departed this life October 3rd, 1921, at his home near Delaware, Ohio. Mr. Main was a man of good intelligence, well liked in the neighborhood for his honest and straightforward habits. Though he never joined the church, he was a warm friend to the Old School Baptists, and loved to hear of the wonderful works of God and salvation by grace. There is no doubt in my mind but that he had been given a good hope in Christ. Three weeks before he died I called to see him at his request. He asked me to conduct his funeral, and said he had always been a plain man and did not want a great show, just a plain, ordinary funeral. I promised if it were the Lord's will I would be there. According to arrangements, I was called from Cleveland October 5th, and was met in Delaware by friends and taken to the home, afterward to the Marlborough meetinghouse, where I tried to preach from Deuteronomy xxxii. 1-4, to a large congregation of relatives and friends. All that was mortal was laid to rest in the cemetery near by. May the Lord comfort all who mourn. GEO. L. WEAVER.

RESOLUTION.

WHEREAS, We, the Ebenezer Baptist Church, of New York city, realizing that we have been blessed of the Lord in the gift of brother **R. Lester Dodson** to comfort and edify us in the preaching of a living way of salvation by grace; and

WHEREAS, We have the assurance that his ministry is also approved by our sister churches among whom he has labored, and being confident that the Lord has given him the tongue of the learned, that he should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary; be it therefore

RESOLVED, That we invite the churches of our association and correspondence to have their pastors, deacons and messengers to sit with us in council on Tuesday, November 8th, 1921, at 11 o'clock a. m., in the meetinghouse, with a view to ordaining brother Dodson to the full work of the gospel ministry.

Done by unanimous consent of the church at a regular meeting held October 2nd, 1921.

JOHN McCONNELL, Moderator.

CYRUS RISLER, JR., Church Clerk.

MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting of the Welsh Tract Church is appointed to begin Saturday, October 15th, at 10 o'clock a. m. and continue two days. Those coming from Philadelphia and Wilmington will take train leaving Philadelphia, Broad St. station, at 7:20 a. m. Saturday and Sunday. Those coming from Baltimore and points south will take train leaving Baltimore (Union Station) at 8 o'clock a. m. Saturday, and all will be met at Newark, Del., and conveyed to the meetinghouse. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, also ministers who are in order and good standing with us.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

THE Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to convene with the Salisbury Church, in Salisbury, Md., October 19th, 20th and 21st, 1921. Those coming from the north take train leaving Broad St. station, Philadelphia, at 3 o'clock Tuesday p. m., and those coming from the south take train leaving Cape Charles at 4:45 p. m. Wednesday morning trains will be met. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. C. MELLOTT, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE First Primitive Baptist Church of Mineral Wells, Texas, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on S. W. 4th Ave. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

SALLIE E. HOWARD, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., August 14, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing this letter from our dear brother and fellow-laborer for your disposal. I feel it will be read with interest by many. When on my way to the eastern associations in 1879 I was in Ohio for the first time, visited the Cæsar's Creek Church and had a night appointment at his father's house, where I was blessed of the Lord to line out the way he was traveling. He was then eleven years old. That was forty-two years ago last May. I was favored to meet him again the first Saturday in June, when he told me the substance of what I preached that, to him, memorable night at his father's home. He is now a soldier of the cross, standing on Zion's walls, firmly rooted and grounded in the doctrine of God our Savior, his unalterable decrees and purposes, and none can stay his hand. It was a joyful meeting.

I want to say I have read with interest the editorial in August 1st number of the SIGNS. I feel it will commend itself to our dear brethren readers everywhere. The kind, loving, tender manner in which it is written must appeal to every sincere heart, though they may hold different views. May the love of God and the indwelling of his Holy Spirit fill our hearts and guide us all in the way of peace and make a plain pathway for our feet.

Unworthy to be thought of, yet hoping in God's mercies, I am, as ever, in hope of life eternal,

P. W. SAWIN.

DELAWARE, Ohio, July 31, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER SAWIN:—I will try to grant your request by giving a sketch of my experience and call to the ministry. I still wonder if I really have been called to such a high place. We are told to be ready to give a reason of the hope within us to those who ask us, and yet I realize I can only give you a little imperfect sketch in a letter, of the many different conditions and experiences of mind, which seems to me will be an awkward piece of writing.

From early recollections of childhood I thought there was a God and of getting religion, and as there was a Methodist meetinghouse very near my father's I went to their revival meetings when just a child with the older children of the

family. My parents being strict Baptists, would have nothing to do with it, and gave us children no encouragement in such, as I see now, works of darkness. I then thought it the very thing, and felt how easy it would be to get religion; and not only that, but I felt that I could have such an influence that I could bring in all my schoolmates but for one thing: I was very bashful, could not say a piece at school like other children. I cannot tell how I suffered in my young days on that account. I thought just as soon as I could get over being afraid I would get religion and do great work in bringing others into the fold, and that I would do such wonders I might get to be a preacher. While I never went forward to the meetings to try, I could, as I thought, see how easy it would be. I got so full of Satan's plans that I would tell mother how anybody could get religion. She would not agree with me, and I would get mad at her to think she was so dumb as to not understand; but since then I have thought this of her: her children will rise up and call her blessed. I had never read the Bible, but I always felt that it was a true and sacred book, so when I got a chance without any one knowing it I would read it. I would read wherever the book opened, so I found this: By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. Oh how that shook my tower of works and boasting. No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him. If the Bible was true I could not go, neither bring all the rest in the neighborhood, so I seemed to be wandering to and fro. I never listened to what the Baptist preachers said, yet it was a very common occurrence for some of them to be at our house. So time went on and another preacher came, and that man was yourself, my dear brother. You talked about the wanderings of the children in the wilderness. I sat in the next room. The lesson you set forth seemed to sink down in my poor dark and wandering mind and take root and grow there. I then thought one of the Baptist preachers could preach, and I really admired him, yet did not have a hope of being included in the covenant of grace, but would read the Bible when I could without any one seeing me, and believe I saw in it the doctrine of Christ our Savior, that he is the way, the truth and the life, and that the Scriptures taught the doctrine of God's predestination of all things. I felt I wanted to tear old Satan's doctrine of lies and deceit to pieces, and thought how he deceived mother Eve. So I lost confidence in the doctrine of Satan and his servants when they say, Do as I say, not as God says, or, Lo here, or lo there, and in my mind would argue when alone the doctrine of Christ, the Savior of sinners, and liked to hear others talk it, but oh, if only I could be included in the covenant of grace. Time went on for perhaps ten or more years, I admiring His plan of salvation, yet sad because I could not hope I was one of his ransomed. I was at work alone in the field thinking of this: For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. I could see how safe God's elect people are, and in distress of mind and tears flowing down was thinking if only I were one of his it would be all I wanted. All at once there was a ray of white light brighter than the sun all around me, which seemed to

come from heaven, and a voice from the Lord saying, Thou art one of mine, and my burden was gone, tears of joy flowed. I was so overcome with joy that all I could do was to stand and gaze up to heaven and groan for joy; I could not speak to thank the Lord for the great things he had done for me. I wanted to tell it to some of my friends, yet would not tell my parents. I thought when grandma Hatch came I would tell her, but before she came it seemed as if I had sat down at ease and in sort of a sleep, or stupor of mind. I would go to meeting when some one would come to preach who was not used to being there, as I thought the preachers I was used to hearing did not know much about preaching. Once Elder L. Bavis came, and I told a young friend of mine he could not preach, but was a nice man. That night I dreamed of being on a journey, and as I had to wait in a town awhile I went into a machine shop to see the works. When I went in all was quiet, but the machinery started right away and Elder Bavis came around and went to work. I thought he saw me all the time, but never let on. He would take a bit of hot iron in the tongs and put it in the rollers, and it came out a perfect piece. He would get the iron so quickly I was astonished at him, and thought, I did not know the preacher had a trade, and as I got up closer I thought, That is nothing, those rollers shape that, but I was puzzled to know how he got just enough hot iron every time and so quickly to make a perfect piece. I went around the corner of the furnace to see where and how he got it, and there I saw two of the brightest and most beautiful persons, if I may call them persons, clothed in shining raiment, and they were just alike. There were a pair of balances, and the iron was melted to a liquid form in the furnace, and the two shining ones I saw would dip the iron out of the furnace and pour it into the balance, and every piece was weighed so as to be just the right amount, and until it was weighed it would be as a piece of hot iron that the workman could take in the tongs, and all the effect the heat of the furnace had on the two shining ones was to make their raiment and countenances shine more and more like a bright and shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. In the morning I saw the preacher around there and thought of what I had said about him, and of my dream, so I concluded I would go and hear him preach. When I got to the meetinghouse and stepped up to the door it seemed it was the very door I went through in my dream. I went in, all was still, but a few Baptists began to sing right away, then the preacher got up and began to preach, and it seemed to me I could see the two shining ones weigh the very words out to him that he was to speak, and it seemed that I could not move or take my eyes off him. I had never heard it so plainly, and I had just said he could not preach. Then I was made to see that it is Christ in the man the hope of glory that does the preaching, and the Lord took that way to whip me for talking about his servants, saying some of them could preach and some could not, and whipped me so completely that I was made willing to go to the Elder afterward and tell him how I had said he could not preach, and how I watched him work and then watched the very words he was to preach weighed out to him. I will tell you something now that I did not tell him. I had been made to see the falsehood and deceit of Satan's doctrine, and that the Scriptures teach salvation is of the Lord. Sometimes

there would be thoughts in my mind about preaching the doctrine of Christ our Savior, but now I was made to see no one could preach the gospel except them that God foreordained before the world began, and all they could preach was just as Almighty God had thought, so shall it come to pass. Well, I began to wish I could be a member of the church, but instead of being a good christian boy I had lived in rebellion and disobedience, had talked about the servants of the most high God and had when a boy laughed and made fun of some of them. The lowest seat in church was too high for me, and the Lord would never suffer dear old Elder E. M. Reeves, the pastor of the church there, to baptize such a filthy, rebellious sinner as I, and I had put off telling it to the church so long I was shut up and could not tell them, and if I could how could they receive me? Still the burden of being baptized grew heavier. I was not fit to be with the children of the heavenly King, and I could not go with those who advocated the way that seems right unto a man, but the end thereof is the way of death. I was shut up and could not tell them, could not sing the hymns at meeting. From the time I heard you, at about the age of eleven, I never opened my mouth to help sing at the Baptist meetings until after I was baptized, about eighteen years later. I had thought I would write some of the exercises of my mind and give them to the church, and maybe they would receive me, but I read in the Bible of some that had crept in who were ordained from of old to this condemnation, and it would never do to try to creep in the church. I felt the best thing for me was to be away by myself; I was not fit to be with the Baptists, and could not go with the Arminians. In 1895 I was married and moved away among strangers, and as I thought, away from the Baptists. Oh how I did starve to hear the preached word, and sometimes hardly knew what I was doing. There was a Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church about seventeen miles away, and when I found them and that they were the real sound kind I did not miss many meetings while I lived in that county. It seemed I could hardly go home until I was enabled to tell them a little of what I hoped were the Lord's dealings with me and was baptized. About two weeks later I saw Elder Hutchinson, who had baptized me, and he asked me how I was feeling. I told him very well. He told me my worst time was yet to come, that I would have to speak in public. I asked him why he thought so. He said I was keeping too quiet, that they could not get anything out of me, that the suspicion had gone out and that some of the brethren told him after we came up out of the water that he had baptized a preacher. I told him I thought he was deceived, and at the same time I felt that I was dishonest with him and was trying to deceive him only two weeks after being received. My answer seemed to burn me like fire and to cut me off. He said I could not cover it up. Years before when I was a young man at home the talk got out somehow that I would be a preacher, and my sister (who is now dead) and I were talking about it, and she told me it was so, that the folks thought I would have to preach some time. I told her I would never do it unless I had to. God alone knows how I was shut up and could not speak, and how I have rebelled against him because I was a coward and afraid to speak before men. I tried to appear before the world as not interested in the

church, and even swore a little to make some think I did not care for the Old Baptists, but I had to suffer for it. The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? With all my shortcomings, weakness, cowardliness and rebellion, many times my mind would be burdened with thoughts about preaching, and I would dream of preaching and see in the faces of the people signs that they received it. One night when I went to bed my desire was that if it were the Lord's will, to teach me what he would have me know, to show me that night in a dream if it were his will for me to preach. I dreamed he came and said I must go, and I got ready to go. One Saturday as I was going along the road to meeting the thought came in my mind with such force that I trembled, that they would ask me to talk when I got to meeting. When I got there Elder Peters told me to get up and read a hymn, which I did the best I could. After he spoke in prayer he took the Bible and handed it to me and told me to read and then talk some if I felt like it. I read the text, By grace are ye saved, &c., as I had in my dream been away and preached from it and the people received it. I was foolish enough to try and preach it again, but soon found out I was lacking. After I returned home I went out by myself and cried and tried to ask the Lord to forgive me for my foolishness and weakness, and afterward told Elder Peters not to ask me to try any more, that I was not fit. Once I was alone in the garden at work, and the thought came in my mind so forcibly that I must try to preach that I got so weak I just knelt down on the ground and was made to say, O Lord, I am willing to go, and was strengthened to rise and went into the house, took up the Bible and let it open where it would. It opened at the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." I closed the book and let it open again, and it opened at the same place. I thought it had been opened at that place and would naturally open there again, so I closed it and then shook it and let it open again. It opened at the fourth chapter of Luke, and I read down to the eighteenth verse and found the same Scripture, but thought that was for the Master, and not me. The time came when I felt that being afraid to talk in the name of the Master before people was taken away from me, and I seemed to feel that I could talk to kings if it were necessary, that man-fearing spirit was gone; but now that I was no longer afraid my mind was a blank, I did not know anything to tell. Some time after when I was alone in the field at work cutting corn it seemed as if the Master stood near me. I could not see him, but in a mysterious way he was there, and took a text of Scripture and preached to me. I just stood as if some one were there preaching to me, and it startled me a little when I realized I stood listening and could see no man; but whether he was there or if the Spirit was leading my

mind, I thought it some of the best preaching I had ever heard. The next day it occurred again, but whether he spoke to me or the Spirit led my mind God knows, I am too ignorant to explain. It occurred again the third day, and seemed to me the sweetest preaching I ever heard. Then the thought began to run in my mind, This is the way you go; you do not know how to preach, but the Lord will stand by you and make it known just what to say, and I thought, That is just the kind of preaching the Old Baptists want, right from the Master. I got over the fence and started toward the house, and that old man I once thought to be dead began to show signs of life and gain in strength, and to tell the truth began to be puffed up, thinking he would take this in hand now and be something yet, and he began to think he could preach. Well, I have to confess now he only got his just dues, for the next was a spell of darkness, and about all he could see was that he was shut in and could not get out, and it seemed to him he could see the children of the heavenly King as they journeyed on past him, and that they all knew he was shut up because of his disobedience and rebellion. They pitied him, but did not want to get very close to him. How he sorrowed to think the rest were traveling home to God and he could not go on with them because he got puffed up after all of his rebellion, and got to thinking he could preach, and about the only Scripture the old sinner could think of was, When ye fast, appear not unto others as though ye fast. He would go to meeting and fight himself to keep from going to sleep, and no one knew of the dreadful state of mind he was in and had been for months. But there came a time of deliverance which is almost inexplainable, and when he was delivered and came to himself these words were on his tongue: Walk about Zion, and go round about her, tell the towers thereof, mark ye well her bulwards, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death. When he got sight of the towers of Zion and what they were, tongue cannot tell it, for our God is our great High Tower and the great tower of love, to give his only Son to die that we might live. About fourteen years ago I moved to this county, and have been blundering along. At a regular meeting May 14th, 1916, the church licensed me to preach, and on December 9th, 1917, I was ordained to the full work of the ministry, and have since tried in my weak way to speak in the name of the Master. To meet you again after listening to you forty-two years ago was surely a time to be remembered. I think my little visit in Kentucky with you and Elder Moon and the happy band of children of the heavenly King at Elk Lick Church will always be remembered by me, and I long to come again.

Dear brother, I have tried to give you part of the exercises of mind I have passed through. To try to preach is as far as I have gotten. With shamefacedness I confess my sinfulness, but I am not ashamed of my Lord and Master. Thanks be unto him who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Yours in gospel bonds,

LISTAN E. STEPHENS.

FOREST HILL, Md., Oct. 6, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The inclosed letter, written by my dear father, I feel might be of interest to some of the readers of the SIGNS, if you find it suitable for publication.

Yours in love and fellowship,

JENNIE GRAFTON.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER DANCE:—I am at home to-day, the second Sunday, thinking of the little group at Rock-springs. The rain on Saturday made the roads so bad that I thought it best to stay at home and spend the day writing to you and others. I saw in the paper yesterday a notice of the death of Elder White, at least I suppose it to be him. The old ministers are fast passing away, but younger ones are being set apart to the work. I know not the day of my departure out of this world, but according to nature I realize the time cannot be long, yet I can say that the matter does not give me much concern, though I am at times greatly troubled about the churches. Elder White once wrote me, in answer to a letter I had written him, expressing great anxiety concerning the churches of my charge after my departure, that I was not so important as all that, for except the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain. I am sure I do not feel at all important, knowing as I do by bitter experience that I am but a small matter, a mere speck, or dust of the balance, when it comes to keeping the city, but after all it cannot be wrong for me to feel an interest in the people I have loved and tried to serve so long. I often fear that I am too indifferent in things pertaining to the church of Christ. It seems hard sometimes to know what to do. Often I feel to ask the Lord, What wilt thou have me to do? If I am not right, set me right and keep me in the way everlasting. Oh that I may be of service to thy people. Give me good gifts, that I may honor thy great name and be of service to thy people. If indeed thou hast called me to the work, stand by me and speak through me to the glory of God and the good of Zion. Other things have faded away, as the fashion of this world passeth away, but the word of the Lord endureth forever. I never seem to reach the point that I see, neither in what is called first experience, nor in the pulpit. I fall short in everything, yet there is still a hungering after it, a seeking for that bread which comes down from heaven, whereof if a man eat he shall never die. Paul says, Not that I have apprehended, or am already perfect, but I follow after. Perhaps I am looking for something not promised; if so, I will never reach it until I awake with His likeness, when I shall be satisfied.

I hope you are both well. I am glad to say that we are all in usual health. Peace be with you all.

WM. GRAFTON.

ODELL, Okla.

DEAR SISTER REED:—It is in much weakness that I attempt to write you a letter, and while I hope to send an epistle of love and christian salutation, I feel too imperfect and sinful to hope to be able to write anything calculated to comfort one of God's humble poor. It is only in the goodness and mercy of a covenant-keeping God that we are ever comforted at all or kept from the evil of this present world. Surely it is only in his merciful loving-kindness to us poor sinners that we are sometimes able to comfort each other with the same comfort wherewith we ourselves have been comforted of him; but when faith is in exercise and we can remember indeed that our God does not despise the day of small things, and that every good and perfect gift cometh down from him, then, and then only, are we able to walk in love one with another, to behold the beauty of the Lord of hosts in the holy hill of Zion. Then we do esteem others better than ourselves; then

we can say with the sweet singer of Israel, Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies. My dear sister, it is here in this happy frame of mind that the victory is gained through faith. Herein the poor, afflicted, tempest-tossed child of the kingdom is by the same power that redeemed him made from time to time to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. This is the inheritance of the saints in light. This is the Lord's doing, and is marvelous in our eyes. Here the child of God is made to know the truth of the prophet: They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, walk and not faint. Here they are delivered out of prison and lifted from the valley of Lodebar and seated at the King's table and made to feed on the high mountains of Israel, in the rich pastures of grace, drink at the cooling streams and rest in the glorious shade of the gospel of Christ. Being above the law of condemnation, they are given sweet rest in gospel promises, and claim the promises as being to them, and made to sing praises to him who died and rose again, saying he did all things well for us, shouting, as it were, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.

Well, I feel now to ask your pardon for this letter. I hope it will cause you to remember my weakness. I am staying with brother and sister Boswell. Harmony Church now convenes at the Bynum schoolhouse. We have a first Sunday meeting and Saturday night before at brother Beene's schoolhouse. Some of the brethren will generally go with me down there. Brother Adams, pastor of Macedonia Church, promised to be with us at Harmony next third Sunday. I still try to preach Jesus the way, the truth and the life of his people, but it does seem I am so unfit, so unworthy, that sometimes I am astonished that I do not quit altogether and never try again. I am thinking of attending a three days meeting in southern Texas in June. I think I would like to go. We sent for eight of Beebe's hymn-books. Come over and help sing. Give my love to Dack and family. Please write me a letter.

May God, who gives everlasting consolation, bless and keep us in the faith of his elect and reconcile us to his will, is the prayer of your unworthy brother in hope, W. LEE STAGGS.

DELIVERANCE THROUGH PRAYER.

PERHAPS there are some real prayers in which the person praying does not feel fully assured that it is of the Lord at the time. This I may not be able to explain; however, I believe there are some prayers in which the person praying feels a very satisfying assurance that it is of the Lord, because at the end there is deliverance from trouble. I believe those who are able to pray a real prayer are those to whom God has given living faith, not in the person's own strength, but faith pertaining to things above; and it seems that a prayer that is real and true is indited from on high. It often seems to me that for a sinner to be enabled to pray is for that sinner to reach a place in his own individual life where he is in an enjoyable communion with God. Not brought to this point by way of obedience and willingness of his own, but the path that leads a sinner to call upon the Lord in the Lord's name leads through trials and

sorrows, which are sorely grievous and disappointing to the very makeup of the sinner himself, and after having reeled to and fro and staggered like a drunken man he is brought by the power of God (if brought at all) to rest at Jesus' feet and to call upon his name, ready to confess that vain is the help of all the earth; and if he is thus enabled to commune with God, if he is thus enabled for his will to be the will of God for the time being, and if he has been enabled to feel that his burden has been carried away, and if he is given the satisfying faith that the Lord will provide, it is all by appointment of God, and that by way of his ever eternal purpose and foreknowledge. He, having known the circumstances from all eternity, indited the prayer, he brought the prayer and he brought deliverance, or the thing prayed for, all in and through his boundless mercy and power, and not that the carnal plea of the sinner caused any change in his purpose or will. In this deliverance I sometimes think that the person delivered may be taught that God, before the dust of the highest hills was made, knew that the man's own lust would lead him astray. He knew beforehand that each and every one of his personal wrongs would be, and at the exact time that they were, yet in their doubts and in their distresses the Lord brings deliverance to his people, and "if the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

Dear editors, I have written this for your consideration and disposal, not desiring to claim any authority of my own, but have merely written my thoughts and belief on the subject, if I have a belief at all.

Yours unworthily,

W. A. CHANDLER.

CLAY, La., April 23, 1921.

LOOP, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have thought for a long time that I would send for your paper and write to know if there are any Old Baptists near here. My home is in Gaines County, Texas, sixty-four miles southwest of Lubbock, ninety miles northwest of Big Spring, Texas, and one hundred and forty miles east of Roswell, N. Mex. We live on what is known as the South Plains. I would be glad to hear from some Primitive Baptists, if there are any in this part of the country; those who believe in a God who is all-wise, who viewed the end from the beginning; one who saw all things, nothing taking place without his knowledge; who foreknew all things and had a purpose in all things, all things being made by him and for him, who was before all things, and by whom all things consist. There is no power but of him, for the powers that be are ordained of him, and they fulfill the purpose he intended they should. Those who are blessed with his Spirit serve and honor him, and look to him for all their sustenance, both temporal and spiritual, and have no confidence in the flesh, for they know in their flesh dwells no good thing. Every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down from above, from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Then if he turns not, why should we say he does? Why should we set forth a belief that if we will, God will? I believe we are punished for our misdeeds and blessed in our obedience, but we are blessed before we perform one good deed, for without his presence to guide us we are sure to go wrong. Man in his best estate is vanity. If in his best estate he is vanity, how can he perform good within himself? "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." We

have no right to say we can. Why should we say we could if we would? That kind of an expression does not fit my case. Unless the Lord guides me I am sure to go wrong, not just a little while, but all the time. If there are any living near of this belief I would like to hear from them.

Yours in hope,

J. F. DANIELL.

HAMLIN, Ark., May 28, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I herewith inclose two dollars to pay my subscription to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which is the only true gospel (if I know anything about true gospel) that I ever get now. All the preaching we hear in this part of the country is work and do, pay the preacher and save yourself. I am not a professor, nor ever have been. I was raised by good Primitive Baptists, being a man of the world. Twenty-six years ago I moved to this country, where there is no Baptist preaching, and have raised a family of eight children. I am sorry to say they have never heard a good sermon in their lives, but I have tried (and feel to believe I have succeeded) to raise them to be honest and to believe in a just and righteous Lord. Not being spiritually taught, I have never tried to teach them spiritually, always believing that the good Lord would in his own way and time attend to that. I have sometimes thought that perhaps I ought to move from this part of the country to where they could have the privilege of hearing the truth, then I think of the hundreds who are in the same condition that we are, and that the just God knows their condition. In the twenty-six years there has not been a Baptist sermon preached in these parts, and there are but few people living here who are of the Primitive Baptist belief or members of that body.

Please pardon my long neglect in renewing my subscription.

Wishing you a long life and a continuance in sending out your messages of truth, I am yours in hope,

A. S. JEFFERS.

RIVES, Tenn., July 25, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed three dollars to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, as I am late with my renewal. I feel I cannot do without it as long as I can pay for it, so please do not stop the paper unless I tell you, and I will try to pay some time during the year, as it is about all the preaching I get. It always comes laden with good news from a far country, which fills my eyes with tears and my heart with joy as I read line after line. I find from its columns that there are people in the world who believe as I do and who can tell my experience better than I can. Oh how I wish as I read that I could see and talk with them. May God's richest blessings rest upon each and every one of the dear kindred in Christ, is my prayer. I am much cast down at times, as I live all alone and am very lonely, but when my Savior reveals his smiling face I am made for a short time to rejoice in his love.

Please cast the mantle of charity over these scattering thoughts.

In hope of immortal life beyond this vale of tears, where nothing enters to defile,

(MRS.) A. L. HARRISON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1921.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 JOHN V. 6, 8; JOHN III. 5.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—Please give your views through the SIGNS on 1 John v. 6, also the eighth verse of the same chapter, also John iii. 5. I desire particularly to know about the water in all three of these verses, but write also on the blood, for the water and blood are joined together in these verses. I am an old reader of the SIGNS, and in fellowship with the truth I hope.

JOHN N. BARTLETT.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Feb. 22, 1921.

The Scriptures referred to read as follows: "This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." ("For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.") "And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one." "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

The request of brother Bartlett has been long delayed, for lack of light on the subject more than for any other reason, and we confess that now we have no better understanding of it than when the request was made, but feel willing to write along general lines, with the hope of suggesting some things worthy of consideration at least.

The sonship of Jesus, its mystery and the impossibility for the carnal mind to in any way conceive or comprehend it, seems to have been in the mind of John in writing this chapter. Along this line we shall write first of all. Paul in bearing testimony of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, said, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh." Such declarations as were made by the prophets concerning His coming, that he should be born of a virgin, were too deep for themselves and for that age of the world, nor is the mystery less to-day, hence by faith only can man believe that Jesus is the Christ. This is the great "stumbling-block" in all civilized parts of the world: How could Jesus be the Son of God? Reason, logic nor science can enter into the mystery. Because of this many reject Bible testimony concerning his coming by water and by blood, but whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. This establishes the absolute necessity of being born of God in order to believe that Jesus is the Son of God notwithstanding the fact that he was born according to the natural course of nature. He took upon himself flesh and blood and was made of a woman. In verse six John seems to ask the question of his brethren, and of all the children of God: Do you believe it? After which he confirms their faith by saying, "It is the Spirit that beareth witness." In other words, it is through the operation of the Spirit that you know Jesus is the Son of God, whom to know is life eternal.

Verse seven declares that there are three that bear record in heaven: the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. This takes us all back to consider the plan of God for the salvation of mankind, or his elect.

The Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, the three-one God decreed, determined—predestinated that the Son should come by water and by blood, and that he, the man Jesus Christ, should by the sacrifice of himself forever put away sin. That was the purpose, and now the three, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, bear witness in heaven that the eternal purpose, purposed in God, has been accomplished, hence there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. These three are one in deity, will and purpose.

Verse eight tells us that "there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one." It will be observed that in verse eight the word "spirit" is not capitalized, signifying that it does not mean God, but rather that spirit that was in Jesus the Son, the man, the servant, in which spirit he rendered obedience unto death, the death of the cross. It was said by him that God is a Spirit and must be worshiped in spirit and in truth. Let this spirit, or mind, be in you, which was also in Christ. It was on the cross that his blood was shed for the remission of sins, and when his side was pierced blood and water came forth, signifying that death had taken place. The testimony of the three-one God was corroborated. The first three declared what should be done, the last three witnessing that all had been accomplished. Thus salvation, redemption and justification came to the ends of the earth, "for as by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." Therefore if we believe on the Son of God we have the witness in ourselves.

In John iii. 5, Jesus said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Some have thought the water in this connection to mean baptism. Perhaps it does, but it has seemed to us for a long time to signify purification. It is true that without baptism no one can enter the church or kingdom of God. On the other hand, it is just as true that every one must be purified, washed, cleansed from all sin, before he can enter the kingdom of God. Man needs "the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior." That being justified by his grace we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

The word "water" is used in a figurative way in most every part of the Bible, and can seldom be used, as it seems to us, in a literal sense. The Lord said by the prophet, When the poor and the needy seek water, and there is none, I, the Lord, will hear them and will not forsake them. In this place the word "water" means mercy, pardon and justification, which were not found in the law. The call was, and is, Come ye to the waters. The word "waters" here means salvation, which the law could not give. Jesus said, The water that I give shall be in you a well of water springing up unto everlasting life. The water here means the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. In Revelation the term, "A pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb," is used. This river of water of life signifies the source, and only source, of life; the river of water of life. Moses smote the rock in the wilderness and water gushed out and the Israelites all drank of that water. Centuries afterward the apostle said, They all drank from that rock which followed them, and that rock was Christ. These examples will serve to show that

the word "water" should not be used always in a literal way. The same is true of the word "fire." Many times it is used in a figurative sense and to apply it literally destroys the spiritual import of the Scripture in which it is used. It often means the vengeance of God, or condemnation of the law. It is highly important to consider well the connections when the words water and fire appear that one may have a right conception of the words. While we all know that understanding of the word of God must come by revelation, it is necessary that language be given its force, and that such words as water and fire not be applied always in a natural sense. Let us all study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen who need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

K.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by J. M. Cate.)

To the Elders and messengers of Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, and the churches they represent, and all who love the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED:—It is through the never-failing mercy of our God, who appointeth the bounds of our habitation, that we are enabled to meet again in council and worship that great God who rules in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. This reminds us that another year of time is gone, with its joys and sorrows, and is numbered with the past. Many of our friends have passed over the dark river of death, and this brings the realization that we, too, are rapidly approaching the end of our pilgrimage, being pilgrim-strangers in a strange land.

Now, dear brethren and sisters, I realize it is your wish and custom to have what is called a Circular Letter to be printed with our Minutes, and at our last session we chose our beloved brother, Elder N. J. Jones, whom we all know was perfectly able to write it, but God saw fit to call him to his eternal home before he had written it. Now to call on one so weak as I to prepare a Circular Letter seems to me a little too much, but if the Lord will be my helper I will try to be obedient to my brethren, feeling that I am nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity. I only have one word on my mind to write about, and that word is so great that my little, weak mind can hardly comprehend it. You may want to know what it is, and where to find it. You will see it spoken of in many places all through the Bible, will see it manifest in all of God's works, and you will see the real thing in the faces of the brethren and sisters when one comes to the church telling what a precious Savior he or she has found, as happened yesterday. "Love." Yes, love. Oh how sweet it sounds in a believer's ear, it soothes his sorrows and drives away his fears. This I call spiritual love, the kind we love the brethren with, by which we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren, and it seems to me we love them because we cannot help it, because God has planted this love in our hearts, and when we hear one of those little ones who has been born of the Spirit cry, our hearts are filled with joy and we praise His holy name. Now, brethren, does it not seem that if we could abide in this love, in God's love, we would continue to love one another, and there would be no jars and divisions, and the whole family of God would be bound together in one bundle of love? Not particularly that we have so much love for

these old houses of clay in which we see the spiritual man dwelling, but the spiritual brother. For instance (Pardon for referring to myself.) long time ago I was traveling along a lonely timbered road; a man appeared by the side of the wagon, a real man, a stranger. I asked him to ride, and as we journeyed along I do not remember anything we talked about, only each of us related our travels from nature to grace. We clasped each other's hand and wept for joy. We found we were really brothers in the Spirit if we were total strangers in the flesh. Before we passed out of the wilderness the man left me, but I cannot remember when, where or how. I have often wished I knew who he was and where I could find him. What I am trying to show is this: we do not have to be acquainted with this body, the house we live in, to love each other. I have had many seasons of rejoicing over those I have become spiritually acquainted with who I never expect to see in the flesh. I view this as love and fellowship abounding, spiritual love and fellowship, God's fellowship. Now we are sometimes a little particular about our church fellowship, which is all right in a way, but it seems that if we would continue in this spiritual love and fellowship, love God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves, we would be willing to bear with what we call our brother's misunderstanding. I sometimes feel there is much nonfellowship and division evidenced in our churches over things that do not belong to the church and should not come into it. Let brotherly love continue. God is love.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator.
J. M. CATE, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, October 6th, 1921, in Salisbury, Md., Mr. Herman Reese Hales, of Snow Hill, Md., and Miss Nettie Frances Matthews, of Salisbury, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Addie Heath was born February 8th, 1850, in Simpson County, Ky., and departed this life at her home near Bangs, Brown Co., Texas, April 3rd, 1921, and was laid to rest the next day in the cemetery near Cherokee, in San Sabo County, Texas, a large congregation of relatives and friends being present. Sister Heath, whose maiden name was Holcomb, united with Sand Run Church in 1869, and was baptized by Elder P. L. Brandstutter, and remained a devoted member of the church until her death, her last membership being with Friendship Church, near May, in Brown County. In 1878 she was united in marriage to W. L. Heath, in Panola County, east Texas. To that union were born two children, one boy and one girl, both of whom were blessed to be with their mother until the last. May the God of all love and mercy enable us all to be reconciled to his will, realizing that our loss is her eternal gain.

MARTIN STONE.

Hilda Garrison died on Monday, July 25th, at the Laura Franklin Hospital in New York city. Her home was with her father, Dr. John Boggs Garrison, in Hopewell, N. J. Just in the bloom of young womanhood, being 32 years of age, she was stricken suddenly in the midst of apparent health with an internal malignant growth about four months previous to her death. Although perfectly aware of the nature of her disease, she was cheerful through it all, and never was heard to complain. She had never made any religious profession, but her life showed that she had faith in God to do all things right according to his purpose. She was universally beloved by all who knew her. Her mother, one sister and one brother preceded her to the grave, and her father is now left alone in his house.

On July 27th Elder Charles W. Vaughn conducted her funeral in the Old School Baptist church-house in the presence of a large company of mourning relatives and friends, to the comfort of those who believe in the power of God in all things and in salvation only through the grace of Jesus Christ.

J. B. GARRISON.

Mrs. Susan Ashworth Irrington was born February 28th, 1841, and died October 5th, 1921, aged 80 years, 7 months and 7 days. She was a Virginian by birth, and at the age of twenty years was married to Robert E. Irrington. To that union were born six boys and one girl: R. L. and C. C. Irrington, of Princeton, W. Va.; J. W. Irrington, of Oakvale, W. Va.; J. M. Irrington and Mrs. L. Saunders, of Windfield, W. Va.; G. E. Irrington, of Huntington, W. Va., and H. F. Irrington, deceased. She had been a faithful member of the Primitive Baptist Church for fifty years, living true to her profession and adorning it

by an orderly walk and a godly conversation. She was strong in her convictions to the last, leaving a bright evidence that she is at rest in the paradise of God. She tried to rear her children to be truthful and honest, and in this she was successful. She was left a widow in May, 1900, but with a brave and faithful heart, full of the love of a devoted mother, she lived to rear her children to manhood and womanhood.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral of this dear old sister, and a large congregation of people assembled on that solemn occasion for the purpose of paying their last tribute of respect to a kind and motherly friend to all who knew her. Her body was laid away in the Matox cemetery to await the coming of her adorable Lord Jesus Christ to raise her vile body and fashion it like unto his in the resurrection. J. W. McCLANAHAN.

RESOLUTION.

WHEREAS, We, the Ebenezer Baptist Church, of New York city, realizing that we have been blessed of the Lord in the gift of brother **R. Lester Dodson** to comfort and edify us in the preaching of a living way of salvation by grace; and

WHEREAS, We have the assurance that his ministry is also approved by our sister churches among whom he has labored, and being confident that the Lord has given him the tongue of the learned, that he should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary; be it therefore

RESOLVED, That we invite the churches of our association and correspondence to have their pastors, deacons and messengers to sit with us in council on Tuesday, November 8th, 1921, at 11 o'clock a. m., in the meetinghouse, with a view to ordaining brother Dodson to the full work of the gospel ministry.

Done by unanimous consent of the church at a regular meeting held October 2nd, 1921.

JOHN McCONNELL, Moderator.

CYRUS RISLER, JR., Church Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. M. M. Perry, Ark., $1.00; S. J. Rogers, Ky., $2.50; Huldah J. Leonard, N. Y., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 694 E. 125th St., or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE First Primitive Baptist Church of Mineral Wells, Texas, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on S. W. 4th Ave. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

SALLIE E. HOWARD, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

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"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 89. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1921. NO. 22.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SALISBURY, Md.

DEAR BRETHREN:—You who are Gentiles according to the flesh, scattered throughout the whole world, grace, mercy and peace be yours through Jesus Christ our Lord, who hath redeemed us by his blood and made us heirs of God and joint-heirs with himself by the one offering of himself, and hath thereby perfected all them that are his; who are the called, which God the Father gave him, for is it not written in the second Psalm, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen [Gentiles] for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession"? And we know that this same Jesus, who is the Son of God, ever asked according to the will of the Father, for in the fortieth Psalm we find the Spirit of him in David say, "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart." It is now my mind, if God so wills, to call your attention to some of Paul's words found in the eleventh chapter of his epistle to the Romans, who are also Gentiles: "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in."—Verse 25. We know that in olden times God called Abraham and separated him from his father's house and all his people. Paul speaks of Abraham in this matter when God called him, that "he went out, not knowing whither he went," and how that God made of him a nation, promising him many things that to the natural mind are impossible to perform; but God is not slack concerning his promises, (2 Peter iii. 9,) and we have the fulfillment of all his promises verified in all instances to all men whomsoever he has promised a thing to be, whether it be woe or peace. After this, Abraham, an old man, well stricken in years, and Sarah his wife past age for conception, and who had never borne a child, being barren, God promised them a son, that the seed of Abraham should be as countless as the sand of the seashore, and as the stars of heaven for multitude, all of which was in due time fulfilled, which sprang from one, and him as good as dead. We know how this tribe in-

creased, how that God renewed the promises to Isaac and Jacob and was ever faithful to them and their seed, to whom at that time the oracles of God were given. Though their transgressions were countless, the forgiveness of God was equal to their sins and his mercy ever about them, keeping them and prospering them in the face of their enemies; but Israel waxed fat and kicked, and perverted the holy law of God, and so changed the commandments and ordinances given to them of God by Moses that when Jesus Christ came in the flesh according to the will and purpose of God, which he had before promised that he should, the prophets all spake of him, and in no uncertain terms of his coming. So strong is the prophecy of Isaiah especially, that he wrote in the past tense, when it was about seven hundred years, as we count time, until his coming, and during the interim great laxness reigned among the Jews, and many said, Where are the signs of his coming? yet in the fullness of time the promise of God was verified in their midst, and Jesus was born of the virgin Mary; but the Jews, being wise in their own conceits, though ignorant of the word of God, failed to recognize the fulfillment of God's promise to them in this same Jesus when he was born, and refused him, casting him aside, having him murdered between two thieves and a common murderer released instead, that all the word of God concerning him and them be fulfilled, for does not Paul say that blindness in part has happened to Israel? which is all in the will and purpose of God, that we, the Gentiles, might also be partakers of the glory which the Son had with the Father before the world began; for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Therefore, by the failure of the Jews to recognize Jesus on account of their blindness, it is written of him, Lo, I turn to the Gentiles, which also is dimly portrayed in many writings of the Old Testament. Peter, who was a strict Jew, and would have no dealings with the Gentiles, which was according to the law, was shown by the vision of the sheet knit, as it were, at the four corners and let down from heaven three times and received therein each time, which was filled with all manner of fourfooted beasts and creeping things, which according to law were common and unclean, that that which God had cleansed is neither common nor unclean. Therefore Peter went immediately and willingly to the house of Cornelius, a Gentile, and preached to them, saying, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."—Acts x. 34, 35. He also commanded their baptism, seeing that the Holy Ghost fell on them as it had upon the disciples, for which visit and preaching Peter was severely censured by those at Jerusalem, but his defence was accepted. Then Paul by the will of God was made the great apostle to the Gentiles, fulfilling all the word of God concerning him. Many and sharp were the trials that lay in the path of duty, but God was faithful, and we hear Paul say to Timothy as he neared his end: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."—2 Timothy iv. 7, 8. Not only was Paul a good fighter and an able defender of the truth, so

much so that rulers and other important men were dumfounded and could not gainsay his words, but the fight that he was in was a good fight, a fight for the truth against evil and wickedness in high places. So then God began to manifest his presence among the Gentiles, and they have ever since been the recipients of manifold blessings and countless mercies by his grace through Jesus Christ, whom he has sent to be a propitiation for the sins of his people everywhere. So faithful and true to them that he is an ever-present help, and has guided and guarded the church safely over perilous seas, through howling tempests of persecution and every dark place of despair. Though oftentimes we have been lax concerning our duty and the way of righteousness, he has ever remained true and faithful, and he will ever remain faithful and true to the people of his choice, but just so sure as there have been trying times and changes, just so sure they will come again. Though blindness in part has happened to Israel, God has not cast away his people whom he foreknew; but we know that because of unbelief they (the Jews) were broken off. Paul here uses the olive tree as a figure to show to the Gentiles the truth concerning the matter, speaking of the tame olive tree and the Jews as branches of this tree, who because of unbelief were broken off, and we, who are of a wild olive by nature, were grafted into the stock of the tame tree and partake of the fatness of the root and stock (Christ). After making this plain he says, "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them [the Jews] which fell severity; but toward thee, [Gentiles] goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." This "if" does not in any way disturb the predestination of all things and the sovereignty of God, nor give us leave to believe that we can or will not do as we please, for there is a fixed path for both Jew and Gentile, and all things, whatsoever they may be, whether powers, principalities, men or devils, things present or things to come, all—everything, is in the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning; but we know that all things which have a beginning must also have an ending. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth;" that is, all material things. There was a beginning of time and all things pertaining to time; so also there is an end of time and all things pertaining thereunto. As we count time we have about two thousand years from the beginning to the flood, when the world was destroyed because of the wickedness of man, whose heart was evil and that continually; but Noah and his house were saved, for he believed God, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. All others were destroyed because of unbelief, they had forgotten God. About two thousand years later Christ was born of the virgin Mary, according to the promise of God, at which time the world was a seething caldron of wickedness and lewdness; the Jews, the chosen people of God, forgot him and walked after their own fancies. All solemnity was gone from the prescribed sacrifices and ordinances, the sacredness of marriage was gone and the home was lightly esteemed; consequently because of this, which was because of unbelief, they were broken off and dispersed, scattered to the four winds, and the Jew has been a wanderer on the face of the earth since the destruction of Jerusalem, which occurred about the year 70 A. D. He has no land

that he can call his own, because of unbelief; he has sacrificed Canaan for the pleasures of the world, while Moses, who was a faithful one, chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt."—Hebrews xi. 25, 26.

Now, brethren, we should not be wise in our own conceits. This blindness of the Jews is only in part, and is to be until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in; for if we, who are wild by nature and were grafted into the good olive tree, which is contrary to our nature, how shall we escape being broken off if we are not steadfast by faith, seeing that God spared not the natural branches, which were broken off because of unbelief, that we might be grafted in? But I would have none think that God ever destroyed a faithful one, though Caleb and Joshua were the only two that came up out of Egypt, above twenty years old, that were permitted to enter Canaan, the land of promise, which God swore to Abraham, renewing his oath to Isaac and Jacob, that he would give to their seed; they were faithful and believed God, so they entered the promised land.

There were some faithful and devout Jews during the apostate stage of the Jewish nation, and they beheld the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; for Simeon took the babe in his arms, blessed him and said: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Other examples we have also on record. Though the masses forgot God, there have been some that remained faithful, and they are the salt of the earth (the preserving quality). Even the cities of the plain could not be destroyed until after just Lot was taken out. But there will be a time when the fullness of the Gentiles be come in, and without any attempt at prophecy, it would seem according to many signs that appear above the horizon that a change is in the none too distant future. There are many lo heres aand lo theres, false christs and false prophets have arisen, which do show signs and wonders to seduce; the love of many has waxed cold. Money is the god of the day, and daily and hourly men and women sacrifice everything that is good and true that they may shower his bounty more profusely than ever on a money-mad, frivolous, idle, pleasure-loving people, that they may be able, so the leaders claim, to win the world for Christ, to finish a work that he could not do; but we know that he satisfied the last demand made by a holy law on a wretched, helpless people steeped and dyed in sin, and no man or set of men can help to do that which has already been accomplished; neither is the wrath of God appeased with money nor his kingdom purchased by such a corrupt medium of exchange. Idolatry and wickedness in high places are before our eyes and on every hand; also are there not dissensions and divisions in our very midst, even within our doors, jealousies, evil surmisings, backbitings and many things that ought not to be? Just what time will bring forth no man can tell, for no one knows the mind of the Lord; only the revealed things are ours, the secret things belong to him. We have his word to refer to. John says, "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things."—1 John ii. 20, and there is much said to those who have ears to hear and hearts to understand. We have a pen picture in the vision of Obadiah, and have a "thus saith the Lord" concerning

Edom. There has ever been a variance between Jew and Gentile. In old times the Jews looked down on the Gentiles, who were the heathen. Then after their dispersion and the recognition of the Gentiles as God having a people among them also, they have ever since looked down on the Jew somewhat. There seems to have been boasting, first on the part of the Jew, then of the Gentile, and Paul here warns us not to boast against the branches (Jews), for we do not bear the root, but are borne by the root. "For if God spared not the natural branches, [Jews] take heed lest he also spare not thee" [Gentiles]. There is no room on the part of any for boasting. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant [of Jews] according to the election of grace." The root that bears us is holy, and only as we partake of the root are we holy; but many things have crept in among us that destroy the joys found only in unanimity of thought and mind. Love the brotherhood, for we are members of one body. How then should the hand tear at the eye, or the eye condemn the ear for not seeing? for all members have not the same office. Then let us live peaceably with all men, especially the house of God, and not be busybodies and meddlers with other men's business, not too quick to condemn a brother for some supposed error. Let us first examine very carefully our own eye and see that the beam has been removed before we set out to clear the moat from our brother's eye. When one has erred we should not be too quick to cast him off, no, not even to deal harshly with him, but tenderly, for perhaps he may see the error of his way and be restored, repenting of his way. When we go not according to Scripture we err, and how shall an erring one correct the fault of another? If occasion arise that we should deal with one, we should seek the guidance of the Lord and an understanding of his word in the matter, and when we have done all, first assuring ourselves of the righteousness of our course, and the offender will not turn and hear the church (not a self-appointed committee of one) we should at least and at last be kind to him. The Lord is merciful to our unrighteousness, then should we not be very lenient toward each other? Harsh words should not pass our lips, but we should at all times see our brother as perfect in Him who hath perfected forever them that are his.

Brethren, I cannot command language that expresses my mind so well as the farewell of Peter, therefore I quote the last verses of his second epistle: "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory, both now and for ever. Amen."

F. SELBY FISHER.

BREWERS, Ky., October 18, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am inclosing copy of a letter from dear brother R. L. Veazey, of Cottage Grove, Tenn., which I have read and reread with much interest, as it seems to be full of the doctrine of God our Savior as well as a very lively spiritual exercise of one who has been and is yet being taught and led by the Holy Spirit. Desiring to share this epistle of love with the household of faith, I send it for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if you deem it worthy material for its dear readers, who indeed are the salt of the earth, who are afflicted, poor and despised, yet they trust in a God who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast; yes, a God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, and to think or hope he has quickened us together with Christ. Oh what a stoop of his mercy, and how rich his grace. This the poor sinner needs and must have to make him sit in heavenly places and fit for the Master's use, for all our righteousness is as filthy rags in his sight.

J. C. CHESTER.

COTTAGE GROVE, Tenn., August 21, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER CHESTER:—I thought I would write you a few lines to-day, as I am at home. I intended to go to Providence, but on account of the rain last night and feeling unwell myself I concluded that it was best not to go. My mind is with the dear brethren and sisters, and I wish I could be with them, but God, who rules all things after the counsel of his own will, knows best, for he rules, governs and controls all things to his own glory and honor, and none can stay his hand or say, What doest thou? At the present time they say you can stay his will, you can overthrow his purposes and keep him from doing his will and carrying out his purposes, but this is not so. They are the very people that deny the Lord that bought them with his own blood. Yet this must be, for he says there were false prophets among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them; and many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of which the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. Now, brother Chester, if the way of truth is not evil spoken of in this day, pray tell me when it shall be. See the difference between Paul's manner of talking and that of the great masses of to-day, beginning with the first verse of the second chapter of 1st Corinthians: "And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with excellency of speech or wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. * * * And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom." Well, how was it then, Paul, if it was not after this manner? Your preaching is not like that of the ministers of to-day. Paul says it was in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. Why did you preach that way, Paul? So that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God. Paul then was most assuredly being led by the Spirit of Almighty God, and that is the way all of God's true ministers are led. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are called, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Oh what a feast it is indeed to sit under the sound of God's called ministers and listen to the grand

and glorious truth spoken as it is in Christ Jesus. It is a balm to our bleeding hearts; it builds us up in the faith and makes heavenly places for us to sit. Oh how I was made to rejoice, as I humbly hope and trust, in a Savior's love while sitting under the sound of your preaching at Walnut Fork last meeting. It was good to my poor soul, and yet I am made to wonder why I should be enabled to feast upon it, for I am so full of sin and corruption, nothing good in me, and many times it seems to me that my hope, if I have any, is almost gone, and I am made to cry out to the Lord, Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; save me from this untoward generation. Then again, as I humbly hope and trust, I am builded up in the most holy faith and made to rejoice in a Savior's love. It is thus that I am tossed to and fro, sometimes down in the valley, and then, as I humbly hope, raised aloft to Mount Pisgah. Now, dear brother, this brings me to my travels from nature's night to the marvelous light and liberty of the truth, as I humbly hope and trust. On the night of September 24th, 1889, I was made to see what a sinner I was before God. My father had been very sick for some two weeks before this, but had gotten much better, in fact well, as we all thought, and on the morning of the 24th he rode up to our little town on some business. I was mowing the second crop of hay, and had gone to the house for some repairs for the machine, and as I came out of the house I saw father riding down the road toward the house. I could tell that something was the matter with him as he came up, and he said, "Son, take my horse, I am mighty sick." He went into the house and to bed; that was about ten or eleven o'clock in the morning. When I came to dinner and went into his room I saw that he was very sick, so I ate my dinner and told my mother that I had to go about three-quarters of a mile to work on a bridge, as I was road overseer and had been warned to fix the bridge, but that I would ride my horse, and if father got worse to ring the bell for me and I would come at once, which she did, but I failed to hear it, so she sent a negro after me and I went at once, and when I got to the house she told me to go for the doctor immediately. I did so, and when we got back I saw that father could not live. Something, I know not what, came over me and I could not sit up, so went to my room and lay down on the bed. It seemed to me that I was bound to die. My wife called the doctor to come in and see me, but he was not the physician I needed. Oh my soul! I lay there in that condition until one o'clock that night. I heard my dear mother call, and I said to my dear wife, Father is dead. I arose, and we started for the room where my father was. I got nearly to his room door and I could not go another step in that direction, for it came to me in thunderous tones, Separated forever. With the assistance of my wife and some one else I went back to my room and to bed, as I thought never more to arise from it. All the sins I had ever committed seemed to loom up before me like mountains, and if there had been a millstone placed upon my breast it could have been no heavier. I tried with all the power that was in me to pray, but it did not amount to anything, for my prayers did not rise higher than my head. My prayer was, Lord, have mercy on me; Lord, save me or I perish. I went on in this way until Thursday evening (my father died Tuesday night at one o'clock) and most of the time I was unconscious. Thursday evening father was buried, and

about three o'clock my wife came in and said they were getting ready to go to the graveyard, and asked me if I wanted to see my father. I told her I did, so with her assistance I went into the room and kneeled down by the precious body of my dear father to take the last look forever, as I thought. It seemed to me that I could not bear to give him up, for I knew that I would never meet him again, for I was doomed to die and hell was my home forever. While kneeling there I tried to pray (as I thought for the last time) to the Lord to save me, for I could see that I was lost. My prayer was, Lord, save me or I perish, and yet I could not see how he could be a just God and save me. If I was lost it was just, and if saved it must be alone through the goodness, mercy and grace of God. Some one carried me to my bed, and all at once I awoke, as it were, feeling perfectly easy, that burden was gone, and as I opened my eyes I looked into the face of sister Paschall. She was the widow of brother John Paschall, and I thought she was the most beautiful person I ever beheld in my life. There seemed to be a complete circle around her head as bright as the noonday sun, and I was made to shout aloud, Salvation is of the Lord. Then it was I could say farewell to my father with the hope of meeting him again. I thought then that I would never see any more trouble. I continued this way for some three weeks, when all at once something seemed to say to me, You are deceived in the whole matter, and, worst of all, you have deceived every one else. Then my burden seemed more than I could bear. My prayer to God then was, Lord, if I am deceived undeceive me. I continued this way for some time, and at an unexpected time to me I was made to rejoice again, as I hope, in the Savior's love. My constant prayer from then until now has always been, If I am deceived undeceive me. O my soul, the trouble I have seen since! only for the grace and mercy of God I could not endure it; but thanks be to his holy name for what he has done for me.

I have written a part of my experience, but could never tell it all. May the Lord give you strength, grace and wisdom to continue telling of the promises of God, proclaiming life and salvation alone in Jesus' name, and finally, when you have done with this life and your career is ended, may the Lord call you to come up there to sing his praises forever and forever. Oh may it be my happy lot to meet you around the throne of God, there to forever shout redeeming grace through Jesus Christ our Lord, is my prayer.

Write to me and visit us as often as you can.

Your unworthy brother,

R. L. VEAZEY.

POCA, W. Va., Sept. 22, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—At our excellent and well ordered association, convened with the Providence Church, Lincoln County, West Virginia, (it being the eighty-sixth session of the Pocatalico Association known to be the Old School Baptist Association) there seemed to be great interest shown in taking care of the people, and that was not all, for it seemed that the entire congregation had come out to hear preaching, and a proof of the warm reception of the Association in that locality was when the names of those who had made arrangements to take care of the people were announced it seemed as if the entire community had opened their doors to take the people in. We were also blessed with able correspondents and visiting ministers. The preaching was

clear, without mixture, no dead flies to cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savor. The order was good, and fellowship among the brethren seemed to be unanimous. Of a truth how pleasant it is for the children of God to dwell together in unity.

By request of sister Terry I will offer a few thoughts on the subject found in 1 Kings xvii. 4: "And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there." This wonderful narrative given of this typical man of God, Elijah the Tishbite, is to be of interest and comfort to the children of God. At the very first mention of him we see the whole man living and moving in spirit and conduct. As we follow him we notice he speaks with power, the name Elijah signifying, My God of power, or, Jehovah is my strength. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heavens gave rain and the earth brought forth her fruit. (James v. 17, 18.) Hence the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. A great drouth had come in answer to Elijah's prayer. In his own strength he could do nothing, but the strength of God was his. He could do nothing, and yet deeds of omnipotence proceeded from his hands. With divine authority and power he shut and opened the heavens and bade the dead to live and the living to die. Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty. As to what the brook Cherith would really signify I am not prepared to say, but there is not a doubt that it was running water at the time of Elijah's sojourn there, and the purpose of God in it complete, pointing to the day Zechariah speaks of in the fourteenth chapter, eighth verse: "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and winter shall it be." That day (gospel day). I think I see the purpose of God in this man of God executing the will of God for the purpose of turning Israel from following Baal. We also hear the prophet, Isaiah xlvi. 11, "Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." And it came to pass after a time that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land. When in a spiritual sense our brook seems to dry, and we are ready to cry, Where is the blessedness I knew when first I saw the Lord? Where is the soul's refreshing view of Jesus and his word? when zeal in the cause of Christ abates and our devotion dies the spirit of praise and thanksgiving seems to be gone, it is then we are made to remember his special care for the church, a people called out. He has said of his vineyard, I, the Lord, do keep it, I will water it every moment, I will even keep it night and day. Then all time is taken up in his watchcare. The raven, a ravenous and unclean bird by nature, is made the servant of God to minister the necessities of life to the man by whom the counsel of God is executed by proving to him the God he served was the true and living God, who could and did consume by fire his offering in the presence of Baal's followers. Oh how wonderful are the works of God, and his ways past finding out!

In conclusion, I will say the God whom we serve will certainly keep his word, therefore be of good cheer. Spiritual

drouth and barrenness of soul in the end proves to be a blessing, and as to how he shall keep his word, let not the clay be at strife with the Potter, but let our song always be, "O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces."—Dan. ix. 7.

"I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there." All things must and do work together for good to them that love God. The God of heaven was at the helm and Elijah must complete his mission, he would not leave the brook until the Lord bade him remove. The howling wilderness was not too dreary for him, because God was with him. The calling of a ravenous bird from the east to minister unto him daily food is evidence of God's power over the unclean as well as the clean. All things must serve the place and purpose for which they were created, and by the brook Cherith we see this man of God waiting the voice of him who commands and it stands, bidding him to remove, feeling his place of defence shall be the munition of rocks. Bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure. J. W. McCLANAHAN.

WARING, Texas, Oct. 15, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find notice of my change of address again, from Sabinal, Texas, to Waring, Texas. It seems that I cannot do any good anywhere except in the mountains. My health is much impaired on account of the move. My brethren and sisters have been very kind to me the past year during my affliction. They have written me some very comforting letters, and have not been negligent in other ways, for which I feel to be oh so thankful. Many times I have felt cast down, disheartened and discouraged, and would think I would suffer from want, but just in time I would be remembered. The Lord works in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. I hope to regain what I lost in the change. Tuberculosis is a loathsome disease, and this locality has proven the most advantageous of any place I know. I acted very unwisely in changing, but I wanted to get where there were some that know the truth, but the Lord's time for me to go elsewhere had not come. Brethren, pray for me when it goes well with you.

Your brother in hope of mercy,

J. B. BOWDEN.

SIDNEY, N. Y., July 18, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you check for two dollars, which I should have sent long ago. I thank you for sending the SIGNS after my time expired. I very much enjoy reading the many letters and editorials, which so strongly set forth the predestination of all things by a God who has all power and will do his good pleasure. The longer I live the more I realize my entire nothingness and inability to do one good act, except as the Lord worketh in me to will and to do of his good pleasure. What have we that we have not received? Who maketh us to differ from another? Is it not the Lord? Why do we glory one above another? Why all this strife and contention among the true believers? Should we not in meekness accept whatever light and blessings the good Lord has seen fit to bless us with, and thank him every day of our lives that he has restrained us from doing things which other brethren do that looks wrong in our sight, remembering that it is the same God that controls each and every one of our acts, and that it is all according to his wise purpose, and that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord? The all-important question is, Do I love the Lord or no?

Yours in hope,

E. C. BIRDSALL.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1921.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

LUKE XXI. 6.

"As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

By request made of us while we were attending the Salisbury Association we shall try to present some thoughts on the above text. Jesus spoke these words with reference to the temple in which the Jews worshipped in the city of Jerusalem; not Solomon's first temple, which had been destroyed many years before, when the Jews were carried captive to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar and his army, but the second temple, which had been built on their return from captivity. This temple, though beautiful and adorned with goodly stones and gifts, did not equal in splendor the first temple erected by Solomon. Of this second temple, standing at the time of Jesus' discourse as recorded in the twenty-first chapter of Luke, Jesus tells his disciples that it, too, shall be destroyed, and that not one stone shall be left upon another. He foretells here the destruction of the temple, which actually took place in 70 A. D., at the time when the Roman army under Titus laid siege to the city and captured it. Then was the temple completely destroyed and the site of it plowed up, so says Josephus, insomuch that even to-day it is a matter of conjecture as to where the temple really stood. It may be said with truth that the temple stood as the center of the Jews' religion, that all their religious life focused there. There were the priests of the tribe of Levi in their holy vestments going about the service as prescribed in the law of Moses, there were the sacrifices offered, there were intercessions made for the sins of the people. But all this was to pass away, and did pass away, every vestige of it, at the destruction of Jerusalem. The covenant which God had made with Israel by the hand of Moses hundreds of years before came to an end in the death of Jesus, though it continued to stand as an old and wornout garment a few years longer, until the temple, every stone of it, was demolished. There is a great lesson for God's people to-day in all this matter of history, and it is this: that the law of Moses is in no sense over the church of God to-day. It has entirely passed away, and the new covenant, which came in by the blood of Jesus, has nothing whatever to do with the old covenant, which came by Moses. It is astonishing how many learned men in the pulpits of the world's churches are not able to distinguish between these two covenants and are all the time endeavoring to mix them up. The two covenants are as distinct as day and night; indeed, the Scriptures frequently present the law as the night and the gospel as the day. Speaking of those who dwell in the night; that is, under the law, it says, Let us who are of the day (the gospel) be sober. True, the law covenant was a type of the gospel covenant; the former foreshadowed the latter, and many things pertaining to the law prefigured the gospel and gospel things, but the two cannot be confused and intermingled with each other except to the confusion of a right understanding of the whole Bible, because law and gospel will not mix a bit more than will oil

and water. Objects of the natural world cast their shadows when the sun shines on them, and so do the elements of the law of Moses become shadows of truly holy and gospel things when seen in the light of the Spirit of Christ; but just as a tree's shadow must not be mistaken for the tree itself, so principles of the law must not be preached as being the very substance of truth and salvation. Here is where the whole world stumbles; that is, at that stumbling-stone Jesus Christ, in that they do not and cannot behold the law as all fulfilled in and by Christ and forever passed away, not one stone of it left standing upon another. Not a single observance or principle of the law of Moses is carried over into the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is sometimes thought and stated that the ordinance of the Lord's Supper observed by the present day church of Christ is a remnant of the old passover supper observed by the Jews under the old covenant. There is not a word of truth in this. The Lord's Supper has no connection with the passover supper. It is true that Jesus met with his disciples to eat of the passover supper before he died, but the Scripture plainly states that the passover supper had been finished when Jesus took the bread and the wine and instituted with his own hands this new or gospel supper to be observed in future ages by his gospel church. Also, it is often thought and so stated that baptism as observed by the gospel church to-day is a remnant of the washings and cleansings observed by the Jews under the law. This is not true at all. Baptism by being immersed in water and in being emersed out of water is a new and gospel ordinance observed first by Jesus and his servant John the Baptist, and has no connection whatever with Jewish washings under the law of Moses. The old legal cleansings may, in some instances, have been typical of baptism, but they certainly formed no part of baptism, and are not linked under the gospel with it in any way. Much confusion of understanding would be spared us could we at all times remember to discriminate between legal principles and practices and gospel principles and practices. Keep them separate in our preaching and in our exhortations to God's people and all will be well. Jesus said that a new piece of cloth is not sewed on an old garment, lest the new tear away from the old and the rent be made worse. He had in mind the distinction between the two covenants, that the gospel is not the law patched up, it is not the old law mended or renovated and made over, but the gospel is a new covenant out and out. Jesus lived and suffered, bled and died, not to make good the deficiencies of the law of Moses, but to bring in a wholly new and better law, the law of the Spirit of divine and eternal life, and to beget his elect unto a living hope by his resurrection from the dead. Neither is new wine put in old bottles, lest the bottles burst and all be lost, but the new wine is put in a new vessel and so all are preserved. The wine or Spirit of the new covenant and gospel of Jesus Christ is put in a new creature, the man born again, or from above, by the will and Spirit of God. The sinner is not reformed, but regenerated, thus becoming a new man in Christ, a fit container or vessel for the new wine of the gospel kingdom; old things, that is, legal things, are passed away with such an one and all things are become new; that is, spiritual. The new man is made in the image of Christ, has the nature and mind of Christ, the heart and life of Christ. The "new birth" is the most profound and far-reaching event

that ever transpired in the life of a sinner. By it he becomes dead to sin, and can no longer live in it; by it he becomes translated from nature's darkness into the light of the kingdom of God's Son; by it he is relieved from the curse and condemnation of the law of sin and brought into the liberty of the truth of God. Nothing liberates like truth. Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free, Jesus said.

All these thoughts have flashed through our mind in connection with the statement of the Savior that not one stone of the temple in old Jerusalem was to be left standing, but all was to be destroyed. The temple of the living God, which is the church, can never be destroyed, but it is not built of legal material; not one stone comes into the spiritual house of God through obedience to any legal ceremony or commandment. The law could accomplish nothing, because of the weakness of the flesh; that is, could accomplish nothing good. Therefore God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that his people should be made the righteousness of God in him.

L.

SUBSCRIBERS TAKE NOTICE.

We have many times requested our subscribers to send subscriptions direct to J. E. Beebe & Co. Many seem to think it makes no difference to whom they are sent, but if they knew how much inconvenience and delay it causes us, they would kindly comply with our request. Make all checks, money orders, &c., payable to J. E. BEEBE & CO.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Pocatalico Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Providence Church, Lincoln County, West Virginia, September 9th, 10th and 11th, 1921, to the sister associations with which we correspond, sendeth salutation and love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—We greatly desire to keep up correspondence with you, feeling the blessings of God resting upon us by your messengers coming to us laden with the precious things of the kingdom of our God. The Minutes of this session will tell where our next session will be held, then we hope it may be our happy lot to meet you all again. May peace and love abound to all who love the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Farewell.

Received by the Association.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Mod.

J. R. BECKETT, Clerk.

The Lexington Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the Second Roxbury Church, at Halcottville, New York, October 5th and 6th, 1921, to the associations and churches with which we correspond sends christian salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Through the tender mercy of our covenant-keeping God we have great reason to praise his great and holy name for sparing our unprofitable lives and enabling us to meet together in an associate capacity. We feel, too, that the gospel has been preached to us in faithfulness and much assurance by God's servants whom he has sent to us, for which we feel to thank his holy name. Our churches are in peace and traveling in the order of the gospel, for which we feel to praise his

holy name. We have received your Minutes and messengers, and desire a continuance of your correspondence at our next session of the same, which will be held on the first Wednesday and Thursday in October, 1922, with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Olive, Ulster County, New York.

JOHN CLARK, Moderator.

JAMES AVERY, Clerk.

O. F. BALLARD, Ass't Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Abram Spitler passed quietly and peacefully away at his home, 2512 Western Ave., Mattoon, Ill., August 14th, 1921, aged a few months over 80 years. He was born and reared to young manhood near Rensselear, Ind. His parents, the late Wesley Spitler, Sr., and wife, who were members of the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, moved to Effingham County, Ill., shortly after the close of the Civil War, and later transferred their membership to a church near their new home. Two or three years later the subject of this sketch, on profession of faith in Christ, was received and baptized in the fellowship of the same church. The writer had known him personally for over sixty years, and closely and intimately for almost a half century. His profession of religion was never tarnished or blighted by a single disorder or God-dishonoring act. He loved the church and kingdom of the Redeemer above all things else. To search the Scriptures and talk of the wonders of redeeming grace were to him always a source of unspeakable pleasure and delight. Only a couple of weeks before he was called home he sat before me at one of my appointments. As the divine plan and excellencies of salvation by grace and the blessed calling of the Lord's children out of darkness into the glorious light of heavenly truth were being set forth, his face became radiant, tears ran down his cheeks and his whole being seemed swallowed in that blessed life which was so soon to became a joyful realization. With him now the joy of salvation will never be obscured. In the years of our acquaintance we were often thrown together, and invariably the conversation would be on the subject of religion. Humility was apparent in all his walk and conversation. No levity or foolishness ever marred his conversation on religion or any other subject. To walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he had been called was his constant desire. To do this he turned confidently to the Lord for grace and strength, for he had no confidence in his own strength. He always persisted in saying that if he was truly a member of the household of faith he was the very least of all. His unquenchable faith in God was a wonderful God-given possession. It was truly the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. His was a good hope through grace.

On August 28th, 1878, he was united in marriage with Mary T. Monson. To that union were born four children: Mrs. George Kydd, of Baltimore, Md., Wesley N. Spitler, of Chicago, Ill., Mrs. Harvey Wright and Leah Spitler, of Mattoon, Ill., who, with the widowed mother and nine grandchildren, are left to mourn the loss of one beloved of all who knew him in all the varied relations of life. He rests from his labors and his works do follow him. He was a life reader of the SIGNS and an actual subscriber for many years, and what is more, he was heartily in accord with the truths set forth in its columns.

On August 16th a large concourse of relatives and friends gathered at the First Presbyterian church-house nearby, and the writer conducted a brief service, after which all that was mortal of the devoted head of an interesting family, an earnest and faithful christian, a beloved neighbor and citizen and a true and tried friend and brother of the unworthy writer, was laid to rest in Dodge Grove Cemetery to await the resurrection.

JOHN G. SAWIN.

Robert Turana Shelton was born in Sangamon County, Ill., December 1st, 1849. In early life he received a hope of salvation by grace through the shed blood of Jesus. When a young man he left Illinois, going first to Davis County, Iowa, and later to Coffee County, Kansas, where on July 30th, 1876, he was married to Margaret Kennedy. Six sons and two daughters were born to them, one daughter dying in infancy. Soon after their marriage he and his wife offered themselves to the church called Neosho, in Coffee County, Kansas, and were received by experience and baptism. In 1889 he removed with his family to Tenino, Wash., where they resided until 1897, when he moved to a farm near Oakville, Wash. Last winter he moved to Elma, Wash., where he departed this life August 5th, 1921, leaving his wife, six sons, one daughter, three brothers, three sisters, the members of his church, by whom he is greatly missed, and a large circle of friends to mourn their loss. In 1896 he and sister Shelton united with Little Zion Church, at Elma, Wash., (the meetings of which church are now held in Oakville) by relation from Neosho Church, in Kansas. Brother Shelton was very punctual in attending church meetings, very seldom missing a meeting, and never without a good reason. His greatest joy in life appeared to be in meeting with his brethren and singing the songs of Zion and talking of the merits of Jesus' blood in the salvation of sinners. He had a deep insight into the Scriptures, and would

have nothing but salvation by grace and a "thus saith the Lord." In 1898 he was chosen clerk of the church, and continued in that office until a short time before his death, when he asked to be relieved of the duties of the office on account of failing health. He was sound in doctrine, as the writer had occasion to know by being associated with him in writing a new church covenant and articles of faith, after all the church records were destroyed in a fire which consumed his home in February, 1920. A kind husband and father and a spiritually-minded brother has passed from this life of turmoil and sorrow to one of everlasting peace and joy, where he shall see Jesus as he is and be like him.

Funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Elder Wilson, after which the mortal remains were laid to rest in Odd Fellows Cemetery, there to await the final call of his Lord and Master.

May the Lord be with, comfort and sustain the bereaved ones. J. D. HARDY.

Mrs. Ruth Drake, widow of Deacon Edward Drake, of Steuben County, N. Y., died October 2nd, 1921, aged 81 years, 2 months and 7 days. She is survived by five children, two stepchildren, thirty-one grandchildren and three stepgrandchildren. She was a noble mother and grandmother, a kind and helpful neighbor and a faithful member of the Old School Baptist Church at Ingleside, N. Y. She was baptized by Elder A. St. John about fifty years ago, and lived and died in the faith of God's elect. She died at the home of her daughter, sister Jennie Tuthill, who with her family did all that loving hands and hearts could do. Sister Drake is with and like Jesus.

The writer conducted the funeral services at Ingleside. D. M. VAIL.

MEETINGS.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

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Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

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1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 694 E. 125th St., or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE First Primitive Baptist Church of Mineral Wells, Texas, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on S. W. 4th Ave. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

SALLIE E. HOWARD, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 89. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1921. NO. 23.

POETRY.

SHEPHERDS.

(THE PASTOR.)

WATCH well your flock, ye shepherds,
Watch them both night and day;
For if you do not watch them,
They might be led astray.

Whenever you are sleeping,
And think that all is well,
The enemy approaches,
But how, you cannot tell.

Whenever they are hungry,
'Tis then they should be fed;
Whenever they are thirsty,
To streams they should be led.

Whenever one is missing,
Or wandered out of sight,
Go search for him, and see that he
Is in the fold at night.

Whenever they grow restless,
'Tis then they're hard to keep,
And you will often have to climb
The mountains rough and steep.

Whenever they are chilly,
E'en though they're in the fold,
Then give them good protection,
Before they get so cold.

When clouds begin to gather,
And night is coming on,
'Tis then you should be watchful
Until another dawn.

Whenever you are faithful,
No matter what alarms,
You will not leave the lambkins,
But take them in your arms.

If any one should ask you,
"Watchman, what of the night?"
Be sure that you can answer,
"The firmament is bright."

Watch well your flocks, ye shepherds,
And though the world may frown,
When here your course is finished,
Then you'll receive a crown.

NANNIE B. EDWARDS.

LAGRANGE, Ga.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TOPEKA, Kansas, October 23, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—Having to write you on business, it is in my mind, as it often is, to write a little for the paper, leaving it to your discretion as to whether it is or is not fit to place before your readers. I know that I never can write anything "in His name" in any way satisfactory to myself. Even my best thoughts are mixed with sin, causing me, whenever I turn my eyes within, to have such a sickening view of myself that I can only clap my hands upon my mouth and cry, Lo, I am vile. The prophet Isaiah said, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."

Only those who have had a view of the King in his beauty, and, to the finite mind, his incomprehensible perfectness, ever realize the uncleanness of their lips. It is to this people of unclean lips, among whom I hope to be permitted to dwell all the days of my pilgrimage here, that I wish to write, for they are the only ones who can have fellowship or sympathy for the uncleanness of lips I feel when I try to utter a word of praise to Him, and the abjectness that makes me tremble when I dare hope that I may be one who has seen the King.

My mind has been led of late to dwell on the forgiveness of sins. Not so much on the forgiveness of our Father which is in heaven, as on the many admonitions to the forgiven ones to forgive one another. "When ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any," "even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." That is something it is impossible for lustful, sinful flesh to do, for the fleshly, natural man receives not the things of the Spirit, either this admonition or any other; but the little child of God, the new, inward, spiritual man, the one that stands praying, groaning within himself, prays not only for forgiveness for himself, but also for the spirit of forgiveness, and when that spirit is given, true forgiveness springs from the heart spontaneously, not of the will or effort of the flesh, but of God. When Christ taught his disciples to pray he said, "After this manner therefore pray ye." He did not tell them to simply repeat his formula, but warned them against using vain repetitions, as the heathen do, and as we can see them doing on all occasions, repeating his words and calling them the Lord's prayer, but he said, After this manner pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven. Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Dear children of God, this does not mean debts of dollars and cents, but if thy brother offend thee forgive him until seventy times seven. That is full and complete forgiveness, as we would ask our heavenly Father to forgive us. Our vengeful nature would prompt us to take our brother by the throat, saying, Pay me what thou owest me. If a brother wrongs you in any way he owes it to you to apologize and make amends (and the same if you have hurt him). It is a debt. We are told to owe no man anything, but to love one another. If we owe a debt of that kind let us obediently hasten to adjust it. If we have the pure and unfeigned love which we owe to one another it is not hard to any but the proud, fleshly man to settle all such debts, for love is the fulfilling of the law. I know by painful experience that the flesh, the strong man armed with a vengeful spirit, when not brought into subjection and kept under, will continually lead us into deep debts, and I have known of such debtors living and dying in debt, never making any effort to pay the debt or any inclination to make amends. Then what shall he do, to whom the debt is owed? Shall he go through life holding the rankling injustice in his heart? No, but as God for Christ's sake forgave you your debts to him, so do ye to one another. How did he forgive? Did he hold our sins and iniquities against us until we came confessing our faults and begging mercy and forgiveness? No; in answer to our supplications he does not say, I will forgive when I see enough penitence in you, but the answer is, Your sins are forgiven, and we hear the blessed words spoken ages before we ever felt our sins or cared for him or his forgiveness: Cry unto Jerusalem that her warfare is accomplished and her iniquity is pardoned,

We learn that long ago God forgave us our sins for Christ's sake when he made the supreme sacrifice of himself on Mt. Calvary, in payment of the debt we owed. He paid it all, and left not one farthing charged against us for us to pay by our so-called good works later on. We have not one farthing to pay, the forgiveness is full and complete; justice is satisfied, and our debt of sin held against us no more forever. What a glorious light shines within when this is revealed to us, not by any efforts of man, but by our Father which is in heaven. The Sun of Righteousness arises with healing in his wings, and his light makes manifest to us that that which we so much craved was accomplished on Calvary's gloomy mountain; and as long as the light of that blessed Sun shines in our hearts he will heal all our backslidings. Oh why, when our own debts have been so completely and so mercifully forgiven, should poor mortals be slow to forgive one another, forgetting his own words, that inasmuch as ye did or did it not to one another, even so to me? To the least of my saints, so to me. But old nature, the strong man armed, never having received these precious things, is not touched by them, and prompts us to say, The injustice done me is too great, the sting is too deep. David said, If it had been an enemy that had done it, then I could have borne it, but it was thou, a man mine equal. We walked to the house of God in company and took sweet counsel together. Oh yes, if it had been an enemy we would soon think no more about it, but it was one of the dear saints, whom I had loved with brotherly love, who has wronged me so deeply, and in spirit we are saying of our God, who has done so much for us, He is an austere man, gathering where he has not sown. He requires of me forgiveness when he has not sown a spirit of forgiveness in my heart, and without him I can do nothing. Dear tried one, you are not without him, for God, who cannot lie, said, Lo, I am with you alway. He is of one mind, and none can turn him. No matter how low you may sink, either naturally or spiritually, no matter in what by and forbidden paths you may wander, or how far you stray, none can turn him; and though you make your bed in hell, seeking rest and forgetfulness in the vain allurements of the world, still, true to his word he is with you, and will never leave nor forsake you nor the other poor debtor. He is our strength, our ever-present help, and we can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth us. In assurance of that help and that strength, when we have been redeemed, brought back from our iniquities, our backslidings all healed, then we may dare to pray to God to forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors, and in humbleness we long for a spirit to bless them that curse us and to pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us, and our great desire is to owe no man anything. Therefore if thou bringest thy gift to the altar and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way. First be reconciled to thy brother, then come and offer thy gift. We cannot hold to a wrong act with one hand and expect to receive a blessing in the other. With hatred in our hearts toward even one of the least of his, any oblation we might offer to him would be a vain mockery. For if we love not our brother whom we have seen, how can it be believed that we love God whom we have not seen? Hatred of our brother and unfeigned love of God cannot dwell together in the same

heart. To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life. The tree of life is our right to a home in the church, where we can eat and feast on the love and fellowship of the brethren. O dear kindred in Christ, if God so loved us that he would give his one darling Son to suffer and die in our stead, to pay our debt and set us free from the penalty pronounced against us, we ought to love one another, for love is the fulfilling of the law, and love worketh no ill to his neighbor. As we hope to meet each other where all but love is done away, as equal joint-heirs with our dear Elder Brother, let us pray to be kept in his fear and love, and that we may be enabled to forgive our debtors as we ask forgiveness for our own debts.

MARY ELLISON.

EASTON, Pa., Nov. 13, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have a very good letter from sister Chick, widow of Elder Chick. If you think it would be all right to publish in the SIGNS, do so; if not, send it back.

Yours, (MRS.) L. E. SHARP.

APRIL 24, 1921.

DEAR SISTER SHARP:—I surely did not think I would be so long in answering your good letter. I was glad to know you still remember me with love and fellowship. I am not worthy of the love and esteem the brethren show me. Many have been so kind to write me. I wonder why. I am a poor letter writer, and often envy those who are gifted in expressing their thoughts, and the way God has led them, on paper. I am often made to wonder if I know anything about heavenly and divine things. We are told, Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, and if my heart were filled with heavenly things why should I be so sinful and worldly-minded? I have to walk in darkness most of the time. I realize daily all my strength must come from the great I AM; I cannot take a step without his guidance. It just now came to me that if I were to be gifted in writing, and a comfort to any of God's little ones, my pen would have to be guided by our heavenly Father. May I be made submissive to his will and trust him for daily strength while I journey through this sinful world. Yes, my dear sister, I often live in the past, and well remember the sweet visits you and dear sister Fisher used to make at our home. How my dear husband enjoyed those seasons. He was always glad to see his brethren and sisters and to converse upon spiritual things. I miss those pleasant seasons now; the home is sad and lonely when we are there. The children are all married except Bonnie, and she is not at home much of the time; she has spent the past two winters in Maryland, and in the summer she goes to Maine. God moves in a very mysterious way. A few years ago we were what you would call a large family, now we are separated, some of us many miles apart. I came to Chicago last fall with Mary. She had a little baby one month old. I only expected to stay a few months, but have been here nearly seven. It is so hard for me to leave her here all alone. I do not stay in the home in the winter now; we have rented the house, and it was just as well for me to spend the winter here. I miss my meetings very much. As yet we have not found any Old School Baptists. We have heard there are a few here, but no church. Sister Cooper, one of our members of the Hopewell Church, is here keeping house for her brother, so we get together as

often as we can. She lives south of Chicago, and we are north, some distance apart. I think I shall have to go home before long. I am sorry you are so crippled with rheumatism, and hope when the weather gets warmer you will be better. You speak of going to the associations. What pleasant times you would have. I, too, have had some precious seasons at those meetings, but now there seems to be a sadness mixed with the joy. I miss my dear husband so when I go and see the other ministers he used to be so intimate with. Many have passed away, and those of his age are looking older, and some feeble.

I have written quite a lengthy letter, but there is not much to it. I hope you will overlook all imperfections. I wish I could see you and talk with you, instead of writing. Love to all your family.

Your little sister,

LIDA CHICK.

RICHMOND, Maine, Sept. 16, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—While reading Anna's letter to-day I felt I would like for you to read it also. The things you said about her Saturday afternoon were so lovely. A few days after she was baptized she wrote me a wonderful letter. She and her cousin, Bessie Weeks, walked from the water with me the Sunday afternoon her sister Pearl was baptized, and it was sweet to hear them tell how beautiful the scene was to them. I, too, enjoyed the preaching, and was sorry to have the meeting end. I do long for a right understanding of the Scriptures, but these things are too deep for me. I think I truly do hate strife, and arguments that tend to strife, but I will have to admit that I do rather enjoy good feeling talks.

Remember me to Mrs. Ker. I was certainly sorry not to see her at Whitefield.

Your sister, I hope,

BONNIE A. CHICK.

GARDINER, Maine, Sept. 13, 1921.

DEAR SISTER BONNIE:—I just cannot resist writing to you this evening, because I long to talk with some one about our dear Savior. I can write what I wish to say much easier than I can talk about it, although I love to hear you talk. Since the association my heart has been troubled, and darkness has come upon me, and I know that I am blind. Oh, if God would only give me light. I hardly feel worthy of walking on earth with God's dear people, I am such an unworthy, wicked sinner. I am more worthless than the smallest worm that ever crawled on the face of the earth. I can write to you freely, because I feel that you understand me. No one knows what cruel, wicked thoughts pass through my mind. I am so selfish and ugly that I do not see how any one can call me their dear little sister; but even if I am a worthless little worm I feel that the dear Lord is with me every minute. He guided me to Whitefield last Thursday. If it had not been his will I should never have reached there safely; he gave me the strength and desire. Have you ever had a great desire to talk with some one, but when you were given the opportunity to do so your mouth would be closed and you could not utter a single word? This is what I experienced during the association. I had a great desire to speak, or rather talk with some one, but every time I tried to speak my throat filled up, and when brother Clark asked me to say something I would have given anything to have been able to, because it would have made the heavy burden in my heart

lighter, but I could not. I do not believe I was worthy of speaking among God's dear people, even if they are my own dear brethren and sisters in the Lord. Do you not believe that if I had been worthy of speaking the Lord would have given me the power to speak, instead of weakening my strength and courage? I could listen forever to the beautiful sermons sent to us through our dear minister from God. Oh how I dreaded the last day of the association to draw to a close, because I could not bear the thought of parting from my loving friends, and I could not bear to think that I would have to wait a whole year before I could meet you all again. I find blessed comfort in you dear people; I love every one of you, and my thoughts are with you when I am not. I sometimes feel sorry that I am so young, and wish that I were older like most of my dear brethren and sisters, because I want to be nearer God, as they are, and understand the truth as they do, and love him with the same love that they do. Do you not think that older people are nearer to God than young ones? I feel too far from him; I want to be nearer to him. O Bonnie dear, I hope you understand me; it is such a comfort for me to write my feelings to you. Sometimes I love earthly things so much that I almost forget who it is that gives us all these things which are so wonderful. How can he be so good to any one so insignificant as I am? I am not worth as much as a grain of sand. I think Elder Ker's sermons were wonderful. His preaching was more like a tonic to me than food, I could not get filled. The more I devoured of it the hungrier I became for more and more, yet I do not believe I could have understood it as clearly as my older brethren and sisters did, but I do know that it was certainly good food.

Well, dear sister, I wish I could hear you talk to-night; perhaps my troubled soul would be comforted. The time I think of God most is after I go to bed nights. Some nights it is almost impossible for me to go to sleep, because I feel so deserted and troubled, and I long for some one to talk with, or rather to talk to me, for I cannot talk, I cannot express my feelings. To-day is my second day of school, a very busy time for me getting settled in our new high school. Is there a meeting in Bowdoinham next Sunday? Mother says you only have them the second and fourth Sundays of the month, but I thought some one mentioned having one next Sunday, and I thought I would inquire, because you would know if any one does.

Well, I must retire, or I will not feel like going to school to-morrow. I wish I had you here to-night to talk to me. I think I could write all night to you, but what I write is not worth reading, so good night, dear sister.

With love to all, I am your unworthy sister, ANNA DILL.

[THE above good letter was written by a school girl of Gardiner, Maine. We met her at the Maine Association in September, 1921, and were deeply impressed with her interest in and desire for the meeting. She rode a wheel from Gardiner to Whitefield all alone, a long distance, and said she was not at all tired. She was baptized two years ago by Elder F. W. Keene. We are sure that many will enjoy her good letter.—K.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1921.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
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REVELATION V. 13.

"AND every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

We have recently received a special request for our views on the text above quoted, and while we freely confess that the subject and its connection is too profound for our limited comprehension, we as freely admit that we have some views which we are not willing to withhold from those who are honestly searching after the truth. There is an awful grandeur in the apocalyptic writings of John, which, while it fills us with admiration and reverence, makes us tremble with fear lest we should darken counsel by uttering words without knowledge upon a subject so sublime and glorious.

Immediately after the account of the letters which were written to the angels of the seven churches respectively, John looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven. A door is a way of ingress and of egress, and the door which John saw opened in heaven must have been closed, or shut, before John saw it opened. Christ as the Shepherd of his flock proclaims himself "the door of the sheep," and all who ever come before him (as such) are thieves and robbers. He is the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by him. The opening of this door, to our mind, signifies the opening up of the way of life and salvation through the glorious mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ. As sinners against God, and children of wrath, heaven's portals were closed against all the human family, for all had sinned and come short of the glory of God. The opening of the door points to the perfect atonement made for all the chosen vessels of God's mercy and grace, by him who came from heaven to save his people from their sins. When he had finished transgression, and made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness for his people, having fully redeemed them unto God by his own blood, he arose from the dead, and in triumph ascended up on high, and commanded, saying, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in," &c.—Psalms xxiv. 7–10. Death is abolished and immortality is brought to light through the gospel, and before the church of the First-born, he who openeth and no man can shut, who shutteth and no man can open, who hath the key of death, hath set an open door. Thus John saw fulfilled the words of Jesus to Nathanael: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."—John i. 51. After the opened door in heaven, the voice as of a trumpet was heard, which Jesus said should gather together his elect from the four winds under heaven, and an exhibition of the wonderful things which should be accomplished under the gospel dispensation. Immediately John was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat upon the throne, who

was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone, and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. This throne describes the mediatorial government of the risen and exalted Redeemer, invested with all the power of heaven and earth, to reign in righteousness, and give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. Under the government of the Messiah all those things which were shown to John in his vision, which the trumpet voice said "must be hereafter," should be brought to pass. The book which John saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne in heaven (the church of God) was written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals, was securely held in the right hand of heaven's exalted King, who sat upon the throne in heaven, contained all the wonderful things which were thereafter to be fulfilled. The opening of the seven seals in their order should disclose what had been hidden from ages, and from generations, but are brought to light under the reign of Christ in the gospel dispensation. On the opening of these seven seals, and what was disclosed by the opening of the first six of them, we have recently published such views as we had, and shall not now repeat what we have written.

In these preliminary remarks we have called attention to some things in the preceding context which we deem important as leading our mind to a more full and clear appreciation of the passage on which we are now requested to write. The theme of exultation and joy in which every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, participated, was the wonderful disclosure of the throne in heaven, the power and majesty of him who sat thereon, the book which was seen in his right hand, which none but the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, was worthy to look upon or to open, and the most ecstatic transport was felt when it was proclaimed that he had prevailed to take the book and to loose the seven seals thereof. "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." A view of Christ crucified is the first revelation by the Spirit that ever caused a poor quickened but guilt-stricken sinner to rejoice, and when they can see him also as possessing all the power and wisdom which is indicated by the seven horns and seven eyes, and fully invested with the seven spirits of God, their joy becomes inexpressibly great. It is not written, As a lamb that had been slain, or, As though he had been slain, but the vision presents him, "A Lamb as it had been slain." This view takes those who behold it to his very cross, and the Lamb is seen as it had been slain, and then his exaltation to his mediatorial glory is signified by his horns and eyes, which are emblematic of all the power and wisdom of the eternal Father, for it hath pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell.

"And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne." Him that sat upon the throne, and the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne, are not to be regarded as rivals in power, for both him that sat upon the throne, and the Lamb, are found in the mediatorial identity of our Lord Jesus Christ. In his eternal Godhead he has truly occupied the throne of supremacy from everlasting, and has borne and car-

ried his people in all the days of old. But the appellative title, "Lamb," belongs to him as the all-sufficient sacrifice which was slain for the redemption of his people. He is both the offering and the Priest who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot unto God, and by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified. Daniel says of him, "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit," and then describes him thus: "Whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books [or seals] were opened." "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."—Dan. vii. 9, 10, 13, 14. The advent of Christ joined the two natures of Christ, as the Son of God and the Son of man. "God was manifest in the flesh." In the one he is the only begotten of the Father, in the other "it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda," so that he was at once the Son of David, and David's Lord. As the Ancient of days he filled the throne of glory before the world began, and as the Son of man he was exalted to his mediatorial throne, at his coronation, after his resurrection from the dead. Now risen from the dead and made (manifestly) both Lord and Christ, he ascends his throne as the King of saints, and from the Ancient of days receives the book, on which no other being in heaven or on earth was worthy to even look, with full power and authority to execute all that is therein written. At this grand event a new dispensation is ushered in, and the four beasts (or living creatures) and all the elders and harpers fall down at his feet and worship and adore him as the King eternal, immortal and invisible, the only wise God our Savior.

"And they sung a new song." New to them, for it had never before been sung on earth, for its theme was that of free and distinguishing grace. Patriarchs and prophets in ages past have sung of him that should come out of Zion and turn away ungodliness from Jacob, but now Zion's watchmen lift up the voice, with the voice together they sing, and the heaven-inspired notes are, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign upon the earth." The kingdom of Christ, though it is not of this world, is, at least a portion of it, in the world, on the earth, but as the organized body of Christ, and as members of him, and as a chosen generation and royal priesthood, having the mind and Spirit of Christ, they reign with him, for all he is and has is theirs, and they reign in him, through him and by him.

John in vision heard the voice of many angels (or messengers) round about the throne (the mediatorial throne of God and the Lamb), not in suppressed or faltering, trembling strains, but with a loud voice, and in full chorus, of thousand

times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.

"And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing," &c. We are aware that the multitude of those who delight to sport with their own deceivings would willingly delude themselves with the fallacious conclusion that this passage sustains the doctrine of what is called universal salvation, and they argue that every creature in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, must include all the human family, and so it would if it were spoken of the old, or natural heavens, and earth, and sea. But even then it would prove too much for their purpose, for every created thing is a creature, whether it be animate or inanimate, beast, bird, fish, serpent or worm, as well as men, all are creatures, and it would be hard for men to make themselves really believe that all created things were intended. But we are expressly told in this vision that John saw the old heavens and earth pass away. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea." "And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write; for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end."—Rev. xxi. 1, 5, 6. It is of this new heaven and earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, that John was commanded to write, and of those who are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that they shall walk in them. These are after God created in righteousness and true holiness, with whom old things have passed away and all things have become new; it is in their mouth this new song is put, even praise to our God. But there is no room for caviling or vain speculation as to who shall sing this new and rapturous song, for we are told in chapter fourteen: "And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps; and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God." Again, these spiritual songsters are described in Rev. xv. 2–4: "And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." It is sufficiently clear to those who desire to know the truth, that those who sing this new and everlasting song are the inhabitants of the new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, and that no others can possibly learn or in any

way participate in the song, and this company includes all who are redeemed unto God by the blood of the Lamb, and no more. Some of these were, when John saw this vision, in heaven (the gospel church), and some of them were abroad in the earth, and to be gathered into the kingdom in due time, and some of the innumerable company of them had finished their course and were sleeping in their graves, "under the earth," and some were in the sea, but the Redeemer's work was to gather them with his arm, and carry them in his bosom. He has promised to gather them together from the four winds under the whole heaven, and bring them with singing to Zion, and with everlasting joy upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. The spirit of prophecy, as the Spirit of the Lord God, was on the holy apostle, and gave him in vision a view of the whole church and kingdom of Christ, and caused him to hear their song, and to record for our instruction the sentiment and exalted theme in which they worshipped God. Not a discordant note nor jarring sound was heard. "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power;" all these they ascribe to him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb forever and ever. What strains of pure devotion swell every heart, and what sweet music flows from every tongue of God's redeemed people. How very different the theme and sound of those who worship their net and burn incense to their drag, who cry, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with the beast? They ascribe blessing, and honor, and power to the works of their own hands, and claim that they have not only power to save themselves, but power to evangelize the world. Music literally is only pleasant when it is harmonious, but what jarring discord would distract the ear were we to attempt to blend the worship of idols with the sweet and heavenly songs of divine inspiration of which John testifies in this sacred book. May it be ours to sing with the spirit, and with the understanding also, making molody in our hearts unto God. "Let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains," and this be our chosen theme, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 15, 1871.

[As we have been requested to publish editorials of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe from time to time, we herewith publish the foregoing article.—ED.]

SUBSCRIPTION BLANKS.

As the majority of our subscribers' time expires with the end of the year, we inclose in each paper of this issue a subscription blank, as a convenience to them in sending new subscribers, as well as in paying their own subscriptions. Will you please make a special effort to send one or more new subscribers when you renew your subscription for next year?

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. W. McClanahan.)

The Pocatalico Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Providence Church, Lincoln County, W. Va., September 9th, 10th and 11th, 1921, to the churches which compose this Association sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Another year has rolled around, and we who are living are blessed to meet again in an associate capacity, and we hope in coming to you bearing this epistle of love that you may be found in one mind, standing together on the fundamental principles of doctrine, seeing eye to eye and speaking the same things. How sweet the thought, If God be for us who can be against us? There is not a shadow of a doubt but that Paul felt the fullness of this expression in his heart. He declared, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Paul's letter to the brethren at Rome was to the end that they be strengthened and comforted. He claims them: "Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ: to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." The principles of doctrine set forth by Paul to the brethren at Rome we claim to be ours, and can say with brother Paul, If God be for us who can be against us? With him we feel to say, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Surely if God be for us who can be against us? Then, if we are his by choice, he is ours by love. He first loved us, and says, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. Now, dear brethren, we do hope that we may be prompted by the Spirit of God's everlasting love in the transaction of the business of this, the eighty-sixth annual session of the Pocatalico Association. We have no desire that a single member of this association should depart from the principles of doctrine set forth in her Articles of Faith, but a great desire that the spirit of brotherly love may be manifest. As one of old said, How good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity of the Spirit. We know that we are imperfect creatures after the order of ordinary generation, but after the order of regeneration we are subjects of gospel address; being born again, are new creatures in Christ Jesus; old things having passed away, behold, all things have become new. Do we not hear the Spirit of Christ speaking by the mouth of Solomon, saying, I am the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valleys? As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters. We see Christ, who is the beauty of the church, and whenever he is manifested in this plane where we all meet on a common level we are ready to ascribe all beauty to him who is the rose of Sharon. May it be God's holy and righteous will to lead us beside the still waters of his everlasting peace, causing us to lie down in the green pastures of his never-

ending love, remembering that we are poor, imperfect creatures standing in need continually of the influence of God's Holy Spirit, that we may be able to judge righteously in matters pertaining to the order of the house of God (church). We feel that good brethren have been sawn asunder in many instances by a fleshly or natural judgment. When a brother or sister gets the idea that they must judge their brother or sister to condemnation, let such an one take heed lest the same judgment be meted out to them. Now, dear brethren, do we not see how important it is to examine ourselves to see by what spirit we are actuated? Do we feel a brother's sigh and with him bear a part? Is it not a fact that the prayer of our heart is for the peace and prosperity of Zion, and that erring ones may be converted from the error of their way, and that we all may adorn our profession by a pious walk and a godly conversation, feeling, If God be for us who can be against us?

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Moderator.
J. R. BECKETT, Clerk.

ORDINATIONS.

MINUTES of the council called by the Ebenezer Baptist Church, of New York city, for the purpose of examining Deacon R. Lester Dodson, with a view to ordaining him to the full work of the gospel ministry.

The council convened Tuesday morning, 11 o'clock, November 8th, 1921, at the meetinghouse, corner of Intervale avenue and Home street, New York city.

Sang hymn 877 (Beebe's collection).

Prayer by Elder J. B. Slauson, of Ridgetown, Canada.

Preaching by Elder George Ruston, of Kelly Corners, N. Y., from Revelation iii. 11.

Elder H. C. Ker, of Delmar, Del., was chosen moderator, and Deacon Cyrus Risler, Jr., clerk.

The churches represented in the council by ministers, deacons and messengers were as follow:

Warwick, N. Y.—Elder H. C. Ker, pastor; Deacon D. J. Dolson, Isaac Baird, M. L. Baird.

Middletown and Wallkill, N. Y.—W. Jones, S. F. Osburn, M. E. Hyatt, A. Jones, E. Brink.

New Vernon, N. Y.—Deacon H. S. Collard, C. Manning, A. D. Hoyt.

Hopewell, N. J.—Elder C. W. Vaughn, pastor; deacons D. L. Blackwell, John Yard, D. S. Bond; G. Connor, C. V. Hill, J. B. Garrison.

Kingwood, N. J.—E. H. Rittenhouse.

Southampton, Pa.—Deacon Casper Fetter, W. Hobensack, M. Noble.

Philadelphia, Pa.—Elder B. F. Coulter, pastor; Deacon J. S. Yerkes, A. Barnsley, A. Coulter.

Welsh Tract, Del.—Elder J. G. Eubanks, pastor; J. B. Miller.

Wilmington, Del.—Elder J. G. Eubanks, pastor; I. R. Jarmon.

London Tract, Del.—M. N. Galloway.

Little Creek, Del.—Elder H. C. Ker, pastor.

Broad Creek, Del.—Elder C. W. Vaughn, pastor.

Salisbury, Indiantown, Nassaongo, Messongoes and Forest Grove churches, Md.—Elder J. C. Mellott, pastor.

Snow Hill, Md.—Elder B. F. Coulter, pastor.

Olive and Hurley, N. Y.—Elder George Ruston, pastor; M. Coones, ——French.

Second Roxbury, N. Y.—Elder George Ruston, pastor; A. Bellows, E. A. Ruston.

Union Grove and Vega churches, N. Y.—Elder George Ruston, pastor.

Bowdoinham, Maine—M. Dunlap.

Particular Covenanted, Canada—Elder J. B. Slauson, pastor; Angus Gillis.

Cane Creek, Va.—R. L. Dodson.

The Minutes of the regular church meeting, held October 2nd, 1921, recording the unanimous action of the church in calling for the ordination of brother Dodson, were called for and read.

Moved and seconded, that the council proceed to examine the candidate. (Before putting the question the moderator invited all present, members of sister churches of our faith and order, to act with the council.) Question put and carried.

Elder John McConnell, pastor of the church, then presented brother Dodson, who related his experience as a subject of grace, and his exercises respecting the work of the ministry.

The examination proving satisfactory, it was moved and seconded that the council proceed with the ordination. Carried unanimously.

Ordination was then imposed by the laying on of hands by the ministers present, Elder B. F. Coulter speaking in prayer.

A solemn and impressive charge was delivered by Elder J. G. Eubanks, and the moderator, on behalf of all the churches represented, gave the right hand of fellowship to brother Dodson.

Hymn 1046 (Beebe's collection) was sung, and the meeting closed with benediction by Elder Dodson.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
CYRUS RISLER, JR., Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Jane Elliott, daughter of Benjamin Gunn and Elizabeth Currie, was born on her father's farm, one mile west of Wallacetown, Ontario, December 9th, 1839. Sister Elliott was united in marriage to George Elliott January 12th, 1865. They resided on the Elliott farm, in the township of Ekfrid, until the death of her husband, when she moved to Glencoe, where she resided until the summer of 1920, when she went on a visit to her daughter, Mrs. James McCracken, at Jenner, Alberta, at whose home she died December 24th, in the 81st year of her age. Sister Elliott was received into the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada at the quarterly meeting held in Ekfrid June 27th, and baptized by Elder William Pollard, and lived a very devoted life to the church, which was to her a sweet and pleasant home among those of like precious faith. Her walk through life was a token of heavenly grace; the burdens and conflicts which the dear Lord was pleased to call her to pass through she bore with great fortitude. She endeavored to fill her place in church the best she could, directed by the Spirit of her blessed Master. Her kindred in Christ were always welcome at her home. Sister Elliott was kindhearted and charitable to the poor, and was loved and respected by all who knew her. She leaves to mourn their loss, besides the church, one daughter, Christie, at whose home she passed peacefully away, three sons: Dr. F. B., George G. and John C., also two grandsons: John K. and George C. Elliott.

Her funeral was held from the meetinghouse in Ekfrid, conducted by the writer, and was largely attended. The body was laid to rest in the cemetery near the meetinghouse. May the Lord comfort the dear ones that mourn.

ALSO,

Annie Bell Gillis died in the London hospital, Ont., September 21st, 1921, in the 55th year of her age. She was the youngest daughter of Duncan and Margaret Gillis, who died some years ago. Sister Annie was received into the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church at the quarterly meeting held in Ekfrid on the fourth Sunday in June, and was baptized July 24th, 1904, by Elder W. I. Carnell. She was a kind and lovable person, possessing those sterling qualities of noble womanhood, and lived a devoted life to the church and cause. Her seat was seldom vacant, until she was stricken with disease which prostrated her. She loved the theme of sovereign grace, and her walk was in fearfulness of offending her brethren or bringing reproach upon the cause or church, which was to her very solemn and sacred. Her illness was of long duration, and her suffering at times was intense, yet she bore it without a murmur, longing for the time to come when her suffering would be over and she would fall asleep in Jesus to await his second coming with power and great glory to take his ransomed home. The following was written by dear sister Gillis while on her sick bed nearing death's door:

"My dearest friends in bonds of love, I have put in a very lonely day, not having slept any last night and none to-day, but thought I would tell you of the refreshing visit I had last night. It seemed as though I was taken in the loving embrace of the everlasting arms of love and mercy and made to lie down in green pastures. Praises were pouring out of my mouth for His wonderful works to the children of men. My room was turned into a palace; while Jesus dwelt with me it was an Ebenezer to my soul, but after a time doubts and fears came and I was brought low. Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, and other passages of Scripture are continually passing through my mind. I hope and desire to be reconciled to His unchangeable will, for I feel that there will be a change soon, and if anything happens to me I hope you will not worry about me, but say, It is the Lord's will, let him do what seemeth good in his sight. I hope you may all be kept in his love. These light afflictions, which are but for a moment, as Paul said, worketh for us a far more exceeding weight of glory, and is all for the trial of our faith. Every one is so kind to me, for which I desire to be thankful. Farewell one and all, and may God bless you all."

Her funeral was held from the meetinghouse in Duart and burial took place in the Duart cemetery. She leaves, besides the church, her pastor, two brothers: Duncan M. and Angus, two sisters: Mrs. Jessie Scott and Mrs. A. J. Mitchell, also nephews and nieces to mourn their loss, but we do not mourn as those who have no hope. May the heavenly promises of God our Savior be their comfort in this the hour of their sorrow.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Deacon Preston Staggs, the subject of this notice, was born in Vigo County, Ind., October 21st, 1840. He received a hope in March, 1863, emigrated to Parker County, Texas, in 1870, united with the Zion Hill Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by Elder James Staggs in February, 1885, serving as clerk of that church twenty-one years. He moved to Ft. worth and united with the Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church in 1909, and was ordained deacon in February, 1910. Brother Staggs lived a consistent member of the church, and enjoyed the confidence of the brethren in the fullest sense, but always acknowledged the imperfections of the flesh and only claimed a hope in the mercies of a crucified Savior. He quietly fell asleep October 28th, 1921, aged 81 years and 7 days. He leaves five children, one son and four daughters, to mourn their loss, besides his

many friends. The church has lost an able counselor and faithful member.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved, after which the body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Willow Springs to await the summons to awake. May the Lord fill the vacancy with his holy presence, is the prayer of the unworthy writer. JOHN H. SMITH.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

John Oliver, Va., $1.00; J. W. Rockafellow, N. Y., $8.00; Mrs. Duncan McCallum, Ont., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102 Seattle, Wash.

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THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 694 E. 125th St., or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE First Primitive Baptist Church of Mineral Wells, Texas, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on S. W. 4th Ave. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

SALLIE E. HOWARD, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

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"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 89. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1921. NO. 24.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HERNDON, Va., Nov. 12, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—It has been some time since I have made an attempt to write for the dear old paper, the SIGNS, and I feel at this moment that should I go on and write in my dark state of mind (as I feel to be now) I fear what I might write would prove to be of no comfort to the children of the most high God. I have experienced many bitter trials this year, and feel sad and lonely. I buried my only child in June of this year, and it has left me almost prostrated with grief and sorrow, yet I live on, and feel that I am still a living monument of God's great mercy, but for what reason I live I know not. A few nights ago while sitting by my fireside the following words of Scripture came rushing into my mind: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price."—Isaiah lv. 1. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." It is only the thirsty ones that need water, and they are the only ones that are commanded to come to the waters (the waters of God's salvation), and it is free to them that come thirsting after the righteousness of Jesus, the wells of salvation, the fountain of everlasting life. Jesus said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."

"And he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat." Yes, the table is spread with bounties sweet to the taste; yes, they are to come to the table free, without money and without price. David said, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." "Yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price." David said, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." Green pastures indicate rich food for the sheep. Jesus calls them sheep, my sheep. He says, My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. Yes, he maketh them to lie down in green pastures, and it is a lovely sight to see sheep lying down in green pastures after eating sweet, tender grass to their hearts' content from their shepherd's pasture. "He leadeth me beside the still waters;" not

water, but "waters," as stated in Isaiah. "Still waters." The storm is over and gone, the waters are still and serene. "He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still."—Psalms cvii. 29. "Yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price." Yes, they come as new-born babes, desiring the sincere milk of the word. His little children grow and thrive on the milk of the word; they grow in grace and in the knowledge of their Savior Jesus Christ. They come to the waters of life without money and without price, and they speak from their hearts, saying, I am glad salvation's free. All that was written in prophetic age has been fulfilled in the coming of Jesus on the earth; for he is the beginning of all things and the end of all things. Jesus said to the Jews, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." John while on the isle called Patmos was told to write the things that were true and faithful. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely."

"Yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price." Wine to my mind is an emblem of blood; so when we come to his table and eat the bread and drink the wine, we eat his flesh and drink his blood in remembrance of him who trod the wine-press alone and shed his precious blood for many.

I must close, for I have written too much already. It seems to me that the field I have entered into gets wider and wider, and I am almost frightened to think that I have lingered so long on the edge of the field and gathered so little; but what I have written is free for you to read and do with as you think best, and all will be right with me. I am deficient in language, and when I write I must do so in a simple and childlike manner. I will close by wishing you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, both spiritually and literally.

From a poor weak worm of the dust,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

POCA, W. Va., Nov. 12, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending for publication a short sketch of the religious faith of Thomas Lincoln and his family, hoping it may be thought worthy a place in the SIGNS. The minutes of their meetings sounded right to me, and I feel that it would be read with interest by many, but you are more competent to judge as to what would be best.

Your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

LINCOLN REARED AS A HARDSHELL BAPTIST.

ROLLING back the mists of a century and offering the deerskin bound records of Little Pigeon Baptist Church, near Lincoln City, Ind., as the missing link of Abraham Lincoln's religion, Thomas B. McGregor, assistant attorney general of the state of Kentucky, has given to an appreciative America substantial evidence that Abraham Lincoln was reared in the simple faith of the "Hardshell" Baptist Church. There is no record of Abraham Lincoln's affiliation with any church denomination, but Mr. McGregor's story of Thomas Lincoln, moderator and pillar of the little Baptist church, proves conclusively, Mr. McGregor says, that the Lincoln family were Baptists. "The parents of Abraham Lincoln deserve a fairer estimate than has been allotted them by most of the biographers of Lincoln," said Mr. McGregor, "and the story,

as told by the records that are still to be found in the archives of Little Pigeon Church, near Lincoln City, Spencer Co., Ind., of the devotion paid by the parents of Lincoln to him who guided the lad of Pigeon Creek in the hour of the nation's travail, goes far to give to them their true estimate. In fact, they were well to do pioneers of their day, of sturdy ancestral stock, owned a farm, domestic animals, tools and a family Bible; neighborly, sacrificing and active church-going members."

"Pigeon Creek Church was founded June 8th, 1816, the year that Thomas Lincoln and his family moved from Kentucky and settled on Little Pigeon Creek, in what was then Warrick County, Indiana Territory. It was then, as now, the chief church in that vicinity. When the meetinghouse was built its site was selected about a mile west of Thomas Lincoln's home, the church building to-day occupying practically the same place. When Lincoln's mother died she was buried between their home and the church, the graveyard not having been at that time started at the church, but when Lincoln's sister, Sarah Grisby, died in 1828, she was buried in the church burying-ground, where her grave is yet to be seen, marked by a rough stone. This church, with its continuous existence since 1816, has only two books containing its records and minutes, the first covering the period from 1816 to 1840. It is in this book that we find Abraham Lincoln's father, stepmother and sister were active members of the Hardshell Baptist Church of Pigeon Creek, and this book, with its deerskin cover, the hair still remaining, not only reveals in its crude historic way the true religion of Lincoln's parents, but gives us the best insight yet found to his own religious views."

"Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks were married by a Methodist minister by the name of Jesse Head, but shortly afterward they were united with one of the churches of the Baptist Licking Locust Association of Regular Baptist churches in Kentucky, and when Nancy Lincoln died in Indiana, Abraham by his own efforts had their Kentucky pastor, Elder David Elkins, come to their wilderness home and preach his mother's funeral."

After Thomas Lincoln had married Sally Bush Johnson he sent back to his Kentucky church and obtained his letter of fellowship, and as the minutes of June 1st, 1823, show, he united with the Pigeon Creek Church by this letter and his wife by experience. From that date until they moved to Illinois, in 1830, their names appear frequently in the minutes of the church proceedings, Thomas being one of the pillars of the church, acting as moderator, on committees to investigate the conduct of brethren and sisters and messenger to associations, bearing the letter of Pigeon Creek to her sister churches. The historic minutes which record the affiliation of Thomas Lincoln and his wife with this little pioneer church follows:

June 7th, 1823.

The church met, and after prayer meeting proceeded to business.

1st. Inquired for fellowship.

2nd. Invited members of sister churches to seats with us.

3rd. Opened a door for the reception of members.

4th. Received brother Thomas Lincoln by letter and * * *

7th. Received brother John Wire by relation and sister Lincoln and Thomas Carter by experience.

"Thomas Lincoln was not in such poor circumstances but that he always donated

to the needs of his church," said Mr. McGregor, in offering the following copy of an agreement to build a new chimney on the meetinghouse:

We, the undersigned, do agree one with another to pay the several sums next to our names in produce this fall to be delivered between the 1st and 20th of December, the produce as follows: corn, wheat, whiskey, soft linen, wool or any other article or material to do work with. The produce will be delivered at Wm. Barker's in good mercantile produce.

Signed with other names is:

Thomas Lincoln, white corn, manufactured—pounds—24.

"Thus," continued Mr. McGregor, "we have revealed to us the religion of Abraham Lincoln's parents, his sister Sarah, and of himself. He was raised in the simple hardshell faith, which in after years never left him. We have no record of Thomas Lincoln or his wife ever uniting with any church after they moved to Illinois in 1830."

KELLY CORNERS, N. Y., Sept. 30, 1921.

DEAR ELDER KER:—It is with some hesitancy that I start to write you, but I just feel I want to, so I hope you will be patient enough to put up with me. I have not been in a very happy frame of mind for some months, and your sermon yesterday afternoon just made me as I said to you, all upside down. It made such a struggling inside, which filled me with confusion. When you spoke of those who were cowards among Gideon's men, and then spoke of the children of God, that they cannot turn back, I felt condemned, for oftentimes I feel I have been like those who were offended at Jesus, where it says that many of his disciples turned back and walked no more with him. But I hope there is that in me which would give answer as Peter did when he said, Lord, to whom shall we go? I am thankful that I have been in a more peaceful frame of mind to-day. The word "guiltless," though I did not feel impressed by it when you spoke it, fastened on me sufficiently to follow me in my sleep, and I have been comforted by it. Surely through that word Jesus is seen. The account of Philip and the eunuch is one of the sweetest to me that there is. How often I read the word and long for the man Christ Jesus to guide me, that Jesus might be preached unto me, for what is preaching without it? I long for his appearing; I want, as you said, another token, and have felt ashamed to ask, or else too hardened and indifferent.

I do not feel I can write more, and it is also bedtime, so I will draw to a close. I hope the Lord will fill your mouth and heart also when speaking in his name, that you may be enabled indeed to preach unto us Jesus. I send my love and best wishes to you both.

Your unworthy little sister,

GRACE ASTON.

[We received the above good letter following the two days meeting in September, 1921, with the Olive and Hurley Church, of which Elder George Ruston is pastor, and sister Grace is a sister to sister Ruston. She has been in this country less than two years, coming from England, where the Lord taught her as he teaches his children here in America. It is good when preaching turns us "upside down." It causes us to examine ourselves to see if we be in the faith.—K.]

NOVEMBER 8, 1921.

TO MY HOME CHURCH AT JUSTUS, PA.—MY DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—It is with a feeling of unworthiness that I am writing a few lines to you after meeting with you at our two days meeting and at our regular meeting the Sunday following, September 12th. I can never tell you how much I enjoyed those meetings and hearing the preached word, after not hearing a gospel sermon, except one, in a year, and that one was by our beloved pastor, Elder Vail, in Waverly last July. I was much pleased to enjoy the blessed privilege of meeting with you all again. It has been a very great comfort to me in my lonely hours to know that I have a home with those whom I believe to be the children of God and who believe in salvation by grace alone. But what a warfare is going on all the time in the christian's breast. Just for short seasons we can read our title clear, then come the harassing doubts and fears and discontent. Then again we feel the assurance that we shall be satisfied when we awake with the likeness of our dear Redeemer. I was much pleased to witness the unity of the brethren. It is certainly joyous to see brethren dwelling together in unity. Let brotherly love continue.

From one who loves you all for the truth's sake, one of the least.

CARRIE EATON.

CADDOA, Colo., October 31, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed money order to renew my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. You could hardly consider it renewing my subscription, as I did not subscribe for it this year, but took it last year. I wish to thank you for sending me the good old paper, it did not come to me unwelcome. Money was scarce with us at the time I should have renewed my subscription, and I kept putting it off until finally I thought I could comfort myself by reading the old ones which I had, as I have some that are over five years old, and they are read and reread very often, for all the preaching I get is through the SIGNS. My husband took up a claim out here in Colorado in 1917, and we have been here ever since. I have found only one family of Old Baptists out here. I see many letters from those who are like myself, shut off from hearing any preaching. Oh how I long to clasp their hands in love and fellowship. Only those who have experienced it can know how hungry one gets to hear our blessed Lord's name praised above all others.

Your unworthy sister,

BRITTIE CAUDLE.

PORTLAND, Oregon, Nov. 26, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I herewith inclose post-office money order for two dollars for renewal of subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for Nancy L. Simmons. She is my mother, past ninety years of age, and requests me to say that her greatest pleasure is in reading your paper, since there is no church in this city of her denomination that she can attend. She has been with us here two years. She would be very much pleased if any of her dear brethren or sisters would write to her. A friendly letter would be a ray of sunshine in her dear old life. She has been a member of your church for about seventy years.

Yours very truly,

J. W. SIMMONS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1921.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

CLOSE OF VOLUME EIGHTY-NINE.

WITH this number of the SIGNS our readers will expect something in the way of a report for the present year, and while it will not differ materially from reports of past years, we feel that our friends will be anxious to hear of the SIGNS' welfare. At the beginning of each year we all feel more or less anxiety concerning the SIGNS from every standpoint. Changes are taking place all the time; many of our writers pass away each year, many subscribers also pass to their last reward, and conditions and circumstances over which others have no control cause many to discontinue taking the SIGNS. It can therefore readily be seen how all connected with its publication enter upon each new year. But number after number goes out, usually on time, and the year passes, and another volume is completed. New writers come into the field to fill the vacancies of those gone, and those of our old writers left continue to contribute to the columns of the SIGNS. Every one has his or her own gift of expression, and whether writing doctrinally or experimentally each communication fills its place and reaches the hearts and minds of those to whom it is directed of the Lord. While gifts differ, there is but one Spirit prompting all who write and all who read to His glory and the mutual comfort and upbuilding of one another. During the present year we have suffered the loss of some of our most able writers, and it sometimes seems that without them the SIGNS cannot be just the same, in the sense that a home is never the same after one of the family leaves it forever. We deeply and sincerely sympathize with those left. Elder J. F. Beeman, one of our ablest and most frequent writers, we shall all miss. Clear in view and expression, he used "the pen of a ready writer," sealing instruction and comfort to thousands. The loss of such men is felt throughout the entire country. Notwithstanding the fact that because of death and other reasons some, as always, have discontinued taking the SIGNS, our list has gradually increased until at the present time we have more subscribers than for a number of years. We therefore feel encouraged to believe the Lord intends that the SIGNS continue.

This is the last number of volume eighty-nine, a long time for a paper to exist, but "if God be for us, who can be against us?" It stands for everything that becomes sound doctrine, both in principle and practice, but no backbiting, no slandering. Peace and good will toward men is the motto of the SIGNS. Another year has passed without controversy of any sort entering its pages; the truth of God has, however, been set forth in no uncertain sound. The editors and publishers have endeavored to comply with the wishes of our subscribers as far as was wise and prudent, and while we have experienced some criticism along certain lines, we have received commendation more than a thousand fold, for which we feel thankful. The "contributions for the poor of the flock" have been up to the standard, and in behalf of the poor we thank all who have aided them in

having the SIGNS. We hear from such brethren the country over, telling us how the SIGNS gladdens their hearts and homes. We also thank those who have contributed to its columns, and request that they continue to write.

We shall all appreciate the efforts upon the part of our friends to promote an interest in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that its circulation may be increased, and we shall do all in our power to give our readers a clean sheet worthy of their confidence and appreciation.

Thanking you all for past favors, we say, Farewell for 1921. K.

A WORD TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

WHEN we were forced to reduce the size of the SIGNS, because of the high cost of materials, &c., used in its publication, we told our subscribers that as soon as prices would allow we would put the paper back to its original size, which promise we have not forgotten, and had hoped to be able to do so ere this, but the truth of the matter is that prices of everything used in publishing the SIGNS are about as high now as when we were forced to either reduce the size of the paper or charge more for it, and after much serious thought on the subject concluded it would be better to cut down the number of pages than to charge more for subscription.

Another thing which makes it very hard for us is that many fail to keep their subscriptions paid up, and we have on our list at present many who are more than two years in arrears, to whom we expect soon to send statements, with the request that they let us know whether or not they wish their paper continued. Last year when we sent such statements to those who were in arrears we failed to receive ten per cent. of what the bills totaled, which would be a poor showing in any business, but for a publication like the SIGNS it is much worse. We cannot understand how any who care to read the SIGNS can be so negligent in paying their subscriptions. We never try to force the paper on any who do not want to read it, and all any of our subscribers have to do is to send us word to discontinue sending the paper to them and it is discontinued immediately. We do therefore feel that when no such notice is sent us, and the paper continues coming to a subscriber, that one should feel it his or her duty to see that it is paid for. While this is a small matter to each subscriber, to us it is a very large matter.

In sending on subscriptions, or business of any kind, much delay and confusion would be avoided if sent direct to this office, addressed to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

The foregoing is not intended for those who keep their subscriptions paid up, nor for those to whom we send the paper free, but for those who through carelessness or other reasons let their subscriptions run behind and then fail to pay, saying they did not order the paper sent beyond the time paid for, or making other excuses. If when your subscription expires you do not wish the paper continued to you, please notify us of the fact and it will stop coming, but if you do not so notify us we feel you should pay for the time you have had the paper. Any one can readily see when his or her subscription expires by examining the date opposite their name on the little pink slip on their paper or on the wrapper in which the paper comes to them. If the date reads 15 Dec. 21, it means the subscription is paid to December 15th, 1921, &c. Please examine your dates, and if your subscription has expired let us hear from you.

J. E. BEEBE & CO.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by John F. Oliver.)

The Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, in session with the Ebenezer Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 12th, 13th and 14th, 1921, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Since the organization of this meeting it has been our custom annually to adopt and send out to its members and correspondents a letter embodying our views upon some subject of importance or interest to the brethren. In this we wish to call your attention to the words recorded in John xix. 30: "It is finished." When Jesus was nailed to the cross, and before he died, he used the above named words: "It is finished." When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar he said, "It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." Some people might ask, What did Jesus mean when he spoke the words, "It is finished"? We would answer by saying, The salvation of his people for all time and in eternity. Yes, God in the beginning, or before time began, had this finished work of Jesus all planned in his mind before the world began, and as the architect plans the structure of a building in his mind before a nail is driven, so God in his all-wise wisdom planned this finished work of Jesus in his mind before time began; yes, planned with the Father and with the Son before the world was. Jesus said to his Father, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."—John xvii. 4, 5. Thus we see that Jesus came into the world to do his Father's will. He said, I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. Again, we read his words which he said unto his disciples: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." —John iv. 34. Thus we see that the salvation of God's elect is sure; nothing can be added to the work nor taken from it, for it is a finished work and complete. As God finished his work of the creation of the heavens and the earth and all the host of them, (Genesis ii. 17,) so Jesus in his death and resurrection finished redemption for his people which his Father gave him to do before time began. No man, woman or child has ever been able to fathom the depths of God's great wisdom treasured up in the man Christ Jesus before the world began. Well might the apostle Paul exclaim, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?"—Romans xi. 33, 34. The man Christ Jesus was both God and man, God manifest in the flesh, made of a woman, made under the law, and a sure Redeemer of his people. In John i. 1, 2, we read, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." Thus we see that all of God's elect were chosen in Christ before the world began. Paul said they were saved and called with an holy calling; not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began; and to verify this statement Paul goes on to say: "But is now

made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." Hence, then, to preach the gospel is to preach Christ Jesus and him crucified, a finished gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. This finished work of Jesus reaches every subject of his love in every nation, kindred, tongue and people, for it is written, I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth, even every one that is called by my name, &c. Paul writes: "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."—Ephesians ii. 19–22. Yes, the building is complete, finished, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner."—Matt. xxi. 42.

The stone which builders did disown,
Is now become chief corner-stone.
This from Jehovah doth arise,
And it is wondrous in our eyes.

Yes, the building is complete, finished, made up of lively stones, living stones, Jesus being the topmost stone, the head-stone. For he is head over all things to the church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

Dear brethren, we might write on and on of this finished work of Jesus, page after page, volume after volume, and yet after all the half could never be told. David in Psalms cxxxix. states: "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." Hence we see beyond successful contradiction that all Christ's members were written in the Lamb's book of life before time began. Every member fashioned in the mind of God when as yet there was none of them, but that all should be made manifest at the appearing of the Lord Jesus, who should abolish death and bring life and immortality to light through the gospel, and take upon himself the sins of his people and die upon the cross and cry out, "It is finished." Oh the great mysteries of Providence. The poet writes:

"Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will."

Dear brethren, we shall conclude by saying, Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Are we as kind, loving and forgiving as we should be toward one another? If not, should we not be exhorted to let brotherly love continue? We therefore beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (Eph. iv. 1–3.)

The next session of this Corresponding Meeting is appointed to convene, the Lord willing, with the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the third Sunday in October, 1922. We hope at that time to again receive your messages of love and fellowship and to have with us your ministers and messengers.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
K. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. M. Adams, November 8th, 1921, at his home in the city of Monroe, Ga., Joseph H. L. Woodruff and Miss Emma Adams, both of Walton County, Georgia.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

William Henry Decker was born April 24th, 1842, in Montgomery, N. Y., and died at New Vernon, N. Y., November 23rd, 1921, aged 79 years, 6 months and 29 days. By his neighbors and all who knew him he was held in high regard as an upright and honorable man, and his decease is sincerely mourned by them. Brother Decker was baptized by Elder H. C. Ker in the fellowship of the New Vernon Church July 3rd, 1898, and continued a faithful member of that church to the end. He gave proof of having received, not the spirit of bondage, but the spirit of a child—the spirit of love, which inclined his heart unto God, and to behave toward him as a child to a father. The witness of the Spirit, the evidence of the love of God shed abroad in his heart, was declared in a walk of humility, and under the influence of that spirit, in lowliness of mind esteeming others better than himself, he showed himself approved unto God in the fellowship of all those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Brother Decker had been in poor health for some time. Hardened arteries and the ailments due to that condition finally obliged him to forego much physical exercise, which was a hardship, for he had been a healthy, powerful man, and enjoyed hard work; yet he was patient and cheerful to the end, appreciating the loving-kindness and care of those who ministered to his necessities. He is survived by two brothers: Cornelius W. Decker and Andrew Decker, and a number of nieces and nephews.

There was a large attendance of relatives and friends at the funeral service, held in the New Vernon meetinghouse. The text of the discourse was 1st Thessalonians iv. 13-18. Interment in the New Vernon Church cemetery. The God of all comfort has promised those who mourn after a godly sort, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you."

JOHN McCONNELL.

Mary Jane Morse Shoemaker departed this life September 5th, 1921. She was the daughter of Joseph and Alba Ellis Morse, and was born August 30th, 1843. She was married October 9th, 1871, to Pardy Shoemaker, and was his faithful companion until it pleased the Lord to remove him by death on February 3rd, 1915. Since then she had either lived alone or with her sister, Eunice Stillwell, with whom she was living at the time of her death. Sister Shoemaker united in her youth with the Middletown Church, Delaware County, N. Y., and was baptized by the late Elder Isaac Hewitt, and for many years she was a consistent member of that church. On Sunday, January 13th, 1918, our dear sister united with the Second Roxbury Church by relation of experience. She was a good, humble-minded, God-fearing christian, and is greatly missed by all of us. She loved to talk of spiritual things, and was particularly gifted in expressing herself to the comfort of the brethren. It can truly be said of her that she was meek and lowly in heart.

Elder John Clark and the writer attended the funeral, and tried to speak to the comfort of the bereaved. The interment was at West Conesville.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Mrs. Sarah Jane Kelley died on the morning of November 6th, 1921, in her 83rd year. She was a Miss Bossom, and was married many years ago to John P. Kelley, and bore him three sons and one daughter. The daughter as well as her husband preceded her to the grave a few years. The sons: William, Horace and Silas, are all living to mourn the loss of a dear mother. She was a noble woman and dear sister in Christ. Sister Kelley, her husband and daughter were all members of the Black Rock Church, Baltimore County, Md., and were baptized by the late Elder F. A. Chick, and all proved true and faithful members, never failing to fill their seats when able to do so. It was good to meet and be with them anywhere, and in their home it was their delight to welcome those of like precious faith. So cordial were their greetings and whole-souled their entertainment that it was indeed a pleasure to visit them and a comfort to hear them talk of the blessed Jesus and his love. Sister Kelley had been in poor health for some time, seldom able to get from home, yet her death was a surprise, as she passed away suddenly while sitting in her chair.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer at Black Rock church-house on the morning of the 9th, and although the weather was very inclement, the high esteem in which she was held was attested by the large number of people who attended the sad services. The text used was 1st Corinthians xv. 26: "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." She was laid to rest beside the remains of her husband to await the call of her dear Savior, when he shall come without sin unto salvation.

May God comfort the sons, the church and all the bereaved ones, is the prayer of one who loved her as a dear faithful sister in Christ.

Written at the request of her son.

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

NOTICE.

THE Shohola Creek Old School Baptist Church at a meeting held October 23rd, 1921, unanimously voted to call for the ordination of brother Hugh McKean to the full work of the gospel ministry. We invite brethren and friends to meet with us on December 24th and 25th for that purpose. Trains will be met at Shohola Saturday, 24th, and friends conveyed to place of services. Any one coming on Friday will drop a line to Nicholas Hess, Shohola, Pa.

Done by order of the church October 23rd, 1921.

GIBSON McKEAN, Church Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

F. H. Richardson, Iowa, $3.00; Mrs. T. H. Young, Ohio, $1.00; W. K. Baird, Ky., $3.00; J. A. Tandy, Okla., $5.00; Miss S. I. Rittenhouse, N. J., $3.00; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $3.00; Margaret B. Tiebout, N. Y., $24.00; Mrs. Val. Werner, N. J., $3.00.

MEETINGS.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102 Seattle, Wash.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 694 E. 125th St., or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE First Primitive Baptist Church of Mineral Wells, Texas, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on S. W. 4th Ave. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

SALLIE E. HOWARD, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 90. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1922. NO. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FLOODS.

"I AM come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. * * * Let not the waterflood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me."—Psalms lxix. 2, 15.

In all the depths of signification this language peculiarly pertains unto Christ, the Head of the church, but in measure is applicable to the members of his body, the church. This we may be very sure of, that no matter how deep the waters and overwhelming the floods which his people are called to know, our Lord Jesus Christ went down in unfathomed depths of anguish beneath all the members of his body, the church.

"Through floods and flames, if Jesus leads,
I'll follow where he goes."

Many dear children of God in their simplicity may sing the above lines who as yet know very little of floods and flames. Like the apostle Peter, in their fervent attachment to the Savior they feel willing to go with Jesus even to prison and to death. That tribulation should be in the predestined pathway of the ransomed of the Lord is very manifest, and let us rest assured that as the all-wise God, our heavenly Father, has decreed that afflictions shall be (in such measure as he seeth fit) the portion of his children, all shall in the end be to his praise and the good of them that love God, who are the called according to his purpose. The apostle Paul wrote: "No man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know."—1 Thess. iii. 3, 4. Our heavenly Father in his infinite wisdom makes allotments of trials, burdens, conflicts and afflictions to his children in just such measure, weight, depth and duration as seemeth good in his sight. "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." If the Lord has appointed the number ten we never shall have eleven. Some dear children of God are never called to pass through deep waters where the floods overflow them. Their afflictions, compared with others of the household, are but ankle deep. Doubt-

less there have been few who have had such a measure of afflictions as Job, Jeremiah and the apostle Paul. Our God was glorified in them; and though they so suffered, nevertheless the Lord abounded in his consolations unto them. (2 Cor. i. 5.) "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him."—Isaiah lix. 19. The people of our God have their enemies. We were some time his enemies, and left to ourselves, but for his sovereign, gracious work in our hearts we would have been even now in alienation, enemies in our minds to God by wicked works. But if our God and his chosen ones have enemies, could not the Lord God Omnipotent who reigneth annihilate them all, so that not even the least one should have any being? Unquestionably so, if it were the good pleasure of his will.

"No foe can annoy me, or friend give a smile,
Unless he permit or constrain;
Though Satan may tempt and false brethren revile,
My God will his purpose explain.

False charges against me, though painful to bear,
In truth may be boldly withstood;
But since they afford me fresh matter for prayer,
I know they are working for good."

"The floods of ungodly men made me afraid."—2 Samuel xxii. 5. These are the words of David in the day that the Lord had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies and out of the hand of Saul. They conspired against his life; they would have swallowed him up. There were times when he was afraid, but in his distress he cried unto the Lord; then realizing that God was his defence and his salvation he could sing, "I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about."—Psalms iii. 6. The apostle Paul endured perils of waters; he was in perils by his own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren. (2 Cor. xi. 26.) O beloved of God, what floods compassed this man. A man verily beloved, chosen of God, and in revelations of the Lord not a whit behind the chiefest of the apostles, yet our God had ordained, and thus declared of him, "I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."—Acts ix. 16. And though in his troubles he was sometimes pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that he despaired even of life, (2 Cor. i. 8,) yet the Lord stood by him, and in all these things he was more than conqueror through him that loved him. In all the floods it was his to prove that "underneath are the everlasting arms."—Deut. xxxiii. 27. We may not have had to contend with floods of ungodly men, but some of us have been at least ankle deep—knee deep in such troubles; yes, in perils among false brethren, false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ; and no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light, therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works. (2 Cor. xi. 13–15.) "Their damnation slumbereth not." Such workers of iniquity have been and still arise as a plague to the churches of God. They make provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof. "They allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption."—2 Peter ii. 18, 19. "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead

captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts."—2 Tim. ii. 5, 6. "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."—Jude 4. Such are the sons of Belial, all of them as thorns to be thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands: but the man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron, and the staff of a spear; and they shall utterly be burned in the same place. (2 Samuel xxiii. 6, 7.) The afflictions of Job rolled in upon him like a flood. He exclaimed, "The thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me. I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came."—Job iii. 25, 26. Trouble came, but not unsent. God removed the hedge that he had made around him, and suffered Satan to put forth his hand against him, and also to smite him with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. (Job ii. 7.) With wave upon wave calamities came fast upon him, and while he scraped himself with a potsherd, and sat down among the ashes, then his wife said unto him, "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God and die. But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips." Such sore and trying providences are to us unfathomable, yet we would believe that in all these dispensations all the ways of the Lord are judgment. They all were in the good pleasure of the God of eternal love, and, said James, "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." —James v. 11. Temporal adversities, afflictions, sicknesses, bereavements, the wrath of man, the malice of devils, are all under the dominion of the Holy One, and not a ripple, not a wave of such can roll in upon us without our heavenly Father; and when in his infinite wisdom, in his decree, he suffers any of the ills of this mortal life to come upon us as a flood, he sets the bounds. (Job xxviii. 11.) "The Lord sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever." Our heavenly Father on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea. (Psalms xciii. 4.) Though the old serpent, called the devil and Satan, cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood, the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. (Rev. xii. 15, 16.) Sometimes doctrines of men and doctrines of devils appear to come in as a flood to carry away the churches of God; but the Lord will deliver his elect and bring them through into a wealthy place. Those who are not of God will swallow these damnable doctrines of devils, and be carried away with them, for "they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of

the truth."—2 Thess. ii. 10–13. Can we enter into Jacob's sorrow when he exclaimed, "If mischief befall him [Benjamin] by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave"? "If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."—Gen. xlii. 28; xliii. 14. Take a glimpse of Jeremiah: "Mine enemies chased me sore, like a bird, without cause. They have cut off my life in the dungeon, and cast a stone upon me. Waters flowed over mine head; then I said, I am cast off." But the Lord moved his heart unto himself in prayer: "I called upon thy name, O Lord, out of the low dungeon. Thou hast heard my voice; hide not thine ear at my breathing, at my cry. Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee: thou saidst, Fear not."—Lam. iii. 52–57. Some, after they were illuminated, endured a great fight of afflictions. (Heb. x. 32.) The outward afflictions of the called of God, with the attendant inward sorrows and conflicts, were common to the faithful in Christ Jesus in those apostolic times. (1 Peter v. 9.) But as they were appointed thereunto, their gracious covenant God, who in his wisdom and love ordained these afflictions as their portion, sustained them in their trials, and at times they even rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ. (Acts v. 41.) It may not be yours, dear child of God, to pass through such floods as just mentioned, but there are floods, and if I pen you glimpses of them perhaps you may say, I also know the enemy thus to come in like a flood. Such floods! Floods of evil imaginations, of vain thoughts, vile thoughts, hellish thoughts, blasphemous thoughts, athiestical thoughts; not a few stragglers sneaking into the land, but a host, an army, a flood invading the soul. Enemies coming in like a flood, exalting themselves against the knowledge of Christ, (2 Cor. x. 4, 5,) that would overflow, obliterate our faith and hope in our dear Savior. This is a little of the story:

"If sometimes I strive as I mourn,
My hold on the promise to keep,
The billows more fiercely return,
And plunge me again in the deep.

While harassed and cast out of sight,
The tempter suggests with a roar,
Thy God hath forsaken thee quite;
Thy God will be gracious no more."

I look back to the days when first I knew the Savior, when blessedness, forgiveness, justification and salvation were sweetly mine in Christ crucified, and I did not think, I could not have believed that such floods could ever invade my soul, that there would be such upheavals, such fountains of the deeps of my depraved nature broken up, and that I should be so overwhelmed, so helpless, so distressed in the floods. Those who have not the Spirit of Christ are not in affliction because of floods of vileness, of evil imaginations. Ah, no; they can live in the pleasures of sin, the uncleannesses of their imaginations are rivers of pleasures to them. But our God, whom we cling to at times so ardently, and call him "mine Holy One," (Hab. i. 12, 13,) is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look upon sin. Then, if in truth we are of God, born of God, sin will be hateful to us, and we shall feel we do not want to feast our eyes upon iniquity; but that one who thirsts for and drinks iniquity like water, and rolls sin as a sweet morsel under his tongue, is not of God. But cannot a child of God put up such a barrier that the floods shall not come in? And if the enemy does come in like a flood cannot we drive him out and forbid his coming in any more? Can you say,

Evil thoughts shall not enter; such corrupt, unbelieving, blasphemous thoughts shall not arise, I will keep them down? Ah, when the enemy comes in like a flood what dismay, how distressed, what confusion, what shame, how discouraged we are when we realize our helplessness in such floods? What dreadful and humbling things we are made to know in our manifold temptations. Our faith is sorely tried, our confidences in the flesh are brought to naught; self-sufficiency, self-salvation, that flesh-exalting, self-pleasing conditionalism, are found to be fallacies. The God of our mercy must appear and come and save us. Many a dear child of God knows that though the outward walk is circumspect, though the Bible be read every day, though daily, yes, and hourly in prayer to the Lord, though frequently assembling with the church of God in public worship, though often visiting the saints, the sick and the poor and ministering to their necessities, yet, though all this is so, there may be with us the sorest afflictions, sharp conflicts, floods of troubles, floods of temptations, floods of conscious sinfulness. "The enemy comes in like a flood."

"Trouble came."—Job iii. 26. "I am full of confusion; therefore see thou mine affliction; for it increaseth."—Job x. 15. How can we endure, go through such floods? What is our support, relief, salvation in the deep waters? Though the floods lift up their voice, though the noise of the waterspouts bring dismay at times to our tempest-tossed souls, and wave upon wave overwhelm us, our covenant God is greater than all, and knoweth all things. O beloved of God, the God of our mercy will not leave us in troubles to sink; for there is not an affliction, not a wave of trouble but what is according to the counsel of his will concerning us. All our manifold temptations are found to execute his gracious decrees, and we shall be so wrought in and by them for our good and his own glory. "When the enemy shall come in like a flood the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." This is our relief and salvation. The Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard. This is the new covenant ministry of God the Holy Ghost. In the flesh no puny arm of flesh avails to lift up the standard. The Comforter, the Holy Ghost, is our Standard-bearer. He takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto us. He glorifies Christ, lifts up the standard of our Emmanuel, the Captain of our salvation, the standard of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the dear Lamb of God. For when the tribes of Israel marched through the wilderness the standard of Judah was foremost. (Numbers x. 14.) So, if we are to drive back our enemies, turn the battle to the gate, if the invaders are to be thrust out of our land, if in tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril and sword we are more than conquerors, it must be and is through Christ that loved us. (Romans viii. 35–37.) And his standard lifted up by the Spirit of the Lord in our hearts to the eyes of our enlightened understanding inspires us with blissful hope, and we can then sing:

"My conquest is sure through his blood,
Though now there's a warfare within,
And Satan comes in like a flood,
To draw my poor heart after sin.

Fresh succor from Christ I receive,
Who did all my conflicts foresee;
And through his rich grace I believe
He saved a sinner like me."

When the standard of Christ crucified is seen in faith and love our hope revives and we are of good courage, our enemies are dismayed, the floods that afflict our souls are stayed and driven back, for

"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Christ's banner over us is everlasting love. (Solomon's Song ii. 4.) O Spirit of the Lord, lift up the standard of our precious almighty Savior, then all shall be well.

Oh the blood and obedience of Jesus apply,
When Satan comes in like a flood,
And through thine anointing my soul shall rely
On the covenant purpose of God.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

DECEMBER 14, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I am sending you one of brother McConnell's excellent letters, describing his conflicts and deliverances. It seems rich to me in comfort, and very worth while for the tried and questioning household of faith to read. Believing you will be glad to give it a place in the SIGNS, I send it along, with the hope that others may read it with as much interest and profit as I have. He tells so beautifully how he finds no good thing dwelling in the flesh, and of the wonderful works of God and his desire toward it. We need some one to tell it for us who is of a stammering tongue like myself.

Hoping this finds you and family as well as we are, I am your sister in the love of the truth, I hope,

WATIE A. BEARD.

NOVEMBER 24, 1921.

DEAR SISTER BEARD:—Your letters have always been timely in comfort and in encouragement, suited to my necessities, and my failure to acknowledge them promptly is inexcusable. The only reason I can give for not having done so is the conviction that I am not worthy of the high regard you express, and it humiliates me to be valued more highly than I deserve; and the fear oppresses me, when writing to those whom I love for the truth's sake, that I may be seeking a further expression of their confidence and approval. There is a spirit in me which craves a high place in the kingdom of God's dear Son, in the hearts of his people, and the more I realize my lack of any good thing to commend me in their sight the more that spirit strives for mastery. I often wonder if this is any part of the life we now live in the flesh by the faith of the Son of God.

The world calls this "Thanksgiving Day," and many who profess the knowledge of God are observing it in meeting places, in formal confession or giving of thanks to Him who is the fount of every blessing. How little they know of the source of every good and perfect gift. Their delight is in the gods many of this world, whom they serve in body, soul and spirit. "They have no knowledge, and pray unto a god that cannot save." It was truly Thanksgiving Day when the psalmist said, "I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation." When I recall to mind the everlasting goodness, mercy and loving-kindness of the Lord to me I feel the reproach of a stony heart, a heart that needs the quickening power of Emmanuel's grace to soften and make it honestly and sincerely thankful. Like Cowper I feel to say:

"For sure, of all the plants that share
The notice of thy Father's eye,
None proves less grateful to his care,
Or yields him meaner fruit than I."

There is none more conscious than I of being subject to changes. If a right spirit has ever wrought in me I am dependent on its renewal day by day; I have no power to retain it; and when I am walking after the flesh I have no power in that day of death. (Eccl. viii. 8.) So I do know that it is by grace we are saved through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.

I had it in mind to write and tell you of the mercies and kindnesses of God to me in my way of life, but the sum of them is too great to be counted. Nor do I know that my thankfulness for deliverances is of a godly sort, but I do know that at this writing I am thankful there is no feeling of envy, jealousy or bitterness against any brother. I am glad, because it is not always so. Often there are thoughts of evil, and not good, toward some. The thoughts and imaginations of my heart are prone to evil; I am easily offended, hard to be entreated, for the enemy of my peace dwelling in my flesh is quick to suggest the resenting of any opposition to my judgment or course of life. Jesus said, "A man's foes shall be they of his own household," and I think I have felt the power and assurance of God's word: "Thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee." I am glad and thankful to have a name with a people "which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." I fear greatly that I may not, in sincerity and truth, be one with them, but there is comfort in beholding their peace, in seeing Jerusalem a quiet habitation; "For thou shalt not see a fierce people, a people of deeper speech than thou canst perceive; of a stammering tongue, that thou canst not understand." The Lord has been good, inexpressibly good, in appointing my life among helpers of my joy, for theirs has been a ministry of good things to me. In following the things which make for peace they are saying, "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us. All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom."

The confusion in some of our churches at present is a cause of much trouble and anxiety of mind. It seems strange that those who love the truth should so far forget what is the hope of their calling as to confer with flesh and blood and give heed to the spirit of antichrist. How true it is that our love for the truth, though undying, has its intermissions, costing us tears and much sorrow; for we are still mortal, in conflict with the world, the flesh and the devil, and victory sometimes wavers along the line of battle. But to appreciate what grace actually accomplishes we must take into account what its subjects would have been without its saving power. Are they not kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation? Sometimes we are persuaded that our contention with brethren is zeal in seeking the good of Jerusalem, but I fear it is often a false zeal, not according to knowledge. It seems to me that true zeal is the fervor of undissimulated love. It stimulates vigorous opposition to whatever threatens the peace and comfort of its object, but its opposition is rather against sin than sinners. Bitterness against the persons of men is no part of

its nature; quite the contrary, and its opposition against sin is chiefly directed against the iniquity of our own heart.

"Zeal is that pure and heavenly flame
The fire of love supplies;
While that which often bears the name
Is self in a disguise."

False zeal is deceiving, but those who are awake unto righteousness are given understanding to discern between that which is true and that which is false; for no agreement is possible between truth and error. What belongs to the inner nature cannot but come forth to light; the spirit, the temper of mind, cannot but express itself. As is the tree, so is its fruit. "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" False prophets and their children—antichrist and his disciples, belong in their spirit and earthliness of mind to the world, hence they proclaim and teach what corresponds to this worldly spirit and temper; and as the world loves its own, it eagerly receives that which is kindred to its own spirit. Those who are established in a false hope do not have those things to disturb their confidence which so often trouble an afflicted and poor people who trust in the name of the Lord. The dread of being deceived, the knowledge of their own blindness, and consciousness of lack in understanding, are peculiar to those who love holiness and hate every false way. The comfort of the Spirit of truth promotes carefulness of walk, taking heed to our ways, studying to answer, in a way of life which the spirit of a man knows nothing of. The hope of righteousness is continually assailed by Satan, whereas the hope of them that serve not God is unmolested, for a false hope hides corruption and its possessor appears clean in his own eyes. A zeal of God according to knowledge is effectual in making the contentious peaceable, the dishonest honest, for the Lord in redeeming his people from all iniquity does "purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." There is no true "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" without earnestness; diligence to make our calling and election sure, for it is written, "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus is not slothful service, for a slothful servant is a wicked servant, and condemned to outer darkness. They are not followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. (Heb. vi. 12.) The followers of them who lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily besets them, and run with patience the race set before them, will be known by their labor of love manifested toward the name of Christ, in a disposition to deny themselves, and a willingness to suffer for Christ and for the benefit of their brethren. In sincerity and singleness of heart they say, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." For my brethren and companions' sake I will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek thy good.

I have written an unreasonably long letter, but it has been pleasant employment, and while there may not be in it anything of special interest to you, it will at least assure you of my remembrance. I believe what I have written is truth, but doing the truth is not demonstrated

in my life, and the more I consider my way the less right do I feel to an "inheritance among them which are sanctified."

You told me last Sunday that you are glad I am your pastor. Because I know you spoke in sincerity, it troubles me; for I am far from possessing any qualification for the work of a pastor after God's own heart, "and no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God." I have the name, but do not live it, and I did wrong in accepting the name before I was proved. Many times I feel that if I am sincere in my conviction of being uncalled to that office I should resign and make room for an acceptable gift. But I am a mystery to myself, and continue doing that for which my heart condemns me. The maintenance of quietness and peace in our church is not due, in any degree or sense, to any gift in me. I would be a bruised reed to trust in for instruction in righteousness. But the trouble now in the churches has affected me with fear lest I may also be drawn into this contention between ministers, and thereby a root of bitterness spring up among our people and many be defiled. I would rather die than be a cause of offence to them; life is not worth the living apart from their good; their loving-kindness is better than life. But the Lord is able to and will bring to pass all he has commanded concerning them that fear him. "The Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee."

Brother Decker, of the New Vernon Church, is dead. He had been ill a long time and his decease was not unexpected. The funeral is appointed for Saturday, when I will be present. I was able to locate and notify sister Manning by telephone, and she will also attend.

I hope the Lord will bless brother Dodson with a message of comfort to the church on Sunday, and that you will remember me, not as your pastor, but as your brother and companion in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.

Affectionately,

JOHN McCONNELL.

OAK LANE, Pennsylvania.

DEAR BROTHER SAWIN:—How strange it is that we should be thinking about each other; for a couple of weeks I have felt a desire to write you, but felt it would not be profitable. Now, dear brother, I do not think I can at the present get down so low as you write, but do feel I have been there and do know some about that waste howling wilderness, but at the present time I do feel peace is within, and I do wish it to be the will of God to give you of the dawn, of the noonday so sweet, and now you are in a state that it would cause you to feel thankful. I am unthankful so much, but when I am brought low and then God breaks the night and dawns the day, then how sweet, how glorious, and I look back at the night. Where is it gone? In memory, and some of the darkest of it, I begin to wonder if it was so dark, or was it imagination? Then, as in the darkness, I kept trying to believe that at the former time of light I imagined the light. Just so with you now, you feel probably the darkness was imagination, too. I do not know that I have written this clearly, but these words express what I mean. It is hard to realize the light of Jesus, the light of the knowledge of God, or brotherly love, or sweet fellowship, or any of these productions of light, when we are in mid-

night darkness of the soul, in the wilderness, with all our enemies ready to devour and destroy, and so far as they can they do, and Satan there applauding, and telling us of all the evil one could possibly be told, and we with no strength to tell him to get behind us, and we feeling so alone that it is hard for us to believe there ever was one beset with so much darkness.

Now I feel for a few minutes to leave your case of darkness and go to the fourth chapter of Matthew, Right after Christ was baptized he was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. It seems to me he must have been in darkness at that time to have been tempted, for the devil never comes in much light, for when the light comes then he gets hence, and when Christ was strengthened how soon the devil left him. Then came angels and ministered unto him, and when he had traveled on, the people who sat in great darkness saw great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up. From that time Jesus began to preach, &c., and on in the fifth chapter we find his sermon when he went up into the mount. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. * * * Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Blessed is such language when filled with the Spirit. Dear brother, I may be writing in the wrong meaning, but do not now feel that I am. In that sermon he said, Ye are the salt of the earth, &c., and you are of the same people he was preaching to. Are you not poor in spirit? Are you not mourning? Are you not hungering and thirsting? Now I do feel this is just the same, the work of the Lord, as though you were basking in the light of his countenance. In the forty-fifth chapter of Isaiah it reads, "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things." Dear brother, if you were brought in the winter how would you, how could you, comfort in your preaching that poor lone child that has been dwelling in the darkness and suffering so much, feeling there was no eye to pity, no arm to save? I do feel these times are for good, for our instruction, for the Lord did lead Jacob about in the wilderness and instruct him, so I know he does all his children; so, dear brother, as low and in as much gloom as you may feel to be, I do feel the everlasting arm is underneath, and in God's own time will you be in heart with the twenty-third Psalm, and feel he prepareth a table before you in the presence of your enemies. You feel so alone, so forsaken; look at Christ at the time of his crucifixion, how he cried with a loud voice, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why should not we poor worms feel forsaken and alone if Christ, God's only begotten Son, was left to cry for light of his Father.

I feel I have not written much of comfort, but I do sincerely wish that ere this you have been made to feel, My Father and my God, and to sing praises unto his great and holy name for the deliverance he brought to your soul. May the sweet promises be applied to you, and then that sweet peace that passeth all understanding will be a guest within thy breast, and then how sweet to go and preach with the smile of the Lord upon you. May you hear, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." I experienced that some time ago, and it was sweet, and now when I look at

it it does not seem to me I could have understood it.

I have written lengthily, and if there are errors I trust you will throw the mantle of charity over them, and consider I am dull of understanding. Write again, for we were very glad to be remembered by you. I wish you were with us this evening, for I feel it would be an enjoyable visit. Come and see us when you can. I wish it could be at the time of our association.

Yours in love and sympathy,

MARY HILL TERRY.

LAURELVILLE, Ohio, Nov. 27, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have in mind to write a few lines to you and inclose them with the obituary of our deceased and much loved sister and mother in Israel, Barbara Notestone. Sister Barbara comprised both a Mary and a Martha in one being. She was always humble, at the feet of her Savior and the brethren, and greatly enjoyed ministering to their wants. Would to God that we might all be like her. Would that we might "love one another with a pure heart fervently," watching over one another for good. "For as he [a man] thinketh in his heart, so is he." I believe that we in this life can see whatever we look for, because we are none of us perfect; we all step aside, at times, at least, and he who is not too busy trying to remove the beam from his own eye, having his thoughts and efforts thereon, will have no trouble to find defects in his brethren. I know one who ventures to hope in God who fears that he is almost continually in the path of the wayward, and whose mind seems to be almost continually, like the eyes of the fool, "in the ends of the earth." I often when thinking of some of the shortcomings of the brethren remember the words of the Savior: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." We should first remove the beam, or make ourselves free from sin, before extending the index fingure toward a brother. Like Isaiah, we are made to exclaim, "My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me!" In these latter days declension is manifest on every hand. I confess to an apathy myself, and would implore the Father that it might be according to his purpose and grace to again send his Spirit abroad in our hearts, and that that Spirit might be shed on us abundantly.

I have in mind at this time to send you for publication a brief obituary of my mother, whose pilgrimage on this earth ended on January 24th, 1918. I often thought that I would write it, but it seemed I could never bring myself to record for publication my greatest of sorrows—the death of a mother.

Yours in hope of heaven,

GEORGE W. HARTSOUGH.

(*See obituary on page 14.*)

MAYSVILLE, Ky., Dec. 17, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—We are just in receipt of the last number of the SIGNS for the year 1921, and what a good number it is. Mr. Turner and I have greatly enjoyed reading its contents this beautiful Sunday morning. What a sweet comfort and consolation it is to be blessed with such a sacred privilege. Especially comforting must it be to its readers when we consider the turmoil and confusion the world is so full of to-day. I often think, "If the fellowship of saints is to our souls so sweet, what heavenly rapture shall we know when round the throne we meet?" Our love and best wishes to you both for the new year.

Your unworthy sister,

BETTIE L. TURNER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1922.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

THE sands of time are sinking fast, and swiftly our days pass away. Many of the dear spiritual family circle in which the SIGNS circulates whom we addressed last year are not here now to read these lines, and many who read these words shall doubtless not be here when 1922 shall have run its course. "The present moments just appear, then glide away in haste." "Our life is ever on the wing, and death is ever nigh." A comparison of our condition at the beginning of 1921 with our condition at the beginning of this year will not beget much gratification so far as any improvement in self is concerned. We cannot see that we have grown very much, or that we know any more or are any wiser. If there has been any real growth in the things that really count, that is, spiritual things, we cannot see it. But if spiritual growth is a matter of faith, should we expect to see it? Walking by sight would certainly give one to know for a certainty that he had attained this or that, had learned thus and so, or that he had become wiser to an assured degree. In the face of the truth that believers must walk by faith, and not by sight, we seriously question whether any one of us can measure our growth in the knowledge of the truth. It would no doubt be a source of much gratification to know that we have moved farther along the way, and that really something had been accomplished, but in the providence of God, which we have no right to question, the Almighty deals with his children in such a way that there is no room for pride in one's self and no consciousness of self-attainment. This may seem strange, but part of the reason for it in the divine mind may be to keep us dissatisfied with self, to humble our pride, to prevent undue exaltation and to make us appreciate the brethren more than one's self. The creation of a divine unrest within our soul is often a goad to urge the believer forward to a greater and fuller revelation of spiritual things. Assuredly, pure and undefiled religion is not stagnant, nor peaceful like a cemetery, but quivering and pulsating with divine energy, a living reality in the souls of men, a mighty sweeping current in the lives of all God's redeemed, healing and quickening wherever it flows, bearing within itself the untold possibilities of eternity yet to be revealed. Religion is vital, that we know. It is not a theory, nor yet a speculation. Theology is the sum of all that man has ever thought about God, and embraces exceedingly little of what man really knows of God, but takes vastly much of what man has theorized and imagined about God. Religion is not theology. Far from it. Religion is God's thoughts about men and about his children, thoughts that men cannot of themselves think, but thoughts which the holy Spirit of the living God reveals in the lives of believers, thoughts at which we are astounded when we think them and wonder if really they can be true, because they seem so infinitely and wonderfully sublime as to be too good to be true. So far as the divine mind surpasses the human mind, so far does re-

ligion pure and undefiled surpass the content of all theologies. It is with religion we are concerned, not with theology; with the mighty current, not the stagnant pool. Religion being a living stream running through all the ages of men from the beginning until now, having its source in the life of God himself, it cannot be limited within finite bounds, nor can it be deflected from its purpose to accommodate our notions and ideas as to what it ought to do or ought to become. It will and must flow and ebb according to its own divine intent, regardless of all let or hindrance on our part. So it is not strange that the path of the church from earliest times is strewn with the wrecks of discarded dogmas and traditions found to be untrue in the light of experience and in the light of a fuller unfolding of God's word. For the path of the just is a shining light that shines more and more unto the perfect day. It was hard for the Jerusalem church to outgrow the traditions of the old covenant abolished by the work of Christ, and they could not refrain from sending word to the Gentile believers that they must be circumcised and keep the law. This aroused all Paul's faithfulness to truth and he fearlessly combated the dogmas of the Jerusalem church with the contention that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availed anything, but a new creatnre in Christ Jesus. As the disciples of the Lord were commanded by the Savior to take away the graveclothes from about Lazarus, so the gospel of the grace of God tears away the wrappings of death and carnality from about the believer that he may know the truth and the truth make him free. None of us are abreast of the truth. We always lag behind. As Christ was far ahead of the generation of his day as a teacher of spiritual truth, so the generation of to-day has not yet caught up with him. Truth is ever ahead of us, beckoning us to come up closer, and by its spirit in us urging us and drawing us closer, yet never so that we can say we have at last arrived and there is nothing more to know. Paul never counted himself to have seized why Christ had seized him. He pressed forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, but never, that we remember, did he ever profess to have attained the mark so long as the mists of time veiled him about and shut him in from enjoying the glory that was to be revealed in him thereafter.

It is expected that a new year's greeting should be more forward-looking than reminiscent, and while we should be far from cheating our readers with the delusion that there are no discouragements by the way, we can faithfully assure you all that there is no reason for despair. Hard times indeed there are with all of us, more or less, hard times spiritually as well as temporally, but then hardness is essentially the pilgrim's lot. To endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ is one of the things to which we are called. It is a calling not to be ashamed of, but one that fits us to count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations, knowing that the trial of our faith, which is more precious than gold that perishes, shall be found unto glory and honor at the appearing of Jesus. To be not ashamed of the faith that is in us, and to be courageous in standing by that faith wheresoever it may lead us, and whatsoever astonishing things it may show us, shall prove us to be faithful in that stewardship committed into our hands by the Lord according as he has called us to labor in his vineyard here. There is often present within us a cowardly im-

pulse to shun the vision which faith brings us, a fearfulness lest we be misunderstood, a disposition perhaps to avoid persecution and unpopularity among those we love best. Therefore, for ourselves through this year 1922, and through all the coming years, we should yearn for that grace to enable us to be true to the vision, for strength to prove ourselves accepted unto the Lord, workmen that need not be ashamed of their handiwork, rightly dividing the word of truth according to that light which is in us. For you, brethren and friends, we desire that grace and discernment which may enable you to rightly judge whether that light which is in us be truly from on high, or if it be darkness indeed. This year, like all others before it, shall bring its joys and sorrows, its births and deaths, its losses and gains, its crosses and crowns; some of us may be called to fathom deep waters of woe, others maybe to scale heights of bliss, but whether we go up or down, through light or dark, let us remember the faithfulness of God, who has given us two things: his oath and his promise, wherein it is impossible for him to lie, so that we have a strong consolation and a mighty refuge in that hope set before us, the hope that is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. "Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace;" this we are commanded to do, and thus we want to do. May the God of love and peace be with you all through the coming year, and always. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen."

L.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at his home, Leesburg, Va., December 14th, 1921, James Henry Russell and Miss Clara May Jenkins, both of Taylortown, Loudoun Co., Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Evaline Steel Hartsough was born in Hocking County, Ohio, December 14th, 1836. She was the last on earth of a family of seven children born to John and Elizabeth (Cave) Steel. She united with the Laurel Primitive Baptist Church on June 5th, 1859, by experience and baptism. She was a member of the militant church over fifty-nine years. She was married to John Hartsough on January 1st, 1866, and to them were born a son, George W., and a daughter, Mary E., who both yet live on the farm on which she first saw the light of day. She was one of the best of mothers, both in the home and in the church. I never knew of her having a season of apathy in regard to church duties, but was always zealous toward God. On the evening of January 17th, 1918, while conversing with her son and daughter, she received a paralytic stroke, which affected her entire right side and deprived her of the power of speech. After that she rapidly failed, and on January 24th passed to eternal rest, at the age of 81 years, 1 month and 10 days. She told her daughter upon the occasion of the death and funeral of our daughter-in-law that she did not want us to have funeral services for her, and accordingly no ministerial services were held in commemoration of one who needed not that any one promulgate her virtues. Her sufferings are ended. God be with the bereft.

ALSO,

Barbara Notestone, daughter of Daniel and Barbara Notestone, was born in Perry township, Hocking County, Ohio, June 25th, 1838, and peacefully, like one asleep, passed over the river to be forever with the Lord and like him, on January 13th, 1921, making her sojourn on earth 82 years, 6 months and 18 days. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Laurel Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Jackson Yeoman on January 4th, 1862. She bore her Savior's cross fifty-nine years, but she will wear the crown he gives throughout eternity. Sister Barbara never married, thus obeying the counsel of the apostle Paul, giving all her affection to her Savior and to the flock of his pasture. She never allowed anything to come before her church duties if her health permitted. Aunt Barbara wanted nothing but the old time apostolic religion, and had no use for the things added to by man. Her house was always a sojourning place for her brethren, and she took great delight in ministering to their comforts both in body and spirit. Truly a faithful one has passed on be-

fore. She spent many years in the service of her Master, and henceforth shall wear the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, giveth to all those who love his appearing. She was the last of five sisters and leaves on earth three brothers, two having preceded her to the Savior. Many more distant relatives and friends will miss "Aunt Barbara." Would that her God might be our counselor and protector. Another Baptist home is broken up. She and a brother, John Notestone, lived together many years, and the unworthy writer, in company with many other brethren, has enjoyed many spiritual feasts with them.

Funeral services were conducted by brother Gale Hanover, of Ashville, Ohio, from the Methodist church-house in South Perry, after which we reverently laid Aunt Barbara's body to rest in the cemetery near by.

GEORGE W. HARTSOUGH.

Mrs. Sarah E. Mattox, the subject of this notice, was born December 28th, 1857, and departed this life November 23rd, 1921, at the age of 63 years, 10 months and 22 days. She was one of eleven children born to Bushrod and Elizabeth Bailey; the others are living, the youngest being fifty-one years of age. Her parents preceded her to the grave some years ago, leaving six boys and five girls to mourn their loss. They were both members of the Primitive Baptist Church. Sister Mattox joined the church some twelve or thirteen years ago, and was baptized by the writer. She lived a consistent member of the church up to the time of her death. Her husband, Samuel Mattox, with her oldest sister and one brother, gave her all the attention that loving hands could possibly do to make her comfortable as she gradually failed in health, her affliction being paralysis, and in her last hours she became unconscious.

The writer conducted her funeral in the presence of a large congregation of relatives and friends who gathered at the Mattox home to pay the last tribute of respect to the departed one whom they loved, and to comfort those who were mourning their loss, yet feeling their loss to be her eternal gain. God alone can reconcile the mourning souls.

ALSO,

W. H. Melton was born August 15th, 1845, and departed this life December 5th, 1921, at the age of 76 years, 4 months and 20 days. He was the oldest son of the late Elder William A. Melton, and was beyond doubt one among our able defenders of the doctrine advocated by the Old School or Primitive Baptists, though he never attached himself to the church, feeling too unworthy. He was married twice, and leaves by his first wife, who was a Miss Tyree, four children, two boys and two girls, to mourn their loss. His second wife was a widow by the name of Goff, who died shortly after they were married. He was a very industrious man and well to do financially. He took several long trips with the writer of this notice. He was well versed in the Bible, and delighted in talking on the subject of religion. I visited him several times during his sickness, and found him each time standing firm in the faith of God's elect. He was the most humble person during his sickness I ever saw. Everything the children or any one else did for him he received with thanks. In our conversations with reference to his prospect for heaven and immortal glory he would say, "It is all of God's free grace; nothing good have I ever done to merit the least of God's blessings."

I was called by his sons to speak on the day of his burial to a large number of relatives and friends, who felt to pay their last tribute of respect to one they loved. J. W. McCLANAHAN.

Zachary C. Browning was born June 25th, 1850, and died June 20th, 1921. He had almost reached his seventy-first mile-post on life's journey when God called him home. He had been in poor health for years, but always bore his suffering with christian fortitude. He was confined to his bed only a short time. All that medical skill and the love and attention of family and friends could do for him was of no avail. For years he had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, and attended the meetings far and near. His happiest hours were spent in studying his Bible and reading his church paper. He lived a noble life, one worthy of emulation. He leaves a widow and eight children, who will always miss him in their home. How sad and lonely his wife will be, they traveled life's journey together so long. Only the heavenly Father can comfort and sustain her in her sad bereavement. May she be enabled to say, Thy will be done, not mine.

He was laid to rest in Maple Grove Cemetery.

A NIECE.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Allie Gooch Reid, N. C., $2.00; Mrs. L. J. Randolph, Texas, $1.00; George M. Conner, N. J., $1.00; J. E. Holloway, Texas, $1.00; L. O. Garrott, Ky., $2.00; Mrs. Wm. Brayton, Iowa, $.50; James J. Ashurst, Ill., $8.00; Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $10.00; J. D. Welborn, Ind., $5.00; Emma Birdsall, N. Y., $2 00; Maria Rees, Ky., $3 00; G. E. Coulbourn, Va., $2.00; J. H. Jones, Ga., $2.00; G. C. Jordan, Mo., $1.00; W. T. Hughett, Ill., $3.00; Mrs. E. Case, N. Y., $2.00; Lieut. Col. J. H. Knifton, Ont., $2.00; Joseph F. Hall, Maine, $3.00.

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Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Dec. 26, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—As there were a number of things I omitted to speak of at the time of my ordination which I desired to mention, I shall attempt to write an account of what I hope have been the dealings of the Lord with me, and shall begin by going back very early in life. When I was but eight months of age my mother was removed from the scenes of this life, but through the care of my father, grandmother and others, and later my stepmother, I was brought up through boyhood. I was considered to have possessed a very stubborn disposition, and it required many thrashings at times to straighten me out, but along with that, about the age of ten or twelve years, as I remember, was a desire to read the Bible and *Zion's Landmark*, though I did not wish any one to know I was interested in such literature. On one occasion my stepmother came down to a barn where I was reading the Bible aloud, as I was wont to do, and I well remember how ashamed I was that she had caught me reading. I was also fond of lining out and trying to sing hymns which I had heard ministers line out, which I would do as I attended the cattle in the fields. Educational advantages were rather limited in that immediate section of the country at the time, and I failed to make the best of the opportunities I had. Leaving home between the ages of seventeen and eighteen, I attended a business college in Richmond, Va., for about six months, after which I began my career in the business world. I still read the Bible and the *Landmark*, and occasionally would get to hear an Old Baptist sermon. In my travels I came in contact with all kinds of young men, some good and others bad, and on several occasions I recall having planned to do things which would have meant more or less my destruction, and which looking back now I can but regard as God in his providences having kept me from. Surely his ways are mysterious in providence as well as in grace.

In the fall of 1906 I went to Wilmington, N. C., to live, and there my associates, both young ladies and young men, were mostly Methodist. They held their Sunday-school classes on Sunday afternoons, and when the time came for them to go I seldom could accompany them,

my desire being to go to my room, get in the closet, shut the door, fall on my knees and try to ask God to have mercy on me. On March 1st, 1907, I returned to Richmond, Va., where I was associated in business with my eldest brother. He was held in high esteem by the members of the New School Baptist Church where he was a member, and was a very active and conscientious worker, being president of one of their societies. A very short time following my return to Richmond a meeting of about two weeks duration was held at his "church," during which I was influenced to unite with them. I loved the Primitive Baptists then, but as there was no church near, and being told that I would not find any church in perfect agreement with all I believed, I cast my lot there. Instead of the satisfaction and relief I had hoped to obtain, my trouble soon broke out in a new and more deadly form than I had ever known before. This time I felt to be without God and without hope in the world, with not a single friend in all the universe to whom I could turn for advice, and my cry day and night, at home, in the office and on the street, was with groanings which could not be uttered. My burden grew so heavy that I was compelled to seek relief somewhere, and though it was a great cross to me to have to tell my brother I had come to where we must part in our church affiliations, I realized I could not endure to live where I was as I was. They had put me on a committee to go out and get people interested in the "church," and this I could not do. About this time I learned of an appointment for Elder Sylvester Hassell in South Richmond, and determined that I should go to that meeting, and my prayer was that it would decide my future course; if the preaching was the kind that fed my starving soul I would ask to have my name removed from the records of the church where I was. The meeting was held in a small hall, and well do I remember the occasion. There were but few present, but I believe the Lord was there and was in the preaching and the hearing and the understanding. The text was: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!"—John i. 29. It seemed I had never heard such words fall from mortal lips as Elder Hassell uttered that day. My heart was filled with rejoicing, and the tears flowed freely down my cheeks. I was among strangers in the flesh, and would have but could not keep back the tears. This did decide the case for me, for I returned fully determined to "come out from among them." My brother, an old deacon (and a very devout and sincere man he was, too,) and the pastor of the church reasoned with me, the latter telling me that the people who believed what I professed to were few in number, old in years, would soon pass on and the church would become extinct, to which I replied: I have nothing to do with how many or how old they are; that is God's work, and he will see to it; but as for me, if I stand alone, I stand alone. It was my only foundation, and all other ground had become as sinking sand. Having taken this course, a weight which had been crushing me down was apparently lifted bodily from my shoulders, and for a time I felt much relieved. There was no longer any doubt, neither has there been since, in my mind which was the true church of God, but many doubts arose as to my fitness to be among such people as they appeared to me, and having passed through a very distressing experience and believing it was not essential to eternal salvation to have my name enrolled on the Primitive

Baptist church-book, I concluded I would live outside the portals of the church, but I was to be taught "man might propose, but God would dispose; man might plan, but God would execute." I had a great desire to hear preaching, and planned my vacation so as to be at the old home during association time. I left Richmond one morning in August, 1908, and went to an appointment of Elders P. D. Gold and Isaac Jones, some one hundred and forty miles away. I do not recall anything in particular about the preaching that day, but while singing the closing hymn one of the deacons arose and asked Elder Gold to announce an open door for the reception of members. When the singing resumed some unaccountable power took possession of me, and when I came to myself I was standing in front of the pulpit. All I could do was to weep, and were it not for what Elder Gold said regarding some correspondence which had passed between us, I am sure they would have had very little reason to receive me. Not long after that a church was organized at Richmond, and I took my letter there as a charter member. Some of the brethren soon began to intimate in different ways that they thought I had a gift to speak, and occasionally I was asked to speak in prayer, and on one occasion to talk from any Scripture that was on my mind. I was now having trouble of another kind, and, realizing my utter insufficiency in every way for such work as this, I began to draw back. About this time, whether in a dream I know not, I appeared to have gone with my stepmother to meeting, and upon entering I saw there was no minister in the stand. Several held a consultation and the lot fell on me. When I walked into the stand and faced the audience, among them was an Old Baptist minister, Elder J. E. Herndon, and this seemed to strengthen me, causing me to hope the Lord had not left me alone. Then came the opportunity to be transferred by my concern to its New York city office, and I felt this was my chance to get out of my trouble; I would go to New York among strangers, and not mention to any one anything about my impressions or the attitude of the brethren there about my speaking. It so turned out that chance did no more for me than it did for that certain poor man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. Those who are familiar with the Ebenezer Church in New York know that on the first Sunday of each month a conference meeting is held, at which all are given an opportunity to speak their minds, and after hearing the different ones tell of their travels it was not long before I found myself trying to speak of the goodness and mercy of the Lord to me, for it did seem he had brought me by a way I knew not and into very pleasant pastures in casting my lot among such lovely people. As time passed on I was called upon on certain other occasions to say something. I was not content to keep silent, but I only got deeper in trouble when I tried to talk. What could I do? Where should I go? I endeavored to reason with the Lord, as it were, and to tell him as did Moses that I was not the man, that I was not eloquent, had a very limited education and no right understanding of the Scriptures. I would also try to review my life before him and show him how utterly unfit I was to be one of his servants; I by no means measured up to the standard fixed by holy writ, and many times was I in a state that I would rather die than live. I would go to the fourteenth floor of my office building, and something would seem to almost draw

me out. On Sundays on my way to meeting I would cross a high bridge, and as I walked across I could see in my mind's eye a picture of my leaping from the top of the bridge to sudden destruction in the waters far below. Sometimes while riding on the trains to and from my work the thought would come, If there could only be a wreck and no one hurt but me, what a relief it would be to leave forever the sufferings of this world. To add fuel to the flame, conditions at my office were almost as near unbearable as they possibly could be, and while I had been able to lay aside but very little, I finally decided that I would rather sweep the streets of the city than endure longer what I was undergoing. I was cautioned not to give up a certainty for an uncertainty, as I proposed to work on a commission basis, but God has been good in his providences, and this change which conditions compelled me to make has proven one of the best in my life. During this period I was also having considerable trouble with my throat, and finally I was advised to go west, in the hope that climatic conditions would benefit me. This suggested another opportunity to run away, but again my plans came to naught. Since I was hedged about and could not flee to some unknown part I determined from time to time to quit trying to speak, and was so wrought up on one occasion that I told our pastor, Elder McConnell, if he persisted in calling on me it would force me to remain away from the meetings. But the love he and other dear brethren bore towards me, which was manifested in such various and wonderful ways at times, broke down my rebellious spirit, and a love was begotten in me which caused me to say, Lord, here am I; use me as thou seest fit. While my case seemed as hopeless to me as the valley of dry bones did to Ezekiel, I had to adopt his language and confess, "O Lord God, thou knowest," and "Thy will, not mine, be done." For many years any writing that savored of one's call to the ministry, or the obituary of a minister, has been quick to attract my attention, and seldom was any duty too urgent to prevent a suspension until I had read the article. Some have come very near to me in their writings, and as I have been given to walk with them I have wept for joy. Occasionally one would talk to me as though he understood the yearnings of my fainting heart, and particularly did Elder H. H. Lefferts seem to read as an open book the inmost desires of my soul and tell me the things that my hearkening ears were longing to hear, on his way to the station after having preached for us in New York. I have desired above all else that the Lord would lead me in a plain path in this most solemn matter, knowing that except he build the house they that labor, labor but in vain. Sometimes I felt he gave me a message; Scriptures would fasten themselves upon my mind and would remain with me until I had tried to write or talk about them, and I began to watch the providences of God in opening a door for me to speak. There were times when I felt I had been given a text, and I looked in vain for the Lord to open the door; at other times he would open a door in a most unexpected and wonderful way; it might be through sickness, inability of a supply to come in the absence of our pastor, or some other channel. I remember especially an occasion when I was troubled about attending an association, and I believe I inquired prayerfully of the Lord concerning the matter and received the command to Go, and as ye go, preach, saying,

The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Upon arriving I found about twenty-nine ordained ministers present, and the committee on arrangements was troubled to know how to have all preach. I thought after all I was mistaken, and the Lord had not sent me there, yet somehow I could not doubt that the Lord had given the command to go. To my utter surprise, a few hours before the closing of the meeting a sister of long standing in the church with which the association had been convened went to the committee and urged them to arrange some way for me to speak, as she was very anxious to hear me, and this sealed the command which had seemed to come direct from God to Go, and as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. This was after I had been licensed by the church, and it was during this period that I hesitated to go to meetings for fear of being misunderstood.

Some very wonderful promises have been made precious to my soul from time to time, notably among them was when the news of my having been licensed by the church was conveyed to me (I was not at the meeting) by a sister who had just received the news and came over to see us (where we were spending our vacation), thinking I knew about it. I was much surprised and disturbed over the news, and as I pondered it in my heart the language of the prophet Isaiah, forty-third chapter, came with much sweetness: "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior." Again, when I was on the verge of writing the church and asking them to rescind their action in licensing me, being also terribly perplexed that day with the solving of a business problem which taxed my very wits, I sought refuge in the Scriptures that night upon reaching home, but not knowing where to turn. The Bible opened at the thirty-second Psalm, and I began reading at the top of the page, not the first verse, and soon came to this language: "I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." I had no thought that such words were in the Bible, and it appeared as though the very breathing desires of my soul were here being answered. The yearnings of my heart were that the Lord would instruct me and teach me and guide me, and this was the very thing he was promising to do. To be sure, it was as a nail driven in a sure place, and for the time being I rested there, because it was in this great Teacher that my soul had put its confidence, knowing that all other leaders are blind, and that if the blind lead the blind both shall fall into the ditch. I cannot record the evidences some have had of their call by grace to serve the true and ever-living God, and while I long for brighter evidences and renewed tokens of his love, yet I desire to acknowledge before men that he hath not dealt with me as I have deserved, but that his goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and my desire is to dwell in the house of the Lord forever and to inquire in his holy temple. One day in the King's court is worth a thousand in the tents of wickedness. At best I can only hope to furnish a very imperfect ac-

count of the great and mysterious ways of God in dealing with the children of men, and of the infinite wisdom, the almighty power, the matchless mercy and the undying and incomprehensible love which contrived and wrought out to perfection in all its details his plan of salvation by grace. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it."

In conclusion, may I say that the church has proven a home indeed to me. I am satisfied that I have found my Beloved dwelling in his people, and I hope I possess the evidence of having passed from death unto life spoken of by John—love for the brethren. My life has been such as to require the forgiveness, long-suffering and forbearance of my brethren, but their love has been unchanging and their fellowship I covet. Surely, here my best friends, my kindred dwell, and here God my Savior reigns.

In hope of eternal life through Christ Jesus, R. LESTER DODSON.

LOS ANGELES, California, Dec. 19, 1921.

DEAR SISTER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—I am home after a seven months' absence. I can say I had a good trip east, and met many people of our faith and order, whose company I much enjoyed. After leaving you I visited sister Robinson, of Walden, N. Y., who has spent several winters here in Los Angeles, and all of us learned to love her as one of the salt of the earth. It was a great pleasure for me to visit her in her home. I went to New York city from Walden, and stopped with brother and sister McConnell, in whose home I was made welcome. Sunday was an all day meeting, and Elder McConnell and brother Dodson both spoke to edification. God was glorified and the hearers comforted. On Tuesday, November 11th, I attended the ordination services, the setting apart of brother Dodson to the full work of the ministry. It was a very impressive and solemn service. Elder Eubanks' charge to the young brother was indeed solemn and beautiful. "Preach the word." That means so much to one who is chosen of the Lord to bear his name to his chosen people, to speak with comfort to Zion, to walk about her, a watchman on the walls of that chosen city of God. May the Lord be with the young brother in all his trials along the way. May he lean upon the strong arm of Jesus, and know no will but his.

I met some at the ordination whom I knew before, and many whom I had never seen before. I did not feel to be a stranger in a strange land, but felt when I clasped their hands that they were my people, they believed the same sweet gospel that has been my comfort for many years. I was requested to let them know through the SIGNS when I arrived home. I have been home since the 9th. I found all well. The 10th and 11th were our regular meeting days. We had good meetings, and here I again heard the same gospel, the same old story, always the same; east, west, north and south the pure gospel of the Savior is the same.

I want to be remembered to all of like precious faith.

Yours in much unworthiness,

(MRS.) J. B. DAWSON.

CAMDEN STATION, Minn., Jan. 3, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—I would like to get some information regarding the location of Primitive Baptist churches in Minnesota, preferably near St. Paul or Minneapolis, and also to obtain the names and

addresses of some of the members in this State. My father-in-law is a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, and has been for thirty years, and is desirous of coming in contact with members of his denomination, and as he is well advanced in years I take it upon myself so get this information for him. The winters are hard for him up in this country, and it is his intention to move to a warmer climate at some future date. Would you also kindly give me the location of the churches in some of the States where the winters are warmer, also the names and addresses of some of the members? I might suggest Portland, Oregon, also other parts of that State, Texas and California, preferably the northern part of that State.

Yours truly,

L. ZWEIGHAFT.

[If any of our readers can supply any of the information desired, please communicate with L. Zweighaft, Box 133 A, Route 6, Camden Station, Minneapolis, Minnesota.—Ed.]

New York, N. Y., Dec. 15, 1921.

Dear Editors:—I have just received the twenty-fourth number of the Signs of the Times for the year 1921, and that is as far as I have it paid for, and am reminded that I should send in two dollars to pay for another year, for it is my desire to not owe any man anything. While it is true I have not an abundance of this world's goods, yet I feel thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift that he in his infinite goodness and mercy has blessed me thus far so that with some degree of promptness I have been enabled to meet my just obligations. This is one thing I have greatly desired, and I know my God has been good to me in enabling me to so do. Yes, I know it is all through his goodness and mercy that it is thus with me. I cannot take any credit to myself for any right doing, and I do not blame any one but myself for my wrongdoing.

I have been a subscriber and a reader of the Signs of the Times since January 1st, 1887, and if I really know myself it has been a wonderful help to me. I do not set it up as my standard, but in my judgment it is the best publication we have; that is, it suits me the best. I know there are other papers that are good, and I am glad of it, but I only take one, so inclosed you will please find a money order for two dollars for the year 1922. Send paper to the same address.

MARTIN D. FISHER.

Paterson, N. J., Dec. 29, 1921.

Dear Elder Ker:—As I am all alone this evening I feel like writing a few lines to you, if only to tell you how much I appreciated your kind letter, received some time ago. Some thoughts you expressed were very comforting. Yes, we know all is well if God be within. But the question arises, Does he dwell in such a sinful heart as mine? In times past I hope I have felt his presence, and long to feel it again. Oh for a closer walk with God!

I suppose you were at Warwick last Sunday. How much I thought of you all, and wished to be with you, particularly at meeting time.

It is about time to receive another copy of the Signs, and I can hardly wait for it to come. How I love our dear family paper and all those who write for it. Both your and Elder Lefferts' editorials are very comforting. As you enter upon a new year may God be with you, giving you wisdom and understanding. May you be enabled to write often, explaining

the truth as it is in Jesus to the comfort of his people. What a wonderful calling is yours. As I write the thought comes, Why should I write to you? Why take up your time, when you have so many able correspondents? Yet, just as a child longs to confide in its father, so I desire to talk to you, feeling that you understand. I do feel that you have been a father to me, spiritually, all these years. As a loving pastor you have guided and instructed me, I hope, in righteousness. For a purpose known unto himself God has taken you from us to serve in other fields. The separation has been hard to bear, but the tie which binds our hearts in love cannot be severed.

Remember me to Mrs. Ker, and I wish to thank her for the card so kindly sent at Christmas time. May the new year bring you joy and happiness. May God be with you at all times and may his grace be sufficient for your every need.

With love, in which all join, I am your little sister in hope,

FLORA TITUS.

[SUCH letters as the above help and encourage us more than the writers can ever know. They breathe the very Spirit and love of Jesus. Those who are pastors, and editors of such papers as the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, need such help. We sincerely thank sister Titus for her kind letter.—K.]

JONES MILL, Ala., Nov. 28, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find check for two dollars, for which please send your valuable paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to Wm. Sawyer, Jones Mill, Alabama, for one year from date of expiration of his subscription. Mr. Sawyer has been a constant reader of the SIGNS for a great many years. Your paper seems doubly dear to him, and he begs to be remembered to all connected with its publication. He still remains firm in the doctrine the paper has always so ably advocated, and the Lord has been with him and given him a clear conception of the Scriptures. He sends brotherly greetings to all the saints, and admonishes them to be steadfast, unmovable and always abiding in the work of the Lord.

Written by his nephew,

A. J. DOUGETTE.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Salisbury Church, Wicomico County, Maryland, October 19th, 20th and 21st, 1921, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—We desire to thank the everlasting Father, the giver of every good and perfect gift, that we have again been permitted to meet with our brethren as an association, and that a feast of fat things has been so bountifully spread for us at the Master's table. We have had preached to us the gospel of the kingdom of God's dear Son, and large congregations of people, with the love of God in their hearts, brought together by his Spirit and power, have come that they may be taught of the Lord and strengthened in the hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Our next session will, in God's providence, be held with the Messongoes Church, Accomac County, Virginia, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday after the third Sunday in October, 1922, at which time and place we hope to meet your messengers again and sit together in heavenly places in Christ.

J. C. MELLOTT, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1922.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ACTS II. 42.

"AND they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

Having been requested to give our view of the above text, we shall endeavor to do so with such ability as the Lord may be pleased to bless us.

This text will be found in connection with Peter's wonderful sermon on the day of Pentecost and following the addition of three thousand souls to the church. The apostles were commanded to tarry at Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high, and when Pentecost was fully come they were all of one accord in one place. Cloven tongues were given them and they declared the wonderful works of God as they were given utterance by the Holy Ghost. While they preached Jesus, and him crucified, many were pricked in the heart by the same Spirit that moved the apostles to preach, and they cried out, saying, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Peter said unto them, Repent, every one of you, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. All then who gladly received his word were baptized. These were those of whom it is said, "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." There were many in after years who did not continue steadfastly, and many departures have taken place from those days until the present time, and such will doubtless continue while the world stands. Such things were foretold by Paul and other apostles, and when they come to pass it is but the fulfillment of their word. Men of your ownselves shall arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. Deceivers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived; false prophets shall arise. Men also claimed to be apostles who were not. Such men attempted to exercise apostolic power, when they had no power or authority of that nature at all. Such did not then continue in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, nor do they now. It may well be asked, What is the apostles' doctrine? In reading the second chapter of Acts it will readily be seen that salvation through Jesus Christ, the Holy One of God, was their doctrine in opposition to all legal rites and ceremonies of the law. The Jews had fully expected life eternal to come to them through the law, and had not some of them been pricked in the heart by the Holy Ghost they all would have continued in that hope and expectation. Christ, and him crucified, has been the apostles' doctrine since their revelation of the Lamb of God. This same doctrine is now preached in many places in the world, but this doctrine embraces many things not continued in by some. Things that become sound doctrine are as necessary to observe and preach as salvation through Jesus Christ. High-mindedness, self-exaltation, is contrary to the apostles' doctrine, but peace is according thereto. Lordship over the heritage of God is in opposition to this doctrine, but for the

young to submit themselves to the older ones of the church is the commandment of the apostle. Self-will, stubbornness, is contrary to the doctrine of the apostles, but pliableness and meekness are in keeping with the doctrine. To do things in any way, regardless of the judgment and desire of the church of God, is contrary to the doctrine of Paul, who commanded that "all things be done decently and in order." To cause divisions in the house of God is not continuing in the apostles' doctrine, who exhorted the brethren to study the things that make for peace, whereby we may edify one another, also to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. To backbite, devour a brother, or brethren, is contrary to the commandment, Love one another with pure hearts fervently. All these things, and hundreds of others, are embraced in the apostles' doctrine, and it behooves those who profess godliness to take heed to them and to preach them, as it is the only way to continue in the apostles' fellowship. To depart from their doctrine means to discontinue in their fellowship. John said our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. Can one be therefore out of the fellowship of the apostles and in the fellowship of the Father and the Son at the same time? Fellowship means equality, oneness. Where there are differences of opinion with reference to either doctrine or order is there fellowship? Without fellowship what is left for any one? To lose the fellowship of the household of God means to lose everything in this life. How careful therefore should every one be to continue in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. Departure means death.

The brethren mentioned in the text continued also in the breaking of bread and in prayers. The breaking of bread was in remembrance of the broken body of Christ, the Bread of Life. It seems that it was done often in those days, though Jesus gave no commandment as to how often it should be done, but said, "As often as ye do it, do it in remembrance of me." Remembrance of him, his love, his sufferings and death, was and is the chief thing in the Supper. Thousands partook of the bread and wine without a thought of Jesus. What mockery! Yet, how can one think of him in this special sense who has no fellowship with his sufferings? The slaying of the paschal lamb in Egypt, the eating of its flesh, with bitter herbs and unleavened bread, is altogether another thing from slaying the Lamb of God, our Paschal Lamb. Through the first the Israelites had assurance of God's protecting care and their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. Through the second the spiritual Israel of God has forgiveness of sins, deliverance from eternal death, redemption and everlasting blessedness. This is why the church continued, and now continues, in the breaking of bread in remembrance of Jesus. Some churches at the present time observe the Supper four times a year, some three times, others twice, or even less, but the breaking of bread seems to have been a daily occurrence after the day of Pentecost until churches were established in order in the different parts of the world. In them we have no record how often the bread was broken and the wine served.

The brethren continued in prayers. Peter told those to whom he preached on the day of Pentecost to pray to the Lord, peradventure he would blot out their sins in the crucifixion of Jesus. Whether any of these mentioned in our text had personally anything to do with it or not we are not told, but his death was demanded

by the Jewish nation, and all at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost were Jews. Doubtless all who prayed asked God's mercy upon their souls because of sin. They desired tokens by which they might know they were accepted in the Beloved. Too, no doubt, they prayed for the apostles that the word of God might have free course, and that they be delivered from evil and ungodly men. Such is the prayer to-day of the Lord's people. They want the gospel to be preached to the glory of God and to the comfort of his poor and afflicted people. The church, no doubt, has the same prayer in her heart for the ministers of Christ that the brethren had in the early days: that they be kept faithful, sincere and upright; that they be delivered from the snares of death and from bringing trouble and discord into the house of God. The peace and prosperity of the church depend largely upon a faithful ministry, rightly dividing the word of truth, continuing in the doctrine and fellowship of the apostles. Paul said to Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." This is as good for each of us now in the ministry as it was for Timothy. May the Lord help us all to take heed unto our ways, that the churches be united in love, doctrine and the order of his house. It is just as true now as in the days of Paul that "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." If, therefore, the churches do not want to be leavened, let them continue in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. If all brethren so continue all will be joy and peace, otherwise all will be desolation.

We hope our sister of New York who requested our views on this text will be given to understand its import whether we have touched it or not. K.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by G. F. Adkins.)

The Salisbury Association of Old School Baptists, in session with the Salisbury Church, Salisbury Maryland, commencing on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1921. Greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—It is in much weakness and tribulation that we attempt this, our annual Circular Letter. It is our desire that we may be enabled to express thoughts that will be of comfort to the children of God, at the same time ascribing all praise, honor, glory, dominion and power to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who is our all in all. We cannot but think of the last words of our Savior, which are, "It is finished." It is finished! What is it that is finished? Is he speaking of himself? Does he mean to say that in his death his people would know no more of him forever; that that is the last of him? We cannot think so. Is it not declared that he laid down his life once for the remission of the sins of his people, and that he took it again for their justification? Well, then, if this be true it cannot be that it was of himself he was speaking when he said, It is finished. Then what is it that he meant when he said, It is finished? Did not the prophets prophesy of the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? Did not the angel speak to Joseph, telling him of the conception of his wife by the Holy Ghost, declaring that a son should be born, that he should be called Jesus, because he should save his people? Did not Jesus say, I came not to do mine own will, but the will of the Father who sent me; which was, that of all the Father gave me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up the last day? Then it must have been his own labors, the work the

Father sent him to do, the putting away of the sins of his people forever, by the shedding of his own blood, by reason of which God said, Their sins are blotted out, and their iniquities I will remember against them no more forever, that he had reference to when he said, It is finished. Then having this testimony within, that Jesus did come into the world, God manifest in the flesh, born of a woman, under the law, to redeem his people from under the law, having declared on the cross, "It is finished," are we not enabled to say with Paul, "If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord"?

J. C. MELLOTT, Moderator.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

G. W. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in January (29th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. Corder Mellott, December 14th, 1921, at the home of the bride, James William Truitt, of Snow Hill, Md., and Agnes Ethel Lyncle, of Laurel, Del.

By Elder George L. Weaver, at the residence of the bride's mother, West 110th St., Cleveland, Ohio, Daniel R. Koelliher and Marion E. McClain, both of Cleveland, Ohio.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, December 24th, 1921, at the home of the bride's father, in the township of Orford, Ont., Canada, Daniel Thomas Dymock and Miss Lucy Irene Allison.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder J. F. Beeman was born in Warren County, Ohio, January 24th, 1845, a son of Ariel and Catherine (Berry) Beeman. At school he was an apt scholar, and was especially proficient in mathematics. Before he was fifteen he had finished algebra and began the study of geometry. Soon his health failed, and he was reduced to a mere skeleton and given up to die. Up to this time he had, to use his own words, been a little infidel, but was now led to pray for mercy, to see the way of salvation and given a sweet hope in the Savior. In this experience he was made to feel that he would die, and he told his mother he felt so impressed, and sent for many of his friends and neighbors to come to see him die, but as they would come into the room he would begin to preach Jesus to them. He recovered without the use of medicine, which he had for years depended upon, and, like Paul, conferred not with flesh and blood, but united with the church, was baptized by Elder J. C. Beeman in October, 1860, and began preaching Jesus; but a few months afterward he became ashamed of his forwardness, concluded he was mistaken and for years tried to stifle the desire within him to preach. This experience was bitter, led him to try, Jonah like, to run away. He was employed by a photographer, traveling from place to place. He landed in Chicago, then in St. Louis, and in this aimless, restless condition joined the army. He was sent to the front, belonging to the northern army in the Civil War, and unhurt passed through the raging battles and storms of shot and shell, all the time feel-

ing a condemning conscience and then a faith that could not be killed, for God had a work for him to do, which was true, for he shielded him and brought him back home, and after more trials finally to the church. He was ordained May 9th, 1878, by Elders Thomas Rose and Joseph Ferr, and served several churches in various states and traveled considerably among the Baptists. Elder Beeman was married twice, but I am sorry to have to state that I am without data as to his first marriage, except the fact that there were five children born to that union. He was married the second time on November 25th, 1884, and to that union were born four children, namely, Nellie, Leona, Oscar and Etta, the last named one being his baby girl, who had been his housekeeper since the death of his last wife, and to whom he was lovingly attached. His last wife died on the 11th day of July, 1917. After the death of his second wife he moved to his late home, Claremore, Okla., in November, 1919. He went to California and stayed five months. In November, 1920, he went to Florida and bought a home there, where he lived until July, 1921, at which time he went to Oklahoma to visit his children, and then to Pennsylvania, and during this visit he was sick with a cold, but seemed to improve. He left Pittsburg on September 7th and went to St. Albans, W. Va., where he was attending an Old School Baptist Association. When he arrived he was very sick, and was able to preach but once, and then for a few minutes only. He grew weaker and weaker until he passed away September 20th, 1921. He was in the kindest hands; he died at the home of A. O. Edwards, in St. Albans, W. Va. He had splendid medical attention, as well as good care, but the Lord saw fit to take him away from this world of trouble and sorrow. He leaves to mourn their loss nine children, six boys and three girls. He was on his way to Virginia, having an appointment at Roanoke on the 17th day of September, but he failed to arrive at the appointed time. In a few days it was learned that he had passed away. He had preached frequently among the Baptists in the south, and had visited at the home of the writer and was highly appreciated and esteemed among the brethren in all the churches he had visited. The writer has had many letters concerning Elder Beeman and this obituary, and I am sorry that there is not at hand sufficient data to enable me to give a more detailed outline of the life of this wonderful man of God. In this bereavemen I will say to the children to remember the father who went in and out before them serving and praising the God with whom he is now resting, and to place their confidence in the same line of thought if possible, for he had them in mind and often spoke of them to the writer.

Remembering that I was one of his best friends, in the hope of immortality I am

J. W. SIMPKINS.

Mrs. Kate Kessler, the subject of this notice, was the widow of our late brother Peter Kessler, and was for many years a member of Black Rock Primitive Baptist Church, being baptized by the late Elder F. A. Chick. She proved a faithful member to the day of her death, which occurred on the 9th day of December, 1921, at about 5 o'clock p. m. The writer had known sister Kessler for about twenty-five years, and can say she was a good Baptist, interesting to talk to, a quiet, good woman, a good mother and neighbor, and will be greatly missed by the church and neighbors as well as by her children, who are: Mrs. Annie McElroy and Mrs. Dora Myers, of Baltimore, Mrs Fannie Goeke, of West Virginia, and Miss Ella Kessler, who was with her to the end and did all that a faithful daughter could do. There are two sons: Joseph Kessler, of Butler, Md., and Dr. Calvin Kessler, of Texas. Many of the Baptists and friends will remember the hospitality of brother and sister Kessler, as they have lovingly entertained a great many of them. May God bless her church, pastor and children, and enable them all to resign her to her Savior, whom she loved and trusted. She was afflicted for a long time, but now sleeps in Jesus.

The funeral was held on the 12th, 11 a. m., at the Black Rock meetinghouse, the writer speaking from 1st Corinthians xv. 25, after which her mortal remains were laid beside her husband to await with him the coming of the Savior.

ALSO,

Mrs. Dorcas Cole, the subject of this notice, was the widow of our late brother J. A. Cole, and was for many years a member of Black Rock Primitive Baptist Church. She was baptized by the late Elder F. A. Chick, and proved a worthy member. Sister Cole was sick only a few days, so was nearly always at her meetings. She was a near neighbor and close friend of sister Kessler, and visited her in her last illness. She was taken ill December 5th, and passed away on the morning of the 11th, less than forty hours after sister Kessler. Sister Cole also was one of the noble of the earth and a faithful member of the church of Christ, and loved to entertain her brethren and sisters and was a good neighbor. The writer was acquainted with sister Cole for about twenty-five years, and always found her faithful and interesting to talk to of the things of the kingdom. Her church, her neighbors and her daughter, Mrs. Sallie Fowble, who lived with her, will all greatly miss her. May God enable them all to resign her to him. Sisters Cole and Kessler were close neighbors, close friends, died and were buried only a few hours apart, and we wish their obituaries to appear in the same paper. May God bless her bereaved daughter.

The funeral was held at Black Rock meetinghouse at 11 a m. December 13th, the writer speaking from the twenty-third Psalm by request, after which her mortal remains were laid beside her husband to await the second coming of the Savior.

Her loving pastor,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

Miss Susie L. Woolford, our beloved sister in Christ, departed this life December 31st, 1921, in the 92nd year of her age. Sister Susie was baptized in the fellowship of the Fishing Creek Church July 27th, 1868, fifty-three years ago, and remained a faithful and devoted member of that church until her death. She was the daughter of the late Deacon Whitefield Woolford, and the seventh of fourteen children. Sister Susie was widely known and dearly loved throughout the bounds of the eastern associations, and firm and unwavering in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. For about sixteen years previous to her death she had been confined to the house and to the bed, patiently waiting for the Master's call. She was tenderly cared for by her sister, Mrs. Hurlock, and her niece, Miss Susie Hurlock. One brother, one sister and many nephews and nieces, with those who knew and loved her in the churches, mourn their loss.

She was buried in the cemetery of the Fishing Creek Church, near Cambridge, Md., January 3rd, 1922. The writer spoke from the words recorded in 1st Corinthians 42-46.

B. F. COULTER.

Cyrus Risler was born November 21st, 1828, and died November 1st, 1921, making his age 92 years, 11 months and 11 days. He was born on the Risler homestead (where his parents always lived) and lived there until he was married, in 1855. He then bought land adjoining and built the house where he died, and with the exception of three years had always lived there. He leaves one daughter, three sons, twelve grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren, his wife having died twenty-one years ago. He and his wife were baptized by Elder Gabriel Conklin May 25th, 1861, was elected church clerk January 13th, 1870, deacon August 30th, 1873, had care of the house since May 29th, 1873, and was made treasurer May 26th, 1888.

ELLA N. FOX.

Brother Risler was a faithful member, deacon, trustee, clerk and treasurer of the Locktown Old School Baptist church for fifty years or more, and faithfully attended to his duties in all of these offices in the church. He was sound in the faith of God's elect, was very quiet and reserved in his manner, and always at meeting when not providentially hindered. He was much interested in seeing the members filling their places in the meetings and looking after the property of the church to keep everything in good order. He will be greatly missed by many brethren, sisters and friends who have enjoyed the hospitality of his home. By request I attended his funeral, which was held at the Rosemont Baptist meeting-house; burial in cemetery there. May God bless all that mourn with grace to support them.

D. M. VAIL.

Mrs. William B. Tawresey passed away at her late home, 618 Washington St., Wilmington, Del., October 26th, 1921, in her 87th year. While she had been an invalid for many years, she was only confined to her bed a few days before death came. She was a daughter of Thomas E. and Rebecca Frazier, of Cow Marsh, Del., where she was born January 10th, 1835. She was united in marriage to William B. Tawresey March 18th, 1866. There were no children born to that union. She leaves her husband, now in his eighty-eighth year, one brother, Thomas E. Frazier, Jr., with many nieces and nephews to mourn their loss. While she never united with the church, she was a regular attendant, as well as an earnest reader of the SIGNS, always looking forward to the meetings when she could mingle with those who gathered for worship, and following with keen interest the preaching of the gospel and always manifesting a great interest in all the affairs of the church. All who knew her I am sure often wondered why she was not enrolled among those where her deepest interest seemed to be; but the Lord's way is not our way. I am sure she had an experience of grace and a hope in God's mercy. Having spent part of my boyhood days in their home, she seemed free to talk with me about these things in her last days. I am sure I heard the confession that comes only from those who know the joyful sound. Brother Tawresey told me since her death he felt her interest was such that she should have been in the church, and not him. Her chief desire was that she might be spared to see him taken care of until the end, and then she was ready to go.

The funeral services were conducted at her late home by Elder J. G. Eubanks, who spoke words of comfort to the bereaved ones as well as to the many friends who gathered to pay their last tribute to her. Her remains were interred in the family plot in the old London Tract burying-ground in Chester County, Pa. May the gracious Master comfort the mourning ones.

W. S. ALEXANDER.

Lyman Hostrander, of Cammal, Pa., was born July 2nd, 1856, and died December 19th, 1921. He was the son of Joel Hostrander and Mary Campbell, and was born near where he died. I attended the funeral of his wife, whose maiden name was Moore, about twenty-six or twenty-seven years ago. They were the parents of three children, two of whom are dead. His home was with his daughter and her husband. He was well up to the time of his death. He went to an outhouse and his daughter hearing a groan a few minutes later went out and found him dead. The doctor pronounced it heart failure. He leaves a daughter and son-in-law, one sister, one brother, with many other near relatives. He was dearly loved by his kindred in the flesh and esteemed very highly by his neighbors as an upright, honest man. While he never united with the Old School Baptist

Church, he was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and we believe he is now with his Savior. May the dear Lord bless all the dear mourning ones with grace to help in this their affliction.

The writer talked to the people assembled at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Cammal, Pa., December 22nd, after which the remains were laid away in the Cammal cemetery near the meetinghouse. D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

J. S. Moore, Ala., $1.00; C. Stevens, Ark., $1.00; Mrs. C. M. Richardson, Va., $1.00; W. H. Chaney, Texas, $1.00; Josephine Culpepper, Texas, $4.00; Wm. Darby, Md., $1.00; Mary A. Barnett, N. B., $2.00; H. M. Bowden, Ky., $1.00; Mrs. J. D. Shafer, N. Y., $2.00; Elder I. W. Bowers, Texas, $1.00.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

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WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

THE First Primitive Baptist Church of Mineral Wells, Texas, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on S. W. 4th Ave. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

SALLIE E. HOWARD, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102 Seattle, Wash.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

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Dropsy remedy, purely vegetable, removes from one to two gallons of water in a day. Shortness of breath quickly relieved. Cures the worst cases of Dropsy in all its forms, and after being given up by the best doctors to die. Specially efficacious in Dropsy of the Heart. Best and cheapest known remedy, only $1.00 a package, six packages $5.00 by mail postpaid, and free to very poor people who are really unable to pay. Trial package free to any address when name, age, address and symptoms of patient are given, with ten one-cent stamps.

ELDER C. W. ANDERSON.

WITTER, Madison Co., Ark.

I know from my own observation that this is an effective remedy for dropsy, and I take pleasure in recommending it to physicians and patients.

ELDER S. HASSELL.

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Compiled by Silas H. Durand and P. G. Lester. $1.00 per single copy, $12.00 per dozen. Send orders to Mildred Durand Gordy, 1926 Norway Road, Ann Arbor, Mich., or Elder P. G. Lester, 826 Virginia Ave., Roanoke, Va.

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(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

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THE

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 90. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1922. NO. 3.

POETRY.

THE VOICE OF MY BELOVED.

THERE is music in the stillness
Of that voice so small and clear,
And the sound is sweet and joyful,
Floating to my anxious ear.

'Tis the voice of my Beloved,
Wafted on the sacred shrine,
Exercising loving-kindness
To this contrite heart of mine.

He comes leaping on the mountains,
Skipping on the hills, behold!
Lo, I see his form appearing
In his goings forth of old.

Hear his voice in tones of pity,
For he knoweth all my frame;
To the dust my soul lies cleaving—
Will he call me forth again?

If he call, sure I will follow,
For his joyful voice I've known;
He himself my ears did open,
And the glory's all his own.

If he tarry, I'll wait for him,
For the vision sure will come;
Lo, by faith I see his glory,
And he whispers, Child, come home.

At his call my heart awaketh
To the beauty of his name;
For his voice is full of power,
And revives my heart again.

He doth make my feet like hinds' feet,
To obey his voice of love;
How I long to ever praise him
In the paradise above.

SEMMA E. CORDER.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BANKS, Ala., Dec. 3, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Brother McLoud, a young minister of Shelhorn, asked for my views on Matthew xxiv. 22, and while I feel too feeble and ignorant to give the import of this Scripture, yet I have felt at times to have a little light on some of this chapter, and as I have a willing mind will attempt to pen some thoughts on it.

"And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." The beginning of this chapter shows the impossibility of the carnal mind receiving the things of the Spirit. Jesus departed from the temple, and his disciples came to him to show him the buildings of the temple. They undoubtedly went to him in a fleshly frame of mind, for instead of asking Jesus to show them the mysteries which God had put in his power, they wanted to show him something. This spirit is ever with us, wanting to do something. It is the work of the Spirit of grace to mortify the "do spirit" in us and cause us to thank and praise God for what he has already done for us. It seems in the beginning of this

lesson that Jesus desired to teach his disciples the worthlessness of human effort and of the work system in the salvation of souls, and said unto them, "See ye not all of these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." This, no doubt, was discouraging to them, as they took great pride in the temple, and that is what the carnal mind and the nominal christian loves to-day—the temple and temporal things, and they hate the Spirit that wars against them: the Spirit of truth. Jesus said, If the truth shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. This is a glorious freedom. The Spirit is continually tearing down our playhouses and workshops. These things cause many sore troubles with the children of God. The destruction of the temple in my mind prefigures the end and removal of the legal system. Paul said, He took away the first, that he might establish the second. After Jesus had told the disciples that the temple should be thrown down, they came to him privately, saying, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Jesus next impressed upon them the importance of not being deceived. He did not answer their question immediately, but did answer them later. As to what world the disciples had under consideration, I do not know. Many brethren seem to think they were speaking of this planet on which we live, but if they were it is clearly shown that Christ was speaking of the old covenant, the Jewish world. The old covenant and the new covenant are called the old world and the new world, as I understand it. Nowhere in this Scripture is the destruction of this planet on which we live mentioned. This chapter, as I see it, is very much like the book of Revelation: we must sum it up in christian experience or we will never get the import of it. If we did not see and feel the very things that Jesus foretold, we could know nothing of the truth of them. Jesus tells them that many shall come in his name; that is to say, they will claim to do the work of Christ —to save souls; but the Spirit showed John that heaven and earth were searched, which was the legal heaven and earth, the powers of this world, and none was found able to loose the seals and look upon the things written in the book, save the Lion of the tribe of Juda, which is Jesus, the Son of God. He opened the book and revealed to his people what must come to pass according to the decrees of God. The work of antichrist is as much decreed of God as the work of Christ, but this excuses no man for his sins, he must suffer the penalty. Jesus in this chapter is showing the work of both sides or spirits, and one is as sure as the other. Antichrist must reign, and Jesus was speaking of the pernicious works of this demon, which is now among us, when he said, "Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved." This has no reference to our final destiny, but saved from the delusions of the world. It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. This is a saving from error in time; not time salvation, but eternal salvation, called common by Jude, which is received and enjoyed in this time world. Jesus said, "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows." All of these things must be experienced in the christian's heart, which cause much

sorrow. This is a sorrow that the world knows nothing of. Persecution comes next. "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake." Dear child of God, have you not experienced these things already? If not, you are not walking in that narrow way which leads unto life. Those who will live godly in this present evil world must suffer persecution. This living is done by faith only. A remnant of God's children are saved here in time, according to the election of grace. God has purposed it that way. Paul is plain on this. Let us remember that the words of Jesus are true. He says famines must come. This is of a spiritual nature, and is known only to the faithful in Christ. "Then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. 'And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." This is the effects of the famine brought on by the works of the flesh and the devil. Solomon speaks of the works of this satanic spirit under the appellation of an odious woman. He says, She has cast down many wounded, yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Notice Jesus says, "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Some are given grace to withstand the delusions. There is no doubt in my mind that Jesus had in mind the great battle that existed between the righteous and unrighteous mammon. There was a great falling away with national Israel, as there is to-day with spiritual Israel. This seems to be a puzzle to many Baptists, but it is true. Israel went out by a thousand and left an hundred, and by an hundred and left ten. So it is to-day; few are chosen to gospel obedience. In those days of apostasy Jesus said, False prophets shall arise and show great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they would deceive the very elect; but this is not possible, as shown in Revelation, which I shall mention later on. For the elect's sake those days were shortened. In this we see our God working all things after the counsel of his own will, and that living faith makes us believe him and know that he is at the helm. Peter said, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, [which means with difficulty] where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" We cannot account for this, except in the economy of God's grace. Yes, to us it may seem difficult to save, but our God is abundantly able to save with an everlasting salvation all them that trust in him. Many things may look doubtful and shaky to us, and we may conclude at times the whole plan is a failure and has been overthrown by the enemy, as in the days of Elijah. He said, They have digged down thine altars and stoned the prophets, and I am left alone, and behold, they seek my life. My brethren, have you ever felt that way? If you have, you have the experience of Jesus, who in this chapter has foretold all your troubles and crosses of a spiritual nature. This is why the natural man cannot understand it. While he tells us of our sorrows, he also tells us of the joy and riches of his grace. The sorrow which grace brings to our minds is but a light thing compared with that great and eternal weight of joy, honor and glory treasured in Christ for us. "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come." Let us notice this gospel had to be preached before the end came. This end under consideration

is the end of the law. The gospel ends the law in the sinner's heart. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to them that believe. Believers in Christ are the only ones that ever see this end that Christ has under consideration. Three times in this chapter Jesus calls the attention of his disciples to the deceitfulness of men and their erroneous teachings. It is the wisdom of God that saves his children in this life; then let us not be deceived in holding to traditions of men, who have no power to understand, much less to save. Notice the disciples asked for a sign of the coming of Jesus, as well as the end of the world. We notice that in verse twenty-six deceivers tell the people that Jesus is in certain places. He tells us not to believe them, they are liars, and will mislead us and take us into the broad way which leads to death; not corporeal death, but separation from the truth. Now see what Jesus says about it: "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." This Spirit that shines in the hearts of God's children is universal in its nature, and is sovereign over all worlds, principalities and powers. This is the experimental coming to his children. He compares himself to the lightning, the wind and water, over which man has no control. I next want to notice what follows the tribulation of those days. The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. This is the experience of every heaven-born soul, though he may not understand it until it is shown him. The sun here is the legal sun, and the moon the law. We, like Paul, when born of God can say, The way we thought to be unto life we found to be unto death. In this the legal sun was darkened, and the moon, which is the law, failed to give us light. The stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. The stars here are the professors of religion in the legal heavens, the nominal christian. You thought they were the children of God until you were born of him, and then you saw your awful mistake. These stars all fell in your experience; you realized they were only hypocrites and pretenders. The powers of the heavens shall be shaken. These are the legal heavens, or they could not be shaken. You have sounded the whole thing in your experience and found it shaky, unsound and a failure. "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn." This came next after the legal system passed away. The tribes here do not mean all the Adam family, but the tribes of Israel; they do mourn. After mourning they see the Son of man in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet; and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." You experienced all this. When old things passed away all things became new. You are a new creature in Christ, at the end of the law. All the children of God see Jesus coming in the clouds with great glory and with the sound of a great trumpet, which is the gospel trumpet. He will gather his elect together. This is all in the gospel day, and has no reference to what men call the world coming to an end, yet many Baptists believe this, and so does the world. Christ says, Ye are not of the world. Then why believe with the world? God forbid. Jesus says the

day or hour the end cometh with his people knoweth no man, not even the angels in heaven. He says, "Learn a parable of the fig tree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh." You can see signs of the end and of the birth, but cannot tell just when it will come; God only knows.

I have tried to take up too much of this chapter already, and will have to omit some of it, as it is very lengthy. In order to make my views clear on the twenty-second verse I will refer you to Revelation xiii. 7, speaking of the beast which is composed of all human agencies and religious theories of the world woven into a new lighting system: "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations." Now notice all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. There is no doubt in my mind that these are the days Jesus had under consideration when he said, "Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved." He spoke of the gospel day here in time as one day, though it may be ten thousand years or more. This record book of life is Christ, and embraces the very elect, whom they would deceive were it possible. This Scripture applies here in time only. Now, in the seven churches of Asia you will see this remnant represented by Philadelphia and Smyrna. Philadelphia had kept the word of his patience. "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation." What made the difference in Smyrna, Philadelphia and the other five churches, which represent the churches of God in all time? Nothing but the grace of God made the difference. Jesus held something against the other five. What was it? getting too much strong drink—intoxication? No. Some immoral act? No. It was a doctrinal charge against every one except two. Ephesus had fallen from her first works. Pergamos had some among them that held to the doctrine of Balaam, who put a stumbling-block before Israel, and also the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, "which thing I hate." He demanded repentance, or he would come quickly and fight against them with the sword of his mouth. Where was any salvation for them without repentance in time? None at all. Thyatira was holding to Jezebel, who claimed to be a prophet and was seducing the servants of God. Notice the consequence of this evil. God gave her space to repent, and she repented not. Now of this same church, "He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations." If this had been written "denominations" it would have had the same meaning. "And he shall rule them with a rod of iron: as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers."

I cannot finish; I will stop here. I have done the best I could. Dear editors, if you think this worthy of space, publish.

In hope, J. E. FINCHER.

FORDYCE, Ark., Dec. 18, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am writing you regarding our association, which convened on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1921, this being her eightieth birthday. This association has journeyed along without any great amount of disturbances eighty years, and so far as doctrine is concerned never did have any real disturbances. At our last meeting,

however, certain churches rose up and denounced us, and said they would not walk with or fellowship those who held to and believed in the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things, and who did not believe in a conditional time salvation, and charged all the churches that believe in this doctrine as heretics, fatalists, Antinomians, &c. They further charged and published us to the world as such, and added to it that our doctrines and all who stood with us were upholding the doctrines of Mohammedanism, having resurrected it, and that it was a most damnable doctrine and of the devil. This, dear brethren, has caused us to investigate what Mohammedans believed, and according to Hassell's Church History we find that Mohammed held to a doctrine of a mixture, and really in the end nothing. This history says he "professed to teach the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things;" but this says "professed." It further goes on to say that he held to the doctrine of weighing in the balances of good and bad, and that we were judged according to such; also a plurality of wives, and that his doctrines are incorporated in a book called "The Koran." This being true, it does not advocate what we as Baptists here hold to. We contend for the absolute foreknowledge of God over all things, and that nothing comes to pass by chance; that all righteousness comes to pass as he foreknew and predestinated, and that it comes to pass just as he foresaw it; that all good works come directly under his guiding influence and righteous Spirit working all good works, and that none of them fail; that equally he foreknew all the deeds of wicked men and devils, and that they, too, will all come to pass just as he foresaw them, and that secondary causes bring them to pass through the influences of the devil and devils, and that such wicked characters are doing their own wicked will and pleasure, but that it is God's will and purpose to have them do their wicked deeds, just as it was in the crucifixion of his Son. They rose up to do just what his hand and counsel had before determined to be done. This was certain, and God had a purpose in it, but they did it wickedly, and so are all other sinful acts of wicked men and devils, and all are certain and in harmony with God's foreknowledge. We note, too, in Hassell's Church History, on page 818, that the Kehukee Association was formed in 1765, and that this association was, together with several other churches in other associations, constituted in Maryland, New Jersey and New York until various associations were made up, which are substantially as follows: Warwick, Upetoio, Whiteoak, Contentnea, Harmony, (Ga.) Little River, County Line, Mountain, Center District, Delaware and Delaware River, Virginia Corresponding, Salisbury, Abbots Creek, Fishers River, Ocmulgee and Baltimore, Md. All these associations, as we see, covered territory from Canada as far south as Georgia and Tennessee, and their ministers were: Gilbert Beebe, S. H. Durand, F. A. Chick, L. H. Hardy, P. D. Gold, B. H. Wooten, A. J. Moore, W. M. Woodard, J. T. Lewis, Howell Joiner, C. B. Hassell, Philander Hartwell, J. R. Respess, David Bartley, Wm. L. Beebe, M. T. Lawrence and many others who lived in all this wide field of Old School Baptists. These men stood firm in the fight against the innovations of Arminianism, stood firmly upon the doctrines of the old London Confession of Faith, adopted the Black Rock findings, and were with Elder Gilbert Beebe and fully indorsed him, and were with

him in the founding and establishing of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which carried in its prospectus: "We believe in the absolute predestination of all things." Now the question with us is, How is it that this doctrine was held, loved and fellowshiped by all this great body of Baptists in 1832, was not Mohammedanism and hated and despised, but now is denounced as heresy and said this doctrine never was the doctrine of Old Baptists? Again we refer you to page 822 of Hassell's Church History, which is to our mind an expression of the love these dear old soldiers of the cross had for Elder Gilbert Beebe, and is substantially as follows: "Elder Gilbert Beebe, of Middletown, N. Y., has had few equals since the days of the apostles in natural and spiritual abilities, in bold and faithful defence, both of tongue and pen, of the great fundamental truths of the Scriptures, and in the extensiveness of his ministerial labors. During his long ministry of sixty-three years he is believed to have preached about ten thousand sermons and traveled two hundred thousand miles, set forth not in the manner of the nineteenth century by missionary funds, but in the manner of the first century, by the God of grace and providence, who supplied all his necessities, thus exhibiting to this materialistic, unbelieving age a life of divine faith and divine support. In 1832 he founded a semi-monthly periodical called the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which he continued to issue until his death, and which is still published by his sons, Elder William L. Beebe and brother Benton L. Beebe, at Middletown, N. Y. In accordance with repeated solicitations, Elder Gilbert Beebe published two volumes of the editorials of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and a very highly approved hymn-book." We see from the above that Elder Beebe was fully indorsed by all these brethren, and his paper was continuously solicited by these brethren all over this wide territory of associations, and his travels extended into two hundred thousand miles. Just think, and he an absoluter, too, and all these brethren loving him, fellowshiping him and receiving him as a corresponding messenger over this wide field of Old Baptists. These people say of him in this history that he has had few equals since the days of the apostles. Yes, this was the way these people regarded him; but now see the doctrine he and all those brethren held then has become Mohammedanism resurrected, and those who believe it are styled heretics. Well, we just know that they are wrong, and we fear that those good brethren who have gone out from us and denounced us have to a great extent been misled by preachers who have men's persons in admiration because of advantages. We hated to give them up, and never at any time raised bars against a brother who could not see into "deep things," and never wanted to make a brother an offender for a word, but we know we are in line with the Baptists of olden times and what they were in 1689. They believed that God decreed within himself all things whatsoever come to pass. The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom and infinite goodness of God so far manifest themselves in his providence that his determinate counsel (Romans xi. 32–34; 2 Samuel xiv. 1; 1 Chronicles xxi. 1,) extendeth even to the first fall, and all other sinful actions, both of angels and men (and that not by a bare permission); which also he most wisely and powerfully boundeth (2 Kings xix. 28; Psalms lxxvi. 10,) and otherwise ordereth and governeth in a manifold dispensation to his most holy ends, (Genesis i. 20; Isaiah x. 6, 7,

12,) yet so as the sinfulness of the act proceedeth from the creature, and not from God. Here is just where we have always been: that all things come to pass just as above set forth in the old London Confession; that even the sinful acts extend to the first fall, and not only so, that it does not occur by bare permission; then it must be decreed and directed, if not by bare permission. This is where we, the South Arkansas Association, are standing to-day, and we are in line with these brethren in the north and east and those of England and Wales. It is hurtful to us to see these things come, but we hope we are counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake, and all we know to say is, it is only the fulfilling of the Scriptures and history only repeating itself. We note in the holy book that these things have ever followed God's people, and that there is a time come for refining. Even crude oils have to go through the refiner before we can get their genuine merits. God will thoroughly purge his church, and they that are and have been manifested must be approved, and the man of sin must be revealed, and I suppose these are some of the all things that work together for good to those who love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose. Now, brethren, we want to say we surely did hate for this to come; we did not want it, but they just said they actually would not walk with us longer, so all that could be done was to let them go and each be by ourselves. This, no doubt, is included in absolute predestination. Our little churches are in peace and see eye to eye and speak the same things: Jesus and him crucified, the only Savior for time and eternity, the Resurrection and the Life. In him we live, move and have our being. There is no power but of him, the powers that be are ordained of him. The devil can have no power only as it is given from above. Pilate could not have had power to crucify Jesus unless it were given him from above. It must have been in strict harmony with God's will and purpose for wicked men to take, crucify and slay his Son. He was delivered into sinful hands and was wickedly crucified and slain. It took all that to make good God's promise of eternal life, which he who cannot lie promised before the world began. Yes, it was made before this world, and it was all done by God; he does not lie, but makes all his promises good through the death of his Son. We do not believe there are any slips in the chain, but that all are certain, as he declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Yes, he has and will do all his pleasure. As he has thought, so shall it come to pass. It is said of him by Job that there is nothing new or old with him. He then foreknew it all, both good and bad, and it will most certainly all come to pass just as he foresaw it. It will come just as the death of his Son—certain. Vain men and evil seducers shall wax worse and worse. Is it so? Shall they wax worse? Yes; and why? Because God saw it and declared it; but they do it wickedly, hence they are the ones who sin, and not God, because he foreknew it.

Much more could be said along this line, but I feel that I have introduced plenty in bringing up this proof of our standing and where the Old Predestinarian Baptists have stood all along the line of time, and we feel that we are today standing on Primitive grounds, even though charged as heretics for believing in the predestination of all things, that

nothing comes by chance, and that God rules all things after the counsel of his own will. We just wish to say, dear brethren, we invite all genuine Old Baptists of the unlimited predestinarian faith to visit us when they can. We love these people; we love those who have gone through the fire and those who have stood firm. Jesus, their head, was despised, rejected and hated of men, denounced, and those of his followers have been all along the line of time, and he said, As they did it unto me, they will also likewise do it unto you. They did not, would not and in fact could not receive him and his doctrine, and they cannot receive it now. They that are of the world speak of worldly things, and the world heareth them, but ye are of God, and he that is of God heareth us, but they that are not of God heareth us not. Hereby know we the spirit of error and the Spirit of truth. Pray for us that God be with us and keep us from unreasonable men, and be our present help in time of trouble. Farewell in the Lord.

Yours in hope through grace and mercy,

V. R. HARRIS.

CANON CITY, Colo., Jan. 9, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending check for renewal of my subscription for 1922. I think it was fully fifty years ago I began taking the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and if I have ever missed one single number I cannot call it to mind. During a greater part of that time I have had it in my mind to visit at least a part of the eastern associations, but for one cause or another the time has never come. When my son was called to Philadelphia, where he holds the position of Professor in charge of the department of civil engineering in the University of Pennsylvania, I flattered myself that my opportunity was almost at hand, but again I was disappointed. My wife was stricken with blindness, and I find my whole duty lies right here in this little mountain city, where we have a comfortable home; and besides that obligation, I have just passed a birthday that puts me on a start on my eighty-third mile-stone, and I realize that my time here is fast drawing to a close. But my mind runs back almost sixty years to a certain time and a certain spot, when and where I trust it was God who caused a light to shine in my heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and for almost sixty years that incident in my life remained, and still remains, as the turning-point, from which I passed from bondage under the law and became a new creature in Christ. I was liberated soon after becoming a member of the Old School Baptist Church, and soon after was ordained, and have always and every place contended that salvation is of grace, and if I be granted years yet to come longer time and opportunity I cannot turn either to the right or the left, but must contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

I wish to express my gratitude to God for such gifts as he has called and sent and is sustaining in the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I would also include the writers and all who are in any way engaged in the conduct and policy of its publication. I am glad to hear of the thinning ranks of Zion's watchmen being recruited, and I pray for God's blessing to rest upon both old and young.

Your unworthy brother,

SMITH KETCHUM.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1922.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE SENSE OF SIN.

"FOR I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing."—Rom. vii. 18.

Few things are more old-fashioned in this speeding time than the sense of sin, and among the things consigned to the rubbish heap by the religionists of to-day is the conviction of sin which used to be regarded as an essential part of any profession of religion. Since religion has become a commodity of the market-place, to be bought with money or merit, any sense of sin is no longer considered a prerequisite of christianity. Whereas Old Baptists used to be not the only people who required a conviction of sin in every applicant for church membership, and many of the Arminian denominations also required at least a show of repentance in all whom they received, to-day all this is changed, and Old School Baptists find themselves about the only people still clinging to the truth that no one can possibly know aught of salvation unless they have seen themselves wholly lost on account of sin. To-day most any person anywhere can become a member of any religious body by merely saying he wants to do so, or by signing a card that he wants to do so, and personal revelation of anything in the way of any semblance of a religious experience is not at all required. George Whitefield, the founder of Methodism, was by no means so callous; and no man in American colonial days preached more strongly the necessity of the sense of sin in the repentant sinner than did the Presbyterian Jonathan Edwards, one time president of Princeton College. Toplady, Cowper, the two Wesleys, Newton and Watts, however much they may have differed on some points, all agreed that the consciousness of sin was essential to true christian belief, as did also Calvin, Luther, Augustine and others before them. We mention these names simply to show that while all religious bodies used to be agreed that there could be no knowledge of salvation in any one not feeling a sense of sin, to-day it is far from being so, and one may to-day search through volumes of modern sermonic literature and never see so much as a word referring to the sense of sin as being any part of a christian experience; indeed, any such thing as a christian experience at all has been pretty generally discarded by all religionists and relegated to the ancient and dead traditions of the past. Here and there a lone voice is lifted up calling attention to the fundamental things of the religion of Jesus, but such are few and far between indeed, and seem like voices crying in the vast wilderness of this age of modern enlightenment, which is only another name for darkness spiritually, and gross darkness at that, and such voices even when lifted up gain scant recognition and small audience. Therefore it can be said without any possibility of successful refutation, that Old School Baptists are the only people to-day who emphasize the necessity of a religious experience as an essential part of the spiritual equipment of the follower of Christ, and who place the sense of sin as a root-fact in that experience. This sense of sin can only come

about by faith, and a man's reason or intelligence can never give him that light to see himself utterly lost and condemned before the law of a just and holy God. Paul says it is a faithful saying, and true it is, that one can never say only by faith, that he is a sinner. It is not enough that one should feel himself to be a sinner, but that he is the chief of sinners. The light of the Holy Spirit of God shining in one's heart does not reveal one is a sinner only in degree, and there may be others worse, but it reveals that one is altogether a sinner, that there is no cleanness nor soundness whatsoever, that the poison of sin has invaded the whole man, mind, body and soul. The individual who has this revelation within himself knows that there is no one anywhere worse than he, or that could possibly be worse, nor has there ever been anywhere at any time any one who could be more sinful. This is because the revelation brought within the sinner by the Holy Ghost reveals human nature as it is, and wherever and whenever it is, and human nature is always the same, whether in a devil or a saint. So far as the human nature is concerned, a devil is no worse than a saint, and the nature in one or both of them is capable of the same dastardly things. Human nature makes the whole world kin, and universal brotherhood is upon the basis of universal human nature, not upon the basis of the righteousness of Christ, which is to the elect only. All are brothers in sin, and when God shines in us to see our nature as it really is we know then that the prisoner in the penitentiary or the sot in the gutter is no worse than we, nor we better than they. But for the providence of God and his restraining grace we, too, should fall into the same condemnation. How lonely and solitary must be the pharisee upon the pinnacle of his self-righteousness and in his fancied superiority to other men, for it is only the man who realizes his infirmities that is companionable and fit to dwell in company with fallen humanity. This is what makes the letters of Paul so full of warmth and beauty to his kindred in Christ, the fact that Paul wrote from no sense of superiority to his brethren, but knowing himself to be still a sinner so far as his nature was concerned, felt to be the least of all saints, and not fit to be an apostle of the Lord. It is well to keep in mind the experience of Paul, not only at the time when he first realized the sense of sin when he was on his way to Damascus, but that this sense of sin never left him all through his ministry. It was ever with him, the thorn in his flesh to buffet him, ever reminding him of his need of Christ. When Paul wrote that he was the chief of sinners it was not before his regeneration, but long afterward, and though he was at that time doing the work of an apostle, he still felt that no good thing was in his human nature, and that he was still by nature the chief of sinners. This unchanged human nature persists in every true believer, and the work of the spiritual birth brings no change whatever in it, even though the man himself is born again. Being born again, and that from heaven, the believer is become the child of God, because he possesses the very divine nature of God, but he has not rid himself of his earthly nature; hence the true christian becomes a battleground, in whom are contending the forces of good and evil with the ultimate victory of righteousness assured, because Christ has triumphed for us and will bring all his off more than conquerors through his great love. This sense of sin in God's people serves many useful ends in the plan and

purpose of God. (1) It is the fertile ground in which the Holy Spirit sows the knowledge of salvation and the revelation of the glory of Jesus. It is hard to conceive of any possible way in which men could ever know the Lord God except as they are brought to see themselves sinners. Jesus prayed to the Father at the time he was bowed down with the load of his people's sins, that his people might be with him in that experience so as to behold his glory, and so it is that the sense of one's guilt before God begets the vision of the glory of Jesus. (2) It produces humility. No fancied superiority to other men can exist in the heart of him who feels his kinship to all humanity by reason of the depravity of human nature. Along with this sense of sin in one's self there goes the sense of the grace of God in one's brethren, so that one sees his brethren as above himself and better than himself. Hence, as did Paul, the believer feels to be at the feet of his brethren and not worthy to occupy a place among them. (3) It prevents self-exaltation. So long as we have the consciousness of sin within ourselves we cannot become exalted above measure, nor puffed up in the fleshly mind. The sense of sin is the soul's ballast, preventing one from getting above his brethren. A balloon relieved of all its weight soars upward and upward into the air until lost to view. A child of God not well ballasted by the sense of sin within himself may well get above his kindred in Christ and may get to advocating conditionalist ideas and principles not in accord with the conception and experience of his humbler brethren. A minister of the gospel not alive to sin within himself is apt to soar over the heads of his brethren when preaching and cannot reach the spiritual family below him who, for the most part, are in the grip of temptations, doubts and fears. The sense of sin qualifies the preacher to keep his feet on the ground however high in the regions of faith he may ascend. (4) It produces fellowship and mercifulness. One who keenly feels most of the time his sinfulness by nature does not feel like judging or condemning the weakness of his brethren, and it gives him a warm companionable feeling for all who are weak and sorely tried.

L.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, December 28th, 1921, Raymond E. Gordy, of Seaford, Del., and Mabel F. Short, of Georgetown, Del.

By the same, at his residence, Salisbury, Md., January 11th, 1922, Charles S. Perdue, of Showell, Md., and Annie May Adkins, of Wicomico County, Md.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at the home of the bride's mother, sister Effie Malcolm, Paynes Mills, Ontario, January 18th, 1922, Clarence H. Eaton, of Bay City, Mich., and Winifred Sells.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder W. B. McAdams was born September 22nd, 1836, and departed this life November 1st, 1921. He was married to Miss Pernesia Temple November 1st, 1855, to which union were born nine children. July 15th, 1873, he was married to Miss Martha J. Richardson, to which union were born ten children. On September 2nd, 1897, he was married to Mrs. Eula Hollingsworth, to which union were born two children, making him the father of twenty-one children. On May 16th, 1912, he was married to Mrs. Martha M. Watkins, of Columbia, S. C., where he died. Four children preceded him to the grave, seventeen surviving him; the number of his descendants is one hundred forty-two. In 1854 he received a good hope in Christ through grace, and in June, 1859, was received into the church of the Primitive faith and order and baptized by Elder S. McKay. Soon after uniting with the church he felt impressions to preach, and on March 3rd, 1877, he was ordained to the full work of the ministry, which office he filled to the honor and glory of God and to the edification of the saints, and was faithful to the end, a firm believer in the sovereignty of God over all things and salvation by grace in time and eternity. He had many sore conflicts in this life, but was patient and endured hardness as a good soldier of the cross, praising God

in all things, even in death. He told the writer that he was willing to suffer all the Lord wanted him to suffer. He was a sound and able minister of the Lord, faithful to serve the churches until the infirmities of age prevented. Surely a great man in Israel has fallen, and the church has lost a faithful minister, but we feel that our loss is his eternal gain. Weep not, dear companion and children, for he has gone to dwell with the Lord. We sorrow not as those who have no hope. He baptized the writer of this obituary, who grieves that we shall see his face no more. W. W. SLAUGHTER.

James E. Paxton was born in Anderson County, Ky., August 30th, 1834, and died November 8th, 1921, in the 88th year of his age. His entire life was spent in the community in which he was born, and he was one of the most respected and substantial citizens. He was married to Miss Mary E. Thompson November 13th, 1856. Of that union he leaves three sons and three daughters: Mrs. Allie B. Bickers, Dee and George P. Paxton, of Kansas, and John R. Paxton, Julia Phillips and Ella McMichael, of Anderson Co., Ky. After the death of his first wife he was married to Miss Sarah Belle Gibbs, of Franklin County, July 18th, 1888. To that union was born one son, Clarence E., of Anderson County. Brother Paxton became a member of the Goshen Old School Baptist Church in 1866, under the ministry of Elder J. F. Johnson. He was afterward ordained deacon, and served his church faithfully in every way as long as his physical strength permitted. No visiting minister or member ever came to his church who did not share his fellowship or the hospitality of his home.

To this sketch of the life of this faithful father in Israel I would like to add what is to me precious memories of my early life in the ministry. When brother D. G. Johnson and I were licensed to preach we found brother Paxton ever ready to encourage us, and his home was always open to us, as it was to all his brethren. No weather was ever too bad for him to be in his place at church, and in winter he always had the church-house heated. Many a time we two young ministers have had no other audience than this faithful brother, and we never considered our trip in vain if he was there. At my last meeting at his church before I came west I preached on the duties of churches to their pastors. I had never felt to do so before, because of a fear that it might be prompted by selfish motives. After the sermon brother Paxton came up with tears in his eyes, gave me his hand and said, "Brother Bond, why did you not tell us that ten years ago?" In his look and manner I felt a reproof which has never been forgotten, and often in my ministry since have his words strengthened me to declare the whole truth, no matter how some might be disposed to interpret it. When I was arranging to leave Kentucky he was sad, and told me one day with choking sighs, "Brother Bond, I love you for the truth's sake." No sentence could have expressed more, and I had no answer to make. The morning I left he was at the train, and he put his arms around me in a fatherly embrace, but neither of us could speak what we felt. Five years ago I visited this aged brother and his faithful wife at two different times, and tried to preach there once. My father was at this meeting, the last time he was ever with me at church services. We took dinner there and were the only guests. As we sat together at dinner a deep solemnity seemed to fill the place, for I felt that it was the last time we would ever sit together in this world, as I expected to leave soon for my far western home; but there was more in this than I then realized, for three weeks later I saw my father pass to the great beyond. With these memories ever fresh and the knowledge of the strong faith which he had we did not feel to mourn when he was called home, for we know that the heavenly things he loved so long are now his at the right hand of God, with the tribulations of this life all done away. I would comfort the lonely widow by reminding her that it is the goodness of God which delivers his saints from the sorrows and afflictions of this life, and in the fullness of time all of us who are precious in his sight shall be brought in as the great family of heaven, where sorrow shall never be known and happiness and praise never end.

May the grace of God enable the sons and daughters and their families to follow in the footsteps of this worthy father. C. W. BOND.

Susan A. Heard was born in Newton County, Ga., March 8th, 1838, and departed this life at the old homestead where she was raised November 25th, 1921, making her stay on earth 83 years, 8 months and 17 days. Sister Susie was never married. She and her sister Phronia lived with their brother, Wilks M. Heard, at the old homestead, which was noted for its hospitality in the entertainment of the Primitive Baptists. Sister Phronia preceded her to the grave several years ago. Sister Susie joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Holly Springs in the year 1864, and was baptized by Elder Joseph L. Purington, where her membership remained until she was claimed by death. She was a faithful member, always filling her place as long as her health would permit. She was quite feeble for several years before her death, but was able to be up and around the house, being confined to her bed but four days. She was a Baptist of the old school, strong in the faith once delivered unto the saints. She was of the circumcision that Paul spoke of, "which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." It has been my pleasure to know her for about twenty-five years, and I can say that it was pleasant to go to her home and there

be associated with her around the family hearth. She loved to converse on spiritual things, more especially the things that pertained to her hope in the mercy of God. A godly woman has gone to be with her blessed Savior and rest in his covenant promises until he shall come the second time without sin unto salvation, when she shall awake with his blessed likeness and praise him in that world which shall never end.

The unworthy writer tried to speak words of comfort to the family and friends that were present at the funeral, after which she was laid to rest in the family cemetery near the old home.

May the God of all grace comfort the bereaved, is my prayer. R. L COOK.

R. B. Luther, wife of Elder A. J. Luther, was born July 30th, 1855, and departed this life October 17th, 1921, aged 66 years, 2 months and 17 days. She was married to Elder Luther November 14th, 1872. To that union were born five children, two girls and three boys; the two girls were twins and preceded her to the grave. She was a faithful member of the Primitive Baptist Church at Mt. Zion, Graves County, Ky., for over thirty years. One of her greatest joys was in attending and caring for her church. She was a devoted wife and mother. She had practically been an invalid for four or five years, but bore her suffering with patience and fortitude, being perfectly submissive at all times to the will of God. Weep not, dear brother Luther and children, for I feel to have the assurance that your loss, which is indeed great to you and hard to endure, is her eternal gain. Though her suffering was long and her afflictions hard to endure, yet she by the grace of God was enabled to endure her suffering without murmuring and is now at rest, being delivered by her blessed Lord from all the trials and tribulations she passed through in this old sin-smitten world. I only had the privilege of knowing sister Luther a few years, but she surely had the orderly walk and godly conversation of a child of God. I can only judge the tree by the fruit it bears. I feel satisfied she is now enjoying the rest promised to all them that love and fear God. May it be the will of God to comfort all her loved ones who are mourning her absence, and may the grace of God be with us all.

By request of Elder Luther I tried to preach at the funeral of his dear, loving and faithful wife.

T. J. PRINCE.

Jane E. Kilpatrick Mackey was born May 18th, 1837, was married to Fletcher Mackey March 14th, 1854, and died November 14th, 1921. Sister Mackey received a good hope through grace and was received in the Second Roxbury Old School Baptist Church, Roxbury, N. Y., and baptized by Elder Isaac Hewitt September 7th, 1856. Her husband united with the same church and was baptized by the same minister July 2nd, 1859. They enjoyed attending the associations and meetings together for many years, not only of their home church, but sister churches. August 1st, 1891, the church gave them each a letter in good standing, and they united with the Lexington Church, in Lexington, N. Y., where they remained faithful and loved members until death. They celebrated their sixtieth wedding anniversary March 14th, 1914. Brother Mackey died July 17th, 1915. Their home was ever open to welcome the brethren, as many can testify. I think the first time I visited Lexington Church was at an association in 1893, when about forty of us were well cared for at brother Mackey's. Much might be said of sister Mackey's trust and confidence in the God she loved and served, and it was her delight to be with the brethren and sisters, either in church capacity or by the home fireside. Many will miss her. She leaves to mourn the loss of a good mother, two sons and one daughter, also several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Her last years were spent mostly with her daughter, Mrs. George Moore, and family, of Lexington, N. Y., where she was kindly and lovingly cared for through her last sickness, which lasted several weeks. Her daughter told me she suffered much, but bore it patiently, without a murmur or complaint. Her suffering and trials are over, and we believe she is at rest, that she obeyed the welcome summons, Child, come home.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Ruston and Elder Clark, who spoke words of comfort and consolation from 1st Corinthians xv. 49: "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." The remains were laid in the silent grave in Lexington Cemetery.

Written by request of those much more competent to write it than I.

(MRS.) J. E. LIVINGSTON.

W. E. Fisher was born August 13th, 1859, and died in the hospital at Portland, Oregon, December 6th, 1921, after an operation for stomach trouble, aged 62 years, 4 months and 23 days. He was a native of Oregon, having been born in Clackamas County. His parents were E. T. T. Fisher, deceased, and sister Fisher, whose maiden name was Stout. Elder Ezra Stout, deceased, was her father. Mr. Fisher leaves to mourn their loss his wife and five children, three sons and two daughters: Harold, Raymond, Floyd and Edna, all at home, and Mrs. Lois Beeson, of Albany, Oregon; also an aged mother residing in Albany, Oregon; three brothers: Fred, of Africa, Hugh and Earl, of Salem, Oregon; three sisters: Mrs Orpha Conklin, of San Jose, Cal., Mrs. Joice Crooks, of Goldendale, Wash., and Addie Rambaugh, of Mist, Oregon, all of whom were present at the funeral except Mrs. Crooks. He also leaves many

other relatives and friends. While the deceased was not a member of any church, he was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, as held by the Primitive Baptists, and told his mother as he was starting for the hospital that that was his only hope of immortality beyond the grave. His father and mother were both members of the Primitive Baptist Church, his father being clerk of the Siloam Association many years before his death. Sister Fisher's membership is still with the church at Tallman, Oregon.

The funeral was held at the old homestead, four miles north of Albany, where the deceased had resided for the past fifty-five years. The writer was called by telegram to conduct the funeral services, which I tried to do, using 1st Corinthians xv. 53, latter clause, to a large concourse of sorrowing relatives and friends. Burial in the Riverside Cemetery, near Albany. S. B. MOFFITT.

Dorothy Hicks, of Macon, Ga., 8 year old daughter of brother and sister J. W. Hicks and granddaughter of Elder J. M. Adams, of Monroe, Ga., met a horrible death on New Year's day. While lighting a gas stove her clothing caught fire, and in a moment she was enveloped in flames. Her mother heard her screams and soon had her wrapped up in a rug, burning both of her hands badly. She was rushed to a hospital, but all in vain, she died in six hours. She was a bright and beautiful child, loved by all who knew her. Flowers were banked upon her casket and grave from her teacher, schoolmates and friends. The funeral was conducted by her uncle, Elder D. Y. Hicks, and grandfather, Elder J. M. Adams, at Salem Church, in Crawford County, Ga., in the presence of a large number of relatives and friends. God alone can reconcile the bereaved family to such a sad death. The Lord giveth and he taketh away, and blessed be his holy name. J. M. ADAMS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. C. B. Rittenhouse, Manitoba, $3.25; Mrs. A. B. Hanson, Nebr., $1.00; L. B. Ford, Mass., $10.00; E. F. Readhimer, La., $2.00; M. C. Reaves, Ill., $1.00.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

UPTON, N. Mex., Dec. 29, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The prophet Isaiah says in the fifty-first chapter and eleventh verse: "Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." I shall not attempt to comment on all of this text, and no doubt what is written will be like my efforts to talk on the teaching of the Bible. Many times my talking has put me in mind of the Irishman's fox. He heard there were foxes in America, and after reaching here he was in the woods and heard a cow bell, and was sure it was a fox barking. He went and looked up in the bell as it hung on a gentle cow, and said, "A long tongue and a hollow head; a lot of fuss and nothing said."

This first word, "therefore," signifies that something had already been done, and the ninth and tenth verses tell what it was: "Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon? Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?" "Therefore," i. e., because of this. If thou hast such wonderful power, even enough to cause the waters of the sea to go back and the bottom of the sea to appear, which had been covered and hid since the world was made, and hast power to cause the water to stand up like a wall while thy chosen people cross over safely, we are sure thou canst do more wonderful things.

"Wounded the dragon." This terrible monster that esteems iron as straw and brass as rotten wood. The arrows cannot make him flee; slingstones are turned with him into stubble; he laugheth at the shaking of a spear; he maketh the deep to boil like a pot; he maketh the sea like a pot of ointment. If it is true that no man taketh thy life from thee, but as thou didst lay down thy life and take it again, which we are sure is the truth, then we are certain thou canst bring back all of thy loved ones, no matter how far they have wandered nor how low down they have sunk in sin. Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring. Jesus said this, and you are sure he will do it. Therefore, because thou hast the power, the

redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing, &c. You cannot redeem anything that does not belong to you. When John the Baptist was born, "Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people."—Luke i. 67, 68. "And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them." "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word."—John xvii. 10, 9, 16, 20. The world thinks this last text destroys the Primitive Baptist doctrine, and tells the alien sinner he can believe any time he chooses; but the Bible says, "As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed."—Acts xiii. 48. "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you."—John x. 26. Paul says, Ephesians i. 19, 20: "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead." "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."—John vi. 39. "That of all which he hath given me." Hath given does not mean going to give if they will believe, but they believe because they are his, given to him by the Father; not giveth me, not going to give, but "hath given me." So they were his, and the time and way was set and fixed for them before the world was, to be redeemed. Therefore Paul says, Galatians iv. 4, 5: "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." And when the hour that God had ordained had come, Jesus said, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." They tried to take him and kill him several times before the hour appointed, but could not lay hold on him. "Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come."—John vii. 30. But when the hour had come according to the predestination of God, Jesus said, Matthew xxvi. 45: "Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest; behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners." "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." His people had sold themselves and were shut up in prison under the law, and must be redeemed from under the law and from its curse, or they must go away into everlasting punishment. "For thus saith the Lord, Ye have sold yourselves for naught; and ye shall be redeemed without money."—Isaiah lii. 3. This is Zion that shall be redeemed without money, for in the second verse of the same chapter it says, "Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion." The Bible tells us who Zion is; it says, "Zion, the people of God," and in Isaiah li. 16, it says, "And say unto Zion, Thou art my people." To redeem means to rescue and deliver from the bondage of sin and the penalties of God's violated law. Paul says, Galatians iii. 13: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is

written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." He bowed the heavens and came down, and darkness was under his feet. He paid the ransom price. The law demanded his life, and got it. The poet says:

"He sends his Spirit from above,
To call the objects of his love;
Not one shall perish or be lost;
His blood hath bought them—dear the cost."

The law is satisfied, because Christ hath magnified it and made it honorable. All of his people are freed from its curse. "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband, so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband." "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ."—Romans vii. 2, 4. "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me," &c. "For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come."—Isaiah lxiii. 3, 4. The prophet speaks here as though the time had come for the Savior to stand before Pilate, and no one to sympathize with him or to be with or by him in this awful hour. Peter said, Though all men forsake thee, yet will I not; but Peter did deny him. Then the saying of Isaiah was fulfilled, "Of the people there was none with me." The poet says:

"Jesus, Jesus will go with you;
He will lead you to his throne;
He who dyed his garments for you,
And the winepress trod alone."

What kind of redemption was this? Let Paul tell, Hebrews ix. 12: "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." So this is fixed, it is secure, it will never end, for it is eternal redemption he obtained for his people. Hosea said, xiii. 14: "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death." Paul says, "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." John says, Revelation v. 9: "For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." The Savior has bought them; he knows who they are, where they are, and he says they "shall come." They are going to come, not one is going to be forgotten or missed or covered so deep in earthly doctrine or so awfully deceived that our King of kings cannot find and uncover that one, and they will be astonished when they find out, like Paul, that the very people they hated the worst are the people of God, and suffered for the sake of the truth.

The next clause is, "Shall return, and come with singing unto Zion." God says by the prophet, "I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him." David said, Psalms cxxvi. 6: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." The Savior is going to bring them with him. He knows the way, he knows how; his arms are long enough and strong enough to bring every one, for we are told that "underneath are the everlasting arms." The poet wrote:

"He whose thunder shakes creation,
He who bids the planets roll;
He who rides upon the tempest,
And his sceptre shakes the whole."

He that is glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders.

September 1st, 1920, wife and I had been married fifty years. All ten of our children and my brother and my wife's brother came to our home. They were scattered from the Atlantic to the Pacific ocean, and had not met for years. Her brother and mine had grown old since we had seen them. Some of our children had not met for a long, long time. I never saw such rejoicing in my life; but they all had to separate again after a few days of social enjoyment—had to go back to their homes to struggle with the awful scenes of this sad, dark, dreary, sin-cursed earth; this world of disappointment, where temptations are thick all around, where Satan sets snares to trap the people of God, where darkness gathers so thick around the children of God that it may be felt, where disease preys upon our mortal frame and pain invades our bodies. As Job said, "His soul within him shall mourn, and his flesh upon him shall have pain." All our children had to say good-bye, maybe never to meet again in this life; but not so with the redeemed of the Lord, who shall meet in the world to come, never, no, never, to be torn away, never to go out in the dark, cold world to suffer and toil and half starve, no more to sigh or shed a tear.

"O happy day, when saints shall meet
To part no more! the thought is sweet!
No more to feel the rending smart
Oft felt below when christians part."

Yes, they will come with singing. The poet wrote:

"Millions there of flaming seraphs
Fly across the heavenly plain;
There they sing immortal praises—
Glory, glory is their strain!

But methinks a specter concert
Makes the heavenly arches ring,
And a song is heard in Zion
Which the angels cannot sing."

The angels cannot sing this song because they have never been partakers of flesh and blood. Paul says in Hebrews ii. 14, 15: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." The angels have never been redeemed from death, never been under the control of sin and Satan, "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; never been delivered from the power of darkness, never been "called out of darkness into his marvelous light." They have never seen themselves lost, undone, hell-deserving sinners; they have never suffered the terror and anguish of mind, fearing everlasting banishment from the presence of God and the glory of his power; never been horrified at the thought of going away into everlasting punishment, which they confess they so richly deserve. You sing a little sometimes now, just a faint foretaste of what it will be; sing a little, oh so little, with the spirit and with the understanding, faintly, with maybe a small amount of grace in your hearts. Many of you cannot sing at all, but, bless the Lord, as Solomon says, "Better is the day of one's death than the day of one's birth." In glory you poor little tongue-tied, dumb ones will have your tongues loosed, and you will sing with an immortal voice, an immortal tongue, praising him who died to save you.

There is no end to this joy. If it were true that in innumerable years this glory was to end, all would be filled with sadness. Nothing like this is before them, but on and on forever and forever the peace, joy, praise and felicity will continue. This being true, "What manner

of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?"

Your brother in hope of mercy,

ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., January 17, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The accompanying letter from brother G. E. Coulbourn I am sending for publication in the SIGNS by request. The mystery of godliness in the work of grace is set forth in the wonderful way in which our dear brother has been led.

May the new year be a successful one for the dear old SIGNS, is the wish and prayer of the writer.

B. F. COULTER.

CAPE CHARLES, Va., January 15, 1922.

DEAR ELDER COULTER:—My mind has been much on your request last Sunday, and also that of sister Holloway, that I write my experience and send it for publication in the SIGNS. I feel a great hesitancy in undertaking to write anything, as I am not gifted in writing for publication, and to write on myself as a subject seems to be a poor subject indeed; but I hope when you have read what I may write, if you find anything in this letter that in any way seems to exalt or give praise to myself, you will consign it to the fire; but should I have anything in my experience that will be to the glory of the blessed Lord and to the comfort of any of the brethren, then let the Savior be praised.

As you know, my home as a boy was in Worcester County, Md., being born and raised near a Methodist church-house. My mother, as I recall it, allowed but did not compel us to go to Sunday-school, which I attended some, and it seems to me now I was more interested in the prize tickets than I was in the lessons. We always attended the protracted meetings, but I never felt that they offered me anything I could accept, as others seemed able to do. In those days as a boy I would occasionally hear Elder Poulson, and think I enjoyed it, and used to wish I was able to understand such doctrine. From boyhood to manhood and on through the years I seemed to drift along, running and working for the things of this world, my life filled with sinful deeds and actions, and trying to think that certain accomplishments in business would make me feel free to indulge the things I most enjoyed; but alas, when I would attain the goal or mark set in material things I would find no satisfaction, but still wanted more and more of worldly goods and pleasures, and so it goes to this day along natural inclinations. From time to time I was privileged to hear Old Baptists preach, and believed they preached the gospel, but that it was for them and not for me. As time went on, living here in Virginia, hearing other doctrine, which offered salvation to any one that would accept it, seeming more interested in me than I was in myself, has caused me to wonder more than once what could be wrong with me; but I never could accept what they offered me, for I believed salvation to be of the Lord. For some years my mind seemed to be a little exercised, and I would undertake to believe that Jesus is the Savior. At that time there never was any doubt as to God the Father being all-powerful, all-wise and above all, but I could not accept the fact that Jesus is the Son of God. I believed it in a way, because I had always heard it, and had read it in the Bible, but it seemed I must have other and direct personal knowledge to be satisfied to accept so great a wonder. I talked with Elder Coulter about this, and he said God would

make me believe it. I would sometimes attempt to pray, but knew not how, and plunged along in worldly pleasures and excitements. It was in the spring last year that I hope the blessed Savior revealed himself to me while on a train coming home from attending a business meeting at Richmond, Va. While sitting in the smoking room in the car there were a number of men in the little room swearing and telling stories, and I am sorry to say that I was enjoying listening, when I looked out of the window on the fields, and the Scripture came to me, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" I began to feel struck and cast down, (I know it was not natural worry, as we had had a good business meeting) and from that moment I heard no more of the conversation from the men, although I feel sure they kept on talking. I cannot recall or write all the Scripture that passed through my mind, but do remember some of it, and hope I always will. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you," &c. One must have salvation before he can work it out or make it manifest or known. I began to fear, and wonder what had come over me, and a lonesome or lost feeling possessed my very soul, or so I felt. I do not know how long this lasted, but I felt the tears start and could not stop them. I felt I must get away from those men, so I got up and went into another part of the car, and there I was shown how small, how worthless and how vile a sinner I was. My whole body seemed shaken, and never before or since have I been so drenched in tears. Naturally I am hard-hearted, not given to tears. When there seemed nothing but darkness these words came into my mind: "Ye believe in God, believe also in me," and it seemed to me that away off somewhere in the haze of darkness I had a visage of something of which I could only see the tips of two white wings hovering over and protecting something very precious, which I could only believe to be my Savior. I began to feel light, and to wonder how all this could happen to such an one as I, and from that time to the present have desired to give God the praise. When we reached the station at Newport News I came out with a feeling that I cannot describe, and felt that I wanted to talk, but saw no one to whom I felt I could talk. On reaching home my wife asked what had happened, saying my face showed something unusual had happened. I tried to tell her, but do not know how I succeeded. I talked to Elder Coulter, and he seemed very happy and mentioned baptism. It was in my mind, but I wanted time to try to learn if possible whether or not I was a victim of imagination. I went to the Bible for comfort and read it through, sometimes feeling to understand, at other times feeling to understand nothing, and that lost feeling would return. When I had about finished reading the Bible through once, wrestling with grave doubts as to understanding, it seemed to come over me that the Bible was written for believers, and all the exhortations were to the brethren, not to live and do as the outside world, and were not made to the outsider to become as brethren. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." I found untold comfort in reading the Bible, and went through the summer hoping I might some time go before the church. In September I was

taken sick, and was in the hospital, and it seemed my mind was not exercised much on recovery; I felt blank, and that things were not with me as I had hoped, but felt all things work together for good to them that love the Lord. We read, That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Then when the Spirit maketh alive we are happy, and when the Spirit seems to leave us our only hope is that if we did not have this warfare we could not have been born of the Spirit; for we know that the one is contrary to the other, and the flesh is not subject to the Spirit, neither indeed can be. I believe I stayed away from the church as long as I could, for I felt to go on the second Saturday in December. So I prepared my grip and arranged to go up to Pocomoke and spend Friday night, then over to Snow Hill, Md., on Saturday. My wife, fearing I might be baptized, asked me, and I replied that I did not know for sure, but might, or words to that effect. She having nursed me through my severe illness, began to plead with me to postpone it until warm weather, as it was about freezing temperature. I would not promise, and left my good wife in a turmoil as I had never left her before, declaring that the shock would throw me back into severe illness. I felt much alone and worried and under a cross going up in the train, and tried to pray that night and ask what to do, if the blessed Lord would show me, and it seemed to me very suddenly I was reminded to remember Lot's wife and not turn back. So I went before the church, was received, and baptized by Elder Coulter just five weeks ago to-day. The water was cold, and I am glad it was, for what a small thing, and what a blessed privilege it was, that I might follow the example of the blessed Savior without trying to choose the temperature of the water, and I am sure it is needless to say that I suffered no ill effects from the baptism. Now, I have not as yet felt sorry that I was baptized, but it seems of late my mind has been more on natural things than spiritual, and I am pondering over the parable of the sower, and wonder if I am one of the thorns that the word has fallen among, letting the cares and pleasures of this world choke the word so that it may not bring forth anything profitable. However, it seems that try as I may I cannot control these things, but I do find some comfort in Paul's words, that the things I would I do not, and the things I would not, those I do. If it was so with Paul, we need not expect it to be different with us. As you know, I am not very near any one of like belief, and cannot explain my belief satisfactorily to any one else of other belief, for I have tried and failed. The question often arises with others as to the justice of God if I am right in my belief. My feeling is, If God should mete out justice to us here below, how could we or how could I have hope? Judges in this world condemn and put away the guilty. If justice were meted out to us, where would we stand? As for me, I stand guilty, and if saved it is by the grace of God through the mercy of his blessed Son Jesus Christ, to whom with what power there is given to me I hope to now and always give thanks and ascribe all power and glory, for I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing. I am trying to hope that just a little light has come into my dark heart, and that it may be the Lord's will to let it shine more and more unto the perfect day. In conclusion, I ask an interest in all your prayers.

I am, I hope, your brother in faith,

G. EDWIN COULBOURN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1922.

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ELIJAH IN HOREB.

(1 KINGS XIX. 12.)

EVERY great spiritual character has its moments of reaction, its times when faith seems lacking and the weakness of human nature dominates. No one is immune from these reactions, and it is often that the greatest spirituality is attended with the deepest gloom and with the most fearful lapses into doubt and questioning. The Savior himself said that among those born of woman there had risen no one greater than John the Baptist, yet this great spiritual man, strong and fearless as he was when being exercised by the power of faith, suffered a terrible reaction when cast into prison, and so great were the doubts enshrouding his mind that he sent messengers to Jesus to ask if he were the Christ, or should they look for another. There may be those who would deplore such a lapse in so great a character, but to the children of God such evidences of human weakness are of great assistance and comfort to such as are likewise tempted from time to time. Not that such reactions give us any ground for excusing our own weakness, but certainly they give rise to a warmth and nearness of fellowship that could not be felt did not the outstanding men and women of the Scriptures exhibit such slips and stumblings. Inasmuch as the Scriptures themselves tell us that all which was written aforetime was written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort thereof might have hope, it is right and proper that the weaknesses of God's children should find a record there as well as the heights of faith to which they attained. There is a dark side to every picture, a bitter for every sweet, and the biblical record of God's dealings with his people leaves nothing to be desired on this score. Elijah's effort to hide himself from the vengeance of Jezebel after his bold defiance of the corrupt king Ahab furnishes us another instance of the weakness of human nature and the reaction wrought by it after a tremendous activity of faith. There is nothing impossible to faith, even as there is nothing too hard for the God of faith. Faith can move mountains and bid them be hurled into the sea, it can open prison doors, open the eyes of the blind, heal the sick, &c. Not the size of faith, but the quality of it, is the important thing. Even though it be but as a grain of mustard seed, it has within it divine life and energy, and this omnipotent power of faith removes all obstacles and stumbling-blocks from the path of the believer and makes the feeblest strong in the might of his God. But the human being through whom faith runs as a mighty current is a poor, weak vessel at best, and it is no wonder that the individual himself feels all burned up after the activity of faith has run its course. Somewhat as an electric current consumes the carbon in the lamp, so faith burns up the man through whom its activity is seen. When Ahab became king over Israel he proceeded to do evil more than all the kings who had gone before him. He made a grove and built an altar to Baal, doing all he could to encourage idolatry among

the Israelites. To this king came the prophet Elijah boldly defying him to his face, condemning his iniquities and declaring to him that there should be no rain for three years and six months. After three years we find Elijah again face to face with Ahab, and Ahab then calls him a troubler of Israel, but Elijah hurls back the accusation at him, telling him that he, the king, is the root of Israel's troubles, in that he has forsaken the commandments of the Lord and followed Baalim. For a poor man of God, apparently without defense, to thus defy the king to his face called for great bravery, and the secret of this courage we believe to have been the faith of God that was so mightily working in him and conquering for the time the weakness in the nature of the man, for the nature of every man is weak, be he saint or sinner. Elijah then summons the people to Mt. Carmel, there to witness the falseness of Baal worship and the integrity of true worship. "How long halt ye between two opinions?" exclaims the prophet as he calls upon the eight hundred and fifty false prophets to build their altar to Baal, to lay their bullock thereupon, and to call upon their god. From morn until eve they call, and Elijah mocks their vain prayers and cries. "Cry aloud," said he, "for he is a god: either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked." All to no avail, however, do they cry aloud and slash themselves with knives. Their god is non-existent and so cannot heed them. After all this display of frenzied false worship Elijah prepares his bullock and lays it upon the altar. Around it he digs a trench. Upon all of it he causes to be poured twelve barrels of water, so that the trench is full of water and the offering soaked in it. For fire to consume it seems impossible, since water resists fire, and the fire would have to surely burn with the fiercest heat in order to lick up the water and consume Elijah's sacrifice. But this presents no obstacle to the faith of the prophet, and he is displaying before Israel that the God whom he worships is the God of impossibilities, the God for whom there is nothing too hard. In answer to the prayer of faith the fire from heaven consumes the sacrifice, and Elijah has proved that the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham and of Isaac is also the God of Israel, even though they have strayed by the altars of Baal. Following this marvelous evidence of true religion, Elijah and the people slay the eight hundred and fifty false prophets, even as Jazebel had earlier caused the prophets of the true God to be slain. Up to this point Elijah seems a tower of strength and has behaved himself with courage and truthfulness in the face even of opposition that would have daunted any one less fearless. But the secret of this strength in the prophet was not in his nature, as we shall promptly see. When King Ahab carried to his queen, Jezebel, the news that Elijah had slain her eight hundred and fifty prophets, she at once sent word to the prophet that within twenty-four hours he should die. At this news the prophet experiences a reaction, and instead of maintaining his defiance as before, turns and flees. Arriving at Beersheba he leaves his servant and fares onward alone into the wilderness, sits down under a juniper tree and wishes that he might die. How intensely human is this flight of the prophet, how close it brings him to the hearts of all of us who have again and again suffered such lapses. Have there not been times when you have suffered terrible let-downs in your

zeal and interest in heavenly things? Have there not been seasons when you have asked yourself, What is life worth, and what does it all mean? Is there any good in any of it, any good in me? Is my religion vain and my hope a delusion? Who has not been beset with temptations like these? But, there under the juniper tree, seeking refuge from persecution and wishing for death, while Elijah sleeps the Lord sends an angel to minister to him. This angel prepared for the prophet refreshment and bade him arise and eat, thus showing that though he might flee from men he could not flee from the providence of God, could not stray beyond divine care and protection. In the strength of that assurance Elijah continues his flight forty days and finds at last a cave on Mt. Horeb in which he hides himself. Even here, though, he cannot hide from the God whose servant he is, and before whom he must either stand or fall. The voice of the Lord searches him out, even as it did Adam in the garden. "What doest thou here, Elijah?" twice asks the voice of Him who lays bare the secrets of men's hearts. A great and strong wind passed by, then an earthquake, then a fire, but the Lord was in none of those violences and they left the prophet unmoved. But when after these came a still small voice it moved the prophet to the depths of his soul and made him hide his face in his mantle. That which calamities could not do the still small voice of the Spirit's judgment did do; that is, it called the prophet to himself and made him ashamed of his weakness and terror in fleeing from Jezebel, he who had so fearlessly withstood Ahab and the prophets of Baal. As the prodigal son came to himself when a long way from home and remembered the blessings of his father's house, so did Elijah hiding in the cave of Hóreb find himself brought to an accounting by the still small voice of judgment, a heart-searching which disclosed the weakness of his nature. How true it is that God does bring to judgment every secret thing, and all in Zion do appear before his judgment-seat daily to receive the things done in their bodies. This judgment of the Lord is something that we ought to cherish, for though it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, there is no safer place in which a believer can possibly be. His judgments correct our backslidings and reveal the way of life. After this exhibition of weakness in fleeing from Jezebel we find Elijah afterward strong in faith again, and thus strengthened we find him again boldly denouncing Ahab's wickedness. When Ahaziah, Ahab's successor, sent a hundred men to bring Elijah down to him we do not see Elijah running away from them, but he boldly stood his ground, and fire came down from heaven and consumed those hundred. Previously he had gone personally to Ahab, and to that king's face had condemned him for stealing the vineyard of Naboth. Thus Elijah was a living proof of that Scripture which says, They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion who appeareth before God. There is, however, but one way to go from strength to strength. There is no bridge from one height to another, but the path lies from one summit of one strength down through the valley of darkness and temptation up unto the summit of the next strength. There is no short-cut, no way in which the valley of judgment and humiliation can be avoided. Simon Peter went from zeal to zeal by way of Satan's sieve. In his strength he had said that he would not leave Jesus though all else forsook

him, but he suffered a lapse in which he, too, denied his Savior. Afterward he became an apostle of the Lord to strengthen his brethren. Thus he went from strength to strength, but only after having proved the weakness of his nature and his need of faith. What a maze of contradictions is the life of God's people. Even Jesus, just a few hours before the cross, felt so overcomingly our weakness weighing upon him that he cried, If it be possible let this cup pass from me. He was heard in that he feared, and the presence of his Father strengthened him to arise and to endure. In this strength of Jesus is our strength, but oh, how weak and cowardly is the flesh. L.

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Arnold H. Bellows.)

The Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Middletown and Andes Old School Baptist Church, at Union Grove, N. Y., September 14th and 15th, 1921, to the churches composing the same sends christian love and fellowship.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—In humility and love is this epistle directed to you, in whose hearts God hath shined and revealed his Son that ye might be new creatures in Christ Jesus. We recognize you by the trials and triumphs, the hopes and fears, that are the heritage of God's elect, and share with you that feeling of utter depravity and vileness by nature as we realize more and more the plague of our own hearts. Therefore we are drawn together by the bonds of common love and mutual interest, desiring to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. We know that if we hunger and thirst after righteousness we shall be filled only in Him who is wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. We also have the sweet promise that if we are poor in spirit we shall be rich in the saving grace of Jesus, who became poor that we through his poverty might be rich. How much we ought to rejoice in that comforting hope in that incorruptible inheritance, and not count it a little hope or a shifting anchor. Though we feel the infirmities of the flesh we should rejoice in spirit that unto us it is given not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for his sake.

During the past year we have been abundantly blessed of the Lord, who hath added to our numbers, and also taken away. The fruitful labors of our dear pastor, Elder George Ruston, and the

faithful ministration of visiting preachers have served to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and edified the brethren by preaching a crucified and risen Christ, who justifies his people by faith, saves them by grace, keeps them by his power and presents them faultless before the throne of God the Father. Since our sins were imputed unto him who knew no sin, that his righteousness might be imputed unto us, who were dead in trespasses and sins, how much by virtue of our profession ought we to examine ourselves in our daily walks of life to determine by what spirit we are led. "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." It is written, "Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." There is a spiritual as well as a natural signification in this divine injunction. Before the heavens or that legal covenant were formed, and the earth was void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, all of the children of promise were in the life of God the Father and generator of that holy nation, that peculiar people who were to show forth his praise, but not yet made manifest. As the light shined in the darkness that comprehended it not, God through Jesus Christ shined in the hearts of his children and manifested to them his only begotten Son as the life and the light of spiritual Israel, and as the seed that should bruise the serpent's head. The church is the new Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all, whom we should honor above all that the natural world possesses for the gratification of earthly ambitions or desires. The church is the bride of Christ and the perfection of beauty, one with him in the beginning, one in the transgression, one in the crucifixion, one in the resurrection and one in that eternal world of glory. This is all presented in the glorious theme of salvation by grace and the mediatorial office of the immaculate Lamb of God, for Eve, the type of the church, was in Adam, who was the figure of him that was to come, bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. "Adam was not deceived; but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression." Adam partook of the forbidden fruit knowingly and suffered the penalty with Eve: separation from Eden and communion with God, or death to the state in which they had existed prior to the transgression. Jesus suffered no deception, withstood the wiles of Satan, went down with his bride, the church, under the condemnation of a righteous and inexorable law, and arose triumphant, having conquered death and hell, that he might present his bride holy and blameless before God in love. Because of that vital relationship with Christ we must needs suffer trials and afflictions. Having that joint-heirship with him as our Elder Brother we are blessed in suffering persecution for righteousness' sake. Did we not fellowship Christ when we felt the condemnation of sin, helpless, forsaken, without hope, without God in the world? Night seemed darkest just before dawn: sin seemed most overwhelming before deliverance and entrance into that rest that remaineth to the people of God. The crucified Jesus hanging upon the cross, between heaven and earth, just before his death and entrance into paradise felt helpless and deserted, and in the awful agony of that dark hour cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" How inexpressibly sweet to us is fellowship with the saints and with the household of God, knowing that Jesus was touched with the feeling of our infirmi-

ties. It is our desire that the Lord guide and direct us, that we forget not the peace and welfare of Zion, and feel more and more in our hearts to live and labor through Him who is our all in all, that the church may be blessed with peace and unity, and ourselves led to exclaim with increasing joy in God, "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel."

GEORGE RUSTON, Moderator.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Roxbury Association of Old School Baptists, in session with the Middletown and Andes Old School Baptist Church, at Union Grove, N. Y., September 14th and 15th, 1921, to the associations and churches with which we correspond sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Through the kind providence and tender mercies of our covenant-keeping God our unprofitable lives have been spared to meet once more in an associate capacity. Your messengers have come to us in the fullness of the gospel of Christ. The great trumpet has been blown and has given no uncertain sound; the theme has been Christ first, last and all the time, for there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. Our meeting has been harmonious, and has been carried on without any discordant note. We earnestly desire a continuance of your love and fellowship, and we hope to meet and greet you again next year. Until then, dear brethren, farewell.

Our next session is appointed to meet with our sister church at Ashokan, N. Y., on the second Wednesday and Thursday of September, 1922.

GEORGE RUSTON, Moderator.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. Corder Mellott, at his home, Salisbury, Md., Alfred Burton McGee and Nellie Farlow West, both of Laurel, Del.

By Elder Charles W. Vaughn, November 9th, 1921, at the home of the bridegroom, in Hopewell, N. J., John B. Garrison, M. D., and Mrs. Frances Hill Riley, both of Hopewell, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Lillian V. Moffett, wife of C. A. Moffett, was born December 4th, 1867, and died at her home near Mt. Vernon, Texas, December 8th, 1921, after a long illness, aged 54 years and 4 days. She was married to brother Moffett December 24th, 1885. Six children were born to them, two boys: Fred and A. C. Moffett, and four girls: Mrs. B. M. Rutland, Mrs. W. B. Scroggin, Mrs. J. A. Williams and Mrs. Arthur Kennedy. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Macedonia the fifth Sunday in May, 1888, and was baptized by Elder J. J. White. She was a faithful member until death, true to the faith, always filling her seat in meeting when able. She always seemed to be very spiritually-minded, and loved her church and the brethren and sisters more than anything in this world. We loved her for her faith and the truth's sake. She was a faithful, loving wife and a loving, indulgent mother, and will be sadly missed by her bereaved husband and children, also the church. She suffered greatly, but bore her afflictions with much patience, realizing that it was God's will for it to be so. Those who knew her best loved her most. The hymns she selected were: "O land of rest, for thee I sigh," "Oh when shall I see Jesus?" and "I am a stranger here below." We always feel comforted when we meditate over loved ones, and call to mind that David said in Psalms cxvi., "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." That she was a saint we have no doubt, therefore, loving bereaved ones, mourn not as though you had no hope. She said she did not fear death, but longed to go and be with Jesus. The last hymn she sang on her death-bed was, "Oh land of rest, for thee I sigh."

She was buried at Providence, the writer conducting the funeral service. W. H. TATUM.

Martha Jane Saunders was born in Cecil County, Md., February 28th, 1839, and died at her home in Liberty Grove, same county and state, aged 82 years and 8 months. She was married to Robert A. Saunders December 25th, 1861. To that union were born four daughters. In April, 1880, her husband was killed, leaving her the care of this family. She remained a widow the rest of her days on earth. She was baptized by Elder William Grafton in the fellow-

ship of the Rock Springs Church September 18th, 1869, and was a faithful member to the end, never allowing any condition of weather to hinder her from being present at the meetings in her earlier years, walking seven miles to the place of meeting if there was no other way. She continued active in all her duties until a few months before her death. It could be said of her that though old in years she was ever young, a mother in the church and to any who needed a mother's care. In affliction she went to the Lord in prayer; if sickness was in the church she would say, "Just wait on that one." She never spoke of her trials unless one went to her for counsel, then she would speak of how the Lord saved her. She was surely a pillar in the church, and will be sorely missed. She had many friends in the community in which she lived, who equally mourn the loss of a true friend in need. The public press spoke of her as "a woman of unusual mental attainments, and until the last took the keenest interest in the affairs of the day; the kindest of neighbors, ever ready to give aid and sympathy in time of trouble." Three daughters survive: Mrs. W. J. Sterrett, Rising Sun, Md., Mrs. W. C. Lake, Cambridge, Md., and Miss J. M. Saunders at home. She buried her youngest daughter at the age of nineteen years. She also leaves eight grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

The funeral was held from her late residence, Liberty Grove, Md., on November 4th, at 2 p. m., Elders J. G. Eubanks and Wm. S. Alexander being present and speaking words of comfort to the sorrowing ones. Interment in the Rock Springs Church cemetery.

Her niece, CASSIE J. ROWLAND.

Mrs. Bettie Rhoades, my dear mother, departed this life November 25th, 1918. She was born and raised in Alabama. She was married to Jasper Evers in 1895, to which union were born four children, two boys and two girls, three of whom are still living, one passing from this life September 30th, 1900. After a long illness of typhoid fever and paralysis father was called from our midst. She was married to Willie Rhoades in 1903, to which union were born six children, five boys and one girl. Mother was a devoted wife, a loving mother and a faithful friend. Oh how dark and dreary this cold world seems; it will never again be as it once was. Mother's tired hands are folded, her weary feet are at rest. Just two weeks before she was taken sick we were sitting alone in a room quilting when she said, "Emma, I cannot live long; you do not know how badly I feel." I did not say anything, but thought, Oh, how could I give you up? Soon she was taken with the influenza, and after suffering intensely for nine days the good Lord saw fit to take her from this world of trouble to that everlasting sweet home in heaven, where there will be no pain, sickness or dying, but all is joy, peace and happiness. She was sitting in her rocking-chair by the fire when death came. I hope to meet her when my life on earth is ended. Mother was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone. In the year 1912 she professed a hope and united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Good Hope, being baptized by the beloved pastor, Elder H. B. Jones, where she remained a true and faithful member until death. She leaves her husband, seven sons, two daughters and one step-daughter, but I feel to know that our loss is her everlasting gain.

Her daughter, EMMA EVERS.

L. O. Garrott passed away quite suddenly January 11th, 1922, as he was sitting on the side of his bed, his head resting on the back of his chair. At the time of his death he was living with his nephew, Jamie Garrott, near Pembroke, Ky. He leaves one sister and several nephews and nieces. The poor have lost a good friend and the church will miss him, but our loss is his gain. His greatest delight was to be with the Old Baptists. Our brother was widely known in the county where he lived, and commanded the respect of all. He was personally near to me, and his departure is a great loss to those who love the truth. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me.

The funeral was held at his home January 12th.

E. L. ANDERSON.

Rachel E. Sheppard, daughter of Henry S. and Caroline A. Sheppard, of Hopewell, N. J., was born September 13th, 1869, and departed this life April 13th, 1921, after a short illness. Her brothers, sister and sisters-in-law were with her during her illness. She never united with the church, but was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith, not of herself, but through Jesus Christ by the Father, who gave his only begotten Son for our many sins. She will be sadly missed by four brothers and one sister, but our loss is her eternal gain. The funeral was held at the home of her brother, J. B. Sheppard, on Sunday, April 17th, 1921, at 1:30 p. m., and at 2 p. m. in the Old School Baptist church-house at Hopewell, where Elder C. W. Vaughn spoke very comfortingly to the brethren and sisters and quite a gathering of relatives and friends, after which she was laid to rest in the adjoining yard.

Her brother, JACOB B. SHEPPARD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

J. C. Chester, Ky., $4.00; T. C. Roe, Md., $2.00; Mrs. M. A. Somers, Va., $1.00.

MEMORIALS.

Deacon Preston Staggs was born in Vigo County, Ind., October 21st, 1840. He received a hope in March, 1853, emigrated to Parker County, Texas, in 1870, united with Zion Hill Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by Elder James Staggs in February, 1855, serving as clerk of that church for twenty-one years. He then moved to Fort Worth, Texas, and united with the church in 1909, and was ordained deacon in 1910. In the loss of brother Staggs we feel not as one without hope, but that our loss is his eternal happiness with the Savior of the blest, in the home prepared for them before the foundation of the world. As a counselor, brother Staggs was ever ready with Scripture proofs and fitting words; as a deacon, clear minded to his duties. He enjoyed the confidence of all the brethren who knew him. He loved the sister churches, and visited them as long as he was able. He had been afflicted for thirty years, but bore it without a murmur. When able he always filled his seat on meeting days until the last meeting before his death. As a neighbor he was kind and obliging and much esteemed; as a father his children have lost a tenderhearted adviser, one who always had a cup brimming full of well wishes, and he lived a moral life for their guide. We pray that God's blessings may be with him after death.

Elders J. H. Smith and E. A. Moreland spoke words of comfort to the bereaved. The body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Willow Springs, Parker County, Texas, October 29th, 1921.

Brother Staggs was a defender of the cause equal to the ablest, and could harmonize his words and thoughts so kindly that he never caused trouble.

Done by order of the Primitive Baptist Church, in memory of Deacon Preston Staggs.

E. A. MORELAND, Moderator.

SALLIE CAPE, Church Clerk.

MEETINGS.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

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WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

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"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

HARDING, W. Va., January 23, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending money to pay my subscription for the SIGNS another year; I feel that I do not want to do without it. The members of our church are few and so widely scattered we cannot assemble during the winter months, so I anxiously await the arrival of your paper for preaching and communications from those of my faith and order. I often feel that I am not worthy of the great love and blessings which God bestows on his people, nevertheless I long for the mercies of our covenant-keeping God, and desire to meet in gospel fellowship with his children and hear the word of God proclaimed in its purity, and to feel that God is worshiped in spirit and in truth; that his children do not desire to please the carnal mind or gain applause from the world, but to honor him before whose eyes our hearts and minds are as an open book. Oh that the Lord would restore unto his people everywhere the joy of his salvation. He says, in speaking of the new covenant he will make with his people, recorded by Jeremiah and quoted by the apostle Paul to the Hebrews, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Christ said, No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day. This law put into their mind and written in their hearts by the Father seals them as his heirs. In due time the light of the Holy Spirit shines in their hearts, revealing to them the exceeding sinfulness of their sins, causing them to labor and be heavy laden and to strive to free themselves from the law of Moses, which was written not in their hearts, but on tables of stone. As that could not make the comers thereunto perfect, they now find themselves at the end of the way and the last day under the law; but Christ said, I will raise him up at the last day. When the three disciples witnessed the transfiguration of Jesus on the mount, and saw him talking with Moses and Elias, a voice spoke to them out of the cloud that overshadowed them, saying, This is my beloved Son, hear ye him. Then the voice of the Son speaks to the weary sinner, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I

will give you rest." The sinner has now given up every other hope of freedom from sin, and he cries, Lord, save, or I perish. Jesus says, He that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. So he reveals himself to them as their Savior and Redeemer and gives them rest. Christ also said, Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Here pardoned souls who have found in this given rest such sweet peace, which the apostle says passeth understanding, learn that while the carnal mind, which is of the flesh, is subdued, it is not destroyed. As Satan tempted our Savior, he will in some way tempt those who trust in him. It may be by saying, Why follow him now? He has said he is meek and lowly, and is spoken of as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. If you walk in his footsteps you may have to suffer affliction with his people, and those worldly pleasures which used to be a part of your life would lose their attractions. You would have to walk a narrow path, and only a few walk that way. If you will only wait you may find a more pleasant and broader road to travel, with plenty of company. You remember that this lowly Nazarene and his followers were not much thought of by the religious Pharisees and other strictly religious sects in his day. If you follow him all the way you will not be held in very high esteem by that same class today. If the children of God who have now been saved by his grace listen to these promptings and suggestions of Satan, made through the carnal mind, which is always opposed to God, they will find through spiritual sorrow that the covenant law, which God put in their mind and wrote in their hearts, which sealed them heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, will teach them ere long that there is no spiritual enjoyment in that broad road, for it leads to destruction. May the Lord in his own time enable all those who stand outside his church from a sense of unworthiness or worldliness to forsake all and take up their cross and follow him, confessing him before his church, fearing not what the world may say, following him in baptism. Thus they will find his promised rest to their souls and henceforth trust in the Lord to help them walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called. May the Lord continue his blessings to the editors, publishers and contributors of the SIGNS, that they may continue to comfort and edify its many readers as they have in the years that are past. May the rich blessings of God's holy Spirit be with his people everywhere for Jesus' sake.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) E. E. WORKMAN.

BRANDYWINE SUMMIT, Pa., Dec. 4, 1921.

DEAR CHARLES:—Have you ever had any spiritual light on the following Scriptures? "Behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth."—Isaiah lxv. 17. "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain."—Isaiah lxvi. 22. "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."—Matthew v. 5. "We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."—2 Peter iii. 13. "I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea," &c.—Rev. xxi. 1-5. "I go to prepare a place for you," &c.—John xiv. 2, 3.

In connection with the above Scrip-

tures, what is to be the end of this world? I hope you have some light on this subject. I have to confess that my knowledge of it is what others have thought or what they think might be true; but knowledge of this world is not always truth, while the Spirit of God never teaches a contradictory lesson, and is always truth.

Affectionately,

B. F. HAMILTON.

STATE ROAD, Del., Dec. 15, 1921.

DEAR FATHER:—In your letter of December 4th you ask two questions. Regarding the first question: spiritual light on the Scriptures quoted by you, I found upon examination of myself that my condition was exactly the same as yours. It was necessary for me to look for spiritual teaching in the matter to that infallible Spirit sent out under promise to the Lord's people, the one and only unfailing Guide and Instructor of his chosen people. It filled me at once with a longing that it would be my lot to write you a few words bearing the authority of the kingdom of God. For many days I went along with only my doubts and darkness in the matter, but yesterday morning, while on the train and in the Baltimore & Ohio R. R. station in Philadelphia, light came, and my mind was lifted and traveled on in much liberty. Those thoughts are now written for you by my wife on her typewriter for your ease in reading them. If you show them to any one else please add your own clear mind of the Spirit regarding any part seeming not to ring true as of the Teacher whose words are without contradiction. In this way we have Spirit witnessing with spirit that these things are true, and error is kept out. With these words of explanation the following is the leading of my mind, as mentioned regarding your second question: In connection with the above Scriptures, what is to be the end of this world? The new earth is a new earth, for the Savior says, "I go to prepare a place for you," and "In my Father's house are many mansions." Of the new earth the abiding quality is "wherein dwelleth righteousness." This old earth is not the dwelling-place of righteousness, for we know that our Savior and his people are strangers here below. The destruction of the old earth is unquestionably by fire, a burning fire, and burning changes the form and elements of that which is consumed absolutely. This burning is taking place constantly before the very eyes "that seeing see not." Our God is a consuming fire, as proven in the fate of the guards of the three men who passed through the fiery furnace in the time of Daniel. Those for whom escape from the burning of this present evil world is given have as their Savior the one and same Son of God, who was the fourth man seen with the three in the fiery furnace. Every one of God's people escapes from the fiery ending of this present world. The elect are gathered together by his angels from the four winds from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven. As the three of the fiery furnace, none of his elect can be harmed by this fire, for being as he is they are in safety. The manner of the accomplishment of these things belonging to the ending of this world is shown in that sign of the coming given by Christ—the fig tree. The ripe figs do not appear on the tree to natural vision at once following the green leaves, neither can man's eye or mind discern exactly how the ripe figs appeared, but in quiet, unseen demonstration of power the fruit comes and is there. So is the coming of the end of this world. The king-

dom of God cometh not with outward show, hence the clouds and great glory; glory seen by eyes that see and hearts that understand. To natural men the appearing of God's face and his presence is the failing of their very powers of existence. The guard at the temple fell backwards—fear. When God speaks the natural ears can only convey to the mind the sense that it thundered, merely a terrific natural phenomenon. Another sign of the end given is the abomination of desolation standing where it ought not. When this world is desolate because of being without God, men given up to their own evil and the face of God removed from them, then is the sign of the "abomination of desolation" standing where it ought not. From the results of this condition so near to us now in this present time God promises that these days "shall be shortened," and the remainder of wrath will he restrain. We shall not all die, but we shall all be changed. The dead shall be raised first, and we that remain shall be caught up with him in the air, ever to be with him and see with him in spiritual vision all these things with no veil (flesh) between. Of the process and completion, time of the end, no man knoweth, neither the Son knoweth, but the Father. Through and by his wisdom are given us only signs. We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, giving no thought for the morrow, being enjoined to let not our hearts be troubled, for we are the children of promise, who inherit the new heavens and the new earth. Those who are known as the "we, according to his promise," know that they cannot add to, or take from, the slightest part of his purposes. They have as one of his precious gifts faith, which is the substance of things hoped for. They have also the law of life in Christ Jesus, which never is separated by any possible manner of life or any condition of being or existence, it being in him before the foundation of the world. They "walk in newness of life."—Romans vi. 4. In the ending of this world that life which is in him enables his people to see and know that their redemption draweth nigh. Had the inhabitants of the earth to-day the mind of Abigail, shown by her words of beauty to David, they would be able to discern the signs of the end of this world, but the "wise and prudent" of this world have not that mind. The evidence of the power of the Spirit of God to separate the precious from the vile and to reveal the beauty of holiness, is manifest in the experience of David and Abigail, as recounted in 1st Samuel xxv. The history related there is vile from even human measurement, but these wonderfully beautiful and comforting words shine forth from the vileness of the surroundings as a diadem of gems when revealed by the Spirit. In the twenty-ninth verse Abigail says, "Yet a man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul; but the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God." She assuredly knew the manner of that law of life in Christ Jesus. In our travel here we little know from what unlooked for source may come to us the precious jewels of the kingdom of heaven. It is not for us to rashly judge one particle of God's great creation, for it is all "meet for the Master's use."

Once more speaking of the coming of the end of this world, many seem to be of the mind that the end is a frightful, crashing destruction to take place violently and with suddenness. There is every evidence that the creation of the earth was not after that manner, and our

sign of the fig tree has all the evidence of a like coming of the end of this old earth. Now to those who are, according to his predestinated purpose, "bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God," to those of his own dear family, there is a "still small voice." Of what? Of his infinite tender love and protecting care. Behold, I come quickly. Even so, Lord Jesus, come. Our wonderful Teacher and Comforter, whom we bear witness that Christ sent to us as he promised when he departed to again return, gives us "line upon line" and "precept upon precept" regarding the mystery of his kingdom. It is the little here and the little there that is our life in him. My longing desire is that we may lay hold upon and treasure up in our hearts every revealed truth given us. May each of us feel as that dear saint of old felt, to whom Jesus said, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God."—Mark xii. 34.

Now, my dear father, write to me soon, if your mind is so led, some of the thoughts you have upon this subject.

Your loving son,

CHARLES W. HAMILTON.

FT. WORTH, Texas, Dec. 30, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—It has been my desire for some time to write a word of appreciation to the dear old SIGNS, which comes laden with good news from a far country, so to speak, and I am made to feel that the same God (whom I hope I have been made to believe in) teaches his people everywhere the same way. David said, "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." So men do not have to go to a theological seminary four or five years in order to declare this wonderful doctrine of God our Savior, and that man is as the grass, &c.; for before man was created the heavens were declaring this glory, and he created the heavens and the earth, day and night and all creation before man was created, and I am persuaded this wonderful doctrine has been declaring the perfections of its Creator ever since its creation. To teach that God depends upon man to set forth his glory is to teach contrary to what David said. David also said, The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. To my understanding all things created are showing forth God's wisdom, glory and knowledge, from the smallest atom of creation to the most profound height of mystery. I want to quote a little of Paul's letter to the Romans, which is in connection with my thoughts on this line: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." So it is by his mercy afore prepared unto glory that we as worms of the dust (if we be his vessels of mercy) are permitted to view this wonderful Creator, and his Son Jesus as all-wise, all-powerful, most holy Lord God Almighty. In my humiliation I have cried out, O Lord, have mercy on me, a weak, vile, unclean sinner, not worthy of the least notice of any one. I

feel in my degradation to be no better than a dog, and have no right to eat of the children's bread. But O, dear Lord, I am not approaching thee in my own righteousness, but have felt to hope, to plead the righteousness of thy dear Son Jesus, and if it is thy holy will, I pray thee have mercy on a vile sinner like me. I feel if my soul were sent to hell thy righteous law approves it well. But at times I have felt to taste of the goodness of God and enjoy the good preaching, and been made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus with my dear brethren and sisters, and if I am not deceived I love them very dearly; but at times I feel if they knew me surely they could not fellowship me. I am continually doing things I ought not, but if they can bear with me it is a sweet privilege to live with them.

I will close now, hoping you will bear with me in my weakness and ignorance and pray for me that I may be kept in knowledge of my weakness and ever be willing to be admonished by my brethren and sisters. Do as you like with this.

Your sister in trials,

MINNIE OFFILL.

CHICAGO, Ill., January 4, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please find herewith four dollars, with which to renew my subscription, also that of Mrs. Ella R. Shields, my sister, as per inclosed blank.

The SIGNS comes to me as an old friend, a very dear friend that always has something comforting to tell, and very little, if any, unpleasantness. I feel that it would be like losing one of my dearest friends to be deprived of the paper, having taken it so many years, and before my time my grandfather, then my own father, besides many of the family also were subscribers and readers from its first issue. I believe I have stated this before, but I feel like repeating it to let you know what a comfort the paper is to one who has little other opportunity of communing with the brethren. It seems sometimes unreasonable, and by wisdom of this world is unreasonable, to me when my faith is tried, to believe that just a little band of very peculiar people can lay claim to be the true church as established on the day of Pentecost. There is so small a number, and even among this little few there are differences occasionally, and I am made to wonder why it is so; still I find no place to go, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. When I look about and see the worldly ways of all flesh, and a seeming coldness even among our own people, I almost shudder. Then when I have been in this state for some time perhaps a little ray of comfort comes into my heart, my faith is renewed, and I feel that I can never doubt again, and that I would like to tell every one that I know of the plan of salvation, all of which it seems I can see perfectly and according to the words of the Bible, as well as my experience, but soon come the doubts and worldly reasoning, then I am back where I am most often. I take one or more other Baptist publications, which are also of comfort, and have one of Elder Durand's books, which has been enjoyed very much. I hope many of the Baptists will read this book.

I wish the editors and publishers a happy and prosperous year, both worldly and spiritually. I have enjoyed the editorials and the lowly spirit in which they were written. Occasionally a few things are not just as I see them, but I know my opinion may be wrong, yet I do feel that all have written in love, and when that is done there will not be much to

cause other than unity. "Blest be the tie that binds."

Pardon me for anything I have written that may be error, for if I know myself it is not from my heart.

Yours in a precious hope (sometimes),

M. C. REAVES.

COLUMBUS, Ga., Jan. 9, 1922.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I desire to write you, though I do not feel that I can say anything of any worth to you, yet I have the desire. I have just read your "New Year's Greeting" of the year 1922 to the dear spiritual family circle. Surely the Lord is with you, filling you with these wonderful, glorious things, enabling you to write about them in solemnly beautiful words, yet so plain and full, easy to be understood, full of comfort to the Lord's afflicted poor people. We thank the Lord always for these gifts, and pray him to enable us to praise his great and holy name for his goodness and manifold blessings bestowed upon us. Great Jehovah, we adore thee.

I am reminded that time with me is swiftly passing, that I am growing old, and my sincere hope is that I am nearer home to-day than I have ever been before. The religion of our Lord and Savior is the life living in the souls of God's redeemed people, a sweeping mighty current in our lives, giving us sweetest pleasures while we live, and must supply solid comfort when we are called up higher. After death its joys will be everlasting as eternity. Oh what a precious gift is faith! Faith to hope in his love and to trust him in all things and at all times, knowing that he worketh all things for our good and his own glory. Oh to praise him in accordance with his holy will, to love him more and more, for love is all he asks. All the fitness he requireth is to feel the need of him. May he give me to hunger and thirst after righteousness, for the promise is, Ye shall be filled. The Lord will bless all that seek him and hope in his mercy. "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." What a comfort and consolation to the trembling child of God. Though trouble and affliction may abound on every hand, we have another great and precious promise: I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Then why are we not satisfied? Because, as you said, it was in the divine mind to keep us dissatisfied with self, to humble our pride, to prevent exaltation of self and to make us appreciate the brethren more than ourselves. How good for us is this divine unrest within our soul, urging the believer forward to a fuller revelation of spiritual things. Blest soul that can say, Christ only I seek. The Lord whom thou seekest will not tarry, and to him the weak are as dear as the strong. Exceeding great and precious promises are left on record for us, and if it were not for them we feel we would sink in despair; yet we are not destroyed, though many times cast down, and in these times of despondency the Scriptures are of comfort to us, a light unto our feet, and our Lord in mercy moves our hearts to consider his testimony. Cast all your care on him, for he careth for you. Jesus is touched by our griefs and sad hearts. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Hannah said in her fervent prayer of thankfulness unto the Lord, "He will keep the feet of his saints."

Dear brother, throw the mantle of charity over this scattering letter; like the writer, it is full of imperfections. Write on, and often, for you are given to expound the wonderful things of truth

which edify and are of great comfort to the weak ones of the flock. May our Lord long spare you and Elder Ker to declare the unsearchable riches of his grace, and to stand by the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. You can never know the messages of comfort and edification it bears to a multitude of believers who love it for the truth's sake, and to many who have not the precious privilege of hearing the preached word, like myself. I have been here in this city since last October and have not heard a sermon since our association, the middle of last October. Do you wonder at my loneliness? But, brother, I have felt full of gladness the last few weeks, for, the Lord willing, it will be so that I can be with you all once more this spring at the same associations we visited a year ago last spring. I hope it will suit our same Georgia band to go again, but if all cannot go perhaps some will. It would be rather lonely for one. I think Sarah Peters may go, as she wanted to last year, also sister Bettie Lunsford, and Mrs. Thetford is anxious to go if she can. It will be another green spot in memory, an oasis in a desert land, I feel, like the other meeting was with those dear brethren and sisters, hearing those gifted undershepherds of our Lord tell the old, old story, yet ever new, of Jesus and his love.

Now I will close, for I know you are already wearied. Remember me in your prayers. A heart full of love to Mrs. Lefferts and your loved ones. Greetings to the dear ones at Mt. Zion Church. I long to see them again. May the grace of our Lord keep you.

Unworthily yours in hope,

FANNIE J. NORRIS.

JETERSVILLE, Va., Nov. 16, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—One of your friends, an able minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, recommended your paper to me as the one that held forth the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord most firmly. I am young and away from the church, there being only a few brethren anywhere near, and I long for some consolation, that I might hear of some of the blessings bestowed on God's people. I am well pleased with the SIGNS, as I seldom hear any preaching, and it is a great comfort to me to read the experiences of the brethren, as they relate my feelings so well. I also enjoy the editorials, as I believe in God's absolute predestination of all things, and that he has all power both on earth and in heaven, that he is all-wise, seeing and declaring the end from the beginning. I am very much troubled and bothered about the difference in the preaching of our brethren. There are a great many of the brethren in Virginia (as I can hear and read) who preach that God only ordained the good and great things, and to say that God predestinated all things makes him the author of sin. I can but think that he that made man, heaven and earth, the fountains of water and all things therein, is just and right, though he does all things according to his will. If he made some things to glory and honor and to endure forever, and some to dishonor and to be destroyed, is he unjust? Are they not the works of his hands? Are they not according to his purpose? We are taught that we receive every good and perfect gift from God, and that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps; that every good thought is from the Father of lights; that the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. Some say that all evil is of the devil.

Verily I believe so, but where does the devil get power to perform his work? Did he touch Job without the consent of the Master? When he moved the Lord against Job the Lord said unto Satan, "Behold he is in thine hand; but save his life," showing there is no power but of God. Christ said to Pilate, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." I believe that God is as just in the predestination of evil to his purpose as he is to predestinate good, for the will of God is good and just in all things.

I shall bring this to a close, as I fear I have already written too much. May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ bless you all, and all his dear people throughout the whole world. Accept my thanks for your kindness to me.

Your unworthy brother, in hope of a better world, P. D. GEORGE.

GOLCONDA, Ill., Jan. 8, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—I would love to write to you, but cannot write suitable for the press, and my husband is failing so in his nerves that it is quite a task for him to prepare my effort for publication, but I have a pressing desire to talk to those precious ones who have so often comforted me with their rich communications through the columns of the dear old SIGNS. Such have been a garden of Eden to my hungry soul. I often think of a dear sister who some two or more years ago wrote that she would rather travel a hundred miles to clasp hands with a dear Old Primitive Baptist than to go to a celebration or place of worldly amusement at any time. I have lost (in lending) the paper containing her article, and would love to hear from her again, and hope she will in the near future write again for the SIGNS, or to me, that I may thus be enabled to find her once more. I feel bound with a band of love to her, and in my garden I have sweet ever-blooming flowers diffusing their fragrance for her, and all the faithful in Christ, which makes the garden a rich place in which to pose. I often repair to said garden as I am passing under the rod of affliction and grief and age. Were it not for the choice sermons and communications I read in the SIGNS I surely would wither and faint by the way. But why should we be so disconsolate, and murmur and complain, when God in his mercy has promised that he will never leave his people nor forsake them?

As my husband is sending his subscription for the SIGNS for another year I thought I would write a few lines, which you may publish if you think they are worthy a place in its columns.

Unworthily, KATE CARR.

LONDON, Ontario, Jan. 5, 1922.

ELDERS KER AND LEFFERTS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The words recorded in Hebrews xii. 1–3, have been much on my mind, and a desire is with me that some of the able ministers of the new testament would write on the above text. Brother McConnell just touched upon it very comfortingly in his excellent letter to sister Beard. In Paul's second epistle to Timothy, i. 7, he says, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." In verse twelve he says, "For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.' As dear sister Terry wrote so comfortingly, Jesus our forerunner, a man of sorrows, must travel in the wilderness to be tempted till the light comes, then

angels ministered unto him. From that time Jesus began to preach, and none can eat that bread of life but the poor in spirit: the mourners and they that hunger. Once since I was favored with a name and place among the salt of the earth I was cast down in much darkness, and I questioned, Has there ever been a work of grace in my poor stony heart? Is there such a thing as a work of grace? and with a feeling of shame I confess I questioned, Is there a Worker of grace? Yes, One whose counsel stands and does all his pleasure. I went into the house and picked up the SIGNS and read and feasted on a letter written by dear old sister M. M. Hassell. I could then say, My Lord and my God, for I felt it was in the strength of Israel's God she penned the beautiful lines. I was once much cast down after writing a letter, when the words came to me as if spoken in my heart, Go on in the strength of Israel's God, the only strength that supports. May it be ours to say and feel,

"On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand,
All other grounds are sinking sand."

My greetings to all who trust in the name of a once crucified and despised but now risen and exalted Redeemer.

J. GILLIS.

ST. ALBANS, W. Va., Dec. 25, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending the renewal of my mother's subscription to the SIGNS, also that of my brother-in-law, A. O. Edwards,. I am also sending a new subscriber, Hester Bird, one who is a strong Old School Baptist in belief. She is in very feeble health, and we feel the dear old SIGNS would be a source of great comfort to her in her lonely hours. I wish to say that I greatly enjoy reading the many rich communications and the editorials in the dear old SIGNS, which always comes as a welcome visitor to our home. Each number comes laden with glad tidings, telling that salvation is by grace, and grace alone. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." May the rich blessings of the Lord rest upon you all, and may the SIGNS OF THE TIMES continue to publish the truth in love, is my heartfelt desire.

I felt I only wanted to write a few lines in the way of explanation when sending in these subscriptions, and have written in a very awkward manner, but I am only a poor weak worm of the dust.

Unworthily, HARVEY BIRD.

FORT WORTH, Texas, Dec. 6, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find a check for five dollars, two dollars for the renewal of the subscription of my sister, Mrs. M. M. Culwell, two dollars for my own renewal, and one dollar a gift to the SIGNS. I have been a reader of this dear paper since 1886. I am now eighty years old, and I do not want to be without my paper as long as I am able to take it. I wish I could express to you how much I enjoy reading it, but words fail me. I am too old to attend the meetings of the church any more, and my paper is all the preaching I get. I dearly love the Old Primitive Baptists and their doctrine, and it is indeed a source of great joy and comfort to me to read such wonderfully good letters from the dear brethren and sisters.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) J. L. RANDOLPH.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1922.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

FATALISM.

THIS cruel word in connection with the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things has again been revived of late, and it has recently come to our notice frequently that those who hold to the predestination of all things as advocated by the founder of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES are being accused of being fatalists. To speak of fatalism and of predestination as though they mean the same thing is a confusion of terms, and may lead to confusion in the minds of those who hear the two words so constantly associated together. Thus it seems proper at this time that we should explain the two words, that it may be plain to all that they are not the same, and at the same time to warn against the false accusations that assail the doctrine of predestination.

The word "fatalism" is of ancient pagan origin, and derives from the religious beliefs of the ancient Greeks and Romans. According to their mythology, there were three fates who were supposed to control all destinies, not only of human beings, but of the gods as well. These three fates were Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos. They dwelt in the deep abyss of Demogorgon, with unwearied fingers drawing out the threads of life: Clotho held the spindle or distaff, Lachesis drew out the thread, and Atropos cut it off. Fatalism therefore means that everything in nature, and all things in human life, and in the life of the gods, are controlled by a hypothetical force, or system of forces, and this force or system of forces is called "fate." All events, even including human choices, are predetermined in a mechanical way by the physical causes that go before them, so say those who hold to "fate" and fatalism. Fate is not supposed to be a living force, but a blind sort of physical necessity that makes sport of human things, buffeting them about as playthings, without either love or hate being concerned in the matter. In giving the definition of fate we are not straining the point, but simply giving the understanding of the word as laid down by the best authorities, those who ought to know more about it than we do, and are in a position to know more.

In all the above, what is there in "fate" that is akin to predestination? Nothing whatever, and it is simply ignorance, or wilful misrepresentation, that insists on coupling the words together The doctrine of predestination is of scriptural origin and rests upon biblical authority, while fatalism is a word never employed in the Scriptures, and is of ancient Greek and Roman origin, having for its authority the legends and mythology of paganism. What a world of difference, then, separates the two doctrines at their very inception: the one springing from the imagination and idolatry of men, the other having its seat in the divine mind of the one true and living God. When the Bible plainly says that God works all things after the counsel of his own will, we want it understood that we believe "all things" does not mean "some things," nor yet "all good things," but "all things." This is absolute pre-

destination of all things, nothing more, nothing less. Again, when the Bible says that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose, we want it understood that "all things" do not mean a few things, nor yet all good things, but "all things" whatsoever come to pass. This is what we mean by absolute predestination of all things, no more, no less. The idea that a blind fate controls all human and divine things, without any purpose at all, without any love in it at all, without any good end in view, is not biblical predestination. God is all-seeing, fate is blind; God is love, and is moved in his love to work all things for the good of his children; fate neither loves nor hates, and has no object in view for the betterment of any one. While God controls all things, he himself is controlled by none; fatalism teaches that not only human things are controlled by fate, but divine things also. Fate is inanimate, predestination is vital and all-powerful, because it is God's purpose working in and through everything to bring about the glorification of truth. If one could tell the infinite distance between life and death, between a stone in the road and a living organism, one might comprehend the infinite difference between fatalism and predestination; because fate treats us all as though we were no more than stones to be knocked about here and there, while predestination is a living and moving force, the very omnipotence of God himself working with human beings, not as though they were stones, but with them as having minds and wills and bodies of their own, and accomplishing his divine purpose through employing these living minds and wills and bodies for the good of his elect children and to make his glory known.

It is sometimes said that Mohammedans believe in absolute predestination, and this is charged as reflecting on the doctrine. Truth is truth, no matter who believes it; the fact that this or that man believes what is truth is never any reflection on the truth. For ourselves, we cannot say from personal knowledge what Mohammedans believe. We know what their enemies represent them as believing, but the testimony of anybody's enemies as to what anybody believes is not likely to be very reliable. Most of the history of God's people from early christian times has been written by their enemies, and much of it is tinged with personal hatred and animosity. It may be that those who come forward as spokesmen for the Mohammedans are not without their personal prejudices in the matter, and if so it would render their testimony suspicious, to say the least. But as to what Mohammedans believe, or do not believe, whether they hold to absolute predestination of all things or not, has nothing to do with the case as to whether the doctrine is true or not. The Bible is the tester of all religious truth, and displays predestination through all its various books too clearly to ever be successfully refuted. Old-fashioned Presbyterians believed in the predestination of all things, and to this very day the doctrine is written in the prayer-books of the Church of England and of the Episcopalians, but how these facts prove anything for or against the doctrine we fail to see. The Bible must be our sole authority in this matter, and upon the say-so of the Scriptures we must and do stand or fall. L.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at the home of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ananias Hastings, Whitesville, Del., February 1st, 1922, Lloyd W. Bethard and Miss Blanche E. Hastings.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Henry E. Purris, son of Absalom and Rebecca Purris, was born in Savannah, Ga., April 26th, 1850, died January 19th, 1922, at his home in Bloomville, Ohio. At the age of twelve years his parents died, leaving him without kin in this country. His parents were of English descent, and came to this country in 1846. Our brother at the outbreak of the Civil War was too young to enlist, but witnessed much of the preparations and subsequent suffering during the four years' struggle. His early manhood days were spent in the employ of the railroad as a fireman and brakeman, shipmate on an ocean ship and serving as U. S. Deputy Marshall in west Texas. While in the latter position he became greatly alarmed about his sinfulness, and spent much of his time in reading the Bible, and to use his own language he felt he was the only one in this great country who ever had such an experience. One day he was handed a paper which contained a picture and the experience of Elder I. N. Van Meter, of Macomb, Ill., and as he read he was overjoyed to find one who believed as he had for years, and he made up his mind he must see this man. Resigning his position he immediately journeyed to Macomb and inquired for brother Van Meter, rode six miles to his house and in a few words told his story. Both were very much affected, and they talked for several days almost continually on spiritual things. In a few days Elder Van Meter went to his church meeting, called New Hope, situated at Greenbush, Ill., brother Purris accompanying him. At this meeting he joined the church and was baptized by Elder Van Meter the third Sunday in June, 1888. Like Paul, he conferred not with flesh and blood, but immediately began to preach Christ and him crucified, saying he did not believe it was by chance or happen so that that paper was handed him in Texas, but it was decreed of God and by his appointment and predestination, and ever after he was one of the firm believers in the predestination of all things. In a few months the church liberated him to preach the gospel, and in June, 1889, he was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry. Elder Purris preached among the brethren in Illinois for two years, was granted a letter of dismission from the New Hope Church and went to Ohio, where he was united in marriage to Mrs. Jennie Seiple Hawblitz. Some time later he and wife returned to Illinois and both became members of the same church, where they remained until the year 1901, when both were granted letters and moved back to Ohio, where with several others they helped organize the Beulah Church of Cleveland, Ohio, he being its first pastor and where his membership remained until his death. His simple faith was beautiful to see, and his trust in the perfect workings of a supreme God of love was a consolation to his dear wife, who survives him and will sadly miss him. We, the church in Cleveland, feel our loss, but believe it to be his gain. I feel indebted to sister Runkle, of Macomb, Ill., for furnishing me with most of his early church history. May the Lord bless all who mourn.

Shortly before his death he requested that I should preach his funeral sermon, which I tried to do with the ability the Lord granted me, after which all that was mortal was laid to rest in the cemetery near Bloomville, Ohio. GEO. L. WEAVER.

Elder Charles M. Hood departed this life November 22nd, 1921, aged 66 years. He had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for forty-five years, and an Elder of the same church for twenty-three years. During the last years of his gospel ministry he was not satisfied out of the pulpit or away from the churches, and was no better pleased than when in company with those who believe that Jesus' atonement was special, his election sure, and that the saints persevere in grace and are called to glory by the Holy Spirit. Many are the hearts that have received comfort from his lips through grace by God, and he was known far and near as one who loved spiritually and regarded the low estate of his brethren and grieved at the reverses of the church. It might well be said that he mourned with those who mourned. The writer feels frank to say that he knew more about the personality of Elder Hood than any one outside of his family, and while many people knew him by name, few knew Elder Hood, and for any one to know and understand him was to have for him an undying christian esteem. His friends were many, and they miss him as they mourn; his brethren loved him and are in deep christian sorrow. He was truly an evangelist, and loved to tour the churches and associations. While on his last tour in Alabama he was taken suddenly ill at the home of brother R. V. Edwards, 322 No. 49th St., Woodlawn, a suburb of Birmingham, Ala., and despite all that kind hearts and loving hands could do for him he passed away preaching the salvation of God through grace. Words are too feeble to express the undying gratitude that his family and the brethren of the Nashville Church feel toward the brethren and sisters who had the opportunity of being in our stead to minister to his last needs. God bless you all.

He leaves his dear wife, our sister, Sarah Polk Hood, four daughters: sister W. P. Carter, Misses Naomi and Stella Hood and Mrs. H. L. Warrell, to-

gether with the University St. Church and a host of friends to mourn their loss.

Elder Hood's funeral was conducted by Elder W. J. Covington, of College Grove, Tenn., and the writer. Burial in Mount Olivet Cemetery, Nashville, Tenn.

Written by request of the family.

A. L. STANSELL.

Joseph Martin Westall died at his home in Pine Bluff, Ark., June 14th, 1921. Brother Westall was a son of the late Elder D. Westall, who was one of the leading ministers of the New Hope Association, and his son Joe was of the same type of Old Baptist, believing in a supreme God, who was before all things and by whom all things consist, whether they be thrones, powers or principalities, things in heaven or things on earth Brother Westall died from Bright's disease, and suffered intensely. While sick he was given a glorious view of Jesus his Savior, who appeared to him before he came to the church for membership and told him to tell the great things he had done for him, which he did, and was baptized in the fellowship of Pilgrim's Rest Church. He was ill at that time, but seemed to recover to some extent and went to Mineral Wells, Texas, but grew worse until finally death came and relieved him of his sufferings. Before the end came he said to his dear old mother, sister Westall, "Mother, take care of my little babies." Sister Westall lived next door to his family, and was looked upon as a mother indeed to both children and grandchildren. Sister Westall is now caring for an invalid granddaughter, who is totally helpless. Brother Westall was twice married, first to Miss Emma Viola Lee, to which union were born ten children. They lived happily together until his wife was called from him, which covered a period of nineteen years. He was again married, this time to Miss Blythe Tullus, of Warren, Ark., to whom were born two children, who are residing with their heartbroken mother, who most bitterly mourns the loss of her good husband, who was their only support. They are now making their home with old brother Tullus, near Eldorado, on the farm where Mrs. Westall lives. She trusts in God to be her everlasting help and to fill the loss sustained in the death of her husband, believing that the Lord's ways are just and right, that he gives and takes away, blessed be his name. We have great sympathy for them, and in this connection wish to say, Dear bereaved, trust in God, for he is a present help in time of trouble, and has directed us to cast our care upon him, for he careth for us. He sticketh closer than a brother, and has said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. The trials may seem hard, dear sister, but in the end all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. He came to our church much rejoiced that he had found fellowship with us; it was a heavenly place in Christ Jesus to him, and he remarked that he wanted to be at every meeting. We hated to give him up, but at the same time we hope to bow in humble submission to the will of our God and be enabled to say, Thy will be done, and not ours.

There are many more things that could be said of brother Westall, but space will not permit. May God bless all who mourn, is our prayer.

V. R. HARRIS.

Alex. W. Campbell, the subject of this notice, died at his home in the township of Orford, Ontario, January 13th, 1922, in the 67th year of his age. Brother Campbell was born on the farm adjoining his late home, where he lived until he was removed from the stage of action by death. He was the son of Farquhar and Mary Campbell. He was twice married, first to Mary Ellison, to which union were born four children, three daughters and one son, three of whom are still living: Mrs. Catherine Sinclair, of Duart, Ont., Emma, of Detroit, and William at home. His second marriage was to Malena Nevalls, who survives him. Brother Campbell has two brothers living: Archie, of Wyoming, and John, of Saskatchewan. He was received in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church at Lobo October 6th and baptized October 20th by the writer of this notice. Brother Sandy, as he was commonly known, lived a faithful and devoted life to the church and cause. His home was a welcome place for his kindred in Christ; both he and his now lonely companion delighted in entertaining the church people, especially at the quarterly meeting held at Duart. I have had many pleasant visits with brother Campbell upon spiritual things, and shall miss him very much. Truly the church, as well as the county in which he lived, have lost a good friend and neighbor.

His funeral was held at the Duart meetinghouse and was largely attended by friends and neighbors, who came to show their esteem for brother Campbell. The writer tried to comfort the sorrowing ones with such as the Lord was pleased to give, using for a text Psalms cxiii. 1-3. Burial was in the Duart cemetery. May God's blessing rest upon the sorrowing ones.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Hiram P. Giles was born in Houston County, Ga., December 16th, 1830, and died at the home of his son, Luke Giles, Brandon, Hill Co., Texas, January 15th, 1922, aged 91 years and 30 days. He was married to Miss Nancy Elizabeth Smith November 16th, 1851, came to Texas in 1855 and settled in Titus County, living there twenty-six years. In 1881 he with his family moved to Hill County. When the war of 1861 broke out he enlisted with Company D, Randall Brigade, Wilson's Division, and served throughout in Texas, Arkansas and Louisiana. He professed a hope early in life and joined the church of his choice, the

Old Primitive Baptist, and lived a worthy member until the day of his death. After the death of his first wife he was married to Miss Margaret Gregory, and after her death he was married to Mrs. Nancy Elrod, who passed away June 6th, 1921. He leaves two sons, Gus and Luke Giles, and one daughter, Mrs. Emma Swint, a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren to mourn. He suffered from the infirmities of age. All was done for him that a good physician, kind relatives and friends could do, but he quietly passed away without a struggle. I believe he died in the triumph of a living faith, and is gone to reign with Christ forever. We feel that we can truthfully say with Paul that he fought a good fight, finished his course and kept the faith, and there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give him at that day; and not to him only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. The writer has known the dear old brother for more than fifty years, and never heard of any charges being preferred against him in the church. He was certainly a peacemaker in the church, in his home and in the community.

The writer conducted the funeral service Monday, January 16th, at Brandon Cemetery Pavilion, before the largest congregation I ever saw at a funeral. Beautiful wreaths and flowers covered the grave. A few Old Baptists were present to help sing. We sang, "How firm a foundation" and "Am I born to die?" I used Job xiv. 14, as a text. May the good Lord bless all who mourn.

SOLON GIPSON.

Charles R. Warren was born in Georgia in 1826, and died December 5th, 1921, aged 95 years and 7 months. He was the second son of Mose Warren, was reared on a farm and moved from Georgia with his parents to Marengo County, Alabama, when but a boy four years old. He lived seven years in Alabama, then moved to Kemper County, Miss., in the fall of 1833. While in Kemper County he was married to Miss Judith E. Bruton in March, 1848. To that union were born thirteen children, six of whom are now living, together with forty grandchildren and fifty-three great-grandchildren. His wife died before he moved to Texas from Mississippi. At the age of thirty-five he enlisted in the Confederate Army and was made 1st Lieutenant. In 1864 he was discharged for disability. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church when eighteen years of age. Brother Warren was a deacon before he came to Texas, then served the church at Joshua, Texas, as deacon and clerk for many years. The writer was associated with him about thirty-five years, and I never knew a more exemplary christian man in all my time among the Old Baptists. Deacon Warren lived a quiet, peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty. He was an old landmark Baptist, and stood firm on the Black Rock and London confession of faith when they were denounced as heresy by men who had never been sound in the faith of God's elect, but who drifted off into conditionalism. When ninety years of age he attended his meetings regularly all alone, but for several years he was too feeble to attend. The writer was not called to see him until he became speechless, therefore had no talk with him. Brother Warren came to Texas in 1882, and settled in Cleburne, Johnson County, making his home with his daughter, Mrs. D. Lockett, for several years.

He, being a member of the old Confederate Camp, the writer conducted a memorial service in the old soldiers' hall at the courthouse the third Sunday in December, 1921. The text of Scripture used on the occasion was Revelation xiv. 13. The remains were laid to rest in the Cleburne cemetery.

W. L. ROGERS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. M. J. Miller, Ill., $2.00; W. A. Thompson, Va., $2.00; Robert Turner, Calif., $3.00; J. R. Beckett, W. Va., $1.00; J. H. Lanier, Tenn., $1.00; Attie Curtis, Maine, $1.00; O. F. Ballard, N. Y., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE First Primitive Baptist Church of Mineral Wells, Texas, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on S. W. 4th Ave. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

SALLIE E. HOWARD, Church Clerk.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

IF IT HAD NOT BEEN THIS WAY, HOW WOULD IT HAVE BEEN?

WE take things from the creation to this time and consider them under the head of this question, and what will be our answer? I will answer for myself, that it is impossible for me to say. For this very cause I must say that I believe all things have come to pass just as God knew they would come, and that they could not have been in some way which he did not know and which was not in some way connected with his holy purpose, either in his providence or his grace. There are many, yes, very many, things for which we can see no use. I do not know why it was in the providence of God that such things should be, and yet I see they are there. The fact that he is almighty, and could have had this or that thing different if it had been his holy will to have done so, and to see that he did not have it different, is enough to tell us that it was under his hand, and that he controlled it either directly by his holy Spirit or by the hand of second causes. When God created man he created them male and female, and yet there was but one visible being. While in this single state God blessed them, and gave to them his commandment, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it."—Gen. i. 28. Therefore man received the commandment in both the male and the female, for they were not yet separated into two personages. Could they while in that state have obeyed the commandment to multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it? No. They must be male and female, and in separate bodies. When the Lord was pleased to make the woman a separate body from the man he "caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from the man, made he a woman."—Gen. ii. 21, 22. He gave the woman no law after she was separate from her husband. The law was given to them while there was but the one being. Now they are two individuals; were they in a proper condition to multiply and replenish the earth? The Lord Jesus said not. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."—John

xii. 24. Adam was the corn (grain) of wheat of the human race, and to multiply and replenish the earth, or to bring forth fruit, he must fall into the ground and die. Just as Jesus, the "corn of wheat" of the church, must fall into the ground and die to save his people, his bride. We may say where there is no sin there can be no death. "For the wages of sin is death."—Rom. vi. 23. The Lord does not give that which is not due, hence the man must fall into the ground and die as a sinner. He could not fall otherwise. Our Jesus must fall as the sin-bearer. He could not fall otherwise. These things were and are in the purpose of our heavenly Father, and all came just as he purposed. Without his purpose the corn of wheat of the human race, Adam, could not fall, and without the fall he could not multiply as God commanded him. This was for the purpose of development. Then in his purpose Jesus must die to save his people, who are brought forth in that development. There is no salvation but by his blood. The sins of the ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands were laid on him, and he bare them all. If these things had not been in God's divine purpose why did he prepare a body for his Son? (Heb. x. 5.) If there was not to be a need for a divine sacrifice why should a divine sacrifice be prepared? (See Psalms xl. 6–8, Heb. x. 5, and many other places.) Also otherwise salvation would have been in some other way than the way it is. There is no reason for stumbling over the truth. We must abide by the code of the government of our God. His providences and his grace are alike of him, and we will see it and believe it if our legs are equal. (Prov. xxvi. 7.) There are things in God's wise providence which came about by a violation of his holy law. Now, we cannot see why this should be so, and yet we see it is so. What shall we do about it? Is it not best for us as his children and his servants to say the same as his holy Son did: "Not my will, but thine, be done"? What can we say more? Why should we charge that God is the author of sin because these things are so? To do so proves that we are not reconciled to God. (2 Cor. v. 20.) Why should we rebel against that which works together for our good, for our salvation, and without which we could not be saved? When Paul said, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," what did he mean? Did he mean "all things," as he said it, or did he mean simply good things? It appears to me that all we have to do to decide this matter is to decide whether it is a thing, or if it is something other than a thing. He tells us in Romans xi. 36, "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen." Then in 1st Corinthians viii. 6, he says, "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." Then in Colossians i. 16, 17, he tells us, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Then in Heb. ii. 10, he tells us, "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Are these references sufficient? Will this doctrine kill or divide the church?

Now we will return to the expression, "These are things in God's wise providence which come about by a violation of his holy law." These are "things," links in the chain by which our dear Lord Jesus came into the world. There is a curse fixed on the man who will lay with his sister; the daughter is so near of kin that she was not spoken of in the law, yet Lot, in a drunken state, lay with his daughter, and by that cohabitation she became the mother of Moab. His generation proved to be enemies to Israel, so that a curse is fixed upon that people. "An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the Lord for ever."—Deut. xxiii. 3. Yet in the providence of God this very law is violated in the bringing in of Ruth, the Moabitess, into the congregation of the Lord, and she is a link in the chain of events by which our Lord came in the flesh. In Leviticus xviii. 15, we have a law, "Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy daughter in law," &c. In the providence of God this law is violated in Juda lying with Tamar, who was his daughter-in-law, and yet this is a link in the chain of events through which our Lord came into the world. The ten commandments said, "Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery."—Exodus xx. 13, 14. Both of these commandments are, in the providence of God, violated in the case of David, Uriah and Bathsheba, and yet all this is in the chain of events by which our Lord came into the world.

But why should I say more? All these are "things," and Paul understood them to be of God, and for God, and all working together for them that love God and are the called according to his purpose.

Here I want to relate a case which occurred in 1915, and which appears to me to be to the point if our legs are equal. Endeavoring to arrest the attention of passers by as he stood in the midst of a small gathering at the side of the promenade, a man was telling of the love of God to sinners. Presently the speaker was interrupted by a voice: "That is all wrong; the Bible is false; there is no God and no heaven." Notwithstanding the interruption the speaker went on with his address until he had finished his discourse, then the meeting was closed and the people separated. We shall follow the interrupter. Poor fellow, his heart was full of bitter enmity to the truth and he tried to persuade himself, and others, too, that religion was all a sham, but it was a poor success in spite of his loud talk. He was a chemist, and he turned into his shop and looked at the clock, and decided it was time to close up for the night. But just then there came a timid little girl. "What do you want?" was the impatient question he asked "Please, sir, mother is sick, and will you give her this medicine?" "Too late, come in the morning." "Oh, please do, she is so sick; please give me it." With a grumble he made up the prescription, and away went the girl. As the chemist proceeded to replace the bottles and turn out the gas his eyes caught the label on the last bottle he had taken up, and to his horror he saw at once that he had made an awful mistake and put in some deadly poison. He thought, What can I do? The girl is gone; I know nothing of her; do not know where she lives. Perhaps her mother has taken it even now. As he thought about it the cold perspiration seemed to come out of every pore, and he stood in terror. If the woman takes the medicine there is no hope; I shall be a murderer. What shall I do? What

hope, what comfort could there be for him, a man who did not believe in God? In spite of his bold denial, but an hour or two before, the man fell on his knees just where he was, behind the counter, and cried aloud, O God, do not let that poor woman take that medicine. God, who leads the blind by a way they know not, was surely leading this poor, restless sinner to the knowledge of Himself Scarcely able to move, in utter helplessness the chemist knelt, repeating his prayer. Just then he heard some one open the door, and looking up saw the little girl standing there crying. "Oh please, sir, I am so sorry. I was hurrying, and fell down and broke the bottle. Oh please give me some more medicine." The chemist was almost overcome with joy, for by God's mercy the child's fall had prevented the terrible thing he had feared. God? Yes, there is a God—had indeed heard his prayer. "Yes, my dear, I will give you some more; do not cry." With trembling hand and beating heart, and mind all aglow with wonder and relief, the chemist carefully made up the prescription again, and the little girl gleefully ran off once more, her lips full of thanks for his kindness. The lights were put out and the door locked, and the chemist went to his home and his room to be alone with God—God whom he had treated so terribly in the past, and whose word had been so mercifully fulfilled in his behalf: "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee.

To me the above is a wonderful evidence of the wonderful works of God. Was it not the purpose of God to bring that chemist to a knowledge of His power to save? Was not that the very way he had purposed to do that wonderful work? There was a mistake by the chemist and an accident by the child, but was there accident with God, or any mistake? It was the hap of Ruth to light on a part of the field that belonged to Boaz, but was it a "happen so" with God? Did he not send her there to be the wife of Boaz?

Here I rest the case, feeling I have written the undeniable truth according to the word of God.

In the hope of and love for the truth, I am yours in a blessed hope,

L. H. HARDY.

ATLANTIC, North Carolina.

A FEW WORDS FROM SCRIPTURE.

"AND Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord." —Luke i. 46.

These were part of Mary's words as she answered Elisabeth in regard to the birth of the only Savior of mankind. I have always looked upon the above words in the highest admiration of the words of mortals. We know that Mary was filled with the Holy Ghost to speak as she did these sublime words: "My soul doth magnify the Lord." Prophets have used similar words. The word "magnify," when used by the servants of God to praise the Lord, seems to lift up the poor souls aloft, as well as to point to the greatness of God, to praise and extol his great name. There are some five places in the Psalms that words occur almost like these: "Let the Lord be magnified." —Psalms xxxv. 27. While I cannot write a long article on this subject, my thought is that these words are well adapted for the saints, as no other people can realize the great import of them as they leave the tongues of mortals who have felt the greatness of the power of their God and Savior. This word seems to render unto God the things that belong unto God. Our minds, which serve the law of God, desire to magnify his power, his mercy, his grace, his love, his providence and his

sovereignty over all worlds and things, but our weak minds or imaginations cannot give expression to our thoughts, only in a feeble measure, as to the vast height, the great depth, extensive breadth and length of the wisdom and riches of our God. Unbelievers cannot use this word understandingly as it relates to God and his power, because the high spirituality of the meaning in thought can never come to them. Mary, a servant of God, by the Spirit did well in saying, "My soul doth magnify the Lord." I believe that many other saints, in the Spirit, can adopt the very words of the mother of Jesus, and in quoting from the writings of David can say with him, "Let such as love thy salvation say continually, The Lord be magnified."—Psalms xl. 16. As magnify means to enlarge, so the minds of the saints are enlarged in their conception of the greatness of God. They cannot in mind reach out to measure any of the Lord's attributes, but such words as the Lord, through inspiration, has prepared for them help their infirmities, so that their joy in believing has an ample outlet of expression that gives God glory, though they cannot fathom the deep mysteries that are unrevealed to them. "I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving." To me it would seem to be a holy and dignified exercise if I could magnify the name of my Lord and Master with thanksgiving. They that have hope of salvation may say, "Let such as love thy salvation say continually, Let God be magnified."—Psalms lxx. 4. I seem to doubt if there be any word in our language that carries more weight in offering praise and thanksgiving unto the Lord of hosts than this word "magnify." Truly quickened and animated saints sometimes vie with each other in using suitable words to express their wonderful thoughts of the high power and greatness of the God they worship. This is evidently right, as Solomon "sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth."—Eccl. xii. 10. "Words of truth," how excellent they are! None like them; they are in the "girdle" of the loins as the most precious jewels, and they are as "apples of gold in pictures of silver." These words are the first equipment of the armor of God; they are not produced by the one that wears the armor, but come from the Maker and Giver of all things.

Yours in hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

THE MERCY-SEAT.

It is well for us all to come before the mercy-seat, for here is the sacred place where we must come to search our own hearts and to be judged and to ask for mercy of him who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. The poet had come to this holy place when he wrote the following beautiful lines:

> "Is there ambition in my heart?
> Search, gracious Lord, and see;
> Or do I act a haughty part?
> Lord, I appeal to thee."

Here he has shown the spirit of humility, and a desire to appeal to his heavenly Father for judgment, guidance and mercy, or, in other words, he has come before the mercy-seat. Oh that each and every one who has a blessed hope may come before this mercy-seat and ask to be judged of Him who doeth all things well; for when we are in this frame of mind we will not feel like holding a brother or sister up to scorn, but will wish to search ourselves inwardly to see if we are not full of dead men's bones. Paul had come to this place when he said, "This is a faithful

saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting." The poor publican had also come to this place when he went up to the temple to pray and could not so much as raise his eyes toward heaven, but smote upon his breast and cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner." For it is not sufficient that we should make clean the outside of the cup and platter, but before condemning our brother or our sister let us first make sure that inwardly we are not full of dead men's bones. There is sometimes too much thought of personal gratification or of purpose to justify our own course, and too little thought of justice to others, and this attitude sometimes overshadows brotherly love and all thought of good to the glorious cause of the church, the Lamb's bride, and this course is the course of iniquity; for it is written, Judge not, lest ye be judged. For every tree is known by his own fruit. For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit, neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. If any of us knew or realized that we were to be judged by the fruit we bear I believe we would hesitate to say of another tree, "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" for fear that if we were weighed in the balances of justice we, too, would be found wanting and deserve to be cut down. The Savior said, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." He gave this new commandment in the world because it was sorely needed, and there never was a time when it was more sorely needed than it is to-day. He said, Love one another, even as I have loved you. Let us here ask ourselves the question, How much did he love us? He loved us so much that he came down into this vale of sorrow and suffered and gave his life that through him we might live. Oh what wondrous love! Can we obey this commandment, or can we attain to this degree of love by condemning our brother or our sister? Think of the two thieves upon the cross between whom the dear Savior was crucified. They both railed against him. Did he condemn them both on account of this? No, one of them was touched by the spirit of his infirmities, and said, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. Did the Savior say, No, you railed against me in my grief and agony and you shall be condemned? No; he said, This day shalt thou be with me in paradise. Such was the love of Jesus Christ, upon which love our profession of faith is founded. May it be our fervent prayer that this love may be so manifested in us that we shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace, and instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree, and that it shall be unto the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off. May we be known by the fruits of brotherly kindness, patience, longsuffering, forbearance, charity and that manner of love which the Savior brought to our attention in this new commandment which he gave unto us, and may we be enabled to walk in the paths of wisdom and understanding. For all her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace. Then we can say from the heart, Peace on earth, good will toward men.

ALFRED E. TITUS.

TRENTON, N. J.

VERNON, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a copy of a letter written to me by our beloved and faithful brother, L. E. Thompson, whom I baptized some years ago, as he states himself, in the Vermejo River, N. Mex. It made my poor soul and heart leap for joy over the good news his interesting christian communication brought to me. I felt to rejoice in the fulfillment of the promises of the eternal God, who has never left himself without witnesses. May the Lord enable him to stand firm upon the watchtower of Zion and ever declare the truth as it is in Jesus, our only salvation for time and eternity. Please publish if you approve.

In gospel bonds,

ASA HOWARD.

LAS ANIMAS, Colo., Dec. 2, 1921.

DEAR FATHER IN ISRAEL:—I was so glad to hear from you once more. Your letter brought vividly to my mind scenes of about twenty-five years ago, when you baptized this unworthy man in the Vermejo River, in New Mexico, also dear brother Guss Dawson, and now to think only you, sister Dawson and I are left on earth. Elder A. D. Bourland, Elder Fetter, the two auntie Boggs, brother Guss, sisters Dean and Vance all gone to be with Christ, which is far better. Also father Dawson is gone, and I wonder what I am left for, but God knows. After that memorable meeting you wrote that you thought I had or would have a gift in the church to preach the gospel of the Son of God. I never felt hard toward you, far from it, but oh, that expression has haunted me ever since. Something told me then that a man of God would not lightly speak such a thing, and at last what I greatly feared is upon me. When I was young I girded myself and went about whithersoever I would, but now I go about whithersoever I would not, and attempt the thing that at times I most dread. Sometimes my mourning is turned into great joy and my hungry soul is fed with, as I hope, that spiritual manna which only can satisfy the redeemed of the Lord. Last winter the church granted me license to speak in the churches wherever God's providence may lead me. I have been faithful to try, but about half of the time I seem left to myself and fit for nothing; at other times God's wonderful plan of salvation seems all plain before me, and I get comfort and peace of mind in talking about his wonderful works of grace, and I feel to know that my Redeemer liveth and ever maketh intercession for us, the only Mediator between God and men. He who cannot look upon sin has provided a just, pure and holy Mediator, whom he accepted in the sacrifice of himself and in whom he is well pleased; for he satisfied divine justice in every particular once for all, redeeming his people from under the law that they had broken and putting them under grace. By grace are ye saved. He only could do that, as all power was given into his hands, both in heaven and in earth, therefore he had the right and the eternal desire to make earthy people fit to dwell with him and his Father in glory; and for that purpose he came on earth, suffered and died and rose again and ascended to the Father, a conqueror over death, hell and the grave, making the salvation of his people sure. No matter how sinful and vile they were in nature, he paid all their debt, washing their sins in his own blood. Not only so, but in this vain, sinful life he gives faith, whereby we hope that our vile body will be changed from corruption to incorruption, from mortal to immortality, when

he comes again with a shout from heaven to call his redeemed to glory, where they will know as they are known of him; and so shall they ever be with the Lord. This doctrine I am willing to live and die by. Sometimes I murmur and complain when I seem filled with unbelief, and cry over my leanness and unprofitableness, and for his presence to revive my drooping spirit and dispel my doubts. When I am ready to give up in despair he comes with healing in his wings and raises me to Mt. Pisgah's top, where I can once more view the promised land and take fresh courage. The everlasting Father, the Prince of peace, has done all needful things for me, and only demands me to bear a very light yoke of service in his vineyard, where he has promised all I need for time and eternity, and I partake of his manifold blessings and try to be reconciled to his will. Bless him for his eternal truth, mercy and love. I have always been blessed with food and raiment for myself and family, a large family, but now I cannot see how I am to get along in the future. So many worldly things are continually going against me that I have not much left. But most of the time I feel to trust him who has always provided for me, and surely will continue to the end of his time for me here on earth. I feel he has taken from me for my good, and he knows best. My wife has not been baptized. She does not seem to be fully reconciled to the Baptists belief and ways, but God will continue to lead her if he has commenced a work in her heart. We have a nice family of children, four boys and one girl, who is the youngest, twelve years old. My father-in-law and sister-in-law live with us, both Baptists and lovable people. Father B. is eighty-three, but hale; I am fifty-eight, and feel to say with one of old, Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life. I often wonder if I will ever see you again in this life. However, we have hope of the glory world. May God's rich blessings be with you and his everlasting arms support you in life and his presence be with you in death. If you feel to, pray that I may be useful in his kingdom, for my great desire above all things is to dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Yours with christian love,

L. E. THOMPSON.

DANTE, Va., Oct. 24, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—A brother mailed me a copy of your paper, the first one I have seen for some time, although I remember reading it when I was a boy, especially the editorials of that blessed man, Elder Gilbert Beebe, whom God raised up to be a leader in Israel, and they brought joy to my poor soul. There is a heavenly love and union that the world knows nothing about, and only those who are brought up in the school of grace and are taught the perfect way of salvation by grace can fully realize it. The Primitive or Old School Baptist Church has been my home, and I have in much weakness been trying to preach for them for about twenty-four years, and I sometimes hope I have been blessed with God's sustaining grace through these years. I love to hear from the brethren and sisters from different parts of the world, and why any Old School Baptists should not approve of our religious papers I cannot tell. They serve to comfort many of God's poor and afflicted people who are confined to their rooms and cannot go out to hear preaching, and I feel it is our duty, as much as in us lies, to try to keep alive our papers that are contending for the truth once delivered unto the saints, and I hope, dear readers of the SIGNS OF THE

TIMES, my coming among you will not be for confusion, but that we may all labor for love and unity.

When it is well with you remember me, a poor sinner saved by grace if saved at all, W. L. EDWARDS.

ARDMORE, Tenn., Dec. 18, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—You will please find inclosed a check for two dollars, for which extend my subscription for the SIGNS one more year, for I much enjoy reading the many good letters it contains each number. It does not advocate the things I once loved and the things I was taught to believe, nor the things I hear preached by the "religious world" to-day, but it seems the things I once loved I now hate and the things I once hated I now love. I believe it advocates the truth, if I am blessed with any understanding of the truth, and I fear sometimes that it has never been revealed to me, yet it has pleased the Father to hide these things from the wise and prudent and to reveal them unto babes in Christ. It seems to me that the many writers for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES are some of the ones who have been taught of the Lord, and I hope they will continue to write, for it is food to my hungry soul and strengthens my little hope. I would rejoice if it were the Lord's will for me to meet every one of them face to face, but if not in this world I hope to meet them in the next. I am such a vile sinner that I cannot do the things I would, but do many things I would not, yet some day, if it pleases the good Lord, I will, I hope, be made a fit subject to ask a home with these good people.

Your friend, I hope,

W. G. PYLANT.

MAY, Texas, Dec. 17, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As it is time for me to renew my subscription to the good old SIGNS, I feel that I want to write a few lines to let you know I certainly love to read that paper, for it advocates the doctrine I hope I love. Our God is a wonderful God, full of love and tender mercy to us poor, weak, dependent worms of the dust. The longer I live the less I see to live for, but may we be reconciled to his holy will and patiently await our appointed time to leave this world of sin and sorrow. May the God of all grace guide and direct his people in the way they should go.

Do as you think best with this, and all will be right with me.

Hoping God will bless you, brethren, in your good work, I am your unworthy sister, I hope,

ADALINE JONES.

WEST FALLS CHURCH, Va.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed two dollars for the SIGNS. I am truly sorry that I did not send it at the time it was due, but hope you will pardon me this time. I appreciate your kindness in not stopping it, for it is about all the preaching I have had the last year or two, and I do enjoy the editorials of Elders Lefferts and Ker and all the others.

Thanking you very much, yours truly,

SADIE TURNER.

OBITUARY POETRY.

WE wish to again call the attention of our subscribers to the fact that owing to lack of space, and other reasons, we cannot publish poetry in obituary notices. We know some think it strange we do not publish such verses (which are often very good and appropriate), but if they were in our position we think they would see the matter in the same light that we do.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1922.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

AMOS VIII. 11, 12.

"BEHOLD, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it."

We have a request for views on the above Scripture from a sister of Durham, N. C., and shall gladly give such as we have.

It will be seen by reading this chapter and those preceding that the Lord was instructing Amos with reference to the then present condition of Israel, and also the things which should befall them in future before the coming of the gospel dispensation. Because of his foreknowledge and fixed decrees he knew every step that nation took, or should take, and that this point of doctrine should stand he caused Amos to prophesy of coming events relative to the children of Abraham. Of all nations they were the called or chosen people of the world, to the end that they should be used as a type of the spiritual Israel, which nation now exists, and shall endure to the end of all things of time and sense. The goodness of the Lord to national Israel was so marked that even the heathen failed not to observe it and to envy the Israelites because of their numberless advantages over them, hence wars and rumors of wars among and between them. Of all blessings bestowed upon Israel perhaps there was no greater than the gifts of prophets to declare unto them the plans and purposes of God in the salvation of men. Many other messages also were sent by the Lord to Israel through the prophets, sometimes concerning their temporal blessings, victories and general prosperity, then, on the other hand, messages of condemnation because of their transgressions and backslidings. In delivering their messages the prophets said, Hear ye the word of the Lord. This they said with reverence and fear, realizing they were declaring God's messages to his people and that they spoke in the presence of the Almighty. Sometimes the Israelites received the word with thankfulness of heart, but many times refused to hear and recognize the word as that of the Lord, hence spurned it, persecuted the prophets and stoned them to death. Still the Lord's mercy endured and he would not destroy that nation, because of the blessing (Christ) in the cluster. After the many centuries elapsed, and as the end of that dispensation drew near, the Lord showed Amos, the prophet, the then present fruitful and prosperous condition of Israel, and in contrast told him of the wonderful change that should take place with them before the coming day of the Lord, or the gospel age of the world. Before the arrival of that great and wonderful day there should be days of darkness, days of sorrow, days of depression, days of longing for something they should fail to find. In that condition they would remember the mercies of the Lord in days and years past. They would remember the true and faithful prophets whom they had rejected, despised and put to death, they should long for a message from the Lord, but have

none. This condition is described as "a famine in the land." It was the Lord who gave Israel blessing and prosperity to the extent that they had dominion, practically, over all other nations, abounding in his promises, in the priesthood and possessing the oracles of God. They could also boast of the temple, the most magnificent structure in all the world. On the other hand, it was the Lord who now by Amos was telling of the days of fasting, days of bitterness of spirit and of a famine in the land. He who gave blessing and prosperity also sent the famine. That was a day of "conditional time," or temporal salvation, the Lord dealing with that nation according to the law of Moses written upon tables of stone, but now he deals with spiritual Israel according to grace and the law written by the Spirit of God in the heart. What a difference. Yet many fail to see light at noonday, but we adhere too strictly to the doctrine of God, who gives the spirit of slumber that men see not, they hear not, and who opens the blind eyes and unstops the deaf ears, to condemn those who fail to see the difference between law and grace.

The Lord said, "Not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord." This famine differed therefore from the one sent in the days of Elijah, when the handful of meal in the barrel and a little oil in the cruse failed not during the three years and a half when it rained not upon the earth. Bread and water were plentiful, but there were no words of the Lord. This means the Lord would cease to send and speak to Israel by the prophets. Between the close of the prophecy of Malachi and the coming of John the Baptist there was a period of about four hundred years, during which time there was no prophet sent to Israel with any message from the Lord. In consequence of the long silence they supposed the Lord had forsaken them, and they sought everywhere for a prophet to tell them of God and of his words concerning them. They wandered from sea to sea, from the north even to the east, they ran to and fro seeking the word of the Lord, but found it not. How gladly would they in those days of famine have received a prophet of the Lord, and as children listening to stories would have heard with eagerness and delight; even had the word been that of condemnation they would have been assured of the Lord's dealings with them, hence not forsaken of him. But seek as they would, desire as they would, not a word from the Lord came. It seems innate with man to appreciate in a very small degree the blessings and privileges given of the Lord until deprived of them, and even though sought with tears when gone they cannot be found, nor do they return, except in the mercy and providence of Him who gives and takes away. The privileges of the Lord's house are not appreciated until his people are deprived of them. Many testify of having had such privileges and afterwards being separated from them by various causes and now have very little or no preaching, and sometimes no communion with the saints. This is a famine, not of bread, nor thirst for water, but for the living God and companionship of the household of faith. Also there is such a thing in the experience of the Lord's people as a famine to hear the words of the Lord with comfort, assurance and power in the Holy Ghost when in the very midst of the preached word and the association of the brethren. No bread of heaven is broken for some poor hungry soul who longs for another token of their acceptance with God through Jesus Christ, no ray of sunshine from the Sun

of Righteousness greets their benighted soul, but all is dark and vain and wild, and they can scarcely deem themselves children of the Holy One. This is a famine indeed. It does seem that the Lord at times forgets to be gracious, that his mercies are clean gone forever, yet

"In darkest shades if he appear,
My dawning is begun;
He is my soul's sweet morning star,
And he my rising sun.

The opening heavens around me shine
With beams of sacred bliss,
While Jesus shows his heart is mine,
And whispers I am his."

During the long silence of the Lord concerning Israel he was preparing them to receive the forerunner of Jesus, John the Baptist, and when he came and preached in the wilderness of Judea he said, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. (It was he spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.) In eagerness to hear the man of God, or prophet, all Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, came and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. Therein was shown the purpose of God in the famine, of four hundred years, to hear the words of the Lord. John was not rejected, but received with all gladness of heart as God's messenger, and his words were gracious to the children of Israel. John, however, with all his greatness decreased, his glory, his ministry, was but a reflection of the glory and ministry of Jesus Christ, the Savior of sinners, the anointed of God. The prophets are dead, yet live unto God. Jesus was put to death, but now is alive for evermore, and by him sinners have access to God the Father, who now speaks to his children by his Son. The days of fasting, the days of sin, are past, and now grace reigns unto eternal life through Christ our Lord, to whom be salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, forever and ever. Amen. K.

AN APPEAL FOR RIGHT.

It is always with a feeling of sincere regret that we make an appeal to our subscribers, and never do so until necessity forces us to it, which is now the case, as so many of our subscribers have neglected sending in their subscriptions for last year, and some for even longer.

The subscriptions for the Signs are supposed to be paid in advance, and when many of our subscribers not only fail to pay in advance, but let their accounts lag behind for a year or more, it works a genuine hardship to us. We appreciate the fact that the last two years have been hard ones for many, and have tried to be easy with those who are in arrears, until now so many have neglected sending their subscriptions that it has become a very serious matter with us, as we are compelled to meet our bills when due, so we earnestly beg our subscribers who are in arrears to send us what is due us. If times have been hard for you and you do not feel you can send the full amount at one time, send on what you can spare, even though it is only one dollar, or even fifty cents at a time, until it is paid. In this way you will not miss the money, and it will be a great help to us in meeting our obligations.

Some have expressed the wish that we add more pages to the paper, but the plain truth is that we have lost so much money the last two years through our subscribers failing to pay us that it has been a hard struggle to keep the paper as it is at present, let alone adding more pages, which would mean more expense for us.

Many who let their subscriptions run behind say they cannot pay us, as they have to pay their doctor, grocer, butcher, &c. We ask in all sincerity, brethren, Do you think there is any more necessity for paying these bills than for paying your bill for your SIGNS? Is not a bill to a brother in the church just as important as a bill to a tradesman?

As said before, we are indeed sorry to be compelled to make this appeal to our delinquent subscribers, but we have let it go until now it is a very serious matter with us, and we hope those who owe us will do what they can toward paying, and thus lift a burden from our shoulders. We are not asking for help, all we ask is what is due us and what we should have.

Look at the date opposite your name on the pink slip on your paper, or on the wrapper in which your paper comes to you, and if it is not up to the present time you will know your subscription is not paid up to date. Any one can tell at a glance just when his subscription expires in this way: 15 Dec. 20, means it is paid to and includes the issue for December 15th, 1920; 15 Aug. 21, means to and including the issue for August 15th, 1921, &c., so please examine your dates, and if you are not paid to the present time let us hear from you.

If you do not wish the paper continued after the time paid for has expired, and will so notify us, it will be discontinued immediately, for we would not continue sending the paper to any who do not want it just for the sake of running up a bill against them, but if you do not so notify us, and allow the paper to continue coming to you, it is only fair that we should expect you to pay for it. Do not ask the postman or some one else to notify us (for they very often neglect to do so), but do it yourself and then you will know the matter has been attended to. Also, if any member of your family who is a subscriber is taken by death, and the paper is not wanted by any other member of the family, please let us know it. Do not let it run on for a year or so, and then send us word that you do not feel responsible for the debt as the subscriber has been dead for some time.

Between our subscribers and ourselves the money due us is a debt of honor, as we have never taken legal steps to collect any of the large amount due us, so if you owe us anything for your paper just consult your conscience, and do as that dictates.

Make all money orders, checks, &c., payable, and address all business letters to

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

INFORMATION WANTED.

I HAVE been trying to get in touch with Elder J. E. Smith for a year, but all the letters I write him are returned to me.

D. B. CAIN.

RAWLS, Ark.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

KINDLY change my address from Swofford, Wash., to Mossy Rock, Wash., as I intend to engage in the real estate business at that place. Send me some buyers for good land in a mild climate and a Baptist settlement.

J. M. AMSBARY.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at his home, 1910 N. 22nd St., Philadelphia, Pa., March 2nd, 1922, James H. McCrone, of Middletown, Del., and Marion B. Townsend, of Philadelphia.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Anne Mary Gott, our beloved sister in Christ, but more generally known among our people as sister "Mollie," departed this earthly life February 25th, 1922, at her home in Tuscarora, Frederick Co., Md., after having steadily declined in health for the past several months and after having been confined to her bed since the first day of January, 1922. She was born in Poolesville, Md., March 28th, 1850, the daughter of Thomas N. and Eleanor White Gott, both deceased. Of her immediate family she is survived by four sisters and two brothers: Mrs. A. T. Davis and Benjamin Gott, both of Washington, D. C.; Mrs. J. C. Carr and William Gott, both of Leesburg, Va.; Mrs. John Chiswell and Miss Eugenia Gott, both of Tuscarora, Md. Of her family she and sister Eugenia were more closely associated together than any of the others, for they came into the church as members together, lived together, traveled about together to meetings and associations, and where one was the other was most likely to be with her. Sister Eugenia feels most keenly the bereavement that has now come to her, and is well-nigh overpowered with her sense of loneliness, not seeing how she can possibly go forward the remainder of her life's pathway without the companionship of her devoted sister. They were both baptized together by the late Elder E. V. White, at Broad Run, Md., on the evening of Thanksgiving Day, November, 1885, following a meeting in the morning at which Elders Furr, Chick and White were present, Elder Chick having preached from Psalms cxvi. 12, 13, a sermon so impressive as never to have been forgotten by the two sisters. The church has not had a more loyal or devoted member, nor its pastor a truer friend, than sister Mollie. She will be missed greatly in her family, and more especially by sister Eugenia, but the loss to the church is also very great, and I myself have suffered a personal loss not to be made good. She was a good singer, and her voice lifted up in the songs of Zion was a help and comfort to us all.

The funeral services were held from her late home. I tried to speak from 1st Corinthians xv. 35–50, not to explain, but to explore the wonderful doctrine of the resurrection. Her body was laid away in Monocacy Cemetery. May the Holy Spirit reconcile us all to God's will. L.

Nancy Jane Borthwick Scutt was born June 22nd, 1840, the eldest daughter of George J. and Polly Hagadorn Borthwick, and died at her home in Livingstonville, N. Y., October 14th, 1921. She was married to Richard Scutt December 31st, 1861, who preceded her to the grave several years. To that union were born two sons and two daughters, all living. Sister Scutt received a hope in Christ when about twenty years of age and united with the New School Baptists, but very soon found that they were not her people. I have not the particulars about her leaving them, but May 21st, 1870, she told her feelings and desires to the Middleburg Old School Baptist Church, was received, and baptized the next day by Elder I. B. Whitcomb, and ever lived a consistent and loved member. Circumstances were such that it was not her privilege to meet with the church as often as she would have liked to, but she improved the opportunity whenever offered, and when not able to be with them she said they were in her heart and mind, and the Bible, SIGNS and hymn-book were a comfort to her. She leaves, besides her four children mentioned, several grandchildren and great-grandchildren, four sisters, the church and many relatives and friends to mourn their loss, but we believe their loss is her eternal gain; that the trials and cares of this life are over and for her to die is gain.

Written by request.

(MRS.) J. E. LIVINGSTON.

Elizabeth Orr Jackson was born in Kentucky December 28th, 1841, died January 25th, 1922, aged 80 years and 27 days. When ten years of age she moved with her parents to Scotland County, Mo. She was united in marriage to Thomas J. Jackson September 22nd, 1861. To that union were born eleven children, six sons and five daughters. The husband, two sons and four daughters preceded her to the better land. She leaves four sons and one daughter, twenty-five grandchildren and twenty great-grandchildren, three sisters and a host of friends to mourn their loss. She professed faith in Christ almost forty years ago and united with Mt. Olive Church of Primitive Baptists, in Hickory County, Mo. She removed from there to St. Clair County, Mo., and united with Goshen Church, later moving to Bates County, Mo., and uniting with Bethel Church, where she remained a faithful member until called to her reward. Grandma Jackson, as she was commonly known, was a devoted mother and faithful member of her church, and lived a life worthy of being followed by all her posterity.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at the home of her son, Charles C. Jackson, about twelve miles northwest of Butler, Mo., with whom she made her home, in the presence of a large number of relatives and friends, after which we followed her to her last resting-place, a cemetery near the home, where she awaits the call of the Master.

M. M. SHUMATE.

Monroe Fenton Frid, beloved son of E. Montague and Marguerite Fenton Frid and grandson of Edward and Betsy Frid and J. M. and Carrie P. Fenton, was born December 22nd, 1913, and departed this life February 13th, 1922. In looking back over the days of his pilgrimage I find that my life was bound up in his life in a peculiar way from his birth. From his earliest childhood he was interested in my

welfare, as well as others that were near and dear to him. To know him was to love him. His little sister died when he was about two and one-half years old, and at that time his conversation was much about heaven. He loved to go to meeting at Southampton, where his little sister was buried, as that seemed more like meeting to him than anywhere he went with us. Last March he was very sick. When he realized there was no help from those around him he said, "Grandpop, pray the dear Lord to raise me up." My prayer was that the Lord would raise him up in life or in separation from us. He became unconscious for a time, then opened his eyes and said, "No more pain." After his last operation he told the nurse, "Life is not worth while; all I do is suffer, suffer, suffer." The Lord made us willing that he depart and be with Christ, which is far better.

The funeral services were held at 5128 Master St. on Thursday, February 16th; burial at Southampton. His life will be a sweet incense while memory lasts.

J. M. FENTON.

A. J. Demott, of Grandon, N. J., was born March 28th, 1845, and died January 30th, 1922. He was married May 26th, 1869, to a daughter of Deacon Mahlon Hulsizer, who, with one son, brother Willis Demott, and wife and five grandchildren, remain to mourn their loss, which was gain to him. He was a great sufferer for many years from rheumatism, which was the cause of his death. He was confined to the house in his last sickness one week, suffering intense agony much of the time. The friends would hear him quoting the hymn, "O land of rest, for thee I sigh." He and his wife were baptized by Elder Balas Bundy nearly forty years ago, uniting with the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church at Locktown, N. J., where he remained a member until called to his heavenly home, where sickness, sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more. Brother Demott was sound in the faith of God's elect and lived and died in that faith and lives with him eternally in glory. May God bless his dear lonely widow, sister Demott, and all that mourn his absence, with his rich, sovereign, sustaining grace, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

The writer of this notice attended the funeral, which was held at the home Saturday, February 4th, 10:30 a. m. Burial in the cemetery adjoining the farm. The house was well filled with friends and neighbors, as he had always lived in that section and bore the name of an honest, upright citizen and neighbor, which we always love to hear of our brethren.

D. M. VAIL.

James F. Walker was born November 5th, 1826, and died January 18th, 1922. Father joined the Primitive Baptist Church in 1897, and was baptized by Elder B. F. Stewart. He was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for several years before his death. He and mother lived together over seventy-one years.

F. I. WALKER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Dr. W. R. Presley, Texas, $1.00.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk,

CLAREMONT, Cal.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE First Primitive Baptist Church of Mineral Wells, Texas, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on S. W. 4th Ave. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

SALLIE E. HOWARD, Church Clerk.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

THE GIFTS TO THE CHURCH.

THE church is clothed and adorned with such as is becoming to her and is needful, and is given of her Husband. She has nothing that she has not most graciously received at the hand of her Lord and Master. The members in particular are taught this in their experience, therefore we know the truth of the matter. All that she has, and all she is or ever will be, has been determined beforehand by the Father and wrought for her by the Son. "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."—Hebrews i. 3. There is nothing on earth to which we may compare the church, for her beauty, her graces, her charms, are of the excellency of his glory. He has clothed and adorned her with all his possessions, for all that he received from the Father he has freely given her, and by the Father's will he is made heir of the eternal possessions of God, and by that peculiar and inseparable relationship existing between Christ and the church she is made joint-heir with him. There is no division of the inheritance in joint-heirship, the possession remains intact, and the heirs or inheritors enjoy together the whole inheritance. In other words, all that Christ possesses is hers also to enjoy together with him. Such an inheritance can only be enjoyed with him, never alone; the enjoyment is necessarily mutual, equally so as is the inheritance. He as King possesses all power, both in heaven and earth—a monarch who knows no fear or defeat. The King of kings and Lord of lords, the blessed and only Potentate, he himself has clothed his bride as is befitting one of her station, and as there is no king who can measure up to the standard of his excellence, so also there is no queen who can vie with this queen, the church, the bride of Christ. They are separate and apart from all others, and far above all powers and principalities, possessing all things in him who loved her and gave himself for her, that he might redeem her, cleanse and purify her, presenting her to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, to mar her beauty, her pleasure and future happiness

with him who is the chiefest among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely. And in order that she may be well formed, perfect and beautiful, he has placed certain gifts in her, that she might meet with all the requirements that are required of her, that she might grow in grace and round out into perfection, being fed and nourished by these gifts while here in the flesh. There are many gifts in her and to her, though all are not manifest at one time, but are manifest and put to use as her needs require. The church has nothing to do with bringing these gifts about, they being gifts to her from Christ. It is written of him: "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men."—Psalms lxviii. 18. The apostle Paul refers to this and says, "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."—Eph. iv. 8. Therefore we see that all which he received for men he also gave men. "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."—Eph. iv. 11, 12. So we see that these gifts are given to the church for a specific purpose, and all are not alike, no more so than the various members of our natural body, but differ in function, yet all working to the same end. Our hand cannot perform the duty of the eye, nor the eye that of the foot, yet they are essential and the body is not perfect without them, and they each perform the respective work for which they were designed. So the gifts in the church can only perform the duties for which they have been fitted, but they are all for the good of the church, that she may be perfected and edified. There is a duty devolving on the church which is a most sacred one, and one that should ever be gone into with prayer and solemnity, that is, the recognition of these gifts. We do not recognize the gift of an apostle or prophet these days, and evidently they are absent, having performed their respective duties and passed on; but there were some to whom he gave prophets, and they prophesied of his coming and the glory that should follow. Some he gave apostles. It seems that the church has passed the prophetic age, also the days of the apostles, yet no man knows what is yet to come, but this we do most assuredly know: that whatever the need of the church may yet be, it will be most bountifully and graciously supplied by Him who is not slack concerning his promises. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."—Matt. xxviii. 20. Without doubt each member of the body is a gift, and is essential, although there seems to be but two principal gifts in the church to-day, i. e., preachers and deacons. In the gift of what we recognize as preacher there are many differences, different abilities, no two seem to be just alike; some good and comforting preachers lack the quality that makes a good pastor, and there are many good pastors that are not what may be termed able expounders of the word. In some instances one person seems to be given the ability of pastor, also to go deep in the word, but not in all cases. No man should be found fault with if he has not these qualities combined, but the church should make use of and profit by that which is given. The office of deacon is very necessary to the church, and can only be filled by those to whom is given this particular gift. The church cannot make a pastor, preacher or deacon of its members; no amount of

training can accomplish God's work, and it is his work exclusively to qualify and fit any man for the work of the ministry or the office of deacon, and all that the church can do is to recognize the gift or ability in one, and when thoroughly convinced of his ability to set him in position to exercise his ability, but haste or natural feelings should never attend such acts of the church. Paul expressly admonished Timothy in this particular, which is left on record for our learning. A bishop must be of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; that is, he should be apt in teaching, possessing the ability to teach others and to comfort others with the things wherewith he has been comforted, or to use our own language, one should preach before he is set to preaching. We cannot rightly recognize a gift until we see it. Men may be taught to do things, such as filling worldly offices, learning by practice, but no amount of practice can ever make a preacher. We should be thoroughly convinced that a man is called to the work of the ministry, and thereby fitted for it, before a church gives him liberty to speak in public, and this should not be done until the church (unanimously) sees the ability in him to teach. One should preach before he is set at liberty, for to set a man at liberty who is not ordained of God to the work of the ministry, how shall we as a church fit him for this stupendous task, which neither we nor he can do? Therefore we should exercise great care and prayerfully consider the act first, for we cannot correct the first error by committing a second; that is, to ordain one simply because he had been licensed would not be proper, his liberty had best be withdrawn; but to save this humiliation of the church, and the member in particular, it should be proven to the complete satisfaction of the entire church that the one can preach before any steps are taken. With the deacon, let these things first be proved, and as soon as they are proved loose him and let him go. While the gifts are of a different nature, one can no more learn to fill the office of deacon than one can learn to preach. They are both gifts—gifts in the church, to the church, for the perfecting of the saints, the work of the ministry, the edifying of the body of Christ. One who has the gift of a deacon will manifest it before the church can recognize it, for how can we recognize anything that is not manifest? The work of a deacon is not merely that of passing the bread and wine in the observance of the ordinance of the Lord's supper, although many seem to think that is the prime duty of the deacons. This is an act that any can learn to do, and do it with as much accuracy as another, though unquestionably it is one of the duties of the deacons and should be performed by them. A good deacon sees and knows the distress and natural afflictions of the members of the church, and visits them when in distress of any kind, either natural or spiritual, and ministers to their needs, and in order to be able to properly fill his office he will have the ability to do these things, doing it of a willing mind, and it is in recognition of these abilities to know of and to attend to the distress of its members that the church sets one apart to the office of deacon, that he may go on unhampered; and these things should all first be proved before any action on the part of the church is taken. It is an erroneous idea that we must, or must not, have a certain number of deacons. If the Lord has qualified only one for the office we had better do with one rather than to install one who is not fitted, for no amount of

instruction by the church can make a man see the duties of a deacon, as it is the deacon's place to see and show them to the church. We should set things in their own order and keep them so; but the fact that one sees his duty and does his duty is a proof of his gift which should be recognized, regardless of how many have preceded him to the office; for rest assured the Lord places no useless material in the church, but only such as is needed, and qualifies each one for his respective place. All things should be done decently and in order. The church should be of one mind, and when that is the mind of Christ there will be no strife nor regrets for having acted. Where unanimity of thought does not reign it is a bad sign for future prosperity and a healthy condition of the church. We cannot be too careful in our deliberations, for we are dealing with the members of the body of Christ. Then why be hasty about setting one up to minister to that body until it first be proved that he can minister? and the only proof that one can is that he has done so. The deacon is a minister, but not necessarily a preacher. There are many ministers in the church. A word in season, or, as it were, a cup of cold water to the thirsty, is the act of ministering, but is not preaching. Many have the ability of ministry and do minister in countless and unseen ways, and are doing the work designed for them, who cannot, nor ever will, preach, that is, enter the public work of ministry. There are many gifts to the church, and they all have their place and work. The gifts of preacher and deacon are public gifts, if we may use the expression; that is, they may be exercised in public, or in a public way. These little gifts are essential, yet are not to be recognized in a public way. Simply because one may have felt impressed to speak of His name in a public way is of itself no evidence of his call to the work of the public ministry. No doubt there are those who are given the same impressions and experiences of a preacher who are not designed to enter the work. This may seem contradictory, but it is not, and is necessary if for nothing else than that there be greater fellowship between preacher and people, a better understanding, a better knowledge of the burdens borne by those who labor in the ministry, a better knowledge of their wisdom and authority to speak, a closer relationship. We cannot tell why God does things, why he gives one experiences, impressions and burdens, why he shuts and none can open, why he hedges us about with thorns and incloses us with a wall of hewn stone, why we are shut up and cannot come forth; but it should be sufficient to us to know that it is God's way with us, that it is infinitely more to his honor and glory and our good than it could possibly be were it any other way. Therefore there is great necessity of care, discretion, good judgment and prayerful consideration, that we may judge carefully and righteously with our brethren in these things, for "a man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men."—Prov. xviii. 16. His gift brings him before the church, for there are no greater on earth, for they are judges of the world, and He has made us kings and priests unto himself. What the Lord has designed he will also do.

I realize now, after having written the amount that I have, that I have but faintly touched this all-important subject. There is so very much that could be said along this line that might be profitable, yet who am I to bring these things before the Lord's people?

F. SELBY FISHER.

SALISBURY, Md.

WILLIAMSTOWN, Kansas, Feb. 27, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing a check to cover my remittance for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I owe you an apology for having allowed my subscription to get so far in arrears. Will you kindly pardon my neglect and continue to send the paper to my address? I can only plead my case as one of the poor of the flock, if indeed I belong to the flock. Poor not only in this world's goods, but poor in spirit, if indeed I know anything of the Spirit. I often fear that I am too carnally minded to claim relationship with any who are indeed spiritually minded. If it were not for the fact that I do feel to really enjoy listening to spiritual conversation, and also to take part in the same with my small ability, and also the fact that I do often feel to hunger and thirst after righteousness; I say, if it were not for these facts my outlook would be gloomy indeed. I can view these signs in others as signs of life; it may be so in my own case, nevertheless I am often doubting, and fear that mine is an outside case; the Lord knoweth.

While I am writing I feel somewhat impressed to write a few thoughts on church discipline and order, as I trust I have been led to view it, and also to remark that nearly all of our brethren out here in Kansas are taking the SIGNS now. We were once a strong association and enjoyed a large correspondence. Our ministry consisted of a number of gifts who were pronounced able and devoted servants. At present we have no correspondence at all, and those old servants have all been released from their labors and called to their eternal rest. We are now without a minister, save one poor weakling in the person of myself. I am often made to lament my weakness and inability to speak acceptably or to perform the duties in general devolving upon one who is called to preach the word as I would like to do, yet there is a certain comfort in going forward to labor with the ability that God is pleased to give. Be that ability ever so small, there is an especial comfort when some dear brother or sister bespeaks an evidence of having received a little crumb. I have not spoken of our decline into our present condition with a view to murmuring, believing it is wrought through the fulfillment of some eternal purpose of Him who worketh all things together for good to those who love him, but it does cause us sometimes to wonder and almost dare to ask, Is it in his purpose to remove our candlestick altogether? Be it far from me to charge indiscreetness or imprudence to our old fathers in Israel; I would not wish to insinuate that they have dealt unwisely, hence our declension, but they were men the same as we, and if left to themselves perhaps no less liable to err. There always have been divisions, and I presume there always will be, therefore it becomes the people of God to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we let them slip. According to my observation I am led to believe that good brethren sometimes err by being too technical concerning doctrine and order. By this I hope I shall not be understood to mean that we must make friends with antichrist, or even compromise with unsound doctrine. This we cannot do, but I fear that we are too apt to make a brother an offender for a word, too apt to strain at a gnat and swallow a camel, or behold a mote in our brother's eye and consider not the beam that may be in our own eye. Dwelling upon technicalities sometimes results in dear brethren being rent asunder, when it really seems that a more rational, more

spiritual mode of procedure might easily have resulted in a reconciliation of differences. It is right, it is incumbent upon us to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, but we should not overlook the admonition, Let your speech be with grace seasoned with salt. It is commendable in all to manifest a zeal for the doctrine of God our Savior and for the order of his house, but we should not forget the divine injunction, Take heed unto thyself, as well as the doctrine. It is strangely and sadly true that brethren well gifted in expounding the Scriptures, and who see eye to eye concerning the vital points of doctrine they set forth, will sometimes disagree on some technical point, a very small matter, but it is allowed to develop into a great fire, even to the declaring of nonfellowship for one another, seeking occasion against one another, seeking to devour one another. Brethren, these things ought not to be. In such a case an unscrupulous brother may seek to justify himself by calling to his defense such Scriptures as these: How can two walk together except they be agreed? or, They went out from us, because they were not of us. Or again, it might be said, If any brother walk disorderly withdraw thyself from him. These Scriptures all fill their place in the divine catalogue of inspiration, and all are alike profitable, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. They are important, we dare not disregard one single word in them. We sometimes come face to face with an occasion when their sentiment must be expressed in actions; but we are not justified in regarding them to the exclusion of other Scriptures, those tender admonitions of Christ and the apostles. Let all bitterness and wrath and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice, and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Jesus said, If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses. Gospel order is a study for every child of grace. Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. None of us will ever become a graduate in this study, but if we are given grace we may learn that to indulge in backbiting, making our brother an offender for a word, or to maintain a haughty spirit, is not an observance of gospel order. We cannot whip our brother into line; more can be accomplished by beseeching, and gospel order may be briefly comprehended in the words of the apostle when he said, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. To exercise that wisdom which is from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, without hypocrisy. The apostle said, Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection. This Scripture does not mean that the people of God should relinquish their zeal for the doctrine, and it should by no means discourage any from taking heed to it or contending earnestly for it, but it does show us that there are other things besides these principles of doctrine that are quite essential to an orderly walk. Let us go on unto perfection. Neither should any be puffed up in their imagination, believing from this that it is possible for

us to arrive at a state of perfection here in the flesh. There is but one being who can claim perfection, the perfect man Christ Jesus, yet there is a light in which the apostle regards some as a "perfect man;" no doubt those whose walk and conversation are above reproach. "My brethren," he says, "be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body." We hope we are not so vain as to believe we can of ourselves walk above reproach or render any service acceptably. Indeed, without him we can do nothing, but, says the apostle, we can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth us. Therefore, in conclusion, we might say, of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall." The God of peace make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Do with this as you see fit.

L. L. SCHENCK.

PINEVILLE, Ky., Dec. 30, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please find inclosed money order for twelve dollars to renew my subscription to the SIGNS and to pay for five new subscribers. I could have sent in a larger list than this if I had gone after them as I should, but I now promise you that I will continue to send in new subscribers. Every brother and sister who believes that the printing of this paper is of God is under obligation to seek its welfare, as they are in anything else that pertains to the kingdom of God. This applies to me as much as it does to any one. The brother and sister that think they should eat bread without laboring are deceived, and he or she that labors just in order to eat cannot and shall not eat. We must labor for Christ's sake, and not for the loaves. Then how are we to labor for Christ? Strive for the welfare of the little ones in Christ. Then if we can send them a message through the medium of the SIGNS we are performing that which is right. Let us hear the words of Paul: "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." Paul's prayer was that all the brethren in all time be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. James says, "Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." James says faith is dead without works. How many of us have living faith? If there be yet any faith in us, I pray let us begin at once to exercise it, for we know

that if any living thing remains inactive too long it will perish. Woe be unto them that are at ease in Zion. "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end." Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it. Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly; not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. The quotations that I have here written are a few of hundreds that emanated from Christ and his apostles for the welfare of the family of God. Christ is the foundation of the church, the house of God. Let us examine ourselves to see whether or not we belong to this building. Are we yearning for the welfare of our brethren? Are we manifesting that yearning? If so, then we are part and parcel of the building; but I am fearful that some of us are like the servant that said he would go and do his master's bidding and did not. How important it is, brethren, that we, one and all, awake out of our lukewarmness before our Master spues us out of his mouth. We are too much interested in the cares and riches of this world; we are looking at the things which are seen, which are temporal, and not at the which are not seen, which are eternal. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. Are we living, or have we lived after the flesh until we are dead? There are people that are spiritually dead, therefore there must be of necessity a spiritual graveyard. When we read in the last issue of the SIGNS of Elder J. F. Beeman's demise we were deeply pained; we were sensitive of our loss in our immediate presence, and seemed to realize that something was gone. The spot seemed dreary and lonely. The pen that had been wielded for years so ably and faithfully we knew was at rest. A brave and faithful soldier has fallen in battle, crowned with honor and glory. We have lost a father in Israel, but our loss is his eternal gain. The question came to my mind, Is there any one to take up Elder Beeman's pen? I prayed sincerely for God to send some one to take up the idle pen, and seem to hear similar prayers ascending from all parts of our land. Lord, may we all pray, for we know that the time of the Gentiles is about up. May we all awake to our duty and give the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the dear old family paper, the support that is due it. While writing this letter I have another subscriber for the SIGNS.

Yours in hope of immortality,

L. D. HOSKINS.

PALESTINE, Texas, March 18, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—I have just received and read the March 15th number of the SIGNS, so ably and firmly defending the great doctrine and cause for which we stand. Yes, I have read it all, and passing over the last of the paper found there an article entitled, "An appeal for right." I proceeded to read it,

and do sincerely trust this article has struck every Old Primitive Baptist reader just as it has me, for I know that I am in arrears myself, though just how much I cannot say at this moment. I have been trying to think when my paper would come to look for the date on slip, but was eager to see inside, so would forget. I am now inclosing check for five dollars, which I am sure will place me in good standing in this respect. The matter of meeting these small obligations individually is a minor one, but in the aggregate to the publishers is a tremendous one, taking into consideration the scope of country they cover. Our neglect, I am sorry to say, is as a rule not from necessity, but from mere carelessness. To our dear readers permit me to say that especially should we attend to this, our dues as subscribers to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It comes to our homes a messenger from our brethren from all parts of the country, telling the great truths of our blessed Master, as well as the many beautiful stories of the dear saints in their humble travels through this life, all so sacredly and closely related to each other. Many times I find some of the sweetest experiences and blessings which are mine to enjoy through this medium of union and fellowship, especially during the winter months, when it is so hard for our brethren to meet their appointments and the congregations to come together, and the further fact that this little paper should be, and I believe is, very sacredly held by our brethren throughout the country. The many storms of heresy, divisions, dissensions, &c., the coming and going of many periodicals, some designed to divide and lead away, others born to build up, strengthen and edify the people of Zion, for various reasons have ceased. When the SIGNS was launched it came at a time when it appears our people were divided and scattered throughout the country, the very foundations of our faith and principles were being threatened; yes, at a time when the dear saints, as it were, were calling for a Moses to lead them out of the chaos, this great defense was ushered in. We find this dear old paper still standing firm in the defence of that doctrine, which to us is so wonderful, and which Christ once delivered unto the saints, defending and making more precious to us that hope which is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and entereth that within the veil. We find through all our zeal and love for these spiritual refreshments coming to us through this medium that we forget our brethren are continually having demands made on them in a temporal way as well as the rest of us, and while individually it is a small item (two dollars a year) in the aggregate with the publishers it runs into a tremendous sum; therefore, brethren and readers, let us not be "slothful in business," especially in these things. While it may do for the world, it will not do for Old Baptists.

I have only offered these thoughts to (as one of old said) "stir up your pure minds," praying that the Lord may continue to bless these dear brethren in their efforts to comfort and strengthen this great host, which we believe to be truly the church of the living God, and which we believe, too, to be the body of Christ.

Your little brother, in fear, but in hope of life everlasting, L. D. ROSE.

HOPEWELL, South Dakota, Jan. 5, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find money order to pay for my 1922 subscription, also I wish you all a happy and prosperous year. While editors and writers are necessary as fuel, you might say the

publishers are the "motive power" that keeps the machinery going, so I would like to say encouraging words to you if I knew how, or could be of benefit. As to the "get up" of the paper, I do not know how you could improve it in any way, only to get it back to its old size. The size of type, workmanship, general make-up, all seem perfect. I know some say the paper is high priced for the size of it, but they do not take into consideration there are no advertisements as in other magazines or papers in which the subscriptions only figure as paid subscribers, to get circulation to procure the advertisements. As I once wrote you, I would gladly raise my subscription to three dollars a year rather than have the size cut as now; twelve and one-half cents per copy, and we pay from ten to twenty-five cents per copy for others that are half advertisements. Then in the SIGNS there is a class of reading we get nowhere else. I have seen several Old School Baptist papers, but I have yet to see the one with the good "get up" and reading matter the SIGNS contains as a whole. I have yet to see even an ordinary editorial from the pen of Elder Lefferts. The pleasant, loving way he has, yet nothing weak, so much like Elder Chick, whom I knew, and to know was to love, and how I wondered who could take his place, as we did when Elder Gilbert Beebe was taken.

My father commenced taking the SIGNS in the twenty-second or twenty-third year of its existence and continued it until he died, in 1900, and I have taken it almost continuously since 1870, so we feel it really is our family paper.

I intended to say something regarding your "Word to Subscribers." It is too bad that our people will neglect or overlook these matters; they ought really to come the very first thing. We claim to love one another, and if we do we should show it by our works, and also show it toward our ministers. To be away from all such associations for a few years cures one of closeness maybe.

Faithfully yours,

E. R. MYERS.

BENSON, La., March 16, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please ask in your paper the whereabouts of some church of our faith in the Ozark Mountains or foothills in Arkansas. I am searching for a small farm home free from malaria and excessive heat in summer. Prefer small stream for water power. Especially am I anxious to find a church that holds to the doctrine as fully as the SIGNS OF THE TIMES does, for nothing less really satisfies. I do not feel worthy of such a home, but hope I love the truth that declares an all-wise, all-powerful Savior, who works and none can hinder. I would like to rent small place at first, and expect to visit place soon.

Your sister, I hope,

LENA LANGFORD.

INFORMATION WANTED.

SLATER, Mo., R. D. 2, March 20, 1922.

I WOULD like to hear of the whereabouts of brother John Barnes, as he is about the only one left that I know of brother Coplen's church.

L. G. THOMSON.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in April (30th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1922.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ANTINOMIANISM.

HERE is another word which is frequently hurled against Old School Baptists as being what they believe and preach. It is a big word, but it simply means the doctrine that faith frees the christian from all the claims of the moral law; that is, if one is a christian it does not make any difference whether one lives up to the code of morality or not. We do not believe any true Old Baptist ever preached it, and our only reason for taking the matter up now is because the word has been revived of late and used against us as in days gone by; and we are considering the meaning of the word in no attempt to enlighten our adversaries (for we can do them no good), but to add our mite by way of instruction to those who have inquired as to what the word means. There are those not among us who reason that if the doctrine preached by the Old School Baptists, that one is saved by nothing that they do themselves, but wholly by the free favor of God, irrespective of any merit or worth in themselves, then why not enjoy one's self in sin and fulfill the lusts of one's flesh without restraint? Such is the construction put upon what we believe by those who do not comprehend the truth at all, and if that construction were correct then it might be said that we are "antinomians," because in that case we should be saying that faith frees the believer from the claims of morality. However, the charge is absolutely false, and arises out of a misunderstanding of what we do preach and believe. The world never understood Christ in the days of his flesh, and it is not at all surprising that the world does not to-day understand his church. The doctrine of Christ is the doctrine of his people, and if the preaching of Jesus was a mystery to the Jews, certainly the preaching of his servants in this or any other age will always be a mystery to the world. The world knew Him not, neither does it know us, and because it does not know us it invents false charges against us. There is one point at which all worldly Bible readers stumble, and that is because of the veil of unbelief before their eyes, which prevents them from being able to distinguish between the two covenants: the law and the gospel, the one which came by Moses and the other which came by Jesus Christ. These two covenants are distinct the one from the other, they never mix nor blend, yet the law is figurative of the gospel and its elements do shadow forth gospel things. The law which came by Moses contained in itself commands regarding the morality to be maintained among the Israelites: they were not to steal, nor to kill, nor to commit adultery, nor to lie, nor to covet, nor to worship idols. This code of morality has come to be recognized by many of the nations of the earth as being a good rule to go by in regulating the dealings of members of the human society with one another. So far as its moral worth is concerned Old School Baptists do not dispute it, but we do say, and shall keep on saying, that living up to the standards of morality will never take away one's sin nor atone

for one's transgressions in the sight of God; that while morality is right and proper and necessary in its place, it is not a way of salvation, and never can be. It surely is not necessary for us to dwell upon what our readers well know; that is, that justification comes not by obedience to the commands of the law of Moses. The Scriptures abundantly enforce the truth that no man is ever justified by the deeds of the law, that the altar of the old covenant service never could make the comers thereunto perfect, that the blood of beasts never could take away sin nor present one sinner holy before God. The numerous texts that over and over again repeat this truth satisfy God's people that salvation cannot come through their own works nor their own obedience. Therefore it was necessary for the accomplishing of salvation that a better covenant be brought in, and this better covenant was brought in through the blood of Jesus, who is the Mediator of that new covenant: that covenant which was made between the Father and Son before time began. This covenant made effectual through the shedding of Jesus' blood is the new and living way of access for all the redeemed into the holy of holies, the presence of God. This new covenant could not come except the old covenant pass away. This is what Old School Baptists preach and believe: that the old covenant has passed away and that Jesus has redeemed his people from under the curse and condemnation of the law and that the claims of the old covenant have now nothing to do with God's redeemed children. The fact that we preach our entire and eternal release from the law through the work of Jesus Christ leads some to misrepresent us by charging that we therefore believe that we are free from all claims of morality, since Christ has redeemed us not according to our works, but according to his purpose. They say this because the present code of morality being observed by nearly all the civilized world was a part of the law of Moses, and they conclude us to mean that if Christ has freed us from the law we are therefore free from moral obligations. But, please observe, when we say that God's children are redeemed from under the law, and that they are no more under the necessity of obeying the law in order to be saved, it must not be inferred that God's children are under no law at all. True, they are not under the law of sin and death, they are not under the law of Moses, but Christ has brought them now under law to himself. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death, and this law is written in the heart and conscience of every true believer, and is an infinitely higher law than the law of Moses, or than any moral code of any human society. This law of Christ is the law of love, and were God Almighty to shed abroad his love in the hearts of all the world as he does in the hearts of his people the world would have no need of jails or reformatories, for no one could have any inclination to do wrong while under the law of the love of God. This law of Christ gives liberty, but not license, to the believer, and there is a world of difference between liberty and license, since liberty is freedom from captivity and license is ability to do as one please without let or hindrance. The grace of God does not lead to license nor to the unbridling of human passions, but it teaches us in the secrecy of our own hearts the denial of worldliness and unholy lusts, to the end that we should live soberly and godly in this present evil world. The law of Moses promised re-

ward for well-doing, and the present moral code of society keeps many men in bounds of decency, because they fear ostracism if they break the code; but the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which he puts in the heart of every believer, teaches the doing of right because it is right, and not for the sake of reward, and teaches the pursuit of truth for truth's own sake, and not from any ulterior or selfish motive. Where this law of grace is in the heart no moral code is necessary in order to make that one live a decent life, for where the love of God is, one cannot steal, nor kill, nor be adulterous or idolatrous. Thus it will be seen by all who have eyes to see it that faith in Jesus does not negative morality, but breathes new meaning into legal things and fulfills the righteousness of the law in those who walk not after the law, but after the Spirit. However, from time out of mind, those who preach that the gospel and not the law is the only rule of life for the believer have been accused of antinomianism, and we judge it shall be so always, because men's eyes are holden from seeing the infinite beauty of the gospel of Christ, and from realizing the utter failure of the law as a way of salvation. Mr. Wm. Gadsby, one of the ablest defenders of the doctrine of grace England ever had, says in his little work entitled, "The Perfect Law of Liberty," "It is an awful fact that we live in a day when the best name which the truth as it is in Jesus can obtain among the bulk of the professing world is that of Antinomianism." A preacher once said to Mr. Gadsby that the preaching of such doctrine encouraged licentiousness. Mr. Gadsby asked him, "Does it lead me to licentiousness?" "Why, no, I do not mean you," the man replied. "Well," said Mr. Gadsby, "does it lead the people I preach for to licentiousness?" "No, I cannot say it does," answered the man. "Well," said Mr. Gadsby, "does it lead you to licentiousness?" The man said, "No, because I do not believe it." "Then," said Mr. Gadsby, "if it does not lead either believers or unbelievers to licentiousness, who are the characters it does so lead?" Only those who love God believe and enjoy the doctrine of free and unmerited grace. It cannot lead them to do evil, because grace in them teaches the contrary; and the doctrine of free grace cannot lead the world astray, because unbelievers cannot believe it. L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Susan Jones, widow of Drury Jones, of Ball township, Sangamon Co., Ill., passed gently away January 5th, 1922, at the home of her daughter, with whom she lived, in Springfield, Ill., aged a few months over eighty-four years. Four sons, two daughters, two sisters and one brother, with scores of friends and neighbors, survive, by whom she will be greatly missed, but by none more than the little church where she had her membership, and it was seldom she ever failed to attend the meetings for nearly forty years. During all these years she loved and lived the faith she professed. Her beautiful and exemplary life was recognized and remarked upon by every one whose privilege it was to know her and be in her presence, and especially was this true of those of like precious faith, who never failed to draw heavenly inspiration from her cheerful conversation and hopeful recognition of the wonderful plan of salvation as shown in the sufferings and death of Jesus, who was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification. The love she bore the dear Savior, and the household of faith, was what prompted her regular attendance at the meetings of her church. When listening to the sweet messages of grace sent of the Lord through his servants, that the joy of his little children might be full, her face would light up with a radiance beyond words to express. Her faith in the power of God was firmly established. It was the joy, peace and strength of her life, and as it served to sustain and uphold her through life's toilsome journey it also became her sure support, her light, strength and unfading joy in death. So sweetly was she supported in her last illness, which was painful and of considerable duration, that no murmur or word of complaint escaped her lips. She seemed to be looking far down the future's

broadening way for the peace her God only could give, and say, With thee, O Lord, let me live. While patiently waiting the message calling her up higher the dear old mother in Israel calmly requested that when her spirit had taken its flight the writer and Elder B. L. Nay, of Cedar Falls, Iowa, should conduct the funeral service, which was accordingly done, in the presence of a large gathering of relatives and friends in the old meeting-house of the Salem-Sugar Creek Church, where so often in life she had met with others to worship the true and living God. The occasion was a solemn and impressive one, after which the body was laid to rest in the nearby cemetery beside that of her loving companion and husband who passed away some years ago. May God graciously bless the surviving members of the family, who so lovingly ministered unto mother in her last sickness, leaving nothing undone that could be done to alleviate her sufferings. Surely such a life as she lived is well worthy of exemplification.

JOHN G. SAWIN.

MATTOON, Ill., March 20, 1922.

Mary Susan Miller, our beloved sister in Christ, and wife of brother Deacon A. S. Miller, of the Mill Creek Church, West Virginia, died at their home, Kearneysville, W. Va., March 7th, 1922. She was the daughter of brother Thomas Turner and sister Anne Thompson Turner, both deceased, and was born in Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania, October 12th, 1854. She leaves five brothers and two sisters surviving her: Robert Turner, of California, David Turner, of Claysville, Pa., Joseph Turner, of Chicago, Ill., E. D. Turner, of Hamilton, Va., Mrs. George McGlincy, of Herndon, Va., and sister Anna McKinny, of Ottawa, Kansas. She was married to A. S. Miller in July, 1874, and to them were born seven children, five of whom are living: Mrs. Alice Mullaney, of Ft. Wayne, Ind., Gilbert Beebe Miller, of Morgantown, W. Va., Herbert C. Miller, of Kearneysville, W. Va., Mrs. Clarence Thompson, of Herndon, Va., and Paul Miller, Kearneysville, W. Va. There are also thirteen grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Sister Miller was baptized by the late Elder Joseph Furr during his pastoral care of the Mill Creek Church, in the month of July, 1877. She was strong and uncompromising in the doctrine of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, was a faithful and devoted member of the church, a true mother in Israel to me and to the rest of the flock. She was a great lover of the holy Scriptures and could readily quote them. It could truly be said of her, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart," for she was enamored of the gospel of her Lord, and verily had lived it. She had a most unselfish disposition, which bore fruit in constant self-sacrifice for her husband and children and in unstinted hospitality for her pastor and brethren. She was one who by the mercy of God presented her body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God. We believe she is at rest and at peace in the paradise of God, but words cannot express how we shall miss her in the family and in the church. Our hearts go out in sympathy to our dear brother Miller in his loneliness, also to the bereaved children and the stricken church. The Lord alone can heal the wound and reconcile us to his will. May he give us all strength to bear it and to go on contending for the precious truth which our sister so whole-heartedly loved.

At the funeral services I tried to speak from the words in the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth verses of the eleventh chapter of John, a portion of Scripture which had been resting in brother Miller's mind after the death of his wife. Interment in the cemetery at Shepherdstown, W. Va.

L.

Emma Rebecca Campbell was born October 17th, 1848, died February 21st, 1922, and interred at Welsh Tract Cemetery February 24th, 1922. Sister Emma came to the church at Welsh Tract Sunday, December 4th, 1869, and was baptized the same day by Elder Hartwell. She was a true and consistent member until the day of her death; of a very reticent nature, deep and broad minded, sound in judgment in both church and temporal affairs. She seldom spoke unnecessary words, was a sincere friend and a most valuable adviser. She loved her Bible and was ever present in her place at meeting. The church loses a dear sister, but it is her eternal gain. She was born on the old homestead farm, near Iron Hill, Cecil Co., Md., and lived there most of her time, she and her sister Sarah A. surviving a family of eleven, including father and mother, and who are all interred at Welsh Tract, except one, a brother, and sister Sarah, the only one living now of this Baptist family. Sisters Emma and Sarah sold the farm and removed to Newark, Del., in March, 1920. She had remarkable executive and administrative ability in managing and financing the large farm, which their father left them for a home for all the children, until one by one they gradually passed away, leaving the two remaining sisters to dispose of, and owing to their advancing years they elected to remove to town, relieving their minds of the responsibility of supervising the farm. September 1st, 1920, she was stricken with paralysis on the left side, but recuperated temporarily until January, 1922, when she rapidly declined mentally and physically, suffering severely until the end.

Elder John G. Eubanks, her pastor, spoke beautifully from Ephesians ii. 6, and after reading two hymns, and commenting on her past life, we repaired to the cemetery and returned her dust to the earth from whence it came, her spirit having gone before to God who gave it. She has but fallen asleep in Christ.

J. B. MILLER.

NEWARK, Del., March 12, 1922.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

J. H. Evans, Md., $1.00; Mrs. R. A. Bufkin, Miss., $2.00; P. M. Sherwood, Del., $1.00; Mrs. M. J. Petty, Ill., $1.00; Grace Veech Smith, Mo., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE First Primitive Baptist Church of Mineral Wells, Texas, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on S. W. 4th Ave. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

SALLIE E. HOWARD, Church Clerk.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

ISAIAH XI. 6.

"AND a little child shall lead them."

I have felt since hearing a Methodist preacher use the above for a text on the funeral occasion of my little grandson, my namesake, that I would write my view of the same text for publication, hoping that I am led by the Spirit of Jesus, the little child the prophet was speaking of. My youngest daughter's sweet little infant, two months and eleven days old, was taken from our fond embrace by the hand of death. Oh how our hearts ached to give him up, but all we could do was to be still and know the Lord had taken him home to be at rest in the paradise of God. My daughter, being of the Baptist faith, had a Baptist minister come to her house, sing a hymn, pray and preach a short (comforting) discourse, after which the body of our darling little babe was taken to its grandmother Wallace's, where the father had made arrangements for their Methodist preacher to preach what they call a funeral sermon, and he read the text at the head of this article: "And a little child shall lead them," and I suppose he did as well as any of them could have done. Being blind to the meaning of the text, he made it appear that this little child by its death would lead father, mother, grandparents and all who loved him to that upper and better world. I must say we are left to mourn the loss of our sweet little William, but do feel of a truth that our loss is his eternal gain. To my mind, the prophet Isaiah was speaking of Jesus, the little child born in Bethlehem of Judea. "For out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel," also declaring that righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins (readiness for action), and faithfulness the girdle of his reins (inward emotions of love), in carrying out his Father's will, leading them the Father gave him to fountains of living waters where they shall drink and quench their thirst. Jacob being the lot of his inheritance, the Lord led him about and instructed him. This being true, it is equally so with every redeemed child of God. He leadeth them in paths of righteousness for his name's sake; he keeps them as the apple of his eye. O how tenderly, lovingly and mercifully is the Little Child leading the redeemed of the Lord about, for he careth for them,

and he teaches them as never man taught. The prophet was presenting to us something we witness in our experience daily: that is, the evil propensities of our nature that dwell in our mortal bodies, which are represented by the wolf, the leopard, the lion and the bear. These animals are of a different disposition to that of the lamb, kid, calf and cow, which represent that meek and lowly Spirit of Jesus dwelling in the heart of his children, for greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world, and a little child shall lead them. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb until death separates them, when mortality is swallowed up of life, then the spirit returns to God who gave it. He said, I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. Hence it is the wolf that shall dwell with the lamb in this our natural life, and a little child shall lead them. The leopard shall lie down with the kid. The clearer view we have of ourselves the more the spots of the leopard appear in our sin-defiled bodies, and with the old prophet Jeremiah we see the heritage of the Lord—speckled, for the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah has said, Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird. We see Jacob's cattle were "ringstraked, speckled, and spotted," and the more the light of the knowledge of the truth shines in our hearts the clearer to us the specks (spots of sin) appear. "And the sucking child [Jesus] shall play on the hole of the asp," poisonous serpent, which was represented by Herod. The serpent, being cunning and full of subtlety, thought to destroy this sucking child. When he saw he was mocked of the wise men he became exceeding wroth and sent forth and slew all the male children from two years old and under to make sure the death of this sucking child. But Wisdom was at the helm, acting in the preservation of the sucking child, hence it was but a play on the hole of the asp, a wonderful display of divine power in the preservation of the sucking child. What Herod meant for the destroying of this child was to the end that the prophecy of Jeremiah be fulfilled, saying, "In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not."—Matt. ii. 18. Herod, that old serpent, gratified himself in putting those children to death in order to destroy the sucking child, but his act was to the end that the prophecy which was spoken by the prophet be fulfilled: "He shall be called a Nazarene." "And the weaned child [Jesus] shall put his hand [power] on the cockatrice' den [antichrist incubator, where she hatches her brood of green-eyed monsters in opposition to the truth]." Mark you, they are hatched (not born again) and brought up in their brooders (Sunday-schools). Let us see what Isaiah says in the fifty-ninth chapter, fourth and fifth verses: "None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth: they trust in vanity, and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity. They hatch cockatrice' eggs, and weave the spider's web: he that eateth of their eggs dieth, and that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper."

In this eleventh chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah, which was addressed to ancient Israel, or Jerusalem under the law, was shadowing forth the government of the Messiah in this gospel day under the grace covenant, the new Jerusalem, the prophet says, "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understand-

ing, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither remove after the hearing of his ears: but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." To my mind the prophet was speaking of Jesus, the little child, sucking child and the weaned child, he being the Elder Brother of the redeemed family, and his Spirit dwelling in them as one family creates in them a desire to be holy as he is holy, and from the depths of a broken heart and a contrite spirit they cry, "O that thou wert as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother!" For "out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise." "Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts." "The weaned child shall put his hand [power] on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." These earthen vessels, of the earth earthy, Christ in them, the hope of glory, are led into the whole truth, wisdom and knowledge, and are made to know him whom to know is life eternal. Earthen vessels, vessels of God's mercy, endued with wisdom from on high, are wise unto salvation, hence they are full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. The waters do no more than cover the sea; the gospel of the Son of God is a savor of life to the living, who are full of the knowledge of the Lord, and it is a savor of death to the dead, who know not the Lord Jesus in the pardon of their sins. This gospel shall be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations, a witness of the things of God, his attributes, love, justice and mercy, with all spiritual blessings the heirs are entitled to by the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus on the cross, perfecting forever them that are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ and called with an holy calling. Let it be remembered that the testimony of a witness in court is as much against one of the parties as it is favorable to the other; so the preaching of the cross is a stumbling-block and foolishness to some, while it is a comfort to those whom the weaned child (Jesus) has made free. For if the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

POCA, West Virginia.

MAPLE FALLS, Wash., Jan. 27, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—My address is changed from Sumas, Wash., to Maple Falls, R. 1, Wash., and as the SIGNS is so dear to me that I do not want to miss a single copy, please change the address of my paper.

It seems that my lot has been cast among the briars and thorns of this evil world, but I have found much comfort even among the thorns, for there is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother that has been my constant companion and has caused me to rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and full of glory, for he has made me to feel that it was better to walk the rough and rugged road with him for my guide and comforter than to have dwelt in a king's palace with all the wealth of an earthly king at my command. It makes our trials and afflictions

a comfort to us when we know that we were appointed thereunto, and when we know that He will be in the fire with us, guarding and protecting us from all the harmful effects, we rejoice in tribulation. I also feel that God's mercy and kindness toward me have been great, and I know that I have not merited the least one of them. Titus iii. 4, 5, reads, "But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." This is the same as to say it was, and is, all of grace, without any works of man; and to further prove this, let us take a look at man in his natural state and see whether he deserves anything at the hand of God except banishment. Paul tells us in Romans iii. 9–18, "What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin: as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace they have not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes." Is this not enough evidence against man in his natural state to condemn him? Would any court of justice pardon one who was guilty of all these offences? No, it could not and maintain its integrity, for they are sworn to give justice according to the law and testimony of the witnesses, and according to God's holy and righteous law, the soul that sinneth it shall die, and there is no reprieve nor suspended sentence, as in our courts, but a positive "shall die." The Scriptures say, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Then where is their chance the Armenians talk about, since by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight? But as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive, for whereas sin did abound unto death, grace did much more abound unto life. For God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus, for while we were enemies, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. Could anything be more magnanimous? Behold what manner of love! The Father giving his only begotten Son, who had never done any wrong, to die the ignominious death of the cross to save his enemies, who were justly condemned to death for their wrongdoing, which they gloried in. But they were dead, without hope and without God in the world, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to grace, though very much alive in a natural sense, as is shown in the third chapter of Romans, but dead in a spiritual sense, totally depraved, not having a spark of spiritual life. For the spiritual life bears fruit, and its fruit is very pleasing to God, and to all who are made alive by

the quickening power of the Holy Ghost. To show how dead they were, let us go back to the type which is a true pattern of the reality, in Ezekiel xxxvii., "The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, [notice carefully] there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry [not much chance for them]. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live?" By Ezekiel's answer he must have been amazed at the thought, but having faith in God to do all things he answered, "O Lord God, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones, Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live." Not much self-righteous works here, is there? In the eleventh verse, "Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. * * * And shall put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live; and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord." Now these dry bones comprise the whole house of Israel, and there is not one outside of these dry bones, and they are all brought to life alike, for they are very dead and very dry. The whole house of Israel here referred to is not national Israel, for they are not all Israel that are of Israel, for although Israel be as the sands of the sea a remnant shall be saved. An Israelite indeed, and those under consideration, are those who are circumcised in heart and ears, who worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh, because they have been enlightened and know the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the weakness of the flesh in its proneness to evil, so their daily cry is, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. There is no self-righteousness in this prayer, which is the prayer of every one of God's little ones, and in this we have found a new and living way, whereby we can come boldly to the throne of grace, where we obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Yes, dear ones, we do enter into the holiest of holies when we approach the throne of God's grace by this new and living way, which is Jesus, and unto him we go to pour out our petitions for mercy, and say, Oh forgive us our trespasses, for we know we are vile and have sinned against thee, our precious and only Savior; and what joy it is to feel his love welling up in our hearts, thrilling our whole being, causing us to say, O, my precious Savior, I know thou dost love me, unworthy as I am. So I can say in the language of the text, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Then, my precious brethren and sisters, wherever you may be, since we have all been cleansed in and by that fountain that was opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, which fountain is Christ, let us follow his admonition, or command, and let brotherly love continue. Oh how I would like to take you dear editors, as well as all those who con-

tribute to the dear old SIGNS, by the hand and tell you how you have comforted this poor old sinner, who feels too unworthy to be called by His name; but where else can I go for comfort? There are no other people in the world whom I love, there is no treasure I prize as I do my dear Savior and my God, and I do hope he will keep me humbly at his dear feet, and at the feet of my dear brethren and sisters, whom I love to serve with the ability he gives me, though it is small. I know he is great, all-wise and ever present, and from everlasting to everlasting; he is God, and beside him there is no Savior.

Submitted in love.

DAVIS BURCH.

I AM THE WAY.

GOD'S way and man's way are entirely diverse in this life or time state. If man is to follow God's way, then he will do God's works, but, "Ye must be born again." This spiritual birth is essential, and man has no more control over that than of his natural birth. He tells us almost at the very beginning of creation, "And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth."—Genesis vi. 12. Christ verified it during his advent upon earth: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it." Just before his crucifixion Jesus spoke these words to his disciples to comfort them, but they, at that time, did not understand the Spirit which spoke them, but later knew when they received the holy Comforter. "And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me. Philip said, Shew us the Father, and Jesus replied, Believest thou not that I am in the Father? The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Therefore to follow or execute God's way or works there must be life first, for Jesus said in his prayer to the Father, As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. Job said, He knoweth the way that I take. To prove that man knoweth not this way of God, refer to where he challenged Job: Where is the way where light dwelleth? He only knoweth this way. "This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left."—Isaiah xxx. 21. And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those; the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon; it shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. See where Jesus discriminates again. I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me. He is the right way and the only way. After Paul's conversion he assayed to join himself to the

disciples, but they were afraid of him, but Barnabas took him and brought him, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way. So he leads those who are born again in the way, and he has promised he will never leave them nor forsake them. Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior. I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me. I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me (not on me), though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me (life first) shall never die.

May we all be comforted by his Holy Spirit unto the end.

J. B. MILLER.

NEWARK, Del., Feb. 26th, 1922.

LA GRANDE, Oregon, Feb. 12, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending herewith the remittance from my church for renewals of the SIGNS. This has been delayed because of a fire three weeks ago, which destroyed my home and about half of my household goods. By extra effort on the part of myself and family, and by assistance from brethren and friends, we are again fairly well fixed in another house near our destroyed home.

While sorting some papers a short time ago I came across some writing I did eight years ago on the eve of moving from Baker to La Grande, and it seems to fit my situation and faith so well at this time I am sending it to you for your disposal. The SIGNS is a most welcome visitor at our home, and I trust the divine Hand may continue to direct you in its publication.

Yours in tribulation and faith,

C. W. BOND.

BAKER, Oregon, Feb. 3, 1914.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have come again to the point reached after by most mortals in this world, of making a change in location in the hope of getting a better reward for my labor and making this life more pleasant. In reflecting upon the causes and reasons for such changes I find sweet consolation in making a comparison between the spiritual and temporal affairs of God's people, or rather the things of this world, with their changeable and uncertain value, to those of the world to come and their true worth and never changing value. I shall endeavor to write a few of these thoughts for your disposal.

The first reason that would be given for this choice of places to live and work by most of mankind would be "free will," the vital principle with most professed religionists, and the one on which depends to them the justice of God and the accountability of man. Upon the exercise of this wonderful power of mind man is either an heir of eternal salvation or eternally lost. When it is applied to worldly business it at first may appear to operate unmolested, for we freely choose the places we live and the business we follow. But even in this freedom of choice we are restricted by unmovable difficulties, and we do not choose the things we would if it was simply a question of choice, with a free will to dictate what the choice should be. Some educated and refined persons live on the frontiers, with none of the comforts and conveniences of modern life around them,

striving for years to overcome the hardships necessary to have a pleasant home. Why do they not choose a place already developed and live there in peace and happiness all their lives? A man starts to town on foot, a journey of several miles. Soon others dash by him in an automobile. Why does not the footman choose to have an automobile? There are millions of acres of fertile land in the world yielding bountiful harvests for a moderate amount of labor bestowed. Why do not the striving laborers of our country choose them a home in such a place? The reason for remaining in the unpleasant situations named, instead of taking the more pleasant ones, is something besides "free will." Each individual is free to operate in his sphere; the frontiersman is free to live on his homestead, the footman is free to walk to town, the laborer is free to strive at his occupation for his daily bread, but beyond these allotted spheres none of them has the means to operate, it makes no difference how strongly their wills may be inclined to the better conditions.

Just so it is in religious matters. The free will religion is a little sphere in which those of that class may freely operate, and it is bounded on all sides by human means and possibilities; it is natural, or carnal, and its wealth is of a natural or carnal quality. Those persons have full liberty to explore and obtain their satisfaction of this religion. Saul could freely persecute the church, and in this he thought he was doing God service. We are told that the natural mind cannot take of the things of the Spirit, neither can it know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Having this spiritual mind and being able to discern and enjoy spiritual things is a gift from above, and every one who has this must receive it just as Paul did, not by the will of the flesh, nor of man, but as a gift of God. Some one may say that Paul followed the direction of the heavenly vision of his own free will and a ready mind, but if he did he had higher desires and finer motives than when he was going of his free will to persecute the church. The first situation was inspired by self-righteousness and the best desires the natural mind could attain to; the last was inspired by a revelation of the Lord Jesus in his soul, this revelation being death to the first intents and purposes and the birth of heavenly desires and heavenly glory and a beginning of the knowledge of true righteousness. When a man is born into the heavenly kingdom he does truly act freely in the steps he takes, for He says that his people shall be a willing people in the day of his power, and nothing but his power can accomplish the new birth. We would not lose sight of the twofold nature of the children of God, nor claim that they always of a free will act according to the standard of righteousness, for when the carnal mind is in exercise they freely act out their carnal natures and are thus sowing to the flesh, the end of which is death; but when exercised by the Spirit they act after the manner of spiritual things, discerning the truth and avoiding error, because the power impelling them implants a love of righteousness in them, and they freely walk in the paths of righteousness because they love to do so. In all these free will acts, both of natural and spiritual minded persons, we find that the freedom with which they always act is a secondary condition. The cause is something with which they cannot deal, and they merely act freely in the sphere in which the cause permits them to act. When it is suggested that a natural mind can

freely take the plan of salvation and thus become spiritual and an heir of glory, there is no truth in it, nor is the idea sustained by the Scriptures. How glad we should be when wafted on the changing scenes of this life, and when disappointed in our choice of worldly attainments, that our hope and faith are heavenly jewels implanted in us poor striving mortals, and they shall never fail. Also the life we now live is Christ in us the hope of glory, and we know that in all disappointments and hardships our life is hid with Christ in God, and in this priceless gift we are secure. Nothing can destroy or injure this inheritance which he has in store for all who love him.

"This world shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine,
But God, who called me here below,
Shall be forever mine."

C. W. BOND.

FREEWATER, Oregon.

DEAR EDITORS:—If you will allow me space in your most valuable paper, I would like to answer the many letters of sympathy and love with which the brethren have remembered us in the sad hour of our great loss in the death of our youngest daughter.

Dear brethren, I would love to write you all personally, but it seems impossible, so I take this way of letting you know that your precious letters brought to our broken hearts the sweet balm that none but God our Savior can apply. If you remember, Jesus said as often as you ministered to his little ones you did it unto him; and the only way we can serve Jesus is serving one another. This brings to our mind that peculiarity which characterizes God's people. They are a peculiar people; not that they are different from the rest of Adam's race by nature, but the change which is wrought by grace does place that peculiar mark upon them, and this mark is manifested in their experience, which is the password, or mark, that identifies them as of the chosen of God. This being so, we would love, God being our helper, to find some of those peculiar marks of the dear Lord, who marked out the way and set markers along the way for the safety of the pilgrims, until the last traveler reaches the great goal, which is heaven and all that heaven is, and in doing this will call your minds to God's chosen people (Israel), which is a true type of spiritual Israel. We hear Moses, the chosen leader of that people, after giving all the precepts to them as God had commanded, say, The land which you are going over to possess is not like the land of Egypt. Now we have two lands, and they are types. The land of Egypt represents darkness, or the condition of God's people under the power of sin, and the land which they were going over to inherit was the promised land, which is a type of the church, or gospel land, which spiritual Israel possesses to-day. As we enter it we want to notice the peculiarity of that land. It is a land of hills and valleys. We in our travel come to some places that seem the most dismal that mortal ever got into, and it is there we learn the sweetness of that soul-comforting hymn, "Like one alone I seem to be, oh is there any one like me?" Then in our travel we come to the hill of the Lord's house, and it is so beautiful that our soul is lost in wonder and amazement; we walk about it, we view the bulwarks, salvation hath God appointed for her defense; we consider the grandeur of her palaces. Oh how sweet and restful to our souls after laboring so long in the valley of despair now to feel secure in the love

of Jesus, feel his sweet and encouraging words, Here, Father, are those which thou didst give me out of the world (Egypt), I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish. All that thou hast given me shall come unto me, and such I will not cast out, but will raise up at the last day. The soul that has ascended the holy hill Zion can sit and sing with rapture and surprise. How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear; it soothes his sorrow and the wounds which the cruel hand of sin has made in the cold valley. It is a name above every name. To his name every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess to the glory of God. So we see the peculiar mark. We see God's humble poor in this life in great tribulation, but in Jesus we see them peaceful, and so confirmed that they sit and sing, I know that my Redeemer liveth. How sweet to feel the abiding faith of God in the soul so that we can say,

"At home, and abroad, on the land, on the sea,
As thy days may demand, shall thy strength ever be."

Dear ones, it is a hilly country, and it has its valleys, but it is a rich and fertile country, and the Lord will water it with the showers of heaven.

Dear brethren, if the thought is in your mind that Jesus had to die (which he had reference to when he said, I go to prepare a place for you) to prepare heaven for his church, just stop and think what was his mission in this sinful world. Was it to prepare heaven for his church, or was it to prepare his church for heaven? Christ died for our sins, and arose again the third day, according to the Scriptures. This being so, he became the first-fruits of them that slept. So it behooved him to suffer and die and be raised the third day. The last enemy of the church is now conquered, the valley of the shadow of death, which is in the land we travel, is so prepared we can walk through it and fear no evil, because Jesus has broken asunder the bars and has come again to his dear church, and I hear her break forth in praise and bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has begotten us again unto a lively hope. Yes, dear ones, the church can and does sing, Come, welcome death, I will gladly go with you, for I feel my dear Jesus holds the victory over you. To my mind the Father's house here mentioned by our Savior is the antitype which Moses described to the Israelites, and the mansions represent the many conditions of the exercise of the mind and heart of the children of God, and this I believe is the peculiar mark they bear here. You often hear them say, I feel cast down. David, a man after God's own heart, calls to his soul, and says, Why art thou cast down, O my soul? You see there is a mansion where when you are weak and cast down you can enter in and weep with them that weep, and when the waters are smooth, and the south wind blows, and the vessel of mercy is gliding serenely over the sea of time, and you feel you are in the sweet embrace of your loving Lord, there is a mansion you can enter in and rejoice with them that rejoice.

Dear ones, I did not think of writing so much when I commenced, but wished to give an expression of my thankfulness to you for your remembrance of us in our great and sore afflictions. While we have been called to pass through the deep waters, we have had the dear Lord very near us in love and mercy, and it seems our afflictions have drawn us nearer our blessed Savior and caused us to kiss the rod with delight, and not with regret, so asking a continuation of your forbearance and sweet fellowship, I will close.

Yours to serve in the gospel of God our Savior, J. T. BARNES.

CANADA, Ky., March 1, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—I can no longer refrain from writing. Such letters as brother J. E. Fincher's, in the February 1st issue, and the editorial by our ably gifted editor, Elder Lefferts, on the subject of "The Sense of Sin," fill my soul to overflowing. Jesus says, Let brotherly love continue. Oh that we all may be constrained by grace divine to so live in the church that brotherly love, peace and unity may abound among God's people everywhere. "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." When we consider what we are by nature, poor, vile sinners, enemies to God, lost, ruined and undone under the condemnation of the law, no hope, no way of escape except through the mercy and longsuffering of our precious Savior, what manner of people ought we to be, O people saved by the Lord? I sometimes wonder if any of us feel as grateful for these everlasting blessings as we should. I know I am lacking. I fall infinitely short of living the life I want to for his name's sake, of that humble devotion, adoration and praise that is due his holy name for the privilege of meeting his saints at our places of worship, Do I love my brethren as I should when I realize that they are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, heirs of eternal life, of heaven and immortal glory? Oh, blessed inheritance, in which they stand holy and without blame before God in love by the will of God. Who is like spiritual Israel? Where can we find such a highly favored people as the Old School Baptists? whose hope is in the Lord, who love to preach and sing his almighty power to save from every trouble, who love the unity and fellowship of the church, which is our home, the refuge, a place of peace and rest, the like of which is to be found nowhere else on earth. We love to read his precious promises in the Scriptures of eternal truth, love to think upon his name. "Happy art thou, O Israel." Yes, they are a happy people. The world can never know nor understand the joy of one poor trembling soul released from sin. At the moment they feel their sins forgiven tongue cannot express the spiritual joy, that sweet peace of soul, when the troubled waters are stilled. Oh the unspeakable joy to be privileged to walk about Zion for even a few moments. We view her vast wealth, we cry out in wonder, Who is like unto thee? What a joy when in the midst of trials, troubles and sorrows to be blessed to say, Thy will be done; to lie passive in his hand and know no will but his. While in the world, in the flesh, we all have our troubles, and many times wonder if his mercies are not gone forever from us. We are filled with doubts and fears and examine ourselves and find nothing good in our flesh, all is unbelief and sin. When we thus view carnality we see it a horrible, bottomless pit from which we desire to be delivered. We see nothing but trouble there, death and destruction. But look unto Jesus, in him we have peace. I want, if it be God's will, to look beyond carnality when writing or preaching and have nothing in view but Jesus, for his name is sweet in a believer's ear. May the present year bring peace and prosperity to Zion, God willing.

I hope Elder Lefferts will continue to write, for I enjoy his editorials, also Elder Ker's. I feel that our God will cause the SIGNS to prosper, for surely it is needed at this present time.

Yours in hope of eternal life in Christ,

G. B. BIRD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1922.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

2 PETER III. 13.

"NEVERTHELESS, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

We shall endeavor to comply with the request of brother H. H. Barton, of Cottage Grove, Tenn., to give our views of the above text. In so doing, however, we shall be compelled to take up its connection in order to reach the matter encouched in the text.

The first verse of this chapter states that this is the second letter to the brethren by Peter, and that the second epistle is intended to stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance, to the end that they should be mindful of the words spoken by the holy prophets, and of the commandments of the apostles of the Lord and Savior. First is set forth the great importance of being mindful of the words of the Lord by the prophets, as being steadfast, unalterable, sure to come to pass in every detail. This was the foundation for them to build upon when assailed by the world, the flesh and the devil. The things of the legal covenant were according to the mind and commandment of the Lord, and in shadow were as perfect as the substance, or body, that made them, but as shadows had to pass away when the Light came, doing away with legal things. Peter also tells his brethren that it is equally needful to be mindful of the commandments of the apostles. If the word spoken by angels (prophets) was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him. If transgression under the law received punishment for every act of disobedience, how shall any escape now who neglect so great salvation: the commandments of the apostles? To obey their commandments means salvation from that certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which corrects the unruly. It was a sure fact that scoffers should come, walking after their own lusts, saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers, prophets, fell asleep, all things continue as from the beginning of the creation. To suffer the ridicule of the scoffers was one of the many things the brethren had to endure in the days of the apostles, and if there has ever been a time when the church has not had to suffer this same thing we have never seen that part of its history. Peter tells us that the scoffers were willingly ignorant of the flood and the wonderful changes caused thereby, even that the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished. The apostle makes this statement to contradict the assertion of the scoffers that all things from the beginning had continued the same, therefore the promise of his coming had failed, and that those who were looking for him were deceived. It has always been, and always will be, the duty of every believer to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, thereby resenting any and every thing that in any sense reflects

upon the faithfulness and immutability of God, who cannot lie, who promised eternal life before the world was. Verse seven tells that "the heavens and the earth that are now, by the same word [authority of God] are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." This world here spoken of does not mean this material globe upon which men live, but the old covenant of legal works contained in offerings and sacrifices which could never make the comers thereunto perfect. It is sometimes forgotten and sometimes not understood that while the apostles were preaching salvation through the blood of Jesus Christ, the Jews at Jerusalem were still keeping to the Mosaic law, as that nation had done before the coming of Christ. All that work, together with the temple, must be destroyed, and according to the word of prophecy was destroyed in the day of judgment of that ungodly nation. Ungodly in the sense that God was not with it longer. Concerning time Peter says, One day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. Therefore if the promise of his coming unto judgment, and the bringing up of the legal world, and of bringing in the new heavens and the new earth, be delayed, no one should be discouraged nor doubt his word. He was not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but was longsuffering to the elect, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. In this is seen that God had an appointed time to do his will in the matter of destruction of all patterns, figures and shadows. His longsuffering meant salvation, or repentance, of the elect from legal worship to serve and worship him. The day of the Lord, when he should gather together all nations to war against Jerusalem, that the city be destroyed by battle and fire, came as a thief in the night, when the inhabitants were not expecting it, hence unprepared to meet the enemy. This was all in fulfillment of the word of the Lord, who was not slack concerning the promise. That legal world, the first heavens and the first earth, passed away with a great noise and those elements melted with fervent heat. These terms are figurative of the wrath and displeasure of God upon that wicked and adulterous generation, called by the Lord Jesus a generation of vipers.

"Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." The word of the Lord, by his holy prophets, promised the setting up of a kingdom that should abide forever, wherein dwelleth righteousness. The former kingdom was the dwelling-place of works, but here is shown the wonderful contrast between the shedding of the blood of goats and calves, which could never take away sin, and the pouring out of the blood of the Lamb of God that took away the sin of the world. The gospel covenant is today the new heavens and the new earth, in the church of the First-born dwells the righteousness of God. John tells us that he saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride to meet her husband, and the voice said, The tabernacle of God, the new heaven and the new earth, is with men. He will be their God, and they shall be his people.

We hope that brother Barton may examine our exposition of the text to see if the things we have written are the things of God. K.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in April (30th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elizabeth Freeborn Scates, my wife, was born in London Township, Ontario, May 14th, 1840. We were married October 25th, 1882. She was baptized by Elder H. C. Ker May 10th, 1910. She had little to say on spiritual things, but she felt herself a guilty sinner and knew there was no help or salvation for her only in Jesus, but I could see the work of grace going on, for when we were married she did not care for the Old School Baptists, but a real love for them afterward became manifest, which love lasted until the day of her death. She united with the church after listening to a sermon by Elder Ker; with tears streaming from her eyes she said to me, O Robert, I want to be baptized. She came before the church, and though her timidity and fear prevented her from telling her mind she was received, and was a consistent member to the end. She loved to have any of the brethren or sisters visit us, and always said to me how unworthy she felt. Her memory and mind began to give way several years before she died, and at last she got very childish and quite out of her mind. In January, 1921, she fell and broke her hip, and gradually failed until September 21st, when she fell asleep in Jesus, I hope, like an infant going to sleep in its mother's arms. She said the day before she died, "Oh that beautiful land;" no other words of a spiritual nature. She was a loving, devoted, faithful wife. R. SCATES.

Dr. D. V. Bailey was born November 25th, 1867, to James W. and Margaret E. Bailey, died March 16th, 1922, being 54 years, 3 months and 19 days old. He was married to Loea F. Queen, of Boyd County, Kentucky, December 21st, 1905. He graduated from a medical school, in Louisville, Ky. Before he was married he practiced medicine in Boyd Co., Ky., twenty months, then came to Union District, Kanawha County, West Virginia, and took charge of the farm where he was born, obligating himself and wife to take care of his father and mother, which they did faithfully until his death. He soon built up a large practice, and was highly esteemed as a doctor by all who called him in the hour of sickness or distress. The last eighteen years he had been in the saddle most of the time, riding far and near, night and day, through all kinds of weather, to administer to the sick. He was a strong believer in the doctrine advocated by the Old School Baptists, and has often gone with the writer to associations when it was so he could leave his patients, and when the time came for the Pocatalico Association to convene with the Hopewell Church, near his home, he was one of the first to give a public invitation, as he was well prepared to take care of many, and did it with pleasure, having a faithful companion to assist him. He was one of the writer's near neighbors, and to-day the entire neighborhood seems to be draped in mourning. On the morning of March 16th the writer was called to his bedside, there to hear him state his willingness and readiness to bid farewell to this world of trouble, and requested that Elder A. J. Mullens and the writer officiate at his funeral. He then called three witnesses to his bedside that he might make known to them his will, fearing the one he had sent for to write it would not get there in time; but the Lord blessed him to see his will executed before witnesses, and he signed his name to it and died in less than two hours. Surely the good Lord was with him and softened his dying bed, for he died in his right mind, showing no symptoms whatever of any misery. He leaves to mourn their loss, his wife, father and mother, two brothers and one sister and a host of relatives and friends, but we feel our loss is his eternal gain.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder A. J. Mullens and the writer in the presence of a large congregation, who had come to pay their last tribute of respect to one who had been a friend to them in sickness and in health. His remains were laid in the family burying-ground to await the resurrection of the dead. God alone can comfort his bereaved wife, father and mother, brothers and sister, and all who mourn. J. W. McCLANAHAN.

Herbert J. Badger, son of the late Elder J. N. Badger, died in the hospital at Poughkeepsie, N. Y., March 19th, 1922, after a very brief illness from influenza, pleura-pneumonia and jaundice. His mother was Elder Badger's first wife, Miss Helen M. Hinkley, of Hallowell, Maine, and he was born in Jay, Maine, August 7th, 1864. He is survived by his widow, but no children. One sister, Mrs. Helen B. Wilson, of Wilmington, Del., and one brother, Gilbert J. Badger, of New York city, survive him. He was away from home on a business trip at the time of his death, which was wholly unexpected, those in the hospital thinking he was improving when he suddenly passed away. He was not a member of any church, but I think he had formerly gone occasionally to hear Elder McConnell. Elder John McConnell, of the Ebenezer Church, New York city, was at the funeral, whether he officiated or not, I have not learned.

Written at the request of sister M. C. Badger.

L.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

J. W. Newton, Ga., $10.00; R. B. Jones, Tenn., $4.25; Henry C. Merryman, Md., $3.00; S. A. Campbell, Del., $1.00; Mrs. Eliza Jones, Ill., $1.00; Mrs. Sirena Bowen, Ill., $1.00; Mrs. W. C. Stephens, Ga., $3.00.

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THE First Primitive Baptist Church of Mineral Wells, Texas, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on S. W. 4th Ave. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

SALLIE E. HOWARD, Church Clerk.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 90. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1922. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"HE WENT IN TO TARRY WITH THEM."

(LUKE XXIV. 29.)

What a guest! What a companion they had on their way from Jerusalem to Emmaus! As they two journeyed together they communed one with another and were sad. Much of the communion among the dear people of God in these days is of like nature. They unbosom their sorrows, tell of what seems to them blessed hopes, of bright anticipations clouded, opening buds of promise have been nipped by the frost, and winter again seems to have returned. While thus believers in Jesus "talk one to another," Jesus appears. Their eyes are holden, they do not know it is their beloved Savior, but he opens up in their experiences the Scriptures, and their hearts burn within them. Have you not, my brother, my sister, when you have told of your heart's troubles to some of the dear kindred in Christ, and in return they have told of their sorrows, felt your poor heart kindle within you? And you have felt it was indeed good to have companions in tribulation. (Rev. i. 9; Isaiah lxiii. 9.) It is when we feel bereaved of the presence of the Redeemer, and in our sadness, with tardy steps, we wander in the vale of humiliation, that we are instructed and the precious Scriptures are unfolded in our experience. Jesus is near us all the time, "in another form," though unrecognized, yet we are learning of him, and our heart is all a flame of love to our suffering, bleeding, dying, risen Redeemer. In our own sorrows we are brought into the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ, and to us it is also most preciously given, in faith in Christ, to taste in some measure the power of his resurrection.

When they came to Emmaus, Jesus "made as though he would have gone further. But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." How could they part with such a fellow-traveler? Had they ever known a more companionable companion than Jesus? "Abide with us."

"Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide:
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, oh abide with me."

Not a brief glance, I beg, a passing word,
But as thou dwellest with thy disciples, Lord,
Familiar, condescending, patient, free,
Come, not to sojourn, but abide with me.

"And he went in to tarry with them." The visits of Emmanuel to the souls of his own blood-bought people are highly prized. To them he manifests himself as he does not unto the world. The believer cannot long do without the presence of the dear Savior. The world with its cares and its pleasures interferes with their peace and comfort as they sojourn in the world. They long, therefore, for frequent visits from the One altogether lovely, and when he comes, revealing himself as our Lord and Redeemer, he says, "I will sup with him, and he with me." We commune with our Savior and everlasting Friend; we tell him our fears, how we are plagued with sin, how we are harassed by the enemy; we show before him our troubles, we express our delight in his person, and wonderful acts done to redeem, to justify and glorify such poor sinners as we feel ourselves to be; we tell him how we want to praise, yearn to love him, to cleave to him, and we crave his mercy and grace to be our portion while here below, and sometimes, like the queen of Sheba, we tell him all that is in our heart, and prove him with hard questions, questions that often perplex us, which we and no creatures can solve, but which we feel assured, if it be the will of our beloved Lord Jesus, he can answer and comfort and calm and satisfy our disquieted heart. Is it thus we entertain our Beloved? Are these the things with which we spread the table and of which Jesus partakes? "I will sup with him, and he with me." The Lord Jesus communes with us, entertains our souls with his own mercy and grace. He reveals his everlasting love, manifested in his being made flesh, in his living, suffering, bleeding, dying and rising again from the dead to save us from our sins; he cheers us with his smile, tells us that all shall end well; that in his unchanging love to our souls he will bring us through all our sorrows, through the waters, through the fires, through the wilderness of tribulation; that we shall be more than conquerors, for he loveth his own with an everlasting love and will bring them all home to his eternal glory. Was there ever such a feast of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined? (Isaiah xxv. 6.) When we sup with him he is indeed made known to us. "They knew him."—Luke xxiv. 31. Of some we read that they "besought Jesus to depart from them,"—Luke viii. 37, but of others it is recorded, "They besought him that he would tarry with them."—John iv. 40. To which do we belong? Oh, is it not that we exclaim, like the psalmist, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." Sometimes we complain of the shortness of his visits; sometimes Jesus appears, lifts the gloom, shows his reconciling face, tells us of his cleansing blood and justifying righteousness, and oh the blessedness of the man whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Then he vanishes out of our sight, and, like Abraham, we return to our own place. (Gen. xviii. 33.) Read how Jeremiah speaks: "O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy name's sake: for our backslidings are many; we have sinned against thee. O the hope of Israel, the Savior thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night?"—Jer. xiv. 7, 8. Such is the condition of Israel at times. The Lord as a stranger in the land, journeying through the tribes, as having no permanent abode, but as a wayfaring man turning aside to tarry for a night. Happy

the household where the Hope of Israel tarried. But oh, how the prophet longed, not for a transient visit only, but that the Holy One of Israel, the hope and salvation of the church, might make his abode among his people. So sacredly blessed are the moments when Jesus comes in to tarry with us we long for these visits to be more frequent, and that they would last longer. When Christ is our guest, like the spouse of old we say, "I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please."—Solomon's Song iii. 5. But the time of love will come when freed from earth, when in the resurrection we shall see him as he is, and this mortal shall put on immortality. We shall be like Jesus Christ, our ascended and glorified Head, and so for ever we shall be with the Lord, the Lamb. "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God; and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name."—Rev. iii. 12. No farther go to-night, but stay, dear Savior, till the break of day. Turn in, dear Lord, with me, and in the morning when I wake, me in thy arms, dear Jesus, take, and I will go with thee. Now, Lord, be with us on our way; unveil thy face, thy arm display, thy glory let us prove. Do thou, dear Savior, with us walk, and while with thee we sweetly talk, our hearts may burn with love. May we in faith still journey on till we arrive where thou art gone, and see thy face in heaven. Then, when in glory we shall meet, in what sweet concert shall we sit and sing of sins forgiven.

Your brother in Jesus,

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

MATTHEW XXI. 42.

"THE stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

This quotation was made by the Lord to the Jews from Psalms cxviii. 22, 23, to refute them when they questioned his divine authority. From the two parables he had spoken just previously they perceived he was picturing them. This greatly angered them. They thought the institutions under the law of Moses were endangered by such teaching; indeed, that the very law itself would be subverted and nullified. But Christ assured them that he came not to destroy, but to fulfill; that not one jot or tittle of the law should pass until it was all fulfilled. (Matthew v. 18.)

There is a legend concerning the building of the great Jewish temple in the reign of Solomon like this: The stones and timbers to erect it were all prepared in the quarries and forests far from the site of the temple. They were all so perfectly hewn and then marked that when they were assembled at the building site they fitted so perfectly together that there was no sound of hammer or chisel heard. But there was one stone so strangely and curiously fashioned that as the building rose there seemed to be no place for it. It was tried in many places, but would fit in none. It lay unused and unusable in the way of the builders. They stumbled over it many times as they went about their work, until at last it was called a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence. (Isaiah viii. 14.) The temple rose in all its beautiful and majestic proportions, nearing completion. Only one stone at last was lacking to finish it. All the material was used save this one rejected stone. The workmen could not think that this stone of stumbling and rock of

offence could be the needful one, but at last they brought it forth and put it in place. It fitted perfectly. They cried in their delight, Grace, grace unto it; and so was verified the Scripture: "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner."

This temple building with all its beautiful and costly appointments doubtless represents the moral institution of the Mosaic law. With the numberless ceremonies and sacrifices enjoined and performed therein, it only served to the purifying of the flesh. Its service was outward and formal, and could not make the comers thereunto perfect as to the conscience. True, the teaching of morals in all our institutions of learning, from the lowest to the highest, is based upon the moral code of Moses. The rules of equity in our courts of justice also have their origin there, but like the temple stones, they are destitute of life—spiritual life. They contain only moral and legal prohibition and injunctions, are not builded together as lively stones which groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord. Its thou shalt, and thou shalt not, represent the duty of the natural man to God and his fellow-man. "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." (the natural man)—Eccl. xii. 13. Christ came to teach that though this moral and legal life was much, yet it was not enough; still he did not come to destroy it, but fulfill it. When God, the Judge of all the world, shall judge in the last day, he will judge it by Jesus Christ. This means that man cannot when judged enter the plea that God gave him a law impossible to keep, for the man Christ Jesus did keep it, he fulfilled this law of God in every jot and tittle. He is the "Ecce Homo," the perfect man. No wonder his faultless life made him the head of the corner. He truly loved the Lord with all his mind, might and strength, and his neighbor as himself, perfectly fulfilling all the other requirements of the law. Though sinful man had broken it, he fulfilled it, even magnified it. Every moral virtue and perfection was his. He was the Capstone of the moral institution of the law, but the keeping of it did not merit eternal life. True, it would do much for the peace and welfare of the world: it would make wars impossible, create peaceful and prosperous communities, give worldly honors, promote health and happiness. To the law-abiding Jews, as a nation, it held the promise of long life and prosperity in the land the Lord God had given them. Paul stated it thus in Romans: What advantage then hath the Jew? Much every way, but chiefly because unto them were committed the oracles of God. The Jews, however, thought the law contained the promise of eternal life. Jesus said unto them, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."—John v. 39.

To briefly summarize. The moral law was adapted to the moral government of the Israelites; it was incumbent as such upon them. Many beautiful and useful lives were developed under its precepts and teachings, but often under its guise was found the whited sepulchre, beautiful without but vile within: the coat to cover the wolf, the profession to hide the Judas.

Now the other side. "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded."—1 Peter ii. 6. Here is another temple that God should build. Christ, instead of being only the head of the corner, shall be its very foundation. "Upon this rock [or stone] I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall

not prevail against it."—Matthew xvi. 18. Its material, too, will be prepared in the quarries and forests of nature. Jacob knew; He found him in a waste howling wilderness, Moses in Midian, Ruth in the land of Moab, Paul on his murderous errand to Damascus, and all his people in the wilds of nature. Upon them all in their natural state he performed his miracle of grace. Though they dwelt in the kingdom of darkness, yet there he fitted them for translation into the kingdom of his dear Son. All are there so well prepared and marked that they come, or are brought out and together by the gospel, and are fitted into the temple of the living God without hammer or chisel or the work of man. They are no longer the dead stones of a nonspiritual morality, but living stones builded together for the habitation of the Spirit through the Lord. John the Baptist said, "The axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire."—Matthew iii. 10. An empty profession is not enough for this new temple. It is not builded of material spiritually dead, but out of dead material spiritually quickened. Paul explains it: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: * * * and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved)."—Eph. ii. 1–5. This material thus prepared by the great Architect of the temple not made with hands for a place within it now is brought together and groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord. It is builded upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone. Unlike the Jewish institution of the law, of which, as we have seen, He was the head of the corner, here he is both the Foundation-stone and Capstone as well, because he is declared "to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."—Eph. i. 22, 23. The Alpha and Omega, the first and the last.

"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law."—Rom. iii. 31. Is the lofty morality of the law as supplied by the old temple service set at naught by the spiritual service of the new temple? Nay. God forbid. Works without faith under the law were as sounding brass. Faith without works under the gospel is only a barren fig tree, but faith which worketh by love is the perfection and fulfillment of the moral code in all its fullness and beauty. Morality alone is the artificial flower with an outward show of beauty, but destitute of growth and fragrance. Spirituality is the true temple of God, the living tree planted by him, and reaching, ever reaching, upward toward the Light, not only with rarest loveliness and beauty, but the richest fragrance and fruitage of the heart's delight. This spiritual temple is of His building. It is the Lord's work, and is marvelous in our eyes. It is not the moral teaching of men, or the schools of men, but of God. There the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, for the testimony of Israel. Of it David exclaims, One day in thy courts, O God, are better than a thousand. There Christ has promised to declare his name unto his brethren. In the midst of the churches will I sing praises unto thee. Peace be within thy

gates, O Jerusalem, and prosperity within thy palaces. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee." "Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

"Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God;
He, whose word cannot be broken,
Formed thee for his own abode."

Amen.

[THE foregoing is the substance of a sermon delivered by Elder D. B. Nowels, at the home of sister Mary Morris, Lamar, Colo., October 16th, 1921, and sent to the SIGNS at the request of sister Sarah Curry, of Canon City, Colo.—ED.]

DANTE, Va., Feb., 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If I am blessed with an understanding I will write upon the following Scripture: "I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?"—Solomon's Song v. 3. David says, In thy light shall we see light. Then if I am blessed with this divine light I will write something that will be food to some poor wayfaring child of God. It is my desire that what I may say be tried by the testimony, because I know that when I have not this divine light I am but a poor mortal subject to error. There are two things necessary for us to understand: what the speaker or writer is speaking or writing about, and who or what is under consideration. The coat here spoken of by Solomon, like other Scriptures, has its meaning, whether I am blessed to see its import or not. However, we know a coat is a covering, or worn as an outside garment. Jacob gave his son Joseph a coat of many colors. As I see, this is the first tabernacle, or covenant, "which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building." Here is the first Abraham covenant of divers washings, which means various, or different, which are the many colors in Joseph's coat. The Lord says by the mouth of Solomon, "I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on?" In putting off this coat, or old covenant, is the time of reformation spoken of by Paul. Therefore Christ being come an High Priest of good things put off this coat, or old covenant of works, and, as the apostle says, he took away the first that he might establish the second. Here is this second that the Lord spoke by the mouth of the prophet: "made sure in all things." The Lord again speaking by the mouth of the prophet of this blessed new and everlasting covenant says, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel." Here the days had come for the putting off this coat. Let us note the fact that this new covenant was not made with any other people than Israel, God's own chosen people. Concerning this people the psalmist says, "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant." Gracious thought! that these people had a great High Priest worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof. "No man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon." John wept because no man was found worthy, but one of the elders said unto him, "Weep not: behold, the Lion

of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." Here is the putting off of the coat, or law covenant, that never could show mercy to its violaters, but thundered forth its sentence: The soul that sins it must die. But thanks forever and ever, these people had a blessed and holy Savior who died for them. Oh glorious love! Oh glorious thought! Yet we are given an eye to see our unworthiness of such love, and all our sinful and rebellious ways. We hear the Lord saying by the mouth of the prophet, "Wherefore? Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant." This same John says, "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet." Here is the bride, or church, clothed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ, here are the feet that are washed and cannot be defiled, here the law has been fulfilled, here are the feet under grace "shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." Here are the two covenants: "For the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Then no wonder John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, because when Christ came his people in the like sense came with Him, for they were eternally with him. Paul says, "Now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much more also he is the mediator of a better covenant."

There are many more things connected with these lines I would like to write of if time and space would permit, but let this suffice, knowing when it is God's will to carry us out on the Lord's day, as he did Ezekiel, we can with Isaiah say, "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks."

W. L. EDWARDS.

HAMMOND, W. Va., Dec. 19, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending a copy of a letter I received from my brother, who is eighteen years old; do with it as you wish.

(MRS.) WESLEY LINN.

MONTROSE, W. Va., Dec. 7, 1921.

DEAR SISTER BERNICE:—I will try to answer your letter, received this evening. I was glad to hear from you.

Well, I feel so weak and low down tonight that I do not know that I can write my experience, as you requested, but I will try, if the Lord will enable me to do so, but without the will of God I can do nothing. I feel too unworthy to try to write.

About three years ago this past summer I was made to see what a sinner I was. I thought I surely was lost, without any hope in life at all. The things I once loved (worldly things) I then despised, and the things I had not loved I then loved, but I could not tell how such a sinner as I could love divine things. I would try to read the Bible, but could not, for my eyes would fill with tears. Night after night I would lie and weep, and try to pray to the glorious God of heaven to save me, for I thought I was as sure of everlasting punishment as if I were there. This condition continued until the first of June, 1921. I had gone to bed as usual, weeping and trying to pray. I went to sleep and dreamed that it was meeting day and Elder J. J. Poling was there, and that I went before the

church and was received and was baptized by him. When I awoke all my trouble was gone, and all that day it seemed as though I wanted to sing the good old hymns. I was at work in the cornfield and sang what few hymns I knew. There were two that seemed to suit my case, and were on my mind more than the others; they were 679 and 1149, Beebe's collection. I then wanted to be baptized, but this was the question: Was I a fit subject to be a member of the Old School Baptist church? which I believe with all my heart is the church of God. I felt too unworthy to tell any one of my feelings, so thought I would keep them to myself; but no, it could not be done. If you remember, at the July meeting sister Hunt came to the church, and oh how I did long to, but the time for me was not then. After meeting was over it seemed as though I was bound to tell some one how I felt, so I told brother Burr, and then Elder Linn asked me about myself. I told him the best I could, and said that if it were God's will for me to do so I would go to the church at the August meeting, and so I did, and that was a very happy day indeed to me, but I have been in very deep darkness at times since. It has seemed as though I surely am a deceiver, and I think and say many times, O God, if I am deceived undeceive me.

I have thought of sending my experience to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but I do not think it would be fit to be published in so good a paper and among the good letters it contains. I surely do love to read them.

Well, as this is quite a lengthy letter I had better close. I do hope there will be nothing to keep you from coming home the 25th, for that is about the only time during the year that we all get together any more.

Hoping to hear from you soon, your brother,

BENTON D. MURPHY.

STERLING, Va., March 16, 1922.

DEAR BROTHER OLIVER:—I received your kind letter of March 6th, and certainly enjoyed its contents. I was sorry to hear of your illness, but hope you are enjoying good health at this time. As for myself, I feel tolerably well at times, and sometimes weak, but put all my trust in the Lord, knowing he is able to heal all our afflictions and to add unto our time if he sees fit, for the Lord has said, Call on me in the day of trouble and I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorify me. Oh that I could glorify him more for the goodness and mercy he has bestowed upon me in the past, praying him to create a clean heart and to renew a right spirit within me. Dear brother, I know the Lord has spared me beyond my allotted time. I believe our souls and bodies are in his hands, and also that all power in heaven and in earth is in his hands. I often wonder, Shall I at last be a castaway, and shall I one day hear those awful words, Depart from me; I never knew you? Yet I feel that though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.

I hope you will not be disappointed with my poor letter, for I know you are much further advanced in the gospel kingdom than I am. Your letters to me were both precious and consoling, and I hope to receive more of them in the near future. I should love to have been with you all at your last meeting at that sacred old meeting-house, Frying Pan, but could not. I hope the Lord may spare me and give me strength to meet with you all to participate of that heavenly food the

Lord sends to his poor and afflicted children.

I will have to close, hoping this will find you and sister Oliver enjoying good health.

Your brother in hope of a better world,

B. W. PRESGRAVES.

(*See obituary on page 142.*)

VARINA, N. C., April 19, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—My remittance is some thirty days past due, but as it has been my custom of late years to pay two years in advance I hope you will pardon my delay. I am now inclosing my check for five dollars, four of which please place to my credit, and one to help some one who is not able to pay for the paper. It might not be amiss to allow me space to say that I have been a subscriber to the SIGNS for a long time. I like the clean cut, clear type style of your paper, but I like the God-honoring doctrine set forth in it more than all. It seems to just suit a poor sinner like me. When I was but a child the Lord said to me (in a dream), I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. I never could forget that dream. In later years I read the same in John xiv. 6. I trembled from head to foot at the thought of these words being left with me so young. I had no hope, and could not understand. Later still, in the year 1886, the Lord revealed himself to me as the way, the truth and the life. My soul was all wonder and love, my burden was gone and I really thought I had nothing left to be done but to rest in the arms of his love, and at his call lay my head upon his precious breast and breathe my life out sweetly there. Oh what a simple child I was! I did not know I must be made tired before I could rest. I did not know that all my strength must fail before I could realize that his everlasting arm was underneath, and that in him alone I must trust for all things. A dear brother said to me some years ago, I do not see how some of our brethren and sisters wait a whole month for a regular church meeting and when it comes let some trivial matter keep them from the meeting. He said, Why, I love to go. Then he burst into tears, and said, But the Lord has given me a mind to go. His words have been precious to me. If I have ever done a good thing it is because my blessed Savior, who is my way, my truth and my life, has led me; yea, given me a mind to do it. My natural inclination is to live in sin. I am carnal, sold unto sin; a slave to sin. I am now about sixty-five years of age, and have been, and am still, such a slave to sin that it has reduced me almost to utter despair. I often feel, and sometimes say, that I am the poorest living man that ever walked on the face of the earth. I do not mean by speaking of myself as a vile sinner that I am known as a common liar or a drunkard. Perhaps my neighbors would say of me, He is a good man and a good neighbor. But they do not see and feel what I do.

I must close. I had no idea of writing so much, but before I close allow me to add that I enjoy all the writings in the SIGNS, and especially do I enjoy the editorials. I often feel I get from one editorial that which is worth more than the cost of the paper for a year. Especially does Elder Lefferts often so express what I hope has been written in my heart that I feel I want to see him face to face and tell him over and over again that I love him for Christ's sake.

With love and best wishes to the household of faith, I am, I hope, affectionately yours,

W. J. STEPHENSON.

FORSYTH, Ga., March 20, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am in receipt of the last issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, in which I notice your appeal to subscribers in arrears, so many and so far behind that you are made to suffer financial loss. This ought not to be. Honesty calls for better attention to our obligations than to let them run along in an indifferent way. If we cannot pay the subscription price and want the paper, some provision can be made for them to get it. If we do not want it let us order it discontinued. I am persuaded that there are but few who want the paper and are not able to pay for it. There may be a few old and afflicted people who would like to have it, those who believe in the doctrine set forth in your paper. Many such you are no doubt furnishing with it now. If any who are in arrears come under this head, and will so notify you, and you will make an appeal to those who are subscribers and are able to come to your rescue for their benefit, I am sure you will get assistance. I would love to see the SIGNS enlarged, more reading matter from such able gifts as have always contributed to it, as well as the editorials. If you need help in this line, and the brethren who are able are willing to help, your statement is enough to arouse them. I send you a small contribution to show my interest. May others do likewise, is the prayer of yours in hope,

J. W. NEWTON.

JONESBORO, La., June 20, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am a sinner to begin with, but I just want to let you know the pleasure I get twice each month from your pure, clean paper. It is the only christian paper I ever read that just exactly suits me. I cannot begin to tell how I do hunger and thirst for real food, but cannot get it here, although we have four denominations, but when I go I never get even a crumb. Dear editors and brethren (if I might be worthy to say brethren) pray for me. It sometimes seems my burdens are heavier than I can bear, and that I am doomed to destruction, for I cannot see one good thing in me. I am passing the paper on to a neighbor, as she has asked for it. I never insist on any one reading it who does not want to, for if they are hungry they will ask for it. Oh, if the paper can fill a hungry soul like it does mine I shall be satisfied. I do hope and pray I may be one of His, if only the least one, but I feel so unworthy.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) L. E. POOLE.

BEMENT, Ill., March 21, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—I must say good-bye to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but want to thank every one who has been so kind as to contribute what they have in helping to pay the expense in sending it to the poor of the flock, for I am one of that number, but I am so old and blind I cannot see to read it any more, and must bid you all good-bye. My prayer is that God will bless every one of you. If I could see I would write more. I will send this little remembrance and many thanks.

Your poor sister, I hope,

MARY J. PETTY.

BROTHER A. S. Rowe, church clerk, has sent us a few copies of A Sketch of the History of the Ebenezer Baptist Church, of Baltimore City, by her pastor, Elder Joshua T. Rowe, which he requests us to sell at twenty-five cents per copy. Address orders to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1922.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

2 PETER I. 10.

"WHEREFORE the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall."

A brother in Alabama asked us more than a year ago to write on this Scripture. We have failed to do so, not willingly neglecting or ignoring the request, but feeling our inability and lack of light to do justice to the subject. Even now we attempt to write upon it with much hesitation, fearing we may not have the correct understanding of it, but we are willing to leave the matter to the judgment of our readers.

Looking back to the beginning of this first chapter of the second epistle of Peter, we find the message addressed by the apostle to those who have obtained the same precious faith as that held by the apostles, and that it is not addressed to any others. We find further that this same precious faith has been obtained in no uncertain way, and by no efforts of the believers themselves, but obtained through the righteousness of God and of the Savior Jesus Christ. The apostle next expresses his desire that grace and peace be multiplied unto the saints, but wants it understood that they cannot themselves multiply grace and peace, but that it is to be multiplied unto them through the knowledge of God and of Jesus. Thus, the like precious faith of all the saints comes to them through the righteousness of God and his Son, the grace and peace is multiplied to them through the knowledge of God and his Son, that knowledge which comes by revelation of the Holy Spirit, and not by dint of study or hard work on their part. Going further, the apostle says that everything relating to life and godliness is given to believers by divine power. This means not that divine power gives his people some of the things belonging to life and godliness and that they must get the rest of the things themselves, but all things and everything that belong to life and godliness are given by the divine power of God. Nothing could be plainer than this, and the statement could not be broader than this, for it expressly includes everything, no matter what, which belongs to the life and the godliness of the children of God, and expressly states that these things come not by efforts of the fleshly nature of the saints, nor by any exercise of their own power, but all come by divine power. Still further, that the divine power gives these things through the knowledge, not their own knowledge, but of the knowledge of that same God who has called them (not invited them) to glory and virtue; and that by this divine power and by this divine knowledge of God and by this calling of God there are given or applied to the church exceeding great and precious promises, and that by all these divine things and gifts of God believers are made partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. Our first parents in the garden of Eden lusted for the very fruit which had been forbidden them to eat; the satisfaction of this lust brought sin into the world, sin brought death, or

condemnation. Therefore all the corruption in the world to-day is the result of sin in the first place. This corruption the children of God escape, because Christ has redeemed them from it by the shedding of his blood, by his death and resurrection from the dead. Now, after telling the saints that all the things they possess come to them through divine power, that their faith comes to them by God's righteousness and that grace and peace come through the knowledge of God, the apostle tells them to add up, or add together, all these divine gifts and blessings in order to show them and to remind them how wonderfully God has blessed them in giving them all these things. Therefore he says, "Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity." This, you notice, is a sum in addition, not in multiplication. He is not telling them to multiply their faith and get virtue, to multiply their virtue and get knowledge, and so on, but to add together the things which they already have, which things have been given them by divine power, for all these things (virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, &c.) pertain to life and godliness, and therefore have been given them by the power of God, and not by their own power. We must remember that the church is the bride of Christ, and that it is to this bride, and not to the world, that Peter is here writing. We must remember that all her beautiful garments are and have been prepared for her in the righteousness of her husband, Jesus Christ, that the filthy garments of her own ragged righteousness have been removed from her and these beautiful garments put upon her by her Lord. Simon Peter, therefore, in this chapter names, one by one, and in their proper order, the garments belonging in the spiritual wardrobe of the bride, and tells her to add them up that she may see how wonderfully she is blessed. Now, it must be quite evident that we cannot add two and two together unless we have the two and two to add together; we cannot add together things which we do not have. Therefore, the church already has all these gifts which are enumerated here, and the apostle plainly tells the saints where and how they received them. He calls on them simply to add them together in order to behold how wondrously rich they are; not in the things of earth, but rich in that heavenly treasure which moth and rust cannot corrupt, and into which thieves cannot break and steal. There are times when the child of God forgets the goodness of God, times when faith and virtue and temperance and patience and all these other gifts are lost sight of or are not in exercise, times when the wardrobe door is closed and we cannot see the beautiful garments, and lose sight of how rich we are, and see only our own nakedness and poverty. Then is when we lack these things, and are blind; then is when we see only the things that are near, the earthly and temporal things, and cannot see afar off unto those things which are unseen and eternal; then is when we forget that we have been purged from our sins. This ninth verse applies as well to the children of God as do the eight previous verses. Because of the fact that believers are often subjected to doubts and temptations, because they do often lose sight of the goodness and mercy of God, is all the more reason why Peter is inspired to cheer the saints with the list of the gifts given them by the

power of God, adding them up to show them how rich they are in the bounty of heaven, and exhorting them to make their calling and election sure. The election of the saints unto glory was in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and their calling is by the effectual working in them of the grace of God. If one was not chosen in Christ before the world began, is there anything that one can do in time to procure that election? Certainly not. If one is not, or has not been, effectually called unto repentance by the grace of God, can that one of himself get himself called? Certainly not. Then there is nothing that any one can do to make his calling or election more sure than it is, for if one has been elected unto glory from eternity it is a sure election. If one is called by grace to the knowledge of salvation it is a sure calling. Both the election and the calling cannot fail, but are as sure as the promises of God, all of which are yea and amen in Christ Jesus. But look at these things from the standpoint of experience and see if there are not times when you have felt that these things are not sure to you, times when you are tempted to think you have been mistaken in the whole matter of religion, times when it all seems a delusion or a dream. The election and the calling are both sure to all the seed of Christ, but am I one of the seed, are these things mine, and dare I claim them? These sore questionings come at some time, and at many times, to the child of God. These are times when one needs consolation, and needs to have one's pure mind stirred up by way of remembrance of God's goodness and mercy. This is just what Peter is doing in this letter. He is bringing to the remembrance of the saints things which they already know, reminding them of God's gifts to them, adding up for them their spiritual wealth, and asking them to diligently examine themselves to see if they have any of these things in them, so as to be assured of their election and calling. Are we not commanded to try the spirits whether they be of God, and are there not many diverse spirits which at various times exercise the saints, some of them being of the flesh and others of them being of the Spirit? Are we not commanded to examine ourselves whether we be in the faith? Are we not told to prove all things and to hold fast the good? Is it not in this way that the believer makes his calling and election sure, by searching himself to see if there be any faith, any virtue, any temperance, any patience, any godliness, any brotherly kindness or any charity? If, at times, we find evidences of these things within ourselves we are never in doubt as to how they came within us, for there is only one way in which they can come within us, and that is by the divine power of God, as Peter writes. If, therefore, we are encouraged to believe we do have faith, or temperance, or kindness, or charity, or any other fruit of the Spirit within us, then are we not to that extent assured of our election and calling? Further, if we are possessed of this spirit of self-examination it will lead us to careful walking, so that we shall not fall. Thinking we know something when we know nothing is bound to lead to a fall, but the believer's safeguard is a fearfulness lest he fall into temptation, and the snare of the devil, and this very fearfulness compels us to diligently try the spirits, and to examine ourselves to see whether these fruits be in us and abound. These heavenly garments are not to be bought in the market-place, they come only by divine power. Peter does not mean for the saints, if they have them

not, to make some effort of their own to get them and thereby get themselves elected or called. The election and calling come first, then follow the beautiful garments given by divine power; therefore look within yourselves and go over the way the Lord has led you to see if you can find evidences of these garments ever having clothed you. If so, your calling and election are sure. We know nothing of what took place before the foundation of the world only as the spiritual evidences of those eternal things blossom within us. If there be any faith, or kindness, or charity, or any of the other fruits, then there must have been the election and the calling, for these fruits are proof of them. L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

L. T. Hawthorne was born in Warren County, Ga., October 10th, 1848, and died at his home, Provencal, La., March 22nd, 1922, aged 73 years, 4 months and 20 days. His parents moved to Arkansas when he was a child, lived there a few years then moved to Jackson Parish, La., where he grew to manhood. He professed a hope early in life and joined the Missionary Baptists in 1865. September 15th, 1870, he was married to Miss Fannie McBride. Nine children were born to them, seven boys and two girls, all of whom lived to be grown and married except the youngest, who served in the United States Navy during the European war and died September 14th, 1920. Cora, the younger daughter, died October 18th, 1919. In the year 1875 brother Hawthorne joined the Primitive Baptist Church called Zion Rest, in Jackson Parish, La He lived there for a few years, then moved with his family to Natchitoches Parish. In wandering around he found some people who believed in salvation by grace, the same doctrine that he did, but had never heard a gospel sermon preached. He wrote for a preacher to come down south, and found a little band of people who said they would like to hear preaching. The preacher came and preached to them the doctrine and was gladly received, so they organized a church with about twelve members. That was about thirty-two years ago. He was ordained deacon of the church, and served faithfully until about two years ago, when his health failed and he could not attend to the duties. He never failed to attend his meetings when his health would permit. He was nearly always chosen as delegate to represent the church in the district meeting and the Louisiana Primitive Baptist associations. He was well known among his brethren all over the state, and always loved to have his brethren and sisters visit him at his home. He was a close student of the Bible, strong in the faith. His mind seemed to run upon the Lord's dealings with his people. The last time he attended meeting he had to have help to get in and out, as he had been unable for about two years to go about without help, but bore his suffering with patience. His affliction was rheumatism and creeping paralysis. He had all possible attention from his family and physicians, but the Lord's time had come. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord. He leaves his dear companion and seven children with brothers and friends to mourn their loss. While we feel lonely and sad to give him up, God help us to say, Thy will be done.

Written by request of his wife, by his brother,

R. A. HAWTHORNE.

Burr W. Presgraves, our brother in Christ, died at his home, Sterling, Loudoun Co., Va., April 11th, 1922. He was born in Loudoun County July 15th, 1840, and lived there all his life. He was the son of W. W. and Rebecca Presgraves, both deceased. He leaves one brother surviving him: Thomas L. Presgraves, of Herndon, Va. He was married to Miss Rosa Havener in 1866, who died in 1903. Of this marriage there are living at the present time three sons and one daughter, as follows: B. W. Presgraves, Jr., and Miss Ellen Presgraves, Sterling, Va.; George W. Presgraves, Baltimore, Md.; Henry C. Presgraves, Herndon, Va. Of these children Miss Ellen will miss her father most keenly, because it was she who kept house for her father and who tenderly and lovingly cared for him in his last days. A vacancy has come into her life which she feels unbearable now. May the Lord be with her and strengthen her, as well as with the sons, to reconcile each and all to his most holy will. Brother Presgraves was baptized by the late Elder E. V. White into membership with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Va., some twenty or more years ago. As to his belief and feelings regarding the truth and the church, I know of nothing better than to refer our readers to brother Presgraves' letter written to brother John F. Oliver, which will be found in another section of this same number of the SIGNS. This letter to brother Oliver was the last thing written by our brother before his death.

At the funeral we read Psalms ciii., and tried to speak from the first five verses, also sang his favorite hymn: "There is a fountain filled with blood," &c. He was buried in the cemetery at Sterling, Va.

L.

MEMORIALS.

RESOLVED, that we, the Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., do sincerely regret our loss in the death of brother **John K. Yerkes,** who died February 18th, 1922. While he always maintained his membership with his old home church in Pennsylvania, yet he was very earnest in serving us in any capacity where his help was needed. He was for many years one of the trustees and also treasurer of this church. Unless hindered by Providence, brother Yerkes was always present at church meetings. In his every day life, as well as in his church relations, he seemed always to desire to do for the good of others, rather than for himself. While we sincerely regret our loss, we feel that our loss is his gain, for we believe that his life and service among us here on earth showed him to have been one of the elect, rich in faith and abounding in good works.

A. B. WILLIAMS }
E. C. ROSS } Committee.
J. W. DAVIE }

Brother Yerkes left a widow, who was formerly Miss Mary Frankland, of Warrenton, Va. Funeral services were held February 20th at the chapel of John R. Wright Co., our pastor, Elder J. T. Rowe, officiating. Interment was private in Glenwood Cemetery.

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Association will be held with Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore city, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 17th, 18th and 19th, 1922. The meetinghouse at 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St., will be open on Tuesday p. m. May 16th, where visitors will be met and taken to places of entertainment. To all friends, brethren, sisters and ministers of our faith and order a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, beginning Wednesday, May 24th, 1922, and continuing three days. All lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus are cordially invited to meet with us.

Only ministers and messengers of churches who feel that they can meet with us in peace and love, and who are in good standing with the churches and associations with which we correspond, will be received to sit in council in our deliberations. In the issue of the SIGNS for May 15th we expect to announce the time of the running of trains, when Daylight Saving goes into effect.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

KNOXVILLE, Tenn., April 6, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have a desire to write you my views of the atonement. There are not many brethren who write or preach upon this subject, but it has always been interesting to me. Atonement means, in Hebrew, to cover the offences of a transgressor. The Greek, "at onement." In our language, reconciliation. We have been reconciled to God by the death of his Son. Christ is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. "We also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."—Rom. v. 11. We notice the atonement was made by the blood of a sin offering. I will present this subject to you under the head of type and antitype. The tribe of Levi was set apart to execute the priests' office. In building the temple, or tabernacle, there was a room in that building set apart for the purpose of the atonement, which was called the inward court, or the most holy place, or the holiest of holies, or the sanctum sanctorum. In it was deposited the ark of the covenant and mercy-seat; on each end of the mercy-seat was the image of a cherubim, and also the golden altar of incense. In the ark of the covenant was deposited Aaron's rod that budded, and two tables of stone, on which were written the commandments, and the golden pot that contained the manna. The order of God was, See that ye make all things according to the pattern showed thee in the mount. We claim this a pattern of heavenly things. Aaron was chosen of God as high priest; his work was to make atonement for the congregation of Israel specially. Chosen blood applied to his right ear proved his ear was circumcised. Blood was applied to the thumb of the right hand and to the great toe of the right foot. This is a type of cleansing by blood. Deposited also was the molten sea, borne up by twelve oxen made of brass, in which was holy water in which the high priests always washed and then put on a clean garment, which represents the righteousness of saints. Around the fringe of his robe were attached pomegranates and bells, and on the breastplate of his girdle was the image of the twelve tribes of Israel. On his head was placed the golden crown, and in front was engraved in large letters, Holiness unto the Lord. We see then the princi-

ples of the doctrine of election shown in the high priest. First, he was chosen; second, blood applied; then washed and dressed. In those days the high priest had a holy oil, and with this he was anointed before he entered into his official work. The high priest always made a choice of a certain beast for the atonement for himself and for his household. The beast was always slain without the camp and its blood caught in a silver basin and was brought in and sprinkled on the lintel and door posts of the tabernacle. The high priest then went within the vail and sprinkled the blood upon the mercy-seat and golden altar and poured the remainder thereof beside the bottom of the altar, then bowed before the altar and made intercession for himself and his household. The congregation waited without in the outward court. The congregation could see the reflection of the glory of God in the holy water, and hear the sound of the bells that were attached to his robe, which was evidence that God was well pleased with the work of their high priest. After this the high priest came out from behind the vail and made choice of two kids of goats; one was to be the people's goat, and one the Lord's goat. They cast lots upon the two goats, and the one the Lord's lot fell upon was to be slain without the camp, where the bullock was slain, and his blood caught in the same silver basin, and the blood applied the same as before, on the lintel and door posts, and the high priest entered the sanctum sanctorum again behind the vail and applied the blood as before stated, upon the golden altar and mercy-seat. The high priest also made intercessions for the congregation. The cloudy pillar that followed Israel from Egypt always appeared and stood over the mercy-seat, which is called the grand Shechinah, the visible presence of God, for God said, I will commune with thee from between the cherubim. The high priest then came out from behind the vail and took the people's goat, which is called the scapegoat, and laid both his hands upon the head of the scapegoat and confessed his own sins and the sins of his household, and then the sins of all the congregation of Israel. The scapegoat was delivered into the hands of a fit man and carried to a land not inhabited and let go. We see, brethren, the proceedings of the atonement in the type show God's election or choice of his people and high priest.

Now the antitype. Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you. We were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself. Jesus Christ, who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature; for by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him and for him, for he is before all things, and by him all things consist, and he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in all things he might have the preeminence; for it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell. This refers to Christ. Christ was referred to as coming from Edom and Bozrah with dyed garments, and said to be glorious in

his apparel, and traveling in the greatness of his strength. His answer was, I am he that speaketh in righteousness, mighty to save. He was asked, Why art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? He replied, I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with me. The time came, according to God's eternal purpose which he purposed in himself, that these things should be made manifest. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." It behooved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren. He is the antitype as shown in the type of the atonement. Christ possessed two natures: human and divine, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God. The two goats shown in the type are symbolical of the two natures of Jesus Christ, who bore our sins in his own body on the tree of the cross. For the Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all. Therefore let us go forth unto him who suffered without the gate, bearing his reproach. He says, I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. Father, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do; glorify thy Son, that thy Son may also glorify thee; and now, Father, glorify thou me with thine ownself, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou hast given me out of the world; thine they were and thou gavest them me, and as thou lovedst me, so have I loved them thou hast given me, and thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. This makes his love to the church parallel with his Father's love to him. Christ then is the High Priest of our profession. The ancient high priest made the atonement in the most holy place, but the blood of the victim was always shed outside the camp. Bear in mind that in the type was shown the pattern of heavenly things. So Christ poured out his blood on the tree of the cross, and by his own blood entered in once into the holy place, even heaven itself, having obtained eternal redemption for us. "Us" meaning God's family, the children of God, the elect of God, all have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. This family was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, for God says, I place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory. Then if they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world and made perfect in one, Christ in the Father and the Father in the Son, Christ in them and they in Christ. Hence as Christ lives by the Father, so the church lives by Christ. He is their life. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory. The poet certainly had the right idea when he said,

"In union with the Lamb,
From condemnation free,
The saints from everlasting were,
And shall forever be.

In covenant from of old,
The sons of God they were;
The feeblest lamb in Jesus' fold
Was blessed in Jesus there.

Its bonds shall never break,
Though earth's old columns bow;
The strong, the tempted and the weak,
Are one in Jesus now."

Brethren, I have written these few lines for your consideration, feeling very imperfect in myself, but these are my views on the choice and salvation of

God's people. I submit them to you, and if you think it best to publish them, do so; if otherwise, use your pleasure.

I esteem your paper very highly,

J. S. LEWIS.

COLUMBUS, Ga., March 14, 1920.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am admonished to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, our dear old family paper. Every number comes laden with good tidings of great joy, bringing to our remembrance the things that are ever new and lovely, for the half can never be told. The editorials are instructive and strengthening to the children of our King in the way of truth and righteousness and in the order of God's house. We read with joy the writings of the brethren and sisters, telling of the goodness and wonderful love of Jesus, his abounding grace and plenteous mercy to his poor afflicted people, how that Jesus hath done great things for them, whereof they are glad. This medium of correspondence for the Lord's scattered people is one of his many blessings, given them for their great comfort and consolation. The Lord's portion is his people, and all things work together for their good. His loving hand is underneath, and he keeps them and holds them up. Oh the manifold mercies of our Lord to his chosen generation! God is rich in mercy and great is his love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. Wonderful love, no tongue can tell, no pen describe.

"Love is the sweetest bud that grows,
Its beauty never dies;
Below among the saints it blows,
And ripens in the skies."

The Lord hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness to us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith, and this precious faith is the gift of God. So then we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Our Savior is a complete Savior, he will supply our every need according to his riches in grace, for in him all fullness dwells. There is nothing else poor sinners need in all the world if they have as their all Jesus Christ, and him crucified. We rejoice that all is complete in Jesus, that all is of grace, all in God's own way. We are glad our works are not counted in at all. We hope we worship an all-powerful God who saves to the uttermost, for he is the only one who can be of benefit to us. "How firm a foundation." Sometimes these words come to me in sweet power and I am enabled to look upward to the Rock, but when left to myself it seems that my mind is as barren of spiritual things as the world around me, or more so, for there are natural beauties here of mountains, valleys and clouds. Oh that he may let his mercies come upon me, open mine eyes that I may behold the wondrous things in his law, for the things which testify of our blessed Lord and his wonderful truth and grace are the delight and the counsellors of his dear children. What soul-cheering consolation we have in the precious promise that nothing can separate us from his wonderful love. Not one that he loves will he ever cease to love; not one of the cords shall be broken.

"Drawn by such cords we onward move,
Till round the throne we meet,
And captives in the chains of love,
Embrace our Conqueror's feet."

Dear children of the Most High, we are told in his word, Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father is merciful, filled with love one to another; condemning not, but for-

give, and ye shall be forgiven; loving one another with the love wherewith ye are loved. Brethren, the children of God, do we really and truly love one another? Surely if we love him that begat, we love also them that are begotten of him.

May God bless you, dear editors, and all who write for the dear old SIGNS, that you may write on for the benefit of the household of faith, whom I hope I love for Jesus' sake. We hope to have God's rich grace and sweet Spirit to direct us all in the way of truth.

With best wishes and love from a sister, the least of all,

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan. 24, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have an inclination to write a short article for your paper to let my friends know I am still in this world of wickedness. I said my friends, for I feel all those who write for the SIGNS are my friends, because many of them in their writings describe my feelings and condition much better than I can, and it appears to draw the cords of love toward them much tighter, and makes me realize my weakness more than ever. I know I am a poor weak mortal, and I wonder why the Lord has permitted me to remain upon this earth so long, as to-day I am eighty years old. I cannot realize it is so. It is recorded, "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow: for it is soon cut off, and we fly away." So it appears as if I am soon to fly away and be forgotten, but so it is ordered. I will ask you to read hymn 511 in the hymn and tune book: "A few more days on earth to spend," &c. It seems to be so applicable to me. We are living in an age that is entirely different from any that I have ever experienced; it is full of wickedness, and seems to be getting worse every day. It is one of God's mysteries, and he has a purpose in it, although it may seem dark and gloomy to us, and it will come out all right in the end. It is not for us to judge. He worketh all things according as he planned. He does not consult poor worms of the dust, and I am thankful it is so. If we had the arrangement of these matters what a miserable mess we would make of it. I am satisfied to let it remain just where it is, knowing full well that we would not be able to make any improvement in the matter.

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

When I take a retrospective view of my life I feel ashamed of myself. I am thankful no one can see or know of all the shortcomings of my life; but God alone sees and knows them all, and I can only look to him and ask forgiveness. I have no merit to bring to him to ask pardon upon, all is black within; it is all of him. If I am saved it will be through his rich and sovereign mercy; I see no other way. There is no other way; there is but one way. I have fears that I am deceived, but I still have hope that I am not; although that hope becomes very small at times, yet it still holds me, I do not hold it. We all know the anchor holds the ship, not the ship the anchor. Thanks to almighty God that it is so arranged, if it were otherwise what would become of us? I mean me, as I am the one interested in this matter; it is a personal matter with me. Probably I am too selfish, but I cannot help it. I sometimes wonder how it is possible that God saves such a wicked wretch as I am; not tries to save if we let him. We know

that nothing is impossible with him; he makes no mistakes. The trouble with me is, Am I a subject of his divine grace? If I only had full assurance that I am I would be one of the happiest mortals on earth; but I have my doubts and fears, and I suppose it is so ordained that I should. I suppose it is well we have not that assurance, for if we did we would become careless and negligent and often go astray. We too often go astray as it is. It seems that I am going astray nearly all the time, hardly ever going in that strait and narrow way that leads to life everlasting. My prayer is that he will lead me in the right way. Blessed be his name evermore. I cannot have one good thought unless he guides me. Bad and wicked thoughts are continually uppermost, the devil is haunting me continually. He goes to bed with me, and gets up with me in the morning, and follows me all the day long; he is even with me in my dreams, so I need almighty God to conduct and lead me every hour. My dear friends, are any of you tormented like this? If so, you can sympathize with me. I often wonder if any other mortal on earth is tormented like this. It seems almost impossible that such could be. I have the assurance that the devil has his bounds; he can go so far, and no farther. His bounds are set, and he cannot go beyond them. He was placed here upon this earth for a purpose, and that purpose is being fulfilled each day. God has a purpose in all things, and if it is according to his holy will that I am to be so tormented, so let it be. He will bring me out more than conqueror, I hope, that I may rejoice upon my deliverance.

If any of you have had like experiences, and feel inclined to write me, your letters will be much appreciated, and would let me know I am not alone in this cold world. May God lead us in a gentle and submissive way, is my heartfelt desire and prayer. I know I am one who is as liable to fall as the sparks are to fly upward, and again I say, Lead me in the way thou wouldest have me go.

Probably I have written enough for the present. May the God of heaven and earth guide us and lead us in that strait and narrow path, is the prayer of your unworthy friend,

C. S. FETTER.

ENTWISTLE, Alberta, Canada, March 18, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—The SIGNS OF THE TIMES is all the preaching of Jesus and his love I have been permitted to have for more than twelve years, and not one person have I met with in that time who believes the doctrine the SIGNS so faithfully, clearly and comfortingly sets forth to the poor in spirit, to those who hunger and thirst after the Bread of life. I have no power of language to express the great comfort the paper has been to me in my exiled condition. I know goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life. In 1907 I separated myself from my kindred in the flesh, and the brethren in Christ, to come to northwest Alberta, Canada, and I am confirmed more and more in the belief that God works all things we do, be it good or bad, to the good of all his believers, and to those who are called of him. Thirty-one years ago the strong man was bound and his goods were spoiled, and the spoils were divided, and to my sorrow and shame, but to the glory and praise of the covenant-keeping God, the strong man held the most important gift ever given to mortal, sinful man: that of charity. A short time back, at my breakfast meal, my selfish self-will was opened to my view. Like mountains

my sins rose up before me, and with sorrow and tears I cried, O Jesus, Father, have mercy on me. Forgive my debts as I forgive my debtors. Love took the place of envy and selfishness. How true that the love of God leadeth to repentance. Oh how I would have loved to have been with the brethren I left and asked their forgiveness. Soon after I was looking through some back numbers of the SIGNS, and came to the editorial of Elder Ker's on love, and tears flowed again, to the praise of such great and glorious love as was manifested in that article. During the sixty odd years of my poor, sinful, selfish life it has never been mine to see or feel such great love, but that great Shepherd of the sheep has pleaded with the Father these many years, Let him stand a while longer, till I dig and dung it, peradventure it may bear fruit. How true that faith without works is dead; works without faith are also dead. Faith and works combined are nothing if charity does not manifest itself as the foundation, Jesus Christ being the true foundation. "If any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." Glorious, that "some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment." For one to be quickened unto a living hope after thirty years or more of burned up works, wasted time, is glorious beyond words to express. It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. The letter kills, the Spirit makes alive. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

"My times of sorrow and of joy,
Great God, are in thy hand;
My choicest comforts come from thee,
And go at thy command."

I do not know that I should send this to be published, but do with it as you wish, and all will be right with me.

J. W. LAWS.

MOUNT UNION, Pa., March 25, 1922.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I hope by the Spirit of truth to write you with regard to the London Confession of Faith. I feel that all true Old Baptists have the true interpretation of it, and that it is sustained by a "thus saith the Lord." I feel, as a Baptist at heart, that the regular Old Baptists are being grossly misrepresented by those who pretended to be Old Baptists, but turned out to be limited predestinarians. For my part, I, if I know myself, am an absolute predestinarian. We read in the Scriptures as follows: "Predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Again, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Again, "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." I have been stigmatized as an "absoluter," because I believe and teach the doctrine of the predestination of all things. Now it is sure that our God did predestinate all things that come to pass or he predestinated nothing, for if he did not predestinate all things he could not have declared the end from the beginning, or make all things work together for good to them who are

the called according to his purpose; neither could he make the wrath of man to praise him and restrain the remainder. Did our God make peace and create evil if he had no purpose in it? Would he form the light and create the darkness and have no purpose in them? Could the devil have deceived Eve had not the Lord made him more subtle than any beast of the field that the Lord God made? If by him all things consist, how could evil conceive and bring forth sin against the will of God? If our God had no purpose for sin in the world what purpose had he for the coming of Christ? If sin came into the world against his will, and he had no power to keep it out, how could his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, destroy sin? Certainly he had no more power than God, his Father. God has all power, and the powers that be are ordained of him. When Jesus said to Pilate, Thou couldest have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above, did he tell the truth? I say, Yes. Our God had a wise purpose in giving men power to do wickedly, and it is for his purpose that God raises them up, that he might show forth his power in them who are ordained of old to this condemnation. It is said they shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. It is declared that men shall be lovers of their own selves, proud, boasting of their own good works and righteous deeds, turning the truth of God into a lie, and, if possible, would deceive the very elect. I feel that the time has come when we should reaffirm the old London Confession of Faith. I know of some churches where a portion of the members believe the doctrine and others do not. How can two walk together except they be agreed? Should we not be of one mind, and speak the same thing? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal be god, then follow him. We cannot serve two masters. If the doctrine of predestination be truth we should see that those who do not preach it be taken out of the way, so as not to divide the church by limited predestination. Paul said he declared the whole counsel of God, not just a part of it. I believe the Scriptures plainly teach predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass. If I were to claim to hold in fellowship those who deny this doctrine, or they were to hold me in fellowship, would we not be acting hypocritically? Would it not be better for all concerned on either side to be enrolled where we belong? Those who are limited are against the "absoluters" of all things. A house divided must surely fall, and is already fast falling. Many whose hearts are in the absolute predestination of all things never go to meeting at all, and long to be enrolled with believers, there to live and die. For my part, I stand on the doctrine as advocated by the SIGNS, and it has withstood the storms for nearly ninety years, and I have read it a great deal for nearly seventy years, or since I was a small boy, with pine laid in the fire-place at night to make light to read by. I have never doubted in all that time that God predestinated all things, as he rules all things in heaven and earth, and no man can stay his power or will.

Brother Ker, your and brother Lefferts' editorials, and the letters of the correspondents, are fine. I live all alone, and must give vent to what I believe. My race is nearly run, as I am seventy-eight years of age. Please cast the mantle of charity over what I have written, and excuse all errors.

Your old brother, in hope of eternal life, R. M. BROWN.

NASHVILLE, Tennessee.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am feeling very poor in spirit this morning, and that I cannot pour out my soul unto the Lord. I will try to lay my complaint before the readers of the SIGNS and let them pass judgment on me, for I feel that of all the people on the face of this earth they, and only they and their kind, are able to discern between soul and spirit and joints and marrow. We read, The word of God is quick (life) and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword. Like the Jews under the law, who were given the oracles of God, they (the Old Baptists) have the word of God given unto them, hence they have the advantage over all others in discerning between the truth of God and the doctrines and commandments of men. This city in which I live is full to the brim of the doctrines and commandments of men; idolatry prevails everywhere, and there are just a few who can see the difference between this and the truth as it is in Jesus. The Missionary Baptists have just passed a great drive (as they call it) in winning souls for Jesus, and they have gathered in from the Sunday-schools (which one "great divine" told them from the pulpit, is the foundation of the church) in great numbers, and they are calling it a grand victory for Christ. One man who is at the head of a great theological school has made the statement that the Sunday-school is the foundation of the church. Inasmuch as the Bible is not his authority for such an assertion, then it must have originated in the shallow mind of a man, and hence they have laid another foundation, which is not Jesus Christ, so they are not operating on the word of God, but upon their own word. My understanding of the Bible is that nothing else will stand the test of God's fiery law but his own work. Other foundation can no man lay, says Paul. This foundation that God laid was none other than Jesus Christ, and him crucified. I am made to shudder at the very thought of living my time here in this world, and then coming to my end with no hope except in the doctrines and commandments of men. Cold chills run over me, and I cry out of my poor weak and almost ready to faint soul, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. That is a thought that has its origin in the word of God; I read it there, and it was the production of a burdened conscience, as the poor man with his head hung in shame, who could not so much as lift up his head, but stood afar off, not fit to approach, but a poor beggar on the dunghill, and it was he that poured out his poor miserable self at the throne of God's rich grace, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Jesus said, "This man went down to his house justified."." Justified from all his sins. Jesus himself had done it all for him, and the rich mercy of God was stored away in his love for just such sensible characters as he, something that the law which came by Moses could not do. To be justified is to be cleared from all guilt, just as much so as if sin had never entered into the world by one man, and death by sin. All this is just because God himself laid the foundation, not when the first Sunday-school was organized, but in heaven before ever the earth was. This foundation was laid deep down in God's eternal decrees, predicated upon his wills and shalls. Hence the prophet says, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder." This is God's way, and the Sunday-school is man's way. God's way will stand, and man's way, like man himself, will go down. It had its origin in time and it will end in time,

or with time. The wrath of God against sin when it is revealed will shake to pieces such a little cob house foundation and it will crumble, and away will go all the works that poor, feeble, ignorant man has built upon it. Oh may God freely give us all a better hope by which we may draw nigh unto him. My poor soul would draw nigh, and I dare not go nigh only in the blessed righteousness of his holy Son, and I am afraid to lay any claim to that and it makes me feel poor in spirit this morning, and think of how I have by my own filthiness forfeited all right to such a wonderful privilege; but this sweet and blessed privilege belongs alone to God's living family, and am I one? that is the great question. Lord, decide the doubtful case, is my cry. May the Lord bless us all out of his unwasted fullness, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Yours in trouble,

C. M. HOOD.

FLORA VISTA, New Mexico, March 30, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will send in my subscription, as it expired the first of this month and I cannot afford to miss a number, as I am alone out here, with no one of our faith and order near me, so the dear old SIGNS comes twice a month laden with good news from a far country. I do not suppose there is a Primitive Baptist within two hundred miles of me. I live among all kinds of "religious" people, with little pure and undefiled religion. It looks like formality; God pity them. I let my neighbors have the SIGNS to read, and they seem to like it, but I do not see how they advocate what they do and can also advocate what the dear old SIGNS sets forth.

Dear editors, what is the nearest point to me that you send the SIGNS? and what are the names and addresses of the subscribers? I would go a hundred miles to have a talk with a dear Old Primitive Baptist. There are only three of us here: my wife, daughter-in-law and myself, and we are very lonely. You see we cannot afford to do without the dear old SIGNS, so please find inclosed a money order for two dollars. May God ever bless your labors and give you faithful minds, and may he bless all the dear writers of the SIGNS in every way. May God give you strength to continue to proclaim his blessed truth.

From a poor old afflicted brother, in hope of eternal life,

J. L. JOHNSON.

ATLANTA, Ga., Nov. 24, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Please change my address from Smyrna, Ga., to 69 Josephine Street, Atlanta, Ga. I want to thank you for your kindness in sending me the SIGNS so long. The editorials and the many good letters from the dear brethren and sisters are a great comfort to me, and also to many of God's little children who are so situated that they cannot hear preaching. May the good Lord long spare you to feed his lambs.

I would write more, but am in too much pain. My limbs are badly drawn, and I suffer all the time, yet can get about with crutch and cane. I have been in this condition for seventeen years.

Your brother in Christ, I hope,

G. W. ALMAND.

NOTICE.

BROTHER A. S. Rowe, church clerk, has sent us a few copies of A Sketch of the History of the Ebenezer Baptist Church, of Baltimore City, by her pastor, Elder Joshua T. Rowe, which he requests us to sell at twenty-five cents per copy. Address orders to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1922.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

LUKE XIV. 33.

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."

Brother Asa Baxter, of Ruston, La., asked us some time ago to write upon this text, but we put it off, thinking the time might come when we might have more light upon it, but that time has not come, and we shall have to attempt it with such understanding as we already have.

The relationships in the kingdom of heaven are new and spiritual, while the relationships of earth are fleshly and natural. All earthly relationships are based upon sex, the heavenly relationships are of the Spirit. In the kingdom of heaven there is neither male nor female, neither marrying nor giving in marriage. When the sinner is quickened by the Holy Ghost, and when afterwards he is born of the incorruptible seed of the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever, there then exists between him and all other such regenerated persons a new and spiritual tie and relationship. This relationship is higher and purer than the carnal or earthly relationship which exists between those of the same flesh and blood. Therefore in Luke xiv. 26, where Jesus said, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple," he meant that if one is a disciple of Jesus the new or spiritual relationship existing by reason of that discipleship is so wonderful and powerful, so pure and elevating, that in comparison with the relationships of earth it is as though one hated these earthly ties. A disciple of Jesus need not be lacking in his duty to parents, or children, or wife, or husband, but the claims of the heavenly kingdom come first, and must be attended to first, and these spiritual claims will so enforce themselves upon the disciples of Jesus that they demand attention first, even though flesh and sense have to be denied; that is, hated. When the children of Israel crossed over Jordan into the promised land the men of the tribe of Reuben also crossed with them, but left their wives and children behind, and though the men of Reuben had to fight the battles of their brethren in the land of Canaan, many were the anxieties of mind and heart experienced by those Reubenites because of their families left behind. The Scripture says that because of the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart; that is, great care and anxiety, because the heads of families were separated from those dear to them by earthly ties because the situation demanded they fight the battles of their brethren, and at the same time compelled separation from those back on the other side of Jordan. Many, many times it is true that the disciple of Jesus experiences the conflict of the two minds: one mind taken up with the cares and duties of earth, the other mind impelling him forward in the service of his brethren. This division within the disciple is sure to cause great searchings of heart to know whether he is being dominated by the flesh or by the Spirit, whether his service is one of love and of grace or

simply from the force of duty. If there is no conflict between one's natural inclinations and the Spirit within one, we might well question whether we are disciples of Jesus. Where true discipleship is, there must be a continual bearing of the cross, a steady denial of self, a constant crucifixion of the fleshly nature and all that belongs to it. There will be an experience of the sentence of death within one's self, to the end that we shall not trust in ourselves. By reference to Matthew xii. 47–50, Jesus plainly shows that the relationship of his mother, Mary, to him did not compel him to yield obedience to that earthly tie, but that he must be, and that he was, faithful to those the Father had given him, and that he must live and die for them, not for Mary alone because she was his mother. "Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren." It is not meant that when one becomes a disciple of Jesus he must take all his money and throw it away, or give it away, that he must run away from those dependent on him and leave them to get along the best way possible. If anything, a true follower of Jesus will feel to be more faithful to his earthly obligations than ever before, but he will feel resting upon him and dwelling within him that which urges him to faithfulness to the truth of God and to the people of God, a call to bear the burden in the heat of the day, something which impels him to contend earnestly for the faith of the saints, and willingness to suffer with the Lord's people or to rejoice with them, as the case may be. To the disciple the kingdom of heaven comes first, and he feels inclined to seek it first, and when the demands of that kingdom are felt the call of earthly duties must move out of the way. This, we understand, is what Jesus meant by leaving all that one has. Not that one must run away from earthly duties and obligations resting upon one, but that the kingdom of heaven is loved more than these, and counted of far more worth than these, so that the earthly love which one has for earthly things is not to be compared with the love in the Spirit for Jesus and his truth and his church. These latter spiritual riches seem so infinitely more valuable than all the things of time combined that one feels to hate, in comparison, the things of earth and all the ties connected with them. We have known preachers to leave their families for weeks and months at a time, to get along the best they could, while the preacher himself was traveling from place to place, living on the fat of the land, spending his time among churches already well served by pastors of their own, and giving as their excuse for so doing that they felt the urgent call of the ministry so binding upon them that they could not stay at home. Personally, we have had no patience with this, because it is entirely contrary to our own experience, and we agree with Paul, that he who provides not for his own house has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel; and we do not understand the words of Jesus in Luke xiv. 33 to uphold any such conduct. One can be faithful to all one's earthly obligations and yet at the same time not be tied up in affection; thus, in heart, leaving them and forsaking them.

L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder John McConnell, pastor of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, of New York city, died of pneumonia Saturday, April 29th, 1922. Funeral services were held Tuesday, May 2nd, 1922. A suitable obituary will be published later.—ED.

Julana H. Dickson departed this life March 17th, 1922, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Laura Whitson, Afton, N. Y., where she had gone to spend the winter, from her home at Arena, N. Y. Sister Dickson united with the Middletown Old School Baptist Church in August, 1862. She was its oldest member, and for about twenty years held the office of church clerk. Our beloved sister was a consistent and faithful member, and never allowed anything to keep her from meeting when her health was good. Her home was open at all times for her brethren, and it was her delight to welcome and entertain them. She was highly esteemed by all who knew her, and often visited the associations in various places. She was blessed with the ability to express to the comfort of others her abiding trust in the God who had been her support and comfort so many years. Our loss is felt very much by her brethren and kindred in Christ, but we would not mourn as those without hope, for we believe that her sufferings are over and that she has joined the heavenly throng, to be forever with the Lord. She leaves to mourn their loss two sons, Edward H. and William, both of Arena, N. Y., one daughter, Mrs. Laura Whitson, Afton, N. Y., several grandchildren, one brother, Edward O'Connor, Delhi, N. Y., and one sister, Harriett Harkness, of Delhi, N. Y. She was devoted to her children and their families, and they to her, and she received loving and constant care from them.

The funeral services were held at Arena, and were largely attended. The writer tried to speak to the comfort of the bereaved, using as a text, "And his rest shall be glorious."—Isaiah xi. 10. The mortal remains were laid in the Arena Cemetery, Arena, N. Y.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Phebe A. Beal, wife of Elder Z. M. Beal, pastor of the Old School Baptist Church at Bowdoinham, Me., was born August 1st, 1834, and died March 22nd, 1922, aged 87 years, 7 months and 21 days. Sister Beal died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Osborn Estey, Lisbon Falls, Maine, where she had been making her home during the cold weather. In 1853 she was married to Elder Beal, and for sixty-nine years was a loving and dutiful wife. Six children were born to them, the oldest daughter dying two years ago. Besides her husband, who is nearly the same age she was, she leaves to mourn their loss, one son, Judge George A. Beal, of Lisbon Falls, Maine, four daughters, eleven grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. Sister Beal joined the Old School Baptist Church at Bowdoinham, Me., July 30th, 1871, where she remained a faithful member for over fifty years, always attending the meetings when health and duties would permit. The Bowdoinham Church will miss the dear sister very much. Our sympathy goes out to the members of the family, especially to Elder Beal in his advanced age. We trust that he will be blessed with that abiding faith in the Savior of sinners which he has so earnestly preached to us.

At the funeral the writer, Deacon J. C. Clark, read passages from the Scriptures, made a few remarks and offered prayer, after which the remains were laid away in the Woodlawn Cemetery, Bowdoinham, Maine. The bearers were her four grandsons.

J. C. CLARK.

Mary J. Hull (maiden name Morris) was born in Vanderburg County, Indiana, June 17th, 1849, and died in Hemet, California, March 27th, 1922. November 19th, 1874, she was married to Mr. J. N. Hull, and they were the parents of four children. Of these Miss Mabel only is left. Sister Hull lived near the place of her birth until 1902, when they moved to Tennessee, where her husband died October 10th, 1908. Twelve years ago she and her dutiful and attentive daughter Mabel came to California, where she lived until God called her home to rest. April 11th, 1885, she was baptized in the fellowship of Big Creek Church, by Elder Lemuel Potter. She was a noble christian sister and mother. I never knew her until I came to California. Her christian virtues drew me close to her in spiritual fellowship, and she was much loved by the Baptist people here. She suffered much the last few years of her life, and before her death she had a leaking and dilated heart.

There were no funeral services held here, as it was her request her body be taken back to Indiana, where services were conducted by Elder A. A. Shoultz. Her body was laid to rest by her husband and children. She was a reader of the SIGNS, and I am writing this by the request of her daughter. It is sweet to record the death of such a sister, knowing her as a christian, and knowing by faith that she rests from her troubles here and lives in the presence of her Redeemer.

GEORGE A. BRETZ.

John L. Ball, our brother in Christ, died of apoplexy, at his home, Buckeystown, Maryland, April 24th, 1922. He was born March 11th, 1848, the son of William and Eleanor Lee Ball, both deceased. He leaves two brothers and one sister: Notley Ball, of Purcellville, Va., Matthew Ball, of Colorado, and Mrs. J. A. Linn, of Loudoun County, Va. He was married to Miss Mollie J. Cawood, of Tennessee, November 4th, 1875, who died in 1887. To this union were born three daughters and three sons, of whom two

daughters and two sons are living: sister Susie Dade, near Jeffersonville, Md., Mrs. Oscar Braden, of Loudoun Co., Va., and John and Garnett Ball, of Frederick Co., Md. Brother Ball's second wife is sister Mary Virginia Ball, nee Chiswell, whom he married September 24th, 1889, and who is left surviving her loss. Brother Ball was baptized something over thirty years ago, by the late Elder E. V. White, at Hughesville, into the membership of the New Valley Old School Baptist Church. Previously he had been identified with the Missionary Baptists, but found they did not preach his experience, nor the doctrine he believed, so he could not fellowship them and therefore left them. Brother Ball was very firm in the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things, and loved to talk about it, as well as the kindred doctrine of salvation wholly by grace.

The funeral services were held at his late home, Buckeystown, Md., burial in the cemetery at Frederick, Md. I used as a text the words in Psalms lxxi. 20: "Thou, which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth." May the holy Spirit of the Lord abide in our dear bereaved sister Ball to reconcile her to his will, and may he comfort all who mourn.

L.

Willoughby Whidden was born near Bounts Ferry, Florida, Feb. 5th, 1836, and died Feb. 2nd, 1922, lacking three days of being eighty-six years of age. He served in the 56 Indian War in Florida, also in the Civil War. He suffered many hardships, but came through without a wound. His parents moved to Tampa when he was small. He was married in 1868 to Susan C. Durrance, and settling in Polk Co., Fla., raised a family of ten children. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church in 1889, remaining a member until death. He told his children at the beginning of his sickness of two weeks that he had not much longer on this earth, but was just waiting his summons to go, and had no fear. He was very feeble the last two years of his life, and spent most of his time reading his Bible and the SIGNS. He quoted quite a number of passages of Scripture while he was sick, and a few days before he died he tried to sing that beautiful hymn, "Amazing grace," &c. He did not seem to suffer much pain, and his last moments were calm and peaceful. His body was laid to rest in the Bethlehem Cemetery, near the church of the same name, of which he had been a member for years. He leaves a wife, ten children, thirty-two grandchildren and four great-grandchildren to mourn.

The funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Elder W. O. Futch. The bereaved family appreciated the many comforting words he said in their behalf.

Written by his son,

C. B. WHIDDEN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

G. C. Harrison, Texas, $1.00; Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Oklahoma, $2.00; W. J. Stephenson, N. C., $1.00; S. G. Lomax, Ind., $2.00; L. Z. Ross, N. Y., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Baltimore Association will be held with Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore city, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 17th, 18th and 19th, 1922. The meetinghouse at 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St., will be open on Tuesday p. m. May 16th, where visitors will be met and taken to places of entertainment. To all friends, brethren, sisters and ministers of our faith and order a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, beginning Wednesday, May 24th, 1922, and continuing three days. All lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus are cordially invited to meet with us.

Only ministers and messengers of churches who feel that they can meet with us in peace and love, and who are in good standing with the churches and associations with which we correspond, will be received to sit in council in our deliberations.

Those coming from Philadelphia and Baltimore on Wednesday morning will come via B. & O. R. R. Train leaves Philadelphia, 24th and Chestnut Streets, at 8:02 a. m.; from Baltimore at 8:12 a. m. The morning trains on the Pennsylvania R. R., from both directions, will be met on Wednesday morning. Those coming on the Delaware Division will take train on Tuesday leaving Delmar at 11:59 a. m. and change at Porter for Newark, or on train leaving at 3:25 p. m., via Wilmington; also on Wednesday morning leaving Delmar at 7:54, and change at Porter for Newark, Del., where all will be met. As trains run on Standard Time, our hour for meeting will conform to same.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the New Vernon Church, at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (7th, 8th and 9th), 1922.

Those coming from and via New York city will take Erie Railroad ferry, foot West 23rd Street, at 4:20 p. m., or the Erie Railroad ferry foot of Cham-

bers Street at 4:30 p. m., for train leaving Jersey City, N. J., at 4:45 p. m., on Tuesday June 6th. Or Erie ferry foot of Chambers Street at 7:02 a. m. on Wednesday, June 7th, for train leaving Jersey City at 7:30 a. m. Get tickets for Howells, N. Y. These trains are operated on Daylight Saving Time.

Those coming from and via Kingston will take Ontario & Western Railway train leaving Kingston at 1:30 p. m. on Tuesday, June 6th. Get tickets for Winterton, N. Y. This train is operated on Eastern Standard Time. Above trains will be met and friends cared for. Those coming by automobile will go to the home of Fred Beyea on arrival at New Vernon.

A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, sisters and friends.

H. S. COLLARD, Church Clerk.

THE First Primitive Baptist Church of Mineral Wells, Texas, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on S. W. 4th Ave. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

SALLIE E. HOWARD, Church Clerk.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

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J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

CHRIST IS OUR SURETY.

"By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament."—Heb. vii. 23.

In Paul's letter to the Hebrews he speaks of the difference between the Levitical priesthood and the priesthood of Christ. First, how that the priests under Moses' law went into the tabernacle daily to make sacrifices, and the high priest went into the holy of holies once a year for himself and all the people of Israel, but Christ only made one sacrifice of himself for all time, and obtained eternal redemption for his people. (Heb. ix. 12.) Second. How the priests entered into buildings made with hands, while Christ entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God. (Heb. ix. 24.) Third. How that the Levitical priests became old and died, requiring new priests in their stead, but that Christ is a High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. (Heb. vii. 17.) Without beginning of days or end of life. Fourth. Under the old covenant the priests were from the tribe of Levi, but under the new covenant Christ was of the tribe of Juda. Fifth. How that if the priesthood after the order of Levi had been perfect there would have been no need of another priesthood after the order of Melchisedec, and how that as the old covenant was imperfect it could not make the comers thereunto perfect. (Heb. x. 1.) "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins."—Heb. x. 4. There must be another covenant, a grace covenant, and a better sacrifice. "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."—Heb. x. 14. So the old covenant, or testament, was taken away, because it was imperfect, that a new and better one might be established, a perfect one. So when Paul was making these comparisons he gave us our text: "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament." Not a surety under the law testament, not a surety under the Levitical priesthood, but the Surety under the grace testament, the Surety under Christ's priesthood. In common things we are all familiar with the terms debtor, creditor and surety. In a similar relation we have sinner, God and Christ. A surety is needed when a debtor is limited in means, or honesty, so the creditor may be sure of his pay. An insolvent debtor cannot pay, and is in great need of a surety. The debt cannot

be paid in any other way. We also know that in common things when a surety pays a debt for an insolvent debtor the creditor accepts his pay and the debtor goes free, without the debtor helping in any way. Now under this new and better testament Jesus is our surety, and when we were ten thousand talents in debt, and not a farthing to pay with, he paid our debt in full, and God, the creditor, accepted his pay, canceled the debt, without any help from the sinning debtor, setting him free, because justice was satisfied. If a common surety can pay a debt and free an insolvent debtor, why cannot Christ, who is the Surety under a better testament, pay the sinner's debt and set him free, even without the sinner's immediate knowledge? He can do it. He has done it. It was done more than nineteen hundred years ago. Jesus ransomed the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife, by a holy life in the flesh, a shameful death on the cross and a triumphant victory over death and the grave. Jesus was surety for Abel, Noah, Abraham, Elijah and David, who lived thousands of years before Christ's day in the flesh, but as a faithful surety he paid their debt. Jesus was surety for the apostles, who lived with him in the flesh, and he paid their debt. Jesus was surety for millions of christians who have lived hundreds of years since he was in the flesh, yet as their surety he paid their debt before they were born. When justice was satisfied God set those debtors free, without their help, or immediate knowledge of their condition. In common things a surety only pays the amount owed and due; no more. So with Jesus, our surety, he paid all the debt of all for whom he was surety; no more. As surety for God's elect he came to do the will of the Father, and that will was, that of all the Father gave him he should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. Now, it is possible for some sureties to fail, but Jesus had all power in heaven and on earth and did not fail, for the Creditor was heard to say, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. If the Father was well pleased with the work of Jesus, our surety, he was no failure, but paid the debt of every one the Father gave him. With those of the Arminian faith a favorite expression is, "Unless you accept Christ as your Savior you will be lost." How could a sinner accept Christ as his Savior until he is saved? Those who believe in salvation by free grace, and have had the spiritual evidence that Jesus is their Savior, with many thanks and great gladness give the Father and the Son all the praise and glory for such a wonderful redemption for poor condemned sinners, even without consulting their wishes. The sinner's debt is paid before he accepts Christ as his Savior, but when that "still small voice" says to his mourning soul, Jesus is your surety, and has paid your debt, he accepts the glad tidings with great joy, sometimes with shouts. All are made willing in the day of God's power, as Saul was. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." —Rom. v. 6, 10. Here Paul says our Surety paid our debt and God accepted payment while we were enemies. Again, we read in Romans xi. 29, that the gifts and callings of God are without repentance. We understand from this that God chose, or elected, his people. Jesus as their surety paid their debt, then God by his divine Spirit quickens them from

death in sin into divine life, spiritual birth, then repentance follows, and finally a blessed hope in Christ as their Savior. Repentance does not, cannot, come before the spiritual quickening, which is the calling of God. Then, brethren and sisters, elect according to the foreknowledge of God, the redeemed according to the will of the Father, by Jesus, our surety, let us give God and Jesus all the thanks, praise and glory for salvation which was wrought for us before we knew it, and made manifest to us in regeneration. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Man is not a creator, this new creature is the workmanship of God. Then, believing that Jesus was surety for all whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world, we daily cry out in spiritual prayer, O, Lord, is my name there? What a comfort is that little hope that Jesus is our surety!

M. N. WEBB.

WEISER, Idaho.

TOPEKA, Kansas, March 26, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—"To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." I have often been requested to write for the SIGNS, and more often feel that I would gladly do so, but "I am so vile, so prone to sin," my unfitness to handle sacred things is ever before me, and Satan at my right hand to resist me. Joshua stood before the angel clothed in filthy garments, and the command was to take away the filthy garments and clothe him with change of raiment. I have hoped in that change of raiment, hoped that

> "My filthy rags are laid aside,
> He clothes me as becomes his bride;
> Himself bestows my wedding-dress,
> A robe of perfect righteousness."

"Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? yet my people have forgotten me days without number." Tormented by the filthy rags (the works of the flesh) that still cling to me, I forget the robe of righteousness, the garments of salvation, wrought out for his bride on Mt. Calvary, and that he has given her change of raiment and clothed her with garments; forget that he knows all our necessities and will provide all things needful, both food and raiment, for us. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. This he distinctly commanded his people on Mt. Sinai, and when Christ came he repeated that command. He also said, Thou shalt not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God. Profaning his name and taking his name in vain are two very distinct things, and in this day one is about as common as the other. National Israel, to whom the command was first given, and who typify spiritual Israel, the bride, the Lamb's wife, the only people called by his name, are the only ones who ever rightfully took his name, and they did not take it in vain. In the day of her espousal was established the custom of the bride taking the name of her husband. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In this day Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."—Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. In the thirty-third chapter, after nearly the same words, he says, "In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness." There in

olden time the Lord bestowed his name upon his bride. He is the Husband of one wife, and never has given permission to any other woman, or church, or worldly institution of any kind, to take his name, or to do things in his name. How careful ought the bride of such a glorious Husband be to keep clean and unspotted from the world the robe of fine linen, clean and white, which he gives her, and never cast a reflection on his wisdom by trying to do over, or do for herself and others, the work that he himself declares is finished. Safely relying on his gracious promise that he will never leave nor forsake her, but will supply all her needs, she does not then feel that she has taken his name in vain, but trusting him fully she wishes to honor and extol his name above every name that is named. Having espoused her unto himself, he promises to supply all her needs. She was only to ask in his name and all her needs would be given her. He pays all her debts, thus keeping her honor unquestioned. Sin is not imputed to her. He bore it all in his own body on the tree, met every penalty which would otherwise have fallen on her. Her credit is good, for her Husband is her Surety. She has not taken his name in vain, for he not only pays her debts and provides all things needful, but stands by, an ever-present help in time of trouble, and sweetly assures her, Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Her eyes are ever turned to him, he fights all her battles, defending her against all her enemies, telling her to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord; and she enters into the rest that remains to the people of God.

Looking down the years and centuries, even to this day, the Lord inspired the prophet to say, "In that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." Seven being a complete number, it embraces the whole Arminian world and their numberless institutions, and they take his name and attach it to every invention their depraved imagination is continually seeking out. But they take it in vain. He does not promise them any help or support, and he will not hold them guiltless who take his name in vain. These seven do not appreciate the finished work of salvation; they do not ask any help of him, volunteering to go on with their own work, eat their own bread and wear the apparel of their own filthy rags of self-righteousness. "Only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." What is the reproach they are so anxious to escape? "The mother of harlots." These harlot daughters, as such, are certainly a reproach to themselves and their harlot mother, and seek to escape from it by begging the one Man to give them the sanction of his name, so that the illegitimacy of the harlot daughters will not be apparent, for many more are the children of the desolate woman than of she which hath an husband. He does not give them his name, but they take it and attach it with very little show of reverence or honor to anything they wish to carry on. They come to my door seeking aid, saying, This play is gotten up by the Holy Name Church; or, This entertainment is by the church of the Nazarene. How vain and blasphemous to take his name simply to make their harlot little ones appear legal. She tells him she has no other need of his name, only to take away

her reproach. She is perfectly willing, nay, even anxious, to continue in her own work, and, like the troubled sea, is continually casting up mire and dirt. We see this blasphemous use of the name of the Lord on every hand, all over the land. But he says, They shall eat and not have enough. They shall commit whoredoms and shall not increase, because they have left off to take heed to the Lord. Though they compass sea and land to make proselytes, they have not increased or added anything to that kingdom that cometh not with observation. They have only made them two-fold more the children of hell, or subjects of confusion. Left alone they made no disturbance, but after the false proselyting, in which they are deluded to think they are now christians, they are now ready to persecute the saints, to bind and put in prison those who do not agree with them, especially as in this compulsory sabbath observance law now being sought to have enacted in Congress, which is only a little wedge for laws to destroy the liberty of conscience which was fought and bled for by the founders of our government. "Whoredom, and wine, and new wine, take away the heart." They beg to bear the name of the Lord, yet they commit "whoredom under every green tree." They will consort with every denomination, and eagerly fall to and help with every invention the ingenuity of the natural mind can seek out. Only let it be called some religious name; that is quite sufficient to take away the reproach of lack of scriptural authority for it. They help one another, and in this town when the Jews, who deny Christ, and receive him not, made "a drive" for money for their tabernacle, they helped them, too. "There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother. There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness." Christ said, Ye are of your father the devil, and while they are cursing him they are doing his lusts. Neither will they bless or own their old mother, Babylon, the mother of harlots. If God's people should help them, even one penny's worth, to ferment their wine, it is that much whoredom, and their wine, or doctrine, and new doctrine, that is continually springing up only takes the heart from the old corn that has sustained us so long. He does not give them his name. In Zion only is the one place, he has chosen to put his name there. He assures them in Zion they do not bless his name in vain. Their clothing is of fine linen, which is the righteousness of the saints, and your righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye." Yes, the poorer you are the more freely come. "Buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live: and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." Oh how can a maid, the virgin daughter of Zion, forget such an ornament as that? even an everlasting covenant with him who assures us that we have not taken his name in vain. There are times in our low estate when we fear that his mercy is clean gone forever, and that he will be favorable to us no more; we have forgotten our name: The Lord our Righteousness; we try to establish righteousness within ourselves

by a more orderly walk, a more circumspect behavior and a more godly conversation, but it only appears as filthy rags. We have forgotten our attire, the robe of fine linen clean and white, but the heavenly Bridegroom says, Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth. I have redeemed thee. Thou art mine.

I cannot apologize for the length of this letter, but tremblingly submit it, and if published may it prove to the honor and glory of his name, The Lord our Righteousness.

From one, the least of all,

MARY ELLISON.

ELECTION.

THE doctrine of election is not indorsed by all of God's children; that, however, does not make it any the less true. From a human or natural standpoint, the doctrine of election and man's accountability to God cannot be harmonized. The apostle Paul tells us that the mystery of godliness is great. The apostle Peter addresses his first epistle to an elect people, and tells them that thereby they have obtained an incorruptible inheritance, reserved in heaven for them. Paul tells the church at Ephesus that they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, to the end that they should be holy and without blame before God in love. The Savior said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes (in Christ) and gives no other reason than that it seemed good in his sight (or purpose). The Savior said to his disciples, Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, to the end that they might bring forth fruit, and that it might remain. Peter says the Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, addressing the same elect people. Perish from the blessings that come from God, given his sheep, and will keep them by his power; they will never perish, but be raised up at the last day by that Spirit that dwells in them. Paul says, If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit which dwells in you. Not that the dead bodies of the saints will be mortal, but he had reference to their bodies at the time he was writing to them. There have been many unregenerate men from Paul's day to the present who have preached not the gospel, and who have tried to explain away the doctrine of God our Savior, of which election is a part. They tell us that when a person accepts Christ as his Savior he is elected. God's election of his people to glory antedates the creation, as is abundantly proven in the Scriptures. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, and the object, or purpose, is that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Paul, in his letter to the church at Rome, says, that the purpose of God might stand according to election, it was said to Rebecca, the wife of Isaac, the children being not yet born, neither having done either good or evil, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. By referring to the Old Testament we learn it was God who said those things to Rebecca. The Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments, tell us that God works all things after the counsel of his own will. The prophet and the apostle, to wit, Isaiah and Paul, certainly did not mean to convey the idea that God only works some things after the counsel of his own will, or they would have said so.

The apostle Peter tells God's elect that they are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people. National Israel were God's people as a nation. Paul tells us they are not all Israel which are of Israel, but in Israel shall the seed be called. National Israel was blessed in obedience and cursed in disobedience, but their blessings were natural; there was no promise of a spiritual blessing for keeping the law. A person might be very wicked, a vile sinner, but if he kept the law he was righteous in a legal sense. God has had a people in all ages of the world, who have had his law written in their hearts from righteous Abel to the present time. When they are all called home time will be no more. They have, and will be, regenerated, or born again; even the infant John the Baptist was born of the Spirit before he was of the flesh. Witness the conversation of Elizabeth, his mother, with Mary, mother of Jesus. He is also said to be full of the Holy Ghost from his birth. Christ was a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, the Savior of every one who has ever or ever will be saved. There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. By election the people of God in all ages have obtained an inheritance. We are told by the prophet Isaiah that God's elect shall inherit. Paul says the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God; then if children, heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. John says, Beloved, now are we the sons of God; it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

Love to the editors, publishers, contributors and readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. JAMES M. SIMMONS.

PARIS, Texas.

CLAY, La., Dec. 6, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed two dollars to renew my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which I enjoy reading very much. I will be seventy-two years old the 15th of next March, if I live to see it. I have been trying in my weak way for about forty-eight years to preach Jesus, and sometimes trying to quit, but I have not ceased trying, yet I do not know whether or not I have ever preached a true gospel sermon. There is one thing I do know, and that is, that I have sat down feeling perfectly at ease, and at other times I have sat down feeling miserable, and thinking I would go home and stay there I feel my time in this sin-cursed world is almost up. I have been afflicted with my heart and nerves for about two years, and cannot go as I have heretofore, and for the last three weeks it seems I can hardly live for lack of breath, and the weaker I grow the sweeter salvation by grace is to me. Oh how could I bear my affliction if I did not have a little hope in the blood of Jesus? How I want to be reconciled to my afflictions, but I find I cannot be unless God gives it.

On our last meeting day at Ruston, La., brother J. B. Hardy, of Arkansas, was with us and preached for us. His text was, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," and I felt while he was preaching that Jesus had put away all my sins, and I was reconciled to my condition for several days, and was glad that everything was just as it was. The most of my time I want to go home to Jesus, where there are no more sighs and groans, but I know my time is in the hand of our God. I believe we all have to suffer all that God sees fit for us to suffer before he calls us away.

In conclusion, I want to say to the writers of the SIGNS, You have been of great comfort to me, and you who read the SIGNS and feel too little and weak to write, and hope you love Jesus and the doctrine the SIGNS contends for and never have written for its pages, I love you just as well as I love the writers. You are just as precious in God's sight as those who write and preach so ably. I do not know when the Lord's time is for calling me away, but I do not feel I will live to renew my subscription again, and I want to say farewell to the poor and afflicted, and I hope we will meet above. If any of you feel to write me I would enjoy reading letters from you in my lonely hours.

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all, J. R. CHANDLER.

HERNDON, Va., May 17, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I, for one, should feel glad if all the brethren who are in arrears with their subscriptions to our dear old family paper, the SIGNS, would come forward and pay up their dues to date, and relieve you of the heavy burden you bear in trying to give us such good, clean, God-honoring doctrine as is set forth in its pages. I love the SIGNS, and am always glad to pay my subscription when it is due. It looks to me at times that all the subscribers do not love it as I do or they would pay up promptly when their subscriptions are due. I have been a subscriber to the paper for almost forty years, and I want to take it as long as I live. I am now in my seventy-fourth year, and do not expect to be here much longer. I am growing weaker daily, both in mind and body, but am blessed to still remember the sweet seasons of my early youth. I felt stronger then than I do now to battle with Satan and his household, and oftentimes felt as the poet expresses it, "I could smile at Satan's rage, and face a frowning world." But now I have to confess, as did dear brother C. S. Fetter in his letter in the May 15th issue, "Bad and wicked thoughts are continually uppermost, the devil is haunting me continually. He goes to bed with me, and gets up with me in the morning," &c. Brother Fetter asks the question, "My dear friends, are any of you tormented like this?" I, for one, can answer brother Fetter, and say, Yes. Oh how wonderful it is that God's dear children scattered all over the land, though strangers in the flesh, can tell so perfectly all the fiery darts of the devil, and how he tries to lead God's dear children captive at his will, which causes them to pray, as Paul did, to have the thorn removed from the flesh, but the only answer any get is, My grace is sufficient. The devil never bothers his own, but is continually afflicting God's dear children, and the Lord suffers him to afflict, but tells him (the devil) to not touch their life. It seems to me that the devil always tempts God's little ones when in their weakest state in the journey of life. He tried that trick with our Savior after he had fasted so many days in the wilderness, tempting Jesus by saying, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." But Jesus said unto him, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Oh how weak I am and forgetful at times that God's grace is sufficient for us in every affliction laid upon us by the hand of God. Paul said, My strength is made perfect in weakness, therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake, for when I am weak, then am I strong. Yes, we are

made to endure all things for Christ's sake. Yes, killed all the day long; accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. (Rom. viii. 37.) Can the devil, then, with all of his fine darts harm one of God's little ones? No, he may follow us all the day long, and go with us to our bedroom, and stay with us all the night through, and face us in the morning and laugh at us; yes, he is sure to laugh, because he knows he has kept us awake the best part of the night, but the little ones go on from day to day, having their strength made perfect in weakness, trusting alone in the everlasting arm of God, which is ever underneath.

Dear brethren, pardon me for writing you such a letter as this, for I had no thought of writing such when I commenced.

Your poor weak brother, if one at all,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

DELMAR, Del., March 11, 1919.

DEAR BROTHER EUBANKS:—I hope you have realized during the past winter the loving-kindness and faithfulness of the Lord, and can say, Thus far the Lord has led me on. You and I are near our journey's end; only a few more days weeks, months or years in this dark desert to complain, a few more sighs, a few more tears, and we shall bid adieu to pain. I trust I have learned from trying experiences, oft repeated, not to think strange of trials, nor to be moved by them, and desire that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry committed unto me, in which I have in weakness and fear and much trembling labored for more than fifty years. Sometimes, though, I still find the way is rough, with pricking thorns on every hand, but worst of all the thorn in my flesh (Satan's messenger buffeting me), so that often when I close my eyes in sleep I feel it would be a gracious relief, and a mercy from the Lord, did I never awake again to this world. Yet I would not be rebellious, but wait all the days of my appointed time till my change come. Since I last met you I have had my share of trials and bereavements, but have been upheld by the hand of Him whose promise is, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.

I started to write to invite you, on behalf of the Little Creek Church, to be with us at our yearly meeting, the third Saturday and Sunday in April. You might get some one to fill your appointment at Welsh Tract that day. Let me know soon if you cannot be with us, for I will have to look elsewhere.

Love to yourself and family from us all.

Your brother in hope,

A. B. FRANCIS.

NEWARK, Delaware.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I have brother Eubanks' permission to copy and forward this letter to the SIGNS for the edification of the brethren generally. It is too good to cast aside, for it revives us mightily to read from the pen of such stanch, tried and true brethren as brother Francis was, a tried soldier of the cross.

J. B. MILLER.

CLINTON, Mo., May 9, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I am sending two dollars, my subscription for the SIGNS one year, will say all the Baptist papers are good, but there is none better than the SIGNS for me. I have never before been a subscriber, but I have been reading it for years, and I believe with my whole heart that it teaches the truth as it is in Christ. I have so much enjoyed the

writings of others that I have often felt a desire to write, but fear I am like the preacher who always informed his hearers that he felt impressed to preach, but never got any further; so I fear I am only gifted with the desire to write, and not with the talent; but I hope the desire is something good, for if I could write I would only write of Jesus, for I hope my hope is all in him. When I so much desire to write I forget perhaps that the writer must go down into the depths, that he must pass through sore trials and tribulations, and through the fiery furnace of affliction. When I so much desire to write, or crave "the pen of a ready writer," perhaps I have not in mind the sacred truth that the writer must be cast off, as it were, on some lonely isle, where none but Jesus can reach him and find him a companion in tribulation, a Deliverer from every trial, in his own experience, before he can comfort those who are in distress. If I know myself, I love the teachings of the Holy Bible. Oh how I love the gospel sound, no tongue or pen has ever found words to describe; no rippling water, no song of bird, no music that was ever heard is so sweet to my ear. Could nature unfold all her wealth, and write her fame in glittering gold, she would but feebly then compare with its music to my soul. I hope it is a message from my Love, and why do I hope it is from him? It comes to me in sorrow and tears, and never fails to cheer me.

ALICE G. FEWEL.

TECUMSEH, Oklahoma.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Can one so sinful as I claim kinship with the people of God? Still, if the Old School Baptists are not my people I am all alone in the world. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES is all the preaching I have, and I seldom meet any one who gives God all power and believes in salvation by unmerited grace alone. I love the dear old SIGNS because that is the doctrine it advocates, and its editors and correspondents all contend for the same truth. My only hope is in the finished work of my dear Redeemer; without him I can do nothing, and his mercy has upheld me all the days of my life. I am nearly blind, and my greatest comfort is when my stepson reads to me from the SIGNS or from Elder Durand's book. Many of his sermons are food indeed to my hungry soul, and the dear Lord is good to me, always providing some one to read to me.

I did not intend to take so much of your valuable time, but only wanted to let my dear people know how much comfort it is to me to hear the messages they send; to me they are like crumbs from the Master's table. Oh may the dear Lord ever be with the editors, and may they live long and stand firm on the walls of Zion, and cry aloud and spare not. I shall take the SIGNS as long as I can pay for it. I can hardly wait to get it, for I am anxious to hear from the dear ones, who all tell the same sweet story of salvation by grace, and give all praise to Him who saved us. Write on, all you who can, and cheer the lonely ones scattered over the land. May the dear Lord in whom we trust bless and guide all the household of faith.

Will you please publish the inclosed obituaries?

Your unworthy sister, in hope of eternal life,

MALINDA FREEMAN.

BROTHER A. S. Rowe, church clerk, has sent us a few copies of A Sketch of the History of the Ebenezer Baptist Church, of Baltimore City, by her pastor, Elder Joshua T. Rowe, which he requests us to sell at twenty-five cents per copy. Address orders to J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1922.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA.

(ACTS V. 1-11.)

At the request of brother John E. Burgess, of Figsboro, Va., we shall attempt to give a few thoughts on this subject, leaving our readers to judge whether what we shall write is theory or truth. This incident, which occurred during the time of the apostolic church, took place at a time when the church was experiencing wonderful unity, owing to the fact that all were filled with the Holy Ghost, and consequently were of one heart and one soul. The Holy Ghost was with the church then in such measure that no one claimed his or her possessions as their own, but sold that which they had and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet, establishing thereby a common fund from which the apostles were to make distribution daily to each and several as the need might require. Let us be careful to notice in reading these fourth and fifth chapters of Acts that the unanimous mind of the church was due to the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, and not on the part of the apostles, nor to any influence whatever exerted by them. The apostles did not direct the members of the church to sell their possessions and bring the money to them, but the Holy Ghost wrought this inclination in them. Therefore when Ananias with Sapphira, his wife, agreed together to hold back part of the price, and not give it to the church, they were not defrauding the apostles, nor the church, but were lying to the Holy Ghost. The creation of this common fund was not by formal vote of the church, nor by command of the apostles, but due solely to the church being filled with the Holy Ghost in such measure that self and selfish interests were swallowed up in the interests of the whole, each and all the members being actuated by a motive to live for the church and to serve the good of the brethren, regardless of what sacrifice of personal well-being this might entail to the individual. However, wonderful as this evidence of the Spirit's work is, and was, there was an exception in the case of Ananias and Sapphira, who did not have the Holy Ghost in such measure as to exclude all self-interest, and who therefore agreed together to keep back part of the price. This shows us that even the church in the days of the apostles was not perfect in the flesh, but had to contend with selfishness as we do now. In fact, the church never has been perfect in the flesh; her perfection is in Christ Jesus and in the Spirit. The doctrine, the order and the faith of the church are all perfect, but the church in its visible organization here in the world never has been perfect. Even the apostles, mighty as all of them were in the Spirit, and able as they were to expound the Scriptures, had to contend against disorders and false doctrine among the churches of the saints. Peter told Ananias that he had not lied unto men, but unto God. This was true, because the command to sell what they had and to give it to the apostles was written within their hearts by the Holy Ghost, so that in keeping back part of the money they disobeyed not men but God. The

result of this, both in the case of Ananias and of his wife, was death, and because of this terrible evidence of the penalty of dishonesty toward the Spirit of God great fear fell upon all the church. This is one of the purposes which God has in such instances of disobedience: to show the church the folly of following after the flesh, and to remind those who are steadfast wherein lies the secret of their faith, that it is not in themselves, but in the grace and Spirit of God being present with them. It teaches us that left to self we shall fall, and die to our usefulness in the church, that our being of service to the brethren depends upon our being kept by the same power which kept Job throughout his afflictions. All the cases of disobedience and disorder throughout the history of the church have had the effect of purging the church from self-will, and of causing the faithful to fear lest they, too, fall from their steadfastness. How would we ever know what order is, and by what patience and long-suffering it is maintained, if we never had to face and deal with disorder? Would God's children ever have known anything of true righteousness had they never known the condemnation on account of sin? Would they ever have known the value of the covenant of grace had they never known the futility of the covenant of works? Would they ever have appreciated Christ had they not been taught to rightly know Adam? God throughout the ages has ever dealt with his people by contrast, using darkness to offset light, wickedness to contradict good, disorder to make manifest order, error to make the truth all the plainer, and so on, and all these contrasts, and the use God has put them to, are not by chance, but by his own divine counsel and the good pleasure of his will according to his predestinated purpose. The consequence of the lie against the Holy Ghost in the case of Ananias and his wife was death. That is, though they may have been children of God, and doubtless were, their usefulness in and to the church was gone because they died. It does not mean that they died an eternal death, or that they were lost from God, but the event proves that we cannot lie against the Holy Ghost in our own souls without suffering for it, and just to that extent that we are suffered to go against what the Spirit indites in our hearts just to that extent we keep back part of the price, and just to that extent do we cut ourselves off from the brethren and lose our usefulness to them. God is not mocked, and though we may deceive both ourselves and our fellows, we never do deceive him. Every departure from sound doctrine, every departure from gospel order in the church, is bound to bring with it woe. While offences always have come in one way or another to the church, and while they not only may, but must, come, there is always a woe to him by whom the offence cometh, and there is no getting away from this woe. It follows upon the transgression as night follows day, inevitably. There is but one way for brethren to be honest one with another, and that is first be honest with one's better self; that is, the inner spiritual self, created in righteousness and true holiness. Christ is in every believer the heart of the new man, and honesty consists in being true to the dictates of this new heart. This requires grace, and great grace. Lacking grace we turn a deaf ear to this new man and listen to the old, then follows woe. Had Ananias and Sapphira obeyed the inner dictates of the Holy Ghost they had not held back part of the price. The following after self

resulted in their dying to the church. Lot's wife turned to a pillar of salt when she looked back, disobeying the angel's command. She was still salt, but salt in a pillar, that is, in a crystalized or solidified state, is not usable. Jesus said that whoever having put his hand to the plough looks back is not fit for the kingdom of God. He may be a child of God, but is not fit for the kingdom; that is, is not usable in and to the church. If they ever were salt they still are salt, but looking back transforms them into such a state that the church cannot use them. Have we not seen brethren who have become so wrapped up in worldly affairs, so taken up with money making and other selfish aims, as to gradually drift away from the church, cease attending meetings, &c.? These lost their usefulness to the church, and while still the children of God, became dead to the church. These things are all for God's wise purpose, and to cause us to fear lest we, too, become enamored of the flesh. These things continually exhort us to that true honesty which consists, first of all, in being true to what the Holy Ghost has revealed within us. If we can through God's grace be honest with our own spiritual inner selves we cannot help but be true with our brethren. Honesty in the outer life must spring from honesty in the heart; that is, in the new heart given by the Holy Ghost. We have seen and known brethren who never kept back part of the price, but spent themselves entirely in the service of the church, never counting the cost. These live in the hearts of the church and their works do follow them, because even though they be fallen asleep they yet speak to us. May the Lord make and keep his children honest one with another, that love and joy and peace may abound through the Holy Ghost.

L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. H. M. (Cell) Speer died at her home, 600 Highland Avenue, Atlanta, Ga., Thursday night, April 13th, 1922. She had suffered for a year or more, during which time she was operated on four times in the hope of regaining her health, but the strain was too much, and relief from her physical suffering finally came when her heart gave way and she passed into the great beyond as peacefully as she had lived, falling asleep and dying without a struggle, surrounded by her loved ones, who watched over her and administered to her, trying to prevent the fatal end. Her life was full of good deeds, always helping others, and trying to lift the burden from their shoulders. Realizing the end was approaching, she planned her funeral, asking that Elder R. L. Clark conduct the services, and requested her favorite hymn, "It is well with my soul," sung. She said she hated to leave her husband and children, but if it was His will it was all right, she was not afraid to die. She had reared a devoted family of six children, five daughters and one son: Mrs. W. H. Wiley, Mrs. W. C. Raney, Miss Marion Speer, all of 600 Highland Avenue, Atlanta, Ga., Mrs. W. S. Smith, Decatur, Ga., Mrs. P. I. Dixson, Thomasville, Ga., and R. T. Speer, Chattanooga, Tenn. She was in her fifty-first year when called to her home above. Her popularity was testified to by the large number who attended her funeral, and the beautiful floral offerings. Her body was laid to rest in the West View Cemetery, Covington, Ga., beside her father, mother and sister. Lucy was a devoted christian. She loved the truth and all that was noble, and while we shall miss her, we feel that she has gone to her heavenly home, and is now basking in the light of God's eternal love.

(MRS.) L. D. ADAMS.

Benjamin Franklin Langford, the subject of this sketch, was born March 2nd, 1842, in the State of Georgia, and departed this life November 17th, 1921, at his residence, in Stevens County, Texas. All was done for him that loving hands could do. He had pneumonia, and was sick only a few days. He realized that he could not live, and requested that telegrams be sent his three children, who were a long distance from his home, that he might see them, together with the three who lived near him, before he passed away. The good Lord blessed us all to meet and be with dear mother at his bedside when the end came—a sad time indeed. His stay on earth was 79 years, 8 months and 15 days. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church in early life, and was ever faithful to the cause. While it is hard to have him taken from us, yet we know the all-wise God doeth all things well, and we feel that it was his will. He will be greatly missed by his church and his many friends and his neighbors. He was good and kind to

all, and ever looked after the welfare of his dear family. He leaves his dear companion, together with six children, three boys and three girls: Lafayette, Bennie, John, Mrs. Minnie Evers, Mrs. Emma Marcus and Mrs. Josie Dooly, and several grandchildren to mourn the departure of father Langford. One infant and one grandson, George, preceded him to the grave. May we all strive to imitate his noble example of christian life and citizenship while passing through this unfriendly world. Indeed a good man has fallen, and our hearts are sad at having to give him up. May the God of all grace bless, comfort and sustain dear mother Langford, together with her dear children and their families, and let us live in hope beyond the grave, where there are no more sad farewells, no more pain or death, but all is one eternal bliss.

He was buried in the Archer Cemetery, near his home, and the writer tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved family, together with a host of sorrowing friends and relatives. Text: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." May the Lord extend care to all the dear family, and may we all be enabled to say, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

Written by request of mother Langford, by her son-in-law, T. J. EVERS.

Heber Clark Kennedy was born in Ouachita County, Ark., Jan. 21st, 1887, died May 5th, 1922. He was married to Miss Florence E. Price Nov. 15th, 1908, and to them four children were born: three girls and one boy, three of whom survive, the eldest dying in infancy. He joined the regular Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church called Damascus the second Sunday in September, 1910. His wife joined the same church the fifth Sunday in April, 1917. Brother Kennedy had been in feeble health for some time with tuberculosis of the lungs and throat and the doctors advised him to go to a higher and dryer place, so in October, 1920, he and family went to southwest Texas, and from there to Phoenix, Arizona, but found no relief, so May 4th, 1922, they took the train for Stamps, Arkansas, but he died on the train, and they stopped at Pecos, Texas, to secure a casket and have the body prepared for burial, and then continued the journey to Stamps, arriving Sunday night, May 7th, where his body was interred beside others of his family. His funeral was largely attended, as he had a great many friends and relatives. He was a loving husband, a kind father, a good neighbor and a loyal citizen. A true Baptist, a precious brother has been taken, and the church has sustained a great loss, but nothing like his dear companion, who never tired of laboring for his comfort. May the dear Lord bless her with his love and sustaining grace to cheer her sad heart and revive her drooping spirit. Our loss is great, but his gain is so much greater that it sweetens our sorrow. He is free from all trouble, and is at rest, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. So weep not, all you who are blessed with a lively hope, for it is only a few more days until we all will be free. J. H. RAWLS.

Mrs. Lydia Elizabeth Vanwinkle died Feb. 14th, 1921, aged 32 years, 6 months and 14 days. She was sick only six days. All was done for her that loving hearts and hands could do. She was dearly loved by all; the poor and needy, the helpless or sick, she had a smile and a cheerful word for all. She never made a public profession, but her daily walk and her love for the Old School Baptist doctrine as advocated in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES proved her understanding of the truth. She was a sweet, good child. She leaves her husband and a daughter ten years old, her mother and four brothers, with other relatives, to mourn our loss. She fell asleep with a peaceful smile on her face, and we feel to know all is well with her.

Written by her loving mother.

ALSO,

Mrs. Pearl Freeman departed this life August 4th, 1920, aged 41 years, 11 months and 21 days. She was the mother of ten children: seven girls and three boys. She was a devoted wife and mother. Her parents were Old School Baptists, and she had a good hope through Christ, and we feel assured she is asleep in Jesus. MALINDA FREEMAN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. A. B. Hanson, Nebr., $2.00; W. E. Blue, N. Y., $2.00; A. D. Hughett, Wash., 50 cents; Mrs. S. V. Curry, Colo., $1.00; "A Subscriber," Ontario, $2.00; S. J. Rogers, Ky., $3.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, Mercer County, New Jersey, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 31st, June 1st and 2nd, 1922.

Trains leaving New York and Philadelphia Tuesday afternoon will be met at Hopewell. Those coming Wednesday can come direct to the meeting-house.

All in good standing in churches and associations with which we correspond are cordially invited to meet with us. Meeting held on Daylight Saving Time.

DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

[THIS notice was received too late for publication in our May 15th issue.—ED.]

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the New Vernon Church, at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (7th, 8th and 9th), 1922.

Those coming from and via New York city will take Erie Railroad ferry, foot West 23rd Street, at 4:20 p. m., or the Erie Railroad ferry foot of Chambers Street at 4:30 p. m., for train leaving Jersey City, N. J., at 4:45 p. m., on Tuesday June 6th. Or Erie ferry foot of Chambers Street at 7:02 a. m. on Wednesday, June 7th, for train leaving Jersey City at 7:30 a. m. Get tickets for Howells, N. Y. These trains are operated on Daylight Saving Time.

Those coming from and via Kingston will take Ontario & Western Railway train leaving Kingston at 1:30 p. m. on Tuesday, June 6th. Get tickets for Winterton, N. Y. This train is operated on Eastern Standard Time. Above trains will be met and friends cared for. Those coming by automobile will go to the home of Fred Beyea on arrival at New Vernon.

A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, sisters and friends.

H. S. COLLARD, Church Clerk.

A two days meeting is appointed to be held in the Old School Baptist meeting-house at Cammal, Pa., Saturday and Sunday, July 29th and 30th, 1922. All lovers of the truth are welcome to meet with us.

J. T. BADGLEY, Clerk.

THE First Primitive Baptist Church of Mineral Wells, Texas, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on S. W. 4th Ave. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

SALLIE E. HOWARD, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

WILMINGTON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1304 Jefferson Street

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

All day meeting second Sunday in each month 10:30 a. m. Evening meeting fourth Sunday in each month 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation to all who love the truth.

J. G. EUBANKS, Pastor.

HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Cloth binding. Price, one dollar each.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at 5 cents per copy. Address,

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DROPSY REMEDY.

Dropsy remedy, purely vegetable, removes from one to two gallons of water in a day. Shortness of breath quickly relieved. Cures the worst cases of Dropsy in all its forms, and after being given up by the best doctors to die. Specially efficacious in Dropsy of the Heart. Best and cheapest known remedy, only $1.00 a package, six packages $5.00 by mail postpaid, and free to very poor people who are really unable to pay. Trial package free to any address when name, age, address and symptoms of patient are given, with ten one-cent stamps.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 90. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1922. NO. 12.

POETRY.

THE GIFT OF KNOWLEDGE.

(JEREMIAH XXXI. 33, 34.)

Of all the blessings man possessed,
The greatest one is this:
To know himself and stand confessed
For what he really is.

The knave who challenges the law,
And he who wars with fate,
Are both alike, and never saw
Truly their lost estate.

Behold the acorn, where it lies,
Deep in the womb of earth;
Who is there thinks that he is wise
Enough to give it birth?

Ev'n so God plants the precious seed
Of knowledge in the heart,
While man, full of conceit and greed,
Oft claims he had a part.

But 'tis the gift his Savior bought,
And man, though poor in pelf,
Is rich, if by God's mercy taught
To really know himself.

HAL MORETON.

ST. JOSEPH, Missouri.

"Whom Jesus wounds, he wounds to heal—
Oh! 'tis a mercy thus to feel:
There's none can mourn while dead in sin;
Thine are the marks of life within.

Be of good cheer, on him rely,
He'll pass thy great transgressions by,
And guide thee safely by his hand,
Till thou shalt reach the heavenly land."

CORRESPONDENCE.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, March 23, 1922.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have been thinking of the subject of friendship, an institution of God between man and man which has a wonderful bearing on our life and actions. To ordinary human reason organized benevolence may at a first glance appear to be much more effective than natural friendship, but if we examine carefully we will find that it merely receives greater advertisement, and is not a drop in a bucket in comparison with the latter. The collection and distribution of money, commonly called charity, at once creates a condition which requires the continuance of the system; idleness is encouraged, and the number requiring relief increases daily. The Lord said, The poor you always have with you. We are creatures of habit, and the luxury of to-day becomes the necessity of to-morrow. Friendship is one of the richest blessings we can have in our natural life here on earth. It is not confined to any class or circumstance; rich and poor, high and low, are on an equal footing. I do not class as friendship the attraction which money has for those who

covet it. The influence of natural kindness to our fellow-man is a thousand times more potent than all the benevolent institutions man can devise. In the crowded city or in the wilderness men must rely at times on the friendship of others. Even the lone trapper far from human habitation is seldom left without some kindred spirit to give him a helping hand in time of distress.

I have dwelt rather fully on this line of thought, for I see in it the kind dispensation of Providence, which in its effectiveness, its great and merciful influence, far surpasses the proudest dreams of worldly benefactors. There is nothing that can replace the wonderful provisions of our God of love. While other applications may be made of the parable of the kindly Samaritan, showing its spiritual interpretations, I feel there is also a lesson taught in regard to the subject on which I am writing. The Levite, representing the organized charities of the day, passed by on the side and it was left to a stranger, an outcast, into whose heart God had put kindness and pity, to relieve the poor man in his desperate condition. If we stop and consider the true value of earthly riches, and have eyes to see the vanity of many of our ambitions, our money spent for that which is not bread, and our labor for that which does not satisfy, it would go far to make us more content with our present blessings. Another may have twice your income, but does he get any more out of life? No. Why then should we be envious of others? We imagine a state which does not exist anywhere on earth. God has provided rich blessings for the least of us if we but had eyes to see them and hearts to rejoice in his goodness toward us. Again, let us consider another phase of so-called benevolence, the instruction of others in an upright walk, the "moral uplift." Can we not see, in spite of all the teaching, all the expenditure of money, a growing levity and carelessness throughout the world toward time honored institutions and wholesome conventions? Can you teach a child to behave properly while you set him a contrary example? Try it and see. The example of a life which places no value on evil, which from the heart desires better things, has a far greater influence on the community than a million dollars spent in tracts and sermons. A virtuous life exposes the folly of evil habits. He who has learned that riches are not a source of happiness, but rather increase care and sorrow of heart, will show by his walk and conversation the truth he has been taught. We are admonished to do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. Friendship, whether shown to or received from another, is a blessing. There is no condemnation in it, and in God's own way it may be used to spread the gospel far more effectively than all the missionary efforts of the great organizations of our day.

If there is anything in this worth publishing you are at liberty to use it, otherwise just destroy it.

Your brother in hope,

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

RISING STAR, Texas, Nov. 17, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter for publication if you see fit. It seems too good to be thrown aside. This young sister's story of love for her God and Savior will touch a responsive chord in the heart of every child of God who may read it. Her story is but a song begun here below, only to swell into an anthem in eternity. Here such is the crowning glory of King Jesus, and ten

thousand more such notes of praise and adoration will join her in his praise as time rolls on and on.

Your brother in a little hope,

J. I. FOSTER.

ANSON, Texas, Oct. 17, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER FOSTER:—Can one as unworthy as I address you thus? and have I any right to have such a sweet privilege? We received your good letter last week, and you requested me to write you how my mind has been since last first Sunday. Well, that is a hard thing for me to write, as I am unable to get my thoughts together enough to write what I wish to say. I am just sweetly resting, and oh what a peaceful rest, no one knows only those who have experienced the same. I still have many doubts and fears, but they are not as thick and heavy since my baptism. I never will forget the night I offered myself to the church. Brother Foster, I had no thought of it when the meeting commenced. Indeed, the first thing I knew was after I sat down something said, Now look what you have done; you have deceived those good people. I came near telling the church I was mistaken and leaving the house, when these words came to me, oh so sweetly, We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. That gave me relief. I remember but little I said, for I was lost to this world in God's love. As we came home that night it would pass through my mind that I was deceived, and had done wrong in offering myself to the church, and I prayed that if I had done wrong something might happen to keep me from being baptized the next day. Then these words came to me, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Then I felt much better, and wished the time for baptism had been next morning instead of that Sunday afternoon. When we arrived at the water's edge everything looked lovely; even the trees seemed to be praising God. As Elder Green led me out into the water I could hardly keep from shouting aloud, Farewell, vain world, I am leaving you. Oh that was a day that will ever be remembered by me. As I was laid under the water there was a great quietness came over me. I left a burden in the water which I had carried with me, no matter where I went, for almost eleven years. That burden has never returned. Sometimes I try to get it back, try to imagine how I felt, but cannot. I may be wrong in doing so, and in writing you thus, but I want you to know just how I feel. I do not know whether any other person on earth ever had such thoughts and feelings as those. I will let you be the judge as to what I am. I am a puzzle to myself. The hymn, "I am a stranger here below, and what I am 'tis hard to know," just suits me. It seems as I write you my, yes, my, sweet Savior's presence fills this room, that he is very near. I have been viewing my past life to-day, and see myself trudging along down the road, as it were, feeling cast down most of the time, no help near; but I can also see blessed Jesus coming right along by me, and as I am faint and almost ready to give up and fall his hand is there to raise me up. Oh glorious thought, that I can call him my Savior. Such love he has for his people.

Now, brother Foster, concerning my hope, it gets very small sometimes, yet I

would not take anything this world has for it. No, it is not for sale. I would not sell it if I could.

I am not going to bother you any longer with my writing. I wonder what you think of me. I want always to be at the feet of the brethren and sisters. Oh if I knew they had no fellowship for me I am sure I would be one of the most miserable persons living. I wish to be always at my Savior's feet. Sweet thought, to know that some day I shall see him as he is and be like him.

I am going to stop writing, for I am sure you cannot get these words together so you can get anything out of them, but I wish to say that we certainly would have been glad to have been at your meeting. In our minds we could see you good people gathered in the church-house worshipping God. We wish it was so we could attend meeting regularly; but then we have been blessed this year in hearing several sermons, and I know we should not complain. We are all looking forward for another good meeting, the Lord willing, in November. There are many here who are Old Baptists, but they, like myself before I did it, cannot see their way clear to offer themselves to the church, but when the Lord's time comes they will make a move. Mother says tell you it lacked just three weeks of being forty-eight years from the time she and father joined the church until their baby girl joined.

Well, brother Foster, I am sending this letter with fear, for I know not what you (or any one else) will think when you read it. I do not know whether or not I have written as a child of God, but you write me when your mind so directs and tell me what you think of this letter.

Your most unworthy little sister, if one at all, DOVIE MYERS.

EL PASO, Texas, May 12, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription is about due I inclose a money order for two dollars to renew it for another year. The SIGNS comes to me as good news (I hope from relatives) from a far country, and as it has been a year since I have troubled you and the dear readers with a letter, I feel impressed to try to write a few lines once more, but now as I start to write I know that unless directed by the holy Spirit of the Most High I cannot write anything that will be of comfort or benefit to any one. If you, dear editors, see fit to publish this letter, I do hope that if it does not comfort or benefit any of the dear children of God they will bear with me, and not be offended, as I confess before man and the all-wise and most merciful God that I am an ignorant, unlearned, and, above all, one of the most sinful of all sinners, who has no hope of eternal salvation through works of righteousness, or anything that this sinful body of mine can do, but I am only trusting in God for his grace and mercy for salvation. Oh what a sweet thought! The hope for this does give me some hope of life eternal, and without this I have no hope. I believe the last words of Jesus, which he spoke while suffering, bleeding and dying upon the cross, when he said, It is finished. I believe then and there the salvation of every one of God's people was made sure and complete, and since that time there has not been one taken from or added to the redeemed of the Lord, for I do not believe that Christ died in vain. Oh what a sweet thought, a sure salvation by grace, and not of works, for if salvation is of works of righteousness, then a poor sinful mortal, such as I, has no hope. I am so full of sin that I am unworthy of the least of the favors and blessings God has in store for

his dear people, and often wander so far in sin and darkness that there seems not to be even a sign of light, and my hope seems to be forever gone, and it seems as if the love and mercy of God have gone from me. Then I am made to wonder, and say, Oh that I knew where I might find him. Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him. But how sweet to think that although I have gone deep in sin, and it would seem that there was none to deliver me, I am made to believe and hope the loving care and the tender mercies of God have ever been with me, and that he has never lost sight of me. This is when I am made to say, Bless the Lord, O my soul, for his goodness and mercy will surely follow me all of my days. If I am not deceived, if I have any light or instruction at all, it is from God, and sometimes I am made to believe and hope that he has led me about and instructed me, and has kept me, and I know he is able to raise me up again to praise his great and holy name. Here I dwell in sin and darkness, and am ever deprived of hearing the gospel of Christ preached in this city, but the city is full of so-called churches and so-called ministers of the gospel of Christ, but their hearts are far from him, for they know not God and are ignorant of his righteousness. They have ears, but cannot hear; eyes, but they cannot see, as they have not been called from darkness into the light and understanding of the glorious gospel of Christ. They think that when Christ died upon the cross he only started the salvation of his people, and they have to help him complete his work; but what can poor, sinful, weak man do to help God perform his mighty work? He who knew the end from the beginning, and declared, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure, who can stay his hand? for he works and none can hinder. None can understand those things except those God has by his Spirit revealed them unto. We are not taught those precious truths by the wisdom of man, but are taught them of God, to whom be all praise, glory and honor. He is the author and finisher of our faith, and has given us a hope in Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior, and that hope is of life eternal; and he hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. So if it was given us before the world began it certainly is not of works, and we should be thankful, and try to walk humbly, ever praising God. As the apostle Paul said, so I hope I can say of a truth, I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day; and Christ said, All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and he that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me; and this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. Then if we are the chosen people of God, chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began, before we had done either good or evil, is not our salvation sure and complete? How about those God had chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world? Have we got to send a preacher to hunt them up and preach the gospel to them that they may be saved? No. I believe that God will in some way, at the appointed time, find them, just as he found Jacob in a desert land, and in the

waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him. Oh what a blessed thought, that God leads us from darkness and gives us light and understanding. Then we know no strange gods, no god that is not able to do his will without our help, and only know the true and living God, who has all power, and rules all things after the counsel of his own will; who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast. This is the God that is keeping us by his own will and power, and is leading us and instructing us and correcting us. He often brings us into afflictions, sorrows and trials, and makes us feel that we are almost forsaken and cast off, but even in this we have consolation, and hope that all things work together for good to those who love the Lord; and believing this we have faith and courage and can even rejoice in tribulation, and have hope that some day all afflictions, sorrows and trials will end, and then life eternal will begin.

Well, as it seems that I am just writing without light or understanding I will close.

Now, dear readers of the SIGNS, if the dear editors see fit to admit this to their good paper, with the good letters it contains, please remember my address is 3115 Sacramento Street, El Paso, Texas, and if ever passing this way you will find a welcome in our home.

A sinner, in hope of eternal life,

C. M. ADAMS.

PATERSON, N. J., May 8, 1922.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I hope you arrived home safely, and found Mrs. Ker well as usual.

I can hardly realize that Elder McConnell is gone. I was very glad that I could be at the services. I much enjoyed the visit to Warwick, and cannot express how comforting, how good, the preaching was to me. Much of what you said has been with me since, especially parts of the evening sermon. My heart has been filled with thankfulness to God for all his wonderful goodness to me. That blessed hope he has given me is very sweet and precious. The wonderful love and fellowship of the Lord's people, shown to me in many ways, has filled my heart with joy unspeakable. Oh that I might be more worthy of their love. I long to live a life more consistent with what I have professed, but I find myself going very far astray; yet I know that even the desire comes from God, for surely it is not of the flesh, and in that there is comfort.

How good Elder Lefferts' editorial in the last SIGNS was. What comfort there is in being shown our spiritual blessings so freely given by divine power. How rich we are. When I look about and see the vain pursuits of happiness of the world, I am made to rejoice that it has been given me to know true joy and happiness.

I did not think to write so much, but as you asked me to tell you what is in my mind from time to time, I do not feel that I have done wrong.

We were all very glad to have that nice little visit with you, and gladly look forward to the time when you can come again, and hope Mrs. Ker may be with you. We all are as well as usual.

With love to Mrs. Ker and yourself, I am your little sister,

FLORA TITUS.

MR. J. H. Simpson, a precious young brother for whom I work, has a fine valley farm of two hundred acres, well adapted to the raising of beef cattle. He wants capital, or a Baptist partner, to enable him to carry on the work and develop the ranch. Can you put him in touch with some one who wants a fine stock proposition in a Baptist community?

Address, J. M. AMSBURY.

AJLUNE, Washington.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1922.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
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ECCLESIASTES III. 15.

"THAT which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been: and God requireth that which is past."

Brother Hawthorne, of Provencal, La., has asked us to write on the above text. This whole third chapter is very interesting, and it might be well for us to glance at the whole of it before coming directly to the verse quoted above. The substance of this chapter is to be found in the twelfth, thirteenth and twenty-second verses, and it is this, that in the lives of men there is nothing better than for a man to take what pleasure he can in his work, and to rejoice and take pleasure in the blessings God has given him. The whole chapter teaches the uselessness of human existence, and especially of that life which the children of men were living in that ancient time of the world during the legal dispensation, under that old covenant which abounded in many works to be done, but which could never bring satisfaction to the laboring and heavy laden who might mistakenly look to it for rest. The tone of much of the whole book of Ecclesiastes is sombre and pessimistic, but it must be remembered when reading it that this book was written before the coming of Christ and during the Mosaic period. It seems to be a summing up of religious experience under the law, because it says so much about a judgment to come, a judgment that should lay bare the secrets of men's hearts, and which men would not be adequate to meet satisfactorily. A note of failure, of man's failure, seems to permeate the whole chapter. Therefore, as this chapter says, the best thing for the natural man apart from God is to get the most he can out of this life, inasmuch as God has not revealed to the natural man whether there shall be anything after him; that is, after this life. The chapter begins with the declaration that there is a time for everything under the sun, and then goes on to name in detail the various times. This is followed up by the assertion that everything is beautiful in God's time; that is, in the time God has appointed for it, and that God has set the world in the heart of men to the end that men shall not find out God's work, except it be God's will to reveal it to them. This proves that if a man should shut himself away from all other men, and from all created things, he could not get away thereby from the world, because God has set the world in the heart of every man, and one's own self constitutes the world from which none of us can escape of ourselves. The great preacher who by inspiration wrote this book of Ecclesiastes warns all under that legal dispensation that their life is vanity, and that all their works amount to nothing in the way of salvation from sin; that the end of the natural man is judgment and condemnation. Very little is said throughout this book in the way of prophecy of a better and more perfect day. Other books in the Old Testament sound the note of faith and joyful looking for the gospel day, but not so with Ecclesiastes. It seems his business to sum up the futility and vanity of all existence apart from God.

Let us come now more directly to the words quoted at the beginning: "That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been: and God requireth that which is past." This same preacher says there is nothing new under the sun. God, knowing all things from eternity that should ever come to pass, and having predestinated all things according to his own eternal purpose, it must follow that there never can be anything new with God. He knows all things, and always has known them. That which is to-day taking place has already been in the mind of God, and comprehended in his infinite knowledge from eternity. All things which are to transpire in the future have already been seen and known in the mind of Jehovah. Not only is all this true from the viewpoint of Jehovah's infinite and supreme mind, but the travel of the children of men from ancient times has been upward and downward and around the same cycle of existence over and over again, century after century, age upon age. Perhaps as to every little detail, the ages as they succeed one another may not be exactly alike, but one age follows the same general plan as every other age. As with each one of us, we go through the periods of birth, growth, maturity, decay and death, so nations and worlds go through the same process, with the exception that a man lives quicker and dies quicker than does a nation or a world. Much is being said these days about this present world in which we live being civilized, and many people seem to think the world was never civilized before our day. Perhaps it never was, according to the standards which now prevail, but other ages and other worlds have been civilized long ago, according to standards which then prevailed and which were satisfactory to those then living. How shall we say that their civilization was inferior to ours, since elements of decay already are apparent in our own, which, if not providentially thwarted, mean the downfall of our civilization, even as the ages before us have perished and gone the way of all flesh? The world in the days of Noah perished in its sins, and because of them; the Egyptian power met its overthrow in the days of Moses, because it held in captivity God's elect. History says that the civilization of ancient Egypt was one of the finest the world has ever seen, yet it perished and left behind it but a name wrapt in mystery well-nigh past the keenest minds to penetrate and solve. The nation of the Jews reached its highest grandeur in the reign of the shepherd king, David. From Solomon's time it declined. Its captivity by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon marked the end of Israel and Judah as independent nations. From that time they were tributaries of other nations, and finally came under the government of Rome. Thus we find them in the days of Jesus. A few years after his death the nation finally ended its existence as a nation and has been scattered throughout the world ever since. Continuing on after the days of Jesus, and after the end of the Jewish nation, we find Rome rising to pomp and splendor under the Cæsars, only to decline and finally to fall under the heels of her barbarian invaders. As the world must come to an end with each one of us living in it, so must it come to an end with the nations. Each has its birth, growth, maturity, decline and end. It has always been so, it shall always be so, so long as things continue as they are and so long as human beings remain constituted as they are. Thus it is true, as the text says, that which has occurred

before our time is occurring now, and that which is to take place in the future has already occurred in the lives of men and nations again and again. We are only doing what our fathers and grandfathers and great-grandfathers did before us, and what our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren shall do after us. Details in the lives of men and nations may vary, but the eternal plan and purpose guiding all varies not at all. Manners and customs and languages and ideas doubtless change, and have changed many, many times, but the basic material of which humans are made never changes, and shall continue to lead men around and around in the eternally revolving and recurring cycle of the ages until Jehovah shall say it is enough and turn us in some other direction and to some other end.

"And God requireth that which is past." Particularly this expression has reference to the commandments and requirements of the law of God given to man in the beginning in the garden of Eden, that law which was afterward written out more in detail and given to Moses upon tables of stone to be published to the children of Israel. God required that everything in that law must be fulfilled, and that everything in that law which was a pattern of the true heavens should be likewise matched with its substance and so perish in the using. Nothing in all that old covenant could possibly fail of accomplishment. Jesus emphasized this when he said that not one jot nor one tittle of the law should in any wise pass away until all be fulfilled. This law, which was past at the time Ecclesiastes wrote (that is, past, but not passed away), was required by Jehovah to be kept. For this reason Jesus came in the flesh that he might fulfill God's requirements and keep the whole law, and keep it perfectly, not merely literally, but spiritually. Like every other text in the Bible, this text would not be rightly seen did not we see Jesus in it, or in some way pointed to it and connected with it. It was because God required the thing that was past, and, further, because man was utterly unable to satisfy that spiritual requirement which God loved and desired to have rendered him, that God sent his only begotten Son into the world that the world through him might be saved.

L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. T. Rowe.)

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, to the churches composing the same.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In our attempt to write a letter to circulate among you we will call your attention to Matthew xvi. 13–19. First of all we notice that Jesus asked his disciples this question, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" and they answered, "Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets." These men we understand were unregenerate men of the world, and all of them were wrong, as the notions of men always are. Then "he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." We understand that the answer of Peter is not for himself alone, but is the faith of each of them, one speaking for the church, and they are not wondering whether he is one or another, but are settled in their belief that he is the Son of the living God, and they did not know this because of their natural intelligence, but by revelation from the Father, as the answer of Jesus shows. They know Jesus by the revelation of the Father, and they know the Father by the revelation of Jesus.

Eighteenth verse: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter; and upon this rock [Jesus] I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Notwithstanding the firmness of Peter's faith he is only a fallible man, who presently denied his Lord, and even the knowledge of him. The church for whom Peter was answering must have a more sure foundation, and no man can lay any other than that is laid, which is Jesus, the sure foundation stone; the gates of hell, even all the enemies of Jesus and his church, cannot destroy her. We do not understand that the saying in the nineteenth verse, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," &c., was to Peter as an individual, so as to make him the everlasting pope or priest of the church, but it is to the church that the keys are given, to show that the apostles and other brethren did not look upon Peter as their head, or as one from whom they were to receive orders in the government of the church. When certain men went down from Judea and taught the brethren that unless they were circumcised after the manner of Moses they could not be saved, they did not call upon Peter individually, but went to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question. The apostles and elders composed the church, and from the church should come our authority for doing things in the kingdom of heaven. The elders mentioned were not ministers, but older brethren, from whom all would do well to seek advice. God dwells in the church and walks in the church and her authority is from him, and therefore he recognizes her actions, so that what she looses on earth is loosed in the gospel heavens, or what she binds on earth is bound in the gospel heavens. In order, therefore, that our actions shall be according to the gospel law we must have the order of the gospel church. Laity, deacons, preachers, all are subject to and under the authority of the church, and steps taken without this is a disorderly course which the church of Jesus Christ must and will curb. May God give us to think on these things.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.

E. A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

CHURCH LETTERS.

The Ebenezer Primitive, or Old School, Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Maryland, to the Baltimore Association, May 17th, 18th and 19th, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We feel it to be a great blessing and privilege when those of like precious faith can assemble for praise, prayer and thanksgiving to our heavenly Father for his many rich, kind and wonderful blessings to poor, weak and unworthy creatures like ourselves.

As a church we are at peace, and considering the seemingly low state and falling away of Zion generally, our members are, we believe, as faithful and alive to their God and to their brethren as any. We greatly deplore the torn and shattered condition of the churches to-day, and humbly implore the members to search the Scriptures for their rule of faith and practice, and follow no man any farther than he follows Christ, but to withdraw from every brother that walketh disorderly, and thus may love, unity and fellowship abound. "For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. * * * But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and

without hypocrisy." Speak not evil one of another, brethren, but confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, are the admonitions of the apostle James. It is sad when we look around among our churches and see the unconcern and worldly-mindedness of so many. We hear the ministers blaming the congregations, and the congregations blaming the ministers, but how few of us ever look to ourselves, and say, I am the cause of this deadness in Zion, and it behooves me to be more patient, forbearing and forgiving toward my brethren, and more zealous to the cause which is so dear to my heart. Truly if we were found more at the throne of grace, and our thoughts and acts were consistent with that prayer, it would be different with us. This organization which has stood one hundred years in a great city, unknown and alone, is not looking to human efforts for any of the things which pertain to the salvation of our souls, but looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

We welcome you to our hearts and homes, and truly hope that your stay with us will be both pleasant and profitable.

During the past two years, since we last convened, there have been quite a number of changes in our little flock. Three have died, one dismissed by letter and one has been excluded; two have been received by letter, and one has been baptized, leaving our total number thirty-one members. Elder J. T. Rowe is our pastor, and we have preaching three Sundays each month: second, third and fourth. We send $20.65 to help with the expenses of the meeting.

Finally, brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might; put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand.

Done by order of the church, May 14th, 1922. A. S. ROWE.

The Black Rock Old School Baptist Church, Baltimore County, Maryland, to the Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, to convene with our sister church, Ebenezer, Baltimore, Md., May 17th, 18th and 19th, 1922, sendeth greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As there was no session of the Baltimore Association last year, it has been two years since we addressed you. During the time we have lost several of our members by death. Four sisters whom we highly esteemed and loved for the truth's sake, who were ever faithful, true and loyal to the cause, always present at our meetings whenever it was possible for them to be there, so we greatly miss them, but we mourn not as those who have no hope, for we believe our loss is their gain. Then there are two afflicted sisters, neither of whom is likely to ever meet with us again, so we feel very lonely and cast down at times, as there are but few of us left, and of the few we regret that there are several we feel could attend, but rarely ever do so, and manifest very little interest in the church. There seems to be a falling away of members, and of those who are not, with few exceptions, who used to meet with us, so our congregations are usually very small. Sometimes we feel discouraged, but when we remember that the hearts of all men are in the Lord's hand and he turns them at his will, and causes them to look Zionward, and that he opens and none can shut, and shuts and none can open, that he rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say, What doest thou? we feel to take courage and abide his (the Lord's) time to restore unto us the joy of his salvation and bless us with a season of refreshing. We have been favored to have preaching the first and third Sundays in each month,

by our pastor, Elder J. T. Rowe, on the first Sunday, and Elder W. S. Alexander on the third Sunday, until last September, since which time we have only had preaching the first Sunday by Elder Rowe.

We trust that you may have a goodly number present, especially the ministering brethren, and may they come in the fullness of Christ our Savior, and that he who is King of kings and Lord of lords may guide you in all of your deliberations, and that your meeting may be one of love, and redound to the glory of God the Father, and to the praise of his dear Son, is our prayer for Jesus' sake.

We name as messengers, Elder J. T. Rowe, and any of our members who may be present. Having lost four members, with no additions, leaves our present number ten. We send five dollars to help defray expenses.

Done by order of the church, May 14th, 1922.

J. T. ROWE, Pastor.

F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Association, convened with the Ebenezer Church, Baltimore, Md., to the associations with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have met and received your Minutes and messengers, which has been a great pleasure to us. The preaching and order have been sound and comforting. We desire a continuance of your correspondence and fellowship. We greatly desire that the Primitive, or Old School, Baptists everywhere will put aside their petty differences and come together in love and harmony on the great doctrine of God.

The next session of this Association will be held with the Black Rock Church, in Baltimore County, Maryland, in May, 1923.

Finally, brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.

E. A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder John McConnell, on April 29th, 1922, at about 1:10 o'clock in the afternoon, surrounded by many who loved him, breathed his last, thus entering into that rest that remaineth to the people of God. He was taken with a chill on April 25th, developing almost immediately into pneumonia, and while all that loving hands and human science could do was done, the time for him to depart and be with Christ, which was far better for him, had arrived; but his gain was our loss, which we mourn deeply.

Elder McConnell was born July 31st, 1858, making his stay on earth 63 years, 8 months and 29 days. He and Ella Slater were united in marriage October 5th, 1882, to which union was born an only daughter, Katharine, who preceded him in death about sixteen years. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, N. J., September 5th, 1886, by Elder William J. Purington; received in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Church, New York city, by letter from Salem Church, Philadelphia, Pa., on June 7th, 1896. He was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry June 6th, 1899. The Ebenezer Church extended him a call as pastor May 6th, 1900, which he accepted on September 2nd, 1900. His faithful labors of love were blest of the Lord to bear fruit to His name's honor and glory, and to the comfort, edification, peace and unity of Zion. While his travels among the Baptists were not as extensive as those of some in the ministry (being a man of heavy business duties), he was much beloved and highly esteemed for the truth's sake by the churches in the east, in Canada, Virginia and North Carolina. He was regarded as a man of exceptionally good judgment, and his counsel was sought by many. He is survived by his devoted and most helpful companion, four brothers and three sisters, and a host of friends and brethren who loved him as a man of rare character and for the Christlike spirit which he constantly manifested.

Funeral services were held in the Ebenezer churchhouse, New York city, May 2nd, in the presence of a large gathering, and were conducted by his two sons in the gospel: Elder George Ruston and the unworthy writer, after which a number of brethren in the ministry made appropriate remarks. Interment was in the cemetery at Frenchtown, N. J., on May 3rd. The

writer feels that, next to his dear companion, he will miss him most of all, but we desire to bow in obedience to the will of Him who gave and who hath taken away, and pray that the blessings of our heavenly Father may rest upon us as a church, upon our sister in her grief and loneliness, and upon all others who are bereaved, and may the name of our blessed Redeemer, whom our departed pastor delighted so much to honor, be praised, both now and evermore. Amen.

ALSO,

Miss Catharine Ford passed away February 28th, 1922, at the age of 82 years, 9 months and 21 days, having been born in Orange County, New York, May 7th, 1839. On June 9th, 1895, she was baptized by Elder Benton Jenkins, and on April 4th, 1897, was received by letter from Middletown and Wallkill Church into the fellowship of the Ebenezer Church, of New York city. We all knew and loved her as "Sister Kate," and the example of her talk and walk in the church was certainly worthy of emulation. It can truthfully be said that she lived her religion, and one of the greatest joys of her life was to be among her brethren and sisters listening to the gospel of the Son of God being declared in demonstration of the Spirit and with power. Having been taught of the Lord that, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm," she trusted only in God, and had no confidence in the flesh. She continually spoke of her inability to do the things she would, but her faith in God to do all his pleasure, in the army of heaven as well as among the inhabitants of the earth, that none could stay his hand, or need say unto him, What doest thou? was unshakable. The writer visited her early in this year, and her conversation was truly in heaven and her delight in God, after the inward man. With such an one surely it is not death to die, to leave this weary road, and amidst the brotherhood on high to be with God at home. Our hearts are made sad because we shall see her face no more, but with the assurance that she has gone home to be with God we could not wish her back to further partake of the conflicts of this world. Sister Ford is survived by seven nephews and ten nieces.

On the occasion of her funeral, at the home of her niece, Mrs. William H. Howard, in Verona, N. J., Mr. Williver, the local Methodist minister, spoke in prayer, and Elder John McConnell preached to the comfort of those present, after which interment was made in the Laurel Grove Cemetery, Paterson, N. J.

May the Lord comfort those who feel the need of him. R. LESTER DODSON.

Miles Starr died May 14th, 1922, at the home of his sister, Mrs. Scott Miller, at Garrardstown, W. Va. He was born June 3rd, 1843, in Trough Creek Valley, Huntingdon Co., Pa., and was the son of Sarah Swope and Moses Starr. He is survived by one sister, Mrs. Scott Miller, and two step-brothers: J. L. and Allen Hauger, of Shepherdstown, W. Va. In 1874 he married Miss Emma Jones, of Jefferson Co., W. Va. To them were born two children, one dying in infancy; the other, Mrs. H. S. Pitzer, with her family, living in Shepherdstown, W. Va., from whose home the funeral was held, burial being in Elmwood Cemetery. Mr. Starr never united with the Old School Baptist Church, but that was the church he loved, and he was a faithful attendant at the meetings of the Mill Creek Church, Kearneysville, W. Va. He had an experience of grace, rejoiced in Christ Jesus and had no confidence in the flesh. A very keen sense of his unworthiness kept him from uniting with the church. He loved to read his Bible and the SIGNS.

At his funeral we tried to speak from the words, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

ALSO,

Mrs. Emily Virginia Cockerille, wife of Fleming Cockerille, passed away from this earthly life Friday, May 26th, 1922, at her home, at Floris, Fairfax Co., Va., after an illness of some months. She was in the eighty-first year of her age, and besides her husband she leaves to survive her, one brother, Cornelius Wyckoff, and one sister, Mrs. Lillie Skillman, of Vienna, Va. The funeral services, conducted by the writer, were held at her home, after which interment took place in Herndon Cemetery. Mrs. Cockerille never united with the Old School Baptist Church, but that was the church of her faith, and she was a regular attendant of the meetings at Frying Pan Church. Calling to see her a short time before her death, I was impressed with her faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, and found her alive in the salvation which is alone by the grace and mercy of God. She was a good woman in the sense that her goodness was after a godly sort, the fruit of God's work within her.

Written by request. L.

R. C. Randall was born July 31st, 1841, near Marietta, Georgia, March 14th, 1922. Early in life he moved to Mississippi, and enlisted in the war of 1861, going through the period of four years, and received an honorable discharge at the close of the war. He returned home and shortly after was united in marriage to Miss M. A. Ott, August 12th, 1865. To that union were given twelve children, two of whom preceded him in death, leaving ten to mourn his death, they are: W. F. Randall, of Biloxi, Miss., Miss D. B. Randall, of New Orleans, La., S. L. Randall and Mrs. R. L. Parks, of Hattiesburg, Miss., C. C. Randall, Mrs. M. L. Risler, Mrs. W. L. Welborn, Mrs. C. B. Seay, Mrs. B. Fereo, of Laurel, Miss., and Mrs. S. A. Miller, of Mobile, Ala. He moved from Lauderdale County, Mississippi, to Newton, and united with the Baptists in 1891, and was baptized by Elder A. Hollinsworth. In 1898 he moved to Laurel, Miss., and

united by letter with the Palestine Church, in Jones County, where his membership was when he was called to meet his Savior. He was a firm believer in the predestination of all things for many years, and often said he was willing and prepared to go at any time. He left his children and sixty-three grandchildren, also many friends, to mourn his departure, but we mourn not, as his faith and hope were in God. I was called to conduct the burial services, together with Elder S. F. Graham, and we both spoke on the subject of faith and hope, to a large assembly, after which his body was laid away by the side of his wife in Hickory Grove Cemetery, Laurel, Mississippi.

ALSO,

Mrs. Ada Randall, wife of S. L. Randall, of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, was born in Jasper County, January 25th, 1887, and died at the home of Mrs. M. L. Riser, Laurel, Miss., March 23rd, 1922. Her maiden name was Miss Ada Reinor. She was united in marriage to S. L. Randall April 20th, 1902, and to that union six children were born: Melvin, Doile, Iva, May, Ollie Lee and Margaret. She leaves her husband and five children, together with the church and all who knew her to mourn her departure. She had been in poor health for a number of years and was taken suddenly much worse at the home of Mrs. M. L. Riser, and although physicians, relatives and friends did what they could for her the dear Savior called her home to the great beyond. She was always ready to give a reason of her hope and to defend the cause, and her home was a home for the Baptists. She united with the church in the summer of 1914, and was baptized by the writer. I was again called to conduct the funeral services, after which her body was laid to rest in the little family lot in the above cemetery to await the gathering together of the redeemed of our Savior. May the dear Father of all our mercies bless all of the bereaved ones.

L. F. EASLEY.

A. B. Canada died at his home, in Madison County, Georgia, January 3rd, 1922, after a brief illness of heart trouble. He was born April 19th, 1849. He was married to Miss Elizabeth F. M. Smith, and to the union were born several children only one of whom survives: Mrs. J. W. Carithers. He was again married, to Mrs. Maggie Chandler, and to them was born one son, A. B. Canada, Jr. He lived a consistent member of Lystra Church for many years, and was always ready and willing to help do anything for the cause. He loved the SIGNS and the doctrine it advocates, and had been a subscriber for many years. He was buried in the churchyard, in the presence of a large gathering of his brethren and friends. The funeral was conducted by the writer of this notice. We feel that God alone can heal the broken heart of the widow. We shall miss him, yet we feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

JAMES M. ADAMS.

Celia Triplett Poling was born January 5th, 1848, and died March 12th, 1922, aged 74 years, 2 months and 7 days. She leaves to mourn their loss a husband and three children. She was united in marriage to John Poling, of near Meadowville, in the year 1881, and to that union were born four children, two sons and two daughters: Elijah Dennis, of Belington, Page, of Hodgeville, Mrs. Eva May Gainer, of Philippi, W. Va., with whom she made her home, and Ella Gay, who died April 9th, 1913. She also leaves two brothers and one sister: Cyrus Triplett, of Huttonsville, Elijah Triplett, of Elkins, and Mrs. Charles Moore, of Ronceverte, W. Va. She had been a consistent member of the Primitive Baptist Church for forty-five years. She died from a complication of diseases, after an illness of about three weeks, during which time she was a patient sufferer, and passed quietly away, as though in sleep.

The writer conducted the funeral services although it was a task, for she was my aunt and a sister in the church. Her home was always open to the brethren, and it was a dear home to me. Her husband has been deacon of our church for many years. She will be missed in the church, as well as in her home and neighborhood. Her body was laid to rest in the little Bethel Cemetery, to await the call of all the jewels redeemed by Christ's own precious blood. Uncle John Poling, her husband, is now eighty years old, and is one of the oldest members of our church, and, according to nature, will not have long here on earth to weep, but will be called to meet her on the shores of never-ending day and live in the presence of their Redeemer.

J. J. POLING.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Simon Hiltabrand, Ill., $3.00; Mrs. T. H. Young, Ohio, $1.00; Mrs. S. N. Stevens, Ark., $1.00; Mrs. Alice S. Daniell, Ark., $3.00; Hattie L. Walker, Va., 75 cents.

MEETINGS.

A two days meeting is appointed to be held in the Old School Baptist meeting-house at Cammal, Pa., Saturday and Sunday, July 29th and 30th, 1922. All lovers of the truth are welcome to meet with us.

J. T. BADGLEY, Clerk.

THE First Primitive Baptist Church of Mineral Wells, Texas, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on S. W. 4th Ave. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

SALLIE E. HOWARD, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

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IN

NEW YORK CITY.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk,
CLAREMONT, Cal.

HYMN BOOKS.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

A LITTLE SPACE, A LITTLE REVIVING.

"AND now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage."—Ezra ix. 8.

It is instructive and comforting to read in the Scriptures what is recorded of the people of God in ages long ago. At times in my musings about them I feel I am with them. I say, They are my people, we are "fellows," "companions," "our folks," with one heart, and one gracious covenant Jehovah: our Maker, Friend, our salvation, our all. Look at what is embraced in this verse. What experiences they had in the providences of the Lord their God. They had but recently returned from Babylonish bondage. The Lord had caused their fathers, and some of them, to be carried captives for their good. "Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans for their good. For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again to this land: and I will build them, and not pull them down; and I will plant them, and not pluck them up. And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart."—Jer. xxiv. 5–7. The chastenings they endured away from their native land were for their "profit." (Heb. xii. 10.) Yes, all the rebukes and chastenings of the children of God are to this gracious end. But we sigh, and complain, and say, These chastenings are painful, I am so oppressed, humbled, crushed down beneath these trials; and perhaps, dear child of God, you have cried in your chastenings, "Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the blow of thine hand."—Psalms xxxix. 10. Behold those captive Israelites in their exile from Canaan! Hear them tell their story: "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down; yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How

shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."—Psalms cxxxvii. 1–6. About one hundred and eighty years before the return of the children of Judah from their seventy years captivity in Babylon the Lord by the mouth of Isaiah declared of the yet unborn Cyrus, king of Persia, "He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid."—Isaiah xliv. 28. He was raised up and girded of the Lord to execute his counsel. Read the first chapter of Ezra, it is very interesting, and see also how at this selfsame time the angel of the Lord interceded for mercy to be showed unto Jerusalem (Zech. i. 12–17), and Daniel also was caused to pray concerning these matters. (Dan. ix. 2–27.) And this in God's gracious counsel he had spoken by the mouth of Ezekiel, xxxvi. 37, 38: "Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this [the things spoken of in this chapter] be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock. As the holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts, so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men; and they shall know that I am the Lord." How high and God-glorifying were Ezra's contemplations of the Lord's gracious dealings in bringing back the captivity of his people. The Lord had done great things for them, whereof they were glad; their mouths were filled with laughter and their tongues with singing. (Psalms cxxxvii. 1–3.) But how soon was Ezra's cup of rejoicing changed and he was given tears in great measure to drink, for he was made to know the thoughtless ingratitude and transgression of many in Israel that filled him with astonishment; that made him ashamed, and blush to lift up his face unto God. A remnant of Israel escaped the sword of Nebuchadrezzar, and also the sore famine and pestilence that destroyed the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The Lord showed his electing graciousness to this remnant and sent them to Babylon for their good. They endured seventy years captivity, and God shows his grace to give Israel a remnant to escape from captivity. The favored exiles return to their own land, and Ezra instructed of the Lord of the signification of the providences of the God of Israel with his people very blessedly, and in a few words, tells of the acts and purpose of Jehovah in these providences. He sees the present goodness of the Lord, and the future mercies in store for the favored ones, to them that love God, to them wo are the called according to his purpose. While the tribes of Jacob journeyed in the wilderness there were especial times when for a little space grace was shown to give them little refreshings by the way. After the experience of the bitter waters of Marah, and the sweetening of those waters so that Israel could drink them, they went on their way in the dry, parched land. "And they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm trees: and they encamped there by the waters."—Exodus xv. 27. An oasis in the desert; and the people of God today in their pilgrimage to the better country come to these resting, refreshing spots. Here we encamp awhile, until the cloud moves; we have been revived and rested, we have had our strength renewed, our health improved, and once more we are marching on our way; we press

toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (Phil. iii. 14.)

Ezra saith, "And now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage." Thus it was God's way in his dispensations with his people; and so it is with those who fear the Lord in our times. It was tribulations and mercies ages past, and to-day our unchangeable, gracious, covenant God appoints our times according to his all-wise counsels. It is not the good pleasure of our heavenly Father to carry us through life's pilgrimage on flowery beds of ease. We are poor sinful beings, vessels of mercy on whom he will show his glories, and the glories of the Lord are to be known, declared upon his own, in bringing the many sons unto glory. They shall be to the praise of the glory of his grace. The called of God are called to endure tribulations, they have conflicts with sin, with inward vile corruptions; this present evil world and the devil are their enemies, and there is fighting to be done. "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life." The Lord in his infinite wisdom has set the day of adversity over against the day of prosperity. (Eccl. vii. 14.) There is much that we have a taste of as we journey on our way. There are burdens to be borne, tribulations to endure, temptations, trials, afflictions; these are our heavenly Father's rebukes and chastenings. (Rev. iii. 19.) There are times of darkness. There are the hidings of his face. "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior." With some of God's dear children there are periods of long captivity, of sore travail, of rugged wilderness experiences, while only here and there for a little space a green spot can be found. They can seldom sing, their harps are all unstrung, all out of tune; sighs and moans and tears and supplications are more frequent than their songs. It pleases the Lord to give us tears in great measure to drink, and God showeth his chosen ones hard things, all in great covenant faithfulness, all in everlasting love. It is all to humble us, to prove us, and to prove to us that our God is very pitiful and of tender mercy, rich in mercy unto all who call upon him, and though with some of us there would appear to be no end to our troubles, and through floods and fires our pathway lies, so graciously are we wrought by the Lord in these dispensations that our trust abides in him, and we are in accord with Job, and in accord with David, and can say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."—Job xiii. 15; xxiii. 10. "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me; thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me."—Psalms cxxxviii. 7. Child of God, look at this picture. There lies a poor, sick, famished, cast off slave, an Egyptian, but David succored him; and gave him bread, and he did eat, and they made him drink water; and they gave him a piece of a cake of figs, and two clusters of rasins, and when he had eaten his spirit came again, for he had eaten no bread, nor drunk any water, three days and three nights. And David said unto him, To whom belongest thou? And he said, I am a young man of Egypt, servant to an Amalekite, and my master left me, because three days agone I fell sick. (1

Sam. xxx. 11–13.) So we, as this wretched, forsaken one, have been found by Christ, our spiritual David, when we have fallen down in the wilderness of our burdens, afflictions and conflicts, ready to perish. But Jesus comes as the good Samaritan (Luke x. 33), he lifts up our head, pours in the oil and the wine, binds up our wounds, and for a little space riches of grace is our portion from our gracious Savior; he restoreth our souls. What heart knowledge have you of the Savior? Sometimes when the soul is cast down under the oppression of the enemy, beneath the heart-sickening consciousness of our corruption, in which we are made to cry, Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? then in much graciousness Jesus comes to our rescue. His blessed gospel enables us to hope in him as our salvation, for his blood and obedience are our trust, and in him is our perfection of beauty before the throne of God. Thus for a little space we are again revived, and take courage to gird on anew our armor, and to sing for a few moments, In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. This is a breathing spell in the battle, a drinking of the brook in the way, a time of expectant triumph. In our trials and the weariness of our souls in the weary land Jesus is the shadow of a great rock and rivers of water in a dry land. Some sweet gospel promise gladdens our heart, a few lines of a hymn; there is thus a time of refreshing bestowed upon us, coming from the Fountain of Israel, from the presence of the Lord. Our Beloved's voice in the gospel of his grace tells us that all shall end well. Read with me, "Thus saith the Lord God, Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come."—Ezek. xi. 16. This is our God in the exceeding riches of his grace unto his unworthy chastened people. The Lord, the sanctuary of these poor outcasts, is just suited to them. It is poor sinners and God. Just the helpless, sick and wounded, the far off one, who was scattered in the cloudy and dark day, poor desolate wanderers, roaming in a foreign land, exiles from the land that flows with milk and honey, but they are not forsaken of their covenant God. The Lord hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew; he loveth them with an everlasting, immortal love. I the Lord will appear to them though far off; depraved and prone to err they be, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, I will have compassion upon them in their chastened, exiled condition, make myself known to them; I will be their refuge; I will cover them with my feathers. (Psalms xci. 4.) In my love and faithfulness, in my everlasting covenant, in my eternal bosom there I will be a little sanctuary to them, and safety, comfort and blessedness shall be their portion in me. O, poor sinner, Jesus Christ will hide thee in his pavilion, and there grace shall be shown thee, and all thy revivings be known.

"A little sanctuary." Just poor vile sinners, just wretched outcast transgressors shut in with Christ crucified. Just Christ and the church; no intruders there. No one to molest, to harm the poor guilty one who has fled to Jesus for refuge. I will be a little sanctuary to them. The Lord alone did lead Jacob, and there was no strange god with him. (Deut. xxxii. 12.) Sometimes my tried and burdened heart cries unto the Lord, Let these little revivings for a little space

be more frequent, or let them longer last, for thou seest I am weak and faint, and can scarcely endure the everyday straits, burdens and conflicts that attend my life. But one smile of thine, my dearest Savior, outweighs all adversities, revives my soul, turns my darkness into light, and the shadow of death into morning.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

NEW YORK, N. Y.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—Sister Ruston has kindly consented to having her letter to me published, as I wished it, yet fearing somewhat to do so. I feel that it will encourage those of the household who are traveling in darkness and harassed with rebellious thoughts and feelings of ingratitude and depression. If you think favorably, please publish it in the SIGNS. It was very sweet to me, and I want to share it with others.

Desiring that the sweet spirit of grace may abide with you, keeping and sustaining you, I am your sister in the love of the truth, I hope,

WATIE A. BEARD.

KELLY CORNERS, N. Y., April 1, 1922.

DEAR SISTERS:—I am addressing this to both of you, as I think you have both written me since I wrote to you, and I am sure you will not mind sharing it. In your last to Grace you said you missed hearing from me, but excused me, knowing how much I have to do. It made me feel very humble at the time I read it, to think anything I had written would be valued by you, and I felt I would try and write to you soon. I hope some of my other neglected correspondents will be able to exercise the same charity, as it seems impossible for me to answer all the letters I receive as promptly as I would like. It is true my time for writing is very limited, but another reason which sometimes prompts me to refrain from writing is my feeling of utter destitution in spiritual things, and I feel I want to write of those things, and hope to feel more freedom at some other time. This evening I feel more in the mood for writing than at some other times, so will make an attempt, hoping the Lord will keep me from giving expression to anything wrong.

We have been to Union Grove to meeting to-day, and I enjoyed it, and felt thankful I could be there. The text was in the ninety-second Psalm, verse four: "For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work; I will triumph in the works of thy hands." In the condition I was in it seemed very suitable to me. Yesterday I spent a miserable day. My heart was full of bitter rebellion about many things. It hardly seems as though I could be in such a condition with the many blessings I have, but I am ashamed to say I was. All I could compare myself to was the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. I loathed myself for my murmuring, rebellious spirit, and yet seemed helpless to alter it. I began singing, "Lord, revive us, all our help must come from thee." Not that I had any thought of the meaning of the words when I began, but just to try and shake off my misery. When I realized what I was singing I felt a little softened, and felt a strong desire that the Lord would revive me, for I knew I stood so much in need of it. Then I found myself singing another hymn, and to my surprise found it exactly expressed my feelings, just as though it had been written for me:

"When darkness long has veiled my mind,
And smiling day once more appears,
Then, my Redeemer, then I find
The folly of my doubts and fears.

I chide my unbelieving heart,
And blush that I should ever be
Thus prone to act so base a part,
Or harbor one hard thought of thee.

But O, my Lord, one look from thee
Subdues the disobedient will;
Drives doubts and discontent away,
And thy rebellious worm is still.

Thou art as ready to forgive
As I am ready to repine;
Thou, therefore, all the praise receive,
Be shame and self-abhorrence mine."

The other verses are good, but these are the ones that suited me so well. I have quoted them, hoping you may see the sweetness in them that there was to me. Gone was all the rebellion and wicked murmuring, and with it the physical weariness that had been oppressing me, and I felt filled with praise to such a God who could in a moment change one so vile and hard-hearted as I, and not only could, but had, appeared to me. All last week I was troubled by thinking of the verse in Galatians where it tells what is the fruit of the Spirit: Love, joy, peace, &c., because I felt so devoid of them all, but this morning, when thinking over the Lord's goodness to me, I realized that I had been looking for the fruit of the Spirit in myself, but the Lord showed me that from him is my fruit found. How precious are these visits from the Lord. They make us cry, More frequent let thy visits be, or let them longer last.

I fear I am writing too much about myself. Forgive me if I am, but there are times when we feel we must tell our friends what great things the Lord hath done for us. I feel my ignorance, and am fearful of writing something I should not, but you have always exercised charity toward me, and I am not afraid that you will fail to do so this time.

I am glad to say we are about all over the flu. We are very busy with the spring work, but it is a blessing we have health and strength to do it. Give our love to all the dear brethren in the New York Church. You wrote Ruth of the comfort and restfulness you find in the Sunday meetings and the companionship of the Lord's people. I feel I can echo that. It is a wonderful thing to have meetings where there is an absence of contention and strife. I wonder sometimes whether we appreciate them as we ought, yet we certainly do in a measure. It seems so good to see love abounding among the brethren, each willing to consider the wishes and feelings of others. May the Lord keep us all from doing or saying anything to mar the peace of Zion.

We are always glad to hear from either of you any time you feel inclined to write. George joins me in love to you all.

Your sister in a precious hope,
ESTHER RUSTON.

SALINE, La., May 29, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending you a letter I wrote to brother C. S. Fetter, and it was returned to me. I read his letter in the SIGNS of May 15th, and felt that I wanted to write a few lines to him, and if you see fit you can publish it; if not, all will be well, as I think you should be the judge. I fully believe that the SIGNS has been upheld by the grace of God these many years it has been published. I think that we are living in perilous times, and it is good to know there are a few contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints. I hope I love the saints of God in deed and in truth.

I am, I hope, your brother in Christ,
E. F. READHIMER.

SALINE, La., May 18, 1922.

DEAR BROTHER FETTER:—I will try in my weakness to write you a few lines, as I have read your letter in the SIGNS,

and it did my poor soul good. I feel I can surely fellowship you in your trials and tribulations, as I feel that there is none like me. I am so full of sin that it often makes me doubt I have ever been born again. My mind it seems is filled with the things of this world, and the wicked thoughts I have make me shudder; and then again I get rebellious and feel that I will give it all up, that I am only a sinner, and do nothing but sin, and why should I profess something I am not? for I often feel I am only acting the hypocrite in professing to be a child of God. But, dear brother, I can only hope. As you said, if we had the full assurance that we were the children of God we would cease to hope. The Scripture says that we live by hope, for if we see a thing it is not hope, but we do with patience wait for it. I believe God has a purpose in all things, and that they will be for the good of his people and to his glory. The dear Savior had to suffer here on this earth, the Just for the unjust, so his people must suffer, too, if they follow him. When I hear some dear brother or sister bemoaning their sinfulness it makes me have confidence in them, for I believe I know that no one will ever see the corruption in his own heart unless Jesus Christ has shined in it, for men by nature love darkness rather than light, and Christ Jesus is the light of the world. He is the way, the truth and the life of his people, and to be made to see our true condition is an evidence of life. It is said that he came to his own and they received him not, but as many as did receive him gave he power to become the sons of God. Not by blood, nor by the will of man, but of God. So it is plain that man has nothing to do with it. I know that if it had been left to me I never would have been with a people I certainly believe are the children of the Most High, for it is against my old nature to dwell with a lowly and humble people. Our nature is vain and puffed up, and I am very often so plagued with the deceitfulness of my sinful nature that I am made to cry with Paul, Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? There is One who can and will deliver his people out of every trouble. He tells them, Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am there ye may be also. Dear brother, these are blessed promises to God's dear children, and when I can feel to hope they are unto me it is worth more to me than all the gold of Ophir and the cattle on a thousand hills. The things of the kingdom of God are as much higher than the things of earth as the heavens are above the earth. Then why should we murmur and complain? It is because we feel forsaken, we feel that the joy of his salvation is gone forever; but he has said, If I go away I will come again; and if he has ever been with any one he never will forsake them. He says, I will be with thee in six troubles, and in the seventh I will not forsake thee. Oh glorious thought to me sometimes, when I can feel and am glad that my trials and troubles will soon be over here in this sin-cursed earth, when I hope to be gathered with the saints of God whose garments are washed in the blood of the Lamb, and his people will in eternity praise him for their salvation; where they will know as they are known. Here we have doubts and fears, and only see as through a glass darkly, but with him we will see him face to face and know that

we are his, and then we will be as holy as he is, for his righteousness is imputed to every one of his redeemed, and if I be a vessel of mercy he is made sin for me, who knew no sin, that I might be made the righteousness of God in him. Oh matchless love, which is beyond the comprehension of the natural mind; how unsearchable are his riches, and his ways past finding out.

Now I think I better close for this time. I hope this will find you well, and I hope it is written with true love; if it is not it will be worth nothing to you. I sometimes think it may be that my writing is prompted by the flesh, and if so it is an abomination unto God. I often fear and tremble, and think I may be mistaken in the whole matter and there is no truth in me, but I feel that I have been made to realize that in me (that is, in my flesh) there is nothing good, and that if I have to work out the least part of my salvation without him I am lost, and if I am saved it is by grace, and grace alone.

I am your unworthy brother, if one at all, E. F. READHIMER.

ATLANTIC, N. C., May 31, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS:—This morning I have read a part of the SIGNS for June 1st, and I want to tell you that so far as I have read I have never read any doctrine nearer suited to my own experience, and views of things. It made my heart go out to those who wrote so I just wanted to grasp their hands and embrace them in my arms. From the spiritual standpoint I feel sure I did that, for with our God there is no distance nor space. Brother Webb's letter on the suretyship of God was surely sweet. It was a clear ring from first to last. Then sister Mary Ellison's letter did with great boldness set forth the blessed word of God. Her declarations of the taking of the name of God in vain are so pure. It is not the man who uses it in profaneness so much as it is to use it in the vain and profane religion of these times. Babylon and her harlot daughters use it in no other way, but as that commandment was given to Israel it is for the church now. I have often felt that for one of us to be engaged with them in any of their religious services was taking the name of the Lord in vain, for it is bowing to idols in the name of God. I sometimes notice that one of our ministers has joined with some Arminian minister in conducting a funeral service. Why not just as well help him in his regular services or his protracted meetings? I can see no difference. To me it is handling the word and service of God deceitfully, for it is engaging in that in which we have not the least faith. That which is not of faith is sin. I feel that we should come out and be separate. Sister Ellison's letter is surely the pure gospel of the Son of God. One has to dwell much in the rich lands of the low valleys to bring forth such solid corn as that. It does not come from the thin soiled hilltops, where everything has blown away. Write some more, sister. Brother Simmons comes in very sweetly with election. If Paul was correct in saying we were chosen in Christ before the world began, and I am sure he was, what can we do now to make that election either effective or ineffective? It is true that we were not chosen in Him to sin and do all manner of wickedness, but to be holy and without blame before him in love. It surely follows that our being chosen in him before the foundation of the world is the only way to holiness and unblamableness before God in love. All of these other ways

which are pointed out by men are false, vain and foolish. Also no spiritual blessing ever came to God's people only according to that choice. Every morsel of spiritual food, every drop of living water, every comfort to the poor mourner, all are given according to that eternal choice. Therefore if there had been no eternal election there could not have been any spiritual blessings. Had there not been any predestination there never would have been any conformity to the image of the Son of God.

Brother Chandler is about my age in years and in the ministry. If I live until March 17th, 1923, I will be seventy years old, and my first attempt to speak in public was on Saturday before the second Sunday in May, 1874, or forty-eight years ago. The most of my life has been under a cloud. The work of the ministry was presented to me at the age of four years. There my troubles began. Then when I was seven years old they were renewed with the knowledge of a very sinful heart. Relief was given to me in the forgiveness of sins June 3rd, 1873. Then all clouds were gone, and the sunlight of the smiling face of my dear Savior was upon me and in me for a short time. I was baptized the fourth Sunday in July. Then the burden of the word of the Lord came upon me and I had to go, but I was lame on both feet, so I had no power to go. Now forty-eight years have passed and I am yet troubled with that same trouble and am under the cloud. Preaching the gospel is very sweet to me at times, and my whole being is filled with joy and praise, but at other times the clouds are thicker when I am done than when I began. The Lord smile on us all.

Your brother in a good hope through grace,

L. H. HARDY.

KELLY CORNERS, N. Y., Jan. 18, 1922.

DEAR ELDER KER:—Like one whose letter appeared in the SIGNS last number, I am alone to-night, and feel I would like to send you a few lines. I have read almost everything in the last number, and it has been especially sweet to me for some reason. You will perhaps be pleased to know I am feeling much more peaceful in spirit than I was when I wrote you before. I think, if not deceived, I have known a little of what it is to rest in Christ for the past few days. In the night seasons, especially while lying awake, I feel I can say, My meditation of Him has been sweet. It has been so good to me that I have dreaded the day coming, lest the evils in my heart should be stirred up and fresh guilt brought upon my conscience. I have often thought that our greatest joy in heaven will be to see Jesus without a veil between, and next to that to be free from sin. As one poet has it, "There we shall see his face, and never, never sin." How I do hate the wretched wickedness within me. Truly the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. When thinking of the blessings stored in Christ Jesus for his people, even though being able to rejoice in them in some measure, yet they seem too great for me to receive. Truly such knowledge is too wonderful for me. The text spoken from when I was baptized was, "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." How sweet is this. I indeed feel willing to be less than the least if only I am assured that I am a babe, one of these little ones.

Brother Dodson spoke for us two Sundays ago, and it was a sweet time to me,

especially in the morning, when he took for his subject the man with an evil spirit who said his name was legion. How wonderful to be clothed and in our right mind. Clothed in the righteousness of Jesus, and desiring him, that we might stay with him. What place is sweeter than to sit at his feet and receive of his words, his love?

I think I have written enough; I fear I shall weary you, but my heart is full to-night, so I hope you will bear with me.

We are expecting George home at the end of the week, if all is well, and are anxiously awaiting his return.

Please forgive all imperfections in this letter, and accept my best wishes for yourself and Mrs. Ker. Please do not do with this letter as you did with my other one. I shrink from anything at all tending to publicity. I have only written because I felt like doing so, and I hope I have that sweet fellowship with you of which you wrote in the SIGNS.

Your little sister,

GRACE ASTON.

[WE hope our sister will pardon us for not granting her request.—K.]

MONROE, Ga., May 24, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am glad to write that we are still living to enjoy some of the perfect gifts that come to us from the Father of lights, and feel that the sweet epistles written by the editors of the SIGNS, and others, are gifts from him who disposes of all things just as it pleases him, and have been enjoying the thought that Jesus told his disciples that it was given them to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, for great is the mystery of godliness, and who can know it? It is a mystery for the light to shine in our heart to cause us to see ourselves sinners, and confess it. It is because wisdom has been made unto us; also righteousness for us to have is a mystery —it is imputed. Then sanctification is made unto us; then redemption. All of it is wonderful indeed. Even the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. We learn that Jesus is the only name given under heaven whereby we can, and must, be saved. This wisdom teaches us that there is no confidence in the flesh, and that we are kept by the power of God, not our own, but bought with a price, and that price is the precious blood of Jesus, that cleanseth us from all sin. Yes, made sin for us, who knew no sin. This wisdom teaches us that Jesus is the King of kings; there is knowledge of his power, and that there is no power but of God, making us acknowledge that our destiny is in his hands; not only ours, but all the world's. Even the devil is at his command. We love to think of even the devil not being able to do anything except what is in the will of God for him to do. The law of the Lord is perfect, and his will is perfect, and all the men and devils cannot break one item in it, nor destroy one of his people, nor add one to the kingdom. We love to rest on this foundation, for it will stand, though all hell may oppose it.

JAMES M. ADAMS.

ASTORIA, Oregon, June 9, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is with fear and trembling that I hereby acknowledge my debt to you, that I am a year in arrears for the SIGNS. Last evening I came across the March 15th number, and saw your appeal. It shocked me, for I had a money order in the house which I had forgotten to send to you. The words of the Lord came to me: As ye have done it unto one of the least of these my little ones ye have done it unto me. A fear

oppressed my soul. Why had I paid other debts and left my debt to you unpaid? I thought in my heart that I loved those little ones more than all the world besides. Thus I have rendered unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, but not unto God the things which are God's. Cæsar has his tax gatherers, and they are harsh and cruel, but the Lord is long-suffering and gentle, otherwise ye sons of Jacob were consumed. I know my debt to the Lord is continually increasing and I can never pay it. The Lord may forgive it, but Cæsar never will. But, dear friends, I pray God will cause me to remember the dear little ones, to at least try to give the cup of cold water in his name; it is their just due. Cæsar puts in a claim for it all, and it seems hard to even save the water for the loved ones. The beast must have the six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold yearly, as he did in Solomon's time, also what the saints can bear, which caused the fall of the Jews. History must repeat itself in the Gentile world, as it was to the Jew first, the Gentile next.

Dear friends, when I took my pen to write I only thought to acknowledge my fault, and thank you for your goodness and charity in sending me the SIGNS so long. Your charity will never be forgotten by the Lord's chosen people.

J. N. HECKARD.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in July (30th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1922.

EDITORS:
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Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

HOPE.

IT having been suggested that we give some expression regarding the above subject, shall try to comply. Perhaps few subjects antidate this one, and few are of more importance. After Adam's transgression, and the Lord had promised deliverance from sin through the seed of the woman, his soul was filled with hope. Hope is expectation, anticipation, hence began to be enjoyed by man early in the beginning of the world. Before the transgression, in Eden, there was no need of hope. Man had all things to be desired and needful to his natural being. There was no need of increase of the things of earth to cause him to look forward with hope of better days. The trees of the garden were plenty, fruitful and pleasant to the eye. The river, eastward in Eden, well watered the garden, so that it was sure to produce abundantly. Every beast needful and necessary to man was at his hand. Every fowl of the air was there present, and the fishes of the sea were at his command. In all this is seen the perfection of the garden, the air and the sea. With nothing lacking, there was, therefore, no need of hope—nothing to anticipate. But when man sinned there was an infinite vacancy, and at once he began to hope that he might hide his naked condition from the Lord with an apron of fig leaves. This re-

minds us of the hypocrite's hope, which is like a spider's web. The first utterly failed, and the second is of no value whatever. The first hope is very prevalent in the world to-day. Thousands are hoping to hide their sins from God by their good works, but universally fail. It really seems strange, when such hope was exploded in the beginning of the world, that intelligent men will continue to make fig-leaf garments to cover their sin. But the blind cannot see, and the dead (in sin) know not anything. One thing was necessary to Adam that he lose confidence in nature's garment, and that was to be clothed with skins by the Lord, through the shedding of blood. Never again did he depend upon the fig-leaf garment. The promise of God to the sinner, of salvation through the seed of the woman (Christ Jesus), was the hope of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Because of such hope, and faith in the promise, Abel offered a lamb unto God and it was accepted. Because of hope and faith in God Enoch walked with God and was translated, not seeing death. Because of hope of salvation Noah built the ark. Because of the same hope Abraham went out, not knowing whither. He sought a city that hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God. Because of this hope he staggered not at the promise, but believed God, being strong in faith, and it was counted to him for righteousness. Because of this hope old Jacob blessed his sons and prophesied concerning better things than Egypt could afford. Daniel, because of his hope in God's promise, worshipped with his face toward Jerusalem, not fearing the displeasure of the king. David and other prophets exhorted the Israelites to trust in the Lord, who was able to deliver them. One said, What wait I for, my hope is in Thee? Christ Jesus was the hope of the Lord's people, according to God's promise, in olden times. Job hoped to see Him for himself and not another, being assured that his Redeemer lived. By faith men of God in the former dispensation anticipated the coming of the promised Messiah. Simeon gloried in the Lord when his eyes beheld the salvation of Israel, and said, Now, O Lord, lettest thy servant depart in peace. The apostles were begotten unto a lively, or living, hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. When it was revealed to them that the Lord had visited his people through Jesus in the forgiveness of their sins, they rejoiced in the hope of the glory of God, and ever talked and wrote of this blessed hope. Paul said, We are saved by hope. In this bringing the saints of old and of the the gospel day into fellowship one with the other. The hope in the Lord of salvation from sin and death is one hope, strong and everlasting. This good hope through grace, or the unmerited favor of God, is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and is entered into that within the vail, whither our Forerunner for us hath entered. Therefore in times of fire we hope; in times of storm we hope; in times of temptation we hope; in times of affliction we hope; in times of loss, in times of cross, we hope; hence are save by hope. Hope is always in the future, therefore we look for still another heaven, wherein dwelleth righteousness; where we shall see him as he is, and be like him; where that one glorious song is sung, which none but the redeemed can learn: Worthy thou art, for thou hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood. When this is entered into the fullness of God's promise to Adam shall have been fulfilled, and hope, sighing and weeping will be no more. K.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, at his home, Salisbury, Md., Edwin James Warren and Margaret Jane Brattan, both of near Pittsville, Wicomico Co., Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Mary L. Poling Findley was born October 27th, 1872, and died at her home in Barbour County, West Virginia, December 26th, 1921, aged 49 years 9 months and 29 days. She was the oldest daughter of Abraham and Margaret Poling. She had four brothers and two sisters, namely: D. H. Poling, Elder J. J. Poling, Worthington Poling and D. B. Poling, Mrs. John W. Coonts and Mrs. D. D. Polington, all of Belington, West Virginia, and vicinity. The subject of this sketch was married to Mr. L. H. Findley, and to that union were born two children: Paul and Margaret. She was ill a long time, and while under sore afflictions received a hope in Jesus Christ in the pardon of her sins, and at the regular meeting of the Little Bethel Church in August she came to the church, told a beautiful experience of God's grace, was gladly received and was baptized by the writer by her request. Previous to her baptism she had a great desire to go to the church, but was not able to go; but the good Lord lifted her up off her bed of sickness for a time and enabled her to fulfill her great desire, and oh how bright and happy she looked when she was baptized. Soon after that she had a relapse of her sickness and lingered on, but died firm in the faith of God's elect, leaving a bright evidence of her acceptance by her Lord in glory. She leaves her aged mother, brothers, sisters, two children, many friends and the church she loved so dearly, but we all feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was preached by the writer at the Little Bethel church-house, Sunday, June 4th, 1922, to a good congregation of attentive hearers. May the Lord comfort all who mourn.

J. N. BARTLETT.

Peter Alfred Parks was born August 29th, 1863, and died January 28th, 1922, from a complication of diseases. He was partially paralyzed for more than three months. Brother Alfred was a son of Moses and Mary Parks (deceased), and a grandson of the late Elder Peter Culp, for whom he was named. While our brother never joined the church, he was a man of marked intelligence, and one who was true to what he believed to be right. He was a firm believer in the Primitive Baptist doctrine, and ever had been. He served his district as J. P. for eighteen consecutive years. He was a good citizen and neighbor, and while we three aged sisters are left lonely indeed, we feel he is at rest from the trials and afflictions of this life. We hope the dear Lord will give us strength and grace to bear our loss, and his Spirit to comfort and reconcile us and give us a smooth, kindly disposition, such as our brother had. We know that dear Alfred can never come to us, but we hope by God's mercy that endureth forever we can, when done with this world of pain and sorrow, be with him in a better world.

Written by his heart-broken sister,

LAURA CLARK.

George Warner Jarmon, husband of Sarah Ann Jarmon, was born in Worcester County, Maryland, June 15th, 1836, and died March 30th, 1922. He was married to Sarah Ann Brittingham December 7th, 1858, and to that union were born nine children, five boys and four girls, all living and married, except Miss Annie, who lived with and has faithfully cared for her parents. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church by Elder George Staton about the year 1866, and remained a faithful and consistent member until death. The writer frequently visited in his home and always found a hearty welcome, and observed that it was always manifested by both brother and sister Jarmon; that their chief delight was in visiting with those whom they loved for the truth's sake, and in talking of the things of the kingdom of God. Surely with such as they it is not death to die. Notwithstanding this fact our hearts are made sad because we shall see his face no more, yet we can say we do not wish him back to again partake of the conflicts of life. He will be greatly missed by his many relatives and friends, by the Indiantown Church and its pastor, and especially by his dear bereaved companion, who is nearing her eighty-third birthday. We here remind all that God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Funeral services were held at his late residence, near Berlin, and conducted by the writer. By request of sister Jarmon hymn number 1253 was read. Interment was in the cemetery near Berlin, Md. May the blessing of our heavenly Father rest upon this bereaved family in their grief and upon all others who mourn.

J. CORDER MELLOTT.

Opal Rosa Lee Everett, little daughter of John T. and Ada Paterson Everett, departed this life March 11th, 1922, aged 7 years, 2 months and 5 days. She was the most remarkable child I ever knew, always kind, with a lovely disposition, and seemed to be serious, and enjoyed hearing religious conversation and hearing preaching, and especially enjoyed hearing the singing of the old hymns. Her father, grandfather and grandmother are all members of the

Primitive Baptist Church, and she seemed to enjoy going with them to their meetings. Before she died she asked them to sing, "Amazing grace," and while they were singing the tears came in her eyes. The church she had been attending with her parents had been having some trouble for some time, and she called her grandfather and mother to one side and told them to go to meeting and hear the preaching, but not to talk about the trouble; that it hurt her to hear them talk about it. She also told her father where she wanted to be buried. She had a brother die in May, 1921, and her request was to be buried by his side. Surely she was taught of the Lord. No person could have given any better advice, and she leaves in our minds a living testimony, so while she hath departed she yet liveth and giveth great consolation in the hope of meeting with her beyond this life of sin and sorrow. May all needed grace ever rest upon us to sanctify both sorrows and joys, and to help us along our journey to the end.

Written by request.

J. H. RAWLS.

LITTLE **James Moon** was born October 2nd, 1911, and departed this life March 24th, 1922, after twenty-six days of intense suffering, all of which he bore with unusual patience and fortitude for a child of his age. He said from the beginning that he would die, and often would say, I want to die and be free from this suffering; and would say, Mamma, papa and Jean, do not cry after me, for I want to go, and would sit propped up and sing very sweetly. He loved every one and was unusually thoughtful of the comfort of others, and was ever ready to do any task that his little hands could do to help his parents or his brother Jean. He and Jean were almost inseparable, and loved each other dearly. Little James was loved by all who knew him, and will be missed in the whole neighborhood, and at school, where he had many dear little friends, but he will be missed more at home by his father, mother and brother, and only God can comfort their broken hearts. God makes his people willing in the day of his power. Yes, he made little James willing to die. We learn obedience by the things we suffer. Oh may the riches of God's grace be with the ones who loved him so dearly and enable them to feel and say from the heart, O Lord, thy will be done.

I was called to attend the funeral service when little James was laid away to await the resurrection morn, when we feel the assurance he will come forth in the image of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. May the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, be with those who mourn.

Written by request of his father.

T. J. PRINCE.

James Stinson was born March 14th, 1844, and died November 5th, 1921, aged 76 years, 7 months and 22 days. He was married to Analissa J. Thompson December 19th 1865, who, with two sons and two daughters, survives him. One son and one daughter preceded him in death. Deceased was born in Russell County, Virginia, and joined the Primitive Baptist Church about the year 1868, in which church he lived and died. What his life was his brethren, sisters, friends and neighbors know better than words can tell. He died of that dread disease cancer of the mouth, and his suffering, which was very great, was borne with great patience. Both brother Stinson and his wife, sister Stinson, took great pleasure in entertaining their brethren and sisters, and their home was often filled with them. We feel that his suffering has ceased and his spirit is at rest with our Father in heaven in that land where there is no more pain.

ROSA COLEMAN.

J. T. Stone, son of Isaac and Almenda Stone, was born in Henderson County, Tennessee, July 22nd, 1845, came to Texas with his parents in 1849, was married to Miss Fatina Ann Shatelford January, 1869, near Tyler, Texas, by Elder Guter, and to that union were born seven children, one dying in infancy, six now living and married, they are, Isaac, of Tyler, Texas; B. L., of Van, Texas; Mrs. W. E. Prater, of Garden Valley, Texas; Mrs. J. B. Evans, near Garden Valley, Texas; Mrs. Effie Roberts, Lindale, Texas; Mrs. Julius Mullins, Carroll, Texas. He had seventeen grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. Two brothers and one sister survive him: J. M. Stone, Tyler, Texas; C. W. Stone, Mineola, Texas, and Mrs. E. P. Jarvis, Dallas, Texas. He served four years in the Confederate War. He lived in the home where he died for nearly forty years, and the Primitive Baptists were always welcome there. His parents were both Primitive Baptists and readers of the SIGNS, but though he never joined the church he was a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace; he told the writer he was not fit. He was always at meeting when his health would permit. His wife is a faithful member and sound in the faith. He was conscious until the last, and bore his suffering without a murmur. Two days before he died he told the writer he was not afraid to die, so, dear bereaved ones, weep not as those who have no hope, for he is gone from the evil to come, and I feel sure that in the resurrection he will come forth in the image of our Savior.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort at his funeral. May God strengthen the faith of his aged and afflicted companion and comfort her, is the prayer of her pastor,

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

LETTER OF CONDOLENCE.

WE, the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada, have learned, with deep regret, of the passing away of **Elder John McConnell,** of New York city, who has visited us for a number of years, and whom we esteemed highly for his good judgment, wise counsel and love for the truth. Be it therefore

Resolved, that we express to the Ebenezer Church our profound sympathy in the loss of their beloved pastor, and especially to our dear sister McConnell in this, her hour of bereavement. Be it therefore

Resolved, that a copy of this resolution be spread upon our minutes, a copy sent to sister McConnell and the Ebenezer Church, and 1 copy sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

J. B. SLAUSON, Moderator.

JOHN T. KERR, Clerk.

DUNWICH, Ontario, Canada, May 15, 1922.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Sarah F. Gandy, N. J., $2.00; Mrs. George S. Yard, N. J., $1.00; Franklin Terry, N. J., $1.00; Mrs. Spencer Nethaway, N. Y., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

A two days meeting is appointed to be held in the Old School Baptist meeting-house at Cammal, Pa., Saturday and Sunday, July 29th and 30th, 1922. All lovers of the truth are welcome to meet with us.

J. T. BADGLEY, Clerk.

THE Siloam Association of Washington and Oregon will be held with the Mizpah Church, at Touchet, Washington (this is near Walla Walla), August 11th, 12th and 13th, 1922. To all ministers, brethren, sisters and friends of our faith and order a cordial invitation if extended to meet with us.

ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

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IN

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

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ALL WELCOME

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

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"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

MATTHEW VII. 1-7.

"JUDGE not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."

These are the words of Jesus in his sermon in the mount, and they should be observed by all his believing people. The lesson in short is, God's people should never judge one another with cruel judgment, especially while they themselves are guilty of greater sins. To thus do is hypocrisy on the part of the brother who beholds the mote in his brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in his own eye. It is the hypocrite that will demand of his brother: Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye. There is much said in the Scriptures against this class of hypocrites, and also how God will judge them. James said, For he shall have judgment without mercy that hath shewed no mercy. James' brethren were judging one another without mercy; they even went so far as to condemn and kill the just; their judging was with cruelty. James said, There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy, who art thou that judgest another? These brethren wanted to be judges of the law, instead of doers of the law. They were doing what Jesus said not to do in the words of our text. "Judge not, that ye be not judged." Dear brethren, let us all take heed to the words of our text. Let us examine ourselves whether we are guilty; are we judging without mercy? If so, then we know we shall be judged without mercy, and with what measure we mete it shall be measured to us again. There is no evading these things. This is God's law, and he knows whether we are guilty of transgressing his law or not; he knows whether we are beholding the mote in our brother's eye and at the same time not considering the beam that is in our own eye. It is in the manner that we proceed to remove the mote that makes manifest as to whether we do love our brother. If we love our brother we will desire to see clearly to cast out the mote out of our brother's eye. We will desire to save the eye; on the other hand, if we hate our

brother, we will demand, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye, regardless as to whether the eye is destroyed, or even the brother is killed, the mote must be pulled out. Let me pull, is the stern demand of a brother who has a beam in his own eye; the beam is what obscures the eye from seeing clearly. Jesus said, The light of the body is the eye. If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light, but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. From this we learn that the eye has much to do as to whether our whole body is full of darkness; there is no question as to which condition we should desire to be in. Our Savior's question is, "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" When we do such things it manifests that our own eye is evil. Therefore our whole body shall be full of darkness; everything looks wrong to us while in this condition. We are not capacitated to remove the mote out of our brother's eye as long as our own eye is evil. The lesson is, we must get our own eye right first, before attempting to remove the mote out of our brother's eye. If our eye is single our whole body shall be full of light. We then will be able to see clearly, we then will love our brother instead of hating him. Love for our brother should be the cause that prompts us to cast out the mote out of our brother's eye; our eye then will be single, we then can see clearly to cast the mote out of our brother's eye. John said, "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" Such an one is a hypocrite. He claims to love God, and at the same time hateth his brother. Evidently many dear brethren fail to distinguish between hating a brother and hating the wrong doings of a brother. It is always right to hate evil wherever we see it, but we always should look first at our own evil doings and rectify them before trying to rectify our brother's, or in any way deal harshly with him for doing things no worse than we ourselves are doing. Many times our sins are greater than the sin we behold in our brother, and it is then that our judgments are cruel. Let us remember the words of our text: "Judge not, that ye be not judged." Paul said, Romans ii. 1, "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself, for thou that judgest doest the same things." It is human nature; it is of the flesh to thus judge. Note Paul said, "Thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest," yet in the face of all this God's people are continually making excuses for their cruelty toward their brother in the way of judging him. Try him by our own rule of judging and we all will condemn ourselves. Even David's judgment condemns himself. Read 2 Samuel xii. 1–23 verses. Note especially fifth, sixth and seventh verses: "And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die; and he shalt restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity. And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man." Here we see the evil in judging harshly. David there was quick to pass judgment against a man that would do what he himself was doing. Thou art the man that you say shall surely die; thou art the man that is

guilty of doing this thing, and has no pity. Thirteenth verse reads: "And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord." Oh what a change in David when he saw how unjust he had been, he then confessed his own wrong: I have sinned against the Lord. James said to his brethren, Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for the other, that ye may be healed. As long as we behold the mote that is in our brother's eye, but considereth not the beam that is in our own eye, we do not feel we need to be healed. We pass judgment against our brother for doing the very thing we ourselves are guilty of. James was trying to show his brethren that they were all wrong in judging each other, instead of that they should confess their faults one to another, and pray one for another. God's people are not confessing their faults one to another, neither are they praying one for another, and at the same time demanding of their brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye, but considerest not the beam that is in their own eye. Paul continued, Romans ii. 2, 3: "But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth, against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" When God's people are guilty themselves they want to do the judging, instead of God doing it. God has not appointed that his people should judge each other with cruel judgment. James said to his brethren, "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not; and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." James does not give to any man an excuse for charging God with confusion that does exist among God's people, when they are judging each other with force and with cruelty. Ezekiel xxxiv. 4, reads, "The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them." These are the words of the Lord against his shepherds. These shepherds are described as hard fighters. We should take heed, and beware lest we also are engaged in cruel fightings, and also lest we pass judgment against all who are engaged in such ruling with force and with cruelty, and yet at the same time are guilty of these things, lest it be a truth, as in David's case, Thou art the man, or as Paul said, Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest, for wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself, for thou that judgest doeth the same things. Jesus taught the same in the words of our text, he was warning his people against doing such things, and also tells them that they shall be judged according as they judge. In our first experience we all plead for mercy, instead of justice. In our first experience we were not beholding the mote in our brother's eye, our great concern then was our own felt sins against a just and holy God. Jesus began his sermon in the mount by saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they

shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." All these are blessed conditions to be in, and if we always remained in these conditions we never would be found guilty of judging our brother without mercy. Note Jesus said, "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." We all know those referred to in our text are not merciful, and at the same time judging each other as forbidden to do by Christ. Evidently no man is in a blessed condition and at the same time beholding the mote in his brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in his own eye. Such an one is not hungering and thirsting after righteousness, for if he were he would not be engaged in such cruel works. Jesus will not call his people hypocrites for being in the blessed conditions spoken of by himself, neither will he judge them as hypocrites unless they are hypocrites. Oh may we all remember the words of our text: "Judge not, that ye be not judged." This is a personal matter with all of God's believing people. Jesus said, Rev. ii. 23: "And all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works." Oh may our works be such as to show that we believe these words of Jesus are true.

Submitted in love,

JOSEPH FORD.

UNI PLACE, Nebraska.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Jan. 10, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed please find check for two dollars for one year's subscription for the paper I love so well, the SIGNS. I cannot read it much unless it is a bright sunny day, as my eyes have failed very much the last few years, but I feel thankful that I can see as well as I do. It has been one of my greatest blessings to read the SIGNS so many years (over fifty-two years), and to enjoy the precious privilege that many of my brethren and friends have not been able to do: to meet with the brethren as I have. I feel to say as did the psalmist: What shall I render unto the Lord for all the blessings that have been bestowed upon me? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. We are told to be strong in the Lord, rejoice in the Lord, and again I say, Rejoice in the Lord. Worthy was the Lamb that was slain to receive honor, glory, dominion and majesty. Oh that men would praise him for his wonderful works; works that no man can do. Oh that I could be more like him, more humble, not so worldly-minded, love not the world nor the things of the world, for they perish with the using, but love spiritual things; they are from everlasting to everlasting. If I could be more like the brethren; they seem to be so Christlike. He is a merciful and gracious God, he will not chide, nor will he keep his anger forever. As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. Oh the depth of his riches, both of wisdom and knowledge. How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out. Who knoweth the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor? I think sometimes about the wells of salvation; the water from those wells is pure, and the more we drink of it the thirstier we

are. They are so constructed that no surface water can contaminate the water; the materials used to construct them are of the best quality, not adulterated. We love to crown God Lord of all, and give him all the glory. If you divide the crown you have an empty crown. Bring forth the royal diadem and crown him Lord of all. Whosoever confesses me before men, him will I confess before my Father. Whosoever denieth me before men, I will deny before my Father. What happened to the man that built on a sandy foundation? The rain descended, the winds blew, the flood came and that sandy foundation was swept away; but not so with the man that built on a firm foundation: the rain descended, the winds blew, but that house stood through all storms. The foundation of God is sure, it hath this seal, He knoweth them that are his. Oft it causes me anxious thought, Am I his, or am I not? In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. A bruised reed will he not break, smoking flax will he not quench until he bring forth judgment unto victory. He trod the wine-press alone, none to help. It is a faithful saying, worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. Oh if I could only say, Thy will be done, at all times. He said, If it be possible, let this cup pass, but not my will, but thy will be done. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Oh could I feel sure of that inheritance that fadeth not away, but is reserved in heaven for us. Jacob was the lot of His inheritance; he kept him as the apple of his eye, led him about, instructed him, made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock. If ye love me keep my commandments. We are told not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is. Be instant in season, out of season seek those things that are precious to our souls. Do not be led astray by all winds of doctrine, stand firm as a rock on the foundation of our Lord Jesus Christ; be carried not away by any (man-made) theories, or by enticing words of man's wisdom. Let brotherly love continue, be of one mind. How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. It is like the oil that ran from Aaron's head to the skirts of his garment, like the dew of Hermon, like the dew that descended from the mountain of Zion, where the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore. The oil that ran over Aaron's beard was the oil of joy. It was not prepared by man; if it had been it would not have been so pleasant, for men cannot prepare such oil. The dew was not of men's work, but it was the work of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I have written more than I intended, but there is no stopping-place. You can look this over, and if you think it "thus saith the Lord," publish it; if not, cast it aside.

Your unworthy brother,

D. L. BLACKWELL.

ST. ALBANS, W. Va., Nov. 20, 1921.

ELDER G. B. BIRD—DEAR BROTHER:—I will try again in my weakness to write a few lines in reply to your letter which I received some time ago. It seems that I realize my weakness and inability to write, as much as a poor mortal can, but I hope you can make allowance for me. A few nights ago I read your experience in a back number of the SIGNS, and was made to rejoice, for oh how wonderful are the dealings of the Lord with his

chosen people. How wonderfully was Jesus revealed to you in the pardon of your sins, as the chiefest among ten thousand and the One altogether lovely. How can such an one with an experience of grace like yours ever doubt? But it seems I have not been blessed with such bright seasons of his love, and I often wonder if I have any right to claim a hope in Jesus, for I have always been such a rebellious sinner, continually doing that which I should not. The most of my time I am in doubt as to whether I have ever been called out of nature's darkness into his marvellous light. If not, I have greatly deceived the church by uniting, when probably not one of them. But this I know, if I am not what I have professed to be, the great and eternal God is not deceived in me, for he is the heart-searcher and the reintryer. Sometimes when down in the very depths of despair I derive a little ray of light and comfort from the words of the poet when he said,

"Could I joy his saints to meet,
Choose the ways I once abhorred,
Find at times the promise sweet,
If I did not love the Lord?"

You wrote in your last letter so beautifully on the subject of the resurrection. It is a deep mystery to me, but I fully believe that Christ is the resurrection and the life. When this mortal shall have put on immortality, that will be a glorious change, a change from corruptible to incorruptible, from a natural to a spiritual state, and we are told by the pen of inspiration that when Christ doth appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but to see Christ and to be like him, shall be enough. Elder W. J. May has a wonderful article on this subject in an old number of the SIGNS, one that he wrote to Elder J. W. McClanahan and he sent it for publication. I read it over to-day.

I have written in a very awkward way, but I beg of you to cast the mantle of charity over this.

Unworthily,

HARVEY BIRD.

EAST POINT, Ga., June 25, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please change my paper, the SIGNS, from 69 Josephine Street, Atlanta, Ga., to 208 Dorsey Street, East Point, Ga. I am now living with my oldest son, and will stay with him what few more days the good Lord lets me live, so I will not bother you any more about change of address. I am no better; am almost helpless, at times, and I am never easy. No one but the good Lord will ever know what I have suffered for the last seventeen years. I sure do appreciate your kindness in sending me the SIGNS so long, and it has been a great comfort to me. I do hope and pray the good Lord will spare the dear editors and brethren and sisters to write on in the future as they have in the past, ever contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, for they comfort many of God's little children who do not get to hear preaching. I ask an interest in your, and the prayers of all God's dear children, that I may be submissive to his dealings with me, if one of God's children, the least of all.

Your brother in Christ, I hope,

G. W. ALMAND.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1922.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PSALMS CXVI. 11.

"I SAID in my haste, All men are liars."

David said this in his haste, and like many other things said in haste, it is not true. David thought when he said it that it was true, and that all men are liars, but all men are not liars, as Scriptures abundantly prove. Paul wrote in his second letter to the Corinthians that the apostles had renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, that they were not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully. To handle the Scriptures deceitfully is to quote them or use them without reference to their connection; it is to quote a part to suit one's purpose, and to suppress the rest. We heard a person say once that the Bible says, There is no God. If one has no regard for how one quotes Scripture, it might be said dishonestly that the Bible does say that. The reference is to the fourteenth and fifty-third Psalms, where we find the following: "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." Just to quote the last four words of this without giving the other part, is to handle the word deceitfully. If this is the way the Bible is to be handled, then the Scriptures can be twisted to mean anything one might want them to mean. But this is craftiness and deceit, and not becoming Old School Baptists, who have ever made their boast that the Bible is the man of their counsel, and that they accept nothing without a Thus saith the Lord, for it. To say publicly that the Bible says, All men are liars, is to state what is not true. David said that in his haste, without properly considering it, and he found it out to be not true. He found out there were some men who were not liars, and that his sweeping generalization of all men as liars was a mistake. When David exclaimed, All men are liars, he was sorely beset and hardly pursued by Saul and his followers, and David was sure in his own mind that he would one day fall by the hand of Saul. This was not to be David's end, but no one could at that time convince David that such was not to be the case. See 1 Samuel xxvii. 1. His friends told him again and again that Saul could never kill him, but David did not believe them. He said they were all liars. Even Jonathan, the one whose soul was knit to David's, went to David in the wilderness of Ziph, in a wood, and strengthened his hand in God, and told David to "fear not: for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee: and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee; and that also Saul my father knoweth." To David in his distress, being pursued and hunted by his enemies like a beast, this seemed too good to be true, and he could not then believe that he should not be killed. Thus, to him, even Jonathan, his best beloved, seemed a liar. David so far doubted his friends, and Jonathan, and so far believed them to be liars, that he took six hundred men and hid himself and them at Gath among the Philistines, and stayed there a year and four months. No wonder, then, that after the defeat of his enemies, and after the death of Saul, and after his kingdom became in the providence of God fully established,

David lifted up his voice in that song of inspiration called the one hundred and sixteenth Psalm, and acknowledged that he had hastily said that all men are liars, that he had been mistaken in the matter, and that he had found it not to be his end to meet death at the hands of Saul; that the Lord had delivered him out of all his afflictions, therefore, that he would take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. He promised to pay his vows unto the Lord in the presence of his saints, and we shall not be wrong when we say that these vows were David's confession of his sins, and that salvation is of the Lord, the same vow that Jonah made in the belly of the great fish. In the thirty-first Psalm we find another saying of David's which he uttered in haste, and which he found to be not true: "For I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes." He was not cut off from the Lord, nor from the Lord's sight of him, but he thought and felt that he was, and so he hastily concluded such to be the case. "Nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications, when I cried unto thee." Thus we see that at the very time when David had hastily concluded that the Lord had cut him off, the Lord was hearing the voice of his supplications. Our spiritual David, the Lord Jesus, when on the cross, cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The God of heaven, his almighty Father, had not indeed really forsaken his beloved Son, but Jesus felt it to be so. The cloud of his people's guilt which bore down so heavily upon him blotted out from his view the face of his Father, and he felt to be forsaken of God and of men. However, his Father was with him, though he felt him not, and the omnipotent power of his Father was strengthening him for the ordeal. Of this Jesus was not sensible at that moment, and believed his God had forsaken him, but back of the cloud the face of his God still shone in his glory, and was beholding the agony of his Son and accounting it for righteousness to those whom he had chosen in his Son from before the foundation of the world. Are there not times in our lives when we conclude hastily that God has forsaken us, and has forgotten to be gracious, and has clean removed his mercy from us? Do there not come times afterward when we are ashamed for having so hastily concluded the inconstancy of God? Also, are there not times when we conclude that our brethren are not true to us, that they are deceiving us, when really they are telling us the truth, and for our own good? We must bear in mind that there are two kinds of men in the world: godly men and ungodly men, faithful men and faithless men. Man in a state of nature is a liar. We should not wish to deny that, and do not. Man in a state of grace is not a liar. If a gracious person lies, it is not he himself that does it, but sin that dwells in him; and the sins of the flesh are not to be excused on the ground that David said all men are liars. It is a terrible thing to quote Scripture to excuse one's wrongdoing, and the judgments of God are sure to find us out if we do it; that is, that certain fearful looking for of judgment and of fiery indignation which is to devour the adversaries. That which is born of God cannot commit sin, for the seed of God remains in such an one and kills him to sin, so that he cannot live longer in sin, nor roll it as a sweet morsel under his tongue. Such an one glories in the truth and tells the truth. He cannot lie. "For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their

Savior."—Isaiah lxiii. 8. It is therefore going too far to say that all men are liars, it is a too rapid and too hasty conclusion, as David confessed. Adam, the first man, and all his posterity, are liars; Christ the second Adam, and all his children, are not liars, they are begotten of truth, and are the offspring of wisdom. This is a distinction which David in his distress failed to comprehend, but which he afterward found to be so. Jacob was a liar, and the very name of Jacob signifies a deceiver; but after that night in which the angel of the Lord wrestled with him, and changed his name from Jacob to Israel, he did not lie. Saul of Tarsus was living a lie when he verily thought he was doing God's service, but Paul the apostle was not living nor speaking a lie when he was serving the churches and preaching to them Jesus Christ and him crucified. Simon Peter lied when he told Jesus that though all men forsook him he would not, but he did not lie when a short time afterward he said, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."

In conclusion, let us say that we should always approach the Scriptures carefully and reverently, never taking them glibly or off-hand, without due regard for the value of words and the connections in which they are used, certainly never to quote Scripture to excuse wrongs we may have committed. If we have done wrong in any way, let us honestly and openly confess it as becomes our profession as the children of God, and not seek to cloak our guilt with words of Scripture, nor take occasion to screen ourselves behind the blessed doctrine of the Lord. Above all, let us be honest.

L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder B. F. Coulter.)

The Delaware Association, in session with the Welsh Tract Church, near Newark, Delaware, May 24th, 25th and 26th, 1922, to the churches and associations with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—In this, our annual letter, it is our solemn prayer that we may be guided and instructed by the Spirit of our God, rendering unto him all honor and praise and glory. That we may refresh your minds to profit, we call to your attention the words found in 1 Timothy vi. 11, 12: "But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." The apostle is writing to his son Timothy, whom he loves in the Lord, and pointing out to him the wonderful beauty of the life in righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness, in contrast to the evil of an unrighteous life made up of "perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth." So he addresses Timothy in no uncertain way: "But thou, O man of God." The words that follow could sink sweetly into the heart of none save the child of God, "The man of God," for he alone is in possession of the righteousness of faith, which embraces all the virtues to be found in the walk of the lowly, humble follower of Jesus. This one is not only a little child, but his growth in grace manifests him as a brave and sturdy soldier, for Paul declares: "Fight the good fight of faith," neither looking to the right hand nor the left

hand, attacking the enemy with the sword of faith, having on the helmet of salvation, "laying hold on eternal life," overcoming through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ the Lord. Now the apostle reminds the young preacher that God is no respecter of persons. The master loves his servant as a brother, and the servant loves his master also as a brother. We are all one in Christ Jesus. He is all in all. Therefore we strive, laying hold on eternal life. Our life of faith is the gift of God. We were dead in trespasses and in sin, having no strength in ourselves, for "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Thus our life is hid with Christ in God. Blessed characters are they who "walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful: but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, foreshadowing the things that must surely come to pass. The apostles by inspiration of God, present to the living in Christ Jesus, the fulfilling of the law and all the promises of God. Thus in Him we live and move and have our being. Thus we can say with Timothy: "Thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."

May the blessing of the Lord rest upon all who fear the Lord and call upon his name.

J. G. EUBANKS, Moderator.
J. B. MILLER, Clerk.

(Written by C. V. Hill.)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the First Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J., May 31st and June 1st and 2nd, 1922, to the churches composing the same.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As is our custom, we address you by what is called a Circular Letter. We will call your attention to the following Scripture: The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. (Romans i. 16.) The all-wise, eternal and ever-gracious God has again permitted us to assemble here in this old brick meetinghouse, where many able ministers of the gospel have rightly divided the word of truth, preaching the gospel of Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. May it be according to the eternal purpose and predestination of the omnipotent Jehovah that our ministers continue to declare the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, not turning to the right or to the left to please men, but declaring the whole counsel of God, ever looking to him who is the author and finisher of the christian's faith, giving all praise and adoration to him who created the heaven and the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, as he is God and there is none else. He speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast. He does it that men should fear before him. We finite mortals cannot grasp or comprehend the infinite wisdom and mighty power of him who said, "Let there be light: and there was light." This same God spoke by the prophet Isaiah, saying, "Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance." Again the prophet says, "All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity." Now if all the powers of earth combined are only as the small dust of the balance, or as vanity, in comparison to God's infinite wisdom and omnipotent power, it is no wonder that David said, What is man, that God should be mindful of him? David did not say this of the flesh, it was

not the Adamic nature in David that perceived the wonderful works of God, his divine wisdom and mighty power, as the natural man knows nothing about these things, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, it can never be anything else. The first man is of the earth earthy, the second man the Lord from heaven. Man in his natural state is earth, and nothing else. He has no power within himself to become spiritual, as they that are in the flesh cannot please God, their hearts are evil and that continually. They do not trust in God, or give him all the glory, but trust in their own power and ability to bring themselves acceptable before him, believing he will justify them on account of their own good works; but instead of their works being good in the sight of God, they are evil and vanity. Every thought and imagination of their heart is enmity against him, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Paul says no flesh shall be justified by the deeds of the law. Man with all the powers at his command cannot change his heart; he cannot rise above that which he is; he still remains earth, his body will return to earth, as "dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Man never put life in his heart, neither can he cause that life to exist one minute longer than appointed of God; but on account of God giving man dominion over the things of this earth he feels able to control his own destiny, the same as he does earthly things about him. Therefore the natural man has never trusted the eternal sovereignty and mighty power of God to bring the blind by a way they knew not and lead them in paths they have not known, to make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. As a matter of fact, he never believes he was blind until he has eyes to see. The natural man has no power to see his own blindness; he is dead to spiritual things. He has no capacity to believe that God's doctrine drops as the rain and distils as the dew, but instead he thinks he must work for salvation in the same manner as he works for the things of this earth. He feels it is positively necessary to put forth an effort, make new resolutions, use his own power, and carry them out, in order to bring about the desired change in his heart. Man never did work or labor for the things of the world until he was born in it, until he had an existence here. How then can he know about the kingdom of God until he is born in it? He can never approach or know the King of that kingdom until he has an existence in it, any more than we can know the kings of this earth before we have an existence here. There is no communication between this world and the kingdom of God. The only way to enter either is by birth. We know we cannot enter this world except by birth, and Jesus said, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. Also, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." Jesus did not say man could be made over, renovated or made better, but must be born again; a second birth must take place in order to see the kingdom of God. The first birth is of the earth (flesh and blood), the second birth is from above, born of God, his own heir, and joint-heir with Jesus Christ. The Adamic, or natural, child knoweth only the things of the earth, he has no capacity or ability to know the things of the Spirit, he is dead in trespasses and in sins, just as lifeless and dead to the kingdom of God as a lifeless or dead body is to the things of this

world. The natural man lives on the things of this world; he hungers and thirsts after worldly things; his food is of the earth. It requires earthly food to grow and develop that which is earthly. Just so with a spiritual child born of God, he hungers and thirsts after righteousness, spiritual food from above. It requires food direct from the kingdom of God and his dear Son to satisfy the pangs of hunger and thirst in the heart of a poor, destitute sinner. Nothing but the revelation of Jesus and his mighty power can ever satisfy the hunger and thirst of the poor and needy when seeking water in the wilderness; when the tongue fails them for thirst the God of Israel hears them, the water of his salvation (his doctrine) drops as the rain and distils as the dew in their hearts, and it is indeed food to their hungry souls. They drink the water of salvation from the fountain in the midst of the valleys and from the pools of water which were once a wilderness, the dry land becomes springs of water. This water which flows from the Rock of salvation is the only water that can ever quench the thirst of a poor, hell-deserving sinner. When one has been blessed with a drink of this water direct from the wells of salvation he believes in God and puts his trust in him. He has witnessed the famine, the wilderness and the desert; he was made to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. He now believes in the power of God; he believes in his doctrine; he believes He is able to save to the uttermost those who come unto God by him. He believes he must be born in the kingdom of God before he can know him or be drawn to him. As Jesus said, No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him. He believes the mighty power of God is the only power in heaven or in earth that can lift poor sinners up out of the horrible pit, that bottomless pit without water, the very belly of hell, and place their feet upon a rock, put a new song in their mouth, establish their going, even praise to his holy name. After one has been led through the wilderness and the desert, been locked in their prison-house and experienced or witnessed by the eye of faith the opening of their prison-house door by the mighty power of God, and brought forth out of bondage into the light and liberty of the children of God, where the Sun of Righteousness shines forth in all his glory, he has the witness within himself that John told the truth according to his experience when he penned that wonderful declaration of Scripture saying, He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself. Also he witnesses that wonderful trust spoken by Paul: "The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith.

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.
DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meeting-house, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in July (30th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, at his home, Salisbury, Md., Charles Upshur Gale, of Rhodesdale, Md., and Susie Jane Johnson, of Salisbury, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Margaret McBane McTaggart, widow of Angus McTaggart, was born in the year 1835, and fell asleep in her blessed Savior March 24th, 1922, making her stay on earth nearly 87 years. Her dearly beloved husband preceded he in death nine years. Brother and sister McTaggart for many years resided on their farm near the Ekfrid meetinghouse. Their home was always a welcome place for their kindred in Christ, and many can testify to their hospitality who have been entertained at their home during the quarterly meetings that have been held at Ekfrid. It was their chief joy to entertain their friends and kindred in Christ. Sister McTaggart was blessed with a lovable nature, and was kind and generous to the poor. She was blessed with a spiritual mind and lived near her Savior, and loved to talk of his goodness and mercy to her, a needy sinner saved by his blood. It can be truly said of our dear aged sister, that her conversation was in heaven; that is, upon heavenly things, for those things were most sacred to her. Sister McTaggart was in her fortieth year when she was received in the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church, and was baptized by the late Elder Pollard, who served this church as pastor for nearly fifty years, and whose labors were blessed of the Lord in many ways. Sister McTaggart was stricken with a stroke of paralysis, which impaired her speech so she could not talk with her sorrowing children as they gathered around her bedside. Although unable to speak, her mind was unimpaired by the stroke and she remained conscious until near the end. Nine children gathered around her bedside and watched their dear devoted mother pass from this life into the great beyond. The end came as peacefully as a child falling asleep in its mother's arms, and we all have great reason to believe that sister McTaggart fell asleep in Jesus, to awake with his likeness, and to be like him, and see him as he is. The church feels the loss of our dear sister, for she was indeed a mother in Israel. Our sympathy goes out to the sorrowing children, and to all friends and relatives who mourn.

Her funeral was held from the meetinghouse at Ekfrid, and was conducted by the writer. Burial was in the cemetery near the church. May the Lord bless us all with a spirit of reconciliation to say, Not our will, but thine, be done.

ALSO,

James Stevenson, our dear friend and believer in our Lord Jesus Christ, and the beloved husband of our dear sister, Cassie E. Stevenson, departed this life June 11th, 1921, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. Mr. Stevenson never united with the church, yet he was a regular attendant at the Ekfrid meetings and enjoyed the preaching of the gospel of God our Savior. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and learned by experience that the works of the creature were of no avail in that great plan. He was a kind and devoted husband, a good neighbor, respected by all in the community in which he lived. His home was a welcome place to all, and he delighted in entertaining those of like precious faith. His faithfulness to the church and his regular attendance at the meetings spoke of a living interest in the welfare of the church, and also in the things of the kingdom of our God. He passed peacefully away after a lingering illness, which he bore with great fortitude, being reconciled to the will of his heavenly Father.

His funeral was held from his late residence, and burial was in the cemetery near the Ekfrid meetinghouse. The writer tried with such ability as the Lord was pleased to give to comfort the sorrowing ones. We desire and pray the blessing of almighty God to rest upon our dear sister, and may her heavenly Husband, our Lord Jesus Christ, be her comfort in this her great sorrow.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Mrs. Elizabeth Adkins, widow of William Adkins, was born December 1st 1825, and died at her home, near Parsonsburg, Md., March 25th, 1922, aged 96 years. She was baptized October 9th, 1892, in the fellowship of the Forest Grove Old School Baptist Church, of Wicomico County, Maryland, we think by the late Elder A. B. Francis. Sister Adkins was a faithful and consistent member, always attending meeting when her health permitted. Her home was a welcome resting-place for the ministers and others of the church, and at association times her home was filled, and all felt it good to be there. The past few years prior to her death, because of infirmities of age, she grew very feeble in mind and body, and was confined to her bed most of the time. Her two single daughters, Rhona and Fannie, gave her constant and devoted care to the end. She is survived by seven children: Joseph J. Adkins, Mira E. Perdue, William S. Adkins, of Morgan, Mich., Jacob M., George W., Rhona B. and Fannie M. Adkins, all living near the old homestead, except William, who resides in Michigan. Five of the children are known to us as faithful members of the Old School Baptist Church. Few have greater reason to be proud of their family than did sister Adkins. She was a faithful and devoted mother, a good neighbor and a true friend.

Her funeral services, which were held in the Forest Grove meetinghouse, and largely attended, were conducted by her pastor, Elder J. C. Mellott, of Salisbury, Md., assisted by the writer. Elder Mellott having been called to the care of the church of her membership less than two years ago, and owing to the condition of sister Adkins' health, had no personal acquaintance with her, the family requested us to assist in the services, and also to write this obituary, owing to the fact that we had known our dear

aged sister many years. The data of this obituary was sent to Elder Mellott, and forwarded by him to us, joining the request that we write the obituary for the SIGNS.

The remains of sister Adkins were interred in the family plot of the Forest Grove cemetery. May the dear Lord comfort the family with his holy presence.

ALSO,

Sarah Ann Willard was born at Huntingdon Valley, Pa., December 25th, 1845, the daughter of Henry and Mary Ann Stout. She married James Monroe Willard December 22nd, 1870, and died April 1st, 1922. Brother Willard died July 13th, 1913. She was baptized at Southampton June 1st, 1866, likely by Elder Harding. The surviving relatives are one daughter, Florence W. Robinson, Willow Grove, Pa., two sisters and one brother: Mrs. Samuel D. Cornell, of Newtown, Pa., Mrs. Frank H. Wood, Bethayres, Pa., and David H. Stout, of Germantowntown, Pa., also two granddaughters, of Willow Grove, Pa. Sister Willard was a faithful and devoted member of the Southampton Church, of Bucks Co., Pa. She was a woman of strong mind and sound judgment, and her love for the place where God's honor dwelleth was so wonderful that she was sometimes found in the assemblies of the saints when advised by her physician to remain at home. We all loved her for the truth's sake, and shall miss her beyond expression. She and her daughter, sister Florence Robinson, were so companionable that the separation is doubly painful to her.

The writer conducted the funeral services, held at the home of the daughter, in Willow Grove, Pa. The interment took place in the Southampton Cemetery. May the Lord bless the family, especially the daughter and two little granddaughters who loved "grandma" so dearly. K.

Mrs. Sallie Ann Lecates was born November 14th, 1843, and died April 18th, 1922, at Delmar, Delaware, where she had lived for the last sixteen years. She was the widow of Roberson Lecates. Mother never joined the church, but attended the Old School Baptist meetings as long as she was able. A few days before she died she said a hope was all she had. It seemed a good one, for the Savior seemed to be with her until the last. She leaves to mourn their loss three children: Mrs. James Figgs, with whom she made her home, Mrs. Olivia A. Parker, of Salisbury, Md., and Isaac J. Lecates, of Crisfield, Md., also three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder H. C. Ker, of Delmar, Del., text Romans viii. 20. There were many friends and relatives present to pay their last tribute of respect. The interment took place in the Delmar cemetery.

Written by her daughter,

(MRS.) JAMES FIGGS.

Mrs. Sarah Elizabeth Utterback died at her home, near Haymarket, Va., Nov. 12th, 1921, in the ninety-fourth year of her age. She was the widow of Jos. N. Utterback. Six children: two daughters and four sons survive them. Sister Utterback was a Miss Utterback before her marriage, the daughter of Mr. French Utterback. She was baptized many years ago by the late Elder Joseph L. Purington in the membership of the Upper Broad Run Old School Baptist Church, in Fauquier County, Virginia. Too much cannot be said of her faithfulness and devotion to the church, and of her steadfastness in the doctrine of God our Savior. Solomon says that the memory of the just is blessed, and it is true that those justified from all condemnation by the resurrection of Christ from the dead do have in their lives a fruitfulness of grace, the aroma of which lingers long in the hearts of the church after the individual is removed to the kingdom above. In this way their works do follow them, and such is the case with our sister Utterback, who has entered into her eternal inheritance and still lives in the love and fellowship of her kindred in Christ left behind here below.

Written by request. L.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, It has pleased almighty God, our heavenly Father, by death, to remove from our midst, and from the field of the gospel ministry, our dearly beloved brother and pastor, **Elder John McConnell,** and,

Whereas, We desire to place on record an expression of our love for him as a fellow-member of this church, and as our faithful and devoted pastor, therefore be it

Resolved, That we desire to bow in humble submission to the will of Him who has said, "Be still, and know that I am God."

Resolved, That we feel we have sustained a loss that to us seems irreparable.

Resolved, That our prayer is that this dispensation of Providence be brought home to each and all of us in a way (God's way) that we will realize more than ever before the goodness of God in calling our brother both to the gospel ministry and the pastoral care of this church.

Resolved, That we desire (by the grace of God) to live in the church as our brother did, for he surely was an ensample to the flock.

Resolved, That a copy of these Resolutions be furnished our dearly loved sister McConnell.

Resolved, That these Resolutions be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Approved and adopted at a church meeting held June 4th, 1922.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
IN NEW YORK CITY.
CYRUS RISLER, JR., Clerk.

WHEREAS, it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst our dearly beloved brother, **Elder John McConnell,** the Baltimore Association deeply feels the loss of one who has been so near and dear to us, and no doubt many others feel as we do. Truly we can say, A father has fallen in Israel, one who has ever earnestly contended for the faith once delivered unto the saints. He feared not to declare the whole counsel of God. Our hearts indeed are filled with sadness at the loss of such a faithful servant, but we feel to bow in humble submission to the will of our heavenly Father, knowing that he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, and is able to raise up another who will be true and faithful to the truth that was so dear to the heart of our departed brother.

We extend our sympathy to his bereaved widow, our dear sister, and pray our heavenly Father to comfort her in this great sorrow.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.

E. A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

MEETINGS.

THE Siloam Association of Washington and Oregon will be held with the Mizpah Church, at Touchet, Washington (this is near Walla Walla), August 11th, 12th and 13th, 1922. To all ministers, brethren, sisters and friends of our faith and order a cordial invitation if extended to meet with us.

ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk.

THE New Hope Association of Primitive Baptists (if the Lord wills) will hold her forty-first annual session with the Mount Zion Church, nine miles south of Greenville, Texas, and one mile north of Cash, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1922. All trains will be met on Thursday. All lovers of the truth are invited, especially the ministers of our faith and order.

S. M. DICKENS.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

ROMANS XIII. 1.

"THERE is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."

Men have been trying to change God's plans from Cain's day up to the present time, trying to build towers whose height would reach heaven. All power men and devils have, or will ever have, is from God. Man could as easily change the whole course of nature, reverse the course of the sun, moon and stars as he could change the plan of God's salvation of sinners, or his destruction of sinners. God is a sovereign in the most absolute sense of that term; man is nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity. The prophet Jeremiah tells us the heart (which is the seat of life) is deceitful above all things, and asks the question, Who can know it? Paul tells us in his Roman letter that man's throat is an open sepulcher, his mouth is full of cursing and bitterness, with his tongue he uses deceit, his feet are swift to shed blood, and the way of peace he has not known. Out of this kind of material he that hath all power has and will continue to make sheep, followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God. We find nowhere in the Scriptures where any man, prophet, apostle, or any one else, was commanded of the Lord to make sheep, but we do find where some are commanded to feed the sheep of the Lord's making; neither do we find where God needed any help to make them or keep them. The apostle Peter informs us that they are kept by the power of God, and that their inheritance is incorruptible. It could not be incorruptible if man had any hand in it. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable, is comprehended only by divine revelation. David tells us in the one hundred and thirty-fifth Psalm that whatsoever the Lord pleased he did in heaven, in earth, in the sea and all deep places. It is natural for man in all walks of life to worship something, and some enjoy being worshipped. Even the most savage races have objects of adoration. John on the isle of Patmos undertook to worship an angel, but the angel said unto him, See thou do it not; worship God. The power that the serpent had when he beguiled our mother Eve, and also when he undertook to tempt Christ, was given him from God. If not so, what did Paul mean when he wrote the words at the

head of this article? If all power is of him, where is any left for any one else? He gave men power to heal the sick and raise the dead, but never to forgive sins. The Savior said, I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me; and this is the will of him that sent me, of all thou hast given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up at the last day. Again, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. No one can believe anything in nature or grace without evidence. If we believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God we believe it by God-given faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. We are saved by hope, but hope which is seen is not hope; but if we hope for that we see not, we with patience wait for it. Faith is the very essence of the christian's hope of glory in the world to come, and we at times have a little foretaste of it in this life. If we know nothing of glory in this life, what evidence have we that we will know anything of it in the world to come? Those who have the most revelation committed to them are the humblest, but sometimes they become egotistic, as Moses did when he smote the rock to bring water to the Israelites; and the apostle Paul said that from the abundance of revelation committed, to keep him under, he was given a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan. He generally realized his nothingness. He exclaimed on a certain occasion that he was not a whit behind the chiefest of the apostles, that he notwithstanding was nothing. He realized the truthfulness of what the Savior said to his disciples: Without me ye can do nothing. The Savior said to certain missionaries, Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made you make him two-fold more the child of hell than you are yourselves. There were never in the history of the world more missionaries in the field, as it is termed, than at this time; nor have the people been more sinful. There has never been more money used in the effort to evangelize the world than is being used now. It seems to be a hard lesson to learn that the world by wisdom has never known God. Holy writ informs us that we are not redeemed by corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but by the precious blood of Christ. He by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified, or set apart to salvation. The Savior said to his disciples, Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should bring forth fruit, and that fruit might abound. He also said, The tree is known by its fruit; a bad tree by cultivation only brings forth more bad fruit. If you know the truth, the truth shall make you free. Jesus said, I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me. When he that commanded the light to shine out of darkness shines in the heart of a sinner, no matter how vile he may be, it gives the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and that knowledge comes no other way. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his. The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God; if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. All of God's elect inherit eternal life through Jesus Christ. Christ is the heir of all things, and those whom he redeemed are equal heirs with him. Jesus' last words before he expired were, It is finished. The work of redemption was complete, but he must rise from the

dead for the justification of those for whom he died. After that was accomplished no one had the right to lay anything to the charge of God's elect; the debt was paid and the law satisfied. He was made to be sin for his elect, who knew no sin, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. What shall we say to these things? if God be for us, who can be against us?

I have tried in this communication to tell something of the testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy.

Love to the people of God in all conditions of life.

JAMES M. SIMMONS.

MATTOON, Ill., May 4, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—A letter written by me in the year 1867, and published in a current number of the SIGNS for that year, was discovered several months ago as I was looking over some old files of the dear old family paper. Having been asked by the brethren frequently, in the past few years, to write for the SIGNS, after reading the article over it just occurred to me I could do no better than to simply cut out the communication and ask you to republish, providing in your judgment it would not be to the exclusion of better matter. It seems the older I get the less confidence I have in my ability or strength to write in a way to edify or comfort the beloved household of faith. When I wrote the inclosed letter I was only twenty-nine years old as against eighty-four now, and if what I then wrote was given a place in the SIGNS after being scrutinized by the late Elder G. Beebe, founder of the paper, and at that time proved comforting to the thousands of readers of that period, the much greater portion of whom have entered into that rest that remains for the people of God, it may be of interest to the scattered flock of this present time. As for myself, one thing appears very sure after all the intervening fifty-five years, I can say of a truth my mind on things spiritual and eternal, and the faith that prompted my utterances then has never changed. The blessed gospel of Christ that was, to me, sweet and precious then, is no less uplifting and precious to my soul now. I was a reader of the SIGNS then, and I am yet. "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon" has been always steadfastly and unflinchingly drawn in defense of the cause of righteousness and truth by faithful servants throughout all the years of its publication. May God ever bless both editors and publishers in the good work of today of supplying such a blessed medium of correspondence, carrying gospel news to hundreds who cannot have or hear preaching from any other source. This may be my last effort. The hour of my departure draws near. The Lord only knows when the call will come. Until then I want to be patient. Grace, mercy and peace that passeth understanding be with all the household of faith unto whom the message may come.

In the hope of a blessed immortality, I am your unworthy brother and servant in gospel bonds, J. G. SAWIN.

LOXA, Ill., Feb., 1867.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Permit me once more through the columns of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to address a few lines to the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus, located in the different parts of the habitable domain, unto whom, together with yourself, be grace, mercy and truth from God our heavenly Father, through Christ Jesus the Lord.

Dear brethren, it is with joy, thanksgiving and praise to God, who moves so mysteriously in the army of heaven, while consummating the work that he hath ordained, that I embrace the present opportunity to say a few things which I hope through the grace of God that is in you, may redound to your comfort, encouragement and strong consolation; that your joy may be full, your hope revived, and your pure minds aroused to a faithful remembrance of those precious things which you have seen with your eyes, heard with your ears and handled with your hands, of the "word of life;" if so be the light of heavenly wisdom be not entirely obscured from me, for in the absence of the true Light, or the unction of the Holy One, I am unknown to my brethren, and they to me, and cannot comprehend the promises of God, explain his ordinances, nor yet profitably discharge the various duties that devolve upon the servants of the Most High. But, dear brethren, kindred in Christ, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit, if God has called me by his grace to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, testify of his mercy and wisdom among the Gentiles, and declare his righteousness to a people that shall be born, I have the heavenly assurance that I shall lack for nothing to enable me to consummate the work assigned me in my Master's kingdom. False teachers may come up in every shape and form, the mystery of iniquity execute with astonishing fury its direful work, numberless prowling wolves, eager for prey, force themselves into our midst, and the sullen enmity of all the hosts of the alienated foes of heaven excited to action against me as a faithful minister of the new testament, if sustained by the power and grace of the omnipotent God I have nothing to fear. None of the weapons raised against me shall prosper. Carnal weapons were not made for God's ministers, but with the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit as their armor, they are invulnerable to all the evils that may come against them. The armor with which they are clad is from the rich and exhaustless stores of heaven. Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. While this is the case, they may well take courage from the language of the blessed Redeemer, which says, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for my sake." It is not always though, that they can grasp the promises and lay hold of the truth. What seems bright and full of meaning at one time may subsequently, under different circumstances, reveal little or nothing to our understanding. The truth of heaven, however, does not thus change from time to time; it is poor, sinful and rebellious man that brings on the conflict, and then, perhaps, the promises are for a time hid from view. I have sometimes when in deep distress almost concluded that my case was an abandoned one, and that the ordinances, blessings and privileges of the Lord's house did not belong to me, although I had indulged in the practice of them a little, and enjoyed some sweet communion and fellowship with the faithful disciples of Christ at sundry times, in the exercise of them. But perhaps I had mistaken the shadow for the substance, and after all had no just right to the ordinances of the kingdom. How long I should struggle with those doubtful disputations of mind God only knows, did not the unerring spirit occasionally, through the medium of Christ our head, convey evidences of enduring mercy

treasured in the vaults of heaven, where robbers dare not come, nor thieves break through and steal. Yea, evidences that God for Christ's sake hath pardoned my sins; that the Lord is my shield, my refuge and my strength. When God put his words into the mouths of his holy prophets, and commanded them to speak, at the same time he gave them ample assurance that of the wicked they should not be afraid, for I will be with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord. The terrors of the fiery furnace, the perils of the lions' den, the pains of incarceration, and the unutterable horrors of the inquisition all disappear suddenly when the light of heavenly wisdom reveals to us the fact that Jesus is near, sweetly whispering, My grace is sufficient for thee. That "as thy days, so shall thy strength be." These encouraging words sustained the people of God in olden time; even so will they comfort his saints, his chosen, his servants, in this day of darkness, delusion and blind stupidity, when men, ungodly men with lofty pretensions to christianity, but having men's persons in admiration, and teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, oppose the legitimate truth of heaven, and who denounce the sovereignty of God as intolerable, unequal and unjust, are seen standing in the high places, leading astray the unwary, training the popular mind to receive their spiritual gifts, and would, if it were possible, deceive the very elect of God. Yea, they glory in their own achievements, rejoice in the works of their own polluted hands, and ignorantly worship their own self-constituted idols, instead of the one only true and living God, as did the prophets, apostles and disciples of Christ, of old, and, dear brethren, as I hope we continue to worship to this day. These paragons of human perfection trust their own righteousness, carnal ordinances and worldly institutions to qualify them for the presence of God. Says one of them, a missionary sent out by the board from Pennsylvania, a few days since, to the writer, "Sir, you presume entirely too much upon the love of God to carry you through; it will not do, for we must be up with the times; your theory will not succeed in this enlightened age." Thus showing conclusively that to preach the Word was not his business, and to stay upon God he did not choose. This, however, only fulfills what the apostle said should be, viz.: "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." God is love. He has loved his people with an everlasting love, and with tender compassion he draws them by his loving-kindness into his banqueting-house, where his banner over them is love. While they were sinners he loved them and gave himself for them. Brethren, do you, can you, presume too much upon the unspeakable love of God? Is not your hope, the anchor of your soul, which you would not exchange for worlds, suspended entirely upon that matchless love? Yes, you have learned in your experience that

> "Love is the golden chain that binds
> The happy souls above;
> And he's an heir of heaven that finds
> His bosom glow with love."

Unlike your enemies, you have no confidence in the flesh, for your own righteousness is as filthy rags in the sight of God. Then methinks I hear it said from the least to the greatest in my Father's kingdom, Their rock is not our Rock, even our enemies themselves being

judges. For their vine is the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah; their grapes are grapes of gall; their wine is the poison of dragons and the cruel venom of asps. Of the gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity, you have been made acquainted in your experience. You have also drank deeply of the wine of affliction, tried the crumbling rock of human perfection, and you have sadly realized the poisonous venom of asps that lurked under your lips. You carefully tried every refuge of lies to escape the demands of heaven against you, but in all your strange devices you were the subjects of disappointment, for you realized to your sorrow that the bed was shorter than a man could stretch himself upon it, and the covering narrower than a man could wrap himself in it. That by the deeds of the law no flesh should be justified, and that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but by the precious blood of Christ, who entered into the holiest of the holy, once for all, having forever satisfied the demands of justice in behalf of his chosen bride. By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes them free from the law of sin and death; "for what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

But, brethren, I have written thus far, whether for your comfort or not, God only knows, but of one thing I am certain, that is, All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. And that the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, and maketh intercession for us according to the will of God. If God be for us, who can be against us? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? Who shall separate us from the love of God? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither life, nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Peace be to the brethren, and love, with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

Yours, in the bonds of affliction,

JOHN G. SAWIN.

EKFRID, Ontario, Jan. 2, 1905.

DEAR BRETHREN:—When about ten years old my father and mother joined the Presbyterians. It did trouble me for fear they had not known that change of heart I felt all should before sitting at the communion. About that time in a vision I thought the world was coming to an end, and saw the Lord coming down from heaven with wings like an angel, to take me. How I did beg of him to take my eldest brother with me. From that time I was given great exercise of mind until the day of my wonderful delivery, when the blessed Jesus was revealed to me, as I hope, my salvation and my Redeemer. How often I had desired to be

prepared to sit at the communion. This Saturday while going into the meeting the lines were with me: I joyed when to the house of God, &c. Go up, they said to me. Then came the thought, But I am as unfit as ever. The text was given out, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" That was the last I heard. What a power of condemnation rested upon me. I was taken out of the body, and saw hell open before me, and was ready to be cast in, but that did not seem to trouble me, but that I had crucified the Lord of glory. When in that distress the Savior appeared to me, and said, Your sins, which are many, are all forgiven; put your hand in my side, and your fingers in the print of the nails; I will put my robe upon her, and shoes on her feet, and a ring on her hand. Then the Lord alone has brought salvation unto me. He took me from the fearful pit, and from the miry clay, and on a rock he set my feet, establishing my way. We were in the meeting from eleven a. m. until four in the afternoon, but I did not hear a word of what went on after the text was given out. When they dismissed I was weeping, and they asked my trouble. I said, Surely it is the work of the Lord; so I joined them, and I wondered that they never asked me to tell any experience; not one ever mentioned to me about the work of grace. I was with them for over twenty years. Though feeling there were some of the Lord's people among them, I never got anything from their preaching, but would feel it was in myself when I did not hear. All this time I was hearing the Old School Baptists preach, and while listening to their wonderful tidings would have a great conflict to conceal my feelings. It would come to me that I was like Joseph: I knew my brethren, but they did not know me. At God's own appointed time I was brought to the home of my friends, and baptized by the people I so dearly love, though I had to leave my kindred after the flesh. The text the Presbyterians had before I left was, Choose ye this day whom ye will serve, &c. The speaker made it all so natural I could not go any more. I remember at one time of wanting to tell my mind to a dear one (she was a member of the Baptists,) and she seemed to turn away, so I thought it was because I was a Presbyterian, but when this dear saint was on her death bed she asked me if I had ever felt the cleansing power of Christ. I said, It is some time since I felt he took me from the fearful pit and from the miry clay. She said, It is enough. The very words that came to me on the street in Glasgow. I have passed through wonderful darkness as well as rejoicing. One evening while in sweet communion with my heavenly Father his love rested upon me in such power that I felt loath to return to my family. When I was going before the church I felt forsaken, when the words came, Think not what thou shalt say, for I will be a mouth to you. I dared not think what to say, but was given liberty to tell what I had passed through. A few years ago in a dream I thought I stood before God, who was as a flame of fire, and the words came, Who shall be able to stand before God? when the Savior passed between us; he is the great mediator between God and man. At one time of the Ekfrid quarterly meeting, while weary in body and dozing to sleep, the words came, Keep close to the shepherds' tents. Another time when very sick, and not expected to get better, I seemed carried above, and the words were with me, I am

the purchased of the blood of Christ. After that I was for some time in such darkness that my heavenly Comforter seemed entirely gone, when he appeared, and the words came, All the devils in hell could not keep my Redeemer from me, for he is from everlasting to everlasting.

(MRS.) ANGUS McTAGGART.

[SISTER McTaggart's obituary was published in the July 15th issue of the SIGNS. —ED.]

COLUMBUS, Ga., May 7, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—My subscription having expired, I desire to renew, for I feel I cannot afford to miss any numbers. I believe the SIGNS is kept true to the faith once delivered unto the saints, though it may not be approved by the world, and many who bear the name of Old School Baptists. I believe those who are at the helm are guided by the Spirit of God to keep our dear medium of spiritual communion pure and clean, and free from all strife and error. I feel the SIGNS, in the power of God "sits steady in the boat" (so to speak) on this rough, billowy sea of time, as the ark with the saved of the Lord floated safely and surely on the waters of the flood which submerged and drowned the whole world. The same flood that deluged the earth floated the ark, insuring safety to the chosen of God. So our dear paper is a manifestation that there is a people saved by the Lord, who dwell far above the deluge the earth is even now in.

Dear editors, may I be permitted to give expression to a few thoughts that have been impressed upon my mind and heart? If the Lord wills I will write a little, and leave it to your disposal, which I feel sure will be well. This text of Matthew xxvi. 29, has been sweet and plain to me of late: "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." I hope that Jesus has given me the true import of the above words, their spiritual import. If what I feel to see in them is from him, it is truth; if not from him, it is error. These beautiful words of Jesus are recorded also in Mark xiv. 25, and Luke xxii. 16, in almost the identical language, and to the same point. The questions came to me, What is the "fruit of the vine"? When is "that day"? Where is the "Father's kingdom"? Now Jesus had just given to his disciples, and partook with them himself, of the emblems of this fruit of the vine, which is the body and blood of Jesus. He said, Take, eat ye all of it, for it is my body and my blood (the bread from heaven of the new testament which is shed for many). This "fruit of the vine," or spiritual body and blood of Jesus, is the life-sustaining food and raiment of the inhabitants of the new Jerusalem, or dwellers in his "Father's kingdom." He said, "I am the bread of life," not natural life, but spiritual. Except ye eat of my flesh and drink of my blood ye have no life in you. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and dwelleth in me, and I in him. We can have no doubt as to what is this fruit of the vine of which he spoke in his last supping and communing with the disciples before his crucifixion, or the end of his life in the flesh, as the head of the body of Christ. I am the true vine, ye are the branches. He said to them, the last night that he communed with them of the things concerning the kingdom of heaven, that he should not again partake of this fruit "until that day when I drink it new with

you in my Father's kingdom." After that night, as Jesus said, the Shepherd should be smitten and the sheep scattered. They were to be sustained by communion with him no more after the supper of the passover until "that day" in which he should eat and drink anew with them in the kingdom of God. Thus when he was smitten they were all scattered; went into sorrow and disappointment, fell asleep. When he for the time being, should no longer sustain them by the fruit of the vine all their strength was gone. They could not even watch with him one hour. There was silence in heaven for half an hour. From the passover supper until after the resurrection of the Lord of glory there is recorded no activity in the kingdom of heaven; that is, no spiritual life or stirring. Of course the Father was with the Son, but he must be smitten that the purpose of God be fulfilled. Jesus said to them, I tell you of these things beforehand, that when they come to pass, ye will remember that I told you. "That day" when he should eat anew with them is this gospel day, and came to pass immediately after his resurrection. He then again and anew talked and communed with them in his Father's kingdom, concerning the things of the eternal kingdom, and we feel he has ever since been drinking and communing with his disciples, among whom we hope we are numbered. His chosen are the blessed and highly favored ones, who are the dwellers in the Father's kingdom, or house, wherein are many mansions. His disciples are they who have been raised to walk in newness of life, and to love and follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. Spiritually speaking, they are now with him in his Father's kingdom, but naturally speaking, they are in a state of separation from him, being yet in the flesh, of which he took part, but now risen to the exalted place on the right hand of the throne of God, there to reign in his Father's kingdom in earth, until all enemies are put under his feet. "His Father's kingdom," spoken of in the text, is not a far distant age or time yet to come; it is not immortal glory, as I once supposed, and as many of God's people seem to think. Jesus said to the disciples, The kingdom of heaven is within you. If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Neither shall they say, Lo here, or lo there, for behold the kingdom of God is within you. The kingdom of God cometh not with observation (natural vision). Rom. xiv. 17: For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink (only); but righteousness, and joy, and peace, in the Holy Ghost. 1 Cor. iv. 20: For the kingdom of God is not in words (letters), but in power (of the Spirit). John the Baptist said, as the forerunner of Christ, Repent ye, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. This is sufficient, yet there are many more Scriptures that prove to us the kingdom of God is right here now, in earth and on earth. It is in and among his living children. They are now partakers of the fruit of the vine, in God's spiritual kingdom with their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who feast again and again anew with them since his resurrection, the power of his resurrection giving them life and ability to eat and drink with him, even while they are yet in the flesh. Oh what glory will it be when they have put off mortality, the only veil or separation between them and a full realization of the blessedness of which through Christ they are heirs with him. "In my Father's house are many mansions." I go to prepare a place for you,

that where I am, ye may be also. In his house, or kingdom, are many dwelling-places. As God's children often describe them, mile-posts, joyful seasons and sorrowful seasons, hills and valleys, experiences of joy in his salvation, and times of mourning on account of sin and the felt absence of their Lord. Many mansions in this house, but all are prepared by Jesus, and are for their good and his glory. He said, when about to pass through death for them, I will come again, and receive you to myself. He did this after his resurrection, and went before them into Galilee. This has been fulfilled to every child of God, whether or not they realize it. He goes before each and every one of his disciples in and out of these many mansions in the kingdom of heaven. This kingdom is not immortal glory in its complete and full sense, yet it is a foretaste and vision by faith of the habitation of God brought down to man. The holy and "new Jerusalem," the city of God, that John saw coming down out of heaven (the holy of holies) from God. The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them. The saints of God are already partakers of the eternal kingdom, which never ends, and which they will fully realize when time is no more. In the beginning, the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the hosts of them, and on the seventh day (gospel day) God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day, and God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, and rested therein from all his work which he had created and made; and so do we. All praise to him.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

(MRS.) C. M. THETFORD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1922.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 10.

"BUT by the grace of God I am what I am."

A person's life, as well as a nation's life, can be divided up into separate periods. These periods often merge into one another so that we can scarcely tell where one begins and another ends; again, they sometimes come as blows on the head which stun and daze so that one hardly knows what has happened. A young man does not feel very different on the day after his twenty-first birthday from what he did the day before he was twenty-one, nevertheless the day he was twenty-one marked a very definite period in his life, and his status as an individual changes very decidedly in these two or three days, in the eyes of the law at least, if in no other way. Looking back over our lives, many of us can see where one chapter ended and another began, yet as we passed along the way we were not conscious of any change; but some of the stages in the journey were marked by sharp and penetrating shocks which changed us for all time so that we were never the same afterward. A great and sore affliction sometimes marks an epoch in a person's life, also some great blessing or rejoicing may do the same. As with a person's life, so with the history of God's people as recorded by divine inspiration in the Scriptures. We find it divided into periods. Not that the people

who lived at the point where two periods, or ages, met were at all conscious of what was going on, or realized what events meant, but just the same, momentous things were being enacted, occurrences the result of which would be far-reaching, and maybe eternal. Saul of Tarsus lived in just such a time, and you and I may be to-day living in another such time. Who knows? When the little child of Mary lay in Bethlehem, no mortal then knew how he should stir the nations and rule them with a rod of iron. When the lowly Jesus walked by Galilee, and up and down Judea's vales and hills, and over into Samaria even, none guessed or imagined how his doings and sayings, then unnoted by the world, should cause thrones to totter and tumble, the earth to quake and kingdoms to perish and vanish away, how beggars should be made princes and exalted to thrones of judgment, and how Lazaruses should find rest from their wounds and bleeding sores in the bosom of the covenant which God had made with Abraham, blessing therein all the nations of the earth, Gentiles as well as Jews. The Bible is very definitely divided into an Old and New Testament, and the legal or Mosaic and prophetic dispensations are very definitely separated from the new or gospel covenant, yet we must bear in mind that to those who were living when the old was passing away and the new coming in, there was no consciousness of the tremendous import of the times in which they were living. The day of the Lord ever comes as a thief in the night, stealing upon us unawares, but none of the elect of God can escape its soul-stirring consequences. It works its will with us while we know not what is going on, a mystery by which we live and move and have our being, but which we can never explain or comprehend only by faith. Thus it was with Saul of Tarsus. He came all unsuspecting to the end of a period in his life, a period in which he had walked according to the law of Moses and the Jews, and in which he had blamelessly adhered to such righteousness as was in the letter of the law, verily as he thought doing the service of God, but entirely ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish his own. This period in Saul's life answered to the time before the coming of Christ; that is, it was the time when Saul was under the law, trying to live by the law, and before his conviction of sin. Now, the end of this legal period did not come gradually with Saul, as it does with some of the Lord's people, but it came like a lightning flash, and all at once. Suddenly the light of God's glory shone round about him. You know the rest. Not necessary to repeat all the details here. The revelation here made manifest in Paul changed the whole tenor of his life. Hereafter instead of being a messenger of persecution and torment to the church of God as he had been, he became a minister of the love and of the mercy and of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ to his people. All that Paul was, and all that he became after his wonderful experience in the Damascus road until he died, he owed entirely to the grace of God. He said so: "By the grace of God I am what I am." His ability and power as a preacher of the gospel, and as an apostle to set in order the things that were right, he owed to grace. His quality and character as a believer in the Lord, and as a follower of Christ, he owed to grace. Indeed, all that he was and all that he had was entirely of grace. The word "grace" means the free and unmerited favor of God, and all Paul's

ability and character in all the phases of his life as a christian flowed from the free and unmerited favor of God to him. Just now, however, we are thinking of the two great covenants: the law and the gospel, and that Paul owed all his life and character as a child of God to the grace covenant, and not a bit of it to the law. This covenant, we call it new, yet it is as eternal as God himself, but we can never call eternal things old; the law we call the old covenant, yet it came after the covenant which God made with and in himself before the world began, but the law being a time covenant, and not eternal, waxed old and perished, as do all time things and principles. Away back, we know not how far, for eternity is not to be comprehended, though we believe it, but somewhere away back before time began, God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit entered into a contract or covenant. Accordingly thereto, the Father chose an elect people and secured them to and in his Son, making the Son theirs and them his, the Son to be responsible for them and to secure them safely for time and forever. This covenant the Son agreed to carry out, and the Holy Ghost witnessed thereto and became the seal of the contract or covenant. This is the covenant which the gospel makes known, and which it proclaims, and which is the life and power and very substance of the gospel. This is the grace covenant, so called because none of the heirs chosen therein had anything to do with it, and had none of its conditions devolving upon them to carry out, and the fact that their names were written in it was altogether owing to God's good pleasure, to his free and unmerited favor. It is out of this covenant, and because of it, that Saul of Tarsus became Paul the apostle. To it, and it alone, he owed his faith, hope and charity, his gentleness, steadfastness, patience, and all other virtues, his life and salvation, and his justification before God, his final abode in the realms of the glory of God. As no will or testament is of any value while the testator lives, therefore Jesus, who was God in the flesh, shed his blood in death to make this new or eternal covenant of God effective. As all things under the law that were used in the temple worship were consecrated with blood, the blood of beasts, therefore Jesus with his own blood consecrated the will of God to his people, and at the same time sanctified the people to God. It took this blood and death of Jesus to make the will of God effectual to all the heirs of God. That being done, it became the work of the Holy Ghost as the administrator of the estate of God the Father to search out the heirs of glory in all the lands whither they are scattered and to make known in them by divine revelation all the things which God had prepared for them that love him, and which flow unto them through the sacrificial atonement of the Son. Now, Paul was one of those heirs named by the Father in his will. Saul did not know it, but the Holy Spirit did, and this Spirit carrying out the eternal will of the Father came in due time to Saul on the Damascus road, and Saul was never the same afterward. He had met an epoch in his life. Old things passed away and all things became new. He became a new man in Christ. No wonder, then, he said he owed everything to grace. To the old covenant he owed nothing, for it had brought him nothing save death and condemnation. All who have obtained by the mercy of God salvation from sin as did Paul, can say with Paul that it is by God's grace they are what they are. It

is God who has made us, and not we ourselves. Every true christian owes all he is and all he ever hopes to be to the covenant of grace. It is God's work that any believe on Jesus Christ whom he has sent. The election of grace is the workmanship of God created in Christ Jesus unto good works. By grace are ye saved.

L.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware Association, convened with the Welsh Tract Church, at Newark, Delaware, May 24th, 25th and 26th, 1922, to the churches and associations with which we correspond sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We meet again, and hope we thank God for the gospel tidings sent unto us through his dear servants, our ministering brethren, and do hope under all circumstances, in the end it may be a profitable meeting, even under the existing trials we have been called upon to endure. When patience has had her perfect work, God's purposes and designs will have been accomplished.

We have appointed our next session to be held with the Rock Springs Church, in Lancaster Co., Pa., at the regular time in May, 1923, where we hope to receive your messengers and ministers once again, the Lord willing.

J. G. EUBANKS, Moderator.
J. B. MILLER, Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, convened with the First Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J., May 31st, June 1st and 2nd, 1922, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting and love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We feel thankful to say to you that we are having a pleasant meeting and the Lord has graciously blessed us by sending a goodly number of his servants laden with the gospel of Jesus Christ our Savior, who have proclaimed unto us glad tidings of great joy, that unto us a child is born, a Son is given, and we do rejoice in the manifestation of his great love to us once more, which cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is neither variableness nor a shadow of a turn.

Our next session of this Association is to be held, the Lord willing, with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, N. J., beginning on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1923, at 10.30 a. m., when we hope to meet your ministers and messengers in the love and fellowship of the people of God our Savior.

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.
DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in July (30th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

MEMORIALS.

(DELAWARE ASSOCIATION.)

Whereas, it is the will of Almighty God to take unto himself, for all time, our much beloved brother and minister of the gospel of Christ, **Elder John McConnell,** and

Whereas, we feel this loss in our Association and churches, almost equal to his own, therefore be it

Resolved, that we herewith express our heartfelt sympathy in this bereavement for all the churches wherein he was known and loved, and condolence for his faithful flock in his own church, and for his widow, our precious sister in the faith, hoping we all can become reconciled to this dispensation of our heavenly Father, and made to say by faith through his Spirit, "Thy will be done." And be it further

Resolved, that a copy of this Memorial be spread

upon these Minutes of the Delaware Association, and a copy forwarded to his widow, our beloved sister in the Lord.

Signed
JOHN G. EUBANKS.
P. M. SHERWOOD.
J. B. MILLER.

Adopted May 26, 1922.
J. B. MILLER, Clerk.

Inasmuch as it has pleased the Almighty God in his all-wise providence to take from us and unto himself our beloved brother, **Elder John McConnell,** many years the faithful pastor of the Ebenezer Church, of New York City, be it

Resolved, that we, the Delaware River Association, bow in humble submission to his holy will, and that we spread this resolution upon our Minutes, and that a copy be sent to our dear sister McConnell. We loved Elder McConnell for the truth's sake, and shall miss his able ministry and safe counsel, but know that he is at rest from his labors, and that his works will follow him. Amen.

ALSO,

The dear Lord has called our aged brother and deacon of the Kingwood Church, New Jersey, **Cyrus Risler,** from the shores of time into the rest to the people of God. Be it also

Resolved, that we spread our expression of our love for him and our appreciation of him on our Minutes, and that the same be published in the "Signs of the Times." Brother Risler was faithful in the house of God, and filled well the office of deacon. We sympathize with the church and with his children. Amen.

CHAS. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.
DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Esther Garrett, our sister in Christ, and widow of the late Joseph Franklin Garrett, departed this earthly life at her home, near Airmont, Loudoun Co., Virginia, July 7th, 1922, in the eighty-sixth year of her age. She was born Oct. 5th, 1836, the daughter of Silas and Jemima Garrett, the last one of eleven children, and lived longer on earth than any of her brothers or sisters. She was born, was married and died in the same home where nearly all the days of her life were spent. She was married June 16th, 1859, to Mr. J. F. Garrett, who died Feb. 6th, 1909. She was the mother of three children, two of whom died in infancy. Her daughter, Miss Harriet Garrett, survives her, and it fell to her lot to care for her mother in her last years. This service of love Miss Garrett rendered unstintedly and devotedly, giving her whole time and attention to waiting on sister Garrett, her mother. Besides having had the care of her own family, sister Garrett raised from childhood to womanhood another girl who is now Mrs. Charles Reed, of Purcellville, Va., who has been to her as her own daughter, and who is bereft now of one who was as a mother to her. Sister Garrett was baptized July 8th, 1894, by the late Elder J. N. Badger into the membership of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, in Loudoun Co., Va. For all the twenty-eight years of her life in the church sister Garrett lived a consistent christian life of faithfulness to her brethren, and of devotion to the truth of God as it is in Christ. She was patient in suffering, and uncomplaining. On account of ill health she was hindered in later years from regularly getting to the meetings of the church, but she loved to have her brethren visit her, and when they did she loved to have them read the Scriptures and pray with her.

The funeral services were held from her late home, the text used were the words in Zechariah xiv. 7. She was buried by the side of her husband, in the graveyard at North Fork. May the Spirit of the ascended Christ comfort all the bereaved, especially her daughter, who sadly misses the mother who had for so long been her especial care. L.

Bessie Miller Lewis was born Oct. 24th, 1893, near Spencerville, Ohio, and departed this life Oct. 21st, 1921, at the home of her parents, brother and sister C. G. Miller, who live at 134 Moody Ave., Riverside, California, leaving father, mother, two brothers, two sisters, a husband and three children to mourn their loss, but we are not as those who are without hope. Bessie was not a member of the visible church, but she gave us good evidence that she belonged to that upper and better kingdom. At times during her lingering illness she tried to express in words what a great sinner she was, and how unworthy of any divine favor. Is not this the best of evidence that the Lord had begun a good work? And the promise is, That he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. May the Lord comfort those who mourn.

Written by request of her parents.

J. A. McCLAIN.

J. T. Stone, son of Isaac and Almedia Stone, was born in Henderson Co., Tenn., July 22nd, 1845, and departed this life May 10th, 1922, at 7:30 a. m. He came to Texas with his parents in 1849, and was married to Miss Fatina Shachelford, June, 1869, by Elder Jeter, and to that union were born seven children, one dying in infancy, six now living and all married. They are Isaac, of Tyler, Texas, B. R., of Van, Texas, Mrs. W. E. Prater, of Garden Valley, Texas, Mrs. J. B. Eason, of near Garden Valley, Texas, Mrs. Effie Roberts, of Lindale, Texas, and Mrs. Julius Mullens, of Carroll, Texas. He had seventeen grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. Two brothers and one sister survive him: J. M. Stone, Tyler

Texas, C. W. Stone, Minneola, Texas, and Mrs. E. P. Jarvis, Dallas, Texas. He served four years in the war between the states. He lived in the home where he died nearly forty years, where he always welcomed the Primitive Baptists. His parents were Primitive Baptists and readers of the SIGNS. Though he never joined the church, he was a strong believer in salvation by grace, and often spoke of his little hope. He told the writer he was not fit to be baptized. He was always at meeting when circumstances would permit. His wife and one daughter, Mrs. J. B. Eason, are members, and sound in the faith. He was conscious until the last, and bore his sufferings without a murmur. Two days before he died he told the writer he was not afraid to die, so, dear bereaved ones, ye sorrow, but not as those who have no hope; for he is gone from the evil to come, and I feel sure that in the resurrection he will come forth in the image of our Savior. The writer tried to speak words of comfort at his funeral. May God strengthen the faith of his aged and afflicted companion, who still survives him, is the prayer of her pastor,

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

MEETINGS.

THE Siloam Association of Washington and Oregon will be held with the Mizpah Church, at Touchet, Washington (this is near Walla Walla), August 11th, 12th and 13th, 1922. To all ministers, brethren, sisters and friends of our faith and order a cordial invitation if extended to meet with us.

ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk.

THE New Hope Association of Primitive Baptists (if the Lord wills) will hold her forty-first annual session with the Mount Zion Church, nine miles south of Greenville, Texas, and one mile north of Cash, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1922. All trains will be met on Thursday. All lovers of the truth are invited, especially the ministers of our faith and order.

S. M. DICKENS.

THE Second Roxbury Church, of the Roxbury Association, will (God willing) hold their two days meeting on Wednesday and Thursday, August 23rd and 24th. Trains will be met on Tuesday afternoon at Halcottville, N. Y., and Wednesday morning at Roxbury, N. Y. We shall be pleased to see and entertain all friends and brethren of our faith and order.

GEORGE RUSTON, Pastor.

THE First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held with Good Hope Church, in Coffey County, Kansas, beginning on Friday before the second Saturday in September, being the 8th, 9th and 10th of the month. We cordially invite all lovers of the truth to visit us. The nearest railroad stations are Burlington, Lebo and Halls Summit. For further information write to brother J. L. Cannady, Burlington, Kansas, R. F. D., or address me at 1243 Polk St., Topeka, Kansas.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

COMANCHE, Texas, June 22, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I have been asked to write more for the SIGNS, I make the attempt. I sometimes try to ask the Lord to be for me wisdom in ignorance, light in darkness, strength in weakness. Once when on a trip, I was told that the preachers in that State condense their sermons. I told them I had not bought a condenser, and if I had one I did not have sense enough to use it, that I would still have to depend entirely on my blessed Savior to enable me to proclaim his everlasting truth. I have been trying to preach ever since, and before they gave me my credentials, which I see by the date on them was forty-two years ago in May, and I am as dependent on the Savior for wisdom and strength to speak now as I was at first. When I first commenced to try to talk I thought, If I can only have a fruitful mind I am sure I can say the words. Lo, and behold, I could think of plenty to say, but I got such a tickling and shutting up in my throat I could not say a word. That taught me my helplessness. The brethren got to telling me how fast I was growing. I went to a three days' meeting, and when I got there some of the preachers asked me to get up and talk, but I would not. I was saving myself up for Sunday. So sure enough they put up the big preacher, as I thought I was. I took this for a text: "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." Isaiah xl. 31, says, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." I had been waiting all right, but not the right kind of waiting. The prophet says, They shall mount up with wings as eagles. I was like an eagle perched on the top limb of the tallest tree in the forest, and it standing right on the brink of a bluff, I thought three thousand feet high. I hopped off, and expected to mount up in the gospel heavens and preach a wonderful sermon, but one wing was tied. I got the worst fall I ever had in my life, and I have had many on account of my abominable pride. The Bible says, "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken." I fell on the stone. Again, "But on whosoever it shall fall [the stone], it will grind him to powder." I have never wanted to see that

text since. I saw clearly after it was all over that the humiliation of not being able to start, much less talk, was for my good, and if I am not mistaken, I afterwards thanked the Lord for the terrible chastening. Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth, and if ye be without chastisement, of which all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Oh the darkness, the darkness, the awful cold and gloom! Nearly all the time I am in doubting, hardly ever a ray of light breaks through the clouds. Some men are called, "Clouds carried by a tempest." Some, we are told, are carried about by every wind of doctrine. The gospel is to keep the little children from being carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, and because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

"The darkness gathers thick and fast,
Cold winds are sweeping all around,
The sky with clouds is overcast,
The snow is spread o'er all the ground.

So our hearts are chilled with cold,
Our minds with darkness stilled,
Memory goes back to the days of old,
When our hearts with love were filled."

This "waxing cold" is not confined to the individual, but because of the universal abounding of iniquity coldness and numbness are throughout Zion from one end to the other. The church of God gives light, a city set upon a hill, the light of which cannot be hid. Nowadays the churches are few and small in membership, and far apart. Do you wonder that it is dark? The clouds carried by tempest have increased so fast, and are so black with iniquitous doctrine, that it is only of God's mercy we are not consumed, and only by his Spirit's power manifest in us that we can see at all. The tempest is worldly influence. "The Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the winds."—1 Kings xix. 11. Solomon says, Awake, O north wind. When God commands the north wind to awake it comes rushing down upon us, and the cold in our natural world becomes so intense that the air is filled with falling frost, all the streams are frozen over, and sometimes the great rivers are frozen so hard the ice will hold up a team and loaded wagon. So cloudy not a ray of the natural sun can pierce through the clouds, and the days are so short the sun is hardly risen behind the clouds until it is set. We hover around our fires while we wish for warmer weather, wish for spring. Still we are helpless to change the condition naturally, and we are as helpless to dispel the darkness or change the condition spiritually; nothing but the warm rays of the natural sun at the appointed time can cause the ice and snow to melt, and cause the natural earth to bring forth her increase. When the warm days come and the gentle warm rains fall on the earth no man nor set of men can prevent the natural flowers from appearing. All over the wild prairies of the far west, where my home is, there are billions of flowers that come forth in their time, some with large flowers, on down to the tiniest little delicate ones, so small, yet wondrously beautiful. As you look at them they speak in thunder tones, declaring the glory of God, and proclaiming his wondrous power to create. Romans i. 20: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." In Psalms xix. 1, 2, it is written,

"The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." O, little ones, Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord? While the high-stepping preachers in the grand temples of Baal are going more of them into the dismal, soggy, quick-sandy swamps of evolution, you, from the high mountain of the Lord's house, can see in every leaf, flower, tree, river, star, &c., the glory of your heavenly Father, all declaring the glory of God. Isaiah, ii. 2, says, "The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and above the hills." You were raised up to that lofty place. So Paul says, For his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved), and hath raised us up together, &c. So there from your high position you can look away off and consider the awful strife going on in the world, some crying, "Lo here and lo there," some claiming to be only beasts, and that there is no God, but you, being taught of him, rest in the stronghold of Jehovah, singing,

"A child of Jehovah, a subject of grace,
I'm of a seed royal, a dignified race,
An heir of salvation, redeemed with blood,
I'll own my relation, my Father is God."

God made a covenant with Noah, That while time lasts there should be seedtime and harvest. The Lord said to Noah, I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth; while the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease. This is just as true spiritually as it is naturally. The church will pass through the dark, cold, bleak, wintry times, both as a whole and invidually, when the glories of the wondrous Savior are all hid from you by the clouds, and nothing you can do will change the condition. This teaches you your helplessness, and causes you to look to the Lord and trust in him. Psalms cxxv. 1: "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever." As certain as it takes the warm rays of the natural sun to give light, and to warm up the earth, so sure you are only illuminated and revived and comforted by the appearing of the Sun of righteousness. Malachi iv. 2: "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." There is a time for the spring, and budding of trees, so there is a set time for the increase in the church. It is written, The time to favor you, yea, the set time is come. When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory. (Psalm cii.) The night comes, and all men on earth cannot cause the breaking of day until the time for it to appear, and all the world cannot prevent the light dispelling the darkness. So Hosea, in, vi. 3, says, "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth." All through the long, dark, cloudy, cold night you have watched, and had to wait, wondering, peering, sighing, but no change came; your petitions went up continually as you thought, Is his mercy clean gone forever? but when it pleased your glorious Benefactor, just about the time you had given up in despair, the morning came. Weeping endureth but for the night, but joy cometh in the morning. When day comes sometimes you get a faint glimpse of the antitypical rainbow, and you feel sure that while

time lasts there will be seedtime and harvest, winter and summer, day and night, cold and heat. God said, I do set my bow in the cloud. So God makes bright clouds in the gospel dispensation, and when you hear a gospel sermon you see the colors of the rainbow in it, for the minister says God's people that Jesus saved are in all nations. Here are all the colors. Here is the rainbow spoken of in our day. Revelation iv. 5: "And, behold, a throne was set in heaven, (the church) and one sat on the throne, and he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne. * * * And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices." As long as that One sits upon that throne that has that rainbow around it, just that long will the children of God be fed, and they will hear the threatening thundertones of God's law threatening vengeance against sin and wicked men, and see by the lightning that proceeds out of the throne the deep depravity and blackness of the human heart, and be made to know that of themselves they can do nothing, and that it is only by the working of His mighty power they are enabled to obey and believe in Jesus. Ezekiel xxxvi.: "And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Again, John iii. 21: "But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." Listen while Isaiah thunders down all that says it is left to man whether he obey or not. Isaiah xxvi. 12: "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us."

Smart men thought that they could make it rain in the west, and tried it, but failed. Some little children are trying to make it rain spiritually, but it is getting colder, colder, dryer, dryer, and they are crying, Do not preach doctrine; do not preach so long. Doctrine is a type of rain. Listen to Moses: "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." Sometimes the poor little children decide they will kindle a fire and warm themselves, but when God says, "Awake, O north wind," who can warm the spiritual earth, from whence comes all spiritual food, &c.? But when Jesus says, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is passed, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land," then you can see the glory of God in all things, you can then look back and see that the long, dark, dreary, cold, sad night was for your good. Oh yes, it is so nice and balmy, it is a time of increase, and your heart is full of joy, and you sing,

"Content with beholding his face,
My all to his pleasure resigned,
No changes of seasons or place,
Could make any change in my mind."

But when it pleases him to withdraw his presence you say,

"How tedious and tiresome the hours,
When Jesus no longer I see,
Sweet prospects, sweet birds and sweet flowers
Have lost all their sweetness to me."

But some are determined to have a fire and warm. Isaiah l. 11, says, Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. "This shall ye have of mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow."

It was a death penalty to kindle a fire on the Sabbath under the legal dispensation. Now if you have entered into the antitypical sabbath of rest, and ceased from your works, it is much better to trust in the Lord for everything spiritually. Paul condemns voluntary humility and will-worship, and shows clearly that all healthy and beneficial increase in the church is of God, and caused by him. He says, "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels [messengers, preachers], intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." Again, "Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will-worship and humility. This voluntary humility and will-worship that is believed in and proclaimed far and near is all from the carnal mind, and caused by the fear of everlasting punishment, and is the very doctrine condemned by Paul in Colossians second chapter, eighteenth verse, including the twenty-third. When the set time comes, and God moves his people to obey and discharge their duty, he makes them perfect to do his will, working in them that which is well pleasing in his sight. Then they come like Ruth, saying, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee, &c. These will cause you no trouble.

In my last article there were some mistakes. Where I wrote, "But methinks a sweeter concert," it came out printed a specter concert. Then, The "people" of so justly deserved punishment, instead of the "angels."

Yours in the hope of mercy,

ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

COLUMBUS, Ga., Dec. 28, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—Many times have I thought I would never again bother you with my poor, imperfect writings, for I feel my sinfulness, inability and unworthiness, and feel as though I could not comfort or interest any one of all the poor of the flock, yet I seem impressed to speak a word of encouragement to the editors and correspondents of the dear old SIGNS. When I look around me and see the many lo heres, and lo theres, which have divided the camps of the saints of the Most High, even those wearing the garb of Old School Baptists, that they may lead the little ones away from the fundamental principles of the doctrine of God our Savior, the doctrine that is so cherished, and is so nourishing, and the hope of salvation to a poor trembling child of God, I am troubled and astonished. The doctrine of the sovereignty of God over all things, both animate and inanimate, is the doctrine that is the only anchor to the hope of the child of God. He in wisdom declared the end from the begining, and it is sure; nothing can take place contrary to what his wisdom comprehended. Then, dear child of God, you may rest assured that his controlling power is over all our enemies. Satan, with all wicked men, cannot change one of all the purposes of God which he purposed in himself before the world began. Enemies may invade the camp of the saints, but it is all for the best, because all things work together for good to them who love the Lord. We hear much said about extremes among the Old School Baptists of late, but oh let us never grow weary of exalting the great God of heaven, and abasing poor, sinful man, for our poor finite minds cannot comprehend that allwise, merciful and compassionate God

who rules the universe, and neither can we know the depravity of sinful man. Let us not be afraid of going to extremes in the exaltation of God our Savior, for his purposes and decrees govern all things, and all things shall work out just as he purposed they should. As time rolls along new inventions spring up, making many changes to our finite minds, but after all they are but developing his infinite wisdom which he purposed before time began. There is nothing new with God, for his wisdom beheld all things which are, ever have been or ever shall be. All the developments of creation are but bringing into manifestation his mighty wisdom. Dear editors, and all who are correspondents of the SIGNS, go on contending for the truth, fear not to declare the whole counsel of God in the future as you have in the past.

I hope you will bear with me in my weakness, and for bothering you with this poor letter, for I feel I want to talk a little more to the dear ones who have been writing to me through the SIGNS all the year now nearly closed. I love the truth, and still have that longing desire to be among the saints. Not only to be in person with them, but to be like they look to me: a people of one mind, one heart and one faith; of one Lord, one faith and one baptism. This is the way they look to me, and I long to be like them.

Dear ones, I would like to tell you how you have comforted me through this, another year. I cannot call each by name, for space says "No," but all are included. Language would fail to express all the heart feels, so words from me can never tell what sometimes I see in the saints of God, for the image of Jesus is reflected there in love and meekness, and makes one long to dwell with you. If you have ever had one glimpse of the perfection of the saints in Jesus, you can never forget it. Years may pass, circumstances may change, but you can never forget the love of Jesus in shedding his blood for you. But I have felt that perhaps after all I have never tasted that sweetness, and yet I feel God is love, and that he for Jesus' sake has pardoned all my sins and given me to taste of his goodness and mercy, placed in my heart a fervent love for the brethren. All those points of doctrine that you all have talked to me about this year are centered in Jesus (as Paul said on board the vessel as it was going down, "Whose I am, and whom I serve.") The experience the apostle had on that occasion is the sweetest comfort that can come to a poor sinner. The vessel must be broken in pieces to let the light shine, but you cannot be lost, for in the breaking of the vessel Jesus is there in that dark and dreadful storm. We pass through long nights of sorrow and distress, and it seems to us the morn will never come, but, dear ones, the Lord is near. He has not been away at any time, but to teach you the truth that the flesh profiteth nothing, it must go down, but your life is safe, because it is in Jesus our Lord. Then cheer up, little one, no harm shall come near your dwelling, for Jesus is your dwelling-place; not only now, but in all generations God has been our dwelling-place, because he is from everlasting to everlasting. This is what we have in Christ Jesus. We are at home in the fold of his watchcare and love. Then, fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom, and you are given to know what this kingdom is; to love its laws, and to rejoice in the dispensation of grace. Many little "bits" through the

year now past seem to have been dropped purposely for the little ones. "Salvation is of the Lord," declaring by the grace of God, I am what I am. I will add here, dear child, look up, for all we suffer, and all the losses we sustain, are but the ways of life and salvation, waymarks given us, that we are his, and he is ours. They are the answers to our prayers that he may guard and guide us while the billows roll. Let no man mislead you with smooth words. Remember the old prophet Jeremiah, he was asked to say "smooth things" lest he frighten the people, but he could not do it.

I must stop now. Throw the mantle of charity over my imperfect writings; they are just like me. I cannot do the things I would, and I would not trust myself if I could. Now, dear editors and the faithful in Christ Jesus, farewell to you for this year. May the presence of the Lord be known and felt by you all in this, the new year, whether in sorrow or gladness. His will be done in earth as in heaven. Do with this, dear editors, as you think best.

Your unworthy sister, in the hope of a better life,

F. J. NORRIS.

PRINCETON, Ky., Jan. 21, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—Having changed my address from Cerulean, Ky., to Princeton, Ky., Box 76, you will please send the SIGNS to Princeton. I have been reading your paper for many years, and my father read it almost from its first issue. I feel I want to continue the few remaining days, if any, that may be allotted to me. I have passed my seventy-sixth mile-post, and feel to be a poor sinner, yet not without hope. I am often made to ask myself, Upon what does a poor sinner's hope depend? This thought carries me back to my youthful days. I was very young when these things first began to impress my mind, and my thought then was that it depended on myself, that I must be good and do good, then God would save me. I was willing to give God that much glory, for I thought that he would save me, not as an act of mercy and grace, but rather as a debt. I began to read the Bible and try my good works, and it all seemed to condemn me. I read that there was none good, nor none that doeth good. I read that all had sinned and come short of the glory of God. I also read that we were dead in trespasses and sin, and that we were without Christ, and were strangers, having no hope, and without God in the world. I read that we were foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, hateful, and hating one another; that the carnal mind is enmity against God, and that to be carnally-minded is death. All these things seemed to be against me. I read Matt. i. 21, and it gave me some relief. Am I one? I read the first and second chapters of Luke, hence I had hope against hope. Oh am I one? Am I his, or am I not?

"Oh tell me, Lord, that thou art mine;
What can I wish beside?
My soul would at the fountain live
When all the streams are dried."

Then what are some of the evidences that I have? The first real evidence I can claim was given me March 10th, 1866. I was in the field plowing, all shrouded in darkness; I had lost all hope in self, and in God, if I ever had any. I felt that I was fast sinking down, when in a moment my poor heart was made to rejoice in God my Savior and I was lifted above time and all earthy things. There I rested until this good hour. Now my meditation of him is sweet, and I love to

read and think of his love and power to save, which, if you will bear with me, I want to say a few more things about, for I am thinking this will be my last. I believe in the finished work of Jesus on earth until he shall gather his people, his elect, his church, his bride, his redeemed, out of every nation, kindred, people and tongue. They are justified freely by his grace through the redemption of Christ. He was delivered for their offenses, and raised for their justification. He appeared in the end of the world (Jewish) to put sin away. This he did when he suffered on the cross. He suffered, the Just for the unjust, and brought every one that he suffered for to God, through blood of the everlasting covenant, having satisfied the demands of the law, hence no more condemnation. The law of the spirit of life in Christ hath made his people free from the law of sin and death, hence they are made the righteousness of God in him (Christ). I believe that the perfection of God is alike in all, but if in one more than another, then it is love. He loved his people with an everlasting love, and with loving-kindness he draws them to him. Paul said, He hath saved us (his people) and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. So then we must believe that our hope of heaven is in God. "In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began." All of God's promises are yea and amen. His promises will admit of no conditions, no "ifs" to them. This hope is both sure and steadfast, and it is to you and your children, and all afar off, even as many as God shall call. So then Jerusalem, which is above, is free. She is the mother of us all, all the chosen in Christ, all the ransomed of the Lord; not only so, but we have a clear receipt, which was given by the eternal God of heaven, and by God to his prophet Isaiah. See Isaiah xl. 2, where it says "that her [Jerusalem] warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Then who is it to-day that is claiming the receipt? The Primitive Baptists.

With love to all who write for the SIGNS, I beg to remain, yours in fellowship,

D. R. TURNER.

ITHACA, N. Y., June 28, 1922.

DEAR ELDER KER:—I was very pleased to get your letter, for I know how busy you must be, but I cannot express the pleasure and comfort it was to me. I cannot realize that you are so far away, and when I know you are in Middletown I sometimes forget, for a moment, where I am, and think I will see you coming in, but I am afraid that will never be. I shall never forget the years you were my pastor, and the many joys and sorrows we have shared, also your kindness to me in so many ways. I miss you all very much, and wonder why it must be, but the Lord rules, and will do all his pleasure. I hope I am thankful for the many blessings and privileges I have enjoyed, and he has promised never to leave nor forsake us, but I long for a stronger faith to live nearer to him. Oh I go so far astray, and am so unworthy, but Christ died for his people, and in him is my hope. I love the SIGNS, and wait anxiously for it. The editorials are so good, and I always look for the K.; each number seems better than the last.

You will see that I cannot express my feelings, so will stop. May the Lord be

with you in every trial, and his grace be sufficient. I am glad your brother has been baptized and also many others. It is encouraging to you, and may the Lord be with you all, is my heart's desire.

In love and fellowship, your sister, I hope,

(MRS.) M. A. BEAKES.

[WE much appreciate the above letter from our aged sister Beakes. After many years of comfort and pleasure in the church she is now situated so that she has no church privileges at all. Her membership is with the Middletown Church, in Middletown, New York, where we served as pastor twenty-three years. Many who know sister Beakes will be glad to read her letter and know of her welfare.—K.]

MACOMB, Ill., June 1, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending you one dollar, for which please extend my subscription to the SIGNS six months. I would like to send you at least one subscriber, but in this city I know of not more than one who advocates the doctrine set forth in the SIGNS, or would care to read it. This seems very strange to me, for I love the precious doctrine of salvation by grace, election, predestination of all things, special atonement, the resurrection of the dead; all are dear and sweet to me, are my comfort and stay and hope. Then why do not others believe and rejoice in these glorious things, and why see spiritual things in such a different light? There are thirteen so-called churches in this city, and not one, I am sure, preaches salvation by grace. Are they all wrong? They say if they could raise all the money they want they could bring the millennium in fifteen years. Poor, deluded, ignorant mortals, to think they can change God's plans, his decrees, which were made before time was; and when the end will be no man knows, not even the Son, but the Father. Is it not a time to watch and pray? for it surely is a time for great spiritual darkness. May God's people be kept true and faithful, and be kept unspotted from the world.

I would love to write a few lines for the SIGNS, but I am just up from a sick bed, and am weak and nervous, so will not at this time. I have taken our dear paper for thirty-seven years, and have never seen a time I could give it up, for it so much comfort and satisfaction to me. I wish all who are behind on their subscription could pay up, as it is too much of a burden for the publishers to carry. I do wish all could do this, as we should owe no man anything, but to love one another. We owe this as any other bill that we should pay. It is imperative. It is our duty, is the way I see it.

With best wishes to all connected with the SIGNS, especially Elders Ker and Lefferts, I am your sister, I hope, in the faith,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

TO OUR CANADIAN SUBSCRIBERS.

AS some of our subscribers in Canada send us Canadian money, we wish to call their attention to the fact that the exchange on it is now very heavy, and we cannot afford to pay it, but can only give them credit for the amount they send, less the exchange. The SIGNS is the only paper we know of that does not charge extra postage for Canadian subscribers, so if convenient please send money orders or express orders.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1922.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

2 TIMOTHY IV. 7.

"I HAVE fought a good fight."

Among the last words of Paul the above sentence is found, and perhaps no expression of his pen is more true. Picturing him as an old man, having finished his course, the words are full and weighty, and much respect and credit should be given them. In the armor of Saul of Tarsus his fight was not a good one, neither was the victory his. To fight against God means failure always, but to fight under his banner, love, is a good fight, and the victory always sure. As Saul this man was sincere in all he did, verily believing he was doing God service, but his sincerity and belief never gained for him the favor of God. If such were true in his case, is it not equally true that no man by his own efforts, regardless of his sincerity and abundant labors, can bring the Lord into his debt, obligating him to save him? Paul in speaking of the matter, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us. When saved, however, and called, he had a work to do, as does every one called unto glory and virtue. His work was to preach, write and put things in order in the churches. This kind of work is not allotted to every man, but another may have the gift of healing (peacemaker), another may have the gift of deacon, another the gift of exhortation and prayer. Every gift fills its own place in the house. Sometimes, however, things get into the house that are borrowed, as were the trinkets of the Egyptians by the Israelites before leaving Egypt. They became a god, through the workmanship of Aaron, not the Lord, and that god was worshiped by the Lord's people. That was part of the type of the Lord's people now, who sometimes worship man-made gods possessing the principles of nature only. Had such the divine principles of Christ they, like Peter and John, would say, See that ye do it not, worship God. There is but one Lord, and he only is to be worshipped. Saul of Tarsus thought he was worshipping God, verily believed it, but when his eyes were opened he discovered that pride, malice, conceit, self, vainglory, &c., had been his god. Having fought first in the armor of Saul, afterward in the whole armor of God, he was prepared to say, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." If he sows to the flesh, he shall of his flesh reap corruption, but if he sows to the Spirit, he shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. No man has ever yet reaped other than that he sowed. The crop is sure; wheat is wheat, tares are tares, no mixture. All of Saul's sowing therefore to his fleshly pride and ambition brought forth the crop of corruption abundantly. He himself was brought to the place to say that all he had thought, believed, practiced, all that was gain to him, he counted but loss and dung. A full, copious crop of corruption according to his sowing. It is just as true now that whatever a man sows he shall reap. Many of us have found it so to our sorrow. The Lord knows the thoughts and intents of the heart, and often when the sins of men seem to them

covered, or unknown, others are acquainted with them. It is also true that at times when men are circulating reports concerning others, if the real truth concerning themselves was known, condemnation would be sure to them. This kind of a fight is contemptible, and the man who thus fights is sure to reap what he sows. Saul, in his mad career, persecuted good, honest, upright men, even unto death. He by nature had the same spirit to kill as is found in our day in men who give no evidence of the grace, love and mercy of God in their lives.

Having now taken up the negative side of the fight, we shall take up the "good fight." This fight includes everything pertaining to godliness. Paul, the apostle, was a very different man than was Saul of Tarsus. As a subject of grace his life was circumspect, never taking advantage of his religion to defraud or defame any of his brethren. He was honest in heart, sincere of purpose and had a conscience void of offence before God. He made no demands upon his brethren for anything of a temporal nature. He was not a schemer, nor was he a politician, working to further his own ends, regardless of the peace and welfare of the churches. But his good fight was to spend and be spent for the people he loved, and called by him his joy and crown. He was steadfast in the doctrine of God, never turning to the right hand nor to the left to please kings, much less common citizens. He believed the whole counsel of God, and whether men would hear or forbear, declared it. In his last letter to Timothy he exhorted him to fight the good fight of faith, to flee youthful lusts, to avoid all things that would gender strife, to beware of those who opposed the truth and caused divisions among the brethren. Such was the course of Paul in all his ministry, and having proven it to be "a good fight" admonished Timothy to follow him, even as he followed Christ. To "endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ," means more than men or angels can imagine who have never been called upon to fight in such battle. Those called to the work of the ministry have the world, the flesh and the devil to contend with, including false brethren, of whom better things should be expected. Paul continued in the fight and at last received the crown. How good it must be when a minister comes to the end that he can say, before God and man, "I have fought a good fight." "I have kept the faith." I have continued in the doctrine and order of the house, and am now ready to be offered. Surely such a fight is a good one. On the other hand, how sad it is when at last one must say, I have caused more sorrow and dissension than good, and my ministry seems a failure. May the Lord save all of us from such an end, and give us to say with Paul, when the end comes, "I have fought a good fight." K.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

DURING the last twelve months we have received letters sent on by some of our Elders, and other brethren, written by some of our old writers. These letters are good in and of themselves, but owing to some features of disorder and confusion in different parts of the country, in which the senders are involved, we have been compelled to return them. We regret very much to be compelled to make this statement, but do it that the writers of said letters may understand that we have nothing against them nor their letters, and hope that they may feel free to write direct to the SIGNS whenever impressed to do so.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder H. C. Ker.)

To the churches composing the Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the New Vernon Church, Sullivan Co., N. Y., June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1922, greeting:

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—It is good to associate in the name of the Lord, and for the worship of God our Savior, and to mingle our voices in praise to Him who loved us and gave himself for us, and while thus assembled you will expect something in the way of a Circular Letter, which has long been a custom with the Old School Baptist denomination, to the end that our correspondents may know, not only of our welfare, but also as to how and where we stand on all essential points of doctrine. This Association has from its organization stood upon, preached and otherwise advocated the infinite, sovereign power of God over all worlds, powers and principalities. He who gave life gave nature also, hence all animate creatures move and live according to the nature given them, in order to the accomplishment of the purpose for which they are and were created, without the slightest mistake or disappointment on the part of God. This includes man, the chief creature of God, and, as man, will live and act according to the earthly nature; moreover, can never rise above earthy things while in nature's darkness. All within him, his entire being, is of the earth earthy. To be a new man, or a different man, another creation is necessary thereto. Inasmuch as the creature, formed of the dust of the ground, had no will or power in the matter, he is equally as helpless in the world, or spiritual creation. God is the only Creator. Therefore until the Lord by his regenerating, life-giving power operates upon the dead sinner he is without God and without hope in the world. But according to the purpose of God in election and adoption the earthy man is made spiritual, the dead sinner made alive unto God, and his salvation through Christ Jesus our Lord. This man translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son, becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus; old things are passed away and all things become new. Therefore he lives in newness of life unto God, both his natural and spiritual Creator. Where is the boasting of man? It is excluded; by the works of the law? Nay, but by the law of grace. This is the character that glories in the Lord, for the reason that Jesus has been made unto him wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

This Association has also been established all these years in the doctrine of predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass. If the Lord had not predestinated all things exactly as they are, and have been, in all probability man would have changed many things from their purpose, even the rising and going down of the sun to suit their own convenience and purposes. Some would change the seasons were it in their power, that those of the north might remain at home in the winter and that those of the south might remain at home in the summer. Some would want seed-time at one season and others would want harvest at a time convenient to them. More than this, some would save men from their sins and rob God of his glory, and make void his purpose in sending Jesus, his Son, into the world to redeem men unto God by his blood. This Association has from its beginning believed and advocated special atonement,

viz.: that the blood of Jesus was shed for the elect of God only, whether the number be many or few. He by the one offering perfected forever all them that are sanctified, or set apart. Also do we believe that the efficacy of the blood of Jesus is so wonderful that those cleansed by it are as clean as though sin had never entered the world, and never again can the saved be brought into condemnation, or separated from God. Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor things present, nor things to come can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. Never has this Association adopted any doings of man-made institutions, but on the contrary, has opposed such since their introduction prior to 1832, at which time the regular, or first Baptists, withdrew from those who insisted upon Fuller's doctrine, viz.: "free will of man and a general atonement for all who will accept salvation." Salvation is of the Lord, and beside him there is no Savior.

Time and space would not allow us to take up every principle of the doctrine of God our Savior, but upon each point we are agreed and earnestly contend for the same.

This Association is also rooted and grounded in the order of the house of God, accepted and indorsed by the denomination always. We want nothing better, nothing new, in the organization of churches; calling for and ordaining men to the work of the ministry; the reception and exclusion of members, and as to how we should behave ourselves in the house of God. As an Association we have enjoyed peace, union and the fellowship and confidence of all our correspondents. May God bless and prosper his Zion and keep us to the end. Amen.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

R. LESTER DODSON, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the New Vernon Church, at New Vernon, Sullivan Co., New York, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1922, to our sister associations with which we correspond, sendeth greetings and love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We are glad that by the love and mercy of our God, we have been permitted to again meet together in an association. Your messengers have come to us bearing testimony of the Lord Jesus. We were made glad by their coming, and trust they will visit us again next year, 1923, at the usual time, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June. The place of meeting will be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in due season.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

R. LESTER DODSON, Clerk.

MEMORIALS.

Whereas, it has proved the will of God, our heavenly Father, by death to remove from the field of labor in the sheepfold of the saints our dearly beloved br ther, **Elder John McConnell,** therefore be it

Resol d, that while we, the churches composing the Warwick Old School Baptist Association, mourn our loss in being no longer blessed with his services in the gospel ministry, we desire to record our gratitude to the God of all grace, the Father of mercies, for the bestowal upon our departed brother of so great and so useful a gift, and that we were favored to be both comforted and edified under his ministration of the things of the kingdom.

Resolved, that we do deeply sympathize with our kindred in Christ composing the Ebenezer Church, of New York City, in the loss of their dearly loved and devoted pastor, praying that the Lord will bestow upon them his especial care.

Resolved, that these Resolutions form part of and be published with the Minutes of this session of the Association, and in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

R. LESTER DODSON, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, at his home, Salisbury, Md., Oscar Henry Majors, of Mardela Springs, Md., and Margaret May Hetrick, of Sunbury, Pa.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at the home of the bride's parents, in Dunwich Township, June 21st, 1922, William A. McCallum and Mary Campbell, both of Dunwich, Ontario.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

William Harrison Linn was born Sept. 5th, 1844, died June 24th, 1922, aged 77 years, 9 months and 19 days. He was a member of the Old School Baptist Church for about thirty years, and always filled his seat when possible. He left his work on Saturday for his church meetings, until about two years before his death, when he was not able to attend, and he told me that he thought of the meetings among the churches in our association on their meeting days. He always visited the sick in his days of health and was highly respected by all who knew him. He leaves an aged widow, nine living children, and many friends to mourn their loss, but we mourn not for him as those who have no hope. His wife's maiden name was Mary Holbert, and to their union were born eleven children: John K., of Hammond, W. Va., Wesley, Nancy Nixon and Jennie Philips, all of Hammond, W. Va., Norah Findley, of Harding, W. Va., Artenses, of Montrose, W. Va., Sanford, of near Kingmont, Lewella, of Bunners Ridge, and Martha Fasel, of Grassy Run, W. Va. Gipson and Cynthia died some years before. Our departed brother was convicted of sin and sought relief, and also for a home in the church, and at last was made willing to trust in God's rich mercy, and hoped that God had for Christ Jesus' sake pardoned his sins. He then was made willing to cast in his lot with the Primitive, or Old School Baptist Church, after seeking for a home, and could not find it among the so-called churches, and there he lived and died. In April the writer was at his home and spent the day with him, and it was pleasant to hear him tell of his experience and of his hope, and how he wanted to be buried, and how he wanted the service conducted. While, as I said, it was a pleasant day spent, yet it left sadness to think we must soon give him up, but his words of comfort were cheering to me. He did not want what is called a funeral discourse, but the plain gospel, old hymns, and prayer. He knew that God would do right, and his hope was in him, and oh how strong did that hope come to me while he was talking to me. Our brother seemed to be so humble that he did not care what people thought of him, but his mind seemed to be carried away, and he was willing to leave all with God in whom he trusted. I did not see him for nearly two months, and when I went to see him he seemed to be too weak to talk, but told me he had prayed to the Lord that he might pass away without great suffering. He said he had been granted that request. When the end came I was away from home, at one of our visitation meetings. The thought came to me that our dear brother did not want what is called a funeral sermon, but always believed in gospel preaching, so this Scripture came to me: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." The congregation was very large, and I tried to show the meaning of my text, and did not preach our brother, but tried to preach Christ, and him the only way of life and salvation, and that there was salvation in no other.

Our dear brother was laid to rest in the home graveyard to await the resurrection of the just. I would say to those who are left, Weep not for your dear companion and father, but weep for yourselves. He has gone from the evil to come, and we are left here in this barren land, where we must be kept and fed by the sustaining grace of God.

JAMES W. LINN.

P. M. Henderson, son of J. T. and Mahala Henderson, was born November 2nd, 1856, in Canton, Texas, and died June 22nd, 1922. He was married to Susan Noton, September 27th, 1875, and to this union were born eleven children, one dying in infancy. All were present when the end came, except two. Those who survive are his companion, Mrs. Parlee Marton, of Georgetown, Texas, Mrs. Mary McLemore, Canton, Texas, Mrs. James Caster, Caddo Mills, Texas, Clarence, Comanche, Texas, Richard, Waco, Texas, Claud, Texarkana, Texas, Mrs. F. Williamson, Canton, Texas, Albert, Ennis, Texas, and Erby, Canton, Texas. All are grown and married, except Erby, and all honored men and women and hold honorable positions. He lived all his life in the county in which he was born, and commanded the respect of all who knew him. He was a peace lover, and did all he could to keep peace in his community. He loved to do right because it was right to do so. He obtained a hope in Jesus in 1910, and united with the Mission Baptists, where he remained about two years. He became dissatisfied with their doctrine and practice, therefore severed himself from them, and was a stanch believer in the sovereignty of God, salvation by grace as taught by the Primitive Baptists. He and wife were regular attendants when circumstances would permit, though they never united with the church, and the Old School Baptists were always welcome in his home. Just before the end he called his children to his bed, bade them all good-bye, just as calmly as if he were going on a journey, and then began begging Jesus to come and get him, exclaiming that he was not afraid to die. He passed

away in the full triumph of a living faith, so, dear bereaved ones, ye sorrow, but not as those who have no hope. The remains were laid to rest in Cools Springs cemetery, amidst a large concourse of relatives and friends, to await the resurrection morn. The writer tried to speak words of comfort from 1 Thess. iv. 16.

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

Susan Webb, colored, our sister in Christ, widely known through this county as "Aunt Susan," died at her home at Silcott Springs, Va., July 13th, 1922, in the eighty-first year of her age. She and her husband, "Uncle John" Webb, who died two years ago, were both members of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun Co., Va. They were baptized by the late Elder J. N. Badger, on the second Sunday in December, 1877. "Aunt Susan" was beloved by all the white folks, as well as those of her own race. The community in which she lived bears testimony of her long years of helpfulness and service on every hand. Her funeral was unique, there being present almost as many white as colored people, the last tribute of her neighbors and friends, who held her in high regard. Her life of humility, gentleness and faithful charity to all who needed her services was all owing to the workmanship of God, and not her own work. It seemed fitting therefore to her pastor, the writer of this notice, to use these words as a text at the last services: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus," &c. Elder A. Robinson, a colored Primitive Baptist preacher, of Harrisburg, Pa., also made a few remarks, as did Miss Mary E. Hughes, a neighbor, who had known "Aunt Susan" for forty years, and who wished to witness to her helpful deeds and faithful service.

L.

Sister **Leah Ringo Ford** was born September 23rd, 1832, and died December 16th, 1921. She was married January 11th, 1853. She united with the Predestinarian Baptist Church, near Stahl, Adair County, Missouri, October 10th, 1886, and remained a dearly loved, true and faithful member until the good Lord saw fit to call her away. She trusted only in God, and had no confidence in the flesh. It was hard to give her up, but the good Lord knows best. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord. We feel that while it is our loss, it is her eternal gain, for she is in the hand of that One who makes no mistakes; that one who is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind.

The funeral was conducted by the writer, at her home in Castle, who used as a text 1 Corinthians xv. 51.

This is written by request of her daughter, Miss Eunice Ford.

W. T. WALTERS.

MEETINGS.

THE New Hope Association of Primitive Baptists (if the Lord wills) will hold her forty-first annual session with the Mount Zion Church, nine miles south of Greenville, Texas, and one mile north of Cash, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1922. All trains will be met on Thursday. All lovers of the truth are invited, especially the ministers of our faith and order.

S. M. DICKENS.

THE Second Roxbury Church, of the Roxbury Association, will (God willing) hold their two days meeting on Wednesday and Thursday, August 23rd and 24th. Trains will be met on Tuesday afternoon at Halcottville, N. Y., and Wednesday morning at Roxbury, N. Y. We shall be pleased to see and entertain all friends and brethren of our faith and order.

GEORGE RUSTON, Pastor.

THE First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held with Good Hope Church, in Coffey County, Kansas, beginning on Friday before the second Saturday in September, being the 8th, 9th and 10th of the month. We cordially invite all lovers of the truth to visit us. The nearest railroad stations are Burlington, Lebo and Halls Summit. For further information write to brother J. L. Cannady, Burlington, Kansas, R. F. D., or address me at 1243 Polk St., Topeka, Kansas.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

THE Maine Association of Old School Baptists, the Lord willing, will meet with Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday before the second Monday in September (8th, 9th and 10th), 1922. We expect brother Lefferts to be with us. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

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"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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POETRY.

A DAILY RATE FOR EVERY DAY.

"AND his allowance was a continual allowance given him of the king, a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life."—2 Kings xxv. 30.

"A daily rate for every day!" 'Twas promised one of old,
When all the world had turned to gray, and vanished friends and gold;
Though exile in a foreign land, God still his need supplied,
And fed him with a royal hand until the day he died.

"A daily rate for every day!" How sweet the promise still
To those who trust him o'er life's way, God doth his word fulfill;
No need of fret or anxious care, his people still are led
To tables he doth prepare, and by his hand are fed.

"A daily rate!" When trials sore beset on every hand,
When grief and pain seem almost more than our weak flesh can stand,
Like beacon light, his promise shines across life's turbid sea,
As is thy day, O, child of mine, thy strength shall ever be,

"A daily rate!" 'Tis his own way our hungry souls to feed,
The grace he gave us yesterday will not fill this day's need;
His tender, holy Spirit calls to daily praise and prayer,
And daily still his manna falls for those who seek their share.

"A daily rate!" O, brethren dear, in this sweet promise rest,
Why should we murmur or repine? He'll give us all that's best.
Why should we ever anxious be, or future ills deplore,
Since in his hand he holds the key to his unbounded store?

"A daily rate!" Thus let us live, and just from day to day
Take trustfully what he doth give, and let him choose our way.
Then pain or pleasure, grief or joy, alike shall blessings prove,
And ours be peace without alloy, close sheltered in his love.

Selected and altered by
MARY ELLISON.

HE KNOWS.

I wonder sometimes in a lonely hour, when others around are gay,
When nothing mars their dream of youth, when joy is a cloudless day—
I wonder why, in the midst of life, the thread of life must break,
I wonder why God, in His infinite love, should allow some hearts to ache.

I wonder why others are merry and bright and I should be left to moan.
I wonder why I, of all the throng, in sadness must weep alone,
Why the hopes of earth should end in blight; why the stricken tear-drop flows.
I wonder why, but I cannot tell. But of this I am sure, God knows.

God knows why this heavy heart should grieve, why love lies buried deep
In the hallowed ground where His angels guard the dear ones in their sleep.
God knows, and when this journey is run, in His own good time and way
His tender mercy He'll make clear, and I, too, shall know—some day.

Some day—yes, some day when all is plain—the "need be" from above,
I'll marvel why it was I e'er could doubt His boundless love.
When I shall greet those loved ones in the mansions of their God
I'll wonder why I did not meekly bow beneath the rod.

And so when my soul is heavy with grief, while others are bright and gay,
And my thoughts go out to the mounds of earth where the loved ones are laid away,
And I wonder why I am left alone and the stricken tear-drop flows,
I'll look above to the heaven of love and remember that God knows. —Selected.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HEBREWS II. 9.

"BUT we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor: that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

Christ said, Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad. He believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. God promised Abraham a son, but his wife was barren, like all the children of God, and without the gift of God they can do nothing. Through faith Sarah, Abraham's wife, "received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." God gave them faith to see Jesus, the Redeemer and Savior of the people, whom he loved as his Father loved him. Christ said, Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me, for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. Behold, I shew you mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. And the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. David said, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." John said to the beloved, It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. God had before the beginning a chosen people that should testify to and of the coming of Christ. He gave them spiritual life to feel, see and hear. He gave them faith, knowledge and understanding, and they testified to the things which they felt, heard and saw. "For the law of Christ constraineth us." Who are "us"? All who have been quickened by the Spirit, born of God. "Because we thus judge, that if one died for all then were all dead." Compared to a valley of dry bones, they that are dead cannot be constrained, they must first be quickened, made alive, before they can feel, hear and see. What is said by the prophets and apostles is true. We know by our own experience when we read or hear any tell an experience of grace, the dealing of the Lord with them. We are touched in our feelings, for such has been the case with us. Christ knew some one had touched him, because virtue had gone out of him. He can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. And he that loveth is of God. He that believeth, is born of God. We love Christ because he first loved us. We were made accepted in him, being predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace wherein he (God) hath made us accepted in the beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the for-

giveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. Crying and begging for the mercy and love of God is an evidence of being born of God. We have the gift and calling of God before we feel the need of grace, mercy and truth. Christ was given to all that were ordained to eternal life. He was made unto them redemption and righteousness, and when he is revealed in them and they see the glory of God in his face then they believe, being born again. They have the witness in themselves, and they testify of Christ, the only name given by which we must be saved. He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. He makes them free from the law of sin and death. The law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, which hope is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and entereth into that within the veil. We have the testimony of those gone before us, and we should testify of the things we have seen, felt and heard. What do we know of the Lord save that which has been revealed to us by his Spirit? In my youth, when but ten years old, the Lord of glory, the God of heaven and earth, by whom all things were created and made, was revealed to me, which gave me the knowledge of sin and death, seeing myself under the law of sin, without hope and without God in the world, for he disappeared, and I knew not where he was. I was left in this earthy house, a body of death. I went down in the mighty deep, I saw the marks of the Lord, the stormy winds which lifteth up the waves thereof, my soul melted because of trouble and I was at my wit's end, then I felt to be a fool. Because of my transgression and because of my iniquities I was afflicted. My soul abhorred all manner of meat, and I drew near unto the gate of death; death confronted me, the sorrows of hell compassed me, and in my trouble I cried unto the Lord, Save, I perish, and he brought me up out of my distresses. "He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto the desired haven." The disciples came to him, saying, Lord, save us, we perish. He said unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? He rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. They marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him? In these latter days I hear the "reverend D. D.'s" saying God's power is limited, that he cannot save people unless they will let him. Paul said they would come in the latter days: "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." "In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves," "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away, for such have not the faith of God. For all men hath not faith, and without faith it is impossible to please God. He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Christ said to one manner of men, or people, Ye will seek me, but shall not find me. Job, a man of faith, a servant of God, was made an example to the household of faith. He said, "I am full of matter; the spirit within me constraineth me." Paul said to the men of faith, The love of Christ constraineth us. Every man for whom Christ by the grace of God tasted death is saved with an everlasting salvation, regenerated, born again, constrained, inclined, drawn to

Christ. He says to such, Seek and ye shall find. At the appointed time of the Father faith is revealed, and they see Jesus their Redeemer, a complete Savior, the chiefest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely, crowned with glory and honor, who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his purpose and grace given us in Christ before the foundation of the world. They shall all be taught of the Lord, from the least to the greatest. They have teaching the world knows nothing of; God puts his law in their minds and writes it in their hearts. He puts his fear in them, and makes them willing in the day of his power. They shall be unto me a people, and I will be to them a God. They shall all know me, and great shall be their peace. Not in the world, but in Christ the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. We must be born of the Spirit before we can walk after the Spirit. These are the "all men," or "every man," that Christ tasted death for; they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before God in love. Christ was made unto us righteousness, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us. If that means every one it would be universalism; it only means all chosen in Christ, predestinated, ordained unto eternal life. They are a chosen generation, a peculiar people. My own experience taught me that I never could be justified by the law before God; nothing but mercy and free grace of God could save a poor sinner like me, and make me holy and without blame before God in love. I searched the Scriptures and found no eternal life in them, they testified of Christ; in him is all a poor sinner needs. I was at my wit's end, for without him I could do nothing. All my desire was that I might find him, but my hope was deferred for fifteen years in sorrow and tribulation. I was afflicted and my whole heart was sick; I felt, Surely I have committed the unpardonable sin. My desire appeared five times in my sleep, and I would awake feeling satisfied for a short time, then something seemed to say to me, That was the shadow of the substance. I felt to have a great burden upon me pressing me down, I was hungry and thirsty, and felt so poor and weak that I thought I could not live, still I continued begging for mercy. As David said, "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." When my desire came it was a tree of life, then I could see Jesus crowned with glory and honor. I cried unto the Lord in my troubles, and he lifted me up out of my distresses. Then I felt to thank and praise God for his unspeakable Gift, which made me free from the law of sin and death. Then we see Jesus as Job saw him in his day, for he said, I know that my Redeemer liveth. "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. * * * Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." All men by nature are dead and need to be quickened by Christ, born again.

In hope of eternal life,

I. H. HARRIS.

OXFORD, N. C.

CAIRO, Texas, Sept. 15, 1881.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—I feel an impression, from some cause unknown to me, to write a few lines for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, although I sensibly feel my weakness, and I fear to undertake to write anything for that, to me, highly prized paper. My mind of late has been exercised on the doctrine of God's predestination of all things. That he has created all things, is proved by Colossians i. 16, 17: "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in the earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."—Rev. iv. 11. In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established. According to what is thus written, God is the only independent being, and all things else are dependent upon him for their existence and movements. Jesus said to Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above."—John xix. 11. In proof of the sovereign sway of God over all things, see Daniel iv. 35: "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely, as I have thought, so it shall come to pass; and as I have purposed, so it shall stand." "For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?"—Isaiah xiv. 24, 27. "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth."—Job xxiii. 13. "There are devices in a man's heart; nevertheless, the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand."—Prov. xix. 21. "There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord."—Prov. xxi. 30. "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."—Eph. i. 11. "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me." "Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."—Isaiah xlvi. 9, 11. If God had a purpose in bidding a certain Benjaminite curse David, who dare say that he had not the right? Because he hardened Pharaoh's heart, to accomplish his purpose, is he unjust? Is he unjust because he chose Jacob and rejected Esau? No, nor is he unjust in anything; for he is God, and cannot do wrong.

I believe that Pharaoh, king of Egypt, was a figure of Satan, who is the king of Egypt, which is darkness. We read, Ezekiel xxix. 3, "Behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said, My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself." This is in perfect harmony with what is said of leviathan, in the forty-first chapter of Job, and also of behemoth, in the fortieth chapter. He is said to be very great, and none can approach him. "He is the chief of the ways of God. He beholdeth all high things: he is a king over all the children of pride." Mark, is not

said to be king of the fishes of the sea, but "king over all the children of pride." Surely this must be Satan himself. And we read in Psalms civ. 24–26, that God made him. "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches. So is the great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. There go the ships; there leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein." He is but filling the place that God designed, and can only do according to his will, for God never has nor ever will be thwarted in a single design or purpose. To deny this is to deny the sovereignty of God. With God there is nothing new or old. But we, poor, short-sighted creatures, cannot tell what one moment in the future will develop. Not so with God. The wheels of time move on, and all things come to pass just as the Lord has determined them. They are new to us, but not so with God. But, says one, Those little things which occur daily are not embraced in the "all things" which God has before determined. Well, if so, where is the line between the large things and the little things? If little things happen by chance, and are not embraced in the purpose of God, why not large things also? The words of the poet are in my mind, and express my firm belief:

"Keep silence, all created things,
And wait your Maker's nod;
My soul stands trembling while she sings
The honors of her God.

Life, death, and hell, and worlds unknown,
Hang on his firm decree;
He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be.

His providence unfolds the book,
And makes his counsel shine;
Each opening leaf, and every stroke,
Fulfills some deep design."

As brother Smoot has said, one thing is so interwoven with another that they are all working together for our good. When Herod saw that he was mocked by the wise men, he made a decree that all the male children, from two years and under that were in Bethlehem, should be put to death. But the angel of the Lord told Joseph to flee into Egypt with the young child Jesus. This was all according to the purpose of God, and Herod, like Pharaoh, was filling his own place, as God had before ordained. It was not by mere chance that Herod did these things, for they were the fulfillment of the prophecy of Jeremiah. "Thus saith the Lord, A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not."—Jer. xxxi. 15. The flight of Joseph into Egypt with the child Jesus was the fulfillment of the prophecy of Hosea: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt."—Hosea xi. 1; Matt. ii. 15. God had a purpose in taking these children out of the world, and surely the way in which they were taken was ordained by him, or he would not have moved his prophet to thus prophesy.

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will."

By the mouth of the prophet Isaiah God has said, As the heavens are high above the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. And, "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that

fashioned it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?"—Isaiah xlv. 9. Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees, "Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers! how can ye escape the damnation of hell? Wherefore, behold I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar." And they killed Stephen and others, and scourged them, not by accident, but in fulfillment of the declaration of Jesus. But did they do it against their will? Certainly not. They had the will to do their murderous work, and acted under the influence of the same spirit which controlled Judas when he betrayed Jesus.

Brethren Beebe, I will draw my letter to a close.

Your brother in hope of immortality beyond the grave,

DURHAM RICHARDSON.

TOPEKA, Kansas, June 11, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—I hope it is not a fleshly spirit that prompts me with a desire to again communicate with the people of God, to that people "scattered and peeled" which shall be brought as a present to the Lord of hosts "in that time." My mind, of late, has been much drawn to the poor hungry ones who write that they have no other preaching except that which comes to them through the columns of the SIGNS, and also to the dear "old soldiers of the cross, who have struggled long and hard for heaven, have counted all things here but dross, and now the crown will soon be given." Who are now too feeble to meet with the saints, and long for a letter, some token of love, encouragement and consolation from those of like precious faith. Perhaps with many, as with myself, the tender feeling of sympathy abounds, but we fail to give it expression to the ones who would be most cheered to hear it. How soul-cheering it is to receive such a token, none but those who have traveled the same thorny road can tell. Those who have endured the same hunger, the same besetments, the loneliness and isolation, know the real meaning of fellowship for all of the lonely travelers. But "the daily portion" given by the King to each one, not one is forgotten, is grace sufficient for each day's need. In our hungry longing no doubt each one often feels glad indeed that the dear Savior indited for us, when he said, "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven * * * give us this day our daily bread." A prayer that is indited by Him will be answered, for he said, Father, I know that thou hearest me alway, and he will give a continual allowance, a daily rate for every day, all the days of our life. Hungry and distressed, often feeling that we are indeed in a famishing condition, beset with the burdensome cares of life, with foes without and worse ones within, how we long to meet with those of like precious faith, and hear them tell of their conflicts and deliverances, to hear them speak the things that become sound doctrine. Though now situated so that I can meet now and then with a scattered few of the Lord's chosen, I know whereof I speak as I attempt to address those who are not so blessed, for I, myself, have been for years where I did not even have the SIGNS,

only an occasional number, and it was only when enabled and led to venture through the storm of heavy persecution that I ever got to go among the people of God. But, dear lonely pilgrims, the same One who now metes out to you a continual allowance, a daily portion, however small you may feel it to be, it is sufficient for this day's need, I trust was not unmindful of me, and sweet were his words, Fear not, I will help thee,

"If I walk on the mount of gladness, I have walked through the vale of tears,
My feet have stumbled often as I trod the lonely years,
Yet my heart is sometimes lifted in a song of thankful praise
To the God who walks beside me, and will keep me in his ways.

Though alone I trod the winepress of that dark Gethsemane,
Yet I never was forsaken, still, I hope, he leadeth me;
Even to the gloomy portals, he will keep me undismayed,
For he'll e'er be with me, saying, It is I, be not afraid."

The case of Mephibosheth is certainly a comfort to the lonely, crying ones, for he did eat continually at the king's table, and was lame on both his feet. Dear little flock whom Jesus feeds, I feel that I am in close fellowship with every one who is thus lame on both feet. When I would do good, evil is present with me. I long to be found trying to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith I hope I am called, but find my spiritual feet so lame I can only go crippling and stumbling along, for I do have to walk much in the dark. It is a narrow path, and I am fearing always that I shall fall out by the way, and in my walk naturally, it is a rough and thorny way, with temptations on every hand, and though I strive to maintain honesty and uprightness, yet I often find myself out of the way, and doing things I hate. Lame, lame on both my feet, both my natural and spiritual walk so defective, I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing. I know that unless the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain. My trust is only in him, and not in my own lame, stumbling feet. But as our fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, as long as they journeyed there, a daily portion, sufficient to their need was meted out to them every day; so must we, as long as we must travel this wilderness world, isolated from all of like precious faith, yet we can trust him who bids us ask him to give us each day our daily bread, to give us our daily portion and let us eat bread continually at his table, for he does often spread a table for us and gives us a rich feast even in the presence of our enemies. Surely goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our lives, and how we long to meet with our friends and tell them, and also hear them tell of their joys and sorrows, of their songs in the night. For to the loneliest traveler is given a song in the night, a sweet portion, and though there is none to hear, perhaps not a sound is uttered, yet there is a singing and making melody in the heart to the Lord. Dear, lonely fellow-travelers, have you not found it so? For it was the king's commandment concerning them that a certain portion should be for the singers, due every day. Oh, precious thought, It is due every day, and he will not suffer his faithfulness to fail. There is a fashionable church edifice just across the street from my house, and I can hear their grand organ and cultured singing, but it is not true melody to me. I would rather drag my old frame many a weary mile to hear the quavering voice of an aged soldier of the cross sing, "Amazing grace (how sweet the sound) that saved a wretch like me," than to go across the

street, which I have never felt any desire to do, to hear their learned and correct music which is so delectable to the natural ear. Though it may be exhilarating to the natural senses, it is only dross to one who has heard, as it were, a new song, even praise to our God, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. He is our song in the night, and his ways are righteous, just and good, though we are often tempted to question, why. Why am I away off by myself, one asks, and not another one who believes as I do anywhere in reach? Dear ones, ye are the salt of the earth, to preserve it until the day of his coming. He is working out his own good and wise purpose in and with you. You do not know what you are to those around you. Your example of honesty and integrity, of patience and humbleness, your faith and trust, may be remembered and spoken of as a memorial to you long after your body crumbles back to dust. So, dear kindred in Christ, as much as in you is, live peaceably with all, do good to all, especially they of the household of faith. To do good and to communicate forget not. Let us put our one little talent to good use. The talents were given out to the servants according to their several ability. If we had received the ten we might not have had the ability to use them. So the one who received the one talent must have had the ability to use it, and he was severely reprimanded for having buried it in earth instead of giving it to the exchanges, so that his lord when he came could have received his own with usury. So let us give our one little talent to the exchanges, sharing our joys and sorrows with each other, for we all travel the same road. The more we share and exchange our good things the greater the joy (usury) we receive and give to others.

I must stop, though this is far from much I thought to write. I am vain enough to imagine that if the Lord would give me to write the things that come in my mind as I am busy about my work, it would be a comfort both to write and to read, but I let it be smothered by earthly cares, buried in earth, and when I do try to write am sometimes made to feel that he has taken from me even that which I had. May our Father in heaven manifest his presence, a daily portion to every one, as due, is my prayer.

Humbly submitted by a wayworn traveler,

MARY ELLISON.

ISAIAH XVIII. 5.

"For afore the harvest, when the bud is perfect, and the sour grape is ripening in the flower, he shall both cut off the sprigs with pruning-hooks, and take away and cut down the branches."

"I am the vine, ye are the branches," and now the sour grape is ripening in the flower. The flower is the showy part of the branches, and these sprigs and extra branches begin to spring up and flourish among the branches of the vine, but after they have served his purpose "he shall both cut off the sprigs with pruning-hooks, and take away and cut down the branches." All new inventions (branches) that some try to get into the church are soon thrown back whence they came. What becomes of them? "They shall be left together unto the fowls of the mountains [high fliers], and to the beasts of the earth [powers]: and the fowls shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them." Yea, in summer they hold their great revivals, &c., compassing land and sea making all the proselytes they can. No doubt they think they are doing great works, and

are satisfied with the food they gather for themselves. Having no appetite for the true fruit, they heap up the prunings that are cast away by the true church and cry, Behold how we are increased with goods.

"In that time shall the present be brought unto the Lord of hosts of a people scattered and peeled, and of a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled, to the place of the name of the Lord of hosts, the mount Zion."—Verse 7. "A people scattered and peeled." Scattered all over the face of the earth, as salt is spread all over fresh meat to save it. "Ye are the salt of the earth." It would not be best for all the salt to be piled in one place. I have often wondered why there are so few Old Baptists in this part of the State, while in other sections there are so many, and can have associations, &c., while we only have preaching once in a while. But sometimes I hope better times are in store for us. This people is to be not only scattered, but peeled, stripped of the filthy rags of self-righteousness, and everything that pertains to worldly religion. "A nation meted out and trodden under foot." Meted out, measured and numbered by their Lord and Savior, but also set apart by and from the world as a heathen nation and even dangerous. They start in on our children at an early age to get them to go to Sunday-school and all such. "Whose land the rivers have spoiled." In the next chapter the prophet tells of the destruction that shall come upon Egypt: "And the waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up. And they shall turn the river far away, the brooks of defence [defence to the Egyptians] shall be emptied and dried up: the reeds and flags shall wither."—Isaiah xix. 5, 6. Reading further we find that everything that is sown by the brooks, that flourishes by the brooks, shall wither and be no more. These seem to be a special kind of brooks, and they flow out of Egyptian darkness and spoil (or try to spoil) the land wherein these precious grapes are growing; but thanks to His holy name, they cannot prevail forever. "For so the Lord said unto me, I will take my rest, and I will consider in my dwellingplace like a clear heat upon herbs, and like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest."—Isaiah xviii. 4. How the clear heat upon herbs makes them grow and come forth! How sweet to the soul is the cloud of dew in the heat of harvest.

Brethren editors, I submit this to your better judgment with much fear and trembling. I do not expect to say anything new to any one, but if some poor pilgrim finds fellowship for my thoughts, which I hope were given to me, I shall be satisfied.

In much weakness,

L. CULPEPPER.

STOCKDALE, Texas, June 12, 1921.

ENSLEY, Ala., June 18, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed check for four dollars and twenty-five cents, for the SIGNS for 1921 and 1922. I am very sorry I did not send it when it was due, but hope you will pardon me, and I assure you I appreciated your kindness in not stopping it, for it is all the preaching I have had the last year or two. I have been from home a great deal of the time with my dear brother, D. W. Morris, who passed away the 25th of November, and I am left alone with one sister and my two children. Oh how lonely we are, and such a lonely home

without him. He never united with the church, but was strong in the Primitive Baptist faith; always read his Bible and I never heard him say or do anything I thought was wrong. He was the pride of the home, and loved by all who knew him, and made friends wherever he went. I stayed with him in Baltimore at Johns Hopkins Hospital from March 1st to May 1st, 1921, and while there I had the pleasure of hearing brother Rowe preach. My brother and I enjoyed being with him very much. I am almost broken down in health, as I stayed right with my brother until the end came. I sometimes wonder why such a noble character and one needed so badly in the home had to be taken away, but God, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, knows what is best. The longer I live the less I see to live for, but may we be reconciled to his holy will, and patiently await our appointed time to leave this world of sin and sorrow. He was about fifty-eight years of age, and professed faith in Christ when a mere boy, and in his dying moments he asked God's blessing upon us, to care for and protect us, then passed away. May the God of all grace guide and direct us in the way that we should go, and may the Lord bless you, brethren, in your good work.

Your unworthy sister,

IDA POWERS.

YORK, Nebr., May 5, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please find inclosed two dollars to pay for, or to take the place of, some one who has not been able to pay for the precious SIGNS. I am sorry you had to make an appeal to the subscribers in arrears, but hope it may bear good fruit and cause many to pay up and take better interest. Yes, the SIGNS is a clean, good paper, never troubling us with trouble of churches or members, for it is of no comfort to read those troubles in our good family paper. The reading of the SIGNS is always a comfort to me, and that is as it ought to be. "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people." I have no fault to find with it these many years I have taken it (ever since 1892), except a little over one year, and it has been a great comfort to me, and is what we should expect and desire, comforting and strengthening to be able to go on our journey bearing the many trials that fall to our lot. I feel acquainted with its many writers, and often have longed to write and tell each one how I enjoyed their views of spiritual things. I often say, Well, I will write them a card and let them know I enjoyed their communication, but fail to do it. I am filled with praise to the Giver of good gifts to our able ministers, like Elders Chick, Lefferts, and so many more I cannot name them all, for their ability to write such wonderful instructions for our sake. May the Lord continue with them to write more and more and build up Zion.

We are in peace here at York, and have meeting every fourth Sunday in each month. Elder W. S. Craig is our pastor this year. He lives in Kearney, Neb. Our dear pastor, Elder C. M. Cooper, who has preached faithfully for many years, is unable to do so any longer, as his health is poor, and he has not been able to be out to meeting many times in the past year.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) A. B. HANSAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1922.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE THIRD EPISTLE OF JOHN.

THIS letter of John is brief, but compact; not many words, but full of wisdom and of very practical value for the church to-day. The first eight verses of the letter are taken up, first, with the personal greeting of John to Gaius, to whom the letter was sent; second, with instructions regarding ministering brethren, that they were to be received by the church and to be brought forward on their journeys by the church. The last six verses of the letter are taken up, first, condemning the course of one Diotrephes; second, commending the faithfulness of Demetrius; lastly, concluding the epistle with greetings of peace and love to the friends of truth, expressing the desire that John might shortly see them and speak with them face to face. The custom of sending letters from church to church is an ancient one, and not at all a modern idea. The New Testament abounds with instances of brethren writing letters to churches, and of churches writing to churches. These letters were almost invariably not intrusted to disinterested carriers, but were sent by messengers from church to church, the names of the messengers being embodied in the letter. Witness the conclusion of Peter's first epistle, which carries a salutation from the church at Babylon to the "strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia." Witness also the ending of the letter to the Hebrews, which embodies a greeting from all the brethren in Italy. The beginning of the letter to the Galatians expressly says it is not only from Paul, but from all the brethren who were with Paul, which might well mean the whole Corinthian church, since Paul wrote it while at Corinth. We would not be violating the truth to say that the epistle to the church at Galatia was really a church letter. Though written by Paul, it was from the brethren at Corinth, and had their sanction. At one time certain men from Judea came down to the Antioch church teaching the Gentile believers that they must be circumcised. Paul and Barnabas had quite a contention with these men about this matter, and it resulted in the Antioch church sending Paul and Barnabas, and some others at the expense of the church, up to Jerusalem to consult the apostles and brethren there about it. Arriving at the Jerusalem church, the apostles and elders received the messengers from Antioch, and resolved themselves into a council to discuss this matter. The result of the conference was that the Jerusalem church wrote a letter to the church at Antioch repudiating circumcision for the Gentiles, and sent the letter by bearers: Judas, surnamed Barnabas, and Silas to accompany Paul and Barnabas on the return journey. The details of this matter can be found in Acts, fifteenth chapter. We simply sketch this here to show that conferences to discuss church matters are no new thing, and that there is nothing modern in the custom of sending letters from church to church by stipulated messengers. Old School Baptists believe this and practice it. In a multitude of counsellors there is safety, and while each

local church is independent from every other local church, and while each church is sovereign in its own affairs, it is equally true that each church is dependent upon her sister churches, and needs the co-operation and support of sister churches. As no man can live to himself, or die to himself, much more no one church can live in isolation from all its sister churches. It needs, and must have, the love and fellowship of the others, and needs often the counsel and instruction of sister churches. Just as apostolic churches kept in touch with one another through letters and messengers and interchange of ministers, so do Old School Baptists to-day through their associations and corresponding meetings do the same thing, and for the same end. It is sidestepping the truth to say that associations have no scriptural basis.

This third letter of John was written by him to Gaius, a member of the church, instead of to the church. John intended the letter, however, for the church. He had previously written a letter to the church, but Diotrephes would not allow it to be received (verse 9), therefore, John now wrote to Gaius, hoping thereby to reach the church, having heard that Gaius was faithful and was walking in the truth. Diotrephes loved the preeminence, wanted to be somebody and to be considered so. Human nature is full of that sort of thing, and needs great grace to keep it down. It was not kept down in the case of Diotrephes, and so troubled the church, and interfered with letters and visits coming to the church from the apostles, and those whom the church held in esteem for the truth's sake. Thus, early in the apostolic church do we see carnal customs and practices creeping in. Diotrephes was a forerunner of all those men and organizations which Protestants have devised to take authority from the church as a whole, and to embody it in one man, or in a set of men. Old School Baptists have never had any use for such, and long ago declared against legislative church councils, synods, ruling elders, and so on. The supreme authority for the administration of the church affairs is vested by the Holy Ghost in the church itself, not in a section of it, nor in one person. The church is the judge of its own gifts, and is the judge in disputes between individual members; it judges as to how, when and where its meetings shall be held and conducted, and how and in what order its business shall be transacted. Diotrephes, however, wanted to have the place of authority himself, and would not receive the apostles himself, nor would he allow the brethren to receive them, even were they willing to do so; forbidding whom he would and whatever he would, even going so far as claiming for himself the power to cast members out of the church. He must have carried matters with a high hand, but his condemnation was sure. John wrote that when he should himself come to that church in person he would not forget that man and what he did. John was no coward, and we are sure that upon his personal arrival Diotrephes met his match and the church found their champion, one ready and willing to stand in the breach and declare for order and decency in the house of God. Contrasted with this domineering Diotrephes is the man Demetrius whom John commends; a man who sought not to have the preeminence in the church, a man held in esteem by all men, and even of the truth itself. The most that can be said of any man in the church is that the truth commends him. This was so of Demetrius, and even the apostles bore record to it, and the church knew perfectly well that their record was true. What a blessing for any of us to have the good report of all men, of the truth and of the brethren.

In all the above there is a lesson we need very much to take to heart and prayerfully and carefully consider. Are we seeking to have the preeminence over the church of God, or are we seeking to know what is the mind of the Spirit as revealed in and through his church and to walk in the counsel of that perfect mind? Are we esteeming our judgment better than the judgment of our brethren? Are we willing to be God's "anything," as a brother once put it, or do we want to be "somebody," and to be considered so? Have we the Spirit of him who made himself of no reputation, or have we the spirit of the flesh, which loves to dominate and lead? These are keen questions and will cause us to examine ourselves well and perhaps with shame. If with shame, let us not persist in forcing ourselves to the front against the judgment of the church, but let us desire that humble mind of Christ which esteems the brethren better than one's own self. Remember, he that abases himself shall be exalted, but he that exalts himself shall be abased. How much better it is, at Christ's appearing, to be exalted from abasement than to have to be brought down from the lofty pinnacle of pride and ambition. John wrote of Diotrephes that he prated against the apostles with malicious words, and Solomon says that a prating fool shall fall. Lord, save us, therefore, from that prating foolishness which denies apostolic authority and does not respect the judgment of the church. The individual exists for the church, and not the church for the individual. The surest christian happiness is to be realized insomuch as we have grace given to us to live for the church and not for self. What we need just now is brotherly love, and lots of it. May the good Lord fill our hearts full of it. L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

John E. Carruthers departed this earthly life at his home at North Fork, Loudoun Co., Virginia, July 6th, 1922, aged 83 years, 11 months and 5 days. He was born in Loudoun County, August 1st, 1838. He was first married to Miss Victoria Wright in 1866, who died in 1888. His second wife was Miss Georgia Hixon, to whom he was married about fourteen years ago, who survives him, and who is a member of the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, having been baptized by Elder C. W. Vaughn. Of the first marriage, Mr. Carruthers is survived by four children, two sons and two daughters: Lloyd Carruthers, Mrs. Ada Williams and Mrs. Olive Adams, of Washington, D. C., and Lorenzo Carruthers, of North Fork, Va. He was baptized into membership with the North Fork Primitive Baptist Church by the late Elder J. A. Norton, in July, 1904. He was a veteran of the Civil War, having fought in the Confederate Army three years and more. For several years before his death he had faithfully served his church as clerk, living a consistent christian life, and a life entirely above reproach in the community, respected by all who knew him. He was very feeble in health for nearly two years, his last sickness being of seven weeks duration. All the time he was patient and uncomplaining, ready to die, and talked of his approaching end with resignation and without fear. His funeral was preached by his pastor, after which he was interred in the burying-ground at North Fork. Though not a member of the "Beebe" Baptists, and though allied with the "Clark" side, he with his wife, our sister Carruthers, always attended our meetings, and I can truthfully say I had no better friend than he. He was charitable and tolerant toward me; though we sometimes differed in our views on some points of doctrine, it was always in love. He loved to talk on spiritual things, and was no fighter or debater. May the Lord comfort the bereaved family and sustain sister Carruthers with his holy consolation.

Written by request. L.

John A. Campbell died at his home in Dutton, Ontario, on August 15th, 1921, in his fifty-eighth year, after a few months illness of pernicious anæmia. He was one of the twin sons of the late Malcolm and Janet Campbell, and grandson of the late Elder Thomas McColl. He was a reader and subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years. Though he never joined the church, he was a firm believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine, and loved to hear of the wonderful works of God, and salvation by grace. The sixty-fifth Psalm, fourteenth verse, was especially sweet to him, and many times during his illness the Bible was his companion, and sometimes he was heard singing that beautiful Psalm, "The Lord is

my shepherd, I shall not want." He leaves a sorrowing wife, one son, two daughters, five sisters and one brother to mourn the loss of a devoted husband, a kind and industrious father and a dearly loved brother. A large concourse of people gathered at his funeral to pay the last tribute of respect to one who was held in high esteem by his neighbors and friends. His remains were laid to rest in the family plot at Black's Cemetery, Wallacetown. He rests from all his labors, and we truly feel to say, Weep not for him, for our loss is his eternal gain. May we all strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

HIS SISTERS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. A. B. Hansan, Nebr., $3.00; Lydia B. Stewart, N. Y., $3.00; Mrs. Lydia C. Ray, Texas, $1.00; E. B. Ault, Texas, $3.00; Mrs. Laura R. Elgin, D. C., $2.00; Mrs. Annie Young, N. J., $4.00; Laura Lake, Ala., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Second Roxbury Church, of the Roxbury Association, will (God willing) hold their two days meeting on Wednesday and Thursday, August 23rd and 24th. Trains will be met on Tuesday afternoon at Halcottville, N. Y., and Wednesday morning at Roxbury, N. Y. We shall be pleased to see and entertain all friends and brethren of our faith and order.

GEORGE RUSTON, Pastor.

THE church at Otego, N. Y., has appointed a two days meeting to be held Saturday p. m., and evening and all day Sunday, September 2nd and 3d, meeting to begin Saturday at 1 p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth to meet with us. Trains will be met Saturday a. m., at Otego, N. Y., and friends cared for.

ROSE T. LEONARD, Church Clerk.

THE First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held with Good Hope Church, in Coffey County, Kansas, beginning on Friday before the second Saturday in September, being the 8th, 9th and 10th of the month. We cordially invite all lovers of the truth to visit us. The nearest railroad stations are Burlington, Lebo and Halls Summit. For further information write to brother J. L. Cannady, Burlington, Kansas, R. F. D., or address me at 1243 Polk St., Topeka, Kansas.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

THE Maine Association of Old School Baptists, the Lord willing, will meet with Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday before the second Monday in September (8th, 9th and 10th), 1922. We expect brother Lefferts to be with us. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

THE Ebenezer Church, Baltimore, Md., will hold an all day meeting the third Sunday in September. A general invitation is extended to all.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Lexington and Roxbury Associations will hold a union association with the Olive & Hurley Church, at Ashokan, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, September 13th and 14th, 1922. Trains will be met at Ashokan Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. Those coming by boat from New York city will leave Desbrosses Street at 8:00 a. m., West 42nd Street at 8:20 a. m. (Standard Time.) Those coming by train will leaven New York, Cortlandt Street Ferry, at 10:00 a. m., and 42nd Street Ferry at 10:15 a. m. (Standard Time.) Should any arrive in Kingston and cannot make connections with the U. & D. R. R. they will be cared for by John Hasbrouck, 150 Prospect Street, Kingston.

GEORGE RUSTON.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

CENTRAL CITY, Iowa, Oct. 12, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I visited brother Baker four years ago, and found him a lovely man, sound in the faith of God's elect; find inclosed a letter from him. I have not his consent, but I feel the letter is mine, and you can publish it if you see fit.

C. OWENS.

WILMAR, Ark., Oct. 7, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER OWENS:—I received your letter yesterday, and am always glad to hear from you. Reading of your trials and troubles brings a fellowship and love that is not common among the world of men. Jesus says, In this world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall find peace. My peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you. It is the peace that passeth understanding. The world cannot give, or take it away. When our minds and hearts are filled with hope and joy in the Holy Ghost we may be alone in the silent hours of night, but we are made to see our blessed Savior as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin, that in and through him, and him alone, we have the victory, and are more than conquerors through him that loved us and gave himself for us, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God; and all things work together for good to them that love God, to those who are the called according to his purpose. If we are without chastisements we are bastards and not sons, and we are taught to despise not the chastening of the Lord; for like as a father pitieth his children, even so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. The world can hate us, persecute and despise us, but it cannot pity one of God's little ones. His children are all robed in a sinless white robe of righteousness, washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. No man can wash a robe in blood and make it white, it will be bloody and polluted, and never can be, by man's work, made white and clean, but Jesus imputes to us his robe of righteousness. Though you have lain among the pots yet ye shall be whiter than snow; though your sins be as scarlet, yet shall they be whiter than wool. We are not only robed, but we are washed with fullers'

soap, white and clean before we are robed, and every stain and spot of blood and guilt is washed away; we are stripped of all our Babylonish garments, and are separated from the world, and told to keep ourselves unspotted from the world; hence the world hates us, but Jesus says, Marvel not if the world hate you, it hated me before it hated you; and tells us to love not the world, neither the things of the world, and that if any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him. The deluded orders of the world are all dressed in the Babylonish garments of every hue and color known to man, and all endeavoring to imitate that shining robe, that seamless robe which has no pattern or stitching of man's device, hence seamless and whiter than snow. Light only is whiter than snow, hence it is a shining, brilliant robe that is given to you and to me; we have not made it, traded for it or bought it. It is a free gift, and it is all we need to shield us from the wrath of God, and all we need as a wedding garment when bidden to the marriage feast. He who had not on the wedding garment was bound hand and foot and cast out into outer darkness, where there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Jesus is the head over his church, which is his body, and will not, or cannot, be separated from each other, and love is the union that unites the Head to the body. How long would one live if his head was severed from the body? So with the church, which is the bride of Christ. Christ is the head over the church, which is his body, and ye are the body of Christ and members in particular. Not of works, lest any man should boast, but by his own Spirit and grace has he quickened us and made us heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, reserved for us eternally in the heavens. Then look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, for I am God, and beside me there is none else. Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly, and you shall find rest for your soul. God has been with his people in six ends of the earth, and tells us, I will be with thee in six troubles, and will not forsake thee in the seventh, and the seventh and last judgment of almighty God seems ready to be poured out in wrath upon this world, but our God has chosen us, selected us, called us, robed us, and made us ready for the marriage feast. Hosanna in the highest. "Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Dear brother, I feel to know (because a tree is known by its fruit) that you are one of those little lambs, and if I have any food at all it is from God, and it is not for dogs or swine, but for sheep and lambs of the flock of Israel, for Jesus says, My sheep hear my voice, and a stranger they will not follow. Poor lost sheep in a howling wilderness of wolves; but Jesus said, I send you forth as sheep among wolves, fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Then, dear brother, look up in the face of Jesus, and as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin, and he says to us, He that is in you, is greater than he that is in the world. Fear not, I have overcome the world. Nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rejoice then, dear brother, victory is ours through him that loved us and gave himself for us, and where he is there we shall be also. The rise and fall of nations is in God's hands, and only the wise shall understand, and all the wicked shall be destroyed, and God doeth it that man shall fear before him.

I am sorry you are so nervous and troubled. If I could possibly, I would visit you, for I have learned to love you as one of God's little ones trusting alone in a crucified Savior. I have written hastily; forgive anything amiss, and pray for me when you pray.

Your little brother, I hope, in Christ Jesus,

J. P. BAKER.

FREEWATER, Ore., Oct. 20, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER TEAGUE: —After a long silence my mind is so impressed that I will try to pen you a few thoughts which have been very comforting to me in the great trials the dear Lord has caused me to pass through since we last met. I know it is impossible for us to present the greatness of our God as he has presented himself to us, but is it not great that he has blessed us with the gift of expressing enough of the wonders of his grace to one another so that it unites our souls and hearts that nothing is able to destroy that union? See what strong consolation the old apostle Paul gathered from a revelation of this wonderful love, or union. See what a deep estimate the apostle puts on it. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us, how shall he not with him freely give us all things? These freely given "all things" are with Christ, and these "all things," dear brother, are all things, death not excepted, for the apostle to the Corinthians says, Whether Paul or Cephas, life or death, all things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. All things are ours; yes, life is ours, and death with all its horrors is ours, and it is truly an inheritance which we received from our father Adam, and it is one we are sure to receive. While we are heirs of our earthly father, we are also heirs of our heavenly Father, and joint-heirs with Christ.

Brother John, while you were all enjoying the association with each other at Little Flock, I was with you in spirit and beholding your devotion. I penned a few of my thoughts, and will send them to you, and you can be the judge whether they were the fruit of the Spirit, or whether Satan was prompting me. We are all well and truly hope you and family are. I surely would love to hear from you, if you have a mind toward the least of all. Wife joins me in love to you all.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. T. BARNES.

THIS, the second day of October, 1921, is the day Mt. Zion Association, my association in early days, gathers with Little Flock Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, a day long to be remembered by me, though two thousand miles away, on account of the blessedness of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ being so near me, the very least, if one at all. Oh how sweet and heavenly it is to feel him so sensibly. While in my communion with him I feel a desire to pen some of his wonders just as presented to my mind. It seemed so plain to me, and not only plain, but crowned with glory unspeakable, in reading his holy word concerning the great contrast between the law covenant and the covenant of grace, and the labors of works under the law, and the sweet rest and peace under grace. Jesus said in bringing out the perfection of wonders of the new covenant, No man putteth new cloth in an old garment, neither does he put new wine in old bottles, and tells why this is not done. This, with many like illustrations, came in my mind to-day as I mused

on the beauties of Jesus, our blessed Redeemer showing or dividing the word of truth. Not only that the covenant of works, as well as the covenant of grace, was of God, but dividing the word of truth. Now, brethren, it seems to me some of our brethren in this our day are like some in the apostle's day: they want to acknowledge Christ, but do not want to give up Moses and the law of circumcision; that is, they preach salvation by Christ, but they must do something to hold or keep in that salvation. Jesus took three up with him on the mount of transfiguration, and that was enough, for in the mouth of two or three every word shall be established. So Jesus has the full number to establish the fact that the law and prophets are no part of the covenant of grace outside of Christ, while in the mount Moses and Elias appeared, the witnesses saw the law (Moses) and Elias (the prophets) and Christ. In their minds they wanted to build three separate places for them, that is, they wanted to preach the law, the prophets and Jesus, all three, for the gospel of God, but a cloud overshadowed them and hid all this wonderful scene from them, and they could not stand, but fell with their faces to the ground, dead to the law and prophets, never to see them again outside of Christ, and they heard a voice speak out of the cloud (mystery) saying, This is my beloved Son, hear ye him; and Jesus touched them, and when they looked up they saw Jesus standing alone. No wonder that these apostles would say, Brethren, we are determined to know nothing among you save Jesus and him crucified, for there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved, for there is salvation in none other; I am God, and there is no other Savior. We do not preach ourselves, says the apostle, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. Now with these blessed truths in us we want to see the effect, or fruit, of the work of Jesus in the salvation of his people, for he is their salvation. Some believe that eternal salvation is of the Lord, but time or present salvation is obtained by our works. Now, dear brethren, come, let us reason along this line. The angel said to Mary, the mother of Jesus, Thou shall call his name Jesus, for (or because) he shall save his people from their sins. This last sentence, "from their sins," does not that include our past, our present and our future sins? If so, where does our work for salvation come in? John says the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin. Does this not mean past, present and future? If so, where is there anything for us to do? It seems to me our whole life should be spent here glorifying His holy name for what he has done for us. We have noticed what the angels and the apostles said of him, let us hear what he says of himself: I came down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of my Father, and this is (no conditions) his will, that all he gave me shall come to me, and I will in no wise cast them out, but raise them up at the last day. So if given to Jesus we have the assurance that he will raise us up at the last day. Is that not enough? My sheep hear my voice, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. Where is there any other salvation for us? The Father has given me power over all flesh, that I should give eternal life to as many as he hath given me. He says, while about the work of the Father, I must work the work my Father gave me to do, for the night cometh when no man can work, and at

the going down of the sun on that notable day he said, It is finished. That is, the salvation of his people. The night is now upon us, that no man can work.

Dear brethren, I have only brought up a few of the bulwarks of our God that establish and seal salvation free through our Lord Jesus Christ, for both time and eternity.

J. T. BARNES.

MT. UNION, Pa., Aug. 28, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel a strong prompting of the Spirit of the Lord in me to write of things that I firmly believe, and what seems to be, in accordance with the experience of many of the Lord's people. The Lord testifying through the Spirit, and one feels that he must give vent to his feelings, being full of the love of God shed abroad in his soul. Who of all the redeemed of the Lord could stand before God acceptable if he must appear before him in the flesh? It is only by the Spirit of Christ dwelling in any one of all the inhabitants of the earth that he can please God. Daily we are mourning the loss of fleshly things. We which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our flesh. We are commanded to go home to our friends and tell them what great things the Lord has done for us. This is what is commanded them that are sent out with gospel messages. They are witnesses, and are sent to tell to the Lord's people what they have seen and heard of the Word of life. Every one of the election of grace has seen that his salvation from sin is not because he is better than any one else, but because he was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and because the dear Son of God died for him, and arose for his justification. If I am one of the Lord's people it was not because I was better by nature than any other man, but because the Lord loved me with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving-kindness had drawn me. No one in heaven can ever say to any others, I am here because I was a good man. Every one of all that company whom no man can number is brought to love holiness, and to hunger unspeakably for righteousness, and every one of that great company will be satisfied with purity and holiness and righteousness in the Lord Jesus Christ, and every one of that immortal and unnumbered company, being rooted and grounded in love, will be able to comprehend what is the length and breadth and depth and height, to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that they may be filled with the fullness of God. We hope in God, we trust in him, we believe in him with all our heart and soul that we have an interest in his Son, not for any good or merit found in us, for we are poor defiled creatures, unfit to come into the presence of such a holy, good and gracious God, but for his own good pleasure and purpose, which he purposed in himself before the world was, he gave us his Son in the covenant of grace; so says the Bible, if we are what we profess to be, and the Son says he will raise us up at the last day. He has all power given to him in heaven and in earth, and holds the keys of death and hell. Glorious thought! When this mortal shall put on immortality, and death be swallowed up in victory, a land of rest, a place of peace and joy for evermore. The Lord has done great things for us, whereof we are glad. Oh how we ought to love him and sing praises to his great name, and not be weary in well doing, for we shall reap in

due time if we faint not. Paul says we are not of them that draw back. He seals his faith with his blood, looking for a better country, an heavenly. Therefore it is said that God is not ashamed to be called the God of such, for he hath prepared for them a city. Oh this is enough to cheer us by the way in all our dark wintry seasons, the promises of the gospel. The ungodly world seems to be carried away at this time with forms and fashions, the Bible is but little read, it lies in the dust, as it were, in the streets of Babylon, but the Lord will keep his elect, they are the darlings of his bosom. Blessed be his name.

I am now nearly seventy-seven years old, and the older I get the less I think of myself, and the more I see my imperfection. I have no confidence in the flesh. I groan, being burdened with my perfect poverty. I have to lean on the Lord, and say, like David, "Now also, when I am old and gray headed, O God, forsake me not," &c. My only hope is in the Lord Jesus Christ, and salvation by grace alone is the only doctrine that I am perfectly willing to trust in, that I can lie down to die assured that the God of the whole earth will do right. I feel comforted, too, in the promise of him who cannot lie, that he will never leave nor forsake his people that cost his blood and his life. In all my troubles I go to him, for he knows them that put their trust in him. With his righteousness to cover all my imperfections I get a taste of that sweet wine, sometimes unexpectedly, that lifts my soul into that element of love and thanksgiving to God for the gift of his Son to pay my immense debt of sin and to raise me up and make me sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. I have no one to lean on but my Lord, ever looking unto him from whom all spiritual blessings come. I am here all alone, like Elijah, but our blessed Lord feeds and cares for them that he foreknew.

The SIGNS was always in my Father's house as far back as I can remember, so inclosed find one dollar to pay for six months, but please do not send it longer than the dollar pays for.

Yours in hope of a better life through Jesus Christ our Lord,

R. M. BROWN.

RAWLS, Arkansas.

MRS. MATTIE HARVEY—DEAR FRIEND: —In reply to your letter, which came to hand some time ago, in which you say you have looked and searched every town you were in for Old Baptist churches, and that they do not exist, except in the extreme south, I will say that is proof to me that you do not know the whereabouts and welfare of the true church of Jesus Christ, the church he set up when he was in this world, for there are more Primitive Baptists in the north than there are in some parts of the south. We have some as able ministers of our faith and order in Kansas, where you live, as we have anywhere. You say you realize the Primitive Baptists are dying out, like the old Confederate soldiers, and that in a few years we shall have no Primitive Baptists left. The Arminians said that when I was a little boy, and now I am forty-seven years of age and they are still here, and are preaching and advocating the same grand old doctrine that the old apostles preached when they were here in the world: salvation by grace, and grace alone. That is the only doctrine that ascribes all honor, power and glory unto God, who gave his only begotten Son to redeem his people from under the law of sin and death, and when the last one of the Primitive Baptists is

brought to the fold time will be no more. God will say to the south, Keep not back, and to the north, Bring my sons and daughters from afar, whom I have created for my glory. Jesus said, The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken, and then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. This is to the elect family, and to no one else, and we are the only people that preach the doctrine of election; all the other religious sects preach that Jesus came into the world to save sinners if the sinners will let him, or accept him, and the Scriptures do not teach any such doctrine as that.

You say in your letter that you have found a Baptist church that is nearer Primitive than any one you have ever known; that the only difference is the foot-washing at communion time. If that is all the difference you can see between them and us I fear you never have received an experience of grace, for there is as much difference in what they preach as there is in daylight and darkness, and I am going to tell you what the Scriptures say concerning them: "When ye make many prayers, I will not hear." They worship the works of their own hands. Why, my dear friend, they are so proud and highminded they stand up in the pulpit to pray. The Savior said to his people when he was in this world, "When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men." My dear friend, have you not seen this manifested in your travels? "For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he shall be brought low." "Because their tongue and their doings are against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of his glory," and "they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands." There was a man who came to Christ when he was in the world and asked him what he could do to work the works of God. Jesus said, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

You say that when you joined us you knew that you were truly converted. I will be plain with you. I have known you all your life, and your life has never proven you were an Old Baptist, and I am glad that you have found your people. You say that you do not know whether your belief is mine or not. Surely not, or you could detect the difference between the doctrine preached by the people you have found and the doctrine preached by us. You know that they preach a universal doctrine, that Christ came into the world to save every one if they just would accept him. The Savior never taught any such doctrine, as he said, Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Everything that belongs to the household of faith is a free gift from that omnipotent Being, the great Giver of every good gift. He gave his only begotten Son to die for his people, his elect family; that is, a people chosen of God and given grace in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, and Jesus said, Those thou gavest me I have kept, and not one of them is lost. I believe the Primitive Baptists are the church of Christ and not all the "D. D's. in the world could change me one hair's breadth.

Dear editors, if you see fit to publish this in the SIGNS, do so; if not, all will be well with me.

D. B. CAIN.

WINNFIELD, La., Jan. 15, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you one dollar to extend our subscription to the SIGNS for another six months. We thought for a time we would not be able to renew at all, but are sending this, and hope when the time is up we can spare another dollar to keep it coming. We do not see how we could get along without it, for it is a feast to us, as we do not often hear preaching, for our church meets about thirty miles from our home. Only those who are cut off from meeting the brethren and sisters like we are know how hungry we get for the truth. We have plenty of so-called religion here, but we cannot digest it. Oh how I long to be near a church, so I could meet the brethren and sisters regularly and have them visit us, and sit and talk around my own fireside, as they used to do at home in my dear father's lifetime. I do not know what I would give if my boy had the chance of those sweet reunions as I did in my childhood days. We are so poor, and our church is so far away, that when mother or I either get to go we always have to leave my boy at home to be with the other one. He does not know what a "hardshell" meeting is like, and cannot realize that we love each other as we do. If at any time any of you brethren are passing up and down the Rock Island Railroad and have time to stop off and preach for us, just drop me a line and I will meet you at either Winnfield, La., or Tannehill. Brother V. R. Harris, of Fordyce, Ark., promised to come some fifth Saturday and Sunday this year, and I am going to look for him. Oh if I could express myself as some of the sisters can, but it is not for me. I cannot even tell what I believe like some folks, but, dear ones, I feel it if I cannot tell it. You have no idea how much good it does me for some preacher to get up and tell my own travels for me. I then think, Surely I do know something about it. But I cannot feel that way long before I am back in the mire, and then think I have been mistaken all the time. Brethren, pray for me, that I may be guided and protected by a mightier hand than man can give, for if left to myself I do not know where I may land.

This is my first attempt at writing for publication, and if you do not see fit to publish it all is well with me, for I know it is not worthy of space in your dear old paper.

Will close hoping to see as much good comfort in the pages of the dear old SIGNS this year as there was last year.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

MINERVA McKASKEL.

ANSON, Texas, June 21, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have a great desire to write a few lines for our dear old family paper, but I am so afflicted with rheumatism and heart trouble, and am such a poor, little, ignorant woman of the dust, that I fear to try. Not that I can comfort any of God's little children, for that is not given to me, but I do derive much comfort from the editorials and the communications of the brethren and sisters, far above anything I read, except the Bible, and I believe it all comes from the Bible.

I have suffered more or less for three years, and am not able to do anything. My children with whom I am living are good to me, and do all they can for me, but the Lord is my greatest helper, and I

am made more and more daily to trust and praise him. I began reading the Scriptures when I was nineteen years of age, and I will be sixty-six next fourth of July, and still love to search the Scriptures, for he says, They are they that testify of me. Jesus is the life of every one that loves him, and I believe I have been made to love him and praise him for forty-two years. We love him because he first loved us. Again, he says, We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. I do believe I love all of God's little ones from my heart, but whether I am one of those little ones or not is my fear. I am so vile, so prone to sin, I fear that I am not born again. I am a poor afflicted creature, not anything good can I do. That which I would, I do not; and that which I would not, that I do; so if I am saved it is through his great love and mercy. Dear brethren and sisters, I am made to feel that my time is not long in this world, and have wept because I could not depart and be with the Lord, if it be my portion. I have lost most all of my love for worldly things and pleasures. I know we ought not to complain of our afflictions, for the Lord suffered and died for his people, the Just for the unjust, and rose again for their justification. I feel to be waiting and hoping to see my Savior and to be like him. I know he has all power in heaven and earth, and works all things after the counsel of his own will. I am made to praise him, and know what a great Savior I have every day of my life.

Well, I have written this in a rambling way just as it came into my mind, and as I was able to sit up. I want to say we have not had any of our kind of preaching in about a year. My husband and I seldom meet any of our brethren and sisters on account of my illness.

Now, dear editors, please excuse this, and do not print it if not fit. It is just like the unworthy writer. I pray the Lord to enable you to send on the SIGNS.

Your little, unworthy sister, I hope,

(MRS.) T. R. ROWELL.

OTEGO, New York.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending a letter I received from a dear sister, Mina E. Thompson, which I think will be enjoyed by the readers of the SIGNS, if you think best to publish it. I have not the consent of the dear sister to have it published, but feel she would not object. We enjoy reading the SIGNS very much.

From the least of all,

ROSE TAMSETT LEONARD.

NEW WOODSTOCK, N. Y., Sept. 20, 1921.

DEAR SISTER:—I hope you will pardon my long delay in writing you, but I had hopes of seeing you at the Jefferson meeting, but I was not able to attend. I have lived over and over the happy time I spent with you all at Otego, and it still stays with me, and I think of all the dear people I met there. As I look back I cannot comprehend how they accepted me in the church. How could they? You know, I keep thinking of Ruth as she went to a strange land. I went to people I knew not and was so warmly and cordially welcomed that my happiness was complete when I was led into the water and baptized. How good the water looked to me; I could hardly wait for them to get through the hymn. It was a perfect day to me, and then communion after, how beautiful, how solemn. I wish I had time to tell you all my thoughts, but I hope to some time. When brother Mead told me how he felt before he was baptized it did not make me feel disturbed about myself, or now either. I said to myself, "None of these

things move me." I felt anchored to the rock, Christ Jesus, and I hope and pray that nothing will come to make me love and trust him less. I have passed through very dark places in my life, and have had some very distressing times, but in them all Christ has brought me off more than conqueror, so how can I ever praise him enough? He is the bright and morning star of my soul. In troubles and distresses friends may try to cheer you, but Jesus is the only true comforter, the only source of light and love and joy. Just now it seems as if he said to me, Daughter, be of good cheer, thy faith hath made thee whole.

Dear sister, I hope you had a good meeting at Jefferson, but to me the one at Otego, September 3rd and 4th, will stand out in my memory as the brightest in my experience. "God works in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." Everything that Sunday seemed perfect to me, and very likely I was the only one who felt just that way about it.

Well, I must bring my letter to a close and attend to my household duties. I will hope to hear from you soon, and about the meeting. Remember me to all the dear ones. My heart will be with you meeting day.

Will close, with love to both you and brother Leonard.

MINA E. THOMPSON.

McEWEN, Tenn., July 1, 1922.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I am somewhat impressed to write you a few lines in which I wish to say that I have been comforted lately by many words written in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. They were as crumbs fallen from the Master's table. Also I want to speak of a dream I had when only a little boy, it is the only one I ever had remain by me. I dreamed of the destruction of the world. It seemed to me that it was the destruction of all things. How I pleaded in my infancy to be spared from the awful consummation that I beheld. When all hope had about gone deliverance came, and I was permitted to ascend above. This dream seems only to be a shadow, or type, of which I have passed through within the last year. Clouds of darkness have multiplied themselves above and against me. Then again, beautiful rays of sunlight would appear and I would begin to rejoice in the thought that the mighty storm was over; then again sudden destruction would break forth with renewed energy. Fire, smoke, and torment surrounded me on every side, and a heavy weight upon my shoulders seemed to sink me through the very foundation that I stood upon, and the last vestige of hope was gone. Again and again would I try in my weakness to find some little pebble to stand upon, but no. Again, a little light from a known source would come to me, only to be taken away. I saw Satan with his complacent smile sitting in estatic happiness. All my pleadings were answered with myriads of condemnations. Many times did I come to the conclusion that this was the way of all flesh. I pleaded with my judgment to not forsake me in such sore distress, but she hid herself in darkness. At last the Sun of Righteousness seemed to appear in perfect glory, and I have been basking in its beautiful sunshine for some little time. A voice says to me, If I had faith like a grain of mustard seed I would cast this great burden into the sea, and this is the very thing I would like to do. Oh let us magnify and praise His glorious name.

You are at liberty to do with this as you see fit.

JOHN J. OLIVER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1922.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE SECRET OF THE STAIRS.

(SOLOMON'S SONG II. 14.)

In the fourteenth verse of the second chapter of that most wonderful song of all songs, we have the bridegroom speaking with reference to his bride, calling her his dove, and telling her position: in the clefts of the rock and in the secret of the stairs. The Authorized Version reads: "In the secret places of the stairs." The word, "places," however, is a supplied word, and the passage can be read just as well, and better, by omitting this supplied word. We shall consider it then, as "the secret of the stairs." We need not state that the bride here is the church of God, and that the bridegroom is Jesus Christ. That the church is in "the clefts of the rock" shows her safety, her sure and secure dwelling-place. That the church is in the secret of the stairs declares her access unto God from the lower to the higher heights, to be secret. Stairs are used for the purpose of furnishing a way from a lower floor to a higher. The way by which God's people ascend from nature to grace is a secret way, or stairs, and the way by which the redeemed of the Lord ascend from grace to glory is also a secret stairs. It is a way which no fowl knoweth, in which no lion's whelp treads; a way wherein those who walk there do so not by their own might or power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts. Turning our Bible over to the tenth chapter of Hebrews, we find some details given us regarding these secret stairs, or this hidden way to God, which none can know nor walk in save by revelation. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." Here we have it told us that the way by which the children of God go up into the holiest where God dwells is by a new and living way, which Jesus, our eternal High Priest, has consecrated for us through his blood. Further, that those who walk up these secret stairs have a true heart. It cannot be said that the natural or human heart is a true heart, because Jeremiah was inspired to record that the heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. By no stretch of fancy, therefore, can the human heart be rightly called a true heart. This heart, then, must be the heart, the new heart, which the Holy Spirit in the work of regeneration puts within God's new covenant people, according to that same covenant which God declared he would make with spiritual Israel in the latter days, taking out of them the stony heart and giving them a heart of flesh, a heart within which is inscribed the law of God. Out of this new heart proceed all the issues of the spiritual life, according to which the children of God hunger and thirst after righteousness, with which new heart they pray unto God and praise and adore him for his goodness and mercy. All

who are in the secret stairs have this new heart, and it is a true heart, no deceit being in it, nor wickedness whatsoever. Further, those who have access unto God by this secret new and living way, have their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience. Nothing can more produce the terrors of hell in a man than to be continually living with an evil conscience. It is verily living with fire to be so troubled. All the awakened sinners have this evil conscience. They realize their condemned state on account of sin. But those who walk in this secret way to God have been visited by the great Physician and have had the balm of Gilead applied to their sores, healing them; they have been made to believe in Christ, and to hope in him for salvation. Therefore, being in union with Jesus spiritually, and partaking of his divine nature, even though they know their human nature still is unchanged, and themselves subject to a continual warfare because of these contrary lives within them, yet they continue to ascend the secret way, or stairs, by faith, looking and hoping for that bright appearing of their Lord whereby they may at last realize even the redemption of their body. Thus, we come to another characteristic of those who are in this secret way, that is, even their bodies are washed with pure water. The life of Jesus in their mortal bodies is so vital and so powerful that even outwardly their lives seem to be changed because the evil which they once revelled in they can enjoy no longer, and the good to which they were once strangers has now become their delight, their desire and aim.

Turning now to the first verse of the third chapter of Colossians, we find something more about these secret stairs. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." Here is the really vital thing about these stairs, the one thing which shows us why they are secret, and why none can have the privilege of this way of access unto the holiest except they have the revelation of this way of salvation within them, experimentally realized. All this is because the way of life is through being risen with Christ. Now, this does not mean being risen from this earthly world to the future or heavenly world, something which none of us now living have ever experienced, and cannot until some time in the future, but there are those of God's children who have passed from a state of nature to a state of grace; or, putting it differently, have been translated from nature's darkness into the kingdom of God's Son. This translation is an ascension, because it can be nothing less than passing from a lower to a higher state of being. This ascension is by way of the stairs, the secret passageway in which and through which believers arise from under the power of the curse and from under the condemnation of the law into the understanding and liberty of the gospel of Christ, all of which ascension or translation comes about by the spirit and power of the resurrection. God's children, therefore, who live by faith and hope on the Son of God, are children of the resurrection, and have passed from death to life, the evidence whereof is love, for he who loveth is born of God.

The last testimony we shall call your attention to regarding these secret stairs is he letter to the Ephesians, especially the second chapter. Here, we have it set forth that all the children of God, whether Jew or Gentile, are quickened together with Christ, and raised up to-

gether with him, and set down by him in the heavenly places, or rather in the heavenlies, for here also "places" is a supplied word and had better be omitted. "But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ." What a blessing this is to us Gentiles, who never were under Moses' law literally, and what a mercy to know that God, after all, loves the Jew no better than the Gentile, but loves with equal glow his people among all the nations of the earth. Further, what a solid comfort to know that Jesus has taken down the middle wall of partition between Israel and the strangers, and that he, of the two, has made one new man, and that "through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." We should love to tell our children, and to tell the world, of this secret stairs by which redeemed sinners ascend upward into the holiest, but we cannot. It is a sealed matter, not to be made known by flesh and blood. Much as we might like to convey this wonderful knowledge to our nearest and dearest, we are powerless to make it known. It is a secret, and cannot be disclosed. The Lord's elect shall be brought into this secret, and shall walk in this new and living way to God, but human means, nor human strength, nor creature merit, can never invade this sacred precinct against the will of God. The wayfaring man shall find it, the fool cannot mistake it; the lame, the halt and the blind shall be found there healed of their infirmities. The dead raised to life go up these stairs, so do the lepers who are cleansed of their sins. We may talk about these things, preach about them, sing about them, shout them from the housetops, but all the time we shall never succeed in making known the secret way to a single soul unless the Lord by his Spirit has already and previously imparted spiritual life and consciousness to that soul. Our lips are, after all, sealed by the Master with his command, See that thou tellest no man. So with all our telling, we shall never get it told.

L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by J. E. Hubbard.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, September 9th, 10th and 11th, 1921, to the churches of which she is composed, and to the associations and meetings with which she corresponds, sends greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As has been our practice for many years to address you at this time by what is termed a Circular Letter, we gladly address you at this time, hoping that the Lord who doeth all things well will direct our pen.

The words found in Romans viii. 14, are with us at this time: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Who of us can come out boldly and declare that we are led by the Spirit of God? In Isaiah xlii. 16, we read, "And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." The characters mentioned in the above texts are helpless and dependent. They are led by a way they know not, hence they cannot take a step of themselves. If they are led by the Spirit of God there is no credit due them, all glory belongs to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. If we love the things we once hated, if we see when

once we were blind, we are given a hope that we have passed from death unto life, that we are led by the Spirit of God. Still our nature is such that doubts and questionings will arise, and we say with the poet

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought;
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his or am I not?"

Our doubts are not doubts of God's power, or goodness, or any of his attributes, but caused by our own weakness and sinfulness. The believer who has been called from darkness into the marvelous light of the gospel is not satisfied with his daily walk and conversation, his walk worthy the vocation wherewith he is called. In Romans vii. 18–20, Paul says, "For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Then there is ever the warfare going on, the Spirit lusting against the flesh and the flesh against the Spirit. But, my brethren, if we were not led by the Spirit of God there would be no warfare, and that is good evidence that we have passed from death unto life. The question of salvation is strictly a personal matter to us. We have no fear or doubts for our brother; he, in our eyes at least, is led by the Spirit of God, and we would that we could walk as orderly and uprightly as he. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Ofttimes we are so cold and indifferent to spiritual things that there is apparently no warfare, but that love for our brethren is always with us. We are never so low that the sight of a brother is not a comfort to us.

The next session is appointed to be held with the Bowdoinham Church, the Lord willing, beginning on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1922, and continuing three days, where we shall hope to again receive your ministers, messengers and correspondence.

J. C. CLARK, Moderator.
G. R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

INFORMATION WANTED.

ANY one knowing of any Old School Baptists at or near Bradentown or Manatee, Florida, will please communicate with Mrs. Ida Powers, Ensley, Alabama.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

C. B. Jackson has changed his residence from 411 E. Mansfield St., to 416 E. Rensselaer St., Bucyrus, Ohio, and requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Martha Cooper Beardsley, daughter of Samuel and Keziah Cooper, was born near Ithaca, N. Y., Aug. 22nd, 1831. She passed into rest at the home of her daughter, at Owensville, Ind., July 29th, 1922, at 4:30 p. m., aged ninety years, eleven months and seven days. She was married to Sherman Beardsley May 25th, 1862, who preceded her to the other world nine years ago. Two children were born to them: Hattie (Mrs. James Montgomery), of Owensville, Ind., and Samuel Beardsley, of Hicksville, Ohio. She is also survived by six grandchildren and six great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews and a host of friends. About fifty-five years ago she came with her parents and family to live at Bourbon, Douglas Co., Illinois, and had resided there ever since. In early life she united with the Old School Baptist Church and retained her membership for the rest of her life. There being no church of that denomination near her home she attended the Missionary Baptist meetings, or often rode many miles to attend her own services. She had been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for practically her whole life, her parents taking it, and after they passed away she continued the subscription. Her eyesight failing, her daughter read it to her as long as she was able

to listen. She came to Owensville to spend the winter, and her health gradually failed. She retained most of her faculties to the last.

The funeral was held at her old home at Bourbon, Illinois, Monday, July 31st, 1922, at three p. m., conducted by Mr. Kerst, of Rantoul, Illinois, a Missionary Baptist minister, and an old neighbor.

(MRS.) JAMES MONTGOMERY.

Mrs. Margaretta Gunnell Jackson died at the home of her grandson, T. Bertrand Elgin, 1123 Allison St., N. W., Washington, D. C., after an illness of about two years. She was born near Vienna, Fairfax Co., Va., August 20th, 1839, the daughter of Henry and Mary Moore Gunnell. She was one of six children, and outlived all of them. In 1868 she married James T. Jackson, and to them were born two children, a son and a daughter, both living: Mrs. Laura Elgin, of Washington, D. C., and Mr. Albert Jackson, of Vienna, Va. She is also survived by two grandsons, the children of Mrs. Laura Elgin: Carlisle and Bertrand Elgin. It was at the latter's home she passed away August 28th, 1922. Four great-grandchildren are also left to survive her.

The funeral was preached at Andrew Chapel, in Fairfax Co., Va., not far from her old home. Burial in the graveyard adjacent. The writer of this notice tried to speak to the comfort of the family from the words in second Corinthians twelfth chapter, ninth verse. Mrs. Jackson never united with the Old School Baptist Church, but that was her spiritual home, and the people and doctrine she loved and talked about. She had been an intimate friend of the late Elder Samuel Trott, and visited frequently in his home during the time of the Civil War. To those readers of the SIGNS who have old files of the paper, Elder Trott needs no introduction. She was enabled by the grace of God to leave a bright evidence behind her of her acceptance in the Beloved, for which we hope we are truly thankful. May the Lord comfort all the mourning ones, especially the daughter, Mrs. Elgin, who was her mother's constant companion.

Requested. L.

Those who knew sister **Sarah Pfaff** will feel sad to hear that she died in the hospital, after an operation, August 7th, 1922. She was baptized by Elder F. A. Chick, whom she loved dearly as a gospel minister. He was a father in Israel to her. She knew the truth, and could tell her experience in her own peculiar way, often saying "I will do just what the Lord wants me to." Just before she died she said she was ready if her time had come. She had no education, but was taught of the Lord all things needful, that it was by the grace of God that poor sinners were saved.

A FRIEND.

MEETINGS.

THE First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held with Good Hope Church, in Coffey County, Kansas, beginning on Friday before the second Saturday in September, being the 8th, 9th and 10th of the month. We cordially invite all lovers of the truth to visit us. The nearest railroad stations are Burlington, Lebo and Halls Summit. For further information write to brother J. L. Cannady, Burlington, Kansas, R. F. D., or address me at 1243 Polk St., Topeka, Kansas.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

THE Maine Association of Old School Baptists, the Lord willing, will meet with Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday before the second Monday in September (8th, 9th and 10th), 1922. We expect brother Lefferts to be with us. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

THE Ebenezer Church, Baltimore, Md., will hold an all day meeting the third Sunday in September. A general invitation is extended to all.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Lexington and Roxbury Associations will hold a union association with the Olive & Hurley Church, at Ashokan, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, September 13th and 14th, 1922. Trains will be met at Ashokan Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. Those coming by boat from New York city will leave Desbrosses Street at 8:00 a. m., West 42nd Street at 8:20 a. m. (Standard Time.) Those coming by train will leave New York, Cortlandt Street Ferry, at 10:00 a. m., and 42nd Street Ferry at 10:15 a. m. (Standard Time.) Should any arrive in Kingston and cannot make connections with the U. & D. R. R. they will be cared for by John Hasbrouck, 150 Prospect Street, Kingston.

GEORGE RUSTON.

THE South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association will hold her eighty-first session with Antioch Church, eight miles southeast of Camden, Arkansas, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 15th, 16th and 17th, 1922. Those visiting this association will get off train at Camden. This is the regular Predestinarian side of the South Arkansas Association, having permanently divided from the conditionalist last year. We invite all regular Predestinarian, peace-loving Baptists to meet with us, especially ministers of this kind.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator.

THE yearly meeting of the Nassaongo Church, of the Salisbury Association, will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 23rd and

24th, 1922, beginning at 2:30 p. m. Saturday, and continuing all day Sunday. All friends and brethren of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. C. MELLOTT, Pastor.

THE yearly meeting of the Indiantown Church, of the Salisbury Association, will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 30th and October 1st, 1922, beginning on Saturday at 2:30 p. m., and continuing all day Sunday. We cordially invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

J. C. MELLOTT, Pastor.

THE Sideling Hill and Fairview churches, of Fulton County, Pa., have appointed to hold a joint two days meeting at Needmore, Pa., Saturday and Sunday, October 7th and 8th, 1922. Trains will be met at Hancock, W. Va., either via Western Maryland R. R , or Baltimore & Ohio R. R., on Friday before the meeting, by notifying in advance Deacon Jefferson Mellott, Needmore, Pa. Ministers and other brethren of our faith and order, are invited to be with us.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 11th, 12th and 13th, 1922. Electric trains leave 36th and M Sts., N. W., Washington, D. C., for Leesburg, Va., at frequent intervals during the afternoon and evening, and all trains will be met at Leesburg on Tuesday before the meeting. Preaching brethren and other brethren in fellowship and good standing with the associations and meetings of our northern and southern correspondence are invited to be with us.

T. S. TITUS, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 90. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1922. NO. 19.

CORRESPONDENCE.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST JESUS:—There are periods in our lives when our pathway is in the sea; we are called to pass through the rivers. But in the deeps it is ours to prove that underneath are the everlasting arms. (Deut. xxxii. 27.) Jonah's hell! Where that sinful, rebellious one was swallowed up was God's love school. Hath not the Lord said, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten"?—Rev. iii. 19. The God of his mercy taught Jonah that he had been observing lying vanities, and in so doing had forsaken his own mercies. "Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly, and said, I cried by reason of my affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice. For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple. The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains: the earth with her bars was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God. When my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple. They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy. But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord. And the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the land." How sacredly wonderful, what riches of grace to a vile transgressor is declared in all this. This is reigning grace. For a sinful, rebellious, vile transgressor to be drawn, inspired by the Holy Spirit, so ministered unto by the Spirit of Truth of the things of Christ that we rise up with the wings of faith, with a humble and contrite heart, and in our supplications to come in unto the Lord, to fall before the throne of God and the Lamb, and there tell our troubles, there pour forth our miseries, and plead for, yes, receive also, mercy and grace to help us in our time of need. Oh to see the Lamb in the midst of the throne;

the Lamb that was slain, and who liveth again, our precious Christ and Savior, who gave himself a sacrifice for us, whose precious blood cleanseth us from all sin. Oh let me but drink of the pure river of the water of life that proceedeth from the throne of God and the Lamb, then all is well; for all the sure mercies of the everlasting covenant are mine, and I am comforted and abundantly satisfied with the goodness of the Lord. Oh the blessedness to go forth in faith and love with the Lamb in the midst of the throne, who feedeth us in the green pastures, and leadeth us unto living fountains of waters: and God wipeth away all tears from our eyes. (Rev. vii. 17.) But it is not always thus with me. Ah no! To my shame I have to tell there have been dreadful times, when there is a devil to do in my soul; for the devil cometh to me in my tribulations, a pitying devil, telling me my lot is hard, that the Lord is putting upon me more than my share of troubles, and that others of the household are not so tried, and not called into such straits, that they have a smooth path and mine is a rough one. Soon I am tempest-tossed indeed, my vile nature, the ocean of my corruptions is all in commotion, and the restless waves run high. I am filled with envy and jealousies toward the people of God, and in my fretful heart there dares to arise the thought that our heavenly Father is not impartial, that he has his favorites in the family, and I am not one, and in these wicked, cruel imaginations oh what a sea of wretchedness I am plunged into. I envy, I am jealous, I do not think kindly of the children of God, I am as one thrust out from among them, I am in a troublesome mood, and the tempest continues its ragings. Ah, I am not strong enough to quell this disgraceful uprising, I am conscious that I am vile, perverse, fit for God's reprobation; I sigh, and moan, and weep over my estate; I loathe myself, and yet I cannot put an end to it. I am tossed with tempest, and so discomfited I am at my wits' end; I am bewildered, I feel I have no wisdom to know what to do. But our God hears my sighs and moans, he knows my distresses. "O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee."—Psalms lxix. 5. The God of all grace, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. He rideth upon the storm; he has the dominion of all things. He can quiet the raging of all seas, when the waves thereof arise he stilleth them. Oh I have found he has but to speak a word of his grace to my soul and all is a calm, Satan has fled, and my vile imaginations have been cast down, forgiveness, riches of mercy are mine, and then I sail on the ocean of his loving-kindness. Then in my happiness and adoring love I marvel, I say, Why, O Christ, hast thou shed thy blood for me? Why didst thou not leave me to perish in my sins? But thou hast called me (a vile transgressor) to know thee in all thine excellencies declared unto the people in the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, and thou art mine, my God, my salvation, and I, a wretched, base nothing, am thine in Christ Jesus, the Son of thy love. O Lord, how forgetful, ungrateful, how foolish, repeatedly so, am I. Surely I have wearied thee with my iniquities, and made thee to serve with my sins, and now thou tellest me thou hast redeemed me, and I am thine. O Christ most precious, thou art in my heart the hope of eternal glory. Oh that I could love thee, serve thee, cleave to thee, never stray away, never have a wrong thought of thee, that I could glorify thee in my

body and spirit, which are thine. Ah, what paradoxes such contradictions are in my life. But, O the divine blessedness that I, a poor sinner, while in tribulations, while walking in the midst of trouble, should experience the revivings of the gracious God. (Psalms cxxxviii. 7.) The Lord bringeth us into truthfulness to lean upon our Beloved (Solomon's Song viii. 5), to be in submission, yes, even to loving acquiescence to all providences, and thus through floods and flames hold on our way, for his grace is our sufficiency, and sometimes in our very conflicts we sing, "In all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us."—Rom. viii. 37. Let me still relate some matters of my soul's experience. When for a little space the path is smooth we may think we have sufficient grace to tread even a rough wilderness beneath our feet, to encounter whatever may be in the future. Our thoughts are that we have an abundance of grace: we hardly need all the money we have in our purse. But when trials and conflicts meet us and swallow us up, then we find we have none too much strength and grace in our possession, scarcely enough for these adverse days, and we are constrained to go to our heavenly Banker quite frequently, not only for small sums, but we must ask for, we feel we must have, quite a large amount to carry us through our adversities; and though we are timid sometimes in our asking, Christ Jesus, our smiling Banker, says, My grace is sufficient for thee, my strength is made perfect in thy weakness; of my fullness thou shalt receive, and grace for grace; I am thy all, and in you all. Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you. When I hear this encouraging, blessed doctrine of Christ it entereth my soul, then I consider him, the great High Priest of our profession, who knows how to succor them that are tempted. I am so encouraged that I come boldly to the throne of grace to obtain all that I need. Oh he abundantly pardons, and much forgiveness I feel must be my portion; he healeth all my soul's maladies, he has the healing medicines, and bringeth me health and cure, and abundance of peace is mine. Here I am at the mercy-seat, and He that dwelleth between the cherubims shines forth, and lifts up the light of his countenance upon me, the poor sinner. Hath not the Lord said, "There I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony"?—Exod. xxv. 22. There are times when I see my vanity, my folly, my vileness, my heart wanderings, my goings astray far from the realms of communion with the Lord. I am made to feel this (what a mercy is this) and I am brought to confess unto my God I am base, to be despised, I am worthless; then also I see, I feel, I know that my God is the Holy One that inhabiteth eternity. And I? I am vile, I loathe myself in my own sight. Then also I see that under his chastening providences I have been fretful, forgetful of his kindness, I have gone on frowardly, I have turned unto him the back and not the face. Ah! oh how wretched I have been, what a contemptible worm I am, I hardly know how to describe the meanness in which I have had to know myself. Some years ago I could not have believed that I could have been so contrary, so angry, so quarrelsome with the Lord because of providences. I have looked upon myself as though I were one that spit in his face when he pleaded with

me. I feel it is dreadful to write this, but I cannot find milder language to set forth the horrible condition that my soul was in some time ago. I thought of Jonah's impudence. The Lord said to him, "Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death."—Jonah iv. 9. But I have seen myself far more perverse than Jonah. I am not writing this to condone his shameful behavior, or to make light of my own shame. I am humbled, I sigh, I hate myself, my heart melteth even now in remembering my quarreling with the all-wise and gracious God, for I do acknowledge in my heart that all his ways are judgment, a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he. Oh from that time to which I am alluding had he henceforth never spoken another kind word, had he never smiled upon me again, had he never shown mercy to me any more, what could I say? But the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. So the Lord looked upon me, and said, Have I not loved thee with an everlasting love? and I fell with a humble and contrite heart, with weeping and supplications, and in love's adoration, at his feet. The God of our salvation has not answered me according to my deserts, he has not dealt with me after my sins, nor rewarded me according to my transgressions, but he does in the exceeding riches of his grace abundantly pardon. O blood, blood! the precious blood of Christ the Lamb, "without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God."—1 Peter i. 19–21. Oh this is the channel in which my faith and hope is in God.

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
Midst flaming worlds in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

MAPLE FALLS, Wash., August, 1922.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I will once more try, by the grace of God, to write a few words, hoping I may comfort some poor tempest-tossed soul with the comfort whereof I have been comforted by His dear presence. While I myself have been called to pass through deep waters of affliction, which at times all but went over my head, his everlasting arm was ever underneath me. Dear Elder Barnes told me once when I was called on to preach, and was shut up, and could not come forth, and I told him that God was just as much glorified in my fall as he would have been had I delivered a big sermon, brother Barnes replied, "Brother Burch, you did not fall; and if you did, you fell in the arms of Jesus," and so it is whenever I fall, it is upon that Rock, and I am broken and humbled, but Jesus is exalted, for his presence and power are revealed, and my heart is made to glow with love when I forget myself for awhile, and know nothing but Jesus and that great love which is shed abroad in my heart, which is a well of living water springing up into everlasting life; and I praise him. This portion of the twenty-seventh Psalm expresses my mind to-night, from the fourth to the tenth veres: "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple. For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pa-

vilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me: he shall set me up upon a rock [Christ Jesus]. And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises unto the Lord. Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me. When thou saidst, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek. Hide not thy face far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation." Yes, dear little ones, he is the only Savior I have, either for time or eternity, and if I am one of that "little flock" I have nothing to fear. But oh the doubts and fears that I am not, for I am so vile, so prone to sin, that at times I fear I am not born again.

I have just returned from Bellingham, where I was in the hospital, where I underwent two operations, which I think are successful, and I feel that I should praise the Lord for his kind watchcare over me while away, and over my dear companion and son who were left at home, whom I found well on my return. I was gone from home six weeks. I was in the hospital three weeks, then it took me three weeks to get strong enough to stand the ride home, but the dear Savior was with me as a present help in every time of need, and I was given the oil of joy for the spirit of heaviness, for when I found that it was necessary for me to be operated upon my heart and spirits were very low and heavy, for I had no means, as we are poor in this world's goods, though I do hope rich in faith, for when I went to see the doctor, the Lord was there ahead of me, but I knew it not, for I was ready to give up in despair, and told the doctor I thought I would not have the work done, as I had no money, and he said, "Yes, you will, I know you, and my bill, which would ordinarily be two hundred and fifty dollars, I am going to cut to forty dollars, and if you ever get able to pay it, all right, and if you do not, it is all right any way." I just felt that the Lord was in that place working for me, and there was a greater joy than that awaiting me, and that also was of the Lord. It was July 6th that I went to see the doctor, and he set the date for my operation (the 10th), so I went to my daughter's house to stay until then, as they lived near Bellingham, and she kept asking me questions about the plan of salvation, as well as church discipline. I answered her the best I could, as I understood the Scriptures to teach, and showed her the Scriptures to prove what I told her. For about a day she was silent, until in the evening of the eighth, when she said, "Well, papa, I might as well give up one time as another, for I want to join the Old Baptists, but have been fighting against it for a long time." That was good news from a far country, for she had joined the Free Methodists on probation, and said we were too hard, but now she says it is all plain; salvation by grace alone, and preservation through life, and the final triumph through Christ's shed blood into the heaven of ultimate glory; and it is all of grace; and it is so plain it looks like she could tell it to any one so they could understand. Now she is waiting an opportunity to join the Old School Baptists.

Well, I have rambled along at a great length, when I only intended to copy my dear old mother's experience, in the school of the Lord, ("And they shall all

be taught of the Lord," &c.) but I got started and just could not find a good place to stop, so I hope you will kindly look over my shortcomings, for I am only a poor old sinner, saved by grace, and that according to His mercy, if I am one of his little ones.

With love to all the household of faith, I am, I hope, your brother,

DAVIS BURCH.

SEDRO WOOLLEY, Wash., Aug. 15, 1922.

DEAR DAVIS:—Well, as I promised, I will write you some of the dealings of the Lord in leading me from the blind and dead state I was in by nature into the marvellous light and liberty of the children of God. It was something over twenty years ago when a great change came over me. I had lived an honest, upright life, without any fear of God, for I verily believed I would be saved if I continued to live right, and up to this time I felt secure, and satisfied with my own good works, but there came a time in my life, (something over twenty years ago) when a dark and threatening cloud seemed hanging over me, which caused me to see myself the greatest sinner on earth; my good works were all gone, indeed they were like filthy rags, and as I had nothing to offer for my sins I felt sure God would cast me off, for I could not see how he could do otherwise and maintain his integrity, but I did cry for mercy, but could not see why I should hope, for I verily thought my salvation depended upon my doing some good works to satisfy the demands of God's holy and broken law. The more I struggled and tried to get out the deeper I got into the mire, and my load of sin grew heavier and heavier, until it seemed more than I could bear. I felt like one alone in the world, without friends or God. I used to wonder if I were losing my mind. I got so forgetful of my work that one morning I forgot to milk my cow. I went to get some milk for dinner, and there was none, then I remembered the poor cow, shut up in the barn, not milked and without feed or water. This made me feel very much ashamed and cast down. I was greatly troubled, and wondered what was the cause of all this, for I had not done any great wrong to any one, and could not see why I should feel so condemned, and while thinking of my awful condition, and feeling very lonely, and praying the Lord for mercy, all at once a great joy came over me, and my burden was gone, and I was in my Savior's arms, and praising him, and all was light around. I felt as though I could fly, and felt like a new being, and everything now seemed praising God. I was very happy for a while, but soon something told me I must have more evidence, and I was so troubled that I could not sleep that night after going to bed, but lay there praying for more evidence, when the face of a little babe in a halo of light appeared at the foot of my bed, which I felt sure was my Savior in the form of a little child, and my heart was again filled with that great love, and a great peace came over me, and I fell asleep. I arose next morning with my heart singing praises to him who had washed me in his blood, my burden gone. While I have had my share of trials and burdens, Jesus has always been near me to help in every time of need.

The subject of joining the church was my next trouble, for there was no Old School or Predestinarian Baptists near us. My husband received a hope about the time I did, and we both wanted to join the Old Baptists, but were finally persuaded to join the Missionaries, and were

both baptized by them and tried to live with them, but found so little comfort in their preaching that we both gave up going to their meetings long ago, as we got more comfort in reading our Bible at home; and as there has never been an Old Baptist Church near enough for us to attend we never joined, though our minds and hearts have always been with them. My husband died Feb. 22nd, 1920, and was ready, and willing to go, and when my work on earth is done I hope to meet him with all the blood-washed throng around the throne of God, where all is love and peace, where we shall see Jesus as he is, and be satisfied, when we shall be like him.

ELIZA BURCH.

COLUMBUS, Ga., Dec. 8, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending this letter which, though not addressed to me, was given me to read. It brought tears to my eyes, and a new strong love and fellowship sprang up in my heart towards the writer, and I felt there are others who might rejoice with me in reading it. It is marvelous when one who has been brought up wholly in an Arminian home and surroundings, and having been taught the "do and live" system, as was so in her case, and many others, to be brought through it all safely into the faith of God's elect. About fourteen years ago she married my brother, who has for many years known and loved the truth, but do you think for a moment that he, or any other human being, could have taught her to speak this language so harmoniously without discord? I am sure I hear your answer, No. Her letter was addressed to her mother-in-law, whom she calls "Grandma." I leave all to your better judgment.

(MRS.) C. M. THETFORD.

AMITY, Ark., Nov. 21, 1921.

DEAR GRANDMA:—When Younge writes to you I always feel that I want to write some, too. Not that you would miss anything by my not writing, but I do not want you to think I have ceased to love you, as that would be far from true. To the contrary, I have for the last few months felt for you that pure enduring love not to be compared with any natural love; or, as I humbly hope, brotherly (or sisterly) love in Christ Jesus, our blessed Redeemer. Although made to know and feel daily that in me there dwells no good thing (nothing but sin, rebellion and corruption when left to myself), he has seen fit in his boundless love and mercy to poor helpless sinners to give me a hope in that covenant of mercy "ordered in all things and sure," a little hope that I am one, even if the very least of those for whom Jesus died, and for the justification of whose sins he rose from the dead; this hope I would never willingly give up, not for all the wealth and pleasure this world can offer. Oh how glad I am that this hope, this salvation, is not conditional, is not dependent upon good works or obedience, or the merits of man, else I could never stand one hour, but would be irretrievably lost. But God loved his people with an everlasting love, and chose them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, to be made manifest in his own good time, according to his own will and purpose, for salvation is by grace, and his grace alone, through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. Many times I am brought low and made to know that all light, all joy, peace and spiritual life come from him alone; that the human heart is indeed depraved and incapable of one good thought, only as he sends it in his love

and mercy. Again, it is given me to rejoice in the light of his countenance, to feel his pardoning love, and to look to him for all strength and light, and for salvation, both temporal and spiritual. He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto him, and none can come unto him except the Father draw him. Therefore everything comes to pass just as he foreordained in his immutable plan and purpose, according to the counsel of his own will, and not by the aid of human means, or creature work or wishes. Grandma, do you think we can limit predestination without limiting the power of God? That is, if we say God is all powerful and able to do his will in heaven and on earth, then say he only predestinated the good and suffered the evil to come to pass (although he foreknew it all); does not that limit the power and workings of God Almighty, and have some other power to work some things? That is the way we hear many Baptists talk in this section, although they sound good to hear on many points. They seem to desire to give God all glory and honor, and we can feel fellowship for what they say on total depravity of the flesh, but I cannot see any place to draw a line on His predestination short of "absolute" without weakening or limiting the power of the Holy One of Israel. We recently heard our elder (an old man) say that there was not a particle of Scripture to warrant the doctrine of absolute, or unlimited, predestination, neither was there any to warrant the doctrine of "conditional time salvation." We had not the opportunity of finding out his meaning in this declaration, but it had a strange sound. To my mind a person would have to accept one or the other. You can well imagine how hungry we get to hear the pure, unadulterated gospel preached, giving God all power and honor and glory, telling of his wonderful, unchangeable love to his chosen people, manifested in the Spirit through the grace, love and mercy of the blessed Son and Savior, who died that they might live. The Righteous for the unrighteous. Grandma, my cup is so little, and I am so little and unlearned, I can only view (my cup can only hold) just a small portion of all these wonderful, glorious things of the beauties, the holiness and the omnipotence of God, and the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, yet I humbly hope he has filled my heart with the prayer that I may be taught in the school of the blest, to know more of his salvation, grace, love and power.

I have written so much I will not have any space in which to write of the "hard times" I hear everybody talking about. There are no hard times with the Lord, and we know he will provide. He has cared for us always, and loved us even when we were dead in trespasses and sins. We are blessed with the best of health and strength, and plenty of food, and good honest toil to meet their demands.

Will close now. May this find you well, and enjoying all the blessings of a covenant-keeping God. Love to all.

ETHEL NORRIS.

[EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER WRITTEN JUNE 11TH, 1876, BY JAMES C. BEARD, AND SENT TO HIS WIFE.]

I have been reading in an old school reader an allegory which is beautiful. It is prefaced with a portion of the eighth Psalm, in which God's chosen people are represented by a vineyard. I cannot give half of it, but will try to write a small portion. The three soliloquizes: I stood in my pride, the sun brightened

my robe with his smile, my shadow was wide upon the earth. * * * My forehead was fair to the heavens. But now how changed. Sadness is upon me, my head is shorn, my arms are stripped, beauty has departed, gladness has gone out of my bosom, the blood has retired from my heart, has sunk into the earth, I am thirsty, I am cold, my naked limbs shiver in the cold. * * * Alas! alas! my beautiful robe is gone. * * * I am destitute, sorrow is my portion, mourning must wear me away. Who will clothe me again? Who will restore my lost and beautiful gifts? The angel answers, My beloved, be comforted. I am with thee still, though every leaf has forsaken thee. The voice of gladness is hushed among thy boughs, but let my whisper console thee. Thy sorrow is but for a season. Trust in me; keep my promise in thy heart. Be patient and full of hope. Let the words I leave with thee abide and cheer thee through the winter, then will I return and clothe thee anew. The storm will drive over thee, but this will be a light and passing affliction. The ice will weigh heavily upon thy helpless arms, but it shall soon dissolve into tears. * * * Then if thou hast remembered and trusted in my promises I will fulfill them. Buds shall shoot forth on thy boughs; I will unfold another robe; I will paint it and fit it in every part. It shall be a comely raiment. Thou shalt forget thy present sorrow; sadness shall be swallowed up in joy. * * * Hope must prop you for a while. Grace shall again be in your motions and beauty surround you.

I have left out the greater portion of it, and when you see the stars (thus * * *) I have omitted portions which would apply only to the tree. But the part I have copied is so beautiful I thought you would like to read it. How much of the christian experience is contained in it. I have felt, and do much of the time feel, as the tree which has been stripped of its branches, so poor and entirely helpless, deserted by every hope; joy and gladness have gone out of my bosom. I am thirsty, hungry, cold, destitute. Sorrow is my portion, and sometimes I feel that mourning must wear me away. Oh how sweet the promise: Be patient and full of hope, for I will return. There are no ifs nor ands. With the command (for it is a command) there is power to cause all (to whom it is addressed) to obey, and patience and hope flow into our souls as free as water flows in its natural course. The Sun of righteousness has arisen with healing in his wings, and we go no more mourning and downcast, but are lifted up above the cares and trials of the world and sing songs of gladness to Him who hath begotten us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, nor of the will of the flesh, but according to his mercy and grace. How can such poor unworthy mortals as I ever feel grateful enough for such hope? No storms or wintry blasts shall ever shake or destroy it. False teachers and false doctrines cannot destroy the hope which is through grace, though for a time allowed to lead the poor and simple astray.

DEAR EDITORS:—Mr. Beard was about twenty-nine years of age when he copied and sent the above to me. The teachings of the Spirit of truth and grace made him an humble man, and at the feet of his brethren. Publish if you think best.

Your sister in hope,

W. A. BEARD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1922.

EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

"DEEP CALLETH UNTO DEEP."

WHILE sitting to-day by the fathomless ocean, gazing upon its boundless wonder and magnificence, its proud waves ceaselessly beating upon the shore, spending their fury there, and while gazing upward to the heavens, ninety-five millions of miles from the earth, the above words of Scripture presented themselves to our mind. We are lost in wonder and admiration at the infinite wisdom, power, glory and majesty of God. So incomprehensible is He that we ask with fear and trembling, Have we ever known anything of so wonderful a God? It is really no wonder that David, while viewing the handiwork of God, said, "Deep calleth unto deep." Surely the Lord made a grand and beautiful world for his creatures to dwell upon, together with every needful thing suited to the needs and necessities of each one. One week ago we were in the mountains of Delaware County, New York, and while viewing their grandeur and beauty, with the valleys, and sparkling streams dashing through them, we remarked to those present, You people are wonderfully blessed of the Lord to live in such a country as this. While there we thought nothing could more fully set forth the works of God in nature, nor set forth the security of the Jerusalem of our God. David, when viewing the mountains round about Jerusalem, said, As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so is the Lord round about his people henceforth and forever. All his works in nature, in some sense, declare his works in grace. As the mountains surrounded Jerusalem and protected it from the assaults of her many enemies, so the Lord guards, protects and keeps safely his kingdom, or church. He is also the glory in the midst. When we think of the unmeasurable distance between the fathomless ocean and the starry sky we can but say with David, "Deep calleth unto deep." The sea calls upon the sun, moon and stars to behold it, so far beneath them with reference to distance, yet equal in manifestation of the power, wisdom and glory of God. The sun, moon and stars call upon the mighty ocean to behold them, each saying, Wondrous are thy works, Lord God Almighty. "Deep calleth unto deep." How deep, unmeasurable, are the works of God; how strange are his dealings with mankind, yet how merciful, how gracious. All nature is for man, and man for God. What a wonder! what a wonder! When all the powers of man fail to grasp the works of God in nature, how may any of us expect or hope to enter into the works of the Spirit? How often the children of God would fathom the heights and depths of the spirit world and enter into the hidden mysteries of the Almighty, but all our proud waves, thoughts and efforts are staid; no ascending unto the things reserved for them that love him, no going down into the buried things of wisdom. His glory he will not give to another. All must keep silence before him; all must know he is God. Many are the oceans in the experience of his people. Affliction, sorrow, loss and cares; all too "deep" for them to understand. Deep

calls unto Deep, but there is no reply. Why does the Lord thus deal with me? is often the cry. Why am I so hindered? Why this anguish of soul? Why am I so far from God? Why am I beset with such horrible thoughts of wickedness? Why so tempted to give it all up and say, There is no God? How often in this way the very deeps of depraved nature are made known. How often the pains of hell get hold upon the Lord's people. Oh the depths of sin, who can tell? The sorrows of death who can tell? In the human heart are the very recesses of hell; the bottomless pit is there, and should the Lord deal with us according to the sins of our hearts, who could stand in his presence? Oh the umeasurable deep of God's longsuffering, his loving-kindness, his tender mercy, his immutability. Faith is needed in this dark day where all light seems gone, the Lord having left his people to themselves, as it were, to show to them the hidden evils of nature, and the lengths men will go to satisfy self. The mystery of iniquity—the mystery of godliness—"Deep calleth unto deep." From the beginning these two deeps have existed, and until time shall be no more deep will call unto deep. The infinite gulf between heaven and earth, between God and man, between righteousness and unrighteousness, between grace and works, law and gospel, is fixed by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the end that "Deep calleth unto deep." The exaltation of God is revealed through the "deep" opposite to his character and godhead. When man transgressed the law of the Lord, sin, with all its blackness of death and condemnation, was manifest in the separation of man from God. That horrible condition continued until the law was fulfilled and justice satisfied by the atonement of Jesus, the Savior of sinners. Deep calling unto deep, God in his mercy, and in the person of his Son, reconciled the world unto himself, and in so doing removed the gulf between heaven and earth, bringing the new Jerusalem down to man; lifting man up through the righteousness of the Mediator between God and men. Here deep called unto deep. Justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne, heaven and earth have kissed each other, in that they have met through the salvation of man.

The above thoughts were written while at Ocean City, Maryland, the atter part of August, and while they may give food for thoughts to some of our readers, we fully realize that the thoughts are but a faint hint at the "deep," unfathomable works of God, both in nature and grace. Knowledge of him and his mighty works is only in part here, language is inadequate to express even what little his children know; the glory, however, is in the Lord, there to abide until that which is in part is done away and that which is perfect appears, when we shall all see him face to face, and shall know as we are known. Until then "deep" will continue to call unto deep.

K.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in October (29th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. R. Dennison.)

The Tygarts Valley River Association of Old School, Primitive, Predestinarian Baptists, now in session with the Valley Church, Randolph County, West Virginia, to the several churches of which she is composed, and to all of the faith of God's elect, sendeth christian salutation.

VERY DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Once more, through the mercy of our covenant God, we are spared to meet in the capacity of an association of churches and brethren, for the purpose of keeping up a friendly correspondence among us, and for the comfort and edification of the sons and daughters of Zion's King, in sweet fellowship of the glorious gospel of the blessed Son of God. Since we last met as an association some of our dearly beloved ones have been called away from time to the realities of eternity, and while we mourn our loss, we hope that they are now safely landed on the sunny side of sweet deliverance, and are basking in the smiles of God's love. We realize that we are a little band, very few as compared with the multitudes of nominal worshippers and carnal christians, but we do hope we are of the "few chosen." The Savior says, Many are called, but few chosen. Again, Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth to life, and few there be that find it. Then, dear brethren, let us not feel discouraged because of our number being so small, for the blessed Savior again says, Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. The dear Savior has purchased redemption for all the "chosen few," all those who were given him of the Father before the world was. He hath borne their sins in his own body on the tree, and by his stripes they are healed, and not by works of righteousness which they have done. No, he was wounded for their transgression, he was bruised for their iniquities, the chastisement of their peace was laid on him, and by his stripes they are healed. Yes, dear brethren, thus it is with the "chosen," "faithful," "hidden few," to whom the promises are made, and to whom an abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness have been given, but the world knows them not, because it knew him not. The world does know them, however, as the uncompromising opponents of the many humanly devised institutions and organizations of the worldly-wise, for the advancement and furtherance of Christ's kingdom, his church. But, he says of his church, Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you. Again, On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. No, nothing can prevail against it, for he so loved it as to give his life a ransom for it; then it is the purchase of his blood, and God has placed every member in the body as it pleased him, and who but a blind guide would presume to increase or diminish it? It is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. Then, dear brethren, let us rejoice that we are of the few who have entered in at the strait gate into the narrow way which leads to life, rather than to be numbered with the many who are pursuing the broad way that leads to destruction. Oh may it please our heavenly Father to keep us in that narrow way, and enable us to serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear, that when earthly life and its labors are done we may hear the welcome approbation of, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. This inheritance is for all the

elect of God, the few chosen: the predestinated of the Father, the redeemed of the Son, and the regenerated of the Holy Spirit. These three sweetly harmonize and accord in the redemption and salvation of the elect, the chosen few. Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

J. N. BARTLETT, Moderator.
J. R. DENNISON, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Tygarts Valley River Association of Old School Baptists, now in session with the Valley Church, Randolph Co., W. Va., to the Pocatalico Association of Old School Baptists, with whom we now correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—We greet you in love. We have received your messengers and Minutes with joy. Your preaching with us has been in demonstration of the Spirit and with power. May our correspondence continue for the mutual good of us all, and may we meet you again from time to time as the Lord may enable us. May peace and love abound to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

J. N. BARTLETT, Moderator.
J. R. DENNISON, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Thomas Jamieson, Man., $1.00; J. C. Nelson, Ky., $1.00; F. H. Richardson, Iowa, $3.00; Mrs. Frances Miller, N. Y., $1.00; J. L. Deshong, Fla., $2.00; Mrs. J. R. Lawson, Ala., 25 cents; Mrs. M. Perry, Ark., $1.00; H. L. Holmes, Tex., $3.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

William H. Dolin, the subject of this notice, was born April 5th, 1839, and departed this life March 15th, 1922, at the age of 82 years, 11 months and 10 days. About the year of 1864 or 1865 he took to himself a wife of the same name, Miss Sarah Dolin, and to this union were born four boys and three girls. Brother Dolin was baptized in the fellowship of the Sarah Church, August, 1886, by Elder Jehu Byrnside, and lived a faithful member of the church until death. When the Sarah Church was constituted it was named for sister Sarah Miller, who was the oldest member of the church at that time, and the great-great-grandmother of brother William Dolin's invalid widow, Sarah Dolin. Brother Dolin was well established in the doctrine of salvation alone by the grace of God, and he, with his wife, seldom missed going to their Association, the Pocatalico, he being one of the messengers bearing their letter to the Association. His home was a home for his brethren. The writer, being requested by his widow to preach his funeral, harkened to her request, and on the first Sunday in August, 1922, with the privilege of calling Elder A. J. Mullins to take a part in the services, spoke to a large congregation of relatives and friends who had gathered at his residence to pay the last tribute of respect to the one whom they esteemed as a father in Israel. We hope what was said on this memorable occasion may redound to the honor and glory of God, and the welfare of the Sarah Church, of which brother Dolin was a member. God alone is able to bind up the broken hearts of the bereaved family and wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Written by request of his oldest son, brother Wm. Dolin.

ALSO,

Sister **Polina Hammon,** wife of Elder A. J. Hammon, was born June 13th, 1839, and departed this life November 26th, 1921, at the age of 82 years, 5 months and 13 days. Her maiden name was Roads. I having not the date of her marriage. She was the mother of twelve children, eight girls and four boys. She was baptized by the writer a few years before the death of her husband, Elder A. J. Hammon, in the fellowship of the Good Hope Church, which soon afterwards went down. She with a few others met and gave letters to each other, which were laid into the Hopewell Church of the Pocatalico Association. By request of her youngest son the writer was called to preach a funeral discourse on the third Sunday in July, 1922; also Elder A. J. Mullins was called to take part in the services. Many friends and relatives came together on that memorable occasion, paying their last tribute of respect to one who had been a mother and friend to the entire neighborhood, always speaking kindly to all with whom she had any

dealings or conversation. Indeed, she was one who truthfully could be called a mother in Israel. I will say to her son and all who mourn for her, I feel your loss to be her eternal gain. God alone can give you comfort.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

Crissann Fisher, wife of Elder T. B. Fisher, was born in Ray County, Missouri, July 20th, 1854, and died at her home in Oak Grove, Missouri, September 9th, 1922, being at the time of her death, 68 years, 1 month and 19 days old. She was married to Elder T. B. Fisher, forty-three years ago, and to them were born twelve children, ten of whom have preceded her in death, leaving only two sons, Porter E. and Paul N. Fisher, both of Oak Grove, Mo. Sister Fisher professed a hope in Christ Jesus, and united with New Hope Primitive Baptist Church in 1894, and was baptized by that venerable servant of God, Elder W. T. Brown, which act she fondly cherished to the day of her death. Sister Fisher lived a devoted, faithful life, and was a noble little woman, a faithful wife, a loving, kind, affectionate mother, loved by all. Sister Fisher loved to read the SIGNS, and was a close discerner of the preaching of men, quick to discern error, and frank to express her opinion when she thought it best to do so. She was in the best of spirits Friday when she prepared for Elder Fisher to go to the Nodaway Association, was active in the labor and duties of her home Saturday, and after preparing supper for herself and her children, was sitting out on the porch at about 6 o'clock p. m., when she was heard to say, "Oh me," and in five minutes she was gone, her spirit had gone to God who gave it. Elder Fisher was phoned for, and the funeral arranged to be held from the home Monday at 2 o'clock p. m., and was conducted by Elders Leon Clevenger and W. L. Hall in the presence of a large gathering of relatives and friends, after which her body was laid in the Oak Grove Cemetery to await the resurrection of the dead. May God bless our dear old yoke-fellow in the ministry and care for the children and the one brother who are left to mourn, is my prayer.

W. L. HALL.

James L. Culpepper, Sr., was born in Alabama, July 28th, 1833, and died at his home, near Stockdale, Texas, August 29th, 1922, making his stay on earth 89 years, 1 month and 1 day. He moved to Mississippi when nineteen years of age, and with his parents came to Sweet Home, Lavaca Co., Texas, in 1852, where he made his home until 1903, when he moved with his family to Wilson County, Texas. He was married to Miss Margaret Hall Harbour, January 17th, 1860. To this union fifteen children were born, all of whom are still living, and thirteen of them were present at the funeral services; also his only living sister, our sister Amanda Guthrie. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Mt. Olive, Lavaca, County, Texas, in 1873, and was baptized by Elder Benj. Posey, of Comal County. He was always present at meeting until he became too feeble to go, and for the last few years had services at home whenever a minister came among us. He had taken the SIGNS for thirty-one years, and was a reader of the paper before that time, and found much comfort in its columns. Many an Old Baptist has found a hearty welcome in his home, and he and his companion were always ready to help any in time of need, especially our ministering brethren. Although it is sad to part with him, we feel that he would not want us to grieve for him, but rejoice with him instead. A few years ago, after we had sung, "While sorrows encompass me round," he said that that was his desire. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord." May God, who sustained him by his rich grace, keep and bless all the bereaved, especially the dear aged companion, and may his holy presence fill the vacancy left by the departed.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders Bergin, of Stockdale, and West, of Kerrville. Interment in the cemetery at Stockdale.

(MRS.) M. J. CULPEPPER.

Howard Addis, son of J. Clarkson and Elizabeth Yerkes Addis, died May 29th, 1922. He was born April 10th, 1856, at Hartsville, Pa., and was stricken with paralysis and lingered three weeks. Sister Emma Addis, his widow, with three sons and one daughter, mourn their loss. Mr. Addis was a good husband and father. He was not a member of the church, but attended the meetings of the Old School Baptist Church from his childhood, and we believe he had a good hope through grace. He was laid away in the cemetery of the Southampton Church, Bucks Co., Pa. Elder H. C. Ker and the writer spoke to a large congregation of relatives and friends. May the Lord comfort the bereaved family and sustain dear sister Addis.

B. F. COULTER.

Rocelia White departed this life at her home in Lexington, N. Y., Jan. 29th, 1922. Her maiden name was Rocelia La Ment. She was born at Lexington, N. Y., Dec. 16th, 1845, and married John A. White (deceased) Dec. 20th, 1865, at New York City. She was a member of the Lexington Old School Baptist Church, being baptized in its fellowship, Dec. 18th, 1869. She was a lover of the truth and a consistent member of the church, and was always glad to receive the brethren into her home. She lived to see many of the members of her church laid away, and the last of these was her very dear friend and sister (in the church) Mrs. Fletcher Mackey, whose death was a great loss to her. We believe that ab-

sent from the body she is present with the Lord, which is far better. She leaves to mourn their loss a daughter, Miss Lillian La Ment White, of Lexington, N. Y., and one sister, Mrs. Harvey, also of Lexington, N. Y. At the funeral the writer tried to comfort the bereaved, using as a subject a part of the eighth chapter of Romans.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Mrs. Janie Adams George, our beloved sister in Christ, was born June 30th, 1878, and united with the church at Harris Springs, Sept. 16th, 1899. She was married to Mr. J. B. George, Sept. 18th, 1918, and died July 30th, 1922, leaving her husband and one little child, together with many relatives and friends to mourn their loss. She was much beloved by all who knew her. All was done for her that men and money could do, but God took her to himself. She had several brothers and one sister. She was the daughter of the late J. J. and Emiline Adams. She loved her church and the doctrine of grace, and it was her delight to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; its people were her people. Her pastor, Elder L. Cook, and the writer conducted the funeral, at a Missionary meeting-house, near her home, in Newton County, Ga., in the presence of a large concourse of relatives and friends. May God comfort her beloved husband in his sorrow, together with the dear family.

J. M. ADAMS.

Mary Wakeman was born in Tompkins township, N. Y., Feb. 22nd, 1845, the daughter of Jacob and Mary Winchell Boice, and died June 27th, 1922, at her home in Walton, N. Y. She married Edwin Wakeman, Jan. 5th, 1865. She went to California, Nov. 1, 1920, expecting to remain two years, but came home just four days before her death.

"Aunt Mary," as she was affectionately called, was a member of the New School Baptist organization, but enjoyed the preaching that gave God all the glory. She had marked in her Bible many passages of Scripture, and asked many questions which proved she was not settled, but searching for the truth, which is Jesus, the way, the truth, and the life. She will be greatly missed by her niece, Mrs. T. M. Hewitt, who tenderly cared for her in her illness, and by her neighbors and friends, who testified to their love for her by the large attendance at her funeral and the beautiful floral offerings. She was buried by the side of her husband in the Walton cemetery.

Written by request.

AMY S. HEWITT.

MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting of the Indiantown Church, of the Salisbury Association, will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 30th and October 1st, 1922, beginning on Saturday at 2:30 p. m., and continuing all day Sunday. We cordially invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

J. C. MELLOTT, Pastor.

THE Sideling Hill and Fairview churches, of Fulton County, Pa., have appointed to hold a joint two days meeting at Needmore, Pa., Saturday and Sunday, October 7th and 8th, 1922. Trains will be met at Hancock, W. Va., either via Western Maryland R. R., or Baltimore & Ohio R. R., on Friday before the meeting, by notifying in advance Deacon Jefferson Mellott, Needmore, Pa. Ministers and other brethren of our faith and order, are invited to be with us.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

THE yearly all day meeting of the Snow Hill Church, at Snow Hill, Maryland, will be held on the second Sunday in October (Oct. 8th, 1922). A cordial invitation is extended to all members of our faith and order, and our many friends. Elder Chas. W. Vaughn is expected to be with us.

B. F. COULTER, Pastor.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 11th, 12th and 13th, 1922. Electric trains leave 36th and M Sts., N. W., Washington, D. C., for Leesburg, Va., at frequent intervals during the afternoon and evening, and all trains will be met at Leesburg on Tuesday before the meeting. Preaching brethren and other brethren in fellowship and good standing with the associations and meetings of our northern and southern correspondence are invited to be with us.

T. S. TITUS, Church Clerk.

THERE will be a two days' meeting at Halcottville Old School Baptist meeting-house on Saturday and Sunday, October 14th and 15th, 1922. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

ESTHER RUSTON, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Association is appointed to meet with the Messongoes Church, near Hallwood, Va., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 18th, 19th and 20th, 1922.

Those coming from the north take train leaving Broad Street station, Philadelphia, at 3 o'clock, Tuesday p. m.; and those from the south, train leaving Cape Charles at 7 o'clock p. m. Get off the train at Hallwood, Va. Any one arranging to come on any other train please notify John Wm. Byrd, Hallwood, Va. Ministers and other brethren of our faith and order, are cordially invited to be with us.

J. C. MELLOTT, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 90. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1922. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MY MASTER IS GREAT.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have some impression of mind to-day to write one more article for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, providing you deem it expedient to publish it. I am not intending to write at length, however, owing to my advanced age (eighty-six) and weakness of mind, but believing as I do, and have believed for many years, of this wonderful narrative, recorded in the twenty-fourth chapter of Genesis, I want to write in a way that it may be right to publish it. I have had a morsel of hope for over sixty years that I love my Master, and the church, to which I am impressed this morning to communicate a few of my many thoughts of the greatness of my Master, and how it was and is that the church became great. Some among us may think it strange to so construe this narrative as to make Abraham represent the church. It seems to me that this is not more strange than that Adam and Eve were both called Adam in the day they were created. (Gen. v. 2.) I have for many years believed, and do believe, that Abraham in a figurative way is spoken of to represent the church of God, and I will mention a few texts. First, Matthew iii. 9; also Luke xvi. 22, &c. Abraham's bosom representing the gospel rest spoken of by Paul in Hebrews iv. 3, while the opposite, unbelieving children of God, do not, neither shall they, enter into this glorious gospel rest, for He swore in his wrath that they (that believed not) should not enter into his rest. (Heb. iii. 11; iv. 3.) So this narrative of the rich man and Lazarus, and their very opposite conditions, is a parable, and cannot be literalized, and cannot be used scripturally to represent the conditions of people after this life, but does strictly and clearly (to me) represent the condition of God's people here in their time state, both the believing and unbelieving, those who have and do enter into this gospel rest, and those who do not, neither shall enter into this gospel rest, for that impassable gulf exists between them so they cannot pass either way, or change conditions, which are so very unlike; the one, this blessed gospel heaven of rest, peace, quietness and assurance forever; this opposite place of torment is confusion, disorder and every evil work, and is all in outer darkness, where they are

weeping and gnashing their teeth, demonstrating the fact that they are living, conscious beings, yet dead in a gospel sense, for we must confess that the dead do not weep or gnash their teeth. The children of God are classified as wise and foolish virgins, or gospel subjects and legal worshippers. Gospel subjects are being conveyed by angels (gospel ministers) or carried by gospel ministers to this blessed gospel kingdom, the bosom of rest, having ceased from their own works. (Heb. iv. 10.) But now as I have digressed so far, and see no stopping-place, I must come to the point: My master is great. I am Abraham's servant, the servant of the church of God, the gospel kingdom, and the Lord hath blessed the church greatly, and it has become great, so we see clearly that the church's greatness is of the Lord, their righteousness is of the Lord. The clause, "He is become great," implies that he was not great until the Lord blessed him greatly, and that it was and is the blessing and goodness of God that has and does make the church great, and that every blessing and act of his mercy and greatness was and is sovereign, both for time and eternity. At the best I have neither time nor space to mention but very few of the numerous Scriptures that prove conclusively that the church of God, through his righteousness, is unspeakably great, but without him they are nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity. (Isaiah xl. 15, 16, 40.) "A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation; I the Lord will hasten it in his time."—Isaiah lx. 22. This little one is Christ, and in order to raise this unit, or little one, to a thousand, according to a mathematical solution, we must add three nothings, (naughts), then take away this little one, and they are nothing; therefore, we are shown by this blessed Scripture that all the value, goodness and greatness in any and every sense of the word is in this little one, Christ, and that there is not one iota of value nor greatness in these nothings whereby they may become great of themselves, but all is in the Lord Jesus Christ. In this way only the church has and is become great, therefore, "my master is great." The three implied nothings represent to me, God's people in the three dispensations of time, who, in and of themselves, are nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity. It is highly becoming of all the chosen, called and sworn servants of their master, the church, to ascribe greatness unto our God, for he is the rock, the hope and salvation of all Israel, for all the election of grace are spiritual Israelites, regardless of their nationality, for they are the offspring of a spiritual Israelite, in whom there is no guile. May we be made able, by grace divine, in this dark day of delusion, in these hearts of ours to stand fast in the Little One, who gave himself for us. I have often thought that it was no wonder that King David's servants said to him, Thou art worth ten thousand of us. All the goodness and greatness of the church of God is bestowed on the church, for the great love wherewith he loved her, whereby she became great. Indeed and in truth, "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." Therefore my master is become great, and we are truly glad, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. I have often thought of late when meditating on the greatness of God, and on our nothingness, that if every one of the elect vessels of mercy that God gave his Son in the covenant of grace had been sacrificed and offered up for the sins of

the elect (their sins) family it could not have atoned for one farthing of sin; but this Little One in whom was no guile, was of more value than they all, for they are nothings without the greatness of this Little One, who leadeth them to fountains of living waters.

Dear readers of the dear old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; my heart and feelings have been endeared to you, and to those who have gone before, for many years, and I want to say to you that I have had a name and place among the Old School or Primitive Baptists sixty-one years, and it has been and is a blessed home to me. I hope that I love my Master and the church greatly; I esteem her above my chief joy, if I am not deceived. May God's mercy and greatness continue with you all.

Yours in trials sore,

W. J. MAY.

SHOCK, Ky., Sept. 2, 1922.

THE TOWER OF BABEL.

AFTER the flood the families of the sons of Noah as they journeyed from the east found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there, and they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city, and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. These words are found in the eleventh chapter of Genesis. No doubt the destruction which was wrought by the flood still disturbed their minds, and as Noah had been so successful in escaping the destruction from the flood, through building of the ark, that his name had gone abroad throughout the land as a man of wisdom and foresight, they said, Let us make us a name. Thus they started out to build the tower, and for a while they seemed to be getting along fairly well, but it was a vast undertaking, and the cost beyond imagination. But in consideration of the fact that every one who believed there was such a place as heaven (and most of the people believed that), and it being described as a place so far surpassing this earthly abode, that if anything occurred that they were obliged to leave the earth they would naturally wish to go to heaven, and if the tower was the sure way, who among them would not be willing to work for it and to pay the price? Furthermore, it was generally understood that this earth would again be destroyed some time, and there was also a great deal of talk of future punishment, and if some way could be devised whereby they could reach heaven it would be a very comforting thought. But as the work progressed, they began to meet with discouragements: the expense loomed up in greater proportion, and heaven was still a long way off, and they found they were not getting along well together, as their language became confounded and they could not understand one another. When they asked for brick the workmen would bring them slime, and *vice versa*, and finally there was so much misunderstanding that they were obliged to give up the project, and it ended in confusion, which to them meant failure. They called the tower the Tower of Babel, and the meaning of the word Babel is confusion. But oh, how many towers of Babel have been started since that time, and how very many are under construction to-day. But when they planned to build the original tower they no doubt had Noah's success in mind, but they must have lost

sight of the fact that Noah did not plan the ark himself, it was God's plan, as he had directed him in every detail, and God's plans never end in failure, they never end in confusion, although they do not usually look reasonable to the natural man. But God is too wise to err, and he says, As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. When men started to send missionaries to foreign lands to convert the heathen, and to build up from the earth a sure way for them to reach heaven, and to make for themselves a name, they were starting a tower, the top of which should reach unto heaven. It, too, is a vast undertaking, and the cost is beyond imagination, and their language is already confounded, for when one kind of material is called for they very frequently receive another kind. It is written in Matthew xxiii. 15, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves." When Saul of Tarsus was persecuting the saints, and binding them and casting them into prison to compel them to obey the Mosaic law, he was doing this zealously, thinking to save himself and others, and to make for himself a name. He was engaged in building a tower, the top of which he thought should reach unto heaven; but it ended in confusion, it was only a heap of earth and slime; it was another tower of Babel, and although we believe in being law-abiding citizens, and admire morality, and it is highly commendable, it can never be substituted for the pure and undefiled religion of Jesus Christ. If any of us have ever been engaged in works of self-righteousness, thinking that we would thereby merit the favor of eternal life, thus by our works we were trying to build up from the earth a way by which to save ourselves and others, we too, have started a tower of Babel which has, or will, end in confusion. When Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran, and it grew dark and he took stones of the place for pillows, he had a dream in which he saw the way to heaven, but he had nothing to do with building it, as it was not built by earthly hands, it came down from heaven. This Scripture reads as follows: "And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set: and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in the place to sleep. And he dreamed, and, behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." This dream foretold the coming of the only tower which has been, is, or ever will be the way to heaven, and this is the tower which is mentioned in 2 Samuel xxii. 3, which reads as follows: "The God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my savior; thou savest me from violence." Jacob's dream foretold the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who said, I am the way, the truth

and the life, and no man cometh to the Father except by me. Did earthly hosts herald his coming? No, there was a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Peace on earth, good will toward men. Did earthly signs point out the place? No, a bright star, hung in the heavens by the eternal God, led the wise men there. Did royal pomp attend his coming? No, he was cradled in the lowly manger. The poet in describing it said, "Low lies his head with the beasts of the stall." He was born a child, and yet a King, a Prince and a Savior. His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the great and mighty Lord. What was his mission upon earth? He came to save his people from their sins. Who were his people? Those whom his Father had chosen before the foundation of the world, for he says, Thine they were, and thou gavest them me. All thine are mine and mine are thine. Were men obliged to raise large sums of money for this purpose? No, he paid the full debt, and gave himself a ransom. Did he fulfill his mission upon earth, and finish the work which he came to do? Yes, when he hung upon the tree of the cross, buffeted and reviled of men, nails in his hands and in his feet, a crown of thorns upon his head, and sweat like great drops of blood falling down to the ground, in grief and anguish he cried, It is finished, bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. Then the salvation of every sinner who ever has been or ever will be saved was made complete, for he did not come to make it possible for men to be saved, he came to save them, for he says, Father, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do; and what is done by him is done forever, that men might fear before him. Therefore, every earthly tower, every earthly effort and every earthly way that has been devised by men to attempt to reach heaven, or to merit eternal life, and thereby to make for themselves a name, no matter how great the cost, no matter how many may be engaged in it, or how great they may be in earthly wisdom or accomplishments, their works and their high towers are of the earth earthy, and will perish with the using, and will crumble back to earth again, a heap of earth and slime. But if you have been brought, like Samuel, to know that He is the horn of your salvation, your high tower and your refuge, then nothing can keep you from that inheritance which is treasured up for you where neither moth nor rust can corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal, for we are told that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, can separate us from the love of God which is in Jesus Christ our Lord.

ALFRED E. TITUS.

TRENTON, N. J., Aug. 23, 1922.

COLUMBIA, S. C., Nov. 28, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I feel a desire to try in my weakness and unworthiness to write you a few lines this lonely morning, as I feel to be all alone, and not alone either, as I hope I can feel the love of God and my dear brethren and sisters, the dear children of the most high God.

Now, my dear brethren, I am in deep trouble. My dear husband, who was so kind, is taken away and gone. Elder W. B. McAdams fell asleep in Jesus at 10:30 o'clock, Tuesday night, November 1st, 1921. He was 85 years, 1 month and 10 days old. He had been preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ for forty-six years. Now, dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, I hope you all can feel to

sympathize with me in my declining days. All of God's dear children who read these lines I hope may feel from the heart to pray for me, and I do hope some one can feel to write me a few lines in a way to comfort my broken heart. Oh, how lonely I do feel, not a Primitive Baptist Church in this town. There was one sister in Columbia, but I do not know where she lives. My husband suffered much, but through all his pain he praised God and blessed his holy name. Toward the last he suffered so severely that he begged the God to let him go to sleep and never wake, and would clasp his hands together and shout, Glory to God. He said to me, Wife, do not grieve after me, for I do not dread anything but the pains of death. Oh how my heart did ache within me to know that the dearest thing on earth to me would soon be gone from me never to return. But bless the God of all grace, for though he can never come to me I hope I can go to him, where there will be no more sad farewells to dear ones.

The nearest Primitive Baptist Church is in Hampton County, S. C., and that is one hundred miles from Columbia, so you can imagine how hungry I feel to hear one of God's dear ones speak of the wonderful God who can work and none can hinder. Oh bless his holy name. I feel this lonely morning, sitting here all alone, that if one of God's dear ones could step in my door and speak a word to me my heart would rejoice in God my Savior.

Dear brother Ker, we are strangers in the flesh, but I hope not in the Spirit, for I have read your comforting writings in the SIGNS until you seem near to me. My dear husband loved the SIGNS, and took it as long as he could see to read. I read them to him many times, and he seemed to enjoy every word.

If it is not asking too much of you, will you please publish this, as I would like the dear readers to know of his death, also please send me one of the SIGNS in which it is published. Dear brother, I am in deep trouble, write me a few lines, as I cannot see the faces of the dearest people on earth to me, the Primitive Baptists. Oh how lonely I do feel. I hope all who read this will feel to pray for me.

Your sister,

(MRS.) M. M. McADAMS.

MALVERN, Pa., June 12, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am, indeed, sorry to be behind with my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so am inclosing check with this for renewal for 1922. I surely would not like to be without our dear old SIGNS, for it comes to me when I cannot go to hear the preaching of the word, and I feel I cannot let this remittance go to you without trying to tell you how precious and how comforting to me are the sweet messages of love from the letters of those who are so widely scattered throughout the land. They all tell the same story of the sense of sin, and the finished work of the Savior. How could we rejoice in our salvation had we not been brought down in the valley of humiliation, where we see ourselves the very chief of sinners, where we can only cry, Father, be thou merciful to me, a sinner? Only as we see ourselves sinners without hope in the world, can we know our need of a Savior, one who can save to the uttermost; not one who depends upon our doing our part. If salvation depends on us I for one would be forever lost, for like Paul, I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) there dwelleth no good thing. To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. Oh, to grace how great a debtor

daily I am constrained to be, for unto him is all the glory, and we are as nothing, less than nothing, and in the vast wilderness of sin and despair we must have our precious Ebenezer, our Rock of defense, for if we are born again we are become a battleground, the Spirit warring against the flesh.

I want the editors, Elders Ker and Lefferts, to know how comforting their editorials are to me, and I read them again and again. I am placed in circumstances where I am unable to go often to meetings, so am always looking forward to the mail that brings my SIGNS, and I seldom let the sun rise again before it is read from cover to cover, and I hope it is my fervent prayer that God may keep, bless and sustain its editors by his loving almighty power to continue their labors, to contend as they have, for the truth as it is in Jesus.

May we ever be kept looking unto Jesus, our precious Savior, is the prayer of a poor sinner, if saved at all, by his grace.

JOSEPHINE DRAKE HAVILAND.

TAFT, Tenn., August 31, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—Brother W. T. Plyant gave us some of his SIGNS to read, which did our poor souls so much good that mother wants the paper, for we believe the doctrine that it contends for is the blessed truth the Bible teaches, and that is all that will comfort God's little children. To preach to them an independent people and a dependent God is no comfort, for we know there is nothing good we can do, and we want to hear of a God that has all power, both in heaven and in earth, and can come to poor sinners where they are, and can make them rejoice in a Savior's love and praise God from whom all blessings flow. We do not want to hear one say, "I have given my heart to God." Oh no! We know that God has done the work, changing us from nature's darkness to know the glorious light of the Savior's love. What a precious thought! I do not know whether this has been done for me or not, but I hope it has. I have been made to love his people; I want to live with them, and I want to die with them. I know they could live without me, but oh how could I live without them? their love and fellowship is so much to me. I have had a home with them only a short time, but it is worth all the rest of my life. I was baptized December 18th, 1921, by Elder M. J. Towry, who is one of God's true ministers. He preached one of the sweetest sermons last Sunday that I ever heard from the lips of man, giving God all praise and glory, and showed us so plainly that blessed home which was prepared for his chosen people. We could see that he was guided by divine power, for every word was comforting to hungry souls. I do not see how any one could turn their back on such preaching and trust in man's works. It is said that the Old Baptists are "old fogie" people, and despised by the world, but I do not care if they are, they are the people I love and want to be like. I would rather be one of them than to have all this world's goods. I cannot live the life I would, for from what I hate I cannot refrain, and what I desire I cannot attain, which makes me have many doubts and fears that I am not born again. I have a little hope for which I would not take a thousand worlds like this. It is sweet to hope and trust in Christ, my Savior, and I hope he will keep me humble, ever looking to him for all needed blessings. Now if this is not right, then I am without hope, and will sink in endless woe.

Mother used to read the SIGNS years ago when grandmother took it. She saw in August 15th number the letter of Elder Isaac R. Greathouse, which she thought wonderful, also all the rest of the writings. Mother has had a home with the dear Old Baptists for twenty-six years, and father for thirty-one years. My oldest sister is also a member with them.

I fear I have wearied you; if so, please forgive me, and pray for a poor unworthy girl, saved by the mercy and grace of God, if saved at all.

WILLIE SISCO.

SWEET WATER, Texas, May 15, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I do not expect my poorly written letters to be published, but as I am so far from any of our faith, among strangers, and am very deaf, I cannot get to meet any one here who can talk much with me, and it makes me anxious to get good spiritual letters. My only joy is to know less of the follies of this poor life and more of the heavenly and divine truth as it is in Jesus, our loving and exalted Priest and Savior. Oh may the loving favors of our merciful God ever be yours.

I will again make the request that some of you write me, if you can feel it in your minds to do so, as I do so desire the minds of others on much of the divine word. God has shown me that if the same anointing that we have of him remains with us it will teach us the perfect truth, and is no lie, and as it has taught us it remains in us, and that we need no man's teaching, as he abides in us, and we in him, that we may have confidence, and not be ashamed at his appearing, for we shall see him as he is and be like him. (1 John ii.) Let me hear what you think of 1 Timothy ii. As Peter tells us, there is no private interpretation of the Scriptures. When Christ's reign is over he has destroyed Satan and all his works. Yes, he must destroy the last enemy, which is the devil, with all his works. When there is no more to mar the peace and joy of his Father's kingdom he returns it to the Father and becomes subject to his Father again, and then God is himself all in all.

Now, dear ones, there are many more texts that are in perfect agreement that I would like to speak of in my poor way, but I will not. Let me feel to have your prayers.

Your friend in deed and in truth,

SARAH A. CARTER.

RUSTON, La., July 10, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER J. R. CHANDLER:—I will, in my weak way, try to write you a few lines this morning, as it has been on my mind, though I feel very weak and little to write to one so much stronger in the faith than I am, and it makes me wonder if such a poor weak worm of the dust could ever speak or write anything to comfort God's little children, but as it is on my mind I will try, whether it is comforting or not. I must confess my weakness, and know that if left to myself I can do nothing, but with the help of the blessed Savior I can do whatsoever he commands me to do. Our Savior says, If I go away, I will send the Comforter. Now when it pleases the Lord to send this Comforter his little children are comforted, it does not make any difference who they are or what they are doing, and that Comforter leads them into all truth, for God speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. I must confess that of late I am in darkness, filled with doubts and fears, and often feel that I am deceived in my poor

heart, and that I have deceived God's children, and oh how this brings my courage low; but I know that if God saw fit in the beginning to send his own Son into the world to save me I am saved, and if the dear Savior did not come to save me I am lost. I often think, Why did God show me such dear wonderful things if he did not love me, and why do I love God's people, when I am so little, weak and unworthy? I feel that the church would be better off without me, but I love them. The Lord says, Every good and perfect gift comes from above, and if God gives me this love for his people it is good and perfect; and if this love I have for God's people is of this world it will perish with the world, I know, but if God-given it will never perish. We know the day will come when all things will be shown up, and that which will not stand will fall, and all things of this world will perish; but God's promises will stand, and he will do all his pleasure, and none can stay his hand, nor say unto him, What doest thou? He watches over the weak, sick and afflicted, and keeps them, leads and directs them when all their hope is gone, and he makes them know he is their Savior, and that beside him there is none other. God's people are confused and scattered, troubled on every hand, but nothing can go beyond God's bounds, for he says to the sea, Thus far shalt thou come, and no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed. We know that when it pleases God to gather his children together and cease their troubles it will be done. His promises are sure, and his commandments just and holy, and all will come to pass according as he has purposed.

I see I cannot write anything that will interest you, so will close, asking you to remember in your prayers a poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all. If you feel that this poor letter is worthy of an answer I should be glad to receive it. If I could write good letters, as you can, I would be glad to write, but they are like myself, full of mistakes.

May God bless you all in every undertaking.

From the same sinner,

OLA C. LOVE.

LOOP, Texas, August 18, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year has passed and gone, as I see the date of my subscription shows I have received all my numbers paid for, and in sending my renewal I wish to speak a word of praise for the good old SIGNS, for in this I feel I am praising the God of heaven, for I feel it is of him that it has stood so long, and is still standing, on that solid foundation, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone. Oh what a joy to be blessed with such sweet messages as fill your paper each issue. Each copy we receive should remind us we are just that much nearer our journey's end. In my dark and gloomy meditation I wonder, Is this doctrine of a sovereign and unchangeable God true? But when the dark clouds of gloom roll away and the Sun of righteousness shines on the way and gives me (as I hope) an eye of faith to behold his power supreme over all things, oh what joy fills my soul to read the glad tidings of good things the Lord has done for us, whereof we are glad. Oh that we could always pray the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples to pray, but we in nature cannot say, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, but by the Spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the dead we can pray, and by that Spirit his people do pray, and will ever pray, and he will hear their prayers, and their prayers will

be in accord with his purposes, and his purposes are all embraced within himself, for whatsoever his soul desireth that he doeth and none can stay his hand. We hear so much at this time about "If we will God will," but, brethren, if this be so what a deplorable condition we are in, as we are nothing, yea, less than nothing, even vanity in his sight. Brethren, if we realize that this is so, then why try some other way? Those who walk in error most assuredly cannot walk in truth, for the truth is in Jesus, so that they who walk in truth must be in him. He said, I am the way and the truth and the life. That which is not of him is false, and the apostle said that in him we live and move and have our being. I have no good works to boast of, and if ever I did a good deed or thought a good thought it was in and by him, and not of myself. Oh the failure I have found myself to be! Of all the resolutions I have ever made I have never been able to keep one, but have found it as one of old said: It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. I have found that of the future here in time I know nothing. We know not this moment what the next will bring, then how can we boast of our works? God forbid. We boast only in Jesus, for in him and by his power in us we can do all things commanded us. We believe in keeping the commands of Jesus, but not by nature or in the letter, but in the Spirit, for he said, My words they are spirit and they are life. If his Spirit is life, then we must possess it or we are dead, and if we possess it then we have life to act according to his commands.

Do with this as you think best, but do not crowd out better reading to give it space. May the Lord enable you to continue your good work.

Yours in hope of mercy,

J. F. DANIELL.

MARION, Ky., May 23, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—You will find inclosed a post-office order for two dollars, for which please extend my subscription for the SIGNS one more year, for I much enjoy reading the many good letters it contains. I believe it advocates the truth, if I am blessed with any understanding of the truth. Sometimes I fear I am mistaken in the whole matter, at other times I hear preaching, or read a good piece in the SIGNS, and feel that the Lord knew me in the pardoning of my sins. Most of my time is dark. One thing I am satisfied about, and that is the Old Baptists are right, but am often made to fear I am not one of them. I am such a vile sinner that I cannot do the things I would, but do many things I would not, yet some time, if it pleases the good Lord, I hope to be given a home where doubts and fears will be no more, where joy and peace reigns for ever. Hoping God will bless you, brethren, in your good work, I am a poor old sinner, if saved, saved by grace alone,

W. N. CULLEN.

SILVERTON, Texas, July 1, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—I herewith send bank draft for two dollars, one dollar is to pay for the SIGNS six months, the other dollar you can use as you wish. I wish to say to the loved ones, scattered far and near, that I long to see them and hold sweet communion with them. Yes, I long to hear the old, old story of Christ and his love to his little ones proclaimed from the pulpit as in days gone by. I have not heard a sermon preached in nearly a year; all the preaching I get is through the SIGNS, and oh how much I do enjoy the good letters and editorials, and I also love to read the "away" back numbers. I have one copy published in 1858. I miss the letters of the loved ones who have passed away.

May God be with you to bless and to keep you in his love.

LYDIA C. RAY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1922.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 CORINTHIANS XI. 27.

"WHOSOEVER shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord."

Perhaps many of the Lord's people have partaken of the Lord's supper with fear and trembling lest they have done so unworthily. Such fear is good evidence of the work of grace in the heart. The fear of self often keeps quickened sinners from evil. The fear of God's displeasure makes his children walk softly before him. None but his children know what it is to fall into the hands of the living God. David said he would rather fall into the Lord's hands, because of his mercy, than to fall into the hands of his enemies. There can be no safer place than in the hands of the Almighty, the Friend of sinners.

The apostle in writing this letter to the brethren was setting in order the ordinance of the Lord's supper. Some had made it a feast, others were hungry and some drunken. They seemed to have no idea of its real significance, nor how it should be observed, and because of their abuse of it the apostle in his letter rebukes them. Jesus instituted the supper in the night in which he was betrayed to be crucified for the redemption of his people. All the former passover suppers in a faint way only pointed to the one that Jesus ate with his disciples before he suffered. The passover supper in Egypt the night before the Israelites left that land was the beginning of such suppers. It signified more than anything ever observed by national Israel up to that time. Many plagues had been brought upon the Egyptians through the power given to Moses. In them all the powers of the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob had been manifest. The last to be visited upon them was the death of the firstborn of both man and beast in every house of the Egyptians. This visitation of God's wrath upon them, because of their cruel treatment of his people, was to make Pharaoh willing to let them go. They were faithful workmen, and did their work well and really were the asset to the land of Egypt, hence they were valued highly, as slaves, and the king, Pharaoh, was very loath to let them depart out of the land. But the appointed time had arrived that they should be delivered from the land of bondage and darkness, and the Lord came down, in power, to bring them out of the house of bondage and into the land of Canaan, which he had given them. Before leaving, however, "the passover supper" must be eaten. They were therefore commanded to kill a lamb or a kid for every house of the Israelites. The lamb, or kid, had to be eaten with bitter herbs, and every man prepared for the journey before them; each must have his loins girded, sandals on his feet and a staff in his hand. The blood of the lamb, or kid, had to be used in staining the door-posts of each home of the Israelites. This was for a sign of life, or salvation, to them when the destroying angel passed over the land to cause the death of the firstborn of both man and beast of every house of the Egyptians. Thus when the destroying angel passed

over the land, the sign of the blood of the lamb was upon the door-posts of each house of the Israelites, and while death was visited upon each house of the Egyptians, not an Israelite died, and the next day they began their journey of deliverance. Hence we see the significance of the passover supper in the land of Egypt. That supper shadowed forth a greater passover supper, a perfect Pascal Lamb, and it was celebrated regularly, according to the Mosaic law, until the end of that dispensation. Then Jesus, our Passover Lamb, gave his flesh to be eaten and his blood to be drunk, that eternal deliverance come to the elect of God the Father. In that night when he ate the last passover supper with his disciples, after the supper was ended he took bread and blessed it and gave to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." Thus ended the commemoration of the passover supper in Egypt by the Israelites. The true Passover Lamb is slain, and his brethren, the children of God, from that day eat the bread and drink the wine (flesh and blood) in remembrance of him, the Lamb of God, that took away the sins of the world. Paul, therefore, in his letter, from which we have taken the above text, was reminding the church at Corinth of the sacred solemnity of the occasion, and as to how it should be observed. It was never intended as a feast, where some became drunken, and where no thought of Jesus is manifest. It seems that in those days every man had his own bread and his own wine, and that the body and blood of Jesus were lost sight of entirely. Such was altogether wrong, hence Paul rebuked them for their lack of sincerity and their ungodly conduct. It is true also that in this day and time thousands are guilty of the body and blood of Jesus in the sense of which the apostle speaks in this letter. In all the world thousands eat the bread and drink the wine without a thought of the Savior, his sufferings and death. They do not discern the body of Jesus, they have no thought of the love that caused him to die, nor have they any conception of the redemption that is in his blood. It is therefore nothing short of mockery for such characters to partake of the Lord's supper. Since the offering of Abel, blood has been the sign of salvation, but none except those saved by the blood of the Lamb of God see it. The offerings for sin by the priests of the blood of goats and calves all set forth the shedding of blood for the remission of sins, but that blood was only a sign, hence could not take away sin. The scarlet line that Rahab was commanded to hang in the window was a sign of salvation to her and her house when the walls of Jericho fell. But now the house of God has the substance of all those signs: the blood of Jesus Christ, which forever atoned for sin, and perfected all them that are sanctified by it. To us the Lord's supper is most solemn; it shows forth his death till time shall be no more. In the faith of the children of God the bread is his flesh and the wine his blood, therefore they eat his flesh and drink his blood because they have life in them. It is impossible to thus eat without remembrance of him. This is eating and drinking worthily, but to make a feast of it, to disregard its solemnity and significance, is to eat and drink damnation to one's self. The order of the house of God should be maintained

by the church in every point, to the salvation here of the Lord's children, rather than their destruction. Salt is used to save, preserve, not to kill. There is salvation in the church by the salt as well as that the world is saved, or kept, by the salt. "Ye are the salt of the earth." Therefore as the church, in this sense, saves the world, let us save one another, and exhort one another the more as we see the day approaching. May peace reign and good will to man be in evidence. K.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada, to the churches of our faith and order in fellowship and correspondence with us, sends christian greeting in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED:—Another year is numbered with the past, and through the mercy of a covenant-keeping God we have been blessed to meet together to worship God (we trust) in spirit and in truth, for which blessed privilege we are thankful to him who keeps Zion. How wonderfully are the Lord's people favored to meet in fellowship, when each can feel a brother's sigh, and with him bear a part, when the Lord shines upon his dear people with the Spirit of his love, when we are humbled by his Spirit to look upon the things of others as better than our own. Oh how sweet to meet in brotherly love and fellowship, when our thoughts are one, our aims are one, when no motive prompts us but to worship God in our bodies and spirits, which are his. What a heaven below our Redeemer to know, and what heavenly blessings are bestowed upon poor, needy sinners by our kind and gracious Savior. But oh for a thankful heart for all these heavenly privileges which we as a church have been favored to enjoy during the past year. Our meetings have been peaceful and well attended, and the dear Lord has been pleased to send among us during the year past his faithful servants preaching Jesus, and him crucified, for the salvation of poor needy sinners, to the comfort of many of the Lord's children who have come burdened with a desire to hear the gospel in its purity. Our desire is that we as a church may still be held in fellowship, and continue our correspondence through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES with all with whom we have corresponded during the years past. Our desire is to labor for the things that make for peace, and to strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

During the year past we have suffered the loss of several dear and faithful members, who have been taken from the sorrows of this world to sweet sleep and rest in their blessed Savior. We, as a church, feel keenly our loss, and desire to bow in humble submission to the divine will of God, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. In looking forward to the coming year we hope to be blessed with visits of faithful servants whom the Lord has placed upon the walls of Zion to declare his glorious truth to the poor and needy in Zion.

JOHN B. SLAUSON, Moderator.
J. T. KERR, Clerk.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in October (29th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder B. F. Coulter, at the residence of the bride, Philadelphia, Pa., August 11th, 1922, John J. Powers and Jessie Bailey, both of Philadelphia, Pa.

By the same, at the residence of the bride's parents, Philadelphia, Pa., John L. Welden and Mildred E. Bailey, both of Philadelphia, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Ira Clarence Thompson, oldest son of brother and sister Thompson, of the Frying Pan Church, died at his home on Sunnyside Farm, near Herndon, Fairfax County, Va., September 19th, 1922. He was born in West Virginia, September 10th, 1879, making his age just 9 days over 43 years. He was the oldest child of a family of seven, and leaves four sisters and two brothers surviving him: Miss Myrtle, Miss Hattie and Earl, all at home, Mrs. Walter Fox, of Vale, Va., Mrs. Jether Dove, of Pender, Va., and Albert Thompson, of Floris, Va. He was married September 16th, 1914, to Miss Laura Miller, daughter of brother A. S. Miller, of Kearneysville, W. Va. They have four little children: Mary M., William M., Clarence W. and David T. Thompson. These little ones, with their mother, are left to face the struggle of life without the husband and father. Sad as it is, we know the Lord reigns and rules over all, and that he will make a way in providence whereby all their needs shall be supplied. For the past fifteen months or more, Clarence had been a sufferer, and as the end approached his sufferings became more and more intense. He knew that death was inevitable, and that he was beyond the help of all medical skill. For himself he did not dread death, though he shrank from the pangs of dissolution, as most of us do. He regretted to have to leave his wife and little ones, otherwise he was made reconciled to the will of God concerning him. From a boy, and as a youth, he was always serious-minded, caring nothing for the pleasures and amusements which most young people generally care for. He was a great reader, but enjoyed only the best books, caring nothing for trash, either in life or in books or in religion. He loved good and serious music, but the popular airs of the day jarred terribly on him. Best of all, he loved the truth of God as it is in Jesus. He regularly attended Old School Baptist meetings, but never united with them, because he felt so keenly his unworthiness for the fellowship of the church. The church and congregation admired and respected him for his exemplary walk and character and would have loved to welcome him into their midst could he but have been satisfied to be subject to their judgment. As I write this, I have before me a letter written me by brother Thompson, telling of a conversation he had with Clarence a few days before death came. He said to his father, "Do you think I have any experience like the Baptists?" "I know I am a sinner, and if saved, it will be by the grace of God, nothing that I can do; also that God controls all things in heaven and in earth and has predestinated all things to come to pass according to his will, even my condition and end. I have believed and loved these things for many years and the preaching of them."

At the funeral, I tried to speak from the words: "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word." He was laid to rest in Herndon Cemetery. May the Spirit of the Lord comfort all who mourn.

ALSO,

George W. Titus departed this earthly life suddenly, of apoplexy, at his home, Lucketts, Loudoun Co., Va., September 18th, 1922. He was a son of Tunis and Mary Hunter Titus, both deceased, and was born at Taylortown, Va., December 16th, 1843, making his exact age 78 years, 9 months and 2 days. He died five miles from the place of his birth, and his whole life was spent within that limited area, but he was far from being a narrow man. His was a rare and wise judgment, and his counsel was sound and much sought after by friends and neighbors, who often asked his advice in both personal and public matters. He is survived by one brother, Deacon T. S. Titus, of the New Valley Church, and two sisters: Mrs. Sarah Plaster and Miss Lucretia Titus, of Leesburg, Va. His first wife was Miss Ellen Virts. Of that union five children are living: Harry C. Titus and Mrs. Esther Loy, of Lucketts, Va.; Brown Titus, of Philadelphia, Pa.; G. Tunis Titus, of Montgomery Co., Md., and Mrs. Thornton Titus, of near Washington, D. C. His second wife, who survives him, was Miss India Titus. To them were born two sons, both living: Nelson and William Titus, at home with their mother. Mr. George Titus never made a public profession of religion, but he was a regular attendant at the meetings of the New Valley Old School Baptist Church, and was always ready to entertain at association times, or to help in any other material way that he could. He was a very active, energetic man, always busy at some work, either for himself or for his neighbors. At the time of his death he was busy working in his field. He was a faithful and true husband, a devoted father, an upright citizen, much interested in bettering his community, a kind neighbor and a steadfast friend; a man who kept his word and faithfully performed any promise he made.

At the funeral I tried to speak the words of Jesus: "He that keepeth my saying shall never see death." He was buried in the cemetery at Leesburg, and one of the largest assemblies ever witnessed here testified by their presence to the esteem in which he was held.

ALSO,

Nancy Virginia Norman, young daughter of Joseph E. and Lillian Lightner Norman, of Purcellville, Va., died of infantile paralysis July 23rd, 1922. She was born October 6th, 1918, making her stay on earth 3 years, 9 months and 17 days. She was a granddaughter of brother Eppa and sister Rebecca Norman, of the Ebenezer Church. She was a dear, sweet child, the sunshine of the home, a great boon to her devoted parents. We know that the same good and all-wise God who gave this gift to dwell a little while on earth is the very same God who has taken the gift again unto himself, and we know that God is no less good when he takes that which he has loaned us for a brief while than when he first bestowed the gift, but we cannot of ourselves make ourselves reconciled to his will. Reconciliation is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, not the fruit of the human will. Nature rebels against God's dealings with us, but grace alone brings resignation. Herein is the cross which God's elect are called unto. If we be without such conflicts between the flesh and the Spirit we are without evidence that we are his. Just a few days before this little soul took its flight from earth, another little girl was born into the home: one came as the other went. However, the little newcomer will fill her own place in the home. The little one gone leaves a vacancy never to be filled on earth. One cannot stand in another's place. Each fills her own place and fulfills the errrand on which she is sent. May the sweet Spirit of Jesus dwell in the hearts of the father and mother to cause them to thank God that he sent Nancy to them, if only for a little while, to thank him further that she is now beyond all pain and suffering and power of temptation, and to give them strength to say, The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord. L.

MEETINGS.

THERE will be a two days' meeting at Halcottville Old School Baptist meeting-house on Saturday and Sunday, October 14th and 15th, 1922. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

ESTHER RUSTON, Church Clerk.

THE Salisbury Association is appointed to meet with the Messongoes Church, near Hallwood, Va., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 18th, 19th and 20th, 1922.

Those coming from the north take train leaving Broad Street station, Philadelphia, at 3 o'clock, Tuesday p. m.; and those from the south, train leaving Cape Charles at 7 o'clock p. m. Get off the train at Hallwood, Va. Any one arranging to come on any other train please notify John Wm. Byrd, Hallwood, Va. Ministers and other brethren of our faith and order are cordially invited to be with us.

J. C. MELLOTT, Pastor.

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IN

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 90. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1922. NO. 21.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Sept. 8, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—"Elder L. H. Hardy, my dear friend and brother in Christ, I have just read an article with your name signed to it, which I greatly enjoyed reading. Elder Hardy, please answer the following questions: Are God's children their own free agents after regeneration, to live in obedience or disobedience? The so-called Primitive Baptists in this country say that God has no will about his children after regeneration, but that it is left to them to live in obedience or not. So please write a long letter on obedience, as I desire to know the truth. I would be glad for other able writers to write on this same subject, as I am in trouble about it. Pray for me, a poor beggar of the earth."

I do not know the location of the writer's post-office, and therefore cannot be personal in my remarks, and I do not wish to be.

I want to first examine the term, "Free Agent." "Agent: A substitute, deputy, or factor; one entrusted with the business of another; an attorney; a minister." "Free: Being at liberty; not being under necessity or restraint, physically or morally." These are the primary meanings of these two words. Then Webster gives the definition of free agency as follows: "The state of acting freely, or without necessity or restraint of the will." That this definition of "free agency" flatly contradicts his definition of the word, "agent" any one can see who desires to know nothing but the truth. Was Adam free in his primeval state as he was when the Lord made him, and put him in the garden of Eden? Let us see: "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." —Gen. ii. 16, 17. Thus man was under the command of God, therefore he was not free. Neither was he an agent, for he was put at the head of a possession. It was his. The Lord saw the condition of the mind and will of man, even of his most faithful servants and children. "For the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth."—Gen. viii. 21. In whom did God see this? Surely in Noah, a preacher of righteousness, the only per-

son in all the old world who found favor in the sight of God; the only one to whom the Lord said, "For thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation."—Gen. vii. 1. It would appear that there were conflicting principles in that man of God: he had in him the Spirit of truth, which bound him to preach righteousness to the praise of God, and the Lord recognized it; he also had in him the spirit of the world, so he would or did make wine and got drunk. In him the Lord saw that the imaginations of the heart of man were evil from his youth. There it was fully manifested that the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh (Gal. v. 17), as Paul saw it and felt it more than four thousand years later. Noah was not free. He was led either by the Spirit of God or by the lust of the flesh. He was a child of God, had been born again of that incorruptible seed by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, yet was moved by a power that was in him, therefore was not free. It was the word of God that moved Abraham to go out of his father's house, from the land of his nativity, from all his people. God commanded; his word was the word of power, the word of the King of kings and Lord of lords. Abraham was a true and faithful servant of that word. He must obey. He was moved by faith. Faith is the gift of God, and God's gift moved Abraham. It was not his free will, but the gift of God. Therefore he was not a free agent, but a servant of the living God. With him and in him did the Lord make his covenant, and fix the promises which were given in his everlasting covenant before the world began, in which all the members of his body were written, when as yet there was none of them. (Psalms cxxxix. 16.) Isaac was the promised seed, as all the elect of God are. He was not like Ishmael, who was born at the dictation of fleshly haste, as all the nonelect professors of religion are. In the fulfillment of the promises of God in his people they laugh for joy and comfort to know that the impossible things of this world are fully accomplished in the Lord. They are born children of God with love, faith, and hope in them. These principles of righteousness show to them their helplessness and dependence on the Lord to move them, and to cause them to go forward in the things he has commanded. Jacob was the chosen, and the one beloved of God, as all his children are. His twin brother was the one they said God hated, as he does all the nonelect. Not because of what they have done, nor because of what they have left undone. The children were yet unborn, and had done neither good nor evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand. (Rom. ix. 11.) What was the character of Jacob? Was he obedient, always doing right? The evidence is to the contrary. He was a supplanter, conniving for the things of this world. But it might be said that these things were done before he was born again, or before his name was changed. Yes, and afterwards, too. Jacob was always Jacob, and yet he enjoyed the blessings with Israel. God never withdrew his love from him which he had for him before he was born. Whether he doubted or trusted, the Lord led him about, and kept him as the apple of his eye. None of this conditionalism with Jacob. God was his God, and he could be blessed in no other. Unexpectedly the Lord appeared to him in the vision of the night, and he saw the faith of God's people as a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, with the angels of

God ascending and descending upon it. God stood at the top of this mysterious ladder, and there he renewed in Jacob the covenant he had made with Abraham, and with Isaac. Was it because of the obedience he had rendered to God in some good work? No. He had just perpetrated one of the most evil deeds of his life, in taking advantage of his blind father, in securing the blessing which that old man had allotted for Esau, and because of this very deed he was now running away from his father's home. Did the Lord's blessings come upon him because of this evil deed? No. But because God had blessed him, and could not and would not break his word because of Jacob's ugly disposition. Jacob's will was nothing, God's will was everything. Who was the cause of Moses being a proper child? Was it the goodness of his father and mother? or was it because the Lord had appointed him to be a judge, and (under him) the deliverer of Israel? Was it not by the gift (faith) of God that the mother of Moses hid him three months? Was it not the same faith that would not let his parents fear the king? (Heb. xi. 23.) Was Moses a free agent in obeying God in his calling to go in unto Pharaoh, and to Israel? or did he rebel, and refuse to go? Would God release him from the work unto which he was born, and preserved from the destructive persecution of the Egyptians just because he was rebellious, and refused to go to do that work? His rebellion did not change the purpose of God. When he refused, and said, Send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send; why did not the Lord release him and send another? (See Exodus iv. 13.) The Lord had said, Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt. That was God's word, and it could not be broken. Was that conditional? Was it not absolute? It was pertaining to the salvation of Moses and the children of Israel from Egypt to Canaan.

I might mention hundreds of things along that line, but must pass on. "He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." —Job xxiii. 10. Thus faith speaks. Had he gone astray? He had spoken the words which were too wonderful for him, he had honored himself. Why did not God cast him off? The Lord knew his way, and he intercepted him to turn him about, as he does all of his people. Those miserable comforters preached conditionalism to him, and the Lord condemned their sayings, as he does all the conditionalism of to-day. The Lord spoke to Job, and he saw the folly of his way, and confessed it before the Lord. Even so are his dealings with all his children. What was David doing in the horrible pit? (Psalms xl.) Why did he not just obey, and come up? But, no, the Lord must bring him up out of that pit. Surely now he can get on the rock. No, the Lord must put him there. Well, he can sing a new song. No, the Lord must put it in his mouth, then it is praise to God from first to last. Surely now he will never see sorrow any more. But hear him: "I cried unto God with my voice, even unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me." "Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in his anger shut up his tender mercies?" Oh how terrible! David, what are you doing with such an

experience as this? Why not obey and rejoice, and praise the Lord? Ah! poor man! Hear him: "And I said, This is my infirmity," &c.—Psalms lxxvii. You, David, a child of God, the sweet singer of Israel, you have an infirmity? That is his word. Ah! this cloud. It obscures my vision of the Sun, and shrouds me in darkness, but in it are the refreshing showers of the gentle rain on the tender grass. Could I be without this? In the world ye shall have tribulation, said our dear Jesus. What next, David? "For great is thy mercy toward me; and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell."—Psalms lxxxvi. 13. But who is this man David? Is he a common evil doer in Israel? No. A shepherd's boy, the slayer of Goliath, the king of the enemies of God's people, a man after God's own heart, and with but one fault. It is he who was the standard for all the kings who were to follow, and whom the Lord called his servant. Then why all this trouble, and such great heaviness? We will let Paul tell us: "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."—Heb. xii. 6. Then, David, instead of rebuking you as a vile sinner in the house of the Lord we extend to you the right hand of fellowship, peace and love as a dear fellow-traveler in the pathway of our God. Here the conditionalism goes down forever. Amen.

How about Isaiah? He saw a wonderful vision, and it was so terrible that he cried, "Then said I, Woe is me; for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips." How do you know? "For mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."—Isaiah vi. 5. Strange that such a wonderful vision should have reflected so much corruption in the beholder. Very far from free agency this, and in a child of God, too.

Jeremiah, give us a word. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"—Jer. xvii. 9. But was not Jeremiah one of the outcasts to say such things as that? Read Jeremiah i. 5, and see that he was ordained by the Lord before he was born, and was kept all the days of his life by the mighty hand of God.

Jonah, we will hear a word from you: was told to go to Nineveh, and preach I that in forty days Nineveh should be overthrown. I would not go. I went to the sea and paid my fare to go to Tarshish, but a storm arose, and I was cast into the sea, and swallowed by a great fish. There I was in the belly of hell, and I learned that the Lord was ruler, and he made me willing to do his bidding. He taught me that "salvation is of the Lord," and made me willing to pay my vows. Jonah, is that salvation which you say is of the Lord for time or for eternity? It is for now when the great fish will, at the command of the Lord, vomit me up on the dry land to do His commandment to me. Then it is for time. What had he done to bring about that salvation? Absolutely nothing, or it would not be of the Lord. Any part he had done in it would be of Jonah.

I will pass from this. Our Lord said, "I can of mine own self do nothing," &c., —John v. 30. Was he a free agent?

Paul said, "For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I."—Rom. viii. 15. Was he a free agent? He surely was a child of God. Read all of it. Again, he said, "For by grace ye are [not were] saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." —Eph. ii. 8, 9. Saved for the present. Are saved. Any free agency in that?

Any conditionalism? "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."—Phil. ii. 12. That is it, is it not? Who were to do this? The most obedient church to which Paul wrote. Not dead sinners, not those christians who are out of the church, not even the disobedient in the church; but those who have always obeyed. Why, and by what power do they do this? 13th verse: "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." He first works the will. Then every opposition is gone. He, in this way, works the do, and the salvation is worked out. There is nothing in the way when God works in them both the will and the do. Hence it is all of God. The commandment comes to them in the things which the Lord doeth in them. Then who or what can hinder them from working out their salvation? What power can offset, or in any way cause that this commandment of God shall not be done? Therefore there is none who can hinder that salvation from being worked out. It is they that receive the commandment who do it, but it is the Lord who first does it in them. God has possession of that heart, and he does not work disobedience in that heart. He does work in it both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Disobedience is worked in them by following their own lust. But at the time the Lord has appointed for obedience to reign he destroys their lustful powers to that extent that his will is done. Thus they are swallowed up of their lust, and it proves to be to them the very belly of hell. There the Lord teaches them to obey his commandment and they do it. Thus they have to be destroyed in themselves before they walk in the commandments of the Lord. Thus they learn that salvation is of the Lord. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."—2 Tim. i. 9 10. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost. (Titus iii. 5.) These things show the way we are saved, and the way our salvation is continued in us, and we in it, and when we have done all that is commanded we shall say, I am an unprofitable servant, for so it was my duty to do. The Bible abounds with so much testimony in praise of the Lord, and so much to show that we are grass, and dung, and dross; vile, nothing, cut off; doing nothing good, nothing but filth. I wish I could say it as I feel it, but have no words. I could write a book and not tell the half on either side. The good Lord deliver us from the awful Arminianism of conditionalism, free agency, and all such foxes as come into the vineyard and destroy the vine with its beautiful clusters.

Your brother and friend, hoping only in the grace and mercy of God for salvation for time and eternity.

L. H. HARDY.

SULLIVAN, Ill., September, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It has been some time since I have embraced the opportunity of speaking to all of our good brethren through the medium of your most excellent paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. This is certainly a great blessing, to thus be able to communicate

our ideas one to another over all the broad expanse of territory which the paper covers, as well as to get the ideas concerning the welfare of God's believing children from the various writers. You editors are certainly doing a wonderful work, and should be sustained by our brotherhood, as no doubt you are and will be.

I feel constrained to write you in regard to Jeremiah vi. 16, and while I should like to use the entire verse, I will only quote the phrase, "And ask for the old paths." There was an article appeared in September 1st SIGNS, page 261, and dated Sept. 15th, 1881, which I rather think caused this Scripture to hang heavily upon my mind. In this fast day in which we are living we are very apt to forget to "ask for the old paths," in fact we, generally speaking, do not want to travel in a path, we want to go in a broad highway, also we are very much inclined to neglect the paths. We read where Job says, He marketh all my paths. Now a path is usually considered to be a byroad connecting two points. In this sense it is usually a nearer route than the main road, and of course in this fast day, when travel on the highway is almost dangerous, the path would be much safer to travel. However, from reading this entire verse I think the prophet had in mind the conduct of God's believing children here in the world. He further admonishes them "to walk therein." That is, do not go out into the broad highway, but in the path, and he also says what the result will be, or tells us where it leads: "Rest for your souls." It seems this admonition by the prophet in that day could be taken by us in this day and used to advantage. Let us not be found in a broad way, but with the chosen few in the path "where is the good way." In the main road we see many, many dangers, i. e., organizations of nearly every kind and character, that we may avoid by being in the path. We are not caring about the welfare of these earthly organizations, so why should we care to travel with them? How many of us in this day are conversant with the articles of faith as held by our forefathers? These are beautiful paths for us to consider. Are we asking for these paths? Or, upon the contrary, do we want a broader road which will take in more and more worldliness? I have been traveling some of late in Indiana and Illinois, and find a disposition among some of our brethren to ignore these articles, and some go so far as to say they ought to be amended, and in some places they would like to have them abrogated. So innovations are apt to creep in among us. We regard these articles of faith as "life-lines" of truth, and in our explorations let us not get too far away from them. If we keep close enough to the "life-line" that we may reach out and grasp it we are not in much danger. We are more safe, however, if we hold it with a steady grasp. I have always been so much afraid that I would rather have the line wrapped about me. Brethren, let us contend for the faith of our forefathers, and be not easily wafted about with every wind of doctrine. Anything short of the article spoken of above is but the "wind of doctrine," and so many winds of doctrine blowing in various directions they create whirlwinds. Our brethren used to glory in predestination. It will not mix with "free will." This vain attempt of our good brethren to mix them has caused much difference and confusion, acrimonious debate, &c. Let us then in these perilous times cling close to the eternal truth of God, walk in the good

old paths, and find rest for our souls. He says by the prophet, "I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways." "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." Brethren, we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. The time is now when they will not endure sound doctrine. The world is crying compromise, but God says, "Be ye separate." A good brother wrote me the other day that when he went to the church he went trusting in the name of Jesus. Since he had joined he found so much worldliness among them he could hardly tell a Baptist from a Methodist. Secret orders, mission societies, tract societies, and in some places they are wanting to put in organs and Sunday-schools. Now these ways of the world are not the "old paths." The plain lines of demarcation between the Old School Baptists and the other religious organizations of the world have been plainly drawn for centuries. We as a people have always been opposed to the many new innovations of man, such as church fairs, festivals, tableaux, holy raffling, Sunday-schools, temperance societies, anxious benches and mourners' seats, protracted meetings and holy altars, female revivalists, theological seminaries, man called, man qualified and salaried ministry, &c. These engines of destruction are all in the broad highway. Then let us as a chosen few keep the even tenor of our way, satisfied as we all are that God is all powerful, he rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. He speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. What his soul desireth even that he doeth. He will work, and who shall let it?

In conclusion, brethren, let me say, Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

A brother in hope of eternal life,

E. D. ELDER.

SIMPSON, Va., March 20, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—You will please find inclosed a money order for six dollars to pay my back dues and to renew for another year, also to send the SIGNS to brother Noah West, Otey, Va. Dear brethren, I beg you to excuse me for not renewing my subscription sooner. I cannot afford to have the paper discontinued, for it is laden with good news from a far country, sets forth the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, and leaves man out of the whole matter. I know that if I am saved it will be by the power of God, and not by anything I have done or can do. I feel to be a great sinner, and know that if I differ from other men it is by his grace, and that alone. If I could I would have come in my own strength, but thanks be to his holy name it is not that way. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."—Rom. viii. 7. At a very early age I felt I had a soul to be saved, or to be eternally lost, so it was a serious matter with poor me. I would take my father's Bible to read, and there I found a law, and I thought I could keep that law, and went about it with all my power for ten or twelve years. Sometimes I would feel all right, then at other times I would feel wretched and undone. In the meantime I dreamed a dream time and time again, identically the same dream. It was that I was walking on a slope as smooth as glass, and the incline was so steep that I could not turn back of myself. It was easy

walking, but as I neared the edge I saw it was eternal hell. Then I would scream and would wake all in the house. That dream troubled me so much that my continual thought was that hell was my doom, and I would try to pray day and night. So time went on, I would make many promises, and break them all. As I grew to manhood I felt to be the worst sinner in the world, and felt that there was salvation for every one but poor sinful me, that my case was an outside one. I knelt down to try to pray, when all at once, to my great surprise, my burden was gone, and I was impressed to go to the Primitive Baptist Church and tell them what the dear Lord had done for me. It is now about twenty-five years since I came to the end of the law, as I hope, and I never have had that dream since. I feel to hope that I have passed from under the law to grace, for by the law there shall no flesh be justified. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."—1 Peter i. 2.

I have not written as I expected to when I began, but I feel that you all are able to overlook my imperfections, and I have written for relief of mind. I ask an interest in the prayers of the household of faith.

Yours in humble hope,

F. T. SOWERS.

BOTHWELL, Ontario, Sept. 27, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—Since our arrival here on the old homestead in the month of March, 1920, we have experienced a continuance of the ups and downs of life which were ours while at our former home at Glen Andrew. The departure of Uncle Joe, February 14th, 1921; then on the fourth day of last September my dear brother Alex's life companion was separated from him by death; but the greatest shock to us all was about 3:30 in the afternoon of July 17th he was suddenly and unexpectedly called from our midst with what the doctor called heart failure. My eldest brother, Duncan, is now bedfast, scarcely able to move himself, and daily growing weaker, from the effects of an internal cancer. As our days, so shall our strength be. So you see we are still sailing on the rough, billowy ocean of life's tempestuous sea. It is not on a flowery bed of roses we reach our happy home on high. In conversation with brother Alex on Saturday evening previous to his departure on Monday, he made an earnest request that I would write a letter to Elder Keene, so that he would know of some of the changes that had taken place in recent years, especially of the death of Jenny. Little did we think that evening that he would be summoned so soon himself.

If these few rambling thoughts will not crowd out more important matter, will you kindly publish them, so that Elder Keene will know in case I may not be able to write him personally?

In conclusion, I will ask you to pardon me for the delay in remitting, and I trust it will not occur again during the remaining years allotted to me upon this earth.

I ever remain, yours affectionately,

JOHN C. McALPINE.

MANASSAS, Va., Oct. 4, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I promised to write you when I get down. Well, I am fast sinking in the old ruts. But did we not have a sweet meeting, and sweet gospel tidings? I was happy, lost in the sweet atmosphere of the presence of Jesus in our midst; no thought of home and what was behind, all in God's care; just

satisfied; like a child at home with its sweet influence. The preaching and texts lingered with me for days. The subject of Joseph, and your text, predestination, and the twenty-third Psalm, seemed to be mine. I kept repeating the precious subjects and the Scriptures incessantly in my mind, and I hoped and believed in my heart, too; there seemed no place for aught else. Oh what a heaven below the Redeemer to know. How unspeakably favored was I. Jesus all the day long was my joy and my song. There was not a discordant note in the sweet gospel of the grace of God. This, I believe, was dear Elder Eubank's subject: The gospel. How sweetly he spoke, in that humble and lowly spirit; how the blessed Spirit seemed inditing every word. The dear old brother, whom we feared might never be able to meet us again. How harmonious everything was, full of love and kindness and blessedness in the Spirit. It seemed sad to see only one or two of the dear old Ebenezer, but it really seemed the young people, children of the mothers and fathers gone, especially brother Eppa Norman's dear children, were just outside, waiting to come in; also those of some of the visiting brethren. Oh what a sweet and Christ-like atmosphere was round about and in the hearts of God's dear and dependent children. I was happy to be there, and satisfied; wanted nothing; like a child at home. The feast spread, both natural and spiritual, was full and satisfying, nothing was wanting. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." The remembrance of all this is sweet. I fear I am nearer earth than heaven now.

With love and fellowship, your sister in Jesus, I hope,

LOUISE H. COX.

DRAIN, Ore., June 1, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—My subscription is past due, and I would have attended to it sooner but for sickness. I have been in very poor health for over three weeks, but the good Lord for some wise purpose has about restored my health again and spared my poor unprofitable life; I do not know what for. It seems that I am just living one trouble down getting ready for another, yet I can see great beauty in it all. The Savior has promised to never leave nor forsake us, and not to give us more than we are able to bear. "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." I surely have had trials to pass through during the seventy-four years of my life, but I feel that Jesus has been at the helm of my frail bark, or I would have sunk in despair; but the storm will soon be over. I have my brethren and sisters, and the dear old SIGNS is a source of great comfort to me. Oh that we all could live nearer to Christ. I am a poor old sinner, and if saved it will be by grace, and grace alone. Dear ones, remember me at the throne in your prayers.

Your sister, I hope,

S. MORNINGSTAR.

MT. STERLING, Kentucky.

DEAR BRETHREN:—You will please find inclosed check for my subscription for another year, as my time has expired, so you can credit same, as we all feel we certainly appreciate the dear old paper that has been coming so long to our home. Our mother is now past eighty-five years of age, so we read the paper to her. We hope success may crown your labors, and may God be with you, is my prayer. My address is the same; no change.

Your brother, I hope,

T. J. RATLIFF.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1922.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ASSOCIATIONS.

MUCH has been written upon this subject in days past, and some things are being said and written now, and we have no thought of presenting anything new, but shall write in a general way, relative to the old custom of forming and holding associations together with their privileges. Prior to 1832, at which time the division between Baptists, now called "Old School" and "Missionary," took place, associations or conventions, were held by those denominated "Baptists." Since the above date each of these denominations has continued to hold annual meetings, called by the Old School Baptists "Associations," and by the Missionary, "Conventions." Such association therefore is no new thing. An association is two or more churches of the same faith and order mutually united by correspondence through messengers appointed to represent such associated churches, when the association is in session. There is also a "Corresponding Letter" written by some member appointed, to the different associations and other meetings of the entire correspondence of such an association and published with the Minutes. Associations are to the end that churches of the same faith and order keep in touch with each other, that each may know the welfare and spiritual condition of the other. An association is not an ecclesiastical body to deal with the private affairs of the associated churches, nor with offending members at home, but for the worship and praise of God. It is, however, the privilege of any association, when in session, to reject, or refuse to seat, any minister, or other individual, who does not believe and maintain the same doctrine advocated by the churches in association. This has been the order of the Old School Baptists since 1832, and we think we are safe in saying, the same order was maintained by those now known as Old School Baptists prior to 1832. We do not recall any criticism in all these years of such rejection. If a minister is not agreed with Old School Baptists upon the doctrine of grace, we fail to see why he should either desire or expect to be recognized by them and invited to a seat with them to take part in their deliberations. It is just as consistent for an association to reject a minister, or other individual, not agreed with it upon gospel order, and we fail in the latter, as well as in the former, to see why any one should want to be seated or recognized by an association of churches with which he is not in perfect agreement. An association could as consistently seat a minister not agreed with it on order as to seat one not agreed with it upon the doctrine of salvation by grace. Just why there should be criticism of one and not of the other we fail to understand. Some have questioned the authority in organizing churches into associations, because the Scriptures do not definitely command it. While this is true, it would be impossible to avoid the association of the people of God agreed upon doctrine, faith, hope, charity. When agreed there is a walking together, mingling, associating, that neither men

nor angels can hinder. From the east, west, north and south they shall come and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God. If this is not real association, we would like to know why. "What therefore God hath joined together let no man put asunder." The very first meeting after the ascension of Christ Jesus the Lord was an association. Devout men out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people under heaven were there, gathered at Jerusalem, and every man heard in his own tongue, wherein he was born, the wonderful works of God. Some of those who most bitterly oppose associations in this day have traveled east, west, north and south attending different associations, accepting contributions and the hospitality of the brethren so associated. Surely consistency is a jewel, yet so few of us possess that quality. It is just as well to consider scriptural authority in the organization of churches and the reception of members. A gospel church cannot be organized according to New Testament authority of members of other churches without such members first obtaining letters of dismissal from their home churches, to become constituted into another body or church. Neither can those excluded from churches of the same faith and order be received into the membership of other churches without repentance and restoration first to the church that excluded them; then only by letter from the church of their membership to the other. Every church is sovereign in her acts within her gates, and it is not the privilege of any other church to in any sense interfere. This refers to gospel churches, orderly and consistently organized. It is the privilege of an association, when in session, to dismiss a church of its membership for any offense thought, or determined worthy, by the associated body. It is not necessary for that church to be represented at the time of dismissal, provided such church has been labored with by the association of its membership. The same is true in cutting off a minister and those who follow him either in disorder or false doctrine. Such things as the above are deplorable and cause much grief to the household of faith, but must be resorted to when exhortation and rebuke fail. Such was done at the "Black Rock Convention" in 1832, and was then indorsed by sound, orderly Baptists the country over and proved a blessing to the cause. There is nothing better than the association of brethren, and the time was (not many years ago) when all met in love and fellowship and peace reigned. If led then by the Spirit of God, what is the leading now? By what spirit are men led when division, contention, bitterness, strife and destruction seem to be the end pursued? We shall all reap what we sow; the harvest is absolutely sure; God is not mocked.

It is an acknowledged fact that associations have been indorsed by the ablest ministers and wisest churches of America, and no kind of meetings have been enjoyed more. Many poor souls never have the privilege of attending other gatherings of the Old School Baptists. Such ones save from one year to another of their little earnings or income to enable them to visit some association that they may hear the gospel preached, and associate with the children of God. We feel safe in saying, nothing but decline in the denomination, making it impossible to hold such meetings, will ever do away with them.

In conclusion, we want to say we heartily indorse associations, association of churches, and shall do all in our power to have them continue to the praise of God and to the mutual comfort of his people. K.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Okaw Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, held with Union Church, Shelby County, Illinois, September 15th, 16th and 17th, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Agreeable to an order of our Association of last year, we undertake to write a few lines, which may be termed a Circular Letter. This has been a practice among our Baptist people for a long time, and it is generally supposed that a Circular should set forth at least some of our doctrinal views. Lest we should fail in this one to set forth any doctrinal views, we should say that our faith is the same as it has been in years gone by, and those who are desirous of knowing just what the Regular Predestinarian Baptists believe can best get that knowledge from the Articles of Faith of the several churches. These articles will be found to be nearly the same as was first agreed to by the brethren in A. D., 1647, in England. Sometimes we are called Old School Baptists, sometimes Primitive Baptists to distinguish our sect from the various sects of Baptists which went away from us in the Black Rock Convention in Maryland, nearly a century ago. Sometimes we are nicknamed "Hardshells," we suppose because of our hard doctrine preached, or maybe because of our distinct separation from any and all other religious organizations. We care not what we may be called, just allow us in this land of liberty to worship according to the dictates of our own conscience, and call us as you please.

Now this brings to our mind the text that Paul uses to the church at Ephesus, That ye henceforth be not carried about with every wind of doctrine by sleight of men, &c. (Eph. iv. 14.) Brethren, we want to say to you to-day to consider well the admonition given to the brethren in that day, and let us apply it to ourselves in this day. If we hear around us the "wind of doctrine" blowing ever so sweet and gentle, let us regard it not. If we see around us the "sleight of men" beguiling unstable souls, let us beware. The time is now when deceivers are waxing worse and worse, then let us pursue the even tenor of our way, as we have done in times past, refusing to "fellowship" or court the ways of the world. As a chosen few let us yet march along under the blood-stained banner of King Immanuel, teaching and preaching the glorious doctrine that our forefathers have contended for for centuries past. Let us strive to hand down to those children coming after us in the future the glorious doctrine of God our Savior, pure and unsullied by any of the sleight of man. We want to exhort you, brethren, be faithful, contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Paul says, "earnestly," not in a mild and joking way, but earnestly, remember your meeting times, and forsake not the assembling of yourselves together. John the Baptist came preaching the kingdom of heaven is at hand. That kingdom is the church of the living God, the ground and pillar of truth. What a glorious thought for us to just believe, that we are members of that kingdom. So we should live as becometh subjects of so great a kingdom. Let brotherly love continue. See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently. By this ye may know that ye have passed from death unto life, because you love the brethren.

"Love is the sweetest bud that blooms,
Its beauty never dies;
On earth among the saints it grows
And ripens in the skies."

Oh, then how beautiful it is that we should be bound together in love, contending "earnestly" for the faith once delivered unto the saints. "Now he that hath wrought us for this selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit." That is, this is just a foretaste of the joys that are to come. The church or kingdom of God is built upon the eternal principles of love. Again, he says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." The brethren drawn together from the various localities where they reside, by the eternal love of God, comprise this Association. "The sleight of men" may hold out other organizations to you as the church; examine and see if they are bound together by the love of God as are the Old School or Predestinarian Baptists, or do they have some other object in view, "filthy lucre" or love of popularity, or something of that sort?

Finally, brethren, we say to you all, Live together in peace and love. May God enable us to labor for those things which make peace in Zion. Farewell.

E. D. ELDER.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Okaw Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, now in session with Union Church, Shelby County, Illinois, September 15th, 16th and 17th, 1922, to our sister churches and associations with which we correspond, greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Your correspondence in past years has afforded us much comfort and enjoyment. We greatly prize the privilege of communicating with you by letter and messengers. We hope the correspondence may continue in the future as it has been in the past and present, in peace and love. Your ministering brethren come to us laden with the glorious gospel, Salvation by grace through faith, and we highly prize their visits. As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things. We desire correspondence with all our Baptist brethren of like precious faith as we are. It is much enjoyment to meet and hear the servants of the Lord proclaim the unsearchable riches of his grace as it is in Jesus, who died that poor lost sinners might live. Surely that is meat and drink to our poor hungry and thirsty souls, to hear his name exalted above every other name, and is the only name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved.

"Jesus, the glorious head of grace,
Knows every saint's peculiar case,
What sorrows by their souls are borne,
And how for sin they daily mourn."

We are told in the Word, Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. So we can say now that we were hungry and he gave us food, thirsty and he gave us drink. By reference to our Minutes you can see who of your brethren visited us, and who of our brethren agreed to visit you.

We have appointed our next Association to be held with Lynn Creek Church, Moultrie County, Illinois, on Friday before the third Sunday in September, and lasting three days, at which time and place we hope to all meet again. Those coming by rail, come to Bruce or Gays.

W. E. HARPSTER, Moderator.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

BROTHER Martin D. Fisher having changed his address from 1033 Summit Ave., New York, N. Y., to Box 5, Moscow Mills, Lincoln County, Missouri, requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder J. R. Chandler, son of Elder L. B. and Lucy (Swann) Chandler, was born near Edwardsville, Ala., March 15th, 1850, and in the year 1858 came with his parents to Jackson Parish, La., and there, and in adjacent parishes, made his home, except one year in Texas, until he died at his home in Jackson Parish, La., July 27th, 1922, in his 73rd year. December 10th, 1868, father was married to Miss Eliza P. Vining, whose parents were Primitive Baptists, and came from Georgia to this part of the country about the year 1849. His wife and five children survive him, three children having preceded him to the grave. He, together with his wife, was received in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church at Ephesus, Lincoln Parish, La., about the year 1872, and a few years later began to talk in public, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry July 24th, 1886, and it is my sincere conclusion (by growing up and hearing him talk in later years) that his early convictions of sin were exceedingly sorrowful, feeling to be in the world without hope, and the fear of sinking into everlasting perdition before the just and holy God. Likewise I believe his deliverance from sin was exceedingly joyous, the Savior having made himself manifest to him as fulfilling that law which he had not the power to fulfill, thereby paying the awful debt in his stead and setting him free, causing him ever after to be willing to try to comfort mourners, and to point them to Jesus, and to praise him for his wonderful love and for his matchless name, and I believe he was made able to preach, not in word only, but in power of the holy Spirit. It seems that, owing to his feeling of unworthiness and of his desire to remain at home with his family, there was considerable carnal resistance to his call to the ministry, and sometimes he said he did not know whether he was a called preacher or not, but one thing he did know, and was a consolation to him, and that was he did not try to preach until he had it to do. Physically speaking, father had been healthy and strong, and spent but little idle time, but doing many hard days' labor, desiring to meet all his business obligations, which he did, and from time to time receiving tokens of friendship from brethren, sisters and friends, although never depending upon the churches for natural support, saying that when he could feel the presence and power of Jesus in his sermons and feel the sweet fellowship of the brethren and sisters by demonstration of the Spirit he had all the pay he wished for, and that with which the things of the world had no comparison. Just previous to his death he was greatly afflicted for some two or three years with heart trouble and infirmities of age, but had been able to go and preach most of the time, and his last sermon was delivered some fifty miles from home on Sunday, July 2nd, 1922, and when met by the writer at the depot on his return trip he said, "I have had a good meeting, you know what that means." On July 8th he was suddenly stricken with a severe attack of the heart, and while suffering all that mortal strength could bear, and with tears in his eyes, he spoke of his past trials and spoke comfortably of his hope in Jesus, saying that he did not know what he would do if it were not for his hope in Jesus, adding that it was for nothing good he had ever done, and said that his mind was much easier at that time than on the evening before, when he had expressed himself to mother and me as being in the dark. On Monday morning, July 24th, he arose as usual and ate breakfast with us, and about 9:30 o'clock that morning we found him on his bed with his last and fatal attack, that of a ruptured blood vessel of the heart, and about 12:30 o'clock that day we laid him down to rise or speak no more, doing all that relatives, friends and physicians could do, but of no avail, and he lay almost as if asleep without indications of much pain until he passed quietly away on the following Thursday. He was laid to rest one mile away, beside his two daughters. He has gone from this world of doubt to dwell where love abounds for ever and ever. May the Lord comfort those who mourn by his unerring Spirit, and may he direct the footsteps of his people everywhere, that they may sometimes feel that they are walking in the light, and thereby feel comforted.

Funeral services were conducted by one who had long been a very dear friend and brother, Elder G. T. R. Baker, who used as a text the words, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith," in which discourse I believe words of truth were spoken.

A devoted son,

W. A. CHANDLER.

Carrie (Reddin) Masters was born near Tinsman, Arkansas, and died March 29th, 1922. She was a member in full fellowship of White-Water Old School Baptist Church, in the South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association. She and her dear old mother came to us from the Missionaries, having joined that organization some years previous to joining us. Her father, old brother Reddin, joined the same church some years later, and all were baptized by the writer. Sister Reddin, who had been associated with the Missionaries, became dissatisfied with these people, as they required too much to be performed on the part of the creature. On hearing the writer preach the wonderful mercies of a forgiving and merciful Lord they claimed they found their people, the Primitive Baptists, and came to us, and have felt that they found a sweet home with us. We realize that we have lost one very dear and precious to us. The writer remembers how beautiful and lamb-like sister Masters appeared the morning of her baptism, what

a wonderful manifestation of her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and it seemed it was more than I could do to wade into the water with such a sainted looking character as she was. Sister Masters leaves a poor broken-hearted old mother, father and husband to mourn her departure, who know that on this earth her sweet presence will never be seen, but at the same time realize that she is far better off than any of us who remain behind in this old sinful and troublesome world. She was married to Lee Masters several years ago, and to that union were born five children: Olga, Curtis, Lemar, Dale and Marguerite, the last one being but a few months old. Sister Reddin has the children in her care, Mr. Masters living with them. Sister Masters died of some tumor complication of an internal nature. She was taken to the hospital at Crossett, Arkansas, and operated upon, but all to no avail. Sister Masters realized the approaching end, and was completely reconciled, and said to her mother that God was her upholding strength, and that it was all by him and in him and therefore she had no fear of what might come.

In conclusion, may we all be reconciled to God's will, and feel that he knows best, and that it is far better for her; she will be missed both in her home and in the church, and we can only say, It is the Lord's doings, and what he does is just and right. The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be his holy name.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor at the Banks Cemetery, by the presence of a large assembly of old friends, who had gathered to show their last token of respect to one whom they had so much loved as a friend, neighbor and christian.

V. R. HARRIS.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in October (29th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

MEETINGS.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

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(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk,

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

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"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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POETRY.

WHY?

A GLOOM of thick darkness obscures the dim vale,
  Through which lies my pathway below,
And surges on surges of sorrow assail,
  Till hope sinks in fathomless woe;
Amazed and affrighted, my soul is oppressed,
  Despairing, to Jesus I cry,
Shall trouble forever thus rob me of rest?
  If thou art my God, tell me why.

The evil I hate still remains in my heart,
  The good that I would is not done;
When I seek from the mazes of sin to depart,
  To folly that moment I run;
Led captive in sin's heavy bondage I groan,
  To God for deliverance I sigh,
Yet from his salvation to wander I'm prone;
  If thou art my God, tell me why.

Reproach and oppression embitter my days,
  Nor can I in sleep find repose;
Deep groans interrupt each attempt at thy praise,
  My heart is o'erwhelmed in my woes,
My trust is thy grace, I have hoped in thy name,
  To thee in each trial I fly;
From thee hitherto my deliverance came,
  If now thou withdraw, tell me why.

But hark, from the word of his grace the reply
  Is given in mercy unknown:
The wisdom of Him whose bright throne is on high
  Hath chosen this path for his own.
His love is assured in the gift of his Son,
  To suffer, to bleed and to die,
That sinners might live, with their Savior made one,
  His mercy alone can tell why.

Dear Lord, can thy kindness forgive my complaint,
  Ungratefully doubting thy love?
Oh suffer me not under trials to faint,
  Nor from thy salvation to rove;
Kept in thy pavilion, and trusting in thee,
  No terror my soul shall come nigh;
Assured by thy love that whatever may be,
  The God of my life knoweth why.

[THE above poem was composed by the late Elder Wm. L. Beebe, and sent to us for publication by his sister, Mrs. V. B. Bailey, of White Plains, N. Y. —ED.]

CORRESPONDENCE.

WHEELING, W. Va., Sept. 15, 1922.

DEAR SISTER ANNA:—I think of you often, and wonder how you are faring. I do hope all is well with you. I hardly know how to begin. It has been so long since I wrote you. I cannot remember if I answered your last letter or not, but I rather think I did. Dear sister, I often wonder whether I should try to commune with the dear saints as I used to. I am so very fearful that the Lord does not require it of me. So fearful of "head" work. How intensely afraid I am of deception. Sure I am that I cannot deceive God, and he knows that I have a horror of it in every direction, and I dare say I am often deceived in myself. Now for the past year I have felt this deception to

be very alarming to me. How I have begged of the Lord to give me true honesty of mind and purpose in all things, and, bless his holiness, he gives me, or rather has given me, gracious access to him in this matter. Oh that I could tell you all that I feel, but I think, yes, I am truly assured, that you have the very same conflicts. Thank God for my dear sister McKinney. I have felt glad to think of you "basking in the smiles of His face." I can lay you by now that you are cradled in His everlasting love. Thus far our God has led us on, and made his love and mercy known. I have been fearful that I was losing interest in the dear members of his body, but hoped such was not the case. I read a letter to-day from Miss Lolo Holland, of Tucson, Arizona; she says, "Dear brother and sister in the Lord, Infinitely more precious to me is this relationship than as brothers and sisters in the flesh, though dear that may be. The love (God is love) which swallows up the fleshly ties and binds the spiritual children of the Father's Spirit in one common bundle of love does not destroy the old affections, but the old ties are swallowed up and overcome of that greater love, just as a tiny stream of water is swallowed up in a greater stream." I was glad to see this explanation, as it allayed my fear of growing cold. You have, in times past, written of portions of Scripture coming to you, or rather opening to your mind, with power and comfort. I always rejoiced in this, for I do love to see, or hear, of the manifestations of the holy Spirit to any of his poor seeking members. I have been blessed in this way during the past year. In the start of this period I longed intensely for assurance that we were within the vail; my mind would usually be led back to the beginning. Time had been that I could not help, at times, wondering why the Lord suffered sin to enter into the world, but the thought came that the Lord never intended that the earthy man should help him in his plan of salvation. If Adam had kept the law he would have somewhat to boast as to human merit. I could see that God was glorified by creature disobedience. It seemed good to me that it was so. Then I longed greatly after this portion, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me," and, "All that the Father gave me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." This seemed to bind the bargain to the elect; but am I of the elect? Then I went back over the way, time and time again, seeking evidence. If ever poor sinners have evidence that they are of God, then I have, too, for I have walked with them all their journey through; that is, I know all the places they have been in, even though I may not have been in the very same depths or heigths, may not have sunk so low, or soared so high, still I have the knowledge of it in my heart. I do think and know that some have sorer conflicts in regeneration than others. I have read of many who feared to go to sleep lest they awake in hell. Some have felt that they were going to die, and given up to it, but this was usually just when spiritual birth came. So we see that all are not dealt with alike, but all know, and acknowledge, these same leadings of the Holy Spirit; at least all who are led of the Spirit, for it is the same Spirit. I have been moved to tears to think how gently the Lord leads us. How he knows just how much we can bear of his wrath or his love. As it is written, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." Dear sister, I know

it is much to say, but I believe I have had a filial fear of the Lord from the time I was old enough to know anything. Yea, I have always been jealous for his honor. Even though I knew nothing about doctrine, and could not comprehend a word of it when I read it, or heard it discussed or preached, yet I desired to see church members show love and zeal for its cause. I could not reconcile myself to indifference as to attending the meetings. It seemed rather strange to me to see my dear father walk ten miles or more to meet with the Old Baptists, and I sometimes felt a little jealous of his love for them, but I would not have him otherwise, I knew he was right.

Sunday, Sept. 24th, 1922. Dear sister, little did I think when I laid this by that it would pass away from my mind, but so it was. Awhile ago I opened my writing tablet, and there it lay unfinished. It seems that my acts are not at my own disposal, my plans usually fall through, even before I can get them formed. Truly of myself I can do nothing. I have never felt so truly helpless as I do now, still I am strengthened to struggle along through each day, and do the most needful housework.

I do not think I have written to you since we moved in with our oldest son, Edward. We really have a pleasant place here on the island, called the Garden-Spot of Wheeling. I like it better than any place we have ever lived, in our sojourn of forty years in Wheeling. This morning I heard singing in a Campbellite church-house just across the street. I went into the front room to sit and listen. It was accompanied by several musical instruments. I saw the congregation going in, dressed in shimmering silks and flaps and fringes, such, as our Savior said, were worn in kings' houses. Tears were near to flow as I said to my son, who sat listening, that I would love to have a church of our own that near us, that I would surely attend every service. How my heart longed for our preached gospel, the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. I explained, or tried to, the difference between us. The older I become the more I desire Christ Jesus for our gospel, and I want it entirely unmixed with the world. Like one of our old hymn writers, I must cry, "Give me Jesus or I die." But He, bless and adore His holy name, does commune with His hungry poor from off the mercy-seat; he does let some handfuls fall of purpose for his poor gleaners, so poor and needy for the bread of life, so poor and needy that we have to go to the field wherein is the Pearl of great price. Nothing else can satisfy us. He, and he alone, is the life of our hope. A few days ago I had been talking with two of my nearest neighbors. In a natural way, or moral, they are all that I could ask, but as to the preciousness of sound doctrine they know nothing, and if I speak of it, it brings a look of surprised pain to their dear faces. On this day, after leaving their presence I was so heart-hungry for some of our members I looked longingly out at the travelers on the street, and saw one man who bore some resemblance to Elder J. N. Jefferson. The thought came suddenly that if it were he, I would have to throw my old arms around his neck and kiss him. I wept at the thought of meeting one who loved the Lord, and was jealous for his holy name, and, dear Anna, this brings me to another crumb from the Master's table. I was reading John, fourteenth chapter, twenty-first verse, also twenty-third verse. I think I have read it many times before, for I love it dearly, but now there was a crumb for me, and I ate it and found it

sweeter than honey with the comb. He says, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." Then in the twenty-third verse: "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." I can never express how I yearned over these words, and ere I was aware I was singing,

"What more can he say than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

Then, dear sister, I was fully convinced that I could not keep his commandments, although they are so very precious to me. Ah, so precious; only he knows how I regard them, but I commune with my poor old sinful heart, and I know that he is truth. He, bless his holiness, has never suffered me to turn away from him, as truth, but now I leave it all in his holy hands to unravel to us. I would like to hear Elder Lefferts or Elder Ker on this position. I see in the SIGNS that Elder Lefferts is pastor at Needmore, Pa., and there will be a two days' meeting held there the 7th and 8th of next month. I began to wonder if it could be possible for me to go, and I entertained a little hope, but I have had worse health lately, so I fear to undertake the trip.

I now remember another portion that seems to cling to me, and I have found by daily experience that it is mine. In Isaiah xlvi. 4, "Even to your old age I am he: and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you." I prove this promise true every day of my life.

Dear sister, I so often wonder at your long silence. I long to hear from you and yours. Write soon if able.

Your poor unworthy sister in hope,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I read this letter from dear sister Pultz something within me kept saying all the time, "Send it to the SIGNS." It is the first letter I have had from her in many months, and it is a long time since one appeared in the SIGNS over her signature. Do as you think best about publishing.

ANNA McKINNEY.

VERNON, Texas, Sept. 7, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—A three days' meeting was held with the Dawson Valley Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, commencing on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1922, which was largely attended, several ministers being present. The meeting was conducted by Elder W. S. Bourland. Elders Fisher, Richardson, Gowin and the unworthy writer being present. After much preaching, refreshments were served under the beautiful trees in Elder W. S. Bourland's yard. On Sunday two came forward and united with the church, giving a blessed relation of their hope in Christ. One (a brother in the flesh of Elder Bourland's) dated his experience back twenty years; the other (a young married lady, daughter of Elder W. S. Bourland, sister Millie Thompson by name) came from the plains, two hundred miles, to be at this meeting. In the evening the church and congregation met at a clear lake, and after prayer by Elder Fisher the two candidates were led down into the water and baptized by Elder Bourland. This closed the services of a precious meeting in which was manifest, as I believe, the Lord's presence. The Lord is bringing his people home to Zion one by one. May it please the Lord to revive his church in the various parts of the country to exalt and glorify his holy name.

ASA HOWARD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1922.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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WEST VIRGINIA TRIP.

HAVING been asked two or three times by Elder J. W. McClanahan to visit him and the churches he serves within the bounds of the Pocatalico Association, at last it seemed the way opened up for us to do so. Boarding a C. & O. train in Washington, D. C., the night of Thursday, September 28th, we arrived at Charleston, W. Va., about noon the next day, and found brother McClanahan awaiting us at the depot. We were at once conveyed by the Elder's nephew, Mr. Fleet McClanahan, to his home for dinner, then a friend took us in his car out into the country to brother McClanahan's home, which is situated on a hillside overlooking the Pocatalico River. The following day, in company with the Elder, we went to his home church called Hopewell and had meeting. Here we met for the first time Elders Geo. B. McClanahan and William I. Wade, and many other brethren. Once in the company of these excellent brethren we felt immediately at home, and as though we had known them always. It is a very remarkable fact concerning the Lord's people that the truth soon introduces them to one another, and once it does all feeling of strangeness subsides. We feel sure this is not the case with any other people than the Old School Baptists. That same night we had meeting in a school-house near Lanham, and the house was well filled with an orderly and attentive company of people. Sunday morning we repaired again to the Hopewell Church, and found a much larger company in attendance than the day before. Members of several churches of the Pocatalico Association were in evidence Sunday. That night we had meeting at sister Null's, owing to the fact that she was not well and unable to be at any of the meetings. Monday morning quite a company gathered at the home of Mr. Lee Bailey, an invalid, and we had meeting there. Mr. Bailey is not a member of the church, but it has rarely been our lot to meet a more ardent defender of Old Baptist doctrine, nor one who more loves the truth which honors and glorifies God. Spending Monday night in Charleston, in company with Elder G. B. McClanahan, we boarded the train Tuesday morning for Hurricane, twenty-five miles away. Here we were met by brother John Beckett, the clerk of the Pocatalico Association, and conveyed by him about ten or eleven miles to the foot of a mountain. We climbed on foot up the side of this, and descending the other side, found ourselves within the bounds of the Providence Church, and at the home of sister Sallie Bird. Standing on the porch of her home we spoke to a large company which had gathered themselves together from some miles around. Down the road a little ways stands the home of brother Edwards, the place where Elder J. F. Beeman departed this earthly life a little more than a year ago. After dinner at sister Bird's we climbed back over the mountain, and brother Beckett very kindly took us to the home of brother Daniel Hatcher and sister Hatcher, in Teay's valley, where we had meeting at

night. Returning to Charleston, Wednesday afternoon, in company with Elders G. B. and J. W. McClanahan, we spent the night at Mr. Fleet McClanahan's, and left early next morning, the three of us, by train for Montrose, W. Va., one hundred and eighty-seven miles away. This brought us within the bounds of the Tygart's Valley Association, and to the home of Elder J. S. Murphy, with whom we visited and spent the night. Here we were said to be about two thousand feet above sea level. Elder Murphy was not expecting us, but could not have possibly welcomed us more warmly had he been looking for us. Soon after our arrival, his son, brother Benton Murphy, a young man, and named for the late Benton Beebe, went quietly out into the neighborhood, and at his request quite a little company of Old Baptists and their friends gathered in after supper. We had meeting and spent with them a most pleasant evening. From the manner in which Elder Murphy addressed the members of the flock as they came into his home, and from their manner of approaching him, we should say that here is a man who is a real pastor. A good preacher is not always a good pastor, nor is a good pastor always a good preacher. We did not hear Elder Murphy preach, but we believe we can truthfully say he has a valuable pastoral gift. One of his daughters is named for Bessie Durand, and another for Bonnie Chick, which goes far to show how highly he values the SIGNS family circle.

Leaving Montrose early Friday morning, the Western Maryland train climbed up and up to Fairfax Station, on the summit of one of the Alleghany Mountains, where we were 3050 feet above sea level. Any one wishing to behold beautiful scenery need not cross the ocean to see it. It is here right at our very doors, have we but eyes to see it. Finally, we came to Hancock, Md., where we were met and taken to Needmore, Pa., for the two days' meeting there. Thus ended our visit to West Virginia, and a most pleasant trip it was. The brethren and friends all along the way treated us as if we really were somebody, which made us feel very little and unworthy, for really we are nothing at all. A sounder body of Old School Baptists it has never been our lot to meet than those who make up the membership of the churches within the Pocatalico Association. They delight in the absolute sovereignty of Jehovah over all worlds, principalities and powers. They believe in one salvation, and that alone through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. They believe, too, that this salvation is for the elect only, and that God made choice of his people in his Son before the foundation of the world. They believe in the resurrection of the dead; that the judgment of the wicked unto everlasting punishment, and of the righteous unto everlasting life, is final and eternal. They, with all of us, look for that bright appearing of the Lord in glory whereby we shall also appear with him in that glory and behold him as he is and be like him. They, like us, confess themselves pilgrims and strangers on the earth, looking for that better country and an heavenly, for that inheritance incorruptible and undefiled which is reserved in heaven for those who are being kept by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. May the Lord preserve those brethren in West Virginia, together with all his children, blameless in body, soul and spirit unto his coming; may he keep them steadfast in the way the fathers trod, contending for the doctrine, faith and practice of the apostolic church.

L.

MAINE-NEW YORK TRIP.

WE had for several years a desire to visit the brethren in the State of Maine, but the way thereto seemed never to present itself until this year, when we found ourselves enabled to visit the Maine Association. Leaving our home in Virginia, we motored through the country to Bowdoinham, Me., a distance of seven hundred and fifty miles. The meeting began on the morning of September 8th, and continued three days. In all the six New England States we know of no churches of the Old School Baptist faith and order excepting the church at Woburn, Mass., and the churches comprising the Maine Association. Out of Maine have come some of the ablest gifts the Old School Baptists have ever had. Elders Joseph L. and William J. Purington, John A. and Joseph N. Badger, S. H. Quint, F. A. Chick and Hiram Campbell, all came from there. Yet, to-day, there is but one Old School Baptist preacher in the whole of New England. He is the aged Elder Beal, living at Bowdoin Center, Maine, and pastor of the churches in the Maine Association. He is now eighty-eight years of age, and not able at all times to get to the meetings, except when the weather and his health are good. In his absence the meetings are conducted by some of the brethren, among whom are J. C. Clark and George Tedford. The membership of these churches is not at all large, but they are sound in the doctrine of God our Savior, and we found them earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, a little island of loyalty in the great New England sea of unbelief. They believe in the predestination of all things, and that salvation is for the elect only, wholly accomplished in the work which Jesus did, without any conditions to be fulfilled by the creature. One was received and baptized during the meeting, and there seem to be others lingering about the fold, waiting for the time when they, too, may follow their Lord and Savior in baptism. Not often has it been our lot to be present at a more pleasant, a more refreshing or more comforting meeting than this one in Maine. We felt in our hearts a thankfulness to God that he had preserved unto himself a remnant in New England who love the truth and who are not ashamed to contend for it. We especially felt this because no section of the United States is so cultured, so refined, so educated and so full of infidelity as New England. Her colleges and universities have for years been sowing copiously the seeds of rationalism and of the higher criticism, and now a bountiful harvest of skeptics and infidels is being reaped. All the old line denominations who used to preach a blood atonement for sin are going out of business unless they, chameleon-like, are willing to change color with the times and modify their teachings to suit the modern notions of men. Blood atonement, New England thinks, is a relic of barbarism, and regards it only as an antique, but not one-tenth as valuable as her antique furniture. No wonder, then, that we felt a peculiar thankfulness to God that he has by his grace preserved unto himself a remnant in New England, a little flock which refuses to change with the times, and which is still asking for the old paths, and seeking to walk therein, not removing the ancient landmarks which the fathers have set.

From the meeting at Bowdoinham, we motored across New England to the Catskill Mountains, in New York State, to attend the Roxbury Association, which met this year with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Shokan, N. Y., during the

second week in September. Here we met Elders C. W. Vaughn and R. L. Dodson, visitors like ourselves, and Elders John Clark and George Ruston, who live there. Here we met also many brethren, all of the same faith and order as those we had left behind in Maine. In this section of New York State, there have been for many years two Old School Baptist associations: the one called Lexington, the other Roxbury; both of them of the same faith and believing the same principles of doctrine. The brethren of both of these associations were at this meeting, and it was unanimously agreed to consolidate the two associations from henceforth under the name of Lexington-Roxbury Association. At this meeting, as in Maine, good will predominated, and peace and good fellowship seemed to flow from heart to heart. Each one seemed to delight in esteeming others better than themselves, and there was an entire absence of any striving for the mastery, so far as we were able to judge. At the close of the Shokan meeting we began the long journey homeward, arriving here safely a few days later, tired in body, but much refreshed in mind and heart. Time and space forbid us to mention personally the names of each of the homes where we were so kindly entertained, or the names of many whom we met. Please consider this letter as a personal message to each of you. May it please God to ever keep those associations in Maine and in New York, as well as all the churches of the saints scattered abroad everywhere, free from all the isms of the modern world, and preserve them as a light shining in darkness unto the praise of the glory of his grace.

L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Elders and messengers composing the First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists, to the churches composing her body, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, greeting.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—Following our usual custom, you will expect something from us in the way of a Circular Letter, and we have decided to adopt the following letter, which was written by the late Elder T. P. Dudley, about the year 1849, entitled, "The Christian Warfare," believing it as true to-day as it ever was. It is as follows:

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—It occurs to us that we could not select a more appropriate subject, (because none possesses more intrinsic merit) for our present annual address than the origin, nature and effects of that warfare which so painfully disturbs the peace and quiet of the children of the regeneration. It is confidently believed that much embarrassment, and many doubts and fears with regard to this interest in the Savior's shed blood, have resulted from misconception of this important subject. How often does the troubled saint exclaim:

> "If I love, why am I thus?
> Why this dull and lifeless frame?
> Hardly, sure, can they be worse
> Who have never heard his name."

That the warfare invariably follows regeneration, or being "born again," is not, we believe, controverted by an experimental christian. But while some of us maintain that the warfare results from a conflict of elements within, others, and perhaps the larger number, contend that in regeneration the man is changed from the love of sin to the love of holiness. We inquire, By what power is the supposed change effected? The answer is: By the Spirit of God. Moses informs us,

"He is the Rock, his work is perfect."—Deut. xxxii. 4. Now we ask, If indeed, in regeneration, the man is changed from the love of sin to the love of holiness, and this change is perfect, does it not necessarily follow that he will be as wholly and entirely devoted to holiness subsequently as he was to sin antecedently to regeneration? If, as is contended by many, the enmity of the heart is slain in regeneration, whence arises opposition to the dispensation of God's providence, irreconciliation to his will, and whence the exclamation, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"—Rom. vii. 24. That the christian is a compound being, is truth so fully taught in his history, as given in the holy Scriptures, that we wonder it should be controverted by any who have "tasted that the Lord is gracious." "But though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."—2 Cor. iv. 16. "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man."—Rom. vii. 22. "That ye put off concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."—Eph. iv. 22–24. "Lie not one to another, seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."—Col. iii. 9, 10. "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."—Gal. vi. 15. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature."—2 Cor. v. 17. Whence these various distinctions between the old and the new man, if indeed there are not two men? If man is only changed in regeneration? If the language that "man is changed" were appropriate, there would be but one man, his feeling and affections having been changed, there would be no conflict, and hence no warfare. We presume that none will contend that the old is the new man, or the new the old man. This would be to confound language and make it unintelligible.

We affectionately ask brethren to consider that the matter of making christians is nowhere in the Scriptures represented as reformation, but as a creation. Hence it is said, "But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying, "For they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them."—Isaiah lxv. 18, 19, 23. None, we presume, will deny that the last quotation has exclusive reference to Galatians iv. 26. "But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." "But now saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by my name; thou art mine." "Fear not; for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him."—Isaiah xliii. 1, 5–7. "How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter? for the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall

compass a man."—Jer. xxxi. 22. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. ii. 10. "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."—Psalms li. 10. But why need we multiply proofs on the point, when they are set forth so palpably in the Scriptures, and realized in the christian experience?

The Bible furnishes the following history of the natural family: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."—Gen. i. 27. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."—Gen. ii. 7. "Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created."—Gen. v. 2. Hence we learn that all "living souls" were created in and simultaneously with their natural progenitor. They all descended from him by ordinary, or natural, generation. They necessarily partake of his nature, and subsist upon the same elements upon which he subsisted. The breath of life communicated to man whence he became "a living soul" constituted him a rational, intelligent, responsible being, the subject of law and of earthly enjoyments, capable of subsisting on the products of the earth, but incapable of other and higher enjoyments. Deprive him of the soul, mind or rational faculties, and what would distinguish him from the brute? Deprive him of life, and he would be like other dead matter. In the absence of soul or body he would have been incapable of filling up his destiny upon earth. "And the Lord God took the man, and put him in the garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. [The life which Adam had could be forfeited by transgression.] And the Lord God said, It is not good that man should be alone, I will make him an help meet for him." "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh thereof; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from the man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."—Gen. ii. 15–18, 21–24. Now, we ask, if the woman had been different in nature and disposition, if she had been incapable of earthly enjoyments, of subsisting upon earthly productions, of breathing a natural atmosphere, in a word, had her susceptibilities been entirely different from Adam's, would she have been an "helpmeet" for him? But she was part of him, possessed of the same nature, and was consequently an "helpmeet." Here, too, we see the declaration, "Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam," carried out. "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life: thorns also and thistles shall it

bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field: in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living."—Gen. iii. 17–20. Did God address a rational, intelligent being in the foregoing quotations, and was he capable of realizing the curse pronounced? The characteristics of this family are strikingly marked in the Scriptures. "And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth."—Gen. v. 3. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."—Psalms li. 5. "The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies."—Psalms lviii. 3. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."—Rom. v. 12. From the preceding facts and arguments it is manifest that the family of the "first Adam" is not capable of rendering acceptable service to God. But the antagonist nature and principle of the two families, (the natural and the spiritual) out of which grows the warfare, is made still more manifest by the contrast introduced by the apostle. "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."—1 Cor. xv. 45–50. Is it not evident then, that all "living souls" were created in, and simultaneously with "the first man Adam," that they all being born of him, necessarily partake of his nature, "and he called their name Adam?" And that all quickened spirits were created in, and simultaneously with the "last Adam," that they all, being born of him, born of God, as necessarily partake of his nature? That all living souls no more descend from the first Adam, than all quickened spirits descend from the last Adam? That the seed of the "first man Adam" disclose his nature, and the seed of the last Adam make manifest his nature? The children of the first Adam are born of the flesh, and are earthly in all their feelings and affections. The children of the last Adam are born of the Spirit, and are necessarily heavenly, or spiritual in their feelings and affections. The children of the first are born for earth; of the last Adam are born for heaven. Those of the first are born of corruptible, those of the last Adam are of incorruptible seed. The first necessarily partake of human, the last of divine nature. The antagonistic principles attached to the two men necessarily result in the warfare. If all living souls were not vitally united to the first Adam how could they be so directly and fatally affected by the first transgression? How could the original act of transgression be considered their act? "And so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "There is none righteous, no, not one."—Rom. iii. 10. If all quickened

spirits were not vitally united to the last Adam how could his mediatorial work effect them in their deliverance from the wrath to come? "This is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."—Jer. xxiii. 6. The transgression of the first man, Adam, involved all his family in guilt and ruin. The mediatorial work of the last Adam met all the claims of the law and satisfied divine justice in behalf of the chosen seed. But as the transgression of "the first Adam" did not disqualify his family for heaven, neither did the obedience and death of the "last Adam" impart to his chosen seed a qualification for the enjoyment of heaven. The earth being the natural abode of the "first Adam's" family, they are necessarily born of the flesh in order to its enjoyment; heaven being the ultimate abode of the saints, they are necessarily born of the Spirit in order to its enjoyment. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." —John iii. 5. Here we are presented with two distinct births of two distinct elements, which necessarily produce two distinct beings; the first of the flesh producing beings incapable; the second of the Spirit producing beings capable of entering into the kingdom of heaven. The first producing simple, the second compound beings. The first having but one, the second two natures. Of those born of the flesh it is said, Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. Of those born of the Spirit, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."—Rom. viii. 7–9. All men have not faith; but without faith it is impossible to please him. Faith is a fruit of the Spirit, "the gift of God" to the new creature. The development of the natural family has been progressing for nearly six thousand years, and yet the last one born, like the first, gives proof, demonstrable proof, of the source whence he sprang. The spiritual family has been developing with and since the days of Abel, and each one born of the Spirit gives evidence of the source whence he sprang. "I delight in the law of God after the inward man." No contingency can prevent the entire development of each, the natural and spiritual family, and we are warranted in believing that the last who shall be developed of each shall be like the first of that family whence he sprang. The sturdy oak of the forest, with all its roots, its huge trunk, every limb, every twig, yea, and every leaf which has been, is now being, and shall be developed, were once enclosed in a small acorn, whence they all spring; all are of the same nature, each a part of the whole. Had not the acorn been providentially committed to the ground, whence it underwent decomposition, germination, there had been no development; so with the corn of wheat. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life [this natural life] shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal."—John xii. 24, 25. Adam the first could no more produce a spiritual being than the thorn could produce grapes or the thistle figs. We learn from the Bible that the husband was composed of two whole and distinct natures, divine and human. The human composed no part

of the divine, nor yet did the divine compose any part of his human nature. Now examine the figure. If the bride is not composed of two whole and distinct natures, or if the human composed any part of the divine, or the divine any part of the human nature in her, can she be an helpmeet for him? Unless she partakes of the same distinct natures can she enjoy him, or he her in this world, or that which is to come? But we find the two men are sustained upon radically different elements. The earth which is the mother of the "old," now, as formerly, feeds the old man. The "new" is fed upon that bread that cometh down from heaven. "If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give for the life of the world." "Except ye eat of the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you."—John vii. 51, 53. The creation and development of those destined to inhabit both the natural and the spiritual world are distinct propositions. Hence the psalmist, personating Christ, "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."—Psalms cxxxix. 15, 16. "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."—Eph. v. 30. Creation was instantaneous; formation is progressive. Though we were created simultaneously with and lay dormant in the first Adam for thousands of years, yet the time arrived, the purpose of God is carried out and we were born of the flesh, elemented alone for a natural state of being, susceptible alone of fleshly enjoyments, adapted to a natural world, capable alone of being sustained upon earthly food, and possessed alone of natural life, all of this family bear the image of the earthly Adam. This includes Adam the first and all his natural seed. "And he called their name Adam." We should not forget that Adam the first is said to be "the figure of him that was to come." What then do we learn from the figure? That the bride and all the spiritual children were created in and simultaneously with "the last Adam." That they are of the same nature with him, and being born of the Spirit they are possessed of eternal life, which qualifies them for a knowledge of "the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."—John xvii. 3. Antecedently to this birth, and the imparting to them of this life (which it is the province of this spiritual Father to impart.) (John xvii. 2.) they are entirely ignorant of the true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."—1 Cor. xii. 3. Although all the spiritual seed were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and had grace given them in Christ Jesus before the world began, and were sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, though they were hidden in their spiritual Father as the first Adam's children were in their natural father, for a long series of years, yet the times come when they are born of the Spirit, when the hidden ones are made known to each other, when their hearts being fashioned alike, the "Sun of righteousness shines in their hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. iv. 6.

(*Concluded next number.*)

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at the home of the bride's parents, at Whitesville, Delaware, November 1st, 1922, Edmund P. Messick and Miss Irma L. Brittingham, both of Sussex County, Delaware.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Lillian Frances Mellott departed this earthly life at her home, in Springfield township, Huntingdon Co., Pa., August 16th, 1922, after an illness of about five weeks due to typhoid fever. She was the daughter of John G. and Evaline Wible, and was born October 11th, 1884. Her father died December 1908, but her mother, our sister Wible, is living, and is in her eightieth year. Lillian was one of nine children, three of whom had died before her, thus leaving five brothers surviving her, as follows: Allison A., Edward, Frank and Scott, all of Three Springs, Pa., and Jesse, of Mapleton Depot, Pa. About five years ago she was married to brother Elmer V. Mellott, son of sister Elizabeth Mellott, of the Sideling Hill Church, Pa. To them were born two daughters: Edna Mae and Evaline Elizabeth, the one in the fifth year of her age, the other one year old. These two little girls, with our brother Elmer, are left to mourn the loss of mother and wife. Surely the stroke is a heavy one, as only those know who have suffered the same. Sister Lillian was baptized the third Sunday in last May into membership with the Springfield Old School Baptist Church. Always from a young girl she had a serious mind, and seemed more interested in celestial than in terrestrial things. From ten years of age the books she loved best had been the Bible and the Meditation and the Trial of Job, written by Elder Durand, often going off alone to read them. She loved the meetings of her brethren and the preaching of the gospel. She was most discreet in her walk and deportment, refined in her manner and conversation, very highly esteemed by all who knew her. She was truly a loving daughter, an affectionate sister, an ideal helpmeet, a devoted mother and an exemplary christian. While from a human standpoint it looked as though she had everything to live for, and was so much needed here in the bosom of her little family, yet God took her, and we dare not question his right to do so. He always knows what is best for his creatures, his judgment is infinitely wise and unerringly just. Sister Lillian was made willing through her illness to leave this world behind and to commit her sorrowing ones to the care of her covenant-keeping heavenly Father. She was one who ever gave all honor and glory to God, and counted herself a poor sinner saved only through the free grace given her in Christ Jesus.

The funeral services were held Sunday, August 20th, and were conducted by her pastor, Elder J. M. Fenton, preaching from Revelation xix. 11, 12. She was laid to rest in the cemetery by the side of the Springfield meetinghouse. May the Spirit of the Lord, who knows all our hearts, comfort the mourning ones and grant them strength to bear their cross.

L.

George Harryman Merryman was born September 8th, 1831, and died March 30th, 1922. He was born on the old Harryman farm, about one mile from Warren, Md. He lived nearly eighty years at Alberton, the Merryman homestead. His parents were among the earlier settlers, and the representatives of the substantial people of that day, thrifty, progressive and devout. He was united in marriage to Miss Mary Gorsuch, who, after sixty-three years of domestic happiness, still survives. He was square and honorable in all his dealings with his fellow-men. As he appeared before men in the busy walks of life we see the real gold that glitters through all the deeds of an active life. The many friends he made, and always held, attest the real nobility of his character. Our friend was a man whose religious relations were outside the church, yet pointing to a character of marked excellence, to be admired of men and approved of God. His high aspiration in life was to be true and just, and to be helpful to others. He was no moralist, who depended upon his own inherent goodness or outward forms of life. He was a man of positive conviction, with strong conceptions of Christ and his atoning sacrifice, with a firm and unwavering faith in God. He stands before us as an example of manliness, who lived on the high plane of uprightness. Our friend's last hours were peaceful, without a shadow or doubt. After the toil then the long sought rest and the companionship of the redeemed. That which is mortal must die; that which is immortal shall not taste of death.

A FRIEND.

[WE knew Mr. Merryman well, and esteemed him highly, both as a man and a christian gentleman. He loved the house where God's honor dwelleth, and the doctrine of grace was most precious to him. We sympathize with his family.—K.]

Alexander Dance was born in Chester County, Pa., November 7th, 1830, and died October 16th, 1922, aged 91 years, 11 months and 9 days. When a mere boy he drove a pair of oxen from his father's farm, near Oxford, Pa., to Dulaneys Valley, Md., making the trip in three days. His father, Joseph G. Dance, an Old School Baptist, having purchased a flour, feed and saw-mill and a large farm at that place, he continued to reside there and operate the mill known as Dance's mill until about fifteen years ago. (He having inherited the mill from his father.) Since that time he resided with his nephew, Alexander D. Brooks, of Cockeysville, Md., until his death. Mr.

Dance married Miss Rachel Ensor, daughter of the late John B. Ensor, who served in the war of 1812, and who was a Baptist of the old faith, and one of the members who held to the old faith at the Black Rock Association at the time of the division. Mr. Dance was not a member of the church, but was a biblical student. He read his church paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, religiously, and always enjoyed meeting with those of his faith, and always had a warm expression for every one. He was known by every one as "Uncle Alex." I recall recently when I was with him at his meeting, at Black Rock, Md., his hearing had become somewhat impaired, I suppose from old age. I asked him if he could understand. (I think it was Elder Joshua Rowe who was speaking.) His answer was, "Not much." I told him some of the remarks that were made, and he quickly responded, I knew he was giving it to them right.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Alexander, of Williamsport, Delaware, at Black Rock Cemetery, beside the remains of his wife, who had gone on ahead twenty-nine years ago. Six nephews were his pall-bearers, namely: Lawrence Dance, Willard Dance, John T. Ensor, John E. Ensor, Clarence Ensor and Frank F. Brooks.

Written by his devoted nephew,

ALEX. D. BROOKS.

James Hann, of Battenburg, N. Y., died October 6th, 1922, of infirmities of age. He was 86 years, 9 months and 29 days old. Sister Hann died one year ago last June. He leaves several children and grandchildren, two sisters, with other relatives and friends. He and his wife were members of the Old School Baptist Church called Kingwood, at Locktown, N. J.

Elder D. M. Vail, of Binghamton, N. Y., officiated at the funeral, which was held at his late home, in Battenburg, October 9th, 1922.

A FRIEND.

DIED—Sister **Martha J. Bailey,** widow of Robert W. Bailey, aged 84 years. Sister Bailey fell six years ago, and again last June, after which her sufferings were severe. She was born April 4th, 1838, and was baptized by Elder Joseph L. Staton, at Indiantown, Md., in 1864, and was a faithful, devoted and loving member of the church. She afterward moved, and retained her membership in the Salem Church of Philadelphia. She is survived by four children: Mrs. Turner Davis, of Box Iron, Md., Mrs. Hillary Davis, of Salisbury, Md., and Albert and Robert Bailey, of Philadelphia, Pa., also one step-son: Wm. E. Bailey, of Salisbury, Md. She is also survived by several grandchildren and great-grandchildren, among the latter being the daughter of Mr. Robert H. Davis, of Box Iron, Md.

Funeral services were held at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Hillary Davis, Saturday afternoon, September 17th, 1922. Elder H. C. Ker spoke with power and comfort to those assembled, after which the body was taken to Snow Hill, Md., for burial beside her husband in the family burial lot of the Old School Baptist churchyard.

Her pastor, B. F. COULTER.

Martha Ann Tillery, daughter of Himrod and Susanna Vandevender, was born February 8th, 1852, and departed this life July 9th, 1922, being at the time of her death 70 years, 5 months and 1 day old. She leaves three brothers and two sisters: John Vandevender, of Forgan, Oklahoma, Philip Vandevender, of Cameron, New Mexico, Wm. Vandevender and Malinda Tharp, of Spickard, Missouri, and Sarah Martin, of Emily, Minnesota. She was married to Isaac Tillery April 23rd, 1873, and was the mother of three children: Ella Cook, Baker City, Oregon, Lizzie Kemph, South Dakota, and Susie Gumm, Prenton, Missouri. She was of a cheerful disposition, a loving mother and a good neighbor. Upon the profession of her faith in Christ she was baptized in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church, near Spickard, Mo., where her parents were members, and remained a member until her death. We weep not as those who have no hope. We believe our loss is her eternal gain. Her body was laid to rest in North Evans Cemetery. May the Lord bless all who mourn.

Her niece, CORA THARP

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. J. W. Rockafellow, N. Y., $8.00; Mrs. M. E. Bentley, Ga., $1.00; Josephine Culpepper, Texas, $4.30; A. B. Corder, W. Va., $3.00.

MEETINGS.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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CORRESPONDENCE.

LOGANVILLE, Ga., Aug. 22, 1922.

ELDER J. M. ADAMS—DEAR BROTHER: —I very greatly fear I cannot write to you as I wish to, though I cannot be satisfied, it seems, without at least trying to express to you in my very weak way something of how we have enjoyed reading the several copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and the other letters and souvenir you so kindly sent us. Perhaps you do not know any of the hungerings and thirstings of a poor "shut-in," as I am. I am sure you do not by experience. Somehow for several years I have been more interested in the great works of God, and his everlasting love for his people, so that I have a great desire to read his word and to know more of his almighty power and grace, of his wonderful works which are so marvelous in our eyes. I have other Baptist literature to read, but as is sometimes said of medicine, it does not seem to hit the spot, according to my own experience and weak understanding of the Scriptures. The editorials and writings of all the contributors to the SIGNS are so rich in expressing the goodness of God to poor sinners that I just do not know how to express my feelings of thankfulness, as I hope, to God, the giver of all good, that he put it into your heart to have care enough for us as to send them to us. We have read and reread them, much to our comfort. They have stirred up my pure mind, if indeed I have such a mind, and have caused me to rejoice more in God our Savior. Oh I just love to think of him as the one eternal God, who has all power in heaven and in earth, and who does as he pleases at all times and in all places, and none can stay his hand, and has no right to say to him, What or why doest thou? I have been very much interested in what I read in his holy book of him: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost; omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent; one God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who made the world and all therein and thereupon, and the one point of seemingly the most interest to me is, he made it all for his own glory, and he will be glorified in it all. Sometimes in my musings I am made to say, It is too high for me, I cannot attain unto it. His ways are past finding out. Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and

true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Oh that I, a poor, hoping sinner, could only at all times be reconciled to God. Sometimes for a short while, by grace, I feel I am reconciled to him. Then all his ways to me are ways of pleasantness, and then I can say, Not my will, but thine be done. Would it could be this way all the time, were it his will, but I know it is not, so why not be reconciled to God? We are, through Christ, and only through him. I must tell you, brother Adams, of a little (just a little, too,) of my weakness. I spent most of yesterday afternoon reading and meditating on God and his goodness to us poor sinners. After supper I was sitting alone on the porch, and soon found myself telling a number of people just how it was, and when I came to myself I was shaking, puffing and blowing, I was so overjoyed I could hardly be still, but I thought to myself: "Such imagination." I soon went to my room and to bed, but not to sleep. I could no more get all these great (to me) fundamental truths of the gospel off my mind than I could fly, one Scripture after another coming up all the time so I could not, though trying all the time, go to sleep. I wanted to forget it, I wanted to go to sleep and rest. I wish I had time and space to quote some of the Scriptures that just read themselves into my mind while lying there trying to go to sleep. I will try, anyway, to quote one: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." Well, thought I, that eternal power and Godhead are the greatest invisible things I ever looked at in my life, and so it is yet. Invisible, and yet clearly seen. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" He gives us eyes to see; without them we are blind. He gives us ears to hear; without them we are deaf. He gives a heart to understand; without it we are ignorant, ignorant of the things God has prepared for them that love him, but he reveals them to us by his Spirit. So then by grace we see, hear and understand, thereby prepared here in our sinful state to praise God in our bodies and in our spirits, which are his.

Well, well, brother Adams, I had no idea of writing so much. Cast the mantle of charity over my weakness, and pray for me and mine. Laura desires me to kindly remember her to you and to your dear wife, sister Adams, and to tell you she has certainly enjoyed reading the SIGNS you sent us, so has Stella and Esta, Mrs. Ivey.

As ever, a poor sinner who loves you,
JOHN R. WILSON.

BIVINS, Texas, Nov. 12, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed find copy of the Corresponding Letter of the last session of our Sulphur Fork Association, of Texas, held on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, including the first Sunday in October, 1922. I will thank you very much if you will publish this letter in the SIGNS, for two special reasons: first, in reading the proof sheet of our Minutes I failed to notice the mistake made by the printer of leaving out the name of the brother appointed to write the Corresponding Letter; second, is to let the brethren who read the SIGNS know where the next session of our Association is appointed to be held. I am also inclosing a good letter I received from Elder H. B. Jones. While I do not have his consent to have it published, I feel

sure that it will not offend him. He is a precious brother to this poor sinner, and has been ever since I first met him and heard him preach, in 1891. Like David and Jonathan, it seems that our souls have been knit together in love. As his letter was a great feast to this poor tempest-tossed soul, I feel perhaps others of like precious faith may be benefited and comforted by reading it.

Thirty-two years ago to-day I was baptized in the fellowship of the dear people of God, the Primitive Baptists. While I have never regretted this act in the least, for I was relieved of a great burden that has never bothered me any more, still my life up to this blessed day has not been satisfactory unto me; it seems to have been altogether unprofitable, and if I were called on to-day to answer the question, Wherein lies your hope of a better life beyond the grave? I would be compelled to answer, It is alone in and through the merits of a crucified and risen Savior. If he represented me on the cross, then I shall see him as he is and be like him, then I will be satisfied.

The present year soon will come to its ending, and while great darkness seems to be overshadowing our nation, our God is true. He says he will never leave nor forsake us, so, brethren, be of good cheer, keep writing your comforting articles to the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and as much as within us is, let brotherly love continue. May the Lord grant peace and contentment unto you all.

Your least brother, in hope of a better life in the world to come,

J. S. McLEOD.

WINNSBORO, Texas, Nov. 3, 1922.

DEAR BROTHER McLEOD:—Your kind favor (letter and Minutes of recent date) came duly to hand. I am sure that most brethren who notice the little mistake you mention will take a charitable view of it. We all make mistakes, and I guess most of us would make more of them in preparing Minutes for the press than you do. I have wondered in my mind where we would find another who would fill the position of clerk nearly as well should we lose you for the place. The bitter accusation you bring against yourself, and the felt sense of unprofitableness you express, only strengthens my fellowship for you, for I realize more and more that there is no salvation for me outside of Jesus. Salvation from myself, salvation from this present evil world. Often in taking a retrospective view of my life as a member of the dear church of God, which is the pillar and ground of the truth, and especially as a professed and recognized minister of the gospel, the whole thing looks so unprofitable, and filled with mistakes and blindness, I am made ashamed and afraid. But sometimes the gracious promise, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more," gives relief. One thing we know: except washed in that fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness, and clothed with the imputed righteousness of Jesus, no sinner of Adam's race will ever meet God in peace. Another thing we may set down as sure: that no sinner so washed and clothed will ever fall short of seeing His glorious face in peace. Our faith and hope is in God, not in ourselves, nor any other man, or men. The psalmist says, Blessed are they that trust in the Lord, for they shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever. Then let us be patient

and fight on with such strength as the Lord gives us, ever looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despised the shame and now is forever set down at the right hand of God. Time's rapid flight will soon bring us to that glorious realm which knows no sin, no doubts and fears, no gloom, no sorrow, no death, for sin, the source of all these things, has never, and can never, enter there. So purity, love, peace and joy are forever and forever. Sometimes the thought of these things makes me feel like singing,

"Reach down, reach down thine arms of grace,
And cause me to ascend,
Where congregations ne'er break up,
And sabbaths never end."

May the Lord bless you, and give you strength, and comfortable hope to the end.

I am doing fairly well, as to health, but my wife is quite poorly. She got a fall about a week ago, and has a broken rib, but is getting along fairly well with it, I think.

Hoping this may find you and yours enjoying good health, I am, I trust, your little brother in hope of a better life,

H. B. JONES.

CANON CITY, Colorado, May 7, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending three dollars, two for the SIGNS for another year, and one to be applied in any way you see fit, to aid you in the publication, or to help in sending the paper to some one not able to pay for it. I think you are doing a great work in furnishing Baptists with such a paper as you do. It has most of the preaching that I have, and I would miss it more than I can tell. May you long be spared to wield "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon."

Your unworthy sister in hope,

(MRS.) SARAH V. CURRY.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

(Written by Elder S. C. Davenport.)

The Sulphur Fork Association, now in session with the church at Providence, Franklin County, Texas, to our sister associations with which we correspond, to wit: the Fellowship, New Hope, South Arkansas, Union and Denton Creek.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have been blessed to meet again in an associational capacity, through the tender mercies of an all-wise, covenant-keeping God. We have no special news of interest to write unto you at this time, more than to say to you that love and sweet fellowship abound, for which we hope we feel thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. We have been greatly refreshed by the coming of your ministers and messengers.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the church at Siloam, Bowie County Texas, on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1923, when and where we hope to meet your friendly correspondents again.

H. B. JONES, Moderator.

J. S. MCLEOD, Clerk.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANKS.

As the majority of our subscribers' time expires with the end of the year, we inclose in each paper of this issue a subscription blank, as a convenience to them in sending new subscribers, as well as in paying their own subscriptions. Will you please make a special effort to send one or more new subscribers when you renew your subscription for next year?

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

John F. Oliver, Va., $1.00; Marion S. Brooks, California, $5.00.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1922.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

APOSTASY.

THIS article has to do with those who, though they have once known the way of salvation, fall away from the first principles of their profession and become renegades, so far as the faith of God's elect is concerned. An apostate is one who ceases to walk in conformity with the principles of doctrine he once believed, and so falls away. As a basis for what we shall write, we want to use the second chapter of second Peter, which gives as good a description of apostasy from the doctrine, faith and order of the apostles as can be found anywhere in the New Testament. It is impossible for any child of God to fall away from the covenant of election which was made in Christ Jesus before the world began. Once in the love of God, always in the love of God. There cannot possibly be any apostasy so far as one's falling out of the hand of God and being finally lost. Not a drop of Jesus' blood was shed in vain. All that the Father gave him shall certainly come to him, and there is no power sufficiently able to pluck one of them out of the Father's hand. This is proved by the line of thought in the sixth chapter of Hebrews, where it is shown that if it were possible for any of God's people to fall away from God the only way they could be renewed again to repentance would be for the Son of God to be crucified anew for them. This could not be, because such a repetition of the crucifixion of the Son of God would be putting him to shame, in that it would be a confession on his part that the work which he did the first time was not satisfactory, or was not perfect enough to eternally secure those given him to redeem. Thus, inasmuch as it is impossible for Christ to be crucified afresh, just so it is impossible for the redeemed to ever fall away so as to be finally lost. But the second epistle of Peter, especially the second chapter thereof, treats of the falling away of those who depart from the principles they once professed to believe, and though they are still the children of God, and cannot ever be cast away so as to be finally lost from Jesus Christ, they do in this earthly life become followers after their own lusts, or become bewitched of their own theories and opinions so far as to preach for doctrines their own inventions, thus departing from the old paths of apostolic doctrine and order which they once professed. All such characters are anathema to the true church, and are not to be fellowshipped by those professing the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. The gospel procedure of the church of God as set forth by Christ and the apostles condemns all such, and they are not to be received into our houses, neither are we to bid them godspeed, lest we, too, be partakers of their evil deeds. We cannot understand how any one can read the second chapter of second Peter and conclude that these false teachers are not children of God. The description of them given in this chapter cannot be made to fit any but those who have once known the way of salvation but have fallen away from the professed faith which rightly becomes

those who walk in that way. In the first verse, these false teachers are to secretly bring in among the saints awful heresies, even going so far as to deny the Lord that bought them. This shows clearly that the Lord bought them; that is, had redeemed them with his own blood, but that they afterward denied him. If the Lord ever bought any with his own blood except those chosen in him before the world began, we have never seen it anywhere in Scripture; and we believe Christ suffered for the elect only, therefore these must have been among the elect. By bringing into the church these heresies, these who forget and deny the Lord who bought them bring destruction on themselves; that is, they bring upon themselves the swift judgment of those who desire to continue steadfast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and become destroyed to the love and fellowship of the church here in the world. We have not time and space to comment upon each one of the verses in this chapter, but our readers will note that Peter described the safety of the true church in the midst of these false teachers by showing how Noah was saved from the wickedness of the antediluvian world, and how Lot was delivered from the wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah. Just so will God spare his remnant now in these latter days when the little flock is so terribly beset with apostate men who have fallen away from the advocacy of the principles which they once professed, and have gone after their own vain traditions and imaginations. Just as God in the old dispensation was determined that his servant David should always have a light before him in Jerusalem, and so spared Judah from the general falling away which befell Israel, so now God has purposed that the spiritual David, Jesus Christ, shall until the end of time have a remnant loyal to him, even though they be scattered and peeled. It is not to be wondered at that some fall away from the gospel order and principles, the great wonder is that all of us do not fall away, and that any are left to hold aloft the banner of truth, for surely were it not for the grace of God there would be no steadfastness in any one anywhere. These apostates are called in the thirteenth verse "spots" and "blemishes," and sport with their own deceptions, even while they associate with the children of sound doctrine and order, their deceptions not yet being uncovered sufficiently to bring down upon their heads the swift destruction which shall cut them off from the fellowship of the church. In the fourteenth verse these who fall away are called "cursed children." Children, therefore, even yet, but children under condemnation, for "cursed" means "condemned." These are under condemnation, not by the law of Moses, nor yet by the law of sin and death, but are condemned by that law of Jesus Christ which dictates the order and doctrine of the church here in the world. Every principle of gospel doctrine cuts off from fellowship with the visible church all who fall away from following in the principles of that doctrine, and all who disobey the order of God's house. Coming down to the twentieth verse, we find that the children of God, even though they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, do sometimes become again entangled therein and are overcome. In such a case as that, the latter end is worse than the first; also that it were better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than afterward to have turned from

the holy commandment delivered unto them. These, being the children of God, shall in the end be saved, but it shall be as by fire, and through such a terrible refining that they shall wish they had never been born. These are those who have sinned wilfully after having come to a knowledge of the truth, and for all such there remains a fearful looking for of judgment and of fiery indignation which shall devour the adversary. Thanks be to God, it is not the wayward child who shall be devoured, but all those things adverse to his peace which have caused him to wander, those things shall be devoured, and the child brought at last to his eternal home in the bosom of the Father; but no words can express, nor shall we ever be able to describe, the awful anguish and bitterness of soul which all apostates must eventually be brought through in order to purge them of their dross. Their latter state of humiliation and condemnation at the end of this gospel age shall be worse than at their beginning, and it shall be awful for them to have to blush for shame when Christ comes in his glory to be admired in all them that believe. Christ is the avenger of his people's wrongs, and no one who has ever offended one of his little ones can escape in the end. God is not mocked, and there is sure to be a time of restitution for all these things. The doctrine of Jesus Christ and the simplicity of the order of the apostolic church have been fiercely assailed from the first, and never more so than by those who are themselves the children of God. The creeping in of false teachers leads away those who are unstable souls, and the time comes when even believers will not stand for sound doctrine, and insist on easy or smooth things.

Time and space will not permit us to mention all the heresies that have from time to time assailed the church, but we cannot forbear to mention a few that are bewitching some of the Lord's people to-day. One of the ways in which believers to-day deny the Lord that bought them is when they teach that eternal salvation is all of grace, but that time salvation is conditioned upon one's obedience to gospel precepts. This is a cunning deception and has led away many. The salvation of the believer here in his journey through time is all of grace, and if he walks obediently to the gospel that very obedience is of grace and is the fruit of the Spirit, and not of self. Another deception to-day prevailing among the Lord's people is that which teaches the purpose of God comprehends all good things, but not the evil things. It is an attempt to limit the sovereignty of God over all worlds, principalities and powers, and as such, it is a denial of the Scriptures and an insult to God Almighty, an insult which shall be well taken care of when Christ comes. Another very dangerous inclination abroad at present among God's people is the tendency among many preachers to over-spiritualize the Scriptures. Now, all of us must know that the Bible is a spiritual book, but we must not go so far as to think it not literally true. To preach Adam as the figure of Jesus Christ is correct, but to go so far as to say there never was any Adam, and never was any garden of Eden; that the Genesis record of creation merely teaches a spiritual lesson, and did not actually take place, all this is exceedingly dangerous. To set forth the spiritual meaning of Noah and the ark is exceedingly edifying to the saints of God, but to say there never was a flood, and never was a literal ark, is to bring in what is not true. Some have even gone

so far as to say that a virgin never did give birth to a child, and that the story of Christ's birth is only a spiritual allegory. This is being preached among Old Baptists in some sections. It is well that we beware of all such. Then, too, there is that dangerous heresy regarding the resurrection of the dead, whereby some have spiritualized it into an ethereal nothing, that it loses all sense or power to edify and becomes a fantastic unreality which the faith of no child of God can lay hold of. There is an experimental knowledge of the resurrection which God's people have here in this world, and it is very comforting and instructive to hear that phase of the resurrection set forth, but when one goes on to give the impression that there is no resurrection to be experienced by the Lord's people, except what they have already obtained, when the future resurrection of the body is ignored or openly denied, then it is time to call a halt, for then spiritualizing becomes a dangerous menace to the church.

Finally, there seems to be a growing disposition on the part of some to deny the actual coming of the Lord at the close of this gospel dispensation, and to preach the coming of Christ as a purely spiritual and experimental thing within the range of the church's life to-day. We have no wish to deny that Christ did come in the Spirit to set up the gospel church at Jerusalem at the time of Pentecost; we further do not deny that Christ is coming now in the Spirit to quicken his people, each in his own order, from death in sin to life in righteousness, but we do most positively affirm, according to the Scriptures, that Christ is yet to come as he has never come before, and that he will consummate the expectations of this gospel age when he appears to raise the dead, and when those who shall remain alive unto his coming shall not die, but shall be caught up together with the risen dead to meet the Lord in the air. We hope all of us may, by the grace of God, beware of over spiritualizing the sacred Scriptures and thus becoming apostates ourselves. None of us can keep alive his own soul, and only the Lord is sufficient for these things.

L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Elders and messengers composing the First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists, to the churches composing her body, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, greeting.

(*Continued from last number.*)

As the light of the sun, the great luminary of day, shines upon the sons and daughters of the natural world, so the "Sun of righteousness" affords light to the spiritual world. "I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him."—Isaiah xliii. 6. Here again we see the figure carried out. All the family of the first Adam created in him are called by his name, "and he called their name Adam." All the spiritual family of the last Adam are called by his name, "even every one that is called by his name." Here we have two distinct families, propagated by two distinct heads, each deriving the nature of his progenitor, and each looking to his appropriate elements for sustenance. The first, mortal beings, sustained upon corrupted elements. The second, immortal, sus-

tained upon uncorrupted elements. The first earthly, the second, heavenly beings. We ask, Is not the old man sustained upon the same identical elements subsequently, upon which he was fed and sustained antecedently to regeneration? Can those elements sustain the new man? Do we not partake of earthly food until our hunger is satisfied without imparting a particle of nourishment to the new man? Does not the new man, "sitting under the droppings of the sanctuary," feed sumptuously upon the provisions of the gospel without imparting a particle of food to the old man? "Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."—Acts xx. 28. "Feed my lambs." "Feed my sheep." Being born of the flesh we are born into a natural state of consciousness, capable of investigating natural subjects, of participating in natural enjoyments, sustained upon natural elements so long as we retain, and until we yield up that natural life which we received in our natural head, Adam the first. Being "born of the Spirit," "born of God," we are made partakers of the divine nature, are susceptible of spiritual instruction, of investigating spiritual subjects, participating in spiritual enjoyments, sustained upon spiritual elements; nor can the being thus born cease to be. "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish."—John x. 28. "Because I live, ye shall live also."—John xiv. 19. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory."—Col. iii. 4. Hence we see that the death of the old man cannot destroy the life of the new man. The law was violated and the curse incurred by man in the flesh. The law was magnified and made honorable, and the curse removed from his chosen seed, (who sinned in their Adamic, or natural relation) by "God, manifest in the flesh." "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham."—Heb. ii. 14-16. The whole humanity of the Lord Jesus, both soul and body, was involved in that deliverance, because the whole "old man," both soul and body, was involved in transgression. "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand."—Isaiah liii. 10. "Now is my soul troubled." "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."—1 Peter ii. 24. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."—1 Peter iii. 18. We have said christians are compound beings, by which we mean there are "two men," two whole and distinct natures inhabiting the same tenement. The "old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts," whose genealogy we trace back to the "first Adam," who "was made a living soul," and who discloses the corrupt nature of the fountain from whence he sprang. Adam "begat a son in his own likeness, after his image" —an enemy to holiness, a hater of God. The "new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holi-

ness," and who exemplifies the declaration, "If the root be holy, so are the branches." "And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken."—Isaiah lxii. 12. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."—1 John iii. 2. Will he appear with two whole and distinct natures? If he shall so appear, shall we be like him, unless we, too, have two whole and distinct natures? Hence it is seen that the two men derive their natures and dispositions from two distinct sources. Each has a life peculiar to himself yet common to his species. The first natural, the second spiritual life. The first is a corporeal, the second an incorporeal being. The first an earthly, the second an heavenly being. "As is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." As he is so are we in this world. Nothing pure or holy attaches to the "old man." "But even their mind and conscience is defiled."—Titus i. 15. Nothing impure or unholy attaches to the "new man." "Unto the pure all things are pure."—Titus i. 15. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."—Matthew v. 8. It is contended by some, yea, many, professors of religion, that the soul is regenerated. We confess we know very little about the soul, but we inquire, What is it that renders man a rational, intelligent, responsible being? What is it that exercises volition for the body? "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."—James i. 15. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart."—Gen. vi. 5, 6. If the soul was regenerated, would it not be as wholly devoted to God subsequently, as it had been to sin antecedently to regeneration? If it be the soul that exercises volition for the body, and that soul is "born of God," and consequently "cannot sin," how are we to account for the wicked actions of David, of Peter and thousands of other christians, even down to the present? But it is contended that the same soul exercises wicked volition for the old, and holy volition for the new man. If so, is not the soul divided against itself? Others tell us it is the mind that exercises volition for the body. We have heretofore proven that "their mind and conscience is defiled," and Paul informs us, "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."—Rom. viii. 7. Hence we see that the influence of this mind will lead the body to rebel continually against God. Such is the practice of the "old man." It cannot be this mind which exercises volition for the "new man," because their works are radically different from each other, and if it influenced both there would be no warfare. We conclude that the old man is "carnally minded," and thus shows that he is in a state of death. The new man, being "spiritually minded," is possessed of "life and peace." It is quite evident that when the apostle speaks of the carnal mind he refers to the mind of the old man, which is not subject to the law of God, and equally evident that when he says, "So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God," he refers to the mind of the new man. "But we have the mind of Christ."—1 Cor. ii. 16.

Adam the first imparts his mind, which is carnal to the old Adamic man, who descended from him. Christ imparts his mind to his spiritual children, and hence the conflict—THE WARFARE. "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man [certainly not after the outward man]: but I see another law in my members [are those members without an intelligent principle?], warring against the law of my mind [not the carnal mind], and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Surely sin does not render the old man wretched, it is his element.) This old man whose deeds are evil, deeds of death. "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing. [Is the soul deposited in the flesh?]: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."—Rom. vii. 18, 22–25. How are we to explain the following seeming contradiction, or paradox? "If we [christians] say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."—1 John i. 8. The same apostle tells us, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."—1 John iii. 9. The old, or outward man, sins daily (and the christian most feelingly acknowledges it), and thus proves that he is not born of God. The new man is filled with holy desires, he "delights in the law of God," complains of "the old man with his deeds," longs to be delivered from the bonds of corruption "into the glorious liberty of the children of God."—Rom. viii. 21, and cries with the psalmist, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."—Psalms xvii. 15. Thus does he prove his birth to be heavenly.

The truth is, dear brethren, the old man is precisely what he has ever been since the fall, in nature and disposition. The "strong man armed" is only bound, not killed. His heart is yet "enmity against God," he is doomed to death; and then will have come deliverance to the new man who cries, O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me. But, we are asked, what becomes of man when death shall have done his office? We answer, The dust returns to its dust again, and the spirit to God who gave it. But what becomes of the soul? When we shall be informed where the soul of the Lord Jesus was between the time of his crucifixion and resurrection we may undertake to answer this question. Of one thing, however, we are certain, and that is that neither soul nor body of the redeemed can go to hell, because both are purchased with the Redeemer's blood. "The redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth forever."—Psalms xlix. 8. "Waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." "After that ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."—Eph. i. 13, 14. Mark, both soul and body are included in the purchase. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Thess. v. 23. The whole "old man" is destined to undergo a mysterious and glorious change, by which he shall be assimilated into the likeness of the humanity of the Lord Jesus, and be prepared for that thrilling occasion, when the glories of eternity shall burst upon his ravished sight, and the heavenly family shall exclaim, Come,

Lord Jesus, come quickly. But, we are asked, When and how are the old and the new man to be united, and how will they appear hereafter? We answer, "Now we see through a glass darkly," but when we shall learn how the soul and body of the Redeemer, Husband, Friend now appears, and how they are gloriously united to his divinity, then, and not till then, may we undertake to say more in regard to the future state of the soul and body, and the "new man" composing "the bride, the Lamb's wife." It is sufficient for the present for her to know that, "when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."—1 John iii. 2. Until which event shall roll on, the wise man describes her thus: "What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies."—Song vi. 13. It is vain to tell us that the flesh, independently of an intelligent principle, call it soul, mind or what you may, will rebel against God. Some brethren conclude that the warfare is to be explained by "mind and matter." Have they forgotten that it requires both to constitute an intelligent, responsible being? We have shown that "even their mind and conscience is defiled," that the "carnal mind is enmity against God." Matter would be incapable of vice or virtue in the absence of mind. Nor are those more successful who attempt to explain the warfare by the different colors blended in the rainbow. Have they forgotten that those colors harmonize, and that it is the entire want of harmony between the old and the new man which necessarily produces the warfare? Have you forgotten the declaration, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world"?—1 John ii. 16. If the old man is born of God he cannot sin, and there would be no warfare. But is this true? Let the christian experience answer: "For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that I do."—Rom. vii. 15.

In conclusion, we submit to your serious and prayerful consideration the foregoing pages, hoping that God may bless us with an understanding of the truth, and dispose us to reduce it to practice, that he may guide us with his counsel, and afterward receive us into glory, is our prayer for the Redeemer's sake. Amen.

Written by T. P. Dudley and copied by order of the Association.

L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

(Written by Elder W. T. Walters.)

The Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, now in session with Providence Church, Appanoose County, Iowa, to the churches composing the same, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—We feel it is by, in and through the tender mercies of that great God by whom the bounds of our habitation are appointed unto us we are enabled to meet together in another Association. Since we last met another year of time has passed, with its many changes. Some of those changes have caused joy and gladness, and some have caused sorrow and trouble. This brings to our mind the language of Job: "Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble."—Job xiv. 1.

Dear brethren and sisters, it has been a long established rule of our Association to appoint some one to write a Circular Letter to be printed with our Minutes.

I feel the association has made a great mistake in choosing me, but as the lot has fallen on me I will try in my weakness to do the best I can, and leave it to the consideration of the brethren.

I will call your attention to a portion of the gospel of Christ as recorded by the apostle Paul to the Galatians, fourth chapter, fourth and fifth verses, which reads thus: "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Now as to the fullness of the time, it was God's own good and appointed time, and that was in time to save his people from their sins. The angel said, He shall save his people from their sins. Now we understand that his people were under the law of sin and death; then they were dead in trespasses and sins, they were in a lost condition, so far as the power of man was concerned, but Christ came to save that which was lost. Paul says, For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. To redeem is to pay back, or to pay that which stood against the redeemed. We understand that Jesus is the Redeemer, and his people, or church, are the redeemed. Christ could not have redeemed them if he had no lawful right or title to or in them, but they are his by gift, as Jesus said to the Father, As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. Let us see what it cost him to redeem them. It cost his life. He said he gave his life for the sheep. When he went down into death for them he satisfied the demands of the law that had dominion over them. He has said, All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. He also said, For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me, and this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. Jesus has said, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Paul also said, Let every soul be subject to the higher powers, for there is no power but of God. The powers that be are ordained of God. Now seeing all power is in God's hand, there is no power to hinder him, he doeth according to his own will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? Dear brethren, Jesus is not only our Redeemer, but he is our Savior and our God. He has said, I will be their God and they shall be my people. These are the elect of God, and they shall all be taught of the Lord, and all shall know him, from the least to the greatest of them. Inasmuch as Jesus has redeemed us by the shedding of his own blood, let us still contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. We are not able to stand of ourselves. The apostle Peter says, Ye are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Dear brethren, let us be obedient to the will of our Master, who has done so much for us; let us meet often, pray with and for each other.

Now may God bless, support, guide and direct us in all our deliberations, for our good and his everlasting and eternal glory, is our prayer for Christ's sake. Amen.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator.
J. M. CATE, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

It is with sadness we write of the passing to his eternal home of our beloved pastor, **Elder John Clark.** His death occurred at his home, in Halcottville, Delaware Co., N. Y., at 7:15 A. M. Saturday, October 14, 1822, from uremic poisoning. Elder John Clark was born in Gilboa, Schoharie Co., N. Y., March 9th, 1838. He was twice married; first to Miss Jennie Eliza Hannah, March 9th, 1863, who died August, 1875, and October 22nd, 1876, he was united in marriage to Mrs. Julia M. Webb, who with two sons, Scott Clark, of Halcottville, and Isaac Laverne Clark, of Roxbury, N. Y., and one step-son, Victor Webb, of Little Rock, Ark., are left to mourn the loss of a good, faithful husband and father. The subject of this notice received a good hope in the mercy of God in early life, related his experience, and was received in the fellowship of the Gilboa Church, June 10th, 1865, and was baptized the next day by Elder Loren P. Cole. The church recognizing his gift gave him license to exercise it within bounds of the church, September 12th, 1880, and he was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, June 11th, 1887, which work he faithfully followed until the summons came that called him home. May 11th, 1889, he was called to the pastoral care of the Gilboa Church, which church he served faithfully until the New York water company took the Gilboa Church property, after which time the Gilboa Church united in a body with the Second Roxbury Church, in Delaware Co., N. Y., where he remained faithful and loved until the day of his death. He was chosen pastor of the Middleburg Church, September, 1893, and continued until the Master called him home. Surely his labors there were labors of love, as he traveled over the rough, hilly roads forty miles, through heat and cold, storm or sunshine, not for hire or reward, but for love to God and his people, to follow the command, Feed my sheep and feed my lambs. He also served several other churches. The local paper among many other things said, "Elder Clark was a notable man in many respects, unassuming in manner, direct in statement, firm in his convictions and true to his ideals. His unquestioned integrity and firm adherence to principle made him influential and a wise counselor. The beautiful floral tribute from members of churches he served attest the abiding place that he won and so well deserved in their hearts." His health the past summer had been unusually good, and he attended the four spring associations, viz., Baltimore, Delaware River, Delaware and Warwick, and expressed great comfort and satisfaction in them. He looked forward with great interest and anticipation to the Lexington-Roxbury Association, held September 13th and 14th, 1922, (his home Assotion) but about two weeks before the time of the Association he was taken sick, from which he never recovered, although he was after that called to attend a funeral, and said that when he arose to speak the pain all left him and he felt nothing of it through the service, and his desire was so great to attend the Association that he did go and attend all day Thursday, the last day, but was very feeble, and spoke for a few minutes only, expressed his comfort and fellowship in the preaching he had heard, and asked that hymn 449 be sung, as that expressed his mind better than he could tell it. The following Saturday and Sunday was the time of his regular appointment with his home church in Halcottville, and he attended both days, and on Sunday preached a good sermon, which ended his labors here below, but his works will follow and be remembered by many. Much might be said of his firm, steadfast, adherence to the doctrine, precepts, examples and admonitions, as set forth in the Bible, as that was his guide and rule, and few, if any, were more familiar with the Scriptures than he.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder George Ruston. Prayer by brother J. H. Bevier, on Tuesday, October 17th, at the church-house, only a few rods from his home, which was not large enough to hold all the people that assembled to pay their last tribute of respect and love. The very appropriate text used for the occasion was 2nd Timothy iv. 6, 7. Burial was in Halcottville cemetery, there to await the resurrection, to which his faith looked. We believe for him to die is great gain, but he will be missed, not only by his family, but by the brethren, friends and neighbors, yet most of all by his dear aged wife and companion, sister Clark, who is in very poor health, but she said, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." Surely the everlasting arms are underneath to support and cause her to bear the affliction, and may she and all of us feel and say, Not my will, but thine, O God, be done, now and ever.

(MRS.) J. E. LIVINGSTON.

Mrs. Mary E. Slusher, daughter of Levi and Patsie Self, was born October 24th, 1852, and departed this life June 22nd, 1922. She was united in marriage to David Slusher, who still survives her, June 23rd, 1871. Sister Slusher received a hope in Jesus in the year 1884. Brother and sister Slusher were then residing in Newton County, Arkansas, and moved from Arkansas to Lamar County, Texas, in the year 1897. The following year sister Slusher offered herself to the Hopewell Church, telling what great things she hoped the Lord had done for her, and was unanimously received, and was baptized by Elder P. D. Ausmus. She was the mother of eleven children, three sons and eight daughters, of whom seven are dead and four are living. She possessed a quiet disposition, was kind to all, an affectionate wife and a

kind, loving mother. She was a great sufferer, but bore her long severe afflictions patiently, seldom complaining. Brother and sister Slusher were living with their son, brother W. L. Slusher, when she fell asleep in Jesus. Just before she died she said she desired to go and dwell with her Lord and Master, where affliction is unknown. All that fond, tender loving hands could do to comfort her was done. The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved, using the text, All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called, &c. The body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Rush Springs, Oklahoma, to await the resurrection morn. L. E. SKINNER.

Mary Linn, the subject of this notice, was born April 16th, 1846, and departed this life October 2nd, 1922, aged 76 years, 5 months and 16 days. She was the widow of Wm. Harrison Linn, whose obituary was published in the SIGNS of recent date. Her maiden name was Holbert. She was a woman of fine qualities; a good mother and a good companion. She professed a hope in Christ many years ago, but never joined the church, though she always desired to hear the truth. In her latter days she became very feeble, and desired me to come to her humble home and preach for her, and oh how she enjoyed the preaching. Just before she departed this life she said if she only knew she was prepared to die she would gladly go, and then she said that she had a good hope and was not afraid to die, but was willing to go. She leaves several children and a host of friends to mourn their loss, but we have hope that she has gone where she will never sorrow more. I will say to the children, Grieve not for her, but weep for yourselves, and oh may the Lord Jesus Christ be your comfort and stay. Live in peace as much as in you lieth, and wait for the resurrection, when I hope that your dear old mother and father will come forth in the likeness of Jesus Christ.

JAMES W. LINN.

MEETINGS.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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IN

NEW YORK CITY.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

O'BRIEN, Texas, Sept. 20, 1922.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I am sending you a letter I received from brother Greathouse when I was sinking with trouble, which I would like you to publish in the SIGNS so I can keep it. I am seventy-two years old, and I once thought when I was old I would have a brighter hope, but it seems I have as many doubts and fears now as I ever did; am helpless in the hands of God. My oldest boy died last April, and it seems hard for me to be submissive or say, "Thy will be done." My only comfort is in reading my Bible and the SIGNS, for they tell my travels better than I can. I have three children living out of eight. My dear companion died over thirty years ago, and left me in this world of sin and sorrow.

"A pilgrim stranger here I roam,
From place to place I'm driven;
My friends are gone, and I'm in gloom,
The earth is all a lonely tomb,
I have no home but heaven."

Remember me in your prayers. May the SIGNS live on and on, for I believe the doctrine it sets forth is the true doctrine. M. A. CARVER.

GRAPEVINE, Texas, May 29, 1922.

DEAR SISTER CARVER:—Friday this week, if the Lord is willing, I want to get to Lawn, Texas, where I hope to meet Mrs. Greathouse, and I think we will come to Comanche and let the doctor treat me some more, as I am better, but not well. It may be we can have some meetings again for you and the others who are interested in better things than this sad world affords. All of the children of God know sorrow in this life; great afflictions came on them, which are unavoidable, and sometimes so awful they are almost unbearable, but the Lord is nigh unto such as are of a broken heart and a contrite spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. All the deep sorrows of the people of God are for a good purpose, and work in the end for their benefit and for the glory of God. He says he has chosen us in the furnace of affliction, and that our light afflictions, which are but for a moment only, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things that are not seen; for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things not seen are

eternal. All of our heartaches and sorrows are only preparing us to rejoice when we are delivered from this world of distress; then shall we know why; then shall we no more see through a glass darkly; sorrow will be forever done away; the social feast will ever last, and with infinite wisdom the children of God will praise their heavenly Father for all his benefits to them. There everlasting spring abides, and never withering flowers. Death, like a narrow sea, divides this heavenly land from ours. We are so dark in this life, the flesh, with all that pertains to it, so terribly beclouds us that we are made to mourn and are not reconciled to the will of our glorious heavenly Father. This carnal mind, that Paul says is enmity against God, is so full of rebellion, is so vile and awfully corrupt, that it causes us untold suffering. If we could only be full of spiritual life, if we could only be in the Spirit, we would know that just and right are all his ways, and that God knoweth the future, and works all things together for good to them that love him, to them who are the called according to his purpose. A few more days on earth to spend and all our toils and cares shall end, and we shall see our God and friend and praise his name on high. As our steps become slow, and our bodies feeble, this is only the untying of the cords that bind us to this land of death and sorrow; the letting go of the child of God, preparing it to bid farewell to all distress of mind, pains of body and anguish of soul. Yes, soon my dear sister, you will break away from all these dark scenes of mortal life and go where tears are not known, where sighing cannot come, where pain has never been felt and cannot possibly enter those wondrous beauteous realms of eternal joy. This hope of eternal felicity is worth more than a million worlds like this, because all is dark, gloomy and sad here, every rose has its thorn. May God in great mercy comfort and strengthen you, and cause you to look away from this world of pain and sorrow, and set your affections on things above, and not on things in the earth. Remember me to your children, who were so very kind to me when I was a stranger in your town; God will bless them for their kindness. He says, He that giveth a cup of cold water to a disciple in the name of a disciple shall in no wise lose his reward.

I am behind with my writing, so you will excuse me for this short letter.

Your brother in hope of mercy,

ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

WHEELING, W. Va., Nov. 27, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have long desired to copy some of our dear departed sister Durand's letters for the SIGNS, but have not felt able, as copying is, I find, very hard on my lame hand. Often I long to share the many good letters with others who I know would appreciate them with me, but unless they are written on only one side of the paper I seldom send them, knowing that it is a difficult task for our publishers. It was my blessed privilege to correspond with our lovely sister for twelve years, and I never sat down to write to her that my heart did not melt in tenderness and love for her. I never met her, but she seemed like an own sister in the flesh, as well as in Spirit. Her letters to me were, for the most part, personal, always showing tender interest for my welfare. Her letters were very comforting to me, and I always prized them more highly than I can express. None but our Maker knows how she and her noble brother, Elder Durand, endeared themselves to me by

their kindness in word and in deed. I always felt unworthy of their loving attention, and never could understand why they would or could take account of me. This answer comes: "Is there a lamb within thy fold I would disdain to feed?" I can only say over and over, God bless them. Their memory is very sweet to me.

Dear brethren, I wish you could know what your precious gift is to me. I do appreciate the SIGNS more each year that I live. It seems so good to have it come every two weeks. When you kindly proposed to put me on your free list, I little thought that I would live this long to be a recipient of your dear bounty. I always carefully scan your "Free contributions," and am glad at heart when they are increased. May the Lord repay you for your kindness to the poor of the flock. My heart goes up to him about this matter. I feel that it is the Lord enthroned on high that has part in this. It is needless for me to try to express my thanks in words, I can only turn to him who knows what we would say if we could.

Yours in deep affliction,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May 12, 1911.

DEAR SISTER PULTZ:—How shall I begin a letter to you this bright summer morning, for so many things flood my mind that I do not know what to say first? I have just finished my breakfast, and Mildred has just taken down the tray. On account of my lameness I do not go down to breakfast, having to go up and down with a crutch, but am much better than I was a year ago. I addressed an envelope to you last evening, intending that my winged thoughts would be on the way this morning, but was hindered from writing. How little it takes to hinder sometimes. Before taking my pen I reread your last letter to me, which I notice is dated April 23rd, which was the anniversary of my brother James' funeral. I had not noticed this until just as I glanced at your letter. How many years have passed, and yet in my mind it is as though it were but yesterday. I cannot tell you how this last letter of yours touched me. In the hundreds of letters that I have received, and many so full and precious, I am sure I never had a sweeter one, or one that had a more comforting savor than this last one of yours, but how you can feel in the way you express toward me, I cannot understand, for I see myself so differently. I see in myself a lack of everything that is lovely, and what I most desire, still it is a comfort to think the Lord would not permit it if I were not one of the hidden ones chosen in him, and that he has allowed our souls to meet in this heavenly union. This thought seems to banish the doubts that so often becloud my way. A thought comes to my mind that I read many years ago: that there might be a purer, more sacred and heavenly love in an interchange of thought when we have never met, for then we can be free from viewing the external faults and imperfections which in some of us are so plain to be seen. But oh how good to know that in the hearts of those who have been with Jesus there is a sweet charity that covers all these things when we do meet. Let us hope that this is ours, and that we shall meet and speak face to face some time. When I read your last letter to my brother I told him that I thought such a message should encourage him very much, for he, with all the ability and many blessings, is not always on the mountain of joy. Surely the Lord's people are gifted to comfort one another.

My dear sister, in your weakness of body I feel sure the Lord is your strength, and in your care and affliction he is your comfort. How good to read that the Lord's people are chosen in the furnace of affliction, and that not many noble, not many mighty are called, but these things are kept from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. Surely it is only by revelation that we can know any of these wonderful and most precious things. What an unspeakable favor to be chosen to walk in the footsteps of him, who was meek and lowly in heart. Oh for grace to walk there; but without him we can do nothing.

Last evening I had a letter from sister Pittman, of Havana, Kansas, and she was expecting sister McKinney to visit her, and be at their meeting and communion, which is the coming Saturday and Sunday. They have been corresponding, but I think they have never met. It caused me to think of you. What a pleasure if you could be there with them, as sister McKinney is very dear to you. I have never met either of them, but I would love to, for I am sure they are of the heavenly household that I trust I hold in my heart with you, my dear sister.

But I must close, and how little I have said of what was in my heart. I hope this will find you and your household in health.

In love and sweet fellowship, I am, I trust, your sister,

BESSIE DURAND.

MURRAY, Ky., Feb. 13, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed two dollars to renew our subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; we feel we cannot do without it. My wife has been a reader for twenty-one years, and I have been a reader for ten years. At the present it is the best preaching we get. We are several miles away from the church, and the SIGNS always comes laden with good news, which usually fills our eyes with tears, and we are made to rejoice in reading its pages. We find in its columns that there are many people in the world who believe as we do, and their experiences are our experiences, and how we wish as we read we could see and talk with them. At the present we feel very low spirited, we have been so deeply offended, but oh may God have mercy on the offenders; may he shower blessings upon them, is our sincere prayer to the end. Pray for us, for we feel the need of God's love every hour, every breath we draw. We fear not man, we fear not the devil, we fear God, who is not of confusion, but of peace. We fear the one who is able to destroy both soul and body. If we are of God's little ones, our names are written there, and there remain, and in the resurrection we will be raised in love and glory. O, dear editors, will not that be a glorious home? A home prepared for the blessed. We do hunger and thirst for God's love, and are continually begging and pleading for his love and mercy. May God's great love and blessing be unto you, is our prayer.

Your poor and afflicted brother and sister in hope,

WM. & FANNIE CHESTER.

BRANCHLAND, W. Va., Oct. 25, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been my ardent desire for the last two months to write you a few words and try to tell you all in my weakness of body and mind how dearly I do appreciate your words of love, truth and fellowship. I kept the two September numbers laid alone for weeks, because I enjoyed their

contents more than usual, and read them over often, and wanted to reply to each one of the writers, but many things have prevented me, as I have to be entirely alone if I write any of my thoughts. Early this morning I had about lost interest in everything in this world; then suddenly it came to me I loved God's word and his dear despised (by the world) people, who are the salt of the earth, who I esteem as a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Yes, dear isolated brethren and sisters, who, like myself, perhaps, are old and afflicted, and never have gospel preaching only as we read it from the pens of others, we do so much desire to maintain good works which we know are the fruit of the Spirit, for it is God that works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. My age is seventy-eight. I have not told you how thankful I am for your kindness in sending me your good paper free since I am old and not able to work to pay for it as formerly. I try to praise my dear Lord when I look at the precious names of those who send donations for "the poor of the flock," and say in my heart, Bless them in basket and store, for I know they are honoring him with their substance.

If there is anything in what I have written please correct and publish.

With best of wishes,

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

INDEPENDENCE, Mo., Nov. 7, 1922.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—If you have the time, and feel inclined to do so, I would be pleased to see your views in the SIGNS on a portion of the sixth verse of the twentieth chapter of Revelation, which reads as follows: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." When did we have a part in the first resurrection? and, as the second death implies a first death, when did we receive the first death? I have no recollection of ever having heard this verse treated upon, and would be glad to have your views, and feel confident many other readers of the SIGNS would also be glad. I have been a subscriber to the SIGNS for nearly fifty years, I think, and am conversant with many of the editorials of dear old Gilbert Beebe from 1832, when the division took place between the Old School Baptists and the Missionary Baptists, and I fully indorse the doctrinal views from the prospectus in 1832 to the present time, and feel that God has revealed the same truths to all the editors that the paper advocated from the very first issue, if I know anything about the truth it is the same as preached by the apostles, and ably expounded by all the editors of the SIGNS for ninety years, and I believe the same doctrine will be edifying and comforting to the people of God to the end of time. Your and brother Lefferts' editorials alone are worth more to me than the subscription price of the SIGNS for a whole year, and I hope to see more from your pen in the future, and hope if the Lord wills it that you both may be spared many years to comfort the people who believe in salvation by grace, and have no confidence in creature works.

Your brother, though unworthy,

THOMAS W. RECORDS.

[WE shall be very glad to comply with the request of brother Records should we feel so impressed of the Lord at any time. We feel grateful to him for his kind words of commendation. Of one thing we feel sure: the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS these ninety years is the truth as it is in Jesus.—K.]

DORCHESTER, N. B., Oct. 20, 1922.

DEAR ELDER KER:—Will you please, through the columns of our own paper, the SIGNS, give me your views on Isaiah xi. 6? I have heard many speakers take this passage as their text, but a full and complete understanding of the last clause, "And a little child shall lead them," has never been mine. I have been an interested reader of the SIGNS for nearly sixty years, and I find I could not do without it in my home. I am an Old School Baptist by faith, and about four years ago I had the pleasure of listening to you preach in Woburn, Mass. I should like very much to be with you all on October 29th of this year, but I am afraid it is impossible, as we (both my husband and myself) are in our eighty-second year. But God has been very good to us, and we are both enjoying the blessings of good health and happiness.

I trust that I shall see this passage explained in the near future, and I thank you in advance. May this find you well and enjoying the blessings of a loving God.

(MRS.) ALBERT COOK.

[WE are glad of the letter from sister Cook. We well remember the day in Woburn, Mass., to which she refers. The lion and the lamb, the cow and the bear feeding and lying down together, contrary to nature, represent peace between Jews and Gentiles through the work of Christ, and instead of enmity and war, as in former days, a little child should lead them; in other words, the Spirit of Jesus, which is gentle, meek and lowly, forgiving and forbearing, should be manifest in them, led by his Spirit. No envy, no malice, no hatred, no pride, all these characterize the Spirit of Jesus, or a little child.—K]

POCOMOKE CITY, Md., July 18, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed two dollars to pay for the SIGNS for 1922, which is somewhat behind, and I feel very thankful to editors and publishers for sending the SIGNS regularly to me. I am a great admirer of the dear old paper, and have been reading it for a great many years, and love the doctrine it advocates. It is nearly all the preaching I get, but I did get to hear Elder Ker on the first Sunday in May, at the Snow Hill Church, and it was a great comfort to me to hear the word of God expounded as Elder Ker does. I have been passing through deep waters during the past year, sickness troubles, trials and tribulations have been my lot. I am not complaining, for the Lord doeth all things well; blessed be the name of the Lord. I have a little hope that I would not exchange for worlds like this if I could. The Old School Baptists are the people I love. While I do not feel worthy to be with such a people, I do love to mingle with them. I feel that I am a sinner in the flesh, but the grace of God is sufficient for all, and I know if I am ever saved it will be by the grace of God. Our paths are laid out for us, and all we can do is to walk in them as the Lord has directed us. We cannot do anything without the help of God. I feel more unworthy of late than I ever did. Often I hear a voice saying, Jesus died and paid it all, it is all the debt I owe.

Yours unworthily,

PARKER PRUITT.

LAMAR, Colo., Nov. 30, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I see on the wrappers that my subscription for the SIGNS expires in December, so I am inclosing you a money order for two dollars for renewal for another year, as I do not care

to miss a copy. Oh how I wish I could express to you editors and contributors the comfort I receive from its pages, but language fails. I pray that God may spare you many years, if it is his holy and divine will, and may you have that unction from him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure, and none can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou? May you ever contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

Brethren, I just had a desire to let you know the comfort I get from the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. May grace, mercy and truth ever guide and direct you, is my prayer. You may publish this if you desire; if not, throw it into the waste-basket, and all will be well with me, for it is like the writer, imperfect, as I am one of the least, if one at all.

Yours in a little hope,

A. H. CRAWFORD.

LOST CREEK, Tenn., Dec. 22, 1921.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find a money order for two dollars, for which please renew my subscription for another year. I love to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and think it the best paper I ever read. I am not a member of the church, but I love the principles and doctrine it advocates. All write so ably, and the editorials are so good and full of interest, that I read the paper through more than once. I much enjoy good preaching and hearing people tell their views on the Scriptures, or reading after the pen of some able writer, better than anything else in the world; it is a feast of fat things to my hungry soul. I am not able to write for publication, and feel too little for so great a work, and think I fully realize my own nothingness in the sight of God. While I cannot write, still I want to tell you that I am a lover of the truth. May you one and all keep on writing and telling the good news that feeds and strengthens the hungry soul and comforts the sad and distressed, and may they find rest and that peace that passeth understanding. I hope you will long be spared to publish the paper, and may God's richest blessings attend you and yours all along the way while here below, is my prayer, if one so weak and imperfect can pray.

LINNIE BRIDGES.

BELINGTON, W. Va., Oct. 3, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Please find inclosed check for subscription to the SIGNS for another year. I feel that I have been paid many times since the valuable paper has been coming to me. My father, Elder J. B. Cross, has been taking the SIGNS for more than forty years, and I have been reading it ever since I can remember, and pray God that the dear editors may be strengthened from time to time in the work of speaking truth to his children. There is no doubt in my mind that the editors have their trials as well as we, so let us all be encouraged that we may run the race with patience, ever looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith.

Thanking you for your courtesy in sending the paper, although I am in arrears,

W. T. CROSS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1922.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

CLOSE OF VOLUME NINETY.

WITH this number of the SIGNS the ninetieth volume concludes. It is with a degree of pride, yet not vainglory, we hope, that such a record has been made. During these many years the paper has not been without the name "Beebe" as publishers and managers. We think they have reason to be justly proud of the long record and high standing of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We are sure that many, the country over, enjoy the same feeling of pride. During the existence it has maintained the policy of its prospectus while many have departed from the principles of sound doctrine. How long the SIGNS will be continued by its present owners no one can tell, but let that be long or short the Beebe family deserves great credit for faithfulness and steadfastness to the cause of truth all these ninety years. Of one thing we feel sure: it will never be better, nor more conscientiously conducted in future than in the past. Knowing the uncertainty of life, and that changes are taking place all the time, and circumstances over which we have no control, are bound to surround us all, this may be the last annual report that we shall ever make concerning the SIGNS, and as senior editor we are glad to say these things of the Beebe family. We are also glad to say that during our association with them in conducting the SIGNS, now more than seventeen years, we have never in all our long life found more congenial, kindhearted, sincere and hospitable people. Our association has been a blessing to us, and so situated as to be out of the office, except now and then, has been and is a real cross to us.

With reference to the present condition of the SIGNS, there is nothing specially new to report, yet our readers will expect something along this line. During the year the business side of the matter has continued about the same as for several years past. As is always the case, we have lost some subscribers for various reasons, but have gained all that we have lost, so at the present time we have about the same number we had at the first of the year. The receipts are about the same as last year, so that all in all the SIGNS is holding its own. Many of our subscribers have been kind and thoughtful in renewing in good season, thus helping the managers to have sufficient cash in hand during the year to meet all obligations. We thank them for such consideration and hope the good example may be followed.

"Contributions for the poor of the flock" have been up to the standard, if not a little better than last year.

We thank all who have in any way contributed to the support of the paper.

Our writers have not been more than in past years, but sufficient to give necessary matter for each number. Some articles have not been published that will likely be during the coming year. Some requests for views have not been complied with, sometimes for lack of understanding, at other times for want of time.

We thank such writers for their kind patience with the editors. We have all

done our utmost to give our readers a clean sheet, free from controversy and troubles of various sorts. The views of the editors have been such as they had, and with few exceptions have been indorsed by the readers of the SIGNS.

We now, in conclusion, ask the support of all our friends during the coming year. Much depends upon this in the success of the oldest paper of its sort in America. In this way let us all cooperate one with the other to advance the prosperity of the SIGNS, all hoping it may live to the comfort of the people of God and to his praise ninety years more, and still longer.

With all good will, we say, Farewell for 1922. K.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by brother C. M. Thurman.)

The Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, in session with the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 11th, 12th and 13th, 1922, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—All associations of our faith and order from our earliest knowledge have annually sent a Circular Letter to their associations for adoption and for printing in their Minutes. We shall attempt to comply with this established order, wishing to be faithful with our brethren. All of us are by nature of the earth, and have earthly inclinations, not one of us being perfect, all of us apt to err, and all falling short of God's righteous law. His law is good for us to continually meditate upon, and we find it recorded in Scripture that his people of old often met together and spoke one to another of the goodness and mercy of God, and that a book of remembrance was written before the Lord for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name. Often we find ourselves departing from this, often when we are in company with the brethren neglecting to mention the things of his goodness toward us. It is necessary that we have the whole armor of God in order to stand up boldly yet humbly in our Master's cause, doing the small things with our might that are expected of us and that are becoming to a godly walk and conversation, ever looking to the Lord for his gracious help in these matters. We find recorded in the first chapter of John, to which we shall call your attention for a short time, that in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and that the Word was God, and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. We understand this to be Christ Jesus the Lord and Savior, who bore the sins of his people. If we are redeemed it is he who has redeemed us from under the curse of sin. There is none other able to do this for us. He and the Father are one, and he came into the world to redeem the elect of the Father, for whom he paid the price, and the elect of the Father shall inherit the kingdom through him. So we need not be uneasy about the elect falling short of the glory of God, that which may give us concern is whether we are among the elect. If not, we are lost. We know we cannot bring ourselves into his favor. For this reason we are accused of believing that whatever is to be will be. How can those who have a knowledge of these things believe anything else? John also says that if all the things which Jesus did and said had been written the world could not have contained the books, so it will not be expected of us to more than mention

a few of these things in this letter. This Word that was in the beginning was with power, a mighty Word from the beginning to the end of time, and beside him there is no other power. We commend these things to you for your meditation. May his love and mercy be with you and guide you aright in all things.

The next session of this Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1923, and to continue three days. Our hearts have been made glad at this meeting by the coming of your ministers and messengers, and we ask for a continuance of your correspondence, hoping to receive at our next session your messages and messengers.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
K. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in December (31st). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Jesse C. Ellis, Ohio, $3.00; Mrs. A. J. Vermilya, Pa., $2.00; Wm. Darby, Md., $1.00; Wm. Hobensack, Pa., $1.00; Miss Annie E. Parker, Md., $3.00; Mrs. May J. Ege, N. J., $3.00; Margaret B. Tiebout, N. Y., $24.00.

MARRIAGES.

BY Elder J. B. Slauson, at the home of the bride's brother, in Lobo township, Ontario, October 28th, 1922, Hector Fletcher and Miss Ena Campbell, both of Lobo township, Ontario, Canada.

By the same, at the home of Duncan McAlpine, a brother-in-law of the bride, at Poplar Hill, November 18th, 1922, Arthur E. Fegan, of Toronto, Ontario, and Miss Flo McGugon, of London, Ontario.

By the same, at his residence, Ridgetown, Ontario, December 6th, 1922, Neil Crawford and Miss Jessie McGugon, both of Dunwich, Ontario.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

George Anderson Luther was born in Dickson County, Tennessee, November 14th, 1865, and departed this life, September 28th, 1922, aged 56 years, 10 months and 14 days. Brother Luther had been married three times. His first wife was Mrs. Samanthy Dunigan. To that union were born five children, four boys and one girl. His second wife was Kansas Yates, and to that union were born two girls. His third wife was Bula Chappel, and to that union were born two boys. Mr. Luther was the father of nine children, namely, Thurman, Richard, Percy, Bertie, Seth, Kenneth, Doil, Manda and Julia, all of whom are living. On his dying bed he said, "Lord, have mercy upon me." These words manifest wonderful evidence. "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." He had a sweet hope in the Lord for several years, and was interested in divine things, advocating the doctrine of the Old School or Predestinarian Baptist belief, but was not a member. He leaves wife and children, and brothers and sisters to mourn his absence.

The writer attended his funeral, September 30th, 1922, and a large congregation of relatives and friends were present. May the Lord bless all the relatives and friends who mourn the loss of this dear one who has gone, if indeed it be his will. May the eternal God comfort the dear widow, with the comfort wherewith we are comforted of God. The will of God be done.

J. R. HATCHER.

Mr. Jessie Arnold was born in Mifflin Co., Pa., October 4th, 1843, and died at his home near Mifflin, Pa., October 8th, 1922, aged 79 years, 4 days. He was married to Miss Fanny Correll in 1866, who died July 1st, 1889. He then married Miss Martha McDonald, in 1891, who died in June, 1892. Soon after his marriage to Miss Correll he and his wife both were baptized by her father, Elder Correll, into membership with the Tuscarora Church, Mifflin Co., Pa., where both remained faithful and consistent members until death. The writer served this little band of believers known as Tuscarora Church for several years, and greatly enjoyed his visits among them. Two of his favorite hymns (1216 and 1257, Beebe's collection) were sung. He was buried in the Tuscarora cemetery, near Mifflin, Pa.

Written by request of sister Ida M. Hart, of McCoysville, Pa.

ALSO,

Miss Ida Morris, our dear sister in Christ, died at her home in Salisbury, Md., October 5th, 1922. She was a daughter of the late Wm. R. and Mary E. Morris. She was born in Wicomico Co., Md., February 3rd, 1857. She leaves three sisters: Mrs. James K. Malone, Misses Annie and Ruth Morris, and

one brother, Calvin Morris, surviving her, all of Salisbury, Md. She was baptized about the year 1889 by the late Elder Silas H. Durand into membership with the Salisbury Church, Salisbury, Md., where she remained a faithful and consistent member until death. She gave full proof of having received the Spirit of Christ, which caused her to walk humbly before her brethren, and, in meekness, esteem all others better than herself. She had been in poor health for a long time, yet always manifested great patience and much cheerfulness. When able she was always present at her meetings, and will be greatly missed by the church, also by her sisters and brother and her many friends. We believe that she is better off; that our loss is her gain.

The writer conducted the funeral services at the home, after which she was buried in Parson's Cemetery, Salisbury, Md.

J. C. MELLOTT.

POETRY.

THE DAY HATH ENOUGH OF ITS OWN GRIEF.

"Take no thought for the morrow, its trials or dangers;
Why burden thy spirit with desponding gloom?
To-day hath enough to perplex and distress thee,
It needeth no shadow of dark things to come.

Take no thought for the morrow, no sorrow shall touch thee,
But that which thy God in his Son hath decreed;
Go to Christ with thy grief, as it daily ariseth,
And seek for his strength in the moment of need.

Take no thought for the morrow; rich mercy abounding
Hath marked every step of thy pathway till now;
Put thy trust then in God for the still distant future,
Effacing those dark lines of care from thy brow.

Take no thought for the morrow, its dawning may find thee
A spirit at rest 'neath the altar of God,
With the last battle fought, the last trial ended,
The victory won through Immanuel's blood."

Selected by Mrs. Loretta Shafer, Binghamton, N. Y.

MEETINGS.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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ELDER S. HASSELL.

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"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

TOUCHED.

THERE are many ways in which the Almighty makes known his ways, and gives to man discoveries of his glories. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. The lightnings of thunder; the sea is his, he made it, and his hand formed the dry land. The stormy wind fulfills his word, the rain, the dew, the sunshine, fruitful seasons, the lily, the raven, lions, and sparrows, the providence of our God embraces all; and then there are some dreadful things that in his sovereign omnipotence, in his true and righteous judgments, the Lord causeth us to know (if we are of those who worship him in spirit and in truth), to humble ourselves in the dust, to bow before the most high God in sacred awe, for he "looketh on the earth, and it trembleth: he toucheth the hills, and they smoke."—Psalms civ. 32. He touched Sinai, "and mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly."—Exod. xix. 18. "The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them. Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words."—Deut. xxxiii. 2, 3. If we have been spiritually brought to Mount Sinai "to meet with God" (Exod. xix. 17), then we found God in this covenant of the law that the Lord did but touch the mount and it smoked against us, its thunders, lightnings, darkness, tempest, the trumpet sounding long, and waxing louder and louder, all proclaiming, and making us to know our wretchedness, our transgressions, that we are under the curse of the law. Oh how undone we are under the ministration of condemnation and death. Ah, wretched, vile transgressors, as we then know ourselves to be, well may we say at this touching of the mountain, "Let not God speak with us, lest we die."—Exod. xx. 19. When God toucheth the nations what awful providences are the portion of mankind. He toucheth them and the pestilence, plague and famine take away the inhabitants of the earth.

The volcano and earthquake destroy cities. He toucheth the nations and wars break forth. The World War was but the touch of his almighty, righteous, chastening hand. But though there has been this awful touch of his wrath, have the nations bowed to this touch, to acknowledge the Lord, to worship him? What nation has done so? Where are the fruits declaring that it is so? Ah, unless mercy and grace follow God's righteous displeasure there is no sackcloth and ashes; there will not be found in man a humble and contrite heart, for vain, sinful man is alienated from God, an enemy to him by wicked works. What a touch was that which Jacob experienced when "there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him."—Gen. xxxii. 24, 25. This was a singular experience in the life of Jacob. He could never well forget it, for in consequence of that touch Jacob went all his days limping and halting, and needed his staff to lean upon. The man, the angel, even the Lord of hosts (Hosea xii. 3, 5), wrestled with Jacob. The man began the wrestling, not Jacob.

"No sinner can be before hand with thee,
Thy grace is preventing, almighty and free."

Look at the man and Jacob wrestling. It was in the night, and Jacob was left alone. He expects to meet Esau the next day, and he was greatly afraid and distressed. (Gen. xxxii. 7.) But he has been in prayer to the Lord, reminding him of his gracious promises, and that God himself had commanded him to return to Canaan. "Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he come and smite me, and the mother with the children." Jacob is left alone, and a man cometh, takes hold of him, wrestles with him. It is not Esau whom he feared; it is not an enemy. I will call it Love's wrestlings, for it was such that Jacob wept and made supplication, and was so strengthened of the Lord of hosts that he held on, and wrestled with him, though his thigh was out of joint, and exclaimed, I will not let thee go except thou bless me. In all the divine sacredness of this wrestling we cannot enter just now; let this thought for the present suffice: the Lord brought Jacob to confess his name to be Jacob, and he said, "Thy name shall be called no more, Jacob [supplanter], but Israel: for as a prince thou hast power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." Although Jacob is to be called henceforth Israel, a prince that ruleth with God, yet it is this prince that went limping and halting all his pilgrimage. It was that touch of the Man that made Jacob to halt. The psalmist exclaims, "I am ready to halt, and my sorrow is continually before me. For I will declare my iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin."—Psalms xxxviii. 17, 18. But the Lord has comforting mercies for the halting ones. (Micah iv. 6, 7; Zeph. iii. 19; Luke xiv. 16–21.) Job cried out in his afflictions, "Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of the Lord hath touched me."—Job xix. 21. It was indeed a painful touch, and in his anguish what experiences he had. Sometimes submissive, sometimes fretful, rebellious. The Lord gave him tears in great measure to drink, showed him hard things, and he had to drink of the wine of astonishment. "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the

end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."—James v. ii. It is a very great mercy in our trials to bow before our God, and say, I know that in faithfulness thou hast afflicted me. No rod of affliction can touch us except our God in his infinite wisdom and everlasting love has ordained it to be, and all the strokes will be in weight and number as Jehovah hath decreed. Job in the fire exclaimed, "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."—Job xxiii. 10. Oh the dross, the vanity that is mine. Surely there is a needs be, quite often, for a hot "furnace of affliction." But let the Lord my God speak to me while I am in the fires, and say, "It is my people," then my humbled trusting heart's response will be, "The Lord is my God."—Zech. xiii. 9. Oh that I could glorify the Lord in the fires (Isaiah xxiv. 15), that meekness, acquiescence, a contrite heart might be in me; that I might grow in graciousness, in the knowledge of Christ, for this is the one thing essential to me, a poor sinner. Child of God, though the Lord touch thee with his afflicting hand ever so often, though painful and humbling his dealings are, let this not be forgotten, that it is the hand of our heavenly Father that toucheth us. All the chastenings, wrestlings, dealings of the Lord, are in everlasting love. They are Love's reproofs, rebukes and chidings. "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten."—Rev. iii. 19. Such touches of his hand will not alienate us from him, but we are drawn thereby to his bosom, and there confess our sinfulness, we pour forth our sighs and supplications, and crave his compassion; yes, we in truth confide in him, cleave to him with full purpose of heart.

"He touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them."—Matt. viii. 15. The miracles of Christ bore witness of his eternal power and Godhead; that he is the Son of God, equal with the Father. There is divine healing virtue in the touch of Christ. "The fever left her." Pain, sickness, all distresses that afflict the human family, are in consequence of sin. "Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?"—Lam. iii. 39. Ah, he does, and surely the child of God knows that very much grace is needed to be able to say when under the chastening rebukes of God, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause and execute judgment for me: he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness."—Micah viii. 9. In a spiritual sense a child of God at times finds himself, in his soul, as one with a burning fever. We are in all disorder, our trials, our sinfulness have wearied us, and we feel we can hold up no longer. "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint," and there we lie upon our bed of languishing, sick of a fever. Where is the One, the hand to make our bed in our sickness, to cool our sin-fevered brow, to ease our complaint? We need Jesus Christ, the one whom Elihu speaks of, "If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness; then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom."—Job xxxiii. 23, 24. Just a word, just a touch of his hand of tender mercy, of pardoning love and justifying grace, and the fever leaves us, and we arise from our bed of anguish to our service of love to his name. (Heb. vi. 10.) "Then the Lord

put forth his hand, and touched my mouth."—Jer. i. 9. He touched his tongue. (Mark vii. 33.) "Lo, this hath touched thy lips."—Isaiah vi. 7. These are touches of gracious omnipotence. Jeremiah cried, "Ah! Lord God! Behold, I cannot speak; for I am a child." It looked to him as impossible that one so unlearned, unwise, feelingly a child, should be a prophet unto the nations. But that touch upon his mouth was enough. A tongue of utterance then was his which all the adversaries could neither gainsay nor resist. The true ministers of our God have ever been such to speak as the Spirit giveth them utterance. It was no easy path that Jeremiah was to travel, and the Lord forewarned him of the rugged way, but gave him the assurance he would stand by him. "Therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them. For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city, an iron pillar and brazen walls, against the whole land, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land. And they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee." Verily to-day the hand of the Lord must touch the mouth that one may in truth be made manifest in the churches an able minister of the new covenant. (2 Cor. iii. 6.) If then the hand of the Lord hath touched a man's mouth to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, his preaching will not be "an uncertain sound."—1 Cor. xiv. 8. It will not be that yea and nay counterfeit gospel (2 Cor. i. 18–20), but it will be Jehovah's determinate counsel, the shalls and wills of our gracious and eternal God, his everlasting covenant of grace, ordered in all things and sure. Such a measure of grace this touch imparts that he will have according to the measure of the gift of Christ, the tongue of the learned to speak a word in season to the weary children of God. (Isaiah l. 4.) He "touched his tongue."—Mark vii. 32, 33. This man "had an impediment in his speech." Many subjects of God's grace know what it is to have a stammering tongue. We feel it is only with lisping, stammering utterances that we can declare the praises of the Lord. With what faltering tongues, with what hesitancy, at times, we attempt to say, Our Father which art in heaven. We would say, Christ is mine and I am his, but our timidity, and fears arising lest we should be presumptuous, cause us to be stammering in our speech. But when Christ our King is seen in his beauty, then that sight, at the touch of his scepter "the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly."—Isaiah xxxii. 4. Christ touched the leper, but he was not defiled. (Luke v. 13.) Isaiah declared himself and all Israel to be spiritually lepers. (Isaiah vi. 1–7.) "And the leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, Unclean, unclean."—Lev. xiii. 45. Isaiah beheld Christ's glory (John xii. 41), he saw the seraphims cover their faces and their feet, "and one cried unto another and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the

seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar; and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." Isaiah felt himself as a very leper, an outcast, but how graciously the grace of God wrought in him to cause him to cry, "Woe is me," and to confess his felt uncleanness, his very leprosy unto the Lord. His cry came into God's holy temple, to the Lord Jesus Christ sitting upon his throne. The cry of the leprous one was heard, his lips were touched with a live coal taken with the golden tongs from off the altar. Oh, our blessedness is in the application of the blood of Christ's sacrifice for our sins; then we have the sweet consolation that our iniquity is taken away, and our sin purged. It was when Christ had by himself purged our sins that he ascended to glory, and sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high. (Heb. i. 3.) Our Lord, our King, our High Priest, the Lamb in the midst of the throne. Well may I, a poor sinner, cry, Woe is me! for I am undone, and, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed." "So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him."—Matt. xx. 34. The apostle speaks of "the blindness of their heart," and of the consequent ignorance and alienation from the life of God. He touched their eyes. When the Spirit of God touches with divine life a poor sinner there is light in that life, "the grace of life," and it is the portion of the quickened sinner to know this. There are dreadful things to see and know; and then also most comforting things to see. It is humiliating indeed to see ourselves vile transgressors of the law of God; and also in those glimpses given us of the holy and dreadful God in his law, we are abased, cast down, we tremble in woeful apprehensions, and feel that God is terrible in majesty, and we begin to know something of that distressing cry, "Let not God speak with us, lest we die."—Exod. xx. 19. It is night time in the soul at Mount Sinai, and "blackness, and darkness, and tempest."—Heb. xii. 18. No mercy shines, but the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness. Moses himself exceedingly feared, and quaked, so dreadful was the sight at Mount Sinai. If under the law, the ministration of death to us, convicted sinners, we see the blackness of our vile transgressions and the fiery wrath of God, his justice and judgment against us, then when we are led to Mount Zion, where God had commanded the blessing, even life forever more, oh how pleasant and comforting are the sights to our enlightened understanding. (Eph. i. 18.) God shineth forth unto the humble and contrite sinner from between the two cherubims. (Psalms lxxx. 1.) God shineth in our hearts in the face of Jesus Christ, and there our comforted, sin-pardoned hearts behold the glories of the Lord, his love, his grace, his mercy, his justice, his faithfulness, and all blessed omnipotence in the salvation of his people. God will shew his dear children his covenant, (Psalms xxv. 14,) and to see what is the hope of his calling, (Eph. i. 18,) and how blessed it is to read our title clear to mansions in the skies, to behold the land that is very far off, to see the King in his beauty, and to read our names written in heaven, in the Lamb's book of life. "Thou wilt

show me the path of life."—Psalms xvi. 11. This is that new and living way, and Jesus, our High Priest and Forerunner, has consecrated it in his obedience and blood, even into heaven itself. He that followeth me, saith our dear Redeemer, shall not abide in darkness, but shall have the light of life. I sometimes feel I need my dear Physician to touch my eyes with his eye-salve that I may see more and more of his glories, and then how blessed shall I, a poor sinner, be, having such blessed eyes. (Luke x. 23.) O, precious Jesus, how often I need thy touch of life and love and grace; yes, and if thou seest it is well, thy chastening touch of affliction. Love's chastening touch. Amen.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, N. C.

UNITY OF HEAD AND BODY.

THIS unity from everlasting to everlasting was, is now, and shall ever remain unalterable, settled in the wisdom and foreknowledge of God, Christ Jesus being head over all things to the church, his body. Is it not then a fact that in wisdom and foreknowledge of God the body is as old as the head? Doth not wisdom cry, and understanding put forth her voice? To my mind it appears that the instant choice was made in him this unity existed, hence the object of his everlasting love. We understand the Holy Ghost, speaking by the pen of Solomon, said, "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens [various covenants], I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth; * * * when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." Having such testimony I feel safe in saying there was, is now and ever will be, unity in the three-one God. These three are one, and agree in one, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The church was there represented in this unity by her head, Christ Jesus, for in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. In the annals of eternity he became the Surety of his bride, he the head of the elect family. It was there, as it seems to me, the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. In the person of Jesus, in the wisdom and foreknowledge of God, the plan of salvation was complete, as the inspired writer has declared, "Wisdom hath builded her house [church], she hath hewn out her seven pillars." The number seven representing the entire church, a people called out in every dispensation of time holding forth the true fundamental principles of doctrine. Paul, in his letter to Timothy, tells him how he should behave himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. Again, we hear John to the seven churches of Asia testifying of the past, present and future by the commandment of Jesus Christ, saying, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and,

behold I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter." The number seven, to my mind, represents completeness. John's address to the seven churches of Asia is applicable to the churches of this gospel day in which we are living. To us, it appears in the light of the Spirit, the body (church) has never been separate or apart from Christ in her spiritual relation or unity. She was condemned in Adam, but not separated from Christ. God decreed the plan of salvation that his elect be not lost. Therefore salvation is by grace, through faith, both being the gifts of God. Grace was given the members of his body, the church, in Christ before the world began; not given for them, but given them in him. As I said in the outset of this article, I feel safe in saying that the moment the choice was made the church invisible existed in him; I mean in the wisdom and foreknowledge of God. In the figure of Adam and Eve, we see Christ the second Adam and his bride: the first Adam of the earth earthy; the second, the Lord from heaven, a quickening Spirit. The first representing his posterity, the second Adam representing those God gave him, in covenant, before the world began. In the letter to the Hebrew brethren it is said, "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these." The pattern of a thing is not the real thing itself. Referring to the offerings under the law, it is said, "But the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these." The heavenly things are the members of his body, the church. David said, "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

ANSON, Texas, Sept. 11, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find check for five dollars. Please send me your paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for one year, and send some one the paper who is unable to pay for it to the amount of three dollars. A very dear friend of mine gave me a few copies of the SIGNS, and really I think it is one of the best Primitive Baptist papers I ever read. One reason I think so much of it is that it stands for what I really believe, and for what I have always believed since my eyes have been opened: Predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass. Another reason why I love to read it is it is not afraid to speak plainly for what it contends. I am an absolute strictly, and cannot be any other way. If I am not an absolute, then I am not a Primitive Baptist, I am only a makeshift, and a poor one. All the denominations here have tried to get me to go their way, but I cannot see a single thing in them. If God did not predestinate all things he predestinated nothing. If God did not foreknow all things before he made the world, he did not know anything after he made it. He is the same God yesterday, to-day and for ever; he changes not. If he predestinated Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel to do as they did, then he predestinated all things just as they have come to pass, and are coming to pass, and will come to pass until time is no more. Take absolute predestination out and we have nothing at all, we are just as the world is to-day, but thanks be to God, we old absoluters are not that way. I am told that God is not

a just God if he saves some and damns some. My reply is, He saves his people, and not the devil's people. I then ask if he was a just God when he caused the waters to roll back and let his children pass on dry land, and after they got over allowed the waters to come back and drown Pharaoh and his hosts? Our Savior died to save His people from their sins. Our blessed Savior said, I pray not for the world. Then why should we pray for the world? I once heard a Missionary Baptist preacher say we had to make a start before God could save us. I replied that I would give all I had if he would show just one instance where God even asked poor puny man to help him to do anything. I still have my property. What I have God gives me, and what I do not have God keeps me from owning it, because he knows what is best for me and I no not, and I am perfectly satisfied with what God does. I am told that we do not send out missionaries to convert the heathen. My reply is, Why should we try to convert the heathen when we have worse than heathen right at home where we can see them every day? My God cares for me, and I love him so dearly because he loved me first. I am the only "absolute" who lives real near Anson, and my work is in Anson every day. All absoluters are good for their debts, as far as I know. I was raised an Episcopalian, and taught to believe my soul was saved when I was sprinkled, though I knew nothing about it. After I was a certain age I joined that denomination and was taught that predestination was a very dangerous doctrine. It certainly is to all but God's own children, and to them it is a glorious doctrine.

Your old brother in a sweet hope,

H. L. HOLMES.

FT. WORTH, Texas, Sept. 25, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find four dollars, for Elder E. A. Moreland's subscription to the SIGNS for another year, also my own. I enjoy reading the many good letters and editorials in the SIGNS. I have been reading the editorials of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe when the SIGNS was first founded, and, if I know anything about the truth, I feel the SIGNS was founded to defend the truth, and believe it has always contended for the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. May it continue on and on in the defense of this truth, is my sincere desire.

I want to tell about the good meetings we attended this summer. I attended the Denton Creek and New Hope associations the second and third Sundays in August respectively. The kind hospitality shown us will forever linger in our memory, and the good preaching was surely spiritual meat and drink to our hungry souls. When I think how good the Lord has been to me all the days of my life, and what a rebellious sinner I have been, and still am, it makes me cry out in depths of sorrow, O Lord, be merciful to me, a weak, vile sinner. It is through the mercy of the great and merciful God we are permitted to enjoy this wonderful feasting to our poor souls. It is my desire, if not deceived, to live the remainder of my days with these humble, kind people. I would not give the fellowship of these people for a thousand worlds like this yet I may be boasting, and say too much, for when we are led by the flesh we are liable to do as others do. "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm," so if we are trusting in our own strength to be delivered, surely we will fall, but if we

are led by the Spirit of Christ surely there is no power that can overcome us. Oh that I may be led by that Spirit to be kept from the evil one, is my earnest desire. I do not mean to say I believe I am kept from evil. No, no, every day I live I see more and more of this old sinful nature revealed. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" The Lord alone knows the heart of defiled, sinful, wicked man, and only as it is his will to make known unto the sons of man their condition do they know anything of their wicked state. But we desire, if not deceived, to be delivered from this body of sin and death, and be clothed with that perfect robe of righteousness of Jesus. "Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body," for we know that in this old world and body we shall have tribulation, and sometimes it seems it is too hard for us; yet when I think of our blessed Savior, how he suffered when in this world, yet having all power, being the very Son of God, and reviled not again when he was reviled, but was submissive in all things, I am ashamed that I am not willing to suffer a little, but always desire my own way. "If ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." So it is some consolation to us if we do suffer on account of sin here in this body; it is evidence we have tasted of God's goodness and mercy, and are not left alone to our own misery.

Do with these few scattering thoughts as seems best with you, and all will be well with this poor worm of the dust.

Your sister in hope of mercy,

MINNIE OFFILL.

PHILLIPSBURG, Mo., Dec. 28, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending you pay for the past year's subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, also one dollar for six months' subscription for the coming year. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate your kindness in sending the paper the past twelve months with not a word of assurance of receiving pay for it, but I intended all the time to send the subscription price, but many things hindered until this day. I do not want to be without it, for I need so much to be instructed in righteousness, and to be builded up in the most holy faith, and need very much the admonitions of those brethren whom I believe God has called and set apart to be instant in season and out of season, to instruct, to reprove with all long-suffering, &c. I also need the spiritual food that I may grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. I believe the word "truth" signifies Jesus, for it is said, Jesus is truth. To grow in the knowledge of Jesus is to grow in grace, and not in our own self-righteousness, for it is written, There is none that doeth good; no, not one. Then if we cannot do anything good, how can it be called righteousness?

I rejoiced with an humble heart while reading brother Ker's editorial on "Close of volume eighty-nine," that the paper is still being supported by those who indorse, love and advocate the faith once delivered unto the saints, and why should we fear about its welfare, when it is written, He who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ? I would like to tell each writer how much I appreciate their letters, which constitute our paper, and hope the Lord will guide them to write again, but space will not permit this time, so please excuse imperfections.

(MRS.) GEORGE TURNER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1923.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

WITH this number of the SIGNS the paper enters upon the last decade of its first century. It has outlived the life of its founder, the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, by forty years. It has also surpassed the lives of the other editors who have gone on before us: Elders William L. Beebe, Benton Jenkins and F. A. Chick, and brother Benton Beebe. Doubtless it shall outlive the present editors. We are sure it shall if the Lord's purpose is that the paper be maintained, for nothing but his purpose has enabled the paper to be upheld and circulated for the past ninety years. "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." As is known, the SIGNS circulates among those who believe in the absolute predestination of all things. That was the second of the ten original principles which Elder Gilbert Beebe enumerated in the original prospectus, published in the SIGNS in 1832. That, as well as the other nine points mentioned in the original prospectus, are the principles for which this paper still stands. We should not think any man would be eligible for editor of the SIGNS who is not in full sympathy with the principles for which the paper has always stood. It certainly would not be honest for any man to accept the responsibility of this work and then secretly to subvert the paper to matters and issues for which it was not originally intended and which should be in contradiction to the original prospectus. For ourselves, we do not hesitate to say that when that day comes that we no longer believe the points of doctrine which the SIGNS has always advocated it shall be our plain duty to resign from the paper. Until then we shall continue to solicit the support, cooperation and forbearance of our readers in our endeavor, by the grace of God, to give them a sound and clean paper. We have especially mentioned above the second point of the original prospectus, "the absolute predestination of all things," not because it is any more important than the other nine points, but because it seems to be to-day the one point of contention among Old School Baptists in some parts of the country. In our writings, and in our preaching, we have never made a hobby of this one point, and very seldom use the word "absolute," unless necessary to do so to emphasize our position. But whether we expressly mention the word "absolute" or not, it must be understood that we, in no sense, limit the predestination of God. Far be it from us to set bounds to his eternal purpose, or to measure with our finite judgment his immutable decrees. We mention this particularly inasmuch as it has come to us as a suggestion that it might be well for the SIGNS to drop the word "absolute." All we have to say to that is that we would as soon discontinue the paper altogether as to give any one the least impression that we had departed from the original principles for which the SIGNS was called into being. The word can be no more objectionable now than it was ninety years ago, unless we have grown unduly sensitive, more sensitive than our forefathers, to the doctrine

which declares emphatically that God is altogether sovereign in all his acts and attributes; and if we have grown oversensitive, so that a word causes us to tingle with apprehension, then more is the pity. But, aside from all this, the continuance of the SIGNS does not now, nor ever did, depend upon the will of man. There can be no doubt but that the Lord has upheld the paper all these years. The fact that he has upheld it proves it has filled an essential place in the lives of his people. No paper standing for a doctrine so unpopular as that for which the SIGNS stands could have lived all these years and have weathered all its stresses, except the Lord had been with it. Puny is the arm of man and vain is his help. Had Egypt been our staff, it would have gone through and pierced our hand long ago, but we know that in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength, and that blessed is the man who trusts in him. It has been our hope, and is now, that we are of those who trust in him. If so, we shall not be confounded, though an host of men come against us to swallow us up. Many have been the encouraging letters which have come to us from various quarters bidding us Godspeed in our work, and we should have loved to write each one personally, but human limitations prevented. We take this way to let all of you know that we do greatly appreciate your kind and helpful messages of love and fellowship. As to the criticisms which we have received, we hope we feel thankful for those, too. We know we have needed it all, or God would not have had it come our way. When we are criticised it makes us look back over what we have said or written and sets us to examining ourselves, with the result that we either become the more confirmed in our assertions, or else conclude the critics to be right. The best of us are but fallible men, none proof against error. While there never is any error in the truth, there may be in our understanding of it. Thus criticism may often be helpful. Believing as we do, that not the least thing comes by chance, but all according to God's predestination, we cannot but receive what comes to us each day as significant of God's will concerning us. Whether, therefore, we receive encouragement or censure, it comes by the will of God, and must be for the good of his people and for his glory. As for the future, it is all in the hands of the Lord. We are here to-day, but may be gone tomorrow. Many have been the changes during the last eight and one-half years, during which we have been associated with brother Ker on the SIGNS, and God alone knows the changes bound to occur in the years before us. Many with whom we have had pleasant seasons of spiritual refreshing have left this time world. Their places cannot be filled, but others have been added by the Spirit of the Lord to the SIGNS' circle. These now refresh us with their love and fellowship in the absence of those gone. All these things cause us to look forward, not with fear and apprehension, but with confidence in the Lord, that if he still has a work for the SIGNS to do, that work shall go on whether we live or die. To the Lord's people God is a reality, not an abstraction. God is a being more real than any other personality can possibly be. His presence with his children is felt by them. Not that they behold him with their natural powers, or comprehend him with their thoughts, but to the faith which he gives them, and which is the fruit of his own Spirit, he is always near. There is no comfort in thinking of God as an abstract something or other afar off from us. The comfort comes in

knowing that he is near every one of us, nearer than our nearest and dearest earthly ties, nearer than life itself. The strength of the believer lies in the assurance that this invisible God is made flesh, and that Jesus is his express image, that this Word of God in our flesh is a very present help in trouble; not a help that is afar off, and unto which we have to bring ourselves by some hook or crook in our own strength, but an all-sufficient help that is present with us, a help that has himself been tempted in all points as we are, only without sin. Whatever the burden may be which is to-day laid upon any of us, he has borne it all before us. Because of this, Paul could say that God would not tempt his children above that they are able, but would with every temptation make a way to escape, that they should be able to endure and to triumph. This way of escape is the Word made flesh, Jesus our fellow-sufferer and fellow-laborer. There is vastly more in this than language can ever express, but we feel confident all true believers know what we are trying to say. These things are from faith to faith. The faith in Paul spoke to the faith in the church, and their faith echoed his. In this way he was enabled to impart unto them some spiritual gift for the mutual comfort of all concerned. Thus we hope it is with the SIGNS. There is nothing in this paper to interest others than the children of God. It has no world-appeal whatever. Our audience is in the minority, and mostly in obscurity, we suppose. If the faith of you who read says "Amen" to the faith of those who write, mutual edification shall ensue. This is our aim, we trust, and unto this end we continue to write, the Lord being our sufficiency for these things.

L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder B. F. Coulter.)

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Messongoes Church, Accomac Co., Va., October 18th, 19th and 20th, 1922, to the churches and associations with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—Our correspondence with each other as year follows year is a sweet evidence of our spiritual fellowship one with another. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Having an eye single to the glory of God, we behold by faith the glory which the natural eye hath not seen, neither hath the natural ear heard, for we are one in Christ Jesus, and our dwelling-place is in heaven, our affections set upon the things which are above the things of the earth. Thus we walk together in the unity of faith, loving one another with pure hearts fervently. As did holy men of old, we seek a city whose builder and maker is God, for the kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. The dwelling-place of the saints is not known in the world. The carnal mind cannot comprehend it. It is a holy city, and cometh down from God out of heaven. Its walls are salvation. The inhabitants thereof are blest above all people. "The eyes of them that see shall not be dim: and the ears of them that hear shall hearken." Their eyes shall see the King in his beauty. They shall behold the land that is very far off. "The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs." Jesus our King and our Savior reigneth in the dwelling-place of God's glory, and the Spirit of the Lord resteth upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the

spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. He saith to the waiting people dwelling together in hope, "Behold, I have graven thee upon the palm of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." Thus are we given to behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. In humility of soul one of old declared, "Good is the word of the Lord." The places of our feet are pleasant places. We are one family, the children of the living God, the bride of Christ. We are commanded to walk about Zion (our dwelling-place), and go round about her, tell the towers thereof; to mark well her bulwarks, to consider her palaces, that we may tell the generation following. Although we may be separated from each other in the flesh (we are in the world, but not of it), traveling in the wilderness and the solitary places, yet in the spirit we dwell together in unity. Marks of grace, though invisible to our individual sight, are interwoven in our life, our walk and our deportment. Our footsteps are in the mighty depths of the sea of God's infinite wisdom and wondrous love, our ear is open to hear his voice, we are eager to respond to his words, we answer, "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek." May our hearts be attuned continually to the glory of his grace, and all praise be given to his holy name.

J. C. MELLOTT, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in December (31st). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, at his home in Salisbury, Md., Nov. 30th, 1922, John Staton Reddish and Edna Belle Bennett, both of Wicomico County, Maryland.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Lucinda McKay, daughter of George and Mary Ferguson McKay, was born four miles east of New Burlington, Ohio, at the McKay homestead, September 7th, 1840, and died at the home of her nieces close by, November 29th, 1922, making her stay on earth 82 years, 2 months and 22 days. She was one of a family of ten children, of whom all have preceded her in death, but she leaves many nieces and nephews, other relatives and friends, to mourn their loss, which we believe to be her eternal gain. Weep not, dear kindred, she has only left this body of clay, with all its sins, sorrows, trials and sufferings, to live with Jesus and all the redeemed of the Lord who have loved and served him, there to bask in the ocean of God's eternal love throughout a never-ending eternity. After receiving a hope in the Savior she united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Middletown, N. Y., in October, 1869, but in later years she moved her membership to New Hope Church, near Blanchester, Ohio, and was a member there until death. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and based her hopes on Christ. Her last sickness was of several weeks duration, due to a complication of diseases, but she bore her afflictions with patience, no doubt remembering the sufferings of her Savior, and with Job could say, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." "Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee." "Though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." All was done that loving hands and medical skill could do to restore her to health, but God in his infinite wisdom saw fit to take her home, and we are made to bow in silent submission to the will of him who doeth all things well. The last night of her stay on earth she waved her hand several times, as if in recognition of some one, and we are constrained to believe that that was when her soul was ushered into the joys of her Lord. Later she fell asleep in Jesus, passing through the ordeal of death without a struggle. Thus another jewel has gone to her reward.

The funeral was held at the birthplace of the deceased Friday, December 1st, and was conducted by Elder C. P. Ballard, who spoke comfortingly to a goodly number of relatives and friends, after which the remains were taken to the family cemetery close by.

A NIECE.

Brother **James C. Macdonald** departed this life at his home in Ridgetown, Ontario, Canada, August 26th, 1922, in the ninety-fourth year of his age. Brother Macdonald was born in Dura, Scotland, August 26th, 1828, making him just 94 years old the day of his death. Brother Macdonald came to this country when about twelve years of age. For a number of years he taught school in various sections of Ontario. He was married to Phebe Louise Beebe, August 2nd, 1876. She was a daughter of the late Elder William L. Beebe, and to this union were born nine children, of whom five are still living: William, of Rodney, Charles, of Toronto, Atwood, of Ridgetown, Mary O'Neill, of Howard township, and Kate Dolson, of Windsor. Brother Macdonald was a man of sterling qualities, a firm believer in the doctrine of God his Savior. He was exercised regarding his salvation when quite young. He united with the Beulah Old School Baptist Church, in the township of Aberfeldy, Ontario, about forty years ago, and was baptized by Elder William L. Beebe. For some time he kept a general store at Duart, Ontario, but finally gave up the store and accepted a government position at Ridgetown as custom collector, which position he filled very acceptably until he was ninety years of age, when he retired from business. His memory was unimpaired by his age, and he could converse upon any subject very interestingly, even at his great age, as he was a well informed man upon almost any topic, but his chief subject was religion, which he enjoyed conversing upon. He was firm in his convictions, yet kind in his general manner. He lived and died in the full assurance of the faith of God, being firm unto the end, and we believe he has fallen asleep in his dear Savior, to awake in his likeness in the morning of the resurrection.

His funeral was held at the Duart meeting-house, after which his body was laid in Duart cemetery. May the God of all grace comfort his sorrowing companion, and the children who mourn the loss of a kind and devoted father.

Written by request.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Nathaniel B. Libbey, second son of Eliasa and Mehetibel Libbey, was born at Sanford, Maine, December 4th, 1832. He lived on the farm with his parents until he reached young manhood, when he learned the blacksmith's trade. In 1854 he made his first trip west, traveling through Illinois, Wisconsin and Minnesota, spending the summer at Janesville, Wisconsin, and then returned home. Coming west again in 1858, he remained about a year. In 1860 he was united in marriage to Miss Jane Libbey, and they came to Iowa in 1862, locating on a farm in Winneshiek County, where they lived until Mrs. Libbey's death, in January, 1898. Since that time, with the exception of one year, when he went back to Maine to care for a brother who was ill, he made his home with his niece and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Gill. In 1886 he united with the Baptist Church at Oakwoods, Maine, of which church he was still a member. A typical representative of the old New England stock from which he descended, he inherited and exemplified in his daily life some of the very best qualities that are to be found in that stock. His personal habits were of the simplest, and in his quiet, unassuming way he was intensely interested in all forms of vegetation, but loved the trees especially well, and often made the remark to those who knew him best that trees were the grandest part of all vegetation, as there was something ennobling and uplifting about them. Two of the outstanding characteristics in the life of "Uncle Nat," as he was familiarly and affectionately called by both young and old in the community, were thrift and honesty, both of which he rigidly adhered to throughout his long life. There remain to mourn his death one sister, Mrs. Josephine Hill, of Sanford, Maine, and six nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held at the home Sunday afternoon, at 1:30, conducted by Mr. Wells, with interment at Oaklawn.

The foregoing obituary was prepared for the local papers. Uncle was a subscriber to and diligent reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I think he was baptized by Elder William Quint, in September, 1886, near the Oak Woods Church. We mourn, but our loss is his gain.

His niece,

(MRS.) CHARLES GILL.

Miss Ella James died December 11th, 1922, at the home of her sister, Mrs. C. A. Wrenn, near Chantilly, Va. She was born December 21st, 1853, the daughter of David James and Harriet C. Whaley, and was the oldest of nine children. Three brothers and two sisters preceded her to the grave, and she is survived by two sisters and one brother: Mrs. C. A. Wrenn, at whose home she passed away; Mrs. G. H. McVeigh, of Charlottesville, Va., and Mrs. Charles James, of Washington, D. C. It was our privilege to baptize her into the membership of the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church the second Sunday in May, 1917. She was happy in her church life, and experienced a relieved and peaceful mind in being brought into the church. Her devotion to the cause was such that she never liked to miss a single meeting, and just the Friday before she died, did not want the family to send for a doctor for fear he might not let her go to meeting on Sunday. Her death was due to hemorrhage of the brain, and her illness very brief. She loved to be of use to any in trouble, and her life was one of ministration. Just the week before her going, she said she loved everybody. Upon being

asked if there were not some she loved more than others, she replied that she had no favorites. This must have been due to the shedding abroad of the divine love in her heart, that love from above which knows no partiality.

Funeral services were held at Mrs. Wrenn's, where we spoke from the fourteenth chapter of John. She was laid to rest in the burying-ground adjoining the Mt. Zion meeting-house. We sorrow not as those who have no hope, but she will be much missed in the church and in the family. Our loss, we believe to be her eternal gain. May the Comforter which Jesus promised his people abide with the bereaved ones. L.

Our father, **J. M. Lamburn,** passed away July 2nd, 1922, at the age of 89 years and 4 months. He had been perfectly helpless for about two years. He was sitting in his chair, enjoying the breeze that was sweeping through the room, when suddenly he put forth both his hands, and said, "Praise the Lord, praise the Lord. I know that Jesus bore my sins in his own body on the tree of the cross. Praise the Lord." Then turning to us, he said, Take me to the bed, I am getting weak. We took him to the bed, and in about fifteen minutes he was gone. We felt shocked, for although he had been helpless for so long we were not expecting the end.

THE CHILDREN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Miss E. G. Merryman, Md., $1.00; Mrs. W. R. Davis, Del., $1.00; Mrs. Allie G. Reid, N. C., $2.00; Mrs. Sarah E. Runkle, Ill., $1.00; G. E. Coulbourn, Va., $2 00; A Friend, Md., $1.00; W. T. Hughett, Ill., $3.00; Mrs. Fannie Muir, N. Y., $2.00; J. D. Welborn, Ind., $5.00.

MEETINGS.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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IN

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To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 91. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1923. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LUKE XII. 13.

"AND one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me."

For a long time I have had a mind to write a few thoughts for the dear saints of God, and yesterday and to-day have felt so lonely and sad that I surely am made to feel, What must I do? The very utterance of my tongue fails to express my longing feelings, so in the very deepest distress of soul I wish to write a little now. The eternal sovereignty of God is surely manifested in the subject. This man must have had the idea that the Master could be persuaded to do something for this man, and thus influence him, in a measure, to have his brother divide the inheritance, thus showing the spirit of covetousness. This is that selfish principle that always opposes the unchangeable, eternal God, whose will knows no change. If it were possible for God's will to change the least bit who could tell what would be the dreadful consequence? If his "all power" in heaven, in earth, seas and all deep places, could be diminished or increased, where would be the hope of his saints? The text says, "Master." This word itself shows his "all power," and therefore cannot be limited. All the power of men or devils cannot diminish "all power." They can only oppose the blessed truth, and this they have, do now, and always will, until time shall be no more. The Master said, "Man, who made me a Judge or a divider over you?" A challenging question indeed! They found no answer for the Master. Jesus always put to silence the opposers of his precious truth. Truly our Master is Lord over all, and blessed for evermore. He spoke a parable unto them: "The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: [notice he thinks he can do great things; that is the man the parable illustrates.] I will pull down my barns, and build greater. * * * And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." Now what goes with this man's sovereignty? Dear reader, do you see the difference? "God said unto him, Thou fool! this night thy soul shall be

required of thee." Now another question: "Then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" This is the test, in the letter, between God's sovereignty and man's. The voice of eternal Jehovah is that he is the ruler of the entire universe. He speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast. He is wisdom, and never makes any mistakes. I feel to say, and safely, too, that the truth is eternal. The Scriptures are given by inspiration of God. They say that God doeth his will in heaven, earth, seas and all deep places, and none can stay his hand. These deep places are not measured by the rule of man. They are in the deepest thought, and our poor tongues cannot reach the depths, for it is spiritual. No man knoweth the things of a man, save by the spirit of man; neither knoweth any man the things of God, but the Spirit of God. "Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute: [now the purpose] that the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation: from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple." This is the wisdom of God, and what it said. Now where is the man, or all the wisdom of man, that could take care of a world, and know all the people coming down that generation in their proper order from Adam to Zacharias, who perished between the altar and the temple? Nothing but the great wisdom of God could direct all the great events that had to come to pass, and not a single mistake could be made. The great flood, leaving but eight souls, could not destroy Wisdom's plan. See the mysterious way made by infinite Wisdom taking care and directing the events of killing the prophets, so that Wisdom was not disappointed. See all the battles which were fought, all the blood shed. The mighty Goliath could not slay the little David, who was the type of our Lord. Oh what display of God's infinite wisdom! How saints can rejoice when it is revealed in them. What if David had been killed? There could not have been a Savior of poor sinners. It is said, He bore our sins in his own body. Again, He bare them and carried them all the days of old. When I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lower parts of the earth, thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, when as yet there was none of them. Again, Jesus said to his disciples, Ye are members of my body, of my flesh and of my bones. What a tender and loving tie of love. This glorious church Jesus must present to the Father without spot or wrinkle. To this end he was born, and for this cause he came into this world. Wisdom hath builded her house, hewed out her seven pillars.

I will have to close. My eyes are dim, as I am nearly sixty-seven years old, and not able to work. I am not able to write you of the afflictions of the Lord's people, but our God causes them to choose rather to suffer afflictions with his people than to endure the pleasures of sin for a season. This is Wisdom's way. These afflictions are spiritual. I most earnestly believe in the infinite wisdom of God, and that God is perfect in all his attributes, and that he cannot make a mistake. He made the new covenant with his people, and it was ordered in all things and sure. It is of faith that it might be by grace, that the promise might be sure to all the seed. This is the sure

mercy of David. As he could swear by no greater he sware by himself, that by two (Son and Holy Ghost) immutable things it is impossible for God to lie. We may have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, which entereth into that within the vail.

It seems like I cannot stop. A few more things, and then I am done. This infinite Wisdom says, Which is, which was and which is to come, the Almighty. Here he stands in three positions: "is," "was" and "is to come." Let us notice Revelation i. 19: "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter." If this does not prove that God controls and governs all things by his immutable counsel, then I am deceived. "The four and twenty elders fall down [humility] before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

Dear editors, do as you think best with this, and it will be all right with me.

Yours in tribulation,

J. R. HATCHER.

McEWEN, Tenn., Aug. 20, 1922.

CARTHAGE, Mo., Oct. 20, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have recently returned from a visit to Canon City, Colorado, one hundred and fifty miles south of Denver, and famous for its scenic attractions. It is located at the foot of the first range of the Rocky Mountains, and at the eastern entrance of the Royal Gorge. Here the Arkansas River has found a chasm a half mile deep in some places where it flows between walls of solid rock; that is, between the rifted mountains. Here also is the world-wide famous Sky-line Drive, where travelers viewed from the city seem to be threading the mazes of the sky. But it is not to tell of the wonders of that region that I take my pen. It is entirely inadequate to do the subject justice, and it is not in the SIGNS that people look for accounts of travel. I am writing to tell of the pleasure I had in my visit with Elder Smith Ketchum and his wife, who now live in Canon City. He was at one time pastor of the New Hope Church, at Greenbush, Ill., succeeding Elder I. N. Van Meter in the pastorate. I never saw Elder Van Meter after the day that he baptized me, he being taken sick in a few days, and living but a short time. So most of my association with the New Hope Church, where my membership was, and is, is connected in memory with Elder Ketchum. Neither the Ketchums nor myself have lived near Greenbush for some years, and I felt that it was a great privilege to see them once more, and feel that some of the readers of the SIGNS will be glad to hear of them through your columns. He is now quite feeble in some ways. He preached to a little band of us on two occasions during my visit, but he did not stand while he spoke. But the old, old story of Jesus and his love is just as sweet as he tells it now as it was when I first heard him tell it years ago, and it is more convincing, for in him we see a man endowed by nature with good intellect, sound judgment and all the ability that goes to make a successful man of the world, but who was led by grace into the strait and narrow way, and now as the sunset splendors

of life illumine his way testifies that it is all of grace that he was led, and has been kept. Perhaps parents were seldom more pleased with their family than the Ketchums, yet gratified ambition has not puffed them up; and perhaps parents never suffered more than they through the loss of two, and a brilliant young son, and the only daughter while a mere girl, though the wife of Prof. Smith, then of the University at Champaign, Ill. But this grief did not embitter them. Through joys and through sorrows they have been kept in the way, praising the Lord for his mercies, and ready to say, By the grace of God we are what we are. So these lives convince us that God's grace is sufficient for the needs of his people, and able to turn a man from worldly success, and more than satisfy him in the exchange of what the prophet calls "that which is not bread" for the spiritual fatness in which his soul delights itself. Elder Ketchum's interest in the affairs of church and state is still keen, and he repudiates the idea held by some that an Old School Baptist minister is unlearned in the things of science and general knowledge. Dear sister Ketchum has one of the saddest afflictions that can come upon any one. She is totally blind. Notwithstanding, she is able to go all over their house, to wait upon herself and to do many things that seem almost impossible to us who need our sight to do them as well as she does. Her great grief is that she cannot wait upon others as she used to, but her hospitality is as broad and her face is as sweet as in the days when her hands were beautified by loving service to all around her, and, except for the sadness which her affliction casts upon all who see her, our visit to them would have been as happy as any we ever made in their home. Elder Ketchum is eighty-two, she about seventy-six. They have a comfortable home, and no lack of anything money can buy. Two sons and their families live in or near Canon City, having gone there for the benefits of the fine climate.

While in Colorado Elder Ketchum asked me to send you an account of my trip, and to tell of the condition of sister Ketchum, as he thought some of your readers would be interested in the story, and, anyway, he wanted them to know about her. In a very bungling way I have complied with his request. It seems that I have no skill in expressing myself, but I think you can get my meaning, and if you will take what I have written and correct it and publish it I will greatly appreciate it. Feel at liberty to change any word or phrase in order to better express what you can see I am trying to tell. By so doing you will greatly oblige a weary and unworthy sister, if one at all,

GRACE VEECH SMITH.

TEHUACANA, Texas, Sept. 18, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I find myself this morning with a desire to talk some of the wonderful love and mercy of the merciful God, who sent his darling Son into this sin-cursed world to bleed and die on the shameful cross for the redemption and salvation of a lost and ruined people, who were chosen in the annals of eternity in Christ Jesus before the world began; and as I have no one to talk with personally, it is with hesitation, and in fear and trembling, that I make the attempt to talk a little to the readers of the SIGNS, and if you see fit you may give what I write to them. I often have the impression to write, but the words are not given me with which to express what I would like to say. I sometimes in meditation

think it a wonder of wonders that our heavenly Father is so mindful of us, while we are so unmindful of him, and so disobedient, yet he guards and protects us from dangers both seen and unseen, and blesses us with many temporal blessings while here in this unfriendly world of sin and trouble; but the greatest of all blessings is the sweet hope we have in Christ Jesus, our Savior and Deliverer from sin and death. While I find myself unworthy of the least of God's blessings, I know that he has wonderfully blessed me in many ways and at many times; yes, many times unexpected and unthought of until the blessing came.

Some put no confidence in dreams, but I want to speak of two dreams I have had during my life, where I realize that in them I have been given a little view of eternal woe and misery, also been blessed with a little view of eternal joy and happiness. When a boy, in my sixteenth year, during my trouble on account of sin, in a dream I was marched with an innumerable host of people, into a trestle flood, which was walled with high walls that no man could ascend to get out. That trestle was very high; it started even with the ground, but kept getting higher and higher, and it projected out over the bottomless pit, and the people were forced along, pushing one another, there being a pressure behind forcing us along, and as I was nearing the end of the trestle I could hear the shrieks and cries of the people as they were forced off into the pit. I awoke, and felt that God had given me a manifestation of my deliverance from that place of woe and misery, and since that I have been hobbling along between hope and doubt, on to old age, being now in my seventy-seventh year.

I also dreamed of climbing a mountainous place which I was unable to climb alone, and there was an unexpected power that supported me in climbing, and finally I was permitted to crawl into the most beautiful place my eyes had ever beheld. I exclaimed, This is the Capstone. It, and everything my eyes beheld, was of bright silvery appearance, and there I could rejoice in God as my Savior and Deliverer. I looked through the Bible for the word "capstone," but failed to find it, but I think I found words equivalent to it, and it does me good to meditate upon these things, and as I meditate I desire to give the eternal God all praise, honor and glory.

I do not know that I can edify one of God's little children, but I want to let them know that the writers of the SIGNS do edify and feed my poor soul, for they speak of a sovereign God, who rules over all things, and of a full and complete Savior of all the Father gave him in the world of eternity, and the devil, with all his combined forces, cannot diminish that number one iota, neither can the Arminian world add one to that number. Dear brethren and sisters, write on, for you do not know when you are feeding a little trembling lamb of God.

Well, I must close. I hope I have not trespassed upon your time, and that you will excuse all imperfections. I desire an interest in the prayers of all God's children.

An unworthy sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all,

J. H. BOZEMAN.

POST, Texas, Dec. 8, 1921.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I thank you very much for sending me the dear paper, for I get much good news from its pages. I knew that my time had expired, but money was so scarce that I kept putting

off renewing. I cannot find any I can get to subscribe for the paper, or I would gladly send in their names with my renewal. I tried out in New Mexico, where I was the other day, but the brethren out there are like myself, poor, and financially not able to meet their obligations. It seems to me that God's people are the poor and afflicted people who shall trust in the Lord here on earth, but I do not believe that they would exchange with the world. I read many good letters in the SIGNS that do my soul much good, so I will make sacrifice in order to continue taking the paper, for I love the cause it contends for and the doctrine it advocates, though I am such a poor wretch, and so blind. When I would do good, evil is present with me, so that I cannot do the things that I would. Oh wretched man that I am! The poor and afflicted are always seeing the imperfections of the flesh, while the man of sin is always boasting of the things he does. What a difference! Jesus while here on earth spoke not of himself, but of the Father, and said, I came not to do mine own will, but the will of my Father, and this is the will of my Father, that of all he has given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. We speak not of ourselves, but of Jesus and the things he has done, while the world speaks of themselves and the things they are doing for Jesus. It seems to me that their God is not any stronger than poor feeble man, therefore their rock is not our Rock, they themselves being witnesses.

Dear brethren, I want to tell you about our little church out in New Mexico, near Lovington. There were only three members there until last August. Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1921, there were five more added to the church, two by experience and baptism, and we had a real good meeting. Brother J. A. Rutledge did most of the preaching, assisted by brother J. R. Goins. Brother Goins is our pastor. The members live from thirty to one hundred miles from the church, but we have been going every meeting day. We want to constitute an association with our sister churches at Portales, New Mexico, and Farwell, Texas, and would be glad to have any of the brethren with us.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

J. R. ELY.

DERIDDER, Louisiana, Dec. 19, 1922.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—From some cause I have a desire to write you and say that after reading several things you have said through the SIGNS, especially what you said in December 1st number on editorial page, under the heading "Apostasy," I feel that I know from the Lord's teaching that many of the Lord's people are in Babylon spiritually to-day for the same cause for which they were carried into Babylon in the days of the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and they will not come out until they have paid the uttermost farthing determined by the purpose of God. It is not in the man to trust in the true God, he can only learn as God teaches him, for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he (the natural man) know them, because they are spiritually discerned, (see 1 Cor. ii. 14;) but in times past when God's people desired a king the Lord granted them their way and gave them Saul. Even so to-day, when God's people get to thinking more of the wisdom of men than that of God they begin to desire to be led by man, and God grants them their ways, which they shall find to be the ways of death.

In that day, what a burning shall take place. They shall be tried by fire, all their works and ways shall be burned up; yet they themselves shall be saved as by fire. John said, He that cometh after me is mightier than I, he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. (See Matt. iii. 11.) Just as sure as one is baptized with the Holy Ghost, the baptism with fire shall follow. The dross, much or little, must be consumed, then shall the fine gold appear, the fine gold with which the street of the new Jerusalem is paved.

Well, I just began this to say I very much enjoyed reading from your pen, and believe you contend for the old paths. Excuse my rambling, and remember me as a poor sinner, saved by grace, both in time and for eternity, as I hope. Will say that if I ever get able, I aim to subscribe for the SIGNS.

J. F. PIERCE.

RIDGETOWN, Ontario, Dec. 6, 1922.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have just read your editorial in the last SIGNS, and have so enjoyed it that I feel to write you a few lines that you may know I fully appreciate the paper, and especially the editorials of both Elder Ker and yourself. I sincerely hope the SIGNS may be published for many years, as it is such a blessing and comfort to those who have no privilege of meeting. I am in full accord with your views so ably set forth in your article. Truly many are departing from the faith, and the state of Zion is very low spiritually. A cold and lifeless condition seems to prevail among churches everywhere. I often ask myself the solemn question, Shall there ever be a reviving among the churches; shall the cold and lifeless state of Zion ever be brought into the springtime again, when the manifestation of spiritual fruit shall be seen ripening upon her sacred Vine and all shall feel the winter to be past, the rain to be over and gone, the flowers appearing on the earth, and the songs of birds and the voice of the turtle-dove heard in the land? I know not how it may be with you, but I have been traveling in darkness for a long time, and I am hoping that in the Lord's own time and way he may cause the darkness to disperse, that the rays of a brighter day may shine in upon me.

Dear brother, I hope you may feel to visit us during the coming year. If you can possibly arrange to come, I know all will be glad to have you with us again. I do not want to intrude upon your time, which I know is so taken up, but I shall appreciate a letter from you whenever you feel to write me.

With best wishes to you and family, I am, sincerely your brother in gospel bonds,

J. B. SLAUSON.

UPPERVILLE, Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I write to ask you if you will send the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which is now coming to Middleburg, to Upperville, Virginia, care of Aubrey Grimes? He and his sister are my cousins, and since my home has been broken up I live with them. I would have written before, but have had rheumatism in my hand so badly that at times I could not write at all. I do not want to miss a single number as long as you are kind enough to send the SIGNS to me, and I thank you for that kindness. I also want to thank the blessed Father that he has enabled you, and all connected with the dear old SIGNS, to so earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. I have been a

constant reader of the paper for thirty years. Now, for some wise purpose, I am denied mingling in church privileges with those of like precious faith, still he who has promised never to forsake us has been a present help in trouble. I am old, sometimes sick, and what the world calls poor, and often feel the need of things for my natural comfort, but O, brother, when we are brought to his banqueting-house, and his banner over us is love, then we are not poor, but rich in the precious hope of salvation by grace.

Brother Lefferts, I did not think of writing of anything but the SIGNS, but sometimes I am lost in the contemplation of the power and glory of God's grace. Pray for me, that my faith fail not.

Your unworthy sister,

ANNIE THOMPSON.

MIDDLETON, Tenn., March, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending pay for the SIGNS, and as I would like to write something for the comfort of the saints, I will make the effort, realizing my weakness and inability to do so without the guidance of the holy Spirit, for if we do anything in the worship of God that will be well-pleasing in his sight it must be by the Spirit of God, or the working of his mighty power within us. I am often at a loss to know whether I am walking in darkness or Light. Christ says, I am the Light of the world. He also says, I in you, and you in me. This brings much questioning to my mind, Am I in Christ, or am I not? I feel sometimes I would be glad to have a better assurance, but as the poet has said, What more can he say unto you who to Jesus for refuge have fled? The flame shall not hurt thee, he only designs thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine. There, dear brethren, if I understand aright is the trial of the faith and patience of the saints of the most high God. Every man's works shall be tried, of what sort it is. Without Christ we can do nothing. No man speaking by the Spirit of God can say that Jesus is accursed, and no man can say that Jesus is the Christ but by the Holy Ghost.

Brethren, I have put off renewing my subscription, hoping to get in a better frame of mind to write a letter for publication, but now feeling as little like it as previously, I am trying because I cannot keep it out of my mind, and if I write anything that will be edifying or comforting to the saints let God be praised, for to think of such a poor, weak, sinful man as I feel myself to be trying to do something for the comfort of God's people here in the world seems too much for me, and it sometimes comes into my mind that I had better let it alone. These things come up in my mind, and I cannot be satisfied without trying to do the best I can. If I am not deceived, if I am what I hope I am, it is by the grace of God, and not by any good that I have done. The natural mind is enmity against God, is not reconciled to him, neither indeed can be. The thoughts of a man's heart are evil continually. How can we expect good from such a source? Man is all evil until God sends his Spirit into his heart, crying, Abba, Father, and takes away his stony heart and gives him a heart of flesh. It is all the work of God, for without Christ we can do nothing. Ye are God's workmanship, created in Christ unto good works, which God before ordained that ye should walk in them.

I want to say that I fully endorse the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and if there is anything in my letter that is inconsistent with sound doc-

trine I do not want it published. I feel almost incapable of writing my own thoughts, for I am seventy-two years old, and my nerves are not steady.

Farewell.

J. S. STANLEY.

MOUNT UNION, Pa., Feb. 4, 1922.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—My subscription for the SIGNS runs out March 22nd, so please find one dollar for another six months, as it is the only paper published that suits me in doctrine as our Lord and the apostles taught: salvation by grace, and grace alone, all the work of our Lord, revealed to man by revelation of our Lord to those who have been called by his holy calling. I have read the SIGNS for sixty-five years, and my grandfather and grandmother took it; then my father and mother took it, and now I am taking it. Kept by the power of God unto salvation, the editorials and correspondence are soul-cheering to me, for they tell my feelings and belief better than I can. I am now going on my seventy-eighth year. I was born September 19th, 1844. I am acquainted with brother H. H. Lefferts, and brother J. W. McClanahan, of West Virginia, and have heard them preach. They preach sound doctrine, and not adulterated. I have heard others calling themselves Primitive Baptists preach; their preaching did not have the right sound. That is what is causing the discord all over the country, a misunderstanding of what the true Old School Baptists believe and preach. I am with the little flock. Fear not, it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. I hope you and brother Lefferts may be spared many years to wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon. Dark clouds are hovering over, but by and by they will pass away and the church will be purified as predestinated. Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. If God be for us, who can be against us? God will not cast away his people he foreknew. Let not our hearts be troubled, as God's will has to be done in spite of men or devils.

I must stop, or these few lines will get too long. Written by an aged man, with the hope of heaven in his soul. Love to the editors and to J. W. McClanahan.

R. M. BROWN.

CANON CITY, Colo., Jan. 4, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find money order for two dollars, for which please continue the SIGNS to Elder Smith Ketchum for another year. Father will be eighty-three January 7th, but is now confined to his bed, having had a stroke November 24th, which has afflicted his left side. He has made no gain, but is gradually growing weaker each day, and it appears that his departure is only a matter of a short time, and when God calls he must obey, which we know; we also know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose.

Sincerely your brother, I hope,

C. C. KETCHUM.

TO OUR CANADIAN SUBSCRIBERS.

As some of our subscribers in Canada send us Canadian money, we wish to call their attention to the fact that the exchange on it is now very heavy, and we cannot afford to pay it, but can only give them credit for the amount they send, less the exchange. The SIGNS is the only paper we know of that does not charge extra postage for Canadian subscribers, so if convenient please send money orders or express orders.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1923.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 CORINTHIANS III. 16. 17.

"KNOW ye not that ye are of the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple is holy, which temple ye are."

A poor sinner seeking for the truth has asked us to write on this Scripture, and we should love to be able to do this in such a way as to satisfy the longing soul, but the Lord himself is the only source of all wisdom and knowledge, and it shall never be said that any man has been able to teach his brother to know the Lord. This present inquirer has told us that in reading the Bible everything seems to condemn her, and even those passages which seem to hold forth some precious promise carry with them a qualification which seems to cut her off. If we have experimentally known anything of the truth ourselves, we have fellowship for her condition of mind. There was a time with us some years ago when to read the Bible meant for us to see our own condemnation in every line of it. It is a sore experience, and cuts the poor sinner down to the ground, but like all the things in the lives of the children of God, it is altogether needful in order that we thereby learn the way of salvation more perfectly, and realize that no flesh can glory in the presence of the Lord. It is said in the Psalms that blessed is the people that know the joyful sound, they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. Have you ever thought what it means to walk in the light of his countenance? The light reveals, or discloses, and among the things which light shows are the nakedness of self and the hidden evils of the human heart. We want to say, therefore, to our inquirer that the very exercise of mind she is now undergoing is proof that she is walking in the light of her blessed Lord's face. How otherwise could she be filled so with mourning over her weakness and sinfulness? How otherwise could she have so tender a conscience that the slightest vanity or selfishness pains it so keenly? "The tender herb" mentioned in the thirty-second chapter of Deuteronomy is undoubtedly this tender conscience made tender by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of truth shall come upon this tender herb as the small rain. Thus shall the tender conscience grow up into knowledge of the way; that is, by being fed with the doctrine. Therefore we shall now turn to the text, hoping to bring forth by the Lord some instruction in righteousness to this very tender conscience. It is true from the teaching of the Scriptures that the church as a body is one and indivisible and that, as a unit, it is the temple of God. The Almighty dwells not in temples made with hands, but in his church composed of lively stones, builded up through the Spirit for the habitation of his honor and glory. However, in the text at the head of this article it is not the church as a body which Paul is considering, but each individual member of the church. Each member is himself or herself the temple of God, and lives and has his being in each believer. This cannot be otherwise than true, because each believer is born of God, else he could not

be a believer, for belief comes by the operation within of the same power which raised Christ from the dead. It will be noticed in the text that it says "ye," and not "you," are the temple of God, and again in the seventeenth verse it says "ye" instead of "you." "Ye" is the singular number and "you" the plural number in the ancient form of the second person. The fact, therefore, that Paul uses the singular form proves to our mind that while it is true that the whole church as a body is the temple of God, the writer in this instance is maintaining that each single individual member of that church is a temple of the Lord. Truly the tabernacle of God is with men in this very day, and all who are subjects of the new or heavenly birth are partakers of the divine nature, and so have the very God of heaven dwelling within them. No wonder the Savior said to his followers that the kingdom of heaven was within them. In each true believer is the King ruling by his love and the power of his grace. Since it cannot be otherwise than true according to the Scriptures that the power of the Lord dwells in our mortal bodies, then it must follow that the mortal body itself is the temple of the living God, and that whenever the believer takes his mortal body and commits uncleanness with it, he is thereby defiling the temple of the Lord. This brings us to the matter in the seventeenth verse, that whoever defiles the temple of the Lord, him shall God destroy. This, too, is the part which worries our inquirer after truth. In this passage she reads her own condemnation, for she has a fear that she has defiled the temple, and is thereby headed for destruction. Dear child of God, you who fear the Lord so solemnly and so reverently, this does not mean you. The very fact that you are dwelling with fear and trembling is your preventative against defiling the temple; that is, your mortal body. Godly fear is the hatred of evil, and so long as this hatred of evil dwells actively within us, there can be no defiling of the temple. Defiling the temple results from a heart grown cold toward God, and from a conscience seared as with a hot iron so that it cannot feel the pain of sinfulness. When a believer uses his mortal body to satisfy the lusts of the flesh in committing fornication, or other baseness, he defiles the temple of God. In this same first Corinthians, sixth chapter, Paul establishes this as follows: "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid! What! know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." Both the body and the spirit of the believer are God's by right of redemption, and it is proper that God should be glorified both in the spirit and in the body of the believer. Therefore, to use the mortal body to commit fornication with it would be to join that which is a member of Christ's body to the body of a harlot, which would be to defile the temple of the Lord. "Him shall God destroy." Such an one would be unfit for the company of the saints,

and could not be admitted into the fellowship of the kingdom of heaven here on earth, nor if he were already in the kingdom could be retained there, but would have to be excluded from the fellowship of the church here in the world. Not that the believer would be destroyed eternally from the presence of the Lord, but he would be destroyed so far as the kingdom here on earth is concerned. "Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." By the "kingdom of God" here is not meant the eternal world of glory, but the visible organization of the church here in the world. Such believers as take their bodies to commit any of the above offenses do thereby defile their mortal bodies, which are the temple of the Holy Spirit, and such shall be destroyed from the love and fellowship of the church here on earth. Our inquirer, who has asked us to write on this, and whose conscience is so tender that the least vain thought and foolish imagination pains it, is not of those who defile the temple of the Lord, rather she is possessing her body in patience and without blame unto the coming of the Lord; but how subtly the tempter takes these very blessed things and twists them so as to torment God's little children, and so tries to wrest them from their faith. Thanks be to God, the adversary shall not succeed, but when the Lord shall appear to relieve the anxieties of our inquirer, Satan shall hold his peace and slink away defeated into everlasting destruction.

We hope what we have here written is unto the glory of God and to the comfort of his little ones. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder George Ruston.)

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, to the several churches composing the same, sends christian greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inasmuch as it has pleased the Lord of Israel to bless you with the favor of assembling together as one association, with, we hope, a pure desire to worship him in spirit and in truth, and believing that he has preserved you as a people from running after the commandments and doctrines of men, and that he has established you in the doctrine of God our Savior, it is our intention, God willing, to direct your minds in this Circular Letter to some of the precepts of the gospel. By precepts we mean those exhortations, entreaties, commands, injunctions and admonitions which God in his word has addressed to believers, and which only believers can or do perform. Many people think that to perform acts according to precept is wholly an effort of the creature, and that precepts are written to influence God's children in a right deportment one toward another. In other words, that it is their duty to do what God has commanded to the best of their ability. Such conclusions are not in conformity to God's worth, for it is a spiritual blessing from the Father, in accordance with his eternal choice, that any of Adam's race should be holy and without blame before him in love. Those who are so blessed receive Christ Jesus the Lord, and it is only those who receive Christ Jesus the Lord who will show any desire to walk in him. Their walk will be after the Spirit, not after the flesh, and the fulfilling of the precepts will be the fruit of the Spirit in them. As seed sown in good ground, they bear through the

Spirit the fruit of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. So Paul could write to the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, exhorting them as dear children to walk in love. They could not walk in love unless God had first bestowed his love upon them, so that they (poor unworthy Gentiles) should be called the sons of God. What wondrous love! Such blessed recipients could not help but walk in love. By nature they were children of wrath, even as others, and when quickened they could not walk under the load of sin, but stumbled in darkness, conscious that they were under the frown of an angry Judge, but his love, demonstrated by the forgiveness of sins and the crowning of their lives with loving-kindness and tender mercies, had transported them into a heavenly element, in which their joy is to walk. They walk in the light of his countenance, and love him in return by loving those who are begotten of him. Conscious of their base origin it was easy in the Spirit to esteem the other better than themselves, and to submit one to another in the fear of God. They desire to speak the truth in love, and to minister to the saints according to the will of God. The Holy Spirit brings to the mind of the believer the gospel precepts, which are a lamp to his feet and a light to his path. Often they minister, wash one another's feet, bear one another's burdens, without thinking for a moment that they are fulfilling his word. Therefore the fruit of love will be demonstrated in their love, tenderness and care for those who love the truth, and their joy will be in the joy of the saints, not in their grief or dismay. When everything is against them (as often it will seem), and they see so much flesh in themselves, so that they have no confidence in the flesh, then they rejoice in Christ Jesus. Peace is another fruit of the Spirit, never obtained by fighting for it with the weapons of the flesh. The peace of God is a wonderful holy gift bestowed upon his sons. Thus they who have felt his love and known the joys of his salvation, having had peace flow into their hearts like a river, speak peace; they are the sons of peace, and they are peace-makers, blessed, for their's is the kingdom of heaven. They live in peace, and are at peace among themselves; these, and these only, endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Another fruit is longsuffering, therefore the brethren were beseeched to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called, "With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love." That is, they were commanded to take the lowest place; considering how base and mean they by nature were, they were to deal gently with long, patient suffering, for it is a part of their vocation to bear with one another. They were not to make a man an offender for a word, nor to ignore the mind of one, even the least of God's saints. They were commanded to be gentle, "tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

In conclusion, dearly beloved brethren, it is our desire that you in the days to come be blessed with his Spirit, and that you might regard his precepts, for the keeping of the precepts is the fruit of the Spirit, and they who are in the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body. They that are in the flesh cannot walk in the precepts, and their works are works of the flesh, for fleshly aggrandizement. The light in them which is not according to gospel precepts is darkness, and breeds

discord and strife. They envy, hate, are deceitful and malicious, and would destroy. And ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light, proving what is acceptable unto the Lord, and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

GEORGE RUSTON, Moderator.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Clerk.
JAMES AVERY, Ass't Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Association, in session with the Messongoes Church, Accomac County, Virginia, October 18th, 19th and 20th, 1922, to the associations with which we correspond, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We cannot but feel thankful to Almighty God, that he in his wisdom, power and mercy has drawn us together as an association once more. It is pleasant to be here to feed upon the crumbs that fall from the Master's table. We have heard good preaching; the ministers being of one mind declaring the truth as it is in Christ, there being but one theme: salvation by grace, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God.

Our next session, the Lord willing, will be held with the Forest Grove Church, Wicomico County, Maryland, beginning on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1923, at which time and place we hope to meet your messengers again.

J. C. MELLOTT, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, at his home, Salisbury, Md., December 20th, 1922, Volley Murray, of Selbyville, Md., and Miss Katie J. Warren, of Pittsville, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mary Ellanora Benedict Baird, wife of Isaac Baird, of this village, died at their home on South Street, Monday afternoon, November 13th, 1922. Mrs. Baird for the past few months had been seriously ill, and death came gratefully Monday. She was the daughter of John G. and Mary Emma Bixbey Benedict, and was born in Warwick township September 9th, 1855. Mrs. Baird was a woman of fine christian character, and was a devoted member of the Old School Baptist Church. Her sunny disposition and warm-hearted, neighborly qualities made life-long friends. In 1879 she became the wife of Isaac Baird.

Funeral services will be held Thursday afternoon, at 1:30 o'clock, at the Old School Baptist meeting-house, Elder Ker officiating. Burial in Warwick Cemetery.

THE above appeared in the Warwick weekly paper, and while it says much of our dear departed sister, we feel to add a few lines of testimony relative to her life in the church.

She was baptized by Elder H. H. Lefferts during his pastorate of the Warwick Church. She was, from the very first until the end came, much interested and devoted to the church and its affairs. Her understanding of such things was keen, and she ever watched for the right way in all things pertaining to the order of the house. Faithful to the very letter. Never missed a meeting until her health failed and made it necessary to remain at home. It was a privilege indeed to visit in her home, and a pleasure to have her in the homes of others. She is sadly missed by the church and community; wherever her name is mentioned it is in fondest remembrance of her kind, bright and cheerful disposition. After months of suffering she has entered into the haven of rest reserved for all the redeemed. May our dear brother Baird, the daughter and little grandson be blessed with the presence of God. K.

Lucy Cornelia Rose, only daughter of William Gray and Mary Morris, of Stewart County, Tenn., was born February 12th, 1839, died July 23rd, 1922, aged 83 years, 5 months and 11 days. She was united in marriage to Irvin H. Rose, of Trigg County, Ky. To this union were born four children, three sons and one daughter: A. M., Leonora, Lucurlus and W. I. Rose, of whom only two are living: A. M. and W. I. Rose. The father died September 22nd, 1868, leaving the mother and the children (only three then, Lucurlus having died in infancy) to care for during the reconstruction period of the Civil War, and until grown. The sister, Mary, lived to marry, and to her and husband, C. W. Wilson, four children, two boys and two girls, were born, who have raised families.

She was grandmother to fourteen children, and great-grandmother of fifteen. She united with the Old Predestinarian Baptists at Dry Creek, Trigg County, in July, 1878, and never moved her membership from there. She moved to Marshall County in December, 1897. She had been a sufferer for more than twenty-five years with rheumatism, and other ills that flesh is heir to, but bore her burden with christian fortitude, never complaining of her lot in life. She enjoyed the gospel set forth in the SIGNS, but hardly ever got to listen to the gospel in a preached way, perhaps once a year, and less of late years. She was buried in the Oakland Cemetery, near where she lived, with simple burial services, to await the resurrection, when the dead in Christ shall rise first.

W. I. ROSE.

Elder J. H. Barr, the subject of this sketch, moved to Geneva County, Alabama, from Pike County, the same State, about three years ago, placing his letter in Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church. He was here licensed to the ministry. He later moved to Slocomb, Ala., where he became engaged in the mercantile business, and also moved his membership to Ephesus Church. His service as pastor was called for by several churches, and he was therefore ordained to the ministry in December, 1921. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and was an active minister in the Western Primitive Baptist Association, visiting the churches and espousing the cause in tribulation as well as in times of joy. Although his life in this work was short, we feel that he served according to the predestined purpose of the all-wise God, and that his life was not spent in vain. He died on December 23rd, 1922, after a short illness of pneumonia. The remains were taken to his old home in Pike County, and consigned to the tomb, there to await Gabriel's summons on the resurrection morning.

J. J. COLLINS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

H. C. Sledge, Ala., $1.00; Mrs. M. A. Somers, Va., $1.00; C. G. Miller, Cal., 50 cents; E. F. Readhimer, La., $2 00; C. Owens, Iowa, 50 cents; J. W. Greene, Ky., $1.00; J. S. Moore, Ala , $1.00; J. E. Holloway, Texas, $1.00; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $3.00; Mary A. Barnett, N. B., $2.00; "A Friend," N. Y., $1.00; R. L. Turner, Ky., $1.00; Sarah A. McColl, Ont., $3.00; H. F. Cate, Kans., $1.00; Hubbell Bros., N. Y., $8.00; Elder W. I. Wade, W. Va., $1.00; Robert Turner, Cal., $3.00; Mrs. A. M. Hellings, N. J., $1.00; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $1.00; W. A. Kelley, Ark., $1.00; Elder I. W. Bowers, Texas, $1.00.

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S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

JETERSVILLE, Va., Dec. 15, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find two dollars, one to renew my subscription for six months, and one to pay six months subscription for Mr. Thos. J. Thorne, Jetersville, Va., R. No. 3. I hope to get more subscribers to the SIGNS as I have certainly enjoyed reading the comforting and edifying messages it has brought to me the past year. I hope I believe the precious truth set forth by you all, through the wisdom and power given unto you. May it please our heavenly Father that his people everywhere may be led into the knowledge and glory of his everlasting truth more fully, and that they may be blessed to acknowledge that they that hold forth his truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord do it not of themselves, for it is not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead, that this everlasting gospel is preached, and it is believed and accepted only by those to whom this wisdom is given, for Christ was made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Now who are the "us?" All who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of the soul, for we are not of them that turn back, says the apostle, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. We believe in Christ according as the Father hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. If it were not according to the purpose and foreknowledge of God that man should fall, how could he have chosen a people and prepared a Savior for them before the foundation of the world? and if he in his all-wise purpose saw fit to let man corrupt himself is he unjust? Is it not lawful for God to do his will in all things, seeing heaven, and earth, and the fullness thereof are his? If man had never been lost he would need no Savior. If our heavenly Father had not seen our faces, then we could not have been chosen to eternal life before we were created. Because we believe in Christ, and contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints, why should we be hated and laughed at? Because we are not of this world. If we were of the world the world would love its own. But they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world, said our Lord as he prayed to the Father. I pray not that thou shouldest

take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from evil. Some are preaching, Keep yourselves, and that you can keep yourself. Why did our Lord pray the Father to keep us from evil? Because of our weakness, no doubt. I believe the Primitive Baptists everywhere preach righteousness through Jesus Christ, and that it becometh us to live godly and righteously in this present evil world. But, brethren, if I have not actually committed murder, and every abominable sin, it is because the grace of God has kept me, and when I look back over my past life, and see one evil that I have been kept from, I have to say, Praise be unto our God, who hath kept my feet from falling, and hath brought me up out of the miry clay. Brethren, if I felt that I had just been too good to steal, or to do any other wicked act, and that I could deliver myself from evil thoughts, surely I could boast of that, and say, I am good, but I fear that I would lack one thing, as that young man did who went away sorrowfully when he found he was yet lacking something; so boasting is excluded, says Paul. By what law? Of works? Nay, but by the law of faith. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.

I am inclosing a letter written to me by brother F. Selby Fisher, which I have enjoyed greatly, so if you see fit you may publish it, though I have not his consent, but feel it is mine. May you all be blessed to hold to and maintain the eternal truth of our God for years to come.

I am, I hope, your unworthy brother,

P. D. GEORGE.

SALISBURY, Md., May 8, 1922.

DEAR BROTHER:—I do not recall that I have ever acknowledged the receipt of your letter to one of March 11th. If I have replied, perhaps you will excuse another attempt, for I feel that I can only make an attempt, and, in fact, much of the time these days I cannot even make the attempt. I have reread your letter this evening, and can heartily indorse all you say. The doctrine of predestination, or the sovereignty of God, has ever been a stumbling-block for a certain class. It is useless to argue this doctrine, or truth, with one who does not believe it, but, for my part, I find my real comfort and stay is not only in believing it, but knowing that there is a God who is sovereign, whose infinite mind and power are so far above our keenest perception that we are lost in wonder as we try to reach their soaring height, and we cannot grasp with our finite minds such infinite power. Man in his natural estate can only accept that which he sees, and that in a limited portion. He knows nothing of the faith of God's people who grapple with the eternal. He has only theory, and theory soon loses itself in the maze of the unknown. Yet one would think that there is abundant proof in nature to assure even the most skeptical that there exists somewhere some form of power over which we have no control, but their eyes are holden that they may not see; but as for you and me, we see on all sides the evidence in nature of a God of supreme intelligence and power. How may a man save his own soul, which is invisible, and cannot save his own life, or the life of his dearest friend? If man cannot control the seasons, or stop the ebb and flow of the tide, how hardly may he expect to control the power that moves them? If God

were not sovereign, immutable, unchangeable, omnipotent, &c., where would your hope be? Aye, my dear brother, it would be a nonentity, be lost, you would have none. But by the knowledge that we have, which He in mercy has given us, that there is a God in Israel, who is King of kings and Lord of lords, we press on toward the mark for the prize of our high calling in Christ, and find rest in this truth. This truth has never been doubted by me from my earliest inception into the mysteries of my surroundings which have ever held an awe for me (with the exception of infidelity). In the tender years of my life I felt the prevailing presence of solemnity, and in early life I became convinced of a supreme power of some sort of a being somewhere, who held all things in his hand, and that I was not so much as a mote in the sunbeam, but as he controlled even the mote, though I were less, he also held my destiny in his hand. With increasing years I began to grapple with the unfathomable things, and forced my reasoning faculties to labor to unravel the mysterious, but the more I delved into the unknown depths the greater the tangle, and in all my searching I could find no way that a sinner might stand clean and justified before such an awful Power, who is even pure in all his thoughts and ways. I not only was born a sinner, with a sinful nature, but continued to be exercized by that nature, and though I was a man among men, I was a worm, and no man, before God, and was so helplessly entangled in the meshes of the net which Satan had spread about me that there was no way of escape; for how could one so guilty as I ever come before the throne to plead, and what could I plead? for I could not see that God could remain just and clear me or allow me in his presence, and for a long time I labored under the delusion that Christ Jesus came to save the righteous, and to condemn the sinner, and finally I began to sum up the matter in a business way, and I charged God with being unfair, and the doctrine of election a partiality affair, that as I had no say in the matter of being born, and neither was I responsible for the sin of Adam, I should not be held liable for that which I had no choice in, and I did not see how any could be saved. I experienced the terrors of a broken law, was living under the Mosaic dispensation, and did not know that Christ had been promised. I had heard of him by the hearing ear, but he appeared a mere figurehead, and of no importance in the salvation of the sinner. As I had not known him I had mistaken his office, and the terrible Moses terrified me by pointing out the broken tables of the law, that should have been kept whole and intact. But I lived through that awful night of terror. Evening or night ever precedes the morning, and frequently as I lay exhausted on Jacob's bed in the mountain, with a stone pillow, I saw the Star in the east, but what could it mean? While I grappled with both fear and hope strong and mighty shafts of light shot up from the eastern horizon; but what was it? How hardly could I expect the great Luminary of day was approaching in all his glory to dispel those shadows that had so relentlessly haunted my every moment awake or asleep? but the Sun of Righteousness did arise and shed his glory about my path. The roar of the wild beasts ceased, and the songs of birds filled the air, and, behold, all things had become new. For a new and living way is cast up, and we see Jesus, who is the express image of his person, the express image of God, but come in the likeness

of sinful flesh, to condemn sin in the flesh. The fact that Jesus came in the flesh nearly two thousand years ago is of small moment to us, but that he is come in your flesh, in my flesh, and that we are the temple of the Holy Ghost, and that he is a faithful High Priest, who not only can be, but is, touched by the feeling of our infirmities, being tempted in all points as we, yet without sin; and as he is without sin, so also are we, for we are members of his body, and as he was not suffered to see corruption, through his offering we are cleansed from all sin. The law demanded the death of the violator of the law, and we were dead, born dead, and he came in the flesh in order that he might die to be with her whom God had ordained should be his bride, that he might bring her up from the confines of death, clothe her with his own righteousness, which is immaculately clean. No stain of sin, no stench of death hangs to her, for he left the grave-clothes in the tomb when he ascended from the grave, and we stand justified before God in him, not in our own merit, nor our strength, but in Jesus. We cannot glory in ourselves before God, but we magnify our Lord and ascribe honor to him, and praise God for the richness of his grace to us through Jesus, and his mercy to us who were some time children of wrath. But in due time Christ died for the ungodly, and has now given us a good hope through grace that we are saved; not will be, but already saved. What he does, he does forever. He commands and it is done; it stands fast, there is no change in him, who knows not so much as a shadow of turning. Our treasure is safe, it shall never be wrenched from us, neither shall any pluck us from his hand. So we rejoice in the truth that God is sovereign, not that we can untangle the mysterious, or give a reason why, but we rest in his power. We do not know the real why of anything, it is none of our business, our minds cannot grasp even the smallest why, but we accept it as being God's way.

You will see that I have spread a lot of ink for you to look over. I hope I have written nothing amiss, and that if the Lord wills you may find a word which the Master has dropped on purpose for you. Write me whenever you feel to do so.

With christian love and fellowship,

F. SELBY FISHER.

HAVANA, Kans., December, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—Very many times I have had a desire to write and try to tell you how much I appreciate the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but my inability and unworthiness have kept me from doing so. Your editorials are always comforting to the children of God. I often think of your great responsibility and am glad you receive such strong approval from the many readers and subscribers. Your labors must bear very heavily upon you, but we never tire reading of the sweet love of Jesus, it never grows old, and our hearts are filled with joy unspeakable, and go out in praise to God, who is love. When I think of how long the SIGNS came to my home before I was interested in reading it, I think, Surely God works in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. I read it but little, and could see nothing in it but sameness. I thank God that through his goodness and mercy I am to-night enabled to write the same. I was not taught it of man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ, our dear Redeemer, who gave himself for us, and will never leave nor forsake us. I believe that I have a sweet hope in Jesus,

which I would not exchange for all the wealth in this sinful world. I feel that I never can tell from the depth of my heart what the dear Lord has done for me. It is all free grace. His love never changes or diminishes. God is love, and whom he loveth he loveth unto the end.

"Amid the trials which I meet,
Amid the thorns that pierce my feet,
One thought remains supremely sweet:
Thou thinkest, Lord, of me."

"The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." There are not many Primitive Baptists in Kansas. We have only a few members, and they are widely scattered, and we seldom have preaching here now. Our pastor, Elder Nathan Reeder, is in poor health, and at his age is not able to meet with us. He and sister Reeder are highly esteemed and much loved by all of us. If I could only be as good as they are, I would be glad. I attended the Turkey Creek Association the first of September, which was held in Coffee County, Kansas, this year. Not many were there, but we had a sweet meeting. All the preaching, and all the entertainment, was at the country home of sisters Bowman (mother and two daughters), and we were together all the time. They cared for us very kindly and lovingly. We met some old friends and some new ones. Elder Frank McCormick is Moderator of this Association. We had three comforting sermons each day. The ministers told us of the way, the truth and the life, and gave all praise to God. I go occasionally to Iola, Kans., to meeting. Their pastor is Elder J. M. Preston, who preaches to them regularly the first and third Sundays in each month. He preaches in love and humility, and does not wish to wound or offend; he feeds the sheep, and is not unmindful of the little lambs. They are a lovely band, and I crave their unfeigned love and christian fellowship. They always treat me very kindly when I go.

Brother Lefferts, I enjoyed reading your Maine-New York trip, also your trip to West Virginia. I am glad you mentioned the place where Elder Beeman passed away. He has been at our home. Elder Pittman conducted his wife's funeral, near Clairmore, Okla., in August, before he met with his fatal auto accident the following fourth of January (1918). We say accident, but was it not God's plan come to pass at his appointed time? I have always felt so impressed that way that I never felt to complain. (Who am I that I should?) Blessed are they who die in the Lord. He passed away praising God, in whom he trusted, with almost his last breath.

Elders Ker and Lefferts, I have letters from both of you written to him, which are highly prized by me. Also from Elder Vail and brother Kugler, and many others. I sadly miss dear sister Bessie Durand's letters. She and I corresponded for eighteen or twenty years. She introduced me (by letter) to our dear afflicted sister Nannie B. Edwards, of LaGrange, Georgia, whose communications and poems have appeared in the SIGNS from time to time. I have many precious letters from her. I hear from her occasionally. She has deep trust in the dear Redeemer. She does not improve; I think she is now unable to leave her bed. Many times the tears trickle down my cheeks as she writes me about her weary days of untold suffering, yet she is resigned, and through it all she is enabled to say, Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. She wrote me about Elder Hassell being in LaGrange last summer, and preaching in their meeting-house. She says, "God be praised, I

heard his voice in prayer at my bedside." I am glad she is able to write, although it makes her very tired. Not long ago she sent me her picture; it is a sweet face. She is thankful for many blessings, tells me about her dear good husband, brother Edwards, how patient and kind he is, and "such a good Baptist." Her faithful sister makes her home with her. She likes the SIGNS, and her faith and hope grow stronger every day. "As the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." May we all praise God, from whom all blessings flow. I have much to be thankful for. I am comfortably situated at the same old home in Havana; my eldest son and his wife live here in the house with me. My five children and their families within walking distance, and all are very kind to me, and I am in the best of health, so I am contented, and not unhappy.

It is near the end of the year, and I hope all who like to read your valuable paper will pay for it promptly. I cannot see how some can be so negligent in paying their subscription. While this is a small matter to each subscriber, to the publishers it is a great loss. May God bless editors and contributors, and constrain them to write on for the comfort of many.

Wishing you all a happy and prosperous new year, with christian love,

MARY E. PITTMAN.

KENOVA, W. Va., Sept. 10, 1922.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—I find, with other good letters in the last issue of the SIGNS, one dated Cairo, Texas, Sept. 15th, 1881, written by Durham Richardson, which somehow has particularly attracted my attention, and I feel a desire to offer a few thoughts about it, if you deem them fit. About fifteen years ago, I well remember, I was in the field, and the question came to me, Do you believe that God knows all things, past, present and future? Why, yes, to be frank and honest, I must admit that he does, and I believe that, if I believe anything at all of the Supreme Being. Next came the question, Do you believe that God has all power? Why certainly he has, and none can hinder him. Then the climax was reached: Since he had all power, and knew before what was coming to pass, is it not just as true that he willed that which comes to pass? Even should we forget that the Bible says plainly in the thirteenth chapter of Romans that "there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God," and even should we be so delicate about using the word "absolute," and should we forget that the Scriptures say that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, is it not just as easy to believe that he ordered all things, as to believe that he had the ability to hinder and willed not to hinder? Then and there, as it seems to me, like a stroke of lightning, I believed in the divine sovereignty of God over all things. At any rate, the most absolute of the absoluters is none to strong in that particular to suit me. I also believe that this question is eternally settled in my mind, and is not for compromise, for indeed it seems to me that the Bible is full of such doctrine, and that I cannot forbear believing it, and so all these years I have been inquiring and looking for some of those who believe that way, and words fail me here to tell how glad I am to meet with some of them. Strange as it may seem, sometimes I have fallen in with some of them when I was not expecting it. I believe

their conversation is the more rich by being rare. I have recently been strengthened in finding some of them looking for me. If I only knew that I was fit to follow around after them. I am glad to say that I have found some twelve or fifteen Old Baptists in this vicinity, and have got a small block-house nearly completed, which I intend to deed them as soon as we can get an organization and trustee appointed to deed it to. So we would like for the brethren traveling this way to stop over with us. (13th and Walnut Streets.) I do not wish any of the brethren to count me a trouble-maker because I have tried to be frank in expressing my inmost feelings about this so-called hard doctrine, for indeed if by any means I should give expression that I did not love this doctrine, which is so beautifully set forth in Bible language, in the article referred to above, written some forty years ago, I would be deceitful. I have heard it said that these old absoluters are just about extinct, but we somehow have a hankering idea (perhaps we should say anchoring) that there will be just such people on this earth when the sun is blown out. Instead of fearing to be one, just afraid we are not one. Since I got such a bountiful mess from this old letter, I do hope that the brethren will write fearlessly along this line. The Bible not only sustains us in the belief in the sovereignty of God, but it also accounts for those who do not believe in it. But while all these things sustain our hopes in this belief, I would not bring any railing accusation against any who do not believe that way, especially those of the Old Baptist camp, for if I have the proper understanding of these things, to meddle with the fellowship of the church, is to meddle with the vitality of our own hope. Therefore I would refrain from criticizing the brethren because they do not believe as I do in any particular, but I am not of a mind to believe other than I do believe just because some one else, or every one else for that matter, believes some other way. Just want to say that I am looking for the man that preaches Jesus Christ on both sides of the river, first, last, all in all. Owing to the condition of the health of my family I am deprived of the gracious privilege of being at any of the associations with you this fall, so far, (second Sunday in September), however I am glad to think that while I am feeling so lonesome that many of you are feasting on the good things in heavenly places in Christ.

Yours in hope,

J. A. PRESTON.

LONDON, Ont., Dec. 18, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—My heart seems touched this evening on reading the last number of our precious paper for 1922. A desire seems to impel me to write a few thoughts, yet, My leanness! My leanness! seems to be the sore cry of a poor needy pilgrim, but as our sweetly gifted sister, and precious comforter, Bessie Durand, who has gone on before, put it, "Without Him we can do nothing." Then dear sister Kate Beebe's precious hymn comes as fitting to my case:

"A crumb of mercy, Lord, I crave,
Unworthy to be fed
With dainties such as angels have,
Or with the children's bread."

I have often in times of gloom and sorrow been made to rejoice on reading dear expressions of love and fellowship from their gifted pens, and sweet Ebenezers of praise would flow to the praise of Him who we hope has translated us from the power of darkness into the kingdom of

his dear Son, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ. Sister Bessie's sentence, "But oh how good to know that in the hearts of those who have been with Jesus there is a sweet charity that covers all those things when we meet," touched me as coming from the Fountain of life. We are told to put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love Him because he first loved us. He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen? This commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God love his brother also. A dear brother through tears said he was glad to read Elder Lefferts' editorial in the December 1st number. I could only say, Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; and I feel so weak and ignorant I do not know what to ask for. They were told in by-gone times they did not receive because they asked amiss, to consume upon their lusts. How those lusts do creep in our frail state. We are told to "comfort one another with these words." Yet it is written, "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh. [he might often crave] while the world standeth." The outcome of that would be peace, which is

"As precious ointment on the head,
That down the beard did flow,
Even Aaron's beard, and to the skirts
Did of his garment go."

The fragrance descended to those who felt to be far away, yet long for the goodness of His house, the place where His honor dwelleth. The trials that afflict the just in number many are, and it seems as we journey on they come unlooked for, yet not unsent. He knoweth the way I take, makes me say, It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good. No other shield or buckler can help. He is a present help in time of trouble. Oh to trust him, to lie passive in his hands, and know no will but his. Yet the night seems long, and we cry, Watchman, what of the night? Then again, a still small voice, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." Then the morning cometh. It is a morning without clouds. All his works praise him, and his saints bless him. Dear sister Mary Parker's laments come before me when her idols were taken on before. But I must not enlarge. This year we have been bereft of a dear mother, and a precious brother. Chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. There is no lasting separation. The bride, the Lamb's wife, is complete in Him. Of each member of that body it can be said, "It is his eternal gain to die." May we be made submissive to the will of the Lord. As our dear brother said to his sorrowing companion, "We must submit to the will of the Lord."

Unworthily, yours in tribulation and hope,

J. GILLIS.

VERNON, Texas, Jan. 7, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—I want to try to express my many thanks and appreciation of your great kindness in sending me the SIGNS for so long a time, also for your brotherly love and forbearance toward me, and wish I could do something for you in return, but I am so unworthy I can do nothing but write and try and thank you. If you are still sending me the paper at Vernon, I have failed to get any copies since I have been here, and if you have stopped it, all is well with me, for I feel I have been a burden too long already, and see no way of paying you,

as I am very poor in this world's goods, but hope I shall be found rich in the faith of our Lord, bearing fruit because of the Vine. Now, dear brethren, any time you see fit to stop my paper, I will only feel I have had even more than I deserve, although it is a great feast to me to read the good tidings of great joy the SIGNS always brings, so do just as you feel is best.

I can never tell you how glad I was to receive the card you sent me with the names of the members here. I went to work at once to find them, and found them all, and many more besides. The church is within fifteen miles of me, and I hope to be able to get there some time this summer. Dear old sister Peden lives here in Vernon. I wrote to her and she came to see me. She is a precious sister, and a great comfort to me.

Thanking you again for your kind remembrance of me, a poor sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all, and feeling to be the least of all, and begging the interest of you all, I am, I hope, your little sister in Christ,

JENNIE LOYD.

MOBERLY, Mo., July 30, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Will you allow one so unworthy as I to step in for a line? I am a stranger to many, and to many I am not, but we all are hoping in the same Lord, and he is our Shepherd, we shall not want, and I love the dear cause of God, and love the dear readers of this worthy paper. I used to have the sweet and pleasant opportunity of mixing and mingling with the dear saints of Baptist faith, many years ago, but shall never have the same again, yet I hold all in loving remembrance. When a child they would lift many burdens with a word of cheer and sweet fellowship. Many have passed from life to eternal joys in heaven, blessed heaven, and but few are left to toil onward a few more days. Some day the death angel will visit the home of this poor, unworthy mortal and bear her away. Can I say when my work is finished, All is well, I am ready to meet my Lord, my all in all? Many sad disappointments are in life, but though cast down we are not destroyed. May the sweet love of God remain with the Baptist people everywhere, and may all strife be cast aside and love and sweet fellowship be with all. May all casting stones be withheld, and love and sweet sunshine be with them. We often walk in the dark valley and cry out to God for mercy, and he lifts our feet out of the miry clay and places them upon the solid rock. O come, thou Fountain of love, from the crystal throne, and fill us with thy spiritual blessings. Though many mistakes we make, Christ is our refuge in time of afflictions and sorrows; to him I flee, and cast all my burdens upon him. His promises are loving and true. Oh how sweet to rest in and lean on his strong everlasting arm. If he goes to prepare a mansion for us he will come again. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Praises be to his great name. Remember me at the throne of grace.

I remain, a firm believer in God.

(MRS.) L. HADEN.

FREEWATER, Ore., Jan. 6, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I thought I would have to send you enough to pay up, and stop the paper on account of the hard times, but I could not get the consent of my mind to give up a paper I had read so long and loved its contents so well. I thought Elder Ker's remarks on the close of last volume were so rich and

full, and then when the first of this volume came Elder Lefferts' introduction on the great principles on which dear old brother Beebe founded it, and how graciously God had raised up others in whose hands it should be maintained, looking back over the long and rough road it had traveled on account of the great hatred of its enemies, and have it now in this twentieth century come to us still advocating the same glorious principles on which it was founded, my soul was made to say, The Lord is good. His counsel shall stand, and his love and mercy shall be toward his beloved Zion. I would love for all who contribute to its columns to know how our drooping spirits have been revived by their good letters. May God bless them, with the editors, to continue in breaking the bread of life to the afflicted in Zion.

Yours in sweet fellowship,

J. T. BARNES.

LAMAR, Colo., Dec. 27, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I wish to write a few thoughts through our good paper, if it meets with the approval of the editors; if not, it will be all right with me. I have been reading the SIGNS for about forty-seven years, but never subscribed for it until March, 1922. I like to read it, so did my first wife, but she has gone home, where there is no more trouble. I married a christian woman, but her name is enrolled with the Missionaries. I told her that the SIGNS was a good paper. Well, said she, why do you not subscribe? I said, I read it, what is the difference? She replied, I do not think you are treating the publishers right, if you like to read the paper you should help support it. I think she was about right, so I sent money for a year's subscription, and am now sending my renewal for another year. I find sin mixed with all I do; like Paul, when I would do good, evil is present with me, so I find a warfare going on all the time, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, which makes me cry out, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death? I find it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, so if ever I see Jesus it will all be of him. I am glad my salvation is all in the Lord Jesus Christ; if not, I am lost, world without end.

I will close by wishing all a Happy New Year.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

W. C. PERDUE.

MOUNT CLEMENT, Mich., Dec. 19, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed check for two dollars for subscription to the SIGNS for another year. I love to read the paper, and oh how I wish I could express to you editors the comfort I receive from its pages. I am not a member of the church, but I love the doctrine it advocates. The SIGNS is about all the preaching I get, as there is no Old School Baptist Church near here. May you one and all keep on writing and telling the good news that feeds and strengthens the hungry soul. I hope you may long be spared to continue writing the good word, and may grace, mercy and truth ever guide and direct you.

Yours unworthily,

JOSEPH W. HASTINGS.

WATCH YOUR DATES.

WE wish to request our subscribers when sending in their subscriptions to see that the date on the little pink slip bearing their address is changed. If not changed, please let us know immediately (for that signifies you have not been given credit for the money sent) and we will look into the matter.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1923.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MICAH V. 4, 5.

"He shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God; and they shall abide; for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth. And this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land: and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him seven shepherds, and eight principal men."

In tracing the path of the Just it will be found brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. This path Jesus trod in declaration of the prophets, who were moved by the Holy Ghost to declare his coming, his sufferings and the glory that should follow. Beginning with Moses, prophecy was quite obscure, but as the ages passed the different prophets became clearer and clearer unto Malachi, who was perhaps the clearest in expression and declaration of all the prophets. Thus the path of the Just was as a shining light that shined more and more unto the perfect day. This day called "perfect" was the gospel dispensation, in which all righteousness has been, and is now being fulfilled to the glory of God and to the comfort of the church of the first-born. It is pleasant to behold the perfect fulfillment of the declarations of holy men of old concerning Jesus. This word by Micah was hundreds of years before the birth of Christ, yet in the New Testament we find its fulfillment in every particular. It might seem that such would put to silence all who are in any way skeptical of the Scriptures being the inspired word of God, but the blind cannot see, nor can the deaf hear. In this fifth chapter of Micah he tells of the birth of Jesus, that it should take place in Bethlehem, though little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of Bethlehem should he come forth unto the Father, who should be Ruler of the people. It no doubt could have been elsewhere that Jesus should be born had it been in the purpose and plan of the Almighty, but not being his purpose, there was no power in heaven, earth or under the earth that could have changed God's decree, predestinated, that Jesus should be born in Bethlehem. Hence, not only was his death decreed, manner and place, but his birth. When the angels carried the message to the shepherds, while they watched their flocks by night, they said, Fear not, for unto you is born this day in the city of David (Bethlehem) a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. The heavenly host immediately joined in the announcement, saying, Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will toward men. The gracious promise of God to Adam had been fulfilled, that salvation should come through the seed of the woman, the Savior, Christ Jesus the Lord, Christ the anointed of God, Jesus the Savior of sinners, the Lord manifest in the flesh. What a glorious character he was, and is, as revealed to the people of God. His goings forth had been from of old, from everlasting. Now he is made manifest, the Ruler of the people. What a vast difference between the Ruler of the people and the imaginary god of the world, who is ruled by the people, and is too poor to help the needy, and whose arm is too short to reach the downcast;

whose wisdom is faulty, and whose doings depend upon the efforts of the creature. The God of Israel is ruler and commander of the people, his power is almighty; his arm is not short that he cannot save; he possesses all things, and is absolutely independent of all beings, powers and principalities. He speaks and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast. It is good to have such a wise and almighty Ruler directing our steps, hedging our way, that the sheep wander not unto death and destruction. Not only Ruler of his people, but Ruler of the whole earth.

"He shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord." All the strength of the Almighty was and is in him. All power in heaven and earth is in his hand. In this infinite strength the Shepherd feeds his flock upon the hidden manna, giving to each lamb and sheep a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. Isaiah said, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance." It is pleasant, as well as comforting, to see the perfect harmony between the prophets, though in different language, concerning the omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence of the almighty God. Again, it is strengthening to know that the church is builded upon that foundation and is earnestly contending for the doctrine of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner-stone. He feeds his flock like a shepherd, in tenderness, love, sympathy, with the food best suited to their needs and welfare. His arm gathers the lambs, no man in the work; he carries them in his bosom, the best and safest place for "the little ones." He gently leads those that are with young; not yet made manifest to the mother, the church.

"And they shall abide." This declares life eternal to all the seed. "Because I live, ye shall live also." Jesus is the vine, and the branches live in him. He said to his disciples that they should go and bring forth much fruit, and that their fruit should abide. The life of the vine is in the root: "Your life is hid with Christ in God." Therefore as the vine abides, the branches abide. The vital unity between the Vine and the branches forbids death to any one of the branches; in other words, to one of the sheep or lambs. They abide now under the shadow of the Almighty and shall endure all eternity. This good Shepherd is great unto the ends of the earth to those who have gotten to their wits' end, finding no rest of mind or soul, feeling to be without God and hope in the world. He is a great Savior to all such as trust in him. No one can thus trust until brought unto the end of the earth, to know vain is the help of man, but "blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust; and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies."

"This man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land." The Assyrian here suggests the enemies of the church of God in all the gospel dispensation. Against which the Lord has raised seven shepherds and eight principal men. The seven shepherds are the good soldiers for Christ, on whom he has put his whole armor, that they stand in the evil day, or day of persecution.

The number seven is perfect, complete, hence the entire ministry of the gospel age is set forth in the expression, "seven shepherds." They have always waged a good warfare, putting thousands to flight who would devour the man-child. While the world stands this ministry of the Spirit, not of the letter, will abide to the glory of God and to the comfort of his people. No one need fear that at some future day the church of Jesus Christ shall again be persecuted as in the days of the apostles, when it was worth a man's life to express his faith in God. It may be that at some future time the Gentile church shall be no more, but then the kingdom shall have been given to the Jews, according to his word, and the same faith, hope, charity, doctrine and fellowship exist that the church enjoys to-day.

The eight principal men are Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter, James and Jude, the writers of the entire New Testament. "Principal men" because of their apostleship, having authority from the Lamb of God to set things in order in the churches, to establish the doctrine of the gospel church so that any departure from it loses their fellowship. Every point of doctrine is found in their epistles; every ordinance of the house is declared by them, and commanded by them to be observed. It is impossible to abide in their fellowship, which was with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, if one departs from their doctrine or order of the church. Every thing, great or small, must be weighed in their scales, and if found wanting must be discarded as of no value to the church, nor of comfort to one of the sheep or lambs.

Summing up, it is establishing to one's faith to behold the fulfillment of the word of the Lord by Micah to the very letter. The birth of Jesus was in Bethlehem; he is the Ruler of the people; great unto the ends of the earth; he feeds his flock; has raised up shepherds in the different ages, and called eight men to write the New Testament. His word, therefore, is the man of our counsel. May the church abide in his counsel, being rooted, grounded, settled, fixed. Other foundation can no man lay.

Written by request. K.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Ashokan, New York, September 13th and 14th, 1922, to the associations and churches with which we correspond, sends christian greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the continued mercies of our covenant-keeping God, our unprofitable lives have been spared until the present, again enabling us to assemble together as an Association, where we have received your messengers, whom we have gladly welcomed. Our meeting has been in harmony and peace, and love and joy have seemed to flow from heart to heart. Your ministering brethren have come to us with messages of love, shunning not to declare the truth as it is in Jesus, for which we wish to be truly thankful to the Giver of all our many blessings. We still, as in the past, desire a continuance of your love and fellowship, and will hope to meet your messengers at our next session, which will be held, the Lord willing, with the First Church of Roxbury, at Vega, N. Y., on the second Wednesday and Thursday in September, 1923.

GEORGE RUSTON, Moderator.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Clerk.
JAMES AVERY, Ass't Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Miss Sarah Drake Stout was born March 23rd, 1836, and died October 26th, 1922, making her stay on earth 86 years, 7 months and 3 days. She was the daughter of Samuel Holmes Stout and Deborah Drake Stout. Her parents were members of the First Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, and were very faithful as their record shows. Brother Stout was the leader of hymns for many years, and his daughters were companions with their parents in attendance at meetings. Miss Sarah leaves one sister, Mrs. Mary Stout Updyke, of Omaha, Neb., to mourn for her as the last of the family, also many nieces and nephews, together with her many friends, to mourn the loss. Miss Sarah was a devoted member of the congregation of the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, and no one would have thought other than she was a member of the church. She lived her faith, and proved the same, as she was guided in a meek and quiet way. She was a descendant of the famous Stout family, which comprised the main body of the constitution of the First Hopewell Church, April 23rd, 1715. We feel our loss is her eternal gain, and she rests from all her labors.

Her funeral was attended by the writer at her late residence, in Hopewell, N. J., and the high esteem in which she was held was manifested by the large attendance of the citizens of the town of all denominations. She was laid to rest in the Hopewell Old School Baptist Cemetery, and we feel when God calls his saints which sleep, from the dead, she will come forth to meet the Lord in the air and ever be with the Lord. May it please God to comfort all who mourn.

CHAS. W. VAUGHN.

Mrs. Susie Yingling, wife of Samuel M. Yingling, died at her home on Jewel street, Friday morning, December 22nd, 1922. Mrs. Yingling had long been a sufferer of lung trouble, having been confined to her bed for about two and one-half years, yet she bore her suffering patiently and was always bright and cheerful. She was 37 years of age and is survived by her husband, one son, Frank, aged 15 years, father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Levin Hastings, and two brothers, Theodore and Chauncey Hastings, all of Delmar.

The funeral services were held from the residence, on Monday, December 25th, at 11 o'clock, Elder H. C. Ker officiating. Interment was made in the M. P. Cemetery.

THE above obituary appeared in the Delmar, Delaware, paper, January 5th, 1923. Again we feel a desire to add a few lines regarding her life as a member of the Little Creek Old School Baptist Church of Delmar, Delaware. She was baptized by the late Elder A. B. Francis, some ten or twelve years ago, and until stricken with illness was ever present at all meetings of the church, except when providentially hindered. She had a fine voice, and was very helpful with the singing. She was well indoctrinated and had no use for other doctrine than gives glory to God. During her long sickness she was cheerful, and sometimes hopeful that she might again be able to attend the meetings, but the Lord had not so ordered it, and she passed away, as above stated, in full faith of salvation in Jesus' blood. We called repeatedly to see her, and she was always glad to hear of the love and peace of the church. We sometimes tried to tell her what we said to the people in meetings, and she was glad always to listen to the old, old story of Jesus and his love. She was a thoughtful and devoted daughter, a faithful and loving wife and mother, a true friend and good neighbor.

Mr. Yingling and the son have our sympathy in their great loss. May the grace of God sustain the father and mother in their declining years.

K.

At her home in Dorchester, N. B., December 27th, 1922, **Mary Althea Hastings,** wife of William C. Hastings, aged 65 years, 8 months and 7 days. She is survived by four sons, three daughters and the husband, also five brothers and one sister, to mourn their loss. The subject of this notice was a woman of exemplary life, and while she never made a public profession of her divine Lord and Savior, we believe that she like Mary of old had sat at the feet of the Master and learned the song of redeeming grace and dying love. May God sanctify this dispensation of his providence to our good, and enable us by faith to say, He doeth all things well. While we deeply mourn the absence of a faithful and loving wife and mother, we sorrow not, even as others who have no hope, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him, we desire to bow in humble submission to the immutable decree of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. We can only sorrow in that we shall hear her loving voice and see her face no more.

HUSBAND AND FAMILY.

Joseph S. Turner, the subject of this notice, and son of the late lamented Joseph B. Turner, was born near Turners Station, Henry County, Kentucky, July 21st, 1844, and departed this life December 13th, 1922, at his home, in Louisville, Kentucky, being a few months past 78 years of age. At the age of seventeen he volunteered in the war between the States, serving a part of the time under Gen. R. E. Lee. He was mustered out of the service in 1865, with an honorable discharge, soon after which he entered into and conducted a mercantile business

successfully for about fifty years. He united with the Cane Run Primitive Baptist Church about thirty years ago, and lived a consistent member, and a strong advocate and an ardent defender of the doctrine of salvation by grace. He was also a reader and strong supporter of the views as set forth in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He was married in 1872 to Mary A. Campbell, and to them were born four sons and three daughters, two sons having preceded him in death. He leaves his widow, two sons, two daughters, four brothers and three sisters, together with a host of relatives and friends, to mourn their loss. While the breaking of earthly ties are sad, we mourn not as those who have no hope.

Funeral services were held at his residence, after which the body was laid to rest in Cavehill Cemetery, Louisville, Kentucky.

As a brother in the flesh, and, I hope, in the Spirit as well, I feel that I can say for him that he was a kind husband, a loving and indulgent father; that he has fought a good fight, he has kept the faith, there is therefore laid up for him a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give him. May the Lord's blessing rest upon the family and guide and direct us all in truth and righteousness, is the prayer of his brother,

G. R. TURNER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

A. M. Bourland, Texas, $6.00; Martha E. Holloway, Md., $3.00; M. C. Reaves, Ill., $1.00; Paul T. Leigh, N. J., $1.00; Dow V. Borst, N. Y., $1.00; J. A. Tandy, Okla., $5.00.

MEETINGS.

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(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

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IN

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

BY J. E. BEEBE & COMPANY

MIDDLETOWN, ORANGE CO., NEW YORK,

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EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 91. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1923. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SALISBURY, Maryland.

DEAR BRETHREN:—This letter from Elder Schenck has proven good to me, and I feel others will profit by the sound doctrine therein set forth. I have not asked his permission to publish the letter, but as a general thing writers of such articles neither insist upon the publishing of their writing nor object when it is done. May the Lord be with us.

F. SELBY FISHER.

WILLIAMSTOWN, Kan., Jan. 5, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER FISHER:—It has been a long time since I received your last very welcome and kind letter. I now feel a disposition to try and drop a few lines, although I feel weak, both physically and spiritually. I have been confined to the house for a few days on account of a severe cold, and while I have not been confined to the bed, I have felt very much indisposed. I consulted our doctor yesterday, however, and he gave me medicine which has relieved me greatly, and through the providence of God I hope to soon be able to go about my several duties. My mind has been led to reflect much upon the goodness and mercy of God toward his people, and of his wisdom and might in leading them about and instructing them and keeping them "as the apple of his eye." Of all the truth set forth in the Scripture this one is not the least prominent, that God is our leader and instructor, our keeper; furthermore, it is good to remember that he finds his people, even as he found Jacob of old, and our condition is just as hopeless as was his unless we be found, sought out. Their desolate, helpless condition, together with the fact that they were found, would surely indicate that they were a lost and ruined people, but the dear Lord found them. I would not have you believe they were hid from God, but the very reverse; their lives were hid with Christ in God, and when the time for deliverance comes he graciously finds his people right where they were lost. Therefore the prophet says, "They shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord, and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken." Called, Sought out; there can be no question but the Lord foreknew those who are sought out, and how well this agrees with the inspired apostle

when he said, "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. We are warranted then in laying stress upon the infallible security of all of God's little ones. There are no exceptions mentioned in the Scriptures, and there are no exceptions now; the Lord knoweth them that are his. It is a matter of much comfort, then when we pause and reflect upon those holy principles which are spoken of in connection with the calling of God's humble poor, their justification, their glorification, in a word, their ultimate salvation. Before one of these little ones can be lost God's foreknowledge must fail, his predestination must fail, the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus must prove ineffectual; indeed, the whole eternal purpose of God must fail before one of these little ones can fall away and be eternally lost. But we are comforted by the blessed assurance, "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew." Those whom he hath found, sought out, those sons of Jacob never can be consumed while it is written, I am God, I change not. I have spoken of these as the "Lord's little ones," the term seems so fitting to those whose hearts God has touched. There are no great ones in this family, but it is a truth peculiar to them that each one will say, I am the least, if one at all. I love to dwell upon these little ones, seeing they are the objects of God's divine love; they are as babes and sucklings; being so very small, they are without strength, they are without wisdom, they cannot walk, except their indulgent parent leads; if they fall they cannot rise except he take them up. The words of the prophet are significant when he said, "He taketh up the isles as a very little thing." "The isles." We know what they are naturally: small bodies of land entirely surrounded by water. This presents a beautiful picture of God's afflicted people. The waters are emblematic of afflictions, tribulations and troubles, these surround God's people on every hand. We are troubled on every hand, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. Cast down; yes, but the Lord taketh them up as a very little thing, and one thing to be borne in mind is the fact that he measureth the waters in the hollow of his hand. Thus we will try to remember that our afflictions are measured out to us by the unerring hand of God. This is the way the Lord leads his people, and indeed they must be led while in this desert land, this waste howling wilderness, which is rendered the more desolate when we are led to view ourselves as we are by nature, barren and unfruitful of anything that is good, wandering about, as it were, having no straight paths for our feet. Thus when we take a retrospective view of our life in this wilderness of sin we are sure we never could have escaped its terrors had not the Lord found us and graciously led us about. "He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." There is no instance on record where his sheep have gone before, but he goes before them, leading them. When the children of Israel came forth out of Egypt the Lord went before them in a pillar of fire at night, and a pillar of cloud by day. This remarkable journey and complete

deliverance no doubt is typical of the travel of God's spiritual Israel of to-day; burdened and provoked by their task-masters as they were, seems to my mind to present the people of God while they were laboring under the law. I presume every one, when he is awakened to his lost condition, has fled to the law for relief, and for awhile seemed to get along very well, but more and more was required of him until it became quite evident that there was none who could comply with the demands of these task-masters; and so with us in our early experience, we verily thought we could live acceptably under the law, but alas, we found we could not meet its demands. The people were led forth from under this bondage, but the enemy pursued them to the Red Sea; these mountains were on either side of them, the sea in front, their enemy behind them. In our experience we found this to be the case, the mountains (our sins) on either side, which we could not surmount, the law (our enemy) pursuing from behind, and the sea (the Red Sea) in front. I am persuaded this Red Sea is typical of blood: the blood of the everlasting covenant of God. It was not in the purpose of God that we of ourselves should overcome our sins, neither was it in his purpose that we should turn again and serve those weak and beggarly elements, but it was through the power of God that the waters were smitten, and by his decree Jesus was smitten. We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. It was a complete deliverance from their enemies: the law. So we find that the blood of Jesus has come between us and our sins, hence the language of the apostle, How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. It is only because of his shed blood that his people enter that everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure. Those embraced in that covenant he has kept, and will keep, as the apple of his eye; he has led his people thence, and has declared in mercy, I will be a father unto them, and they shall be my sons and daughters.

There seems to be an element somewhere claiming the name of Old School Baptists who advocate the theory that eternal salvation is dependent entirely upon God's sovereign grace, but our time salvation is dependent upon ourselves. To my mind this presents a very complicated place of salvation. "Keep me as the apple of the eye; hide me under the shadow of thy wings."—Psalms xvii. 8. These two witnesses, Jacob and David, testify that the keeping power is all of God. In Hannah's prayer and exultation at the birth of Samuel, she voiced the same sentiment: "He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail." A great array of testimony could be produced upon this subject if it were necessary, but I trust it is not necessary just now, as I feel sure you are not misled in that way. I feel that we are quite as dependent upon our dear Lord to keep us in the way as we are that he lead us and bring us in the way. The bride said, "He brought me into the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." This is a wonderful banner, and I would that it were more in evidence.

I hope to hear again from you at your convenience, and beg to remain, yours in hope,

L. L. SCHENCK.

COLUMBUS, Georgia.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

How I would love to write to each and every one who write for our dear family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and tell them how much I love them for the truth's sake, but my pen would fail to express it as I would wish, for I cannot tell on paper just how I feel towards those I love in Christ Jesus. I know it is a gift from God to be able to write anything to the edification and comfort of God's dear children. I feel so unworthy, so deficient in it all, and often feel ashamed of myself, and think it may be wrong and a sin for one so ignorant and blind as I feel myself to be to attempt to write to the people of the most high God, who cannot look upon sin. The question will arise, Is it for Jesus' sake, and for your brethren's sake that you write, or is it all of the flesh? Such questions make me fear and tremble, for if I know my heart, I do not want to deceive God's dear children.

To-night I have been reading in our favorite paper, the SIGNS, and why is it our favorite paper? Because in reading it we are assured we are not alone in this world, but that there are others who have been brought by a way they have not known, and led in paths they have not trod. Because the editors and correspondents are manifested as lovers of God, because God first loved them. Able ministers of the new testament, who rightly divide the word of truth, are given by him. We have often been refreshed in our souls, and made to bless God that there are such ministers and people in the world. We read the editorials, and see how clearly and fully the glory of God is set forth; not only that he is infinite in love, but also in wisdom and power. The dear Savior of sinners is set forth, not as a beggar, not as inviting, but as mighty to save; as dying the just for the unjust; as finishing the work his Father gave him to do, declaring, "Because I live, ye shall live also." What wonderful love to poor finite creatures as you and me, that the blessed Lord should leave the shining courts of glory and come to die the ignominious death of the cross to redeem his bride. What wondrous love is this! The Christ-man on earth; he came to his kingdom in the world, but not of the world, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, chosen in him before the foundation of the world. I know we are not worthy, but Jesus is our worthiness; he is our righteousness. When he opened the prison doors to us poor sinners, did we not praise him, and say, He has done great things for us, whereof we are glad? Then our hearts leaped for joy at the sight of him who was made sin for us. Then we did say,

"Was ever love like this?
Was ever grace so free?
This be my constant joy and bliss,
That Jesus died for me."

Jesus having loved his own that were in the world, loves them to the end. What a consolation to know we have a Friend who loveth at all times; although we him oft forget, his loving-kindness changes not. Surely we feel when we almost lose sight of him, and he shines in our hearts, and we feel its hardness depart, that he loves us with an everlasting love, and with loving-kindness draws us. "Draw me, we will run after thee."

"He gently leads my soul along;
His loving-kindness, oh how strong."

What a blessed thought that we have a Friend that changes not. He alone can find the poor downcast souls, and speak

peace to them. It is seldom I get upon the mountain top, much of the time I am in the valley, full of doubts and fears, wondering and questioning if it can be that I am one of God's chosen vessels of grace and mercy. Many sad thoughts have I had, and many tears I have shed over my sinful heart, and feel if I am a chosen one, I am the least of all. Yet as sinful and depraved as I feel myself to be, I would say with Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Now with the poet I would say,

> "'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
> And grace will lead me home."

If we are saved it is by the grace of God, not by works; no, not by works. All of God's dear children when first touched by the Lord, when made by the power of the Lord to see their exceeding sinfulness, try their creature good works to the full extent; try to keep the law, but fail utterly, for there is no peace or rest to the sin-burdened soul in any good works he can do; though he try with all his might he will fail; though he have courage enough to try and try again, he will find no relief, no rest for the poor troubled soul. Christ is the good shepherd, and says, My sheep hear my voice. He is leading his own, and makes his truth and mercy known to them. Sometimes I am filled with the hope that I am a chosen vessel of God's grace and mercy; sometimes fears arise, and comfort mingles with my sighs.

> "'Tis ever so, thy faithful love
> Doth all thy children's graces prove;
> 'Tis thus our pride and self must fall,
> That Jesus may be all in all."

What a blessed privilege to listen to the messengers of our Lord, telling the sweet old, old story of Jesus and his love. What joy to know that Christ has fulfilled the law, and completely atoned for all the sins of his people. These dear children stand blameless, without spot or wrinkle before God in love, through Jesus Christ our Lord. His children were here in the flesh, he came to redeem them from sin and death, and deliver them from the power of darkness into marvelous light. Jesus saith, I am the way, the truth, and the life, and at sometime in their experience the followers of the meek and lowly Savior have felt the truth of this saying. He is the way, the truth and the life. What a wonderful consolation to the tempest-tossed, burdened souls, who are searching for the blessed truths of the gospel. It would be glorious if at all times we could embrace the Scripture, "Let not your heart be troubled," but I am most of the time troubled about many things, and am inclined to trust in an arm of flesh. But I have, I think, at times felt to leave all in the hands of my heavenly Father, saying, "Thy will be done," knowing that he is love, and that his banner over us is love. He rules all things for good, and, dear kindred, we feel when thus enabled to view these blessed things it is perfect happiness, a taste from the Fountain Head.

> "My willing soul would stay
> In such a frame as this,
> And sit and sing herself away
> To everlasting bliss."

A little band of pilgrims, sojourners here, seeking a city not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. How thankful our hearts are we can communicate one with another of our travels, sometimes

full of joy, sometimes dark, and we trust in a God who can lead us through all dark places, and who teaches us that his tender care is always around and about his people wherever they are led; and he teaches them they shall have no other God before him, for he is all in all. None can harm them. His rod and staff comfort them that put their trust in him. Nothing shall be able to separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. This chosen generation is kept by his power unto salvation, for he creates in them a willing mind to serve him in a way that becometh his people.

Now, dear kindred, I will close, lest I weary you. I would say to you, Write on in our family paper, for the messages you send are of much joy and comfort to the scattered ones. I have great comfort in reading the dear ones' writings. If I could write as they do, what comfort it would be for me; they tell my experience better than I can. My heart is filled to overflowing, so that mine eyes run over with tears, and my heart almost bursts with thanksgiving to our God for his mercy to us undeserving sinners. I have been a reader of the SIGNS more than forty years. I lingered round the Shepherd's tent until my days were almost spent, feeling unworthy to ask a home with those who sing, Amazing grace. I have had more enjoyment since I united with these dear people than all the world can give. It is spiritual happiness we enjoy after we have been brought from darkness to light. Pray for me, that God will richly bestow upon me his free grace, and may the Lord bless you all and save you for Jesus' sake, is my prayer.

F. J. NORRIS.

POCA, W. Va., Jan. 25, 1923.

DEAR SISTERS:—It being my grandson's request that I send his money to pay on his subscription to the SIGNS, I also feel to pen a few of my feeble thoughts for your consideration. If approved, please publish; if not approved, cast aside. If I am not deceived, which I hope I am not, I love those who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and prove their love for him by honoring him. One cannot honor him, and take any part of the honor to himself in his salvation, for salvation is of the Lord, from start to finish. Now my mind is running out after the brethren: the fathers and mothers in Israel, with whom I have been blessed of the Lord to meet in the past thirty years. Many of them have been called home to that bright clime to be with Jesus in the paradise of God forever and ever, where there will be no more pain or sorrow. Job iii. 17, 18, says, "There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest. There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor." Many sore trials await us here, and many bitter persecutions from those who know not the truth as it is in Jesus. The apostle Peter gave us to understand that there is a purpose in these bitter trials, "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." God's children praise Jesus for their deliverance from sin and death, for he was delivered for their offenses and was raised again for their justification, and being made free from sin they become servants of God. They have their fruit unto holiness, and the end is everlasting life. (Rom. vi. 22.) Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not

under the law, but under grace, for the reign of grace to the overthrow of sin frees the child of God from the law of sin and death, and if the Son makes you free ye shall be free indeed. We Old School Baptists are the only people who preach a free salvation; all others preach a meritorious salvation: that the dead sinner might do something in order to merit salvation, that he must acquaint himself with God and be at peace. (Job xxii. 21.) This is the natural notion of all from a natural standpoint. All the institutions of men claiming to be religious claim to have the power to christianize and evangelize the world if they could just have a little time and plenty of money. Oh what a difference in the belief of the church to that of the world. Who maketh thee to differ from another? Grace, unmerited favor, has made the church to differ from the world. This people are a people called out of the world, called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but by grace given them in Christ Jesus (not for them), who is their Surety, Prophet, Priest and King, who will administer this grace to every covenant child in time of need, for his grace is sufficient for every emergency. O gracious and merciful Father, may it be thy will that we be humble servants in our Master's vineyard, willing to preach Jesus the Friend, Lover and Savior of lost and ruined sinners, for when Jesus is preached all is preached, for he is the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the bright and morning Star. We sometimes say "free grace," while we could leave the "free" off and it would mean the same. We sometimes say "absolute" in connection with predestination. We could leave off the "absolute" and it would mean the same, for predestination is absolute, or it is no predestination at all. I am one of the many Baptists who love the doctrine of predestination and election, for upon these two principles of doctrine our eternal destiny hangs. I heard a man once, who was called an Old School Baptist preacher, say that he thought the doctrine of predestination was preached too much, that its tendency was to drive away from the church, instead of drawing membership to the church. Paul did not think that way about it, for he preached it.

Now in my closing remarks I feel to say there is no people upon the earth just like the old order of Baptists. I have met many scorners from the professed religious world who looked upon me as the offscouring of the earth, but so far I have felt to take courage and feel the words of Jesus are truth.

Dear brethren, I am close to my seventy-fourth birthday (April 15th), and feel my stay upon earth to be short, and will say, Strive to live in peace with each other.

From an old sinner, saved by grace if saved at all,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

BREWERS, Ky., Jan. 26, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As it is time to renew subscriptions for a few of the readers of the dear old family paper in this part of God's footstool, you will please find check to cover inclosed subscription list. Also copy of some letters written by a dear sister in the flesh, which are so full of love for the church where she has been such a faithful attendant since 1879 that I feel others would be glad to read them. If you think worthy a place in the paper insert them and oblige a poor sinner,

J. C. CHESTER.

BENTON, Ky., Jan. 10, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER JIMMIE:—I have written a letter to the church; I will send it to you, and if it is all right you may read it the next time you all meet in conference. Dear brother, I hope the dear Lord will hold you up and enable you to preach Jesus to the comfort of his people. Tell brother Jenkins that I still remember his faithfulness, and hope the Lord will bless and comfort him in his last days. Some days I can be up some, and then I have to be in bed three or four days or a week. The days and nights are long to me. It is nearly six months since I have been able to do any work, but if the Lord will make me reconciled and submissive to his will all will be well. I have but little hope of ever being any better. An interest in your prayers I crave, that we may meet beyond the grave. I would be glad of a visit or a word of comfort from any of you; love to all.

From your sister,

ALICE.

To the church at Soldier Creek, Marshall County, Kentucky.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—The Lord has seen fit to lay the hand of affliction on me, and I have not had the pleasure of meeting with you in conference for a long time. The thought came to me one night when I could not sleep, to write to you, and I will try to write some, if the Lord will give me strength, for I am very weak and nervous. Dear people, I hope you are still trusting in God for life and salvation. He says, I will leave in the midst of thee a poor and afflicted people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. I know I am poor and afflicted, and his mercy and grace is all I have to trust in. Oh I am so glad that our dear Savior is not like we poor sinful creatures, for if it were possible for him to be I fear he would become wearied with me, continually begging and trying to pray to him, both day and night, for his love and mercy. If it can be his holy will, may he keep us all so close to him, and fill our hearts so full of love for him and his cause that we will never want to follow after the vain and perishable things of the world. Oh may the Lord continue to bless you to meet and worship him, and remember when you meet that I think of you, and try to beg the Lord to be with you in your songs, in your prayers and in your preaching. May all you do and say be done to honor and glorify his holy name. When it is well with you pray for me, for I feel like I need the prayers of all the saints.

Written in much weakness.

Yours in hope,

ALICE L. MATHIS.

LIMONA, Fla. July 24, 1921.

ELDER J. W. MCCLANAHAN—DEAR BROTHER:—Your letter of recent date came a few days ago, just at the time I was seriously thinking about you and your association, as I was expecting to be with you in September, but I have a great deal of traveling to do before I reach your place; however I am a planner: before I start on a trip like I have before me now I count the days that I may have at each place I expect to stop. Two years ago I overburdened myself in preaching. It was so laid out that I had to move nearly every day. While I was able to stand the worry, it did not strike my mind so pleasant when almost every morning I knew I had to be on the move to reach every appointment. To give you an idea, I got into Roanoke, Va., on May 2nd, 1919, preached there at the association, then went on down

through that State into North Carolina, preaching almost every day. I went almost to the coast one way, and back another way, and when I got back to Roanoke early in August I found in the ninety-eight days on that trip that I had preached ninety-four times, which would have averaged, perhaps, one hour or more for each discourse. I was not physically exhausted at all, and that in the hottest part of the year. I expect to leave my home here on next Saturday, July 30th, and a brother will take me in his car to Lakeland, Fla., that will be twenty miles on my road. From there I will go as direct to Pensacola, Fla., as I can. From there I will stop at two churches in south Alabama, fifty and seventy-five miles from Pensacola. These churches are about four hundred and fifty miles from here. Brethren there have been writing to me for some years to visit them. They are readers of the SIGNS, as your people, and their opinion of me from my letters may be like Paul said on one occasion: "For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible."—2 Cor. x. 10. Now this may be repeated, so when they see me it will be a little old man, but a great big sinner, who is a wanderer through the Book in preaching, just like his life has been on God's earth. If I make the right railroad connection I expect to be in Oklahoma on August 10th. I have an appointment in Oklahoma for the second Sunday in August. My youngest daughter, who is a stenographer, and at present serving her county as Assistant County Attorney, is trying to get her vacation at the time I shall be there and go with me to Pennsylvania to visit her brothers, but I am not certain yet about her leave of absence. I have two sons to visit, one in Homestead (which is a part of Pittsburg) the other one hundred and twenty miles northeast of that city. I want to leave Pittsburg in time to get to your association, perhaps Thursday, or may be Wednesday I will take the B. & O. R. R. down the east side of the Ohio River to Point Pleasant, there change for the town where I am to get off; I do not know which place until I hear from you. I may not see the SIGNS that will have your notice in, so you had better write me about August 15th. At present I do not know whether I get off at St. Albans or not.

Yours, in hope of immortality,

J. F. BEEMAN.

[THE above was sent by Elder J. W. McClanahan, thinking it would be of interest to the brethren, as it was his last letter to him.—ED.]

MATTITUCK, New York.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending my subscription for the SIGNS another year, so will try to write a few lines and tell you how much I enjoy reading it, and what a comfort it was to me all the years I was living on the Pacific coast, where I had no other preaching, but truly hope our Lord was teaching and leading me through all those years. I feel I have had not one trial too many; all have been needful; there has been much to learn. I cannot say that I have grown worse instead of better, because if our God has bought me with the price of his dear Son's suffering and life, I believe he will keep me to the end, and would he allow me to grow worse? I cannot think so, but I know this: I feel to be far worse now. I see my sins, mistakes, follies, shortcomings; yes, all the sins of the flesh, the old man with his deeds, more clearly than ever before. Is it because He has been leading me about and in-

structing me? I trust so. The more I see of my shortcomings the clearer seems my understanding of his wonderful mercy and love to poor sinners. "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." We must learn to hate our lives in the flesh; like Paul, we cannot do the things that we would, but the things that we would not we seem to be always doing. As Paul says, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." Thus the warfare between the old and the new man. Sometimes it seems that the "old man" would almost vanquish the "new man," but underneath are the everlasting arms, and our Father will let us fall just far enough to teach us the weakness of the flesh and the strength of his almighty arm to save.

NELLIE H. ARNOLD.

BERLIN, Md., Oct. 25, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have for a long time felt a desire to write to you all through the dear old SIGNS, but never have felt that I could write anything that would be of comfort to any of God's people, for I feel I am so weak in spirit, and unlearned, both in spiritual and material things, but I want you who write for the dear old paper to know how much I enjoy your good letters. I hope it is God's will that they will continue through all the days of life, for there are many hungry souls feasting. I look forward to the time for my paper to come just the same as I do for preaching days, and I seldom let it lie very many hours before I have read it from cover to cover. I am away from home to-night, doing some work, and I have some of last year's copies with me and have read several letters in them. I feel that if I could write like many who write for the SIGNS I would want to write all the time, but how can one so black with sin as I feel to be say anything that can be of comfort to one of God's people? The world tells us we can have religion if we only ask for it. Brethren, is this true? I think not, for over twenty years of my life I wanted to be a christian, but have never seen myself one yet. I see myself a lost and ruined sinner, and there is nothing in me of myself that can release me from the load of sin that is upon me. If it is left to mortal man, what hope is there for me? There is nothing but the bottomless pit of darkness that I once saw in a dream. That was many years ago, but is still fresh in my mind. I ofttimes feel I would like to write to some of you personally in regard to your experiences, but have refrained from doing so in days past because I was not one with you, now because I cannot see how I can write to such good people. I sometimes feel I am one of the wolves in sheep's clothing spoken of in the Scriptures, and was kept from uniting with the church for a long time on that account, but for some cause, I know not what, the day I went before the church everything was taken away and I did not realize just what I was doing until after I was received, then the thought came to me that I had deceived the church, but oh I hope and pray it is God's will that I have not deceived them. Dear brethren, if you knew how dear you are to me, and how unworthy I feel to be among you, I believe you would have a heart to pray for me. If any feel like writing to me I will be very glad to hear from them.

May God bless the household of faith, is my prayer.

J. W. S. TIMMONS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1923.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MATTHEW XXIV. 14; 1 CORINTHIANS X. 11; HEBREWS IX. 26.

"AND then shall the end come."
"Upon whom the ends of the world are come."
"But now once in the end of the world hath he appeared."

A reader and friend of the SIGNS living in the south has asked us to write a comparison of the above three texts, found in three different portions of the Scriptures of the New Testament; particularly is it desired that we tell what is meant by "the end of the world." This is very interesting and very far reaching. Much has been written, and many sermons have been preached along this line, but the subject is too vast ever to be exhausted. In the first citation, Jesus is answering the question of his disciples, who have asked him what shall be the sign of his coming, and of the end of the world. They had asked him this question because he had declared that all the buildings of the temple in Jerusalem should be destroyed, and that not even one stone of those buildings should be left standing upon another. It was not surprising that upon his telling them of such a calamity to come they should want to know when and how it was to come. We now know that those temple-buildings in Jerusalem have long since been destroyed, and we further know that they were destroyed when Jerusalem was conquered and devastated by the Romans in 70 A. D. It was then that the Jews as a nation ceased to be, their world then coming to an end. By the coming of the end, therefore, was plainly meant the ending of that legal or Jewish age or dispensation. Wars, international conflicts, famines, pestilences, persecutions and false christs prevailed in the latter days of that Jewish age in which Jesus and his disciples were then living. Those tribulations, and more like them, were to come to pass, and did come to pass, before that legal world perished under the heel of the Gentile invader and conqueror. The gospel of the kingdom was to be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations before that Jewish world should end. This preaching was done by the apostles, those to whom Jesus gave commandment after his resurrection to preach it; it did not fail of accomplishment, and was not left over for the christian church to carry on after the apostles' death. The work of the apostles was done by the apostles, and we are not at this time doing their work, nor finishing what they left undone, for they left nothing undone of all that Jesus gave them to do; and the preaching of the gospel to every creature among all nations was one of the things he gave them to do. They did it. "Which was preached to every creature which is under heaven."—Colossians i. 23.

According to the second Scripture about which we are asked, and which occurs in the tenth chapter of first Corinthians, and in the eleventh verse, it is declared that all the things which befell the children of Israel in their travel from Egypt through the wilderness, and into the land of promise, happened unto them for the admonition of the gospel church; that is, for ensamples unto those "upon

whom the ends of the world are come." The dispensation from Moses to Christ was full of types and figures of things in the gospel heavens. Those types were not the substances themselves, but merely the likenesses or images of the reality. The law given to Moses for the Israelites abounded in numerous images of Christ, who was to come, and of the spiritual kingdom to be ushered in by his coming. Thus, the ends, or antitypes, of all those legal types and shadows are to be found in the appearing of Christ at the end of the law and in the church of the new covenant. As it is the purpose or end of an apple-tree to bear apples, and of a fig-tree to bear figs, so was it the end or purpose of every Old Testament foreshadowing and prophecy to find its fruitfulness in Christ and his kingdom. Therefore, the ends of that legal world, the accomplishment of its purposes and the fulfillment of its promises, are come upon us of this gospel or spiritual dispensation. All the trials and temptations which befell Israel of old were for the learning and admonition of the Israel of to-day, the spiritual household of faith. Not a single time was Israel of old ever tempted but that there was made a way to escape, and every time that way to escape was some image or figure of Christ. At one time, it was the rock smitten that their thirst might be quenched; at another, it was manna from heaven that they might be fed; at still another, it was the brazen serpent lifted up for the healing of those bitten by the fiery, flying serpents. But whether it was the smitten rock, or the falling manna, or the exalted serpent of brass, their way of relief was always some prefigurement of Christ. Likewise, it is true that now in this gospel day no trial befalls the elect of God but what befell the fathers of old. What was common to them is common to God's people now; but also now as then, with every trial sent upon God's people there is always provided a way to escape, and that way is always Christ in some one of his innumerable manifestations, not coming in types and images as in the world of long ago, but coming to and with his people in his own living Spirit, in very essence and in very reality.

This brings us to consider the last text named at the beginning, which is Hebrews ix. 26. This tells that "now once in the end of the world" Christ has appeared to put away sin by the offering of himself. The word "now" means at that very time, or at the time then present. The "end of the world" then must mean the "now," or the time then present. The epistle to the Hebrews was written some time before, though not very long before, the year 70, the time at which the Jewish age ended. The writer of this epistle, and those to whom he was writing, were living in the end of that world. That, too, was the period when Jesus was born. He grew up in the end of that world, entered upon his public ministry, did all the work given him by his heavenly Father to do, offered himself without spot to God for the redemption of his people, arose from the dead, ascended to the right hand of God, and therefore gave gifts to men for the use and service of his church in the age just then dawning, this gospel age in which we now live. It is plainly understood, therefore, that the "once" appearing of Christ was in the "now," or the time then present, when this Scripture was written; and that both the "once" and the "now" were the "end of the world." It could not have meant the end of the material or created world, because that has not yet ended after two thousand

years have elapsed, and it would not be sensible to stretch the "now" two thousand years. We are left no alternative, then, but to conclude that the "end of the world" in Hebrews ix. 26, must mean the end of the age or dispensation in which Christ appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. In their experience the children of God come to the end of the world when they are brought to the end of the law, stripped of all self-righteousness and creature works, beggars poor at mercy's door, realizing their lost and ruined sinful condition. Here, experimentally, is where Christ appears to them the way of salvation, hope of eternal life through him springs up in their souls, faith begets saving belief in the Son of God, and love from God toward him and his people overflows the gladdened heart. As the destruction of the old world was the birth-pangs of the new, and as the futile ashes of the legal age gave place to the rising temple of the new age, so in the poor sinner's soul is born a lively hope in Christ as his dead legal expectations descend into oblivion. The ten lepers whom Jesus cleansed had come to the end of their world, were beyond all earthly companionship, yet in Christ they found new life, new health they never had expected. The man born blind could not help himself, nor could others help him. He had come to the end of the world. There, he experienced the appearing of Jesus, by which former things passed away and all things to him became new. So, too, was it with the man who dwelt among the tombs, with the woman at the well in Samaria, and with numbers of other poor souls who have seen the end of all human wisdom and creature merit, but who have by the grace of God obtained in and through Christ Jesus an abundant entrance into the sabbath-day rest of Christ's gospel, and into the new world of gospel truth and peace and blessedness. This gospel world also shall have its end when Christ shall appear to gather his redeemed people to himself. All now living by the faith of the Son of God shall find some day, at the appointed time of the Father, this world coming to its end. As the dissolution of the old dispensation was a sign of the new age's approach, so the unceasing and increasing corruption of our present age betokens the world's decay, and presages its ultimate destruction. Individually with each one of us, as we experience the gradual weakening of our physical and mental vitality, we are reminded that life is swiftly passing. The crumbling of our decadent mortality indicates the coming of our world's end, when, as we hope, mortality shall be swallowed up of life.

L.

TO OUR CANADIAN SUBSCRIBERS.

As some of our subscribers in Canada send us Canadian money, we wish to call their attention to the fact that the exchange on it is now very heavy, and we cannot afford to pay it, but can only give them credit for the amount they send, less the exchange. The SIGNS is the only paper we know of that does not charge extra postage for Canadian subscribers, so if convenient please send money orders or express orders.

WATCH YOUR DATES.

We wish to request our subscribers when sending in their subscriptions to see that the date on the little pink slip bearing their address is changed. If not changed, please let us know immediately (for that signifies you have not been given credit for the money sent) and we will look into the matter.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at the home of the bride's parents, brother Angus Gillis, Muirkirk, Ont., January 3rd, 1923, Warren James Campbell, of Harwich township, and Miss Jessie Eva Gillis, of Muirkirk, Ontario.

By the same, in the town of Ridgetown, at the home of the bride's grandmother, sister Emma Campbell, January 24th, 1923, Noah Haines and Miss Neta Irean Sperrel, both of Ridgetown, Ontario.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder George G. Davis, of St. Joe, Arkansas, was born April 1st, 1864, and died January 13th, 1923. He was the son of John and Mary Davis. January 2nd, 1883, he was married to Martha Jane Shipman, and to that union were born (I think) fourteen children, eleven girls and three boys. He joined the church the third Sunday in July, 1883, and was baptized by the writer the third Sunday in August of the same year. He was ordained to the full work of the ministry May 18th, 1895, by Elder Joseph Goad and Deacon W. H. James, of Little Hope Church, and Elder Jeff Mathis and Deacon J. D. Stanley, and myself, of Enon Church. He was the ablest minister I ever heard, and was called on for funerals by all denominations in the community. Several years ago he and I agreed that which ever one was left would preach the other's funeral. It was said by those present at his funeral that he would be missed more than any man in all north Arkansas. His visits to the sick were very comforting, and he could give good advice under all circumstances. He was not an educated man, having attended school only three months during his life, but he was a good historian and had a fine memory. He was pastor of Pilot Mountain Church ever since his ordination, also was pastor of Bethel Church, in Carroll County, and of Enon Church, in Marion County, at the time of his death. Several of his daughters are members of the church. I baptized his wife at the same time I baptized him. He was pastor of Salem Church, in Baxter County, for a number of years in his early ministry. I could not tell of all his merits were I to write volumes; God alone can fill his place among the Baptists. May God be a father to the fatherless and a husband to the widow, and comfort all who mourn, is the prayer of the unworthy writer,

W. J. CASY.

Andrew Jackson Johnson was born in Madison County, Arkansas, November 22nd, 1840, where he grew to manhood. He was married to Susan Brinson April 1st, 1858. He came to Texas in 1878, first locating in Hood County, where he resided only about one year, then removed to Johnson County, where he lived until 1890, when he moved to Knox County, where he lived until he died, December 25th, 1922. Uncle Jackie Johnson, as he was called, united with Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church, in Johnson County, in 1886, and was baptized by Elder William Hefner. His companion preceded him to the eternal home, December 18th, 1914, being seventy-six years old. To them ten children were born. Eight are still living, and all were at the bedside when the end came. Following are the names: J. D. L. Johnson, A. M. Johnson, A. J. V. Johnson, J. K. Johnson, all of Munday, Texas; J. L. Johnson, Flora Vista, New Mexico, Mrs. Etta Goin, Vernon, Texas, Mrs. A. C. Campbell, Mrs. Mary Thompson, Munday, Texas. He is also survived by thirty-five grandchildren and forty-eight great-grandchildren. He opposed making so many tests of fellowship among the churches as some believed in, and stood by me in all my efforts for peace in Texas for all these years. He built and donated a good meetinghouse to Little Flock Church, also gave the land for the house and cemetery. His firmness and rugged plainness, with his unquestionable honesty, made him a man of strong influence in his community. He accumulated a fair amount of this world's goods, which did not make him vain or proud, but his chief delight was to receive the Primitive Baptists at his home and give them a broad and hearty welcome. His great hospitality was remarked wherever his name was mentioned. Two of his sons are members of the same church.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder O. Strickland, in the Little Flock meetinghouse, in the presence of a large congregation.

J. H. FISHER.

Benjamin F. Ellis was born July 5th, 1834, near Rock, Pope County, Illinois, and died at the home of his son, Mack, in Rock, January 17th, 1923, aged 88 years, 6 months and 12 days. He was united in marriage March 21st, 1860, to Mary Moore, who preceded him in death November 24th, 1887, making their stay together over thirty-seven years. To this union were born seven children, four boys and three girls. Brother Ellis professed a hope in Christ, and, with his companion, united with the Primitive Baptist Church in the eighties. His home was ever open to his many friends, especially those of the household of faith. He leaves to mourn, besides his children, two brothers, one sister, one half-brother and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren, together with other relatives and friends.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at Mt. Zion church-house. Text used, Job xiv. 14: "If a man die, shall he live again?" After which his body was laid to rest in the Mt. Zion Cemetery, there to remain until the resurrection day.

N. A. RODGERS.

Mrs. Sarah Sanders was born March 26th, 1839, in Rienzie, Mississippi, and died April 3, 1922. She was married to J. W. Sanders in 1863, who died December 19th, 1887. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Gravel Hill, Tennessee, in 1886. She moved from Tennessee to Upshur County, Texas, in 1888. Her membership was at Parren, Texas. She loved the company of the saints, esteeming herself to be a poor unworthy one, whose only hope was in the Savior. The earthly house dissolved and her spirit we believe has been received by the Lord Jesus in glory. Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth, and their works do follow them. She left three sons and three daughters, who mourn the loss of a true mother. Her body was laid away in the cemetery of Shadow Grove, Upshur County, to await the resurrection at the last day.

Sent by her daughter,

(MRS.) M. E. HARGROVE.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

J. M. Hixon, Ala., $3.00; Duncan R. Black, Canada, $2.00; Elder J. C. Chester, Ky., $3.00; L. B. Ford, Mass., $3.00; Mrs. Duncan McCallum, Ontario, $2.00; Sarah E. Rice, Mo., $2.00; Col. J. H. Knifton, Ont., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 91. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1923. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BAPTISM.

I HAVE been urged to write for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES upon the above subject.

Some authorities have been disposed to define in a very liberal manner the literal meaning of the word, though it is not my purpose at this time to concern myself especially with the literal definition, or man's teaching, but rather to discover, if possible, in some measure, the real significance of its spiritual import. The Scriptures abound with proof that immersion is the correct mode of baptism, but if there were none other than the record of the baptism of Jesus, that alone should satisfy every true follower of our Lord. "And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straitway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him: and there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."—Mark i. 9–11. There seems no mistaking the meaning of this language, yet how few there are to-day who are followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, comparatively speaking. To be sure, it is a "little flock." Only a few days ago I read in a leading New York paper, of one so-called divine, giving, as it were, an accounting of his stewardship, in term of years second only to one in the great city, in which he stated that during his ministry he had baptized over five thousand babies. While it was not stated "how," we are certain only one guess need be made. This only shows how ignorant is the wisdom of this world as touching the true teachings of Christ. There is no mention made in the New Testament concerning the baptism of infants, but there is constant mention of faith as a prerequisite or condition of baptism, and John when he was baptizing "in Jordan," seeing many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming unto him, said, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones [Gentiles] to raise up children unto Abraham." The point I wish to

emphasize here is the bringing forth "fruits meet for repentance." Having established the mode of baptism, let us inquire as to whom it may be applied. Is it the adult, the infant, the Jew, the Gentile, or who? The standard by which they shall be measured and the scales in which they must be weighed is, "By their fruits ye shall know them." There is mention made of being buried with him (Christ) in baptism, and this suggests to our mind what I believe to be the true meaning of the word. Naturally, none are buried until it is certain they are dead; then the law requires that they shall be buried. Baptism, therefore, denotes death, that its fit subject has been brought under the law and killed. The leper has become altogether leprous, not a sound spot anywhere, but wholly and entirely unclean, unfit for the companionship of any living creature, isolated beyond any eye to pity or arm to save, having no hope and without God in the world, knowing the reality of all flesh being grass. John, speaking of the one of whom he was a forerunner, declared, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." He shall try every man's work, whether it be good or whether it be bad, and when weighed in his balance, all are found to be wanting. There is none good, no, not one, but all have come short of the glory of God. All creature work must be burned up, for no flesh shall glory in his presence, and every one who is to enter through the door of baptism into the house of ordinances which he has set up must die to all confidence in the flesh, or trust in himself, and be made alive to the righteousness of Christ, pleading only the merit of the Lamb of God, which alone could take away the sin of the world. When the Lord's people have been so taught of him they delight to walk in his commands, they behold Zion a city of quiet habitation, and that out of her, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Then, it seems necessary that one should be baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire before he is eligible for the baptism in water, which does not put away the filth of the flesh, but to the one who has received that baptism which is from above, it is the answer of a good conscience toward God. Personally, I am satisfied that there is an innumerable company of the Lord's people who, for some reason, do not follow their Lord and Master's example. There are those in my mind at this writing who I am persuaded know the truth as it is in Jesus; they love to sit under the sound of the gospel when it is preached in demonstration of the Spirit and with power from above; they feed upon the great and precious promises made to the poor and needy. There is no question in their minds that the doctrine of the Old School Baptists is the doctrine of God our Savior, that it is the only doctrine that will stand the test, the only doctrine that gives God all the power, honor and glory; they will contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints when it is assailed; they love the Lord's true witnesses and will give of their earthly goods to minister to the natural needs and comforts of God's afflicted poor, and yet, whether content or not, they remain what some have termed "Dry Land Baptists." I have often asked the question, Why? Many others have confessed to the same thing. I have about concluded that it is because they have not been wholly killed to all creature merit. They are looking for

worthiness in themselves, when the only worthiness that a child of God ever had, or ever will have, is in Jesus. Until one is brought to realize this, until he is willing to place his case before the brethren, the saints, who it is declared shall judge the world, he is not ready for burial, not yet being wholly dead. Water baptism does not purify the flesh; it will not save the infant, any more than it will the adult, but it is an answer of a good conscience toward God to all who have beheld the beauty of the bride, the Lamb's wife, to those who have been made to say, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me." The ordinance of baptism, set up by Jesus Christ, is the door through which one is admitted to the rights and privileges of the church militant, and I have yet to meet the person in whom the Spirit of God dwells that ever regretted having been baptized. While those who have been baptized often feel unworthy of the love and fellowship of the brethren, the privileges in God's house mean more to them than all the world besides. To be members of that family entitles to the freedom of the house, and they can and do speak often one to another of the Lord's wonderful dealings with them, thereby comforting one another with the same comfort wherewith they themselves are comforted of God. The natural home, with all that it can possibly mean, is but a poor and imperfect figure of what the church is to them that are weary and heavy laden; they do come together at times with Christ Jesus as the head of the family, and find peace that passeth all understanding, sweetly resting in his love. I would that I might be able to employ words that would express in some small measure what that church means to me. I hope I know to some extent what Jesus had in mind when he said to one, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." Jesus commanded his disciples, saying, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." There are three that bear record in heaven and three that bear record in earth. The subject must not only be a fit subject, but the one administering the ordinance must be called and qualified of God, and there must be the church, the body of Christ. Without these three I do not see how there can be a valid baptism. The Lord's people should not only confess him by word of mouth, but in deed and in truth, thus manifesting their love for him and letting their light so shine that men may see their good works and glorify their Father which is in heaven. Truly, the church is a city that is set upon a hill. It is above earth, and the way that leads to that city is an highway, cast up in the wilderness, wherein the redeemed walk. The vulture's eye hath not seen it, neither hath the lion's whelp trodden it. It is only through the death, burial and resurrection of him that loved us and gave himself for us that we shall be brought forth more than conquerors; this we see set forth in baptism.

I truly hope I have done no violence to the subject, and that the Lord will stir

up the pure minds of those who are exercised upon it, both old and young, leading them into a plain path and giving them courage and strength to do that which is well-pleasing in his sight. I repeat that it is not essential to salvation to be baptized. Salvation is of the Lord from first to last, and there are no conditions or requirements to be complied with or met on the part of man, neither can a thousand baptisms of men bring even one infant into favor with God, but "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his," and if there never was another baptism as long as the earth stands it would not diminish the number of his jewels one millionth part of a fraction, but is only an answer of a good conscience toward God to them with whom he deals.

May he ever lead and keep us in the strait and narrow way, causing us to revere and praise his great and adorable name.

R. LESTER DODSON.

RUTHERFORD, N. J., Feb. 10, 1923.

SALINE, La., Dec. 21, 1922.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am impressed to write a few lines since reading brother Records' article in the last SIGNS, but it is with fear and trembling I make the attempt, as I feel that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing, and am afraid that my impressions are of the flesh, and not of the Spirit of God. But God knoweth our hearts, and we cannot deceive him. I feel it is a blessed and glorious privilege for the people of God to be enabled to write or speak in his name, but we are weak and helpless, and cannot do one good thing unless we are guided by God's unerring Spirit, and may we be enabled to trust in him for every good and perfect gift, that we may give all glory to God, and none to man.

Dear brother, I hope you will not think it presumptuous of me to give my views on Revelation xx. 6, for I hope it is with love and humility that I express my humble views. I would not have written but he said to do so if one felt so impressed, and I will leave it to your judgment whether it is worthy of a place in our dear family paper. The text is, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." In the first place, the angel showed John things that must shortly come to pass, and what John saw was in the gospel dispensation. Christ is the resurrection and the life; he is the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, so he is the first resurrection. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." The new birth is the first resurrection, and when one is born again he has his part in that resurrection; blessed and holy is he; that which is born of God cannot sin. When one is born again he is raised from the dead state he is in in Adam, he becomes a new creature. What he once hated he now loves, and what he once loved he now hates; old things have passed away, and, behold, all things have become new. He needs not that any man teach him, for the same anointing which he has received will teach him all things, and is truth and no lie. The first death is when we died in Adam, and the second death is the death of these bodies. God told Adam that the day he ate of the forbidden fruit he would surely die. He did eat and did die; he died to the mercies of God, for he was dead in trespasses and in sins; he had no knowledge of God or godliness, and would stay dead if not resurrected by the power of God. Speaking of the second death

having no power on him that hath part in the first resurrection, our hope is that the body will be resurrected. It is sown a natural body and raised a spiritual body; sown in weakness and raised in power; then will come to pass where it says, O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Christ rose victorious over death and hell, and so will all his people; they will arise in his likeness, and be satisfied. Why should his people murmur or complain when Jesus is their King, their all in all? But they can only hope that they are the children of the heavenly King; they have their doubts and fears, and cannot be comforted unless they are comforted by their Savior. When he is with them their joy is inexpressible and full of glory; they have a joy that the world knoweth not of. It is better felt than told, for it cannot be told, we can only hint at it, but all have the same experience, or have been to the same school and have been taught that all goodness comes from God, and not from man.

I feel that I have only hinted at the subject, but it may be you can understand what I have tried to tell you. It is sweet to me sometimes when I hope I am enabled by God's grace to behold some of the beauties of the kingdom of God, and is worth more to me at times than all this world contains. Oh how unworthy I am of the sweet blessings I have received of the merciful God! Without his mercy I would be forever lost, but I hope that Jesus Christ is my Savior, and if he is I am blessed indeed. Oh for a closer walk with God, but I feel at times that I never knew anything of the goodness of God, as my mind is so often wrapped up in the things of this world, and I am so often doing the things I would not, and not doing the things that I should, and sometimes I am made to cry out with Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Christ alone can deliver, and does deliver at God's appointed time. God's will is done in all things; every pain we suffer is for some purpose, and will work to the good of God's people, and to his glory. If we could only be reconciled to his holy will how much better off we would be, but cannot, unless the spirit of reconciliation be given us, for every good and perfect gift cometh from the Father of lights, in whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. But it is necessary for the children of God to be shown from time to time their helplessness and dependence upon the almighty God, who shuts, and none can open; who opens, and none can shut. Blessed be the name of God.

May you, dear brother, be enabled to go on contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, not fearing what the world may say or do.

If I have said anything amiss, just remember that I am weak and unprofitable without the grace of God, but I hope that this is submitted in love to the household of faith, for we know that if the earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

I am, I hope, your brother in the resurrection of Christ,

E. F. READHIMER.

HUNTSVILLE, Ala., Jan. 15, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sorry I am so far behind with my subscription, but I thought I would wait until I was settled before I had my address changed. I have not received my paper regularly on account of my moving so often, and I

surely miss it, for each number is filled with good news from a far country, so I am sending money order for five dollars, for which please renew my subscription, and forgive me for not remitting sooner. I have started two letters, but after commencing them felt they would be of no value, yet for some cause I still desire to have the children of God know the kind of a God I worship. I hope I believe in a Creator who has all power in heaven and in earth and in all deep places. When my mind runs back to the creation of heaven and earth it reminds me of the hidden wisdom of God, how by wisdom he made the world and the world by wisdom knew him not. So it is true then that God's wisdom was before the formation of all things. Then all things were formed according to his wisdom. Was his wisdom conditional? No, a thousand times no. The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, As I have thought so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed so shall it stand. (Isaiah xiv. 24.) To my mind there are many things that have to come to pass before the full salvation comes to Israel. The wonderful thought is, that there is a God, and he has a Son, and his name is Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. Dear kindred, is not this the same Jesus God covenanted with before there was any eye to pity or arm to save? If the fall of man was not determined, but was conditional, then salvation is also conditional. As I understand it, salvation is deliverance from sin. I could quote many passages of Scripture along this line, but if the dear editors see fit to publish this I want the readers of the SIGNS to search and see if there is any Scripture for this kind of doctrine. To be brief, I believe in a God who made heaven and earth, and all therein, and had a wise purpose in all he did, and all fulfills his purpose. I speak of creation. We received our natural mind by the creation of God, and the spiritual mind is a gift of God. To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. I believe in obedience to God and his law, and that obedience is the fruit of the Spirit, so it is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. If we live after the flesh we shall die, but if through the Spirit we mortify the deeds of the body we shall live.

I have tried to give a short sketch of my views, and hope you can pick up my thoughts and put them together. If there is any one who can afford to write me a letter I would appreciate it. Pray for me when it is well with you. I am a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

May the Lord bless all Israel, is the prayer of this unworthy one.

R. A. FANNING.

MONROE, Ga., Jan. 23, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I love to think of the things that were written by inspiration for the good of the afflicted and poor people of God. I have been impressed with some of the things recorded in the book of Proverbs, sixth chapter, the seven things that God hates, especially the two last ones: a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren. We read of Ananias and his wife, who fell dead at Peter's feet and were buried together. Then great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard of these things. It surely was enough to cause fear indeed. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and this wisdom is from above, being given unto us, if indeed we have it. The injunction is, If we lie, do it no more. Peter did no

better in denying his Lord and Master, but the grace of repentance was granted him, and he went out and wept bitterly. Then he was enabled to strengthen his brethren. He could tell them that the way of man was not in himself, being bought with a price, and that price the blood of Jesus, which cleanses us from all sin. To say, as some affirm, that we have to atone for our own sins, would be sowing discord. To say all good things work together for the good of the Lord's people, and that bad things do not, or to say that Joseph's brethren, full of envy and lying to their father, and the woman who had Joseph put in prison, were not working together for the good of Israel, would also be sowing discord. The religious world has a picture of the devil, which most of us have seen, very ugly, showing him with a forked tail and a pitchfork. That, I think, is misrepresenting him, for seven of that kind could never have been in one woman. (Luke viii. 2.) I want to say they have also drawn a picture of the Old School Baptists just as far wrong as that. They call them "absoluters;" preachers of infants to hell; that they got drunk, and then say the Lord made them drunk; that they steal a horse, and say the Lord made them steal. They call us fatalists, blasphemers, and say we do all these things claiming to glorify God as well in them as in singing his praises. Now, for any of our people to join in with such, and tell it, is sowing discord among brethren, and I further feel that it is hateful in the sight of our heavenly Father. I have been in over ten States of the United States, have read the lives of John Kershaw and of William Gadsby, of England, but must say I have never met any yet among all those who stand for the absolute sovereignty of God who try to excuse their wrongdoings by hiding behind the doctrine. Baptists of the old order are few and far between.

We are still enjoying the doctrine advocated in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It was good for our grandmother ninety years ago, and it will be good for all generations yet to come. Sometimes in reading it I am melted to tears of joy, because it is food for my soul. We are glad to be living, and feel to have a strong hold on all those who are in accord with the doctrine, and want to contribute a word of encouragement to it whenever we can. May the Lord keep and direct us in the good and right way, is our desire.

Your brother,

JAMES M. ADAMS.

MIRANDO CITY, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am now here in southern Texas, near the Rio Grande River, for the balance of the winter, to recuperate and take some rest. Our coast country, adjacent to the border of Mexico, is desirable for a winter resort, and a great oil field is now being developed here in Mirando City, near Laredo. There seems to be an oil boom going on, and excitement prevailing, and ostensibly is producing paying quantities of oil, and this part of our Texas country is advancing in settlement, industry and enterprise. This brief note will inform the brethren of my whereabouts, as my name has not appeared in the columns of the SIGNS for some time, and I would be pleased to hear from any of the brethren, by letter or through the old reliable SIGNS, which has weathered the storms as a defense of truth for a great number of years, contending for the true faith and the principles of Bible doctrine which the God of Israel has so long preserved

and blessed to the joy and comfort of his beloved bride, the Lamb's wife. Any who have a desire to write me, send to Mirando City, Texas, care of J. F. Staggs.

The Lord bless our faithful and efficient editors and publishers, whose labors are gone forth to the ends of the earth to cheer the wayfaring children, and to glorify God.

In hope of immortality beyond, affectionately, ASA HOWARD.

TAFT, Tenn., Feb. 11, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am now going to try in my poor weak way to tell you how much I have enjoyed your paper for the past six months, although I feel I would have to say that tongue cannot tell, neither can words express, the sweet pleasure, joy and comfort it is to this poor old soul to read its pages. Many times I have wondered why is it that these people, though many miles away, write my thoughts and tell my feelings better, it seems, than I could myself. There was a time when I cared nothing for the Old Baptist people, and thought I would never be one of them, but I wandered along for many years, and was made to know there was nothing I could do, or any one else in this old world could do, to save me from going where peace is never known; but, if not deceived, in due time the One who works all things after the counsel of his own will made himself known to me, then I could say,

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear;
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

These are sweet moments, but soon pass, and I am left to wonder if I am among the few who were brought to God by the death of Jesus Christ our Lord. I hope so. We are saved by hope. I know the Old Baptists are a poor and afflicted people, yet they are rich in the love of Christ. They love one another, and trust in God to keep them unspotted from the world, and take them home when this life ends. The Savior says, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. Now is not this a great comfort, to know we have one to look to who can come to us and cause us to rejoice with the joy the world cannot afford? We can go on and on, feeling our lives are a failure, and often say, Where is the blessedness I knew when first I saw the Lord? And when the good Lord, who is of love and tender mercy, shines a little ray of light in our hearts then we sing:

"In all the paths in which I've passed,
What mercies I've enjoyed;
And this shall be my song at last:
Cast down, but not destroyed."

From some cause it is my heart's desire to live with these people, and I can say I think the paper is worth many times the price. I am now past sixty, cannot see very well, but am blessed beyond measure in many ways, for which I hope I can thank the dear Lord, for it is through his love and kindness, and not any good I have done.

I hope the Lord will bless the editors, and give them grace to stand in all their trials, that they may continue to write to the glory of God, and the comfort of his people, and may all who have a mind to write do so and comfort others as they themselves have been comforted.

I ask you to overlook my mistakes, and remember a poor sinner who loves the sweet story of Jesus and his love above all things. If I meet you in the beautiful beyond, it will be by the grace of God.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) J. E. SISCO.

ASHLAND, Ill., Jan. 9, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I finished reading the January 1st number of the SIGNS last night. The letters were all good, and brother Lefferts' editorial was so good I would like to thank him for it. He writes the things I like to read, and does not fear to declare the absolute predestination of all things. I believe that doctrine with all my heart, if I know what I believe at all. Nothing spoils my confidence in a preacher quicker than for him to dodge the truth when he is preaching, or at any other time. Our little church, called Union, at Yatesville, believes in the predestination of all things, and it is preached there by our pastor, Elder L. P. Harriss, of Duquoin, Ill. He preaches the foreknowledge of God in all things, and that God declared the end from the beginning, and that he works all things after the counsel of his own will; that he created all things that are in heaven and in earth, and that he had a purpose in all that he created, and that everything is fulfilling the purpose it was created for. All power is of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God, let them be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, they were made by him and for him. The SIGNS is the best paper printed that I know of, and may the good Lord uphold it many more years, and may it be the Lord's will to spare Elders Lefferts and Ker a long time to feed the sheep.

I have made such a poor letter out of this you had better put it in the fire.

D. S. KOONTZ.

HAYMARKET, Va., Jan. 25, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I feel impressed this morning to write you a few lines. I know not why, as I feel destitute of all spiritual things, and all is darkness with me, but I know the Lord can be with me in whatever condition I may be, if I be one of his little ones. The question is, Am I his? I feel to be the least one, if one at all. I thought when I was young that as I grew older I should be better, but it seems I see more corruption in the flesh and have less confidence in self than ever. I am not writing this just to be writing, but because I do feel to be so unworthy of the many blessings the Lord has bestowed on me. I have thought often of you and yours this winter, and trust you have been well. I have had much trouble since we last met. My son was taken very sick, had to be taken to a hospital and a serious operation performed, but the Lord saw fit to restore him to health, and he is now with me, so that I am again reminded the Lord is good to me. My son was in the hospital but three days when I fell and broke my arm. This has caused me much suffering, and is still very painful, but better. I am not able to wait on myself, or to use my hand in any way, which you know is not pleasant, but please, dear brother, do not think I mean to murmur or complain, for I feel that all God does is just and right. Some have said it was carelessness, others that it was an accident, that my arm was broken, but there are no accidents with God. It was all intended and it came to pass. I feel reconciled to his holy will.

Forgive me if I have written anything amiss, for it is not my intention so to do. This letter is very imperfect, like the writer.

With christian love to you and yours, I am your unworthy sister in hope of eternal life,

(MRS.) L. S. UTTERBACK.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1923.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE SOUL.

ELDER H. H. LEFFERTS—DEAR BROTHER:—We have been taking the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the past year, and like it more than any other paper. I have had a mind for some time to ask your views on what the soul of man is. For instance, when the soul of man is spoken of, does it always mean the body of man? I have pondered upon this much. If you have a mind to do so, please give your views through the SIGNS.

Yours in hope of life eternal,
(MRS.) S. J. PRIDDY.

PRINCETON, West Virginia.

Our attempt at this time to comply with the above request is with no desire whatever to stir up any controversy. As to what the soul of man is has ever been a subject fraught with difficulties, a subject over which there has been no end of argument, and which has never yet come to any definite settlement. We think it will always be so. The subject is one that defies definition. It will never be possible to so get the matter expressed in words as to be satisfactory to all parties. But, as elusive as the "soul" is, it is no reason why we should not write upon and express such thoughts about it as we may be enabled to. Others have a perfect right to their views, as we have to ours, and we write with no aim to convince any one who may differ with us. We believe sister Priddy would be glad to hear from any of the brethren who feel they have some light on the subject, and such may write directly to her, not to us, if they care to do so.

The words "soul" and "souls" occur about four hundred and seventy times in the Old Testament, and about sixty times in the New. It is obviously not possible to take up, within the space of a short article, each of the more than five hundred passages where the words occur. At best, we can but scan the matter, and doubtless may overlook some important passage which should be taken into consideration. To save time, we shall not mention anything about what Webster, or some other authority on words, says "soul" means, but shall come at once to texts of Scripture, and try to make the Bible the man of our counsel. We can, at the start, say to our sister Priddy that the soul is not the body, although there are several passages where the soul includes the body, and more than the body. For instance, "Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran." This not meaning that Abram, Sarai and Lot had no souls before they came to Haran and that they got their souls while in Haran, but that the persons or servants that had joined with Abram, Sarai and Lot while in Haran, went with them out of Haran. In this passage the souls are the persons or individuals themselves, not merely the bodies of those persons, nor yet their spirits, but the whole person. This use of the word to designate the persons themselves is to be found in many Scriptures. Instances of this are as follows: "All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were threescore and six." This passage indicates not only that the souls were individuals themselves, but that the

souls came out of Jacob's loins, hence were born of man, therefore were not immortal or undying. The idea that every man has an immortal soul is false, and not one passage in the whole Bible where the word is used allows us to make any such assertion. The soul of man is mortal, subject to death; not immortal unless redeemed from sin by Jesus Christ. Matthew records that Jesus said, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Luke records the same utterance of Jesus thus: "What is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?" Taking the statement as Matthew has it and putting it with Luke's, we find that Jesus meant by the soul the man himself. Soul is not the body, but embraces the entire personality of the individual. Jesus also said, "Fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Here the body is mentioned apart from the soul, showing that in the mind of Jesus body and soul are not the same. Paul's prayer for the brethren at Thessalonica was, "Your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." This passage makes a distinction between the spirit and the soul, and the soul and the body. The soul is not the body, neither is it the spirit. That the soul is not the spirit is proved by Hebrews iv. 12: "The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit." Not only, therefore, is the soul not the body, neither is it the spirit, but these are distinctions so fine that only the word of God, sharper than a two-edged sword, can show us what the difference between them is. Only by taking the Bible Scripture by Scripture and comparing one text with another, the Holy Spirit guiding our inquiries, can we arrive at a satisfactory conclusion of the whole matter. Metaphysic nor philosophy nor science can tell us what the soul is. A few years ago some scientist found that a body after death did not weigh as much as just before death. It seems that he weighed a man's body just before death, and then weighed it immediately after death, and discovered that the body lost a few ounces in the process of dying. He immediately concluded that these few ounces represented the weight of the man's soul, inasmuch as the soul was supposed to leave the body at death. The Bible does say that the spirit returns to God who gave it, but the spirit is not the soul, as we have found in Hebrews and in Thessalonians. If there is any Scripture which says a man's soul goes to God at death, we have never seen it. It may be so, but we rather think the Bible is silent on this point. The record in Genesis says that God breathed into Adam the breath of life and he became a living soul. It then took the breath animating the body which God had prepared for it, to make a living soul. The body without the breath was not a soul, nor was the breath without the body a soul. A dead body from which the breath has passed, is not a soul. The breath after it has left the body, is not a soul. Further, merely the breath and the body taken together do not make a soul. If this were so, then animals would have souls. The Bible never uses the word "soul" in connection with animals, but only with human beings. It is a whole lot easier to tell what soul is not, than to tell what it is. As a definition, we risk the following for you to take it or leave it: The soul is that living, animating, sentient personality which constitutes

one's individuality apart from the beasts, and which so pervades and controls the body, and which is so interwoven and commingled with the body as to make "disembodied souls" an unscriptural phrase. The soul is so much a part of the man, and the man is so much his own soul, that the man cannot exist without the soul, nor the soul without the man. Both are the subjects of redemption. Christ did not offer himself a sacrifice for sin in order to save man without a soul, nor yet to save the soul without the man. The work of redemption is to save sinners, and that work Jesus did. We hear much said on every hand about "saving souls," as though it were a part of man that is saved, and not the man himself. Jesus, however, said, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. The whole man, not a part of him, is the subject of regeneration. There has been much discussion in former years as to what part of a man is born again, and some have concluded it is only the soul which has been born again. You cannot separate the soul from the man himself. The soul cannot be regenerated without the man being at the same time regenerated. All such hair-splitting arguments are vain, and lead nowhere. The simple truth is that Christ Jesus came into the world to save his people from their sins. This people were sinners. As sinners, they were fallen human beings: men, women and children. As such, they were living souls, but souls living in a state of condemnation. Christ redeemed these fallen beings, these men, women and children given him of the Father before time began. He redeemed them all, every one of them, and redeemed all of them, body, soul and spirit; for redemption, according to the Scriptures, includes the whole man. It is the man who is born again, and it is wasting time to try to tell what part of him is born again. Our treatment of this matter may not meet with your approval, but we said at the start that the subject is an elusive one, and we expected at the beginning to have to conclude with not settling it. Wiser men than ourself have wrestled with the subject without being able to write "finis" at the end of it. We did not expect to clutch what has always eluded those wiser than we.

L.

NO HYMN BOOKS AT PRESENT.

For the present we are not able to fill orders for hymn books, as the firm which for years has done our bookbinding has gone out of business, and we have not as yet made arrangements with another firm to do the work, but hope to do so in the near future. We will announce in these columns when we are ready to furnish the books to those who desire them.

WATCH YOUR DATES.

We wish to request our subscribers when sending in their subscriptions to see that the date on the little pink slip bearing their address is changed. If not changed, please let us know immediately (for that signifies you have not been given credit for the money sent) and we will look into the matter.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

"A Friend," Ontario, $3.00; J. C. Clark, Maine, $1.00; Mrs. Catherine Walker, Ontario, $2.00; Joseph F. Hall, Maine, $8.00; Mrs. F. J. Norris, Ga., $1.00.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, it has pleased Almighty God in his wise providence to remove by death from the field of his labor in the sheepfold of the saints our dearly beloved brother, **Elder John McConnell,** therefore be it

Resolved, that we, the churches composing The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, mourn our loss in being no longer blessed with his services in the gospel ministry, and we desire to record our gratitude to the God of all grace, the Father of mercies, for the bestowal upon our departed brother of so great and so useful a gift, and that we were favored to be both comforted and edified under his ministration of the things of the kingdom; be it also

Resolved, that we do deeply sympathize with our kindred in Christ composing the Ebenezer Church, of New York City, in the loss of their dearly loved and devoted pastor, praying that the Lord will bestow upon them his especial care.

Resolved, that these resolutions form part of, and be published with the Minutes of this session of the Association, and in the "Signs of the Times." Be it further

Resolved, that a copy be sent to our dearly beloved sister McConnell, and may the God of all grace sustain her in her great loss.

GEORGE RUSTON, Moderator.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Clerk.

JAMES AVERY, Ass't Clerk.

MEETINGS.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER

OLD SCHOOL

BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, the fourth Sunday in each month at Wall's Hall, corner 13th and Lexington Sts. All day service with lunch at noon. Service begins at 10:30 a. m. Take Sellwood car at 1st and Alder Sts., get off at Lexington St., right in front of the hall. Street car runs on 13th St. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon, R. D. 3, Box 177.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 91. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1923. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

AMARILLO, Texas, Sept. 12, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We are told to "be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." We are sure the time has come that was spoken of where the apostle says, In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils. The havoc he has made is enough to make the blood run cold in our veins and the heart to stand still. Spreading out, gathering to himself, until one of the head men at the thirtieth annual meeting of a religious convention said, "There is something wrong with the world; decay has set in; the so-called social gospel is turning the churches into mere social clubs." Another man said, "God is not love. God is not everywhere." I have warned them ever since the SIGNS was first published, and told them, "You are going into the quicksand." They said, "He is fighting." Darkness? We all see the natural darkness every night, but how many of us ever think of the wonder of it? The power of it? Its origin? How came it to be? Who is the author of it? Why does it have to exist? What is the use of it? I asked a man about this, and he said the dark is the shadow of the earth. I will ask another question: If the sun and all the stars ceased shining what would cause the darkness? The Bible says, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." This is the first type portraying the more wonderful things of the spiritual kingdom. The deep depravity of our hearts enshrouded in darkness is set forth, and our emptiness also, "void." "There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God." All people are in nature's night and do not know it until they are called out of darkness into his marvelous light. (1 Peter ii. 9.) "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." Paul says, "When it pleased God, who separated me from my

mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood," &c. Then he knew the people he wanted to kill were the children of God, and the way he thought to be unto life he found to be unto death. No one can see the light who has no eyes. "I form the light, and create darkness." —Isaiah xlv. 7. "Thou makest darkness, and it is night, wherein all the beasts of the field do creep forth. The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God. The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens."—Psalms civ. 20-22. These can see in the dark; they like the dark the best. So do the antitypical beasts. Therefore it is written, "Men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."—John iii. 19. "For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people."—Isaiah lx. 2. This prophecy is being fulfilled, but we have a promise in the last of this second verse, for it says, "But the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee." (Jesus.) Third verse: "And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Not natural kings, but, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father," &c. When God is pleased to withdraw from his people all the antitypical beasts of our flesh begin to creep forth. David said, "My sore ran in the night." When it was dark to David the awful crime he had committed when he had Uriah killed caused him to tremble, and fear, and hang his head, and the stench of that awful sin, a continual running sore, was offensive to him. Then when it is night we, too, realize our miserable sinfulness and our wretchedness. We are terrified spiritually, as a little child in the midst of a dense forest, with the wild beasts roaring, screaming, howling near. No wonder the children of God are filled with fear and trembling when the antitypical beasts appear in all of their horrid forms, so loathsome and degraded. This is set forth by Paul in English language where he says, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, * * * murders," &c.—Gal. v. 19-21. What horrors, what awful faults we have, what terrible power these have; nothing but the Spirit of God can deliver us from them. It is only God in you that delivers you; nothing else can. "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."—1 John iv. 4. How thankful we ought to be when God raises us above these and keeps us above them by his power. Peter says, "Kept by the power of God," &c. Surely if this is true God deserves our praise and adoration. It makes his little ones willing to go through cold and heat, mud and snow, wind and storms, afflictions and persecutions, be put in stocks, and burned at the stake. Count all things but dung, that you might "win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." The darkness is necessary. We must have the night, and cloudy, gloomy weather, or we could not appreciate the bright, clear day. The spiritual gloom and darkness must come first, or we could not appreciate the glorious arising of the Sun of righteous-

ness. "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." Had we never been wounded we would not need healing. All through the long, dark, dismal night you have waited and watched for his appearing. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." All through the long legal night the prophets were telling of a glorious day that would surely come. David said, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."—Psalms xxiii. 4. "The valley of the shadow of death." The legal dispensation was called the ministration of death. Under the law or shadowy dispensation it was very dark. Paul says, "For the law, having a shadow of good things to come," &c.—Heb. x. 1. This law dispensation no doubt is what David had reference to when he said, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod [Jesus] and thy staff they comfort me." David, by the light he received from the indwelling of the Spirit in him, was enabled to foretell the coming of the dear Savior, notwithstanding he lived during and under the law dispensation, for he said, They made long their furrows, they plowed upon my back, referring to the very time they scourged your precious Savior. Again, he said, Psalms xxii. 16, 17: "They pierced my hands and my feet [referring to the crucifixion]. I may tell all my bones," referring to the elect of God having the truth made known to them. Solomon says, "My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away." That is, until the law is fulfilled and the gospel dispensation, a dispensation of light, is brought in. Isaiah says in ix. 2: "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death [law dispensation], upon them hath the light shined." When a little ray of light would come to the prophet Isaiah he would exclaim, ix. 6: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given," &c. Fifty-third chapter: "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant," &c. Again, in sixty-third chapter: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? * * * I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me." Foretelling exactly what did occur when they took your dear Savior and brought him before the king. Peter, who said, Although all men forsake thee, yet will I not. But he did. The prophecy must be fulfilled.

"While all exposed to wrath divine
The glorious sufferer stood."

"Was it for crimes that I had done
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity, grace unknown,
And love beyond degree."

The suffering and coming of the dear Savior was set forth in type, shadow and plain language in all the Old Testament. "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein there is no water." Shut up under the law. "Sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money." You never would have seen a star had it not been for darkness, but when the sun is set the beautiful stars appear and twinkle delightfully. So when the dear Savior withdraws his presence, then you are enshrouded in darkness, and how you delight to meet those who shine as stars

forever and ever. Daniel xii. 3: "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." As you stand in the natural dark and look up at the millions of stars, and the moon comes out, shedding forth her wondrous silvery light, you behold in these the glory of your heavenly Father. You pass through a long dark season, and by this experience you learn the truth that you could learn in no other way: "Tribulation worketh patience," &c. You learn by being helplessly in the dark that you are not free to do, think and see as you choose. Had you never been in darkness you could never have been made to rejoice because of deliverance. Paul says, Col. i. 13, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." No nation on earth but the children of God have heard in all ages the voice of the stars proclaiming the glory of God to them. Therefore David says, Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world; there is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. God loved his people too much to leave them without manifesting his glory and power to them in the stars and planets. Do you wonder it is dark, when we are told that we were not simply in the dark, but as it is written, For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord, walk as children of light? It is true "we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as I am known." That will surely be a glorious day to all the tempest-tossed, sin-bedarkened children of God, who have passed through many dark, lowering, threatening clouds, while waves of sorrow have rolled over them, and darker and darker has it grown around them, while they, like Peter, have cried out, Lord, save me. But when the darkness is impenetrable, and the awful waves are dashing your frail bark on the sea of this life, all the Savior has to do is to say, "Peace, be still," and there is a great calm. A few more days of groping in the dark, with just now and then a little ray of light, and then with rapture and surprise you poor little trembling one will be where,

"All o'er those wide extended plains,
Shines one eternal day;
There God the Son forever reigns,
And scatters night away."

ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

REVELATION XXI. 1, 2.

"AND I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And John saw the holy city, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

While these precious things were shown to John on the desolate island of Patmos, it is a beautiful truth that they came to him by inspiration of God, to be handed down to the generations following, to shew forth the perfect work of God in the salvation of his chosen people, to the lifting of Jesus on high, and to reveal and make manifest in the heart of each member of the body of Christ (which is his bride). The voice that came to John (by the angel), said, "I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." The things that John saw by revelation of Jesus each child of the living God sees through a spiritual experience of grace given unto them by and through the Spirit of Christ. John saw a new heaven and a new earth. The light of

God's truth shines in the darkness of a deceitful heart and shows unto us Jesus, a complete Savior. The old heaven and the earth, in which we reveled and enjoyed, has passed away, as the natural darkness of the night is obliterated by the rising of the morning sun. Now we behold the beauty and glory of the kingdom of God, which is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. This is what John saw coming down from God out of heaven. Thus it is "a heaven below our Redeemer to know," and we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, that he might bring many sons to glory. The innumerable company of God's elect prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Her heart is prepared to worship him, not under carnally religious ideas, but in spirit and in truth. The bride sings the song of love to her Lord and King, saying, "Draw me, we will run after thee." The new song also comes to us in the words of the prophet Isaiah, saying, "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

"And there was no more sea." The sea signifies trouble; our vile passions surge and carry us away to unknown depths, filling the mind with every deceitful lust, but when the brilliant light of truth illumines our heart, revealing the natural carnal heart as deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, salvation (through faith) banishes the old heaven and the old earth, "And there is no more sea." Then the new heaven and the new earth is resplendent in the glory of God. New inspirations in righteousness turn us about, for we have heard a voice behind us, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it," and we hear a voice from heaven saying, "Seek ye my face," and a willing answer comes out from our broken and contrite heart, saying, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek." The Lord provides and prepares the way. He calls his sheep by name and they follow him. His love is shed abroad in the heart where hatred dwelt. The Sun of righteousness is risen with healing in his wings. We are clothed in pure linen, which is the righteousness of the saints, and now as a bride we are adorned for our husband (the blessed Jesus), who by the commandment of God the Father has wrought out and completed our salvation. As we had no power or choice in our birth in Adam, neither had we power or choice or merit in our new and heavenly birth in Christ Jesus the Lord. The Lord commended his love unto us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with rich heavenly blessings in Christ. No boasting on our part, but thankfulness and peace and joy in him who hath loved us and gave himself for us. We know God and love him when we confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, and our testimony is that we love the brethren.

B. F. COULTER

PHILADELPHIA, Pennsylvania.

GRANBURY, Texas, Feb. 26, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find check to pay for the SIGNS for another year. I do not want to do without the paper, for we live where we cannot hear preaching without going forty or more miles from home. I wish some member of the church at Ft. Worth, Texas, would write and let us know the time of meeting there, as that is the nearest church of our faith, so far as I know.

I much enjoyed the many good letters in the SIGNS for February 15th. There are a few yet who I believe are contending for the faith of God's elect, but it seems this is a day of falling away, and but few are inquiring after the ancient paths and landmarks. I know that God is yet able to reserve unto himself a remnant who will not listen to false doctrine.

I hope the God of all grace will prosper the editors, both spiritually and financially, and may his banner of love ever be with his poor and afflicted people.

In hope of a better life,

J. W. CAUDLE.

THE EXISTENCE OF SOVEREIGN POWER.

A FEW thoughts on the above text, first, for the consideration of the editors of the SIGNS, then, if it meets their approval, to be passed on to its readers.

Existence of God. There is no nation or race of people, whether savage, civilized, or half-civilized, but what in some way proves the existence of something superior to themselves, and to which they offer up their devotions, let it be gods of stone, wood or gold. Our own Indians worshipped a great spirit; certain others will walk through fire and mutilate their bodies, and throw their first born child to the "sacred" crocodiles of the Nile, &c. In the midst of all these counterfeit religions there is something that shows to us that somewhere is one pure and undefiled religion, for there cannot be a counterfeit without a genuine. We need not go to the Bible to prove there is a God, or to prove that God exists. I do not mean by this that every one can see or understand what I am going to try and describe, for it is not given to all to understand the mysteries of God, but he that hath ears to hear let him hear. I take for example something that we all know, as we have always tried in speaking to the people of God to tell them things that they knew, then they can say they know they have heard the truth. Step out in the open on a pleasant early morning, and watch the shadows of darkness giving way to the light of the sun, that great light that God hath placed in the heavens to give us light by day; for thousands of years this same sun has been performing its duty without the help of man. This alone proves to us that beyond the realm of earth there is power that controls, and we are carried away by the thought of the greatness and the sovereignty of it; we feel its warmth as it rises in its strength at midday, and gradually goes on its downward course, and finally drops beyond our view, then again comes the tall dark shadows of darkness creeping over the earth. Notice here are two opposites; light and darkness cannot abide together. Then the stars begin to twinkle, and seem to get thicker and thicker, and finally to cover all the sky, like a great canopy studded with jewels, and the moon with its mellow light joins in with its smaller helpers illuminating the heavens. Well might David exclaim, The heavens declare the glory of God. Our minds are too small to grasp the full meaning of the power of God and his attributes, I cannot find words to fully express myself; it is too wonderful for me.

Now another example that we know: Man has sought out many inventions. We take the earth for the base to fasten our telescope, and we scan the heavens, and watch the movements of the planets; we determine the speed and the direction they are going, and we find by the study of astronomy that certain bodies going a certain speed will at a certain time next year come between the rays of the sun

and the earth and cause the people here to see a shadow on the sun, an eclipse. They will tell us on what part of the earth it will be visible, and the hour and minute it will commence, how long it will last, &c. O, dear Lord, what harmony, what absolute control, what sovereign power and exactness in controlling the heavenly and earthly bodies, that mortal man can figure out to the minute years ahead. Why and how can they but say there is a sovereign God? These things we know, we have seen with our eyes. All men see, but do all men understand? No, the great majority will pass it by as an every day occurrence, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. These things we see with our natural eyes not only prove that God exists, but prove his sovereign power, show his invisible working and absolute predestination. Paul tells us, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."—Rom. i. 20. They may deny the existence of God, but this is no excuse; they may claim his power is limited, call him unjust and deny the truth of the Master and his apostles, but his work goes on forever, and little do they realize that they are weaving into a perfect picture, fulfilling and carrying out the decrees of him that "hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance."

Now, in conclusion, just a word to the people that are everywhere spoken against, who have nowhere else to go for comfort but to him that spoke as never man spoke, who know that your salvation depends entirely upon the free and unmerited grace of God, and have a hope that you have been brought into the banqueting-house under the banner of love; you need not fear, "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

May God by his eternal power and wisdom sustain the editors and writers of the SIGNS, that they keep on proclaiming "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon."

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

CLEVELAND, Ohio, Feb. 17, 1923.

LONGVIEW, Texas, Jan. 3, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—I thank the Lord that he has spared my unprofitable life and blessed me with sufficient means to renew my subscription for your good paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which comes laden from a far country. It comes from the pens of those who are ably gifted of the Lord to write and tell of the goodness and mercy of that all-wise God who works and none can hinder. I do not see how I could do without the paper, as it is about all the preaching I get any more. I would be glad if I could send you some new subscribers, and I may a little later. There are a few around here who love to hear the Primitive Baptists who preach the doctrine the SIGNS advocates: salvation by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is all of grace. I have two nieces here who have left the Missionary Baptists on account of the doctrine they preach. They disagree with them on doctrine,

and they say they do love the doctrine the SIGNS advocates, and wish they lived close to a Primitive Baptist Church, where they could go to preaching and hear the doctrine they believe to be the truth. I was talking with an old gentleman in Longview on Saturday; he said he was seventy-two years old and had never joined any church. He said he would be glad if we could have a Primitive Baptist Church here.

If there are any ministers of the faith and order that the SIGNS contends for passing through Longview, please drop me a card, if they can stop in passing through to fill an appointment. I live five miles east of Longview, and would be glad to have them any time. My address is Longview, Texas, R. 4, Box 38.

As ever, your little brother, in hope of eternal life,

E. SMALL.

FOSTER FALLS, Va., Feb. 3, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I have been a reader of the SIGNS, thought I would write a short letter for publication (if approved). I am one who believes in the sovereignty and predestination of God in all things. God hath made all things; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. Evidently, and without controversy, God made nothing without first predetermining to do so; moreover, he did not predestinate a thing without a purpose, but determined according to wisdom the use for which everything was made, from the smallest atom of dust to the binding and loosing of Satan. There are but two characters taught in the Scriptures, although spoken of under different captions. One of these is the elect lady and her children, which embraces the seed of Abraham, the heirs of promise, unto whom God promised eternal life, before the world began. The other character the children of the devil, and every one of them wondered after the beast and received his mark. God has, according to his foreknowledge, predestinated his chosen unto eternal life by Jesus Christ. All the children of the wicked one shall go into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. According to the predestination of God in the law of sin and death, from all eternity the destiny of the wicked was as much fixed in the mind of our God as was the salvation of the redeemed from the law of sin and death.

I may write again.

Yours in hope,

L. K. SHOCKLEY.

MANGUM, Okla., Feb. 23, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find check to pay for the SIGNS one year for our dear young brother, H. M. Henderson, of Mangum, Okla. This young brother is a grandson of the late Elder E. W. Henderson, of Troy, Alabama, whom I knew some forty years ago, and who was held in high esteem for the truth's sake. I feel it would be a great pleasure to the friends of Elder Henderson to know that his grandson was baptized in the fellowship of the Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church the third Sunday in January, 1923, after telling the church what great things the Lord had done for him. We feel to hope that the Lord has a great work for this dear brother to do.

If you see fit, publish this; if not, consign it to the waste-basket, and all will be well.

Written by a poor sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all,

W. H. PUGH.

HATTIESBURG, Miss., Jan. 8, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—I want to tell you how much mother and I enjoy your good paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We think it is the best paper we ever read, and it is about all the preaching we get. My mother is a cripple, and eighty-seven years old, so you see we cannot go much. She reads most of the time, so I am inclosing a money order to pay for the SIGNS another year, as we both love to read it for the truth's sake, if I am not in the dark. We hope you will be spared many years to comfort those who love the truth. If not asking too much of you, remember us, your sisters, I hope. May the good Lord guide and take care of us all, is the prayer of a poor cast down sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all, R. A. BUFKIN.

INFORMATION WANTED.

I AM requested to make inquiry through the SIGNS for a copy of a debate between John A. Thompson and Benjamin Franklin, which took place somewhere in Ohio about the year 1873. Any one having such a book for sale please write me, stating price.

J. C. CHESTER.

BREWERS, Kentucky.

NO MORE EVERLASTING TASKS.

OUR supply of the "Everlasting Task for Arminians" is exhausted, and as we do not expect to have any more of them, will be unable to fill future orders for the little book.

AN EXPLANATION.

THIS issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be a little late in reaching our readers. Through a combination of circumstances we have been much delayed in our work, but hope to have April 1st number out on time.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1923.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MODERNISM.

SOME time ago brother B. L. Fallin, of Choudrant, Louisiana, called our attention to a news item which issued from New York City, October 14th, 1922, to the effect that Bishop Brown, of Arkansas, had communicated to Bishop Manning, of New York, his desire to resign from the house of bishops of the Episcopal denomination, owing to the fact that the former no longer believed in the literal interpretation of the Bible concerning the creation of Adam and Eve, the planting of the garden of Eden, the fall of Adam and Eve, and its effects, the birth of Jesus, and his death and descent into hell, his resurrection and ascent into heaven, his second coming to raise the dead, &c. Brother Fallin requests us to write something of our thoughts regarding the matter. Those of you who have been reading the newspapers are probably aware that very nearly every protestant denomination at this time is being rent with dissensions between what are called the fundamentalists, who are trying to stand by the literal interpretation of the Scriptures, and the modernists, who are discarding the Bible records. When any individual claims to no longer be in sympathy with the denomination to which he belongs, honesty and sincerity demand that he sever his connections

with that body. This, Bishop Brown has done, and we admire his frankness in coming out openly and stating his disbelief in the denomination to which he belongs. This is much better and fairer than the attitude of some others, who, while rejecting the doctrines of their denominations, have not the moral courage to openly stand by the consequences of their convictions. The above instance cited by brother Fallin is only one of many such occurring every day in the nominally religious world. Such instances constantly arising are symptoms of a disease very widespread at the present time, and one which, we think, will grow steadily and alarmingly worse. We believe such to be the case because the Scriptures, of the New Testament especially, foretell such a condition of affairs as bound to prevail in these last days of the gospel age. "After their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." We have on record the warning by inspiration that "in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers," &c. Because the Scriptures amply warn us of such characters, it cannot be otherwise than that such characters shall abound. We should not be astonished that such things are so, but would be amazed if it were not so; for were it not so, then the Scriptures would not be true. God would not be unerring in his foreknowledge, and his predestination would not be effectual. But when we see every day of our lives things coming to pass which we read in the Bible shall come to pass, what better proof do we need of the inerrancy of the Scriptures, and of the absolute predestination of all things? Who but a wonder-working God, controlling all things and working them after the counsel of his own supreme will, could by his Spirit cause men of old to foretell these very things which we are ourselves witnessing coming to pass? Is this not proof beyond all gainsaying that God does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

We shall now try to present what we think are some of the direct causes accounting for the present strife and dissension convulsing the protestant world: (1) Unregenerate church membership. How can any be expected to reverence or to believe the Scriptures when they have never been the subjects of spiritual regeneration and the new birth? When the risen Christ sent forth his disciples to preach the gospel, he gave them authority to baptize believers, and believers only. Philip, for instance, did not baptize the eunuch until he was assured the eunuch believed, not merely with his lips, but with his whole heart. Such belief is the effect of that faith which is the fruit of God's Spirit, and comes into the sinner's soul as the result of that same power which wrought in Christ when it raised him from the dead. The nominally religious world has, for generations, been taking into its memberships anybody and everybody, regardless of whether they were regenerated or not. The large majority of nominal believers, we venture to say, have no such thing as a religious experience, and would not know what you meant by an experience of grace were you to ask them about it. In view of such a state of things, how can it be otherwise than that men who have never had Christ revealed within them, who

never had his love shed within them, should deny the power of God, the salvation of his Christ, and the teachings of his word? There never has been but one way, and there never will be but one way, in which a sinner can know that Christ is the Son of the living God, and that is by the revelation of the Holy Spirit. In the absence of such revelation one is but an unbeliever, though he may have the name of being a christian. The protestant world of to-day has not this revelation, and consequently is drifting rapidly away from its professed articles of faith, and from its creeds, into avowed and open infidelity. The infidelity has really been there all the time, but is now coming more and more out into the open. What has been hidden and kept secret is now being manifested. Why, at this time, should infidelity be more bold and open than at any other time within our own recollection?

This brings us to our next point. (2) Restlessness and discontent with the old forms of authority. The last ten years have witnessed a break-up all over the world of old and established customs and governments. Social traditions have been violated by widespread immorality among all classes as a result of the war, and family life has been disrupted and disorganized by a general resort to divorce, which has steadily become so common that it is no longer noticeable. Kings and thrones which thought themselves secure have toppled into ruins, and anarchy with chaos has replaced the former rule. Even in those countries where governments have not been overthrown, powerful groups of individuals have so intrenched themselves behind privileges that government is powerless to accomplish its will for the betterment of the whole people. Such a condition brings government into disrepute with the masses, who no longer respect its laws, but delight in seeking ways and means to evade obedience thereto. Like a hideous disease, this malady of discontent fails to stop with society and government, but invades the various churches and denominations, unseating those in authority there, objecting to their established forms, defying the old creeds, and substituting individual ideas and interpretations for the plain declarations of the Scriptures. The depravity of human nature runs amuck, making a mess of everything once held dear and sacred. We have the comfort of knowing that this is no new thing under the sun, and that God knew all about it before the foundation of the world. As soon as his purpose in it all is accomplished it will be brought to a stop. It cannot cease before then.

Another cause leading up to the present state of affairs is, (3) Growth of material prosperity and the advancement of science. Civilization built upon money-getting and money-spending, and bringing with it untold luxuries and diversions, has dulled the moral and spiritual perceptions of the people, blinding them to anything beyond getting all the fun they can out of the present, with no thought of to-morrow. The worth of anything, even of character, is now measured in tangible things; not measured by a man's ideals and principles, but by how much money he is worth, or by how much prestige he can exert to get what he wants. Beyond the tremendous power which money has come to wield, there are the many wonderful inventions and discoveries of science which have been achieved within the last few years, all of which have tended to inflate the pride of men, and to cause them to believe they

verily are gods. Drunk with the power which has come to them, they are willing to defy the very God of heaven himself, and do defy him, exalting themselves as equal with God, and claiming that all things are possible with men, and nothing too hard for them. Reaching up into the heavens to bring down electricity to run their world, building ships to ride the air currents, that they may fly from sea to sea, talking through the ether without wires over intervening thousands of miles, ridding themselves of disease by talking to themselves, renewing defective parts of their bodies by surgical operations; by doing all these and many other such things too numerous to mention, no wonder man is infatuated with himself, no wonder he exaggerates his own importance in this great universe. All this is calculated to turn him from the mere formal creeds of protestantism, and to cause him to say, I myself am god, and beside me there is no other god. He accepts himself for what he feels himself to be, recognizes no authority outside himself, knows no law but that of his own will, wants no heaven not of his own making, believes in no hell except for those who thwart and disappoint him.

There are perhaps other contributory causes leading up to the present schism in the religious world, but we think we have named the main ones. That the times are perilous for men of true faith, we have no doubt. We believe it is as true now as ever it has been, that those who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. God has in this day reserved unto himself a gracious remnant. They constitute through his love a treasury of revealed religion, the only religion that after all amounts to anything, that is builded upon a foundation against which the gates of hell cannot prevail. The times, we believe, shall grow very much worse before any permanent relief will be manifest. Iniquity shall ripen unto the catastrophe, which shall reap it and take it away. Every age preceding this gospel age has ended in catastrophe. This age, according to the Scriptures, shall likewise end in the overwhelming destruction of antichrist and the deliverance of the children of God. The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to be fulfilled in all true believers at the appearing of Christ. May God preserve his people from idolatry and keep us turned unto him. L.

NO HYMN BOOKS AT PRESENT.

For the present we are not able to fill orders for hymn books, as the firm which for years has done our bookbinding has gone out of business, and we have not as yet made arrangements with another firm to do the work, but hope to do so in the near future. We will announce in these columns when we are ready to furnish the books to those who desire them.

CHURCH NOTICE.

To our beloved brethren and friends, who may desire to visit the Cedar Creek Church,

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE

we have changed our place of meeting from Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, to Oregon City, Oregon. Day and hour will be the same: fourth Sunday in each month, services beginning at 10:30 a. m., with lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Grace Veech Smith, Ill., $1.00; T. O. Turner, Ky., $1.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Lennie (Emerson) Bowden, daughter of W. B. Emerson, was born May 7th, 1848, in Graves County, Kentucky, and was married to Isaiah Bowden, September 22nd, 1870, by Elder W. A. Bowden, of Pilot Oak, Ky., and to that union eleven children were born, four preceding her to the great beyond, they dying in infancy. Seven survive her, who are as follows: J. B. Bowden, Waring, Texas, A. O. Bowden, Silver City, N. M., H. T. and C. H., Murray, Ky., Robert D., Havana, Ill., Mrs. Allie Smith, Danville, Ill., Mrs. Cora Morris, Murray, Ky. Mother became ill Saturday, January 6th, and apparently suffered but little, and on Thursday, January 11th, she ate a fairly good meal, but complained of choking. She was conscious until 5 o'clock, when she laid down, folded her hands and just went to sleep. Her stay on earth was 74 years and 8 months. She professed a hope in Jesus in 1870, and joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Mount Zion, in Graves Co., Ky., and was baptized by Elder W. A. Bowden, the third Sunday in June, 1870, thus holding membership in the church of Christ fifty-three years. She lived a devoted and faithful life, a life of true devotion, both to the church and her family, never complaining of her lot in life. She had no enemies, but was loved by all who knew her. She loved her brethren and sisters, and would spare no pains to make all who visited her home happy. She was a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, the doctrine of predestination and election, and the final perseverance of the saints to glory.

Her dear body was laid to rest in the old churchyard at Harmony Church, there to await the resurrection of the dead, at which time she, together with all the family of God, shall arise in the image of Jesus, to be with him in that land of bliss where there is no pain, sorrow, sickness or death. Brother H. N. Olliver preached the funeral discourse, using for a text a portion of the fourteenth chapter of Job, developing the theme that mother never died one day too soon or one day too late, but just exactly at the time appointed of God. O, dear brothers and sisters, if we could only live out our appointed time on earth to the glory and praise of God, as dear mother did, we should be satisfied. I will only say that by the grace of God she was what she was, and by the reign of the same divine grace we only can walk as she walked, for she was a living monument of God's grace and mercy. May God in his infinite love and mercy guide and direct us through our remaining days on earth, and at last consign our vile bodies to the tomb to await the call of the Master, when we, too, shall be raised to be satisfied with his likeness.

Written with much sorrow, the writer not being able to attend the burial, feels the stroke very heavily,

ALSO,

Isaiah Bowden, son of Elias and Elizabeth Bowden, was born near Cottage Grove, Tenn., January 17th, 1845, and died in Murray, Ky., December 28th, 1916, making his stay on earth 71 years, 11 months and 11 days. He professed a hope in Jesus in 1870, and was baptized in the fellowship of Mt. Zion Church the third Sunday in June, 1871. He and mother were married September 22nd, 1870, at the home of her father, W. B. Emerson, by Elder W. A. Bowden. Father lived a consistent and faithful member until death. He left, besides mother and seven children, a host of relatives and friends to mourn his departure. Father was sound in the faith that was once delivered unto the saints, and ever ready to attend his meetings, and never gave any offense to the church. He was honest and sincere in his convictions, a firm believer in the doctrine that has ever characterized the church of God on earth since the apostles' days, and when the conditional time salvation craze entered the church he stood firm, ever contending for the faith of the fathers, believing in the doctrine of salvation by grace from start to finish. He and mother walked together in sweet fellowship, a perfect oneness in doctrine and order, not only in church relationship, but at home, and now that they are gone from us, it is a source of great comfort to look back over the past and behold their devotional walk. They never tried to teach their children to know the Lord, but did teach us honesty and morality.

His funeral, which was largely attended, was preached by Elder H. N. Olliver. Burial was in Harmony churchyard. Sleep on, dear parents, and take thy rest, for in the morning of the resurrection you, together with all the redeemed host, will arise with the likeness of Jesus, and in the New Jerusalem will sing praise to him who died to redeem us from death.

Written by a son in sorrow,

J. B. BOWDEN.

Martha Jane Connley Bogart, widow of Ephraim Bogart, was born May 25th, 1838, at Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., the daughter of Hiram and Hannah Connley (deceased), departed this life August 7th, 1922, making her stay on earth 84 years, 2 months and 13 days. She was married to Ephraim Bogart in 1855, and to that union were born eleven children, six sons and five daughters. Her husband, one son and two daughters preceded her to the grave. Those living are Mrs. Rose, North Cement City, Mich., Abram Bogart and Mrs. Orville Winchell, of Kingston, N. Y., Walter E. Bogart, of Ashokan, N. Y., Irene J. Stevens, of Ohioville, N. Y., with whom she made her home in her last days, and where she passed away, Jacob C. Bogart, of Newport, R. I., Joseph G. and Virgil W. Bogart, of Alligerville, N. Y. When about eleven years of age she received a good hope through grace, and was much burdened for a long time. She attended the Old School or Primitive Bap-

tist Church for many years, but always felt too unworthy to ask a name with the people she loved for the truth's sake, but in October, 1916, when she was seventy-eight years of age, her God gave her strength to ask a name with the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church and was gladly received, and baptized by Elder George Ruston, in the presence of a large gathering of friends and brethren. She loved to attend her church meetings, and did so as long as her health permitted, and loved to hear her Savior set forth as the way, the truth and the life. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone.

Her funeral was held from the Olive and Hurley Church, of which she was a member, and was conducted by her pastor, Elder George Ruston, who spoke comfortingly to a large audience of relatives and friends, after which her body was laid to rest in the Ashokan Rural Cemetery. May God comfort and sustain the bereaved ones, and keep us all in his fear, is our prayer.

Written by request of the family, by her son-in-law,

ORVILLE WINCHELL.

James Abner Morse, son of Joseph and Alba C. (Ellis) Morse, was born July 5th, 1838, and died February 20th, 1923. He was married to Mary A. Owen, December 19th, 1866, and to that union were born two daughters: sister Emma Davis and sister Celestia Chapman, who survive him. His wife died September 18th, 1914. He served in the Civil War from August 21st, 1862, until the close of the war. He united with the Middletown Old School Baptist Church, Delaware County, N. Y., when a young man and was baptized by the late Elder Isaac Hewitt. He loved the doctrine of salvation by grace, and was strong in the faith. He had a realizing sense of his own frailty, and his hope was centered in the Beloved. A few days before his death he said he had no fear of death. He never murmured or complained, but was in subjection to his Master's will. He took to his bed November 9th, 1922, and suffered much until a few hours before he died, when he peacefully fell asleep. He was laid to rest by the side of his wife in the Halcottville Cemetery. The writer spoke at the funeral, and has written the above at the request of the family.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Deacon Jacob M. Adkins, of Indiantown Church, departed this life December 13th, 1922, after having been stricken with a stroke of paralysis while at his farm, about one week before. He was born March 11th, 1857, and on March 7th, 1883, was married to Mary E. Morris, our esteemed sister. Besides his widow, he is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Bessie Jones and Mrs. May Perdue, and four sons, John, Jacob, Lawrence and Paul Adkins. In December, 1888, he was baptized by the late Elder T. M. Poulson into membership with the Indiantown Church. Besides faithfully serving this church as deacon, he led the singing. For these and many other reasons he will be sorely missed by the church. We feel that the church has lost a good and faithful member. Sister Adkins feels this loss most keenly, and is wellnigh overpowered with her sense of loneliness, not seeing how she can possibly attend services at Indiantown without him, who always for the past forty years accompanied her. May God bless her, and all who mourn his absence, with his rich and sustaining grace, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

The funeral services were held in the Forest Grove meetinghouse, and were conducted by the writer, after which interment took place in the adjoining cemetery.

J. CORDER MELLOTT.

Morgan S. Trumbo was born November 9th, 1842, and departed this life February 19th, 1923, aged 80 years, 3 months and 10 days. He leaves a widow, one son, three sisters, one brother, one granddaughter and many friends to mourn their loss. He was not a member of any church in his life, but we firmly believe he is a member of the church above, being a firm believer in his Savior Jesus Christ.

It is with hearts filled with appreciation that we desire in this way to express our gratitude and thanks to our friends, relatives and neighbors for their kindness and sympathy extended during the recent illness, and at the time of the passing away, of our beloved husband and father, also for the beautiful floral offerings.

MOTHER AND SON.

THE foregoing obituary notice was handed to me when I arrived at the home to conduct the funeral of Mr. Trumbo, which was held in a church-house in Gahanna, Ohio, where I tried to speak to the relatives and friends with such ability as was given me. I will say in remembrance of our dear friend, and, I hope, brother in the faith of God's elect, that at the times I have talked with him it impressed me very much that he knew the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and that his views were very clear on the plan of salvation by grace. He enjoyed talking of the Almighty God and Savior, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and he liked to be with the Regular Predestinarian Baptists.

After the services his body was taken to New Albany and laid to rest in Maplewood Cemetery, there to await the summons from on high. May the God of all grace comfort and strengthen the relatives and friends, and enable us all to bow in humble submission to his holy and righteous will.

L. E. STEPHENS.

Jesse DeCoss departed this life February 16th, 1923, at his late home, near Clifton, Va., at the age of 68 years and a few days. He was the husband of our late sister, Elgivia V. DeCoss, who was baptized by Elder J. N. Badger in the fellowship of the Bethlehem Church about twenty-five years ago, and who preceded Mr. DeCoss to the grave five years. Though Mr. DeCoss never united with the visible church, he was ever ready to talk on the things pertaining to the kingdom. His walk in life exemplified that of a true believer by a godly conversation. A few hours before the end he requested his children to have the unworthy writer conduct the funeral, which was done with such ability as the Lord gave, by reading Romans viii. 29, 30, and trying to speak a few words of comfort to the bereaved family. His body was then laid in the Clifton Cemetery, to await the call, Come, ye blessed of the Lord, and enter into that eternal rest prepared for the saints before the foundation of the world. He leaves two sons and two daughters to mourn their loss, yet I feel to say they do not mourn as those having no hope. May the Lord strengthen their hope and increase their faith, is the petition of a sinner.

K. C. SPINDLE.

Mary Ann Cunningham departed this life February 7th, 1922, at her home, in Whitefield, Maine. For several years she had been helpless from paralysis. She and her husband, the late Miles Cunningham, were cared for by their daughter, Mrs. Annie E. Potter, who left a lucrative position to go home and minister to their wants, and no aged couple were better and more tenderly cared for than they. Sister Cunningham was born in Whitefield, Maine, December 5th, 1823. Her parents were Mr. and Mrs. Hiram Heath. She and brother Cunningham were baptized in the fellowship of the Whitefield Old School Baptist Church, September 6th, 1878, by the late Elder F. A. Chick. They were consistent and beloved members of the church to the time of their death. Their home was a home to all Old Baptists, and they were always ready and anxious to do all in their power for the cause they loved so well.

JAMES E. HUBBARD.

MEETINGS.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFIT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102 Seattle, Wash.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.

Compiled by Silas H. Durand and P. G. Lester. $1.00 per single copy, $10.00 per dozen. Send orders to Mildred Durand Gordy, 1011 Vaughn Street, Ann Arbor, Mich., or Elder P. G. Lester, 826 Virginia Ave., Roanoke, Va.

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ELDER S. HASSELL.

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OF

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

BY J. E. BEEBE & COMPANY

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To whom all letters should be addressed, and money orders made payable.

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Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 91. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1923. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Dec. 9, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am of a reminiscent mind to-day, and feel like penning a few thoughts as I think of the years gone by. On this day sixty-one years ago, at the home of Elder J. G. Jackson, Shelby County, Indiana, I opened my mouth for the first time in public to speak in the name of my blessed Lord and Master. I was yet in my eighteenth year, and a more backward, bashful boy never lived. It was not of choice on my part, but of necessity, which I trust was laid upon me. No poor mortal ever fought it more earnestly and determinedly than I, and deeply felt the "woe is me." I would gladly have been obedient to the call could I felt it possible to preach in a God-honoring way; but me, a poor ignorant boy, it was impossible. But the time came when I could no longer forbear, and I arose, with fear and trembling, and read the hymn beginning,

"The Lord my Shepherd is,
I shall be well supplied;
Since he is mine and I am his,
What can I want beside?"

I have often thought a more true and suitable hymn for the occasion could not be found. What I said I do not know, but I do know there were many tearful eyes, and a great burden that was crushing me to the earth was gone, and it seemed to me that I had come into a new world; there was rest unto my soul. In the sixty-one years I have passed through many deep trials and conflicts, but the dear Lord gave me a dear good wife, an helpmeet indeed, who was ready to share with me the joys and sorrows, the many privations (and they were many) without murmur or complaint. I feel now that few persons (if any) ever made more or greater sacrifices for the church's sake than she did. Not every poor servant has been blessed that way; but while our pathway has been strewn with many thorns and rough places, there are many bright spots in memory, and much to be thankful for. I have never sought the care of any church, but when a call was made have considered it prayerfully, though I have not always accepted the call. I have been blessed in serving churches that were in peace; no discord. Never, to my recollection, were there motions made but what were carried unanimously. I freely confess I have many faults, but there is one that is cruel as

the grave which I am free from: jealousy, for there is no one who enjoys having our most gifted brethren come among us more than I do, and there is not one real called gospel minister that I have ever heard but what excelled me. I have often felt cast down and discouraged with myself because I could not preach better, but glad to hear them that could. I feel to-day just a boy in strength, and as dependent as I was sixty-one years ago, though I can truly say the blessed gospel truths I have tried to preach I feel I have a deeper and more sacred reverence for. During the first twenty-five years of my serving churches in Indiana I do not think I received more than twenty-five dollars. The churches there, though composed of excellent Baptists, gave no consideration to the pastor's needs. As a result the old Elders died poor, leaving nothing for their families, while the members did. No mention was ever made of such a thing by the old faithful Elders. It now seems to me every member ought to know that no one could conduct any business (farming or anything else) successfully and give one-third or one-half or more of his time, and if they really and truly love the cause they are willing to bear some of the burden and make some sacrifice, according to the gospel rule laid down. If we have ministered to you in spiritual things is it not clear we should receive of your earthly things? On New Year's night, 1880, we were from home; at midnight we received word our house, with all its contents, was burned, and not a dollar of insurance. No one could tell as to its origin, as we left home in the morning, leaving but little fire in the fireplace. In 1883, with a hired hand and other help, we put up a levee, planted a crop of corn, and on, or about, October 1st such a downpour of rain fell as had never been known at that time of the year. The levee broke, my entire crop was destroyed, together with three head of cattle, and not an ear of corn did I get out of twenty-seven acres. As a result in 1884 I gave up everything, a physical and financial wreck, and sometimes felt forsaken of God and man. In the year 1886 I was at the home of the late Elder White; my head and heart were bowed down, I was crushed; he said to me one day, You, I think, would like to read Toplady on predestination. I took it, and went alone to a grove to read it. It was written nearly a hundred years before. I can never express the great comfort it was to me, and confirmation of my faith in that blessed, God-honoring doctrine. I could see the hand of God in all the deep trials through which my pathway lay; all was for some wise purpose, and for good, though blind unbelief is sure to err and scan his work in vain. It took all to move me from Indiana, and the dear Lord has supplied our needs; nothing came by chance. The fall of 1885 found us penniless, and, it seemed, friendless. In November I went to the manager of a large factory in an adjoining county to get a position (anything I could do). He frankly told me he thought I had a higher calling. I went home much cast down, and after some hesitation arranged for a tour among the churches south, leaving home about January 1st, 1886, with only two dollars, feeling that if the Lord sent me he would provide. My first appointments were in eastern Indiana. I told not a person of my poverty; I felt to hope I had a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother, and that he would not forsake me. I had two appointments in Ohio, then, for the first time, in Kentucky, Alabama, Georgia,

North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware and Pennsylvania, a trip of more than five thousand miles, and the Lord did provide, and I could truly say, as the dear disciple said, We lacked nothing. The sweet enjoyment of the meetings I can never forget. I was favored with the company of dear old Elders Mitchell and Respess for a week, which is precious in memory yet. My visit to Pennsylvania was by request. I had been commended to them and they to me. I returned home the last of March, and found all well. I continued to travel during the spring and summer, and by request attended the Mt. Salem Association, near Walker, Kentucky, the last of August; then on to the Mt. Pleasant and Licking, in this county, and by special request to the Lobo meeting, October 1st. Six churches in the Juniata Association called me to serve them, wrote me a house would be furnished me, and something to live on, but I felt no exercise of mind to go. They wrote me the second time, but I had to decline, though I had not the care of a church. While I appreciated their kind offer of temporal needs, I could not accept in order to get that much needed necessity. About November 1st we rented two upper rooms at Ludlow, Kentucky, across the river from Cincinnati, bought a few pieces of second-hand furniture, and went to housekeeping. It was not long before two or three churches had called me to serve them. While they were small in membership, they, from the first, ministered to our necessities, and with the sewing my true and faithful wife did we managed to get along. The latter part of 1889 two churches here called me to serve them, and in February, 1890, we moved to Henry County. The churches furnished the house and paid the rent. My health had improved and I was delighted to again go to work and earn something, and with the help of the good brethren, and our own labor and economy, we were again able to get us a comfortable little home in old age, yet my family underwent many privations in the land of plenty that ought not to have been. Many days I traveled without a meal in order that my family might be better supplied. It is too true that brethren become covetous and a few bear the burden of expense.

This was not written for my benefit, for my labor is nearing the end, but some poor fellow-laborer may be comforted to know there is another one who has been down in the depths, though the half has not been told. God is my judge.

Sincerely,

P. W. SAWIN.

EAST ROCHESTER, N. Y., Feb. 25, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER KER:—I am sending you a letter I received a few years ago from our late pastor, Elder John McConnell, with the hope that others may receive the edification and comfort in the truth so clearly set forth that it gives me; that is, if you see fit to give it a place in our dear old SIGNS, which is all the preaching I now have. I have a strong desire, dear brother, to tell you how much I enjoy your editorials, and also brother Lefferts', and, in fact, all letters printed in the SIGNS, and truly feel to say, Amen, to all. Oh to grace how great a debtor daily I am constrained to be. If I live to reach the sixth of next June I will be eighty-three years of age, a monument of God's mercy, daily realizing my absolute dependence upon the sovereignty of God in all things by and through our Lord Jesus Christ, the way, the truth and the life, the head over all

things to the body (church), who hath immortality, and our only hope, wrought in us by his almighty power in our hearts crying, Abba, Father. The power that worketh in us mightily who believe, is the same power that raised Christ from the dead, our resurrection and life. To believe in his name is the work of God. We are created in Christ Jesus, and called with an holy and effectual calling.

Dear brother, I felt when perusing again Elder McConnell's letter that I would send it to you, and if you thought proper you could insert it in the SIGNS. When I commenced this writing it was only to send his letter, but a strong desire possessed me to write my appreciation and indorsement of the editorials, and of the love, fellowship and sound doctrine so clearly set forth and so truly maintained in the SIGNS.

In love and fellowship, your brother in hope,

THEODORE E. WELCH.

NEW YORK, N. Y., July 2, 1916.

DEAR BROTHER WELCH:—Some months ago I received a letter from you, at a time when I was in great distress of mind from business cares, and I could not settle myself long enough to write to any one. Of late I have had you in mind very often, but some way have been unable to put my thoughts in writing. Writing business letters is not difficult to me, it is not to express my mind, but when it comes to writing to one of the Lord's people I am oppressed with a sense of insufficiency and poverty in everything worth while communicating, so I usually put off the attempt until "the time of the singing of birds is come," and wait for "a morning without clouds." The way I would have it to be, never comes, for it is written, "He that observeth the wind, shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds, shall not reap." Notwithstanding the many proofs I have had that God's ways are not my ways, nor his thoughts my thoughts, I forget his law, Lean not unto thine own understanding. At meeting to-day sister Slawson kindly allowed me to read the letter you recently wrote her. Your expressed love for us all touched me deeply, especially your affectionate reference to me. Every one is good and kind to me, particularly those I have most sinned against. How wonderfully the Lord has blessed us as a church, causing us to dwell together in a quiet habitation. While many of our neighbors are unable to meet with us regularly, by reason of distance, yet unity of spirit in the bond of peace makes us every one members one of another, and together we worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" The love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us, manifests itself in mutual love. From the consciousness of God's love toward us must necessarily spring mutual love toward each other. As no man hath seen God at any time, it follows, therefore, that we can only know God, live, move and have our being in him, in unity of spirit. Only by a spiritual bond can we have the assurance that he abides with and in us, and this spiritual bond is love. As God is love itself, and all love radiates from him, so must unity of the church with him be manifested hereby: he works in them as the Spirit of love, that love reigns in them as the animating principle. Only through love can we become conscious of God, can we be convinced of the reality of his being and

nature, love being in itself the product of his nature. Hence, the more a man's heart is shut against love, the more is he sunk in selfishness, the less can he know of God. But that love to God which is inspired by the revelation of God's love to us, and has God for its source, can only prove itself as such by the mutual love of the brethren for each other, since this is its necessary working and effect. That God, through his indwelling and vitalizing love, dwells in believers, means the same as that his Spirit dwells in them, for his Spirit is itself the fountain of love, the Spirit which dwells and works in God himself as love. We cannot be conscious of a fellowship of spirit with him, if love, the mark of that Spirit, does not show its living power among us. "Hereby know we that we dwell in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit."

July 3rd. I was interrupted last evening, and had to defer writing further until now. Have written what I firmly believe is the truth, though I am not so fully persuaded that my writing or preaching is in demonstration of the Spirit. "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things." I am not a good man, and no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. Without controversy, the gift of the Holy Ghost is to believers the pledge of abiding fellowship with Christ. But there is much which falsely claims to be from that Spirit, and the Scriptures clearly define between that which serveth him not, to the difference between its genuine operations and such as are only pretended, a deceptive imitation. The deceitfulness of false teachers is in their profession of enjoying special illumination of that Holy Spirit, who is the source of life, without which no man can testify of Christ. From the beginning, corrupt human nature has mingled its disturbing influence in all the manifestations of the Holy Spirit; to genuine inspiration there has been opposed a false one, the leading of the Spirit of truth has always resulted in making manifest the works of the devil. Enthusiasm for the truth is counterfeited by enthusiasm for error, delusion and fanaticism have their own prophets, false prophets mingle with the true. Error in doctrine, proclaimed with all ardor of false inspiration, works through the influence of that enthusiasm upon the popular mind. Hence there is needed some decisive test, whereby the saints may be secured against the influence of this deception. This is furnished by the apostle in 1 John iv. 1–6. Under the term "spirit" the apostle comprehends two things outwardly alike, but differing in their essential nature: true and false inspiration, and it is his special object to warn against the delusion of false prophets, and to furnish a test by which these may be recognized. Hence he commands us to try the spirits as a way of distinguishing the true from the false, or that which proceeds from a holy nature and from a corrupt one. So he preaches Jesus, the way, the truth, the life. To acknowledge Jesus as the Christ is synonymous with acknowledging him as he appeared in the flesh, the eternal Word in our flesh, the eternal Fountain of life revealing itself in human form. To separate the only begotten Son of God from Him who has appeared in the flesh, to obscure the unity between the divine nature and its manifestation in the flesh, is that point of controversy around which gather all the vital questions of the present time. Faith in this fundamental truth is the victory that overcomes the world. Differences of view re-

specting Scripture interpretation, mistakes of understanding most of the evils which often threaten the sundering of christian fellowship, should not hinder us from recognizing the image of the heavenly in those whose faith and profession have their root in the belief that Jesus is the Son of God. They who are given this belief are in fellowship with God, are partakers of the divine nature, are animated and led by the Spirit of God, and by that Spirit will be sanctified wholly, body, soul and spirit. The special object of the apostle is to warn us against all manifestations of that spirit which is not of God. In all such manifestation is recognized the spirit of antichrist, whose aim is self-exaltation, and whose spirit is already in the world. To many professed preachers of the gospel the Son of God is little more than the historical Christ, a vague, indefinite form. They content themselves with the contemplation of a mere ideal which has no part in life, never becomes flesh and blood, conceptions having no contact with the earthly and actual.

But I am prolonging this letter unreasonably. I want to assure you that we have you in our heart and mind, that our fellowship is with you and all who so often question,

"'Tis a point I long to know;
(Oft it causes anxious thought,)
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

"Could I joy his saints to meet,
Choose the ways I once abhorred,
Find at times the promise sweet,
If I did not love the Lord?"

Love to God is in itself an invisible act, seen only by Him with whom we have to do, but the effects of this love, as they appear outwardly, are seen by us. True love to God must be determined by the presence or absence of brotherly love. How can I believe that one truly loves God in whom I cannot see the visible evidences of this love? The visible, in such a case, bears witness of the absence of the invisible. The inseparable connection between love to God and brotherly love is due to sonship, equal relation of all to God, relationship of life to one another. "And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him." "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death."

Kindly assure sister Welch of our love and fellowship. This letter is for her as well as yourself. I can sympathize with you in your financial troubles, perhaps I have suffered more seriously than you in the past two years. In various ways the Lord shows us hard things, hard to understand and be reconciled to as being among the "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." But God is his own interpreter and he will make it plain.

Affectionately your brother in faith and hope,

JOHN McCONNELL.

HAMMOND, West Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I will write again to you, for the letters I have received from you were good news to me, and I appreciated them, and would be glad to meet you, yet I feel so little and unworthy at times that I am ashamed, and wonder why I would leave my home to go among the Old School Baptists and try in my weak way to preach to them,

yet when I get home for awhile then it is that I get in a frame that I want to go and be with the Primitive Baptists, because they are the only people who suit me in their belief and way of order. Dear brother, we see that there are some who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and they that love him will hear his sayings, and that is the evidence that they do love him; so by their fruits ye shall know them. Dear brother, will not wise men love correction, while those who are not wise will be angry and peeved? So then by their fruits ye shall know them. The Lord Jesus Christ was a man of sorrows, and when he was reviled he reviled not again, and in his humility and meekness overcame his enemies, and he did not use carnal weapons, but by his Spirit of meekness in doing the will of his heavenly Father he overcame the world and destroyed him who is the king of darkness, the devil, and gained the victory over death, hell and the grave, and arose from the dead the third day for his children. He said unto Peter, after he (Peter) had cut off the ear of one of his (Christ's) enemies, that he would not suffer him (Peter) to fight any more with carnal weapons. Neither will he to-day let his children fight with carnal weapons; that is, with a fleshly spirit; while those who are not his children fight with carnal weapons, which is a fleshly spirit, and they show and prove they are not the children of God. By their fruit they seek to justify themselves, but they will not be corrected. God's children love peace and order and doctrine in the house of the Lord, because the faithful are the house of God, the household of faith, and these are the children of God, and they will serve the Lord Jesus Christ, because his Spirit is within them. The grace of God hath appeared; it teaches them to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and counsels them to live soberly and righteously in this evil world. Then we see what the grace of God will do to them to whom it hath appeared, and by their fruits ye shall know them. Then where the grace of God hath not appeared they will go on in their own justification, fighting with carnal weapons, because they have not learned what the grace of God will do for his children. When you rebuke a wise man for his error will he not take it with humble spirit and feel thankful afterwards and love you for gently reproving him, while the scorner will seek to justify himself, for he loves not the order of God's house? This is why I hope I love to be with the true Primitive Baptists, those who want a clean house, though they be few in number, for the promise is to the few: Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Dear brother, we know there have been some in all ages who cared nothing for the truth, although they were among God's children, and who bring up an evil report of the land, like those did who went to spy out the land of Canaan. Why did they? It was because they were not in possession of the good Spirit, and they who have not the Spirit of Christ will to-day bring up an evil report, a fleshly report. There have been a few, a remnant, who have always stood for the truth, for doctrine, for gospel order, and who contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. One might, ask, What was that faith which was delivered unto the saints? We should live peaceably with all men inasmuch as in us lies, be kind, be sober, speak evil of no man, preach the word, and do unto others as you would have them to do unto you. That faith was the gift of God, and in

it was embraced election, predestination and effectual calling, which is an holy calling, which is not according to our works, but according to God's purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. This faith once delivered unto the saints taught them to be humble and to bear one another's burdens, to be gentle and bear with each other, to obey the gospel of the Son of God and not to seek to justify themselves; and even if any had a quarrel they should forgive one another in meekness and in love. Why, then, dear brother, should I not want to be among this kind of people, who are the true Primitive Baptists? There are those who claim to be Primitive Baptists, yet by their works they deny it. A man is not justified by his word, but by his works, and the faith which was once delivered unto the saints will produce faith, but man's works will not produce good works. The faith that was once delivered unto the saints is the only one that will stand the test when tried. When God's true children are tried as by fire they will stand, for they are the gold, and gold always stands the fire; the dross cannot, neither can the hay, wood and stubble. Gold shines brighter after it is tried, so do they who are possessed of the Spirit of the most high God, and they can stand the fiery trials which are to try them. They will endure all the temptations, while those who only claim to be Primitive Baptists, and are not, but are only possessed of the flesh, cannot endure trials. God's children understand that they themselves cannot endure and stand and fight the enemy, but that there is a God in heaven who will fight their battles for them and give them the good of the land, which is faith, love, joy and peace in the Holy Ghost. Those who are only possessed of the fleshly spirit do not believe that God will fight the battle, and go about it themselves with carnal weapons, and make a complete failure. God has qualified his children with the spiritual weapons of faith, love, joy, patience. That faith which was delivered unto the saints they were not in the possession of until it was given them of the Lord.

JAMES W. LINN.

CALALLEN, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I notice that my subscription is past due. Inclosed find a check for five dollars, two of it for my subscription for another year, and the three dollars to apply to the contribution department to aid in sending the SIGNS to others. I have been thinking for the past month or so that when I sent in my subscription I would write a few lines for the SIGNS, but kept putting it off, thinking I would have something to tell later on. But this morning finds me just a small speck of humanity, trembling in the presence of an almighty God. Oh how small and unworthy I feel. But on the other hand, how rich, how great, how wonderful and perfect is the great God I hope for Christ's sake has pardoned my sins; and the only way I have of basing my hope at all, is that I love the brethren, who seem to be so much better than I am, and I hope and pray that I may always feel humble and at their feet. I am now past thirty-four years of age, and feel myself to be like the children of Israel when the enemy was behind them, and the Red Sea in front of them: they knew not what to do. I feel that way this morning, and have for some time past. Oh what does the Lord want me to do? What is right? I remember back twenty-two years ago, when I was twelve years old, that one

morning I slipped a copy of the SIGNS in my bosom and took it with me as I went to turn the cows in the pasture. I stole away in the woods and began to read, and the first piece I read was an experience, for those were the kind of pieces I would always hunt. This experience was a travel from nature to grace, and call to the ministry. As I finished it, something seemed to impress me that some day that would be my lot, and that impression has followed me off and on all these years. The Lord has not called me, but for the past four years I have been going through many hard trials, and could only hope that old Satan was tempting me, and I would pray God to give me strength to stand it all, for unless he is my shield and helper I realize that I would fall; for in me there is no strength. I have had many dreams, and have seen most of them come to pass, which makes me rejoice that it may be the Lord is in the matter after all. I well remember one night when an Old Baptist, in belief, and myself were camped out on a hill, where we had been working a bee-yard, that I dreamed I was lying in the road, with my feet south and head north, with a rope around my neck extending up towards heaven out of sight, then a newspaper appeared before me with the headlines that E. B. Ault, of Calallen, Texas, had committed suicide, and went on to give a sketch of my life, &c. When I had read about half of it I thought I caught the rope with my left hand, and stretched my right hand up towards heaven, and cried that I would preach Christ. At that instant my right leg from my hip down to my toes began to leap and praise God. I awoke, and it was still leaping and praising God, and I lay there in wonder at it, for I had no control over it at all. After it stopped I got up and got a drink and came back to bed, but sat up and could not keep from crying. The man with me awoke, and asked if I was taking cold. I said, No, I just had a bad dream, and told it to him. The next day I asked him to promise he would tell no man; I already began to doubt. Previous to this incident, I had gotten into an argument with another Baptist about whether this body of ours had any part or lot in the matter. He argued it did not; that it was just a lump of clay, and that when we died it returned to the dust, from whence it came, and would be no more; that it was no part of us, just merely a house that we lived in. I argued to the contrary, that this body is a part of us, and this same body is the body that will be changed to a spiritual body. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. Unto who? You who have had the new birth, the change from death unto life, these are the subjects that are made new creatures in Christ Jesus. I cannot believe that Jacob and Esau represent the inner and outer man, as some have argued, but that Jacob represents the Lord's people, and Esau the nonelect, for the Lord said he loved the one and hated the other, neither being born. We know that Christ came in the form of flesh here on earth, to redeem his people; he lived a perfect life in the flesh to redeem fallen man, and accomplished it all to a jot and tittle. Flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom of heaven, but shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye, at the last day. There will be those on earth at that day who will not see death, for they will be changed at the coming of Christ, when he comes to gather his people home.

I had better close, for I have already

written more than I ever thought I would, and have just rambled along telling what came into my mind, and if it is not according to the teachings of the Bible cast it into the waste-basket, and all will be well with me.

We have a little band of brethren here, but have found that our church was constituted in disorder, about two years ago, and now want to get straight, so we are patiently waiting, hoping that some day we will be given a light to follow that will lead us right. We still meet twice a month and sing a few hymns, the first and third Sundays, and are glad to have all meet with us who are interested, especially the ministers. All these things I believe work to our good, but oh they seem hard to bear while we are going through with them. Will be glad to hear from any Old Baptists who are figuring on moving to the coast country.

Asking an interest in your prayers, I remain, your unworthy brother, saved by grace, if saved at all.

E. B. AULT.

ATLANTIC, N. C., March 8, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have been sick all the week, and have been the most of the time right in the house. To-day I have read the SIGNS for March 1st, and have enjoyed all of it, but most especially your editorial in answer to sister Priddy. Your views accord exactly with my own. Sometimes I have treated on the parable in Matthew xiii. 33: "Another parable spake he unto them: The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." I can get nothing out of this but the fact that there are three measures of meal, or the parable means nothing. These three measures of meal are soul, body, and spirit. These are the proper components of man. The kingdom of heaven is Christ in the Spirit. When man is born again this kingdom is hid in this man, all of him, soul and body and spirit. Now if a woman takes leaven, hides it in three measures of meal, well mixes it, puts sufficient water, and heat to cause a leavening of that mixture, can she or any other person tell which of these measures of the meal the leaven operates on first? Will they not all be leavened together? Even so the kingdom of heaven hid in the man will operate on the whole man, soul and body and spirit, until the whole is leavened into a fitness for the Master's use. The first feeling sense of sin in my heart was felt sixty-six years ago, when I was four years old. Then the gospel ministry was presented to me, and I was given to feel how solemn a thing it was to bear the ark of the Lord. I am now within ten days of seventy years old, and that solemn feeling concerning the kingdom of God has never left me, but it has grown on me to this day. If there is any part of me, soul, body or spirit, which is not affected by this solemn awe I am in because of it, I am not aware of it, and cannot tell which part it is. I am continually aware of an enemy to all that is good dwelling in me, and I do not know just where he dwells, only in me. He appears to trouble me all alike, within and without. I am sure that he is my own carnal nature. I feel that he is bound. He has not yet been allowed to run to such an excess as to be a disgrace in the house of the Lord, but he has brought me very low, and at times it has been hard for me to understand how one could have dealings with such an enemy and be a servant of the living God. Thus I get all crossed up with this indwelling thing. As badly as I am made

to hate this thing, it looks as if I could cut it off if it was on the outside, but he has such a deep hold on me that I cannot get rid of him, and he is stronger than I. The wrestlings of these sixty-six years, especially of the last fifty years, since I received a hope in the Lord Jesus Christ and his blood, convince me that there is no good thing dwelling in my flesh. I do not believe that the word "flesh," in this connection, means this body, but that old carnal nature which is forever the enemy of God, not subject to his law, neither indeed can be. When this body dies it shall live again, but this old carnal nature, enemy of God, shall never live again. The kingdom of heaven is hid in the whole of the three measures until the whole three are leavened. All leavened together, at the same time, and alike, to be one new man in Jesus Christ. Not the soul, not the body, not the spirit, but the soul, body and spirit; the whole man. He it is who is born the first time, and the again birth is received by the same man who received the first birth. It appears to me that this is true, or language means nothing. I enjoyed and indorsed your letter. The Lord continue to bless you.

Your brother, I hope, in the Lord Jesus Christ, L. H. HARDY.

LAGRANGE, Ga., Feb. 24, 1923.

DEAR MR. LEFFERTS:—This is to let you know that my mother, Mrs. G. M. Edwards, is very sick at this time, and wishes you to publish same in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so that her correspondents may understand her long delay in not writing. She also asks an interest in the prayers of all the saints. The SIGNS is a great comfort to papa and mamma, and they rejoice at the coming of each number.

Your friend,
VERA EDWARDS McGINTY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1923.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MATTHEW XXIII. 37, 38.

"O JERUSALEM, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."

Brother A. T. Handley, of Oakman, Ala., has asked us to present our views on this passage of Scripture. Inasmuch as we have had some thought on the matter, we are willing to give such as we have for the consideration of our readers. There is never any failure in the Lord's work. Although the above text is often used by Arminians as proof that the Lord wants those to be saved who refuse to come to him, the passage means nothing of the kind. All that the Father has given to the Son come to him. Not one of them is lost. His word never returns unto him void, but always accomplishes the pleasure of God, and prospers in the thing unto which he sends it. In the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth his will is done, and none can stay his hand or dispute with him. If one will take care to read this entire twenty-third chapter of Matthew, it will be seen that Jesus addresses not only his disciples, but the multitude as well, that he names all the marks peculiar to the Pharisees, or self-righteous class, that he denounces woe upon them because they

are blind to their own sins while claiming all the time to have kept the law. He plainly tells them that they have been paying tithe of mint and anise and cummin, but the weightier matters of the law, such as judgment, mercy and faith, they have entirely ignored. He pronounces them to be full of extortion and excess while striving to make clean the external life, that they appear beautiful outwardly, but are within full of all uncleanness. These same self-righteous characters think themselves to be better than the generations gone before them, in that they build the tombs of the prophets slain by those former generations and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous martyred in the days of their ancestors, saying, "If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets." But Jesus tells them they are no better than their forefathers had been, and that they would commit the same horrible deeds themselves, for, "Behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city." Further, he pronounces the doom of the Jewish nation, in that all the righteous blood shed upon the earth from Abel unto Zacharias was to be required, the sum total of it, at the hands of the generation then living in the days of Jesus. The final accounting was to be demanded in that very day when the Jewish nation should be left desolate and dispersed throughout the Gentile world. Thus, the whole of this twenty-third chapter of Matthew shows that, though the Jews had been under the law of Moses for about fifteen hundred years, they were no nearer living up to it and obeying it than when they were first placed under it at the time Moses gave it to them after having received it of God in Mt. Sinai. Jesus, in addressing Jerusalem, and in saying that often he would have gathered her children and she would not, never meant that he was disappointed, or that Jerusalem had acted any differently from what he had known she would, but he had reference to the law of Moses, in which God had said to Israel, If you will I will. By referring back to the chapters in Exodus, Numbers and Leviticus, where are stated minutely all the things of the law, it will be seen that all the blessings of that legal covenant were contingent upon the obedience of Israel to the commands of the law, and that all the punishments named therein followed conditionally upon their disobedience. This summing up of the law may be found in Leviticus, twenty-sixth chapter, to the effect that if Israel walked in the law and kept its commands, Israel was to be blessed with rain in due season, with fruitfulness of the field and plenty of bread. They were to dwell in safety, without fear either of beasts or of men. The tabernacle of God was to dwell in their midst, and he was to walk among them as their God, and they, his people. On the other hand, if they did not do all these commands, and if they broke the covenant, God would appoint over them terror and consumption. He would make their sowing vain, their enemies should slay them, the pride of their power should be broken; famine, pestilence and war should be their portion. It must be plainly seen, then, that in the law of Moses God said to Israel, If you will I will. Jesus, therefore, said concerning Jerusalem (the center of Israel's government and worship), How often would I have gathered the children, and ye would not. It was not their will to

obey the covenant given them by Moses, therefore they did not reap the blessings promised, but did, in full measure, obtain the punishments threatened for disobedience. The fifteen hundred years of Israel under the Mosaic law proved conclusively that is not in the nature of man, that it is not consistent with the human will, to walk obediently to divine precepts. The law was weak through the flesh, and it was therefore impossible that righteousness should come by the law. Israel's history, which is the record over and over again of sin and condemnation, established the fact that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified in the sight of God. The law had to be given in order to show this, not so much to show it to carnal Israel, who were blind and could not see it, but for our learning, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Those things written aforetime were not written so much for the edification of those who were inspired to write them, as for our instruction, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope. When God gave the law to Moses for him to give to Israel, he knew then, and had known from eternity, what the outcome should be. God knew that it was not within the capacity of man to measure up to the demands of a holy and righteous law. Further, it was not God's predestination that Israel should have kept the law, but it is was God's purpose to lay bare the depravity of human nature preparatory to the coming of Jesus and the bringing in of a better hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Had the Mosaic law been a success, from the human standpoint, there would have never been any need of a better covenant, for, verily, then man should have been sufficiently his own savior not to have needed any other power than himself to supply all his needs. The words of Jesus over Jerusalem do not signify that he had been disappointed at their failure to embrace the blessings promised them if they had kept the law, but his words testify openly to that failure on their part, and therefore he pronounces their just doom: "Your house is left unto you desolate." That is, the first covenant must be taken away in order to establish the second, or gospel covenant, that their kingdom as a nation among the nations of the earth must come to an end, their temple must be destroyed and themselves scattered everywhere. This glorious new covenant came not from Sinai by Moses' hand, but came manifestly to the heirs of glory in the blood of Christ. This, Jesus said, is the cup of the new testament in my blood, which was shed for many for the remission of sins. This blood of the new covenant purges the consciences of the children of God from the dead works of the old covenant to serve the living God, delivering them from the oldness of the letter to walk in the newness of the Spirit. This new covenant, not on tables of stone, but on the fleshly tables of the circumcised heart, says not, I will if you will; but, I will and they shall. I will, says God, be their God, and they shall be my people. This people of the gospel covenant are a willing people in the day of God's power. Their delight, by the grace of God, is in the law of God, and they walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Thus, the house of Israel was desolated, and the kingdom taken from them and given to the Gentiles, who by the Spirit and power of the resurrection of Christ do bring forth fruit unto holiness; but when the fulness of God's elect among the Gentiles shall have been gathered into the new covenant life and bless-

edness, then shall the kingdom revert to Israel, who shall then, by revelation, be taught that salvation is of grace, and not of works, by the same mighty power which has revealed this in the Gentiles. Then shall Israel say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," according to the last verse of the chapter under consideration. L.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in April (29th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

My dear aunt, **Rebecca J. Yerkes,** entered into rest October 22nd, 1922, in Philadelphia, Pa., in which city she had lived the greater part of her life. Aunt Rebecca was born and lived all her early life in Southampton, Pa., and was a member of the Southampton Baptist Church, having been baptized by Elder Wm. J. Purington, April 13th, 1879. She honored all her days, by her walk and conversation, the profession she had made. I think of this dear aunt as one of the finest characters I ever knew. I often marvelled at the stern integrity of a character, combined with such meekness, such humility and such saintliness. About sixteen years ago Aunt Rebecca fell and fractured a hip. She never recovered from the effect of the fall, and was obliged to use crutches the rest of her life. Later her eyesight failed, and for years she had been nearly blind. In all these afflictions the nearest approach to complaining I ever heard her give expression to was, "I do not want to murmur, for I have so many blessings, but sometimes the way looks dark." In her afflictions her dear pastor, Elder Durand, was a comfort and blessing to her. He visited her often, even after his own health and strength had failed, and we who loved her felt an increasing love for him because of his faithfulness to her. She greatly missed his visits after he was called home. Aunt Rebecca was a favorite with two generations of nieces and nephews, who took to her what cheer they could from the outside world. Her little world for many years was in her rooms, where she was faithfully and lovingly cared for by her sister. Aunt Rebecca had another fall October 19th. She was never entirely conscious during the few days she lived, but when one who loved her much hummed in her ear,

"Jesus, the very thought of thee
With sweetness fills my breast;
But sweeter far thy face to see
And in thy presence rest,"

She smiled sweetly and nodded assent. That which we call death seems to me to be so much more to be desired than life, that I cannot grieve for the dear one who is "gone from the evil to come," but I grieve for the dear sister who is left sad and lonely. Only those who know what Aunt Rebecca's wise counsel and loving sympathy meant to me, can understand my loss.

Services were conducted by Elder B. F. Coulter, pastor of Salem Baptist Church, Philadelphia, at the home of her nephew. Interment private, at Southampton.

AMY R. BARNSLEY.

James Harvey Rower, of Kalida, Ohio, was born July 1st, 1850, and died, February 13th, 1923, making his stay on earth 72 years, 7 months and 11 days. He had suffered much the last twelve or fifteen years, yet he seemed to enjoy life, and bore his suffering patiently. He spent much of the time in his last years reading the Bible, books, church papers and all reading that contained spiritual food. I have seen him feasting many times on articles that were plain and easy to be understood, but he was not in sympathy with questions that gendered strife, but rather edification. Many years ago he felt deeply convicted of sin, thinking he would die before he saw another sun rise; but before another morning the Savior appeared unto him and showed him that he had died for his sins and put them away forever, and he was made happy in the Savior's love. His life many times seemed to be in harmony with those blessed characters mentioned in the ninety-first and ninety-second Psalms. In the ninety-fifth Psalm were also many expressions of praise to God which were cheering to the one departed. We who saw father cold in death knew he suffered much at the last, but his face was lighted with a smile, which seemed to say that in his last moments he had a glimpse of a higher and better place. He and his wife journeyed together for fifty-two years. To their union were born five children, two preceding him in death. He leaves, besides his wife, one son, at home; two daughters: Alice, of Chicago, and Mrs. Walter Cory, of Frankfort, Ohio. His relatives and friends will miss him much. He was of much help to the church of his membership, and his advice was always of such a nature as to bind together. His example was good to follow, and he was well informed as to what the Baptists believe. He helped much with the financial affairs of the church. He served his town as a mem-

ber of the School Board, Trustee, Justice of the Peace and Land Appraiser, and also served as County Commissioner for about seven years, and was well liked.

HIS SON.

IN his infinite wisdom the Lord has seen fit to call unto himself one whom we loved very dearly, **Mrs. Agnes Lindsay Miller,** born near Newark, Delaware, January 4th, 1840, and quit the shore of time February 10th, 1923, aged 83 years, 1 month and 6 days. She was a direct descendant of Thomas Griffith, who was the chosen pastor of the little church constituted in Wales in 1701, and who was the first pastor of the same church when it located at Welch Tract, where a long line of her ancestors have worshipped. She was married to Mr. George P. Miller, who preceded her to the grave many years. Two sons survive her: James Miller, and J. B. Miller, who is a member of the Welch Tract Church. Mrs. Miller possessed a personality that endeared her to rich and poor. Her broad, intellectual mind shed an atmosphere of strength and charm to those who loved the beautiful things of this life, but her sweetest charm was her abiding faith in her loving Savior. At the early age of fifteen she was shown her helpless condition, and in the years that followed she was surely brought through the furnace of affliction, but came forth as tried gold, fully established in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, ascribing all honor, majesty and power to him who led her through all the darkness into light. She was not given strength to follow her Savior in the lovely ordinance of baptism, but she was deeply taught in the things pertaining to the kingdom of the Most High. How I treasure her handclasp, and some little testimony of these precious things. I know she knows in full the sweetness of them now. She had been deprived of her sight for some time, but was tenderly and lovingly cared for by her son, J. B. Miller, and his family. Many will recall the hospitality of the home. Elders Eubanks and Coulter spoke comfortingly to the bereaved; she was laid beside her loved ones in the Welch Tract Cemetery.

LUCY A. SHRINER.

Mrs. Lydia M. Truitt, beloved wife of Mr. James B. Truitt, of Snow Hill, Maryland, departed this life in the sixty-fourth year of her age. She was a model wife and mother, and was loved and esteemed by all who knew her. She did not become united to the church, but loved the truth as it is in Jesus, and gladly listened to the preaching of the gospel. She is survived by her husband, one son and five daughters. Funeral services were held at her late home, after which her body was laid away in the Old School Baptist cemetery in Snow Hill, Maryland.

B. F. COULTER.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence, in Delmar, Del., March 1st, 1923, Roland A. Brumbley and Miss Susie A. Bailey, both of Delmar, Del.

By the same, at his residence in Delmar, March 8th, 1923, James J. Rittenhouse, of Clinton, N. J., and Miss Sophia Servis, of Baptisttown, N. J.

By the same, at the home of the bride's parents, at Southampton, Pa., March 10th, 1923, Joseph Whitaker Ennis, of Smyrna, Del., and Miss Jane Sillman Kulp, of Southampton, Pa.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, at his home, 200 Wicomico Street, Salisbury, Md., March 8th, 1923, Ernest P. Gordy and Rebecca E. Parsons, both of Salisbury, Maryland.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

C. Stevens, Ark., $1.00; I. H. Evans, Md., $1.00; J. T. McCoun, Ky., $4.00; Mrs. F. J. Grey, Tex., $3.00; Mrs. S. J. Clegg, Pa., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFIT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102 Seattle, Wash.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

LIGHT.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." Oh how wondrous is even this temporal light as it rises and spreads out over the earth, covering it as with a cloth of gold. Surely it is as the smile of heaven and the joy of the world. Solomon said, "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun." Light is life, and without light life could not long exist, and in its absence all beauty fades away. If all the earth were a wondrous garden carpeted with living green, with the most beautiful of flowers and trees everywhere, and with gay and graceful birds and butterflies flitting among them, and all light should be shut out, who could appreciate all this wondrous beauty? It would then be an empty void to us. Why? Because of the absence of light. Or, on the other hand, if all these beauties were spread about us and we were without light, then there would be no light for us, and the whole earth with all its beauties would be darkness before us and we would be unable to appreciate or to enjoy or to comprehend any of this beauty. As all things earthly were without form, and void, without this temporal light until God said, "Let there be light," so it is with things spiritual; they, too, are without form, and void, to us until God says, Let there be light, and then, as with the temporal light, there will be light, for this is not an invitation, it is a command; then we will see the plants of grace blooming and blossoming in beauty about us and bearing the peaceable fruits of righteousness, and the Scriptures, which without the spiritual light were without form, and void, are now everywhere filled with beauty. For now, as it is written, Romans xiii. 12, 13: "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying." For, as it is written in Peter ii. 9: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy na-

tion, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. iv. 6. Who hath called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Isaiah in the fifty-eighth chapter says, Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning and thine health shall spring forth speedily, and thy righteousness shall go before thee. The glory of the Lord shall be thy reward. It is written in Ephesians fifth chapter: Let no man deceive you with vain words, because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them, for ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. Walk as children of light. For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth. Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done in secret, but all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light. Wherefore, he saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. But this light has never shined in the heart of a poor sinner until God hath said, Let there be light, and then there will be light, for this is a command, and when he speaks it is finished; he commands and it stands fast. When this light first shines in our heart it is sometimes brighter and clearer than the noonday sun, and reveals not only the beauties which are here mentioned, but it also reveals to us the exceeding hatefulness of sin that dwells within us, also our own weaknesses and imperfections, and causes us to grow upward in grace and out of ourselves. Although this light is sometimes obscured, it never dies, and at times it springs up, as it were, a well of living water; and when the light is obscured, as it will sometimes be, even then, as with the temporal light, when the day is spent and the earth, however beautiful, is shrouded in darkness and all this beauty is shut out, we look above and behold the beauty of the visible heavens with their myriads of sparkling gems, many of which are great worlds. There is beauty there. Why? Because there is light there. So with the spiritual; sometimes when all is darkness about us we can look away and behold the most sublime and inspiring beauty in the Sun of Righteousness, and in the stars of the spiritual heavens, which are made bright and glorious with his robe of righteousness, which is white as the light; and when clad with this robe its glory is spread over us as a cloth of gold, covering our nakedness and our imperfections, clothing us with the warmth of love and the beauty of holiness. And as this light makes all things manifest, it is thus the source of all wisdom and knowledge and understanding. And when it is shed abroad in our hearts, it dispels the dark clouds of doubts and fears and envy and jealousy and hatred and confusion, for these are born of the veritable powers of

darkness. As we are journeying along life's rugged highway, and the sun has gone down and we are weary and seeking a place of rest, if we see a place where there seems to be room, but when we draw near there is no light shining forth, the house is in disorder and there seems to be unhappiness and confusion within, and discontent and sadness seem to be written on the faces of the occupants, we feel that there is no peace or rest there, and we are repelled. But if we journey on a little farther and see a place where the light shines forth and all seems peace and harmony and contentment, and the light of love illumines each countenance, and joy and peace which are born of understanding reign, we are attracted to this place and feel that here is a place of rest. For love and peace, which are born of the light, draw and attract us, but strife and confusion, which are born of the powers of darkness, repel us. Then let us as children of the light seek that peace which is born not of fear, but of understanding. Although here below we see only in part, we have a hope to see as we are seen and to know as we are known, when we are called to dwell in the fullness of the glory of Him who hath redeemed us and cleansed us by his own blood; then hope shall be changed into glad fruition and thanksgiving into praise. And when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then we shall dwell in the perfect light both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. Then we shall enter into the fullness of the glory of that perfect day where there are no clouds of darkness to obscure and confuse, there to bask in peace in the light and sunshine of his love. For Jesus Christ is the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

ALFRED E. TITUS.

TRENTON, N. J., Feb. 26, 1923.

VARINA, N. C., June 17, 1922.

DEAR BROTHER GEO. T. WHITWORTH: —If one so utterly unworthy as I may thus address you. Your letter of the 9th inst. was received in due time, and read and reread with much interest. I feel that I command no language to express how much I appreciated your kind and loving letter, and I feel as though I want and ought to write you something in reply, but as I sit here at the typewriter, feeling all dried up, as it were, something seems to repeat within me, over and over again, How shall a clean thing come out of an unclean? But, my dear brother, I often fear that we (the Primitive Baptists) acquire and cultivate the habit of complaining more than we should. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. His visage was more marred than any. On one occasion he went into the mountain and prayed all night. On another occasion he prayed until his sweat was (as it had been) great drops of blood. He suffered all manner of persecution, and finally prosecution between two thieves on the shameful tree of the cross. All this was not necessary to fit him for heaven, from whence he came, but was (may we not hope?) to redeem just such poor worms of the dust as you and me and others of like precious faith. Behold, I leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. It is written, He shall feed his sheep like a shepherd, carry the lambs in his arms and gently lead

them that are with young. You and I would never know the truth of this if we did not get to the place that it was necessary for us to be carried like lambs in his arms. You and I would never realize that his everlasting arm is underneath if we were not required to go down, down, down, until the last vestige of strength of ours had failed. Then when we feel his touch we are not so much distressed about who is our time or eternal Savior, for we know that he is the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. Our Lord said, I am the door of the sheepfold. It is said that in old times in the far east the shepherds from the opposite hills would sometimes bring their sheep down to water at the same hour, and that they would become so mixed that it would seem impossible to separate them, but when they were ready to go each shepherd called his own sheep by name, they knew his voice and followed him. Then at night they were gathered into the sheepfold, and the shepherd himself became the door. In doing so the sheep were shut in and the wolves, or enemies, were shut out. No doubt there came very dark and stormy nights, when the sheep could not see their shepherd, or know that he was still the door, with the wolves howling on the outside. I picture that the little lambs huddled close to their mother, and the mother trembled with fear. But what a comfort it must have been when day finally came, to find that the shepherd was still the door, and had been through all the dark and stormy night. Our dear Savior knew all this, and used it to illustrate how carefully and lovingly he watches over his flock in all their weary wanderings here. Our blessed Redeemer was but a sojourner here; he had no place to lay his head. You have, no doubt, long since learned that you are but a sojourner here. Perhaps you have never come to the place where you could say, This is a goodly place, I will rest here until my Savior comes for me. You have, no doubt, many times been on the top of the mountain, and with your spiritual field-glasses viewed your home beyond, and with unspeakable joy over the thought that your journey was nearing the end, and that within a few more fleeting days, or months, or years, you would be permitted to quit this mortal tenement of clay and go home. But as you are but a wayfaring man here, in the service of King Jesus, and since the King's business requires haste, you must journey on, and since the land of Canaan is a mountainous country, in order to reach the pinnacle beyond it is necessary that you pass through the valley, with its deep gorges, and almost insurmountable passages, which very much impedes your journey, and often night after night finds you there, with the storms sometimes raging and wild beasts howling about you. It is no wonder that at such times you are made to cry out, O Lord, are thy mercies clean gone forever? and to feel in your heart that it had been better had you never made any profession of religion than to have gotten yourself into such a predicament. But since you are a wayfaring man you can no more remain here than on the mountain that you last left. But just somehow (to your astonishment and surprise) you have reached the pinnacle beyond, and with your field-glasses you are straining every nerve to get a better view of your home beyond, and in spite of all the dark nights, with the thunderings of Sinai and the howling of the wild beasts, you say, Thank God I am a day's march nearer home. As you look back on the scenes of the past you

say, I know that my Redeemer lives, for surely none but the hand of the almighty God could ever deliver me from such an ordeal. So it will be in all your journey, until, within a few more days, or weeks, or months, or years, you will hear the voice of your adorable Redeemer saying, Child, your Father calls, come home. Notwithstanding the gates of the city to which you go are made of pearl, and the streets all paved with gold, you will be no more afraid of soiling it, for you will yourself be white like wool, white as snow, and all eternity will be none too long for you to live and praise your King.

My dear brother, judging from your letter to me, I feel sure that all I have written, and a thousand times more, will be true of you. But O my soul, shall I continue to hope that it will be thus with me? I know that I often pass through such valleys as I have tried to describe, and that sometimes I picture myself on the mountain, with my field-glass (the eye of faith) getting a fairly good view of my home beyond, and, like a little child, I find myself crying to go home.

My dear brother and friend, I realize that so far I have told you very little of myself, or my past life. I prefer to tell you of better things. I think I can truthfully say that I hate my own life. I am ashamed of it, and prefer to tell as little of it as possible. This is Sunday. I have been at home all day, and I have felt that I wanted some one to talk to, and have centered my fire on you, but I hope you will pardon me, for I sometimes feel that if I hold my peace the very rocks under my feet will cry out. If I write again, I may venture to tell you a little more of myself, but let us have that last, if at all. I will be glad to hear more from you, I enjoyed your letter much.

Affectionately yours,
W. J. STEPHENSON.

WICHITA FALLS, Texas, Dec. 28, 1908.

DEAR BROTHER G. T. WHITWORTH:—Yours of recent date duly received and carefully noted. You ask my views on the text, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."—Matt. v. 16. I venture to give a little of my views on this text, not that I have any special light on it, but to grant your request, knowing that you can make proper allowance for my folly, and look over my great imperfections. My mind is barren most of the time these days, and I now feel conscious that I will feel ashamed of my efforts to give what I have on the subject. I have always heard this text emphasized to justify many acts that are unauthorized in the Scriptures, and doubtless have myself referred to it as authority for voluntary so-called good deeds and outward worship. How ready I am to conclude that men's good actions, such as giving alms, helping the poor, attending meetings, leading in singing and prayer, carrying a sad countenance, abstaining from uncleanness and drunkenness, and living soberly, constitute the acts of letting their light so shine, &c., and who can dispute that these acts are good? and who will say that they are not conforming to God's word who follow after doing the things here mentioned? There is a tendency with me to praise those who thus live, and I sometimes speak to their face in praising them. But the text says, Let your light so shine that it may glorify, not you, nor your church, nor your preacher, nor your confession of faith, nor your ancestors, but your Father which is in heaven. This is a very delicate point, brother George, and I want to handle it carefully. I have always heard preaching which sounded about like this:

We ought to search the Scriptures to find what God commands us to do, and then we ought to follow or obey his commands, and thus let our light shine. I have also heard the remark that christians by neglecting their duties to God and the church put their light under a bushel. If we will stop now and reflect a moment we will readily see that if christians are left to thus dispose of themselves, or the command of God, that they are entitled to praise, themselves, for being clever enough to act according to the exhortation, for it is understood from the exhortation that God does not force the matter upon them, but that they may refuse and hide their light contrary to the purpose of God. So, then, "Your Father which is in heaven" is not justly entitled to the praise if it is left with his people to act upon their own volition. Again, these views of the subject would lead us to the conclusion that if one can hide his light, then without an especial intervention of the Lord all might do the same, and the church, which Jesus says in the verses preceding our text is the light of the world, could be hid; notwithstanding his assertion that "a city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." Let me drop back to the fourteenth verse: "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." Let me change the wording just a little: A city that will continue to sit. Mark the difference between "sit" and "set." Sit means to partially recline, and may change places, but the text says, "Is set on an hill." Set means permanently fixed, stationary, and "is set" is in the passive voice (grammar), and denotes that it did not set itself, but is set by some one else having control over it. Again, "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." The man is a sovereign of the candle. The candle does not light itself, nor can it put itself under a bushel, but it is lighted and put on a candlestick according to the wishes of the sovereign. If our candles should become unruly in our homes, and refuse to give light when we wanted them to do so, we would soon cease using or lighting them. Let me ask, What constitutes the good works mentioned in the text, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works"? I will first answer negatively, or showing what it is not. Jesus says, "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them." "Do not sound a trumpet before thee." "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray * * * that they may be seen of men." "Moreover, when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast."—Matt. vi. 1–16. Can we say that giving alms before men, praying upon the streets and in the synagogues, and fasting with sad countenance before men, is not good? Surely if our text enjoins it upon us to let our good works be seen before men, almsgiving, praying and fasting are excepted in the list of good works which we are to let men see.

But I must hasten. What are the good works? We must first consider that God is the great Sovereign, and his glory he will not give to another, nor his praises to graven images. If we voluntarily give alms, pray, or do any other commendable deed, it is from a selfish motive and brings praise or glory to ourselves. The great Sovereign keeps his glory for him-

self, therefore his commands to his people are as effective as his commands to Lazarus, the man with a withered hand, the man sick of the palsy, and all his commands to his disciples to follow him. So when he says, "Let your light so shine," their light shines before men, and they cannot help it, nor can they ever be able to see it, because the light shineth in the darkness and the darkness comprehended it not. The christian tries to keep his emotions and his exercises hid, feeling to be such a sinner that he is ashamed for people to think that he professes to try to live right. For to will is present with him, but how to perform that which is good he finds not. For the good that he would he does not, but the evil that he would not that he does. When an applicant for membership to the church tells of his or her sad state after they were awakened to a sense of it, you are made to rejoice and glorify your Father which is in heaven, for their light shines to you in their darkness, yet they are not able to see it as light. So you do not feel sorry for them that they have great doubts and fears, and that their troubles were and are great, and that they feel to be the chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints, but rather praise God for the light that you see in their darkness. Of course every child of God is led to do justly and love mercy, not because he finds it in the Scriptures, but from the love of God (charity), without which it would profit him nothing.

The subject is too large for me to exhaust in a letter, or even in a sermon, for I see much more that I wish I could write, but must desist. I would love to take up Job's case, Jeremiah's, David's, and others on the line, but this must suffice for the present.

Hoping to hear from you again soon, I am, as ever, J. J. MANLEY.

HARDING, W. Va., Feb. 11, 1923.

ELDERS KER AND LEFFERTS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel that I must express my appreciation of the truth of your statements regarding the Beebe family, in the closing of volume 90, and in the beginning of volume 91. The many readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES can testify of their faithfulness all those years in the ministration of the gospel through its columns. We believe that all the editors who so faithfully upheld the doctrine of God's sovereignty and salvation by grace, at the end of their lives could say, like Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." What a wonderful blessing it is to be enabled to keep the faith of God's elect, turning neither to the right nor to the left, but walking in that strait and narrow way cast up by God the Father and traveled all the way by his holy Son Christ Jesus, leaving precious footprints which his people by an eye of faith can discern. We believe those editors who were faithful so many years all died in the faith, as Paul said of those whom he enumerated as faithful in olden times. When Paul said he had kept the faith, he concluded by saying, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." "And not to me only." Surely Paul was leaving a sweet message on record for all of God's children to the end of time. "But unto all them also that love his appearing." The humble child of God learns by experience that he loves the appearing of the Lord, and longs for the day when he shall come again when nothing shall hide him from the wicked or the righteous. "For every eye shall behold him." I often thought

when reading after those editors as they neared the time of their departure, the heavens were opened, as it were, to them, and they gave us glimpses of its glorious treasures.

Elder Lefferts, I was much interested in the description of your travels through West Virginia. When Elder J. S. Murphy came to his appointment at the Valley Church (of which he is also pastor) on Sunday after you were at his house, and spoke so enthusiastically of your preaching, we all felt that we had missed a precious message, but we were glad you came this way and were edified by the things brother Murphy told of your preaching and conversation, and hope you may be enabled to visit our association at the Leading Creek Church in August.

I am renewing my subscription to the SIGNS, and hope its present editors may long be spared to defend the gospel to the praise of God, in whom we trust. May he give to the correspondents who have written so ably for our paper, grace to continue to uphold the hands of the editors until the battle is over.

Like the poor widow, I have only a mite to offer, but like her, it is all I had. May the Lord bless us all according to his eternal purpose, for Jesus' sake.

Unworthily,

(MRS.) E. E. WORKMAN.

CAPE CHARLES, Va., March 18, 1923.

DEAR ELDER COULTER:—I recall that on several occasions you have requested that I write you a letter that you might have published, and I have declined to do so, feeling my inability to write anything profitable; but since your more urgent request last Sunday I have felt to do so, with what ability may be given me, you to decide if I have expressed a thought that purports not to be of self, as I fully believe there is nothing in natural man that should be exalted or gloried in; but let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord. I have sometimes felt that I have had some sweet ministrations of the Spirit, causing happy and pleasant meditations, making me very desirous of talking with others of like experiences, but seem to find that when with the brethren I cannot express what I hope I have received, and neither do I expect to be able to write it with pen, for when these showers of blessings come, do they not sometimes come with joy unspeakable and full of glory? We find, too, that they come when we sometimes least expect, and, like the rain, come down, and no man can stop, neither can he bring; and sometimes when the enemy has overtaken us wandering around back in the wilderness (from which we hoped that we had escaped after baptism) and tempts us, would we not be unable to resist his temptations but for our blessed Redeemer reappearing, driving the evil one out and refreshing our souls with his visits, which sometimes seem to be angel visits? Walking home from the post-office this Sunday morning with so many people gathering at different places of worship, I wondered why I could not stop in some one of the places and worship with them. Is it because I am prejudiced, or what is the trouble with me? as I know I have no claim to being better than they; and thus I often wonder, and sometimes have, as I seem to have this morning, this Scripture, in mind: "And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them." "Neither shall they say, Lo here! or lo there! for, behold the kingdom of God is within you." This is recorded by Luke when Jesus had been asked when the kingdom

of God should come, and it seems he makes it plain where this kingdom is when he says, It is within you. Then it cometh not with observation; so, when a sinner has been quickened, he begins to search and look for this kingdom, and at times it seems away off, far beyond our reach, until we by exercise of the Holy Spirit do at other times have a little hope that it is within us. When there is a kingdom there is of course a king in the worldly kingdoms, or countries, and the people are subjects to that king. So it is here in the kingdom of God that he has by the new covenant set up in the hearts of his people, giving them Jesus as their King; and then we begin to see, as we hope, that God is a spirit, and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. So then we see that whether in the finest mansion constructed by men's hands, or down in the densest swamp, we can worship provided only we be given the will and desire to do so by God. For it is written that "They shall be all taught of God;" and again, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." These being the words recorded by John as coming from our blessed Savior himself, surely they cannot be contradicted; then all that we can do is to hope that we have been drawn to him, and keep on looking for evidences of that hope, and we sometimes feel we have sweet evidences from within, and while beset with conflicts, we find that the experiences of the holy men of old recorded in the Scriptures show that they also had warfare, but were given strength to realize that they were more than conquerors through faith, the gift of Christ, who was in them the hope of glory. May it please the Lord to give us strength to walk by faith, always confessing our weakness, desiring to glorify his holy name, so that when we do glory we may glory in the Lord, is what we feel to try to pray for; self nothing, Jesus all. But oh how hard it is to keep down this self, and we believe this to be impossible for man to do, naturally, as we like to exalt self; but when the kingdom of God is revealed within, then it is no trouble to see self as did David when he said, "I am a worm, and no man;" for he was shown the power of God and the weakness of man; but when comforted how sweet it must have been for him to cry out, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." Paul, in one of his letters, bearing testimony as to this kingdom within, says, by way of exhortation, "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price." Oh that we could be given strength as Paul exhorts, to give God glory in body and in spirit.

I do not know whether you will find anything in this letter, as I fear to try to write on these things, yet have made the effort, and in conclusion sometimes feel as the poet expressed it: It must be so, Plato, thou reasonest well; else why this pleasing hope, this fond desire, this longing after immortality?

G. E. COULBOURN.

MECHANIC FALLS, Maine.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter from my daughter. I was glad to hear how much she enjoyed the preaching at Bowdoinham. It was my desire to be there. I will be seventy-three years old in March, and am very feeble. There is nothing impossible with God; if it had been his will I would have been there. Praise his name. His will is sure to be done.

Had I the tongues of Greeks and Jews,
And nobler speech than angels use,
If love be absent, I am found
Like tinkling brass, an empty sound.

Were I inspired to preach and tell
All that is done in heaven and hell,
Or could my faith the world remove,
Still I am nothing without love.

Should I distribute all my store
To feed the bowels of the poor,
Or give my body to the flame,
To gain a martyr's glorious name;

If love to God and love to men
Be absent, all my hopes are vain;
Nor tongues, nor gifts, nor fiery zeal,
The work of love can e'er fulfill.

LEWIS D. GOWELL.

GARDINER, Maine, Sept. 15, 1922.

DEAR FATHER:—I want to thank you for the "Feast of Fat Things." I have one in the house, so will send one to a friend in Pennsylvania, whom I think will enjoy it. Our association was held at Bowdoinham last Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Elder Lefferts, one of the present editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, was the visiting minister. He is a wonderful preacher, reminds me of Elder Chick. There was baptism on Sunday: Mrs. Clark, of Freeport. It has been so long since I have heard preaching that I thoroughly enjoyed the meeting, or rather, God saw fit to comfort me at that time, for I well know he can comfort us at any time or place. His first sermon was on the text: "Consider the lilies," &c., and the last one Deut. xxxii. 9: "Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." He was certainly filled from above, and one felt like sitting all day to hear such wonderful things declared.

As it is getting late I must close, hoping you are feeling better.

Yours in hope of eternal life in Christ Jesus our Savior,

MABEL A. WEEKS.

CARNEGIE, Okla., Dec. 23, 1922.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find check for four dollars to renew my subscription to the SIGNS for 1923. We do not want to miss a copy, for we do enjoy reading your editorials and the good letters written by the saints of the same faith that was once delivered unto the saints. We are deprived of preaching where we live, as there is no church of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist faith near us, so when the SIGNS comes we do not sleep until it is read. May God bless and keep the dear old paper coming.

I am a sinner, saved by grace if saved at all, J. R. COX.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in April (29th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

GOLDSBORO, Texas, March 15, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please change my address from Lawn, Texas, to the above address, and, moreover, note the change in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Prosperity to all the Baptists.

Yours in love, W. M. LITTLE.

ELDER Asa Howard expects to be located permanently at Keller, Texas, and wishes his correspondents to address him there, care of J. H. West.

NO MORE EVERLASTING TASKS.

OUR supply of the "Everlasting Task for Arminians" is exhausted, and as we do not expect to have any more of them, will be unable to fill future orders for the little book.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1923.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

GENESIS VI. 2.

"THAT the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose."

At the request of sister M. A. Carver, of Comanche, Texas, we shall try to write some thoughts on the above Scripture. Sister Carver says she has understood there are some who say that the "sons of God" named in the text were angels, and wants to know if we agree with that statement. No, we do not agree with it. We do not think the "sons of God" who married the daughters of men were angels. Angels are ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto them who shall be heirs of redemption, says the writer to the Hebrews. In the one hundred and fourth Psalm, fourth verse, the Lord God makes his angels spirits. These angelic spirits who minister to the comfort and wellbeing of the children of God do not marry. Proof that they do not is seen in Mark xii. 25, where Jesus, speaking of the resurrection, says that those who shall be accounted worthy to obtain the resurrection of the dead are neither married nor given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. Therefore, the angels of God do not marry, hence the "sons of God" who took unto themselves wives of the daughters of men, were not angels or spirits. No, these "sons of God" were evidently flesh and blood men who fell in love with worldly women and married them. We understand the expression, "daughters of men," to mean worldly women, women without spiritual life. The "sons of God" were men who had been quickened and regenerated by the Spirit of God, hence were men of faith. John tells us that now are we the sons of God, but that it does not yet appear what we shall be. God has a people to-day whom he has quickened by his Spirit and called unto the belief of the truth. It was so in ancient times, away back at the time of the Genesis record. That faith which is the fruit of God's Spirit actuated men then. Examples of this were Abel, Enoch, Noah, and many others. These all were flesh and blood men, men of like passions as ourselves, yet were born again of the incorruptible seed of the Word of God, hence were sons of God. These men, many of them, no doubt married women void of faith, and such women were designated the "daughters of men."

Now, just a word or two regarding angels. These angels are an order of beings above us humans, but we know scarcely anything of them, only as they are manifested through the human form. We find in the eighth Psalm the statement that man was made a little lower than the angels, hence he is lower than the angels, and the angels are above men. Of this there can be no doubt, if we are to stand by what the Scriptures say. However, speculation as to various details regarding this angelic order of beings would lead us nowhere, and we care not to indulge in it. But there are numerous instances in the Scriptures where angels have assumed the human form in order to reach and minister unto the children of God. One of these is

found in Genesis, nineteenth chapter, where two angels came to Lot in Sodom, and sojourned the night with him. These two angels were two men, as witness the fifth verse and the eighth. The inhabitants of Sodom knew them for men and recognized them not in their angelic capacity, and Lot himself spoke of them as men when speaking of them to his fellow-townsmen. Skipping over several instances of the human appearance of angels, we note the second chapter of Zechariah. Here, the man with a measuring line in his hand goes forth to measure Jerusalem, and in the third verse this man is said to be an angel. We have thought that the angels of the seven churches in Asia, spoken of in Revelation, were the pastors of those churches. Insofar as the pastor of the church is a man called of God to comfort and to watch over the church over which the Holy Ghost has made him overseer, he may be said to be the angel of the church. The Lord God has seen fit to place in such a man a measure of his Holy Spirit sufficiently to enable him to be a gift to the edifying of the church. In this sense, as a ministering spirit, he is an angel, and as such his human nature is lost sight of, further than as it furnishes a tabernacle for the angel, a temporary tenement or dwelling-place. The pastor in his capacity of a ministering angel to the church is sexless and not married, though as a man he may be married. The Scriptures do not forbid the marriage of pastors or elders, and celibacy is not gospelly enjoined upon them. Thus, it is not too much to say that a pastor, or elder, or any other ministering gift in the church, leads a dual or double life: as a man he enters into all the things of man, knowing all the affairs incident to humanity and his manhood; as a minister, he transcends his humanity and becomes an angel, delivering a message from the Highest to the flock of his care. Aside from all this, however, the Scriptures abound in instances of angelic ministration to the heirs of glory without such ministration being in human form. In the thirty-fourth Psalm, for instance, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." This angel of the Lord's presence is not a man, is not any human appearance, but is a spiritual oversight and watchcare of the people, wholly independent of any literal visibility. Also in the thirty-fifth Psalm, "Let their way be dark and slippery; and let the angel of the Lord persecute them." Here again, the angel is not a human appearance, but would seem to be a spirit of judgment, or of condemnation, pursuing the guilty. David, in prophesying of Jesus, in the ninety-first Psalm, was moved to say, "He shall give his angels charge over thee in all thy ways." These angels who watched constantly over the blessed Son of God while in his trials here below, were certainly not men, but various spiritual guardian presences of the almighty Father, ever with his only begotten Son in all his temptations. Likewise the angel which came to Jesus during his agony in Gethsemane (Luke xxii. 43) was not a man, nor in earthly form, but the spiritual presence of God's everlasting strength. To sum up the whole matter, it might not be too much to say that anything ministering to the spiritual comfort and welfare of the children of God is an angel, whether it comes through some earthly appearance or manifestation, or whether it is a direct communication of the Holy Spirit. It might well be said that even faith and hope and charity are angels of the believer, for certainly these

do minister to them who shall be heirs of redemption. These angels do always behold the face of the Father in heaven, hence let any who despise one of God's little ones beware. A child of God can never be offended, persecuted or hurt but what it is done in the very presence of God. Such an offense against his child cannot be hid from the heavenly Father, and the Father will certainly take care of his own, he will avenge his own, so let the offenders beware. What a comfort to know that the children of God have not to win the victory for themselves, but it is already won for them, and given to them in the Lord Jesus Christ, through whom they are brought off more than conquerors.

L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Amos Horner was born in Barry County, Missouri, December 6th, 1858. He crossed the plains with his parents at the age of nine years, and they settled near Oregon City, Oregon. At the age of nineteen he was married to Miss Nancy D. Savage, and to that union were born five girls and three boys, three daughters having preceded him beyond the river. Those surviving him, besides his wife, are W. R. Horner, of Columbia City, Oregon, Mrs. Alma Weddle, George A. Horner, Mrs. Mattie Gainer, and Levitt Horner, all of Sweet Home, Oregon, also his aged mother, Mrs. M. L. Ringo, one brother, G. W. Horner, Sawtille, California, one sister, Mrs. Martha Tucker, of Estacada, and a host of friends to mourn their loss, but, dear ones, let us not mourn his departure, but let us believe that our loss is his eternal gain, for the Lord knoweth them that are his. He is also survived by twelve grandchildren. He was glad to go, and said to his wife, "Let us go home." He was faithful to his churches, never missing an appointment if he could possibly help it, often walking fifteen miles to be there. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church called Pleasant Grove, at Goldendale, Washington, May, 1885, and was baptized by Elder James A. Bullock. He was ordained to the work of the ministry August, 1885. Elder Horner was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and never lost sight of the fact that Jesus was the author and finisher of his faith. He was faithful in contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and was at the time of his death pastor of Bethel Church, Tallman, Oregon. Elder Horner was an invalid several months before the final summons came on Thursday, March, 15th, 1923, making his stay on this earth 64 years, 3 months and 9 days.

Funeral services were held at Sweet Home, Oregon, March 17th, 1923, conducted by Elder W. M. Rose, assistant pastor, attended by a large and attentive congregation, after which his remains were laid to rest in a nearby cemetery, to await the final resurrection day.

Written by brethren C. E. Smith, and W. R. Horner, his son.

John Alexander McTaggart, son of the late Angus and Margaret McTaggart, of Ekfrid, Ontario, died at his home in London November 12th, 1922. He was born June 21st, 1866. The following week-end Elder Joseph L. Purington attended the June meeting, and on each succeeding visit would inquire for the boy, who was born so near the time of his first visit. After attending high school and business college he took up telegraphy, while residing in our home, where he often was seen reading the SIGNS, and such as speak forth the praises of Him who calls from nature's darkness into His marvelous light. In 1908 he was married to Miss Lena F. Campbell, of Dutton (granddaughter of the late Elder Thomas McCall), who feels sorely bereaved. When she expressed a desire that he would be well again, he replied, "But, my dear, we must submit to the will of the Lord." A few years before their marriage he purchased a hardware store in Appin. In their pleasant home, then, they loved to entertain those of like precious faith. "The love of Christ constraineth." They moved to London in 1919. His illness of one week was pneumonia, and came on the eve of the Duart meeting, which they had hoped to attend. His physician was called, and two more in consultation, and all was done that loving hands could do, but the days of his appointed time were fulfilled. Though our hearts are bleeding, we must say, "Thy will be done." Besides his widow, he is survived by four brothers and five sisters, who miss his loving attention. At the last meeting he attended, tears were on his dear face. I felt his mind was on things invisible that day, and took his hand in loving fellowship. As I sat by his bedside the morning before he passed away he did not (in the fever) recognize me. His loving smile lit up his countenance. We little thought then that it was as a breath from that land from which no traveler returns. May He who is too wise to err, too good to be unkind, give the oil of joy for mourning, and tune our hearts to say, "Blessed be the name of the Lord."

The funeral was held from their home to the Ekfrid meeting-house, where Elder J. B. Slauson spoke loving words of truth and comfort to the large congregation of sorrowing friends, after which six nephews

tenderly bore our loved one to the cemetery close by. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power.

Written by request.

JESSIE GILLIS.

Cecilia Scott Bosley, the subject of this notice, was a Miss Shaul, and was married when young to Thomas Henry Smith. Both she and her husband became members of the Old School Baptist Church at Black Rock, Md., and were baptized (I think) by the late Elder F. A. Chick. Brother Scott died several years ago, and she later married Mr. Levi Bosley. Sister Bosley was a woman of a bright, active mind, a reader of the Scriptures and a faithful member of the church. She knew what she believed, and was steadfast in her faith. The writer had been her pastor for twenty-three years, and always found her interesting to talk to on the subject of religion, and both pastor and church missed her much when she became unable to attend her meetings. Her husband, Mr. Bosley, was very faithful to her, and took her to meetings while she was able to go. She was paralyzed on December 17th, 1921, and passed away October 7th, 1922, being nearly 88 years of age, as she was born November 14th, 1834. She was never able to speak after her affliction. She could make some signs by which she could be understood, so it was a pleasure to visit her. In all this long and sore affliction her husband was very faithful to her, and made her as comfortable as loving hands could. When she passed away her pastor was in North Carolina attending some meetings, and although a telegram was sent he did not get it in time to be present at her interment, so we held a memorial service to her on the first Sunday in November. Her remains were laid beside that of her first husband, in the cemetery adjoining the Black Rock meetinghouse, to await the coming of Jesus, in whom she trusted while she lived, and who she believed would come and awake her sleeping dust to reign with him in his throne forever and forever. May the Lord ever bless the sorrowing husband, at whose request this notice is written.

Her pastor,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

Brother **James A. Holcomb** was born March 24th, 1851, and reared to manhood in Habbersham County, Georgia. He moved from there to White County and married Miss Frances E. Henderson. To that union were born seven sons and four daughters, seventy-nine grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. He joined and lived with the Missionary Baptists about thirty years. Later he moved to Madison County, Georgia, near Union Primitive Baptist Church, and joined there on September 4th, 1909, and was baptized by Elder L. M. Chandler. Later he moved near Moriah Church and joined there by letter. He died June 25th, 1922, after three or four months of terrible suffering with heart disease, which he bore with christian patience. His funeral was preached by Elders J. H. Stuart and J. F. Chandler in the Missionary church-house at Hull, on S. A. L. R. R. Burial at the Hull Cemetery. He was a kind, loving husband and father, an honorable citizen, a dear, humble church member. He was just a little younger than myself, and felt like my yokemate, so it is hard for me to give him up.

ALSO,

Brother **E. M. Edwards** was born August 25th, 1856, in Franklin County, Georgia, was married to Miss M. S. Smith, daughter of Deacon Henry and Elvira Smith, of Madison County, by Elder W. D. Chandler December 12th, 1877, and died April 2nd, 1922. He is survived by his wife, seven children and twenty-eight grandchildren. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Moriah August 25th, 1894, and was baptized by Elder E. L. McDaniel. He was elected Clerk of said church November 23rd, 1896, which position he filled with efficiency until death. He was a kind, loving and devoted husband and father, and an humble, orderly church member. To know him was to love him. He retired Saturday night, April 1st, in usual health, and he and his wife were heard talking just before day, and when time came to get up his wife decided to slip out and make the fires herself and let him sleep, and would not call any one else for fear of awaking him, but alas, when they did go to awaken him he was found to be sleeping that everlasting sleep. Imagine their horror. Sure enough death comes as a thief in the night. His faith was wholly in God and not in man nor man's work.

His funeral was preached by Elder J. F. Chandler, at Moons Grove Church, to a large, orderly and sorrowing congregation. The interment was at the Henry Smith family burying-ground.

THE foregoing notice was taken from our county paper. Elder J. H. Stuart assisted Elder Chandler in conducting the funeral.

GEORGE T. WHITWORTH.

Mrs. Martha (Fooks) Perdue was was born near Salisbury Md., June 5th, 1842, and died at her home in that city December 28th, 1922, being a little more than eighty years of age. She had always been remarkably active until October, 1921, when she was very ill, and had a fall, injuring one limb. She never regained the use of it, and was unable to walk alone again. She was the most uncomplaining and cheerful invalid I ever knew, making of her sick-room a gathering-place of a host of friends, both young and old. She was married to John D. Perdue April 8th, 1868, and lived on a farm near Parsonsburg until his death, in 1907, after which she moved to Salisbury.

There were six children, two died while small, and a daughter, Mrs. David Ward, died in 1917. There are three sons living: Claude, of Painter, Va., Harry and Herman, of Snow Hill, Md. One brother, Mr. Linn Fooks, two nieces, Mrs. R. B. Williams and Miss Lena Trader, who were as daughters to her in their loving-kindness, and six nephews. She was baptized at Forest Grove, by Elder A. B. Francis, May 18th, 1893, where she was held in loving fellowship until her death. It was never easy to her to speak of the things which lay nearest her heart, but when she was moved to do so she showed such a steadfast trust in His word, and such a deep love for His people, such humility, as to make one wonder at the marvel of God's work in the hearts of men.

The funeral, conducted by Elder Mellott, was held in the meeting-house at Salisbury, and the dear lady was laid to rest by the side of her husband at Forest Grove. (MRS.) HARRY PERDUE.

Clara Endora Hunt passed away at the home of her son, Benjamin K. Hunt, Middletown, N. Y., February 11th, 1923. She was born in the town of Wawayanda, a daughter of Susan Kirby and John B. Carey. Her age was 76 years, 3 months and 2 days. Most of her life was spent in Middletown, N. Y. She was united in marriage October 28th, 1873, to George Hunt, who died January 10th, 1917. She was baptized June, 1898, by Elder A. B. Francis, and attended regularly her meetings until last Christmas, when ill health prevented her from going. Her faith in the Lord and his people was very sincere, and she will be greatly missed in the church, where she dearly loved to be. During her last sickness she was very patient, and cheerfully bore the suffering she had to endure. She was a kind and loving mother and grandmother, and will be sadly missed in our home, which she made so pleasant. Besides her son she is survived by two daughters, Susie, wife of Peter Osburn, of Scotchtown, N. Y., Mrs. Ida Van Schaick, of Long Island, N. Y., eleven grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

The funeral was held in the Middletown and Wallkill church-house, Thursday afternoon, February 15th, 1923, Elder R. Lester Dodson officiating, and speaking with much comfort to the ones left to mourn their loss. Her favorite hymn, 804, and also 1246, were read. The text used was Job i. 21. She was buried in the Wallkill Cemetery, Phillipsburgh, N. Y.

Her grandson, STANLEY B. HUNT.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. M. E. Bentley, Ga., $1.00; Mrs. Val. Werner, N. J., $1.00; P. M. Sherwood, Del., $1.00; Mrs. Sirena Bowen, Ill., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association is expected to meet with the church at Black Rock, Baltimore County, Maryland, on Wednesday, May 16th, 1923. Visitors coming via Baltimore will take train leaving Union Station at 3 p. m. Tuesday, 15th, for Cockeysville, where the friends will meet and care for them. Those coming via Harrisburg will leave that city at 12:01 p. m. 15th, arriving at Cockeysville at 2:38 and remain until 3 o'clock train from Baltimore, when all will be taken to places of entertainment. We hope to see a goodly number.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFIT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

CHURCH NOTICE.

To our beloved brethren and friends, who may desire to visit the Cedar Creek Church,

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE

we have changed our place of meeting from Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, to Oregon City, Oregon. Day and hour will be the same: fourth Sunday in each month, services beginning at 10:30 a. m., with lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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EDITORS:

Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 91. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1923. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BREWERS, Ky., Jan. 30, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have often thought of trying to write something for publication, but when I begin to examine myself I find a mass of corruption so vile and prone to sin; I fear I am not born again, and we read in God's word, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom. I ask, Can one be born of himself? No; this is absurd. All life must come from the Fountain of life. I want to acknowledge that I am too ignorant to teach God's children, besides, I understand it is the Lord's work to teach them, and when the Lord in mercy teaches it is effectual. The God whom I sometimes feel an inclination to serve is so powerful he has but to speak and it is done. He could speak a world into existence with it peopled at one mighty stroke of his power, while we poor finite beings cannot even give life to one of the smallest of his creation. We find ourselves surrounded by people who are either ignorant or presumptuous enough that they claim it to be an act of the natural man to become a spiritual man. Surely their thoughts have not in any way comprehended their littleness, or they would not say so. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them. There must be a spiritual being before there is a view of spiritual things or of the spiritual kingdom, as Christ himself has said, and there is no need of men saying differently. The flesh profiteth nothing in this work. Christ said, The words I speak they are spirit and they are life. Then when he speaks to one dead he immediately lives. He speaks, and it is done; commands, and it stands fast. When he speaks one of his little ones into existence there goes up a moan, a sigh, and the little babe knows nothing but to cry and mourn on account of the many sins which well up before it, until it is rewarded with a glimpse of the Savior pouring out his precious blood for its sin, then there is a cry, or shout of joy, which ebbs from the new-born babe, and from that time the child begins to hunger and thirst for righteousness, which is fulfilled in the Lord's time and way in filling them to overflowing at times. To such the Lord will make known his covenant, because they are his people and he has given them the secret the world by wisdom can-

not find out, though there is an humbling fear which attends every heaven-born soul to keep him from being puffed up. The Lord gives them love for him and a hatred of sin. His strong arm is over them, under them and all around them, to supply all their needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. It is no wonder his children cry unto him day and night. They have been taught of him; he has given them peace, and great is their peace. This is the people he has formed for himself, and they shall show forth his praise. While in this world they will have tribulation, because the Lord has said they should. He further states that they shall have peace in him. The experience of God's children is that there is no peace outside the protecting banner of his love, which drives away every foe; yes, Satan, with all his fiery darts, is dispelled by the entrance of his words, which enable the one who is in the valley and shadow of death to fear no evil. It is the entrance of his words that enables one to see Jesus crowned with glory and honor, and I am persuaded from the teachings of his word that there is nothing that will ever separate one of God's children from his love, because what he does shall be forever. His work is ever effectual, and never ends until all his children are made to see and feel the beauty of that heavenly kingdom which is not vested in the power of men, but God has said, "Their righteousness is of me," and so it is.

I inclose a letter written by dear brother Veazey, of Tennessee, which has been food to me; I pass it on for your disposal.

Yours in hope,

J. C. CHESTER.

COTTAGE GROVE, Tenn., Jan. 14, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER CHESTER:—I thought I would try to answer your precious letter which I received several days ago. I was glad indeed to hear from you, and to know you had not forgotten me, a poor, miserable worm of the dust, as I feel to be. I have been reading to-day and to-night some of the precious truths in God's word, and in reading and meditating upon the great plan of salvation and the redemption of his people from nature's night into his marvelous light and liberty the thought came to me as to how we were redeemed. We know what the so-called religious world will and does say, we know how they say we get into Christ, that is, by our own good acts, that all we have to do is just to lay hold of the promises, and they tell us that it is easy to be a christian, that we have nothing to do but to go to the church and tell the preacher that we have decided to go to work for the Lord and live a better life. They tell us we are all right, and they baptize us, and now we are soldiers enlisted in the great war, and now we go to work helping to make more just such christians. But when I begin to read the Book of all books I find that this is not the way. I find that this Book tells me of a different plan, and one that suits my case much better. I find therein a sure plan, a plan that does not have to be renewed year by year, and this plan says that we are not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold (neither are we redeemed by the poor puny help of man). But now comes the bedrock of it all, now comes the plan that never fails, the One who saves in time, the One who saves in eternity, the One who saves to the utmost. Oh, my dear brother Chester, what is this plan? It says, But by the grace of God. Now

here is something that is sure. Oh behold him the precious Son of God being born into this world of sin, being born according to promise, laid in a manger, growing to manhood, as it were, traveling with and teaching his children, healing and comforting, raising the dead, going on to the time of his betrayal and crucifixion, and there, oh think, just view for one moment his precious body there between the heaven and earth, there pouring out his life's blood, and what was it all for? To complete the great plan of salvation and redemption, for he says it is finished. Father, the work thou gavest me to do is finished. What was that? It was the salvation of his people. He was buried and arose the third day; he conquered it all, and now he says, Of all the Father hath given me I shall lose nothing, but raise them up at the last day, having redeemed us by his own precious blood. No wonder the Scripture says, Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God. This is the redemption of his purchased possession unto the praise of his glory. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. It being according to his grace, we have something to rely upon; although we go down to the valley and shadow of death we will fear no evil, because his grace is sufficient for us, and yet though we may become entirely overwhelmed in utter darkness (as I have been so long), although every ray of hope may seem almost gone, when it seems that all friends and even our own dear family have forsaken us, yet his strong arm is still beneath us, his protecting care is still over us, his love is still being shed abroad in us to that extent that at an unexpected time to us, but just at his own time, he lifts us up and makes us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and, oh my soul, what a time of rejoicing with the little saint shouting praises to God. My dear brother, this is the kind of a Savior I want to praise, this is the kind of a God I want to glorify. Just give me the presence of my blessed Jesus and they can have all the world, with its pomp and pride, with its different kinds of organizations for saving souls. Take his presence from me, take his precious promises, take his sustaining grace from me, and you have taken my all in all. Then another thing, if you were to deprive me of my precious brethren and sisters, and not allow me to meet with them and hear them talk of the dealings of the Lord with them, and hear my precious brethren in the ministry proclaiming the unsearchable riches of His grace, though I feel and know that I am not worthy to be in their midst, yet take these privileges from me and you have taken all the pleasure of this world from me; yet many are the times when I go to the churches I feel like the brethren had rather not be bothered with me, yet I know that I love them, and desire to be with them. My mind now goes back to this Scripture, where he says, Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. I think this is speaking to his ministers, he is telling them what to preach and who to comfort. Speak comfortable words to his people, the ones he has redeemed, the ones he shed his blood for, and oh the times I feel that I have been comforted and made to rejoice while sitting under the sound of your and dear old brother Jenkins' voice, when it seemed to me that I could just see the very image of the blessed Son of God in your faces.

Now, brother Chester, I will close for

fear of tiring you. May God sustain you, may he hold you up, may he give you grace and knowledge from on high, that you may be enabled to continue preaching the unsearchable riches of his grace, ever looking to Jesus, who is the author and finisher of your faith; shun not to declare the whole counsel of God, and may your last days be your happiest, and when your life's work is over, and you are called from the walks of men, when you are called to lay your weapons of warfare down, oh may it be your blessed privilege to hear the welcome plaudit, Well done, thou faithful servant, enter into the joy prepared for you from before the foundation of the world. This, brother Chester, will be enough, there to sing praises forever and ever. When it goes well with you remember me at the throne of grace. May God bless you. Remember me to brother Jenkins. Tell him to visit us. This leaves us not well. I fear my little girl has influenza. Hope you are all well. Visit us and write me as often as you can. Farewell in the Lord.

Yours in hope,

R. L. VEAZEY.

CLAREMONT, Cal., Feb. 27, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—There are many things I would like to write about if I felt competent, but I feel that what I should write would be entirely too much like myself—not fit. I am often very much impressed with the story of Paul's conversion, the most remarkable ever recorded, as I view it. How little he had to do with it all. He did not even pray for it; no, but he very soon began to pray, and when he became a praying man it was then time through God's plan that Ananias should make him a visit; yes, even one who had done much evil to the saints at Jerusalem, and who even when starting on this very journey took letters from the high priest giving him authority to bind either men or women and bring them to Jerusalem and have them tried for worshiping the very Christ in whom he had now become a believer, not through choice of his own, but from Christ's choice. "A chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." For the gratification of Paul? No, indeed, "For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." Yes, and how he did suffer, and was given courage to fight the good fight and be ready for his reward. And yet with all his strength and courage how careful he always was to put it all to God's credit and take none himself, and that makes us think of the hymn:

> "Jesus paid it all, all to him I owe;
> Sin had left a crimson stain,
> He washed it white as snow."

Yes, all to him I owe, not to receive blessings, but for blessings received; and right here is a good place to think about "good works." God's little ones do not do good works with thought of gain, but from a thankful heart, prompted by Christ himself. Just to think, ten thousand talents in debt, and not one farthing with which to pay, yet the debt must be paid, every jot and tittle of the law must be fulfilled, must be paid to the uttermost, every farthing, no exemption until all is paid; and we never become praying men and women until we realize all this. No one ever prayed until there was something to pray for. When we realize this, then our words are something like this: Father, I have not wherewith to pay what I owe. I am ruined, lost in the miry clay and horrible pit. I cannot extricate myself; have tried, and my struggles only sink me deeper and deeper in

the mire. I can do nothing; oh, save, or I perish. Until we are brought to this state we are in no condition to receive the promise. The praying sinner asks only for mercy. Asking for a reward or remuneration is not prayer, but a demand, but asking God for mercy is the sweetest prayer that man ever prayed, for that is asking God for something that he can give to the sinner. Again, only a sinner can be saved, and before a person can indite a consistent prayer to God for mercy he must be made to know that he is a lost and ruined sinner, and there is no help for him short of the great God of heaven through his Son Jesus, the Savior of men. By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. Yes, it is a free gift bestowed upon sinners made worthy by Christ's righteousness. No wonder the righteous shall hold on his way. They become righteous not of themselves, but through the cleansing power of Jesus' blood shed upon Calvary for you and for me, if so be we are his. If we are his we share his righteousness, however unworthy we may feel ourselves to be. Thankful indeed we should be for this feeling of unworthiness, for it keeps us in our place, from becoming exalted above measure; and good it is for us that he chastises us, for then we are brought low and at his feet, the only place for a repentant sinner and the only place in this world we are safe from ourselves. May he ever keep me at his feet and the feet of my brethren. May his choicest blessings be upon all his dear children, that they may enjoy sweet peace and fellowship. How good and how pleasant it is to dwell together in unity.

Your unworthy brother,

OLIVER P. SPEIRS.

JOHN XXI. 6.

"CAST the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find."

I have been meditating for some time on the above Scripture. If the Lord will, I will try to pen a few thoughts for publication in the SIGNS. Being my first attempt to write, I ask all lovers of the truth to bear with me in my weakness. In this chapter is set forth both the works, and failure of man, also the demonstration of the power of God. In the third verse of this chapter Peter saith unto the disciples, "I go a fishing." The other disciples said, "We also go with thee." They went forth, and that night they caught nothing. To my mind this net represents the gospel preaching, this ship the true church of God, and God's servants are fishermen. Matt. iv. 19: "I will make you fishers of men." Luke v. 10: "From henceforth thou shalt catch men." In order for God's servants to cast the net on the right side they must preach Jesus Christ and him crucified; that there is none other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. This is the way the Lord's people believe it. It is in accordance with their experience, therefore when the net is cast on the right side, or the true gospel preached, so to speak, the fish are very readily caught. Naturally speaking, when a net is cast into the water the fish do not try to get into it, neither do they try to stay out, but soon they find themselves entangled in the net, then they begin to flutter, but the more they flutter the greater the entanglement. Following this they are carried ashore, where they die. So it is with the quickened sinner; when the gospel net is cast on the right side of the ship; that is, when the quickened sinner sitting under the sound of the voice of the gospel minister, who

represents the fishermen, he is caught unaware, in that he hears the minister, much to his astonishment, relating his experience and describing his condition. Then it is that he flutters, in that he questions himself as to who has told the preacher these things. He endeavors to conceal the truth that he feels has been revealed; he denies it as much as possible in his actions. Thus in his fluttering he finds himself more entangled. Next he is carried ashore and dies. To my mind the shore represents deliverance, and when the quickened sinner reaches deliverance he dies to the perishable things of this world and all things become new, which I understand is the first resurrection.

Brethren, I submit this to you for your consideration. Please do as you think best about publishing it. If you deem it unworthy of consideration, please feel free to ignore it and cast it aside.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

T. F. ADAMS.

WILLOW SPRING, N. C.

VANCOUVER, B. C., Jan. 7, 1923.

GENTLEMEN:—Inclosed please find two dollars, my subscription for the SIGNS for 1923. I am also inclosing a part of a letter I have just received from a true friend who died some months ago. The letter had been mislaid. It appears to me as being worthy of reproduction; do with it as you see fit.

A. J. DIXON.

PROVIDENCE, R. I.

GOOD thoughts and desires never grow in nature's garden. Life comes from life, never from the dead. God said, Let there be light, and there was light, and it is He that lighteth every man that cometh into the world (redeemed world). God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their sins or iniquities unto them. He came unto his own, and his own received him not, but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to that believe on his name. The evidence constitutes a belief. No man can believe without evidence, and when he has the evidence it is impossible for him not to believe. We must come to him believing that he is the only true God and the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Without faith it is impossible to please Him, and faith is the gift of God, and works by love and purifies the heart. Oh that our faith may be made strong in this day of delusion, when men say, Lo, here is Christ, and, Lo, there is Christ, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. May we be enabled to make straight paths for our feet, turning neither to the right nor left, but with an eye single to the honor and glory of God, taking His word for the man of our counsel, which we are told is given to us for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works; and to oppose everything that has not a thus saith the Lord with it. My natural sun is fast sinking behind the western hills, no more to rise forever. Oh how solemn: weighed in the balance and found wanting; righteousness as filthy rags; heart as the cage of an unclean bird; desperately wicked, prone to wander as the sparks to fly upward, to live and die in this state where God is one can never come. But, blessed be His name, when there was no eye to pity, no arm to save, His own right arm brought salvation down by a living way to all

that call upon Him in truth. This is my only hope, if I have a true hope, which often I am led to doubt, being so small when looking down into my own sinful heart. It is then I cry, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner, that I may have a hope as an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, within the veil, which is Christ.

FREEMAN CROCKER.

MACON, Ga., March 3, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please find an order for twenty-five dollars, to use in any way that will help the dear old SIGNS most. My dear father, who left us long ago, had the SIGNS in his home since it was first published, I think, and since my marriage, many years ago, I have taken it. I am now seventy-four years of age, and one of my sweetest joys is in perusing and drinking in every word of our dear family paper. As I wrote you before, dear Elder William L. Beebe fifty-two years ago performed the ceremony that joined my dear husband and me in the bonds of matrimony. He was W. C. Stevens, and I was Emmie Heard Davis. He lived then at Covington, Georgia. How I loved him. He was one of God's elect, and I thank God I had him at that time. I was reared in a Primitive Baptist family, but when I married I joined the Methodists with my husband, but was not satisfied. About ten years ago I offered myself to the Primitive Baptist Church near Covington, Georgia. Brother Robert Cook is pastor, and he has great liberty in expounding God's word, to the joy of those less fortunate. I wonder they took me in among God's people, for I stray at a guilty distance, and my greatest worry is, Am I his, or am I not? I fear I am deceiving some of God's chosen people. I went to Covington twice to hear brother Lefferts, but heavy rains prevented his coming. I long to meet him; his letters in the SIGNS are so uplifting. I think he knows of me. I also have learned to love Elder Ker. May God bless you all to carry on this blessed work which feeds the feeble lambs. The greatest hope I have is that I love the brethren. I am lonely and sad, and plead with God to lead me by the hand. Please remember me in your prayers. I am as prone to evil as the sparks are to fly upward; when I would do good, evil is ever present. I cannot get close to my Savior. "Oh for a closer walk with God, a calm and heavenly frame." The more I try to pray the worse I feel. Sometimes I think I have done wrong in uniting with the church, for I am so full of sin, and the cares of the world beset me so. My two daughters are in denominations where they hear little of Jesus Christ and him crucified. I pray God to bring them to the right life, even if they have to be struck dumb and blind like Paul.

I know you have grown tired, but there is nowhere else to go for comfort but to God and his people. I feel that the good letters in the SIGNS are next to the Bible, and I understand them better.

I fear I am not worthy to sign myself "sister in Christ."

With love,

(MRS.) W. C. STEVENS.

LEBANON, Ohio, April 5, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you the obituary of sister Letitia Dunham, a dear sister of our little membership here at Lebanon. She has been gone from among us over four years, but until a short time ago I could not find the exact time of her being received into the church. The notice published in our local paper did not even mention she had

been identified among the Old School Baptists, and our old church-book had disappeared. Her son found a record of his father and mother being received into the church, pinned in a little old Bible. Our little membership has become few in number and we do not often have meetings any more. I am sorry to say there are only four living here. My sister still receives the SIGNS, and I read and truly enjoy it. I sincerely hope you may be enabled to carry on the work of publishing the dear paper, for many of us have no other preaching from the brethren.

Your unworthy sister,

CLARA K. WILLIAMS.

(See obituary on page 142.)

BENSON, La., March 11, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I am sending in my subscription, I want to say I am thankful to all who answered my request for a church in Arkansas. I am sure those who answered had good churches, but it is the Ozarks or foothills in Arkansas that I desire to visit, and perhaps get a home. Especially would I appreciate a church that gives God all power and glory as does our SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I would like also to say to the writers to write on, for it is food to my soul, which I hope hungers for the great news, always new, though told over and over so many times. It was a great treat to me last summer to visit churches in Sabine and San Augustine counties of Texas. I found those churches have not divided on predestination, but stand as firm as any I ever saw. I met dear brother A. C. Burns, whom I knew when a child, and his son. Both preach a great God and helpless man. It was lovely to hear the son speak of my beloved father in his preaching. No great wealth do they possess, though something so much higher that they seem to me the great of the earth, God's humble and able ministers. There were others, too, but space forbids mention of all I met. It was a lovely people and a trip to be long remembered. Oh, that we could have more of the spirit that deems others better than self, for then we find love and peace. I must say I never witnessed a more solemn meeting than when brother William Burns baptized sister Martha Wallace. A small attendance, but it seemed the Holy Spirit was there and all seemed to feel it. Time has been when I felt ashamed of the Primitive Baptists, because they were common, plain people, but now I hope I realize in part at least that the Lord knew what he was doing when he made them, for his church needs no popularity, and how glad we should be it needs not the attempted improvements of the modern churches, for it was made perfect.

In love,

LENA LANGFORD.

MAY, Texas, Dec. 24, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As my subscription is about due for the dear old SIGNS will send you two dollars to pay for another year. I think it the best paper ever printed, and cannot express to you what it is to me in my lonely life, yet not alone, for my Lord is with me very often, and I have a little hope that is worth more than worlds to me. This poor worm of the dust will soon be eighty-four years old, and I am very feeble. I hope and trust that you brethren will live many years to publish the truth.

My pen is so bad I will close.

Your unworthy sister, if a sister at all,

ADELINE JONES.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1923.

EDITORS:
Elder H. C. Ker, Delmar, Delaware.
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SEARCHING FOR UNITY.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have been thinking of the strife and contention among God's people of late. Jacob, when blessing Judah, said, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."—Gen. xlix. 10. I understand this refers to Christ. Why so much division now? Is it God's will? Is it the carnality among his followers? Is there any promise in the New Testament that the people of God shall be united as one, and see eye to eye, and speak the same things? "For whereas there is among you envying, and strife, end divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?"—1 Cor. iii. 3, 4. I have been taking the SIGNS forty-five years, and love the editorials; am nearing my seventy-fifth birthday, and live nearly one hundred miles from the church of my membership, with no railroad directly from here there, so the SIGNS is all the preaching I get of late years.

If you can write on the above subject, please do so. May God's richest blessings attend you and all God's poor and afflicted little flock, is the prayer of one of the least, if not deceived,

W. M. FREEMAN.

CROSS PLAINS, Texas.

"WATCHMAN, what of the night?" was the inquiry made of those upon the walls of Zion in the times of the prophets in Israel, the inquiry which came from the hearts of those weary with waiting for the dawn of the new age which should bring in the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Jesus Christ. There were divisions in Israel then, barriers of prejudice between Judah and the other tribes. These separations then caused much anxiety and questioning among the spiritually-minded. Something of the same exists to-day throughout the length and breadth of the land among those professing to be children of God. These differences among believers (such as brother Freeman) cause great searchings of heart, as well as searchings of the written word of God to see if the Scriptures warrant any such state of affairs. The answer of the watchman to the query, What of the night? was, "The morning cometh, and also the night." Both light and darkness were included in the answer of the watchman. We think our reply to brother Freeman must likewise comprise both light and darkness. The day of which the prophet spoke when he said, "The morning cometh," was that same day of which Jesus spoke while here on earth. He said, While I am in the world I am the light of the world, and I must work the works of him that sent me while it is yet day, for the night cometh, in which no man can work. The years spent in the world by Jesus in the days of his flesh were the day toward which the watchmen in Israel looked when they said, The morning cometh. After Jesus left the world and returned to the Father it was night. The work of redemption and of justification was finished; nothing could ever be added to it nor taken from it. Then was the night, and now is the night, in which no work by man in the accomplishing of salvation can be done. None needs to be, for all salvation is complete. Now God's people rest in this finished work of Jesus, even as at night-time men rest from the arduous labors of the day. So the watchmen declared that the morning should come and also the night, there should be light and there should also be darkness. All who have the mind of the Spirit cannot help but

desire the peace and unity of the church of God. All the light of the children of God is in Jesus Christ, outside him all is darkness; in him is unity of heart and mind, out of him all is confusion and distress. The Gadarene who dwelt among the tombs was vexed by a legion of devils until Jesus appeared to him, then were the devils cast out and the man clothed and in his right mind at the feet of Jesus. There is never any unity among the children of God in the flesh; that is, in their human nature; the real and permanent unity of the saints is as the Spirit of Christ dwells in them and actively works in and through them. When the Spirit is quiescent and the human nature active strife and confusion abound. We doubt if the church of God has ever in all its travels seen perfection in human nature. There have been times throughout the ages when there seemed to be more peace and unity than at other times, but such have been due not to any perfection in human nature, but to the greater measure of the Holy Spirit at some times than at others. One instance of this is found in Acts, ninth chapter: "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, and were multiplied." The very opposite of this peaceful condition is recorded in 1st Corinthians, reference to which has already been made by brother Freeman. The church at Corinth was troubled with a party spirit, some being for one preacher, some for another; also some went to the Lord's table not discerning the meaning of the ordinance, but ate to appease their hunger, and drank until they became drunk. For this cause some were sick among them, and some were asleep in indifference. Like many others greatly perplexed, our brother asks to know if there will ever be unity and peace among the people of God. Our answer is, In Christ Jesus, yes; in the flesh, no. No good thing has ever dwelt in the human nature of any child of God, all their goodness is in the nature of Christ. Being born again, they are partakers of the divine nature. In this nature believers are perfect, and in the measure in which this nature predominates in their lives this perfection is made manifest. Just to the extent to which their human nature controls them, to that extent their ugliness will appear. In the world ye shall ever have tribulation, but in Christ peace. This world is not only outside us in other people, but worst of all it rages in our own carnal nature. When this carnality prevails we see worldliness invading the ranks of the saints; when the mind of the Spirit is leading, Jerusalem appears a quiet habitation and truly the city of our solemnities. Not until human nature is altogether done away with and all the saints delivered from the body of this death shall peace and unity prevail forever throughout all the length and breadth of the kingdom of God. All the differences which now serve to keep apart the children of God are of the flesh. They are not of the Spirit. All these things are comprehended in the will and in the eternal purpose of God from before the foundation of the world, but the author of them is our own carnal nature, not the Holy Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit is never the author of confusion, but always of peace, in all the churches of the saints. The predestination of God comprehends both good and evil, all the wrong steps as well as all the right steps of his people, but when they do wrong it is the flesh that does it, and when they

do right the Spirit of God does it. When we can see the people of God through the eyes of the Spirit, we see no fault in them. We then see every one of them perfect in Christ. We then know no man after the flesh. While the contentions among God's people are very distressing, they are, after all, nothing but surface disturbances. They do not go down very deep, and do not at all disturb the serenity and calm of the eternal oneness which binds them together in Christ. There is such a thing as falling out with one another when the flesh of one gets in the way of the flesh of another, but there is never any falling out in the Spirit. Such brethren may be separated one from another in the flesh, yet all the time be so eternally tied together through the Spirit, and so vitally in union with Christ, that no permanent severance could ever be possible. It is possible for the surface of the ocean to be so lashed by a passing storm that the waves roll mountain-high. Then mariners often lose their lives and stout ships go to pieces, but down fathoms deep in the sea peace reigns and the depths remain undisturbed by the tempest raging above. Thus with the church of God. These strifes and contentions reach no further than the flesh; that is, not beyond the human nature; in the depths of the Spirit of Jesus the people of God are all one and dwell at peace one with another. There have been seasons in the history of the church when Zion here below has had a little foretaste of the heaven to come, when she has dwelt safely for a time in peace because the Spirit of her Lord dwelt in the midst of her. Then, again, when he absents himself, night comes and the beasts of the forest creep forth. Death and alarm stalk abroad, the wolves come, the sheep are scattered. All this is to teach us over and over again that no confidence whatever is to be put in the flesh, that all our safety lies in the appearing of Jesus. We only see in part now and know in part now. Just because such understanding as we now have is only in part, differences arise. When we think that the part we do know is all there is to be known we are apt to think of ourselves more than we ought to think and to fall out, perhaps, with some brother because he is not willing to accept as final the little part that we do know. What a blessed promise, however, is that which assures us that when that which is perfect is come we shall see as we are seen and know as we are known. It will not then be in part, not as through a glass darkly, but face to face. Then, assuredly, shall we all see eye to eye, and speak the same things. There will not then be any arguments on predestination, or on any other point of doctrine, for then shall human nature perish and the nature of Christ reign triumphant in all the heavenly bodies of all the saints of God. We cannot give our brother Freeman any assurance of any betterment ever to come in the flesh, but at the appearing of Jesus all the children of God shall appear with him in glory and shall be like him. There have been a few times, but indeed very few, when we think we have experienced a little foretaste of the peace and unity to come after awhile. At such times as we have experienced the appearing of Jesus to our soul's comfort and salvation, everything appeared all right, no confusion anywhere then, all the brethren looked lovely and perfect, every criticism and fault-finding was silenced, glory abounded. If such the sweetness of the streams, what must the fountain be? If so rapturous are these little foretastes here, so rare and so far between, what

must be the glory and beauty of the neverending day of eternity? We have the promise that the church of God shall be conformed to the image of Christ, that they shall all come to the unity of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. A child has to have much disciplining before it comes to the full growth of manhood. Many whippings, many disappointments, many stumblings and fallings before it can learn to put away childish things and to think and act as a man matured and developed. This present world is where the children of God receive their discipline, their scourgings, their chastenings. They are following on to know the Lord, and shall attain the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls, forever to abide in perfect peace and unity in the presence of God.

L.

NOTICE.

OWING to the fact that the building in which our office has been located for the last thirty-three years has been sold, and we have received notice to vacate same by May 15th, the next issue of the SIGNS will be late in reaching our subscribers. We have a huge task before us in moving our machinery, &c., and it will take some little time to get things in running order in our new place, so we ask our readers to be patient with us, and we will do the best we can in making up the time lost while moving our plant, and get our publication up to date as soon as we can. Our new location is to be 13 Center Street, Middletown, N. Y., which is near the Erie station, where we will be pleased to see our friends at any time.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder J. A. Campbell was born in Sercey County, Arkansas, Feb. 22nd, 1847, and departed this life March 18th, 1923, at his home in Munday, Knox County, Texas, aged 76 years, and 26 days. He was married August 29th, 1867, to Miss Margaret Blasingame, to which union were born eleven children, seven of whom survive. His first wife died Nov. 19th, 1894, and he was married the second time Nov. 10th, 1895, to Mrs. Lizzie Griffith, who passed away June 13th, 1912. He was married the third time, Oct. 11th, 1914, to Mrs. A. C. Allen, who survives him. Elder Campbell moved to Wise County, Texas, in early life with his family; joined the Old School Baptist Church, called Enon, in Montague County, Texas, in 1876, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry Aug. 18th, 1877, by Elders James Bedford, A. Matlock, C. D. Hurst and Deacon W. M. Miller, since which time our dear brother had many conflicts with the enemies of truth. He ever contended for the eternal sovereignty of God in all things, preaching salvation by grace, unconditional election, final preservation of the saints and the resurrection of the dead. No man had a better reputation at home or abroad, even the enemies of truth respected him for his charity, firmness and kindness. His motto was to owe no man. Our churches in Texas and adjoining states, together with his bereaved family, have sustained a great loss, a kind father and husband, an able pastor, a wise moderator and disciplinarian, always admonishing the church to patience, love, kindness and forbearance, and to contend earnestly for the faith, always ready to labor and to make sacrifice for the peace of Zion. Truly a great man in Israel has fallen, and the people mourn their loss, yet we feel our loss is his gain, he having been called home to his reward. While we sorrow, it is not as those having no hope. Our hope and promise is that we shall be raised from the grave incorruptible, caught up together to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with him. Dear brother Campbell suffered much during the past year with heart and asthmatic trouble, but did not complain. Surrounded by his dear companion and friends, he would often express a desire to go and be with Jesus, and several times while talking with the unworthy writer he said he was ready and waiting the Lord's summons to go home. The end came quickly, and without a struggle he was gone. Elder O. Strickland and the writer tried to speak to the bereaved at the church-house, near the cemetery, and to point them to the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. May we all try to imitate the walk and life of this man of God.

In sadness,

W. S. BOURLAND.

Mrs. Rebecca Burns (nee Waldrep) the subject of this notice, was born September 12, 1839, died January 8, 1923, making her stay on earth 83 years, 3 months and 8 days. She was married to Mr. Irvin Burns Dec. 28, 1856, to which union three children were born, one girl and two boys: Mrs. Adaline Gray, James Henry and Martin. Her husband having died in the civil war, she was married to M. V. Burns June 10, 1872, to which union two children were born: William A. and Vergia, both of whom preceded her to the grave near the age of twenty-five. She received a hope in Christ and united with the Missionary Baptists, but became dissatisfied with them and united with the Baptists of the Primitive faith and order, and was baptized by Elder Berry Asply, living a consistent member until the end. She was a charter member of Cool Springs Church, and remained there until her death, always filling her seat when not providentially hindered. She was sound in the faith, believing the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, of which she was a reader for many years. She surely was a mother in Israel, and adorned her profession by an orderly walk and godly conversation. Surely the church has sustained a great loss in the death of sister Burns, but we hope our loss is her eternal gain. She leaves two children, eighteen grandchildren, sixteen great-grandchildren, with a host of relatives and friends, to mourn. Her remains were laid to rest in Cool Springs Cemetery to await the resurrection morn. Weep not, dear children, as those who have no hope, for she is not dead, but sleepeth.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved.

Her pastor,

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

George W. Bradshaw died at his home near Ryan, Loudoun County, Virginia, April 3rd, 1923, in the 80th year of his age. He was born Nov. 7th, 1843, and was a son of Walter Nelson Bradshaw and Lydia Jane French, both deceased. He outlived his three brothers and four sisters, being the last of a family of eight children. Mr. Bradshaw's first wife was Miss Sallie Middleton, whom he married Feb. 20th, 1884. She died April 8th, 1908. They had six children, four of whom are living: Hugh Bradshaw, of Wallingford, Iowa, George, of Waxpool, Va., Miss Bertha Bradshaw, of Washington, D. C., and Miss Flora, at home. Mr. Bradshaw's second wife, who is left surviving him, is our sister Sarah E. Robey, whom he married Feb. 6th, 1913. He never made a public profession of religion, but the Old School Baptist Church was the people he loved, and with them he always met when able to do so, being as regular as any member of the church. He believed firmly in the omnipotence of God, and that he is sovereign over all worlds, principalities and powers; that salvation is wholly of grace, not of works. Throughout the community Mr. Bradshaw enjoyed the confidence and esteem of all who knew him. He was honest, upright, industrious, faithful in the discharge of every duty, his word as good as his bond. He had an equable temperament, and had the faculty of not losing his poise even in difficult situations. His health failed him in July of last year, and since then had been gradually declining, at times rallying and getting stronger, again weakening. The end at the last came rather suddenly. We feel that he is out of all pain and trouble and is at rest.

Funeral services were held at his home; burial in the cemetery at Leesburg. May the presence of the Lord dwell with our bereaved sister and with the children of our dearly beloved friend.

L.

Frances Virginia Hudspeth (nee Dean) was born in Coosa County, Alabama, March 29th, 1836, and departed this life March 11th, 1923. She grew to womanhood at this place, was educated at Montgomery, Ala., at which place she taught school after she finished her education. She was married to A. G. Hudspeth Jan. 1st, 1859, to which union were born eight children, five boys and three girls; two boys preceded her to the grave. She with her husband moved to Texas in the year 1860. In 1890 she came with her family to Oklahoma, living at different places until about twenty years ago, at which time she moved to Lexington, Okla., where she since resided. She obtained a hope while in early life, and united with the Primitive Baptist Church known as Zion's Rest in the year 1869, at Corsicana, Texas, and lived a life consistent with her profession until the end came. About two years ago, "grandma," as we all called her, had the misfortune to fall and break her hip, but with the assistance of a good physician and a trained nurse, and the providential care of her heavenly King, she was sufficiently improved to get about some on her crutches, always availing herself of every opportunity to attend her church meetings. With all her afflictions and sufferings she was never heard to murmur or complain, but bore her sufferings with great patience and fortitude. Before the end came she expressed herself as being ready and anxious to be freed from the trials incident to this life, and be at rest. The children who survive her are William Hudspeth, of Stephenville, Texas, Mrs. F. L. Berry, of Pawnee, Okla., Mrs. E. M. Burnett, Mrs. C. L. Hackler, G. J. Hudspeth and A. G. Hudspeth, of Lexington, Okla., all of whom were present when the end came.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer, who tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved, after which she was laid to rest in the Lexington Cemetery, beside her husband, Elder A. G. Hudspeth, who had preceded her to the grave by more than

four years, to await the resurrection. To the children we would say, True, mother is gone, but while she is gone she yet speaks; her noble, exemplary life is a living monument to her praise. She not only told you how you should live, but showed you. May the Lord bless each of you with grace to bow in humble submission to his will.

Written by one who loves the family, especially this noble saint, as a mother indeed in Israel.

A. D. WEST.

Letitia D. Dunham, widow of John E. Dunham, was born August 15th, 1844, near South Lebanon, Ohio, and departed this life October 3rd, 1918, at the home of her son, Raymond, near Lebanon, her age being 74 years, 1 month and 18 days. She leaves to mourn their loss two sons and two grandchildren, also two brothers and three sisters, besides many relatives and friends. She was a daughter of Joseph and Sara Ann Jameson, who lived and died in the vicinity of Lebanon. In the year 1864 she became identified with the Main Street Presbyterian denomination. In February, 1870, she and her husband were received by experience into the membership of the West Lebanon Old School Baptist Church. She was ever a devoted, faithful member of the church, and a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone. She was ever in her place at meetings when possible, and ever ready to entertain ministers and brethren who came among them. It can truly be said of her that hers was truly a life of devotion to her family, her friends and her church. She was greatly missed when she was called away.

The funeral services were conducted from the home of her son, Raymond, on Monday, October 7th, by Elder Ballard, of Blanchester, Ohio, and Mr. Kunze, of Lebanon. She was laid to rest beside her husband in the Lebanon cemetery.

CLARA K. WILLIAMS.

W. W. Ridgway, the subject of this notice, was born November 19th, 1838, died March 29th, 1923, being 84 years, 4 months and 10 days old. He was married to Miss Mary Magdalen Jenkins October 19th, 1858, who preceded him to the grave about three years. To this union were born eleven children, four having died in youth, leaving five boys and two girls, also two grandchildren. He served in the Civil War. "Uncle Billy," as he was familiarly known, was noted for his high standing for honesty, integrity and morality. He professed a hope in Christ in youth, and although he never attached himself to any church, he was a staunch believer in the doctrine of God our Savior, and also in the old order of Baptists, known as the Old School or Primitive Baptists. There is, besides his immediate family, one sister, Mrs. Emeline Taylor, one half-sister, Mrs. Leeman Bowden, of Dukedom, Ky., and two half-brothers, Pete Ridgway, of Fulton, Ky., and James Ridgway, of Arkansas. Uncle Billy was always ready to lend a helping hand to those in need. He loved his neighbors and friends, who were many in number. As a husband, he was kind and affectionate; as a father, he could not be excelled in any way, as can be plainly noted by the family he has raised, all of them being refined ladies and gentlemen. Thus has gone from us one who will not only be missed by his family, but by his neighbors and friends also. Will say to the family, Weep not as those who have no hope, for after awhile, some sweet day, we hope to meet Uncle Billy in that haven of rest where parting will be no more.

Funeral services were held at the Walnut Fork Church by Elders H. N. Oliver and J. C. Chester, after which his body was laid to rest in the Walnut Fork Cemetery, there to await the resurrection morning, when the Lord shall call him from the grave, with all his redeemed host, to praise him forever and forever.

Written by his neighbor and friend,

R. L. VEAZEY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. M. A. Casstevens, Texas, $3.00.

MEETINGS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association is expected to meet with the church at Black Rock, Baltimore County, Maryland, on Wednesday, May 16th, 1923. Visitors coming via Baltimore will take train leaving Union Station at 3 p. m. Tuesday, 15th, for Cockeysville, where the friends will meet and care for them. Those coming via Harrisburg will leave that city at 12:01 p. m. 15th, arriving at Cockeysville at 2:38 and remain until 3 o'clock train from Baltimore, when all will be taken to places of entertainment. We hope to see a goodly number.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, May 23rd, 24th and 25th, 1923. To all ministers, brethren and friends of our faith and order a cordial invitation is extended. Trains will be met at Conowingo Station, on the Columbia Branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad, Tuesday evening about 5:30, and Wednesday morning about 9:30. Those coming from Baltimore or Philadelphia change cars at Perryville, Md., taking the connection to Conowingo, Md.

S. R. DANCE, Church Clerk.

The Delaware River Association will hold its annual session with the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church, commencing Wednesday, May 30th, and continuing three days. Those coming by train will come direct to Frenchtown, N. J., over Pennsylvania Railroad, where all will be cared for. Trains arriving here at 5:18 p. m. Tuesday will be met. Any one coming on other trains will inquire for O. R. Kugler. We cordially invite those of our faith and order to come, especially ministering brethren.

O. R. KUGLER, Church Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, of New York City, at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (6th, 7th and 8th), 1923.

The New Vernon Church having (through her trustees) very kindly granted the Ebenezer Church the use of her meetinghouse, the services will be held therein. Entertainment will be provided at "The Old Homestead" situated a short distance from the meetinghouse. Those who attended the Association last year will recall the pleasant hours spent at this house, conducted by F. J. Beyea.

A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren of our faith and *order*.

Particulars as to train service will be announced later.

Those coming by automobile will go direct to "The Old Homestead."

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.
CYRUS RISLER, JR., Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFIT, Pastor.
J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

CHURCH NOTICE.

To our beloved brethren and friends, who may desire to visit the Cedar Creek Church,

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE

we have changed our place of meeting from Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, to Oregon City, Oregon. Day and hour will be the same: fourth Sunday in each month, services beginning at 10:30 a. m., with lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.

Compiled by Silas H. Durand and P. G. Lester. $1.00 per single copy, $10.00 per dozen. Send orders to Mildred Durand Gordy, 1011 Vaughn Street, Ann Arbor, Mich., or Elder P. G. Lester, 826 Virginia Ave., Roanoke, Va.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 91. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1923. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SCIOTOVILLE STATION, PORTSMOUTH, Ohio.

DEAR SIRS:—Will you please publish the inclosed article by Elder W. J. May (a very old brother)? I think it would be interesting to the many SIGNS' readers.

Yours truly,

MARTHA ELLIOTT.

SHOCK, Ky., March 18, 1923.

MARTHA ELLIOTT:—A stranger to me indeed in the flesh, but well acquainted in the trials and tribulations of the Lord's humble poor. I am judging thus by your request. Sister Jane May, Elder H. W. May's wife, told me you wanted me to write and tell you what the dove of Noah's ark meant, and I have put it off simply because it is too mysterious for me, and lies too far under the surface for me; it requires those of God's servants who by his grace can and do do business in great waters. These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep; but I have decided to-day to suggest a few of my thoughts on this wonderful and mysterious subject, and send them to you, and who knows but the Lord may order some of them at least to your comfort and benefit? This is all I can do; such as I have give I unto thee.

In the first place, in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth; and the earth was without form, and void, &c. No question in my mind but the creation of this earth, with its fullness and fashions, was emblematic or typical of God's spiritual universe, and the heaven was before the earth, and all the works of God are so powerful and mysterious that we must know they did not, neither could not, have come by chance, therefore they come by design—the design of our God, the Sovereign of worlds, the Creator of all things, visible and invisible; for his glory they were and are created; and the invisible things existed from everlasting, or ever the earth was, when there were no visible things, and if there had been no invisible things there never would have been any visible things; or, in other words, if there had been no substances there would have been no shadows whatever, for shadows cannot cause substances, but substances do cause shadows, therefore coming events cast shadows before them. Let us bear in mind that the Old Testament Scriptures abound with mysterious types and shadows, which

we cannot understand, except by divine revelation. I have thought, and yet think, that this narrative of Noah and the ark, and the things connected with it, is as grand a type as ever was recorded in the Scriptures, and I believe, and have believed all these many years, that the ark wherein the eight souls (persons) who were saved by water was a type or shadow of Christ, as the prophet Isaiah has told us, forty-second chapter, sixth and seventh verses, "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and will give thee [Christ] for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." So, then, as every living thing of all flesh wherein was the breath of life died, perished in the mighty flood of waters, every human being that ever did exist, or will exist, who was not chosen in Christ before the world was will utterly perish, regardless of what men believe, preach or teach. We have no doubt but countless thousands of those who perished in the flood were happily housed in heaven and immortal glory, but this wonderful shadow which the heavenly substance casts forth shows us plainly that it is absolutely certain that no one can escape perishing in the wrath of divine justice who was not chosen in Christ before the flood came, preserved in Christ until the wrath of divine justice was overpast. When Noah sent out the dove the first time there was no place for it to set so much as the sole of its foot, for the flood was not yet abated, therefore Noah put forth his hand and took her and pulled her in unto him, and he stayed yet other seven days, then sent out the dove again, and in the evening it returned again, and, lo, an olive leaf in its mouth which it had plucked off, by which Noah knew the waters were abated from off the earth; and he stayed yet seven other days, and sent out the dove, which returned unto him no more. The dove represents the church, the Lord's chosen people, the election of grace; so also does the olive tree. Paul speaks of the Jewish church under the law as the tame olive tree and his people of the Gentiles as the wild olive tree, and there is no need of citing the numerous portions of Scripture showing that the church is represented by the dove. Solomon says, "O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock." Viewed in the clefted or wounded side of Christ from everlasting, or ever the earth was. Again, My dove, my undefiled, is but one. The prophet Zechariah speaks of the church as a candlestick all of gold, and two olive trees by it. (Zech. iv. 23; also Rev. xi. 4.) These are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. So, then, to sum up this great mystery of mysteries which I have only hinted at in a bungling way; I say to sum up my scattered thoughts as briefly as I can, so as to be the better understood, I will here quote Psalms xlii. 7: "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." Over Christ. All the wrath of the law of divine justice that was due, or was demanded for the transgression of the elect family of God, was wreaked down on the sin-bearing victim, the Lord Jesus Christ in full force and virtue, as is shown in the Scripture, by the typical Moses. We must know that the Scriptures do emphatically teach that it is impossible for any human being, regardless of age, sex, color or character, to enter heaven and immortal glory who was not chosen in Christ before the world was, or ever

Adam's dust was fashioned into man. Grace is older than sin, so also Christ was before Adam, was from everlasting to everlasting, or ever the earth was, when there were no fountains abounding with water. The dove being pulled into the ark and kept safely until the flood abated shows us that all the election of grace, the redeemed family of God, were chosen and preserved in Christ, safely kept from the wrath, waves and raging billows of the law of divine justice, when deep called unto deep for satisfaction for transgression, being ten thousand talents in debt and not so much as one farthing with which to pay. But their blessed Surety, the loving Jesus, their Elder Brother, for the great love wherewith he loved them paid their dreadful debt, saying to the prisoners, Go free; and a palm leaf is an emblem or token of peace, which the dove brought in the cool of the day (evening), showing that the demands of law and justice were fully satisfied and settled forever and ever. Read Hebrews x. 12. If the seven seals had not been opened and every charge and claim completely canceled and all these lawful (all the elect) captives lawfully delivered, before Adam heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the cool of the day in the garden, all would have been utterly swept away with the waves and billows and floods of the deep and righteous calls of the righteous and holy law of God.

May God bless these rambling thoughts to the comfort of you and others, for Jesus' sake. Write us when convenient.

W. J. MAY.

FARMINGTON, Kentucky.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—Maybe I ought not to bother you with such weak and uninteresting thoughts as I have, but I want you to know I indorse every word of your New Year's Greeting in the SIGNS of January 1st. You can hardly imagine how thankful we little weaklings are to God for such men as you, and others. We thank him that you are not willing to leave off the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty in all things. When we leave off the absolute predestination of all things we leave off the very channel through which all things come our way in time and in eternity. We will not lay down the absolute certainty of all things and take the chance of uncertain "happen-sos." If I object to the absolute predestination of all things it is evidence I care very little for any kind of predestination. I notice when we are asked to leave off absolute predestination we are asked to take on conditional time salvation instead thereof. If I believe part of my salvation is conditional on my part it is evidence I would not object seriously to conditionalism in all parts. For me to believe that salvation is conditional on my part is very poor evidence that I have salvation. If we are willing to divide the child it is evident it is not ours, and that we care but little for it. Conditionalism is a fruit of the flesh, and is the natural religion of the unregenerate world. I well remember the time when I naturally believed I would have to do something to be saved, and believed I had the power and ability to perform that thing just when it pleased me to do so. Now you see where this idea of man having power and ability to perform conditions in order to be saved comes from. If a man believes in conditionalism before regeneration, and believes it after he claims regeneration, what evidence have we that that man has been regenerated? If the regenerated and the unregenerated see and believe the same things, how can we draw a line of distinction between the

two? How can a man be taught of God without learning something? But we should not be surprised to see men departing from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and to the doctrine of conditionalism, thereby turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, denying him and his absolute sovereignty in all things. They are hardly aware of the fact that they were before of old ordained to this condemnation, not aware that in every effort they make against God's grace and sovereignty they are themselves fulfilling God's absolute predestination concerning them. It is no use to ask why God ordained some men to turn grace into lasciviousness and to deny him and his Christ. The way is no man's business. It is enough for us to know that God does as he pleases, and does it right. Not a bone of Jesus was to be broken, yet they were to look on him whom they had pierced. When they came to break the legs of Jesus they decided not to break them, yet they willingly pierced his side, not aware that higher Power was controlling their wills and deeds, entirely ignorant of the fact that every move they made, everything they did and all they decided to leave undone, was the fulfilling of God's absolute predestination. If God controls the wills and deeds of some men, would it be wrong for him to control the doings of all men? Can we dare to draw the line where God must stop with his controlling power? If the time has been when men's wills and deeds were according to God's determinate counsel, let the objector tell when and where he ceased to determine, rule and control the wills and deeds of men. When they establish the fact that God is no longer the ruler and controller of all things, then the fact is settled that we are without God and without hope in the world, and that which comes to pass comes only by chance or happen-so. How can we give up God as the ruler and controller of all things?

I only meant to say a few things by way of indorsement, but could not control my thoughts.

A poor sinner in hope,

J. B. ADAMS.

SULLIVAN, Ill., April 19, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am herewith inclosing a letter which I received from Elder Schenck; I would like very much to see it published in the SIGNS. Some of our brethren are inclined to separate the two salvations, and I think this letter makes it plain. I hope you can use this, although, as you will see, it was not written for publication.

Your brother, E. D. ELDER.

WILLIAMSTOWN, Kansas, March 5, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER ELDER:—Your kind letter dated February 24th came duly to hand. I was truly glad to hear from you, and I feel that I owe you an apology for not having answered your former letter, which came to hand a year or so ago, which was also gladly received. If you can bear with me in my weakness I will now try to write you a few lines. As you requested my views on the matter of salvation, I will give you such as I have, if the Lord will guide my pen. To write or talk upon or to listen to a conversation upon the subject of salvation is to me most interesting. There is no subject of more vital importance to poor, lost and ruined sinners than this, and perhaps there is no subject the truth of which is more grossly perverted; notwithstanding I feel sure there is no subject more clearly defined in the holy Scriptures than this.

In reviewing the matter we will do well to consider the several witnesses who have been called to bear witness concerning this matter. Their testimony is the testimony of God to speak and write as they did. Therefore the apostle said, When I came unto you I came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. It becomes us therefore to take heed to those things which were written by them, lest we advance something contradictory to divine testimony.

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." I can find no name in the Scripture spoken of in connection with the work of salvation save the name of Jesus. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." Here is one witness speaking directly from the throne of God; indeed, the very angel of God himself, declaring in advance the advent of Jesus and the glorious work before him. It would seem that this should be sufficient to establish the truth beyond all cavil, and I have no doubt it does, so far as the real subjects of salvation are concerned; but it appears that men have grown wise above what is written, and are not satisfied with that which is left upon record for us. Michael, the archangel, contending with the devil, disputed about the body of Moses. This contention is still going on between the followers of these respectively. The followers of Michael the archangel (which is God) are contending that the body of Moses was buried in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor, thus clearly signifying that the law hath no more dominion over us. The followers of Satan contend, as did some in the days of the apostles, that, Except ye be circumcised and keep the law of Moses, ye cannot be saved, to whom the apostle said, We gave no such authority. This contention has seemed to resolve itself into a kind of traditional belief that men must do something in order to be saved, notwithstanding all that is written to the contrary. Our contention is that we are no more under the law, but under grace. It is ours to ascribe all power and glory unto Jesus as the Savior of sinners, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. As stated before, I know of no other name spoken of in connection with the work of salvation save the name of Jesus. So also we find no other reason assigned why his name should be called Jesus except this: "He shall save his people from their sins." One of two things, then, is clearly apparent: He has saved his people, or else he has not. If he has not, then the whole eternal plan of salvation is a complete failure, Christ hath suffered in vain. On the other hand, if he has saved his people, it is an everlasting salvation, for what God doeth it shall be forever; nothing can be added nor anything taken from it; and God doeth it that man should fear before him. Could his name be called Jesus if he had not saved his people? or could there be salvation without Jesus? Let the world answer these questions if they will. The prophet Isaiah said, "He will save us;" the angel said, "He shall save us," and the apostle said, "He hath saved us." In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established. We might well rest our case here, but the evidence is not all in by any means, yet we might pause long enough to consider his divine attributes, whether he be found worthy to be called a Savior, or a King, or our High Priest,

or God. Can we confide in him as a Savior if he has only the desire but not the power to save? Can we honor a king who is only a king in name, but who sways no scepter? Can we trust him as our High Priest if he has atoned for our sins but yet has not satisfied divine justice? or can we bow the knee to a disappointed God? God forbid. The eternal Father himself was well pleased in him, signifying the same by a voice from heaven and by his Spirit descending in the bodily shape of a dove and lighting upon him, and he in turn glorified his Father, saying, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." God sent his prophets to bear witness, saying, He shall not fail nor be discouraged till he has set judgment in the earth, and the isles shall wait for his law. We sometimes think it strange that any intelligent being will preach or teach that Christ died to save the whole world, but there are none really saved only those who upon their own volition are willing to accept him. Let such preachers and teachers bring on their witnesses. Briefly stated, it is not a question with God's people whether they are willing to accept him, but the great question with them is, Am I accepted in him? We know his salvation is sure to all his people, but does that include me? I fail to see how any one can believe in eternal salvation by grace and yet teach that our time salvation is dependent upon the creature self. If this is the case, why should the psalmist pray, Keep us back from presumptuous sins? Why should we give credence to his words when he said, The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want; he leadeth me beside the still water; he maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he restoreth my soul? Why should the apostle Peter have intimated that we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation? Why was it necessary that the Lord should lead Jacob about and instruct him and keep him as the apple of his eye? or what meaning can we attach to the apostle's words when he said, For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ; and whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation; or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation. But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead; who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust that he will yet deliver? (See 2 Cor. i. 5–10.) It is made quite clear, then, that Christ is our deliverer as well as our Savior and our Redeemer; indeed, he is our all in all. Whom have I on earth beside thee, or whom in heaven but thee? In him we live, move and have our being. In fact, the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. To the contrary, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord."

We might continue to produce Scripture testimony bearing upon this most important subject, but I hardly feel that it is necessary. I have tried to present my views and my reasons for such views. I feel sure you know more about this than I am able to tell, but it is good for us to speak often one to another of these things.

In conclusion, therefore, I will use the language of the apostle: "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partakers of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works,

but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." I have tried to be brief, yet comprehensive, but fear that I have not succeeded in either, but do not know that I could do any better if I should try again. Please cast the mantle of charity over my weakness and write me again at your convenience.

I remain your brother in hope,

L. L. SCHENCK.

WHITE PLAINS, N. Y., Oct. 31, 1922.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—I feel a desire to write you, and have been thinking of our good meetings each Sunday. Truly the Lord has blessed you most wonderfully in his cause to comfort the dear church. I want to tell you how much I enjoy your sermons each time, but words fail me, yet the desire is so often with me, for it does seem that you tell my feelings better than I can. For many years before I met you at the New York Church I had been reading your published letters and in them you were telling of the same things through which I was passing concerning this doctrine and people. Many times after reading your letters my heart was melted to tears, and after meeting you and hearing you talk from time to time, there seemed to kindle a flame of sacred love such as often goes out to the dear people of God, but which cannot be described. One year ago in November, I was down south, and as I awoke one morning, these words came to me as though some one had spoken them to me: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you." I shall never be able to tell while breath remains, the joy and gladness that filled this vile heart of mine. I want to tell you how glad I was to-day that I went to meeting. At first, I thought I would not go, but there came a stronger desire to go, and the preaching seemed to comfort me, for this doctrine seems always new. May the Lord be with you to proclaim his wonderful work to his poor, helpless and longing people.

Yours in hope of life beyond,

MELISSA GRIMES.

RUTHERFORD, N. J., Dec. 23, 1922.

DEAR SISTER GRIMES:—I am reminded of the fact that I have not acknowledged receipt of your good letter sent me by sister Beard. It affords me encouragement to know that you feel the Lord has blessed me to speak comfortably to Jerusalem. Of late, especially, I have been feeling most unprofitable, and cannot understand how any one could be comforted by anything I have been able to say. Many times unfruitfulness and barrenness of mind as touching spiritual things are of such magnitude before my eyes that I am almost convinced that, after all, the brethren have been deceived in their impressions that I have been called of the Lord to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. It is certainly out of a sense of absolute poverty of anything good in self that I am made to speak, and while I am convinced that it is only in this way the Lord is glorified, at the same time it is an entirely different way from what I would have it naturally. I have been considering, prayerfully, I hope, what the mind of the Lord is concerning my serving the people of the Ebenezer Church, and it just seems at times that I am so fearful I am not the right man for the place, and I feel to be so unequal to the task that I hardly know what to decide. I am sure I have had abundant evidence of the love of the brethren manifested toward me, and

I sincerely hope that that love is reciprocated by me, for, unless I am mistaken in the whole matter, there is a love toward them that cannot be expressed in words. Yet serious doubts and questionings arise as the time approaches for me to give the church an answer. I hope my prayer is, Lord, decide the doubtful case. I think often of hymn 1046:

> "Oh, that the Lord would guide my ways
> To keep his statutes still;
> Oh, that my God would grant me grace
> To know and do his will."

Perhaps I am desiring to walk by sight, when we know that the Scriptures declare the way of the Lord is an highway which the vulture's eyes (the wisdom of this world) hath not seen, but the redeemed walk in that way. It is a walking of faith. What, then, is faith? We are told in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews that it is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. What a remarkable chapter that is on the subject of faith. I have not the time now to call attention to what is there declared, but if you are so inclined, you might read what is recorded there, and if the Lord gives you understanding, it will be profitable to you. In this walk of faith, with all things which are seen appearing against us, how often do we need to hear the words spoken by Jesus to which you made reference: "Peace I leave with you," &c. Only he can bid the tempest be still, and then are we at our desired haven. Do we not marvel when the boilings of turmoil and strife and murmurings are going on within, to hear this Man who spake as never man spake, bid us rest in his peace? Only the souls who experience it know the joy of his salvation, and of the rejoicing at his appearing. We often feel to say, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, for we seem to be sinking down beneath the waves of destruction. May the Lord give us to feed upon the sincere milk of the word and cause us to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, that he may be glorified in his saints and we be made to rejoice in him, having no confidence in the flesh.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

R. LESTER DODSON.

MT. UNION, Pa., Aug. 22, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Having read the good old paper, lo these many years, I must pay up a little longer, for I cannot do without it, as it is all the preaching I get. The editorials are fine, and the views the same as dear old Elder Gilbert Beebe's, and the correspondence is a comfort to those of like faith. Many things came into my mind to write, but at my age (seventy-eight) I fear I am too weak a writer to be of any comfort to the many able writers of our family paper, but will say a few words, trying in my weakness to say something about the doctrine of predestination. Some persons seem to think there is a difference between predestination and absolute predestination. The first, they say, they believe, and apply to the things pertaining to the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth; the latter they are afraid to believe, for fear it will make God the author of sin. Upon this part of the subject I understand that God is above and beyond all law, and consequently not to be held accountable by finite man for his work. In this belief I think we are fully sustained by the inspired writings; if not, our own opinion on this or on any other subject is not worth anything. Job in his affliction asks this question, Shall any teach God knowledge, seeing he judgeth those that

are on high? Isaiah makes a similar inquiry, saying, Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor, hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him and taught him in the path of judgment? Paul corroborates this evidence, saying, Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath first given him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? Webster defines predestination to be the unchangeable purpose of God, and absolute as meaning positive and unlimited. If, then, predestination is the unchangeable purpose of God, it must be positive, and that it is unlimited we have abundant proof. While Webster as a lexicographer is our standard, the christian in matters pertaining to his spiritual welfare must look beyond the decision of men for his guide. In this case, however, the opinion of the scholar is clearly sustained by the word of God. We read from the book of Job that he (the Lord) is in one mind, and none can turn him, and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. The sweet singer of Israel tells us positively that the counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations. God himself says by the mouth of the prophet Malachi, I am God, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. James gives his testimony in full assurance and in much faith, saying, Every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down from above, from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. If, then, God himself is unchangeable, his purpose must be equally steadfast. That the predestinating power, together with the foreknowledge of God, extends to all things both inside and outside the church, is too clearly set forth in the Scriptures for any one who is born of the Spirit of God and kept by the power of God to deny. Solomon says, The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. It does seem that this passage alone ought to satisfy the mind of our timid friends. But this is not all the evidence. Paul, in his discourse to the idolatrous worshipers at Athens, tells them that God made the world and all things therein, and hath made of one blood all nations, for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the time before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation. Now the most inconsistent Arminian does not claim that all nations of men are in the church, but that they may be if they will, or might have been if they would, and for us to believe such would be to disbelieve the apostle, for he says that they who compose the church, or of whom the church is composed, are redeemed out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation. Peter, in his memorable sermon on the day of Pentecost, speaking of the Savior, says, Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. The truth of this assertion of Peter's is very apparent from the reading of the evangelist, for we find that every attempt to arrest our blessed Savior in his mission was a failure until the set time of the Lord arrived, then they could exercise their power just so far as it was for the glory of God, and no farther. David tells us that the wrath of man shall praise God, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain. Those who seem to be so fearful of making God the author of sin must, it would seem, think that he only takes notice of these outside matters as they pass in kind of a panoramic view

before his omniscient gaze, disposing of them as best he can, I suppose, for if he had not power in the beginning to dispose of them as suited him, he has not now, for we have before seen that he is unchangeable. It does look as though the regularity of the law of nature ought to teach the men better than to believe such haphazard doctrine, without Scriptural testimony, but we have plenty of that, and we purpose to define our position by the Scriptures, not by nature. The Lord by the prophet Isaiah speaks on this wise: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Paul, in his letter to the Ephesians, says, In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Now, if the all things spoken of in this declaration do not mean all things, how shall we determine what limit to put upon that consoling declaration which says, All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose? Limit the meaning of the word "all," in this case, and it destroys all the comfort to be derived from it otherwise considered; to deny the predestinating power of God in all things seems to me very much like talking about a Savior that tried to complete the work of salvation, but failed. In fact, it is sapping the very foundation of our salvation. A God of such limited power and wisdom may do very well for an Arminian, but for one who is born of the Spirit of God and is kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, and who feels that in and of himself he can do nothing, nothing short of an all-wise and all-powerful God will suffice. Such a person daily feels that if the smallest part of the work is left for him to perform he is lost world without end.

Well, I could still go on, but will close. Cast the mantle of charity over my imperfections. Love to all who write for the SIGNS.

Your old brother, in hope of eternal life,

R. M. BROWN.

FREEWATER, Ore., May 7, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—Just a word of inquiry. I sent a short notice to the SIGNS the first of April, hoping to get it in the issue of April 15th, but it did not appear, and this morning May 1st number came and no notice. The notice was an explanation to my correspondents why I had not answered their letters. My wife has been sick for nearly four months with influenza, and for the last three weeks has been in town, where she could be nursed and nearer the doctor. I have father with me, and as he has passed his ninety-fifth birthday, and is blind, and his mind is as blank as his eyes, and he is only out of bed when I help him, so with all this I could not keep up my correspondence. Many of my correspondents are readers of the SIGNS. I am glad to say my wife seems to be improving, but very slowly, but I think she will soon be able to be brought home.

I have just read your editorial in answer to brother Freeman, and my heart and soul were made to rejoice to see such unmovable truth set forth in such humble and bold terms. Dear brother, if we could always see and understand those two principles, good and evil, peace and confusion, light and darkness, day and

night, and place the evil, confusion, darkness and night to the flesh, or natural man, and peace and all the good to the spiritual, or heavenly man, and give God's predestination rule and power over all, you would cease hearing the enemies of truth saying that if God predestinated so-and-so it makes him the author of sin. As long as we are in the flesh the warfare will go on, but thanks be to God he giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. T. BARNES.

[WE hope brother Barnes will pardon our seeming carelessness in not publishing the notice he speaks of above, for we have had many annoying things to contend with during the past few months. We extend our sincere sympathy to him, and hope he may soon see brighter days.—ED.]

LYNN GROVE, Ky., Feb. 12, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please find inclosed two dollars to pay for the SIGNS another year. We feel we cannot do without it, and find much love and comfort in its pages. My wife joins me in love to the household of faith. We so deeply feel our unworthiness, and beg the love and forgiveness of the dear heavenly Father, for we both humbly confess sin is mixed with all we do. We hope we have the forgiving spirit. As Ruth of old, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

Yours in great sorrow and tribulation,

W. T. CHESTER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1923.

EDITOR:

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PSALMS XXIII. 4.

"YEA, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil."

We have a request before us for our views on what is meant by "the valley of the shadow of death." We cannot say that we have any very definite views about it, but may present some thoughts we have had in connection with the subject. A shadow of anything is never the thing itself. A shadow, therefore, is not the real thing, but merely the darkness caused by an object when it intercepts the light. On account of an object being in the path of the sun's rays it causes an unilluminated outline of itself to be cast upon the ground. This dark space is merely an outline, no more, and wholly unsubstantial. There is no body or substance to it. Now, the twenty-third Psalm speaks forth not David's experience merely, but more than that, it speaks forth the experience of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ while here on earth in the days of his flesh. We have a long time believed it full of meaning that the twenty-second Psalm beginning, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" is followed so closely and connectedly by the beautiful language of the twenty-third Psalm. If the language of the twenty-second Psalm forms a detailed prophecy of Jesus' experience while on the cross, we must conclude the twenty-

third Psalm to be a continuation of that experience, but with the difference that whereas the twenty-second Psalm portrays his terrible anguish and suffering, the twenty-third Psalm shows him transcending his bodily anguish and looking right into the Father's face with the blessed assurance that the mighty God is his shepherd and deliverer. We must never forget in reading so many portions of the Old Testament, especially the prophecies and the Psalms, that holy men of old spake by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that in so doing they were talking not of themselves, but of the sufferings of Christ and of the glory that should follow. Nothing could possibly more minutely portray the anguish of Jesus in the crucifixion than does the twenty-second Psalm; nothing could more resound the glory of Jesus from age to age than does the twenty-third Psalm. To Jesus death was but a shadow; to him, God as he verily was, death could not be but a shadow. Let it never be lost sight of that as Jesus was truly a man he was also God. As God he could not die, to him, as God, death was only a shadow. He was, as a man, made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death. As a man, truly he did die, and his death was the most excruciating and heart-breaking that ever man suffered. As a man, death was to him no shadow, but a painful and humiliating necessity and reality. This we cannot help but realize as we read over the words of the twenty-second Psalm, but as we read over the words of the succeeding Psalm there seems to be such a consciousness of the Father's presence with him that Jesus rises above the real death which his manhood is enduring and transcends that death so that it becomes to him but a shadow, beyond which he triumphantly comes to the victorious conclusion that he will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Had death been a real thing to him instead of but a shadow, it would have meant the finality and disappointment of all his life's work, the defeat of his church's salvation, but the fact that he knows he will dwell in the house of the Lord forever shows clearly his consciousness of his oneness with God, and that he knows nothing can interrupt that unity; so that for Jesus death, and what looked to his enemies to be defeat, meant to him and his Father but a stepping-stone to victory, only another stage in that long and painful journey from the virgin's womb to exaltation at God's right hand. But while this Psalm has its primary application to the experience of Jesus, so it must have its place also in the experience of those who are the followers of Jesus. As to Jesus in his Godhead, death was but a shadow, and nothing more, so to every child of God in that he is a child of God, death is but a shadow. The man Jesus paid the full penalty of his people's guilt in the death he died for them upon the cross. This penalty God will not require at the hands of his people. To do so would be to claim payment of the debt twice. This God will not do, because, first, he is a just and equitable God; and, second, the payment rendered by his beloved Son was so perfect and complete that it cannot be ever added to or done over. All believers, as they are the children of God by having been actually born of the Spirit of God, do not and cannot die. This is positively declared by Jesus. "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Paul writes to Timothy that

Christ "hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." Further, in Hebrews we have the assurance as follows: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." In Adam all died, all were lost in a state of condemnation, and separated from God by wicked works. In and through the glorious work of Jesus Christ this death and condemnation are ended so far as the children of God are concerned, and all God's elect are raised up from under captivity to the law of sin and from the death or condemnation which comes by the law. Therefore there is now no condemnation (death) to them which are in Christ Jesus. To the people of God death is but a shadow. We are daily walking through the valley of this shadow. We see death touching all about us, we see the whole world lying in wickedness, the whole of human nature utterly depraved and under the sentence of death. But this death can never really touch one for whom Christ has died. Since Jesus himself has lain in the tomb, no child of his need dread or fear its gloom. When we come to tread the verge of the dark river we have a hope that it shall not overwhelm us, but that its waters of condemnation may stand as a wall to let us pass through dryshod, unharmed and unscathed, to the other side and the blissful paradise of God. To our human nature, death is the end and ultimate reality; to the man who is a new creature in Christ Jesus, it can be but a shadow.

L.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at his home in Ridgetown, Ontario, Canada, April 3rd, 1923, Duncan William Lodge and Flora Ann Graham, both of Dunwich, Ontario, Canada.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, at his home, 200 Wicomico St., Salisbury, Md., May 5th, 1923, Lester Myles Powell and Thelma Adkins Dennis, both of Salisbury, Maryland.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. G. M. Edwards, mother of Mrs. J. Roy McGinty (wife of the editor of *The Chatsworth Times*), died at her home in LaGrange, Ga., Monday, March 5th, at 6:30 p. m. Before her marriage she was Miss Nannie B. Woodall, daughter of Samuel Parsons Woodall and Matilda (Wilson) Woodall, and was born in Troup County, Georgia, November 1st, 1864, being 58 years old at the time of her death. Mrs. Edwards was one of the most remarkable women it has ever been the pleasure of the writer to know. Although confined to her bed for nearly thirty of the past thirty-five years, she was not only reconciled and uncomplaining, but held cheerful court to the hosts of friends who were constantly gathered around her bedside, and her sick-room was ever a scene of brightness and a source of inspiration to those who loved her best. Mrs. Edwards was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, joining this denomination early in life, and was at all times one of the staunchest "defenders of the faith," that faith which was her daily support in life, and by which she looked confidently into eternity. Throughout the length and breadth of the land her home was known as a hospitable haven, especially to the Elders and laymen of her own religious faith, and the ablest and most distinguished ministers of the nation sought and found inspiration and counsel at her bedside. Brilliantly gifted, mentally and spiritually, she wrote extensively for the religious press, in verse and prose, and her pastor, for many years an able minister among the Primitive Baptists, stated at her funeral that her influence through her writings had been greater than his through his preaching. Although confined to her bed, she carried on an extensive correspondence, writing more or less regularly to scores of friends throughout the United States and Canada. She was married some forty years ago to George Magruder Edwards, who, with their only child (Mrs. McGinty), survives her. Probably the world has never seen an example of a family more perfectly united by the ties of unselfish love and characterized by more cheerful self-sacrifice one for the other than marked this family circle, the center of which was the beloved and loving wife and mother. During all the long years of her invalidism she ruled

the home with the same gentle and cheerful spirit which marked all her relations in life, and from her bedside directed the household work and the planting and cultivation of the flowers she loved so much. The news of her death carried sadness to the hearts of every one who knew her, and hundreds will feel a keen personal loss at her passing.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder J. T. Satterwhite, her pastor, at the LaGrange Primitive Baptist meetinghouse, Tuesday afternoon at 2 o'clock, and the body was laid to rest beside her father and mother, in the cemetery at Lebanon Church, eight miles south of LaGrange. Among the many lovely floral offerings was an especially beautiful one sent by the Woman's Club of Chatsworth. Besides her husband and daughter, she leaves one sister, Mrs. Ludie Edwards, of LaGrange, and one brother, S. G. Woodall, of Atlanta.

Just before her death the writer was preparing to print a small volume of Mrs. Edwards' verses, which will now be gotten out as a memorial volume.

His call has come, and the gentle spirit of this beloved woman has gone to dwell in his kingdom on high. The writer feels his incapacity to pay adequate tribute to her memory. To him she was more than an affectionate mother-in-law; and aside from the cheeful greeting of "Son," he will miss the conscious assurance of her constant prayers in his behalf. She has gone, but there abides the sacred memory of her life as an inspiration to those who survive her, and the confident assurance that on the resurrection morn she "will awake with his likeness" to a new and glorious life eternal.

HER SON-IN-LAW.

Merritta Waterbury was born July, 1852, and departed this life January 1st, 1923, in her 71st year. She was married to Frederick W. Waterbury, September 1st, 1870. August 8th, 1875, she was received into the fellowship of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, in New York City, on relation of an experience of grace, and was baptized by Elder William L. Benedict on the 22nd of the same month. Her life in the church, for over forty-seven years, was consistent with what she professed to believe, and it is with a sad heart that we record the death of this sister. She had been in poor health for a year or two, but was able to be at the table for dinner on the day the end came. She was living with her only daughter and son-in-law, sister and Mr. Arthur Barlow, near Otisville, N. Y., at the time she passed away. She also leaves a sister, Mrs. Carrie Lane, of New York City, who is a member of the Ebenezer Church. The writer was asked to conduct the funeral service, speaking with such ability as the dear Lord was pleased to give, from Psalms xxiii. 1, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." Interment was at Hackensack, N. J. We shall miss our dear sister, but the evidence she has left behind assures us that she has gone home to God, therefore, we mourn not as those without hope. May the God of love and of mercy comfort the bereaved ones, and enable all who feel their need of him to realize that he is their refuge and their strength.

ALSO,

Annis M. Smith Welch, beloved wife of Theodore E. Welch, passed away in East Rochester, N. Y., March 28th, 1923, being over 85 years of age. Sister Welch was baptized November 24th, 1867, by Elder Gilbert Beebe, in the fellowship of the Middletown and Wallkill Church, from which she obtained a letter and united with the Ebenezer Church, in New York city, in 1872.

The following paragraph is copied from a Rochester paper: "Mrs. Welch was born at Southington, Conn., Jan. 18th, 1838. She was a very talented lady, being quite noted in her younger years for works of art, and the walls of her home bore many striking paintings, which she had executed."

She is survived by her husband and one son, Fred. A., who resides with his father. Interment was in the Pittsford cemetery. We desire the blessings of heaven to rest upon our brother in his declining years.

Written by request.

R. LESTER DODSON.

Mr. F. L. Bailey was born May 5th, 1865, the son of Alford and Ann Bailey. He was married to Miss Belle Buxford, December 20th, 1884, and to that union were born four boys, namely, H. O. Bailey, A. K. Bailey, V. D. Bailey and F. B. Bailey. Their mother died of lung trouble when they were very small, but having grandparents who were able to help the little boys were well cared for. May 8th, 1898, he was married to Miss Julia E. Pugh, and to that union were born two children, a boy and a girl, namely, A. I. Bailey and I. A. Bailey. Here I must say his second wife has proved to be one among the best step-mothers I ever saw; by her there was no difference shown, she was a mother to all. Mr. F. L. Bailey never joined the church militant, but was one to whom God had given grace in Christ to know the joyful sound of the gospel. He was an able defender of the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He had been in poor health for two years or more, and the writer frequently visited him to hear him declare the power and wisdom of God in the salvation of poor helpless sinners. His first bodily affliction was said by the doctors who attended him to be high blood pressure, later paralysis destroyed the use of his left side, which he never did regain in full, but got so he could walk some by the use of a crutch. He had all the attention a kind wife, children and many friends could give him, and he would always thank those who waited on him in his afflictions.

He rejoiced to know the Lord had been mindful of him, and had sent Elder Lefferts to his house to comfort him with the pure unadulterated gospel of Jesus Christ. He freely expressed himself to Elder Lefferts, and all who visited him, giving them the reason of his hope in the atoning blood of Jesus. The number of days allotted to him expired January 20th, 1923. His boys were shoeing their horses at the shop, a short distance from the house, and he said he felt to go out where they were, telling his wife he would be back in a few minutes, but he was carried back lifeless, having fallen while watching his boys about their work. Much could be said in the way of praise of this noble man, as he was truthful, honest and a first-class citizen of Kanawha County. His request was that the writer preach to the people on the day of his burial which was January 23rd. A large congregation of relatives and friends came together to pay their last tribute of respect to this poor soul, who had sorrowed over the loss of his third son, U. D. Bailey, who was killed in battle in France the day before the armistice was signed, but in the midst of his sorrows he gave God the honor and glory of all things working together for good to them that love him. The writer used these words as a foundation for a few remarks, "If a man die, shall he live again?" To the widow and children I must say, Your husband (to the widow) and your father (to the children) has left a bright evidence of his acceptance in the Beloved. If such is our happy lot, all will be well with us also.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

Sister **Nancy Baird Robertson,** widow of Vincent Robertson, was born October 11th, 1826, the daughter of Victor E. and Jane Slawson Baird, and departed this life January 4th, 1923, in the 97th year of her age. She was a dearly loved member of the Middletown (N. Y.) and Wallkill Old School Baptist Church, having been baptized by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, October 31st, 1869. Until her health failed she was a faithful attendant at the meetings of the church. Clear in doctrine and the order of the house of God, her walk was such as becometh one called from nature's darkness into the marvelous light of the kingdom of Christ. She was a resident of Middletown for the past half-century, and during that time saw the advent of the railroad, the telephone, the electric light, the automobile, radio, wireless, &c., in all of which she was deeply interested, her mind being remarkably clear up to the time of her last illness.

Funeral services were conducted at her late home on Jan. 8th, 1923. Interment in Hillside Cemetery, Middletown, N. Y.

ALSO,

Sister **Martha Ann Howarth** was born in New York city, August 22nd, 1841, and died February 17th, 1923, in her 82nd year. She was a daughter of James and Sarah Daniel. She was baptized by Elder James C. Goble in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Church of New York city, Nov. 19th, 1860, where her membership was at the time of her death. She was rooted and grounded in the doctrine of God her Savior, and her chief delight was to attend the assemblies of the Lord's people. Truly she felt that there she was favored to mingle with her kindred in Christ, and with them join in praise to Him who loved the church and gave himself for it. She was a very intelligent reader of the Scriptures, and fond of the songs of Zion. Many of these songs she was very familiar with, and often derived comfort in the perusal of same.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder R. Lester Dodson, at Nyack, N. Y., where interment took place in Oak Hill Cemetery.

R. M. STRONG.

My dear husband, **Johnson R. Wilmoth,** who died February 13th, 1923, was born January 26th, 1857. He was married to Julia C. Coberly, December 21st, 1876, and to them were born nine children, two of them dying in infancy and seven are still living: Truman C. Wilmoth, Currence E. Wilmoth, Howard I. Wilmoth, Steven Floyd Wilmoth, Mrs. Cora S. Murphy and Mrs. Ettie Perry. My husband never made a public profession, but was an honest, upright man, and I have often seen him weep when I would be reading spiritual letters, and when his mother died she talked so beautifully he wept while she was talking. Before he died he bade me farewell and raised his hand upward.

JULIA C. WILMOTH.

Lydia C. Ray departed this life at her home, in Silverton, Texas, April 24th, 1923. I will send her obituary for publication in the near future.

Her nephew,

T. J. BELL.

My sister, **Mrs. Hattie A. Winfield,** died May 1st, 1923, in her eighty-ninth year, at my residence, Ramsey, N. J. She died firm in the Old School Baptist faith.

Sincerely,

MARY ROSENCRANCE.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Sallie S. Gaines, D. C., $2.00; Mrs. M. J. Mundy, Kansas, $1.00; W. E. Blue, N. Y., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

The Delaware River Association will hold its annual session with the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church, commencing Wednesday, May 30th, and continuing three days. Those coming by train will come direct to Frenchtown, N. J., over Pennsylvania Railroad, where all will be cared for. Trains arriving here at 5:18 p. m. Tuesday will be met. Any one coming on other trains will inquire for O. R. Kugler. We cordially invite those of our faith and order to come, especially ministering brethren.

O. R. KUGLER, Church Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, of New York City, at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (6th, 7th and 8th), 1923.

The New Vernon Church having (through her trustees) very kindly granted the Ebenezer Church the use of her meetinghouse, the services will be held therein. Entertainment will be provided at "The Old Homestead" situated a short distance from the meetinghouse, and conducted by F. J. Beyea.

Those coming from and via New York City will take Erie Railroad ferry, foot West 23rd Street, at 4:20 p. m., or the Erie Railroad ferry foot of Chambers Street at 4:30 p. m. for train leaving Jersey City, N. J., at 4:45 p. m. (Daylight Saving Time) on Tuesday, June 5th. Get tickets for Howells, N. Y. Those coming from and via Kingston will take Ontario & Western train leaving Kingston at 1:25 p. m. (Eastern Standard Time) on Tuesday, June 5th. Get tickets for Winterton, N. Y. Above trains will be met. Those coming by automobile will go direct to "The Old Homestead." A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends of our faith and *order*.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

CYRUS RISLER, JR., Church Clerk.

The Olive and Hurley Church of the Lexington-Roxbury Association will hold our annual two days meeting Saturday and Sunday, June 19th and 20th, 1923, the Lord willing. All coming by train will be met Friday evening and Saturday morning at Ashokan. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us at this time.

JOHN J. SECOR, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 91. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1923. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NEWARK, Del.

DEAR EDITORS:—In looking over mother's effects I find four letters which passed between her and Elder Chick. If you have space any time in the future, will you kindly publish them? Each one is a sermon. If you decide not to publish, kindly return, and oblige,

Your brother, I hope, in gospel bonds,

J. B. MILLER.

NEWARK, Delaware, May 28, 1878.

ELDER CHICK:—Sad, weary and alone, I feel like telling you a few of my thoughts. I esteemed it a great privilege to be able to attend the association. Very many able ministers were there, beneath the sound of whose voices, which was almost a shout of praise to God, how little and insignificant did I feel; and when I heard them tell a reason of hope within, what is the wavering light I have been trying to keep in view? I know that your hope is the fixed and beautiful star; mine lost in doubts and fears. Four years ago we buried our interesting babe of nearly two years; just as the sun was setting his soul left its prison-house of clay and rose on high to join the blessed company above, and from then I desired religion. I began to think of a life beyond this, and of the necessity of being prepared for it. Neither time nor space will permit me to tell you all that has occurred in these long years. I have never been able to converse with any one as I would wish. It is a feeling of my great inability to rightly express myself on this solemn and all-important subject, and I feel that it is presumption in me to send you this, but when you extended to me your hand, I felt that you understood my case, and moreover, I felt that you had sympathy for me. I do so much want to know where I stand, and as I told you, my great sense of unworthiness does not diminish the desire to be one of God's people, yet it makes me afraid to go forward and ask that this yoke be placed upon me. But why do I wish to live with them? Simply because I love them. I am called to pass through sore trials, together with poor health, and there is always a longing for rest, an aching void in my heart, but I could bear all this if I could feel in my inmost soul that Jesus, who died for sinners, died for me; to say in truth, My Father. Some-

times when I try to pray it all merges into one thought: Lord, thou knowest; and in the still hours of night I raise my helpless arms to Him who alone can help, and ask that he will give me faith, and for an evidence of his pardoning mercy. I believe that upon faith alone hangs my deliverance. Oh, if I only knew what to do, how to understand, how to exercise faith, then all would be well. But if I am not to feel this, not my will, but thine, be done. Some time when you are writing will you not treat upon the subject of faith, through the SIGNS? I do not wish anything I have written published. After I came home Friday evening, I asked myself over and over again, Is it the work of God, and will it endure to the end? He that overcometh shall inherit all things. I was much disappointed that I did not get to hear you preach, but I knew nothing whatever of your being in the neighborhood until the evening of the day that you preached at Welsh Tract. I had been longing to hear a comforting gospel sermon. I was sorry to hear of Elder Francis being so ill with a lingering, prostrating disease, but hope he may recover.

I hope you will pardon me for thus trespassing upon your time. Often when in darkness and distress it affords me relief to write. I feel calmer this evening. I can feel to say that it is good for me that I have been afflicted, and I think I can see the hand of God in it all, and in him alone do I place all my trust, for,

"I smite upon my troubled breast,
With deep and conscious guilt oppressed;
Christ and his cross my only plea;
O God, be merciful to me."

AGNES E. MILLER.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., May 30, 1878.

MRS. A. E. MILLER—MY ESTEEMED FRIEND AND SISTER IN CHRIST:—I was made glad at the coming of your unexpected letter, and feel that to-day I must attempt a reply. I am glad that you could feel to speak of some of the feelings of your heart in regard to the great things that belong to our salvation. It is often a joy and a comfort to speak of the darkness and trials of the way to those who love the same things. I can recall to mind many times when it has done me much good to tell some brother or sister the trials of my mind, and yet often I have felt to regret it afterward, fearing that I had deceived them in what I had said. In my early experience I suffered very much under the fear that I should deceive some one; that they would think me a christian when I was not. In your letter, my dear friend, you speak of many trials of mind and of many doubts and fears. I believe that these are the temptations of the enemy of God's people. He does not annoy the ungodly, the unthinking world, in this way, but God's dear children are often distressed by him. These very doubts and fears arise because we see so much that is depraved in our hearts that we cannot even think sometimes that we are the children of God. But, my dear friend, we could not even see this vileness, this depravity of heart, if it were not that the light shined in the darkness; and if God had not loved us, this light would not have been given. So that your very doubts and questionings are evidences that you are born of God. It is said, "The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." So the light has shined in the heart of many a poor sinner and he has not seen the light, but he has seen the darkness which it revealed, and so has thought there could be no hope for him. I believe that this is the true meaning of the text just named. But bye and bye

the poor, needy, perishing sinner hears the voice of Jesus, and looking up out of the darkness of unbelief, and from the prison-house of sin, he sees the light, and in the joy of that hour forgets that this clay tenement is still his abiding place. Oh, then he can sing,

"On the wings of his love
I was carried above
All sin and temptation and pain;
And I could not believe
That I ever should grieve,
That I ever should suffer again."

Oh how good it is to trust in the Lord. We have no resting-place, no other refuge that will endure the trying storms of adversity. I believe your feelings are those of a child of God. I believe that he has been leading you by a new way, by paths that your feet have not known; and for you and for all the people of God has he said, I will not leave you. Why should you love God's people if you are not one of them? Why should you delight in the truth if you have it not in your heart? We know (there is no doubt) that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. This is the word of a loving, pitying God and Father to encourage his little, trembling children on their way.

I enjoyed the association much all through. I felt that for you and for all such seeking souls as you, there must be a word of comfort, some little crumb from the Master's table. I felt a great desire to have a more full talk with you at that time. Before closing I want to say, If it be in your heart to go to the people of God and ask a home with them, do not delay. Ruth said, "Entreat me not to leave thee," and Naomi ceased her objecting. God in his word bids you say as Ruth did, the church of God will not say you no. I will try to write upon the subject of faith ere long for the SIGNS. Give my love to all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in Newark. Write to me again. May God bless you, is my prayer.

As ever, yours,

F. A. CHICK.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., August 2, 1879.

MRS. AGNES E. MILLER—MY DEAR FRIEND AND SISTER IN CHRIST:—I feel a strong desire and prayer in my heart this morning to write you in such a way as may comfort you and increase your joy, but a great sense of weakness and inability rests upon me, so that I can only say that the Lord can strengthen and comfort your heart, and I pray God that he may keep you and guide you and take you at last up to his own presence. Then temptation and trial will be over; there sin and sorrow can never enter. It did me good to get your letter a few days ago. I was glad you had confidence enough in me as a servant of God to write to me, and then the contents of your letter did me much good. Some of the Lord's people are led in a checkered way, and so your life has been deeply checkered and you have had many trials to encounter; but he gives the more grace. The trials have only made the way for his grace to shine forth more clearly. Do you not remember how when the great apostle was deeply afflicted with the thorn in the flesh he thrice besought God most earnestly that it might be removed? But the answer was, My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in weakness. And do you not remember that Paul then said, Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me? Dear friend, was there not perfect self-denial here? The most complete and entire swallowing of self in the one desire that God

might be glorified? Now your trials shall work for the glory of God, through the perfecting of his strength in your weakness, through the sufficiency of his grace toward you. In view of all this can you not glory in the infirmity, and in the trial? And not only so, but your light affliction, which is but for a moment, shall work for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things not seen. Thus not only is God glorified in your afflictions, but you yourself have the promise of unmeasured blessing growing out of it. Then lift up your head and rejoice, for the day of your redemption draweth nigh, and your salvation is nearer than when you believed. I can but feebly tell you of these things, but Jesus can apply his own word. May he do so in rich mercy. There has no trial of mind, no temptation from the enemy overtaken you but which is common to all your fathers have known, but what your Elder Brother felt. The Elder Brother has drunken of the cup to its dregs, and does not that thought sweeten the taste he has reserved for you? I want to ask you one question: Are you satisfied with living away from those you love so well? Does the Savior's voice never speak from behind you, "Where are the nine?" Let me say to you, that you are not only depriving yourself of rest and joy, but you are depriving your gentle, loving Savior, and you are keeping your kindred in Christ out of a part of their lawful joy. Bring ye, says God, all the tithes into the store-house and prove me now herewith if I will not open the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room to contain it. Dear sister, has not God given you a little possession in the land, a few flocks and herds in the goodly caravan? Why not then bring the tithes? Why not come and tell what the Lord hath done? There would be the joy of a good conscience in so doing. The smiles of your heavenly Father would rest upon you, and you would feel that you at last had found a home. May God help you to come and confess him before men, is my prayer.

I expect to start on my way to Maine on Monday after the second Sunday in this month, or next Monday week. I have an appointment in Wilmington on Tuesday night. I expect to come up to Newark on Monday night and stay over until Tuesday p. m. I want to call and see you at that time. I do not expect any appointment, but feel like stopping and chatting a while with some of the friends. I expect to stop at Mr. Hossinger's all night. I shall not write to any one else. Will you please let the friends know? If the friends think it best to have an appointment all will be right, but I should enjoy conversation as well. Remember me to all who inquire. Write to me again.

As ever, your brother and friend in gospel bonds,

F. A. CHICK.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., July 20, 1880.

MRS. AGNES E. MILLER—MY DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I was glad to receive a kind letter from you, and was much interested in its perusal. You are very often in my mind, as one whom I hold dear for Christ's sake, and nothing would be more the cause of rejoicing with me than to hear that you had entered into your privileges in the kingdom of Christ. Oh what a foe is unbelief! It kept the great multitude of those who came out of Egypt from entering the land of their

desire and of promise. It is the same fearful foe that hinders you and me and many of God's people from filling our place and doing our duty and enjoying our privileges to-day.

"I saw a stranger journeying on,
With pilgrim staff in hand;
His face was set the race to run,
Within the goal to stand.

The sun was shining clear and bright,
His heart was filled with hope;
He hastened onward in the light,
Nor feared with foes to cope.

I saw again the darkness fall,
The sun was hid from view;
The pilgrim's heart with fears was filled;
He doubts the right and true.

Another form came to his side,
And said, I'll guide thee through;
In me, if thou wilt but confide,
Thou wilt find safety, too.

The pilgrim stranger heard his speech,
Nor marked that he was blind;
He followed on the goal to reach,
Nor knew tears left behind.

And still his guide with siren song
Allured him on his way,
Till sudden seen he stood upon
The brink where ruin lay.

Then starting back he cried, Alas,
My God, where have I strayed?
Oh lead me back, nor let me pass
Along this dangerous way.

The christian is the pilgrim true;
He journeys on to God;
While unbelief, though hid from view,
Still leads him from the road.

With heart oppressed by grief and shame,
He marks his wandering way,
And 'gainst himself writes bitter blame
That he from God should stray.

Lord, fire my heart with zeal and love,
Nor let me stray from thee;
Oh fix my steadfast eyes above,
Thy face oh let me see.

So shall I press to Zion's hill,
Nor list to unbelief;
And glorious peace my soul shall fill,
And I be free from grief."

It seems to me sometimes that unbelief is one of my greatest troubles. It comes in various shapes and disguises, so that I do not always recognize it, sometimes even professing under the garb of expediency a zeal for God and truth. I would warn you against this foe, my dear sister and friend. It is best to go straight onward in the path the Lord has marked out for us. We shall find that the lions are all changed into helpers, and we need not be afraid. The question is not whether we are fit or worthy, but do we believe and trust in Jesus? This rightly understood is the sum of all true religion. We may have the letter of the truth in our heads, but this will not avail unless we have the spirit of it in our hearts. Do we when clouds of doubts and sorrow hide us from the light naturally, spontaneously, as it were, turn to the Lord Jesus for protection and guidance through the gloom? Is this Jesus to us the Lord our righteousness? Do I feel that I have nothing, want nothing but the Lord Jesus? Then indeed am I a christian. Oh may the presence of the God of glory abide with you and comfort you. Do not let unbelief keep you from confessing your Master any longer, and do not wait for frames and feelings. Satan can change them in a moment, as he will. One thing, however, he cannot change, and that is the everlasting grace and love of God. In that we can trust, and trusting in this we can say, Rejoice not over me, O mine enemy; though I fall, I shall rise again. The test of love is obedience. "If ye love me keep my commandments," said the Lord to his disciples. Does the spirit that is within you prompt you to do the will of God? Then let not unbelief hinder the promptings of that spirit. As you love the Lord so do his will. My sister, I write this to you to encourage you, and because I know you can never be satisfied as you are

without the fold. Oh how blessed are they that do the commandments of the Lord, for they have right to the Tree of life, and enter in through the gates into the city. And truly in keeping his commandments there is great reward.

I was sorry to disappoint the friends at Welsh Tract, but felt that I could not help it. One of our oldest members had died. He was one of the constituent members of Black Rock Church, which was organized in 1828. A good and worthy member all his life. I had a pleasant trip to the eastern shore in many ways. On my return I preached at London Tract and took dinner at Mr. Hossinger's, and then took the train to Baltimore. I must close. May God bless and be with you in every trial. Write whenever you can feel to do so.

As ever, your brother and friend,

F. A. CHICK.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Jan. 28, 1882.

MRS. AGNES E. MILLER—MY DEAR FRIEND AND SISTER:—I read with deep interest the letter which you put into my hand, and to-day feel like trying to write you a brief response. I have you often in my mind, and would like to say a word of comfort and encouragement if I could; but after all that I can say it would amount to but this, Look to the Lord. Behold the Lamb of God, he can strengthen, he can comfort, he can save.

"Man has no grief he does not know;
He felt each pang of mortal woe,
And swift descending from above,
He comes with treasures rich of love.

'Tis safe to trust this faithful Friend;
Let constant prayer to him ascend;
Then journey on calm and serene,
Believe his word, and on him lean."

My mind has been led of late to the 126th Psalm: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." These are the last two verses of the Psalm, and there is also much food for reflection in what precedes these words. Israel's captivity had been turned back again. Like the rivers, the people were flowing to their own land. The first company had begun to build again the ruins of their city, but the labor was great and the people few in number and their enemies fierce and mighty. There was much to dishearten and discourage. Now, in this time of care, with great toil, amid many dangers to be encountered, the people are encouraged as in the words which I have quoted. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. The lesson is that a time of care, of trial and of labor must always precede the attainment of anything worth having, whether in things pertaining to this life or the life to come. The boy bends over his task with tears of weariness and discouragement, but thus he is sowing the seed of a life of usefulness in time to come. He sows weeping, but shall reap in joy. Hard toil in youth is needful to reap an honored old age. It is so in christian experience. The hours of sorrow, of striving against sin, must precede reaping of the sheaves of joy in Christ and his finished salvation. By the needed discipline of trial the christian graces are developed in the believer. And so life itself is a sowing time filled with much weeping, but ending in a harvest time of joy forever and ever in a better world. Notice, "shall doubtless come again." Here, dear sister, is a most sure promise to you in all your afflictions. Remember, the sowing does not last always, the reaping time comes bye and bye. Be not weary in well doing, for in due time you shall reap

"I saw a fairhaired gentle child
Sowing the golden corn,
And tears bedewed her features mild;
She seemed as one forlorn,
Why weepest thou, my child, I cried,
What trouble does thou bear?

I grieve to sow this precious seed,
I love its beauty fair.
But, child, I said, the seed will grow
To form of fairer grace,
And beauty more than thou canst know
Will amply fill the place.

Then gladness chased away her tears,
Her heart believed the word;
She could not harbor restless fears,
Fond hope her being stirred.

Oh christian doubter, learn from this
To sow and wait the end:
The weeping now, but then the bliss
Shall make you full amend."

I know it is easy to say, Be comforted, but far from easy to take the word home to the heart. We cannot always see the end. Perhaps if we could we should not always go forth weeping, and so should in the end miss the promise to the weeping. The Lord gives us faith, then sends trials to prove our faith; but if we could see the design of our trials they would cease to be trials of our faith (Romans). This comforted me once in a time of anxiety. May it be a word in season to you also, dear sister.

But I must close. May God bless and keep you each day. Write to me soon again, and always when you feel like doing so.

As ever, I remain your brother and friend,

F. A. CHICK.

MONTROSE, W. Va., Jan. 24, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I will, after so long delay, write you a few lines. I have thought of you many times since you stayed all night at my home. I do not think I was ever better pleased with visitors than I was with the two dear Elders McClanahan and yourself. I had desired for a long time to meet you and to hear you preach, and I do believe that the dear Lord, who directs all things after the counsel of his own will, directed you to my home at the proper time. Our conversation and the sermon you preached that night could not have pleased me any better, and I have a strong desire to see you again, although I feel very unworthy of your company and fellowship. I long for the company and sweet fellowship of the Old School Baptists, for they are the dearest people on earth to me, and I love to see peace and love among them. I believe from the depths of my soul they are the true followers of Christ and the apostles, and that they are the ones who to-day know the joyful sound of the gospel of the Son of God.

I am sending you a letter I received from dear old Elder J. W. McClanahan, which you may publish in the SIGNS if you think proper. I think all sound Baptists who are acquainted with this dear old brother esteem him very highly for the truth's sake.

I hope these few lines may find you and your family well, and that it may be the Lord's will for you to visit our association this year. May the God of love still be your strength and stay in all your trials.

Your brother in gospel bonds,

J. S. MURPHY.

POCA, W. Va., Jan. 1, 1923.

ELDER J. S. MURPHY—DEAR BROTHER:—I received your kind, brotherly letter a few days ago, and, feeling somewhat impressed to write you again, I am now making a feeble effort. I hope the Lord may guide my pen to the glory and honor of his name. This he will do if I am led by his holy Spirit.

One of my grandsons told me of a text used by a preacher, not of our faith, in the closing of a protracted soul-saving effort. The text was this: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."—Jer. viii. 20. The word "we" in his text the preacher refused to use, and supplied the word "you," making it read, "You are not saved," instead of, "We are not saved." Jeremiah did not hesitate to class himself with backsliding Israel, who were in a state of captivity. He was with them in their captivity, fulfilling there the purpose God had for him as a true prophet of the Lord. He was hurt at the departure of Israel from the principles of true worship to that of mockery, bowing to images, idol gods. He said, "For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt." Jeremiah was born for the purpose God had in him. The word of the Lord speaking to him said, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee; and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."—Jer. i. 5. Jeremiah had no reference to Israel's eternal salvation, but to their deliverance from idolatrous worship. He was faithful in the discharge of his duty as a prophet. To my mind he typifies the true and faithful minister called and qualified of God to take the oversight of spiritual Israel, to warn, reprove, rebuke. On the day of Pentecost Peter exhorted the children of God, and when they heard the wonderful truth of the gospel proclaimed by Peter they were pricked in the heart, and said unto him and the other apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Not, What shall we do to be saved? as it is usually quoted by those who handle the word of God deceitfully. The gospel of the Son of God to his beloved ones is heart-pricking; to those who are not his it cuts to the heart, and they say, These are hard sayings, who can hear them? Peter preached repentance to them in the name of Jesus Christ, saying unto them, "The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation." Those who were the subjects of gospel address gladly received his word, were baptized, and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. There is quite a contrast between the gospel of the Son of God and a perverted gospel. Those who claim their preaching makes christians are not preaching the gospel, their proper title would be "proselyters." Of them Christ says, "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves." One may be converted from one error to another and yet not know the first note or sound of the glorious gospel of the Son of God. To my mind, the sense in which a proselyte is two-fold more the child of hell than the one who proselyted him is that the victim is one of God's little ones captivated and led into one of the man-made institutions called by those people the church. Seeing his sad mistake, he is in double trouble, two-fold more so than the one who did the proselyting, for the latter is not having this kind of trouble. The one proselyted realizes he is not at home with the people to whom he has gone for a home, their practice and their doctrine do not seem to him to be God-honoring, yet he is numbered with them. Oh what a conglomerated mass he is identified with, no two of them speaking or seeing the same thing,

a perfect state of confusion. What a hell to the poor troubled soul! This knowledge I have had for two long years by sad experience. I suffered in this deplorable condition, but God's command is sure to reach every one of his children in due time, for he has made everything beautiful in his time. When his people feel the command of God to come out of Babylon they are sure to obey. If none of God's people ever got into Babylon there would be no need of any such command. To my mind, they come to be proselytes by those who are in the business of proselyting, and are two-fold more the children of hell (torment) than the ones who proselyted them, as I have already stated above. The one who is in the business of proselyting has no such trouble. He is one of those who says he is a child of God and knows it, therefore will not class himself with sinners. For this reason the word "you" is supplied instead of "we." No doubt Jeremiah was very anxious for the recovery of Israel, his people, from the state of captivity and from the abomination of their bowing to images called gods. God says, "My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and have hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." Jeremiah speaks to Israel as the Lord commands him, saying, "Be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them." Jeremiah was one of the Lord's prophets ordained and sanctified (set apart) to be a prophet to the nations. His face was set as a flint to speak the truth with boldness and faithfulness, declaring the truth of the Lord to ancient Israel. He said, Why trimmest thou thy way to seek love? The wish to be popular had gotten in among them, and I feel the same thing has in this day appeared among God's children in spiritual Israel. There are now some among us who are advising, for the sake of popularity, that our preachers leave off preaching such things as predestination, election, the universal sovereignty of God over all worlds, all beings and all events, so as to have larger congregations and more ingatherings; but I am one who thinks more of the quality than of the quantity.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

GOD.

WHAT a wonderful God is ours! He commanded the universe, with all its magnetic forces and planetary forces, to come forth, and it came. He spake and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast. He divided the sea from the land, and said unto the sea, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed," and it stays within its bounds. He made the sun to rule the day, the moon and stars to rule the night, and they have never ceased to obey. Every beast of the forest is his, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? He goes with his children into the den of lions, and the lions' mouths are closed; he goes with them into the fiery furnace, and not a garment is singed; he goes with them into prison, and they sing songs in the night; he visits the homes of the bereft, and their sorrows are turned into praise; he speaks to the surging billows, and they are still; he opens the eyes of the blind, and they

see; he unstops the ears of the deaf, and they hear; he loosens the tongue of the dumb, and they speak; he touches the lame, and they walk; he speaks to the dead, and they rise; he visits the lonely isle of Patmos, and the new Jerusalem comes down. What a wonderful God is ours! This God is ours forever and ever, and will be our guide even unto death. "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."

NANNIE B. EDWARDS.

IT IS THEN I SHALL DIE.

When springtime appears in her beautiful robe,
And the scene is a feast to the eye,
When woodlands are singing with melody sweet,
Is it then, is it then, I shall die?

When summer has come with her bright golden days,
And the hours seem swiftly to fly,
When softly the breezes are floating along,
Is it then, is it then, I shall die?

When autumn—drear autumn—his entrance has made,
And the hand of decay we descry,
When flowers are fading and passing away,
Is it then, is it then, I shall die?

When winter is here, in his desolate form,
And the rough winds mournfully sigh
Like a requiem sad, through the leafless boughs,
Is it then, is it then, I shall die?

The Giver of life—the Creator of all,
Enthroned in His kingdom on high,
Whenever He calls, it is then I shall go,
It is then, it is then I shall die.

[THE foregoing poem was composed by the late Nannie B. Edwards, whose obituary appeared in the last number of the SIGNS, and was sent to us by her son-in-law. We think it will be read with much interest, so give it space.—ED.]

ORTH, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—You will please find inclosed money order for two dollars, for which extend my subscription to the SIGNS one year. It advocates the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, which I love, and it does my poor soul good to ponder over this truth, for it makes me free, and I feel that I am free indeed. I am near my eighty-third milestone, and the blessed servants of the most high God take the things of the Master and show them unto me. Over nineteen hundred years ago he poured his soul out unto death, and seeing the travail of it he was satisfied. The Father works, and the Son works also, the Father having set all the members in the body as it pleased him; and being rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us even while dead in sin, quickened us together with Christ, raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places, and in so doing he honored the blood of the everlasting covenant which was ordered in all things and sure, though it was not made to grow, for it embraced all the members of his body. Hence as many as were baptized into Christ were baptized into his death, and he was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father that we should walk in newness of life. I wonder sometimes if the truth has ever been revealed to me; I know so little, but when I read the words of the Master, who said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes, for even so it seemed good in thy sight, I think it may be that I am included in this number, for I am but a babe in the knowledge of the truth in Christ Jesus. The Father has chosen the foolish things to confound the wise. This also seems to embrace the

class to which I belong, for surely if I am one, I am the least of all saints. It seems to me that many of the writers of the SIGNS, with the editors, are the called and qualified of God the Father, the very elect, which it is impossible to deceive, being kept by the power of God to feed the sheep and lambs. May it be the will of our Father that they continue long on earth to feed the children in the destitute parts of the Father's vineyard. May the God of all grace guide and direct the sheep and lambs in all the ways of his counsel.

With much love to the household of faith,

C. T. RICHARDSON.

HATTIESBURG, Miss., Dec. 26, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find two dollars to renew my subscription for the dear old paper. Wife and I have been taking it one year the 23rd day of this month, and have been comforted so much by the dear letters it contains. They just suit me. About eleven years ago the great doctrine of election and predestination was opened up just a little to me, but, dear brethren, I understand so little of it I cannot write it. A little more than one year ago wife and I asked for a home with them at Palestine Church, at Laurel, Miss., and they accepted us. For myself, I do not feel worthy to be with them, my sins are so many and so heavy. Sometimes I think I am doing them a great wrong by having a name with them. We live about thirty-five miles from Laurel, and can seldom get to meeting. Your good paper comes every two weeks full of good food for a hungry soul, for I truly hunger after the things pertaining to our dear Savior and his church. I love to read of a people who give God all power. The Bible tells us to deny ourselves, to take up our cross and follow him, and in order to deny ourselves we must give God all power, both in heaven and on the earth.

With these few remarks I will close, asking you to please send my paper to Hattiesburg, no street number.

I am your brother in a small hope,

D. B. PARKS.

ATLANTA, Ga., March 28, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As my time for renewing my subscription for the good old SIGNS is due, I will now send you two dollars; one to pay for six months longer, and one to pay for sending the SIGNS to the poor of the flock. I am now seventy-three years old, and very feeble and nervous. I want to take this good old paper as long as I live. I feel sometimes that the time is near at hand when I must depart from this vain world of sin and sorrow. I have a little hope, though very small at times, but I am in the hands of a wise and righteous God, in whom I trust. When it goes well with you, pray for me and mine. This may be the last time I shall ever write for the SIGNS. Give my love through the medium of your good paper to all the household of faith. I love to read after the good brethren and sisters. Tell them to write often. I read so much good news from a far country. Oh how I love to read the good old SIGNS. Write on, dear brethren and sisters, and feed the poor. If I am a child of God I surely am the least of all. Pardon me and overlook my weakness, for I can do nothing of myself.

Farewell.

(MRS.) M. E. BENTLEY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1923.

EDITOR:
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ROMANS I. 14.

"I AM debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians."

A debtor is one who owes a debt. Paul here says he owed a debt. Those to whom he owed the debt were the Greeks and Barbarians; in other words the Gentiles. It was peculiarly the work and the gift of the apostle Paul to preach the gospel of the grace of God to the Gentiles. To this end, he was an elect vessel chosen of God to bear to them the one name given under heaven whereby God's people must be saved, the name of the risen and exalted Jesus Christ, the Son of God. On occasion, Paul preached also to the Jews, but it was not preeminently his work to do this. The full force and power of his ministry were not to the Jews, but to the Gentiles. To this end, that he might preach to the Gentiles. He was raised up by the power of God, and called and qualified by the Holy Spirit with ability and understanding to that end. It is a noteworthy fact, and one that we too easily lose sight of, that any gift to minister to the Lord's people, no matter what the nature of that gift, is never bestowed for the personal use of the one to whom the gift is given, but is bestowed for the use of the whole church; that is, for the comfort and edification of the body of Christ. Such gifts, either to preach or to teach or to exhort, come as a free gift upon and within the one to whom they are given; and as they are freely bestowed, without money or without price, or without any conditions whatsoever to be performed by the one receiving them, so they are to be used freely and without stint in the service of the churches of the saints. The various marks which distinguish the church of God from all other bodies and organizations are infinite, but among them is the peculiar character of the true church's ministry. The true church depends always on the power of the Holy Spirit to provide its ministers for her. She cannot depend upon a college-bred ministry, nor upon a man-made ministry in any sense, but her source of supply in this matter has ever been the all-sufficient grace and power of the Lord Jesus Christ, who by his Spirit calls whom he will, and sends when and where he will, in order that his people shall be fed. The individual thus called and sent has no say about where he will or shall go; he cannot direct his own steps, nor select for himself the field of his labors. Paul was not asked whether he wanted to preach to the Jews or to the Gentiles, but God performed his own pleasure with him. No doubt there were times when Paul went along willingly and did willingly the work laid on him; at other times he went against his will. But no matter whether he went willingly or against his will, go he must, and go he did. If he was given grace to do it willingly, therein he had his reward; but if against his will, a dispensation of the gospel was committed unto him and he had to preach it. He said himself it was woe unto him if he did not preach it. Therefore he could not escape preaching it, nor could he preach something else than the gospel. It had to be just that

and nothing else, and Paul was the man to do it. To that end the Spirit had qualified him, and he could have no rest nor discharge until he had paid the debt which the Spirit laid on him. The gift given him was not for his personal aggrandizement, but given him that thereby he should serve the Gentiles. In that way it became a debt which he owed the Gentiles, and he had to pay it. His ministry to the Gentiles had to be fulfilled among them, and there was no possible way to avoid it. All who are familiar with Paul's travels know through what extremes of pain and rejoicing his ministry was accomplished. He endured perils by land and sea, suffered hunger and scourgings, was often met with faithlessness on the part of his brethren. Notwithstanding, none of these things moved him from the fulfillment of his ministry, not because of his own persistent natural character, but because of the invincible might of the Holy Spirit within him whereby he could not quit the field until he had spoken and written every word before determined and laid upon him by the great Head of the church. Even Jesus Christ, the eternal Word and Son of God, was given power over all flesh, not to choose where and how he should use that power, but that he should give eternal life to as many as God the Father had given him. Christ was given grace for grace, not that he himself needed the grace, but that he should bestow this grace or divine favor of his Father upon his people. God, before the foundation of the world, blessed his children with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus. Thus there was laid up for all the children of God every blessing that all and each of them should ever need, these blessings to be measured out to them in the providence and grace of God, by Christ who executes the will of God and administers these things to his people. Even this Son of God came down from heaven, not that men should minister to him, but that he should minister to men. No service necessary for the good and welfare of his people was too small or mean for him to perform. The reason of this was because he loved his people with a love far too infinite ever to be humanly comprehended, loved them long before they knew him, and while they were yet dead in sin. This eternal love glowed in all he wrought. This was the fervent flame that consumed him, that caused his church's debt to be his debt; and this love found its brightest and holiest consummation in his taking his own pure body and offering it, as the church's High Priest, a ransom to the Father to atone for all the transgressions of the bride whom he loved. Now, every minister called of God to preach the gospel is given a measure of the gift of Christ to the end, not that he should or can use that gift for his personal ends, but that he should and must be a servant of the church. Such a gift becomes a debt which he must pay to those to whom God calls him to preach. It is a great blessing if such debt can be paid willingly; if against one's will, it must be paid nevertheless, however much one's nature may rebel. On the other hand, Paul was careful to stir up the mind of the church to look after and care for the temporal needs of their ministers. He told them that if the servants of God had sown unto the churches in spiritual things, it was right that the preachers should reap of the church's carnal things. He admonished them not to muzzle the ox that treads out the corn, he told them that no man that wars goes to war at his own

charges; but while Paul tells the churches what is their duty toward their ministry, he was very careful not to use any of these things himself. He did not apply these things to himself, and rather boasted, it seems to us, that his own hands had ministered to his needs, so that he was glad he had not been chargeable to any of them. We can understand how a minister might visit in the churches of a brother minister, and finding those churches unmindful of their pastor's needs, might try to stir them up to be more mindful in that respect, but it is quite another matter indeed when the pastor himself seeks to remind his churches of such a duty toward him, and rebukes them for their remissness to him. It is a matter which would require very delicate handling, and we believe most Old School Baptist preachers would prefer to suffer in silence than to make their needs publicly known in this way. We cannot believe that God ever yet called and qualified a man to preach the gospel but what God put it into the hearts of the people to care for him. Of course, the man may not be cared for as his own nature might prefer to be cared for, he might even have to deny himself many things he would like to have, but, depend upon it, he will receive everything which God intends him to have, and everything which God knows is for his good. God is infinitely a better judge of our needs than are we ourselves. If we have the grace given us to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all things needful shall be given unto us. God is faithful and will perform all his word, not one promise shall fail of fulfillment. But have we that grace, have we that grace in sufficient measure, are we seeking first the kingdom, or are we seeking something else? These are the questions which try us. What we need is more of that love of God in our hearts, without which we are but sounding brass or tinkling cymbals. Whatever else we have, if we have not that love we are nothing.

L.

ORDINATIONS.

OAK GROVE, Mo., May 17, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending a notice for publication of the ordination of two deacons in our church. At our annual three days meeting the first Sunday in May, and two days before, the Predestinarian Baptist Church of Jesus Christ met at the church-house on Friday morning at 11 o'clock. By special invitation Elder G. E. Higdon, of Richmond, Mo., was with us. He and our pastor, Elder T. E. Attebery, did some very able preaching. We also held services in the afternoon. On Saturday morning the church met at 10:30 for song service, and at eleven the services were continued by prayer by Elder T. E. Attebery, then Elder W. L. Hall preached to a large and attentive audience, after which meeting was adjourned for lunch, which was spread on long tables prepared for the occasion, and to say the good sisters had prepared a good dinner for us is putting the statement mildly. After lunch the church was called together by singing, and the church being in conference the unfinished business of the morning was taken up, which was the ordination of two deacons for the church. The Elders and deacons invited to assist in the work proceeded to organize a presbytery by electing Elder G. E. Higdon Moderator and Elder W. L. Hall, of Blue Springs, Mo., Clerk. Elder Higdon was chosen to offer the ordination prayer, and Elder T. E. Attebery to deliver the charge to the deacons. The brethren chosen by Oak Grove Church to be ordained as deacons were D. J. Owings and Roy Barnes. They were presented to the presbytery by Deacon F. M. Webb, who answered as spokesman for the church. The presbytery being satisfied, proceeded with the ordination by the laying on of hands, and by prayer by Elder G. E. Higdon. The charge was delivered by Elder T. E. Attebery. The prayer and charge delivered by the Elders was very solemn and impressive, and we trust the two brethren fully realized the obligation, and may they always be faithful to the trust bestowed upon them. The deacons were then delivered back to the church and the right hand of fellowship extended by the presbytery and the church.

Minutes read and approved. On motion, the presbytery was dissolved.

Presbytery: Elders G. E. Higdon, T. E. Atterbery and W. L. Hall, deacons Eldridge Barnes, F. M. Webb, J. H. Webb, George Jackson, C. C. Odell, D. J. Adams and F. M. Corn.

G. E. HIGDON, Moderator.

W. L. HALL, Clerk.

WE trust you will not feel burdened by our request to have this act of our church published in your paper. We feel very thankful to the good Lord for the gifts to our church, and trust they may prove a blessing to the church and the church to them. May God's richest blessing be with you in your work.

W. T. WEBB, Church Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Rebecca Pilkington, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. R. G. Minton; of Hazen, Ark., was born March 20th, 1877, and died March 17th, 1923. She was twice married. First to Mr. W. C. Sparks, and to that union two children were born. After his death she was married to Mr. G. L. Pilkington, and to that union were born three children, two sons and one daughter. Sister Pilkington is greatly missed. She was a companion indeed to her dear husband, and a loving mother, and a woman loved by all her neighbors. She was a member of the Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, and was a strong believer in salvation by grace. She was ever ready to help those who were in need. She leaves to mourn their loss her dear husband, two sons and one daughter by him, one daughter by her first husband, three stepchildren, three brothers, three sisters, the church and a host of friends. The church misses her at our meetings. May the dear Lord by his presence enable all who mourn to say, Thy will be done. Thus we are passing away: here to-day and gone to-morrow.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort to a large gathering of people at her funeral, assisted by J. L. Pilkington, of Water Valley, Mississippi, after which the body was laid to rest in the Mt. Pleasant Cemetery, there to await the summons from on high. May the Lord comfort the family.

A. H. WEST.

DEATH OF ELDER B. F. COULTER.

JUST as we were ready to go to press with this issue we received the sad news of the death of Elder B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., which occurred Thursday evening, May 31st, 1923. An obituary will be published later.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Cyrus Cross, Ohio, $1.00; Mrs. S. V. Curry, Colo., $1.00; Mrs. W. B. Robinson, N. Y., $2.00

MEETINGS.

The Olive and Hurley Church of the Lexington-Roxbury Association will hold our annual two days meeting Saturday and Sunday, June 19th and 20th, 1923, the Lord willing. All coming by train will be met Friday evening and Saturday morning at Ashokan. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us at this time. JOHN J. SECOR, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFIT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

CHURCH NOTICE.

To our beloved brethren and friends, who may desire to visit the Cedar Creek Church,

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE

we have changed our place of meeting from Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, to Oregon City, Oregon. Day and hour will be the same: fourth Sunday in each month, services beginning at 10:30 a. m., with lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.

Compiled by Silas H. Durand and P. G. Lester. $1.00 per single copy, $10.00 per dozen. Send orders to Mildred Durand Gordy, 1011 Vaughn Street, Ann Arbor, Mich., or Elder P. G. Lester, 826 Virginia Ave., Roanoke, Va.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 91. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1923. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"BAALI"—"ISHI."

(Hosea ii. 16.)

It has pleased the Lord to declare himself in manifold characters unto his chosen people, and the most wonderful and endearing of all is that He, in the person of the Word made flesh, the incarnate Son of God, Emmanuel, our Lord Jesus Christ, is the Head and Husband of his people. This glorious and unspeakable union, in its heights and depths, is a great mystery. "I speak [saith the apostle] concerning Christ and the church."—Eph. v. 32. In our contemplations of the Lord being the husband of his people, he is our Lord, possessor, owner, master, friend, husband, all very expressive of our relationship in wedlock with our God, and they all are found expressed under these two names: Baali, Ishi. Christ and the church were chosen, he, the Head, (Isaiah xlii. 1,) and the church his body, (Eph. i. 22, 23,) before the foundation of the world, (Eph. i. 4,) and accounted, in marriage union, his chosen ones were blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. The election of the church in our Lord Jesus Christ was unto the ultimate heights of the adoption of the children, to be holy and without blame, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved. In the glad tidings of Christ's gospel it hath pleased God to show unto his chosen ones how precious, near and dear they are unto him; that he hath, in the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus, brought them into such union and blessedness unto himself that he declares this union unto them that they are his in eternal wedlock. "For thy maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called."—Isaiah liv. 5. Christ, the Lamb of God, gave himself for his bride a sacrifice, and an offering of a sweet-smelling savor; gave himself for her sins to cleanse her in his precious blood, to redeem her, to present her to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. (Eph. v. 27.) But I am somewhat ahead in my subject. The church chosen, accounted in Jehovah's eternal decree, the bride of the incarnate Son of God, and

predestinated unto eternal glory, fell by transgression in Adam, and thus the elect are found transgressors under the law and under its curse; but this could not disannul Jehovah's eternal purpose concerning Christ and the church. (The church was given unto Christ, the incarnate Son of God, for God's election of Christ and the church in him ever embraced the purpose, that in the fullness of time God would send forth his only begotten Son, made of a woman.) Christ would not disown and cast away his church whom he foreknew, when by transgression she fell in Adam. He gave himself a ransom for her. As the offspring of Adam the elect, even as the non-elect, are found alienated from the life of God, dead in trespasses and sins; by nature the children of wrath even as others. Can such depraved creatures be brought into union with the incarnate Son of God? Can they ever be in vital experience accounted in wedlock with Christ? Can thine Holy One, the altogether lovely Emmanuel, take to his bosom such vile beings? Oh how utterly unfit are God's elect by nature to be companions, the friends, the brethren, the bride of Christ. They are corruptible beings. (Rom. i. 23.) Our Lord Jesus Christ is the incorruptible God, the word made flesh. Then, in some wondrous and glorious way, the chosen bride of Christ must be brought unto him as a chaste virgin, (2 Cor. xi. 2,) she must be made meet to live in companionship, in everlasting love with Christ, in eternal wedlock with him. To consummate this, Christ gave himself for the church an offering and a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savor, to satisfy all the claims of the law, to redeem his people from all iniquity, and wash them from their sins, and to clothe them in his righteousness. "For this is the name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our righteousness."—Jer. xxiii. 6. And the church in union with him shall be called, "The Lord our righteousness."—Jer. xxxiii. 16. The Holy Ghost also in covenant, in wondrous transforming works of grace in the souls of the elect, sanctifies them, regenerates them, gives them a new heart and a right spirit, and puts forth in them spiritual and heavenly graces, and makes them all glorious within, meet to dwell with Christ in heaven; and all this blessedness of meetness to be the companions and wife of Emmanuel shall have its consummation in the day of Christ, when he shall descend from heaven, and the bodies of the elect shall be raised from the dead immortal, incorruptible, changed, fashioned like unto the glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ, our glorified Husband and Redeemer. Therefore, in the times decreed of God, the elect are called by God's grace, taught of the Lord, called unto the fellowship of the Son of God our Savior. Now I desire to trace these matters as known experimentally by the chosen of God, and under this relationship that Christ is the Head and Husband, and therefore the Redeemer of his church. The twofold aspect in which the Holy One of Israel is the husband of his people is in their relations to him in the old and new covenant, and under these two names, Baali and Ishi, the subject is before us. When God quickeneth a sinner into divine life it is that he shall be brought to know he is a lost sinner, and be brought into fellowship with Christ; and unto this sacred fellowship the called of God are made to know their relations unto God in the ties of the old covenant to him in wedlock. This is clearly declared in Jer. xxxi. 31, 32: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with

the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with the fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord." Here God, as husband, is Baali, is Lord, Master; but in the development of Jehovah's eternal purpose in his people let us hear his voice in the new covenant: "But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord. For they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Oh, this is Ishi, my Husband's voice! In the former statement, "Which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them," the marginal rendering reads, "Should I have continued an husband unto them?" As though she had forfeited all claim, all right to me as an husband, having so sinned against me to the deserving of death. Did he surrender her to her damnation, as women that break wedlock are judged? Oh no. But Christ himself gave himself; her Surety, Husband, Redeemer, was her Ransomer, and he gave himself a sacrifice for her sins. Wherefore we are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that we should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. (Rom. vii. 4.) There is a transition into the "better covenant" relationship unto God. And this new covenant aspect of our union to Christ is very blessed, for therein it is shown that Christ hath redeemed us from all iniquity, from all dishonor, from the curse of the law. O blessed Savior, thou art wondrously, so sweetly our Ishi. I mention it again, it is as signified under these two names, Baali, Ishi, we are made to know our relationship to our God and Savior Jesus Christ. The fullness of the unspeakable bliss contained in the name of Ishi can only be fully known when the bride, the Lamb's wife, shall be with Christ, both crowned and seated by his side, and thus be with Christ forever in immortal glory. While here below we can only taste some moments of this blessedness by faith; sacred, blissful earnests of our predestined "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." The called of God are called unto the fellowship of the Son of his love, and in the beginning of our knowledge of him it is as Baali he is known. To rule, possess, to have, to chasten, to bring us to be subject to him. (Eph. v. 24.) Some dear children of God appear to spend all the days of their sojourn in the world and only know Christ as Baali, and have only known a few rare and precious moments when they could feel their dear Savior was Ishi. There is with many who are not vitally, experimentally established in Christ such frequent relapsings from the grace of Christ, from the gospel to the covenant of works; and though with their lips they confess that in Christ's gospel they began in the Spirit, (Galatians iii. 3,) yet conclude that to be acceptable, to be happy, to get Christ's blessings, they must be made perfect by the flesh by bodily exercise. They are so foolish, bewitched, that they confound and attempt to mix the old and new covenants. But the children of promise,

of Sarah, the free woman, will always find that a covenant of works, a conditional covenant "gendereth to bondage." There were in the days of the apostles men who did not know the distinction between the law and the gospel, and as they themselves did not know the liberty of the gospel, of being under law to Christ, they preached another gospel, and perverted the gospel of Christ, (Gal. i. 6, 7,) and with their mischievous, bewitching teachings entangled some of the dear saints in a yoke of bondage. So to-day there are teachers who lay heavy burdens upon others that they do not touch themselves. But Christ's yoke is easy, his burden is light; his commandments are not grievous, but joyous, and he puts them in their hearts, and works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Perhaps, dear child of God, you have been jealous, envious of what you esteemed to be the deeper, richer experiences of other children of God; you would like to have their joys and consolations, their times of sacred intimacy with Christ their Husband and King in his house of wine. You long for their blessedness, but would you choose their trials, afflictions and conflicts that are ever in association with all our consolations in Christ? "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us; so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."—2 Cor. i. 5. It is declared that through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom, and if you will find the spouse leaning upon her Beloved, you will learn from her that this intimacy with Christ is the fruit of her experiences with him in the wilderness, in the weary land, where her strength gave out, where she fell down, and there was none but Christ could help her; where she was hungry and faint and none could nourish and cherish her but Jesus, whose flesh is meat indeed and whose blood is drink indeed. Here in the wilderness were conflicts, storms and beasts of prey, a howling wilderness, and she was ready to perish. Emmanuel found her, led her about, here and there, instructed her, humbled her, showed her her follies; he was her Lord, her Baali, and he taught her, and drew her to himself in everlasting, redeeming love, and while she leans upon him as she treads the wilderness under her feet her throbbing, trustful heart is saying, My Ishi. "I am my Beloved's, and his desire is toward me."—Solomon's Song vii. 10. The knowledge of Christ so as to call him Ishi is that we grow up into him in all things; it is to know Christ in the fullness of the blessing of his glorious gospel. The communion of the Holy Ghost wherein he, the Comforter, so takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto our souls, so glorifies Christ in our hearts in this communion that we are made to feel the exceeding blissful preciousness of Christ our Redeemer, our Head, our Husband. Our souls are so wrought beneath these ministrations of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, that we are saying, Jesus is mine, and I am his. To call Christ Ishi is that we have entered into the palace, (Psalms xlv. 15,) that he sups with us, and we with him, (Rev. iii. 20,) in his banqueting-house, and his banner over us is love. (Solomon's Song ii. 4.) We have known, as Queen Esther, to come and fall before his throne as a perishing suppliant; he has holden out to us the golden scepter, and he has with his own kind hand seated us at his side upon his throne, and the marriage song, the forty-fifth Psalm, is sung. How fair, what glory and majesty are his; he is altogether lovely. And she, the queen, happy wife of Christ, the

Lamb, all radiant, and blushing beneath the smiles of her Lord, who greatly desireth her beauty which he hath put upon her. (Ezek. xvi. 14.) For she is now, in everlasting love, in immortal beauty, by redemption, by Christ's precious blood and righteousness, by all the graces of regeneration she thus shall dwell with, and is at home in the palace of Christ, the Lord of glory, her Beloved, her Friend and Savior and worshipped Ishi. The elect in their fallen, lost estate, as vile transgressors under the curse of the law, have need of much to be done to bring them to a spiritual heartfelt knowledge of all this; to bring us to confide in the blood, the atonement and the righteousness of Christ, which alone can cleanse and beautify us and make us as a chaste virgin unto Christ. (2 Cor. xi. 2.) In our vain notions of matters we think that our preparedness for Christ, our wedding apparel we surely, at least in part, must furnish ourselves, that we may be meet and ready for our Savior and King; and so, going about in this conditional way to establish our own righteousness, we are made to feel a severity in the gracious dealings of Christ, our Baali, our Lord. It is in humbling lessons that we learn that we cannot flourish by our own doings, that we are as the fading, dying leaf, and our own iniquities like the wind carry us away, all our righteousness are as filthy rags. (Isaiah lxiv. 6.) Carnal professors of Christ's name, out of their mere theories of matters pertaining to Christ and the church, talk, but show by their very talk that in vital knowledge they have never known the Savior. But if we are the called of God, then under the tuition of the Holy Spirit we are shown what is in our hearts. There are indeed dreadful bitter things for a poor sinner to learn. Even after the quickened sinner has tasted that the Lord is gracious, and has had sacred times of rejoicing in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh, there are relapsings from this implicit faith in our Beloved. We are plagued with an evil heart of unbelief, misgivings arise, thoughts exalt themselves against the knowledge of Christ, and our ignorance of his purposes in his trying providences, in our trials, and when the pilgrimage is wearying, and tribulations are our every day portion, and perhaps we are attempting to get along unhelped, we fail to lean upon him, then we fall down, not only in sheer weakness, but in the humbling knowledge that it is a vile sinner that has sunk to the earth. Do thoughts arise that Christ does not care for me as formerly? And do we petulantly cry out, Where are thy former loving-kindnesses, are they restrained? Are we saying Ishi now? Rather in our thoughts we have gone back to Baali, my Lord. Ishi, my Husband, is too sweet, too endearing, we can hardly frame our tongues to call Christ Jesus, my Husband. In our first love, (Rev. ii. 4,) the love of our espousal to Christ, (Jer. ii. 2,) such a thing as straying away from our beloved Savior would have been, in our thoughts, a thing incredible. But it is through painful, humbling experiences of our weaknesses, of the dreadful things found in our flesh, the lusts still there to be continually crucified, and then to find a barrenness, a backsliding in heart. It is out of bitter knowledge of this that we are made to say,

> "Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it;
> Prone to leave the God I love."

The backslidings of Israel recorded in the Scriptures are a painful narrative to read; and when we are made to compare our own lives with what is recorded we,

too, can trace how here and there we have wandered away. We do well to be mindful of the instruction in Heb. iii. 12: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God." There may have been from the first day that we knew Christ, or rather were known of him, all the outward form of godliness, such as our assent to the doctrine of Christ, reading the Scriptures, engaging in prayer, singing hymns, assembling with the church for worship, hearing preaching, and many other external matters, and yet all so formal, cold, lifeless, mere outward religion. Ah, I, too, well know how wretched is all this mere outward, physical, tongue religion, and how I have been made to sigh over it all, and how powerless I have been made to feel I was to get out of it, to refresh, renew, to quicken my soul into the verities of the blessed gospel of Christ.

"In vain we tune our formal songs,
In vain we strive to rise;
Hosannas languish on our tongues,
And our devotion dies."

It is the gracious quickening, renewing ministrations of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, that are essential, that we poor barren sinners need.

"Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly dove,
With all thy quickened powers;
Come, shed abroad a Savior's love,
And that shall kindle ours."

Ishi, my Husband, can hardly be our heart's language while we are so inconstant, and so barren in the life of the graces of the new man. Oh, how blessed is that man that is of a humble and contrite heart before the Lord. Thus meek, and beautified with salvation, sweetened by the Lord's loving-kindnesses, by the riches of his mercy, who is love sweetened, loving, trustful, believing in our sweet Lord Jesus, the Lamb of God, "with all thine heart."—Acts viii. 37. No heart whatever for any other. "So the Lord did lead him, and there was no strange god with him."—Deut. xxxii. 12. They two, no other one there. "And it shall be at that day, saith the Lord, that thou shalt call me Ishi; and shalt call me no more Baali."—Hosea ii. 16. Read the chapter and see what preceded all this, and brought her to this day. There her waywardness, her treacherous dealings are told, how he brought her to know her inconstancy, how he made her to feel her shame and abject poverty and wretchedness, how he healed her backslidings and drew her back unto himself; this is all divinely told. "Behold, I will allure her, and bring her unto the wilderness, and speak comfortably [to her heart] unto her. I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt." Oh, it is while thus banqueting with him, and her comforted heart in blissful hope is singing, her Lord, her Husband, has made this delightful oasis; he has made the wilderness to rejoice and to blossom as the rose. What a happy time! This is "that day," saith the Lord, that thou shalt call me Ishi; and shalt call me no more Baali. And he still goes on to speak to her heart of the covenant of eternal wedlock in which Christ and the church are one, saying, "I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, N. C.

WHEELING, W. Va., Jan. 12, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing two letters, one from sister Workman and one from brother G. O. Walker. They were very comforting to me. I will leave them to your judgment as to publication. I feel to be highly favored, that my letter in the SIGNS should bring such kind response from the members. I also received a "Feast" sent by brother Thomas Roe, of Masseys, Md. It has proved indeed a feast of fat things to me. It is a book I had long desired to read. He has my warmest thanks. Since my last letter in the SIGNS my poor old husband has become almost helpless from hardening of the arteries. He is almost as helpless as a infant. I entreat the prayers of my dear brethren and sisters that I may endure the extra burden. Our address is changed from 77 13th Street to 56 Zane Street, Wheeling, West Virginia. In much love and appreciation I remain your very unworthy sister in hope,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

REEDSPORT, Ore., Dec. 24, 1922.

DEAR SISTER PULTZ:—I hope you will not think me rude for thus addressing you and telling you that I have been as familiar with your name as that of my near neighbors for many years, having enjoyed your articles in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have been from home several weeks and Mrs. Walker forwarded two copies to me. I read nearly all of both before supper, feasting on it all, and I presume the reason I feel inclined to write you is because you make a clear statement in few words of a subject that has been uppermost in my mind for many months. You say, The Lord never intended earthly man should help him in his plan of salvation. If Adam had kept the law he would have somewhat to boast of as to human merit. I could see that God was glorified by creature disobedience. I am not writing you something new or some instruction, but to tell you I have been rejoicing in the same deep musing, thoroughly grounded in the human or carnal mind, a feeling that causes us to read as though there is some power set over against God over which he is sovereign. This is idolatry. "There is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God." I am God, and there is none else, there is no God beside me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that have not yet been, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Thou art worthy to receive glory, honor and power, for thou hast created all things for thyself; and for thy pleasure they are and were created. For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible. The wrath of man shall praise thee, and the remainder of wrath wilt thou restrain. That is, there will be no wrath that does not redound to his praise. Four years I attempted obedience to the law for justification; four years of guilt and sorrow, in which I learned the law is just and holy and good, demanding love, full, perfect, beautiful love to my God and to my neighbor; but I am carnal, sold under sin. In my day of relief I saw everything in creation, so far as my mind could vision, conspiring together to the praise and honor of His great and adorable name, and I found myself feasting on the sweetest of dainties, saying over and over, Thy will be done. My dear sister in Christ, stranger in the flesh, I was not rejoicing in the hope of heaven, I was reconciled, I was rejoicing in his unerring will who doeth all things well. He made

all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil, and I being a speck of that creation, even though it might be in the depth of hell, would fulfill a purpose in the eternal plan to exalt his worthy name above every name that is named, either in this world or the world to come. For months those sweet words, Thy will be done, were sufficient to dispel every worry, every uneasiness from my long troubled breast, I was sweetly resting in submission to his will; I was sweetly resting in his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste; rejoicing in his holy will, having tried every other refuge in vain; and I now have no use for any savior who does not work all things after the counsel of his will. He said to the teachers of his day, who asked for a sign that they might recognize, Ye believe not, because you are not of my sheep; my sheep hear me, and I know them, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. Any savior of less power is not to be trusted; we rejoice only in the One who says, "I am God, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." The bitterest and oldest controversy of which mortals have any knowledge began in the garden, when that old serpent called the devil tempted the mother of all living. It has come on down under multitudes of names: will-worship, conditionalism, &c., teaching one may earn blessings by the deeds of the law, which may be possible only in continuous perfect obedience, such as God's own Son rendered. He only will be able to stand before the judgment-seat with erect head and say, I have obeyed the law that demands unremitting love to God and to our neighbor. The best plan you and I and all poor rebels who have been tried in the balance and found wanting (ten thousand talents in debt and not a farthing to pay) is to bow our heads in shame and cry, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. Indeed, if any man ever did earn one blessing, Jesus' name would not so far outglory that man's name, and grace would lose its beauty. The law was not given for that purpose. The truth is hard to grasp, although it is clearly stated in different places and ways in God's holy word of truth. The law entered that the offence might abound, that where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. That every mouth may be stopped, and that all the world may become guilty before God; therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified before God, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. Knowing the evil of my nature, that the human heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, I am glad it is all of grace; that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy; that even in time it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps; that man's ways are not in himself. Some say this is a dangerous doctrine, that it will cause men to sin all they want to, but about all I am interested in is whether it is the truth, for if the truth makes us free, then are we free indeed. All other ways are dangerous, are sinking sand. Cursed be man that trusteth in man or that maketh flesh his arm. We hope he has written a new law in our inward parts, which causes us to hate the things we once loved and love the things we once hated. The carnal mind being enmity against God, we are prone to say there is injustice with God. Paul told the Roman brethren the Lord loved Jacob and hated Esau before they were born or had done

good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand; that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy; that he raised up wicked Pharaoh for the purpose that God's name might be declared throughout the earth, and that he might make his power known in Pharaoh's overthrow. Then with our exalted conception of man we are inclined to indignantly bring the Creator of all things before the judgment-seat of human reason and say, If he works all things after the counsel of his own will, what fault can he find with man? We will let Paul answer: Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? I believe we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. Truly as the darkness of night contrasts and makes us appreciate the return of bright day, so does the blackness of sin show forth the innocent glory of holiness in God's Son, the glory of his countenance. The stench of self-righteousness when laid bare by the law drives us to the covenant of grace, where he clothes us with the garment of salvation and covers us with his robe of righteousness in his banqueting-house, where his banner over us is love.

Now I must close, hoping by the grace of God you will continue to write for the comfort of the readers of the SIGNS and for all who rejoice in a full Savior and salvation, having no confidence in the flesh. I very much enjoyed Elder Lefferts' clear trumpet sound in the editorial, "Apostasy." Such expressions seem to leave no doubt of those who make them of Gideon's three hundred. I presume that through these eighteen hundred years there has been a feeling that the time of falling away had come, and we feel it is with us now, but we do not know how large a remnant the Lord has reserved to himself who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Elder A. Horner, a dear peace-loving minister of the sanctuary, once said to me, It seems as though the Lord has ever preserved his church apparently on the brink of destruction, and I said of this as Paul says, We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. God had Gideon's host put to tests and reduced the army to three hundred, lest Israel vaunt herself and say, Mine own hand hath saved me. The three hundred, the remnant according to the will of God, if not all the rest, knew they were saved by the power of God. So in this time of sifting out there is a falling away of those who are inclined to trust in man, or that maketh flesh his arm, and there is so much confusion of tongues that we are often puzzled which way to turn to find one to whom we can pour out our whole hearts without giving offence. At such times we are left no refuge but the mercy-seat, where Jesus answers prayer, and we find him a strong staff to lean upon. When we are weak in the flesh, having no other to look to, we retreat into our strong tower, our city of refuge, where no enemy of our peace can torment. With the Captain of our salvation we need not fear what man can do to us, in the lion's den or in a burning fiery furnace. Death itself loses its sting when he who bore our sins in his own body is near. To whom can we go? for he alone has the words of eternal life, and that alone is what we want, to see him exalted and

long to see him as he is and be like him. Having the earnest of that glorious life, we are longing and trying in our inner man to begin here to be like him, but alas, what a futile task to conform this heavy clay in its earthly state to his glorious likeness. He is the resurrection.

When our journey here is ended,
And we lay beneath the sod,
Who on earth can then awake us,
Who can save us then but God?

But we know we shall be like him,
And shall see him as he is,
For his word cannot be broken,
And he shed his blood for his.

I intended to write the editors, but if you feel inclined you may forward this to carry to them what I would rewrite.

Your brother, I hope,

G. O. WALKER.

HARDING, W. Va., Jan. 7, 1923.

MRS. FLORENCE PULTZ:—Dear sister in hope of eternal life which God that cannot lie promised before the world began. I was so pleased to get your good letter. It surely had in it the ring of truth, and made me feel that you had tasted that the Lord is gracious, and that you have been with Jesus. There is nothing earthly can compare with the blessedness of having a hope in our hearts that he has redeemed us from sin and the grave; sometimes like the disciples my heart has burned within when he has seemed to journey with me and open up the Scriptures to my mind, but so often he seems to be gone, and I see only my own imperfect self and loathe myself because of sin in the flesh, and fear and tremble because I know that all we do or think is open and naked to the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Not long ago when thinking of these things I was comforted when I remembered that he said he would remove the sins of his people as far from them as the east is from the west, and would remember them no more forever. I said, Oh, can it be possible that all these works of our flesh that annoy us so have been washed away in the Savior's blood, and like the lions in Bunyan's travels can only frighten and annoy, but cannot destroy us or separate us from his love? You ask if I live in reach of a church. I have been an unworthy member of the Valley Church in Randolph County for thirty-five years, but live twelve miles from it, have to go eight miles on the train, then get conveyance out. The Valley Church was organized in the year 1806, and used to have a large membership, but now there are only eight of us and widely scattered. We only have meeting during the summer months. The Elder Murphy, mentioned in Elder Lefferts' description of his travels, is our pastor. He was also Aunt Sallie's pastor. She was a member of the Leading Creek Church in Randolph County. There are five churches in this part of the state of which the Tygart's Valley Association is composed. Yes, my name has sometimes been in the SIGNS, but when I write it seems so like myself, so imperfect I fear to send it, yet do so at last feeling that the editors will not publish it if it has in it anything contrary to sound doctrine. I have been a reader of the SIGNS since I was a young girl. I am almost fifty-eight years of age now, and I consider it a wonderful sound periodical, and its editors have always tried to keep it clear of anything that would disturb the peace of God's children. It is a great comfort to me,

especially during the winter months, when I cannot get out to hear those of our own faith and order. Like you I have no fellowship for those unfruitful works of darkness practiced by those professing to know Christ, but in works deny him. I was pleased with Elder Lefferts' description of his trip through this state. I would have considered it a blessing from God to have met him and heard him preach and talk. He with Elder J. W. McClanahan and his brother, G. B. McClanahan, from Poca, W. Va., came to Elder Murphy's unexpectedly to them. They had no way of letting us know. I should have gone had I known. When Elder Murphy came on Sunday he told us about their coming, and what a wonderful sermon Elder Lefferts preached that evening at his house. Like you I seemed to get some of the joy of that message, and felt that though I had not met him, a man of God had passed this way, and comforted and encouraged some of the Lord's people. He thought he might be enabled to visit our association the coming August at the Leading Creek Church. I fear my letter has been more descriptive than spiritual. Oh, I am such a poor needy creature, and of myself can do no good thing, and have to go to the kind heavenly Father for everything, and I cannot express what a blessing it is to me to know there is a God that is merciful and forgiving, one on whom we can call when all other help has failed us. It is with shame I must confess that sometimes I do not go until other helpers have failed. We realize that when life's journey is done. He is the only one can help us then. May he comfort and bless his people everywhere according to their needs, for Jesus' sake.

Yours in love and fellowship,

(MRS.) E. E. WORKMAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1923.

EDITOR:

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,

Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

AFTER about seventeen years' service I have resigned my position as senior editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have served with such ability as the Lord gave, and have enjoyed and appreciated the confidence and commendation of the readers of the SIGNS.

Owing to the increased expenses of J. E. Beebe & Co., in office rent, moving to the new office, getting into running order, &c., they notified me in April that my small salary ($8.00 a week) would have to be cut more than fifty per cent., which would mean less than four dollars a week for my services as editor.

I am now serving five churches, traveling 15,560 miles a year to meet these appointments. Am in my sixty-third year and my health not as good as in the past. Considering all these circumstances, I could not consistently devote the time necessary and carry the burden of care and responsibility of the editorship for the small amount now offered me. No one knows, except those engaged in editorial work, the strain and anxiety of mind of an editor, and, perhaps, no business man receives as little compensation as an Old School Baptist editor. My duties all these years have been to write, judge and revise copy and to assist in proof reading. Elder Lefferts has not been expected to do anything other than write editorially, hence is not in any sense

responsible for the nonpublication of some articles in the past. Many letters not published have been good, but it has been utterly impossible to publish everything that came to the office. I make this statement to relieve Elder Lefferts, the remaining editor, of any censure along this line.

I have realized all these years that I am fallible, and have, no doubt, made mistakes, but did the best I could, endeavoring always to keep the doctrine clean; in other words, to see that nothing unsound got into the columns of the SIGNS. Have also tried to avoid controversy and all unpleasantness.

That I am no longer connected with the publication of the SIGNS, the writers and subscribers will please not send matter for publication, nor renewals of subscriptions, to me, as it will cause delay and extra expense.

Now, after having served you seventeen years as editor, I say, Farewell in the Lord to the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, whom I love in the truth.

H. C. KER.

REGRETS.

WITH this issue of the SIGNS closes my ninth year editorially with the paper which all of us regard as our family paper. It is with great sadness and regret that I have learned of brother Ker's reasons for severing his connection with the paper, but I am glad his reasons do not involve any matter of doctrine, and that they are purely personal. Yet personal as they are, they must be respected by all of us, and since he wants to be relieved of editorial work, it would not be right for us to insist that he continue to carry the burden of such work, especially as he has ceased to reside in Middletown, N. Y., near the SIGNS office, and since he is compelled to travel long distances to fill his numerous appointments, thus taking a great deal of his time in such work. Nevertheless, I have no other thought than that brother Ker will continue to support the SIGNS, which he has for so many years so ably guided and upheld, and that he will continue to write for the paper at such times as he may feel impressed to do so, that the publishers, readers and myself may continue to have the benefit of his valued counsel and encouragement. It was at brother Ker's insistence and request that I consented nine years ago to let my name be added to the editorial staff of the SIGNS, and it was with exceeding reluctance that I finally gave my consent. My reluctance arose from the fact that I felt wholly unqualified for such work, and keenly realized my lack of wisdom and experience in that direction. Now, after nine years of such work, I still feel as greatly as ever my weakness and inability to do the work as it ought to be done. It is a very great burden indeed, how great none can know but those engaged in it. To maintain the SIGNS as a medium of communication between Old School Baptists in different sections of the country, and at the same time to keep the paper free from unprofitable arguments and controversies, is not easy; further, to write editorially and to so present one's views on various matters without giving offense or causing endless discussions is still harder to do. My nine years' association with brother Ker on the SIGNS has been pleasant and congenial. He has been free to express his views without any criticism from me, even had I felt disposed or qualified to criticise, which I never have; and he has very kindly granted me the same privilege. I sincerely wish him well, and it is my prayer

that wherever in the providence of God his lot may be cast he may be prospered in the work of the ministry in all the churches of his care, that all things needful may be added to him, that his own soul may be refreshed and strengthened through Christ's gospel which, by the grace of God, brother Ker so ably preaches. The selection, correction and revision of copy for the paper have never been my work all these nine years, nor will it be now. I am situated too far from the office to do this. That work, in which brother Ker has been a great help and mainstay, will now all be done at the office. I will try to continue to write editorially for the paper from time to time as I have been doing, and as I may continue to be enabled to do. The reduction in salary which Elder Ker says has been made in his case will not benefit me in any way, and I want all connected with the SIGNS to know that it is not to be added to the sum of ten dollars a month which I am now receiving, and have been for nine years receiving from the publishers. With such ability as the Lord has given me I hope I have been ready to serve both the SIGNS' readers and the churches of my care. To what extent either the SIGNS or the churches give me of their carnal things in return for such service as I have been enabled to render is a matter purely for them and their consciences to decide. I have not a thing to do with that.

With all sincere wishes for brother Ker's futherance in the gospel, hoping J. E. Beebe & Co. may be given strength to do all things necessary for the publishing and continuance of the SIGNS, and soliciting from our readers and subscribers their continued help and support, I am, I trust, yours to serve in the gospel,

H. H. LEFFERTS.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon James Tilford McCoun, commonly known as "Tip" McCoun, of Frankfort, Ky., formerly of Farmdale, Ky., was born in Mercer County, Ky., June 8th, 1838, and recently passed away at the ripe old age of 84 years. He was the son of James and Elvina Cardwell McCoun. Brother McCoun grew up to early manhood on the farm in Anderson County, after which for years he engaged in the mercantile business with the late Benedict Farmer, at Farmdale, Ky. Owing to failing health he removed to the farm and became one of the most successful and progressive farmers of his State. In 1869 he was married to Miss Susan Emma, only daughter of the late and well beloved Benedict and Lucy Farmer. To this union were born two children: Ernest and Lucy. Ernest departed this life some years ago. Lucy is the beloved wife of Mr. A. C. Morris, of Frankfort, Ky. In 1888 brother and sister McCoun came before the church at Little Flock, Anderson Co., Ky., during which time I was pastor of that church, and I had the pleasure of baptizing them. Brother McCoun being found possessed of the qualification for the office of deacon, was duly set apart to that service, and well and truly did he serve as such, magnifying his office, and getting unto himself a good degree and great boldness in the faith. He was a great and good reader, clear, eloquent and forceful, perhaps one of the very few of the first class. He possessed much brightness of intellect, and was truly spiritually minded and strong in the faith, therefore his conversation and reading were instructive and edifying, and evidenced much of the saltness of grace, which in many respects might class him with Stephen and Philip, except that he did not attempt to speak in a public way. In fact, he was in that sense timid and reserved, but in the sense in which he was gifted he was well in evidence as a humble, spiritual, faithful servant in the church.

Elder P. W. Sawin, who is specially gifted on such occasions, conducted the funeral service much to the satisfaction and comfort of the sorrowing ones, and I am sorry to have it to regret that sickness in my family prevented my being present to take a part with him in the solemn service.

Peace to his memory.

P. G. LESTER.

J. Y. McNeely, our dear brother, passed peacefully away December 28th 1922, aged 83 years. He was the eldest of nine children of Thomas and Mary McNeely, and was born December 6th, 1839. He attended meetings at Brush Creek, Graves County, Kentucky, under the pastorate of Elder Wm. Howard, who was highly esteemed for the truth's sake. I do not think brother was much concerned about his salvation until some time after he enlisted in the

Civil War. During a "revival" in camp he was taken for a candidate ready for baptism, and solely thereupon was being led unceremoniously into the water, and when he objected the man who was going to baptize him said, Why, Mc., if any of these boys are ready for baptism you are. Rather than act uncivilly he suffered the performance in silence, but not being of the heart he felt it must be of sin, so it only increased his trouble. The light shining in revealed more and more the corruption of his heart, but it was years after the close of the war that a full awakening and clear manifestation of his acceptance was revealed to him. He was married to Miss Rachel Wingo, and moved back to Arkansas, near the scenes of his activities during the war, and seemed to be happy with his little family, but ere long his troubles weighed heavily upon him. His chief pleasure was in attending the meetings of the church. After a year or two deliverance came to him and he followed his blessed Master into the liquid grave. He moved back to Kentucky and united with the church there. His health failed, so he sought the hills of Tennessee, and moved his membership to Yellow Stone Church, where he sat under the preaching of brother Seals. His trials and afflictions were many, but he bore them without a murmur. His hearing and sight were very poor toward the end, and his nerves were so shattered he could scarcely carry food to his mouth; all caused from injuries received during the war, but his afflictions did not keep him from attending where the true gospel was preached. He told his wife a short time before he died that his time had come and he was glad of it.

ALSO,

Our dear brother, **M. P. McNeely**, and second son of Thomas and Mary McNeely, passed to his eternal rest September 30th, 1912, aged 67 years. He was born December 31st, 1844. He made no public profession by baptism, but in many ways showed feelings of regard and attachment to the Lord's people. I think it was in the year of 1876 he was taken very ill, and when he showed signs of recovery began to tell of how the Lord had snatched him from the grave, as it were. He praised the Lord in ecstasy of joy for what he had done for him. Many thought he belonged to the church, as he attended the Baptist meetings regularly. No one could long be with him without realizing whose he was and whom he served, but he never did join, feeling himself too unworthy. He even went prepared at one time to be baptized, but the minister did not come. He was a man of few words, but one who walked his religion, and was deeply exercised and well taught in the things of God. He was an invalid for two years, confined to the house, but sometimes able to walk to his store, only a few steps away. In daytime one usually found him with his hymn-book or Bible, sometimes both, perhaps singing, but never murmuring at his trials or afflictions. His friends were amazed at his endurance and patience. Oh how we miss his advice and love, for he was more than a brother to us younger ones, our father having died in the spring of 1862, which threw the whole responsibility of a mother, five sisters and two little brothers on him at the age of sixteen. He left a dear wife, two daughters, six grandchildren and a host of relatives and friends to mourn. The daughters have passed on to the great beyond; the wife, too, has joined the blood-washed throng.

His two sisters,

A. Y. & S. C.

Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Madden, wife of Deacon Enoch Madden, of the Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., died of paralysis at the home of her son, Ira Madden, Mount Union, Pa., May 24th, 1923. She had been in failing health for some time. She was born 74 years ago in Cromwell township. Was the daughter of Daniel and Katherine Elizabeth Price Book. Was married January 5th, 1877, and became the mother of five children, four of whom survive her: Ira Madden and Mrs. Myrtle Rorer, of Mt. Union, Pa., Charles Madden, of Three Springs, Pa., and Frank Madden of Orbisonia, Pa. Also, she is survived by two brothers: Abram Book, of Expedite, Pa., and Samuel Book, of Pittsburgh, Pa. She united with the New School Baptists fifty years ago, and although she never severed her connection with those people, and never united with the Old School Baptists, her husband, brother Madden, assures us his wife was an Old School Baptist in belief, and that she became so she could not fellowship any free-will doctrine, and that she became satisfied salvation is wholly of grace, and not of works. The funeral services, however, were conducted by her pastor at the home of her son-in-law, Mr. Clyde Rorer, at Mt. Union, Pa., and she was buried in the cemetery at Orbisonia. May the Lord comfort and sustain our brother, Deacon Madden, in his sad loss, and dwell with all the bereaved family to reconcile them to his will.

Written by request.

L.

Sister **Sarah Albina Campbell** was born May 10th, 1846, and was called to the church triumphant March 25th, 1923, making her stay on earth 76 years, 10 months and 15 days. Her parents were John and Jane Campbell, who, with many of their children, were devoted members of dear old Welch Tract Church, and their home was an open house to all who loved the truth. To the numerous members of the family it was a haven of rest. Sister Sarah, the last of the family, ever maintained that loving hospitality. She had many personal charms, and her broad and interesting mind made her a charming

companion for the aged, or those young in years; sunshine seem to radiate from her presence, and one felt better for the touch of her hand and the loving, tender thoughts that ever flowed from her great heart. She was well established in the doctrine of salvation by grace and the sovereign power of Jehovah. The church has lost a faithful and devoted member. Personally, I feel oneof the ties to earth has been severed. She was especially dear to me, as we entered the church together on a beautiful May morning in 1868. We, with two others, were baptized by Elder Barton, assisted by Elder Leachman, and all that church of precious saints who welcomed us have passed over the river. I alone remain of the church that was my childhood home. While my name and home is with the Wilmington Church, the love of this precious sister never failed, and with loving tenderness I pen these lines. Many of her family and friends gathered to pay the last tribute of respect to her. Elders Eubanks and Coulter spoke of the precious things she loved.

Affectionately,

LUCY A. SHRINER.

W. T. Bowers was born November 10th, 1868, near Jewett, Texas, and died June, 1922, making his stay on earth 54 years and 8 months. He was married in September, 1895, to Mrs. Ula Bowers, who preceded him to the grave. A few years later he married Mrs. Fannie Evans and lived happily for six years. The Lord gave him a good hope in the forgiveness of his sins through the mercy and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. He joined the Old School Baptist Church called Little Flock, and was baptized by his uncle, Elder I. W. Bowers, in 1897. He was an ardent lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and was ever interested in the peace and welfare of his church, where he exemplified his profession with an orderly walk and godly conversation, faithful to fill his seat as long as his health would permit. He was a great sufferer from the effects of pulmonary consumption, which baffled the skill of all medical treatment, and all that kind friends could do to mitigate or remove that awful malady. He was industrious and faithful, anxious to accumulate a sufficiency for his family, and prayed the Lord to give him sustaining grace to endure his affliction with patience and resignation to the divine will. He served the church as deacon and clerk, and was efficient in each capacity, and delighted to wait on his brethren at the communion table until his physical strength failed, when he desired his brethren to visit him, and he rejoiced to talk of his hope, the sovereignty of God and all Bible doctrine, which was a sublime subject to our dear departed brother. He gloried in salvation by grace, and to hear the Scriptures expounded by the chosen servants whom the Lord had called, as was Aaron, was his meat and drink. He had many hardships and sore trials, but ever held the Old Baptist Church in highest esteem as the only genuine, true church of Christ. With the living faith, the gift of God, he was able to withstand all the fiery darts of Satan. He was a strong believer in the resurrection of the dead, and all the cardinal points of the teachings of Christ. He is now freed from the poverty and vanity of the world, realizing the saying of Paul, To live is Christ, and to die is gain. His companion and friends took him to Fort Worth for treatment, and he lived just one week after he arrived there. He leaves a host of relatives and friends to mourn their loss. He was buried by the side of his first wife. May the Lord sanctify this sad providence to his own glory and to the peace of his afflicted people.

Written by request.

ASA HOWARD.

J. H. Flowers, an old and highly respected citizen of the Sand Flat community, died at his home Saturday morning, December 30th, 1922, aged 61 years. Funeral services were conducted by Elder Slaughter, of Edgewood, Texas, at the Oakland Church, Sunday morning, interment following in the Oakland Cemetery. The funeral was said to be one of the largest ever held at Oakland, many coming from a great distance to pay tribute to this good man. Surviving are his wife and many devoted friends to mourn his death. Up to Wednesday previous to his death he was in his usual good health and spirits. Wednesday evening he and his wife attended an entertainment, and he was suddenly stricken with paralysis while conversing with a friend. He was immediately taken to his home, where physicians and loved ones did everything in their power to restore him, but he never regained consciousness, and passed away peacefully Saturday morning. A good man has gone to his reward. He was a Primitive Baptist preacher, and had profound faith in God, and in his Son Jesus Christ. He was true and loyal to his church, and kept close to his heart the welfare of the congregation with which he was identified. In his home life he was affectionate and kind, wisely guiding the two orphan children who were brought up in his home. To these, and to us all, he has left a rich inheritance, an example of a manly life nobly lived.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

T. W. Records, Mo., $1.00; Mrs. Sarah Gandey, N. J., $3.00; James R. Crutcher, Tenn., $1.00; Elder J. M. Fenton, Pa., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFIT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 91. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1923. NO. 13.

CORRESPONDENCE.

OBEDIENCE.

DEAR EDITORS:—With your approval, I would like to say a few things on the above subject, if the Lord should see fit to so direct my mind. Ever since I can remember hearing people talk of things, this word has been one of the most prominent. For a long time of my life I thought very little about the word; in fact, like all people, just thought it was a matter that was within the confines of our own volition. I suppose my life would have continued with this view of the word, but, as I hope, God, who is rich in mercy, has shown me that it is not of him that willeth or runneth, but of God who sheweth mercy; shown me that there is a cause for everything; shown me that no man can come to him, and that the natural man cannot receive him, and that the wise cannot understand him; that the Lord must build the house, that the Lord must keep the city, that man's labor is all in vain, and that the watchman's waking is of no avail; that the keeping of the city and building is all predicated on God's doings; that Paul may plant and Apollos water, but the increase is all of God; yes, all of Him. So then all obedience that is of a spiritual nature is the outgrowth of God's grace (increase), not of works, all coming as the river of love flowing from his throne of mercy, God working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and in harmony with that will we do work. Yes, we work, but it is all in accordance with his working in us, both the will and the do (no conditions in it at all). Jesus says, If ye love me, keep my commandments. Surely if we have his love it is plain to to be seen that without this we cannot keep them; so then it is not conditional. Without this love shed abroad in our hearts we cannot do these things, and to undertake to do so would be trying to build the house, and the labor be in vain; or the watchman trying to care for and protect the city without the Lord's keeping it would be in vain. So it is with us when we are purposing in our minds that we are going to help the Lord, it is a vain affair, and as sure as God's truth stands, brethren, it is all going to be burned up. John says, Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try them whether they are of God, because many false prophets have gone out into

the world. How are we to try them? Why, every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. Yes, and they are here now, and are teaching for doctrines the commandments of men (conditionalism), and when you are preaching conditional obedience you are simply denying that Jesus Christ came in the flesh to destroy him who had the power of death, which was the devil. That was what he came for, and he did it, and redeemed his people from under the curse and freed them from the devil, and he leads them as a shepherd leadeth his sheep. Yes, he goes before them. John says, As many as are led by his Spirit are his children. Oh, yes, led by his Spirit, but they are his sons and daughters. Brethren, here is your evidence, here is the proof witness. He says they are led (not left after regeneration to their wills or will nots) by his Spirit; his banner over them is love, and as a fruit of his Spirit they are made obedient to every good work. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome, for greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. Sure, have overcome them, because they have a King, a Governor; one who said, All power in heaven and in earth is delivered into my hands. One who told Pilate that he could have no power against him at all were it not God's will to give it to him from above. No, they could not crucify Jesus Christ except power was given them from above. God's will and purpose was all chained in the crucifixion and Jesus must be obedient unto death; he must go as it is written of Him. Wicked men and devils were all carrying out God's eternal purpose, as it required the death of his Son, and in order for that to be accomplished wicked men were raised up to do just exactly what God's hand and counsel had before determined to be done. So we see even the wicked were in gross wickedness, yet it was all carrying out God's determination. He said it was his determination, and we cannot doubt his words. So now, in his death, we were reconciled to God. In the shedding of his blood he obtained eternal redemption for us. Did? Yes. Well, it required his death, did it not? Yes. Well, was that by chance, or was it in harmony with God's promises before the world was, and with his determinate counsel? and if so, could it have been any other way than the way it was? Surely not. So then we must confess the fact that his wisdom embraced all things and his promise of eternal life began before the world was, and all things taking place here in time are in harmony with his wonderful foreknowledge and purpose, and time has only manifested what was his will and purpose from all eternity. Sin's entrance into the world, all its fatal consequences, all the redemption of his people from under its curse, the victory being given unto Jesus Christ, who has power over all flesh, holding the keys of hell and of death, working all things after the counsel of his own will. None can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou? Saved his people with an everlasting salvation, none able to pluck them out of his hand, his Father being greater than all. Peter says: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, * * * but with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you. Who by him do be-

lieve in God, that raised him from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: being born again, not of corruptible seed," &c. Oh yes, here we have obedience in this service to him, and to take up the true cause of the whole matter we find that we were first redeemed by his blood, and that we had purified our souls in obeying through his Spirit. Yes, indeed, and how sweet it is with all God's little children when they have this precious spirit of his love and mercy to bring them to this purifying state. But it is not a matter left to the flesh, for no flesh shall glory in his presence, and they that are in the flesh cannot please him; so we see it is the gift of his love and his Spirit that we overcome and purify ourselves in this obedience, and it is not a matter left to us. Peter again says, Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price. Not your own? No. Well, whose are you? Ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. Well, if you are Christ's, then you are led by his Spirit, are you not? Well, then, he goes before his own sheep and they follow him. Do they do that? Do they love him that much, and are his commands sufficient to cause this? Is his love sufficiently strong to cause this? Yes, he says so, and if you doubt it and say that it is left to us to obey or disobey, why then to my mind you deny that Jesus Christ came in the flesh and died and was resurrected and ascended into glory and declared that his people's righteousness was of him. If we praise him, it is because we are made to the praise of the glory of his grace. If we love him it is another manifestation that these are the workings of his mighty power in us to the praise of the glory of his grace. Yes, the glory of His grace. Let us have grace to serve him in an acceptable manner. Lord, save, or we perish. God, be merciful to me, a sinner. Lord, help my unbelief. The Lord is the strength of our lives, and all our salvation. He was Peter's Savior in the greatest moment of death to deliver him from drowning. He was Jonah's deliverer, and Jonah said, "Salvation is of the Lord." These are all time conditions, and here is salvation in time, but not a conditional affair. Jesus was just at the right place to take care of Peter when he was sinking, and to deliver Jonah from the whale. God was with Moses and the children of Israel, and was so unfailing in his promises that he furnished the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night that they might know that he was with them. He delivered them from the power of their enemies and from all harm and landed them safely across the regions of destruction. This was in time, and God was their Savior, and let me again assert that anything that is not of God will come to naught. All the works of men and of the flesh shall perish, and anything called salvation or obedience that is not God's work, and his Holy Spirit in you, and of his sovereignty, is of no avail. Jesus Christ was a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious; ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house and holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Now we see what is done, and how we came from the living stone (not anything dead, but life) something having life different to any natural thing and hated and disallowed of men (all conditionalists), but

chosen and precious. Now see, ye are likewise (lively stones, too) built up (not building yourselves as a matter conditional on your part) a spiritual house, offering spiritual sacrifices unto God by Jesus Christ. Yes, we offer up spiritual sacrifices, not the works of the flesh or legalism, but offerings that are spiritual offerings; for offerings and burnt offerings thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me. He came to do the will of his Father that sent him, and in this he was to die, the just for the unjust; and here are your sacrifices that this spiritual family offers up, praises to his Son, and they his poor little helpless children gather here in this house (in him). This is identically the same house that David spoke of when he said, O Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place through all generations, before the world was, &c., and so this spiritual house is where the spiritual offerings are made by this royal priesthood and holy nation, and this holy nation is not of this world any more than her spiritual house is of this world, for it is not of the world, and the world knoweth it not, for it knew him not, for he was from above, and his kingdom is of an eternal nature, and this is life eternal, that they may know him the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. He came to His own, and his own received him not, but as many as did receive him, to them gave he power to become his sons, and so they are his by birth, and he leads them and they follow him, and will not follow the voice of strangers. This conditional obedience that we hear talked about by all kinds of people is a strange voice, and God's poor people find no comfort in it, for it works a burden unto them and places them back in Egypt under Pharaoh's cruel hand and under the burden of the law, and does not honor Jesus Christ, who has delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver, in him whom we trust will yet deliver. Oh dear children of God, has he delivered us? and does he still deliver? and are we struggling along hoping and trusting that he will yet deliver us in and through the resurrection? Yes, we believe that he did deliver us from under the law of sin and death, set our feet upon the Rock (Jesus the spiritual house) and established our goings, and that we know we are not sufficient of ourselves to go, and that he placed a new song in our mouths, praises to his holy name. He is the only name under heaven given whereby we must be saved either for time or eternity. All spiritual blessings are his gift; it is according to his divine power that he hath given (note this word given) unto us all things pertaining to life and godliness. Oh dear children of God, it is wonderful that he had such mercy upon us, gave us of his divine power all spiritual things and all life, sure, and not a matter of conditional waiting for us to do before he would do. One thing here let me say: Surely it has been his divine power and his mercy that have kept me, and if I have walked in the path of duty, surely he is worthy of the praise for it, and not me. I feel too poor, sinful and unworthy of the very least of his blessings, and I must say if I have even had one good thought it was the outgrowth of his Spirit and I was housed in that spiritual house and there worshiped according to the gift of grace as the measurement through Jesus Christ. Hence we are bound to give thanks unto God alway, brethren, beloved of the Lord, for He has from the beginning chosen us unto salvation. Salvation? Yes, salvation. Then we were chosen to it, and the grace

of God brings it. Oh but it is so wonderful that his love was so great as to give us grace here in time that we might be taught by it, and to that end denying ungodliness. Yes, God bless you, this is what makes God's people hate every false way and deny ungodliness. It is his grace and teaching by and through it and thereunto that makes us obedient unto every good work, in harmony with his creating us in his Son before the world unto good works, which he ordained that we should walk in them. Yes, and there will not a single one of them fail that He created us unto doing, and His grace coming and saving us.

Well, brethren, I think I had better close. This article has increased to much greater proportions than I expected. I only hoped to give you in a more condensed form my opinion of obedience, so do not let it crowd out better matter for your readers. Do with it as you think best, and I assure you all will be well with me, for I feel that I am not able to do one single thing only as aided and blessed with the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and no other but him.

In hope,

V. R. HARRIS.

FORDYCE, Ark., Jan. 28, 1923.

FOSTER FALLS, Va., Feb. 4, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is evident from the whole teaching of the Scriptures that God is an absolute sovereign over all worlds, powers and principalities, doing all his will and pleasure in all his wonderful works in earth, in heaven and in the mighty deep. He says, I am God, and change not; therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed. God's hand and arrangement were in Joseph's being sold by his brethren and carried into Egypt. Yes, God in his infinite wisdom predestinated that he should go there, and that he should be cast into prison on the false evidence of Potiphar's wife. Yea, God hath made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil. The woman was there, full of evil intent, but God worked the whole matter to Joseph's good and for his own glory. While the woman's wicked desire came to naught, nevertheless God predetermined the entire transaction according to his own will and purpose. God gave unto Adam a positive law, and he in violating the law brought sin and death into the world, but it was according to the predestinated purpose of God that sin should enter into the world by the transgression of man. If sin had not entered Christ would have had no bride to redeem from sin and death. Jesus said he came to destroy the works of the devil. If there had been no evil Christ would have had no enemy, therefore would have had nothing to overcome; besides, the saints could never have sung the song of redemption, because there would have been nothing to be redeemed from. Then God, according to his righteous will, decreed that there should be a devil. It seems that he had use for Satan in the great trial of Job. Some will say that Satan just happened to come among the sons of God on that particular occasion, but I say that God predestinated that Satan should be there. Moreover, God's purpose did not fail when he delivered Job into Satan's hand. Job in his great trial and suffering was made to realize what he must endure in God's kingdom. This trial of Job worked for his good and to God's glory, while Satan gained neither honor nor victory, but had to withdraw his presence at the imperative command of Israel's God. All things, whatsoever

they be, are here according to the just decrees of the great I AM. What the Lord doeth is done forever; no man can add to or take from. The righteous are saved by the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ, who is Lord of lords and King of kings. The wicked, who wondered after the beast and received his mark in their hand or forehead, is that portion of the human family whose sins are imputed unto them, instead of Christ's righteousness. They were not given unto the Son in the covenant of grace, but were left to perish in their sins, according to the glorious justice of God, which he hath purchased in himself. O man, who art thou that repliest against thy Maker?

Dear brethren, if this reaches you and you think it contains sound doctrine, you may publish it. I feel most thankful for your kindness in continuing to send me the SIGNS; it is a wonderful paper, and always richly laden with gospel truth.

I am yours to serve,

L. K. SHOCKLEY.

DELPHOS, Kans., December, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Recently I was on my way to visit some brethren in the eastern part of this State, and as I rode along alone (I say alone, for among all the throng in that crowded car I did not know one to whom I could speak of the precious things of God) as I humbly hope He did then take of the things of his and show them unto me. I should like, by the help of God, to share with others who know how comforting are such tokens of his love. My mind, through no effort of my own, became centered upon the five barley loaves and two small fishes spoken of in John vi. 9, and I pondered on what they did signify, for I am persuaded that every word in the Scripture has a special signification if we only know how to interpret and apply it. My mind went from the five loaves to the five smooth stones which David gathered from the brook, and with one of which he slew Goliath, the boasting giant Philistine. (See 1 Samuel xvi.) Do not the Philistines represent antichrist, or all the enemies of the people of God? The giant defied the armies of Israel and they fled before him, so he was chagrined when he saw that one little shepherd boy had come out to fight him, and filled with scorn he said, Am I a dog? and he cursed David by his gods. Now Saul no doubt felt very solicitous for the lad, and wished him to wear his own armor. David suffered it to be put on him, with the coat of mail, and girded on Saul's sword, and even tried to go with them on, but he had not proved it, and said to Saul that he could not go in his armor for he had not proved it. But he went to the brook with his staff in his hand, and selected five smooth stones and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even a scrip, and his sling was in his hand, and he went forth to meet the Philistine. No wonder the giant from whom all Israel had fled was so filled with scorn, for he did not know that God hath chosen the things that are despised to confound the mighty and bring them to nought, and does it that no flesh should glory in his presence, and that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of man. In that power, in the God of the armies of Israel, in which David went forth to meet the boasting Philistine, is the only armor in which we dare to meet our enemies, for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God. I felt I was shown that these five smooth stones represent the five points of doctrine, namely, (1) The eternal vital unity of Christ and the church. (2) The elec-

tion in Christ before the foundation of the world. (3) The special atonement of Christ for his chosen people. (4) The predestination of all things. (5) The final preservation of the saints to glory. Any one of these, if rightly handled, will vanquish our enemies, great and small, and the same things that are so deadly to our enemies are precious food to the Lord's people; and so also the five barley loaves represent the doctrine of God our Savior in all its essential points, for no matter how great the multitude, even an innumerable host that no man can number, that are fed by the five barley loaves, there are still twelve basketfuls left, which represent the twelve apostles, and their teachings with the five loaves are sufficient to feed the Lord's people throughout all generations. The two small fishes surely represent the two witnesses, the Old and the New Testaments. The Old prophesying of the things to come, and the New testifying that the Scriptures are fulfilled.

These things came very sweetly to me, and I told them to the brethren, and a wish was expressed that they might be published in the SIGNS, so I humbly submit them to your disposal.

I remain, in love of the truth,

J. H. HAMMONS.

PHILLIPSBURG, Mo., March 25, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find check for four dollars to pay for my past subscription and also to renew for another year. I hope you will pardon me for getting behind with my subscription, and that there will be no occasion for such hereafter. I also hope you will live long to publish the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that I may be enabled to take it as long as I live, for I think it superior to all other papers I ever read. I get so much comfort and consolation from the letters and editorials each number that I feel like writing each one a personal letter and try to tell them how much I enjoy reading their writings, and to tell them to continue writing for the paper. While all are strangers in the flesh to me, there is a sense in which we are not strangers. Those dear brethren and sisters who write so sweetly and with so much light, liberty and understanding given them from on high to write of the things which are above, are brought in a sacred nearness to me; all traveling the same road, all having the same experience, all being taught by the same Teacher, all having the same Father, and Jesus our Elder Brother, Savior and King, hence we are no more strangers, but one family, all knit together with one strong cord of love, ascribing all power, praise, honor and glory to the blessed Lamb who died on the rugged cross to set his people free. These people are my people, their God is my God, with them I want to live, die and be buried.

I hope you will be spared many years to help edit the paper. How I wish I could hear you preach the gospel in its purity, for it is a source of solid comfort to this poor tempest-tossed soul, pointing us to Jesus, the anchor of our soul, both sure and steadfast. "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

I close with a heart full of admiration, love and fellowship for the writers and readers of the SIGNS.

(MRS.) GEORGE TURNER.

MALVERN, Pa., April 6, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Still I am here in this world, where sin and sorrow are abroad, and once again am inclosing check for the beloved SIGNS, and you will please give me credit on wrapper of

paper. I say, beloved SIGNS, and it comes from my heart, for I hope I can express in a measure the comfort and joy it brings to me, a poor wayfaring sinner, whom circumstances deny the blessed privilege of meeting with God's people, except on rare occasions. First I turn to the editorials, which are as wells of water to the thirsty, then back to first page, from which I read to the finis. Dear Elder Coulter's article in March 15th number tells us in a beautiful way of God's love for his people, love that chose us and drew us unto him who gave himself for us. It is a mystery past our power to solve that such rich and wonderful blessings should be given to poor sinners, such as I feel myself to be, weak in faith, but clinging to the hope that I do know and love the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and I am glad that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES goes on advocating that doctrine which is so precious to its subscribers. "Modernism," in March 15th number is ably expounded, and I feel to say with the writer, "May God preserve his people from idolatry and keep us turned unto him."

In hope,

JOSEPHINE DRAKE HAVILAND.

OROVILLE, Cal., May 21, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please find inclosed two dollars to pay for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES another year. I do not want to miss a single copy, for I love its writers, and believe they are the children of the true and living God. It is all the preaching I ever had in my life, or ever expect to have, as I do not know a person anywhere near here who believes as I do. I long to sit under the sound of the gospel and to meet and hear the brethren and sisters talk of Jesus and the true salvation which is by the grace of God alone, and does not in any way depend upon poor helpless man.

If you send the SIGNS to any in Butte County, California, I would be very glad to have their addresses. May God's blessing be upon the SIGNS and all the household of faith, is the prayer of one of the least, if one at all.

My address is Route B, Oroville, Butte County, California.

MARION S. BROOKS.

MANSFIELD, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find money order for five dollars, two for a year's subscription to the SIGNS, the other three for the poor of the flock. I am eighty years of age, and the SIGNS has been taken and read in my family since my earliest remembrance. Each issue is eagerly sought, and I reread the old back numbers that I have had for thirty years. How dear to me is the memory of those dear old writers, and none less dear do I hold the present writers, for they present to us the same precious truth. If I know myself, I do love the doctrine of God our Savior.

Love to all the kindred saints.

M. A. CASSTEVENS.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in July (29th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

NO MORE EVERLASTING TASKS.

OUR supply of the "Everlasting Task for Arminians" is exhausted, and as we do not expect to have any more of them, will be unable to fill future orders for the little book.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1923.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

INTRODUCTORY.

WITH this issue of the SIGNS we take pleasure in introducing to our readers the following associate editors: Elders R. Lester Dodson, whose address is 184 East Pierrepont Avenue, Rutherford, New Jersey; George Ruston, of Kelly Corners, New York; Charles W. Vaughn, of Hopewell, New Jersey. These brethren have occasionally written for the paper, but not all frequently. Now, that they are to be associated together in editorial work, it is hoped their writings may appear more and more often, and that the burden of writing may be so impressed upon them that they may have to write. All three of these brethren are in the fruitful years of their lives, at that age when they are naturally equipped to do their hardest and best work; and spiritually, too, we believe them to be men fitted of God to bear the burden of the work in the heat of the day.

Elder Dodson was born and reared in southern Virginia, united with the Old School Baptist Church while living in Virginia, but came to New York city and engaged in business there some few years ago, whereupon he united by letter with the Ebenezer Church of New York city. This brought him under the ministry of the late Elder John McConnell, who was like a real father to him. Brother Dodson began little by little to speak publicly in the meetings as occasion might arise, and the church soon saw that the Lord had bestowed within him a gift for the ministry, and they ordained him to that work not long before the death of Elder McConnell. Since Elder McConnell's death Elder Dodson has been called to the pastoral care of the Ebenezer Church, and is serving that church in that capacity at this time.

Elder George Ruston was born in rural England. His father was pastor of one of the Strict Baptist churches there, and his mother was a member of the same. When brother George grew to young manhood his attention turned to the United States as a promising field for the realization of his aspirations, he having chosen art as his profession, and having been educated in that line in England. He located first in Ohio, but it was not until he moved to New York city that he found the Old School Baptists in this country. Here both his wife and himself became regular attendants at the meetings of the Ebenezer Church. After a time both were baptized by Elder John McConnell. Very soon brother Ruston's gift for the ministry plainly manifested itself, and he was ordained to that work. Soon after his ordination he was called to the pastoral care of the churches in the late Roxbury (now called Lexington-Roxbury) Association, of New York State. He is now living among those churches and serving them.

Elder Charles W. Vaughn, like Elder Dodson, is a native of Virginia. He was born and reared, baptized and ordained, while still living in southwest Virginia.

After a time he moved with his family into northern Virginia, and located on a farm in Loudoun County, in the vicinity of churches served by the late Elder J. N. Badger. He supplied these churches from time to time, both before and after the death of Elder Badger. After the death of the late Elder F. A. Chick, former editor of the SIGNS, the church of his care at Hopewell, New Jersey, was turned in its mind by the Spirit of the Lord, we believe, toward Elder Vaughn, and that church invited him to visit them. This he did several times, until the Hopewell Church extended to him the call to move to Hopewell, live among them and serve them as pastor. This call he accepted, and there he is located at this time.

We make these brief statements of each of these three brethren, thinking our readers want to know something about them as men and as brethren who are to serve on the SIGNS. They are men not old by any means, but at the same time are not novices, and have given proof of their ministry. They are men who have the interest of the SIGNS at heart, and we believe that more and more as you get to know them through their writings the more and more you will grow to love them for the truth's sake. We bespeak for them your charity and love. Deal patiently and gently with them, for they are new and untried in editorial work. If criticise them you must, do so kindly. Harshness will do no good, either to them or to you.

L.

SALUTATORY.

WHEN I was received into the fellowship of the church I felt keenly my unfitness and unworthiness. Later, when set apart to the work of the gospel ministry, I was made to cry out "my nothingness," so far as I could see coming short of all the necessary qualifications, but, in my extremity, I feel to hope the Lord gave me the promise, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior." Now, I have been urged to become an associate editor of what I regard the best periodical in circulation among Old Baptists, the oldest, and undoubtedly a paper second to none as to the number of able editors it has had in the past. Retrospecting these things, and feeling that to speak and write in the name of the Lord is, by far, the highest possible form of service to which mortal man can be called, makes me tremble with fear to take my pen in hand. Examining myself, I find not only an utter lack of what I consider natural abilities, but, most of all, my very limited knowledge and correct understanding of the Scriptures to rightly divide the word of truth. Had I to look only to self, the outlook would be most gloomy, "but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ," I am sometimes enabled to look away from self, looking beyond the things which are seen, which are so much against me, and by faith, I trust, beholding things unseen, declaring with one of old, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God: how unsearchable are his judgments, and his

ways past finding out." The mystery of God's ways and the wonder of his love are themes that will ever enrapture the minds of men and of angels. I now recall hearing Elder John McConnell speak repeatedly of the forbearance and long-suffering of his brethren, and of his feeling sense of unprofitableness and unworthiness. I could not quite understand then why he should give expression to such things, for it seemed to me that we were a most highly favoved few to have such a pastor, one toward whom I saw little need of forbearance and long-suffering, and as to his profitableness, the condition of the church, dwelling in peace and in unity, bore testimony. While I cannot presume to compare myself with him, I believe I am coming more and more to understand just what he meant, for the long-suffering and forbearance of my brethren are continually in evidence towards me, but with me there is great need for them. I am sure, therefore, that there will be occasions requiring these things on the part of my readers, but am persuaded if all are guided by the Holy Spirit there will be bearing and forbearing one with another. Unless deceived, my heart's desire and prayer to God is that I may labor faithfully in love to exalt his great and glorious name, feeling assured that when enabled so to do Zion will be encouraged, comforted, edified, unified, strengthened and built up in her most holy faith. Realizing fully my entire dependence upon the Lord to enlighten my mind, I shall, with great reluctance, attempt to serve my readers in this capacity, hoping that our hearts may be made to burn within us while he speaks with us by the way, and "that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me."

R. LESTER DODSON.

RUTHERFORD, N. J.

KELLY CORNERS, New York.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS:—It was with great reluctance that I consented to be an associate editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for I realize my inability for such an office. In the past I have desired nothing greater than to be of service to the brethren, and though the least able of His servants, yet I have continually craved the blessed privilege of comforting God's people. Perhaps it was the thought of being in subjection to my brethren that made me consent to be an editor of such an excellent paper. I have always looked upon the churches I serve as a family, and I the least worthy among them. They have manifested great love and patience toward me, and now that I am brought into touch with a larger family circle I ask in this my first message to you that you deal with me as my brethren have always done, with patience and forbearance. Above all, I would desire you to be faithful to me, and should I be left to my own understanding and present anything other than God's word allows, then, dear brethren, do not hesitate to correct me. The SIGNS has been ably served in the past by brethren who were entirely dependent upon the Lord, and it is from that same blessed source that I must receive if I am to be of any service to you. I shall not attempt to write new things, but rather to declare the same truth that the SIGNS has so ably and boldly declared these many years. I esteem it an honor to be associated with Elders Lefferts, Vaughn and Dodson, and hope that we shall ever be following after the things which make for peace, and the things wherewith one may edify another.

GEORGE RUSTON.

HOPEWELL, N. J.

DEAR BRETHREN AND FRIENDS:—The publishers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES have solicited me to accept a position as one of the members of the editorial staff. I feel very unworthy to stand as one to protect the doctrine and faith of its columns, which have been so faithfully defended, but the thought and feeling to serve the brethren, and the desire for their welfare, is my earnest petition. Upon acceptance of this responsible service to the household of faith I trust ever to be faithful in doctrine and order of the gospel. The doctrine and order according to the original prospectus is the ground upon which I stand together with the other servants of the staff.

Sincerely yours,

CHARLES W. VAUGHN.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, to the churches composing the same.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—We will at this time, the Lord willing, offer you some thoughts on Isaiah xxxii. 1, 2, which reads, "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." We feel sure that the prophet had in view the gospel day, and saw King Jesus reigning over his kingdom, or church, from whom came all the commandments, and all these are to be obeyed, and no others, if we are to have peace in the family of God and live to the honor of his blessed name. He has said, If my children walk not in my commandments I will visit their transgressions with the rod. But he never makes a stroke more than is necessary, nor goes beyond what is righteous. He metes out justice to all, and all the time. He commends when his servants please him, saying, "Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." As to the order of his house, the princes rule over it, his apostles are the judges, and this is the supreme court of heaven, and from their judgment there is no appeal. We have no right to come saying how things seem to us, but come with a "Thus saith the Lord," from the mouth of his apostles. What they teach us we should believe and observe, and nothing more, if we would be orderly churches of Jesus Christ. They set forth the way of salvation, declaring that is all of grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord. The Father having determined to save sinners, did in the fullness of time send his Son Jesus Christ to execute that eternal purpose, and so if we be the children of God we are as Isaac was: children of promise, who in due time were born again of an incorruptible seed by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. Now we are no more children of darkness, but of the light, and one of the princes of judges says, "Walk as children of light." Dear ones, in coming into the church we obligate ourselves to live as the judges have prescribed, and doing so we shall live to the comfort and encouragement of each other. Judge Paul says, Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together. Is this injunction hard to obey? If so, we do not love the brethren as we have professed. It is not a burden to go to see those we love, and the company of those who love us and sympathize with us is worth putting ourselves to some inconvenience to enjoy. Another one of the judges has said that we know we have

passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. Christ was not ashamed to call his saved ones brethren, and these are most assuredly the brethren the apostle is talking about. We are not rulers in or of the church, but the church holds the keys and prescribes our manner of conduct and its bounds. So nothing is in order without the sanction of the church, but she can bind and loose as in her judgment is right, and walking with the church the man Christ Jesus is a hiding-place, a covert, rivers of water and the shadow of a great rock; yea, verily, head over all things to his own, whether it be one person or the whole body. He is their meat and their drink, his righteousness is their clothing, his word is music to their ears, a comfort to their souls; he is strength to the weak, rest to the weary, a shield to those who are shot at, and he hath said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," but be with you to the end.

Brethren, this is a day of falling away, many are denying the power of the form of godliness they profess, but we believe there is nothing too hard for the God of our salvation. He made the earth, and every creature that lives in the air or in the water, and he sustains all that he has made by his great power, and by him the virgin did conceive and bring forth a Son, who is the Savior of his people, and beside him there is no Savior, and he is our Comforter. May he give us a mind to seek him, love him and serve him, thus letting our light so shine before men that they, seeing our good works, may glorify our Father which is in heaven, and to his blessed and holy name be all the praise, now and forever. Amen.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.

E. A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, at his home, 200 Wicomico Street, Salisbury, Md., June 6th, 1923, Albert Dozy Fooks and Beatrice Carey Hammond, both of near Snow Hall, Maryland.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Alvin Gideon Herndon was born in Anderson County, Kentucky, February 21st, 1841, and died October 11th, 1923, at the home of his son, John F. Herndon, who, with his kind and patient wife, had cared for him for several years. He lost his eyesight more than twenty years ago, but bore his affliction with patience, and was cheerful most of the time. He, with his dear wife, united with the Old School Baptist Church at old Little Flock many years ago, and were always to be found in their places in the dear old church-house on meeting day. They raised a family of thirteen children, seven girls and six boys, all of whom are living, the youngest being past thirty years old. Our home was always a Baptist home, and the most pleasant memories of my life are of Baptist gatherings at "Forest Home," our dear home place, which was a home for us for over fifty years. Mother was called to rest ten years ago, and after that his darkness was dark indeed, but now we rejoice in the hope that they are both dwelling in the light of the smiles of the precious Savior whom they loved and worshipped for so many years. They were firm believers in salvation by grace, and the predestination of all things. They loved to sing the songs of Zion, which they did from memory, and I can see them now as they sat side by side by the open fire singing "How Firm a Foundation," which was their favorite hymn. Now we trust they are singing praises to the God of all grace in that world that shall never end, and where parting shall be no more.

Their daughter,

(MRS.) C. W. BOND.

Frances Virginia Hudspeth, daughter of William and Frances Dean, was born March 29th, 1836, in Coos County, Alabama, and died March 11th, 1923, in Lexington, Oklahoma, making her stay on earth nearly 87 years. She was educated at Montgomery, Alabama, and taught school previous to her marriage to A. G. Hudspeth January 1st, 1857. To this union were born eight children, five sons and three daughters. Two sons preceded her to the grave. She, with her husband, moved to Texas in the year 1860, and joined the Primitive Baptist Church soon after coming to Texas. She was always strong in the faith and always went to meeting when she could and was a devoted member. To know her was to love her; words cannot express how grand and noble she was. In 1890 she, with her family, moved to

Oklahoma. About twenty years ago she moved to Lexington, Oklahoma, where she resided until death called her home. She had been in feeble health for several years, but was able to be up and around in the house some until six weeks before her death. Sometimes we would think she was going to get well, and then she would get worse. She was very patient in all her sickness, and in health loving and kind. She lived with her youngest child, A. G. Hudspeth, who never married and lovingly cared for her, sparing nothing for her comfort and pleasure. May God bless him, and comfort and reconcile him and brother George, who are left alone in the home. She is survived by six children, three sons and three daughters. All were at her bedside when the end came. The children are W. A. Hudspeth, of Stephenville, Texas; Mrs. E. M. Burnett and Mrs. C. L. Hachter, of Lexington, Oklahoma; Mrs. F. L. Berry, of Pawnee, Oklahoma; G. J. and A. G. Hudspeth, of Lexington, Oklahoma. Her children have lost a kind, patient and loving mother, her church a devoted and faithful member. She also leaves a host of friends, who will miss her. All that loving hands and a trained nurse could do for her was done, but the appointed time had come and she must go to meet her blessed Jesus whom she so fully trusted.

Funeral services were conducted by brother A. D. West, who spoke words of comfort to our poor aching hearts after which she was laid to rest in the Lexington Cemetery by the side of her dear husband. May God grant that her children all live a life worthy of such a dear mother. She wrote our dear father's obituary and sent it to the SIGNS in 1918, and I want hers to be published in it, as it was her most loved paper, and she had taken it for fifty years I expect.

Written by her youngest daughter,

(MRS.) F. L. BERRY.

Delpha Ann Corn was born near Whitesberg, Ky., December 12th, 1853, and departed this life December 14th, 1922, being 69 years and 2 days of age. She moved with her parents to Missouri when a child, and the family settled near Wellington, Missouri, where she grew to womanhood. She was the oldest daughter of John Q. and Phoebe J. Adams. March 12th, 1882, she was united in marriage to Benjamin F. Corn, and to that union two daughters were born; the elder preceded her to the grave when about three years of age. She leaves to mourn their loss her husband, one daughter, one step-son, two sisters, two brothers, besides many relatives and friends. The first Saturday in December, 1888, she, with the writer of this notice, united by experience and baptism with Oak Grove Church, Jackson County, Missouri, and was baptized by Elder Peter L. Branstetter. She was ever a devoted, faithful member of her church, and a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, and was ever in her place at her meetings when able to attend, and was ever ready to entertain the brethren, sisters and friends. It can truly be said of her that hers was surely a life of devotion to her family, her friends and her church. She is greatly missed by all who knew her. Funeral services were conducted at the home by the pastor of her church, Elder T. E. Attebery, assisted by Elder W. L. Hall. She was laid to rest in the family cemetery, there to await the great resurrection morn.

BENJAMIN F. CORN.

Mrs. Annie E. Church, daughter of Elbert and Prudie Yarborough, was born January 20th, 1864, and departed this life January 24th, 1923, at the home of her only sister, Mrs. George W. Hays, Little Rock, Arkansas, where she was making her home. Sister Church united with Bethesda Old School Primitive Baptist Church, near Camden, Arkansas, and was baptized by Elder Nathan C. Yarborough, in June, 1897, and continued a faithful member to the end. She was a noble woman. Her christian virtues drew me close to her in spiritual fellowship, and our loss is felt deeply by her kindred in Christ, but we would not mourn as those without hope, for we believe her sufferings are over. Sister Church is survived by one sister, Mrs. George Hays, of Little Rock, Arkansas, and two sons: Maurey Church, of Bauxite, Arkansas, and Lucian, somewhere in the government service, besides many relatives and friends, who deeply mourn their loss. She was a reader of the SIGNS. I am writing this at the request of her sister, and it is sweet to record the death of this dear sister, knowing by faith that she has entered into that rest that remaineth for the children of God, and that she dwells in the presence of her Redeemer.

There was a large attendance at the funeral services, which were conducted by Elder J. T. Evers, who spoke most comfortingly to the bereaved, at Bethesda Church, where her father, mother and many relatives who preceded her rest.

ALICE S. DANIELL.

Lydia Reel Brayton, daughter of Henry and Catharine Starr Reel, was born in Reelsville, Indiana, May 31st, 1841, and passed away at her home, in Logan, Iowa, May 11th, 1923, aged 81 years, 11 months and 11 days. She was the last member of the Henry Reel family, and did her full share to help others. She left her native State with her father, mother, three brothers and three sisters for a home in the west early in September, 1853, and arrived in Council Bluffs in October, where the entire family spent the following winter. In March, 1854, they came to Harrison County, and located where Logan now stands, the present residence being located on the original home site. All her life she was much in-

terested in education, being instrumental in locating the city school where it now stands, and in organizing the city library. Lydia Reel was married December 27th, 1868, to William Brayton. They lived in and near Logan, Iowa, except two years spent in New Mexico. They were the parents of eight children, all living, except two who died in infancy, and Mary, who passed away at the age of seventeen. Those surviving are Effie, Henrietta, Martha (Mrs. G. E. Secour), Cynthia (Mrs. R. S. McFarland) and Percy. There are seven grandchildren and many other relatives and friends who are left to mourn. William Brayton passed away March 23rd, 1911. Mrs. Brayton united with the Primitive Baptist Church, and was baptized in May, 1879. She was a faithful member, attending meetings as long as her health would permit, later having church services at her own home. The funeral was held at the Baptist Church in Logan, Elders Edgar Carter and William M. Jones, of Loveland, Iowa, officiating. Burial was in Logan Cemetery by the side of her husband.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

J. Ryan Jackson, Ga., $2.00; Mrs. Spencer Nethaway, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. Mary E. Pittman, Kans., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

CLAREMONT, Cal.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFIT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

CHURCH NOTICE.

To our beloved brethren and friends, who may desire to visit the Cedar Creek Church,

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE

we have changed our place of meeting from Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, to Oregon City, Oregon. Day and hour will be the same: fourth Sunday in each month, services beginning at 10:30 a. m., with lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND LATER WRITINGS

OF

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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EDITOR:

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS:

Elders R. Lester Dodson, George Ruston, Chas. W. Vaughn.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 91. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1923. NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., June 27, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing two, to me, dear, good letters, which are at your disposal, and which I think will be read with interest and comfort by others. While I would much rather meet the dear kindred in Christ, and talk face to face of the things by the way, yet I love the heart to heart talks through the silent tongue of the pen. How oft we ask ourselves the question, yea, in bitterness of soul, Oh is there any one like me? and what a comfort to our souls to find others just as we are. So as face answers to face in water we see our likeness in others, and it gives us to hope we may not be entirely deceived. Both letters are from those who are dear to us in that blessed tie that binds the heart in christian love.

Dear editors, will you kindly allow me space to say to the many brethren, sisters and friends who so kindly wrote me after reading my letter in April 1st number of the SIGNS, that I cannot express to them the appreciation and comfort of soul their tender, loving, sympathetic words were to me? While I have not been able (because of my nearly blind condition) to answer all, I do appreciate them all, and am grateful to the Lord, I hope, for their love and fellowship to one so unworthy of it, for I often feel to say, I am a worm and no man; yet sometimes take comfort in these blessed words, Fear not, thou worm, Jacob, I have redeemed thee. In several of the letters I was asked to write more frequently. I can only say that there has often been an impression of mind to write, but I have ever felt there were so many far more gifted with the pen and tongue, and the fear of being a burden to the kind editors and publishers prevented, yet I do appreciate your comforting, assuring words that my feeble writing has not been entirely in vain in the Lord. It is quite likely this will of necessity be my last. I am now in my eightieth year, and while my general health is good (never better), my nearly blind condition forbids, for it must be difficult to prepare for the press. I still go to our meetings, as desired by the brethren, but feel as a preacher and pastor I have been a failure in the true sense, but feel I have contended for the faith once delivered unto the saints with the ability God gave me, always desiring

to speak the things that become sound doctrine. Now to all who love the blessed God-honoring doctrine as advocated by the dear old SIGNS, I say from the heart, God bless you, and the God of peace be with you, and lead you in the way of peace and righteousness, for his dear name's sake. Farewell.

Unworthily yours, the very least of all,
P. W. SAWIN.

ATLANTIC, N. C., April 22, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER SAWIN:—I received your good letter, and am glad to say to you that I could make out the most of it. I well remember the first time we were up north together. I was so young and so inexperienced in traveling among even our brethren that it was a great comfort to have you with me. Also, I learned to love you so much as a precious brother that I have never let one of your letters in the SIGNS pass that I did not read as soon as I got hold of it, and now I am glad to say that I have never found any occasion to differ with you on any point of doctrine. This makes me feel that there was no mistake in my first impression of you on our first acquaintance.

I am hoping to go this year to see the brethren at the eastern associations, and to go on to the Canada meeting. I am acquainted with Elder Slauson only of the brethren over there. I have met the two sisters Wells, who have both married since my acquaintance with them, and are now both widows, I believe. I do not know how far our meeting will be from their homes. I would be glad if you could be with us up there this year, as I would be glad to see you again. I was seventy years old in March, but have generally been well. Last week I had five spells of kidney colic in two days, and was in bed with it, not able to eat one mouthful from Monday dinner to Thursday morning, then only a little oatmeal; however, I am better, and have filled an appointment to-day. I feel that the grace of God has been all my trust for these forty-nine years I have been trying to declare his word to his people. I look back and see many mistakes I have made in my great weakness, but I am glad to say that in all of them he has been my shield and my help. I feel that he who has been my support all these days will keep me to the end. I once read the words of a poor woman whose life had been just a little out of the way, but her faith in God was strong. She was at the seashore to be banished from home and friends. She spoke in old English with weeping eyes, and said, He that kept me will keep me to the end. Those words are often with me, and I am made to rejoice in such strong faith in the God in whom I have been led to trust. Man may forsake us, hate us, turn us away in disgust, but our God, our Husband, Friend, will keep us to the end. Our lives may not have been just what they should have been, but that cannot hinder the grace of God in our salvation. He who purged Solomon, David, Nebuchadnezzar, Manasseh, Paul, and all the saints of old, can, and will, purge his people the world over, and keep them ready to be revealed in the last time. Oh, my dear brother, I do feel so much the need of his holy hand to wash me that I may be as white as snow, to cleanse me that I may be as wool. I know that in the brightness of his countenance all of our blemishes will be fully removed. We shall be returned to him as pure as we were in the mind of God before we sinned. I cannot think that our dear Father gave to his son a prostitute wife. No, she was pure in his eye, which cannot make any

mistake. But even though she was pure, she had not the power to retain her virgin purity. As soon as the temptation came, though it was from her strongest foe, she had no power to resist it. She sinned and fell into death. She had no power to release herself. Sin had filled her whole being, therefore she followed after that which was evil. Notwithstanding this awful fall, and the awful condition into which it placed her, her Husband did not forsake her, nor divorce her. His great love was just as strong for her as it would have been if she had not fallen into so desperate a condition. In the fullness of this love he came to her in the flesh. He carried her and bare her all the days of old. She was bound on his heart with a cord stronger than hell, higher than the heights, deeper than the depths. He needed no life-lines to be thrown out by her. All her salvation was in him. She was full of the sin of the world, he came to take it all away. Her whole body was full of putrifying sores, he came to cure every one of them. He was full of ability to do all the Father sent him to do, and all the devils in hell and out of hell could not stay his hand. Oh such a Savior! "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." He stained all his garments. She was wrapped in them. That blood could not be wiped away; it went down, and her sins went down with it. Here she was separated from her transgressions as far as the east is separated from the west, an incomprehensible and an ununitable distance. She does not dwell in herself, but in her Husband. Her old name is taken away and a new name is given to her. It is the name of her Beloved. Nothing is so sweet to her as to be called by his name. His name is, "The Lord our righteousness." Her name is, "The Lord our righteousness." He said, I will name my name upon her. He has done it, and she is given to rejoice that the day of her espousal has come. If he appears to have gotten out of her presence for a moment she begins to inquire, Where is my Beloved gone? Her heart is filled with weeping and her soul with great sorrow, until she hears his voice walking in the garden of the Lord. It may be that the cold north wind is blowing, and the snow and the ice may be on her garments, but the knowledge of the presence of her Beloved is enough to melt the cold, with all its consequences, and immediately the warm south wind fills her whole being. She is resurrected from the dead state to the fullness of life in him. At once her faith is strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, and it reaches to the end, where she listens to the voice of her Beloved calling up all the members of his body to come and enter into the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world.

The Lord who has kept you all these days, keep you to the end.

Your brother in a good hope,

L. H. HARDY.

SULPHUR, Ky., June 12, 1923.

ELDER P. W. SAWIN—DEAR BROTHER:—I have thought of you many times since last we met, and have often had a desire to write you, but something has held me back. I think it is the fear the desire might be of the flesh, yet I have hope it is of the Lord, and I also hope he may guide my pen, for I do not know how to write as I should (that is, of myself) any more than I know how to pray as I should, but what a wonderful blessing is the gift of the Spirit that maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. What a blessing to be made to

know our own weakness and how frail we are, and when we see Christ as our all in all, and the One altogether lovely, then we rejoice with joy unspeakable. But truly I can say there are few moments in praise I enjoy, and they are succeeded by pain. If a moment in praising of God I employ I have hours again to complain. Oh how true are these words in my case. Brother Sawin, I have not heard any preaching since I heard you at old Sulphur Fork, and I do miss the meetings so much, and feel to sympathize with the lonely ones who are deprived of church privileges. Some of the sweetness of your last sermon lingers with me still. While listening to you speaking words of truth and soberness I wondered how any could turn from such preaching as that and go where they preach for doctrine the commandments of men. Surely they have never been brought into the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, the blessed Savior, for a hungry, thirsty soul can find neither food nor drink in salvation by works. But I do not feel to be greatly concerned about the outsider. I wonder if I am wrong in this, and if it is sinful for me to feel this way, but I know the Father has all power in heaven and on earth, and I know he saves whom he will, and there is none to hinder or help, for he says of the people, There was none to help, and mine own arm has brought salvation; but I do feel to be greatly concerned about myself, for I see so much sin and evil in my own human nature it causes me to fear I will never be permitted to see my Savior as he is and be like him. I sometimes think the only knowledge I have is of the head, for when my heart seems to be so cold and hard I then think surely that great and wonderful love of God has never been shed abroad in such a heart as I have. I feel to know you have no such doubts or fears of this kind. I can see marks of grace in others, but when I search my own heart I see nothing but sin, and every evil thought, all my own righteousness is as filthy rags. But it is said Christ is our righteousness, and in him only is perfection, and, blessed thought, he is the sinner's friend, the only one that can do us good, and he knows just what is needful and best for us, and he gives us grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Then it is not according to our works, and I feel to be thankful for that, for if it was according to our work (in my case at least) I know I would be a castaway, yet I do believe I love the doctrine of free grace, and the predestination of all things; I cannot believe anything else. It is sweet and precious to me to believe that God rules and controls everything, from the greatest down to the very smallest mote that flies in the air, yet I have heard one say there was no doctrine of absolute predestination taught in Cain killing Abel, that it was Cain's own sin. Well, I fully believe it was Cain's own sin, and if I should commit a wicked act it would be my own sin, and I would be punished for it. Was not the act of Joseph's brethren selling him their own sin, because they thought to do evil, and did not know they were working out the predestinated purpose of God? Surely they were none the less guilty. Was not the death of His Son predestinated, and did He not ordain the wicked hands that did it? I may be wrong, for I know my weakness, but if I am I hope I may be set right before I leave here. Sometimes I feel to hope thus far the Lord has led me, and if he is leading me (Oh if I could know that), then I would know everything was and is all right with me. Oh come, tell me, is it thus with

you? I feel to know you are only waiting for the call of the blessed Master, Child, come home; there to bask in the sweet sunshine of his presence, and sing praises to that God you have been trying to serve so long here below. I do not know we will ever meet again in this world, but may we all meet in that happy home above where Jesus is, there to see him face to face and sing the song redeemed by grace.

I must stop lest I weary you with this rambling letter. Give my love to all the family.

I am, I hope, your sister in hope of a better world,

ADDIE CHANDLER.

CHARITY.

FOR some cause my mind has been directed to the word "charity." I have decided to pen a few thoughts as they occur to me. If I have the right conception of the word "charity" ninety per cent. of the people have the wrong view. The apostles often use the word in their writings. Paul said in 1 Corinthians xiii. 1, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up." Faith, hope and charity, and the greatest of these is charity (love). It has been for a number of years the idea among worldly religionists that charity is a gift bestowed upon persons, and for a long time there have been institutions organized for the purpose of taking care of donations named as charity, and they have officers of different ranks to take care of the funds, and of course these officers have to be paid, and now it is a custom to give of their abundance a small amount for charitable purposes, not knowing what person or persons their gift is going to benefit. But listen to Paul: "And though I bestow all [not part] my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." Now compare Paul's statement with the general idea, and note the difference. If he gives all his goods, and even his body to be burned, and has not charity (love) it profiteth nothing. Charity means love, and where no love is there is no real charity. It has been a practice among the Old Primitive Baptists in all ages to look after their afflicted members, not through institutions, but according as the Lord hath prospered them. (See 1 Cor. xiv. 1–4.) I can well remember back in the latter seventies and eighties, on each Saturday the pastor would during conference make an inquiry as to the welfare of the brethren. His question was: Brethren, is there any one in need? Any one sick, needing attention? If so, let it be known. I have witnessed several times some one would rise and address the moderator and brethren with, Brother or sister so-and-so is sick, or had some misfortune. Then the moderator would direct the body to get together and take steps for their relief. The deacons were admonished to do this duty. No contributions were begged from the world, no funds as charity to be sent to some charitable institution, but sent direct to the one in need. Charity doth not behave itself unseemly, rejoiceth not in iniquity; beareth all things, and never faileth. Love is of God, and he that loveth is born of God. So we may safely say true charity is as much the fruit of

God's Spirit as is love, peace and hope, for all true love is the outgrowth of that indwelling love of God, and the performance of any of the commands as are laid down by Jesus and his apostles is only evidence of that love of God shed abroad in the heart. Charity is not, and cannot be, only a custom just handed down for generations, but is the direct command handed down by Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Where there is no love there is no charity, and I have often said love is the strongest and most profound word in use, for God is love, and he hath loved us (those whom he foreknew) with an everlasting love. Yes, those he loved in eternity he still loves, and will love in time and all eternity, manifesting his love to them, causing them to cry, Abba, Father, and also to love one another; for there is no greater evidence of a true child of God than the expressions of love one toward another. Love will let itself be known, for by the standard of honest weights and measurements a true manifestation of God's love is made manifest, for said the apostle John, "But whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" Well, if charity is love, and one claims to be a lover of God, how can we know it unless there is some manifestation of that love by its fruits? John said, My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

Brethren, I have written this in fear. I hope to be remembered by all when at the throne of grace.

I am, I hope, your brother in hope, and in afflictions,

J. B. BOWDEN.

WARING, Texas, April 4, 1923.

JOHN XII. 25, 26.

"HE that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honor."

These words were spoken by our Savior just a short time before his crucifixion, and his trials and conflicts in the flesh prompted them, knowing that all redeemed by his blood and grace would feel the same suffering of tiring of this world with its pleasures of sin. There lies the distinction, the line of demarcation between the unbeliever and believer, "he that loveth his life shall lose it," and "he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal." One, until his heart is circumcised, or softened by regeneration, desires nothing but the pleasures of this world, particularly in whatever forms he is tempted, or "blinded" to follow. He knows nothing about that mercy or love that attends regeneration, and we should pity him rather than condemn him, for either subject is helpless within himself; it is all by the mercy of God we are what we are. On the other hand, one who has been brought from darkness to His marvelous light has been made to see the imperfection and corruption that belong to carnal man, and he is made to abhor them, particularly within himself, to see his own vileness and to know, as Paul declared, there in no good thing in him, in his flesh, and to love the things he once hated and hate the things he once loved. This condition of mind is surely evidence of regeneration (born again), and that promise of eternal life to those who have hope in Him makes us secure when we are given to see it by faith. But look at the price with which we were bought, the sacrifice. We killed him, our sins killed him, nailed him to the cross, but it was by the determinate

counsel of the Father that he should die such a death, for in the following verse he says, "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour." "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." It is unnatural to forsake or discard the pleasures of this life in the flesh; that is, our mind altogether dead to trespasses and sins, to which we are heirs by Adam's transgression, and it is only mercy and grace that can change this condition in any fallen sinner of Adam's race. It has been said that clay will stick to clay, and we surely did stick close to it until by the grace of God we were made to see ourselves sinners, convicted, reproved and made to repent in sackcloth and ashes, brought to see our nakedness. None of us came into the church of our own volition; no, not one; we were helpless in our regeneration, and we are just as helpless after the new birth, for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh.

"If any man serve me, let him follow me." If a subject is given to hate the pleasures of this world he must have a desire to follow spiritual things, and thus he is led to follow his Savior. "Let" in this sense is more of a command than left to the will of the person under exercise. His yoke is easy and his burden is light when we are given to endure each trial and conflict as they appear from time to time.

Dear brother Oliver, my mind was arrested on these words yesterday for a time, and I wrote some of my exercise on this sheet of paper, but this morning the exercise is gone and I cannot finish it. Brother Eubanks once said, You cannot bottle sunshine. Light to-day is invariably darkness to-morrow. No use in turning down a leaf.

Your little brother in hope,

J. B. MILLER.

NEWARK, Del., Nov. 7, 1922.

HERNDON, Va., January, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—In looking over some of my letters this morning I found the inclosed letter, which I received from dear brother Miller some time last fall, and in reading it over again this morning I thought some of the readers of our family paper might enjoy it with me, so make the venture to send it to you for publication if you see fit. I would love to still write for the dear old paper, but have no gift to do so.

Yours in hope,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

RISING STAR, Texas, June 26, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have just read with much concern Elder Ker's resignation as editor on the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. My desire and object in this letter are to express myself by way of encouragement to you, and to let you know that I am mindful of you. I feel that prayer is going up to God as the prayer of one man that he will enable you to continue to edit with the pen of a ready writer. We feel that the editorial department will continue, by the grace of God, in all the fullness and clearness of expressed experimental and scriptural truth that has featured it ever since its first issue. Moreover, we as the SIGNS'

family, are asking our heavenly Father for companion editors with you, that it may continue as in the years past, believing that he will soon grant our petition. As to this we have no doubt, although knowing that it will require an act of special providence of God, as was so clearly manifested in former editors. Consequently our God is continuing to bestow a special blessing in its publication. In thus speaking, I do not intend to minimize the blessedness attending and consequent to its illustrious train of correspondents. They have from its earliest existence kept its pages lighted with a constant blaze of Bible truth which has stirred the souls of thousands to write for its columns, and has filled the souls with love for them of many thousands more whose pens have remained silent. So a continual anthem of praise to our God and to the Lamb commenced with its prospectus in 1832, and our desire and prayer is, if the will of God be so, that it may continue to be resounded throughout coming years by rising generations, who will also learn to read and write of God's grace, love and truth as taught in his unerring word.

Finally, brother Lefferts, be strong in the faith. Shun not to declare the whole truth. The Lord give you light to speak as the law and testimony direct. Consider what it says, and the Lord give you understanding in all things that shall come to be yours to write of in all your editorials, even as he has in those of yours in the past. Now, having by the foregoing somewhat relieved my mind of an abiding impression to write to you, I commend you, as editor, to God, that his wisdom direct your pen to the comfort and instruction of your readers, and to the honor and glory of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ who ordained this unequaled medium of correspondence, as we believe, to this end. The grace of God be with you. Amen.

Your brother, the least, if one,

J. I. FOSTER.

JOHN III. 16.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Is it possible that any part of "the world" that God so loved as to give his only begotten Son to be a sacrifice for, to pay the redemption price of, should ever perish eternally? Will a father ever destroy his own offspring? Will a loving bridegroom ever destroy his lovely bride? Will the advocate destroy his client? To all the above interrogations we answer emphatically, No. The sacrifice was too great. When God created Adam he said it was not good for him to dwell alone, so he made for him an helpmeet. He made the "helpmeet" from a part of Adam, so when the Lord got the work done he (Adam) was in two parts, and it took both parts to complete the work. So when Adam was thus created he was "the figure of him that was to come," and "him that was to come" was the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, a quickening spirit. Also, that "breath of life" that God breathed into Adam's nostrils was only a figure of that eternal life hid within Christ, in God, for all his spiritual offspring. Also, that love that Adam had for his bride, that moved him to voluntarily go under the curse of the law for her, is a figure of the great love wherewith the second Adam loved his bride, (the church) and was made sin, and a curse for her. Also, while the "figleaf apron" represents the very best righteousness that man has ever gotten up, the coat of skin (which is the most dur-

able garment in the world, and that cannot be obtained without a sacrifice of life) is evidently a figure of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, the garment with which his people must be clothed before they can ever pass the solemn test. The first Adam was to multiply and replenish the earth, and this carried out constitutes a "world," all of which received condemnation in their federal head. The offspring of the second Adam have received in him an imputed righteousness which makes them pure, just and holy before God. This is done by the fact that Jesus Christ lived the life that the law required, suffered all the penalty of God's just and holy law, that was justly due to them, and was buried and rose for their justification. If Jesus lived for them, kept the law for them, suffered for them, died for them and rose for their justification, will they be justified? Or is it a failure? All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, they will certainly come clear. The "world" that God in Christ was reconciling to himself, is evidently the world that God so loved that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. This is the people that the Holy Spirit had in mind when he addressed the Virgin Mary. Thou shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, (Why call his name Jesus?) for he shall save his people from their sins. All the above is said without an "if," or "peradventure," or "maybe." The Holy Ghost does not say, He shall try to save his people from their sins, or that he shall save as many of them as he can, but the language conveys the idea that all are included. Also, Paul does not say that God was in Christ trying to reconcile the world unto himself, but he was just doing it. When Christ told Nicodemus he must be born again, he gave a name to a hitherto nameless thing. Every child of God who has ever lived in this world, or ever will be here, was, or will be, born again. He was first born of a corrupt seed, flesh and blood, and under this birth he cannot inherit the kingdom of God. He must now be born again, of incorruptible seed, a pure seed that cannot be corrupted, and every child that is born into this family will certainly get his inheritance, which is incorruptible, and undefiled and fades not away. There are only two ways by which we can inherit, one is by legal birth, and the other is by legal adoption. In either case, we are perfectly passive. We cannot possibly have anything to do with our natural birth, and it remains a fact that we must be born of this incorruptible seed if we have any part or inheritance in that heavenly kingdom. The works which we do here in this world do not make us what we are, but only prove what we are. Make the tree good and its fruit will be good.

"He loved the world, his own elect,
With love surpassing thought,
Nor can his mercies e'er neglect
The soul so dearly bought."

G. W. BERRY.

ZANESFIELD, Ohio.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As my subscription is long past due, I will send you money order for four dollars to pay for what is overdue, and to pay on the next year. I feel I must take the SIGNS while I live, as I am in my seventieth year. I have taken it for forty years or more. My father took the paper for that

long or longer, and my grandfather took it before him. I had a year's binding of the SIGNS that my grandfather had away back in 1832 and 33, that had an account of the split on the missionary question. I was just thinking how firm the SIGNS has stood all those years. Well, dear brethren, it is just as true to-day as it was ninety years ago, for the Lord is everywhere present and has the power to let all men everywhere see and know the truth if it is his will to do so. I hear people talking about helping the Lord, as though the Lord needed man's help. I never could see why God needed man's help. I often tell people if I had the same power as the Lord I would cause all men to see and understand the plan of redemption, and that I would create in them a new heart and willing spirit; but we cannot do those things. I fell in conversation with a Methodist minister this winter. He was telling me what great things were needed for mortal man to do. I asked him why the Lord did not do those things, for he had the power at the turn of his hand to bring all mankind to the truth, and to also give them the earnest of the spirit. He said he supposed he could, but had handed the kingdom over to man. I told him that I thought that a poor piece of business.

Well, dear brethren, I have written these few thoughts to let you know that there is one Baptist in this part of Ohio that stands firmly on the principles which the SIGNS has always stood for. I would be glad to hear from any of the brethren.

As ever, your brother in tribulation and hope in Christ,

G. D. PETERS.

ENLOE, Texas, Dec. 26, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find two dollars, for which please renew my subscription to your paper. Dollars and cents do not pay for the great comfort we receive from the dear brethren and sisters through the dear old SIGNS. You need what Moses needed when he became worried: you need your hands upheld by a word of encouragement. I feel my weakness so much it make me tremble to attempt to encourage any one, but He who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance, is able to support the dear old SIGNS and hold it up, as he does the truth at all times. May the life of the dear old paper be long. I feel my weakness very much, but am counted with the Old Baptists in the New Hope Association.

J. D. ROBBINS.

MACOMB, Ill., June 7, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find one dollar, for which please extend my subscription to the SIGNS six months. I thought of writing a few words of commendation and good wishes, but as I am not well I will not at present.

With best wishes and greeting to all connected with the dear paper, and wishing all Godspeed, I am your sister, I hope, in the faith,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

LAKELAND, Florida, Feb. 10, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you money order for two dollars to renew my subscription for another year. For some reason I feel that I cannot get along without the SIGNS, as it stands for the doctrine that I hope I have believed for more than fifty years, and in which my father and mother rejoiced since my first recollection.

Wishing for you, and all connected with the SIGNS, a pleasant and profitable new year, I hope I am your friend,

ROBERT MILES.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1923.

EDITOR
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ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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THE TWO WITNESSES.

BROTHER Marshall Sellars, of Sandersville, Georgia, has asked us to give our views on the eleventh chapter of Revelation, especially the first part of that Scripture. Not long ago we tried to use this portion of Scripture for a text at the Warwick Association, and it seems rather singular that we should also receive a request along the same line at about the same time; a little peculiar that different minds should be running in the same channel. This eleventh chapter of Revelation should be read in connection with the fourth chapter of Zechariah, because the two chapters (one in the Old, the other in the New Testament) present the same truth. The measuring rod in Rev. xi. 1, is the same plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel mentioned in Zech. iv. 10. This measurement is the judgment of the Holy Spirit, and is in the hands of Jesus Christ, the spiritual Zerubbabel. The man of the name Zerubbabel, who began the restoration of the temple in Zechariah's time after the Babylonian captivity, was a type of Jesus Christ, who is the builder of the real temple of God, the church. The Holy Spirit of the risen Christ at the right hand of God brings into judgment every secret thing, and every one of the elect must and does in this time state appear before this judgment-seat to receive the things done in the body, whether it be good or bad. "Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place." This judgment of the Holy Spirit was, so Peter says, to begin at the house of God; that is, at the church; and the church at that time was first manifested among the Jews. The gospel of the kingdom was first preached to the Jews beginning at Jerusalem. This we read of in the first chapters of the book of Acts. On the day of Pentecost, many were pricked in the heart; that is, they were measured by the plummet in the hand of spiritual Zerubbabel and made to exclaim, Men and brethren, what shall we do? But after the gospel was first preached to the Jews, and after God's elect remnant among them was gathered into the gospel fold, then the gospel went to the Gentiles. "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you [Jews]: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." According to the second verse of the eleventh chapter of Revelation, the Gentiles are to occupy the (gospel church) 1260 days. No one knows how long a time this 1260 days represents. There have been various theories about it, and many have been the mathematical calculations trying to determine it, but it still remains a secret. We do know, however, that it means the period during which the gospel church, or holy city, is given over to the Gentiles, and that period began in the days of the

apostles when, their work done among the Jews, they turned to the Gentiles; we are to-day living in that same 1260 days or Gentile period. How much longer it may continue we cannot say, but it will continue until all God's elect among the Gentile nations of the earth have been manifested, not that all of them shall ever be brought into membership in the visible church (only a very small remnant of them enjoy that privilege), but every one of the elect must be, and shall be quickened and regenerated by the Holy Spirit and brought into manifested eternal life. When the fullness of all the elect of God among the Gentiles shall thus have been brought out of condemnation on account of sin and experimentally brought into the saving knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, then visibility of the church of God shall become extinct among the Gentiles to spring up again among the Jews; even as many hundreds of years ago it ceased from among the Jews to spring up among the Gentiles. Then shall be the end of the 1260 days representing the period during which the gospel church is among the Gentiles. During that same 1260 days, the two witnesses do their testifying in sackcloth; that is, in sorrow on account of sin and the repentance which follows that sorrow. Sackcloth was the ancient badge of humiliation and sorrow. These two witnesses are, first, the Scriptures of the Old Testament; second, the Scriptures of the New Testament. To get this clearly in our minds, let us read carefully the fourth chapter of Zechariah. Note that the candlestick is all of gold, that it has seven lamps, seven pipes to the seven lamps. This candlestick can be none other than the church of Jesus Christ established in its gospel doctrine, order and practice as set forth in the word of God in the New Testament. It is important that we notice the "bowl," which is not underneath the lamps, but on top of the candlestick, showing the supply of oil comes not from underneath, or from an earthly source, but from above, an heavenly source. All the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily in Jesus, and he is the living Head of the church; she is complete in him, receiving from that bowl all her virtue and life by which she shines forth as the pillar and ground of the truth, the lamp lighted by him and kept shining by him to show forth his honor and glory. All the testimony of the Scriptures, both of the Old and the New Testament (the two witnesses) comes down into the lamps by first coming through the Head, Jesus Christ. The Scriptures were never written for the world, but for the church of God, and belong only to the church. The church of God is the only body of persons on this earth that has among them the unfolding and interpretation of the Scriptures. Whenever the world tries to interpret the Scriptures they handle them wrongfully, and invariably to their own condemnation. This opening up of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, as well as of the New, is one of the bright marks of the Gentile gospel church, something which was withheld entirely from the church while under the law. Yet it is only through great tribulation that this testimony of the two witnesses is made known; that is, in sackcloth. Every principle of gospel truth has won its way only through great humiliation and suffering on the part of God's people. The road to soundness in doctrine and in order is far from an easy one. It is marked by the blood-stained feet of martyrs, by those who have been perse-

cuted and maligned because of the truth for which they stood. During all of the 1260 days of Gentile occupation of the holy city, the testimony of the holy Scriptures is revealed and preached through much sadness and humiliation. Yet every word throughout the Scriptures shall be, if it has not already been, fulfilled. Not one word can fail of coming to pass. "These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will." Wherever in the Scriptures it is declared that heaven shall be shut, it shall be so; wherever it says rivers are to be turned to blood, it shall be just that way; and all plagues promised are certain to come to pass. If any man or men seek to hurt either the candlestick or the witnesses, the written word of God tells just what woe shall come upon such, and so it shall come to pass. Every word written by inspiration of God shall verily be fulfilled. At the end of the 1260 days, the beast shall ascend out of the bottomless pit and shall fight against the Scriptures, and shall overcome them. The bottomless pit is none other than the depth of iniquity resident in the carnal heart and depraved human nature of ungodly men. The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and so vast is the mystery of iniquity that it is unknowable, except in small measure, even by those who are taught of it in the light of the Holy Spirit's revelation. Out of this bottomless pit of corrupt human nature shall arise the organized power of antichrist to oppose and to overcome the testimony of the Scriptures. There has always been more or less opposition among unregenerate mankind toward the testimony of God's truth in the Scriptures. The Bible has for centuries been subjected to revision after revision, criticism upon criticism, in the endeavor to get rid of its teachings so abhorred by unbelievers. The Scriptures have, however, survived it all, and shall continue to survive all opposition until the time spoken of in Revelation xi. 7. Then shall the beast be successful in killing the Scriptures. The two witnesses shall lie dead, but not out of sight, in the streets of that city spiritually signified by Sodom and Egypt where the Lord was crucified. It does not say that these two witnesses shall ever lie dead in the street of the holy city; that is, in the church, but shall lie dead in Sodom and Egypt. All the bodies of those beasts sacrificed under the law were burned outside the camp; Jesus also went forth without the gate bearing his reproach and was crucified outside the city; and it is outside, not inside the city, that these two witnesses lie dead, but not buried from sight; and when the beast shall finally have succeeded in ridding himself of the Scriptures, which have for so many centuries plagued and tormented him, when at last he shall have extinguished the Scriptures, having substituted for them a Bible of his own manufacture, written in the light of so-called science and philosophy, then the nations of the earth shall rejoice in the universal brotherhood to which they have attained by their own inventiveness and wisdom, and shall congratulate one another that at last they have attained to such superiority over the then obsolete and antiquated Bible. But this extinction of the Scriptures is to last only for a very short time comparatively, just for three days and half, whatever that may exactly mean. At the end of that three days and half, the Scriptures shall come into

power again, consternation and condemnation shall come upon all who have opposed them and have killed them, and antichrist shall in its turn go down, never to be revived. Truth may suffer eclipse, but can never be permanently vanquished. The very life and power of God himself is the vitality and vigor in his truth, so that, as the poet says, Truth crushed to earth shall rise again, the eternal years of God are hers. We need not be pessimistic or given over to despair, when we know that God is all the time ruling and reigning, not only in the heavens of his glory, but right here on and in his footstool earth. The moments of time roll tirelessly and ceaselessly on, accomplishing the unfolding of his purpose, and bringing relentlessly to pass all things contained in his will from before the foundation of the world. We cannot help it nor hinder it, nor would we.

L.

WATCH YOUR DATES.

WE wish to request our subscribers when sending in their subscriptions to see that the date on the little pink slip bearing their address is changed. If not changed, please let us know immediately (for that signifies you have not been given credit for the money sent) and we will look into the matter.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in July (29th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

George A. Jenkins, the subject of this sketch, was born December 15th, 1845, and died March 31st, 1923, aged 77 years. Brother Jenkins was married to Miss Nannie R. Sellers October 6th, 1874. He together with his wife united with the church at Ramer, Alabama, the fifth Sunday in March, 1889, and were baptized by Elder H. M. Curry. Brother Jenkins lived an exemplary life, was a patriotic citizen, self-sacrificing, ever ready to lend a helping hand to the needy. He was absolutely uncompromising upon the principles of the doctrine of the sovereign grace of God, and was one of the meekest and humblest men I ever knew. He died with that dreaded disease, cancer of the liver. He bore his afflictions with great patience, meekness and humbleness, and never murmured. I visited him one week previous to his death, and when I was leaving him he said, "Brother Wilson, this is the end of an unprofitable life. I am reconciled to my fate, and will soon be at rest. I only regret leaving Nannie (his wife) alone in the world, but I realize that she will soon follow after me." I would say to the dear companion, Weep not as those who have no hope. May the rich blessings of the graces of the Spirit of almighty God attend you through life's career, and comfort you in the hour of death with the same comfort that your dear husband was comforted when he passed this stage of existence. There are only a few more days of disappointment, weeping and bereavement, then the joyful summons will come, Child, your Father calls, come home.

Funeral services were conducted at his home in Banks, by Elder B. J. Wilson, who was his pastor for twenty-three years. His body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Banks, Alabama, the following day.

Written by his humble pastor, who is a deep sympathizer.

B. J. WILSON.

Brother **W. M. Heard** was born in Newton County, Ga., September 29th, 1849. He united with the church at Holly Spring, May 2nd, 1891, and was baptized by Elder William Adams. He was married to Miss Alice Thompson November 27th, 1898. They had no children. He died at his residence in Covington, Ga., very suddenly, of heart failure, May 28th, 1923, making his stay on earth 73 years, 7 months and 29 days. Brother Wilks (as he was called) was the youngest and last one of the Heard family, nine in all, and all grown: six sons and three daughters. One son was killed, or died, in the Civil War. The rest have died since the war. This family was noted for its high moral standing and honesty, and stood high in the community and county in which they lived. They were all strong in the Old Baptist faith. It has been my pleasure to

know brother Wilks for thirty-five years, and was my pleasure to be with him on a trip to the World's Fair, at Chicago, in 1893. I can truly say I was never with a more pleasant companion. He was strong in the faith of the Old Baptists, and was a reader of the SIGNS for many years. His home was always open to the Old Baptists, and the unworthy writer has had many pleasant times there conversing on spiritual things. We feel that a good man is gone, but feel our loss is his eternal gain. May the God of all grace bless his dear companion in her lonely home of grief and sorrow. She was certainly a true wife to him. Although she is of a different order than her husband, yet I feel she is hoping and trusting in the same God he did, and he can pour the oil of his grace into her heart, and enable her to say with one of old, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Brother Heard's body was buried in the cemetery at Covington, after services conducted at the residence by the unworthy writer; from the last clause of the twenty-third verse of the sixth chapter of Romans. Prayer was offered by the Methodist minister, Mr. Dillard. May the good Lord be with his companion, nieces and nephews, and enable them to trust in the same God he trusted in, is my prayer.

R. L. COOK.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

J. I. Foster, Texas, $1.00; "A Friend," N. J., $2.00; W. H. Wicks, Md., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

The Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet with the Sulphur Creek Church, at Nesika Lewis Co., Wash., on Friday before the second Sunday in August, 1923. Those coming by train will be met at Morton, Wash., on Thursday; Morton being a station on the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul R. R., running out from Tacoma. Should any one wish to go out on Friday a stage leaves Morton at 7 a. m., and at 1 o'clock p. m.

SONORA A. HESS, Clerk.

Please give notice in the SIGNS the old Trinity River Association will hold her session this year with Salem Church, Cleburne, Johnson County, Texas, beginning Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1923, and continuing three days. All friends, and lovers of the Lord Jesus Christ, are cordially invited to attend. If the Old School Baptists ever needed a time of coming together in the faith of God's elect people it is now.

ASA HOWARD.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church, of southern California, meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m., corner of Park Ave. and Fifth St., Riverside, Cal. A cordial greeting awaits all lovers of the truth who feel they can afford to associate with us.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.
CLAREMONT, Cal.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

CHURCH NOTICE.

To our beloved brethren and friends, who may desire to visit the Cedar Creek Church,

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE

we have changed our place of meeting from Sellwood (Portland) Oregon, to Oregon City, Oregon. Day and hour will be the same: fourth Sunday in each month, services beginning at 10:30 a. m., with lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND LATER WRITINGS

OF

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., June 16, 1923.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—I have an inclination to jot down a few thoughts that have been running through my mind of late; I dare not say an inspiration, as that sounds too sacred a word for me to use. Whether I shall be enabled by the Holy Spirit to write anything that will be of interest to the people I address is for them to decide. I do not propose to tell anything new, not something that you know nothing about, it is an old story, that is inexhaustible, so you must not expect too much from me. You know that small boats must keep near the shore while larger ones may venture more. I must acknowledge that I dread the task, but something urges me on. I know my weakness, my imperfections, and I fear the carnal mind will rise up and entangle my thoughts. I fear a desire to please the flesh. At present that is not my intention; my desire is to hew to the line, and not to stop to see where the chips are going to fall. I know there is a God who was able to speak the various planets into existence, and gave them their place in this vast universe, and gave them their course, and he had no counselor; he needed none, no one to guide him. He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. If we have such a God to guide us, why should we fear? He guides our every thought, and we cannot even think a good thought without him. He guides our footsteps, without which guidance we are liable to fall into some pitfall, or quagmire, so we are never independent of him, and need his guardian care every moment of our lives. I am telling you these things just as if you did not know them before, but if you did not know them you could not say amen to them. I have no doubt that you have had some of these feelings yourselves, and can say amen to them; if you have not, either you or I are deceived. I know it is possible for me to deceive you, but it is impossible for me to deceive the great God of the universe. I know I often do things that are contrary to his holy and divine will, which shows what we are liable to do when left to ourselves. If I am what I hope I am he will not let me go so far astray that he cannot bring me back into the fold. Then how ashamed we are that we should go so far from the road that leads to

everlasting life. My prayer is that he will keep me steadfast, and will still guide me in that narrow path that leads to eternal life, that he will give me a will to do his holy and righteous will. When I look back over my past life, and see what a crooked road I have come, I feel ashamed of myself, for it is full of sin all the way along, and mine has been a very unrighteous life. Fifty-five years ago, when my sister died, Elder Purington preached the funeral sermon. I was the only one of my parents' five children left, and he said I was spared for some wise purpose. I have failed to see the wisdom in it, although it was wise, even if I could not see it, as God makes no mistakes; it is all for some wise purpose, but what puzzles me is why should I be permitted to remain here lo these many years? I am now in my eighty-second year, and I see no change for the better, if anything worse; I do not feel fit to live, nor fit to die, so you see what a dilemma I am in. If it were not for the rich mercy which is the only hope for the saints of his choice, I would give up in despair; but I could not give up if I wanted to, for I do not hold on to that hope which is the only salvation of a poor undeserving sinner like me, it holds me; all I can do is to praise and adore his holy name. You know the ship does not hold the anchor, but just the reverse: the anchor holds the ship; so with me, I do not hold the hope, but the hope holds me. The great question with me is, Am I one of those unworthy mortals who it is holding? I hope I am. I too often have doubts and fears that I am not; I can only hope. If that hope is destroyed I am surely lost. What a dreadful thought to meditate upon.

I hear there is a commission about to be, or has been, appointed to rewrite the Bible. I suppose they intend to correct some of the mistakes the Lord made when it was written. What a botch of it they will make, but let them go on, give them rope enough and they will hang themselves. I contend the Bible was once written by the inspiration of God, and cannot be rewritten, as God makes no mistakes. I suppose that if it is undertaken they will write it so it will be more in conformity with the carnal mind, and with the wisdom of the wise men of the present day, and not so antiquated with this enlightened religious world. But this is a subject not worth considering by the saints of the most high God, so it is best to drop it. I have troubles enough, which grieve me, without meddling with outside matters which do not concern me, or that I have no interest in. The children of God have their own troubles to contend with, which the world knows nothing of, nor are we able to explain, nor is it worth while to attempt it. In my meditations I am led to hymn 1218, which appears to fit my case:

"A few more days on earth to spend,
And all my toils and cares shall end,
And I shall see my God and Friend,
And praise his name on high;
No more to sigh, or shed a tear,
No more to suffer pain or fear,
But God, and Christ, and heaven appear
Unto the raptured eye."

You can read the whole hymn, it is good, and just suits my case, and I have no doubt does many others. It seems as if I have written much, and said nothing; as if I had aimed at the substance and only hit the shadow; I have not the ability to write upon this subject, but I can only hint at it. I hope you can see what I am trying to get at, and will make all due allowances for my insufficiency and shortcomings, and will spread the mantle of charity over all mistakes, and attribute them to the flesh, for you know that is

weak. When we go out on a clear night and gaze upward and behold with wonder and amazement the millions of planets placed there we wonder as to how they all got there, and what power holds them there, and gives them their course. I know your answer before you tell me: The power of God does the whole work. Nothing ever goes wrong with his work; no cogs to slip; no belts to get out of order; everything is perfect. God is the author of everything. He is the author and finisher of every good and perfect gift that is bestowed upon us from day to day. Are we mindful of that fact? I fear not; we are too negligent and careless. It is easy to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done, when things are going our way, but let afflictions and persecutions overtake us, do we say the same thing then? It is then hard to say, but these sad afflictions are necessary to the well-being of our souls; they are to try our faith, to sift us from the chaff, as the wheat is sifted, so we should at all times be ready for the sifting, if it is possible. I know this is a difficult task; in fact, I do not know where or how to begin; if I am ever to be prepared it must be done by the God of heaven and earth, for I see no other possible way it can be done.

It appears as if I have written enough for the present, and as I am about to close this article I will ask my friends to be lenient with me in passing judgment upon it, as I know it is like the writer, very imperfect. It will not bear a very minute inspection, for it is too full of self. I must admit that self is very much interested in this case. A poem said to have been written upon the wall of his cell by a maniac is as follows:

"Could I with ink the ocean fill,
Were all the world a parchment made,
Were every reed on earth a quill,
And every man a scribe by trade,
To write the love of God alone
Would drain that ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky."

I will now close by wishing all the saints of God a loving farewell. I can make no distinction, when I say all. A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all, as I feel to say I am the least of saints, and chief of sinners.

C. S. FETTER.

HISTORICAL SKETCHES.

THE one hundredth anniversary of the Harris Spring Primitive Baptist Church, one of the churches composing the Yellow River Association, was held in August, 1922. The meeting-house is located in the county of Newton, in the state of Georgia, not far from the town of Social Circle. Elder Robert L. Cook, the pastor, was chosen Moderator. The meeting opened with prayer by Elder J. D. Curtis, followed by a discourse from Elder James M. Adams, who called attention to the points of the Bible doctrine for which the church has stood during its century of existence. In the afternoon there were first read the constitution and the decorum of the church. The original charter members in the organization of the church were not many, but the Lord added to their number by baptism until the membership rose to considerably over a hundred. Elder Joel Colley was the first pastor, and continued so for thirty years. The second pastor was Elder Isaac Hamby, who served for many years. The third pastor was Elder William Adams, father of the present Elder James M. Adams. The next pastor was Elder J. T. Jordan, and the present pastor is Elder R. L. Cook. Only five pastors have served the church since it came into existence one hundred years ago. The church record shows that peace has reigned al-

most continually, except in 1837, when the trouble arose over the question of foreign missions, and when it was said that the heathen were dying and being lost for lack of the gospel and money. Elder Colley went to one of the conventions, and on his return reported that it reminded him of the worm with a thousand legs. The majority of the church sustained the pastor in his opposition to missionary societies, and stood with him in defense of the old doctrine of salvation by grace. Just there is where this church stands to-day; on the ground of free grace, and grace alone. Elders Joseph L. Purington, of Maine, and William L. Beebe, of New York, were members of this church in the fifties. They ordained a colored preacher, Berry Tuggle, an able and prominent preacher among the people of his race. As many of the northern associations are in correspondence with the Yellow River Association, they will doubtless be interested in these few shreds of information concerning their sister church in the south.

THE one hundredth anniversary of Jack's Creek Primitive Baptist Church, one of the churches of the Oconee Association, held its one hundredth anniversary April 12th, 1923. The meeting-house is located about eight miles from Monroe, the county-seat of Walton County, Georgia. Every church of the Oconee Association was represented at this meeting. The meeting was opened by Elder W. L. Allen, followed by Elders J. D. Curtis and J. M. Adams, who dwelt upon the doctrine which has been preached in its pulpit during all of the one hundred years. The record of the constitution of the church was read by Elder J. M. Adams, who had been clerk of the church for thirty years, the present clerk being brother W. H. Robison. Thirteen members were in the original organization of the church. The doctrine to which they subscribed themselves was: 1st. We believe in the one true and living God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and these three are one God. 2nd. We believe in particular, unconditional election, in effectual calling and in the final perseverance of the saints through grace to glory. 3rd. We believe in the fall of Adam and of all his posterity in him. 4th. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. The first pastor was Elder Jeremiah Reeves, who served for two years, being followed by Elder Joel Colley, who served for twenty-five years. In 1837 there was this resolution: "That the many speculating schemes on the part of benevolent societies, so-called, are not authorized by the word of God." This brought about a separation. Out of one hundred and nineteen members at that time twenty-seven went over to the Missionaries. After Elder Colley, the pastors of the church in the order of their service were as follows: Elders G. W. Malcom, Joseph L. Purington, U. M. Almand, I. S. Almand, John G. Eubanks, William Adams, John R. Chandler, William Adams again, M. F. Hurst, John R. Chandler again. The present pastor is Elder Robert L. Cook. During its one hundred years this church has set apart three preachers to the work of the ministry: G. W. Malcom, Gresham Herring and James M. Adams. The meeting was brought to a close with the hymn, "Grace, 'tis a charming sound." Inasmuch as the Oconee Association is in correspondence with the associations in the north, it is believed that this sketch of one of the Oconee churches will be read with interest.

***

RANDOLPH, Maine, June 15, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have been requested by sister Bonnie Chick to write my experience, and this morning I will make the attempt. If I were to relate it in detail it would make too lengthy an article, as indeed it may prove to be. On the twelfth day of March, 1870, I was born, conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity like all of Adam's race, but I am unable to go back to a time when I did not think that God was a God of power, and went to him in prayer, even in my childhood. I looked upon him as one who could relieve distress of mind in times of trouble; not only that, but could remove the trouble itself. I think I was a traveler even then. I awoke one night crying, and mother asked me the cause, and I said, "I dreamed I was in hell," so I think these vital things were on my mind at times. I attended the meetings held monthly by the late Elder Hiram Campbell, going with my parents, who nearly always went. I would listen, and think I understood some of the things he said; then he would pass into deeper waters and I understood not. Thus I grew up to young womanhood. I enjoyed my young friends and our social gatherings, which were few, living in the country. After a time I began to attend the conference meetings, as we called them, often taking my aunt, the much gifted and lamented late Louise Moody, along with mother and myself. These little gatherings were enjoyed by me, especially if some one would relate an experience. Finally in the year 1895, while attending the association at Bowdoinham, Maine, the late Elder Beebe was preaching, and I was so wrought upon I could scarcely stay in the house. I was in the depths, the billows and waves of almighty God seemed to swallow me up; I suffered agony. I suppose the sermon was good sound doctrine, right to the point, as I remember my dear aunt Louise, sitting ahead of us, looked around and smiled; that smile cut me so. She could smile and I was suffering. I little realized that death preceded life. The dear ministers of God, how kind they were. Elder Chick would talk with me, and I remember Elder Beebe said, It would not be natural for you, a young lady, to be attracted by an elderly man like myself. Oh, I loved them, and they saw it, I suppose, but I could not yet go home. After the association I was away from home (teaching), but my mind was on these things, and I wrote to Elder Keene one or more letters, and he, as he always did, talked and wrote to me very kindly, giving encouragement. But the time was drawing near, even at hand, when Christ was to be revealed as my Savior. One night after retiring, and before I had fallen asleep, I beheld the dear Savior as plainly as I ever saw an object with my natural eyes. My heart went out to him in much love and adoration; I felt I could clasp him in my arms. Oh, it was heaven below my Redeemer to know, and even then while I was yet beholding him the tempter said, It is natural love. O, my brother, how many trials come even with our first love. But I had seen my Savior, and Satan could not make me believe I had not. I was tossed about like a ship in a storm, but came before the church in October, 1895, was received, and baptized by Elder F. W. Keene the following day, October 13th. How ignorant I was. I talked with my cousin, Mrs. James E. Hubbard, who was baptized the same day. I told her I did not feel I loved the brethren so much, my love was all for the Savior, and she said her love was just the oppo-

site, her love was all for the people. We did not seem to realize it was all one and the same. Directly I was led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, but he can go only as far as is for our good and the glory of our God. I feel I have had much of the presence of our God in the years that have followed. In times of trouble he has been an ever present help. On the death of my dear father, in 1901, when I was about to enter the room and behold him in his last sleep, it seemed I could not, and yet I wished to do so. These words came, Though He slay me, yet will I trust in him. Yes, we do trust in him; we have nowhere else to go. "Thou hast the words of eternal life." Many experiences of His love and mercy have I had along the journey. One precious season was given me when beholding the rainbow. It seems such a condescension that the God of heaven should place it in the heavens, thus keeping in constant remembrance his promise to us poor weak, sinful creatures. On one occasion when ill, and not knowing but I might depart, I saw a great gulf between myself and God, such that I could not cross over, then I saw how the gulf was spanned: by the God-man Christ Jesus. Many, many times he has come to me and taught me lessons by the way. In the year 1898 I was married, and in the year 1901 a little son came to me. As I watched him grow to boyhood and young manhood, I loved him almost to idolatry. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." When at the tender age of seventeen years he joined the Navy, and it seemed my heart would break; but his mind was set upon it, and we found that our persuasion was of no avail. As I realized he was going, and I watched his dear form as he walked away, it seemed I could not endure the parting. Oh what I suffered cannot be told. I knew it was the will of our God. The thought came in the days that followed, Would I change it if I could? and my soul answered, No, let God be true, let his word remain unchanged. I could suffer, but if one jot or tittle could be changed everything could be overthrown. Thus He comforted me, and I lived on. Only anxious, loving mothers can know what I endured. The World War was at last over. Days of suspense are hard to bear, for seven long weeks at one time we heard nothing, then came a letter from far away Italy. Well, the Lord watched over him and brought him safely back to me; at the end of two years and four months he received his honorable discharge, and came home. Thus we are taught by our loving Father that underneath are the everlasting arms. How can I sink with such a prop as our eternal God? In my life he is all and in all to me; to him I am looking for help. As I see the clouds gathering about me I know when the storm breaks in its fury he will be there to comfort and to save. Though in the world, I am not of it. I am glad God has a remnant according to the election of grace, so I am not alone.

The Whitefield Church has been without a regular pastor since the death of Elder Campbell some years ago. Elder F. W. Keene used to visit us and give us from his store-house which God filled so abundantly, but now he is gone from Maine to serve elsewhere, and we have our association only once in two years, when some visiting brother comes to us and we feast on the things of our Father's kingdom. As you know, the association is held alternately at Whitefield and at Bowdoinham, so we who are able go there also. Here in my home town, Randolph, my mother and I are the only Old

School Baptists, but in Gardiner there are a few members. I frequently meet my dear sister, Mabel Weeks, and whether it be on the street or sitting with her in her car, we always have some word to say about that blessed union. I feel the Lord has led me through deep waters and dark valleys, where the darkness has encompassed me about; and he has also led me to the mountain top, where I have, as it were, viewed the promised land. I find myself still a child looking to and asking my Father for help. I crave his presence, but my nature shrinks from the raging storms which precede the sunshine of his presence.

I have tried to tell a few things, but, as every child of God knows, it is a daily experience, and is known only by Him with whom we have to do. The people of God are very dear to me. I not only love them, but those they love seem near to me.

"Not from the dust affliction grows,
Nor troubles rise by chance;
Yet we are born to cares and woes,
A sad inheritance."

Now, dear brother, if you consider this of sufficient interest to my Father's family you may give it a place in the SIGNS.

Through the blood and righteousness of our dear Savior only, I am your sister,

NELLIE M. PALMER.

MARSHALL, Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—The following was written by sister Fletcher in her Testament, and I am sending it with her obituary; perhaps you will think it worthy a place in the dear old SIGNS.

This is written by request of her daughter.

HATTIE L. WALKER.

DECEMBER 12, 1920.

I AM willing to leave all in thy hands, for thou art too good to be unkind. My hope is in thee. In 1859, when I was a child, I went to the Northern Methodist meeting one night, and a venerable old grey-haired man was preaching. As I entered he read his text, Matthew v. 9, and I felt as if my heart was pierced. When he invited me to come forward, I did not go that night, but the next night when the invitation came I felt I could not remain in my seat, so I went forward, and a voice seemed to say, He that confesseth me before men, him will I confess before my Father in heaven. All these years has my hope remained. I am nearly seventy-six, and have had a great many trials and tribulations, but the Lord has sustained and kept me up to this time, and faith is in him that he will keep me to the end. I do so feel my nothingness. Oh that I could praise him for his goodness to the children of men. I joined the Methodists twice, but was not satisfied, and often had glorious hope in the Lord. My mother was an Old Baptist, and when I would hear them preach I would become more dissatisfied, so I finally went forward in 1872 and joined them. I have heard them preach when I would think that if Paul were here he could not do any better, for they give God all glory and power on earth and in heaven. It was my delight to go to my church and hear my blessed Master exalted. I would go on horseback, with my baby in my lap, and the good book says, He that waits on the Lord shall mount up on eagles' wings, shall run and not be weary, shall walk and not faint. Oh how often have I experienced it. I have had a sad life in the last years. There was trouble in our church, and it was broken up, but God will comfort all who trust in him. For what is man that thou visitest him?

I will try to jot down some time a little more of my unprofitable life.

MARY W. FLETCHER.

(*See obituary on page 238.*)

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1923.

EDITOR

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
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GENESIS XLIV. 12.

"AND the cup was found in Benjamin's sack."

The sons of Jacob had already been down to Egypt for corn, and had left Simeon there bound and in prison. When the corn was gone their father said unto them, "Go again, and buy us a little food." Judah assured his father that they could not possibly go unless Benjamin accompanied them. Jacob hesitated, for he had lost Joseph, and Benjamin, the only remaining child of his beloved wife Rachel, was very dear to him, but at last he bade them take of the fruit and carry it down to the man as a present, also said he, Take double money in your hand, and the money that ye brought again in the mouth of your sacks carry it again in your hand, and take Benjamin, and Jacob concluded, "If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved." They returned to Egypt with Benjamin, and when Joseph saw them he commanded the ruler of his house to slay and make ready, for these men shall dine with me at noon. The brethren were filled with fear because they were brought into Joseph's house, thinking that Joseph sought occasion against them. They communed with the steward of Joseph's house regarding the money that was returned in their sacks, but he said, "Peace be to you! fear not." When Joseph came home they bowed themselves to him to the earth, and he lifted up his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his own mother's son, and said, "Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son." Joseph made haste, for his bowels did yearn upon his brother, he sought where to weep, and entered into his chamber and wept there. After he had washed his face and refrained himself, he commanded his servants to set on bread. His brethren were then seated before him, the first-born according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth, and the men marvelled one at another, and Joseph sent messes unto them from before him, but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of theirs. Then Joseph commanded his steward to fill their sacks with food, as much as they could carry, to put every man's money in his sack's mouth, and to put his silver cup in the sack's mouth of the youngest, as well as his corn money. When they were gone out of the city, and not yet far off, Joseph commanded the steward, "Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good?" He overtook them and spake unto them these same words. Then took they down every man his sack to the ground and opened every man his sack. The search began at the eldest and left at the youngest, "and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack."

We shall here cease to follow the narrative, as our intention is to write of the cup in its spiritual significance, also of

the characters with whom this cup is found. Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, bare his two sons: Joseph first, and then Benjamin. Jacob loved Joseph more than all his sons, and Benjamin, being the youngest, was also greatly beloved, for it is written, Jacob's life was bound up in the lad's life. Joseph was therefore Benjamin's elder brother, and Joseph being a lively type of Christ, Benjamin to our understanding is a wonderful type of the church in the gospel dispensation. The steward is the servant of Joseph, and represents the gospel ministers, who are stewards of the manifold grace of God. It was the steward who ministered to the brethren when in distress over their returned money. He said, "Peace be to you! fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks." He it was also who searched the sacks, he stood in Joseph's stead and spoke the words given him by Joseph. He also declared that they had the divining cup, and they denied it, for the thing was impossible with them; so wherever there are those whose iniquities encompass them around, they stand before their Judge self-condemned, depending entirely upon the mercy of him with whom they have to do. Such in their confession deny that they have the cup. The cup represents the sorrows, travail and separation which Joseph experienced while passing through the afflictions that were his lot according to God's purpose. The cup therefore was a type of the cup of our Lord Jesus Christ. He came down to the Egypt of this world where he was crucified, was sold by his brethren, and at Gethsemane he said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." He fell on his face and prayed, saying, "Oh my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

"How bitter that cup, no heart can conceive,
Which he drank quite up that sinners might live."

As Joseph partook of his cup he divined the very things transpiring in his life to be according to the purpose of God revealed to him in the two dreams given him long before. It was in a sense of loneliness he partook of that cup. It could not be shared with the Egyptians, he was alone. As our Lord partook of his cup, he divined and could say, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." He had a full cup. "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." This blessed Person is none other than our Elder Brother, though we knew it not. We have seen him pierced, and we mourn for him; when brought into judgment, we expect chains and death, and say, What shall we speak? We know not what to say nor how to clear ourselves. The brethren on their second visit for corn dined with Joseph, and it is written, "Joseph made haste; for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there." Whilst here on earth our dear Redeemer ate with publicans and sinners, and his bowels of love yearned over them. Often in the secret chamber of his solitary life he offered supplication with strong cries and tears for them, and for all his brethren. It is said that Joseph took and sent messes unto all of them from before him, but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of their's. The least notice or favor of our Lord to a poor sinner is not according to good works, but according to his love,

and love is the fulfilling of the law. While the brethren representing the Jews received the law, yet Benjamin (the gospel church) received five times as much, which signifies a fulfilled law. With those who are born of the same mother (Jerusalem above) the cup is found. They say it is not in their sack or life, yet they are grieved for the afflictions of Joseph; they are vile, sinful. When they would do good, evil is present with them. This is the cup. Yet when it is shown to them they tremble, for they fear it is stolen, that they are taking that which belongs to another. They feel God-forsaken, are fearful of death, offer supplications with strong cries and tears, they hate sin, but find it in their members, and are made to cry out, Not my will, but thine be done. As the steward, or preacher, by the Holy Spirit's guidance searches, the cup is found, and it is in Benjamin's sack; that is, in his who is the smallest and least in the family. There is little Benjamin with their Ruler partaking of the same cup. "And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders." The rest of the brethren could return to their father, but Benjamin shall dwell in safety by him. Only in a realizing sense of our own weakness is there safety, and then we know we have no righteousness, nevertheless our near kinsman Jesus the Lord shall cover us with his righteousness all the day long, and we shall dwell between his shoulders. What a safe place for poor weak sinners: between his shoulders. He carries the lambs in his bosom. It is also written, "The government shall be upon his shoulder." As partakers of his cup, though babes, they yet divine and see things that are hid from the wise and prudent. They clearly discern what holy men of old wrote as moved by the Holy Ghost. To the Jews under the legal covenant it was not revealed, but it is revealed unto us. In these things we have fellowship with God and are partakers of his cup. Not one shall come short of his glory, for if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him. The father's life was bound up in the life of the child. Jesus, our Elder Brother, is God-man, therefore in him God's life is bound up in our life. As Joseph made himself known unto his brethren, so does our Lord Jesus make himself known with the glory of a risen Lord, who like as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. He showed to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus that his going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it. His blessed presence gives joy and gladness, and the five changes of raiment given Benjamin are but a faint type of the blessed raiment with which, from time to time, his bride, the gospel church, is adorned.

G. R.

NO MORE EVERLASTING TASKS.

OUR supply of the "Everlasting Task for Arminians" is exhausted, and as we do not expect to have any more of them, will be unable to fill future orders for the little book.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER J. B. Bowden has changed his address from Waring, Texas, to Center Point, Texas, and requests that his correspondents address him at the latter place.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Deacon P. M. Sherwood.)

The Delaware Association, in session with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster Co., Pa., May 23rd, 24th and 25th, 1923, to the churches and associations with which we correspond, sendeth greetings.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We are again, by the goodness and mercy of God, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift, permitted to address you with this our annual Letter, and we pray that our coming together is in the name of Jesus, and that we shall be brought to realize he is in our midst, and that his ministering servants who are with us shall be made strong in the Lord in declaring his blessed Word, that it may be in demonstration and in power, and to the comfort and edification of the saints. In much weakness, and feeling sensibly our need and dependence on him who is the God of our salvation for strength and wisdom, we will with such ability as God gives call your attention to the following Scripture: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."—Eph. i. 3–6. You all who are familiar with and love to read the holy Scriptures know that these words are a portion of the epistle of the inspired apostle Paul to the church at Ephesus, written as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, which was with reverence and godly fear. Paul was a chosen vessel of God, and yet while a vile and zealous persecutor of the church of Christ he was as one born out of due time, called of God to be an apostle and to do the work of the ministry, and to preach the gospel of the grace of God with much assurance and with great comfort. He said, "For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me," according to the will and power of God. Paul was now willing to preach with love the things he once hated to those of like precious faith: the doctrine of free grace, election and predestination, justification and the resurrection of the saints from the dead through a crucified and risen Savior. Paul says he, being the least of the apostles, labored more abundantly than they all, as in writing to the church at Corinth he reproves them as to their disorderly conduct, and says, "I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also." Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool.) I am more; in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft, in journeyings often, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside these things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. (2 Cor. x. 1.) In having th

care of all the churches, and as an apostle, he could not be present as oft as desired, and therefore had occasion to send Timothy, Titus and other faithful ministers to visit the various churches, and occasion to frequently write the churches concerning their welfare, and to exhort them and reprove them in love, and to rejoice with them in that they were prospered of the Lord, and to comfort them with the same comfort wherewith he himself had been comforted of the Lord. Now to the church at Ephesus, as we have called your attention, he writes of those blessed truths which belong to all of like precious faith. Though Paul being absent in the flesh, in writing to the churches he was with them in the Spirit, and now he yet speaketh the same living words of God, which Scripture is for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope, that we may with one mind and one mouth glorify God for his mercy. Believing we are the blessed characters addressed by Paul, we feel that we do bless God through the gift of his dear Son, our Elder Brother, who has redeemed us by his precious blood from sin and death, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. Christ is in the church and the church is in Christ, and the church, being the body of Christ, it is in him and through him we are blessed with all spiritual blessings; and the heavenly places in Christ are in his body, the church, "for it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell."—Col. i. 19. Jesus is the fountain of living waters, and it is from him that all spiritual blessings flow, and often when the thirsty souls find this Fountain is when they are made to sit together in heavenly places, the church, in the assembly of the saints, and Jesus in their midst. The apostle Peter adds his testimony by saying, "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." The apostle continues giving some instructions in addition, saying, "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

In conclusion, we wish to use the words of the apostle, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you."—Phil. iv. 8, 9.

JOHN G. EUBANKS, Moderator.

J. B. MILLER, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Black Rock Church, Baltimore County, Maryland, May 16th, 17th and 18th, 1923, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is with a feeling of humility, and, we trust, of thankfulness, that we have met together in love and fellowship to receive your messengers and messages of love, which to us is an evidence that we are led and kept by the same God, who is above every creature, and to praise him who was exalted a Prince and a Savior to give repentance unto Israel. The preaching has been good, the theme being Christ, and him crucified, and telling of that glorious subject that God is truth, and outside of him there is no truth, the proclamation of which does honor, exalt and glorify him in his love and mercy in the salvation of his people. God's people everywhere are a believing people, and believe that salvation is of the Lord. We feel that we have been greatly blessed in this meeting, and that the season has been one of refreshing.

Our next session is to be held with the Harford Church, Harford County, Maryland, at the usual time next year.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.
F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.
E. A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

The Delaware Association in session, assembled with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster Co., Pa., to the associations and churches with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is with much pleasure we meet and receive your Minutes and messengers, as they come to us in love, and your ministering servants come in the Spirit of the Lord and preach the gospel of salvation by grace to all, according to the election and predestination of God as chosen in Christ Jesus. which is to our comfort and edification. We feel we are made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. We greatly desire the continuance of your correspondence and visits from your ministering servants and messengers.

The next session of this Association is appointed to be held with the Salem Church, in Philadelphia, Pa., May, 1924.

J. G. EUBANKS, Moderator.
J. B. MILLER, Clerk.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, it has pleased the almighty God to remove from his earthly labors, and from our midst, our dearly beloved brother and pastor, **Elder B. F. Coulter,** and

WHEREAS, we desire to give expression to our love for him, who faithfully labored among us, and earnestly contended for the faith once delivered unto the saints, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we desire to bow in humble submission to our God, who is full of mercy and can do no wrong.

RESOLVED, that in the death of our dearly beloved brother and pastor, we have sustained a great loss, and express our deep sorrow that we shall see his face no more.

RESOLVED, that we fervently and earnestly pray that all those who mourn his death may be sustained by sovereign grace, especially his heart-stricken and bereaved family, to whom we extend our deepest and most affectionate sympathy.

RESOLVED, that a copy of these resolutions be sent to his widow, our dear and precious sister Coulter, and to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Approved and adopted at a church meeting held July 1st, 1923, of the Salem Old School Baptist Church, at Philadelphia.

T. C. KOCH, Church Clerk.

WHEREAS, it has pleased almighty God, according to his all-wise purpose, to take from the militant to his happy and eternal home our beloved and faithful brother, **Elder John Clark,** Halcottville, N. Y., of the Lexington Association, who for many years served the churches in his section, and was an able and firm defender of the faith and order of the house of God, be it

Resolved, that we, the Baltimore Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, bow in humble submission to his holy will, and that we spread this resolution upon our Minutes, and that a copy be sent to our dear sister Clark. We loved and esteemed Elder Clark, as we do all who are made ministers of God. He has gone to his reward and his works do follow him. Amen.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.

E. A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Mollie Fletcher, wife of Benton Fletcher, entered into rest July 1st, 1923 Her maiden name was Nelson. She was born February 9th, 1845. December 19th, 1867, she was married to Benton Fletcher, and of that union were born six children: four sons and two daughters. Two of the sons died in infancy, or early childhood. Two sons, Word and Gilber, and two daughters, Mrs. Eula Klipstein and Mrs. Mary Hayes, are left to mourn their loss, but, as we believe, her eternal gain. The subject of this sketch was well known to the writer, and to know her was to love and esteem her. She was baptized and admitted into the fellowship of the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church at Upper Broad Run in early life. She lived to see the church pass out of existence, most of its members having been called home, and the scattered few too feeble to attend. It was a constant source of regret that there was no preaching of the kind she loved within her reach, but the Bible and SIGNS were still left to her, and these she kept always near, and never wearied of talking of the wonders of redeeming love, and the glory and sweetness of salvation by grace. She was quite helpless for two years before the end came, but was lovingly and tenderly nursed and cared for in every way by her daughter Eula. Indeed it has never been my privilege to see a more devoted daughter. There was no minister of her belief available, so a Missionary Baptist conducted a short and impressive service, and we laid her to rest in the Warrenton Cemetery, there to await the final resurrection, when this mortal shall put on immortality and this corruptible shall put on incorruption.

A loving friend, and sister in hope,

HATTIE L. WALKER.

Brother **M. F. Yancey** was born in north Georgia November 18th, 1858, died March 16th, 1923. He was united in wedlock to Miss Matie Smith March 14th, 1880, and to them eleven children were born, seven sons and four daughters. All are living and married but the two youngest sons. Brother Yancey joined the Primitive Baptist Church somewhere in southern Alabama several years ago, but the church denied our doctrine and went off with the limited or conditional side. After some years brother Yancey came to Arkansas, thinking he would never inquire after them any more, but soon found that where his treasure was there was his heart, also soon found the people he loved, then he wanted a home with them, so on Saturday before the third Sunday in July, 1920, he united with the Old Predestinarian Baptists at New Hope, Arkansas, and sister Yancey just one month later, and was baptized by the writer. As I led her down into the water she said to me, This is one thing that has bothered me more than twenty years. Sister Yancey preceded brother Yancey to the grave. She died August 2nd, 1922. While they were permitted to live but a short time after finding what they believed to be the sound and orderly church, I do not believe I have ever seen any enjoy hearing the gospel preached more than brother and sister Yancey did. It was a pleasure to visit their home, and they delighted to have the brethren and sisters visit them and talk of the goodness and mercy of God. They were firm believers in the predestination of all things, and salvation alone by grace. They were much devoted to each other, and were surely joined together by the Lord. They were laid side by side in the cemetery at New Hope Church, there to await the redemption of their bodies. The writer conducted the funeral services, using as a text Romans viii. 21-23. The church will miss them much, yet their sorrow is mixed with joy, for they are free from sin, which causes all of our suffering. May it please our heavenly Father to bless their children with grace, that they may be able to follow their example.

J. H. RAWLS.

Sarah Catherine Dudley, daughter of W. L. and Elizabeth Junkins, was born January 8th, 1854, died June 17th, 1923, aged 69 years, 5 months and 9 days. She was married to John L. Dudley June 8th, 1871, and to this union were born eleven children, three of them having preceded her to the great beyond. She leaves to mourn their loss a husband and eight children: William T. Dudley, of Mulkeytown, Mrs. Effie Brunner, of Sacramento, Calif., Mrs. Laura Newton, of Hurst, Ill., J. M. Dudley, of St. Johns, Ill., Charles Dudley, of Ina, Ill., Mrs. Dollie Duncan, of Royalton, Ill., Roy L. Dudley, of Royalton, Ill., Clyde Dudley, of Mulkeytown; twenty-four grandchildren, three brothers: G. T. and H. L. Junkins, of Sesser, Ill., two sisters: Mrs. Clara Short, of Mulkeytown, and Mrs. C. T. Greenwood, of Garvin, Okla., and a host of relatives and friends. Mrs. Dudley's faith in Christ never wavered, and her trust was all in him. She remarked recently that while it is possible to deceive men, we cannot deceive God, for he knows what we are. She was a faithful wife and mother, and nothing seemed to make her so

happy as to have all her children together in her home. How glad we are we can say truthfully she was a good neighbor, and one who believed in living in peace with her neighbors. She will be greatly missed by her husband, children, relatives and neighbors. What a consolation to know that Jesus, the lowly Nazarene, who was her Savior, is also our Savior and Friend. When on earth he bore men's burdens, and shared their sorrows. He has not changed, but remains the same unchangeable Friend and Helper. He said of the woman who anointed him, She hath done what she could. We who knew Mrs. Dudley can say of her, She did what she could, and we are assured in our hearts that her Savior and ours will say the same.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Lydia Stewart, N. Y., $3.00; Mrs. Laura R. Elgin, D. C., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

The Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet with the Sulphur Creek Church, at Nesika Lewis Co., Wash., on Friday before the second Sunday in August, 1923. Those coming by train will be met at Morton, Wash., on Thursday; Morton being a station on the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul R. R., running out from Tacoma. Should any one wish to go out on Friday a stage leaves Morton at 7 a. m., and at 1 o'clock p. m.

SONORA A. HESS, Clerk.

Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will hold their sixty-ninth annual session with Spring Creek Church, near Stahl, Adair Co., Mo., commencing on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in August, 1923, and continuing the two following days. All lovers of our beloved Zion, and especially preaching brethren of our faith and order, are cordially invited to meet with us. Those coming by rail will be met on Friday at Novinger and Stahl on the Quincy & K. C. R. R.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator,
Stahl, Missouri.

J. M. CATE, Clerk,
Centerville, Iowa.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held with Big Walnut Creek Church, near Williamstown, Jefferson Co., Kansas, about twenty miles northeast of Topeka, and ten miles west of Lawrence, on the U. P. R. R., to begin on Friday before the second Saturday in September and continue three days (7th, 8th and 9th of September). Lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. For any further information write to or inquire for, Elder L. L. Schenck, Williamstown, Kansas, or address me at 1243 Polk St., Topeka, Kansas.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

The South Arkansas Regular Primitive Baptist Association will convene (the Lord willing) with Pilgrim's Rest Church, at Fordyce, Arkansas, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1923, and continuing three days. All regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists are invited to meet with us, especially ministers. Pilgrim's Rest Church is one-half mile from Cotton Belt Station, and known as the Old Stover Place.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator.
W. C. HORTON, Clerk.

Little Flock Church will no longer hold meetings at Park and 5th Streets, but for the present will hold them at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 949 East 10th Street, Riverside, California. We hope to have a place again soon, and when we do we will appreciate having our notice with you.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

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Dropsy remedy, purely vegetable, removes from one to two gallons of water in a day. Shortness of breath quickly relieved. Cures the worst cases of Dropsy in all its forms, and after being given up by the best doctors to die. Specially efficacious in Dropsy of the Heart. Best and cheapest known remedy, only $1.00 a package, six packages $5.00 by mail postpaid, and free to very poor people who are really unable to pay. Trial package free to any address when name, age, address and symptoms of patient are given, with ten one-cent stamps.

ELDER C. W. ANDERSON.

WITTER, Madison Co., Ark.

I know from my own observation that this is an effective remedy for dropsy, and I take pleasure in recommending it to physicians and patients.

ELDER S. HASSELL.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 91. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1923. NO. 16.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE WEDDING GARMENT.

WHEN Jesus came into Jerusalem and performed the miracles, and the blind and the lame came to him in the temple and he healed them, and the chief priests and the elders saw the wonderful things that he did, and saw the children crying in the temple and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they were sore displeased and asked him by what authority he did these things, and Jesus spake to them in parables, and among other things said, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding." You will recollect the servants at first were not very successful in procuring the guests, and again the king sent forth other servants, with the instructions to tell them which were bidden, "Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage." So these servants went as they were commanded, and gathered together as many as they found, both bad and good, and the wedding was furnished with guests, and when the king came in to see the guests, there was one which had not on the wedding garment, and he said unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment? and he was speechless, and the king ordered his servants to bind him hand and foot and take him away and cast him into outer darkness. You will note there were three requirements necessary in order to attend this feast. First, these guests must be bidden, or chosen, by the king himself. Second, they must be in the highway, or in the way. Third, every guest must have on the wedding garment. You will note that these guests could not be found until the servants were sent into the highways. It is written in Isaiah xxxv. 8, "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called, The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." Then it is evident that these guests were already in this highway which is called the way of holiness, which is the path which no fowl knoweth and which the vulture's eye hath not seen, neither hath the lion's whelps trodden it,

nor the fierce lion passed by it. But these guests were already journeying, they were in the way, and like the certain man who fell among thieves, who beat him and robbed him and left him half dead and the good Samaritan came where he was, bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and put him on his beast and brought him to the inn, and like Saul when he was journeying toward Damascus and he heard the voice calling to him and he fell to the ground and had to be led into Damascus. These guests did not come of themselves, they had to be gathered or brought in. Neither had they done anything to merit being bidden to the feast, for both the bad and the good were there, and they were furnished with a garment (for the occasion) which was not of their own weaving.

What is this wedding garment? How may it be acquired, and how may we be able to discern it from some other garment? We are never clothed with this garment until we are stripped of all the Babylonish garments of self-righteousness and washed pure and white in the blood of the Lamb, and then we are robed in this beautiful garment, which is the righteousness of Christ. For though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. This robe is woven throughout without seam in the mill of tribulation. The groundwork is humility, and it is closely woven, or knit together, by the cords of love, and it is embroidered with the golden threads of faith, hope and charity, and the most beautiful, as well as the greatest, of these is charity. Not charity in an earthly sense, as the giving of gold to hide a multitude of sins, although gold is good in its place, yet all of this precious metal which is in the ore, together with all that has ever been taken out and refined, can never buy one of these wedding garments, for it cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof. The gold and the crystal cannot equal it, and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold. The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold. When once clothed with this beautiful garment, which is incorruptible, it endureth forever, and its beauty never fades, and it will ever admit us to the feast. This was the feast which Solomon called to our attention in his Song, when he said, He brought me to the banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love. But Solomon did not come there of himself, for he says, He brought me to the banqueting-house, and when at the feast where the banner over us is love it is a feast indeed. As the queen of Sheba said of Solomon's house and his table, his servants and his wisdom, which were a type of this kingdom, and this table, and of these servants, the half has not been told, and there was no spirit left in her, she had become as a little child. She was then one of the halt and the lame and the blind, for it is they who are gathered here and made whole, and when seated at this table their lame feet are hidden underneath the table and their imperfections are not seen. The blind are given eyes of faith to see such beauties as natural eyes never beheld. The tired ones who have journeyed find rest; the hungry are fed on the manna and feast upon the Pascal Lamb. It matters not where the table is spread, it is the table of the Lord, and every guest who has this garment on is bidden to the feast by him, and although Paul may call it his table, or Apollos may call it

his table, Paul may plant and Apollos water, but God giveth the increase. Thanks to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, the giving and dispensing of this beautiful garment are not intrusted into the hands of erring mortals such as we, for if it were there is no doubt that many for whom it was intended, and who wear it most graciously, would be stripped of its every vestige. Therefore, before attempting to bind or cast out one of these guests let us first make sure that they have not on the wedding garment. For Jesus said, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him if a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." Woe unto the world because of offences, for offences must needs be, but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh.

This garment is also mentioned in Isaiah lii. 1: Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. But every wearer of this garment has a certain sense of both fear and hope. Of fear as did Paul when he said in 1 Cor. ix. 24–27, "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we are incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself become a castaway." The poet has brought this to our attention in the following lines:

"Did I meet no trials here,
No temptation by the way.
Might I not with reason fear
I should be a castaway?"

Then a sense of hope, as mentioned by Paul in Col. i. 5, 6, "For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven whereof ye heard before in the word of truth of the gospel; which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth." Then we understand that it is by these fruits we shall know them, therefore it is by these fruits we may discern those who have this garment on. What then are these fruits? This question is answered in Gal. v. 22, 23: The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law. If we live in the Spirit let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us be not desirous of vainglory, provoking one another, envying one another. Paul has given us further evidence by which we may discern the wearer of this garment, as this garment is not worn by the dead, but is worn by the living, as we were all dead in trespasses and in sins, and in order to wear this garment we must first pass from death unto life, and Paul says, We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren; and, as Paul says, it is through the hope which is laid up for us that these fruits are brought forth, and as Jesus is the christian's hope, these fruits come to us not of ourselves, but through him, as it is he who hath clothed us with his garment.

"For Jesus is the christian's hope,
Wrought in us by God's power;
It holds the weak believer up
In the distressing hour."

It is this fear and this hope which are given us of the Lord, which saves us

from the fall. May it be appointed unto them who are anointed of the Lord, to preach good tidings unto the meek, that he may send them to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and to open the prisons to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable day of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all that mourn, to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. Therefore awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, that the King who hath chosen these guests, and this Bridegroom, the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely, for whom this feast was prepared, may be glorified in thee, and thou in him.

ALFRED E. TITUS.

TRENTON, N. J.

COTTAGE GROVE, Tenn., Jan. 23, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER CHESTER:—I thought I would write you a few lines this morning. We are certainly having some bad weather, yet it is in the purpose of God, for as he purposeth so shall it be, so it must be just as it is.

In the first chapter and fourteenth verse of Colossians you will find this Scripture: "In whom we have redemption through his blood; even the forgiveness of sins." This word "redemption" means something indeed, for we know what it means in the natural sense of view. For instance, if we have something and we see it is going to be taken from us, and some one steps in and in so doing redeems it and places it in our possession, we know there would be rejoicing with us. Just so with the individual dead in sins, he is ten thousand talents in debt and not one farthing to pay with; no way of ever redeeming himself. Now what needs to be done for him? There must be a reconciliation made, and how is this to be done? There must be a mediator brought in to intervene, so God in his almighty wisdom and purpose sent forth his Son to be the Mediator, giving into his hand all power both in heaven and on the earth, with the power to redeem, and to save them which were lost. But what did he have to undergo in order to carry out the purpose of his Father? He was born into this world having not whereof to lay his head, growing up to manhood preaching the glorious gospel of salvation, the same gospel that he taught his disciples to preach, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. "My counsel," which means, my words. Going on to his betrayal, which he said would be, and not only would be, but that it must be, for what purpose now we see: the purpose of God. Again, this must be in order to fulfill all righteousness, and at the very appointed time which God had set. He was betrayed by a kiss, and by the very one who was to, and not another, because if it had been it would not have been according to God's purpose. He was then taken by the wicked mob, made to bear his own cross, and was nailed to it, and this according to the purpose of his Father. Oh see the precious Son of God there nailed to the rugged cross, see his side pierced with the spear, and see that precious blood running forth from his side. My dear brother, this is that redeeming blood that was spilled for you and for me, if we are not deceived in the matter; and he cried out and said, It is finished; the work

thou gavest me to do is finished; and through this he became the Mediator for us, the interceder, the great Savior of his people, and this through his precious blood and sovereign grace which was given us in Christ Jesus. He did not redeem us a part of the way and leave the balance for us to do, but he made a full and complete atonement, and therefore redeemed us from all sins. He did not say "sin, but "sins." Oh what a wonderful Redeemer, in whom we have redemption and the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. Then no wonder we love to sing the song,

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see."

When we were drinking down sin as the ox doth the water, when we were trampling his mercies under our feet, taking his precious name in vain, caring nothing for his services, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others, even then his ever-reigning grace was with us, around us and over us. He loved us even when we were dead in sins, and quickened us together with Christ (by grace are ye saved), and after he was crucified he was taken from the cross, buried in the tomb for three days and then arose conqueror over all. Now the time comes for his ascension to his Father, and oh how it grieves his disciples for him to leave them; but now comes the fulfillment of God's promises, for he says it must needs be that I go away, for if I go not away the Comforter will not come, but if I depart I will send him unto you. So we see both the purpose of God and his promises, and they will be fulfilled, not one jot or tittle left out. Having redeemed us from all iniquity there is nothing left; ye are a chosen generation. Here is set forth God's choice; he made choice of some as a royal priesthood, as a holy nation, a peculiar people that should show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light, which means wonderful, glorious light, the light of the blessed Son of God which lighteth his children, the ones who were given him in the covenant of redemption, the ones for whom he shed his precious blood. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Herein is his love made manifest in his children in calling them out of darkness into his marvelous light and liberty, having redeemed them not with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but by his own precious blood. The question now arises, Was his blood, this precious blood of the immaculate Son of God, oh was it shed for me? Am I one of that number that was reckoned in the covenant of redemption? Was this grace treasured in Christ for me? Will I ever be the happy recipient of this grace? Sometimes I have a faint hope that I am one of that number, now that he is at the right hand of his Father, there to make intercession for the saints. He says, If I go away, I will come again, that where I am ye may be also, for in my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. Now comes the grandest and most glorious thought of all, that he is coming again, for what? To carry his redeemed host to those mansions prepared for them. Oh what a glorious time that will be to those he has redeemed when he comes to call them from their sleeping dust, and to those who are still living when they shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and caught up with him in the air, and then borne away on his balmy wings of

love to that haven of rest, there to sing and shout praises to him as never before, giving him all the glory, praise and adoration for what he has done for them, having redeemed them out of every kindred, tongue and nation from all sins, and now they will be prepared to sing that new song: Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests.

Now I will bring this to a close for fear of tiring you. May the Lord uphold you by his ever-reigning grace, and when it goes well with you remember me at the throne of grace. Visit us as often as you can, and may the God of peace be with you. This leaves us all well as usual. I hope you and family are well. Write me as often as you can.

Yours in hope,

R. L. VEAZEY.

BREWERS, Ky., Jan. 27, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER VEAZEY:—As I am shut in to-day on account of the weather I was led to reread your good letters of the 13th and 23rd inst., and now arises a sense of gratitude from within, so that I cannot forbear to make the attempt to tell you how your writings are appreciated, not only by me, but by my dear wife and others to whom I have read them, and I feel that it would be well to pass the letters on to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES that others may enjoy the crumbs which have fallen from the Master's table. I feel sure you are so full of love for the cause you will not object. It is true you will say you cannot see anything in your writing worthy of notation, but you remember one spoke to the Savior while here on earth, and said, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee, or thirsty, and ye gave me drink? &c. Christ answering said, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me. I will say first that this was a true disciple, who had been taught of God and could see perfection in Jesus and his work and condemnation in self, as is ever the case when the knowledge of the glory of God is shown in the face of Jesus Christ. It is then that self is abased and all righteousness of self is but as filthy rags in the sight of God. You remember the Lord has said, Their righteousness is of me. Who is he speaking of? Surely not the self-righteous pharisee who says, I pay tithes of all I possess, I fast, &c., and am not like this poor publican, who could not so much as lift his eyes to heaven. They who come to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek him, and one who has been rewarded with that best robe, the robe of the blessed Son of God, which was wrought out on the rugged cross, which you so beautifully spoke of, and when placed on one of God's little ones which he chose in Christ before the world was, then and there is the greatest display of his matchless grace which we can imagine with our finite minds. God in his infinite wisdom saw all these deeds of kindness to his children from the beginning; in fact, they are but a manifestation of the spiritual blessings in these heavenly places, according to His choice and not according to our good works or obedience, but it is as recorded by prophecy with an oath, The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed so shall it stand.

We read further on in God's word where he says, For men verily swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. I am persuaded, my dear brother, that an oath of God confirms to the end, inasmuch as all of the Lord's works were known unto him from the beginning, and the lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord. Will he not control all things according to the plan laid in eternity? When we poor, weak, sinful worms of the dust would even dare to lay our unholy hands to the sacred work of controlling or attempting to change God and get him to do differently to his purpose and grace, it is strange that all such are not struck dead. But no, his counsel shall stand and he will do all his pleasure. God has said, There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them. The "you" referred to here must be the church in the gospel age even down to the end of time. The apostle would refer even back to false prophets, and we fancy we can see a class to-day who in substance would say, We are casting out devils in thy name; we would clothe the naked, give food to the hungry and do many wonderful works, when it is all to be seen of men and carry out some design of their own. This is a class which seems to know from the wisdom of this world, and not the wisdom which comes from the Father of lights, with whom there is neither variableness nor shadow of turning. His strong arm is ever underneath his little children, who are never able to walk of themselves. O dear brother Veazey, when my poor finite mind is caused in some degree to look at the above portions of his word I am made to say with the psalmist, Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, I cannot attain unto it. We look around us and see one of God's servants down in the valley all hedged in one day, or even in one hour or minute, and at the very next view of him he is enabled to speak or write in power and demonstration of the Spirit. The apostle Paul would say of such experience, We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory. He continues by saying the princes of this world know nothing of this wisdom. I am forced to believe by the Scriptures which follow, that the princes (or wise men of the world) never have and never will attain unto this wisdom. Hear him: Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. Yes, the Spirit, or Comforter, which Christ said the Father would send in his name, he shall teach you all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you. You will notice God did not say the preacher should teach you, but He, the Comforter, would do the work, and he is the Rock, his work is perfect. When God begins the work the first thing is to give life, and then line upon line and precept upon precept. God, for some wise design, leaves his children to their own lusts, that he may prove us, or try us, as we would express it, that he may display his grace and make his power known, and not only his power, but to prove to us we have no power, as he did the apostle Peter. This same apostle would seem lifted up when he would address the elect of God, and would say, Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye

are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. When we have been down in the valley and shadow of death, with the very pangs of hell hold of us, and his gentle dew began to distil on the dry and parched land, there was a restoration of the joy of his salvation; then for a short time we were raised above every wave of trouble; yes, made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ; we could then see Jesus crowned with glory and honor, and no righteousness of our own to plead, but could say with all true Israel, "The Lord our Righteousness," then for a time our glorying is of the Lord. Time and time things will go on until God's time to bring all to a close, he ruling all things and upholding all things by the word of his power. He has said, I am God, and there is none like me. I am God, and beside me there is no Savior. Again, I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. This great I AM ever has had the people in mind and a purpose, and soon after time began and he had formed man of the dust and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and he began to breathe, this man has been wanting to do something to rob God of his glory, but He says, My glory I will not give to another. His firm decrees hang on his wills, shalls and nots, and Satan, the world and men combined cannot remove one of the stakes, nor break one of the cords, all of which has been hid from the wise and prudent, but revealed unto babes, which will one day around the throne of God sing, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name, the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

Lest I be writing without knowledge, I close. My wife joins with love and best wishes to you and family. Hope you all are well. My family are well as usual, while there is much sickness around us. Write when inclined to one of the least, if a servant at all.

J. C. CHESTER.

ATLANTIC, N. C., July 26, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—To-day my mind has been somewhat on the text Isaiah lviii. 1, "Cry aloud, spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." I do not know that I understand this text, but I do know that it is Israel who are to hear the word. Now Israel is the church of God, and not the Arminian world. There are several things in this prophecy that can well be applied to the Arminian world, but it is not this text. To obey the injunctions of this text the prophet had to tell the children of Israel things which they had done in violation of the commandments of God. These things were not to them pleasant things. They rather he prophesied to them smooth things, and that he went to their feasts with them. But he must obey the word of God, whether they would hear or whether they would forbear. It was not his business to consider how they would receive it, or if they would reject it altogether. He was commanded to tell it. When he had done this he was excusable, but not until then. The commandment to-day is to God's ministers, just as it was then to the prophet. If we do not do this we are not excusable before God. It is not our right to stop to think how our brethren will receive it, or whether they will receive

it at all. Suppose we are cast off because of it, or we may have their support withdrawn from us, and we cast out, that has nothing to do with the faithful servants of God. They know that God's arm is not shortened that he cannot do as well by them as he did by Elijah in the time he was rejected and hunted to be killed by Israel and her idolatrous king. Then they had about two ways to tell Israel of their sins: To preach it to them, and to write it to them. To-day we have another way added to those two: we have our church papers, through which we communicate to one another. This medium of correspondence is more widespread than either of the others, and things can be told to thousands who cannot be reached by the mouth or by private letters. But sometimes the servant of God finds himself handicapped in this matter. He writes of sins which are public among us, and his letter is cut off by not being published. This is one of the sins of Israel to-day. We are afraid we will make an abrasion on some one's conscience, and the chafe will cause anger. It is generally that way. If we have a sore we do not want any one to bother it. It hurts. It was so with Israel, and when the faithful prophets did so, as God had commanded them, they were shut up in prison, and in damp pits, to punish them for their faithfulness to God. Even this did not excuse the servant of God. It so grated on the feelings of Jeremiah that he decided that he would not speak again in the name of the Lord, but the word of God was in his heart as a burning fire shut up in his bones, and it rendered him weary with forbearing, and he could not stay. Had to speak in the name of God. So it is to-day. It may bring to these tried ones fire, persecution, or whatever it may bring, but they must do this word of God. "Cry aloud." Do not get in a place where you cannot be heard, or in some private chimney-corner, and tell some brother who you know is agreed with you, but get in the public places, in the pulpits, and the columns of our papers, where they may be read by those who are faithful, that they may be stirred to more faithfulness, and by those who have turned aside, that they may be rebuked, and hear the word of the Lord, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Where is that voice? Behind them, thus showing that they are going the wrong way. If we are going out of the way in doctrine or practice it is the same, the word of God comes rebuking our faith or our course. Wrong is wrong, let it be by whom it may, or in whatever it may be. We are to cry aloud and spare not. Our voices shall be as the sound of a trumpet. A trumpet sounds. The blower of that trumpet does not know who will hear. He has nothing to do with where the sound will go. He is commanded to blow. Another hand has the commanding of the effects of that sound. Paul said, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."—2 Tim. iv. 3, 4. Has not the day come, as he said? Will Israel endure the sound doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty? Will they endure the sound doctrine of the resurrection of the dead? One of these departures is as far from the truth as the other. Will they endure the doctrine of good church order? Will they follow the word of God in humbling themselves, and esteeming others better than themselves? Oh this is humiliating.

Yes, but did not the Lord humble himself, and become obedient unto death? He said, Follow me. If we follow him where will we go? Pretty low down in the valley. There is where he learned obedience; no one ever learned it anywhere else. We must be in the same school, in the same class, to learn the same lesson. The same Teacher must do the teaching. This is the old school. To depart from anything taught in this school is to go away from the way of the Lord, and to sin in his sight. Because one fully believes that "all things are of God" does not constitute him a hobby-rider, if so, Paul was a hobby-rider, for he said, "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever."—Rom. xi. 36. In several other places he uses about the same language, yet there are those in the church who are supposed to be leaders who do not believe this word, or at least they will contend against it, and accuse God of being the author of sin if this be true. We should cry aloud against their departure. It is sin in Israel to dispute the Scriptures of divine truth. One says to work out your own salvation is to work to get something. One wrote to me, "If I am not to get anything for what I do, I will not do it." All I could say to him was, "You are an hireling, and working for wages." The word of the apostle is work out, not to work for. A man cannot work out that which he does not possess. If he works out a thing he is only manifesting that which he has. If he obtains something for his work it is wages which he has earned. This cannot be disputed. To be in Israel with that kind of faith is to bring in things not taught in the Scriptures, and therefore not the truth of God. We, as the servants of God, should rebuke that kind of matter in the church, for it is not rest to the weary, it is labor. Cry aloud, and spare not. It is the sins of Israel that are to be rebuked. It may be in the pulpit, or the press, and such rebukings have the right to claim place in our papers to come before the church of God.

A great deal might be said along this line, but I will not make this letter longer.

I desire to pray that the Lord will bless the editors and publishers of our paper.

Your brother in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,

L. H. HARDY.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, N. J., May 30th, 31st and June 1st, 1923, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting and love in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We are glad to report a most pleasant and profitable meeting, a refreshing season from the Lord. Your messengers, in the gospel, have preached Christ and him crucified with power and in demonstration of the spirit. We have been comforted and built up on our most holy faith, and made to say, "Lord, it is good for us to be here."

Our next session of this Association is to be held with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., to begin Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1924, at 10:30 a. m., where and when we shall hope to meet your ministers and messengers again. Until then farewell in the Lord.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1923.

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Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PROVERBS XVI. 33.

"THE lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord."

These are the words of the wise man, Solomon. They were inspired by the Holy Ghost, and are, therefore, the words of truth. The world abounds with people to-day who believe that everything is left to chance and lottery, but there are, on the other hand, a few people, a peculiar people in the world, who believe that God hath made with the house of David (Jesus being head over all things to the church) an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure. This latter class, having been made wise unto salvation, are thoroughly in accord with the sentiment expressed by the writer in the first verse of this sixteenth chapter of Proverbs: "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." Also, "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps." "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." But these peculiar people have more than the written word to present as proof; they have the witness within. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." They are well acquainted with the journey of that certain man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and with all that happened unto him, and know that chance did him no good, since both the priest and the Levite passed by on the other side, and if this was all we had to offer our readers they would certainly be comfortless and without hope, but the lot having been cast and the whole disposing thereof being of the Lord, a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed (going that way on purpose) came that way, and when he saw him he had compassion on him, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine (the grace and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ), and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him. This great Physician declared, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." He further declared, "For I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Sin did not enter the world by chance, but was foreseen with all of its attendant evil effects and consequences, and it was the lot of Jesus to come and put it away, as far as the east is from the west, so far as his bride, the church, is

concerned, to reconcile her unto God. This entailed all of his sufferings, his death and resurrection. Not one pain too many did he feel, not one drop of blood did he shed in vain, but all was necessary to pay the redemption price. Every link in the chain, from his birth into the world until his departure, was forged and welded together according to the divine will and determinate counsel of God. Nothing came to him by chance, but everything was ordered in all things, and sure. His crucifiers could not lay hands upon him until his hour had come. How hard was his lot, how bitter the cup which he drank, we can never know, only in part. He was made to cry with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lamasabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" In the garden of Gethsemane, "being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." What a picture! Who can look thereon? Who can comprehend it? His beloved disciples could not watch with him in that hour. The prophecy of Isaiah must be fulfilled: "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me." It was through the door of suffering that he was to enter into his glory, and realizing that he came not to do his own will, but the will of the Father which sent him, "that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day," he could say: "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done." Dear child of God, the lot of Abraham, of Joseph, of Moses, of David, of Daniel in the den of lions, of the Hebrew children in the furnace, of Job, of Jonah and many other Old Testament characters could be cited, as well as many in the New Testament; of Stephen, Paul, Peter and John, but you have searched the Scriptures and know what is the lot of God's heritage. Be assured of this one thing, whatever thy lot may be, whatever thy afflictions, whatever trials and conflicts thou hast been called upon to endure, thy problem, be it ever so perplexing, "the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee. Daniel did not understand his lot. He said, "I heard, but I understood not; then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?" Nevertheless he had prophesied, "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." The whole, not a part, but the entire disposing of thy lot is of the Lord, and he will bring thee forth by a right way; he will lead thee in paths thou hast not known; he will make darkness light before you and crooked things straight. He will exalt the valley and lay low the mountain and hill; he will make the rough place smooth, and cause springs to spout up in dry places and the desert to blossom as the rose, that "the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." All your times are in his hand, and all events at his command, and he will make you lie down in green pastures, and lead you beside the still waters, restoring your soul and leading you into paths of righteousness for his

name's sake. Be still, therefore, and know that he is God, and beside him there is no Savior. Wait on the Lord. Stand still and see his salvation, which he will surely manifest. He knows thine own peculiar case, the beseeching of thy heart, and whatever thy station in life may be, stand in thy lot, and whatsoever thy hands find to do, do with all thy might. If thou art a speaker, he will fill thy mouth and loose thy stammering tongue; if a writer, he will direct thy pen, if a hearer or reader, he will open thine ears and cause them to tingle with joy at the sound of the gospel of the Son of God, and give thee to see upon the pages thou shalt turn the things that are testified of him, as the Way, the Truth and the Life. Many will be the time when you will be in prison, shut up and unable to come forth, hedged about as with hewn stone, but God is the whole disposer of thy lot, and if it be thine to suffer for his sake, rejoice, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." The lot is cast, and worm and squirm all thou wilt, thou canst not change anything, thou canst not make one hair white or black; thou canst not better thy condition one whit, for thou art of the earth earthy; but God who is rich in mercy and with the great love wherewith he loved us "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think," according to the power that worketh in us, and "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

R. L. D.

AN APPEAL.

WE regret it is necessary to call the attention of many of our subscribers to the fact that they have neglected sending in their subscriptions, and have let them lag so far behind that now it has become a very serious matter with us, as we need what is due us.

We are constantly receiving letters from all over the United States and Canada telling of how much comfort the SIGNS has been to the writers, many of whom are so situated they cannot attend meetings, and have no other way of hearing the gospel or the christian experience of their brethren. These letters are very encouraging, but will not help us pay our running expenses, which (for the past year especially) have been very heavy, and when we do not receive what is due us it makes our burden hard indeed to bear. While we are always thankful for any financial aid our friends feel inclined to send us, we are in this appealing directly to those who are in arrears to send on the amount of their indebtedness.

Last May we had to move from the building in which the SIGNS had made its home for nearly thirty-three years into new quarters, for which we have to pay more than double the rent we paid in our old place. This, coupled with the heavy expense of moving our machinery, paper, &c., and the ever-increasing cost of everything connected with the printing business, made a very expensive year for us.

When we found we had to move we at first thought we would drop out one of the issues for the month of May, as the task seemed more than we could accomplish, but we did not, and now by much hard and persistent work we have man-

aged to regain the time lost in moving, and again have the paper on time, and it is rather discouraging to us after struggling to give our subscribers ALL they pay for to have so many fail to pay us what is rightfully ours.

No doubt many will be surprised to learn that the interest on what is owed the SIGNS in unpaid subscriptions would pay our running expenses, with a large amount to spare. Brethren and friends, is this right and fair to us? We never try to force payment of a debt, but simply leave it to the honor of those owing us, making it a debt of honor, so please examine the date opposite your name on the little pink slip on the wrapper in which your paper comes (or on the address on your paper), and if in arrears do as your conscience dictates.

We would much appreciate it if all ministers of our faith and order would consider themselves our agents, and would receive and forward subscriptions, also do what they could toward increasing the circulation of the SIGNS.

We much dislike mentioning financial affairs in our columns, but at times it becomes absolutely necessary, as we have to purchase our supplies from firms who do business on a strictly business basis, and when our subscribers fail us in their obligations it makes our task a hard one indeed.

Brethren and friends, please try and see our position in this matter, and if you are in arrears with your subscription send us what you can on account. While it is a small matter to each individual, to us it is a large and an important matter.

Address all letters, and make checks and money orders payable to

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,

Middletown, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Alexander Seaten McDonald, of Appin, Ontario, Canada, died at his late residence in Appin, February 12th, 1923, in the seventy-seventh year of his age. Mr. McDonald was born in Ekfrid township, where he lived all his life. He was united in marriage to Martha Corneil over fifty years ago, and to this union there were born eight children, five sons and three daughters, three sons having died in infancy in 1886, one daughter, sister Eliza, having preceded him in 1915, leaving two sons and two daughters: Justice D. A. McDonald, of Vancouver, B. C., and Robert E. C., of Appin; Mrs. D. R. McRae, of Glencoe, Ont., and Mrs. Benjamin Saxton, of Plenty, Saskatchewan, besides his lonely widow, together with many friends and relatives, who mourn their loss. Mr. McDonald was a man of sterling qualities, a good neighbor, a kind husband and a devoted father. He never made a profession of religion, but his faithful attendance at meetings and his daily walk and conversation were living evidences of his possession of a good hope through grace, in which he firmly believed. His home was always a welcome place for those of like precious faith. He and his devoted companion (sister McDonald) delighted in making their home a welcome place at all times, and especially at the times of quarterly meetings held at Ekfrid. Mr. McDonald bore his sickness with great fortitude, being reconciled to the divine will of his heavenly Father. While he felt the separation from his lifelong companion very keenly, yet he was resigned to the will of God.

His funeral was held from his son's residence in Appin, and was largely attended by many friends and relatives who came to pay their last tribute of respect to one that all honored. He selected the text to be used at his funeral, which he repeated several times as he neared the end: "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."—Rom. viii. 24, 25, from which the writer tried to comfort the mourning ones with such as the Lord was pleased to give. Our earnest prayer is that heavenly grace will sustain our dear sister in her deep sorrow, and reconcile her to her great loss of so kind and devoted a husband, and may his dear children be submissive to the divine will of God in this their great loss of a kind and devoted father. His body was laid to rest in the Appin Cemetery, to await the final resurrection of the saints.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Mrs. Fannie Morehead Kersey, the subject of this memoir, was born in Fauquier County, Virginia, the daughter of Presley Worthington Morehead and his wife Mildred. She was married to W. W. Kersey. I

do not know the date. She leaves one daughter, Mrs. Apperson, of Rosslyn, Va., also two sisters and two brothers, all living in Virginia, to mourn the loss of a dear sister. It was my privilege to know her for several years, and I always esteemed her very highly as a lovable and gracious woman, and October 23rd, 1921, it was my pleasure to baptize her in the fellowship of Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C. Sister Kersey was able to get to meeting but a few times after being baptized, which was very much regretted by all the church, for we all loved her as a dear sister in Christ. She knew what she believed, and was free to express herself, which she could do in a clear and interesting way. Sister Kersey was sick quite a long time, and suffered a great deal. The condition of my family at the time kept me from visiting her, which is a source of regret to this day, but her sister, dear sister Mrs. Mary Murphy, writes me that her hope continued bright and her faith strong in the blessed Savior Jesus, in whom she had trusted for many years. On July 21st, 1920, I attended the funeral of her husband, W. W. Kersey. Sister Kersey bore her bereavement with christian fortitude to the end of her mortal life, and on February 14th, 1923, she was laid to rest beside her husband in the National Cemetery, at Arlington, Va., there to await the second coming of her Lord and Savior, when that body that was sown mortal shall be raised immortal, and reunited to her spirit that is now with God who gave it, and from then to all eternity shall her whole soul, spirit and body be with the Lord, to praise him more perfectly than was possible while possessed of mortality. In view of these blessed and glorious truths I would say to her loved ones left behind, Cheer up, for her it is far better to be with Jesus. Her pastor and the church of her membership feel keenly the loss of such a dear sister, but desire to bow in humble submission to the will of him who never makes a mistake.

Written at the request of her sister, sister Murphy.

Her pastor,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

Jackson Bailey, the subject of this notice, was born August 18th, 1862, died January 29th, 1922, at the age of 59 years, 5 months and 11 days. He was a brother of F. L. Bailey, whose obituary appeared in the SIGNS a short time back. Jackson never made a public profession of religion, but firmly believed and stood for the doctrine of the Bible as is advocated only by the Primitive or Old School Baptists. Not being able to give the date of his marriage I will say he married Miss Fannie Melton, a daughter of W. H. Melton, whose obituary also appeared in the SIGNS some time ago, and to this union were born five boys and one girl, the oldest boy preceding his father to the great beyond some four or five years, at the age of about twenty-one years. Jackson, being in poor health for a long time, the loss of his eldest son was more than his nerves could bear, and he became insane, and was sent to the asylum at Spencer, West Virginia, where he departed this life on the date stated above. His body was brought home for burial. Elder J. B. McClanahan was called to preach on that memorable occasion to a large congregation of relatives and friends, who gave expressions of sadness of heart, for he was esteemed by all who knew him, as a man of good report, honest, upright in all his business transactions, and, above all, we believe he was one of the redeemed of the Lord. He leaves a wife and five children, three sisters, Mrs. Sidney Melton, Mrs. Catherine Oldes and Mrs. Laura Melton, and many relatives and friends to mourn their loss. After funeral services at his home his body was taken to the old family burying-ground and laid beside his son, to await the resurrection of the dead.

Being without some important dates, I have written a short sketch of this honorable man's death, it being the request of Mrs. Sidney Melton for me to prepare a short obituary. I will say to all who mourn, We feel your loss is his eternal gain, for he surely knew the joyful sound, and David said, Blessed are they that know the joyful sound.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

Mrs. Susan C. Riddle, aged 72 years, passed away at the home of her daughter, Mrs. H. A. Gates, July 10th, 1923. She had the best of care, her daughter was by her side day and night for three weeks before she passed away, and all of her wishes were carried out. She selected hymns to be sung at her funeral, and also chose Elder S. B. Moffitt to conduct the service. Mrs. Riddle, widowed three years ago, was born in Texas, November 19th, 1850. She was orphaned in her infancy, and was reared to womanhood by an older sister. She was married in 1869 to John Welcome Riddle, in Texas, where she resided until 1887, coming to the State of Washington, where they lived until the death of Mr. Riddle three years ago. To this union were born four boys and two girls, of whom only two are living: Mrs. H. A. Gates and John Turner Riddle, both of Welcome. Besides the daughter and son there are left to mourn their loss eleven grandchildren, twelve great-grandchildren, one foster daughter and a host of friends. Mrs. Riddle joined the Primitive Baptist Church called Pleasant Valley, of Limestone County, Texas, over forty years ago. December 25th, 1909, she joined the Primitive Church called Bethel, at Bellingham, Wash., and was a member till her death. She was a sister of great charity and a mother to every one who knew her.

Written by request of sister S. C. Riddle.

T. N. DEAL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Miss Laura Lake, Ala., $3.00.

MEETINGS.

Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will hold their sixty-ninth annual session with Spring Creek Church, near Stahl, Adair Co., Mo., commencing on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in August, 1923, and continuing the two following days. All lovers of our beloved Zion, and especially preaching brethren of our faith and order, are cordially invited to meet with us. Those coming by rail will be met on Friday at Novinger and Stahl, on the Quincy & K. C. R. R.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator,
Stahl, Missouri.

J. M. CATE, Clerk,
Centerville, Iowa.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held with Big Walnut Creek Church, near Williamstown, Jefferson Co., Kansas, about twenty miles northeast of Topeka, and ten miles west of Lawrence, on the U. P. R. R., to begin on Friday before the second Saturday in September and continue three days (7th, 8th and 9th of September). Lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. For any further information write to or inquire for, Elder L. L. Schenck, Williamstown, Kansas, or address me at 1243 Polk St., Topeka, Kansas.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, the Lord willing, will meet with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield Maine, September 7th, 8th and 9th, 1923. Those who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.

The South Arkansas Regular Primitive Baptist Association will convene (the Lord willing) with Pilgrim's Rest Church, at Fordyce, Arkansas, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1923, and continuing three days. All regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists are invited to meet with us, especially ministers. Pilgrim's Rest Church is one-half mile from Cotton Belt Station, and known as the Old Stover Place.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator.
W. C. HORTON, Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 91. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1923. NO. 17.

CORRESPONDENCE.

COVINGTON, Georgia.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have had a desire for some time to write my feelings and views on the ministry and writings of Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to comfort God's dear people scattered abroad if I could. As a starting point, I call your attention to the last two verses of the third chapter of second Peter: "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory, both now and for ever. Amen." Peter addresses in this second epistle those who have obtained like precious faith with "us," the apostles. So it is necessary for us to inquire whether we have obtained, or have had delivered unto us, the same faith as the apostles had, to know whether we are included in this address. Peter believed that Jesus was taken according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God by wicked hands and was crucified and slain, thus suffering the just for the unjust, that he might bring his people to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the Spirit. Peter also believed that Jesus' people are the elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. He further believed that there were those appointed unto disobedience, that some stumbled at the word, being disobedient, "whereunto also they were appointed." Do you believe these things, my readers? If so it would seem favorable for you that you are included in the like precious faith with the apostles. "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." Peter expressed the length of his faith, both forward and backward. Looking backward, he said that Christ verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world and manifested in these last times for his people who by him do believe in God. Looking forward, he said that the elect receive, and shall yet receive, the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls, this same salvation

concerning which the prophets inquired and desired to look into. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. It is not of earthly origin, but comes from the God of heaven, and bears the seal and stamp of the high court of heaven, where God sits, the Judge of quick and dead. Abel was the first to have delivered to him this faith, by which he offered unto God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts, and he, being dead, yet speaketh. Cain killed his brother Abel, thus stopping him from further offerings, but could not stop him from yet speaking. The enemies of Peter put him in prison, they had him between two soldiers and bound him with chains; the keepers before the door kept the prison. Certainly they thought they had him fast, and that his speaking was stopped, but, by the power of God, the chains fell off, the iron gate opened, the angel of the Lord led him forth. His speaking could not be stopped. Such faith is precious and wonderful to all the faithful in Christ Jesus all the way down the old covenant line to the new, and on and on more or less to this present time, according as God gives his people all things which pertain unto life and godliness through the knowledge of him who has called them unto glory and virtue. It enables the children of God to add to their faith virtue, &c., but, on the other hand, he that lacketh these things is blind and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall." The children of God can fall from their own steadfastness, and they are the only ones who can so fall, because they are the only ones raised up high enough to fall; and when they do fall, they fall into the hands of God, for he will surely catch them, but the apostle writes that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God. Paul wrote to Timothy that some have erred from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows. The error, or fall, is what hurts the child of God. Paul further wrote that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron. Peter was not at all uneasy about the elect losing their inheritance, which is incorruptible and fadeth not away. He fully knew that the inheritance was reserved in heaven for them, and that they were being kept unto it by the power of God through faith, so making a sure thing of it. But he longed for grace and peace to be multiplied unto them through the knowledge of God and of the Savior Jesus Christ as they journeyed along here below as pilgrims, because the apostle realized that false teachers among them would bring in damnable heresies, and that many would follow their pernicious ways. Peter wrote his brethren, therefore, that he thought it meet as long as he was in this tabernacle to stir them up by putting them in remembrance, knowing that shortly he must put off this tabernacle, even as the Lord Jesus Christ had shewed him; and he further endeavored, that even after his decease, they might have these warnings in remembrance. The more sure word of prophecy, of which Peter writes that they do well to take heed, was concerning the false teachers which were sure to be among them. When the Lord sends a man to preach,

he will speak the truth to please the Lord, being moved by the Holy Ghost, though it may seem hard, and he be evil spoken for it; but when preaching comes by the will of man, he is apt to endeavor to please man, being moved by worldly considerations, such as money and honor. False prophets will declare falsehoods and cause the people to trust in lies, and to suffer on account of it, as in the case of Hananiah and the people of his day. So will false teachers of any age take the word of God spoken unto the fathers by the true prophets and teach it falsely, put the wrong construction on it, teach for doctrine the commandments of man, teach that salvation is of him that willeth and of him that runneth; they do not teach that salvation is alone of God that sheweth mercy, as did all the true prophets of God from Enoch to Malachi. All the apostles warned their flocks against these false teachers having itching ears. They were jealous over the flock of God. "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." Paul's great concern for his brethren was that they should be no more children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine by the sleight and cunning craftiness of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. A man may have a gift to speak in public, and use feigned words, great swelling words of vanity, and yet lack charity, which God alone can give, and his preaching will be as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal to the hungry child of God. The sincere milk of the word is what the child needs if he is hungry, and not mere words. The word by itself, even the printed word of God correctly and well-spoken by the most able, wise and prudent of men, cannot of itself cause any growth. The Holy Ghost sent down from heaven is the milk of the word. This the hungry child of God relishes, and it makes him to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The Holy Ghost, the third person in the record of heaven, has been, and still is, the manager of the ministry of the word, without the help of man. Prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The apostles themselves preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and with lesser or minor gospel ministers it is the same in every age. The Holy Ghost manages the preaching of the gospel in every age. Jesus himself must call and ordain every man called to preach the gospel. It has always been so, it is so yet. The Lord chooses and ordains his preachers as suits him best, and when and where it suits him, and they have to wait to be endued with power from on high, as did the apostles. Jesus, after his resurrection, commanded his apostles to teach believers to observe all things whatsoever he (not Moses) had commanded them. Moses, the good man, and great and wonderful prophet of God, and mediator of the old covenant, taught many things which Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant established on better promises, did not teach. Moses and those who sat in Moses' seat until Christ, taught (or tried to) every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, to know the Lord. To this end the pharisees compassed land and sea to make one proselyte, and having made him, their victim was two-fold more the child of hell than themselves. It would seem better to let a bad man alone where he is than to make him worse than he was be-

fore, and that is just about what mankind does when it tries to lead another to know the Lord, both and all fall into the ditch. Under Moses' covenant it was lawful for every man to teach his neighbor and his brother, saying, Know the Lord. Now, under the new and better covenant of which Jesus is the Mediator, such teaching is prohibited. It is not lawful under Jesus' covenant. The new covenant reads that they shall not teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord (no conditions about it), for all shall know him, from the least unto the greatest, all of them shall be taught of the Lord. He is the great Teacher who makes himself known unto his people that asked not for him. He writes his law in their hearts and is to them their God, and makes them to him his people. Those who have this new covenant law written in their hearts know they cannot teach any one to know the Lord. God has nowhere commanded or authorized any one to give that knowledge. If any one comes trying to teach us to know the Lord, we may know he or she is a false teacher. When Jesus, after his resurrection, sent out his apostles to preach, it was not that they should teach men to know the Lord, but to teach those who already were believers to observe all things that Jesus (not Moses) had commanded. The apostles suffered greatly for their preaching, but God enabled them to rejoice in the midst of their sore trials. Included in this preaching of the apostles, the Lord sent out his warnings to his people to beware of false teachers, not to follow their pernicious ways. The false teachers' ways are in the plural, they have several ways, but the way of truth is in the singular, and the Bible always speaks of it in the singular, for there is but one way of truth, and that way is Jesus himself. When a teacher comes with more than one way, we know he is a false teacher. Jeremiah prophesied unto the children of Benjamin, "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." They were to stand (not walk) in the ways, and were to ask for the good way, and walk in it, and in the good way was rest for their souls. Peter rejoiced amid all his fears and cares that the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and how to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished. His fears for his brethren were that they might be led away by the error of the wicked and fall from their own (not God's) steadfastness. He exhorted them to grow in (not into) grace, and in (not into) the knowledge of the Lord. Peter knew by revelation that God's people already have the grace given them in Christ before the foundation of the world, but his great desire was that it be multiplied unto them and that they grow in it. A plant cannot grow into a field, but it can and does grow in the field and is fertilized and cultivated by the husbandman, and Jesus said his Father is the husbandman. Peter instructed the brethren to grow in grace, because he knew they were already planted in grace, having been called unto glory and virtue. Whom God did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among his brethren; moreover, whom he did predestinate them he also called, and whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified. Those whom God called of both Jews and Gentiles, were beforehand prepared unto glory. May God bless the truth with his own penetrating Spirit to his own honor and glory, is my prayer.

J. FRANK MOSS.

EL PASO, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—My subscription has expired, and it has been my custom once a year on renewing my subscription to the dear old family paper to try to write a few lines expressing my appreciation, and the joy and comfort I receive from its columns, as it is the most appreciated of any paper I ever read. Oh how I wish I could write to the comfort and pleasure of the readers as the writers, especially the editors, do to me; but I am uneducated and dull of understanding, and have no gift of expressing my thoughts or feelings, but I do hope and believe what little understanding and spiritual light I have I have received of God, for I know I have not been taught it by man, for it is not for man to impart the spiritual light and understanding I hope I have experienced, although most of the time I am in darkness, and seem to be without feeling, and am weighted down with sin, and seem in deep slumber, dead to all spiritual life. While in this condition, being spiritually dead, with no power to see, hear or move, I believe when that voice which called Lazarus calls me I can hear, see and move. But while I am dead can I do anything that would obligate God to give me life or light? I know I cannot, and knowing this I must confess that salvation, life, light and all blessings come as free gifts from the great God of all power, both in heaven and earth, and to him belong all the praise and glory. This is the God I hope I am made to believe in. This is the God I hope chose me in Christ Jesus before the world was. So then if this be the truth (of which I have no doubt), if I am saved it is by the foreknowledge, love and mercy of God, and not by works of righteousness which I have done, for I know that I am full of sin and have not done anything good, but have hope that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I feel to be chief. What a glorious thought, that although I am weak and helpless, and so deep in sin, God has given me a hope of life eternal through Jesus our Savior. Though often I feel to be forsaken, and my hope is almost gone, and nothing but sin and darkness abound, then my heart panteth, my strength faileth me, but after this the glorious light appears and I am again made to rejoice in the Savior's love, and am made to know that my Redeemer liveth. If I were always on the mountaintop, and all was light and joy, then I might forget the horribleness of the darkness, and would not know how to appreciate the blessed light which comes from God alone. I believe that all darkness, affliction and trouble of all kinds, work together for our good and comfort, though at times we cannot see it that way. Some time since I heard a man say it was sure that the Old Hard Shell Baptists were not the church or the people of God, for they were not blessed with wisdom, and as a rule were a very poor and afflicted people, and that God blesses his church and people with wealth and knowledge in this life. This does not appear to me to be true, for we have recorded in the holy Scriptures an account of the people of God being scattered in the mountains, dwelling in dens and in caves, not being blessed by the fruit of their own labor, even without a house to live in, but were driven from all their earthly possessions. Now where were they? They were in the hands of the mighty, all-wise and most merciful God, who had by his own power prepared those dens and caves for the protection of his people. There is none of the com-

forts or blessings of God's people that is wrought by their own hands, either spiritual or temporal. We are strangers and pilgrims here in this world, hated and persecuted by the world, passing through many dangers, toils and snares, and often seem forsaken of God, and in this condition, without the God of love and mercy, we would be forever doomed and banished from his presence and all that is good. So it is by the grace, mercy and goodness of God that we are made to behold Jesus our Savior, who came into the world and died for our sins. How thankful we should be for this hope of salvation by grace; for if salvation is not by grace then we have no hope of salvation; but now having this hope we feel like singing, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me." In this assurance we are made to rejoice, and can endure affliction, suffering and persecution, knowing that in the end it worketh for our good. I have suffered affliction and financial losses, which at the time would seem very grievous to me, and which has caused me loss of sleep and enjoyment, but now I can see that it was for my good, for it has humbled me, and caused me not to bind myself to the things of this world, but to be content with what I have, and first seek the kingdom of God, esteeming that to be of more value than all the things of this world, which perisheth and fadeth away. It is my desire and hope that the God of mercy and love will ever keep me, and that when I have finished my course I can say as the apostle Paul, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day. Let us remember that if we do receive the crown at that day, it is not paid to us as a debt owed to us for our labors, but is given to us by the righteous Judge, and was prepared by him before the world was. There was at that time a crown prepared for every one of the redeemed of the Lord, and so at that day there will be just enough crowns for them; not be even one lacking, or not one left over, for all that the Father has given to the Son will be raised up, and not one of them lost, for Jesus said, My sheep hear my voice, and know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand; so we can see that this crown and eternal life are both given us, and are sure and steadfast, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. By faith we see the blessed face of our Redeemer, and know that it is through him we shall safely reach the goal. Oh what a blessed thought for such a worm of the dust as I to have. With this hope we should be willing to suffer the afflictions, sorrows and persecutions of the people of God, knowing that this is only for a short time, then light and joy cometh in the morning, and we will be forever with Jesus our Savior, to whom we shall give praise and glory throughout all eternity. We know that God has a people among every nation, kindred and tongue, whom he will bring by his mighty power, love and grace from darkness into his marvelous light, and at the coming of Jesus they will be brought into that everlasting kingdom God has prepared for them from before the foundation of the world. There is one thing I notice in God's people: they endure affliction with more patience than any other people in the world, and I believe that is because God has given them the

assurance that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord.

I have already written too much, and if you, dear editors, see fit to publish this unworthy letter I do hope it will not offend any of God's dear children. If any feel like writing to one as sinful and unworthy as I am, I would be glad to hear from them, for my wife and I are out here and are deprived of the blessings of hearing the blessed gospel of Christ preached, and the only preaching we get is through our dear family paper, the SIGNS, and some few letters I have had from some dear brethren. If any of the household of faith ever pass this way (especially ministers) I hope they will call upon us, for even if there are only the two of us we do hunger for the gospel of Christ, which we do hope is the gospel of our salvation. Our address is 3115 Sacramento Street, El Paso, Texas.

Farewell to all for this time, and my hope is that some one will pass this way and we will again be able to hear the gospel preached. I wish the writers and editors of the SIGNS success, and hope all will contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints, as this seems to be a trying time for all believers of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior.

From a sinner, if saved at all, saved by grace,

C. M. ADAMS.

FREEWATER, Oregon.

DEAR BRETHREN:—This morning my mind goes out to the afflicted in Zion on the great subject of faith. The apostle to the Hebrew church (second chapter) defines faith as being the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. It seems that while the substance which faith embraces is something that is not seen, it is something every child of God knows. Then the great question is, How are they to know what that substance is? It is by revelation. Jesus says, I give unto you eternal life. This life, God says, is in his Son Jesus Christ. Then the life, which is Jesus, is what we hope for: immortal life, and this hope is based upon the evidence we have received in the soul. We would love to divide between faith and belief, as so many look at the two as being the same, but faith is a substance, a principle which belief springs from. It is impossible to believe in Jesus without having faith that he is able to perform, or accomplish, all he has promised. Now while he has promised eternal life, we only have that life in him, and we hope, according to his promise, to see him as he is and be like him, and upon this promise we with patience wait. I have tried to make my mind clear on the faith of God's elect. It is the very life (substance) of the saint's hope. It is the very foundation out of which all the evidences or fruits (good works) of the children of God grow. With this faith I want to notice some of its fruits borne by those of old who have obtained this precious faith. First, I will call your minds to the testimony given by James, and I wish you to note that James in his testimony is emphasizing the faith of God, and putting the test to it, and this is to prove it. Jesus says to his disciples, Your faith shall be tried as by fire, so James in his epistle is putting the test to it. "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?"—James ii. 14. Then he uses the destitute brother or sister in need, and says, If one say to such, Be thou clothed and fed, and give not those things needful to the body, what doth it profit?

"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." Then in the nineteenth verse he brings up a belief that is not produced by faith, and says, "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble." We have two beliefs here defined, and find them as foreign as night and day, yet both are based on evidence. A belief which comes through faith is one which develops charity (love). Faith which works by love shows the glory of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ, and works a belief in the soul to trust and obey through a principle of love, but a belief that is wrought in devils is a slavish fear, which comes by God making his sovereign power known, through the penalty of the fiery law justly inflicted upon them.

Twentieth verse: "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" Now we come to the particular part I wish to notice, and the reason I wish to notice it is because it seems some brethren think there are two justifications, as they do two salvations, but there is but one salvation and one justification. Twenty-first verse: "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?" Now notice the twenty-second verse: "Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?" James has said faith without works is dead, and to prove his assertion he brings up the act of Abraham in offering up his son Isaac. The act of Abraham showed the power and nature of faith. A tree is known (justified) by the fruit it bears, so faith when tried shows whether it is a living or a dead faith. I understand James here to set forth the truth that faith of God in a sinner's heart will bear fruit unto God, and by this fruit he is justified, or stands justly before God and the whole family of heaven as one of that number. Before we turn to the incident of Abraham in making this offering I wish to call your minds to James i. 12, 13: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man." The reason I call particular attention to this expression of James is because some say God does not tempt his people. It does not say he does not tempt them, but it does say he does not tempt them with evil. Evil temptations come from the devil, through the lusts of the flesh, in which there is no good thing. In this wonderful act of Abraham he received witness that he pleased God. We read in the twenty-second chapter of Genesis: "And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. And he [God] said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." As they went according to the command, the son said, Father, here is the fire and the wood, but where is the offering? See what faith wrought. "Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering." When they came to the place the altar was built, and Isaac was bound and laid on the altar, and the knife in the father's hand was raised for the purpose to sacri-

fice his son, when an angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham, lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him, for now I know that thou fearest God. I have recorded lengthily from this narrative in order that you, with me, might drink from this vital principle which is said by Paul, and proven in the experience of God's people, to be an abiding principle. Paul, in the fourth chapter of Romans, in speaking of the power of faith, says, "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." James says that he justified himself in this faith by his works, which are the fruit of faith. Paul and James are showing the very same thing. They are showing the difference between works and grace, or the law and faith; and James shows the difference between the faith that is the gift of God and that which comes by the law.

Dear sister, we received both of your good letters, and while I have not been able to answer, I want to assure you they were read with much pleasure. I have not been able to keep up my correspondence on account of my wife being sick. I am truly glad to write she is better.

I am sending you this letter, which I started when my wife was first taken sick. I intended to send it to the SIGNS, but never could get time to finish it, so will send you what I have of it, as I have not the time nor the mind to write you a letter. I was truly glad to learn you were improving in health, and that the blessed faith which was so manifested in Abraham was so powerful in holding you up in you deep afflictions. We send our best wishes to you and family, and ask you to remember us to all the brethren and friends who may ask after us. If not asking too much, let us read more of your soul-cheering letters.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. T. BARNES.

[THE foregoing letter was sent to sister Taylor, of Pleasant Hill, Missouri, and by her forwarded to us for publication in the SIGNS.—ED.]

MATTITUCK, N. Y., July 27, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—For some time my mind has been much on the trials of the church, and I feel impressed to write some of my thoughts for your consideration. I feel your judgment will be controlled by the Holy Spirit, and unless what I have written has been indited by the same Spirit it will have no place in the SIGNS. "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." Our Savior said to his disciples, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." As individuals we have tribulation, deep trials, often seeming too heavy to be borne, collectively, as a church, we must also suffer. We are not better than our Master, who was sinless, yet endured a life of self-denial and suffering for us, his church, that through his suffering we might be saved from our sins, and brought out, or cleared, from the condemnation which was resting upon us. Yes, and justly so; we deserved it all. The church is composed of human beings, all sinners saved by grace, each with his natural disposition. All are sinners alike, and boasting is excluded. It is only of God's mercy that one of them is saved. The Holy Spirit comes upon this mass of corruption and all become united, or in unity, as one in Christ Jesus. The lion and the lamb, or the fiercest and gentlest, are made to lie down together, and both feed in the same pasture; all

love the Lord who bought them, all love the church, and while under the influence of the Holy Spirit dwell peacefully together, but it is through much tribulation that we enter the kingdom. Each member has his own natural disposition, the old Adamic nature, no two are alike. Some are naturally gentle and peace-loving, although no better, for all were under the same condemnation. Some seem more obstinate and willful, or fierce, like the lion, the old man with his deeds seems harder to keep under; these often do and say things that make trouble for themselves and others. It sometimes seems that Satan has desired to have us that he may sift us as wheat, and when for our good we are given into his hand for a season, there is an uprising of the old man, or Adamic nature, and we may cause ourselves, and the church we love, pain and sorrow. "It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him through whom they come." We must be brought low and learn anew our weakness, and that we are nothing, less than nothing, unless kept by our Lord's mighty arm. We are told to fear none of those things which we shall suffer. "Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried." Job says, When I am tried I shall come forth as gold. Our Lord has all power in heaven and in earth, and underneath are the everlasting arms. We cannot fall so far but that they are always around and about us in all our wanderings, trials and afflictions. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." David was a man after the Lord's own heart, yet he sinned grievously; he was one of the Lord's chosen ones, but the Lord hated his sin, and punished him for it. Let us bear with each other, and forgive, remembering it is only of our Lord that any have been kept and restrained from outbreaking sin. He that ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city, so is it not wonderful that even one of us is kept, when all are so prone to sin? "If any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye," and the peace of God, which passeth understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" "And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." As smoke rolls in billows and floats upward toward the sky the purified church will ascend to her Lord, leaving forever the fires of tribulation through which she has passed.

NELLIE HALLOCK ARNOLD.

RUSTON, Louisiana.

DEAR EDITORS:—Find inclosed one dollar, for which please renew my subscription to the SIGNS for six months. I wanted to renew before my subscription expired, but sickness prevented.

Please tell me just what is meant by "absolute predestination," and who created sin. Pray for a poor old sinner, an invalid of twenty-nine years. I love the SIGNS. It is all the preaching I get, excepting a visiting preacher now and then. If I could write as others do I would love to write a short letter for the SIGNS, but I feel much like one left out and unfit for any use. May the Lord bless you to continue the SIGNS, and the dear ones to continue their letters.

Yours in the hope of a better life,

(MRS.) M. F. STOKES.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1923.

EDITOR

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

EPHESIANS I. 5.

"HAVING predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

This quotation was written by the apostle Paul to the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus. Now the truth of the matter comes to every one that nameth the name of Christ as to what manifested realization we have in our hearts. We are made first to realize a power beyond all that naturally can be perceived by the carnal mind, and in this realization the sinner is made to cry out, Who art thou, Lord? and from this realization he feels to be burdened. Seeing himself a sinner, more and more burdened he feels, until the time appointed of God for Jesus to reveal himself as the Savior of sinners, then with Paul he can declare, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."—1 Tim. i. 15. This realization of life gives understanding, seeing and hearing never before felt in all the life of the individual. We find all these things of which we are partakers to be according to the good pleasure of His will, and were predestinated of God before the foundation of the world, according as he has chosen us in Christ. As this individual meditates on the riches of God's grace, and on the love manifested, of which he is made a partaker, it causes him to hope in Christ and to live after the Spirit, and to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness. When our minds are turned to view all the way we have passed, and to see the loving-kindness bestowed, we are made to say, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."—Psalms xxiii. 6. We have not been able at all times to have the mind to recall the mercies and sweet seasons of the past, but when affliction's hand is laid upon us then we remember our Burden-bearer and know how precious he is, and that it is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."—Titus iii. 5. We are made to love every one who walketh uprightly and those we are assured are directed by the Divine hand, but those who walk not uprightly are not of the Lord. As for man, there is no uprightness in him except he be kept by the power of God. All we are in a natural way is of the first Adam, and all we are in a spiritual way is of the second Adam, and with Paul we are made to say, "By the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."—1 Cor. xv. 10. When God places one on the watch-walls of Zion he is made to do the things commanded of God, and not seek the justification of the flesh. "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." With all these we are made to pass through fiery trials, but, brethren, be of

good cheer, for Jesus overcame the world and triumphed for you. We are made glad to talk or correspond with those who feel the fiery trials, for they come with us. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you."—1 Peter iv. 12. As we pass through this pilgrimage we are fully aware that all these things belong to the household of faith.

"My times of sorrow and of joy,
Great God, are in thy hand;
My choicest comforts come from thee,
And go at thy command."

"Jesus, the glorious head of grace,
Knows every saint's peculiar case;
What sorrows by their souls are borne,
And how for sin they daily mourn."

According to the good pleasure of his will we are made to pass this way and feel the rending smart oft felt below when christians part. Beloved, may we all feel to be true and faithful to Zion in the vocation to which we are called.

As an editor of our beloved paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I shall expect criticism, both harsh and mild, and also commendation perhaps, but let me say to you that this responsible position was not sought by me. I feel this is one of the things that has been laid upon me in the household of faith, and I trust that he who predestinated all things after the counsel of his will will keep and direct all our ways to your comfort and his glory, that we may with one accord fight the good fight of faith together, being mutually comforted one with another, and declare how great things the Lord hath bestowed upon us all according to the good pleasure of his will.

C. W. V.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

I NOTICE important changes in the editorial staff of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, in the resignation of Elder H. C. Ker therefrom, and the addition of Elders R. Lester Dodson, George Ruston and Charles W. Vaughn thereto. Having been more or less acquainted with the editors of the SIGNS from it founder, Elder Gilbert Beebe, to the present time, and having humbly served in the work of the ministry with them in a limited manner, and having been somewhat familiar with the character of the work demanded by the day and generation in which each one served, and the adaptability of the gift of each in his day, and of the present requirements, and the ability of the present editors, I feel that the paper will have lost none of its wonted prestige required in serving the ends desired by its great founder.

The *Landmark* wishes for the SIGNS a full measure of the success anticipated in placing these able and orderly ministers with Elder Lefferts upon its editorial staff.

P. G. L.

[OUR able contemporary, *Zion's Landmark*, in its issue of July 15th, contains the foregoing gratifying note from its senior editor, Elder P. G. Lester. Thank you, brother Lester! We appreciate your kindly feeling and encouraging words, coming as they do from one who has known the editors of the SIGNS all along down the line, and who himself stands as a fatherly counselor to us of a younger generation. We hope to be able, by the grace of God, to realize your good wishes.—L.]

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

A. H. Cox, Va., $1.00; Mrs. Joab P. Stout, Ill., $1.00; Melissa Grimes, N. Y., $1.00; C. E. Jackson, Ohio, $1.00.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder C. W. Vaughn.)

The Delaware River Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church, Hunterdon County, New Jersey, May 30th and 31st, and June 1st, 1923, to the churches and associations composing the same.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We desire to greet you in this our annual address in brotherly love, and the language of Paul to the Hebrews, thirteenth chapter, first verse, "Let brotherly love continue," is the expression we are minded to call your attention to, and to express some thoughts as they present to us the relations of love of the people of God. The word "let" is used in the imperative mode, to express a command or an entreaty, so we feel the apostle was entreating the Hebrew brethren to continue in brotherly love. Brotherly love is the love created in our hearts for the brethren by the conceptions of life through the Holy Spirit, and we are made to love the things of life, and when the life is manifested which is not of this world, but of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, love to that one immediately goes out, and we are made to love that individual because of the life manifested in us, by which we have eyes to see of the good works wrought in their hearts, which God hath worked in them, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Phil. ii. 13.) Having this manifestation of individuals we love them, for they are born of God, and their faith is not of the will of man, nor of the wisdom thereof, but in the power of God. This love goes out to all who bear these marks, and when the manifested life of one who professes to love the brethren proves not to be of the Spirit, that love for that one ceases, as he is proven not to be of Jesus, hence they walk not with him. The apostle in his entreaty admonishes as to how we should be mindful of each other as brethren, and whatever state one might be in that we should consider them as brethren, and bear one another's burdens. We feel we love the brethren, and this causes us to love and desire their welfare and uphold the order of God's house. We have had much thought on the order of God's house, and by the manifested relations we have in these thoughts we are made to say that every manifestation of a spirit that is not for the unity of the brethren in peace and fellowship is disorder. We are also admonished in our walk and conversation to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace, as there is one body, and one Spirit, as we are called in one hope, as we all are of the same faith. One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. (Eph. iv. 3-6.) The expressions quoted in this epistle are in no way thought to be given out to worldly men that they might manifest godliness, but to call attention to the admonitions of the apostle to the pure-minded, and this brotherly love will be manifested because we are born of God, and by this we know we have passed from death unto life.

We are glad to have you all come to us, or any who come confessing Jesus as the Savior of sinners, though they be strangers in the flesh, and those who are not strangers who come bearing not this fruit we will not receive, and from every brother who walketh disorderly we are commanded to withdraw. (2 Thess. iii. 6.) He that loveth is born of God, for God is love. Dear brethren, may our "moderation be known unto all men." Be temperate in all things. "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory."

H. C. KER, Moderator,
DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Benjamin F. Coulter was a son of Deacon Alexander and Ann M. Coulter, who were faithful members of the Welsh Tract Church. Elder Coulter was born September 3rd, 1846, near Newark, Delaware, and departed this life May 31st, 1923, in Philadelphia, Pa., being in his 77th year. He was united in marriage to Annie Hill, August 1st, 1872, and they lived a beautiful, happy and devoted life together for nearly fifty-one years. August 1st, 1922, they celebrated their golden wedding, and in answering this question he remarked that they yet had to have their first quarrel, and since his passing to that beautiful mansion, which was spoken of by him in his last words to his sorrowing companion, that Jesus had prepared for his people, she has told me that she never heard him speak a cross word in his life. To this union were born two daughters, Edna and Florence, the latter died in early childhood. He is survived by his grief-stricken companion and one daughter, sister Edna Baker, two granddaughters and one great-grandchild, who, together with the Salem Church, of Philadelphia, Pa., and Snow Hill, Md., of which he was a faithful pastor, and all his kindred in Christ mourn our loss, which to him was great gain; but we sorrow not, even as others who have no hope, for we believe he is asleep in Jesus. Brother Coulter's whole life had been devoted in ministering to the comfort and necessities of others. When but a young man he went to New York city, where he graduated in pharmacy, and after he was married he came to Philadelphia, where he continued in that business until 1880, when he graduated in medicine at the Jefferson Medical College, after which he disposed of his pharmacy and devoted his time to the practice of his profession. The Lord called him by his grace to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and on the first Sunday in September, 1883, he was baptized by Elder J. L. Staton in fellowship of the Welsh Tract Church, where he continued a faithful member until he asked for a letter in July, 1887, that he might unite with the Salem Church of Philadelphia. He was made a deacon and clerk by this church, and he was fully qualified for both offices. As a deacon he was proved, being found blameless, grave, not double-tongued, holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience, and with a wife that was faithful in all things. He was gifted in writing and in exhortation. Many readers of the SIGNS have enjoyed and been comforted by his early writings, and many readers will recall a letter or notice published in the churchhouse, giving notice that "The latchstring is always out," and that when any of the brethren came to the city they were welcome to his home. During these years many lovers of God's chosen people have found this to be true. His gift opened the way for further usefulness, and the church had a presbytery called, and he was ordained to the work of the ministry October 16th, 1905. Brother Coulter was loved by all the faithful in Christ and those who knew him and associated much with him. He was a faithful undershepherd, a good disciplinarian, sound in the faith, and firm in maintaining the order of the house of God. The churches of the Delaware Association will miss him and his counsel.

The funeral service was held Sunday night, June 3rd. Elder J. G. Eubanks preached an eloquent discourse to the comfort of all, followed with appropriate remarks by Elders Vaughn, Dodson and Mellott. On Monday, June 4th, Elder H. C. Ker preached at Welsh Tract to the comfort of many, after which his remains were interred in that cemetery, there to sleep in Jesus with all the redeemed until this mortal shall have put on immortality and awake in the likeness of our risen and glorified Redeemer in the resurrection. We pray the God of all comfort and grace to sustain our dear sister Coulter and all the family, in this great bereavement, also all who are made to mourn their loss, and may we all realize that underneath are His everlasting arms.

P. M. SHERWOOD.

Lydia C. Ray, of Silverton, Texas, was born January 16th, 1849, near Paris, Tenn., and departed this life April 24th, 1923, making her stay on earth 74 years, 3 months and 8 days. Aunt Lydia Ray was the fourth daughter of Benjamin and Eliza H. Powell, who raised a family of nine children, four boys and five girls. All preceded her in death. Her father moved from near Paris, Tenn., to near North Mount Pleasant, Miss., in 1866, where she received a sweet hope in Jesus in 1867, the eighteenth year of her age. Her father moved from there to a little home southeast of Holly Springs, Miss., in 1868, and that fall she offered herself for membership in the Old School Baptist Church at "Chewalla." She was received, and was baptized by Elder Wade Nowlin. She lived near Potts Camp, which was near the church, until 1878, moving to McLennan County, Texas, that year. From there she moved to Johnson County, in 1881, and was married to E. B. Ray May 12th, 1882. She gave him up in death December 19th, 1899. Having no children, she was left alone in this world, excepting a number of nephews and nieces. She lived for some time with one of her nieces, Mrs. Ruth Irwin, who was also a sister in the church. She moved from Johnson County to Silverton, Texas, in 1909, where she lived alone the remainder of her life, except when she was visiting the churches throughout the United States. Going back into the eastern States, and out into the far western States, she had a large acquaintance among the brethren and sisters throughout the land. Aunt Lydia was strong in the faith that was once delivered unto the saints, believ-

ing in the absolute predestination of all things, both good and evil, believing that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are the called according to his purpose. As one said who knew her in her girlhood days, and also after years, "she lived on the positive side of life." Her nephew, T. J. Bell, of Dustin, Okla., and a niece, Mrs. Effie Hammock, of Ft. Worth, Texas, were called to her bedside just one week before she died, and did all they could for her in her last hours, but the Lord called her unto himself, and she could not stay longer, passing quietly away, as one going to sleep.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort to a host of friends and kindred in Christ gathered at her home, before taking her body to its last resting-place. Opening her Bible, we saw two verses of Scripture marked, one the eleventh and the other the fourteenth verse of the eighteenth chapter of Matthew. The eleventh verse reads, "For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost." The fourteenth reads, "Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." I tried to speak from these two verses, after which her body was taken to the beautiful cemetery near Silverton, on the plains of Texas, and was laid away to await the calling forth of the Father. I will say to those who will miss her, to not mourn as those who have no hope. While we shall miss her here, our loss is her eternal gain. She is gone where there is no more sorrow nor pain, but all is peace, sweet peace.

Her nephew,

T. J. BELL.

MEMORIALS.

(DELAWARE RIVER ASSOCIATION.)

WHEREAS, it has pleased Almighty God to remove by death our beloved and esteemed brother, **Elder B. F. Coulter,** be it

RESOLVED, that we bow in humble submission to his will, and say, Thy will, and not ours, be done. We will miss Elder Coulter in that kind and affectionate life manifested among us. The churches of his charge have our sympathy, and also his dear family. Be it

RESOLVED, that we spread this resolution on our Minutes, and a copy be sent to our dear sister, his widow.

ALSO,

WHEREAS, it has pleased Almighty God to remove by death our beloved, aged and esteemed brother, **Elder John Clark,** be it

RESOLVED, that we bow in humble submission to his will, and give an expression of love we hold to those who preach glad tidings. Elder Clark was one who stood firm in his convictions, and in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and our loss is his eternal gain.

RESOLVED, that this resolution be spread upon our Minutes, and a copy sent to his widow, (sister Clark) of Halcottsville, N. Y., with an extension of our sympathy.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

The church at Otego, N. Y., has appointed a meeting for Saturday afternoon and evening and all day Sunday, September 1st and 2nd, 1923. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

ROSE T. LEONARD, Church Clerk.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held with Big Walnut Creek Church, near Williamstown, Jefferson Co., Kansas, about twenty miles northeast of Topeka, and ten miles west of Lawrence, on the U. P. R. R., to begin on Friday before the second Saturday in September and continue three days (7th, 8th and 9th of September). Lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. For any further information write to or inquire for, Elder L. L. Schenck, Williamstown, Kansas, or address me at 1243 Polk St., Topeka, Kansas.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, the Lord willing, will meet with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield Maine, September 7th, 8th and 9th, 1923. Those who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association is appointed to be held at the First Church of Roxbury, in Vega, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, September 12th and 13th, 1923. Trains will be met at Roxbury, N. Y., on Tuesday. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, especially ministers of our faith and order.

V. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

The South Arkansas Regular Primitive Baptist Association will convene (the Lord willing) with Pilgrim's Rest Church, at Fordyce, Arkansas, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1923, and continuing three days. All regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists are invited to meet with us, especially ministers. Pilgrim's Rest Church is one-half mile from Cotton Belt Station, and known as the Old Stover Place.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator.

W. C. HORTON, Clerk.

The Sideling Hill and Fairview Churches will jointly hold, the Lord willing, a two days meeting, Saturday and Sunday, October 13th and 14th, 1923, at Needmore, Fulton County, Pennsylvania. Those coming by rail will come on Friday before the meeting to Hancock, Md., either over the Baltimore & Ohio or Western Maryland R. R., and will please previously notify Deacon J. C. Mellott, Needmore, Pa , so as to be met and conveyed to the place of meeting. All brethren and ministers in accord with us are invited to meet with us.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 17th, 18th and 19th, 1923. Trains will be meet at Herndon Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning, leaving 36th and M Streets, Washington, D. C. Time of trains not given in this notice because schedule is likely to change before October. Brethren and ministers of our correspondence, and all others who are in fellowship with us, are invited to meet with us.

K. C. SPINDLE, Church Clerk.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California.

C. S. MILLER.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS:

Elders R. Lester Dodson, George Ruston, Chas. W. Vaughn.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 91. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1923. NO. 18.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ATLANTIC, N. C., August 24, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—When I was in southwest Virginia, more than a year ago, some of the brethren requested me to write an article on Philippians ii. 12, 13: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Some of those brethren are readers of the SIGNS, and therefore I will send this letter to you, and you, after you have read it, may consider whether it is fit matter for that paper. If not, you can return it to me, and no harm will be done.

First, I want to note that these words were spoken directly to one of the most obedient churches to whom the apostle wrote. He tells them that they had always been obedient. Therefore he could not be admonishing them to do any further obedience than they had already been rendering. He was not exhorting any one to join the church, to be baptized, to go to the communion table, to wash feet, nor to any other thing to which a disobedient child might be admonished. If I understand correctly, he was simply admonishing them to continue to do as they were already doing, both in His presence and in His absence. What salvation were they to work out? It was their own salvation. It was not a salvation which they did not already own that they were to work for. He did not say, Work for a salvation of your own. No, but to work out that which they already possessed. Their own. It was theirs already, and they were in possession of it. They had been working it in them. Now that the apostle had seen this he admonishes them to continue this working as God continued to work in them. Is it not the very salvation which Jude called, "The common salvation"? The Greek word here translated "common" is *koinos*. It literally means, shared by all of a certain class. Therefore it is a salvation that is shared by all the called of God. This salvation they all have. Now, when they are living obediently, as these Philippians were, they are working out that which God had worked in them, and was working in them. Or they were bearing fruit unto holiness, and the end is everlasting life. The same is true of Isaiah i. 19, 20, "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat

the good of the land: but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." I cannot see one condition in either of these texts. He does not say, If ye will be good and obedient, but, If ye be good and obedient. The being good and obedient is the thing already perfected in them, and the other things follow as the evidence of the work which God has performed, and is performing in them. Therefore the salvation is theirs, having been worked in them by the mighty hand of God. They are already in possession of it. They do not have to work for it. It is not given them in consideration of something they may do. It is theirs, and God gave it to them. Therefore it is by grace. Jonah said, "Salvation is of the Lord," referring to that which he now saw before him, and which he would receive in being thrown out of the belly of hell. This he realized was by the grace of God, and not by the good works of Jonah. Paul said, "By grace are ye saved," thus he declares that salvation which we now have, and enjoy, is by grace. Ye are now saved. I, as an individual, or in person, was never in eternity, therefore I never committed any sin in eternity. What I need is that salvation which saves me from sin. All my sins are done in time, and therefore a salvation which does not save me in time is no salvation to me. That which was given to me before the world began, and is now manifested in me by the workings of the Holy Spirit in my heart, is the salvation which saves me now to-day as I journey along, and will not let me go world without end. This is the only salvation that such a sinner as I dares trust in. This is that salvation which our blessed Jesus wrought out on the tree of the cross, and thus insured every babe in Christ of the assurance of his or her safety in our Lord. John the Baptist said, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is the sin which our Lord came to take away from his people. Therefore their salvation which they are now to work out is the salvation which they receive from the consequence of the Lord having taken from them the sins of the world. Hence it is our present salvation, and is for now and forever. When this salvation is worked in them by the Holy Spirit of our God it makes them both willing and obedient. This is the only source of obedience to God. No men by nature were ever friends of God, nor had they a mind to obey him. Their carnal mind, which is all they have, is strictly an enemy to God, and to all his ways, therefore when they are willing to do the will of God it is because the Lord has worked it in them, and therefore their willing and their obeying are both of God. This is contrary to the flesh, hence to thus teach, and preach, one must go down in the deep, in the belly of hell. No one ever preached the gospel of the Lord Jesus only as he was taught to do so by going down in the deep. It was not the belly of the fish, the whale, that caused Jonah to cry unto the Lord. He was in deeper sufferings than that. He said, Out of the belly of hell cried I unto thee. The belly of the fish could not have caused him thus to cry, it was the suffering he had in the belly of hell. One does not have to be swallowed up by a fish to be taught to preach the pure gospel of the Son of God, but he does have to be swallowed up in the belly of hell to thus be taught. The resurrection of the Lord Jesus is the crowning point of the gospel. How can any one know anything of the resurrection of Jesus

Christ unless he is made a partaker of that resurrection? To thus be made he must first be carried down in the deep. The Lord sends his servants down to the sea in ships, and they do business in great waters. They see his wonders in the deep. There the Lord commands, and raises the stormy winds which lift up the waves. These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. It is there that they learn the power of God, and are made to obey his commandments. There they see and feel their weakness, and there they call upon the Lord for deliverance. Read the one hundred and seventh Psalm. Do I not know these things by actual experience? Why should I not declare them?

Brother, sister, if you have been led this way you know what I have said, and you can testify to the truth of it. This is the only way we know anything of God or of his holiness and power. He is the Savior. I know it because he saves me. I am his witness. I do not have to consult another, and yet it is so good that I, and such as I, have the testimony of those who wrote his blessed word to witness to the truth taught in us. This is the salvation, and thus the Lord teaches his ministers. If you have not gone down in the deep places, may it not be true that there is a mistake as to your calling to the sacred work of the ministry? May not that be the reason you object to the preaching of those servants of the Most High God whom he has taken through the great waters? When one declares that God is the absolute Sovereign over all men, and worlds, and things, that they are the works of his mighty hand, that they were made by him, for him, and for the purpose of his glory, why does your heart sicken, and you turn away from such declaration? May it not be that you have not been down in the deep places where alone the wonderful works of God are seen? I do not refer to any one, but ask these questions of all who profess to preach his word. Surely the Lord teaches all his ministers in the one school, and therefore there is great peace among his true ministers. I hope the Lord will lead all of us in the way of all truth.

Your brother in a good hope through grace,

L. H. HARDY.

WITTER, Ark., Aug. 3, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find check for ten dollars, five to be credited to my subscription, and the other five for the use of the SIGNS. I commenced taking the SIGNS in 1872, when I was nineteen years old, and have been a subscriber ever since, and am now in my seventieth year. There are many reasons why I like the SIGNS better than any other Baptist paper I have ever read, not the least of which is its steadfast observance of the divine commandment: "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set."—Prov. xxii. 28. By a law of nature, or rather of nature's God, every deviation from a right line gets further and further away the longer it continues, and never of itself returns, nor can it return, except its motion and direction be reversed. It was by this that the vine that was planted wholly a right seed became the degenerate plant of a strange vine, (Jer. ii. 21,) and the house that the Lord said should be called a house of prayer became a house of merchandise and a den of thieves. The true church is the light of the world and the salt of the earth, but this is not in the sense of its flavoring, but its preserving properties, and it must remain the same

as at first, must always be salt, for when it changes it loses its savor and becomes thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden underfoot of men. The church cannot be progressive, in the common acceptation of that word, without ultimately losing every characteristic of the true church. "Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." This is of great importance, or the commandment would not have been given. Immovability and immutability are in meaning the same. Man is ever changing, and cannot keep from changing. All the works and institutions of men, and man himself, are ever changing, and cannot cease from changing. What folly to look for immutability in a scene of endless mutation; and yet there is such a thing as immutability. There is a "King immutable," the same yesterday, to-day and forever, the Lord that changes not, and in consequence of this the sons of Jacob are not consumed. Nothing resembling immutability or immovableness (lack of change) is found among men, except as the King immutable dwells in them and works in them to will and to do of his own good pleasure; except as he makes them perfect to do his will, working in them that which is well-pleasing in his sight by Jesus Christ. They are kept by his power, and his divine power gives them all things that pertain to life and godliness. Two of the seven churches to which John wrote in Revelation had not departed from the faith and practice of the primitive church, and no fault was found with them. They were Smyrna and Philadelphia. To the one he said, Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. To the other he said, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth. The two cities in which these two churches were, alone of all the cities of their size, escaped the wreck and ruin that befell the world when the Roman Empire fell and ancient civilization was destroyed. Gibbon, who was notoriously unfriendly to christianity, says, "They were left standing like marble columns in the midst of a scene of ruins." Were not these cities preserved by the "salt of the earth" that was found in their midst? They were kept from departing from the faith, kept from the hour of temptation, by the power of God, and even the cities in which they were escaped the ruin that befell the balance of the civilized world. May the Lord keep us, and enable us to contend, and not only to contend, but to contend earnestly, for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and preserve us blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is a day of departure from the ancient faith and practice of the true church.

In tribulation,

C. W. ANDERSON.

POCA, W. Va., June, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER:—This is our meeting day at Hopewell, the church where I have had a name among, or with, the Old Predestinarian Baptists for thirty odd years last July, if memory serves me correctly, and in those thirty odd years I have missed five meetings that I have a perfect knowledge of. Three times on our regular meeting day I was in the State of Indiana, and twice I was attending other associations, and to-day, on account of bad health, I am not there in body, but my mind has been there, and elsewhere, among the brethren I have been blessed to meet in my own State, your State, also Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio and Pennsyl-

vania, who are earnestly contending for that faith once delivered unto the saints. I am now nearing my seventy-fourth birthday in this poor world of sin and sorrow, and as I grow in years I hope I grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. This growth is not in harmony with the natural religionists of the day, but by an eye of faith the child of God sees more and more the imperfections of himself, and with the apostle Paul can say, In my flesh dwells no good thing. He realizes his own imperfection. He feels his poverty, and cries, Oh my leanness, my leanness! He feels to be a weak, sinful, empty worm of the earth, not worthy of the notice of any one, much less the God of high heaven, but through the riches of God's grace he is brought to know that though in himself he is poor, yet He who was rich became poor that we through his poverty might be made rich in faith, heirs of the kingdom of God. In himself he is vile and sinful, and so often feeling ashamed of himself; his vile disposition and the evil propensities of his sinful nature are continually cropping out to cause him to mourn. Now should we look on nature's side for evidence of an inward work? No, never. But when we see one who has professed to love the truth continue to absent himself from the church, or place of worship, to be found seated with the worldly religionists of the day, this would indicate to the church of Christ that such an one has not the love of God in his heart as he professed to have, also it is not a proof that such an one loves the brethren, but the opposite. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death."—1 John iii. 14. I am sure there is nothing I can do that would convince my brethren quicker that I had no love for them than for me to be mixing with the "ites" on our regular meeting days, or any other day. The church is a home for God's children. It is here our friends and kindred dwell; it is here we go to worship God, as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. It is here we meet to mingle our voices together with the redeemed of the Lord. Living faith moves the children of God to good works. "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."—James ii. 17. Paul says, The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do rejoice that my happiness does not depend upon my cultivation, nor on the power, skill or prudence of my own hands, but upon the very life of Christ, for he is my life, and because he lives I shall live also. Without faith it is impossible to please God. To live a life of faith is both sure and sweet, for faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, who was delivered for our offenses and was raised again for our justification.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

NEWTON, Ala., Aug. 26, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have received the August 15th issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but unfortunately I have missed the issue for August 1st. If you can arrange to send it I will indeed be glad. I have not been a subscriber long, but each paper brings such glad tidings to me that I can scarcely afford to miss a copy now. Brother Marion S. Brooks correctly ex-

pressed my sentiments toward the SIGNS when he wrote in the issue of July 1st, 1923, "I do not want to miss a single copy, for I love its writers, and believe they are the children of the true and living God." Brother Brooks states further, that he does not know whether there is another believer in his home county, in California, or not. How desolate that would be to me. Here in southeast Alabama we are blessed with numerous small churches, with shepherds who I feel contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and how sweet is the joyful sound in a believer's ear.

If all were like brother Brooks it would not have been necessary for the publishers to have made the appeal they were forced to make in the last issue with regard to finances. We realize that the publishers do not desire to deprive any believer of receiving the good old SIGNS, but it must be placed upon a sound business basis. We cannot afford to let this paper, which has been sounding the clarion call for almost a century, go down upon the rocks of financial distress. Each subscriber should pay what he is in arrears, and put his subscription upon a "cash in advance" basis. The publishers are already mailing free papers to the "poor of the flock." Now if they can afford to do this in a charitable way, it seems that we ought to pay at least our own subscription fees. You remember that the publishers state that the interest on back subscriptions alone would pay their running expenses.

I am not requested in any way to make this statement. I feel justice demands that each of us assist the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in a financial as well as a spiritual way.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

J. J. COLLINS.

SUMNER, Wash., Aug. 31, 1923.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—You may be surprised to receive this from me, a perfect stranger in the flesh, but I hope not in the Spirit, but when I read the "appeal" in the last SIGNS it just made my heart ache to think any Old Baptists would do as they are doing. I am fearful they are not God's dear children; if they were they would do what is right. I am poor, as the things of this world are concerned, but have always paid all my bills and tried to live a life of honor. I had wonderful examples in my dear departed father and mother. I do feel ashamed of those who profess to be Old Baptists and then do not pay for their SIGNS. Mr. Carter and I take it together, as we both live on the same ranch. I will be seventy-four years of age next month. I raise chickens and do washing for my neighbors' hired men to support myself, but still I have a little I am sending you. It is only a widow's mite, but accept it as from one who loves the truth; it cannot be too strong for me. Many times I have said I should much enjoy hearing you preach. I have heard many good ministers preach, as I lived in New York State until 1906. I was baptized by dear Elder Durand forty-five years ago. How we all loved him, and many others I could mention. I was very glad to see the associate editors had been added to the editorial staff, as I know the task was very heavy for you.

Please accept the inclosed to help a little with your expenses. I only wish it was ten times as much. I have written this to you, as I felt I would like to talk personally to you. I do hope the Lord will put it in the minds of those delinquents to pay up. I should think they would be ashamed when it comes out in print, but you did the right thing. I

hope you will be spared many years to publish the dear old SIGNS. May God give you strength and wisdom.

Your unworthy sister, saved by grace, if saved at all,

(MRS.) M. PATCHIN.

FORDYCE, Ark., Sept. 3, 1923.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I have just read your appeal to the subscribers of the SIGNS, and am hastening to do my "bit" toward helping to bring some relief from your present condition. The writer realizes what these moves mean, as he has had experiences along this line, and also the burdens brought on by a great number of accounts, which soon run into thousands of dollars. I do hope our people will seriously consider that it soon runs into thousands of dollars to carry from one to ten dollars on the subscription list. We do believe our dear Old Baptists are honest, but some perhaps are just a little "hardrun," and some just a little careless, and many of them unthoughtful of the burden and hardships that it brings upon one where there are so many delinquents. There have been many good businesses absolutely wrecked by the proprietors trying to carry these burdens rather than give offence to those who were in arrears. Old Baptists, let us ever be on the alert to see that we do not burden our people who are working so faithfully and earnestly to give us a good sound paper. Surely we all realize that this one is a paper that has to look to the subscription list for its existence. The SIGNS is free from worldly matter, no advertisements or fiction about it, but just pure genuine Bible, and experiences of God's humble poor, which are of much comfort to us, especially those who are in a more isolated state than some of us, who hear and see nothing, only as they get it from the columns of the SIGNS. My subscription does not run out until December 15, 1923, but I am going to send you two dollars to renew, two dollars for the "Poor of the flock" and two dollars renewal for H. E. Garner. Also, I will see if I can get several new subscribers at the coming associations, and help that much. I hope all readers of this paper will put their shoulders to the wheel and push. All pushing means light burdens, but all pulling down means destruction, so, brethren and sisters, let us push and not pull down.

Yours in hope,

V. R. HARRIS.

FT. WORTH, Texas, Aug. 25, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find money order for four dollars, two dollars to renew my subscription to the dear old SIGNS, which has been in our family since before I was born. My dear old grandmother, Effie J. Haynie, took it for years before my birth. I esteem it above all papers. The other two dollars is to send the dear old family paper to my dear old mother and father, who live on the plains, at Lubbock, Texas, and never get to hear the blessed truth as it is in Christ Jesus. If be the Lord's will, I would love to have some of the servants of the Lord go up in that country and preach for them. The address is W. N. Haynie, R. 2, Lubbock, Texas.

The Lord bless and strengthen you.

Yours in a good hope,

(MRS.) FRED SAMMONS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1923.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PSALMS XC. 10.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending two dollars to pay for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES another year, as I do not want to do without the paper, for it is all the preaching I have. I have not heard any preaching since last fall, and I do miss the meetings. How blessedly happy and thankful one should be when they have the sweet privilege of attending their meetings, and what a blessing the gift of hearing and knowing the gospel's joyful tidings.

Elder Lefferts, will you please give your views on the ninetieth Psalm, tenth verse? A friend claiming to believe Old Baptist doctrine, though not a member of any church, asked me to make this request. May we all be given an inquiring mind, and the desire to know more of the truth as it is in the blessed Jesus, and may he give us grace as he sees we have need of it, teach us to know our weakness and our helplessness and to trust more and more in Israel's God, for in him only are strength, mercy and peace, our All in all, and a very present help in trouble. May he cause us to run and not be weary, to walk and not faint, and to lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.

With love to all the household of faith, your sister, I hope,

ADDIE CHANDLER.

SULPHUR, Kentucky.

The passage about which our sister asks us to write reads thus: "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow: for it is soon cut off, and we fly away." This is a confession on the part of the sacred writer of the utter unprofitableness, vanity and emptiness of human life and all earthly existence. It is an acknowledgment before the Lord of disobedience and of just condemnation on account of sin. The beginning of this Psalm opens with that sublime assertion that God has been the dwelling-place of his people in all generations. This means that from the time of our first parents in the garden of Eden, down to the present, there never has been a time nor a generation but that God has had a people and he himself has been the dwelling-place of that elect people, that the one spiritual generation of almighty God runs through all the generations of men. After that declaration the psalmist goes still further back, and makes the still more wonderful assertion that God has been the dwelling-place of his people before the mountains were brought forth, or before ever he had formed the earth and the world, that from everlasting to everlasting his people have dwelt in God. The Psalm thus opens with the doctrine of election. Then, following upon this, from the third to the eleventh verses inclusive, there comes a recital of man's sin, disobedience and condemnation. God's power in turning man to destruction is confessed. God said to Adam, following upon his disobedience, Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return. This sentence, or judgment, passed upon man because of sin is what is referred to by the psalmist when he says, "Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men." That is, God says, Return to dust, and they return to dust. Men have been returning to dust for ages past, and still do, all because of sin and disobedience. "Thou carriest them away as with a flood." Millions of earth's

children, yes, tens of thousands of millions, have returned to dust since that divine edict went forth in the beginning that they must do so. Surely, as with a flood, the generations of men have been swept away. The shortness and nothingness of human life are portrayed in the sixth verse: "In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth." Now, from the seventh to the eleventh verses comes the description of God's Israel while under the law. It must be remembered that these expressions in these five verses are true of the elect in a state of condemnation under the law, but not true of them in a gospel or grace state. Under the law, all their days were passed away in God's wrath; now under the gospel of the grace of God, all our days are passed in his mercy. Then all their iniquities were set before him, and even their secret sins were exposed to the light of his face, but now since Jesus has come in the flesh, and put away the sins of his people by the one offering of himself, God has removed their sins from them as far as the east is from the west, he has blotted out their transgressions as a thick cloud from before his face, and their sins and iniquities will he remember against them no more forever. Thus we see that in this ninetieth Psalm, the expressions from the seventh to the eleventh verses inclusive were true legally and in the past condemned state of the elect of God, but they are not true gospelly in this day and dispensation of grace wherein God, for Jesus' sake, has forgiven his people all their transgressions. The days of our years are here said to be seventy years, and if, by reason of strength, they be eighty years, it amounts to nothing but just ten more years of labor and sorrow. Some of God's elect travel under the law longer than others, some bear the burden of condemnation on account of their sins longer than others. While some do this figuratively seventy years and others eighty years, it all amounts to the same thing: all alike learn the utter unprofitableness of human nature and the vanity and emptiness of all human things. Those who labor under the law longer than others simply experience the wrath of God longer than others, and have just that much more labor and sorrow. It can never be anything other than labor and sorrow to a child of God under the law, it can never be labor and rest, never labor and freedom, but always labor and sorrow and bondage. It is only as the Lord teaches his people to number their days (twelfth verse), and shows them how frail they are, that they are made to apply for the true wisdom which is of God in Christ. Then it is, like the prophets and holy men of old under the law, they beg for their Lord's return, that he may have mercy upon them, that he may wash them clean in the fountain opened up in the house of David for all uncleanness, that fountain which the dying thief rejoiced to see in his day, and in which in our day, we, too, hope to be made clean from all corruption. From the fifteenth to last verse of this Psalm it assumes a different tone, a crying out for the appearing of the Lord, and a desire to be unclothed of their filthiness and clothed upon with the beauty, that is, righteousness, of the Lord God; desiring, too, that the Lord would, when he should come, establish upon his people the work of their hands. All the types and shadows under the law were things made with hands. The desire, therefore, was that Christ should come, and thus bring to pass and settle upon his people the true spiritual meaning or substance of all those typical and figurative things which their hands had made. There is a whole sermon right here in this thought, but time and space forbid us to enter upon it now. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Deacon R. M. Strong.)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Ebenezer Church, of New York city, at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, June 6th, 7th and 8th, 1923, to the several churches of which she is composed, sends love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Having been blessed with the privilege of meeting once more in an assembly of the saints, according to our annual custom, we would express gratitude to God for his continued goodness and mercy whereby we have been kept in the love of the truth, and in the highly valued fellowship of those who continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine. In addressing you at this time, we desire to be directed by the Spirit of truth, so that our communication may be suited to the condition and need of all to whom it may come. We will call your attention to the language of the prophet as recorded in Isaiah lxii. 10: "Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people." It is evident from the language employed that a commission is given to certain persons, and that they are commanded by the Lord to do a certain work. We shall therefore do well to inquire who are the persons thus commissioned, for until we settle that point the message given must be covered with much obscurity. In this matter the word of God must be our only guide, and if under its clear shining light we are enabled to discern what those bright beams manifest we shall not be at a loss to ascertain who are the characters referred to, for we think we shall find them to be none other than the servants of the Lord, the ministers of Jesus Christ. Surely it is to these highly favored men of God that this commission is given, and it is they who have authority and power from him to do the work set before them. It was spoken in prophecy of our Lord, "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." This prophecy the apostle quotes, "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." The gracious Lord bade his disciples to tarry in the city of Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high, and assured them they should be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. The gift, then, and promise of the Holy Spirit, was that which he received, and poured out. The apostle, explaining the nature of these spiritual gifts which the Lord gave unto men after his ascension, says, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." As we know, apostles and prophets have ceased, and their ministration is closed. Evangelists, pastors and teachers still remain for the benefit of the church of God, for the gospel is still to be preached, the work of the ministry is still to be carried on, the body of Christ is still to be edified. Thus in the church of Christ there still remain those who simply preach the gospel, without having a settled ministry; some are pastors, settled over churches, and others teachers, to whom the Lord has especially given a gift of instruction to open the truth and establish the people of God in it. The

ministers of Christ are also spoken of as stewards, and especially "stewards of the mysteries of God." To them is committed the care and keeping of the mysteries of the gospel. The steward is the highest officer in the household. To his care is committed the management of his master's property. So, in a spiritual sense, the servant of Christ has an oversight of the church of Christ, for the Holy Ghost has made him an overseer to feed the church of God. This he does ministerially by bringing forth out of the treasury of his heavenly Master things new and old, and as "allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel" and as having "that good thing committed unto him," his office is carefully to guard, vigilantly protect, and as occasion serves, to bring out for the food and clothing of the household of faith the deep mysteries of heavenly truth. They are also called laborers. Thus our Lord called them, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers few." So the apostle speaks of himself and his fellow ministers, We are laborers together with God. They labor in word and doctrine for the good of God's people; they break up the fallow ground, and plow and sow, trusting that their labors may be owned and blessed of the Lord. In the portion of the word under consideration the servants of Christ are also addressed as invested with a peculiar commission which may be called that of leaders, for we feel sure it is to his servants that the Lord here speaks, as he does in other parts of Scripture, as, for instance, where he bids them strengthen ye the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees, and again, Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God. This would seem plain in the light of the Scripture under consideration, for we read in a preceding verse, I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day or night. They are represented as going before God's people, leading the way, showing them the path in which they should walk, clearing away the obstacles which lie in the path, and opening the gates one after another, that the saints of the Most High following in their train may successively go through each gate, and so entering the heavenly city (a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God), find rest and peace. This brings us to the message given them, and the work to perform with God's guidance and blessing. Their first work then, is to go through the gates, and this is expressed in a very emphatic manner. The Lord doubles the command. He does not merely say, Go through the gates, but, Go through, go through. The servant of God, then, must himself pass through each gate, that the people of God may follow him. Now what is the first gate that he and they must pass through? The "strait gate," that of which our Lord declares, "Strait is the gate." This strait gate is narrow, distressful, full of difficulties (as it were), while broad is the way that leadeth to destruction. It would seem that this strait gate might represent the new birth, and only subjects of this new birth ever have, or ever will, enter through this strait gate.

What is the second gate? for the word reads, "Go through, go through the gates." The gate of faith, for we read of God opening the door of faith to the Gentiles. Again the apostle speaks of his preaching at Ephesus, "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me." This brings us (so to speak) to the third gate, which we will call the gate of hope. Of this we read in the prophecy of Hosea,

where the promise is, "And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope." This door (or gate) of hope is the same as the apostle calls "a good hope through grace," and which he declares to be an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. This brings us to another gate which has still to be opened and passed through, and a blessed one it is, for it gives admission to the palace of the King in Zion. This gate is the gate of love. The apostle in speaking of the fruit of the Spirit in contradistinction to the works of the flesh, mentions faith, hope and charity, (or love), and says the greatest of these is charity, or, in other words, love. The apostle John tells us that we love God because he first loved us. Had he not loved his people with an everlasting love in Christ Jesus his Son, and chosen them in him from all eternity, his people would have had no knowledge of God as their God and Father in the Son of his love. Faith, hope and love are all needed throughout the earthly pilgrimage of the Lord's dear people, but in God's appointed time, faith is changed to sight, and hope to fruition (or realization), and love abides forever. We have now gone through the gates. There is none beyond the last, for "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." But this is not the only work that the servants of God are commissioned to perform. The message to them goes on, "Prepare ye the way of the people." The "people" here spoken of are the people of God, the people whom the Lord has formed for himself that they may shew forth his praise. These people are represented in a state wherein they need spiritual guidance. But how do the servants of God ministerially execute this office? They are told there must be a work of grace upon the heart; that Christ must be revealed and formed in them the hope of glory. This is the marking out of the way, a setting it out, which is the first thing done in making a road. They also prepare the way by proclaiming Christ as "the way, the truth, and the life" of his people, and thus as good workmen who need not be ashamed, they make the way plain to all who are given eyes to see in the day of the Lord's power. But there is still further work to do, expressly enjoined upon them: "Cast up, cast up, the highway." The Lord's people desire a "highway" upon which they may safely travel, and this the servants of God are called upon ministerially to cast up. When they bring forth the Deity and Sonship of Christ (Son of God and Son of man) and lay this divine truth before them it is casting up a highway whose foundation is broad and good, for it is the foundation of the apostles and prophets, "for other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." But the servants of the Lord have still other work to do. When they have gone through the gates, prepared the way of the people, and cast up the highway, they have to "gather out the stones." But what are these stones? Not the stones which they have laid to cast up the highway. No, this is not the work the Lord's servants are called to do, for they are workmen who need not be ashamed of their workmanship, their Master, or his commission. These stones which they have "to gather out" are stumbling-blocks of sin, Satan and unbelief, thrown upon the King's highway after it is cast up, so that they block the road, or cause the children of God to stumble in it. The servants of God, then, have to gather out these stones

which impede the road. That this is the meaning of the command would seem evident from similar instruction which the Lord has elsewhere given. "Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumblingblock out of the way of my people." Then follows, Lift up a standard for the people. The standard which the servant of God is to lift up is the standard of the gospel, which he has to wave on high, that it may be a guide for the people to show them the path in which they are to walk. This standard is lifted up in the very beginning of the way to show where the path begins, and it floats all along the road to the very end of the way to show where the path ends, for Jesus is the way, the whole of the way, and every part of the way, and this as Prophet, Priest and King. As then, the servant of the Lord lifts up the standard of gospel truth, holds on high the banner of truth and love, it shows the people of God, for whose benefit it is displayed, that this is the way in which they are to walk. When, too, they wander and stray from the path, as the servant of the Lord lifts up the standard before their eyes, it gives them a rallying point once more to bring their feet upon the King's highway, for there, and there alone, the royal standard floats, and there, and there alone, do they feel safe under its ample folds. Amen.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
R. M. STRONG, Clerk.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in September (30th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Ebenezer Church, of New York city, convened in the meetinghouse of the New Vernon Church, New Vernon, Sullivan Co., N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 6th, 7th and 8th, 1923, to our sister associations with which we correspond, sendeth greetings and love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been according to the loving-kindness and tender mercy of our covenant-keeping God that our unprofitable lives have been spared and we permitted to meet again your messengers in an associated capacity. We value your correspondence, and desire a continuance of the same. We feel the Lord's servants have come to us declaring Jesus, and him crucified, as the way, the truth and the life, and so long as they come preaching the truth in love we shall gladly welcome them in our midst.

The churches comprising this Association have decided to unite in entertaining the Association next year at New Vernon, Sullivan Co., N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1924, where we shall be glad to meet your messengers again.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
R. M. STRONG, Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

BROTHER Davis Burch wishes his correspondents to address him at 1416 D St., Bellingham, Washington, where he is now located.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, at the home of the bride's parents near Powellville, Md., September 4th, 1923, Richard Temple Walker and Margaret Gertrude Laws, both of Gastonia, N. C.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mary Elizabeth Halbrook Hatcher was born September 27th, 1857, and departed this life January 26th, 1923, aged 65 years, 3 months and 29 days. She was married to J. R. Hatcher January 3rd, 1876, by Mr. Sanders Woods. She died at the home of her eldest son, Alfred Hatcher, 1402 Laurel St., Nashville, Tenn. Her body was brought from Nashville and was buried in the graveyard on Richland Creek, five miles northwest of McEwen, Tenn. She joined the Old School Baptist Church at Richland meeting-house about 1882, and in 1901 she stood firm in the faith and grace of God when the Conditional Baptists departed from the doctrine of God, and she died a firm believer in the faith of the Old School Baptists, having lived a faithful member of the same up to her death. She was loved by all the saints of God as far as she was known. She loved to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and her Bible. When she talked over the telephone she always gave her name Mrs. J. R. Hatcher. Yes, she loved the sacred tie that bound us together in union. She often spoke of that lovely union of Christ and the church, and near the end of her pilgrimage said, "O Jesus, sweet Jesus, I know that I am in thy hands, and I am bound to go." How often we have sat together and talked on the holy Scriptures, and read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES! Now I, her weeping husband, am left alone to mourn my great loss. We lived together forty-seven years and twenty-three days. She was the mother of twelve children (among which one was born dead), seven boys and five girls, namely, Alfred Hatcher, Katie Ragan, Rittie Robertson, Thomas Hatcher, Isabell Simpson, Francis Hurt, James H. Hatcher, Elisha Hatcher, Maudie Greenwell, Ernest Hatcher and Lemuel Hatcher, with the darling baby born dead. There never could be a more devoted wife, nor a more loving mother. I am not able to say too much for my darling wife, for she was so good and kind to me. She loved us all, yet her health had been bad for several years. She held to the sweet doctrine of the "absolute predestination of all things," and it seemed that this doctrine to her was a sweet revelation, like it is to all the saints who sincerely believe it. My dear loved saints, may God give you a spirit of prayer for me, a poor old sinner in hope of a better resurrection. For only a few more days I am left to travel the path of thorns and then I hope to meet my darling wife (not male or female) and sing highest honors to the eternal King and Lord of lords in that haven of rest for evermore. May God bless you all.

Your sorrowful brother, if one at all,

J. R. HATCHER.

P. S.—Dear loved saints, if God gives you a mind to write me, I feel that I would appreciate it.

J. R. H.

MEMORIALS.

(Snow Hill Church.)

Whereas, it has pleased God in his all-wise providence to remove from us, and, as we hope and believe, take unto himself our beloved pastor, **Elder B. F. Coulter,** which cast gloom over and among us, as we did so grieve to lose him and his sweet comforting preaching, but be it

Resolved, our way is not God's way, until at least he makes us to realize, and subjects us to his will, and much as we have been grieved by our loss, we feel to say that the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord, and be it

Resolved, we hope that it will please our Lord to be with and comfort our dear sister Coulter and family in their grief, and that we all will be made satisfied to rejoice in Elder Coulter's memory, and be made to realize that our loss is his eternal gain, and that we should not be so selfish as to wish him back, and should become reconciled to God's will in this and all things, is what we should try to pray for, hoping that it may please God to bring us to truthfully say, "Thy will be done."

Resolved, to send a copy to our dear sister Coulter, and a copy to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Approved at our church meeting September 1st, 1923, at Snow Hill, Md.

G. E. COULBOURN, Clerk.

WHEREAS, it has proved the will of God, our heavenly Father, by death to remove from the field of labor in the gospel ministry our dearly loved brethren, **Elders John Clark,** of New York, and **B. F. Coulter,** of Pennsylvania, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we, the churches composing the Warwick Old School Baptist Association, mourn our loss.

RESOLVED, that we do deeply sympathize with our kindred in Christ composing the several churches served by them as dearly loved and devoted pastors.

RESOLVED, that these Resolutions form part of and be published with the Minutes of this session of the Association, and in the "Signs of the Times," also that a copy be transmitted to our beloved sisters Clark and Coulter.

R. LESTER DODSON, Moderator.

R. M. STRONG, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Elder C. W. Anderson, Ark., $5.00; J. H. Jones, Ga., $1.00; Elder V. R. Harris, Ark., $2.00; Mrs. M. Patchin, Wash., $5.00.

MEETINGS.

The yearly meeting of the Messongoes Church is appointed to be held on the third Sunday, and Saturday afternoon before, in September, 1923, beginning Saturday at 2:30 o'clock p. m. Elder H. C. Ker expects to be with us at this meeting. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. For any further information write to John Wm. Byrd, Hallwood, Va.

J. CORDER MELLOTT, Pastor.

The yearly meeting of the Nassaongo Church is appointed to be held on the fourth Sunday, and Saturday afternoon before, in September, 1923, beginning Saturday at 2:30 o'clock p. m. Elder R. Lester Dodson expects to be with us at this meeting. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. For any further information address the writer, at 200 Wicomico St., Salisbury, Md.

J. CORDER MELLOTT, Pastor.

The yearly meeting of the Indiantown Church is appointed to he held on the first Sunday, and Saturday before, in October, 1923, beginning Saturday at 2:30 o'clock p. m. Elder C. W. Vaughn expects to be with us at this meeting. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. For further information write George F. Adkins, R. R. 2, Pittsville, Md.

J. CORDER MELLOTT, Pastor.

The Choctawhatchie Association, of the Primitive Baptist faith and order, will convene at Bethel Church, near Blue Springs, Barbour County, Alabama, on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1923.

The Conecuh River Primitive Baptist Association is to convene with Hopewell Church, near Goshen, Pike County, Alabama, on Saturday before the second Sunday in October, 1923.

The Ebenezer Association convenes with Sweet Water Church, Crenshaw County, Alabama, on Saturday before the first Sunday in October, 1923.

The Western Primitive Baptist Association is to convene with Bethel Church, Early County, Georgia, on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1923.

The Patsalgia Primitive Baptist Association convenes at Pilgrim's Rest Church, Covington County, Alabama, on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1923.

The Claybank Association of the Primitive faith and order convenes with Pleasant Ridge Church, Coffee County, Alabama, on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1923.

J. J. COLLINS.

The Sideling Hill and Fairview Churches will jointly hold, the Lord willing, a two days meeting, Saturday and Sunday, October 13th and 14th, 1923, at Needmore, Fulton County, Pennsylvania. Those coming by rail will come on Friday before the meeting to Hancock, Md., either over the Baltimore & Ohio or Western Maryland R. R., and will please previously notify Deacon J. C. Mellott, Needmore, Pa., so as to be met and conveyed to the place of meeting. All brethren and ministers in accord with us are invited to meet with us.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 17th, 18th and 19th, 1923. Trains will be met at Herndon Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning, leaving 36th and M Streets, Washington, D. C. Time of trains not given in this notice because schedule is likely to change before October. Brethren and ministers of our correspondence, and all others who are in fellowship with us, are invited to meet with us.

K. C. SPINDLE, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Church will no longer hold meetings at Park and 5th Streets, but for the present will hold them at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 494 East 10th Street, Riverside, California. We hope to have a place again soon, and when we do we will appreciate having our notice with you.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California.

C. S. MILLER.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

DROPSY REMEDY.

Dropsy remedy, purely vegetable, removes from one to two gallons of water in a day. Shortness of breath quickly relieved. Cures the worst cases of Dropsy in all its forms, and after being given up by the best doctors to die. Specially efficacious in Dropsy of the Heart. Best and cheapest known remedy, only $1.00 a package, six packages $5.00 by mail postpaid, and free to very poor people who are really unable to pay. Trial package free to any address when name, age, address and symptoms of patient are given, with ten one-cent stamps.

ELDER C. W. ANDERSON.

WITTER, Madison Co., Ark.

I know from my own observation that this is an effective remedy for dropsy, and I take pleasure in recommending it to physicians and patients.

ELDER S. HASSELL.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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ASSOCIATE EDITORS:

Elders R. Lester Dodson, George Ruston, Chas. W. Vaughn.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

MATTOON, Ill., Sept. 3, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Some weeks ago in looking over an old file of letters I came across one written nearly thirty years ago by our late brother, H. Cox, of Ghent, Ky., whose comforting and instructive articles often appeared in the SIGNS many years ago, and after reading it twice over with renewed interest and encouragement, I am sending it to you for publication, feeling sure it will be read with interest by many of the present readers of our family paper. Then the dear old brother, who was one of the fathers in Israel, having passed his fourscore years, was, like the old patriarch Abraham, looking for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. The letter was full of interest at the time it was received, but much more intensely so now, as I, too, have passed my four and a quarter score years, and can gaze a little more intelligently on the sublime subject that aroused heavenly emotions, and thus prompted the brother's message so long ago, and it is no marvel that the rereading of it thrilled my heart and intensified my faith in the unsearchable love of God in the rich provisions he has made for the comfort and security of the people whom he has chosen for an inheritance; a people who have no abiding city here, but are looking for another, which is none other than Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever. Yes, of the city of the great King, the new Jerusalem, which cometh down from God out of heaven, and for her safe defense salvation hath God appointed for walls and bulwarks, and of the majesty and greatness of it, and the excellency thereof, the tempest-tossed and wayworn pilgrims have had a sweet foretaste in their experimental translation from the dismal night of sin and death into the glorious light and liberty of God's dear Son. All this, and much more, had been taught the dear old father in Israel by the Spirit that searches all things; yea, the deep things of God, and reveals them unto babes, poor, helpless and needy, as he felt himself to be. Yes, the blessed faith that God had given Abraham became an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, and enabled him to see as through a glass darkly, as all the Lord's people see, while in the flesh, the land that is afar off. At times we long

to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Brother Cox long years ago responded to the Master's call and entered the city wherein dwelleth righteousness, which he had so long and patiently waited for. The "substance of things hoped for" has become a wholesome, immortal and unperishable reality. Now I am looking for the culmination of the same blessed hope in the sweet, joyous, unending rest that remains for the people of God. It is quite probable this may be my last message to the scattered flock, readers of the dear old family paper, that I have read for over sixty-eight years, and now, brethren, one and all, let me say in the language of Peter, in his second epistle, first chapter, wherein he speaks of the great and precious promise given unto his brethren, and of their having escaped the corruption that is in the world. He tells them "Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." Grace, mercy and peace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and may both publishers and editors of the SIGNS be constantly imbued with the sincere love, devotion and heavenly regard for the things that make for peace, looking heavenward for guidance, as did their predecessors, is the sincere desire of one of the least of the kingdom, if one at all.

Your brother, and companion in tribulation, J. G. SAWIN.

GHENT, Ky., March 26, 1895.

DEAR BROTHER J. G. SAWIN:—Yours of the 18th instant came duly to hand, and would have been answered sooner, but my feeble condition, both mentally and physically, has deterred me from making the effort, and my wife is also in very poor health, which oppresses me very much. With these encumbrances upon us I am made to realize that you, and other correspondents to whom I may write, will be poorly paid for reading what I may offer in answer to the letters addressed to me, one of which was yours of the 18th instant, which came laden with the ever-glorious truth of the gospel. Ah, how true. Abraham sought a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. But, like that ancient servant, the children of God walk by faith. How precious the thought that faith is the gift of God, and all the gifts and callings of God are without repentance. They are bestowed in love upon the chosen people of God, and his love, like all his great and wonderful attributes, never changes. When lifted above the vanities of a sin-cursed world and led into the sweet enjoyment of that fruit of the Spirit they greatly rejoice to know that their ever-to-be-adored Redeemer is the builder and maker of that great city. That city is none other than the church; that church of which the apostle speaks, saying, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." It is the same of which our Lord spoke, saying, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Then it was appropriate for Abraham to seek a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. He while here below entered into that great city, but he only dimly, while clothed in the flesh, beheld its glories and beauties. Many figures of speech and symbols are

given to the saints in the sacred oracles of God to present to them the celestial beauties of that great city, that church. John beheld her when she shone forth in heavenly glory above the law in the gospel heaven, and said, "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." Ah, how the heart of that ancient saint must have pulsated with the purest emotions of heavenly delight and joy when gazing upon her, who is the bride, the Lamb's wife, standing with the law under her feet, clothed with the perfect righteousness of her ever-to-be-adored Redeemer, and you, dear brother, no doubt often when proclaiming to God's dear people the sublime truth of the gospel rise far above all sublunary things and gaze with almost angelic delight upon your present and future home: the kingdom of God's dear Son. While clothed with mortality it is your present home, and by the light of divine grace you see the King in his beauty, and behold the land that is very far off, and you proclaim to the saints with irrepressible joy the beauties and glories that shine forth in the character of your glorious Lord and King, and you give to them in heavenly vision the unfading glories of that land which is very far off, into which you, dear brother, after a few years of service in that kingdom here below, and after a few more years of sorrow and sadness, will enter to go out no more. Sometimes this poor, little, feeble one has a glimmering hope that that glorious land will be his future and eternal home, and while tottering on the verge of the tomb he sometimes is made to rejoice in knowing that hope which is given to the dear saints while here below. "As an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever." He entered that vail, which was the vail of death, and there as the great High Priest made one great offering. He forever perfected all them that are sanctified, set apart in him, chosen in him before the foundation of the world. By that one great offering, which was his own sacred body and his own precious blood, he redeemed all the inhabitants of that great city which Abraham sought, and made them a peculiar people zealous of good works. Then surely he is the builder and maker of that city. He is God, and his work is perfect, therefore when he entered that vail, when he made that one great offering for sin, all for whom he suffered were redeemed from all iniquity while clothed with mortality. They have sorrow, pain, disease and death, all of which are the result of sin that reigns in their mortal bodies. But all their sorrows and weeping, yea, and death, are given to them in love and mercy. All their spiritual poverty is evidence to them that they are dwelling in a land of humility. But for their comfort their Lord hath said to them, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." But how hard it is for us poor mortals to look upon these afflictions, especially death, as blessings. Yet the apostle said to us, "All things are your's; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are your's; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." All these things are given to the inhabitants of that great city which hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God. They have this life that now is, and the promise of the life to come.

They have death, with the blessed assurance of a blessed and glorious immortality, when this mortal shall have put on immortality, and this corruptible shall have put on incorruption.

Perhaps I have wearied you with these feeble thoughts, but the theme is so deep, rich and profound that after reading your letter, in which you spoke so beautifully of the faith of Abraham, I could not refrain from meditating upon it. This may be the last letter I shall ever write you. Be that as it may, I humbly entreat you to remember me in your solemn invocations at the throne of grace, that I may have the presence of our glorious Redeemer while I stay amidst these scenes of sin and sorrow, and his loving arms may be beneath me. I bid a last farewell to you and earthly things, and may you be blessed with health and sweet faith yet many years to feed the blessed inhabitants of that great city with the great truth of the gospel, the unsearchable riches of Christ, is my earnest prayer. Please write me when you have leisure. Pardon me for having written you as feeble a letter as this, but you know that feebleness, both mentally and physically, belongs to those who have passed their four-score years, and believe me affectionately yours, H. COX.

LILLIE, La.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending two dollars to partly pay my subscription to the SIGNS, and I desire to thank you for your kindness in sending me the paper. I have often desired to comfort God's little children, and each time I get the SIGNS and read the good letters it seems to renew this desire, but as I make the attempt I fear it may be of the flesh, and if so, it will be of no comfort to any of God's children. From some cause my mind has taken hold of a portion of Scripture recorded in the book of Job: "Doth Job fear God for nought?" This language was uttered by the devil himself. Job, I understand, represents the whole church of God in all her prosperity, trials and afflictions. The devil is ever ready to accuse God's servants, saying that the Lord had blessed Job. Exercised with the spirit of popular religion, he asks the question, "Doth Job fear God for nought?" Supposing that Job was hired to fear, as much as to say I, or any one else so blessed, would fear as long as he was hedged, but supposing Job was, like himself, an enemy to God. "Put forth thy hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face." We feel sure every word the devil said, and every move that he makes, is that the power and love of God might be manifest toward His people. Then we are not to think for a moment that the devil had influence with God, to induce him to give one of his servants over to be afflicted to gratify the devil, neither was God's purpose to see whether or not Job would curse him, or whether the devil told the truth or not, for he is God and changes not. There is not even a shadow of a change, and God was not any wiser in the end, for as he says, As I thought, so shall it be. So he was not mistaken in what he thought concerning Job (and what he said). "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in all the earth?" Truly there is none like the children of God; they were chosen before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. ("A perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil.") I take the position that Job's case was for his good, the overthrow of Satan's plan,

and his words, and God's eternal praise and glory. The devil himself admitted that Job did fear God, but asked the question, "Doth Job fear God for nought?" If it were for the great blessings that he feared, why, after all was gone, did he bless the name of the Lord? God's people fear him from a principle of love, and they love him because he first loved them, and when this love is manifest they love him and fear him. As a child loves its parents, and desires to please them, so one who loves God also desires to please him. In spirit they do love, serve and obey him, but they are carnal, sold under sin, and every day in their carnal nature they are disobedient. The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, but in the sight of Jesus, the blessed Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world, they are blameless before God; their sins have been atoned for. Jesus' precious blood cleanseth them from all sin, and this is why it can be truly said that there is none like him in all the earth. The only difference I can see in Job, or in the elect and nonelect, is the difference which God through mercy and grace made in his decree, which has gone forth out of his mouth, saying he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Did not God make Job? Did he not make all the rest? Then who made the difference? There is a difference, for there is none like him in all the earth. Then, unless we charge God with folly, Job possessed nothing good, or any quality, which was not given him, and the only reason given in my weak understanding, is given in Jesus' language where he says, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, and, Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. When the armor wherein we trust is taken away we come to where the apostles did: "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." This was where Job was when he said, Though he slay me yet will I trust in him. When God's people are stripped of self, and fleshly confidence, then they truly trust in him. Oh that I could always trust in him and serve him in spirit and in truth.

I have not touched the subject and do not feel able to. All who read this, and have a mind to pray for the needy, pray for me. May the Lord bless the entire family of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Do with this as you see fit.

Your little, weak, unworthy brother, if one at all,

R. W. RHODES.

COLUMBUS, Ga., Aug. 21, 1923.

ELDER L. H. HARDY—DEAR BROTHER: —If I dare claim this sacred relationship. I have read and reread your article in the last SIGNS, August 15th number, and desire to tell you I enjoyed it, and felt to be much comforted. We are strangers in the flesh, but I hope kindred in spirit, for I feel to hope we are looking to and trusting in the great and good God, who is almighty, to whom all majesty, power, dominion, honor and glory belong. This is all my hope, that Christ Jesus is my perfect obedience, my strength and my Redeemer. Cry aloud, and spare not, declaring the whole counsel of God. As you said, it is as much needed this day as in the prophets' day. The truth as it is in Jesus is all that is of any worth, for thereby the children of Israel are fed and

comforted, and guided in the strait and narrow way, turning neither to the right nor the left. There is but one way, all others are byways, and lead us into error. Preach the word, the glorious doctrine of Christ and the apostles. Salvation is of the Lord. Salvation by grace alone. God's sovereignty, his absolute predestination in all things that take place, saying, As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand. But, as you said, do not get in a place where you cannot be heard, or tell it to a brother in his private home who you know agrees with you, but preach it from the pulpit, preach it wherever the Lord sends you. Cry aloud, and spare not. The undershepherds know not where the sound will go, nor who will hear. The God of Israel will direct the sound to his hungry poor, who look to him alone for sustenance. Paul told Timothy to "preach sound doctrine," the bread of life, for to the Israel of the Lord this alone will satisfy and comfort. You say the time has come when Israel will not endure sound doctrine, they will not follow the word of God in humbling themselves, and esteeming others better than themselves. Surely they are not looking to and following the meek and lowly Jesus, who humbled himself and became obedient, even unto death. He said, Follow me. He went low down in the valley and there he learned obedience, and we must learn it in this same way. Truly we must be in the same school, in the same class, to learn the same lesson, and be taught by the same teacher. This is the old school. How restful and glorious the truth that all things are for him, and through him, and to him, and by him all things consist. "I am the Lord; I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." How sad to see the churches divided, contending against this blessed doctrine. May we be given the desire to pray unceasingly that the Lord would grant us grace to keep his statutes, and with patience run the race that is set before us, knowing this: that which is of the Lord will stand, and that which is of man will come to naught. We must have no selfish desires in this matter. We must endeavor only to honor and magnify his glorious and wonderful name, praying for the peace and welfare of Zion. Surely our eyes would be lifted up, and we would see no man save Jerusalem, the One altogether lovely, the Prince of peace. Oh, I thank the Lord for his dear ministers, who are earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints; yea, declaring the whole counsel of God, in love, thereby feeding the sheep and lambs. There is no church of Predestinarian Baptists near this big city, so you see my isolated condition. I am living in a heathen land, so to speak, but God, who is rich in mercy, and doeth all things right, hath placed me here, and I must not complain, yet I long to be with my brethren and sisters of the same faith and hope, mingling our voices in songs of praise to the Lord of glory, who has done all for his people, and has given us to taste of his goodness and mercy, and has taught us to look to him alone for salvation in time and eternity. Jesus hath done all things for us; his work is perfect and finished. Only God is good, then how can we, who are accustomed to do evil, do good? Paul says, In me (that is, in my flesh) there dwelleth no good thing. But God worketh in us both the will and do of his own good pleasure, for only his works in us praise and glorify his holy name. His glory he will not divide with another. But, dear brother, we surely will do all the good works he works in us. There are some who claim the name of Old School Baptists, who will not preach nor hear the blessed and

glorious doctrine of God's predestination of all things. They say that he predestinated the good, but not the evil things, saying this would make God the author of sin. Is not this conditional salvation, making salvation conditional in part upon their supposed obedience to the holy commands of God? They must either hold their obedience is perfect, or that the divine commandments are imperfect and will accept of faulty obedience. This was the blindness of the Pharisees, who trusted in themselves and their self-righteousness. They deny both the complete fullness and sufficiency of Christ's atonement, and the need of it, claiming that they can obey in part, thereby putting in conditions in salvation. All salvation, and its joys and blessings, come to us through Christ's atoning sufferings unto death for our sins. With thanks to God for his unspeakable gift, we turn away from this bloodless atonement and faithless salvation, to the "fountain filled with blood, drawn from Immanuel's veins, and sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains," and in joyful faith and praise we say, Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be dominion and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Brother, I only meant to tell you how much I enjoyed your writings. May the Lord give you the mind to write often for the comfort and edifying of his scattered flock. Throw the mantle of charity over these scattering thoughts of a poor sinner saved by grace alone, if saved at all. God bless you and keep you, and all his dear ones everywhere.

Yours in christian love.

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., Aug. 26, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As we are at last permanently located at 1416 D St., Bellingham, Wash., I want the SIGNS sent to me here. I much enjoy reading the SIGNS, for the correspondents and editors are surely taught of the Lord, if I have been, but I am fearful at times that I know nothing as I should, and I am made to wonder at times whether there is anything in it, or if it is a fairy tale, and I am deceived in it all. Oh the infidelity of my mind, how treacherous it is, and how deceitful is my heart, and desperately wicked, who can know it? I get so discouraged trying to live like a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus should live, that I pray and long for him to come quickly and take me home, and more especially when I try to deal with worldly people who do not hesitate to lie, cheat, or even to steal, but that does not hurt like the pain we feel when brethren whom we have learned to love prove untrue and turn their backs upon us, and think more of this world's goods than the tie that binds. But dear old brother Paul tells us all about this, for he had all these, and more, to contend with, and when the time came for him to depart and be with Christ he could say, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is a crown of righteousness laid up for me, and not for me only, but for all those who wait for his appearing. But am I waiting with that expectation and hope that a child of God should have? If I am, it is all of His love and mercy, for there is not now, nor ever has been, one redeeming feature in me. But I do love God's dear little ones, and love to talk to and with them, and to read the communications and editorials in the dear SIGNS, and the many precious promises in the Bible seem to me when reading them to

be personal letters to me, though I am the least, if one at all, of God's little ones, for I come far short of the pattern Jesus set for his followers or disciples. He that would be my disciple, let him first deny himself; take up his cross and follow me daily. It is easy enough to follow where honor and praise are accorded us, but when reproach and rejection come we shrink from them, and rebel, but He hid not his face from shame and spitting; he bore our griefs and carried our shame all the days of old. He was forsaken of all his friends, yet he loved us with an everlasting love, and was obedient even unto death; faithful and true. Are we faithful and true to him? Do we deny ourselves? Do we take up our cross and follow him in our daily walk? I, for one, must lay my hand upon my mouth, and cry, Unclean, although I have the desire to follow him, and grieve because I am not able to do so. But I am thankful for the desire I have to follow him, and my daily prayer is, Lord, make me submissive to thy holy will, and I try to be, but am so weak and prone to sin that I cannot take one step aright without him, in fact I can do nothing without him.

A little one in hope,

DAVIS BURCH.

CRYSTAL CITY, Texas, March 5, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am in southwest Texas, where I cannot hear any preaching; no Baptists down here but my wife and me, and the only preaching we get is through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and we are always glad to see it come. My wife was called to Dallas several days ago, to one of the girls who was very sick, and I spent most of the afternoon reading the SIGNS. We read and reread them. Sometimes when reading the good articles from different ones telling my experience so well, I wonder how so many people all over these United States have the same experience. I feel sometimes that I get so low down, so vile, I wonder if a child of God ever gets as mean as I feel to be. I think I surely am deceived, and have deceived many others. I think back to 1887, when I felt myself to be a lost and condemned sinner, for some time thinking every day I would soon be in torment reaping my reward, feeling that was the only place for such a sinner as I was. At last one morning when plowing I felt my time had come, and I had about given up all hope, when I said, Lord, I have quit all my meanness, and I have tried to do good, so why not change me as well as any one else? I heard a voice, it seemed to me as plainly as I ever heard anything, say, When a man does that he is already changed. I stopped and sat on my plowstock, and I said, Of course it is a change, any one ought to see that, for I once loved dancing and all the pleasures of this world, now I have lost my love for worldly things, and want to do good and please God. While sitting there I looked back about fifty yards, and I saw Christ, it seemed to me as plainly as I ever saw any one, coming down on wings, and he said, Thy sins are all forgiven; go tell it to the world. All fear of hell left me, and I was the happiest man ever lived. I went on with my plowing, telling of the plan of salvation. It seemed like there were several hundred people around me, and I was showing them the difference in God's way of saving people and the way the Methodists tell it: that they have to do something or God cannot save them. I was telling them God could do anything; he could save any of them, that if he could save as vile a sinner as I was he

could do anything, and, my dear brethren and sisters, I still feel that way. When I think back to that day I feel encouraged, and think that it surely meant something, and my desire has been to serve my Master ever since, but I find myself oftener out of the path than in it, only crossing it once in a while. Often I am in a gathering of jolly people, joking, and the conversation running on a lot of foolishness, and I find myself joining in with them. We run a hotel, and nearly always have many guests, especially at this time of the year. We have an extra train here every night, and the trainmen stop with us, and they are always full of fun, and I think sometimes I would like to be off by myself, so I would not be in such jolly company and could keep my mind more on spiritual things.

I hope God will bless you, editors and publishers, to continue the publication of the SIGNS for many years to come. If you see fit to publish this, all right; if not, I will not be offended, for it is like the writer, imperfect.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

J. B. MOUNT.

BRANCHLAND, W. Va., Sept. 15, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have thought for a long time I would like to respond to the good reading and the consolation I have had while reading the soul-cheering messages of love and truth from the Lord's scattered people, who I esteem as the very salt of the earth, who, like poor old unworthy me, are deprived of hearing preaching, or any Baptist company or conversation. When I read the SIGNS for September 1st I hardly could lay it down, for it was so soul-cheering. It was all good, and did speak my very sentiments and my experience. Brother C. M. Adams, of El Paso, Texas, did write such a soul-touching letter. I had felt so alone in this world that I had classed myself with one of old who said, "Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life."

My dear spiritual friends, one and all, I feel while trying to write these few thoughts to you (should they be printed) that surely this will be my last, for I do daily walk through the valley and shadow of death, and if I should live a few more days (to September 20th) I will be seventy-nine years old. Oh! how I do long to depart and be with Christ, which I hope will be far better. Farewell.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

CONCERNING MINUTES.

WE have decided that in the future it will be much better for us to forward the Minutes we print direct to the Clerk of the Association sending them, instead of distributing them to the different associations and churches, as we have been in the habit of doing for many of the associations. Our directions for such distribution are very old, and undoubtedly many persons to whom we send them are dead, or have changed their address, and do not receive the packages sent them, for which we are censured, when we have not been to blame, as we had not been notified to change the name or address on our mailing list. By sending direct to the Clerk of the Association (or to any other one person designated) we can guarantee the safe delivery of the Minutes, but where we are sending them to different people at different post-offices we cannot guarantee they will reach the ones to whom they are addressed. We hope the brethren will agree with us that this is a much safer and better plan, and will not ask us to distribute their Minutes for them.

J. E. BEEBE & CO.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1923.

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PSALMS VII. 9.

"For the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins."

The heart here referred to is not the muscular organ of the body, but rather the seat of affection and passion, the secret purpose, the disposition of mind. It is this heart that the Scripture means when it says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Again, "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." Also, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Believing in Jesus is a heart work. Philip said to the eunuch, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. It is also written, He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool. One must know the folly of his own heart (and that by divine teaching) or he will trust in it. God searcheth the heart; that is, he turns his searchlight of truth upon the heart; when he does, who can stand? Poor mortal man, then, is like Hazael, whose name signifies sight of, or seen by God. When Elisha looked steadfastly in his face, "he was ashamed." Why ashamed? Because the prophet saw his inward secret purpose; he could read him. What man is there living who could stand a close inspection of his life and doings, who could stand with his soul naked of its fancied coverings? Would he not quail before it? Who of us would be willing for our closest friend to examine in detail our hearts and lives with the measuring rod of truth? Who would have our thoughts for one day, or one hour, exposed? How much more to have our whole life open before our closest friend for him to see the unholy thoughts and godless deeds, the lies, deceit, backbitings, envyings, pride, lust, and a legion of other things that God hates. If, we say, we were examined by our closest friend, our cheek would be covered with shame, and he would cease to be our friend from then. We resent calumny, hypocrisy and treachery often more because they harm us than because they are untrue. We loathe others for the things we too frequently allow in ourselves. In spite of all the wickedness of the human heart, what man is there who does not pride himself in his fancied goodness, which to his friends, if they knew his heart, would be obnoxious? How much more unto Him who knows the thoughts and the intents of the heart? "No man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it," and the love of self is inherent in us; self-esteem, self-justification and self-seeking are natural propensities of the heart of man. While it is true man would for shame hide himself if his closest friend saw him just as he is, yet it is the awful truth that he blushes not before Him whose eye is in every place, beholding the evil and the good. Such is the hardened, callous heart of man. He takes more thought and pains to hide his faults and failings from his friends than from

his God, and winks at the very thing in himself that he is forward to condemn in others. O Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him? Why should there be so much thought for the good will of man, who at his best state is altogether vanity, when there is so little concern about Him whose glory filleth the heavens?

> "The rocks can rend, the earth can quake,
> The sea can roar, the mountain shake;
> Of feeling, all things show some sign,
> But this unfeeling heart of mine."

It is natural, but not God-honoring to belittle our own failings, and ever to be ready to judge others rather than judge ourselves, and we often carry ourselves before others, as though we were perfect in thought, word and deed. Surely this is walking in a vain show. How different it was in the beginning: man walked with God and delighted to be in his presence without the sense of shame, for he was innocent, but after his transgression he hid himself from God, for he knew he was naked and could not endure the eye of him who is too pure to behold iniquity. From then until now none can endure his presence and live, yet it is he that trieth the hearts and reins of men. If man, even our closest friend, were to judge us, after he had seen the vileness of our hearts and reins, yet his judgment would be unrighteous, because his heart and reins disqualify him as a judge. His heart and reins are foul like ours, but God is righteous. Paul calls him the righteous Judge, and it is he that trieth the hearts and reins. Have we known anything of this trial taking place in ourselves? Dear brethren and friends, this is a solemn question, yet all who have had such a trial take place in their lives know something about it. This trial in Paul's life made him to say, In me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing. Job, who was another of those whose heart was tried, said, Behold, I am vile. The Lord has his way to make the sinner testify against himself, and when he has clearly brought the case out into the open court of conscience the sinner is self-condemned. The Lord does the searching and trying; in wisdom he has seen fit not to give his glory to another. He shall convince of sin, righteousness and judgment. Man may judge you, but what does man or his judgment amount to? If put in the balance with God's judgment they are lighter than vanity. When God has brought the sinner into the place where sentence shall be passed, the sinner knows he has no hope only in the mercy of him who is the Judge of all. There, to his amazement, Jesus is revealed as the end of the law for righteousness. It softens his heart of stone; in fact, it breaks his heart. Now he knows what the Scripture means, where it is written that the love of Christ surpasseth knowledge. He is deeply grieved when he sees that his sins crucified his lovely Jesus, and though while being tried his face was filled with shame, yet now his face is no more ashamed. Jesus, his best friend, who knew his inmost soul with all its ills, loved him and gave himself for him. Once more, to the wonder of heaven and the astonishment of earth, God and man are reconciled. The Judge and the sinner are everlasting friends, and through his precious Lord the poor sinner is clothed and in his right mind. "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." His trying and searching of their hearts has been a blessing to them, so that often now their hearts' desire is that he will continue to search and try them. While in such a heavenly mind they love the Lord, his ways, his people, and their cup runs

over. They believe with all their hearts. Why does not this joy and gladness last? Why does such an one who has been sick of self sink back into self? It is because there are many lessons to be learned. Jesus was led up of the Spirit in the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. We thought we knew what vile and sinful hearts we had, but it is God's purpose to hide pride from man, which is accomplished as God tries the heart. "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart." G. R.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. N. Bartlett.)

The Tygarts Valley River Association of Old School or Primitive Baptists, in session with the Leading Creek Church, Randolph County, West Virginia, August 24th, 25th and 26th, 1923, to the churches of which she is composed.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the kind protecting care of our heavenly Father we are again permitted to meet together in another association, and to send this, another epistle of love, in which we wish to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance of some things pertaining to your eternal salvation and your identity in the church of Christ. Our eternal salvation is according to the election, predestination, effectual calling of our God and through the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." All this secures the eternal salvation and final glorification of all those who love God and are the called according to his purpose, and to them all things work together for good. He who says, "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," can and does work all things for the good of his elect, and his own glory. Who can stay his hand? Who can say unto him, What doest thou? He is before all things, and by him all things consist. We feel to thank God that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, and that our salvation does not depend upon our own works, and that it is all of free and unmerited grace. It is no wonder that the old Tygarts Valley River Association, and the churches thereof, call themselves Predestinarian Baptists, for our election, effectual calling, justification and final glorification depend on the predestination of our God, who is of one mind, and none can turn him. The world may laugh and scoff, devils may rage and roar, antichrist may combine and oppose with all their ingenuity, sophistry and cunning, nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his, and he will save them with an everlasting salvation, and salvation is of the Lord, through the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for our sins, he rose for our justification. He laid down his life for his sheep. His blood cleanses us from all sin, and by his grace all his people will be enabled to join in that "new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for

thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

Now, dear brethren, we will briefly notice the church of Christ, which is built by him, which the gates of hell shall never prevail against. No earthly eye can look upon her beauty, nor can the natural mind comprehend in the least her glory. It is a kingdom not of this world. Christ is her King, who rules over and in her in righteousness. God is in the midst of her and keeps her by his power. She is Christ's purchased possession, purchased with his own blood. She is the object of Christ's love. He loved the church and gave himself for it. She is an assembly called out by him to dwell alone. The church is composed of a regenerated membership, who have vital, revealed, experimental religion, who worship God in spirit and in truth. The members of the church are added to her by the Lord himself, and they continue in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. May the Lord keep you in peace, in love and in fellowship. Amen.

J. B. CROSS, Moderator.

J. N. BARTLETT, Clerk.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in September (30th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $1.00; Mrs. E. J. Clary, Ohio, $3.00; J. L. Deshong, Fla., $2.00; James Fidler, Mo., $3.00; Mrs. John Beamand, Ohio, 50 cents.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at the home of the bride's parents, in the township of Ekfrid, Ont., August 15th, 1923, Robert O. Gastle and Miss Morna Beatrice Perry.

By the same, at the home of the bride's parents, in the township of Ekfrid, Ont., August 25th, 1923, Wesley G. Tompson and Anna C. McCallum.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

David G. Adkins departed this life July 25th, 1923. He was the youngest son of a family of ten children, six sisters and four brothers, two sisters having died several years ago, leaving families of children. My very dear and much loved brother had been a professor of religion several years, and so far as I know he adorned his profession by a godly walk and conversation. He bore the afflictions of himself and family with much patience. I visited him some years ago, while he was on a bed of sickness, and he told me that the eleventh chapter of Paul to the Hebrews had been much comfort to him, especially the thirty-eighth verse. After the death of our mother, who died seventeen years ago, he seemed to delight to visit me and converse on the Bible, I being his oldest sister, now nearing my seventy-ninth year. Oh, I wonder why he is taken and I am left in sorrow.

I will copy from the *Huntington Advertiser:* "Friends here have learned of the death of David G. Adkins, 54, a former resident of Cabell County, W. Va. Mr. Adkins died in Indianapolis, Indiana, July 25th, as the result of a fall caused by the collapse of a scaffold upon which he was standing. Mr. Adkins is survived by three brothers and four sisters, all of whom live in West Virginia, and seven children, who live at his home at Mount Healthy, Ohio. Mr. Adkins was buried at Mount Healthy, Ohio."

His sister,

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

Sara Eliza Greene, widow of Isaac Greene, died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Julius Cleaver, near Odessa, Delaware, Thursday evening, October 5th, 1922, in her 84th year. She was born in Missouri, and came to Delaware when she was sixteen years old, where she spent the rest of her life. She was married Jan. 7th, 1862, to Isaac Greene. She is survived by two sons and two daughters, Thomas Greene, of near Newark, and Gilbert Greene, of Philadelphia, Mrs. Julius Cleaver, near Odessa, Del., and Mrs. J. T. George, near Newark, thirteen grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. No one knows how we miss her. She was a kind, christian woman, a loving mother and a dear old grandmother to us all. She was loved by all who knew her, and was ready at all times to render assistance to those in need. She loved the

Old School Baptists, and stood firm and unmovable in the doctrine of salvation by sovereign grace. How she used to enjoy going to their meeting. I enjoyed going with her, and she took me quite often. The first meeting I attended with her was at Bryn Zion, when I was but ten years old, this being the church she joined, and of which she was a member for forty years. The last meeting she attended was held at Welsh Tract. She was taken sick at her son's, near Newark, Delaware, and was sick there for two weeks. Her two daughters were there to wait on her. She wished to be brought to my mother's, which she called her home, so we brought her, and she just lived three weeks after arriving there. Her daughters were by her side day and night for five weeks before she passed away, and all of her wishes were carried out. She could not stay longer, passing quietly away as one going to sleep. While we shall miss her, our loss is her eternal gain. She is gone where there is no more sorrow or pain, but all is peace, sweet peace.

The funeral service was held Sunday, October 8th, 1922, at Bryn Zion, and Elder J. G. Eubanks preached an eloquent discourse to the comfort of all. She was laid to rest beside her husband in the adjoining cemetery.

Written by her granddaughter,

H. ELIZA CLEAVER.

Mrs. Elizabeth J. Minnott, of Bowdoinham, Maine, departed this life July 31st, 1923. She was born December 29th, 1843, and married December 31st, 1863. Her husband, four daughters and one son mourn their loss. Thirty years ago she was baptized by Elder Hiram Campbell, and united with the Bowdoinham Church. She was always present at the meetings, for she loved the people of God, and the preaching of the gospel was sweet to her. During her last illness she was a great sufferer, but was given grace to bear it patiently. It was her request that brother Joseph C. Clark should conduct the funeral services, and he spoke words of comfort to the sorrowing family and friends. May God reconcile us to his will, is the desire of our hearts.

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

Henry Berry was born in Calcasieu Parish, La., May 15th, 1840, and died August 30th, 1923, at the home of his son, D. Berry, who with his kind and patient wife had cared for him for several months. He had been very feeble for some time, but was very cheerful the most of the time, and was confined to his bed but a few hours before he departed this life. Brother Berry was an old soldier, and the father of a large family, of whom six are living. He, with his dear wife, who preceded him in death, united with the old Antioch Church, Edgerley, La., many years ago, and he was always to be found in his place in the old church-house on every meeting day. Words cannot express how much he will be missed, but we rejoice in the hope that he is dwelling in the light of the smiles of the precious Savior he loved and worshipped for many years. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and the predestination of all things.

The funeral was held at old Antioch Church, Elder Scott, of Vinton, La., officiating. His body was laid in the cemetery by the side of his wife.

AUGUSTINE BERRY.

MEETINGS.

The yearly meeting of the Indiantown Church is appointed to be held on the first Sunday, and Saturday before, in October, 1923, beginning Saturday at 2:30 o'clock p. m. Elder C. W. Vaughn expects to be with us at this meeting. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. For further information write George F. Adkins, R. R. 2, Pittsville, Md.

J. CORDER MELLOTT, Pastor.

The Conecuh River Primitive Baptist Association is to convene with Hopewell Church, near Goshen, Pike County, Alabama, on Saturday before the second Sunday in October, 1923.

The Ebenezer Association convenes with Sweet Water Church, Crenshaw County, Alabama, on Saturday before the first Sunday in October, 1923.

The Western Primitive Baptist Association is to convene with Bethel Church, Early County, Georgia, on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1923.

The Patsalgia Primitive Baptist Association convenes at Pilgrim's Rest Church, Covington County, Alabama, on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1923.

The Claybank Association of the Primitive faith and order convenes with Pleasant Ridge Church, Coffee County, Alabama, on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1923.

J. J. COLLINS.

The Sideling Hill and Fairview Churches will jointly hold, the Lord willing, a two days meeting, Saturday and Sunday, October 13th and 14th, 1923, at Needmore, Fulton County, Pennsylvania. Those coming by rail will come on Friday before the meeting to Hancock, Md., either over the Baltimore & Ohio or Western Maryland R. R., and will please previously notify Deacon J. C. Mellott, Needmore, Pa., so as to be met and conveyed to the place of meeting. All brethren and ministers in accord with us are invited to meet with us.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 17th, 18th and 19th, 1923. Trains will be met at Herndon Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning, leaving 36th and M Streets, Washington, D. C. Time of trains not given in this notice because schedule is likely to change before October. Brethren and ministers of our correspondence, and all others who are in fellowship with us, are invited to meet with us.

K. C. SPINDLE, Church Clerk.

The yearly meeting of the Welsh Tract Church is appointed to be held the third Saturday and Sunday in October (20th and 21st), 1923, beginning Saturday at 2:30 p. m. We hope some of the ministers who attend the Corresponding Meeting of Virginia will arrange to be with us, it being on their way to the Salisbury Association. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and ministers of our faith and order, and to all who love to meet with us. Those coming from Philadelphia and Baltimore will come via B. & O. R. R. to Newark, Del., on Saturday. Trains leave Baltimore (Mount Royal) at 10:18 a. m., and Philadelphia at 1:10 p. m.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

The Salisbury Association is appointed to be held with the Forest Grove Church, near Parsonsburg, Md., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 24th, 25th and 26th, 1923. Those coming from the north take train leaving West Philadelphia station, Philadelphia, Pa., at 10:06 o'clock, Tuesday a. m., and those from the south, train leaving Cape Charles at 12:30 o'clock p. m. Get off the train at Salisbury, Md. Those coming from Baltimore or Ocean City, by way of B. C. & A., get off the train at Parsonsburg. For any other information please write George W. Adkins, Parsonsburg, Md., R. R. 1. All brethren and ministers in accord with us are cordially invited to meet with us.

GEORGE W. ADKINS, Clerk.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Little Flock Church will no longer hold meetings at Park and 5th Streets, but for the present will hold them at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 494 East 10th Street, Riverside, California. We hope to have a place again soon, and when we do we will appreciate having our notice with you.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California.

C. S. MILLER.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND LATER WRITINGS

OF

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"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 91. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1923. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JUDGES VI. 12-14.

"AND the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor. And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites. And the Lord looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?"

The language of Gideon is so expressive of what are the emotions of soul that the tried, distressed, tempest-tossed children of God know. When sinking in our manifold temptations something more than creature power is needed that we can believingly feel the Lord is with us. We learn in our straits; when we are pressed out of measure, and above our strength, that then to believe, to confide in our gracious God, can only be according to the working of his mighty power in us. (Ephes. i. 19.)

"And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us?" How hard a matter it was for Job and his three friends to understand that the Lord was with Job, and all those evil things to have befallen him. Though God doeth as it pleaseth him in the army of heaven, and among the children of men, and all his ways are judgment, a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he; yet he ever has the glorifying of his name in all his providences; and peculiarly this is so in the lot he giveth his loved, chosen, redeemed and called people. All things work together for their good. (Rom. viii. 28.) The Lord chasteneth them for their profit. (Heb. xii. 10.) We all shall see in the conclusion of all the dispensations that are our portion, the end of the Lord, that our covenant God is very pitiful, and of tender mercy. (James v. ii.) What terrible things had befallen Israel in Gideon's time. The Midianites had invaded the land to destroy it, and Israel was greatly impoverished, and they cried unto the Lord. The Lord awakened them to the bitter knowledge of their transgressions. There is Gideon threshing wheat in the wine-press to hide it from the Midianites. "And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor." No doubt Gideon had been thinking, The

Lord hath deserted us, and hath cast us off as disobedient, unprofitable creatures. "The Lord is with thee." If God be for us, who can be against us? Hath not the Lord said, "I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me"?—Jer. xxxii. 40. But in our lacking of understanding of the dealings of the Lord with us we are often filled with troubled thoughts. If I am one of God's elect, loved with an everlasting love, if a child of God, if I am redeemed by Jesus' precious blood, if I am a subject of God's grace, why hath all this befallen me? This trial, this adversity? Why have the Sabeans robbed me, the fire of God burned up my flocks? The Chaldeans have stripped me bare, and why am I so bereaved? (Job. i.) Jacob once exclaimed, All these things are against me. The child of God may confess unto the Lord that all his afflictions, the wormwood and the gall (Lam. iii. 19), and that any lot above what the fiends have in hell, is mercy, and that if God were strict to mark our iniquity none could stand, and that all evils are less than our iniquities deserve, and like Jacob confess, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant."—Gen. xxxii. 10. But if the Lord is with me why am I brought into darkness and not into light? Why is this trial so prolonged? Will it never subside? Why are my prayers unanswered? Why am I so tempest-tossed and not comforted? If Christ is with me in this windy storm, if he is my Pilot, he who manages the seas and holds the wind in his fists, why is all this tempest upon me? Why does he not hush the storm, say to the proud waves, Be still, and bring me in quietness into my desired haven? If the Lord is with me, see, O Lord, mine affliction, for it increaseth, the darkness deepens, my conflicts continue and are every day more severe, and I am weaker, brought low, so discouraged. The Lord with me? Why then is all this befallen me? In our afflictions we may think upon the Lord's dealings with his people in ages past, how he saved them out of all their troubles, but in our infirmity we are saying, It is not so with me. Gideon remembered the miracles that the Lord wrought in behalf of Israel for their deliverance, and he knew that nothing but a miracle could now deliver them from the ravaging, destroying Midianites. Is the age of miracles past? Has our performing God left off to do as he did in times past? "Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?" We remember what our fathers have told us, we do not dispute their story, but, O Lord, where are thy miracles now? The language of Gideon contains in it a yearning that the Lord, who only doeth wondrous things, would come in his miraculous grace and show Israel that he is with us. "Lord, where are thy former lovingkindnesses?"—Psalms lxxxix. 49. "Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory: where is thy zeal and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies toward me? are they restrained?"—Isaiah lxiii. 15. The child of God learns that his strength is small, and that he has no might against the many adversities that invade his life and bring him low. We are made to know however that Christ's strength, imparted to us, is made perfect in our weaknesses,

and though infirmities abound we are able to glory in them that the gracious all-sufficient power of Christ may rest upon us. There are times when in the all-wise dealings of the Lord with us that we are minished, and brought low, through oppression, affliction and sorrow. (Psalms cvii. 39.) And our God seeth, and we know it quite well that our power is gone. (Deut. xxxii. 36.) Those who are not Christ's may talk of their self-sufficiency, and boast of their exploits, but the taught of the Lord have such troubles as they never know, and when the elect of God, who know their God, do exploits, (Daniel xi. 32,) such as those mentioned in the eleventh of Hebrews, they ever willingly make their boast in the Lord, and the humble hear thereof and are glad. They ascribe every deliverance, every triumph, to the kindness, love and power of their gracious covenant God. Through God they do valiantly, for he it is who treadeth down their enemies. Yes, it is amidst the many evils that befall us that we learn our nothingness, and we learn also more deeply the corruptions of our vile hearts, and though there be, as we fear, but little grace and godliness in us, we to our grief know that briars and thorns, inward iniquities, abound in our flesh. Ah, when we would that we were meek and loving, prayerful and trustful, and that we could glorify God in the fires, we are made to feel we are so far off from God, so unchristlike, so sinful. But by God's discipline we become more and more poor, we see ourselves worthless, to be despised. The Lord graciously meekens us, and we sigh, and cry for mercy, for grace to help in our time of need. But how plagued we are with the unbelief in our prayers. Unbelief is so mingled with my poor prayers. Ah, my unbelieving prayers! How ashamed I am of myself, and of my unbelieving prayers. If the mercies that my soul craves were to be mine according to the old covenant, then only an infinitesimal portion would be mine. That covenant of works could never yield to sinful, wretched, helpless, unworthy me what my soul seeketh. But I want those sure mercies of David that flow from the new covenant that is in Christ's blood, shed for the remission of sins. Yes, I sigh, I yearn to live upon those treasures of God's grace in the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; this is all my salvation, and all my desire. Our Savior said to the father of the afflicted son, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."—Mark ix. 23, 24. I feel I know the conflicts in the soul of this man. The faith of God's elect, which is of the operation of God, is victorious over all surmisings, questioning and fiery darts of the devil. We may be saying that only a miracle can give us enlargement, and give us deliverance from our distresses. Can you, such a vile, worthless, murmuring, fretful, distrustful one, think that the Lord will work a miracle in your behalf? We sigh and moan, and cry unto our God, though compassed and plagued with unbelief, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." But Gideon was saying, The Lord hath forsaken us, and given us into the hands of the Midianites, and Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me. O Zion, how mistaken thou art, how poor and unworthy are thy thoughts of God of thy salvation. O thou gracious God, how graciously assuringly thou speakest to disconsolate Zion.

Thou speakest to her heart, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me."—Isaiah xlix. 15, 16. If we are of God we are learning continually that we cannot live independent of our gracious God, and blessed indeed are we to live upon him whose compassions fail not; they are new every morning. Great is thy faithfulness, O heavenly Father. Like Gideon, we may be standing before the Lord discouraged, unbelieving, sighing, longing, troubled, but the Lord knoweth us, knoweth us in all our sinfulness, all our weaknesses. The Lord looked upon Gideon with pity, compassion, in everlasting love, and said unto him, "Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?" While I am writing this there is springing up in me such yearnings, and my heart is saying, Oh, to believe in my God, to trust him in the cares and distresses of my life. O child of God, the Lord is with thee in adversities in thy sore afflictions, for though the way be rough and dark and soul-distressing, yet he still keeps thee by the operations of his grace, looking unto himself, sighing over the felt desertion. But though the Lord hideth his face, and we are troubled, it is but for a little moment, and though he cause grief, though he chasteneth us sore, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses. O beloved of God, of this let us be assured, that ours shall be the eternal triumph, for Christ hath died, and is risen from the dead.

"Triumphantly glorious our Head has ascended
O'er death and the grave, all their power laying low;
This gains us a rising when time shall be ended,
Death no more shall hold us, Ah never, oh no!"

The Lord God omnipotent reigneth! His counsel shall stand and he will do all his pleasure. In love he hath predestinated his elect unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself according to the good pleasure of his will, and who shall frustrate love's predestination? "Go in this thy might," was the word of the Lord to Gideon, and Gideon's might was, The Lord is with thee. That was enough. So we shall find it, beloved in the Lord. If God be for us, who can be against us?

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RANDOLPH, Maine, Aug. 28, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I am sending you this letter, written by brother Edwards, which, with your approval, I would be glad to see in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He speaks of its getting too lengthy, and brings it to an abrupt ending, but I dare say he could have written much more and still given us something interesting. I love to hear of the experience of God's people.

Yours in love, for the truth's sake,

NELLIE M. PALMER.

CASTLEWOOD, Va., Aug. 14, 1923.

DEAR SISTER PALMER:—If I am worthy to thus address you. When I received the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for August 1st and turned to your article on page 229 I read it and reread it, and it seemed to fill my poor soul with love and joy. It carried my mind back to the memorable days of my spiritual travel from nature to grace, and you told my experience in a much plainer way than I could find words to express it, and I knew it was the truth. Yes, this is a travel through and by the grace of God, because Paul says, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the

gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." This is the lesson all God's little ones learn in grace's school, and all the pupils in this school are taught by the one Teacher, Christ Jesus, and they all sing the same song of salvation by grace. Though the ways differ some in the manner of expression, so it would seem some have a brighter manifestation than others, but in sum and substance it is the same. I have thought the spiritual travel of all God's children was so nearly in one channel that when the experience of one was told the experience of all of them was told. While some of God's children may get so turned around and led off through the deceitfulness of the flesh that they seem almost to deny the true faith and doctrine, yet, as a general thing, if you can get them to tell their experience it sounds and rocks just like the old bell that all the children of God know so well when they hear it. Dear sister Palmer, when we sum the whole matter up, it is experience to experience. For one to say he knows and can tell me of a road and country I have traveled over, yet cannot describe this road and country to me, and cannot tell me any of the things along this road, he is not the one who can bring the glad tidings. But when one can tell it or write it as you did in your good article it is indeed as good news from a far country, or as cold water to the thirsty soul. If I cannot tell you your experience my talk does you no good, because I speak to you in an unknown tongue, and therefere say to you that I know nothing about it, and you cannot say amen to it. Dear sister, you came very close to my experience when you said you were unable to go back to a time when you did not think that God was a God of power. This is my experience; almost as far back as I can remember I had dreadful fears and a weight of condemnation, and thought that if I died in that condition I could never come in where God and his people were. I would wander off by myself and try to ask God to have mercy on me, a poor sinner. My father, Elder Lewis Edwards, had one of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe's books, with Elder Beebe's picture in the back of it, and I would slip this book off where no one could see me and kiss Elder Beebe's picture. As you said, I loved them. I never saw Elder Beebe, only his picture and writings, which were dear to me, and the only reason I know why I became so closely tied to him was because I read after his gifted pen. This may appear childish, or foolish, but it tells some of the exercise of my mind under this sore weight of condemnation that seemed to await me. I have thought that when one prays his first prayer given by the Lord he is then born of the Spirit, let him be at a young or old age, he is then given to love God and his people. My affections became so drawn out after the old defenders of the true faith and doctrine, who God had called and raised up, and who had stood so firm upon the walls of Zion, and cried aloud and spared not, that I became afraid I might be making idols of them. Then something seemed to say to me that we love them because the Lord loves them; in other words, we love them for Christ's sake. I would love to tell you of the many dark and dreary seasons I passed through up to the time when I hope the Lord manifested himself to me in the pardon of my sins, and showed me he was my Savior and my righteousness was in him, but it would make my letter too lengthy. It is said, "I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment: that I may cause

those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures." This is spoken in positive terms, and is sure and steadfast. The Lord can come to us in our darkest troubles and speak peace and all is well; the dark clouds that seem to threaten our overthrow are instantly dispersed and gone. It seems to me that if we had more of the experience of our people talked of one to another it would be edifying, though doctrinal communications, when according to the teachings of Scripture, are good. Dear sister, I would love to see more from your pen, and may you ever stand firm upon the doctrine of salvation by grace. The God I hope I serve is a God of all power, and nothing ever has or ever will come to pass but what he foresaw.

Yes, it was hard for you to give up your darling son, but he was just as safe while in the army as he was when in your arms, but not as well satisfied. Daniel was just as safe in the lions' den as anywhere else, but not as well satisfied. I have thought that the old king knew about the power of God, for he said to Daniel while in the lions' den, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions? Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me." This is the God I want to serve, the God who has all power in heaven and on earth. It seems the poet covers all in the following verse:

"'Tis well when on the mount,
They feast on saving love;
And 'tis as well in God's account
When they the furnace prove."

Well, my letter is getting too lengthy. I had no idea of writing so much when I commenced. I am at home to-day, and not very well. I hope you and yours are well.

Dear sister, when it is well with you remember me, a poor sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all,

W. L. EDWARDS.

NEWARK, Del., Aug. 12, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—While thinking of my dear departed mother, in the sentiment of hymn 305, Beebe's collection, my mind was led to the words, "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." This one verse, if nothing else, when brought to bear upon the subject effectually settles in the minds of the regenerated the question of election, for it must be of grace, and if by grace it is no more of works. Then the regenerated are the only persons who feel it, for Paul says, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." The worldly religionists invariably place the wrong construction upon the word "sanctified." Generally speaking, they refer to a sanctified person as one who cannot commit sin, is perfect in the flesh, and prepared in every way to meet his Master in heaven. The proper meaning of the word "sanctified," as applied in this Scripture, is "set apart." Now who sets them apart? In the first verse of the chapter in which this first Scripture occurs (Hebrews x.) certain persons are spoken of, or referred to, as "comers." "For the law, having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect." Then by what offering was it all accomplished? "Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin

thou hast had no pleasure: then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God." "He taketh away the first [covenant], that he may establish the second [covenant]. By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Therefore it is "by the which will," his will alone, we are set apart, or sanctified, made the elect of God, by his own will, and not by any righteousness or works of our own, and it is all of mercy we are not "blinded." "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin." This remission, then, must be for those who are set apart. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." Therefore if we have a hope we are set apart, and made sacred by his blood in the sacrifice. "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)." Yet we are still in the flesh; when lust gets the better of us we are made to suffer, and will to the end of time, for there is no discharge in this war. When we would do good evil is present with us. As Newton expresses it:

"Great God, from thee there's naught concealed,
Thou seest my inward frame;
To thee I always stand revealed,
Exactly as I am."

"But since my Savior stands between,
In garments dyed in blood,
'Tis he, instead of me, is seen,
When I approach to God."

It is only by this Sacrifice that we can hope we have life in eternity. "Your life is hid with Christ in God."

J. B. MILLER.

POCA, W. Va., Sept. 4, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter received from our esteemed sister S. E. Corder some time ago. She is one among many of our spiritual-minded sisters who wields her pen in honor to the wisdom and glory of God in the salvation of poor lost sinners, and I feel it would be read with interest by many of the household of faith. I have her consent to send it.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., June 29, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER McCLANAHAN:—When I gave you the parting hand you said, If you have a mind to, write me some time. I replied that I was such a poor writer; it flashed through my mind that I might write to you some time next winter, "when the cold shall come, and lonely are the hours," but before you reached home I found myself writing to you in my mind, and have been at it ever since, and to stop it I will just sit down, my pen in hand, and write you a few lines. What a strange creature I am: so changeable. I have never been able to find myself out. You and your brother were sent to us in the power of the Spirit. Our precious Jesus said, As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. You

came in the fullness of the blessings of the gospel of Christ (how sweet the joyful sound), and fed the sheep and lambs, as also did the other ministering brethren present, all one in Christ Jesus. Owing to the recent illness of our faithful pastor, and the condition of public affairs surrounding us here at the present time, which you know about, I admit it looked a little discouraging about holding our meeting, but our blessed Lord, who "is excellent in working," "brought forth his people with joy, and his chosen with gladness." To him who giveth to us richly all things to enjoy, be honor and power everlasting. As the saints sat under the sweet myrrh droppings of the sanctuary, their faces set by the hand of the Lord toward the mountains of Jerusalem, it did seem to me they were "lively stones" in the house of God, offering up the sacrifice of thanksgiving in the courts of the Lord's house, carried away in the Spirit to sit together in a heavenly place in Christ Jesus. For a long time before this meeting I felt to be an outcast in Israel, and felt almost (but not quite) without God and without hope in the world. A miserable state to be in. Would I ever again be gathered from the coasts of the earth, or was the Lord merely clean gone forever? Filled with unbelief and sin, could I deem myself a child? I became so faithless and unbelieving, I asked myself, Is there anything in anything? Like Ezra of old, I was ashamed, and blushed to lift up my face to my God. But as the saints assembled the lines fell unto me in pleasant places. Yea, I felt that I had a goodly heritage, and I do not think I ever enjoyed a meeting better.

But I find I am writing too much about myself. This is one of my weaknesses. Your coming among us has refreshed us, and if it be the Lord's will you will come again. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Hope you will have a mind to write often for the SIGNS, as I love to see your name there, and read your letters. I do not ask you to notice this letter by way of a reply, as I am not worthy. Raise a petition for me at the throne of grace.

From your sister, I hope, in the bonds of christian love,

S. E. CORDER.

HOPE, La., Oct. 14, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—For some cause, I do not know what, I have been impressed to write some of my travels through life. I sometimes hope I am under the reign of grace, at other times the hope is almost gone. Now I will quote one Scripture: "The Son quickeneth whom he will." About thirty-five years ago there was a protracted meeting going on, and all my friends seemed very much interested in my salvation, and of course I wanted to be saved, so I joined with them. They seemed to have great confidence in me, elected me clerk, and I served them fourteen years without a jar, but all this time I felt that there was something wrong. I never could understand this mission business. At last I stopped going to their meetings, and they sent the deacon to see me. We talked the matter over, and he asked me if I would accept a letter; I told him that I would, so they granted it, and I kept it for some six years. At that time some people came in here who called themselves "Gospel Missions." Well, I thought they preached some truth, so I, with others, had our letters put together, and organized a church, and a preacher was called. He soon left us, and we called another. He was there but a little

while before we disagreed about salvation. He said that there were many precious souls going to hell for the want of the gospel. I told him that all for whom Christ died were saved. You know after the quickening there is a travail, and the nearer delivery the harder the travail. May 7th, 1907, my daughter-in-law died, and this same preacher conducted the funeral services, and went home with my son that night. Well, they gave me some rough jolts. My dear companion told me not to notice them, and I took her advice. That night we had a storm, and the next morning I left there to go home. The timber was down, so I could hardly get through, I expected to find my daughter's little hut blown away, but to my surprise all was well. I went on to my younger son's, and the timber was blown across his corn crib and on his fence, but the little house was standing, and the little children singing like birds. Next was my home; it was all right. I went on to the field where the corn was and it looked as though it was ruined. The fence was blown down and broken by fallen trees. I did not go inside of the field, but commenced fixing the fence, so as to keep the stock out. The next think I knew I was singing:

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost."

I thought that everything looked lovely, and thought I would never have any more trouble. Since then I have been satisfied that God would work and none hinder. Since then I have had some sweet and joyful times, also I have had some dark times in the wilderness of sin. My bodily afflictions are sore and trying, but sometimes my hope of a better life comforts me. I am near the end of my journey, will soon be eighty-one years of age.

Your brother, I hope,

J. F. COLLINSWORTH.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is time to renew my subscription, and as I do not want you to wait for me, inclosed find two dollars, and I wish to say so that every one can know it that I cannot express how much good and comfort I receive in reading the SIGNS, and when each one is read I give it away to some individual, hoping that some lonely heart may find the same comfort that I do. I remember more than forty years ago a member of the church gave me some, when it used to be printed in newspaper form. She did not know that my mind had been inquiring after the precious things they contained. I had never seen any of the papers, and how astonished I was to find a people telling of the same thoughts, and having the same experience that I was having. They are precious to me, too precious to be destroyed, because they tell of precious things. That Pearl of great price that once seemed too high for me to reach, now, through great mercy, I have a hope is mine, yet there is a fear that I am presuming too much for a poor mortal of the dust. Why should such mercy be shown to me? I have done nothing to merit it. Now I can see how the Lord has guarded and guided me all my life, through dangers that I was not aware of at the time. I commenced the letter in the last number of the SIGNS, and thought, What Elder has written this? At the end I saw it was a voice from Trenton, N. J., and I was glad one had been heard from that place. The second article was plain and straightforward all through, both pointing to the truth. Every word of both letters seemed open and plain. Our days are passing swiftly by, and we live only from day to day, looking forward to the end, not expecting, neither hoping, anything of the world.

Now, dear people, good-bye.

F. R. S. MILLER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1923.

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EZEKIEL I. 10.

"As for the likenesses of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion on the right side; and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle."

This prophecy of the likeness of four living creatures undoubtedly has to do with gospel ministry, which, in a sense, can be said to be the teeth in the head used in preparation of the food for the body. Ezekiel was among the captives by the river Chebar, and the heavens were opened and he saw visions of God, the hand of the Lord being upon him. By the operation of the Spirit of the Most High within him he could, by faith, look forward to the dawning of the gospel day, when the Son of God would come and be made a partaker of flesh and blood, "for to make in himself of twain one new man." The coming of Christ Jesus, the God-man, the Lord from heaven, a quickening Spirit, makes manifest that the first Adam is of the earth, earthy; that all flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it. Without the Spirit of the Lord blowing upon it, without God working in us, we could not know that all flesh is grass, and while this reveals a very sad state of affairs, if that were all, we are not left in despair, but in his light we see light, for he is that true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. There is not one in all the universe who has any spiritual light but what comes down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Paul said he was "confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." This light shining in the heart has a twofold effect: not only does it show up the creature's true condition, that he is altogether vile and corrupt, that from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot there is no soundness in him, but, "In that day [that experience] there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness," and they shall behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." This is what Jesus taught, and what his ministers are to realize if they are to have fellowship with him. He said, "I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things." Surely, the servants are not to be above or better than their Master. If they are to be his ambassadors, if they are to speak in his name, if they are to bear the image or have the face of this man, Christ Jesus, they will be made to know, as it is written, There is none righteous; no, not one. At best, they will have to

confess to being unprofitable. These creatures not only had the face of a man, possessing meekness, gentleness, kindness, forbearance, forgiveness, mercy and love, the fullness of which dwelt only in Jesus, but they also had the face of a lion, the face of an ox and the face of an eagle. One record is to the effect that they were full of eyes within, before and behind. The city lieth four-square, therefore the watchmen upon the walls of Jerusalem must be full of eyes, turning in every direction, lest the enemy approach from some unsuspected quarter, and they are not only to have the face of an eagle to discern what is right and to detect error, but they are to be as bold and fearless as a lion, and are commanded to "Cry aloud, spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." They are to take the little foxes that spoil the vines, for the vines have tender grapes, otherwise they will creep in unawares and lead astray the lambs and the weak of the flock, which are the tender grapes of the vine. There seems to be a disposition, on the part of a great many, throughout our land and country to-day, to kindle a fire and walk in the light of the sparks thereof; to bring in new things, being no longer satisfied to walk in the old paths, not content to preach "salvation by grace," but insisting upon "salvations" which depend upon the do and live system, claiming that in regeneration the flesh is changed, and that thereafter the creature is the "master of his fate and the captain of his soul." We once heard an Old Baptist minister make the illustration that a man who was addicted to drink for many years rode a mule, and that the mule had invariably taken the left fork of the road, which led to a saloon, but that after the man was regenerated, his old mule was even changed, and thereafter would take the right fork of the road, which led to a church on the hill. From what we know of a mule he can well be used as a figure of the flesh, but our experience has been even though you may allow his mane to grow long and his tail become bushy, he forever remains a mule by nature, and if he ever takes the right road it is because there is one astride who, with a bit in his mouth and spurs in his side, guides and directs him as seemeth good to the rider. I have thought of our "nature," as being a great, corrupt stream, flowing only downward, and that continually, emptying itself into the sea of death. It cannot change its course, any more than the Ethiopian can his skin or the leopard his spots, and if there is any inclination to swim up stream, or a desire for holiness, it is because the grace of God hath appeared unto us, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. Recently, we have seen a number of Scripture quotations advanced to support the "many salvations" idea, but when they are sifted down to rock bottom, whether it is converting a brother from the error of his way, the saving one's self from the untoward generation, a taking heed unto one's self, or unto the doctrine therein, after all is said and done, the one and only answer is "grace." If there is any converting or taking heed, is it not because the love of God constraineth us? If the fruit is good, it is certain that the tree is good. Who makes the tree good? This doctrine does not license or encourage one to sin; grace in the heart causes one to turn from sin and to seek righteousness, and the one thus inclined de-

sires to praise God, and not man. One says concerning the Scripture, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," that God gives the will to so work, and the power to work, but that God does not do the work, his children are to do that. The question could be asked, If God gives the will to work, and the power to work, is there anything that will or can hinder it? We like the scriptural expression, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." There can be no confusing or mistaking what this means, because it is God which worketh the "to will and to do," and his work is always effectual, a perfect work. Jude is also called to the witness stand by some to try to prove there is more than one salvation. He said, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." The next verse explains this one: "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." Therefore it was necessary that he should put them in remembrance of the fact that they had been bought with a price, not with corruptible things, such as gold, silver and creature works, but with the precious blood of the Lamb of God, which not only put away the sins of the past, but for all future time, as well. This is clearly shown in the case of the good Samaritan. Jude addresses his letter "to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called," and to prove that he realized they could not keep themselves in the love of God, or from the influence of those ungodly men even, he sums up his epistle by commending them unto him, that he is able to keep them from falling, and to present them faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. This is the salvation, kept by the power of God, through faith, that is common to all who are sanctified (set apart from the world) by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called, in every age, nation, kindred and tongue. There cannot be one single exception to this, else God is not the full and complete Savior of his people. The doctrine, "Salvation is of the Lord," does not make the Bible a book of contradictions, as some assert, but rather harmonizes the Scriptures from cover to cover, as well as fitting in with the experience of God's people. It embraced Jonah's deliverance, in time, from the very belly of hell, and brought David up out of an horrible pit. It is the God-dishonoring doctrine of salvation by works that causes no end of trouble among Old Baptists. How an Old Baptist minister can preach a doctrine of conditions is beyond our comprehension. Paul, though at one time a Pharisee of the Pharisees, put all those things behind him, and spoke a pure lauguage, saying, "By the grace of God I am what I am." Such doctrine glorifies God and comforts the poor and needy. Paul had to fight, as it were, with beasts at Ephesus in earnestly contending for the faith and endeavoring to maintain the doctrine of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, just as God's servants will have to do in every age. Men will ever deny the doctrine, but there will be living creatures who will maintain until the very last trumpet is blown that it is "by grace ye are

saved." This was spoken to those who were already quickened, and by way of emphasizing the point he continued, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Does this not show clearly to whom all the credit is due for the salvation and good works of the christian? They who have the face of an ox, and upon whom the Lord hath placed his yoke, will have to bear the burden with patience, and endure to the end. There can be no compromise made with error; there is no middle ground between truth and that which is not truth. The feet of the likeness of the living creatures Ezekiel saw were straight feet, and they were as burnished brass, showing that the true ministers are to turn neither to the right nor to the left, and that they will meet with persecution, but let them rather remember that Christ also was persecuted, and ever press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, looking unto him who is the author and finisher of their faith. Jude's very expression, Earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, signifies that there will be opposition to it, but in the army of the Lord one is to endure hardships as a good soldier, standing firm, and forsaking not his post to which God has called him.

"They four also had the face of an eagle." This seems not only to suggest discernment, but as the eagle soars aloft, far above and beyond the reach of all who would do her harm, so shall the Lord's servants be lifted above all that is earthly, and be made to realize that God is at the helm, doing his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. They will see, as Ezekiel did, the wheel within a wheel, when it moved went only forward, proving that all things, however contrary they may seem to our finite minds to be to God's will, nevertheless do work together for the good of them that love God, those who are the called according to his purpose, that he is glorified, and all his works do praise him. Regardless of what man may do or think, God's undisturbed affairs do move on. Ye faithful servants, hold on your way. If you meet with a lion slay him with a "thus saith the Lord," and later on you will be brought back to find bees working in the carcass, and thus beholding the hand of God you will eat honey and give to those of your kindred in Christ of the sweetness of God's doings, which are marvelous in our eyes. It will be a time of exalting the Lord, and of lifting the name of Jesus on high. Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up in his day, and his train filled the temple, and above it stood the seraphims; each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly, showing that when God's servants go preaching salvation by grace man is hid, not in view; his steps are ordered of the Lord, and he goes in the strength of the Lord. "And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory." There was no room there for the glory of man. On the other hand, Isaiah felt, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." John was seeing eye to eye with Ezekiel

and Isaiah when he beheld a throne in heaven, and him that sat thereon was to look upon as a jasper and a sardine stone, and round about the throne sat four and twenty elders, and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne were four beasts, evidently the four gospel writers, who were the four living creatures who actually recorded the things they saw Jesus do and heard him say. These all agreed, and John said, "They rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." This seems to include all time, past, present and future. Let us not add to nor take from the things which are written, but rather study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, that we may be found in accord with the prophets, apostles and him who spake as never man spake.

"Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

R. L. D.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

W. M. Little has changed his address from Goldsboro, Texas, to Teague, Texas, where his correspondents should address him.

Elder J. T. Barnes, is now located at Milton, Oregon, and requests his correspondents to address him at that place.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. John T. Cockrill, Va., $5.00; George B. Spitler, Ill., $6.00; T. H. Richardson, Iowa, $3.00; Mrs. J. W. Turnage, Ark., $3.00; Mrs. M. E. Bentley, Ga., $1.00; R. T. Hackney, Ky., $1.50; Harriet N. Harkness, N. Y., $5.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

David R. Garland, our brother in Christ, departed from this earthly life August 4th, 1923, at his late home, near Warfordsburg, Pa. He was born September 2nd, 1862, thus making his stay on earth 60 years, 11 months and 2 days. He was the son of Jacob F. and Lydia Covalt Garland, both deceased. Both of his parents and grandparents were Old School Baptists, members of the Sideling Hill Old School Baptist Church, in Fulton County, Pa. Brother Garland was baptized by Elder A. B. Francis into the membership of the Sideling Hill Church in the year 1889, I think, but am not certain as to the year. He was married to Miss Mary Mellott in 1888, and she was a few years ago baptized into membership with the Fairview Old School Baptist Church, at Needmore, Pa. His wife and one son, Sherman Garland, survive him. He is also survived by two sisters and one brother: Mrs. Allen Smith, Mrs. William Carnell and Daniel C. Garland, all of Warfordsburg, Pa. Brother Garland was a spiritually-minded man, and one who loved to visit with his brethren and to talk of the things of the kingdom of Christ. He unswervingly believed salvation to be all of grace, with no conditions contingent upon the will of the creature. He, too, believed with all his soul in the sovereignty of God, and that God works all things after the counsel of his own will. We desire the Holy Spirit to dwell reconcilingly with sister Garland, and with all the bereaved family. As his pastor, I was sent for to attend the funeral, but could not get there. Memorial service will be held, the Lord willing, at Needmore on Friday, October 12th. Interment in the cemetery at Sideling Hill.

L.

Died at her home on Grove Street, in Delmar, Del., May 11th, 1923, **Mrs. Mae Hearn,** the wife of Marian Hearn, and daughter of sister Fannie Hearn. She was 34 years, 7 months and 8 days old. She had long been in declining health, and was confined to the house several months before the end came, through which she entered rest from all her sufferings. Mae, as we all called her, was a lovely woman, bright and cheerful in disposition, kind and loving to see her friends, but better than all this, she was deeply experienced in grace, and a firm believer in the doctrine of God our Savior. No one can love the church more than she did, nor be more faithful in attendance. She loved the songs of Zion, and often asked us to sing when calling on her. She selected the hymns and the text for the funeral occasion, and made all other arrangements as quietly and coolly as though she were going on a pleasant journey. Sometimes when calling she would ask me to tell her about the last meeting, and what I said. Her interest never abated in the things of the kingdom.

She had a host of friends, and there was scarcely standing room in the house the day of the funeral, which was conducted by the writer, who had known and loved Mae all her life. She is survived by her husband and her widowed mother, who feels she has lost all she had to live for in this world, as Mae was her only child. May the grace of God sustain her and keep the husband.

The interment took place in the cemetery in Delmar.

H. C. KER.

George W. Alumbaugh was born March 29th, 1857, and died September 3rd, 1923, making his stay on earth 66 years 5 months and 5 days. He was married to Mary Jane Warren July 9th, 1876. To this union were born nine children, three boys and six girls, one boy and two girls preceding him in death. The living are Mrs. Hattie Koelmel, of Lexington, Mo., Mrs. Nora Blair, of Kansas City, Mo., Mrs. Eliza Flournoy, of Wellington, Miss Maud and Forest, of Wellington, Mo. Mr. Alumbaugh joined the Primitive Baptist Church in the year 1889, and was baptized by Elder W. H. Newton, of Oak Grove, Mo. He believed in a God of purpose and of all power, both in heaven and on earth. He wished not a word of praise to be spoken in his behalf, but gave God all the praise and glory. He said he was not afraid to die, but would rather escape his terrible suffering if it were the Lord's will. Funeral services were conducted by Elder W. L. Hall, of Blue Springs, Mo., after which his body was laid to rest at Lexington to await the second coming of our Lord and Savior.

Written by his sorrowing

WIFE.

MEETINGS.

The Western Primitive Baptist Association is to convene with Bethel Church, Early County, Georgia, on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1923.

The Patsalgia Primitive Baptist Association convenes at Pilgrim's Rest Church, Covington County, Alabama, on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1923.

The Claybank Association of the Primitive faith and order convenes with Pleasant Ridge Church, Coffee County, Alabama, on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1923.

J. J. COLLINS.

The Sideling Hill and Fairview Churches will jointly hold, the Lord willing, a two days meeting, Saturday and Sunday, October 13th and 14th, 1923, at Needmore, Fulton County, Pennsylvania. Those coming by rail will come on Friday before the meeting to Hancock, Md., either over the Baltimore & Ohio or Western Maryland R. R., and will please previously notify Deacon J. C. Mellott, Needmore, Pa., so as to be met and conveyed to the place of meeting. All brethren and ministers in accord with us are invited to meet with us.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 17th, 18th and 19th, 1923. Trains will be met at Herndon Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning, leaving 36th and M Streets, Washington, D. C. Time of trains not given in this notice because schedule is likely to change before October. Brethren and ministers of our correspondence, and all others who are in fellowship with us, are invited to meet with us.

K. C. SPINDLE, Church Clerk.

The yearly meeting of the Welsh Tract Church is appointed to be held the third Saturday and Sunday in October (20th and 21st), 1923, beginning Saturday at 2:30 p. m. We hope some of the ministers who attend the Corresponding Meeting of Virginia will arrange to be with us, it being on their way to the Salisbury Association. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and ministers of our faith and order, and to all who love to meet with us. Those coming from Philadelphia and Baltimore will come via B. & O. R. R. to Newark, Del., on Saturday. Trains leave Baltimore (Mount Royal) at 10:18 a. m., and Philadelphia at 1:10 p. m.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

The quarterly meeting of the Covenanted Baptist Church to be held at Duart, Ontario, has been changed from Saturday before the first Sunday in November to Saturday before the third Sunday in October, and to continue three days (20th, 21st and 22nd) to convene on Saturday at 11 o'clock a. m. Elder C. W. Vaughn is expected to be at this meeting.

J. B. SLAUSON, Pastor.

The Salisbury Association is appointed to be held with the Forest Grove Church, near Parsonsburg, Md., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 24th, 25th and 26th, 1923. Those coming from the north take train leaving West Philadelphia station, Philadelphia, Pa., at 10:06 o'clock, Tuesday a. m., and those from the south, train leaving Cape Charles at 12:30 o'clock p. m. Get off the train at Salisbury, Md. Those coming from Baltimore or Ocean City, by way of B. C. & A., get off the train at Parsonsburg. For any other information please write George W. Adkins, Parsonsburg, Md., R. R. 1. All brethren and ministers in accord with us are cordially invited to meet with us.

GEORGE W. ADKINS, Clerk.

The Second Roxbury Church will, God willing, hold a two days meeting at Halcottville, N. Y., on the second Sunday, and Saturday before, in November (10th and 11th). We invite all who love the truth to meet with us at that time.

GEORGE RUSTON, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

HANOVER, Conn., Sept. 23, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending this letter from Elder John McConnell, for I feel it will be most interesting to all the readers of the SIGNS. I hope God will graciously pour out his Spirit upon all connected with the SIGNS, that they may cry aloud, spare not, as Elder Hardy said in his letter. Send us just what we need; if it be to reprove and rebuke do not hesitate, and may the same grace give us, the readers, tender hearts to receive all the Lord sends.

EVA ASHBEY.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Nov. 6, 1920.

MY DEAR INQUIRING SISTER:—I cannot describe my gladness in receiving your letter, though it was not altogether unexpected. Your evident interest in our meetings, and the short conversation we had, impressed me with the feeling that you are seeking to know the way of life as it is in Jesus; and if this was so, I felt you would be heard from again. It is written, "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek."—Psalms xxvii. 18. He speaks, and it is done. His word is in your heart and your tongue, while you are seeking to know him, whom to know is life eternal. He has said concerning his word, It shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. Seeking, inquiring, feeling after God, is the way of life he has ordained his people shall walk in. It is not in my power to open the understanding of any as to how God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself; the Lord alone must give the hearing ear and the understanding heart; but I am glad it was in your mind to tell me some of your questions and fears. The longer I live the more am I persuaded that the kingdom of God's dear Son is the dwelling-place of inquirers; who think upon his name, speak one to another in a language easy to be understood, for they speak the same things, and in mutual love and fellowship bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ, their King. There is inexpressible comfort in the assurance that the life of God's people is one life; "for we, being many, are one bread, and

one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." They have all things in common. In all their afflictions, questions, fears, doubts, trials, temptations, weakness; in all that is given them to suffer and endure, "there is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."—Eph. iv. 4–6. When in heaviness of spirit we feel to say, I am become as a stranger to my brethren, of all the people there is none with me, there is quick understanding and response in the hearts of all the household of faith, Even so, come, Lord Jesus; for they all testify to the life he lived in the flesh. A spiritual conviction of the truth of the gospel is a belief peculiar to those who are born again, who have the Spirit of God dwelling in them in holy communications as a vital principle. The natural man knows nothing of it, for it is "according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness."—Titus i. 1. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God; he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself. Spiritual conviction arises from the enlightening of our understanding, for our passing a right judgment upon things depends upon our having a right conception of those things, and as this conviction of the reality of heavenly things arises from the spiritual knowledge of those things, then our mind is spiritually convinced of their truth and holiness. Upon this point the Scriptures are very clear: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. * * * For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. iv. 3–6. "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."—2 Cor. iii. 18. Nothing can be more evident that a saving belief of the gospel is here meant, a belief from the mind being enlightened to behold the glory of those things which it reveals, and when our eyes are opened to behold the beauty of holiness and the excellency of heavenly things, immediately we are convinced of the truth of what God declares concerning the hatefulness of sin. In his light we see light, for in the same light in which we behold the beauty of holiness is revealed the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of our heart, and our hopelessly ruined condition. It is then we feel the need of a Savior; then we know that only almighty power can deliver us from the bondage of corruption. There is but one Savior, "and thou shalt call his name Jesus! for he shall save his people from their sins." "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

You say that God and Christ are always in your mind as two persons; that you are interested to have it made clearer to your mind, and would like me to write you on the subject. For about twenty-two years I have been trying to preach Christ, that in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and, if I am not deceived, I have preached what I sin-

cerely believe. But nevertheless, when the name of God and Christ occur in my mind, two persons are conceived of; images or likenesses appear, distinct from each other. I am conscious of being in captivity still to a natural mind, of enduring a contradiction in myself against the Spirit I would have my mind in subjection to. The natural mind cannot comprehend the mystery of godliness; it cannot understand that "there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." But Jesus said to his disciples, It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. To those that trusted in their own understanding, it was not given. So, your confession to feeling that you know nothing as you ought to know it, is in the fellowship of all them who feel the need of a clean heart and a right mind in serving the only true and living God. The apostle John speaks of the Word made flesh as being the Lord Jesus Christ, which Word, he declares, existed from eternity, was with God, and was God. So existing, he was the real and only Creator of all things, and did not hesitate to claim, even when in the flesh, not only equality, but oneness with God. (John i. 1–14; x. 30.) That this divine Word made flesh, was the only Savior of men, is the very burden of the whole gospel of this apostle, who tells us himself that he wrote it in order that men might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing they might have life through his name. (John xx. 31.) To the same effect is the testimony of Paul, who tells that Christ Jesus was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man, and being found as a man humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (Phil. ii. 6–8.) "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."—Gal. iv. 4–6. This was that eternal Word, now made flesh; and he dwelt among men, and men beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. (John i. 14.) In this manner, the Lord Jesus was both God and man; he was truly God-man. As concerning the flesh, as an Israelite, but still, over all God blessed forever. Amen. (Rom. ix. 5.) And this great mystery, divine and human nature in the person of Christ, survived death, and will endure forever; for being raised from the dead by the mighty power of God, he is set at his own right hand in heaven, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet, and hath given him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. (Eph. i. 20–23.) These two natures, divine and human, are so inseparably united in Christ that there are not two persons, but only one person of the two natures, namely, the person of the Son of God. For, says Isaiah to the house of David, Behold, the Lord himself will give you a sign: a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel. (Isaiah vii. 13, 14.) His very name, as well as the whole declara-

tion of Isaiah, according to Matthew, imports the oneness of his person, as well as the being of two natures in it, for Immanuel, being interpreted, is, God with us; it is one person, who is God-man: all of which the apostle makes clear in his statement of the nativity of Jesus Christ. (Matt. i. 18–25.) This gift to us was decreed of God from all eternity, for the blessed God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. (Eph. i. 3–6.) Nowhere in Scripture is there intimated any other name whereby any sinner can be saved but the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth; it has always taught, under every dispensation, and all the experience of God's people confirms its teaching, that he is, and always was, able to save to the uttermost, all that do, or ever did, or ever will, come unto God by him. (Heb. vii. 25.) God manifested in the flesh of Jesus of Nazareth was no other than the Messiah, whom the prophets had so long foretold. The Scriptures set forth his life, his death, his resurrection and his ascension to heaven; his glorious gospel, according to his command, has been preached to men through nineteen centuries; the church, purchased with his blood, still abides in strength under that form which his apostles gave to it by his own authority and through his own Spirit. It must never be overlooked that the work of Jesus in saving his people from their sins is not the special work of one nature or the other nature united in his person, but it is to be considered as the work of the person thus formed of these two natures; that is, the work of him who is God-man, the work of Immanuel, the work of one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. We are not to divide our Savior, for his fitness to be our Savior lies precisely in this, that he was God manifest in the flesh. There is not a single utterance of our Savior, either during his ministry or after his resurrection, that can be made to signify any intent on his part to divide his two natures, even in thought, in anything that related to his work in reconciling us unto God, and as if to guard against this very error, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John seem intentionally to speak of our Lord merely by his name Jesus when they speak of him after his resurrection, when we would be most liable to lose sight of his human nature. Even when they record his last words to his disciples, investing them with powers and appointing their work in the world, his declarations and promises, which involve in their very nature his absolute Godhead, it is still Jesus who thus commands and instructs them. It is Jesus who claims omnipotence, and says to them, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. It is Jesus who commands them to teach all nations all things whatsoever he had commanded them, and to baptize them in his name as the Son, along with the names of the Father and the Holy Ghost; it is Jesus who appropriates the most unsearchable attributes of God, promising to be with all of them always, and everywhere. (Matt. xxviii. 18–20.) It is impossible to conceive of anything that can lie more entirely out of the reach of our knowledge, when left to ourselves, than this wonderful mystery, God manifest in the flesh, and it never can be known except as it pleases God to reveal in us the fellowship of this mystery, in

bearing in our body the marks of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. To overcome him that had the power of death our Redeemer must be the omnipotent God; to be "God with us" he must, in our nature, be touched with a sense of all our infirmities; in a living way we must be made to know the exceeding greatness of his power, how the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, making intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered, and that he ever liveth to make intercession for us.

I know I am writing at tedious and unreasonable length, and very much fear I shall conclude without clearly expressing what is on my mind, but I would love to have you see what is the fellowship of the mystery of Christ, that the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. Notwithstanding the consciousness of Job of his vileness, that in his flesh dwelt no good thing, he said, "Yet in my flesh shall I see God," and when it pleased God to reveal himself, Job still said, Behold, I am vile. As it was with him, so it shall always be with us: when we know that our Redeemer liveth, we shall be confessing to no good thing dwelling in our flesh. I have heard it preached, and it is a suggestion common to the natural mind, that the flesh which our Lord took upon himself was the flesh of Adam in its original innocence, or at least of a very different type from that of his brethren, which the apostle says it was like. But the apostle is very explicit; denies that he took the nature of angels, and that he did take the seed of Abraham, which in the Old Testament is charged with greater proclivities to sin than any other race of mankind. Indeed, the flesh that Christ took upon him had come to be another name for sin. Hence it is called the body of the sins of the flesh; a sinful indulgence is a "garment spotted by the flesh." It is spoken of as lusting against the Spirit, and our Lord in taking such a nature is said to have been made sin for us. I think the meaning of the apostle is, that as Christ was made sin for us, by being born into a nature which is in all others, so we, by being born of his Spirit, become in him the righteousness of God. The birth of the Word into the likeness and fashion of man, as a sinner, was symbolized by Moses, in making the brazen serpent in the likeness of that which had infused the evil it was to cure, and our Lord was lifted up in the similitude of the sinful nature which he died to redeem. If there is any truth in language, or any reliance to be placed on symbols, the flesh which our Lord took upon himself was like that of his brethren whom he died to redeem, and not the flesh of Adam in its original innocence any more than it was the nature of holy angels. "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one," that is, one in blood, one in condition, though infinitely different in character; one in the process of glorification through death to the flesh, and therefore he is not ashamed to call them brethren, and through death he delivers them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage; and this he does by the crucifixion of their flesh, and their resurrection life in him, giving them the assurance that whether living or dying, they are the Lord's. As the death and life of Christ were not of himself as a man, but according to the will of the Father, whom he obeyed in all things, so the believer's death to sinful flesh, and

his resurrection to a new life, are not of himself, but by the power of the Holy Spirit, and in that sense they are God's. I believe this is the meaning of the saying, "Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end [or to effect this death and life in us] Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living," or the reigning power both in the dying and living process.

The fear of imputing fleshly pollution to Christ, by admitting that he took human nature in its corrupt and materialized state, comes from failing to consider that pollution does not arise from the nature, except so far as it is a reigning power. To all others it was sin, because it was the ruling power of their lives, and they were without strength to make it anything else. But in him it was conquered; it was ruled by the Spirit, which he had without measure; it was from first to last, in the temptations of life and in the sufferings of death, so absolutely in subjection to his godliness as to be as holy as God. Hence, though he was made sin, or what was so to all others, yet it was not so to him; though he had the serpent form he had not its venom, but, on the contrary, a life-giving, spiritual, quickening power to bruise the serpent's head, and destroy his power over believing souls. He said, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."—John xii. 31, 32. He had taken the nature reigned over by Satan in its corrupt condition, and through the eternal Spirit had held it uncorrupt, and was ready to offer it upon the cross without spot to God, bruised as to his heel, but crushing the serpent's head. This was our Lord's victory; in this we see him traveling in the greatness of his strength. By excluding the divine nature of Christ from all participation in his sufferings we misrepresent the gospel, and reduce his sacrifice infinitely below the place it holds in the law and the prophets. If we say that God cannot suffer, then our Lord's agony was merely that of a man, no greater than many men have endured, and adding the dignity of his character will never make up the deficiency of it to atone for sin. That is the way the wisdom of men presents the subject to our reason. But "without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." He gave himself for us, made his soul an offering for sin. These terms include nothing short of his whole personality, and we, body, soul and spirit, are sanctified wholly in the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death. Jesus had no atonement to offer for sin that did not crucify a sinful nature, and establish in its place a spiritual life, and in receiving his atonement we are confessing that Christ is come in the flesh. "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace."

I should apologize for the length of this letter, and for presuming on your patience in reading it, but I am confident you will accept it as an evidence of desire, at least, to have you know that my fellowship is with you in all your misgivings and fears. I may not have chosen acceptable words to satisfy your thirst for knowledge of the only true God, but if a word has been dropped that will stir up your mind to think upon the name of the

God of our salvation, the God of our life, I shall be well pleased. We shall be glad to have you meet with us whenever it is possible, and any time you feel impressed to write me I will try to answer promptly, but not at such length as this letter. I have not been well lately, and being confined at home have had more opportunity to write than I usually have.

With sincere desire for your good, both temporally and spiritually, I am, I hope, your brother in like precious faith,

JOHN McCONNELL.

HAVANA, Kansas, Sept., 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As I am writing to you on business, I would like to tell you about the Turkey Creek Association, which was held this year with Coles Creek Church, at Iola, Kansas, beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in September and continuing three days. There was a good representation from other churches, quite a number were there from Missouri. The ministers present were Elder J. M. Preston (pastor of Coles Creek Church), Elder F. M. Sutton, of Toronto, Kans., Elder Chambers, of Crescent, Okla., Elders Shumate and Shields, of Kansas City, Elder Herryman, of Mulberry, Kans., and Elder Crocket. Elder F. W. McCormick, the Moderator, not being present, brother Nowels, of Parsons, was chosen Moderator. Elder Preston was Clerk. Ample preparations were made by Coles Creek Church to entertain all present; lunch and supper were served in the meetinghouse. We were together all day, with services in the forenoon, afternoon and night. The preaching was good, and very comforting. Much interest was manifested, and we felt that it was good to be there, and when it was time for us to return home we felt the sweetness of the meeting and the comfort of it as we sang:

"I love thy church, O God,
The house of thine abode,
The church our blest Redeemer bought
With his own precious blood."

I believe the dear old SIGNS is in the Lord's hands, and when Elder Lefferts introduced those three associate editors I was made glad by the sweet salutatories, written in such humble spirits. After I had read and reread all of them, I said, Surely they have been with Jesus and learned of him. Yes, we know that all spiritual knowledge is a revelation from God the Father. The Lord knoweth them that are his, and the blessed promise is that he will never leave nor forsake us. Dear editors, I am sure you have the prayers and best wishes of the readers and contributors of this valuable paper. Preach the word. It is your duty to feed the lambs and sheep, the last sweet command of the dear Savior, or as Paul so solemnly enjoined, Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. I have been reading the SIGNS for more than twenty years, and it seems each year I get more and more from its pages. May you be constrained to write on. Dear brother Dodson, before I come to a close I want to tell you that surely God directed your pen for my comfort and consolation. One night when I retired I was troubled. My problem was perplexing. I could not sleep. The next day I picked up the late SIGNS (August 15th), and again read your editorial (particularly the last two columns), when I read, Cast thy burden upon the Lord and he shall sustain thee, I thought, How sweet, why did I not think of that? I read on to the end, the tears coursing down my cheeks, and when I had finished there was nothing left to worry about; the trouble had all vanished; the darkness was light before me; the mountains lay low; crooked

things were straight; I was gathered with the lambs in his arms and carried in his bosom. All our times are in his hand, and all events at his command. I was made to lie down in green pastures, and led beside the still waters. Yes, he knows our own peculiar case, the beseeching of our heart. Our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, and he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. Pray for me, that I may always cast my burden upon the Lord, and trust him more fully. Dear reader, please read this editorial again, lest you have missed some of its beauties and joys. God is not slack concerning his promises.

Hoping God will bless you all in your labors, I am, with abiding love and fellowship, your unworthy sister in a sweet hope,

MARY PITTMAN.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Oct. 30, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending two dollars for my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the first time. I have thought of doing this for some time, but I did not want to send it in unless I wrote something, and I feel too unworthy to try to write anything. I will try to relate part of my experience before I joined the church, which I hope and trust was manifested by the grace of God. My first recollection of the real condition I was in seemed to be brought to my mind one day at a funeral, when the preacher made a remark to this effect: Would we be ready to die and go home if the Lord should call us at any moment? After I left the house my mind seemed to meditate upon that thought, and I was in what you might term a sea of darkness for many months afterward. I wanted to go somewhere to be alone and read the Bible, seeking for words of comfort. I would feel out of place, or ashamed, when when among christian people, yet I longed to get some place where I could hear Old School Baptist preaching. I had an earnest desire to be among the Old School Baptists, where I felt at home, and I hope I will always feel as much at home as I do now, but something seemed to be holding me back. The Father's will be done at the appointed time. I would find myself pondering over the words of our blessed Savior until I would cry myself to sleep for want of more evidence that I belonged to our Father's small flock here on earth. I continued in this state of despair and darkness until one night I was suddenly awakened by what seemed to be the presence of the Savior right around me. This filled my heart with joy, and I thought to tell some one about it. With the hope that I was being guided by the Father above I went before the Mount Olive Church, May 21st, 1922, feeling very weak and unworthy. I was received into the church, and baptized the following Sunday. Words cannot express the joy I felt in my heart when I was led into the shining water by Elder J. S. Murphy. I continually find myself looking for more evidence that I am one of the flock, but I do love to meet with the brethren, and the words uttered by them are as music to my ear.

I hope and trust that these few words I have written have been directed by the Savior's almighty hand. May God bless every one of you, is my prayer for his name's sake.

March 7th, 1923.—This has been written a long time, and I have felt too unworthy to send for the paper, but I do not feel that I can do without it any

longer. If you feel as I do about this letter you will just put it in the waste-basket.

A poor unworthy sister in hope,

ELSIE M. GALL.

ONEONTA, N. Y., Oct. 4, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have felt worried and grieved for some time, knowing something of the embarrassment you are experiencing, and am inclosing five dollars to help that much toward the relief, and I hope and pray the dear Lord may put it in the hearts of all who can to help as much as they can, that our dear paper may continue, and the publishers be relieved of their heavy burden. I am sure we would all miss it more than we could tell. It is like an old and tried friend to me, was in my father's home from my earliest recollection, and has been in my home since the early 1860's, before it was published in pamphlet form, and I do not know that I have ever lost a number. I love it and the doctrine it promulgates, and believe it to be the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. I was eighty-six years of age my last birthday, and while I am very well and quite active I do not travel far alone, and as I live with my children since the death of my dear husband (in 1907) I am not always where I can get to meetings and the SIGNS is great company for me, and the print is so clear I can read it comfortably without an extra reading glass. I would love to be able to write something for its columns, and tell the dear writers how I enjoy their communications, but I always have such a feeling sense of my nothingness and utter inability to write anything your dear readers would enjoy, or worthy the space it would occupy, for the columns are always filled with good reading. I hope all who can write will continue to do so, and hope that your heart and hands may be stayed up spiritually and financially, and that you may be spared long to proclaim the unalloyed truth as it is in Jesus.

Yours in hope,

HARRIET N. HARKNESS.

ROUND HILL, Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I thank you very much for the card; it was good of you to think of us old folks. We missed you when our meeting day came, and felt lonely and sad without you and the dear ones we hope we love for the truth's sake. I much enjoyed your preaching the last time you were here, and have often thought about it while at my work. It is fifty-three years the last of this month since I was baptized, and the yoke has indeed been easy and the burden light. The rough places have been made smooth and the cooked things straight, and I have been given strength to bear the trials of the way, and I hope that He who has helped me thus far will give me strength to the end. I have no strength of my own; all my help must come from the Lord, who is able to save a poor worm of the dust like me, for I know there is none like me; none so vile, so prone to go astray; none so ignorant as I am; but I love to meet with the dear ones and hear the truth preached. It is my meat and my drink to mingle with the dear people of God, and they bear with me and are very good to me.

We hope to see you at Hughsville. Love for Mrs. Lefferts and the children and all the dear ones; tell them we missed them, and will be glad when we have another meeting. Mr. Norman is well and busy.

Please excuse this poor letter, and write when you have time; it helps us.

Your little sister,

REBECCA NORMAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1923.

EDITOR

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

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GENESIS II. 16, 17.

"AND the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

The above quotation embraces the commandment given by the God of heaven and earth to the creature, which he created and placed over all other created things on earth, and we note from the reading that Adam was of the dust of the ground: "And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air."—Gen. ii. 19. When God created the earth the fullness was known unto him. "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world."—Acts xv. 18. This testimony declares unto us that every purpose of God in the creation must be fulfilled. The commandment of our God to our father in the flesh (Adam) rests without any conditions, and when that commandment was violated the penalty passed upon the violator. The great question is often asked regarding the source of the sin conceived in Eve, Why should she desire this fruit which Adam was commanded not to eat? We cannot go beyond the word of inspiration, so we note this quotation, "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" Which expresses the wisdom he possessed; that he knew the expression of God's commandment to Adam, and also the effect the fruit would give to the mind of those who ate thereof. These expressions given by the serpent to Eve were the beguiling influences thrown around her to bring transgression of God's law. In the transgression sin was brought. The strength of sin is the law, and the wages of sin is death. Now we have the characters which bore sin, the conceiver and the bringing forth, and they are responsible unto God, and must receive the judgment of his righteousness as prescribed in his law. The above quotations, as we are given to understand, are as far as we dare express, for God did not inspire Moses to give us any further expressions to know the conditions or existence of the devil in the beginning.

Now we pass on into the perfect wisdom of God, as given by inspiration. "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world." He was not deceived nor taken unawares, but knew the very workings of iniquity, and the power and strength of sin, which is law, and the wages of sin, which is death. So in Adam all have sinned. There is no righteousness of an incorruptible seed in man in his natural state, as he is full of iniquity, but, "Wisdom hath builded her house."—Prov. ix. 1. In all the things God made, nothing was made without his Son, and as he hath purposed so shall it come to pass. This leads on to the expression, Jesus stood as

a "lamb slain from the foundation of the world," and at the appointed time of the Father he came into the world to do and finish the work his Father gave him to do. Jesus declared, All my Father hath given me shall come to me, which embraces his suffering, death, resurrection and the preservation of the saints to glory through grace. As touching the elect of God, they are the church, and Jesus declared that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Dear reader, what power is in all the world that God does not control? If there is a single one, there is some reason to believe that Jesus had not all power, but the word declares that "Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.—Matt. xxviii. 18. He will save to the uttermost all the Father hath given him. Salvation hath God appointed for walls and bulwarks about Zion, and every inhabitant is kept by the power of God. In the summing up of all the strong assurances of salvation that belong to the people of God, we are made to question the realization of our own hearts to prove our inheritance, but the search does not warrant a positive declaration that we know we are one of the elect of God, but the realization brings us to say we hope we are one of the chosen of God in Christ. The realizations in the heart of the sinner proclaim Jesus as having all power in heaven and in earth, then nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of Christ, and all service rendered unto God in righteousness is but the working out of the life of his conceptions conceived in our hearts. Hence the apostle Paul could say, "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." "Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works."—James ii. 18. These are the working power of God in the hearts of his children, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. We are thus made to proclaim the absolute sovereignty of God over all worlds, principalities and powers. We are questioned often as to the word "absolute." The definition of the word, according to Webster, is, adjective, free as to condition; perfect in itself; unlimited in power; fixed; irrevocable; despotic; positive. Noun: The will or power of the Almighty. The question given in the SIGNS as to "absolute predestination," and who created sin, has been much in our mind while writing the foregoing article, and we trust that our readers will understand us in our position of thought, and not for a moment think we believe God is the imputer of unrighteousness, and brings to naught all iniquity, also setting their bounds, which they cannot pass, and when it pleases him time shall be no more, death and hell shall give up their dead and the King shall say unto them on his right hand, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

C. W. V.

TO OUR CANADIAN SUBSCRIBERS.

As some of our subscribers in Canada send us Canadian money, we wish to call their attention to the fact that the exchange on it is now very heavy, and we cannot afford to pay it, but can only give them credit for the amount they send, less the exchange. The SIGNS is the only paper we know of that does not charge extra postage for Canadian subscribers, so if convenient please send money orders or express orders.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. W. McClanahan.)

The Pocatalico Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Elium Church, Jackson Co., W. Va., September 7th, 8th and 9th, 1923, to the churches composing her body, and the associations with which she corresponds, sendeth salutation.

MY DEAR BRETHREN:—It has once more, by the order of this association, fallen upon me to write a Circular Letter for your consideration, and if approved by you it will be spread upon the Minutes of this association. The subject upon which I have selected to address you is of importance, and should not be overlooked by those who profess a hope in Christ Jesus. The Scripture I have selected is found in 1 Corinthians ix. 11, and reads thus: "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?"

It is with a degree of fearfulness that I enter upon this subject. I hope none of my brethren will take any offence, for I feel that their pure minds need to be stirred up by way of remembrance of these things. Paul begins his letter to the Corinthian brethren by saying he was "called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus." So we see this address was to the church, and is applicable to the saints throughout all time. Paul, as a faithful minister, shunned not to declare all the counsel of God in his epistles of love to the church he was addressing. In speaking of the ministry he says, "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." The minister is required to be faithful in discharging his duty, not only in visiting and preaching, but he is to cry aloud and spare not, lift up his voice like a trumpet and show the Lord's people their transgressions and the house of Jacob (church) their sins. The reproof, correction and instruction given by Paul to the Corinthian brethren is equally applicable to the church through all time and in every place. A minister who will not preach without pay for preaching is not worthy of the pastoral care of a church, for such God has not called to take the oversight of his flock. A church in calling a pastor should, we think, be a unit. No minister should take the care of a church knowing there were some of the members opposing him, even if it be but one; also a church that will not minister of their carnal things to the necessity of their pastor is not worthy of a pastor. Paul's instruction to a young minister was to neglect not the gift that is in thee. He must give time and attention to reading his Bible, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth;" for "no man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life." Beside the time given to meditation and study he must be at some expense to prepare himself with conveyance, clothing, &c. The needs of his family are the same as other men; his own clothes and those of his family wear out, his crop will not grow without work, and he, not being able to hire, ofttimes overworks himself to make good his word, for the appointment is out, and the brethren will be expecting him. I know this is a question we are often reluctant to

talk about, and yet it is one the Bible speaks of; it is one of interest to the church, to the minister and to his family. The minister wishes to be held as a brother, not a slave to his brethren, and when he has all his own expenses to meet, and family to see to, and yet give a majority of his time to the brethren, he is sensible that they should divide burdens with him. O, my dear brethren, may we be willing to help bear each other's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. It is a pleasure for a God-called minister to wait on the churches, and he could not be content without it, and will go to his task, although it be at his own expense, and although he knows his family has a natural right to his time and labor, yet he should not be neglected because he is a willing servant; the brethren should not conclude he will attend whether they divide burdens with him or not. This is making a slave of him, and not a brother, and it will have a bad effect on his feelings. It seems to me that religion should strengthen moral obligations rather than weaken them. Your duty to your minister does not rest on the same ground that your duty to a pauper rests. You give to paupers when want makes it indispensable to them, but you should give to your pastor as you are interested in the same work he is interested in, as a brother, as one willing to divide the burden with him. You do not give to him as a hireling, for he is not a hireling; you should share in common the comforts of life, and in common perform the burdens of life. You should not seek to exalt and enrich him, for this he does not desire at your hands, he only wants to live upon an equality with you. The deacons of a church are supposed to be the proper ones to look after all necessary expenses of the church; it is their duty to remind the brotherhood of what their duty is to their pastor. No minister should be honored by the title of Elder, neither should such an one be called to the pastoral care of a church, who will deny a just and honest debt, and no church should hold a minister or a deacon in fellowship who will take advantage of the homestead law to keep from paying a just and honest debt, for these are two sacred positions which should be well watched by the laity of the churches.

Written with an eye single to the welfare of the churches and to the honor of the cause.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Mod.
J. R. BECKETT, Clerk.

(Written by T. L. Rosebery.)

To the Elders and messengers of the Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, in session with Spring Creek Church, Adair County, Missouri, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, greeting.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—We feel it is by and through the tender mercies of that great God by whom the bounds of our habitation are appointed unto us that we are enabled to meet together in another association. Since we last met another year of time has passed, with its many changes. Some changes have brought joy and gladness, and some have caused sorrow and grief.

Dear brethren and sisters, it has been a long established rule of our Association to appoint some one to write a Circular Letter to be printed with our Minutes, and as the lot has fallen upon me I will do the best I can, and leave it to the consideration of the brethren. For a starting point I will call your attention to Revelation xx. 6, where it says, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first

resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." Brethren, if not deceived, Christ has revealed himself to us, and has placed our feet upon solid ground and established our goings, and has resurrected us from our dead works, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Then we certainly have had a part in the first resurrection. Brethren, we read about there being a book of life, and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death. The second death has no dominion over those who have been resurrected from their dead works, for they are the ones the Lord made the new covenant with, when he said, "I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Listen, "And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." And the Lord says, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Our Savior was born a child, yet a King, and it was said, His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God and The Prince of Peace. His mission here was to save his people from their sins. His people were those the Father had chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Now did his people have to raise large sums of money to get him to come and pay the debt they owed? No, he paid the full debt they owed, and gave himself a ransom for all that the Father gave him. He fulfilled his mission here on earth, and finished the work he came to do. The last words our Savior said was while hanging on the rugged cross: "It is finished." Meaning the plan of salvation for his people was finished. Then, that being so, the salvation of every sinner who ever has or ever will be saved was made secure.

Now I feel to close and leave this to the consideration of the brethren. Now may God bless, support and guide us in all our deliberations, is our prayer for Christ's sake. Amen.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator.
J. M. CATE, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Pocatalico Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Elium Church, Jackson County, West Virginia, sendeth greetings to the associations with which we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We have been greatly comforted by your messengers coming to us laden with the precious gospel of the Son of God, declaring the absolute sovereignty over all things, and that all things (not a part) work together for good to them that love God, to those who are the called according to his purpose. We greatly desire to keep up correspondence with you, and that our love and care for each other may grow stronger and stronger, being rooted and grounded in the faith of God's elect, and that we may never become entangled with the deceptive doctrine of conditionalism and limited predestination, as is advocated by some who claim to be Old School Baptists. We hope it will be God's will that your messengers meet with us at our next session. Our Minutes will tell where and when we will convene. May the God of love and peace rest upon us, to the praise and glory of his name.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Mod.
J. R. BECKETT, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, October 20th, 1923, at the home of the bride's parents, Leesburg, Va., James Gasquet diZerega, of Warrenton, Virginia, and Miss Hannah Brown McIntosh.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon George W. Mezick departed this life August 27th, 1923, in Felton, Del. Brother Mezick was born in Worcester Co., Md., September 7th, 1834. His age at the time of his death was about 89 years. Brother Mezick had long been an invalid due to a fall he had some years ago, since which time he was not able to walk. In early life he was united in marriage to Miss Priscie Laws, who survives him. They had no children, but their home was the home of their nieces and nephews, practically raising several of them. Brother Mezick united with the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church nearly, if not quite, fifty years ago, and was soon chosen deacon, which office he filled well and faithfully until too feeble to attend meetings of the church. His interest, however, never waned, and to the last he was much concerned for the welfare of the church. While living in Salisbury, Md., and it was only about four years ago that he left there, his home was headquarters for ministers and visitors. A hearty welcome was always found in his home. I have never known a more substantial, settled, fixed Old Baptist than was brother Mezick. Quick to detect error, faithful to reprove when necessary, and just as kind to commend when merited, firm in his convictions, never being turned from what he thought right. He deplored his faults, and often would write bitter things against himself, but in the eyes of his many friends he was one of the best and most honorable men in the community where he lived so many years. He was a wonderful support to Elder Durand during his pastorate of the Salisbury Church. I would not want to think that any one loved brother Mezick and appreciated his able counsel more than did I. He was one of the best and truest friends I ever had, and our fellowship never abated. A long, useful life is ended here, but a better and longer one begun above, through grace in Christ Jesus, in whom he believed and trusted. He is survived by his widow, several nieces and nephews, among whom is Mrs. Lee Disharoon, of Philadelphia, Pa., where he and sister Mezick made their home most of the time during the last four years, who lovingly and faithfully cared for them.

The services were held in the Salisbury meeting-house, conducted by Elder J. C. Mellott, pastor of the church, assisted by the writer. Interment took place in the graveyard adjoining. May sister Mezick and the relatives be blessed with grace as their day.

Written by request. H. C. KER.

Our dear brother **Orvil F. Ballard** departed this life September 30th, 1922, at his home at Clovesville, Delaware Co., N. Y. He was born at Vega, Delaware Co., N. Y., December 5th, 1841. His parents were Jonathan and Roxine Ballard. December 17th, 1868, he was married to Miss Sarah F. Hewitt. He was baptized by Elder James Miller, and was one of the eleven members that constituted the Clovesville Old School Baptist Church. He was chosen clerk of the church at that time, which office he faithfully filled until called home to be ever with his dear Savior. He was a beloved member of his church, and we all mourn our loss, but realize our loss is his eternal gain. He leaves his widow, one sister, two children and several grandchildren to mourn their loss. May the God of all grace comfort them in their bereavement.

EUNICE A. STILLWELL, Church Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

G. G. Martin, Va., $2.00; Mrs. J. R. Blythe, Pa., $2.00; William W. Darby, Md., $1.00; John C. Gunn, Tex., $1.00; A. B. Corder, W. Va., $3.00.

MEETINGS.

The Second Roxbury Church will, God willing, hold a two days meeting at Halcottville, N. Y., on the second Sunday, and Saturday before, in November (10th and 11th). We invite all who love the truth to meet with us at that time.

GEORGE RUSTON, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California.

C. S. MILLER.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Little Flock Church will no longer hold meetings at Park and 5th Streets, but for the present will hold them at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 494 East 10th Street, Riverside, California. We hope to have a place again soon, and when we do we will appreciate having our notice with you.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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ASSOCIATE EDITORS:

Elders R. Lester Dodson, George Ruston, Chas. W. Vaughn.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., Sept. 20, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If you will allow one so poor and needy as I am to thus address you. As I have to send you a remittance for the SIGNS, I will try and write a few lines in regard to the truth as it has been taught in all the years since the church was first organized. The supreme effort is being made to destroy the doctrine as taught in the SIGNS, and as I read in two papers that this doctrine must be put down, I will suggest a plan that will accomplish what the writer of that article desires. If he and his kind will just dethrone the great "I am that I am," and put the devil on his throne in his (God's) place, they will accomplish what they so earnestly desire. These are continually saying we teach God causes us to sin. We have denied this thousands of times, and still the charge is made against us. I have both the first and second volumes of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe's editorials. He says on page 30, first volume: "The doctrine of absolute predestination, when rightly understood, does not involve the idea of man's acting involuntarily in sin, neither does it exonerate him from accountability." Then, if he does not sin involuntarily, he must sin because he loves to sin. We, if I should assume to be counted among "the faithful in Christ Jesus," have always taught that it takes the grace of God to keep us from sinning, and that every one who comes to the church of God in a proper manner is caused by the Spirit of God to come, and every one who walks uprightly is caused by the Lord to do so, and every one who does not sow to the flesh is prevented from sowing to the flesh by his loving heavenly Father, and if the children of God do not neglect so great salvation it is because they are kept by the power of God. If these positions are true, we ought to be able to prove them by the Bible. The first one stated is, It takes the grace of God to keep us from sinning. Romans v. 21: "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." The word "reign" means to rule. Then grace restrains us. Titus ii. 11, 12: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation" (not trying to bring and fails, but bringeth salvation), "teaching us, that, deny-

ing ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world." Again, 1 Cor. xv. 10: "But by the grace of God I am what I am: * * * but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Ephesians iv. 7: "Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." Again, Eph. ii. 8, 9: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." This text does not only teach that grace purges our sins, and that our sins are blotted out by the blood of Jesus, but teaches our being saved from doing wrong now in this evil world. Our salvation for time and eternity is all of God. I have never in my life read in any ancient history, or old time periodical, such an expression as, "two salvations." The two salvation theory is of very recent date, or I am a mistaken man. Listen to your blessed Jesus as he sweeps away this do and live, this do and be blessed two salvation idea as they claim, one of God eternal, and the other of and by ourselves in time. John iii. 21: "But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God." Again, Gal. i. 4: "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world." Here Paul says Jesus gave himself for our sins. This saved us from "going away into everlasting punishment." He did not stop there. He did not make this known to us and then leave it to us to decide whether we would be delivered or choose to deliver ourselves from this present world, but that he (Jesus) might deliver us from this present evil world. Listen to the eternal thunder of the Almighty by Paul: "Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us." This deliverance is not from eternal death, for in the eighth verse he says: "For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: but we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead." Then comes the text: "Who delivered us from so great a death," showing positively, absolutely and without a doubt that our salvation in time as well as for eternity is all of God. How sad it is to know that some have gotten so befogged, if they ever saw the light, that they say Jonah could have gone on to Tarshish if he had chosen to do so. Freewill doctrine pure and simple, and had its origin in the bottomless pit of human reason. Next. Every one who comes to the church of God in a proper manner is caused to come by the Lord. Psalms lxv. 4: "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest [yes, causest] to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple." Acts ii. 4. 7: "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Again, "The love of God constraineth us." Constrain means to compel. Then his love compels us. "He brought me to his banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love." Again, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." I have reserved unto myself a remnant according to an election of grace.

The next proposition was, Every one

who walks uprightly is caused to do so by the Lord. Ezekiel xxxvi. 27: "And I [God] will put my Spirit within you, and cause [yes, cause] you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." The truth of God here sweeps away the mistake some are making that we can obey or disobey as we choose. Freewill doctrine again, and never was the doctrine of God. I will now prove why we do not sow to the flesh. (Hebrews xiii. 20, 21.) Speaking of Jesus as the God of peace and great Shepherd of the sheep, Paul says, "Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever." Let us quote it again: "Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight." Brethren, quit teaching freewill doctrine and come back to the old paths. Paul says in the last clause of the above, "to whom be glory for ever and ever." If God causes us to be perfect in every good work to do his will, he deserves the glory, but if it is ourselves that just choose to walk in his statutes, we ought to have the glory, but the Lord says, "My glory will I not give to another, nor my praise to graven images." If we do not sow to the flesh, it is because God makes us perfect to do his will. When God wants to teach us to look to and trust in and depend on him, instead of his causing us to sow to the flesh he just leaves us to ourselves and we are sure to sow to the flesh, as certain as Peter did when he denied the blessed Savior three times before the cock crew. Paul said, "I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." He went up to Jerusalem, and when the test came he whimpered like you or I would have done under the same conditions, and acted the lie and hypocrite both. He learned by this his weakness. The last proposition asserted was, If the children of God do not neglect so great salvation it is because they are kept by the power of God. Isaiah xxvi. 12: "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us." 1 Peter 4, 5: "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." Yes, kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. When God does not keep us we are sure to neglect this great salvation, because in us, that is, in our flesh, dwells no good thing. Paul says, Gal. v. 17: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." The doctrine that we can obey if we will, causes us to cease to trust in, depend and lean on our wondrous Husband for protection, and deliverance from temptation, and is nothing but the same doctrine as taught by all freewill preachers, only applied to different parties. The prophet says, Thy maker is thine husband; the holy one of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall he be called. "With the breath of his lips shall he stay the wicked." When you have a mind to attack some one for an insult, all your Husband and Protector has to do is to breathe upon your angry mind, and you are quiet; all he had to do was to say, "Peace, be still," and the waves became quiet. Solomon pictured out your Savior and his bride, when he said, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, lean-

ing upon her beloved?"—Song viii. 5. Here is the picture of the King of kings and his lovely bride, washed from her sins in her blessed Husband's blood, after he by his wondrous power had delivered her "from the power of darkness," and had gone out into the wilderness where he found Jacob and led him about and instructed him and kept him as the apple of his eye, and made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock, which flinty rock is the absolute sovereignty of God over all creatures and things, as says the confession of faith which I have that was printed in the year 1806. It says, God "governs and controls all creatures and things, from the greatest even to the least." "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." All we like sheep had gone astray. See him coming up from the wilderness with his bride leaning on him, she who was so depraved, debased and degraded, black, filthy, polluted and sinful, and was clothed in filthy rags. All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. Then our obedience not caused by the Spirit of God is filthy rags. See her now beautified by his grace; see her clothing, wrought gold raiment of needlework, royal apparel; all of which she had no more to do with the manufacture of or making than Rebecca did with the raiment that Abraham's servant gave to her that was brought from Abraham's country. Abraham's servant gave her "presents of gold and presents of silver and raiment." Oh look, brethren, look at this wonderful picture. See the rapturous love beaming from the bride's eyes, as they are always turned toward Him, and no wonder. He was so high, pure, sweet and holy, and she so degraded, black and sinful; yet he loved her and cleansed her and made her fit to lean on and associate with him; yes, always turned towards him with that sweet confidence that a loving, virtuous wife has in her husband who has always provided for her in affluence and defended her on all occasions, and now she loves him with the very love he sheds abroad in her heart, having learned by sad experience that she cannot defend or protect herself, nor resist the awful temptations of this world, nor the wiles of the devil, who can talk more love and make more pretentions of love than any hypocrite on earth. Therefore, as she has learned her weakness she leans on him, knowing the power of that arm that encircles her, adores him, rests in his love and trusts herself to his care. "We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."—Phil. iii. 3. Let us quote that again: "Rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

Your little weak brother, in hope of mercy,

ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

SANTA CRUZ, California.

DEAR EDITORS:—I received a letter from my cousin a few days ago, who is also a member of God's visible church, and before closing it she said, "Many of us are wondering why you never write for the SIGNS any more." The best reasons I can give are that I am much older (was seventy-six last month), and that my mind is not so clear. I know that I love the Lord and his people more and more as the days go by, and if I thought I could write to his glory, and for their good, my pen would not have lain idle so long. I read such good articles in our paper; they tell the old but ever wonderful story so well that I have nothing to add except His continuous goodness to

me. I have been kept by his power so long, and so well, so free from chastisement and affliction of any kind, that the words, "Be still, and know that I am God," are my greatest comfort. As the days of my journey are shortened my vision seems clearer, and I live nearer and nearer to Him who made it possible for us to experience the joy that comes with an unconditional salvation. If any one ever desired to be good, and to do good, it is so with me, but I sin and stumble yet, though nearly three score years have passed since I first believed, since I drank from the fountain of his goodness, mercy and forgiveness. I thought then that the way would be easy, that my burden would be light. I have found it so different, as well as difficult, but have been made to see his wisdom through it all, and have thanked him again and again that his master-mind was the motive power which runs this world, and saves his people; that we had no more to do with it than we had in creating the universe, and who of us, knowing our nature, and the temptations we encounter, would have it otherwise? I was called and set apart by the grace of God (although too unworthy to write of it) to partake of the things of His kingdom while sojourning here, and of the riches of his grace eternally. He found me in a wilderness of pleasure and sin, and taught me the Way, the Truth and the Life. Before that period I had done nothing to commend me to his favor, nor have I done so since. I have desired it, have called to him from the depths of my soul to enable me to live nearer him, to give me words with which to tell his people of my gratitude and thankfulness, but he does his pleasure in earth as in heaven, and I must finish my days according to his plan and purpose. I so frequently wish that I lived nearer my beloved brethren, but even the isolation may be for my good; it prevents them from knowing me as I know myself; it makes me hunger for that upon which they feed, but I might tire of it as some seem to do who live in their midst. I cannot trust myself. I make promises and break them; I praise him from whom all blessings flow one minute, and the next am entering into a conversation with the ungodly, and as far from my actual desire as the heavenly light is from nature's darkness, and I grieve over it, for His words and works are as firmly fixed in my soul now as in the eternal past, and when the last enemy shall have been conquered I know that I shall see him and be like him, and I shall be amply repaid for every heartache and pain, and for every doubt and fear experienced here. The harder the trials the sweeter the release. My experience, and life since then, differ but slightly from all who have been called to worship him in spirit and in truth. I may have had a sweeter taste of his graciousness than some, but it has only served to make me more humble, more willing to sit at their feet, and to serve them in any capacity. May God forgive me if the foregoing should sound boastful. Thou knowest my leanness, and that I feel it daily, but in thy strength and will I am made to rejoice until my cup runneth over. All of us are as one in him; none to be judged by what we have seen, heard or felt, but because it seemed good in his sight. All have taken sweet counsel together, have walked into the house of God with listening ears to hear of the things of his kingdom, and of the joy and gladness of its inhabitants, and we have rejoiced greatly, believing with all our hearts and souls. How excellent is

thy loving-kindness, O God, therefore thy children put their trust under the shadow of thy wing. Our strength and our hearts may fail, but he is the strength of our hearts, and our portion forever, therefore we will not fear, though the earth be removed and the mountains be cast into the midst of the sea. He is nigh to all who call upon him in truth; he will fulfill the desire of them that fear him; he will hear their cry and save them. Then be joyful, brethren, lift up your heads and be glad, for he hath promised to strengthen and help us in every time of trouble; and more, for he says he will gather his saints unto him, those who have made a covenant with him by sacrifice, and the heavens shall declare his righteousness. He further says, I have put my words in thy mouth, I have covered thee in my hands that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundation of the earth, and say unto you, Thou art my people. Even down to old age all of them shall prove his sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love. I am assuming and believing, as I write, that he has a chosen and precious people, and that they are those who are known as and called Old School or Primitive Baptists; that you have received a work of grace in your heart; that you understand all that I do, and more; that you have walked in the same paths, have trusted in the same God, and believe in his word. If we are different, and peculiar, it is just as he said we would be, and if we believe that we shall dwell in his house forever and ever it is because he has told us so, and we thank and praise him that there is a better life than this, a land that is fairer than day, where all is love and peace, where all the ransomed shall meet, nevermore to be separated.

I would love to attend the Frying Pan Association, but God has willed it otherwise; yet I will think of all of you, and love you with that love which passeth understanding. I expect to go south again in a few days, and I look forward to the time with pleasure, for there my best friends, my kindred, dwell, and I will again hear his truth proclaimed, and enjoy the great privilege of mingling with my brethren. That God may bless and keep his people, and cause them to walk uprightly before him, is my prayer for Jesus' sake. May the editors of the SIGNS be greatly blessed in their work; may they be given wisdom from on high that they may speak and write to the comfort of his people, and that they may be upheld spiritually and financially, for as the spiritual man requires the same kind of food, so does one in his natural state require that which is necessary for his existence. I have written more for my pleasure than for your profit, as it looks to me, after summing up the above, but I could do no better if I would, so overlook all that is amiss.

Your sister, in hope of that life which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began,

MARY E. WRIGHT.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Aug. 16, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed please find check for two dollars for one year's subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I feel like expressing a few thoughts to be published in the good old SIGNS, which is just about my age, it having been established in 1832. How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, like the oil that ran from Aaron's beard to the skirts of his garments, like the dew of Hermon, like the dew that descended upon the moun-

tains of Zion, where the Lord gave a blessing, even life for evermore. Let brotherly love continue; esteem others better than yourself; be kind; love one another fervently; to gain friends be friendly. We have a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Thou only be our leader. The psalmist's words were: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies. My cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so my soul panteth after thee. Whom have we in heaven but thee? There is none we desire beside thee. He speaks and it is done. He says to the north, Give up; to the south, Keep not back. How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out. Who knoweth the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? I will be a hiding-place from the winds, and a refuge from storms. Oh that I could touch the hem of his garment, or dwell under the shadow of his wing. Oh that men would praise him for his wonderful works to the children of men. I love to praise him for the wonderful blessings he has bestowed upon me through my ninety-one years of life. Just about fifty-four years I have been mingling with the saints of the Lord, with a feeling of unworthiness, through all those years thinking that if I could be like the other brethren it would encourage and comfort me. I feel to say as Paul said, By the grace of God I am what I am. I labored more abundantly than you all; yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. We are kept by the power of God through faith. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, in whom we have access by faith through our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul said by Christ, Strengthen me, I can do all things. In him we live, move and have our being; without him we can do nothing. We are like a ship without a compass or rudder in a sinking condition. There is safety in him. At the name of Jesus every knee must bow, and every tongue confess. No weapon formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that confesseth against thee shall be condemned. For there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, that walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. I feel to be the least among the brethren, prone to err, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love. When I would do good, evil is present with me, and the things I ought to do I do not. Job said, I know that my Redeemer liveth. The three he thought were his friends turned out to be his enemies. His last days were his best days. As thy days so shall thy strength be. Blessed are they that do his commandments, for they shall have right to the tree of life, and enter in through the gate to the city. Jesus entered a ship, and passed over to his own city, and they brought to him a man sick with the palsy on a bed. Jesus, seeing their faith, said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, be of cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee. The scribes said among themselves, He is a blasphemer. Jesus, knowing their thoughts, rebuked them. Be still, and know that I am God, and there is none beside me. Art thou not he who dried the Red Sea, and made a way for the ransomed of the Lord to pass through dry shod, which the Egyptians

essayed to do and were swamped, Pharaoh and all his hosts? We are sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things; as unknown, yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed. God is love. We love him because he first loved us. All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord, and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom and thy power.

May his power dwell among the brethren, is the prayer of an unworthy brother,

D. L. BLACKWELL.

TEHUACANA, Texas, Oct. 26, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As we have been spared by the mercy of the all-wise heavenly Father to near the close of another year, I feel somewhat disposed to write you a few lines in way of acknowledging to you my appreciation of the favor you have bestowed upon me, a poor, unprofitable dust-worm of the earth, in sending me the SIGNS another year. It has brought me much comfort and joy in my lonely hours, as I am unable to do any work and get out to hear but very little preaching; in fact, there is hardly anything preached in this country that gives God all the praise, honor and glory. I would love to write something to the dear brethren and sisters who contribute to the columns of the SIGNS, if I could write something edifying and encouraging, but I feel too little and weak to edify any one, yet I do hate to be all the time feasting on the good things falling from the Master's table and never do anything or say anything in return to let them that feed me so plentifully know how they have comforted me in my loneliness. When my paper comes I hardly ever sleep until I have read it from cover to cover, and sometimes I am so rejoiced that my cup runneth over and my eyes fill with tears, so that I have to stop reading and cry within, Glory be to God for his mercies to the children of men. Sometimes when I am reading I feel almost like I was in company with the writers and holding sweet communion together, and would love, if it were the will of God, to grasp the hand of every writer in love and christian fellowship and bid them God speed. This may be my last, as I am nearing my fourscore years. Farewell. May the love and mercies of an all-wise God hover around us during the remainder of our sojourn here in this unfriendly world of sin and trouble, is the prayer of this old sinner, saved by grace, and grace alone, for time and eternity.

JOSEPH H. BOZEMAN.

HENDERSONVILLE, Tennessee.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription expired September 15th, inclosed find money order for renewal of the same. Please pardon delay, as I was visiting associations. I am seventy years of age. It will soon be winter and I will not be able to go to the meetings, for I cannot get out in bad weather. Our church is about extinct, just a few of us left who cling to the old landmarks, and we have had no regular pastor for a long time, therefore I cannot give up the good old paper. I rejoice in my lonely hours to know that the Lord has maintained such a wonderful paper, with staunch advocates of the truth. What a blessed privilege to have three associate editors. I feel the time is not far distant when history will repeat itself, according to the federation of the churches, and all other signs of the terrible things that are coming upon the earth. I will say to each and

every one, Write on, and cheer the hearts of the feeble poor. It is sweet to know there are a few who believe in a God that rules in the army of heaven and among men. I see requests to write personal letters, and I surely feel like writing to many of you. If the Lord wills, and I am spared, when I am shut in from all my people I hope to be able to correspond with many of you. I hope all will keep their subscriptions paid up.

Love to all who love the truth.

(MRS.) HENRY J. DORRIS.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association, now in session with the First Roxbury Church, at Vega, N. Y., September 12th and 13th, 1923, to the associations and churches with which we correspond, sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Another year has passed, and through the goodness and mercy of almighty God our unprofitable lives have been spared, and we have been permitted to meet in an association, where we have listened to your messengers, who have come laden with the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, pouring forth out of the great storehouse messages of love and truth as it is in Jesus, and we have been strengthened, edified and built up in our most holy faith. There has been no discord, but one continual flowing together of love and fellowship, and we can indeed say it has been a joyful season in the Lord.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Second Roxbury Church, at Roxbury, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday between the second and third Sundays in September, 1924, when we hope to meet your messengers again, the Lord willing. Until then, dear brethren, farewell.

GEORGE RUSTON, Moderator.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

The Tygarts Valley River Association of Old School Baptists, now in session with the Leading Creek Church, Randolph Co., W. Va, to the Pocatalico Association of Old School Baptists, with whom we correspond, and to all others of like precious faith who may read this letter.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—We again greet you in love and fellowship. We received your messengers and Minutes with joy. Your preaching with us was sound, good and wholesome in demonstration of the Spirit, and with power. In this letter we also wish to notice the visit with us of Elder H. H. Lefferts, of the Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, who by his kind and lovely disposition, his able preaching, his gifted ministry to us, has endeared himself to us all. May peace and love abound to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

J. B. CROSS, Moderator.
J. N. BARTLETT, Clerk.
W. T. CROSS, Assistant Clerk.

BOOK NOTICE.

CHATSWORTH, Ga., Oct. 15, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—Under separate cover I am mailing you a copy of "Verses," a little booklet by my wife's mother, Mrs. Nannie B. Edwards, of La Grange, Ga. Some of her writings have appeared in Primitive Baptist publications. She prepared the copy for this little booklet before her death in March, but it was only recently printed. A number of friends throughout the country had expressed the desire to have some of her writings in book form, and if you think it worthy of notice in your paper I should like to have you say that copies can be gotten from me at fifty cents. This will not cover the cost on the small edition printed.

Sincerely,

J. ROY McGINTY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1923.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 JOHN V. 7.

"FOR there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."

It may not be amiss that some pronouncement from us at this time on the above subject be forthcoming. It is a very deep matter, and one in which the Scriptures must be our guide, because mere speculation on the nature and character of God amounts to nothing unless supported by the written word of biblical authority. The mystery of godliness is most profound, one in which the mind of man quickly eclipses itself, a matter which cannot be profitably and satisfactorily known, except by revelation from the Spirit to our faith, the faith which is the gift of God. First of all, God is one God, and he is eternal, the Creator of all things, but himself uncreated, always existing, without beginning and without end, utterly incomprehensible and infinite. "Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God."—Isaiah xliv. 6. "There is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many and lords many,) but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all the things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."—1 Cor. viii. 4–6. These two passages, one from the Old Testament and the other from the New, are sufficient to prove that Jehovah is one God, and that there is no God beside him. The Bible abounds in many substantiating texts, but space forbids us to give them all. We pass, therefore, to the second point. This is that while God is one, he is at the same time three. Finite mind cannot grasp the oneness of God, neither can it grasp the threeness of him; that as truly as God is One, he is at the same time Three. This does not mean that the one God fills three different offices, but that in his divine Being and Personality he comprehends eternally three Persons within himself. We use the word "persons" for lack of a better one, but it is hard to express what is inexpressible. God is Father and God is Son and God is Spirit, or Holy Ghost. In order to be the Son he does not cease to be the Father, nor when he is Spirit does he cease being both Father and Son. He is at one and the same time the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and that eternally. This plurality in the unity of God is shown in Genesis i. 26, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," the pronouns "us" and "our" showing clearly that God was talking with and in himself, and that the formation of man was the result of the communion of the three Persons in the Godhead. God as Father is the Creator of all things, giving to all things their several and individual beings: to the birds their characteristics, to the fish theirs, to the animals theirs, and to man his being and personality. As

the Father God is the Provider, furnishing the whole universe with all things essential to the developing and maturing of all things within it. This same God who is the Father is also the Word, or the Son. The Word and the Son are identical. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."—John i. 1–3, 14. This text proves that the same Word made flesh, which was Jesus, was in the beginning with God, and not only was with God, but was God. Therefore, the Son and the Father are one, and the Son is eternally the Son just as much as the Father is eternally the Father. Jesus was born of the virgin Mary during the reign of Cæsar Augustus, but this entrance of Jesus into the world was not the beginning of his being the Son of God. He was God's Son eternally. His appearing in the earth had a beginning, but his Sonship had no beginning. The prophet Micah, in forecasting the city of Bethlehem as the city of Jesus' birth, said, "Out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Thus proving that though Jesus was to be born in Bethlehem such birth was not the beginning of his being, but that he had always been going forth, even from everlasting. God as the Son had a special work to do. This was the work of redemption and of justification. He took upon himself the seed of Abraham, because the suffering of death was for him necessary in order to redeem his people from their sins. He who was to perform the work of sanctification was of God, and those whom he was to sanctify were also of God, therefore the Son was not ashamed to call them brethren whom the Father had chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Therefore, God in the person of his Son took part of flesh and blood and became a man, took upon himself the form of a servant, and became obedient unto the shameful death of the cross in order to redeem his people from their sins, was raised from the dead for their justification, and ascended up on high to give repentance unto Israel, and to give gifts unto men. There, at the right hand of God, the Son must reign until he has put all enemies under his feet. The heaven must receive him until the times of restitution of all things, until all things spoken of by all his holy prophets since the world began be fulfilled. (Acts. iii. 21.) Then he will come again the second time without sin unto salvation. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."—1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. This is to take place at the time of the restitution of all things. This shall be the end of the office-work of the Son. After this he will deliver up the kingdom of the Father. (1 Cor. xv. 24.) "And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."—1 Cor. xv. 28. This means not that the Son will cease to be the Son, but that having done all the work which the Father gave him to do he will cease from that work and forever rest from all of it, even as the Father rested from all his labors at the conclusion of the six days of creation. God did not cease to be God when creation ended, neither will the Son cease to be the Son

when his work culminates in having put all things under him and in having surrendered the kingdom to the Father. Now, our last point is that God is eternally the Holy Ghost, just as he is eternally the Father and eternally the Son. He is eternally Spirit. This Holy Ghost has its special work, just as the Son has his special work. This work before the coming of Christ the Son was to move holy men of old to prophecy beforehand of the coming of Christ, and of the glory that should follow that coming. Also, it was the work of the Holy Ghost to inspire the sacred writings of holy Scripture, else the Bible would never have been written. Now, after the coming of Christ, and after his death, resurrection and ascension, the Holy Ghost in this present time is not writing Scripture, but it is expounding it, it is taking of the things of Jesus and showing them to the saints. Further, the Holy Ghost is going throughout all the world quickening and regenerating those whom God has ordained to eternal life, and bringing them under the effectual call of sovereign grace to the knowledge of the Way, the Truth and the Life, and when the Holy Ghost shall have called out from the world and brought into the kingdom all God's elect among the Gentiles, then shall the Holy Ghost do the same for God's elect among the Jews, and so all Israel shall be saved, and all God's people, whether Gentile or Jew, shall have it revealed in them that salvation is all of grace, and not of works. This is the special work of the third Person in the three-one God, but be it remembered that this Spirit was eternally with God, and was and is God, just as the Son was eternally God and is God, and just as the Father was God, and is yet God, and shall forever be God.

L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder George Ruston.)

The Lexington-Roxbury Association, in session with the First Roxbury Church, Vega, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, September 12th and 13th, 1923, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations with which we correspond.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We as a church are known as the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, and it is well for us to consider carefully and prayerfully whether we stand according to the doctrine and order professed and practiced by the church as it was founded. This is a question that should not be treated lightly, but it rather behooves us all to examine ourselves by the word of God, for there have been a number of churches in the past that did run well, where the sound of the gospel in its purity found a place in the hearts of the brethren, and their voices with one accord were raised in harmonious praise unto the Lord, but through apostasy they have become the habitations of the dead, or have disappeared entirely. To quite a number of us there has been a fearfulness that we, too, might in some way lose our identity. When we consider the conditions under which we live it would seem that never was there a time more favorable to the church of God than now. There is no outward persecution, and the facilities for getting to meetings are many more than those enjoyed by saints of old, and it is fashionable with the world at large to have some kind of religion, but let us not be deceived, the religion that is most fashionable to-day is that which is but a covering under which men group for worldly benefits. When we refer to the worldly religions as a veneer we would not lose sight of the fact that there is a

possibility of a similar condition prevailing among us. Truly "the ways of Zion do mourn," and comparatively few seem to care any more for her solemn feasts, yet where on earth is there a place so full of beauty and glory as the Zion of our God, and what table can the kings of the earth show that is comparable to the table of our precious and adorable Lord? "Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces." But let us examine conditions around us. Is it not alarming and distressing at times to notice the apparent indifference and lifeless course of many who are known as brethren? Worldly-mindedness, covetousness and love of pleasure find room in the hearts and lives of brethren in these days, so that the word of God is choked and becomes unprofitable. So little are the privileges of the gospel cared for or sought that it seems a wonder at times that the Lord does not withdraw himself from us. There is also an indifference to the commands and precepts of the gospel in many professors of the truth, and little care for the order of God's house. Instead of esteeming others better than self many are filled with self-esteem, and should one through a tender conscience towards God speak or write against such things he is considered weak in the faith. We would here say that a faith that is so strong it will wink at the worldly purposes and intents of the heart and consider them among the "all things," without self-loathing and self-condemnation on account of them, is not the faith once delivered unto the saints. Where the grace of God has come it teaches the denying of ungodliness and worldly lust. We take it for granted that any and every member of the church has professed that it is by grace they are saved through faith. Paul tells us that this very grace of God teaches (we do no have to teach each other), for "they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord." No, for the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. "Teaching us, [think of it, brethren,] that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Regarding worldly-mindedness the apostle says, "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Too many, we fear, to-day are led more by worldly desires than by that which is spiritual. To such we would say, "Be sure your sin will find you out," they that sow to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. We may by our desire to save this, or make that, neglect our meetings, and deny ourselves the company of God's saints, but such gain will not be of much profit at the swellings of Jordan; and how often, too, we see the most trivial thing will hinder some from being in their place at meeting. Dear brethren, the Lord sees such things; he cannot be deceived. The Lord in his providence has appointed us a day in which we should assemble whenever possible. It is the day on which our Lord rose from the dead, and surely his followers should be thankful to God for his mercies that he has in this world of wickedness given them one day in every seven when they can publicly assemble for his worship. With six days for our work,

cares and pleasures, let us not cast away the one that we should use for public worship of God to pleasure and company. Remember there is no company like our Lord Jesus Christ and his saints, and no pleasure like the joys of his salvation. Be not deceived with the idea prevalent that prosperity and wealth are the chief things to seek in this life. No, seek first the kingdom of heaven, and if riches increase set not thine heart on them. How many have their hearts set on riches today so that their life in the church is warped. The Lord have mercy upon us. He has said he will try her as silver is tried, and purify her as gold is purified. We sometimes dread to ask for the trial of fire, but as we consider Zion in her low estate let us unitedly cry, Lord, for Zion's sake cause thy word to be once more like a fire, and burn thou up all that is in us contrary to thy truth, for Jesus' sake.

GEORGE RUSTON, Moderator.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder R. Lester Dodson, at his home in Rutherford, N. J., October 19th, 1923, Peter Northrup, of Dover, N. J., and Elvira Tuthill Koebig, of Binghamton, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Sarah E. Slawson died September 27th, 1923, aged eighty-two years, at the home of her eldest daughter, Mrs. Oscar Woodruff at Hartsdale, N. Y. She was the widow of Daniel S. Slawson, and their home for many years was in New York city, where their family of five children, two daughters and three sons, was raised. Our dear sister sustained a serious fracture of the hip on August 2nd, and with the tenderest care seemed to be doing well, when she was stricken with what is termed embolism, or obstructed circulation. She said, "I feel very sick," and in forty-five minutes she had entered her eternal rest. Sister Slawson was received into the fellowship of the Ebenezer Baptist Church (Old School), of New York city, May 15th, 1870, and baptized the following month, June 5th. I believe none are now living of those who were then members. She was a devoted, loyal member of the church until the end of her life, and many can testify to her faithfulness and many excellent traits of character, and to the pleasant hospitality of the Slawson home for so many years. She was an exceptional mother in her loving interest and watchcare over her family, and her dear bereft children treasure her memory. Indeed, the memory of her in her family and in the church is a rich possession. She was sympathetic and helpful, and all of us who have enjoyed association with her feel to have met with a deep loss in her death. At the funeral services a prayer was offered by a minister, a friend of the family, and her pastor, brother R. Lester Dodson, conducted the remainder of the service, by reading the twenty-third Psalm, reading hymn 613, making brief but suitable remarks, and speaking in prayer. Sister Slawson knew the plague of her own heart, had no confidence in the flesh in the matter of attaining to the things of grace and truth. She loved the righteousness that is by faith, and the assemblies of the saints, and was dependable in her walk in life. We miss her sadly.

WATIE A. BEARD.

Mrs. Hettie Lawrence, daughter of Ira and Mary Slauson, was born November 23rd, 1875, and departed this life February 17th, 1923, at her home at Cold Spring, near Roxbury, New York. She leaves to mourn their loss, her husband, Mr. Edward Lawrence, one son, Marvin, and a daughter, Mary, also one sister, Mrs. Walter Harrington, and a brother, Sylvanus Slauson, both of Halcottville, New York. Sister Hettie was a dear child of God, so, though it was with deep sorrow that we laid her body away, yet we sorrow not as those without hope, for she gave abundant evidence that she had been with Jesus and learned of Him. She had a meek and quiet spirit, and loved the brethren. She patiently endured unto the end and now she is at rest.

ALSO,

Roy Lawrence, aged 16 years, son of the above, died February 17th, 1923, two hours before his mother. Roy was an ambitious boy, and was working some miles away from home. While at his work he was taken sick, but felt he must go home to his mother. Soon after he arrived home he developed pneumonia, and shortly afterwards his mother was taken sick with the same disease. They both passed away the same day, and were laid side by side in the same grave. May the dear Lord give us all patience and resignation to his will.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Sister **Olevia A. Hastings,** wife of Deacon Levin Hastings, died at her home in Delmar, Del., August 3rd, 1923, aged 74 years. She had been in failing health for several months, but was confined to her bed only four days. She lost her only living daughter, Mrs. Susie Yingling, last winter, and never re-

covered from the shock. Sister Hastings was a devoted member of the Little Creek Church, of Sussex Co., Del., faithful in all the walks of life. She was a woman of few words, but her acts of kindness and faithfulness were many. Seldom was she absent from her church services, even when so feeble as to be compelled to walk with a cane. She loved the house of God, and her faith was strong in the Lord. Nothing gave her more pleasure than to entertain those she loved for the truth's sake, and the Hastings' home had long been a pleasant resting-place. She is survived by her husband, brother Levin Hastings, and two sons: Theodore and Chauncey, all of Delmar, Del., together with one brother and three sisters. Sister Hastings is much missed by us all, but most of all by her lonely husband in his declining years, who, together with the sons and relatives, have our deepest sympathy.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Old Baptist meeting-house in Delmar. Many gathered to pay the last tribute of respect to the dear woman. Interment took place in the Delmar Cemetery. May grace sustain us all.

By request.

H. C. KER.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, it has pleased God in his infinite wisdom to remove by death his servant, **Elder John Clark,** who for many years served the churches of the Lexington Association, and witnessed the uniting of the Lexington and Roxbury Associations with joy, we, the Lexington-Roxbury Association mourn our loss.

RESOLVED, that we do deeply sympathize with our brethren and kindred in Christ composing the churches he served as a faithful pastor.

RESOLVED, that these resolutions be published with the Minutes of the Association, and in the "Signs of the Times," also that a copy be sent to our beloved sister Clark, and may she find a merciful and gracious God sustaining her in her bereavement.

ALSO,

WHEREAS, it has pleased God in his all-wise providence to remove by death from the field of his labor our dearly beloved brother, **Elder B. F. Coulter,** therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we, the churches composing the Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, mourn our loss in being no longer blessed with his visits among us. Be it also

RESOLVED, that we do deeply sympathize with our kindred in Christ composing the Salem and Snow Hill churches, in the loss of their dearly loved and devoted pastor, praying that the Lord will bestow upon them his especial care.

RESOLVED, that these resolutions form part of, and be published with the Minutes of this session of the Association, and in the "Signs of the Times." Be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy be sent to our dearly beloved sister Coulter, and may the God of all grace sustain her in her great loss.

GEORGE RUSTON, Moderator.

AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Little Flock Church will no longer hold meetings at Park and 5th Streets, but for the present will hold them at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 494 East 10th Street, Riverside, California. We hope to have a place again soon, and when we do we will appreciate having our notice with you.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. S. MILLER.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 91. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1923. NO. 23.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CASTLEWOOD, Va., July 10, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—Find inclosed money order for two dollars, which please place to my credit for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. If I am blessed with a fruitful mind I will express a few thoughts upon the words recorded in Psalms cxxv. 2: "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people." I feel it is not in or of me while encumbered with a natural mind to reach the true import of the words, also believing there are but two kinds of writing and preaching, one is by revelation and the other vain imagination. I truly hope what I may write will be altogether free from natural views and egotism. I confess the words under consideration are too deep for me, and while this is true, it is also true that I have some ideas or views on the Scripture, that I am willing to hand out to my brethren, to be tried by the search-light of divine truth. That these chosen people are the generation of Jesus Christ, and of their mother, Jerusalem, the church, no one will doubt. In speaking of this Jerusalem, or church, it is said, "Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth." There we have the whole family of God in one body as the manifestation of the sons of God. The manifestation of a thing is not its beginning, but clearly reveals its identity. The Lord says by the mouth of the prophet, "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients, gloriously." When John saw the bride, or church, he said, "And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." Yes, continually descending, and will continue until the last heir of God is manifested in the flesh, and being thus continually manifested, does not make them any less the sons of God, or change the divine purpose of God. Isaiah says, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem." This is the mother's voice to her beloved little ones. Paul says, "Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." Yes, she is a free mother indeed, and all her children are free, and not one of them

born out of true wedlock. Again, in Psalms it seems the whole matter is covered by the saying, "Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion. For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; he hath blessed thy children within thee." In fact, it is the great Head and Father, and the mother and children. Again, John says concerning this blessed bride, "I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." The prophet says, "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city." In tracing this eternal relationship of Christ and the church Jude speaks very plainly and covers the whole matter, and says, "To them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ." Here we find the chosen people of God given in a covenant of grace to the Son, and thus preserved in him, their great and eternal head. The inspired poet has well said,

"Her Founder's love has ever proved
Like Salem's mount, which ne'er was moved;
'Tis fixed on this eternal base,
The grace of God and gift by grace."

Some of our Arminian friends say we should not go back so far. If they do not want to hear us go so far back they should not ask of us the reason of our hope, and when they make this request of us, we have just to turn back to the Father's will to this chosen bride. There we find the right and title, and then the survey can easily be made, and the lines followed. We cannot blame them for not wanting to go so far back, because they have neither right nor title to the will. As I see it, these sanctified people, by God the Father, were before the morning of time, or ever the earth was, and were preserved in Jesus Christ, and called. David says, "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect [that is, unmanifested]; and in thy book all my members were written." John saw these members, as new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven. Her name also came from the same country. The prophet Isaiah says, "And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory; and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name." I feel sure it is the same name and faith that would now be called Primitive or Old School Baptist. David says, "Sing praises to the Lord which dwelleth in Zion." Thanks to his name, he is ever round about this chosen people as their great and eternal head and Father. David again says, concerning the church, Praise thy God, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion. The Lord says by the mouth of the prophet, "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness." When God's chosen people fell under the curse of a violated law it did not destroy or make the eternal purpose of God of no effect. Jesus says, To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world. The Lord speaks again to this ever-blessed and chosen bride in loving-kindness, reminding her of the sacred and eternal union thus, "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you." The word "children," and new creatures in Christ, does not destroy the doctrine I have here in a weak and imperfect way tried to present, nor the eternal purpose and salvation of God's people, because they are of the generation of Jesus Christ that is spoken of in Matthew. The first therefore had no earthly beginning, because Isaiah says, "For as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children." When were

these children brought forth? Let us refer to Prov. viii. 22, 25: "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old." He does not say, "ways," but "way," and again, as I have quoted, saying, "Before the hills was I brought forth." Here is the bringing forth of that generation, as children, of God, and therefore could not have had any timely or earthly beginning. As to the "new creature in Christ," it brings joy to all of God's children, because it drops experimentally to them. As I see it, this new creature is a unit of God's people, or of that generation I have been speaking about, and was made partaker of flesh and blood, and as I see it while kept by that strong man armed he is as "Thy dead men shall live." The time for this quickening, or living, is recorded in Deut. xxxii. 9, 11: "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings." Dear little one, how was it with you when this stirring up took place? Had not the stronger than the strong man come and taken from him all his armor? Did you not think yourself to be the worst sinner on earth? Did not this fluttering follow you up? Was it not mother's voice telling that all was not right with you in the sight of God? You tried all your good performances, which seemed to do you no good; did not these flutterings, or awful feelings, follow you until you cried in bitterness of soul, Lord, have mercy upon me, a poor sinner, condemned to die, and at a time unexpected to you, God spoke peace to your soul? Then all was well, while your soul was overflowing with joy you thought your troubles were over here on earth, and forever. Here mother and children are satisfied; then mother spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings. As the poet says, On the wings of his love I was carried above. Were you not a new creature in Christ in deed and in truth? Did you not feel to be new? Yes, you were at mother's house, with a feast of fat things; old things were passed away, behold, all things had become new. As I see it, notwithstanding the new creature was a unit of that eternal generation, he was also a new creature in Christ in the manifestation and pardon of his sins, because, as I have here quoted, old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new. I would love to speak at length of these "all things are become new," and the love, the comfort of mother to all her little ones, but time and space would fail me. Therefore in this sense they are new creatures in Christ. The nest is one thing, and the young is another, and answers to the me, the I and the we, the indweller of the house. The child is not born to make it a child, but because it is a child, and is only a change of element. Being manifested in the nest did not make them any more or less the sons of God, or young, but as I have here said, clearly manifested their identity. Let us note the fact the mother did not bear away the nest, but the young that were in the nest. John iii. 29, shows the unity as one with Christ and the church: "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled." The young that were borne away on mother's wings must have been here under consideration. Again, John says, I will shew thee the bride, the lamb's wife. Paul says, "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as

Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body." Here the apostle was given wisdom to show this relationship with Christ and the church, and join both body and Head together, with all their children, as one complete body. Therefore I cannot tell my readers there is an eternal head without an eternal body also, and to destroy one it seems to me would be to destroy both head and body. The inspired poet has well said,

> "One in the tomb, one when he rose,
> One when he triumphed o'er his foes,
> One in heaven when he took his seat,
> While seraphs sung all hell's defeat."

Paul says in Colossians, "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell." Jesus says, That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us. To know and believe these things is to love them. When the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, and we are visited with that true love to God and his people, we can then in this revealed light view and trace this relationship with a joy that this proved. The world knows nothing of such joy and love. With these blessed and chosen people, the Primitive or Old School Baptist Church, I have had my home, though unworthy I be, for a great many years, and hope I may live with them in sweet fellowship until my work is done here, then if I am what I sometimes hope I am I will fall asleep in Jesus, and when I awake with the likeness of Jesus, the great head of the church, I shall be satisfied.

W. L. EDWARDS.

MATTHEW XII. 33.

"For the tree is known by his fruit."

Christ said, "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit." This Scripture is often used by ministers of the gospel. Being but a little child in the household of faith, my views may not be of much value, but it may be our fathers in Israel can sift the chaff from the wheat and find a few kernels.

"The tree is known by his fruit." Christ used many parables to illustrate the nature and acts of men. As the fruit of a tree depends upon the kind or nature of the tree, so man's thoughts and actions depend upon the nature of the man from whom they flow. In Matthew vii. 18, Christ said, "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." A corrupt fountain sendeth forth a corrupt stream, and a pure fountain a pure stream. All fruit is like the source from which it comes. It cannot be otherwise. The term "good tree" does not mean large tree, for a small tree will bear fruit like the large tree, but not so much fruit. It does not mean an apple tree, for a peach or a pear tree will bear good fruit of its kind. Neither does it have reference to the tree's physical perfections, for if a tree is able to bear any fruit at all it will bear fruit true to the kind or nature of the tree. The term "corrupt tree" does not mean small, weak or defective tree physically, for a large, or a strong, or physically perfect tree would bear corrupt fruit if it had a corrupt nature or source to bear from. So all trees, either good or corrupt, bear fruit true to their nature. Matthew vii. 16: "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" The fruit of an apple-tree must

be apples, the fruit of a fig-tree must be figs, the fruit of a nut-tree must be nuts, of an oak-tree must be acorns. A neglected tree may bear no fruit, or fruit of a poor quality, but all the fruit it bears will be true to the nature of that tree. Wicked people bear fruit in thoughts, desires and actions true to human nature, and can bear no other fruits, but circumstances may determine something as to the quality of their natural fruits, but the kind is the same. A man may be a thief, but when he is put in jail for stealing his corrupt fruit may be limited for a time, but his evil nature still remains. Care, cultivation, seasons and climate affect the crops of fruit trees, but do not change the kind of fruit they bear. Man's environments as to race, climate, nation and parents will affect his thoughts, acts and desires, which are the fruit crops of his nature. When Adam and Eve sinned, and when they bore fruit (Cain), it was from a corrupt source or fountain, therefore it was a corrupt fruit. Could they bear any other kind? Surely not. Now what are the fruits of our old Adam nature? We are generated from Adam in the flesh, and Paul tells us in Galatians v. 19–23: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred," &c. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." Christ tells us a corrupt tree cannot bear good fruit. Then Paul tells us that the fruits of the flesh are evil. Unless we are born of the Spirit we have no source but the flesh, then what will our fruit be? Surely like the tree that bears it. Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Man is somewhat like a tree in his environments and culture. Two trees of the same kind, or nature, may be treated differently, as to soil, climate, pruning, cultivation, &c., and bear the same kind of fruit in very different quantities and grades, but it will be the same fruit. Two persons having the same natural or spiritual natures may bear fruits of different quantities and grades, but of the same kind. A heathen with spiritual life may not bear as much good fruit in China as John with the same nature in a christian community, but the fruits of the Spirit are the same everywhere: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, &c., against such there is no law. "But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law." People do not make laws against the fruits of the Spirit (no need to); but the fruits of the flesh are under the law of sin and death. Our many, many laws are made against the fruits of the flesh. We inherit our sinful natures from our corrupt origin. We cannot change our origin or nature any easier than a tree can. We cannot bear fruit from a nature we do not have, neither can a tree. The Spirit warreth against the flesh and the flesh warreth against the Spirit. Each nature has certain traits, and bears its fruits. All our traits of both natures are affected by our race, nationality locality, health and parents, but all are true to their source. My prayer is that each one of God's chosen people, whether in heathen or civilized lands, be given power in regeneration by which he may bear more fruits of the Spirit than of the flesh. This is a distinguishing mark of the christian. Is it yours? Do you bear two kinds of fruits? Are you without sin? Are you in the flesh? You surely bear one kind, and christians bear two kinds. Now may God's grace, which was sufficient for Paul, be given us in such

abundance that we may bear more spiritual fruits. "For the tree is known by his fruits."

M. N. WEBB.

WEISER, Idaho.

HARDING, W. Va., September 10, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—I thought when last I wrote for publication I could not try to write again, but since the Association at the Leading Creek Church, in Randolph Co., W. Va., my mind has been continually dwelling on the wonderful truths of God which were so ably set forth by our ministering brethren, and will not let me rest until I write. May the Lord help me. There were four visiting ministers with us, namely, H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va., J. W. McClanahan, G. B. McClanahan and Del Smith, all of Poca, W. Va. Those from Poca were all members of the Pocatalico Association. These ministers and the members of this Association had a great desire to have Elder Lefferts (editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES) come among us. He told us he also had a desire to come. We believe if the church needs a special gift the Lord will provide a way for that gift to be manifested among them, for all the gifts that are necessary for the upbuilding of his church are bestowed somewhere, and he will send them where they are needed. "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended upon high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."—Eph. iv. 8. "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some evangelists."—Verse 11. Then he goes on to tell us why he gave them: "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." The ministers of our Association have been called upon to visit churches and associations in other states; they realized that their preaching was received with gladness, which leads us to believe their gifts, too, were needed in other churches outside those they served as pastors. The sermons were impressive, and we felt a solemn awe as we followed them into the depths and heights of God's wonderful knowledge and plan of salvation, which was carried out by the sufferings, death and resurrection of his own dear Son and made manifest to his people by his Holy Spirit, and so ably set forth by his ministers whom he had called and qualified. We, like the woman of Samaria at the well, felt that Jesus, by them, was telling us all things that ever we did, namely, our feeling of condemnation when we were called before the judgment-seat of Christ, our cries to him for mercy and our deliverance from sin. As we by faith beheld this righteous Judge in all his glory, we thought of his words when he said, "The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here." When this queen had heard and seen all the wonderful things that Solomon by his wisdom had said and done there was no more spirit left in her. Like her, when we by faith behold the depths of the wisdom and riches of Christ, we have no spirit (of opposition) left in us, and we fall at his feet and crown Him Lord of all. When those

gifted ministers are so wonderfully blessed with revelations from Christ and enabled to hold him up before his people as such a complete Redeemer and Savior, we are reminded of the apostle Paul, how after he had been so greatly blessed with revelations and even caught up into the third heaven, was given a thorn in the flesh to buffet him, lest he be exalted above measure. Paul said the thorn was given in the flesh, we therefore conclude that only the flesh or carnal mind was in danger of undue exaltation. We realize that those wonderful gifts are bestowed on the church in earthen vessels, and when we hear ministers asking God for strength to stand, lest after preaching to others they become castaways, our heart cries out, Amen! When we hear God's foreknowledge, predestination, election, special atonement, salvation by grace and the final preservation of the saints to glory set forth we feel that the carnal mind ever has and ever will call that a hard doctrine, and we recall our own experience concerning these truths. A few months after I had received a hope in Christ I was very much troubled and could not comprehend it, but Luke x. 21, "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight," came to me with such sweetness and force it made me willing to leave it all with the Lord of heaven and earth. Dear reader, when you hear the doctrine preached that you call hard, remember that it is the gospel of the Son of God, and is the power of God unto salvation, and no other power can save you. If you feel that election and special atonement leave you out or shut you off from God, remember that Christ died to save his people, and that includes all that ever has or ever will believe on him, no difference who they are or where they may be; and when John the revelator beheld them he saw there a great multitude which no man can number of all nations and kindred and people and tongues. When you hear that salvation is by the grace of God alone, you may feel that such a salvation cannot reach you, that you are not willing to be saved, and perhaps have heard some professor say, "You will not let God save you." Poor sinner, God is able to save you from yourself. The prophet Jeremiah said, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." God has all power in heaven and earth; if he is not able to save a sinner from that deceitful and wicked heart, what power is there to save him? The word teaches us, The blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. According to God's word and the experience of his people a ray of light from his Holy Spirit can cause you to feel that your heart, which you thought was smooth and peaceful before, is full of rugged mountains of sin and confusion. The longer that light shines there the more you will see of your own sinfulness, and will tremble before God and cry for mercy. That cry is a confession of your guilt. Instead of Christ begging you to be saved, as the world teaches now, you are begging him to save you. The word teaches us that his people shall be a willing people in the day of his power. You have now felt his power, and are willing to cry to him for help. When he has brought you to realize that he is all power and you are all weakness, he will manifest himself unto you as your Savior and strength. O glorious moment, O blessed thought, Christ is now in you the hope of glory.

He says, "No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house."—Mark iii. 27. Christ has now bound that strong man and spoiled his house, he can no longer reign there. Although he is bound and subdued he is not destroyed. He is that flesh, or carnal mind, that lusts against the spirit of God's people, and may cause you many uneasy moments. He may tell you that work in your heart was not of the Holy Spirit, that you are deceived; he may also tell you that you are not yet worthy to come into the church and walk in full fellowship with the people who have been taught by the same Spirit that taught you. Dear child of God, he may tell you those people who preach what you now believe are "old-fashioned" and ignorant, and so different from the world you could hardly fellowship them. "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, [in the wisdom of this world] they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus."—Acts iv. 13. Like them, the servants of God in our day have been taught of Jesus, and that is the highest school and the greatest teacher that ever has been or ever can be in the world. Trust in the Lord and ask him to show you the right way. The same power that brought the children of Israel out of Egypt and went before them during the day in a pillar of cloud and at night in a pillar of fire, can lead you, and when it stands between you and your enemies it will be light and life to you, but darkness and destruction to them.

Before closing, I must say to the readers of the SIGNS, perhaps many of you have heard the editor, Elder H. H. Lefferts, preach, but there are hundreds who have not had that privilege. We recognized his gift in his editorial writings, but since he visited our Association and we heard him preach and talk we feel that the Lord has indeed bestowed a wonderful gift on the church through him for the upbuilding and strengthening of his people. He stands fearlessly up on the walls of Zion and shuns not to declare the whole counsel of God, and hews straight to the line, using God's word for a plummet, proclaiming the truth of God which the SIGNS has always upheld, and we feel that our family paper is blessed in having such able and well qualified associate editors, and that the doctrine of God will still be placed before its readers in all its purity. May God bless and sustain all the writers and publishers, and enable those who have been "appealed to" to help bear the financial burden of the paper, for Jesus' sake.

(MRS.) E. E. WORKMAN.

SALISBURY, Md., Oct. 14, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—You will doubtless be surprised to receive this letter, and it may be that you have entirely forgotten the writer, but I have a desire to write to you which I cannot seem to get rid of. If the desire is of the Lord, or not, you will have to judge as you read. I feel to be so ignorant concerning the things of God and his righteousness that I cannot rightly judge. I have had such sweet meditations since our meeting at Nassaongo that I would like to tell you what a joy and comfort it was to me. It is always with sadness that I see the meetings come to an end and go back to the temporal things of this life. This week, however, I have been on the mountaintop, and everything is beautiful and joyous. The words, O God, my God, the

God of salvation, have been constantly with me since Sunday, and I find myself saying them over and over, and somehow there is not a doubt in my heart but that he is my God, and I am His. The hymn number 406, "My God, the spring of all my joys," &c., I have sung over and over, and every word is more precious than pearls, for they are above price. God has surely prepared a table for me in the presence of mine enemies, those of our own household, and what a feast I have enjoyed. Having to be content with crumbs which fall from our Master's table, what unspeakable joy when we are given a feast of fat things for our portion. Do you think our feast would become stale and undesirable could we have it before us always? When we are given a little glimpse of the joys, we hope, that are stored up for us how we cry for more and more, and for a continuance of the manifestation of his love to us. Do you think we would ever tire of all this? It is so seldom that I have a season of joy and gladness, and I try so hard to hold fast to that joy, but it is soon gone, and I know not where to find him whom my soul loveth. The Song of Solomon is the most beautiful love story ever written, and when our understanding is enlightened a little to see the beauty of it, oh the joy and sweetness in reading and thinking of it. Surely, my dear brother, it is God's work that we love so deeply those whom we firmly believe are his precious little ones. We love God and his Son Christ Jesus, because he first loved us and drew us to him by the cords of his love and his sweet resistless grace. Therefore we love him wherever we see him manifest; it is the love of God shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost.

When I had written this far I was made to stop, because I had no more to write; my mind just left those things; I was shut up. Now, after days have passed, I will attempt to finish it. My season of rejoicing is over long ago, and I am right back where I was, so sick of self, and seeing there such a wicked and deceitful heart, hating sin, yet sinning daily, hourly. I cannot even think one good thought. If I do have a thought I enjoy, before it is scarcely formed dozens of evil ones crowd it out, and it is gone. I am afraid to write or speak of these things God's children love, for fear I will expose my utter ignorance and the brethren will find me out and have no further use for me, or fellowship for me. I see so much of the hypocrite in me; deceit is mixed with everything I do or say. This disgusting old man, flesh, is always in evidence. I am so helpless, and so vile and sinful, that it is only through the abundant mercy of God I am not cast off by the church. Oh how wonderful, how glorious, that we have such a kind and loving Savior. I know he is able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto him; but have I come unto him? Have I been brought into his banqueting-house? Is his banner over me? I know if I had to stand before him in my own righteousness there would not be the faintest glimmer of hope for me, but if our dear Jesus (how sweet that name) died for me, the pure and holy for such a miserable, polluted worm of the dust as I am, then I have a good hope, through this precious Jesus, that I am one of the body of Christ. But these doubts and fears are almost always with me. I think it must be because I am so proud and so easily puffed up. If I had many seasons of rejoicing I would get high-minded I fear.

There is a great struggle in my heart

and mind over sending this letter. One spirit says it is like the writer, deceitful and vain, another something urges that it be sent, to tell you how we all enjoyed your visit here. The thought that it may be a tiny bit of comfort to you to know we did enjoy the meeting at Nassaongo so much is the only reason I do not burn it all up. We feel richly blessed down here to have Elder Mellott as our pastor. He is a splendid preacher, also a lovely man.

I will now close, hoping you may be able to judge the writer leniently, and yet not be deceived.

Your very unworthy sister, if one at all, EFFIE F. GIVAN.

MT. ZION, Ill., Sept. 24, 1923.

DEAR FRIENDS:—I am sorry to have been so negligent in the matter of my subscription to the SIGNS. I presume it is part of our nature to be this way. The SIGNS has been coming to some member of our family for many years, perhaps sixty. I seldom hear the truth preached, and what I get is through your paper, so far as preaching goes. While I have never united with any church, it is comforting to me to be able to enjoy the doctrine as outlined in the SIGNS. When I try to comprehend the greatness of the Almighty in the creation of the universe, and all that pertains to it, I become bewildered in the wonders of it all, and feel that man is too insignificant to be worthy of much consideration, and yet when we know that God in his infinite mercy sent his Son to this world to suffer and die, it was for some purpose, and that was to redeem his people from their sins. So, after all through this mercy man is given some hope of life hereafter; but in no other way, it seems to me.

I am inclosing ten dollars. Four to apply on my subscription, and six dollars for some others who may be in arrears.

With affectionate regards, I am sincerely your friend,

GEO. B. SPITLER.

LAMAR, Colo., Nov. 29, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I see my subscription for the SIGNS will expire in December, so am inclosing money order for two dollars to renew for 1924. I would like to write and tell the brethren what comfort I receive from their writings, but the Lord withholds from me the gift of writing, and no doubt he has a purpose in it, for he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? The comfort I receive from their writings cannot be told in words. My prayer is, if it is the Lord's will, they may live long and ever contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints, for this is the only doctrine that will ever save a poor sinner like me.

Your brother in a little hope,

A. H. CRAWFORD.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANKS.

As the majority of our subscribers' time expires with the end of the year, we inclose in each paper of this issue a subscription blank, as a convenience to them in sending new subscribers, as well as in paying their own subscriptions. Will you please make a special effort to send one or more new subscribers when you renew your subscription for next year?

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in December (30th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1923.

EDITOR

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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I CHRONICLES IV. 10.

"AND Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested."

There is but little left on record concerning Jabez, yet what is written is sufficient to establish Jabez's standing as an eminent saint of the Most High. There were gods many, and lords many then, even as there are now, and Israel frequently went whoring after strange gods, but here was one man, more honorable than his brethren, calling on the God of Israel. How blessed to call on the living and only true God. Men in trouble and distress call upon their gods, as one of old said, "Every man unto his god," but we find Jonah did not call upon his God, even when the captain said, "What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God." Thus we see that one does not call upon God, the living God, by the wish or command of others. Jonah must come to the belly of hell ere he cries unto the Lord. Jabez, also, from his prayer shows that he had got to a place where he was in need of a substantial blessing. Among the many gods of the earth, why should he call on the God of Israel? He was led, just as holy men of old wrote, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. He was inspired by God to call upon God. Isaiah says, "O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name." Yes, it is by God, the Holy Spirit, that we make mention of his blessed and holy name. He called on Israel's God, and said, "Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed." He was in need, could not help himself and could say,

"No help in self I find,
And yet have sought it well;
The native treasure of my mind
Is sin, and death, and hell."

Out of dire necessity he cries, "Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed." He wanted a like blessing to what all true Israelites have had at the hand of their God. It was an "indeed" blessing that Jacob had, though he limped ever afterwards, and many others, too numerous to mention, were recipients of blessings "indeed." Jabez could not be content in just hearing reports of others who had obtained the blessings, he was in earnest. What a blessed trait to be in earnest, to have a fixed desire. It is from a heartfelt desire for an "indeed" blessing that we are writing on this subject. Perhaps there are many readers of the SIGNS who have similar longings. You know that Israel is saved with an everlasting salvation, and you know also that you are sinners, and that the Scripture saith, Jesus came to save sinners, but you cannot be content with just reading and assenting to it. You want it written in your hearts. In other words, you want a "Thus saith the Lord;" a word from his mouth. It is so much in your mind and heart that you cannot help but cry, Oh that thou, the living God, wouldest bless

me, even me, chiefest of sinners, unworthy to call upon thy holy name, but as Peter said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." Such an exercise, dear soul, makes business and pleasure take a lower seat, and God, God's word, God's people, are with us in our hearts, and we know now that "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." What is an "indeed" blessing to you? Is it not to have your sins forgiven, to be freed from the bondage of the law, and to be brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God; to be sealed by God, the Holy Spirit, as an heir of heaven; to be blessed with the spirit of adoption, which enables you to cry, "Abba, Father?"

"Oh that Thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast." When God's saints are in the belly of hell, at the bottoms of the mountains, the waves and billows roll over them, they have no coast. The judicial wrath of the law is like an angry sea, upon and in which a poor sinner is tossed; he finds no resting-place there for the sole of his foot. Jesus calms the sea, and we immediately see the rock in which we are secure; like Jonah, cast upon the dry land, we can say, Salvation is of the Lord. Christ is that dry land, and we are free from the law by the body of Christ. Now that we have some evidence upon which we can stand, it is our desire for more knowledge of what in the purpose of God is ours. We would be directed into the love of God, his election and predestination. We would enter into and enjoy the blessings of the land, and have sweet fellowship with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We would walk with David, and run with Habakkuk. To have our coast enlarged is to be directed by the Comforter to that covenant ordered in all things and sure and to know where we set our foot in this heavenly land it is ours by the will of our God, to know that our cross and our crown are both willed by Him. We thought that darkness of mind, sorrows, crosses and an absent God were all proofs of our being out of the secret, and said, "All these things are against me," but the Lord enlarges our coast, and we see love inscribed upon them all. What a wonderful height, depth, length and breadth there is to the love of God, and we live, move and have our being in love, and God is love. What a blessing it is, then, to have our coast enlarged from the narrows of self to the vastness of God.

"And that thine hand might be with me." The hand of the Lord is the power, or might of the Lord. Do we not need this at all times, that it might be with us? The hand of the Lord is ever with his saints, for like the potter who commences a piece of work on the wheel, and does not take his hand from the vessel until it is finished, so the Lord continues the work he has begun; but we would see his hand with us. So often it seems to be against us, and, like Jeremiah, we say, "Surely against me is he turned; he turneth his hand against me all the day." He turneth his hand upon the little ones. It is good to look to the hand of the Lord for temporal blessings, but let us remember "he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul." Many have their hearts set on certain things which are contrary to God's word, and when they see that what seems to be a providence turn up in their favor they are positive the hand of the Lord is with them, and they persist often to their own undoing and destruction of Zion's peace. Thus a rebelling Jonah found a ship waiting to take him to Tarshish.

He also happened to have his fare, and whilst the storm was brewing he went down to the ship's sides and fell asleep. Paul says, "Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame." So it is with all who trust in themselves, self-satisfied, they fall asleep in that treacherous calm of carnal security; they know not that a storm is coming that will ultimately find them overboard in the perilous deep. All this time the hand of the Lord is with them. It was with Jonah, for Jonah must preach to Nineveh, though he goes by way of the belly of hell, and when on dry land he knew the hand of the Lord had been with him. It is this hand which Peter calls "the mighty hand of God," and it is a mighty hand that can make all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Jabez prayed also to be delivered from evil, that it might not grieve him. Oh, what a blessing to have a tender conscience towards God and man, and to be delivered from every imagination and thought of the heart. Genesis vi. 5, says, "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Man is no better to-day, vice is rampant as ever, and with many professors there is much spiritual wickedness in high places. There is a limiting of the Holy One of Israel in his sovereignty on the one hand, and a hiding behind predestination on the other. There is a lightness in walk and conversation which is an evil in this day, and those who walk thus do it, if they are true Israelites, to their own grief. Wherever there is walking in the flesh there will be grief sooner or later, therefore how fitting is such a prayer to poor sinners. Jesus taught his disciples to pray, "Deliver us from evil," and will he not yet teach them? Are there any who can make a sweet morsel of sin? God forbid. All who have wept for the afflictions of Joseph will groan under sin, and hate evil, and will pray, "Keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me."

"And God granted him that which he requested." That the Lord answered him is proof that it was true prayer. Oh, how many prayers are "talked" in these days, yet God has promised the very blessing embodied in Jabez's prayer, and his promises are yea and amen in Christ Jesus. Therefore if God be true his saints in Christ shall ask and receive, shall seek and shall find. They shall have all their needs supplied according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

G. R.

TIMELY SUGGESTIONS.

DESIRING to see the usefulness of the SIGNS extended, both on account of those who may read, and the publishers, two suggestions are offered whereby the subscription list can be enlarged:

1. Let every present subscriber obtain and send in one new subscription. This will mean an immediate increase of one hundred per cent. Can any lover of the truth spend two dollars during the year to better advantage?

2. There are a number scattered over the country who would enjoy reading the paper, who cannot afford to pay for it. On the other hand, there are many who can well afford to send it for one year to those less fortunate. Can those in the latter class do better, in sending Christmas remembrances, than to have the SIGNS greet their friends throughout the coming year?

If either of the above suggestions make an appeal to you, remember action is what counts. R. L. D.

THE foregoing suggestions from Elder Dodson are very timely, and if each of our subscribers would do what they could toward helping increase the circulation of the SIGNS it would be a great help to us in publishing the paper. Do not feel your help is not worth the effort, that you could only do a little, for the little that each one can do when added together would mean a grand total to the publishers. J. E B. & CO.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by George R. Tedford.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, September 8th, 9th and 10th, 1922, sends greetings in the Lord to the churches of which she is composed, and to the associations with which she corresponds.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As it was your request for me to write this letter, though I feel my unworthiness and inability to attempt it, if the Lord will enable me I will write a short letter, as it has been our custom for many years to address the dear followers of the Lord Jesus Christ by what is called a Circular Letter.

Brethren, let us look at Romans viii. 9: "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." In Galatians v. 16, we read, "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." If we do walk in the Spirit then we shall love one another, and if we are blessed with the Spirit of Christ our meeting will be one long to be remembered, and it seems to me that if we walk as we are here directed there will be nothing but joy and peace among us. But the flesh is weak, and doubts and fears assail us, and we must ever look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. He is the complete redemption and salvation of his people. The children of God suffer, "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." "Christ also hath once suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." "As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." So then it is written, Let him that glorieth glory in the Lord. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Our hope is that we are not forsaken. He who was rich became poor that we through his poverty might be rich. So poor was he that he had not where to lay his head. He paid our debts, made satisfaction for our sins and freely justified us by his blood. Now, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

J. C. CLARK, Moderator.
GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER J. B. Bowden wishes to announce that his present address is Ingram, Texas, Box 85.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, it has pleased almighty God to remove by death from this time-state, our dearly beloved brother, **Elder B. F. Coulter,** we the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada, do bow in humble submission to the will of God, and desiring hereby to extend by the unanimous voice of the church, an expression of our sorrow and deep sympathy with dear sister Coulter and family in their great loss,

RESOLVED, that we spread this resolution on our Minutes, and send a copy to sister Coulter, and a copy to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

J. B. SLAUSON, Moderator.

JOHN T. KERR, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Margaret Ann Keiter Bales was born May 18th, 1831, in Hampshire County, Virginia, and departed this life November 9th, 1923, aged 92 years, 5 months and 21 days. At the age of three years she came with her parents to Greene County, Ohio. Mrs. Bales was the daughter of Frederick and Mary Keiter, and was one of a family of twelve children, of whom five are left to mourn the loss of a kind and loving sister: Mrs. Susan Beam, of the Zoar neighborhood; Mrs. Jane Buckwalter, of Needmore; Mrs. Katherine Haines, of near Paintersville; Edward Keiter, of Lumberton, and James Keiter, of California. April 15th, 1852, she was united in marriage to Elisha Bales, who preceded her to the heavenly home a little more than nineteen years ago. As a result of this union six children were born: Susan Maria, William Harrison, Mary E., Silas Raper, Frederick Keiter and Sarah Emma. Of these two are still living: Silas Raper and Sarah Emma Girard, on the home farm. Besides these she leaves to mourn their loss seventeen grandchildren and fifteen great-grandchildren. She was not a member of any church, but held rather closely to the belief of the Baptists. Her life was one of tenderness and uprightness, and she was loved because of her kind disposition, amiability and unselfishness. "Aunt Margaret," as we all called her, was known for her integrity and purity of personal character, and the many kind and generous qualities of heart that so endeared her to her family, neighbors and friends. As a neighbor she was loved and respected by all, and her passing away is not only a loss to the family, but also to the entire community.

I will add to the above, that on the 12th I was called from Delaware to conduct the funeral service at the home, where many relatives and friends were gathered, showing she was esteemed highly. I have known her all my life. She was a good woman, and our hope is, one of the ransomed of the Lord.

After service at the home she was laid to rest at Jamestown, Ohio, to await the summons from on high. May we all be enabled by the grace of God to be reconciled to his will.

L. E. STEPHENS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

W. H. Burford, Ark., $2 00; J. T. Burford, Jr., Ark., $1.00; Mrs. E. J. Bolton, Ark., $1.00; John W. Rockafellow, N. Y., $8.00.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, 1315 Columbia Avenue (Park Avenue Hall) PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Little Flock Church will no longer hold meetings at Park and 5th Streets, but for the present will hold them at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 494 East 10th Street, Riverside, California. We hope to have a place again soon, and when we do we will appreciate having our notice with you.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. S. MILLER.

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Compiled by Silas H. Durand and P. G. Lester. $1.00 per single copy, $10.00 per dozen. Send orders to Mildred Durand Gordy, 1011 Vaughn Street, Ann Arbor, Mich., or Elder P. G. Lester, 826 Virginia Ave., Roanoke, Va.

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ELDER S. HASSELL.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 91. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1923. NO. 24.

POETRY.

DEITY.

THE great all-seeing and unseen,
With power supreme is fraught;
Created all that e'er has been,
Will be, or is, from naught.

Whose reign, unmarked by fleeting years,
Endures when time has fled;
Above all judgment, doubts and fears,
No law above his head.

No object, whether small or great,
Is hidden from his sight;
He knows, and holds the keys of fate,
And all he does is right.

There is no creature anywhere
But he has given birth,
And all, without his tender care,
Would perish from the earth.

His power the universe upholds,
Even heaven's jeweled dome;
While he the book of life unfolds,
As centuries go and come.

The face of every lily fair
Was painted by his brush;
And 'twas his love for beauty rare
That caused the rose to blush.

He knows all things that were and are,
And which are not yet done;
Ordained them from his throne afar,
Before time had begun.

And though he hath his face concealed,
No power from us can sever
The matchless love he hath revealed,
Which shall endure forever.

He speaks, and countless worlds roll on,
Or cease at his decree;
High Priest and Lord, the great Three-One,
The infinite Deity.

ALFRED E. TITUS.

TRENTON, New Jersey.

DEAR EDITORS:—The following verses were composed by the invalid sister while she was very low in a hospital, and were sent to her brother, G. D. Holland, and by his consent are at your disposal.

J. A. PRESTON.

LIFE—What is it?
A stirring within the nut-brown shell,
A plant springs forth in the light to dwell,
A tendril clings with its baby hands,
While a green bud bursts its circling bands;
Softly the silken petals unfold,
Till perfume flows from the heart of gold.

LIGHT—What is it?
A soul dwelt midst the darkness of sin,
That would not let a gleam shine in,
A mere spark, that soul, in its house of clay,
Like a tiny star so far away;
But lo, it twinkled, expanded, grew,
And darkness receded, the rays shown through.

LOVE—What is it?
A tiny babe in a stall was laid,
Helpless, midst perils, yet unafraid;
Over him shown a protecting star,
Guardian angels watched near and far;
Untouched by sin, the earth he trod,
Overcame death, abides with God.

A flutter of wings, a burst of song,
There's life everywhere, the whole day long;
A rosy-hued dawn, a silvery moon,
A glimmer of light and night is noon.
What does yon bird sing to its mate?
LIFE, LIGHT, LOVE, they are God's incarnate.

LOLA LEE HOLLAND.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JAMES I. 27.

"PURE religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

Perhaps religion is one of the most common subjects of the world to-day, and in all probability no subject discussed is as little understood. Men of master minds, women of intelligence and children of all ages deal with what they call religion. Many of all classes are sincere, believing they understand exactly what they preach, write and talk concerning this most important subject. Thousands verily believe they are doing God service in sacrificing worldly matters in order to give their time and devote their lives to the kingdom of God, but in reality few in all the world understand what religion is. There is in this day more progress in "church union" than at any time in church history. Thousands, yes, millions, are identified with different organizations called by various names, all supposed to have the Lord's seal of approval. All believe they are doing that which is pleasing in the Lord's sight, and verily expect to receive eternal blessedness for what they do. But, after all, is it not more for show, pomp, social, financial and political gain than for the poor and needy, or to the praise of God? Most all simplicity, both in preaching and worship, has taken wings of the morning. The greater talents among men in the ministry have left the simple principles of the gospel and have plunged into science headlong, without considering that God is before all things, and that by him all things consist. It seems, too, that the more they flounder and drown in such waters the more followers they have. This is but the fulfillment of the word of the Lord: Men shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived, and were it possible would deceive the very elect. Two blessed points are here set forth: There is an elect people; and that people cannot be deceived by the cunning craftiness of men; no, not with all their scientific ideas and notions. Pure religion and undefiled before God is in no sense scientific, but rather the very essence of simplicity. The wayfaring man, though a fool, cannot err therein. Thousands of sermons, so called, are delivered Sunday after Sunday without the slightest reference to Jesus Christ, and him crucified. Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people, says the word of the Lord. Never, since the resurrection and ascension of Jesus, has there been more darkness, ignorance, superstition, gaudy show and lack of sincerity than now, yet it is all called religion. How few of all this world have the fear of God before their eyes. Those who have such fear, and know what religion is, are the most deluded, the most ignorant and most behind the times, in the minds of the "wise and prudent," of all people on earth. The religion of Christ, they are often told, would do for that age of the world, but not for this progressive period. It really is wonderful how vain man, made of the dust of the ground, has advanced and progressed, until he is wiser and far ahead of the Creator. Lord, save thy people from such delusion: the snares of death. Three kinds of religion are spoken of in the New Testament, viz.: pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father; Jews' religion and vain religion. The same three kinds are in the world to-day. The first named above is known and experienced by the Lord's people, regardless of who or where they are. The second mentioned is still with the Jews in their

worship of God, supposedly, without Christ in it. The third is abroad in the land. The first is pure and undefiled. No show; no pomp; no partiality; no greed; no covetousness; no slander; no backbiting; no high-mindedness. The poor are equal with the rich, the rich on an equal plane with the poor; the rich brought low and the poor exalted. No such thing as preference for the man with good apparel and the gold ring. No sitting of the poor under the footstool of the rich. Is such true among the progressive denominations to-day? No place is found for the poor and needy; really that class is not wanted in such places, but rich men and women of importance are sought everywhere. Has money become the god of the earth? Is it worth more than a broken and contrite heart? Is it worth more than honesty and integrity? Even in church relationship, which should be union, every class of society must stand by itself. It is sometimes wondered if the thought ever enters the mind of those who belong to the "400" class that God is the Father of the poor as well as the rich. In this matter all are alike, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. It seems that in the days of Jesus the Father had even more respect for the poor than for the rich. The poor publican was justified rather than the rich Pharisee; Lazarus the beggar rather than the rich man who fared sumptuously every day; the poor widow who cast in her mite, all she had, rather than the rich who cast in of their abundance; the poor man of the tombs rather than the arrogant of the land. Indeed it was Christ's pleasure to eat and drink with sinners and be called their friend. When religion puts on the aspect of pride immediately it becomes "vain religion." High seats and gaudy dress often separate between the precious and the vile, between those who are the Lord's children and those who are not manifestly such. In pure and undefiled religion there is no difference shown between classes of society in the church. This is the very lesson taught by the text at the head of this article. There is neither rich nor poor, neither high nor low, neither male nor female, but all are one in Christ. The tie (love) that binds happy souls together is pure and undefiled; it could not be otherwise, since it is the love of God and passeth understanding, in the sense of union.

The mighty angel that John saw come down from heaven stood with one foot upon the sea and the other foot upon the earth, and cried with a loud voice that time should be no longer, signifying the end of all temple worship, including all forms, rites and ceremonies. Under the Mosaic dispensation there was a time prescribed by the law for everything: holy moons, sabbath days, offerings, sacrifices, circumcision, &c., but with the coming of the gospel, and to the end of all earthly things, such shadows shall never exist again, because of the absence of the body (Christ) which caused them. Now God is worshipped in spirit and in truth, and he seeketh such as thus worship him; that is, none so worship him except first sought and spiritually prepared by him to render spiritual service. What, therefore, is there in the sight of God and the Father in forms, rites and ceremonies? God had no pleasure in such things in the days of old, and surely there can be no pleasure in them to him in the gospel day. Pure religion and undefiled, therefore, is to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. In making reports some ministers state how many calls they make

during the year, and in all probability not one call is made by them upon the fatherless and widows, in the sense of the text chosen for this article. When destitute and sore afflicted it is a small and easy matter to call at the homes of the fatherless and widows and express sympathy in word; not difficult to say, I am very sorry for you in your distress, but the apostle James says, If one is destitute of food and clothing, and you say to such an one, Be ye fed and be ye clothed, notwithstanding you give them not the things necessary, where is your faith? In reality, what service has been rendered? None whatever. Is this the kind of visit to pay the fatherless and widows in their destitution? The answer is, No. If destitute of bread, the visit means a barrel of flour; if destitute of clothing, it means to supply their need; if destitute of fuel, it means wood and coal. Just here we want to emphasize the fact that such visits of kindness are not by any means confined to ministers, but such kindness, pure religion and undefiled, should be ministered by all the household of faith. The children of God are commanded to be doers of the word, and not hearers only. In such religion there is no form, no show, no hypocrisy, no partiality. Such was the life of Christ in the flesh. He ministered to the poor and needy, and said that should his followers give a cup of cold water to a disciple they should not lose their reward. There is, therefore, work to be done by those called unto glory and virtue. When I was hungry ye fed me; when I was naked ye clothed me, and when sick and in prison ye visited me, said Jesus. How much better such service than the pride, pomp and vanity of the world.

To keep oneself unspotted from the world is clearly seen in the foregoing. Most every one in this day is in some way associated with worldly matters, business of everyday life. There is not the slightest shadow set forth in the New Testament that men should be indolent, but rather that they should work with their own hands to provide for those dependent upon them. Hence to keep himself unspotted from the world means right living, right dealing, having no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, not carried about with every wind of doctrine, but rather stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not again entangled with the weak and beggarly elements of the world. All forms, rites and ceremonies perished with the using, hence touch not, taste not, handle not. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. H. C. KER.

THINK.

"THEN they that feareth the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name."—Mal. iii. 16.

There are times when this Scripture has afforded me some comfort, especially the very last clause, for that seems to embrace or include me. Yes, even me, who am not able to speak as others do, but feel that I am made to think upon his name, that name which has all power in heaven and on earth. I might also say under earth, for is there any place that he is not, to whom alone might dominion and power be ascribed? Surely there are times when it is most sweet when enabled to meditate upon these things and to have a view (although in small degree) of his might and majesty, to know something of his most holy character and

glorious attributes, but these things are only known as he is pleased by the light of his Spirit shining in the heart to reveal to us, and that same light that makes known unto us something of his holy character and divine perfection also shows us something of our own vileness and imperfection; and oh what a contrast, how infinitely great the difference, even to the limited view we have of these things. But I trust my God has made known to me that I am altogether vile, and have been made to cry out, Unclean, unclean! and have no power to cleanse myself. This truth we never want to lose sight of, nor to forget the hole of the pit from whence we were digged, but we know that our own heart is treacherous and deceitful and desperately wicked, and it will not do to depend upon, but if kept it will not be by our own strength, which is only weakness, but it must be alone by the power of God, which we know to be sufficient. He alone can keep us from idolatry (giving to the creature that which belongs to the Creator, which we all are naturally inclined to do), but let this be our desire, that he keep us from denying him and claiming that for ourselves which does not belong to us; that is, the ability to do or not do, which my own experience teaches me is untrue, and my understanding of the Scripture the same. I can do that which is good and well-pleasing in my Master's sight only as he is pleased to work in me. If I have ever done one truly good, unselfish act it was only as the love of Christ constrained me, and the only cause I know of that I have not gone to the same excess in sin as some other have, is because of restraining grace. If there is any difference in my nature from others, I do not know it, all being children of wrath. The only difference is what grace makes them; to grace all the glory belongs. Then, knowing these things, how very wicked it would be on my part to claim for myself that which I know does not belong to me (power to do good if I see fit and proper to do it), thereby robbing God of his glory. Will a man rob God? The question is asked and answered by God himself. (See Mal. iii. 8.) But God is not mocked. If we sow to the flesh we shall of the flesh reap corruption, and when we undertake to walk by the light of the spark of the fire of our own kindling this shall we have at God's hand: we shall lie down in sorrow. Then how vain to claim anything of ourselves, who are nothing, less than nothing, and vanity. But how good it is when our minds are led away from the vanity of the flesh, and the utter vileness and weakness of the same, and look alone to that God who has all power, and has created all things for his own glory, who is the only all-wise Creator, and supreme Ruler of the universe, controlling and governing all things after the counsel of his own will, working in his people that which is good and well-pleasing in his sight. He works and none can hinder, and I know that unless he works in me all is vain, for without him I cannot do anything. This truth I never want to lose sight of, that he alone can keep me, and that he alone is my Savior, now, henceforth and forever. I love to think of him, and rejoice in him, having no confidence in the flesh, knowing that if we live after the flesh we die, but if through the Spirit we do mortify the deeds of the body we live. Let us not forget that it is through or by the Spirit that this is done. Then to God, the Spirit, all praise is due, and I love to think of it this way, and right here I want to quote from the apostle Paul to his beloved brethren at Philippi that which has appeared beautiful to me:

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." But this I can only do as I am enabled by him whose thoughts and ways are as far above my thoughts and ways as the heavens are above the earth.

Brother Dodson, I will mail what I have written to you, not for the purpose of it being published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, of which you are an associate editor, for I consider that the limited space in the paper should be taken up with the writings of those who are better enabled to write of the honor of our King than I am, and also to the good and comfort of his subjects, so this is for your perusal. I have written to ease my own mind, with hope that it may not be a burden to you to read my imperfect writing; you being my beloved pastor, and knowing my weakness as you do, I feel assured of the charity you possess, and I make free to you some of my mind and thoughts.

From one who trusts he has been made to love the Lord, and to be a lover of good men, made good only as the love of God has been shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Spirit that has been given unto them.

Your little brother,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

EAST POINT, Ga., November, 1923.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—Though I feel little and unworthy to thus address you, yet I want to let you know I am still alive, but no better. I am suffering more, and am never easy, still I get around on crutch and stick.

Dear brethren, I want to thank you for still sending me the SIGNS. The many good letters in them have been very comforting to me in my lonely hours of suffering. Dear editors, brethren and sisters, write on as God gives you light and liberty, for your articles comfort many of God's little children who are on beds of affliction, also many who are far from any place of true worship. Although we believe that our God is everywhere present, and nowhere absent, and can and will comfort his people, yet we, as his, are commanded to comfort one another, and through this medium we can and do comfort each other. We read of their travels, ups and downs, doubts and fears, and are built up and strengthened while traveling through these low grounds of sorrow. It is said in holy writ that it is through great tribulation ye shall enter the kingdom, and that many are the afflictions of the children of God, and, dear friends, I can realize this, whether I am one of the redeemed of the Lord or not. I often think that if I were one of the redeemed I would not be in the dark so much, or have so many doubts and fears. There is one thing I do know: I love the Primitive Baptists with a different love than I have for others, and I feel to hope it is the love of God in my poor heart that makes me love them. God is love, and he chooses such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth. John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I do believe he that loveth in deed and in truth is born of God, and I believe the whole family of God was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Yes, when the appointed time of the Father arrived he (Christ) came into this world to save his people from their sins. He suffered, bled and died, paid whatever his people owed, can-

celed all their debt, and cried on the cross, "It is finished." Then and there the whole family, or church, of God was eternally saved, redeemed by the goodness and mercy of God, saved by grace through faith, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. Yes, dear brethren, it is of the good Lord from first to last. He hath saved his people with an everlasting salvation, and when the time appointed of the Father comes he sends forth the image of his Son in their heart crying, Abba, Father, then they are made to see their sinful and wretched condition, and when they are delivered they love the brethren. Yes, he is a full and complete Savior. Oh how thankful we ought to be, and love and serve him, and one another, while we sojourn here. I feel I am near my journey's end, and ask an interest in the prayers of God's people.

Dear editors, may the good Lord long spare you to comfort his children, as you have in the past, and may you ever contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. While I love dearly to read the SIGNS, and it is a great comfort to me in my condition, still if you have to go down into your pockets for the money do not send it, for I do not want to be burdensome. If I had the money, or was able to work, I would gladly pay for it. Pray for me, that I may be reconciled to my lot.

Thanking you for past favors, I am your poor, little, afflicted brother,

G. W. ALMAND.

GRAYSON, La., Nov. 18, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending money order for two dollars to renew my subscription to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which expired August 15th, 1923, and please pardon my negligence in waiting so long to renew. If I am not mistaken in what I believe, I can truly say that I do heartily indorse the doctrine set forth, and so earnestly contended for by the editors and writers of the SIGNS.

Our little church, Mount Pleasant, is composed of a little band of faithful brethren and sisters, who believe in the personal unconditional election of all whom the Father gave to the Son, and that all things that take place or come to pass are in accord with his will and purpose. We have two ordained Elders, to wit, J. S. Gordy and J. E. Smith. Elder Gordy is our pastor, and we esteem him very highly for the truth's sake.

Will brother Lefferts give his views on Songs of Solomon viii. 8?

With love to all, I am your little brother in hope,

J. W. VALENTINE.

HERNDON, Va., Nov. 26, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find check for three dollars to extend my subscription to the SIGNS from December 1st, 1923, to December 1st, 1924, the extra dollar can be applied to the fund of "The Poor of the Flock," who are poor financially, but rich in the Spirit and in the things of the kingdom of God's dear Son. The older I get the more I feel to be dead to spiritual things, and I often question myself whether or not I have ever been taught spiritual things. God only knows, if I do not. My desire is that I shall be made able to hope on to the end of my pilgrimage here below, and that will not be very long, for I am getting to be an old man with tottering steps.

In love and fond fellowship, your brother, I hope,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

LYLES, Tenn., Nov. 13, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—You will please change my address from McEwen, Tenn., to Lyles, Tenn. I inclose a money order for two dollars to continue the paper another year.

I wish to say to the many good brethren who have written me since I lost my sainted wife on January 2nd, 1923, that I certainly appreciated their sympathy, and was much comforted of God in reading their letters.

Your very unworthy brother, if one at all, J. R. HATCHER.

CEDAR RAPIDS, Iowa, Nov. 10, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I am sending my remittance for another year I want to say I think the first article in the November 15th issue is very soul-cheering. I read every word of it, and it is Bible doctrine. I am eighty years of age, and cannot go out to hear preaching in the winter, and the SIGNS is all the preaching I get, so it is a very welcome messenger. There is plenty of "do and live" doctrine preached, but it is no food for me.

RACHEL OWENS.

LEVELLAND, Texas, Aug. 18, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—You will find inclosed check to pay for the SIGNS another year. Wife and I are always glad when the SIGNS come, as it is always full of good letters, and advocates the truth as we understand it. We have heard but one Primitive Baptist sermon preached at this place since we came here two years ago, which was preached by our beloved brother Jim Rutledge. We hope though that the time is not far distant when this country will be filled with people of our faith and order, and right here I would like to say to those who read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that this is a new country, and is just beginning to settle, and there is a chance to get located right now if you come in time, as there is not much land sold yet.

Your brother in hope,

T. W. BOWERS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1923.

EDITOR

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION—SIN.

IN the September issue of the SIGNS, on page 266, a request is made of the editors, by sister M. F. Stokes, Ruston, La., to tell her what is meant by "absolute predestination," and who created sin. We have waited to see if some one of the other three editors would respond to her request, but so far only a slight reference by Elder C. W. Vaughn has appeared, and now that we are asked to prepare another article, it shall be our purpose to present some thoughts for the consideration of our sister, and the other readers, along the lines requested, nothwithstanding our feeliing that we are the least qualified of the four to write upon such profound mysteries.

In taking up the first part of the request, it may be well in the outset to refresh our memories as to the meaning of words. Turning to the edition of Webster's on our desk, the definition given of the word "absolute" is: "Free as to condition; perfect in itself; unlimited in power; fixed; irrevocable; despotic; positive; the will or power of the Almighty." "Predestination" is defined as follows: "The act of foreordaining; the doctrine that God has from all eternity decreed

whatever comes to pass, especially, by an unchangeable purpose, the eternal life or death of man." So far as we know, the word "absolute" is not to be found in the Bible, and because of this some have objected to its use in connection with the word "predestination." On the same ground "predestination" could be objected to, since nowhere does the word appear in all the annals of Holy Writ. The words "predestinate" and "predestinated" are found only a few times, and yet the meaning of all these words is as the "scarlet thread" that runs through all the pages of the sacred Book. In the ordinary use of language it sometimes becomes necessary, in order to establish definitely and without qualifications or conditions, to use some such word as "absolutely" or "positively" to dispel any and all doubt in the mind of a questioner. Without a question being raised, there would be no occasion for emphasis, and if all who professed to believe predestination really believed that it means "the act of foreordaining; the doctrine that God has for all eternity decreed whatever comes to pass," there would be no need for using the word "absolute" to make it clear that what is meant is that it is "free as to condition; perfect in itself; irrevocable and positive." It has not been our custom to use publicly the expression "absolute predestination," but in speaking of predestination we have invariably meant that it was "free as to condition," and should it become necessary to use the expression in order that we might be distinguished from those who do not believe in the sovereignty of God, in the predestination of God, in God as the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end, we shall gladly carry such a banner. While it is good to have the authority of wise men as to the literal meaning of words, all who seek God in sincerity and in truth know that the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God. We want God to speak, and turning to the fifteenth chapter of Genesis, thirteenth and fourteenth verses, we find recorded what he said to Abram: "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their's, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years: and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward they shall come out with great substance." This language is far-reaching and all-embracing. God spake concerning the sojourn of Israel in the land of Egyptian bondage, and her deliverance from the land of Pharaoh. At that time Abram had no seed, and he well could inquire of the Lord with regard to the matter, How could such things be? he himself being old and Sarah, his wife, having passed the age of bearing, but God brought him forth, and said, "Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be." Bible students are familiar with the manner in which Isaac was born; he in turn was to beget Jacob, and Jacob was to have twelve sons, and among them was to be Joseph, who was to dream a dream which was to cause a conspiracy among his brethren to destroy him. Their plot to kill him was to be thwarted, and they were to compromise by selling him into Egypt, the very place where God had said to Abram his seed should go, and what a mercy it proved to be that Joseph should go down before and prepare a place for them. Joseph's life was one of continued hardship; he was falsely accused and cast into the dungeon, but not to remain. Somehow (or was it just that

way?) the king had a dream, and he was in great trouble; his sleep went from him, and there was no rest for him. He called together all his wise men and magicians, but there was none that could interpret the dream unto Pharaoh. At that juncture the chief butler remembered his fault and thought of the Hebrew who had interpreted his dream. Joseph was brought before the king, and when he was told the interpretation of his dream, that there were to be seven years of plenty, during which time the great storehouse of Egypt was to be filled; that the seven years of plenty were to be followed by seven years of famine, &c., Pharaoh asks, "Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?" Joseph was made governor, clothed with full authority, and he gathered corn as the sand of the sea. Then the seven years of plenty were ended and the seven years of dearth began to come; the famine waxed sore in Egypt, "and all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because the famine was so sore in all lands." Did the famine affect Jacob and his other sons? Most assuredly it did, and as there was nowhere else to go, of necessity they had to go down into Egypt to buy corn. It was a matter of life and death with them. God had said to Abram long, long before this: "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their's, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years: and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward they shall come out with great substance." Was there anything uncertain about any of this? They were now in Egypt, but Joseph was there with a sufficiency for all their needs; they ate the fat of the land, and there was no lack. It would have seemed good to have continued on under such favorable conditions, but God had said that they should be a stranger in a land that was not theirs, and should serve them, and that they should be afflicted four hundred years. Joseph must die; there must arise a new king over Egypt, who must not know Joseph, and under his reign the children of Israel must be brought into servitude and sorely afflicted. This new king was to be jealous of the Israelites, and contrived a way whereby they would be held in check, by decreeing that all male children born unto them should be put to death, but the midwives feared God, and at that very time we see God raising up one by whom he was to deliver his people. He had said, "They shall come out with great substance," therefore, Moses must be born; he must be spared, and brought up in the king's house, that he might be taught the ways of the Egyptians, and thus be qualified to go unto Pharaoh, and to bring up the children of Israel when the four hundred years were up; not before. Was there any predestination in all of this? Were not even the years numbered in which they were to serve and be afflicted by that nation, and was not Pharaoh raised up for that very purpose? Hear ye the word of the Lord: "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth."—Exodus ix. 16. Abraham's seed, Israel, was to come out with great substance. This did not mean the earrings and trinkets of gold they were to borrow of the Egyptians; no, by no means. Those things proved a curse to them, but they were to be made to know that God himself would bring them out of that land of terrible bondage, and deliver

them from the power of that impossible taskmaster in such a fashion that not even a dog would wag his tongue against them, so perfect and complete it would be; not a hoof should be left behind. That great and wonderful deliverance which God wrought in bringing them up out of Egypt was to be their theme throughout the years to come, and was to be handed down to their children, generation after generation. What a great substance it was to them, and what a great substance it is now for one to have a personal knowledge of God's dealings with a poor sinner, to be led about and instructed, watched over and kept by him. The honor, fame and riches of this world are as nothing compared to that great substance, which is not short of Christ Jesus, Immanuel, or God with us. It is in this way that we are taught, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Different phases of the subject upon which we have touched could be brought out to show God's predestinating purpose to manifest all of his attributes: his wisdom, his power, his love, his justice, his mercy, his forgiveness, &c. How mysteriously and wonderfully all these appear in the case of Joseph going down into Egypt, even by the wicked hands of his brethren, to save much people alive, and what a remarkable type his is of him who was to come and redeem his people from under the law and the curse of sin. While what the Lord said to Abram concerned Israel as a nation, it was at the same time figurative of what was far more wonderful and amazing, which had undoubtedly been said to his blessed Son in covenant relation with regard to his people, the Lamb's wife, the church, long before the foundations of the earth were laid. Of a surety God's people were to be strangers in a land that was not theirs, a world of sin and ruin, to be brought about through the fall of Adam, but how glorious the thought that a remedy was prepared in the person of God's only begotten Son, that he should come and suffer, bleed and die, be buried and rise again, that they might come up out of that horrible condition with a great substance, a knowledge that he is theirs and they are his. The price was indeed a great one to pay, and he was the wise Masterbuilder who figured out the cost in advance, but it had to be paid; he had to finish the work. He came to do the will of the Father. The cup could not pass, but he must drink it to its very dregs. Unto such an hour and for such a cause came he into the world. There was no escape. God had ordered it in all things, and it was sure, and in very deed we are told "of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done," and further, "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and with wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was impossible that he should be holden of it." It was he who was to destroy the works of the devil and save his people with an everlasting salvation. It was by Jesus Christ that his people were predestinated unto the adoption of children, according to the good pleasure and will of God. (Eph. i. 5.) We cannot conceive of the gospel being preached without embracing the sovereignty of God over all worlds, king-

doms, principalities and powers, be they visible or invisible. The gospel is declared to be the power of God unto salvation to them that believe. Let us not place limitations upon God's power.

Concluding the first part of our subject, we would like it clearly understood that we do not wish to make a bone of contention of predestination, or to set up bars of fellowship against those who do not view it in the light we do. In view of what we have said, and what our experience teaches, to be established in predestination or any other principle of doctrine, one must be led into it and taught it by the Lord. We once heard one of our able ministers preach "predestination" from the text, "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God," and among some of the things he said were these: Some like to play along the banks of this river, others like to wade out in it to knee depth, others to the waist and armpits, and still others like to swim out into the mighty deep, &c. He said those who could not swim had no right to forbid those who could from going out into deep water, neither had those who could swim any right to pull those who could not out into deep water and drown them. This expresses our feeling; nevertheless, we confess it to be a joy unspeakable and full of glory to meet with those who have gone down to the sea in ships, and have done business in great waters, and hear them tell of what they have seen of the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep.

Sin! What is it? One says it is "any thought, word, action, omission or desire, contrary to the law of God." In 1 John iii. 4, we are told it is the transgression of the law. Paul, in the fifth chapter of Romans, says, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." There has not been one of all Adam's race but what was conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity; every one has come forth from the womb speaking lies. James tells us that "every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death;" therefore, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man." When God searcheth the heart and trieth the reins of a man he is made to confess as David did: "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight, that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest." David had caused Uriah to be put to the front in battle and killed that he might take unto himself Uriah's wife, but when the prophet Nathan appeared and shot an arrow from God's bow it found its mark, and he was made to confess to his guilt, as every one does with whom God deals. David had said the man who was guilty of such a crime should be put to death, but the grace of God, through the unspeakable gift of his dear Son, said, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.

We will have to be brief with the latter part of our subject, but we shall ask our readers to turn to the account, and trace out God's dealings with David, and be astonished at his ways in raising up Solomon, the man of wisdom, from this union between David and the wife of Uriah, down through which lineage our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was to come in the flesh. Did not God have a purpose in all this, and yet was not David the one

who had sinned? To be sure, such was the case. It is true of every case, and when one testifies to the contrary we know they are not speaking according to the teachings of God, nor experience, and, therefore, we have no fellowship for any such doctrine. Man is the sinner, but, glory be to his precious name, Jesus is the Savior, saves even unto the uttermost.

This number is the last for the year, in which it has been the custom to summarize some of the dealings of the Lord with us during the year in a "farewell" address, and we are certain nothing could be more comforting, more soul-cheering, more inspiring to God's "little ones" than to be assured that their salvation from start to finish, in time and eternity, is of him who hath delivered, who doth deliver, and who we trust will yet deliver. If they are trusting in him to deliver them, now or in the future, it is because he has delivered them in the past, and the knowledge of this is that great substance with which they are blest. This is knowing him whom to know is eternal life. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our life, and we will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Farewell for 1923.

R. L. D.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in December (30th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, November 27th, 1923, at his home, Leesburg, Va., Thomas T. Hickman and Miss Della R. Trundle, both of Poolesville, Montgomery Co., Maryland.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Annie Grafton Jones, wife of Calvin Jones, and daughter of the late Elder Obin Grafton, died at her home, Forest Hill, Md., October 14th, 1923, aged 63 years. Sister Annie was baptized when quite young in the fellowship of the Harford Church by Elder William Grafton, where she remained a faithful and much loved member until her death. Truly no one knew this dear sister but to love her. Her gentle, quiet, unassuming manner, and her loving, sympathetic nature endeared her to all with whom she came in contact. After her marriage she still continued to live in the house of her childhood, so that she and the writer of this notice had never been separated. Through all the years of our lives we have been sisters indeed and in truth, both in the church and in the house. My loss I feel to be unspeakable, but take comfort in the thought that for her to die was gain. She had been in failing health for several years. For months before her death we knew that she was critically ill. From the first she felt she would not recover, and told us she had no desire to. She suffered greatly, but was very patient. One night, some two weeks before the end, sister Annie had a beautiful vision, which she described to the sister who was watching by her. In the morning, while I was giving her some nourishment as she sat propped up in a chair, she put her arms about me, and said, Oh I have so much to tell you, if I can only do it. Her mind at that time acted slowly, and she talked with difficulty. Then she began in broken sentences, and with many pauses, to tell me of a terrible storm she had witnessed, which was followed by a beautiful calm, where all was peaceful and lovely, and heard things too wonderful for her to describe. There were others present, she said, and she asked them if they could feel the calm, and hear the music and see the beauty, and they said, We cannot. She wondered why they could not see and feel what was so real and so wonderful to her. I replied, No, my dear, they could not understand because this wonderful experience was given to you, and you alone. It was for your comfort. Yes, she said, it was a comfort, indeed it was.

At 4 o'clock Sunday morning, October 14th, she passed quietly away, just as one going to sleep. She leaves to mourn their loss, her husband, four sisters and one brother, besides the church, and many relatives and friends.

Funeral services were conducted on Wednesday at Harford meetinghouse by Elder W. S. Alexander, who spoke beautifully from Revelation vi. 20. The body of our loved one was laid to rest in the cemetery at Harford, where lie many of her kindred after the flesh.

Her sister, in sorrow,

JENNIE GRAFTON.

Joel H. Messick was born in Sussex County, Delaware, February 7th, 1841, and departed this life August 29th, 1923, aged 82 years, 6 months and 22 days He was united in marriage to Miss Orpah Anne Short December 16th, 1868, and to this union were born seven children, four boys and three girls. One boy dying in infancy, and another son when just grown, which leaves two sons and three daughters surviving him, as their mother preceded their father several years. The three daughters are members of the Broad Creek Church, and are devoted and faithful members, which was a great consolation to their father. Brother Messick united with the Broad Creek Church by experience and baptism September 10th, 1893, and the ordinance was administered by the late Elder A. B. Francis. In 1894 he was chosen deacon, and clerk of the church, in which the duties were lovingly and faithfully performed. As all readers would expect, he was a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, which was not only after he had united with the church, but for many years previous, which bore the fruit of life. He often said that if he was saved it was by grace; and if a saint, the least of all. He gradually gave way, but kept up, and was out to his meetings until the second meeting before his death, and his last. He was patient to the very last, and when the end came it might well be said he fell asleep.

His funeral was conducted by the writer on Saturday before the first Sunday in September, and his remains laid to rest in the cemetery near by. I must say we feel our loss greatly, but our loss is his eternal gain. My relations with brother Messick were in love and sweet fellowship, which cause an endearing tie between pastor and church.

CHARLES W. VAUGHN.

Brother **Carl Kulander** was born in Sweden March 31st, 1856, and died November 19th, 1923, aged 67 years, 7 months and 19 days. His death was indeed sad. He was by himself hauling feed from the field, and in some way the team became frightened and threw him off killing him instantly. He came to America at the age of 21 years, and lived in eastern Kansas for some time, moving to Hamilton County in the spring of 1887, and settled on a claim near Hatton, Kansas, where his sad death occurred, he having lived there over 36 years. He was married to Miss Emma Carlson, February 20th, 1889. To this union were born five children: Mildred, of Hutchinson, Kan.; Vernie, of Umatilla, Fla.; Audrey, who is at home; Olga, who died July 4th, 1916, aged 14 years, 6 months and 9 days. The twin of Audrey died January 19th, 1897, not having been named. He leaves to mourn their loss his widow, three children, two brothers, Henry and Alfred, of Emporia, Kan., and a host of neighbors and friends, he being well-known to the community. Brother Kulander was given a hope in Christ in early manhood, and joined the church called Providence (Primitive Baptist) December 8th, 1907, and was baptized by Elder D. B. Nowels, who was pastor of the church at that time. He was a faithful and humble member, and will be sadly missed in the church. He lived and died in the God-given faith, and loved the doctrine of salvation by grace as taught him, as he firmly believed, by almighty God. Another of God's children has been called to his long sleep, and while we miss him and mourn his death, we mourn not as those who have no hope, but feel and know that on the last day when the trumpet of God shall sound his sleeping dust will come forth with all of God's children, and his body will be made immortal, and he will then see Jesus, and be like him. This is our hope.

His funeral was held from the Primitive Baptist meetinghouse, near Hatton, conducted by Elder Henry Holdren, assisted by brother T. J. Crist, and his body was conveyed to the Hatton Cemetery and laid to rest.

(MRS.) HENRY HOLDREN.

Lillian J. Hambree Johnson, my dear wife, was born in Milton County, Georgia, July 18th, 1869, and died at the home of our daughter, Mrs. J. M. McGinnis, in Atlanta, Ga., September 30th, 1923, making her stay on earth 54 years, 2 months and 12 days. She realized her lost condition at the age of thirteen years, and was a mourner nearly two years, when she received a hope in Jesus. In her fifteenth year she joined the Primitive Baptist Church, of the Yellow River Association, at Bethlehem, Ga., the third Saturday in June, 1884, and was baptized the following day, together with her father, Elder O. F. Hembree, by Elder Gulledge. Some time after she moved her membership to Corinth Church, of the Marietta Primitive Baptist Association, where she remained a consistent member the remainder of her mortal life. She rejoiced in the doctrine of predestination, and salvation by grace alone. She was married to G. R. Johnson September 3rd, 1888, and to this union were born three children, two daughters and one son: Mrs. W. J. Stephens, Mrs. J. M. McGinnis, who resides in Atlanta, Ga., and Fred Johnson, who is with me here on the farm. She was a great sufferer for two years or more before her death. She was brought back to her old home the day she died, where she had lived thirty-five years. On the fol-

lowing day, October 1st, Elder J. M. Linsey conducted the funeral services, and spoke words of comfort to a large concourse of relatives and friends, after which her remains were quietly laid to rest in the Willico Cemetery to await the resurrection morn, when all the blood-washed throng will come forth in the image of Jesus, and will ever be with the Lord.

G. R. JOHNSON.

Fannie Estelle Starr was born in Lafayette county, Miss., February 21st, 1870, and departed this life (at her home, Odell, Tex.) October 3rd, 1923, making her stay in this life 53 years, 7 months and 12 days. She was married to W. P. Starr, of Wilbarger County, Texas, August 11th, 1892, and to this union were born four children, one dying in infancy, leaving the husband and three children here below, to follow on at the Master's call. The deceased professed a hope in Christ at the age of 19 years, and joined the Old School Presbyterians, but had not attended their meetings for a number of years, and for the last years of her life had been a constant attendant at the Old Predestinarian Baptist meetings, there gathering now and then a crumb that was scattered for God's little lambs, which was her meat and drink spiritually. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of God, and her delight was to have the Old Baptists in her home. Her life was such that to know her was to love her, and we can all say that a devoted companion and loving, tender mother is gone. Weep not, dear ones, God is merciful, and does all things well; your loss is her eternal gain. The tree is known by its fruit, and the evidence we have establishes our hope that she is sweetly sleeping in the arms of Jesus, and at the sound of the trumpet she, with all of the redeemed, will be brought forth, fashioned like unto his glorious body, singing praises to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost for ever and ever. Amen.

Written by request of the husband.

W. N. GREEN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Allie Gooch Reid, N. C., $2.00; W. A. Kelley, Ark., $3.00; John F. Oliver, Va., $1.00; Jesse Ellis, Ohio; $3.00; G. C. Jordon, Mo., $1.00; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $13.50; G. E. Coulbourn, Va., $2.00; Mrs. May J. Ege, N. J., $3.00; S. J. Rogers, Ky., $4.00; J. H. Shambaugh, Ohio, $2.00; J. E. Holloway, Tex., $1.00; C. Owens, Iowa, $1.00.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Little Flock Church will no longer hold meetings at Park and 5th Streets, but for the present will hold them at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 494 East 10th Street, Riverside, California. We hope to have a place again soon, and when we do we will appreciate having our notice with you.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. S. MILLER.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

ROMANS VIII. 28.

"AND we know that all things work together for good to them that love God."

These words bring to our minds solemn thoughts and reflections, of the ground they cover, and the real true meaning of the words here spoken by the apostle, under the inspiration of the holy Spirit of God. How hard it is for poor insignificant creatures to understand or comprehend the working of his almighty power, as he (God) works all things after the counsel of his own will. As we contemplate the majesty and glory of our God in all his works let us ever remember that "as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." It seems to me that Paul was here contemplating the work of God from the beginning to the end, from creation to the final glorification of all the redeemed, and not a single link in the chain of God's providence could be left out and his most holy will and purpose accomplished for his dear saints and his glory. We poor finite creatures cannot sit as judges of what our God should do or not do, or divide between the good and the bad, from our viewpoint. It has often been said that God predestinated the good things, but not the bad. Who of us is able to sit as judge and draw the dividing line; place the good things on the right, the bad on the left? Let us examine a few things left on record for our learning. God created Adam upright, a good created being, gave him a law. He broke that law and fell under its curse: sin and death upon all his posterity. Now we all know that our God could have made Adam strong enough to have withstood the temptation, but in the purpose of God, with an end in view in the far future, he made Adam just as he was. We would place this evil step on the left, not comprehending the thing to be accomplished: the glorification of our God and his only beloved Son Jesus, the Savior of sinners. But I want it distinctly understood that God is not the author of sin; man is wholly responsible for all his sins and misdeeds. We note again among the "all things" the selling of Joseph. Joseph had a dream. (Read the narrative.) Was it a mere chance dream, or did the God of heaven inspire it? He had a purpose in it, therefore it was a link in the chain. Joseph told it

to his brethren and they put their interpretation upon it (and a correct one). The evil of their corrupt nature arose and they conspired against Joseph and sold him to merchantmen, who carried him to Egypt. See the sorrow of poor old Jacob. Would we not all place this on the left, with the bad things, as old Jacob did when he said, All these things are against me? Dear reader, how often have we said in our hearts as Jacob did, not seeing the end? But, reader, follow Joseph in all his career, shut up in the prison cell by evil intention, is this for good? Yes, in the purpose of God, though yet hid from mortals. Pharaoh dreamed a dream, Joseph was there to interpret it. Suppose Joseph had not been there, then what? But he was there to interpret the dream. Seven years of plenty, seven years of famine. Joseph finds favor with the king, and is made head over all, to save much people alive. God sent him there; the end is good, and when made known his brethren bowed to him willingly, and Joseph told them, Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. Again, the betrayal of Christ by Judas. Where in all the history of the world was there a blacker or more heathenish crime? yet it was all in the fixed, predestinated purpose of our God. Suppose there had not been a Judas; then what? The Scriptures would not have been fulfilled, nor the purpose of God. It is written, "As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." When Jonah took ship it was evil upon his part, but God meant it for good. He was to learn obedience by the things he suffered. The storm came. Was it by chance? Certainly not. They cast lots, and it fell upon Jonah, the guilty one, and they cast him overboard. Then what? Our God was superintending it all, and had prepared a great fish to swallow him up and carry him to the place appointed, ordained or fixed. Had our God control of that fish? Most assuredly he had, and when the three days and nights were up he was delivered. So they "were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Now how any true believer can repudiate and hold up to ridicule this blessed doctrine I cannot understand. I am satisfied many are prejudiced by wrong interpretations of evil doers. I have heard of some, in trying to refute the doctrine of predestination, taking up some atrocious crime of murder, and holding it up in all of its most heinous nature, crying out with a loud voice, Tell me that God made that man do this awful deed? Now that is a false statement. I have traveled extensively in twenty-two states, and Canada, and have never heard any one ridicule such an idea, and I could not fellowship any one who did. God is not the author of sin, neither tempteth he any man, man of his own lust is tempted. I know of one man who thus tried to justify himself in an evil deed, but the church excluded him, and did right in so doing. I have never favored setting this up as a standard in church fellowship, but have opposed it. I have full fellowship for those who do not see this as I do, and can stand hand in hand and fellowship with them, but cannot fellowship those who hold it up to ridicule. In all my travels I have met but one man who favored it as a standard. I opposed it, and do yet. For the elect's sake the world stands, and many of the dark scenes that take place, that are beyond our comprehension, will be among the "all things" in the providence of God, and in some way, though

remote, be for the good of his people, individually or collectively. The wrath of man shall praise God, the remainder of wrath will he restrain. The wicked are his sword for the chastisement of his people. What a sweet comfort when we can rest all in his blessed hand and power, and know that the darkest scene is as necessary as the brightest one. Darkness and light are alike with the Lord. He dwells in the thick clouds; he maketh the clouds his chariot. Truly it is a day of darkness. Darkness has covered the earth, and it truly seems gross darkness the people, and I sometimes wonder why his wrath is not poured out; but for the elect's sake will the world stand until the last one for whom Jesus died be made manifest.

"Chained to his throne, a volume lies,
With all the fates of men,
With every angel's form and size,
Drawn by the eternal pen."

What a blessed comfort to feel that

"The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will."

Dear reader, I trust you may be favored to gather a few crumbs of comfort from these scattered thoughts, for there has been a little comfort to my soul as I have penned them, and a relief to an exercised and burdened mind. The dear Lord bless you all, and lead and guide us all in the pathway of peace and righteousness.

Yours in sweet gospel fellowship, though the least and poorest in my Father's house, P. W. SAWIN.

SHELBYVILLE, Kentucky.

MACOMB, Ill., Dec. 5, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am inclosing two dollars, one to extend my subscription for the SIGNS for six months, and one to help a little in the publication of our dear family paper. I have been a subscriber for thirty-eight years continuously, and during all that time I have never missed a copy, and I always look forward to its coming with pleasure. It has always been a great comfort to me, and I heartily indorse the doctrine set forth in its columns, for it is food and drink to the hungry and thirsty soul. Salvation by grace alone is what this poor sinner stands in need of, and that is what the SIGNS contends for. I realize my utter dependence, and weakness in performing any good deeds or works to obtain mercy or forgiveness, so when I read of others who feel and believe as I do I am comforted and encouraged. The editors, as well as correspondents give God all the glory, saying, "Salvation is of the Lord," and there is salvation in no other name. This is comforting to poor weak ones who have no strength in themselves, and have tried all their own works to no avail, and must look elsewhere for relief. We rejoice to read of a people, a "remnant according to the election of grace," scattered over our country, who are still contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints; and the SIGNS still publishes this old, old story of God's love to his children, but I am very sorry to learn that many are behind in their subscriptions. Dear brethren, this ought not so to be. We should "owe no man any thing, but to love one another." We owe our kindred in Christ our love, and should show forth that love by helping to bear the burden, and so fulfill the law of Christ. I feel that we owe this debt to the SIGNS in the same sense that we do a doctor's or grocery bill, and should feel in duty bound to pay, and we should make an extra effort to pay our subscriptions in advance, so that the publishers can meet their obligations, for if all were thus negligent our paper could not be kept up, and I feel that none who read it

want to see it go down. The money for my own subscription was not always easy to get, yet I have tried to manage in some way to get it so as to always pay in advance. This is not said in a way of boasting, for I have nothing of which to boast, but we often get neglectful and forgetful and need to have our minds stirred up by way of remembrance, and I realize that no one needs this more than I do. I feel I am not the one to give counsel, but, dear brethren and sisters, let us try and do our duty in this matter; pay what we owe on the SIGNS in this month, if possible, so the paper may begin the new year clear, and the burden lifted from the publishers. I feel to be the least of all, much of the way is through darkness and gloom, and I scarcely dare claim a hope in Christ. I see my sinfulness so plainly, and am so forgetful, so unmindful of God's mercies, that often I feel almost without hope, yet I do love the brethren, and the dear Old Baptist Church

"There my best friends, my kindred dwell,
There Christ my Savior reigns."

So I must cling to this little hope, for it is all I have to keep me from falling. Realizing my weakness, I know that if I am saved it is by grace. Grace all the work shall crown.

We hated to give up Elder Ker as editor, for we loved his writings, but we still have dear brother Lefferts, whose writings we have loved from the beginning. I feel that he is a true man of God, endued from on high with wisdom and understanding to write to the comfort and instruction of God's people. The three associate editors, although new in the work, have written much to our satisfaction, in humbleness and in a God-fearing manner, and I feel will prove to be workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, and we hope the SIGNS will be kept to the high standard it has hitherto maintained. May God's blessing rest upon you, dear editors, that you may continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and be not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, but be enabled to press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. This is a day of great spiritual darkness and infidelity, and it becomes God's children, especially his ministering servants, to put on the whole armor of God, to fight the fight of faith; and be ye faithful unto death and he will give you a crown of life.

Dear kindred in Christ, I must close. This is not written as I intended when I began. I hope you will forgive all amiss. My health has been poor for more than two years, and I have written but little. I have been up and down, but hope I have not lost interest in the cause of our blessed Master. My hope is small, my faith is weak, and I am brought low, but I believe God still reigns, and rules in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and he knows them that are his, and has promised not to leave nor forsake those who trust in his name. May we trust in him, to whom be glory forever.

With love and best wishes to all the household of faith, that you may have a happy and prosperous new year, I am you little unworthy sister,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

REEDSPORT, Ore., Nov. 8, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have often asked, and tried to answer the question, What is meant by absolute predestination? and supposing the invalid sister's question in a late number of the SIGNS was open for

answer, I feel like offering some remarks, if only God will give me utterance, otherwise I can only darken counsel.

After much meditation and reading, I believe both those who use the term, and those who do not, understand it to mean that God predestinated all things whatsoever come to pass, and that whatsoever he predestinated comes to pass. It would seem that if one said, "I believe in predestination," that would define his position, but I have heard rankest Arminians say they believed in predestination, and deny the doctrine bitterly with the next breath. That doctrine exalts God more than the carnal mind can endure. I once quoted Paul: "Being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." A man said, "All things," does not mean every thing. I would have made my position clear, and would have been clearly in harmony with the Scripture, if I had said, I believe he works absolutely all things after the counsel of his own will. If that is not true Paul could not truthfully have said for our great comfort and consolation, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." If an enemy of God could work some things contrary to God's will we could have no confidence and assurance in God. The believers in God's sovereignty over all things have been distinguished by many different appellations. "Baptist" at one time was distinguishing, but true to prophecy, men of their ownselves rose up, speaking perverse things, to draw disciples away after them, bringing in mission boards and other damnable heresies. Then the followers of the old paths were known as "Old School," and expressed their unswerving faith in God's sovereignty by saying they believed in absolute predestination, and again men rose up, claiming to be Old Baptists, advocating what they called "conditional time salvation," meaning, as I understand, that God only predestinated some things, and then the ones who still advocated God's sovereignty were known as "absolute predestinarians." This truth is substantiated abundantly in the Scripture. I will quote one: "I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isaiah xlvi. 9, 10.

It is not clear to me what the sister had in mind when she asked, Who created sin? God did not. He is the highest; he is the beginning and the end. As the above Scripture says, "there is none else," therefore there is no law for him to sin against. He did create and use wicked men and spirits for specific purposes. "Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."—Rev. iv. 11. "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."—Prov. xvi. 4. God, having created a thing for a special purpose, either good or bad, unto honor or dishonor, does not in the least obligate himself, who surely, by all reason, can do his will with his own, as Paul and Isaiah set forth. For the same reason that I am writing these lines, they declared his right to do his will with his own, and illustrated it with the potter and clay. There is a prevailing belief that men in nature are in some way related to God, and that he is under moral obligation to reverence their so-called works. Paul says, "The children of the flesh, these are not the children of God." "They that are in the flesh cannot please

God." The flesh and the Spirit are contrary the one to the other. Evidently to a people who believed power was divided between or among two or more beings God said by the pen of Isaiah, "That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me; I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things," and illustrates his right so to do by the potter's right to fashion the clay as it pleases him. An evil spirit from the Lord was repeatedly on King Saul, inciting him to jealousy and hatred. The Lord sent a lying spirit to the mouths of Ahab's prophets. Men with wicked hands did whatsoever God's hand and determinate counsel before determined to be done in shedding the most innocent blood ever spilled on earth. God's own Son freely humbled himself and exalted the Father more than I ever knew a conditionalist to do when he said, "Of mine own self I can do nothing;" and again when he said, "The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works," which should ever forestall the common saying among conditionalists, that eternal salvation is predestinated, but the child of God's salvation in time is conditional on his works. Do you ask the same question I have asked a thousand times: Why does he yet find fault, for who then has resisted his will? We will let Paul answer: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power [or right] over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" I believe the supreme object of creation was that Jesus' name should be exalted above every name that is named, either in this world or the world to come, and if there was just one person who was justified by a holy life, by obedience, his name could not consistently be exalted above that. The law is just, holy and good, and it requires full, perfect, beautiful love to God and to our neighbor, and there is not a just person on earth that liveth and sinneth not. The law was not given for a stepping-stone, or ladder, to climb upward to God, it was given that every tongue might be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God. The law entered that the offence (not righteousness) might abound. We may ask, Why all this? Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, and the remainder of wrath wilt thou restrain. That is, there will be no wrath that does not ultimately redound to his praise. I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create evil, I the Lord do all these things. The dark, dreary night is a background to the beautiful sunlit day, so is the wickedness of evil to the holiness of God's sinless Son. Dear reader, have you ever tried to make a picture of just clear blue sky, not a cloud or anything else, but just one color, be that color ever so beautiful? The darker the cloud, the more glorious the sky.

I sincerely believe the Scriptures abundantly set forth what I have in a small way tried to express. Knowing I am but dust, I am glad to put my trust and my all in the living God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will. I am naturally a sinner, but by reason of his great amazing grace I now love the things I once hated, and hope I hate the things I once loved.

"And if thy judgment grow severe
And send my soul to hell,

I am condemned, but thou art clear,
Thy righteous law approves it well."

In gospel bonds,

G. O. WALKER.

[SIN is not a creation. It is an act; a transgression of law. God placed Adam under law. Adam disobeyed that law. He was the first to commit sin. Therefore, sin originated with and in man. This God knew beforehand would come to pass. God created man, and knew when he created him what man would do, therefore, if God foreknew Adam's sin Adam was certain to sin. This certainty of Adam's sin was, therefore, comprehended in the eternal mind of God. Being in the mind of God, it could not help but be in the will and purpose of God; therefore, was predestinated or ordained beforehand.—L.]

BERLIN, Md., Sept. 16, 1923.

DEAR ELDER VAUGHN:—I feel to write you, though my thoughts are so sinful that I feel I will burden you, and draw on time that perhaps would be better spent in other ways. The Lord willing, I will express a few thoughts. When Christ Jesus the Lord was crucified, and dying upon the cross, he cried, "It is finished," which will cause us to meditate on what was embraced, and when we note he knew all things, and that he should arise from the dead the third day, that the sufferings of death were not embraced, but the salvation of his people was perfected and he had finished the work on earth the Father gave him to do, we are given in the word of inspiration the declaration of Jesus, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."—Luke xix. 10. This declaration does not, to my mind, apply to all the world, as only those who know the strength of sin are in a lost condition. Those who boast of their righteousness and good works are not lost, but alive, in the same condition that Paul was when he said, "I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died," and their conversation will embrace the mind of Paul as he was on his way to Damascus, as the end of his journey was known, and all things he would accomplish were determined, just as all self-righteous workers will declare to this day. They know they have heaven as their eternal home, and what they are doing is for the Lord, and because of their doings Jesus will hearken unto them. Paul, like the poor publican, and many others who feel the condemnation of God resting upon sin, confesses his unworthiness, and feels the total depravity of man. We are made to realize all our help must come from the Lord. All miracles Jesus performed were performed by the Lord, without the help of man. As it is expressed of him, He trod the winepress alone, and of the people there were none with him. So our salvation is free, and not as the world proclaims, that we must obtain it, which puts a price on it. Jesus says, I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. Salvation must be of the Lord, by grace, and grace alone. The poor sinner in the realization of his condemnation will implore the righteous Judge for his mercy, as we in a natural sense, after realizing our conviction for crime, would plead the mercy of the judge who pronounced the sentence of death. These are the truths which weigh heavily with me, a poor sinner, justly condemned, and the reason for my crying unto the Lord for mercy, and instead of justice he bestows mercy, and I am set free.

Dear brother, I have written as my mind has been led in meditation upon the glorious way of salvation by grace, and

you may do with it as you feel will be for the good of the cause. If you feel it would be of comfort, publish; if not, all is well.

With love to all the church of God,

J. W. TIMMONS.

ONTARIO, California, Dec. 8, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is time to renew our subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so I am inclosing a money order for the same. I have been reading it for over fifty years, and would not like to be without it. It was in the spring of 1871, while burdened with the feeling of my exceeding sinfulness before God, that I was reading some of the old volumes of the SIGNS. The experiences I read there spoke of a rejoicing in Christ's mercy, but I felt to be without hope. While I was reading, the words came to me, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," and with it came the sweetest feeling of love to God, and to all the dear brethren and sisters I know. We lived in Cincinnati, Ohio, then, and from the porch where I sat the Ohio River and the green fields of Kentucky lay before me, and I sat and sang,

"Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood
Stand dressed in living green,
So to the Jews old Canaan stood
While Jordan rolled between."

for it brought it all to mind. From then until now I have loved the SIGNS. Dear Elder Beebe often visited our home, and we loved him dearly. As we lived in Cincinnati, many of the eastern preachers visited at our home while on their way to the Licking Association in Kentucky. Elder Durand came every year, and among them who came sometimes were Elders Chick, Purington, Leachman, William Beebe, and also Elders White, Furr, Lester and Housel. I did not realize then as I have since how highly favored we were to have their company and hear them preach. In 1881 I was baptized by my father in the fellowship of the Mill Creek Church, near Cincinnati. Since my father's death, in 1885, I have lived with my brother, and fifteen years ago we came to live in California. The Little Flock Church, at Riverside, had just been organized, and there I have found a band of dear brethren and sisters that I truly love for the truth's sake. This little church has its share of trials and sorrows, but it stands firm in doctrine and fellowship, and has been a sweet home to many of us who live here in southern California.

Yours in christian love,

HANNAH E. DANKS.

CENTRALIA, Wash., Oct. 1, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I want to beg your pardon for allowing my subscription to run past due, and am inclosing money order for four dollars to pay for the present year and next year, so I will not be tardy next year. Whether it is worth anything or not, I want to commend the editors, contributors and publishers of the SIGNS for the kind of paper published. I do not see how it could be made any better, only by using more paper. It always comes filled with the sovereignty, wisdom, power, love and mercy of the great Jehovah, always debasing self and exalting Jesus, the friend of sinners. The writers tell very plainly and feelingly how we are sometimes for a short season on the mountain top and for a long time in the valley. They tell my experience much better than I can, and although thousands of miles apart they appear to know me better than I know myself. The predestination of all things, as advocated by the SIGNS, is, as nearly as I

can understand, exactly what I believe. It is to me the only doctrine that is really comforting. If some things that come to pass were not predestinated, it appears to me there might be a clash, and that is not a comforting thought. Yet I feel very lenient toward brethren who do not have the same view as I have, for at one time I could understand only a limited predestination, and twenty-three years passed, with much searching and study of the Scriptures, before I finally felt settled and firmly grounded in the doctrine of predestination of all things. It appears to me now to be the only doctrine consistent with the declaration that all things work together for good to them that love God. It is a most glorious doctrine, relieving the minds of weary travelers through this wilderness of sin of all doubt and fear that every event will not be in its proper time and place. It gives to the most high God all power and glory, which to my mind is small enough tribute from his people, who, when they shall see Jesus as he is, and be like him, will have received all the good.

I am making this rambling letter too long, but must say to all the writers, Write on, dear brethren, for you are of those to whom it is said, Cast thy bread upon the waters and after many days it shall return unto you. Write on, for when you feel to be saying the least in your writings you are saying the very thing some poor pilgrim is hungering for. At least I know one in that condition, for the Scriptures are, for the most part, a sealed book to me, but when some brother takes up a subject and shows from it the goodness and mercy of God it all appears plain and beautiful. I want to ascribe all glory and honor to God, for in my flesh dwelleth no good thing. All is vanity and uncleanness, but I sometimes hope that Jesus has prepared for me that robe of righteousness which will identify me as one of the guests bidden to the feast. Remember me in your prayers.

Your brother in hope of never-ending life in that beautiful city whose builder and maker is God,

J. D. HARDY.

SYRACUSE, New York.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find check for two dollars to renew my subscription to the SIGNS. I realize it is past due, but have neglected sending it. The SIGNS puts forth just what I believe. Often when reading the many articles I feel they are speaking my mind much better than I can. I surely felt to rejoice and thank God when I read of the associate editors. May God sustain us all and help us, grant us grace to know and do his will and give him all glory. The one desire of my heart is to trust him in all things and at all times. He surely has been my helper in times past, and often I have felt to rejoice in him, which is a comfort the world knows not of, neither can they take it away.

Unworthily yours,

AGNES B. GOODRICH.

OROVILLE, Cal., Dec. 10, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is not possible for me to send in a new subscriber, for I do not think in this town of six or seven thousand people there is a single one who believes the dear truth as published in the SIGNS, so I will just send a little remittance, or Christmas gift. I wish I could send more, and send often, but I am an old widow, scarcely able to work, with a child to support, so must be content to give the widow's mite.

Your sister in hope of a better life,

MARION S. BROOKS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1924.

EDITOR

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

INTRODUCTORY TO VOLUME NINETY-TWO.

FROM the first volume of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to the present one it has been the custom followed by the successive editors to present to our readers some reflections especially called out by the beginning of the new year and a new volume. We desire to continue in the old paths, for therein is the good old way.

Dear brethren, as we now attempt to write you in this our annual salutation, the thought of the righteousness and truth of the God you love, causes us to have a deep feeling of unprofitableness. We trust the Holy Spirit will guide us all through the new year, as has been manifested in the past pigrimage of those who edited, wrote for and supported the SIGNS. We must confess all our help must come from the Lord, and in this love we greet you. Paul, writing to the Romans, said, "Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you."—Rom. xvi. 16. When we are partakers of the fruit that is borne by those professing the name of Jesus, and it is good, we love that fruit for its delicious flavor, and in the relations of life in us by which we can thus discern the fruit we receive it with gladness. So we are always glad to receive from the brethren all around the glad messages of love for the truth and faithfulness of the house of God, and to feel the strong tie of love in our hearts spring up and embrace the sweetness of thought thus expressed, and the many other connected expressions seem to fill up the words of Paul as quoted above: "Salute one another with an holy kiss." We are made to love you and desire your welfare, and those things that are faithful and true, and for the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace may we ever greet you. Now, dear readers, we cannot greet you with an holy kiss and commend you to follow in and manifest fellowship for those who Paul in the same chapter as above referred to said, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf; but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil. And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."—Rom. xvi. 17–20, and not only commend them, but support the same. Then when our brethren should be constrained by the love of truth to turn and manifest no greeting for us should we cast them out as ungodly, nonforbearing and untrue? To our mind, we fail to discern the difference between those things that Jesus spake to Peter when he rebuked Jesus, saying, "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned,

and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."—Matt. xvi. 22, 23. You, by the light of grace, have been made to walk in the light, and to love light and hate darkness, and the very power of darkness seems a continued horror to you, and all that come unto God by him are walking in light. We realize the warfare in our members, the flesh against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, and there is no release until the last enemy is destroyed, which is death, and it is only in God's strength we stand. We feel to be at the feet of those who stand on Zion's hill and publish glad tidings, and at war with those who do not. There are those going forth publishing their works among the household of faith for the sole purpose of publicity, and not for the unity of the fellowship; but in their cries they will peal forth, "Let us unify," which to the pure in heart is but the amalgamation of the powers of darkness, and all their forces are the combined elements of iniquity through the different sections of the country that cannot stand forth in the light of the true order and faith of the gospel; but they love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. There is not a man, woman or child that bears the marks of a separation from the flesh to serve the Lord but what we are made to fellowship. This might infer that we profess to know all who bear the marks, which we must confess we cannot judge by the social relations of the natural man, which savorest unto the flesh, but the one who is made to deny himself, and turn from all the world and follow Jesus, bears the marks, to our understanding. In turning from all the world does not infer that members of a church should not hear the good admonition of their brethren, or be indifferent because the whole church would not submit to the individual judgment, but the corruption and iniquity which are manifested in selfishness, backbiting, evil-speaking and all manner of evil communications are of the world. We trust the Spirit may abound in our hearts, by which we may be mortified to the deeds of the body, that we may live unto God and in the fellowship of the people of God. In this great love we are kept as the church of God, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

May the impress of his love in your hearts salute you as you close this reading, by which you can judge all we have written as written in love, and the sweet cords of love bind editors, publishers and all who love the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the truth's sake, with the sweetness by which we can say, God bless forever.

C. W. V.

TWO GOOD RESOLUTIONS FOR 1924.

1. RESOLVE to form the habit of paying your subscription to the SIGNS promptly, when due; if in arrears, send in what you can—something—and at least let the publishers know you are receiving the paper.

2. RESOLVE that you are going to obtain one new subscriber for the paper in 1924, and be sure of it by securing it in January; December may be too late.

R. L. D.

NOTICE.

WE have received numerous complaints from subscribers, saying they failed to receive their December numbers of the SIGNS. Their papers left this office the same as usual, and the trouble was probably due to the Christmas rush of the mails, and not to any carelessness on our part.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. C. Mellott.)

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Forest Grove Church, Wicomico Co., Md., October 24th, 25th and 26th, 1923, to the churches and associations with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—In this, our annual Circular Letter, we desire to call your attention to the walk and conversation that becometh the gospel of Christ. Have you ever observed the importance and great stress given this subject in the epistles of the New Testament? Very often such important matters escape observation until forced upon our conscience by circumstances. Let us begin then with the motive from which a walk and conversation spring. For they may spring from other than a gospel motive, and be directed to other ends than striving together for the faith of the gospel and to keep the unity of the Spirit. A becoming walk and conversation flow out of the special operation of God's grace in the heart. Let us then try to trace out the way in which one ordereth his conversation aright, and whose walk is in newness of life. It is very plain that we cannot understand or apprehend this walk and conversation before we know the truth and power of the gospel. While we are under the law, striving to obey it in our own strength, influenced by the flesh, we neither know nor manifest the walk and conversation that becometh the gospel. The time comes however when the legal scales drop from our eyes, and by the teaching and operation of the blessed Spirit in the heart our understanding is enlightened and our heart opened to receive the glad tidings of salvation by grace. We have an example of this in the case of Saul. Under the power and influence of a legal spirit, entangled in legal bondage, he went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. Who would attempt to commend his walk and conversation, and say that it becometh the gospel? But "as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" What a marked change, "Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." Trembling and astonished he said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? and the Lord said unto him, arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." Who will utter one single protest against the walk and conversation of this eminent apostle whom the Lord called to bear his name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel, after the legal scales fell from his eyes and he received his sight? We have another example in the case of the eunuch. "Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? and Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." He replied, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." "And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." The walk and coversation of both Philip and the eunuch be-

cometh the gospel of Christ. So also when the Lord has been pleased to deliver any one of us from the bondage of sin and into the liberty of the gospel, then, and not until then, do we know and manifest a walk and conversation that becometh the gospel of Christ. It is the gospel, therefore, which is set before us, not the law, and our walk and conversation are to be such as becometh the gospel. Let us therefore conclude with a New Testament quotation: "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ."

J. C. MELLOTT, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Forest Grove Church, near Parsonsburg, Wicomico County, Maryland, October 24th, 25th and 26th, 1923, to the associations with which we correspond, sends greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—According to the all-wise counsel, purpose and loving-kindness of God, our Creator, and (we believe) Father in heaven, who rules all things after the counsel of his own will, who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast, we have been brought together again, not according to our own will, but according to his will, as an association. We value your correspondence, and desire a continuation of the same. We feel that the Lord has been with us, speaking through his servants the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, there being no mixture of works and grace, grace being the only theme.

Our next Association is appointed, the Lord willing, to be held with the Nassaongo Church, Wicomico County, Md., beginning on Wednesday after the third Sunday of October, 1924, when and where we hope to meet you messengers again.

J. C. MELLOTT, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

J. Benton Rowan, son of the late John Rowan and Augusta A. Jenkins, and nephew of the late Elder Benton Jenkins, was born November 1st, 1875, and departed this life at his home in Middletown, N. Y., December 10th, 1923, making his stay on earth 48 years, 1 month and 9 days. He was married to Miss Bertha L. Hulse April 22nd, 1903, who with one son, Melvin Benton Rowan, survives him. He never joined the visible church, but was a firm believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine, and was for over thirty years a valued member of the staff of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He was an expert proof reader, and took great interest in his work, and to his careful watchfulness is due much of the credit for the few errors which have appeared in its columns. He entered the SIGNS' office when a boy, and with the exception of about one year was steadily employed there until April, 1922, when on account of failing health he was compelled to give up coming to the office, but continued reading proof and doing what work could be performed at his home until a few days previous to his death. His long association with us in publishing the SIGNS endeared him to us all, and we feel we have not only lost a very valuable assistant in our work, but have lost a good, tried and dear friend. Great as is our sorrow, we realize the greater loss is to his bereaved widow and son, to whom we would say, Weep not, for he is gone where sorrow and sighing is no more, to where all is joy and peace. May God be their help and enable them to say, Thy will, not ours, be done.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder R. Lester Dodson, who spoke words of comfort to the bereaved, after which his body was laid to rest in the Hillside Cemetery, at Middletown, N. Y., there to await the final summons of the Master.

J. E. B. & CO.

Sister **Bertha Moe** departed this life July 29th, 1923, aged 51 years. She had been in failing health for several months, and although she had the best care and attention at her home, at Ashokan, N. Y., yet she did not seem to improve, so it was decided she should go to a sanitarium in Kingston, N. Y. While there she seemed to improve, and even talked of returning to her home. Her dear husband called at noon on Sunday, July 29th, to see her, and enter-

ing the room a few minutes after the nurse had served her with food, found she had quietly passed away. Sister Moe united with the Olive and Hurley Church, and was baptized Sunday, September 17th, 1916 She had for years been a very zealous worker in another denomination, and while she occasionally in those days came to our meetings, yet she did not understand the truth. When her husband was baptized she remarked that he was a Baptist, but she would rather that he had joined her denomination. She was told that the Lord had made him a Baptist, and he could make her one also, to which she replied, Never; I do not believe the doctrine. The Lord made her to believe and love the doctrine she once despised, and about a year after she said she did not believe, she was received into the church. She was a firm believer, her testimony was confirming and her walk consistent; truly her memory is precious. She leaves to mourn his loss, her husband, brother Clarence Moe, also one son, Benjamin Moe, of Mount Pleasant, N. Y., and two daughters, Mrs. Laura Elmendorf, of Shokan, N. Y., and Hollis Moe, who lives with her father at Ashokan, N. Y. Three brothers and four sisters also survive her. In the death of sister Moe the church has lost a very useful and worthy member, but the blow comes heaviest upon her dear husband and family, and we would pray that the Lord sustain them under it.

Her mortal remains were laid away in the Ashokan Cemetery, the writer officiating.

G. R.

Deacon J. D. Stanley was born in Perry County, Tennessee, May 9th, 1833, and died at his home, in Marion County, Arkansas, September 9th, 1923, aged 90 years and 4 months. He came to Arkansas in 1857, and bought a farm on Clear Creek, in Marion County, where he lived until death. He was married to Miss M. A. Blackburn, July, 1854, and to that union were born fourteen children, seven of whom are still living. His first wife died February 20th, 1878. He was married to Miss S. H. Lancaster, October 15th, 1882, and to that union were born six children, four girls and two boys, all of whom are living. His second wife died July 11th, 1911, after which he lived with his children until he was called to his eternal home. Besides his children he leaves a host of grandchildren, and three great-great-grandchildren. He united with the Primitive Baptists in 1858. In 1859 he was chosen church clerk, and was ordained deacon of his church in 1879. He was a faithful member, as long as he was able to go never letting anything of a worldly nature keep him away from his meetings. He went far and near to meet with the brethren he loved so well, and his home was a home for his brethren and friends, and the more of them he could get to go home with him the more he enjoyed it. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of election and predestination, and died as he lived, in that faith once delivered unto the saints. He was sick but four days before he died, and was reconciled to God's will, and longed to go and be with Jesus.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer, assisted by William J. Casey, after which the remains were laid to rest in the family cemetery, to await the second personal coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

T. A. PARSLEY.

Mrs. William Penney passed away at her residence, Mason City, Iowa, December 18th, 1923, aged 97 years, 6 months and 3 days. Harriet Harding, daughter of David H. and Fanny Reeves Harding, was born at Otisville, Orange County, New York, June 15th, 1826, she being the eldest of a family of nine children, four girls and five boys. Her brothers were the late Luther R. Harding, of Lincoln township, George H., Stephen T., and John K., all respected and influential citizens of Mason City, and one surviving brother E. O. Harding, of Port Jervis, N. Y. Her sisters are all deceased. She was affiliated with the Old School Baptists in early life, having a grandfather and an uncle who were ministers of the church of New Vernon, N. Y. Harriet Harding was united in marriage to William Penney, of New York, March 28th, 1867. In 1872 they moved to Mason City, buying virgin prairie soil and building a home, located three miles west of the city, called at that time Crabapple Grove, now thirteenth street northwest. Mr. Penney preceding her in death fourteen years. She suffered an injury twenty years ago which caused her much pain and inconvenience, but through it all she was a brave woman, bearing the infirmities of age with a grace and fortitude which bespoke strong character. In all her ninety-seven and one-half years her faith never wavered. With peace written upon her brow she passed into the broad and complete life, leaving behind the influence of a thrifty, patient, trustful life. She leaves nieces and nephews, neighbors and friends, who will miss the gentle voice and kindly character, but will cherish the memory of a heritage rich in good deeds and kind words.

Mrs. Sarah Elizabeth Kennedy departed this life at the home of her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Williams, near Stamps, Arkansas. She had been in feeble health for several years, being afflicted with nerve and heart trouble, caused by a paralytic stroke. She was born January 13th, 1858, in Ouachita County, Arkansas. Her maiden name was Simpson. She was married September 16th, 1880, to J. T. Kennedy, and to them were born eight children. Three died in infancy, and two others preceded her to the grave; one, H. C. Kennedy, departed this life May 5th, 1922, and one daughter, Ethel May Perkins, departed this life October 15th, 1911. Two

sons, J. E. and E. V. Kennedy, and one daughter, Mrs. Lola Anna Williams, survive, together with her husband, brother James T. Kennedy. Sister Kennedy united with the Regular Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Bethesda, Ark., on Saturday before the second Sunday in October, 1896, and was baptized by Elder N. C. Yarbrough. Brother Kennedy joined August, 1864, and they were both faithful in all duties as members of the church, showing their faith by their works, and their works and christian fellowship by assembling with the brethren and sisters, thus manifesting that their treasure was not in this world. While we will miss our dear sister, yet we could not wish her back. May it please the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ to bless her dear husband, together with the children and grandchildren, with sustaining grace, and enable them to say, Thy will, not ours, be done.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder V. R. Harris, of Fordyce, Ark.

Written by request.

J. H. RAWLS.

My mother, **Susan C. Whidden,** was born October 14th, near Bartow, Florida, and died November 2nd, 1922, aged 74 years and 19 days. She lived only nine months after my father's death. They were both members of the Primitive Baptist Church, and had been for a number of years. She was practically an invalid for years, and did not go much to meeting. She raised a family of ten children, of whom nine are living. She was a faithful wife, and a loving and tender mother. I can never forget the love she bestowed upon me, and all her children. She was buried in Bethlehem Cemetery, near Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church.

Written by her son,

C. B. WHIDDEN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Margaret B. Tiebout, N. Y., $24.00; Mrs. Sarah E. Runkle, Ill., $1.00; Miss S. I. Rittenhouse, N. J., $3.00; Attie A. Curtis, Maine, $1.00; Mrs. L. J. Randolph, Texas, $2.00; W. T. Hughett, Ill., $3.00; Mrs. R. P. Trimble, Kans., $2.00; A Friend, N. Y., $2.00; Miss E. Annie Parker, Md., $3.00; Mrs. Georgia Warren, Fla., $1.00; J. D. Welborn, Ind., $5 00; Marion S. Brooks, Calif., $5 00; J. S. Moore, Ala., $1.00; Hubbell Bros., N. Y., $12 00; Mrs. Maria Rees, Ky., $3.00; D. H. Baker, Wash., $1 00; Miss Mary Opdyke, Pa., $1.00; J. R. Duffus, B. C., $3 00; Mrs. M. Coons, N. J., $5.00; Elizabeth Rittenhouse, N. J., $2.00; Morte H. Craig, Mo., $3.00; M. W. Richardson, Texas, $3.00.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Little Flock Church will no longer hold meetings at Park and 5th Streets, but for the present will hold them at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 494 East 10th Street, Riverside, California. We hope to have a place again soon, and when we do we will appreciate having our notice with you.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. S. MILLER.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 92. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1924. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WHEELING, West Virginia.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending sister Ellison's letter, subject to your approval. She sent it to me, but I had some fears of sending it to you, fearing it would take too much space. To me it seems a wonderful letter. I feel very thankful for the gift of the SIGNS. I find much good reading in it, and love it for the truth's sake. My life is a busy one, and I long for more time to read and write; indeed this is my whole desire. My Bible, Baptist papers and hymn books look very inviting to me, but I cannot feel to let the necessary housework go undone, as far as my health will permit me to pursue it.

I am, I hope, your sister, although very unworthy,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

TOPEKA, Kansas.

DEAR SISTER:—I was so overwhelmed by distracting sorrow and distress I seemed to have forgotten the omnipresent God, and had no thought to call upon him as an ever-present help in time of trouble. But while so forgetful of him, he showed me, as I humbly hope, that he had not forgotten me, by speaking these words in my ear: As the days of a tree so shall the days of my people be. Then, in the midnight darkness and loneliness, in the midst of an ever-changing throng of a speeding train, I lay back in my seat, and with closed eyes, oblivious to all about me, a picture was spread before me such as I have never been able to portray with tongue or pen. The winter just passed has been another continuous siege of distracting grief and tribulation, and my mind reverts to the view I then had, and I have wished I might express to those of "like precious faith," and also of like trials and conflicts, some of the thoughts those words have brought to my mind. Being spoken to me as they were, I thought they were Scripture, but the only text I can find is in Isaiah lxv. 22: "They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." No doubt the connecting sentences have a deep significance, and I would love to read after the pen of some one who is given understanding of them. As for me, if I attempt to search and find out

God, I am apt to find that his judgments are unsearchable and his ways past finding out, and can only speak of the things which are given and revealed to me, as I humbly hope, by his Spirit, and leave them to his elect, precious, to judge whether they are of him, or only the emanations of fleshly imagination. If it was not a token of remembrance from a compassionate, unchanging God, then I fear I have never received a seal of his love, as he sometimes allows me to dare hope he has given me. I was often made to reflect on the words, "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness." It seemed that in this the Lord quickened again my slothful, forgetful heart, and for a little while my troubles were put in the background and I was given a little surcease from the tempest raging in my mind, and instead thereof a season of refreshing from his very presence, which he made me feel was going with me.

I have thought that the "tree" here spoken of represents Christ, who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and as his days so shall the days of his people be. As I lay back, with closed eyes, I seemed to see a little tree in all its verdant, springtime beauty, clothed with leaves and blossoms. In the warm sunshine and gentle breeze it waved and beckoned with its spreading branches, and how sweet to rest beneath its shade, enjoy its fragrant bloom, and reflect on the prospect of fruit to follow. So shall the days of my people be. Where is the similitude of the days of a tree and the days of the Lord's people? Let us go back to the early experience of a child of God,

> "When converts first begin to sing,
> Their happy souls are on the wing;
> Their theme is all redeeming love,
> Fain would they be with Christ above."

Oh what lovely blossoms, and what a sweet savor of Christ they send forth as they call and beckon to us to "come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." "Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein." The trees of the field do clap their hands, the cedars of Lebanon (the older brethren) bow at his feet, and praise him in fullness of joy, resting in the blessed promise that the Lord will not leave himself without witnesses. Perhaps the little tree had stood unnoticed, apparently dead, until the little leaves began to grow and the signs of life involuntarily began to appear. What rejoicing now that we see it is not dead, as it appeared, and now we hope to see the sweet fruits of the Spirit evidenced later on, for they shall take root downward and bear fruit upward. But, as the days of a tree, by and by the sun does not shine so brightly, clouds appear, and oh how dark it becomes. A storm arises, and in the raging the poor little tree sways and bends, the lovely bloom is beaten off and swept away, or covered with earth. The storm passes, and the little tree is left standing, not so proudly, perhaps, but of a more sober dignity, as, the promising bloom gone, the fruit buds begin to appear, and as the fruit increases in the upward branches the root is taking deeper hold in the earth. So are the days of my people.

> "It is not long before they feel
> Their feeble souls begin to reel;
> They think their former hopes are vain,
> They're filled with sorrow, grief and pain."

Cannot every child of God go back in memory to the time they thought they would always go on their way rejoicing in the bloom of their earliest love, believ-

ing the enemies of their carnal nature were all slain, and would never vex or annoy them any more? But alas, the little clouds begin to arise, vexations come, and the lovely bloom is beaten off as the sorrows of the world worketh death to the sweet spiritual enjoyment, perhaps leading them as far as Peter, to even deny the Lord, saying in doubt and unbelief, that after all it is only a delusion, and they were deceived and had deceived others. Where now is the blessedness ye spake of? The beautiful promising bloom which looked so pleasant is gone from their view, swept away and buried in the storm of earthly cares and sorrows that has so unexpectedly fallen upon them. "But the root of the righteous shall not be moved." The storm passes, and they find themselves still standing in the faith of God's elect, cast down, but not destroyed. Oh then the fruit buds begin to appear, as in humbleness they are brought to see that it is not in their own strength they stand. "I am the root and the offspring of David." This is the Root that extends downward in the earthen vessel of mercy. Each can say, O Lord, "my goodness extendeth not to thee," but his goodness does reach down to every vessel of mercy. The strong downward Root holds firm, and will not let them be overwhelmed. They are made to realize that "the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit," which is borne upward in praise and thanksgiving to God for deliverance from the storm. The many storms of affliction and sorrow, trials and tribulations, perils and persecutions break and beat upon the "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord," until they bow and bend, so shaken in mind they fear they cannot stand; no, not another day.

"I fear at last that I shall fall,
For if a saint, the least of all."

Yet when the storm passes, and the Sun of righteousness once more beams forth, then in this light, and not their own feeble sight, they see it is not in their own strength they still stand, but the Strength of Israel has held them. Not by works of righteousness which they have done, not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord. Much more of the cherished fruit is gone. But when blooming youth is gone, and old age comes on, we are made to realize that it is the bitter, gnarly fruit of self-confidence and fleshly ambition that is being beaten off. It came from earth, and must fall back from whence it came, for "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up," but the "tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord," its fruit shall remain. One by one we see every earthly hope and joy beaten off and swept away, but the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace and fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, oh nothing shall ever be able to separate us from that. How gladly we should have the gnarly, poisonous fruits of the flesh pruned away, so that we might shine forth as the morning, with not a cloud to intervene between us and our Rock, who shelters us in this weary land of storms and trouble. As the tree grows older, as the growth in grace and in the knowledge of truth increases, the poor tempest-tossed child of God seems to gain strength in the storms, often stands more firm, and is not so easily tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine; does not so lightly bow and bend to the lo heres and lo theres, but the sweet fruits of the Spirit are borne upward to him, the Strength of Israel, the Root of David, in the earthen vessel, has kept him from falling, and enables him to say, I can do all things

through Christ who strengtheneth me. If it is his will that I shall weather another storm he will give the old trunk, stripped of all the foliage of youthful hopes and ambitions, every branch of earthly aspirations and joys broken off, strength to endure. But oh the weakness of the flesh. How we do shrink and dread when we see the storm coming, though there is a "needs be" for it all, and we know that

"Not a single shaft can hit,
Until the God of love sees fit."

How we do feel the need of the prayers of all saints, for it does seem at times that this flesh and heart will surely fail. Oh may he, by the power of his might, when the adverse winds do blow, give me strength to still stand in the way, ready for whatever is in the counsel of his will to come next.

"As the days of a tree." How often have we seen the tall cedars, the sturdy oaks, beaten by the storms of many seasons almost to the ground, nothing left but their bare old trunks, and to all appearance have lived their time and served their purpose, yet they do not quite fall; not yet, their downward roots have not yet parted from the earth, they must wait the appointed time to fall. So shall the days of my people be. Old age is come, the bare old trunk is stripped of every alluring earthly joy, until there is nothing left to live for, and "I long to lay my armor by, and dwell with Christ at home," for

"Surely like a withered tree,
No fruit to me is found,
Why do I live, O Lord, I cry,
A cumberer of the ground?"

"When a few more days I've wasted,
When a few more scenes are o'er,
When a few more griefs I've tasted,
I shall fall, to bloom no more."

But not yet. The downward Root has not yet parted from the earthen vessel, and though I often feel, especially in the heart-rending trials I have endured of late, that there is no fruit borne upward from such a withered and weather-beaten old trunk, yet all the days of my appointed time I must wait until my change come.

One night as I lay thinking of the trials and conflicts of the Lord's peculiar people these words came to my mind with force, "I see men as trees, walking," and I thought how like a tree is the walk of the Lord's people. None can see men, nor the people of God, walking as trees, until led out of the town, or world, as was the blind man, by God's own hand, and how short the time until made to see that as the days of a tree, so are the days of the Lord's people. He sometimes lays his hand heavily upon us, showing us what great things we must suffer for his sake, until we cry, "Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me." Whom he loves he rebukes and chastens, and it is his chastening hand that makes us look up, until we see clearly every man, every child of God, walking the same path, every one enduring the same storms and afflictions, for if ye be without chastisement, then are ye bastards and not sons. There is no place of rest for us in the town, or world; we cannot go back there, or tell to any in the town of the things we see clearly. They know nothing of the reproach of the cross, and have no sympathy for the mourning people of God. But to our own house, there we may freely go, sure to find there the sympathy and fellowship we crave. There all speak the same language, weeping with those who weep and rejoicing with those who do rejoice. Here we see men as trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, walking the same road,

buffeted on every hand by storms without and within. The same storms that beat and bend one old tree beat upon all, and though one may feel that the storm has brought him a little lower than the rest ever get, yet all the rest feel the same way: less than the least of all saints. But in this is our fellowship and our love made perfect, and we often find the lowest tree bears the sweetest fruit, as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood. What a comparison. The low apple-tree is the one that bears the fruit. The ones that stand the highest are not always the most fruitful. But "as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons." "Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly." His loved ones among the sons of earth are lowly. A proud look he hates and abominates. The proud he knoweth afar off. But the fruit of his love on the lowly trees is sweet to our taste; yes, sweet, because when we are made to look up we see that his banner over us is love, and know that, "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me." "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

As the days of a tree, so are my people. As the tree falls, there shall it lie. It falls to earth, and returns to the dust as it was, and so shall it be until the bright morning of the resurrection, when the Lord shall bring again in power that which fell in weakness, and will clothe it again in the beauty of holiness, then shall we be satisfied. Every idol that now intervenes between us and our love will be swept away, and we shall see his face, and never, never sin. No more storms of darkness and sorrow falling upon us, no more crying of pain and anguish, no more griefs and heartaches, no more trouble and mourning, no more losses and crosses, no more wars and fightings, the conflict will be over, our warfare ended, and God himself shall wipe the tears from off all faces, for, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." Then shall we see him as he is, and be like him. "As the days of a tree [He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief] are the days of my people."

Submitted to the discretion of the editors, and through them to the people of God, walking as trees, toiling, sorrowing, rejoicing, the half of which can never be told.

One of the least,

MARY ELLISON.

ST. JOSEPH, MO., Dec. 20, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I want to renew my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and offer something for the sending of the paper to the poor. I have taken the SIGNS for some years, but have never felt my ability to write anything that would be of help or comfort to God's people. I do sincerely hope that our paper will continue to stand for the truth, as it has for many years, and shine as a light in the darkness. What I have here written I do not expect you to use unless you think you should. I have no confidence in my poor ability to write anything of value, but I can truly say that I am able to feast upon the letters and articles in the SIGNS. We need to-day more than we ever did, it seems to me, something that will stand immovable for the doctrine, the truth and the faith of our fathers, and my hope is that you and the associate editors of the SIGNS may continue as you have. In this day of modern things how often we hear men express the opinion that there is too much doctrine in the churches; that we are all

striving to the same end, and that doctrine is a stumbling-block; that they do not like to hear it discussed, because it is harmful to the cause of Christ. Have you ever heard that said? I have often. We find among them two classes of people: the elect of God, and the children of the world. As to the latter class, it is not strange that they should hate the doctrine of Christ and not want to hear it. Paul says in 1 Corinthians i. 18, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." The reason is found in the words of Jesus: "But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines, the commandments of men."—Matt. xv. 9. As to the first class mentioned, God's elect, perhaps they are sometimes deceived, and this should not be thought strange, because Jesus said, "For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."—Matt. xxiv. 24. Man in his natural state has always hated law and restraint, and he can only love the doctrine of the new covenant when he is given power from on high to understand it and grace to love it. The Jews before the day of Christ hated the old covenant, and they departed from it and trampled it under their feet. They thought there was too much law; it was not good for them; they ought not to observe it, and they should have a more liberal law. After they had been delivered from the bondage of Egypt, sustained by the food of heaven, they yearned and longed for the fleshpots of Egypt. They thought God was making a mistake and did not know what was good for them. It is impossible for the natural man to do otherwise than to hate and despise the doctrine, because it is foolishness unto him, and the regenerated man (the child of God) must labor with fear and trembling, lest he be deceived and led astray. We are (or rather, we hope we are) the adopted children of our heavenly Father, who so loved us that he adopted us into his family and made us brothers of his crucified Son. What evidence have we of our adoption? Is it not found in the testament of our heavenly Father? Will the adopted child deny the authenticity of his adoption papers: his adoption deed? Dare he go so far as to say that the deed is a forgery, or to question its legality? If he does, then where does he stand? Could he claim that he is still entitled to an inheritance in his father's house if he had no proof of his adoption? Is not the testament an evidence of our adoption? But if we challenge the evidence, then where does our case stand? Or would the child still want to remain in his father's house and be and continue ignorant of the manner of his adoption? We are like one who has gone on a long journey into a strange country. The road leads to the eternal city, but it leads through the wilderness, and there are many crossroads and byways, but the doctrine is our signposts that point the way and keep us on the right road. If we are ignorant of the signposts, or fail to observe them, we will soon be lost in a wilderness of "isms" and "ites," and perhaps we will arrive late at the wedding feast of our Prince. To the elect the doctrine should be everything. It is the certificate of marriage between Christ and his bride. Now if in truth the church be married to Christ, then is the doctrine a most precious testimony of that fact; but if the church be not married to Christ, then it is of no value. Churches (so-called) are to-day denying the virgin

birth of Christ, and denying the resurrection of Christ, even as was done in the days of the apostles. Many are the false christs that are taught to-day. False prophets are about us everywhere. We are encompassed by antichrist. Let us therefore continue steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, that we may be able at all times to say in the secret chambers of our hearts, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."—1 John iii. 1.

MORTE H. CRAIG.

POCA, West Virginia.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending you a Circular Letter written by Elder Wm. Martin, and published in the Minutes of the Pocatalico Association in the year 1867. My reason for wishing it published is I want our people to know that the Circular Letter I wrote for the Pocatalico Association the year 1915, which was republished in our Minutes of 1922, is no departure from the views our forefathers held with reference to the duty of the churches toward their pastors. Some good brethren have written me words of comfort with regard to our Circular Letter, claiming it to be timely and good; others thought there was a little of the Missionary spirit in it. Elder William Martin was the only ordained minister who stood firm when the Missionaries went out from among us in the year 1835.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

To brethren and sisters of the Pocatalico Old School Baptist Association, and all others of like precious faith.

ACCORDING to a long established custom with us, you expect a Circular Letter to accompany our Minutes. Dear brethren, thirty-two years have passed away since the formation of our poor, little, despised and much persecuted Association, and by the helping hand of an all-wise and covenant-keeping God we are to-day in our doctrinal views what we were then. Change after change, both religious and political, has taken place, desolation and bloodshed have been some of the fatal consequences of some of these changes. While we deplore such a state of things in our once happy country, yet we rejoice to know that God has not changed, and cannot change.

"His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower."

For these are among the "all things" that shall "work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." If we will look back upon the scenes through which we have been led by an unseen yet bountiful hand, we are bound to say with good old David, Bless the Lord, O my soul. When men have looked upon us with contempt in consequence of our small numbers, our weakness, our contracted views, &c., God, who sees not as man sees, has led us safely on through dangers, seen and unseen by us, and the year 1867 finds us yet, as an association, without a visible mark of his displeasure on us, and, as far as we know, we are at peace with one another. Dear brethren in the Lord, when we think of God's boundless mercies toward us we are lost in wonder and admiration, and are ready to say with Watts,

"Why was I made to hear thy voice,
And enter while there's room;
While thousands make a wretched choice,
And rather starve than come."

When we look around among the churches of our Association coldness and indifference seem to be inscribed upon us so

plainly, that we may read as we run; perhaps it is as discoverable in our absenting ourselves from our church meetings as anything. Dear brethren and sisters, you know the time when nothing that you could control would keep you away. "How is the gold become dim!" If there is a wedding, a celebration, a show in the bounds, you are regular attendants. Are these things so much more attractive than the good news of life and salvation? How often do we spend our money freely at such places, when if there are even a few dollars wanting to defray the expenses of printing our Minutes, or paying our corresponding messengers, it is difficult to collect. Now, brethren, these things ought not to be. Almost always we send our preachers off at their own expense, and if they ask one of their private brethren to accompany them the reply is, "I cannot lose the time," but the preacher must go, if he and his family suffer. We read that God hates robbery. If the like of this is not robbery, I do not know how to give it an appropriate name. Dear brethren, how do you suppose your preacher feels when thus sent off? He passes the farms of his brethren, finds them all at work, everything in order, but his business at home is neglected, and perhaps he has been compelled to put his wife and daughter into the field to try to fill his place while gone. He bears it all, and when he gets to the place of meeting the members have been too busy to attend, and he finds, perhaps, a dozen. He gets up with a heavy heart and tries to preach, his affairs at home are on his mind; he makes a failure, returns home, finds everything in disorder, and the following are some of his thoughts: Does a merciful God require these things at my hand? If God had required me to preach, surely things would be different. The churches do not want to hear me or they would attend. Dear brethren, do not pierce the heart of the preacher with such an unholy weapon. Preachers are sometimes very much to blame; they are too timid. God requires them to teach whatsoever he has commanded them. This duty of the church is one of the "all things," but they hesitate to teach this duty, for fear they will think they are preaching for the fleece and care but little for the flock. They know that some are like the horseleach's daughters, "crying, Give, give," and are never satisfied, and to shun this extreme they have plunged themselves into as great a one. May God have mercy on church and preachers, and put and keep us where we belong. Farewell.

WM. MARTIN, Moderator.
JEHU BYRNSIDE, Clerk.

BERLIN, Md., Dec. 10, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find check for two dollars, for which please extend my subscription to the SIGNS another year. I would like to say to the many good writers, Please write on, and may God bless you with the mind to thus continue many years; you can never know how many poor hungry souls you are feeding. For one, I must say there have been many feasts sent through the dear old SIGNS, and if one so black as I am can be fed in this way, surely there must be many more. I cannot express the joy and comfort I have had from the many writers' pens, and have been made to feel that I would like to write to them just to tell how much I have enjoyed their writings, but have been kept from doing so for fear I am not what I hope I am. Oh if I could write like many of you can, and have the blessed assurance that I have been born again, as so many of you seem

to have, how happy I think I would be; but when I remember we are told that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, then I am made to feel it is for my good that I am kept in doubt. I am afraid that if we could see ourselves as we see others we would soon become like the Pharisee: proud and boastful. I hope it is my prayer that I be kept at the feet of my brethren, ever esteeming others better than self. I would like to say to you all, Be firm, and stand fast in the gospel truth as it is in the Lord, look neither to the right nor the left, but straight ahead to the truth as it is found in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for the world ever has her eyes on you, waiting for evidence upon which they may accuse and convict you. This was so with the dear Savior when he was here on earth, and it is so to this day. He said we shall not follow a part of the way, but all the way, so if we must follow all the way we must be accused and suffer all things for his name's sake.

Yours in hope of a better life,

J. W. S. TIMMONS.

SAN ANTONIO, Texas, Jan. 4, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find check for five dollars. Let two dollars of it apply on my subscription, and the other three dollars go for a contribution to aid in sending the SIGNS to others. I have been thinking for some time that I would send in my subscription and write a few lines for the SIGNS, and have kept putting it off, thinking I would have something to write, but to-night finds me as blank as ever.

Here we are starting in on a new year, and it finds me moving to another part of the country. My new address will be Weslaco, Texas. Right down on the border of Mexico, in the Rio Grande valley. I am wondering what use the good Lord has for me there. It may be he is just getting me away from the good Baptists here because I am not fit to live among them. The Lord moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform, and he is guiding the old ship of time to-day just the same as in the beginning. If any Old Baptists happen to be in that part of the country I will be very glad to see them, and they will find the latch on the outside at my house. I have gone through many trials, and had many ups and downs, and many dreams that have been consoling to me, yet I am the same old sinner, saved by grace if saved at all. Oh may I be kept humble, and at the feet of my brethren.

E. B. AULT.

LYLES, Tenn., Dec. 26, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—You will see by the inclosed subscription blank that I have three subscriptions for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for one year. I have tried to get the SIGNS into as many homes as possible. There are not many Old School Baptists here, and preachers are few. The SIGNS tells my experience, and I have already sent in my subscription for 1924. I feel comforted when I read the editorials and the many good articles written by the brethren and sisters from all parts of the States. I have just received the December 15th number and read with interest and comfort the editorial written by Elder R. L. Dodson, on the subject of predestination, for it is a subject which embodies all the doctrine of God shining in the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, and thus secures to us a surety in the eternal three-one God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. How I do love to read the good old SIGNS.

I must close. May God bless you all.

J. R. HATCHER.

MALVERN, Pa., Jan. 1, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—With my remittance for the SIGNS for another year, I want to say to you that I feel I cannot do without its regular soul-cheering visits, and feel rejoiced that it is keeping close to the old doctrine of our fathers, for I cannot accept any doctrine but the one of atonement, which pays the ransom for one's sins, and delivers us from the body of this death; not that we are worthy of this salvation in any way that I can feel, but it is a free gift unto all them who were chosen in Christ before the world began, the people who were predestinated unto the adoption of children, and I do believe He will save to the uttermost all the Father hath given him; not one can be lost, or plucked out of his hand. Am I one of those, or am I not? I have been told by a member of one of the big so-called churches in Philadelphia that if I could not say positively that I was saved I was not saved, and was denying the Savior, for he died for every one, if we accepted him. He could not understand why I could hesitate to affirm that I was, beyond any doubt, saved; why I need have any fears or doubts; why sin should trouble me any more; but, like Paul, I groan, being burdened. It cheered me to read in November 1st SIGNS, in Elder Vaughn's editorial, these words: "In summing up all the strong assurances of salvation that belong to the people of God, we are made to question the realization of our own hearts to prove our inheritance, but the search does not warrant a positive declaration that we know we are one of the elect of God, but the realization brings us to say we hope we are one of the chosen of God in Christ." Elder Vaughn has made more clear the position I have on this than I can myself, and so often I read in the SIGNS words that tell my own thoughts and experience far better than I can myself put these things in words, but if I know myself I love the doctrine of salvation by grace, and I hope I know him, whom to know, is everlasting life.

JOSEPHINE DRAKE HAVILAND.

FRANKFORT, Ky., Dec. 22, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If you will allow me to call you brethren. Herewith I am sending my check for two dollars to renew my subscription for another year. I have been sending my subscription by brother J. T. McCoun, of Farmdale, Ky., later of Frankfort, Ky., but, sad to say, that good brother has gone to his reward. It is sad indeed for me, for there is not another Primitive Baptist in Frankfort, nor in Franklin County that I know of, and not one of our members nearer than twelve miles of me. Our members are so few and scattered we have no pastor. I have been a reader of the SIGNS for over twenty years and it seems it is dearer to me each year, and I hope to not miss a single number. Please address it to me the same as before: 361 Holmes Street, Frankfort, Ky.

Elder P. G. Lester used to come among us, but on account of his health has not been with us for two years. I have had the pleasure of hearing Elders P. W. Sawin, George Weaver and J. W. Slauson a few times.

F. MORRIS.

SHELBYVILLE, Kentucky.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Several years ago I had asthma (not hay fever) so badly I could not lie down, and through a friend I heard of the asthma remedy put up by D. J. Lane, St. Marys, Kansas, (price $1.25 per bottle), so I took it, and have not had asthma since. Other cases of longer standing have used it with the same good result. I have no interest in it, except to benefit the suffering.

Will you kindly publish in the SIGNS?

P. W. SAWIN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1924.

EDITOR

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REVELATION III. 20.

"BEHOLD, I stand at the door, and knock."

At the command of Christ, the glorious One whom John saw in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, the apostle wrote a message to each of the angels of the seven churches which were in Asia. Every one of these seven churches was a Gentile church. Therefore, the messages are especially adapted to the needs and conditions of the gospel church in this age of the world, an age in which the elect from among the Gentiles are being brought into the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. It seems to us that these seven churches in Asia represent the seven ages of the gospel church, beginning at the end of the time of the apostles and extending down to the end of gospel dispensation, the last age being the Laodicean period of the church's history. It is at the close of the Laodicean period that the bridegroom is to stand at the door and knock. Beginning with the message to the church at Ephesus, we have given us here a history of the church's travel throughout this day, or age, of grace. If we had wisdom enough to tell just when the Ephesian age ended and the Smyrna age began, just when the Smyrna age ended and the next began, and so on down to the end of the Laodicean age, we could then tell the exact day and hour at which the Bridegroom shall stand at the door and knock. This can never be done by mortal man. No man, however wise, is able to take the centuries of history and divide them up into periods so as to exactly fit the prophecies of Scripture. To do so would enable such a man to tell at what moment the Bridegroom shall come, would enable him to date the appearing of Jesus to his people. That kind of proceeding would entirely displace faith and put the matter within sight. This can never be in the world, for the people of God must walk by faith, and not by sight. But while we cannot delimit the boundaries of the ages with such exactitude, we can, God helping us, glean some of the spiritual truth contained in these seven messages from Christ to his churches. To begin with, there have been but thirteen apostles, and there never will be any more than these: the twelve apostles to the gospel church among the Jews, and the one apostle to the Gentiles. Some think that Matthias, chosen to take the place of Judas after his death, was merely a filler-in until Paul appeared, and that upon the coming of Paul into the apostleship Matthias dropped out of sight, thus making Paul the twelfth apostle. We cannot see the matter in this light. There were twelve apostles to the twelve tribes of Israel. Aside from these, there is one to the Gentiles, and Paul is that one. Now, it was not strange that immediately after the apostles' day certain men should arise claiming to be apostles, and claiming their right to legislate for the church in matters of doctrine and practice. These men were impostors, and there were those of God's people who

were not deceived by any such representations on the part of these men. In the first message, which was to the church at Ephesus, Christ commends that church for detecting the false claims of the would-be apostles. "Thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars." There were other things about the church in that Ephesian age which were not to be commended. It had left its first love. This was regrettable, and Christ condemned this falling away from first love; but, on the other hand, the church in that age was endued with patience, it labored in the cause of truth, it did not faint nor become weary in welldoing, and it could not endure them that were evil.

The message to the church of Smyrna plainly indicates that age of the church in which it suffered martyrdom for the cause of truth. "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." The expression "ten days" is not to be taken as meaning literally ten days of twenty-four hours each, as we count time, but it signifies a definite period fixed by the Head of the church (it may have been ten years or ten tens of years) during which the gospel church was to be persecuted and suffer martyrdom for the truth.

The message to Pergamos plainly indicates that age of the church succeeding the previous age of martyrdom, a time when the church ceased to be troubled so much by persecution from without, but a time when false doctrine reared its ugly head among the ranks of the professed followers of Jesus. "Thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam." "So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate." It is a peculiar mark of church history that purity in doctrine coincides generally with those ages in which the church endured severe afflictions, laxity in doctrine, and the inroads of heresy coincide with those times in which the church was at rest and more or less at ease.

The outstanding mark of the church in the Thyatira age seems to have been that the woman Jezebel was suffered to teach, that she called herself a prophetess, and that she seduced the ministry to commit fornication, and caused them to eat things sacrificed to idols. This was an age when the churches experienced great searchings of heart by the Spirit of God, it was a time when those who could not be beguiled by this false woman and who could not receive her doctrine were commanded to hold fast that which they had already received by revelation from God, and to know nothing other than they had been taught by the Holy Spirit. This woman Jezebel does not simply mean a person or individual who was teaching at that time, but Jezebel is a generic name, signifying a diabolical false teaching abroad in the land at that time.

The especial mark of the church during the Sardis age seems to have been that she had a name to live, but was dead. This means that the church was professing to be the church of Jesus Christ, but that for many of them it was nothing more than a dead profession: a religion without a soul, faith without works. As the ages succeeded one another, the opprobrium which at one time attached to being called a "christian" wore gradually away, and it came in time to be a badge of respectability. Therefore many attached themselves to the church and

professed to be christians who had never been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and who were utterly strangers to the actual life and experience of true religion. This was the condition of things in the Sardis age. Many had the name, but were really dead. However, not so all of them. "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy."

This brings us to the Philadelphia age of the church. Like all the other ages which we have briefly and hurriedly outlined, we cannot tell what year it began nor what year it closed, but it was that age which was the cleanest and purest of all the church ages since the days of the apostles. In this period an open door into the sacred mysteries of God was set before the saints and there was such liberty of understanding and of utterance given the ministry of the Word as has not been the case since that day. It was a good time in which to have been alive, but it has passed and the Laodicean period is upon us.

The Laodicean period is the last age of the gospel church; that is, of the gospel dispensation. It is a period when the church is neither cold or hot, but is lukewarm; a time when the love of many waxes cold, when enthusiasm and zeal flag and when spiritual winter holds the church in its icy clasp. We are not a prophet, nor the son of a prophet, but it has seemed to us that the church of Jesus is passing through the Laodicean period right at this time. How long it is to last we cannot tell, but at its close the Bridegroom will stand at the door and knock. Then, and not until then, will the winter be over and gone and songs of praise and adoration ascend upward to the most high God of our salvation. "I sleep, but my heart waketh," says the bride in the Song of Solomon. Being asleep, she is inactive, there is no spiritual exercise, life is dormant. She is not dead. Her heart is awake. Christ is her heart, and he never slumbers nor sleeps; but there are times when the saints of God sleep, times when they cannot talk nor think nor read of spiritual things, times when they have no manifestation of divine things, and no enjoyment in them. To be in such a case is to be right where the Laodicean church was. At such times only one thing can wake her up, that is the coming of the Bridegroom. At his appearing she awakens into activity. The singing of birds is come and the voice of the turtle, the speech of love, is heard in her land. She says, "Stir not up, nor awake my love, till he pleases." No power under heaven can ever stir up nor awaken spiritual animation in the church of the living God until the Bridegroom, Jesus, comes. Let him but knock at the door and instantly she is all aflame with love, wide awake, eager for his coming. Whatever business or cares she may have been engaged in, these are hastily laid aside, forgotten, all earthly cares and considerations drop away when he knocks at the door. "My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him. I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock. I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone." But, at the end of the lukewarm Laodicean church age, when he shall knock at the door, he will not withdraw himself and be gone. No, but then unto all who hear his voice and open the door, that is, unto all his elect people (for none others can hear, and none others can open) he will come in and sup with them and they with him. In other words, right here fits in the Scripture in 1 Thess. iv. 15–18: "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the

coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Thus shall the Bridegroom come, and thus shall his saints when he knocketh open unto him, thus shall they sup with him, and he with them. At his appearing they shall appear with him in glory, shall see him as he is, and be like him. They shall be raised forever above the reach of all terrestrial things. There is but one really soul-satisfying experience which the saints of God have while journeying through this world, and that is the appearing of Jesus. At such times, "or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Amminadib." Such seasons, rare and splendid, are but foretastes of what is to come, of that glorious and wonderful time when we shall awake with his likeness, to be satisfied, not for a moment only, but forever and forever. L.

TWO GOOD RESOLUTIONS FOR 1924.

1. RESOLVE to form the habit of paying your subscription to the SIGNS promptly, when due; if in arrears, send in what you can—something—and at least let the publishers know you are receiving the paper.

2. RESOLVE that you are going to obtain one new subscriber for the paper in 1924, and be sure of it by securing it in January; December may be too late.

R. L. D.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Olive Orinda Butler, of "Mount Hope," Sanford, Maine, was born October 26th, 1846, and departed this life April 19th, 1920. She was baptized in the fellowship of the church at North Berwick, Maine, by Elder Frederick W. Keene, August 12th, 1894. There are many sacred memories arising in our hearts as we contemplate the fellowship, the sweet companionship that we have been favored with in some of the departed children of God, and this dear sister was one such. From her earliest recollection she was exercised in her soul unto the Lord, and felt she was a poor sinner, very much needing the mercy and salvation of God. But because from her childhood she had been so inclined she found the enemy often buffeting her soul with insinuations that she was not born again. Our sister Orinda Butler loved the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and loved the church of God, but ever viewed herself as the most insignificant one of the flock of God. She lived an unselfish, gracious life, ever thinking of the welfare of others, though it were to the sacrificing of herself. Her soul in its departing is now with Christ, which is far better than to sojourn in this world of sin, afflictions and conflicts, and her body laid in the ground to await the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, when the dead in Christ shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. He shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

ALSO,

Mrs. Abbie G. Clark, of Sanford, Maine, was born May 24th, 1826, and died January 19th, 1922. She united with the church at "Oak Woods," North Berwick, Maine, and was baptized by Elder William Quint March 4th, 1883. Our sister, who lived to a good old age, was one who to the end of her days held fast the doctrine of Christ, and took much pleasure in hearing the truth preached, and in conversing upon the things of Christ, her Redeemer. While she was able to do so she found it to be her happiness to assemble with those of like precious faith, and as she was timid about riding in a carriage, unless it journeyed very slowly, she frequently walked several miles to attend the meetings of the church to hear the preaching of the everlasting gospel of Christ. In the back numbers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES there are some very excellent poems composed by our sister upon divine subjects. She was quite gifted in this way, and deeply gracious is the doctrine, and experience in the doctrine, so written. There is none abiding, and so in her ninety-sixth year the Lord called her from the evil to come, to the better country, that is an heavenly.

ALSO,

Mrs. Augusta Staples died at her home at Oak Woods, January 17th, 1913, after a long illness, through which she was tenderly cared for by her son and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Fred J. Staples. She was buried in the family burial ground on June 20th, the seventy-first anniversary of her birthday. She was the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Abbott. She leaves to mourn their loss one son, Fred J.; a granddaughter, Mrs. Howard Blanchard; one great-grandson, Roger; two sisters, Mrs. George Hayes and Mrs. George L. Johnson; two brothers, Isaiah and John W. Abbott, also two nieces, Mrs. Alfred Ford and Mrs. Frank Johnson. Our sister was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church by Elder F. W. Keene, August 12th, 1894. She loved the precious Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ, and now, we trust, her soul is with him, where pain and sorrow are no more.

ALSO,

Mrs. Elmira B. Roberts was born June 4th, 1842, and departed this life February 20th, 1923. She was the daughter of Peter G. and Betsey Ford. She united with the church at North Berwick, Maine, and was baptized by Elder William Quint, November 20th, 1864. The last few years of her life she lived at the home of her brother, Mr. Stephen Ford. In her early days she was constant in her attendance at the assemblies of the church. She was a timid believer, and would speak with hesitancy of her hope in the Savior, ever desiring stronger and clearer evidences she was in truth one of the chosen and redeemed of the Lord. But she loved the people of God, and her only consolation was in the gospel of the grace of God.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

Luther Ransdell, my beloved husband, was born March 5th, 1858, in Carroll County, Kentucky, and departed this life July 3rd, 1923. He was married to Miss Lettie Blanton February 24th, 1881, near Rock Bridge, Kentucky, and in 1882 moved to Washington County, Missouri. For the last five years of his stay on earth he made his home in Caledonia, Missouri. He had been in poor health for several years. His last sickness was of ten weeks duration, during which time everything in our power was done to relieve his suffering, but to no avail. He was very patient, and was ready and willing to go when the Lord called him, and called us to his bedside and told us to praise the Lord that his sufferings were over, also told us not to grieve for him. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Beach Creek, Kentucky, in June, 1900, and was baptized by Elder P. W. Sawin, but had not been able to meet with them for a number of years. He leaves his wife, one brother, one sister and a host of friends to mourn their loss. He will be sadly missed.

Funeral services were held in the Presbyterian meetinghouse in Caledonia, July 5th, conducted by Mr. T. M. Finley, after which his body was laid to rest in the Methodist cemetery near by.

Written by his wife,

LETTIE RANSDELL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

J. T. Kerr, Ont., $2 00; Josephine Culpepper, Tex., $4.00; J. T. Caples, Ala., $3 00; John B. Harned, Ky., $1.00; W. E. Bryan, Ky., $1.00; A Friend, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. J. W. Cain, Ark., $3.00; Elizabeth Rose, Ore., $3.00; G. A. Dundas, Calif., $5.00; Mary A. Barnett, N. B, $1.00; Paul T. Leigh, N. J., $1.00; Grace Veech Smith, Mo., $2.00; Lewis B. Ford, Mass., $3.00; Joseph F. Hall, Me., $8.00; Mrs. Readhimer, La., $2.00; J. J. Starr, Tex., $5.00; W. P. Starr, Tex., $5.00; E. B. Ault, Tex., $3.00; A Friend, Ont., $1.00; Lettie Ransdell, Mo., $1.00; Mrs. M. A. Somers, Va., $1.00; Mrs. E. L. Ferris, D. C., $5.00; Mrs. Duncan McCallum, Ont., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Little Flock Church will no longer hold meetings at Park and 5th Streets, but for the present will hold them at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 494 East 10th Street, Riverside, California. We hope to have a place again soon, and when we do we will appreciate having our notice with you.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. S. MILLER.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.

Compiled by Silas H. Durand and P. G. Lester. $1.00 per single copy, $10.00 per dozen. Send orders to Mildred Durand Gordy, 1011 Vaughn Street, Ann Arbor, Mich., or Elder P. G. Lester, 826 Virginia Ave., Roanoke, Va.

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ELDER S. HASSELL.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS:

Elders R. Lester Dodson, George Ruston, Chas. W. Vaughn.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 92. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1924. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BREWERS, Ky., Dec. 21, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have just finished reading the December 15th number of the SIGNS, and am so stirred that I am made to take up my pen to express some appreciation of the spiritual food the great Shepherd has enabled his under-shepherd to give out to the bleating lambs of his fold. I realize I am weak, sinful and ignorant, but the Lord has dealt richly with me, whereby I am made to lay hold on some of his promises, of which I sometimes try in the light the God of mercy gives me to speak of the riches of his grace, and now in attempting to write it, as in speaking, unless guided by the Spirit of truth what I write will be as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. When the dear Lord is pleased to give the pen of a ready writer it is easy to write, or loosing our stammering tongue, it is easy to speak. God has said, My speech shall distil as the dew. When we begin to consider who spoke these words we find that God, who has all power both in heaven and in earth, needs not the help of puny man to arrange or take care of all his creatures, which were created for him and by him. Holy writ tells us that he (God) formed a people for himself, and they shall show forth his praise. Now we understand that God not only created this people, but he formed them of the dust of the earth, and breathed into the nostrils of Adam, the head, or first man, the breath of life, and he (Adam) became a living soul. Adam did not know then, nor even after he had transgressed God's law, that any part of his seed should be so blessed as to be fitted for a paradise of bliss, yet it was so, and for no other purpose than His holy name's sake. The God of wisdom had well planned the structure of the new Jerusalem. He could view all of Adam's family, all steeped in sin; yes, and took into consideration all the cost of a well devised plan to bring a portion of this people from the thraldom of sin and place them around a great white throne, with their voices filled with sweetest strains of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made them accepted in the Beloved. Yes, "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table," and now, away down

the steps of time, we, the pensioners upon that bounty, are given the eye of faith, whereby we can with some boldness enter into the holy of holies and begin to take a view of this well devised plan of redemption to save rebellious man, who deserves nothing but the wrath of God. Dear reader, let us pause a moment, and by the eye of faith take a view back through the streams of time, and join with the faithful shepherds who were abiding in the field and watching over their flocks by night, when the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were afraid. I will add just here that every true shepherd is afraid when the glory of God shines about him. But the point in view was to join in sentiment with the expression the angel gave those true servants. "Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Then we can join in one accord, and say, Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and we want to call his name Wonderful, for he counsels with us in the dark hours of midnight, when the enemy would hurl fiery darts at us until we despair of life. This Prince of peace would even give us to see our acceptance with the Father by and through the death and suffering of this loved Wonder from heaven, who came not to do his own will, but the will of the Father, and he said, "This is the Father's will that sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Here again, dear child of God, we see a choice of love manifest. When the darling Son of God's love bowed his head and cried, "It is finished," the prisoners were sent forth from the pit of sin wherein is no water. In this act of obedience to the Father's will the Son broke down the middle wall of partition between us poor Gentiles and the Jews, who had become overzealous and pharisaical, to the extent they (the Jews) would call the poor Gentiles "dogs." Christ came to his own people and but few of them would own him as their kinsman, only those who were born again by the will of God. He said on one occasion, Other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them I also must bring. The striking point in all this "I must bring" is so suited to us poor Gentiles that we would want to say that our blessed Redeemer is still upon the throne of David ordering and establishing his kingdom with men. When the Comforter, which Christ promised his disciples the Father would send in his name, begins to take of the things of God and show them unto the heirs of promise they are often made to say, Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. These heirs of promise do not always reside upon the mountain; it is needful that they journey through the valley. The Lord appoints wearisome nights unto them. They, like one of old, are made to feel that they are left alone, but when the speech of the Comforter begins to distil into their benighted soul they are often made to say with the apostle, We are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God. When we would consider all of God's dear children with whom the Lord in his mercy has cast our lot, saying nothing of the countless millions scattered here and there, we are made to think it is an innumerable company, which man cannot number, but God's power and wisdom is so great he knows them that are his, and he will one day bring them all into his banqueting-house, and the banner of love will float

over all, until all the redeemed of the Lord join in one song: Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory and honor, both now and for evermore. Amen.

Dear brethren, I submit this poor rambling article to your judgment. Do not let it crowd out more worthy material.

Your brother in hope of blessed immortality,

J. C. CHESTER.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., Dec. 2, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription is due for the dear old SIGNS, and I am sending my remittance, my mind and heart go out to the little ones scattered throughout this broad land of, shall I say, ours? No, not ours, for this is not our home; we are pilgrims and strangers, yes, wayfarers, seeking a country, longing for home, but only finding the earnest, or foretaste, of it along this rugged path; sometimes running, sometimes groping in the dark and stumbling, sometimes deep in the slough of despond, thinking that our God, in whom we trust, is clean gone forever, but still praying for deliverance from this sticky, miry clay which holds us so firmly in its grasp, and from which it is impossible for us in and of ourselves to extricate ourselves; and here it is, my dear, precious brethren and sisters, when we look around about us and view our filthy garments, spotted with the sins of self-righteousness, that we take root downward and bear fruit upward, for here we are able by grace divine to see our King in his beauty and holiness, and ourselves, as Solomon describes us, as nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity. It is then we ascribe praise, honor and glory unto our God; and there is no god like our God, for he is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent, ruling in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and none can stay his hand, nor say unto him, What doest thou? and from everlasting to everlasting he is God, and beside him there is no Savior. What a strong tower we have. He is a sure covert from all the storms of life, and he tempers the winds to the shorn lambs. Yes, shorn of all boasted power and self-righteousness, and made to know there is no power but his. Then when we are sent forth as sheep among wolves he still guards us with his eye and there can no temptation befall us, only such as is common to man, and with the temptation he makes a way of escape, which is the love and fear of God in our hearts, which is our present help in every time of need, and without his Spirit working in us we are as sounding brass or a tinkling symbal, for in us (that is, in our flesh,) dwells no good thing. It is sweet to trust him; to feel that restful assurance that he is at all times and in every trial and danger very near us; it is his everlasting arms that are underneath us bearing us up, and his almighty power and his great love, wherewith he loved us even while we were dead in sin, that saves us, both in time and in eternity. How void of spiritual life we are when left to ourselves and the evil one, for he is always present with us, tempting us in the lusts of the flesh, and lusts of the eye, and the pride of life, which things are first and foremost in the estimation of the world to-day, which things we should fight against in our own sinful hearts, and crucify the old man with his affections and lusts, for if we live after the flesh we shall die, but if we through the Spirit do mortify (or keep under) the deeds of the body we shall live. Romans vi. 16, reads, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his

servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" Paul says, Ye were once the servants of sin, but being made free from sin ye became the servants of righteousness; but when ye were the servants of sin ye were free from righteousness; dead to the knowledge of God or his love or mercy. What fruit, or, in other words, what did it profit you, then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. We look back at them and wish we could blot them from our memory, but cannot. What grieves me most is my present evil nature, which is ever present with me, and overwhelms me, making me loathe myself, causing me much deep searching of the heart, and causing me to cry out in my agony, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" or, in other words, this body, which has no life other than natural in and of itself, which is at war with the Spirit; this body we so much long to lay down, because we are so tired carrying it around; because there is no good thing in it, unless the Spirit of God dwells in it richly in all wisdom, causing us to hope that we have been made free from sin, and been made servants to God, having our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life, for this is the full consummation of our hope, that this body, sinful as it is, which will be sown in corruption will be raised in incorruption; will be sown a natural body, but raised a spiritual body; sown in weakness, but raised in power; for since we have been quickened to life by the same power that raised up Christ from the dead, and are kept by that same power, we are made to believe in Christ as our Savior, both in time and in eternity, without any condition or qualification on our part; and, believing him, we have hope in his promises, because we know him to be full of love and mercy, and one with God, so there is no doubt in our minds but what he will fulfill all his promises. Paul tells us in his letter to the Corinthian brethren, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep [or die], but we shall all be changed." Yes, indeed this is a mystery, but no greater than the mystery of taking a dead body and putting life in it and causing it to sing praises to God, all contrary to nature, with an eye of faith and a heart and mind enlightened by the new covenant of God's love and mercy written and imprinted upon it, it is made very plain. With men this change would be impossible, but God spoke this world into existence and formed every living creature, giving each one its intelligence and form and habits according to its place of abode, and causing all necessary food and maintenance to exist within its reach, whether fish or beast, whether man or fowl, all are provided alike by the great God of the universe, not only when they were created and made, but he continuously provides for them, as well as us. God formed them all for his glory, and this change, which is the finale of the manifestation of his magnificent works of glory, is not beyond the limits of our faith, for with the eye of faith we all with open faces behold, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, and we rest in this feeling of security, and do with patience wait for the fulfillment of this promise, and while it doth not yet appear what we shall be, we are willing to leave it to our God, who doeth all things well, and he has told us that we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is, and be satisfied. Now what more should we want to know? The one and

all-important question with this poor old sinner is, Am I embraced in that blessed number that shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord?

Please find inclosed a money order for two dollars to pay for the dear old SIGNS another year, for it, and my Bible and hymn book, are about all the company I have, as I am not able to go away from home much, but have sweet communion with my dear Savior, which encourages me to press on with my face set toward Jerusalem, where I hope to meet you all.

DAVIS BURCH.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Dec. 26, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I have read with a great deal of satisfaction the farewell address of volume ninety-one of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I feel that it is a pretty full reason for the things upon which you treated, and sufficient proof to any except those who have made up their minds that, "I will not believe any testimony whatever which is on that line." While I was reading it I could but think of the language of Elihu to Job, "Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters."—Job xxxiii. 13. When God made his covenant with Abraham he did not tell Abraham the ways of anything in that covenant. He made it, and it should be taken as his right, for he who made it cannot do wrong nor sin. He is not under law to any man or government. He is God. He told Abraham that in his seed should all the nations be blessed, and that in Isaac should his seed be called. This Abraham received, and believed. Yet that faith should be tested, or he should be tested in that faith. Isaac is born. Abraham saw that part of the fulfillment of God's promise to him. But here is the trial: "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.' Abraham did not say, God, you have promised me that I shall be a great nation, a father of many peoples, and my seed shall be in this very child. Now if I go and kill, and burn him thy word will not be true. None of these things were with him. The faith which God had given him was great, and that constituted him the father of all the household of faith, of the children of God. He believed that even though he should kill him God was able to raise him from the dead. That God's word was sure, that it could not fail. With this faith he arose, saddled his ass, took his servants and Isaac, and went, as God had commanded him, into the country of Moriah. His faith was not seen by Isaac at that time. Abraham had fire, he had a knife, upon the shoulders of Isaac he had wood. All were Abraham's, and prepared by him for the fulfillment of the word of God to him. As they went there seems to have been no inquiry in the mind of Abraham. Whatever there may have been in his mind was known only to God, for he was silent. There he was still to know that he who had commanded him was God. There was an inquiry in the mind of Isaac: Father, here is the wood, the fire, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering? He knew nothing of the why they were going, only to offer to God an offering. The faith which God had given to Abraham saw in the distance the Jehovah-jirah of God. Not a word of all the promises of God could fail. He had not reached the top of the mount of God, but faith told him that that holy altar was there. "My son, God will provide him-

self a lamb for a burnt offering," is the answer of faith. Could he see his dying son? We do not know, but if he could he could see the resurrection of God in him. He would raise him from the dead. His word was sure. He who is to be a blessing to all nations is to come forth from this child. That is the promise, and he who promised will surely fulfill all he has said. Isaac shall live. God will provide for himself an offering. All Abraham as a man could see was Isaac. But what did it differ? God had power over death as well as life. All were his to command, rule and overcome. Dead or alive may Isaac be, but the promise of God is sure. Isaac must live. He is the father of the promised seed. This faith moved Abraham to go with unfaltering step to the very spot. When he was there God showed him the place. There he built the altar to receive the sacrifice. The wood was put in order, the sacrifice was bound and laid upon the wood on the altar. Not one doubt is seen. The whole is a scene of faith in Him who had promised, and commanded. It is His ability which is being trusted. At last came the fatal step: the knife is taken ready for the last blow toward the offering. Sure there never was such a trial in any other man, and yet there is not one lame step in it all. But behold the end of faith: "Abraham, Abraham," said an angel of God. "Here am I," said faithful Abraham. He had not failed in one point of all that God had commanded. "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me." Abraham had seen the provision of God only by faith, but now he looked, "and, behold, behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son." Did not God know before all the way? Was there anything in all this that was new to him? Doubtless he did this to prove to Abraham his wonderful power to keep him in the most trying times which could come to him, and to all his seed that he was able to save unto the uttermost them that come to God by him. This is what he shows to us in his wonderful dealings with us in our poor hearts as he saves us from the power of our sins. Thus he brings our blessed Jesus to our view and and we are able to see in him all we need, and that he is ever the Jehovah-jirah of our God to all his people. He did not give an account of any of these matters to Abraham, only as he fulfilled them in him and to him.

I have been made to feel that Elihu was a true type of the gospel ministry, and yet he could not convince Job of sin. His three friends had failed. To me they are striking figures of Arminianism, which we have to contend so much with in the warfare with our old carnal natures. These know not the truth, and therefore cannot teach it. I have not been able to quote from them as the servants of God. They knew nothing of his inspiration. Eliphaz knew nothing only as a natural man. None of his words were inspired of God. They are not Scripture given by inspiration of God. He was a son of the tribe of Esau. He was of the non-elect family. When he said, "Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upwards," he only knew what he said literally. He had no inspired knowledge of what he said. It is fully proven in his other expression, "He shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." God has never made

any such promise to his people. He has not in any way, nor at any time, limited his goodness to his people. His word to them is, Lo, I am with thee always, even unto the end. I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. The everlasting arm is ever underneath. Such are the words of God which are embraced in the faith of God. It was in these things that Abraham was moved forward in the service of his God without faltering step. Any who will read the fifth chapter of the book of Job will see that right in the beginning of his sermons to Job Eliphaz showed himself to be a strict Arminian. There is where you will find those quotations. He and his friends came to hold a protracted meeting to convert Job. This is the first protracted meeting I have any account of being held. Three preachers to convert one man. They began as if they were in earnest. They went at it with fastings. However not one of them had felt the conflicts which Job was feeling. There they could be no more than miserable comforters to him. They could not enter into his sorrows, for they did not know them. When Elihu began to preach the gospel to him he did not answer Elihu. But he could not bring the needed comfort to Job. Finally God spake, and the mouth of Job could not answer. He had said things which were too wonderful for him, therefore he put his hand upon his mouth and spake no more. His mouth was a stream of words before the three Arminian preachers, but how very quickly it was sealed when God spake. You know how it is. You have traveled that way, and there is where it has to be learned. There is no other school where any one may learn of God. It was in the dealings of God with Abraham that he learned of him, and so must it be with all who learn to know Him and the power of his resurrection.

Brother Dodson, I did not think to write so much, but have kept on until now, and I will stop. The Lord continue to bless you, and the other dear brethren editors, to feed the flock of God with good, wholesome food from his table.

I trust I am your brother in a good hope,

L. H. HARDY.

HOLLY SPRINGS, Ark., Jan. 16, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been reading the SIGNS ever since I can remember reading anything on religious subjects, and it seems the same to me now that it did at first. I have copies of it that date much further back than my first recollection, and have the first and second volumes of the editorials of Elder Gilbert Beebe, and I am sure there has been no change in any way, and feel to hope it will continue the same, and that I may have the privilege of this dear old paper coming to my home as long as I live.

I feel I want to tell you of my great sorrow in the death of my precious mother, which occurred January 11th. She had lived to the age of seventy-five years, but I was not prepared to give her up without a feeling that it was too soon for me to part with her. I am sure it is far better for her, but with poor dear father it seems almost more than he can bear. She was taken very suddenly with pneumonia Saturday evening, and grew worse all the time until Thursday night, when she quietly fell asleep in perfect rest. The day before she died she told me she had read the editor's farewell message in the SIGNS and was anxious to see the new year's greeting. She had never forgotten the good one written last year. She told us she did not fear or dread death, and talked calmly and

sweetly about dying. All of her seven children were present when she passed away. Our oldest brother died six years ago, and another died in infancy. Father and mother celebrated their fifty-seventh wedding anniversary January 3rd, 1924. We have a great deal to be thankful for, but are sad, so sad. I wish to be remembered in your prayers.

I did not intend to write so much, but please forgive me.

I will close by wishing you all A Happy New Year.

(MRS.) A. S. PATTERSON.

PERRIN, Texas, Jan. 20, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel I owe you an apology for not sending in my remittance sooner, but have neglected it. It seems I cannot do without the paper, as it is almost all the preaching we get of late. The doctrine the SIGNS sets forth is the truth, to my mind, but there are many claiming to be Old Baptists who do not love the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things, but to my mind it is clearly taught in the divine Book of eternal truth, for there are many examples in Scripture that prove it. My wife and I have just visited our old home church at Keller, Texas, to attend dear sister Allen's funeral, which was sad indeed, as she was one of the old members in the church when dear old Elder A. D. Bourland baptized me. Then the church was alive, under one of the grandest Elders of his day, and when the wolf came he never left his post He was found crying aloud and sparing not, but always feeding the flock of God which Christ purchased with his own blood.

Please accept two dollars for my remittance, also two dollars to send the SIGNS to the "poor of the flock."

Your brother in hope,

C. Y. OSTEEN.

SNOW HILL, Md., Jan. 9, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find check for two dollars to renew my subscription to the dear old SIGNS. I realize it is a little past due, but it is just negligence on my part. The SIGNS sets forth a dear and precious doctrine that I much love, and often when reading the many articles I am made to feel they are speaking my mind and feelings much better than I can, and I am made to rejoice and thank God when I read the many good editorials all the editors write. May the God of heaven sustain us all and help us; grant us grace to know and to do his will, and give him all glory. The one desire of this poor heart of mine is to trust him in all things and at all times. He surely has been my helper in times past, and often I have felt to rejoice in him, which is a comfort the world knows not, neither can they take it away.

I am making this rambling letter too long, but must say to all the writers, Write on, dear brethren, for you are of those to whom it is said, Cast thy bread upon the waters, and after many days it shall return unto you, for in your writings you are saying the very things some poor pilgrim is hungering for.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

(MRS.) W. K. TRUITT.

INFORMATION WANTED.

IF there are any Predestinarian Baptists, the kind who read the SIGNS, in or near Washington County, Arkansas, please address me at Lincoln, Arkansas, Route 3. (ELDER) J. F. TIPTON.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

J. F. PIERCE has changed his address from De Ridder, La., to Merryville, La., R. F. D. 1, Box 39, where his correspondents will please address him.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1924.

EDITOR

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 58.

"THEREFORE, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

A sister in Ohio has requested that we write on the above Scripture. It is evident from her letter before us that she is distressed by the indifference to truth and godliness manifest among some professing to be Old School or Primitive Baptists. God forbid that we should sit in judgment upon our brethren, or lightly esteem those for whom Christ died, for our most precious moments have been when sitting at the feet of the brethren and the banner over us was love. We have listened to the heavenly theme of salvation by grace, and have seen Jesus exalted, and have loved the brethren so that we felt we could give our life for them. Then we felt our heart was fixed, and, like Ruth, we were steadfastly minded. We were sure these people were our people. Beloved brethren, "Charity suffereth long, and is kind;" there can only be true steadfastness where there is faith that works by love. Blessed souls they are who are possessors of this love: God's love. Such are easy to be entreated, and possess a willing mind. They want to be found in the Way, the good old way. This love constrains them, so that their walk and conversation are becoming; it "doth not behave itself unseemly." Where this precious love is shed abroad in the heart there is a right conception of truth and godliness, for it "rejoiceth in the truth," and the word of God is their criterion. It beareth all things, believeth, hopeth and endureth all things according to the word of God. One with such love may be deceived for awhile by those who profess love to them, but the true test is, What think ye of the Beloved, and what is his word, his work, to you? for do not I love them that love thee? We are not commanded to love everybody, nor to fellowship anything contrary to God's word. If there are brethren for whom we have professed love and fellowship there can but be a desire in our hearts for them and their welfare, and a questioning as to the spirit that we ourselves possess. Are we prompted by love? Has love through all our actions run? We hear of many up and down this land denying this doctrine or subscribing to that, but we never hear of a poor sinner who has suffered under the condemnation of God's holy law, and God's grace has reached him, lightly speaking of grace. We mean the grace of God that bringeth salvation and teaches the denying of ungodliness and worldly lusts. In the living of this grace there is a sure defence of the truth. Paul says, "Be ye steadfast." Where love is, there is the best ground for brethren to be rooted steadfast in the apostolic doctrine. "Unmoveable." There are many things calculated by Satan and his angels to move the child of God. Bonds and afflictions abide them, but Paul says, "None of these things move me." Faith looks beyond the things that are seen, it

has respect unto Him who has promised, knowing that he who has promised is able to perform. Some to-day are not asking for the old paths where is the good way, but rather are departing from them, and are inclined to try and remove the ancient landmarks, but the Lord still reigns, and in his purpose there has always been a sifting of his people. In that sifting the chaff will go, but not a grain of wheat will fall to the ground. Sometimes there is a shaking by various winds of doctrine, but that which is steadfast cannot be shaken, therefore remains. The church is being sifted to-day; there are those in it who do not belong there, for by their fruit ye shall know them. While some are denying the doctrine, others hold the form of sound doctrine whose lives are unbecoming, and in some cases, we fear, they appear to hide behind predestination. Remember the accountability of men and devils is just as truly set forth in the word as the predestination of God, and he who would hide behind predestination in his wickedness is out of the secret. There is in this day in many places a conformity to the spirit of this world, and wherever this is so the understanding becomes dull in the things belonging to godliness. The conscience is less tender and the affections cold, sin is not the burden it once was to the soul, and there is little crucifying of the old man and his deeds. Again, in this day there is an absence of spiritual conversation as brethren assemble together, and often worldly topics, foolish talking or jesting take its place. Paul says, "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." We are called to glory and virtue, and in learning of Christ there is of necessity a putting off concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.

But to return to our subject. Throughout the whole of the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians Paul is dwelling upon the resurrection of the dead. There were some among the Corinthian Church who said there was no resurrection of the dead. Such denial, if true, would remove all "hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." Therefore Paul begins by declaring what he had delivered unto them, and states that his testimony was according to the Scripture. He makes mention particularly that he had testified of Christ's burial and resurrection, and then mentions many witnesses, including himself, and he informs them that the greater part of the said witnesses were still living, while some had fallen asleep. From the substance of the whole chapter it is easy to discern that the closing verse is an admonition to the brethren to be steadfast in the doctrine, especially in the resurrection of the dead. To us the resurrection is a glorious, soul-cheering theme, too high for mortals to comprehend and too profound for controversy. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust, and while it doth not yet appear what we shall be, yet we hope we are not deceived when we say that there is that within us that says, like Paul, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." There are two ways of denying the resurrection: one verbally, that is, with our mouths, and the other by our walk and testimony in divine things. From verses thirty-three and thirty-four we have reason to think there were those in the Corinthian Church who denied the resurrection in their cor-

rupt and unrighteous walk. Whilst there are none to our knowledge among the Old School Baptists who deny the resurrection verbally, yet there are those who deny it in their walk and conversation. The scriptural record is simple, and is sufficient condemnation to any who might verbally deny the resurrection, but it is our intention in this article to warn the brethren against such who say that Christ lives, yet deny him in their lives. Paul says, "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received." Has there been anything delivered unto us? Have we received the truth that Jesus died, and that he died for our sins, and that he was buried and arose the third day for our justification? If we have received this we have received the word of truth, the gospel of our salvation, and we have in us evidences of a new birth, also of a deliverance from the law and its penalties by the body of Christ. We have evidence of the resurrection powers, for we have risen by the operation of the gospel in us from under the condemnation of the law to the liberty wherewith Christ makes us free. The Scripture fits us then where Paul says, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above," and it can truly be said of us, "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new," so there is now a new man in Christ Jesus. There may be those who would say that the resurrection power manifest in this new man is all the resurrection he will know. Whosoever they are they certainly place themselves in the same error as Hymenæus and Philetus, who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is passed already, thus overthrowing the faith of some. There is a resurrection still ardently desired by the new man, which we hope to show as we proceed. This new man is distinct from the old man, for it is a heavenly creation, created after God in righteousness and true holiness, yet it is the sinner that is born again, it is the sinner that is saved. Let us consider the new man "according to the scriptures," for while our hope is that we shall bear the image of the heavenly, we do not yet see ourselves in this heavenly image. This new man has a mouth, for he says, Thy word was found, and I did eat it, &c. What is this mouth? it is not the mouth of the natural man. He has a nose with which he smells the heavenly fragrance of the vine with its tender grapes; it delights to smell the unction of grace. He also has eyes with which he sees Jesus crowned with glory and honor; he also sees his calling. He has an ear also that hearkens to the truth and hears the voice of the good Shepherd, but it knows not the voice of a stranger. He has a heart that is a new heart, and it is with this heart that he believes unto righteousness. He has hands with which he gathers the handfuls of purpose that fall for him in the gospel field; he also clings to Christ, the blest angel of life, saying, I will not let thee go except thou bless me. He has feet that walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. With these feet he can run and not be weary, and walk and faint not. None of us can describe what this new man really is, but we know and can positively testify that as is the heavenly so are they that are heavenly (present tense), and we thank God it is written, As we have borne the image of the earthy (which image we have borne and are bearing), so shall we also bear the image of the heavenly. Lest any should say we have separated the new man from the sinner we will proceed further. This mortal body is the dwelling-place of the new man. Paul

says we have this treasure in earthen vessels, also bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. By the quickening of our mortal bodies by the Spirit dwelling in us there is a painfulness, an anxiety, a questioning and a declaration, "O wretched man that I am," &c. Paul tells of an experience in which he saw things unlawful to be uttered, and he says, Whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell. Many of the saints have had experiences similar to Paul, but while here in this time state they are in the body. There are also joys experienced, so that our whole body is filled with praise, and our mouth utters what our heart feels, and our eyes shed tears of joy. All this is not an expression of the old man, but of the new, and the sinner is the new man. The old man is crucified, for they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. There is not one sinful inclination of the sinner but what the new man mourns over and would have it otherwise. This makes him long for cleansing blood, and he deplores his vileness, and will ever do so as long as he bears the image of the earthy. If the mind of man could be put in a beast it would not be satisfied, but would aspire to be equal with man, yet having the mind of man he would feel more humiliation because he had a beast's likeness, which humiliation would not cease until he was in the likeness of man. So it is with us, for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality, and until this comes to pass the saying that is written is but a "saying." But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the "saying" that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory," and this victory is through our Lord Jesus Christ. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

G. R.

ENCOURAGED.

1. BECAUSE of new subscriptions that are being sent in—as many as seven from one small church—something for others to think about.

2. BECAUSE of the response to our suggestion to send the SIGNS a year to those who will appreciate it, as a Christmas remembrance.

3. BECAUSE of the liberal contributions to the fund for sending the paper to the poor of the flock.

Did you, reader, have any part in the above? Are you willing to do your bit towards putting the SIGNS in the home of every lover of the truth? In union there is strength. Let us double the subscription list of our family paper during 1924.

R. L. D.

ANY one having a first volume of the Editorials of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe which they are willing to part with will please notify W. J. Hocutt, R. 2, Berry, Alabama.

WATCH YOUR DATES.

WE wish to request our subscribers when sending in their subscriptions to see that the date on the little pink slip bearing their address is changed. If not changed, please let us know immediately (for that signifies you have not been given credit for the money sent) and we will look into the matter.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, January 17th, 1924, at his residence, Salisbury, Md., Thomas McDonough, of Pittsburgh, Pa., and Miss Sallie Edna Laws, of Parsonsburg, Md.

By J. J. Collins, at his residence, Newton, Ala., R. No. 2, December 23rd, 1923, Jesse T. Williams, of Harford, and Miss Annie Maud Mims, of Newton, Ala.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Robert Leachman Spindle, deacon of the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church, died at his home near Centerville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Sunday afternoon, January 13th, 1923. He was born near Sudley, Prince William County, Virginia, November 30th, 1840, making his stay on earth 83 years, 1 month and 13 days. All but seven years of his life were lived in Fairfax County, and all but eleven years he lived near Centerville. His mother was Sarah Pridmore, a member of the Bethlehem Old School Baptist Church, and she had been baptized by Elder R. C. Leachman. His father was Addison Spindle, an Old School Baptist in belief, but not a member of the church. Brother Spindle was accustomed to attending the meetings at Bethlehem, but when he became exercised about uniting with the Old School Baptists he felt that the Lord directed him to the Frying Pan Church, and he was baptized there in May, 1878, the first to be baptized there by Elder E. V. White after his accepting the pastoral care of that church. He served the church for twenty-nine years as clerk, and for many years as its trustee and deacon. In 1868 brother Spindle married Miss Victoria Virginia Rector, who died in 1898. To them were born ten children, eight of whom are living, as follows: Mrs. Gertrude Williams, of Baltimore, Md.; Mrs. Lovena Darr, of Fairfax, Va.; Gilbert Spindle, of Clifton, Va.; K. C. Spindle, of Centerville, Va.; Robert Spindle, of Bladensburg, Md.; Mrs. Agnes Robey and G. C. Spindle, of Centerville, Va., and Mrs. Catherine Cockerille, of Washington, D. C. He is also survived by twenty-seven grandchildren and thirteen great-grandchildren. In 1903 brother Spindle married our late sister, Priscilla Bradshaw, who died in 1909. He was one of Col. Mosby's guerillas in the Confederate Army during the war between the States. For twelve months during the war he was a prisoner in Camp Chase, Ohio, at the same time as Elder William L. Beebe, and it was there he first heard Elder Beebe preach. Brother Spindle said he could not remember a time in his life when he did not know and feel that he was a sinner, but for many years believed salvation to be by the law, until during the years from 1866 to 1878 when matters spiritually came to a crisis with him and he was brought to realize his utter nothingness before God and that Jesus is all in all. He was an absolute predestinarian, and was uncompromising in the doctrine and order of the visible church. Not only was he held in love by the members of the church, but he was highly esteemed as a citizen of the community, and held every public office of trust in the district where he lived. His entire life was a work of charity, both in the church and with his fellow-men.

The funeral services were held from his late residence; the text used was 2 Timothy iv. 7, 8. Burial was in the cemetery near his home. As his pastor, I have suffered a real personal loss; he ever held up my hands in my ministry, and encouraged me continually with his love and fellowship. We believe he is at peace, and at rest with his God. May God comfort the bereaved church and the members of the bereft family circle. L.

Evaline Wible, of Three Springs, Pa., died Wednesday morning, December 26th, 1923. Her death was incident to age. She was a daughter of Richard and Elizabeth Madden, and was born August 28th, 1843, being at the time of her death aged 80 years, 3 months and 28 days. Her husband, John G. Wible, preceded her to the great beyond fifteen years and fifteen days. Mother is survived by the following brothers and sisters: John Madden, of Three Springs, Pa.; Enoch Madden, of Mount Union, Pa.; Mrs. Charlotte Swartz, of Three Springs, Pa.; Mrs. Amelia Matthews, of Altoona, Pa. The following children survive her: Allison, Edward, Frank and Scott, of Three Springs, Pa., and Jesse, of Mapleton, Pa. She was a devoted member of the Old School Baptist Church, being baptized many years ago by the late Elder E. V. White, and always loved to attend the meetings. She and father always liked to have meetings at their house, and all enjoyed them much. After the death of father, mother made her home with her son Scott and his wife, who provided an excellent home for her, and always took her to meeting. She read a great deal in the Bible and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. She was an excellent wife, a true friend, a loving and affectionate mother, and a true christian. She was held in high esteem by all who knew her.

The funeral was held Friday, December 18th, in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Springfield Township, Huntingdon Co., Pa., conducted by her pastor, who preached a beautiful sermon, full of comfort, using as his text the second chapter of second Timothy. A large number of relatives and friends attended the funeral, being an attestation of the esteem in which she was held. Her body was laid to rest by that of her husband in the cemetery beside the meetinghouse.

Written by her son,

ALLISON WIBLE.

Sister **Isabelle Mattox** (*nee* Taylor) was born May 8th, 1854, in Monroe County, Georgia, and was married to T. L. Mattox in 1877. To that union eight children were born: two boys and six girls, all living, and all with her a few days before the end came, January 2nd, 1924. She leaves her husband and eight children to mourn, namely, Mrs. Alice T. Bridges, Ernest Mattox, Mrs. Annie Lane Cornelius, Mrs. Ettie Bulner, Mrs. Zetter Medlin, Taylor Mattox, Mrs. Lottie Alexander, Alline Harnald. Sister Mattox professed a hope in Christ in her eighteenth year, and united with the Predestinarian Baptists. She came to Texas shortly afterwards, settled in Rockwell County, and put her letter in the church at Elmridge, Kaufman County, where she lived a consistent member, always filling her seat when possible. Her home was a home for the Baptists. She was a faithful wife, a loving mother and a good neighbor. Her family, neighborhood and the church have sustained a great loss, but we hope that our loss is her eternal gain. Her remains were laid to rest in Blackland Cemetery, to await the coming of Christ, when the dead in Christ shall arise first in the image of the Lord. I will say to her companion and children, Weep not as those who have no hope, for your wife and mother is not dead, but sleepeth.

Written by her former pastor,

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

Fannie C. Bledsoe, daughter of Alex and Amanda Collins, was born May 16th, 1866. She was married to J. L. Vinyard at the age of about twenty-one years, and to this union one child was born. They both preceded her in death by several years. She was married to J. W. Bledsoe in 1897, who also preceded her to the grave. Two sons, Floyd and Willie, were born to this union; one is left to mourn her departure, also one brother, six sisters and a host of relatives and friends. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church early in life, and died strong in the faith, Thursday, July 12th, 1923, at the age of 57 years, 1 month and 25 days. This good sister will be greatly missed, as she was a good, kind mother and friend, and was loved by all who knew her. She never complained of her suffering. She was a great lover of the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace, and never tired of talking of the goodness and mercies of God.

The funeral was conducted by the writer at the cemetery, where I tried to speak comforting words to the bereaved ones. We sorrow not as those who have no hope, for we hope through God's rich and sovereign grace to see our dear sister in that glory world, where there is no sickness or sorrow, pain or death, where we hope to be in the likeness of our blessed Redeemer.

Written by request.

W. T. WALTERS.

Mary J. W. Alumbaugh was born in Lafayette County, Missouri, April 14th, 1859, and died at her home near Wellington, Missouri, January 7th, 1924, aged 64 years, 8 months and 23 days. She was married to G. W. Alumbaugh July 9th, 1876, and to that union were born nine children, six of whom are living and were present at her funeral. Beside the children she is survived by two sisters, one brother and a number of grandchildren, and other relatives. She united with the Primitive Baptists May 12th, 1894, and was baptized by Elder William Startzman. She adorned her profession with a zeal begotten by the spirit of love for the Master and his cause, and a love for the church and her brethren. She was never happier than when sitting under the sound of the gospel as proclaimed by such elders as preached Christ and him crucified, and gave God all the glory in the salvation of poor sinners. She was a constant reader of the SIGNS, and loved the doctrine of predestination. She loved to entertain her brethren and sisters in her home, and for several years the meetings of the church were held at her home, and she was always glad when meeting time came. After the death of her husband, September 5th, 1923, she failed very rapidly, but bore her sufferings with christian fortitude, longing to be released from the fleshly bondage here and depart and be at rest. She was a good mother, loving her children with tender devotion, kind to all, and loved by many, especially the Baptist people who knew her and were entertained in her home.

The funeral was held from the home January 9th, conducted by the writer, after which her body was taken to the Lexington Cemetery and laid beside that of her husband, to await the coming of the Lord Jesus. We sorrow not as those without hope.

W. L. HALL.

Mary Louise Cudney united with the Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, in New York City, and was baptized by the late Elder John McConnell, June 21st, 1903. Sister Cudney suffered with extreme nervousness for a year or two before she departed this life on December 22nd, 1923. She leaves an only child, a daughter, Mrs. Loversa Windrum, of Brooklyn, N. Y.

R. L. D.

Mrs. J. M. Valentine died in the hospital at Ballinger, Texas, July 19th, 1923, aged fifty-four years. She was taken ill very suddenly with appendicitis, and after an operatioe lived only a few days. She was a true christian woman, loved by all who knew her. She was a member of the church at Lawn, Texas, where she attended services several times a year, although it is a long distance from her home. All her friends were impressed by her devout attitude toward our Savior. She is survived by her husband, J. M. Valentine.

A FRIEND.

MEMORIALS.

DURING the last year, since we met in an associate capacity, it has pleased the Lord to take unto himself four of our Deacons, viz., **James W. Hastings** and **Harrison Messick,** of the Broad Creek Church, Sussex County, Delaware, **Jacob M. Adkins,** of the Indiantown Church, Wicomico County, Maryland, and **George W. Mezick,** of the Salisbury Church, Wicomico County, Maryland. The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Forest Grove Church, deems it right and respectful to spread this memorial upon our Minutes and also to have it published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. These beloved brethren were faithful in all the walks of life and served well the churches in the office to which they were appointed. They were sound in the faith, and in walk and conversation glorified God, were highly esteemed by the Association and churches of their membership, and stood high in their respective localities. The churches of the Association will greatly miss their faithful service and able counsel, but we desire to bow to the will of the Lord, knowing that he is the builder and keeper of the city. Whatever he does is in wisdom to his own glory. We deeply sympathize with the churches of their membership, and also with their bereaved families. We pray God to keep us all steadfast in the truth, that we as an association of churches may honor and glorify his great name.

ALSO,

INASMUCH as it has pleased the great Head of the church to call from his labors, and the shores of time, to his everlasting reward, our dear brother, and pastor of the Snow Hill Church, **Elder B. F. Coulter,**

Be it resolved, the Salisbury Association bow in humble submission to our great loss and to the will of Him who doeth all things well.

Be it further resolved, that this resolution be printed with our Minutes, and also published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that a copy be sent to our beloved sister Coulter, upon whom we pray God's blessing to rest in her sad bereavement. We shall miss our dear brother and faithful servant, but have full assurance of his eternal rest from his labors. His works will follow him.

J. C. MELLOTT, Moderator.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

G. W. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

J. A. Tandy, Okla., $5.00; E. H. Winchel, Mich., $1.00; Mrs. Val. Werner, N. J., $2.00; B. T. Davis, Tex., $3.50; Mrs. Thomas Jamison, Man., $3.00; Thomas C. Roe, Md., $3.00; Mrs. J. D. Shafer, N. Y., $1.00; H. C. Sledge, La., $1.00; Mrs. W. E. Gaines, D. C., $5.00; Mrs. O. P. Owens, Ky., $1.00; J. A. Nuckols, Ky., $3.00; C. Lilly Buck, Conn., $1.00; C. T. Reynolds, W. Va., $1.00; Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Okla., $2.00; Mrs. Otto Schroeder, Calif., $3.00; Mrs. Bettie Bennett, D. C., $2.00; M. C. Reeves, Ill., $1.00; Elder J. C. Chester, Ky., $3.75; S. E. Mathis, Ky., $1.00; C. Y. Osteen, Tex., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, 1315 Columbia Avenue (Park Avenue Hall) PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Little Flock Church will no longer hold meetings at Park and 5th Streets, but for the present will hold them at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 494 East 10th Street, Riverside, California. We hope to have a place again soon, and when we do we will appreciate having our notice with you.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. S. MILLER.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND LATER WRITINGS

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 92. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1924. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

POCA, W. Va., Jan. 6, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I often think of you, and of the brethren of the eastern associations and meetings I had the blessed privilege of meeting and mingling our voices together with last fall. It gives me great pleasure to think of the brotherly love manifested by all toward me, and also my brother. It had been on my mind for several years to visit the brethren of other sections of the country beyond yours. This has been, and is yet, a great wonder to me: in the midst of our ablest gifts that such a stammering, illiterate mortal as I could receive such a hearty welcome. But remembering that Solomon has said, "A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men," strengthens my feeble knees, and makes me feel that the good Lord has in a mysterious way been pleased to give this poor dust-worm of the earth words to speak in a way that the brethren and sisters of the household of faith have felt to be comforted. Oh how poor, little and weak I have felt when words of eulogy have been spoken by those manifesting joy of heart at my feeble efforts, when to me it appeared I was reaching for something and getting nothing. Eulogy has never had a tendency to puff me up, but always made me feel humble, hoping that I was not deceived, and that I had not deceived those who gave evidence of joy flowing out of hearts full of love. I would like to write a personal letter to all I had the privilege of meeting on my trip among the dear people, but instead will attempt to address them collectively through our medium of correspondence, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. At this time I desire, if not deceived, to address all of like precious faith on the subject of spiritual worship. All worship, no matter when or where it may be found, if it is not true, it must be false, and offered to some other than the true and living God. But, as expressed by the apostle, "We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Now, dear saints of God, in approaching this sublime subject, and in attempting to define that worship which in the Scriptures is called spiritual, I do so with fear and trembling. Have we any correct news or understanding of that infinite Being

who inhabits eternity, dwells in the light, whose name is love? In the great and mysterious gospel scheme, which is the power of God unto salvation, Christ is revealed unto the faith of his elect children, and he dwells in Zion, and inhabits the praise of spiritual Israel. If I have a correct view in regard to the worship which in the Scriptures is called spiritual, or of the Spirit, it must be free from everything that is natural or fleshly; so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." The apostle seems to leave out nothing in his very searching and discriminating letter to the Roman brethren. It is of the Spirit they are born and led, and through the Spirit they are enabled to offer up spiritual sacrifices unto God, hence, "as lively stones, are built up a spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."—1 Peter ii. 3. The only conclusion we can come to in this matter is that the whole building is spiritual, and therefore the sacrifices offered up unto God are spiritual, and acceptable unto God. "Through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." Now, having come to that medium of access wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God, I will say something in regard to the worship of God in a spiritual sense. Worship is that reverence or outward religious homage paid to some acknowledged deity, by the professional religious world, but in Zion God dwells, and is her only rightful Sovereign and Lord, and "thou shalt have no other gods before me." Hence a special qualification to worship God. "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications." Now through the spirit of grace, when poured upon them, they come as supplicants, they approach the mercy-seat in full assurance of faith. "I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring."—Isaiah xliv. 3. Christ is the center of all spiritual worship, and these ancient prophecies were looking into gospel times, when the Spirit should be poured out upon all flesh, although living as did the saints under the old dispensation, and bound to serve according to the law, from which they could not be released until time of reformation, which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed upon them until the time appointed. (Heb. ix. 10.) "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him."—Psalms lxxxix. 7. When God is worshipped the creature is abased and God exalted. Not in form simply, nor the position the body may be in when engaged, which is nothing but that assurance that faith gives to the soul that reverence due to the name in which is all their trust. They "enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name."—Psalms c. 4. When the poor humble minister is blessed by the Spirit of truth to go forth in the unity of the Spirit, and with the dear children of God of one faith, all in the bond of peace, with love and fellowship abounding among them, and then feels the presence of our dear Redeemer, the spiritual light beaming from his lovely revealing power, opening the Scriptures to his understanding, that the bread of life be broken to the children of his love, feeling the emotion of love to him, to his cause and to his people, then he maketh his servant to proclaim the ani-

mating strains, the heart-soothing messages of the gospel of the ever-living God, and to partake with the dear children of the sustaining, refreshing and solacing fruits of the Spirit, consisting of that love that expands the heart with a fullness which runneth over, and spreads like a shoreless ocean, and peace that flows like a river through the streets of the new Jerusalem.

Should this be published, when you have read it, and have come to the throne of grace in prayer, remember a poor old sinner, who if saved, will be saved by the grace of God alone,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

WINNSBORO, Texas, Jan. 28, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am inclosing the experience of my long deceased sister, and would like to see it in the SIGNS if it meets with your approval. This experience was so much food to my poor soul that I want others to read it, for I feel it will be food to them. I have been a subscriber to the SIGNS for a long time, and enjoy the letters of experience, also the able editorials, that appear in it from time to time.

Your brother in Christ,

M. E. DYKES.

BANKS, Alabama.

MR. O. B. DYKES—DEAR BROTHER:—Brother in the flesh and in the Lord also, I hope. I feel impressed to write what I feel has been the Lord's dealings with poor unworthy me, but will first write a little of what I believe with all my heart, viz.: the doctrine of predestination and election; that the children of God were all chosen in Christ before the world began, and he reveals himself in his own appointed time and way. This revelation does not make them his children, but only manifests the fact that they are already his. I believe the last one will be brought home, for I believe God is able to perform the work, for he saw the end from the beginning; nothing new nor old with him, and he will do all his pleasure. He shines in the heart of every one who is brought to a knowledge of the truth and shows them their awful condition as sinners in the sight of God. They then begin to try to work themselves into the favor of God, and never feel they are as helpless and dependent as little babes until they make every effort they can, and finally give up all hope that it is possible for them to be saved.

I will now try and tell you as nearly as I can, if I am not deceived, how the Lord has led me about, but I cannot tell the exact time of my first serious and troubled thoughts about death, but it was when I was a child, and I would soon forget it and be as contented about it as if it had never bothered me. I think it was in my fifteenth year I felt myself to be such a great sinner I did not know what to do, and felt my sins were unpardonable. I tried to pray the Lord to have mercy and forgive me. I kept it concealed for a time, but one day I became so troubled I could hide it no longer. I think I was spinning and mother carding rolls for me, when she noticed me, and asked what was the matter. I tried to tell her, and asked her to pray for me. She talked to me, and told me part of her experience, but it did me no good, for I did not believe she had ever been such a sinner as I was. I do not think I was in that condition very long before it wore off to some extent. I would think that if the other children, my companions, knew I was troubled in that way they would make fun of me, so I tried to get rid of it and wait until I got older, when I hoped

the Lord would forgive my sins and I would have the privilege of joining the Primitive Baptists, for I thought they were good people. But my trouble would return and I would try to put it off. Many times I took our little Testament and stole off to the woods to read it and try to get relief, but it condemned me and made me feel worse. I went on in this way until I was married, when it seemed I almost forgot my trouble for two or three years; but it returned, and I was so miserable I could not conceal it from my husband. The very breathings of my heart were: Lord, have mercy on me; Lord, save or I perish. I thought he was a just God, but could not see how he could remain so and save poor me. I thought I was the chief of sinners and had sinned away the day of grace, and that there was no mercy for me. Dear brother, I carried that heavy burden, and it grew worse all the time, until the first of the year 1889, when, I hope, the Lord removed it in the forgiveness of my sins, and put a new song in my mouth. It was one morning while I was sick, lying on the bed by myself, weeping and mourning over my sad condition, I had given up all hope, and thought God was frowning at me, that I would soon die and there would be no possible chance for me, when it seemed that this was presented to me: Child, be of good cheer, it is I, your sins are all forgiven you. It seemed that everything was brighter and more lovely than ever before, and at the same time the hymn "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound," was presented. I felt happy, and praised the Lord, my burden was gone, and I thought I would have no more trouble, but it was only a few days before I began to have doubts, and fear that I was deceived; that it was all imagination, and my trouble was worse than before. The weight of baptism came upon me, and it was continually on my mind. I would often dream about it in my sleep. I wanted to join the Old Baptists and live with them, if I was fit, but felt so weak, little and unworthy I could not, for I had nothing to tell that they could confide in. I was afraid I was deceived, and that I would deceive them. I stayed away just as long as I could and live, and I tell you that it was with fear and trembling I went when I did, but they received me on what I told them, without a question. Dear brother, I I have had a great deal of trouble since that time, so much that a few times I have wanted to ask the church to erase my name from the book. I have thought many times that I have committed greater sins than any one, but when I would do good evil is present with me, so that I cannot do the things that I would. About the greatest evidence I can claim is sometimes presented when I am in deep trouble. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I can assure you that the happiest time I ever have is when I can go to meeting and have sweet fellowship with the dear brethren and sisters, and hear the gospel preached in its purity, which I believe is done by the Primitive Baptists. Oh how I do love the doctrine they preach. I was at the best meeting I ever attended the first Sunday and Saturday before in May, at Mt. Zion. Winfield and Genie both went, and told the dealings of the Lord with them, and were received. They and Billy Benton and wife were baptized Sunday morning. I never will be able to express the joy it was to me. I tried with all my soul to praise and thank the Lord in sparing me to live and be able to go and see my dear husband baptized. He had

stayed away over six years, if I am not mistaken, since having a hope. I tried a great many times to encourage him to discharge his duty. I knew it would be a great satisfaction to me, and relief, too, and honestly believed it would be to him. He has expressed himself since as finding the sweetest rest he ever had. He and Genie have good experiences. It seems that Genie has given up all worldly pleasures and is entirely devoted to the Old Baptists, and I cannot help saying, Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me rejoice; bless his holy name.

Dear brother, I want you to answer this and be candid. Do you see anything in it that could be claimed as an experience, or that I could possibly have any hope in? It seems that every time I get to doubting so much my mind runs directly back to the time and place I have written about. There is this much I can say, If I am saved it is alone through the mercy and grace of God; grace, free grace, nothing good that I have done.

This is the third day since I began to write, the last day of May, 1893, and I will now try to finish it. I suffer a great deal, but try to be submissive, believing it is right, that it is what God in his all-wise purpose has assigned me, and the more I suffer the more I feel willing to trust in him, and the more I realize my weakness and entire dependence upon him, for without him I can do nothing. It seems since I have been sick that most of the time my mind is almost entirely weaned from the things and cares of this world and running on spiritual things. Some of the time I have sweet comfort and rejoicing, then again I am wandering in darkness and despair, almost ready to give up, but I have never been willing to give up this little hope.

Dear brother, I will bring this to a close, hoping you will excuse me; I had to write to relieve my mind. I want you to answer me as soon as you can. Please write your experience. I would be very glad to have it. Remember me in your prayers, and if we never meet again on earth may we meet in a better world than this, is the prayer of your unworthy sister until death,

MARY M. SELLERS.

FORDYCE, Ark., Jan. 8, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have just received the SIGNS for January 1st, 1924, and note the suggestion for "two good resolutions." Well, all right, I hope many of our good Old Baptists will carry them into effect, but I must say that I am such a failure, and always have been, on resolutions that I fear to make them, but at the same time I feel to hope that God's rich grace and love from the depth of my poor heart has given me so much love for the SIGNS and the cause it stands for that I never let up working for its advancement. Last year I secured many subscribers, and I believe most all renewals of the old ones, and now on the new year I open up with one new one and one renewal of the old ones, as you will see from the inclosed remittance slip. I want to say to our Old Baptists everywhere, that the SIGNS is standing on the Rock, and surely is worthy of our earnest support. The December 15th, 1923, number has two articles in it that are alone worth the subscription price for the paper. These are the articles by Elder H. C. Ker, on pure and undefiled religion, and of Elder R. L. Dodson, on absolute predestination and sin. I wish every Old Baptist in the United States had these articles and read them in their true light, and without prejudice; surely it would be a revelation to them, and a sweet one at

that. For the new year, I surely hope God will be with all who are connected with the paper, and bless it and make it a source of much comfort to his poor and afflicted people. May we all behold him as our counsellor and peacemaker, and may he be our guidingstar as we journey on through life's rough pilgrimage, and may we be found at each other's feet, esteeming our brethren and sisters better than ourselves, and to that end try and bear each other's burdens, instead of heaping more upon each other.

Yours in hope, yet in sorrow,

V. R. HARRIS.

MENTOR, Ohio, Oct. 21, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—Having received my middle of the month SIGNS OF THE TIMES and read the editorial written by you, I have been so fed by the words therein contained that once again I am filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory, so that I feel compelled to write and tell you. I will now speak a little about poor, old, sinful self. I am a widow and have just passed my seventy-ninth birthday, and am living with my youngest son, David Turrell, near Mentor, Ohio. I am an unworthy member of an Old School Baptist Church at Cleveland, Ohio, but so feeble in health I am not able to attend the meetings, as it is about twenty-five miles from here. My children are not of my mind, and sometimes it seems to me as if I should starve to death for lack of some one to talk with about the One who is chiefest among ten thousand, and, to me, altogether lovely, which is God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, who is all-wise, all-powerful, and who rules not only in heaven above but in the earth beneath; who made all things, and without him was not anything made that is made. I am assured by his Spirit and word, which agree, that he is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works, and in his time all nations which he hath made shall come before him and worship and glorify his name. The wrath of man shall praise him, the remainder of wrath he will restrain.

I would be very much pleased if you would send me some bits of your experience from nature to grace. I think in my experience God by grace through faith began a good work within me when I was a small child.

In love, and with love to your household,

ELIZABETH TURRELL.

LONG BEACH, Cal., Dec. 25, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the tender mercy of the covenant-keeping God we are permitted to address you in the sweet bonds of christian love and fellowship. We have been readers of the dear old SIGNS for over forty years, and in our feeble way have endeavored to hold up the hands of the editors and publishers by trying in our weak way to show our appreciation of the noble efforts they have put forth these many years in defense of the truth. Inclosed you will find postal order for nine dollars, which you will please apply as per directions in subscription blank: four dollars for subscription, the other five dollars to be used as your judgment may direct.

Wishing you all (including, editors, correspondents and readers of our dear family paper) the choicest blessings which the blessed Lord has treasured up in Christ Jesus our Lord, I am, as ever, your brother,

G. A. DUNDAS.

UNION, Ore., Jan. 12, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If God sees fit to direct my poor mind this morning I will try and write you a few lines in regard to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I feel that I ought tell you to stop my paper; not that I do not love the dear old paper, but because I am so poor and hard pressed that I cannot get the money to pay you. I am behind more than two years, and this is the third. Two years ago I lost everything I had, and was in debt sixteen hundred dollars besides, but I have that all paid but two hundred and fifty dollars. Yesterday morning fire visited my home and destroyed a part of what I had, so that is another setback; but I am still living in hope, knowing that the Lord will provide. I go to meeting as often as I can, and have walked forty miles a few times in the last two years when I did not have money to pay my way.

I will write no more. Do as you see fit, and if you stop my paper just as soon as I can I will send in my renewal and pay what I owe you, and will not think hard of you. I want to say that I believe the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is the only true paper to-day, that I know of.

I will close by thanking you for past favors.

THOMAS JONES.

TEMPLE, Oklahoma, Jan. 8, 1924.

DEAR FRIENDS:—I am sending you seven dollars, two dollars to apply on my subscription for this year, and five dollars to assist you (a very little) in sending the SIGNS to some who are not financially able to pay for it. I have been sending the above amount for the last several years, and while it is a very small sum, I feel it is all that I can do, as I am a poor man financially, and also not very young, as I will be seventy-seven years old the 17th of this month. While I do not belong to any Primitive Baptist Church (and am not fit to be), if I know myself I believe the doctrine the SIGNS OF THE TIMES contends for now, and has since 1832.

Hoping that the SIGNS and all its readers may have a prosperous year, I remain, as ever, your friend and well wisher,

J. A. TANDY.

GOLCONDA, Ill., Jan. 9, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my husband is sending money to renew subscription to the SIGNS for another year, I will inclose a few lines. I desire to say that I am much interested in and receive much comfort from the reading of the many rich editorials, and letters from the brethren and sisters of the household, as published from time to time in the dear old paper; that such editorials and letters are all the preaching (on account of continued bad health) that I get to hear, and I hope you will continue to write as you have heretofore. The SIGNS is surely to me as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, coming as it does richly laden with the Master's goods to the poor, hungry, thirsty children.

I close, wishing you much happiness and success through the year.

KATE CARR.

NOTICE.

A FEW times we have unwittingly published communications from persons who have been excluded from the church. This has happened because we were ignorant of the fact that they had been excluded. While we do not believe in entering into church troubles, we will not knowingly publish anything from a person who is not in good standing with the church, no matter how sound such a communication may be.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1924.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

1 CORINTHIANS I. 21.

"FOR after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

We glean from the field of history, both of man and that which was inspired by God, that since the beginning of time there have been upheavals, convulsions, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and the like in the earth. Nature has been forced to find some way of casting off her surplus gases. In the animal and human world strife, warfare, extermination and death have been waged; species have come and gone; kingdoms, governments and nations have risen and fallen; every phase of life has had its perils. In the light of the past, it is no strange thing that there is to-day a great spirit of restlessness raging in what is commonly termed the religious world. Men are ambitious for leadership and notoriety, and are not satisfied to continue in the old order of things. Many self-styled "Sages of Divinity" are, therefore, making claims to scientific discoveries which, if true, tear down the very foundation upon which the church is built. Had not God declared by the mouth of his own Son, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it," we would begin to worry. Because the finite minds of men cannot comprehend or explain the mysteries of God they have the arrogance and impudence to tell us the Bible is out of date, contradictory, untrue and mythical. They deny the miracles of Jesus, and have no use for "old time religion," for they say, "The trouble is that oldfashioned religion really bores. That is the matter with it. It bores, and boredom is worse than murder. It kills as effectively." It is clearly seen they know not him who is the chiefest among ten thousand, the altogether lovely one, hence cannot say with David, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth I desire beside thee." But those who love the Lord can sing, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah." Those who have the witness within that the Lord has been their dwelling-place in all generations will desire that he might so teach them to number their days, that they may apply their hearts unto wisdom. "The natural man," however, "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Men have become drunk with the wisdom of this world, which is foolishness with God, and they would do well to remember, "If any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know." We are told, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Can it be possible that those who show such utter disregard and disrespect for our Lord have any

fear or love in their hearts for him? It seems to us that were he not the God of matchless mercy that he is he would crush such defying creatures into dust and scatter it upon the sea of his wrath. Had the Lord not put his law in the inward parts, and written it in the hearts of his people, it might be possible to deceive them; shrewd men might be able to confuse and convince them that the Scriptures do not mean what they teach, but when Christ has been formed in one the hope of glory, and he has been quickened by the mighty power of God that wrought in him in raising him from the dead, such questions as, Whether the conception was of the Holy Ghost, or, Hath he power to quicken the dead? are not debatable; they know such miracles have been wrought in them, and they can say with Peter, "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty." They know that part of the Bible which they have experienced is true, and by faith they believe all that God has said. They are willing to remain babes in Christ, and do rejoice, in spirit, with him in saying, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty," &c. We feel safe in saying Paul was one of the "not many wise after the flesh" whom God called, and yet he declares, "My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." The grace of God worked effectually in his heart and changed him from a giant Pharisee to "less than the least of all saints." This is what it does wherever it is manifested, and where we see the spirit of defiance, rule or ruin, haughtiness and pride we can be sure they are not the fruits of the Spirit. God said, Except a man become as a little child he cannot enter the kingdom. So-called ecclesiastical experts say, Except a man become a master in science he cannot find out God. Whom are we to believe? Let God be true and every man a liar. A babe, naturally, does not imply to our mind one possessing more than ordinary wisdom or strength, but rather we think of its helplessness, being wholly and entirely dependent upon the the parent, and we like to think of its simplicity and childlike faith to believe all, everything, that the father says. Recently we have had occasion to observe the absolute confidence of the child in the father, trusting him so implicitly that he would step off into space if the father held out his arms to him. Surely those who have been led about and instructed by our heavenly Father, and kept as the apple of his eye, are willing to trust him just as implicitly. Their faith staggers not at anything, for they know things which are impossible with man are possible with God, that he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that they ask or think; they know whom they have believed, and are persuaded that he is able to keep that which they have committed unto him against that day. If it were possible to search out God through

the medium of science it would destroy faith, without which it is impossible to please God, and it would do away with revelation. John said he wept much because there was found no man in heaven, nor in the earth, neither under the earth, who was able to open the book which he beheld in the right hand of him that sat on the throne, but he was told to, "Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." It was perfectly sealed. In the beginning of the book of Revelation it is declared to be "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John." Let those who will, deny it. As for us, we believe it with all our heart; yea, more, we know some things have been revealed to us. "Secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children for ever." This latest outbreak is nothing new, so to speak; it is the same old serpent that appeared in the Garden of Eden, lying to and deceiving Eve. In the days of Job, when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan came also among them. He has ever been going to and fro in the earth, beguiling with his subtility, and, at times, as Paul says, is transformed into an angel of light. He has even invaded the camp of Israel and driven his beautiful (?) wedges of "modernism" and "conditionalism" between brethren, but the Lord has him in charge and his bounds are set, and his destruction sure: "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." We would that brethren might measure all things with the golden yardstick of truth and weigh them in the scales of Holy Writ, lest they be deceived.

We shall now come directly to our text, which says, "For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." This cuts the ground from under the feet of all workmongrels and science searchers, for we are plainly told here that it was verily according to the wisdom of God that the world by wisdom should not know God. This is diametrically opposed to, perhaps, ninety-nine per cent. of all that is being preached and believed to-day, but the system of creature works in obtaining salvation has no foundation in the word of truth. Some are cunningly endeavoring to mix works with grace, but they are, and ever must remain, as separate and distinct as water and oil. It is not true, never has been nor ever will be true, that God beseeches or pleads with his creatures to give their hearts, or to accept of his salvation. Preaching is not for the purpose of converting the world to Christ, as some affirm, but rather to save them that believe, to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood; not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ be made of none effect, but with such simplicity that the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein. This preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto them which are saved it is the power of God. Paul said, "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." The cross of Christ does not con-

sist only in the fact that nearly two thousand years ago he hung upon Calvary's cross for a few hours; while the physical pain his humanity experienced there must have been excruciating, to say the least, we do not believe for a moment that it compared with the awful agony of his soul in the Garden of Gethsemane when he sweat as it were great drops of blood, realizing not only that of the people there was none with him, and that his beloved disciples could not watch with him one hour, but worse, yea, ten thousand times worse, he felt forsaken of his Father, and was made to cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" So far as we can determine from the record, with but one exception, his entire life in this world was a cross. He was declared to be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; he came not to do his will, but the will of the Father which sent him, to the end that of all the Father had given he should lose nothing. It was through the door of suffering he was to enter into his glory. The law demanded that the soul that sinneth, it shall die, and in order that he might redeem his bride from under the curse of the law, he, the just One, must lay down his life, pay the full penalty demanded by the law, to satisfy the justice of God in cancelling the debt against his bride, the unjust one. To preach that he did this and that "there is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," is to speak comfortably to Jerusalem, to cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. It is by the experience of these things that we are crucified with Christ; nevertheless we live, "Yet not I," said Paul, "but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." It is when we are given to see that he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed, and that he is made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption, that our hungry souls can feed upon the bread of life which came down from heaven. "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit." God's people are living creatures, and except they eat his flesh and drink his blood they can have no part with him, for in him we live, and move, and have our being. We, too, must suffer, must endure the contradiction of the flesh, but when we are weak, then are we strong; when we are utterly lost, then are we perfectly saved.

"How strange is the course that a christian must steer,
How perplexed is the way he must tread;
The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
And his life he receives from the dead."

This kind of preaching saves them that believe; it finds those who are in the way, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and they are filled, or satisfied, with what the Lord has done.

"I am, saith Christ, the way,
Now, if we credit him,
All other paths must lead astray,
How fair soe'er they seem.

I am, saith Christ, the truth,
Then all that lacks this test,
Proceed it from an angel's mouth,
Is but a lie at best.

I am, saith Christ, the life,
Let this be seen by faith;
It follows, without further strife,
That all besides is death.

If what those words aver,
The Holy Ghost apply,
The simplest christian shall not err,
Nor be deceived, nor die."

We felt to take up our pen in defense of the truth, and have written for the consideration of those who know the truth. Jesus said to those which believed on him, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The Lord deliver us from error.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by sister Della Powers.)

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists, in session with Big Walnut Church, near Williamstown, Kansas, September 7th, 8th and 9th, 1923, to the churches composing the same.

DEARLY BELOVED IN HOPE:—We desire to comment upon the christian warfare as a basis for our Circular Letter. Though this subject is as old as christian experience, in fact being christian experience itself, it never grows old. In natural wars there must be two persons or companies at variance with each other, so in spiritual warfare there must be two, and they are the natural and the spiritual, the outward and the inward, the old and the new, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. The flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, causing the child of God to cry, "O wretched man that I am," "when I would do good, evil is present with me." The natural man, born by natural birth, by natural parents, the first in manifestation, is called the elder, and of him it is decreed that he shall serve the younger. He is not subject to the law of God, but delights in fading, fleeting, temporal things, while the younger, the new, inward, spiritual man, is made manifest when it pleases God in the fullness of time to reveal his Son in the chosen earthen vessel in which he dwells. As Paul said, it pleased God in the fullness of time to reveal his Son in him. This spiritual being cares nothing for the things of this world, but delights in the law of God, to which the natural, fleshly man is not subject, neither indeed can be. He, the elder, receives not the things of the Spirit. Instead of delighting in them as the inward man does, they are only foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are only spiritually discerned. The Spirit searcheth all things; the Spirit alone searcheth the deep things of God. If the natural man were born of the Spirit, and received and delighted in spiritual things, there would be harmony, and not, as it were, a company of two armies, continually at war. The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin." These dead cannot discern spiritual things, they cannot please God. Then how soul-cheering the assurance that our salvation is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Savior; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."—Titus iii. 5–7. The strongest evidence we have that we are partakers of the heavenly calling in Christ is our love for

the brethren; by that love we know that we have passed from death unto life. But when we all, like sheep, have gone astray, giving heed to the seducing spirit of the flesh, which fosters wrath, strife, envy, malice and all fruits of the flesh, then love, the greatest of all the fruits of the Spirit, is wounded, and we fail to show to all men that we are his disciples, by our love for one another.

"We fear, we faint, we grieve, we doubt,
And feel the load of sin."

But, dear kindred in Christ, let us look unto the hills, from whence cometh our help, look to him who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, according to his own purpose and grace, for we have painfully realized that by our own fleshly deeds shall no flesh be justified in his sight. How joyfully we can all praise and give all honor to him, saying, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory, because thou hast redeemed us by thy blood. "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name," because he has given us hope, an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, which all the venomous works of our old sinful nature can never destroy. How our souls leap forward at the thought of the time when we shall meet in heaven, our home, where not one sinful thought can come. This old flesh, born of the flesh, and is flesh, must be sown a natural body, and raised a spiritual body in the resurrection, changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ, then, the enmity between the flesh and Spirit slain, and the warfare ended, we shall be satisfied when we awake in his likeness. The manifold temptations which every chastened child of God often feels and fears has separated between him and his God, plunging him into darkness which can be felt, yet filled with longing for renewed tokens of his love, crying to God to keep him from the evil and the power of the tempter, all these sighings and mournings shall be left behind, with all our wars and fightings, and then shall we be

"Forever freed from doubts and fears,
There God shall wipe away our tears,
And lay our heads upon his breast,
And gently bid us sweetly rest."

And unto him be all the honor and glory and praise, forever and ever. Amen.

L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator.
MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Elders and messengers composing the First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists, to the brethren with whom we correspond, and to the saints scattered abroad, sends greeting and christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE:—A hope more precious to the poor and afflicted people of God than all the glittering crowns and kingdoms of this transient world. It has pleased the Lord to permit a little handful of us, the fewest of all people, to meet once more as an association. We truly feel to be a "remnant," weak and small, but we have been made, we hope, to watch over one another for good, and not for evil, and we have in so doing been given a joyful assurance that the Lord has been with us, and as one of old said, he can "save by many or few," so he also condescends to manifest his presence to the few, the two or three gathered together in his name, according to his promise. We have heard his name extolled above every name that is named, and man abased, so that we feel to say with the sweet singer of Israel, "My Lord: my goodness extendeth not to thee," but we do feel that his goodness

has extended down to us, in the outpouring of his Spirit, so that the preaching has been harmonious, and in demonstration of the Spirit and in power, and to the comfort and edifying of the body of Christ, and love in one delightful stream has evidently pervaded every heart. As an association, we have never felt more our weakness and inability to stand in our own strength; never felt more our need of the sustaining grace which the Strength of Israel alone can give; never felt more the need of the comfort he has at this time given us in the words that though persecuted we are not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the West Union Church, Shawnee County, Kansas, when, if the Lord wills to sustain and bless us to meet again, we hope to have with us as many lovers of the truth as may be enabled to come, hoping we may be of mutual help and comfort to one another.

Brethren, pray for us. Farewell.

Done by order of the Association, and signed in her behalf.

L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

ENCOURAGED.

1. BECAUSE of new subscriptions that are being sent in—as many as seven from one small church—something for others to think about.

2. BECAUSE of the response to our suggestion to send the SIGNS a year to those who will appreciate it, as a Christmas remembrance.

3. BECAUSE of the liberal contributions to the fund for sending the paper to the poor of the flock.

Did you, reader, have any part in the above? Are you willing to do your bit towards putting the SIGNS in the home of every lover of the truth? In union there is strength. Let us double the subscription list of our family paper during 1924.

R. L. D.

WATCH YOUR DATES.

WE wish to request our subscribers when sending in their subscriptions to see that the date on the little pink slip bearing their address is changed. If not changed, please let us know immediately (for that signifies you have not been given credit for the money sent) and we will look into the matter.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Amanda Melvina Miles, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life January 24th, 1924, at the home of her cousin, Mr. George Bennett, near Burtonsville, Maryland, in the 84th year of her age. She was the daughter of William G. and Ellen M. Miles, both deceased, and was the last of her family, her sister Julia having died in 1866, and her little brother while very young. Sister Miles was baptized by the late Elder Silas H. Durand in the membership of the Southampton Church, Bucks County, Pa. She was a great lover of the truth as it is in Jesus, a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation alone through sovereign free grace, and rejoiced in her conviction that God is one and supreme over all things. She was devoted to the church of her membership, and faithfully attended all the meetings until her precarious health prevented her further going. She was blessed with a good mind and a very retentive memory, and was especially well versed in the genealogy of the several branches of her father's and mother's families, with their ramifying connections, and was regarded as an authority in such things, and she had a keen interest in historical matters. Aside from this, she had a spiritual mind which loved to read the Scriptures and the spiritual writings of the saints in the present time and in past ages. Her health had not been good for many years, so that she had a long acquaintance with suffering, but she had that patience which tribulation works and did not murmur at her lot, and she did at all times greatly desire to be given grace and strength to bear it. We believe she is at rest and that all her pains are over.

Funeral services were held in the Southampton meetinghouse, the place so dearly loved by her, after which her body was laid in the family lot in the adjoining burial ground. L.

THE above obituary was sent to me by Elder Lefferts, saying he would be glad if I should feel to add something.

I first met sister Miles many years ago, but had seen her perhaps less than a dozen times since we first met. I knew her to be a most substantial Old School Baptist, firm in the faith of God's elect, satisfied with the goodness of the Lord's house. For a number of years she had been afflicted and had not lived in the bounds of the Southampton Church where her membership was. She had made her home at Burtonsville, Md., not far from Leesburg, Va. Elder Lefferts, brother Hobensack and I visited her last October and had a little meeting for her special benefit, and she seemed to enter into the spirit of it. She and Elder Lefferts were related by blood ties, he had known her all his life and she had known and loved him from his childhood. It was therefore perfectly natural and absolutely right that he was called to conduct her funeral services, and I want to assure him, and others concerned, that I, as pastor of the Southampton Church, am glad that he served.

H. C. KER.

W. R. Jones was born near Plano, Iowa, April 15th, 1870, and departed this life January 12th, 1924, at his home in Centerville, Iowa, at the age of 53 years, 8 months and 28 days. He was married to Miss Alice Oeneal June 12th, 1904, in Schuyler Co., Missouri, and to that union were born two children: Paul W. and Vernon M. He is survived by his wife, two sons, his aged mother, Mrs. M. E. Jones, of Plano, Iowa, four brothers and two sisters. The brothers and sisters are: his twin brother George, of Corydon, Iowa; Walter, of Promise City, Iowa; Guy, of Centerville, Iowa; Fred, of Plano, Iowa; Mrs. Ida Hibbs, of Unionville, Mo.; Mrs. Sylvia Davis, of Centerville, Iowa. His father, one sister and one brother preceded him in death. Brother Jones united with the Old School Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church called Providence, in Appanoose Co., Iowa, about fourteen years ago, and was an honest, upright and faithful member until death. He was ordained deacon October 20th, 1923. Brother Jones had been in poor health for several years, and told me before he was ordained that he felt unworthy to be ordained a deacon, but wished to be submissive to the church.

Funeral services were held at the church near the cemetery, a distance of about eighteen miles from his late home, conducted by Elder W. T. Walters, of Stahl, Missouri, and the writer, after which the remains were laid away in the Jones Cemetery to wait the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

ALBERT C. WOODLEY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Kenneth Finlayson, Can., $3.00; Lieut.-Col. J. H. Knifton, Ont., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

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ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk,

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Little Flock Church will no longer hold meetings at Park and 5th Streets, but for the present will hold them at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 494 East 10th Street, Riverside, California. We hope to have a place again soon, and when we do we will appreciate having our notice with you.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. S. MILLER.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND LATER WRITINGS

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 92. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1924. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WILLIAMSTOWN, Kansas, Jan. 9, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I feel quite unworthy to address you as brethren, but I trust you can bear with me. I have felt somewhat impressed to write a few lines for your consideration, and if you think it will be of comfort to any poor child of grace you are at liberty to publish it; or if for any reason you prefer not to publish it, it will be all right with me. The Scripture which I desire to notice can be found in Solomon's Song v. 4: "My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him." The writings of Solomon, as well as all other writers of divine testimony, are laid deep in divine wisdom, and can be understood only as it pleases our God to reveal them unto us. But when we read what any of the divine writers say concerning the hand of God it creates within a feeling of reverence to his most holy name, for we know that none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? The writing of this wise man is especially interesting, as well as comforting, to the dear people of God, because, first, he represents the bride, the church, as well as every member in particular; second, because he seems to be holding such sweet and close communion with his beloved, and the interchange of compliments as passed between them will not be regarded as flattery on either side, but as words spoken openly from a pure and honest heart. Many of the expressions of Solomon lead us back in memory to our own experience when first we saw ourselves lost and ruined sinners. "Look not upon me, because I am black," he says. How well do you, child of God, remember how awful was the scene when first your eyes were opened to see the corruption of your own heart. No one could frame words to suit your feelings better than these of Solomon: "I am black," not fit to be looked upon even by my fellow-men, much less by the pure eyes of God. And what a surprise we were to ourselves when we first saw ourselves thus. We had spent our lives in fancied security, feeling nothing of the weight and stench of sin, neither did we know anything of the joys of salvation. We may have spent our lives in innocent pastime, or honest toil, or we may have plunged deep into pharisaical religion with earnest zeal, and thought we were

verily doing God service, or we may have been outlaws, fearing neither God nor man, and seeking nothing but selfish interests; whatever our former walk of life, this one thing is certain: we never had seen ourselves so black, so sinful. Hence I say, what a surprise when the light shined within and revealed all the blackness of our polluted heart. Our whole being seemed but one polluted mass. We may have regarded our former conduct as exemplary and above reproach, but notwithstanding this with all this display of blackness and darkness we can only cry, Unclean, unclean. We pause and look backward now upon our past life, and we find it is one continuous scene of sin and transgression against a just and holy God. It is quite common with the Lord's people when they arrive at this stage of their experience to feel that something is due on their part; in fact, they feel that something must be done to appease the righteous indignation of God or they are lost world without end. We sought to win the favor of God by trying to keep the commandments, but found we could not do that. We sought to do good, but learned that in us, that is, in our flesh, there dwelleth no good thing. We sought to appear clean, but found we could not bring a clean thing out of an unclean. In all of our efforts, no matter with what zeal or energy they may have been put forth, this awful truth stood preeminently above every thing else: "I am black." Thus every dear child of God is made not only to see himsef a sinner, but he is made to confess the same. It pervades his very nature, he feels it lurking in his every move, motive or ambition. In a word, he realizes he is lost, ruined and undone, as one having no hope, and without God in the world. Dear child of God, can you remember when you came to this stage of your travail? Or can you remember ever having begged for mercy until you were brought right here? The Scriptures abundantly testify that salvation is by and through the mercy of God. It is therefore necessary that we be brought down low, so low that we will even smite upon our breast and say, "God be merciful to me a sinner." It is necessary that we be made to feel a real conviction of sin before we can pronounce God "just" in our condemnation. Indeed it is the design of God to teach his people the all important lesson that we are vile and full of sin, and he is full of truth and grace; that we should put our trust in none but him. As long as we were trusting in our own works, as long as there was a straw, as it were, for us to cling to, that was our hope, but, "as an eagle stirreth up her nest," these straws are removed little by little, until we are finally brought to see that our nest, our old restingplace, where we were nurtured and brought up, is no longer a place of repose for us. Our old nest of fancied security has become decidedly uncomfortable to us. The little eagle when he is thus deprived of everything, so to speak, finds himself alone upon the high precipice of the mountain, a yawning chasm before him, no food in sight, and apparently forsaken of the parent bird. He feels that he must do something. He plunges forth, but alas he finds he is too weak, his wings have not the strength to bear him to safety. Down, down, until death seems his certain doom, when oh, to his glad surprise, the parent bird comes beneath, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them and beareth them on her wings, and by her own strength, to safety. So the Lord alone did lead Jacob. So our "beloved put in his hand

by the hole of the door." Thus it is our heavenly parent that stirs up our nest. He shows us we are sinners, and shows us we are helpless to recover ourselves from that state. Indeed we come to the very place where we can see no hope of salvation, and as we give up all for lost we are given the sweet realization of the fact that his everlasting arms are underneath, and, as Solomon expresses it, "My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." What joy and surprise to us who have seen ourselves so black, now to hear our Beloved address us as, "My love, my fair one." But such is the complete work of our Beloved, our Redeemer. He gave himself for his bride, his church, his beloved, that he might present it unto himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. "He is the Rock, his work is perfect." Through virtue of his perfect work he persists in his attitude towards his beloved, and says, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." Had not our Beloved put in his hand, this gracious state never could have been attained to by us. "My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door." "Of the door," are words written in italics, signifying they were supplied by the translator, and I fail to see how they add anything to the weight or importance of the subject. I am at a loss to know how to construe those three words in harmony with the subject matter of the text. But, "My beloved put in his hand by the hole." I think this will apply to our experience better if we say this hole is a horrible pit, such as he found David in, or the great chasm from which he delivered the little eagles, for in such places is where he finds all his little ones. The horrible pit, the miry clay, how well we remember those places; that helpless condition we were in we can never forget. Here indeed our Beloved put in his hand. He inclined unto us; he heard our cry; he took us up also out of an horrible pit, and out of the miry clay, and set our feet upon a rock; he established our goings. He put a new song in our mouth, even praise unto our God. The hand of our Beloved did this. Our consolation is in the fact that as he did for Jacob, for Solomon and for David, so he does for all his little ones, for his mercy endureth forever. Men may boast of their progress and advancement in religion, but God's people know we are just as helpless as any of those whom he has set for an example to us. Dear trembling child, your condition was just as hopeless and just as deplorable as any of those, and many more who are mentioned in the Scripture, but your deliverance is just as complete as was theirs, for the hand of the same Beloved that was "put in" their case is "put in" in your case. You may have thought, perhaps you now feel, that you have strayed too far in the waste howling wilderness of sin; or you may feel that you are black, so black that you fear your Beloved will never look upon you, or you may have felt that you are in the pit so deep and are so begrimed with the miry clay that he never would take up such an one as you, but he was there with them, he is there with you, his hand is stretched out still. You may feel that you are small; indeed you may feel that you are very small, but we have not read in the Scripture of anything that is too small or too great for our God to perform his wonders upon it. "He taketh up the isles as a very little thing." This means you, dear child of grace. An isle naturally is a small body of land entirely surrounded by water.

How well this represents the afflicted and poor people of God. The waters, an emblem of tribulation and distress and affliction, they surround God's people on every hand. The beloved apostle has said, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." These he taketh up, and, like David, their feet are set upon a rock, and, like him, they sing a new song, even praise unto our God. Sometimes we falter in our uneven journey here, when trouble and distress roll in upon us, when we are stricken with grief or burdened with sin, but let us not be discouraged, for the hand of our Beloved is there. He measured the waters in the hollow of his hand. Our afflictions and distresses are measured to us, dear child of God, and each of us will drink just as they are measured to us by the unerring hand of God, and he alone doth know the full measure of our cup. It is enough for us to know his hand is there. He has declared by the prophet Zechariah, "I will turn mine hand upon the little ones," signifying that his hand covers every one of them. They are all in his keeping, and their steps are all ordered by him. Our race is set before us. It therefore becomes us who are running in this race to be ever looking unto him who is the author and finisher of our faith. Yes, his hand is turned upon his little ones. The imprint of every one is there on the palms of his hands, there is no danger of these falling away and being eternally lost, as we are sometimes told they may, for hear him say, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." Truly it pleases him to sometimes lay his hand heavily upon us, but have we received good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not also receive evil? In all his dealings with us, his people are made to confess that he is just and righteous in all his ways. By this we know that all things work together for good to those who love him, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Truly indeed our Beloved put in his hand by the hole. Hence he says by the prophet Isaiah, "Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged."

Time and space forbid enlarging further upon this sublime subject. Time and language would fail me to speak of all the wondrous work of the hand of our Beloved, but it may be briefly comprehended in this: He worketh in all things after the counsel of his own will. May we all be humbled under his mighty hand, and upheld by his mighty hand, and may we join in the song,

"Resistless Sovereign of the skies,
Immensely great, immensely wise,
My times are all within thy hand,
And all events at thy command."

L. L. SCHENCK.

RIDGETOWN, Ont., Jan. 29, 1924.

DEAR BROTHER VAUGHN:—I am inclosing an article I have written for publication in the SIGNS, and am submitting it to you to decide whether or not it is suitable matter for publication. It has been a long time since I have had an impression to write anything for publication, and should this present desire emanate from my fleshly nature it will be of no comfort to the readers of the SIGNS. I have been a long time in a dark state

of mind, and have felt that darkness was so dense that what I might write would be of no comfort to any one. The Scripture that is impressed upon my mind is recorded in John xii. 27, and reads as follows: "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour." The appointed hour for the Son of God to be betrayed into the hands of sinful men was near at hand. The fulfillment of the word of the prophet (Zech. xiii. 7,) was about to be fulfilled: "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." Judas Iscariot, who was destined to betray the Son of God, was present at this supper, and complained because of what seemed to him extravagant use of the costly ointment which Mary used to anoint the feet of Jesus. Judas Iscariot did not complain because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief and carried the bag and wanted the price of the ointment himself. We here see the cloud of divine justice hovering over the Son of God, who was soon to be betrayed into the hands of sinful men to do what God had before determined should be done. I now desire to look into the nature of the trouble that oppressed the soul of our dear Redeemer. First, it appears to me that there is presented in the language of the Son of God an evidence of two natures, human and divine, as he is declared to be verily God and verily man. It seems evident from the expression of the Lord of light and glory that there were both fear and meekness in his prayer to his Father to be saved from this hour. Here is manifested the weakness of the nature he received from the virgin Mary. The next sentence he utters is expressive of his divine nature, thereby setting forth the thought that he was with the Father before the world was, and that his infinite mind embraced the will and purpose of God, who sent him into a sinful world to do not his own will, but the will of him that sent him.

"But for this cause came I unto this hour." The great cause of all causes is the salvation of the Lord's people, and a cause that all the saints of God are interested in, a question that causes all to search their hearts and to review their past lives and daily search for evidence of his divine Spirit, which if found dwelling in our hearts will cause us to hope that we are included in the great plan of salvation. The poet asked the question that is often asked by the peace-loving and God-fearing: Am I his, or am I not? Does his Spirit dwell within this sinful heart of mine? Have I been sustained in past trials by his grace? Has the dear Redeemer loved me, and did he suffer for me? These thoughts often rush through our minds, then we begin to cast about for the evidence of that higher and purer life which one must possess if a child of God. There are plenty evidences of our natural existence, but that searching of heart is to find evidence of eternal life, and if eternal life, which is the sovereign gift of God, dwell within our hearts, it will be as soul-fruit that will be meet for repentance, and an evidence that we are included in the great cause for which Jesus came into the world, and for which he suffered and died upon the cross, the Just for the unjust. The mocks and scoffs of men, being robed with a purple robe, his sacred brow being pressed with the cruel crown of thorns, the false accusation of men, and all that he must endure until he expired upon the cruel cross,

stood open before his infinite gaze. Now the question arises in my mind, Was there any fear or dread of the dreadful stroke that the hand of divine Providence was about to visit upon his own Son? It appears from his earnest prayer to be saved from "this hour" that a certain degree of fear and dread of his suffering upon the cross seemed to cause him to shrink beneath its awful load. Here is brought to view the weakness of his flesh. While the spirit was willing, yet the flesh was weak, and he shrank from the exceeding suffering he must endure upon the cross. In the weakness of his flesh he is made like unto his brethren, touched with a feeling of their infirmities. How often the Lord's people are tried in the furnace of affliction, and how often arises in our minds the questioning, How will I stand the trying hour? Will grace be given to strengthen me for the trying ordeal that lies in my path? Was there such a thought in the mind of Christ? It is very evident that the things that troubled his soul were not the things of time and sense. The things of time often trouble our natural mind, but do they oppress our soul? We read that the sorrows of the world work death, so, judging from our own experience, the bitter waters that were rolling heavily over the pure and spotless soul of the dear Redeemer were not of this world, but a burden infinitely greater than any mortal man could bear weighed heavily upon his soul, the great burden of the sins of his people pressed him down as a cart loaded with many sheaves. We call to mind how heavy was our burden of sin, and how painfully we bore its load, and under its mighty weight, and feeling keenly its stinging pain, we were made to cry, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. But how small was our load compared with the great burden that oppressed the dear Lamb of God that should take away the sins of the world. "Now is my soul troubled." Not only the great burden of sin that oppressed him at that moment, but his future suffering also was open before him; his infinite mind at that very moment embraced all he must endure for the salvation of his people. If he was tried in all points like unto his people, there may have been in his mind some fear as to being able to perform the mighty work that lay before him. Truly he testifies of himself that the Son can do nothing of himself but what he seeth the Father do, for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. Is not this also expressive of his weakness, and in evidence of that nature he received of the virgin Mary? Through the weakness of the flesh he seemed for a moment to shrink beneath the mighty load he must bear in order to finish the work of salvation, and from the weakness of the flesh came the plaintive cry, "Father, save me from this hour." Just before he uttered those words he said, "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say?" Let us for a moment, if the Lord will, look at those words, "What shall I say?" How often are the children of God driven to the throne of grace, not knowing how to pray or what to pray for. How often those words of the suffering Redeemer are upon our lips: "What shall I say?" What can mortal man say but bow in humble submission, acknowledging, Thy will, O God, be done?

Just here I want to call especial attention to the above words, "What shall I say?" Was not all the suffering of the the Son of God appointed by the eternal Jehovah, and not one of those pains or fears or dread that troubled his soul could he escape and complete the work that

was laid upon him? Was not the Captain of our salvation made perfect through suffering? When we cast about and see the sinfulness of men in its dreadful wake, and hear the loud blasphemies of the so-called religious world, what shall we say? When we see men of our own-selves rising up and speaking perverse things, and drawing disciples after them, what shall we say? When we see the low estate of Zion, and the coldness and lack of love and fellowship existing among professed followers of the dear Redeemer, what shall we say? There is only one answer that I can find, and that is expressed in these words: The will of God be done. The very things that are transpiring, are they not a sign of the times that we are living in the last days? The word of God is being fulfilled, and all transpiring events come along in their order, that the word of God shall be fulfilled, for he is a wonder-working God, and his works are like him. The so-called religious world knows nothing of the trials of the Lord's people. They vainly profess to worship God, yet their hearts are far from him. They must walk by sight, for they have no knowledge of that faith that is the gift of God, by which the Lord's people believe in him and worship him, for he seeketh such to worship him who worship him in spirit and in truth. The salvation of the so-called religious world to-day is not the salvation of the Lord's people, neither is their savior the Savior of sinners. They profess to be saved by the works of the creature, but the Lord's people are saved by grace, through faith, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. "For this cause came I unto this hour." To save his people with an everlasting salvation, world without end. To accomplish this work of salvation a ransom must be found, a debt must be paid, the demands of a violated law must be satisfied, and who could accomplish this great and mighty work, and meet and satisfy every demand that was against the Lord's people but the Son of God, who is pure and holy and separate from sin, in whose heart no evil thoughts were found, in whose mouth there was no guile and who when he was reviled reviled not again? He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth, yielding himself without any resistance to the smiting of the sword that was awakened against him. As we follow the dear Redeemer to the judgment-seat of Pilate, and behold the dreadful scene that took place between those whited walls, we fail to find language to give expression to the many thoughts that arise in our minds. We know that that was the hour and power of darkness when Jesus was led away to be crucified, but their power could not exceed the purpose of God. Their bounds were set, their eyes were blinded and they knew not what they did when they led the Lamb of God to Calvary. The wrath of man visited upon the Son of God was to the praise of God in the triumphant victory of our blessed Lord and Savior over death, for in his death he destroyed him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

We now pass beyond the sad scene of the suffering of our adorable Redeemer to the dawn of a bright and glorious morning, when power of an endless life was manifested in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead and showed forth the victory over death, hell and the grave. Through the victory of the Lord Jesus

Christ over all the powers of darkness and the consequence of sin we have hope of the world of eternal glory. That by the same power that brought the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead our vile bodies will be changed at his second coming and fashioned like unto his own glorious body. "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Then will he deliver up the kingdom to the Father, that God may be all in all.

Submitted for your consideration.

J. B. SLAUSON.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Jan. 22, 1924.

DEAR SISTER OSBURN:—You, and the rest of the good people identified with the Middletown, New Vernon and Brookfield churches, are often in my mind, and I look back with pleasure to the seasons we have been favored to spend together. In the providence of God my wife and I have been separated from you all, but the tie in the truth is of a character that binds us together. Your letters to my wife have been read with much interest, and I can but feel that the Lord has been (and is still) with you all. What a truly wonderful relation the people of God bear one to the other in the Son of his body, of his flesh and of his love. Members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones; it is in this relation that they are one in him. Apart from him they are nothing, and less than nothing. He is the head of the body, his church. The manifested members of this body are those who are taught by the Spirit of God, and are made partakers of the hope and joy that is found in the gospel (glad tidings) of his mercy and grace. It is at times a comfort to remember that the number of the elect (manifested) is known to God, who chose them in his Son from before the foundation of the world, and he will not leave a hoof behind, but will bring them to witness his glory, and bring them off more than conquerors through him who loved them and gave his life for them, that they may have a perfect and complete view of him, and be forever with him. While tabernacled in the flesh this perfect and complete view will not be granted; in fact, we could not survive it, but is in store for each and every subject of divine grace. There are seasons (for the most part few and far between) when we have a slight glimpse by faith, but we seldom get beyond this. It would seem that this glimpse was more pronounced during the season of our first love than it has ever been since. I recall a conversation had with the late Elder Benton Jenkins, after I had been in the church a few years, in which I bemoaned the fact that I was in a cold and listless state, and expressed the hope that I might soon again experience the joy and peace that were mine when I became identified with the church in her visibility. In a kind and brotherly way he assured me that I never would experience that first love again. At the time it was hard to believe, but I have learned from bitter experience the truth he uttered. If we could always be babes in Christ, where would we find fathers in Israel? No, it is a growth in grace and in the knowledge of God our Savior. The more we grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ the more we grow in the knowledge of ourselves. This latter knowledge is just as needful as the other, lest we become high-minded, and forget the source from whence cometh all (not part) of our mercies.

The meetings in New York are both pleasant and profitable. We feel that

Elder Dodson's gift is growing, and certainly we do not know what the churches in the Warwick Association would do without him. Next Sunday he goes to Warwick, and Elder Walker, from Philadelphia, comes to serve the church here. Truly the outlook among the churches is not at all encouraging, but it must be the purpose of God that matters are as they are, or it would be otherwise. I am inclined to think that just here the doctrine of predestination fits in, and we do well to test the matter as to our full belief of this portion of the doctrine of God our Savior. The Captain of our salvation is still at the helm, and in his own time and way will bring about and fulfill all his purposes. I think we have to leave the matter just there. May the faithful few remain faithful.

I have read with much profit Elder Lefferts' editorial in the last issue of the SIGNS.

I am glad to advise you that I am well again, and look forward with pleasure to seeing you all on our return to Middletown. I doubt if we go home before May 1st next.

In gospel fellowship, your brother,

R. M. STRONG.

MONROE, Ga., Oct. 18, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I would love to tell you all about our associations. They are now all over for this year, the last one being our own, the Oconee. We attended six of them, and all seemed to be lovely, except one, which was made a little unpleasant by one of the visiting ministers who wanted to "unify" us by telling us that the faith of Elder Gilbert Beebe was extreme on predestination, and condemning those of us who profess to believe as did the late Elder Beebe. This failed to "unify" some of us who had loved that doctrine before this criticizing preacher was born. According to the first Minutes of the Oconee Association, in 1837, the clerk was directed to have the proceedings published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, showing thus at that time our accord with the principles advocated by Elder Beebe. In 1854 the Oconee opened correspondence with the Warwick, Delaware River, Delaware and Baltimore Associations; the Ocmulgee and Yellow River Associations did the same. We have been in perfect peace and harmony ever since, with Elders Joseph L. Purington, William L. Beebe and J. G. Eubanks living with us for many years during that time as pastors of several of our churches. Now, at this late date, for any one to come to any of these associations and condemn the doctrine of those Elders and of our former Moderator, the late Elder D. W. Patman, and of the late Deacon D. F. Montgomery, all of whom visited these associations before many of us were born, and to hear younger ministers saying it is never too late to correct the mistakes of our fathers, is indeed very unpleasant to some of us, to say the least. If they want two or more salvations, or limited predestination, or that God merely overrules the wicked with no purpose in what they do, we are willing for them to have their doctrine and keep it to themselves. We want none of it. Some of us are not willing to change yet, and shall not be later. It is inclined to make us stronger in the old doctrine of the apostles, and of such men as Elders Beebe, Purington, Chick, Durand, Eubanks and others whom we love and cherish, even the sweet memory of those who have passed away, and we want to prove it by again coming up north next spring to those as-

sociations. We feel that the truth needs no "unifying," and that truth and error will not mix.

Your brother in hope of life,

JAMES M. ADAMS.

LITTLESTOWN, Pennsylvania.

DEAR FRIENDS:—I have often desired to write and tell you I am still the recipient of your kindness, and again thank you. I hope I am truly grateful to our Father, as well as to yourselves, and hope you may long be spared to comfort the weak and weary. I little thought when my name was put on the free list that I would be a burden so long; so many weary years of nervous suffering, with no brother or sister in the flesh or Spirit to comfort, yet I still have my God, my Savior, who can save unto the uttermost. Nothing but an all-sufficient Savior can do me any good, for I am ever straying, never showing forth the marks of the Spirit, which are love, patience, &c., but it causes sorrow, which makes me feel I have the witness within, and is that not above all blessings? Yes, yes. Truly the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. Thirty-eight years ago I was placed in the liquid grave by Elder Chick, who was truly a pastor as well as a preacher; but he has gone to his reward. God's ways are past finding out.

Since writing the above I was more than glad in reading in the SIGNS the lines under the heading "Encouraged" to know the pure hearts had been stirred up.

Pardon me for writing so much. I often have the desire, but the mind is weak as well as the body. May God's blessing rest upon you all for your kindness.

I remain gratefully yours,

GEORGIA D. ENGLAND.

MARTINDALE, Texas, Dec. 18, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed money order for the sum of six dollars, to apply on my subscription for the dear old SIGNS. I enjoy reading the SIGNS more than any religious paper, and it is a great comfort to me to read the many experiences the dear saints write. I hope to live to see it published many more years. The preaching of the truth is what counts with God's people. The world at large is so far from it in practice, as well as religiously and politically, that it seems to cause God's people to hunger for seasoning of the food.

We are having regular meetings now on the second Sunday and Saturday before in each month, conducted by Elder C. Thomason, and invite all Old Baptists of the same faith and order to visit us when convenient.

Yours in bonds of peace,

J. L. JENNINGS.

A COPY of the SIGNS, dated "Alexandria, D. C., May 19th, 1837," has come into our possession. In the "List of Agents" are shown two hundred and twenty-one people who were authorized to solicit subscriptions for the paper. After nearly eighty-seven years, how many new subscribers would we get in 1924 if two hundred and twenty-one people would actively try to get subscriptions? Let each church or community select a man through whom to report. Some of our readers do not have checking accounts and it is inconvenient to obtain money orders, but they could easily hand the amount over to one who has a checking account to send in for new subscriptions or renewals, thus insuring promptness in their dues and material aid to the publishers. Can we count on your cooperation, kind reader? R. L. D.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1924.

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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JOHN XV. 14, 15.

"YE are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends: for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."

Having meditation regarding the love and friendship of the Lord's people we quote the above as a basis of remarks to write unto you, our friends. Jesus expressed the first sentence, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you," which calls us to note the mutual love existing between Christ and his people, who are members of his body. They, being members of his body, are active in the body in accord with the mind, as the living Head commanded. The doing of the things commanded is but the action of life in his people. The action of life is not produced by a dead body, hence we must be alive to have active life. Man in nature is dead in trespasses and sins, and hath no spiritual life until he is quickened by the Spirit, and in this spiritual life is given understanding, and the Spirit maketh manifest the spiritual man which is in obedience to the Son, even as the Son is to the Father, and all the commandments of the law of the Spirit of life are in the heart and mind of every child of grace, which identifies them as his friends. What great love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the friends of his Son, and having that love for his commandments which constraineth us to be obedient children. The cause of Christ embraces fellowship, order and faithfulness in his house, and all these are commanded by him in his Spirit, of which we trust we are partakers. Henceforth his Spirit taketh of the things of his and showeth them unto us. The child of grace has the mind of Christ, and the relation of obedience rendered by the Son to the Father is in the hearts of all the subjects of grace, and whatsoever he commands they do, and are a unit in action as they are led by him as their Shepherd, and they do what he doeth; as sheep of his pasture, they feed, and know he feedeth, and none other can give that food, for it cometh from the treasure of heaven, and none can give it but the Son. His friends know the things committed by the Father to his Son, and he hath made known unto us all things that he heard of his Father. The Father commanded his Son, and his Son was obedient to his Father in all things commanded. Jesus declared that he came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him. Jesus taught his disciples in word and act, and by the revelation from the Father they knew he was the Son of God, and the works manifested were beyond the power and comprehension of the natural man. The disciples of Jesus were spiritually minded, and all the commands of Jesus were felt and reverenced, by which they could say, "Thou hast the words of eternal life." Dear brethren, as we are united in the body, and every member of special use, we feel we want all to be present and feel the love one to another flowing from

heart to heart. When the light of grace shines in the walk and conversation of an individual, all who see light rejoice in the light, and a special friendship is felt for the one who walketh in the light. This one perhaps has had a hope but a short time, yet is bearing fruit unto God through Christ, and we know it is a precious fruit, because of its sweet and delicious flavor. Having the sweet and precious fruit borne upon the tender branch, we are continually questioning, Why do they not come to the church? not realizing they must wait the Lord's time. When they feel the power of his word, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done," they are made willing in the day of his power. We feel Jesus is a friend to the sinner, and one who never leaves nor forsakes, but keeps and saves with an everlasting salvation; where his Spirit ministers it is a sacred place. Jacob, when he lay all night with a stone for a pillow, and saw, as it were, a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, and the angels of God ascending and decending upon it, though restless and weary, yet, with the presence of God, he could say, This is none other than the house of God. The members of his body as his house are to each member as the poet expresses, "There my best friends, my kindred dwell, there God my Savior reigns," and if possible we would forever be in praise, and enjoying the sweet fellowship of the saints. We do not wish to be separated from them.

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

Dear brethren, it becometh all as followers of him to be faithful in every good work, keeping in mind the admonition of Paul to Timothy: Study to shew thyself approved unto God. In all deliberations as children of light their light shineth forth from their hearts, and others see of their good works and glorify God. Their good works are the working out from their hearts, which God hath worked in them, both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and not the works of natural man. We can often sing, My dearest friends in bonds of love, whose hearts in sweetest union prove, &c.

We have some feelings along this line of thought we cannot express, but we hope the Lord hath commanded us, which enables us to realize a heart-felt power incomprehensible to the carnal mind, and we know we cannot find him out by searching, but continue hoping unto the end. We desire in our conversation, either oral or written, to be mindful of the friends Jesus had in mind when he spake. All people with whom we are surrounded that we are blessed to live peacefully with we call our friends, and are in this natural life, but not of the spiritual, though one might be both. Dear friends, may we be kept in that dear uniting love that will not let us part, and may it be felt in our hearts that we can say, Come thou with us. May those who have gone after other gods, whom we have felt were of us, be made to know the friends of Jesus, and to those who have not been given strength may it please God to give strength for their day in trials, and may we be favored to see them coming home to Zion with song and everlasting joy upon their heads, doing whatsoever he commanded them.

C. W. V.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Deacon Harvey J. White.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 17th, 18th and 19th, 1923, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—We hope we feel thankful to our Lord in giving us the privilege of meeting together in love and fellowship to receive your messages and messengers of our sister churches, and of the various meetings with which we correspond. We welcome all in love and unity with us. Jesus commanded us to "love one another; as I have loved you." Therefore, brethren, may we dwell together in humbleness and humility before our Lord and Savior. May our visiting ministers have the blessing of God upon them, and may they be given the tongue to preach the wondrous truth as it is in Jesus. We hope we feel thankful for all these blessings, and that we have the privilege of hearing this truth preached to us as it is in Jesus, the giver of every good and perfect gift. May this be a meeting of joy to all who are assembled with us, and may the dear Lord bless each and every one with lovingkindness, and shower his grace abundantly upon the little ones. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." It is good to every hungry soul to meet together and partake of the feast of fat things spoken of by the holy men of old, and so ably preached by his servants this day. All these things are for our good, our joy and our comfort, that we may praise him and love him, for indeed he so loved us. All glory be to him, for there is none other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. Brethren, may we continue to dwell all the days of our lives in the house of the God of our fathers in Israel: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and at last be taken unto himself in that heavenly home, where his people shall dwell with him and see him as he is and be like him, and so live with him and in him forever and ever.

Our next session is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, beginning on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1924, and continuing three days. At that time we shall hope to be favored with a goodly attendance of your ministering and other brethren, bearing unto us messages of good news and laden with the holy unction of the Holy Spirit, that our souls may again be refreshed by your presence among us. Our desire for spiritual Israel is that the church of God scattered throughout our land may be encompassed about with the angel of his saving presence, and that the risen Christ may be the glory in her midst. The Old School Baptist Church of this generation has a great work to perform in standing for the faith once delivered unto the saints, in these days of falling away, if only the grace of God may strengthen us to be faithful, and to not weary in well-doing. May we set our faces as a flint against all errors and delusions of men, quit ourselves like men, be strong, not shunning to endure hardness, that we may prove ourselves good soldiers of Jesus Christ, fighting the good fight of faith, laying hold on eternal life.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.

K. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Joshua L. Mellott, deacon and clerk of the Fairview Old School Baptist Church, at Needmore, Fulton County, Pa., died February 9th, 1924, at his late home on Pleasant Ridge. He was one of five children, the son of Isaac Mellott and Mary Lake, and was born February 19th, 1850. He is survived by two brothers: Caleb, living near Hustontown, Pa., and Enoch, near Hancock, Md. He was married to Miss Mary Mellott, the daughter of Dennis and Miriam Mellott, December 19th, 1872. Six of his children survive him, as follows: sister Miriam Mellott, of Hustontown, Pa.; Unger Mellott, of Hyndman, Pa.; Mrs. Maria Hess, of Pleasant Grove, Pa.; Thornton Mellott, living with his father on the home place; Thomas Mellott, living near Johnstown, Pa.; Mrs. Edith Garland, of Needmore, Pa. He was baptized in November, 1872, by the late Elder Thomas Rose into the membership of the Fairview Church, was made deacon in 1900, and was elected clerk in 1915. He served his brethren faithfully and well, was faithful in attendance at all the meetings, unless prevented by illness, and has been known many times to be at the meeting under such adverse circumstances as would have daunted many others. He loved peace and the prosperity of the church, was devoted to its welfare and was firm in the doctrine of the infinite omnipotence of God, and of salvation by grace. Brother Joshua had the respect of all who knew him, and was known to be a good, reliable citizen, and a kind neighbor.

The funeral services were conducted by his pastor, the writer of this notice, in the meetinghouse at Sideling Hill, using as a basis the fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians, after which the mortal remains were interred in the cemetery adjacent. We have a hope for him that he is at rest in the paradise of God. May the Holy Ghost comfort the bereaved church and family. L.

John Brimson died at his home in Remsen, N. Y., September 7th, 1923. He was born in Trowbridge, England, January 2nd, 1846, educated in the common schools near his home, and when seventeen years of age went to London, where he remained several years. He came to the United States in 1869, and found employment in New York city, where he remained about a year, then went to Syracuse, N. Y., where he was employed in a meat market. He went to Whitesboro in 1878 and opened a meat market, which he successfully conducted until 1910, when he retired, and moved to Remsen. He had been in failing health for several months. He was married to Esther Poile, of Delphi Falls, April 14th, 1872, who survives with one daughter, Mrs. R. May Jones, of Remsen, two granddaughters, one brother, of Whitesboro, and three sisters residing in England survive. Brother Brimson was baptized the first Sunday in July, 1878, by Elder S. H. Durand, at Utica, N. Y., and was a member of Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church of Utica until 1898, when that church consolidated with Otego Old School Baptst Church, when his membership was transferred to Otego, where he remained a much loved member until called to lay his armor by and dwell with Christ at home.

Funeral services were held at his late home September 10th, conducted by his pastor, who spoke words of comfort to the sorrowing widow and friends. Burial was at Whitesboro, his former home.

ALSO,

John Martin Boes died at his home, in Los Angeles, Cal., October 27th, 1923. He was born in Hesse Cassel, Germany, October 4th, 1835. After receiving his education he served a four years' apprenticeship at the jewelry manufacturing trade. He came to the United States in 1854, locating in Newark, N. J., where he worked at his trade two years, going from there to Albany, N. Y., in 1857. In 1864 he enlisted and went to the front, serving until the end of the war. In 1866 he went to Utica, N. Y., where he established himself in business as a manufacturing jeweler and diamond setter. He was a member of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church of Utica until 1898, when that church consolidated with the Otego Old School Baptist Church, and his membership was transferred to Otego, where he was a member the remaining days of his life on earth. He, with his wife, went to California to live in 1905, and that has since been their home. Brother Boes was buried at the Soldiers' Home in Sawtell, California. He was married to Bertha Schlapfer, August 27th, 1860, who together with six children: Clara, of New Hartford, N. Y.; Mrs. Charles Pfeifer, of Utica; John, of Salt Lake City; William M., of Los Angeles; Frederick W., of Chicago, and Francis C., of New York, survive. He is also survived by fourteen grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Sister Boes is left lonely indeed. She writes his mind was much on the Scriptures, and on the things above, and he longed to go, and felt the end of all things was near. It was his desire to go quickly, which desire was granted, for he was reading in the SIGNS in the evening, and died at one o'clock in the morning. May the Lord reconcile us to his will.

Written by request.

ROSE T. LEONARD.

Brother **B. F. Pyles** departed this life at his home, near Campbellsburg, Ky., September 27th, 1923, aged 79 years. He was married to Miss Mary Coplinger in 1872, and six sons were born to their union: William and Jess, of Kansas; Otis, Sennate and B. Pyles, of Campbellsburg. W. Roy preceded him to the grave. Brother Pyles first united with the church at Providence, Ky. He joined Sulphur Fork Church, by relation, about 1890, and was a faithful member until

his death, and was always found at his church meetings as long as able to attend, and willing at all times to discharge any duty placed upon him by his church, and was sound in faith and practice. He was a good, quiet, moral man, as well as a faithful brother, and kindness shone out in all he did with his family and friends. We feel sure our loss is his eternal gain. We believe his soul is resting in the paradise of God to await the resurrection, when he will see Jesus and be like him, and forever dwell with the Lord. The church has lost a faithful counselor and friend, a place is vacant in our home that can never be filled. He leaves a wife, who, although not a member of the church, at all times has been faithful to it, also his sons, and it is good to meet and counsel with them. May God in his grace ever smile upon them, for he is gone to his final resting-place, where we hope to meet him, where there will be no death or parting.

The funeral was conducted at the home by his pastor, Elder P. W. Sawin, of Shelbyville, Ky., and his body laid to rest near his home in Campbellsburg Cemetery. There was a large gathering of kindred and friends present to pay their last respects to their departed loved one.

Your brother in christian love,

ERNEST F. RANSDELL.

Mrs. Eliza Susan Byrd, wife of L. J. Byrd, of Hallwood, Va., departed this earthly life, February 11th, 1924, at the Pine Bluff Sanitorium, near Salisbury, Md., where she had been a patient since last October. She was born July 6th, 1861, at Mearsville, Va., and was the daughter of Julius and Susan Young Mears. She never united with the church, but was a lover of the truth as it is in Jesus, and a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. She made a special request that the writer of this notice be asked to conduct the funeral services, and that hymn number 1217, "I would not live alway," be sung at the grave. The high esteem in which she was held was shown by the large congregation assembled to unite in paying their last tribute of respect to her memory. She had been a sufferer for several years, but now all her trials are ended, and we believe she is at rest. Besides her beloved companion she is survived by four daughters: Mrs. A. W. Lewis, of Loretta; Mrs. Walter Nock, of Salisbury; Mrs. G. B. Hall, of Hallwood; Mrs. A. N. Rose, of Central Falls, R. I.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer, after which her body was laid in the family lot near Hallwood, Va. May the Lord comfort and reconcile this family to his will.

J. C. MELLOTT.

WITH sorrow we notice in our columns the deaths of the following: Elder W. L. Rogers, of Cleburne, Texas, was called home January 31st, 1924. Sister Eubanks, wife of Elder J. G. Eubanks, passed away February 15th, 1924. Brother Joseph B. Howell, of Middletown, N. Y., was struck by a train while on his way to meeting Sunday, January 27th, 1924, and died the following day.

A suitable obituary of each of the above will be published when received.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Mary Murphy, Va., $2.00; L. D. Rose, Texas, $2.00; Duncan R. Black, Canada, $2.00; Elder I. W. Bowers, Texas, $1.00; Robert Turner, Calif., $3.00; Mrs. Amos White, Mich., $2.00; Miss Altha Drake, N. J., $1.00; A Friend, N. Y., $6.00.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Little Flock Church will no longer hold meetings at Park and 5th Streets, but for the present will hold them at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 494 East 10th Street, Riverside, California. We hope to have a place again soon, and when we do we will appreciate having our notice with you.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. S. MILLER.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 92. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1924. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ISAIAH XLII. 16.

"AND I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."

The above prophecy is full of wonder to the blind. It is evident that this prophecy is to Israel; that is, the prophet was speaking to the house of Israel. There is no doubt this is a figure, or type, and did and does embrace spiritual Israel (the church) in her travels in this gospel day, for the prophet begins this chapter with the mark of attention: "Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles." This can have reference to none other than Jesus, our blessed Redeemer, and this being so we see that the Gentile is embraced in those who are led in a way they have not before known. There are three things in this text I wish to notice. First, the leader, the one who says, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect," is God, and he says, I will bring the blind. No conditions nor ifs in it. Oh how precious is this positive declaration. No wonder Paul says the gospel of Christ is the power of God. No wonder it comes to the blind in demonstration of the Holy Ghost and in power. No wonder it comes with such assurance to the poor soul who feels ready to fall by the way, and says to him, You are not your own keeper, but are kept by the power of God. I am glad that Wisdom away back in eternity saw and prepared such a safe and sure way for these poor blind pilgrims who have no abiding place here, but seek a country where all the shade will be removed from their eyes and they will be blest to see their blessed Leader as he is and be like him. This anointed of the Father says, I am the good shepherd, and my sheep (the blind) hear my voice and they follow me; they know not the voice of the stranger. Bless the dear Lord for this understanding the blind have to hear and know the voice of their leader (Jesus), and we just as truly thank his holy name for making us (the blind) deaf to the voice of the stranger. Dear, blind brethren, lift up the drooped head and receive strength for the feeble knees, for our God blessed this same old prophet to see this way so secure and sure that one,

though a fool, should not err therein. Now we come down to the day and time when this blessed prophecy began to manifest itself, and let us (the blind) gaze upon the great mystery, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not," a way which they had never traveled before. Oh how beautiful is the way. Angels, with the heavenly host, awakened the shepherds who were watching over their flocks by night and led them in the way (Bethlehem), and their eyes (the blind) saw the way. I am, says the Anointed, the way. In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and was God made flesh. As we follow him in the way every step is taken in wonder and amazement. It is a new way, it is God's way, and his way is as high above man's way as the heavens are above the earth. We see him in Simeon's arms, and hear Simeon bless God for what he (the blind) saw: God's salvation, and hear the old prophet say that he (Jesus) was a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Israel. Simeon saw here what Israel saw many years before. Now as we start out in this way let us note the great mystery in the way, but in this let us not lose sight of the surety of the way. I will have to pass over many of the waymarks, on account of space, but before I leave the babe I want to notice some of the crooked things which are in this way, also the darkness that shuts it out from the wise and prudent of this world, but he who leads the blind reveals it unto babes. We see Joseph and Mary take the babe and flee into Egypt (darkness). Why did they go? Because he who said, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not," said, Go. What! the God of the whole earth running for his life? Yes, Herod will seek his life. Right here in the beginning of the way is a place so dark that nothing but the light of the Spirit which Jesus says shall guide you (the blind) in the way can penetrate, and so crooked that the world, with all its boasted wisdom, can never find or get one of these blind ones. Now let us go back to the Father of this blind nation, Abraham, who is the father of all the faithful. See him when called out. Though blind to the way he staggered not at the promise of God, but went out, not knowing whither he went, and sojourned in the land of promise, but it was a strange land to him. Here is evidence that he was led in a way he had never before traveled, but while it was a new way to him he did not stagger, and the reason he walked uprightly was because the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob did lead him, and there was no strange god with him. It is said that the sheep know not the voice of the stranger. Oh how my poor soul does rejoice while traveling this mysterious way to find these immovable monuments of the faithfulness of our blessed Leader, who knows all the way, and who makes all the mountains of doubt as level as the valleys, and makes straight all the crooked ways that come up in the mind and heart. Dear ones, all this heavenly host of blind pilgrims was completely hid in the seed of Abraham, for in his seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. When this had come it was declared by the angels that this good news should be to all people, and as we journey on in the prophetic day we see them all stop and wonder with great admiration at these blessed waymarks. Take old Jacob, to whom this blessed promise was confirmed, after he had spent a life in this way, and had proved the faithfulness of God, his great leader, he could look back and see how wonderfully God had straightened

all the crooked places and smoothed all the rough places. While passing through many of them he felt they were against him, but the dear Leader could show him, as he did Paul, that all things were working for the good of all the blind who loved this way and were called to walk in it. Then please note Elijah, the old prophet, in this way felt in his very soul all his companions had been killed and that he was left alone with his enemies. Oh how rough and crooked was then the way to him, but God, faithful to his promise, removed every obstacle by showing him that he had reserved seven thousand who had not surrendered to his enemies, and the young prophet Elisha (the gospel church which followed Elijah, the church, under the law) saw him as he traveled in this highway, saw him go up in a chariot of fire drawn by horses of fire. This, to my mind, represents the fiery trials and afflictions through which all God's children must travel in this world. As we behold the dear church of God, which embraces every one mentioned in the text, in their fiery afflictions, singing as they go, we glory in tribulation, because it worketh patience, and in no way can the path of the weary souls be made smoother and straighter than to have patience to wait upon their dear Leader, knowing his faithfulness to all his blessed promises to his chosen and called. If we could see the end of the way (purpose of God) there would be no mystery, but our text truly teaches that this way was made for the blind (redeemed) to walk in, and they possess two natures: the Adamic, or carnal, which is enmity to their divine nature, which is spiritual. The gospel of God, which is Jesus, leads and guides us in the way of truth. The carnal mind was received from our earthly father, Adam, and is so corrupt it cannot understand the things of the spiritual way. Satan is ever present with his deceit, and tells us that God, who leads us, doth not know. Jesus, who is the way, was not exempt from this great deceiver, but God the Father prepared for him a body which was to atone for this blind nation, who should be led in this sure way. While he was tempted in all points as his brethren, yet without sin; that is, the Spirit was given to him without measure, and he was able to resist all temptation and live a holy life, and in this he fulfilled the law, and all this blessed blind nation was in him, and he bore their sins in his own body and nailed them to the cross. If the knowledge of him and this blessed atonement had stopped at the cross we would have been like the apostle who said, If in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable. But the promise in our text is that he will make crooked ways straight and rough places smooth, so let us wait upon the one who promises. We have now followed him as far as we can, and unless he rolls away the stone that has the king's seal (death) upon it we never will see the way. How true it is that we, like Israel, who came up to the great waters of the Red Sea, must stand trembling and wait for God's salvation, and, according to his promise, his angels on the appointed morn come and roll the stone away and the seal of death is broken and the eternal sun shines forth in all its glory and lights up the highway, and makes it so plain through the gospel which brings life and immortality to light. The prophet's vision is now made plain, for we see the blind as they are journeying and communing on the great mystery, the crooked and rough way. This eternal Light which is to remove everything that blocks the way appears,

and shines with such glory it causes the heart within to burn with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Please look and listen to this wonder. Jesus says, What is it troubleth you so? With astonishment and wonder they say, Are you a stranger in Israel and know not the things which have taken place? O my soul, see how wonderful is the teaching of this Teacher. What things? Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God, and we had hoped he would redeem Israel, but to our great disappointment they have crucified him, and this is the third day, and some bring strange news to us, saying he is risen. "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" He began at Moses and the prophets and straightened and smoothed the way so these blind and fools could not err in the way.

I must now leave this glorious subject, with a short exhortation to the blind to watch for the footprints of the flock who walked this good old way, and be not carried away by the new ideas that are now being manifested among the flock. The gospel tells of these, and says, Go not after them, for they are designing men. They have men's person in mind, and not the welfare of our beloved Zion. In all your troubles rest with faith in your great Leader, for he has promised to bring us off more than conquerors.

Dear brother Lefferts, I have written some of my thoughts on the way in which God leads his people in this poor world of sin and sorrow. Look it over and if in your judgment there is anything in it that would give it a place in our precious paper you can publish it, but do not publish if you see anything that would not be for the good of our beloved Zion.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. T. BARNES.

MILTON, Oregon.

ACTS XVII. 30.

"AND the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent."

Why repent? Because God judges the world in righteousness. Who by? By Jesus Christ, who was before ordained for this purpose, and he is the only one capable of judging the world in righteousness.

"The times of this ignorance God winked at." What times? Of what ignorance was Paul speaking? While the Jews were the only nation at that time who had the law of Moses given them, yet they were in ignorance, because they did not know the Man whom God had appointed to judge the world in righteousness. Christ came to his own, and they received him not: his own, that is, the Jews. That was the time of ignorance with them, because all had sinned and had come short of God. The law of Moses did not change their minds, did not give them eyes to see nor hearts to understand that Christ was to bless all nations, that in Abraham's seed all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. The Gentiles also were in ignorance when they were worshipping idols. The nations of the earth were in ignorance while dead in trespasses and in sins. Paul was treating on God's purposes. He here was declaring the true and living God to them on Mar's Hill, seeing them still in their ignorance, showing to them that God had made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of all the earth, and had determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitations. This agrees with God's promise to Abraham, in blessing him and his seed among all the families of the earth. God had set their bounds and their places to dwell on the face of all the earth. Paul, being stirred in spirit

to see God's promise, and the time for his promise to be brought to pass, could say by the Holy Ghost, Now God commandeth all men everywhere to repent, not only the Jews as a nation to repent, but all men, Jews and Gentiles alike, because all have sinned, and God grants repentance alike to all men, to the whole house of Israel embraced in God's promise to Abraham, and embraced in the covenant between God and his Son, the Man ordained to judge the world in righteousness. They were commanded to repent, not while they were in a dead state of ignorance, in that ignorance which God winked at. He took notice of their ignorant state, pitied them, remembered his promise to Abraham, and now his promise must be fulfilled in exalting Christ a Prince and Savior to give repentance and the remission of sins to the house of Israel. The law covenant passed away and the new covenant came into force. God's promise is kept. Now all men everywhere repent, because God's promise is sure to all the seed, all the elect of God, all the living; for God is not the God of the dead, but of the living: of Abraham, Isaac and of Jacob. This is the time in which God has commanded his people to repent. This is the day of salvation, the accepted time. When you have heard his voice, harden not your hearts. Under the law they could and did harden their hearts, but not now. As Peter said, What was I, that I could withstand God? The apostle said, If you hear his voice. He did not say, If you do not hear his voice. His sheep hear his voice, and they that hear, live. Every one everywhere who hears, lives. They who hear, follow him. Therefore, it is all the living everywhere who repent among all nations of men whom God made of one blood and appointed to them their dwellings and habitations in which to dwell on all the face of all the earth.

JAMES W. LINN.

HAMMOND, W. Va.

KINGSTON, New York.

DEAR SISTER RUSTON:—It is with a deep feeling of unworthiness that I attempt to write you, or address you as sister. While I feel the brethren and sisters are very near and dear to me, I very often feel to be unworthy of a place among them, but it seems for the past few weeks I have been strongly impressed to write you some of what I trust has been the Lord's dealings with me, also what I feel to be my experience, if I have any. Sometimes I feel fully satisfied, and feel to praise and thank God for what he has done for my poor soul. It was a great comfort to me Sunday to see that one come forward. It took my mind back to the time when, I trust, I was made to come to the church and confess Christ openly as my hope, my salvation, my all, and to tell the brethren what a strong desire I had to be with them, but I felt so unworthy, and I still feel that way.

This was the way I long had sought,
And mourned because I found it not;
My grief, my burden long had been
Because I could not cease from sin.

Dear sister, I know if I write as my mind runs to-night it will weary you, for I am thinking back over my travels, or a part of them at least, back when it was first made known to me I was a sinner. It was when I was a child about eleven years old. I had a dream; I thought I was in an old building; it seemed to be a very old house, ready to tumble down. I seemed to be alone, and thought I looked toward the door and saw some one approaching. He was very fair, and I

thought it was the Savior, or Jesus, as I dreamed it. I thought he looked beautiful, yet when I fully realized it was he I was afraid, and crouched down in the far corner to try and hide myself from him. Then I awoke, and could not understand why I dreamed such a dream, or why I was afraid of him. In the morning after breakfast I again thought of my dream. I went out the back door, and a little way from the house was a knoll. While I stood on that spot it came forcibly to my mind that because I was such a sinner was the reason I felt to hide myself from him, and that house that was in ruin was my own poor soul, I was a wreck. I began to look over my past life and every wrong I had ever done came before me. Well, from that time I made a vow with myself that I would never again do anything I ought not to, but I could not get rid of that burden. There were times when I felt more burdened than others, but I felt that instead of growing better I was growing worse. I would find myself praying as I went about. Sometimes I would pray for mercy and pardon, but I had such fear I did not dare to fall on my knees to pray for fear God would strike me dead. It seemed it would be mockery for me to approach him in that way, but as I was going about I would cry, O God, have mercy on me; save or I perish; keep me as the apple of thine eye, and from the hands of wicked men. These are the words I used to utter. I would go to the meetings, and loved to hear the Savior talked about and set forth as a complete Savior, for I felt sure it would take a Savior of that kind to save one so vile as I, and at times when the Elder or brethren would be talking I would be made to weep in spite of my efforts to restrain my feelings. I did not want any one to know how I felt. Sometimes they noticed how badly I felt, especially if they talked on experience. I could follow them until they came to tell of their sins being forgiven, then I was left in the dark, for it seemed there was no hope for me, but I trust God in his own time and way showed me my sins were forgiven, and I was made to rejoice with joy that was unspeakable and full of glory. When I was about eighteen years of age my burden was so heavy one night that it seemed I could not endure it or live through another night; I thought if I died hell would be my doom. I felt I would like to see Elder Clark and talk with him and tell him how terrible I felt before I went, for I knew he had hope for me, for he had spoken to me at different times. I thought he would preach my funeral sermon, and perhaps would think I was happy, and I did not want any one deceived, so I sat down and wrote him that night, then in my agony threw myself across the bed and fell asleep. Well, some time during the night I dreamed I saw a stream of water, and a large flock of sheep near the stream. They had been washed and were as white as snow, all one whiteness. Some were still in the water, and Elder Clark was leading them out, and I saw the Savior then as the good Shepherd of the sheep. This Scripture then came to me: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." I awoke feeling my burden was gone, not knowing what had happened. Old things had passed away, and, behold, all things had become new. I rejoiced for some time, and in the morning asked them not to mail the letter. I burned it. I was away from home at the time, and

went about my work singing. Before that I was ashamed to sing in public, and told them I could not sing. They thought some strange thing had happened to me. Well, I had a short season of rejoicing, then I began to doubt. This thought came to me: You saw all those sheep that had been washed in the water and in the blood of the Lamb, Christ Jesus, but you did not see yourself as one of the sheep. Then I was plunged in the dark, and doubts and fears began to arise. I went on in this way for about four years, then I was very sick. While I was lying in bed I was exercised very much. It seemed I had received the word with joy, but the world and cares of life had choked out the better joys, and the parable of the sower came to me, causing me considerable anxiety, and finally my mind was led to join the church, that I was to take up His yoke and follow Him, so I thought that if my life were spared I would go and tell the church what I felt the Lord had done for me, if I was not deceived. Then came my unworthiness again, but in the Lord's own time he brought me to the fold, with believers enrolled, with believers to live and to die, but I am still a poor wayfarer. It would take me all night, perhaps, to write all that is running through my mind of my travels as I have been led.

I hope you all are well, and enjoying the presence of the Savior, for in his presence there is fullness of joy, and at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore. I am feeling better. I did feel that my time here was short; if so, I trust and hope the Lord will give me dying grace, and bless those who are left behind. I hope no one will mourn for me.

Your sister in hope,

LIZZIE SECOR.

COLUMBUS, Georgia.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—There is a desire in my heart to write you, and I hope the desire is from the Lord, and that he will guide my pen, that what I may write will be in honor and praise of his most holy name. Surely I have been enabled to appreciate the spiritual food the great Shepherd has enabled his under-shepherds to give out to his afflicted poor people through the columns of our dear old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, a blessed medium of communication for the redeemed family of grace, coming twice each month laden with glad tidings of great joy, comforting and encouraging the wayworn pilgrims in the way while sojourning in this wilderness world. Fifty years, and more, I have been reading the SIGNS, and I feel sure I love the glorious doctrine it sets forth, and the Lord's dear children who fill its columns with words of praise and honor to God, our Father, with a pure love. I often go to my pile of old SIGNS, back as far as 1885, and read them, and find them filled with the same glorious doctrine of God our Savior, and love and sweet fellowship of the saints, as to-day. How peculiar that they never grow old, telling us of the old, old story of Jesus and his love; just suited to this peculiar people. I can truly say, I have no confidence in my poor ability to write anything of value, but can truly say that I am able to feast upon the letters and editorials in the SIGNS. It seems to me we need to-day, more than we ever did, something that will stand immovable for the doctrine, the truth and the faith of our fathers, and my hope is that you, and the associate editors of the SIGNS, may continue as you have, saying, Salvation is of the Lord, preaching Christ the way, the truth and the life, making the way

plain. Cast up the highway for the Lord's people, taking oversight of the flock, for ye are the Lord's ministering servants. Oh how thankful the Lord's dear children are for these gifts, the Lord's ministers, to expound the Scriptures to them, instructing them, watching over them, comforting and encouraging them in the way. What glorious things to dwell upon. Like David of old, I would say, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer." There are times when it is most sweet to be enabled to meditate upon the things of the Lord, and to have a view of his might and majesty, to be taught something of his most holy character and glorious attributes, but these things are known only as he is pleased to reveal them unto us by the shining light of his Spirit in our hearts; and this light that makes known unto us his divine perfection also shows us our vileness and imperfections. I trust God has made known unto me that I am altogether vile, and have been made to cry out, Unclean, unclean, and have no power to cleanse myself. Still we pray for deliverance from darkness and the sins of self-righteousness, for here we are able by divine grace to view our King in beauty and holiness, and ourselves, as Solomon describes us, as nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity. "Without me ye can do nothing." This truth I never want to lose sight of, that he alone can keep me, and that he alone is my Savior, now and forever. I love to think of him and rejoice in him, having no confidence in the flesh, for we know that if we live after the flesh we die, but if through the Spirit we mortify the deeds of the body we live. The one desire of my heart is to trust in him in all things at all times. He has been my helper in times past, and often I have felt to rejoice in him, which is a comfort the world knows not of, neither can they take it away. May God grant us grace to know and do his will, and give him all the glory.

Write on, dear brethren, for you are of those to whom it is said, Cast thy bread upon the waters, and after many days it shall return unto you. Write on, for when you feel to be saying the least in your writing you know not the message of comfort and cheer you are sending some poor hungry pilgrim. The SIGNS is surely to me as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, coming as it does richly laden with the Master's goods to the poor, hungry, thirsty children. There are times when I feel so alone, isolated as I am, there being no church of our faith and order near, that I may hear the preached word and be in the sweet company of my best friends. "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." I look on my table near-by, and there I see a stack of the dear old SIGNS. I begin to read these precious letters, written to one another, and soon feel to be in their midst, joining them in praise to the Lord.

May God bless you and the associate editors and publishers to continue the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES many years to come. Remember me to the dear Baptists whom I met when at your home a few years ago. We are all anxiously hoping you will visit us again soon. Come this summer and bring your family and pay us a long visit. Love to Mrs. Lefferts and loved ones.

In christian bonds of love,

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

THOMASTON, Georgia.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I beg the sweet privilege of addressing you thus. I am sending herewith money order to pay for one year's subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to be sent to E. A. Gordon, Thomaston, Ga. I have been taking the SIGNS about six months, and, if I know anything, I indorse the truth as set forth in its columns. It may look strange to the world for me, being raised as I was (all due respect and reverence to my dear old parents) in a Missionary home, and taught their faith, to be contending for the absolute sovereignty of God; and it seems strange to me, since I never heard an Old Baptist preach until I was twenty-seven years old. It only proves that God works everything after the counsel of his own will and none can hinder. I enjoy the letters and writings of all, especially the dear old weather-beaten patriarchs who have weathered so many storms of life, thereby having more of their dross consumed and their gold refined.

I will not crowd out more wholesome writings by taking up your space. Pray for one who feels like one alone, but hopes for a better life through Jesus Christ.

JULIUS J. LACKEY.

PARSONSBURG, Maryland.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a new subscription for the SIGNS, our dear old paper that is loved for the manner in which it so ably sets forth the teachings of our Lord and Master. We who have the privilege of its perusal should take the very, very good and timely suggestion of Elder R. L. Dodson, and exert ourselves a little, and show the appreciation we have for the labor and sacrifices of the editors and publishers. This is from one who cannot see self as he sees others. I was baptized by Elder A. B. Francis the second Sunday in June, 1894, in the fellowship of the little church of Forest Grove. I thought at that time I was done with sin, and that my troublous forebodings were at an end, but alas, how sadly mistaken I was, for the corruptions of sin are all that this poor sinner can see in self, but by the mercy of a dear risen Redeemer I, even I, entertain a little hope in that great plan of salvation by grace, and grace alone.

GEORGE W. ADKINS.

A COPY of the SIGNS, dated "Alexandria, D. C., May 19th, 1837," has come into our possession. In the "List of Agents" are shown two hundred and twenty-one people who were authorized to solicit subscriptions for the paper. After nearly eighty-seven years, how many new subscribers would we get in 1924 if two hundred and twenty-one people would actively try to get subscriptions? Let each church or community select a man through whom to report. Some of our readers do not have checking accounts and it is inconvenient to obtain money orders, but they could easily hand the amount over to one who has a checking account to send in for new subscriptions or renewals, thus insuring promptness in their dues and material aid to the publishers. Can we count on your co-operation, kind reader? R. L. D.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in March (30th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1924.

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MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

"SHALL there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it."—Amos iii. 6.

The "evil" here spoken of means troubles, calamities, afflictions, adversities, trials, disasters, &c. None of these things could be in any of the cities of Israel, or of Judah, except the Lord did it. No enemy could ever touch the Lord's chosen to hurt them without the Lord directed and sent that enemy against his people. This declaration is addressed to the children of Israel, as is apparent from the first verse of this chapter, and the prophet of the Lord here reminds Israel that they are the chosen people of God, whom he brought out of Egypt, and that of all the families of the earth the Lord had chosen, or "known," none but Israel. Because they were the Lord's, therefore he punished them for their iniquities. No other people was dealt with after their sins as Israel. The heathen could engross themselves in idolatry and wickedness and prosper therein, but not so Israel. God had made a covenant with them by Moses, and every transgression of that covenant carried with it punishment. Two could not walk together except they were agreed. Of these two, the Lord was one; the other was Israel. There could be no walking together of the Lord and Israel with their sins separating between them, therefore all these evils brought upon the cities of the chosen people were the Lord's work, to punish them for their transgressions. However the great defect of the old covenant was that no matter how much punishment might be visited upon Israel because of iniquity, no real reconciliation was ever effected that way. Not until Jesus came and the sins of all the elect of God were visited or imputed upon him, not until the blood of Jesus had atoned for all those transgressions, was real reconciliation brought about between God and his people. The law never did, and never could, reconcile God's people to himself. It took an infinitely better covenant to do that: the new covenant in the blood of Jesus Christ. Under this new covenant the elect of God have their troubles and afflictions, all of which come, not by chance or accident, but are sent by the Lord to his people, not to reconcile them to his will, but as evidence of their reconciliation. No other people in all the world have the trials and temptations which the Lord's people have. They do not have them because they are not included in the reconciling bond effected by the work of God and his people, but the children of God are sent these trials as proof of his love for them and of his choice of them. The Lord chastens whom he loves and scourages every one whom he receives. Without these things the elect have no evidence that they are the Lord's. The lion never roars except he has prey; no bird can be caught without a snare to catch him; no trumpet is ever blown but the people know there is cause for alarm; therefore, no evil ever comes to the city of God except there be a

cause, and that cause is God himself, and he brings the evil to his city because that city is his elect, loved as no other city is, and she needs correction or rebuke often to remind her of the ministry of reconciliation wrought out for her in the glorious and victorious work of her Lord and Savior.

"O LORD, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear?"—Isaiah lxiii. 17.

To err is to wander from the ways of the Lord. The ways of the Lord here mean the precepts of God as set forth in the law of Moses. God so made man in the first place that it was not possible for him to keep in the way of the Lord; that is, to maintain himself in obedience to the law of God as delivered to Israel by the hand of Moses. The fear of the Lord is to hate evil, this hatred of evil does not reside in the natural heart of man; yet God made that heart, and, in making it, it was his design that the natural heart should never naturally hate evil or reverence that which is divine. Now, the text asks a question: Why is man made so as to err, and why is the heart made hard against the hatred of evil and the reverence of God? The answer plainly is, as is the answer of nearly all Old Testament questions, that had it been possible for man to keep himself from erring, and had it been natural for the human heart to reverence and fear the Lord, there never would have been any necessity for any better covenant than that of Moses, nor for the coming in the flesh of the blessed Son of God. Nearly all these questions find their answer in the coming and in the work of Jesus. It was because salvation could not come by the law, because man had not the power within him to save himself, that Christ came and was made in all things like his brethren, the elect of God, in order to take out of them the stony heart and give them a new heart, a heart which could and would reverence and fear the Lord, thus making a new creature in Christ Jesus, who would delight in the law of the Lord and who would not willingly want to err from his ways. No one of all the Lord's people will dispute the fact that human nature is sinful and depraved. That being so, this depravity certainly did not originate from a monkey, but from the first man Adam. This first man was the creation of God, and all that this first man ever developed was in him when God made him. While man was made upright, he afterward fell into condemnation; there must, therefore, have been in him at the beginning the inclination to fall. When this inclination to fall met its opportunity in the temptation brought by the subtle serpent, then was sin fully developed. Had the first man been created with no inclination within him to yield to temptation, then all the temptations which the serpent might have brought to bear never would have made a sinner of him. Without these imperfections in the first man, and in the progeny of that first man, there never could have been revealed the perfection of the Lord from heaven in the second Adam, and in the children of the Lord Jesus Christ. This, then, answers the question as to why man was made to err from the ways of the Lord, and why his natural heart was hardened from that holy reverential fear which is the beginning of spiritual wisdom. No proper conception can be had of all the predestination of God unless we have faith given us to see all events linked together from the beginning unto the end in one wonderful unbreakable chain of divine wisdom directing all things.

"I MAKE peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things."—Isaiah xlv. 7.

Taking this expression in connection with its context, we see that it particularly refers to the uprise and prosperity of the kingdom of the ancient King Cyrus, commonly called the great. The wonderful power of Cyrus, and the marvelous spread of his rule all over that eastern land, was explained by the fact that the Lord did it. Without the power of God there could have been no Cyrus, nor his strong empire. The fourth verse tells that it was for God's elect's sake that Cyrus was raised. God used him to deliver Israel from their captivity to Babylon. In the first place, it had been by the power of God that the Babylonian empire under Nebuchadnezzar had been strengthened and prospered to such an extent that its ambition could not be appeased except by the conquest of Jerusalem and by the captivity of Israel. Never could the Babylonians have gained the ascendancy over God's elect Israel had it not been by God's will and power. But Israel had become very corrupt, and had strayed far from the paths of the fathers, and from the law of Moses. This was God's way of chastising Israel for her sins, by giving her over into the hands of the heathen for a time. This was an evil thing, and so it seemed to Israel, but God did it. Who can dispute it? Just as it seemed evil to Israel for the heathen to hold sway over them, so it seemed an evil thing to Babylon for Cyrus to gain the ascendancy in turn over them and to bring the glory of Babylon to naught. Yet this evil, too, God did. The first evil meant the carrying away of Israel into captivity, the second evil meant the deliverance of Israel from captivity under the favor of Cyrus; the first seemed an evil to Israel, the second was an evil to Israel's enemy. The Lord's work never fails, whether that work be to cause the clouds of night to gather thick and dark about us, or whether it be to scatter that darkness by the all-conquering rays of the oncoming light of his salvation and glory. The God of peace is the God of the whole earth. To make peace is to effect a reconciliation between two opponents. When Israel was in her own land it seemed good to her to walk in her own counsels, so she forsook the holy precepts of God. It took an evil dispensation against Israel to reveal God's judgment of her. Afterward down in Babylon, when she would have served God, she found her harps hung on the willows and her heart sick with alienation from her own land. It often takes this to make us appreciate our blessings. Many times we complain and rebel with God's goodness in us and all around us, yet are we not satisfied; but when these blessings are taken from us, then do we mourn our loss and repent us of the stubbornness of our carnal nature. As it took an evil dispensation against Israel to correct her idolatry and waywardness, so it took an evil dispensation against Babylon to return Israel, a remnant of her, to her own land again. Of these evils the Lord was the Creator. He brought about the growth and prosperity of Babylon under the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, and he likewise brought about the development of the empire of Cyrus by which Babylon was vanquished. By both these evils Israel was benefitted. It is just as true today of spiritual Israel as it was then of national Israel, that all the growth and decline of earthly kingdoms and powers redound to the good of the church and to the glory of God. God does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. The army of

heaven is the church of the living God, the inhabitants of the earth comprise those whose dwelling is wholly in earth, and who have no part in the holy city. God's will is done in all the affairs of the kingdom of heaven, likewise his will is done in all the affairs of the earth. All these things so come about that there is no mischance or misfits, but every thing is in his time and place. God has a time for everything, and everything is in its time and place, all at the right instant, never too soon. How safe we poor sinners are with such a God as this to watch over us and to care for us. If only we might have faith, and ever more faith, to be not so unbelieving. L.

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George W. Adkins, Md., $1 00; R. J. Hall, Va., $1.00; John Davis, La., $8 00; Thomas W. Records, Mo., $2.00; Mrs. S. A. Bird, W. Va., $3.00; Sarah J. Clegg, Pa., $1.00; Thomas C. Roe, Md., $6 00; E. G. Webb, Kans., $5.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Wm. Leroy Rogers was born in Jackson County, Alabama in 1838, moved to Franklin County, Tennessee, where he was married to Mrs. Sarah Grove. They came to Hood County, Texas in 1872. To this union ten children were born: Samuel D. Rogers, of Des Moines, N. Mex.; Mrs. Eliza Macy, of Clovis, N. Mex.; J. C. Rogers, of Des Moines, N. Mex.; George Rogers, of Flaxon, Okla.; J. A. Rogers, of Mountain Air, N. Mex.; Mrs. Druza Meyers, of Abiline, Texas; M. N. and C. C. Rogers, of Sweet Water, Texas; J. B. Rogers, of Mountain Air, N. Mex. One child died in infancy. The mother of these children passed away at their home in Johnson County August 17th, 1892. In 1894 brother Rogers married Mrs. M. S. Donaldson, of Blum, Texas, who survives him. When twenty years of age brother Rogers entered the ministry of the Primitive Baptist Church, and has been faithful to his call, and served his church until the last two months. Elder Rogers died at his home in Cleburne, Texas, January 31st, 1924, being nearly 86 years old. Brother Rogers had been in failing health for two or three years, but bore his afflictions with patience, and when asked how he was getting along would always say, Very well. The writer heard brother Rogers preach over forty-two years ago. He was an able minister of the gospel, and stood firm on the doctrine of predestination, as advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and was a great friend of that paper. Elder Rogers requested the writer to conduct his funeral service. The funeral was held at his home in Cleburne, February 2nd, in the presence of a large congregation, then we went to Fall Creek Cemetery, eighteen miles west of Cleburne, near his old home, and there met another large congregation gathered, and after a short service in the church-house we laid his body beside his first wife, there to await the resurrection morn. Sunday at 11 o'clock, a memorial service was held in the old Confederate Soldiers' Hall, at the Court House in Cleburne. We feel sure that our precious old brother is gone to rest with Christ forever. We hope to meet the dear old brother where parting is no more. May God bless all who mourn.

SOLON GIPSON.

Sister **Mary Massey Eubanks,** wife of Elder J. G. Eubanks, died at her home in Newark, Del., Friday, February 15th, 1924. She was born November 20th, 1844, near Union Court House, about twenty miles north of Columbia, S. C., where she lived with her parents until she was about eight years old. From there they moved to near Lost Mountain, Ga. Here she united with the Sorrel Spring Church, Cobb Co., Ga., about the year 1874, and was baptized by Elder Newton Eubanks, a cousin of her husband. She had

been a patient sufferer for years, being afflicted by a goitre and a weak heart. She dreaded the monster death, yet said, "I am not afraid to die." Her faith was firm to the end. She believed in salvation by grace alone, and lived this belief all her days. She is survived by her husband, five sons and four daughters: Hassel and James, of Louisville, Ky.; Benj. T., of Newark, Del.; Beebe, of Washington, D. C.; O. P. Eubanks, of Wilmington, Del.; Mrs. H. H. Townsend, of Chester, Pa.; Mrs. N. W. Lee, of Philadelphia, Pa.; Mrs. Georgia Pyle, of Hudson, Kan., and Miss Eugenia, who lived with her parents and faithfully served them all her days. Sister Eubanks will be missed by all who knew her, but most of all by her constant companions, her husband and daughter Eugenia.

The funeral services were held from her late residence. The day was very stormy, which kept many from attending the service. However the house was well filled, which showed the esteem in which she was held. Interment took place in the Welsh Tract Cemetery, near Newark, Del. We believe she is at peace and rest. May the dear Lord comfort the bereaved family, and sustain us all by his grace.

J. C. MELLOTT.

James Lindsey Miller was born June 24th, 1868, and died February 4th, 1924, aged 55 years, 7 months and 11 days. He was the son of the late George P. and Agnes E Miller, born at Newark, Del., in the old Welsh Tract settlement, near the present site of the old meetinghouse. He never felt worthy to come into the church, but all his days he believed in salvation by grace, and has said more than once that it can be nothing but the grace of God that can save a sinner. About twenty-two years ago he was in the German Hospital, at Philadelphia, Pa., between life and death, after an operation for appendicitis, and after his restoration to health told us at home that he had been visited by a revelation from God that he was a sinner, and from that time was given a hope in Christ, yet he never after was given strength to come to the church. He was stricken in health, and died suddenly. After being at his office he started to walk from his office to the station at 52nd Street, Philadelphia, and dropped dead. Interment was at Welsh Tract Cemetery, February 8th, after services at my home, in Newark, Del. Elder J. G. Eubanks spoke feelingly of his death.

His brother,

JOHN B. MILLER.

Elizabeth Turrell, the subject of this sketch, was born October 6th, 1844, and died February 23rd, 1924, aged 80 years. Sister Turrell for the past year had been in failing health, and several times had expressed the desire to go from this world of sin and sorrow and meet her Savior. Her hope was strong, and the last time I saw her, which was shortly before she died, she said, I long to go. The Lord is good, and will not leave me now, and I long to go and be at rest. She was a very devoted sister in the church, always present, until prevented by sickness. We will miss her counsel. Her place is vacant, but we mourn not as those who have no hope. For her to live was Christ, and to die is gain. Her husband, who preceded her to the place of eternal joy, died April 29th, 1920. Beside the church, she leaves two sons and one adopted daughter: Dr. Turrell, of Cleveland, Ohio; David Turrell, of Mentor, Ohio; Mrs. Lillian Grosvenor, of Detroit, Mich. Hymn 1246 (Beebe's collection) was read by her request, and I spoke from Rom. viii. 38, 39, to the friends who had gathered. May the Lord bless them that mourn.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

Albert Manning, only son of Ephraim and Caroline A. Manning, died February 19th, 1924, aged 60 years and 17 days. He was a useful and noble man, and loved by all who knew him. He will be greatly missed, but none can miss him as his immediate family. He was a kind husband, a good father, a dutiful son, a faithful friend and a friendly neighbor. I never remember his giving me a cross word. O how I miss him. But all the skill of the best doctors could not keep him here. Everything that kind hands and loving hearts could do was of no avail. There is a time to be born and a time to die. None can stay the hand of God. He leaves a wife, one son, one sister and his mother to mourn their loss. May God give us reconciliation and cause us to say from the heart, Thy will, not mine be done.

CAROLINE A. MANNING.

Edwin F. Readhimer was born in Bienville Parish, Louisiana, December 6th, 1872, and was married to Miss Ola Pullin November 29th, 1896. He united with the Oak Grove Primitive Baptist Church, Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana, November 3rd, 1906, and was baptized by the writer. He was ordained deacon July 6th, 1918, which office he filled to the comfort of the church, and, we hope, to the glory of God. He was also clerk of the church for several years. He was faithful in attending his meetings and associations, also the district meetings, and his presence was a comfort to the children of God, and now his absence brings sorrow to their hearts, but the Lord knows best. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." His body was laid to rest in the Saline Cemetery, near where he was born and raised. The unworthy writer tried to speak words of comfort to a large and attentive congregation. He leaves his dear wife, mother, several brothers and sisters to mourn his absence. May the good Lord bless them and comfort their poor hearts, and give the dear wife

and mother strength to bear their afflictions and sorrows. May his sweet love abound in their poor hearts, and may they feel in their hearts his presence and care over them, is the prayer of the writer.

Written by request of the dear wife.

J. J. WHITE.

My dear brother, **Absalom M. Vore,** passed from this life January 28th, 1924, at his home in Bucyrus, Ohio. He was the son of Jesse and Katie (Mussar) Vore, and was born in Center Co., Pa., in 1840. He moved with his parents to Crawford Co., Ohio, in 1859. He leaves a grief bowed widow, also one daughter and two grandsons, of Marion, Ohio. He was the oldest of five living children: a brother, Lewis H. Vore, three sisters, Mrs. F. W. Fralick, Mrs. Alice Moore and Mrs. Mary Pittman, of Havana, Kans. He was universally esteemed as a man of the highest character, and his high ideals and many deeds of kindness won for him the love and respect of every one who knew him. We mourn not as those who have no hope. He received a sweet hope in Jesus in early life, and at the time of his death was a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

He was laid to rest in the mausoleum at Bucyrus, Ohio.

His sorrowing sister,

MARY (VORE) PITTMAN.

Little **L. C. Shipman,** the infant son of Elder J. W. and May Shipman, was born December 3rd, 1922, and departed this life February 19th, 1924, making his stay here on earth 1 year, 2 months and 16 days. He was the ninth child, and leaves to mourn his death, father, mother, two sisters, five brothers, one brother having preceded him in death. He was taken with measles and pneumonia, and was only sick about one week when the Lord of heaven saw fit to take him out of his suffering. Oh how we miss him, but we are made to say, like the prophet of old, Blessed be the Lord that giveth, and blessed be the Lord that taketh away.

Written by his heartbroken MOTHER.

Joshua Cross was born December 18th, 1853, and died January 5th, 1924. January 4th he started from his home to go to the home of his daughter, Mrs. W. D. Parsons, and on the way was stricken with paralysis, and died in a few hours. He was united in marriage to Sarah Phillips, and to that union were born eight children, four boys and four girls. He leaves a widow, two sons and three daughters to mourn their loss: Calvin and Frank, Mrs. W. D. Parsons, Mrs. John Moore and Mrs. W. J. H. Wright.

Funeral services were conducted Sunday, January 6th, at the home of Mrs. W. D. Parsons, by Elder Jerome Polling, who spoke words of comfort to the sorrowing ones, after which his body was laid to rest in the cemetery, there to await the Master's call.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Little Flock Church will no longer hold meetings at Park and 5th Streets, but for the present will hold them at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 494 East 10th Street, Riverside, California. We hope to have a place again soon, and when we do we will appreciate having our notice with you.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. S. MILLER.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

PORTALES, New Mexico.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending you an answer to a letter I received from a man in the east. He wrote, "Love God and love man is the sure guide to happy living on this earth, and to whatever is best for us hereafter. Everything else is more or less in doubt; nothing more so than some of the doctrines you are surest of." He quotes Matthew xxii. 37, 39: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," &c. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." 40: "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." The law, and all the prophets, and all of the glory of the Father's house were hung upon the nail that was fastened in a sure place. That nail is Jesus. Isaiah xxii. 23, 24: "And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house," &c. The law was a part of the glory of the Father's house, because Paul says, 2 Cor. iii. 7, 8: "But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?" "For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." Luke xvi. 16: "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached." It is plainly set forth that we are not obligated to keep the law; none but the Savior did or could keep it. Our salvation depended upon his being able to keep the law. He loved God with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself. All the glory of his Father's house was hung upon him, and he had the power to fulfill the law, and kept it perfectly. It demanded perfect and perpetual obedience. He said, No man taketh my life from me. I have power to take it up again. In the first place, this party who wrote me cannot do what he thinks he can, and no one else can. Then if our eternal salvation depends upon something we cannot do we are lost, unless it is so arranged some one else can do for us what we cannot do, and his doing is credited to us. Unless what the one does who is able to satisfy

the requirements of the law is imputed to us we are lost. This is exactly what was done for us when the Savior came. By his righteous living, death and suffering on the cross in the garden, and by his resurrection, we were eternally saved, and absolutely by nothing else. "So by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."—Rom. v. 19. Again, "Much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." Man cannot do what the law says, so it is written, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."—Rom. viii. 3. This man the world thinks can keep the law is dead, blind, and cannot hear what Jesus says. Jesus asks, "Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word."—John viii. 43. Paul says, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14. There has got to be something done for these helpless, lost, ruined God-hating people, and God is the only one who can do what is needed to be done for them, and every time they are told they can love God, and are free to choose, and it is just left to them whether they will serve God or sin, and are free to choose between God and Satan, it is causing them to trust in man, whose breath is in his nostrils. The Bible says, "Vain is the help of man," and, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." No wonder crime is on the increase, when they are told all they have to do to be saved is to say three words, which are, I accept Jesus, and that God will save them if they will let him. This causes the alien sinner to say, I will go on and have a good time, but as I can turn round and go to God, and as he is so anxious to save me he will do it, this doctrine is licentious. Let us see what God has promised to do for his people who cannot break away from Satan: They walk "according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." Isaiah xlii. 16: "And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." Did you ever hear anything more glorious than this promise? God has to draw them, because they are under the control of Satan and do not know it, and cannot deliver themselves from the power of darkness.

You say, "God does not want us to love him because he compels us to do so." I did not say God compels us to love him, but his love compels us to do things. His love moves us to action. All men naturally hate God. Paul says, "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."—Rom. viii. 7. Isaiah liii. 3: "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not." These men you say ought to love God hate him, and no man has ever loved God until God has shed his love abroad in his heart. Therefore Paul says, Romans v. 5, "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us."

Again, 1 John iv. 7: "For love is of God; and every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God." 1 John ii. 29: "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him." Every one ought to know that love controls us, instead of thinking we exercise it, and they would were they not drunk on the blood of the saints, and controlled by the wine of the beast, and were not in the school of old Jezebel. So it is written in Revelation, Because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel to teach and to seduce my servants, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. It is the power of love that causes people to cast themselves over precipices, and into rivers, and destroy themselves rather than to be separated. Many strong minded men have lost their reason because disappointed in love. The noble man's daughter fled with her lover. Her father caught up with them at the arm of the sea. The ferryman risked his life on account of her entreaties. The waves were rolling, white caps breaking, when her father saw the great danger, he cried out "Come back, come back, my daughter," but he was too late, she and her lover and the ferryman went down beneath the awful waves, and to their long eternal home. It was love overpowered her father's anger. If natural love is so strong, what must the power of the love of God be? "God is love." Song of Solomon viii. 7: "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would be utterly contemned." If God is love, as the Bible says, it is clear that there is no power equal to the love of God. Paul says, 2 Cor. v. 14, "For the love of Christ constraineth us." "Constrain" means to compel. Let this be quoted, "The love of Christ constraineth us," until it reverberates and resounds over every vale, leaping to every mountain top, reaching back and forth, rolling along in thundertones, smashing the doctrine of free will, scattering its advocates as chaff before a cyclone, resounding as with heaven's trumpet, until every child of God on earth shall take up the text and repeat it, while heaven breaks forth in unison with all the redeemed of God on earth, while spiritual cords in every heaven-born soul's heart tremble with rapturous joy and gladness, while tears of glorious emotion flow down the weather-beaten, furrowed cheeks of the people of God in all lands, while the heralds of the cross repeat this glorious truth in all countries where the glorious gospel is preached; in harmony with Paul saying, "The love of Christ constraineth us," and tell the church of God that the word "constrain" means to compel, and therefore an alien sinner will not turn his back on the pleasures of this world until this love compels him to do so. As Ephriam said, Jeremiah xxxi. 18, "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God." Let the truth be shouted from every watchtower by every faithful watchman, that "the love of Christ constraineth us," and tell them "constrain" means compel, until all the denominations learn that the "free will" doctrine of Zoroaster is false, and that it is not left to the heaven-born children of God to do as they please, which is, they can join the church of God or not, come in or stay out as they choose, and that it is left to do as they want to, but that the love of God causes them to want to come, so as to find a place of rest. The love causes them to come, or they are scared into the church by fear of punishment, or some other impure motive.

So the Savior says, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Drawn by his love. No one knows this better than your poor, little, sinful brother. Ah yes, down there on the old farm on the river, as wild as ever grew, sinful and profane, until, as I hope, God called me by his grace, turned me, and I was turned, brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, set my feet upon a rock, put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God, and established my goings. (Psalms xl. 2, 3.) Do you wonder I have gone through cold and heat, rain and snow, leaving my loved ones, and am now giving all my time to my blessed Savior? If a man has a child that cannot know his father because he does not know him, is under the control of a party that teaches him that his father is a terrible tyrant, the child believes what he is taught, the father will have to do something to change this state of affairs, so as to cause the child to love him. This is what God does. The first thing God does is to give life, ("I give unto them eternal life") and enables him to see his lost condition, and makes him say,

"If my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well."

Sheds his love abroad in his heart, and he loves his Father with the very love his Father puts in his heart. Now he knows the devil had him, and if it had not been for the love his Father had for him, and for his Father's superior strength and wondrous power, the devil would have dragged him down to everlasting darkness and eternal woe. No wonder he is willing to serve his Father. That is enough to cause any disobedient, hell-deserving child to be willing to obey.

"'Twas all of thy grace we were brought to obey,
While others were suffered to go
The road which we chose as our way,
Which leads to the regions of woe.

Then give all the glory to his holy name,
To him all the glory belongs;
Be yours the high joy still to sound forth his fame,
And crown him in each of your songs."

One of the leading preachers in the south was at my house some years ago, and he told me he was traveling and preaching. He said his shoes were about worn out from walking, and I think he said his feet were sore or blistered, but the impression to go on was so strong he could not stop. Now the question is, Was it the love of God that was compelling him to go, or was it some impure motive? Was the carnal mind the moving power, or was it the power of the love of God? If I knew it was the love of God that causes me to go, I think I would be exceedingly happy. But I am so cold, so dark, so weak, so ignorant and little, sometimes I am alive to my situation. I am past seventy years old and must soon be called to try the realities of a never-ending eternity. Have I, poor, weak, unworthy thing that I am, ever tasted of the good word of God, and the power of the world to come, and have all the impressions and power that have moved me been brought about by the love of God, or have they all been from one Paul writes about where he says, 2 Cor. xi. 14, 15, "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works"? It was love that caused the Savior to bow the heavens and come down, and suffer, and die, and save his people from their sins. So Paul says, Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave

himself for it. Then if he loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation, redeeming the time because the days are evil?

Your brother in hope of mercy,

ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Dec. 6, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose a letter from a friend that I would like to see published in the SIGNS, and I also feel I would like to express a few thoughts for your good paper. We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose. Many are called, but few are chosen. Not many mighty, not many noble, but the poor of this world. You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, out of every kindred, tongue and nation, that you may bring forth fruit, and that your fruit might remain. I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit. Abide in me and I abide in you, as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me. I am the vine ye are the branches. He that abides in me and I in him the same bringeth forth much fruit. He is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. Where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst. He is the rock, his word is perfect. Just and right is he. A bruised reed will he not break, smoking flax he will not quench, until he brings forth judgment unto victory. He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. He says to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth. Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, raised from the dead, carried up into glory. John said, Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. If ye are my friends do whatsoever I command. What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him? Man in his best estate is vanity, a poor worm of the dust, prone to err as the sparks are to fly upward. How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out. If God be for us who can be against us? He that gave up his Son that the world might be saved. He was led as a lamb before her shearers to the slaughter, not a word from his mouth, only to say, Thy will be done, and, If possible, let this cup pass from me. He died and rose again for our justification, that we might live with him and be like him. He said, If the world hate you, you know that it hated me before it hated you. It makes no difference what worldly men say against us they cannot hurt us. Fear not, little flock, for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Not the kingdoms of this world that crumble to the earth, that are shaken with the winds and seas and earthquakes, but his kingdom is from everlasting to everlasting, throughout all generations. If it were possible they would deceive the very elect, but it is not possible.

The fifty-four years that I have been mingling with this little flock at Hopewell, N. J., have been years of joy and years of sorrow. Many who were here

when I came with them have passed to a better world, where there will be no more sorrow, no more pain, no more sleepless nights, but all will be with Christ, which is far better. I feel to be a poor sinful creature; when I would do good evil is present with me. What does it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his soul? Is Christ divided, as the world would have it? No, indeed, Christ is not divided, and cannot be. We would have an empty crown if it were so. As I pass along in my ninety-second year I realize, I hope, how I have been blessed in being able to attend most of the meetings of our little flock here at Hopewell, and to visit the brethren, especially those who are not able to meet with us. It is one of my greatest comforts to meet with them and enjoy the things that they enjoy. My eyesight has failed so that I am not able to read the SIGNS very much, but my daughter, Mrs. Hill, reads them to me, so I enjoy them in that way. Can I say with Paul that I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, and am now ready to depart; henceforth there is a crown of righteousness laid up for me, which the righteous Judge will give me at the last day? Can I say that? It is my great desire to be submissive to his will. I know that he can make a dying bed as soft as downy pillows are. His great arm is always underneath us, and we cannot fall with such a prop. We seek that inheritance that Jacob possessed. Jacob was the lot of his inheritance. He kept him as the apple of his eye, and led him about and instructed him. As the eagle stirreth up her nest and fluttereth over her young, taketh them, beareth them and keepeth them from falling, so the Lord alone did keep Jacob; made him suck honey out of the rock and oil out of the flinty rock. Paul said to Timothy, Consider what I say, and the Lord give you understanding in all things. Unless he gives us to understand these precious things we never can understand them. Marvel not that I said unto you, You must be born again. Nicodemus had not been taught to understand these things, and he said, How can a man be born when he is old? What a blessing that he gives us to understand things that the world hates.

From an unworthy brother,

D. L. BLACKWELL.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 22, 1923.

VERY HIGHLY ESTEEMED FRIEND:—On Saturday I was reading in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, with which you are very familiar, and which you, like myself, are very fond of, and among the many interesting letters contained therein yours seemed to take closer hold of my feelings than any of the others. Not but what the others were very good, and contained many wholesome truths, but your letter seemed to touch a tender spot in my feelings and experience, and I could say amen to every utterance therein; everything appeared to be so plain and touching that it seemed to come right home. I cannot explain why it should be so. I suppose you are able to understand my feelings better than I can explain them to you on paper. It is like two drops of water, when they come in contact with each other they immediately become one. I was just prepared by the almighty God to receive it, and it was like the dew of heaven upon the tender plant, so refreshing, and I felt like saying, Write on. You cannot imagine what good you are doing while you are writing such blessed truths. You speak of how good and how pleasant it is to dwell together in unity. We all have earthly friends we love

dearly, yet they are not like those heavenly friends, who seem to stick closer than a brother. I had a friend who married a cousin of mine, and they lived happily together, and upon his death-bed he said, Anna, I have loved you dearly these twenty-five years, but I love my Lord and Savior more, to whom I am now going. You say, Let brotherly love continue; Esteem others better than yourselves. I feel to hate myself, for I feel to be less than the least, less than nothing. We know that it is impossible according to nature, but it is true spiritually. I feel that no one is more vile than I. I am almost eighty-two years old, and in taking a retrospective view of my life I can see no good I have done; it is full of mistakes from beginning to end. I can see much wickedness I have done. I have sinned against God and man. If it were all (or half of it) written out in plain view I would want to vanish entirely out of existence immediately. At the death of my sister, in 1868, (I then being the only child of my parents living; there were previously five.) Elder Purington remarked that I was spared for some wise purpose, but I fail to see the wisdom of that purpose, yet we know that God has a purpose in all things, whether we see it or not. He speaks and it is done. Man may propose, but God disposes.

There is much more in your letter that I might quote, but it would only lengthen my letter; all seems to be applicable to my case. I have had many rich blessings bestowed upon me from time to time, more than I have deserved; in fact, I know that I have never deserved a single one. I feel to say with the poet,

> "If my soul were sent to hell,
> Thy righteous law approves it well."

My dear aged friend, I picked up my pen not knowing what I was going to write, only the thought of telling you about my feelings. I did not intend to write as I have, but leave it just as the Lord has directed my thoughts and guided my pen, but I do not know that I have written anything of interest. I know not how much longer the Lord is going to permit me to remain in this sin-cursed world, nor do I wish to know. I am in the hands of the Lord, and it is a safe place to be; too much of the time I am in the hands of the evil one. I am willing to remain my allotted time, whether it be long or short. I am only awaiting my Maker's call, knowing full well that when he says, Child, thy Father calls, come home, I will immediately obey. I will not tarry a single moment, but will come forth; not one moment too soon nor one moment too late, it is all fixed according to his decree. Then will I be released from this prison-house of clay, and know no more sorrow, pain or care.

Probably I had better stop, lest I weary you; not that I am exhausted, as there appears to be no end to these things. I hope you will spread the mantle of charity over my imperfections, which you will find are plenty. Remember me to Elder Vaughn and family. May grace and mercy attend you in your remaining declining years, is the desire of your unworthy friend, C. S. FETTER.

LONDON, England.

DEAR SISTER ASTON:—I was very glad to see your hand-writing again. I hardly know when the last letter came, but still I know you have more than enough to occupy your time, and if you are anything like me, it is not very often when spare moments come that letter-writing appeals to you. It has seemed a big task to me recently. Perhaps as we grow older we are less inclined to write or

speak of those things which concern us more than anything else (or should do), although I suppose it should not be. A growing knowledge of the enormity of sin in one's self partly accounts for it, I think, a knowledge that sickens me altogether often, and seems to deaden all that leans Christward. We must experience the depths of the fall in our own heart, and it is little wonder, Grace, that you, with me, should have to complain of a "frozen heart," so cold and frozen that nothing can move or melt it but "love divine," and we have to prove that we cannot even desire the influence of that love unless the Spirit move our hearts to cry for it. Strange it would seem that those so richly and undeservedly loved could remain stupidly indifferent and slothful, content to be at a distance from the dear Object who once so enthralled and ravished that same heart that the shortest time needful to give to earthly concerns was begrudged, did we not know that in the Shulamite are "a company of two armies," that our own evil nature, never to be changed while we are in these earthly tabernacles, is in league with hell and Satan, and capable of all sins except the unpardonable one, which the Lord would never permit one of his own children to fall into, otherwise he would break his own word. O Grace, you are learning hard, painful lessons, but necessary ones, of the greatness of God's salvation, and the depths of your own depravity, and it is not human nature that turns to the Lord with a cry for mercy after what seems such willful sinfulness. I think it is at such times we really deeply appreciate the Lord's tender pity; it is his pity we seem to need above all else. As the hymn-writer says,

"Pardon all our baseness, Lord,
All our weakness pity;
Guide us safely by thy word,
To the heavenly city."

Under such teaching there seems an added depth in those lines,

"He saw us ruined in the fall,
Yet loved us notwithstanding all."

There would be no hope whatever for either one of us were that not an eternal verity. We ourselves never credited we could act so basely as we have done when our hearts were warm with first love; we little understood then how sin could freeze and make them harder than the paving-stones we walk upon, but the Lord has not been surprised. He knew from the beginning that we should "deal very treacherously," for he knows the strength and power of Satan as we do not, and in infinite wisdom he permits the adversary to partly overcome, that we may shun sin the more and more fully, utterly renounce our own strength and righteousness, for I believe many shreds stick fast when we think we have entirely cast out all thoughts of doing anything towards our own salvation. Satan will not ever finally overcome the least of those who have been taught to fly for refuge to the Lord Jesus, but he is often permitted to so harass, perplex and torment that such an one can live very near the brink of despair, as you know, yet even our sometime dreary dwelling, which borders on the shades of death, is not death, nor is it despair; the Lord will see to it we shall never be there, although for our sloth and backsliding he may chasten us sore, he will never give us over unto death, and

"Though he thy transgression hate,
Jesus feels for thy distress."

Yes, he feels for your present distress, and it is his own hand that will lift you up out of the miry clay, he himself that will renew and revive, even as he revives nature in the springtime. Who to look at the trees now would think there was

the least spark of life in those apparently dead branches? but the genial warmth of spring will revive and draw out the hidden life, and so the christian finds it in his own experience. Sad as it is to feel our deadness and barrenness, we should be in a far worse condition were we satisfied in such a state. We sometimes seem to get even as low as that, but we cannot be happy. The Lord makes us as the hymn says,

"Uneasy when I feel my load,
Uneasy when I feel it not,
Dissatisfied for want of God,
Though oft of him I've not a thought."

The Lord opens thy mouth when it seems altogether shut. He who will not let you rest short of himself will see to it that Satan shall be crushed under your feet again. Has he not promised, "Because I live ye shall live also?"

Now I must close. This is a poor attempt at a letter; I am afraid it will read cold and dead, like the writer. The psalmist echoed, or rather, we echo his prayer many a time, "Quicken me."

Love and best wishes,

ELSIE STONELAKE.

LOOKOUT, W. Va., Dec. 23, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am going to venture to call you brethren. While I feel very unworthy to take a seat so high, for I have been here about forty-two years and lived an unprofitable life, I feel at this writing to be an orphan and almost a complete castaway. However, dear brethren, I want to thank you, if I can find language, for the patience you have had in sending me the SIGNS so many years without receiving a penny. The paper came to me when I was low down in affliction and trouble, causing me great rejoicing, and when I would see my children coming from the post-office with it I would rejoice with glad tears, for I knew the truth was coming once more my way. If you knew the comfort the letters and editorials are to me you would not wonder why I fail to find language to express to you my gratitude. They came to me at a time when I was in the dark waters of affliction and distress, when feeling that a few more minutes would take me from this world, and that I was so sinful that God had almost, if not altogether, passed me by. But thanks be to that great and holy King who does all things after the counsel of his own will I am here, and although a sinner am allowed to read your blessed writings, and I feel if you knew, dear brethren, the great comfort the SIGNS brought me you might find room for some rejoicing. I have been made to realize in my many years of affliction, when my wife and children did not have bread in the house, and knew not how I was going to get any, that God was a God of tender mercy, and therefore we always found something to eat. I tried for several years of my life to live the "do good" system, but oh how I failed. I feel while I was on my way to Damascus, as the apostle Paul, I was made to stand still and know that there was no salvation in this poor worm of the dust, and now I know that if this little unworthy soul ever enters that glorious kingdom it will be because it has been marked by the blood of the Lamb. I love the expression "absolute predestination," because I know it is right. If there is anything wrong it lies at my door, but my prayer to God is that our blessed Jesus can find a place to lay his head in my poor dwelling. Again I want to thank you, dear brethren, for your long extended kindness and patience in ministering as you have to this little benighted soul away off here in the lonely mountains where Christ's

name is never mentioned. Your messages flow as living waters to the thirsty, and I love you (although I have never seen you in the flesh) and would like to take you by the hand, for I feel that I could then tell you more than I can write. I hope you will forgive me for my slowness and still let me have the SIGNS, for I do not feel I can live here without it. At times I have felt ashamed to pick up the paper to read, realizing your burdens are heavy, and have thought time and again of writing you to discontinue sending it, but I felt very hungry for the truth it contained and could not refrain from partaking of what to me was a grand feast.

I will bring this to a close by asking that if any of you ever happen to be in this part of the country to please do not fail to stop with me, because I would feel it was a great honor bestowed upon me.

I am yours in weakness,

WILLARD L. PENNINGTON.

VERNON, Texas, Jan. 21, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending in my subscription, which is past due, and must beg your pardon for my seeming neglect, and hope you will forgive me once more. I thank you for sending on the paper, and feel it is more than I deserve. I cannot tell you how much I enjoy reading the SIGNS; it is a feast to my hungry soul. I look and long for the time for it to come, and when it arrives I sit down and read it through, and oh how I do enjoy the editorials and many good letters. I wish I could write as you do, but it is not the will of the Master, or I could. I must say to the dear editors, Write on, cry aloud and spare not; stand for the truth as it is in Christ our Lord, who bids his servants to fail not to declare the whole counsel of God, and to shun not to declare the whole truth. There are some claiming to be Old Baptists who only preach one side of the question. They cannot stand the doctrine of the predestination of all things, and call us "absoluters," but it does not hurt the truth. I only hope that I am one of God's little children, but my fear is that I may be deceived and am deceiving others, but I know that I love the Old Primitive Baptists better than any people on earth, but cannot see how they can fellowship me. When I am made to look within I can see my sinfulness. As Paul once said, There is no good thing in the flesh. If I am saved it will be by the grace of God, and not by anything I have done. No, no, a thousand times no, for I am only a poor sinner in the sight of the merciful Savior, who has promised never to leave nor forsake those who trust in his holy name.

I must close. I did not intend to write so much. May we rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. May the editors of the dear old SIGNS live long, and may God be with you all to guide and direct you in all truth.

(MRS.) M. E. PEDEN.

CALION, Arkansas.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I have gotten three subscribers for the dear old family paper, I want to write just a few words to you all, especially to those dear brethren and sisters who write for the paper from time to time, and tell them that my wife and I feel very lonely after losing both of the deacons of our church here at Bethel, in Union County, Arkansas, and if we did not have the many precious articles from their pens we would be without any words of comfort from any of the household of faith. I am trying to serve three churches, and when I am

away from home the SIGNS is all the consolation my dear wife has. I want to thank you all for sending it to us, as we have not been able to pay for it. It has continued to be a message of love to us both, and we hope the blessed Lord will enable our dear editors to still continue to contend for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints, for we feel that the grand old doctrine of salvation by grace is the only doctrine that will comfort God's dear children while passing through this unfriendly world, for we realize that this is a day of great declination, and that nothing but the mighty hand of God can keep and sustain us while making our pilgrimage through this time world, and all that will land us in the world to come, for it is by and through his blessed Son that salvation was promised for all the heirs of promise. May the Lord bless and keep us all from the evils of this world, and finally save us in his kingdom, where we will continue to praise him through Christ, our great Redeemer, in that world without end. T. J. EVERS.

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1924.

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ISAIAH XLVIII. 10.

"I HAVE chosen thee in the furnace of affliction."

In all of God's dealings with Israel he has manifested that he has a sovereign choice, which is not influenced by the thoughts or mind of man, but is definite according to a purpose fixed and settled before the foundation of the world. He is of one mind, so much so that none can turn him. Balak would have Israel cursed, and that if he could by a prophet of God, but to the confusion of Balak, Balaam blessed and said, How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed? When God chose Abram it was not that he was good, and when Israel looked back to that choice she confessed, "A Syrian ready to perish was my father." When he chose Moses to lead his people Israel, Moses said, "Who am I?" and confessed that he was slow of speech and of a slow tongue, yet God said, "Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord?" When God would make David king he sent Samuel to anoint the one that he would name unto him. When Samuel looked on Eliab he said, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before him. But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on

his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." In the end David, the youngest, was brought from among the sheep, and was manifested by the word of the Lord as his chosen. God's people are called "a chosen generation," chosen before the foundation of the world, embraced in the promise made unto Abram when God told him that in him and in his seed, meaning Christ, shall all the families of the earth be blessed. When Abram would have more assurance of the promise God had given him we find an horror of great darkness fell upon him, and God said his seed should be a stranger in a strange land, and should be afflicted for a definite time. Thus Israel of old was to be an afflicted people. "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people." Afflicted, yet beloved of God, so much so that "he reproved kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." God was to Israel a wall of fire round about her and the glory in the midst of her. There were certain characteristics seen in Israel of old. She was in Egypt, yet she could not learn their language. Egypt is spoken of as a people of a strange language, also an Israelite was an abomination to an Egyptian, nor would the Egyptians and Israelites eat together. Again, "Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations." Just as Israel of old had characteristics peculiar to her, so it is with Israel to-day, and it is our intention to write of some of the marks of the children of God, particularly of their trials during their pilgrimage through this wilderness world. The Lord has a purpose, or end, in all afflictions. James says, "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." From the moment that God the Holy Ghost begins the work of grace in the soul there is a bringing judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet, and a sweeping away of the refuges of lies. Perhaps the most deceptive refuge of lies is self-righteousness. Many of God's dear saints will cling to that and find refuge in it. Righteous self is as obnoxious unto God as sinful self, yet how many there are while professing a pronounced hatred to sinful self, view with pleasure what seems to be an improvement in self. Being stripped of all fancied goodness is a very painful process, hard to be endured, for, like Job, one will cry, "My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go," but as Job, all of God's chosen will come to the place where they confess, "Behold, I am vile," and, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." There cannot be a true worship in the kingdom of heaven unless it be in a life from the dead, for "the body is dead because of sin," and it is in and from this very state that life, in a cry, a sigh or a groan, is manifest. "Fools, because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted: their soul abhorreth all manner of meat; and they draw near unto the gates of death." This death is that which fills a heaven-born soul with wretchedness and woe, and this is one of the marks, yes, and the most precious of marks, of God's dear saints. The worldly religionists have no bands in their death, their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men are, neither are they afflicted. They have more than heart can wish. Not so the children of God, for sin is mixed with all they do.

"A daily cross, a stubborn will,
A heart replete with every ill,
Affections prone from God to go,
Are bonds that only Israel know."

Others can worship God when they please, but with God's children it is,

"Trials give new life to prayer,
Trials bring them to his feet."

Sometimes it is the thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, darkness of mind, temptations and evils too numerous to mention, that will bring them to the place of prayer. Generally the great besetting sin is unbelief. An evil heart of unbelief; oh, what a plague this is to many of us! Though the Lord has smiled upon us and given us the joys of those that fear him, yet we will hearken to Satan's lies rather than to what the Lord has spoken. Yes, and the very goodness of God in bestowing upon us his unmerited grace will be lost sight of, and if he bless us with prosperity, so that for awhile everything runs smoothly, we manifest our ungodly inclinations, and would but for grace sink into perdition. In his grace meted out to us there are trials, crosses, losses, yea, in the words of our text, a "furnace of affliction," and the chosen of God are manifest in and by their afflictions. Not but what the world and worldlings have their trials and troubles, but afflictions of God's saints yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness in those who are exercised thereby. John Newton, writing to a friend, said, "If you should ask me what is the clearest proof of a person being a christian, I should have to say, the one who is saying, 'When I would do good, evil is present with me,' and 'How to perform that which is good I find not,'" and so we believe, for on our heavenly Joseph and all his offspring there is a cross-handed blessing. There is no comfort or help, experimentally to us, but what finds its beginning in tribulations. The word of God is like a fire, and when applied by the Spirit it will burn, and one's moisture is soon turned into the drought of summer. It will rebuke and condemn. "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." It has always been the lot of Israel to be an abomination to the worldling, professing and profane, neither can they eat together, for, "He would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him." What is life to the one is death to the other. The furnace separates the dross from the gold, and under God's afflicting hand his children learn patience, which is manifest in their hoping for that which they see not. Thus tribulation works patience, and patience experience. While passing through the trial it was hard, and the cross heavy, but our eyes having been opened to the wretchedness of our own heart, we could say, It is of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed. If the Lord seems to leave us to ourselves we seldom go far before we prove the heart to be deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and though we always dread affliction, yet at times we cry in bitterness of soul, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Thus there is not a flame of the furnace but has its work according to the wisdom of God, and works for good to his saints. The Lord has made no bargain with his people in this matter, and there is no

way to escape the furnace or the chastisement. It is not conditional, for all are partakers. William Gadsby in a sermon preached at Manchester, England, November 1st, 1840, said, "Every principle that would make salvation conditional in man I hate as I do the devil, because God, in the riches of his grace, has brought me so solemnly to feel that it is all a rich precious teeming out of the love of God."

G. R.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at his home, Leesburg, Va., March 19, 1924, Russell C. Dowden, of Herndon, Va., and Miss Alma O. Whaley, of Fairfax, Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Our father, **George M. Leedom,** was born March 11th, 1840, died December 5th, 1923, aged 83 years, 8 months and 24 days. He was married to Elizaetta B. Lefferts October 29th, 1863, and to them were born five children, four of whom, with his wife, are left to mourn their loss. The oldest son died several years ago. October 27th, 1923, father and mother celebrated their sixtieth wedding anniversary, having with them all of their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Father was a member of the Southampton Old School Baptist Church for over fifty years. He never wavered in his belief in salvation by grace, nor any other points of doctrine that make God the head over all.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder H. C. Ker, of Delmar, Del., at our home in Trenton, N. J. While we miss father, yet we feel that all is well, he is at rest.

His daughter, ELIZABETH L. FETTER.

Mrs. George M. Conner departed this life February 14th, 1924, making her stay on earth fifty-six years, 9 months and 12 days. August 1st, 1883, she was married to Ezra S. Brewster, by the late Elder W. J. Purington, and at the expiration of some twenty years Mr. Brewster died, leaving her alone without family, and as their home was at Oxford, N. Y., and her relatives in Hopewell, N. J., she returned to Hopewell, and on March 29th, 1913, she was married to George M. Conner by the late Elder F. A. Chick, after which she and brother Conner settled in Hopewell, spending the remainder of her days near her two half-sisters, Mrs. Updike and sister Carry Drake. She leaves two step-daughters, Mrs. Fred Blackwell and Miss Hattie Conner, both of Hopewell, N. J., and two half-sisters, as above mentioned, one brother, Leebins Titus, together with a host of other relatives and friends, besides the church, to mourn with brother Conner their loss. We can truly say of sister Conner that hers was an exemplary life.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer and brother C. V. Hill, after which her remains were laid to rest in the Hopewell Old School Baptist Cemetery. The proof of the esteem in which sister Conner was held was proven by the large concourse of people attending her funeral. We will miss her greatly, but we feel our loss is her eternal gain, and may God comfort all that mourn by which they can say, Rest on, dear one. CHARLES W. VAUGHN.

John William Byrd, deacon and clerk of the Messongoes Old School Baptist Church, near Hallwood, Va., died March 3rd, 1924, at his late home in Hallwood, Va. He was born May 23rd, 1857, near New Church, Va. He was married to Miss Elizabeth Margaret Byrd, the daughter of Jacob and Susan Fisher Byrd, January 9th, 1879, and to this union were born four children, two of whom died in infancy. He is survived by his wife and two daughters, Mrs. Finney M. Knight, of Messongo, Va., and Mrs. Chester W. Baker, of Delmar, Del., also one grandchild, and one sister, Mrs. Mary F. Chesser, of Pocomoke City, Md. He was baptized July 23rd, 1876, by the late Elder T. M. Poulson into the membership of the Messongoes Church, was made deacon in 1901, and was elected clerk in 1922. Of him it can be truthfully stated, he served his brethren faithfully, was faithful in attendance, and was surely faithful to me as pastor of this church. He will be greatly missed by his immediate family, by Messongoes Church and by myself.

The funeral services were conduced by his pastor, in the Messongoes meetinghouse, after which interment took place in the family lot near Hallwood, Va. We believe our loss is his gain. May the Lord comfort the bereaved family and church.

J. C. MELLOTT.

Matthew R. Lanham, the subject of this notice, was born December 18th, 1832, and departed this life March 7th, 1924, at the age of 91 years, 2 months and 19 days. He leaves his wife and five children to mourn their loss, namely, Mrs. Lillie Burford, of Charleston, W. Va.; Mrs. Margaret Brick, of Fry, W. Va.; Mrs. Annie L. Conker, of Charleston, W. Va.; Mrs. Francis P. Lanham, of Fry, W. Va.; Augustus E. Lanham, of Charleston, W. Va. Three children preceded him to the grave. "Uncle Mat.," as he was called by all the neighbors, was a warm friend to the old order of Baptists, and had an experience of grace from his early life, but on account of his unworthiness, as he often expressed himself, he never became a member of the church militent. His doors were always open to the Baptists on the regular

meeting days of the Hopewell Church, near his place, especially when the Association convened with the above named church, and he always gave a public invitation to entertain the people. For this noble trait alone the members of the Hopewell Church have lost a true friend, and a brother in the Spirit. He was an honest, truthful, hard working man, providing for himself and those of his household.

The writer was called to their place the day after his death, and the funeral services were held March 9th. A large gathering of relatives and friends were present to pay their last tribute of respect to the one they had held in high esteem through life. The writer spoke for a short time, using as a foundation for his remarks the words of Jesus, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth," after which his body was laid to rest in the family burying ground to await the resurrection of the dead. J. W. McCLANAHAN.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, it has pleased almighty God to take from earth our dearly beloved brother, deacon **Robert Leachman Spindle,** we, the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church, of Fairfax Co., Va., feel that a suitable memorial should be prepared, while we know that words can but slightly express what we feel in our hearts, neither can they do justice to so noble a life as was found in brother Spindle. He was a man of sterling integrity, upright in heart, kind and generous, held in high esteem by all who knew him, and to know him was to love him. He lived a faithful and devoted life to the cause of Christ, which he dearly loved, tried to fill his place in the church with such ability as God gave him and was very seldom absent from any of the meetings of the church, feeling it to be his duty as well as his privilege to meet with his brethren. He was a close listener to the preaching of the gospel of the Son of God, and always seemed to enjoy it. He served this church as clerk, as trustee and as deacon for many years, to the entire satisfaction of all. He used the office of a deacon well, being found blameless. Brother Spindle had been a member of this church for over forty-five years, and we shall long cherish his memory in our heart of hearts. We extend our condolence and heartfelt sympathy to his bereaved family of children. We feel our loss deeply, but would bow in humble submission to our all-wise King, and desire to say, as did one of old, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Be it

RESOLVED, that this memorial be recorded among our church records, and a copy sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Done by order of the church at her regular meetting, March 8, 1924.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.

K. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

I. H. Evans, Md., $1.00; Casper G. Fetter, N. J., $2.00; Mrs. J. A. Hurley, Mich., $2 00; Mrs. Martha E. Frazier, Del., $3.00; A. Bourquin, Md., $2.00; Mrs. F. J. Gray, Tex., $3.00; A. B. Corder, W. Va., $1.00; Mrs. A. B. Engell, N. Y., $2.00; Mrs. C. E. Smith, Ore., $8 00.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor,

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

Little Flock Church will no longer hold meetings at Park and 5th Streets, but for the present will hold them at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 494 East 10th Street, Riverside, California. We hope to have a place again soon, and when we do we will appreciate having our notice with you.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 92. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1924. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CAPE CHARLES, Va., March 22, 1924.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—I am inclosing herewith for your perusal a letter I received from an attorney of this town, a friend of mine, and a copy of my reply. Mr. Topping is a Sunday-school teacher in the New School Baptist denomination, and I have had several talks with him, and always find him willing to listen to the trend of my thoughts, and as he seems to be the only one in this section I have been able to talk to, I am afraid I have felt flattered by him. I have been made to wonder since writing him if I have composed my letter from my natural mind, and if I have written anything worth while; in fact, if I should have written at all. I feel sure if there is anything in this letter outside of myself you will detect it, and will much appreciate it if you will be frank with me and say just what you think. Should there happen to be anything of interest in these letters I am sure it will be all right to do with them as you desire. I fear to write for publication, and fear all along the line, lest I be pushing myself and seeking the limelight, so to speak, as I find all the time creeping up in me something desiring an exaltation of self, and then on the other hand plainly see nothing in self to exalt. This past winter has seemed a winter season to me within, there seeming no feeling, all cold and dark, and I am made to wonder why it is thus with me, especially when one like my friend Topping can seem to rest so assured. I do feel thankful though, for I hope that recently the light has seemed to shine again, and I am, I hope, thankful for the darkness, as most surely this is all I deserve.

I hope you are by this time restored to good health, and that all is well with you in every respect. I beg to remind you I have not forgotten you are to visit with me when in this section.

With kindest regards to Mrs. Lefferts and your family, I am, I hope, yours, hoping in and for the mercy of the Lord,

G. E. COULBOURN.

CAPE CHARLES, Va., March 18, 1924.

DEAR MR. COULBOURN:—I received your letter of the 12th instant, and, like the conversations I have had with you, I found it most interesting and instructive, and I want to preface whatever else I may say by assuring you that I regard

your interest in me as a distinct compliment. My failure to acknowledge your letter more promptly has been attributable to the multiplicity of demands on my time since it reached me.

Attempting to reply to your letter in the order of its paragraphing, I would say, first, that I read carefully the excerpts inclosed by you, and found in them much food for thought. I am not sufficiently versed in things Biblical to advance argument on behalf of either preacher participating in the conversation adverted to, but at first blush am impressed with the idea that the objections raised to the innovations characterizing the "New School" are technical rather than material. At least, I hesitate to concede that Sunday-schools, Missionary Boards and other mediums of christian expression are obstacles to the advance of civilization, or in conflict with the two great elementary principles enunciated by the blessed Savior when he said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," &c., or again, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor," &c., for to emulate either of these conceptions one must know the Deity, and how may such knowledge be attained except by the direction of these or similar instrumentalities? I am, of course, deeply concerned with the question of whether or not I am pursuing the proper course to insure my soul's salvation, which, as I understand, is in direct contravention with the logic of your doctrine, however I think my religion prompts me to a desire to live a life of rectitude for the benefit such living may yield to mankind (my neighbor), and not for the reward which we are told comes to the righteous. This whole subject is too profound for my limited vision, and the most I can hope for is to assimilate a few of the crumbs of knowledge borne to my consciousness by your expositions of the Scriptures. May I therefore hope that you will again give of your time in an effort to add somewhat to my enlightenment? At least, be assured I listen with pleasure, and, I am sure, profit.

I have written much more lengthily than I had intended, for which imposition on you I apologize, especially as I have taken so much time and space to say so little.

I am yours very cordially,

J. WARREN TOPPING.

CAPE CHARLES, Va., March 21, 1924.

DEAR MR. TOPPING:—I have received and carefully read your letter, and much appreciate some expressions therein, and am trying to answer you, but do so with much fear, as I know it is not in my power to enlighten you. It is with fear that I at any time undertake to explain the sacred Scriptures, and it is now my thought in writing to you that we may be able to "compare spiritual things," but realize fully that this cannot be done without the guidance of the Spirit.

I wish to say that in my talks with you, and in my letter, it has not been my desire to condemn you in any of the mediums mentioned, but simply to set forth that we find no authority for them in the Scriptures, and find that the whole plan of salvation is not one of works, but is all of grace.

In the closing of your second paragraph you ask how one can know the Deity except by the directions of these or similar instrumentalities, and I hope to call your attention to certain Scriptures which I trust may answer this much better than any man can do. The Scripture you quote: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with

all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself," I find recorded in Luke x. 27, and it is the conversation between a lawyer and the blessed Jesus. We find that this lawyer asked the Savior, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Well, I am sure if you will just reflect for a moment you will see that this was a foolish question for a lawyer to ask, for his profession should have taught him that there is nothing a man can do to inherit anything, so we find the Master asking him how he reads the law, and he quotes the above Scripture, or one of the divers laws and commandments given to Moses way back under the old covenant of the law. I think, too, if you will read this whole chapter you will catch the thought of the Master when he told this lawyer, "This do, and thou shalt live." Was it not an impossibility with this lawyer, or any other man, to love the Lord with all his heart, soul and mind, and his neighbor as himself? This is the very lesson here taught, that man could not keep this law, that he (Jesus) was come to fulfill the law, and He is the good Samaritan that came to the man who fell among thieves, and bound up his wounds after he had been passed by by the priest and Levite.

Now in more direct answer to your question as to how one is to know the Deity without certain instrumentalities, I would say, By revelation. You know the law covenant under Moses was broken, and if you will read Jeremiah xxxi. 31–34, you will find what is to take place under the new covenant, which is the covenant of grace. "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." Now notice what the prophet says by the Spirit in the thirty-fourth verse: "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." When Christ came he made sure this will, or covenant, in fact was the very Surety itself, and so taught while here on earth, and among many of his wonderful teachings we find this in John vi. 44, in reply to the murmuring of the people at his teaching, he said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Again, he said he came not to do his own will, but the will of the Father, and told very plainly what that will was by saying, "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing," and a little later, just before his crucifixion, said in his last prayer to the Father, "Glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."—John xvii. 1, 2. Then we find our blessed Savior continuing in this wonderful prayer by saying, "I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." All this work Jesus did himself while on earth, and if he finished it I cannot see very much left for any "instrumentalities" of any kind, and to make it more plain as to who was to continue this wonderful teaching, we find him promising his disciples that he will not leave them comfortless (John xiv. 18), that he will give them a Comforter after he has been lifted up, which Comforter is the Spirit of truth, "the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name," and goes on to say that this Holy Ghost "shall teach you all things."—John xiv. 26. We find all these things were fulfilled, and the dis-

ciples waiting several days at Jerusalem as commanded, until endued by the Holy Ghost, before qualified to preach, after which they could and did preach, but preached, if I understand right, a finished salvation, through the Lamb that was offered once for all, as the apostle Paul tells us. It had before been customary under the old covenant for the priests to offer yearly sacrifices, but Paul says, "Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," and that it was not necessary to offer himself often. (Heb. ix. 26.) Then the preaching of the gospel is for them that believe, and as God prepares the preacher so he prepares the believer, for the gospel "is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth." To the Jew first, then the Greek, who were brought in under the new covenant of grace. The apostle goes on to tell us that by this gospel "is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith," not from faith to unfaith.

So now, my dear friend, I hope with these Scriptures you may not think me strange in depending upon or in writing and hoping for a teaching of the Deity by his own Spirit, for our Savior said, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

Since writing the above I picked up my Atlas of the World and find a chart therein, as follows: Population of the world, 1610000000 inhabitants, of which number it gives 555000000 as professors of christianity, about one-half of these being Catholics, the other half of this number Protestants and Greeks. So we find just a few over one-third professed believers, and the thought has come to me that if one man's salvation depends upon another man, how can this one-third rest in peace a moment until they save the other two-thirds? God gave this multitude natural birth and natural life, and placed in the heavens the natural sun to give them natural light, and this natural sun is sufficient to give light from time to time to every individual who has sight to see, whether he lives in Cape Charles or China, and God has not made it incumbent upon mortal man in his weakness to bottle up this natural sunshine and take it to others, and indeed you cannot bottle or box sunshine, for the tighter you make the box the darker it becomes. Just so has God through his spiritual Sun (Jesus) given spiritual life to every one who has it ("Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."—John iii. 3), then those so born, or quickened, are given eyes to see and ears to hear, and God has taken unto himself this blessed Son who is the spiritual light of every one who has been or will ever be born or quickened into the spiritual kingdom, and his light will from time to time, as it pleases him, shine in and give them light, regardless of where they live, whether in this country, China or Africa. "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."—Matt. xxiv. 27. When this wonderful Light shines in a sinner's heart I believe, and I hope from experience, that it reveals to the sinner the power and righteousness of God and the weakness and the depraved condition of himself, making the sinner dissatisfied with self, making him a beggar for mercy, and keeping him at the mercy-seat, giving him light enough from time to time to enable him to walk by faith, although at times in much darkness.

I am fondly,

G. E. COULBOURN.

TUCKER, Ga., Nov. 30, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter written to me by sister Silla Wilson. The letter was comforting to me, and by her consent I am sending it for publication, as I think it will be comforting to others. Her request was not to publish it if it would crowd out other worthier letters. I enjoy reading the many good articles in the SIGNS, especially the editorials. May all who are interested in its publication be sustained by the grace of God.

J. M. LIVSEY.

MONDAY, Aug. 6, 1923.

ELDER J. M. LIVSEY—BELOVED AND FAITHFUL PASTOR:—Unworthy as I am to address you, I must try to relieve my mind. Ever since you last spent the night with us I have wanted to write you, but many difficulties have hindered, the greatest of all being the deep felt sense of my vileness. The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin. In this is my hope, and, praise to his name, he hath begotten us again unto a lively hope.

Back to the time you spent the night. The day before I had passed through a terrible conflict, mentally and physically. I felt you were coming, and I never dreaded to see a minister come so much, for so terrible had been my experience I dared not try to talk, even though I much wanted to do so, and sometimes it seemed as if my soul would burst out of the tired body. The many things you and father talked of I felt a witness to, and felt to say, Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. Often I cry, O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me; and often I am shut up and cannot come forth. Brother Livsey, there are a few people in whose heart lies a hidden sorrow, the floodgates of which they cannot open to their nearest and dearest friends. There is but One who knows all about our troubles, and in all my conflicts he is the Rock upon which I rest. Oh that I could praise him for his mercy upon the chief of sinners. To have hope that he shed his blood for me, and that he permitted me to cast all my care upon him, feeing he careth for me, is too wonderful for expression.

The little message I gave to you yesterday was written to Shiloh, as you see. The way was not opened for me to send it, so I concluded it was not worth the notice of any one. I was impressed to give it to you. If there is a little morsel in that message, or in this one, bless the Lord that he hath so mercifully remembered this vile worm. Oh the magnitude of the riches of his grace! He is the rock, his work is perfect. Nothing can thwart his purpose, change his will nor rob him of his glory. The Hebrew children were cast into the fiery furnace, Daniel into the lions' den and John into prison; experimentally I have been there too. He told me in his language to Peter, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." O, blessed Comforter, it has never failed. When it is his pleasure to turn us over to Satan we are as helpless as the snow before the sun, but that God-given faith assures us with strong consolation that "death and hell can do no more than what my Father please," and though we are as helpless as newborn babes, when faith is strong "we can smile at Satan's rage, and face a frowning world." If there is a little nugget of gold in this lump of clay, there is so much dross to be burned away it will take much fire, and O, dear servant of the living God, I rejoice to know he is the refiner. This faith, which is the gift of God, though it be tried with fire, shall be

found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. To him, who is able to do all and more than we can ask, I commend you and your loved ones, and ask his love and mercy to be given you in full measure, and his heavenly protection over you down the steep of time and his divine presence with you in the hour of death.

I will now close, begging you to pray for us.

The least and most unworthy one of all, SILLA WILSON.

CLEBURNE, Texas, March 1, 1924.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—Will you please publish these two letters in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES?

Yours truly,
(MRS.) W. L. ROGERS.

VERNON, Texas, Feb. 16, 1924.

DEAR SISTER ROGERS:—I just received a copy of your county paper, giving an account of the death of your dear husband, and after having gone to bed and could not sleep have arisen at midnight, and am now trying to write to you. I had just previously received a letter from dear Elder Gibson telling me that brother Rogers had passed away, and when I read his letter I could not help weeping, as brother Rogers was almost like a father to me, and now that God has been pleased to call him home we can but say, A great man in Israel has fallen, a leader of the people has been taken from us, and we mourn our loss for his worth and merit sake. But in all such losses we desire to try and be reconciled to the will of our God and heavenly Father, for we feel to know whatsoever he doeth is right, because it is God that doeth it. Then, as his dear humble children, we desire to pray God to reconcile us to his will in every dispensation of his providence, knowing of a truth that our God is eternal and we are but timely, and that we, like all created things, must fall and cease to be, because God ordained it so. We are like flowers of the field, in the springtime we shoot forth our tiny spears of grass upon which in the morning is distilled the dew of heaven, then grow in the sunbeams of God's love, as do the grass and flowers thereof, and develop through God's purpose and power into man and womanhood, and we do show forth, the same as the beautiful flowers, the workmanship of the eternal Creator's hand, and that he who maketh and buildeth all things is God. But we, like the grass, are timely and must decay and fall, according to the edict of God: Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. God has spoken it, and heaven and earth may pass away, but not one jot or tittle of his word shall fail until all be fulfilled. Then ere long you and I must lie down to rise no more in this life and be numbered with the saints of the Most High who have crossed over the Jordan of death and are now upon the sunny banks of deliverance enjoying the riches and beauties of that promised land, where all is love and sunshine, and one eternal day. No more darkness, no more sickness, suffering, sorrow or death, but our everlasting Father shall be the eternal Light that shall light that glorious mansion wherein is the throne of God, and around which the archangels cast their glittering crowns, crying, Holy, holy art thou, Lord God Almighty. Also the redeemed hosts of earth shall sing anthems of praise to his blessed name forever and ever. Then having faith to believe all these things to be true, that even though we have to die and this mortal body perish, yet God, who cannot lie, has promised us eternal life, and even though we go to the tomb,

yet we shall live again. "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." My dear sister, this mighty Prince, King Immanuel, our Elder Brother, met and contended with him who had the power over death, destroyed his works and came out a mighty victorious conqueror over death and the grave, and said, I am he that liveth and was dead, and because I live ye shall live also. Blessed, comforting thought to us poor perishing mortals, who at most have only a few days on earth, we have One that sticketh closer than a brother, that performeth the things which were appointed for us, that is seated at the right hand of God and maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God, and said, I know my Father always hears me. Then, my dear sister, I pray the Lord to hold up your drooping head and sustain you by his grace in your declining days, and that you may be reconciled to this sad dispensation of his providence, and that the comforting influence of his holy Spirit will be your constant companion, and that you may be enabled by grace to say, like Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Truly brother Rogers was a good and a great man, but the Lord's purpose has been accomplished with him, his work is ended, and now to him his reward is given, which is eternal life, and to be with God in paradise, and, my dear, aged and precious sister, after a few more days (I know not how many) of the turmoils and vexations of this life I hope to meet our dear and precious brother beyond Jordan, there to worship, praise and adore the blessed and holy name of the eternal God forever and ever. May this be our happy lot, is my prayer for Jesus' sake, and may the tender mercies of God be upon you.

I am, I trust, a very sorrowful brother,

W. S. BOURLAND.

TEMPLE, Oklahoma, Feb. 10, 1924.

DEAR MRS. ROGERS:—I see in the *Granbury News* an account of the death of your husband, and my very dear and highly esteemed friend, Elder W. L. Rogers. I want to express to you my deep sorrow in this great loss to you, as I realize you will miss him much, but I believe you will be as submissive as you can, believing, as I know you do, that he has gone to a far better world than this. I have known Mr. Rogers for over forty years, and I can truthfully say, I never knew a better man. Mr. Rogers was a firm believer in the glorious doctrine of predestination and immutability as taught in the Scriptures of divine truth, and advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES from 1832 all the way down to the last SIGNS published, February 1st, 1924. I am very sorry that I failed to visit Mr. Rogers and you this last fall, as I had planned to do. I feel now that if I could call back this last fall I would go if possible. I would be glad if you would write me all about his last sickness, where he was when he died, the day of the month and the day he was buried, also who, if any one, spoke at his funeral.

Mrs. Rogers, we would be glad if you would visit us some time in the near future.

Expressing again my deep sorrow for you, I will close.

My wife joins me in love to you and all friends. J. A. TANDY.

POCA, W. Va., March 12, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you for publication, if it meets your approval, a letter I received from Elder J. N. Bartlett. I have not his consent, but feel he will have no objections to what I have done, for he is a lovely old brother. We are near the same age, and are together quite often during the spring, summer and fall seasons, and oh how I long for those bright, sunny days of spring and summer to come that we may be blessed to meet and worship our God under our own vine, none daring to molest or make us afraid.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Feb. 29, 1924.

DEAR BROTHER McCLANAHAN:—I received your good letter in due time, and was glad to hear from you. The reason I have not written you sooner is the weather has been right cold, and my desk is away from the fire, and when there came a moderate day I was out working at one thing or another. My health is about as it was when I last wrote you, and it is much better than when I was with you at your association. I keep up and about all the time, and moderate days do a little work, so I feel I ought to be thankful that it is as well with me as it is. The rest of us are about as well as usual, except my granddaughter, Mrs. Cross, she is in very poor health. This seems a long winter to me, as I am confined at home. I would love to go out among the churches and see you again, talk with you and hear you preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. What a wonderful theme! He is so wonderful, rich in grace, in love, in mercy, in wisdom, in truth, in righteousness, all of which he gives unto us poor miserable sinners, of his free will, according to his grace, which grace is all-glorious and divine. It takes its rise in the bosom of Deity, and its passage to us is through the atonement of Christ. Its nature is sovereign, discriminating, efficacious, rich and free, and the design of it is the salvation of all his elect people from sin, everlasting death and the grave, to heaven and immortal bliss at God's right hand, in his presence, where we shall see him as he is, be like him and praise him forever and forever for his wonderful grace. The everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure was founded in grace, and the whole gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is a dispensation of his grace, so by grace are we saved; yes, forever saved according to his grace, which flows freely to you, to me, as I hope, and to all the redeemed of Christ, and, dear brother McClanahan, I hope and believe "'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far, and grace shall lead me home." The Lord hath done all things well. (My text last Sunday.) He hath done all things well in creation, in providence and in grace. He hath done all things well in giving us eternal life, in giving us faith, hope and love to God and his people, in keeping us by his power, in saving us everlastingly by his grace, in separating us from the world, in giving us a sweet home in the church of God with his people, his elect, his redeemed, where he blesses us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, where we can sing his praise, preach his gospel, eat and drink his presence, worship him in spirit and in truth, and there in his church he often meets with us, blesses us, comforts us, shows us more and more his grace, nourishes us with the precious provisions of his grace, joins us together in love and fellowship, builds us up together as lively stones a spiritual house. He hath done all things

well in preparing a place for us where he will receive us to himself, where we will praise him forever.

I hope the dear Lord will keep you, bless and comfort you, and that when summer comes we can meet again and praise God, from whom all blessings flow. Write soon.

I am as ever, I hope, your brother in Christ, J. N. BARTLETT.

MONROE, Ga., March 10, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—Knowing each of you as I do, and feeling a oneness with you, I would love to express my appreciation of your labors in continuing to edit a paper which has stood the test for nearly a century because of the truth which has come to us in soberness and love, prompted by the same spirit that actuated its first editor, who did not shun to declare unto us all the counsel of God, and who took heed to himself and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made him overseer, to feed the flock of God which Christ purchased with his own blood. We are trying continually to find a kindred spirit, to examine our walk and conversation among our brethren, hoping to be encircled in their love, meeting with them each month and finding them ready for the same spiritual food fed to them before, the sincere milk of the word, which strengthens them in the faith that Jesus is the good Shepherd, and their destiny for time and eternity is in his hands. Jesus told the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well that the water which he should give her would be in her a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Yes, ever springing up. We never have to draw this water in our own strength, nor have we ever to clean this well out. It never goes dry. This is the pure water of life. The food is never prepared by the sheep, but for them. It is by the grace of God we are what we are, and that grace was treasured up in Christ before the world began, and all the children of God are going to get it on time, every time. God, seeing the end from the beginning, saw everything that ever has been, is now or ever shall be, and he had a purpose in it all, men or devils not being able to change one thing, for God said his purpose should stand, and that as he thought so it should come to pass. Some have inferred that the destiny of man was in Adam's hands while in the garden of Eden, but we love to think that man has been passive in the hand of God even before there was breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. God put man in the garden without man's knowledge or consent, and he put him out the same way, and all the consequences of doing it were in God's purpose, decree, will and predestination, for man's days are before determined, and his bounds are appointed that he cannot pass, God's power controlling the hearts of kings as the rivers of waters, working in his people both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. We are not our own, but are kept by the power of God through faith. My desire is that each one of you may be wise as serpents and as harmless as doves, then we shall continue to dwell together in unity, and it shall be good and pleasant.

JAMES M. ADAMS.

WATCH YOUR DATES.

WE wish to request our subscribers when sending in their subscriptions to see that the date on the little pink slip bearing their address is changed. If not changed, please let us know immediately (for that signifies you have not been given credit for the money sent) and we will look into the matter.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1924.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JUDGES V. 15, 16; 1 CHRONICLES V. 1.

"FOR the divisions of Reuben there were great thoughts of heart. Why abodest thou among the sheepfolds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks? For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart." "Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel, (for he was the firstborn; but, forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel: and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright."

A twofold request has come to us to write upon the above quotations, by a sister, and a non-member of the militant church. When we first turned to them we were made to wonder what could have created a desire in the heart of any one to inquire about such Scriptures, as we saw absolutely nothing in them, but we now hope the Lord has given us some light, and such as we have we pass on to our inquirers and readers. If we have any experimental knowledge of the Scripture being opened up to our understanding it is a most wonderful work of God. "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all," while the creature is darkness, and in him is no light at all, except as God the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning, shines in his heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It is only in his light that we see light.

We propose to reverse the order of the quotations, and deal with the latter part of our subject first. Reuben was the first of Jacob's offspring, and Leah bear him. The law concerning the birthright, as defined in Deuteronomy xxi. 15–17, was "If a man have two wives, one beloved, and another hated, and they have born him children, both the beloved and the hated; and if the firstborn son be her's that was hated: then it shall be, when he maketh his sons to inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved firstborn before the son of the hated, which is indeed the firstborn: but he shall acknowledge the son of the hated for the firstborn, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath: for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his." This would seem especially applicable for such a case as the one we are now considering, and thus we see the throne, or choice blessing, whatever it might have been, was reckoned according to birthright. Jacob, while having purchased Esau's birthright for a mess of pottage, must disguise himself in order to obtain the blessing of his father, Isaac, and when he went to obtain a wife he, too, was deceived, reaping according to that which he had sown, for while he loved Rachel and served seven years for her, "it came to pass, that in the morning, behold, it was Leah: and he said to Laban, What is this thou hast done unto me? Did not I serve with thee for Rachel? Wherefore hast thou beguiled me? And Laban said, It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn."—Gen. xxix. 25, 26. Reuben, therefore, was the son of the bondwoman, and when Leah bear him she said, Jehovah hath seen my

affliction. To our mind, in the experience of the Lord's people, Reuben represents that which is natural, or fleshly, and as prone to do evil as the sparks are to fly upward. If those who are slaves to sin and in bondage to the law could obtain their release and come into possession of that inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, by the keeping of the law, then righteousness could come by the law, and Christ is dead in vain. Instead, we are told, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." To be sure, there is not one in all the earth who has not forfeited, forever, their right to the tree of life, and God has placed a flaming sword which turns every way to keep it. Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." He that climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber, and we have God's own word that "there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." Abraham at one time seemed to have tired waiting on the Lord, and said, "Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir," but the word of the Lord was, "This shall not be thine heir," but "in Isaac [the promised son] shall thy seed be called." In that kingdom which is above the inheritance is not reckoned, or counted, in the genealogy after the birthright, or according to the law, but according to grace, and it is given unto the sons of Joseph by and through their spiritual Joseph, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Joseph was the firstborn of Jacob by the wife whom he greatly loved, the freewoman, and when Rachel bear him she said, God hath taken away my reproach. This, then, is the meaning of the name Joseph. (Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.) Jacob presents to us a wonderful picture of our blessed Redeemer, the one who alone could take away our reproach, in his blessing to Joseph saying, "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall. The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him: but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel: even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts and of the womb: the blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of thy progenitors, unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren." Turn aside for a moment, kind reader, and view this wonderful picture of inspiration, and see the name of Jesus inscribed upon it all. How different was Jacob's blessing to Reuben: "Reuben, thou art my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power; unstable as water, thou shalt not excel: because thou wentest up to thy father's bed; then defiledst thou it: he went up to my couch." Truly the judgments of the Lord are unsearchable, and his ways

past finding out. His thoughts are altogether different from man's thoughts. In the first chapter of Isaiah, in dealing with a "sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers," children who were corrupters, who had forsaken the Lord, who had provoked the holy one of Israel unto anger, and gone away backward, he could say, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." How astonishing it is that he is able to justify the ungodly. Without this we could have no hope, but the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all, and it is by his stripes we are healed, our sins having been imputed unto him and his righteousness unto us, not according to our works, but according to the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. Therefore, we have become heirs of God and joint-heirs with his Son, being born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. It is said that to Reuben, and him alone, was due the preservation of the life of Joseph, when his brethren would have destroyed him. There is a sense in which it seems to us one is necessary to the other; it takes the experience of both to compose the "new creature," for we see in this Shulamite, as it were, the company of two armies, the one warring against the other, the flesh against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, but "that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual," so Reuben must be manifested before Joseph, but the elder shall serve the younger. The strong man armed keepeth his palace, and his goods are in peace till a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, and taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. Then "In the divisions of Reuben," (This is the marginal version, instead of, "For the divisions of Reuben," in Judges v. 15, 16.) "there were great thoughts of heart," and "great searchings of heart." Only those who realize the birthright of Reuben has been taken away, with the blasting of all their hopes and castles in the air, understand it is given unto the sons of Joseph, that the reward might be reckoned not of works, but of grace, the unmerited favor of grace, the unmerited favor of God. Only those who experience it can know the great thoughts and searchings of heart, or the agony of the soul that feels to be without God and without hope in the world. They know the heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; that it is altogether vile, like a cage of unclean birds, and full of dead men's bones, and what to do or which way to turn they know not, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered. They must first be made to know the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and brought in the place where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, before they shall sing the wonderful song of deliverance. By way of comforting those who are thus journeying, the declaration is, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. God does not despise the cry of the broken-hearted and those who are of a contrite spirit, but he will hear them that wait patiently (enduringly) for him, and will bring them up out of the horrible pit and set their feet upon a rock and establish their goings; he will bring them to his banqueting-house, to the place of his abode among

the sheepfold, to hear the bleatings of the flock, and to know where he feeds his sheep at noontime, where they will behold the solemnity of Zion, a city of quiet habitation, and that it is out of her, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined, and does shine.

We referred advisedly to one of our inquirers as being a "non-member of the militant church." We are persuaded that she, and all others like her, are members of the mystical body, and while they feel to be and are Reubenites by birthright, or nature, they are, nevertheless, earnestly longing to be numbered among the sons of their spiritual Joseph, hence they are following after the Lord's people, as the kids by the shepherd's tent; they long to hear the voice of the great Shepherd of the sheep, and to be led forth in pastures good and green, where they may glean and receive crumbs of mercy dropped purposely for them from the Master's table. To all such, let us bid, in the name of Jesus, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee," whereof thou art glad. Tell them of your great thoughts and searchings of heart, your questionings and fears, and your unworthiness, and ask them to tell you if is it thus with them. Be "militant," "serving as a soldier," and receive "the answer of a good conscience toward God," and thus enter into the full joys of the ordinances of his house in the keeping of his commandments. There can be no better evidence that you belong in the church than because you love the brethren, and your knowledge of your unworthiness. If you felt worthy of a name with the Lord's people, they would not receive you, if they knew it, neither would you feel at home among them very long, but it is because the Bride bears the name of her beloved, "the Lord, our righteousness," that she is all glorious within, and her delight is in him, the altogether lovely One, and she has no confidence in the flesh, and can rejoice in his worthiness. Therefore, put on the whole armor of God and fight the good fight of faith. "Be ye not equally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

If we have written anything that will explain satisfactorily to our inquirers and readers the portions of Scriptures referred to, we desire that they shall ascribe all praise unto him from whom all blessings flow. R. L. D.

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, April 2nd, 1924, at his home, Leesburg, Va., Ish C. Myers and Mrs. Emma E. Herrell, both of Loudoun County, Virginia.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

D. G. Beard was born in the State of Alabama, March 4th, 1857, died March 20th, 1924, making his stay on earth 67 years and 16 days. When quite young he moved with his parents to the State of Arkansas, from there to Louisiana, and there married Miss Susie Sledge, January 13th, 1876, came to Vanzandt County, Texas, in 1878, and lived there the remainder of his days. To this union were born eleven children, four boys and seven girls. One boy, Herbert, the eldest, preceded him in death. The other children are: Jane Rushing, Deborah (deceased), Lucy Stroud, Ida May Groves, Maud Dellie Preston, B. C. Beard, Rosa Lee Hood, Susie Etta Dunbar, John McGee Beard, James Daniel Beard, also twenty-eight grandchildren, twenty-three living and five dead. During the year 1896 he received a hope in Christ. He was a strong believer in salvation by grace, but from a feeling sense of unworthiness never united with the church, but was a regular attendant at church services when not providentially hindered. His home was a home for the Baptists, and he always did a brother's part in caring for the brethren. He never united with any denomination, nor with any of the secret orders of the day. He was an honorable, upright citizen. In the death of Mr. Beard his wife has lost a faithful and true husband, his children a loving father and the community one of its pillars, but we hope our loss is his eternal gain, and we would say to the bereaved, Weep not as those who have no hope, for he is not dead, but sleepeth in Jesus, from whence none waketh to mourn. In the presence of a large concourse of relatives and friends he was laid to rest in the Highland Cemetery to await the second coming of Christ, who shall change this vile body and fashion it like unto his glorified body.

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

George Scates departed this life at the home of his daughter, Mrs. P. J. Froude, Detroit, Mich., September 21st, 1923, in the eighty-sixth year of his age. Mr. Scates suffered a paralytic stroke in 1920, from which he never recovered, and gradually grew worse until he passed away. He spent most of his life in Canada, living in the village of Appin for a number of years. He was a faithful attendant of the Covenanted Baptist Church, at Ekfrid, and a firm believer in the doctrine held by the Old School Baptists. He was a kind husband, a devoted father and a good neighbor. His home was a welcome place for all who visited him, and especially at the time of the quarterly meetings held in Ekfrid. Mr. Scates was a firm believer in the doctrine of sovereign grace, and bore his affliction with great fortitude. He was very reticent regarding the conversion of his own soul, feeling himself too unworthy to talk of his own exercises of mind, but we feel assured that while he was not a professor he was a possessor of hope and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He was twice married, his first wife was Letitia Hamilton, who was a firm believer in the doctrine of the Old School Baptists, and to that union were born four daughters. She preceded him in death thirty-two years. His second marriage was to Sarah McCollum, two years after the death of his first wife, who preceded him in death two years. After the death of his second wife he went to live with his daughter in Detroit, at whose home he passed away. During his illness he manifested a spirit of reconciliation, saying many times, It is the Lord's will that I should be afflicted. He bore his affliction patiently and without a murmur. His kind and faithful daughter did all that a loving child could do for a kind and devoted father. He leaves his daughter, one brother and many friends to mourn their loss. His body was brought to Ekfrid and buried in the cemetery near the meetinghouse, by the side of his first wife. The writer conducted the services, which were largely attended by friends and acquaintances, thus showing the high esteem in which he was held. May the grace of almighty God comfort the sorrowful.

J. B. SLAUSON.

R. Rountree was born in Jackson County, Alabama, December 25th, 1839, and departed this life March 7th, 1924, at his home in Santa Anna, Texas, aged 84 years, 2 months and 12 days. He died very suddenly, and his death was a shock to the family. He came to Texas with his parents at the age of fourteen years. He was a confederate soldier in the Civil War, and in the Eleventh Infantry. He was married to Miss Sarah J. Floyd in 1865, and four children were born to this union, one died in infancy. The living are J. A. Rountree, of Fort Worth, Texas, Mrs. W. P. Ross, of Bridgeport, Texas, and R. T. Rountree, of Santa Anna, Texas. His first wife died May 15th, 1877. He was married to Miss Ruth L. Moss, December 13th, 1877, and four children were born to this union, they are Mrs. Eva Fulton, W. J. Rountree and Misses Nannie and Bertha Rountree, all of Santa Anna, Texas. He was once a member of the Missionary Baptists, but some twenty-seven years ago he joined the Primitive Baptist Church, and lived faithful to that church until death. His last membership was with the Little Flock Church, Munday, Knox County, Texas, and he often expressed his love for his church. We called a Primitive Baptist minister to conduct the funeral, but on account of

rain it was impossible for him to get here, and some of the older children being Missionaries their preacher was called. Primitive Baptist people did the singing, papa's favorite hymns were sung (as many as could be), two were, "There is a fountain filled with blood," and "I would not live always." He had been a subscriber to the SIGNS for nearly twenty-seven years. We believe papa is at rest, sweet rest, where sorrow comes no more. We loved him and miss him. He leaves a sorrowing widow, seven children, twenty-one grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren, other relatives and a host of friends to mourn his untimely death. He was laid to rest in the Santa Anna Cemetery. We are lonely and sad.

BERTHA ROUNTREE.

Mrs. Mary MacCauley Cheyne was born in Linlinthgan, Scotland, February 12th, 1840, and died February 29th, 1924, aged 84 years and 17 days. At the age of twenty-four she was married to Alexander Cheyne. To this union were born nine children, six of whom are living. For a number of years both Mr. and Mrs. Cheyne conducted a home for orphan children, the house being the birthplace of Sir Walter Scott. The place was known as the "Day Home." They emigrated to the United States thirty-eight years ago. After a short residence in Milwaukee, Wis , Mrs. Cheyne, with her husband and family, came to South Dakota, where they resided for four years. From there they went to Washington and resided four years, most of that time in Klickitat County. In 1911 they moved to Klamath Falls, Ore. In 1917 they moved to Cottage Grove, Ore , where Mrs. Cheyne passed away a few months later. Mrs. Cheyne resided in Klamath Falls, Ore , since that date, and died there suddenly at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Mary Thompson. Her body was taken to Cottage Grove, Ore., for interment. Mrs. Cheyne led a devoted christian life, uniting with the Baptist Church at an early age. She leaves to mourn their loss the following children: James A. Cheyne, of Zillah, Wash., William, Robert and Alexander, of Klamath Falls, Mrs. Mary Thompson and Mrs. Bell Dawson, of Klamath Falls. She also had thirty-one grandchildren and one great-grandson.

Her daughter,

MARY THOMPSON.

SISTER Cheyne, with her husband, Elder A. Cheyne, came to Coast Fork Church, at Drain, Ore., in 1917, with a letter from Pleasant Grove Church, in Washington, where they were baptized by Elder Hess, having been with the Missionary Baptists. They were sound in the Primitive or Bible doctrine, active and mature, giving full evidence of a good hope and calling. A few months after forming this much cherished acquaintance, when they were just comfortably settled in their new home, he was called to the fruition of his hope, and the lovable aged sister went to the tender care of her children at Klamath Falls, Ore., until Jesus called her to the place he had prepared for them that love him.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder N. B. Walden, at Cottage Grove, Ore.

G. O. WALKER.

Joseph Beakes Howell, son of Samuel Chandler and Sally J. Beakes Howell, was born May 7th, 1839, and died January 27th, 1924. November 9th, 1865, he was married to Mary Horton Corwin, daughter of George W. and Lamira Horton Corwin. He was struck by a train while on his way to attend a meeting of the Middletown & Wallkill Old School Baptist Church, at Middletown, N. Y. He was baptized by Elder H. C. Ker in the fellowship of the New Vernon Church, Sullivan County, N. Y., October 6th, 1901, where he remained a faithful and loving member until his death. He was chairman of the board of trustees of the Middletown & Wallkill Old or Primitive Baptist Church, also a trustee of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church, and will be sadly missed by both of these churches.

Funeral services were held January 31st, 1924, at his late residence, Middletown, N. Y., conducted by Elder R. Lester Dodson, pastor of the Ebenezer Church, of New York city. His favorite hymn, "Jesus, lover of my soul," was sung at his baptism, and also at his funeral. Interment was in the family plot, at New Vernon, N. Y.

H. S. COLLARD.

Shrintha Mercer departed this life March 25th, 1924, aged about 73 years. March 22nd she fell into a sleep from which she never wakened, but passed peacefully away three days later, leaving eleven children and three sisters to mourn their loss. Her husband, who was not a member, but was a believer, died about twenty-two years ago. She always attended meetings when possible, and much enjoyed meeting with her brethren and sisters, and often spoke of the mercy of the all-wise God to poor sinners.

She was followed to the grave by a host of friends, where our pastor, Elder W. B. Valentine, held services, using for a text the Scripture, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God."

Written by her brother-in-law,

FRANK PARKER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. Sirina Bowen, Ill., $1.00; Mrs. M. E. Bentley, Ga., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

The Lord willing, the next session of the Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association will convene with the Harford Church, Harford County, Maryland, on Wednesday, May 14th, 1924, and continue three days. Visitors will be met at Forest Hill, on the Md. & Pa., R. R. Those coming via. Pennsylvania or B. & O. R. R. to Baltimore, will get train for Forest Hill, at North Avenue and Oak Street station. Try to reach Baltimore not later than 2 p. m., Tuesday, the 13th. We hope to have a goodly number visit us.

M. F. WHITAKER, Church Clerk.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS:

Elders R. Lester Dodson, George Ruston, Chas. W. Vaughn.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 92. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1924. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SANTA ANNA, Texas, Feb. 23, 1924.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—Your letter of the 16th instant reached me in due time. I have read and reread same with unabated interest, and feel to say I fully indorse what you say. No grounds for cavil, and I am really glad I wrote you first, even if my writing was unsolicited. Sometimes, if not all the time, my understanding of God's word is dull, and that makes me hard to be understood.

Now, brother Dodson, I am going to make a request of you, and I feel that you should, and I trust you will, comply with my request, for I feel to do so would be of much spiritual good to the many readers of the SIGNS. This is my request: I am returning your letter, and ask you to have it put in the SIGNS. I feel your letter to me away out here in Texas is too valuable to the household of faith for me to keep, as I am so isolated it would not be of any real comfort except to me. In your devotions please remember this poor sinner, a beggar for mercy,

JOHN R. HAVENS.

RUTHERFORD, N. J., Feb. 16, 1924.

DEAR BROTHER HAVENS:—Your letter of January 10th was duly received, and while I should have been glad to have acknowledged it promptly, as previously written you, my duties are numerous, and some of them cannot be postponed. It is possible I did not clearly understand your first letter, which caused me to have some misgivings with regard to your views as to the creature's ability to, of himself, walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he is called of God. I am glad you have exercised charity towards me, and that your fellowship for me is not strained. Your second letter convinces me that we are not so far apart as I first feared; in fact, if I understand you now, I think we can walk together without falling out with each other by the way. I would wish that I might have the time to look up and examine the references which you make, but my time is too limited for that now; however, when you "affirm that Adam sinners bought by the blood of Jesus are the recipients of God's grace, and this grace we see in the manifestation of sons and daughters of Adam by the birth of the Spirit," I feel I can take you by the hand as Ananias did Saul and say, Brother Havens.

To refer again to a quotation in my previous letter, in the third chapter of John, third verse, Jesus answered and said unto Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." It is the man that is born again, born of the Spirit, thus becoming the recipient of God's saving grace, and, therefore, it is by grace ye are saved, &c. When the sinner is enabled by the Spirit to, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," and is given a good hope through grace that he shed his blood for him (the sinner), then does he see the glory of God in the face of his Son Jesus Christ, and thereafter he has no confidence in the flesh. "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." How wonderful then does that grace appear. It is nothing short of the unmerited favor of God extended to one who out of his own mouth confesses to being the very chief of sinners. The case which you cite illustrates unmistakably, to my mind, my contention. Saul, though a Hebrew of the Hebrews, and as touching the law, blameless, &c., as such was a persecutor of the church, and not a fit subject for Ananias to meet with, but after he had received of the Lord's hand double for all his sins, being quickened by the mighty power of God and made alive to his true condition, and a pleader for mercy, was then ready to obey the command of God to go and meet with Ananias, and after Ananias had evidence of the Lord that Saul was a changed man, he gladly and willingly went to meet him, and being brought together by the Lord in that manner had fellowship for Saul, and could address him as "Brother Saul." This is God's way of working, my brother, and when he has brought you and I, or any or all of his people to see eye to eye, we, too, will be glad to come together and own that we are kindred pilgrims journeying here below, but seeking a city whose maker and builder is God. Most assuredly, Saul of Tarsus, a son of Adam, was a subject of the new birth, and as such felt to be less than the least of all saints. He said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." This sounds almost like a contradiction, how one can be a saint and yet a sinner, but this is the "new man," who possesses two natures, the complex creature. I have recently come across some writings of Elder J. H. Johnson, where he treated upon the subjects of regeneration and the new birth, and thinking, perhaps, the latter treatise might throw some light on the new birth for you, am taking the liberty of quoting from Volume 1, pages 401, 2 and 3, of his writings, as follows: "Nor does the birth change the subject born, neither the fleshly or spiritual child, though the circumstances of both are changed. Yet that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. The flesh is born of corruptible seed and is corrupt; the spirit is born of incorruptible seed and therefore cannot be corrupted. 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.' That person who receives the Spirit which is of God is at once a compound character, possessing two different and antagonistical natures, because born of different parents. One is born of a fleshly or earthly parent, the other of a spiritual or heavenly parent; and 'as is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.' Each recipient of that spiritual, heavenly, or "new man,"

is a subject of two births, is born of two different parents, of two different natures, and is therefore a composite being. That composite or complex being is what I understand to be a christian or saint; and although often addressed or spoken of as such, and as a simple being, it is nevertheless a compound one. How else are we to account for their sometimes being spoken of as 'sinners,' and at other times as being 'righteous before God;' sometimes 'carnal,' at others 'clean;' once 'black as the tents of Kedar,' and 'comely,' or 'as the curtains of Solomon?' The whole mystery is solved in the fact that they are born of two different parents, of radically different natures. It is a seeming paradox to say that the saint or christian is a sinner and not a sinner; but Christ at one time said to Peter, 'Get thee behind me, Satan,' and at another, 'Ye are clean;' and I believe that Erskine told the truth when he said,

> 'To good and evil equal bent,
> I'm both a devil and a saint.'

In one relation they are the subjects of redemption, in the other they 'cannot sin,' and therefore need no redemption. All the evil is consequence to the first birth, all the good to the second. The seed of the herbage drops into the earth, and there is a production and growth of the same nature of the original. 'The holy seed' (Isaiah vi. 13) or 'godly seed,' (seed of God in the margin, Mal. ii. 15), is communicated to our earthly bodies, and there is an 'inner' or 'inward man,' a child of God, a production of the same nature of the original, a growth in grace in the knowledge of our Lord." "It is certainly a pleasant contemplation for us to look around us and behold all the works of God revealing, developing and thereby praising him, and with adoration we may exclaim with David, 'The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.' And again, 'All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee.'—Psalms xix. 2; cxliv. 10. When that spirit which is 'born of God' has a lodgement within, it being the spirit of life and light, we are vitalized and illuminated, and hence we feel and see—feel our malady and see the justice of our condemnation; feel and see that God is holy, and we unholy in our polluted birth; feel and see that 'the law is holy and the commandment holy and just and good,' and that we are 'carnal, sold under sin.' Now here is a saint, a subject of two different births, born of two different parents, of two different natures, each developing his kind, like everything else we see around us."

I have quoted at some length, but as it treats upon the subject matter, I hope you will find it good reading. Pure water must come from a pure fountain, while a corrupt fountain can send forth nothing but impure water. Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." Whether I make myself clear or not, I can but feel if we bear any spiritual fruit it is because of the life of the Vine being manifested in us, with all the praise due to his holy name, the branches having not whereof to glory, save in the cross of Christ, while if left to ourselves we can but manifest the nature that is in us by bringing forth fruit to or of the flesh, which is not acceptable in the sight of our God. It is out of a knowledge of my weakness and inability to know anything of myself as I ought to know that I try to write and

speak of the things of that upper and better kingdom. I trust our correspondence has proven of some benefit to us both, and shall be glad to hear from you again when you feel an inclination to write me.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

R. LESTER DODSON.

TOPEKA, Kansas.

DEAR EDITORS:—The inclosed letter seems to me to be very suitable matter for the columns of the SIGNS. If it meets your approval I believe it will be read with joy and fellowship by other fellow-travelers who have been brought by a way they knew not. Such messages help to cheer through many an otherwise lonely hour, and keep alive the little glimmering hope that we would sometimes lay by if it were not an anchor of the soul, and sure and steadfast, that holds us as we trust and long to be in the way of truth.

MARY ELLISON.

PRINCETON, Kentucky.

DEAR SISTER ELLISON:—If one so unworthy as I feel myself to be should address you thus. I have read and reread your letter in June 15th number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I do not know why, but is so impressive I just cannot refrain from trying to write you. I do not know why it is with me as it is. I am of all, most miserable. I have had serious thoughts of my destiny beyond this life ever since I can remember. My mother died when I was very small, and my father died when I was sixteen. I was taught to believe that when I got ready to be a child of God all I had to do was just let it be known by asking God to be merciful to me, go to the mourner's bench and be prayed for by some preacher and all would be well with me. But alas, not so with me, for all my life has been anything but pleasure. I was sixteen when I found I was a sinner, and oh how far from God and his grace I did feel, and no one could relieve me. I tried all and everything any one would advise me to do, even so far as to join the Campbellites, and how I suffered the Lord only knows. I had no one to speak to who would sympathize with me, for all my people were of the "do and live" type, and I found there was nothing I could do that would help me. I was in more trouble, I thought, than I could stand. So I left the so-called church, and just drifted on for three years. Sometimes I would feel I was as good as my associates, at other times I was so miserable I could not enjoy anything. I had often heard of the Old "Hardshell" Baptists, but did not know anything about them, or what they preached. July 29th, 1877, one of them was to preach at a schoolhouse four and a half miles from where I lived, and a young sister and I went, and oh how he did preach. We went in, and I took a seat as close as I could without attracting attention. The preacher got up, and of all the preachers I had ever seen I thought this one was the homeliest. He began to sing "Amazing grace." While I had often heard it sung, it had never sounded to me as it sounded that day. He took his text, and it seemed that all he said was to me. He told me all I had ever thought, and just how I felt. How it did make me feel to hear a man tell my feelings better than I could have told them myself. I pondered it in my heart, and would try to slip off all alone and ask God to have mercy on me. It did seem to me I could feel some better to think there was one, at least, who had been along the path I was

still in. I had no one to talk to about the preaching, for I knew I must not speak one word about it. So I would slip the Bible out and read every chance I could get, but it seemed only to condemn me. So it went on from bad to worse with me. I was trying all the time to do something good, something for which the Lord would have mercy on me, but all in vain. In the spring of 1878 my health failed, and I thought surely I was going to die, and oh how wretched I was. I had married and gone among strangers to live. My father-in-law was a Baptist, but I did not want him to know I was in trouble, and did not think he did, but one day he came in to see me, and I was crying, but he did not stay long, and I thought I had seen him for the last time. But not so, I had not suffered all yet, for I kept on, and sometimes my grief was so great I could not conceal it. I would weep and moan, and could not sleep or rest at all. The doctor was coming to see me every day, and one day he came and I told him not to leave any medicine for me, for it was not helping me one bit and I did not want it at all. He said I was not going to die so young, but I did not think he knew. I drifted on until August 20th. About 2:30 p. m. I was alone, and I thought my time had come, I surely did think I would be dead in a few minutes, and at a time when I had given up, and was reconciled to my fate, just at a time unexpected, I heard these words spoken to me so plainly I looked around. The voice said, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Oh how happy I then was. I thought I would never have another minute of trouble, but alas, not so with me, for I am so vile, so prone to sin, I fear that I am not born again. When I read your good letter I went back, so to speak, and came on with you through all, but too unworthy to be received, I fear, but it does my heart good to read and rejoice in the many good letters I see in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I turned to the passages of Scripture and read the good promises that are in the sixty-fifth chapter of Isaiah, also the sixty-sixth. I do enjoy reading after some good brother or sister who understands, and does not mind revealing what they think they do understand. "My grace is sufficient for thee," is sweet to me; also, "Fear not, little flock," and many other sweet promises I often can rejoice in, while I am a poor sinner, saved by grace alone, if saved at all. But thanks be to God, who saved me and called me without repentance, for it is all of grace, from first to last. I love all the dear Primitive Baptists, and love the cause, and hope I have a sweet hope that I am one of the called; not by works of righteousness which I have done, but by what the Lord did for me before the foundation of this world.

Dear sister, we are strangers in the flesh, but I hope not in the Spirit, for I feel we have traveled the same rugged road, at least in part. If I could write as some of the dear brethren and sisters do I would write often, but I cannot. I just felt I wanted to tell you how much good I got out of your letter, and have tried in my weakness to tell you of some of the Lord's dealings with me. I am one of thirteen children, who are all gone but two sisters and myself. All of them had their names among the different churches, but one sister, she believed in the Old Primitive Baptists, but never joined, as she lived far from any church of that faith and order. I am not ashamed to own the Lord, who has done so much for poor sinners like me. I hope when this reaches you the Lord will be with you

and show you just how to take it, for he knows them that are his. I hope he will lead you to know me, and not let you be deceived in me. I know I cannot deceive the Lord, for he knows all, from the least to the greatest of them.

I will close with much love, I hope, for the church, and all the household of faith, and some day we will all know as we are known and be happy. I hope to see and read again from your pen.

Yours, unworthily, but with a sweet hope beyond this vale of tears,

JOSEPHINE McGREGOR.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Jan. 13, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing this, to me, good and comforting letter from dear sister McPhail. It came as a cup of cold water to a thirsty soul, for I was much cast down, my pathway dark and gloomy, and oft crying out in bitterness of soul, Oh is there any one like me? so I feel we are companions in tribulation, and are traveling the same pathway, and I think I know of every waymark she describes. Blind? Yes, blind, and need to be led every step of the way. Sometimes I am comforted in the words, Poor, weak and worthless though I am, I have a rich almighty Friend, &c. My daily desire is,

"Oh that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still;
Oh that my God would give me grace
To know and do his will."

I have not the writer's consent, but feel it will be all right for you to glean from her letter that which is of general interest to the readers of the dear old SIGNS, to whom I now send New Year's greetings, having just passed my eightieth year, and feel to say, On earth peace and good will.

P. W. SAWIN.

IONA STATION, Ontario, Dec. 8, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER SAWIN:—Another year is nearing its close, bringing you and I and all His chosen nearer our eternal home. Oh the meaning of that word "chosen" to us! What a blessed lot to be an heir, chosen to dwell with our dear Redeemer and Elder Brother throughout all eternity. Our finite minds cannot embrace the fullness, but we have blessed sips of that living water that supports our weary, wandering minds and wayward steps. Dear brother, I am one whose heart is full of that cursed pride. I do not want to be poor and miserable and blind and weak in myself, yet I do know what it means to be weak in myself, that my dear Redeemer may be all in all. When we are weak then are we strong. This hateful nature of ours rebels against the crushing process of refining the awful dross, due to the consequence of sin reigning in our mortal bodies, that the pure life of our own living Jesus may abide and shine in the dark and sinful nature. The poor Samaritan woman who came to draw water from Jacob's well knew not the man who said, "Give me to drink," but when the power of God's holy law took up its abode in her heart and spoke to her, saying, If thou asked of me I would have given you living water, that you should never thirst again, she thirsted for the living water, and said, Give me to drink, and knew that he that spoke to her was Jesus, and said, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did." Dear brother, if we could always wait on him, rest in his love, we would feel satisfied, but for me I must needs go into the fiery furnace to refine the awful load of dross that lurks in this sin-polluted heart. I must be stripped of all my idols to worship the only true and living God. He seeketh such to worship him as wor-

ship him in spirit and in truth. The wisdom of this world is foolishness unto him. Very often I question myself, Have I only natural wisdom, a form of godliness, denying the power thereof? I surely am a mystery to myself, and feel that if I am one of the blind, an object of his love and pity, then truly I am led in a way I knew not and in paths I have not known. "I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight." How truly have we felt his faithful promise from time to time leading and guiding our unwary feet in the paths of righteousness and peace, the peace that passeth understanding. Surely it is of the Lord's mercy we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not; they are new every morning; great is his faithfulness. "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him." Jeremiah's words, but "as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." Dear brother, when clothed and in our right mind how sweet to meditate upon the gracious promises of our covenant-keeping God. He performeth the thing appointed for me, and many such things are with him. The poet says, "Behind a frowning providence he hides a smiling face." How weak our faith is when we murmur at his correcting hand, but we are as prone to evil as the sparks to fly upward, but he knows us all together; when he hath tried us we shall come forth as gold.

If you received a letter from me as often as I think of you it would be pretty often, but I fear to write, for I may not be guided by the only right motive, as I am so full of self. Write some time again.

Dear brother, I will close, wishing you all the blessings of our Lord during the new year, and with love to you and all your dear ones. I hope you are all well.

From your sister in hope,

(MRS.) JOHN McPHAIL.

HENDERSONVILLE, Tenn., April 4, 1924.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—Yours of March 27th received, and I surely appreciate your kindness in replying to my inquiry. Please pardon me for not being more explicit. I have been a member of the Old Baptists since 1897, or thereabouts. I have often written to brother Chick and others for information, and have been a reader of the dear old SIGNS all these years. I wrote a short letter to the SIGNS last September, and it was published in one of the November numbers.

Now, I will explain why I asked these questions, so you may understand me and be charitable to my ignorance and mistakes. I am seventy-one years old, and have rheumatism very badly; have been a widow twenty-four years, but am still keeping house; have raised a large family, but none of them belong to my church. I am glad to tell you I come from the old pioneer stock which emigrated from Virginia and North Carolina of the Fords, Hardys, Frosts and Bridgewaters. The great trouble with our people, they ought to be teachers, at least some of them, but have need of some one to teach them things beside predestination, which doctrine I believe and love with soul, mind and strength. Oh how sad to think how few watchmen there are on the walls of Zion to cry aloud and spare not, to Israel, against the adversaries of the truth. I was talking to a very dear brother about those who were added to the church on the day of Pentecost, as recorded in the second chapter of the Acts. He said there were Gentiles among them, but I insisted there were not. He seemed to think because they spoke different languages they were Gentiles. If I know the truth, you are right; I simply wanted some one else's views on the subject. I even went back to the death of

Solomon, when the kingdom was divided and when Israel went into idolatry, long before Judah did, and that was what I meant when I spoke of the lost tribes. They set up a kingdom in Samaria. Judah had no dealings with the Samaritans, as was very evident in the talk of Jesus with the woman at the well. Pardon me, brother, for being so tedious. I know I cannot teach you anything, but how sweet to know the spiritual Israel is here to-day, and has always been. I go back to the forty-ninth chapter of Genesis, and what a consolation to read of old Jacob's blessing Judah, and to follow the line of blessing until this good day, and to see what the Lord has done for the Jews. They have retained their national character as no other people all these years, and when the Lord's time comes they will be grafted in again into the old vine. Oh how wonderful to follow the line of the Lord's people then as well as now, and to see how, in his own good time, he brought them out of Babylon and planted them in a pleasant land and put a new song in their mouth. My dear brother, you would be surprised to know how few Baptists there are in middle Tennessee. I live twenty-two miles from Nashville. I go there sometimes, and visiting preachers go there. Brother James W. Linn, of West Virginia, visits them. But now, with all our modern up-to-date ways of traveling, our little country churches are destitute of an under-shepherd. It is so very sad, I cannot refrain from writing of it. I cannot write intelligibly to any one for publication, but I feel you will be charitable to my ignorance, read between the lines and understand me.

Since I began this letter the last SIGNS came. Elder Isaac Greathouse and Elder George Ruston are precious truth-tellers. As you say, many of the Lord's people live in Babylon. I lived there twenty-six years, and the Lord surely brought me out. Some time, if the Lord will, I may try to write about it.

I have not written as I expected. If you get tired of this and throw it in the waste-basket, all right.

In hope,

(MRS.) HENRY J. DORRIS.

TAFT, Tenn., Aug. 28, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—Find inclosed two dollars to pay for the SIGNS another year. I feel it has been by the love and kindness of the merciful God that I have been spared the past year to read the dear old paper which is of so much comfort to poor unworthy creatures like me. I always look forward for the time to come when I will get my paper, for it comes full of good news from a far country. It is the same old story over and over, yet it is always new to those who love the sweet story of Jesus and his love, which I humbly hope I do. I love above all things to hear God's little children talk of his wonderful works, and give him all the praise, honor and glory, for we read it is by grace we are saved, for which I feel very thankful, for if it had read that it was by the works of the creature I would now be here in this low ground of sin and sorrow without any hope, for I must say,

"My nature is so prone to sin,
Which makes my duty so unclean,
That when I count up all the cost,
Without free grace, I know I'm lost."

May God bless the editors in the future, as he has in the past, to declare the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. If it is not asking too much of you, please remember me and mine at the throne of grace.

Your little sister in hope,

(MRS.) J. E. SISCO.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1924.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

I JOHN V. 18.

WE know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not."

By request we are giving our views on this portion of Scripture, leaving the matter for the consideration of our readers. All men by nature are dead in trespasses and in sin and under condemnation of the law of sin and death. This death is universal over the whole race of mankind, including both the elect and the wicked. The redemption from this condemnation through the Lord Jesus Christ, however, is not universal over the whole race of mankind, but is for the elect only, for those chosen of God in Christ before the foundation of the world. The elect of God are the ones who are born of God by the operation of the Holy Spirit. This being born of God is entirely the work of God. It is a birth from heaven, and of an incorruptible seed, it is not according to the will of man, or of the flesh, but wholly according to the will and purpose of God. Through Christ Jesus and by the work of the Spirit of Christ, God's elect, who by nature were under condemnation through Adam's transgression, receive the new birth which is from heaven. That is being born again, they have passed from under the law of sin, and from under subjection to death, into the kingdom of the Son of God. Having thus passed from under the dominion of one law, they can never again be held accountable to that law, nor can they ever again be held captive by it. This we believe was in the mind of the apostle John when he wrote "that whosoever is born of God sinneth not." The apostle knew that because of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ the whole elect family of God were forever redeemed from sin, and were forever justified in the sight of God. The apostle knew further that this work of Jesus Christ was not at all in vain, that it never could be undone, and that it would never need be repeated, because by the one offering of himself Jesus Christ perfected forever them that are sanctified. The work of Jesus, therefore, having entirely redeemed and entirely justified all of the elect from all their sins, it is impossible that whosoever is born of God should ever again sin. That is, they could never by any act of theirs again bring themselves into condemnation, even as, in the first place, it was by no act of theirs that they escaped this condemnation. Sin is a transgression of law, and where there is no law there can be no sin. Had not God in the first place put Adam under law, no act of Adam could have brought him into death; but being under law, any transgression of that law brought its punishment unavoidably. It is impossible for any one to transgress a law which they are not under, and certainly those who are born again, born from heaven, are not under the law of sin. They cannot, therefore, transgress that law. In that sense, they can no more commit sin. Whatever the acts of the elect of God may or may not be, they cannot be sins

against the law which they were originally under, for they are no longer under that law, hence not accountable to it. They, being born of God, no longer belong to the world, nor to the flesh, nor to Satan; they no longer belong to Moses, nor to any other power or government short of the power and authority of almighty God. Not belonging to these things, and not being accountable to these things, they cannot sin against them, nor be brought into condemnation by them.

Were we to leave the subject here it might be charged against us that this glorious truth, for truth it is, would lead its followers to license, or to the unbridling of their human passions and lusts. Let us emphasize, however, we are speaking of God's elect in their character as the begotten children of God, not in their capacity as human beings. As human beings every one of us is accountable to the laws and ordinances of human government, are bound, so far as in us lies, to behave ourselves as law-abiding men and women, but as subjects of the new birth, God's people are certainly not subject to any law or authority short of the kingdom of heaven. Further, having been justified, in the sight of God by Christ's resurrection, from all condemnation, these children of God can never-more sin, so far as God is concerned, can never separate themselves again from him, and can never again be condemned by him. While prejudiced people constantly charge against the wonderful doctrine of salvation alone by grace that it leads to careless walking and living, such is not the case, because wherever and whenever God's Spirit reveals within the sinner Christ Jesus as the way and life and the salvation of that sinner, God at the same time imparts with that revelation the holy and reverential fear of himself, which fear is hatred of all evil, is an effectual safeguard against one's using the doctrine as an excuse to satisfy the appetite of one's fallen and depraved human nature. Every believer is a double personality: the one personality human, the other divine; the one of the earth earthy, the other the offspring of God's own nature. This spiritual side of the believer's life and character is that which is born of God and that never can sin. For instance, Paul writes thus, "For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. * * * Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Further he says, "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man." Concluding these same remarks, Paul says, "So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." Throughout this seventh chapter of Romans, from which we have quoted these passages, Paul uses the pronoun "I" as identifying the better self, that is, his spiritual self, and he speaks of the baser self, that is, the human self, as if it were almost another person than himself. He does not deny that there were times when this indwelling sin exerted itself and caused him to do that which he did not want to do, and which he would not conscientiously do, but at such times as this he said it was not himself that did the sinning, but that it was sin which dwelt in him.

This discourse of Paul in the seventh of Romans bears out what the apostle John says in the text at the beginning of this article, that is, "That whosoever is born of God sinneth not." The child of God, having been redeemed from under the curse and dominion of the law of sin and death, is henceforth under the law of Jesus Christ, and although the child of God frequently comes far short of living up to the precepts of Jesus Christ, and although his failure to do so gives rise to much sorrow and repentance, yet none of the acts of the child of God contrary to the precepts of Jesus Christ can ever bring him into condemnation from God. The believer's tender conscience is one of the positive evidences of spiritual life, and one of the surest signs that one has been born again. Though the believer's own heart frequently condemns him, God never does, because God looks at every one of his children through the infinite righteousness of his beloved Son, and God, seeing his people that way, sees no fault in them. However, God's children while in this state can never see themselves as God sees them, can never see themselves without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. We have, nevertheless, the promise of God left on record that the time shall come when every one of God's children shall see themselves as God sees them, and shall know themselves as God knows them. For the present they must be content as best they can to behold these things by faith, as through a glass darkly. They must be patient as best they can to know in part and to see in part, hoping for that blessed time when that which is in part shall be done away and they shall see face to face.

L.

EXODUS XXXIV. 27.

"AND the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel."

We now write unto you, feeling the obligation laid upon us, and desire to write you the relation manifested to the Israel of our God. The time Moses was with the Lord when he commanded him to write was forty days and forty nights, he did neither eat bread nor drink water, and he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant and the ten commandments. This covenant was to and with the chosen or elect nation of all the nations of the world. The Lord kept, directed and brought Israel out of bondage through the Red Sea into the wilderness, where they were fed with manna from heaven, and the water they were to drink they beheld it come from the rock. This covenant was manifested in a natural sense, but to our feelings we trust the covenant of life, which was with his Son in the salvation of all the elect, is the covenant in which we rejoice. We note Israel did not keep the commandments which were delivered to Moses to write, as they followed after the dictation of the carnal mind, and were enraptured in the lust of the flesh, and were seeking rest and comfort in nature, and all their readings and acts were but for the enticements of the flesh. This is to our mind the manifested virtues in man of the first covenant. The tenor of this covenant with all the way the Lord led his people and delivered them into the land of promise speaks out to every individual of the way the Lord leads his children in paths not known and in ways past finding out, in bringing them from darkness to his marvelous light, and gives them to see his kingdom, and to know the individuals distinct from all other

people. This life and character identifies the Life of them, and they live after the law of his kingdom, which is not a law of carnality, but of the Spirit of life. This tenor strikes the key of a higher tone than the flesh, as it brings forth praises to his name. We perhaps could write much connected with the old legal covenant which was written upon the tables of stone, but what we desire most is to feel the power of our covenant-keeping God manifested to us, that we are embraced in the covenant which is felt in the heart, and all the law commandments are written in the heart. We note God gave kings to direct Israel, and one after another would pass and another come forth to take his place, but the King of the kingdom of God is Jesus, and the peace and increase thereof shall know no end. As we read of the way the sons and daughters of the covenant of grace are led and made to pass through great tribulation and the Prince of the kingdom of God, which is his only begotten Son is ever with them, as the word of inspiration declares, He never leaves nor forsakes them. Their trials are many, and seem to wax worse and worse, until they are sick, faint, poor and helpless, then his presence is manifested in healing, cheering, clothing and feeding. Then the thought comes, While Christ is rich I cannot be poor; what can I want besides? These are, to our mind, some of the manifested love which is portrayed by the giving of the covenant to Moses, and then each one has the law of the Spirit of life in their hearts, and all the commandments of that law are felt to be individually for themselves. His love constraineth us to keep his commandments, and every heaven-born sinner loves, because he is born of God. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." All writing that is prompted by the Spirit is done in love, and when we write with hatred and enmity it is of the flesh. When we read from the pen of any one we note from the expressions just the features of their heart's wishes, and if we are made to feel they are of fleshly origin we should not even regard them, as we would be sowing to the flesh. We note the expression of many, saying, "I was impressed to write," and then reading that which was written we are made to bear witness as to the origin of the impression, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. When they read that which was written aforetime, which was written for our learning, then they were commanded to write, and the expressions were faithful and true, and came to pass according to the prophesy, and testifies the comandments were of the Spirit. We are made to rejoice as we read the many good letters forwarded to us for the SIGNS, and all of one accord, which is very encouraging to both editors and publishers, that their labor is one of love. We hope brethren and sisters will write when they are thus impressed, that we may share the expressions manifested in their hearts. This expression is not intended to convey the thought that there is not enough matter to fill the columns of the SIGNS, but to let you all know we appreciate all the household of faith, and you may address your correspondence to J. E. Beebe & Co., and you will be given true and faithful consideration.

Dear brethren, we do not feel it necessary to write all that could be written in connection with this text, but the few words submitted are desired to be of comfort to you, and your pure minds stirred up, and your hearts made to recall its felt relations, which are of the Spirit. We now feel that one of the least may express their felt relations and all the kingdom of God beareth witness. May we continue to write and speak to each other of these things, that we may sing together the sweet song, "Glorious things of thee are spoken, Zion, city of our God."

C. W. V.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by J. C. Clark.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Old School Baptist Church, Whitefield, Maine, September 7th, 8th and 9th, 1923, to the associations with which she corresponds, sends greetings.

BELOVED OF THE LORD:—Through the mercy of our covenant-keeping God, who cannot lie or make any mistakes, we are permitted to address you with this our annual letter, and as we come together we desire that God may make his presence known to the extent that we may feel it is good for us to be here, and that he may show forth his power through the ministering brethren who meet with us, in declaring the whole truth in boldness and godly fear, and that it may be gladly received, to the building up of our most holy faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. If there is any portion of Scripture comes to us at this time it is the first verse of the eighteenth chapter of Luke: "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint." We understand that prayer is the sincere desire of the heart. If this is so, I think we will not find the child of God sincerely praying for that which is wrong, so when we are kept in a spirit of prayer we are kept in a humble condition, and more likely to walk humbly before God and our brethren while in this condition. We are more likely to be patient and esteem others better than ourselves. Christ spoke many parables under many circumstances, but they were only understood by those who were in a measure of the same spirit of him who spoke them, therefore we see and feel that when in a spirit of prayer we are in a humble frame and at peace with the dealings of God, and in a place where we are of use to our brethren. Christ while here in the flesh prayed to the Father, not that his will, but the will of the Father, be done. This parable set forth the great love God has for his people in bringing them into a humble condition. The teaching and Spirit of Christ strips us of all our weapons of warfare and makes us helpless as little children, as in the case of the publican mentioned in this chapter, who, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. This publican's prayer was great, for he went down to his house justified, as is the case when brought into a humble prayerful condition. In the parable to his disciples, in the preceding chapter, we read it is impossible but that offenses will come when these circumstances are about us. How great the blessing if we are found in a spirit of prayer. If a brother trespass against us we are in a condition to rebuke him, and also in a condition if he repent to forgive him. Now, dear brethren, this true spirit of prayer is a perfect gift, consequently must come from the Giver of every good and perfect gift. We are in a world of many changes, but our God never changes, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. What great reason we have to praise our God in prayer and exhortation, and we hope that it is the sincere desire of our hearts to walk in peace, and that jealousy or any hateful thing come not among us. He spoke a parable unto them that men ought always to pray and not to faint.

J. C. CLARK, Moderator.
GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER W. W. Slaughter has temporarily changed his address from Edgewater, Texas, to Lelia Lake, Texas, where his correspondents will please address him.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Joseph James Adkins, deacon of the Indiantown Church, near Powellville, Md., died March 21st, 1924, at his late home, near Wango, Md., after a brief illness of about one week. He was the son of the late William and Betsy Adkins, and was born October 11th, 1848. December 20th, 1870, he married Miss Mary Catherine Holloway, and to this union were born thirteen children, eight of whom survive him, namely: Miss Caroline E. and Miss Anita E., who lived at home; Mrs. Cora T. Beauchamp, of Snow Hill, Md.; Edgar I., James U. and Joshua S., of Parsonsburg, Md , R. 2; D. William, of Snow Hill, Md., and George F., of Pittsville, Md. He is also survived by three sisters: Misses Rhona and Fannie, of Parsonsburg, Md., and Mrs. Elizabeth Perdue, of Showell, Md., and two brothers, Geo. W., of Parsonsburg, Md., and Wm. S., of Morgan, Mich., beside twenty-nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. He was baptized May 5th, 1878, by the late Elder Thomas Poulson into the membership of the Indiantown Church, where he remained a devoted and faithful member. He was made deacon in 1888, and in this capacity served the church faithfully. He also served as clerk from 1907 to 1914. Brother Adkins will be greatly missed by all who knew him, but most of all by his immediate family and the Indiantown Church, but we are comforted with the assurance that our loss is his gain. We believe he is at rest.

The funeral services were held from his late residence, conducted by his pastor, the writer of this notice. A large company of relatives and friends were in attendance, showing the esteem in which he was held. Interment took place in the family lot located on the farm. May the dear Lord comfort this dear family and the Indiantown Church, and sustain us all by his grace.

J. C. MELLOTT.

Elder William Stilwell, son of David and Izzy Stilwell, was born near Danville, Illinois, December 4th, 1839, and died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. E. L. Chase, Webster City, Iowa, April 6th, 1924, making his stay on earth 84 years, 4 months and 2 days. In the spring after he was born his parents moved to Greene County, Wisconsin, near Monroe, where he grew to manhood. In the year 1864 he was married to Miss Rhoda Parr, and to this union were born six children; two died in infancy. His oldest son, David, died April 13th, 1892, at the age of 27 years. In the fall of 1880 he and his wife moved to Iowa, and settled on a farm near Duncombe, Iowa. His wife died January 31st, 1901. He was united in marriage to Mrs. Anna Brown, of Missouri, in the year 1903. She died August 3rd, 1906, and after her death he made his home with his two daughters in and near Webster City, Iowa. Those left to mourn his death are Mrs. Lottie Spring, of Des Moines, Iowa; Mrs. E. L. Chase, of Webster City, Iowa; Orren Stilwell, of Fort Dodge, Iowa, four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Elder Stilwell united with the Honey Creek Church of Old School Regular Predestinarian Baptists in Greene County, Wisconsin, in the year 1876, and was baptized by the late Elder John Butler. After moving to Iowa, in 1889, he united with the West Fork Church of Old School Baptists by relation, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry December, 1895, remaining faithful until death. It was his request that the writer should preach his funeral, which I did April 8th, 1924, at his late home. Quite a large gathering paid their last respects to the deceased, after which he was laid in the grave by his two wives in the family lot, to await the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

ALBERT C. WOODLEY.

Elder John D. Curtis was born in the year 1841, in Newton County, Georgia, and died March 4th, 1924, aged 82 years, 3 months and 14 days. He was married in 1861, and enlisted in the war between the States in Company E 53rd Georgia Regiment; served in the Army of Northern Va., coming home in 1865 to fight the battles of life for his first wife and seven children. She died in 1901, then he was married again, and seven children were born to them. He had been a member of Shoal Creek Church for many years when he was called and ordained to preach the gospel of Christ. He served the churches humbly, yet boldly contending for the faith. He surely fought a good fight, and kept the faith, and receives the promised crown of righteousness. He served as Moderator of the Ocmulgee Association, and was highly esteemed among all the churches. He was buried near his old home, Mansfield, on a disagreeable day, and only one of his fellow-servants was there, Elder W. L. Allen, who conducted his funeral to the comfort of the bereaved family. We desire that the promise of God to the widow and fatherless may be realized by sister Curtis and all the children.

JAMES M. ADAMS.

Mrs. Mary Ferguson died February 28th, 1924, at her daughter-in-law's home in Elkins, W. Va. She was born September 12th, 1826, making her stay on earth 97 years, 5 months and 16 days. She was the daughter of Amos and Nancy (Schoonover) Canfield. She was married to Levi Coberly, October 15th, 1846, and to that union were born nine children, six of them preceded her in death. Her husband died March 12th, 1833. In October, 1892, she was married to Solomon Ferguson, who died February 22nd, 1898. Sister Ferguson was baptized by Elder J. B. Cross in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Leading Creek, at Montrose, W. Va., June,

1887, and was a sound and faithful member of this church until the day of her death. She was well established in the doctrine of God our Savior, and firm in the defense of the truth, and always attended the meetings of that church when it was possible for her to get there. She loved to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and had been a reader of it for many years. We can say in truth that a good woman, a kind and faithful mother, a true friend, a highly esteemed member of the church, has been called home. She leaves three daughters: sister Julia C. Wilmoth, Mrs. Lydia Maxwell and Mrs. Lucy B. Coberly, all of Elkins, W. Va., and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren to remember her in sadness. Her body was brought to the Leading Creek meetinghouse, where the writer, her pastor, conducted the funeral services, assisted by Elder J. J. Poling, then her body was lowered in the grave to await the resurrection. May the God of love comfort all who mourn.

Written by request of her daughter, sister Wilmoth. J. S. MURPHY.

Dorothy Ann Sales, daughter of Ira and Martha Wilcox, was born in Delaware County, Ohio, August 10th, 1844, and departed this life March 23rd, 1924, aged 79 years, 7 months and 13 days. In 1864 she was united in marriage to Samuel F. Strawser, and to this union were born five children, three of whom together, with the husband preceded her in death. In November, 1875, she was received in the Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, of which she was still a member. In 1914 she was married to Simeon Sales, who also preceded her in death. Throughout her life she devoted much time to being helpful to others. The fact that she was always unselfish and considerate of others enabled her to enjoy a wide acquaintance. There are left to mourn their loss, one daughter, Mrs. J. C. Parks, one son, E. E. Strawser, of Delaware, three brothers, I. T. Wilcox, of Ashley, Nicholas, of Cardington, and John D., of Delaware, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, together with many other relatives and friends.

C. E. JACKSON.

Mrs. Catherine Morgan, widow of Charles Morgan, was born at Easton, Pa., Nov. 14th, 1836, and died at South River, N. J., April 2nd, 1924. She came to South River in early girlhood and married. When quite young she united with the Methodists, and was very active in the work of that denomination, but became dissatisfied with the doctrine they preached. As she expressed it, she felt she was walking on ice, there was no foundation. She began going to hear Elder Durand preach, and attending the associations with sister Julia Bissett. About twenty-five years ago she was baptized by Elder Durand in the fellowship of the Washington Old School Baptist Church, of which she was a faithful member until her death. She felt to be nothing, but she had a wonderful Savior. She received the word as a little child. The last meeting she attended was the first Sunday in March. She requested the pastor to sing the hymn beginning, "Show pity, Lord; O Lord, forgive." That expressed her feelings.

Funeral services were held April 5th. Preaching by the pastor from Psalms xlviii. 3.

A FRIEND.

Malinda A. Freeman was born in Erath County, Texas, June 12th, 1849, and departed this life January 12th, 1924, aged 74 years and 7 months. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church about thirty years ago, and lived a christian life until death. She leaves two children and a host of friends to mourn their loss.

E. T. FREEMAN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. G. E. Anderson, Va., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

Owing to unavoidable circumstances, which could not be overcome, Salem Church will be unable to entertain the Delaware Association this year, therefore, to whom it may concern, we announce that there will be no session of the Delaware Association in 1924. We regret to make this announcement, but it seems to be the will of the Lord that it shall be so.

J. B. MILLER, Clerk.

Since mailing notice of the next session of the Baltimore Association we are informed there will be no session of the Delaware Association this year, therefore we are requested to change the time of the Baltimore Association from May 14th to May 21st, in order that there be no intervening week between the Baltimore and Delaware River.

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

The Lord willing, the next session of the Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association will convene with the Harford Church, Harford County, Maryland, on Wednesday, May 21st, 1924, and continue three days. Visitors will be met at Forest Hill, on the Md. & Pa., R. R. Those coming via. Pennsylvania or B. & O. R. R. to Baltimore, will get train for Forest Hill, at North Avenue and Oak Street station. Try to reach Baltimore not later than 2 p. m., Tuesday, the 20th. We hope to have a goodly number visit us.

M. F. WHITAKER, Church Clerk.

The Delaware River Association is appointed to be held with the Southampton Church, at Southampton, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, to begin Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, and continue three days, being May 28th, 29th and 30th. Meeting will begin at 10:30 a. m., daylight saving time. A cordial invitation is extended to all of our faith and order to meet with us. Those coming to Southampton, Pa., will be met, or inquire for C. B. Reeves. Those coming to Ivyland, Pa., inquire for Wm. Hobensack.

WM. HOBENSACK, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (4th, 5th and 6th), 1924. In accordance with decision rendered last year the churches composing the Association will entertain jointly. The New Vernon Church having kindly granted the Association the use of her meetinghouse, the services will be held therein. Entertainment will be provided at "The Old Homestead," situated a short distance from the meetinghouse. Those who attended the Association last year will recall the pleasant hours spent at this house, conducted by F. J. Beyea A cordial invitation is extended to brethren (especially our brethren in the gospel ministry), sisters and friends. Particulars as to train service will be announced later. Those coming by automobile will go direct to "The Old Homestead."

R. LESTER DODSON, Moderator.

R. M. STRONG, Clerk.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 92. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1924. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PSALMS LXXIII. 21-26.

"THUS my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins. So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee. Nevertheless, I am continually with thee; thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever."

There are many deep and terrible experiences that the elect of God are made to know under the teachings of the Holy Ghost, and though humiliating, and our nothingness, vileness and helplessness are felt, yet how gracious are the fruits of all things unto the called of God. For the Lord our God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, in his dealings with us ever has in view the glory of his own name, and the welfare of his dear children. The psalmist had many experiences which he portrays in this Psalm. His steps had well-nigh slipped, he had been envious of the ease and prosperity of the wicked. "For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning." But the Lord mercifully directed his steps into the sanctuary of God, and opened his eyes to see some things he had not understood; and there he again tasted mercy from the God of his mercy. Reviewing the many things he had passed through, and his present state, he retells the story, and speaks of his present blessedness, his portion as he is held in the hands of the Lord. He declares what is the ultimate height of glory, that is, his "earnest expectation."—Rom. viii. 19.

"Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins." There are seasons with all the Israel of God "when every one shall know his own sore and his own grief."—2 Chron. vi. 29. There is that heart-grief that is ours when the Holy Ghost shows us our iniquities, and we, by his gracious operations, are moved to mourn over them unto the Lord, and there are many other griefs arising out of God's providential dealings, and then, as described in this Psalm, we are grieved in our cogitations over matters that we do not understand, for how frequently our conclusions are erroneous. Ah, some self-wise, shallow professors of Christ's name may say, The psalmist ought to have known better than to be envious; I would not have troubled myself in such

matters; I, I, I would have walked, and have done better in all these matters than the psalmist. Enough said of these self-sufficient religionists. No one has more self-condemnation than a child of God when the merciful, gracious Lord shows him the vanity of his ways. "Thus my heart was grieved," whether there was a true foundation or not. "I was pricked in my reins." These were not momentary pin pricks, but the spear, the arrows of conviction of God. Yes, and Satan's fiery darts wounding his soul also. I well remember the time when I first took notice of what is written in this Psalm. It was about twenty-seven years ago. I was riding in my buggy to attend a funeral, and was in a cast down state of soul. I said within me, What text of the Scriptures shall I preach from at this funeral? and I thought of the words, "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." I thought, That will do. Then I said within me, How, under what circumstances came the psalmist to come to this persuasion? So I mentally recalled the preceding verses, beginning at this twenty-second verse, Oh, I thought, is it such an one as this? I found tears coming into my eyes and flowing down my cheeks, for I felt I was just such a person myself. "So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee." People sometimes may think, and rather boastfully say, to be heard of others, What a fool I was. But this of the psalmist is no such self-eulogizing prattle. When the Holy Ghost shows a child of God the folly of his thoughts, and speech, and ways, it is humbling, it is graciously so, for we are made to be of a meek and lowly mind before the Lord our God. We see how unwise we were, how far astray, how we had wandered away from the paths of judgment, how erroneous were our conclusions, how stupid we were. "Fools, because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted."—Psalms cvii. 17. Such we see we have been, and no marvel that we were prey to all afflictions. We see now (that is, under divine enlightenment, after having received instruction in the sanctuary of our gracious God,) that we belong to the foolish things, base things, things that are despised, things that are not. (Cor. i. 27, 28.) "So foolish was I, and ignorant." So vile, so depraved, so astray from God and the truth, "I was as a beast before thee." Ah! to be thus before the Lord knowing that we are there revealed unto him exactly as we are, for in these sacred, dreadful moments we poor sinners know that our God is the discerner of the thoughts and intents of our heart, neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. (Heb. iv. 12, 13.) "The publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner."—Luke xviii. 13. "And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes."—Gen. xviii. 27. Job exclaimed, "Behold, I am vile: what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth." "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

"So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee." Ah it is no trifling matter to see one's self so foolish, so ignorant, so degraded that we feel that we are sunken lower than the human

family. "I was as a beast before thee." Oh our God is the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, and what am I? Sinful, vile, foolish, I have to loathe myself. "I was as a beast before thee," humbled, prostrate in the dust before the Lord, and yet his grace so exercising our sinful hearts that we are meekened, and contrite in heart, confessing our transgressions, our folly and shame, and imploring his compassion, pleading for his mercy in Christ Jesus. But can he, will he, bestow his lovingkindness on such a foolish, vile, ignorant mortal, one who feels, "I was as a beast before thee"? Yes, he will have mercy upon us. He is the God of all grace, and we are bowed before the throne of grace, the throne of God and the Lamb. (Heb. iv. 16.) Our God is rich in mercy unto all who call upon him in truth. When the Lord said, Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, was Jacob offended? Did Israel feel insulted to be named a worm? Ah, no! We feel the Lord knows us exactly as we are, and each one says, I feel I am but a poor creeping, sinful, helpless worm. The Holy One of Israel will be the help, the protector, the Redeemer of these worms. Did not Christ Jesus, the dear Lamb of God, in his humiliation exclaim, Behold I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people? Jesus, who in his own person was without spot, holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person, yet when he as the Surety, Redeemer of his own, bare their sins, when all the shame, the ignominy of his people was laid upon him, when he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, when he was made a curse for us, how humiliated he was, how crushed and smitten. Behold, and see if there is any sorrow like his. He cried out unto Jehovah the Father, "Save me from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns."—Psalms xxii. 21. So the thought, the hope, is put in our hearts that our precious Christ whom we have is not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

"I was as a beast before thee. Nevertheless I am continually with thee; thou hast holden me by my right hand." "Nevertheless." Notwithstanding I am all that is foolish and base, I am not spurned from thy presence, I am not cast out into outer darkness to languish and perish in my folly. Ah, I have many times had such a feeling sense of the vileness of my Adamic nature, I have felt myself as a most loathsome reptile, too base to have being in the world, I have seen myself fit only for God's eternal reprobation, for the damnation of hell. "Nevertheless." Oh the exceeding riches of grace in God's kindness to us in Christ Jesus. We are miracles of God's grace. Again and again in the twentieth chapter of Ezekiel the Lord says, "But I wrought for my name's sake." He will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy. "Nevertheless, I am continually with thee; thou hast holden me by my right hand." It is because of his own everlasting and immutable love that Jehovah holdeth fast unto himself his own elect, and such of them as he hath called, and hath so shown them their depravity and utter baseness will by his gracious operations in their souls feel to be as dust and ashes, and tell the Lord, So foolish am I, and ignorant; I am as a beast be-

fore thee. If such a worthless wretch can be loved of God, then it would not do to turn this one loose; he is not fit to go abroad alone, so foolish, so ignorant, he will get into all manner of trouble, take the wrong path, stumble into the ditch, be the prey of every snare, allured by every deceiver, robbed by spiritual thieves and robbers. "Nevertheless, I am continually with thee; thou hast holden me by my right hand." Held so lovingly, mercifully unto himself, who shall pluck us out of his hand? Saith our dear Savior, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one."—John x. 28–30. "Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words."—Deut. xxxiii. 3. This is the important thing, not our hold on God, but that eternal God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, has hold of us. It is the great, almighty, gracious hand that has hold of "my right hand." It is the weak, tiny hand of the little child held in the strong, kind hand of the Father. The little toddling child holds on to the father, but the father has the outside grip. There is a verse of a hymn that reads, "Lord, I would clasp thy hand in mine," but I will alter it, and put it as the psalmist does,

> "Lord, I would clasp thy hand in mine,
> Nor ever murmur or repine,
> Content, whatever lot I see,
> Since 'tis my God that leadeth me."

Can any power pluck us from the hand of our covenant God? Who shall ungrasp the gracious grasp of the Lord God omnipotent who reigneth? Oh it is blessedly wonderful to me a poor sinner. "Nevertheless, I am continually with thee." Sometimes I have thought he has loosened his hold of me, turned me adrift, given me up, tired of me, I am such a fool, need so much mercy and grace. Ah, I have thought, and have said in my infirmity, I am a castaway, so worthless, so unprofitable that God no longer holds me unto himself. I am all astray, a wanderer in the waste howling wilderness; I am so vile, so fretful, rebellious, perverse, not fit to pray, and no heart even to pray, and if I do he regards me not; when I cry and shout he shutteth out my prayer. Dear reader, I could go on and on attempting to tell of my times, of my wretchedness, dullness, hardness, my inward vileness, but cannot fully tell the dreadful story. "He restoreth my soul." Oh the blessedness of this blessedness. Oh the preciousness of our precious Christ. The clouds are swept away, he lifts up the light of his countenance upon me. The noise of Satan the roaring lion is hushed, the day dawns, the night is past, the devouring, howling beasts of prey have gone into their dens. Christ is mine and I am his. Jesus' precious blood and righteousness is my comfort and glory. Then I find I am with my God, held unto him, never separated from him, he still holdeth me by my right hand. "My people have forgotten me days without number."—Jer. ii. 32. Oh the shameful ingratitude, yet how assuringly the Lord speaks in Isaiah xlix. 15, 16, and in Isaiah xliv. 21. "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." If it were not that we are divinely kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, we would never be able to hold on our way. So the psalmist feels to confide in his God who has hold of him. In his faith he is so persuaded of the faith-

fulness, and the immutable graciousness of the Lord, that he says, "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." The believer in Christ needs a guide. The Holy Ghost, the Comforter, shall guide us into all truth. Many think because they have a better knowledge of some items of doctrine, and can talk about the truth, that they are all right, acceptable to God. But all this may be, and yet a person may in his heart know nothing of the truth of the gospel, and have never walked one step therein. What does any one know of the Savior who never felt he was a perishing sinner? What does a man know of grace who does not feel altogether unworthy, helpless, a poor base thing, a nothing? (1 Cor. i. 28.) How can any one know that Christ is the Lord our Righteousness unless he has been taught to see and feel that all his righteousness is as filthy rags? What know we of the precious, cleansing, sin-atoning blood of the Lamb of God? Oh we are made to cry, "Foul, I to the fountain fly; wash me, Savior, or I die." So with unnumbered sacred things of our God and Savior the Spirit of truth so teaches, so guides the elect and called of God, that they are made with all appreciation vitally and experimentally to enter into the truth. The difference between the mere professor appears at times to be slight; and the children of God may be deceived in these fleshly professors. Concerning hypocritical professors the Lord speaks of them to Ezekiel, "Also, thou son of man, the children of thy people still are talking against thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord. And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not."—Ezekiel xxxiii. 30-32. What avails all this mimicry of hypocrites? There is much head and tongue religion in the world, but what does my soul know of Christ, his precious blood, of his high priesthood, of him as my Advocate with the Father? To that poor sinner who has been made to confess unto the Lord, "So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee," how comforting is the persuasion in his soul that, "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel." In all my straits, in all doubtful matters, when blind guides would order my goings, when my own unwise heart would devise my paths, thou shalt guide me. Thy counsel, the blessed gospel of Christ, shall order my goings. The pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night. The Lord is so unchanging in his love he will ever counsel us. He so blessedly declares, "I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye."—Psalms xxxii. 8. He will ever have his eye upon us; never for one moment are his chosen out of his sight. He sees us when we see not him, and the darkness and the light are both alike to him. The children of God are not carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease, but perplexities are their lot. Sometimes they are called to do business in great waters, and as the storm rages their souls are melted because of trouble, and they are at their wit's end. But through the

floods and the fires the Lord is with his people. His rod and his staff shall comfort us in the valley of the shadow of death. Thou shalt "afterward receive me to glory." God hath called unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, and the elect of God whom he did foreknow he hath predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, and, moreover, whom he did predestinate them he also called, and whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified. (Rom. viii. 30.) The pilgrimage is ended, we are come through all the tribulations in our journey and our almighty Friend has held on to us, and guided us safely to the end, bringing us to glory.

"How cheering the prospect of glory to come,
And the bliss of eternity see;
To be with the Lord and his chosen at home,
Oh this will be heaven to me."

"Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." Oh, thou art more glorious and excellent than mountains of prey. (Psalms lxxvi. 4.) Some people speak as though the pre-eminent attraction in heaven is to go to meet and to be forever with some precious much loved one of whom they have been bereaved. All this is mere human nature. Earthly kinships are not perpetuated in the realms of eternal glory. They belong to time, and to this world. When we depart this life, and are taken into heaven itself it is true we shall then be forever at home with all the chosen in Christ Jesus, the household of God, but it is to depart and to be with Christ, so shall we ever be with the Lord. "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" My God, my Redeemer, the Lamb in the midst of the throne, our eternal All. "There is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." Christ is "The Desire."—Hag. ii. 7. In all the characters he sustains unto his people he is the One so needed by us poor sinners.

"His presence disperses my gloom
And makes all within me rejoice."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Feb. 11, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing an excellent article from Elder Hardy, and write to state that among the several letters received regarding my letter in the January 1st number of the SIGNS, one was from brother Bartlet, in which he asked several questions regarding Scripture. My nearly blind condition made it impossible for me to answer, so I wrote brother Bartlet that by his consent I would refer them to Elder Hardy. I then wrote the Elder, inclosing both letters from brother Bartlet, and Elder Hardy kindly granted my request. I feel the Elder is far more gifted in expounding Scripture than I. After receiving the manuscript I wrote the Elder for his consent to have it published in the SIGNS, which he granted, and I am sure it will be acceptable to the publishers, and will be read with deep interest by the many dear readers. I love to hear that which honors and glorifies God. I feel to be a poor worthless worm of the dust, often trying to pray as David did, Now, Lord, that I am old and gray-headed, forsake me not.

Love to all the household of faith.

P. W. SAWIN.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Jan. 25, 1924.

DEAR BROTHER BARTLET:—Your letters to Elder P. W. Sawin have been sent to me. I do not feel equal to the task which you ask him to perform. He is much better qualified for it than I am, and yet when I consider the infirmities of age which I feel coming on me so swiftly

and knowing that he is already in the midst of that sea, I will undertake to comply with his request, hoping that our God will give you an answer of peace. In Genesis vi. 6, we have, "And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart." The Hebrew meaning of the word, "repented," in unfavorable way, is to avenge one's self. The word, "avenge" means to exact punishment or satisfaction for wrongs or injuries done to one's self, and to execute vengeance. Therefore we are to understand that the repentance of God was simply to punish man in his disobedience, and with his disobedience by having him to suffer in that in which he was trying to exalt himself above that for which God had made him. What man received was the just punishment of him who had not given to him any unreasonable commandment. God had given to him a reasonable law, with a fixed penalty, and the man knew both. Therefore God determined to execute his vengeance on the man whom he had made. That is what I understand God's repentance to mean at this place. In their travels from Egypt to Canaan Israel sinned very much. When Moses was with the Lord in the mount they made for themselves a god, a golden calf. God's anger was kindled against them, and he told Moses of their evil. Moses went down to see as God told him. He then turned and pled with God for Israel, but he did not plead in the name of Moses, nor in the name of Israel, but in the name of God, who was offended. It was his people, and it was his name that would be blasphemed by his enemies if there was a failure in carrying up his people to the land of promise. Therefore Moses pleaded in the name of and for the sake of God, whose servant he was, and we are told, "And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people."—Exodus xxxii. 14. Therefore instead of executing justice on his people he showed them mercy. Thus God's justice was perfectly satisfied and mercy given. Mercy is altogether by Jesus Christ. By him is the holy law of God satisfied. Therefore we see Jesus in this very act. The law would have justly executed death on all that host, but mercy by Jesus Christ saved them, and the law has no more claim on them. A preacher, claiming to be a Primitive Baptist, once wrote to me, and said, "God is not going to repent for me, I have got that to do for myself." In my reply to him I said, "If Jesus Christ does not, or has not relented for me, then I am lost." He is exalted at God's right hand for to give repentance to Israel and the forgiveness of sins. Wherever he gives repentance he gives the forgiveness of sins also. Here is our salvation, and this was the salvation which Israel received at that time. As the holy God the Father he is not as man that he should repent, but as the mediator of his people he repents, and in that repentance he pleads the cause of his people, and his pleadings are always perfectly acceptable to the Father. Again, in Judges ii. 18, we have, "For it repented the Lord because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them." This shows the very tender mercy of God towards his people, and while he is so merciful to them he executes his vengeance upon those who persecute them. This he will do, even though he bear long with his enemies. I could give a few very pointed remarks on this point, but it would not be altogether germane to the subject under consideration. In 1 Samuel xv. 35, we have, "And the Lord repented that he had made Saul king over Israel." This repentance was in the

shape of a rebuke to Israel because they had refused God in his management of their tribes, and had demanded of Samuel a king to go in and out before them. To rebuke them in their own sins the Lord gave them a man after their own hearts. A man of fine stature, from his shoulders and upward higher than any of the people, and beautiful to look upon. In every way he was just to suit the people, but he proved to be a curse to them, and the Lord took him away, and gave them a man after his own heart. This repentance therefore was to the rebuke of Israel, and to the merciful kindness of God in giving them David to be their king. In 2 Samuel xxiv. 16, we have the case of the judgment against David for his pride in his great kingdom, when he had the people numbered. When the Lord had rebuked that pride, and humbled the king, he bid the angel to cease his destruction against that people. This repentance was a ceasing of the execution of his judgment, and the giving of the hand of mercy. We have the same in 1 Chron. xxi. 15. In Psalms cvi. 45, we have a case where God remembered his covenant with Israel, notwithstanding their sins, and his mercies going out to them in the forgiveness of all their sins. His tender care over them was according to his tender mercies, and not according to their prayers, nor their obedience. On those things mercies could not be shown, for mercy is altogether for the sinner. They were God's people, and he loved them, and he gave them his tender mercies, and showed his love to them. In Amos vii. 3, and vii. 6, we have two cases where the Lord had rebuked Israel by sending destruction on their substance, and he withheld his hand and showed mercy to them. This was in their natural substance. Thus we are given to see that every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights. In Jonah iii. 10, we have, "And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not." This is a case where God gave to a people not of the promised seed, or Abraham's seed, repentance by the preaching of his servant Jonah. Undoubtedly God knew just to the extent that Ninevah should be overthrown before he sent Jonah there to do that preaching. Jonah did not know. He thought God had said that city should be destroyed. But because he did not know the extent of his prophecy is no reason that every word of it should not be fulfilled, as it surely was. The king, the head of Ninevah, and all his servants, with the beasts thereof, were in sackcloth, repenting in the dust. The whole city was brought down in fasting and in repentance. This is not one bit of evidence that there was one child of God in all that city. Their sins were national, and their repentance was so, too. What they possessed God had given to them, but they knew him not. They knew not the hand that had blessed them, and when the judgments should come God sent his true but rebellious servant there with a message. That message was a terror to those Ninevites, from their king on his throne to the beggar on the dunghill. It brought them down in the dust. Their king, kingdom and their city were at stake. They were so humbled that every one came under that fear. Their humility was the thing which was produced by the message of God's servant, or God's message by his servant. Ninevah was humbled in the dust. That kind of people God will bless and not curse. There-

fore it is said he repented. The true meaning is that he withheld his judgments which they thought, or expected. Like Jonah, they felt that their city was to be torn up root and branch. Had we been there we would have thought so, too. But God had a greater and wiser purpose in it than Jonah could see, or than the Ninevites could see. That was a great city. Jonah went three days journeying in it before he began to cry. I do not know of any city on the earth now which a man might not walk through in three days. Then there were more than 120,000 inhabitants there who did not know their right hands from their left hands. See what humbling there was before the Lord, and at his word. The city was fully overthrown to all intents and purposes, regardless of the thoughts of Jonah or the Ninevites. The word of God was fully fulfilled. Now there was nothing more to be done, so God withheld his hand and administered to them no more punishment. He showed to them his mercies to them in their nation. This is his repentance.

On the first Sunday in August, 1922, I heard a young preacher say in a sermon, "All the ministers of God do not learn to preach as Jonah did." I felt that that is the reason so many of them, and he among the rest, have never learned that salvation is of the Lord. The whale's belly could not have given this lesson. We do not, any of us, go through the fish's belly. Jonah was in the belly of hell. He said, Out of the belly of hell have I cried unto thee. It was there that he learned that salvation is of the Lord. There is where every one of the ministers of God learn that lesson. There Jonah learned that the word of God is a word of power, and that it must be obeyed. There met together a repenting Jonah and a repenting Ninevah. One could preach to the other, and the other could come down in the dust, for God ordained it so. Here Jonah became a striking figure of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This proves that all this, every point connected with the whole narrative, was appointed of God. Appointed, therefore predestinated beforehand. Not one thing nor word of all of it could fail, though the very heavens should fall. The giving the blessing in a different way from what Jonah and the Ninevites supposed was strictly of the Lord, and by him fully appointed before Ninevah had an existence. The doing of this thing was only the development of that which God had appointed that his holy name should be glorified in all the earth.

My letter is long. I have made three copies. One for brother Bartlet, one for brother Sawin and one for myself. The Lord bless us all and give us understanding in all his way according to his holy will.

In hope and love, I am your brother,

L. H. HARDY.

SANTA CRUZ, California, April 20, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed please find money order for two dollars to pay another year's subscription for the SIGNS. For nearly sixty years I have loved the doctrine it advocates, and as I am alone in this city it is a source of much comfort to me. My love goes out to the publishers, to all who contribute to its columns, and to all who love the truth as it is in Jesus.

Yours in the hope of a blessed immortality,

MARY E. WRIGHT.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1924.

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2 CORINTHIANS VI. 1.

"WE then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain."

This chapter is connected with the chapter that goes before, because it opens with the words, "we then," meaning because of that, or for that reason. Going back and reading the verses of the chapter before, we find these words, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." God was in Christ Jesus reconciling the world; not reconciling simply the Jews unto himself, but the reconciliation of God in Christ Jesus extended to every people everywhere. That reconciliation which was made in Christ Jesus covered all the elect family of God. God was in Christ, which proves that Christ was not only a man, but that he was both God and man; and that while he was truly a man, he was at the same time truly God, and the very God of heaven, and God in Christ performed the work of reconciliation unto himself of his children, who were dead in trespasses and in sin, who were separated from him by transgression, yet God laid upon Jesus Christ the sins of all his people. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, imputing their sins unto Christ, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation; not that God has committed unto the gospel ministry the power to reconcile sinners unto God, not that, that work was done by the Almighty in Christ himself, but he has committed unto us the tidings of it to preach unto God's people wherever they are. "Now then," he says, "we are ambassadors for Christ." The apostles were sent out in this world as ambassadors for Christ as though God did beseech the church by them. These twelve men were sent forth by the Government of heaven, by the authority of God, as the ambassadors of Jesus Christ, as though God spoke through them. An ambassador is one who is sent by one government to another government, and the ambassador represents, he stands for, the government that sends him. He is clothed with the authority of that government. If an ambassador in a foreign country would deliver a message from his country while there it is his government that sends it; when the ambassador declares it it is as though the government spoke it, and the government stands back of that message and makes it good. These apostles were sent forth by almighty God as the representatives of heaven's Government, and they went with the power and authority of that Government. When these apostles spoke it was not as though they spoke and thought as men, it was not simply themselves speaking, but it was heaven

speaking through them. It was not what the apostles, as men, wrote, because that which they wrote was written by the authority of God. If the New Testament was written by mere men it is of no more account than any other book. These men wrote these things not as coming from themselves, but by the authority of the Government of heaven, endowed with the power of that Government; when they spoke it was as though God spoke through them; therefore he says it is "as though God did beseech you by us." He says, "We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." Now, what does that mean? Be ye reconciled to your troubles, to your afflictions, your trials and your temptations, for these things are the will of God concerning you. If God causes you to tread the path of sorrow and affliction, be ye reconciled to it; it comes from the hand of him who loves you with an everlasting love, and he has your welfare at heart. Let us remember that at the time Paul wrote this the church was being persecuted, believers were being put to death, all on account of the doctrine they believed. To be a christian in those days meant to be hated, to be persecuted; it did not mean what it means to-day. People now do not know what the word "christian" means. Those who are truly christians in this day and time fear to claim the name of christian. It is the greatest thing in the world to be a christian, and if some one would come and ask you, Are you a christian? you would hesitate to say yes. We think we know what it is, perhaps, to be a christian, but how many of us in this world do? Do we practice it in our daily life? It is not simply to believe the truth of predestination, to believe the truth of salvation by grace; not only to believe it, but to live it. Do you and I live it? Therefore when some one asks you, Are you a christian? you quake and tremble, and are afraid to say, I am. We come far short of living the life a christian should. In this day our life is so commercialized we live very far from the precepts which Christ taught. We may be christians in belief in doctrine, but Heaven knows that in our daily lives we come far short of being christians in our works. Human nature and flesh and blood are so constructed that of ourselves we can never live up to the standard. It is only in the measure that the grace of God dwells in us and teaches us to live that we can be christians in any sense whatever. Therefore when one claims to be a christian, openly and above board, he is claiming a tremendous lot. He is claiming more than we would dare claim.

The church was being persecuted, saints were being put to death on account of the doctrine they believed, but Paul said, Be ye reconciled to it, God is doing it. It is not by accident. It is God sending these trials, these tribulations. You believe all things are wrought by the counsel of God's own will, you believe that his will is done in heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. This is your belief, this is your heart, therefore be ye reconciled to God. These bitter things are but the will of God concerning you. Paul was not addressing the world, he was not calling on the world to be reconciled to God; they could not be. He was speaking to those who were already in the church of the living God. The apostle said, Be ye reconciled to it, it is not sent by the devil, it is God's will. Jesus knew no sin, but God Almighty made him to be sin for us. He was made to be sin for the salvation of his children that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He had no sin himself, so

we have no righteousness ourselves. Therefore, God made our sins his sins that we in his righteousness might be made whole.

"We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." This is as it appears here in the Bible, but we notice in this verse there are some words in italics. When you see in the Bible a word written in italics it means that the word has been inserted by the translator. Now, reading it as it was originally written, leaving out those words in italics, it is as follows: "We then, workers together, beseech also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." The words "with him" are supplied words. There is a vast difference between workers together and being workers together with God; being partners with God; co-workers with God, carrying on God's salvation. But that is not the thought here. The apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ were ambassadors working together, working in the vineyard, because it was the Lord who had called them to the ministry. But not workers together with God.—No. They were not in partnership with God, but the apostles were workers together. You know it makes a big difference when you leave out those supplied words. The church of God are workers together with one another. They are not workers together with God, because God does not need any one to help him.

What does it mean by receiving the grace of God in vain? The grace of God appeared to you bringing salvation. You never had any salvation until the grace of God brought it to you; you may have thought you were saved, but when the Lord by his Spirit began his work in your soul you saw that you were lost, that you were guilty before God. When salvation did really come to you it was revealed to you and in you by the grace of God. Is that all it did? The grace of God in bringing salvation also teaches us that we should live soberly and righteously. Then grace not only brings salvation, but this grace of God teaches us the denial of worldliness and ungodly lusts and it shows us that without God there is no hope. It teaches us how to live. A religion that does not teach us how to live is not worth anything. There is no comfort in it, no peace in it, no reality in it. There is this difference between the children of God and the people of the world: i. e., the people of the world can put on their religion and take it off to suit their convenience. They can go on putting it on and taking it off as they see fit. It is a very convenient religion. If you do not want to be bothered with your religion leave it outside; a very adjustable religion, lay it down and take it up. God's people cannot get rid of their religion. It is with them all the time. Grace not only teaches salvation, it teaches the life of that salvation. Dear brethren, we should be the last person in all the world to tell you how to deny the lusts of the flesh. We do not know how of ourself to deny self. But we know that while we cannot teach you, the grace of God can and does. You are not drunk on the lusts of the flesh, you are not running after the world in its drunkenness after this and after that. The world is drunk on many things, drunk on pleasure, drunk on immorality, drunk on making money. God's people are a sober people. God's people do not get drunk on the things of this world, because the grace of God teaches them the denial of those things. We "beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." Some have received the

grace of God in vain. There are some who believe the doctrine of predestination; of salvation by grace. You talk with them and they say they believe it and that they know they are sinners, but that seems to be as far as it goes. They do not live it. That is receiving the grace of God in vain. That is what James means when he says, "Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." A person who shows his faith by his works does not need to do much talking. His faith is shown in his life. If a man loves God he does not need to advertise it. These apostles could not make the brethren live right, and they cannot cause us to live right, but if the grace of God be in us it will cause us to live right. It is just as necessary to live these things as it is to believe them. That is one way in which the grace of God is received in vain—there is no life. Suppose also after a child of God has been taught that salvation is by grace, he should begin to teach again the commandments of the law and to say that salvation is by the law. That one departs from grace. Paul wrote to the church at Galatia, when some began to teach the law again, that if salvation comes by the law, Christ is dead in vain. If it is possible to be saved by the law, why did Christ suffer as no man has ever suffered? There is no salvation by the law. Some think that the blessings we obtain come from our own obedience, they believe that salvation is by grace but that we are blessed for obedience. Where does true obedience come from? From the flesh? No, but it is of God's grace. We do not know that there is any blessing for obedience; but if there is, the fact that one is obedient is a blessing in itself; the power, the strength to be obedient is a blessing itself. When one comes into the church, he is obedient. What reward is there for it? Is he going to be any better afterward? The very coming to the church, submitting one's self to its ordinances, the ability and strength to do it, are all blessings in themselves. Think of Jesus, how obedient he was all his life; obedient to the will of God, yet there never has been a man who suffered as he did. The most obedient life is the most trying life. "Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." If one is obedient, bringing forth fruit unto God, then that one is purged to bring forth more fruit, and so it goes on and on until the end.

Let us leave this word with you: If you are so highly blessed as to be a true follower of the Lamb, you will have a hard time in the flesh. In the world, ye shall have tribulation, but in Jesus, peace.

L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Samuel Jones Rogers was born March 2nd, 1853, in Bath Co., Ky., and died January 31st, 1924. He was married to Miss Lillie Stith, and to this union were born three children, two girls and one boy: Grace and Worth Rogers, of St. Louis, Mo., and Mrs. Blanch Beswick, of Huntington, Va. He was the son of Granville and Mary Jones Rogers. He moved to Mt. Sterling, Ky., and lived their until death. His wife preceded him to the grave some thirty years. He united with Bald Eagle Old School Baptist Church, at Sharpsburg, and was baptized by Elder P. G. Lester in the year 1909, and was a consistent member until death, and was held in high esteem by all who knew him. He was a true Old Baptist, a constant reader of the SIGNS for many years, firm in the predestination of all things. He was a kind father and husband, a good citizen, true to his friends, and we believe he is now resting in the presence of the dear Redeemer forever free from the sorrows of this life. May the Lord and Savior ever be with the children and all who mourn.

As there was no preacher of our faith and order, a Missionary Baptist spoke in prayer at the home of A. B. Ratliff, and his remains were taken to Sharpsburg and there laid beside his wife to await the resurrection morn.

T. J. RATLIFF.

William Harmon was born December 11th, 1842, in England, and emigrated to this country about 1870, and died April 20th, 1924, at the Lakeside Hospital, in Cleveland, Ohio. Brother and sister Harmon settled first near Otego, New York, and there he received a hope, and shortly after his wife was also made to feel her unworthiness, and in November 1872, they were both baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church by Elder S. H. Durand. Some years later they moved to Cleveland, Ohio, and together with several more organized the Beulah Old School Baptist Church, of Cleveland, where they both remained steadfast to the faith under very great difficulties. Brother Harmon was a man of a very stern and positive nature, one who would never compromise on the principles of predestination or election, and would often quote Paul, that we know that all things work together for good, and was fully persuaded that neither life nor death, things present nor things to come, could separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Brother Harmon never let anything but sickness keep him from his meetings, and when in company with the brethren would talk about the wonderful works of God, and his great mercy to such a poor miserable sinner. We, as a church, will miss his presence and counsel, but feel that our loss is his gain, and the doctrine which he so ably defended here in this life will be fully realized when he awakes in His likeness, and is satisfied. Besides the church, he leaves one son, one daughter and several grandchildren here in Cleveland. I tried to comfort the friends on the day of the funeral by speaking of the sureness of the works of God, and felt proud to speak of the departed brother as one who had not denied the faith, and I believe he has entered into the joys of the Lord. May the Lord bless the family and the church, and give us all strength and will to say, Thy will be done.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

Allie Bloyd was born in McLenan Co., Texas, in 1882, and departed this life March 23rd, 1924, making her stay on this earth 42 years, 2 months and 2 days. She was married to S. C. Bloyd in the year 1901, and to this union twelve children were born, two children dying in infancy, ten children are still at home. My dear daughter was a loving, obedient child, and never gave me one moment of trouble after she was old enough to know right from wrong. Always loving and kind, her dear children have lost a precious, loving mother, but the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. We feel sad and lonely to give up our loved ones here, but what is our loss here to be compared to their eternal rejoicing with God? He doeth his will, and I must be still and know that he is God.

L. A. KEE.

Mary Susan Richardson was born December 4th, 1842, in Jackson County, Alabama, and departed this life September 20th, 1823. She was a daughter of Joshua and Martha McAdams, and with her parents emigrated to Attalla Co., Miss., when nine years of age. She grew to womanhood, and received a hope in Christ, and joined the Primitive Baptist Church called Hopewell, where her parents were members. January 19th, 1865, she was united in marriage to A. J. Richardson, and to this union were born three daughters and four sons, all lived to grow up and marry. Her husband, one son and a daughter preceded her in death. After the death of her husband she seemed sad and lonely, and spent her remaining days visiting her children. Owing to infirmities of age she seldom attended the meetings of her church. She loved the doctrine of predestination and election, and prized highly the privileges of church, and loved to meet in the assembly of the saints whenever she could to hear the gospel preached, and to talk with those who were exercised upon spiritual things. Among her greatest pleasures of life was to entertain her brethren and sisters, and her doors were ever open to the people of God. A few months before her death her health began to fail, but she kept up most of the time until the last of July, when she rapidly grew worse until called to her eternal home on high. She was eighty years, nine months and sixteen days of age. All was done that a faithful doctor, loving children and kind friends could do, but could not stay the cold hand of death. She often expressed a desire to depart and be at rest. She selected hymn number one in Loyd's hymn book to be sung on the occasion of her funeral, which was done. She leaves to mourn her death five children, fifteen grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, one sister, a number of nephews and nieces, and a host of friends, besides many brethren and sisters in the church. We all miss her much, but would not call her back, for we realize for her to die was gain, as she often expressed a desire to depart and be at rest. She seemed submissive and reconciled to the last, not a murmur or complaint escaped her lips. She quietly fell asleep in Jesus, that blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Written by her sorrowing daughter,

(MRS.) W. T. RAY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Marion S. Brooks, Calif., $1.00; Mrs. Jay McTavish, Sask, $3.00; Mrs. Dugald McTavish, Sask, $3.00; Elvira K. Northrup, N. Y., $1.00; Susan Shepherd, N. J., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

Owing to unavoidable circumstances, which could not be overcome, Salem Church will be unable to entertain the Delaware Association this year, therefore, to whom it may concern, we announce that there will be no session of the Delaware Association in 1924. We regret to make this announcement, but it seems to be the will of the Lord that it shall be so.

J. B. MILLER, Clerk.

Since mailing notice of the next session of the Baltimore Association we are informed there will be no session of the Delaware Association this year, therefore we are requested to change the time of the Baltimore Association from May 14th to May 21st, in order that there be no intervening week between the Baltimore and Delaware River.

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

The Lord willing, the next session of the Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association will convene with the Harford Church, Harford County, Maryland, on Wednesday, May 21st, 1924, and continue three days. Visitors will be met at Forest Hill, on the Md. & Pa., R. R. Those coming via. Pennsylvania or B. & O. R. R. to Baltimore, will get train for Forest Hill, at North Avenue and Oak Street station. Try to reach Baltimore not later than 2 p. m., Tuesday, the 20th. We hope to have a goodly number visit us.

M. F. WHITAKER, Church Clerk.

There will be services at Lexington, N. Y., in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse on Sunday, May 25th, at 11 a. m., and 2 p. m. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

The Delaware River Association is appointed to be held with the Southampton Church, at Southampton, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, to begin Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, and continue three days, being May 28th, 29th and 30th. Meeting will begin at 10:30 a. m., daylight saving time. A cordial invitation is extended to all of our faith and order to meet with us. Those coming to Southampton, Pa., will be met, or inquire for C. B. Reeves. Those coming to Ivyland, Pa., inquire for Wm. Hobensack.

WM. HOBENSACK, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (4th, 5th and 6th), 1924. In accordance with decision rendered last year the churches composing the Association will entertain jointly. The New Vernon Church having kindly granted the Association the use of her meetinghouse, the services will be held therein. Entertainment will be provided at "The Old Homestead," situated a short distance from the meetinghouse. Those who attended the Association last year will recall the pleasant hours spent at this house, conducted by F. J. Beyea. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren (especially our brethren in the gospel ministry), sisters and friends.

Those coming from and via. New York City will take Erie railroad ferry, foot of West 23rd Street, at 4:20 p. m., or Erie Railroad ferry foot of Chambers Street at 4:30 p. m. for train leaving Jersey City, N. J., at 4:45 p. m. (Dayligh Saving Time) on Tuesday, June 3rd. Get tickets for Howells, N. Y.

Those coming from and via. Kingston will take Ontario & Western train leaving Kingston at 1:15 p. m. (Eastern Standard Time) on Tuesday, June 3rd. Get tickets for Winterton, N. Y. Above trains will be met. Those coming by automobile will go direct to "The Old Homestead."

R. LESTER DODSON, Moderator.
R. M. STRONG, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Little Flock Church will no longer hold meetings at Park and 5th Streets, but for the present will hold them at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 494 East 10th Street, Riverside, California. We hope to have a place again soon, and when we do we will appreciate having our notice with you.

OLIVER P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

PROVERBS XVI. 33.

"THE lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord."

DEAR EDITORS:—I do not feel worthy to address you, neither am I able to impart all the truth and power encouched in the above words, yet I have been fed so much by reading the letters in the SIGNS from those who shun not to declare the whole counsel of God that I would like to say a word or so in regard to the above text. We find that these words were written by Solomon, a man full of wisdom, by the will of God. Holy men of old wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and not by private interpretation of the weak and feeble writer, or man, hence it remains as the truth. The world abounds to-day with people who believe (whereunto also being disobedient they were appointed) in chance and lottery, and that things come to pass as men just happened to do, or not do, and if they had been good all would have been well and the sun would have shined. On the other hand, there are a few, yes, few, people who believe that God hath made with the house of David (Jesus being head of the church) an everlasting covenant, ordered in all (yes, all) things and sure. If I am worthy to be counted among the faithful I am glad to say, I hope to belong to the latter class. Proverbs xvi. 1, "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." Then, brethren, if you prepare and make a box, did I help you? Did I give you any thought and plan when you and I were miles apart? Did the saw fear the plank in forming it into shape? Did the plank say unto the saw, Why are you forming me so? Now, let us think for a moment. Who directed the eyes of the Lord to that little lump of dust to form Adam? Who taught him the way to place the bones and flesh, with all of its veins and tissues? Who had influence with God to cause him to give Adam dominion over all the beasts of the field? What man, or power, told God to blow in the nostrils the breath of life that he (Adam) would become a living soul? Was not the whole disposing thereof of the Lord? I say it was, before all men, without fear. Let us look a little deeper into the matter. You and I were not yet formed when it pleased God to hang the four corners of the world upon nothing,

you and I were very helpless when it pleased the great I AM to form the great heavens and set plans to lay the foundations of this world according to his holy and divine will, that at the time all appointed and set men would begin to multiply and fill the land. Brethren and sisters, Adam had to die, as you Bible readers know. If not, why did God say unto Adam and Eve, Replenish the earth, before he formed them, as recorded in Genesis i. 28? O God, I know that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, and that his mind is known to the Lord afar off. David tells us these things, and I believe all he says. The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil; for him and by him were all things created. Then if all things were made by him, it remains a fact, as Solomon hath said, the whole disposing and forming is of the Lord. Isaiah xlvi. 9, 10, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all [not a part] my pleasure." Was it unknown to this God above described that Jacob would receive the blessing? Let us quote Genesis xxv. 23: "And the Lord said unto her [Rebekah], Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger." Looks like the end then of the working of the mother of Esau and Jacob was declared, no peradventure about the matter; a fixed and predetermined will had to be carried out. Esau was the firstborn, and was a cunning hunter of the field, and his father loved him, but Jacob was a plain man dwelling in tents, (The Lord made all things, did he not make the difference between these brothers?) and Rebekah loved Jacob. Father Isaac now was waxing old, and called his son Esau to go into the field and kill the savory meat, that Isaac the father might eat and bless the son Esau, and while he was out in the field the mother was telling Jacob what to say when he went in before his father. Mind you now that Rebekah clothed Jacob with the skin of kids that he would be hairy. "And he came unto his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I; who art thou, my son? And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau, thy firstborn." Was there any absolute predestination in this, or was it a happen so? I believe the written record had to come to pass according to the will and foreknowledge of God. Who was disposing the mind of Rebekah at this most particular time? Where does free-will doctrine go under this kind of power? Here Jacob was taught to tell a complete falsehood by his own dear mother, that the blessing would come his way. I can see, I think, where it goes. The blessing was given to Jacob in the eternal mind of God long before the sun, the fount of light, a single round had run. The lot is cast into the lap, and it fell upon our blessed Jesus to die for his people. Was there any uncertainty about the power that sent his angel to the virgin Mary into a city of Galilee named Nazareth, saying, Mary, thou art highly favored, and thou shalt conceive and bring forth a son, and shall call his name Jesus? Was Mary a free agent now, and even before, under this kind of power? Did not obedience become her choice, as it was all she could do? Let us not forget the text. The whole disposing is of the

Lord. Without calling God in question, why was Jesus to bleed and die? In my weak understanding, this Jesus was sent forth by the power of God to save his people, and I believe these people whom God predestinated and did foreknow, and they alone, believe in the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure. These people, as recorded in Ephesians ii. 10, are the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Is this people the people he was sent to redeem? I think they are. Jesus now was born in Bethlehem of Judea (exactly at the appointed time), and behold King Herod had a private talk with the wise men who sought the child that they might worship him, for Herod's desire was to destroy the child, but thanks be to God, the whole disposing being of the Lord, these wise men were warned in a dream by night and returned home another way; also, Joseph and the mother were told to flee down into Egypt (by the Lord) in order that Herod could not destroy the child. Then after a while the death of the king came, and we behold father Joseph, mother Mary and the son back in their native land. We notice it was the custom to have the annual feast at Jerusalem, and Jesus now was about twelve years old. No, not about, but exactly, twelve, when they went to the feast. All the things being finished mother and father started back home, and were a day's journey before the child was missed. Who was controlling and keeping the mind of Mary satisfied, and causing her to think that the child was in company along this time and hour? and when they found him not, to the feast of Jerusalem went they, and behold, he (Jesus) was in the midst of the wise, and asked his mother, Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? Brethren, what God are you talking about now that saw all these things before the morning of time? I hope I am under the care of the one who is doing all the disposing thereof according to his will that he willed without the aid of any man or men. We see from this point the mighty workings of the power of our Lord. At the age of twelve he began to rightly divide the word of truth without malice and guile, yet simple and full of power. In this blessed Lamb is and was created every child of God before the foundation of the world was laid. Turn and read the divine record the Lord spoke through good old Paul in 2 Tim. i. 8, 9: "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; who hath saved [yes, saved] us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Then, were you and I there to influence the Lord with obedience to cause him to give to Paul and Timothy eternal life? Did Paul and Timothy induce the great I AM with obedience for this great gift, and persuade him with good works to save them before the world began? How many men were there on the face of the globe when there was no globe? Now those who believe in part God and some obedience of man cause or obligate God to man, or believe that we have to be good to make the sun shine, or believe that we are free agents and have to receive the Spirit of the Lord so he can save us, did not get a fair deal in the matter, for Paul and Timothy say they were saved according to the promise of

life which was in Christ before the world began. They did no obedience toward God when as yet their substance was unperfect. Then if (please remember the "if") we have to be good, we did not get a fair deal, for Paul and Timothy did not have to be good. If we are free agents, able to receive or reject, we beyond all doubt are stronger than the Spirit of the blessed Lord? Did not then God make a sad mistake to give man that much power over the Spirit? Ah, vain flesh, let us give to Him all the glory and power, for the blessed Lamb was slain according to the time and hour purposed by the almighty God, long ere the morning of time.

Space and time now draw me to a close, and I will say, brethren, behold the Lamb, how he had to hang upon the cross to pay the debt. Judas was controlled by the same God that sent Jesus to die for those whom God created in him (Jesus) in the day he created all things. Shun not to stand for the truth, is my plea.

Your little brother, a believer in absolute predestination, if a brother at all,

THOMAS L. HUFF.

DULUTH, Ga., Dec. 25, 1923.

CHIRENO, Texas, Feb. 10, 1924.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—If you will allow one so sinful and unworthy as I to call you brother. As I sit and read the good articles in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES this lonesome, dreary Sunday, I feel like trying to tell you all in a feeble way how they cheer my dull, wracked heart, but words fail me; I cannot express to you the joy and comfort they bring me. I have in my hands the January 1st number, and have read brother G. O. Walker's article on absolute predestination, and your short note: "Sin is not a creation." I heartily agree with you, as far as I understand the Scriptures. Now, if the Lord will permit I will give a few of my thoughts. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and that includes everything that now is, ever has or ever will be. At the time of the Father everything that was in wisdom was made manifest and came to pass at the appointed time. Now let us make man in our own image and likeness, so out of the ground he formed Adam, and breathed in him the breath of life and man became a living soul, good for what God intended him, and he filled his mission to a jot and tittle, and did nothing but what God intended him to do. God put him in the garden. It was not good for him to be without a helpmeet, so he caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and took a rib from his side and closed up the flesh thereof, and of the rib which the Lord God had taken from man made he a woman and brought her unto the man. The serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field, and beguiled the woman and she ate of the fruit of the tree, and gave to her husband with her and he did eat, thus violating the law of a just and all-wise God. Adam was not deceived, but Eve, being a figure of the church, was deceived. Adam violated the law for the love he had for his wife, and came down to equality with her. Adam, I think, was a figure of Jesus Christ, who left the shining courts of heaven and came down to the sin-cursed earth, suffered, bled and died on the cruel cross for his people, the church, a peculiar people, a royal priesthood, an holy nation. Jesus Christ never offered himself to any man or set of men. It is preached all over the world by every sect except one that if you will accept Jesus as your Savior he will save you, re-

ject him and his offering and you will go down to hell. I may be wrong, but I want to state here that I do not believe any such doctrine, and have no fellowship for them that do. They tell me that if they believed as I do they would not be afraid of anything; they would kill, steal and sin all they wanted to, for they would be saved anyway. My answer to this is, that if one believed as I think I do he would have no such thoughts. He would try to shun even the appearance of evil. Some one said, You believe there will be a part saved and a part lost. I asked, Do you believe that every one will be saved? He said, No. Well, there is not much difference in our belief then. Well, yes, a lot. You have to be good, go to Sunday-school, read the Bible, go to meeting and take what the preacher tells you, right or wrong, and then Jesus will accept you, and you can join the church, be baptized, and then you will be saved. This is popular doctrine, and is preached by the power of money and the do good system and the up-to-date denominations and religions of the day. They say, Give, and are never satisfied. I do not think they know anything about the Lord and his church. They may profess religion, but there is a great difference in professing and possessing. I think those people are still under the law trying to justify themselves by their own good work. If there had been a law given that could have given life verily righteousness would have been by the law. The people of God were saved from their sins from the foundation of the world in wisdom by Jesus Christ, and every perfect gift was treasured up in him in order to be let out in time of manifestation, and to-day is the day of manifestation, and each one of his children will get what was laid up in store for them.

I feel that what I have written will be of little comfort to any one, and if I have written anything contrary to the teachings of the Scripture and the church I ask you as a father to show me my wrong, and pray for this unworthy one who lives in hope of eternal life, if not deceived by sin. I am a strong believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone, also a Predestinarian Baptist of the old faith and order.

Dear brother Lefferts, I do love to read the writings of the Elders and members who contribute to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I am not a subscriber, but I read the SIGNS of a beloved brother and sisters who are taking the paper. Do with this as you see fit, and it will be right. Forgive anything wrong you see in these poorly written lines, and when you bow at the throne of grace remember me.

Your unworthy brother,

W. D. HOLLOWAY.

HAVANA, Kansas, May 6, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—My daughter, Mrs. P. H. Lindley, and I have just returned from the yearly meeting of the Cole Creek Church, Iola, Kans., and I have a desire to tell you a little about it. It was a sweet meeting, as they always are, with one exception. They are not without sorrow, they are mourning the loss of dear sister Andrews, wife of L. J. Andrews, who passed from this life April 14th, 1924, leaving to mourn a husband and three children, and her absence seemed to cast a gloom over all. She lived in Iola, and was always present at the meetings when not providentially hindered. She was a loving wife and mother, a sweet christian, and was loved by every one who knew her. I knew her well, and to me she was indeed a precious friend and sister. May her grief-bowed family be reconciled to God's holy will,

realizing that she is now asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep. She realized that she could not get well, and requested that her pastor, Elder J. M. Preston, conduct her funeral, and she wanted no singing. This last request she told me last November when I spent a day and a night with her at her home. At that time she also related to me her christian experience, how the dear Lord had delivered her out of deep soul-trouble, set her feet upon a rock, and put a new song in her mouth, the song of redeeming love. She will be missed very much by her friends and brethren, but much more by her sorrowing family.

The meeting commenced Friday afternoon and closed Sunday night. There was a good congregation of interested listeners, and all was in peace and harmony. There were only three ministers present. Two or three others intended coming, but failed to do so on account of sickness in their families. The preaching was good and very comforting. It breathed forth a pure spirit of love and unity among the saints of God. If there was any difference of views upon some minor subject it was not a source of unkind reflection. Let brotherly love continue was the rule followed. They preached salvation by grace, and told us of the sweet and precious testimonies left on record for us who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, we who are resting in the blessed promises so satisfying and sweet. Who can fathom God's love so richly revealed in these promises? He is God and changes not. Nothing can be added to make these glorious promises stronger, because they have no weakness. Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory. Can we not also say, Though he slay me yet will I trust in him? He makes himself known to his sanctified ones by putting his law in their hearts, and writing it in their minds. He has promised us eternal life, and we shall never perish. He will bring the blind by a way they knew not. It has always been a marvelous thing to be led out of a village from among fashionable people, and neighbors whom I loved and had good times with, and then go out into the country five or six miles to a little old schoolhouse and offer myself to a band (few in number) of Primitive Baptists. I know that no power of man could have induced me to take such a step, therefore I must give all praise to the great and supreme Ruler. These dear brethren know my standing among the people here. Although not a member, I had worked with them for several years in their Sunday-schools, aid societies, entertainments, sang in their choirs, but notwithstanding all this, when I told the church that whereas I once was blind now I could see, they received me joyfully and lovingly, and the sweetness of that hour I have not forgotten. When the love of God was shed abroad in my heart all those former pleasures vanished like bubbles, never to return; I saw no more enjoyment in them. My prayer was, and is now, Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee. Thy people are my people, and thy God my God.

Dear editors, I am still enjoying the SIGNS. I have never met any of you, but when I read your good editorials I feel quite well acquainted with you, and as I write to you I have a feeling that we are of the household of faith. Christian companionship far exceeds in blessedness all earthly friendship. Our dear Savior sends light afflictions to us, which we must bear just as he wants us to, but

sometimes the problem seems very perplexing, unfathomable, and we say, Why, oh why, is it thus? The answer comes back to us, Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. God makes a difference to exist between the natural surroundings of his children, we know not why. We are all sinners saved by grace. Sometime all mysteries shall be revealed. We must all pass under the rod.

"How trying the process by which we are brought
To bow to the will of our God;
What care he bestows, and what wisdom and love
Are seen in his dealings, while making us prove
That 'tis well to pass under the rod."

With unfeigned love and christian fellowship, your unworthy sister,

MARY E. PITTMAN.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, April 23, 1924.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I particularly enjoyed the last number of the SIGNS. This may be largely due to my own state of mind in reading, but I liked the spirit which was manifested in all the communications. How good it is to behold humility before God and love in christian charity among those who profess the name of Jesus. By precept and example he taught his disciples how they ought to walk. A meek and lowly spirit involves no compromise with evil, but is the greatest protection we can have against the powers of darkness. We have a warfare to fight, but it is within, against the hidden evils of our fleshly nature. The weapons of this warfare are not carnal, nor are they such as would cause us to emulate the spirit of Cain. Faith, hope and love, with prayer and watchfulness, are the fruits of the Spirit, and are mighty to cast down every high imagination and the spirit of pride and enmity, which embitter the heart of man against God and his fellow-man. We may assail those who differ with us, and lash them with our tongues, but what does it profit us or them? Let us remember him who was reviled yet reviled not again, who rendered blessing for cursing and suffered the cruelest death for us who were enemies by nature. If thine enemy hunger feed him; if he thirst give him drink. Pray for those who despitefully use you and persecute you. I am quoting from memory, but think I have the sense of these teachings rightly expressed. If we believe that faith is the gift of God, the work of the Holy Spirit, and that we cannot by teaching impart it to another, then what profit is there in striving with those who do not understand the truth? Does this not tend to confirm them in error? If we walk in love, in the Spirit of Jesus, showing forth our faith by our life and conversation, then our light is not hid, and those whom God has brought to seek his face will gladly come to dwell with us. I did like the spirit shown by the two letters published, written by friends who differed very materially in their views. Such exchanges of ideas are profitable. Sometimes it is necessary to rebuke another, but the motive which actuates us must be love, or it is worse than useless. The tongue is rightly called an unruly member.

With love in gospel fellowship, affectionately, your brother,

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

FLORA VISTA, New Mexico, Feb. 27, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—Another year has rolled around and brought us one year nearer our journey's end. Dearly beloved of our Father, I feel that if the Lord is willing I want to try and relate to this beloved household of faith what I feel the merciful God did for me in the year 1879. In the month of May I felt to be a poor wretched sinner, and Friday even-

ing before the fourth Sunday in August I trust God for Christ's sake forgave me my great mountain of sin. My parents moved from Arkansas to Texas in the year 1878, and if I have a hope it dates back to August, 1879. There were no Old School Baptists in that part of the country, so I groveled along and did not join the church until June, 1894, and O, dear beloved, what a blessed privilege it was to me to be baptized. I felt the brethren made a mistake in receiving me, but the church was one of my chief joys. I am living in the northwest corner of New Mexico and know of but two other Old Baptists in this part of the world, so, dear brethren and sisters, write on, for you do not know how much good it does our poor souls to read and reread the blessed truth; it is good news from a far country. Dear editors and writers, you are contending for a full gospel, and that is what does my poor soul good. You preach a God who is able to save to the uttermost ends of the earth. Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers, for there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. (Rom. xiii. 1.) It is a blessed consolation that God has all power in heaven and in earth. I am a poor sinner and cannot do the things I desire. Sin is mixed with all I do, and I am so imperfect I fear I am deceived in this my only hope. I do know I love God and the brethren and sisters with all my heart, and I believe the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. Though I do not understand it all I believe it is God's word and is the truth, whether I understand it or not. I believe it was written by the inspiration of God, and that is sufficient for our faith and practice, and the only rule. At times my hope seems very small, yet it is all I have and I would not exchange it for worlds.

Dear editors, do with this as you think best and all will be right with me, but do not crowd out good matter for it. May God direct you and the writers and ever bless your labors, and each writer and reader, is the prayer of a poor old sinner, saved by grace if saved at all,

J. L. JOHNSON.

OROVILLE, Cal., April 21, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing one dollar. It is so little it seems hardly worth sending, but it is the widow's mite. Your dear paper and the Bible are the only words of comfort that come to me, but I live in such darkness most of the time that I really do not get the comfort from them that it seems I should. I would be in despair if the dear writers did not tell of their doubts and fears and sore trials, I am such a sinner. Why do I sin, when I long to serve God? Is it because I never heard a real child of God preach, and only know the ways of this world and must spend my time with the free-will people? I catch myself trying to be like them so I can have friends among them, trying to live up to the law, to do something like they do to save souls, as they call it. Oh how anxious I sometimes feel to save some one I love who does not seem to care even to hear the word of God, then I awake and realize salvation is of the Lord. I wish I could ask all the dear children of God to offer a prayer for me that I might be clothed and in my right mind.

"A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth."—Isaiah xlii. 3. This Scripture is a mystery to me, and I hope some of the dear able writers will give their views and explain what it means.

I did not think to write so much when

I started this. Love to all the household of faith.

May 8th, 1924.—I am inclosing five dollars for the publishers of the SIGNS. I want to say that in all my life I never read anything so soul-cheering as Elder Lefferts' editorial on 1 John v. 18: "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not."

MARION S. BROOKS.

LAUREL, Miss., Dec. 17, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is through the mercy of the all-wise God that we have been blessed through another year. The time has come for me to renew my subscription, and with my renewal I am sending in for six other subscribers. I wish I could have gotten more, but I did the best I could. I cannot see how the people who love the truth can do without the SIGNS.

I am sending a letter from sister Anna Windham, and ask you to publish it, as we esteem it very highly. I have not her consent, but feel sure she will not object to others sharing our enjoyment. She seldom gets to our meetings.

I pray that God will bless you publishers and editors to continue publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It is the only paper I know that gives God all power. Remember me at the throne of grace.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

T. J. KNIGHT.

To the very dear brethren and sisters of the Palestine Church I wish to send greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I long to address those I hold in sweet fellowship, and to know of your spiritual welfare, yet in my great weakness it is with trembling that I try to pen you these few lines, and with eyes filled with tears, realizing my great dependence upon the Lord for all things needful, desiring that he will undertake for me, for I have long since learned over and over again that without him I can do nothing. Yes, now as I look back these many years and think of his never-failing presence and strength, and remember he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, it seems to give me courage. My mind often soars on eagles' wings, as it were, to where God in his great wisdom has planted a little vine and left a husbandman to keep it. I view with an eye of faith that little band of his chosen ones keeping it for him, with the dew from heaven watering it, with the river of life flowing out from the throne of God, the streams whereof make glad the city of our God, to that little city wherein dwells his little chosen band. Oh how long he has blessed brother Easley to stand, as it were, a burning bush out of which God speaks to his little chosen company, feeding them on the sincere milk of the word. Oh how thankful we ought to be for such a great gift. How good it is to see him as the Lord's servant as he rises to speak before the people and the spirit catches fire yet does not consume the bush, only the mind is consumed. When his spirit is lifted up on high God speaks through the fire of his Holy Spirit, then as our minds are permitted to partake of that heavenly manna handed down from the height above we seem to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord. I am sometimes permitted to see with an eye of faith those heavenly beauties while sitting alone by the fireside during my sleepless hours at midnight while all else is wrapped in slumber, then it is I seem to have sweet fellowship with God and am brought to a realization of the fact that he is my all and in all, and then for

hours I magnify his holy name. Yet I often feel cast down and am made to long for his sweet presence again, and very much desire the prayers of God's people that I may never bring reproach upon his great cause. I am still hoping that I may be permitted to meet with you all again and enjoy once more the good news from a far country, and at last enjoy a happy entrance into the church triumphant, where we can join those who have gone on before, and join them in eternally singing hymns of praise.

Your humble sister, I hope,

ANNA WINDHAM.

HOMEWOOD, Miss., Dec. 11, 1923.

ROSWELL, New Mexico, Feb. 9, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending two dollars for subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have been thinking for a long time I would subscribe, for I know it is filled with the richness of God's love among his people. I do not feel worthy to claim kinship with the dear people of God, though they are the people I love. Why? Because, he first loved us. I have a love for the chosen people of God wherever they may be, a love I cannot describe unless God gives me words to speak, for I am so helpless without the help of my dear Savior. I feel so little in the sight of my Master that I often think if I am one of God's little ones surely I am the least and weakest of my Father's family; but if I am a child I feel that is just what my dear Savior intended for me to be, for there is nothing about me that he did not intend. I am just as he intended me to be, for he gave me the knowledge I have of his wonderful love and mercy. He taught me all I know, and if it is his will I hope he may direct my pen so that I may be able to write a few lines in honor of his name, for he has wonderfully blessed me. In all my afflictions, trials and troubles this Scripture often comes to me, "He shall deliver thee in six troubles, yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." This Scripture has given me great comfort. I hope my dear Savior will direct my mind that I may not say anything that is not in accordance with the teaching of his will. I often think what a blessed Savior we have to whom to give all the glory and honor. He is so great I have never found words to express the beauty I sometimes see in his wonderful works; they are beautiful to me. He never began a work that he did not complete, and never completed a work that he was not glorified in. I sometimes think that what he has taught me is greater and of more value to me than all this world full of gold. I feel I am one who can say that I have gone through great tribulation, but feel it has been for my good and my comfort, for he says his people shall go through great tribulation, and that he has a poor and afflicted people, a chosen people. I can only say that all my trials have only brought me to see his great power, and show me that he is the Way, and I look to him for all my help. Dear people of God, I sometimes almost lose sight of the things of this world, and can say, What is there here for me? I see so much of sin and confusion it makes me shudder. I can say, Dear Lord, if it is thy will, may I be guided through this life and be kept from the snares of this sinful world. I often wonder why I am thus tossed to and fro in such great storms of trouble. Is it to try my faith in Christ Jesus? If so, I want to have a heart to say, Lord, thy will be done, not mine. I want to be submissive to his will. Often something will occur and the Scripture comes to me, "O ye of little faith," then I am made to say, Lord save or I perish. I feel unworthy to try to write anything for the people of God to read, though it is a relief to my poor feeble mind, and hope the dear brethren and sisters will bear with me and remember me in their prayers.

EMMA SINGLETON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1924.

EDITOR

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

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Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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HEBREWS XIII. 5.

"LET your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

As we take up our pen to write again for our family paper it is with a desire that the Lord will direct us, that we might comfort his dear saints. At best we are but earthen vessels, and only of value in the Master's hands. It has pleased him that his servants shall be of like passions as the rest of men, and none are more and none are less than the Lord makes them to be. Yes, it is his will that they be in and of themselves empty vessels of the common earth, so that if they differ from the worldling at all it is grace makes them to differ. Now this very grace of God placed four-footed beasts of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things and fowls of the air in a certain vessel, as it had been a great sheet knit at the corners and let down to earth. It also brings down the high-minded that they can condescend to men of low estate. So, as a family our hopes and our aims are one, our comforts and our cares. Perhaps it would be well to speak of cares, as often the cares, anxiety and dissatisfaction we meet in this life are right opposite to contentment. Many think if they could only find smooth sailing they would then be content. Does not the God of our life know what is needful for us better than we do? Each of us have cares, some are bowed down under them, others are rebellious and think they ought not to be. Few can say with Paul, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Rather, many are like an unruly horse, ready to jump the traces at the least load. In the church of God the person who is dissatisfied and is fault-finding, generally has a wrong spirit; so it is with us, it is the person, not the place, the mind, not the surroundings that need to be changed. The Lord has in his all-wise providence fixed the bounds of our habitation, has placed us where we are and has put the crook in our lot if it be there. We believe this, then why are we not content? As we look over the road we have traveled there are still in our minds spots where we surely felt that this or that was of the Lord. His hand supplied our needs and we really felt God to be our God. We were sure it was God, for the thing he did was good. Yet as we journeyed we soon found the comfort was not lasting and darkness and doubts overtook us so that we questioned if the Lord were with us. When his good hand is withdrawn then anxiety springs up and we fear we are after all mistaken. Like Israel, we are almost ready to say it was better with us when we were in Egypt. We consider those around us who have no fear of God before their eyes, yet they prosper and have more than heart could wish. David said, "I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked." It has pleased the Lord that many of his saints shall be among the poor of this world, yet from observation

we know that one need not be poor to be covetous. The wedge of gold that Achan found to his destruction is still among the things coveted to-day, silver and gold and Babylonish garments. Many think that a man's life consists in the abundance of the things which he possesseth, yet covetousness in Scripture is declared to be idolatry. Paul says, "Let your conversation [behavior] be without covetousness." In another place he says, "I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me." When Paul was in need it would have been easy to look to this or that one who were possessors of worldly wealth and have coveted it, but this would not have supplied his needs nor brought contentment. The Lord has said he will supply all our needs, and he is a great God above all gods, he holds the hearts of all flesh in his hand, and the cattle on a thousand hills are his. In coveting that which God has given to others, is it not rebellion against his all-wise disposition of things? Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have. We brought nothing into this world and we can carry nothing out, and there are but few, if any, of us but can say that the Lord has blessed us abundantly above what we deserve, yet to our shame how often we are dissatisfied with the things we have, with our surroundings, our home, our clothing, &c., when really it is not the surroundings, the home or the clothing, but ourselves. If only the Lord give us contentment then all is well. The prophet had a little chamber on the wall with a bed, a table, a stool and a candlestick. Old John Warburton, walking home many miles from an appointment where the brethren had not ministered to his temporal needs, was bemoaning his lot. His feet were sore, and he thought he had just cause to be grieved. The Lord spoke to him, and said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Warburton burst into tears, right there he was content. The poor widow on the Yorkshire moors, thinking her believing neighbor was passing her open window, lifted a crust of black bread and exclaimed, "All this and Christ." Dear ones, when Christ dwells richly in our hearts by faith we are not much worried about the things we have not. We are content with the things we have. It has been our lot to move in various circles of life, and we have seen men ambitious to accomplish a certain task, yet when they had achieved it they were most unhappy. We have seen others covet the uppermost seat in the church of God, and by craft and guile they attained to it, but it was to their own undoing. There are others with money in their eye who have brought to themselves confusion and strife. "For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

"For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." This exceeding great and precious promise is sure to all the seed or election of grace, therefore is of value only to those taught of the Lord. The promises of God are yea and amen in Christ Jesus our Lord to the glory of God the Father, that is, where Jesus Christ is revealed in us and faith has embraced him as the lover and Savior of

sinners, our souls are set at liberty, our hearts are enlarged and we are lifted up to the company and fellowship of the sons of God. Being by the new birth partakers of the divine nature, we with holy boldness have access to the same promises with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Therefore, wherever you are, whether it be in deep waters in providence or in grace, what he has said stands true, he cannot deny himself, for to deny you is to deny himself, for ye are bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. He that has called you to the selfsame thing is God. Too often we disbelieve this precious truth, too often we believe Satan and regard his lie. A few evenings ago while in a downcast state of mind, almost ready to give up, the words came to us,

"If to Jesus for relief
My soul has fled by prayer,
Why should I give way to grief,
Or heart consuming care?
Are not all things in his hands?
Has he not his promise passed?
Will he then regardless stand,
And let me sink at last?"

"If he worms and sparrows feed,
Clothes the grass in rich array,
Can he see a child in need,
And turn his eyes away?"

Like a reviving cordial it braced us up and we were content, and believed his word and sang his praise. Oh, are there any in all our family circle who have not at some time during their pilgrimage set this to their seal that God is true?

G. R.

MARRIAGES.

Married by Elder H. C. Ker, at the home of the bride's parents, November 29th, 1923. George Rounds, of Salisbury, Md., and Miss Mary Lynch, of Laurel, Del.

By the same, at the home of the bride's parents, at Mardela Springs, Md., March 15th, 1923, Aquilla H. Evans and Miss Aice M. Graham, both of Mardela Springs.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Darius Runkle died at his home in Macomb, Ill., April 16th, 1924, aged 78 years, 1 month and 27 days. He was the son of David and Margaret (Kaiser) Runkle, and was born in Champaign County, Ohio, February 19th, 1846. When quite young he came with his parents to Morgan County, Illinois. After a few years they moved to McDonough County, Illinois, where he spent the remainder of his life, moving from his farm to the city of Macomb thirteen years ago. He had been in ill health for several years, but the last year became more feeble and ten days before his death he took to his bed when uremic poisoning set in, which was the immediate cause of his death, which came as if going to sleep. October 26th, 1876, he was united in marriage to Sarah E. Van Meter, daughter of the late Elder I. N. Van Meter, and four children were born to them: Arthur Leslie, Walter Loring, Earle Van Meter and Mrs. Grace Garrison. There are six grandchilden and two great-grandchildren living. On May 1st, 1863, when but 17 years of age, he enlisted in the Civil War, being a member of Company C 137th Reg. Ill. Vol. Infantry, and was honorably discharged at the close. He never made a public profession of religion, but always leaned toward the Old School Baptist faith, having no sympathy for the popular religion of the times. He enjoyed the visits of the preachers and brethren and sisters who often came to our home, but often said he was not fit or worthy to belong to the church. He was honest, industrious, upright with his fellow-men. He was a good husband and father, a kind neighbor and good citizen, respected by all who knew him.

His funeral was largely attended, Elder Hale, our pastor, preaching an able and comforting discourse from the words, "There is no man that hath power over the spirit, to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death."—Eccl. viii. 8. His remains were laid to rest in Oakwood Cemetery at Macomb, six nephews being pall-bearers. He leaves to mourn his wife, four children, one sister, Mrs. B. F. Myers, member of a Primitive Baptist Church here, and she is the last one left of twelve children, and many other relatives and friends. One son is home with me or I would be entirely alone. Pray for me, dear brethren and sisters, that I may be enabled to say, Not my will, but thine, O God, be done.

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

Our dear brother, **Jonas S. Strimple,** died at the home of his niece, Mrs. James Risler, near Stockton, N. J., March 11th, 1924, aged 89 years, having been born December 25th, 1835. Brother Strimple was twice married, first to Mary Burd. She lived only about six months. His second wife was Amy Fox, whom he married October 25th, 1875. She died Sep-

tember 24th, 1905. Brother Strimple was baptized in the fellowship of the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, N. J., October 21st, 1900. His second wife was baptized the same day in the fellowship of the Kingwood Church. Brother Strimple was a faithful member, a lover of sound doctrine, a good Bible student, and his chief delight was to converse upon the Scriptures. The church could always depend upon his presence at meetings unless providently hindered. His last days were spent in the home of his niece, sister James Risler, who faithfully and lovingly ministered to his needs and wants. He had suffered a stroke some time before his death which rendered him almost helpless.

His funeral service was conducted in the home of sister Risler by the writer, at the request of brother Strimple. The interment was at Sandy Ridge. We all sorrow that we shall see his face no more, but know he is better off. I had known him many years and loved him for the truth's sake. May grace and peace be with the family, especially sister Risler who loved him so dearly.

Written by request.

His pastor, H. C. KER.

Joseph C. Clark was born October 1st, 1858, and departed this life April 27th, 1924, at his home in Freeport, Maine, aged 65 years, 6 months and 26 days. He had been in failing health for some time, but bore his sufferings without a murmur. He leaves a wife, one son, two daughters, three brothers and three grandchildren to mourn their loss. He was a kind husband, dearly loved by his children, respected by his friends, and highly esteemed for the truth's sake by those who have been taught of the Lord. He united with the Old School Baptist Church at Bowdoinham, Maine, thirty-five years ago, and was baptized by Elder Hiram Campbell. He was firmly established in the truth, always ready to speak of the way he had been led, and of the precious things of the kingdom of our God.

Funeral services were held at his home May 1st by Elder H. C. Ker, who was enabled to speak words of comfort to the sorrowing family and friends. The will of God is done in heaven and earth. We desire to be made reconciled to his will.

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

Eunice Wagoner, widow of Walter Wagoner, was born in Clackamas County, Oregon, November 14th, 1853, and died in a hospital at Medford, Ore., April 23rd, 1924. She was the daughter of Joel and Addie Bidwell Kirtley. She was the mother of nine children, six of whom are still living. She was given a good hope in Jesus at an early age, and united with the Coast Fork Church of Predestinarian Baptists in November, 1903. She was an outstanding example of love, patience and faith, blessed with the spirit of reconciliation and trust that enabled her always from the heart to say, Not my will, but thine, be done. She died in full assurance of the resurrection and the better life.

The funeral services were conducted at Drain, Oregon, by the writer, and the remains were followed to their resting-place in the Ritchie Cemetery by a large concourse.

G. O. WALKER.

Mary E. Marks died at her home in Atlanta, Ga., April 20th, 1923, at the advanced age of 77 years. She was the wife of Joel Marks, and leaves a host of friends and relatives to mourn her death. While we know she had lived to a ripe old age, we grieve to give her up, yet we cannot wish her back again to suffer any more in this vale of tears. She leaves eight children, four daughters and four sons: Mrs. C. W. Corley, Mrs. J. A. Hammock, Mrs. J. A. Perkins, Joel Marks, Arthur Marks, Willie Marks, Purdy Marks and three sisters and one brother: Mrs. Lottie Cooper, Mrs. Ella Corley, Mrs. Eula Henry and Mr. J. D. Almond. She was a strong and loyal member of the Primitive Baptist Church. She joined the church at Harris Springs, in Newton County, Ga., in 1865, and was baptized by old brother Hamby. She moved her membership to the Degress Avenue Church, in Atlanta, Ga., several years ago. She was confined to her bed for three months before her spirit took its flight from its prison of clay to live in eternal joy. Yes, she was ready to go, and when the kind summons came her spirit quickly fled away to join that happy throng. Oh, may the good Lord prepare us to meet her on high with all the redeemed of the Lord, where suffering, sorrow, sin and death are felt no more.

Written by her lonely daughter,

DORA HAMMOCK.

My dear wife, **Mrs. Maud Ely,** was born in Bell County, Texas, February 22nd, 1882, and died April 10th, 1924. She was a firm believer in the faith of the Old School Baptists, and her membership was at Lovington, New Mexico. After a long illness the death angel visited our home and claimed our loved one and took her home, where she will suffer no more. She left to mourn her departure, husband, eight children and one grandchild. Our loss is her gain. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

J. R. ELY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Simeon Hiltabrand, Ill., $3.00; Mrs. Sarah V. Curry, Col., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

The Delaware River Association is appointed to be held with the Southampton Church, at Southampton, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, to begin Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, and continue three days, being May 28th, 29th and 30th. Meeting will begin at 10:30 a. m., daylight saving time. A cordial invitation is extended to all of our faith and order to meet with us. Those coming to Southampton, Pa., will be met, or inquire for C. B. Reeves. Those coming to Ivyland, Pa., inquire for Wm. Hobensack.

WM. HOBENSACK, Clerk.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association which was to have been held at New Vernon, New York, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 4th, 5th and 6th, 1924, is now to be held at Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse of the Middletown & Wallkill Church. This change was made necessary because of a fire which destroyed "The Old Homestead," conducted by F. J. Beyea, the place where the friends were to have been entertained at New Vernon. The Association is to be held at the same time as originally appointed, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 4th, 5th and 6th, 1924. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren (especially our brethren in the gospel ministry), sisters and friends.

Those coming from and via. New York City will take Erie railroad ferry, foot of West 23rd Street, at 4:20 p. m., or Erie Railroad ferry foot of Chambers Street at 4:30 p. m. for train leaving Jersey City, N. J., at 4:45 p. m. (Dayligh Saving Time) on Tuesday, June 3rd. Get tickets for Middletown, N. Y.

Those coming from and via. Kingston will take Ontario & Western train leaving Kingston at 1:15 p. m. (Eastern Standard Time) on Tuesday, June 3rd. Above trains will be met. If any arrive at Middletown and there is no one at the station to meet them they will go direct to the Waldo Hotel. Those coming by automobile also go to the Waldo Hotel.

R. LESTER DODSON, Moderator.

R. M. STRONG, Clerk.

The Olive and Hurley Church will hold our annual two days meeting in the meetinghouse at Shokan, N. Y., Saturday and Sunday, June 14th and 15th, 1924, the Lord willing. Both east and west bound trains will be met at the Ulster & Delaware Railroad station at Ashokan Saturday morning.

JOHN J. SECOR, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

SCIOTOVILLE, Ohio, March 31, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—Here are two letters from Elder W. J. May, a very old brother, which were very interesting to me, and I think they would be of interest to many of your readers. I would be glad if you would publish them in the SIGNS when you have space.

Yours truly,

MARTHA L. ELLIOTT.

SHOCK, Ky., Feb. 4, 1924.

DEAR SISTER ELLIOTT:—I am truly glad of your good letter, and will briefly reply the best I can. We should remember that the Scripture in which this text is found has direct reference to the destruction of the temple worship and the city of Jerusalem, and Jesus told his dear children, including his disciples, of a number of coming events which would take place before the end came; that is, the end of that legal world and the destruction of Jerusalem, that Jewish city. The preacher you spoke of surely was not a sound Old School Primitive Baptist. Was he? Surely not, or he never would have said the carcass represented or was the Savior, although their god is not as our God; our enemies themselves being judges. Once, in Elijah's day, when they tested their gods they fell short. They went about calling until noon, but could not arouse them.

Dear sister Elliott, and all others, I want you to know that it is not in me to unfold the deep mysteries of God, all we can know of them is by divine revelation, so if there is anything in this hastily written letter to your comfort you may know it is of the Lord and not of me. The carcass spoken of here was the Jews, the inhabitants of that great city Jerusalem, and the eagles were the Roman army, who bore the emblem of the eagle in their standard, who besieged the city and devastated it so that there was not one stone upon another that was not thrown down, and as near as I can now remember there were two hundred and fifty thousand of God's people, the Jews, who perished in that awful destruction. Gathering his elect people, spoken of in Matthew xxiv. 31, does not mean all God's elect people, but his elect, or remnant, that he delivered out of the city and temple worship. The heaven there spoken of was the legal heaven.

Pardon my haste and mistakes.

Your servant, W. J. MAY.

SHOCK, Ky., March 18, 1924.

DEAR SISTER ELLIOTT:—I was made unusually glad by the contents of your good letter, which came to hand promptly, for I was afraid my hurried letter to you in answer to your inquiry about the carcass and eagles would not be satisfactory. As to your sending it to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication, you may do as you please about it, but I hardly think they will publish it, for I rambled over it so briefly that it is not very plain, but I believe it is said that a hint is enough for the wise, and I am sure of the fact that I am writing to wise men who are able to judge what I say.

I have in mind to write one more article for the dear old SIGNS, if it is the Lord's will. There are a few things I would love to mention before I go hence to be no more.

You ask me what the tree of life that was in the garden of Eden represented. This is a deep and interesting subject, and, like the rest of God's divine arrangement, the interpretation belongs to God, therefore if the Lord is pleased to bless me with light and liberty I will write you such views as the Lord blesses me with, and that is all I can do, for of myself I can do nothing.

My good sister in Christ, notwithstanding I have never seen you your precious letters have and do afford much comfort to my heart, so much so they cause me to feel sure the grace of God dwells richly in your heart by faith in Christ, and if so you have tribulation in this world.

In your good letter of the 12th inst. you say, "What does the tree of life in the garden of Eden represent?" (Gen. ii. 9.) Now, sister Elliott, all that I can do, or even undertake to do, is to tell you what it represents to me, and of course there are probably different views held by the good brethren, therefore what I write on this subject shall be subject to the criticism and correction of any of them, for at the most I can only hint at a few of the blessed truths in and connected with this wonderful text: "The tree of life also in the midst of the garden" that God planted. This was God's garden, the weak, puny, fleshly hands of man had no part in planting this garden. This was God's garden, and also God's man he had formed that he put in his garden he had planted on purpose. So God put the man (Adam) in the garden, and also at his appointed time he drove him out of the garden, therefore I cannot see where the freewill and the ability of the creature finds any place to set its foot. In order to be plainly and easily understood, I must say that to me the tree of life in the midst of the garden has reference to the church of God in Christ, dwelling in the bosom of the eternal Father, "set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest parts of the dust of the world."—Prov. viii. 23-26. "The Lord possessed me [the church in the attribute of wisdom, who is justified of all her children] in the beginning of his way, before his works of old." We see in Proverbs iii. 18, that wisdom is called a tree of life, as follows: "She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her." She is spoken of as feminine, and there are other passages I could refer to, but do not feel able in body or mind to write at length, neither do I deem it necessary. I will, however, turn to what is said of this tree of life in the last chap-

ter of the book of Revelation. In describing this wonderful city, the church of God, it says, "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb. In the midst of the street [Christ] of it [the city], and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." To me this is describing the church of God in her triune or threefold sense, as Paul wrote in first Thessalonians. There he says the church is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ; the same also in his second letter to the Thessalonians. We should bear in mind that Christ and his church are one. He is the head and the church is his body, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations, which I believe means the moral influence the church, the light of the world, has upon the surrounding community. While others have a little different view of this point, and may be right about it, I do not see any material difference, for it is all of the Lord. Neither do I believe that the tree of life in the midst of the garden was one of those trees which the Lord God made to grow out of the ground that was pleasant to the sight and good for food, for this word "also" means an addition. This, the tree of life, neither the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, were of the trees which the Lord God made to grow out of the ground that were good for food. Neither did the partaking of the tree of good and evil cause good or evil, but gave the knowledge of both good and evil.

Remember me in your prayers, for I am a poor weak mortal, aged eighty-six years, two months and sixteen days.

W. J. MAY.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I have several times been solicited to give a sketch of my travel from nature to grace; that is, if I ever have experienced or known anything of such a travel, and in compliance will, in my weak and rambling manner, endeavor to tell you something of the dealings of the Lord, as I sometimes hope, with me. If I could express myself as I have heard others it would indeed be a pleasure to write.

When I was about eleven years of age my mother left me to attend to the breakfast table while father and the remainder of the family repaired to the adjoining room for prayer, as was his custom. While standing by the table it suddenly appeared to me that I was not to live long. I began to feel very badly, and it occurred to me that I was an awful sinner. My weight of trouble was more than I can express. On being called to breakfast I refused, saying I did not wish to eat. Mother asked if I were sick. I replied in the negative, but stated that I felt very badly. I tried to keep out of sight as much as I could, for, being but a child, I did not wish any one to know what a condition I was in. My playmates, who had heretofore afforded much pleasure, were now no company for me. The United Baptists were holding a meeting near father's residence. With a troubled mind I went to the meeting, and the preacher, after finishing his discourse, invited all those who desired an interest in their prayers to come forward. I felt to be one, though I did not make it manifest, and after meeting went home with a heavy load of sin. Mother by this time saw I was in trouble, and asked what was the matter, and with much embarrassment I told her. She advised me to pray the Lord for forgiveness of all my sins. That was what I had been trying

to do, but had received no relief. She further said, that if I desired the prayers of those people, to make it manifest and they would assist me all they could. It seemed that I grew worse and worse in spite of all I could do, and that my prayers were an empty sound that could not be heard or noticed. I decided to go forward to be prayed for, hoping the prayers of the people might be heard in my case and that the Lord would undertake for me. Finally I tried to shake off my troubles, but the more I strove to get rid of them the worse they got and the more guilt-stricken and sinsick I became. My very breathings were, Lord, be merciful to me, a poor helpless sinner. I had by this time lost all hope of God hearing or answering prayer in my behalf. All you who have realized this moment of despair can better imagine my feelings than I can express them. In this sad condition and distress of mind I was sitting on the mourners' bench, as it was called, my prayers were hushed, my tears were dried. Just here for a short space of time I have no recollection of what took place. The first thing I remember after this state of my mind was praise to God. My burden was gone, and I thought the sun shone with more brilliancy than ever before. I loved every one and wanted to tell them of my feelings, but being only a child, only eleven years of age, thought it would not do for me to utter a word in public, so I sat there thinking I would never see any more trouble, and thinking how good the Lord had been to remember me. But I must tell you that before I left the church-house I began to fear that I was deceived. I tried to get my burden back, but never have as yet. I tried to pray God that if I were deceived he would make it known to me in some way. The members asked me if I had a hope. I was afraid to say yes, but could not say no, for I felt that God had been merciful to me. I was then informed that it was my duty to be baptized. This to me was a solemn thing, but I felt that if I knew it was my Master's will I would be willing to perform my duty as best I could, notwithstanding my unworthiness. I had never heard a Primitive Baptist preach, as there were none in our immediate vicinity, but I had heard the old people say the "Hardshells" were a selfish people, and that they preached infants into hell, which was enough to turn the mind of a young person such as I was against them, so I thought the United Baptists was the church of Christ. Of course I was too young to know and understand the doctrine, and united with them, and remained with them about eighteen years. I was married at the age of nineteen, and shortly afterward my husband bought a small farm in the northern part of Pope County, Illinois, to which farm we moved, and near it was an Old Baptist Church, Grand Pier, where I heard Elder Richard Fulkerson preach every month. His preaching truly attracted my attention, and I soon began to see the difference in the preaching. Some said there was but little difference, but that was not the way it appeared to me. Elder Fulkerson preached that Jesus Christ came into this world to save his people from their sins (not to try and fail), and that he accomplished the work he came to do; that he bore the sins of his own people in his own body when he was nailed to the tree; that he redeemed them, being made a curse for them; that that redemption is eternal, and that he now makes it manifest by revelation by his Spirit to the poor lost sinner that he washed all their sins away. Yes, Elder Fulkerson told us that

God Almighty loved his people with an everlasting love, and notwithstanding they were led captive by the devil at his will, had fallen under the condemning sentence of His law he yet loved them; that Jesus paid all the demands of the law, took the sins of his people upon himself and bore them on the tree, and that by the blood of the everlasting covenant the prisoner shall come forth out of the pit wherein is no water. He also told us that it was not yet manifest to all his people that their sins had been taken away, but that it would be, and that not one of them would be left behind, and that all his children should know him, from the least even unto the greatest. Elder Fulkerson further told us that he professed to be a hunter hunting for the lost sheep on every high hill and mountain and the holes in the rocks, and O, brethren and sisters, I believe he found poor unworthy me, pent up on a high hill, and that while he was distributing his Master's goods to his flock I was feasting upon the scattering blades that chanced to fall near me. When preaching upon experimental religion, or the change from nature to grace, how a person was made acquainted with his heirship to that rich inheritance for those who were given to Christ, he told my travel so much better than I could that, as before stated, it truly attracted my attention, and although that kind of preaching was new to me, yet it fed my hungry soul. I have already mentioned that I was willing to do my Master's will if I knew it, but am bound to acknowledge that after seeing plainly, to my understanding, the Old Baptists to be the church of God there was something that hindered me from discharging what I at that time felt to be my duty. I thought there was an indication that the United Baptists would return and take their position in the Old Baptist ranks again, and as I felt to be the least and most ignorant among them thought I would wait. But I knew no peace day or night, oppression weighed me down; I thought I was getting sick and commenced taking medicine, but it did me no good. My friends asked what was the matter with me, but I could not tell them. I felt my strength giving way. I was at meeting one night and a United Baptist preacher was present and was requested to open services. He did so, and talked about the "old path" which is the "good old way." I shall not undertake to describe my feelings at that time. Elder Fulkerson spoke a few words, then proclaimed the doors of the church open, and called upon the doubting ones who felt little and poor and unworthy, those who were troubled and distressed, who had a little hope, but were afraid they were mistaken, to come and go with them. I felt to say, Hinder me not; I will go with this happy band. It seemed that I could see the footprints of my Master in the good old way so plainly that I was compelled to obey the call. I calmly arose and started, but my strength gave way, insomuch that had it not been for the aid of a bench I believe I would have sunk to the floor. I tried in my weak and stammering manner to tell the church some of my travels, and while doing so my mind became so transplanted that I have no recollection as to whether the church received me or not, but was told on the road home that I had been received with gladness. I have no doubt the Old Baptist is the church of Christ, but feel too unworthy to belong to it, to be identified with that peculiar people, yet I do desire to be with them. Tongue cannot express the liberty and freedom I have realized since I attached myself to

them. I believe I have been made to realize that passage of Scripture which reads: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." I hope the Lord will be with me and guide my footsteps aright, and that he will enable me to discharge my duty while traveling through this world of sorrow and distress.

If you will not consider me tedious I will relate a dream I had a short time after I professed a hope in Christ. I dreamed I was standing by a smooth wall, which was on my left hand, and on my right was a dark, yawning, bottomless pit. There was only room between the wall and pit for one foot to stand on. I thought I was bound to go home, but felt afraid I would fall into that awful abyss. Before I attempted to tread that narrow path I thought of my Savior, and called upon him to assist me. He appeared in the form of an angel, braced me up and kept me from falling. He promised me a safe journey, and took his leave. I started on, but soon began to tremble and fear, which caused me again to cry unto him for help. He again appeared to me and caused me to stand, upheld by his righteous, omnipotent hand. Oh I felt to praise his matchless name! When I arrived at the end of that narrow path there were so many roads I did not know which one to take; I thought I knew the direction. Finally I took the left hand road, and had not gone far when I came to an old house. I called on the lady of the house to direct me home, but she gave me little satisfaction, so I started on and soon arrived at a very deep watercourse through which I was necessitated to pass. I started in with much fear; the water became deeper and deeper, until I was almost gone. I cried to the Lord to save me or I would perish, and at that moment he appeared to me and raised me out of the water. Again thanking him for his mercies I started on, and walked smoothly upon the surface until I reached dry land, when I was in sight of my father's house. I stopped to thank God for remembering me through all my dangerous travel, and felt to trust him. Just at that moment I awoke. I have often wished that my dream had continued until I reached father's house. But without stopping to venture an interpretation, I say I have always found God a present help, a shadow of a great rock in a weary land, to brace me up while on my journey through this low ground of sorrow and distress, and my prayer is that he may continue to be with me and not suffer me to be tempted more than I am able, but with every temptation make a way for my escape.

I will now close my already too lengthy letter. I could say a great deal more, but it might crowd out matter that would be of more interest.

Farewell, KATE CARR.

(See obituary on page 191).

EL PASO, Texas, May 7, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription has expired, and my wife and I are so far from any of the dear Old Baptists, and not being blessed with the opportunity of hearing the gospel, I am sending money order for two dollars to renew for another year, and will write a few words in expression of my appreciation of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which has stood so long, and has in the past, does now and I hope will in the future, stand firm in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, and will continue to stand in and contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. In the SIGNS I read letters from all parts of the country, and, with the editors, all seem to be in harmony,

and give evidence that they are all taught of and know the Lord, and are known of the Lord. I do enjoy their letters, and if I could write as they do I would write often. It is my desire to write, but when I think of how ignorant and sinful I am it makes me blush to even think of trying to write anything for publication in so good and sacred a paper, but I do wish I could write something that would be of comfort to some lonely downcast child, who, like myself, is wandering in the desert, like a sheep without a shepherd, wandering in darkness, sin and trials, and is made to sigh and say, How long wilt thou leave me, O Lord? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me? This perhaps is to keep us from being exalted and trusting too much in self, for just as surely as we trust in self we get an awful fall, and are made to see that the Lord is our strength, our refuge, our help in time of distress, our guide, our light and our all; in him and by him we have life in this world, and if we are what we are sometimes made to believe and hope we are (children of God) then we have life eternal beyond this life of loneliness, affliction and anguish of soul, where all these things will be forgotten. Is not this a glorious thought and hope to have? and then to think that this is all according to the foreknowledge, love, mercy and grace of God our Father, who has loved us with an everlasting love, and that it is not according to our works, or because we have loved him and have done many wonderful works for him, for we know we have not done one thing for him, but he has done all things for us, and to him belong all the power, praise, honor and glory for evermore. He makes us to know that he is the God of heaven and earth, and is over all, and that we are only dependent creatures, and that life, salvation and all that we are or ever hope to be are of him and through him. All his dealings with us are according to his own will and purpose, and sometimes he makes us to see them, and gives us faith and hope in him, which enables us to say, Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. We cannot save ourselves, so our salvation depends entirely upon the only true and living God, who we hope has chosen us in Christ Jesus since before the world began, and what a blessed hope this is. At times it seems hard that through the afflictions of my wife we have been driven away out here in the desert, far from all the dear Old Baptists, yet though afflicted and deprived of associating with the people we dearly love we can still thank and praise God that in all this he still gives us hope of a better life beyond this world of sin. This must be the same hope the apostle Paul had while writing of affliction. He said, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed," and after mentioning many other things he says, "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Having this hope makes our affliction seem lighter, and in this hope we can glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given

unto us, for when we were without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly. So now we see that by the Holy Ghost this was given unto us when we were without strength to perform that which was good. In this we have hope of salvation through the love and grace of God, who hath called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace has saved us (if saved at all). It is by his mercy we are enabled to rejoice in this hope, for we are not taught of man to know anything of this hope, and this hope is not revealed unto the wise and prudent, for Jesus said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." Has the babe ever received anything by its own wisdom or strength? No. It receives everything as a favor and a gift, having performed no good works of any kind that should be rewarded. So every humble child is taught of God to know he is dependent upon God for all things, both in this life and in the life to come. All will be peace and happiness in that house of many mansions of which Jesus told his disciples when he said, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." I feel that God has been kind and merciful to me in sparing my unprofitable life and in giving me a hope of his mercy and grace through the obedient life, crucifixion, burial and resurrection of Jesus, who is the Savior of every one of the redeemed of the Lord, and it is through and by him that we have hope of life eternal beyond this world of sin and sorrow. There is a great difference between the man who is taught of God and one taught by the wisdom of man, for we see that man in the wisdom of man is proud and boastful, and thinks he is able to do many things for himself and for the Lord, but the man who is taught of the Lord is humble, and gives God all the praise, power, honor and glory, and is made to know Jesus as Simon Peter did. At one time Jesus came to his disciples and asked them, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" In the answer we have what the natural man thinks of Jesus: "Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets." We see the natural men seemed to know there was one man called Jesus, but who he was or what he was they knew not; but Peter knew who he was. How did Peter know who Christ was? After he had told Christ man's opinion of him then Christ said, "But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." So it is to-day, if we know Jesus it is because God the Father has revealed him unto us, and if the Father has revealed Jesus unto us we as his disciples can rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that we have seen. The Pharisees do not like this loud-voice praising Jesus and taking all the glory and honor from man and giving it unto Jesus, for we read that on one occasion when all the disciples of Christ were praising him with a loud voice some of the Pharisees said unto him, "Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you, that, if these should hold their

peace, the stones would immediately cry out." So we see that there is no power of man that can stop or prevent the praise and glory of Jesus, who is above all power and control of men.

Well, I have already written too much, and not at all as I thought I would, as my mind was led away from what I thought to write. Now, dear editors, consider this letter, and if you see anything in it you think would be of comfort to any one you may publish it; if not, cast it aside, for it seems that I have written without light and understanding, and fear it is too much of self. If this does appear in the dear old SIGNS, and any reading it feel to write to a poor unworthy sinner I would surely appreciate it, as I do indeed enjoy and find comfort in the letters I receive from the dear old Baptists. Should any of them ever pass this way there is a welcome in our humble home for them. Our address is 3115 Sacramento Street.

May God's mercy, comfort and grace remain with you all.

I will close by asking you all to remember us at the throne of grace.

C. M. ADAMS.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I have never related much of my experience, or what I hope is an experience, from nature to grace, and thinking you may have experienced some of the same things, I feel you might like to know how I have been led, I hope, by a way I knew not. I was eleven years old when I first began to feel the mighty power of God. I was very blind at that time, and began to pray to him, and felt he would hear me. I know now I had not been quickened by the Spirit. I would repeat a prayer of a child, "Now I lay me down to sleep," &c. For something like two years this lasted, and then I became very self-righteous, would pray long prayers, and thought I was a good girl, even thought my father and mother would be proud of me if they knew what good prayers I could pray. Oh how blind I was; but this did not last long. At about fourteen years of age I think the Lord showed me what a sinner I really was. Something came over me and I felt quite different. I felt to be a condemned sinner. I tried to do good, tried to obey my father and mother, and tried to pray, but all I could say was, God be merciful to me a sinner. That summer I felt the need of the prayers of christian people, but felt they would never be able to reach my case. I went to the Methodist meeting one night and gave my hand for prayer, but returned to my seat feeling no better. I went home and went to bed and the burden on my heart was so great that I could feel it weighing me down, and a darkness so great I could feel it surrounded me. I became unconscious of everything but the great darkness. I thought maybe I was going to die, and knew I would be lost, but knew I could do nothing more, and felt I would get justice if lost. I did not seem to have power to move, and in this condition I dropped off to sleep, and at the rising of the sun, as it shone in upon my pillow, I awoke clapping my hands together and praising God. I think I cried out loudly three times, Glory to God, before I was awake enough to realize what I was doing. I was afraid I had awakened some of the folks, but they all appeared to be asleep, so I went to my morning tasks, and all the while my heart seemed to be praising God. I thought all my troubles gone, but the tempter soon appeared. When I felt I wanted to tell some one the tempter said, You will deceive them; you know you

are the same sinner; you are no better than you ever were; you want to make some one think you have religion, but you are mistaken, you are a sinner and you know it; so I kept it to myself and tried for years to have a brighter evidence. I was eighteen years old before I became satisfied with my hope. Those were four years of trial and trouble for me. I would not read the Bible for fear some one would notice it. If I had I could have found comfort, but I did not know that. When I was eighteen I heard brother I. N. Stephens preach. Yes, I heard him. He took for his text, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." That was good news to me. I thought every word he said was just for me. I did not join the church for two years, for I felt too unworthy. I felt a sweet peace come over me as I tried to relate some of my experience, and that sweet, peaceful feeling remained with me at my baptism, and for some time after. I thought I would never have any more trouble, but since then my soul has been down in the valley, then again I have felt that I am only a pilgrim plodding along up the mountain, shouting as I journey, Deliverance will come. Sometimes I rejoice and can praise him for all things, and again I feel too unworthy to call upon so great and powerful a God, yet I rejoice in his mercy, his greatness and his great power, and hope that he gave his Son a ransom for my soul. ALLIE BLOYD.

(See obituary in May 15th number.)

ABILENE, Texas, March 28, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I feel quite unworthy to address you as brethren, but I trust you can bear with me a little while. I have been a member of the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church for thirty or thirty-five years. My membership is in Smith County, Texas, where my first husband and I joined. I have not moved my membership, as there are no Old School Baptists in this city. My first husband died in 1913, and I was married to Mr. W. C. Clark in 1915. He was a Methodist. I have been a reader of the SIGNS ever since I can remember. My old uncle, Duncan Adams, took the paper when I was a child. I am also a niece of Frank Adams. I think many of the old brethren remember Uncle Frank Adams, as he was an Old School Baptist preacher. I have the first volume of Elder Gilbert Beebe's Editorials, and also have a poem about the speckled bird, that was published in the SIGNS when it was in newspaper form. My first husband and I took the SIGNS as long as he lived. After his death I left Smith County and came to Abilene to live with my daughter. I was not able to pay for the SIGNS after Mr. Allen died, but after the death of my second husband I was so lonesome that I sent for the paper. Write on, brethren, and may you long be spared to comfort the weak and weary.

(MRS.) W. C. CLARK.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in June (29th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER S. J. Norris has changed his residence from Samantha, Alabama, to Tuscaloosa, Alabama, Route 4, where his correspondents may address him.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1924.

EDITOR

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
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1 CORINTHIANS VI. 20.

"FOR ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

Brother Thomas L. Huff, Duluth, Ga., has asked us to write on the above Scripture, especially upon the "bought," and when the buying and selling took place. Of all those to whom Paul wrote, probably none had more grossly departed from the ways of the Lord than the Corinthians. There were not only divisions among them, some claiming to be of Paul, some of Apollos, some of Cephas and some of Christ, but they seemed to have lost all regard for decency, not only as pertaining to the order of God's house, but were breakers of the law in the land in which they dwelt. Paul's accusation was, "Ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren," and he says, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you." What a terrible indictment to bring against them. Nor was this all, for they utterly lacked judgment to deal with such things. "I speak to your shame," said Paul, "Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren." It has seemed to us in rerecent years, especially, there has been a great lack of judgment with regard to keeping house in the church. Because of the lack of order, confusion and distress have come upon us. Some have seemed perfectly content to go along almost any way, so long as sound doctrine was being preached, while others have not been as careful of that as becomes those who should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. Paul exhorted the Hebrews to "be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines." To the Ephesians he wrote, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." We should determine to know nothing save Jesus Christ, and him crucified; "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." There is therefore, no room in the church of God for "progressiveism." "He is the Rock, his work is perfect," and John in the very last chapter of the sacred Book tells what shall be the lot of him that shall add to or take from the words of the book of this prophecy. We are not only, then, to speak the things which become

sound doctrine, but to "let all things be done decently and in order." As we have said before, the church at Corinth was in an awful condition, but were they any worse by nature than we? If we have been saved from some of the things which they were guilty of, is it not because it is by the grace of God we are what we are? If left to himself, is there any limit to which a child of God will not go? The history of Israel all down through the ages has been, "All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way." We have all been prodigals, at best. What a mercy it is the Lord does not forsake us altogether. He comes again and again to stir up our pure minds by way of remembrance, saying by his Holy Spirit, "Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever." He came in the person of his Son to seek and to save that which was lost, to raise the dead, to give sight to the blind, to cause the deaf to hear and the lame to walk. The fault found with the Laodicean Church was that they knew not their wretched condition; they were miserable, blind and naked, and knew it not; were neither hot nor cold, but lukewarm, indifferent, &c. The message of the Lord was he would spew them out of his mouth. They were counseled to buy of him gold tried in the fire, that they might be rich; and white raiment, that they might be clothed, that the shame of their nakedness might not appear, and to anoint their eyes with eyesalve, that they might see. It would seem that this age in which we are now living is the Laodicean age, but the angel was told to write also, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." We earnestly desire that the Lord might quicken his people to a true realization of their condition and cause their ears to be hearkening for the sound of his voice; that they might, "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." We are certain they will be willing in the day of his power, but until they have spent all they have and begin to be in want, they will not long for the things of their heavenly Father. Oh, that he might stand at the door, and knock; that he might teach them, "All flesh is grass, and all goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field." Without his Spirit to blow upon them such things can never be known. We need to be stripped of self before the best robe is put upon us; we must hunger and thirst after righteousness before we are to be brought and given a place at the King's table. The ground must be prepared before the sower goes forth to sow, and since the preparation and the sending forth the sower is all of the Lord, some seed will fall into good ground and bring forth, some an hundred, some sixty and some thirtyfold. How true is this parable to-day. The seed, we are told, is the word of God, but when it is preached, some seeds fall by the wayside, then cometh the wicked one and catcheth away that which was sown; some fall upon stony places, the word is received with joy, but when tribulation and persecution ariseth because of the word, there is a falling away and not enduring. Likewise, "He also that received seed

among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. But he that received seed into the good ground, is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty." "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Therefore, let the servant of God, when he preaches, preach Christ and him crucified, that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Paul, speaking of him as being the chief corner-stone, says, "In whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." This shows the vital unity of the head and the body, and as "your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own," the body is not to be defiled, we are not to do as we please, so to speak, revelling in the flesh, gratifying the lusts and passions thereof, but to keep our body under, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when we have preached to others, we, ourselves, should be castaways. If we know anything of the mystery of iniquity, or the vileness of our own heart, we can understand in some slight measure how Jesus was weighed down under the sins of his people, how he was pressed as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves, but the price which he paid was commensurate with the debt. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Having washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God, it behooves us to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, "For [in-as-much-as] ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

Our brother wishes to know particularly when they (the Lord's people) were bought, when the buying and selling took place. According to our understanding, they were first given to Christ before the world was: "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that he should walk in them." "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." This, undoubtedly, refers to the mystical body of Christ, to be manifested in time. As we have seen, it was the workmanship of God that created them in Christ Jesus. The church, his bride, was in him before she was manifested in Adam, and in this sense Adam was created in the image of God, his wife, Eve, being created in him. As time began to turn the pages of the book it revealed, or brought to view, what the will of the Father was, and the more is seen the more inscrutible appears

the wisdom which drew the wondrous plan, wherein God was to glorify himself. This embraced the fall of Adam, through which all of his posterity became in bondage to the law and were sold under sin, with all of its despicable consequences, from which they were unable to extricate themselves. The case does not end here, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." The covenant, or agreement, entered into before the morning of time between the Father and the Son called for certain stipulations, which were to be carried out and fulfilled in every jot and tittle in due time. "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." The price which he paid constituted all his sufferings in this world, his agony of soul, death and resurrection, and when he came forth conqueror, with all power in heaven and in earth given into his hands he could say, "Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled." "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Having been given in the beginning, they were still his when sold under sin by transgression, and being the head over all things to the church, he was responsible to the Father for them and paid all the debt, to the very last farthing, by taking upon himself, "not the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of his people." He did all the above during the thirty-three years spent here in this sin-cursed world. We do not understand it has ever been, or ever will be, necessary for God to modify or change in any manner, shape or form whatsoever his original and only plan. He not only knew, but fixed the end from the beginning, and the creation of the heavens and the earth, and all that in them is, as well as all that ever has or ever will take place, has been and will be only a visible expression, or outward manifestation of his unalterable purpose. The only firm foundation upon which anything can rest is that he is God and changeth not, and beside him there is none else. Therefore, the sons of Jacob are not consumed, because his love knows no end or turning. Neither shall death, life, angels, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height, depth, or any other creature be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. It is because we have been bought with a price: therefore (for that reason) we should glorify God in our body, and in our spirit, which are his.

"Let us ask the important question,
(Brethren, be not too secure.)
What it is to be a christian,
How we may our hearts assure.
Vain is all our best devotion,
If on false foundations built;
True religion's more than notion,
Something must be known and felt."

Let us not only be hearers, but doers of the word; let us prove to the world that we have been with and learned of Jesus, that we have been bought with a price which far outweighs the honors and glories of this world, and like the wise virgins, let us be ready, with grace in our hearts, when the Bridegroom cometh. May the Lord give us understanding.

R. L. D.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Nancy Catherine Carr, daughter of Thomas and Delila Bell, was born in Pope County, Illinois, December 13th, 1843, and died April 28th, 1924, aged 80 years, 4 months and 15 days. She was united in wedlock with Thomas J. Carr August 14th, 1862, to which union six children were born, as follows: William H., of Abilene, Kans.; James G., who died in infancy; Chester A., of Carbondale, Ill.; Olive M. Floyd, of near Golconda, Ill.; Elmer E , of Ottumwa, Iowa, and Stella M. Fulkerson, deceased, of Hartsville, Ill. At the tender age of eleven years she professed a hope in Jesus, and at, or about, the age of thirty years joined the Primitive Baptist Church, at old Grandpier, and was baptized by Elder R. Fulkerson, where she remained a faithful member the balance of her life. Her confinement to her bed extended over a period of six months, and during all that time her sufferings, though intense, were borne by her with remarkable patience. Kind and loving hands did all that could be done for her relief. A short time before she died she was heard to say, "My journey is nearly over," and, "I regret to leave you all, yet it is needful that I go away." When the end came she quietly fell asleep in Jesus. Truly a noble woman has fallen, but she will rise again. It was her request that Elder N. A. Rodgers officiate in the funeral solemnities and that she be buried in the old Grandpier Cemetery. Elder Rodgers officiated on the occasion, speaking words of comfort to a number of mourning relatives and friends, after which she was gently laid to rest to await the resurrection. She leaves an aged companion, four children, eleven grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, two brothers, and many other relatives and friends to mourn their loss.

In sorrow, her daughter,

OLIVE M. FLOYD.

(See communication on page 179.)

Deacon William H. James was born November 7th, 1840, and died April 10th, 1924, making his stay on earth 83 years, 5 months and 3 days. He was married to Miss Rebecca Smith January 2nd, 1870, and to this union were born four children. One died in infancy, and one daughter at the age of 9 years. Two boys, Frank and John B., are still living. He made his home with them since the death of his wife, October 7th, 1914. I baptized him and his wife in the fellowship of Little Hope Church, Boone County, Arkansas, the first Sunday in September, 1890. He was ordained Deacon the first Sunday in September, 1891. He served the church as clerk for several years, and filled both offices to the satisfaction of the church. He was one of the most orderly walking, Christlike men I ever knew, and always attended our associations and union meetings as long as he was able. Language fails me to express the many noble traits of this man of God. He requested me to preach his funeral, also his wife's funeral, which I did. They were both good church members and good neighbors. To know them was to love them. May God bless all the bereaved.

WILLIAM J. CASEY.

Elder J. A. Kinsel was born in Alabama, April 27th, 1848, and died December 19th, 1923, at the home of his son, D. P. Kinsel, May, Texas, after a long illness. His age was 75 years, 7 months and 22 days. His parents were Jesse and Elizabeth Kinsel. He was married to Miss Matilda Buckner April 20th, 1867, who survives him. Nine children were born of this union: Mrs. Lizzie Wiley, of Long Beach, Calif.; Mrs. Mary Miles, who died in 1906; Mrs. Amanda Williams, of Brownwood, Texas; D. P. Kinsel, of May, Texas; J. R. Kinsel, of Rockport, Texas; J. L. Kinsel, of Dilley, Texas; Mrs. Lula Miles, who died in 1914; Mrs. Addie Monroe, of Teague, Texas; Mrs. Dora Miles, who died in 1909. Soon after their marriage they were received into the fellowship of the old Piney Grove Church, near Headland, Alabama, in the year 1875. He immediately commenced preaching. He moved to Texas in 1882, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry on Saturday before the first Sunday in June, 1897.

ALSO,

Mrs. Althia Sikes was born February 21st, 1857, and died February 4th, 1924, aged 66 years, 11 months and 14 days. She was married to H. B. Brady January 1st, 1873, in Logan County, Ark., and to this union were born eight children. Her maiden name was Anderson, and one brother, D. D. Anderson, of Big Springs, Texas, survives her. W. T. Lee, Jesse and G. W. Brady, sons, preceded her to the grave. Four daughters, Mrs. S. C. Copeland, Mrs. Florence Powell, Mrs. M. M. Hood and Mrs. L. D. Thomas, all of Holder, Texas, survive her. Her husband, brother H. B. Brady, died at their home at Holder, September 23rd, 1894. After living a widow for a number of years she was married to Elder W. B. Sikes, who survives her. She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church about forty years. Her last illness was cancer, of about three years duration, during which time she suffered much, but bore her affliction with christian grace and a spirit of cheerfulness which characterized her life.

J. I. FOSTER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

L. S. Utterback, Va., $1.00; Mrs. C. M. Richardson, Va., $2.00; C. E. Jackson, Ohio, $1.00; Mrs. Sarah Gandy, N. J., $3.00; C. Stevens, Ark., $3.00.

MEETINGS.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expect Elder George Ruston to be with them the fifth Sunday in June, 1924, and as a more convenient place services will be held at the home of J. E. Livingston, 64 E. Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., at 11 a. m. and 2:30 p. m. All are welcome who care to meet with us.

(MRS) J. E. LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

THE FULFILMENT OF THE SCRIPTURES.

"IN the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."—Gen. i. 1.

What for? For his own pleasure, and the earth was for a place on which he would raise up, develop and prepare a family to dwell with him and to enjoy his presence, and whose presence he would enjoy. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."—Rev. iv. 11. "And this is the Father's will [pleasure] which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."—John vi. 39. "And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."—Col. i. 17. Being before all things, and the Creator of all things, he was alone before he created anything; but he was not pleased to remain alone, but, as before stated, he created the world in which to prepare a family to dwell with him and enjoy his holy presence. A family that could enjoy God's presence must know him and love him, for he is love, and he could not dwell harmoniously with any that are not lovely. God being purity could not dwell with impurity. God being justice could not admit the unjust into his presence, and he being full of mercy, those who dwell with him must know him in his mercy, and mercy is kindness bestowed upon the undeserving. To make a world just suited to raise such a family required a Creator of infinite wisdom, power, love, justice, purity and mercy, and to appreciate these divine qualities in him each individual composing that family must have a divine knowledge of these qualities ingrafted into their own experiences by the Spirit of him who possesses them in their fullness. God made man upright, but under the temptation of the serpent, which is the devil, man sinned and became dead in trespasses and sins, but God having foreseen this had provided a remedy in the person of his Son, whom he had given power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him. (John xvii. 2.) Those given to the Son were the family whom God predetermined to dwell with him, and love him, and behold his glory, and be partakers with him in the joys of his eternal home. Being infinite in wis-

dom and power he had provided for every emergency in which each and every one of his family should ever stand in need, and so rules that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."—Rom. viii. 28. In Christ is life, and the life is the light of men. (John i. 4.) By the light of the life of the Spirit of God man sees himself a sinner before God, and is made to hate sin and to desire to be free from it. Jesus is the only Savior of sinners, and in him dwells the fullness of the godhead, and the fullness of humanity also, and he is the only mediator between God and man, and he only can make reconciliation between God, who is infinite justice, and man, who is a vile sinner, and justly condemned on account of his sins. These things are shown to and revealed in the experience of each individual of the family of God by the holy Spirit of God, and thus they are born into the spiritual family of God, and fitted to dwell with God when their bodies shall have been raised up spiritual bodies like unto the glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The history of the church in the world is divided into three periods, or dispensations. First, the Patriarchal; second, the Israelite; and third, the Gentile. The Patriarchal extended from the creation of Adam to the death of Jacob. A period of 2255 years. The Israelitish extended from the death of Jacob to the dispersion of the Israelites after the capture of Jerusalem by Titus, the Roman general, and the destruction of their temple. A period of about 1885 years. The Gentile period extends from the destruction of Jerusalem to the present time and on to the great Armageddon battle, which I think is not long off. After the death of Jacob the Lord's chosen people were known as the twelve tribes of Israel, or the nation of Israel. They were the chosen people of God among the nations, and he peculiarly blessed them more than any other nation in the world. They were peculiarly blessed with the law which was written by God himself upon tables of stone and given to them alone; they were blessed with the Levitical priesthood, which was given to no other nation, and they were given most of the prophets of God spoken of in the Scriptures, and the greatest of all God's peculiar blessings was the gift of the Messiah. He was an Israelite of the tribe of Judah and of the family of David, and was the only man who ever held the three offices of Prophet, Priest and King. God gave the Israelites many admonitions, saying unto them, "Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord. If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit." "And I will set my tabernacle among you: and my soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people." "But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments, * * * I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies; they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you. And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins."—Leviticus xxvi. 2–4, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18. God repeats this warning that he will punish them seven times, three more times in this twenty-sixth chapter of Leviticus. A time in the Scriptures means 360 days, and seven times means 2520

days, and in prophecy a day is counted a year. So the seven times here mentioned means 2520 years, that God told the Israelites that he would punish them if they continued to disobey him. Did they hearken to his counsels, or did they rebel against him? Let Elijah answer, "And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts; because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword: and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."—1 Kings xix. 14. The prophet made one mistake, and the Lord corrected that by telling him, "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him." Therefore the Lord sent them as prisoners into Babylon, where they remained for seventy years, that the land of Israel might enjoy its sabbaths according to the commands of the Lord. (2 Chron. xxxvi. 21.) After their return to Palestine, the land which the Lord gave them, they yet were under punishment, for although they had kings of the tribe of Judah to reign over them, according to Jacob's prediction in Genesis xlix. 10, yet these kings and the whole nation of Israel were subject to Gentile authority the 2520 years of punishment, for their idolatry and other sins commenced when they were carried to Babylon in the year 606 B. C. 2520–606=1914. That time of punishment was due to expire A. D. 1914. Did it expire then? I think it was in the spring of A. D. 1915 that Gen. Allenby captured Palestine with its capitol, Jerusalem, and proclaimed liberty to the Israelites to go back to Palestine and settle as their home. Did Gen. Allenby have authority to give that liberty? He had the authority of the Empire of Great Britain and the other allied nations, and greatest and best of all he had, I think, the authority of Michael, the great prince who was then standing up for the delivery of Israel and every one who was found written in the book of life. As proof of this see Daniel xi. 44, 45; xii. 1: "But tidings out of the north shall trouble him [the emperor or kaiser of Germany]: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him." "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." The second verse, "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." This verse concerning the resurrection being connected with and following immediately after the testimony concerning the time of trouble leads me to think that the time of trouble will last until the resurrection of the dead. Paul in his letter to the church of Rome says, "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in."—Roman xi. 25. Jesus said, "And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."—Luke xxi. 24. Do both refer to time? Did they mean that the Gentiles were to enjoy the favors of God for an equal length

of time? with Israel? Israel was a peculiarly blessed people from the death of Jacob until the crucifixion of Christ, during a period of about 1845 years. Jesus just a little before his crucifixion uses this language, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."—Matt. xxiii. 37, 38. Thus Jesus as judge pronounces sentence upon the house of Israel. Even after pronouncing such a judgment he suffers them to occupy their land forty years, until A. D. 70, when their city was captured by Titus and they were scattered among the nations of the earth, and since then they have been as dry bones in a valley of death for a period of about 1845 years, or until 1915, and during these 1845 years the Gentiles have been peculiarly blessed. To the Israelites the Lord gave the law, the Levitical priesthood, and the prophets. To the Gentiles he has given the Bible, the church and the gospel ministry. Each for a period of about 1845 years. He prolonged the Israelites' period forty years, and he is prolonging the time of the Gentiles since the standing up of Michael, but for how long I am not wise enough to tell. But between the present time and the resurrection of the dead will, I think, be a continued time of troubles. During this time Mystery, Babylon, and her daughters, or all false religion, is to be put down, the beast and the false prophets are to be taken and cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. See the eighteenth and nineteenth chapters of Revelation, especially the twentieth verse. The dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, is to be bound for a thousand years and cast into the bottomless pit and shut up and a seal put upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years shall be fulfilled. (Rev. xx. 2, 3.) Some time during the fulfillment of these things the great Armageddon battle is to be fought. This battle is of so much importance that it is spoken of in many places in the Bible. I think, Ezekiel xxxviii. 17; xxviii.; xxxix.; Joel iii. 1, 2.; Rev. ix. 13–21; xvi. 12–21; xix. 17–21, and other places. I am expecting these things to take place soon, I think during the present century.

D. A. MEWBORN.

FARMVILLE, N. C.

[THE above letter of Elder Mewborn's is an unusual one, but it presents some thoughts along an entirely new line concerning matters which it might interest our readers to investigate in the light of holy Scripture. While we are not at all sure that Elder Mewborn is correct in his conclusions, we think it might be well for his views to be laid before the SIGNS' readers for their judgment.—L.]

OTTAWA, Kansas.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I think this is the first time I ever addressed a letter to the SIGNS, and the first time in the twenty-six years I have been a subscriber that I have been delinquent. I am not now writing to ask for charity, but for your forbearance a little longer, until I can get the money, which I hope will not be long. I do not see how I can get along without the dear old paper. Except for my two daughters I have no natural relatives within hundreds of miles, and many miles lie between me and any spiritual kindred, so far as I know. My husband was paralyzed the 10th of last September, and lay helpless and speech-

less until October 15th, when death relieved him of his suffering. The dear Lord surely took care of us through the awful trial by raising up friends who did everything mortals could do for our help. We wanted for nothing. I never could tell all they did for us. For five weeks through mud and rain they stood by us, and when the end came I was relieved of all responsibility when I thought I would surely faint under the burden left upon me. He has wonderfully sustained me through it all, and I feel to say, Who have I in heaven but thee, and who upon earth do I desire beside thee?

April 15th number of the SIGNS came Saturday, and the letter from G. E. Coulbourn was like an apple of gold in a picture of silver to me. I read it several times, and if I know anything about the truth he presented it in a clear, beautiful manner.

Just across the street from us there is a progressive Dunkard denomination, and last night I went over with the children to their Easter exercises. I sat there much of the time with throbbing heart at what seemed to me irreverence, committed through ignorance, I am sure, for as friends and neighbors they are lovely people. Of one of their number, a bank cashier, it has been said, Were every one like he we would need no laws. For years and years I have been in deep distress because I could not live as I desire. I seem to be continually giving account of every idle word, and you who have tried to live righteously know the sickening depths of despair into which I have been plunged. Well, I have my old SIGNS sewed together in book form, and about two weeks ago I was reading in one of the back volumes for relief. I read a letter from Gilbert B. McColl, and he also was lamenting his inability to do one good thing, but he said, Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled, and he said, I think I do hunger and thirst after righteousness. Oh it was just like scales falling from my eyes; I felt almost like shouting. Why what had I been doing all these years but begging, pleading, craving with my whole heart for righteousness? Always striving and always failing to keep his commands. Often I have said, O Lord, I am feeble and sore broken, undertake for me. I found while trying to walk the strait and narrow way that I was lame on both feet and made a very crooked path. I have read the Bible and SIGNS since I was old enough to read, and of course have read those words many times, they were perfectly familiar to me, but never before had they been applied to me, and it was just as if I had never heard them before. Ever since my husband was taken I have felt to be still and know that He is God.

Elder Dodson's advice in the closing remarks of his editorial in the April 15th number is good. Oh that I could be with the church militant. Indeed the whole article is sweet to my taste. I have been separated from the people of God for years, but I do not think I love them less because of it. I cannot turn from some little one because they cannot see predestination as I do. When they tell me of their unworthiness of the least of God's mercies, and that they are depending wholly upon Jesus for salvation, that they have no other plea, no other hope, and attribute all power to God, my heart goes out in love to them.

Pardon this long letter and all that is amiss.

ANNA McKINNEY.

2 SAMUEL XXIII. 5.

"ALTHOUGH my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow."

It is not my purpose to comment upon the above Scripture. That is out of my realm. "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." I quoted it to request dear Elders Keene or Dodson, one or both of them, to write upon it, the Lord willing to so direct. On the first Sunday in May, as I was being separated from the church, the flock at Shiloh, with whom my poor name is enrolled, that Scripture was given me as "a strong hold in the day of trouble," and it has been continually with me to the present. Since that day I have had the blessing to read Elder Keene's article in the SIGNS upon a portion of the seventy-third Psalm. I wish to say to him that as I read I was made to feel that it was directed to and for me, unworthy as I feel to claim the least blessing of the Lord.

To Elder Dodson:—The letter you wrote to sister Anderson I had the privilege of reading in *Zion's Landmark*, and it was blessed to my comfort and encouragement. My soul praised the Lord that he had given gifts to men, and that he, by grace I hope, had enabled this poor worm to be a partaker of the rich fruits of those gifts. How solemn were my feelings as I read after what manner you would love to see the dividing of which you spoke. I felt, Oh that each one could be brought to consider the words of God: "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things." Then in solemn wonder exclaim, "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes." "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Feeling this truth, I was made to cry unto God in the bitterness of my soul, "And I said, This is my infirmity." In my grief and poverty over my loss of meeting with the saints at Shiloh on that day, the Lord did graciously impart to my wounded soul the healing balm by leading me, oh so gently, to many of his sweet promises to his tried children, and hope, which seemed almost buried by the terrible conflict within, was revived, and I was made to rejoice to have hope that I was the least fragment embraced in that "everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure," and from then until now I very much desire to hear preaching from that Scripture.

Now please bear with me for another little word. When dear brother Livsey asked me to let him send my letter to him to be published in the SIGNS I did feel too insignificant to have my imperfect writings appear in a paper so ably edited, yet I could not get rid of his request, and pondering the matter in my mind the following thoughts caused consent to be given: No editors or readers are more worthy than brother Livsey, to whom it was sent, it is his property now, he must do with it as he wishes. Thus it went, I being "a beggar poor at mercy's door." How precious is that hymn to my soul, as is also the hymn, "Behold, I am a sinner still."

Dear Elder Lefferts, there are times in my journey when I cannot longer refrain from trying to pen down some of the things which I experience by the way. This is one of the times, and it has been much in my mind and heart ever since reading the articles written by Elders Keene and Dodson. I am sending this message to you and leave it to your wise discretion, feeling that you are able to judge and pass sentence. I am a sinner,

not only by nature, but by commission and by omission. Although I do believe that the Lord governs and disposes of all peoples and events according to his purpose and pleasure, nevertheless I grieve because of sin—because of my sins. Surely I have been brought to know the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and my hope is that divine love hath shined in my heart relieving the indwelling corruption of my sinful nature, causing me to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and I feel assured that if it is by grace I hunger I shall be filled. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."

Your humble sister in Christ, I hope,

SILLA WILSON.

LOGANVILLE, Georgia.

CHICAGO, Ill., April 12, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Sister, father and I have been laid up for some time with the grippe, but we are very thankful to our dear Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for the faith he has given us in him. Faith which is the fruit of the Spirit, as brother C. V. Hill said in his sermon to us last night. This is his second visit with us, and each time our dear Lord has seen fit to send us by him much comforting spiritual food. Of late I have been much exercised concerning faith. Our house of faith, what a wonderful thing it is, and it makes us patient and longsuffering to know that by trials and suffering it is built up strong and staunch. Surely faithful and positive, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be."

Our dear mother passed away last October. In her last letter to Paulina, Bradford and me she said, "Children, I feel that I have passed through all the gates, and the last gate has led me on the King's highway of righteousness, where none but the redeemed shall walk." Surely the keystone to mother's house of faith was laid when she uttered those words. It was finished. How often I have heard her sweet voice say, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you." When my left eye was injured, about two years ago, causing me intense pain and agony, mother's great faith in the power of God came to the rescue. How fervently she prayed, and her prayers were answered. The prayers of the righteous availeth much.

Our home here in Chicago is the home of any Old School Baptist, or Old School Baptist preacher, while they are here in the city. They will be more than welcome. Our telephone number is Wentworth 2860. Address, 6346 Parnell Avenue.

Publish this if you see fit.

A. P. SHELBURNE.

BIVINS, Texas, March 10, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find check for two dollars, for which please renew my subscription for this year. I regret to say I have neglected this since January; but poor people have poor ways, and I often think my way is the very poorest; but the Lord's people are a poor and afflicted people. Job says, He heareth the cry of the afflicted. He that is whole needeth not a physician, but he that is sick. So realizing my imperfection and my affliction, both of mind and body, feeling solely dependent upon the all-wise and all-powerful yet merciful God for every thought of sacred or divine things, I am sometimes made to hope I am numbered among that precious flock which he holds as the apple of his eye. I find myself, oh so often, doubting the little hope which is

to me more precious than silver or gold. Yes, my doubts and fears are all of myself. As to the wisdom, purpose and power of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our salvation, who rules and overrules, both in heaven and earth, who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast, who declared the end from the beginning and from ancient times things that have not yet come, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure, the God who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, I have no doubt. Oh what a glorious thought, that a poor sinful worm of the dust is made to lean upon a God like this, who is able to save to the uttermost, and who loved us even when we were dead in trespasses and sin, and who has raised us up and made us to sit together in Christ. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." I think I know that if I am saved it is by the grace of God, and that bestowed upon me according to his will, just sufficient to cover all of my many sins, and that because of his great love, which he had for me in his Son before the highest hills were laid. I believe that he gently leads his elect along life's dreary way just as he would have them go. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Then how are we to miss it? I do firmly believe that our afflictions are allotted to us, and that not one is in vain, but each is for our good and his glory.

Brethren, I fear I have wearied you by writing more than I should, but will ask you in a brotherly way to pardon my weakness and look over my imperfect way of trying to express what I hope and believe. If I know what I believe, it is the absolute sovereignty of God and the predestination of all things. We here in east Texas have preaching regularly, by our beloved brethren, Edlers W. B. Roberson and T. A. Wall. Our little church at Pleasant Hope is at peace. It is one of the churches of the Sulphur Fork Association, and for some reason the good brethren retain me in fellowship. We enjoy reading the SIGNS, for it sets forth what we believe. May the great and adorable God ever uphold you in your work of sending this good paper to lovers of the truth, is the prayer of an unworthy sinner, saved by grace if saved at all,

A. D. WALL.

ARCOLA, Ill., March 17, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If you will allow me to address you by that term. By brethren I mean all who are interested in the welfare of your good paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I am sending you a money order to pay my subscription for another year, and will try in my weak way to write a few thoughts, and if you do not see fit to pass them on to the brethren I shall be satisfied with your decision.

I wish for a short time to turn your attention to James v. 10: "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience." When we turn back to the Scripture which tells of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ we can see that these prophets had indeed spoken in the name of the Lord, and that it was by the inspiration of God that they had so spoken. Turning to the first chapter of Matthew we find the angel of God appearing to Joseph and sustaining the testimony of the old prophet when it spoke of the birth of the child Jesus. It plainly states in Matthew i. 22, 23, "This was done, that it might be fulfilled

which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel; which being interpreted is, God with us." Again, we read in Matthew ii. 4, 5, the prophet's language must again be fulfilled, because God had inspired him to prophesy where his Son should be born, and it must be fulfilled. Again, in the same chapter, fifteenth verse, we find the words, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son." Another place where the prophet's language must be fulfilled is in the seventeenth verse of the same chapter. So, dear brethren, we can see the eternal word of God being fulfilled all around us, and we will continue to see it fulfilled until every word and purpose of God has been brought to pass just as he has predestinated that it should. As I have purposed, so shall it come to pass. The Lord has purposed, and who shall disannul it? The Lord has stretched forth his hand, and who shall turn it back?

I must stop writing for this time, for I only thought to write a few lines at the most, but permit me to say I believe in the birth and life and sufferings of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ in exactly the way it is recorded in the Scripture, and I also believe it was all prearranged, foreknown and predestinated by God the Father that He should be taken with wicked hands and crucified. If not, what was the meaning of the Scripture in Acts iv. 28: "For to do whatever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."? Brethren, God rules the whole universe, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

If any of the brethren care to write me I would be more then glad to answer. I am, I hope, a babe in the ministry of Jesus Christ. I have nearly reached my twenty-eighth birthday, and would be glad to write to all real Baptists to cheer us along the thorny way. May God bless you all, is my prayer.

Your unworthy brother,

HAROLD T. JONES.

ENLOE, Texas, Sept. 18, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing two dollars to renew my subscription for the dear old SIGNS. I regret very much the hardships you are having of late to keep the dear old banner of love in circulation, still when we think of the question in Revelation vii. 13: "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" then perhaps we can get some comfort. Christ said, John xvi. 33, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." I think it is the duty of all lovers of the dear old SIGNS to not only keep paid up, but to ever be ready to say a few cheering words when we have the mind to do so. If I reflected over my own weakness I could never make up my mind to make the attempt, but when I think of the great power that has no boundary lines, and he who is the fount of every blessing, he who is the great fountain of wisdom (and we are only in the shallow part of it), then in his name perhaps I might say a word of comfort. "For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." But for this searching of deep things we would only be found weeping through eternity, but God be thanked, when the great search was made one of the elders spoke the cheering words to John, "Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed." I hope you may find comfort in words like these, and may the lovers of the dear old SIGNS find comfort in him who hath prevailed.

J. D. ROBBINS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1924.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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JOHN III. 6.

"THAT which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

This language is the given declaration of the Savior of sinners, as he spake to a Pharisee, a ruler of the Jews. Jesus, the Son of God, perfect in wisdom, was a discerner between flesh and Spirit; or rather, he knew both; on the one hand the flesh, with all its relations; and the Spirit in all perfection in holiness on the other. We now feel to refer to the language written in the first book of Moses, Genesis iii. 7: "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked: and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons." We note here the very first exercise of the carnal mind in the act as recorded, and the flesh relations are to cover up the iniquity in the flesh, but the truth embraced Adam, who was made to know, when he heard the voice of the Lord, walking in the garden, that he was yet naked before the Lord, so Adam and his wife hid themselves among the trees of the garden. This to us, dear reader, testifies of the flesh, and we, as Adam multiplied, have the same flesh with all its conceptions, and, if possible, would hide the iniquity of our hearts from the Lord; but he knoweth us altogether, and when we in the flesh seek to go forth to the satisfaction of our lust, by our very goings we testify to the designs, as they bear relations to the flesh, and the more one thinks he has covered his purpose, those fig leaves wither, and the kind of sewing that is done only exposes our nakedness all the more, and we are cast off, both in our own convictions and the righteousness of God. Every one who is spiritually-minded loses fellowship for the manifested spirit and all the workings of the flesh, either to attain to a fleshly satisfied revenge, or to go forth to deceive the church and heap to one's self. Such desires are of the flesh, and they profit nothing. The flesh will also go in and act in the written word of gospel order of the church of God, and by the very appearance of the individual will testify whether his garment is one of his own sewing of fig leaves or the garment that God made to cover him, which was a garment of skin, which would not wither, but was of a far more durable substance.

We have written so far to point out the flesh, and we trust we are made to know that if we sow to the flesh we shall of the flesh reap corruption. We notice the vision given Peter upon the housetop, when the sheet, as it were, "knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth; wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common."—Acts x. 11–15. In this same chapter we find the

expressions given to Peter that all his zealousness of the flesh was nothing, and that he was not to judge what God has cleansed and call it common. We see with the vision of the flesh and the evil thereof we will reject the cleansed of the Lord.

We now turn to the second part of the subject: "And that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." As we are now made to trace the manifested fruit of the Spirit, we must call attention to this relation and its origin. God is a Spirit, so to be born of the Spirit one must be born of God, which is by the word of God, an incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth forever. We now have thought of a new creature, which was created in Christ Jesus, unto good works, which God hath before ordained that he should walk in them. This spiritual man sows to the Spirit and seeks the kingdom of God; being born of God he can see the kingdom of God, which is a glorious kingdom, which is righteous, and dressed in the garment of salvation. All the inhabitants of this spiritual kingdom are cleansed by divine cleansing, and are neither common nor unclean. The servant of God, according to the word of inspiration, is a very peculiar creature to all relations of the infirmities of the flesh. God has made him undershepherd of His flock, and all the flock is loved, and both sheep and lambs are fed with the prepared food from the Master's table; and the undershepherds are gentle, kind in meekness, longsuffering, forgiving, encouraging and embracing in love all that come after Jesus. How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things. Dear reader, those who come as we have called your attention above, console the weak and pour in both oil and wine. We are always glad to meet and hear brethren from different parts of the country, and hear them tell of the same way of truth and life. It seems to build us up in the most holy faith. From the description given by the apostle Paul, this one that is born of the Spirit speaks of a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. The old heaven and the old earth have passed away, and, behold, all things have become new. We hope we have been brought from darkness to his marvelous light, and in his light we see light. This spiritual life desires the peace, fellowship and association of the kindred in Christ everywhere, and to know that we had offended one of these little ones we would feel to come to them in full explanation for peace. Ye that are strong are commanded to bear with the weak. We are made to bear with the weak when we feel our own weakness, and no man in the flesh has any tenderness for the weak, but rather in his arm of the flesh he would crush the weak. We often, in the language of the poet, ask the question, "Do I love the Lord, or no; am I his, or am I not?" If God can be merciful to one so vile, who is he that is not more worthy? Paul declared he was the chief of sinners, and said, Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given. May we not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but may we say, Come from the north, the south stay not back, and come from the east and west, into the unity of the spirit and bond of peace, which is but the refreshing manifested to each other as we have it in our hearts, and to those who have hope say, Come thou with us, as they bear fruit of the birth in the Spirit.

We know we have passed from death into life, because we love the brethren. How hard it would sound to hear our kindred in Christ, as we trust they are, say, Do not come with us, as we no longer have care or brotherly kindness in our hearts for you. Dear brethren, may the Spirit bring to each of us the searching rays of the sunshine of his grace, by which we can discern between flesh and Spirit, and in this light we will see the mote which is in our own eye, and not be looking at the mote in the eyes of our brethren. May we in the spirit of truth speak, write and exhort in all long-suffering and doctrine.

In conclusion, we will add the admonition of the apostle: "Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity." —2 Peter i. 5–7. Brethren, "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak not guile: let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil."—1 Peter iii. 8–12. The admonition we have called your attention to, as given by the apostle, is but to testify between the flesh and the Spirit; and as one is led by the carnal mind, he will manifest the flesh, and as one is exercised by the Spirit he will sow to the Spirit.

C. W. V.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Harford Church, Harford County, Maryland, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 21st, 22nd and 23rd, 1924, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greetings in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year is numbered with the past, and we are again gathered together in an associate capacity, and, as is our custom, address you in what is called a Circular Letter. We would call your attention to Jeremiah xxxii. 26, 27: "Then came the word of the Lord unto Jeremiah, saying, Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?" These words were spoken to the prophet Jeremiah at a time when the children of Israel were about to go into captivity to Babylon, and he was told to buy the field of his uncle's son in Anathoth, to subscribe the evidence and take witness to the purchase thereof according to the law, and to put the book of purchase in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days. For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land, notwithstanding that the city of Jerusalem is besieged and given into the hands of the Chaldeans, who shall take it and burn it with fire. The word of the Lord; how comforting to Jeremiah while shut up in prison, saying he will bring back the captivity of Babylon and plant them in this land. Yea, and rejoice over them to do them good, saying, They shall be my people and I will be their God. Surely he has a people, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it, saying, This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise; children that will not

lie. My word shall not return unto me void, it shall accomplish that which I please, and shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it. His word saith, Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. His word saith, I will never leave nor forsake thee. For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. This embraces every living creature. For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains, and the wild beasts of the fields are mine, for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof. God over the fowls of the air when he commanded the ravens to feed his servant Elijah. God over the beasts of the field when he sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths that they could not hurt his servant Daniel. Over the fiery furnace, over the raging sea, saying, Peace, be still.

"Is there any thing too hard for me?" "I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded." For I am God, and there is none else; I am God and there is none like me, and beside me there is no Savior. Job exclaimed, I know that thou canst do all things. The woman said, If I but touch the hem of his garment I shall be whole. The leper said, If thou wilt thou canst make me clean. The centurian said, Speak the word only and my servant shall be healed. At this day, when many are denying the Savior and form of godliness, the Lord God omnipotent still reigneth, and the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. God has a remnant according to the election of grace, who worship him in spirit and in truth and have no confidence in the flesh. We believe this little company who have assembled here on this occasion are of that number.

We have tried to express some thoughts on the God of all flesh, but must exclaim, like the queen of the south, The half can never be told. For great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever."

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.

E. A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Association, convened with the Harford Church, Harford County, Maryland, to the associations with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have met and received your Minutes and messengers, which has been a great pleasure to us. The preaching has been very clear and comforting; the order and entertaining have been excellent. We desire a continuance of your correspondence and fellowship.

The next session of this Association will be held with the Ebenezer Church, Baltimore city, in May, 1925.

Finally, brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.

E. A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Simon Dishong, our brother in Christ, departed this life June 5th, 1924, at his home near Chestertown, Maryland. His membership was at the Sideling Hill Church, Fulton County, Pa., having been baptized there about twenty-five years ago by the late Elder E. V. White. He was the son of Henry and Priscilla Dishong, and was one of ten children, of whom but one son survives, Mr. Henry Dishong, near Warfordsburg, Pa. Brother Simon was born in Licking Creek township, in Fulton County, Pa., February 25th, 1855. He was married in September, 1878, to Miss Sarah J. Starr, daughter of brother Marcus and sister Mary Starr, both deceased. To them were born eight children, all of whom are living: Mrs. Cora Sipes, of Saluvia, Pa.; Mrs. Viola Garland, Joseph W. and Oscar Dishong, all three of Wilmington, Del.; Mrs. Jeannette Hurd, near Chestertown, Md ; Clarence and Norman Dishong, both of Wilmington, Del. Then there are several grandchildren and seven or eight great-grandchildren surviving Our Sister Sarah Dishong is left surviving her husband. For thirty-nine years of their married life not a break came in the family. Brother Simon, though having for some years lived near Chestertown, Md., never forgot the church of his membership, and whenever possible made the journey from the eastern shore to Fulton County to attend the meetings. We shall greatly miss him in our meetings, for he was devoted to the cause, and a firm believer in the doctrine of God as taught and revealed by Jesus Christ. We hope sister Dishong may realize the presence of the Lord with her in her sorrow, and that she, as well as the children, may be reconciled to God through the indwelling work of his Holy Spirit, knowing full well that it is far easier to say, "Thy will be done" than to feel it, and that simply saying it without feeling it amounts to nothing.

The funeral services were conducted in Sideling Hill meetinghouse by his pastor, using the words in the fourteenth chapter of Job.

ALSO,

John Chiswell died at his home, Licksville, Montgomery County, Md., June 7th, 1924. He was born near Poolesville, Md., December 30th, 1851. His brother, Thomas Chiswell, and his sister, Mrs. Margaret White, both of Poolesville survive him. His wife, sister Chiswell, a member of the New Valley Old School Baptist Church, in Virginia, is left, with three daughters, to mourn their loss. The daughters are Eugenia, Eleanor and Mary, all living at home. One daughter, our sister Margaret Chiswell, died some years ago. Also, one of the surviving daughters, sister Mary, is a member with us at New Valley. Mr. Chiswell never united with any church, but we feel that he had a hope of salvation through the blood of Jesus Christ. He was a man respected by all who knew him, a good and kind friend and neighbor, a devoted father and husband. The former Senator Grove thus writes of Mr. Chiswell: "He was a high-toned, honorable gentleman. So few of the old school are left. He was always extremely courteous and friendly." Mr. Chiswell's going is a sad loss to his family, and to us all. He was very diligent in those little attentions to all who knew him, those many kindnesses that mean so much, and yet which so many of us seldom think of to perform ourselves. May the Comforter abide with all the dear mourning ones, and may His unerring counsel guide them in how to get along as best they can without their loved one. Called on to conduct the last services, the writer used a portion of the fourteenth chapter of John. The burial was in Monocacy Cemetery, at Beallsville, Md. L.

James Ruffurty was born in Illinois May 21st, 1857, and died at his home near Pleasant Hill, Mo., June 4th, 1924, being 67 years and 14 days old. He was married to Miss Laura E. Randals April 14th, 1881, and to this union were born two children: Ora A. and Mrs. Claud Odell. March, 1884, death visited his home and took from him his wife. He then went to his father's house, which he made his home. He afterward married Miss Henretta V. Dingus, and to this union were born four children: Ellis R., Clifford D., Etta M. and James P., the four last named, with their mother, are left at home to mourn; his two first children live close to them. He also leaves two brothers, two sisters and a host of more distant relatives to mourn. Brother Ruffurty received a hope, and joined Dry Wood Church, in Kansas, some thirty years ago, but in a short while joined Little Flock Church by letter, where he remained as long as he lived. Brother Ruffurty had a good gift in singing, and the church has missed it much. He was a firm believer in the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Elder W. L. Hall and the writer tried to speak words of comfort to the relatives. We have hope that at the last time he shall come forth in the likeness of the blessed Son of God and be satisfied.

T. E. ATTEBERY.

Westwood Bowden Roper was born September 11th, 1849, and died February 28th, 1924, aged 74 years, 5 months and 17 days. He was married October 20th, 1881, to Dorothy Davis Marten, and to this union were born four children: Abner Leslie, John Clyde, Ozorah Pearl and Beulah Kate. October 23rd, 1894, his loving helpmate passed on. October 27th, 1895, he was united in marriage to Ada Beckham, and to this union one child was born: Zula. He was a kind and devoted husband and father. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Mud Creek, Fulton County, Ky., on the first Sunday in October, 1891, and was baptized the following day, and lived a de-

voted member. He served his church for several years as clerk, but on account of declining health he asked the church to release him, which they did. Brother Roper was a man who loved the Old Baptist cause, believing in God's choice and election, and the final perseverance of the saints. He never let the cares of this life hinder him from attending his meetings. Brother Roper and I were together once a month for about four years, and the more I was with him the more I loved him. His desire was that when the Lord was done with him on earth he would fall asleep in Jesus, and not linger, and the Lord granted his desire. He ate a hearty dinner February 28th and walked out to his barn and the end soon came.

The writer tried to speak to the comfort of his bereaved family and friends. Oh may the dear Lord reconcile his children and companion to his will. He was buried near Anna, Ill., beside his first wife, to await the resurrection morn, when Christ will come and receive his children unto himself.

O. W. PERKINS.

MEMORIALS.

THE Baltimore Association, in session with the Harford Church, desire to give some expression of their sorrow and loss in the death of our much beloved brother, **Elder B. F. Coulter,** of Philadelphia, Pa., whose presence with us in these meetings, as well as other meetings of our churches, was always appreciated, and his ministry comforting and profitable, but in our sorrow we wish to bow in submission to the will of Him who doeth all things well, praying the blessing of God upon our dear sister Coulter.

ALSO,

IT is the especial desire of this Association, assembled with the Harford Church, at this time, that a prayerful memorial of respect and love be written and recorded for the pastor of Harford Church, Elder John G. Eubanks, in his recent bereavement in the death of his beloved wife and companion, and our sister in the Lord, **Mary M. Eubanks.** The many virtues which composed her character were unknown to many, as she very seldom left her home in recent years, and in her early days she seldom left her own fireside, devoting her time to raising her children and caring for them during her husband's absence serving churches at great distances from his home. Patience was a virtue of her character. She possessed it by the grace of God, and she acted it many years in her latter days in her physical sufferings, for she confirmed it by suffering in silence, never complaining of the Lord's dealings in a rebellious spirit. Her judgment and advice were sound in church matters, and especially valuable to her husband as an undershepherd in the cause of the Lord. This memorial to her recalls that her husband, the present pastor of Harford Church, is, in point of service in the churches east and north, the oldest living undershepherd, beloved, honored and respected by Primitive Baptists wherever known. Be it

Resolved, that a copy of this memorial be spread upon our Minutes, and a copy forwarded to brother John G. Eubanks.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.

E. A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor,

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38,

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

BELLINGHAM, Washington.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I have had it in mind many times to write to the brethren and sisters through the SIGNS and tell them how my heart goes out to them in love when I read their good letters, both doctrinal and experimental, for one proves the other. As faith is made perfect by works, so the great and precious truths recorded in the Bible are proven through the experiences of grace in the hearts of God's children, and prove the doctrine of the Bible as believed and preached by the Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists, those who believe in and preach that God is a sovereign, ruling both in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, predestinating all things whatsoever come to pass, and yet it does not make God, nor claim that it makes God, the author of sin; declaring that sin is not a condition, but an act of disobedience by one who is under a law, whether it is God's law or a law established by man. An act is not considered a transgression where there is no law forbidding it. Because the law says, Thou shalt not steal, it becomes a transgression, although it does not cause the person who steals to commit the act, but the one who steals does so because that person is drawn away of his own lust and enticed, and neither the law nor the ones who make the law are the author of the theft. The one who is guilty never blames any one but himself, but this does not prove that the entrance of sin into the world was any surprise to God, neither does it prove that because God knew and planned that sin should come into the world that he was the author of it, although he made man just weak enough to yield to the temptation which God in the beginning determined should be placed before him, and knew that he would yield, because God had already prepared the complete Antidote, and had given him (the sinner) to Him by promise. Foreseeing the end from the beginning he did know every little detail that was needed to make up every circumstance which must come to pass, just in such a way and manner to bring about the very thing which God foretold would come to pass. Thus in the light of common reason can any one say that anything just happened? Why not give God all the glory, and say that he predestinated every detail in the whole matter, from the be-

ginning to the end of time, since he alone is God, and beside him there is no Savior, ruling in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of earth. There is one thing certain, and that is that God is ruling and there is no other aiding him, since he is the source of all power, and all the powers that be are ordained of him. Since this is a fact, there is nothing short of honoring him with the predestination of all things that will ascribe to him the honor due to him as the all-wise God, the Creator of the universe.

Well, I see I have not even mentioned the subject that was on my mind when I sat down to write, the subject which had been on my mind for a day or two, and upon which I felt I had some light, which gave me a great deal of comfort, but the subject of predestination was not on my mind, and I have never felt qualified to write upon this much disputed subject with any light or comfort to any one, but take predestination out of the power and purpose of God and it takes away my hope of salvation. I never could feel it was the right thing for one of God's children to judge another one who we feel has been washed in the precious blood of our dear Savior unworthy of our love and fellowship just because he could not see and understand the deep mystery of God's eternal and unsearchable truths as we do, for who gave us our knowledge and understanding? If it is of our ownselves then we have something to boast of, but not before God, for all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and if it is it must be that these differences of understanding are for our good and for God's glory, otherwise all things would not work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to his purpose. Those are the only ones who have any interest in the Bible, or in heaven, or the riches of the inheritance of the saints in light.

The subject which I had in mind to write about is one of the most important and one of the most interesting in the Bible, and is found in Romans ix. 9–13, and concerns us (if I may claim a part in the promises of God our Savior), and herein is one of the many strong proof-texts in the Bible in support of an especial election by grace unto salvation by God the Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The ninth verse is called the word of promise, and in it is embraced one of God's predestinations, for he says, "At this time," speaking of the time which he had told Abraham of when Sarah was to have a son in her old age, after the time had passed according to nature for her to conceive (a miracle), that the power and praise might be of God and not of man. "And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac." It was by this family that Christ came, as he was a direct descendant of Abraham. "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil." (Why, Jacob, you must first make a start, give your heart to God, &c., or you cannot be saved.) Here is something different; God made choice of Jacob even before he was born, and not only so, but here is Esau just as good naturally as Jacob, but God made choice of Jacob, elected him to be the lot of his (God's) inheritance. Why? So that the purpose of God according to election might stand. Yes, and it will always stand; not of works, but of him that calleth. Here is an effectual call. Yes, positive. "It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger." Why here is an infraction of the law, for according to the law the first-born son was given a birthright entitling him to rule

over his younger brethren, but now in this case it is reversed, the elder shall serve the younger; and to add humiliation and grief (as the world looks at it, though not so with those who are born again,) "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." As I see it, Esau here represents the old man, or the man that was born of the flesh, while Jacob represents the new man that after God was created in righteousness and true holiness, for the elder must serve the younger, and was hated of God, and is hated by all his children, although he serves us in that the elder is the habitation of the new man, or younger. Although we find him very hard to please, a very hard taskmaster, and to us he is the body of death, we fear him so much that, like Jacob, we fear he will kill us, but when we return to our Father's house we find him apparently very peaceful. When we feel that we are at peace with all mankind, and think the old man is dead, or at least the enmity is to all appearance gone, but, like Esau, after a time we find him to be a very hard man to fight, and he causes us no end of sorrow and pain, and we are not a bit proud of our relationship, and very often groan within ourselves and long to be delivered, are looking forward with joy to the time when we shall lay these bodies down and dwell with Christ at home.

Well, dear Elders Lefferts and Dodson, also the others who write so comfortingly for the household of faith, I want to tell you how I love you all for the truth's sake. I am the same old sinner. No, I do not get any better, as I surely thought I would when I first united with the church at Oelwein, Fayette County, Iowa, in 1880. When I look back over my crooked path it causes much shame and regret, yet I can see many tokens of a dear Savior's love and mercy to me, a hell-deserving sinner, which causes me much joy and gladness, and what remaining days I have I want to spend praising him, but oh my poor weak efforts seem very far short of real worship, and I know that unless I am kept and guided by his hand I will fail, but he has promised to never leave nor forsake us, and on this promise I am relying for all my help, and for my salvation, both in time and in eternity. DAVIS BURCH.

NEWARK, Del., Dec. 3, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed for publication in the SIGNS is a good letter which no doubt will edify many sinners saved by grace.

Yours in hope, J. B. MILLER.

POCA, West Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER MILLER:—I often think of you, brother Eubanks and brother Sherwood. I could mention many others, but space forbids. Feeling very lonely, and having a desire to talk to you, I have picked up my pen to make an attempt, hoping to relieve my mind by this feeble effort. Poor and unworthy as I feel myself to be, there remains in my heart a secret spring, which when touched, as I hope, by the spirit of love causes me such emotion of love that I cannot refrain from speaking aloud. Yes, poor sinner as I feel myself to be, yet when the good Lord is pleased to send a refreshing shower of his love, and knowledge of the truth into my soul it causes my poor sinful heart to expand with an overflow of his love to my Creator and to all the redeemed of the Lord who hold the truth in righteousness. What a theme is embodied in this word of four letters, "love," its origin being in God, and he being a God of love. The elect lady and her

children were the objects loved by the God of love in the annals of eternity, and by the pen of inspiration we hear him saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore (for that reason) with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. This fountain of love is opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and uncleanness. Zechariah, in speaking of this fountain, says, "In that day," having reference to the gospel day, when Jesus by his shed blood should atone for his elect bride, who had fallen under the condemnatory sentence of a violated law. The law God gave Adam in the garden of Eden Adam transgressed, and sin is a transgression of the law, hence the act of the creature, man. Christ has met all claims of the law or none would ever be justified in God's sight, for there is salvation in no other. Inspiration says Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. It is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. Sinners were condemned, but now are justified; they had violated God's law, but Christ has met its demands. They were sinners by the disobedience of one man, but by the obedience of Christ they are made righteous, which righteousness is sufficient to release them from all claims of law, being equal to all its demands. They were justly condemned without Christ, they are now justly justified by him. Christ having met all demands against them they are now viewed by the law as not guilty. The law holds no more claims against them now than if they never had been under its curse, consequently the poor sinner is made the recipient of all the graces of the Holy Spirit, none of which he could have had without the atonement made by Christ. This is the principle upon which sinners stand justified before God, and not in consequence of the obedience of the sinner. It takes the righteousness of Christ to justify, and not the righteousness of sinners, which would be no better than that of the Scribes and Pharisees. Every poor sinner who is enabled by grace divine to praise God for salvation must of necessity first realize a feeling sense of his or her guilt before the Lord, which is the effect of the operation of the Spirit in their heart, and every one thus taught bows in deep humility before God, praying his mercy to be extended to one so vile. They now see and acknowledge their sins. Oh the anguish of soul. They mourn and weep on account of sin, saying, Lord, if mercy can be extended to one so vile as I and thy throne remain untarnished, let it be so. I know that I am unworthy of the least of thy mercies, and often I have trampled thy mercies under my feet. Always ungrateful, justly condemned, ten thousand talents in debt and not a farthing to pay, unworthy to approach a being so good and so holy as God, yet can go to no other. Let me say to you poor hungry and thirsty souls that you will never find peace as long as you trust in your own strength, but when your strength is exhausted, and you are ready to give up all hope, a lovely Savior appears to take away all your sins, who says, Son or daughter, as the case may be, thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven. It is then the poor soul is made to leap for joy and praise God in the highest strains for deliverance from the law of sin and death which their burdened soul had been mourning under so long. It is then the poor child of God can see how God can be just and the justifier of sinners: that it is in consequence of the atoning blood of Jesus Christ which cleanses from all sin,

Now in my concluding remarks I feel to say of a truth the bride, the Lamb's wife, was the object of God's everlasting love, and that before she had an actual existence in the world. Jesus being the head over all things to the body, which is the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife, love being the neck connecting the head to the body, has no end, for the upper part is taken up in the head and the lower part of the neck is taken up in the body, so there is no end to God's love for his chosen bride, his elect people, they being the people of his choice, and all the spiritual comfort of the body, the church, of which Jesus Christ is head over all things to, must and does come from the head (Jesus Christ) down to the body through the neck of God's never-ending love. His love for his bride was so great that he came to her and saved her with an everlasting salvation, seeing that she could not come to him. He saw her ruined in the fall, he loved her notwithstanding all, he saved her from her lost estate, his lovingkindness oh how great.

Dear brother Miller, after you have read this poorly written letter you feel there may be a crumb in it that might be of comfort to some poor humble child of God you are at liberty to send it to the editors of the SIGNS for their disposal. I would be very much pleased to be at your house at least once more, but am not likely to be, as I am getting up in years and am badly afflicted with rheumatism. I will be glad to hear from you any time you have a mind to write me. I hope I have been prompted to write this by the spirit of love. Give my regards to all who may inquire after me.

From your old unworthy and afflicted brother, if it be that I am one of God's little ones,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

FAYETTEVILLE, Ga., March 20, 1924.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—It has been a long while since I wrote for publication. I have felt the desire many times, but I fear the desire was of the flesh, for when I do or say anything commendable self is sure to rise up and claim a share of the honor. Dear humble christians, is it thus with you, or does it make you more humble when brethren accept your offering? I believe there is no service to God in what we do or say unless it is done in fear, realizing our weakness, ignorance and inability, and that all help must come from God, and all honor is due him. The world wonders why a person who observes the moral law, blameless, is not saved thereby, they declare it is so; but it matters not how good the deed, if it is not done in Christ's name it must be in man's name, or for self, and when one cannot look beyond self in what they do, they certainly cannot look beyond self, or nature, for the blessings derived by moral obedience. The humble christian obeys because of his love for Christ and duty, not looking for nor thinking of being blessed for it, but the natural man cannot see, feel nor realize any but the moral law, and the only blessing he knows anything about is the praise of man, and many poor deluded souls look for self-praise.

Another reason I have not written is my sinfulness, ignorance and emptiness of spiritual things. I have tried and quit. If my mind leads out on anything I cannot follow it with my pen, and some things leave me; I get tangled and lost and give it up, but sometimes, not often, it seems that there is a pretty chain of thoughts that are inseparable, then it is a pleasure to write; but sin is mixed with all I do, and my life so full of blunders and mistakes I sometimes think it would

have been better that I had not existed; better for my associates, if nothing more.

I have written on an entirely different subject to that in mind when I started, did not get to what I intended, so will leave it for your judgment. Pray for me and mine.

Unworthily,

GEORGE W. JACKSON.

LAMAR, Colo., Jan. 7, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—Just a few lines to say I do enjoy the many good letters in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I cannot understand how a child of God can find any fault with the majority of the writers. We should remember that there is none perfect but God, and all are liable to make mistakes when not guided by the Holy Spirit. Let us be ever ready to watch over each other for good, not looking for the mote that is in our brother's eye when the beam is in our own eye. Let us contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and if that causes offense we cannot help it. I believe God saw the end from the beginning, and knew just what man would do before he was made from the dust of the earth, so a remedy was provided to save his people before the foundation of the world, they being just as complete in the mind of Jehovah then as they will ever be. When we limit God's foreknowledge then he ceases to be God. He saw the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. Jesus said he did not come to do his own will, but the will of the Father, so we poor sinners should want God's will done, not ours, for we know that what he does is just and right. I have thought that if I could go to heaven against the will of God it would be no heaven to me, so we say and pray, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

Let me ask an interest in your prayers, for if one at all I feel to be the least of all.

Wishing editors, publishers, writers and readers a long and useful life, I am yours in hope of meeting my Lord and Savior in peace,

W. C. PERDUE.

MONROE, Ga., July 1, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—You whom I met at the Delaware River and Warwick Associations, at Southampton, Pa., and Middletown, N. Y., I cannot find a word big enough to express my appreciation for the kind hospitality that was extended to me while I was with you. I was often melted to tears when I could see and feel that union that existed among our fathers in fellowship over seventy-five years ago and that we were sitting each day under that same banner of love that the war between the States had no effect upon. I felt it was a great privilege indeed to be counted worthy of a seat among you and try and sing God's praise. It has been twenty-two years since my first visit among you, this being my sixth visit. The sweet memory of several of your ministers who have passed away was an inspiration to me, as was seeing others who are filling those old pulpits and proclaiming the same doctrine of grace. I feel much refreshed in my very soul and it will be food for me to feed upon for many days yet to come. It did me good to go to New Vernon and see the tombs of Elders Gilbert and William L. Beebe. I was glad to get home safe and sound and find all well, and to make a good report of my visit, and I hope to be normal again soon.

With much love and best wishes for you all, your little brother, I hope,

JAMES M. ADAMS.

McNeil, Ark., Nov. 28, 1923.

Dear Editors:—Our dear family paper comes to us laden with the writings of the precious gifts to the church of our Savior, to wit, the ministers who are chosen to walk in and out before the church, who so earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. It is all we have here in our immediate neighborhood, and is all the preaching I get. After reading the statement given out by the editors some time ago in regard to the financial condition of our paper, and that a great many were in arrears with their subscription (that is through carelessness) I felt that we all ought to come together and pay all the indebtedness. It is our family paper, so let us build it up. The cost of everything has been and is high. I wish all would contribute toward relieving the real needs of our paper. Do not let it suffer at all. I herewith inclose you five dollars; two dollars to advance my subscription one year and three dollars to use as you wish. I ask an interest in your prayers.

I remain as ever, your afflicted friend and brother, in hope of eternal life,

W. A. KELLEY.

June, 13, 1924.

Dear Brother:—I was so glad that you wrote. It had been so long since we heard from you that I felt you had forgotten us, and it was almost like seeing you to read your letter. Mr. Norman and Bess are well. I feel a little better one week and the next not so well. I have been sick three months, and in all that time have not been strong enough to walk down the road and back, so you know how weak I am. I get very tired of sitting around and being waited on, but I would like to feel that it is all right. I am not reconciled and want to be up and helping Bess with the work, but I know that the Lord knows best, and I feel that he will lead me and care for me and keep me all the way. I wish I could hear you preach, for I feel hungry for the truth and wonder if I shall ever hear it again. I have been reading the Bible some and find many parts that I want to hear you talk about. I read the Signs and get some good sermons from it. How I should love to have been with you at the associations, for it is my meat and drink to mingle with the dear ones, even if I am a poor feeble worm of the dust; yes, the very least one. Remember me in your prayers, and come and see us some time when the roads get so you can. Love for Mrs. Lefferts, the children and all the dear ones. Mr. Norman and Bess send love.

Your little sister,

REBECCA NORMAN.

(*See obituary on page 222.*)

Ingram, Texas, Feb. 20, 1924.

Dear Editors:—I have just returned from a trip to the Rio Grande valley, where a few Old Predestinarian Baptists have just set up housekeeping. They have seven members and a good outlook; there are several others who express a desire to join with them. I found several in that part who are still contending for the grand old doctrine of salvation by grace for time and eternity, having no desire to place a limit upon the eternal decrees of God. If any Predestinarian Baptists have a desire to move to the valley of south Texas they need have no fear of not having the church of their choice. This little band is sound in the faith and welcomes any Baptist of the faith characteristic of the old order of Baptists.

As ever, your brother in hope,

J. B. BOWDEN.

SULPHUR, Ky., June 4, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—Another year has come and gone, and by the mercy of the kind heavenly Father the SIGNS OF THE TIMES still lives, and it reminds me that my subscription is a little past due, so I am sending two dollars for renewal for another year, as I do not want to do without the paper that brings such good news from a far country, such cheering messages of love and comfort from one to another. I would be glad if I could write as others do, but I have not the gift of writing, though I do feel to crave it much, but my mind seems so perfectly barren of all good things it seems useless to try to write. I have been in such darkness for some time, with not a ray of light, I have felt I surely must sink in despair, and must cry continually to God to be merciful to me a sinner. My heart seems so hard and cold I wonder, Oh is there any one like me? I seem to be deep in the miry clay, with no strength of my own to help myself, then I am made to know my strength is all in him who has all power and who is ruling all things after the counsel of his own will. He is the fairest of ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely. He it was that found me deep in sin and folly and has given me a good hope through grace. I see myself filled with sin and unbelief, but I see Jesus my friend when he hung on the tree, who opened the channel of mercy for me, for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them, but dare I hope to be one of that number when all manner of evil thoughts come crowding in like a flood and I get so weary of myself and sin? I would that he were always nigh, then prisons would palaces prove when I am made to view him on high.

I will try to stop. I only thought to write a very few words to send in my subscription. I have tried to get some subscribers for the SIGNS, but failed. May the dear Lord be with editors and publishers to give you strength as your day, and may you all shun not to declare the counsel of God, and stand firm in the faith once delivered unto the saints. There are so many isms in this day, so many false prophets gone out into the world, it is good to know there are a few who know the truth as it is in Jesus, and they contend for that truth in meekness, love and fear. May the Lord let us all have grace as we have need to serve him with reverence and godly fear.

ADDIE CHANDLER.

LOS ANGELES, Cal., Jan. 28, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I see my subscription for the SIGNS will soon expire, so inclosed find money order for two dollars to renew for another year. I would like to write and tell the brethren what comfort I get from their writings, but it seems the good Lord withholds from me the gift of writing, and no doubt he has a purpose in it, for he knows who to trust and who not to. We know he works all things together for good to them that love him. My prayer is, that if it is the Lord's will they may continue to write. I would like to have some one write on the subject of women preaching, and their prayers healing the sick and afflicted. I cannot believe it is in man to do such things now. The way I see it, it is by grace we are healed.

Your brother in hope, if I am one at all,

WILLIAM RANDELL.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1924.

EDITOR

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

2 JOHN 10.

"IF there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed."

What is this doctrine without which one cannot be received into the houses of the church and without one cannot be bade Godspeed? Doctrine is here declared by the inspired apostle to be the essential thing, the real test of one's being a true follower of Jesus. Without this doctrine, one lacks the necessary qualification for the fellowship of the saints. Since, then, this doctrine is so important, let us inquire what it is. In doing this, we shall not do better than to consider other expressions in this second epistle of John. For instance, in the seventh verse: "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist." Here it is plainly stated that not to confess the coming of Christ stamps one as being a deceiver; that is, not to confess Christ's coming in the flesh. The Scriptures plainly teach that Jesus Christ, the eternal son of God, was born of a woman, that he took not on him angelic nature, but the seed of Abraham. Now, the seed of Abraham comprises the elect family of God, chosen before the world began. This chosen seed was not elect angels, but elect human beings. So Christ was made a little lower than the angels, and came in the flesh for the suffering of death. To deny this coming in the flesh, to deny that Christ was as truly man as he was truly God, is antichrist and a deceiver and such is not to be countenanced by the house of God. However, it is not enough that we confess the coming of Christ as a historical fact. That, any one could do, just as easily as he could say that George Washington or some other man lived years ago. There must be a confession that Jesus Christ has come in one's own flesh, that he has come in the individual experience of the believer himself. In other words, a living experience of Christ is the real test of genuineness. This doctrine or teaching of Jesus, more than any other one thing, was the test of discipleship when Jesus was here in the world as a man among men, and this teaching of his caused many who had been following him to withdraw from him. For proof of this, turn to the sixth chapter of John and read the wonderful discourse on the bread of life, from the thirty-second to the fifty-eighth verses. In these words Jesus taught that himself is the bread of life and that the eating of his flesh and the drinking of his blood are an essential test of whether one has eternal life, that "except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." In the sixty-sixth verse, we are told, "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." Jesus was not here referring to the gospel ordinance of the Lord's supper, but was plainly stating that without one is brought into a living fellowship

with Jesus in his sufferings on account of sin and into a living knowledge of the cleansing power of his blood, there can be no such thing as one's possessing eternal life. Life is knowledge, and there is always a certain amount of knowledge accompanying a certain amount of life. Eternal life is always accompanied with a certain quality of knowledge. Wherever eternal life dwells, there cannot help but also dwell the knowledge that one is a sinner and that his condemnation on account of sin is just. But spiritual knowledge does not stop there. It teaches that human nature is altogether unprofitable in the way of righteousness, that it is wholly incapable of any good thing in the sight of God. In a living way, and not out of books nor by tradition, the sinner continues to be instructed by the Spirit of the great Teacher until he fully realizes his utterly lost condition and is made to throw himself entirely upon the mercy of God, without one jot of anything to merit that mercy. He becomes a beggar, but being really a beggar in heart and not merely by word of mouth, he is not turned empty away from Mercy's door. Christ Jesus appears for his relief and reveals himself to and within this beggar's soul as the Savior, the only name under heaven among men whereby that beggar must be saved. By the grace of God now appearing through Jesus to this beggar, the beggar is lifted from the dunghill of total depravity and is set among princes, is manifested as the son of the King; that is, as a child of God. From now on the believer finds his struggle but begun. The burden of condemnation lifted from him and his heart singing for joy because of the new hope springing within him, he finds himself in the company of all the people of God from Abel to the present time; but finds himself, like them, engaged in a warfare, one from which at times he would fain be free, but which cannot end until natural life ends: the warfare of flesh against Spirit and Spirit against flesh. He finds a dying daily going on within him, a continual being delivered unto death, a ceaseless rendering of his body a living sacrifice. In some such way as this there is a continual confession in heart and life that Christ Jesus has come in the flesh. It need not be that one is all the time confessing this by word of mouth, but the confession nevertheless will show itself in the outward life, in the actions of the individual; it will manifest itself in the conduct of the one having this living experience, shining out through the hands and the feet, bringing forth the fruits appropriate to repentance. Without this manifestation of Christ in the flesh one is a deceiver and an antichrist and cannot be in the fellowship of the house of God. When Christ came in the flesh it was not in order to reinstate or to reinforce the covenant of Moses. That covenant could never bring in salvation to the children of God, but Jesus came to make an end of the old ineffectual covenant and to establish a new and successful covenant. The new covenant became a vital reality to the children of God through the death and resurrection of Christ. This new covenant was promised to be put in the new heart of the child of God and to be imprinted in his mind. In other words, the new covenant or new law was not to be something abstract from the child of God, but was to be part and parcel of the new creature in Christ Jesus. It was not to be a covenant conditioned upon the volition of the believer, but was to be enforced in the life of the believer by the "wills" and "shalls" of God. Christ, after his resurrection, said

"go" and they went, he said "come" and they came. All gospel obedience is this way, and no other. It is obedience springing from the manifestation of Christ in the life of the believer. He said to his disciples, A new commandment give I unto you, That ye love one another. This loving one another is not something we can bring about ourselves. Might just as well try to make the sun shine as to try to make one's self love the church of God. It cannot be done by one's own effort. But how easily one loves the brethren when this commandment is written in the heart by the finger of the Holy Spirit. This love is Christ manifest in the flesh. God is love, and love is God, and whosoever loveth is born of God. If we love God we love those who are begotten of God. If we love not our brother whom we have seen, it is vain to say we love God whom we have not seen. Not having this love, we are deceivers and an antichrist. No wonder, then, Paul says in the thirteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians that charity (love) is the one thing without which we are unprofitable to the house of God. Having not love, no matter what else we have or think we have, we are nothing. We might be able to speak ever so angelicly, might be able to dive down into the deep mysteries of God, might be able to expound all prophecies, make great sacrifices or expend ourselves and our substance bountifully, but if it be not prompted by love, have not love in it, what does it all amount to? Nothing. It seems to us that this is the doctrine without which John said a man was not to be received into the house or church. In order to gain admittance there, one must have a vital knowledge of the coming of Jesus in the flesh, and the essence of this living experience is love. Having not this love, one is classed a deceiver. In another place the inspired writer tells us to mark them that cause divisions, and have nothing to do with them. One who would divide asunder brethren in order to establish his own cause has not the love of God, therefore he does not confess that Christ is come in the flesh. From such, turn away. It is like those two women who brought a child to King Solomon, each woman claiming to be the mother of the child, and asking Solomon to decide the matter. Solomon called for a sword, and was about to divide the child when the woman, who was really the child's mother, called out to the king to let the other woman have it. Thus the woman who really and rightfully loved the child was willing to relinquish her right to it rather than see the child killed. True love in the church of God will always seek the good and welfare of the church itself before the personal good and advantage of one's own self. This is the living teaching or doctrine that Christ is come in the flesh, this doctrine gives one an open door into the houses of the saints; without this doctrine or teaching of love in one's own life one fails to possess that secret of God which gives access to the holy of holies. There is no sight on this earth more pleasant than a church of the saints where all love each other, where each esteems the others better than himself, where all are imbued with the desire to spend and be spent for one another, and any individual who would mar that peace to serve himself would most assuredly not have within him that doctrine of the Master, Love one another. Not having this love he could not confess that Christ is come in the flesh, therefore must be a deceiver and an antichrist. From all such may the Lord deliver his people. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder H. C. Ker.)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Southampton Old School Baptist Church, at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., May 28th, 29th and 30th, 1924, to the churches composing the same.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—According to our long accustomed order it becomes our pleasant privilege to again address you in our annual Circular Letter. The subject to which we shall call your attention at this time is "communion," and as a text we name the following: As oft as ye do it, do it in remembrance of me. In establishing the ordinances of the house of God the Savior instituted this one, together with all others, to be observed while time lasts. No ordinance of the church is more significant and no ordinance is more solemn, as it sets forth the Lord's death till he come. The communion supper was different from any other supper or feast that preceded it, and during the existence of the militant church no change shall ever be made in it, nor shall it cease to be observed in remembrance of the Lamb of God.

When the Lord's purpose in Israel being in Egypt four hundred years was accomplished, he, according to his promise to Abraham, delivered them. He had his own way of making Pharaoh let the Israelites leave the land of bondage, and the night before they were to leave that country enroute for their own land, Canaan, they had what was called the passover supper. Every family of the Israelites was commanded to kill a lamb or a kid, the blood of which was to be sprinkled upon the doorposts of their homes; they were to eat the flesh of the lamb, or kid, with bitter herbs. Every man was commanded to have his loins girded about and a staff in his hand and shoes upon his feet, ready for the journey before them. The Lord's way to make Pharaoh willing to let his people go was to send death into every house of the Egyptians, that the firstborn of both man and beast should die in the one night. Because of this the blood of the lamb, slain by each family of the Israelites, was commanded to be put upon the doorposts of their homes as a sign of salvation when the destroying angel should pass over the land to bring death to all the firstborn of the Egyptians. Thus the blood of the paschal lamb in Egypt meant salvation to the Israelites when the destroying angel passed over them. That supper, called the passover, was celebrated at regular seasons by the Israelites during their history, as a nation, in remembrance of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. When Christ came to fulfill the law and put an end to all types and shadows he, in the night in which he was betrayed to be slain for the everlasting deliverance of his chosen people, said it was with desire that he had desired to eat that supper with his disciples. This was the real passover supper, the real Paschal Lamb, the blood of the everlasting covenant, the bread of heaven. The Paschal Lamb took the bread and blessed it and gave to his disciples, saying, This is my body which is broken for sin. After the supper he also took the cup, and when he had blessed it, said, This is the new testament in my blood which is shed for the remission of sins, this do in remembrance of me. No more was the passover in Egypt to be celebrated, no more remem-

brance of the blood of the lambs slain there. The end of all shadows had passed away with the coming of the Lamb of God, who, by his own blood, took away the sin of the world.

We as a denomination have been censured always because we neither unite nor allow any except our own people to the Lord's table, being called close communionists. But in reality the church of God has no more control over communion than over love, faith and fellowship. In the absence of fellowship there is no union, and in the absence of union there is no such thing as communion. The partaking of the blood and wine, in our faith the body and blood of the Son of God, is an open act evidencing communion with one another. Should the table never be spread, should the heaven-born children of God never partake of the bread and wine, it would in no sense affect their communion one with another. On the other hand, should all other denominations partake with them of the bread and wine, there would be absolutely no communion between the house of God and them, for the reason of no fellowship, no oneness, no equality. John said, "Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ," hence communion with God, with his Son and with all the saints. We are told in the Scriptures that the brethren continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. May the Delaware River Association, by the grace of God, be steadfast in the doctrine, ordinances and order of his house, the pillar and ground of the truth.

Finally, brethren, farewell; be of one heart and one mind; live in peace and the God of peace shall be with you. Amen.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Southampton Church, Bucks Co., Pa., May 28th, 29th and 30th, 1924, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is a pleasure to report a most enjoyable meeting. Your messengers and ministers have come to us in the blessing of the gospel of Christ. They have not shunned to declare the counsel of God and we are strengthened and built up on our most holy faith. We desire a continuance of your correspondence.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the First Hopewell Church, Hopewell, Mercer Co., N. J., to begin Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1925, when and where we shall hope to again receive your messengers. Until then farewell.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at the home of the bride's mother, in Muirkirk, Ont., June 11th, 1924, William Alexander Burchiel and Miss Margaret McCallum.

By the same, at the home of the bride's father, in the township of Caradoc, Ont., June 28th, 1924, John Wesley Campbell and Miss Marguerite Fletcher.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

OUR dear sister, **Lucinda E. Records,** widow of Willard S. Records, departed this life May 18th, 1924, at her late home on Church St., Salisbury, Md. She was a faithful member of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church, and will be greatly missed by the church and all who knew her. No one has done more to encourage and uphold the pastor of this church by kind words and faithful attendance than she. Her death came suddenly, while alone.

Services were held in the Salisbury meetinghouse. Interment took place in the graveyard adjoining.

J. C. MELLOTT.

Mrs. Rebecca Norman, our sister in Christ, wife of brother Eppa Norman, deacon of the Ebenezer Church, died at her home "East Lynne," in the vicinity of Bluemont, Loudoun County, Virginia, June 20th, 1924, after an illness of some months from heart trouble. She was born January 11th, 1849, the daughter of Benjamin and Elizabeth (Tolson) Williams. She was married December 23rd, 1875, and became the mother of seven children, one of whom, Eppa Badger, died in infancy. The remaining children are the one daughter, Miss Bessie, living at home; L. B. Norman and Walter Norman, of near Unison, Va.; Joseph and Andrew Norman, of Purcellville, Va., and William E. Norman. Sister Norman was baptized into membership with the Old School Baptists at Quantico, Va., by Elder Joseph L. Purington, in September, 1870. After some time she united by letter with the church at Mt. Zion, and after another lapse of time she joined by letter the Ebenezer Church, of which she was a member at the time of her going from us. Many who read this notice will remember the hospitality of both brother and sister Norman in their home when entertaining the Corresponding Meeting. Sister Norman was a truly godly character, unselfish in her devotion to her husband and family and church, always thinking of the comfort and pleasure of others and never seeming to think of herself at all, never saying an ill word of any one, but saying nothing if she could not say something good. She was blessed with a spiritual mind and deep discernment into the import of the Scriptures. Hers was a truly living religion, and she loved to talk of the dealings of the Lord with her. The last letter she wrote to me, dated just a week before her death, will be found in another column of the SIGNS. The very day of her death she had been reading in the fifth chapter of Galatians. Therefore, it seemed appropriate that at her funeral the text should be taken from this chapter, which I did, using the twenty-second and twenty-third verses, concerning the fruits of the Spirit, the spiritual graces which were so beautifully exemplified by the grace of God in our dear sister's walk and conversation. The night before she passed away she dreamed of its being communion season at dear old Ebenezer, and saw in her dream the brethren gathering at the meetinghouse, but saw herself unable to get there. Truly it was not to be that she should ever take the Lord's Supper again with her brethren on earth, but we feel assured she has entered into the communion of saints in the world of glory beyond the grave. The devotion of her family to her was a beautiful thing to see, and we cannot help but notice the love and care manifested toward the dear mother by Miss Bessie, the daughter who said to me that her mother had been to her a sister, a companion, friend and mother all in one. No one but God himself knows the loss we have all sustained in her departure. The Ebenezer Church without her can never be again the same as with her in our midst. The aching void left in the family circle will be extremely hard to bear by every one of the children, but especially so by dear brother Norman. May the good Lord by his Holy Spirit dwell very comfortingly and reconcilingly with our dear brother, with Miss Bessie and with each of the sons and their families. We laid the body to rest in the quiet, peaceful ground of Ebenezer with the hopeful assurance in our hearts that her spirit is at rest in the paradise of God. L.

(See communication on page 215.)

Mrs. Cyrus H. Jones departed this life June 24th, 1924, aged 90 years. She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church over thirty years, and loved the doctrine of Christ and the apostles. She was confined to her bed most of the time for several years before she died, and enjoyed having the ministers come and preach for her. Elder I. N. Keel preached for her the night before she died. Her husband preceded her to the grave twelve years. She leaves five children to mourn her departure: Mrs. Louisa Dunham and John Jones, Oakdale, La.; Mrs. Emily Gipson, Neame, La.; Wiley and Henry Jones, Leesville, La.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder I. N. Keel, after which her body was laid to rest beside that of her husband. I would say to the bereaved ones, Weep not as those without hope, for you believe she is resting in Jesus. May the God of all grace be with you all to guide and direct you.

M. J. CANNON.

Elder David Hicks, the subject of this notice, was born April 18th, 1850. He was married to Miss Diana Jarvers about the year 1870, and to this union were born nine children, seven girls and two boys. He leaves fifty-one grandchildren and sixteen great grandchildren. He professed a hope in Christ at about the age of eighteen years, and joined the West Fork Primitive Baptist Church, and was baptized by Elder Hughie Burns. The church seeing he was a gift of the Lord to them set him apart to the full function of the gospel ministry in the year 1874. During his sickness he would tell his family that he would live to see his seventy-fourth birthday, which he did, and as the day drew near he said to his heart-broken wife and children, I have but one more day and two nights to stay with you, and April 18th, 1924, which was his birthday, he fell asleep in Jesus. He requested the writer of this notice preach his funeral, and the fourth Sunday in June, 1924, the writer met a large congregation of friends and relatives who had come together for the purpose of paying their last respects for the man whom they esteemed as being one of God's humble, qualified servants, who had preached for forty-two years in the

mountains of West Virginia, traveling a great deal of the time on foot while in the prime of life rather than ride horseback. Elder Hicks was much beloved by all the brethren and sisters of the Pocatalico Association, and will be greatly missed by us all. He was truly a model Baptist, living out his profession by a pious walk and a godly conversation. The writer was blessed with liberty to address the great gathering of people who had come from all parts of the country on this memorable occasion. Elder Hicks and I being the oldest ordained ministers in the Pocatalico Association, I being one year and three days older than Elder Hicks. The Lord alone can bind up the broken hearts of a weeping widow and children who mourn their loss.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

Mrs. Ann Eliza Martin, daughter of the late Elder James C. Goble and Lucy Choate Goble, born in South River, N. J., September 13th, 1832, departed this life January 28th, 1924, in her 92nd year. She was married to Captain Henry Martin, of South River, June 25th, 1850, in New York City, and to this union were born four children: Mrs. Lucy G. Van Deventer, Daniel B., Jonathan C. and Emma R. Martin, all of whom survive her. She also leaves five grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren, besides many dear relatives and friends who mourn her departure. Her husband died suddenly in the year 1876, and her daughter Emma has been her constant companion and loving attendant all these years. She loved her children and grandchildren devotedly, and in her last illness she talked continually of them, her church and of heaven. Grandma was baptized by the late Elder Wilson Housel, at South River, August, 1878. From that time until her death she was a devoted member, always present at the meetings until feebleness compelled her to stay at home. The first Sunday in February, 1923, was the last that she was able to go out. After that time meetings were occasionally held at her home, which was always open to the Elders and visiting members. The late Elder S. H. Durand, her former pastor, always spoke of it as his South River home.

Funeral services were conducted at her late home in South River on January 31st, 1924, by her pastor, assisted by James Manahan, of Elizabeth, N. J., a man of God and one of the family. Grandma chose Psalms xvii. 15: "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." Hymn 1218 was read, being marked as one of her favorites. "Abide with me," and, "Asleep in Jesus" were sung. The last hymn was very appropriate, for the end came as peacefully as a little child going to sleep. As one of the relatives remarked, "A noble life, a beautiful death." Burial was in Monumental Cemetery, South River.

Written by her granddaughter,

HELEN A. MARTIN.

Martha Rebecca Cox, daughter of Jonathan and Nancy Jones, was born in Buchanan County, Missouri, December 28th, 1852, and departed this life at her home in Maryville, Mo., March 29th, 1924, at the age of 71 years, 3 months and 1 day. She was united in marriage to W. Yates Cox, July 29th, 1869, and to that union were born eleven children, seven sons and four daughters, two sons died in infancy. Three sons and the four daughters were present at the funeral. She united with the Three Forks Nodaway Church by experience and baptism, in 1905, and was baptized by Elder R. M. Simmons, and ever lived a faithful and devoted member until her death. Her suffering was great though kind and loving hands did all that could be done for her relief. We feel that the church's loss is irreparable. While her dear companion is not a member of the church here below, he is a firm believer in the doctrine the SIGNS OF THE TIMES sets forth. Their doors were ever open to the brethren and sisters, and as we had no church-house in Nodaway County the church frequently held her sessions at their house. We believe our loss is her eternal gain. She was a kind, loving mother and a devoted companion, and to know her was to love her.

The funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Calvin C. Moore, who spoke words of comfort to a large concourse of relatives and friends, after which her remains were laid to rest in the Maryville Cemetery to await the resurrection morn, when all the blood-washed throng will come forth in the image of Jesus and will ever be with the Lord.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mrs. J. B. Hardy, $5.00; C. Z. Ross, N. Y., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

The Siloam Association will meet with the Cowlitz River Church, at Riffe, Lewis County, Wash., August 8th, 9th and 10th, 1924. Those coming by train from the south stop at Chehalis, where stages go out to Riffe about 8:30 a. m. and 2:30 p. m. Morning stage arrives at Riffe about 11 a. m., afternoon about 4:30. Any going by train from the north will take the train at the Milwaukee depot at Tacoma to Morton, where train will be met Thursday, August 7th. There is a good highway into Riffe from the north, via Tacoma and Morton; from the south via Chehalis. A cordial invitation is extended to all.

SONORA A. HESS, Clerk.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

EBENEZER

OLD SCHOOL

BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

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THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 92. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1924. NO. 15.

CORRESPONDENCE.

COTTAGE GROVE, Tenn., Dec. 18, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter written to me by Elder J. C. Chester, which I have read and reread, and it is so full of the grand and glorious truths of God our Savior, giving God all the praise, power, glory and honor, that I feel I want the dear readers of the SIGNS to enjoy its sweetness with me. Oh that the Lord may enable him to continue writing, and not only writing, but may he be enabled by grace divine and given wisdom from that God who rules all things after the counsel of his own will to go forth preaching the unsearchable riches of his grace, thereby feeding and comforting the dear saints of the most high God, is my prayer.

R. L. VEAZEY, SR.

BREWERS, Ky., Dec. 9, 1923.

PRECIOUS BROTHER VEAZEY:—Though bowed down from a sense of my own corrupt nature, there is an undescribable something within that would say with David, "My heart is inditing a good matter," yet I must pause when I would finish this quotation of the sweet singer in Israel and can but beg the Lord that my tongue would be the pen of a ready writer, that I may speak of some of the sweetness which would flow from that "Fountain" of life which the dear Lord so wonderfully enabled you to pour forth in notes of sweetest strains in your good letter of the 5th inst., which I have read and reread with much interest, with eyes filled with tears of joy and love. Oh to see that the Lord would so fill you with his love and wisdom that you can pour out such words of thanks and praise to his great and matchless name, whereby you can scarcely cease to write of his goodness to you, and then to see how the God of wisdom reveals these hidden truths to you in demonstration and with the power of his Spirit I am led to say, Alleluiah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, and oh but for the protecting care of his guardian hand of love, mercy, power, wisdom, grace and truth where would you and I be? Indeed I have been as a tiny vessel upon the vast ocean in a great storm for the last few days; yes, I will add, for more than forty years, when I hope the Lord spake peace to my never-dying soul, at a time when I can but trust he was so moved in pity to one in the great deep when it

seemed that I must sink to rise no more, that he came as the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother and placed his strong arm underneath me, who was so overcome in wrestling with a man all that long and toilsome night. Surely I was beaten, stripped of all my raiment and half dead when this Samaritan came that way at the right time. The Levite and the priest of chance had gone on and showed no mercy, could give no healing balm, neither had they any beast to place me on, nor anything to meet my indebtedness in sin. No creature worth, no works of righteousness, no carnal reasoning, no offering from the field would do, for the blood of bulls and calves, nor the ashes of an heifer would do the work at this time, but this Man who lay down his own life for his friends must now sprinkle his precious blood manifestly on my guilty conscience, and I hope he then and there purged my conscience from dead works and made me want to serve the only true and living God. Yes, I have a faint hope that then and there on that autumn evening, when the western sun was fast sinking, seemingly pouring forth the last beams of light I would ever see, this Samaritan placed me on his own beast and carried me to the inn, and there told the innkeeper that all my debt of sin was canceled, and he begged of the Father (the innkeeper) to let one of the legal captives go free, and not only this, but take this poor cripple into this great inn, which is built upon a rock. Is this all? No, this little stone must be put in the right place, to fit without any chiseling. Now the stone is set in the building, is it going to stay there? Yes, the Samaritan has told the Innkeeper to take care of it until he came again, and if any other debt (sin) comes up I will pay it when I come; do not accept the coin which the bankrupt offers, such as good works, obedience, or the like, they are all counterfeit coin and will not pay this debt; nothing but the blood of Jesus Christ will cleanse from sin. So then by the blood of the everlasting covenant he broke down the middle wall of partition between the Jew and the Gentile. Yes, that legal veil is rent from top to bottom (even from the firm decrees of God down to the commandments of men), so that there is no difference between the Gentile and the Jew. The apostle here while comforting a Gentile church would say, Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God. All boasting of the self-righteous, pharisaical boasting of the Jews, is here cut off to rise no more. Now comes the sweetness of that well planned inn, or building, which is so fitly framed together. It having been already placed upon a Rock, yes, a chief Cornerstone, now it must grow unto an holy temple in the Lord. All the citizens of this commonwealth have laws written in their minds and so firmly placed in their hearts that God's grace teaches them how to live, and when in reality they are in doubt about the ministration of these laws the Lord in some mysterious way sends his Spirit and makes it plain. It may be, and often is, in sore trial, wherein the poor child has some great tribulation, the Holy Ghost, that sweet comforter, comes along again and shows these blessed truths that the Lord God omnipotent reigns and delivers, even from the lowest hell, all of the citizens of this great commonwealth, and will one day gather all the members of that house into that home above, where all is love, peace, joy and rapturous pleasure for evermore. "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed

up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Dear brother Veazey, I have been at home all day on account of rainy weather, and not well besides, but while musing on the beauties of the kingdom of God's dear Son we forget our suffering, and can only long to be free from the cares of this world, but we must wait our Maker's nod, and in our weakness beg of him to give us grace for each day and trial. It seems we must be content to meditate, and in our visions look at the dew drops of love which form upon the tender branches of the Vine as the gentle dew distils from heaven. I beg an interest in your prayers when at the throne of God's rich grace. Surely you know I never tire of reading your good letters, which are full of truth and food to a care-worn and tried pensioner upon God's goodness. Wife joins in desiring and begging the God that neither slumbers nor sleeps to keep you and your family, and all his dear children.

Farewell in the Lord.

J. C. CHESTER.

COTTAGE GROVE, Tenn., Dec. 5, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER CHESTER:—While sitting by my fireside with my dear family I am made to meditate upon the goodness, mercy and love of God to me, a poor sinful creature, in giving me my dear family, and for his watchcare over them, and to think that not one of them has been taken from me. Oh how thankful I am to him, yet this is not caused by anything that I have done, but it is alone through the goodness and mercy of that great God who rules all things after his own counsel, for by him all things consist. He is a God of justice, a God of love, a God of wisdom, a God of purpose, and rules all things, and that to his own honor and glory, for he says, I am God and there is none other, and I will do all my pleasure, (This being true, who can keep him from doing his pleasure?) therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. Therefore, that is, for that reason, because I am God, because I am all-powerful, because none can stay my hand, for this reason I will do all my pleasure. I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending, the all in all. Oh what a great God we have. Why should we fear to own his name or to defend his cause, maintain the honor of his word, the glory of his cross? for by the one offering he hath forever perfected them that are sanctified; that is, set apart, and he is their sanctification and their glorification; he is their Redeemer and their redemption; he is their life, their light and their all in all. Then what more do they need, for he has predestinated them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself? Oh what a glorious salvation, all linked together in one unbroken chain, and this chain composed of complete links, and the links composing this chain are made up of God's purpose, and they were all purposed in Christ Jesus, and that before the world began. Here is love, mercy, long-suffering, faith, hope, the forgiveness of sins, the salvation of his people, the redemption of his people, the resurrection of his people, the coming again for his jewels, the gathering together of his saints, the deliverance of them from their afflictions, the ascension of them with him into the paradise of his love, there to sing the praises of him, and to him, who redeemed them with his

own precious blood out of every kindred, tongue and nation, for by the one offering he hath forever perfected them. He did not have to try this kind of an offering, and seeing that it failed get up another and try it, and then another, but just the one, and it was a perfect one, and in that one the work was complete, for behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of his people, he is the offering. My dear brother, sometimes I feel that I have been permitted to behold him upon the cross, there pouring out his lifeblood, as it were, for his ransomed host, and I am made to cry out and ask if I was embraced in it. I am made to weep and to mourn and cry unto him. But if I am not embraced it is just and right, for the Lord doeth all things well. For ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you and ordained you, that you should be holy and without blame before him in love. Then the choice was not ours. Nay, verily, but his, and the choice was made in one who was able to keep and to take care of them that were given him in the choice, for there is none of them able to pluck them out of his hand, for we hear him saying that my Father that gave them me is greater than all, and none of them is able to pluck them out of his hand. So we see they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Oh when this revelation is made known unto the heirs to whom it was promised then will they not rejoice and shout, Worthy, thrice worthy, art thou, oh Lamb of God? We are born into the world sinners, and we are here without hope and without God in the world, being aliens wholly absorbed in sin, walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, and are by nature the children of wrath, even as others, and being in this condition it becomes necessary for something to be done, and the thing to be done is something that we are not able to do of ourselves; there must be another birth, and we are just as helpless in this birth as we were in the first birth to bring it about and to be delivered. There must be a quickening, a making alive; there must be a great change take place, and this change must be of an incorruptible nature. This says at once that the first was a corruptible one, and this second birth comes by the word of God, which word liveth and abideth forever, and this is by the quickening power of God. You hath he (God) quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sin. Here is where this chain begins to form its links. While in this state God for his great love wherewith he hath loved us, even when we were dead, hath quickened us together with Christ. By grace are ye saved. Here is where his goodness, his mercy, his grace his long-suffering to us was made manifest; herein is redemption, not with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, nay, verily, but by the precious blood of Christ. Then no wonder we can rejoice in the song,

"Amazing grace (how sweet the sound)
That saved a wretch like me,
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."

The glorious light of the blessed Son of God has shined in our poor, sinful, dark, benighted souls, removing that burden of guilt and sin from us. He bore us in his own body and gave us to behold him as our blessed Redeemer and our Savior, took our feet out of the mire and clay and placed them upon the rock Christ Jesus, and put a new song in our mouths, even praises unto him.

Brother Chester, I feel I could continue

writing, but fear I have already tired you, for I feel that what I have written is all worthless to you, for it is like the writer, so imperfect, but I hope you will forgive me. I felt I could not sleep to-night without writing you, so I have written what I have. May the Lord bless you and yours, and keep and uphold you by his strong arm, is my prayer. Remember me at the throne of grace. Write me when you feel like it.

Yours in hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began,

R. L. VEAZEY, SR.

LONDON, Ont., Dec., 1923.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS:—While rereading some letters of the past my mind was made to meditate upon the contrast between much weakness and strength in time of need, as portrayed in our dear sister Sinclair's letter, and I felt a desire to share it with those who through weakness are made strong. In no other way can we approach Him who hears the prisoner's groan but with an undone feeling, our righteousness not only rags, but filthy rags, and a cry, God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

"Jesus, the name that calms our fears,
And bids our sorrows cease;
'Tis music to our troubled breast,
'Tis life, 'tis joy and peace."

The wrath of man shall praise him, our rebellion against his holy will, our murmurings and proneness to wander. Nothing good ascends but what has first come down from the Giver of all good and perfect gifts. We can only approach him through the merits or efficacy of his sufferings. Paul says, "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church; * * * to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." "And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power." We read in Revelation v. John the divine "saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much." "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." One of the elders which John saw said, "Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." "And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song." This is the song, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." We must go down to learn the glad sound, Salvation is of the Lord. Israel of old was led through the deep as a horse, that they should not stumble. So is every heir of promise. The night may seem long, but joy cometh in the morning. Not long since the still small voice raised my drooping hopes to songs of praise with the lines,

"Oh may my heart in tune be found,
Like David's harp of solemn sound."

Yours in a solitary way,

(MRS.) JESSIE GILLIS.

MUIRKIRK, Ont., Jan. 15, 1922.

MY LOVED AND ESTEEMED SISTER:—I am going to try to write you a letter. This is the first I have attempted to write with a pen. Lila said she would write for me, but I thought I would try and

write myself, as I have often been writing you in my meditations during my wakeful hours. Some nights I sleep and others I do not. Brother Alexander Campbell has passed away. Sisters Christy Graham and Annie Gillis are gone, too.

"As star by star decline,
Till all are passed away."

Oh how I appreciated the love and esteem of the church when they assembled at our home at the November meeting. Surely it was a time of the singing of birds to my poor soul. I was brought into his banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love. When I awoke in the morning these words were upon my lips, He came leaping over the mountains, skipping over the hills. My Beloved is mine and I am his. I felt at that time it was all I needed and I truly was on the mountaintop for a long time. The time came when something began to tell me, Your Beloved only follows you on the top of the mountain, he does not know you when you are in the valley and in the caves of the earth, in your distress, and again I was brought low and began to murmur and complain. It seems so fresh to my mind. What was to become of me? On January 4th, after a night of no sleep, I felt I was tired out. The next night these words dropped sweetly into my mind, as if spoken by some unseen person,

"Though thy path be dark and drear,
And thy nights be filled with fear,
There is one who loves thee ever,
He will leave thee never, never."

I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner.

I have written this with great imperfection. When I tried to read it I did not know whether to send it or not, but I am glad I can write even an imperfect letter.

SARAH SINCLAIR.

REEDSPORT, Ore., March 28, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have enjoyed this letter from our beloved brother Edwards, and would be glad to share it with those of like precious faith.

G. O. WALKER.

CORVALLIS, Ore., March 24, 1924.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER WALKER:—I will try in my weakness and unworthiness to write you a few lines, but do not know at this time what I may say. Your good letter did me much good. It was much better than I can write, and makes me feel my weakness all the more. If I have any hope at all it is in Jesus Christ, and him alone, for I have no confidence in the flesh. I find myself much of the time wandering in darkness, when my sins hover around me as black clouds of darkest night, and all hope seems to be gone; then I am driven back to my experience, and there was the darkest night this poor mortal ever passed through. My sins and agonies of pain seemed to press me to the ground, and all strength seemed to leave me, and I felt myself falling to the ground I verily thought. Then a light from heaven seemed to shine round me, as Paul says, above the brightness of the sun. It must have been the glory of the eternal God of all glory. Then when I came to myself my burden was gone, and oh how light I felt. It seemed to me I was walking above the ground in the air. Dear brother and sister, I cannot find words to express these things any better. I can say of a truth that when all the gloom and darkness was gone, and the light of the glory of the Son of God appeared, it was much better felt than told. I have wondered if any poor mortal ever passed through such darkness and gloom as I have; if they have, they surely know what darkness is. It was Jesus that

showed me he was able to save the vilest of sinners. I found myself as helpless as a lifeless lump of clay. Oh it is free and unmerited grace in and through Jesus Christ our Lord. How unworthy I feel. I do not feel worthy to be found sitting at the feet of my brethren. I hope the brethren and sisters will bear with my weakness while I live here in this unfriendly world. I love the strong meats, for they are the sweetest to me, such as election, predestination, the foreknowledge of God and the sweet promises to his elect in Jesus Christ, who saved his elect with an everlasting salvation, through the loving grace that was given us in him before the world began. How sweet it is to meditate upon these things; if only I could apply these sweet blessings to this poor unworthy sinner.

I will stop right here.

Your unworthy brother, saved by grace if saved at all,

JAMES EDWARDS.

ADRIAN, Mich., July 15, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If one so unworthy may call you brethren. I see it is time for me to renew my subscription to the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have read it since I was a child, and ever since I could understand, or thought I could understand its meaning I have loved its teachings, and as I am now very old I love it very much, and feel I cannot do without it. I will be eighty-seven years of age this month, and if I do not send in the money next year please discontinue sending the paper. I hope you may be spared to teach the gospel in its purity for many years. If I am what I hope I am then when my days are ended on this earth all will be well with me. God knows me better than I know myself, and I can put all my trust in him, for he is my all in all. LAMIRA CARY.

OTTAWA, Kansas.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am inclosing a money order for you to apply on my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Through the kindness of a dear brother in Cape Charles, Virginia, I am enabled to do this. Words are inadequate to describe my feelings when I opened the letter and read the contents. I said to my daughter, I must accept it, for I feel it is the Lord's doings, though it is marvelous to me. To-day I received a letter of the same kind, and if I thank the sender it must be through the SIGNS, as the letter was unsigned, with no place of residence, and the postmark was too dim to read. I am afraid they have made a sacrifice to do this, and I would gladly return it if I could. I will surely be willing to trust the Lord to the end of my days. He is able and will provide though I am all unworthy of his notice. All I can say is, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." May every deep-felt care of mine be trusted with the Lord.

With love unfeigned,

ANNA T. McKINNEY.

ABERNANT, Ala., Dec. 26, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I see my subscription to the SIGNS has expired, so will renew. Please find money order for five dollars; two for my subscription for another year, and do as you think best with the balance. I wish it could have been more. I surely do like the SIGNS, and especially what it stands for. It seems strange that the Savior would suffer and die for one so sinful and corrupt as I. I wish every one who loves the principles the SIGNS stands for could have it to read next year.

Yours in hope,

J. T. CAPLES.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1924.

EDITOR

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

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ECCLESIASTES X. 19.

"A FEAST is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things."

It has been requested that we write upon the above Scripture, particularly the latter part, which we will do with whatever light the Lord may grant unto us. We shall not dwell upon worldly feasting, nor the laughter of fools, which is compared to the crackling of thorns under a pot. Neither is it our intention to dwell upon natural wine, nor money, the love of which is the root of all evil. Rather we shall try to present what is our understanding of the above text. Wherever God, the Holy Ghost, begins a work of grace in the heart of man there will be trouble and distress, a state very different from what to-day is called getting religion, which when one has, he feels happy, and often openly declares that he is all right with God. Such religion at best is a lie and and is not of God. The work of the Spirit is to convince of sin, therefore there is sure to be a burden of sin, more or less, and a mourning over sin. Wherever there is a religion that began without a burden of sin, distress and sorrow, it is not the work of the Spirit, but proceeds from the flesh. To the one who is in soul-trouble it will seem as though God has found him out and has set a mark upon him. So full and complete will the teaching of the Spirit be, that the soul will confess through dire necessity that, "Salvation is of the Lord." Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, is the only one who can do them good, and the Spirit takes of the Word and they hear it. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Thus such an one is encouraged through the Holy Spirit taking the word of his grace, and they are made to look to the Lord and hope in him. This world will be a wilderness of woe from which the redeemed of the Lord would flee. By the Spirit's guidance they seek a city that hath foundations, which is Zion, the city of God, the mountain of his holiness. It will be the discontented, the distressed and those who are in debt that the Spirit will lead, for he has said, "They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them." There the glorious Lord will turn their mourning into joy and will comfort them and make them rejoice. This comfort comes by the Spirit directing their hearts into love of God the Father, who, while they were yet sinners sent his beloved Son into the world to save sinners. He also shows them that though they fear hell and damnation God in his love has freely given them heaven and salvation. Therefore it is written, "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people [Jew and Gentile] a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." Then their mouth is filled with laughter and their tongue with singing. Thus the ransomed of the Lord are set in safety from him that puffeth at them. While feasting on God's love and

mercy they can laugh the enemy of their souls to scorn and despise him, and in the confidence of faith they can laugh also at the folly of their doubts and fears. "A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry." This is a feast of fat things, a feast of wine. The word of God which holy men of old wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost was like water clear as crystal, very pure, but by the presence and power of Jesus this water is made wine to his people. Their doubts and fears subside and they are completely blessed. When the brethren of old feasted with Joseph they were merry with him, and how can saints to-day help but make merry when they taste of the love of their heavenly Joseph, which, like the blood of the ripened grape, is sweet to their taste. It maketh glad the heart of man. Thus those who hunger and thirst after righteousness are filled and they forget their poverty; but it has pleased the Lord in his divine plan that it will not be always a feast, laughter, wine and making merry. It would not do always to be feasting on heavenly bounties and enjoying the felt presence of the Savior, there must be a walking by faith and not by sight.

"Money answereth all things." After feasting if there is no money one would lapse back into the condition of poverty in which he was prior to the feast; in fact, money is necessary for feasting. Worldly men and women could do but little feasting and drinking of wine without money, it answereth all things. Just as there is a currency in all lands, so in the kingdom of heaven faith can truly be called the money of the kingdom; with that in hand the thing desired is obtained. There could have been no feasting on heavenly bounties or drinking of wine from the true Vine without faith; this precious money is absolutely necessary, and without it it is impossible to please God. Every man who went into the vineyard received his penny a day. By this currency the Elders obtained a good report. It enabled them to embrace the promises, walk in the fiery furnace, stop the mouths of lions, open prison gates, subdue kingdoms and receive their dead again to life. It "answereth all things." Now, just as in all lands there is the true coin and counterfeit, so there is true faith and faith (so-called) that is counterfeit. True faith must come from the heavenly mint, and is the gift of God. Each of the redeemed family receives from their heavenly Father just as much (and no more) as he has willed they shall have. Each in the vineyard received at the end of the day a penny, and whatever the day may have been they each will receive the amount the Master determines. If it be a day of sorrow, or of darkness, or sin-sickness and self-loathing, yet at the end faith is increased by the Master's good will. For unto him that hath shall be given. Just as money is needed for the necessities of life, so where faith is, the trial will not harden the one under it, but soften and humble him, causing him to look to the Hand from whence it comes, and in all prayer, praise, sorrow (godly sorrow), repentance, believing, receiving, glorying and resting, faith, the currency of heaven, must be in constant use. It is the possession of this money that keeps every heir of heaven from legal bondage and death. Of Abraham it is written that being not weak in the faith he considered not his body now dead, neither the deadness of Sarah's womb; he staggered not at the promise through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, being persuaded that what he had promised he

was able to perform. Thus faith answers all things. It is the only currency that will "buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, instruction, and understanding." Sin-sick, laboring souls need food and healing. Jesus said, "Believe ye that I am able to do this?" The answer was, "Yea, Lord." He replied, "According to your faith be it unto you." They need the bread of life; faith procures it. When the brethren go to our spiritual Joseph for bread because the famine is sore in the land, they go with money in their hands, which is returned in their sacks' mouths, from which we see that faith is increased in the using thereof. Now the money of any country is known by the image and superscription it bears. Just as the Roman coin handed to Jesus bore the image and superscription of Cæsar, so this heavenly money bears the image of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the embodiment of love. Its superscription is "The faith of God's elect." It will not pass in the devil's domains. It will meet with persecution and rough usage there, but in the kingdom of God it will answer all things.

G. R.

TO OUR DELINQUENTS.

We are sorry it again becomes necessary to call attention to the fact that many of our subscribers have neglected sending in their subscriptions, and we ask all such to please remit as soon as they possibly can. We have to pay our bills promptly, and when we fail to get what is due us it makes it hard indeed to meet our financial obligations, so please examine your dates and if in arrears do unto us as you would have others do unto you.

J. E. B. & CO.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder R. Lester Dodson.)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, convened at Middletown, Orange County, N. Y., June 4th, 5th and 6th, 1924, sends greetings to those with whom she corresponds.

Dearly Beloved Brethren:—The words to which we shall call your attention in our annual Letter are found in John xiv. 15: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." They are the words of Jesus to his disciples, and do not apply to any one else, neither can any others receive them. In fact, no Scripture is given in a spiritual sense to the world at large, for it is declared, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Thus it is to be seen that it is the man of God, or the people of God, who need reproof, who need correction and instruction in righteousness. No others have any knowledge of him, neither can they know or desire him, because the things which are his are spiritual and the natural man cannot receive or discern them. One says, "I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth." There are those who are living witnesses, companions in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, who were in the Isle of Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ, "who is the faithful witness, and the firstbegotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth," and unless we are followers of him and can testify that he is the way, the truth and the life, certain it is we are not his manifested disciples. Perhaps

there never was a time when visible proof of the discipleship of the Lord's people was so little in evidence as it is to-day, when there was a greater need that the trumpet of the Lord should be blown from the housetop, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Zion needs to be aroused to the need of walking in the precepts and examples of her exalted King; she needs to come out, stand aloof and apart, and be separated from the world, and touch not any unclean thing. There is a great disposition on the part of the so-called churches to-day to conform to the world and compromise with Satan, and Old Baptists are not altogether guiltless. Can a man serve two masters? Will he not love the one and hate the other? Paul wrote unto the Hebrews, saying, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) and let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." We know a little band of believers, although without a pastor, and without preaching save three or four times a year, yet they meet regularly twice each month to sing and talk of the things of Jesus. We commend them to you for consideration and emulation. There will be lions and bears in the way, of course, to hinder and discourage us, but we must not give up; rather let us set our faces as steel against all opposition, and in the strength of the Lord we shall conquer and triumph. When John saw him who was in the midst of the seven candlesticks, who held the seven stars in his right hand, he was told to write unto the angel of the church in Smyrna, "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Those who are fighting the warfare from which there is no discharge in this life should be faithful, even unto death. To the Ephesians Paul wrote, "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand." Oh that we might behold our Leader, the Captain of our salvation, and take courage, "forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before," "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

"If ye love me, keep my commandments." On another occasion Jesus said, "If a man love me, he will keep my words." His commandment was that ye love one another. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." With the searchlight of truth turned upon us let us take stock, examine ourselves and see if our light is so shining that others may see our good works and glorify our Father which is in heaven, or whether we are hiding it under a bushel and subjecting ourselves to the censure and criticism of those who are without because of our conduct. Are we watching over one another for good, or are we seeking occasion to find fault and kill our brother? Do

we make a brother an offender for a word? Are we like Ham, doing all we can to expose the shortcomings of our kindred, or like Shem and Japheth, go backward with the garment of charity to cover their faults? Are the undershepherds faithful to the Master's cause, and is their service rendered from a loving heart, with fervency and zeal, giving all diligence to make their calling and election sure? or is it for leadership or filthy lucre's sake? Do they count their own lives dear, considering their own welfare and comfort, or do they desire to spend and be spent, being instant in season, out of season, going whenever, rain or shine, hot or cold, and wherever the voice is heard, Come over and help us? We fear that a great deal of the cause of Zion's condition to-day, her indifference and lukewarmness, as well as much of her disorder and distress, is to be laid at the door of those who have the oversight of the flock. Likewise, we would inquire of those who compose the various churches if they are thoroughly awake to their obligations to each other and to the gifts the Lord has given them? Are you familiar with, and do you administer of your carnal things to the needs and necessities of those who serve you, through whom you receive spiritual things? We have known of cases where ministers, although almost destitute of worldly goods, have had to pay their own railroad fare to go and serve churches for months, and perhaps years, without receiving a penny towards even their expenses, to say nothing of their time. Is not this muzzling the ox that treadeth out the corn? We would also ask what consideration the poor of the flock receive at your hands. Are your deacons familiar with their needs, and do they acquaint you with them, and do you supply them? Do you visit them with those things of which they severally stand in need, with clothes for him that is naked, wherewith he might be warm, and with food for him that is hungry, with which he may be fed? Are you thoughtful of the care of your meetinghouse, or glad when meeting is over that the roof did not fall in while meeting was going on? Not long ago we heard a minister say he would not be surprised if the roof fell in while services were being held at a certain place. We mention this, brethren, to show you that our imagination is not running wild. Such things ought not to be, and there is no excuse for them, especially at such places as the one referred to. We doubt not that similar things can truthfully be said of other places. Beware, lest the Lord remove your candlestick from you.

While our communication is addressed to the churches and correspondence of the Warwick Old School Baptist Association, knowing that it is the custom to publish Circular Letters in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and believing what we have said is more or less applicable throughout the country we broadcast our message, if approved, hoping the Lord will stir up the pure mind of all who think upon his name, who profess to love him, giving them a right understanding of what is his will concerning them, and working in them that which is well-pleasing in his sight. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Submitted in love.

R. LESTER, DODSON, Mod.

MARTIN D. FISHER, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in joint session with the several churches composing said Association, convened in the meetinghouse of the Middletown & Wallkill Church, Middletown, Orange County, New York, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 4th, 5th and 6th, 1924, to our sister associations with which we correspond, sends greetings in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Again in the providence and grace of our God we are granted the sweet privilege of meeting your messengers in an associate capacity. Your correspondence is most helpful to us, and we desire a continuance of the same. Surely the gospel of the Son of God has been clearly and faithfully proclaimed, and when such is the case those who so proclaim it do and will find a warm and hearty welcome.

Our next session is appointed to be held on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1925, the place to be announced later through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and we shall be glad to meet your messengers again.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.

MARTIN D. FISHER, Clerk.

WATCH YOUR DATES.

WE wish to request our subscribers when sending in their subscriptions to see that the date on the little pink slip bearing their address is changed. If not changed, please let us know immediately (for that signifies you have not been given credit for the money sent) and we will look into the matter.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Jonathan Collins Buster was born in Morgan County, Tennessee, August 29th, 1842, and died in the hospital in Kingman, Kansas, June 21st, 1924, aged 81 years, 9 months and 22 days. He was stricken with paralysis more than a year ago, and while he recovered sufficiently to be up most of the time, and to be out to meeting a few times, his health gradually failed from that time. During the last few months complications set up which impaired his respiratory organs and his heart. He retained consciousness until the last, and bore his affliction with great fortitude. He seemed to be just waiting for the Master's call, and often expressed his readiness to go. He moved from east Tennessee to Illinois, with his parents, when a child, and afterward to Missouri, where he lived when the Civil War broke out. He enlisted in Co. D, 18th Regiment of Missouri, and served during the War. While at home on a furlough he was married to Miss Martha Jane Franklin, March, 1862. To this union were born ten children, three of whom preceded him in death. His wife, three sons, C. F. Buster, of Elko, Nevada; F. J. Buster, of Northfork, Idaho, and A. E. Buster, of Cheney, Kansas; four daughters, Mrs. Lee Wheeler, Gilroy, California; Miss Mertie Robey, Wichita, Kans.; Mrs. Olive Heckendorn, Humboldt, Kans., and Mrs. Vaun Williams, Great Bend, Kans., fifteen grandchildren and fifteen great-grandchildren survive him. Brother Buster professed a hope in early life, and united with the Missionary Baptists, but soon discovered his experience was not in accord with their faith and practice, and joined the Primitive Baptist Church in Haskel County, Kans., where he had moved in 1883. He was baptized by Elder Rowland. A few years after coming to Kansas he located at Cheney, Sedgwick County, where he resided until his death. He was in the constitution of Pleasant Valley Church, now worshiping at Kingman, and was a constant attendant, having missed but few meetings during the thirty odd years the church has been constituted. He has walked to meeting, a distance of twenty miles, many times when he had no other means of getting there. For a short time the church was without a pastor, but when meeting-time came brother Buster would come, and if he could not meet with the church assembled he would meet with them in their homes. His mind and conversation were on heavenly things. One could not be in his company long without having one's mind called to the good things of Christ's kingdom. He was steadfast in the faith, and lived and died in an unwavering trust in the finished righteousness of the God who works all things after the counsel of his own will. About a week before he died he was moved from his home to the hospital in Kingman, where he could be made more comfortable,

if possible, and where he could be nearer his brethren, as most of the members of the church lived here, or near. His faithful wife came with him, and though worn by long watchcare at his bedside, remained with him until death separated them. Brother Buster had a large circle of friends, who will miss him. A vacancy in the home has been made that can never be repaired, but no place will he be missed more than in the church, where he was held in high esteem, where his godly walk and conversation, his counsel and faithfulness shone as a lamp to the feet of the younger members.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer from his late home at Cheney, in the presence of a large concourse of sorrowing friends, after which his body was laid to rest in the Cheney Cemetery to await the time appointed when it shall be changed from mortal to immortal, and fashioned like unto the glorified body of the Redeemer. May the sustaining grace and comforting power of the Holy Spirit rest upon all who mourn and enable them to look to Jesus, who alone can heal our sorrows.

This is written and is being sent for publication in the SIGNS by a previous request of our departed brother. J. R. HARDY.

James K. P. West died at his home in Snow Hill, Md., May 13th, 1924, aged 80 years, 4 months and 24 days. He was the son of Minus and Elizabeth (Dickerson) West, and was born in Worcester County December 19th, 1843. He spent his boyhood days with his father on a farm near Snow Hill. In 1865 he was married to Sarah Anne Jones, daughter of William and Elizabeth Jones. She lived for only a short while. In 1870 he was married to Amelia Kelley, daughter of Samuel and Dennie Kelley. He spent his entire life on a farm near the old homestead, until thirteen years ago, when he moved to Snow Hill, where he spent the remainder of his life. He had been in failing health for several years, but not until two years ago did he have a very serious attack, from which he never recovered. The end, though not unexpected, was a shock to the entire community. An only child, Anna Belle, by his first wife, has been dead since the year 1907. He is survived by his wife and seven children, three daughters and four sons: Mrs. William Sirman, Mrs. Edgar Carmean, Mrs. Theresa Lake, Dewitt M , James E , William B. and George P. Also thirty-two grandchildren, thirteen great-grandchildren and two brothers. He was a strong and loyal member of the Old School Baptist Church, and was baptized forty-five years ago in the fellowship of the Nassango Church, near Salisbury.

His funeral was largely attended. Elder Ker, his pastor, preached an able and comforting discourse from the words: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." His remains were laid to rest in the Old School Baptist Cemetery at Snow Hill, six grandchildren acting as pall-bearers. Yes, he was ready to go, and when the kind summons came his spirit quickly fled away to join the happy throng. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

His loving daughters,

CORDELIA AND LULU.

Mrs. Eliza Angelina Edwards was born March 5th, 1843, and departed this life July 1st, 1924. She was first married to George Irvine, in 1860, and to this union five children were born: Minnie, John, Fannie, Kate and Bradie. After Mr. Irvine's death, in 1879, she was married to William Allen Edwards, and to this union was born one child, Nellie. She professed a hope in Jesus, and united with the Baptist Church early in life, and lived a consistent member ever after. She leaves to mourn their loss four children: Mrs. Minnie Brown, Mrs. Kate Gambell and Mr. Bradie Irvine, all of Fulton, Ky., Mrs. Nellie Fowler, of Okolona, Miss., and a host of grandchildren and great-grandchildren, also one brother, John Roper, of Texas, and one sister, Mrs. Kate Lunford, of Hickmon, and a host of other relatives and friends. Sister Edwards was a consistent member of Mud Creek Church, and was always present at her meetings when Providence would permit. She lived to the ripe old age of 81 years and 4 months. Sister Edwards ate a hearty dinner, and about six o'clock in the evening her daughter-in-law found her dead, sitting in her chair. Oh what a grand way to pass out of this old world of trouble to be with our blessed Redeemer to dwell for evermore. I will say to her children, Weep not for her, for your loss is her eternal gain. She outlived the pleasures of this old world. She remarked to me that she was just waiting for the summons from on high, for she was willing to leave this old world and try the realities of her hope. Oh what a grand blessing to be willing to leave this world, for there is nothing here that we should wish to stay for, considering that rich inheritance that lies just beyond this vale of tears, and I hope to meet her in the image of Christ to sing his praise world without end. Elder T. J. Prince and the writer tried to speak to the comfort of the children, relatives and friends, after which she was laid to rest in Rush Creek Cemetery to wait the voice of her Redeemer. May God bless her children and her church and reconcile them to him, for the dead in Christ have ceased fom their labors.

Written by request of her family.

O. W. PERKINS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

T. L. Huff, Ga., $1.00; J. C. Kenerley, Ga., $10.00; Marion Hamons, Idaho, $1.00.

MEETINGS.

The Siloam Association will meet with the Cowlitz River Church, at Riffe, Lewis County, Wash., August 8th, 9th and 10th, 1924. Those coming by train from the south stop at Chehalis, where stages go out to Riffe about 8:30 a. m. and 2:30 p. m. Morning stage arrives at Riffe about 11 a. m., afternoon about 4:30. Any going by train from the north will take the train at the Milwaukee depot at Tacoma to Morton, where train will be met Thursday, August 7th. There is a good highway into Riffe from the north, via Tacoma and Morton; from the south via Chehalis. A cordial invitation is extended to all.

SONORA A. HESS, Clerk.

Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, will hold her seventieth annual session with Providence Church, about four miles northwest of Plano, Appanoose County, Iowa, commencing on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in August, and continuing the two following days. All lovers of the truth are invited. Trains will be met at C. B. & L. depot, Plano, Iowa, on Saturday to convey visitors to the meeting. For any other information address J. M. Cate, 502 East Franklin Street, Centerville, Iowa.

W. T. WALKER, Moderator.

J. M. CATE, Clerk.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is to convene at the residence of W. I. Zinn, near Meriden, Jefferson County, Kansas, on Friday before the second Saturday in September (12th, 13th and 14th), 1924. Meriden is on the A. T. S. F. R. R. Also a motor runs on the L. & T. from Leavenworth to Meriden, two or three times daily. From K. C. take the U. P. train writing to brother Zinn to be met at Grantville, or phone from Grantville to Meriden. Also busses run from K. C. to Topeka every hour, from whence the A. T. S. F. train leaves for Meriden at 8 a. m. and 5 p. m. For further information write to W. I. Zinn, R. 1, Meriden, Kansas, or address me at 1243 Polk, St. Topeka, Kansas.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

The South Arkansas Regular Primitive Baptist Association will, the Lord willing, convene with Bethel Church, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 19th, 20th and 21st, 1924. Bethel Church is two miles north of Bearden, Arkansas, on St. Louis, S. W. Railway (Cotton Belt Route). Trains will be met Thursday evening and Friday morning. We invite all peace-loving Predestinarian Baptists, especially ministers, to meet with us.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

HYMN BOOKS.

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THE

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 92. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1924. NO. 16.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE COMMUNION.

I CAN only give a very limited sketch of what was in my mind from two to four o'clock this morning. Whom seek ye? Jesus of Nazareth. I am he. (John xviii. 4, 5, 7, 8.) "She hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table."—Prov. ix. 2. It was not by accident, nor a thing which happened to be, it was a prearranged thing, a foreordination of God. A commandment went forth, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones."—Zech. xiii. 7. Here the wicked receive the full commandment of God. The sword is commanded to awake. "Arise, O Lord, disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword."—Psalms xvii. 13. These are men of the world, yet the hand of God. (Verse 14.) They are commanded by the Lord, and must do his commandment. All these are but links in the great chain of events which God in his holy, perfect, divine, eternal purpose had made for the sure salvation of his loved ones, the bride of his beloved Son. Of all these links there is not one lap-ring nor slip-link which may be slipped in or left out, but, to the contrary, each one forms a part of the chain, and each one is firmly welded in God's eternal foreordination. All these were by his determinate counsel and foreknowledge. (Acts ii. 23.) If there is one link of this chain of events which are employed for the fulfillment of these Scriptures left to contingencies that one link makes God dependent upon the hand, wisdom or power which comes in just at that time and helps him to do what he had predestinated. Our God is not dependent. He is God in all his purposes, and he manages and rules in all the things which he has purposed in himself to the fulfillment of his will. A holy law was with him, he made it, and would give it to his people. That law is strong and unyielding. It is for a people who are weak, and blind, and lame, and poor, yet that law is requiring. It requires perfect obedience, perfect holiness. It yields not a hair's breadth, even in the most minute point. The whole of the people to whom this stern law will be

given, either as a whole, or any single member of that ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, cannot in any way satisfy the just and holy requirements of that holy law. But with all this weakness and all these shortcomings God loved his people, and in the tenderness of his love and the power of his sovereign omnipotence he provides an holy sacrifice that will make sure the perfect salvation of all his elect people. (1 Peter ii. 9.) For this purpose we are told, "When he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me."—Heb. x. 5. This was the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. (John i. 29.) That is the only sin we know of, and this Lamb of God came to take it away from his chosen people. It was to this end he came, and this work he fully accomplished. All the circumstances connected with him from his conception in the womb of Mary to his ascension in glory were only parts which God had ordained for the fulfillment of his divine purpose in the taking away of the sin of the world, and the perfect salvation of all the members of the body of "the elect lady and her children." All this was because of the love God had for her in the truth. All the things our Lord did for her. He bare her sins. They were imputed to him, and were therefore his sins by imputation. He gave her his righteousness, and therefore it is hers by imputation. All this must be before she could eat the bread of life and drink the water of life. "And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."—John vi. 35. Therefore coming is eating, and believing is drinking. Then he informs them, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." This is the only channel of salvation. His body crucified is the broken bread, and his blood spilt for his people is the holy wine. This is the holy communion of the Lord and his people. Every one who is brought to this table which wisdom spread in eternity, and are given to eat this broken body that wisdom slew and drink of this wine which wisdom mingled, has eternal life and is a child of God. We commune together, but not always in holy perfection. We are poor sinners, and ignorant, but our Savior is all holy, and he is not only wise, but he is Wisdom itself. (1 Cor. i. 30.) When he gave us himself he gave us wisdom. Now all this is revealed to us by his Spirit which he has given to us as our divine guardian. Therefore he communes with us in his own body and blood. We commune with one another in our communications and in the literal bread and wine. These are emblematical of the great and pure communion which our Lord gives us with himself and with one another by his grace shed abroad in our hearts by his Holy Spirit. Our communing together brings to our remembrance the dying of our Lord and his living again to intercede for us. In his love he gives us to feel the blessedness of his intercession, by showing our sins forgiven, and we draw nearer to our God in our gospel experience which he gives us day by day. In these sweet manifestations we draw nearer to him with our whole heart, and our affections leave the earth, or time things, and hunger for the eternal fullness of God in our beloved Head.

With my heart desiring the fullness of his presence forever, I am, yours in this blessed hope,

L. H. HARDY.

TOPEKA, Kansas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am submitting for publication this letter from dear sister Bonnie Chick, which seems to me to be worthy of careful reading. As I copied I thought to abbreviate some, but it is such a wholesome, heartening letter, I found it hard to condense, for there is not one idle word in it. I have her consent to send it. Parts of it are especially comforting to me, but that which appeals to me most, as suitable to place before the people of God, is her daily walk and meditations on the way, and her determination to know nothing save Christ and him crucified, and to allow nothing to interfere with her loving duty of attending her meetings. I have seen more fallings away which had their incipiency in the gradual and increasing neglect of the assembling of the saints than in other beginnings. If there were more Marys like this dear sister, esteeming the privilege of sitting at the feet of Jesus, where he has promised to be with even two or three assembled in his name, there might not be such a nearly universal complaint of dullness and coldness in the churches. Too many when in trouble or distress, instead of seeking a balm in Gilead, go down to Egypt for help. Turning to the vain, delusive allurements of the world for relief to a troubled mind will never satisfy. But, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Nowhere else can we find a friend to help us on to God.

MARY ELLISON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., May 15, 1924.

VERY PRECIOUS SISTER:—Surely I can sing, "Wonders of grace to God belong." Your letter is here, and it does seem as if my heart is humbled beneath the mighty hand of God. The next morning after I wrote to you I was left to feel cast down. Sister Pultz came before me, and I felt I would seek comfort in writing to her. Time did pass more quickly while writing, and it seemed the burden was lifted, and I could lie on my bed that afternoon with a peaceful feeling that is indescribable. Truly as my physical strength came back I found myself dreading to take up natural duties again; I had such a sweet time reading and writing in the quiet of my room. I was not lonely a moment. What a wonderful God is ours. Oh dare one like me claim him to be mine? But, dear sister, I do hope I have been taught the truth of the words Jonah had to avow: "Salvation is of the Lord." I hope it is the light shining within that makes my heart appear as a cage of unclean birds. Could any one but he who sees himself a wretched, debased sinner cry to him for mercy? I have to cry, He is merciful to me, and his blessings are manifold. I have nowhere else to flee. No sanctuary, Lord, but thee.

My precious sister, I intended to begin by telling you I know just where you are. I know your desire to know what is right for you to do. It still seems to me that He has placed Marthas and Marys in the church even in this day. Mary was not cumbered with service in natural things. It was her lot to sit at the Savior's feet and talk of the things that lay nearest her heart, while Martha was cumbered with many natural cares which marred the spiritual enjoyment that was Mary's. Did not the Savior say that Mary had chosen the better part? Not that Mary could have done this if left to herself but to me it is a setting forth of the two classes we often find among the Lord's people to-day. Some, it seems, cannot feel to let anything stand between them

and spiritual delights, and miss no opportunity of meeting with His people; all natural cares and duties drop into insignificance, while others are so cumbered with them that they cannot lay them aside to attend to the things of the kingdom. How much of the joy they miss, and yet (to a certain degree) the Marthas are needed as well as the Marys. I, too, have often felt I should go to others in some distress, but at times have been so weak, physically, I felt I did not know how to go. I worried about this, and realized that in many instances I felt no burden to do so. I wondered if I were just purely selfish, for if I went I was so glad to get back to my own room, where I could read and write quietly. For a long time I have felt wretched, to be placed where I could not spend time in these ways. I would fairly dread going places to visit, knowing they could not understand if I felt to sit and write for hours. Perhaps at those very places there would be a great desire to write, and I could not rest until I did, though cutting remarks might be made. Dear one, I feel our experience in this line has been much the same. Surely the world has lost its charms. Even natural conversation has become a burden. I cannot even read the things that would be considered educational. I never had a good memory, but I have found God's power wonderfully manifested toward me in regard to being enabled to remember passages of the Scripture, and hymns that have come to me with power. Am I too strict, too narrow? Somehow I have been made to fear everything that would take my thoughts to natural things. At times I do read descriptions, and have (but not very recently) read some short stories, but it seemed like time wasted, and I have been made to feel it is far better to spend the time reading of God's goodness and power. I feel if each moment of my life were spent thinking upon him it would only be right. But, my precious sister, with all these feelings, I find myself looking with pride around our place, because it is well kept. I find myself planning to make my room look more attractive, while all the time I know a bare room, with a board for a bed, would be a most peaceful dwelling-place if I could feel his presence. Pride, cursed pride, besets me on every hand. Can it be that I am all natural, and that I do not fear God, or long to please him instead of man? My natural friends have long ceased to expect me to enter into worldly pleasures with them, but look at the evils that beset me day in and day out. Can you follow me, dear sister? I am such a mixture, I am never happier than when feasting on the things of the kingdom, but still beset with a natural pride, that you would not think one who has had to be so crushed would still have. What can be before me to crush this, if what I have already passed through has not done it? For awhile He has not left me to sink so low as in times past. In each trying place it has seemed as if I could feel the power of the words, "Let every deep-felt care of mine be trusted with the Lord," and there has been a rest from terrible distress I once felt.

Dear one, I do not know when I last wrote you, but I have looked for a letter, and wondered, as it seemed to be with me before this sickness, if you were shut up and could not write. My heart aches for you in your trials. I hope it is the Lord's will that you may have a quiet season in which to meditate and write of the things you love most. How the dart hurled by Satan must have hurt you, and yet God proved his word, that "No

weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."

How I should love to see you. Your interests are mine. What a mystery, strangers in the flesh, but knowing each other better than many with whom we have been thrown for years. God bless and keep you. May he give you many more sweet messages to his children.

May 16th.—My dear, precious sister, while working around this morning I was thinking of the many comforts I have, and the pride that tells me to make things look attractive, and I felt that the money spent in idle show surely could be put to better use. I thought of Jesus telling the rich man to sell all he had and give to the poor. I have always been bountifully provided for, and I fear I often spend what I have foolishly. Only this week I had been reading some of your letters, and among them the one in which you spoke of certain words coming to you. It did seem strange that only Wednesday I had asked brother Hill what the words meant, and he said he could not tell me. They had been much on my mind, then to think you mentioned this incident in your letter. While writing yesterday my heart was so full that this did not come to me, but when I was clearing the breakfast table, thinking of the things I have written, the oneness of our thoughts, even in this, seemed wonderful. You had had this on your mind also. How can we doubt there is an all-powerful God? The wonder of it all increases. My finite mind cannot grasp it. My being fairly becomes on edge when I try to fathom the depths of both the riches and wisdom of God. This joy is akin to pain. Dear sister what is it that makes our thoughts turn to those we have never seen? This love cannot be natural. It does not seem we are so far apart; a felt sense of nearness comes. As I sat here writing I felt a yearning desire to meet you. We know not what is in store, but if it is the Lord's will that some day I shall do so, nothing can hinder. The friend, of whom I have written you, and I have hoped that some time we may take a trip west together. I have not felt there would be much pleasure in it for me if I could not meet with Old Baptists on the way. How wonderful if in time she should love these people, too, and find her chief joy in such a trip was to meet and mingle with the saints of God. We have taken short trips together, but never have I felt that I could be gone from my meetings. I feel I would be utterly wretched taking a long trip if I felt I were forsaking my meetings. From my earliest experience I have felt that nothing should come between me and these, if I were physically able to go. I went to Trenton one week-end, the fall after I was baptized, intending to stay until Sunday night. Sunday morning I awakened, feeling restless and condemned, knowing I was in easy reach of home, as our trolley ran right by my friend's home. I was indeed troubled, so I wakened Elizabeth and told her how I felt. She, being a natural friend, I feared would be a little provoked, but to my surprise she told me if I felt that way she knew I could not be content to stay. I got up and dressed and reached home at 10 o'clock. When I came in the house an expression of gladness came over my father's face. God in his mercy has never put me any place where I was denied this privilege. Two winters come before me. One I spent at my sister's, in

Maryland. There was much snow and ice, but the trolley did not stop running, and I could get to Baltimore each Sunday. The following winter a friend at Black Rock lost her only sister, and was alone. When I went down to the funeral she asked me to stay with her, and I said I had nothing to hinder me. We were eight miles from the station, and twenty-five miles by train from Baltimore. There was not a week-end I could not get to the meetings. The winter before the roads in the country had been so blocked there were many week-ends they could not have gotten me to the station. It just seemed as if I could not cease wondering at the goodness and mercy of God to me, and so it has been all along.

My dear, dear sister, what will you think of me for sending such long letters? I had no idea when I sat down to write where my mind would be led. Many things I have written were far from my thoughts. May God give you the spirit of forbearance. I wonder often if, like Ahimaaz, I run without a message. It just seems as if I cannot work or do anything at these times until my mind is unburdened.

Deepest love.

BONNIE CHICK.

NEWARK, Del., May 31, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If you have any spare space in the future, and it will not crowd out better matter, you may insert these remarks in the SIGNS.

As I opened the Book this morning, in quest of a portion of Scripture I had in mind, the first verse that came to my notice was, not that for which I was seeking, but one upon a far different subject than that I had in mind, and as my mind was enlightened upon these words I feel to record them. There was a power in them to me, and if they are for some one else they shall prosper whereunto I send them. These are the words: "Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness."—2 Cor. ix. 10. I assume Paul was speaking regarding the temporal necessities that are due a minister of God's calling, as he had occasion to say in the preceding Scripture, "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" Now who is "he that ministereth seed to the sower"? It is the Lord Jesus Christ, for who else but him supplies our carnal or spiritual food? Does he not say, "Every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof"? As I see it, all I have of this world's goods, be it little or much, I consider I am but a caretaker of it. The one who has the nature given him in conception to freely distribute is highly blessed indeed, for that one can sometimes see a brother who has the nature to withhold more than he should when his pastor or a brother in need should have a portion to sustain life in him or his family. While at times it seems hard to part with these temporal things which are given us, for "he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown," yet if we had a more ready mind to administer to the comfort of those deserving we no doubt would reap more spiritual blessings, and even temporal blessings, than we anticipate, "and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness."

Therefore it seems that if we give more bountifully, with a free heart, we invariably receive spiritual and temporal blessings or favors which we could not possibly anticipate, and if it is given in the spirit of love, expecting nothing in return, it is as bread cast upon the waters, returned after many days. "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward, * * * and whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." Thanks be to God for this unspeakable gift. Jesus is the gift sent down from heaven. While we require temporal things upon which to exist in earth this Gift freely supplies it all, as well as spiritual food; money is not required for that. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread?" Here is the discrimination between grace and works: grace is free, and the gift of God, and works will not avail unless blessed of grace. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." This Gift is immutable and infinite. The Giver therefore is greater than the receiver, for his own words are, It is more blessed to give than to receive. "He that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness." "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."

J. B. MILLER.

XENIA, Ohio, June 8, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—My mind has been impressed while sending in my subscription to write some for publication, if you feel that you can consistently publish it. I am an entire stranger to both publishers and editors, having never met them in the flesh, but we have dwelt together in unity since before time was, I am made to hope, and if so it will so remain throughout time and eternity. I desire to set forth, if the Lord will, as plainly as I can, the doctrine and order believed by the church of my membership, not as a criterion to go by, but to be honest with our brethren. Two cannot walk together except they be agreed. Those who believe they can walk together and not agree are certainly not going to strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. We indorse the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in substance. It is the only paper that has come to our notice in recent years that sets forth the desire to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. This encourages us to believe that it is of the Lord. Others claiming to be Old Baptist papers have come to our notice which unify the Ashdods, Ishmaelites and Hagarites, confuse the little Isaac and deceive for a time. We believe in the new birth as set forth in the SIGNS of May 1st, 1924, by Elders Lefferts and Dodson, and for which we have no apologies to make. We also indorse the article of Elder Frederick W. Keene in May 15th issue. Those same poor base creatures entered the ark with Noah. Peter saw the same debased creatures embraced in the sheet let down from heaven. Just such characters I desire to dwell with, but would rather hear the Lord speak to Job (the church) out of the whirlwind than to sit and listen to Elihu. We have no more to do with our

common salvation than we have to do with our eternal, both are absolutely of the Lord. Who having journeyed throughout the different walks of this earthly life, with their earthly aspirations high and lofty, and by the unerring hand of almighty God being in the eyes of this vain world debased and despised, but in the unerring hand of him who brought him a a jewel of great price, upon reading the editorial of Elder Ruston's in the June 1st number but can say, Surely that which is sharper than a two-edged sword has pierced deeper than the natural heart? We indorse it all. We also wish to state that we do most heartily indorse Elder Leffert's article in May 15th issue on second Corinthians, also the article by Elder Vaughn in the May 1st number. As to the election, every heaven-taught child knows the struggle began before the child was born, therefore neither life nor death of either infant or adult can ever change it. As to predestination, we believe Christ is head over all things to the church; the "all things" include both the doctrine and the order. We have no power to set the bounds of either, for we believe it is all absolute, and in God's hand, and his only. We believe in the absolute separation of church and state, and that Old Baptist ministers have no scriptural authority whatever to mix in politics. As to associations, we heartily indorse them, but will not knowingly fellowship those who handle their church troubles through the association, and in sending trouble back to the churches, that it be not by a mere act, and allow two or three to poison the mind of the entire association. As to yoking the ox and the ass together, we believe the regeneration of Jesus Christ should not upon any occasion worship with the unregenerated denominations of Adam. We desire the fellowship and correspondence of all those, we trust, who know it is more needful to admonish, rebuke, and rebuke sharply, that we remain steadfast in the faith, than to have some coming around patting us on the back and telling us what godly fellows we are when there is not a drop of godly blood in our mortal bodies.

Farewell to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth.

W. A. FERGUSON.

MOHLER, Oregon.

DEAR EDITORS:—If the heavenly Father will guide my faltering pen I would like to try and tell you all what the old SIGNS does for me. While I am not a subscriber, I get it quite regularly, and oh if I could only tell you how many, many times it has seemed to come just in time to save me. Save me from what, I often wonder, and it makes me shudder and draw back when I look at the vileness within. Now please do not misunderstand me when I say it saves me, for I do believe in the all-powerful God, and that nothing whatsoever shall keep him from his own, but I also believe that his own are often far from him, and that it is through sorrow, tribulation, sickness and death we are allowed to touch only the shadow of his robes; not death to the body, but death to desires and pleasures of this world. I have read the SIGNS for many years, and hope to be able to read it as long as I live, for it is the only reading there is any kernel in to me. The SIGNS as long as I have read it has had the same sound and has sent forth the same faith: the power of Jesus, the absolute predestination of all things according to the plan and purpose of God Almighty, the sinfulness of man and the righteousness of his Redeemer. One of

my greatest comforts in this swiftly passing throng is to know that I am a sinner, for Jesus died to save them that were lost. My dear old father is the only one of like faith I ever meet any more, and I am sending two dollars for the renewal of his subscription. Mother has been dead for over twenty years, but he still gets the SIGNS in her name, so please do not change it.

The least of all, if one at all, trusting in the mercy and grace of Jesus,

CAMILLA WILKES.

MARSHALL, Va., July 27, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—In this I am sending you money order for two dollars. My time expired in May, but the paper has continued to come, for which I humbly thank you all. Mine is the only number that comes to this post-office, and is all the preaching I get. Once in a great while I get to meeting, but the dear old SIGNS comes regularly twice a month. I think the editorial in the July 15th number is one of the ablest and most comforting sermons I have ever been privileged to read. I am not very far from Elder Lefferts' home, and one of his churches, but very seldom have the pleasure of being there. But it is all right, the blessed Lord knows just what is best for me. If I could get to meeting often I might get puffed up, or the brethren might get tired of me. I am very lonely much of the time, but the dear Savior was lonely. He says, And of the people there was none with me. It is a little comfort to me to think of his loneliness.

I would like to see something written on "sifting." Once when it was my lot to be exceedingly cast down and troubled these words were given to me: "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat." I cannot help hoping that this sifting is the cause of much of my trouble. I do not think even one grain of wheat will be lost, and perhaps there is a grain in me.

With a prayer for all the household of faith, and for the editors in particular, I am the very least of all,

HATTIE L. WALKER.

NORTH BATTLEFORD, Sask, Ont., Jan. 26, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—Find enclosed $5.00, $2.00 for the precious family paper, and $3.00 for the poor of the flock, for I am sure they rejoice on its arrival. Just a line to let you know I have a feast when it comes, full of the bruised corn, as one of the number said, no husks, all glory and power to God the Father, the Son, God the Spirit, the Word made flesh to his chosen in Christ Jesus. All God's truth must be fulfilled. We know in part. When I read Mary Ellison's letter in January 15th number I rejoiced, for we both know in part. It is a wonderful letter, and the title clear. If I had the wings of a dove I would fly home to my friends. God has placed me here and if it is his will that I should meet the dear friends in Jesus the way will be opened. I give the SIGNS to some people to read who do not want to take it.

Love and greetings to one and all.

(MRS.) KENNETH FINLAYSON.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., July 21, 1924.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—I thank you much for writing that article for publication in your church paper. It was indeed nice of you to say such kind things about mother. Inclosed please find check for two dollars for subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, with the request that the paper be sent in memory of mother to some member who is unable to pay. Will you kindly notify the publishers of mother's death? I thank you.

KATHERINE FISCHER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1924.

EDITOR

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
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ACTS VIII. 33.

"IN his humiliation his judgment was taken away."

We have been asked by a sister to use the above words at the head of an editorial. As much as in us is we desire to comply with such requests from our kindred in Christ. If the Lord stirs up the pure mind of his people and implants in their hearts a desire to know what the Scriptures teach, he is able to give the pen of a ready writer whereby their questions will be answered to their satisfaction, edification and comfort. All who have been taught of him know full well that he must enlighten the mind of his servant and give him understanding in order that he may be able to set things in their proper place. If we know our own heart we earnestly desire, both in speaking and in writing, to shew ourself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. While we do not wish to court the favor of man, we are confident if we give expression to the things of God they will find lodgment in the hearts of those begotten of him and we will have their approval. There is abundant scriptural proof of the fact that God dwells in his people, and we can truthfully affirm, if we have any knowledge of the Lord's mercy, his longsuffering, his forbearance and lovingkindness, it has come to us in a way of life at the hands of our brethren. Surely they have not dealt with us as we have deserved to be treated by them. It has greatly encouraged us at times to realize that we have brethren who can and do feel for us, whose prayers are continually going out to our covenant-keeping God to make bare his arm in our behalf and fill our mouth with such things as will be suited to the needs of his children.

The words referred to are only a portion of the the thirty-third verse of the eighth chapter of Acts, and considered by themselves at best can present only a part of the picture. In order that we may have a more complete background it will be necessary to bring to view some of the surrounding scenery, or the conditions leading up to and following after the utterance. In those days, as in these times and all other ages, the world was not a friend to the cause of righteousness. The forces of good and evil have ever been arrayed against each other. Paul tells us in the beginning of the chapter, "At that time there was a great persecution of the church which was at Jerusalem." He, himself, as Saul, having no knowledge of God, "made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison." Because of this persecution, the saints were "scattered throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria," but "they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." Though scattered, they were the "elect according to the foreknowledge of God," and "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." God's people can

never be so scattered, or so far off but that his all-seeing eye is ever upon them, and he supplieth all their needs. "The angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert." The eunuch of Ethiopia is a type of the church in nature; she is black as the tents of Kedar, and her place of dwelling is desert, and she is as powerless to change her condition as the Ethiopian is his skin or the leopard his spots, but God having begun a good work in the eunuch's heart, continues that good work by sending Philip to meet with him. As the eunuch read Esaias the prophet, "The Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest what thou readest?" Philip's heart seemed to have delighted toward this one with whom the Lord was dealing, for he "ran thither to him," and the question he asked of the eunuch was evidence of the bond that bound them. It was the very question which he desired most of all to have answered. As the king of old was troubled about his dream, which none of his wise men or magicians could tell him, and Daniel, the prophet of the Lord, came telling not only the dream, but the interpretation thereof, so Philip saw into the very depths of the secret places of the soul of this one who realized he was black and in a desert land, and as he spoke the language of his heart he had the witness within that Philip was a true prophet of the Lord. His reply could only have endeared Philip to him more than ever: "How can I, except some man should guide me?" What a confession to helplessness and dependence upon the great Teacher. "And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him." Oh how the poor heart that is hungering and thirsting after righteousness yearns for the messenger of the Lord to come this way, that he might come in and tarry in his house, in the place where he dwells, and deliver the message of the power and the peace of the gospel of the Son of God. "The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: in his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth." What an appropriate figure inspiration uses here to typify the spirit that moved every thought and action of our blessed Lord. Guile was never found in his mouth, and when he was reviled he reviled not again. As a sheep, inoffensive and harmless, he was led to the most ignominious slaughter of all ages. While his humanity was weak and cried out against the bitterness of the cup, being led of the Spirit, he could say, "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done." He "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." When his hour had come, he opened not his mouth to utter a word of complaint or objection, not a single struggle did he offer against his crucifiers. Unto such an hour and to die such a death came he into the world, according to the will of God. What great condescension that the King of glory should bow the heaven and come down into this world of degradation, to hang upon Calvary's cross between two thieves, and yet without a semblance

of revenge or pride in all that he said or did. He was thus manifested to be the Son of God, or the Son of love, for God is love.

"In his humiliation his judgment was taken away." In his mortification and abasement he was deprived of his capacity to judge, and as they crucified him, "and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left," he said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." In the Spirit he was perfectly resigned to the Father's will, and there is nothing on record to indicate that he desired any compromise, or that his own will should prevail in any way whatsoever, for he rendered a perfect obedience. Who, then, shall declare his generation? Who shall tell of the manner of his coming? He was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of a virgin, in a manger, and there was no place for him in the inn. Who shall declare the purpose of God in his advent into the world, his sufferings, death and resurrection? Who shall explain the necessity of his life being taken from the earth, the dying of the Just for the unjust, and the power which wrought in him when God raised him from the dead? There can be but one answer to these queries: Those to whom is given "power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Only they that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep. They must pass through the gall of bitterness, and be made to know that vain is the help of man, and cursed is the man that maketh the arm of flesh his trust, before they can discover the pearl of great price and know that great and marvelous are the works of our God in the salvation of his people. No others can declare the generation of him whose life was taken from the earth, whose kingdom was of this world. "And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?" What is the answer? "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" they prophesied of one whose name was "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Truly he was full of wonder, the man of wisdom, and the government of his kingdom is upon his shoulder. In that kingdom where Jesus reigns, peace prevails and he is the "Prince of Peace," and those who are bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh seek peace, and pursue it. In the day when the Lord alone shall be exalted the lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down. "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." How wonderful when the Lord fills the mouth of his servant and he is enabled to preach Jesus, the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end, who liveth, and was dead, and, behold, is alive for evermore; preach Christ, and him crucified, as the Way, the Truth and the Life. The Scriptures testify of him. Therefore, whatever Scripture is used, whether in the Old or the New Testament, Jesus is the sum and substance of it, and "the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not

manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." This is the word that searches all things, yea, the deep things of God, and when it is preached in demonstration of the Spirit and with power to one it shows him all things whatsoever he did, and he is made to ask, Is not this the Christ? It shows him that Christ is all his worthiness and that he should not trust in himself; that to be like Jesus he must be humbled, brought low, and "in his humiliation" his judgment must be taken away. He is thereby made willing to submit his case to the brethren and be subject unto them. In the case of the eunuch it had to do with one outside of the visible church, and there was such power and sweetness in the opening up of the word to his understanding he was made to say, "Here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." There are evidently many who are followers of the flock to-day who have not been brought sufficiently low as to have their judgment taken away in their humiliation, who do not really and truly believe with all their hearts that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, else they would do as the eunuch did and follow in the footsteps of their Lord and Master. We would that it might please our heavenly Father to lead in a plain path and make straight the way of the Lord before them, that they might take up the cross and follow him. This matter is one between the individual and his God. All the servant can do is to preach Jesus, and this is done only as he is endued with power from on high. We wish to emphasize, however, that the humility of Christ did not end at the water's edge. Truly he did humble himself in demanding baptism at the hands of John, and none realized this more keenly than did John, as was clearly shown by what he said, but the humility of Jesus was unchanging, everabiding. There are those in the church to-day who act as though they left their humility outside when they were received into the fellowship of the church and were baptized. They are no longer willing to subject themselves unto the brethren, but in the lusts of their pride and desire for leadership boast that they will not take orders from any one on earth. Nothing but wreck and ruin can follow such a course. We would to God that he might make known unto them that he dwells in his people, that "the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" One may proclaim love and peace from the housetop, and yet every action proving selfishness to be the foundation upon which they are building. Let the servant remember Peter's exhortation to "feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder: yea, all of you be subject to one another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." We would like to impress indelibly upon the mind of all the inspired writing; "How beautiful are

the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings." In other words, how beautiful is the walk, the life, that makes for peace, and unity, and love. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Brethren, let us be nothing, and less than nothing, that Christ may be all and in all.

"Jesus the great, the mighty God,
A man of grief became;
In paths of meekness here he trod,
And bore the sinner's shame.

Humility, how bright it shined
In every act he wrought;
What lowliness of heart and mind,
Appeared in all he taught.

His love to men of sinful race,
Glowed in his tender breast;
For man he yielded to disgrace,
Forsaken and distressed.

Led as a lamb to meet the sword,
He bowed beneath the stroke;
Not one revengeful, angry word,
The dear Redeemer spoke.

Oh may his meekness be my guide,
The pattern I pursue;
How can I bear revenge or pride,
With Jesus in my view?"

R. L. D.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in August (31st). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Lydia B. Stewart, N. Y., $2.00; Mrs. Kenneth Finlayson, Canada, $3.00; Mrs. Katherine Fischer, N. Y., $2.00; Marion Brooks, Calif., $1.00; Henry C. Merryman, Md., $2.50; Mrs. M. A. Drew, N. Y., $1.00; Katharine F. Burch, Md., $1.00; Mrs. Laura Elgin, D. C., $2.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Rachel Moe Bogart, our sister in Christ, died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. William Fischer, in Brooklyn, N. Y., June 24th, 1924. She was born February 4th, 1839. She was united in marriage with Jonathan J. Bogart, to which union were born nine children, three dying in infancy, the six living being S. Wallace Bogart, Westfield, N. J.; Elmer E. Bogart, Steamburg, N. Y.; Clarence M. Bogart, Richland, Oregon; Mrs. Lillie C. Barton, St. Louis, Mo.; Mrs. Annie K. Shurter, Samsonville, N. Y., and Mrs. Katherine C. Fischer, Brooklyn, N. Y. Sister Bogart was a resident for over fifty years of Olivebridge, Ulster Co., N. Y., and she and her husband united with the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church in the year 1886, where her membership was at the time of her death. Brother Bogart preceded her by about thirteen years, dying in 1911. The last few years of sister Bogart's life was spent with her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. William Fischer, in Brooklyn, N. Y., and she was enabled to attend meeting at the Ebenezer Church in New York City from time to time, where she was highly esteemed for the truth's sake. The writer visited her not a great while before her departure and was much comforted by her heavenly conversation. We are confident our sister has gone from a world of sin and sorrow to be at home with her blessed Lord and Savior, therefore we mourn not as those without hope. Her life was one worthy of emulation, and we hope those who are left behind may be reconciled to our Lord's will, remembering that it was he who gave, and that he hath taken away. We were called to officiate at the funeral, and used the twenty-third Psalm as a basis for our remarks. Interment was at Linden, N. J. R. L. D.

Ray W. Caudle, son of brother J. W. and sister M. S. Caudle, was born November 8th, 1895, and died June 12th, 1924, from a bullet wound through his head. To all indications he was murdered, but by whom, and for what reason, has not been made known. He, with another young man, was living on a ranch near Lubbock, Texas. He was found dead by his partner on returning from work, lying outside the house. Circumstances point that some one shot him from within the house, as he was approaching after he had put up his team. His remains were brought back to Fort Worth, Texas, and laid to rest near brother Caudle's home. His loved ones are heartbroken over it, as this is the first death in the family of thirteen children. Brother Caudle told me this young man was a very kind, obedient son, and ever ready to take advice. He was of a quiet, modest disposition, and was never in any kind of trouble. The paper that gave notice of his death said, "No one knew of this young man

having an enemy, and all his acquaintances were perfectly astonished at this incident."

Elders E. A. Moreland and J. H. Smith spoke comforting words at the grave where the young man's body was laid away. We feel to say to brother Candle and family, Trust in the Lord, and be reconciled to God's will. We do feel to sympathize with them in their sorrow, but desire to say as Job did, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." While we as weak mortals cannot comprehend the purpose of the almighty God in the death of this promising young man, we would not question the wisdom of God, feeling he worketh all things after the counsel of his will. May the God of all grace give them of his Spirit to say, Not my will, but thine, be done.

Written by request.

MINNIE OFFILL.

MEETINGS.

The annual all day meeting of the Brookfield Old School Baptist Church, situated at Slate Hill, N. Y., is appointed to be held on Friday, August 22nd, 1924. The following ministers are expected to attend: Elder T. W. Walker, of Pennsylvania, Elder George Ruston, of New York, Elder R. Lester Dodson, of New Jersey.

F. S. MILLER, Clerk.

Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, will hold her seventieth annual session with Providence Church, about four miles northwest of Plano, Appanoose County, Iowa, commencing on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in August, and continuing the two following days. All lovers of the truth are invited. Trains will be met at C. B. & L. depot, Plano, Iowa, on Saturday to convey visitors to the meeting. For any other information address J. M. Cate, 502 East Franklin Street, Centerville, Iowa.

W. T. WALKER, Moderator.

J. M. CATE, Clerk.

Providence permitting, there will be an all day meeting at the Lexington Old School Baptist meetinghouse, Lexington, N. Y., the fifth Sunday in August (31st). All who are seeking the truth are welcome. GEORGE RUSTON.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, the Lord willing, will meet with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 5th, 6th and 7th, 1924. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is to convene at the residence of W. I. Zinn, near Meriden, Jefferson County, Kansas, on Friday before the second Saturday in September (12th, 13th and 14th), 1924. Meriden is on the A. T. S. F. R. R. Also a motor runs on the L. & T. from Leavenworth to Meriden, two or three times daily. From K. C. take the U. P. train, writing to brother Zinn to be met at Grantville, or phone from Grantville to Meriden. Also busses run from K. C. to Topeka every hour, from whence the A. T. S. F. train leaves for Meriden at 8 a. m. and 5 p. m. For further information write to W. I. Zinn, R. 1, Meriden, Kansas, or address me at 1243 Polk, St., Topeka, Kansas.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

The South Arkansas Regular Primitive Baptist Association will, the Lord willing, convene with Bethel Church, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 19th, 20th and 21st, 1924. Bethel Church is two miles north of Bearden, Arkansas, on St. Louis, S. W. Railway (Cotton Belt Route). Trains will be met Thursday evening and Friday morning. We invite all peace-loving Predestinarian Baptists, especially ministers, to meet with us.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 15th, 16th and 17th, 1924. Those coming by rail will be met Tuesday before the meeting, at Fairfax Courthouse, between the hours of two and six o'clock. Electric trains via Washington-Virginia Railroad leave the station at Pennsylvania Avenue and 12th St., Washington, D. C. every hour for Fairfax Courthouse. Please take notice that no trains will be met after six o'clock Tuesday evening, no trains will be met Wednesday morning, nor will any trains be met at any other point than Fairfax Courthouse. Those who expect to come to the meeting will greatly facilitate matters if they will previously notify either Deacon I. H. Thomas, Sterling, Va., or brother C. M. Turman, Arcola, Va. All brethren of our faith and order, especially the ministering brethren, are cordially invited to meet with us.

I. H. THOMAS, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R F. D. 1, Box 38.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

HYMN BOOKS.

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THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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CORRESPONDENCE.

MONROE, La., May 11, 1924.

DEAR FRIENDS:—I received a letter from Elder I. R. Greathouse in February that I am sending, and asking that if you feel your readers would like to see it that you please publish it. I have read and reread it in my poor faint way, and see so much in it that I feel others would enjoy it, too. I want to say that I feel the dear Elder did not get the meaning of my questions to him. David said, Praise ye the Lord. Who? Ye. Praise God in his sanctuary. Whose? His. Praise him in the firmament of his power. I want to say that he says he seeketh such to worship as worship him in spirit and in truth. If so, they are spiritual worshipers, and are always pleading in the name of the truth. No instruments but those that are tuned by his holy Spirit have ever looked upward. When the blower of the trumpet sounds it it has no uncertain sound, and those who have ears to hear all acknowledge the sound. What the dear Elder says in his whole letter is true, but I want to say that I deny having ever attempted to worship our God only in the name of Jesus. All the other thoughts I have been so filled with are not directed by his holy Spirit, and God forbid that I look back upon them. If I did not have another life I would be without hope and without God in this world. My grandfather left me the first two volumes of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I have read after the Elders, brethren and sisters for years, and see much in their wonderful writings. Dear brethren, one and all, do not be discouraged, the battle has been fought and won, and He is making intercession for us; our seats are prepared.

Your little brother,

B. P. WHETSTONE.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., Feb. 11, 1924.

DEAR BROTHER:—We went over to the church and saw Elder Valentine and the brethren in that part of Louisiana, and had some good meetings. Thanks to the Lord. I want to be thankful to the Giver of every good gift for the friends he gives me. I realize I am unworthy of the least blessing he bestows upon me in the multitude of his mercy. David wrote, Oh give thanks unto the Lord for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever,

You spoke to me of the use of stringed instruments in the worship of God. Under the legal or law dispensation in the service in the temple they used the organ, timbrel, harp, &c. Various animals, fishes and fowls are spoken of, some they were allowed to eat, and some were forbidden by the law to be eaten. These were only shadows, figures of the worship and walk of the people of God in this the gospel dispensation. If any of you can get anything to strengthen you spiritually out of a shadow, take it. I cannot. I prefer the substance. I delight in the living vital power. Paul says, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."—Col. ii. 16, 17. Again, "For the law, having a shadow of good things to come."—Heb. x. 1. Again, Paul says, "Which was a figure for the time then present. * * * * Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, * * * * imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."—Heb. ix. 9–12. Paul says, "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Not the circumcision made with hands. "Circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit." So now in this dispensation Paul says, He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly, but he is a Jew which is one inwardly. Solomon's temple, and all that pertained to it, with all the stringed instruments, were made with hands, and were only a shadow. The girls who danced before him all dressed alike, all making the same motion at the same time, were only a figure of the churches in order. Ministration means service. So Paul says, "If the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory." Now then, if you want the inferior, if you want that which has no taste, that which has no vitality, no life, get you an organ and help yourself; there is only the harmony of sounds, while we who worship in the spirit, taste of "the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come," assembling around a table, the food on it prepared by the King of kings and Lord of lords, "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." Yes, called you out of the shadow of death, the law worship, into his marvelous light to worship him in spirit and in truth, and to enjoy the more excellent glory. "For that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelled." Again, "For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious."—2 Cor. iii. 10, 11. If you have not been born of the Spirit, and are not capacitated to feast on spiritual food, you surely will enjoy natural things,

natural sounds and natural preaching, but if you have been born of the Spirit you will delight in spiritual singing, spiritual songs and spiritual preaching, for Paul says, "They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit."—Rom. viii. 5. The temple and temple worship was done away and the spiritual worship was brought in, no more to use organs, harps, &c., no more to offer bullocks, heifers, goats, lambs, doves, homers of meal, but to offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving, the calves of the lips, to sing with the spirit and the understanding, to sing with grace in our hearts, making melody in our hearts in in praising the Lord, "for we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ," "to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Again, "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name." The woman said to the Savior, "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." The Savior answered and said, "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." To join some denomination for fear of being lost is not worship. To worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness is to come to him with a heart full of thanksgiving because he hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, to be enabled by his Spirit, that you are born of, to sing with the spirit and the understanding, making melody in your hearts, that is worship. The world goes back and worships like the Jews did, and uses stringed instruments, because they are under the law. Solomon says, "My beloved is mine, and I am his, he feedeth among the lilies. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away." The prophet said, After two days he will revive us, in the third day he will raise us up. So the Savior raised us up above the law, up out of the valley of the shadow of death, which is the ministration of death written and graven in stones, up out of the dark in our experience, delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son. Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world." Organs, harps, &c., are made with hands, and are of this world. The love of God and the Spirit, and all spiritual blessings, are not of this world, but were in Jesus before the world was, and all come from him. So now you, being translated from the law dispensation, and having by experience been brought into the wonderful light of the gospel kingdom, no more have to walk through the valley of the shadow of death, or law dispensation, but Jesus has arisen unto you with healing in his wings. "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." The natural sun gives light, strength and warmth to all the children of Adam, so the Sun of righteousness gives light, life, comfort, warmth, vigor, &c., to all the children of God. The Jews were under the law, which demanded perfect and perpetual obedience. They could not fulfill the law's demands, therefore Jesus had to come. "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer," &c. He magnified the law and made it honorable, fulfilled its demands, and the law was changed from a dispensation of death to a law of forgiveness. For the priesthood being changed, there was made of necessity a change of the law, says Paul. When you transgressed under the law there was no forgiveness, the transgressor

had to die, is the reason it was called the ministration of death. They brought the woman to the Savior, taken in the very act of adultery, and they said, Moses in the law said stone her to death, what do you say? Listen to his answer, all you who raise your dresses like you were afraid your skirts would touch the floor where a poor erring sister or brother had walked, hear the answer of him who spoke as never man spake, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." Listen, you brethren who point scornfully, and curl your lip at the poor one who is overtaken in a fault. All the accusers went out, and Jesus said, Where are thine accusers? Doth no man accuse thee? She said, No man, Lord. Jesus said, Neither do I; go and sin no more. So the essence of the gospel is forgiveness, as set forth in the new covenant, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness," &c.—Heb. viii. 12. In Luke xvii. 3, 4, Jesus said, "Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him." Some say, But there is a sin unto death. So the Bible says, but the dead never beg forgiveness. Only the living want to come into the house out of the snow, rain, dark, wind and sleet. Achan got a goodly Babylonish garment and a golden wedge and hid it under his tent during the law dispensation, and the law demanded his death, so they stoned him to death. Isaiah said, ix. 2, "The people that walked in darkness [under the law] have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." All through the legal night the prophets were telling of the coming of Jesus, and the glory that should follow. So John says, This is the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. Not the natural world that we come into by natural birth, but the spiritual, that we come into by being born again of an incorruptible seed. Peter says, "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently. * * * * Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."—1 Peter i. 10, 11. We are not under the law, but under grace. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage," only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serving one another. Now we have been liberated from the law and its curse, and its natural service, and have spiritual life, spiritual service, spiritual light and glory, all of our sins blotted out, all put away by the sacrifice of the Savior on the tree, for "Christ hath redeemed us from the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Then you say with Peter, "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?"

Your brother in hope of mercy,

ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

SANTA CRUZ, Calif., April 24, 1924.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I was surprised, but very much pleased, to receive a letter from you. I never thought for a moment that I had written anything worthy of a reply, but, as I told you, I enjoyed your letter in the SIGNS to such a degree that I felt impressed to tell you so, thinking you might feel a little en-

couraged thereby. Then, a couple of years ago, when I was in Los Angeles, one of the dearest sisters I ever knew made a visit to New York, and was present at your ordination. She told me a great deal about you, some things from her own judgment, and some that she heard, all were so favorable that I wished to know you, as I do all Baptist ministers who preach the truth as it is in Jesus. Why I should have written is more than I can yet understand. I knew I loved you, because I knew you to be an heir of promise, but loving God's people and telling them of it are different things. He may be willing to listen to my lisping, stammering tongue, but those who have been more deeply taught, who have more fluent tongues, tire, presumably, of those who cannot interest them. I do not mean that they are not esteemed, but they should be silent that others may be heard, those who can instruct as well as comfort. It will be a long while before I go south again, and I am lonesome for the preaching, and for the brethren. One of the brightest evidences I have of being born again is that I love them, yet the many manifestations that I have of it are sweet remembrances, and will cheer and comfort me while reason lasts. But I will not enlarge, all of us sing the same song if with different voices, and we tell the old, old story with the same effect, though in meekness and trembling. I have never had the pleasure of living among my beloved people; in all my nearly seventy-seven years I have not heard as many sermons; but for the past sixty of them God has been with me, even when I thought I was alone. I have passed through fiery trials in that period, and I have sinned until I feared his mercy would be withdrawn forever, but I know now that all the mistakes I have made, all the happenings of my life were ordered by him, and for my good and his glory. The Scriptures testify of his goodness and mercy, they also testify of a people chosen and prepared by him, and I praise him that he has given me the understanding to discern who they are, moreover, that nothing can pluck them from him, that if he commences a good work he will perform it against that day. I cannot say to you that I am one of them, but his words give me great comfort; they cause me to stand firmly on the foundation laid for the faith of those whom he loved before the foundation of the world. I know the Spirit mortifies the deeds of my body; at times I have faith to say, I know that my Redeemer liveth, though I know my sinfulness until I realize that great is the mystery of godliness, and how can these things be? Yet the light that lighteth the world shines around me anew, and I have faith to believe, to trust him, and a hope as bright as the midday sun that some day I shall see him and be like him. Sometimes I feel to talk so assuredly to the brethren that I tremble afterward when contemplating it. But Paul had boldness, Thomas doubted and Peter denied him, yet he loved them with an everlasting love, and by his grace, though the chief of sinners, I will trust him though he slay me, praising him every day for the plan of salvation, knowing by sad experience how futile the attempt to do, or say, one thing meritorious in his sight. All my life I have wanted to be good, and all that time I have failed signally. Nothing but the blood of Jesus can save us from our sins, and now if I try to work out my own salvation I am working out that which God has placed within me, and with which I had nothing to do.

I had a letter recently from my pastor, saying he and the entire congregation missed me, and desired my early return. I felt pleased to know it, for our old nature clings to us with great persistency. I told them when I put my letter in that I could not promise to be much help to them, but I would promise never to make any trouble, and I have kept my word. Nothing distresses me more than discord among those who profess to be christians, or who desire to be.

But I am not writing as I would like, am not telling what I really feel, nor can I, and I hope you will overlook anything I have said amiss. I was sorry to learn that you had been sick, and thank God he restored you to be a comforter and an instructor to your congregations, and pray that your labor may not be in vain in the Lord in many ways. I know that a minister has great responsibilities, and may he make you strong in him, that you may measure to the stature of the fullness of Christ. I pray that all of us may be filled with the fullness of God, that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith, that we may be rooted and grounded in love for him and that we may love one another.

I do not ask for a reply, nor will I feel hurt if I do not get one, but if you have the time and inclination I shall be more than pleased to read it.

With love in the Lord, your unworthy sister,

MARY E. WRIGHT.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Nov. 11, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have for some time been a firm believer in the sovereignty of God, unlimited in the execution and absolute in all things, and lately have felt impressed to write a few lines on the subject. This morning while reading one of W. J. Bryan's articles, where he makes use of these words, "Christ cannot be forced upon one who does not want him," and further tries to disprove, or qualify the power of God by quoting, "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." At the first reading I was astonished at such a remark by the noted writer, but not at all surprised when I remembered that it is said that the preaching of Christ, the power of God, unto some, the unbeliever, the unregenerated, the "uncalled" (if you please) a stumbling-block, foolishness, but unto the believer, the regenerated, the born of God, the called, the power and the wisdom of God. It is further stated that many wise men after the flesh are called, but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and further, "that no flesh should glory in his presence" (by making themselves willing to "accept Christ"), or in any way merit any claim in the sovereign will and power of God in our salvation. "But of him [God] are ye in Christ Jesus, who [Christ Jesus] of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that according as it is written, He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord," for he is the power unqualified of God unto salvation. The same and only power Paul said he was only determined to know, Christ, a gift of God, who giveth us all things freely, who was ordained to this end before the world began. Then if we are to create a willingness to accept Christ, the power of God in our salvation, we are to that degree self-righteous, and if so, what becomes of the Scripture before quoted, He is our righteousness, &c.? If we possess the power to accept or reject the will of Christ, the Son and power of God, do we not set at naught, or impair,

the wisdom of God by the uncertainty of our willingness? Then what truth is there in the Scripture, Now are we sure that thou knoweth all things; and, known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world; and, I am God, and change not? Is it possible to purchase God's love, and merit his favor by creature ability, by acts of obedience, when it is written, We are saved by grace, through faith, and that (faith) not of ourselves, but the gift of God? The most pleasure I find in reading and meditating on the Scripture is in believing and trusting in the assurance of the absolute sovereignty of God in all things, since I believe in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, without the aid of any counsel or help, and that he has a wise and divine purpose in the creation, and that his plans and decrees have never changed; if so, we would have long since been "consumed," and that he was infinitely perfect in his wisdom and will, since he worketh all things after the counsel of his will. Though we may murmur, and wonder why this and that, yet we dare not, or have not the right, to say, Jehovah, why doeth thou? But believing he hath the same power as the potter over the lump of clay, and that he hath power to bring light out of darkness and strength out of weakness, that he can work and none can hinder, and that all power in earth and heaven is given unto him, and he is Alpha and Omega, and his eternal purposes have been, are being and will ever continue to be fulfilled through all time and eternity. If not, he is not perfect in all his attributes, or has failed in his designs. Either would be our ruin. God's sovereignty, I believe and trust in it. Search the Scriptures, dear reader, for in them (that is, by obeying them) you may think you have eternal life, but they (the Scriptures) are they that testifieth of him (God) and his sovereign power in all things. They teach of his unsearchable riches, of his greatness in goodness, of his richness in grace, love and mercy, that was given, not bought, in the covenant of redemption, designed in the form of his Son Jesus Christ, as a Lamb slain for our sins from before the foundation of the world, and in the fullness of time Christ, the power of God unto salvation, was made manifest, not to do his own will, but that of his Father that sent him, to finish the work that God had decreed should be done for the salvation of his people from their sins, and when he hung his head while dying on the cross, and said, "It is finished," I verily believe that then and there was consummated the salvation of all the saints of God, and of all he came to save not one will be lost, but all the Father hath given him will be saved. To believe otherwise is to doubt the efficacy of his blood, the sovereignty of God's will in the matter, and since there is to be no more sacrifice for sin, and there is no other plan of salvation offered for sinners, and none for the self-made righteous, it seems that heaven, with all its blessed eternal assurance, might be a failure, but to believe in the unlimited power and sovereignty of God, who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast, who is perfect, invincible, immutable, omniscient, all-wise, who justly executes his firm decrees with love and longsuffering, is a solace, a comfort, a joy to the poor, trembling sinner, who knows his weakness, who realizes he is nothing, and less than nothing, altogether vanity, who only hopes and trusts that God remembered him in the covenant of redemption, and that he still loves and cares for us, and by his grace

and mercy we may after death be carried home to heaven, where we can praise his name more fully for evermore.

Farewell.

Your brother in hope,

L. A. BOAZ.

DID CHRIST DIE IN VAIN?

DEAR PEOPLE OF GOD:—I almost shudder to have such thoughts run through my mind. Have I a right to ask such a question? Can any of God's little ones have such an opinion of the all-powerful, holy, loving Savior, as to believe that Jesus would die in vain for billions of people, or even for one person? Yet I heard a well educated minister (Missionary) say in the pulpit, "Christ died in vain for many." He repeated the sentence several times in his discourse: "Christ died in vain for many." He died for every one, but billions are lost. The loss was not Christ's fault, but man's fault. Now, this would mean that Christ died with the desire and hope that his death would save every one, but alas, it failed, such a sad, awful failure. The world was about four thousand years old from Adam to Christ's death. Millions of people had lived and died before Christ came in the flesh. Why should he be required to die for any of them who had lived a wicked life and died without hope? Would not that be a hypocritical pretense? Is Christ a hypocrite? Very few well informed men or women thirty-three years old (Christ's life in the flesh) in Christ's day, or any other day, believed that Christ's death would save everybody. Then why should Christ, who knew all things, even the secret thoughts of men, believe such a doctrine? If our learned ministers of this day know that millions have died without hope, and that millions more will die without hope if the world is the hope of man for many more years, then why, if neither man nor Christ believed in a universal salvation, would the all-wise God ask Jesus to die in vain, or why would Jesus be willing to die in vain for millions, or one? Is not such preaching blasphemy? When millions had already been lost before Jesus died, why did he die for them? (Cain, Pharaoh, Judas, &c.) How can any one use such language without shame and a mental shock? Did God and Christ try to save everybody, and then let the devil get the most of them? If so, who is the more powerful, the more wise and skillful? Poor, ignorant, vainglorious man would charge the all-wise, all-powerful God with a plan of salvation that is a failure—a plan that any common man would know beforehand would be a failure; a plan that many men are entreating God to improve. Then, after charging God with such a flimsy plan, or system of salvation, one that men are continually imploring him to improve, they will bow down and claim to worship him, worship a failure, worship a god whose plan of salvation might be improved if he would listen to man, worship one whose power and skill is so limited that he saves but a small per cent. of all he tried to save. Now, this same ignorant man, who worships "The unknown God" (unknown to him) claims to be a help savior, and has invented many plans and systems of salvation to help God and Christ save those that would be lost without their help. But these man-helps are all failures. Why are man's helps failures? Because man by worldly wisdom knows not God. Those who know God

do not charge him with incompetency, mistakes and failures. The plan of salvation is spiritual, made in the spirit world, perfect and complete, and needs not the help of man, neither can man change it. Christ did not die in vain. He is a full and complete Savior. Man is not a savior, or a help savior. Such awful misconceptions of man's power. Jesus trod the wine-press alone. His blood was the only holy blood that was shed or found on earth. No other blood has any saving power. Saul was a worldly-wise man, but he knew not God nor Christ, in a spiritual way until after his great vision. So with all other men. This spiritual knowledge comes not as the wisdom of the world, but it comes in a mysterious way, from a mysterious source, as Saul received it. Those who receive this spiritual life and wisdom from this mysterious source do not say that Christ died in vain, but praise his holy name for such a full and free salvation. Christ came not to do his own will, (or make a failure) but to do the will of him that sent him. And this is the will of him that sent him, that of all that the Father gave him he should lose nothing, but should raise it again at the last day. No sacrifice in vain, no failure. Now, my dear believing brethren and sisters, let us worship and praise the all-wise and loving Savior, because the spiritual life and wisdom, which was so mysteriously given us, declares them to be the supreme God and a complete Savior, while man by worldly wisdom may choose and worship any kind of a limited failure that suits his fancy.

In hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ, who did not die in vain,

M. N. WEBB.

WEISER, Idaho.

TEHUACANA, Texas, Dec. 31, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—As we are admonished to speak often one to another and to not neglect the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, I feel I would like to have a little communication with you this morning, for I am so situated that I can neither assemble with the brethren nor speak with them, only through the medium of talking with them on paper. I have received so much enjoyment and satisfaction in reading the good articles in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that I feel I want to speak a few words by way of encouragement and indorsement of what has been written, if the Lord is pleased to take the lead of my mind and guide me in what I may say. I know that if left to myself what I may write will be worthless, but if I could write in a way to edify others as they have edified me it would be the height of my ambition, but I feel so imperfect, weak and sinful that I fear to say anything, yet feel impressed to try and say a little. While I travel the most of my time in the valley of doubt and fear, yet I sometimes have a little space of rejoicing in the Savior's love, and feel to say that I know my Redeemer liveth, and that the Lord is my shepherd and I shall not want. Then again I am left to grope and wander in the dark, and am like the crane and the swallow, I chatter, and I am made to mourn as a dove bereft of its mate; then again I am made to hear the voice of my Beloved, who cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills; then I can feel that I have found him whom my soul loveth, and can feel that my love has brought me to the banqueting-house and his banner over me is love.

Dear brethren and sisters, write on, for you do not know when you are giving, as

it were, a cup of cold water to a thirsty, wayworn traveler in a lonely valley.

If you have them, please send me a bundle of the December 15th number of the SIGNS for sample copies. I am making an effort to get some new subscribers, but do not know what success I will have. The reason I want the December 15th number is because of the editorial in it, for it is such a masterpiece on the subject of predestination.

J. H. BOZEMAN.

RHODELL, W. Va., July 25, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I just received a letter from Elder W. J. May, and he says I can have it printed in the SIGNS if I desire to do so. He is a precious father in Israel, and I feel sure his letters are always worthy a place in our papers. I have been with him several times during the last four years, and I am made to believe the Lord has blessed him with deep understanding and has made him one of the precious fathers in Israel.

I am a member of Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Association, and for nearly twenty years have been trying to preach among the brethren of this country. As I grow older the more I can see of the weakness and unprofitableness of myself. I have read a few articles written by Elder Lefferts on the subject of the end of the world, and surely was proud of his writings. I would be glad to see an article from him on what the second death, spoken of by John in Revelation, represents. May God bless and keep you all by his Spirit.

Your weak brother,

S. L. WOOD.

SHOCK, Ky., July 23, 1924.

DEAR BROTHER WOOD:—I have read your precious letter three times and am now writing you, or rather trying to do so. My mind has been, and is, rambling over the blessed truths of the Scriptures, enjoying, to some degree at least, the sweet comfort and consolation that we find only at the feet of Jesus; then and there we are clothed and in our right mind.

Brother Wood, no mortal tongue can tell my feelings and sufferings of mind these many lonesome months (about twenty) that I have been shut in away from you brethren, sisters and the heavenly family, where my treasure is, and, of course, if so my heart also. I often think of it, and sometimes speak of it, as the miserable life I am living, but rightly consider it is the miserable death I am dying.

My dear brother in gospel bonds, my mind has been much exercised for a few days upon some points in the narrative of Gideon and his army of thirty-two thousand, and I have decided to mention a few of my thoughts to you, and they shall be subject to your criticism and correction. Of course this narrative, with its corresponding texts, draws our mind to the church of God, the gospel kingdom here in its time state, especially to the ministerial force, or the gifts of the body, the church of Jesus Christ. I can but drop a few hints at best. I want right here to mention one of those corresponding texts, which reads as follows: "Let your light so shine before men, that they [men] may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." —Matt. v. 16. The word "so" means "in such a manner." We may, and do, sometimes let our light shine, but not in such a manner that men (God's children) may see our good works, and glorify our Father who is in heaven. I do not know how this is done, unless it is as the three hundred typical servants who lapped

water like a dog, putting their hands to their mouths, and who stood every man in his place and looked every man on the Captain of their salvation and did as he commanded them, threw down their earthly pitchers, that their light might shine with such exceeding brilliancy that the children of God praise, honor and glorify the blessed name of our Father who art in heaven. To me this breaking of these earthly pitchers means to us the self-sacrificing leaving our tender and loving families, often in affliction and destitute circumstances, putting our hand to our mouth, Paul like, laboring with our own hands, not looking every man from his quarter for gain. I sometimes think it may be that we Baptists have too many in the preaching ranks to expect victory at the hand of the Lord. My dear brother, I have in these few years you have been visiting us been looking over these mysterious things seriously and solemnly, I hope, and can conscientiously say I have no doubt that you are one of the number represented by those who threw down their earthly pitchers at the command of the Captain of their salvation, and in so doing let their light so shine before men (men of God) that they may see their good works and glorify our Father who is in heaven. All Israel were too many to carry the ark of God, wherein were such holy and sacred things, only the Levites touched it; there was no need for the puny hand of Uzza to touch it. It cannot fall; no, never; I the Lord do keep it (the church). These anxious Uzzaites need not think the church of God needs their preaching.

I must soon close. I have rambled along and have not at all written as I thought I would. Since I began writing my mind has soared away into an ocean of mysteries that no finite mind can explore. I am afraid you cannot make anything out of this letter, but you may send it to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES if you choose to do so. Write us when you desire. May God bless us.

Yours in love, W. J. MAY.

P. S.—Brother R. T. Hackney passed away this morning, July 23rd.

W. J. M.

SIDNEY, Texas, June 27, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find two dollars to renew my subscription to the dear paper. We have been readers of the SIGNS for ten years or more. My aunt, Mrs. M. A. Carver, has taken it and I got it from her. We much enjoy reading the paper and it is a great comfort to us. We seldom get to hear an Old Baptist preach, but were blessed in hearing Elder Greathouse last summer, and hope he will come to Comanche again this summer, for his preaching was spiritual food to us.

I have written several letters to send to be published, but when I read them over they seemed so imperfect I cast them aside. I want the many good writers to know their letters are very comforting to me. I, too, have had many trials and tribulations, and the writers can tell my experience far better than I can, for I cannot find words to express my thoughts. We are not members of the church, but love the principles and doctrine the paper advocates. I so fully realize my nothingness in the sight of God that while I want to tell you I am a lover of the truth, and also tell of some of the way I am led, I am not able to do so. May you all keep on writing and telling the good news that feeds the hungry soul and comforts the sad and lonely. I hope you will long be spared to publish the paper, and may God's richest blessings attend you through life, is my prayer, if one so weak and imperfect can pray. I crave the prayers of all the dear writers, for I love them all.

(MRS.) W. L. CLEERE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1924.

EDITOR

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

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PROVERBS IX. 1.

"WISDOM hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars."

Some time ago Brother J. C. Kenerly, of Atlanta, Georgia, asked us to present our views in the SIGNS on the above text. We did not do so at the time the request came because we felt we could not, even now we fear to attempt it; however, to say that we have had no thoughts upon the matter at all would not be true, therefore we shall try to present such thoughts as we have and leave them for the judgment of our brother and our readers. This wisdom spoken of by the inspired Solomon is the wisdom of God. The house of wisdom is the church of the living God. It is through the wisdom of God that the church is built and that her seven pillars are hewn out. Knowledge is one thing; wisdom another. The wisdom and the knowledge of God are both infinite, and comprehend all things. But if we confuse knowledge with wisdom in this matter we shall lose the beauty of the text. Wisdom is especially the use to which knowledge is put. Taking it naturally, a man might know many things yet have very little wisdom. On the other hand, a man might be very wise yet have a very limited knowledge. Education may strengthen the mind with knowledge, but it cannot compel that knowledge to be employed wisely. The natural-born mechanic can do marvelous things with a few tools, while a mechanic without natural ability might not do nearly so well with all the modern mechanical appliances; so a really wise man with a little store of knowledge might accomplish great things, wherein a highly educated man might fail because he lacked ability to be wise. We simply mention the above matters to show the distinction between knowledge and wisdom and that they are not at all the same thing. The true and living God is just as infinitely wise as he is infinitely knowing, but our text says particularly that it is through wisdom rather than through knowledge that the church is built. God, foreknowing from eternity all things that should ever come to pass, comprehended all and every condition that should ever befall his children throughout the ages of time. Knowing all things, God knew beforehand just what to do, and when and how to do it in order to establish and to secure forever his holy house, the church. This marvelous wisdom God abundantly displayed when he beforehand blessed his people with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Herein was provison made in the wisdom of God for all the needs of his people in any and all times. It will be noticed that the text says, "Wisdom hath builded her house," not his house. Wisdom is spoken of as being in the feminine, not the masculine, gender. The reason for this is because the unity of Christ Jesus and his people is so vitally and eternally close that the wisdom of the eternal God embodied in Christ Jesus is at the same time the wisdom of the

church also. What belongs to Christ belongs to her, therefore it is her wisdom, further, because it is the wisdom of God manifested in the church and flowing out of the church in a living walk and conversation, bringing about a building of her members up into the spiritual temple. As Paul wrote to the church of Philippi, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." The outward fruit testifying of salvation in a believer's life is due to the Spirit of God working in the soul of the believer. Likewise the wisdom of God in the upbuilding of the church is not brought about by some outward influence brought to bear upon believers, but it is brought about by the Spirit of infinite wisdom working in and through each of the living members of the body of Christ, and working so effectually as to bring them out from the quarry of nature where they have lain dead in trespasses and in sins and fashioning them and building them up into the spiritual house of God. The house of God is not in any way the result of man's work or teaching; not even do man's efforts have a part in it. From the beginning to the end, from foundation-stone to cap-stone, it is entirely the work of God, and wholly the revelation of God's infinite wisdom working its will in and through the members of the body of the Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul told the Athenians when he preached that remarkable sermon on Mar's Hill that the most high God does not dwell in temples made with hands, nor is he worshiped with man's hands.

We now come to the second part of the text, which declares that wisdom has hewn out her seven pillars. In ancient times seven was often regarded as having a mystical significance, or as signifying perfection. For instance, the seven churches in Asia mentioned by John in Revelation do not mean simply seven literal churches, but signify the seven periods of the gospel church, or the entire travel of the gospel church from the days of the apostles to the end of this dispensation. Paul, in writing to Timothy, declared the house of God to be the church, the pillar and ground of truth. In the song of Solomon the bride, or church, is spoken of as coming out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke. We shall not, therefore, contradict the word of God when we say that the church is the pillar of the truth, nor would it be wrong to say that the churches of the saints are the pillars hewn out by wisdom. A pillar is used in a building to support the superstructure, and is itself builded on the foundation. One of the purposes of God in maintaining his church in the midst of an ungodly world is to uphold the truth as well as for it to be supported by the truth. God has nowhere said in the Scriptures that the church is to convert the heathen, or to save the world for Christ, but the Scriptures do abundantly testify that God's object in the church is that it shall be the living witness of his truth. Therefore, the church as a whole being the pillar of truth, the individual and separate churches builded upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets are the pillars. These churches of the saints, beginning with the one organized in the city of Jerusalem during the time of Pentecost spoken of in the second chapter of Acts and continuing on down through the centures to the present time, have been hewn out by divine wisdom. Human efforts and creature wisdom have had nothing whatever to do with hewing out these

pillars. The wisdom of God incarnate in the Lord Jesus Christ is the mighty force that, in the beginning of the gospel age, lighted the lamp of his truth in the hearts of men, and that same wisdom trims those lamps and keeps them burning at the present time. No one of us can keep alive our own soul, and it is equally true that all of us together cannot keep the church alive. God has his own perfect way of carrying on and accomplishing this work. It is not the way that men would do it, nor is it after the advisings of men's thoughts, but it is the only perfect way, and as far above man's way of doing things as the heavens are higher than the earth. Unto the Jerusalem church, the first gospel church ever organized among men, God himself added daily such as should be saved. The members of the church had nothing whatever to do with increasing its membership, or with decreasing it. This was the Lord's work entirely, and it is still the work of God to-day. Through his infinite and unerring wisdom God selects whom he wants to be members of his church, and he, by the Spirit of divine wisdom in the hearts of those individuals, brings them into the church, maintains them in the church as long as it is his will that they should stay there, and when done with them here takes them home to the church triumphant. We see, hence, that truly it is wisdom that has builded the temple of the living God, and that it is indeed his wisdom that hews out the seven pillars of the house, that is, the whole perfect number of the churches of the saints that have been here in the world organized through the Spirit into visible bodies. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." L.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in August (31st). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at his home, Leesburg, Virginia, August 10th, 1924, Robert L. Preston and Miss Genevieve Payne, both of Hamilton, Va.

By the same, at his home, Leesburg, Va., August 10th, 1924, Robert P. Newton and Miss Dorothy H. Preston, both of Hamilton, Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder C. H. Davis was born December 16th, 1849, was united in marriage to Hassie Wimberly, daughter of Elder L. M. Wimberly, about 1880, with whom he lived happily until called from home by death, which sad event occurred July 23rd, 1924. To this union were born five children, two of whom preceded him in death, to wit, John and Edward, and three yet survive him: Mr. Gilbert Davis, of Gordo, Ala., Mrs. Bell, of Florida and Mrs. Walter Hays, of Vernon, Ala. In the death of Elder Davis, his wife has lost a true and devoted husband, one who tried to do everything possible to add to her happiness and enjoyment in this world, but she will have the consolation of knowing that she was to him truly a minister's wife, one who was ever ready to assist him in all his ministerial work. His children have lost a kind and affectionate father. The town of Vernon has lost one of its best citizens and the loss to Hopewell Church, and the Primitive Baptists generally, cannot be estimated now, and from our point of view it seems irreparable. Elder Davis was ordained to the full functions of the gospel ministry on the third Sunday in August, 1895, and from then until his death few men have labored more faithfully, or put forth a greater effort to "magnify that office" than he did. No one, except a minister, will ever know the hardships he bore during the twenty-nine years of his labor as a preacher. Nearly forty years ago the writer and he had a heart to heart talk, in which, for the first time in life, we told each other of our impression to preach, and from that day until his death I felt that I had in him as true a yoke-fellow as it was possible to find, but I always felt that he was far my superior, and ought to work in the lead. Elder Davis was a sound and safe minister contending earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the

saints, believing with all his heart that the only hope of humanity is in the imputed righteousness of him who nineteen hundred years ago sprang out of the earth, when righteousness looked down from heaven. (Psalms lxxxv. 11.) But he has gone, his race is run, and we are left behind, though soon to follow, but that spiritual tie, that three-fold cord of relationship that binds God's children together, can never be severed.

In conclusion, I would say to the family and all sorrowing friends, Let us willingly submit to Him who is too wise to make mistakes, or too good to do wrong.

The writer conducted the burial service at the residence of the deceased, at Vernon, Alabama, in the presence of a large concourse of sorrowing relatives and friends, after which his remains were laid to rest in the City Cemetery.

G. W. BERRY.

Our mother, **Elizabeth B. Leedom,** died June 6th, 1924, aged 83 years, 3 months and 11 days. She was married to George M. Leedom October 29th, 1863, making their life together over sixty years. Father died just six months ago and mother never seemed to fully recover from the shock of his death. She was a great sufferer, but she never complained, but said that it was God's will and all was right. Mother was a member of the Southampton Old School Baptist Church for over sixty years, having been baptized before her marriage by Elder Harding. Her children will always remember that her first desire was to attend the meetings of her church, and her example could well be followed by all of us. She leaves four children, ten grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, of Delmar, Delaware, at our home, in Trenton, N. J. Mother will be greatly missed by her children, but she has fought the good fight, and entered into rest.

Her daughter,

ELIZABETH L. FETTER.

MEETINGS.

Providence permitting, there will be an all day meeting at the Lexington Old School Baptist meetinghouse, Lexington, N. Y., the fifth Sunday in August (31st). All who are seeking the truth are welcome.

GEORGE RUSTON.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, the Lord willing, will meet with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 5th, 6th and 7th, 1924. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is to convene at the residence of W. I. Zinn, near Meriden, Jefferson County, Kansas, on Friday before the second Saturday in September (12th, 13th and 14th), 1924. Meriden is on the A. T. S. F. R. R. Also a motor runs on the L. & T. from Leavenworth to Meriden, two or three times daily. From K. C. take the U. P. train, writing to brother Zinn to be met at Grantville, or phone from Grantville to Meriden. Also busses run from K. C. to Topeka every hour, from whence the A. T. S. F. train leaves for Meriden at 8 a. m. and 5 p. m. For further information write to W. I. Zinn, R. 1, Meriden, Kansas, or address me at 1243 Polk, St., Topeka, Kansas.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church will (God willing) meet at the home of J. E. Livingston, 64 E. Main St., Cobleskill, N. Y., on the second Sunday in September (14th), at 11 a. m. and 2:30 p. m. All who love the truth are welcome. There will be no services at the Yellow Meetinghouse, Roxbury, N. Y.,.on that date.

GEORGE RUSTON.

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will, the Lord willing, meet with the Second Church of Roxbury, at the Yellow Meetinghouse, Roxbury, New York, on Wednesday and Thursday, September 17th and 18th, 1924. Trains will be met at Halcottville Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning. Those coming by automobile will come to Halcottville Tuesday or direct to Yellow Meetinghouse Wednesday. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

ESTHER RUSTON, Clerk.

The South Arkansas Regular Primitive Baptist Association will, the Lord willing, convene with Bethel Church, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 19th, 20th and 21st, 1924. Bethel Church is two miles north of Bearden, Arkansas, on St. Louis, S. W. Railway (Cotton Belt Route). Trains will be met Thursday evening and Friday morning. We invite all peace-loving Predestinarian Baptists, especially ministers, to meet with us.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 15th, 16th and 17th, 1924. Those coming by rail will be met Tuesday before the meeting, at Fairfax Courthouse, between the hours of two and six o'clock. Electric trains via Washington-Virginia Railroad leave the station at Pennsylvania Avenue and 12th St., Washington,

D. C. every hour for Fairfax Courthouse. Please take notice that no trains will be met after six o'clock Tuesday evening, no trains will be met Wednesday morning, nor will any trains be met at any other point than Fairfax Courthouse. Those who expect to come to the meeting will greatly facilitate matters if they will previously notify either Deacon I. H. Thomas, Sterling, Va., or brother C. M. Turman, Arcola, Va. All brethren of our faith and order, especially the ministering brethren, are cordially invited to meet with us.

I. H. THOMAS, Church Clerk.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 92. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1924. NO. 18.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LYLES, Tenn., July 16, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—For the last few days and nights I have been thinking of the wonderful ways of our God. I realize that they are past finding out. This morning I feel that I am a poor sinner, as I almost always feel when I am made to see my own sinful self. I do hope that I have "a good hope," and if so God has given it to me. I have received the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, a paper I have been taking since 1881, and the writers make me feel that I may be comforted with the same comfort wherewith they themselves are comforted of God. I read in the July 1st number the letter from (Oh if I only could feel worthy to say sister) Anna McKinney, and felt I was comforted in her words, "For years and years I have been in deep distress because I could not live as I desire." No one could tell my feelings better than she did. Again, she says, "I seem to be giving account of every idle word, and you who have tried to live righteously know the sickening depths of despair into which I have been plunged." Many other things in her writings were very touching to this poor sinner. I believe that God prepared her to write that communication, and to God belongs all the praise. I was also much comforted by the letter from brother J. D. Robbins, of Enloe, Texas. This boy is a nephew of mine, and has scarcely any natural education, but in speaking of saying cheering words he says: "When I reflect on my own weakness I could never make up my mind to make the attempt, but when I think of the great power that has no boundary, and he who is the fount of every blessing, he who is the fountain of wisdom (and we are only in the shallow part of it), then in his name I might say a word of comfort." This letter is short, but look at the glory shining in the words he has written.

Precious saints, I have not written as I thought, but I want to tell you that I was sitting alone and watching a lot of ants on a floor, and as they were traveling back and forth and met each other they would seemingly salute one another. Not one of them failed to do this. I watched them about one hour, and wondered whether or not they represented the Lord's people. I became deeply interested in them and in their peculiar

travel. I saw one of them lost from the rest. I watched its "bending lines" hunting for the "footsteps of the flock." No one to salute it. What a lone pilgrim! I got my Bible and turned to Proverbs vi. 6. Then I trust I saw the glory of God's wisdom beautifully set forth in his creation of the ant: "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise." Continue on the next verse and you will see that the ant has no guide, overseer or ruler. It was God's wisdom that guided and ruled her. Unspeakable wisdom taught the ant to provide her meat in the summer and gather her food in harvest. This is the work of God in her. "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went." Do you see the wisdom of God in this? Is not the text in your very soul? Abraham went out, but he did not know where he was going. God's children must seek the kingdom of heaven, they know not how. When the glory of God shines in the hearts of the people they do not know how to "perform that which is good." This glory makes them feel the exceeding sinfulness of their vile nature. We do not know what to do, and we cry, Lord, what must we do? Children, we feel there is a path of duty before us, but is it not also a path of thorns? Is it not like sister Anna McKinney says: "You who have tried to live righteously know the sickening depths of despair into which I have been plunged"? How did Abraham go his journey when he did not know whither he went? He could not return, for he, with all the faithful, was not "mindful of that country from whence they came," &c. Surely infinite wisdom guided and ruled them, held them on the predestinated orbit watched by God's eternal eye. If we wander far from the fold, or even one is lost for a time, like the lost ant, he is brought back by the ever-merciful God of all created things. This is the God I desire to worship with all my heart, soul, mind and strength, but I feel that I cannot do this like I desire to. I am made to feel that my God must make me to thus worship him or I will fall at last. Like the old song,

> "I fear at last that I shall fall,
> For if a saint the least of all."

I am in my sixty-ninth year, and have been crippled for twenty-four years back, and besides this bodily affliction I am troubled with neuralgia around the heart. I do not wish to deceive the Lord's dear people; no, no, for I love the Old School Baptists everywhere. I wish I could meet with you all. Surely I feel like saluting every one of you.

I feel I want to tell you a part of a little something before I close. It is a secret that the world does not understand, but it may be that you can condescend down to this poor sinner and bear me witness. In the winter of 1877 was the first time I saw within me that I was an awful sinner before my God. I never before had any trouble over my condition. It was at late bedtime, and my wife and my little babe were asleep. There was nothing to cause me to feel such a burden as had seized my guilty soul. I fled to the law for relief, but it all failed. I tried to hide my feelings, for I did not know what was the matter with me. I felt ruined and forever lost, and that it was just in God to banish me from his presence forever. Some time in May the same year I was cast off from my own works. I had tried my last prayer, and it failed me. So I took my infant babe in my lap, as I thought for

the last time, and my mother told me to pray, but I said I had tried all, and must die and be forever lost. Mother said, "Remember that the darkest hour is just before day." I knew it was dark to me; and I could not think day would ever come to me. There in a moment, while I knew not what was going on, my burden was gone. Since then I have had many trials that I have not time to relate, as I do not wish to weary you. When I hear others talk thus I am made to rejoice for a time. I often am caused to go to my Bible and read with comfort the words, "My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth, and the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." Tell me, is it thus with you?

Do as you feel with this writing. It is not fit for anything, or it seems so to me. It was not written for publication, but if the dear editors think it will be of comfort to any one I am willing to throw in my little mite. I desire the editors, the brethren and sisters to continue to write, and to do all they can to continue the long standing of the SIGNS. I believe that it has been held up by the almighty power of God. The world hates this good paper, and this makes me love it the more. "He is the Rock, his work is perfect." He has written his new and everlasting covenant in the hearts of his people, and it is ordered in all things and sure. Will some of you please write on the subject of the "ant" in Proverbs vi. 6? Pray for me when it is the will of God.

A poor sinner, saved by grace if saved at all,

J. R. HATCHER.

NEWARK, Del., April 8, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—In searching among some of mother's papers I discovered her experience, written to Elder F. A. Chick in the year 1909 or 1910, which I have copied, and hope some time when you have space in the SIGNS you may publish it. Many who personally were acquainted with her request me to have it published.

Your brother in hope,

J. B. MILLER.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR FRIEND:—If you will excuse my pencil I will drop you a few lines in reply to the good letter you sent me. I am pleased to know that you appreciate the books as having belonged to a friend of yours (my brother), for I know he esteemed you highly for the truth's sake, and I appreciate the kind tribute you paid him in your letter to me. Yes, he was a quiet, humble, spiritually-minded man. "Hearts that are great beat never loud; earth knows a little, God the rest." But he has passed away from every sorrow and wearisome pain, to be forever with the Lord. No, I did not intend that narrative for publication, not now; perhaps some time I may be able to write something not quite so rambling and disconnected. In days past you have many times cheered, encouraged and comforted me when you knew it not, thus you were enabled to give the cup of cold water, and I have always wanted to tell you something of the way I have been led, and have done so in a stammering way. To-day I was looking over some papers and old letters, and among them I found a letter from you, written June 12th, 1888. I read it with just as much interest to-day as I did then; an excellent, good letter, replete with wise counsel and

scriptural truths. In it you wrote, "I would like to have the story of your life and of the heart exercises that have developed by all its changes." Now it is strange after twenty-two years I should make the attempt, having forgotten that you ever made the request of me. Surely there is a time to all things. Remember me in your prayers, for I am often weak and weary, and feel that I am far from the fold, but at times have the sweet assurance that I am watched over by the good Shepherd, and in my helplessness the cry goes up, Lord, thou knowest.

For some time I have had a desire to write you, and once I made the attempt, wrote you a long letter, but after reading it over it was so much like the writer it went into the waste-basket, and I thought I would write another, but for three months my time was all taken with my oldest granddaughter Audrey, age fifteen years, who had a serious operation at my house for appendicitis and peritonitis. We had a trained nurse, but I had to assist in relieving her. When she was able to go home I was left very lonely. I miss the companionship of my brother so much; his chair is vacant, as is the couch on which he used to lie and rest while I read to him. A few days ago I picked up my Bible and was reading the twenty-sixth chapter of Matthew, and when I came to the twenty-ninth verse memory carried me back to when I was a girl fifteen years old at school; it was then and there I was first brought to see myself a vile sinner. We were having a recitation in biblical antiquities. I remember that day our lesson treated of the different trees and the vine. Here and there were quotations of Scripture in explaining the lesson to us. Our teacher, who in my estimation was a grand good woman, quoted the twenty-ninth verse of the twenty-sixth chapter of Matthew. While talking to us about Christ eating the Passover with his disciples, all at once a great burden seemed to oppress me, and I wept bitterly, made excuse that I was sick, and the dear good woman never knew the cause of my distress. I sat the recitation out, but never will I forget my feelings that day, and for days that followed. But I was obliged to go on with my school duties and keep up with my classes, and of course to mingle with my girl companions, for I was in a boarding school. Gradually these serious impressions wore away, but never altogether, but do you not see how carefully memory gathers up the golden links of childhood and weaves, as it were, the chain that binds our hearts to the years that have passed away? But to hasten on. After a few years school days were done, then I plunged into gay but good society. I was extremely fond of dancing and theatres, and being passionately fond of music, grand opera held a peculiar fascination for me, but every now and then a feeling of condemnation would come over me and I would think, What does all of this amount to? But I was strictly serving the world, the flesh and the devil. The years rolled on and I was married, and after a period of years my trials were greater than ever and I was aroused time and again to a sense of my sinful condition. I was so wrought up I had no rest day or night, and weary days and sleepless nights almost incapacitated me for attending to my household duties. When I was in such distress a so-called evangelist came to our town, saying he was going to turn the town upside down; and he did. I attended the meetings every night. I was then going to the Presbyterian meetings, but I could get no comfort there, not one

crumb. On one occasion I started to go to "an inquiring meeting," they called it, but when I reached the building I was directed to another "inquiring meeting," and that was to Mr. Coulter's (Elder B. F. Coulter's father's house). I found dear old Elder Grafton there. All seemed glad to see me, but my mind was so troubled I could say but little. I could not utter what I wanted to tell them; words are always so difficult with me I never can say all I feel. So it was then, as it is often with me now, my lips are closed with unuttered thoughts. I know that I often weary myself in silence, and then wonder why I am not understood. I went home that evening, but not to sleep. I never will forget that night. I could not stay in bed, but prostrated myself on the floor, begging for mercy. I watched the dawn, and the sun rise in the east, but it was all utter darkness with me. I got the children off to school and went about my household cares in "darkness that could be felt." Finally I went to the third story, and kneeling down by the foot of a bed, gave up everything as lost, both in this world and in the world to come, when suddenly a great peace came over me, a peace I never could describe. My terrible burden was gone and my whole being was flooded with a calm sweet peace I could not understand. The words came to me, "Peace, perfect peace, in this dark world of sin, the blood of Jesus whispers peace within." I arose from my knees and everything seemed changed,

"O sacred hour, O hallowed spot,
Where love divine just found me;
Wherever falls my distant lot,
My heart will linger round thee."

I went down stairs singing, and for three days I was in possession of that same sweet peace, but soon doubts and fears began to trouble me, and have from that time until now. My depraved sinful nature rises up before me, but I have a little trembling hope that I would not part with for worlds, and I have often longed for a home with the people I love, but I feel far from the exalted opinion I have always had of what a christian should be like. My brother, I would not even be a doorkeeper. At the same time I know that it reads, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," but "unworthy and unclean" still rings in my inmost being.

But to finish my little story. It was not long before I had to go to my mother, who was old and feeble, with all the other old folks of whom you know. I cared for them all, and followed each one to the brink of the river death, until all the old familiar faces were gone, except my brother George and my children. I had hoped that my brother would be spared to me, but He who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind took him home, and has left with me sweet and dear memories. Now I ask myself and wonder why I have written you of this? Harrowing memories have been revived. Knowing that you know a little of my outward life years ago, I thought to tell you a little of the the inward struggles through which I have passed, having never told any one before. I have been shut in, and a great part of the time alone, and have thought of all my part of the sorrows, struggles and heartaches, the sleepless nights and the lightless days of toiling, hoping, dreading, praying, but through it all I feel I have been sustained by an all-wise God, who has led me safely through deep waters.

"Lonely seems the veil of shadows,
Sinks my heart with troubled fear;
Give me faith for clearer vision,
Speak thou, Lord, in words of cheer."

AGNES E. MILLER.

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, July 6, 1924.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—The testimony of men requires two or three witnesses in agreement, and even then it may be unreliable, owing to analogy or collusion. The witness of the Spirit of God is infallible. Speculative reasoning will lead only to confusion, ministering questions rather than godly edifying in the faith. There are times when God reveals to his servants events that are shortly to come to pass, for the good of his children and his own glory. Such revelation cannot fail of fulfillment though there be few that credit it or believe in its divine origin. We have an instance worthy of our consideration recorded in the ninth chapter of Daniel. He was given understanding to read aright the words of the prophet Jeremiah, and the effect of this knowledge was to cause him to turn in prayer to God and plead for the fulfillment of the very thing that God had determined to accomplish. This is evidence of true faith. In the days when our Lord walked on earth many questions were put to him concerning the latter days and the coming of his kingdom. His questioners were referred to the prophecy of Daniel, and in addition certain precepts were laid down for their guidance, to which we all do well to take heed. How often are we admonished, both directly and by parables, to prayer and watchfulness; that we should live daily as though we expected at any moment the coming of our Lord. Paul writes to the Thessalonians, "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." There are those to-day who are zealously trying to frighten men into religious fervor by dire threats of impending disaster, and doubtless some of their specious reasoning may mislead God's little ones. These efforts are all of no avail. The testimony of Daniel is, "None of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." In the book of Revelation it is written again, "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." The very next verse mentions Armageddon. Jesus said, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." "And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them. For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day." If we believe in Jesus Christ and love him we will ever look to and hasten unto that day, not in fear or dread, but in patient watchfulness and prayer, yet let us remember the words of him who cannot lie, "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." "Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

With love in the fellowship of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,

GILBERT B. McCOLL.

MALVERN, Pa., Aug. 6, 1924.

DEAR SISTER ALTHA:—I am afraid you must think your dear and precious letter to me so long ago met with a poor reception, but I hope you can come to believe otherwise. My strength has been for the past year even less than has been the case some of the time since my injuries in 1918–19. I guess you did not know I had a series of mishaps, each one following on the heels of the other. Well, I am very thankful my injuries and troubles have been no worse, and my children have been loving and kind to me in all my trials. I am thankful that God's care and blessings have been an ever-present cause for thankfulness and gratitude, for more and more I realize our extreme weakness and need of being upheld by the everlasting arms of our Savior, and my desire is to know him more fully, whom to know is life everlasting. If we are given the desire to so know and to lean upon him for even the least of our blessings we cannot cringe and murmur if we can only be brought in communion with our precious Savior through the medium of trials and tribulations, and for some there seems to be no other way, while others seem to be naturally possessed of such sweet humility that God's teaching does not have to come to them by hard and grievous trials, but seems to fall on them like the gentle distilling dew at night and their countenances seem to shine with the glory of it. They are the Marys, but I am afraid I am among the Marthas, "troubled about many things," and if the trials I have had have brought me nearer to God I am thankful for them, but they show up the stubborn will I am possessed of and add to the loathing I feel for self, a creature clothed in filthy rags which only the pure and undefiled wedding garment can cover and make acceptable to the Bridegroom. How wonderful it all is, the love that reaches out to poor sinners and beggars, nothing to give, deserving of nothing. It puts a song of joy and thanksgiving in our mouths, a wonder and joy too deep for words to express, and when we are on the mountain we feel no tribulation or sorrow of soul can cast us down. We feel secure in our hope, but not for long, again we go down in the valley, his glorious face seems turned from us and we see ourselves in all our unholy and sinful flesh, such a burden of it. We feel as though we must have been deceived and deluded, that we can have no part in the atoning blood of our Savior, that we hope we do have; we can ascribe to no merit in us, that it is all of grace.

"Oh to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be."

Then again,

"Amazing grace (how sweet the sound),
That saved a wretch like me."

I hope you will be patient with me. I have not written the way I intended, for my thoughts have run ahead of my pen and many errors are the result, but if it has been God's leading it is all right. I was sorry to know you were too ill to get to the association. I seemed to be given strength much above the ordinary to go there, and such a feast of good things it was. The love and harmony that prevailed was wonderful, and it filled me with gratitude that all was so peaceful. I cannot describe what joy the meetings there filled me with, but I did miss Elder Vaughn, and was glad the reports of his serious illness were tempered with the assurance that he was thought to be on the way to recovery. This was also the report of you, from your sister I think it was, and I hope you have been blessed

to go on gaining strength. I had hoped to get to Hopewell once more before this, but my strength has not been equal to my desires since I returned from Southampton. Extend my love to any and all of them with whom I hope I have kinship. Best wishes and love to you and sister. Write me if you can, for it is a great comfort to hear from you.

Your sister in bonds of love and fellowship, I hope,

JOSEPHINE D. HAVILAND.

[THE foregoing good letter was written to sister Altha Drake, of Hopewell, N. J., and forwarded to us for publication.—ED.]

ADAMSTON, W. Va., Aug. 1, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I will once more try and write you a few lines to let you know I am still among the living. It has been on my mind for some time to try and write for the SIGNS once more. My health is bad, and I am so weak and nervous I do not know if you can read this or not. I have experienced much trouble since I last wrote you, and many times it has seemed that it was more than I could bear. I went to my room this morning feeling so distressed I had to shed tears, when these words came to me, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions." I do hope I have a home in my Father's house. This world is a wilderness of woe and is not my home.

I was reading in my SIGNS this morning a letter written by brother R. L. Veazey, and in it he was speaking of the love and mercy of God in giving him his dear family, and he said, "To think that not one of them has been taken from me." Oh how that brought tears to my eyes, for many times have I said the same thing, but I cannot say it any more, for, dear brethren and sisters, since I last wrote to the SIGNS I have lost a dear boy twenty-eight years of age. Oh how hard it was to give him up! He left good evidence that he had been taught of the Lord. When done with earth and toil and pain I hope to meet again my boy in that home so bright and fair, where no pain nor death can enter. Three years ago this fall we left our old home and went to live with one of our sons in a city. No one but God knows how sad my heart was as I left the old home where all my eight children were born and raised. I often sit and look over the city and wonder if there is one Old Baptist in the whole city. I am one alone, yet not alone, for there is One who has promised never to leave nor forsake us. He is my only hope. He says he will be with us in six troubles and in the seventh he will not forsake us.

This may be the last letter I will ever write to our paper. May God be with the editors and all who write for the SIGNS. Remember me at the throne of grace. If any who read this badly written letter care to write me I would be glad to hear from them. If after reading this you think it fit to publish you may do so; if not, cast it aside.

From your sad and lonely sister,

ELIZABETH PHILLIPS.

ASBURY PARK, New Jersey.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I have been requested to write a little about my early experience. If I have one it relates back when I was fourteen years of age. I was brought up in a Baptist home, many preachers were entertained by my father, among them Elders Conklin, Barton, Beebe, Chick, Purrington, Rittenhouse, Hartwell, Durand and Staton. I considered it a great privilege to hear those

wonderful men. I heard Elder Durand the first time he ever preached in Salisbury. Many years elapsed before I had an opportunity to be with the Lord's people. I married a Methodist minister's son and went with him, as I considered it my duty, and for thirty years I never attended an Old School Baptist meeting. I said to Mr. Smith I did not believe it right to go to hear this minister, for I never felt he was telling what I believed, for I seemed to feel like drawing comparisons. I raised seven children. After my husband's death I told my children, Now I am going back to my people, for I felt they were the Lord's people, and I had been separated from them many years. I felt like Ruth, where they were I wanted to be. I went to Nassaongo Association, and Elder McConnell preached upon duty, and Elder Francis upon baptism, and I felt it was for me. I then was taken with pneumonia, and a vision of a barren oak tree stood over me, at first destitute of life, but it revived, roots and all, green leaves hovered over me beautifully, covering me, making me to know that the Lord had a purpose in bringing me from darkness into light, and I felt that if I got well I would tell the church my feelings and ask them if they would have me. I united with the New York Church, and was baptized by Elder McConnell, if I remember rightly, July, 1915, and it has been a delightful home to me. I have not attended meetings very many times since you have been our pastor, but I enjoyed the visits you made to see me. Where love reigns peace is sure to reign, and this has been my feeling. Where strife exists we must examine ourselves.

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord, or no,
Am I his, or am I not?"

This is my constant prayer, that I may always be charitable, for charity is akin to love.

Your sister, I hope,

SARAH A. SMITH.

[SISTER Smith is now in her ninetieth year, but her eye of faith is not dim. It was a sweet privilege to visit with her during the early part of August.—R. L. D.]

ARDMORE, Tennessee.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please accept my check for two dollars, for which renew my subscription for another year. I thank you very much for sending the paper after my time expired, for otherwise I would have missed many articles that to me were rich and gave me much pleasure to read, for I believe the writers were guided by the unerring Spirit, and if the Lord was guiding them we know their writings were food to his poor and afflicted people scattered all over this land, for it was the Lord speaking through them. The Savior says, My sheep know my voice, and a stranger they will not follow. The Lord gives them the will to follow him, for if he left them to wander about in their own way they might want to follow a stranger; but he goes before and leads them, and calls them by name, and when he calls them they know his voice, for he says, My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life. Not if they will accept it, but he absolutely gives them eternal life, and they shall never perish. These words are very consoling to one who is weak and cannot stand alone. He holds him up, or he will surely fall; leads, or he will not follow; gives the hearing ear, or he will never hear his voice. Oh if I knew that he had ever

called me, or had ever led me about, or if I knew I had ever heard his voice, I would say, I am one of his, and would feel sure there is a mansion prepared for me, where I would meet all of his poor and despised (by the world) people, but much loved by the Lord. I am so vile and sinful I know that if I am ever blessed with the privilege of meeting with his dear people it will be by grace alone. Remember me in your prayers.

A friend, W. G. PYLANT.

CARNEGIE, Okla., Dec. 9, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find check for two dollars to renew my subscription to the dear old paper for another year. Words cannot express the encouragement we get out of it, for we have no other way of hearing the truth preached as it is in Christ Jesus. It seems as if we are located here where there are no Old School Predestinarian Baptists near us, only my wife and I. We have watched our dear old paper, thinking some one close to us would write to the SIGNS, but have found none. If there are any of like faith near us we would like to hear from them. We believe in the supreme sovereignty of God, the Creator and Preserver of the universe, and that he does all things according to his will and good pleasure, and that all things work together for good to them that love him, although we worry and complain. Our desire is to get back to our church, where we can attend meetings and mingle with those loved ones and listen to the truth preached, and perhaps we might gather some crumbs that might fall from the Master's table. The Lord's will be done, not ours.

I am a poor unworthy worm of the dust, so do with this as as you like and it will be all right with me, but send the SIGNS along, for I am a poor sinner, saved by grace if saved at all.

Your brother, I hope, J. R. COX.

SIMPSONS, Va., April 26, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel I owe you an apology for my neglect in sending you my check to pay the subscriptions of Noah Vest, of Otey, Va., and my own, for the dear old SIGNS sets forth the doctrine I believe is clearly taught in the divine Book of eternal truth. There are many examples in the Scriptures that prove the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things whatsoever are brought to pass by Him. I feel to hope I believe the eternal God knew just as much about us in the morning of time as he will after we live our lives out here. I believe the eternal God never has consulted man about anything, but he speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. He works all things after the counsel of his own will, and none can say unto him, What doest thou? He will do his will in heaven and upon earth, and none can stay his hand, so, dear brethren, write on, and give the Lord all honor, because man is nothing, and less than nothing. I desire an interest in your prayers.

F. T. SOWERS.

LITTLESTOWN, Pa., Aug. 28, 1924.

DEAR SIRS:—I am writing to ask you to discontinue sending the SIGNS to Georgia D. England, as she passed peacefully away Tuesday, August 26th, and was buried to-day at Lovers' Rock burying-ground. I want to thank you for kindly sending your good paper to her. She loved the good letters and feasted upon them. The print is so large she was able to read it almost to the last. She many times requested me to notify you when she passed away, and to thank you.

Her niece,

(MRS.) HOWARD BASEHOAR.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1924.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT.

THE time has arrived when we can no longer issue the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as a semimonthly publication, so beginning next month (October) it will be issued once each month with twenty-four pages per number instead of twice each month with sixteen pages per number as at present. This change is made necessary because of the high cost of everything, and because so many subscribers have failed to pay their subscriptions each year, and thereby have put a heavier burden upon us than we are able to carry. We have from time to time published notices requesting delinquent subscribers to do what they could toward paying us, also have sent bills to many, with but discouraging results.

There have been several plans talked of during the past two years which were thought would benefit the SIGNS in a financial way, but nothing was done about any of them, and to-day the publishers are no better off financially than if there had been nothing said on the subject.

The SIGNS is one of the very few papers depending alone upon subscriptions to meet the cost of publication, most of them receiving the major portion of their income from advertisements, but as many of our subscribers object to seeing advertising matter in the SIGNS we do not feel we want to try that plan, but hope that by issuing the paper once a month, with the extra pages added, we will have time to do enough commercial printing to place our business upon a paying basis. Certain it is that some change will have to be made. When so many fail to send in their subscriptions it is not to be wondered at that we cannot continue as formerly. Of course we have many subscribers who pay for their paper promptly, and others who not only pay for their own, but send extra money to help send it to "the poor of the flock," and to all such we are thankful and appreciate what they do.

We have tried to keep the SIGNS as a semimonthly publication, but do not feel we can longer continue it as such, and hope the change to a monthly edition may be prospered, and that our friends will support it; if not, it looks very much as though the SIGNS will have to cease publication.

We hope the brethren can see our position in this matter and will do what they can toward helping us to continue the paper, and send in their subscriptions when due, also try and get us new subscribers. A little labor along this line by each subscriber would do much toward lightening our burden. Will YOU see what YOU can do?

J. E. BEEBE & CO.

MATTHEW XXI. 18-22.

"Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away. And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away! Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, it shall be done. And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

We feel to give a few thoughts as they are connected in the Scripture referred to. The first phrase testifies of the activity of Jesus in his personality as a man, and also of the necessity of a natural body for food. We note, as one would expect of natural plants, the botanical nature of the fig-tree, and seeing leaves, must expect fruit to be there also, as fruit succeeds the leaves; but no fruit was there. We here have the power of Jesus manifested in the words spoken to the fig-tree. The fig-tree was a natural plant with natural foliage, and the event occurred in the personal presence of his disciples, which taught them in demonstration of his mighty power, and as natural men his disciples expressed amazement as the fig-tree so soon withered. While we are considering the fig-tree we note that it was in the way for the very purpose, and manifested the power of the Son of God. We will now turn to your experience, and we feel assured that we, too, have some knowledge of a natural existence, and a natural life as man, and all the outward show of man in a religious way is as the foliage on the fig-tree, with no fruit thereon and no virtues of life. Before we can bear fruit we must have the true virtues. So this proves, to our mind, we must have in us life before we can manifest life. This brings to mind that every poor self-righteous sinner is in the way, like the fig-tree, not going to Jesus, but Jesus comes to them, and at the power of his word all their righteousness withers and they stand stripped naked before the Lord, and they believe the power manifested to them and they have no strength. In the realities of total depravity we groan as the word of the Lord rests with us, knowing, according to his word that rests in his heart, that realization testifies of his power to cast us out of the way forever. We have no fruit, no life, hence we are nothing; less than nothing, and vanity. The way brings in a great train of thought. As the heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ, we were chosen in him who is the way of salvation; when he comes into the city of God we are always in the way. He calls us by name and leads out, and we follow him. As the Lord found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness, and led him about and instructed him, so the Lord leads his people. We go as we would not, and walk as we would not, for all crooked ways have been made straight and rough ways made smooth, and when we are in the wilderness we feel sure that the Lord is gone forever and we are left alone. This is but the working of his mighty power and the appointed time to bring us forth from the wilderness, or from darkness to his marvelous light. We note the exclamation of the disciples and the answer of Jesus, and the expression he continued to speak unto them: "If ye have faith, and doubt not." This expression again will draw for proof as to faith. Faith is the gift of God, and to have faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, and with patience wait for it, we have the substance of the virtues of God in us which bear fruit, and it re-

mains, and is not faulty and imperfect, but true holiness. In the virtues of this faith we are, with the groanings of our hearts, made to pray unto God; and as he that knoweth the mind of the Spirit has made intercession we pray acceptably unto God, and are made to feel the manifested answers to the utterances. He testifies unto them if they doubt not. We might pray to have an exceeding high mountain removed because of the obstruction to our view, of fatigue to our natural bodies, but we would be filled with doubt, and our prayer would be of a selfish and carnal lust, which is not the prayer of faith. We pray to God realizing a reverence and hallowedness in our hearts unto his name, and that all power belongs to him, and that he can give or withhold, and the utterances are, "God be merciful to me a sinner." These words are felt more than uttered, and peal forth to give all glory and honor to God, and when we realize our hope of worthiness we are made to express his abundant mercies to us, far beyond our expectations and of a greatness we cannot hope to attain.

Dear reader, as we are submitting these expressions we trust we have some of the virtues referred to, but often feel like being all withered, and dried, with no life; and must confess that if we have the true virtues, it is Christ in us the hope of glory, and we realize truly that he is our guide in the way of all truth and of all our goings forth. That which has been to the strength and comfort of the Lord's people was by the guiding hand of the good Shepherd. Our sins loom up before as great mountains of darkness, and we trust we have hope that God, for Christ's sake, has cast them in the sea of his forgetfulness, to be numbered against us no more forever. These are the mountains that are cast into the sea, according to our understanding. In submitting the above we hope that your hope will feel strengthened and your trust in the Lord confirmed.

C. W. V.

QUESTION ANSWERED.

A FRIEND in Georgia has asked us if it is according to the ancient Baptist rule or order for a member of the church to take advantage of legal exemption to shun paying a debt; that is, if it is right for an Old School Baptist to avail himself of homestead exemption or of the bankruptcy law to avoid payment of a debt. No doubt there are local conditions prevailing in the section where our friend lives that have caused him to ask us this question; perhaps even, our friend may have in mind some particular case. However, it has always been the practice of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to keep clear of any local disturbances that may be prevailing among the churches in certain sections of the country. The SIGNS when started in 1832 by its founder, the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, was designed to contend more for certain points of doctrine than for certain church customs which might be observed locally in certain sections of the country. However, we have no objection to answering our friend to the best of our ability, but want it distinctly understood that we have not any individual in mind nor any specific case, our thoughts are to be considered along general lines only. It was never considered right under the law of Moses for an Israelite to defraud his neighbor, neither is it ever right according to the gospel of Jesus Christ for a brother to

knowingly defraud his brother or his fellow-man. If an Old Baptist should take advantage of the bankruptcy law, homestead exemption, statute of limitations or any other legal exemption in order to get out of paying his just and honest debts, without having made an honest effort to pay them, and with intention to fraudulently deprive his creditors of due compensation, he is doing wrong. Such conduct is dishonest and not to be countenanced by the church. On the other hand, there always have been and always will be instances where a man cannot pay his debts no matter how much he tries to do so. There are, at times, complications which arise in business that throw a man into insolvency decidedly against the man's own inclination. Conditions arise, perhaps, which the man himself has no control over and can in no way avoid; conditions which may make it necessary for him to either be forced into bankruptcy by his creditors or to go into bankruptcy himself. In such a case there is no fraud and no intention to deceive, consequently no dishonesty. In such a case no offense against the church has been committed, and there is no reason why such should be excluded from the church. We believe that no cast-iron rule can be laid down that will cover all cases, and the sum of the whole matter is simply this: That it is wrong to defraud, to deceive or to be dishonest knowingly, and such willful misconduct should be rebuked by the church; but to say in all cases it is wrong for a man to plead legal exemption, is going entirely too far, because there have been instances where honest and upright men have been excused by law from paying their debts with no intention whatever on their part to deceive or to defraud any one. L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

William T. Yard was born April 5th, 1873, and died May 12th, 1924, making his stay on earth 51 years, 1 month and 7 days. He was the son of the late George B. and Mary May Yard. He was married to Miss Mary Voorhees, daughter of T. Romeyn and Martha Blackwell Voorhees, and to this union were born four sons, viz., Miles V., Allen L., Roger W. and Arthur B. Yard. The sons, together with their mother, survive him. He also leaves his mother, a twin brother, John Yard, and two sisters: Mrs. Walter Atchley, of Pennington, N. J., and Mrs. Hannah Hulse, of Allentown, Pa., together with a host of relatives and friends to mourn their loss, but we are made to say, Their loss is his eternal gain. He united with the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, N. J., by a relation of faith, and was baptized by the late Elder F. A. Chick. The life lived by brother Yard was one of devotion, which proved the sincerity of his profession. He was chosen trustee and deacon, which offices he faithfully filled. His life was one of deep meditation, and in church conference his words were of spiritual wisdom. Brother Yard was one who labored faithfully for the welfare of his family, and was also kind and generous to his pastor. The church has lost a faithful member, the family a husband and father and the community a good citizen. May God comfort all who mourn.

His funeral was conducted by the writer, after which his body was laid to rest in the Old School Baptist cemetery, at Hopewell, N. J., witnessed by a host of relatives and friends.

C. W. V.

James Lew Culpepper was born April 25th, 1866, and died July 26th, 1924. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church near Sweet Home, Texas, in July, 1895. He was married to Etna Grant about thirty-six years ago, and to that union were born seven children, of whom three, and his wife preceded him to the grave. He leaves one son and three daughters, all living in San Antonio, Texas, four grandchildren, who were the idols of his heart, and seven sisters, seven brothers and a dear old broken-hearted mother. This is the first of her children to be taken away. He made his home with one of his daughters. Oh! how they will miss his dear, kind and loving countenance. He was shot down at the hands of an assailant, only living a few minutes, and did not know what it was to suffer, but it was hard to have him taken away so suddenly. He was on his way to town to finish buying his clothing to go to three associations in east Texas with his sister Josephine, who had her suit-case packed to go with him. What a sad disappointment for her. We never know what is in store for us. He was loved by all who knew him, and if he ever had an enemy no one knew about it.

Services were held at his home, July 28th, conducted by Elder C. Thomason, of Athens, Texas, attended by many sorrowing relatives and friends who desired to pay their last respects to him. He was buried in San Antonio by the side of his wife. May God bless and give strength to all who grieve in this sad hour.

OLLIE CULPEPPER.

Mrs. Sarah Hunt was born in the State of Mississippi July 21st, 1836, and died near Rice Texas, August 9th, 1924, making her stay on earth 88 years and 19 days. She was married to John Henry Hunt at the age of eighteen years. "Grandma Hunt," as she was generally called, was loved by all who knew her, and always had a kind word for every one. She often said she hoped she would die suddenly, and not have to suffer much, which she did. She leaves to mourn one son, a daughter, several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. May the good Lord comfort all who mourn.

Funeral services were conducted by Mr. Caraway, the Methodist minister at Rice (she having joined that denomination at the age of seventeen years), assisted by the writer, as she was one of our old neighbors and friends. Her body was laid to rest in the beautiful cemetery at Rice, Texas.

SOLON GIPSON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

J. C. Nelson, Ky., $1.00; J. P. Fallin, La , $1.00.

MEETINGS.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is to convene at the residence of W. I. Zinn, near Meriden, Jefferson County, Kansas, on Friday before the second Saturday in September (12th, 13th and 14th), 1924. Meriden is on the A. T. S. F. R. R. Also a motor runs on the L. & T. from Leavenworth to Meriden, two or three times daily. From K. C. take the U. P. train, writing to brother Zinn to be met at Grantville, or phone from Grantville to Meriden. Also busses run from K. C. to Topeka every hour, from whence the A. T. S. F. train leaves for Meriden at 8 a. m. and 5 p. m. For further information write to W. I. Zinn, R. 1, Meriden, Kansas, or address me at 1243 Polk, St., Topeka, Kansas.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church will (God willing) meet at the home of J. E. Livingston, 64 E. Main St., Cobleskill, N. Y., on the second Sunday in September (14th), at 11 a. m. and 2:30 p. m. All who love the truth are welcome. There will be no services at the Yellow Meetinghouse, Roxbury, N. Y., on that date.

GEORGE RUSTON.

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will, the Lord willing, meet with the Second Church of Roxbury, at the Yellow Meetinghouse, Roxbury, New York, on Wednesday and Thursday, September 17th and 18th, 1924. Trains will be met at Halcottville Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning. Those coming by automobile will come to Halcottville Tuesday or direct to Yellow Meetinghouse Wednesday. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

ESTHER RUSTON, Clerk.

The South Arkansas Regular Primitive Baptist Association will, the Lord willing, convene with Bethel Church, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 19th, 20th and 21st, 1924. Bethel Church is two miles north of Bearden, Arkansas, on St. Louis, S. W. Railway (Cotton Belt Route). Trains will be met Thursday evening and Friday morning. We invite all peace-loving Predestinarian Baptists, especially ministers, to meet with us.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator.

The Sulphur Fork Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will hold its seventy-eighth annual session with the church at Pleasant Hope, ten and one-half miles southeast of Bivins, Texas, on the Texas & Pacific R. R., to convene, the Lord willing, on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1924. All peace loving Baptists who believe in God as the sovereign ruler over all things have a cordial invitation to meet with us. Trains will be met Thursday p. m. at Bivins.

J. S. McLEOD, Clerk.

The Sideling Hill and Fairview Churches, situated in Fulton County, Pa., have appointed to hold a joint two days' meeting at Needmore, Pa., Saturday and Sunday, October 11th and 12th. Those coming by rail over either the Baltimore & Ohio or Western Maryland Railroads will be met on Friday before the meeting at Hancock, Md., but it will be necessary for those wishing to be met to previously notify Deacon J. C. Mellott, Needmore, Pa., in order that arrangements may be made. We cordially invite the brethren and ministers of our faith and order to meet with us.

ROLLA MELLOTT, Church Clerk.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 15th, 16th and 17th, 1924. Those coming by rail will be met Tuesday before the meeting, at Fairfax Courthouse, between the hours of two and six o'clock. Electric trains via Washington-Virginia Railroad leave the station at Pennsylvania Avenue and 12th St., Washington,

D. C. every hour for Fairfax Courthouse. Please take notice that no trains will be met after six o'clock Tuesday evening, no trains will be met Wednesday morning, nor will any trains be met at any other point than Fairfax Courthouse. Those who expect to come to the meeting will greatly facilitate matters if they will previously notify either Deacon I. H. Thomas, Sterling, Va., or brother C. M. Turman, Arcola, Va. All brethren of our faith and order, especially the ministering brethren, are cordially invited to meet with us.

I. H. THOMAS, Church Clerk.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS:

Elders R. Lester Dodson, George Ruston, Chas. W. Vaughn.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., Aug. 5, 1924.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I take this way of answering the letters I have received from brethren from different parts of the United States in regard to my article published in the July 15th number of the SIGNS. I had no idea of starting a controversy when I wrote what I did, or I perhaps would not have written it, and indeed I do not know why I wrote in that way, only it is the way it was revealed to me as truth. I very much appreciate the spirit of love and sweet fellowship which those who have written me manifest toward this poor old hell-deserving sinner, whose only hope of salvation is in the finished work of our crucified and risen Redeemer, both in time and eternity. It seems to me that if we are trusting in a God who is only part sovereign, and there are some things in this world which transpire contrary to his inscrutable will, then there is some power which he does not control, and if this is true then what assurance have we that that power will not prevail and cheat us of our hope of seeing him as he is and being like him? To say that these evil things which come upon us in a dark and cloudy day are unnecessary and ought not to be, and that God being all-wise knew it, but it was not his will, although he allowed it, looks to me like charging God with folly. These things that grieve us so much, things that are wrapped in mystery to our sin-darkened, selfish minds, are only some of his mysterious ways the poet Cowper speaks of in the wonderful view he has of the God of the whole earth, in whom we trust, in which he says, "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform," &c. God is of one mind, and none can turn him. I am God, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. If we can prove by his unalterable word that he did predestinate some of the wicked acts of men in fulfilling his prophecies concerning his chosen people, for whom alone the Scriptures were written, then we are satisfied. So let us take God's dealings with Abram, where he said to him, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee." Did Abram wait to find out whether that other country was a better one than the one in which he then was living? No, he

did not even inquire where it was, for God had wrought upon him that degree of faith which causes men in all ages of the world to yield immediate obedience, and he got his household ready, with all his movable possessions, with his brother Lot and family, and their possessions, and they went forth into the land of Canaan whither the Lord had directed him, and the Lord spoke unto Abraham, and said, "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." I am trying in my weak way to show God's loving watchcare over all his little ones, even while they are encompassed about with sore trials and with tempestuous billows rolling over them, while the fire of God's wrath is burning around them. They cry for help and no one is near to help, and they feel lost, with no eye to pity, for the world looks on in derision and only smiles at their tears. Then comes a still small voice; yes, it is so still that the world cannot hear it, but it is loud enough to bring joy and peace to the weary one, for it says, Be not afraid, it is I; and we look up and behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world, and oh how light and free we are. Where are all our fears gone? Jesus has paid it all, and has washed us, and now we are white in the blood of the Lamb, and are rejoicing in his love. Now let us follow Abram in the Lord's dealings with him after these things, meaning the execution of God's mighty power in giving him the victory over the kings who had stolen Lot with his wife and children and all his possessions, and when he was returning he was blessed with Melchizedek king of Salem, priest of the most high God, "and he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thine hands. And he [Abram] gave him tithes of all." Then after all these proofs of God's love and watchcare over him the Lord appeared unto him "in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?" Now Abram's faith was wavering, for God had told him that he would make of him a great nation, and had kept his word in every respect except in this one, he had given Abram no seed, and to his mind God had failed to keep his word, so he asked him, "What wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless?" "Thou hast given me no seed: and, lo, one born in mine house is mine heir." This is the way we reason in this our day; we think the Lord has forgotten to be gracious, and feel that he ought to be better to us if we are his children, and we in our weakness conclude that because he does not give more of the goods of this world to relieve our suffering there is nothing in religion. I remember one time (though with shame) I said, There is no God. My sufferings were great, my dear wife was in the hospital on charity to be operated upon, not expected to live, and I not able to work, though trying to earn a few dimes by selling gliding casters in Bellingham, where my wife was confined in the hospital, and going without my dinner so I could take something home to our three little ones, and at the same time filling my appointments regularly

each month with the church. I do not say I preached for or to them, but I was afraid to go and afraid not to. They, to all appearance, were indifferent, not even coming to see us, and I said, Surely there is no God, and verily believed I had been deceived in it all, until one night, after a very discouraging, cold, rainy day, I came home with but very little for the children, and I sat long after they had gone to bed, thinking what to do. I could neither read the Bible nor sing, or even read the dear old SIGNS, although one had just come that day, and they all laid on the stand where I always kept them close by me, for they were my dearest friends and comforters, outside of my dear Savior, and I never failed to find comfort in them until then; but now all comfort was cut off, and you who have been there know how forsaken and lonely I was. The last prop and stay I thought had failed me, and I thought he was the one who should have redeemed Israel, but now he was dead and laid in the tomb and I was without hope. I picked up the SIGNS and began leafing through it, not realizing what I was doing, until an article caught my eye and I began to read, and it seemed that some one came and sat down beside me. I turned to look, and there sat my dear Savior, with oh such a sad reproachful look in his eyes. I burst out crying, and begged him to forgive me, and we had a glorious meeting right there. I have related this to show how quick we are to lose faith whenever the clouds gather thick around us, when we cannot see clearly the road marked out ahead of us, at least that is the way with me; I do not believe there is any one else so weak in faith. When we stop to think, and reason, these trials are a part of God's predestination, for, Think it not strange concerning the fiery trials that await you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. These trials are the refining pot into which all God's children have been cast, and there are none exempt, for the dross must be burned away before they are fit for the Master's use, and when they are tried they, like Job, do come forth shining in the righteousness of their risen and exalted Redeemer, with their self-righteousness burned away. Now I have taken my own case, because I know it better, to prove that God is the same today as he was in the beginning, and that whatever he has promised will come to pass in his own good time, although he waits until all the laws of nature declare him a failure, as in the case of Abram when the Lord told him that "this shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels, shall be thine heir." Still the Lord tarried, although he took Abram out and told him to look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if he was able to number them, and he said unto him, So shalt thy seed be. And he believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness; not his own righteousness, which was like ours, only filthy rags, but that righteousness which is of faith given him in Christ Jesus our Lord, and that before the world began, and now revealed to him by the Holy Ghost. The Lord said unto him, "I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it," but Abram was doubtful, just as we are, wanting to know for a certainty that he was the one who was to be given this great inheritance. He did not seem to doubt but what God was able to bestow it upon whom he pleased, but was he the one? Did you, dear reader, ever have these same feelings, and want some sign from God to prove to you be-

yond a doubt, for you did not want to run without a message which you felt sure was from God? When Abram was told to make a sacrifice it was not left for him to choose what the sacrifice should consist of, but the very specific articles were told him, and he took them and divided each one in the midst.

I have finally come to the point which was in my mind to talk about, though by a round-about way, for my heart has been filled with the goodness and mercy of God in his faithfulness to Abraham and his wife, for we all are embraced in them as the children of Abraham and heirs of salvation, as he is the father of all the faithful, and the wills and shalls of Jehovah are so unalterably fixed that the children of Israel are driven through fear of death by starvation into this very land, and consequently under bondage. We see Joseph on account of the visions or dreams which God had sent him to tell to his brethren and father, for the express purpose of causing them to hate him with such bitter hatred that they wanted to destroy him, and when they could not kill him, though it was in their hearts to do so, they did the next thing to it, and sold him to the band of spice merchants, who, according to God's predestinated plan, took him into the very place he had determined he should go. Do you suppose it was a joy for Joseph to do God's will? He whom God loved he chastened. We see him kept there in bondage, away from his people and kinsmen, until the time appointed when Joseph's dream was to be fulfilled, when all his brethren, and even his old father and mother, should bow to him. Pharaoh had a dream and none of his astrologers could divine it. Then they thought of Joseph, and he was brought from the prison where he was put by his false accusers, and he told the meaning of Pharaoh's dream, and was chosen governor of all that Pharaoh possessed. Yes, they meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. So Joseph stored up corn and provision against the day of famine, a savior with abundance when his people were brought to the place where they knew they must have help or they would perish, a beautiful type of our Savior's love going into death by false accusers and arising from his prison, the tomb, with sufficient grace for all our needs. Do you suppose Pharaoh would have honored Joseph by making him ruler, and by letting him bring his people into Egypt and giving them the best of his land, if he had known that by so doing his kingdom would be rent and torn as it was? No, indeed not; neither did he know that in persecuting these Hebrews he was doing just what God intended he should do, for God's children have to be driven and persecuted and chastised in order to make them willing to do his will. God said to Pharaoh, For this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, &c. Pharaoh saw that the Hebrews were very prolific and strong, and he got afraid lest they might get too numerous and in time of war overthrow his kingdom, so when another king rose up who did not know Joseph he increased the burdens of Joseph's brethren, and instructed the midwives to destroy all the male children; but they feared God, and so they increased until they were a great nation, but their taskmasters made them serve with such rigor that they began to long for freedom. I would like some one to tell me whether it was in the love and providence of God that they were scourged and harassed by these cruel taskmasters preparing them through the

things they were made to suffer to do his will in coming out of this rich fertile country, or was it just the evil dispositions of those cruel taskmasters and contrary to God's will? In the preservation of Moses' life from the hand of the king who ordered all male children drowned was it an accident that this Egyptian damsel found him and adopted him, or was it according to God's purpose in fitting him for the great work of manifesting God's power even in Moses killing the Egyptian, and in this making him as unfit naturally to go into Egypt as a man could possibly be? he being afraid to go on account of his guilty conscience, knowing they sought his life as a murderer, and who would not feel that any one else would be more suitable to go than he? But this was all arranged so that (as in all cases) all the honor and glory would be given to God, to whom all honor and glory belongs. We see Moses prepared for the Master's use, hear all of his objections overruled, and the assurance given that he is the one chosen of God to go down into Egypt to speak in God's stead. While Aaron was to do the talking, he was to be as God unto him in knowledge, and we see them go down, first to the elders of the children of Israel, telling them all that God had told Moses concerning their deliverance, showing them all the signs which he was to show Pharaoh. When they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their afflictions, they bowed their heads and worshiped, and well they might, when told that God had sent his messengers to deliver them from their long night of weeping. Just think, four hundred years, and we think it a very long time to wait for the daydawn and the light of his countenance if he tarries but a few months, or even as it is in some cases, a few years. Oh how we wept and prayed for deliverance, and thought surely he was clean gone forever, and when deliverance did come oh how we did worship him. But there was still much bitter sorrow and sore affliction ahead of these people, and just at the time appointed, after God had made his power known in Pharaoh, causing him to greatly distress the children of Israel to leave with all their host, goods and chattels, the Egyptian women giving them their jewels and begging them to leave, He brought them out with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, and we see them brought to the Red Sea, to the end of their strength, just as far as they could go. Were you ever there, dear reader? Yes, I know just how you felt; your enemies (sins) behind you, the mountains (the world) on either side, no help there, and certain death ahead. Oh what a dilemma! Is it any wonder they murmured when caught in this death-trap and no way of escape? But deliverance was near, though they did not know it. "Stand still," says Moses, "and see the salvation of the Lord;" and then an impenetrable cloud came between them and Pharaoh's host, hiding them in the clefts of the rock, and then to their wondering gaze the waters of the sea were divided and stood up like a wall, so that they walked through on dry ground, which their enemies assaying to do, were all drowned. Oh what a beautiful picture this brings to our enraptured vision, all our sins washed away in the precious blood of Jesus. What a miraculous deliverance, and just at the right time to save us from certain death; and he waited until all our hope of being saved by any power of man was gone, so that all honor and glory would be given unto the Lord. God promised Abraham that he would

bring his seed back to the land of Canaan and give it to them and to their children for an everlasting possession, and now we see them on their return journey, but, like us, it is through much tribulation (for forty years) that their children do enter into the promised land. His word did not return unto him void, but it prospered and accomplished the thing whereunto he sent it. While we are here in the flesh we only see in part and know in part, but when that which is perfect is come then that which is in part shall be done away and we shall know even as we are known. I rejoice in the fact that the differences of understanding and expounding the Scripture will not change God's wills and shalls concerning us, and I do know that death will bring us all together and all differences will be settled, and God's will and purpose will go on unchanged. So let us be kind one toward another, forbearing one another in love, not making our differences of understanding of any point a test of fellowship. I am willing to leave it right where the Scripture leaves it, for one thing is sure: God knows, and he will work his sovereign will, even if these things are hidden from our sight and understanding. We are saved by grace through faith, and our superior knowledge (if we have any) will not make us any happier, or comfort God's people, unless accompanied with the spirit of love and humility, which is the Spirit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. When we boast of being sounder in the faith, and think we have a better understanding of the Scriptures, and able to teach others, we had better take a look around, for all boasting is excluded, for it is of the flesh and only genders to strife, which generally ends in much trouble and sorrow; so let us consider others better than self, and let God do the exalting, if any is done, thus peace and love will flow on as a river from the throne of God and the Lamb. Let brotherly love continue, for love is the fulfilling of the law, and is the fruit of the Spirit, and denotes life, and eternal life, which is the one essential thing for us to be convinced of in the fruits meet for repentance, and if these proofs are satisfactory then let us be careful how we draw the bar to fellowship, since our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, and our life is hid with Christ in God, who hath given us this hope, which is a good hope, for it is founded on nothing less than Jesus Christ and his righteousness. Again I say, Let brotherly love continue, and may the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ rest, rule and abide with all his little ones, both now and forever. Amen.

DAVIS BURCH.

WHEELING, W. Va., Aug. 19, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing a letter from our dearly beloved sister, Semma E. Corder. It speaks for itself of the fullness of her heart when she wrote, and her desire to share this gift with others. When I finished reading it my heart began to sing in the words of one of our precious hymns,

"Daughter of Zion, from the dust
Lift up thy fallen head;
Again in thy Redeemer trust,
He calls thee from the dead."

I have read it several times, and it has been a feast to me each time. I wanted to send it on sooner, but felt unequal to sending a few lines along with it. I have desired to greet the dear saints once more, and tell them of the Lord's mercy to me, in that I have been given strength as each hour demands. I need not say days, for many times during the day I become very weak, and begin to fear that

I can go no further in the way of waiting upon my poor helpless husband, but each time I am helped to press on in the way of service, until my heart overflows in praise to the Helper of the helpless.

I had a very pleasant surprise a month or two ago, when sister Mildred Durand Gordy, who with her husband and family were passing through Wheeling, called me by phone and asked if she might call to see me. Of course I was willing. In a little while she came with her little babe in her arms. The thought of her as she stood hesitantly in our door brings tears to my old eyes. It would be useless for me to try to describe my feelings. Her presence seemed to say, Peace, be still. I felt peaceful and quiet in her dear presence. She seemed to strengthen me, and there came a desire in my heart to be with her always. She told me that when she thought of meeting me face to face she felt that I would hate her. But it was the reverse, I loved her dearly, and loved her husband and children for her dear sake.

I will close, as I am in a poor frame for writing. I feel to be so abased by this effort to write that I am wondering if I should ever undertake to write to the loved ones, I feel so unworthy and so helpless. Each day brings me a clearer view of my entire nothingness, still I go right along begging the Lord for divine favors. I am truly wretched at times under a sense of the sins I see in myself. Truly sin is mixed with all I say and do. I ask the prayers of all lovers of the Lord.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., July 29, 1924.

MY PRECIOUS SISTER:—My thoughts turn to you this morning, and I feel they are thoughts of peace. "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee."—Psalms cxxxix. 17, 18. Now I have been dwelling in the "dust of the earth" (earthy things) for some time, and you know from experience what a "mean city" it is. I have no doubt but what you have been a dweller there and understand my case, and that is why my heart opens to commune with you, a companion in tribulation, and as Philemon has it, "my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus," but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, he sayeth to the prisoner, Go forth, and a little child (Jesus) leadeth them in that highway of holiness where none but the redeemed walk. How sweet that sounds.

"When I awake, I am still with thee." Drowsiness clothed me with rags, and when the Lord bid me awake and sing and drew me out of the "low dungeon" I was astonished to find that "I am still with thee," and to view (by faith) the King's daughter (the church) brought unto him in raiment of needlework, entering into the King's palace. A day in thy courts is better than a thousand, and I felt that I was abiding fast by his maidens, and their God was my God, and their beautiful garments of salvation my garments, and their peace my peace, all coming from the King of Israel, our Lord and Master, who has said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you," and our joy no man taketh from us, being sealed with that holy Spirit of promise unto the day of redemption. If we sink in deep mire where there is no standing (Psalms lxix. 2) the everlasting arms

are underneath. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill, that he may set him with princes, even with the princes of his people. Was there ever such love as this? His loving-kindness, oh how great.

Dear sister, mayest thou prosper and be in health even as thy soul prospereth (3 John 2), and as you are one who is alive among the "living in Jerusalem" I have no greater joy than to have your christian confidence, and as I sent you only a postal card on receiving your last good letter thought I would write you some things that were on my mind. There is no comfort in speaking or writing to the children of this world about journeying toward Jerusalem, of the great trial of affliction and the abundance of joy felt and known by the children of the kingdom, of our knowledge of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich. They have never been filled with bitterness and made drunken with the wormwood and the gall, and tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come. They love this present world, and if any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him. But the children of the heavenly kingdom are crucified unto the world and the world unto them, they have fellowship with the sufferings of Christ and enter into his glory. He hath hid these precious things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes because it seemed good in his sight. If his sovereign, discriminating grace embrace you and me, dear sister, and our names are written in the ark of the new covenant, our inheritance is incorruptible, our scarlet sins are made white in the blood of the Lamb, and he shall lead us unto living fountains of waters, and wipe away all tears from our eyes. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. I cannot attain unto it. "It is enough: Joseph my son is yet alive." When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.

I have felt for some time that I would like to send a few lines to the SIGNS to let the dear household of God scattered abroad know that this poor Gadarene, on whom the Lord has had compassion, and crowned with his loving-kindness and tender mercies, is still in the land of the living, craving an interest in the prayers of all the saints when the smoke of the incense ascends up before God out of the angel's hand, and if you feel so inclined you may forward this to the editors of the SIGNS, to be at their disposal. I commend this and my life, my all, to Him that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand. May the protecting care of him from whom cometh every good and perfect gift be round about us, dear sister, as the mountains are round about Jerusalem, and that our meditation of him be sweet, is the prayer of a poor little prisoner of hope,

S. E. CORDER.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Aug. 3, 1924.

ELDER J. W. MCCLANAHAN—VERY DEAR BROTHER:—I received your good letter dated July 28th, and while I was glad to hear from you it made me feel sad to learn of your afflictions, and I can truly say that I sympathize very much with you, and hope and pray you may be able to keep up and travel a few more years in the gospel ministry. I feel to believe you have been able to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. What a good and gracious gift that is to poor unworthy

creatures, as we feel to be. Your last letter appealed to me in many expressions as coming from the heart of a true gospel minister having the cause of Christ at heart and having a great desire to serve in the gospel ministry, yet feeling subject to the will of God, for you say in that good letter: "But I feel it is good for me to suffer, that I may learn obedience by my suffering." That thought and expression is sublime, for it manifests a true and humble follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, who "though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." Yes, dear brother McClanahan, I think I know what you mean. I, too, would learn obedience, and sometimes am made willing, even through suffering. I sometimes think I know something of what the prophet Isaiah said of Christ: "A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." All the true followers have to pass through many sorrows and become acquainted with grief, yet in all our afflictions, all our sufferings, all our trials and troubles, the blessed consolation of the gospel is for us; the precious promises of God's word are to strengthen us, to encourage us and to teach us where to put our trust and on what to base our hope: the suffering Son of God clothed in human flesh, Christ and him crucified. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." We cannot always see how this can be, but it is God's word and will prove true, for in all our affliction he was afflicted. Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, all of which is beautifully expressed in that little poem you quoted. But, dear brother, we are both old, and both are diseased, from which we can scarcely hope to be entirely well while we are in this world. We often think of death and dread its pangs, but God hath given us a good hope through grace, "which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail." That hope which is so sure and steadfast strengthens us to even look forward to death in hope. Last summer when I was very sick, not able to do anything, thinking of death, sad and lonely, sick and discouraged, hymn 1265 (Beebe's collection) came to me with much power and sweetness:

> "When thou, my righteous Judge, shalt come
> To fetch thy ransomed people home,
> Shall I among them stand?"

Read the whole hymn. I sang it all alone and it was music to my soul, and "though vilest of them all," as expressed in one of the verses, yet I felt it was my soul's desire, as in the fourth verse:

> "Let me among thy saints be found
> When'er the archangel's trump shall sound,
> To see thy smiling face."

That is heaven to me, to see Jesus as he is, to see Jesus and to feel his love shed abroad in my heart. In his presence is fullness of joy; at his right hand are pleasures for evermore. Paul said it was better to depart and be with Christ. Paul in 1 Thessalonians iv. 13–17 says the final consummation of the resurrection from the dead shall be, "And so shall we ever be with the Lord." "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." When the dead in Christ shall arise first, then we which are alive and remain on the earth (until the second coming of Christ) shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Oh what a comforting hope God has given us in the resurrection of the dead, and then to live with him forever in that heaven of bliss, and there to praise

him forever and give him all the glory for our salvation from sin, from death, from the grave, from hell, to God, to heaven, there with all the ransomed host to praise him forever. Oh that is the heaven I hope and long for, and all through Christ my dear Redeemer, and all by his rich and sovereign grace.

I believe that if you are able to travel you will be at our association. I hope to attend yours.

I am, as ever, yours in hope and fellowship, J. N. BARTLETT.

SOLOMON'S SONG I. 6.

"My mother's children were angry with me; they made me keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept."

DEAR BRETHREN:—Paul said all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. Then we must have the true light to see the meaning of the above quotation. I often feel destitute of this light, but however such weak views as I have I sometimes hand out to my brethren to be tried by divine truth. I have often thought of the great wisdom and grace that was given to the inspired writers to see and set up this ever-blessed kingdom in all of its beauty and glory, and the love of God from all eternity to this bride, the Lamb's wife. She is the object of his love, because John says God is love, and he has spoken to this ever-blessed chosen bride by the mouth of his holy prophets in the most endearing, positive and insuring terms, saying, "Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table." Here David saw the whole family of God complete in Christ her great eternal head, and her children were there also, because it is said in Deuteronomy xxxii. 9, "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." Paul said in Hebrews, concerning this divine arrangement of our God in this vineyard, "In bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren; saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." "And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me." Here we have Israel, God's chosen people. Joseph's brethren were angry with him because Jacob, his father, loved Joseph and made him a coat of many colors, which represents God's people under the law dispensation of divers colors or washings and carnal ordinances. Notwithstanding all their envy Joseph went at the command of his father to see whether it be well with his brethren. Here the meek and mild Joseph, though they envied him, loved them because they were his brethren, and also the Jews, God's own chosen people, went back and followed him no more. I would love to write more about these people while in Egypt, and their deliverance from under the hand of Pharaoh, but time and space forbid. Here the Lord by the mouth of the prophet owns this vineyard, saying, "For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant." Here again are the children that are "like olive plants round about thy table." Again Jesus owns his vineyard when he says, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman." "I am the vine, ye are the branches." As I see it, the manifestation of these branches plainly shows their eternal existence in the parent-vine. David says in Psalms concerning this vineyard, "And the vineyard which thy

right hand hath planted, and the branch that thou madest strong for thyself." Dear brethren, it is to this vineyard and mother's house and table the way-worn child of God loves to come for comfort. When the little child is blessed with the dainties of mother's table and the sweet juice of the fruit of the vine how it nourishes and cherishes the poor drooping soul. It is here we receive the evidence of our eternal inheritance, and it is here our heads are raised above the rough billows of this old world; but these feasts of fat things are only a foretaste of what the Lord has prepared for those who love and serve him. Farewell.

W. L. EDWARDS.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., January, 1924.

MY DEAR FRIENDS:—I have an inclination to write something in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and whether I will be able to produce anything that will be in any way edifying to the readers thereof remains to be seen. I am well aware that unless my mind is led by the Holy Spirit my efforts will be all in vain; if I am led by the carnal mind it will not be at all palatable to the spiritual. I therefore hope, and pray, that the almighty God of the universe, who controls all things, and at all times, will guide my hand in this undertaking. Our ways are in his hand, our course is laid out and we must travel that road, although it may appear rough and thorny at times, nevertheless we must pass through it, and after we have passed it, and we stop and look back and take a retrospective view over the road we have come, we can see the wisdom of the almighty God in leading us that way, as it was the only way for us to go. Any other way would in all probability have been to our hurt, and to our sad inconvenience, and very much to our discomfort, so we should not be too hasty, and jump at conclusions, for it may be to our downfall. I know this to be true of my own experience. We cannot be too careful in our walk through life, for it is full of pitfalls along the road we travel, and we cannot always discern them, until it is too late, until we are virtually into them, then we are in a predicament, and it is only by the help of our Maker we are able to extricate ourselves, and even then we find ourselves very much besmeared. It is better to be at Jesus' feet than to get upon the mountain top, as pride must have a fall and we are liable to get bruised, which makes us mellow; so at his feet is a good and safe place to be. But some may say, How can you get at his feet? I will say that if we depend upon flesh and blood we will never get there, for it is contrary to our carnal mind to seek such a humble and lowly place. We have to look higher than mere man power to get there. It is where I crave to be, even if I cannot always be there. When I stop and meditate for a single moment, and look within this vile, sinful and polluted heart, I am made to wonder how a just and true God can (and do justice to his most high and righteous law) pardon such a vile wretch as I feel myself to be. But hymn number 809 comes to my mind; it is too lengthy to repeat it all; you can read it yourself; it is all good. It commences like this:

> "Where must a weary sinner go,
> But to the sinner's Friend?
> He only can relieve my woe,
> And bid my sorrows end."

What miserable creatures we are; not safe to be left out of God's care, but we are constantly in his care although we do not realize it, at least we do not act so. I am now 82 years old, this 24th of January, and I often wonder why it is that I

(the only one of my parents' five children) am spared lo these many years, and when one of my friends is taken away I ask myself, Why was I not taken, who would be so easily spared, and not missed? But God knows best. I cannot dictate to him. It will all come out right in the end. We cannot improve any upon God's plans. We cannot add to nor take from any of his designs. On a clear night if I go out and look upward and behold the millions of worlds God has placed in this vast universe, and given each its course, I do not ask who put them there, or who directs their course, or who holds them there; it is all God's work, and I can only look on in wonder and amazement. He had a purpose in it all, best known to himself, and each purpose carries out his will. There are some things the natural man, as well as the spiritual being, is under obligation to admit, certain things that God has intended the natural man will know at God's appointed time, and not before; so also the spiritual things, each in God's own appointed time. The natural man will learn the things pertaining to the world, and the spiritual man learn the things pertaining to the spiritual kingdom, according to his will. These are facts that cannot be gainsaid, unless I am very much mistaken. I do not think I am, but if so I am willing to listen to wise counsel, and if wrong the sooner I am corrected the better, for it is a bad thing to be in error, it makes no difference what it is. Wisdom is a very essential qualification, more especially so when we come to deal with spiritual matters. If we only can have wisdom that comes from above, unpolluted wisdom, that does not have a single taint of man's wisdom, we will not go far astray. But how much of the time do we possess such wisdom? With me, especially, it is seldom. It is a sad acknowledgment, but it appears as if the devil goes to bed with me, gets up with me in the morning and follows me wherever I go. I cannot get rid of him, he is a regular tormentor. I can never go to bed at night and say that I am satisfied, for with the day's work there is always something done that should not have been done. I am never satisfied with my day's work; probably I have spoken some little word that has wounded some one's feelings, and it would have been better had I not spoken it. That goes to show we are not our own keepers. If we were perfect and never did any wrong we would have no need of a Savior. Should we not be glad we are sinners? Please do not mistake my meaning. I do not wish to convey the idea that we rejoice in sin; far from it. I wonder many times if there is another mortal upon this earth who possesses such a vile and wicked heart as I. If such there be, then, poor soul, you can to some degree sympathize with poor me. I feel to be a little lower than the lowest of God's "chosen race." I shudder to use that phrase, as I feel it does not belong to me, and I should not use it, but I hope I am one of them. That little word "hope," that precious word, buoys me up. If it were not for hope we would of all mortals be most miserable; more than that, it is a gift from God, from whence all true gifts come. We cannot attain unto it by our own works or efforts; that is what makes it the more pleasurable to us. If we could obtain it through any efforts on our part we would not be able to give all the glory to our heavenly Giver. It would be only a partial glory, or, I might say, no glory at all. God does not divide his glory with another; it is all his, or none at all, as I see it. My

friends, am I right? If I am wrong please tell me, as I want to get upon the right side of this question. It is a serious matter to get astray on this subject. We can only look to a higher power than man for counsel and advice, and I hope he will guide me safely through this sin-cursed world, for it seems so filled with sin. We see it all around us; murders, holdups and robbery upon all sides. We cannot pick up a paper but what we may see an account of these things. Some may boast of this world getting better, but it appears to me to be getting worse every day. I suppose the God of the universe intended it to be so, or it would not be. He has a purpose in it, as he has in all things, and all things work according to his purpose and divine will. We cannot stay his hand; all we can do is be still and recognize him as Lord over all. That is one of the great troubles with us; we cannot always be still; we want to be doing something to help along the cause, but we can do nothing; it will still go on just as he designed it. We cannot make one hair white nor black. We even do not know our own thoughts until they are given us. We do not know what is going to come into our minds five minutes hence, whether good or evil, so what is the use attempting to speculate, or prophesy as to the future? it is all laid out for us. One might as well attempt to calculate mathematically the contingent forms of the tinkling bits of glass in a kaleidoscope as to look into the future and foretell its pattern. God has it all planned out for us, so we might just as well let it alone, as we cannot change it, alter it or improve upon it. Sometimes we think we can.

My friends, I have written enough for this time, such as it is. It is like the writer, very imperfect. I hope you will spread the mantle of charity over all my mistakes, and if anything has been written amiss you will overlook it, and attribute it to the carnal mind, as that is liable to err. I feel to thank the Lord for the many rich blessings he has bestowed upon me from time to time, much more than I deserve; I have not deserved the half of them.

But I must close, as I have already written more than I intended. I hope it will not weary you. Probably I am usurping space that could have been put to better use. Love to all the lovers of the truth. C. S. FETTER.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Nov. 13, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter from Elder L. H. Hardy which I think would be enjoyed by many of the readers of the SIGNS.

Sincerely yours,

D. L. BLACKWELL.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Nov. 4, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER BLACKWELL:—I was made glad yesterday to receive your good letter and to see how the Lord had sustained you. There are few who live to reach the age of ninety-one years, and to think that he has so blessed you that you are not only able to be active at this age, but has given you strength to write so comfortably, and with very little nervousness. Surely you can witness the truth of the saying of the Holy Ghost by Isaiah, "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary, and they shall walk, and not faint."—Isaiah xl. 31. It is good to all of us to see this blessed word of God so beautifully fulfilled in our older brethren and sisters. They have unwaveringly borne the burden and heat of the day, they have seen the deep darkness of

many nights, they have heard the heavy thunderings as the lightnings have flashed out from the thick darkness with threatening destructions, and yet they continue to be and to live in the great God. They are his apostles who testify of his great power to save unto the uttermost them that come to God by him, and to give the testimony that the gates of hell shall not prevail over those whom he has chosen to salvation. These strengthen us to press forward towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. They are our evidence that the goodness and mercy of the Lord endureth forever. We hear them say, "What a sinner I am," and yet we do not see them go down. Why? Surely it is because mercy is the sinner's hope. Mercy was designed from the first for the sinner. The righteous do not need it. They have nothing on which mercy can be bestowed. "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness," is the promise. The only promise the great have that I can find is destruction. The fat cattle I will destroy. Therefore the promise of salvation is to the poor, the humble, the mourning soul, the penitent sinner. The Lord by his almighty grace gives them repentance. That repentance is unto life. No repenting sinner can ever die, for they have this as the gift of God, and the gift of God is eternal life. This life is not in falling nor fallen Adam, it is in His Son. Therefore just as the Son is sure so are those whose life is in him. This makes the life of the penitent sinner as sure as the throne of God. What wonderful blessings our Father has prepared for us and given us in his Son. Satan, the great archfiend, has done all in his power to destroy this blessed Life of ours, but in his doings he has only worked his own destruction, for when he seemed to have the blessed Jesus secure in his satanic power he got his head bruised to death, and the dear Lord triumphed over him. This he did for us who are so very dependent upon him for life and salvation. He is our dependence for salvation from first to last. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."—Acts iv. 14. This is sufficient to tell the whole story of salvation. Therefore all our hope, all our confidence, is in him. Thus man is cut off and can receive no praise for any part of salvation. The glory is the Lord's.

The Lord continue to bless you to the end.

Your brother in a good hope,

L. H. HARDY.

BERLIN, Md., June 8, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel to-night that I would like to write a few lines for the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but whether or not I will be able to set forth what I feel is (like everything else) according to the will of the all-wise God, for I know full well that of myself there is nothing good I can say or do.

"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass."—Isaiah xl. 7. The grass and flowers here spoken of to my mind refer to none other than those born of God, when they are called out of the natural or sinful world and given sight to see just what they are in the sight of God, then it is they are cut off and made to thirst after the Spirit of the all-wise God. When you are in trouble you naturally look for some relief, when thirsty you look for water, and if there is none to be found you will have to go without it and suffer for the want of the same. So it is when the Lord has breathed the breath of life in you and

given you eyes to see, you behold how black and filthy you are, then it is you wither and fade from your own works and put your trust in the Lord. When you were old enough to know there was a right and a wrong way you thought all you had to do was to observe the laws of the land and be honest and all would be right, that when you got older you would get religion and serve God; but alas, you were deceived. You flourished and blossomed in this thought until the heavenly Father had need of you, then it was the Lord blew his breath upon you, giving you the life of the godly, and then you withered away from your own good works and were made to beg for something you had known nothing about before you were made to see how impossible it was for you to be one of God's people by your own good works. Surely the people is grass. Then if we are grass we have no power of ourselves, and when the drought comes we are made to wither and fade, and have no more power to bring the blessings upon us than did the grass to bring the rain upon it. Did not Solomon feel this drought (and made to wither) when he said, Look not upon me, because I am black? Surely the all-wise God of heaven and earth had been dealing with him and showing him how imperfect he was. Was there not a withering away from sin and a praying to God for mercy? Had he not been shown his sins he would not have had to mourn on account of the same. Then it was he was made to hate sin and was being taught of the all-wise God.

Dear editors, do with this as you see fit. You are at liberty to change it in any way you wish, or you are at liberty to cast it out, for I feel it is like the writer, very imperfect and full of mistakes. J. W. S. TIMMONS.

SAN MARCOS, Texas, Sept. 1, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending in my subscription to the SIGNS. I have been a subscriber for about twenty-one years and am not willing to do without it, as I am a shut-in and feast upon all it contains. I have just read the September 1st issue, and every article was good to me. I find the SIGNS to be just as sound as it was thirty years ago. That causes me to praise the Lord for still ruling and keeping us in the good old way. As faithful Abraham was led so are we, by faith in the living God, who controls all things for our good and his glory. I am sixty-one years of age and do not get any better, but it seems to me I get less every day. I am just waiting on the dear Lord to keep me in that narrow path that leads to life everlasting. Often when I get very low and cold I am made to go back to where I hope the good Lord spoke peace to my soul. It was the sweetest peace I ever knew. One thing I do which may not be right is I want every one saved, but God, who made heaven and earth and waters and keeps all, will do just right in everything; nothing is left out.

I was reading this morning and came upon a Scripture I have never heard any one use as a text when preaching, and wish some good brother who feels like it would write upon it. The Scripture is Revelation iii. 15, 16: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." Like the writer.

May the good Lord give us grace in time of need.

(MRS.) W. L. HAWK.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1924.

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ISAIAH LXV. 9, 10.

"AND I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there. And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place to lie down in, for my people that have sought me."

It has been requested that we write on the above Scripture, especially upon the valley of Achor, which is also mentioned by the prophet Hosea. It is always well to remember that much of the Old Testament is made up of types and shadows of better things to come; that is, of New Testament realities; in fact, the whole of the seed of Israel was a type of spiritual Israel, which is spoken of as the seed of the Lord. Not only are they the seed of the Lord, but they are also the seed of Jacob. This seed was to be blessed far above anything that literal Israel enjoyed. They were to serve the Lord with one consent, and the prophet in this chapter declares that they shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble, and before they call God will answer, and while they are yet speaking he will hear. Such a wonderful and peculiar people none could bring forth out of Jacob but God himself, for Jacob himself is spoken of as a worm and but small. But God speaks and says, "I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob," and to accomplish this God must be manifest in the flesh, "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." It behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, and he must be made under the law to bring forth his children, or seed, condemned by the law. The Lord of hosts knew exactly what this meant, that the demands of justice must be fully met, that he must be made sin who knew no sin, and that he must be spit upon and crowned with thorns, and suffer shameful crucifixion to bring them forth. This seed of the blessed of the Lord could not be brought forth unless Jesus, the grain of wheat, fall unto the ground and die. Jesus died, was buried and rose again. He arose as conqueror over death, hell and the grave. The prophet Isaiah in another place declares, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." Thus this seed is brought forth out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains. The Jews said, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours." Jesus the Son of God, who is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, inherits by the will of his Father the mountains of God. These mountains are where spiritual Israel dwells securely, and from whence much help and comfort comes. It was on a mountain that the ark rested. "But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains." The covenant of grace, God's purpose in that covenant, his foreknowledge, predestination, election and the final perseverance of his chosen, determine the security of these "delectable

mountains" from whence the saints obtain help and comfort and view their incorruptible inheritance. Literal Israel dwelt much in the hills and mountains, in fact Jerusalem was built upon and surrounded by mountains, and before the mountains of spiritual Israel were manifest literal Israel must be torn up; as Job says, He overturneth the mountains by the roots. These roots were chiefly the Levitical priesthood which must be before ever the High Priest of our profession, Jesus the true inheritor, is manifest.

"And mine elect shall inherit it." This elect is the election of grace who inherits it through the head Christ Jesus. The promise was given to Abraham that in him and in his seed, meaning Christ, should all the families of the earth be blessed. "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed."

"And my servants shall dwell there." The prophets were servants of the Most High, so also were the apostles. It was to the apostles that Jesus said, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." They were to dwell and reign in the gospel church, sitting on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

"And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks." The meaning of the word "Sharon" is "a plain." It was where cattle found abundance of pasture, and where the royal herds of David grazed and the lovely rose of Sharon was found. Here also the Lord showed marked signs of his displeasure by taking away its fertility, and Sharon became like a wilderness. The district which was called Sharon is not exactly known to-day, but as the desolation of Sharon was a marked disfavor from the Lord to Israel of old, so Sharon becoming a fold of flocks is a marked favor of God unto his children. Literal Sharon, like literal Israel, has disappeared; in fact, had been lost from sight and was not known to the Jews in the time of Christ, but he came, the true "Rose of Sharon," to gather the flocks into one fold, for he said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." Thus Jesus gathers the flocks, feeds them and folds them. So Sharon again becomes a place where pasture is in abundance and where the flocks feed and fold.

"And the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in." As it was upon this portion we were particularly requested to write we shall first consider what the valley of Achor signifies. Achan, the son of Carmi, took of the spoil of Jericho which was accursed, and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and when she went out against the men of Ai she fled before the men of Ai and thirty-six men of Israel were slain. Wherefore the hearts of the people became as water and Joshua rent his clothes. Achan had taken a wedge of gold, two hundred shekels of silver and a Babylonish garment and hid them in the earth in the midst of his tent. Achan was taken, his sons and his daughters, and all he possessed to the valley of Achor and Israel stoned him with stones and burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones, and they raised over them a heap of stones unto this day. The above is the literal account of Achan and the valley of Achor, and while the valley of Achor with its heap of stones has vanished as com-

pletely as Sharon, yet it also has its antitype in the gospel dispensation. There are also those of whom Achan and his brood are a type, who, professing to be in the Spirit and at war with the flesh, which flesh is under the curse, having hidden in the earth in the midst of their tents, which signifies their hearts, the wedge of gold, the silver and the Babylonish garment. As a consequence the church of God is troubled, their hearts are melted and become as water; that is, they are not strong in the faith, they flee before their enemies and their elders rend their clothes, they go in mourning and lie in in the dust of self-abasement. It is impossible for Israel to proceed while Achan is at large. Israel is troubled, Achan is at ease, but judgment must begin at the house of the Lord, and if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear? Let us here notice the course taken by Joshua and the elders of Israel. They did not begin to suspect this or that one, rather they felt in some way that the Lord was wroth with them, therefore they fell with their face towards the earth before the ark of the Lord, the elders putting dust upon their heads. It was unto the Lord they looked, for only in his judgments is there life. It seemed as though he had forsaken his people, or that they were cut off from his favor. Only in the valley of Achor was there a door of hope. To-day he that loves silver or gold will beget his kind, and he whose eyes covet the Babylonish garment will ever have those around him who will love the garments of Babylon. The valley of Achor, which means "trouble," is the place where all such are stoned. But we will come more closely to what the gold, silver and garments signify. Jericho with all its substance was cursed. The Israelites had surrounded it, Achan among them, they had seen its walls fall at the blast of the trumpet, and poor Rahab, with all that she had in the house, saved. Yet Achan took of the accursed thing. The children of God have seen the building of hay, wood and stubble destroyed; yea, all their good works, on which they have felt their house secure, overthrown, and they saved by the grace of God. They have seen this, yet some would turn to the weak and beggarly elements. They have begun in the Spirit, have shouted the shout of victory at the voice of their heavenly Joshua, yet they have taken the wedge of gold and two hundred shekels of silver, which represents "duty faith," with its false security, and a Babylonish garment, which signifies the righteousness of the flesh. From the commencement of the gospel dispensation the church has had times of trouble, when in that very trouble, as in a valley, she has stood and purged herself of Achan and his brood. Even before the destruction of literal Jerusalem, when the sentence of God, as it were, hung over that wicked generation, the beloved James wrote, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire." This judgment and fire came, and Jerusalem then became a heap and Achan and all his brood perished there. This was a door of hope to the troubled brethren, they were freed from the accursed thing and from those who would draw them under the frown of God. The Judaising Achans would have the Gentiles practice circumcision, and some others followed their

own pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth was evil spoken of. While they promised liberty they themselves were the servants of corruption, for of whom a man is overcome, of the same he is brought into bondage. Paul wrote to the Galatians, "Ye did run well; who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. * * * I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be. * * * I would they were even cut off which trouble you." Truly it is an awful thing to be a troubler of Israel. Simon Magus believed and was baptized, yet hid the gold and silver in his heart and desired to buy the power and gift of the Holy Ghost. But Peter said, "Thy money perish with thee. * * * Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God." They that would be under the law must as a consequence be under its curse. The law and its enforcement was a ministration of death, and wherever a person seeks to be justified by works he is fallen from grace. The true Israelites are enabled by God's Spirit to take these troublers of Israel and stone them with the word of God, by the power of the Spirit from the mouth of his saints, like a rock, is as solid as God himself, and it is written, "His place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks." They cast the stones of the law against those who are under its curse. It is death to be under such condemnation, and the law and all its ordinances are heaped upon all such. For he that offendeth in one point is guilty in all. Then Israel sings as in the days of her youth, and the herd, which represents a body of clean beasts, made clean by the perfect work of a crucified Redeemer, can then lie down; yes, what is more, they can chew the cud and look over all the way the Lord has led them, tracing all their blessings to the root of the true vine, Jesus Christ, who is the stone of Israel. In the time of Elder Gilbert Beebe there were those who were not satisfied with the word of God. They had surrounded the Arminian walls and blown the trumpet of the gospel, had seen the walls thrown down on the seventh day, the day when the Lord rested from his labor, yes, they had seen lost sinners like Rahab saved with an everlasting salvation, and knew the apostle by the Holy Ghost had written, "For we which have believed do enter into rest;" that is, like the herd we lie down, but that was not enough for them. Achan takes of the accursed thing, duty faith, which is a false faith, carrying with it certain conditions dependent upon the creature: a righteousness, that is, a right-ways-ness of the creature which can be seen and gloried in before men. These were in the hearts of those Achans, and the brethren stoned them and their missionary zeal under the heap of the law in that day. Then the saints could rest under their own vine and fig-tree, none daring to make them afraid. There have been those who have wanted to be more charitable than God's word requiries, who have been inclined to spare Achan as Saul spared Agag, but doing so has always meant destruction and fleeing before the enemy. Others, for the sake of peace, and perhaps under the false idea of loving them all, have visited and preached to such people and have boasted that they have fellowshiped them all. The result of this compromise in the churches of these men to-day is that the Achans do not hide their stolen spoil

under their own tents, but are with their wedge of duty faith and conditionalism dividing the churches of those who in the past compromised. To these we would say the valley of Achor only is a door of hope. Cut off by the law those who carry legalism into the promised land. When that is done the herd shall lie down in the valley of Achor.

G. R.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. R. Dennison.)

The Tygarts Valley River Association of Old School Primitive Baptists, now in session with the Little Bethel Church, Barbour County, West Virginia, to the several churches of which she is composed, and to all with whom we correspond, sendeth christian salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN in the sweet fellowship of the gospel of God's dear Son:—It is alone through the goodness, mercy and long-suffering of our kind heavenly Father that we are again permitted to meet as an association of churches, messengers and correspondents, to worship, praise and glorify the great Creator, Ruler and Preserver of all things, and to comfort and edify one another, and oh how thankful we should be for the blessed privilege of meeting once more in God's house, where prayer is wont to be made, and where brethren dwell together in unity of the faith and in love. As it is our custom to address you through a Circular Letter, and as that duty, or rather privilege, has fallen on me, I will call your attention to John xvii. 4: "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." Now, dear brethren, this is the language of the dear Savior himself. He says he has glorified the Father on the earth. Surely he did, for the Father had promised eternal life before the world was, and at the time appointed of the Father he sent his only begotten and dearly beloved Son into the world to insure this eternal life to all the elect vessels of mercy, every one embraced in that covenant of grace ordered in all things and sure. Then it was to the glory of the Father that the Son left the shining courts of heaven and came down to this sin-cursed earth and took upon himself the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. It was through his active and passive obedience to the will of the Father that he glorified him on the earth. He says, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Nothing could have been more glorifying to the Father than to make his word sure, and verify his promise of giving eternal life to all the elect, and this the Son in obedience to the will of the Father undertook to do. Then did he do it? Assuredly he did, for he says, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do," and while expiring on the cross, just in the last moment, hear him cry, "It is finished." That is, the redemption and salvation of the church was fully and completely accomplished by his suffering and death; by this one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified (set apart). It was said by the holy angel, "He shall save his people from their sins." And again, He gave his life a ransom for the church, "that he might

sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Oh blessed truth, oh glorious work, that the dear Son of God would die, the just for the unjust, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He died for our offenses and rose again for our justification. Yes, we are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." "We were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, * * * but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot," and all through the everlasting love and mercy of God, and the redemption of Christ Jesus freely bestowed on poor, helpless, sinful creatures. Then, dear brethren, let us ever be found earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, that we may know nothing among the brethren but Christ, and him crucified, that we may receive and hold him a glorious and complete Savior, one that has done all things well, having led captivity captive he hath spoiled death, hell and the grave, triumphing over them in his death. Dear brethren, what a precious Savior we have, one that has done all things for us, and not as some would have it, blocked out the way for us and left it for us to put on the finishing touch and complete the work. May the dear Lord enable us to worship, praise and exalt him a whole and complete Savior.

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen.

J. B. CROSS, Moderator.

J. N. BARTLETT, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Tygarts Valley River Old School, Primitive Baptist Association, in session with Little Bethel Church, Barbour County, West Virginia, to the sister associations with which we correspond, sendeth christian salutation in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN in sweet fellowship of the gospel of God's dear Son:—Your messengers came to us laden with the precious truths of the glorious gospel of the Son of God, proclaiming the free and complete redemption, salvation and glorification of all the elect vessels of mercy, through the finished work of the adorable Redeemer in his suffering, death and resurrection, without the aid of humanly devised institutions claiming to be auxilaries to help the Lord in the conversion and salvation of souls. Dear brethren, we highly appreciate and esteem your correspondence and earnestly desire and solicit a continuation of the same.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Amnon Church, Marion County, West Virginia, commencing on Friday before the last Sunday in August 1925, and continuing three days, when and where we hope to meet your messengers again.

Done by order of the Association.

J. B. CROSS, Moderator.

J. N. BARTLETT, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at his home, Leesburg, Va., Sept. 6th, 1924, Mason Melton, of Lincoln, Va., and Miss Lillian Stipe, of Purcellville, Va.

By Elder R. Lester Dodson, in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse at Warwick, N. Y., May 25th, 1924, Douglas Sisco and Lillian Pearl Dolson, both of Warwick, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Z. M. Beal departed this life July 17th, 1924, at his home, in Bowdoin Centre, Maine, aged eighty-eight years and eleven months. He was born August 19th, 1835, married Miss Phoebe A. Trufant October 3rd, 1854. To this union were born six children, one son and five daughters. He was a kind and loving husband and indulgent parent. His wife and one daughter passed away a few years ago. He leaves one son and four daughters to mourn their loss. He united with the Old School Baptists fifty-three years ago. In 1896 he was ordained to the work of the ministry. The churches he served were blessed with sound doctrine. The Lord enabled him to declare the unsearchable riches of Christ so plainly, whether speaking in the pulpit or in private conversation, that the name of Jesus was exalted above every name that is named. He had been too feeble the last two years to meet with us. We visited him a short time before he passed away, and it was comforting to hear him speak of the things of the kingdom of our God. Jesus the Savior of sinners was his theme, and a few moments before the end came, he raised his hands and said, "Jesus, Jesus." We loved him and esteemed him highly for the truth's sake.

At his request brother George R. Tedford conducted the services at the funeral, to the comfort of the relatives and friends. May God reconcile us all to his will.

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

Rebecca Vermillion Shields was born April 9th, 1845, and died July 16th, 1924, aged 79 years, 3 months and 7 days. She was married at the age of fifteen to John C. Shields, brother Shields having preceded her in death some seven or eight years. To that union were born seven children, five now living, three sons and two daughters, twenty grandchildren and several great-grandchildren. Brother and sister Shields joined the Primitive Baptist Church over thirty years ago. We have not the exact dates when, nor by whom they were baptized. Sister Shields was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and had no confidence in the works of man. She was in feeble health some few years before her death, and was not able to attend meeting during her declining years, but always rejoiced to hear preaching, and to have her brethren and sisters visit her. Just one month before her death brother Moreland preached at her house. She was very weak, but she remarked she could go to sleep hearing preaching. We were impressed at the time she was thinking of that blessed sleep in Jesus, for she said to me she was only waiting for her summons from on high. She was indeed one who lived and showed her faith by her works. She was loved by all who knew her. She was living with her daughter, Mrs. Maggie Markham, at the time of her death, and all was done for her that loving hands could do, and nothing spared for her comfort that could be done. She died of pleurisy, and weakness of old age. Her body was laid to rest in Mt. Olivet Cemetery, Ft. Worth, Texas, by the side of her husband, to wait the resurrection morn. We desire to say to her children, Weep not, for she left evidence she had faith in God, and was ready to be with her dear Savior. You will miss her kindly counsel and loving presence, but remember mother has gone to that blissful home where suffering and pain is no more, and all but love is done away. May God our Savior reconcile us all to his will, is my sincere desire.

Written by one who loved sister Shields very dearly, and esteemed her as a mother in Israel.

MINNIE OFFIL.

Our mother, **Mrs. O. Bedience Hamilton** was born May 15th, 1856, and died December 17th, 1923, aged 67 years, 7 months and 2 days. She was not a member of the visible church, but was a Primitive Baptist believer, and for many years lived in the faith once delivered unto the saints, and never denied the faith, even unto death. She believed in salvation by grace, and grace alone, and that God for Christ's sake had pardoned her sins. Like Paul, she said, Not of any good that I have done, that I am saved, but by his love and mercy wherewith he loved me and gave himself for me. We, the bereaved, mourn our loss, though we mourn not as those without hope, for we believe our loss is her eternal gain, and to her death was only a dream. She expressed herself as being ready to meet her Savior, and the end came like one going to sleep. All was peace, everlasting peace. Oh such wonderful consolation to have faith that cannot be shaken even in death. Let us hope that our faith will stand the test, and we, too, come out victorious in that day. We shall see her no more in the flesh, but by the grace of God we will meet again in the Spirit. She was a devoted wife and a kind and affectionate mother. She leaves to mourn her death husband, five sons, one daughter, three stepsons, a stepdaughter, and one sister, Mrs. Bettie Thomas, of Shiro, Texas.

Written by a stepson,

J. D. HAMILTON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Hulda J. Leonard, N. Y., $4.00; J. W. Groom, Mo., $1.00; Mrs. Peter Allison, Ont., $1.00; Elder J. H. Hammons, Cal., $1.00; C. Owens, Iowa, $1.00; Mrs. E. J. Clary, Ohio, $1.00; W. J. Stephenson, N. C., $3.00; S. C. Abercrombie, Ga., $1.00; Mrs. M. Perry, Ark., $1.00; Josephine Culpepper, Texas, $4.00.

MEETINGS.

The Sulphur Fork Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will hold its seventy-eighth annual session with the church at Pleasant Hope, ten and one-half miles southeast of Bivins, Texas, on the Texas & Pacific R. R., to convene, the Lord willing, on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1924. All peace loving Baptists who believe in God as the sovereign ruler over all things have a cordial invitation to meet with us. Trains will be met Thursday p. m. at Bivins.

J. S. McLEOD, Clerk.

The Sideling Hill and Fairview Churches, situated in Fulton County, Pa., have appointed to hold a joint two days' meeting at Needmore, Pa., Saturday and Sunday, October 11th and 12th. Those coming by rail over either the Baltimore & Ohio or Western Maryland Railroads will be met on Friday before the meeting at Hancock, Md., but it will be necessary for those wishing to be met to previously notify Deacon J. C. Mellott, Needmore, Pa., in order that arrangements may be made. We cordially invite the brethren and ministers of our faith and order to meet with us.

ROLLA MELLOTT, Church Clerk.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 15th, 16th and 17th, 1924. Those coming by rail will be met Tuesday before the meeting, at Fairfax Courthouse, between the hours of two and six o'clock. Electric trains via Washington-Virginia Railroad leave the station at Pennsylvania Avenue and 12th St., Washington, D. C. every hour for Fairfax Courthouse. Please take notice that no trains will be met after six o'clock Tuesday evening, no trains will be met Wednesday morning, nor will any trains be met at any other point than Fairfax Courthouse. Those who expect to come to the meeting will greatly facilitate matters if they will previously notify either Deacon I. H. Thomas, Sterling, Va., or brother C. M. Turman, Arcola, Va. All brethren of our faith and order, especially the ministering brethren, are cordially invited to meet with us.

I. H. THOMAS, Church Clerk.

The Welsh Tract Church has appointed her yearly meeting to begin on Saturday, October 18th, at 2:30 p. m., and continue two days (Saturday and Sunday). Those coming from Philadelphia and Baltimore will please come via B. & O. R. R. Train leaves Philadelphia on Saturday at 1:10 p. m., and Baltimore (Mt. Royal) at 10:18 a. m. Get tickets for Newark, Delaware. A cordial invitation is extended to all who are of our faith and order, and especially any ministers who expect to attend the Corresponding Meeting of Virginia and the Salisbury Association.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Nassaongo Church, near Salisbury, Wicomico Co., Maryland, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1924. Those coming by rail will be met Tuesday before the meeting, at Union Station, Salisbury, Md. All brethren of our faith and order, especially ministering brethren, are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. C. MELLOTT, Moderator.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt 102, Seattle, Wash.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

HYMN BOOKS.

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BAPTIST HISTORY.

MY Scrap History of the Primitive Baptists is mainly a collection of historical notes from original sources, and which have been gathered from a wide range of authors. It is composed principally of notes and extracts, mostly in the form of quotations and condensed statements, of what I believe to be the most correct historical accounts of the Baptists that have come under my notice during the last thirty-five years. Also, there is included much other ecclesiastical matter of importance. I believe this compilation of historical matter will be welcomed by our people. Have received many words of commendation. The work is divided into seven chapters, titled, Position Taken; Beginning With the Birth of Christ; From the Calling of the Gentiles to Constantine; From Constantine to the Reformation; The Reformation and Modern Events to the Baptists in America; The Baptists in America; and Miscellaneous Subjects and Notes. Cloth bound, 380 pages, $2.00, postpaid.

(ELDER) W. S. CRAIG,

KEARNEY, Nebraska.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 92. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1924. NO. 20.

POETRY.

THE LIGHTS ALONG THE SHORE.

I have watched the fading glory
  Of the lights along the shore,
Those far famed in song and story
  In departed days of yore.

Those from lamps all trimmed and burning,
  Shed a gleam across the wave,
Where they thought some struggling seaman
  They could rescue, they could save.

Now these lights are flickering badly,
  Some are red and some are blue;
And the seaman flounders sadly,
  Knowing not what he should do.

Some are beckoning him to danger
  On these rocks and shoals of earth;
That the babe born in the manger
  Was not one of virgin birth.

They accept a little portion
  Of the word so good and true,
Brand the rest as rank distortion,
  "Crucifying Christ anew."

Just because the lamps they carry,
  Like the foolish virgins hold,
Have no oil, and thus they tarry
  To obtain it with their gold.

Thus the Bridegroom comes unheeded,
  When he comes they have no light;
It just fails when it is needed,
  They are children of the night.

But there's light that ne'er will fail us,
  It shines brightest in the dark;
And though winds and waves assail us,
  There's no foundering of the bark.

Like the virgins who were given
  Wisdom's oil and plenteous light,
Saw the Bridegroom come from heaven,
  Come to guide them through the night.

He who calmed the tempests raving,
  Fills the lamps and trims the light,
Till we're safe within the haven,
  Free from rocks and shoals and night.

ALFRED E. TITUS.

TRENTON, New Jersey.

IN THE DAWN.

(JOHN XX. 1.)

The mantel of darkness once more is unfurled,
And night spreads her canopy over the world;
In the forest a silence now reigns supreme,
Save the whisper of trees, or the murmur of stream.
The tongues of the day are silenced and stilled,
But the terrors of midnight our fancies have filled,
Till trembling with fear, like a knave in despair,
When his victim cries out from the empty air,
We fancy the shadows are ghosts of our past,
Who are lurking to seize us and bind us fast.

But Orion, the hunter, doth boldly climb
The steeps of the heavens, sirene and sublime;
And up where the portals of day open wide,
Sweet Venus, the herald of the morning, doth ride.
Soon far in the east faint flushes of light
Are driving in haste the pall of the night,
And across the deep heavens the streamers of day
Are dimming the stars in the great Milky Way.

In glory the monarch of light now appears,
And strikes from our hearts all our doubtings and fears,
How splendid the peaks with their crimson crown
When he from his throne in the sky looks down;
Each flower he touches with scepter of gold

In its homage looks up and its leaves unfold.
On the breast of the sea the waves leaping high
Strive to catch the first glance of his mighty eye,
And the forest and field, the mountain and plain,
Wear the rich royal robes of purple again.
How tenderly heaven now smiles on her world,
When the curtain of night once again is unfurled.

Thus often we stagger through sorrow and pain
To the dawn of our hope and to morning again;
Thus often with crucified Faith on the cross
We suffer in darkness and mourn our great loss,
Till wakened we see in the gray light of dawn,
The sepulchre open, its great stone withdrawn.

HAL MORETON.

ST. JOSEPH, Missouri.

CORRESPONDENCE.

OTTAWA, Kansas.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending the inclosed letter hoping you will publish it if you think best. As I was thinking of the power, majesty, wisdom and greatness of our wonder-working God, and how truly the heavens declare his glory, and the firmament showeth his handiwork, and how he works all things after the counsel of his own will, and his will must be done, my mind running along on this line, I felt, as I often do, the absolute certainty of all this, the words came, We have also a more sure word of prophecy. I got the Bible and read the chapter. How can we find a darker place than our own hearts? It all seemed so wonderful to me. I asked brother Coulbourn to write on it for the SIGNS. As I was reading his letter this came, God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto our fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.

Love to all of like precious faith.

ANNA McKINNEY.

CAPE CHARLES, Va., Aug. 31, 1924.

DEAR SISTER McKINNEY:—Your letter was received some time last week, and much enjoyed, as it does seem with so many miles between us, neither knowing the other, and as you were writing on your sixtieth birthday, there are many years between us in age, so that I am going to say that it must be the same hope that has made you feel an interest in me, and in the letter I wrote for the SIGNS in the spring. I have been thinking of your request that I write a letter for the SIGNS on the subject, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star rise in your hearts," together with the three preceding verses, and two succeeding verses, found in the first chapter of second Peter. After reading your letter I read the whole chapter referred to, and had some little meditations as I thought on the subject, but my mind had for some time seemed to dwell on the parable of the sower, when on anything other than business and natural things, so much so that I asked Elder Ker if he could talk from a portion of this parable last Sunday at Snow Hill, but instead he read the first chapter of second Peter, then the text above mentioned, commencing at the sixteenth verse, and said that after a conversation with me on the exhortations of the apostles he could read no other text, and I thought, Truly God works in a mysterious way his wonders to perform, and thought again of your request, and wish you could have been present to have heard the discourse, which was both comforting and instructing. I thought the sermon must have been for me, and thought I could not attempt to write on it, as I might appear to be copying. But could I copy him if I would? I did not think much more about it until to-day, when your request came back to my mind, and now I find myself having

written the above, and wondering just what I may say next. It is of course obvious that the apostle Peter is here, as the apostles in the other letters, addressing a certain class, and in this case it is "to them that have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ." The object of this letter, or rather the first chapter of it at least, seems to be to put the ones who had obtained this precious faith in remembrance. In remembrance of what? Of this very thing, that they once had the precious faith. How did they get it? Through the righteousness of Christ. So we find here that this faith was a gift, and the apostle exhorting them, putting them in remembrance that it was a precious gift. Peter would also have them know that they had not followed cunningly devised fables in making known the coming of Christ, but that they were eyewitnesses of his majesty. Before Christ all that was known or spoken of him was by prophecy. The prophets were inspired with the thought, with the very truth, that Jesus was to come, and so taught, but did not see him, as did the apostles, in reality. John writes in his gospel, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." We also read that he came to his own, and they received him not, but as many as did rereceive him to them gave he power to become the sons of God. This number, we know not how many, were "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."—John i. 13. The prophets did not have the living proof to establish the fact, or statements they made, as did the apostles, and it would seem that Peter here wants to make clear that now we might be sure; that is, those to whom he was talking, the ones who had received the precious faith that Christ had been born in the flesh, and crucified, and therefore, we have the more sure word of prophecy, which is Christ himself. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." This Scripture by John seems to clearly state just what this sure word of prophecy was that Peter had in mind, for John also says that he, too, beheld his glory, and that He was full of grace and truth. Now Peter says to these people addressed that they will do well to take heed unto this sure word of prophecy, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place. If one should undertake to walk in a dark night, and get lost in the darkness, and should finally behold a light in this darkness, surely he would take heed unto that light, and walk, or be guided, by it, fearing that if he got out from under its reflection he would be again lost, or consumed in darkness. Natural men who are of sound mind all know this, and seek natural or artificial light in the night time. Lighthouses are placed all along the coast to warn the ships, by lighting the points of danger, and the captains of the ships take heed to those lights shining in dark places along the coast, and stay away from the shore. Peter here is exhorting these people of like faith to take heed unto this sure word, take heed unto Christ, who has been made unto them sure and real, whereas in days of old they only had the promise. How long were they to take heed? Until the day dawn; that is, as long as we remain in this time state, this natural world, which is all darkness without Christ, this natural body, or tabernacle, as Peter calls it, and when we have put off this tabernacle, our hope is for the dawn of day,

where we may behold the Day Star in all its glory. May it please the God of all light to so enlighten our minds that we may take heed unto this sure word, Christ, and that he may become a light unto our feet and a lamp unto our pathway, that there will be no danger of forgetting this sure Light and having to be put in remembrance, lest we follow the false teachers and their pernicious ways, as Peter seemed to have in mind in writing this letter.

Instead of sending this letter to the SIGNS I am sending it to you, feeling there is so much in the subject that if I have said anything it is not more than to hint at it.

Submitted in hope and fear, for your consideration.

G. E. COULBOURN.

HIRIAM, Georgia.

DEAR EDITORS:—Having been spared to live amid the alternate joys and sorrows of this brief life for more than threescore years and ten, I feel that the Lord is still of tender mercy and long forbearance, and is very gracious in giving me the evidences upon which rest my feeble hope of what he did for me while I was yet a sinful boy. The Lord works and none can hinder. He caused me to see myself a sinful boy at the age of ten. I would not have been thus disturbed, would have put it behind me if I could. In my eleventh year, I was at a night meeting; had no interest more than just to be there. The first song was, "The day is past and gone." I saw that this applied to me. I left the house in tears, feeling that the night of death was at hand, and that it was not for me to rest in the bosom of God's love. I thought that if I would not go to meeting I could get rid of this trouble. But alas, the unexpected would come often in the midst of my greatest glee and I would leave my playmates and spend the rest of the day alone. Some would say to me, I would not do that way, that is ugly. If they could have known how it was with me just then it would have been a prayer instead of their very modest rebuke. This particular incident served as a caution to me in after life. Poor humans do not know the cause every time.

Another very impressive incident of my life was that of going to a dance with all the expectancy that a seventeen year old boy could have in an occasion of its kind. In due time the dance was on, and everything lovely, but I was soon turned about so that it was nothing to me. I went back home, and scarcely have any knowledge of going, but remember telling my mother that I was very sick. In my eighteenth year I had typhoid fever and was in bed ninety days. After I was able to sit up, an old time Missionary preacher came to see me. He said, "Son, you are going to get well now. They tell me the doctors gave you up several times. Did you think about dying during your sickness?" No sir, I was not bothered about the thought of death. July 9th, 1872, I went to Alabama on a visit, and while there I had remittent fever. My father died July 29th, and my grandmother died August 7th. I was brought home the last of August, and October 8th a sister died. I have never felt these things were visited upon me to make me a better boy, they are the heritage of the flesh, and in keeping with the inevitable decree that man must die. I feel I am to answer for my sins, and not the sins of any other. God is equal in all his ways. In 1873 my sins arose as a mountain on every side; the enemy of souls was behind, the Red

Sea in front. The cleansing efficacy of the atoning blood was at hand, delivered me from the bondage of sin and put a new song in my mouth, even praise to our God, for a period of time Satan was chained in the bottomless pit. It was a day of praise and adoration in the courts of our God, and was more to me than a thousand years besides. It was the millennial reign of Christ within my soul, perfect peace and happiness pervaded the realm, and I wished to have others come and see a man who had told me all things that ever I did. Is not this the Christ the Savior of sinners? This was about two o'clock a. m. I thought I would tell my mother the first thing next morning, but by that time Satan was loosed again, and suggested that I keep this to myself. From that day he has been seeking to destroy my hope, and would have me forget that the Lord is still ever gracious. I joined the Missionary Baptists in October, 1873, but soon became dissatisfied. A conditional salvation, to be rejected or accepted, did not agree with my experience. In 1875 I called for a letter; I did not know what I wanted with it, but knew I could not stay there, and from what I had heard of the Primitive Baptists they were preaching a very dangerous doctrine, which was the cause, as I understood, of none of my people belonging to them. Occasionally I would go to hear them preach, and was pleased to see the unity and brotherly love so manifest among them, but thought their doctrine would not do for me. In May, 1879, while hunting bees, I heard the members singing and went up to the church and sat down in the back seat. Elder I. N. Moon preached from the text, Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment, &c. Every word came to me with power, and in demonstration of the truth that the eye that sees shall not be dim, and the ear that hears shall hearken. I could see Jesus as King in Zion, and believed the gospel of his kingdom. July 4th, 1887, I went home to the house of my friends, and was baptized next day by Elder I. N. Moon in the fellowship of New Harmony Church, Paulding County, Georgia, of which church I am still a member. Many pleasant seasons have been mine, and many reverses, too, but the Lord never forsakes nor leaves alone. He doth not cast off in old age, nor forsake when our strength faileth. "When my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." He gives us strong consolation in the darkest hours, and turns our eyes to the hill from whence cometh our help. It is then we think of a precious jewel up there, a companion, who was a loyal Baptist, a devoted christian, faithful to every trust that becometh the good and virtuous.

"The road may be rough, but it cannot be long,
I'll smooth it with hope and cheer it with song,
I'll travel on till death shall come,
For dying is but going home."

"A land upon whose blissful shore,
There rests no shadow, falls no stain,
There those who meet shall part no more,
And those long parted meet again."

May the Lord be our sufficiency in death, and take us to that blissful clime where congregations never break up and sabbaths never end. If these things be mine, some sweet day the trials of the journey will seem nothing, when I get to the end of the way.

The following is a duplicate of a letter written by a boy in the Navy nineteen years old. Others have suggested, and we agree, that we would like to see it published in your paper. It is very expressive of the fact that God is not dependent upon conditions, age or environ-

ments, is over and above all, holding supreme dominion, consummating his righteous designs as purposed in himself before he said, "Let there be light," without the puny help of man.

Yours in love,

W. A. HARRIS.

U. S. S. MELVILLE, VALLEYJO, Cal., June 7, 1923.

DEAR MOTHER:—I received your most kind and welcome letter the other day, and surely was glad to hear from you, and to get those clippings from the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. They are plain words, and in them is a world of wisdom that everybody does not know. I read them over and over; they are food to me. I want to take the SIGNS, so tell me where I can write to subscribe. It will be of much comfort for me to read the unsearchable riches of God, which he has shed upon his dear children. I do like to read such truth as it contains, for I believe in the very things the writers say; they leave the world out and give the God of heaven the credit, to whom the credit is due, even to Jesus Christ. The holy Comforter, sent by God, testifies of the loving grace of Christ Jesus. My dear mother, this is the kind of a God I want to worship. Before I received the letter I was bothered some about the many sins of my fleshly mind, and how often I was turned off, but, as the dear brother says, God has his strong arms over and all around, and makes me sit in heavenly places in true communion that is in Christ Jesus. He told the truth about the saving of the Lord. He does his will and his own good pleasure, without the puny help of man. Man has nothing to do with it. The God of heaven is all-wise and righteous, and sheds the unsearchable riches of his grace over his people, for whom Christ shed his precious blood. By experience I feel out of my place when I go to some of the so-called churches. I can have more blessings in the corner reading the truth of the word of God than I can by hearing them preach. But I do get a revelation in hearing the preachers that cast the net on the right side of the ship, and they are the ones who through God's plan preach the gospel to his dear people. I am going to keep these clippings and reread them. Sometimes in reading them the love of truth makes me shed tears. I want to protect the banner of God's love. I know he is righteous and does no sin. But my sinful life, the flesh, works against the Spirit and makes me feel I am doing something out of the way. I cannot help temptations, but I believe the Lord will look after me, a poor miserable creature, as I feel myself to be. He knows my faults, and searches my heart. All to him I owe. Sin was a crimson stain, he washed it white as snow. If the people knew how he only helps the poor needy sinner who is in the mire they would leave off the fake religions of man. You say the word "christian" means a true follower of Christ. If we follow him we will lose all pride, and will not think about living in society and joining the fine churches of this earth, and will have the precious Savior to keep us from these things, for he will supply us with the riches of his grace. The Scripture says, Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, but the law came by Moses. This grace does not have to be renewed year by year, for it stands forever. The man was right when he said, Good thoughts and desires never grow in nature's garden. Mother, I read, and think I understand, precious letters the Primitive Baptists have written. Please write and tell me where to get the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Pray for me, that I might have strength to stand on the firm foundation of the truth, and for help to bear me up in my weakness.

Your son,

JEWELL CROKER.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Sept. 15, 1924.

DEAR BROTHER VAUGHN:—Why have you been in my mind all day? Are you a sunken island like me? All last week I was under a terrible heavy, dark cloud, and probably as full of grief as I have ever been at any one time in all my life. I saw myself to be a sunken island, with the boisterous billows of the sea over me and God's waterspouts all about me. This state of things continued until I saw that the sunken islands of the sea are only the tops of the hills and mountains in the waters, which God has placed beyond destruction, and that they go on downward until they all join in the one continent body, and that thus continent is joined to continent, and island to island, to form the one body, the earth. Even so are the little ones joined one to another, and away down in these deep places is where we are so joined that we learn the sweet fellowship of the Spirit, and are led into the fellowship of the Lord Jesus Christ. There in much fear and great trembling we are led to desire the will of God to be done. If we live it is the Lord, and if we die it is the Lord. He is the God of life and of death. The light is but his revelation, and the darkness is his pavilion where he hides his face in sweet communion with his bride. There he teaches her the sweet lessons of his grace and shows her that in him is all her life and her salvation. Satan may be near, and roar as the fierce lion, and make the already troubled soul tremble, but he can do no more than our Father please. When our God has done his will with the typhoon he will say, "Peace, be still." It will obey his voice, for it is his faithful servant. Then the waters will cease to rage, and there will be a great calm, accompanied with the knowledge that that poor tempest-tossed one is delivered safe on the shore of divine mercy, and into the green pastures of the great Shepherd of the sheep. Here they are given to see that they are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand. Here we can trust the Lord. Oh just now we could not trust him, even though the word said, Trust ye in the Lord, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. Is that what we desire? Yes. Where do we experience it? Surely in trusting the Lord. Then why not trust him? The question repeats itself, Why? The poor soul has to answer, I would, but I cannot. That is it. I am as helpless to trust the Lord as I am to make a world. I would, but I cannot do it. It may be in a minute of time that all my confidence is in him, and I cannot see any reason why I had not done this before. It was on the third Sunday in August, 1878, that I had walked ten miles to Old Blounts Creek, in Beaufort County, N. C., and had preached to the people. I ate dinner with one of the brethren, and was walking back to our humble home when I began to question why the Lord had required such hardships of me? There were others who were as able to preach his word as I was, and they had conveyances to go and come, but the burden was on me, who had nothing. I became very stubborn, and felt that the lines had fallen to me in weary places. Presently my mind was taken back through my experience from seven years old up to my deliverance at twenty years old, and through many of the mercies of God after

my deliverance up to that time. When this meditation had ended my whole being was filled with love to God, and my soul was made to praise him for giving me such an easy task to perform. Then I questioned, Why could I not have looked back and remembered all these things before, and not have been so stubborn and rebellious, and angry at the Lord's dealings with me? Then these words came to me, If I go away I will send Him, and when he is come he shall bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Thus for the first time I was given a little understanding of God's sweet promise in giving us the Holy Ghost to be our comforter and guide, to keep us in distress and to shine in us when his blessed day should dawn in our inward parts. It is thus, my brother, that our dear Lord has taught me in all his blessed gospel which he has given me to see, and it is the only way I have understanding in his glorious way. Therefore all the things of his kingdom are hid from me only as he leads me to them and gives me to taste the things he has in store for me. I am given to see that my dark days and the clouds are just as much the blessings of God to me as are the brightest of times and the gentle showers on the newly mown field. How wonderful is our God, and how sure is his blessed love.

I am glad to say that our church is in peace. We received one in December, two in May and one last Saturday. The next church to us has baptized seven this year. We desire to bless the Lord.

I do not want to tire you, so I will close, with lots of love to sister Vaughn and to all the dear ones at Hopewell.

Your little brother in a good hope,

L. H. HARDY.

TOPEKA, Kansas, Sept. 22, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I am sending you the manuscript of our Minutes I feel constrained to write a sketch of our little Association, just past. Through the mercy and blessing of God it was a season of joy in the Lord long to be remembered. We were led to hope for several ministers to visit us, and as one after another wrote of their inability to come we had one disappointment after another. Last year, with a "cloud like a man's hand" hanging over us, we went with drooping heads and downcast spirits, but I think I never witnessed such a reviving season of refreshing as we were made to feel from the very presence of the Lord among us, and the deep, heartfelt joy of it seemed to radiate from every countenance, and we certainly felt that though so cast down we were not yet quite destroyed. So in encouragement we this year looked forward with eagerness for the time to come, and though we felt regret at the absence of some of our "old professors" whom we have regarded as "tall as cedars," and who once walked with us in the way of truth, and also at the failure of other ministers to be with us, yet truly the Lord did not leave us comfortless. When I received a letter from the last Elder we were still expecting saying it was doubtful if he could be here my spirits fell, but the words, Our God will supply all our need, came to me with power. I felt perfectly satisfied, for I realized that it is not always good for children to have all the sweets they crave, and now if it was our Father's will to withhold them from us it was because he saw it best for us, and surely he is, as ever, too wise to err, and truly it did seem that "heaven came down our souls to greet, and glory crowned the mercy-seat" as he made us to realize that all our

springs are in him, and not dependent upon a multitude of preachers, or upon a large assembly, but upon one Preacher, who, giving strength to the weak and power to the faint, did bountifully deal out to us each day our daily bread by the hand of one ministering servant, who though persecuted is not destroyed. The praise and thanksgiving due our ever-present Help can never be more gratefully rendered than by those who have come up out of great tribulation. Never in my recollection have we had so much singing, and the sweetness of the words seemed enhanced by the melody in our hearts to the Lord as we comforted one another with psalms and spiritual songs. So we are encouraged to hope on, and to run with patience the race set before us, looking ever to Jesus as our goal, counting all things but loss if we might win that precious goal. Oh who is there among us who fears the Lord, walking in darkness and having no light in and of ourselves, but would prefer to be numbered with the little flock who have the promise of Christ's presence among them? The little flock, the little city with few men in it, the fewest of all people, yet in the aggregate an innumerable host that no man can number, and compose the train that filled the temple of the Lord, whom the prophet saw "high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple." No room for any other train, whether Sunday-school train or any other "endeavor." His temple is filled with the train who keep him in their hearts and praises high and lifted up above every name that is named. Not one of that bright train will ever be left out. I once read, while waiting in an office, in a worldly magazine, an expression like this, "If I am in the house of God at all I am as the smallest grain of sand used in the construction of a great building." It touched such a responsive feeling in my heart I never forgot it. O, dear people of God, no matter how little I am if I am of that house not made with hands it cannot be "fitly framed together" without me. No matter at what variance we may become here, no matter how far apart we may stray, there in that building of God we will all be fitly framed together, and none will any more pass by even the meanest of his sheep without a look or a word, but the feeblest lamb in Jesus' fold will be fitly framed together with the most favored ones, all one in Christ. Here we have now and then little foretastes of the joys that await us when for a little season our cares and sorrows are lifted from us and we have little sips from the streams of the pure river of water of life, and truly the little tastes from these streams do make glad the city of our God. There, when our skillful Pilot leads us to "anchor beyond the dark sea," as dear old brother Groshong so sweetly sang to us, our quavering old voices will be attuned anew as we ascribe unto our King unceasing praise, honor and glory in that happy land where there are no more sad separations, neither will we learn war any more, and God himself shall wipe the tears from off all faces, and we shall be changed and fashioned like unto his own glorious body. Then we shall see him as he is and shall be satisfied, and no more take the parting hand, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Dear publishers, many are the expressions of regret at the necessity that compelled you to curtail the SIGNS, and how deplorable it is that some are so neglectful of their just obligations as to bring about such a condition, while some have said they would rather have paid double the present price and had it continue to

come twice a month. But you can only bow to the inevitable. You surely have been patient and charitable in your gentle and repeated urgings to delinquents to respond to your necessities. I often think of Paul's words, If the word spoken by angels be steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? The SIGNS has, in a way, been a salvation, for we are saved by hope, and how often has our hope been strengthened and revived as we partook of the joys of salvation in perusing its pages as the saints scattered abroad published salvation in its columns. Dear people of God, our neglect will receive a just recompense if we are finally deprived of the comfort of hearing from others, and thus, with our pens, speaking often one to another. Let us think on these things before it is too late. I would gladly be of help, but have been able to do very little, except as the Lord has enabled me to keep my own subscription paid. If this is published I would say to those who have kindly urged me to "write on," that I do not wish to appear to ignore their request.

Humbly submitted.

MARY ELLISON.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Oct. 2, 1924.

TO OUR PASTOR, AND OUR OTHER KINDRED IN CHRIST JESUS:—We are reminded that next Sunday (October 5th) is the time appointed for our regular monthly church meeting. In our mind's eye we see a little company gathered in the meetinghouse, and after the usual afternoon services have been held we see our pastor coming down from the pulpit, announcing that this is the time appointed for the church meeting, calling for the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting, the consideration of new or unfinished business, and communications from absent loved ones. It is just here that we desire to join you. This we hope we may be able to do in the form of a communication, but we would much prefer to be one in your midst who has been favored to enjoy the morning and afternoon preaching services, but this great privilege we are denied. This feature of the meeting (calling for communications from absent members) we deem a most excellent one, especially so in cases where the member (or members) resides at such a distance from the place of meeting as to render their attendance infrequent. In such cases the absence of members is felt keenly, and we are cheered, comforted and helped by communications from them. It is an old saying, and a true one, that "there is no place like home," and when one in the providence of God is separated from those of like precious faith and membership of a gospel church we feel this truth is often deeply impressed.

Now as regards ourselves. We have nothing to report that we feel would prove of help or comfort to you. There are seasons (few and far between) when we hope we truly know something of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, but most of the time we are without any special exercise of mind (the mind of Christ, we hope), and we go day after day without any special exercise concerning things spiritual and divine. At times it seems as if we were about buried under the cares of this natural life and lose sight of the life beyond. Surely that which is born of the flesh is flesh. At times we are enabled to derive a little comfort from the fact that we can look back over our lives and realize that in former days we had no exercise of mind relative to

things divine that we hope we have known since, as we hope, we have been delivered from nature's darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God. The deliverance we refer to is of God, and like all his works is perfect, but he alone can apply that deliverance in our experience from time to time as we journey over the hard and rugged road of everyday life. We would like to be always in a spiritual frame of mind, enjoying the felt presence of our Elder Brother, but it would seem from our experience (confirmed by those we have known and still know and love in the truth) that were we so favored we would not prove suitable companions for the Lord's people. We sometimes think that the experience of the Lord's people in this the gospel day is but a reflection of the experience of the same people in former dispensations, and thus we are enabled of the Lord to sit down in the kingdom of heaven (the gospel day dispensation) with the old testament saints.

We wish to be remembered in love to one and all.

In gospel bonds, your brother and sister,

R. M. STRONG.
H. M. STRONG.

[If more such letters were written by absent members there would be less coldness and indifference in our churches.—R. L. D.]

Roswell, Georgia.

Dear Elder Lefferts:—Trusting in the Spirit of truth to guide me, I will now try to write you, whom I love for the truth's sake, feeling my heart is moved to write to you believing you to be one of the saved in Christ. I wish to now address you upon the subject of salvation, and in doing so the Bible alone must decide everything pertaining to salvation, but where this is done then the testimony of godly and eminent writers among the saved may be taken as confirmatory of this salvation in its power and comfort. Notwithstanding the overwhelming testimony of the holy Scriptures that besides God there is no Savior, and that according to his mercy and by his grace he saves us, so it is well that we look into this subject, both scripturally and experimentally, for only as we are taught the doctrine of God our Savior, and the truth of the Scriptures in our experience of the power of salvation, have we any true knowledge and understanding thereof. Many Bible texts affirm this. He who denies this denies revealed religion, or christianity, and affirms the ability of man. If salvation is of the Lord then the glory of salvation is his. The grace of God is unconditional, the words of man are conditional, and depend upon himself. Did you ever read in the Bible of conditional grace? The Bible doctrine is: Salvation is of the Lord. By grace are ye saved; not of works, lest any man should boast. This is present salvation, and this salvation is of the Lord, and by grace; is the teaching of the holy Bible, for it says of Jesus, He shall save his people from their sins. Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. Salvation from all sin. He is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them, and since Jesus saves to the uttermost, and from all sin, this salvation is by grace, from its beginning to its end, the grace of God that bringeth salvation. Grace now reigns in salvation, reigns through righteousness, reigns unto eternal life, reigns

by our Lord Jesus Christ, who alone saves sinners from all sin, past, present and to come. It is true then that God himself is the author, the beginner and finisher of salvation in all that salvation means, and to him therefore is all the power, honor, praise and glory of salvation due, both now and forever, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen. We are dependent at all times upon the Spirit and grace of God. This is the daily experience of every sinner saved by grace. Jesus said, For without me ye can do nothing. Ours is the sin and unrighteousness, but his is the salvation and righteousness. No man has ever yet received this salvation conditionally, nor ever can, for Jesus is God's unspeakable gift, and with Jesus God freely (not conditionally) gives us all things. If God be for us who can be against us? Paul says, Then cometh the end when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father. Again, Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Pardon me for trespassing upon your valuable time, and forgive all mistakes, and pray for poor unworthy me.

Yours, I hope, in hope of eternal life,

G. ROBERT JOHNSON.

COLUMBUS JUNCTION, Iowa, July 9, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If I may thus address you, for I do feel unworthy, yet I desire a name among the children of God. I am a mystery to myself. I hope the Lord has called me, and has revealed himself as the one altogether lovely, the one to be desired above all others. I have traveled this road a long time, but cannot see that I am any better. I feel my unworthiness more and more as time passes, and feel to plead, Lord, undertake for me, I am too sinful. I have been reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for over fifty years, and do not want to be without it while it continues to advocate and publish the doctrine of election, predestination and the final perseverance of the saints through grace to glory. If God was able to call the world into existence he is surely able to save to the uttermost all whom he hath called. You hath he called who were dead in trespasses and in sin and were made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, glorifying your heavenly Father, denying self, putting down the deeds of the flesh. I often wish I was able to write like others to the edification and understanding of the inquiring ones, but like Moses I am slow of speech and of a stammering tongue, and unless He undertake and guide my pen I would only darken counsel with words without understanding. I do enjoy reading the many good letters from the correspondents, and the editorials are a great comfort to me. I have not heard much preaching the last year, on account of illness. I desire to say to the correspondents and editors, Continue to comfort Zion, to wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, to publish the glad tidings, and may the God of all grace direct and sustain you. I am inclosing money order to pay my subscription another year. When it is well with you remember me and mine at the throne of his grace.

The least of all, if a child at all,

J. L. THURSTON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1924.

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LUKE XVI. 8.

"AND the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light."

We have been asked to write especially upon the first portion of the above verse of Scripture. Our inquirer appears not to be able to reconcile it with the teachings of Christ, nor, indeed, shall we attempt to do so, since we believe a careful reading of the preceding part of the chapter will establish the fact that it was not Jesus who commended the unjust reward, but rather the "certain rich man" who was his lord. The word "lord" is spelt with a small and not a capital letter. The account as given is, "There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward. Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig, to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore." The steward was manager of the estate of his lord, being vested with certain discretionary powers, and when he learned he was in disfavor and was no longer to be steward, he displayed his shrewdness by ingratiating himself into the favor of his lord's debtors in reducing their indebtedness, which cost him nothing. He said, "I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed," nevertheless his scruples permitted him to waste his master's goods and then buy for himself a soft bed at the expense of his lord. He took advantage of his stewardship; he capitalized it and outwitted his lord, who in turn acknowledged it by commending him for his cunning. "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." This was what the unjust steward did in forgiving his lord's debtors part of their debt, and his lord, undoubtedly being one of his kind, and having gained his wealth by unfair methods, commended him therefor, but Jesus would say, "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?" Children

of light, or a just steward, one who would not take advantage of his lord, would not be credited with wisdom by the worldly-wise to-day, but it is only in their generation, their day, that the children of this world, or the children of darkness, are still to be wiser than the children of light. The truly wise are those whom the Lord has made so, and he tells them to choose life rather than death; they build their house upon the rock instead of the sand; they lay up for themselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. The grasshopper might be said by the earthly-wise to be wiser in his generation, the summertime, as he fritters his life away, than the poor little ant as she struggles along, storing up food for the winter, but inspiration cited the wisdom of the ant when the writer of Proverbs vi. 6–8, said, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest." Later on in this sixteenth chapter of Luke Jesus presents an analogy in the case of the rich man and Lazarus. He says, "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: and there was a certain beggar, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lifts up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented." "Blessed be ye poor: for your's is the kingdom of God." The children of light, possessing heavenly wisdom, will not take advantage of their masters, or fellow-men, but will be honest in their dealings with all men, realizing their accountability to God, who looketh on the inward parts and discerns the thoughts of the heart. This applies to all classes and conditions, therefore it is written, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and thy mother, which is the first commandment with promise, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ, not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him." The opinion seems to prevail to-day that one can serve the devil at least six days and on the seventh day put on his good clothes, go to church and serve the Lord. Jesus declared, "No

man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." There can be no half-way ground. Jesus said, He that is not with me is against me. To the lawyer, who tempted him, saying, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." If one should do this they would be all taken up with him and they would have no time for walking in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standing in the way of sinners, nor sitting in the seat of the scornful, but they would be delighting in the law of the Lord, and in this law would they meditate day and night. How good it is to contemplate his works and ways and the wonders of salvation by grace.

"Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God!
He, whose word cannot be broken,
Formed thee for his own abode,
On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
Thou mayest smile at all thy foes."

But we are reminded that it is with the mind we serve the law of God, and with the flesh the law of sin. We are both Spirit and flesh, and these cannot be blended together. The law and the gospel are separate and distinct the one from the other. In fact, the law must end and be fulfilled before the gospel begins. Under the law the unjust steward must be cut off, or lose his stewardship, but under the gospel, or grace, the prodigal lacks no good thing. "By the law is the knowledge of sin," but thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. By nature we are all unjust stewards, wasting our Master's goods and making to ourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, but the Lord makes us to know that the end of the way that seemeth right unto man is death, and he turns us about, causing us to seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. We are, therefore, pilgrims journeying; this world is not our home, and we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come, which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. May the Lord keep us in the strait and narrow way. However contradictory certain portions of Scripture may appear to us at times, we are firmly convinced that the word of God when rightly understood is consistent from beginning to end, and that whatever inconsistency there is it is in us. Christ is not divided, neither are his teachings at cross-purposes, but they dove-tail and link together in one harmonious chain. To us it is sufficient proof of the inspiration of "all Scripture" to see, as we sometimes hope we can do, how wonderfully in accord they are, and how from Moses on they only prophesied of that which was fulfilled in Christ. What greater evidence could be desired than that which we have, that from beginning to end one great Spirit has guided, directed and inspired all the testimony? When this spirit of understanding is given us we can see how that according to the Scriptures Jesus ought to have suffered "these things" and entered into his glory, and our hearts sometimes burn within us as he speaks with us by the way and opens up to us this wonderful truth. Let us search the Scriptures, for they are they which testify of him, and let us rightly divide the word and "render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's."

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Mary Ellison.)

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists, convened with the church of West Union, Jefferson County, Kansas, September 12th, 13th and 14th, 1924, to the churches composing her body, and to the saints scattered abroad, sendeth christian salutation and love.

DEAR BRETHREN IN HOPE:—When one is appointed to write a Circular Letter to be spread upon our Minutes, and placed before the public, it brings a sense of helplessness, dependence and unworthiness to be even a servant, which produces a weight hard to lay aside. But there is a comfort, of which the writer of this letter is laying hold as a support, and to which we would point every one who may in the future be appointed to this duty, and that is that we are not sent to a people of strange language who cannot understand our complaint. We have a fellow-feeling for each other, for we all know that of ourselves we can do nothing. We are sometimes prone to blame the Lord for reluctance to do what is required of us, by saying he did not help us, or give us any mind to write, and without him we can do nothing. Dear brethren, if we are his people we are not without him, now or ever, for he said, "Lo, I am with you alway." Let us not forget our dependence upon him, but remember also words just as true: We can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth us. And, Gird on sword and buckler and go in the power of his might, and not of our own. Look to his strength and not at our own weakness, and in writing a Circular Letter remember it is to be submitted to a people who will faithfully examine, judge and correct it, for it must conform to the pure language of the members of the Association and go forth to the scattered saints not simply as the sentiments of the writer, but as the doctrine and belief of this Association. Relying upon the faithfulness of those who will judge what is here written, we will call your attention to Solomon's Song iv. 4, which reads as follows: "Thy neck is like the tower of David, builded for an armory, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men." The significance of the neck, figurating the union of Christ and the church, is very impressive, and the words in connection with it in this text very comforting. No figure could more plainly show the union and oneness of the head and body, nor the vitality of that union, nor the dependence upon the durability of that union, for life in both head and body. One cannot exist without the other. If the neck is severed life immediately ceases in both head and body. Neither is the body added to the head one member at a time as they are developed or brought into manifestation, but the head and body are coexistent, both created at one and the same time. This in nature is an exact figure of Christ and the church: Christ the head and the church his body, as is plainly taught in the Scriptures, and signifies the nation of whom the prophet spoke when he said, "Shall a nation be born at once?"—Isaiah lxvi. 8. The figure, like all other types, begins in time and ends in time. Both at once receive natural life, and both die together, while the antitype, the union of our spiritual Head and his mystical body, is from eternity to eternity, the life of his body being hid with him in God, and when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory, inseparably connected with him as long as he was and is himself in

God. As he said, I in them and thou in me, that they may be one, as we are one. Nothing shall be able to separate them; they are all there as one, and from time to time a little one is made manifest, or revealed to us. As Paul said, It pleased God in the fullness of time to reveal his Son in me. His Son in Paul was already in existence, even when he was prosecuting the saints, but was not yet revealed, not even to Paul himself, nor brought into manifestation to others.

"Thy neck." The well Beloved is setting forth the comeliness and graces of the bride, and says, "Thy neck is like the tower of David, builded for an armory." David personates Christ, and his name is a strong tower, the righteous runneth into it and is safe. The neck, the connecting link between Head and body, is like that tower. The safety of the righteous depends upon that everlasting union of Head and body.

An armory is a place for the storage of weapons. In Colossians vi. are enumerated some of the weapons stored there: the truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the preparation of the gospel, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. In short the whole armor of God, every point of doctrine is centered in the connecting link between Head and body. As long as that link is unbroken, that armor intact, the righteous is safe. The weapons of our warfare stored there are not carnal, for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against evil principles and powers of the wicked, and on the neck, the union of Head and body, hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men. A buckler is both a shield and a weapon, and each of the weapons, as enumerated above, as stored in that armory, is a buckler, a shield and defense, in the warfare that besets every child of God, by which we shall be able to quench all the fiery darts hurled at us from without, and from the raging war within.

"A thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men." These "mighty men" are the apostles and prophets, every writer of the inspired testimony left on record for our learning and given as a protection and defense for us, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

"A thousand bucklers." These words are of inexpressible sweetness. Every precious promise, every sweet assurance, every point of doctrine, is a buckler with which our dear Lord inspired these mighy men of old, every one of them able to handle both shield and buckler, to write, not only for their own use, but for us, as bucklers for our defense, to protect and comfort us, when, as in this day and age of the world, "hell [Arminianism] hath enlarged herself and opened wide her mouth." "When the enemy comes in like a flood" if it were not that the Lord with all these precious shields and bucklers is on our side, then would we, few and helpless as we are, be swallowed up quickly. But here are a thousand bucklers for our comfort and stay, and they all hang on the neck, all depend upon the inseparable union of our beloved Head and body. If that could be severed all would fail. That cherished union is the "one chain of thy neck," which ravished the heart of the Beloved. "Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck." One of thine eyes, the eye of faith, is the eye single to the glory of God, for if thine eye be single thy whole body is full of light. How ravishing that one single

eye must be to our Beloved. Lord, how pleasant it is to see a whole assembly worship thee. That one chain itself is equal, in fact it comprises the whole armor of God, and enables us to flee for refuge to that strong tower to lay hold on the hope set before us, which hope is a buckler sure and steadfast, and hangs on the neck, and its security depends upon the indissoluble union of the Head and body of Christ. "The word of the Lord [the word of God] is tried: he is a buckler to all them that trust in him."—2 Sam. xxii. 31. He is an ever-present help in time of trouble. "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower." "In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears. Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth." This goes back to our early experience, when the foundation of our early hopes, our own self-righteousness was shaken and moved from us, and these old earthen vessels did shake and tremble as we realized the wrath of God, expecting each moment to hear the sentence, Thou cursed, depart. Can any one express the joy he received when the Lord revealed himself as a shield and buckler to all them that fear him, a complete sufficiency against every foe? Himself a thousand bucklers, for all the promises are in him yea and amen. Not one of them shall ever fail. They were sufficient for the mighty men who wrote them, and they are sufficient for us. What more can he say than has been said to us? "Order ye the buckler and shield" and stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. A thousand bucklers we have, munitions of warfare and defense stored in the high tower of David, and all hang on the neck of our beloved Head and body of Christ.

Finally, brethren, be strong in the Lord. We are only a little city, and very few in it, but he giveth strength to the weak and power to the faint. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day. Dear people of God, let us be not soon shaken in our mind, for we still have the same thousand bucklers that did so rejoice our hearts and strengthen our hope in the days of our earliest love. The days seem evil now, and the wars and fightings so grievous and wearisome we long to lay our armor by and dwell with Christ at home. But let us remember now in these trying days our Creator as he appeared to us in our youth, when in our earliest love, without any cruel doubts or unbelief, we trusted him fully as our sure defense, and with confident hope rejoiced in the words, Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and sword of the Spirit which is the word of God." Praying always, as Christ hath said men ought always to pray and not to faint. Prayer, another buckler and shield. A thousand bucklers we have, and they all hang on the neck, the life-sustaining link connecting Head and body in a vital indissoluble union. "The christian's hope shall never fail."

In bonds of love, farewell.

L. L. SHENCK, Moderator.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

(Written by J. R. Beckett.)

The Pocatalico Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Association convened with the Hopewell Church, Kanawha Co., W. Va., September 12th, 13th and 14th, 1924, sendeth greetings to the whole household of faith.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It should be first taken into consideration that this task has fallen upon one who is weak, and feels as dry as the driest stick, nothing in me, and altogether unworthy, so in the outset I should try to explain how it came about. The Association of last year failed to appoint some one to write a letter, so as Clerk, and by request of the Moderator, I will do the best I can.

Dear brethren, the words used as a foundation of remarks will be found in Isaiah v. 8: "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!" All Scripture was given by inspiration of God through his chosen prophets and apostles, and as he chose those to write he also chose the family to be addressed, and he was here speaking of the wicked, who if they do not join house to house they lay field to field; he was speaking to the sinner saved by grace. But the house of God is one, and cannot join or mix with any of the many houses of the wicked. Joshua xxiv. 15, speaks of the house of the Lord, and says, "If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve." Now Joshua here did give national Israel their choice what god they would serve, knowing that it was not the true and living God they would choose. But he says, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Now Joshua could not speak within himself, but he was a chosen vessel of the Lord, and spoke as it was given him from on high, and the house under consideration was and is a spiritual house, and does not join to any other house of the antichrist spirit. Joshua xxiv. 19: "And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the Lord." But we find a remnant does serve him, but not of themselves, but by the mercy of God through his holy Spirit they serve him. We believe in one God and Father, one Sacrifice for sin, and that the one Sacrifice reaches only one house, and that this one house is the only people who do or can sin, for sin is the transgression of God's divine law which he has written on the table of the heart, and this law extends no farther than the house of almighty God, therefore the wicked cannot sin, because they have not the law in their hearts, so they are numbered with the beasts. If a man raise a family of children does he not govern them by a law? and when they disobey what is the penalty? They are punished with the rod. If he has many cattle he has no law by which to control them, so to keep them under subjection he must set their bounds. So God rules the devil, also he is as a chained beast. The chosen family of God is above all natural law. The waters are divided, which represent people, the people of God above the firmament, and the larger bodies underneath the firmament. Every stream of water has its head, and cannot rise above its head, and runs in inclosed banks, and each little brook runs into a larger stream, which is the gathering together, or joining house to house, and we find God has so arranged that his little children are in those streams, but as the sun comes up they are raised as a fog above the firmament, but they have no power to raise themselves, but it is the sun which is a type of the Son of God, who has raised his beloved above law

and set their feet upon that rock which is head of the corner. That they (the redeemed) be placed in the midst of the earth she is surrounded on every side, and as they lay field to field they have no way of escape, but Jesus reaches down and lifts them above all carnal things, and they praise his holy name.

We travel through this world of sin
Upon Christ's loving treasure,
So from his throne he condescends
To make our toil a pleasure.

Upon the cross he shed his blood,
'Twas for his bride's redemption,
And when he spilled that precious blood
Of them we hear him mention.

He prayed for them, that prayer was heard,
And to them is the promise,
Then he ascended from this world
That promise to accomplish.

And now as he has fixed the way,
And made them sure for heaven,
Their only duty day by day
Is trust in him forever.

Submitted in love.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Mod.

J. R. BECKETT, Clerk.

(Written by Elder W. T. Walters.)

The Hazel Creek Association of Regular, Predestinarian Baptists, now in session with Providence Church, Appanoose Co., Iowa, to the churches composing the same, and the faithful in Christ Jesus.

DEARLY BELOVED OF THE LORD:—By the tender and everlasting love and mercy of that great God who is the giver of all good and perfect gifts we have been spared to meet together in an association to preach, praise and honor our God, who is the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity. Now, very dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, from a long established custom of the Association, every year they appoint some one to write what is called a Circular Letter, to be printed with our Minutes, and as the Association has said I should write it this year I will try and do the best I can, and leave it to the consideration of the brethren. You will expect me to use some Scripture for a starting point, so I will call your attention to Matthew i. 21, which reads thus: "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." Now as to sin, we have all sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Paul tells us we have before proved that both Jew and Gentile are all under sin. "There is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness." Now as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, death passed upon all men. We understand that his people were under the law of sin and death. Then they were dead in trespasses and sins, they were in a lost condition so far as the power of man was concerned, but our text says he shall save his people from their sins. The prophet as he was moved by the Holy Ghost spake, saying, Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel. Now when the virgin Mary had brought forth her first-born Son, behold, "There came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." Lo, the star which they saw in the east went before them till it came and stood over where the young child was. Paul says, It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. The prophet said, "For unto us a child is born, unto

us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." We have already said his people were under the law of sin and death, but when the fullness of the time was come God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, and he is the only one who could redeem them, for he is the only one that had any lawful right or title to or in them. His people are those the Father gave him. They are his by gift, as he said to the Father, Thine they were, and thou gavest them me. They were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. Dear brethren, our Savior is not as man, he fully knows all things. He fully knew all things he had to suffer in order to save his people from their sins. I hear him say in prophecy, about seven hundred years before he was born in Bethlehem, I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Dear brethren, he bore our sins all the days of old. Though he murmured not, "he is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath born our grief, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." Oh think of our dear Savior when he was among his people, they would falsely accuse him when he was bearing their sins for them. Guile was not found in his mouth, he sweat as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground. He wore a purple robe and a crown of thorns; he was ever obedient to the will of the Father. The Father had given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as he had given him. Jesus has also said he had all power in heaven and in earth. Now seeing all power is in God's hand, there is no power to hinder him; he doeth according to his own will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, nor say unto him, What doest thou? Dear brethren, Jesus is not only our Savior, but he is our God, he is our hope, the resurrection and the life. Jesus said to the Father, I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. We have no record of anything that he came to do that he left undone. So it is all complete, a finished work. Then, "him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." He went down into the grave, but he arose again for our justification, and he is alive now to die no more. He has left us that precious promise that, If I go away I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also. Yes, dear brethren and sisters, he is coming again to take you home to enjoy the everlasting eternity given you by your Redeemer, and you will see him as he is, and be like him. Now may God bless, support, guide and direct us in all our deliberations, for our good and his everlasting and eternal glory, is our prayer, for Christ's sake. Amen.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator.

J. M. CATE, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Pocatalico Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Hopewell Church, Kanawha County, W. Va., September 12th, 13th and 14th, 1924, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting and love in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We are glad to report a most pleasant and lovely meeting, a refreshing season from the Lord. Your messengers in the gospel have preached Christ, and him crucified, in demonstration of the Spirit. We have been comforted and built up on our most holy faith, and made to say in our hearts, Lord, it is good for us to be here.

Our next session of this Association will be held with the West Fork Church, Calhoun County, West Virginia, beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1925, and continuing three days.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Mod.
J. R. BECKETT, Clerk.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists, to the brethren with whom we correspond, and to the saints scattered abroad, sendeth greeting and christian salutation.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—The time has once more arrived that we have been permitted by the will of God to meet again in an associate capacity, and while we are few in number we take comfort in the thought that "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," and surely, brethren, we can say of a truth that He has been with us and made us to feel how good and glorious it is for brethren to meet and mingle their voices together in praises to him who has redeemed us with his own precious blood.

Our next session is appointed to be held with Big Walnut Creek Church (the place to be specified later), to begin on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1925.

Brethren, farewell.

Done by order of the Association, and signed in her behalf.

L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator.
MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Sara Grant Jones, our sister in Christ, passed away after several weeks illness at the Fifth Avenue Hospital, in New York city, September 6th, 1924. She was born December 12th, 1844, and came to this country from England about forty years ago. She united with the church in October, 1893, was baptized by the late Elder John Clark, and placed her letter with the Ebenezer Church, in New York city, May 3rd, 1914. Sister Jones was firmly established in the doctrine of God our Savior, and realized all her help must come from God. A short time before she passed away she desired us to petition Him who sits on no precarious throne, nor borrows leave to be, in her behalf. Those who were acquainted with her shall remember her as an unusual character, one who was not afraid to say what she thought. We shall miss her, but we mourn not as those without hope. She leaves one son, a resident of New York city.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Ebenezer meetinghouse. Interment was in Woodlawn Cemetery, New York city. R. L. D.

Mrs. Sarah A. Dolin, the subject of this notice, was born June 16th, 1845, and departed this life October 23rd, 1923, at the age of 78 years, 4 months and 7 days. She was the mother of eight children, five boys and three girls. Seven of the children are living to mourn their loss, one having preceded its mother to the great beyond. She was an invalid for six years before her death, by reason of paralysis, and bore her affliction with fortitude, ready at all times to speak kind words to her children, who were kind and attentive to her in all her afflictions. The writer visited her home and preached for her comfort with the ability that God was pleased to give him while she was lying upon her bed of affliction. She lived a consistent member of the Old School Baptist Church called Sarah for sixty years. She had great pleasure before the hand of affliction was laid upon her in visiting the sister churches of the Primitive faith, also in going with her husband, brother William

Dolin, whose obituary appeared in the SIGNS some time ago, to the Pocatalico Associations, even to the extreme part of the district, and having at all times a word of comfort to speak to those of like precious faith with her. The doors of her house were always open to take care of her brethren and sisters. Truly she was a mother in Israel. I can say of a truth that the Sarah Church has lost a loving member and her children a loving mother. We feel their loss is her gain. Elders A. J. Mullens and G. B. McClanahan preached on that memorable occasion to a large gathering of relatives and friends, who showed respect for her as being a good neighbor and friend to all.

Just a few words to you children: As it has been God's will to take your mother from your fond embrace, you are not left to mourn as those who have no hope, for she has left with you bright evidence of her acceptance in the Beloved.

Written by request.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

Augustus Hartman, the last living child of the late John and Eva Hartman, died at his late residence, Forest Park, Baltimore, Maryland, February 27th, 1924, aged 77 years, after an illness of ten days with pneumonia. Father was for many years a devoted reader, and at the time of his death was a subscriber, of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He never felt worthy to become a member, but attended the meetings and associations as long as he was able to do so, and was a strong believer in salvation by grace. He was a brother-in-law of the late Elder William Grafton, of whom he was very fond. Father was esteemed as a man of high character, and his many deeds of kindness won for him the love and respect of all who knew him.

The funeral services were held from his late residence Friday, February 29th, 1924, when Elder Joshua T. Rowe spoke feelingly of both father's death and of our brother Lester's, who was killed instantly in France, in September, 1918, in the World War. Father's body was laid to rest in the private family lot at Dryad Ridge Cemetery, Pikesville, Baltimore, Maryland. He leaves his wife and eight children. His place is vacant in our home and it is very sad to see his vacant chair, but a comfort to feel sure he is with Lester and God.

Written by his daughter,

KATHARINE HARTMAN BURCH.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Mary Derby Hoyt, N. Y., $2.00; Ranson W. Hull, N. Y., $3.00; Miss Bonnie Chick, N. J., $5.00; Mrs. J. R. Green, Ga., $3.00; B. H. Carter, Wash., $1.00; J. W. Rockafellow, N. Y., $8.00.

MEMORIALS.

(HAZEL CREEK ASSOCIATION.)

WHEREAS, it has pleased the all-wise God in his dealings with his children here to call from our midst to his home on high our beloved **Deacon W. R. Jones,** we feel to bow in humble submission to the will of One who is too wise to err and too good to do wrong, yet this does not lessen our sorrow at his taking away. He will be greatly missed in the Association and the churches. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. He departed this life January 12th, 1924, at his home, in Centerville, Iowa. We realize no words of ours can comfort his sorrowing companion and children, although we desire to express our sincere sympathy, and commend them to God, the only one who can truly comfort in so great a bereavement, praying his God whom he so delighted to serve may be their God, and that they may honor the sacred profession he so highly esteemed.

Feeling we cannot do justice we will desist, and recommend this be entered upon our Minutes, and a copy furnished the bereaved widow.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator.

J. M. CATE, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects Elder George Ruston to meet with them the fifth Sunday in November (30th), 1924. Services to be held at the home of J. E. Livingston, 64 E. Main St., Cobleskill, N. Y., at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All welcome who love the truth.

(MRS.) J. E. LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Cloth binding. Price, $1.25 each. One dozen or more, ordered at the same time and all to the same address, one dozen dollar each. Cash must accompany orders. Make checks and money orders payable to

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED EACH MONTH

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 92. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1924. NO. 21.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GENESIS XLIII. 14.

"If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."

We are made to notice in this text the words that are in italics, namely: "Of my children," and as they do not add anything to the inspired meaning, and being added words to the original translation of the holy Scriptures, therefore, we will leave them out. Then the text would read, "If I be bereaved, I am bereaved." The words, "If I be bereaved" have a future signification, and mean that if he is to be bereaved, that he is now bereaved. Jacob realized this truth. Jacob loved Joseph more than the rest of his children, and this caused jealousy to spring up between Joseph and his brethren, and they dipped the coat of many colors which his father gave him in kid's blood, and thus deceived their father. Jacob's very soul went out in love for Joseph. He had no evidence that he was yet alive, and now he feared that little Benjamin would go in the same way. The famine was sore in the land, and Jacob kept Benjamin at home, and sent the ten children down to Egypt to buy corn to preserve life. God had sent Joseph on ahead to preserve life, but neither Jacob nor the ten boys knew this at that time. Joseph was a figure of the Son of God, and I believe that the coat of many colors was a type of the many sins which God laid on his dear Son. He bare our sins in his own body on the tree. Joseph was to be made known to the eleven brethren at the right time and at the right place. They must bow before him according to his dreams which he had dreamed before this. The Lord had made known to Abraham that his seed should sojourn in a strange land and should be evilly entreated for four hundred years, and after that they should come forth and serve him in this place. This promise was made to Abraham before that he had any seed, and therefore it had a future signification. "If I be bereaved, I am bereaved." How mysterious was this to Abraham! This promise was true before it was made to Abraham, therefore Ishmael, the son of the bondwoman, could not change this promise, although he was also Abraham's seed. "Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman." There was a people that came

to John's baptism and claimed to be Abraham's seed, but they stood as the type of Ishmael, and therefore did not stand as the type of Isaac, who was the promised heir. John the Baptist called them the generation of vipers, and would not baptize them. "It is of faith, that it might be by grace; that the promise might be sure to all the seed." This word "faith," I wish to notice just here. In reading after all other people I notice that they set their compass on "faith," and leave the impression that faith is their act, or their work, and truly this is the type of the Ishmaelites. This is true with all the workers of the law. Faith is the gift of our God, and when we look at this deep mystery we realize it to be "the fruit of the Spirit," and God is a Spirit, therefore, faith is God himself. "The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. And his name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know; yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all."

This will have to suffice for the present, and we will return to the subject. This promise was made to Abraham before Isaac was born. As Isaac was, so are we the children of promise. Notice the words: As Isaac was, so are we. Equivalent to saying, As we are, so was Isaac. If we be bereaved, we are bereaved. If I be bereaved, I am bereaved. Look at the ten hungry children as they go down to Egypt to buy corn. Think of the dream of Joseph concerning the seven years of plenty and the seven years of famine. Think of all the dreams that he had and the Ishmaelites buying him from his brethren, and thus he was carried down into Egypt. The Lord was with Joseph and prospered him, but alas, he must be tempted by his master's wife; but Joseph refused, and would not yield to the temptation. So Joseph was cast into prison upon this false accusation, and now he interprets some dreams, and finally is forgotten by the chief butler. All these events must come to pass according to the purpose of God in sending Joseph down into Egypt to preserve life. See the ten brethren, how they humbled themselves in their obeisance to Joseph as they bowed themselves before him with their faces to the earth. Is not this in the experience of every child of grace? How humbled they were when they bowed before him in harmony with all his dreams which he had before this time. All the powers of earth could not have kept these events from coming to pass. Dear child of God, how guilty you were when you were made to see your blessed Lord, your spiritual Joseph. You bowed before him with a broken and contrite spirit, which is to God of great price. Your spiritual Joseph paid this price for you and in turn gave you this broken and contrite spirit. How humble you were when you fell before your exalted King. Hunger and starvation caused you to go down into this dark land of spiritual Egypt. You were willing to pay for corn to preserve your life, but your money (self-righteousness) failed in every instance.

Dear child of God, as I give you some of the Bible history of Joseph I desire that you keep your mind on the

beautiful picture of your spiritual Joseph, who traveled the dark way before you from the manger to the cross, and his passage through death, and of his resurrection from the dead, and the ascension of him to glory, there in the presence of God as a merciful High Priest making intercession for you and all the redeemed of the Lord out of every nation, tongue and people.

Joseph knew his brethren, but made himself a stranger, and spake roughly unto them, and accused them of being spies, &c. They did everything they could to excuse themselves, but to no avail. Little Reuben felt that dreadful stroke of guilt for selling their brother into the dark regions of Egypt. All in the same condemnation. They were also rebuked by their father Jacob for making themselves so plainly known to their brother, but Joseph divined them, and they fell into the trap and confessed, and "said one to another, We are verily guilty." Little Benjamin had the divining cup, and they were all arrested and felt their guilt. There was no escape for them. They must bow to Joseph according to his dreams before dreamed by him. They were true before they were dreamed and had to be fulfilled at the "set time." While at the table, Benjamin's mess was five times so much as the rest of the brethren. All jealousy was gone now. Joseph could no longer refrain. His love loomed up before him so great that he said, I am thy brother whom ye sold. God for your sakes sent me here to preserve life.

Dear saints, I am only hinting along here, but your experience lies in this beautiful picture. Your inheritance is reserved in heaven for you. Your spiritual Joseph left the court of heaven, laid his glory by and became the incarnate Son of God, who was your Prophet, Priest and King. His Father sent him to bear the dreadful curse for you on the cross upon Calvary's rugged hill. The sins of all the church of God were laid upon this incarnate Son, and he paid it all. They must come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. Dear saints, you had to have a knowledge of this grand truth. This must be in a way that you did not desire for it to be. The "divining cup" was concealed in your sack (heart). Thus it was revealed to you that you had sold your spiritual Joseph. He had gone the path of thorns before you. He bore your griefs and carried your sorrows even all the days of old. Ah, dear saints, what a dark picture! But remember that all things work together for good to them that love God, and to them that are called according to his purpose. It is in this darkness that the saints receive the greatest evidence. It is then that they are partakers of his sufferings, and they shall be partakers of the glory that shall follow. They must follow him in the dark Gethsemane, where he prayed to his Father, saying, Father, take this cup from me. He had the divining cup, and he knew that death was near. Here is the ram that was "caught in a thicket by his horns, and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him for a burnt offering in the stead of his son." Jesus now almost at the very end of his life divines his awful hour. Take this cup away. Our guilt was all on him, and now must he fail, even for one moment? No, no. His Father was with him and prolonged his days. "He shall see his seed, and he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands." Follow him to the cross. There for three long hours that darkness

prevailed over all the earth, and your suffering King cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Precious children, I hope that I have been brought there. There in unmeasured space the glorious Sufferer bled, groaned and died. He completed all the work, and said, "It is finished." Salvation was, is and always will be, complete in your blessed King. Is all this for me? A poor sinner like me? Ah, "If I be bereaved, I am bereaved," and have always been.

Dear editors, if the above does not crowd out better matter you can publish it in the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES if you deem it worthy of notice.

Farewell in a sweet hope,

J. R. HATCHER.

LYLES, Tenn., Oct. 30, 1924.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Oct. 16, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you two good letters for publication, if you think best. The first came as a sweet surprise and comfort inexpressible. It has been read by some of our good brethren and sisters, who have asked me to send it for publication. I hesitated, thinking it might seem too personal, but after receiving the last one I feel to send them to you. The baptism of which our dear sister speaks was in 1893, when her mother was received into the Cane Run Church, at Turners, Ky. They soon after returned to Texas, their native State. It was a joy to find this sister so firmly established in the faith and doctrine upon which the dear old SIGNS was founded in 1832, and the little church at Fort Worth as well. Yes, like the few at Sardis, who had remained steadfast, and not defiled their garments with any of the modern false doctrine. While the world stands there will be a few who will remain steadfast, for God will not be left without a witness. But how true and lamentable, as the apostle said, the love of many wax cold, becoming indifferent to the meetings, loving the things of this world more than the things of God, when we should prefer Jerusalem above our chief joy. I cannot understand how brethren who are lovers of the truth can forsake the assembling together, if it be only to sing or hear sung the dear old songs of Zion. On the first Sunday, we met with the dear saints at Elk Lick, and after they had sung three or four of the good old songs I told them if there was nothing more said I could go away feeling we had had a good meeting. It was an inspiration to try to talk. Dear kindred in Christ, how can you absent yourselves, when this is all that is real in this life? "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above," &c., above the vain alluring elements of this world.

Dear publishers, I deeply regret the necessity of only one issue of the SIGNS a month. Is there not some way to remedy this? I cannot understand how subscribers become so indifferent to your appeal. I feel sure that if they would try their case by the golden rule (which should govern us all): "Do unto others as ye would they should do unto you," they would respond at once. I have been a reader of the SIGNS for more than sixty-five years, and cannot bear the thought of its being discontinued. Dear reader, how do you feel about it? I think we should all be willing to make some sacrifice for its upkeep.

I have written more than I intended when I took up my pen, but have written as my mind seemed to be led. I submit all to your better judgment, desiring to send a loving greeting in the Lord to all the writers and readers of the SIGNS, hoping it may continue as in years gone

by. This undoubtedly will (if published) be the last time my name will appear in its columns, but an interest in your prayers I crave, that we may meet beyond the grave, see Jesus as he is, and be like him, then I shall be satisfied.

Yours in Christ, the very least of all,
P. W. SAWIN.

FT. WORTH, Texas, Sept. 19, 1924.

ELDER P. W. SAWIN—VERY DEAR BROTHER:—Somehow I have had a desire to write you for over a period of three or four years. I have read from time to time letters you have written in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and have been much comforted by them, and my heart has been melted in tears many times in reading your travels, especially in one of your articles where you spoke of your early ministry. I do not remember seeing you, but you baptized my mother, Elder J. H. Fisher's wife then, about thirty-one years ago. I was a little girl of five years, and whenever I would see your writings in the SIGNS it was always with deep interest I would read them.

I see you are almost blind. That to me is very sad. If I am not deceived I love the dear Old Predestinarian Baptists above any people on earth, and all the dear old soldiers who have held up the banners of truth so long have a sacred place in my heart. I have not been a member with these dear people long, only four years, but will say I had a secret desire for many years before that, and I wanted to be with them, but felt always I was not worthy their love and confidence. Neither have I felt like it since, but do desire to live at their feet. I feel to know very little, and need the prayers of God's people. We have a little church here in this city; not many of us, but sweet peace abounds.

Maybe I am intruding on your valuable time to put you to task in reading this, but somehow I have desired to write and tell you how I have enjoyed your writings, and tell you how I sympathize with you in your affliction of being almost blind. If I know anything at all, I believe in an all-wise God, who doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, nor say unto him, What doest thou? and believe in a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who came to save his people from their sins. Whether I am one of those included I know not, but I do believe all for whom Christ died are saved with an everlasting salvation; not one will be lost.

Dear old brother, while I do not know you personally, yet I love you for the truth's sake, I hope, and hope you will be spared a number of years yet to comfort God's people. Pray for me and mine, and forgive me if I have intruded on your valuable time.

Your little unworthy sister, I hope, in many sorrows,

MINNIE OFFILL.

FT. WORTH, Texas, Oct. 10, 1924.

ELDER P. W. SAWIN—DEAR BROTHER:—Your letter came to me some few days gone by, and it made me feel very unworthy to think of you writing to one so full of sin as I am. Your letter was indeed appreciated, and read with much interest. Dear old brother, I certainly felt honored to receive it. I would have answered it sooner, but have been encumbered much about natural things, until I could not. I find it to be true in my life that man's heart deviseth his way, but God directeth his steps. Many times I think I shall do so-and-so on the morrow, but find each day I do things

that I did not think I would. So I find also, spiritually speaking, that I cannot do the things I desire, for I find, "For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I." "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." I feel to be wretched, and feel there is no good thing in my flesh. But I hope I trust in the righteousness of Jesus, who knew no sin, but was made sin for his people. So I am not expecting perfection in this life, but have hope that in the morning of the resurrection this old sinful body shall have put on immortality, and shall come forth in the likeness of Christ. Then, and then only, shall I be satisfied.

Dear old brother, it will not be long before you shall go the way of all the earth. It is very sad to me to think of the dear old soldiers of the cross having to depart, for in each generation there seems a departing from the truth. Here in Texas there has been a falling away, to such an extent that there are only a very few who still hold to sound doctrine. I desire, if not deceived, to worship and praise the true and living God, who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, the God that upholds all things by the word of his power. I cannot by feeble utterance ascribe the greatness and wisdom I feel justly belong to this God who I hope to love and praise, for I am weak and carnal and cannot do the things I would love to.

Dear brother, my heart goes out to you in pity in your sad affliction, but may the dear Lord be with you, that you may feel to say, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." Though your natural vision be impaired, yet may you see brighter and brighter (in your declining days) the way that leads to life and immortality.

I read your letter to my mother, and she said when I wrote to you to send her love and best wishes to you and family, and tell you she was sorry to hear of your almost blindness.

Dear brother, I will close. Pardon this poor attempt in answering your gifted letter. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

Brother Sawin, you need not feel obliged to answer this, but will say I certainly appreciate your letters. I may write you any time I feel like doing so.

Hoping you and family are feeling well, your little, weak sister, in hope of mercy,

MINNIE OFFILL.

BRUNSWICK, Maine, Oct. 20, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter from brother Fisher to the three churches which compose the Maine Old School Baptist Association. It is worthy a place in our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for it is written just as he conversed with us during the three days' meeting. We surely enjoyed his visit, and Elder Dodson declared the unsearchable riches of Christ, and knew nothing among us save Jesus Christ and him crucified. We were fed and com-

forted as he set forth the precious things of the kingdom of our God. Jesus the Savior of sinners, one mighty to save, the one altogether lovely and chiefest among ten thousand. No other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. I know brother Fisher did not write it for the SIGNS, but all the members of the three churches were not present when it was read in our meeting, the fourth Sunday in September, and if it is published they can read it, and will be glad to hear from him. It is good reading for all the household of faith, and I hope the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be full of the dealings of the Lord with his people, and with his wonderful works to the children of men.

Your unworthy sister,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

SALISBURY, Md., Sept. 15, 1924.

TO THE THREE CHURCHES IN MAINE—MY DEAR BRETHREN:—You have been in my thoughts much of the time since it was my blessed privilege to meet with you. My visit with you was, and I feel ever shall be, a pleasant oasis in my desert travel. I am still at a loss to know why or how you could have been so kind to me and received me as you did. Surely our God put it in your heart to do so, and, unworthy as I am of your love and fellowship, I can truthfully say that you occupy a large and well-established place in my heart. It may not be necessary to refer to the meeting just past, as all enjoyed it and felt it a season of refreshing from our heavenly Father, but none was more helped and built up than the poor unworthy one you so willingly admitted into your circle. Circle is the proper word, for there is no break in it, all hearts beating as one, all minds as one, and that the mind of Christ. Surely God is in your midst, for ye are his temple, a holy habitation, where God is pleased to dwell. My mind for the last several days has been to write to you, but if the eminent apostle Paul came not to the Corinthians "with excellency of speech or wisdom," I most surely shall not, nor can I come to you now in this way, but in ignorance and weakness, fearing perhaps I should remain silent and let you forget me, but of this I am sure: God reigns, and whether I persevere or faint and fall his will, not mine, be done, and the glory is his.

It is my mind to refer to a certain Scripture found in Isaiah lxiv. 4, to which Paul also refers in 1 Cor. ii. 9, regarding the hidden things which He hath prepared for "him that waiteth for him," or, as Paul says, for "them that love him." The terms are synonymous, for why would I wait for one except I love them. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." How very broad this is, and how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out. Oh the depth of his wisdom and knowledge, how can the finite grapple with the infinite? for no man by searching has or can find God, and none but his own children wish to find him, for none know him but his children. All that we have had, have now, or ever will have, is that which he has prepared for us. It is my mind to bring to your mind some of the things that he prepared for us. We must not lose sight of the fact that the evening and the morning were the first day, also the same order prevailed throughout the six days, the seventh day being spoken of differently. Darkness ever precedes light, death precedes life, labor before rest. These things

are so contrary to our natural way of thinking that we often become confused and doubt the very thing that we are witness to, for it is written, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—2 Tim. iii. 12. This is one thing assured for all who live godly in Christ Jesus, and if I know anything of the desire of the Lord's people, it is that they live a godly life, and live in Christ Jesus. Persecution, doubt, darkness of mind, to will, being present, but how to perform finding not, are some of the things prepared for them that wait for the Lord, or, as Paul says, that love him. How little did we think when we first tasted that the Lord is gracious, when first relieved of that load of sin that bore us to the earth, in the first hour of deliverance, that we should ever doubt, that we should ever fear or grieve again. Often I look on a babe in its mother's arms, innocent and smiling, how little it knows, and how well it does not know, what life holds in store for it. We in our spiritual birth, tender babes in Christ, know nothing of the things in store for us, for eye hath not seen. Surely this is true, for can one who has just come in, when all is love and brightness, be made to see how doubts could ever torment them again? We cannot show it to them, or tell it to them, for it cannot enter their heart or understanding, and often, if not altogether, when these trials overtake one they fail to see or realize that the very thing that hurts so is something that God has prepared for them, and this very doubting is one of the things prepared. But God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. It is only by revelation that we can know anything of God; the Spirit reveals many things to us, all we know is this way. It is by the light of the knowledge of the glory of God revealed in the face of Jesus Christ that we find out we are sinners. The light reveals, makes manifest, it does in no way increase our sin, but shows us our sin. The stretched line never made the log crooked, but shows or reveals the crook. Christ is the straight edge, the perfect line; in seeing him we see our imperfections, and by him it is revealed to us that we are sinners. The Spirit reveals this to us; also by faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, do we wait with patience for the things that God hath prepared for us, and, "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him."—Rom. vi. 8. Christ suffered in the flesh, for he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Not only was, but is now. We are his body, and all his wounds were in the body, the head was not wounded, though it bowed in death, so we, his body, do bear the wounds, for we are crucified with him, fastened to the cross, the old man and the new, the flesh and the Spirit. We bear about the body of the dying Lord Jesus, but these wounds are marks of suffering, which are marks of his grace, for if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him. All the trials we meet by the way are prepared for us, just as much so as the glory that shall be revealed in us, which is surely none other than the glory of God, for there is no glory but of him, and to him be all glory now and forever.

F. SELBY FISHER.

FRANKFORT, Kentucky.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—If you will allow me to call you brethren. I have been a reader of the SIGNS for a number of years, longer even than I have been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, and I see many good letters in it and am made glad. Sometimes I feel I wish I could write, for I hear so little preaching. We have no pastor at our church, and I never see a letter from any of our members, and from some cause we fail to assemble ourselves together. Our membership is small and widely scattered, but it would be a great pleasure to me if we had stated times to meet and talk about the reason of the hope that is within us. We are told that where two or three are gathered together in his name he will be there, and that to bless us. There is only one other member of our church in our town and I spend a good portion of my time with him. There is nothing on earth that gives me so much pleasure as to be with and in the watchcare of the children of God. I look to them and to God as a child under the parential roof looks to its parents for guidance. I wish we had a pastor and regular times to assemble ourselves together, but as I am the youngest member, and the last and least of all, I do not know how to bring about such a state of affairs. If I say anything about the matter some may think I am too officious and have the idea of do and live, but I have the idea of live and do, and while I believe in the foreknowledge and eternal purpose of God, and that the gifts and calling of God are without repentance, and that a man for all his works would have no preeminence above a beast, yet I think there are some things for the church to do: to try to have a pastor; to attend church services; to see that the pastor has a living; to see that the meetinghouse and surroundings are kept in order, and that it is the duty as well as the privilege of each member, jointly and severally, to look after those things, and I am glad I have these impressions. We are told by Paul that we ought to be ready to give a reason for our hope, and while I see every day how far short I come of showing my faith by my works, the only reason of hope I can give is the love I have for the church, and the love of associating with the people of God, and the impressions that are made on my mind as to the duty of the life of a professed christian. I believe these impressions come from God, and thank God for them. Moses had something to do, Abraham had something to do when he offered Isaac upon the altar, and God counted his faith to him for righteousness. I think the apostles had something to do, as Paul wrote to Timothy to have things ready when he came. That was, I think, to have something with which to help Paul in his work and on his journey, not as the price of salvation, but to carry out the plan that was laid out by God before the foundation of the world, even before time was. As these thoughts come into my mind in regard to church service I thank God and hold them as a reason of hope. If a man omits every thought that comes into his mind that he thinks is from God, is that a sin of omission? Only the regenerate, or chosen people of God, have these thoughts and impressions, and I do not think they should be lived down. God knew from before the creation of natural things who he would call, and said he would not always strive with man.

"'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought),
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

If I know myself I desire to walk close to

God, looking ever to him for guidance, and may I ask to be remembered in your prayers and in the prayers of all his believing children?

As ever, a poor, old, helpless sinner,

F. MORRIS.

LOOP, Texas, Sept. 4, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have a desire to express my gratitude for the many good letters published in the SIGNS, realizing were it not for a merciful God those soul-cheering messages could not be penned. Being situated as I am so far from any who see and are made to know there is but one God, and all power is his, it is not often I meet with them, but when blessed with meeting them it does my poor heart good to see the tears of joy flow and hear them praise God for being so merciful. I have met with them from many places, and though they come from the north, east, west or south it is the same thing, a great and mighty God, and poor dependent creatures. But it seems the time has come when there are so few who have the courage to stand and cry aloud and spare not; they are seeking new ways. Oh, when will our people come back to Zion? Oh that we could pray God to keep us from the enemy. But we have this consolation: our God does not sleep, he never takes a journey, but is ever present in the immensity of space he occupies and his hand rules from eternity to eternity, and even the devils obey when he commands. In the beloved Book we find the record of the sons of God going up to worship, and the devil going up, too. Do we ever see this? Yes, I think so; we see a little band of God's little ones gathered together, and the first thing we know we see the enemy creeping in. He begins to tell them what they must do—begins to heap burdens upon them, creating strife and contention. But thanks be to God, we still have a few who are preaching Jesus, and when we find a little band where Jesus is preached we find love and sweet fellowship, and they have love one for another and peace reigns, and why? Because Jesus is there; he that is head over all things to the church, he who came down to this low ground of sin and sorrow, he who took not on himself the nature of angels, but a body of flesh, and died the just for the unjust. He who knew no sin was made to suffer and die for the sins of his people, those who had strayed afar off, wandering in the wilderness of sin. Under the law they were doomed to die, but God so loved them that he sent his Son to pay the debt of sin by the death on the cross. Jesus said on the cross, "It is finished." Oh, the debt of sin was paid, and he went down into the tomb and rose again, and justified every one the Father gave him. Sin hath no more dominion over those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Can we attain to this by nature? Oh no, but in the Spirit we can serve him, and do serve him, and if he commands his little ones obey, because his words are spirit and they are life. When the love of God rests upon his children they long to do his will. Jesus said, Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me. The letter killeth, but the Spirit maketh alive. So we see no one can learn how to serve God by reading, but only by the Spirit can they learn. We believe in reading the Scriptures, for they are the witness to testify with the witness within that God is a merciful God. May God uphold all his little ones by his power, is my prayer. I am (seemingly) a poor wanderer in a strange land.

J. F. DANIELL.

LA JUNTA, Colo., Feb. 2, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a bank draft of two dollars for another year's subscription to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as I do not want to miss a number. I very seldom lay them down until I have read them through, for the many good letters are a great comfort to me. I love to read the letters from our dear writers over and over, and while I am not able to express my thoughts in words or writing, I am made to realize that I have been fed from the crumbs that fall from our Master's table. We read of their travels, their ups and downs, their doubts and fears, and it is strengthening to us and builds us up while traveling through these low grounds of sin and sorrow. Our blessed Savior was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. He never rejoiced while in the flesh. He is said to never have rejoiced but once, and that was in spirit, and that was because these thing were hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. Paul had a strong and abiding desire and prayer that his brethren might know that exceeding greatness of the mighty power of God which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Jesus is the true witness. He that believeth hath the witness in himself, and he that believeth in Jesus hath eternal life. He may be led off in other paths, but when Jesus is preached that preaching comes to him as a witness in his own heart, and in his own experience he comes face to face with self; he sees his own life in a measure in the life of Jesus, and what we see and feel in preaching and in his blessed word we hope for. We look for Jesus to come again without sin unto salvation. We are saved by hope, but what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. However dark the way, however great the trials, however unworthy we feel, yet we hope our little hope is something we cannot give up, though at times it almost seems gone, but it is hid with our dear Savior, who giveth us everlasting consolation and hope through grace. If one at all the least of all. My prayer and desire is that I may bring no reproach upon the church, or be a stumbling-stone.

Yours in hope,

ROSILIA E. SHOEMAKER.

DALLAS, Texas, Nov. 17, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If you will allow one so unworthy as I am to thus address you. I see in our precious old paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that you are very short of funds. I feel that we cannot afford to do without the comfort it brings to us. It is surely good news from a far country. I receive it with great joy, and I hope the good writers will be given grace to help them. It seems I have not the gift of writing anything comforting to any one, but if I know myself I do love the Old Baptist doctrine, and I hope they always let me stay with them and entreat me not to leave them, for they are my all in all.

I am inclosing a money order for twenty-five dollars to help our good paper. Use it as your judgment directs.

(MRS.) F. J. GRAY.

[WE indeed thank our dear sister for her generous gift. Such letters are helpful to us in more than a financial way, for by them we know our feeble efforts have been of comfort to some of God's chosen people.—J. E. B. & Co.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1924.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THOUGHTS.

NOT any one text, but just some scattering thoughts are running through our mind, and in lieu of anything better, we can but give what we have. We have been thinking, for one thing, what a wonderful blessing it is to be able to believe in God and in his Son Jesus Christ. This blessing no one can obtain for themselves no matter how hard they may try to do so. The Jews upon one occasion asked Jesus to shew them the works of God that they might do them. It seemed never to occur to their minds that they might not be able to do God's works, there seemed to be with them no consciousness whatever of their own limitations or of God's infinity. In reply to them, Jesus said, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." This word of Jesus rightly understood upsets all prevailing notions as to what true, saving belief really is. Belief does not come by the will of the creature, nor by any effort possible for men to put forth. Belief unto salvation is the work of God, the fruit of his own Holy Spirit, the offspring of divine revelation. As Paul wrote the Ephesians, "Who believe according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead." The word clearly states here that the only efficient power unto sure believing is the same resurrection power which raised Christ from the dead. What a wonderful thing to contemplate, that the very same power, not some other, which raised again the Lord Jesus from the dead is the power that works in believers, producing in them the ability to believe in God unto salvation. No belief of any kind is worth anything unless it has a basis to rest upon, and the more substantial the foundation the firmer the belief is sure to be. The foundation of true belief is faith. Faith takes hold of the invisible things of God and brings the soul into touch with those things. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. This faith is the gift of God and the fruit of his Spirit, hence not in any sense to be originated or maintained by any work or effort of the human being himself. What can any soul know truly of God except it please God to condescend to that one and reveal his character in him? Flesh and blood cannot possibly convey to any soul any true conception whatsoever of the way of salvation. It must be taught of God. Faith, then, is that spiritual principle established in the soul of the believer by which that one is made to believe in the one true and living God. By this faith the believer counts himself wholly a sinner by nature and to be saved only through the mercy and goodness of almighty God, whose Son came in the flesh to execute the covenant made in him before time began. By faith, the believer realizes it is not by the deeds of the flesh he can ever be justified in the sight of God, but solely through the atoning blood and righteousness of the Lamb

of God. By faith, the believer is brought from under the unavailing prescriptions of the old covenant, to walk in the spirit and newness of life of the new covenant brought in through the death and resurrection of Christ. What a great thing to be able to walk in the obedience of faith! What a great thing not merely to believe in certain points of doctrine unalterably true, but to be able to maintain a godly conduct which in some measure shows forth the reality of the principles believed in the heart! For some one merely to give their assent to certain articles of faith amounts to nothing unless the life and reality of that faith abound in one's life. Articles of faith may be all very well in their place, but never can they take the place of vital religion. If one wishes to know what one believes, he need not seek among the archives of the church, but search diligently the record written indelibly within his soul by the finger of God's Holy Spirit. But how, in that case, may one know whether one's spiritual experience is really due to divine revelation or merely to the vagaries of one's mind? The answer to this is for that one who thus inquires, to search diligently the record of God's dealings with his people as left us in the Scriptures. Every spirit exercising the children of God must be brought to the test of the written word of God. If what we feel and believe harmonizes with the teaching of God in the Scriptures we may well be encouraged to trust we are on the right road, but if what we hug to ourselves as reality will not stand the test of the Scriptures it must be rejected and cast off as being of the flesh and carnal mind. In opposition to this, some one may say different things in different places, that there is contradiction in the Bible. In answer to this, we affirm there is no contradiction in the word of God. That there are contradictions in the constructions put upon the Scriptures we freely admit, but we cannot consent to the charge that contradictions or inconsistencies exist in the Bible. The Scriptures must be taken in their entirety, and not in part, they must be looked at as one whole theme from Genesis to Revelation. Of course, one might take from the Bible a passage here and there and construe them to mean most anything one wishes, but the Scriptures are not meant to be torn apart from their connections and contexts. They must be considered in their connection with all other Scriptures. When led to read them this way and in the light which the Holy Spirit alone can afford, the Scriptures are not at variance with themselves, but present consistently and entirely the one and only reliable source of information as to the character of God and of his manner of dealing with the children of men. L.

AN EXPLANATION.

In the issue of the Signs for the month of November there appeared the Circular Letter of the Pocatalico Association, in which are presented certain assertions regarding the "wicked," or "nonelect," which the Signs does not stand for and which the editors of the Signs do not indorse. It has been the Signs' custom for many years to publish without comment all Circular Letters of Old School Baptist associations sent to it for publication. These Circular Letters are beneficial to our readers in that they keep us informed of the doctrinal viewpoint of Old Baptist churches and associations in various parts of the country, but such Circular Letters should never be taken as representing the views of the editors of the Signs, for the editors are in no wise

sponsors for them, nor are they responsible for any expressions which may be contained in these Circular Letters. The SIGNS is a medium of correspondence for Old School Baptists, and, in this sense, our readers have a right to know what views are being held by their brethren in different parts of the country. Therefore Circular Letters sent to us for publication are published by us as sent and are not subject to revision by us. In the case of individual and personal letters, however, the editors have the right of revision and the right to accept or reject such letters as they see fit. L.

CLOSE OF VOLUME NINETY-TWO.

WITH this number the SIGNS OF THE TIMES concludes its ninety-second volume as a medium of correspondence among the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of the United States, Canada and England, and we feel that during all these years the paper has always stood firm for the principles set forth by its first editor and publisher, Elder Gilbert Beebe, and that it now advocates the same doctrine it did in its first issue in the year 1832. At times we wonder how we have been able to go on with its publication as prop after prop was removed, and it seemed that the structure must surely crumble and fall, but by the help of our ever-faithful God it has been continued to the present, and by his help we hope it will be continued years to come. We know that as long as he has use for it it will continue, but not a day longer.

During the past year, because of financial reasons, we were forced to change the SIGNS from a semi-monthly to a monthly publication, but increased the size of each issue from sixteen to twenty-four pages. So far our subscribers have been very kind to us, and have continued their support, which has much encouraged us, and made us hopeful that the SIGNS will still be published for many years. The letters sent us regarding the change expressed regret that such a move was necessary and the writers hoped that the SIGNS would not be discontinued. We feel very thankful for their kind and encouraging words, and hope by the Lord's help to continue publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

We know our readers will be pleased to learn that beginning with the January issue Elder H. H. Lefferts, our senior editor, has consented to try and write an article for each number, and that either Elder R. Lester Dodson, Elder George Ruston or Elder Charles W. Vaughn, will also write for each number, making two editorials in each issue. This will give our readers the same number of editorials during the year as formerly.

We wish to thank our editors for all they have done toward helping us keep the SIGNS upon a firm foundation. They have given freely of their time and labor, and we feel their efforts have been much appreciated by our readers as well as by the publishers. Theirs has been a labor of love during the past year, but we do not feel we should longer allow them to continue to do all the giving, so next year we hope they will feel to accept something from us in return for their valuable services, which of course cannot be measured and paid for by dollars and cents, and even if they could be, we are not in a position financially to pay what they are worth. We also thank our correspondents who have contributed letters for publication in the past, and hope they will continue to write during the years to come. Also, we thank our subscribers who have kept their subscriptions paid up, and those who have contributed

toward sending the paper to "the poor of the flock;" in fact, we thank all who in any way have assisted us in continuing the publication of the SIGNS.

As to the future of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, we will say that we feel greatly encouraged by the way our subscribers have continued their support. We are receiving about as many new subscribers as we usually do at this time of the year, and have only had about the usual number of orders to discontinue the paper, so feel our subscribers are going to stand by us and continue to support the paper.

As a majority of our subscribers' time expires with this issue we are inclosing in each paper a subscription blank as a convenience in sending in their renewals, also in sending names of new subscribers, and we request each one to not only renew their own subscription, but to try and secure at least one new subscriber for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Again thanking all who in any way have assisted in the past, we will now say, Farwell for 1924.

J. E. B. & CO.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by John F. Oliver.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 15th, 16th and 17th, 1924, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greetings.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Through the kind providence of our covenant-keeping God we are once more blessed with the privilege of meeting in an associate capacity, and we hope that the blessed Spirit of our adorable Redeemer will guide us in the way of truth and that the bright rays of his blessed Spirit may shine in our hearts, that we may be enabled to rejoice in the blessed truth as proclaimed by his servants, and in writing this, our annual Circular Letter, for the consideration of our brethren we wish to present a few of our thoughts on the following named words recorded in the thirteenth chapter of Hebrews, first verse: "Let brotherly love continue." And again, Let us not be found having on our own righteousness, but be clothed with the righteousness of him who has redeemed, washed and cleansed us with his own blood. The meaning of the word "let" is to permit, to allow, to suffer, to give leave or power by a positive act, not to hinder, &c. God in the first creation of the world used for the first time in creation the word "let." He said, "Let there be light: and there was light," showing by this that his word is power, for he speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. Hence then, the word "let" is more a command than a permit. "Let brotherly love continue." "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good."—Rom. xii. 9. In natural creation God commanded light to come forth out of darkness, also in spiritual creation he did the same. Paul in writing to the Corinthian brethren said, "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. iv. 6. Yes, in the first creation "the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."—Gen. i. 2, 3. Dear brethren, we

were all darkness and had no light, until God commanded the light to shine down into the dark recesses of our hearts and gave us the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ, who is our all in all. For this cause, "Let brotherly love continue." David in the one hundred and thirty-third Psalm says, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Unity is oneness, two in one, like two drops of water coming together and kissing each other; two made one, Christ and his bride (the church) made one, I in you, and you in me; "Christ in you, the hope of glory," and what "God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." We believe in the vital unity of Christ and the church. May we therefore, brethren, endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Let us not get too high-minded, and become puffed up with worldly pride and feel to exalt self like the Pharisees did of old, for our Savior has said, "And whosoever shall exalt himself, shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted."—Matt. xxiii. 12. May peace, love and fellowship abound in our hearts, and we pray that we may all be kept by the almighty power of God, through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Our Savior hath said, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love."—John xv. 7–9.

Now, dear brethren, we feel that we have made this letter too long, but feel to conclude by giving all praise to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, to whom be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

The next session is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, of Loudoun County, Virginia, beginning on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1925.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
K. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

(Written by J. L. Hastings.)

The Salisbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Nassaongo Church, Wicomico County, Maryland, to the several churches of which it is composed, and to all with whom we correspond, sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—We desire to thank the God of all grace that it is our privilege to once more meet in an associate capacity to speak and hear of the goodness and mercy of God's grace, and as it is our custom to write something in the way of a Circular Letter we will call your attention to the portion of God's word found in James i. 26, 27: "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." James, we are told in the beginning of this epistle and chapter, was a servant of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and, like all of the prophets and apostles, he spoke and wrote as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, Jesus taking of the things of the Spirit and showing them to him. He was given much to exhortation, and we feel that exhortation and reproof is good at times, for he has told us in what I have quoted that if a man seemeth to be

religious, and bridleth not his tongue, his religion is vain. Here we are led to see that there is vain religion, that there are wolves in sheep's clothing. We are told that there are those who creep in unawares. They come in with their tongue not bridled, and not only do they deceive others, but their own hearts, and their religion is vain. These are those that creep in among us, but the Scriptures tell us that there are false prophets and false teachers in the world, and that they would deceive the very elect, if it were possible. But here we have the assurance that it is not possible for the elect to be deceived. They may be led away by their lusts, and enticed to do and think many things that cause them to mourn and groan on account of sin, but those who cry, Lo here and lo there is Christ, do not deceive them, because they are led by the Spirit to know that this is false, and that this is but the husks that the swine do eat.

In our text he tells us of pure religion. What does anything have to be to be pure? Words would fail to describe what it is to be pure. Gold when dug from the mine is not pure, that is to the natural eye, it is filthy and dirty, and must needs go through many processes to bring it to that point where it can be termed pure gold. With the many processes the last it must go through is the fire that consumes the dross, and when pure a man's face will reflect in the gold. Now this will illustrate the pure religion that James speaks of, which is the religion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who came to save poor lost and ruined sinners. The religion of man is all vain, but the religion of Christ is pure as he is pure; it is undefiled. We are pure and acceptable before God the Father.

What is it to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction? Does this mean the boy or girl who has no father to care for them, or the woman whose husband has been taken from her? No, a thousand times no. It is nothing out of place to visit those who are in distress naturally, but this means far more than that. Who are the fatherless and widows that James has in mind when writing these words? We feel that they are those whom John saw that came up out of great tribulation, that washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. You who have been brought to see yourselves lost, ruined, undone, wretched sinners, who have been brought to the ends of the earth, know the time in your experience when everything that was earthly was taken away, father, mother, husband and wife, not in a natural sense, but in a spiritual sense. Like Job you could say, Naked came I into the world and naked go I out, fatherless and alone, crying for mercy, afflicted, tempest-tossed, seeking everything for relief, desiring that pure religion that is undefiled.

How do we visit the poor and afflicted people? Is it by going to their homes so many times a day or week? No. It is by speaking a word of comfort to them, many times when we know it not. Give to them a cup of cold water, as it were, to one of these little ones. Oh how refreshing to one when brought to realize that there are those whom the Lord has called to pass through the same affliction that they are passing through, and to know that there is a people who have been brought through fire and come forth as gold, all the dross being consumed, and they standing in the sight of God pure and holy and without blame before him in love, having their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb, not having one spot of the religion of the

world upon their garments, but being found with the assembly of the saints, worshiping God in faith, trusting alone in a crucified and risen Redeemer and walking alone by the faith of the Son of God.

May we ever be found visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction and ministering to them of the things of the Spirit, as it may please God to give them to us. May we lay aside all the things of the world, and with the blessed Savior be made to say that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. May the God of all grace keep and sustain you. Amen.

J. C. MELLOTT, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

(Written by James Avery.)

The Lexington–Roxbury Association, in session with the Second Roxbury Church, Roxbury, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, September 17th and 18th, 1924, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and churches with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We call your attention to 1 Corinthians xv. 20, 21: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." This is a great and glorious chapter, beginning with the gospel by which we are saved, and ending with complete subjugation of all things unto Him who died for our sins, was buried and rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures (verses three and four). The writer of this epistle seemed to know nothing but Christ crucified, Christ risen and ascended, and reigning. In this chapter he gives special prominence to the resurrection, proving that the life and death of Christ would have availed us nothing if he had not risen, that apart from this great fact there is no gospel to preach, no ground for faith, no salvation; but Christ being risen, all is well with those who trust in him, and as he is in his glorious body, so shall we be. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." All are in Adam without exception, and therefore all are sinners and were dead in trespasses and sins. All born again are in Christ, and he is to them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption, and life eternal. "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." The kingdom of God will be that condition on earth, when the will of God shall be done on earth, when the Son shall have subdued all things unto himself. God shall be all in all. These mortal bodies of flesh and blood must be changed and made like unto his glorious body, no longer subject to the powers and circumstances which control them now. "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment." In 1 Thessalonians iv. 15–17, this is more fully set forth. The Lord himself referred to it in these words, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." The natural man can never see or inherit the kingdom of God unless he is born from above, born the second

time, and all who are born again belong to the kingdom, and must in one of two ways obtain a body fit for the kingdom. The body must die and rise from the dead at his coming, or be in a moment changed without dying, as were Enoch and Elijah. "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." Corruptible and mortal are terms referring to our present bodies, incorruptible and immortal describe the body that shall be ours at his coming, when we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." In Hosea xiii. 14, it says, "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." Thinking of these words we often say we are glad that God has power over death and the grave and will destroy both and will never alter his purpose about it, and in the case of the believer death is a blessing, and brings only gain, and is far better. The glories of the resurrection encourage us to be steadfast in the faith, unmoved by any false doctrine, and to gladly walk in the good works which he has ordained for us. He demands that we present our bodies a living sacrifice, which is our reasonable service, since he has bought us with a great price, that he may work in us all his good pleasure, causing grace to abound toward us. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." We have the following, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." "And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept, arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." At the last day Christ will descend from heaven and raise the dead from the grave to final glory.

GEORGE RUSTON, Mod.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Lexington–Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Second Roxbury Church, Roxbury, N. Y., September 17th and 18th, 1924, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and churches with which we correspond, greeting.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—With pleasure we report a most enjoyable and profitable session. Your messengers and ministers have come to us laden with the bread that comes from heaven, and can only be had by God's chosen servants, and only understood by a God-chosen people. We desire a continuance of your correspondence.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Middletown and Andes Church, at Union Grove, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday between the second and third Sundays in September, 1925, when we hope to meet your messengers. Until that time may God keep you, and privilege you to meet with us again.

GEORGE RUSTON, Mod.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Nassaongo Church, Wicomico County, Maryland, October 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1924, to the associations with which we correspond, sends greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We feel that God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, who established the church, who made Christ head of all things to the church, which is his body, has established branches in this body wherever it has been his will to locate them, and since we read in the Scripture, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together," we believe that God will bring his people together, as we hope and feel he has done at this meeting, to enjoy the pleasant association with each other, and to be fed with the bread of life prepared only in heaven, and delivered to us by his servants, his gospel ministers, whom he also prepares to do this ministering. We feel the Lord has most graciously and abundantly blessed us during this meeting, both with the quality of food and quantity of his servants to minister it, all of whom have preached one God of grace and Christ our sin-bearer, our one and only hope of salvation, and this of grace and not creature works. We desire a continuation of your valued correspondence.

Our next Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Indiantown Church, near Powelville, Maryland, on Wednesday after the third Sunday of October, 1925, when and where we hope to meet your messengers again.

J. C. MELLOTT, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at his home, Leesburg, Va., October 28th, 1924, Orien Mellott, of Andover, Fulton Co., Pa., and Miss Susie R. Thomas, of Watson, Loudoun Co., Va.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at the home of the bride's parents, October 18th, 1924, Paul H. Kenney and Miss Nettie E. Tomlinson, both of Delmar, Sussex Co., Delaware.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder James Calvin Walton, my father, departed this life November 3rd, 1924, after an illness of several months, being confined to his home since January, 1924. In the winter of 1922 and 1923 he was not able to get out, being afflicted with a very severe carbuncle, or rising on his right jaw, and after that with what the doctor called influenza, until spring, suffering very much. During the summer and fall of 1923 he revived and seemed to be much better, and just before Christmas made a trip to New Liberty Church, Bell County, Kentucky, accompanied by the writer and several of the brethren. Arriving home the day before Christmas he was never able to be at another service away from home. About January 1st the shortness of breath returned, and terminated in dropsy, he having been afflicted for several years with kidney trouble. In 1874 he was married to Elizabeth Ann Sorey, and to this union were born one boy and two girls, the younger girl preceding him to the grave. In 1910 he married Mary H. Smith, and to this union were born one boy and four girls. The boy and two girls preceding him to the grave. We sorrow not as those who have no hope, as we have reason to believe our loss is his eternal gain. Brother Walton united with the Old School Primitive Baptist Church in young manhood, and stood firm in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone for poor lost sinners, believing and preaching Christ the only way for upward of forty years. He was a firm believer in the London Confession of Faith. His life was such as to command the respect of both friend and foe. All through his sickness it seemed to greatly cheer him to have people come and talk with him, especially the brotherhood. Elder Walton firmly con-

tended for the doctrine of election, and the absolute, unlimited, unconditional predestination of all things as portrayed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the London Confession of Faith. He believed that Christ paid it all on Calvary, and by and through him alone his bride, the Lamb's wife, will inherit eternal life.

Written by his son, and brother in hope of a perfect life beyond this vale of tears,

JOHN E. WALTON.

Richard Marshall, our brother in Christ, passed away from this earthly life October 31st, 1924, at his home near Hillsboro, Loudoun County, Virginia, in the 84th year of his age. He was baptized in 1896 into the membership of the New Valley Old School Baptist Church by the late Elder E. V. White. His wife before marriage, was Miss Jennie Allder, of Bluemont, Va. His wife survives him, together with three sons and one daughter: Ernest, Thomas and Townsend Marshall, and Mrs. Drury, all of Loudoun County. There are also some grandchildren, we know not how many. On account of his very feeble health for the last three or four years brother Marshall had not been able to attend the meetings of the church, but in those years when he did attend no member was more regular or more faithful or more devoted to the cause than he was. His familiar figure on horseback (for he never rode any other way) will be long remembered by all who frequent Old Baptist meetings in this part of the country. It was his firm and unswerving belief that almighty God is the one and only sovereign over all worlds, principalities and powers; and that the promise of eternal life is sure to all the seed chosen in Christ before the world began. We have hope that our brother's spirit is in the paradise of God at rest and at peace from all the troubled turmoil of life. May God comfort the bereaved family and reconcile all of us to his holy and righteous will.

ALSO,

Mrs. Virginia C. Ball, our sister in Christ, and widow of our brother John L. Ball, died at the Woman's Hospital, in Baltimore, Maryland, November 17th, 1924, after a short illness of one week. Her home was in Buckeystown, Md., but she had gone to Baltimore for a visit. Sister Ball was born September 10th, 1851, and was the daughter of Joseph N. and Eleanor Chiswell. She was one of nine children living to be grown. She is survived by three sisters and three brothers, as follows: sister Alice Trundle, of New Cumberland, Pa., Mrs. Morris J. Dade, of Jefferson, Md., Mrs. Anna Allnutt, of Dawsonville, Md., William and Joseph Chiswell, of Washington, D. C., and Frank Chiswell, of Salt Lake City, Utah. She was married to brother John Ball in 1889, becoming his second wife and the mother of four stepchildren: sister Susie Dade, of Jefferson, Md., Mrs. Oscar Braden, of Paeonian Springs, Va., Garnett Ball, of Ijamsville, Md., and John Ball, of Buckeystown, Md. She was baptized by the late Elder E. V. White nearly forty years ago into the membership of the New Valley Church, at Broad Run, Md.

The funeral services were held from her late residence, Buckeystown, Md., and the interment in the cemetery at Frederick, Md. Sister Ball was a most devoted and self-sacrificing wife and stepmother. Her own pleasure and convenience were never considered by her before the interests of her family. The welfare and care of those she loved came first, always before herself. At the funeral we read the fourteenth chapter of John, and spoke from Hebrews ii. 14, 15. Our little church has suffered the loss of two of its members very recently, but we must be submissive to the will of him who doeth all things well. May the Lord comfort all the mourning ones.

L.

Brother **Benjamin Secor** died at the home of his son, Robert, April 4th, aged 79 years and 22 days. He was united in marriage to Eliza Windrum, of Shokan, N. Y., June 2nd, 1870, and to that union were born three sons: William, of Woodstock, Robert and Lorenz, of Kingston, and one daughter, who died in infancy. He was baptized February 2nd, 1878, by Elder Isaac Hewitt. Brother Secor was appointed deacon of the Olive and Hurley Church, which position he filled until his death. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace, the final perseverance of the saints and the resurrection of the dead. He lost his wife in August, 1914, which nearly prostrated him in body and mind. She had been a wonderful helpmeet to him in every way, and though not a member of the church took much interest in the meetings and entertaining the members and friends in her home. Brother Secor will be long remembered by the many who have been so kindly entertained in his home. After his wife's death he continued to keep his home, but for a time lost all interest in his business of fruit-farming. He told the writer if he had not been sustained by a divine power he would have lost his mind, but in the Lord's good time he was made to say with Job, Though he slay me, yet will I trust him. He was much comforted by the hymn commencing, "How firm a foundation," especially so in the fourth, fifth and sixth stanzas. In the last few years of his life he was greatly blessed in his reading the Scriptures with much spiritual comfort. His talk in our covenant meetings was a great comfort to his hearers. He had made arrangements for spending the winter with his sons in Kingston, and the morning following his arrival he was stricken with paralysis, and although all was done that loving hands could do he never recovered, but lived until April. His sons have lost a kind and loving father and the church a precious brother.

The funeral was held at the meetinghouse in Ashokan, where Elder George Ruston preached to a large assembly of relatives and friends, although a very rainy day. The many floral offerings that covered the casket and platform expressed the high esteem in which he was held. His body was laid to rest by the side of his beloved wife in the Tongore Cemetery, there to await the resurrection to which he looked forward in glorious anticipation.

Written by request.

MARY B. KEOGAN.

Mrs. Priscilla Mezick departed this life August 31st, 1924, at her home, in Felton, Delaware, aged 83 years, less three months. She was the daughter of Elijah and Sallie Givans Laws. She was united in marriage to George W. Mezick February 13th, 1870. There were no children born to this union. Sister Mezick united with the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church, Salisbury, Wicomico Co., Md., many years ago, and continued faithful and steadfast until the end. Her husband, brother George W. Mezick, who preceded her in death one year, was for many years a deacon of the Salisbury Church, and sister Mezick was truly fitted for a deacon's wife, fulfilling faithfully and well every duty. It was one of her greatest pleasures to entertain members and friends of the church. Many can testify to her hospitality. Her disposition was mild and her manner always the same. She was rooted and grounded in the doctrine of salvation by grace for time and eternity. Nothing short of an almighty God, able to do his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth would do for her. We all loved her dearly for the truth's sake, and miss her more than we can tell, but know she is at rest, where storms assail no more. She was the last of her immediate family, but is survived by several nephews and nieces, all of whom mourn the loss of a loving and kind aunt.

The funeral services were conducted in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Salisbury, Md., by her pastor, Elder J. C. Mellott, assisted by the writer. Many were present to pay their last tribute of respect to her. Interment was in the graveyard adjoining. May comfort and peace abide with us all.

Written by request. H. C. KER.

Sarepta May, wife of Elder W. J. May, was born June 1st, 1838, and departed this life October 10th, 1924, aged 86 years, 4 months and 9 days. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church called Old Pond Creek in the year 1861, and was baptized by Elder George Pinson, and remained a member thereof until given off with a number of other members to be constituted into a church called Little Hope, where she remained a worthy member until death, always filling her seat in her church at the meetings, unless providentially hindred. We once took notice that she attended five years in succession without missing a church meeting. She dearly loved the church and the church loved her. If she had an enemy in the world I never heard tell of it. She was a dear and God-blessed companion to me, and a tender and loving mother over and with her thirteen children, whom God had blessed us with, nine of whom are living. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her, especially by her children and grandchildren, and greater than all by me, her lonesome husband, whose loving companion she was for 67 years, 9 months and 2 days.

Her funeral was largely attended, and the services were conducted by Elders H. W. May, J. D. Riffe, G. B. Bird and W. M. Stanley, who preached in the order of their names. Their sermons were not lengthy, but wonderfully interesting and consoling to the poor broken-hearted family and friends. All of her nine living children were present, also a large number of grandchildren, and a few great-great-grandchildren. The body was laid away to rest in the graveyard on the home premises, in the reserved spot which I have kept all these many years for myself and her, and she is now asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep. Oh blessed day! Oh glorious hope!

Her husband,

W. J. MAY.

Veda C. Hill, the subject of this notice, departed this life September 30th, 1924, at the age of 17 years, 4 months and 5 days. She was married to Mr. Clayton E. Hill December 22nd, 1923. She was a daughter of William P. and Nancy J. Thornton. She leaves to mourn their loss her devoted husband, her father and mother, six sisters and four brothers, also a little infant daughter. While they mourn their loss, from some expressions to her mother with reference to that good old hymn, "Amazing grace," and its comfort to the weary, a few days before her death gives comfort to the bereaved family, they feeling to hope that their loss is her eternal gain. The writer has often visited Mr. Thornton, and can say I never met any family of children that could surpass them for politeness. Little Veda, with all the family, was taught manners from their infancy by father and mother, sister N. J. Thornton, who is a member of the Old School Baptists. I will now say to the bereaved husband, father, mother, brothers and sisters, God alone can bind up your broken hearts and reconcile you to his will. A large congregation of relatives and friends came together at the home of William P. Thornton to pay their last tribute of respect to the departed one. The writer used for a foundation for a few remarks the text found in Revelation xiv. 13, after which her body was laid in the St. Albans Cemetery to await the resurrection of the dead.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

Joseph S. Hastings was born February 5th, 1854, and died April 4th, 1924, making his stay on earth 70 years and 2 months, lacking 1 day. Three sons, Frank E., Lester F. and J. Calvin, and two daughters, Mrs. Virgle P. Wilkins and Mrs. McCoy Ennis, together with their mother, survive him. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and was a faithful attendant at Forest Grove, although he never became a member of the visible church. The day of the funeral was very stormy, but did not prevent a host of friends and relatives attending the services, which showed the high esteem in which he was held.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer, after which his body was laid to rest in the Old School Baptist cemetery, near Parsonsburg, Md. May God comfort and bless this bereaved family and all who mourn.

J. C. MELLOTT.

Reuben Munday McWilliams, son of James H. and Bettie McWilliams, and eldest of nine children, was born in Madison County, Kentucky, August 7th, 1851, and departed this life in Kansas City, Missouri, August 21st, 1924, aged 73 years and 14 days. He was married to Miss Ollie Hall June 6th, 1915. Brother McWilliams received a hope early in life, and in 1887 he united with the Primitive Baptist Church called Mt. Vernon, in Sumner County, Kansas. On the first Saturday in October, 1915, he united by relation with Pleasant Hill Church, near Plattsburg, Missouri. During his long period of suffering there was never a murmur; he ever trusted in his heavenly Father. He was blessed with a view of the glories of the world above just before he was called to go, and pointing upward tried to show them to his wife. He leaves to mourn their loss his wife, two brothers, two sisters and a host of other relatives and friends.

Funeral services were held by the writer at Pleasant Hill churchhouse, and the body laid to rest in the cemetery there to await the call of the blessed Master.

LEON H. CLEVENGER.

Elder W. O. Rutledge was born September 22nd, 1849, in the State of Mississippi, and died October 30th, 1924, at his home, near Garner, Parker County, Texas, making his stay on earth 75 years, 1 month and 8 days. He was given a good hope in the Lord about the year 1874, and soon after united with the Primitive Baptists of the Predestinarian faith and order. I formed his acquaintance in 1872, and after he united with the Baptists he never was known to deviate from the faith, and always seemed to manifest a great degree of humility, and seemed to take a great interest in the welfare of Zion. He leaves to mourn their loss a devoted companion, four sons, one daughter and several grandchildren, besides the church (Zion Hill) of which he was pastor for about twenty-five years. While we feel sad we weep not as those who have no hope. He was buried November 1st, 1924, in Anthon Cemetery in the presence of a goodly number of friends and relatives, the services being conducted by the unworthy writer.

J. G. ELLIS.

MEMORIALS.

INASMUCH as it has pleased the Lord to take unto himself two of our Deacons, viz., **J. J. Adkins,** of the Indiantown Church, and **J. W. Byrd,** of the Messongoes Church, we, the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Nassaongo Church, deem it right and respectful to spread this memorial upon our Minutes, and also to have it published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. As these dear brethren were always faithful in attendance and served well the churches in the office to which they were appointed, they will be greatly missed in their respective churches. Likewise, being highly esteemed by this Association, will be missed by all the churches comprising same. They were sound in the faith, wise in counsel, faithful in service, and their conversation was such as becometh the gospel of Christ. We bow in humble submission to the will of the Lord, knowing that he doeth all things well. We deeply sympathize with the churches of their membership, and also with their bereaved families. May the great Head of the church keep us all humble and steadfast in the truth, that we as an association of churches may praise, honor and glorify his name.

J. C. MELLOTT, Moderator.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

G. W. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

O. J. Croker, Calif., $4.00; W. W. Darby, Md., $1.00; Mrs. W. C. Stevens, Ga., $2.00; David Servis, N. J., $2.00; Mrs. Mary Faulkner, N. Y., $2.25; G. A. Dundas, Calif., $1.00; Jane Lucas, Iowa, $1.00; Mrs. McC. Steadman, N. Y., $3.00; A. B. Corder, W. Va., $5.00; A Friend, N. J., $1.00; F. H. Richardson, Iowa, $6.00; John F. Oliver, Va., $1.00; Miss Margaret B. Tiebout, N. Y., $24.00.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER T. W. Walker having changed his address from 5327 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa., to 847 Lee Street, Danville, Va., requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

W. M. Little's present address is Groesbeck, Texas, Route 3, care H. V. Ray.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS:

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

MILTON, Oregon.

DEAR EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS:—I have a desire to express to you the great sadness it gave me to have to give up the precious SIGNS in its semi-monthly visits to my humble home, but am truly thankful for its visits once a month, and sincerely hope and pray it has enough faithful supporters to hold it and not let it fall entirely. It certainly is painful to see brethren who love the truth as it is in Jesus, so ably set forth in the SIGNS, fail to support the same by not paying their subscriptions.

In connection with these remarks I have a subject in my mind which I would love to express to the precious ones who read the SIGNS, if the dear Lord will enable me to express it in a way that will be profitable to them and glorifying to the worthy name of our Redeemer. This being my feeling, I submit it to the inspection of the editors, feeling they are able to decide the great problem. The thought is this: The prophecies of God in olden times, or in the prophetic day, and the testimony of the apostles who are the witnesses of God in the gospel day. First, I will say prophecy is something which tells of future events. Second, the gospel is a witness to the events which prophecy declares. Now with this thought let us first notice the burden of the prophets, for truly prophecy was a burden, as also is the gospel. Almost all the old prophets introduced their prophecies by saying, The burden of the word of God came upon me saying. Isaiah, in the second chapter, says the word he saw, or which came upon him, was concerning Judah and Jerusalem. Judah and Jerusalem embraced God's people in the prophetic or law covenant, and there was no other nation under or embraced in that covenant. This being so, this word of the prophet is to them, and to no one else. While there were many other nations of people, yet Israel was the only nation which had the oracles of God, and the word which the prophet here speaks is to and concerns them, and no one else. In the second verse is the word which I first wish to notice: "And it shall come to pass in the last days." Notice the prophet says something is to take place, or come to pass, in the last days. The question is, What does he mean by saying, The last days? He means the last

days of prophecy, when the things he here prophesies are fulfilled. This we will notice when we come to the gospel day. "It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established." This establishing is in a specific place, not here or there, but it is in an exalted place; it is in the top of the mountains, showing its supremacy over the hills (the high place which Israel then occupied). "And many people [all nations] shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob: and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." In consideration of what is to come to pass the prophet in the fifth verse says, "O house of Jacob, come ye and let us walk in the light of the Lord." This request of the prophet to the house of Jacob has a secret I wish to notice. He does not say, O house of Jacob, come and walk in the light of the Lord, but says, "Let us." The prophet is one with the house of Jacob. Now my purpose is to find when this house of the Lord shall be established, and I hope that I, as the prophet, am one with the house of Jacob, and will say to my brethren, Come, let us walk in the light of God (prophecy), and in so doing we will find it a house which is established, and all the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. The prophet Daniel speaks of it as being diverse from all other kingdoms, and this difference which Daniel sees is the same as Isaiah saw when he said it was established in the mountain of the Lord, above the hills and all other kingdoms. Daniel says it is an everlasting kingdom and shall break in pieces all other kingdoms.

I wish to notice one more prophecy, and then will take up the gospel which establishes this prophecy. In the sixty-second chapter of Isaiah God reveals his mind to the prophet in the certainty of his purpose and the surety of the fulfillment of this prophecy: "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness therefore go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory." Here are the many people which shall come and say, Let us go up to the house of the Lord. In the thirty-second chapter the prophet tells us that the time is coming when a king shall reign in righteousness and princes shall rule in judgment. In the twenty-sixth chapter the prophet tells us what shall take place in Judah when God establishes his house in his holy mountain: "This song shall be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." Salvation, then, is the defense of this house of God which is exalted in the top of the mountain of God's holiness. This house spoken of by the prophet is the church of God which he purchased with his own blood, and while the prophet's prophecy of its being established or set up in this poor old sinful world did not make it the house (church) of God, it was ever his, it stood in the mind and purpose of Jesus Christ just as perfect and secure as it did in the last days spoken of by the prophet in our text, but at the time spoken of by the prophet it was shut up under the law, not visible to the house of Israel and Judah, but by the prophet it was said, The days cometh when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. This is the time when his (God's) house shall be es-

tablished, and as Jesus is the covenant of God's people we must look to him for the fulfillment of all these precious promises. We can go back before the prophets and find that God himself appeared unto Abraham and made promise to him that in him and his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed. This promise was not to "seeds," as many, but it was to "thy seed," which is Christ. By following the prophets down through the prophetic or law day and watching and taking note of the signs and events which were to take place before the great and notable day in which all these precious things which filled the hearts and minds of not only the prophets, but the house of Israel and Judah, were to be fulfilled, we come to the dawn of a day above all days. While Zechariah was attending to his priestly duties an angel appeared unto him and made him to know that the time long looked and hoped for by Israel was now dawning: I (God) will perform my oath to my people. God's way is not man's way. Elizabeth, Zechariah's wife, was barren, and like Sarah, was old and well stricken in years, and this is where God performed his wonder, it is where all human power failed, and by his angel God told the priest that Elizabeth shall (please notice the "shall") bear him a son, and you shall call his name John. How shall I know this? says Zechariah. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." Notice the firmness in which these precious truths are established. Let us leave these precious signs and follow on in this highway which is made for the redeemed to walk in. The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is fulfilling his promise to his prophets. He sends his angel Gabriel to a maid of Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, and this maid is not like Elizabeth old and past age, but is young, and the impossibility of the promise is just as great and unsolvable as with her near kinsman. The angel says, Hail (stop; be still, and hear the word of the Lord), thou that art highly favored among women, the Holy Ghost shall overshadow or come upon thee, and thou shalt conceive and bring forth a son (notice the old prophet said long before this, Unto us a son is given), and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. (Not make him a house, but exalt his house.) At this precious promise Mary was astonished, for she had never known man, and she, like Nicodemus, could only say, How can these things be? and like Zechariah, How am I to know? Dear ones, this is the work of God and it is marvelous in our eyes. Look down deep in your soul and see if you cannot find these precious evidences in your own experience. The angel lets her know that while things are impossible with man that all things are possible with God. While the world is afraid that God will not be able to establish his blessed kingdom (church) with every member without their help, they are running to and fro crying, Help, help. But worse than all, they are climbing the walls and trying to spy out the liberty of this blessed people, by bringing in perverse things to lead and decoy disciples. Such is painful to the humble poor here, but bless God, every one is in that blessed house which is established in the top of the mountain (God's sovereign power). One more thought in regard to this wonderful display of God's work with Mary, the mother of Jesus. The angel does not leave this dear woman to ponder these wonders alone, but tells her of the same work of grace being wrought with a near kins-

man of hers who lives up in the hilly country. (Dear brethren, this is so figurative of where we live in this marvelous work of grace. It is not all valley, neither is all hills.) When it was made known to Mary that Elizabeth was blessed she went to visit her, and when they met please note how faith was revealed from faith to faith, at the salutation of Mary the babe John leaped forth for joy. In the new covenant they all shall know me, says God. Under the precious evidence could these help believing it is the work of God that brings belief?

We must now pass by many monuments which God has established along this precious highway for the comfort and peace of those who seek this safe and firm abiding city, for space will not admit of noticing all, so we will just notice a few of the many evidences of Jesus, who came to do the will of his Father: remove the old covenant and establish the new. We can take all four of the disciples who gave a true record of the life and work of Jesus and they all harmonize in their evidence concerning the work which Jesus did in establishing his Father's house: the kingdom. It is declared, "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached." John, who was to go before Jesus, came crying in the wilderness (just where the Lord found Jacob, Israel), "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Not to come, but is now here. At this marvelous work many wanted to know if he were the Christ, and he confessed and said he was not. He said, He who comes after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. I indeed baptize you with water, but he that cometh after me shall baptize you with fire and with the Holy Ghost. While John was baptizing in Jordan Jesus came and demanded baptism, but John, as all who have tasted of the heavenly gift, felt too unworthy for the sacred and solemn obligation, but Jesus made him strong in spirit by saying (he speaks and it is done), "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness," and John baptized him and the promise of the Father crowned the act by sending the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, and it abode on him (Jesus), and spoke in a voice which John understood, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. From that time on Jesus was ever manifesting himself both in word and deed as the Son of God, and fulfilling the will and purpose of his Father in establishing the house (church) of God. He demonstrated the fact of the Godhead being in him by miracles and signs and wonders, which not only confounded the world, but astonished those he called to be subjects and occupy this house of God. Many times did they say, We cannot understand what he means by saying and doing such deep things. The blind are made to see, the lepers are cleansed and the dead are raised to life. Oh such wonderful things never man spake as he, even the winds obey him; and wonderful and marvelous, after all these wonderful works he tells them he is going away and where he is going they cannot go now, but shall hereafter, and after calling them to be eyewitnesses of this wonder, he now tells them that the time has come that they who have loved him and followed him shall be offended and deny him. O, dear brethren, this is the work of God, and he by his dear Son, our blessed Savior, is establishing this marvelous work in the hearts and minds of his witnesses, those whom he has chosen to go and bring

forth fruit which shall remain, and my soul doth magnify his holy name while I feast upon that precious fruit; it is living fruit which grows upon the tree of life (Jesus). While the disciples could not understand at that time his wonderful words and what he did, he told them they should know hereafter. He said, I tell you these things now, that when they come to pass may you know them. When Jesus was glorified (risen from the dead) they remembered his words. When he told them he was going away he also told them he would come again and take them to himself, that where he was there they should be also. This he said while he was here in the flesh. The word, which was God, was made flesh. This was the God-sacrifice which atoned for the sins of this house (church), which through this atonement is established in the top of the mountains. When Jesus arose from the tomb he came forth in his glory conqueror over death, and he came to his disciples and made them know that it was him, and not a spirit as they supposed. It took the wounds in his hands and sides to convince them, and just so we must have the same evidence to believe to-day; we must feel the suffering of Jesus before we can share his glory. When he had opened up the great mysteries of the prophecies to their understanding he commanded them to tarry at Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high, and then they were to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, "and, lo, I am with you alway." He promised if he went away he would come to them again, and this time he is coming in Spirit and not in flesh. The flesh is not a permanent abode, but the Holy Ghost, which my Father will send, shall abide, says Jesus. On the day of Pentecost they were all in one place and of one mind, and that mind was the mind of Christ, and the promise of the Father came as a mighty rushing wind, "and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as fire, and it sat upon each of them: and they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." At that time there were dwelling at Jerusalem devout men out of every nation, and at the report of this wonderful manifestation the multitude came together and every man heard them speak in his own tongue, or language, and they were so astonished they said one to another, What does this mean? While some were amazed at what had taken place, others mocked and accused the apostles of being drunk. We wonder to-day at people who mock and ridicule the publishers of salvation in Jesus, which is the wall around this house of God, which does establish it against all who try to invade it. It was demonstrated by the apostles when they could with established faith say, These men are not drunken, as ye suppose; but this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: and it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God. The prophets looked forward and spoke of these last days, and told of what now is established. God's everlasting covenant, which is ordered and sure in all things, is now established with the house of Israel and Judah (church), and the apostles here declare the fruit of this church by saying, or quoting the prophet Joel, "I will," says God, "pour out my Spirit upon all flesh," and this is the very reason the "many," spoken of in our text shall say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of Jacob. As the first covenant was given

to Israel as a nation and embraced them as God's people as a nation, so the new covenant is made and established with his spiritual Israel, and as his natural blessings were bestowed upon old Israel as a natural nation his Spirit is poured out upon spiritual Israel, and her blessings are now in heavenly places in Jesus Christ, just in accordance with his choice, which was in Christ before the world was. This shedding of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost was a seal of God which established all the work of Jesus that he did while here in the flesh. He was verily God in the flesh and he was verily God in the Spirit when he came to establish his house (church), and in this coming we have his precious promise that he has come to abide. I will, says God, never leave nor forsake you; and Jesus' last words were, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

In conclusion, let me say that the evidence that the house of God is established is that it has stood through all the persecutions the dear Lord suffered Satan to bring against it, and it stands to-day as the beauty of all the beauties to Israel, the chosen of God. May the blessing of the Lord rest upon every inmate of this established house, is my prayer.

In gospel bonds,

J. T. BARNES.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Nov. 26, 1924.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—Because of the very serious condition of my dear wife I am now confined to and about home nearly all the time, and as I sat upon the side of her bed just now I had some thoughts on, "Absoluteness" as I see it pertains to God and his works and his ways. There is a sweetness or a something about it which I cannot discover to my own mind, nor declare it to others, which makes my poor heart rejoice, and forever seals my lips against calling in question anything that is God or of God, or even anything of the all things which come to pass in time and in eternity; in the earth, in heaven or in hell. There is no place where God is not, either in his tender love and eternal mercy, or in his fiery wrath taking vengeance. I have just searched out the word, "absoluteness," and find it to mean the things which pertain to God in all his attributes, and that there is not an attribute which is not absolute. The true meanings are: independence of everything extraneous; unlimitedness; absolute power; independent reality; positiveness.—Webster. When we think of God we cannot rationally think of one who exists by the permission of another, or by any other power but that which was altogether in and of himself. Therefore he is absolutely self-existent, and being such he is absolutely independent of any other power to do all his will and purposes. HE IS GOD. In the divine power God is absolute. He does not get any of that power from any other source, nor can any other power prevail over his divine power. That power prevails over all other powers so that there is no power but of God. The powers that be are ordained of God. Whether they be thrones, or principalities, or powers, things present, or things to come, or the things which are past (to man), they are all of God and are God's. God is absolute in his presence. He is forever present at all times and in all places, both here and hereafter. He is the beginning, therefore he is before all things, and by him do all things exist. All things shall work together for his glory, and for the good of them that love God and are the called according to his purpose. It is all embraced in the "absoluteness" of God.

All these things exist by the absolute wisdom of God. His wisdom is eternal, and absolute. There is nothing of any nature or character which is strange to him. He not only knew it, or them, but he declared them. To him they were, and are just as sure before they actually come to pass as they ever are afterwards. One thing, however tiny it may be, which would be new or strange to God would be the eternal destruction of the great Godhead. There is nothing, however so little, however so weak, which might be unknown to God if it were to get tangled up in the great wheels of his salvation which would not fully and completely destroy the whole of the great work of salvation. Thus the Godhead itself would be destroyed, and everything would go away into nothing, the prevailing idea of infidelity. Therefore if we believe in God we believe that he is absolute in his eternal wisdom. Knowledge is jointly coupled with this, for it would be folly itself to know a thing and then to not know that that thing would surely be, and not only to know that it would surely be, but to know just how, and just when to have it to be for the accomplishing of his divine purpose, and to have no confusion in anything pertaining to his works and his ways. This is knowledge coupled with wisdom, and both are eternal, and are complete in God, and in no other. Then it is sweet to know that the "absoluteness" of God is as perfectly stable and as completely unchangeable as is his eternal existence. All heaven, and earth, and hell, with all their combined forces, can never make the least change in him in any of his attributes. He is God, and he will ever be in all time and in vast eternity. "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Therefore the assurance of our salvation is altogether hinged on the unchangeableness of our God. We are sinful every day, and every second of time. We are sin itself, and of ourselves we are cut off. But thanks to God, in him we are saved by the sacrifice of his Son, who is perfect satisfaction in all his works and all his ways. I in you, you in me, and I in the Father, and the Father in me. What a blessed eternal life unity between the God, the Father, through the Son, and for and in the church. A life which preceded any and all of them only in the eternal mind of the ever-adorable Jehovah, the ever-merciful God. Through all his attributes his love is so interwoven that they are joined one in another. They are not a stuccoed wall, nor city, but solidly built up in him to stand forever. Principalities, powers, things present and things future, as well as things past, will all fall before this sacred city which God has built, and which God has blessed. In all of his "absoluteness" he is ever underneath her, and she is as sure as he is sure. He will not be angry with her, nor will he ever cast her off. She is the object of his eternal love. She is very little, but it is in part this which identifies her with his mercy. He has promised to carry the lambs in his bosom, and to put his hand (power) on the little ones. By experience we do know that the older we get and the nearer we get to the end the smaller we feel, and the more we feel the need of divine power to uphold us and to save us. Also we are taught that when the Lord has much use for us to do hard work in his field he takes us through the deep waters, where we hear the roaring of his waterspouts, and where his waves go over us, and we, as islands, have the billows go over us. But in all these things God will surely bring us out more

than conquerors, for the absolute purposes of God are upon us forever, and in his name will we rejoice to his praise. I am glad that our God is absolute in all his attributes and in all his purposes. Here I have hope in him, but outside of this I have nothing.

With love and the best wishes for your prosperity in our Lord Jesus Christ, I am, I hope, your brother in his holy kingdom, and under his banner,

L. H. HARDY.

PALESTINE, Texas, Feb. 8, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS, and all the household of faith, scattered, as it were, to the four winds:—I have read somewhere, Ye are the salt of the earth, and I believe it. Salt is principally used for preserving meats, but as we think on the substance we find its uses are varied, and very little of earth's productions are found but what have sufficient percentage of salt to aid in their growth or their preservation. In this particular my mind was wondering on the scattered condition of our people. The salt we know in its application must be distributed entirely over the substance being treated or preserved; thus we find that in God's well arranged purpose we are living and are being planted in the different parts of this vast domain according to his all-wise counsel and predestinated arrangement. When John was allowed to look into this glorious revelation he saw people out of every nation, kindred and tongue, and seeing it in this light reveals to us who are yet travailing in this low land that the redeemed of the Lord are to be found wherever it has pleased God to place mankind, and when the powers of the country become so tyrranical, and sin becomes so unbearable that the saints can no longer be found, we may expect a dissolution, or a decay, to set up at once, for when the salt has lost its savor it is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men. Salt has another effect. In Collossians iv. 6, the apostle exhorts the brethren to speak, letting their speech be seasoned with salt. I have noticed when salt is placed upon snow or ice that it causes it to melt and return to water. In my opinion just here is a very beautiful example for many of us when we are attempting to defend the glorious doctrine of our Master, and desiring to speak to the comfort of our hearers; sometimes we possibly become harsh, when it would be more to the honor of Christ and to the good of his people could we season it just a bit with the salt herein spoken of by the apostle. While it may appear in this instance to have a different effect, we find all coming forth from the same divine power, and never failing in its application when properly applied. I have heard some of our most able gifts in expounding the true word of prophecy, and appearing in the most wonderful light of wisdom from on high, fail to feed the little lambs only because of the lack of seasoning, but I do not want to appear in the attitude of criticising my brethren in the ministry. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow, from heaven, and watereth the earth, and causeth it to bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth, it shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish that which I please, and prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. So, my precious brethren, rest assured that the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, cannot be stopped, or man refuse it, when this word goes forth, and for this let us go forth

shouting his praises, rejoicing in tribulation and persecution, for the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.

Allow me a few words now touching upon a little visit I made during the month of October back in the State of Kentucky. I left home with the view of attending the Old Soldier Creek Association, which met with Frost Chapel Church, in Wingo, Ky., arriving there Thursday late in the evening. The brethren began to gather, and by Friday at eleven o'clock a large crowd had assembled for the meeting, which increased every day throughout the association, and by Sunday, which was the second Sunday in October, there was an overflowing of people, as well as a time of great rejoicing with all who had come with the spirit of love, which seemed to be manifested throughout the meeting. This carried me back to the home of my boyhood days, but when approaching the brethren many were absent whose faces once shone with the brightness of the faith and the care and love for the cause, who had passed on to their final reward, but others were still there who were worn with the storms of many winters, and the passing through the turbulent waters of former days, as touching the church, who had come through, as it were, the refining fires of those days, and found as the smoke cleared that they stood shining brighter and brighter, clothed in the purity of the doctrine of simplicity of love and sweet fellowship one for another, which characterizes, in my opinion, every heaven-born child of grace. I was told there were at this association sixteen ordained Elders, among them, Elders J. M. Oliver, Curley, Clark, Prince, Jenkins, Perkins, a nephew of the late John M. Perkins, a young brother Darnell, twenty-six years old, evidently one of the anointed of the Lord, loved much by the brethren for his humble and contrite spirit, Elder J. C. Chester, clerk of the association, another great gift to the church. Many of the dear brethren I met there I would like to mention, but have taken too much space already.

May the Lord bless, comfort and prosper his people everywhere, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Brethren, I have written these rambling thoughts to send along with my remittance for the SIGNS another year, cast the mantle of charity around them, and if deemed worthy publish, if not, all is well.

I am, I trust, your unworthy brother in gospel bonds, L. D. ROSE.

COLUMBUS, Ga., June 5, 1923.

DEAR EDITORS:—Here is a letter from my sister-in-law which was most comforting to me, and I feel it might be read with interest and edification by others of like precious faith. It truly sheds forth that spirit of love and forbearance in meekness and humility that never fails to conquer, for it comes direct from the fountain of life (Jesus). It is pervaded by that sweet spirit of humility so necessary to show one's immediate presence with the Savior of sinners and the Lord of glory. Oh why cannot we always speak and write in this kind and loving spirit that is of Jesus? But as this was not so to be, let us feel that all things are working together for good to those who love the Lord, and to his own ultimate glory.

Publish if you like, otherwise all will be well.

In hope of life,

(MRS.) C. M. THETFORD.

AMITY, Ark., May 29, 1923.

DEAR SISTER EVER:—I have felt a desire to write you again, not only since receiving your good letter several days ago, but ever since I wrote you last, for I want to tell you that I have been made to feel ashamed and rebuked for taking up one of the vital questions of doctrine, in which I know we all believe, and disagreeing with you on some particular point connected with same. You who have always given unmistakable evidence of having been taught of the Lord in all these things and made rich in knowledge and experience, whose love and christian fellowship I value so highly; in fact, second to none. How much better and sweeter it is for us to speak and write of those things which we hope we have tasted and felt and been taught in our own experience of the unsearchable riches of Christ, and not try to dig into and explain the unrevealed mysteries of God, which we are assured we shall know and understand in full when we awake with his likeness and shall see him as he is. It is this upon which our precious hope is based. Truly no words can be found more expressive than those of Paul in speaking of this: "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail." Even when we feel to be left alone in darkness in the midst of the tempest, and our God seems not to hear our cries, the anchor is still there, not by any might or power of our own, but by the almighty power and sovereign, eternal love of him who has said, I am the Lord, I change not, and we know that if we are anchored on the everlasting Rock we cannot drift away and be destroyed, but our Deliverer will come to us in time, and even the winds and the waves obey his voice. When he speaks, "Peace, be still," we are filled with praise and thanksgiving, and made to know that in him alone is salvation.

Elder Lefferts' editorial in the May 1st SIGNS on unity among the children of God was good, and especially comforting to me, for these things have always seemed sad and perplexing to me, and have been on my mind of late. While I do not belong to the visible church (and oftentimes feel that the Lord would not permit one so unworthy and ignorant to become a member, even if there were a church at our very door), yet I have often thought of what you wrote once, that although we were denied much joy and sweetness in communion with the saints, we were also doubtless spared much sorrow and sadness which would be ours as active members of my visible organization. Surely Elder Lefferts is one who has been given more than ordinary wisdom and understanding in all things pertaining to the church of Christ, and an unusual measure of the gift of imparting to others, unusual even among those who have received the divine command, "Feed my sheep." I know grandma is enjoying her privilege of attending the meetings in north Georgia. She seems to look forward all winter to the time when she can get out with the Lord's people again with so much pleasure, and I feel to know how it is with her. Yet she is more fortunate than some who cannot have this blessed privilege at all, any time of the year. Now that the days are longer, we are planning to get over to hear the "Limited" preach, as that is all within our reach. They treated us nicely, and we heard many good things spoken, yet we were made to feel sad, and like an outsider, by hearing them say that God predestinated all the "good" only, and not the "evil," that takes place, thus, to

our minds at least, denying the absolute sovereignty of God, and weakening the "firm foundation" of a poor, weak sinner's hope.

Dear sister, I cannot find your last letter, so perhaps have not answered it, but accept the above as the sincere promptings of my heart, and my feelings toward you. I am not writing so soon to rush you, but because I have wanted to ever since I wrote last. I hope this finds you all well and enjoying your new car, &c. All well here, but very busy of course. We have had lots of heavy rains lately, crops damaged and washed away to some extent, yet things could be much worse, and we do hope the Lord enables us to thank him for his mercies and manifold blessings we feel we are so far from deserving through any merit of our own. Perhaps you can tell from my letter that I am feeling very much cast down and poor in spirit at present. Surely no one has more of a "thorn in the flesh" than I, for I am made to grieve continually over the sin that is mixed with all I do. I find I have no power to control the seasons of spiritual light and darkness, for if I could I would dwell continually in the blessed presence of Jesus. But our God, who is God of all power, as well as justice and mercy, controls our spiritual seasons as well as those of nature. My comfort is in the hope that the Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered, and as the Spirit maketh intercession according to the will of God, these poor prayers will be answered in his own good time, and I shall yet rejoice in the light of his countenance. Pray for me. May the love of God keep our hearts united in meekness and humility.

Your little sister,

ETHEL NORRIS.

THE TWO "MUSTS."

In our Lord's discourse with Nicodemus he twice makes use of the word "must," a word of immense depth and moral power in both cases. Let us ponder it for a few minutes, for, though but a word of one syllable, it contains a volume of most precious evangelical truth, in whichever light we view it.

First, then, we read, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." There we have the total setting aside of man, in his very best estate. The "must" of the third chapter of John, like the flaming sword of the third chapter of Genesis, turns every way to keep the way of the tree of life. It completely shuts out the first man and all who are linked with him from the tree of life. If I must be born again, if I must have a new life, a new nature, then it matters not in the smallest degree what I am or what I have, I am shut out. Man, as born of woman, enters this world with the image of his fallen parent stamped upon him. Man, as he came from the hand of his Creator, was made in the "image of God." Man, as he issues from the womb of his mother, wears the image and likeness of a fallen creature. Hence the force of our Lord's expression, "Ye must be born again." It is not said, Ye must amend, ye must try and be better, ye must alter your mode of living, ye must turn over a new leaf. Had it been thus, Nicodemus would never have asked, How can these things be? A man of the Pharisees would have understood any or all of these things. A change of character, of conduct, any moral reform, any self-improvement is perfectly intelligible to a Pharisee of every age, but to be told, "Ye must be born again," can be understood only by one who has reached the end of himself and his doings, who has been brought

to see that in him, that is, in his own flesh, dwelleth no good thing, who sees himself a thorough bankrupt, a bankrupt without a certificate, who can never set up on his own account. He must get a new life to which the deed of bankruptcy cannot apply, and he must trade in the wealth of another, on which the creditors have no possible claim. There is an immense power in this little word "must." It bears upon all alike. It speaks to the drunkard and says, "You must be born again." It addresses the most rigid teetotaler and says "You must be born again." It speaks to every class, to every condition, to every grade and shade of character, to man in every rank and every clime, to every creed and every denomination in its own clear, emphatic, sweeping style, and says, "You must be born again." It bears down with more weight upon the conscience than any appeal that could be made on the ground of moral conduct. It does not interfere in the least with the question of moral reform in any of its many phases. It allows as broad a margin as any philanthropist or moral reformer may desire. It does not disturb the various distinctions which society, public opinion, law or equity has established. It leaves all these things perfectly untouched, but it raises its clear and commanding voice above them all, and says to the sinner, to the man born of woman, to the worst and to the best of men, "You must be born again." It demands not reformation, but regeneration; not amendment, but atonement. Some say that this rebirth means immersion in water. Then if water saves the soul, why upon the name of Jesus call?

Second, what, then, may be asked, are we to do? Whither are we to turn? How soon are we to get this new life? Our Lord's second "must" furnishes the reply: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This makes all plain. A second man has entered the scene. There are two men and two "musts." As to the first man, he must be born again; and as to the second man, he must be lifted up. In a word, the cross is the grand solution of the difficulty, the divine answer to the "How." Am I completely struck down by the first "must?" Am I overwhelmed by the insuperable difficulty which it proposes to me? Am I only on the very verge of despair as I contemplate the apparent impossibility of what nevertheless must be? Oh, then, with what power does the second "must" fall on my heart? The Son of man must be lifted up. Why must he? Because I must have a new life, and this life is in the Son, but it could only be mine through his death. The death of the second man is the only ground of life to the first—life to me. One look at Christ as lifted up for me is life eternal. The soul that truly believes on the Son of God, as dead and risen, is "born of water and of the Spirit." The water that springs up into everlasting life, not born (immersed) in the dirty, filthy water we have flowing down our creeks, which has no life, but the water of life. When thus born of God he hath everlasting life, he is passed from death unto life, from the old creation into the new, from the first man to the second, from guilt to righteousness, from condemnation to favor, from darkness to light, from Satan to God.

May God the Spirit unfold to the reader's heart the beauty and power, the depth and comprehensiveness, and moral glory of the two "musts."

C. W. J. WALKER.

AN EXPLANATION.

I LAMENT the sad mistake of the Pocatalico Association, of which I was Moderator at the 1924 session, in adopting the Circular Letter for this year containing some expressions which we as a body of orderly Baptist churches do not believe. Just how those expressions got by the committee without being noticed, I am unable to tell. I myself at the time was suffering with rheumatic misery and in such pain that I scarcely knew the association was being held. The inclemency of the weather at the time the letter was read compelled the people to crowd into the house, and this disturbance to some extent took the minds of our able thinking brethren from the reading, the committee appointed to examine the Circular Letter being composed of the Moderator, Clerk and our corresponding brethren. I am now writing this for no other reason than that we may appear as a body of Baptists who have not departed from the true principles of doctrine. We trust we are holding the truth in righteousness, believing the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be a thorough furnisher to every rule of faith and practice that is necessary to be observed by the church as an organized body of believers, especially as to the doctrine contained therein, which is to be closely observed. We are taught in the word of truth that if any should come unto us bringing any other doctrine than that which Christ and the apostles preached, we are commanded not to receive them into our house (church), neither are we to bid them godspeed. I am now an old man, nearing my seventy-sixth year of age. I have spent the larger part of my life trying to preach among the churches of the Pocatalico Association, and among the Old School Baptists in eight other States beside West Virginia. My manner of preaching, I hope, has been to comfort the redeemed of the Lord, and it has been the uppermost desire of my heart to preach to the living children of God, as God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. The Lord's portion is his people, and his people are a part, not all, of Adam's posterity. Jesus came into the world for the express purpose of saving his portion from their sins. They were his by gift of the Father, given to Christ before the world began; therefore, the right of redemption rested with Christ. Hence, we believe that the offering of the body of the Lord Jesus Christ and the shedding of his blood on the tree of the cross have forever perfected the redeemed family of God, who were from eternity set apart to this end in the eternal and unchangeable purpose of God. The question now comes up, What about those who were not chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world? As to these, Jesus himself tells us in John viii. 21: "Then said Jesus unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come." This, then, is the condition of all sinners not embraced in the covenant of grace. They cannot live the life of the redeemed, because it takes eternal life to do that, and this eternal life is the gift of God through Christ Jesus to his elect only. Therefore the "wicked" shall die in their sins. The natural element of the natural man is sin, and he cannot exist out of it, nor be free from it a bit more than a fish can live out of water, which is its natural element. All the wicked can do, or have ever done, is to work iniquity. Let us hear the words of Jesus uttering their sentence: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he

that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."—Matt. vii. 21-23. The Lord never knew them in the covenant of redemption, never knew them as his portion. Paul, in his defense before Felix, said, "But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets; and have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." The thirteenth Article of Faith of the Pocatalico Association reads, "We believe the joys of the just will be eternal and the punishment of the wicked everlasting." We know that such an expression as that the redeemed sinner is the only one who sins is not the truth. Those who were not embraced in the covenant of redemption are sinners under the sentence of death as transgressors, being equally guilty with Adam, who is their natural head. They are transgressors of the law God gave Adam in the garden of Eden, Adam being the head of every man, woman and child who have ever lived or are living upon the earth. All became guilty before God in the act of Adam; his act was their act. Thanks to God, he made choice of a part of the fallen sons and daughters of Adam's posterity, in the second man Adam, the Lord from heaven, a quickening Spirit. These Jesus came to save, they having been given him in covenant-contract by the Father. He redeemed them from under the curse of the law, and by this atonement made by the Son of God they are free from the law of sin and death. We have no account of the non-elect ever being made free from sin and death. I must say that the Pocatalico Association has never before had such an idea advanced as that the non-elect are not sinners, and cannot sin, and that they are all just as the beasts. Dear brethren, we are very sorry such expressions went out as appeared in our Circular Letter. We hope you will cast the mantle of charity over our imperfections by pardoning us for this mistake. Oh, may we be found at all times standing firm on the doctrine of the Bible, earnestly contending for the faith of God's elect.

I have written this, I trust, through no other motive than love for the cause.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

TUSTIN, California.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find three dollars for the SIGNS. I have been a delinquent, but am paying up all I owe and six months in advance. You brethren have been very kind to me to keep sending the dear old paper. I am not a member of the Old School Baptist Church, but they are the only people I have found in my experience who give God all glory. They preach a finished salvation, and his children's names are written in heaven. The other religious denominations of to-day preach that you have to do something. If that is the case I know I am lost eternally. I joined the Christian Adventists, but they did not satisfy me, and when I heard the Old Baptists preach it satisfied my poor soul. They seemed to preach my travels of mind perfectly. Dear brethren, if I love a church it is the Old Baptist. It often makes me wonder if I am included in that wonderful covenant of grace. If I

am a child of grace, the least of all. Salvation is of the Lord, and none can hinder or stay his hand. I believe he can save the vilest sinner. No one can understand this glorious gospel only by revelation, and if I have a hope it is small. The Bible says we have passed from death into life if we love the brethren. There is no one of the faith living near me, and they wonder why I do not agree with them, but oh there is no comfort in their doctrine. All his dear people have the same sweet story to tell. The SIGNS is the only preaching I get, and I hope I will be able to take it as long as I am on earth. I love to read the experiences, for they tell my experience better than I can. Dear brethren, the more I see the beauty of Christ the more I can see the depravity of man, for he is unclean, unclean, and cannot speak of spiritual things unless led by the Spirit, or Holy Ghost.

I will close, and I hope the dear SIGNS will keep on being published, declaring the all power of God.

(MRS.) CLOYD PETTIT.

DANVILLE, Va., Nov. 25, 1924.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I am inclosing two dollars to pay for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES another year, for I do not want to miss a single issue. I have received my paper regularly this year, and every time one comes it brings with it a fresh kind thought of you. The dear old sister and I both have enjoyed it much, and want to thank you again for sending it to us. I surely appreciated the letter you wrote me early in the year, and have thought many times of trying to answer it, but my feeling of nothingness has caused my silence, and that you should ask me to write for your paper has humbled me indescribably. A desire to write has followed me for years, but I am sure it is of the flesh, and there would be no comfort in what I would write to the little hungry lambs, such as I find from the gifted writer of our dear papers. Where God needs me he will place me, and make me fit.

With best of wishes, I hope I am your little sister through grace,

BELLE NEAL.

BURDEN, Kans., Sept. 16, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription for the SIGNS has expired and I am sending two dollars to renew, will say a few words to express how much I enjoy its columns. Having been gone two months in the mountains of Virginia in hope of helping my husband's health and his eyesight, we returned home to find the SIGNS all here to read, and I have been reading and feasting on the contents of same. I have been in prison, as it were, for some time, but such articles as "Benjamin's Cup" and "The Wedding Garment," and a lot of other good preaching (I call it) is grand, and I have had a feast of fat things and almost can say, I know "my" Redeemer liveth. I got to the place where I was afraid it was all a mistake, that I had not tasted the good word, but some way my little hope revived. Praise his holy name, my cup was made to run over.

"Was ever love so great as this?
Was ever grace so free?
This is my glory, joy and bliss,
That Jesus died for me."

I am so unworthy I feel the cup was not for me. Jesus said, The cup my heavenly Father gave me shall I not drink it? and so the sinner for whom he died shall go free. Does that include me? If so, no man can pluck me out of his hand. Blessed thought. What am I that I should attempt to address the people of God? A sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

(MRS) V. A. EDWARDS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1925.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

As we stand upon the threshold of another year, it may be a good time to look back over the road we have come and recount some of the mercies of God toward us; for to recount all the goodness of God would surpass our limited ability. First then, we may well mention the cordial relations which seem to prevail between the members of the editorial staff of the SIGNS one toward another and toward the publishers. If there have been any unpleasant frictions or misunderstandings during the past year, the same is not known to us and has not been brought to our attention. Second, we want to thank God for the astonishing forbearance and love manifested toward publishers and editors during 1924 by the readers and subscribers of the paper. Many have been your words of encouragement and commendation, few indeed have been your faultfindings and criticisms. During 1924 we came face to face with the fact that the SIGNS could not be continued longer as a semi-monthly without substantial financial aid, which was not forthcoming, therefore there seemed nothing to do but change the paper to a monthly issue, which was done. Naturally we dreaded making this change, and thought we might thereby arouse dissatisfaction among the subscribers and readers of the paper, but nearly all seemed to take in the situation and to reconcile themselves to it as to the inevitable. We were much amused by one letter received, which said that the writer had long thought the SIGNS to be a money-making proposition. How surprisingly little does any one know about the arduous duties devolving upon those who endeavor to keep up a paper like the SIGNS. The editorial staff has served during 1924 without renumeration, and we very much doubt if the publishers have much more than made a living. But enough of looking backward; let us look forward to the year just opening. As we know the help of the Lord has never failed the SIGNS in all the past years of its long history, this emboldens us to hope and trust the grace of God may continue to be with us and strengthen us to maintain the principles for which the SIGNS was started forth in 1832. Not by any means as ably as the founder, the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, do we hope to do this, but we do trust that the very God who gave him his wonderful ability as minister of the new testament may in our measure grant to us the same courage and love for the truth which animated him. We well know that without Christ we can do nothing. All our understanding of the Scriptures and all our ability to write upon scriptural themes must come from the Spirit of him who is risen from the dead and exalted at the right hand of God. No matter how much education, or how much reasoning power, or how much intellect a man may have, none of these faculties will help him in his understanding of the Scriptures. John wept because there was found no man

able to loose the seals and open the book held in the right hand of him who sat upon the throne, but the angel told him not to weep, because the Lion of the tribe of Judah had prevailed to loose the seals and open the book. This is the book of the law and the prophets and Jesus risen from the dead holds the key, the only key that can unlock its sacred mysteries. The Holy Ghost sent down from heaven enlightened the apostles as to the meaning of the written word of God, and that same Spirit to-day is the only Instructor in the things of God. Only by revelation can these holy things of God be known. Not through the natural senses nor through the imaginations of the heart do these things come. How blessed to read the Bible when one can see the testimony of Jesus written all over it and all through it; how discouraging to read it when naught but the bare letter of the word can be seen. All the Scriptures in some wonderful way testify of Jesus, and no matter what text may be taken, and what may be said about the text, if Jesus be not seen in it we have not caught the substance of it. No man has any control over the Spirit of God, but the Spirit of God does control whom it will and when it will. Therefore it cannot be expected that any of the editors can at any time write upon this or that text as may be requested. We shall, in the future as in the past, try to write upon such passages of Scriptures as we may be requested so to do, always providing we have any light upon them. If we feel to know nothing about such texts as may be proposed to us, or feel that we have no light upon them, it is better that we lay such aside awaiting the time when it may please the Spirit to enlighten us upon them. We do not believe there ever has lived any one man, always excepting the Lord Jesus himself, who has known about every text throughout all the Bible. For this one reason, if for no other, we have always been afraid of commentaries written by men upon the Scriptures. A commentary [proposes to explain all the Scriptures, and many such have been written by men, but men at best are fallible creatures and no dependence to be put in them. Thus, we have never relied upon commentaries to enlighten us in the meaning of Scriptures, but have desired to wait upon the Lord, trusting to him to give us light upon them as may best please him to do. During the past year one brother wrote to us that he thought the SIGNS had somewhat relaxed from its original position, because he had not noticed as much said about "absolute predestination" as formerly. On the contrary, we had ourselves thought the subject of predestination had been very much to the front lately in the articles in the SIGNS. Not a number comes from the press, we are sure, in which the matter of doctrine is not mentioned. Predestination, election, salvation by grace and other kindred points of doctrine thoroughly permeate every article which appears in the paper. We do not see how any reader of the paper can help noticing this. Nor would there be anything left of the gospel were these things left out. The gospel could not exist without these vital principles, for they are the very life of it. Right here, another matter comes into our mind which we want to tell you about. Whenever any letter is sent to us for publication, it is of course always understood that such is subject to the approval of the editors, and it ought to be further understood that the editors are under no obligation whatever to publish any letter which they deem not suitable for the paper. A let-

ter may be unsuitable for several reasons; it may be unsound in doctrine, or it may be too lengthy, or it may be too full of personalities, or it may be so badly written as not to be readable. But when once a letter is approved by the editors and passed for publication, it still may need revision as to spelling, punctuation or grammatical construction. This work of revamping falls either on the publishers or on some one of the editors. Even after all this is done, the letter may be a good one, yet may not represent the views of any one or all of the editors upon the subject it seeks to present. It is not right nor fair to the editors that the readers of the paper should take it for granted that because a certain letter is published, that therefore the editors are in accord with its views. We do not believe that every letter published should be so censored as to bring it wholly into line with the views of the editors. A letter should present its writer's viewpoint. In correcting manuscript in readiness for the printer we seek to cull out errors, but we do not seek to destroy the individuality of the writer nor to change his point of view to accord with ours. A letter may be wholly sound in doctrine, yet may present some view upon some portion of Scripture which we may never have seen just that way, but so long as the letter is sound in doctrine it is approved for the paper, provided it is not inadequate in other ways. We do not mean to publish anything in the SIGNS which is at variance with the principles for which the paper stands, yet granted that a letter fills this qualification it still may differ in the presentation of some Scripture from the manner in which the editors might treat upon it, but for this reason it is not disqualified from publication. Brethren, write on. We want your letters. Especially do we want the ministers to write. Our readers enjoy not only experimental articles, but they particularly want letters expounding the Scriptures. For that reason we greatly desire the ministering brethren all over the land who have obtained like precious faith with us to write for publication their views upon passages of Scriptures into which the Holy Ghost may have led them. This kind of writing cannot help but be comforting and edifying to the Lord's people scattered over this country. So many, many of our readers are isolated from meeting privileges and do not get to hear much preaching. To these the SIGNS comes as a real boon and we want, for that reason, the paper to carry to them good and sound expositions of Scriptures to instruct them in righteousness and to build them up in their most holy faith. Brethren, we crave the charity and forbearance of all of you. We are but very weak, fallible men, and constantly need round about us the embrace of your love and fellowship. If we err, we want you to tell us about it; do not go to some one else and talk about us, thereby prejudicing our friends against us, but write us and let us know wherein we have erred. On the other hand, if we ever write anything that is especially blessed to your comfort and edification, let us know that, too. A kind word goes a long way at times. May the Spirit of God put it in your hearts to pray for us that we be not wavering in the faith of God's elect, may you have it given you of God to desire earnestly the welfare of the publishers and of all connected with the paper, that this medium of our correspondence may be maintained to the glory of God in the midst of a dying and gainsaying world. May our God grant to you and to all of us all things needful in his sight

that we may lack nothing essential to our profession as children of the Most High God. Above all, may the reality of the truth be manifested in our lives among men, may our lips and lives express the holy gospel we profess. Our religion is naught but a theory if it prevail not in our lives. L.

JEREMIAH XXX. 1, 2.

"THE word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book."

The testimony of the word of truth that the Lord God spake to Jeremiah was what he was commanded to write. We cannot have the personal feelings that Jeremiah felt, but other writers have given some expression as to how the weakness of their flesh was realized, and as we are brought in the way we can fellowship their words and are comforted in our hearts with the words they have penned for our encouragement, and the sweet fellowship in these things which were by the word of the Lord rests with the writer and the reader. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."—Rom. xv. 4. All that was written was by the command of God, and was for the comfort of the people of God throughout all ages, and the theme was Jesus and the salvation of his people. When we come to the time of the fulfillment of all the old testament, Jesus says, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."—John v. 39. Those who read the Scriptures as a manuscript, or a group of manuscripts, thought from the wording that they, by acts of creature performances, could merit eternal life; and men of to-day, when they read the words of Jesus to his people, deem them addressed to the world. When the apostles wrote to the church of God exhorting the brethren to live after godliness, they are to-day turning these exhortations to the world. We find from the writing of the Scriptures that the word, or command of God was the moving power, and not a mere invitation, as some men lay stress upon; and the burden of the word of the Lord was not a mere written page, but in power and demonstration of the Spirit. When his word is spoken to one it is done. When he commands it stands fast. All the writers of the Scriptures hold to this theme, both in the Old and the New Testaments. When we hear one professing to be a minister of the gospel proclaim these things according to the Scriptures, we acknowledge the proclamation as the words of truth, though the speaker may have just the letter of the word as it is written, and not have the true realization, because he has no life (spiritual life), and cannot witness with those who are moved by the Spirit of God to act in service to God. Paul in writing to the church of God addressed the brethren in different places, and spoke to them in the sincerity of Spirit, exhorting them to live as becometh the gospel of Christ, and to take heed to themselves and the doctrine, and to continue in the things which they had learned and had been assured of, knowing of whom they had learned them. In the summing up of the power by which the truth in the gospel is written, dear brethren, we cannot comfort you with a multitude of written words if they are not written by a power that moves us in realization to write. We often see writings which we are constrained to testify are of the flesh, as the design of thought is to give a personal feeling of self-justi-

fication, and their writings are not for the unity of Spirit and bond of peace, but division and destruction of the assemblage of the saints, and some would destroy the servants of God and scatter the sheep until they would never hear of each other, nor their welfare would not be known to the great mass of brethren. The church of God in different sections has brethren grouped together in common organizations called associations, for the convenience of each other, that they may have the strengthening presence of their brethren. Paul admonishes us to forsake not the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is. We enjoy the associated presence of the people of God everywhere the spirit of love is manifested. We have been hearing from brethren in different localities, but to visit and come together with the church of God in one great company brings us face to face, and we can speak to each other, and out of the abundance of our hearts we can speak and it reaches the heart again. Strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Those who proclaim there is no Bible authority for associations must think Paul's admonition to forsake not the assembling of ourselves together meant that they would not have an association. We have had the pleasure of attending five associations this fall, and enjoyed meeting the brethren in all these associations. The records of such meetings are kept and passed on to coming generations of such that God calls from darkness to his marvelous light, that they may have the testimony of the course and progress of the church of God in the generation preceding them. All the manifested life of the people of God that is written is of comfort to his people and will be to the honor and glory of his grace.

In writing unto you our desire is to impart some spiritual gift to the comfort of the church of God, and honor and glorify God. We cannot do as we would, but it seems necessity is laid upon us. We attended three associations in the State of Georgia, where we met many good and faithful brethren and sisters. This visit among the brethren was a great pleasure. We can recall from memory the places where we spent the nights, partook of dinners, and other places we visited, and all are stored in precious memory. We would like to mention all the names here, but space forbids. Our visit was arranged by Elder James M. Adams, who is a faithful minister of the gospel, and the qualifications that Paul wrote are manifested in his life, and lived among the brethren, so we are made to love him for the truth, together with all the dear brethren we met there.

Brethren write of the commands of the Spirit, which are contrary to the flesh, and bring us into a feeling of power that constraineth. John while on the island called Patmos, received by the revelation of God the manifested power of the Most High and wrote the book called Revelation, which is acknowledged by all Bible readers as very deep spiritually. He wrote the testimony of God given to him in the opening and closing of the seven seals, the same of which no man was worthy but the Lamb that was slain. We have rejoiced much in the wonderful testimony here written, which is in direct accord with our experience, as no man could open up to us the vision of His glory, nor take away the darkness and gloom that oppressed our soul. When this event, or realization, took place in our life we rejoiced within our soul and praised God from whom all blessings flow. In the testimony of His power and

love, as expressed by the holy men of old as they wrote, and as we are now considering in God's word to Jeremiah, we have been led to lay aside personal designs, and consider the truth as it is in Jesus, and the church of God as far superior to any relations of men.

We wish to say to those who have written for publication in the SIGNS that they have been very comforting to us. By these communications we are encouraged, and desire the continuance of their writings.

May the abundance of God's mercies rest with you and his love constrain you in the path of righteousness for his name's sake. C. W. V.

THANK YOU.

WE are indeed thankful to all who have sent contributions to help the SIGNS in its hour of need, for we were much discouraged, and felt our feeble efforts in publishing the paper were of little comfort to God's children, but since receiving so many letters from our friends, containing not only financial assistance, but words of encouragement and good wishes, we feel to take new courage in our work, and hope that the God of all good still has use for the SIGNS, and that it is to be continued as a medium of correspondence among our people.

For convenience's sake we are acknowledging the contributions received to help the SIGNS, and those to help send the paper to the "poor of the flock," under the same heading.

We also thank our subscribers who have paid up and renewed their subscriptions, or sent us new subscribers, and we request all to examine the date opposite their name on the little slip on which their address is printed, and if in arrears to send us what they can. If they do not feel they can pay it all at one time, just send what they feel they can in small installments. As some of our subscribers may not understand just what the date opposite their name means, we will say that it shows the date to which their subscriptions are paid. For example, 15Dec24 signifies their subscription is paid to the 15th of December, 1924; 1Oct24 shows their subscription is paid to October 1st, 1924; 15Dec23 signifies their subscription is paid only to December 15th, 1923, &c., so by looking at the date opposite your name you can readily see just when your subscription expires, and whether you are paid in advance or are in arrears.

Once again thanking all who have in any way assisted us, and hoping the year 1925 has many good things in store for our brethren and friends, we hope by God's help to continue sending the SIGNS to you.

J. E. B. & Co.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Josephine Culpepper, Tex., $4.00; Mrs. M. Jackson, Iowa, 25 cents; Mrs. T. H. Youngs, Ohio, $1.00; Mrs. Effie J. Bolton, Mo., $1.00; Jessie C. Ellis, Ohio, $3.00; P. M. Sherwood, Del., $1.00; J. R. Cox, Okla., $1.00; Miss S. I. Rittenhouse, N. J., $3.00; Mrs. A. C. Morse, N. Y., $3.00; Attie A. Curtis, Me., $1.00; J. J. Okes, Va., $1.00; G. C. Jordon, Mo., $3.00; Mrs. J. D. Shafer, N. Y., $1.00; G. E. Coulbourn, Md., $2.00; Mrs. W. R. Davis, Del., $2.00; Sarah A. McColl, Ont., $3.00; Mary E. Pittman, Kans., $1.00; Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Bloomfield, Mo., $2.00; Mrs. M. E. Drake, N. J., $1.00; Mrs. Val Werner, N. J., $2.00; J. A. Tandy, Okla., $5.00; Miss S. A. Stone, N. J., $2.00; Hubbell Bros., N. Y., $10.00; Mrs. Sarah R. Johnson, N. J., $3.00; J. H. Shambaugh, Ohio, $3.00; A Brother, Md., $1.00; Mrs. J. W. Garrison, N. J., $2.00; Miss E. Annie Parker, Md., $3.00; Alfred Titus, N. J., $2.00; C. Stevens, Ark., $3.00; Mrs. Georgia Carruthers, Va., $1.00; Mrs. Jennie Cole, Va., $1.00; Mrs. Maria Rees, Ky., $3.00; Mrs. W. O. Harris, Okla., $2.00; J. D. Welborn, Ind., $15.00; Jno. F. Davis, La., $24.00; Mrs. F. J. Gray, Tex., $25.00; J. W. Longfellow, Colo., $2.00; J. W. Newton, Ga., $5.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Sister **Mary V. Guernsey** was born April 8th, 1834, and departed this life August 23rd, 1924. For a number of years she was a member of the Middletown, Delaware Co., N. Y., Old School Baptist Church, where she was baptized. She and her first husband, brother Peter Delameter, were received by letter from the Middletown Church to the Otego Church, November 3rd, 1872. Brother Peter Delameter died at Otego in 1875. Sister Mary married for a second husband William Guernsey, who many years preceded her in death. She leaves to mourn their loss a son and daughter by her first marriage: Mr. Reid Delameter, of Margaretville, New York, and Mrs. Lee Strangeway, of Andes, New York, also one son by her second marriage, Mr. William Guernsey, of Lancaster, New York. She was very highly esteemed by both the Middletown and Otego churches. She loved the brethren, and it was her delight to entertain them in her home in the years that are past. She was firmly rooted and grounded in the truth as it is in Jesus. Her brethren will miss her good counsel and advice, but they believe that for her to die was gain. It was my privilege to visit her occasionally during the last few years, most of which time she had been confined to the home of her daughter, Mrs. Lee Strangeway, who with her husband nobly cared for her in her declining years, trying in every way to make her as comfortable as possible. I always found her glad to visit, and the theme dearest to her soul was to hear the name of Jesus exalted. She felt to be small and poor, and often her lack of heavenly-mindedness was a grief to her. She had a sweet disposition, was very affectionate toward her children, and was loved by all who knew her. In spite of her advanced age, having lived a period of over ninety years, her mind was very bright and clear. The writer was requested to preach at her funeral, which was held at the home of her daughter at Andes, New York, taking for his subject John xiv. 1. Her mortal remains were laid away in the Margaretville Cemetery.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Mrs. Elizabeth Catherine Money (nee Cornell) was born in the State of Georgia November 3rd, 1833, and was married to J. A. Money in 1855. To this union were born twelve children, six of whom survive her, namely, H. T., J. A., Samuel G., N. E. Money, Mrs. Martha Merrick, Mrs. Jemima Samples. She received a good hope in Christ in the year 1849, and joined the church of the Primitive Baptist faith and order in 1879, and was baptized by Elder Jeff. McBride. She lived a consistent member, always filling her seat when not providentially hindered until the end came, October 31st, 1924, when she fell asleep in Jesus. She was a staunch believer in the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and her home was a home for her brethren and sisters, whom she was delighted to entertain. Her friends were numbered by her acquaintances. She did not suffer long, being stricken with paralysis about five days before she died. He husband preceded her about forty years. She was buried in the Money cemetery by the side of her husband in the presence of a large concourse of relatives and friends. The writer tried to speak words of comfort from the fourth chapter and thirteenth verse of first Thessalonians. I would say, Weep not, dear children, as those who have no hope, for mother is not dead, but sleepeth in Jesus, from which none ever wake to mourn, and is gone from the evil to come.

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

James Earl Bartlett was born June 14th, 1909, our home being at that time 27 Marcus St., Atlanta, Ga. He was a fine boy, full of life, yet very studious, and was ready for the third grade High School, having passed the other grades with good marks. On August 7th, 1924, he was run over by a very large truck, and was in the hospital for more than six weeks, suffering great pain, which he bore with christian fortitude, until the afternoon of September 22nd, when he passed away. He told us he had begun to understand the preaching, and wanted to go with us to meeting every Sunday. Among the last words he uttered was, "Jesus." He tried to talk more, but he was too weak, and only lived about four hours after that. Earl set a good example for all who knew him. He was a good, obedient boy, and every one loved him. We have sweet evidences that he was a child of God. Those of the family who survive are, Walter Bartlett, Sr., Luna E. Bartlett, father and mother, Walter Bartlett, Jr., now of Washington, D. C., Mrs. Hallie Blackshear, Waco, Texas, Mrs. Annie Christian, East Lake, near Atlanta, Ga., and George D. Bartlett, Atlanta, Ga. We all miss him much, but are looking to our heavenly Father for strength to bear this great bereavement. Pray for us.

WALTER AND LUNA BARTLETT.

David Slusher was born June 20th, 1853, and departed this life August 18th, 1923, making his stay in this world 71 years, 1 month and 29 days. Brother Slusher was married to Miss Marie E. Self June 23rd, 1871. There were ten children born to this union. Six of the children and his wife preceded him to the grave. Two sons and two daughters are left to mourn the loss of a dear father. The surviving are brother W. L. Slusher and Mr. J. F. Slusher, two daughters, Mrs. Dora McNabb and Mrs. L. E. Jackson. Brother Slusher joined the Primitive Baptist Church in the State of Arkansas, Newton County, in

the year 1883, and was baptized by Elder A. R. McPherson. When about forty years of age brother Slusher was badly hurt, and from that time until he passed from the walks of men he was a great sufferer. Brother Slusher was a strong believer in the sovereignty of God, and a lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which came to him free of charge the last two or three years of his life. The writer was at his bedside when he fell asleep. He passed from time to eternity without a struggle. All that kind hands and medical skill could do was done for him, but his appointed time had come and he went home to be forever with his Lord and Master. I would say to his loved ones left behind, Be ye reconciled to God's will. The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the weeping mourners gathered around his lifeless form, after which he was laid beside his wife in the Rushsprings Cemetery.

L. E. SKINNER.

Mrs. Emma C. Pilchard, widow of Wryxan Pilchard, departed this life at her home, in Pocomoke City, Md., November 4th, 1924, aged 81 years. She was the daughter of the late Isaac and Eliza Jones, and was born in Worcester Co., Md., October 10th, 1843. Mrs. Pilchard was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and it was her delight to attend Old School Baptist meetings, and she was seldom absent until age and infirmities prevented her presence. She was a kind-hearted woman, a devoted, faithful and loving mother. She is survived by two sons: H. T. Pilchard, of Pocomoke City, and William N. Pilchard, of Philadelphia, Pa., also one daughter, Mrs. Janie Boston, of Pocomoke, with whom the mother made her home, and who sadly misses her companionship and counsel.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer in the presence of a large congregation which had gathered to pay the last tribute of respect to one dearly beloved. The interment took place in the family burying ground at Cross Roads. May comfort and peace be given the family through the Holy Spirit.

H. C. KER.

Mary A. Shoemaker departed this life September 22nd, 1924, at her daughter's home, Montrose, W. Va., aged 73 years, 7 months and 13 days. She was the daughter of Adam and Mirah Fancler. She was united in marriage to John W. Shoemaker in 1868, and to this union were born three children: Leonora D. Murphy, Nancy C. Phillips and Ingeba J. Ferguson. She united with the Leading Creek Old School Baptist Church April 27, 1873, (making her membership 51 years) and continued faithful and steadfast until the end. Her husband preceded her in death in 1904, and her daughter Nancy in the year 1921. She was highly esteemed by all who knew her, and will be greatly missed in our church, but we must be submissive to the will of God, who doeth all things well. She leaves two daughters, two brothers, sixteen grandchildren, besides many relatives and friends, to mourn their loss.

She was laid to rest in the Baptist Cemetery at Montrose, W. Va., there to await the call of the blessed Master.

Written by her grandson,

BENTON MURPHY.

Mrs. Catherine McIntyre McMillen, widow of John McMillen, departed this life September 16th, in her ninety-fourth year. Mrs. McMillen had suffered from a long illness and weakness from the infirmities of age. She was afflicted in many ways, having lost her sight. She was almost totally blind for eight years, yet bore her affliction without murmuring. She was given a spirit of reconciliation to be still and know that he is God, and that he would give grace according to her days. The subject of this notice was the daughter of Angus McIntyre. Her mother's maiden name was Walker. She was united in marriage to John McMillen some sixty years ago, and to this union were born five children, three daughters and two sons. All are still living, who are left to mourn the loss of a kind and devoted mother. Mrs. McMillen never made a profession of religion, but was a believer in salvation by grace. In my absence her funeral was conducted by the Presbyterian minister of Duart. Burial was in the Duart Cemetery.

Written by request.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Angus McCormick, husband of Helen McCormick, died at the family residence, 134 Park Avenue, New Castle, Pa., December 2nd, 1924, in his 59th year. His death was very sudden, coming after a short attack of heart trouble. In addition to his widow he leaves four children: Mrs. T. O. Hogue, of New Wilmington, Pa.; Archie G., of Pittsburg, Pa.; Donald W., of Chicago, Ill., and Russell A., at home. Father was not a member of the church, but attended many of the meetings with mother, and always enjoyed being with the people of mother's faith. Always a loving husband and father his absence is keenly felt by all of us, but we take consolation in the belief that he has passed on to a place much better than his earthly home.

Funeral services were conducted by a Presbyterian minister, Mr. Kirkbride, and the remains laid to rest in Graceland Cemetery, New Castle, Pa.

Written by his son,

DONALD W. McCORMICK.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

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A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

PSALMS LXXVIII. 9.

"THE children of Ephraim, being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle."

"Armed, and carrying bows." In all apparent readiness to meet the foe. Many of the babes in grace having heard of the many foes that we have to encounter have thought it will be well for me to have my armor on, and that I have in my hands the weapons of our warfare, and then I shall be able to face the enemy, and fear no evil. Bear with me awhile if I tell you some of my early experience. Perhaps to some big believers, who were never babes, weak and ignorant, what I may tell may be foolishness; but I am not thinking of writing for their benefit, but desire to communicate a few things that might be useful to such as are sometimes weak and faint in their warfare with the world, the flesh and the devil. Do not think because I am taking upon myself to relate some of my early experiences in battles that I am now without fears, and ever behave as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Ah, no! Though for many years I have endured many conflicts, and have many scars, yes, at times in the battle I have been so wounded that I was of no use for any more fighting for a time, and have been carried to the hospital tent for repairs and recovery, and I can see that in some fights I have had with the foe if it had not been for One, who stood up for my help, and covered my head in the day of battle, I should have perished. I will tell you more about this One in telling my story.

During the first ten years after I first tasted the salvation of God I was a diligent reader of the Scriptures, and the word of God was my almost constant meditation. I saw by reading that the children of God were the subjects of many weaknesses, they were sometimes cast down, they even fainted at times in the day of adversity. They were sometimes fearful and unbelieving, smitten down, trampled in the dust under the feet of their foes. They were oftentimes very failures, and far from what it became them to be as children of the most high God. I thought I could see how it was they fell short of glorifying God, and I said, Oh, that they had marched on from victory to victory, no matter how rugged the way, or how many and mighty their enemies. In my simplicity I thought I could see what they ought to have done under such-and-

such circumstances, and then all would have been well; then they would not have to cry out in the dismal straits that they were brought into. I said within me, I see their mistakes, I will profit by them. I said, They should have done this; they should have done that; they were not upon their watch; they were taken by surprise; they were negligent, forgetful; they should have been looking to the Lord all the time, praying without ceasing; they should not have trusted to their own strength. Thus I rather blamed the dear Bible saints. I felt I loved them, but I felt a little ashamed of the ignorance of some of them. I used to imagine what I would do in such-and-such a trial. If adversities and temptations assailed me, if Satan should run upon me like a giant, I would resist him, steadfast in the faith. I argued with myself, Suppose my carnal reasonings, or the insinuating sophistries of men and devils make assaults upon my faith, upon the doctrine of Christ, how would I stand my ground, and ward off the onslaughts of the foe? I thought I could see how it could be done, ought to be done, and also if such times came to me I would, by the grace of God, do it. I was very careful even in those times to have in my thoughts that phrase, "By the grace of God," or the words, "By the help of the Lord," for I could see by my reading that that was the becoming form of speech. But, oh, from experience I know but little of what are the deeps of meaning in those few gospel words, "By the grace of God."

"The children of Ephraim, being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle." I put on my harness, and as I imagined kept myself all panoplied for war. I thought I was all ready for trials, afflictions and all emergencies, and without doubt I would make a valiant showing in the conflicts that awaited me. I had no suspicion that there was any vain self-confidence entering into my cogitations. Theoretically, scripturally I knew that God only is the everlasting strength and salvation of his people, and that without Christ we can do nothing. I would have said, All my trust is in my near Redeemer, and I need his graciousness every moment or I shall fall; and I thought, I will at all times look to God alone, and not imagine that an arm of flesh can save me. "For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me."—Psalms xliv. 6. This was the form of my inward speech. I was a happy boy, happy in our Savior's love, happy that all my sins were forgiven; yes, put away in Jesus' precious blood. I delighted to read the Scriptures, and much prayer was mingled with my reading that the Holy Spirit would open them up to my understanding. I thought I knew I was sinful and weak and would have to contend with those who vaunted their own inherent sufficiency. I thought I knew, from the Scriptures, that all our endurance, life and vigor must be supplied to us daily, and that all supplies were stored up in Jesus. At this time of which I am speaking it might be said of me that I had not seen war (Exod. xiii. 17), I knew nothing thereof (Judges iii. 2.) But as I looked into the King's armory, and saw the armor and the weapons of war (Eph. vi. 10–18), I thought, How kind is our Savior to provide for all the battles of his people. Surely, I said to myself, believers in Christ ought to war a good warfare, and I felt satisfied to think that I at least should; I would be a valiant soldier, I would fight the good fight of faith, laying hold on eternal life. But I did not know that temptations would

strike so hard; I did not know that the lusts of the flesh were so formidable; I did not know that Satan had fortresses and strongholds in my fleshly nature, and spiritual wickednesses could ascend from my corrupt nature and make havoc in high places, and invade the sanctuary of my worship of God, my prayers, and my praises, my meditations upon the things of Christ. There are professors of Christ's name who talk of conflicts and wars who know nothing thereof. They can talk about the old man and the new man, the flesh and the Spirit, that these are contrary the one to the other. They have the theory upon the tip of their tongues, but they have never put on the armor of God, nor handled a weapon, never fought a battle. They have deceived themselves, for their whole continued every day life declares them to be living after the flesh. They love the world, and the things of the world, and seek their gratification in the vanities of time and earth. All their blessednesses are sensual. Their most intimate friends, their boon companions, are those who know not God; the ungodly are their associates; they are at home with the world; they are not strangers and pilgrims in the earth; they live in wantonness; their course is with the course of this world. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"—2 Cor. xiii. 5. "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life."—1 Tim. vi. 12. I may look into the dictionary and trace the definition of the word "faith," I may be sufficiently familiar with the Scriptures to tell all that the Bible says about it, but the experimental knowledge of faith, how it is wrought and put forth in the soul, how the child of God lives, walks, fights and triumphs by faith in Christ, is something far more than knowing the bare meaning of the word, and being well versed in what the Bible says about it. From the beginning of my experience as a believer in Jesus I found there was in me a "striving against sin." There was a power in me that moved me with hatred to sin. I felt I dare not, I must not, I will not, tolerate it in me; so the conflict began, but I did not know, and still do not know, all "the deceitfulness of sin." I could never tell in what quarter, under what circumstances its uprisings would appear in my flesh to war against my soul. This I find in all conflicts with sin, and every other enemy (they are all leagued together), that for my safety, and the conquest of my foes, I need to be ever looking unto Jesus, and praying with all prayer unto God, seeking counsel, and gracious strength to war a good warfare, and having done all to stand. "Striving against sin" has been no trifling affair. I have seen little boys playing soldiers, and sometimes in times of peace the army of a nation in sham battles go through exercises of what are presumed to be the strategy of actual war, but no one is hurt, and no blood is shed. In the early days of my life as a believer I wanted, and to this day feel I want, a tender conscience; not a hardened conscience, seared with a hot iron. I want a believing, loving heart, to love our God, our precious Christ, his people and his truth. Oh let there be a heart in me to know thee my God and Savior. I want to feed upon the Bread of Life, to feast upon thee, dear Lamb of God, to know in truth that thy flesh is meat indeed, and thy blood is drink indeed.

"I want that grace that springs from thee,
That quickens all things where it flows,
And makes a wretched thorn like me
Bloom as the myrtle and the rose."

A few hours after I had in my heart the blissful hope that my sins were all forgiven, and that Christ had washed away my guilt in his precious blood, I, to my soul's surprise, found I was still sinful, there were rising up within me thoughts and emotions that I knew were wrong, and I was pained, and troubled in my soul. I told our dear Savior all about it, and sought anew his pity, his compassion, his forgiveness. I felt a determination not to have such things within me. I thought to exterminate all sinfulness in me, though I did not know how, but I thought surely there must be some way that I would be able to live, to be holy even as our Father who is in heaven is holy. I longed so to be, and I am yearning unto this hour to be pure and holy unto the Holy One of Israel. As the poet Cowper saith,

"Let this hint suffice,
The cross once seen is death to every vice.
Else he who hung there suffered all his pain,
Bled, groaned, and agonized, and died in vain."

Such has ever been the effect when Christ crucified has been revealed in the quickened sinner's heart, we feel we cannot any longer live in sin. I found in my life of striving against sin that I had wrestlings and fightings every day, that in my carnal nature there are dens and caves where the enemy hides, and I found when I thought my foes were swept off the field, and all was peace, then all unawares they crept forth and were arrayed against my soul. Indeed many of the sins of my flesh are so disguised that I have not known them to be my enemies until wounded by them. Oh the deceitfulness of sin. (Heb. iii. 13.) What is sin? Multitudes of those who profess the name of Christ consider sin to be their outward acts, such transgression of the law that can be seen and known by others, as stealing, lying, cheating, adultery, drunkenness, using vile language, getting angry. Such people if they can get along without being discovered in such conduct are well pleased with themselves, and esteem themselves righteous. But the children of God, the called by God's grace, know to their souls' bitterness and shame that as the Savior saith, "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."—Matt. v. 28. "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer."—1 John iii. 15. "Thou shalt not covet."—Rom. viii. 7. "I hate vain thoughts."—Psalms cxix. 113. "The thought of foolishness is sin."—Prov. xxiv. 9. Christ saith, "That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come from within, and defile the man."—Mark vii. 20–23. During these early years of which I am speaking I was beginning to know a little of the plague of my own heart. Yes, I found that all my resolutions, sighs and groans, and my felt shame, and though I might shake my head I could not shake evil thoughts out of me, or quell my sinful emotions. But I felt, I cannot be at ease with sin. I cannot, I will not, make peace with such enemies of my soul. I loathed my iniquities, and I felt very often to despise myself because I was vile. Now, there are also other kinds of conflicts; they are described as a great fight of afflictions. (Heb. x. 32.) There is the hatred of the whole world that lieth in wickedness to be endured. There are also the buffetings of Satan's messengers. There are temporal hardships, sicknesses, bereavements, distresses, persecutions,

tribulations, manifold temptations, and in all these things the chosen of God are more than conquerors through him that loved them. Yes, amidst all the wrestlings and conflicts how precious, how endeared, how all-essential is our dear Savior, the Captain of our salvation. Now let us take a glimpse of some of the conflicts of the soul. Here are some of the enemies that arise, invade the land and plague the heart of the child of God: envy, jealousy, irritability, pride, vain thoughts. Oh, says some one, such little trifles as these do not bother me. Perhaps it is so. Do you tolerate such things in yourself? If such evil things do not distress you, if you do not find your soul wrestling against these, what you think are very tiny foes, if you are not in conflict with them, then you are in league and in peace with them, and notwithstanding all your profession of the religion of Jesus Christ you do not know him, and you are yet dead in trespasses and sins. Others may be in no concern about such evils of their flesh, but that one who is of God feels them to be an annoyance, they distress his soul, he feels ashamed that such mean, ugly, hateful things are in his flesh, for they war against the soul, and mar the blessedness of our life in our Beloved. What shall we do with such mean enemies within us? Try your skill, use all your natural energies, and you will find your wisdom unavailing, your powers exhausted, and in the strife against these foes you will be brought to your wit's end. O, child of God, in this warfare your heart's language unto the Lord at length will be in gracious oneness with this, "O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee."—2 Chron. xx. 12. There is wrought in us by the Holy Spirit a very "looking unto Jesus." Our eyes are unto thee, O Savior, O thou Captain of our salvation. We flee, we are allured to Christ the Lamb of God, for we are humbled, ashamed, we are wounded in spirit because of our sinful tormentors, for unto our Emmanuel we feel it is all known. It is in him, whom we feel has compassion on such as are out of the way, we see our beauty, our righteousness; in him all iniquity is purged, and in hope in him our heart is persuaded we shall ultimately be holy, all glorious; we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Where are all our envies, jealousies, evil thoughts, vain imaginations, and all internal meannesses? Why in these sacred moments of the soul's meditations upon Christ and his salvation they are quelled, they flee away, they are defeated, they go and hide themselves again (for awhile at least) in their dens, and thus we find we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

Take another glimpse of the warfare. These are "the wiles of the devil," "the fiery darts of the wicked." "Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."—1 Peter v. 8, 9. The great dragon, that old serpent called the devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world, the accuser of our brethren, who accuseth them before our God day and night. (Rev. xii. 9, 10.) Satan, if suffered to do so, (for he is under the dominion of Jehovah) can inject into our minds all manner of infidel and atheistical thoughts. How at times I have suffered from these fiery darts. Then he can infuse blas-

phemies and foulness, in depths, for utter vileness wellnigh unimaginable, this I know, so that my soul has been shocked, amazed and plunged into agonies before our God. I knew they came not from my corrupt nature, but from without. Satan resists, and interferes with our approaches and standing before our God. (Zech. iii. 1, 2.) He is the accuser of our brethren, who accuseth them before our God day and night. (Rev. xii. 10.) Oh were we left in the conflict to ourselves we should be overcome and hopeless. He challenges our souls with "ifs." He approaches us with his wiles, all to draw us away from our God and our precious Christ, to allure us into forbidden paths. Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light, and his serpentine strategies to seduce us into false ways and doctrines are such that only by the wisdom and grace of our God are we able to escape the snares of the devil. Some of God's dear children have not to such depths and lengths been tempted and assaulted by Satan as others of the household of God. I cannot describe the manifold assaults of Satan, but this will ever be the ultimate end, he shall be cast down, overcome and bruised under the feet of the redeemed of the Lord. But in the conflict, in not giving place to him, in resisting him, we find it no child's play. Even the apostle Paul when he was buffeted cried out in the battle, feeling he was not in himself sufficient to endure such painful thorns, such buffetings; and his hope and consolation was this from the mouth of the Lord, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Thus animated in the conflict, and conscious of his insufficiency he exclaims, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong."—2 Cor. xii. 9, 10. How shall we meet and triumph over all the assaults of the devil? We are instructed to resist him, steadfast in the faith, having the shield of faith, wherewith we shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. There is no other defense. Faith in whom, in what? Not in an arm of flesh, not our bare assent to the doctrine in the Scriptures, not the gospel in word only, but in Christ Jesus and his gospel known in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance in our tried hearts. Thus our faith, wrought in us by the operation of God, looks unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith. There is the victory of our brethren recorded in Revelation xii. 11, and as it was then so it ever is: "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." So in looking to Christ crucified, to the blood and righteousness of the dear Lamb of God, all the fiery darts, the accusations of Satan, are quenched, and in the word of our testimony we exclaim, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." There are no victories apart from our precious Christ.

Now let us take a glimpse of another class of enemies. There is a great fight of afflictions. (Heb. x. 32.) There are sickness, bereavements, temporal hardships, persecutions, revilings of those who hate us for Christ's sake, perils among false brethren, and in the world we shall have tribulation. Are we enduring all

these things as good soldiers of Jesus Christ? Not always. I have found myself murmuring, unreconciled to the sorrows of my lot, self-pity creeps in, and I am its captive, and holds me in my peevishness, and I am at times fretting against the providences of the Lord. Oh I could pen a long narrative of my failures, and of the ugly things which in my trials, sorrows, bereavements and varied tribulations have showed themselves to be in me, which have only aggravated the burdens of my soul, and weighed me down. But nevertheless there is in enduring the fight of afflictions a triumphing in Christ, when he, in his compassion, and support, shows himself our almighty Friend. The friend of weak and sinful worms. Ah, yes, the Holy Ghost shows us we are but dust, base things, things that are not (1 Cor. i. 28), and we are brought humbled at the mercy-seat, and in the precious revealing in our hearts of Christ's preciousness, in the persuasion that God in faithfulness, in love, and for our good hath brought us into the waters of affliction, into the fires of tribulation, and that surely he will be with us, sustain us and bring us through. Our God does quiet us, and graciously bring us to submission to the painful and rugged pathway. Oh to be in acquiescence to all the will of God.

"My conquest is sure through his blood,
Though now there's a warfare within,
And Satan comes in like a flood,
To draw my poor heart after sin.
Fresh succor from Christ I receive,
Who did all my conflicts foresee;
And through his rich grace, I believe
He saved a sinner like me."

There are seasons when we wax valiant in the fight, we tread under our feet every adversary, and put to flight the armies of the aliens, and everything that would alienate us from our God and Redeemer. These times are when our almighty Friend and Captain of our salvation is very near, feelingly in our hearts, leading us on in our sore conflicts with the world, the flesh and the devil. We felt our weakness and were constrained to cry unto him in the battle, and he came to our rescue (1 Chron. v. 20; Psalms xxxv. 1-3), and though all the day the battle rages, and there is no cessation of our conflicts, there is an hourly striving against sin, and our trials and hellish temptations, and the sore providences of the Lord are unabated, we are enabled by the power of Christ that rests upon us to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and sing our battle song as we are entering into our conflicts. We read Jehoshaphat "appointed singers unto the Lord, and that they should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the Lord; for his mercy endureth for ever."—2 Chron. xx. 21. "They shall be as mighty men, which tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle: and they shall fight, because the Lord is with them, and the riders on horses shall be confounded."—Zech. x. 5. Saith the psalmist, "By thee I have run through a troop; and by my God have I leaped over a wall."—Psalms xviii. 29. O, tempest-tossed child of God, this is the word of our God, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."—Isaiah liv. 17. "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him."—Isaiah lix. 19.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

WHEELING, W. Va., Dec. 12, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing dear sister Workman's good letter to be published, if you see fit. I am sorry I could not send it sooner. I have been very weak for over a month, barely able to hold on my way, but the Lord seemed to say, Behold me, I am thy strength, and it is sweet employ watching the wonders he can do. Even worldly friends are looking on and wondering to see me live on under such an unequal warfare. My poor old husband grows weaker, and more confused in his mind. The Lord graciously raises up friends who are looking on, and they are always ready to proffer help. Some time ago I was very much stirred by these words:

"Long as our fiery trials last,
Long as the cross we bear,
Oh let our souls on thee be cast
In never-ceasing prayer."

How I longed for the spirit of never-ceasing prayer, but now I find that it comes only by or through never-ceasing afflictions. I often think of the request of Zebedee's sons, and our Savior's reply to them. I was much interested in Elder Davis Burch's letter in the October number of the SIGNS. It reminded me of St. Stephen's apology. I am well pleased with the SIGNS as it is. Time flies so fast with me that I do not notice the difference in its coming. I am well pleased with our dear good Elders, their articles are so good and helpful. May the Lord bless them for their noble work. I wish I could clasp sister Gray's hand, and kiss her, for her generous gift. I feel to share in her generosity as I am on the poor list. I feel indebted to all the dear ones who contribute to it. This last December number is so good. It seems to me that the Holy Spirit is being more clearly manifested in our "poor little faint-hearted few." Elder Lefferts' thoughts are so heart-stirring, and brother Selby Fisher's letter is so good. In fact every letter in it seems unusually good. I feel that unless my health improves I will have to give up my correspondence with the (I feel to say) blessed of the Lord. But if I am silent I trust I may still have your much cherished love and prayers.

"Never as now have I clung to thy keeping,
Yet when my clinging grows feeble and cold,
Answer my whispers, and quiet my weeping,
Be my companion, Lord, when I am old."

FLORENCE PULTZ.

HARDING, W. Va., Oct. 9, 1924.

DEAR SISTER PULTZ:—I received your card some time ago. I had not answered your last letter, not because I did not appreciate it, but because I felt I had nothing to write that would be of interest to a child of God. I may not have anything now to write, but I feel impressed to try it. One thing I can say of a truth: I am still sinful and wholly dependent upon God for mercy and strength. I read with interest your letter in the October SIGNS. It makes me sad when I think that our paper will only come to us once each month, and it grieves me to think that the subscribers have failed to do their part towards its support. I have wondered whether it was from inability to meet the subscription price or from a lack of interest in spiritual life. Some of our writers say we are living in the Laodicean age of the church. "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot." Natural and temporal comparisons appear in many places in the sacred writings, accordingly this lukewarm condition would not be savory, but insipid and unpleasant to the taste. "So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." What a sad condition for the church when she be-

comes distasteful to her Redeemer and he turns from her, as it were, in disgust. She may not behold the brightness of his glory, "because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." Can it be that our churches are in this condition now? We know by experience that we must feel from the depths of our hearts the need of spiritual enlightenment before we cry to God to give it. We see our churches standing as they were, or decreasing in membership, yet we seem in a stupor and do not realize that we are wretched and miserable and poor, nor feel the need of crying to the heavenly Father for help.

The subject of prayer has been on my mind much of late. I fully believe that God's plans are laid and he brings them to pass according to his will, but according to the Scriptures and our experience he often makes his children feel the need of the things he has in store for them before he bestows them. I recall my father's family prayers, how he prayed for his own family, for his neighbors and their children, the sick and afflicted, the widow and orphan, the sinner, those who were mourning on account of sin, for the rulers of our nation and the upbuilding of our church. If we could hear an awakened cry go up from the ministers of our churches for their upbuilding we would feel comforted in the thought that God had a revival in store for us. You remember when the Lord had promised one blessing to the children of Israel he said he would yet be inquired of by them for that blessing. One of our ministers when praying in public worship always asks the Lord to bless our children; when most of his children professed a hope and joined the church I felt that God had in a measure answered his prayers. The apostle admonished the churches to pray without ceasing, and in many other instances he admonished them to prayer. In some of his letters he asked the church to pray for him. Christ told his disciples, Whatsoever ye ask of the Father in my name that shall ye receive. He said again, Pray for those who despitefully use you and persecute you. I know God does not answer prayer in the way we think it should be, but many times during severe trials and sickness we feel that we must sink with the heavy burden, but we cry to the heavenly Father for help, pleading the merits of his own dear Son, for we feel too unworthy to ask in our own name. Like the dear Savior in the garden of Gethsemane, his holy Spirit strengthens us, and like him we say, If this cup may not pass until I drink it, thy will, not mine, be done.

Dear sister, why should I write these things to you when you know them already by experience perhaps much better than I do? I think it is because we like to express our thoughts to those who do know and understand us.

I attended our association at the Little Bethel Church, near Meadowville, also a three days' meeting at the Leading Creek Church, at Montrose, and enjoyed the preaching. May the Lord bless you at all times, and enable you to cast your care upon him, for he careth for you.

Unworthily your sister,

E. E. WORKMAN.

P. S.—Dear sister, since writing this letter I see where Mrs. W. L. Hawk in the SIGNS has asked some one to write on Revelation iii. 15, 16. I hope Elder Lefferts may feel impressed to write at length upon that subject, and include verses seventeen and eighteen. You may send this to the SIGNS if you think best. —E. E. W.

KINGMAN, Kansas.

DEAR EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS:—It has been on my mind for some time, and more especially since the SIGNS was changed to a monthly, to say some things to the household of faith in regard to the business interests of the SIGNS. What I may say is not with the design to give offense to any, but with the earnest desire to stir up the pure minds of those who are neglectful to a realization of that which to me seems to be both a privilege and a solemn duty. Notice I said, "Those who are neglectful," not those who are punctual. Each one shall decide for himself to which class he belongs. As the readers of the SIGNS know, paid advertising is excluded from the paper, and none of us would be willing that it be otherwise, thus compelling the management of the paper to depend wholly upon subscriptions and free-will offerings to meet the expense of its publication, and when I say to you, dear reader, that this expense is no small matter, I do not speak inadvisedly, I speak from experience. The publishers of the SIGNS must incur this necessary expense if they publish the paper. The concerns with which they do business in purchasing supplies have no interest in the success of the SIGNS, only a business interest. When their bills fall due they expect their money, which is right, and if the management of the SIGNS should make a habit of neglecting to meet these bills they would very soon be in the position that they could not get supplies, and of necessity the publication of the paper would cease, and we would feel that the cause of Christ had been disgraced, because one of the outstanding requisites of a genuine Old School Baptist is honesty and faithfulness to contract. When we fail to fulfill our obligation to the SIGNS, by not paying promptly our subscriptions, we withhold from them the only means they have to meet their obligations. I dare say they are making the obligations necessary to publish the SIGNS upon their faith in the faithfulness of their subscribers, and whenever we fail to discharge our obligations to them we expose them to great inconvenience, hardships, and perhaps to reproach. It is wrong to betray the confidence of a stranger, much more a faithful friend, and one of the household of faith. This, dear brethren, is not right; this is not bearing one another's burdens; this is not manifesting the proper concern for the heavenly things with which the good Lord has blessed us. I am not pleading the merits of the SIGNS as a reason why you should fulfill your obligation to it by keeping your subscription paid up, but I am appealing to your honor, let us be faithful in little things if we would prove ourselves worthy to be entrusted with great things. If we have a sweet hope in Jesus we have the richest gift that has ever been bestowed upon God's creatures, and we should so cherish that precious bequest that no overt act of ours could obscure it from the view of our brethren. Do we love righteousness? If so, that is sufficient reason for us to be diligent in doing that which is right; but we cannot prove that we love right only as we are found walking in the paths of righteousness.

I wish to say that I believe the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is, and has been during its entire publication, a great blessing to the cause and church of Christ, and so long as it is conducted as it has been I believe it will be approved by our heavenly Master. I did not feel reconciled to the recent change that was made in its issue from a semi-monthly to a monthly, but I

am certain that "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." I would feel that it was a calamity indeed if the SIGNS should be compelled to suspend publication, but I well know that unless the subscribers keep their subscriptions paid this is exactly what will occur. We must remember that if we should be deprived of this, or any other blessing, that we were unworthy of it or it would not be so. I know it is not compatible with our feelings for the publisher of a paper to have to request through the paper that we remit our delinquent subscriptions, but I know also it is no more unpleasant for you to read it than it is for them to have to do it, and both of these unpleasantnesses can be avoided if we will have a regular time to attend to this little obligation, and when that time comes attend to it promptly.

Brethren, I feel an interest in the SIGNS for the principles it advocates. I believe they are founded in truth. They cheer us when we are cast down, and support our trembling hope when doubts and fears assail. They will live and triumph when all earthly comforts shall perish. May our hopes ever be built upon this firm footing, and may they grow more and more in our esteem.

In humble hope,

J. R. HARDY.

MILFORD, Del., Dec. 26, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find two dollars, for which you will please send the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to me at the above address. I have never been a subscriber to the paper, but from time to time for several years past have had the privilege of reading it through the kindness of others, which I have appreciated very highly. I love the paper for the glorious truth which it so firmly advocates, and always enjoy reading the many good letters from the dear kindred in Christ who are scattered throughout the length and breadth of the country. They all tell the same sweet story: salvation by grace, and grace alone. I have thought for some time that I would subscribe for the paper, but one thing and then an other would step in the way to hinder me; but I feel that the proper time has at last come, since my daughter made me a Christmas present of two dollars to spend as I please, so while the rest of the family were attending a Christmas program near-by, and I remaining at home as a matter of choice, and while sitting all alone and meditating upon the significance of Christmas, it occurred to my mind that I could not spend the money in any other way that would make it worth as much to me, and that would so often remind me of my dear daughter's gift, as to send it to you for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I am a stranger in this part of the country, having come here last May from the State of Louisiana, and having been afflicted ever since coming here, with something like paralysis, have for the most part been pretty closely confined at home. However I have been blessed to visit two different churches. The one at Broad Creek, which is under the pastoral care of Elder C. W. Vaughn, I have visited three or four times, where I had the blessed privilege of hearing Elder Vaughn and brother Bond, both of Hopewell, N. J., and it was indeed a feast to my poor hungry soul to hear them so ably defend and proclaim the doctrine of God our Savior. This is not a very strong church, numerically, but as lovely a little band as it has ever been my privilege to meet; and, too, I would not forget to say that there are many there who are not members that seem to take as much interest in the little church and her ministry as if they were members, and

really on my first visit I thought surely that was a very strong church. I love all those good people dearly. I have also visited the church at Salisbury, Maryland, which is one of Elder J. C. Mellott's charges. I have been to this church twice, and there I found another lovely band of Baptists, and at that place, as well as at Broad Creek, I found some very precious ones on the outside, who seem to have their whole soul and mind on the welfare of the church and the Baptists at large, and especially the ministry. They surely do know how to take care of a poor old pilgrim and make him feel at home. Elder Mellott is a very pious and humble man, as well as an able defender of the doctrine, and seems to have the churches of his care, as well as other churches, very much at heart.

Well, I have not written just as I thought I would, but it has been with love and best wishes for the dear editors of the SIGNS, and the many readers and contributors thereto. I am a poor old sinner, in hope of a glorious resurrection in that sweet by and by, where all the blood-washed throng around the throne of God shall sing and shout the praises of a triune God, where sickness, sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more.

May a prosperous new year greet us all.

J. E. SMITH.

KELLY CORNERS, N. Y., Dec. 23, 1924.

DEAR SISTER PALMER:—I received your good and interesting letter over a month ago, but my time has been so occupied that I have been unable to write an answer before. By your letter I can see that you dearly miss your mother just as you dearly loved her, and I can quite understand how you miss her counsel and encouraging words, but I am glad to see from your epistle that the Lord is good and gracious to you in remembering the low estate of his handmaiden. There is much here below to perplex and dismay God's children, but his assurance is that he will bring them off more than conquerors through him that loved us and gave himself for us. We do well to remember that the Lord sits over the furnace as a refiner, and he knows not only our frame, but also the trial and trouble through which we must pass. He also times everything, for there is a time for everything under the sun. We learn as time goes on that we cannot change anything.

"All must come, and last, and end
As shall please my heavenly Friend."

Therefore much of our time is spent in desiring the Lord to give us a reconciled mind, that we might know somewhat of the day of his power, for he says, My people shall be willing in the day of my power. But we are also rebellious and often ask, Why? Why should this bereavement have come? Why should I have this cross and that loss? We are not content to acknowledge that the Lord knows best. But even in this we account the long-suffering of God's salvation, and though we believe not, yet he abideth faithful. He is the Savior of Israel in times of trouble. It is in trouble we are made to think of him, call upon him, and at times we know he is near, and that he is our help and our shield. What your mother said will follow me to my grave: "Talk about better things," and if only for that she has an abiding place in my heart. She is in heaven though her body is in the earth. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living, and they all live unto God. The Lord bless you with happiness this Christmas time. I hope your boy will be with you, and that your good husband is well. Christian love to all.

Your brother,

GEORGE RUSTON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1925.

EDITOR

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ASSOCIATE EDITORS

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Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

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REST.

SOME one has sent us a request that we try to write something on the subject of "rest." Perhaps the text in our inquirer's mind is that one in Hebrews iv. 9, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Anyway, this text will do as well as any other for a starting point on this subject. An essential qualification necessary for the enjoyment of rest is that one must be tired, weary or worn out. Rest is not needed by one who has not labored or who is not weary. The word means nothing to one full of vigor and strength eagerly seeking something to do, or who is busy doing something. There are all sorts of ways, however, of being tired. One may be tired from the usual round of everyday work, from plowing in the field, from work in an office, from attendance at a counter, from household duties and cares, or from scores of other ways. But this rest in which the children of God are especially interested is a peculiar rest that comes after having labored and having become weary in a very special way. It is not at all unusual for all of us to become more or less tired and weary every day with the daily round of our various activities, but then we can lie down at night and find that recuperation of our physical and mental powers in sleep, which equips us to pursue that same round of busyness the next day, and the next, and so on. In spiritual weariness, however, there is no natural recuperation, but instead there is a complete exhaustion of self, a complete wearing out of self-righteousness, self-confidence and of every resource of self, all a necessary labor leading one to that wonderful rest which is not to be found in any resuscitation of one's self, but which is found for the weary self-exhausted sinner outside of himself and in the complete and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who enter this rest of Christ's lose themselves and become enveloped in the perfectly satisfying fullness of the Lord. In the instance of the child of God, being tired of self arises from a disgust and loathing of the sin one sees in self, and this disgust and loathing arise from the self-exposure caused by the light of revelation shining in the soul, and this light is God himself. The same God who in the beginning commanded the light to shine out of darkness is the very same God who shines in the sinner's heart bringing into evidence and into consequent condemnation every evil thought and imagination, every secret intent and hidden purpose of which the sinner was previously completely unaware. This work of the divine exposure of one's totally depraved human nature, when once begun by the Spirit of God, never lets up. The fact that it does not let up, and the fact that it cannot be interfered with or stopped by any power this side of heaven, give rise ultimately to the complete wearing out of the sinner's self-resources. Becoming at last tired of self and weary of sin, the sinner finds himself coming more and more into

fellowship with the ministry of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus; the burden of John's ministry being to cry that all flesh is grass and the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field, and as the grass and its flower are withered by the burning sun, so the powers of the flesh and their seeming goodliness pass away when the Spirit of the Lord blows upon them. This is the essential process which must be wrought in one by the Holy Spirit before that one can be in shape to be placed on spiritual Solomon's bed, there to find the real and the remaining rest which the poor, tired, sin-sick soul so longingly craved. Jesus is the end of the law for righteousness to them that believe. It was not intended that the law should be kept by mortal man, the sinner himself. This truth, however, is hid from the consciousness of those who are under the law, so that they think it is obligatory upon them to keep it. To this work they arduously set themselves, and perhaps, like Saul of Tarsus, think they have succeeded very well until the light of God's Spirit shines within them exposing their complete failure and condemnation. The light of God shows them their own unprofitableness in the way of righteousness. Yet being under condemnation, they still know nothing of the fullness of Jesus Christ until his liberating voice speaks within them by his mighty power, not beseeching them, or pleading with them, but lovingly and efficiently commanding them into his rest, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Then comes the astonishing revelation to their weary souls that the law which they thought it was obligatory upon them to keep, has already been entirely kept by the Lord himself when he suffered and died the Surety of his people, having been himself lifted up from under the law's condemnation, and from under the curse of sin, in order that he might lift up unto him all that the Father had given him before the world began. Inasmuch as he lives they shall also assuredly live as they never have lived before, and in this living unto God and in this yoke-fellowship with Christ they find the perfect rest to their souls. Joshua led the hosts of Israel out of the wilderness into the promised land, and in the promised land of Canaan Israel found a rest never found while in Egypt or in the wilderness; but it was only a comparative rest, not at all perfect by any means, because the Canaanite was still in the land, and many were the contests witnessed by Israel in Canaan, many were the trials endured there and the idolatries and mischiefs practiced there. It is very evident, therefore, that Joshua could not and did not give the chosen people rest, even though he led them into the land promised to Abraham and to his seed four hundred years before. Further, we know that Joshua did not give them rest, because if he had then David in the Psalms would have said so, and would not have spoken of another day. The fact that David did speak of another day ahead of him in which Israel was to obtain rest, proves that it was a rest which yet remained to be revealed, a rest which Israel did not obtain under Joshua. This rest "that remaineth" is none other than the perfect rest which the believing sinner finds in the glorious work of the Lord Jesus Christ, that work whereby Christ perfected all the elect of God by the one offering of himself, that atonement through his blood whereby sin is washed away, that resurrection of the Son from the dead whereby the elect are forever unblameable in the sight of the Father.

Words fail to make intelligible this wonderful rest to one who has never entered into it. It must be experienced in order to be known. It can only be experienced by the work of God's Spirit, it cannot ensue from human training nor be compassed by human understanding. It comes about by the wearing out of self and through an attaining unto the selflessness of Christ. Such an attainment cannot be by one's voluntarily starting out on a race for it. It is the race set before the children of God by no act of theirs, but by the eternal purpose of the living God who has called them to this end and who has ordered them to this glorious destiny, that they may find in Christ Jesus the fulfillment of all their best hopes and aims when they shall have been completely conformed to his image and shall have awaked with complete satisfaction in his likeness. There were certain ones of the Pharisees who found fault with Jesus for plucking ears of corn on the sabbath day. Jesus justified his children in his reply by saying that man was not made for the sabbath, but the sabbath was made for man. Now, "sabbath" means "rest," and Jesus is that "sabbath," or "rest," to his people. The literal seventh day kept by the Jews, or which was pretended to be kept by them, was never the real "rest," but merely a shadow of it. There was no work to be done at all by any Israelite on the seventh day, but as a matter of fact they did do work on that day, and they could no more help doing something than they could have kept the sun from shining in the heavens, and the fact that they could not entirely refrain from all activity on that, or any other day, shows that man is so naturally constituted that he cannot keep the law in this or in any other respect, and that human nature is so constructed that it cannot measure up to any divine requirement, no matter how simple that requirement seems on the face of it to be. For this reason Jesus said that man was not made for the sabbath, meaning that man was not made so as to fit into the legal requirements of the sabbath, or into any other legal exactions. The bed was too short for him to lie on, no rest there for him; and the covering was too narrow for him to wrap himself in, no effectual protection or hiding therein for him. Quite the opposite, however, Jesus said that the sabbath was made for man, that is, the legal sabbath was but a type (not substance) and when the fulfillment should come, which fulfillment was to be discovered in Christ's own work through his death and resurrection, then should be brought in for man the real sabbath, the perfect and absolute rest for the believing sinner in the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, that full and complete gospel which declares to the weary, wayworn child of God that his iniquity is pardoned, that his warfare is accomplished and that he has received at the Lord's hand double for all his sins. This is just the sort of sabbath the conscious sinner needs, and this is just the kind of rest God has made to fit man's needs, and, blessed thought, this is a rest that remains. It stays, it abides. It does not flit about here and there as does a bird from tree to tree. It is not here to-day and gone to-morrow. It is permanent. To be sure, we may not always have with us a realizing sense of this rest so that we may be feelingly comforted by it at all times as much as we shonld like, but nevertheless the rest is one that remains. Like the seventh day on which God rested from all his creative work and never again resumed creation, so does the child liberated from the condemnation of the

law through the liberty wherewith Christ has made him free, never again resume the arduous duties of the law. That was a yoke which neither we nor our spiritual forefathers were ever able to bear. Then why seek to be entangled in it any more? If one could effectually get back under the law one should have to undo all that Christ has done. That would be the same as trampling under foot the blood of Christ and counting the blood of the new covenant an unholy thing. Therefore, the writer to the Hebrews says to us that since we have left us a promise of this rest let us labor to enter into it. This laboring to enter into the promised rest is not a stirring up of physical or mental or moral activity, it is not entering into a confederacy with Egypt, or a leaning upon the broken staff of the flesh. Nothing of the sort. It is a laboring of faith and by faith, a laying hold of eternal life. It is a working of God in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. In short, this laboring to enter into rest is a continued firmness in gospel doctrine and principles, it is a continued separateness from legal principles and practices. It is a coming out of Babylon and having nothing to do with the unclean thing. It is a contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints and the maintenance of an uncompromising distinction of grace and works. Christ cannot concord with Belial. That way lies confusion. Rest is found in Christ first, last, all the time and forever.

L.

WATCH YOUR DATES.

We wish to request our subscribers when sending in their subscriptions to see that the date on the little pink slip bearing their address is changed. If not changed, please let us know immediately (for that signifies you have not been given credit for the money sent) and we will look into the matter.

MATTHEW XXII. 14.

"For many are called, but few are chosen."

It has been requested by several brethren that we write upon the above Scripture, and in doing so we expect to refer to the parable as a whole. It is our mind that this fourteenth verse belongs to the parable that Jesus had just spoken. Jesus was in the temple surrounded by a multitude including the chief priests, scribes and Pharisees. These were bitterly opposed to him and his teachings. They had seen him ride as King into Jerusalem, and heard the multitude cry, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." He had cast out money-changers, healed the sick and blind, cursed the barren fig tree and confounded the scribes and Pharisees with his parables. They knew he spake of them, and would have laid hands on him but they feared the multitude because they took him for a prophet. Now we would have our readers bear in mind that the parable of which our text is a part was referring to them and their day, and while we have little doubt but that it can be applied to our day, yet we shall dwell upon it as it relates to the people in question. The brethren who have asked us to write upon this subject, like many others of God's dear saints, are exercised as to their calling, whether it is an effectual call or not. In this they do well, for Peter has enjoined on the elect to give diligence to make their calling and election sure. As a denomination we believe in an effectual call, which is a call out of darkness into God's most marvelous light. We believe that God has a people, chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began, and called with an holy calling, "not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," and

that it is God's good pleasure that not one of his chosen shall ever perish. Some have thought that the "many called" refer to the elect of God and the "few chosen" those who are chosen into the visible church of God, professing his name before men and walking in the ordinances of his house, or chosen to proclaim his truth and work in his vineyard. It is our mind, as before stated, that the text applies to those immediately in the hearing of our Lord as he spoke the parable in the temple. To the Jews under the legal dispensation God had often called. He called them by priest and prophet, but for the most part they regarded not their call. "They mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets." But few when they went to the sacrifice were given to see beyond the type to the thing signified. Just as there were many who fell in the wilderness through unbelief, so many who were bidden by Moses (the law) to the types and shadows of the old dispensation would not come, for they were a wicked and rebellious people, and God sware that they should not enter into his rest. In the parable before us the king sent out his servants; Abel was one of his servants, as was also Enoch, the seventh from Adam; Noah also was a preacher of righteousness, so also was just Lot, but they were not regarded, and after God had chosen the tribes of Israel and had led them out of Egypt, feeding them with angel's food and giving them to drink water from the rock, yet there were only two entered into the promised land, the rest fell in the wilderness. Their children were little better, for it often seemed evil unto them to serve the Lord. He raised up judges for them, but they continually violated the commands of God. Again he sent prophets, "rising up early, and sending them." These declared that the king had prepared his dinner, his oxen and fatlings were killed and all things ready, "Come," said they, "unto the marriage." There could be no clearer testimony than that which the prophets spake concerning Jesus, for they spake of him. "But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: and the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them." The scribes and Pharisees made much show of religion, just as the fig tree had many leaves, but there was no fruit. He cursed the tree which represented national Israel, they bore no fruit, and Jesus told them in chapter twenty-one, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Just as their fathers had slain the prophets, so they followed in their pernicious ways, and on cursing them Jesus said, "Behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias as son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation." When the king heard of their slaying his servants, that is, when their guilt was fully manifested, their cup of wickedness full, he was wroth, and sent his armies, which were the wicked, who are God's sword. The Roman armies came and destroyed those murderers and burnt up their city. "Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden

were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage." In another parable they were told to compel them to come in, and we believe the power of the king accompanied his servants so that they were able to gather together all, as many as they found, both bad and good, bad representing harlots, publicans and sinners, and good, those of the Jews who could say, "Touching the law," "blameless," "and the wedding was furnished with guests. And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: and he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless." From another parable we learn that those gathered were the poor, the maimed, the halt and the blind, and these were compelled to come in. "Where the word of a king is, there is power." Under the legal dispensation it was do and live, but under the gospel it is believe and be saved, and they believed according to the working of that mighty power that wrought in Christ when it raised him from the dead. Thus the power of the King was in his command, and this King, our Lord Jesus Christ, said, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, * * * but rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," and when these lost sheep came it was in humility, desiring mercy, and being humbled through sin abounding, they were made acceptable only through the Lamb of God, and the merits of his righteousness. Then the language of Isaiah was theirs: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with the ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." Wherever such characters are the Lord is there in the midst; in other words, the King comes in to see the guests. Cornelius could rightly say to Peter, "Now therefore are we all here present before God," and when Peter or any true servant of God speaks in God's name, they hear, not as the word of man, but God.

"He hears our praises and complaints,
And while his awful voice
Divides the sinners from the saints,
We tremble and rejoice."

Let us return to our subject. Many of the Jews were indifferent to the call of Moses and the prophets, for they were not all Israel that were of Israel, for it is written, "God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear." There was "a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing them to err." This bridle was pride, and we read, Pride goeth before destruction. Now while the many that were called would not hear, there were a few who did hear. There was Simeon, to whom it was revealed that he should not see death until he had seen the Lord's Christ. There was also Anna the prophetess, and here and there a few that clave to him with purpose of heart. Yes, these chosen few were the "we" that Peter speaks of when he says, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." They also were those addressed when Jesus said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." They also were the remnant of whom Paul tells us when speaking of his believing brethren: "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." Now when the murderers were destroyed, and their city burnt, and the Levitical priesthood, with all that pertained thereto, dead and buried, there were those who still clung to the law. It was such with their legalism that bewitched the Galatians of whom Paul

wrote, I would they were even cut off which trouble you. Whenever such an one is asked to give a reason of his hope he is speechless. The King commanded, Cast him out; that is, cast him where he belongs, into outer darkness, the darkness of Sinai; being under the law and clinging to it he must of necessity be under its curse, and there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. They that would cling to the law are still married to Moses and have no need of Christ's righteousness, for they, going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of Christ.

Thus we have in our feeble way tried to show who were the many called and who also were the few chosen, and that our text applied to the Jews and not to the Gentiles, for it was to the Jew that Moses and the prophets were sent. The Gentiles walked in darkness until Jesus came and his call to them enlightens them and proves their election sure. The testimony of that blessed few has been left on record that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Sometimes it is the lot of saints to-day to mourn that there are few going to Zion with their faces thitherward; yet while there was a remnant of the Jews according to election, yet of the Gentiles there is a number that no man can number, and with us, each one that is brought from the highways and hedges enters the kingdom of heaven, sits down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect. Therefore, though there are but a few here and a few there, yet when the King comes in to see the guests we are lifted up at the sight, and realize him to be the Lord of hosts. G. R.

MARRIAGES.

Alva M. Myres and Miss Virgie Campbell were united in marriage at the home of the bride's parents, R. B. Campbell and wife, near Hartford, Ala., by J. J. Collins, December 21st, 1924.

J. E. Pritchett and Miss Ola May Gilley were married December 28th, 1924, by J. J. Collins, at W. R. Campbell's, near Wicksburg, Ala.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Wm. A. Melton was born June 25th, 1821, and departed this life December 10th, 1903, at the age of 82 years, 5 months and 15 days.

Lucinda Melton, wife of Elder Wm. A. Melton, was born February 12th, 1826, and departed this life January 20th, 1896, at the age of 69 years, 11 months and 8 days.

Elder Wm. A. Melton and Lucinda Lanham were united in wedlock October 17th, 1844, and to this union twelve children were born; four of the children, two boys and two girls, preceded their parents to their graves. Elder Melton was ordained to the full function of the gospel ministry about the year 1858. He was a very active man while in the prime of life, and did a great deal of traveling among the churches of the Pocatalico Association, and visiting sister associations, being a messenger bearing the Corresponding Letter, and representing the Pocatalico Association. His way of traveling mostly was on horseback, and he was faithful to discharge his duty, let the distance be ever so great. Being appointed by his own association as a messenger to the Muskingdom Association, of Ohio, and the Indian Creek Association, of the eastern part of West Virginia, he would spring into his saddle and ride from three to five hundred miles each fall regularly. His weight was about 135 pounds. No minister of the gospel had a better companion for a wife than he; they may have had as good a wife, but no better. She never tried to discourage him, but always encouraged him. When she saw he was bothered about leaving home when his harvest was needing attention she would say to him, You go on to your appointment, the people will be expecting you, I will see that the work goes on all right; your clothes are all ready for you. She was a fine manager, both in and out of doors. Elder Melton was a sweet doctrinal preacher, having it well seasoned experimentally. In the year 1881 he was appointed Moderator by the Pocatalico Association, after Elder Wm. Martin, who had been Moderator for forty-five years, and who earnestly requested that his successor be appointed, as he was physically unable to serve longer. Elder Melton served as Moderator for a number of years, until age and lack of physical strength forbade him serve longer.

When sister Melton was called from this time world the writer was called on by the old Elder to sing a hymn, offer prayer and speak as my mind was led, by way of comforting the children, relatives and many friends who had come to brother Melton's to pay their respect to the one they had loved to the end of her mortal life.

Elder Wm. A. Melton was highly esteemed by the old order of Baptists, and died in the faith he had so earnestly contended for for so many years. By the request of his children the writer spoke for a short time by way of comforting the relatives and friends, after which his body was laid to rest by the side of his wife in the family cemetery, there to await the resurrection of the dead.

Written by request, in memory of Elder Wm. A. Melton, and Lucinda Melton, his wife.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

Sarah E. Holcomb, the subject of this notice, was born August 26th, 1843, and departed this life November 12th, 1923, making her stay on earth 80 years, 2 months and 16 days. She was the daughter of Peter and sister Ann E. Bainbridge, who preceded her many years. She was married to Jonathan P. Holcomb November 28th, 1866, and to this union were born one son and two daughters. The son, one daughter and husband preceded her, and only one daughter, Mrs. Izola Harbourt, survives. She also leaves one brother, Samuel Bainbridge, two sisters, Mrs. Martha Hoagland and Mrs. Anna Atchley, and many relatives and friends to mourn for her. She was cared for with much tenderness by her granddaughter, Mrs. Marion Mulhaland, in which we can express much commendation. By a relation of faith she united with the Old School Baptist Church at Harbourton, New Jersey, known as Second Hopewell, and was baptized by the late Elder Philander Hartwell June 12th, 1864, and she lived a true and devoted member.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer, and the esteem and love manifested for her were attested by the multitude gathered in the church-house where she often assembled with the saints for worship. She is greatly missed by the church and her pastor, but we mourn not for her, as she rested in a precious hope. May God comfort all who mourn, and resign us to his will, by which we can say, Blessed be the name of the Lord.

ALSO,

Miss M. Elizabeth Drake, the subject of this notice, departed this life December 10th, 1924, at the age of 74 years. She was the daughter of Charles and Amanda Drake. She leaves one brother, William F. Drake, and one sister, Mrs. Isabel Savidge, both of Hopewell, New Jersey, and a host of relatives and friends to mourn for her. She was a member of the Old School Baptist Church of Hopewell, New Jersey, and was united to her in sweet fellowship, by which she was constrained to relate her experience, and by that relation of faith she was received, and baptized by the late Elder F. A. Chick October 21st, 1912, in which she proved a true and devoted member.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer, and all who mourn were commended to trust in the God of her salvation, after which her remains were laid to rest in the cemetery close to the place she used to gather with the saints to worship. We feel our loss is her eternal gain, and are made to say, Rest on, dear one.

C. W. V.

My dearly beloved mother, **Angie Moody,** daughter of John and Eliza Heath Little, was born January 16th, 1841, in the town of Pittston, Kennebec County, Maine, and departed this life August 6th, 1924, at the home of her daughter, in Randolph, Maine, making her stay on earth 83 years, 6 months and 21 days. She was united in marriage to H. Wilbert Moody July 8, 1863, and to this union one child was born. Mother was a student of the Bible from early youth, taking the family Bible and stealing out by herself lest some member of the family might know she was reading it. She was an attendant of the Sunday-school and joined the Methodist class, but was led to see she was not at home with those people. Her first baptism was an obstacle for some time, and she was much disturbed in regard to her condition, but one day Galations iii. 13 came to her with such power that everything seemed cleared away, and September 7th, 1878, at the yearly Old School Baptist Association in Maine, she was baptized by the late Elder F. A. Chick. I think few if any ever loved and enjoyed more than she did the association of her people. She was always eager to be with them, and always wanted the time spent in talking of the wonderful works of our God; if it was spent otherwise she considered it a waste of time. Many and severe were the trials experienced by her during her long life, but she was upheld by the God of her salvation. She was the last of a family of father, mother and eight children, her husband also having preceded her some twenty-three years. Many times when in distress the Lord spoke words of comfort to her troubled soul, and passages of Scripture would come with felt power. She was firm as a rock, never yielding to anything contrary to what the Lord had taught her. She was never absent from an association during all the years since her uniting with the church (and attended some before) though sometimes obliged to leave home under sore difficulties. She used to say, "I do not see how any one can stay away from an association." The last one she attended, at Whitefield, Maine, at eighty-two years of age she rode a distance of ten miles on Friday, and attended Saturday all day and evening, and all day Sunday. Her testimony was given in a clear, strong voice, and she praised her God publicly for the last time. She had been troubled for years with a weak

heart, and that with the infirmities of age caused her to fade away. Her sufferings were severe during the last few days, but the final struggle was eased by the administering of a hypodermic. Elder George Ruston spoke ably at the funeral, from the text, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." These words also, "Loved one, come home," were the first to come to her on Sunday morning preceding her passing on the following Wednesday. She was loved for what she was, and as was remarked by one at the funeral, "A good woman has gone." Her life and morals were above reproach. She leaves to mourn an only child, the writer, and one grandson. She was so much to me during my life of fifty-four years. We were never apart more than a few weeks at a time, and during the last five years of her life I was her constant companion, attendant and nurse when she required nursing. She was my counselor, guide and sister. Our love surpassed the love of women. She is gone and I suffer, but not as those who have no hope. Her Savior is my Savior, too.

ALSO,

My dear father, **H. Wilbert Moody,** was born at Pittston, Kennebec Co., Maine, December 29th, 1836, and died at his home in Pittston, May 16th, 1901, aged 64 years, 4 months and 17 days. My father never united with the church, but he had the Lord's little ones in reverence, and the home was always open and all were welcome. I still remember the preparations on meeting Sundays when our table was made larger and well spread. The pastor, the late Elder Hiram Campbell, lived at Brunswick, Me., and after coming by team and rail was met, often by my father, and conveyed by team (about 9 miles) to our home. Those were golden days which still exist in memory. My father was a hard working farmer, who found an able helper in my mother. He started with nothing and built up a comfortable home by hard work and prudence. Neither father nor mother were ever out of their beloved State of Maine. Father at times for many years suffered severely from bad attacks of phthisic, then the "grippe" from which he nearly succumbed, but rallied to live some twelve years after, but broken in health. During his last few years he became a constant reader of the Bible, and I think he found comfort therein. His mind became much exercised, and about three weeks before the end, one morning he came out into an adjoining room while mother was renovating the sleeping-room, and when done he went back, saw the sun streaming in at the window, and these words came, They need no light of the sun there, and he was filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory, saying, "This does not look like the same room I went out of, the room I have suffered in." In a previous illness these words were given to mother, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God." Now the assurance was given and father had not long to stay. Such love filled his heart, he said, "My folks are nothing to me," and no one loved his family more than he, but the glory of our blessed Redeemer outshines all earthly ties.

His funeral was attended by Elder Frederick W. Keene, of North Carolina, then living at North Berwick, Maine, and all that was mortal was laid to rest in the cemetery at Whitefield, Maine, where he and mother now rest together. Mother's grief knew no bounds, and she felt her time was short, but the Lord had planned it otherwise.

NELLIE M. PALMER.

Deacon Ephraim R. Myers departed this life December 22nd, 1924, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Edward Pyatt, in Flemington, N. J., where he had made his home for some years. Brother Myers was born near Locktown, N. J., December 10th, 1837, making his age 87 years at the time of his death. September 15th, 1860, he was united in marriage to Miss Cornelia H. Fox, of Ohio, who preceded him in death several years. He is survived by two daughters and two sons, sixteen grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. Brother Myers and his wife were the last baptized by the late Elder Gabriel Conklin, more than fifty years ago. Deacon Myers was faithful in the house of the Lord, called Kingwood, to the end. He loved the order, doctrine and ordinances of the church. No compromise could be made with him. He was a sweet singer and for many years led the singing. Failing health caused him to leave the vicinity of the meetinghouse, and his presence and assistance were much missed. It was my privilege to visit him several times during his long illness, and always found him interested in the affairs of the church, and with comforting hope of salvation through the mercy of God.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer, his pastor, in the Methodist meetinghouse at Mt. Rose, N. J., and the interment took place in the Mt. Rose Cemetery. May strength and peace be ministered to the children.

By request. H. C. KER.

Elder C. C. Melton was born in Carroll County, Virginia, December 13th, 1845, and departed this life December 6th, 1923, at his home, in Nebo, Ill., aged 77 years, 11 months and 23 days. He was united in marriage to Martha Ann Wilkinson in Pike Co., Ill., September 12th, 1872, and to this union nine children were born, six sons and three daughters, all except one daughter survive, together with the mother. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church in 1879, and consistently conformed to the faith until his death.

MARTHA ANN MELTON.

Isabella Frances Culpepper (nee Walterman), wife of B. F. Culpepper, was born August 7th, 1844, and died December 12th, 1924. She was married to B. F. Culpepper July 6th, 1865, and to this union eight children were born, two boys and six girls. Her husband and four children preceded her to the grave, four girls surviving: Mrs. Florence Sanders, Mrs. Donie Reese, Mrs. Lizzie Smith and Mrs. Mame Norber, also one sister and one brother-in-law. She united with Mt. Pelier Church, Henry County, Alabama, the second Sunday in April, 1876, and was baptized by Elder W. M. Hubbard. In 1879 she moved to Texas and settled in Upsher County, nine miles east of Gilmer. She and her husband united with the church at Bluff Springs, of the Predestinarian faith and order, where they lived consistent members until death, always filling their seats unless providentially hindered, and their home was a home for the Baptists. She was a faithful wife and a loving mother, both naturally and spiritually. In her death the church has sustained a great loss, but we hope our loss is her eternal gain.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort from 1 Thessalonians iv. 13, after which her remains were laid to rest beside her husband in the presence of a large concourse of relatives and friends, there to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change this vile body and fashion it like unto his glorious body, and so shall we ever be with the Lord; so weep not, dear children, as those who have no hope, for your mother is not dead, but sleepeth in Jesus.

Written by

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

Mrs. Lucy Adeline Watkins, wife of J. T. Watkins, was born near Mayfield, Ky., April 1st, 1861, and departed this life December 7th, 1924, aged 63 years, 8 months and 7 days. She leaves husband, six children, and six grandchildren to mourn their loss; one son deceased. She also leaves one sister and two brothers. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Mt. Pleasant, Graves Co., Ky., on the fourth Sunday in May, 1912, and since that time lived devoted to the One who commands and it stands fast. She was a good mother and a noble companion all her life. She leaves a host of friends and brethren to mourn their loss, but the Master saw fit to call from our midst and take her to the upper and better home, so let us look to God who doeth all things well. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh, blessed be the name of the Lord.

The funeral services were held from the residence, Paducah, Ky., December 8th, 1924, with Elder C. O. Kerley, her pastor, officiating. Burial was in Oak Grove Cemetery.

Written by her son-in-law,

ROBERT McGREGOR.

Mrs. M. J. Carson, born September 1st, 1835, died December 15th, 1924, at the Home of the Incurable, in Atlanta, Ga., where she had been for several years. She was the youngest child of thirteen children of John and Margaret Webb, of Monroe County, Ga. She was born and reared by them there until 1859, they all had left the old home but her and her father. They moved to her brother-in-law's and sister's, E. P. and Nancy Newton, the writer's parents, and lived with us until her father died in the early 70's, and her marriage to D. P. Carson. She had no children, but two step-children, who were grown and married when she married, but they visited and loved each other as own mother and children. When she moved to my father's she was taken in as one of the family, and acted and felt that mother's children were as near and dear as if they had been her own. After we were all grown she looked and depended upon us more than any one else. She had no means of support except her work, by which she was able to make a comfortable living until her health failed, then she was cared for by my mother's children as long as she lived, being the youngest of thirteen brothers and sisters, all had passed away except one brother, Dr. G. W. Webb, who is 91 years old. She came from a long lineage of Primitive Baptists. Her great-grandfather was a minister of prominence among the Baptists, her father was Deacon in his church, as was my father, and two of his brothers were Deacons in their churches. She was a true member for many years of her last days. She had many good friends outside of her church, for all who knew Aunt Jane loved her for her moral worth, as was evidenced by the many who paid respect with flowers and their presence at her funeral and burial in the family cemetery. Truly a good woman is gone.

Written by her nephew,

J. W. NEWTON.

Miss Nannie Rountree, my dear sister, was born in Young County, Texas, November 23rd, 1879, and departed this life December 10th, 1924, at Santa Anna, Texas. She never united with the church, but lived a sweet life, and always enjoyed the church services and attended meetings as long as she was able, and especially did she enjoy the hymns and often sang them at home. The last one we remember hearing her sing was, "Oh when shall I see Jesus?" She was a sweet girl in the home, and we miss her much. Our home is sad. Her father preceded her to the grave nine months. It was sad to give papa up, but we wish to be submissive to the Lord's will. A sister-in-law preceded her to the grave near six months, and this, too, was very sad to the family, she leaving three little children, who are in the care of mother and myself. We feel that she, too, is at rest in the arms of Jesus. She was a member of the Missionaries. My sister had been in poor health for some

time, but never complained. She and the others are at rest, sweet rest, where sorrow comes no more. This is a sad world, but what a sweet thought that beyond this world of sorrow is a heaven for the saints, God's chosen people, his elect.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Stone in a way that was comforting to the family. She leaves to mourn a dear mother, sisters, brothers and other relatives. She was laid to rest by the side of her father, to await the resurrection morn.

In sorrow,

BERTHA ROUNTREE.

Jessie A. Baker was born July 5th, 1870, and departed this life October 6th, 1924, making his stay on earth 54 years, 3 months and 1 day. He was married to Etta Tibbs October 7th, 1894. He professed a hope in Christ while young, and united with the Primitive Baptist Church April 28th, 1922, and lived a true member until death. He leaves a wife, one son, a daughter-in-law and one grandchild to mourn his death. Brother Baker was severely afflicted for several years before his death, but seemed to bear his afflictions with much patience. He professed a hope nearly forty years ago, but did not come to the church and give a relation of his hope until April, 1922, at which time I, with the assistance of Elder O. W. Pirkins, baptized him in the fellowship of Bethel Church, Graves Co., Ky., and by request of his lonely wife, and through the strong ties of christian love I had for him, I in my weakness am writing this brief notice of his death. We believe that through the good hope of grace in Christ which he manifested by the love he had for Christ and his kingdom that he is now at rest, and we feel that our loss is his eternal gain. Oh may it be God's holy will to reconcile his loved ones he has left behind in their sad and lonely state, is my prayer for Christ's sake. Amen.

Written by

T. J. PRINCE.

Mary J. McCallum, wife of John E. McCallum, was born in Aldboro, Elgin County, Ontario, the only daughter of the late John S. McColl, one time school inspector for Elgin, and Mrs. McColl, and died at her home in Iona Station, Ontario, June 12th, 1924, after a few hours illness with peritonitis. For a number of years she followed the profession of teaching. She was widely known, and her amiable and genial disposition won for her many friends, by whom she was held in high esteem. She leaves to mourn their loss her husband, one son, Duncan, one daughter, Mrs. Delmer Gosnell, of Highgate.

Funeral services were held from her late residence, and her body was buried in the family plot in the Cowal Cemetery.

DUNCAN C. McCALLUM.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. J. F. Primm, Ark., $4.00; Mrs. M. A. Somers, Va., $1.00; J. R. Nucols, Ky., $3.00; D. S. Koontz, Ill., $2.00; Miss Semma Corder, W. Va., $1.00; Thomas Nixon, Ohio, $3.00; Sarah E. Runkle, Ill., $1.00; "A Friend," N. Y., $1.00; Wishing the SIGNS a prosperous New Year, Ont., $1 00; J. B. Simmons, Tex., $1.00; Mrs. B. H. Shearon, Tenn., $1.00; Thos. C. Roe, Md., $3 00; W. E. Bryan, Ky., $1.00; Joseph F. Hall, Maine, $8.00; John Yard, N. J., $3.00; Paul T. Leigh, N. J., $1.00; Mrs. Bettie Bennett, D. C., $2 00; Mrs. W. W. Readhimer, La., $2.00; Nellie M. Palmer, Me., $2.00; W. T. Judy, Neb., $1.00; Mrs. Thomas Jamieson, Cal., $1.00; J. P. Starr, Texas, $5.00; Mrs. Jean Semster, Manitoba, $1.00; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $3.00; Miss C. Lilly Buck, Conn., $2.00; F. W. Gainer, W. Va., $1 00; H. L. Davis, Tex., $3.00; W. K. Baird, Ky., $3.00; J. S. Moore, Ala., $2.00; Mrs. John Beamond, Ohio, 50 cents; J. A. Jordan, Va., $2.00; E. H. Winchell, Mich., $6.00.

[THE contribution of G. C. Jordan, Mo., acknowledged last number, should have read $8.00 instead of $3.00.—ED.]

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

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ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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THE

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

TOPEKA, Kansas, December 22, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am writing to renew my subscription to the SIGNS and to notify you that my address is changed from Williamstown, Kansas, to 1243 Polk St., Topeka, Kansas. I also feel an inclination to drop a few lines, which you may look over and dispose of as you see fit. My mind has been exercised some of late upon these words, "We know," and I pause to ask, Who knows? In the beginning of the book of Romans the apostle addresses all that be in Rome called saints, and further says, "Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ." Therefore keeping in mind the fact that it was Paul writing, and the called in Jesus Christ written to, and that he uses the pronoun, "we," we conclude those are the ones who "know." It is an inspiring thought, this fact that "we know." It eliminates every doubt to the contrary. It is reassuring. The saints know things which the world never knew, and cannot know. There are things which we know, and there are many things we do not know. But upon this particular occasion the apostle says, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." This "we know," notwithstanding Satan and his followers seek to have it otherwise. It is difficult, indeed it is impossible, for the carnal mind to be reconciled to the glorious truths which the Lord's people know. "We know" that God is the surety of his people. His name is a strong tower, the righteous runneth into it and is safe. Men and devils go about unconsciously doing the will of God, performing their devilish works, but it must all, in the end, redound to the glory of God and the good of his people. Jesus was put to death in the flesh, but it was written of him, "For the transgression of my people was he stricken." Surely. Yes, "we know" that he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. It is indeed a delight for the saints to know this blessed truth. It was necessary that Jesus die that divine justice might be satisfied. It was necessary that he die that he might be raised from the dead that God's called people might be justified. He was delivered for our offenses and raised for our justification. It is evident, in fact, "we know," there was no other way by which

we could be justified in the sight of God. We are sinners by nature and by practice, our works are corrupt, they never can suffice as an offering for sin. So-called good works and resolutions never will appease the righteous indignation of him who hath said, The soul that sinneth it shall die. Our own life's blood, individually or collectively, could not suffice to pay the debt we owed. "We know" it was the part of sovereign mercy that God should prepare a ransom for us in the person of Jesus, his Son. We know it was part of the divine economy of God that our sins should be laid upon him. He died in our stead. He redeemed us from death. He did his work perfectly, and our justification is declared by his resurrection from the dead. One of two things must be admitted: Christ has redeemed his people, or else he has not redeemed his people. He has saved his people, or else he has not saved his people. In the face of all the blessed testimony brought to bear upon this point the world seems not to know. But "we know." We know that our Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand in the latter day upon the earth. If he did not redeem he would not be a redeemer, and if he did not save he would not be a savior. If he did not save his people from their sins then his name "Jesus" would not be appropriate to him. We know there is no other name associated with the work of salvation save the name of Jesus, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. This the world seems not to know. Men have sought out many inventions, they have devised many ways and means whereby they say we may be saved or we may not, but not once in all their devices is it said we *must* be saved. We know God's people must be saved. Every one included in his gracious covenant must be saved. It is part of his gracious covenant that they shall all know him from the least even unto the greatest of them, and their sins and their iniquities he will remember against them no more forever. Is not this a gracious promise when we realize so sensibly that we cannot cease from sin, we have not the ability in and of ourselves to raise ourselves above its awful influence? But, "They shall all know me." Yes, "we know," "and this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." We know he hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. We know that what God doeth, it shall be forever. Nothing can be added to it nor anything taken from it. It is our joy to know our God is not deficient in any respect whatever; his grace is sufficient for us, his mercy endureth forever, his purposes never can be altered, his decrees never can be thwarted. All this we know perfectly well, but when we are enabled to view ourselves as we are, loathsome masses of pollution and sin, we are made to cry, I do not know. As to the salvation of God's people we have no doubt. We know they are saved, and would to God I could be like them, but "I do not know." We have a good hope through grace, but I cannot say I know that I am saved. We doubt and fear and tremble, our sins rise up before us to such a degree we almost give up in despair, but even with all this we dare to hope in the efficacy of the shed blood of Jesus.

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

This little hope we have, that star in the east when it shines clearly, never fails to lead us to the place where Jesus is. When thus led we can view him "Immanuel," "God with us." This little hope enables us to view his shed blood, and we know it cleanses us from all sin, his resurrection, and we know it was for our justification. These early experiences of the saints of God will not be forgotten. Like Mary, the mother of Jesus, we keep those things and ponder them in our hearts. We remember how we became mysteriously burdened with sin, and how we were just as mysteriously relieved of that burden. We remember how a love for the brethren mysteriously sprang up within our hearts, and oh the mystery that they should manifest a love for us. This love leads us to "know." Ah, dear, trembling child of grace, do we dare claim this for our own? By this shall ye know ye have passed from death unto life, because ye love the brethren. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." We shall not question the wisdom and mercy of divine Providence even in adversity and misfortune. Our good is not reckoned from a financial standpoint, neither from worldly satisfaction and pleasure, but the trial of our faith is more precious in the sight of God than gold which perisheth. There are numerous cases in the Scriptures to prove the vigilant care which God maintains over his chosen and called people. I cite the case of Joseph as an example; his trials, afflictions and persecutions. His brethren meant it all for evil, but God meant it for good that he might save much people alive, as it is this day. God overruled their evil designs that it all should work for the good of his people. Balaam went forth at the instance of Balak to curse the people of the living God, but the watchcare of God was over his elect, and every curse was turned into a blessing. We also learn a lesson from Balaam, when his beast turned aside into the field three times and his foot was crushed against the wall he became enraged and smote the beast, when the dumb ass, speaking with man's voice, forbade the madness of the prophet Balaam discovered it was an angel which stood in his way. Dear children of grace, how many times may we recall that we would surely have gone headlong into destruction had we been allowed to pursue our own way. The guardian angel of our Lord often stands in our way. He that keepeth Israel never slumbers nor sleeps. "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." These things we know, and God be thanked it is so.

L. L. SCHENCK.

FORDYCE, Ark., Dec. 8, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—In viewing conditions in our country, also reports from other countries, the absolute fulfillment of the many Scriptures has been vividly brought to my mind. Paul in writing the greatest of many letters descriptive of what shall come to pass in the future, says, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men

shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away," and God's people, like Israel of old, have been turned away from them. History has clearly shown, as the record given of the human family as recorded in the Holy Bible, together with the history as recorded of man and his demeanor here all along the ages of the world, and it has clearly shown beyond any question, that the tendency of humanity has had a downward course, but this apostle is here going way beyond the general trend, and has given Timothy this great warning, and says, "This know also." Know what? That in the latter times all these things shall come to pass. In looking, reading and watching the movements of men in the general channels of life, also religiously, we find them without natural affection, trucebreakers, incontinent, heady, highminded, lovers of worldly pleasures more than truth, and above all despisers of those that are good. Religiously speaking, we find them full of every conceivable form of godliness, but absolutely having no more knowledge of God's power and mercy than a beast, further than what tradition has taught. Idolatry has covered the land, men are proving to the people of God who have eyes to see, ears to hear and hearts to understand the great things that God has prepared for them that love him, that they are only as natural brute beasts, and are acting just as they have been taught by the gods of the world. They have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof. From such turn away. They enter houses and lead captive silly women, laden with sins, lead away with divers lusts, ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, &c. There has been a general tendency of the theologians and "smart men" to lead the people into "modernism," or that man sprung from the lower animals and evoluted into a man. Here in this present century they are urging the people to accept this belief, and, worse still, that Jesus Christ never did exist here in a body of flesh, but was only as an emblem. Here we see the absolute fulfilling of the Scripture in exact language. They deny him, and the reason is plain, for they know him not. They are of the world, and the world heareth them. They speak of the world, but "ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."—1 John iv. 4. "We are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us." This is the accountable reason why they deny him. They have not seen him, they know him not and his word has no place in them; all the god they know is the god of tradition, and such as they wonder and picture out, and that is composed of such as the wisdom of this world imagines, which with God is foolishness.

"Perilous times shall come." Yes, they are here. Since the United States went into the World War the spirit of selfishness, graft and greed has manifested itself to an alarming extent. Society has retrograded, men and women who were looked upon as leaders in morals and religion have committed some of the blackest of crimes, and, religiously speaking, have introduced into the so-called churches schemes and plans to raise

money for those of whom Paul said, They shall lead captive silly women laden with sins, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. All these things which look to us so glaring and irreligious are only manifesting and bringing to pass the very things recorded in the Scriptures. We read in Ecclesiastes iii. 14, "I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it that men should fear before him." God was before all things and by him all things consist, without regard as to who or what they are, have been or ever will be. It is all by him, and all these things that are upon us now have once been, and the corruption and vice we now see have been, and shall continue to wax worse and worse, and doubtless, to my poor vision of things, shall come to the point where we will have to have the mark of the beast to buy or sell.

Again in the fifteenth verse: "That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been: and God requireth that which is past." Yes, we see very clearly from this very language that all that is now has been, and that which is or was once in the past is to come back again, and so it is no marvel to us for these things to come, for they absolutely have to come, and they, like the great and mighty ocean, are just "foaming out their shame." "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."—Jude 4. Surely they were of old ordained to this condemnation. It is exactly where the righteousness of God's justice left them in their sins to their own shame, and truly they are showing that by their fruits ye (we) shall know them. Yes, they deny the Lord God, but note that Jude said "our" Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, not theirs, for if he had been theirs they would not have been in the condemned state, and would not have denied him, neither would they have crucified him, but to this end they were "ordained" and therefore they had taken, crucified and slain the Lord of glory, and in that great wicked act carried out one of the greatest purposes known to us poor mortals, to the end that he died for our sins and rose for our justification, that the wicked were the sword in his hand to smite the shepherd and to scatter the sheep, and his hand of mercy is turned upon the little ones.

In conclusion, let us all remember that God is the head over all things, and that he upholdeth all things, and the government is upon his shoulder, and that crime, vice and wickedness will go their full limit, as darkness always goes as far as it can, but where the light is darkness has to end, so we hope that God will give us of his grace sufficient for us to be enabled to endure to the end, and that his everlasting love may reveal to us that these are some of the "all things" that work together for good to them who love the Lord, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Oh that we may be made to realize that he is the God of our salvation; that it is in him, by him and through him we are living and having our being, and that it is in him we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, and to that end he most certainly is entitled to all the praise. Had it not been for his unbounding mercy and goodness, we, too, would be just like others are, worshiping the creature and running after the gods of the

world, and doing just as they are, but God in his mercy has appeared unto us, giving us an understanding that we are in him, that it has been by the wonders of his everlasting love that he has bestowed upon us, therefore giving us of his Spirit, and as many as are led by that Spirit are his sons, and no more. Let us here say: He is the Rock upon which we are founded. "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." That church is his body and we are his members in particular, inseparably with him in his everlasting love, and in the final resurrection will be raised and fashioned like his glorious body. It is a great mystery, but we shall not all sleep, but shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Yes, we have borne the image of the earthly here in sorrow after the manner of natural life, which is appointed once to die, but thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we shall live by him and through him, after, or in the manner of, an endless life, life eternal. So let the heathen rage and the people imagine vain things, wickedness manifest itself, we have one consolation: it can go just as far as God wills and there it shall stop. The Bible shows that this has ever been his ruling power over all worlds and beings, and shall we now falter by the way and say that he has lost his government? No, not in anywise, for he is the same now he has ever been and always will be, and the things that are now manifesting themselves, as in the beginning of our text, are only the things that we have the promise of, or rather the assurance that they shall come. All these things bring sorrows to God's poor, afflicted and despised people, but all these are just the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. These things to God's people are an heritage. In the world they shall have tribulation, but in him peace. As peace is all in Christ, and must and cannot come from any other source, so then persecutions are our dues from the world, and cannot come from any other source, and cannot be any other way, according to the declaration of the Scriptures. So then let us try as much as in us is to rejoice that we are counted worthy to suffer for his sake. If these are not the things that the Scriptures teach, then I confess that I am blind as to what they mean.

I will close with love and sweet fellowship, as I hope, to all the poor afflicted and despised people of God.

V. R. HARRIS.

EAST POINT, Ga., November, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—While I feel so little, sinful, weak and unworthy to thus address you, by the help of One who holds the issues of life and death in his hand, I will write you a few lines to let you know I am yet alive, but my pain and suffering are no better, still I am spared for some purpose best known unto the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

Dear Brethren, I appreciate and thank you very much for sending me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES so long; it has been a great comfort to me in my many lonely days of suffering. I am always glad to see it come, and read it through before I sleep, unless I am suffering too badly. The pain is now so severe that I cannot read, write or sleep without morphine. Dear brethren and sisters who write for the SIGNS, write on as the Lord gives you light and liberty, for you do comfort many of God's little ones scattered over our land who are deprived of hearing

preaching, many of them upon beds of affliction, and oh you do comfort them so much. We are commanded to visit one another, the sick and afflicted, the widows and orphans, and comfort one another with the same word wherewith we ourselves are comforted of the Lord. Comfort ye, comfort ye one another, saith the Lord, and oh, my dear brethren, I do know by experience that it is comforting to poor unworthy me. Though we are many miles apart, and I have never seen them, I dearly love the writers as soon as I have read their good spiritual letters. Our God is love. He is everywhere present and nowhere absent, and he seeks such to worship him as do worship him in spirit and in truth, and he says, I know my sheep (or children), and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish. The good Lord does all the work. He hath saved his people with an everlasting salvation, therefore with loving-kindness he draws them. Yes, he makes it known unto them in time. There is a time for them to be born of the Spirit, then he sends forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father. He has done it all. Oh how thankful we ought to be to have a little hope that we are of the number that Jesus came down to these low grounds of sorrow and suffered, wept, bled and died for, and put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself. It is declared that as far as the east is from the west he has removed our transgressions from us. He tells us how to live here in this time world: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." That love we have for each other, dear brethren, is a good evidence we are born again, born of the Spirit of God. I do know that I love the children of God, but the great question with me is, Is it with that spiritual love of God? I can only say that I hope it is. They are the dearest people on earth to me.

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

I know that if I am saved eternally it is a poor sinner saved by grace, and grace alone. Dear brethren and sisters, do you have doubts and fears? I do. Then again I am made to rejoice and say, I know that my Redeemer liveth. During the last few years I have awakened in the night singing some good old hymn, rejoicing and suffering at the same time, my body racked with pain; but love is stronger than death. Manifest your love to each other, dear children of God, and let brotherly love continue; live in peace one with another and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Dear editors and brethren, I hope you will overlook my imperfections with charity, and if you publish this correct the many mistakes. I have written it at different times, as I am in such pain I cannot write long at one time. My limbs are almost stiff and my eyesight bad; I am on crutch and stick yet. I have not been easy in nineteen years, so, dear afflicted children of God, I know how to sympathize with you.

Dear editors, may the good Lord long spare you to edit the SIGNS and to stand upon the walls of Zion. Cry aloud, spare not and ever contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. I thank you again for sending me the SIGNS so long. I will not think hard of you if you stop it, yet I enjoy it very much. You may publish this if you see fit; if not, it will be all right with me. I ask an interest in the prayers of all God's people. May God bless the editors and writers of the SIGNS, is my prayer.

G. W. ALMAND.

ROMANS IX. 20.

"NAY but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?"

God, in his divine nature, is incomprehensible. The human mind cannot conceive the matchless wisdom, the unlimited power and the divine purposes of him who fills all space, penetrates all substances, pervades all minds, and is equally present with each and all of his creatures at the same time; is most absolute, positive and efficient in all his works; that he permits sin, determines its bounds, and defeats its purposes to the consummation of his righteous designs as purposed in himself in the ancients of eternity; that he determined beforehand all his dispensations; understood the time, course and the progress of all events; that all things were comprised in infinite wisdom before ever the world was; that all things cooperate and work together in securing ends with which infinite wisdom and goodness are satisfied. The Scriptures disclose those mysterious truths as characteristics of the uncreated Deity who changeth not, but yesterday, to-day, forever is the same "I AM." Then who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? Whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day. Thou knowest mine downsittings and mine uprisings; thou understandest my thoughts afar off; there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Then who knoweth the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? As the heavens are above the earth, so are his ways above our ways and his thoughts above our thoughts. He is above all, and over all; without beginning of days or end of time. This is the God of all the earth. He says, Be still, and know that I am God. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee, for the world and the fullness thereof are mine. He owns the cattle of a thousand hills; is not in need of the perishing things of earth, as silver and gold, not even the tenth part of it. Withholding doth not impoverish him, nor the gold of Ophir enrich him. Come, O man of the dust, let us observe the contrast: "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow: for it is soon cut off, and we fly away." Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble. He lives amid the alternate joys and sorrows of this brief life, and perpetuates his dying race through the same vicissitudes of toil, care and sorrow through which he himself has trodden, down to the gloomy mansions of the tomb, where his thoughts, his envy and his hatred perish, never to know anything more that takes place under the sun, there to molder back to the dust from whence he came. Yet vain man would be wise, though he be born like a wild ass's colt, born in the wilderness of sin, wholly ignorant of his own weakness, until it is the pleasure of the Lord to show him in his ignorance and utter dependence, and turn his eyes to the hill from whence cometh his help. To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him? He is sitting at the helm, holding supreme dominion. He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. Judgment he lays to the line, and righteousness to the plummet. If he cuts off and shuts up, or gathers together, then who can hinder him? Who hath directed

the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counselor hath taught him? "It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea." He does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, nor has the right to say, Why is it thus? The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord. Yet he endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, and has graciously arranged to the good of all men, and his tender mercies are over all his works. His judgments are sure, and all his works are done in righteousness. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out. "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever."

My dear brother, if you think this worthy please publish it.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

W. A. HARRIS.

HIRAM, Georgia.

NAPA, Idaho, Jan. 25, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find a money order for four dollars, for which please credit my old account, and extend my subscription another year. I am sorry that I could not send it sooner, but it seemed I could not spare the amount from my family. I am not a member of any church, but my father, Elder J. H. Ring, was a subscriber of the SIGNS when I was a boy, and it is like an old friend to have it again, and I love to read the words written, many times by outsiders like myself. Let us hope we are included in our dear Lord's plan of salvation. We cannot see why he does things, and can only put our trust in him, knowing he doeth all things for his glory and the good of those who love him. I sometimes feel that I have a very small hope, but most of the time that I am too great a sinner to belong to the dear church. Brethren, pray for me, for my own prayers seem to go nowhere.

I was much surprised some time ago to see a letter from Elder Peter Sawin. I can remember him being at my father's home when I was a boy, and I then liked to hear him preach. I supposed he had passed on long ago, but our dear Lord seems to spare some as landmarks along the way.

Yours in hope,

CHARLES M. RING.

LAUREL, Miss., Jan. 3, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is through the mercy of the all-wise God, the Creator of heaven, earth and all things, that we have been brought through another year, and I hope I am thankful for his goodness in caring for me in my unworthiness. I pray that God will still bless us and care for us, especially the editors and publishers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for I cannot see how we could do without the paper. We are at peace here at the Palestine Church. Our pastor is Elder L. F. Easley, who we esteem highly for the truth's sake.

Please find inclosed check, as I am sending four new subscribers, and five of us are renewing our subscriptions. I wish you all a prosperous new year. Remember me and mine at the throne of grace.

Your unworthy brother in Christ, I hope,

T. J. KNIGHT.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1925.

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RECOGNITION.

THE act of knowing a thing or person again is based on the fact that one must have known the person or thing at some time before. To recognize is therefore to remember that one has previously been acquainted with the person or thing under consideration. It is not our purpose to discuss this matter any further than it relates to the things of the kingdom of God. As most matters have a spiritual side as well as a natural side, so there is a spiritual recognition of matters spiritual as well as natural recognition of matters natural. The basis of each of these two sorts of recognition is different from the other, so that a person able to recognize things naturally may not be at all able to recognize anything spiritually; but one who has spiritual ability to recognize spiritual matters is not thereby prevented from an appreciation of natural things, and so has the advantage over the one who has the faculty of natural recognition only. What we desire to do in this article is to inquire into the nature of spiritual recognition. Furnishing a base for this consideration, we will use the text in 2 Corinthians v. 16: "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." It will be noticed that the word "henceforth" occurs twice in this short passage, meaning "from that time forth." What time is meant? What time are we to date from in this matter? The text plainly asserts that from a certain time there has arisen a new manner of recognition in regard to persons spiritually born. The words in verse fifteen will give us the starting-point: "And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." Here again the word "henceforth" comes in as clearly connected with the phrase "they which live." This living is a spiritual, not a natural living, and from the time that spiritual life is evidenced in the one born from above there comes a new or spiritual outlook to this one, by means of which he is able to identify and to re-identify or to recognize things or persons in the spiritual world. This living unto God is altogether the effect of the death and resurrection of Christ, therefore the resurrection of Christ is the date from which this spiritual recognition starts. Paul says in our text that the time had been when the disciples had known Christ after the flesh, that was when he was here on earth. During his lifetime here in the flesh his followers had been associated with him and had witnessed his sayings and his wonderful works, but now that Christ had arisen from the dead Paul goes on to say that from the time of his resurrection we shall no more know him after the flesh. It is true that Jesus was just as much man as he was God, and that being verily a man did not in any sense dispute the fact that he was verily God; however, even during his sojourn

here in the world those who recognized him for what he really was, that is, the Son of God, knew him as such because to them was given life from God akin to the life that was in him, so that the life in them recognized the life in him. For this reason his true followers recognized him as being God manifest in the flesh while the world of the Jewish nation recognized him merely as a man, and declared him to be naught but the son of a carpenter in Nazareth. Thus the Jews accused Jesus of being a blasphemer and an impostor, because to them was given no life from above, therefore no power of spiritual recognition by which they might truly know him; but the true disciples knew Jesus as the fullness of the Godhead dwelling in flesh, and worshipped him as such, because to them had been vouchsafed life whereby to truly know him and to love him. This life of the Spirit which was now made resident in the disciples of Jesus was in God and with God before the foundation of the world so that it was not difficult at all for this life when appearing in the elect here in the world to cause them to recognize the true character and value of the Lord Jesus. Since a person cannot recognize what they have not before known, it would have been before impossible for the human nature or for any faculty of the human mind in the disciples to recognize the divinity in Jesus; their human nature would have seen only his human nature. But their life spiritually was hid with God, and had been so hid from eternity. This spiritual life being naught else than God's very life is the only faculty fully able to recognize divinity in Jesus, because this life had been from eternity with God and fully cognizant of the right nature of God. The instant, therefore, that this spiritual life takes up its residence in a sinner, the moment he is quickened into divine life, that moment and from that time forth he is awakened to a new consciousness of himself and an entirely new valuation of the things of God. Whereas before this he was dumb to all things really worth while, and dead to all things which vitally matter, now by the life of the Spirit he becomes alive to the truth and conscious of his own depravity and condemnation on account of sin. Thus there is a travailing in birth with this one until he is born again and brought out from under the law into the liberty of the gospel of Christ. From the time that this new birth takes place he never knows Christ after the flesh again and never thinks of valuing the Son of God as being no more than a man, neither does he look upon his kindred in Christ as being merely men and women after the flesh, with all the faults and weaknesses inherent in the flesh, but views them as the elect of God with whom he is not fit to dwell, seeing in them the perfections of God and the mark of the Father in their foreheads. After his resurrection Jesus appeared to his disciples at different times in that same body in which he had been crucified, that same body still containing the marks of the wounds he had received, but we have no record that any of the disciples recognized him by that body. They recognized him surely, but it was not after the flesh. When Mary came to the tomb the morning after he had risen and when she saw him, she thought it was the gardener. (John xx. 15.) Not until he called her name, "Mary," did she recognize him. What a wonderful proof this is of Jesus' words that he would call his sheep by name and that they would know him and not mistake his voice. Never was there a voice like his voice. His voice was the

voice that made all creation and that had called the world and all that therein is into being. No man ever spake like this God-man. It is no wonder Mary knew him when he addressed her; but we need to note here that she had not recognized him until that living Word in its power called her name. When she tried to touch him in her gladness, Jesus told her not to touch him because he was not ascended, therefore was not yet glorified. What that process of glorification was through which Jesus passed when he ascended to heaven forty days after his resurrection we cannot tell, for the Bible does not tell us. Therefore, it does not yet appear. But if we could know what change was wrought in Jesus' body through his ascension to glory, then we should know what all the saints of God shall be, and we should know how each shall appear when they shall be glorified. It is promised that this vile body shall be changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body, that is, like unto the body of his glorification. It is true then that the spiritual body which each of the resurrected children of God shall wear in glory is not the likeness of Jesus' body when it came forth from the sepulchre yet containing the marks of all the wounds it had suffered, but the likeness or image of his body when and after it had been glorified in the ascension. Therein is a secret hid from us, in that we cannot understand what a spiritual body is because we cannot know the mystery of the glorification of Jesus which took place in his ascension from Olivet to the right hand of the Father. We have the assurance, though, that when Jesus who is our life shall appear, we shall be like him, and shall appear with him in that same glory which he now has with the Father. Thomas had said he would not believe that Jesus had arisen from the dead unless he could prove it for himself by a personal examination of the wounds in Jesus' hands and side so as to satisfy himself that Jesus was the very same who had lived and died here on earth. Thomas was not the first to be such a doubter, nor will he be the last. However, when Jesus next appeared to the disciples and Thomas was with them, Jesus personally called Thomas by name and bade him satisfy himself as to the wounds in Jesus' body; but we have no proof that Thomas did touch him any more than Mary had done. It was enough for Thomas to hear that blessed voice personally addressing him and the wealth and power of that divine utterance satisfied him adequately, without his making any examination to see if the wound-marks were there. Again, here in the case of Thomas as in Mary's case, we see a spiritual recognition of Jesus and not a fleshly one. In the instance of the two disciples walking to Emmaus, they did not recognize Jesus although he walked and talked with them and expounded to them the Scriptures. Not until he broke the bread did they know it was he. Again a spiritual and not a fleshly recognition. It is not necessary for us to go on and multiply instances to prove our case. It is readily seen that the church's recognition of her Lord ever since his resurrection has been after the Spirit and not after the flesh, and so it will ever be. We shall never know him after the flesh any more. At the last time, when he shall descend the heavens with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, to raise the church and to transport it to glory, he shall not be recognized by his saints because of any bodily or physical appearance, but he shall be known to be the Son of God

clothed with omnipotent power and with honor and glory. He shall shine forth in all the radiance of the eternal God. No flesh shall be able to stand before him, to say nothing of recognizing him. What that shall be, and how glorious and wonderful that coming shall be, no tongue can tell nor pen portray nor heart conceive. Not only is not Christ known any more after the flesh, but his children in the gospel kingdom do not know one another after the flesh. Because of his life in them there is a spiritual bond and acquaintanceship between them, according to which they view one another perfect in Christ. We may see the faults and weaknesses of our brethren, but if Jesus' life abounds in us we shall find ourselves not imputing their sins and weaknesses unto them, but shall be moved to forgive them them for Christ's sake. We often make excuses for what God's people do to us, often look over their trespasses against us, even as they look over ours against them, because of Christ's life in his children which moves them to bear and forbear one another. Saul of Tarsus had freely shed the blood of the saints and had done all he could to stamp out the church and its doctrine, and surely the members in that day had every reason to hate and despise Saul of Tarsus for his cruel treatment of them, but when Paul came to the church in Damascus and was received as one of them into their membership so glad and rejoiced were they to see the marks of Christ in him that no one of them thought of such a thing as casting his wrongdoings at him, nor even so much as remembering them against him. In other words, the church did not know Paul after the flesh, but saw him as a new man in Christ Jesus, with all the old things passed away. In some such way as this all God's people know one another. This is a spiritual recognition, knowing God's children after his own likeness, and not seeing or accounting to them the likeness of fallen Adam. This is one of the indelible marks of the church of Jesus Christ all through the ages, this mark of knowing one another in the way of love and charity, and of not marking up against one another all their weaknesses and shortcomings. When we fall out with one another by the way and degenerate into calling one another hard names and backbiting and devouring one another, when malice and envy and jealousy rage, then we are knowing one another after the flesh and have lost our visible identity as the church of the living God Some say there is no recognition in heaven, but we do not agree with that thought. If there is spiritual recognition between the children of God here, why not hereafter? Why not the fullness then, if we have the earnest now? Of course, we shall not know each other then after the flesh, we shall not know each other as husbands and wives and as parents and children, not in any such way as that, but as God's people here in the world are tied together in love and fellowship in Christ Jesus, so shall they in glory be more vastly and wonderfully united together in the fullness of that love and fellowship and spiritual acquaintanceship. We see only in part now, and only as through a glass darkly, but then shall we see even as we are seen and shall know even as we are known. As all the relationships of earth are based upon sex, and as there shall be no sex in the resurrection nor in the kingdom, there cannot be a persistence of earthly relationships beyond this world; but the relationship of God's people in the kingdom of God is based upon a new birth and that of the Spirit, not of the flesh. All

the relationship which ensues from this spiritual birth is undying and eternal. While we have now these spiritual enjoyments in small measure, we shall have them hereafter in full and glorious measure. Heaven is not a place where one's identity is lost and swallowed up in one great mass or body of life where each individual part knows nothing for itself, but where only the one great mind dominating the whole knows all. This is what Buddhism teaches, but the Bible does not teach it nor do we belive it. Earth is inhabited by Adam multiplied, and all the millions and millions of persons who have ever lived, or who shall ever live on earth, are only Adam after all. All the individuals of earth's inhabitants have Adam's nature and mind and body and cannot get away from it however seemingly diverse from one another they may be. The kingdom of heaven, which is to endure forever after all other kingdoms have been destroyed, is inhabited by God the Father, his Son, the Holy Spirit and the whole church of God redeemed through Jesus' blood. All the individuals of this redeemed host thus inhabiting the heaven of glory are the offspring of God Almighty, and in that sense might be called Jesus multiplied. Yet each one in the kingdom of God has a spiritual personality and individuality their own, which is none other than the likeness of Jesus, the wearing of his image. As there is an infinite variety between idividuals here in the world as the offspring of Adam, no two of them alike, so much more infinite is the variety of individuality in Christ Jesus, yet between all the various individualities in Christ Jesus, between all his offsprings who dwell in heaven, there are no clashings, no jarrings, no fallings-out, but love holds perfect sway and binds all heaven's multitude together in oneness of heart and mind, Jesus Christ being King and holding sway in, through and over all. Thus shall love be triumphant in consummated redemption and infinite perfection. L.

REQUEST ANSWERED.

DEAR BROTHER:—I am sending you a copy of our last Minutes, thinking perhaps it might interest you, and it gives me a good excuse to write, asking your views on some portions of Scripture that I have been thinking of lately. It is a part of David's life as recorded in 2 Samuel, beginning at the seventh chapter and continuing through the tenth chapter. Then beginning with Absalom's conspiracy until he was slain, and especially when Shimei curses David. You will think, I am afraid, that this is an exacting request, but I have been reading this Scripture, and it has been more in mind than I ever remember it to have been. Please interpret as much of Absalom's character as you feel inclined to.

The above is the first part of a letter we have received from one whom we have known for many years and for whose judgment and discernment in spiritual matters we have a very high regard. We often feel that the knowledge and understanding of the Lord's people with regard to that upper and better kingdom so far surpasses our own, if indeed we know anything as we ought to know, we hesitate to appear before them either in person or in the form of an epistle, and while this seems particularly true on this occasion, yet we desire to show a willing mind, hoping and praying that God will bring things to our remembrance both new and old—new in the sense that they will be refreshing, and old in the sense that we shall present nothing that does not accord with his eternal truth.

David is perhaps the best known to us of any of the Old Testament characters. His psalms have been the source of consolation and instruction beyond almost any portion of the Old Scriptures. They contain such great variety as to afford us

comfort when other of the inspired writers do not reach us. While many of the psalms were written by and concerning David, nevertheless they speak unmistakably of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, of him who said of himself, I am the way, the truth and the life. This explains in large measure to our mind why the sheep of his pasture delight to glean in the fields of their spiritual David, where there is living food for their hungry souls, and where at times "handfuls of purpose" are let fall for them at the command of their King. While that portion of the word referred to in 2nd Samuel deals with the advanced period in David's life, after he had become king of Israel, reference is made in the eighth verse of the seventh chapter to his origin. The prophet was instructed to speak as follows: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over Israel: and I was with thee withersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth." We would recall to the minds of our readers the words of the Lord to Samuel concerning David after Saul had been rejected as king of Israel: "Fill thine horn with oil, and go; I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons." The one here spoken of was not the first, nor the second, nor the third, nor even the seventh choice of man. Eliab, Jesse's oldest son, was said to have been the counterpart of Saul as to his countenance and his stature, but the Lord said, "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." The record is that Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. "And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither. And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the Lord said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he. Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward." This was in keeping with the declaration, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord," and is also in accord with what is written, "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence." Truly, David had great cause to feel goodness and mercy had followed him all the days of his life: When the lion and the bear came to prey upon a lamb of the flock, the Lord delivered it out of their paws; when the Philistine armies and Goliath's bold challenge had struck terror to the hearts of the men of war in Israel, David, the shepherd's lad, went forth with his staff (faith), and the word of God in his sling, and Goliath fell to the earth as

though he had been a lone sparrow upon the housetop; while being hunted by Saul as a beast of the forest, hiding in caves and caverns in the mountains, with but one step (God) between him and death, he discovered a friend in Jonathan, the king's son, such as he had never known before. It was while he related to Saul the dealings of the Lord with him that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and there sprang up that love which David describes as being wonderful, passing the love of women. It is through trials and afflictions that the souls of God's people are knit together, intertwined and interwoven, stitch by stitch, each experience bringing them closer together and making them one, until they are bound by a tie beyond anything that flesh and blood can conceive. But no sooner had it come to pass that the king sat in his house, and the Lord had confirmed him king, and given him rest round about from all his enemies, that David began to forget God, saying, "See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains," and he began to marry more wives and to have sons, as is shown in the seventeenth chapter of 1st Chronicles, which, by the way, is almost identical, word for word, as the seventh chapter of 2nd Samuel, but it is plain from both of these chapters that David's house of cedar was not to be a permanent place of abode. His house, like all houses that men build, had to crumble, but by the mouth of the prophet the Lord spake of something that would stand, saying, "Moreover, I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforehand. * * * And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever." We understand this prophecy reached beyond Solomon and the temple which he builded, embracing the coming of the Lord Jesus through the lineage of David according to the flesh, and of his kingdom which is an everlasting one. The Lord declared, "My mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever." After this fashion did Jesus build. When the prophet spake these things unto David he was humbled, and made to ask, "Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And yet this was a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Lord God? And what can David say more unto thee? for thou, Lord God, knowest thy servant. For thy word's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these things, to make thy servant know them. Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears. And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things and terrible, and for thy land, before thy people, which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt, from the nations and their gods? For thou hast

confirmed to thyself thy people Israel, to be a people unto thee for ever: and thou, Lord, art become their God." With his face toward the Lord, as it were, he went forth conquering and to conquer, as the victories enumerated in the eighth chapter would indicate. But it was not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord. Without his Spirit we must ever go down into everlasting defeat. It was the Spirit of the Lord which enabled David to recall his mercies of old, and to inquire, "Is there any that is left of the house of Saul, that I might shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" With the love of God in his heart there was none too little or despised for him to take knowledge of, not even Mephibosheth, who, bowed with gratitude and surprise, asked, "What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?" People of the world cannot understand how a king, sitting upon his throne, could be humbled to consider those of such low degree as the character Mephibosheth portrays; they cannot understand to-day how some who have been highly favored of the Lord with things pertaining to this life, can stoop, as they regard it, to the level of God's afflicted and poor people, but one in whose heart the love of God has been shed abroad, regardless of the station he may fill in this world, feels to be less than the least of all saints, and well knows God is no respecter of persons. This narrative of David and Mephibosheth undoubtedly presents a figure of Christ and his church, and as Mephibosheth was given a place at the king's table, where he was to eat continually, so every heaven-born child is brought, not invited, into the kingdom of our Lord and Master and given to partake of that bread which came down from heaven, of which if a man eat he will never die. This is that meat which the world knows not of, which our own flesh and blood and best friends in the flesh cannot comprehend should we try to tell them of it.

In the tenth chapter we see how David thought to comfort Hanun, whose father, the king of the children of Ammon, had died, but his servants were grossly misunderstood: "The princes of the children of Ammon said unto Hanun their lord, Thinkest thou that David doth honor thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? hath not David rather sent his servants unto thee to search the city, and to spy it out, and to overthrow it?" David's servants were despitefully used, but the Lord continued his watchcare over his own and prospered David and blessed him in a most wonderful way. With such evidences as he had of God's love towards him it would have seemed the least he could have done would have been to have walked circumspectly and to the honor and glory of God for all his benefits towards him. Instead he was guilty of the most heinous crime that could be perpetrated: taking Uriah's wife for himself and then having Uriah put to the front of the battle and killed. Was the Lord going to wink at such as this? Certainly not. He searched David out and made him to know that he was acquainted with all his ways, that things done in secret were to be brought to light, and that there was no fleeing from the presence of the Almighty, no escaping the vengeance of a just and holy God. Truly, his worst enemies were those of his own household, the deeds of his own commission. It was the son of his own loins who conspired against him and won from him the hearts of his own people. He had to abdicate his throne and flee from Absalom, and during this flight,

Shimei, a descendant of the house of Saul, beholding the disgrace of David, came forth and cursed still as he came, and he said, "Come, out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial: the Lord hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the Lord hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom." David said, "The Lord hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so?" "It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day." How wonderful it seems to us that David could see in this the correcting hand of his God. Shimei spake falsely, for the Lord had not delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom. Instead, Absalom was slain, the news of which moved David greatly and caused him to weep, saying, "Oh my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" Absalom had posed as a good fellow, as a moralist, defending the honor of his sister by slaying Amnon, who had wronged her, but he was too ambitious, taking the law in his own hands, forgetting that "vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord," and anxious to exalt himself even by the means of dethroning his father, but the Lord did not prosper his way. There is a right way to do things, an orderly way, and in the house of God it will have to be done in such a way that he that glorieth shall glory in the Lord. The moralist, or self-righteous man, with all of his ambition and genius, will not be able to win the victory with such weapons. A large part of the so-called religious world have mistaken "morality" for "christianity," and if their efforts to obtain salvation by works could succeed they would dethrone the very God of heaven and rob him of that honor which is his due. "Christianity" embraces "morality," but it does not follow necessarily that the latter is the former. The ambitious moralist is a dangerous person in the church, while one who knows he is a sinner, but hates sin with a perfect hatred, is not likely to lead the weak astray. Let each examine himself to see whether he be in the faith.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Attie A. Curtis.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 5th, 6th and 7th, 1924, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—We desire to write of those things which will comfort and edify one another, but the Comforter, even the Spirit of truth, must take of the things of Jesus and show them unto us, and bring to our remembrance what he has said unto us, and enable us to express them. Jesus has wrought in our souls the hope of glory, so all boasting in the flesh is excluded. We make our boast in the Lord, for he has done great things for us, whereof we are glad. "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious." We would like to show forth the beauty in this portion of Scripture by relating the experience of the sinner saved by grace. In being brought from nature's darkness into his marvelous light they are in great distress on account of sin, and cry to God for mercy. All their good deeds and works to obtain salvation are swept away, and they feel sure they are lost and their con-

demnation is just. In the midst of this tempest and distress Jesus reveals himself unto them as their Savior, and what a wonderful change takes place: peace and joy in believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. No matter how many times they relate that experience they always claim it as the work of God in their believing on Jesus. How very precious he is to them! No other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved. How delightful it is to be gathered together and speak one to another of our hope of salvation, the One altogether lovely, and chiefest among ten thousand. How his blood has cleansed us from all sin, and we are clothed with his righteousness. The salvation of the people of God is a perfect work, nothing can be added to it, or taken from it. "Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee."

"Jesus is precious, saith the Word;
What comfort does this truth afford!
And those who in his name believe,
With joy this precious truth receive."

We rejoice in having these truths set forth by the ministering brethren who visit us. We are comforted, edified and built up in the faith which God gives. It overcomes the world and purifies the heart. The fruit of the Spirit enables us to love one another with a pure heart fervently, and esteem others better than self. Our walk and conversation will be as becometh the gospel, for we shall desire above all things to speak of the power of God unto salvation. Our God has all power in heaven and earth, and in these perilous times we love to declare that he changes not. His people will not give his praise and glory to another. We need not fear although the earth be removed and the mountains be cast into the sea, for the church of the living God cannot be overthrown. No weapon that is formed against her can prosper; no enemy can be found to harm her, for Jesus has died, yea, rather, has risen again, and not one of his people, chosen in him before the foundation of the world, will be missing. As these truths are brought to our mind with power, we feel like saying, "O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." May God enable us to realize that he rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; that the everlasting arms are underneath, and he will never leave nor forsake us. May he enable us at all times to be found speaking of his goodness, mercy, power, love and wisdom, giving thanks to him who is alive for evermore, and because he lives we shall live also.

Finally, brethren, farewell.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

The Particular Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada, to the churches and associations with which we correspond, sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Another year is past, and we are still spared through our covenant-keeping God, who has been pleased to bless us as a church in our meetings, both monthly and quarterly, as we have often felt a refreshing season from the Lord. Our meetings have been well attended, and peace, love and fellowship have been manifested in our assemblies. We have been greatly comforted by the minister-

ing brethren who have visited us during the year at our quarterly meetings, who came preaching Jesus Christ, and him crucified for the salvation of sinners. We can truly say, How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments. During the year past we have been favored with visits from the following Elders: Lefferts, Ruston and Jackson, for which we have a deep feeling of gratitude to both them and our Father in heaven for that bond of fellowship that has bound us together in that union that exists between Christ and his people. We, as a church, are still desirous of your correspondence, and hope that in the year to come we will be favored with ministering brethren from churches and associations with which we correspond, whom we shall be glad to welcome into our homes and our pulpits, and all others of our faith and order in fellowship with us who come knowing nothing among us but Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

Our quarterly meetings are to be held as follows: At Dunwich, commencing on Saturday before the second Sunday in May, 1925, and continuing three days; at Ekfrid, beginning on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in June, and continuing three days; at Lobo, Saturday before the first Sunday in September, and continuing two days; at Duart, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, and continuing three days; when we hope to meet your messengers again. Until then, dear brethren, we will say farewell.

J. B. SLAUSON, Moderator.
ANGUS GILLIS, Clerk pro tem.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 5th, 6th and 7th, 1924, to the associations with whom we correspond, sends greeting and love in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We are glad to report a pleasant and lovely meeting, with the best of evidence that the Lord was in our midst. One dear sister asked for a home with us, was received and baptized. Brother Dodson was with us and preached Christ and him crucified. Brother Fisher, from Maryland, visited with us, and we were all glad to meet him.

Our next session of this Association will be held with the Whitefield, Church, at Whitefield, Maine, in September, 1925.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in March (29th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

D. L. Topping, Md., $1.00; "A Friend," Ont., $3.00; Robert Turner, Calif., $3.00; Elder J. C. Chester, Ky., $3.00; Mrs. Sarah E. Rice, Mo., $2.00; Jesse Myers, Mo., $1.00; W. D. Hughs, Okla., $3.00; Mrs. J. C. Hughs, $1.00; W. T. Bennett, Fla., $1.50; J. B. Adams, Ky., $4 00; L. P. Leach, Miss., $1.00; H. F. Cate, Kans., $1.00; Mrs. J. R. Blythe, Pa., $3.00; Mrs. Grace Veech Smith, Mo., $2.00; Mrs. Allie Gooch Reid, N. C., $2 00; W. L. Crowley, Ala., $1.00; W. A. Kelly, Ark., $3 00; A. Goodrich, Va., $3.00; "A Friend," Conn., $2.00; Thomas W. Records, Mo., $8.00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Charles Thomas Richardson was born in Campbell County, Georgia, August 17th, 1839, and died at Olney, Texas, January 15th, 1925. He was married to Miss Mary Elizabeth Brewer, of Louisville, Miss., July 31st, 1861. She died in 1921. He leaves two brothers, Dr. Ike Richardson and James Richardson, a Methodist minister; and is further survived by four children: Turner Richardson, Olney, Texas, Mrs. Fannie Terrel, Orth, Texas, Mrs. Ellen Howard, Olney, Texas, Mrs. Lilah Blakeney, Witchita Falls, Texas, also many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. One son, William Richardson, died in Newcastle, a few years ago. He was in the Civil War, and with General Lee at the surrender at Appomattox Court House. After the war he came to Texas and began to preach in Wise and Montague counties. He was baptized by Elder J. A. Campbell, and ordained by the same. He moved to Young County, and the writer met him in 1900, and we labored together until his death. When the Primitive Baptist Church was organized at old True he joined, and was called as pastor, and so continued until his death. The church has lost a humble pastor, and the community a good citizen and neighbor. He dated his hope in Christ from the Civil War, if I mistake not. Elder Thomas Richardson was a pleasant companion and associate, was not aggressive in his views towards others, in either his religion or his politics. He regarded it as a most sacred privilege that every person should be allowed his views in religion. He was not a bitter controversialist, but mild and meek toothers. His example of honesty and religious fidelity is worthy the imitation of every one. He was a loving, patient husband, a kind and indulgent parent. The writer of this notice was personally associated with him for some twenty-five years. We preached together, prayed together, ate together, slept together, traveled together and were separated only by death. I have lost a bosom companion, a trusted friend, a true yokefellow and brother minister of the highest type of manhood and ministerial honor. If he was not a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ then I do not believe there is one on earth to-day. He believed that God would always have true ministers on earth. What could our young ministers desire more than to have a large portion of this man's spirit given to them? This was the prayer of Elisha toward Elijah. He believed in the doctrine of election, predestination, effectual calling in grace, and that God's church would all be saved in glory without the loss of one, and that all infants were saved by grace as all others are. But he has now gone to a better world, and on to his reward, and we mourn not as others that have no hope. We feel sure he is at rest. Very pleasant was thy love and tender care to me, my brother. He believed in Bible grace, and practiced good honest works, without deception. He believed in good works, but gave all the credit to God and his grace without self-righteousness. He placed God above man in all things. The writer visited him in his last sickness, which was a form of heart disease. He would often say, "This is all for the best, but it is hard for us to see it, I have no hope of getting well; I am ready to go." In answer to voices that he seemed to hear in his semi-slumbers, he would say, "Yes, I am ready to go, it is all right, God's will be done." When I would ask him, Do you want anything? he would answer, "No, only God's will be done. I have preached Jesus, that is enough, I am willing to risk that, I am ready to go."

He was buried by the side of his wife at old True, near the meeting place where he had so often preached Jesus. Services were conducted by the writer, which he requested of me before he died. The text was, "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."—2 Cor. v. 1.

Farewell, dear yokefellow.

J. H. FISHER.

Nannie A. Adams, wife of C. M. Adams, departed this life November 18th, 1924. She was born near Jackson, Tenn., September 19th, 1872, and while a child with her parents moved to Parker County, Texas, and remained there with them until October 6th, 1895. She was married to C. M. Adams and lived in Parker and Tarrant Counties, Texas, until December, 1919, when she became so afflicted with asthma the doctors advised her to go to El Paso, Texas, and after moving here her health was almost restored, and then she was afflicted with a cancer. She had two operations, which were not successful, and for about seven months she suffered greatly, but bore all with patience and did not murmur or complain. She was a devoted wife, a kind and loving mother, and was always at peace with her neighbors. She received a good hope in 1910, and in 1915 she and husband joined the Missionary Baptists, but soon became dissatisfied with their works, as she said she did not receive a good hope of life eternal through good works, and after attending a "Ladies' Aid" meeting she said they reminded her of Martha, who was cumbered about much serving, and careful, and troubled about many things, when Jesus told her but one thing was needful, and Mary has chosen that good part, sitting at Jesus' feet hearing his word, and so it was always the desire of the dear departed one to sit at the feet of Jesus and hear his word. She fell asleep in Jesus on the date above mentioned just as the sun was setting, and there being no other one here in this city of her faith, except her bereaved husband, we had a Missionary Baptist conduct the

funeral services. Before she passed away she requested that only one hymn, "Nearer my God to thee," be sung, which was a song she always loved. She was not a member of the Primitive Baptists, but enjoyed going to their meetings while at Ft. Worth, Texas, but being deprived of that privilege here her only comfort was reading the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, a paper she dearly loved. She leaves to mourn their loss a lonely husband, two daughters, one son, two brothers, two sisters and her father, J. C. Brewer, who is a member of the Primitive Baptist Church at Ft. Worth, Texas, but he now lives at Lamar, Arkansas. It is hard to give her up, but it is a sweet hope and comfort to us to know that she was so willing and ready to go, so we have a hope that she is now asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep, as she passed away trusting in Jesus, and not trusting in an arm of flesh.

Written by her bereaved husband,

C. M. ADAMS.

Mary Catherine Burns, wife of W. R. Burns, second daughter of the late Elder John R. Martin, was born September 23rd, 1859, and died December 29th, 1924. Her husband preceded her some twenty-four years. She was married November 29th, 1879, and to this union were born eight children, three died in infancy, five survive and were present when the end came. They are Albert E., Mrs. Ollie Gray, Mrs. Hattie Hobbs, Miss Nellie Grant, and Mrs. Arra Lowe. She also leaves three brothers and four sisters to mourn her demise. She was a kind, loving and faithful mother, a dutiful wife, and her friends were numbered by her acquaintances. She was given a good hope in Christ in early life, but from a feeling of unworthiness never united with the church, but was a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and she delighted to hear Jesus preached, the only name whereby we must be saved, and was always at meeting when circumstances would permit. Her home was a home for the brethren and sisters, and she was sound in the faith once delivered unto the saints, and died in the same. She was conscious to the last, telling her children not to grieve for her, for the change would be sweet, also that the natural mind could not grasp the things God had in store for his children. Her family has sustained a great loss, but they feel it is her eternal gain, so sorrow not, bereaved ones, as those who have no hope, for your mother is not dead, but sleepeth, gone from the evil to come.

Her remains were laid in old Bethel Cemetery, beside her husband, to await the second coming of our Savior, who shall change this vile body, then to hear our Savior say, Behold, I and the children that God has given me. The writer spoke words of comfort from 1 Thessalonians iv. 13, to a large concourse of relatives and friends.

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

William Bogart was born in the town of Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., February 29th, 1848, and departed this life September 8th, 1924, making his stay on earth 76 years, 6 months and 8 days. He was married to Eliza Jane Taylor May 20th, 1871, and to that union were born one son, Otis J., and one daughter, Edith, wife of Arthur Carter. He leaves to mourn their loss his wife, one son, one daughter, three grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, three sisters, Mrs. Phoebe Rowe, Mrs. Orville Winchell and Mrs. Irene J. Stevens, five brothers, Abram, Walter, Jacob, Joseph and Virgil Bogart. Mr. Bogart although not a member of the visible church was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone, and for many years, with his faithful wife, attended the Olive & Hurley Old School Baptist Church as long as his health permitted, feeling too unworthy to have his name on the church book, but he was highly esteemed by the brethren and all who knew him, being a kind neighbor, always ready to lend a helping hand.

His funeral was held in the Olive & Hurley meetinghouse September 11th, and was conducted by the pastor, Elder George Ruston, who spoke very comfortingly to a large congregation of relatives and friends, after which his body was laid to rest in the Ashokan Cemetery.

ALSO,

Otis J. Bogart, son of William Bogart, was born in the town of Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., March 9th, 1874, and departed this life October 29th, 1924, making his stay on earth 50 years, 9 months and 20 days. He was married to Cassie Every December 16th, 1897, and to that union were born one son and one daughter. He leaves to mourn their loss his wife, one son, one daughter, one grandchild, his mother, Mrs. William Bogart, and one sister, Mrs. Arthur Carter, besides a host of friends.

His funeral was held in the Olive & Hurley meetinghouse November 1st, and was conducted by the pastor, Elder George Ruston, and was very largely attended, showing the high esteem in which he was held by all who knew him, after which his body was laid to rest in the Ashokan Cemetery.

Written by request.

ORVILLE WINCHELL.

John Stokes, the subject of this notice, was born in Barbour County, Alabama, in the year 1854, and died January 6th, 1925. He lived in Barbour County until he reached his majority, when he married Miss Mary Frances Smith. To this union nine children were born, six of whom with his afflicted wife, survive to mourn his death. When first stricken with pneumonia, five days before the end came, he said to his family and anxious friends gathered about his bed, "This is my last sickness. I will never leave this bed of suffering alive. I am not afraid to die.

No, no, I only hate to leave my wife." In the spring of 1923 he confessed a hope and joined the Primitive Baptist Church, and was baptized by Elder George Baker, who also officiated at his funeral. The life of Mr. Stokes was devoted to the welfare of his family, and the care and untiring devotion to his invalid wife through many years of self-sacrifice and trouble was touching and pathetic in the extreme, and won for him in the hearts of those who knew him best the warmest admiration and praise. No task was considered too great for him when it contributed to the comfort and happiness of those God had entrusted to his care. Mr. Stokes possessed the virtue of honesty to a marked degree, as is attested by those who knew him during his life. His word was his bond, and his integrity and fair motives were never questioned during his residence in Lincoln Parish, Louisiana, for a period of more than forty years. The surviving members of his immediate family are all worthy citizens of Lincoln Parish, and composed of the following: Mrs. Mary Frances Stokes, Miss Florence Stokes, Charley Stokes, Mrs. Vica Riser, Mrs. Della Spencer, Mrs. Bessie Chandler and Mrs. Blanch Liner. Let me say to these bereaved ones that the passing of your beloved husband and father should draw you nearer to your divine Father, for he has gone ahead to await your coming, and your loss is his eternal gain. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Generosity was one of the shining attributes of Uncle John Stokes, and no worthy charity ever knocked at his door and went away hungry or empty handed. To the sick and afflicted he was a good Samaritan, and administered to their wants with the kindest solicitude, and his services were given as freely as water. We verily believe that his spirit is at rest where all is peace.

A friend,

WILL F. SPENCER.

Ava Marie and **Eva Lee Hatcher,** twin babies of W. T. and Maggie Hatcher, Only, Tenn., were born December 31st, 1924, and Eva Lee died January 21st, and Eva Marie died January 23rd, 1925. Their respective ages were 21 and 23 days. These little babies were placed in a casket beside each other on the morning of January 23rd, 1925, and carried to the "Reynold's graveyard" near Vanleer, Tenn., and there buried in their little grave, to await the resurrection from the dead, then they will perfectly realize the saying, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." May God bless the bereaved father and mother, and all the dear family of these beautiful twins. God saw fit to take them from this world of trouble. The will of God be done.

J. R. HATCHER.

MEETINGS.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expect Elder George Ruston to meet with them the fifth Sunday in March (29th), 1925. For convenience services will be held, the Lord willing, at the home of J. E. Livingston, 64 E. Main St., Cobleskill, N. Y., at 11 a. m. and 2:30 p. m. Trains Sunday from Albany reach here at 10:02 a. m., and return at 5 p. m. Sunday trains from Binghamton reach here at 10:40 a. m., return at 5:27 p. m. All welcome who desire the truth.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meetinghouse, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor,

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

THE Beulah Old School Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 2 o'clock p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Strangers in the city can call Cyrus Cross, 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, or Elder George L. Weaver, 1309 East 114th St.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

COTTAGE GROVE, Tenn., Oct. 27, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter I received from brother I. H. Harris, of North Carolina, and it is so full of the truth, as I understand it, and so rich that I feel I want the readers of the SIGNS to share it with me, so I hope you will see fit to publish it. May the Lord be with brother Harris and enable him to continue to write to me, for I certainly enjoy letters like this one, giving God all the praise and glory. May the Lord bless you all, is my prayer.

Your brother in much affliction,

R. L. VEAZEY, SR.

OXFORD, N. C., July 5, 1924.

DEAR BROTHER VEAZEY:—I was glad and surprised to receive your good and kind answer. I feel to be poor and imperfect, and felt that my letter would be of no comfort to you. While my mind was impressed to write you, I felt to believe you knew God, whom to know is eternal life. If you had not been born of God and constrained by his grace you could not have written as you did. To know God and his Christ in the pardon and forgiveness of our sins is more and better than all the world to poor sinners who were dead and are alive, lost and are found. We were blind, but now we can see. What can we see? At the appointed time of the Father, when faith was revealed to us, we saw the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, the end of the law under which we so long felt justly condemned. Ten thousand talents in debt and nothing with which to pay. We sold ourselves for nothing, and became servants to sin in a covenant with death and at agreement with hell, yet it did not give us any trouble when we were dead in sin. Life must precede works, so we had to be quickened, born of the Spirit. It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. When death confronted us and hell compassed us about then our travail came and we could see no way to escape the judgment of God. The sting of death and the pangs of hell got hold upon us, then we felt the exceeding sinfulness of sin, in a desert land and in a waste howling wilderness we were ready to perish, without hope and without God in the world. There the Lord found us and led us to his banqueting-house and his banner over us was love. Then we believed, and saw the goodness

of the Lord, Christ the end of the law for our righteousness, and without him we could do nothing. He put shoes on our feet, a ring on our hand and the best robe on us, clothed us in the righteousness of Christ. The Lord has done great things for us whereof we are glad. Before our pain came Christ was born to us; then we could rejoice and thank God for the victory through Jesus Christ. This was the doing of the Lord, and it was marvelous in our sight. It was new to us, but it was not new to the Lord. He knew before the foundation of the world the way we would take, and what he could and would do, according as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. He foreknew all of his people, and predestinated them to be conformed to the image of his Son. Yes, that they should be to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in Christ; not that we accepted Christ. We were made accepted in him, and he first loved us, even when we were dead, for by grace are we saved, and that grace was given us in Christ before the world began. So we see the choice of God was before the foundation of the world. The Lord's portion is his people whom he did foreknow, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He told where he found him, and how he led him about and established his goings and kept him as the apple of his eye. So we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, yet we by nature were children of wrath even as others, but having loved us with an everlasting love he said, I am God, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. God did not have to learn anything. What he had purposed before time he was able to bring to pass, and he was not dependent upon man to let him. He showed his purpose in the case of the two manner of people, Jacob and Esau, before they were born, having done neither good nor evil. He did not love Jacob for anything good he had done, neither did he hate Esau for any evil he had done, so he said he loved one and hated the other that his purpose according to election might stand; not of him that worketh, but of him that calleth, and he will call every one his Father gave him according to his will and purpose. I cannot understand why the Old Baptists differ so much about predestination. They all admit God's foreknowledge in all things, and absolutely all things that God foreknew are just as sure as what he predestinated. The word "absolute" does not make anything more sure. That God foreknew it does not make predestination mean any more than what he foreknew. If God foreknew everything that would take place it will be sure to take place as he foreknew it. He is his own counselor, and works all things according to his will and purpose, and there is none can turn him. He is unlimited in wisdom, knowledge and power. That this is true is known to all who know God and have eternal life, and not for anything they have done, it is the gift of God. This gift is a new life, not by generation or creation, but by regeneration. God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give us the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us, that our faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. What is our condition in the world? Just as Christ said: In the world ye shall

have tribulation. We are troubled on all sides, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our own body, for we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh, yet we find in our flesh no good thing. Our sinful nature is still the same, so that when we would do good evil is present with us. We are like Rebecca when she had conceived two manner of people: If I am so, why am I thus? So we have the flesh and the Spirit, and the one is contrary to the other. Paul asked the Lord to remove the thorn in the flesh, but he said, My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in weakness. I have heard the words used: While we are in the midst of life we are in death, yet it is not recorded that way, but Paul used words to that effect. While he was in Christ he was in a body of death. He said, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? and we have often felt to witness with him, but when we believed and could see the goodness of God then we could thank him for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ which hath made us free from the law of sin and death. He that is born of God hath the witness within himself. If we have been made free from the law of sin and death we have the witness in us, and there are evidences that we are the children of promise. The first and sure evidence that we are quickened into life is to feel our guilt and condemnation. We have sorrow for sin, the godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto salvation is not for outward sins. We were shapen in iniquity and in sin did our mother conceive us. Then we were born in sin, yet we had no trouble as to how we were born until we were quickened to feel our condition. If we had been born naturally blind, deaf and dumb we would have had no trouble about it until we came to feel the need of what we did not have. He that increaseth in knowledge increaseth in sorrow. If we had been born with a cancer we would not have had any trouble on account of it until we came to the knowledge of it, then the trouble would begin. Could we help it? No indeed. However it is time the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, not by our consent, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. All the children of God were in the same condition, dead in sin, and they could not so much as repent, but God repented for them. He said, This covenant with death shall not stand. I will break it. I will redeem them from death. I will ransom them from the grave. Yes, we were dead in a carnal grave, bound hand and foot. These are the people the Father gave to his beloved Son, and he gave them grace in him, and he said, I have loved them as my Father loved me, and he loved me before the foundation of the world. Then it was not us who first loved him and chose him, we loved him because he first loved us. He is to us a gift from God, and he proved his love for us by giving his life, his sinless body to die, that we should live, that where he is there should we be also.

I have made my letter too lengthy, and will say in closing that I know God is unlimited in wisdom, knowledge and power, and has the perfect right, without wronging any one, to do whatsoever he willed and purposed before time. Had it

not been for his mercy we would have been left in pain and everlasting woe, where the worm dieth not, and where the fire is not quenched, which I understand to be the second death. But we can ever thank and give praise to his holy name for the blessed gift of his beloved Son, who came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and lived for us, died for us and by his one offering forever perfected eternal redemption for all the Father gave him, and rose from the dead, giving us the victory over death, hell and the grave, and said, If I be lifted up I will draw all men unto me. That is, all men the Father gave him. When he ascended on high to the right hand of the Father he led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men, the men his Father gave him to save. He descended from heaven and did his Father's will, then ascended to his Father's glory to make intercession for us, and if we are part in him we are blessed in the first resurrection. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." What is the second death? "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death," which has no end for ever and ever. That was our great trouble, which made us mourn as the dove and beg for mercy, and Christ, our feeling High Priest, whom God made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, was touched by the feeling of our infirmities and was a present help in time of need. Without him we could do nothing. "Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing?" The travail and birth of created, natural children is not like that of regenerate children; one is of the earth, and do mind earthly things, the other is of the Spirit, and do mind, or seek after, heavenly things.

I have just hinted at my thoughts. If the Lord is in it he will give the understanding, if he is not in it it will be of no profit. If this is not in accordance with Primitive doctrine it is not what I believe, for I believe they preach the only way of salvation by which we are saved.

Your brother in hope of eternal rest and peace beyond this life, for if in this life only we have hope we are of all men most miserable,

I. H. HARRIS.

MARK XVI. 15.

"AND he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

We see the Arminians busy to-day sending out missionaries to preach the so-called gospel to the heathen in all foreign countries, claiming they are solicited by this Scripture to do so. It is well at all times in handling the word of God (Scriptures) to first see who is speaking, and to whom it is addressed. We find this is the Lord speaking to the elect of God, or in other words, a command of the living God, spoken to a living people, made alive through the death and resurrection of the speaker (Christ). In the beginning, God said, "Let there be light," and light was, and now is, and will ever be as long as time lasts. He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. Just as the light is still made manifest, just so is the gospel being preached by the power of God. The difference between the light and gospel is, we can behold the light with natural vision, and we behold the gospel with the eye of faith.

"Go ye into all the world." We see those commanded had to enter (into) the world to execute the command, they having been chosen in Christ (out of the world)

before time was, hence were not of the world. Christ said, I in you, and you in me, and I in the Father. They were ever in Christ, and entered this world by the command to preach, after the similitude of Christ entering this world, holy and without blame before the Father, for Christ had made them free from sin and death, through his death and resurrection from the dead (the flesh) and restored them to the Father. Then those addressed in the text were living subjects, able to preach, testify of Christ (the life in them). The dead can do nothing, hence the Arminians, dead because of unbelief, cannot preach, neither can the heathen hear, because they have ears and hear not; the blind leading the blind.

Back to the text: "And preach the gospel to every creature." Preaching in the spirit is a living testimony of the word of life, testifying to the things tasted, handled and felt in the hearts of the elect of God, who has declared that he will never be without witnesses. The preparation of the heart and the answer of the tongue are both of the Lord; out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

"The gospel" (definite) let us try to prove by the Scriptures what "the gospel" is. All things were created by the power of God. Again, all things were created by Jesus Christ, then Jesus Christ is the power of God. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Then Christ being the power of God, and the gospel being the power of God, Christ is the gospel. Then those disciples were commanded to preach Christ. Paul was not present in person when that command was given, yet he received it in due time. Paul says, When it pleased God to reveal his Son (Christ) in me, that I might preach him among the heathen. Notice, Paul did not preach to the heathen, but among the heathen.

Again to the text: "To every creature." Everything God made in the beginning was a creature by creation. Was this command to preach to all creation? Certainly not. The Lord's ways are not man's ways. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death [works]." The world is sending the (so-called) gospel to the places God has overlooked (man's way). The God we worship is a God of purpose, and the purpose of having the gospel preached was with him before the world was (predestinated). Rom. viii. 20: "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." We find in the above Scripture that man was created subject to vanity, and God by foreknowledge had subjected the same in hope; that is, the creature was a subject of hope, in the mind of God, before he was created a subject to vanity (predestination). There was also a needs be that the gospel should be preached, Rom. viii. 21, "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Then we see that Christ's command was, Go ye and preach the gospel to the above mentioned creature, not to the saving (Arminianism) of his soul, but by your preaching the gospel (Christ) the creature shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption (flesh) into the glorious liberty (Christ) of the children of God. Christ is the liberty of his people, for he led captivity captive. The Arminian world is busy to-day educating preachers (proselytes) to go where the disciples failed to go, as the eleven could not and

did not cover the whole world, as there was too much ground to cover. John in Revelation says, "I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth." The preachers are made in heaven, and the gospel is everlasting.

In conclusion, I feel to say with Paul, If any man preach any other gospel, let him be accursed.

A poor old sinner,

K. C. SPINDLE.

SULLIVAN, Illinois.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter from Elder Jones to me, which I consider sound, and would like to see in print if you think it is worthy, otherwise will you return it to me? Elder Jones is, as you see, a nephew of mine, and we all consider him to be a good gift to us, having been ordained about one and one-half years. I may write a short article for you soon.

Respectfully, a brother in hope,

E. D. ELDER.

ARCOLA, Illinois.

ELDER E. D. ELDER—VERY DEAR UNCLE AND BROTHER:—Your letter received to-day, and I was glad to hear from you. I feel in the right spirit to write you a few thoughts to-night. I do not know that they will be of any benefit to you, but if not, just discard them. I did not get the brother's ideas on many particular points of doctrine, but he seemed to preach pretty strong. I had some of our articles of faith with me, and he said he agreed with them. They were the first six, I had lost the others, so I did not get a chance to hear him express himself on them. My dear uncle, I cannot see how any one can limit God's predestination without limiting his foreknowledge and power. Why if he did not predestinate things to come about just to please him there would be things that would be working just contrary to his divine will all the time. To my mind, anything that is foreknown must be predestinated, for if it was not predestinated it could not be foreknown, for anything to be foreknown must be a settled fact. When the Scripture reads that "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil," I cannot, nor do I wish to, modify the Scripture. It reads again, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him." I have no right to say that because Satan is visible or invisible, one or the other, that he is not included in that, for he must be either visible or he must be invisible, and this Scripture covers both words, so I must take it as it is. When in Revelation it reads like this, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created," have I any right to say, Oh no, there are some things here that just happened to exist, and the Lord tried to keep them under his rule, but he could not? That is too soft for me, uncle, for the God that I see as a complete and all-powerful Savior must not be a goody-goody God when things please him, and the opposite when they do not, but things must be according to his pleasure, for why would the Scripture be written: "What his soul desireth, even that he doeth"? We read again in Jeremiah, thirty-second chapter, words like these, "For thus saith the Lord, Like as I have

brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them." Again in Jeremiah xxxi. 28: "And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, to build, and to plant, saith the Lord." Another portion of Scripture, uncle, I wish to quote is Psalms xvii. 13: "Arise, O Lord, disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword." Now, dear uncle, some people would faint if you preached that the Lord used the wicked as his sword to bring about his purpose, but the Scripture says "the wicked, which is thy sword," and I have no right to say it is not that way. The Lord used Satan as his tool when he saw fit to have Job afflicted, and I am going to say that he told Satan just how far he could go with Job, for he told him not to take his life. I believe that the God I worship is able to make Satan, or make a way for him to come into existence, and not be the author of sin.

Now, uncle, I do not wish to weary you by any more writing, but there is one more portion of the great word of God I wish to quote and write a few thoughts upon, and then I will close. In John i. 4, 5, we read, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." I believe that has reference to the children of God and Satan that are here in this world together. The light of God shines in upon his little ones while they are mixing and living among the others, but they do not see or comprehend, for "The wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand." So I believe that God gives his children blessings here while they are among these wicked, and yet they do not see them and they themselves cannot help it, for they as natural brute beasts were made to be taken and destroyed.

Now, dear uncle, I do not know whether I have written so you can follow me or not, but if not, just lay it to my weakness and imperfections, and if you can get a small crumb out of it that tastes good to you please thank God for it, and pray for me, a poor sinner, whose only hope is in the name of a once crucified, but now risen and exalted Lord and Master, who never does things half way, for he says, Father I have glorified thy name upon the earth. I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. So if I was in the place I have only thanks for this great and glorious Savior, although I am unworthy.

Hoping I have not wearied you, I will close for this time.

Your loving brother and nephew,

HAROLD T. JONES.

PITTSVILLE, Md., Dec. 17, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed two dollars for renewal of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for I do not want to be without this most valued paper. While I am writing this, if it is the Lord's will, I will try in my feeble way to fulfill some of the brethren's request, i. e., write my exexperience for publication in the SIGNS. It has been a little over eleven years since I was first asked to write my experience. I have refrained, not because I had no desire to do what the brethren asked me to do, but from a feeling sense of inability to do, say or write anything that would in any way be of comfort to them. I feel the same to-day, but have been and am being comforted by reading

the good letters by those who, I hope, have been led in the same way I have, therefore I feel that if it is possible for me to drop a few words of comfort by relating my experience it is no more than I should do. I do not know what I will write. I am continually made to know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing; that the good I would, I do not, but the evil that I would not, that I do. I do not feel I am any judge as to what should go in the SIGNS, therefore must leave this to your better judgment, and what you do will be all right with me.

If I write my experience I must begin where I was a man, for I was at one time as great a man, in my estimation, as walked upon the face of the earth. I was able to do good or evil, I was able to swear or leave it off. My father and mother were members of the Old School Baptist Church at Indiantown before I was born, therefore being reared among Old Baptists I naturally clung to them, but knew no more about salvation by grace than any other man of the world. I went to the meetings, but heard nothing. I thought that any time I wanted my sins forgiven, which from my viewpoint were very few, because I thought I was as good as any one, all I had to do was a little lip service and all would be well. This lasted until I was about eighteen years old, when one evening, while in my father's barn there either appeared before me or I had a vision of One, who is spotless, who is all white, who is all righteousness, giving me as it were, a new set of eyes, eyes that I could see within. Oh what horror! Brethren, I was shown that I had been looking on the outside only, that while I had been endeavoring to keep the outside clean I had no thought for the inside, which was as filthy rags, all manner of uncleanness. It was there I learned that my heart was deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; that I needed the answer of true prayer, not the answer of lip service. I fell to the floor and tried to pray, but could not. I was in a miserable condition. After a while this partly disappeared, only to return again and again with greater force. I tried the best I could to satisfy the law, or justify myself before God, but the more I tried, the more I did, the further I was from getting rid of my burden. I tried to keep this a secret, but to my surprise the next time I went to meeting Elder Poulson told me while preaching better than I could how God brought his children low. I tried to believe this was the work of God with me, but trouble after trouble came, and no assurance that I was one of the called. This continued for about eleven years, when, on the third Sunday of November, 1912, I had been visiting, and on my way home I felt I had gone to the end, I could do nothing more, and without mercy I was clean gone forever. I was friendless, it seemed that my own father had turned his back upon me, and that I was without God in the world, and it seemed that he heeded not my day. I arrived home in this condition, and I went in the house and was caring for the children while my wife was preparing supper, when (if I ever received a hope) Jesus Christ appeared to me in all his glory, telling me that he was the Savior of poor depraved sinners; that he died and shed his blood for the remission of the sins of his people; that he took his life again, and was now sitting at the right hand of the Father on high, making intercession for his people. I was made to believe I was one of his people. Brethren, I want to tell you that was a happy time in my life. I was at rest, but not for long. I went to Indian-

town on the first Saturday of December following, for the purpose of telling the church what I had heard, seen and felt, when on entering the house I was cut down again. The first thing I saw was Elder Poulson, not in the stand, but on the floor in front of the stand, then the members sitting around in their accustomed places. I did not see them as men and women, but as one body, Jesus Christ being the head. It was the perfection of beauty, while I at the same time was black, and not worthy a place among them. I came home in sorrow, feeling I must be mistaken, that what I had thought was true was only imaginary. I went along until March of the following year, 1913, hoping and doubting, when I went again with the same intentions, with the same result. Elder Poulson was very feeble at that time, and was not there in June. I thought that must be a providential act to keep me away, for I thought I must be mistaken in what I believed. Elder Poulson was there in July, his last time at Indiantown. Elder A. B. Francis was asked to be there in October, both Saturday and Sunday, also Wednesday and Thursday following. On Saturday when Elder Francis got up in the stand he read hymn number 1007 in Beebe's collection, and the thought came to me, If that is your experience we are brethren. I could not sing; I believe I wept for joy. When he read the last hymn he told those present that if any wanted to talk to the church to let it be known by taking the front seat. I went forward, and was received for baptism the following Thursday. I thought my troubles over, but, brethren, you know how badly I was mistaken. I am made to fall often, but I do believe I am allowed to partake of a few of the crumbs that fall from the Master's table. I love to hear the doctrine of salvation by grace preached, and love to read it as set forth in the SIGNS.

Your unworthy brother, saved by grace if saved at all,

GEORGE F. ADKINS.

SALISBURY, Md., Dec. 15, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am handing you a short letter from my father, that came as a help to me in a very trying hour. I feel that perhaps it will help others, and if you think so shall be glad for you to publish it in the SIGNS. As he wrote he seemed to be living in that wonderful and all-sufficient faith which can come alone from the Giver of every good and perfect gift. All men do not have faith, and without it no man can please God, and all who do have it do not have it at all times, or, that is, it is not in activity. Like all other gifts of God, it is truly a gift, and we cannot have it unless he gives it, and when he does give it, all hell cannot move us to be afraid. I often think of the little girl's answer when asked if she knew what faith was, her reply was, "To take God at his word, and ask no questions." I often wonder if I have such faith, for I am prone to ask "why" to many things that have come to me in my checkered career.

I have been asked by many of the brethren to write for the SIGNS, but do not feel equal to the occasion, and take this opportunity to say to all who have asked, that while I appreciate their confidence in me, I do not feel the ability to write on spiritual matters, and have grieved that I allowed my pen to portray my thoughts in the past as I have. If at any future time I feel the ability to write, and you feel to publish my feeble efforts, my name may appear in its columns again. God reigns. I wish for all who are in any way connected with the SIGNS,

that you may be prospered of the Lord, that you may stand fast in the calling wherewith the Lord our God has called you.

Your unworthy brother,

F. SELBY FISHER.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Dec. 9, 1924.

DEAR SELBY:—Your letter received this a. m. Let me assure you I truly sympathize with you in your miserable state, for I feel that I also am a partaker of such things. We are not alone in these things (although we feel to be), for it is our record that this is the common heritage of God's people throughout all time. They alone know it is only through much tribulation they enter the kingdom. They alone know of that darkness that can be felt, and sometimes, if my poor heart deceives me not, I have been made to take courage in the thought that these things do not come about by chance, but are all ordered by him who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. All will work to the glory of God and the good of his people, who are the objects of his special care. Our God is sovereign, and says, "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things." It was Job, I think, said, He hath brought me into darkness, and not into light. In this he acknowledges the sovereignty of almighty God, and there are times when it is the pleasure of the Lord that we are made to suck honey out of the flinty rock. But we are poor dependent creatures and cannot take comfort from the truth, only as the blessed Spirit makes the application. But the promise is sure. He will keep his people alive in the time of famine. While it is true we are unfaithful and full of unbelief, yet his faithfulness never fails. He cannot deny himself. The needy he never sends away empty. They may be made to cry long, as the case sometimes is, but though the vision tarry, wait for it. At the appointed time it will come and not tarry. Our God has a purpose in all he does. There is a set time to favor Zion, and when that time comes there is nó power to thwart God in his purpose, but he is never hurried nor hindered by men or devils.

I will now close, desiring that blessing upon you that God alone can grant.

MARTIN D. FISHER.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Aug. 1, 1924.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars for one year's subscription to your paper, which I love to hear read to me. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." "'Tis a point I long to know, oft it causes anxious thought." So many misgivings and wrong sayings, I am as prone to err as the sparks are to fly upward. The flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, the one contrary to the other. Sin is mixed with all I do. The words of the psalmist are, "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men." We loved him because he first loved us. John said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." Love not the world nor the things of the world.

"Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above,
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

He loved us with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness he draws us. He is the God of truth, his word is perfect. In him is safety; without him we can do nothing. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all. "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." He rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. His throne is in heaven and his footstool is upon the earth. He says to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far and my daughters from the ends of the earth. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. He speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. The wind and the sea are at his command; not a wheel will turn without him. The Lord thy God is mighty and he will save his people from their sins. All power is given him; he had power to lay down his life and power to take it again. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was nailed to the cross, great drops of blood streaming down his cheeks, only saying, If it be possible let this cup pass from me, nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. All this was done for his people he loved so well. I will be their God and they shall be my people. Be still, and know that I am God. I am not ashamed to own my God, nor to confess his worthy name. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honor, glory, dominion and power. The ransomed of the Lord come singing unto Zion; they shall run and not be weary, walk and faint not. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me." The yoke is easy and the burden is light. Whosoever loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me. One said, "I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of God had not where to lay his head. How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out. We are not our keepers, but are kept by the power of God, therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God, in whom we have access unto that grace wherein we stand and rejoice in the glory of God. Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. "By the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain."

Your unworthy brother,

D. L. BLACKWELL.

TEHUACANA, Texas, Dec. 29, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel a few lines of thanks are due you and the dear brethren and sisters who contribute so liberally to the fund for "the poor of the flock" for sending me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES another year. It has been a great source of pleasure, satisfaction and joy to me, an old worthless sinner, saved alone on the merits of the crucified, risen and glorified Redeemer, who cried on the cross, "It is finished." What was it that was finished? It was the salvation of his elect, who were chosen in the annals of eternity, and that salvation was fin-

ished for time and eternity. My companion and I are all there are in this community who believe in absolute predestination of all things and a sovereign God over all worlds, devils and angels. There are some very good people here, and I believe they are children of God, but they preach a conditional time salvation, which I cannot accept. If I could write in a way to edify others I would love to, as there is no one here for me to talk with on the subject of the sovereign will and purpose of God respecting all things, times and events. I view the sovereignty of God as being the highest, deepest, broadest and longest of subjects; finite man cannot attain to the depths of it. We may exhaust our ability and we have hardly hinted at the subject, it is so wonderful and glorious when one can get a little glimpse of it. I believe God is glorified in all the works of his hands. He says he made the wicked for the day of evil, so he is glorified in the wicked. He does not glory in men doing wickedly; no, not at all, but he is glorified in their wickedness. Many times he was glorified in the wickedness of Joseph's brethren selling him to go into Egypt; that was his way of sending Joseph to lay up sustenance for his father's family. He was glorified in the wickedness of Nebuchadnezzar's having the Hebrew children thrown into the fiery furnace, also in Daniel being thrown into the lions' den, and in Pharaoh's wickedness in persecuting the Israelites as he did, but greatest of all was he glorified in the wickedness of the crucifying of Christ. There has never been a crime committed, no matter how heinous and black it may have been, that God could not have prevented if he had chosen to do so, and as it was not his will to prevent it it surely was his will for it to be just as it was. We can violate God's law and trample it under foot, but there is one thing we cannot do, and that is we cannot go beyond his eternal sovereign will and purpose, neither can we stop short of his purpose. We can go just so far, but no farther. When God speaks it is done, and when he commands it stands fast. When it pleases him he can stop the vilest of sinners in his wildest career. He can take an infidel and make a Primitive Baptist preacher of him. Some Baptists preach that God permits or allows things to transpire, which is so, but he never yet has permitted an event or an occurrence short of a predestinated purpose. He never permitted or allowed anything to transpire that he could not have prohibited if it had been his will to prevent its occurrence. He permits nothing contrary to his sovereign will, yet some tell us that he suffered, permitted or allowed things to occur that he would not have been.

I will close by wishing and praying for the publishers and editors, together with all the correspondents of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, a happy and prosperous year for 1925. I ask an interest in the prayers of you all, and that you will overlook all mistakes and imperfections in this letter. I may never address you again, as I passed my eightieth birthday the eleventh of this month, and am getting very shaky. The older I get the more imperfection I can see in myself, and if saved it is by grace, and grace alone.

Farewell for 1924.

J. H. BOZEMAN.

WINNSBORO, Texas, Jan. 9, 1925.

DEAR BROTHER J. S. MCLEOD:—Dear brother in the sweet bonds of gospel fellowship. News of your sad misfortune in the loss of your companion reached me

a day or two ago, and I feel that I must drop you a line or two to let you know that I feel for you in your sad bereavement, and sympathize with you as much as one of my capacity, and no experience as yet of the kind, could. I have tried to pray for you, that the Lord would comfort you with that sweet comfort that only he can give, and reconcile you and all your dear children to his holy will. I know he can do that, dear brother, and feel sure you believe that this dispensation of his providence was according to his blessed will, as our precious Guide Book informs us that he worketh all things after the counsel of his will. Also, For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. That tried and patient servant of God, Job, in the deepest trials, affliction and sorrow, said, "He [God] performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him." Again, in his deep distress he makes this pathetic appeal for sympathy: "Have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me." Job did not feel that his afflictions came by chance, but saw the hand of God in all. So good and kind is the Lord to all his little ones he gives them in his own good time and way to say with one of old, It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good. We know by experience and observation that all earthly blessings are but temporal and are continually passing, but our blessed Lord, though sinful and unworthy we are, has given us hope of blessings that shall never fade away, the fruition of which will, through Jesus Christ, be ours to enjoy in that home beyond the river of death, where sin and sorrow, death and parting hath never been; no, nor ever can come. May that richest blessing, a reconciled mind, prepared to sweetly say, "Thy will be done," be yours, also that of your family, if God's holy will, is the prayer of your poor brother in hope of a better life,

H. B. JONES.

DUDLEY, Ont., March 14, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I find my subscription is due am inclosing two dollar money order for another year. My dear brother, Col. J. Knifton, of Parry Sound, died September 5th, 1924, so you will understand why he has not sent in his subscription, which I conclude has expired before now. He sleeps in Jesus, which is the only comfort I have concerning his death. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace alone, and his only hope was in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. He loved the joyful sound, and the Lord's people, although he never joined the church, and was always afraid of vaunting himself in that way. Twice he had made up his mind regarding baptism, and each time the Elder died: first Elder John McConnell, then Elder Coulter, which made him feel very sad, but he knew that whatsoever God doeth is right. He was much drawn to Elder Slauson when hearing him in Toronto, for his work's sake. About two days before his death the Lord took away all fear of death and gave him that peace which the world can neither give nor take away. He was a very prayerful man, and a constant reader of the Bible and SIGNS. Things of this world tired him, except his daily calling, which had to be relinquished some months before the end. His disease was internal cancer, but a paralytic stroke came and caused his death in two or three days. He spoke very highly of some friends he met in

Chicago, about a year or so before he died, and fully intended if spared to visit them again, but it was not the Lord's will for him to do so. His death is a terrible blow to me, but my desire is to be truly submissive to the will of God. He leaves his wife, two sons, five grandchildren, two sisters, also my daughter Alma (his favorite niece) to mourn their loss.

SUSIE P. MAY.

CARROLLTON, Mo., Feb. 17, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—Find inclosed two dollars to renew our subscription for the paper another year. We are all old people, the three of us, I being the youngest, seventy years of age, my husband is seventy-three and my blind aunt, Mattie Watson, who lives with us, is eighty-one. We live on a rented farm, and the mail we get each day helps much to break the monotony, and the SIGNS we appreciate very much indeed. I have to read it aloud to my aunt when I can, but owing to throat and lung trouble cannot read long at a time. I had influenza this winter, from which I am just recovering. My aunt is the only remaining member of the family of Joseph and Kezia Watson, who subscribed for the SIGNS and read it all their lives, subscribing when the paper was in its beginning, or a few years after. It is all the preaching we get, there being no church or Primitive Baptists near us. We are glad you are getting the much needed financial help, and know you must feel quite a bit encouraged. The stirring up you gave the people was needed in these unsteady times.

I am making this too long. Please pardon us for not sending our subscription sooner.

ELLA M. LYNCH.

CASTLEWOOD, Va., Dec. 29, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed please find money order to pay my subscription to January, 1926. I was very proud to see your faith was so strong in God, our great and ever-present head, when you said in the December number of the SIGNS, "By the help of our ever-faithful God it has been continued to the present, and by his help we hope it will be continued years to come. We know that as long as he has use for it it will continue, but not a day longer." This is Old School Baptist faith, warp and filling, and I do not see how any one who loves these people and this faith can afford to see the paper go down. No, never, but let us by the help of the Lord put in new energy for the SIGNS in the new year and make its circulation the largest in many years. I have in much weakness occasionally written for the SIGNS, and I hope I may continue as I may have light and liberty to occasionally write for its dear columns.

Wishing success to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and a happy new year to all, I am your brother in hope,

W. L. EDWARDS.

BATTLE CREEK, Nebr., Dec. 30, 1924.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—I just want you to know that we surely do appreciate the good letters and editorials of our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and we are very sorry it only comes once a month, as we look forward to its coming with much pleasure, and read it through before we lay it aside, then to share our pleasure with others we pass it on for those who are not able to take it. How I wish it was taken in every Old Baptist home, as we think it the best paper that is published to-day. May God bless each and every one who may read this.

Z. I. JONES.

HERNDON, Va., Dec. 15, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find subscription blank with one new subscriber's name listed for one year's subscription to the good old family paper. I do hope many of your old subscribers will make a strong effort to swell the subscription list, so you can go on with your good work of publishing the dear old SIGNS, and be relieved of the burden you have had in being so financially oppressed. We do not want to see the paper go down, and with the help of the good Lord of heaven and earth, I believe it will live on and on for many years to come.

If the Lord should enable me, I would like to write a letter for its columns in the near future.

In fond remembrance, I crave to remain your loving brother in Christ Jesus,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

CALION, Arkansas.

DEAR FRIENDS:—Find inclosed two dollars to pay my subscription another year, and if I do not write you to stop it send it on, but if I see I cannot pay I will let you know. I have received a great deal of consolation and encouragement from reading the SIGNS, and have thought I would write and so tell the dear ones who write such soul-cheering letters for the SIGNS, but when I begin to consider myself, who and what I am, I shrink from the attempt. I used to attend the meetings of the old church with my dear mother, and would look at the old brethren and sisters and how good and sweet they looked to me, and the thought would enter my mind that when I became old I, too, would be good, but as old age comes on instead of reaching that perfection I saw in those dear old souls I am continually growing worse. All my life has been a complete failure, and now that I have passed my sixty-seventh year I look back and see myself as the greatest sinner that ever was born, and feel to know that if I am permitted to reach that great eternal rest it will be alone through the mercy of God, by grace. Pray for me.

Unworthily yours,

J. C. DAVIS.

DENVER, Colo., Dec. 19, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending check for four dollars, two dollars for the renewal of my subscription, the balance to use as you see fit. I do not know where to get a new subscriber, so will send the price of one. I sometimes think that it may be narrow and prejudiced, as there are so-called churches all around me, but I have been to but one in the past fifteen years. I sometimes read what they call their sermons, but, like the rest of their works, they are all of this world, pomp, style and appearance.

With best wishes,

J. W. LONGFELLOW.

FLETCHER, Okla., Nov. 15, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I note that I am behind with my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I beg your pardon for not sending it sooner. The SIGNS with me is a great feeder of gospel truth. The editors and writers of this dear old paper have long been given power and ability from the eternal God to feed poor wayfaring pilgrims (such as I hope that I am) on the doctrine of God our Savior. If I know anything about the truth as it is in the Son of God the SIGNS advocates this truth in all its columns, and I hope and pray that God in his love and mercy will continue to sustain the editors, contributors and readers of the paper by his sovereign grace. I beg to be remembered by all when at the throne of grace.

I am, as ever, I hope, a poor sinner saved by grace,

L. E. SKINNER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1925.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

HEBREWS IX. 27, 28.

"AND it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation."

We have a request before us to write upon the above text, which we shall now try to do, the Lord being our helper. We do not believe this passage can be understood except in the light of the verses preceding it. Scanning the seventh, eighth and ninth chapters, we note that the inspired writer is treating upon the subject of the eternal priesthood of Christ and contrasting it with the priesthood of the Aaronic line under the Mosaic covenant. He takes up the things pertaining to the legal covenant and shows how they were not the substance itself, but only the types or figures of the substance. It takes the death of the testator to make a will effective. No will or testament is in effect while men live, but after they are dead. In other words, we shall suppose that a man owning property makes during his lifetime a will in which he disposes of his property as he pleases among his several heirs. The names of these heirs are mentioned in the will by the one making the will and also the portion of the estate that is to go to each of these heirs at the testator's death. This intention of the testator regarding those whom he has named his heirs is not made known and does not come into effect until the one who made the will is dead. But upon the death of the testator, the executor or administrator of the estate takes the matter in charge and sees to it that the conditions of the will are carried out and that the ones named in the will as heirs come into the possession of that part of the estate intended for them. Even the things of the legal covenant were dedicated in blood. "For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission." Therefore, as the old testament had to be dedicated in blood in order to make it effective unto Israel, and as all these things were merely types of the true or gospel covenant, it necessarily follows that the new covenant must also be dedicated in blood in order that it become effective to all the heirs of salvation. The new covenant being an infinitely better testament than the old, it requires an infinitely better blood than the blood of beasts to dedicate it. The old or Mosaic testament was sealed by the blood of beasts, and could never make the guilty conscience clean before God, nor purge away sin; the new covenant saves unto the uttermost all the children of God, and is made effective to all the heirs through the shed-

ding of the blood of Jesus, the death of the testator. That which we call the new or gospel covenant is really the covenant made in Christ by the Father before the world began, but now made manifest in these latter days to the church. God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost made a covenant or testament in and by themselves before time began. God the Father chose his people in Christ and blessed them in him with all spiritual blessings, and predestinated that in the fullness of time these heirs thus chosen should receive the adoption of sons by Christ Jesus according to the good pleasure of his will, and not according to their works. This, in brief, is the testament of God concerning his heirs made before time began. Now, as it is appointed unto man once to die, and after his death there comes the opening of his will or testament in order that his heirs named therein may come into possession of their portion of the estate left them, so God in the person of Christ was manifested in the flesh for the suffering of death that Christ through his death should bring into effect the will of God made in the Son before the world began. Had Christ not died, the whole elect of God should still be in darkness and in total ignorance of the way of salvation. Christ having died, the administrator of God's estate, which is the Holy Ghost, goes to each one of God's children and reveals in them the knowledge of life, and gives unto each of the elect the earnest of their inheritance, the fullness of which they each are to realize when they shall experience the fullness of Christ's coming in the resurrection of the dead. We well know that the general opinion among many people at the present time is that after a man dies he is then ushered before the bar of God's justice to have the books of his life cast up to see whether he is to go to heaven or to hell. Others think that this day of general judgment is to come at the end of time. Such belief presupposes that a man's final destiny depends upon what kind of a life he has lived, and whether his good deeds offset and overbalance his bad ones. Such belief resolves itself into the notion that salvation is according to works, and takes no account of Christ at all. So far as the elect of God are concerned, the day of judgment is over. All the judgment deserved by the children of God was laid upon Christ Jesus, and he endured the full force of his people's transgressions. Therefore, the judgment-day for the whole church of God was when the sword of divine justice smote the great Shepherd of the sheep and his life was taken to satisfy the demands of the law. Never again can the church of God come into condemnation. Christ needs never to suffer and to die again for sin. He has done that work perfectly, and by the one offering of himself has forever perfected every one sanctified or set apart by God the Father unto eternal life in the covenant or testament made before time began. The first coming of Jesus was as a man among men for the purpose of being a sin-bearer to redeem his people from sin, to reconcile them to God and to satisfy the demands of divine justice. This first coming of Jesus began with his being conceived by the Holy Ghost in the virgin Mary, and ended with his ascension to glory. This coming as a sin-bearer he will never repeat. When he comes the second time, it is without sin and to reveal the salvation of God in each one of God's heirs named in God's testament made before time. This second coming began with the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the church in Jerusalem at the pentecostal season, as recorded in the second

chapter of the Acts, and will continue until it culminates in the appearing of Christ at the end of this gospel age, when he shall descend from heaven with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, to raise first the dead in Christ, and then to change those that be alive and remain, so that the whole church of God shall be caught up together as one to meet the Lord in the air, and so forever be with him. This second coming of Jesus is therefore not the matter of a moment, nor of a day, nor of a year, but is reaching over the whole age of the gospel from the time when the Spirit first descended until this heavenly administrator shall complete his work in the final and full revelation to all and each of the elect, of all the wonderfulness of the glory of God. It will be seen therefore that the judgment which is to come after men are dead is the opening of their wills and the carrying out of their intentions regarding the disposition of their estates among their heirs named by the testators in their wills. No child of God shall ever be judged after he dies and be sent to hell. That would be to annul the work of Christ and to say that the blood of Jesus was not sufficient to save that one from perdition. On the other hand, there shall be a resurrection of the unjust, or of the nonelect. This resurrection of the nonelect which is to follow after the resurrection of the church to glory is a resurrection unto damnation, or unto condemnation. At that resurrection of the wicked, "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." But while there is to be both a final awakening of the church unto glory and of the wicked unto perdition, we want it understood that the "judgment" mentioned in our text has no reference to this matter, but to the opening of men's testaments after they are dead, and to the execution of the provisions of their wills. As it takes a man's death to make his will effective, so it took the death of Christ to make effective the will of God to each and every heir of divine grace. Also, do not neglect to notice that this appearing of Christ unto salvation is only unto those who look for him. The whole world knew him not when he came the first time on account of sin and for the redemption of his people. His own people were then given faith to know him and to believe in him. The Jews as a nation did not know him then, neither will the whole world know him when he comes the second time without sin unto salvation. His own elect will be given the ability to know him when he comes to glorify them, but it certainly will not be a spectacular event for all the world to see. This coming of Christ unto salvation will be to those who look for him, and this looking for him is a looking by faith. Unto the children of God is given faith whereby they believe in Christ and look for his appearing to come and save them. This looking shall not be in vain. He will come, and will come to his own, and shall receive his own unto himself. But as for its being an event which the whole world shall witness, we do not believe it. The world shall see him when he comes to resurrect the unsaved unto everlasting contempt and to punish them with everlasting destruction, but to see him in his coming to glorify his people with his own glorious image the world shall never see that. To the world Jesus

was never anything but the son of the carpenter in Nazareth. They ridiculed the declaration of his being the Son of God. Nevertheless, that nation which ridiculed him and did not believe in him reaped the very judgment that he pronounced upon them in the destruction of their nationality and in their being scattered throughout the world. Just so, when he comes the second time to make known God's will in all them that believe, the world shall be ignorant of what is going on and shall continue in grossness until the time appointed for them to reap the condemnation surely promised them, then shall they awake to shame and everlasting contempt and shall realize the destruction spoken of in 2 Thessalonians i. 7–10. L.

JAMES I. 27.

"PURE religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

This general epistle was written by the apostle James as he was given the power and love of the Holy Ghost to identify the subjects of grace. There are many expressions written by the different apostles upon this same theme. The testimony referred to speaks of undefiled religion, which is not a mere act of the creature in a moral way, but the Spirit of God, which by the Holy Ghost separates him from the world and makes him to serve God in the spirit. Having the love of God, he is constantly drawn in an undefiled way. The way, which is the way of life, is manifested, testifying that his going forth is not of the flesh, so he walketh orderly before God. Dear reader, you may question just what we mean by "he walketh orderly before God." One is given the spirit of the second Adam, by which he is desirous to live as becometh the gospel, which is of God, and testifies of the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ. This pure religion is the religion of the church of God, and every member of that body is of the same spirit and mind, which is the mind of Christ. Every member of the church of God is continually questioning his course as to whether he is ordered of the Lord or led by the lust of the flesh; but when one can truly feel that he is not able to direct his steps, and is brought by a way he knew not, he testifies with the words of truth that his pilgrimage is in paths not known and in ways past finding out, and must exclaim, What I am is by the grace of God. One cannot boast of his goodness, but has a continual confession of uncleanness as he realizes his true condition in the flesh. The word "religion" embraces all the rites and ordinances of the church of God, which we feel is the identity by which we testify that the Old School Baptist Church is the true church. This good Samaritan has only worked out what God has worked in him, both to will and to do of his pleasure. This religion in its reality gives sweet pleasures to the child of grace, and the household of faith can sing together the hymn,

"'Tis religion that can give
Sweetest pleasures while we live;
'Tis religion must supply
Solid comfort when we die.

After death, its joy will be
Lasting as eternity,
Be the living God my friend,
Then my bliss shall never end."

What wondrous love is thus manifested in the walk and conversation of the Lord's people. They hear the proclamations of the gospel, and the testimony of David in Psalms lxxxix. 15, 16, expresses their heritage: "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice

all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." This is according to the Scripture, the experience of the church of God, and not every member of the church of God is a partaker of the ordinance of the church militant in the visible relations, but in their hearts they yearn after them and can truly say, "There my best friends, my kindred, dwell, there God my Savior reigns." The sweetness of these truths comes to them out of the flinty rock of salvation. Every one that has these relations is for the Lord, not against him, for Jesus declared, He that is not for me is against me. The embodiment of this power manifested in the heart of an individual separates from the world to serve God in spirit.

We now visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions, which is not a mere call at their lodging-place, but to administer to them of such necessities of life needful for their comfort and protection; and this is not confined to the ministry, but to every member of the church of God. We note that these relations are taught by men, and many are drawn after their delusions to perform bodily acts, and expect, or look to, these things for salvation from sin, which the child of God fully realizes is not the truth, but salvation is by grace, and grace alone, and all the relations of life they bear are by virtue of the conception of life, which is by the Holy Ghost. We love to hear from all who love the truth, and by the power of the Almighty they can tell of the dealing of the Lord with them, which embraces every one who is in the way, though they may not express their feelings with the same vocal words, but with the same substance, and many widows of the Spirit are married in the wedlock of salvation and rejoice in the presence of their Husband, the Bridegroom of their souls. All who feel alone, and have no idol gods of the flesh to trust in, are the poor in spirit, rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom of God. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven."—Matt. v. 3. We wish you to read the fifth chapter of Matthew, and there you find many marks of identity to the pure in heart.

We call your attention to the last part of the subject under consideration: "And to keep himself unspotted from the world." This covers deep matters closely connected with the flesh. We wish you, dear reader, to keep in mind that all that is accepted by the God of heaven is ordered of the Lord. For one to be kept unspotted from the world is not to be so besieged with self-righteousness that he would say, I will not do such as are committed by others, but, contrarywise, he feels he is the chief of sinners, and not worthy of the least of the blessings of God; and with the same eye he beholds the righteousness of the kingdom of God and desires all his deliberations to be according as the Scriptures set forth in church worship and affiliations among men, which embrace unfruitfulness in many ways, and as John the Baptist proclaimed, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight. For one to come in contact with those whom we have referred to and partly described, and speak of His goodness and talk of His power is meet indeed, and of the cleansing from sin, which is by His blood, is drink indeed to a thirsty soul.

We feel the above falls short of giving the text justice, but wish you, dear readers, to remember the weakness of fallible creatures, and cast the mantle of charity over the weakness you are able to discern, and we hope your minds will be drawn into the deep and glorious riches of grace. Submitted in love.

C. W. V.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Charles W. Vaughn, January 16th, 1925, at the bride's home, West Broad Street, Hopewell, N. J., Miss Elizabeth Drake and Mr. Fred L. Conner, both of Hopewell, N. J. This is the fortieth wedding that Elder Vaughn has performed since becoming pastor of the Hopewell Church, in 1915.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

William Cudney was born June 24th, 1842, and departed this life June 18th, 1924, at his home at Shokan, N. Y. He leaves to mourn their loss, his wife, Emma Cudney, one daughter Minnie Davis, of Kingston, N. Y., also a sister, Mrs. Irene Cudney, of Shokan, N. Y. He was a believer in the truth as it is in Jesus, and could go back twenty-five years to where he trusted the Lord first began a work of grace in his heart. In conversation with the writer several years ago he said how he felt to be such a sinner, and from that moment we felt a love to him for the truth's sake. He was afflicted with bodily ailments and his dear wife, sister Cudney, and his sister Irene patiently cared for him during his long illness. Death to him was not a frightful foe, and we believe he is at rest. How truly blessed to be forever with the Lord. A happy release and a blessed entrance into that heavenly home that God has prepared for them that love him.

The writer spoke at his funeral and the mortal remains of our departed friend were interred in the cemetery at Woodstock, N. Y.

G. R.

Perry George was born December 9th, 1896, and died January 20th, 1925, making his stay on earth 28 years, 1 month and 11 days. He united with the Old School Baptist Church in the year 1920, and was a faithful member. He contracted pneumonia January 7th and suffered greatly for thirteen days, but died easy, not moving hand nor foot. He was praying every breath, saying, "By the grace and Spirit of God," that was all I could understand. The nurse did not want me to come in the room, so I did not go in all night before he died next morning. That morning I went to the door, he was praying. I went to the bed and said, How do you feel this morning? He said, I feel pretty good in the Spirit of God. I went to the other room, my nerves broke, and in five minutes he was sleeping in a better world. He was faithful and patient to the end, and never refused anything we wanted to give him. He leaves to mourn his wife, four children, mother, father, five brothers, four sisters, a host of relatives and friends.

Written by his heart-broken wife, a sister in Christ, I hope,

(MRS.) PERRY GEORGE.

Mrs. Henrietta Maria McLeod, my dearly beloved mother, was born in Pike County, Ala., December 26th, 1861, and departed this life January 6th, 1925, making her pilgrimage on earth 63 years, 12 days. She was the fourth daughter of S. J. and M. E. Richburg in a family of six daughters and four sons. She was united in marriage to J. S. McLeod December 22nd, 1881, by John A. Park, justice of the peace, also a member of the Primitive Baptist Church. Their marriage being the result of a romance which dates back to their school days. While attending Henderson Academy, taught by father's eldest brother, H. C. McLeod, four years prior to their marriage they became engaged. My father tells me that when mother was a little girl there was something in her countenance that won his love for her. To that union were born nine children, six sons and three daughters, one son preceded her to the grave nearly twenty-three years. In December, 1885, together with her husband and two small children she moved to Texas, where she resided until death. Those who survive are her husband, eight children, thirty-two grandchildren, her mother, four sisters and four brothers. My mother was a staunch believer of the Primitive Baptist faith, and had possessed a hope for more than fifteen years. She attended the meetings and entertained the members in her home with great pleasure. We know that as a wife and mother she was perfect; not only did she sacrifice for her family, but for her neighbors and friends. Her faithfulness and courage knew no bounds. She was a faithful wife in trouble and sorrow as in joy, a loving mother at all times. Blessed be the all-wise God who blessed us with such a friend.

Funeral services were held by Elders Tally and Robertson, and her body laid to rest in the Huffines Cemetery. Mother is not dead, but asleep in Jesus.

Written by her son,

BERNARD McLEOD.

Eunice Williams Snodgrass was born June 22nd, 1845, in Illinois, and died February 10th, 1925, making her stay on this earth 79 years, 7 months and 19 days. She moved with her parents to Texas in 1855, came to Oregon in 1870, and lived in Clackamas County until 1889, when she moved with her family to Linn County. She was married August 4th, 1861, to William Snodgrass, who died July 9th, 1900; to this union were born ten children, three boys and seven girls. The following named children preceded her to the great beyond: George died September 15th, 1884, Eunice G., April 26th, 1895, William J., April 26th, 1920, Roy Byron October 13th, 1920. The following named children survive her: Robert, of Portland, Oregon; Mrs. Lena A. Yeoman, of Brogan, Oregon; Mrs. Mary E. Jarnigan, of Coburg, Oregon; Mrs. Hannah Busay, of Lebanon, Oregon; Mrs. Lillian Jarnigan, of Coburg, Oregon; Mrs. Rose Reidy,

of Lebanon, Oregon. She also had nineteen grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. The daughters were all at her bedside when she died. She professed a hope in early life, and united with the Primitive Baptist Church, and was baptized by Elder Joseph Allison in the year 1871.

Her funeral was largely attended, the services being conducted by her pastor, Elder W. M. Rose. His sermon was not long, but was wonderfully interesting and consoling to the poor broken-hearted children and friends. The body was laid to rest in a nearby graveyard, by the side of her husband, who preceded her thereto to await the resurrection of all the dear saints of God. She is now asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep. In her death the children have lost a good mother and counselor, the church a dearly loved sister.

Written by request of her children.

C. E. SMITH, Church Clerk.

Thomas Jefferson Carr was born in Sumner County, Tenn., May 4th, 1840, died Feb. 21st, 1925. He was married in Pope County, Ill , August 14th, 1862, to Nancy Catherine Bell. She preceded him in death April 28th, 1924. To this union were born six children, viz.: William Hodge Carr, of Abilene, Kan.; James Grantly Carr, who died in infancy; Chester Alonzo Carr, of Carbondale, Ill.; Olive Myrtle Carr-Floyd, of Golconda, Ill.; Elmer Eugene Carr, of Ottumwa, Iowa; Stella Mabel Carr-Fulkerson, deceased. When a small boy, his father moved from Tennessee to Missouri, from where they later came to Pope County, Illinois. There he received his schooling, such as that day afforded, and laid the basis for a life of service to his fellowman. Clothed with that spirit of simplicity, supplied with great generosity and charity, he went forth to do good to any and to all with whom he came in contact. The only rule of action he had in his life was, "do right." He believed that supplied all that was necessary to make the good man or woman. When the call came for our Nation's defense in the early sixties, and the time came for brave and true manhood to unsheath the sword for the cause of justice and liberty, he volunteered and joined Co. E, 120th Ill. Inf. He was soon made first lieutenant of his company, and remained until honorably discharged through general debility. Time after time he returned to his company, only to be attacked again by some vicious fever that lurked thereabout. He never fully recovered from the rigors of the service during the remaining period of his natural life. Without reservation it may be said, he stood one hundred per cent. for our costitution, our flag and all its institutions. About the close of the war of the Rebellion he began his loved profession, school teaching. He also farmed in connection with it, but his heart was with the school-room, the class, the child and profitable education. He loved educational institutions, the teachers' institute, the teachers, who gathered around him to get his points, his ideas and advice. To them his heart went forth in great sincerity. When he became too old to participate actively in his chosen work, he stepped aside for younger ones, to whom he handed the torch to "carry on." His religious convictions were deeply anchored to the doctrine of salvation by grace through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In early life he was affiliated with the Missionary Baptists, but later in life became dissatisfied with the teachings of conditionalism and joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Old Grandpier, where he held membership at death. He wrote more or less extensively along religious and secular lines, and searched ardently for scriptural truth. Truly he believed in the immortality of the soul of man and held that the Bible offered conclusive proof of this. Many of his writings were upon this line of thought. Soon after his companion, of more than sixty years of happy wedded life, left him by death, his heart was broken, his spirit crushed and the allurements of life vanished. With her passing on he patiently bided the time when he, too, should join her, eventually to again reunite in eternity with Jesus. There must be a word said about the care and devotion given by our sister, Olive. Untiringly and faithfully she remained by his side during his lonely days and nights, ever administering to his wants. Shortly before his death her strength failed her and forced her to her bed.

We children feel that God's will be done, and while we shall greatly miss him personally, he is yet with us in spirit.

ELMER CARR.

Sarah J. Morningstar, widow of A. W. Morningstar, departed this life at the home of her son, Elder C. F. Moningstar, near Drain, Oregon, at the age of 76 years, 11 months and 24 days. Her maiden name was Watkins. She was born in Fulton County, Illinois, February 1st, 1848, where she grew to womanhood and was united in marriage to A. W. Morningstar December 21st, 1865. To this union were born eleven children, six of whom, with their father, preceded her to the great beyond. She experienced a change of heart and united with the Mount Zion Old School Baptist Church, in Illinois. She was a devoted member of the church, always faithful to the Old School Baptist doctrine, and loving the brethren. She and my father, with their three oldest children, came to Oregon in 1877 and settled on a farm near Drain. They were loving parents, and their home was always a home for the Baptist brethren, where they held regular meetings as long as mother was able physically to attend her household duties. She is survived by five children: Charles F. Morningstar, Dollie M. Walker, John Ernest Morningstar, Sibyl C.

England and William Riley Morningstar. Besides these children she leaves three daughters-in-law, two sons-in-law, and thirty-four grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren to mourn the loss of a loving mother and grandmother. We ask the brethren to remember us in their prayers in our sad bereavement.

Her daughter,

SIBYL C. ENGLAND.

T. T. Reid was born January 15th, 1850, in Chickasaw County, Mississippi, where he lived until he was fifteen or sixteen years of age. After the close of the war he and his mother moved to north Mississippi, where they resided until he grew to manhood. In 1869 he married Miss Clemmy Cox, and to that union seventeen children were born, of whom eleven, together with his dear companion, are still living, six children preceding him in death. He was a kind and loving father and a devoted husband. Father gave us evidence he had a home over there, having received a hope forty or fifty years ago. He never united with the Primitive Baptists, but loved the doctrine of God our Savior and enjoyed the sweet songs of Zion. He loved the people of God, and when called upon would help care for the poor and afflicted. The writer, his son, has talked with him on various occasions, and tried to preach at different times in his presence, and he seemed to enjoy it and praise God. Father passed into the great beyond February 12th, 1925, making his stay on earth 75 years and 27 days. Sometimes we hope we can like David say, He cannot come to us, but we can go to him. We believe his spirit is basking in the sweet presence of Jesus. He leaves his sorrowing companion and eleven children to mourn their loss, but our loss is his eternal gain, and we weep not as those who have no hope.

Written by his son,

J. B. REID.

Nancy E. Mills, daughter of Tyra P. and Mary Alvis, was born at Johnsonville, Ill., January 4th, 1856, departed this life at the home of her daughter, at Keenville, Ill., Sept. 25th, 1923, aged 67 years, 8 months and 21 days. She was married to George E. Mills April 22nd, 1875, and to this union nine children were born, one child dying in infancy. Six sons, Curtis B., George Edward, Jr., Tyra A., Cloyd Norman and Arthur, two daughters, Mrs. Nettie O. Burkitt, at whose home mother died, and Hattie E. Cornstuble, of Mt. Vernon, Ill., and a great number of relatives and friends mourn the loss of a greatly loved one. She professed faith in "Him who doeth all things well" very early in life, and joined the Methodists in Johnsonville about thirty years ago. Later she joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Keenville, known as Little Flock. The church having gone to decay some years ago, she placed her membership with the Salem Church, of Xenia, Illinois, on May 18th, 1922. She lived a faithful, consistent member until Christ called her away to try the realities of the great beyond. She loved the doctrine and principles of the Primitive Baptists and was in her greatest enjoyment when listening to some epistle of Christ expounded. Mother's suffering was great, but she bore it without a single complaint, and died in faith and hope of the resurrection.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder G. W. Inyart, of Olney, at the home of her youngest daughter, Nettie, of Keenville, after which she was laid to rest in the family cemetery, there to await the resurrection morn, when Jesus comes the second time in great glory to take his ransomed people home. She is lovingly remembered and sadly missed by her children.

NORMAN MILLS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. A. B. Engell, N. Y., $3.00; Cyrus Cross, Ohio, $3.00; L. B. Ford, Mass., $3.00; Mrs. Lizzie Hamm, Ark., $3.00; M. E. Williford, Texas, $3.00; Dr. W. R. Presley, Texas, $1.00; R. E. Campbell, Texas, $1.00; Sarah J. Clegg, Pa, $1.00; Mrs. Elizabeth Rittenhouse, N. J., $2.00; Mrs. J. A. Hurley, Mich., $3.00; I. H. Evans, Md., $1.00; Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Okla., $2.00.

MEETINGS.

There will be an all day meeting at Clovesville, N. Y., on the first Sunday in April (5th). All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

There will be an all day meeting at Lexington, N. Y., on the fourth Sunday in April (26th). All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

The Baltimore Association will be held May 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1925, with Ebenezer Church, 210 East Madison Street, near Calvert Street, Baltimore, Md. The meetinghouse will be open on Tuesday, May 19th, from 2 o'clock to 5 o'clock, where visitors will be met and given place of entertainment. A cordial invitation is extended to all to meet with us.

ALVIS S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association is to be held with the Welsh Tract Church, the Lord willing, to begin on Wednesday before the last Sunday in May, 1925, and continue three days (May 27th, 28th and 29th). Those coming from Philadelphia or Baltimore can come on either the B. & O., or P. W. & B.

R. R., on Wednesday morning. The trains leave Philadelphia, B. & O., at 8:02, and P. W. & B., at 7:20. Leave Baltimore, B. & O., Mt. Royal, at 8:12, or P. W. & B., at 7:55, Union Station. Those coming via Delaware R. R. will change cars at Porter and consult "time table" as to time of leaving. All lovers of the truth as held by us, and especially ministers in good standing with us, are cordially invited to meet with us. Get tickets to Newark, Del., where you will be met and conveyed to place of meeting.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday in the meeting-house, corner Intervale Ave. and Home St., Bronx.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 93. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1925. NO. 5.

POETRY.

CHRIST IN GLORY.

John was familiar with his Lord
  When on the earth He trod;
But He who spoke in Patmos wore
  The glory of a God;
Familiar intercourse? Ah, no;
Christ was in heaven, and John below.

That face was not the face more marred
  Than any man's before;
The bosom John had leaned upon
  No golden girdle wore;
Yet his inspired description ran,
"One like unto the Son of man."

John saw His Godhead on the mount
  Through glistening garments glow,
But heaven's unshrouded majesty
  Laid the Beloved low,
And only through Christ's touch of power
Mortality survived that hour.

Oh, what must be the thrilling change
  Departing spirits prove,
As fearless, faultless they approach
  This risen Christ above?
No wondering thought, no lurking pride,
No failings to confess or hide.

And many a dying saint to-day
  Findeth his hope upstirred
At the dear droppings from Christ's lips
  Which John in Patmos heard:
"Fear not, beloved, it is well;
I have the keys of death and hell."

(MRR.) M. C. CHAPLIN.

GALLEYWOOD, England.

THE GIFT OF KNOWLEDGE.

(JEREMIAH XXXI. 33, 34.)

Of all blessings by man possessed,
  The greatest one is this:
To know himself and stand confessed
  For what he really is.

The knave who challenges the law,
  And he who wars with fate,
Are both alike, and never saw
  Truly their lost estate.

Behold the acorn where it lies
  Deep in the womb of earth!
Who is there thinks that he is wise
  Enough to give it birth?

Ev'n so God plants the precious seed
  Of knowledge in the heart,
While man, full of conceit and greed,
  Oft claims he had a part.

But 'tis the gift his Savior bought,
  And man the poor in pelf,
Is rich, if by God's mercy taught
  To really know himself.

IDOLS.

(1 JOHN V. 21.)

Not all the idols men adore
Are made of stone or precious ore;
'Tis in the chambers of the mind
The worst of idols we will find.
'Tis there we worship haughty pride,
'Tis there our greed and lust abide;
There often hate sits on the throne,
And there a murder oft is done.
Deceit may make our craven face,
But truth will find the hiding place.

HAL MORETON.

ST. JOSEPH, Mo.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BREWERS, Ky., Jan. 26, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I attempt to pen a few words for your consideration I am reminded again that the Savior knew his mission when he said, No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him. Notice he did not say, Draw at him, nor, Try to draw him, but, Draw him. Though he was equal to the Father in all his attributes, the Son was ever ready to acknowledge the supremacy of the Father, even more so than finite men are inclined to do in this age of enlightenment. The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob has said, I am God, and there is none like me. Poor child, have you not learned this grand truth in your very experience? Is he not the One altogether lovely, and the chiefest among ten thousand? Oh will you not stop a moment and consider some of the grandeur of this God of wisdom, love, mercy and truth? He is infinite, and works his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his mighty hand. He upholds all things by the word of his power. A mighty sovereign is he, and yet how little is known of him by the great masses of to-day. This God of the whole earth has a people in every kindred, tongue, people and nation, who are heirs by election of this King who sent his only darling Son to suffer, bleed and die that they might live around his throne of righteousness, all clothed in linen pure and white, and not for any works which the poor children have done, or left undone, but all because of the sovereign will and choice of the God of love, purpose and grace. This God of the whole earth has created all things for himself, and by himself, and rules all things after the counsel of his own will, and works all things together for the good of his people above mentioned, but blind unbelief is sure to err and scan his work in vain, but God is his own interpreter and he will make it plain. This elect people God has formed for himself, and they shall show forth his praise, because he will dwell in them and uphold them by his Spirit. The eminent apostle to the Gentiles was made to see and acknowledge this grand truth after he had been killed to all self-righteous pride and vain show of natural attainment. The Lord even led him into that hidden wisdom until he cried out, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." He was also made to use simple terms which enter with force into every child of God who knows and love the truth. "You hath he quickened, who were dead." Dear child of God, have you not known and felt the word of his power? Yes, that word which is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, which cut you down and laid you low? This is the work of God, and in this way he is preparing timbers of the forest for his new Jerusalem. This is the people which shall praise him. God's holy Spirit must rule and reign over this people, because they are now in the kingdom of his dear Son. Yes, they are builded upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord, and they are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. Men and creature-worth have no lot nor part in this great work. Christ said while here on earth, I will build my church. Dear child, you who have been so much tossed

to and fro, sometimes in the valley and sinking down with woe, are you not glad he said, The gates of hell shall not prevail against it? You who at times find the promise sweet, are you not glad the work is finished of building that city which is to be your resting-place when done with the toils of this life? Have you not seen enough of your works to convince you time and again that you are a failure, nothing, and less than nothing? But oh this God who is to try you will bring you through the fire until you reflect his image, because he is a rock and his work is perfect. Not one trace of sin is to be found on the robe which the glorified shall wear around the throne of God and the Lamb, because they have been washed in his blood that cleanseth from all sin, and they will chant the glories of their King, world without end, Amen.

I am inclosing a good letter from dear brother J. R. Hatcher, of Lyles, Tenn., which has been of much comfort to me. Should you consider it, together with the scattering remarks I offer, worthy space in your valuable paper you may insert them at your convenience. Do not crowd out better material.

Your unworthy brother in gospel bonds,
J. C. CHESTER.

LYLES, Tenn., Jan. 3, 1925.

ELDER J. C. CHESTER—MY PRECIOUS BROTHER:—I should have written you sooner, for I received a good letter from you, a letter which contained the rich things of our God, things that you and I never can tell in the fullness which we desire. The doctrine of God our Savior is full of the predestination of things. Oh that I could hope I am embraced in that doctrine. Sometimes I am made to hope. So you see that we cannot hope, we cannot love, for both hope and love are of God and Christ. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Love is of God, you see. Again, "God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Is it not rich when we are made to feel that Jesus died for us while we were yet sinners?

Now back to the predestination of all things, and this brings us to that "determinate counsel," that covenant of grace which was ordered in all things and sure. That covenant was made in the annals of eternity, and consisted of three distinct persons, and yet they are one. I know this is driving me into the deep, and oh how can I ever fathom this mystery? All of these three persons have their peculiar office-work. The God of justice never would have saved us had it not been arranged by the God of mercy, and this mercy must come through Jesus Christ, the second person in this Godhead, and we never could have realized this mercy had it not been revealed to us by the Holy Spirit in the third person. In eternity these three are and were one. The one only true and living God. This was before there were worlds, sun, moon or stars, before there was a man, a woman or any created thing. Now what about influences? Did this One and Three just fix a plan that finite man must work before he could be saved? If so, then must not man have to do this work before God acts upon him? Then this finite man would have to work a finite work, and then the infinite God must work, or else this finite man would have to do an infinite work; and how could he do it? It looks to me that this three-one-God stood as the highest court of the entire universe, from which there can be no appeal.

A court that never has to retry a case. "I am God, and there is none else," "declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Sin must be punished by the God of justice, therefore sin must have been in the determinate counsel of God before a sinful act was committed. If there had been one sin left out there would have been no declaring it from the beginning. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Again, "For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?"—Isaiah xiv. 24, 27. To be as brief as I can, I must conclude that the infinite God is the only independent of the entire universe. In eternity he had not even one thing to consult as to why or how or what he should create, nor how to dispose of all things visible or invisible. All things were made and declared and sworn to by this eternal God. This God of divine justice must punish sin, and this must be done in the person of his darling Son. All things were thought, sworn to and declared in blessed eternity, and must take place in time, and at the set time and place. There is a time to every purpose under the sun. So the Son of God came into this world to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. He was the only sacrifice, the living sacrifice, that could take away sin. He was the one offering, and therefore was the merciful High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. He must reign forever, both on earth and in ultimate glory. "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."

I have not time to comment on all these Scriptures, so we will notice the universal reign of Christ, and then I am done. The angel was sent from God to the virgin Mary, and said, "Hail, thou that are highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women," &c. "And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Read the first chapter of Luke. This is what I call the double reign of Jesus. He reigns upon the throne of his father David here on earth and also reigns upon the throne of God in ultimate glory. No wonder that he is "the Son of the Highest." He holds the reins of the entire universe in his own grasp and is indorsed by the three-one-God. He is enthroned in the heavens, there making intercession for us according to the will of God. How blessedly sweet it is to have a blessed hope in this High Priest who is alive for evermore.

Brother and sister Chester, I have thought of you many times since our association. Oh that I was worthy to even think of saying, "Brother and sister." I have been made to pass through many sorrows since I saw you. I have wished and longed to be with you and hear you speak of the power of the double reign of our dear Redeemer. Sometimes I am almost crushed under my feeling sense of unworthiness, and almost sink beneath my load of sinful self. I long to see you

both once more in life, if it be God's holy will. My days are almost ended, "The time of my departure is [near] at hand," and oh that I could say with Paul, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." Dear brother and sister, I can only hope in these things. I am a sinner, and cannot do good, for sin is present with me when freely I would do good. How blessedly sweet it is when that Holy Spirit causes us to realize by faith that we love the appearing of the Lord. This turns midnight to day with us. Yes, when we can get a glimpse of our Beloved, though it be through the lattice, when we can hear his sweet voice saying, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter [oh how cold we are at times] is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land," then it is blessed sweet to us. But oh sometimes we feel our blackness, and have to say, "Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me: my mother's children were angry with me; they made me keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept." Ah, how real this is to us. As little Ruth, the Gentile, clave to Naomi, the Jew, and they were both made one in Boaz, the type of Christ, so we must cleave to our Beloved and his church for the rich inheritance that is reserved in heaven for us. How peculiar is God's way. All things are wrapped up in unmeasured eternity, and in this strange and mysterious way he reveals them unto us and we cannot tell why and how they are revealed. We often feel like the poet,

"How strange is the course that a christian must steer,
How perplexed is the path he must tread!
The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
And his life he receives from the dead."

Brother and sister Chester, I have only hinted at this subject. I did not even think of writing on such great mysteries, but had just reread your dear letter, and it was, I hope, made new to me, and I felt I must write something. My wife joins me in christian love and salutation to you both.

Your very unworthy brother, if one at all,

J. R. HATCHER.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Dec. 7, 1924.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—I would be glad if it were the Lord's will and I could walk in and hear the preaching to-day. During your last visit with us and all through your discourse was love for each other, and it seemed beautiful, but when we got home sister Corwin said she never heard any one say the stone that killed the Philistine was the word of God; then it seemed more beautiful, because it all came up before me. Your sermon in Warwick from John i. 48, took me back to my experience; it was beautiful. All my life my grandfather and uncle had called me "Little Old School Baptist," and they could not have said anything meaner to me. Just before my dear husband (Mr. Thompson) died my dear mother spent the week end with me and we went to my meeting in the morning. While we were eating our dinner I thought perhaps mother would like to hear Elder Jenkins. I am sure she was an Old Baptist at heart. I asked her if

she would like to hear him, and she said, O daughter, you could not give me a greater pleasure. My husband looked at his watch, and said, I do not want to hurry you, but if you do hurry you can get there in time. He told me he would take care of the baby and do up the dishes, so we went, but before I went in I looked around to see if there was any one on the street that knew me, for I was ashamed to be seen going in the house. I was tempted to leave several times, for I verily thought that Elder Jenkins was preaching my mother and me into hell, but dear mother was drinking in every word like a thirsty child. I was very rude after the meeting and would not let her stop and speak to any one, not even to sister Jenkins (who was my first cousin), for I was cross. Mother said, What is the matter, my child, are you worried about the baby? I said, Matter, mother, what right has Elder Jenkins to preach you and me into hell? She replied, O, my dear child, he did not, it was wonderful to me, it is because you do not understand. I said, Mother, if you ever spend a Sunday with me again I will see that you hear Elder Jenkins, but never will I darken that door again. About two months after that my husband was taken from me, and my father moved me home. One day I was feeling sad and homesick for my husband and home, my poor heart was breaking, and as I stood by the window crying my mother came to me and put her loving arms around me and said, My dear child, mother's heart aches for you, but, my child, you know nothing about living trouble. I turned to her, and said, Mother, if there is anything worse than what I have I would like to know it. Well, brother, I did know. My trouble began and I felt God had forsaken me, and I even questioned if there were a God. I married again, and my life was very different from what I had been accustomed to. I felt there was no one to go to. I felt myself such a vile sinner and that this was all sent upon me to punish me. I got to where I was afraid to lie down and sleep, and when I tried to pray it seemed like mockery. I could get no comfort from the Bible, and felt I was sinking deeper in a horrible pit. It seemed as if a rock were hanging over me and that if I dared to close my eyes I would be crushed to the bottom, and only God knows what I suffered. The doctors said it was my mind, and sent me away for a change and rest, but there was no rest for me. I could not stand the preaching, and remained away. I went to my uncle here in town, who was a deacon of the same denomination, and he wanted to know who had been talking to me. I asked him why he asked me that question, and he said it was Old School Baptist doctrine I was talking. I told him I was not an Old School Baptist, and never would be, I would take a chance with the multitude. I was angry and went home. I was finally stripped of all self-righteousness, and when I laid down at night I felt that if my soul were sent to hell His righteous law approved it well, but O brother, if ever I prayed I did then. I cried out, "God be merciful to me a sinner" from the bottom of my heart. I was made to feel that I could do no more. About midnight I was awakened by some one seeming to call me. I sat up in bed and the room looked beautiful, it seemed as though there were a hundred electric lights, and a voice said, Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Oh such joy, such peace, the burden was gone! He, Jesus, saw me in that horrible pit and

brought me out of it and put my feet upon solid rock, put a new song in my mouth, brought me to his banqueting-house and his banner over me was love. I asked, Where can I go? The answer came, To the Old School Baptist Church. I counted the hours and minutes. Sunday morning Mr. Brink asked me if I were going to meeting, for I seemed so much better. I said, No, you go. He said, What is the matter with you, you never used to miss a service? After dinner I got ready to go to the Old Baptist meeting, it was snowing hard and my little daughter wanted to go with me, and I told her she could go if she would ask no questions. When we came down stairs Mr. Brink said, What, you going out in the storm in your condition? I told him it would not hurt me. When I opened the door it was like a huge ball of fire there, and it went before me to the meetinghouse door. When I entered the meetinghouse it seemed I had never before seen such faces. Elder Jenkins was in New York and brother Emory led the meeting. Oh it was wonderful! The next Sunday I heard my first gospel sermon, and I cried when the Elder closed. I was a mystery to them all. Sister Jenkins was sick, and the Elder told her I was there. The next Sunday he told her I was there again, and she said, God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. The next Saturday was church meeting and I asked sister Wilkinson (she also was a first cousin) if they allowed any one to go. She said, "Oh, yes," very short. I said, If I come down can I go with you? "Yes," shorter still. I went early, but she had gone. I followed her (but not of myself). I passed empty seats and went and sat with her, and when the Elder had called on the brethren he called on sister Wilkinson, then he said, This is cousin Libbie Brink. She said, Yes, but she is only here as a listener. God opened my mouth and I related my experience. Not a word was said. The Elder said he could not speak, he was speechless, for he never heard such an experience. I followed after them another month. When the Elder asked me if I had anything to say I was afraid I would say something wrong, but did say that when it was the Lord's will I desired to follow him in baptism. Dear brother Hait said, What would you do if we should not receive you into the church? I said, Oh but you will not forbid me coming to hear the preaching. I was heartbroken, and thought, I will stand outside on the walk and listen, they cannot drive me away from there. But they received me and I was baptized the next afternoon. It was a bitter cold day and they had to cut a hole in the ice (which was twelve inches thick) large enough for two to walk in. It looked just like a grave, but was the most glorious sight I ever saw. For months I was on the top of the mountain and thought trouble could never touch me again, but it did, and it is trouble most of the time, but I would not part with my little hope for all this world. If I know my heart, I love the brethren and sisters and love to meet with them.

Elder Dodson, I did not intend to write so much when I started. Sister Corwin asked me to request you to give your views in the SIGNS on Jeremiah ii. 13. Please cast the mantle of charity over this poorly written letter. Love to the New York members, also to you and your family.

Your sister in a precious hope,

M. E. BRINK.

SAYRE, Oklahoma.

DEAR BRETHREN:—You who were verily foreordained before the foundation of the world and manifested in these last times by being born again, not of a corruptible seed, but of an incorruptible seed, and by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever; not of works. This is to you and to your children, and to them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call, who were saved and called before the foundation of the world, but called in time to be saints manifestly. (See Proverbs, eighth chapter.) Solomon says the Lord possessed him in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. He was set up from everlasting, or ever the earth was, before the highest of the hills were formed or the morning stars sang together he was there with his Father. He rejoiced always before his Father, and his delights were with the sons of men, &c. Yes, wisdom hath builded her house, hewn out her seven pillars, sent forth her maidens, mingled her wine, killed her beasts, furnished her table, &c. Already has done it; not going to do it. (See Proverbs ix. 1-3.) The thing that has been is that which shall be, and that which is done is that which shall be done, and there is no new thing under the sun. So it seems to me that the type and purpose of all things was set and printed by the holy prophets, and as the leaves of time are turned things are developed. There is not anything taking place but what is declared shall be so. I do not think anything ever has or ever will take place in time or eternity independent of God. Some say that if it is as we say it would make God the author of sin; they say he has nothing to do with the wicked works of men and devils. But let me give one instance: The Jews and the Gentiles and the people of God gathered themselves together crucified and slayed the Lord of glory, and when they did it they did no more nor less than God's hand and counsel before determined should be done. Wicked, wicked, criminal act! No worse crime was ever committed, and there have been more comments about it than all the other crimes combined. If this will not suffice the gainsayers it is useless to say more. God's purpose was fulfilled in all that took place in the garden of Eden, and on down to the crucifixion of his Son, and will be to the end of time, because the wicked are like the troubled sea, they can go so far, and no farther. Thank God, I am enabled to exalt his name above every name as Lord of lords and King of kings. Yes, I believe he has all the power, both in heaven and earth. The powers that be are ordained of God. There is no power but of God. He speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. As he purposed so shall it stand. All of which were in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. Yes, the wicked for the day of evil, &c.

I am in possession of articles of faith subscribed to in 1824 by the Old School or Primitive Baptists, when there were not so many different orders of Baptists as there are to-day. All Baptists claim the same articles of faith, and statistics show there are about sixteen different orders, but the Old School, or "Hardshells," is the only order that still contends for them. We can afford to sing, "Keep silence, all created things, and wait your Maker's nod," &c. (See hymn 15, Beebe's collection. By Watts.) All Baptists used to indorse Watts' hymns, but we are the only people that continue to sing these songs. God rules in the

army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. This power is what we claim to be the gospel that shall be preached in all the world, and it will go, money or no money, because God is omniscient, omnipresent and everywhere, and fills immensity, consequently God is as much in India, Peru, China, Africa and elsewhere as he is in the United States, with the same power. Let us all sing, "All hail the power of Jesus' name." Brethren, I have realized that the way of man is not in himself. He may devise his ways, but the Lord directs his steps. Why, if we are free moral agents, do we not live better and have more of this world's goods? Because it is through great tribulation we must enter the kingdom. No building a heaven on earth. We must realize before we die that there is something better after death. Had it been possible, Job never would have undergone what he did. Strange that he, being perfect, upright, fearing God and eschewing evil, the Lord would let the devil rob him and afflict him so. Hold the keys of death and hell in his own hand, he can shut and none can open, open and none can shut.

I am past seventy-four years of age, and have hope that I realized what it is to be born again early in the sixteenth year of my life, when I was made to see myself the worst sinner that ever lived, and at a time unexpected all my troubles were gone and I felt as light as the air, and loved God with all his creation. Brethren, do you know what it is to be a mourner on account of your sins? Just as certain as you ever shed a tear on account of godly sorrow for your sins just that certain you are one that Christ died to save, and when he died on the cross and said it was finished your salvation was complete in him. But, O my soul, the warfare is now begun, the flesh against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh. See what Paul says about it. There are none but do things they rather not have done, and leave undone many things they would have rather done. Let us try and be reconciled to our lot, and let God be praised. World without end. In God we trust.

This was written by the request of old brother Hatcher and others of Reed, Oklahoma, and if space is allowed for printing, all right; if not, return it to me. Make any corrections necessary, for I am a very poor writer, and barely able to sit up on account of afflictions.

J. K. NICHOLSON.

CARTHAGE, Mo., Jan. 31, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—For the inclosed check please continue the SIGNS to me at my address for one year. I often feel when reading the many good things that appear in its columns that I am a drone: always eating of the good things of the Master's table and never producing anything. At the same time I have had nothing on my mind that would be of profit if written, and there has seemed to be no scarcity of matter for publication. It seems proper, and profitable, for me to say I am thankful the old paper still lives. The conditions that make it necessary to reduce its publication to once a month make me sadder than the loss of the other number. I hope you will be sustained and comforted in your labor to continue publishing the SIGNS. It would be an irreparable loss to many should it cease to be.

I am sending you a letter I received from a member of the church at Greenbush, Illinois, where my membership is. I would be glad to see it published in the SIGNS if you think it suitable. Brother

Walker is held in esteem in the church, conducts services in the absence of the pastor and seems quite useful. My acquaintance with him is slight, I having met him only a few times some years ago.

Your sister in hope,

GRACE VEECH SMITH.

PRAIRIE CITY, Ill., Jan. 26, 1925.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—As it has been some time since I have written you, and as I have heard nothing from you only through sister Bowen, I will make another attempt, and it may be you will repent and answer it, but if not the omission is forgiven anyway. We have been having some very severe winter weather here since about December 10th, but would rather have it now than a month later. It was thirty below zero here during Sunday of our December meeting, but nevertheless we should not complain, but render thanks unto God for his loving-kindness toward us. When I attempt to talk or write upon God's holy word I feel my unfitness and unworthiness to the extent that I fear I am deceiving the dear children of God, and yet I know that this fleshly nature of mine would much rather sit at the feet of the brethren and sisters if my mind would be at peace with God while so doing, therefore I hope that what I may write will be of the Spirit of God, and not of self. The subject of the few remarks I may make can be found in John v. 25: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." We are told by the so-called religious world of to-day that there is a spark of spiritual life in every one of Adam's race, and that all needed is to be fanned into a blaze, and if the subject accepts Christ and lives and holds fast unto the end he will be saved, but if he does not accept he will be lost. They further tell us that one can accept Christ and go almost to the end and then be lost, and also tell us that Christ is pleading with every one to come and be saved, and that men have the power to reject the pleadings of Christ. Now if this be true our hope is in vain, for if man can reject the power of Christ then Christ fails to be the Savior of sinners and heaven will be depopulated, but thanks be unto his name, the heaven-born child knows this is not the case, for Christ says the dead shall hear his voice and they that hear shall live. Not may, or if you will accept Christ. Matthew i. 21, says, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." When the Spirit goes forth from God and enters the sinner's heart it does not consult the sinner about it, but convicts the poor soul of its sins. The convicted soul tries all of its good works, and they all fail, and as a last resort cries unto God, Be merciful to me a sinner. It has no power or desire to reject the work of the Spirit, but as a drowning man grasps at a straw so the poor convicted sinner goes to God for help. This is one of the dead Christ spoke of, and when the Spirit entered the heart life went with it and the sinner was made alive. As soon as life enters the dead sinner is born again, not of blood, nor of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. We are passive in the natural birth, so are we also in the spiritual birth, and every dead sinner that Christ speaks to will hear his voice and live the spiritual life just as surely

as Lazarus heard his voice and came forth from the grave when Christ told him to after he had been dead four days. Every child of God will hear his voice some time in life, no matter where they are or who they are, for Christ says, All the Father giveth me shall come to me. Again, he says, No man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him. Therefore according to God's word the sinner cannot come until he hears the voice of the Son of God, as recorded in the text. Then if the sinner is dead, which is a fact, how can he accept or reject the word of God? Dear sister, you know and every heaven-born soul knows, that the sinner has nothing whatever to do with it, but it is God working in him according to his own will and purpose, for he speaks to the dead sinner and the words are life and the sinner is made alive and is now a willing subject, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and God says they that do this shall be filled. If those who believe that their eternal salvation depends upon themselves can get any comfort out of it, and are satisfied, let them remain where they are, but for me, and many others, we have a better hope, and our hope is as an anchor of the soul, that reaches within the vail. Again, if we are born of the Spirit, having received the adoption of sons, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, and are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, Jesus says that no man is able to pluck such out of the Father's hand. O blessed hope which God giveth us, is it not enough to make us rejoice with joy unspeakable?

I will close for fear of wearying you. Remember me as the least of all, if one at all.

J. W. WALKER.

BURKEVILLE, Va., Feb. 10, 1925.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I am sending a letter my husband wrote you some time ago, but never did send it. He contracted pneumonia January 7th and died January 20th. He was a loving, devoted husband and father. He believed in the Old School Baptist doctrine, and was strong in the faith to the last, and died praying. I went to the door of his room and he was saying, "By the grace and Spirit of God." I stopped to hear what he was saying, and the nurse said, Go on and speak to him if you want to. I went to the bed and said, How do you feel this morning? He replied, "I feel good in the Spirit of God," and in five minutes he was sleeping in Jesus I believe. He was faithful to the end.

Pray for me, his lonely wife,

(MRS.) P. D. GEORGE.

JETERSVILLE, Va., April 6, 1924.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—Though I have never been blessed to meet you, and am a stranger in the flesh, still I hope we are bound together by the everlasting cords of the love of God, that love that passeth all understanding, that constraineth us, that keeps us from sinning presumptuously, that enlightens our benighted souls, that raiseth us up out of death, that constraineth us to cry unto God for mercy and that puts the prayer in our heart to the Lord to keep us and lead us in the way of life that we may not sin, but may live to the glory of his grace. Not that we fear punishment or wish to gain a blessing, but that we may show forth the glory and power of his love in our hearts, that love which makes us hate our life and abhor ourselves in dust and ashes and long to walk righteously, uprightly and godly that we may be well-pleasing in his sight, and that we

may not be a reproach unto him and a stumbling-block to his people. Yea, we cry day and night, O Lord, have mercy on us, as we view our blackness and feel our weakness. Oh this cold and lifeless heart, surely I am less than the least, and fear that my hope is vain, and I know that if left to myself I am lost. I feel my case to be as the beautiful rose, which as the rain and the dew come down and water the earth and the sun shines upon it flourishes and blossoms, but withhold the sun, rain and dew its beautiful leaves will wither and the blossoms fade and fall and only the thorny old bush remain, unsightly and harsh. When we are left without the power of the love of God in our heart we show no gentleness, no mercy or kindness, every disagreeable trait in our nature appears, so it is not unto us the praise is due, but unto him who maketh the flowers to flourish and grow to beautify the earth. The natural man admires the beauty of the rose, but he considers not that the praise belongs to the Maker thereof, but we know that God hath formed a people for himself and they shall show forth his praise.

I have been reading the SIGNS for April 1st, and rejoicing in the truth set forth by the writers, especially by brother Isaac R. Greathouse in his article on the love of God constraineth us. Oh the joy of the truth that the Lord he is God and beside him there is none else; he speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. I cannot conceive of a god that wants to save a people and they will not let him, but I believe that God created all things according to his purpose, not one too many nor one less than is needed to carry out his purpose, and they all do and shall work as a clock with its many little wheels all doing their part, though they who understand not may see no need for so many, so while I do not understand God's ways and works, yet I believe they are all right, and that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to those who are the called according to his purpose. I believe he made the serpent the most subtle beast of the field, and he did and shall do according to the wise decrees of our God, who works in mercy, goodness and righteousness, and it shall be by his mercy that every tongue shall praise him in glory. Whether I shall be there or not I am sure of this one thing: he will judge the world in righteousness, and if I am condemned it will be just, but if I am saved it must be by his grace. I have no other hope, and sometimes I almost cease to hope that such a wretch as I am could be loved of the Lord, yet I rejoice to hear his name praised, and to read the writings of the people he has blessed, their hopes and fears are it seems a part of my life. May all his servants be upheld and made to stand as a wall, unmovable and unshakable, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left hand, being determined to know nothing among men save Jesus, and him crucified. The Lord bless and uphold you, that you may be for a mark to his people to guide them in the old and only way.

Your unworthy brother, I hope,

P. D. GEORGE.

HOPEWELL, N. J., March 5, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—You will find inclosed two dollars to pay for the SIGNS another year. I feel ashamed to have neglected sending it so long, but I have been debating whether or not to take it another year, as I am now the only one in the house to read it, and I am as barren as a dead tree. I have to look back and think of that rock, or tree, or moun-

tain, and ask, Did the Lord visit me there? Sometimes I think that surely the Lord was in that place. The last year has been full of trouble and disappointments, yet the Lord has provided bountifully for me. I took a trip through the west, and in the States of Nebraska and Iowa and met many good Old Baptists of the old type. They go through all kinds of weather and ride miles to attend their meetings, and peace reigns among them. I will name a few I met, and if you feel to publish this letter it may be it will acquaint some one with some brother or sister near them. My first visit was with Elder Edgar Carter, at Loveland, Iowa, eighty-eight miles east of Omaha, Nebraska, and there I found a church of about sixty members. I also visited brother and sister David Campbell, of Loveland, Iowa. My next visit was with Elder C. M. Cooper, 1731 Lincoln Avenue, York, Nebraska, where I remained a few days and attended their meetings. While in York I also visited at the home of brother A. B. Hansen, 1826 Nebraska Avenue, and at the home of brother Edward Deason. I then left for the home of Elder Joseph Ford, 216 West 18th Street, University Place, Nebraska. I visited the church at Cheney, where they were holding a two days meeting, and there met several brethren and sisters, including brother B. O. Jeffrey, of Weiser, Idaho. They had a very pleasant meeting. I have the names and addresses of several of the members of the churches in the States mentioned in this letter, and if any brother or sister would like to know of any near these places I would be pleased to give them their addresses.

I left home December 3rd, and returned January 9th, with many good things to think of, among them the thought of being made to feel so welcome to their homes.

I will close by saying, "I am a stranger here below, and what I am 'tis hard to know," but may this be a token of love to the household of faith.

GEORGE CONNER.

INDEPENDENCE, MO., Feb. 16, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS:—I am glad to note the interest the subscribers have taken in the two last numbers of the SIGNS to aid in sending the paper to "The Poor of the Flock." There are those who are so situated that they have no preaching, some are isolated from the church by distance, and others by feebleness, and to such the SIGNS with its rich editorials and spiritual letters from its correspondents is edifying and refreshing, and I hope the good work will be kept up, and enable our publishers to continue to publish the unadulterated truth the paper has advocated for over ninety-two years, without a single variation since its prospectus published in 1832, and I feel sure if it is God's purpose for the SIGNS to continue as in the past he will direct the minds of the subscribers to sustain it in its further duties. I was glad brother Hardy made the timely and sympathetic appeal to the subscribers in the last number. I believe it is more on account of negligence than intent, and believe our people are honest, and constrained to do right if notified of their duty in a kind way, as brother Hardy wrote, and I hope his timely words will have a beneficial effect.

Inclosed find check for $10.00 to be used as follows: $2.00 for Parries Rice, new subscriber, No. 73 South 12th Street, Kansas City, Kansas, $8.00 to aid the SIGNS. I hope to send more names soon.

Yours in hope,

THOMAS W. RECORDS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1925.

EDITOR

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

ONE of the SIGNS' readers has propounded to us three questions which he desires to have us answer. These are as follows: (1) What is a true mourner? (2) How does a preacher know when he is called to preach? (3) What is an ordination sermon?

A true mourner is one who mourns because he is a sinner. "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted," said Jesus. He did not refer to those who mourn because they have lost health or wealth, houses or lands, friends or kindred, but those who have been made to see themselves as poor helpless sinners before God, wholly guilty and deserving condemnation. This sort of mourning is begotten in the sinner's soul by the work of God's Spirit. This Spirit brings to light all the total depravity of one's human nature and discovers to the sinner his utter inability to extricate himself from the pit of iniquity. One cannot make one's self know that he is a sinner, one cannot find it out by reading the Scriptures, nor can he be taught his sinfulness by human teachers. The Holy Spirit alone can reveal this, and the Spirit once having begun this work in the soul carries it on irresistibly until Christ is formed in that one's soul the hope of glory. In this being brought unto Christ as the end of the law for righteousness, the believer finds his sole comfort and rest, his only surcease from the vileness he sees in himself.

A preacher knows when he is called to preach at such time or times as his gift meets with a response from his brethren, the church. The church is the sole judge of whether a man is called to preach or not. One cannot be the judge of the nature of one's own gift. If the church sees the gift to preach in one of its members they will certainly recognize that gift as a preaching gift and will call for that gift to be set apart to the work of the ministry. It is said in the Scriptures that the saints shall judge angels. What does this mean if not that the church shall judge those who minister unto it? Are not angels those who minister unto the heirs of redemption? Surely so. Then, these ministering gifts which mean so much to the comfort and welfare of God's people are all of them given from God for the service of the church, and all of them are subject to the judgment of the church. It therefore rests with the church to judge whether one is a deacon or an elder; whether the preacher is a pastor, a teacher or an evangelist. We do not deny that the individual whom God calls to preach will have an exercise of soul himself regarding the work of the ministry, but then it is so easy to think one is called to preach when one is not. One's exercises of mind might be wholly of the flesh and not of the Spirit at all, there might be a great deal of ambition or self-exaltation mixed up in the matter. Not that the person himself would be conscious that ambition or self-seeking was present in his mind, but it might be

very apparent to the church, and would, if detected, certainly disqualify one from the ministry. God never yet called a man to preach that he did not call someone to hear that man preach. There is no halfway work with God, his work is a complete and perfect work. It is just as necessary that some one be called to hear the preacher as it is that the preacher be called to preach. No really called minister of God ever preached in vain. Therefore, if one thinks himself called to preach, let him look for the seal of his ministry in the judgment of the church. Preaching the gospel means far more than simply beating the air and consuming a prescribed number of minutes or hours, it means far more than a mere flow of words, and far more than oratory or eloquence. None of these things makes a preacher. The one essential thing in preaching the gospel is power, and this power can come from nowhere else than from the presence of the unction of the Holy Spirit. Lacking this unction, there is no preaching, because there is no power; if no power, then there is no call to the ministry. It is perfectly self-evident therefore that the individual himself cannot be the judge as to what power or how much power, if any, accompanies his utterances. Of this matter the church must be and is the solely qualified judge.

An ordination sermon is the sermon preached at the time of the ordination of a brother to the ministry by one selected or appointed by the presbytery to preach it. Whenever a certain church thinks and believes that they have a brother in their midst who, in their judgment, is called to preach, the custom among Old Baptists generally has been for the church of this one's membership to set him at liberty that he may visit other sister churches as he may be invited by them, to give those sister churches the opportunity of hearing him and of judging of the nature of his gift. All this is in order that the home church may have the concurrent or divergent judgment of sister churches in the matter of this brother's gift. If the judgment of sister churches agrees with that of the home church in saying that this brother is called to preach, then the church of the brother's membership proceeds to call for his ordination. This is done by inviting sister churches to send their messengers to sit in council with the church sending out the call. At this meeting thus called together a presbytery is chosen, composed usually of all ordained elders present, to proceed with the matter of ordination. To the presbytery thus chosen, the church delivers her candidate for ordination to be examined. The presbytery proceeds with this examination of the candidate by inquiring into his experience of grace, his call to the ministry, and questions him also as to his belief and standing upon points of doctrine and church order. The presbytery being satisfied with this examination, and having assured itself that the brother is qualified for the work of the ministry, proceeds to ordain him by prayer and the laying on of hands and the giving of the charge. Then comes the ordination sermon, which is preached by whatever elder the presbytery may appoint to do it. This ordination sermon differs in no real particular from any other sermon. It is, and it ought to be, the preaching of the gospel. The one preaching it can only preach it as his mind may be led, and it is not possible nor desirable for him to follow any prescribed form in preaching it. To do so would be to render it an abomination instead of an edification. As a matter of fact, the few ordination sermons

which we have heard since ourselves being among the Old Baptists have been along the line of the work of the ministry, elucidating its joys and sorrows, its burdens and its privileges, its duties and its cares; not that the minister preaching it had in anywise prepared what he should say beforehand, but simply that his mind would generally be led along to speak of these matters in connection with the ordination at hand.

We hope we have written nothing amiss in setting down any of the above statements. If we have made any mistakes in this matter, or if any of our readers feel that we have not rightly apprehended this matter, we will thank you to write and tell us wherein we have stated the matter erroneously. Strange as it may seem to those who read these lines, we have never witnessed but one ordination besides our own in all the twenty-four years of our membership in the Old School Baptist Church. Therefore we may easily be mistaken in this matter. We are absolutely in earnest, therefore, when we say we want you to let us know if you detect anything in any of the above which we have not stated correctly. Some churches of our faith and order favor doing away with the "licensing" as a preliminary to ordination, and believe in proceeding with ordination so soon as it is evident that a brother is called to preach; other churches hold that the candidate should serve a term as a licentiate before being ordained. We have not gone into the merits of this matter here, believing it better to leave the discussion to older and wiser heads than ours.

L.

ECCLESIASTES IX. 14, 15.

"THERE was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it: now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man."

It has been requested that we write upon the above Scripture, particularly regarding the poor wise man who by his wisdom saved the city. The apostle John said, and so we believe, that the world could not contain the books if everything were written concerning him, yet at this time we feel ourselves to be so ignorant of him and his wisdom that it is with fearfulness we attempt to write. It is no harder for the ox to go to the slaughter than for us at this time to write on spiritual things. The church of God in all ages has been like a city set upon a hill that cannot be hid, so small that the world knoweth them not, yet they are hated of all men for his name's sake. We believe this little city is the church militant, which is but little compared with the rest of mankind. At no time have there been more than few men in it. Men are the defense of a city, but these few men were unable to defend the city against the invaders. Of these men some were soldiers raised for the defense of the city, others as householders were to bring out of their treasure things new and old; these are the men of whom Paul wrote when he said, "If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." They are also spoken of as stewards and as watchmen who shall lift up the voice together. We say there have never been more than a few; Jesus said the laborers were few; there are but a few to-day, yes, very few stewards that are found faithful. Darkness has covered the earth and gross darkness the

people. Now in themselves these few men who are soldiers, stewards, householders and watchmen have no might against that great king, Satan, who has ever been their enemy. The history of this little city proves, and every citizen from his own experience knows, that Satan has sought the destruction of this city with all its inhabitants, but it pleased the Lord that the poor wise man should be one with the inhabitants, tempted in all points like unto them, yet without sin, and he is able to succor those that are tempted. The closeness of the siege and the fearfulness of an impending doom did not qualify the men of the city with wisdom to find the poor man, or even to seek him out. He was found of them that sought him not, they had not the ability to seek him by nature, therefore the question arises, How was the poor man found? He was revealed by God the Father, as Jesus said to Peter, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." This poor wise man, Jesus, the seed of the woman, despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, poor, for he had not where to lay his head, was born to die; wise, for he was the wisdom of God in a mystery. He was found in the fashion of a man, and he alone is the wisdom of the city, everything hanging on him as on a nail in a sure place. Jesus, the poor wise man, came as man to suffer, as God to save. From the commencement of the siege Satan knew if he could finally destroy one of the citizens he would have good grounds to expect by more terrible assaults to destroy them all for

> "If one believer may be lost,
> It follows, so may all."

Such was the condition of the citizens by nature that they were like dry brands fit for the burning, not a whit better than the children of wrath. Jesus, the poor wise man, by his wisdom, knew our condition and degradation, saved us and bore our iniquities. The great king, Satan, is a subtle foe; he gave the lie to all that God had said to our first parents, beguiled the woman and brought condemnation upon her seed, therefore our fallen nature is an easy prey to this wicked king, and his every aim is towards our undoing. We are encompassed with innumerable enemies, hosts of devils and wicked men, both professors and profane, the corruptions of the human heart which are many, but we are weakness itself at our best. Satan has ever moved professor and profane against this little city to destroy it, and it has often been their cry, "Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof." The fact that every citizen by nature is a child of wrath with no redeeming feature in himself is in itself a great bulwark from which Satan often sends his fiery darts at the city. It is the presence of the poor wise man (for "the angel of his presence saved them") that saves the city. As a man the world saw him. Pilate said, "Behold the man." They saw him poor, no one to plead his cause, scourged, spit upon and crowned with thorns, but they were not wise to see that this was the Way of Salvation that lifted up the heads of that little city. Wisdom means "the best means to accomplish the best ends," and that is just what Jesus was, and in making himself an offering for sin he became death of death's and hell's destruction, and by his wisdom, and his only, he brought in an everlasting righteousness, saving unto the uttermost them that come unto God by him. He delivered his darling from the power of the dogs. This is he "who

of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." The church to-day, just as the individual taught of God, finds Satan ever ready to resist, and if the Lord raises up one man and endues him with the poor man's wisdom, the devil will stir up earth and hell against that man, nevertheless, the poor man's wisdom shall be his salvation. There are, as there always have been, those who creep into the city unawares, men with seducing spirits, who have never felt the plague of their own hearts or seen that their wisdom is foolishness. These are "lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers," &c., "from such," saith Paul, "turn away." This little city was to dwell alone and was not to be reckoned among the nations. They have ever been in the wilderness of this world never to figure in the histories of men. Though there have been many so-called church histories, yet it is our humble opinion that the only church history that is reliable is in the pages of the Bible written by holy men of old, few men at that, yet their testimony, much of it in the form of prophecy, was history before it transpired. Most of the so-called churches in the world came from the church of Rome, who is the mother of harlots. To-day they are all one in doctrine, and as time advances they are likely to return thither again. At best they are some of the great bulwarks built by the devil against the little city. The flood of false religion professed by them is as water cast out by that great and wicked king sent to overcome the city, but swallowed up by the earth, which means the people of the earth. From every quarter Satan's warriors attack the election of grace, but when they are met with God's word, which is the poor man's wisdom, they, like Satan their king, are vanquished. Now although our Lord Jesus, the poor wise man, by his wisdom saved the city, yet no man remembered that same poor man. So forgetful are we and fallen by nature, that after we have witnessed the saving power of Jesus, yet we forget the Lord that bought us, get into trouble and try our own wisdom which is folly, and we should be utterly overcome by the enemy but for the mercy of God, who sends his good Spirit to bring the former days to our remembrance. The chief butler had his dream interpreted by Joseph, yet he did not remember Joseph, but forgot him. Thus Peter and others of the disciples when Jesus was gone said, "I go a fishing," and thus it is with most of the men of the city. In dire necessity, the poor man comes to their aid, they are delivered and transported to the third heaven, far above earth and time things. Indwelling sin in the form of pride and vainglory will so puff them up that they forget the poor wise man and his wisdom is despised and his words not heard. The Remembrancer will cause them to remember the wormwood and the gall, and their soul being humbled within them their visage will then appear vile, more marred than other men, and their form more than the sons of men, and so distressed are they and full of fearful forebodings that they have not where to lay their heads. The good Spirit so guides them that in the likeness of sinful flesh they have found the poor wise man, and thus the Word is made flesh, for they are members of his body, his flesh and his bones, and his wisdom is salvation unto them.

G. R.

A SUGGESTION.

To those of our brethren, sisters and friends of the Old School Baptist faith to whom God has given plenteously of this world's goods, just a word of suggestion to you. When making arrangements for the disposal of your property after you are through with it would it not be well to remember those of your own household in the faith, the church, the poor of the flock and our ministers, the called and qualified of God, who, obeying the call, go about ministerng of the spiritual food to his saints, feeding the sheep and the lambs, leaving their homes and families with many cares and hardships, that a little of your abundance would relieve, and so fulfill the word, "Bear ye one another's burdens," which otherwise would go to the world, not used for the furtherance of the gospel and truth, but rather in opposition to it? Brethren, think on these things. A word to the wise is sufficient.

A friend of the cause,

J. E. LIVINGSTON.

COBLESKILL, N. Y.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

The Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in New York City wishes to announce to all her brethren and friends that commencing May 1st, 1925, services will be held at 106 West 59th St., New York City. We have enjoyed your visits in the past, and we welcome you whenever you come to this city.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Elder W. W. Slaughter has changed his address from Edgewood, Texas, to R. 1, Edgewood, Texas, where his correspondents will please address him.

John R. Havens having changed his address from Santa Anna, Texas, to Coleman, Texas, wishes his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder W. N. Tharp was born in Tipton County, Indiana, December 9th, 1849, and united with the Primitive Baptist Church in early youth and began preaching before he was of age. October 5th, 1872, he was married to Mary Ann Newhouse, of near Morristown, Ind. They had one son, who died at birth and one son, Charles W. Tharp, who with his wife Rose, is now living in Jacksonville, Fla. He was the son of Samuel and Elizabeth Tharp, pioneers of Tipton County, Ind. He leaves one brother, David, now living in Missouri, and one, Harris, in Oregon. He was for many years a member of Shiloh Church, near Morristown, Ind., where he was ordained to the ministry in 1878, but about 1892 moved his membership to Bethlehem Church, near College Corner, Ohio. Moving with his family from Greenfield, Ind., to Liberty later he moved his membership from Bethlehem Church to Fairfield Church. January 1st, 1919, he united with Sugar Grove Church, at Goodwin Corner, Ind., where he retained his membership until his death. He taught school in early life, but on account of ill health he began working as a contracting carpenter, which occupation he followed for many years. In the last few years he had been in the greenhouse business in Liberty, building up a large business from a small beginning within a short time. This he followed until age and ill health compelled him to retire. He traveled extensively through many states, proclaiming the unsearchable riches of God, and was truly a spiritual-minded man, deeply interested in his church, and disclaiming any merit or trust in works of righteousness which he had done, relying wholly and entirely upon the free grace and mercy of God. He was a lover of children and found his greatest joy in their companionship. No sacrifice was too great for their pleasure. On the 18th day of July, of this year, he was taken with his last sickness, and on the 25th started with his son Charles for Jacksonville, Fla., where he was cared for in his son's home until August the 28th, when he was removed to St. Luke's Hospital, where he stayed until his death, which occurred at 9:45 p. m., September 4th. He died in peace.

Mrs. Annie L. Yates, the devoted wife of Elder J. H. Yates, and daughter of Thomas and Mary McNeely, was born June 17th, 1851, and died January 22nd, 1925. She was marrried to Elder J. H. Yates June 17th, 1879, of whom she was bereft in the autumn of 1901. Two of their seven children also preceded her. The remaining five are Elder Otto Yates, of Martin, Tenn.; Mrs. Ruth Adams, of Water Valley, Ky.; Mrs. Nora George, of Wingo, Ky.; Mrs. Mary Covington, of Mayfield, Ky.; Mrs. Greta Griffin, of Boonsboro, Ark., who are left to mourn their loss.

They were models of piety, honesty and uprightness, and their orderly walk and godly conversation all tend to modify the grief of their children, from which more solid comfort is derived than treasures of gold. May the Lord impress them to persist in striving to imitate this most worthy example. She is mourned by many other relatives and friends, besides her sister, the only one left of a large family, all of whom we hope have preceded her to that better land. She was very fond of her, and their souls seemed knit together, bound by natural ties for more than seventy years. While in their teens they professed a hope in Christ, and two years later united with the Primitive Baptists at Brush Creek, Ky., and, together with an older sister, were baptized by their pastor, Elder W. P. O'Kelly, May, 1873. She remained a devoted, consistent member of that order for nearly fifty-two years, when God saw fit to take her from this world of sorrow, pain and death. Her afflictions for ten years were very painful and incurable, each attack bringing her lower, and more than once dear friends were summoned to her bedside to bid her farewell, but she lived on for more than a year. She bore her afflictions with great fortitude, and would say, Why is this poor sinner spared and those full of life and vigor taken? "Judge not the Lord by feeble sense, but trust him for his grace," &c. Yes, she waited until Jesus called, but her sister waited too late to make good the promise to return and stay until death should part them. She was too far away to attend burial, but calmly submits to divine Providence that cannot err, hoping she is not lost, but gone before. She read much from her papers (the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and the *Gospel Standard*) while lying down, without the aid of glasses, and her mind was not at all impaired. She loved the glorious truth they advocated. Having abundant evidence of the love of God to her, she could not help loving his people in return wherever she found them. Her path was sometimes rough and crooked, like all God's people, causing trouble which being banished ere long according to His promise to make rough places smooth, &c., very often the "ups and downs" of the lawful heirs. The hymns, "O Zion, afflicted with wave upon wave," &c., and "Love is the sweetest bud that blows," were great favorites of hers, and the twenty-third Psalm, "The Lord is my Shepherd," &c., was sweet to her, especially after passing through the trials of the one preceding it. She lived with Mrs. Nora George, a daughter, who ministered to her every need with marked devotion. However her task was much alleviated by two sisters living near, also an aunt, and the best of neighbors, to whom we shall ever feel indebted. She was never very healthy, but invariably attended both days of her monthly meeting if possible. She attended meeting the last time at Wingo, it being the the seventy-ninth annual session of Soldier Creek Association of Old School Baptists, held with the church at Frost's Chapel, Graves Co., Ky., October 1923. She returned home with an infected hand, which barely escaped amputation, but finally healed and a slow poisoning from its effects seemed to invade her whole body, and the suffering she endured without a murmur cannot be told. She was not able to walk for nearly a year. In this condition pneumonia developed and snatched her away, barely giving her children time to witness the end. She only spoke a word or two, but lovingly feasted her eyes from one to the other, and she was perfectly conscious until they closed. Her lamp went out leaving no visible token of suffering and little of age. Her cup of suffering was full, but all earthly things were left behind and changed for oil of gladness, for we shall see Him as he is and be like him, and be satisfied.

Elders A. J. Luther and T. J. Prince were called to conduct funeral services, but neither was able to attend on account of illness, and the place was kindly filled by a Missionary Baptist, a friend of her son's. Interment was in the family burying-ground at her home. We breath kind words to broken hearts, and pray God to comfort them.

Her sister,

SOPHIA COPELAND.

Sister **Sara Sinclair**, daughter of Archie and Effie Campbell, died at her home near Duart, Ontario, February 29th, 1924, in her 66th year. Sister Sinclair was united in marriage to Duncan Sinclair December 21st, 1882, and to this union were born four children, two sons and two daughters, all are still living. Sister Sinclair was received into the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church on the fourth Sunday in September, 1902, and was baptized at Lobo, October 5th, 1902, by Elder W. I. Carnell. Sister Sinclair about two years before her death suffered a slight paralytic stroke, from which she never fully recovered her strength; although she appeared in her usual health, yet she felt a weakness and tired easily. Her chief joy was attending meeting and meeting with her kindred in Christ. She seldom missed being present at our meetings, and was an attentive listener. Sister Sinclair was blessed with a clear understanding of principles of doctrine and enjoyed the strong meat of the gospel. She loved to converse upon spiritual things, having been separated from the trifling things of time and sense. She was highly favored with sweet meditations upon the inspired word of God. She was left a widow by the sudden death of her beloved husband for four years, and while she had every earthly comfort, surrounded with kind and loving children, and blessed with a pleasant home and a host of friends, yet she spent the years of her widowhood in mourning for her beloved husband. She was blessed by the enabling grace of God to bear her loss with great fortitude,

looking forward to the time when she would be called from this world of sorrow into that sweet rest that remains for the people of God. Her home always was and still is a welcome place for those of like precious faith. Sister Sinclair leaves to mourn their loss four children: Clifford, at home, and Ernest, of Kingsville; Mrs. Robert Kerr, of Duart; Mrs. James Driver, of Palmyra, Ont., together with three brothers and two sisters: Peter A., of St. Thomas; John and Daniel, of Lobo, also Mrs. John Graham, of Komoka, and Mrs. Margaret Graham, of London, Ont., besides many other relatives and friends. We are glad to state that all of her children, together with her brothers and sisters, are faithful attendants of the Covenanted Baptist Church, and are believers in the doctrine held and preached by the Old School Baptists. Her younger brother, Daniel, is a member of the church. Sister Sinclair lived in the hope of the resurrection, and died in full assurance of faith that at the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ he would change and raise her vile body and fashion it like unto his own glorious body. I will conclude by saying that the church has lost a worthy member, the community a good citizen and her family a devoted mother.

Her funeral was held from her late home, conducted by the writer, and was largely attended. Burial was in the Duart Cemetery. May the rich blessing of divine Providence rest and abide upon the sorrowing family, is my earnest desire.

J. B. SLAUSON.

On the morning of March 15th, 1925, the death angel took from this life **J. T. Amason, Sr.,** after several days of suffering. All was done for him that the attending physician and loving hands could do, but he quietly passed to his reward. A good man is fallen and a kind father and faithful husband is taken away. He was born near Atlanta, Georgia, February 6th, 1845, making his stay on earth a little over eighty years. They moved to this county about 1847, where he spent his life. "Uncle Tom," as the most of us called him, was one of the Confederate soldiers and spent four years in the cruel war fighting for his country, and he was the last one that was in our midst to be taken away. He never united with the church, but loved and contended for the doctrine of salvation by grace. His service in the war was with the Third Arkansas Regiment, under General Lee and Colonel Manning. I heard him relate many incidents that took place with him while serving in the war that he was forced to believe was the hand of Providence caring for him, for which he desired to thank the Lord for his wonderful mercy extended to him, though he did not feel worthy of the least of his favors. He bore his sufferings with much patience, and a few days before his death stated to the writer and his dear family that he knew he had to go, but did not dread it one bit, the suffering was all he dreaded, and the blessed Lord was his only hope. He leaves to mourn his death his loving wife, two sons, J. T. and F. J. Amason, four daughters, Mrs. Mattie Smith, Mrs. Jettie Murp, Mrs. Alta Lee, Mrs. Winnie Davis and several grandchildren, together with his many friends. I would say to the members of his dear family who are left to mourn, Weep not for him as one who had no hope, for in my association with him and from the many sweet conversations I had with him I am assured and can assure you and all who knew him that he had a sweet and blessed hope of life immortal beyond the grave. While his body sleeps beneath the sod his soul is basking in the sweet smiles of a once crucified but now risen Redeemer, there to await the resurrection morn. He loved his family and was continually looking after their welfare and the welfare of his country. It was interesting to hear him tell of the many conflicts and trials that had overtaken him while making his long journey through life. We all feel sad that we shall see him no more, for he was a frequent visitor to our home, but we know his loved ones will miss him more, for that vacant chair is seen every day by them and brings much sorrow to their hearts, but, dear family, let us all try and be reconciled to God's most holy will, for we must remember that God's will must and shall be done in all things, in earth as in heaven, and say, Sleep on, dear father, for we know that what God appoints is best.

His body was laid to rest March 16th, in the cemetery at Bethel Church, where his dear wife holds membership, and of which church the writer is pastor. Owing to a heavy downpour of rain we had to bury him without any funeral service.

Written by the request of the family by one who esteemed him highly,

T. J. EVERS.

John I. Davenport was born August 17th, 1844, in Schoharie County, N. Y., and died February 12th, 1924, aged 79 years, 5 months and 26 days. He was married in 1871 to Miss Mary G. Davenport. Ten children were born to them, of whom seven are living. His wife died in 1911. He was baptized in Troy, N. Y., by Elder D. M. Vail, of Waverly, Pa., about twenty years ago, more or less, I do not know exactly. He loved to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and took it for many years. He was a strong believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine and always attended their meetings when he could. He believed that by grace we are saved, and gave God all the praise, honor and glory.

Funeral services were conducted by H. B. Kimmey, of Albany, N. Y., and his body was laid to rest in Waterford Rural Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

(MRS.) THOMAS JACKSON.

Mrs. L. E. Cardwell, wife of Elder A. P. Cardwell, was born in Desoto County, Mississippi, December 25th, 1854, and died from the effects of pneumonia, at her home in Vernon, Texas, February 9th, 1925, making her stay on earth 70 years, 1 month and 14 days. Sister Cardwell was a daughter of Daniel McClain, and professed a hope in Jesus at the age of sixteen years. She moved with her parents to Ellis County, Texas, in the year 1875. In 1884 she was married to Elder A. P. Cardwell, and to that union four children were born, two boys and two girls, all living. Sister Cardwell also assisted brother Cardwell in raising six children by a former marriage, all of whom survive. She was baptized in the fellowship of Hopewell Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, of Ellis County, Texas, by Elder D. D. Wright, the third Sunday in July, 1891. She was indeed a very self-denying sister, giving her life and energy to others. Her home was truly an Old Baptist home, and she delighted to serve that others might be happy, caring for her home, children and step-children that Elder Cardwell might go and preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. She was sound in faith and doctrine and trusted in God alone for life and salvation, believing that God is a sovereign and worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and that salvation is by grace. She believed that the heirs of promise shall be raised from the dead unto an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled to dwell with Jesus and all the redeemed of the Lord for ever and ever. The church and her husband and children have sustained an irreparable loss by her death, but our loss is her eternal gain. While we sorrow and wait she (as we believe) is basking in the sunlight of God's holy kingdom with the Father, Son and holy angels for ever and ever. May we all seek to imitate her worthy christian life and meet her in the celestial city above.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. B. Hughes, and by request this notice was written by

W. S. BOURLAND.

Mary Adeline Jones was born in one of the Carolinas February 13th, 1839, and died February 22nd, 1925, aged 86 years and 9 days. She was the daughter of Joe and Elizabeth (nee Jinks) Cagle. Her parents moved to the State of Georgia when she was two years old, where she grew to womanhood and was united in marriage to Wesley Ballard Jones January 21st, 1857. They moved to Arkansas and resided there during the Civil War, then moved to Texas about the year 1865. To this union were born one daughter, who died in infancy, and one son, Charley, living near May, Brown Co., Texas, with whom she was living at the time of her death, her husband having preceded her many years. She received a hope in Christ at eighteen years of age, soon after uniting with a church in Coryell County, Texas, her husband joining at the same time, and were both baptized by Elder Jesse Graham. Brother Jones was ordained by the same church to the office of Deacon. Brother and sister Jones were well known to the household of faith throughout this country. A large congregation of relatives and friends attended her burial. Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder J. C. Kilgore, after which her body was laid to rest, to await the second coming of her Lord on the resurrection morn, when he shall call her from her sweet sleep, likewise all the redeemed family of God, to meet him and be like him, for then she shall see him as he is. We would comfort the bereaved son and relatives, and also the sorrowing friends, with the thought that she lived in hope of the resurrection, which, to her, will be but a small moment until she will awake to the full realization of never-ending glory and immortality.

J. I. FOSTER.

Emily F. Davis, the subject of this notice, was born March 19th, 1855, and departed this life October 12th, 1924, aged 69 years, 6 months and 23 days. She was united in marriage to Paul Davis November 22nd, 1882, and to this union five children were born. She was the daughter of Elder Melton, of the Pocatalico Association, who served them as Moderator for a number of years. She was not a member of the visible church, but was a strong believer in the doctrine of the Old School Baptists.

I was called to conduct the funeral, which was largely attended, and took for my text Job xiv. 1-4. Her body was laid to rest to await the resurrection morn, when Gabriel shall put one foot upon the sea and the other upon the land and swear by him that liveth forever that time shall be no more.

W. I. WADE.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, it has pleased almighty God to remove by death from our midst sister **M. A. Jones,** therefore be it

Resolved, that Macedonian Church record upon the pages of her church book her obituary and this memorial as an expression of our love and the high esteem in which she was held as a mother in Israel. Her removal leaves a sad vacancy in our worshiping congregation which cannot be filled, but our sadness is sweetly tempered with the ever-present remembrance that our loss is her blissful gain. God saw fit to call her to glory and virtue in early womanhood. Therefore her life has been a long and exemplary one, in which shown forth the virtues and christian graces which so beautifully adorned her long and useful life in the church of God. Being now dead she yet speaketh thereby to the younger sons and daughters of Zion's King who knew her, and so God has added

her to the long list of the illustrious dead of whom he has by the pen of John the revelator said, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

J. I. Foster, Texas, $1.00; L. D. Perry, Tenn., $1.00; Walter Peacock, England, $2.00; Mrs. Kate Lunsford, Ky., $1.00; T. J. Bell, Okla., $1.00; Mrs. Sirena Bowen, Ill., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

The Baltimore Association will be held May 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1925, with Ebenezer Church, 210 East Madison Street, near Calvert Street, Baltimore, Md. The meetinghouse will be open on Tuesday, May 19th, from 2 o'clock to 5 o'clock, where visitors will be met and given place of entertainment. A cordial invitation is extended to all to meet with us.

ALVIS S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association is to be held with the Welsh Tract Church, the Lord willing, to begin on Wednesday before the last Sunday in May, 1925, and continue three days (May 27th, 28th and 29th). Those coming from Philadelphia or Baltimore can come on either the B. & O., or P. W. & B. R. R., on Wednesday morning. The trains leave Philadelphia, B. & O., at 8:02, and P. W. & B., at 7:20. Leave Baltimore, B. & O., Mt. Royal, at 8:12, or P. W. & B., at 7:55, Union Station. Those coming via Delaware R. R. will change cars at Porter and consult "time table" as to time of leaving. All lovers of the truth as held by us, and especially ministers in good standing with us, are cordially invited to meet with us. Get tickets to Newark, Del., where you will be met and conveyed to place of meeting.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, Mercer County, New Jersey, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1925. Trains leaving New York and Philadelphia on Tuesday afternoon, June 2nd, will be met and visitors taken to places of entertainment. Those coming Wednesday morning will come direct to the meetinghouse. All lovers of the truth and ministering brethren of our faith and order are invited to be with us. The meeting will be on Daylight Saving time.

DAVID M. VOORHEES, Church Clerk.
R. D. 1, PENNINGTON, N. J.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expect Elder George Ruston to be with them the fifth Sunday in May, 1925. For convenience services to be held at the home of J. E. Livingston, 64 E. Main St., Cobleskill, N. Y., at 11 a. m., and 2:30 p. m. All welcome who desire the truth.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (10th, 11th and 12th), 1925. Those coming from and via New York City will take Erie R. R. Ferry foot of West 23d Street or Chambers Street for train leaving from Jersey City. Get tickets for Howells, N. Y. Those coming from and via Kingston, N. Y., will take Ontario and Western train from Kingston. Get tickets for Winterton, N. Y. Trains will be met and friends cared for. Time of trains will be announced later when new schedules will be effective. Those coming by automobile will go to the home of Mr. Fred Beyea (The Old Homestead) on arrival at New Vernon.

A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, sisters and friends.

R. LESTER DODSON, Moderator.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 106 West 59th Street, Manhattan.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue
(Park Avenue Hall)
PHILADELPHIA, PA
Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.
ALL WELCOME

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED EACH MONTH

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 93. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1925. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FT. BRANCH, Ind., Jan. 17, 1925.

DEAR BROTHER MCCLANAHAN:—Several months ago I wrote you, expressing my commendation of an article which appeared over your signature. I received your reply and have wanted to acknowledge it ever since, but have never felt I could write anything that would interest you, and feel the same way now, but I want to say that I appreciated your letter very much. I have read it over many times, and expect to do so again. I always take special interest in an article when I see your name signed to it. I may try to write to you again when I can have something to write about. For the present I want to ask a favor of you: If you have a mind to comply I would like your views on the word "convert" as it is used in the Scriptures. In one place, the nineteenth Psalm, it says, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Also in the New Testament, where Paul said, "He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way," &c. The change that came to Saul on the way to Damascus is spoken of as a conversion (not in the Scripture itself however). Do you distinguish between regeneration and conversion? and how? I believe you will understand what is on my mind. If you should have a mind to write on the above subject I will be glad to read it any time. I know it is much easier to ask questions than to answer them.

Yours in the faith of the gospel,

BUFORD OLDHAM.

POCA, W. VA., March 4, 1925.

DEAR BROTHER OLDHAM:—Having never met you in person, we may say we are strangers in the flesh, but I feel to hope we are dearly related in the Spirit, which relation brings us near to each other as the children of God. Being taught and brought to a knowledge of the truth in the school of grace the Scriptures testify of this truth: "Thy children [God's children] shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." In this school they are taught the knowledge of the saving power of God's given grace, which he gave them in Christ Jesus before the world began, a special provision made by God the Father for these children, who receive a special atonement for their sins. I think this vital principle of doctrine

brings peace to all quickened children of God when they feel the special application of the atonement by the Son of God on Cavalry's rugged cross for them to take away their sins.

In your letter to me you have requested I give my views on a part of the seventh verse of the nineteenth chapter of the Psalms of David, which reads thus, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Much is said by conditionalists about having many conversions during their protracted soul-saving efforts. Since it is true that men and women can be converted from one error to another, and not have any knowledge of what a true conversion means, such is very distasteful to one who has truly been converted from law to gospel righteousness, from dead faith under the old covenant to living faith in the new covenant. David says, The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. The law which David is referring us to has the power of convincing by demanding strict obedience to its mandate, which the trembling child of God is not able to give. In this time of trouble they learn that if there had been a law given that would have given life verily righteousness had been by the law. There is no promise of eternal life in the law. While its death sentence is ringing in the ear, and the power of its condemnation sinking deep into the heart, saying, The soul that sins shall die, it seems to me in Jesus Christ law and gospel meet to the glory of God, and by him the commandments and promises are all fulfilled. The law being magnified by the obedience of Jesus Christ, according to promise he has saved his people from their sins by his blood, freed them from the condemnation of the law by his obedience, abolished death by his resurrection, he has obtained eternal redemption for the entire elect family, soul, body and spirit.

Now as to what constitutes the soul. We see Adam as he came from the hand of his Creator, a lifeless lump of clay, God breathed into his nostrils the breath of natural life and he (Adam) became a living soul, a living, active, moving man, having a natural instinct above that of the brute creation. His superiority gave him the preeminence over all animal kind. God gave him a law with its penalty annexed, which was a death sentence as a transgressor or violator of said law. He ate and died. In Ezekiel xviii. 20, we read, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Now to me it appears that the soul is the understanding, the intellectual principle which enables one to think and to reason. As one of old has said, Come, let us reason together. We hear the Lord speaking by the mouth of David, saying, "Therefore [for this cause] my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [the grave]; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One [the body] to see corruption." We understand this Scripture as having reference to the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave. In the flesh he was human, in the Spirit he was divine. Now to the power of the law of the Lord being perfect, converting the soul, I will say, The law reveals God demanding obedience in the covenant of works, the gospel reveals God working by the covenant of grace. When one turns from laboring under the law to that rest which remains for them in the gospel, the finished work of Jesus, the evidence is clear that the law of the Lord was perfect, converting the soul. Paul says, "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the

law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?"—Rom. vii. 1. I view Moses in many respects beautifully typifying the work of the law, for the law was given to Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. There is not a doubt on my mind with reference to Moses (the law) being perfect in accomplishing the purpose God had in giving him the law. The work of Moses (the law) is to bring the quickened sinner to the border of the goodly land, Canaan, and in this his work as a servant is perfect, converting the soul. While he himself could not enter the promised land, Canaan, which represents gospel rest, the finished work of Jesus Christ, the law is to discover the corruption of quickened sinners and to make it manifest to them that they are sinful, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. As the law is holy, just and good, by so much does it show the sinfulness of the flesh. The Lord tells Moses, Yet thou shalt see land before thee, but thou shalt not go thither unto the land which I give the children of Israel. He further tells Moses, This is the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed. I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither. Moses must die at the mouth of the Lord, and no man knows of his grave to this day. When one is truly convinced that there is no promise of eternal life in the law, that it knows no mercy, has no sin-pardoning voice, and that its demands cannot be met by a poor hell-deserving sinner, such as I feel myself to be, it is then that the law becomes lifeless to the sinner and he becomes dead to the law. For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. When the law is sent into the heart and the quickened sinner is brought under its power he also learns that the law is weak through the flesh, for by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified before God. For by the law is the knowledge of sin. Now Moses is dead and buried, old things having passed away, and, behold, all things have become new, and now he feels that he should no longer worship in the oldness of the letter, but now in the newness of the Spirit.

With reference to regeneration, I will say none are subjects of regeneration but the generation of Jesus Christ. It seems that the heart is the seat of reception. To regenerate is to renew the heart by a change of affection from natural enmity to the love of God, to implant holy affections in the heart; born anew; changed in heart, changed from a natural to a spiritual state. "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." When the stony heart has been removed, and the heart of flesh given, the law of the Lord is written there, never to be erased.

Your brother in affliction,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

PALATKA, Florida.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—I have been sick since February 4th, having suffered a slight stroke, affecting the right side, and while I have been sick have received many kind and encouraging letters. This one from brother Miller is so comforting I think it would be good reading in the SIGNS for those who may be afflicted either in body or mind. I am improving all the time, but while it seems slow to me, I am able to wait on myself and go out every day, for which I hope I am truly thankful. I sincerely hope you and your family are well. My love to them all.

GEORGIA WARREN.

NEWARK, Del., Feb. 22, 1925.

DEAR SISTER GEORGIA:—This is a time I have to myself (Sunday), and will try to convey a few thoughts to you since you are afflicted, but there is but One who can comfort you as you would like. If he condescends to come down into your heart you can say with Paul, Most gladly therefore will I glory in mine infirmities. But, dear sister, that grace must be present, it is essential to walk by faith to say such things as, I glory in mine infirmities. The skin does not like to be pricked, we do not like to be hurt, we cannot stand much of pain in the flesh; no, and therefore it is necessary for the Lord to be present in our hearts when we are to suffer (as you are now), or my words of condolence will have no effect upon you whatever. I attended a funeral at Hopewell, the first Monday in this month, next door to brother Vaughn's, one of his congregation (old Mrs. Hartwell), and one of the hymns selected by Mrs. Titus, her daughter, was hymn 603 (Beebe's collection), "How tedious and tiresome the hours, when Jesus no longer I see." When he takes away from us all pleasures of this world, even home ties, for he says ye shall forsake father, mother, sister and brother, if you would take up my cross; when he brings us to this place, then the eye of faith is exercised within us, and in sickness and pain we can glory in our infirmities.

"His name yields the richest perfume,
And sweeter than music his voice,
His presence disperses my gloom,
And makes all within me rejoice."

His holy Spirit is operating in our hearts when we can sing this melody or have this sentiment in our hearts.

"While blessed with a sense of his love,
A palace a toy would appear;
And prisons would palaces prove,
If Jesus would dwell with me there."

But when he disappears again, his Spirit behind the cloud, oh, darkness again supercedes light, and we mourn for his presence again.

"Dear Lord, if indeed I am thine,
If thou art my sun and my song;
Say, why do I languish and pine,
And why are my winters so long?

Oh drive these dark clouds from my sky,
Thy soul-cheering presence restore;
Or take mé unto thee on high,
Where winter and clouds are no more."

Oh many times have I been in this last state, have pleaded for him to take me, and even now, if it is his will, take me now. What is there to be comforted with? This world's goods are but a passing vanity, life here is but a vapor, if we live long years what have we in the end? Nothing but vanity and vexation, but that little hope of life in Christ is more than the riches of this world. Yet in this pilgrimage we are in contact with the world most of the time, and it is impossible to even think upon him whom we love, for John says, We love God because he first loved us, and if we can boast of a little hope in him, a hope that we have been regenerated, if faith is exercised in us, we can surely say we love God; but to feel it the Holy Spirit must operate within us at the time. In the flesh we cannot say this. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. The word "Life" covers it all. He is Life itself, and if we are included in that number that have been washed by his blood, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, then we can surely go farther and say with John, We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. This life is what binds together on earth, it is his life and love in us, that

when exercised by faith gives us the desire to be together at our homes and associations, forsaking not the assembling of ourselves together. When that little hope is exercised by faith God's little ones can surely be included with those of whom Paul says, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." There again is this life "that dwelleth in you," there is the heirship. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Paul goes on to say, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Then we come to where Paul says, "We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." That is, we wait by faith until the Father of lights cometh down from above, in whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. It is the Holy Spirit we must wait for; we cannot command it. He helpeth our infirmities; we cannot even pray for anything, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Then who shall separate us from this love of Christ? Your experience is as Paul's, he says nothing can.

When I sat down to pen you a few words, sister Georgia, I had no idea of going so deep into this subject, but my mind was led to write these things, and I do hope He sweetened it a little for me while writing, and if it comes to you that way it must be of the Lord. It has been a long time since I have written a word, so barren have I been I was drifting fast into the world again, but he will keep us, he will not tempt us beyond what is common to man, and he will make a way of escape for his children in whatever temptation the lust of the flesh brings us. May the Lord comfort you as only he can comfort, and your experience teaches you it must come from him alone. Whatever is consistent with his will, may we all profit by it according to the measure he will deal to each of us. It comes in different ways and forms to us all, but when the thorn pricks us his grace is sufficient for us, but we can depend our strength will be exhausted and his made perfect; in other words, exalted above earth for the time being by the exercise of faith within us. When we can view by the eye of faith, then we are not walking by sight.

Your brother in hope of life in Christ,

J. B. MILLER.

PROVERBS XIV. 12; XVI. 25.

"THERE is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

The way that seems right to a man is always the wrong way. If it were not it would not always end in disaster. A man is never lost as long as he knows the way home, so if he makes a start at all he starts the way that seems right, but it is directly from home. Therefore the way that seems right is not the way of drunkenness, reveling, lying, stealing or any other lawless way, for those things do not seem right to any sensible man or woman, so the "way which seemeth right" must be the way of the Pharisee or the hypocrite, and the two characteristics are generally found in the same fellow. If he is a Pharisee he is ever trying to parade his goodness and hide his meanness; if he is a hypocrite he is trying to conceal his meanness and make us think he is good. Such people make long prayers for a pretence, and to get widows' houses is their intent, and greater damnation from God is their judgment. But this is the only way that seems right unto a man that I can think of that is not right. If to travel the way that seems right unto a man will lead us to ruin, it would seem the part of wisdom to travel the way that does not seem right, which is the way of life and salvation by free and reigning grace, which is to trust in the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, to believe that he lived for us, kept the law for us, suffered all its penalty for us, died for us and rose for our justification, our sins having all been imputed to him and become his, as much so as if he had been the actual transgressor, for he (Jesus) was numbered with the transgressors. If it had not been just and right to number him with the transgressors it could not have been done. In order for Jesus to redeem the sinner he must stand in the sinner's place and God the Father must meet out to him all the punishment that is justly due the sinner. He could not take the sinner's place in law were it not for the fact that he is the Husband and the church is the bride, therefore they are no more twain, but one spirit. When God created Adam and then took a rib from him and formed Eve it took both of them to be Adam, and when she (Eve) fell under the curse of the law Adam became responsible for her sin, and if he was a figure of him that was to come, then he that was to come is the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, a quickening Spirit, which is Christ, and his bride the church. Jesus while here in the flesh asked the question, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" The answer to this question is, in my opinion, the following: Yes, he ought to have suffered what was due the bride, because he agreed to do it, and because he could not enter into his glory without the bride (the church), for "the woman is the glory of the man." I am persuaded that heaven would not be a place of happiness for the Husband, the head of the church, without the bride, for in the figure referred to she is part of him, therefore in order to their eternal happiness they must dwell together.

The above are only a few thoughts on the "way which seemeth right unto a man," and the way that does not seem right unto a man, but it is right and now in order to carry the figure a little further and say that Jesus Christ is the way, the truth and the life. He was ever the way. He came here "the way," and walked the strait and narrow way, and is teaching his people in this day by his holy Spirit, which he gives them to guide them into all truth and keep them in the way that

is right. The lost man travels the way that seems right, and that way is directly from home, for if he knew the way home he would not be lost, but inasmuch as he is lost every step he takes carries him just that much further from home. This is a dangerous course, but he will pursue it until the evidence is produced to show him he is wrong, and this is accomplished when he receives the witness within, "which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." When this takes place "Lebanon [church] shall [to this one] be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest."—Isaiah xxix. 17.

G. W. BERRY.

"IT IS NOT SO WITH ME."

(Job ix. 35.)

The welfare of the household of God is in his hands, but why their circumstances are just as they are is more than I can solve. A few of God's people go along with long periods of pleasantness, with few temptations, with very little inward conflict, and their outward earthly affairs cause them no anxiety or sorrow. My lot has seldom been such; if I have not all the time had earthly trials there have been few days that I have not experienced inward afflictions. The Lord's dealings with his own are unsearchable. As our Father in heaven, his ways are so high, and his thoughts so deep, that we poor, frail ones cannot understand why this and that has befallen us, and why we are thus disciplined. I sometimes sigh, I sometimes murmur and fret, and then again I am brought lowly before the Lord, and acquiesce to his chastening rod, only imploring that he will be to me a Father, and give me the portion of his children, and that he will maintain his fear in my heart that I may not depart from him. I remain a vile sinner, though I am utterly wearied with sin; I am buffeted and tempted by assaults from without and within, and find no cessation in the conflict with the world, the flesh and the devil. This conflict is not like a child playing with tin soldiers in mimic warfare. I find the war bitter and heart-aching. I am often bruised and pierced through with wounds, the cares and pleasures of this earthly life, the flesh with all its lustings. Satan in all his infernal malice hurls his multitude of fiery darts at my soul, or transformed as an angel of light he would seduce my soul with sugar-coated errors away from our God and the simplicity of the gospel of Christ. Oh how much I have need of the spiritual weapons and armor of the gospel. Some appear to be ever salient, always harnessed for the battle, and are so skillful that they have easy victories, at least I judge so, for I can find no scars upon them, and I never hear them tell of the enemy inflicting any wounds upon them. "But it is not so with me." I know that in modern carnal warfare men may survive bloody fields of battle and themselves come forth without a scratch of the enemy upon them. "But it is not so with me." I am at times sorely discouraged and cast down, and I should sink in the very deep but for the revivings of hope, when Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, is revealed, and my trust is in him. I am sometimes wounded and sore broken, and as I look myself over I find many scars, wounds that have been healed with the mercies of the new covenant, healed with Jesus' precious blood. I know our almighty and gracious God could, if it were his will, so keep and bless us even while in this present evil world that no affliction should befall us, and sin and Satan should not plague us, but it is far otherwise. I know I am

a sinful and unworthy one, and I am often much humbled and contrite in heart before the Lord. To him I tell it all. I know that he knows it before I tell him all my sins and griefs and helplessness. He comforts me, he restores my soul, and then in my consolations I sing, We are more than conquerors through him that loved us. The apostle has said, "We walk by faith, not by sight," and it is truly so. Our Jesus, our Savior, our All, is he whom having not seen we love, and in whom though now we see him not, yet believing we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. The world that knows not God may mock at this, but do we not know that there is nothing more real than the life of faith of the poor sinner who is a believer in the Redeemer? If for "a little space" we are favored with "a little reviving" (Ezra ix. 8) we have blessedness so satisfying that nothing of earthly bliss can compare with it. Christ is unto us the bread and the water of life, and all things else may be described as "that which is not bread," and those who are born of God cannot be satisfied with it.

"Jesus is all I wish or want,
For him I pray, I thirst, I pant;
Let others after earth aspire,
Christ is the treasure I desire.

Possessed of him, I wish no more,
He is an all-sufficient store,
To praise him all my powers conspire;
Christ is the treasure I desire."

"With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early."—Isaiah xxvi. 9. Surely such desires are wrought in the heart by the Holy Ghost, and will the Lord disappoint the soul's desire? "The desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee." Thus, dear children of God, I go on, a power, a divine power, within me causing me to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, to "win Christ." (Phil. iii. 8.) I will go unto God my exceeding joy. Let every thing be laid aside (Heb. xii. 1), and lost and be esteemed as dung, our hearts reach forth for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ our Lord. To see him as he is, and to be like him, is all our expectation, our bliss, our heaven.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

INGRAM, Texas, Jan. 31, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been a long time since I have written to the dear old SIGNS, and feeling so lonesome to-day it seemed I could not refrain from writing, though my unworthiness is still a stumbling-block in my way. I must say the last number of the SIGNS was especially good, although I was confined to my bed and only read it at intervals, as I was not able to sit up. I especially enjoyed the brother's article "the two musts." Ye must be born again. I do not think that subject can ever be exhausted, and do not think we can over estimate the real meaning of the "Ye must be born again," as those who have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, those who have felt the sting of sin, realized the inbred corruption, felt the very dregs of human depravity, felt the awful sense of condemnation, those are the ones who enjoy the blessed words of our Master, "Ye must be born again," not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. I will say that those in whom the Lord hath begun a good work realize it was for nothing that we have done, but by sovereign mercy and love he hath saved us. We may be ever so moral, and may have lived a life unrebukable, yet we must be born anew,

must be made a new creature in Christ, for in Adam all die, and in Christ we must be made alive. It has always seemed to me that those who are looking for salvation by works or any merit on their part really have never experienced the real love of God in their hearts, never have felt the sting of sin, never have known the real love of God by the Spirit, or they would sing a different song, for God is love, and he that loveth is born God, so true love is the fruit of the Spirit. A child that is born of Adam is a manifested heir of Adam, and partaker of all the nature of the Adamic family, and by nature the child of wrath, steeped in sin, totally depraved, and in this condition unable to extricate himself from the curse pronounced upon him for the violation of the righteous law of God through Adam. By the relationship we bear to Adam we are born in sin. Now if we are sinners by nature it stands to reason that we must be born of an incorruptible seed in order to take on a new nature, hence, "Ye must be born again." It was a mystery to Nicodemus, yet it was the truth, and it is as much a mystery to the carnal mind of men now as it was then to Nicodemus, yet we hear people talk of the new birth as if it were an easy matter to obtain it. I have heard highly educated men try to explain the doctrine of the new birth, and speak of it as though men could tell just how it comes about. Jesus told Nicodemus, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."—John iii. 8. We know that if it is or was brought about by our own works we would know exactly whither it cometh or goeth, and it would not be such a mystery. No wonder Paul said, Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness. It always has been a profound mystery to me why the Lord ever gave me any satisfaction of mind, but sometimes I feel to hope he for Christ's sake pardoned my sins and gave me a sweet hope in his mercy. As long as I have been in possession of a hope I positively cannot say I know, cannot say I have been born of God, but these many years I have lived in hope, which Paul said is as an anchor of the soul, and I would not exchange it for all the world. But these people who claim to know do not love the doctrine of the sovereignty of God, and are strangers to grace. It does not make any difference how much of this moral christianity they may have, they must be born again, and it must sound in the heart of those men as it did to Saul of Tarsus before they can say, My Lord and my God. John said, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John was very careful to tell us how it was and how it was not. Jesus tells us that the wind bloweth where it listeth, and we hear the sound thereof, but canst not tell whither it comes nor whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of God. It is presumption on the part of any man to say he knows he has been born of God and therefore does not have to hope. Oh how can these things be? Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. There has been much wrangling as to the "water" mentioned here, but I have always thought it referred to the first birth, the birth of the flesh. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of Spirit is

spirit. When Jesus spoke these words it was such a mystery it caused much questioning in the mind of the great leader in Israel, insomuch it caused him to say, How can these things be? Jesus answered him, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and ye receive not our witness, and explains the nature of man, with all his inability and carnality, and follows it with, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

These are some of my thoughts as they occurred to me, and I felt I wanted to write them, as I wanted to relieve my mind. I did not aim to try to add anything to what brother Walker wrote in the last issue of the SIGNS, for it was very good and to the point. I really did not write as I thought I would at the beginning, but my mind drifted out on that subject, as I have always enjoyed meditations on the new birth. I have been sick so long it seems to me I can never get so I can be with the dear Old Baptists, and writing is my only way of communication, and if these few remarks are not in the way of better material the editors can use them. I will say no more at present.

Your brother in hope of a better life,
J. B. BOWDEN.

MIDDLETON, Tenn., Jan. 27, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I want to try and write some things that have been upon my mind for a long time. I have been thinking of the immensity of space, and the power of our God. I cannot see that there is any end to space. If we could travel for years in one direction would we come to the end of space? As I believe that space is limitless, so I believe that God's power is limitless. God is omnipresent and fills immensity. His power is supreme over all powers. There is no power but of God. The powers that be are ordained of him. He had the power to create this world and all things pertaining to it, and without him was not anything made that was made. All things exist by the same power by which they were created, and known of God are all his works from the beginning. God is unlimited in power. He has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Then what is man that is made of the dust of the earth? As I understand he is (naturally) vanity, and nothing. There is nothing but the working of God's power within us can raise us above this world and the things pertaining thereto. Man is born in sin, he is dead in trespasses and sin, and will remain there until called out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of the Son of God by the power of the Spirit. Then let us give God all the praise in all things, for he works all things after the counsel of his own will. We are his workmanship, created in Christ unto good works, that God before ordained that we should walk in them; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Then, dear brethren, if so be that we have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, is not this enough, that Christ came down into this low ground of sin and sorrow and died, the Just for the unjust? He paid the debt in full, he set the lawful captive

free. Then if Christ hath made us free we are free indeed. God says, My grace is sufficient. Then what more do we need? I feel sometimes that I would like to have a better assurance, but we can live here only in hope of the glory to come, which hope is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and entereth into that within the vail, whither Christ the forerunner hath gone, there to make intercession for the saints according to the will of God. Dear brethren, I sometimes feel that I want to go forward, that there is more I ought to do in the name of the Lord, but fearfulness gets hold of me and I fear it is of the flesh and not of the Spirit. I cannot do the things I would, and the things I would not those I do.

Brethren, I almost feel ashamed of my weakness, but I got to thinking of the great power of God and his wondrous works and wanted to relieve my mind, so if you think it is fit for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES you may publish it; if not, I will think the fault is in me, and no harm will be done by not publishing it.

I am sending two dollars to pay for the SIGNS for the year 1925. I am late, but have been waiting hoping to have something to write, as I see so many good letters and editorials in our paper, all testifying to the truth, as I believe, in Christ Jesus our Lord, and I want to send back a response, and say, Let God be praised. Since writing what I have I once decided not to send it, as there is so much weakness displayed in it, and felt it was only for ridicule, but if it is the truth, and of the Spirit, let God be praised. I feel to be the least of all saints, if one at all.

Submitted to your better judgment.

J. S. STANLEY.

PALO ALTO, Calif., Jan. 8, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find two dollars to pay for another year's subscription for our beloved church paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, wish I was able to send two thousand dollars instead, for it is worth far more than that to me. What would I do without it over here where there are no preachers, or Baptists either? In all my acquaintance there is not one who tolerates the sound doctrine that is taught in the Scriptures. It is an awful thing to have to live among such people when one is starving for spiritual food from our Master's table. I am one. In all my life I have never wanted to be among God's chosen people as I do to-day. The older I get the more I need his help, and to be among his people. I am not considering this life, for it is all sin and sorrow, but I am hoping to "be hid with Christ in God" in the next life which is beyond death.

My heart aches for brother Fisher. I do not know him personally, but I hope I do spiritually. His letters have been of much comfort to me, as have the letters of other writers. I hope the Lord will continue to give them good things to write us about. I do hope you will be more prosperous with your (and our) paper in the future.

Yours in hope and love,

EUGENIA F. SCHROEDER.

FARWELL, Texas, May 7, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing herewith an obituary notice of little Iris Presley, granddaughter of our much esteemed brother and sister W. R. Presley. It is at their request that I am writing the same and sending it to the dear old SIGNS, which they esteem next to the Bible. Next Monday (May 11th) they will have been married fifty years, and are expect-

ing all of their children to be with them at that time.

I take this opportunity to thank you for sending the SIGNS to poor unworthy me. I desire to be thankful to you and to God. My health is some better, but I am yet unable to work. May God bless, uphold and sustain you all to continue publishing the SIGNS—the truth. Remember me and mine when at the throne of grace.

I must tell you of our little church here at Farwell, Texas, and also of the one at Portales, New Mexico. There are only two churches of the Old Predestinarian order in this big plains country. We hold services twice a month here, the first and third Sundays, and Saturday before the third Sunday. Next meeting is our communion time, and we are also to ordain Dr. W. R. Presley and brother C. C. Cox to the office of deacon. Both are nearly seventy years of age. Elder J. A. Rutledge, of Portales, N. M., and myself are the only ordained ministers in this part of the country. He is past seventy and I am in poor health, but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, we have good interest, and the outlook seems good for an ingathering, but we want it to be of the Lord; we want him to add to the church, and not let man add through impulse and carnal means, and thus get a number of Ishmaelites, who are mockers at best.

I am, I trust, yours in the bonds and afflictions of the gospel of our risen Lord,

W. J. STEPHENS.

(*See obituary of Iris Presley on page 141.*)

SIMPSONS, Va., Jan. 8, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending you my check of two dollars, to be credited to the subscription of brother H. A. Conner, Copper Hill, Va., as he asked me to do so. I would be glad if the SIGNS OF THE TIMES was in more homes of our brethren, for it sets forth an independent God and a dependent devil. Our God works all things after the counsel of his own will. We cannot find in his written word where he ever consulted sinful man about anything, but speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. I hope I believe in a God that is carrying on his undisturbed work, regardless of men or devils, and I hope we are made to trust in him.

Editors and brethren, write on and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints of the most high God. I ask an interest in the prayers of all true worshipers of God, both now and forever. If I am saved it is by the mercy of God; nothing on my part.

F. T. SOWERS.

LONDON, England, March 21, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for February, 1925, and I cannot express what a feeling of love and union I have toward the dear saints of God scattered abroad. It is the love of God in the children of God that we love. What a sameness there is in the pure language, children that will not lie; their cry the same, sorrow for sin, hopes and fears, longings and joys the same. The first article in the SIGNS by that dear man of God, Elder F. W. Keene, opens up the pathway of the tried children of God.

I am inclosing two dollars, that you may send the SIGNS to some one who is unable to pay for it. I am seventy-eight years old, and have known and loved the truth for over fifty-five years.

May God bless the labors of your hands and keep you faithful in times of trouble and sorrow, is the prayer of

WALTER PEACOCK.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1925.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

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MELCHISEDEC.

INASMUCH as we have been asked to write on this subject, we shall hope to give such views as we have. There is not in the whole of the Old Testament, probably, a more mysterious personage than this Melchisedec. The record of him fills very little space in the whole Bible, occupying but three verses in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis, one verse in the one hundred and tenth Psalm, and some half dozen verses in the letter to the Hebrews, but the spiritual import of this man is tremendous since he is declared to be "made like unto the Son of God." His name means "king by right," therefore, rightfully king by royal or divine right. We have sometimes been asked if we believe Melchisedec to have been really an actual person, or was he simply an apparition which appeared to Abraham, or was he a vision of Christ which appeared to Abraham. From the record of this man as it reads in both Genesis and Hebrews, there is nothing to warrant us in saying Melchisedec was not an actual, real person. If he was no actual being and if he was simply a vision of Christ which appeared to Abraham, then we might just as well say that Adam or Noah or Moses or any other of the characters of the Old Testament were not real men, but simply figurative representations of spiritual things. Of course, Melchisedec was very pronouncedly a wonderful type of the priesthood of Christ, and therein lies the spiritual value of Melchisedec so far as the children of God are concerned, but that is not to say that he was not an actual being. The record of this man says he was without father or mother, without beginning or end of days. We suppose that it is this description of him which has given rise to the denial of his having been an actual person, since humanly we cannot conceive of his having had no parents, nor having had no beginning or end to his days. The process of human generation began with Adam, and all mankind has been descended from that first man, so that no man is without parentage or without the limitation of life. One learned man of the present day, who professes to be conversant with the Scriptures, gets around this mystery of Melchisedec by saying that the genealogy of Melchisedec was not known, that no one knew who his father and mother were, and that it is in this sense that Melchisedec was without parents. Also, that the age of this man was an unknown quantity, and that it is in this sense he was without beginning or end of days. No such explanation as this suits us, no matter how learned the man who puts it forth. Such an interpretation requires too much twisting of the Scripture in order to make it fit. We believe the mystery surrounding this Melchisedec is not intended to be known, therefore we cannot and shall not try to make it clear as to how this man could come into being without having had a father and a mother and without any bounds being set to his

days. We do know that all things are possible with God, and that is enough for us. If God's inspired word tells us that such things were true of Melchisedec, far be it from us to contradict it. Let God be true even though it makes every man a liar. We cannot understand how Enoch was translated that he should not see death, we cannot understand how Elijah was taken up to heaven in a chariot, we cannot understand these and hundreds of other things in the Scriptures, but if God tells us through inspired men that such things did occur we have no desire to question them, but want to believe them with all our hearts. Let us turn now from these debates as to the actuality of the person of Melchisedec, to what the Scriptures say is the spiritual significance of this man. As his name signifies "king by right," so Christ, the spiritual Melchisedec, is King in Zion the city of God, by divine right or appointment. Melchisedec was both king and priest, both offices vested in the one person, so Christ the Anointed of God is not only King, but is the High Priest of his people. This Melchisedec met Abraham returning victoriously from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him. Abraham had spoiled his enemies and had taken of the prey for himself. One-tenth of this he rendered to Melchisedec. Somehow, Abraham recognized this mysterious personage as one to whom he should be subservient and showed by his actions that he owed tribute to this priest of the Most High God. This Melchisedec must have been a stranger to Abraham, for we have no reason to believe that they ever met before. It must have been by faith that Abraham knew him. Abraham must have had within himself the evidence of this priest-king's true character. This evidence within Abraham could have been based on nothing less than faith, since faith is the evidence of things not seen. At the time that Abraham met Melchisedec the Levitical priesthood, which was the priesthood of the old or Mosaic covenant, was in the loins of Abraham. It was the business of the tribe of Levi to produce priests for Israel during the time of the legal dispensation. These Levites were to offer the sacrifices and attend to all the priestly duties and offices of that legal covenant. However, when Jesus should come in the end of that legal age to offer himself a sacrifice for sin and when Christ should arise from the dead and ascend unto God as the eternal High Priest of the church, then this Levitical priesthood was to pass away and be of no more use. The type was to disappear when the substance or reality came into evidence. This is all signified in Abraham's paying tithes to Melchisedec. It was not so much that Abraham paid the tithes himself, as it was the Levitical priesthood in the loins of Abraham mutely signifying its subserviency to the eternal priesthood of Jesus Christ. This Melchisedec brought forth bread and wine unto Abraham. Bread and wine were set before the disciples of Jesus by the Savior himself as the memorial of his body and blood. This body that was broken for them and this blood which was shed for them signify the death of the Lord. Melchisedec's act, therefore, in setting forth bread and wine unto Abraham shows Melchisedec's spiritual connection with the death of Jesus, therefore that he is the type especially of the risen Christ at the right hand of God, there to make eternal intercession for the sins of his people. One cannot be a priest unless he has something to offer. Those Levites under the old law offered the blood of beasts and birds. Jesus

came into the world to offer for the sins of his people, his own body. As the High Priest of his people, Christ was not compelled against his will to make this offering, but willingly and out of infinite love, he took his own body and offered it upon the altar of the cross a sacrifice without a single imperfection, a perfect atonement unto God for all the transgressions of all his children who thereby were through this one offering forever perfected. As Melchisedec was called king of Salem, which means king of peace, so Christ through his priesthood established the covenant of eternal peace between his people, who were once enemies to God by wicked works, and God the Father Almighty. Jesus came into the world not, as some think, to make peace between the nations of this world, but to bring in everlasting peace for all the children of God, for that eternal kingdom which is not of this world. There is no beginning or end to the days of Jesus Christ. As a man here on earth among men, he had a birthday and a deathday, but as the spiritual Mechisedec, the great High Priest of the church, he is eternal. He was in the beginning with the Father, and the Father and the Son were One, and ever have been One. This oneness in the Godhead was not disturbed by Jesus coming to earth in the form of man. His nativity in Bethlehem was not his beginning in any other sense only that it was the beginning of his humiliation, as Melchisedec he had no beginning or end. Christ was without father or mother. Joseph, the husband of Mary, nor any other man was the father of Jesus. He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, so that, among men, he had no father. While Mary was the mother of his flesh, Jesus had no mother in heaven. His Godhead was mothered by no woman. Thus it is that he was without father or mother. This man Melchisedec was not of the lineage of Abraham, was not a Jew or Israelite, but was instead no earthly relation to Abraham whatever. So the Christ of God, the eternal Priest of all true believers in God, cannot be claimed by Jews as theirs any more than by Gentiles as theirs. Flesh and blood connection with Christ Jesus there is none, and all who are connected with Christ, or who are related to him, are so because they have been born again, not of the flesh, but of the will of God, so that no flesh and blood can have any claim upon the spiritual Melchisedec, nor can any fancied merit of flesh and blood claim his attention. This Christ of God was just as much a Priest of God's elect before the foundation of the world as he is now or ever will be. Just as much, we say, because with God there is naught that is new or old, and all things, past, present and to come, are in the presence of God as one eternal now. With God there never has been any development of anything. All things were known to him perfectly from eternity. Therefore, Christ in the eternal mind and purpose of God was the High Priest selected and ordained of God long before there was any revelation of that matter to the faith of the children of God. When we say that this spiritual Melchisedec, the Lord Jesus Christ, is our High Priest at the right-hand of God, we are so apt to let our fancy wander to some imaginary place in space where we may think this Christ is located, but it appears to us that this intercession of the High Priest is not mere theory or doctrine, but is a reality in the experience of the children of God. How do any of the children of God know that this Melchisedec is living and making intercession for them if they never experi-

ence this intercession in their lives? It seems to us that if these things are to be really believed by us, there must be a living testimony of it in the lives of the children of God here in the world. Now, Paul tells us that prayer is something we cannot do ourselves, that we do not know what to pray for, nor how to pray for it. He tells us that the way out of this infirmity of ours is through the fact that God has ordained his Spirit to make intercession for us. Now, is not this intercession of the Spirit in the hearts of the children of God the work of Melchisedec at the right hand of God? It does seem so to us. And every true prayer that is ever prayed by any or all of the children of God is indited or inspired in them by this great High Priest, their advocate in the court of heaven. We have an example of this intercession in the twelfth chapter of the Acts. Herod had put Peter in prison under guard, intending to bring him forth to the people after Easter, but the angel of the Lord came and liberated Peter. At the same time prayer was going on in the hearts of the church for Peter's deliverance. This prayer in the church was not any whimsical thought or wish of their own, but was inspired in them by the Spirit of God. This prayer did not change God's mind concerning the imprisonment of the apostle and cause God to release him. No, not at all. But the Spirit in the hearts of the church caused them to pray in harmony with the will of God, and made them to ask for that which God had already planned or predestinated to grant them. Thus, all true prayer is the fruit of the Spirit's intercession in the hearts of the children of God, and this is the living evidence within them that Christ is their eternal Priest-King after the order of Melchisedec, at the right hand of God. If religion does not abound in realities such as these, then it is nothing but a body of doctrine and dogmas and differs not from the religions of the world. But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first-fruits of them that slept, and this spirit and power of his resurrection in our mortal bodies makes his religion a living reality within his people.

L.

LUKE XII. 15.

"TAKE heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

Since the Lord said to Adam, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," the human race has, undoubtedly, been struggling for an existence and a competence. Every honest man should be willing to expend sufficient effort to earn his way through life, and "if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." So far as we know there can be no objection to one securing for himself, lawfully, and for those entrusted to his care, some of the comforts and even luxuries of life, but he can do all this and yet not be covetous. To be covetous is to have an inordinate desire, especially for money; to be immoderate or excessive. What brought forth the words of the text was, one had said unto Jesus, "Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me." An inheritance is something which becomes ours by reason of our relationship to another, ordinarily that in which we had no part in creating, and since time immemorial there has been contention and strife as to how it shall be divided and who shall possess it. It may have been the law or custom at that time that the eldest should receive the inheritance. It is evident the one in ques-

tion had not received what he felt to be his share, which might be said to be only natural, but the teaching of Jesus to those who have reason to hope they have a foretaste now and that some day they shall come into full possession of that inheritance which is "incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away," is that they should crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts; that those who are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with his Son, and who have been partakers of his sufferings, death and resurrection and have risen with him should "seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth," is the inspired admonition. Jesus, therefore, said unto them, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness." They were not only to be careful, but to "beware," or regard covetousness as an enemy. Paul said, "They that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition," and he warned "the man of God" to flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Jesus went on to show that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" by speaking unto them this parable, saying, "The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool! this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul [his life]?" "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out," yet there is that insatiable desire to hoard up and build greater barns in which to store one's goods, and he begins to lose sight of the finer and better things, "For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." It is a great truth that no man can serve two masters; his heart cannot be divided, "for he will either hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other." The man after God's own heart, who declared, "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, then to dwell in the tents of wickedness," said, "Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not covetousness," and the wise man wrote, "He that hateth covetousness shall prolong his days." In other words, the man who is willing to lose his life, shall find it. How strange this seems. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." These things sound paradoxical. A man's life, then, does not consist in the abundance of things which he possesseth. We see this even in a natural sense. One may accumulate and pile up wealth, but if in attaining his coveted goal his health has been undermined and he loses his ability or capacity to enjoy that which he has gathered, of what account is it to him? There is seen

here and there a disposition on the part of some who have gained great possessions to distribute them where needed. There is a joy, or prolonging one's days, in giving, if done in the right spirit, and we are glad to observe a tendency in the right direction. Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," and his words are ever true. Those who profess to be followers of him, above all others, should bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ. We too often see those who have been highly favored of the Lord shut up their bowels of mercy against their brother who is in need. How good it would be to lighten his burden a little, to show in some tangible way your love for him for the truth's sake, to visit him while he is in prison and cannot extricate himself with such things and assistance as will release some of the chains which bind him, that he might be set free. We have no doubt but that many of the Lord's servants should receive more consideration at the hands of their brethren than they do. If he sends them forth to feed his flock, having received those things which are spiritual they should administer of their carnal things to the needs of those who serve them. They are commanded to provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in their purses, nor scrip for their journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat. The gospel is to be preached without money, and without price, and among the qualifications for the office of a bishop, or true minister, are to be found these: He must be given to hospitality, not greedy of filthy lucre, not covetous. We know of no surer way for one to kill himself in the church of the true and living God than for the people whom he serves to discover that he is preaching for money. Nevertheless, the ox that treadeth out the corn is not to be muzzled. In our opinion, it is not true that one of God's ministers will preach better by reason of hardships forced upon him through the withholding of those things which his brethren are simply able to provide for his needs and sustenance. To the contrary, we firmly believe where there is umistakable evidence of one's acceptance by those whom he goes among endeavoring to serve, in the realization by him of the appreciation on the part of his brethren of his gift, there will be a growth and development in things which are spiritual, and they will grow up together as calves in the stall, all realizing that all that they have and are comes from their heavenly Father, who is the great Shepherd of his sheep, and that it is his good pleasure to give them the kingdom. In the ministrations, one to another, love will abound, and they will feel it is a blessed tie that binds their hearts in christian love, and that it is there their best friends and kindred dwell, and there God their Savior reigns. They will have all things in common, and none shall possess more than another, equal heirs, and joint-heirs with Christ, the head over all things to the church; being in one place and of one accord and possessing the mind of him though rich became poor, that through his poverty they might be made rich. We have observed for many years, in different parts of our country, some who appear to possess all of this world's goods that is necessary for their needs and comfort, and yet when it came to doing for the cause which they profess to love above every-

thing else it was not convenient, or they were too thoughtless, or cold and indifferent, and sometimes too busy to even attend their meetings. The pastor needs the flock as much if not more, it seems to us, than the flock needs him. Oftentimes he feels to be wavering and tottering, ready to give up, when some old, reliable wheel-horse of a brother or sister, so to speak, one who can be depended upon on every occasion, comes to his rescue and his heart is strengthened and he encouraged to press forward with the load. Personally, we are made, continually, to feel thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift for having cast our lot in such pleasant places and among such devoted and faithful brethren.

In conclusion, we would desire of our readers that they be thoughtful and considerate of one another, of them who serve you in a spiritual way, and of the publishers through which you receive such papers as our own SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Do not let such things come at the bottom of your list of obligations. We are well aware that many of our people do not possess a great deal of this world's goods, and we would remind them that it is expected of a man according to that which he hath, and not according to that which he hath not. We would also remind others of Paul's epistle to the church at Corinth, concerning the collection for the saints, that every one is to lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him. Of him that hath much, much is expected. The strong are to bear the burdens of the weak. Therefore, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

R. L. D.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Elder J. B. Bowden wishes to inform his correspondents that he has changed his address from Ingram, Texas, to Kerrville, Texas, and requests them to address him at the latter place.

Elder George L. Weaver has changed his address from 1310 East 112th Street, Cleveland, Ohio, to 18 North Seventh Street, Hamilton, Ohio, and asks that his brethren write to him there.

ORDINATIONS.

PURSUANT to the call for a presbytery to ordain John T. Everett to the work of the gospel ministry met on the fourth Saturday in April, 1925, and after morning services and the church conference, opened the service of and for the organizing of the presbytery by singing, and prayer by Elder T. J. Jackson, then organized by electing Elder V. R. Harris Moderator and brother W. C. Horton Clerk of the presbytery.

The presbytery being thus organized, asked that Chappel-Hill Church present brother John T. Everett, who is a member of said church, to present his views of God and his kingdom, and all things thereunto pertaining: The Bible and its teaching, together with his experience, and what he hopes to be a call to the great and wonderful work of the ministry. After hearing the statements from the brother the presbytery, being satisfied with the statements so made, and feeling that God had called him to that work, and therefore being satisfied, did proceed to ordain the brother, by first delivering to him the charge as laid down in the Bible, said charge being delivered by Elder V. R. Harris, and then kneeling in prayer and laying on of hands by the presbytery, Elders V. R. Harris, T. J. Nash and T. J. Jackson, and Deacon William J. Martin. The ordination prayer was then delivered by Elder T. J. Nash. Then sang a hymn, and extended to the brother the right hand of fellowship, and expressed in deep solemnity the earnest desire for the good and welfare and watchcare of God's guiding hand and Spirit to him.

It was also ordered, by motion and second, that this Minute be spread upon the church's records, and also that a copy of the same be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication therein.

Done and signed by order of the presbytery, this 25th day of April, 1925.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator,
W. C. HORTON, Clerk of the Presbytery.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Charles W. Vaughn, March 7th, 1925, at his residence, Hopewell, N. J., Ella May Savidge, of Hopewell, N. J., and Philip Harold Reed, of Rosedale, N. J.

By the same, March 18th, 1925, at his residence, Hopewell, N. J., Ida Pierson and William M. Cubberly, both of Lawrenceville, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Jenkins Vaughn, wife of Christopher Green Vaughn, of Hopewell, N. J., departed this life April 21st, 1925. She was born July 17th, 1857, making her stay on earth 67 years, 9 months and 4 days. She was born in Floyd County, Va., and was a young girl when her father was drafted into the army favoring the Confederate cause, which service he survived and his family endured the hardships imposed by devastation and punishment inflicted by the Federal soldiers after the surrender of General Lee, which caused them to suffer financially. She was married to Christopher G. Vaughn Nov. 26th, 1873, and to this union were born five boys and six girls. Three sons and one daughter preceded her, and one son went west and his whereabouts is unknown to the family. She is survived by one son, Elder Charles W. Vaughn, of Hopewell, N. J., and five daughters: Mrs. C. M. Turman, of Arcola, Va.; Mrs. Z. K. Hylton, of Flora, Ind.; Mrs. C. W. Hylton, Willis, Va.; Mrs. C. E. Shelor, of Roanoke, Va.; Mrs. Lester S. Vandyke, of Hopewell, N. J., together with their father to mourn their loss. She was of the family of Elisha and Rhoda E. Jenkins, composed of eight children, four sons and four daughters only one son of that family, Mr. J. W. Jenkins, of Blandinsville, Ind., and one daughter, Mrs. Sarah E. Weeks, of Willis, Va., survive to mourn. She was a first cousin of Elder P. G. Lester, of Roanoke, Va., who was groomsman at her wedding and brother in her faith. He had the pleasure of burying her and her husband in baptism in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Little Flock, in the New River Association, October 6th, 1884, of which association Elder Lester is Moderator. Elder Lester was requested to preach her funeral, but owing to the distance and failing health it was impossible. Her funeral services were conducted by Elders J. G. Mellott and W. S. Bond, from the selected text 1 Corinthians xv. 10: "But by the grace of God I am what I am," who spoke to the comfort of those present, after which her remains were laid to rest in the family plot in the Hopewell Old School Baptist Cemetery to await the power that shall call that the grave shall give up its dead, and she enter into the full consummation of her faith and hope. May God comfort all that mourn and reconcile us to his will, for we are persuaded that our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by her son,

C. W. VAUGHN.

ALSO,

Mrs. Sarah Furman Blackwell, widow of John Blackwell, of Rosedale, N. J., departed this life December 13th, 1924. She was born August 19th, 1845, making her stay on earth 79 years, 3 months and 24 days. She was married May 9th, 1866, to John Blackwell, and to this union were born ten children, six boys and four girls. Her husband preceded her Sept. 8th, 1897. Two sons died when quite young, and two after reaching manhood. She was a kind, good mother to all her children. Two sons and four daughters survive to mourn for mother, also quite a large company of relatives and friends to mourn for her. She professed a hope in Christ, and united with the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, N. J., and was baptized by the late Elder William J. Purington. To this profession she proved faithful and true, and was held in the highest esteem by her pastors and all the church, and was often referred to as "Mother Blackwell."

Her funeral service was conducted by her pastor, using for a text John viii. 31–40, and was attended by a large gathering of relatives and friends, after which her remains were laid to rest beside her husband's to await the full consummation of her faith and hope in the resurrection of the dead. We humbly hope her children may realize the manifestation of the same power that rested with their mother, and may God comfort all who mourn.

Written by her pastor,

CHARLES W. VAUGHN.

Betty Peters, my wife, and daughter of Benjamin and Jerusha Shools, was born Feb. 6th, 1855, and died April 4th, 1925, aged 67 years, 1 month and 28 days. March 22nd, 1877, she was united in marriage to George DeBolt Peters, and to this union were born four children, two sons, Royal S., of Detroit, Mich., and Benjamin F. Peters, of Bellefontaine, Ohio, two daughters, Mrs. Deota Underwood, of Mt. Victory, Ohio, and Mrs. Leota Cole Clingerman, at home. Betty lived her life in this vicinity, having for forty-six years lived in the home where she passed away. She was very much devoted to her home and was always at her post, giving her whole life and strength toward the upbuilding of her family, and was never known to be idle. She cared nothing for the vanity of the world. She passed through a very long and deep christian experience, and was a fine, clean woman, but felt crushed down and sinsick, not worthy to enjoy a place with other people, and groping in the dark, trying to find the God-given light. This longing hope began when she was about twelve years of age. We were married

when she was in her nineteenth year. I found her shrouded in this awful darkness and despair, feeling to poison the grass that she walked on, not feeling worthy to eat at the table, simply living on just the crumbs from the table, not worthy to touch the Bible, and when cleaning and dusting the house she would take two sticks to move the Bible, lest she would mar this sacred book. She told me in the spring of 1878 that her time had come to die, and go to torment. She passed away in her mind, expecting to awake in torment, but instead the Lord snatched her away. A light shone around her and she viewed Christ on the cross for her. She called me to rejoice with her. Her experience was published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I think in the summer of 1878, in May or June, I cannot just remember. She united with the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church near Sidney, Ohio, known as the Harmony Church, about thirty years ago, and was baptized by Elder A. B. Breese, a sound absolute Predestinarian Baptist. I have not the least doubt that she is with Christ.

Her funeral was held at her home April 8th, and Mr. Harvey Adams, of Middletown, Ohio, preached to a large gathering of relatives and friends. Burial was in the Zanesfield Cemetery, in sight of her home.

Her loving husband,

C. D. PETERS.

Little **Iris Rose Presley,** infant daughter of Mr. and Mrs. T. I. Presley, was born, Sept. 29th, 1923, and departed this life April 24th, 1925, at the home of her mother's aunt, Mrs. J. A. Floyd, at Farwell, Texas, where they were visiting, their home being Plainfield, Texas. Her sickness and suffering were of short duration, living only about ten hours after becoming ill. All that mortals could do was done by all present to stay death's cold hand, but all in vain. Her grandfather, Dr. W. R. Presley, and Dr. McCuan, rendered medical aid, but God had called her and she had to obey: Child, thy Father calls, come home. Little Iris was a beautiful child and exceptionally bright. None but those who have been called to pass through the same ordeal can fully sympathize with the grief stricken father, mother, grandfather, grandmother and other relatives. But we say to you in your sorrow, Weep not for her, she is not dead, she is sleeping that blessed sleep in the arms of Jesus, where all is joy, love, peace and eternal happiness, no more death, no more sad farewells, but finally, when the trump shall sound and the dead shall be raised, her body shall come forth from its sleeping dust and shall be changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus, as shall be all the saints who are asleep in Jesus. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. How comforting to know that our loved ones are in the loving embrace of Jesus, that their conflicts are all over, that death and the grave have been conquered and have no more power, because Jesus said, As I live ye shall live also. Look to Jesus, sorrowing ones, he alone can fill the aching void and sweetly reconcile you to his will.

A brief funeral service was held at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Floyd, conducted by Mr. Gilliam, the Methodist pastor and the writer, after which her remains were carried to Clovis, New Mexico, and laid to rest in the cemetery there to await the resurrection. May the God of all grace comfort and bind up the broken and bleeding hearts and give us all grace to say, Thy will, O God, be done in all things.

W. J. STEPHENS.

Hannah Jane Orr, daughter of George and Mary Ann Bailey Orr, was born November 16th, 1840, near Anderson, Indiana. Her mother brought her to Ohio at the age of three weeks, because of the death of her father, and she spent her childhood with her faithful grandmother Bailey. At the age of twelve years she started out in the busy world to seek her own living. Sister Orr was a faithful member of the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church for over forty-seven years, and it was one of her greatest delights to be with the brethren and hear and talk of the wonderful sacrifice her dear Savior made for her, and she was always ready to help and entertain the Lord's people. For the past twelve years sister Orr had made her home with her cousin, Mrs. C. M. Carls, of Hamilton, Ohio, from whose home she was called to rest April 15th, 1925, at the age of eighty-five years.

I was called to conduct her funeral. After short service at Hamilton her body was taken to Pottstown, to the old meetinghouse where she had been a member so many years, where the final services were held. She was a stranger to me in the flesh, but from reports from brethren who knew her I learned her life in the church had been one of service, and by her church she will be greatly missed. We know ere long we, too, will be called from earthly labors, but we have hope in the morning of the great resurrection we will hear the voice of our blessed Savior and come forth, see him as he is, and be like him, and be satisfied. May the Lord bless those that mourn.

ALSO,

Catharine Elizabeth Skillman Sater, daughter of Thomas and Jane Skillman, was born March 23rd, 1842, the last of a family of ten children. May 5th, 1867, she was married to William V. Sater, to which union were born four children: Stanley, Clifford, Alma and Vance. She died in her 82nd year, after a lingering illness. Although she had never united with any church, she always attended the Old School

Baptist Church called Mill Creek, near New Burlington, Ohio, and it was her delight to entertain the Baptist brethren and Elders, and her death will be deeply felt by the members there.

I was called to officiate at the funeral, and spoke briefly, from Romans viii. 37–39, to a large gathering of relatives and friends, after which the body was laid in its last resting-place in Cottage Grove Cemetery, Cincinnati. May the Lord bless all those who mourn, and reconcile us to say, Thy will, O Lord, not ours, be done.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

Mrs. Sarah Estell Willey departed this life February 19th, 1925, at her home in Mardela Springs, Maryland. Mrs. Willey was born October 20th, 1865, making her stay on earth 60 years. December 20th, 1883, she was united in marriage to George W. Willey. To this union one son was born: Harry T. Willey. She is survived by her husband, son, one sister, Mrs. James Gullett, one brother, I. H. Evans, and two half-sisters: Mrs. James Majors and Mrs. Jane Brown. Mrs. Willey was not a member of the church, but a firm believer in salvation by grace, and never attended any meetings except of the Old School Baptist Church. She loved the songs of Zion and the peace of the church. She bore her affliction patiently, though a great sufferer. It was the privilege of the writer to visit her during her illness, and I found her strong in faith, giving glory to God. She was a faithful wife, a devoted mother and a kind neighbor, and will be much missed, but especially by the companion of her youth and later days: Mr. Willey.

The funeral services were held at her home, conducted by the writer, text used, Acts ii. 21. Interment took place in the Mardela Cemetery. May the Lord comfort the family with his presence and grace.

By request.

H. C. KER.

George Philip Johnson was born in Spartingburg County, South Carolina, October 8th, 1832, and died March 20th, 1925, aged 92 years, 5 months and 12 days. He came to Cobb County, Georgia, at the age of fourteen years, was married to Miss Prudence Hicks about the year 1854, and to this union were born three children, two sons and one daughter, who died in her nineteenth year. His wife preceded him to the grave sixteen years. He professed a hope in early life and joined the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Corinth over forty years ago, and was baptized by Elder Kemp, the Moderator of the Marietta Association. He lived true to his profession, and rejoiced in the doctrine of salvation by grace. He served as church clerk for many years. He leaves two sons: J. A. and G. R. Johnson, one brother, Dr. A. E. Johnson, five grandchildren, eleven great-grandchildren, and five great-great-grandchildren and a large number of other relatives and friends to mourn his death.

The funeral service was conducted by his pastor, Elder J. M. Livsey. We can truly say of him that a good man has fallen. His body was laid to rest in the Willis Cemetery by the side of his companion to await the summons from on high.

G. R. JOHNSON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Thomas Jackson, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. S. V. Curry, Colo., $2 00; Mrs. M. J. Mundy, Kans., $1.00; Mrs. M. Jamison, Man., $1.00; Simeon Hiltabrand, Ill., $3.00.

MEETINGS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, Mercer County, New Jersey, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1925. Trains leaving New York and Philadelphia on Tuesday afternoon, June 2nd, will be met and visitors taken to places of entertainment. Those coming Wednesday morning will come direct to the meetinghouse. All lovers of the truth and ministering brethren of our faith and order are invited to be with us. The meeting will be on Daylight Saving time.

DAVID M. VOORHEES, Church Clerk,
R. D. 1, PENNINGTON, N. J.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (10th, 11th and 12th), 1925. Those coming from and via New York City will take Erie R. R. Ferry foot of West 23d Street at 4:20 p. m., or the Erie R. R. Ferry foot of Chambers St., at 4:30 p. m., for train leaving Jersey City, N. J., at 4:45 p. m., on Tuesday, June 9th, or Erie R. R. Ferry foot of Chambers St., at 7:02 a. m., on Wednesday, June 10th, for train leaving Jersey City at 7:30 a. m. Get tickets for Howells, N. Y. These trains are operated on Daylight Saving Time. Those coming from and via Kingston, N. Y., will take Ontario & Western R. R. train leaving Kingston at 1:15 p. m., on Tuesday, June 9th. Get tickets for Winterton, N. Y. This train is operated on Eastern Standard Time. Trains will be met and friends cared for. Those coming by automobile will go to the home of

Mr. Fred Beyea (The Old Homestead) on arrival at New Vernon.

A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, sisters and friends.

R. LESTER DODSON, Moderator.

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ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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Chapter VI.—Church Trouble, Associational, &c.
Chapter VII.—Doctrinal Views, Occurrences, &c.
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Chapter IX.—Unspotted from the World, &c.
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THE

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

LAKELAND, Florida, Jan. 1, 1925.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—If so small and imperfect, poor and sinful a person as I am should thus address you. This is the first day of the new year, as it is called, and no man knows what may come to pass before the first day of 1926. In Psalms lxxxiii. 22, it is written, "So foolish was I, and ignorant. I was as a beast before thee." Man cannot know the future, but God does. "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world."—Acts xv. 18. Again, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." —Isaiah xlvi. 10. In his infinite wisdom all things were just as plain before God before he created the earth and all things. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible," &c. If God created all things, did he know what he was creating them for, or not? If God created all things he certainly must have had a use for them. If he did not, why did he not let all the ferocious animals and birds of prey drown in the flood? Why bring them across if he had nothing for them to do? Even the microbes and germs are serving the very purpose they were created for. When God wants to call one of his loved ones home the germs are here to cause his death. There was not a fly in all of those millions of flies in Egypt when there was a plague of flies there that could fly high enough or far enough around to get over into the land of Goshen; no, not in ten thousand years. Nothing separates the two countries but an imaginary line, like the line between two states or two countries. Aaron smote the dust and it turned to lice. Not a stray louse in Egypt, and not one could have crossed the line between the land of Goshen and Egypt. All the combined armies of the earth, with all the new-fangled instruments of destruction, and flying machines that these good christian people have made and are making to destroy each other with, all together could not get one louse across that line into Goshen, if they could have had the armies and instruments and flying machines there. Why? Because the Bible says, "Who being the brightness of his [Father's] glory, and the express image

of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power." Again, "Thy maker is thy husband; * * * * the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called."—Isaiah liv. 5. Again, "And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked."—Isaiah xi. 4. Just think of his power. All your God has to do is to breathe and the wicked are slain. How do you think man could have conveyed a single louse across that line? You may be wrought up and on your way to take vengeance on an enemy, with the billows of anger rolling through your carnal mind, and all your Savior has to do is to breathe on you and all is calm. "Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance." "All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity," and yet we see and hear men saying what they can do, and what God cannot do. They say now, When man makes his choice God himself cannot change it. Paul says, "There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."—Rom. xiii. 1. Evolution is free-will doctrine gone to seed. They say man by the exercise of his will can evolve a race of people that will live three hundred years instead of seventy or eighty years. Did God determine to accomplish certain ends for the good of his people, and his own glory, or not? We know he saw beforehand all things, and arranged everything to suit himself, being unlimited in wisdom, and almighty in power, every stake was set, every occurrence was considered, every thread was seen, and must and shall be in its proper place, and no power can change it. God did formulate a plan by which he intended to save all of the objects of his love, and before he created all things he held a counsel, and in that counsel his only Son agreed to bow the heavens and come down and suffer for his loved ones who needed help. There is nothing so important as the salvation of the people of God. The poet says,

"Jehovah in counsel
Resolved to fulfill,
The scheme from eternity
Laid in his will;
A scheme too profound for
A seraph to pry,
And all for the lifting
Of Jesus on high.

'Twas not from the creature
Salvation took place,
The whole was of God, to
The praise of his grace;
And all to his glory
Shall tend by and by,
To accomplish the lifting
Of Jesus on high."

Another poet wrote,

"Long ere the sun began his days,
Or moon shot forth his silvery rays,
Salvation's scheme was fixed, 'twas done
In covenant by the three in one.

The Father spake, the Son replied,
The Spirit with them both complied;
Grace moved the cause for saving man,
And wisdom drew the wondrous plan.

The Father chose his only Son
To die for sins that man had done;
Emmanuel to the choice agreed,
And thus secured a numerous seed."

If God did not know and intend we should need a Savior why was Jesus "foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead"?—1 Peter i. 20, 21. If it was not in his eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus before the world, for us to need his grace to teach us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, that we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, according to Titus

ii. 11, 12, why did he give his people grace in Christ before the world began? 2 Timothy i. 9: "According to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." If in his counsel he did not intend his people should have eternal life, why does Paul say in Titus i. 2, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began"? The reason all this was done was because God had determined in the counsel that his people should be in a condition that it would be absolutely necessary for their good and his glory for them to need help, and to be delivered out of the awful condition they were in. Had they not fallen, had they not been depraved, sinful and polluted, they never would have rejoiced to sing "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me." Tears of joy never would have traced down their weather-beaten, wrinkled cheeks while they sang

"Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song,
The joy of my heart, and the boast of my tongue.
Thy free grace alone, from the first to the last,
Hath won my affections and bound my soul fast."

Had they not been polluted, sinful and helpless the Savior would not have given himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, and we would never have loved and worshiped him in the beauty of holiness, and we never would have sung

"All hail the power of Jesus' name,
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all."

The crucifixion of the blessed Savior was determined and fixed to come to pass before the foundation of the world. "And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined."—Luke xxxii. 22. Peter says, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." They did what they wanted to do. They hated him without a cause. The purpose and predestination and Spirit of God never caused or moved them to do this wicked act, but their own bitter hatred, and moved as Judas was by Satan. The Savior said, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." Satan moved Judas to sell the Savior, so Luke says, "Then entered Satan into Judas, * * * * and he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him."—Luke xxxii. 3, 4. As sure as Satan entered into Judas and moved him to betray the Savior so sure did Satan move and cause the wicked men to crucify the Savior. God does not move or cause wicked men to do wrong, and none of our great ministers ever so taught. But they did and do teach that it takes the power of God to keep men from doing wrong. "Thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou hast wrought all our works in us." Again, "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ."—Heb. xiii. 20, 21. Ezekiel xxxvi. 27, "I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." When the time had come for the dear Savior to suffer, he said, "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour." I heard a man say while preaching that the bad seed was in the dirt when God made the man. The Bible does not say so, but Solomon says, "Lo,

this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."—Eccl. vii. 29. Many get befogged as to how we became sinners. James says, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." —James i. 13, 14. The Bible is plain how we became and who made us sinners, so Paul says, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."—Rom. v. 12. Again, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners."—Rom. v. 19. Then by man came death. Elder Gilbert Beebe never taught God moved or caused man to sin. He said, "If God could not have prevented the entrance of sin into this world, how do you know he can prevent it entering into the next world?" Let me quote you from first volume, page 30, of his editorials. He wrote, "The doctrine of absolute predestination when rightly understood, does not involve the idea of man's acting involuntarily in sin, nor does it exonerate him from accountability." Yes, "when rightly understood," but the fog is so dense, the darkness is so great. "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." Then Jude tells us another cause of the falling away, and why so much railing against the truth is going on. He says, "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men," &c. It is best for us to be as we are, had we not been in this awful condition we would not have needed a Savior. We would have had no reason to love, worship and adore the Redeemer. Paul says, All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Look at our clothing, see how filthy and ragged we are. "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." This is the state we were in by reason of sin. You are so awfully afflicted in this life, the Savior said, In the world ye shall have tribulation. You mourn on account of sin, would shake it off if you could, would tear loose from it had you the power, but you find yourself helplessly fettered by sin; you groan in your prison, so it is written, "To hear the groaning of the prisoner, to loose them that are appointed to death." So when you learn your helplessness you look for help, you look to some one else, and when you find him, and are taught his great power, and know that some sweet day he will set you free forever, it causes you to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Paul says, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—2 Cor. iv. 17. Here the words "exceeding and eternal" are used. Just a moment to suffer here, just a moment compared with eternity. This light affliction, this suffering here, Paul says is the cause of our eternal weight of glory, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; that is, the affliction produces the glory, wondrous glory, eternal glory. Hear Peter, "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." The glory that should follow; ah, yes. "Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured

the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." That he might rejoice over his people after he had redeemed them from the curse of the law. After he had paid the price the law demanded, which was their life, and, as he is our life, when the law got his life it got the life of all the people of God. Paul says, "When Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Jesus said, The Son of man is come to give his life a ransom for many. He gave his life, the ransom price was paid. Loved you from eternity, washed you in his own blood and hath made you kings and priests unto God and his Father. (Rev. i. 5, 6.) How he rejoices over this clean, beautiful, wondrously intelligent, innumerable company which no man can number, all their beauty, intelligence, and glory and royal apparel coming a free gift from him. Listen to Paul, "They which receive abundance of grace, and the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ."—Rom. v. 17. Again, "And we know that the Son of man is come, and hath given us an understanding." "Then opened he their understanding." The love is from him. God is love, "and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." Again, "Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us," how he has cleansed you. "Called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." You now sing the sweet songs of Zion, hear the glorious gospel of your salvation. He has given you "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Clothed you in royal apparel, which he himself has prepared every stitch of, every particle of this comes from him, for all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. So it is written, The King's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework. Again, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." This once black, polluted, ignorant, innumerable company has now in the sight of God been made white. So we find this in the Bible, "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried." Her heart is now full of the love he shed abroad in it. But you say, It is so seldom I can ever realize that the love is there, most of the time I am so cold and dark. So it was and is with all the true followers of God. Job mentions this in the twenty-third chapter, but he says, "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." This King of kings and Lord of lords rejoices over you, little trembling one. Isaiah in lxii. 5, says, "For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee, [Zion]: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." A young man marries a virgin because she looks so nice and clean and beautiful and is a virgin. So it was with you, the church looked so nice and clean and beautiful to you, and you saw she was not polluted with all the things and doings of the world. She was separate, and only depended on Jesus for all she enjoyed. "As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." He will bring you to his heavenly eternal home, when the work of grace is done, then you will be forever

free from pain, woe, fear, anxiety of heart, and will be just as white, clean, pure, sweet, intelligent, beautiful and glorious as the blessed Savior. Now we know in part, but when that which is perfect is come then shall we know even as we are known. Again, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." Who shall also change our vile bodies and fashion them like unto his own glorious body. Will I be one? Am I, so poor, so ignorant, so unworthy and weak, always stumbling and so blind, one that is to be the recipient of such a wonderful indescribably glorious change and blessing as that? If so, let me suffer on a few more days, or years at most. Job says, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come."

Yours to suffer in time,

ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

[ELDER Greathouse plainly shows that the eternal purpose of God embraces all things, but that predestination is not causative. God purposed all the incidents in the life of Joseph, for instance, but the moving cause of his betrayal by his brethren was their jealousy and envy of him. God's hand determined beforehand the manner, time and place of Jesus' crucifixion, but the immediate cause of Jesus' death was the bloodthirsty hatred of the Jews against him.—ED.]

KINGMAN, Kans., Feb. 1, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you the experience and a letter of a very dear sister whose membership is in our home church, and who we esteem very highly. She has related to me many of her travels through life and many of the bright evidences given her that she has indeed been taught of God. However she feels that her hope is little, but yet it is all she has to rely upon. The Lord's little ones are taught in many ways and led in different paths, yet it is the same sweet story, and we are made to feel a oneness and love for them that tongue cannot express. Brethren, do with these letters as you think best, and all will be well.

We have a lovely band of Baptists here and all are in peace and all are sound in the doctrine, for which we hope we thank the Giver of all good gifts. We would be glad to have Baptists of our faith (Predestinarian Baptists) visit us. Our meeting time is the third Sunday and Saturday before in each month. May you be given strength to send the SIGNS on. There are many scattered over the land who are not within reach of a church, and the SIGNS is their preaching.

Your sister in hope of life beyond this world of sin and sorrow,

(MRS.) J. R. HARDY.

KINGMAN, Kans., Jan. 2, 1925.

DEAR SISTER HARDY:—I will try in my poor weak way to write you a few lines and I hope they will be welcome, but why should they be, when I feel so poor, so sinful? But through the mercy of the God we both adore I hope you will cast the mantle of charity over what I write and glean out the bright spots and pass over the bad, as what I am about to relate began several years ago. My parents were living on a farm at the time, just how old I was I do not know, but I was quite a child. I was walking along a road and came to the crest of a small hill, when suddenly I stopped, and whether I heard the word of God or not I cannot tell, but I commenced trembling, and wondered what was wrong. I was afraid and yet the heavens above me were declaring God, nothing but God. Then I noticed that the road I had to follow was narrow and straight, too narrow for me.

I was afraid to follow it, yet I could see three tracks and I debated which one I would go in, fearing all the time I would fall. To me the three tracks represented the three attributes of God, the three dispensations of time: the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. This road led down to a small ravine and up to another hill not any higher than the one I was standing on, and beside the road in the bottom of the ravine lay a pool of water clear as crystal, and I stopped to look and gaze upon the sight that looked so beautiful. This, to me, represented the pure river of water that John saw proceeding from the throne of God, also baptism. After gazing awhile upon the beautiful water I started on, still trembling, and once I stumbled and nearly fell, but not quite. It seemed as though I could not go on, so weary and weak was I, and still above me was God traveling with me, yet I could not look up and see, somehow I must finish the rest of my journey to the other side. How long it took me to go I do not know, but it seemed ages. I began to climb the other hill when something seemed to have happened, I was getting stronger, my feet seemed to be lighter and I could walk with ease and comfort and the sun shone with a glory and brightness I cannot describe. I threw my hands heavenward and looked up to behold a brightness brighter than the noonday sun. I seemed to float along in the air so light and bright was my condition. The rest of the day was as no day at all, and I do not remember one thing about how I got home, nor do I remember anything that happened during several days that followed. I was living with the beauty of God, and God is the beginning and the end of all things. After that time and seasons came and went until I was about ten years of age when I began to worry about being good. I must be good, but what had I to do with? I could not give, for I had nothing to give. I thought I must read the Bible, which I did, but I could not understand it. It seemed that the things I wanted to do were the things I must not do. This I kept up until I was at the age of fourteen, and ready to do anything that others thought I ought to do, so I united with the Methodists (and this is where I stumbled in crossing from one hill to the other.) No sooner had I done this than I was greatly troubled, for I did not believe as they did. The Bible did not say that a child of God could be lost, so what was I to do? I wanted more than anything to do the right thing. There was no one like me, even my parents, sisters and brothers were not like I was, I was a stranger to them and a stranger to myself; I knew not what I wanted. I felt to sorrow because I was so different from the rest of the family, until one night I dreamed a great storm, with great clouds rolling and tossing, was coming upon us, and father and mother decided we must go to the storm-cave for shelter, and after we were all assembled in the cave and the storm broke above us there appeared a circle of light in the direction from which the storm came. I was glad and happy that I could see it, and asked all the family if they could see the beautiful light, but none could, and I was troubled because they could not, but was at peace to think that I could. This was a short time before I heard of the Primitive Baptist Church. I could not get it out of my mind, and every day of my life I wondered what it could mean, and never was it made plain until after I asked for a home with the Primitive Baptist people, when it unfolded like a book. The storm was the displeasure of my peo-

ple when they knew I was going with the Primitive Baptists.

Dear sister Hardy, if I have an experience, and I hope I have, this is a part of my travel before coming to the true church. In closing this Scripture came to my mind, "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and it gives me comfort. I hope I have not written something that will be of no benefit to you. May the brightness and glory of God our Savior shine throughout all the ages of time as a light to lead his people home, is my prayer for the Redeemer's sake.

Your sister in that most precious faith,
PHEBE A. CATES.

KINGMAN, Kans., Jan. 29, 1925.

DEAR SISTER HARDY:—Your dear good letter with wonderful words of comfort came at noon to-day, and I think of the words spoken in the fortieth chapter of Isaiah: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." It seems that this text is given to us as a testimony from God that he has a people here on earth who need comfort. "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem," that city not made with hands, but by the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who bled and died upon the cross, who was the sin-bearer of his people. How glad I am that this is true, for if it is by works of the flesh then it is no more by grace, and the Bible very plainly says it is by grace, and that it is the gift of God, so we need not listen to the lo heres and the lo theres, but ever be looking to the gracious Savior to give us the rain from on high. Sister Hardy, I wish I had the gift and the power to present to you the wonderful sermon that fell from the lips of our dear pastor at our last meeting, for it was wonderful food for the little ones to think about. It had been my desire for fifteen years that I might hear that very subject used, and to think that it came so soon after writing my experience to you. I know it was of God, for who else could it be of but of him? My mind wonders with the beauty that John saw in his vision: the holy city, the new Jerusalem. Great is the mystery of godliness, and who am I that I should dare claim to be one among God's people?

If there is anything in my experience that you and brother Hardy think would be of comfort to the saints scattered abroad you may send it to the SIGNS and let the editors do as they deem best with it.

I am sorry sister Tuttle had to go away so soon. We were hoping we would get to see her again, but, as always, the Lord knows best. I have been wishing you would come and spend the day with us. I surely will try and come out soon, for I am homesick to see you.

Yours in hope of a better world,
PHEBE A. CATES.

COLUMBUS, Ga., March 12, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find money order, the subscription price for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the coming year. Excuse my delay in not sending first of the month. I appreciate the dear old SIGNS much indeed. Surely it is a boon of joy and great comfort to me in my many lonely hours, separated far from the dear Baptists I hope I love for the precious truth's sake. I am always anxiously watching for its coming, that I may read more of the precious things that our blessed Lord hath from time to time revealed to the

loved ones and given them to write for the comfort of his redeemed family of grace. Comfort ye, comfort ye one another, saith the Lord. Comfort one another with the same word wherewith we ourselves are comforted. I do know, dear brethren, by experience that it is of great comfort and greatly edifying to unworthy me to read the precious messages of love and truth given the dear children of God for benefit and good to one another. All the redeemed family are one household, and there can be no selfishness in this matter, so what is given one is for benefit and good to all. Oh how thankful we should be for a hope that we have been taught of the Lord, that we are of the number that Jesus redeemed with his precious blood and put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself. It is declared that he hath removed our transgressions from us, as far as the east is from the west. He tells us how to live in this world, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Love one another as I have loved you. Wonderful love. I do believe I love the children of God, but the great question often comes to me, Is it with that spiritual love of God? I can only say, I hope it is. I know if I am eternally saved, it is a poor sinner saved by grace alone. Oftentimes I am filled with cruel doubts and fears, darkness is all around me. Then again I am made to rejoice, and say, Jesus is my Savior, he hath done all things for me, and a song is given, my heart is filled with melody unto the Lord. May we be enabled to manifest this pure love more and more to each other, dear children of God. Let brotherly love continue, live in peace and so fulfill the law of Christ. It is joy to know our God is not deficient in any respect; his grace is sufficient for us; his mercy endureth forever. His purposes can never be changed, his decrees can never be thwarted. All this we know, but when we are enabled to view ourselves as we are, a loathsome mass of sin and pollution, we are made to cry, I do not know. The salvation of God's people is sure. We have no doubt about this, but am I included in this favored number?

"Was it for crimes that I had done,
He groaned upon the tree?
Would he devote that sacred head
For such a worm as me?"

We doubt and fear and tremble, our sins rise up before us like mountains; we almost give up in despair, yet this little hope remains with us, a little spark of light, and we dare to hope in the efficacy of Jesus' blood. That star in the east, when it shines on us leads us to Jesus, it is then we view him as our Savior, and the Scriptures declare his blood cleanses us from all sin. The saints can never forget these early experiences. Like Mary, they keep all these precious things and ponder them in their hearts. Yea, they remember how this burden of sin was felt by them, and how it was taken from them and peace spoken to their souls. We remember how a love was given us for the Lord's people, and how they manifested this same love for us, wonderful, mysterious love, that binds our hearts as one. By this shall ye know ye have passed from death unto life, because ye love the brethren. God is love, his mercy endureth forever. Oh that we may be made to realize that he is the God of our salvation; that it is in him, by him and through him we live and have our being, and that in him we are blessed with all spiritual blessings, and that all praise is due him. Had it not been for his unbounding mercy and goodness we, too, would have been like others worshiping the creature and running after the gods

of this world. But God in mercy hath given us understanding concerning the things in him and his kingdom, of the wondrous love that he hath bestowed upon us, therefore giving of his Spirit, and as many as are led by that Spirit are his sons.

Dear editors and brethren, overlook my imperfections with charity. May the Lord long spare you to edit the SIGNS. Standing on the walls of Zion cry aloud, spare not and earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. I ask an interest in the prayers of all God's people. May God bless the editors and the writers of the SIGNS, and all his loved ones everywhere.

"Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee."

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace,
Black, I to the fountain fly,
Wash me, Savior, or I die."

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

ATLANTIC, N. C., April 8, 1925.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have read with much interest your editorial in the SIGNS for April. I think that every stroke of the bell is a clear definition of the truth. Your views of the judgment are the same as I have set forth for the past forty years, or since it was first opened to me, just about that long ago. The first time I used it was in some expressions in a sermon. There was a very dear old preacher there who had very defined views on that subject. He understood me to advocate the idea that there was no judgment for the people of God. He said some things by way of reply, but I thought I saw his position and would not make any reference to what he had said. Soon thereafter I was at his home church, and used that subject as a text. When I was through the dear old man hugged me in the pulpit, and said, "I thought that brother Hardy did not believe in the judgment, and I believe he believes it as strongly as any one I have ever heard speak on it. If I have had any views given to me by the Lord they are just as you have set them forth. Every question must be brought before a court of jurisdiction to decide the final of it, and the verdict given according to the evidence produced and the law governing the very case. Opinions do not decide cases. When the Spirit of God shows one his sins he does not need that any one should accuse him. He has a live witness in his own heart that accuses him, and he knows his witness is true, and he does not deny any of the accusations. This is undoubtedly the open judgment to that one. When this is thus opened the case never closes until the Spirit reveals in that heart the forgiveness of sins by Jesus Christ. Even so with all our life. When the Spirit of God accuses one he knows that evidence is true, and confession is made, and sins are forgiven. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Persons with whom the Lord thus deals will never know of any judgment afterwards. They are dead to self-righteousness, and made alive to holiness. When the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the archangel, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, it will not be to a judgment, but to receive the final decision of the judgment through which he has passed, and been acquitted.

Your reference to the final resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked is beautiful to me. I love that precious doctrine because it is the crowning point

of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Take that out and the whole gospel fails of reaching the glorious point to which it is appointed. In short, the whole of your editorial is one morsel of sweetness. Such honey comes only out of the honeycomb and drops down to us and in us as the holy hand of our God squeezes it out. The honey and the honeycomb must be eaten together: the milk and the honey, the butter and the honey. I am glad we have such a God who knows how to rule, and that he reigns in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. His eye is in every place beholding the good and the evil. He is in the sea, and will deliver his children from the tempest there.

Two months to-day we laid my dear wife in the tomb to await the time when the Lord will bring her up to dwell with him in his glory. I am now sure in my mind that she is now praising him for his great salvation. I am very lonely. I feel that this world is nothing to me. I long to fly away and to be at rest in my dear Lord, and to join the whole throng of the redeemed in praising him for his great salvation. I know of no salvation but that which is in our Lord Jesus Christ. He gave me this blessed hope on the third day of June, 1873. There have been times when it all felt to be but a dream, but I know that it came on that very day. It was so full of sweetness and the praise of God that I can never doubt it. However there are times which are so dark that I cannot see this great blessing. I am glad that our God has given us the Holy Spirit to bring all things to our remembrance which he has said unto us, and that he takes the things of the Father and shows them unto us. In this way I am so led that I cannot forget his tender mercies. I know that all his visits are visits of mercy. They may be in sore chastisement, but they are the mercies of God to us.

When you have access to the throne remember me to the King.

I am your brother in much sorrow, but in the love of the gospel,

L. H. HARDY.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., February, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is my desire to write something for the readers of the SIGNS to meditate upon, whether it will interest you or not I know not, that will be for you to determine for yourselves. One thing I do know for a certainty: I am a very great sinner; not a day passes that I am satisfied with myself, for I have done or said something that is wicked; and how can I help it? I have made one resolution after another to do better, but have broken every one; not one am I able to make and keep. I sometimes am made to rejoice that Jesus came to save sinners just like me. I do not rejoice in sin, I abhor it, yet I find myself rejoicing in sin unawares, then I abhor myself. As I have just passed my eighty-third birthday, this hymn often comes into my mind:

"O land of rest, for thee I sigh,
When will the moment come,
When I shall lay my armor by,
And dwell with Christ at home?"

It is too lengthy to repeat it all; you can read it for yourselves. It is applicable to me, but my passport is not yet sealed. I cannot yet go home, but must abide my time. Whether it be days, months or years I will try and be content. It is one of God's wise acts not to let us know the time of our departure. If I knew I fear I would not be as happy as I am. I have no complaint to make with his dealings with me. He knows best what is for our good. I have a great many bless-

ings to be thankful for. We do not realize our blessings, and are not as thankful as we should be. I know I am not. I am too negligent, and careless in my actions and thoughts. Although we cannot at times control our thoughts, we may to a certain extent bridle our unruly tongues. It is a task to even do that, for a word will sometimes slip out unawares when we are not on our guard that hurts our companion. Oh could I be more discreet at times is my desire. I become weary of wandering round and round this vale of sin and gloom, and long to leave the unhallowed ground and dwell with Christ at home. But my bounds are set; I cannot go beyond them, nor do I wish to. I do not wish to change any of God's plans; they were wisely planned in eternity before the world was made, and cannot be changed or altered. If I did wish to alter any of his plans I would be at a loss to know where to begin. He planned the heavenly bodies, gave each planet its course. Some are near this earth, others beyond the computation of mankind, all for some wise purpose unknown to mankind, and as to numbers, that is also known only to him who placed them there. Each has its course, and when they will cease their course is a mystery. Some wise men have even predicted as to when they will cease to travel their rounds, but they still travel on their course; I see no change. I go to bed at night and wake in the morning and they appear to be going on as usual, so let them go as God intends them to go and all will be right. He makes no mistakes. The wisdom and inventions of all mankind combined cannot change the course of a single planet. Such inventions and discoveries as God intended man to make for the good and welfare of mankind will be made; such as the telephone, airplane and radio will be developed as he allows them to be invented, developed and improved upon from time to time as in his good judgment he sees fit. Although some of these are very destructive to mankind, yet there is a wise purpose in them all, although they may not be able to discern it at the time. He creates the good, as well as the evil for its purpose, though we poor finite mortals may not be permitted to discern its destructive powers. We may many times make mistakes and do not see them until it is too late, and we may be able to accomplish our aims through our mistakes, so our mistakes are not always unprofitable for our welfare or good.

It appears as if I have written enough for the present. I have written down as it came into my mind, if you consider it worthy of space in your valuable paper, all right; if not, it will be all right also. I know there is much of self in it, which is no good, the flesh profiteth nothing.

Yours unworthily,

C. S. FETTER.

FORSYTH, Ga., Nov. 1, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The following is submitted to you for your consideration. There are two prevailing systems of religion on earth to-day. The Lord said unto Adam, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The serpent told the woman, "Ye shall not surely die." In these promises we have the two prevailing systems. One of these systems teaches that man is not dead, and the other teaches that man is dead in trespasses and sins. One sprang from the devil and the other sprang from the Lord. Satan told man he would not die as a consequence of his disobedience, and he is telling to-day through his mul-

titude of agencies that man is not dead, but knows good from evil, and can choose the good or the evil. That is the doctrine Satan preached to Eve, but it disputes the doctrine taught by Jehovah, his Son and the holy apostles. God said ye shall surely die, and Paul in Romans v. 12, says that by one man's offense death passed upon all men. John said, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." He refers to the new birth, or regeneration, and this shows that nothing short of the power of the Son of God can put life into him, and he who hears that voice lives. This is a special call, which is the voice of the Son of God. So far as results are concerned, God's covenant sheep are dead sheep before he calls them to spiritual life. He says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." The atoning blood of Jesus Christ is the only atonement. There are numerous sects claiming to be followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God who teach that all men are not dead spiritually, but that they are naturally capacitated to come into eternal life by obedience to the law and accepting Christ. They forget that the tree of life is in the midst of the garden, and the flaming sword which turns every way prevents natural Adam from partaking and eating of its fruit, which is eternal life. The efforts to evangelize the world are founded upon this false assumption that the world is not dead, which is a lie of the old serpent. This false doctrine lurks in the heart of every unregenerate son of Adam's race, and it is but natural for them to proclaim it to the world outside the walls of Zion. There is no way to the Holy of Holies but by and through the blood of Christ, which was the purchase price paid for his chosen people, so let every one who has been the recipient of this life as long as we live upon the earth give honor, praise and glory unto him who has done so much for us.

Yours in hope of this eternal life,

J. W. NEWTON.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Association, convened, with the Ebenezer Church, of Baltimore City, Maryland, to the associations with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—This meeting has been a great pleasure to us because of the great and mighty power of Jesus which has been spoken to us about the love of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and the receiving of your Minutes and messengers, and the hope of a continuance of your correspondence and fellowship in that great love which binds our hearts together in unity, one church.

The next session of this Association will be held with Black Rock Church, Baltimore County. "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.

E. A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Elder George L. Weaver has changed his address from Hamilton, Ohio, to 750 McMakin Ave., Winton Place, Cincinnati, Ohio, and his correspondents will please address him at the latter place.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1925.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE CHURCH.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I am sending you some questions for your consideration, and if you think them worth while, would you give your opinion on same, based on Bible testimony, and have same published in the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES? We enjoy your writings so much in the SIGNS.

1. Does the God of heaven have a visible church in the world? 2. Did the God of heaven establish this church? 3. Was this church governed by the laws of heaven, or did God give her the power to make laws? 4. Is it scriptural for a church to make laws? If so, when did she receive the authority to do so, and from whom? 5. Did God give the church a complete law to be governed by? If not, what did he leave out? 6. Does the government of the church ever change? 7. Has the church of God been in full sway since its beginning? 8. Is the church to-day the same as it was when it was established? If not, who made the change?

Your humble brother, I hope,
AMOS RICHARDSON.

BUNA, Texas.

It is our desire to endeavor to comply with brother Richardson's request, and we shall try to answer the questions which he has named above. We hope this questionnaire sent us by our brother may arouse a profitable train of reflection in the minds of our readers and that there may be those beside ourselves who may feel to write our brother and give him their answers to his questions. The main thing we notice about our brother's questions is that information is wanted, scripturally based, concerning the "visible church." Our brother means by the "visible" church, an organization of believers in Christ Jesus publicly banded together before the world that is in sight of all men, for the purpose of maintaining the doctrine and order laid down by Christ and his apostles. As we understand these queries, our brother is not concerned as to whether the elect children of God are in the world in this present day in which we live, but whether there is any guarantee in the Scriptures that there shall be in all ages a visible organization of believers gathered together into churches for the purpose of, openly before the world, contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. Before plunging into this matter, let it be first understood that the power by which believers are brought together and made to sit together in the church is wholly of God. The churches of the saints are in no sense organized by the power and wisdom of men. It is alone the power of the Holy Ghost working in the souls of the children of God which brings them together and builds them up together in a visible church-body. The apostles had nothing themselves to do with the organization of the Jerusalem church as recorded in the early part of the Acts. They were acted upon by the Holy Ghost and were themselves the recipients, not the bestowers, of this power. And so has it ever been. Wherever in any time and at any place churches of true believers have been established, it has always been the Holy Ghost that instituted this work in those ordained of God to be church-members, and it has always been the Holy Ghost which has carried on this work of organization to completion. In this matter, the true church has always differed from worldly organizations. All

worldly organizations, religious or otherwise, are gotten up by men and carried on by means of money and man-power, their memberships maintained by means of proselyting, coaxing, urging, persuading, advertising or other means. The churches of the saints have ever depended solely upon the power of the Spirit of God to maintain them and to add to their membership. Also, let it be emphasized, that while we often speak of a visible church, there really is no such thing, and the Bible nowhere uses the expression "visible church." The church cannot be seen by the worldly mind so as to be understood by the mind natural to men. Men may see a body of men and women calling themselves the church, they may see these men and women meeting together at stated times and having singing and prayer and preaching in those meetings. The world may see these individuals baptizing new members in water, may see these persons partaking of the bread and wine at the supper. All these things the world may see and yet not see the church of God at all. It is only the outside framework which the world sees, the world cannot see the life within the members, it cannot read the meaning in their church order nor in the doctrine of the church. The world saw Jesus when he was here on earth, but it saw him only as a man, the world did not see or understand his divinity and did not recognize him as verily the Son of God. Just so it is with the body of Christ which is his church. The world simply sees a certain form and mode of assembly being practised by a body of individuals professing to be the church of God, the Spirit and faith of God which begets and enlivens this form and mode of worship the world cannot comprehend. So when we say "visible" church, do not understand us to mean that the church of God is to be at any time rightly understood and properly valued by the world. We simply mean the outer body or framework of the church which consists of certain modes of coming together for public meetings, or we might say an outer shell of public order and ordinances which house the truth that the believers love and practise. Our brother Richardson has no doubt, we believe, that God will always have a people here in the world so long as the world stands, but wants to know if the Bible anywhere guarantees that there will always be an open or public organization of believers overtly before the world to maintain the doctrine and order of the apostolic church.

Questions 1, 2 and 7 overlap each other and can be answered together. While the word "church" is not an Old Testament word, the Old Testament nonetheless abounds in prophecies of the church. One of these prophecies pertinent to these questions is in Isaiah xxxiii. 20: "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken." A tabernacle differs from a temple in that a tabernacle is a place of worship which moves about from one place to another, while a temple is fixed in one place. Therefore we believe this passage from Isaiah refers to the church of God here in the world and not to the church in glory. While the church of God here in the earth has moved from the place in the land of Canaan where it was first founded, it is still in the world and is still kept in place by the stakes and cords, and it shall ever be so long as time lasts. In Matthew xvi. 18, we have the very definite

promise of Jesus himself: "Upon this rock will I build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." This tells us that Christ himself is the builder of the church militant, that he is the preserver of the church militant. This Scripture cannot refer to the church in a glorified state, because there are no "gates of hell" in glory to threaten the church. The expression "gates of hell" embraces all that is darkness, confusion and unbelief, all that loves lies and makes lies. In the face of all opposition Christ promises his church shall be ever maintained, because founded on a Rock. However, let us warn all Old School Baptists that the Savior nowhere agrees to keep alive the denomination called Baptists, or called anything else. The militant church since the days of the apostles has not always been called Baptist. The name has frequently been changed, but the principle never. A hundred years from now, if the world lasts that long, the militant church at that time may not be called Old School Baptist, it may be called something else. The name matters little. The names by which the church has been known by the world in different ages have been names which their enemies gave to them. Wherever in any age the church militant has been in visibility we find it contending for the same principles of the doctrine of God: the immutability and infinite sovereignty of God, salvation by grace, the utter sinfulness of man by nature, the divinity of Christ, the efficient teaching and guidance of the Holy Spirit, the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust, and the continual preservation of the saints by the grace of God throughout this world journey and finally to glory. The church militant in its gospel character began its journey among the Jews at Jerusalem, after a time it went among the Gentiles, where it has continued to this present time; but when the fullness of the Gentiles shall be come in, the militant church shall return to the Jews. The entire eleventh chapter of Romans gives this matter in detail.

Questions 3, 4, 5 and 6 asked by our brother overlap and can be answered together. They ask concerning the law or laws which govern the church, whether they have ever changed, and if any power exists on earth having the right to change them. The doctrine, faith and order of the church militant were all given from God himself in his Son the Lord Jesus Christ, were revealed by Christ to his apostles, and were by the apostles delivered to the church. This apostolic faith and practise remains to-day, and will ever remain the only divinely authorized belief and practise of the militant church of Jesus. If there should come to the saints any man or men teaching any other doctrine than that which the church has received from Christ and the apostles, such man or men are not to be received into the churches nor are they to be in any way encouraged. (2 John 10, 11.) There has never been given to any power on earth the right to modify, or in any way change, the apostolic faith and doctrine so as to make new legislation for the churches of the saints. "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven."—Matt. xvi. 19. These words were addressed not only to Peter but to his disciples, and this is the promise to them of the divine authority which Jesus said they were to have in the "kingdom of heaven," meaning the militant church. The giving of these keys

was on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven gave them that holy unction by which Peter and the other apostles were enabled to interpret, unlock, the sacred treasury of holy writ and bring forth things new and old out of its treasure. These words of Jesus make the New Testament the only rule of faith and practise for the gospel church, and men are forbidden to add to or to take from the words of this book. (Rev. xxii. 18, 19.) Christ is the head of every member of the militant church, and he is the head of the whole body. The thinking, seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, understanding are all in the head, which is Christ. Each member has these spiritual faculties only as he has them in Christ Jesus, and not in himself. Whoever heard of the hand telling the foot what to do, or whoever witnessed the ear moving the tongue, or the eye dictating to the nose? Just as absurd, therefore, would it be for the members of the church militant to change the law by which the Head governs them, or to seek to be loosened from the Head that they may rule one another. In this connection, it might be well to read Colossians ii. 18–23, and as well Ephesians ii. 19–22.

Question 8 asks whether the church itself has changed since it was established, and if so, who changed it? God himself knows no change, the truth of God is one truth and does not change, Christ the head of the church being the Son of God is also without change; therefore we fail to see how there can have been any change in Christ's body, the church. The church grows in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. This growth is a development of the body, it is the light of truth shining more and more unto the perfect day; but this is by no means a change in the church. Nothing is added to nor is anything taken from it. It is a growing from within, a developing of the inner or spiritual life.

Now that we have tried to answer these questions, we shall be glad to have some of our readers try their hand at them.

L.

ROMANS V. 19–21.

"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover, the law entered, that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord."

Dear readers, we are called first to note one man's disobedience, by which many were made sinners. Paul in writing to the Romans was calling attention to the disobedience of Adam to the law of God to him in the course of uprightness for keeping and eating of the garden of Eden. We now come into much thought. Adam kept the law of God in the garden, as far as we have Scripture proof, until the conception of iniquity, and when that conception took place Eve partook of the tree in the midst of the garden and gave to Adam and he did eat. The disobedience was in the partaking of it, and this disobedience passed the sentence of death on Adam according to God's law. We, being Adam multiplied, have the same sentence reigning with us, and according to the Scripture we are dead in trespasses and sin. The words "many were made sinners" will embrace the entire multiplication of Adam. The verb "were" puts the plural form of the term according to the infinite wisdom of God. We are conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity, and when we were born into the world we were sinners and then this sin reigned unto the death referred to by the God of heaven throughout all the law

and the prophets, as there was no life in the first Adam to extricate himself from this disobedience. There must be one that is righteous before he could know righteousness and obey a righteous law. If righteousness could have reigned by the deeds of this first man's obedience after having the conception of death, and that death brought forth, then we would enter into eternal life by works of righteousness we can do. The law entered that the offense might abound, and until this law was satisfied this offense must abound, and to satisfy this law the offense must be taken away.

Now we enter the consideration of the One's obedience by which many were made righteous. This one must be under that law and yet righteous to live to the fulfillment of the law and redeem from under that law that those sinners which were made righteous by him could stand before God justified and free. According to the language of Scripture spoken by Jesus Christ, If the Son makes you free you shall be free indeed. The word "shall" expresses futurity, as he had not yet suffered and his blood as the Lamb of God had not been shed. The law of God resting with the second Adam was not the law given to the first Adam that he should merely live up to that law though he was born under it to redeem his people from that disobedience. He must save his people from their sins. "Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." In this quotation we note the decree of God given to Adam in the garden of Eden. The will of the Father must be done, and his Son testifies, I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me, and not until he made full sacrifice and became obedient unto death and cried, "It is finished," was this decree to the Virgin fulfilled. Our heart beats with joy in the expression, as we know we are vile, that the salvation of the righteous is eternal. Those are made righteous by his perfect obedience, according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and this obedience could only be rendered by his Son, and those made obedient to his commandments are by the conception of life in them. They are not following in the commandments of Moses to the Jews as a rule and government of natural living, but the commandments of Jesus in their hearts. His love constraineth us to follow him. The individual that follows him beholds him as their all-sufficiency, their Friend, their Husband, their Shepherd, and the ordinances of the church, his precepts and examples, they pant after. Sin abounding grace much more abounded in Christ, which should reign supreme above sin and destroy him who had the power of death and deliver his people. In this virtue of life grace reigns unto eternal life for all the elect of God, and they were chosen in Christ, and he stood as a Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world. Jesus testifies to this fact. You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you. All the elect of God were chosen in Christ, for he came to do the will of his Father. As sin abounded in the transgression of Adam in the beginning of the multiplication of Adam, the grace of God in Christ did much more abound and separate the chosen, or elect, as was manifest in Cain and Abel. Cain bearing the distinction of nature, all the conceptions of iniquity rose up and slew Abel, because of manifested virtue by which he magnified the Lord and the Lamb, which was the first king of the flock, and without blemish in the faith of God, in which he made the offering, and

God respected his offering. The faith in Abel was the gift of God in him, and in that faith he offered the Lamb. Without faith it is impossible to please God. We note a people throughout all the law and the prophets that were directed by faith and magnified the Lord and pointed to him that was to come and testified of him. The expression of Jesus again says, Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, but they are they that testify of me. According to these evidences grace much more abounded, by which the old man was subdued and the new reigned supreme. Paul in the above subject, by the grace of God that was with him, noted all the law and its commandments to the natural people, and how they verily thought salvation was by works of righteousness they did, so Paul testifies that this sin reigned unto death, even so grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. This grace hath appeared to all men in the visible form of Jesus and should not be seen with the natural eye, but to those the Father revealed him knew him as the Son of God and the power of the Father that was with him, and all he did he testifies he did it not of himself, but of his Father. There is a very close point to be noted, as we were by virtue in creation vitally in the loins of Adam, by which sin reigned unto death in us, so by virtue of the life of the second Adam we were elected to eternal life and in the Lamb's book of life were all the names written, and Jesus exclaimed, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. Jesus calls his own sheep by name and leadeth them out and they follow him. The Father's delight was in his Son, and the Son's delight was in the habitable parts of the earth, among the sons of man. I was ever with the Father as one brought up with him, and without me nothing was made that was made. Grace did not reign through Christ Jesus unto eternal life in which he only offered salvation, but he saves with an everlasting salvation, and after his resurrection he declared that all power is given unto him in heaven and in earth, and he intercedes for the elect, and will come and make up his jewels and gather his ransomed home to inherit the kingdom of God as was the pleasure of the Father to give. This inheritance through Christ Jesus our Lord is reserved in heaven, and Paul declared that neither principalities, nor powers, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We have written but briefly, but will submit the above to the good judgment of the household of faith, trusting that while you read what we have written you may feast upon things connected, that are not written, and your pure minds be stirred up to the grace of that God that much more abounds. C. W. V.

AN INVITATION.

MRS. J. P. Quinn, whose membership is with the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., but whose home address is 828A No. Market St., Frederick, Md., requests us to announce that should any Old School Baptists be passing through the city of Frederick, Md., at any time of the day or night, she will be very glad to have them call at her home. There is no Old School Baptist Church in Frederick, Md., but the city lies on main roads of travel from the north to the south and from the east to the west, so that sister Quinn will be very glad to see any of our people who may be passing through Frederick at any time.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association to the churches composing the same.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—As you will expect something from us at this time in the form of a Circular Letter, we will call your attention to first Peter, second chapter, and ninth verse. After speaking in the eighth verse of some who were appointed unto disobedience, he says in the ninth verse: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." This doctrine of choice is abundantly set forth in the Scriptures, 2 Thessalonians ii. 13, the apostle says that "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation." Then in Ephesians i. 4, he says, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." We feel that these quotations are sufficient to establish the fact that God did from all eternity choose in his Son Jesus Christ a people out of every nation, tribe and tongue, whom he predestinated to salvation through the atoning blood of Christ, and concerning this Jesus Christ our apostle tells us that it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell, and Jesus said, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth, and I came to do the will of him that sent me, which will is that of all he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day, and as he cannot fail all Israel shall be saved with an everlasting salvation. This chosen people, though of different nationalities, not at all alike, as pertains to the flesh, they are accounted unto the Lord for a generation, they are members of the body of Christ, being begotten of God through the Spirit, and so are one family, God being their Father, and the Jerusalem, which is from above, the mother of them all, and these are a royal priesthood, the priesthood of the kingdom of God, and have no need that any man offer unto God for them either upon Jewish altars or Roman confessionals, as they are the anointed of God, and offer their bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable to God, also the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for the wonderful mercy shown them of the Lord, an holy nation, holy in the holiness of Jesus their head, who has fulfilled every jot and tittle of the law which they violated, hence they are complete in him who is the head of all principality and power. A peculiar people, separate, distinct, and unlike all the nations around them, not as men and women, but in their faith. They rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. While others boast of their works and tell of what they have done for themselves and the Lord, they can boast only in the finished work of Christ, and tell what they hope the Lord has done for them, and how unworthy they feel of such great love and mercy as God through Christ has been pleased to show them, and they say, Not unto us, O Lord, but to thy name give glory for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake. The Lord hath ordained it so, that his praises should be shone forth in the calling of this people out of darkness into light, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Do you not remember, dear ones, how dense and how horrible that darkness was? Having a true sense of sin, and being without hope and without God in the world, blundering around, not knowing which way to turn, lost and ruined, perplexed and distressed, God is justly angry with

the wicked, and I am that wicked one, but in this darkness sounds out the words, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee," and to our great joy and delight here is Jesus, manifest as the mediator between God the offended and man the offender, and as far as the east is from the west so far has he removed all our transgressions from us. Here now we see Christ the way, the truth and the life. Our sins were by the Father laid upon the Son and he has suffered that which was justly due to me. He died the Just for the unjust, he gave himself for our sins, and with Solomon we exclaim, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." No wonder the apostle calls this marvelous light. It outshines the noonday sun; it so far exceeds all the righteousness of men that the saved one says in heart and soul, "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils," and does not such an one delight to show forth the praises of such a merciful God by walking in the paths marked out for his children, be baptized, walk in the ordinances of the Lord's house in company with those of like precious faith, speak of his goodness, talk of his power, and let his light, which is Christ, shine so that others see his good works and glorify his Father in heaven? May he give us all the strength necessary to a true following of Jesus Christ, and to his name be all the glory. Amen.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.

E. A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Spencer Nethaway, N. Y., $1.00; Archie McAlpine, Ont., $2.00; Mildred D. Gordy, Mich., $2.00; Marion S. Brooks, Cal., $3.00; "A Friend," N. J., $2.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at his home, Leesburg, Va., June 17th, 1925, Posey F. Phillips and Miss Savilla C. Jewell, both of Oatlands, Va.

By Elder C. W. Vaughn, at the Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J., June 17th, at 6 p. m., Miss Mary C. Leigh, of Pennington, N. J., R. No. 1, (daughter of brother and sister Paul T. Leigh) to Mr. Leroy D. Hill (son of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Hill), of Trenton, N. J., R. No. 1.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Dr. Ira H. Thomas, our brother in Christ, passed away from this earthly life at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Paul Popkins, Purcellville, Va., June 2nd, 1925, after having steadily declined in health for the past several months. Had he lived to the 29th of June, he would have been seventy years old. Brother Thomas was the son of the late brother John W. Thomas and sister Emily Hamilton Thomas, both of them members of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church. He was born at Circleville, Va. Graduated in medicine at the University of Maryland at the age of twenty-five. At the age of twenty-six married Miss Kate Baker, of Unison, Va. Practised medicine first at Lewinsville, Va., then moved to Jonesville, Lee Co., Virginia, where he practised medicine six years. Came back to Loudoun County and established himself at Aldie. After a brief time he went to Savannah, Ga., where he practised his profession for one year, but the climate there not suiting his health he came back to Aldie, Va., and the rest of his life stayed in Loudoun County. He was a very faithful and competent rural practitioner of medicine, and, like most country doctors, held himself ready at all times and seasons to answer any calls that came to him from the sick and suffering, going alike in the heat and in the cold, at all hours of the day or night, in all kinds of weather, never considering his own welfare or safety, ministering to rich and poor alike, rendering to all the best that was in him. He leaves behind him a whole host of friends to whom he richly endeared himself by his faithful ministrations. He was the father of two children, one of whom, a son, died in infancy; the other, a daughter, Mrs. Popkins, survives. He has one grandson, George Thomas Popkins. Dr. Thomas and his wife were both baptized at the same time by Elder J. N. Badger about seventeen or eighteen years ago into membership with the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, on a fourth Sunday in August. Our brother served the church faithfully and well as a deacon, as clerk, and as treasurer of the Board of Trustees. No one but ourselves and our all-wise God can appreciate and understand the dreadful loss all of us have

sustained in the departure of our brother from this earthly life. While it shall no longer be our blessed privilege to commune with him here below, we feel assured he has joined the communion of the church triumphant, and that our loss is his gain. He had a rich and deep experience in the things of the kingdom of God, was well-grounded in the doctrine of God our Savior, and keenly alive to what constituted good order in the house of God. One had to meet with him often and meet with him much in order to get to know the richness of his spiritual character. He did not open up his deepest feelings and thoughts to every one, but when once his confidence was gained he was a free talker and most interesting to listen to. Very rarely indeed has it ever been our privilege to be associated with one who so dearly loved the doctrine of God's supreme and absolute sovereignty over all worlds, all men and devils. He not only firmly believed in the absolute predestination of all things, but he continually practised it. Whatever came to pass was perfectly all right with him, and that which each day brought to him he accepted it as coming from the hand of God, who could not err, whose ways are ever just and right, no matter how otherwise they might appear to our human judgment. That the salvation of sinners is wholly and entirely of grace from first to last, without any conditions contingent upon the obedience of the sinner himself, our brother had not the slightest doubt. He had many doubts as to the genuineness of his own experience, but seemed not to doubt at all the truth of the glorious doctrine of God in Christ Jesus. May the Spirit of the Lord who knows all our hearts dwell with our dear sister Thomas, and with our brother's little daughter and her family. We laid to rest the body of our brother in the cemetery at Ebenezer, believing his spirit to be at home in the paradise of God. As a text at the last services we used the last half of the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians. Some few days before brother Thomas passed away, upon two occasions, a light as from some eternal scene overspread his face and he uttered clearly the words, "What a transformation! What a transformation!" Who shall dare say that he did not in some wonderful, mysterious way have a glance into the glory beyond? No doubt our brother felt with him the presence of that glorious Christ unto whose image each and every child of God is predestined to be conformed. Surely that must be a glorious transformation when all the redeemed shall no more bear the image of the first Adam but shall witness the consummation of their salvation in being clothed with the image of the heavenly Christ himself.

ALSO,

William Albert Davis, our brother in Christ, passed away from this lower life at the Loudoun Hospital, Leesburg, Va., June 10th, 1925, in the eighty-second year of his age. He was the last surviving child of William and Verlinda Davis, and was born near Dumfries, Va., May 4th, 1844. His wife, who was formerly Miss Mary Greenlease, survives him. Surviving him also are four children: William Davis, of Shreveport, Louisiana; Ashby Davis, of Santa Fe, New Mexico; Mrs. Laura Hogle, of Santa Fe, New Mexico; Miss Florence Davis, of Washington, D. C. Brother Davis was baptized by Elder E. V. White into the membership of Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church in 1885. For all these forty years he was a faithful and devoted member of the church. We have known him to go to meeting many times when scarcely able physically to do so. He was constant in his attendance upon the meetings no matter what the weather, always being in his place unless conditions were such that it was impossible for him to get there.

The funeral services were held at Herndon, and burial in the cemetery there. By the request of his daughter Florence, we tried to speak from the words of Jesus recorded in John xi. 25. Brother Davis was declining in health for some months before his death and suffered much pain part of the time, but he was very patient and never to us uttered one complaining or faultfinding word. He was anxious to be taken out of the world and death came to him as a sweet release. We feel that his hope was a good one through grace, and believe him to be at rest with his Lord. May the Spirit comfort the mourning ones.

L.

Afria Fooks, the subject of this notice, was born May 8th, 1859, in the neighborhood of the Nassaongo Church, near Salisbury, Md., where he lived until grown, and when twenty-five years old was married to Annie Kelly, and to this union were born two children, both now living: Willie Fooks, of Dover, Del., and Welton Fooks, of Salisbury, Md. Mr. Fooks died January 6, 1925. These two sons, together with his wife, sister Annie Fooks, are the immediate family left to mourn their loss, but there are many other relatives and friends too numerous to mention who feel their loss of this friend. Mr. Fooks never made any outward profession of religion, but he loved the Old School Baptist doctrine, and was often seen at the meetings, and was always glad to have them visit with him. It was the pleasure of the writer to visit with him during his last illness, last fall, at which time the Salisbury Association was being held at the Nassaongo Church, and it was the request of Mr. Fooks that as he could not get out to the meeting, that meeting be held at his home, which was done, Elder Vaughn and Elder Wyatt both preaching, after which service Mr. Fooks remarked that the only thing he could think of that was not just as he would have had it during the preaching was that he was sorry there were not more present to hear such good preaching.

Funeral services were held at his late home in Salisbury, Md., and conducted by the pastor of the Salisbury Church, Elder Mellott, assisted by Elder H. C. Ker, of Delmar, Del., after which his body was laid to rest in the Salisbury cemetery. May the Lord bless the widow, the two sons and all others, and help them to bear their loss. I am, and have always felt, glad that I was his cousin.

G. E. COULBOURN.

Deacon John B. Ham died at his home in North Berwick, Me., May 17th, 1925. He was born April 26th, 1838, making his age eighty-seven years. He united with the "Oak Woods Church," North Berwick, in 1864, being baptized by the late Elder William Purington. In April 1878 he united by letter with the Woburn Old School Baptist Church, in Woburn, Mass., where he was appointed deacon. In early manhood he married Miss Jennie Johnson, to which union one daughter was born. She married Mr. Allen, of Portland, Me. Has since died, leaving one son, Everett, and two daughters, Lulu and Beatrice. These survive brother Ham. He was the last of his family. Brother Ham was strong in the faith, and loved the doctrine in its purity. The writer had been his pastor for nineteen years, and our association was very pleasant. He was faithful in attending the meetings while his health permitted, but his interest in the affairs of the church was always keen. During the last few days of his life he often quoted Scripture and tried to sing the good old hymns he loved so well. We shall miss him, but know he is at rest.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer at the late home at North Berwick, Me. A male quartette sang several hymns. The body was buried in the family plot in the North Berwick Cemetery.

By request.

H. C. KER.

Elder R. R. Crawford, of Hardeman County, Tennessee, was born June 21st, 1842, and died May 22nd, 1925, aged 82 years, 11 months and 1 day. He was married to M. C. Solomon April 22nd, 1867. The time of his married life being fifty-eight years. He leaves a widow and thirteen children, fifty-one grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren. His is the only death in his family in fifty-eight years. He raised all his children without having to call a doctor to see any of them before they were twenty-one years old. Brother Crawford was prompt in attending church meetings, never missing a meeting when it was possible for him to be there. We miss him very much.

Written by request.

J. S. STANLEY.

MEETINGS.

The one hundred and sixth annual session of the Highland Association of Regular (Absolute) Predestinarian Baptists will convene with the New Hope Church, six miles north of Dawson Springs, Ky., on Friday before the third Sunday in August, and continue until Sunday. All sound ministers and brethren will be welcome.

G. D. CLARK, Moderator.

SAM MCGREGOR, Clerk.

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E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE of JOSHUA S. CORDER.

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Picture of Elder Joshua S. Corder.
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Chapter XII.—In Perils.
Chapter XIII.—Fell Asleep, A "Loved Disciple."
Chapter XIV.—Memorials, Poetry, Circular Letter, &c.

This little book of 152 pages was published by Elder Corder's daughter, sister Semma E. Corder, of Philippi, W. Va., and printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office several years ago, and we feel is a work that will be read with interest by any of the household of faith.

The book was originally sold for one dollar per copy, and was bound in cloth, but there were some printed sheets that were never bound, and these sister Corder has generously donated to help in publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so we have decided to bind them in paper covers and offer them to our readers as long as the supply lasts for the extremely low price of twenty-five cents per copy. If any who purchase this book feel they have not received full value they may return the book to us and we will refund the price paid for it.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

GOD IS EQUAL IN ALL HIS WAYS.

(EZEKIEL xviii. 25; xxxiii. 20.)

THE Godhead is one, composed of three, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Three in one, and one in three. This three in one Godhead is equal in power, wisdom, love, mercy, justice and purpose. How could it be otherwise and be God? It could not be otherwise and be equal in all God's attributes. A house divided against itself cannot stand. In union there is strength. All whom the Father elects, or chooses, the Son dies for and pays their debts, and the Holy Spirit regenerates and sanctifies. A complete harmony. All God's ways are equal, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit working together. We must not say that God chooses all men to be saved alike, but that all are not saved, that would show inequality with God. We must not say that Christ died for all Adam's posterity alike, and paid all their debts alike, but that all Adam's posterity will not be saved, that would say that the Godhead is not in harmony, and would make God unjust in not saving all whose debts had been paid by the debtors' Surety. Who is ready to say that God is unjust? How can any one say that God refused to save some whose sins had been settled for, paid off and canceled by the suffering and death of Christ, the Son, without saying God is unjust? Who can say that Christ died for people who are not saved without saying that God's ways are not equal, that Christ died unjustly, Christ is a failure? Again, we must not say that God elects or chooses some sinners, and Christ dies for them along with all others, and then the Holy Spirit fails to regenerate and sanctify them, and they are not saved because the Godhead was not in harmony. This would say that God's ways are not equal. Then again, we must not say that the Holy Spirit regenerates and sanctifies sinners who are not chosen by the Father, nor who were not atoned for by the Son. This would not be harmony in the Godhead. For any one to say that either part of the Godhead, whether the Father, the Son or the Holy Spirit, has done or will do its part in the salvation of sinners, and then either one or both the other parts of the Godhead fail to do its part, or their parts, for the same sinners, would not only be charging God

with unequal ways, but also charging him with failure, with breaking his promises and with having a faulty plan of salvation. How often have we heard so-called ministers of the gospel say, God offers salvation to every one, Christ died for every one, and the Spirit is wooing every one, and that all three are doing their best to save every one, yet many are not saved. Such people charge God with helpless failure. Others say that the death of Christ made salvation possible for every one, but all are not saved. Again, they say God's ways are not equal. O, vain man, how can you measure God with your puny reed of wisdom, love, mercy and justice? How can man with such unequal ways judge God's ways? Now, let us not charge God with failure, nor any parts of the Godhead with failure, nor with having a faulty plan of salvation, nor with being unfaithful to his promises, nor with thwarting his own purposes, but let us ascribe all power, honor and glory to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, three in one, and one in three, in complete harmony, all equal. Surely the Godhead is equal in all its parts, in all its ways, in its purposes and its accomplishments. God loved his people with an everlasting love, Christ was as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and when Christ went to the Father he sent the Holy Spirit to regenerate and show the things of the Father and Son to the chosen and redeemed, called spiritual Israel, and every one of them will be brought off more than conquerors through him that loved us and gave himself for us, because God's ways are equal in all his attributes.

My mind has been stirred of late by man with unequal ways charging God with being like unto wavering puny flesh, rather than giving him the glory of being perfect in all his attributes. If any one can get any comfort from this presentation of a God equal in all his ways and attributes let him give God all the glory for opening my vision to his everlasting truth. My hope is built on God's perfect plan of salvation, on his equal ways, on the complete harmony of the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit in all their work. May God forgive those who falsely accuse him and bless those who rightly adjudge him worthy of all glory. Amen.

M. N. WEBB.

WEISER, Idaho.

DUSTIN, Okla., April, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I am somewhat behind with my subscription, I am sending three dollars, two dollars to pay on my subscription and one dollar to go to "the poor of the flock." Pardon me for not sending this in sooner, as it has been negligence on my part. I indorse the doctrine as it is set forth by you and the contributors to the dear old SIGNS.

If I were speaking for the few associating together here in Oklahoma, I would say there is a people here who believe in the absolute predestination of all things, who believe in a sovereign God, believing that God, the Most High, ruleth among men; that he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, nor say unto him, What doeth thou? who believe he could and did declare from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure; yet I will not speak for any one but myself. I do not believe God had to wait to see if Adam would eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, but believe the atonement for sin was waiting long before the fall

of Adam in the garden of Eden, before the highest hill was formed or the dust of the earth was fashioned. I believe the law was given that the offense might abound, but where sin abounded grace did much more abound; and as sin hath reigned unto death, even so doth grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. I believe in unconditional salvation, having no confidence in the flesh, and believe that obedience and all good works are of the Lord; that the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant doth make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. I do not believe we are rewarded for obedience, but believe that by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous; so he (Christ) is our obedience, our righteousness, our salvation, our faith, our hope, our life, our resurrection, and he is our High Priest and King, our Shepherd, our Elder Brother, and our Friend; yes, and our Lord and our God. Surely the goodness and mercy of our God shall follow his chosen all the days of their lives. "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." He has loved them with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness has he drawn them, and they can say as David, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." What a wonderful God is our God, who is called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace, who has shown pity, and brought peace, for in all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them. In his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bore them and carried them all the days of old, who says, I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. The Lord has not at any time tried to do anything, but he speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast; he says to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back, bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth, even every one that is called by my name. This is the God of Israel, the chosen ones, who are the elect, and precious, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. I do not know if this is my God or no, but I hope he is my God, and a few times I have been made to rejoice, and then I felt that I could say, My Lord and my God.

Do with this as you see fit. If you should have a mind to use it, all right; if not, cast it aside. If used, correct mistakes. May the Lord bless and comfort the publishers and editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and may he give you strength and bear you up in all your deliberations, is the prayer of one who hopes he has love for you for the truth's sake.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

T. J. BELL.

HERNDON, Va., July 6, 1925.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—After our April meeting I was impressed with the thought of writing a short letter on the subject of baptism. You know you spoke on the subject of baptism in your discourse that day, stating for one to be baptized is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, &c. Baptism, the apostle Peter says, is like a figure of Noah "while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ," &c.—1 Peter iii. 20, 21. In hearing you preach that wonderful sermon that day my mind carried me back to that notable day over forty years ago, when dear brother White led me down into the watery grave and baptized me and I was received into the fellowship of the dear old Frying Pan Church, with a desire in my heart to live and die with them. It was a bright day to me then, in the month of May, when the flowers appeared on the earth and the singing of birds and the voice of the turtle was heard in our land. I was made to feel as the eunuch did after his baptism, to go on my way rejoicing. The poet said of him,

"The happy eunuch when baptized
Went on his way with joy;
And who can tell what rapturous thought
Did then his mind employ?"

No tongue nor pen can tell of the sweet joy that is felt when one is brought to obey the admonition and the command to be baptized.

"O how happy are they
Who their Savior obey,
Whose treasures are laid up above.
Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

I would love to say to every child of God who desires to follow the Savior in baptism, Go home to the church and tell them of your desire and be baptized. Yes, baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Our Savior has said, and is still saying it, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Not letting your light shine before men of the world, who cannot see your light, but men of God, who can see your light, and who can glorify your Father which is in heaven.

I feel now that I am nearing the end of my pilgrimage here below, and the most of my time my mind seems to be a total blank to spiritual understanding, yet at times I am made to fondly remember the bright day I spent over forty years ago in following my Savior in the mode of baptism. I was made to feel as the poet expresses it,

"Come, Holy Spirit, dove divine,
On these baptismal waters shine;
Oh teach our hearts, in highest strain,
To praise the Lamb for sinners slain."

I have only hinted a few things connected with the subject of "baptism," but will bring this letter to a close. I hope to see you soon.

With love and best wishes, your brother, I hope,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

WHITE PLAINS, N. Y., April 5, 1925.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I feel some impression to write to you this beautiful evening, after hearing you preach two wonderful sermons to-day. It is not always that I am given such a clear understanding while sitting under the gospel

sound; my heart did rejoice to-day, and it did seem that I was carried back to the years that have passed and gone, when, I hope and trust, this blessed work of grace was begun in my soul by the great God of heaven and earth. I can never tell the many wonderful things concerning his dealings with me, but I can say I do know there was a time when I was shown that I was a guilty and condemned sinner, without hope and without God. My sins rose up before me like a great mountain, and where to flee I knew not. All the night long my soul was melted down in grief and sorrow. You spoke of how you desired to hide in your distress and cry alone to the Lord, truly it was mine also. I well remember one day when I was so burdened I went from my home into the woods and hid from all human view behind a tree, and there it seemed I poured out my feeble cries unto the Lord, and these words came to me and filled my very soul,

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

To-day it was a feast to me. As you proclaimed the blessed truth I could go back over the way and see and know something of being brought down in the death and suffering and sweet deliverance from the terrors of hell, and I can say as you did to-day, I have never had its burden of condemnation since, but a fear and many doubts, yet I can see God's power in it all. I am glad this God does not need the puny hand of mortals to help. If it were as poor blind men are crying everywhere to-day, as in the past, that they must help the Lord to increase his kingdom, his power would be a failure. Job knew something about the wonderful working power of God in the days of old. I have often enjoyed reading the book of Job. The thirty-eighth chapter seems to confirm what I mean in speaking of mortal men. Truly Job is a type of the elect of God whom Christ bought with his precious blood. It is so complete; a fixed number, and known to God, and to him alone, who they are, or how many. Dear Elder Dodson, there is no people like this dear people on earth, for they are one people, and all are taught in this school of grace, and they see eye to eye, for they are taught that salvation is of the Lord, and the flesh profits nothing. I trust the Lord will bless you and all of his called, and send servants to cry aloud and spare not, and may he bring all of them who are at war to peace, because his dear children are all helpless and need each other. There is much comfort where peace abounds.

I trust you will pardon me for making this letter so lengthy, but for some reason my mind seemed to be led in this direction. When I started I did not expect to write so much, as I do feel fearful to speak or attempt to write these latter years, because it seems I am so vile, and if one whom Christ died for, the vilest of them all.

I want to give you some of the Scriptures I feel have been given me in days that have passed and gone, but time and space forbid me telling you how wonderfully they came to me. Most of them were given me when I was called away from the New School denomination, and some since. Before I left the New School: Matt. xii. 18; Matt. xxiv.; Deut. i. 10, 30. After uniting with the Old School: Jeremiah twelfth chapter; 1 John ii. 28, 29. There are many more, but these seem to be like an open book in my memory, as I was in so much distress concerning the doctrine and I could no longer stay with the New School people, for I could get no comfort; my whole life seems a strange one.

Please correct all mistakes, for I am unlearned, yet I trust I have been taught in the school of grace, and the lesson I have learned is, I am a poor helpless worm of the dust; salvation is of the Lord.

Yours, I trust, in hope of life beyond this vale of sorrow,

MELISSA GRIMES.

TAFT, Tennessee.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter I received from Elder Lytle Burns, which you may publish if you think it worthy of space. I enjoyed reading it very much, and would like to see it in print and let the brethren share it with me. My paper comes to me regularly, and I fully indorse the principles it sets forth, and the contributors contend earnestly for the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God, both in time and eternity; that God has a purpose in all things, both animate and inanimate; that God works all things after the counsel of his own will; that he made all things for a purpose, and for his own glory, and all things will glorify him in the purpose for which he made them, and everything will fill its purpose, from the least to the greatest. God determined, or predestinated all things; if not, then all things came by chance, or blind destiny. He works all things after the counsel of his own will; not a part, but all things, and he disposes of all things just as it pleases him.

Your little brother, in hope of a better life beyond the grave,

M. J. TOWRY.

FLORENCE, Alabama.

DEAR BROTHER TOWRY:—Since your association I have often thought of you and of the dear brethren and sisters, and am feasting yet on the crumbs that fell from the Master's table while I was with you all. I attended two other associations right after yours, and enjoyed them, then went on to Tuscaloosa, Birmingham and Atlanta. I tried to preach three times while in Atlanta. One sister from Redwood, Tennessee, joined while I was there. I have sold my store and rented my house, and expect, the Lord willing, to devote more of my time this year trying to comfort the Lord's people. When the weather gets better in the spring or summer I want to visit all the churches in your association, commencing at Huntsville. It seems there is a bitter feeling among Old Baptists in many places, but our people have got the truth. I am not ashamed or afraid to preach the absolute sovereignty of God over all the works of his hands. The government and disposition of all things were complete in his mind, therefore the prophet could say, "Declaring the end from the beginning." God never changed his mind, never made a mistake. He always has, is now, and will through all time, accomplish his will and purpose in all things, from the least to the greatest. Our God has a spiritual family to be heirs and joint-heirs with his Son. He has blessed them with all spiritual blessings (not some) in heavenly places, and is working all things for their good. Having chosen them in a furnace of affliction he has made them accepted in the Beloved, has given them an inheritance that is undefiled and that fadeth not away, but is reserved in heaven (not on earth) for each and every one of his heirs; then in addition to that they are kept by his power through faith unto salvation. Oh that is the best news a poor sinner like me ever heard; good news from a far country.

"His oldest children now of age,
Are in their happy home;
In songs of praise they will engage
Till all the minors come.

When he has called his children home,
When all his children meet,
Celestial joy shall fill his throne,
Then heaven will be complete.

Then throughout the heavenly plains
The heirs of God will sing
Redeeming grace in higher strains,
Salvation by their King."

Write me when you feel so disposed.
Yours in hope,

LYTLE BURNS.

BERLIN, Md., Dec. 8, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If you will pardon me for thus addressing you. While sending in my renewal to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES I feel I would like to write a few lines for your consideration, if I may be given the mind and language from the God of all power. I would like to say to all the brethren, Be of good cheer, for you have been called with an holy calling out of darkness into the marvelous light. How are we to know this? Because we are made to hate sin. If we had never been brought into the light then we would have known nothing about sin, but when by the light of God we were shown our wickedness then we were made to see how black we were with sin, and then it was that our troubles began. If we had never been called into the light then we would not have known God and would have had nothing to suffer in the heart on account of sin, for we would have known nothing about it. So it is to-day with all the chosen race, for Christ said he would chasten all he had called. If you are made to suffer on account of sin then you may feel assured it is the calling of Christ out of darkness into light. Naturally it is impossible for a blind man to see the danger when he is near it, so it is with every child born of God, for he was blind (spiritually) until God opened his eyes and showed him just where he stood. Then it was he was made to cry to the Lord for mercy, just as Jonah did when he said, "I cried by reason of mine afflictions unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice."—Jonah ii. 2. He had been alone in his disobedience and was being made to suffer for the same. So it is with you, my brethren, if you had nothing to suffer you would have nothing to rejoice over. It is for our good that we are carried down to the bottom of the sea of distress with the seaweeds wrapped about our heads. Do you not think that Jonah rejoiced after he had been brought out of the belly of hell and set at liberty once more? I fully believe it is for our good we are made to suffer, for Christ said, Blessed are they that suffer for my name's sake. We are often made to ask the question, Am I his, or am I not? If we were not a part of his body we would not be made to suffer on account of sin, for we are told in the great Book of books that he was made to suffer even death on account of sin. Then I say again, Be of good cheer, for if we are made to suffer and die with him on account of sin then we shall rise with him, for he has conquered sin and death and has risen triumphant over hell and the grave.

Yours in deep trouble, and unworthy to be numbered with you,

J. W. S. TIMMONS.

OTTAWA, Kansas, March 29, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will be glad to have you change my address from 902 South Main to 609 East Fourth Street, as I have moved and do not want to lose a paper. On the day I received the March SIGNS I also received the *Lone Pilgrim*, kindly sent me by sister Ellison, also *Zion's Landmark*, from brother Coul-

bourn, and what a lot of good reading I did have. In sister Attie Curtis' excellent letter the words, "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious," seemed a special message to me. I have very often wondered why none of my friends or acquaintances, or my family for that matter, are never ready to talk about this wonderful God whom I hope I adore; all talk on spiritual things seem to bore them. All questioning now was gone. "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious." Why of course, it was all so plain, why had I not seen it before? Those words kept coming into my mind for days, "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious." A few days ago I felt I would be so happy to live the rest of my days here on bread and water if I could only know I was God's child and he would take me to himself when I leave this world. Elder Lefferts' editorial in the same number on "Recognition" is so good, also Elder Dodson's is so interesting. In reading of King David's life I had noted particularly this account, I was so glad to read it. All of it sounded good to me. Elder Schenck's letter, too, meant much to me. I am personally acquainted with him, and hope I love him for the truth's sake. I am pained to hear of so much confusion everywhere. All true Old Baptists believe that God is all in all, without him we can do nothing, that he has all power in heaven and in earth, that none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? I know if he destroys me it is right and just, and I sometimes wonder how he can do anything else, and this causes me many sad and sorrowful hours. I am not very well, am so nervous I find it very hard to write, so would like to say to some of the dear ones who have written to me, that they are not forgotten, and I hope to write to all of them some day, God willing. I would like to thank the friends who have been so kind to me in my affliction, especially one dear brother who has been kind beyond belief. He would not like to have me mention his name, but he will know to whom I refer. The SIGNS has been in our family from almost, if not, the first issue. I read the experiences when a child with much enjoyment, I read them now with, I hope, more understanding, and I must say I am not wise enough to find any fault with them. I love the SIGNS, and my desire is it may continue steadfast in the faith once delivered unto the saints. Let us forget poor, feeble, fickle worms of the dust and talk of God. All his works praise him. He is so great I hardly dare speak his name.

With love to all who, while they love him, fear and tremble at his word, I will say, Good-bye,

ANNA McKINNEY.

VANCOUVER, B. C., Jan. 11, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find two dollars to pay my subscription to the SIGNS. I am prompted at this time to add a few words, and as I write the question arises within me, Is it the devil that is doing the prompting, that one so vile as I should attempt to write of the things that belong to the pure in heart? I am an old man—at least no longer young—having passed my sixty-fifth birthday, and all these years I have been rolling sin under my tongue as a sweet morsel. I have been told by preachers that I should embrace religion and join the church. To one such preacher I replied that I had never met with the change of heart I thought necessary before one was a fit subject to unite with the church. He ridiculed the idea, and said it was not

necessary, all one had to do was to be baptized, join the church and go to work and all would be well. I told him that might be good enough for him, but it did not suit me. When a small boy I got the idea that all men were born under a curse, with the sentence of death irrevocably passed upon them; that in such a state they were helpless and hopeless, and in such a state they must remain until He who holds the keys of death should reveal himself to them, and for this revelation I have ever been looking. In my case (being a seafaring man) I have often felt his presence in delivering me from what seemed sudden death, and at such times I have resolved with all the determination within me to lead a different life, only to see those resolutions broken. Paul says that we know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. Surely he must have had something better, for I have known men who held to the same faith that I do and I have loved them, but this does not satisfy me that I have passed from death unto life, for how can we who are dead to sin live any longer therein? I go on from day to day doing the things I should not, and leaving undone the things I should do. Each day the debt grows larger, and I have nothing with which to pay. I seldom go to the meetings here, for I do not believe what they preach, but I take comfort in reading what the saints have to say in the SIGNS, and wish I could be numbered among them, but alas, I am still a hell-deserving wretch, without hope.

I submit these few broken remarks for your consideration, if they should merit such.

I am, yours truly,

A. G. DIXON.

MONROE, Ga., July 3, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel there is due the brethren and sisters of the Baltimore, Delaware, Delaware River and Warwick Associations a word of gratitude for their kind hospitality extended to us while we were with them in May and June, also those at Broad Run, Maryland, Frying Pan, Virginia, Black Rock, Maryland, and Warwick, New York. It was one of the most delightful visits of my life, and surely begat an inspiration in us for the cause of truth, and will be as bread cast upon the waters for us to eat and enjoy when we get old. The sweet fellowship was as a bank account that we can draw upon, and it will get larger the more we draw on it. The good old doctrine of our fathers, that some of the children now seem to want to modify, or sugar-coat, I think is like the robe the prodigal son got, the best just as it was. It was very good to get home and find all well, and if we never see them again we wish for them all the grace that is treasured up in Christ.

Your little brother,

JAMES M. ADAMS.

MALVERN, Pa., Jan. 6, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—With my remittance for another year I want to add a word of appreciation for your efforts in the publication of the SIGNS, and a word of thankfulness that we are still to have it as a monthly visitor. Had I financial means to aid in the publication I would indeed feel it a privilege and pleasure to do so. Words do not help much, but I do hope you feel that I am deeply grateful and appreciative of the SIGNS, that it brings me messages of great comfort, and I thank and praise God that we have such a medium wherein heart may speak to heart of the things which are too deep

for the natural mind, and where those of like precious faith may commune together. Even those not permitted, by lack of physical strength, to attend the meetings can have a great joy and blessing in this mode of communication, and may it be God's holy will to continue the SIGNS, a blessing to them of feeble strength, which only those denied the precious privilege of meeting together can estimate. To me, one of the isolated from such precious meeting privileges, the paper comes as a real blessing, and I trust it may be God's will to bless with richest mercies all connected with the publishing of it, and that we may all strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. May our good and able ministers of the word be given grace to write for the edification of the little ones, and may we all feel that "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in christian love," and may we be given to know more abundantly the riches of his grace and mercy, and unto him be all honor and glory. May he keep the feet of all them that profess his name in the narrow way, wherein is peace and joy, according to his will and good pleasure.

JOSEPHINE DRAKE HAVILAND.

CHICAGO, Ill., May 1, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing herewith my check for seven dollars to cover my arrears for my paper, which you have been generous enough to send to me for nearly three and one-half years, and I have enjoyed very much such articles as I have been permitted to read. However I am away from home so much that I seldom ever get to see the paper, and when I do I only get to read a part of it, but I observe that it still stands for those exalted principles laid down in the holy Scriptures, and still contends earnestly for the doctrine once delivered unto the saints. I feel that the Baptists everywhere should lend their support to this paper, the only absolutely sound periodical of its kind in existence, for it surely does seem to me that the time has almost come when our people, some of them, will not endure sound doctrine. May grace, mercy and truth lead your minds along paths of thought that when reproduced in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will cause all of God's little children to rejoice everywhere.

I am a judge on the Bench of the Circuit Court of Chicago, Illinois, and I very often find my faith in the Sovereign of this universe a staff and a shield for me. You may continue my paper, but please send it to 110 S. Peach St., Duquoin, Ill., and then it will go to the residence instead of going to my office when I am gone.

Trusting that the good Lord will bless you in your every effort to praise his exalted name, I am, I trust, your brother in hope of eternal life, which God who cannot lie, promised before the world began,

L. P. HARRIS.

WATCH YOUR DATES.

WE wish to request our subscribers when sending in their subscriptions to see that the date on the little pink slip bearing their address is changed. If not changed, please let us know immediately (for that signifies you have not been given credit for the money sent) and we will look into the matter.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Lydia B. Stewart, N. Y., $2.00; Mrs. Clara Parker, Ore., $2.00.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1925.

EDITOR

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
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THE UNPARDONABLE SIN.

WE have been requested to give our views on what constitutes the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, the sin which Jesus said should not be forgiven unto men. Inasmuch as it is necessary to have the Scriptures upon this matter plainly before us as we write, we shall begin by quoting those passages which refer to this matter. The first is in Matthew xiii. 31, 32, and reads as follows: "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." The gospel according to Mark iii. 28-30 puts it in this way: "Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation; because they said, He hath an unclean spirit." Turning now to Luke xiii. 10, we find it thus: "And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven." Both in Matthew and in Mark this declaration of Jesus concerning the unforgivable sin is in connection with the Pharisees accusing Jesus of having cast out devils by Beelzebub the prince of devils. This ascription of the work of the Holy Ghost to the devil is what is called the basphemy against the Holy Ghost. To thus ascribe the work of the Spirit to the devil is to be guilty of a sin which shall not be forgiven. The period during which this sin shall not be forgiven is "never." Matthew puts it, "Neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Mark says, "Never." Therefore we take it that the expression, "Neither in this world, neither in the world to come," is the same as, "Never." That is, whosoever ascribes the work of God's Spirit to the devil is a lost soul, there is not forgiveness for that sin throughout all the period of time. As for the heaven beyond this life, there will be no sin in that world, therefore no forgiveness of sin there. To be guilty of this blasphemy is to be in danger of eternal damnation. In the eternal mind and purpose of the infinite all-wise God from before the foundation of the world, God's elect were not, and have never at any time been, in danger of eternal damnation. When the blessed Jesus declared this truth about the unforgivable sin against the Holy Ghost, he was then in the legal or Jewish world. Under that legal covenant and in that legal world, there was no such thing as forgiveness for blasphemy against God. Witness the Scripture in Leviticus xxiv. 16: "And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death, and all

the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the Lord, shall be put to death." When Jesus further said, "Neither in the world to come," he had no reference to the world of eternal glory beyond this mortal life. He meant by "the world to come," the gospel world or age which was to follow after his resurrection from the dead, when the legal world or age should have come to an end. As there had been no forgiveness in the legal world for the blasphemy against God, so there is not now any forgiveness for this blasphemy against God in this gospel world. The law of Moses could not forgive that sin, but killed him who committed it, neither does the gospel of Christ forgive blasphemy against God, but excludes from the household of faith one who ascribes the Spirit's work to the devil. Therefore neither in the law world nor in the gospel world is there forgiveness for the sin against the Holy Ghost. The word "never" does not mean eternal. It means "at no time," and has reference to the whole extent of time, that throughout the whole period of time there is no forgiveness for blasphemy against the Spirit. We know that this subject has been a matter of great concern to many of the Lord's dear children, because most of them have at some time in their souls' travels feared themselves to be guilty of the unpardonable sin. That great adversary of the soul's peace, the devil, loves to tease and torment the children of God and his accusations against the brethren are never so poignant as when he can take the very Scriptures of truth and hurl them at the saints. Never is Satan so plausible as when he comes garbed as an angel of light quoting passages from the sacred book. But while he quotes Scripture at times, he always quotes it piecemeal, never having any regard for the context; and while he quotes it often glibly, he never construes it correctly. Nevertheless the pain which Satan causes by his gross misapplications of the Word are terribly acute and give rise to sore doubts and misgivings on the part of the harassed believer. Now, we feel to say emphatically that where one has a fear lest they have committed the unpardonable sin, the presence of that very fear is itself an evidence that the unpardonable sin has not been committed. Those who are guilty of this unpardonable sin never have any such fear about it. The presence of the fear proves there exists also a reverence for God. Where reverence is there can be no blasphemy. A spiritually awakened soul is alive to sin, the unawakened soul is dead in sin. When dead in sin there is no fear of sin, indeed no consciousness of sin at all. To be conscious of sin and to be in fear of it is evidence of spiritual life. We feel to say to our readers, especially to those who may have at times feared themselves guilty of the unpardonable sin, that if you were really committing this terrible sin you would not know it, you would be callous and hardened, and without feeling any pain about it. The fact that this fear of the sin is with you shows your conscience to have been made tender regarding the offensiveness of sin, and this fear of the Lord is the knowledge of life to depart from the snares of death. Jesus says in the Scripture quoted from Matthew that a word spoken against the Son of man shall be forgiven. This means that any offense which comes against Jesus shall be forgiven. All the sins which are chargeable to the second Person in the Trinity are forgiven, it does not at all matter what may be the

character or kind of blasphemy or sin committed. If it be an offense against Jesus Christ, it shall be forgiven. Jesus Christ is the Mediator between God and God's elect, and is the elect's Surety for all the debts they owe to divine justice. Almighty God has laid on his Son all the sins of all his elect children. There is not one single sin which the elect of God have committed, or are committing at this present time, or that they may or will commit, but that Jesus Christ has atoned for the whole of them. He has washed away all the sins of his people in his own blood. This is because the sins of all God's chosen people come against the Son of man, Jesus Christ. He is the Scapegoat for all of them and bears their sins, all of them, away into the land of forgetfulness, whence they shall never return to be remembered any more, never to be again charged to their account. On the other hand, the sins which come against the Holy Ghost are not forgiven. This is because there is no mediation provided in the will of God for these sins. These are the sins for which Jesus Christ was not made responsible, the debts for which he was not made Surety. Suppose Mr. A gives to Mr. B his note for $500, and that Mr. A asks Mr. C to go his surety on this note. Mr. C consents to be A's surety. In the event that A cannot pay this note, C will have to pay it, because he is the surety for it. But, suppose Mr. D also owes Mr. B a note and that D fails to pay it. Now, B goes to C and wants C to pay D's note. Will C do it? He will not. Why not? Because C is not D's surety, therefore is not liable for D's debts. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was from all eternity the predestinated Mediator and Surety for his people who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. All their debts to God he will pay and has paid. He gave his life for them. But Jesus Christ is not Surety for the sins of the whole human family. Therefore the sins of those for whom Jesus was not made Surety, are not atoned for and never will be atoned for. All those sins are sins against God the Spirit directly, without a mediator to stand between and render satisfaction for them. Therefore these offenses being against God the Spirit, and not against Jesus Christ, have never forgiveness. There is no sin so terrible, no blasphemy so heinous, but what it is possible to be forgiven, provided it is against Jesus Christ, that is, provided he is the Surety for the transgressor committing that sin; but even it be but a word against the Holy Ghost there is not forgiveness anywhere for it, because it is an offense for which there is no mediation provided, no surety to pay it. The apostle Paul had at one time been a blasphemer, as witness his first letter to Timothy, thirteenth verse. But this blasphemer found forgiveness. Why did he? Because Jesus Christ was from all eternity predestined to be his Savior, therefore the Surety who paid all Paul's indebtedness to divine justice, thus bringing unto Paul the forgiveness of all his sins. No doubt there have been many who have blasphemed God who have not found forgiveness as Paul did, who were naturally no worse men than Paul had been, but who obtained no forgiveness because Jesus Christ was not from eternity responsible for their safety, was not made of God to them their Surety. Therefore their sins were against God the Holy Ghost without a mediator to stand between them and divine justice to make good the debt that they might go free. From all this line of thought which we have been pursuing here, it will be seen

that it is not possible for a child of God to commit an unpardonable sin. There is not one single sin of all the elect of God which Jesus Christ is not the atonement for. If there is anything which he left out or overlooked, then he is not the perfect Captain of their salvation, but liable to err, as the rest of us. Since he has however perfected all his set-apart people by the one offering of himself, it follows that not one of them can commit an unforgivable sin. This unforgivable sin is the sin committed by the wicked, or by those who were not included in the covenant of election before the foundation of the world. Their sins have no atonement. There is no mediator provided for them, hence their offenses are directly against God the Holy Ghost, and not against Jesus Christ. If they were against Jesus Christ, they would be forgiven.

We hope we have made ourselves sufficiently clear, so that you have grasped our view of this matter. We hope we may have been enabled to set at rest your fears as to yourselves being guilty of this unpardonable sin. If you have had a fear within yourself that you may have been guilty of this, that very fear is testimony of spiritual life within your soul; having this life you must belong to Christ, and belonging to him you have him as your Advocate in the court of heaven to present you faultless before the throne of God. Belonging to him, you cannot sin yourself away from him. "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

L.

2 PETER II. 20–22.

"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they had known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire."

Before entering into our subject we will draw the attention of our readers to the commencement of the chapter, where it will be seen that the apostle is warning the brethren of false teachers who should rise up among them and that many would follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth should be evil spoken of. It is of these false teachers that Peter is writing in the three verses that form the subject for this article. The apostle uses some very remarkable expressions in this chapter concerning these men, expressions that have caused diversity of opinion among good men. He declares they deny the Lord that bought them, and that they had forsaken the right way. Such language would seem to imply that these false teachers were among that number who are bought with the precious blood of Christ, and had known the way of righteousness, but had forsaken it. We believe there were some of them who were taught of God, while others, who were perhaps in the majority, were graceless characters. These latter, being, as we say, in the majority, we will first deal with them. Jude says, "For there are certain men crept in unawares," that is, unawares to the brethren, but God was fully aware of them, for he had of old appointed them unto this condemnation, ungodly men. We believe that these teachers were false from start to finish,

that like the dog who was still a dog after he had vomited, and the sow who was still a sow after she was washed, so these men were false in their profession and false in their teaching, all they had was appearance, they had a name to live and were dead. Jude said these false brethren had crept in unawares, yet we doubt not but they had been received into the fellowship of the brethren on their confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and love towards the saints, thus they professed that the Lord had bought them. They did this with such mock humility, and such professions of love that it would ill become even the saints to question their sincerity. Their feigned love and mock humility gained a place in the hearts of the saints. They walked with them, communed with them, and to all appearances the Scripture would seem true of them which says, Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price. As soon as they had gained the confidence of the brethren and were looked up to by some, they began to deny the doctrine of God our Savior. The sovereignty of God over all worlds, men and devils, and the salvation by grace, and grace alone, they could not endure, but denied it, and taught others to do the same, thus their denial of the faith was a denial of the author of it. Their knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ was a head knowledge, such as can be acquired by natural men, such knowledge often produced what appeared to be a good moral walk, so that outwardly they were as whited sepulchres. By this head knowledge they escaped the pollutions of the world. Many of these false brethren had been brought up surrounded with idol worship. The knowledge they had acquired of the truth enabled them to escape the pollutions of idols, yet when persecution came they easily became entangled and overcome. Being fleshly they minded the things of the flesh. The apostle said, "The latter end is worse with them than the beginning." Yes, for they generally became avowed enemies of truth and haters of those who loved the same.

"For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they had known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." Again all that such men could possibly know of the way of righteousness was a head knowledge, they had confessed Christ before men, had been baptized, and to all appearances had turned from dumb idols to serve the living God. They appeared firm in the faith and seemed to be in the way, yet not being possessors of the Holy Spirit how could they receive a holy commandment? They turned from the holy commandment delivered unto them. Notice the word "commandment" is in the singular, therefore in turning from the holy commandment, we believe is meant, turning from the new commandment of Jesus, which is, "Love one another." This was given to the disciples by Jesus himself, and they in turn delivered it to the brethren. Those who were not gracious characters were very easily turned from that holy commandment. The flesh cannot love, for love is the fruit of the Spirit, but they, being fleshly, trampled under foot the precious pearls of the gospel, and turned again to rend the brethren.

Let us now consider those who had tasted that the Lord is gracious, who had known the way of righteousness, yet were left to themselves and to the devices of their own evil hearts. Now if these men were taught of the Lord, and bought by him through the shedding of his precious blood, they were his, and could not be

eternally lost. Most of the churches in the apostles' day had corrupt and disorderly brethren among them, they were not to tolerate them, but rather as Paul saith, "Do not ye judge them that are within?" "Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." Again he speaks of delivering such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Such in this time state, unless given repentance, will forever be like clouds carried by the tempest of false doctrines. The true servant of God is rightly compared to a cloud from whom the doctrine of God our Savior drops as the rain, into thirsty souls, and in that sense Jesus appears in the clouds as the water of life, but those in error are clouds without water, to whom is reserved the mist of darkness for ever. Some of these false brethren crept in among the Galatians, turning them from Christ crucified, to the works of the law. They were false brethren unawares brought in; that is, they were false in their confession, for they should have testified, and probably did, that they were dead to the law by the body of Christ, that the thunder and darkness of Mount Sinai they could not endure, and that the light of Mount Zion had shone in their hearts, in a word, that Christ had brought them liberty from the bondage of the law. They departed from the way, building again the thing that once by their testimony they destroyed, and by so doing they made themselves transgressors. Thus Paul's declaration applied to them, For as many as are under the law are under its curse; so Peter calls them cursed children. Just as some turned to Judaism, others turned through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, also love of money exercised their hearts with corrupt practices. These had escaped the pollution of the world; that is, the idolatrous practices, and the corrupt living, through the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, yet, says Peter, If "they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning." "For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." Thus some through persecution were entangled and overcome, some through the flesh and some through their love of Judaism, and the latter end of those who are subjects of grace yet have erred is worse than the beginning. Their condemnation, darkness of mind, and bitterness of soul, is like a fire burning continually. It is the very gall of bitterness, and far exceeds their soul trouble that they experienced at the first. Moses wrote of this people in type, "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end! How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up?" It has been our lot to see the latter end of some who we believe were once taught of God, and while we do not believe in parading the follies and mistakes of others, yet we can say with Peter, "The latter end is worse with them than the beginning." Peter said many should follow them, and those many were led astray, therefore the woe of many shall come upon them, thus they pierce their souls with many sorrows. Some would-be preachers, with high opinions of their own judgment and but little love for the church of Christ, could not trust in the judgment of the church, but through their anxiety to preach and have a following they turned from the holy commandment. Others, says Jude, were

murmurers, complainers, despising dominions, and speaking evil of dignities, yet he advises the brethren to have compassion, making a difference, and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire. Some were given repentance and confessed their faults to the brethren, others persisting in their ungodly course, passed out of this life sword in hand against the brethren they had professed to have loved. We leave them in the hands of a just and holy God; they had sown to the flesh and of the flesh had reaped corruption. Surely these things should make all God-fearing souls walk humbly, with a prayer in their hearts for the Lord to keep them in his fear. "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" In another place the apostle tells us that "in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor." These false brethren were evidently vessels to dishonor, in the house, and for a purpose known unto him who has seen fit that they shall be there. In conclusion Peter says, "But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire."

G. R.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Sister Mary Ellison has indefinitely changed her address from 1243 Polk St., Topeka, Kansas, to Meridan, Kansas, R. 1, and would be glad to hear from other "scattered strangers," for she says the friends that most cheer her on life's rugged road are the friends of her Master, the children of God.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Delaware Association of Old School Baptists, in session with Welsh Tract Church, May 27th, 28th and 29th, 1925, to the several churches, brethren and messengers composing the same, greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The cycle of time has brought us together once more in an associational capacity, and one of the customs of this assembly is that one of the brethren shall prepare a Letter to the several churches in correspondence with us, and of our faith and order, which is supposed to be an article of comforting and edifying remarks on Scripture, giving advice, admonition and spiritual comfort to the brethren assembled. In the past we have had our preachers to write for us, but now it devolves upon one who truly feels his insufficiency to write or speak upon spiritual matters, as one recently expressed it, it is as hard as for the ox to go to slaughter. With me, it is easier "to go through the eye of a needle," and it is with fear and trembling that I attempt to assume such a serious undertaking. But we know it is only the power of the Spirit in the creature that can edify or comfort one or more of such a gathering of the saints, who have hope in the mercies of God, born of the Spirit. My mind is settled upon one word: "WORKS." "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?"—James ii. 14. It appears James had a good cause to rebuke the brethren for discriminating against the poor in favor of the high class, or rich, among themselves at that time. This same condition among the brethren remains to-day in divers places, we regret to observe, but nature will be nature until the end of time. Not only did he rebuke the breth-

ren for this, but he also brought to their attention the case of a brother or sister being "naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled: notwithstanding ye give them not these things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?" "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." Christ's works are planted in righteousness, imputed in him in his children, and the planting is done by the Father. And "every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." When our Savior spoke of the Father to Philip, he desired to see the Father, and that would suffice him, but our Lord said, "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do."—John xiv. 9–12. But the faith of God had not as yet been planted in Philip's heart, to see the Father and his works, and it is not until "we are born again," born of the will of God, regenerated as it were, that man can discriminate between God's works and man's works. Paul says, For by grace ye are saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of (man's) works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. This is the difference between the works of man and God's works. For we are told it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Almost Jesus' last words on earth were, I have finished the work which thou (the Father) gavest me to do. (John xvii. 4.) "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."—Rev. xx. 11–15. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."—Rev. xx. 6. It would seem to us the "books" (plural) represent the law or works system, under the old covenant, and practiced to-day by modern or worldly professors of the different denominations under different names, some still regard

the priestly rites and dress as of old national Israel. They were judged according to their works. "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." —Matt. vii. 20–23. John also "saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. * * * And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."—Rev. xxi. 2–7. And of the new Jerusalem, the city of Zion, he said, "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." Christ Jesus is the Lamb, he is the Book and he is the Life.

JOHN G. EUBANKS, Mod.
JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk.

(Written by Deacon Wm. S. Bond.)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the First Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J., June 3rd, 4th and 5th, to the churches and associations composing the same.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—As it is our custom, you will expect something in the way of a Circular Letter, but it is through much weakness that we address you. We call your attention to the words found in the epistle of Paul to the Hebrews, xiii 1, "Let brotherly love continue." If we do this it is because we have the love of Christ in our hearts, for Christ is love. "We love him, because he first loved us."—1 John iv. 19. If we love not our brother whom we have seen, how can we love God whom we have not seen? Jesus said, If thy brother smite thee on one cheek turn to him the other also. If we do this it is because we have the love of God in our hearts, for God is love, therefore "let brotherly love continue." Then we can see eye to eye and speak the same things. Then it is not the teachings of the flesh, but of the Spirit. Jesus said, Who is my brother? When Jesus was in the temple with the lawyers and doctors, asking questions and answering them, they told him, "Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee," and he pointed to his disciples, and said, The same is my mother, my sister and my brother. Therefore, beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love. (1 John iv. 7, 8.) He that hath learned and heard of the Father cometh unto me. But we cannot come unto the Father except we be quickened by his Spirit. Jesus said, No man cometh unto me except my Father which sent me draw him. We

must then be drawn unto Christ by the cords of his love, for it was his love that caused him to lay down his life for his people. Now when we have been made to see that he laid down his life for us, then we are made to love one another, for Christ is love. Jesus said, I have loved thee with an everlasting love and with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. (Jer. i. 3.) It is the love of Christ then that has caused this brotherly love in our hearts, for the Savior said, My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me, but a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of a stranger. "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." —Heb. xiii. 2. Jesus said, I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, "when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."—John xv. 13. For Jesus laid down his life for his people, and he said, It is finished. "Other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ." May we build upon that foundation which is of the prophets and the apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone and are builded together an holy temple in the Lord. For Paul may plant and Apollos may water, but God giveth the increase. (1 Cor. iii. 6.) Paul said, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lust shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." For Jesus said, I will give them a new covenant. I will no longer write it on tables of stone, but will write it in their hearts. Now when it was written on tables of stone it was written under the law of Moses, which the children of Israel could not keep, but when it was written in the hearts of his people it was written by the pen of Jehovah God with the blood of Jesus Christ in the Lamb's book of life, and can never perish, for Jesus said, As I live ye shall live also. (2 Tim. i. 8.) Let us then take heed to Peter when he said, "Use hospitality one to another, without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever."—1 Peter iv. 9–11. Jesus said, "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased

and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."—Luke xiv. 11. The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. That which we have seen and heard of the Father declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. (1 John i. 3.) Therefore, brethren, let us proclaim the whole gospel as it is in Christ, and not try to please the flesh, which is of the earth earthy, but let us say as did Paul, I desire to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified, for he is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, for in him all fullness dwells. It is through this brotherly love then that we address you. But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness, but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. It is then by the power and wisdom of God we are made to preach his word. His word is life, yet we are made to say, as did Moses, I am not eloquent, but am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue, and the Lord said unto him, Who made man's mouth? did not I the Lord? Therefore go and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say. We are made then to speak in such a way that will be to his honor and glory, for he must be glorified in his people, therefore let brotherly love continue, that peace and joy may abide in the Holy Ghost.

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.
DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in August (30th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, May 27th, 28th and 29th, to our sister churches with whom we correspond, sendeth greetings in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—According to the great mercy of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who is the giver of every good and every perfect gift, we have been favored again to meet your messengers in an associate capacity. We enjoy and value your correspondence, and desire a continuance of same, and urge that your ministering servants, who are able, and generally very acceptable, and of good report among you, and us, whose preaching is to edification, may continue to visit us as your messengers. We feel that the preaching has been of great comfort and edification, and in demonstration and in power, declaring Jesus as a complete Savior, the fountain of life eternal, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace.

The next session of this Association is appointed to meet with our sister church at Rock Springs, Pa., in May, 1926, where we shall be glad to receive your messengers.

JOHN G. EUBANKS, Mod.
JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the First Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, Mercer County, N. J., June 3d, 4th and 5th, 1925, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We are glad to report that the meeting has been pleasant and enjoyable, not a discordant note having been heard. Your messengers have come to us with a diversity of gifts, which

we feel is needful for the comforting of the children of God's choice, and the preaching has been with power and demonstration of the Spirit, pointing to Christ as the chief corner-stone.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, Hunterdon County, N. J., to begin on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1926, when and where we shall hope to again receive your messengers.

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.
DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, May 30th, 1925, at the home of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Robert B. Bailey, near Delmar, Del., Mr. Emory Yohans, of New Haven, Conn., and Miss Grace M. Bailey, of Delmar, Del.

By the same, June 20th, 1925, at his residence, Salisbury, Md., Mr. William Randolph Brown and Miss Mary Ellen Shockley, both of Salisbury, Maryland.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Sister **Amanda Hawthorne** was born August 1st, 1850, and died February 18th, 1925, making her stay on earth 74 years, 6 months and 17 days. She was married to R. A. Hawthorne October 10th, 1872, and to that union were born ten children, four of whom died in infancy. Two girls and four boys, together with her dear companion and a number of grandchildren survive to mourn their loss. Sister Hawthorne joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Hickory Grove, Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana, July 7th, 1874, and the next day, together with her husband, was baptized by Elder B. F. Sorrels, and remained a faithful member until death. Her body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Provencial, La., in the presence of a large gathering of relatives, friends and neighbors. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Her sufferings are over, and may the good Lord bless all the bereaved, and fill the vacancy in their hearts with his sweet love and presence. The writer has spent many pleasant hours in the home of the family, and it is a very pleasant family to associate with. To know them is to love them.

Written by request.

J. J. WHITE.

During the night of June 22nd, 1924, the death angel entered and took from his loved ones **Elzy Roberson,** and it is with much sadness I pen these lines in loving memory of the subject of this sketch, for we thought so much of him. I was associated with him quite often, as I was pastor of his dear father's and mother's church, the old Union, in Union Parish, Louisiana. To know Elzy was to love him for his kind and gentle manner toward all his loved ones and friends, and we also loved him for his firmness in all his undertakings. He was a noble hearted boy. When he was about to take his leave for the west, where he died, he threw his arms around his mother's neck and his last words to her were, Mother, I hope to meet you in heaven. He fought in the late war, and engaged in many hard battles and witnessed many sad scenes while on the other side of the Atlantic, but returned home true and faithful to his loved ones. He always had a very high regard for his dear father and mother, also for the writer when I was in his company. He never joined the church, but claimed a sweet hope in our blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ a short while before he passed to his reward, and I feel to say to his loved ones that this should be of much comfort to them all, for we are told in the blessed word of God to sorrow not for them as we would for those who have no hope. I feel assured that while his body is sleeping beneath the sod his soul is resting in the sweet smiles of a once crucified but now highly exalted Redeemer. Yes, dear family, he is done with the trials of this sinful world that you and I still have to battle with. He was only thirty years of age, and though we would say that he has gone too soon, let us remember the blessed Lord doeth all things well. May you all have the royal presence of the blessed Lord to fill the vacancy in your homes, and feel to say, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Let us hope to meet him where there are no more sad farewells, but all is eternal praise to God.

Written by one who esteemed him highly.

T. J. EVERS.

MEETINGS.

The seventy-fourth annual meeting of the Siloam Association of Oregon and Washington will be held with the Mount Zion Church, near Forest Grove, Ore., August 7th, 8th and 9th, 1925. Those coming by train will take the Electric at Portland for Forest Grove. There is a good highway from Portland also. We hope to have a good attendance. For further information write to Elder W. J. Reeves or sister Jemima Beaman, Forest Grove, Ore.

SONORA A. HESS, Clerk.
2327 N. 27th St., TACOMA, Wash.

The one hundred and sixth annual session of the Highland Association of Regular (Absolute) Predestinarian Baptists will convene with the New Hope Church, six miles north of Dawson Springs, Ky., on Friday before the third Sunday in August, and continue until Sunday. All sound ministers and brethren will be welcome.

G. D. CLARK, Moderator.
SAM MCGREGOR, Clerk.

The Olive and Hurley Church, of the Lexington-Roxbury Association, will hold our annual two days' meeting the third Sunday and Saturday before, August 15th and 16th, 1925. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. Trains will be met at Ashokan station Friday evening and Saturday morning.

JOHN J. SECOR, Church Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects Elder George Ruston to meet with them the fifth Sunday in August (August 30th, 1925). For convenience services to be held at the home of J. E. Livingston, 64 E. Main St., Cobleskill, N. Y.

ADDIE C. LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will meet at Whitefield, Maine, on Friday before the second Monday in September and continue three days (11th, 12th and 13th, 1925). All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.

The sixty-eighth session of the First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1925, beginning on Friday before the second Saturday in the month, at 1243 Polk Street, Topeka, Kansas. Topeka is of easy access from all points by way of the Union Pacific, Rock Island, Sante Fe and Missouri Pacific, and busses running in all directions. From the Sante Fe depot take a Washburn-12th Street or a Country Club car, get off at Polk Street and walk one block south. From Rock Island or Union Pacific take any car that comes along going south, and transfer to either of the above cars, or will be met if notified. Write to Elder L. L. Schenck, 1243 Polk Street, Topeka, Kansas, for further information, or to myself, at Meriden, Kansas, or telephone 7535 after reaching Topeka.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

The Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to meet with the Chappel-Hill Church, 2½ miles east of Ouachita, Arkansas. Those coming from east, south and southwest, come to Camden, Arkansas, and those from north and northwest, come to Malvern, Arkansas, and from these points take Rock Island Railway to Ouachita, Arkansas, where trains will be met Thursday and Friday. The days appointed for this meeting embrace Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 18th, 19th and 20th, 1925. We are very anxious to have all peace-loving, unlimited Predestinarian Baptists, especially ministers, meet with us at this time.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator.
W. C. HORTON, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

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Meetings every Sunday at 106 West 59th Street, Manhattan.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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(Park Avenue Hall)

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Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE of JOSHUA S. CORDER.

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Picture of Elder Joshua S. Corder.
Chapter I.—Early Years, Christian Experience, &c.
Chapter II.—Church Division, Trials in Early Ministry, &c.
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Chapter XI.—Some Extracts, Reminiscences, &c.
Chapter XII.—In Perils.
Chapter XIII.—Fell Asleep, A "Loved Disciple."
Chapter XIV.—Memorials, Poetry, Circular Letter, &c.

This little book of 152 pages was published by Elder Corder's daughter, sister Semma E. Corder, of Philippi, W. Va , and printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office several years ago, and we feel is a work that will be read with interest by any of the household of faith.

The book was originally sold for one dollar per copy, and was bound in cloth, but there were some printed sheets that were never bound, and these sister Corder has generously donated to help in publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so we have decided to bind them in paper covers and offer them to our readers as long as the supply lasts for the extremely low price of twenty-five cents per copy. If any who purchase this book feel they have not received full value they may return the book to us and we will refund the price paid for it.

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VOL. 93. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1925. NO. 9.

POETRY.

THE SCHOOL OF SORROW.

"I sat in the school of sorrow,
The Master was teaching there;
But my eyes were dim with weeping,
And my heart oppressed with care.

Instead of looking upward,
And seeing his face divine,
So full of tender compassion
For weary hearts like mine

I only thought of the burden,
The cross that before me lay,
The clouds that hung thick above me,
Darkening the light of day.

So I could not learn my lesson,
And say, Thy will be done,
For the Master seemed not near me,
As the heavy hours went on.

At last, through grace I lifted
My streaming eyes above,
And I saw the Master watching,
With a look of pitying love.

To the cross before me he pointed,
And I heard him sweetly say,
My child, thou must take thy burden
And learn thy task to-day.

Not now may I tell the reason;
'Tis enough for thee to know
That I, the Master, am teaching,
And appoint thee all the woe.

Then kneeling, my cross I lifted,
For one glimpse of that face divine
Had given me strength to bear it,
And say, Thy will, not mine.

And so I learned my lesson,
And through the weary years
His gracious hand sustained me,
And wiped away my tears.

And the ever-glorious sunlight
From the heavenly home streamed down,
Where the school tasks are all ended,
And the cross exchanged for the crown."

[THE foregoing is a favorite of Elder J. G. Eubanks'.—ED.]

CORRESPONDENCE.

GREENWOOD, Mo., Dec. 4, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As it has been some three or four years since I wrote for the SIGNS, I feel this morning to write a few lines, that the readers thereof may know where and how I am. When I last wrote I was located at Weiser, Idaho, now I am at the above address.

"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."—Psalms lxxvi. 10. Is it a fact that all Scripture is profitable to the man of God, or are just what people call the easy good texts for the children to read? My answer is, All Scripture is profitable, &c. There was no wrath, no sin, no death, until after the transgression, no transgression until after the law, no law until God gave it, and he gave the law to

a man who could not keep it, for the man was made a servant of vanity. Rom. viii. 20: "For the creature was made subject to vanity," &c. If God is the first great cause, and by him all things consist, and all things were made by him and for him, is there anything that he has no use for? If there is, what is it? So God made, or created, the creature subject to vanity, he gave this subject he had made a law. What for? Rom. v. 20: "Moreover, the law entered, that the offense might abound," &c. God must have desired the offense to abound or he would not have given the law. The transgression of the law brought guilt, so the object of the law must be "that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."—Rom. iii. 19. Thus we see how man came in condition to have wrath, malice and all that it takes to make a sinner. But had you noticed there was not a single promise until after sin? I hope the dear Lord will guide me into his glorious truth, and, if it could be his will, clear to the end of the (gospel) field. I hate to see one turn round and round in the middle of the field, for fear of being called an "extremist." One is not on unlawful ground so long as he is in the gospel field.

I will now notice some of the incidents where the wrath of man is manifest. In Genesis xxxvii. I think Joseph's brethren are beginning to gather, or store up, some wrath, because of the coat Jacob made for Joseph. Added to this Joseph had some dreams which he proceeded to tell his brethren, which when they heard they hated him more. God surely was preparing things for some great event. When Jacob called him to go see how his brethren did in Shechem Joseph said, "Here am I." Joseph starts, not knowing where he is to go, nor how long it will be before he will again see his people, and when his brethren see him, God's time having fully arrived for Joseph to make a certain journey, the wrath of his brethren was sufficient to do anything bad to Joseph, had not restraining grace held them in check. Man's wrath said, Here is the filthy dreamer, let us kill him. God's restraining power, without sound or display, caused them to sell him into Egypt. God for some great reason was going to bring a famine on earth, but was going to bless a certain place with great abundance before the famine, and was going to have one there qualified with knowledge to provide to save much people alive, so in love and mercy he (God) sent Joseph to Egypt to lay up in store for his people (Israel) against the day of want. Joseph's brethren through envy and wrath would have killed him, or left him in the pit to die, but their wrath was restrained, and just enough loosed to praise God. Well, you know their wrath sought often to take Jesus, but never did they get him until his hour had come. Joseph had a great work to do, he had to prepare before the actual need that which would save his brethren; so did Jesus, hence he stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If man was free to take of the forbidden fruit, so was Israel free to go into Egypt; if man could have kept from taking the forbidden fruit, so could Israel have kept from going into Egypt, and in both cases the ones to save life (Jesus and Joseph) would have been unnecessary, notwithstanding God had made a creature (man) subject to vanity, had given him a law that all might become guilty, and to Israel he said they should go into a strange land and be evilly entreated, &c. You ask, Could not God have done differently in both cases? I answer, Yes, if it had been his will,

But as it was not his will to do differently, I say it was his will to do just as he did, for he does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. Is this extreme? If so we will have to find more of it before you or I will be benefitted much. We read that God made all things, whether visible or invisible, that they were made by him and for him, so in order to salvation there must be something lost. Even God has never said there could be a thing saved that was not lost. The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. God gave the law that the offense might abound, and that all might become guilty, that he might have mercy on whom he would have mercy. There is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God. You may pull which string you wish and it is all of God, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, and all that is between. It seems to me "permissive" predestination is most misleading. I may permit my boy to go to town, he is at perfect liberty to go, or not to go, but when I send him to town he must go. Instead of God permitting Satan to crawl on his belly and eat dust, he says Satan shall do this, and at one time he told Satan to "get thee behind me." In the last time he is going to tell that old serpent to enter into a place prepared for him. It would seem by these statements concerning Satan that he is under perfect control and not independent in anything; and if he is not an independent power he is a dependent power, and if dependent every thought, act, &c., must be given him.

I have had to pass over much of the real sweet meat, and that which is comforting to the child, now I feel to notice only one more incident. In the fullness of time, just at the right time Jesus came into the world; he came for a certain purpose. He as man wept because of sin and its result, he taught righteousness, his own as a nation received him not; he was despised, rejected. No doubt there has been a time with you when you had neither time nor will to notice him, no mind to seek after him, no will to be like him; if so you received him not. There were those at that time who wanted to hurry up the sacrifice, and we have just such people to-day, but his hour had not come yet, he was busy about his Father's business. But his hour did come. Was everything ready? Was the wrath of man at that point that would praise the Lord? Let us take a little look. We think so. There was one of the twelve just ready to betray the blessed Son, for he was raised up for that very purpose. Who raised him up? How about the people, were they ready to destroy (or try to) the blessed Son of God? Both Herod and Pilate, with all the Gentiles, were gathered together to do that which before was appointed. Who had gathered them? No power but of God, who appointed what was to be done. He was betrayed, taken to prison, tried, now listen to the verdict, Take him and crucify him; that is what you are to do. Why? For I find no fault in him. A queer verdict, to crucify one because he had no fault, yet it was so, there was no fault in him. It was high time for the wicked, which is the Lord's sword to awake, smite the Shepherd, &c. We see a wonderful sight, a whole company of people going up a hill called Calvary, there is one in the midst they are leading, dragging, beating, this blessed One who had not a fault. What vile people to pull, drag and beat this holy One. Suppose we had power to go liberate the just

one, and let those vile ones go up alone, what will they accomplish, a company of sinners, vile persons? Nothing. But suppose we turn these vile, sinful people back, and we just let Jesus go up, what have we accomplished? Nothing. Besides this was the hour of darkness, the hour the Son of God must be offered a sacrifice acceptable to God. Then let them go up, sin in the lead as usual, and we will see something wonderful. What do we see. Oh behold the power of darkness and the power of light, one sacrificing the other. Can you rejoice? The apostle says, "For we know all things work together for good to them that love God." Here the wrath of man is ready to praise God, by offering a sacrifice acceptable for sin. How I would love to show you the first thing you saw was your sins, and Jesus coming in later showed you your Savior, and how all along the way darkness and gloom, doubts and fears have always preceded the appearance of your blessed Savior, who when he comes causes you to rejoice and take courage and praise God again and again.

Yours in hope,

T. E. ATTEBERY.

MERIDEN, Kansas, July 10, 1925.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—As I am writing to ask you to announce the meeting of our Association, I would like, with your permission, to again offer a few thoughts for the consideration of the readers of the SIGNS, with an effort to use as little space as possible. One of the subjects that has occupied my mind lately is my neighbors. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," and, "Who is my neighbor?" This question was asked by a certain lawyer, who stood up, tempting Christ. Read Luke x. 25–37. Of course this lawyer was a stickler for the law of Moses, and, like the same kind of lawyers to-day, thought to merit salvation by his own works. He quoted from the law, ending with the words, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Christ assured him that if he did this he should live. Then he asked, Who is my neighbor? Christ did not give him a direct answer, but related the incident of the man going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, of the failure of the priest and the Levite, men of his own country, to help him out of the distress into which he fell. But a certain Samaritan, a man of a different nationality, and of a race looked down upon by the self-righteous Jews and pious lawyers, so much that it was not expected Christ would even talk with one who was a Samaritan, he ministered to the needs of the poor robbed and beaten man, and the lawyers had to acknowledge that the despised Samaritan was the true neighbor. This narrative shows that it is not always those who live the shortest distance away who are our real neighbors, but the ones, who, no matter what the distance, are ready at any time to do a neighborly kindness to one in trouble. I see that a long article could be written on every sentence in this narrative, but I wish to confine my thoughts to loving our neighbors as ourselves. I will first consider them in the common or natural application of the word as those who live nearest to us. Here the "do and live" people may think they have their inning, for Christ said, If we love our neighbor as ourself we shall live. But I challenge the world to produce one single person clear enough of selfishness, who after an unprejudiced analysis of himself, can honestly say he loves his neighbor as himself. But spiritually, Who is my neighbor? As in na-

ture, we consider them to be the ones nearer to us than any other people, the ones made nigh by the blood of Christ, and ever ready to give a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, with never a word of reproach or censure for the naked and forlorn condition in which they found us. Because he himself "can feel his brother's sigh, and with him bear a part," for he also has traveled the same dangerous road from Jerusalem, has encountered the same thieves, suffered the same buffetings and experienced the same failure of the chance people to help him. Who would not love such a neighbor, who has endured the same fellowship of suffering, and now comforts us with the same comfort wherewith he himself has been comforted of God? Dear saints, how do we love ourselves, our loathsome selves, which make us cry out in our wretchedness, for we know that in our flesh there dwells no good thing? By looking away from ourselves, we find it is the love we have for the priceless hope that saves us from sinking in life's troubled sea. The precious belief of the truth we love and prize above rubies. Every neighbor made nigh by the blood of Christ, in whom we see even greater evidence than within ourselves of the same sweet hope, the same precious faith and belief of the truth, we love them as we love ourselves, even better than ourselves. When that love is in full sway each esteems others better than himself. It is a love that begets love, that flows from heart to heart. We love each other with a pure heart fervently only when we esteem others above ourselves. Loving our neighbor as ourselves, is the love that assures us that we have passed from death unto life. (As Christ said, if we do this we shall live.) Without it hope would fail, and life would hold an aching void the world could not fill. A dear sister was asked contemptuously, how she knew she loved the brethren. Dear neighbors, we know it by more than one token. We know it by the joy we feel when we meet, even the handclasp, so different from others, giving a telepathic assurance of the same precious faith. We know it by the hardships we endure as we drag our old bodies many weary miles to meet them, when every fiber of our being craves rest and quiet at home. As the two milch kine, bearing the ark of God, with their calves tied up at home, went straight to the camp of Israel, lowing as they went, so we, if we love our neighbor as ourselves, often go in heaviness to meet them, leaving our loved ones tied at home. And O, dear people of God, we know it by the hurt we feel when one whom we have loved and trusted as a brother indeed, turns with railing accusations against us. What more grievous peril can befall us than the peril of false brethren? Not the faithless people of the world, but a brother who has proven false to the love and trust we confided in him. Hatred can easily render railing for railing. Indifference can ignore it, but love suffers. Paul said of the christian graces, The greatest of these is charity. Charity means love: among neighbors, forbearing love. The greatest of all is love. In that better world to which we are all hastening, there faith will end in sight, and hope will end in a full realization, but love will never end. Through endless eternity it will endure ever the same. Love, the greatest of all, is there, as here, "the golden chain that binds the happy souls above." Love worketh no ill to his neighbor. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all

thy strength, and with all thy mind." When this is done there is no time left to work ill to our neighbors. All our mind and all our strength engaged in this love, our bodies kept under and brought into subjection, we then have no faculties left to work ill to our neighbor. Besides, he plainly tells us that whatsoever we do, or do not do, unto even the least of them, is even so unto him. "And thy neighbor as thyself." This is in the singular. Thy neighbor. Our chief neighbor is the one certain, never-failing, great Samaritan to us all, and does all things for us, and certainly is entitled to the most vehement love of all our hearts and all our strength. He says, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you." In my school days, the lesson in my Fifth Reader about the dream of Abou Ben Adhem made a lasting impression on my mind. In his dream it seemed an angel appeared with pen and paper, and announced he was recording all the names of those who loved God. Abou Ben Adhem was grieved because he could not say positively he loved God. I presume that, like the Lord's people to-day, he could have said, I hope I love him, but only that. Finally he said, "Put me down, then, as one who loves his fellow-men." The recording angel wrote and departed, with a promise to return and show him the completed list, and when he came back, "Then lo, Ben Adhem's name led all the rest." A heart full of love to our fellow-men, loving our spiritual neighbors as ourselves, is a sure indication of the love of God shed abroad in our hearts. If we love not our brother whom we have seen, how can we love God whom we have not seen? "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another," for love is the fulfilling of the law.

I have thought on this subject for some time, and it seemed a coincident when last Sunday the minister briefly touched on it, showing that our true neighbors are those nearer and dearer to us than all people, thus giving me a bit of sweetness I had not yet found. I realize I have left out much more than I have written, but I submit it to the editors, and if it meets their approval, to the readers of the SIGNS, in a spirit, I hope, of neighborly kindness. I hope it may stir up the pure mind to search the Scriptures and see if these things be true. If there is found one word of truth in it, do not give praise to the poor, sinful hand that penned it any more than to the pen in the hand of the writer.

I would like to let Elder Greathouse know that I tried to answer his much appreciated letters, but fear he has never received them. We are pleased with his article in the last SIGNS.

Still permitted to hope for a better life, I remain as ever, one of the least,

MARY ELLISON.

EAST POINT, Ga., July 21, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Though I feel, and am, unworthy to thus address you, I want to write just a few lines, the good Lord being my guide, to let you know I am yet alive, but suffering much pain. It is now nineteen years since I was stricken down, suffering all the time.

I want to thank a friend, and brother in Christ, who sent me five dollars. He lives somewhere in the State of New York, but did not sign his name, and this is the only way I have of thanking him. I thought, and made the remark, that he had the love of God in his heart. The money came at a time when it was much

appreciated, and I love him for the truth's sake, I hope. Our Lord has a people in every nation, kindred and tongue, and he loves them with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness he draws them, and has saved them with an everlasting salvation; yes, he has done it all. Yes, Christ hath redeemed and saved his people from their sins, and when the appointed time comes for them to know it God sends forth the Spirit of his Son into their heart, crying, Abba, Father, then they will repent, and not before, for it takes a godly sorrow to work repentance. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." It is by grace we are saved eternally and in time. Jesus says, I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish. Oh that I could know that I am one Jesus spilt his precious blood for; if so I would have no more doubts and fears. John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I know I love God's dear people wherever I meet them, and those I read after but have never seen, as soon as I read their good letters my love goes out to them the same as to those I have seen face to face and talked with, and that makes me hope that I have the love of God in my poor heart. Sometimes it seems that love is all the evidence I have of being born of the Spirit, and at times when I read my Bible it is a sealed book to me, then I go mourning; at other times I may open it and read the same Scripture and it seems so plain and comforting to my poor soul that I am made to rejoice for a little season; it is just up and down with me.

Dear brethren and sisters, I do believe that the Primitive Baptist is the true church of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ that he set up before he left these low grounds of sorrow. He gave his children a commandment how to live and serve him and one another, and told them that if they loved him to keep his commandments, meet often together, pray with and for each other, visit the sick and afflicted and the widows and orphans, comfort one another with the same words wherewith ye have been comforted of the Lord, also much more I could mention. Are we doing so? I fear not. Our dear Savior said, If ye love me keep my commandments.

Dear brethren and sisters, this may be my last writing for the SIGNS unless I get better, and I ask an interest in your prayers to the good Lord that I may be submissive to his will in all things. I often fear I am not a child of God or I would not have to suffer so long, yet I know many of his dear ones who have suffered for years, which comforts me. I know I have been made to rejoice many times in my afflictions. I hope the brethren, sisters and friends will continue to take and contribute to the SIGNS and not let it go down, for the editorials and many good letters are food to the children of God, and may the good Lord long spare you, dear editors, to write and stand upon the walls of Zion and cry aloud and spare not, ever contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

I want to again thank you for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, also to thank the dear friend who sent me the five dollars.

I will now bid farewell to one and all, with that little hope that after death we will all meet in that upper and better kingdom, where sickness, sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more.

A poor sinner saved by grace, and grace alone, if saved at all,

G. W. ALMAND.

SYLVIA, Tenn., March 26, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—You will please find inclosed check for two dollars to pay for your valuable paper for another year. If I can I would like to express a few of my thoughts in a way that will be encouraging to the faithful ones who seem to be putting forth every effort to continue sending these pages filled with glad tidings into the many destitute places where there are no preachers to feed the little hungry and weak lambs, who are hungering and thirsting for that drink that comes alone from the Fountain of life. As it was said to the woman at the well, If you had asked me I would have given you to drink of that water that you would never thirst again. That water reaches the thirsty spot that no other thirst-quenching drink can reach, and is the remedy especially prepared for the disease, and all the expert "Divines," with all their machinery and material that money will buy cannot and have not manufactured one drop of that thirst-quenching drink. No, no, it comes from only one source, and has effect where this peculiar thirst is, and in no other ailment is it beneficial, for the preparation of the heart, together with the answer of the tongue, is of the Lord. What a mystery is the wisdom and power to enter the inward parts and put a desire into the once stony heart to do the will of the Lord, and when wrongfully accused to feel thankful they are even worthy to suffer persecution, and to feel in their heart that this new life springs from the Fountain of love. Oh what a wonderful change! Where and how did you obtain it? Was it by anything you had or could do? Was it bought with money, or was it handed to you by some friend or relative? No doubt you have felt yourself to be a condemned and hell-deserving sinner, then you do not feel to boast of what you have or can do. You feel helpless, wretched, condemned, a beggar at mercy's door, not worthy to as much as raise your eyes to heaven, and feel to say, Lord, be merciful to me a sinner.

Dear editors, these are some of my thoughts, and if this stammering attempt finds its way into print I hope you will not let it crowd out something more worthy of space in your valuable paper.

Yours in hope of a better life,

L. D. PERRY.

NEWARK, Delaware.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The writer of the following letter is a grand-nephew of brother J. G. Eubanks, his grandmother was brother Eubanks' sister. He is but twenty years of age now, and I first read a letter published in the SIGNS from him to his mother last year, while he was in the Navy on the California coast at San Diego. This letter seems to be worthy of space in the SIGNS, when you can spare it. The Lord knoweth them that are his.

J. B. MILLER.

HIRAM, Ga., July 1, 1925.

DEAR BROTHER MILLER:—I thought I would write you a few lines in order to let you hear from me. Since I left your beloved place up in Delaware I feel to love all who are in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for his name's sake wherever they may be, even to the end of the earth. For several days my condition has been wonderful, my mind is above all earthly things, seems like I am in direct communication with our blessed Lord, who was in the world in the flesh and suffered and died on the cross for our justification, paid the debt of the law, and when it pleases him to take one of his prisoners and set him free, it is ac-

cording to the good pleasure of his will, and the God of heaven is the one that gets all the glory, not man, for man has but a few days on this earth and full of trouble. I feel entirely dependent upon the Lord every hour I live and for every breath I breathe; I am made to rejoice in his name. If I should have justice, and if the Lord had dealt with me after my sins, I would have been a hell-deserving sinner. But I find the Lord is a Lord of mercy, and his truth endureth in all generations. I earnestly thank the Lord for his mercy he has shewed unto me. While I was traveling from place to place in the U. S. Navy his love was as strong towards me when I would be hundreds of miles on the far Pacific Ocean as it is at the present time. I feel strong in the Lord, giving him all power, sovereign and mighty, "who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure."—Isaiah xl. 12. It is good for us to think upon the power of God and what a wonderful salvation he has given his people. I have a good evidence to believe and stand by this old doctrine preached by the Old Primitive Baptists, and I want to die believing the same doctrine. I hope the Lord will bless all your family and his people in every nation, kindred and tongue. Place the mantle of charity over my imperfect writing.

Yours truly, a sinner in hope of salvation by grace,

JEWELL CROKER.

ACME, Okla., Sept. 22, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will write a line to send in my remittance for another six months, as I cannot get along without our precious paper, and also to let you know how the notice in the last SIGNS hurt me. Just to think that the Baptists would let their subscription run on unpaid like that. I know one who has taken the SIGNS four or five years without paying for it. He said he was not able to pay for it, but he was taking and paying for several newspapers all that time. I do not know whether or not he is still taking it that way, but I do know he was able to pay for it. His grown children said to me several times that their father did not have to pay for the SIGNS as it was sent to him free. He claims to be a good Baptist and is a deacon. I fear it is the same way with many others. Oh I do hope we will not have to give up our paper. I have taken it off and on for several years, and when I saw I could not pay for it I had it discontinued to me until I could pay for it. Brethren, one and all, it is a shame to let our faithful editors and publishers suffer like this. I am an old man and very poor, but I expect to put every dollar I can get on the dear paper. It is all the preaching I get, and it is as sound now as it ever was; it sets forth just what I believe. Of course I am an outsider but I do hope I love the doctrine as set forth and contended for by our dear paper. May the great almighty God uphold the SIGNS in the future as in the past. Pray for me, dear ones.

The very least,

S. S. COX.

[WE cannot understand how any one who enjoys reading the SIGNS can practice deceit in order to get it for nothing. We are sending it to a great many free, and our brethren and sisters are contributing toward sending the paper to those who cannot afford to pay for it, and it is very unfair, to say the least, for one to represent to us he is not able to pay for the paper when he is.—ED.]

HUNTINGTON, W. Va., May 2, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed money order for five dollars to pay my back dues and a year in advance. I enjoy the SIGNS very much and would hate to do without it, for I do not hear much preaching, as there is no church very near me. I would like to have any of the ministers or brethren when passing through here stop and see us. I feel to be so unworthy and to be such a great sinner that I wonder any of God's people count me anything. I attended the Pocatalico Association last year and they were all very nice to me. I did not feel worthy of the kindness shown me. I met many dear good people who I will never forget. I doubt so much of the time that I am one of his, and then I will feel a ray of hope, and there is nothing I would take in exchange for it. I do love the brethren and sisters; they all look good to me, and any of them are welcome at my home at any time. I would enjoy having any of the household of faith write to me if they have a mind to do so.

I thank you for sending the dear old SIGNS as long as you have without me paying for it. God bless you and your work. I will soon send some for those who are not able to pay for the paper.

From one who is very unworthy,

VICTORIA MEADOWS.

BEND, Oregon, July 11, 1925.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—In my father's house there is bread enough and to spare while I perish with hunger, is the way the so-called prodigal son described his predicament while feeding swine for a stranger in a strange land, and this morning I feel very much that way; but my Father's house is lost to me, and it is my hope to find it, as did Jacob, in a waste howling wilderness and desert land. There is not a genuine "Hardshell" Baptist in central Oregon that I know of. I met a man from Klamath Falls a short time ago who had the doctrine. He said his parents were Old School Baptists and he believed the doctrine, but he did not seem to have that reverence for it that is a mark by which I know them. Genuine "Hardshell" Baptists are scarce on the Pacific coast. If there is one in central Oregon, or one who wants to come to this land of mountain scenery, I would surely like to hear from him. I have a pleasant home here with my soldier son, and need the SIGNS, as I never go out to the money-hunting gatherings here. I can never get the truth by radio, though I have "listened in" on a number of Sunday evening services since our radio was installed, but have heard nothing worth while; even the singing has not the old time ring.

In hope,

J. M. AMSBARY.

HEREFORD, Texas, July 29, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—I wish to ask through the columns of the dear old paper, the SIGNS, if any who are in possession of either the First or Second Volume of the Editorials of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe would sell same. If so, please answer this inquiry, giving name and address, number of volume, condition of books and price. In this west Texas country the gods of this world have blinded the eyes of the people so that they worship the creature more than the Creator. Only occasionally do we hear the truth as it is in Christ preached in its fullness, giving to God all power, honor and glory in the salvation of poor, fallen and depraved sinners, although we have many who preach another, which is not another, but a perversion of the gospel, teaching

that God predestinated all good things, but has nothing to do with things evil; also that after regeneration it is optional as to keeping the commandments. I understand such doctrine to be contrary to the teaching of holy writ and my experience, and is of no comfort to my poor hungry soul. But occasionally Elder J. A. Rutledge, of Portales, New Mexico, Elder Jack Stephens, of Farwell, Texas, and my father, Elder W. S. Bourland, of Vernon, Texas, come this way and preach for us the unsearchable riches of Christ, which honor, adore and glorify God's holy name in all things. I am always glad to get each copy of the SIGNS, for in both the correspondence and the editorials is the beauty, glory, majesty and dominion of our God's kingdom set forth.

I beg to subscribe myself, a poor unworthy sister, saved by grace if saved at all,

(MRS.) J. DAVID THOMPSON.

ARLINGTON, Texas, Dec. 12, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription has expired I will send in for another year. I enjoy almost all the letters in the SIGNS, and am sorry that the publishers had to make a monthly publication of it. It seems as if there were enough Old Baptists in the United States to give better support to the dear old SIGNS, a paper that has labored so long for the doctrine of the Lord.

We have the truth preached for us twice each month by Elders E. A. Moreland and J. H. Smith, at our little church in Fort Worth. Our church is enjoying sweet peace, and the Lord is adding to our number by letter, and a young brother, by the name of Williams, was baptized the first Sunday in this month by our pastor, Elder E. A. Moreland. We love to have brethren visit us from other churches. I hope the blessed Lord will give us of his grace that we may continue to esteem each other better than ourselves.

Unworthily, your little brother in hope of mercy,

J. W. CAUDLE.

XENIA, Ohio, July 6, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please renew our subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for one year. It has been coming to our home for many years and we enjoy reading it. Rather like it better since it comes once a month than we did before; think the letters are better. There is no meeting within fourteen miles of our home any more, and father and mother are both old and feeble and do not get to meeting very often. Father is nearly eighty-four, and crippled with rheumatism so that he walks with a crutch; mother is past eighty-five, very feeble, and scarcely ever gets away from home. They have been married fifty-one years, and have lived in this one place for forty-three years. Please send the paper as before, to Joseph Buckwalter, Xenia, Ohio, R. F. D., No. 9, Box 53.

Written by his daughter,

MARY J. BUCKWALTER.

VERNON, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been a long time since I have spoken to you in writing, but I have many times greatly desired to send a few lines to you all, but fearing it was of the flesh, and feeling my unfitness to crowd in with my weakness, I have pushed it back from time to time, but at last I want to express my thanks to you for your great and unmeasurable kindness in sending me the SIGNS. I know I have been a burden a long time, but have all the way thought to be able to bear a part with you. I

have greatly enjoyed all the good old SIGNS contained, and it has been a source of great joy and comfort all these many years, and I thank you more than tongue can express, but my eyes have become so afflicted I cannot see to read, so you may send my paper to some other poor soul that will love and enjoy it as I have.

Thanking you again, and hoping I have a real hope in Christ, I am a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

(MRS.) JENNIE LOYD.

MACOMB, Ill.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find $1.00, for which please extend my subscription to the SIGNS six months. I would like to be able to pen a few lines for its columns, if only to send to all greeting in the Lord, but I am far from well, and will not do so at present. I hope I am thankful to the Giver of all good and perfect gifts for his great kindness to his people in bestowing upon them such able and competent men to act as editors of our dear paper. Elders Lefferts, Dodson, Ruston and Vaughn are able writers, deeply taught in spiritual knowledge, and write much to the comfort and encouragement of God's people. May they long be spared to edit our dear family paper, and may it be upheld and blessed by our dear heavenly Father.

I am, I hope, your sister, though least of all, SARAH E. RUNKLE.

FLOYD, Va., April 3, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." The people of God are born with this love within their hearts. Does not this create a never-sinning principle within their souls? When we are led according to the Spirit the fruits are peace, joy and love, we are blessed with charity, which is the very fruit of love. Oh what a blessed thought that it is his life of love that his people have, and this life of love entitles us to the heavenly world as we journey in this world of sin and sorrow. How little we know of our heavenly home above. I have often thought if we were given eyes to behold the heavenly world as it is in its beauty, power and glory we would be struck with blindness and fall as if dead, the power would be so great. At a powerful view of the light the apostles Paul and the prophet Daniel fell as dead men. Who can see God in glory and live? for he lives in unspeakable brightness and glory, as we read. I am glad I live in the gospel day, for it is the day of God's richest and sweetest blessings, and answering for that everlasting day in heaven.

Your sister in hope,

MOLLIE SALMONS.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in joint session with the several churches composing the said Association, convened in the meetinghouse of the New Vernon Church, Sullivan County, New York, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 10th, 11th and 12th, 1925, to our sister associations with which we correspond, sends greetings in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Again in the goodness and tender mercy of our God we are granted another precious privilege of meeting your messengers in an associate capacity. Your correspondence is highly prized by us, and we desire it to continue. We feel that the truth has been preached and our hearts have been made glad.

Our next session is appointed to be held on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1926, the place to be announced later through the "Signs of the Times," and we shall be glad to meet your messengers again.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
ROBERT M. STRONG, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1925.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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ZACCHAEUS.

In the nineteenth chapter of Luke's narration of the gospel of Jesus Christ we find the only record given in the Scriptures of this remarkable little man Zacchaeus. Meager as the record is, it is sufficient to arouse our interest, and if we take carefully all that Luke says about this man we shall find it very illuminating regarding the christian experience of nearly every child of God. There is something about this little man and the relation of Jesus unto him that makes Zacchaeus not a solitary figure but one who embraced within himself much of the exercises of soul to which the children of God can bear witness. For instance, he was rich and he was little and he was chief of the publicans. This last fact was enough to arouse the enmity of the Jews against him, enough to ostracize him from his own nationality. The publicans were those who collected taxes for the Roman government. These tax-gatherers were often oppressive and unscrupulous. Zacchaeus claimed in the presence of Jesus that he had not been unfair or dishonest, and that if he had ever extortioned from any man he had returned unto that man fourfold. Nevertheless, any man who represented the government of Rome, no matter how just or upright he might be, was repugnant to the Jews. For this fact probably the law of Moses was somewhat to blame, since it commanded aloofness from the nations round about Israel and forbade the Jews to have any dealings with Gentiles. All these circumstances caused Zacchaeus to find himself in a position of isolation from his kindred in the flesh. Is it not true, we ask, that every child of God finds himself much in the same position? No matter how many good and kind friends we may have, nor with what close and tender relationships we may be surrounded, the Lord's people spiritually are characters who dwell much alone and walk much in a solitary way. They are made to feel themselves cut off from their fellows and find themselves unable to go along heartily and willingly with the doings of the world about them. The cutting off of Zacchaeus from his fellow-Israelites was due, however, to his occupation and the office he held under the government; while the isolation of the child of God from the things of the world is due to the manner in which the Spirit of God exercises him. The record further says that Zacchaeus was rich, no doubt this means that he was rich in worldly goods. But whether he was rich in a worldly sense or rich in the sense of his own self-righteousness and in the consciousness of having done what he considered good works, his case was not very different from that of every child of God who, in a state of nature, believes himself to be self-righteous and full of good works. Before the Spirit of God shines in a sinner's heart, and while he is yet in his sins, the sinner feels himself to be rich. He may not think this in a money sense, but he does think it so far as his own

fancied uprightness and integrity are concerned. He believes himself to be able to attain the favor of God by his own good works, and knows not that he is poor and naked and blind. Zacchaeus had a desire to see and to know Jesus, and so urgent was this desire within him that he climbed a sycamore tree to be in a better position to behold Jesus as he passed by. This was because Zacchaeus was a little man and because the throng of people so pressed Jesus on every side that Zacchaeus could not see him. This man was not the first nor was he the last to believe that the way to get to Jesus is by going up, believing that the higher up he climbed the better he could view his Lord. Human nature thinks that way to-day, and has always thought so, believing that the way to heaven and salvation is by climbing up higher and higher by one's efforts, never at all conceiving that the true way to Jesus is in being brought down from one's self-exaltation into the dust of self-abasement and humiliation at the feet of Jesus. If the sycamore trees in that land around Jerusalem were anything like the sycamore trees here in Virginia, Zacchaeus could not have picked out a harder tree to climb. The first limbs are never near the ground, the bark easily scales off, leaving a very smooth surface on which one gets a foothold only with the greatest difficulty. How well, therefore, this tree represents the law and its hard exactions by which the sinner fondly hopes to scale his way up out of sin into the presence of God. This sycamore tree well represents the works-system of salvation, that system of which Paul said if salvation be of works then must the reward be reckoned of debt and not of grace. Jacob at Luz pillowed his head upon a stone, and many poor sinners have tried vainly to find rest in obedience to the hard and unyielding precepts of the law, but no spiritual Jacob has ever yet obtained justification in the sight of God through the deeds of the law nor fleshly attainments. Zacchaeus performed a very difficult feat in climbing the sycamore tree, and in doing so followed out the way his best judgment dictated, the way he thought best to behold Jesus. However, Jesus said, "Come down." Thus the way to Jesus was not up, but down; not in climbing higher, but in being called down lower. The way unto Jesus is an humbling way, not a way which exalts man; a way which glorifies God but which abases the creature. Jonah found the truth of salvation to be in his being called to go down into the depths, Saul of Tarsus learned the same in his being utterly cast down at the appearing of that light which outshone the meridian sun. Always, we might say, the road to heaven lies through hell. Jesus himself descended into hell. Why did he do it if none of his people was in hell? He had to go into and through all places wheresoever his people were. Therefore his descending into hell is sufficient proof that his people must have been there, thus necessitating his going there. "He must needs go through Samaria." Why must he? Because his lost sheep were there. No need at all for his going through Samaria, or any other place, if none of his flock dwells there. Jesus came where Zacchaeus was and called that little man down unto him from the tree of exaltation to the ground of self-abasement. The path of Jesus led him wheresoever his sheep were and this man Zacchaeus was one of those sheep. Jesus told Zacchaeus it was his purpose to enter into his house and dine with him. Jesus waited for no invitation. He made known his intention

to Zacchaeus without first ascertaining whether Zacchaeus was willing. Of course Zacchaeus was willing at the moment Jesus made known to him his intention of entering his house. Whenever Jesus says unto us, "I come quickly," our hearts reply, Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly. It may well be thought that Zacchaeus' heart leaped for joy at the saying of Jesus that it was his intention to come to his house and dine with him. Upon entering the house Jesus said, This day is salvation come unto this house. This is enough to prove that Zacchaeus was a child of God and that the salvation of God had come in unto him. Jesus is the salvation and salvation is Jesus. Jesus had come into his house, therefore salvation had come into his house. Jesus further said that this man Zacchaeus was truly a child of Abraham and that this was the reason why salvation had come unto him. Salvation is not unto any but the children of Abraham, the children of Abraham are not those whose circumcision is outward in the flesh, but whose circumcision is in the heart by the Spirit of God. They who have the faith of Abraham, whether they be Jew or Greek, are counted as the children of Abraham, therefore are they heirs according to the promise. Now, this man Zacchaeus, however much he may have been an Israelite after the flesh, was certainly a child of God after the Spirit, therefore a true descendant of Abraham, and included in the covenant which God made with Abraham as well as in the covenant which God made in Christ before the foundation of the world. Jesus concluded his remarks concerning Zacchaeus by saying that he, Jesus, was sent to seek and to save that which was lost. Have we not the right to conclude from this, and from the connection in which Jesus uttered these words, that Zacchaeus was one of these lost ones and that Jesus was sent of God unto him? These lost ones are the Lord's people, his own elect lost in sin; not lost in that Jesus cannot find them, but lost in that they of themselves cannot come unto Jesus. We sometimes speak of the wicked or nonelect as being lost, but certainly they have not been lost in the same sense in which the church was lost. The human race lost its standing in Eden through Adam's transgression, but the church was lost from its union (not unity) with Christ through transgression, which union was manifestly reestablished through Jesus' satisfying the law and overcoming the separation between his bride and himself; not that the unity of the church and Christ had ever been in the least severed, but the manifestation of that unity in the visible union of Christ and the church had been temporally disrupted through Adam's transgression and through the elect's brought into condemnation under the law of God awaiting the time when the Surety should come to pay the debt to divine justice in its entirety and to reclaim or redeem her unto himself, a bride without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. There is much, very much, of glorious eternal truth that glows in all these holy characters throughout the Scriptures, and although Luke is the only writer who mentions Zacchaeus we cannot think him unimportant on that account. There is surely much about this man that brings him into fellowship and kinship with the children of God in all ages. He is one of those stars with which the Spirit of God has garnished the heavens of his truth. All these "lights" of which God is the Father shine not with any effulgence of their own, but with the light of God's own illumination within them. So that

when we see this light of truth's testimony shining out of them, we glorify not them but the God who has wrought all this work in them. Out of Zion the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. This Zion is a glorious diadem in the hand of our God. This diadem crowns the head of him who is King of kings and Lord of lords, and although that sacred brow was once crowned with the thorns of ignominy, it is crowned now and forever with her whom he has saved by his blood. The bride, the church, is the crown of her Husband the Lord Jesus Christ. He glories in her and she in him. We go on and on in pursuit of this theme of salvation until we come to that "Selah" unto which the psalmist so often came, to that place where thought and meditation go on and on, but whither the flight of verbal expression cannot follow.

L.

JEREMIAH II. 13.

"For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."

Israel has been a stiff-necked, gainsaying and rebellious people. Two nations, or natures, have ever struggled within her. While delighting in the law of God after the inward man, at the same time she has had another law in her members, warring against the law of her mind, and bringing her into captivity to the law of sin, which is in her members. At the time of his prophecy Jerusalem had been carried away captive; she was in bondage, in a state of death. The Lord showed Jeremiah two things: First, he said, "I see a rod of an almond tree," and second, "I see a seething pot; and the face thereof is toward the north." The budding of the almond tree was one of the first evidences of spring, of the awakening of nature from winter's dormant state, and God was thus showing that he would quicken Israel, that he would arouse his people from their slumber and bring them back from their captivity. This was to be accomplished through trial and affliction, the seething pot, that they might mark well and remember all the way the Lord had led them. God uttered his judgments against them touching all their wickedness, who had forsaken him, and burned incense unto other gods, and worshipped the works of their own hands. Therefore, the Lord said, "I will call all the families of the kingdom of the north," "and they shall come, and they shall set every one his throne at the entering of the gates of Jerusalem, and against all the walls thereof round about, and against all the cities of Judah." God used the wicked as his word against his people in the day of his vengeance. He still searches out Israel and brings to light the evil of her doings. He tries her as gold is tried, and refines her as silver is refined, purges her of her dross and brings her forth as gold from the crucible. To this end God raised up and sent forth his servant, Jeremiah. He spoke to him in such a wonderful way that he was made to know God as the beginning and the end, the Alpha and Omega. The Lord had said, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee; and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." While he did not speak in such plain terms to all the prophets and apostles, nevertheless they all knew him as a God of purpose, working all things after the counsel of his own will. This is equally true of those whom he calls and qualifies to minister in the gospel of his Son. We have great comfort in be-

lieving that we were known unto God from the beginning, that at the appointed time and place we were brought forth for a purpose known unto himself, and we are satisfied that we shall go to all that he sends us, and whatsoever he commands that shall we speak. This is our hope, and it is in this strength that we go forth from day to day. Such knowledge is humbling and makes one to realize he is, indeed, a child and altogether dependent upon the Lord. But the Lord said unto Jeremiah, "Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee." "Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. See, I have this day set thee over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant." God's servants are not to hold the personages of men before their eyes; they are to fear no man, but to study to show themselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, let men hear or let them forbear. They are to reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all long suffering; therefore, the Lord said, "Gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them. For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brazen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, and against the people of the land. And they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee." What a wonderful promise this is to those who have been called to "earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints" against certain men who have crept in unawares, "who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into laciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."—Jude 4. Our eyes only have to be opened to see a similar condition existing in spiritual Israel to-day to what was referred to in our text. We see in a measure on every hand, in the body as a whole and in individual churches and members in particular, how the people have committed two evils: first, they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living waters; those whom the Lord brought up out of the land of Egypt, and led through a land of deserts and of pits, through a land of drought, and of the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt, they have forsaken him and turned from his way, and though he brought them "into a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof," they have defiled the land and made of the Lord's heritage an abomination. "The priests said not, Where is the Lord? and they that handle the law knew me not: the pastors also transgressed against me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal and walked after things that do not profit. * * * Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord." It would appear that these things were written of this, our day. The people have forsaken the fountain of living waters. The fountain is the origin or source from whence the waters spring. The water of life, salvation, has, does and always will flow out from the throne of God, and from him alone. He is the fountain of life and from him all life proceeds, and without him there is not, neither can be, any life, and

how the inhabitants of that city who have drank from the streams of that river, whereof they were made glad, made to rejoice in the mercy and deliverance of the God of Israel, can forsake him who has wrought so great salvation for them, is one of the great wonders of the mystery of iniquity. It would seem that the dealings of the Lord with his people in such a manner as to cause them to break forth into singing, The Lord hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and the rider hath he cast into the sea, &c., would cause them to forever walk in his ways, following his precepts and examples, but they are no sooner left to themselves than, like sheep, they all go astray. How foolish, it seems, that they should turn from the great Shepherd, from the hand which feeds them, which gives them everything they have, even to the air they breathe, yet, the Lord says, "They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters." This is not all, for they have "hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." In those days because of the dryness of the summer months, and scarcity of springs, it was necessary for the people to collect in reservoirs and cisterns the rain water, which fell in abundance during the rainy season, for the sustenance of themselves and their flocks. Those cisterns were hewn out of the rock of that hilly country, excavations were made for the gathering in and retaining of the water, but the figure used in the text is "broken cisterns, that can hold no water." What a remarkably accurate illustration this seems to us of those who to-day profess to know God, whom to know is life eternal, and yet deny the power of his Christ; who claim to have drunken from the well of salvation the wonderful knowledge that Gold is all and in all, that it is he who has brought them out of nature's darkness into his own marvelous light, and at the same time cling to a work-system whereby they are to eat the fat of the land as a reward of their so-called good deeds, and thus make salvation in time conditional. When all such is weighed in the scales of the truth it must be discarded as being unfit for use in the Master's cause. Those who feel able to hew out their own cisterns and catch the rain water for themselves and their flocks are privileged to go about their work, so far as we are concerned, but God has declared their works are an abomination unto him. Though they work and hew out cisterns, they are "broken cisterns, that can hold no water," therefore they are of no avail in his sight, and all their efforts combined cannot cause a stream to flow beyond or above its source, the creature. Naturally, we do not like to drink rain water. When we are thirsty there is nothing in all the universe so refreshing or satisfying as the pure water that gushes forth from the mountain side, and the nearer the top of the mountain the spring is the purer the water will be. So, spiritually, we want all the water to come forth from the throne of God, from the mountain of the Lord's holiness, from the fountain of living waters. We want no adulterations, no modifications, no conditions, but the plain, clear truth, "Salvation is of the Lord." This doctrine is good and wholesome and the flock will thrive on it. Wherever it is preached the pasture will be green, and those who feed therein shall have the witness within themselves that the Lord is their shepherd and they shall not want. But if man could attain unto perfection sufficiently to hew out cisterns that would

hold the rain water, it would soon become stagnant and full of germs, causing those who drink it to become sickly and insensible to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. How important it is, therefore, that there should be true ministers to cry in the ears of Jerusalem, bringing them back to the first principles, saying, "Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown [there was no creature effort there and no strange god with them]. Israel was holiness unto the Lord, and the firstfruits of his increase: all that devour him shall offend; evil shall come upon them, saith the Lord." "Wherefore I will yet plead with you, saith the Lord, and with your children's children will I plead." How wonderful that notwithstanding all her faults and corruption the Lord does not turn from Israel, he does not forsake her forever, but pleads with her and brings her again and again to the place where she is made to hear his voice. He causes her to seek after him, even though it be in the "seething pot," and when she seeks she finds; finds in him a sufficiency for all her needs. We are confident when every child of God reviews their life in Christ each and every experience will prove that it was God who brought them up out of the horrible pit, that it was God who placed their feet upon a rock, it was God who established their goings, and he who put a new song in their mouth, therefore let them render unto his great and adorable name the honor and glory that is his due. "Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow."

We have endeavored as best we could to comply with the request to write upon the foregoing Scripture, and desire that the Lord give us understanding and lead us into the way of all truth.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Deacon R. M. Strong.)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, convened at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, June 10th, 11th and 12th, 1925, to the churches of which she is composed, grace be unto you, and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

DEARLY BELOVED:—Our God, who is the God of salvation, changes not, therefore we are not consumed. Your letters are received, and we rejoice in the intelligence they convey of your steadfastness in the faith, and that peace and love abound among you. We are bound always to give thanks unto the Lord for such a happy state of affairs, for except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. The dear Redeemer has said, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." The commandments of Jesus are delivered to, and are binding upon, all those who love him, whose love is shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto them. He has given them his words, which manifests them as his disciples. All his instructions are for their benefit. His gracious words demand their profound attention, and their peace and comfort depend largely upon their faithful observance of them. We are solemnly exhorted to give earnest heed to his words, whether spoken immediately by him, or through his inspired apostles. We are liable to let

them slip, and in so doing often find ourselves in trouble and sorrow, for we cannot escape chastisement when living in disobedience. All that he has commanded his disciples to do is recorded in the New Testament, and is also written in their hearts. The performance of anything, religiously, which he has not authorized or commanded is not obedience to him, nor acceptable to him. His word thoroughly furnishes all that is profitable and needful for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. All else are the doctrines (teachings) and commandments of men, and are an abomination to God. We cannot recognize as his disciples those who do not with humility yield obedience to his word, who have not his words in their heart and in their mouths, as that upon which they live, and as the word of their testimony. That word is to try us; by it we are to prove all things, and hold fast that which is in harmony with it. His word is a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path. Great peace have they who love his law. His word is pure, therefore his servants love it. The pure in heart love purity. They hunger and thirst after righteousness, and love holiness for holiness' sake. They say, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord of hosts." Such is the happy condition of those who walk in the commandments of Jesus. May we be enabled by grace divine to run in the way of his righteous commandments, and find rest unto our souls. Draw us, O Lord, and we will run after thee.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.

R. M. STRONG, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at the home of the bride's parents, in Frenchtown, N. J., August 7th, 1925, at noon, Harold Stewart Llewellyn and Miss Lillian Parsons Gilbert. Mr. Llewellyn, of Bermuda, Miss Gilbert, of Frenchtown, N. J.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, August 5th, 1925, at his residence, Salisbury, Md., Mr. Arthur Clarence Smith and Miss Martha Elizabeth Shockley, both of Salisbury, Maryland.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Cornelia Bowen Startzman, youngest daughter of Archibald and Margaret Bowen, was born near Harpers Ferry, Clark Co., Va., February 9th, 1849. In 1861 her parents came to Missouri, locating near Dover. At the close of the Civil War the family moved to Bloomington, Illinois, where she spent her early girlhood and taught in the Bloomington schools four years. September 28th, 1875, she was married to William Martin Startzman. To this union eight children were born, six of whom are living and were with her during her last illness. They are W. A. Startzman and Miss Ida Startzman, of the home; J. N. Startzman, of Enid, Okla.; Mrs. F. E. Wyatt, of Oak Grove, Mo.; Mrs. T. O. Thornton, of Kansas City, and Mrs. J. W. Taylor, of Pleasant Hill, Mo. She leaves also one sister, Mrs. Ida W. Holder, of Delavan, Ill., and a brother, S. M. Bowen, of Chicago, Ill., also nine grandchildren. She with her husband united with the Old School Baptist Church in February, 1884, and were baptized by Elder David Bartley, her sister's husband. Two years later they moved to Missouri and placed their membership with Big Swiabar Church, of which she remained a devoted member, and which church her husband served as pastor for eighteen years preceding his death, which occurred July 20th, 1905, just twenty years and one day previous to her own passing, which was July 21st, 1925, at 7:30 p. m., at her home in Blue Springs, Missouri.

The funeral services were conducted from the home Thursday afternoon at 2 o'clock by her pastor, Elder W. L. Hall, who read the twenty-third Psalm and part of the twenty-seventh Psalm, also the seventeenth chapter of John, and spoke beautiful words of comfort to her remaining family. The service was kept as sweetly simple as possible, which seemed in keeping with the sweet and cheerful life of our mother. The bower of beautiful flowers about her was testimony of the love and esteem in which she was held. We each felt to say she passed away in the triumph of a glorious faith, and her calm, sweet, peaceful face was the evidence of the avowal, Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

Her daughter, MARGARET S. TAYLOR.

Our dear brother, **Handy Culver,** died May 24th, 1925, at his home in Delmar, Delaware. He was born June 14th, 1837, making his stay on earth almost eighty-eight years. In 1876 he married Miss Elizabeth Lynch, to which union three children were born. She died in 1882. In 1884 he married Miss Elizabeth Hastings, daughter of the late Deacon Winden and Betsey Hastings. There were no children to this union. He united with the Little Creek Old School Baptist Church many years ago, and while not a man to talk freely on spiritual things, loved the house of God, together with its doctrine and ordinances. In his death we have lost one of our best, oldest and most substantial members, always ready to assist in any way possible in all the burdens of the church. Years ago he was a good singer and loved the songs of Zion. We shall all miss him greatly, a fine conversationalist and always in his place. Seldom in the last thirty years was found his seat in our meetings vacant. But his widow and daughter at home, sister Polly Culver, miss him more than others can, yet they are wonderfully sustained, for which strength they are truly thankful to their God. They have been members a number of years and have the sympathy of all who know them. Brother Culver is survived by his widow, one son and two daughters: S. N. Culver, Miss Polly Culver and Mrs. John W. Culver, all of Delmar, Delaware.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer at the home. A very large congregation was present to pay the last tribute of respect to our dear brother. Interment took place in the family plot at Smith's Mills, Delaware.

By request. H. C. KER.

Miss Josephine Culpepper was born in Lavaca County, Texas, March 14th, 1873, and died July 2nd, 1925, making her stay on earth 52 years, 3 months and 18 days. She joined the Regular Old School or Primitive Baptist Church at Mt. Olive, Lavaca County, Texas, March 28th, 1897, and was baptized the same day by Elder J. G. Grant. She, with her parents, moved to Wilson County in 1903, where she lived until her death. She bore her sufferings with christian fortitude, never murmuring or complaining. She was sound in the faith of God's elect and lived a life above reproach, and her godly walk and conversation endeared her to all who knew her. It was a pleasure to her to minister to the weak and to be of comfort to her brethren. I knew her for several years and it seemed to be her delight to do good deeds, and she was always ready to help those who needed help. If there was ever a manifested child of God on earth she was one. She loved the doctrine of sovereign grace, and lived and died in full triumph of a living faith. She kept her suffering a secret for a long time for fear she would worry others, and when she was confined to her bed she was never known to complain. She leaves a heart-broken mother, seven brothers and six sisters, besides a host of relatives and friends to mourn her absence and their great loss. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."—Rev. xiv. 13. With the evidence we have of her hope we feel that she is now at rest in the paradise of God, nevermore to suffer the pains, trials and troubles of natural life, but to sing praises in the immediate presence of her Savior; yes, now enjoying the full fruition of that hope that was her daily companion. Like Jacob of old, when she felt her nothingness, and felt to doubt and fear, she would return to Bethel in her experience and seek the dear Lord whom she met in her travel. Never did the dear Old Baptists have in their fellowship a more worthy member, and it is a great sorrow to them to have to give her up, but our God doeth all things well, having served out his righteous will with her on earth he received her sainted spirit up into glory, there to await the resurrection of her body, which was laid to rest in the cemetery at Stockdale, Texas. The funeral services were conducted by Elder C. Thomason. I would say to the heart-broken mother, brothers and sisters, Weep not for her as for one without hope, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."—1 Thess. iv. 14. Nevermore to be separated, but to continue forever with the Lord in the world of bliss.

Written by request. J. B. BOWDEN.

Mrs. Mary Febert Gossam, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Sidney Clark, Manassas, Va., August 17th, 1925. She was 87 years old on the ninth day of June last. Her name before marriage was Clark. She was the widow of John C. Gossam, who died in 1899. Her birthplace was near Dumfries, Prince William County, Virginia, and all her life was spent in that county. She was the mother of eight children, and is survived by four sons and one daughter: Mrs. Sidney Clark, of Manassas, Va.; Frank I. Gossam, of Lynchburg, Va.; G. A. Gossam, R. B. Gossam, W. T. Gossam, all of Waterfall, Va. Besides these, there are fourteen grandchildren living. Sister Gossam was baptized about thirty-eight years ago by Elder J. N. Badger into the membership of the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, and was a consistent member up to the end. Of late years she had not been able to get out much to the meetings owing to her age and health. About a year ago she fell and broke her hip and it was thought she would never be able to walk again. She did however get so she could go around some, then a few weeks ago had the misfortune to break her arm. Altogether, these injuries and her advanced years made it impossible for her to rally from them. We feel that it was nothing short

of the Lord's own Spirit which taught her the way of salvation and whose grace kept her in his own right way all her journey through. She was firm in her belief in the unlimited sovereignty of God and in her confidence in Jesus' power to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him.

Funeral services were held at Antioch, near Waterfall, Va., interment in the family burying ground on the old farm where she had lived many years ago, she being buried by the side of her husband. Her pastor spoke from the twenty-seventh Psalm at the last services. May the Lord comfort all who are bereaved. L.

Mrs. Malcolm A. Mac Intyre was born June 2nd, 1837, and died at her daughter's residence, in Winnipeg, Canada, July 2nd, 1925. Mother was in good health, but the last few days mentioned different times that her time was drawing to a close. Just a month before, on her birthday, June 2nd, she wrote my sister in Gary, Ind., telling her that this might be her last letter to her, related part of her experience, and told her to read the fifth chapter of Matthew and the 91st Psalm. The evening before she talked freely on the Scriptures. She had a stroke on the morning of July 1st, and passed away the following morning. All was done for her that loving hands could do, but it pleased the Lord to take her from us. God's will be done, not ours. She was united in marriage to Malcolm Mac Intyre October 10th, 1865, and lived in Lobo, Ontario, until seven years ago. They held their golden wedding October 10th, 1915, my father passing away June 29th, 1919. To their union five children were born, three sons and twin daughters; twelve grandchildren and one great-grandchild survive. Mother and father were baptized by Elder Pollard June 1st, 1868; later my father was ordained a deacon. Mother was a beautiful christian character, and manifested the same by her walk and conversation. We miss her, but our loss is her eternal gain, for she has gone to be where Jesus is, where there is no more sorrow or pain.

The funeral services were conducted by Mr. Gilbert McColl and the body, banked in beautiful flowers, was laid to rest by the side of her husband, at Brookside Cemetery, Winnipeg.

Her daughter, ANNIE McGALE.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Mintie Mapes, N. Y., $2.00; Mrs. A. B. Engell, N. Y., $2.00; Miss Laura Lake, Ala., $3.00; C. E. Jackson, Ohio, $3.00; G. W. Golden, Iowa, $1.00; J. H. Jones, Ga., $1.00; F. S. Terry, N. J., $1.00; Mrs. Wm. K. Truitt, Md., $1.00; Mrs. Mary Patterson, Ohio, $1.00; Mrs. J. B. Hardy, Kans., $5.00.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, it has pleased our God to call his servant and our beloved father in Israel **Elder Benjamin F. Coulter** from his labors on earth to his final rest in Christ. Therefore be it

Resolved, that, we herewith give expression from our hearts of the loss sustained by us by this separation of another friend and brother, whose advice and counsel was always of love, and for peace. Love was the source of his theme in the stand and at the fireside, and those who were blessed to know him have suffered a loss that cannot be replaced in earth. Therefore, be it further

Resolved, that we bow in humble submission to His will in this loss to the visible church, knowing that our Almighty Friend will not forsake nor leave His little flock in Salem Church, and in his appointed time will provide them another undershepherd. And be it also further

Resolved, that a copy of this Memorial be sent to his widow, and our sister, Annie Coulter, and be spread upon these Minutes of the Delaware Association now in session assembled.

JOHN G. EUBANKS.
P. M. SHERWOOD.
ARTHUR W. ROUNDS.

Deacon G. W. Webb died at his home in Covington, Georgia, July 15th, 1925. He was born January 1st, 1834, united with the Old School Baptist Church, at Rock Springs, Morgan County, Georgia, in the year 1875, was baptized by Elder U. M. Almand, and was ordained deacon 1876. He afterward moved to Newton County, Georgia, and united with the church at Harris Springs by letter, and remained with this church as a faithful deacon until death. He was a strong believer in unconditional salvation by grace, and grace alone, and often spoke in defence of this glorious doctrine, and he was always at his post of duty at his church meetings when possible. His interest in the church was very keen, true to his convictions, uncompromising, honest, faithful and full of good deeds. He was a practitioner of medicine as long as his health would permit. He was a gallant soldier in the war between the States, being a member of the 44th Georgia Regiment, Doile Cook's Brigade, Army of Northern Virginia. He leaves several sons and daughters, nieces and nephews to mourn their loss, together with his church, and the church he often visited. His wife preceded him to the grave several years. She was a faithful and true wife, an helpmeet indeed. Their children are living monuments to them, especially Miss Maggie, who so faithfully cared for and waited on her father in his last illness for more than a year. May God's richest blessings be bountifully bestowed upon her and all who were near to him by kinship in the flesh or fel-

lowship in the Spirit. We feel that his life has been a benediction to every one who came in contact with him. Let us try as much as in us is to emulate his life of love and good works. He is done with this life of toil and pain and is basking in the sunlight of his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, where we hope some day to meet him and to enjoy that blissful home where all is love, peace and joy for evermore.

Resolved, by the church of Harris Springs, that we lost a faithful member and deacon, and we bow in humble submission to this dispensation of an all-wise, kind, heavenly Father, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, and be it further

Resolved, that a copy of this resolution be spread upon our Minutes and a copy be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication, and a copy be sent to the family.

Read and adopted by the church in conference, August 14th, 1925.

R. L. COOK,
J. W. ROCKWELL, } Committee.
J. H. ADAMS.

MEETINGS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will meet at Whitefield, Maine, on Friday before the second Monday in September and continue three days (11th, 12th and 13th, 1925). All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.

The sixty-eighth session of the First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1925, beginning on Friday before the second Saturday in the month, at 1243 Polk Street, Topeka, Kansas. Topeka is of easy access from all points by way of the Union Pacific, Rock Island, Sante Fe and Missouri Pacific, and busses running in all directions. From the Sante Fe depot take a Washburn-12th Street or a Country Club car, get off at Polk Street and walk one block south. From Rock Island or Union Pacific take any car that comes along going south, and transfer to either of the above cars, or will be met if notified. Write to Elder L. L. Schenck, 1243 Polk Street, Topeka, Kansas, for further information, or to myself, at Meriden, Kansas, or telephone 7535 after reaching Topeka.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will meet with the Middletown and Andes Church, at Clovesville, New York, on Wednesday and Thursday, September 16th and 17th, 1925. Those coming on Tuesday p. m. by train or auto will be met at Halcottville. Those coming by train on Wednesday a. m. will be met at Fleischmanns, N. Y., or by auto will find the meetinghouse near the village of Fleischmanns, on the State Road. All who love the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

GEORGE RUSTON.

The Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to meet with the Chappel-Hill Church, 2½ miles east of Ouachita, Arkansas. Those coming from east, south and southwest, come to Camden, Arkansas, and those from north and northwest, come to Malvern, Arkansas, and from these points take Rock Island Railway to Ouachita, Arkansas, where trains will be met Thursday and Friday. The days appointed for this meeting embrace Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 18th, 19th and 20th, 1925. We are very anxious to have all peace-loving, unlimited Predestinarian Baptists, especially ministers, meet with us at this time.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator.
W. C. HORTON, Clerk.

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Chapter II.—Church Division, Trials in Early Ministry, &c.
Chapter III.—Tours West and East.
Chapter IV.—Settling in Life, Teaching, &c.
Chapter V.—Trials During the Civil War.
Chapter VI.—Church Trouble, Associational, &c.
Chapter VII.—Doctrinal Views, Occurrences, &c.
Chapter VIII.—Boldness in the Faith.
Chapter IX.—Unspotted from the World, &c.
Chapter X.—Churches—Refreshing Seasons at Mt. Olive.
Chapter XI.—Some Extracts, Reminiscences, &c.
Chapter XII.—In Perils.
Chapter XIII.—Fell Asleep, A "Loved Disciple."
Chapter XIV.—Memorials, Poetry, Circular Letter, &c.

This little book of 152 pages was published by Elder Corder's daughter, sister Semma E. Corder, of Philippi, W. Va., and printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office several years ago, and we feel is a work that will be read with interest by any of the household of faith.

The book was originally sold for one dollar per copy, and was bound in cloth, but there were some printed sheets that were never bound, and these sister Corder has generously donated to help in publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so we have decided to bind them in paper covers and offer them to our readers as long as the supply lasts for the extremely low price of twenty-five cents per copy. If any who purchase this book feel they have not received full value they may return the book to us and we will refund the price paid for it.

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THE

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

VERNON, Texas, Dec. 22, 1924.

DEAR EDITORS:—I see our subscription has expired, so am to-day mailing you a check to pay our subscription and that of the others listed below. We desire to be thankful for this avenue of spiritual communication, wherein brethren may edify, strengthen and comfort one another in the promises of God that he is abundantly able, faithful and cannot die, and that his word cannot fail although heaven and earth may pass away. He says, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. Even though we be poor, tempest-tossed pilgrims, sojourning in a strange land, without an abiding-place, yet seeking one, a city whose maker and builder is God, at times almost shipwrecked upon the boisterous waves of unbelief, tossed hither and thither, without rudder or compass, led willing captives by our archenemy at his will, to deny our Lord, disobey his commands, and thereby bring to ourselves the justly merited chastening rod, whereof if we partake is evidence that we are the children of God. Every son he receiveth he chasteneth, and he that is without chastisement whereof all are partakers is not a son, but a bastard. Then when the rod has been applied and our guilty conscience made bare we, like Peter, stand afar off and weep bitterly. Our Immanuel, King, High Priest, Mediator, Elder Brother and Redeemer has by the instigation of the devil been denied, and now as we turn our guilty and sorrowful eyes upon him in agony and anguish of soul we hear him say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? He was made to be sin for us, who knew no sin, bowed down in sorrow as the bulrush, laden as a cart with many sheaves, the Lord having laid upon him the iniquity of us all, and he at the same time saying, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do, "for I have given unto them thy words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them." In the foregoing language we

see Jesus beautifully described as our Mediator interceding and pleading for those given to him of the Father. Having borne our sins in his own body and carried them all the days of old, and put them away by the sacrifice of himself, in all our afflictions he was afflicted, and it pleased the Father to lay upon him the iniquity of us all. A sin-bearer who knew no sin, suffering the Just for the unjust, made under the law to redeem them that were under the law (his bride, the church). Hence we hear him say, "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God," and we hear the Father say, Awake, O sword, against the man that is my fellow, smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones. We see Herod and Pontius Pilate, together with the men of Israel, and the Gentiles, gathered together for to do whatsoever God's hand and counsel had determined before to be done, and in his agony Christ praying, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt, and now having kept and fulfilled the law and made it honorable, tempted in all points like unto his brethren, he met the enemy face to face and put him to flight, emerged a mighty conquering King, and declared, For this cause came I into the world, and, For this cause came I unto this hour. Then when he (Jesus) had lived a life of holiness and perfection for his bride (which was appointed for her) it was needful, according to the Father's will, that he also lay down his life for his sheep. Hence we hear that howling mob, when asked by Pilate who should be released unto them, whether Jesus or Barabbas, demanding that Barabbas be released but Jesus crucified. We see him going as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so opened he not his mouth. We see him climbing Golgotha hill with his cross, as a cart laden with many sheaves, reared and crucified between two thieves, nails driven through his feet and hands, pierced in his side by a Roman soldier, which opened up in the house of King David and in Jerusalem a fountain for sin and uncleanness, a fountain of pure water of life (eternal life) flowing both to the former and hinder sea, and in winter and summer so shall it be. From righteous Abel to the last vessel of mercy, when time is no more, its cleansing power will be the same. All will have been washed in this fountain, cleansed, purified and sanctified by the atoning blood of Christ, redeemed from death and condemnation unto eternal life by Jesus' death and resurrection. "By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Those who were called, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace given them in Christ before the world began. This is God's work, nothing can be added to nor taken from it, and whatsoever the Lord doeth it shall stand forever.

Dear brethren, my kindred in Christ, I realize I am poor and unworthy and have no righteousness of my own, but I am trusting in the finished redemption of my Elder Brother, King and High Priest, and the greatest evidence I have is I believe I can truthfully say that I love God and my brethren. In and of myself I find no good thing.

Our little church (Dawson Valley) is four miles east of Vernon, Texas, and a lovely little band, all in peace. We have received during this last year four by experience and baptism and three by letter. We cordially invite all lovers of the truth

to visit us and behold our order. When at the throne of grace we beg an interest in the prayers of God's people that we may stand firm and faithful to the end. May Israel's God bless, keep and lead all his people in the way of peace and righteousness and deliver them from the hands of wicked men, is my prayer.

A poor brother, I trust, in tribulation,
W. S. BOURLAND.

REEDSPORT, Ore., July 26, 1925.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS: — Your very kind and considerate letter at hand, and I will try to comply with your request, but only by the will of God can I write anything profitable to the household of faith; he alone knows what the hearts of his beloved are prepared to receive. I feel sure he has so directed both writers and readers of the SIGNS as to fill a great need to both those who need sincere milk and strong meat. Being myself a weak vessel I strongly feel the need of the mercy and guidance of a near kinsman who has all power both in heaven and earth, so that no weapon formed against his beloved shall prosper. I only feel safe in the belief that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," because they are "predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."—Rom. viii. 28; Eph. i. 11. Many, even of those who contend for the absolute sovereignty of God, feel called upon to justify or vindicate him before the court of human reason. To me it seems a perversion of language uncalled for to say God predestined and created all things, including man, but because man acts willingly God is not the cause. I have also heard it said of God, who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast, that some of his decrees are not causative, and heard it explained by saying, The architect is not the cause of the house, but when the architect is the builder and owner it makes a difference. I believe Isaiah's and Paul's position is scriptural, and much safer ground. Evidently it was to cover this very ground that God said by the pen of Isaiah, "That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me: I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things. * * * Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou?"—Isaiah xlv. 6, 7, 9. Paul says, after noting that when the children were not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, God hated Esau and loved Jacob, that he has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and that he raised Pharaoh up even for this same purpose, and that men will call God to judgment, saying, Why doth he yet find fault if he does all this himself? Answers, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" These clear, simple statements exalt our Lord's name above every name and puts his wisdom, power and practice above reproach. He has the right to make all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. But the other position is, to say the least, confusing, it suggests an independent devil and man. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." A picture of nothing but clear blue sky would not be very attractive, it needs a contrast

of dark threatening clouds. "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things." Our minds have no capacity to discern anything without comparison. In my early experience I feared God and abhorred myself on account of sin, and was given a desire above all things else to exalt and praise God's worthy name. The first relief I had in some four years was while still feeling myself justly condemned for the deeds done in the body. I saw by faith all God's creation praising him, and I, being a small part of that creation, according to his will would ultimately in his own way redound to his glory, even though it be in banishment. I was reconciled, and for weeks, yes, months, I breathed over and over the sweetest words I ever knew: "Thy will be done." "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee."—Psalms cxlv. 10. I believe he has purposed, created and controls every thing, both visible and invisible, that he rules all things after the counsel of his own will, and he has the perfect right, as the potter has power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. Man does sin willingly, rolling sin under his tongue as a sweet morsel. God made the crooked serpent also. Like Pharaoh they were raised up that God might make his power known and that his name might be declared. I cannot to my satisfaction apply the Scripture: "Neither tempteth he any man." "God did tempt Abraham."—Gen. xxii. 1. "The Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets."—1 Kings xxii. 22, 23. For this cause God shall send them strong delusions."—2 Thess. ii. 11. "The law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." Being dead with Christ our desire is unto holiness and sin is as a festering thorn; it is abhorred by those who are alive in Christ. And you are not under the law, but under grace, according to the new covenant.

Your brother in hope of pardoning love,

G. O. WALKER.

ATLANTIC, N. C., July 30, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Brother E. G. Webb, Cullison, Kansas, has requested me to write on Acts xv. 20, which reads thus, "But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood." The foregoing was the conclusion of the last ecclesiastical counsel ever held which can ever be binding on any gospel church. Certain men, doubtless of the church, had come down from Jerusalem and taught the brethren that, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." The people being thus taught were Gentiles, and were never under the law of Moses, nor the law of God which came by Moses. Circumcision had never been demanded of them. Thus those teachers, who were of the Jews, wanted to bind the law burdens of the Jews on the believers of the Gentiles. Paul and Barnabas disputed this, and sharp dissensions arose in the church, and it was determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain other of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders about this question. It was in the decision of the question of circumcision that the instructions given in our text that the apostles and elders gave their decision of that matter. After all the argu-

ing and speechmaking which may have been on that subject at that time the apostles and elders found no place where the law of Moses was binding on the Gentile churches. The only things which they saw necessary were purity of moral and religious life. First, to "abstain from the pollutions of idols." These Gentiles had been used to being partakers of these pollutions, but now since they are born of God, and children of his family, they must abstain from those pollutions. In this our day men will not bow to idols of wood or stone, &c., but anything which is set up as a help to God in the salvation of sinners is an idol. Therefore any picnic feast to such things are pollutions of idols, and things which we are commanded to abstain from. In the year 1881 two Sunday-schools joined in a May picnic, and came near my house to hold their festivities. Among them were some warm friends of mine. Two of them came and invited me to take my family and come with them to dinner. In as mild a way as I could I asked to be excused, but they would hear to nothing but that we should go and eat with them. This brought me to an absolute refusal. Then they asked my reasons for refusing to eat with them. I plainly told them their Sunday-schools were idols, and that their well prepared nice dinner was nothing less than the pollutions of idols, and that I, as a servant of the living God, was commanded to abstain from it. After they had eaten one came back to where I was at work. We talked on some matters, until a young man came and said, "Billie, come with me; we are going to have a dance around in the work-shop." As they both started away I said, "That is it, boys, they sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play." I feel sure that when a Primitive Baptist engages in any of those feasts he is guilty before God of violating this gospel requirement which was given by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem.

The second requirement was to abstain from fornication. That is for the unmarried to abstain from cohabitation. I suppose that my brethren and sisters generally will agree with me in this point, but to do this is no more a violation of the word of God than the eating of the pollutions of idols. The same catalogue of crimes, the same commandment to abstain from the one that there is to abstain from the other. We should remember that these things are for the gospel church, and not for a body of Jews or other Legalists, nor Unitarians, nor Evolutionists, nor for the world at large, but strictly for the gospel church. If we Primitive Baptists are the gospel church these four points of decision of that last binding counsel held by the apostles for the benefit of us Gentile believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are binding upon us, and we have no more right to go to nor to partake of the pollutions of idols than we have to commit fornication.

The third point is that we must abstain from eating of things strangled. It is a thing that dieth of itself. The blood thereof is coagulated in the body, so that the one cannot be eaten without the other, which bring us to the fourth and last point, "And from blood." From the eating of the blood with the meat. It was required of the Jews in their law that the blood should be poured out on the ground, and not eaten with the flesh. This requirement by the apostles does bring this over to the gospel dispensation, and inasmuch as they were writing to the

Gentile brethren it is enjoined on us to this day.

I hope brother Webb will get some comfort out of what I have written. The Lord bless us all to love and follow Him.

Your brother in a good hope in Christ Jesus,

L. H. HARDY.

KNOXVILLE, Iowa, June 30, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a copy of a letter written by my sister to her home church. I have her permission to send it, so if you think it would be of interest to the readers of the SIGNS and wish to use it in your paper, you may do so, if not, it will be all right with us.

Yours in a precious hope,

(MRS.) JESSE R. JONES.

PALESTINE, Texas, May 24, 1925.

To the Middle River Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, Winterset, Iowa.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I take this opportunity to extend to you, one and all, my sincere regards and christian greetings. I know you are preparing for a feast of love, and trust you will have a good meeting next Saturday and Sunday. May the Spirit of the Lord be with you abundantly, for without it all is vain words and repetitions, but with it, all things are possible, and a feeling of brotherly love and fellowship is shed abroad in our hearts and we feel that we are indeed one in Jesus Christ. I would love to be in your midst and enjoy your sweet fellowship. I will be with you in spirit, if not in the flesh. May you have a kindly thought toward me, and a word of prayer in your heart that I may continue in the grace of God, for, brethren and sisters, I feel that I need the prayers of the saints. Sometimes I am downcast and feel that I am indeed the chief of sinners, and if, through the mercy of God, I am a child of grace, I am the least of all. I feel as I journey along the pathway of life that the older I get the worse sinner I am. Oh, that I could always do as I ought. The Spirit and flesh are at warfare, and always will be. But oh, that the Spirit could be uppermost and guide my each and every action, but the carnal nature is with me, and will be until God in his infinite mercy sees fit to take me from this world of strife and woe to that haven of rest beyond. There my toils and sorrows will be over and I shall bask in the smiles of our blessed Lord forever and forever, if so be that I am numbered with the redeemed of the Lord. It is my hope, though a lost and ruined sinner, that I may some day be one to enjoy the fruits of the sweet promises of God. I beg and plead for the mercy and grace of God that he will ever be merciful to my unrighteousness. I am very glad you have a good, substantial churchhouse in which to worship. May you each and every one be able to attend your meetings regularly. I remember what pleasure and joy I received when I attended meeting regularly. I hope you may all be blessed with that sweet privilege of "assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is." May there be no strife or ill feeling one towards another, but may sweet peace and love abound in your hearts, remembering your unworthiness, always looking to God, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift, to guide and direct you in the paths of truth and righteousness for his name's sake, is my prayer toward you. It is indeed gratifying to hear that God has seen fit to add to the church daily such as shall be saved, both young and old. I rejoice to hear of the additions to the fold, especially of my girlhood friend,

and chum, Jessie, it is sweet to see the young people go to the church. It is a haven of rest in this world to those who have tasted of the goodness and grace of God and are seeking a home and a place to rest from the turmoils of this world. I am sure there are others who should perform that duty, and may God give them strength to go home to their brethren and tell them what God has done for them. I have been to meeting a few times since coming here, and hope to attend more regularly this summer. Elder L. D. Rose and wife have been very kind to me, and are always desirous for me to go with them every time, but sickness in the family sometimes hinders me, though myself, husband and John are in good health. Elder Rushing, of Athens, and Elder Rose, of Palestine, are pastors of Holly Springs Church, a little church twelve miles north of Palestine. They are both able preachers, and men yet in their forties. The brethren and sisters are very friendly to me and I feel at home in their midst; they tell the same sweet story of salvation by grace and I feel we are one in Christ Jesus. Elder Neal, another able preacher, is pastor of another church south of Palestine. I hope I may be able to visit this church next month at their communion meeting. I love to commune with these people. I feel they are following the example of the blessed Lord when they humble themselves to wash one another's feet. Having taken part in this service, I feel that the full blessings come in partaking of the emblems of his body and casting down all pride and formality, humbling self at the feet of the brethren. Then is the sweet joy of obedience realized.

Dearly beloved, may the peace of God and the blessings promised by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ be yours, both in your church life and your individual homes. May they that are aged and sick be strengthened in the grace of God as they near the portals of the world beyond, and may each and every one of you be ready at any time to answer the summons and lay aside worldly things, for we know not who will go first, or when and how he shall go. May the dear fathers and mothers in Israel take great consolation in the fact that the years will not be many before they will be called to meet the loved ones gone on before, and that surely they will not be held here long by the bondage of sin. My wish for them, one and all, is that their sufferings may be few, and that they may fall asleep gently in the arms of Jesus.

For the younger ones, may you each and every one strive earnestly to defend the faith once delivered unto the saints, and may you continue steadfast in the faith as you journey on, remembering that the way is sometimes steep and thorny, but our blessed Master has gone on before and has bid us follow his bleeding footprints. May you all ever look to Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith. I should be pleased to hear from any one who can find time to write to me.

Your unworthy sister in hope of a better home beyond,

VELMA JORDAN FRENCH.

MONROE, Ga., June 25, 1925.

MR. S. W. HOYT—DEAR FRIEND:—This is to tell you that I got home safe and sound, and hope I am thankful. As I am about normal now I look back over the way I went, and see you and remember a kind word from you, for which accept my thanks. My trip shall be as bread upon the water, that we may gather and eat in the future.

I am sending you a clipping from our county paper, telling my friends here of my trip. You may enjoy it, or show it to some one who will, say Gilbert Beebe. We hope to see you some day here with us. Let us hear from you some time.

Your friend,

JAMES M. ADAMS.

MONROE, Ga., June 20, 1925.

WALTON NEWS:—By request, I will make a report to my friends through your good paper.

Leaving here May 14th, at noon, arriving at Leesburg, Va., the next day for dinner with Elder H. H. Lefferts; then over the Potomac, in Maryland, to Broad Run Church for two days' meeting; being received in a most cordial way among my kind of folks. Then to Baltimore, where the association was held; meeting several ministers of the Old School Baptist faith, where we enjoyed three days, staying over for Sunday. Went out to Black Rock Church, an old rock house where the Baptists met in 1832 to consider the Missionary plan to save the heathen, and the separation was declared. Hence the New School was born. Then to Newark, Delaware, with the Delaware Association, with the old church Welch Tract, that was constituted in 1701 with sixteen members from Wales, building the present house of brick that were brought over the water, and conveyed eight miles on mule-back in 1746. Elder J. G. Eubanks, of Georgia, is its present pastor. Three days there and over for Sunday meeting, spending Memorial day there with our northern friends. Nothing was said to mar the feelings of one who wore the gray. Ingratitude was said to be mean in any of us. A wreath of flowers was called for from all the societies, churches and schools and laid upon a rock that was marked for the dead of all wars. Part of Lincoln's speech was read that he made at Gettysburg. The stand was beautifully decorated on the lawn of the college grounds. Just a mile or so from there, at Cooches Bridge is a monument to the first man unfurling the Stars and Stripes in battle, September 3rd, 1777, with four large cannon pointing toward the four corners of the world, chained together to let the world know that we are united for defense. Then to Hopewell, N. J., to the Delaware River Association, where everything was ready to entertain, meeting my son, William, and nephew, from Mansfield, making six of us from Georgia. Here were three more good days, but hot weather indeed. William Hobensack, of Pennsylvania, came for us in two autos, making us have a good time, showing us his beautiful farm, and cities for many miles around, then bringing us back to Hopewell for the Sunday meeting, where we received all the kind hospitality that could be given. Space will forbid giving names of all. Then to Warwick Association, about seventy-five miles beyond New York city, up in the mountains of New York, where we were entertained at a hotel near by the old church, New Vernon, with forty-two rooms. Over a hundred could be seated at the table at a time. Here is the tomb of Elder Gilbert Beebe. Met two of his children there, one a son, Judge Beebe, and his sister, both nearly ninety years old. This was the last association, and perhaps the best. The hotel bill was nearly seven hundred dollars, but it was cheerfully paid. Then to Warwick, N. Y., to an evening meeting with Elder H. H. Lefferts. Then back to Herndon, Va., to another Sunday meeting at Frying Pan Church. Then home on the 15th of June.

On the whole, it was one of the best trips of my life, meeting my folks from Maine and Canada, all contending for the old doctrine and faith that was once delivered unto the saints, meeting also some of the Methodist friends, who told me to tell them down south that they were making a mistake by not uniting with them, to be stronger and more able to carry on the great work of salvation.

It is good to go away, but better to get home. Thank you for the space.

Your good friend,

J. M. ADAMS.

ENLOE, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my time is out and I want to send in my subscription for the SIGNS, I thought I would write a few lines, as my mind has been leading that way lately. To begin with I will quote Isaiah xlvi. 9, 10, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." This is not the god we hear of, that has done all he can trying to save man, and who wants all men saved, but cannot save them, so lets them die and go to torment, who is no god at all, for he has neither power nor purpose. Our God inhabiteth eternity alone. He says, "I am God, and there is none like me." He is the eternal God, with eternal life, eternal wisdom, unchangeable, with eternal power, and an eternal purpose in all things. "Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done." "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him."—Col. i. 16. All things fill the place and purpose God created them for. He has all power and will do all his pleasure. After creating all other things it pleased God to create man, and he created him just as it pleased him. Man was made subject to vanity, as he was natural and not spiritual. The Lord put him in the garden and gave him a command. Did he keep it? No. He could eat the fruit of all the trees in the garden except one. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Did he eat of it? Yes. Did he die? Yes. He is dead in trespasses and sin. Now, if he is dead, and salvation is conditional on his part, what condition can a dead man fill? Is there anything he can do? If he can perform a condition he is not dead. The serpent said, Ye shall not surely die. Now, dear reader, which is it, does man save himself by performing some condition, or does our Savior save him by grace? He said, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." What is man that was formed of the dust of the earth? Man is a created being, and had a beginning, hence could not be eternal. But when the Lord gives his children eternal life, eternal love, then they will have everlasting joy and peace; that is, it will never end, and none can separate them from the love of God.

I believe in the doctrine of election. Let us see what the old Book says. Romans ix. 11, 13, 15, 16, 20, "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the pur-

pose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Again, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." We look for Jesus to come at his time and gather up his bride, those who are asleep in Christ and them that are alive, and when he comes he will call them and they will come forth. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first."—1 Thess. iv. 16. Yes, all his children, called sheep. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."—John x. 27–29.

Your little brother in hope,

W. H. TATUM.

WESLACO, Texas, Aug. 16, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find check for $4.00 to apply on my subscription to the SIGNS. This will pay it some in advance. We have a little church here of only about seven members, all at peace. This town is only five years old, but has about three thousand population, and still growing fast. This Rio Grand valley is a wonderful country. We are just as far south as we can go in the United States, towns about three to seven miles apart, and about three hundred thousand people here now from all over the north and Canada. Lots of them spend the winter here, as it is very mild, seldom getting cold enough to hurt the orange and grapefruit trees. We have plenty of Primitive Baptists around of all kinds and factions, but we hope to be still holding to that same old doctrine that the SIGNS has advocated all these years. I started reading the SIGNS when I was about nine or ten years old, and have been reading it now for about twenty-seven years, and am proud to see it still in the same old paths as from the beginning. Many have been my battles and ups and downs during my short life. What it has all been for the Lord only knows, for I know that few and evil have been the days of my life. It seems to me at times that it would have been better had I never been born. Then again when I can visit a dear brother's home like I did Sunday before last, when I felt impressed to hunt up brother Hatcher, whom I had heard of as being an old time predestinarian, and see the tears of rejoicing flow from his eyes as we talked of the goodness and mercies of our Lord, it made me feel O how good it is to be able to be among his dear people. How unspeakably pleasant it is when faith can flow from faith to faith as we try in our feeble way to express our thanks and praise to our great Master who rules and superrules and made all things after the counsel of his own will. Last Sunday this brother Hatcher came to our meeting here at Weslaco and to our pleasant surprise brought along Elder W. D. Hughes and family, who had just gotten into the valley from Oklahoma, so be-

tween Elder Hughes and Elder C. Thomason we had a real good meeting. We have no regular pastor since Elder J. B. Bowden, of Kerrville, Texas, left us on account of distance and ill health, however we continue to meet just the same, and the good Lord sends us a visiting preacher or two about two-thirds of the time. O may we ascribe all the honor and praise to his name. We would be glad to have any Old Baptists visit us who come our way, especially those who believe in the same doctrine as advocated by the SIGNS.

Your unworthy brother, saved by grace if saved at all,

E. B. AULT.

INDEPENDENCE, Mo., Sept. 14, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I am mailing subscription to the SIGNS, I will tell you something about the First Association of Kansas, held in Topeka, Kansas, last week, at the home of Elder L. L. Schenck. There are only two churches in the association: Big Walnut and West Union, with a membership of nineteen. Elder L. L. Schenck is pastor of both churches, and is endowed with ability to feed the flock to their comfort and edification. There were two visiting Elders: W. H. Schenck, of Pittsboro, Ind., one of the associate editors of the *Lone Pilgrim*, and cousin to Elder L. L. Schenck; also Elder J. R. Hardy, of Kingman, Kansas, was there by invitation. They all preached with power and demonstration of the Scriptures. Elder J. R. Hardy occupied the stand Sunday morning for one hour and fifty-five minutes, edifying the congregation with the glorious truth of the gospel which fell from his lips every minute of the time. I had not been there long before I knew they were my people, if I am worthy to claim them as my people. They were scattered over Kansas, and as far as Oklahoma. They were using Beebe's collection of hymns, and when I would solicit them to subscribe for the SIGNS most of them were already subscribers. Never in my life have I been in a strange company of people and felt so well acquainted. This association will be pleasant for me to think about as long as memory lasts.

Your brother in hope,

THOMAS W. RECORDS.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Tygarts Valley River Old School, Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Amnon Church, Marion County, West Virginia, to the sister associations with which we correspond, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Your messengers came to us laden with the glorious gospel of the grace of God, proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation through the suffering and death of God's dear Son, giving God all the praise and all the glory of the redemption and salvation of the church, which is the pillar and ground of the truth, the bride, the Lamb's wife, the purchase of his blood. Dear brethren, we appreciate your fellowship and correspondence, and desire and pray for a continuation of the same.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Mt. Olive Church, Barbour County, West Virginia, commencing on Friday before the last Sunday in August, 1926, and continuing three days, when and where we hope to meet your messengers again.

Done by order of the Association.

J. B. CROSS, Moderator.

J. N. BARTLETT, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1925.

EDITOR

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

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Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

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JOHN VIII. 32.

"AND ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

From the very first that spiritual aspirations found a place in the soul of man there has been a longing for freedom: the freedom of the soul from the thraldom of unbelief and sin. History shows over and over again how the various races of men enslaved by their stronger fellows have struggled strenuously to be free, counting liberty as more to be desired than life itself. Even so have the souls of children of God throughout all ages prayed earnestly for that freedom which truth alone can give, that liberty which lifts all burdens and brings the believer out into the day of the triumphant Son of God. In the verses preceding and following the words under consideration we find that those to whom Jesus was speaking did not all believe what he said: some did, others did not. None could believe Jesus then, none can believe him now, but those who have the witness of the Spirit within themselves. To some who heard him this witness was given, therefore they believed; to others it was not given, therefore they believed not. Belief, in order to be genuine, must be based on solidity, and that which affords the rock-bed foundation of belief is faith, and faith is the gift of God, the fruit of his Spirit. It takes the same power to bring about belief in the soul as it took to bring the body of Jesus out of the sepulchre. This same mighty power working in the children of God causes them to believe that Jesus is the Christ. That his people should know the truth, Jesus definitely promised. There were no doubts about this fact then, there are none now. The children of God "shall" know the truth. It is not that they "may" know it, it is not that their knowing it hinges upon any contingency which they themselves must bring about, but they "shall" know the truth. Jesus speaks with positiveness and with authority. To him was given power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him. Thus, their knowing the truth depends not on the will of man, not on any conditions which the soul must fall in with in order to know the truth, but the certainty that the children of God shall know the truth is of God entirely, his absolute sovereignty and eternal purpose bring about the performance of the promise made in and by Jesus Christ that all his children shall know the truth. They shall not be taught it of men, it shall not be handed down from one to another, nor from generation to generation, but all his elect shall know the truth from the least of them unto the greatest, for all shall be taught it of God. From this point which all God's people agree upon, we pass on to consider how and in what way the knowledge of the truth brings about freedom. First, what is truth? Pilate asked this question, and we may well ask it, too. Jesus himself answers this question in saying, "I am the way, and the truth,

and the life." Therefore Christ Jesus is himself the truth. Whatsoever agrees not with him and in him is not truth, and must necessarily be false. If truth makes free, then Christ Jesus makes free, for Christ is truth and truth is Christ. We who are to-day living by the faith of the Son of God in this present day of grace and of the gospel dispensation can scarcely realize the captivity in which our spiritual forefathers were under the law in that age of Moses and of sin and death which was before the coming of Christ. All who walked by faith in that age from the time of Abel down to old Simeon were spirits in prison. Notwithstanding that they believed in God and looked for the coming of God's Lamb who should bear their sins away and purge them in his own blood, yet all of them died in faith, not receiving the fulfillment of the promise as we who live in this age have received it. The Holy Spirit in them moved them to testify beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and of the glory which should follow, but as to what or what manner of time the Spirit within them did signify none of them knew; and although they earnestly sought to know the meaning of the Spirit's work within them, yet to none of them was it ever revealed. The book was sealed up until the time of the end and none was found able to loose those seals and open the book until the Lion of the tribe of Judah came. Herein, therefore, was bondage, real soul captivity. That is why we call them "spirits in prison." The church throughout all that period of time before Christ was a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. The coming of truth, Jesus, made an end of this captivity. The law of God found its fulfillment in Jesus, sin found its destruction; in him condemnation was done away. The doing away of these things brought freedom to the children of God. No more were they under law, but under grace; no more under obligation to offer sacrifices, or to rituals and ceremonies, or to keep feasts and holy days, for now was come the revelation of the truth in Jesus Christ whereby the children of God were liberated from the narrow strictures of legalism and brought out into the infinite reality of the gospel wherein God is served and worshipped in Spirit and in truth, in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter. Far better is it to know that we are living in one never-ending Sabbath which Jesus has made and kept for us, and is making and keeping within each of us, than to feel that the sabbath is but one day in the week in which we must do no work or be condemned. Far better than bringing our turtle-doves and pigeons and lambs and kids to some carnal priest for an effectual atonement, is it to know that we have an eternal High Priest entered within the heavens who has made by himself one effectual offering for our sins which insures our never perishing. The things which Truth teaches us are so wonderful and life-giving that when we know them there is sure and abundant liberty from all the ineffectual works of the law which superstitiously were supposed to give life, but which really never did. The Jews commonly thought that they had eternal life in observing the Scriptures, but Jesus said they had not, that the law and the prophets testified of him. It was a false tradition or superstition that by doing the things contained in the law they might reap eternal life, and many among men even to-day are still superstitious about this very matter, still ignorant of God's righteousness and going about to establish their own right-

eousness. But superstition is not confined to any one race or condition of men, for Paul told the Greeks at Athens that he perceived in all things they were too superstitious. The Athenians had erected magnificent edifices as dwellings of the gods, but Paul told them that the true and living God whom he worshipped did not dwell in temples made with hands, nor was he worshipped with men's hands as though he needed anything. The truth in Jesus Christ had been shown to Paul and so his soul was free from any such error as that God needs our weak ministrations, or that he is in any sense dependent upon the efforts of poor puny man, or upon any of his creatures.

Whoever commits sin, Jesus said, is the servant of sin. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, therefore is the Lord's free man. The child of God cannot offend against any law which has no jurisdiction over him. We were some time the servants of sin because we were under the law of sin, but having been delivered through Jesus Christ from under the law of sin and condemnation this law is no longer over the redeemed of God, hence they cannot transgress it any more. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made believers free from the law of sin and death. Since the work of Jesus Christ cannot by us be undone, we cannot therefore commit sin as once we did, cannot longer live in it as our natural element, and have been made free from its condemnation, which is the wages of sin. This freedom from the service of sin is accomplished in the children of God through their being taught the truth. The entrance of the Word gives light, darkness is abolished, slavery ended, the captive freed. Truth makes an end of slavish fear. The fear of death, the dread of torment, horror of the consequences of sin; all these things enslave the soul. Naught but the truth in its purity can abolish such slavery as this. The thing we dread is the thing which enslaves us. To the extent we are afraid of anything, to that extent we are in bondage to that thing. Most of such fears arise from the fact that we are ignorant of the thing we are afraid of. Ignorance breeds terror. When, however, the revealing light of truth is turned upon the thing we fear, we then come to know that thing for what it really is and it no longer has power to terrify us. To the condemned sinner, conscience-stricken because of his sins, what horrors lurk in death and hell. Burdened with his load of guilt, he knows he is not fit to live nor yet fit to die; to his tortured soul his life from day to day is filled with anguish, his nights are woeful. When, however, the Sun of righteousness arises upon his sin-stricken soul with everlasting healing, then are the shades of night with all its terrors suddenly withdrawn and the soul is freed from fears and from annoying doubts. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God revealed in the face of Jesus Christ accomplishes in the soul that wonderful freedom which death nor hell nor sin can evermore destroy.

The truth of God is infinite even as God himself is infinite, and just as "finis" can never be written to any of the attributes of Deity, just so there is no end to truth. It is promised us that we shall know the truth, not the slightest uncertainty about that, the freedom which knowing the truth brings is our precious inheritance in Christ; but there is no end to it. The soul grows and keeps on growing in the knowledge of truth and of grace. We can never come to the place where we can say, This is the end of truth. It is like a river, ever flowing;

never stopping or staying. We cannot set bounds to it nor confine it with narrow limits. To no one of us, nor to any one age or period of time, is the truth all revealed. Not for nothing do the Scriptures repeatedly speak of godly things being like rivers, or like flowing streams. Like rivers, these things of God are not static, but ever going on and on to infinity. There is a river, so says the prophet, the streams whereof make glad the city of God. This living and continual stream of eternal truth has gladdened the hearts of believers throughout all ages and has brought them that freedom from sin and from death, from snares and delusions, from all false traditions and doctrines of men. What need we care what the world believes so long as we have that secret which is given to all them who fear the Lord? Though the world is torn and rent with strife, though men search and delve for fame and honor, wealth and glory, why need these things worry us? Having meat to eat the world knows not of, let us possess our souls in peace. If the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing, let them do so and welcome. God in his rich and sovereign grace has brought us into his pavilion where safely he makes us to abide. Under the covert of his wings, we are come to trust. They that trust in the Lord Jehovah are like Mt. Zion, they shall not be moved. What a wonderful blessing indeed is it to have in our souls that steadying power of revealed truth whereby our souls remain ever true to the course marked out by the compass of divine faith, not drifting hither and yon at the beck and call of every varying wind of human doctrine, of vain philosophy and of science falsely so-called. Knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus lifts the soul up into a kind of aristocracy of the Spirit; or like an airship flying high aloft, carries us above the earth-deflected currents of the lower atmosphere, into the calm serenity of the vastness of eternal space. L.

LUKE II. 28-32.

"THEN took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

The above referred to is a testified truth of the apostle Luke when this just and devout man, Simeon, who was waiting for the consolation of Israel, came by the Spirit into the temple and the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him according to the custom of the law. We first note the act, "Then took he him up in his arms." Was the realization of Simeon brought about because he took up Jesus in his arms? We see, by going back, Simeon was just and devout. For one to be just the Holy Ghost must be upon him, and he was living by faith, for "the just shall live by faith," and that faith being the substance of things hoped for, he was waiting for the consolation of Israel. When he came by the Spirit into the temple was none other than the love of God constraining him, and he being led by the Spirit could behold that which was of the Spirit, and seeing Jesus he beheld him as the consolation of Israel, the salvation which God had appointed for walls and bulwarks around Zion, the light to the Gentiles and the glory of God's people, Israel. What a wonderful view of glory and beauty he beheld in Jesus. It seems to us that all men who are led by the Spirit are made to see all fullness in Jesus for time and eternity, and are made to live in that faith in him, which is the life of the just. After Paul beheld Jesus he continually spake of his unright-

eousness, and all his righteousness of the flesh was as filthy rags to him; that is, in his flesh dwelt no good thing; when he would do good evil was present with him, and the things he would he did not. By the light of grace he beheld what was in that dark and benighted soul, and he saw the salvation which was by grace, for he said, We are saved by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. "For mine eyes have seen thy salvation." The power and virtue Simeon beheld in Jesus was the fulfillment of the proclamation of the angel from God to Mary that she should call his name Jesus, and he was but speaking the same that Mary spake, according to Luke i. 46, "My soul doth magnify the Lord." We are made to feel that all the Lord's people behold him as one that God anointed and sent to redeem his people, and in him doth all fullness dwell, and what they are is by the grace of God. What great consolation it gives a poor sinner to read of and have fellowship with Simeon, Mary, John the Baptist, Paul, Jonah, David, Abraham, Jacob, Isaiah, Jeremiah, John, Peter and James, and all others who wrote of this salvation which God hath prepared before the faith of all people. The revelation of Him in the heart of any poor Gentile will make him magnify Jesus, for none knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whom God will reveal him, and "no man can come to me, except my Father which hath sent me draw him." We often feel to encourage those who have hope to tell it to the church, and when we examine ourself we find selfishness, and a desire that we might add to our numbers, and often when we are thus exercised we forget to consider ourself and those who hear us, as Paul wrote to Timothy. (1 Tim. iv. 16.) If we do that we will testify of salvation by grace and the love of God that constraineth us, and as Paul, he declared that he labored more abundantly than they all, meaning the apostles. "Not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Therefore he could declare, "By the grace of God I am what I am." What concerns us is, Do we know the joy of God's salvation? All the joys and comforts we have had to enjoy were wrought by the working of the far greater power than man. We have had at times a rest in feeling, which came after we united and were received into the household of faith and the ordinance of baptism administered. We are made to feel it was by the Spirit we came into the temple, and the rest was given by the Spirit, for it has continued for thirty years. When we think we will have a great feast of rejoicing we are made to grope in darkness, and there is nothing good in us and sin is mixed with all we do. Paul said, "Thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." In preaching salvation by grace all creature performance is left out. It is only as we are brought into subjection by the Spirit that we glory not in ourselves, but in the Lord. Christ is our light, and the only source of light and life in the Spirit. We have often remarked that we could not preach as we had read and heard of others preaching, and for no other reason than that we have not so learned Christ. God's anointed, the way of the saved of the Lord, and when we are thus constrained, the faith of our heart is preached, and the faith of God's people is preached, the abundance is declared by the words of the mouth, for the preparation of the heart, as well as the answer of the tongue, is of the Lord. Then we see eye to eye, and speak the same things, and all have the same mind. This glorious truth sepa-

rates the Lord's people from the world, places them at his right hand, which the savorings to the flesh cannot touch. The servant of God, as Paul writes to Timothy as above, is embraced, and all that hear him in this salvation, which encircled the entire building of God, and all wish to dwell there. As David declared, "One thing I have desired of the Lord, and that will I seek after; that I might dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life." David said of those who know the joyful sound, "They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted."—Psalms lxxxix. 15, 16. Dear brethren, if we take heed unto ourselves and unto those who hear us, we will preach nothing but Christ, and him crucified, and all flesh as grass, and the glory of man as the flower thereof. Those who hear are saved from untowardness of self-righteousness, of the pernicious ways of men, and the doctrine of antichrist has no resemblance. The walk and conversation is in direct accord with the doctrine of salvation by grace. We are hurt every time we read from the pen of a man who says he kept himself in the way, for our experience bears record to the truth that declares, "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." When we read, speak or write, and cannot see beyond the watchman, we get no comfort, spiritually speaking.

"Oh that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still;
Oh that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will."

Our desire and prayer to God is that all who are standing upon the watchwalls of Zion may cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, her iniquity is pardoned and she hath received double at the Lord's hands for all her sins.

O. W. V.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by J. M. Cate.)

To the Elders and messengers of Hazel Creek Association of Regular, Predestinarian Baptists, and the churches they represent, and the faithful in Christ Jesus.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We feel it is through the loving-kindness and tender mercy of the all-wise God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, that we are once more enabled to meet together in council, and in love and fellowship, to worship the One who has saved us and called us and made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

It is a long established custom of the Association to have what we call a Circular Letter prepared by some one to be printed with our Minutes, and by your action at our last meeting the lot has fallen upon me. Dear brethren, I feel too weak for the burden you have put upon me, but, wishing to be obedient to your request, will make the effort, hoping you will throw the mantle of charity over my weak efforts. In thinking of some small subject upon which to write my mind was called to a part of the ninth verse of the tenth chapter of St. John: "I am the door." I looked it up and began to investigate, but, dear ones, I found it no little subject (if it is only a few words), and that it is inseparably linked with all other subjects in the Bible, and with our christian experience. As I can find no little subject in the Scriptures I will have to do the best I can with this one. I understand this door spoken of is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In the parable in the first part of this chapter Christ says, first verse, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth

up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." Second verse, "But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep." Eighth verse, "All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers." Eleventh verse, "I am the good shepherd." Now we have Christ coming in by the door. You may trace this up, as I have neither time nor space in this letter. The door we wish to talk about is recorded in the ninth verse: "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." Jesus says in the seventh verse, "I am the door of the sheep," and we hardly think any could enter in by that door but the sheep, for they cannot even know the door (Christ) except by revelation, and even then they cannot come to the door (Christ) except the Father draw them, for we read, "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." And, "No man can come to me [the door], except the Father which hath sent me draw him." To my mind, these Scriptures make it quite plain that there were sheep and a fold before Christ came. He says, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Spiritual Israel, not national Israel, for he says, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold [the Jews, or national Israel, but of the Gentile nations]: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." What did Christ come for? He says he came to seek and to save that which was lost. The sheep (the children) which the Father gave him. Now we see they were God's children before Christ came. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." All thou hast given me shall come unto me, and he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out, but raise him up at the last day. We see that the Lord did not come to make sheep, nor to make a way possible by which they could save themselves, but that they were a gift to the Son by the Father; that they had gone astray and were in bondage, sold under sin, and Christ came to redeem them. Did he do it, or did he fail? In his prayer to the Father he says, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do," &c. Some may say, Then what profiteth the Scriptures, or the preaching of the gospel? "All scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." This Scripture tells plainly who gave the Scripture, who to and for what purpose. It pleased God through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. Now we see the preaching of the gospel is to save believers, the children who were quickened and made alive and could hear and understand. This has no reference whatever to an eternal salvation, but to a common salvation, as Jude calls it when addressing those who are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ and called. This good Shepherd says to Peter, Feed my sheep, feed my lambs. He emphasized the command by repeating it the third time, so we judge that he was impressing upon Peter's mind the work he was giving Peter to do, and that this should be the work of all his called ministers. How thoughtful the dear Lord was of his sheep. He gave his life for them because they were his sheep, not to make them his, and gave them a home in which to live (the church), and says, "I am the door: by me if any man enter

in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." He maketh us to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth us by the still waters. Praise his holy name.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator.
J. M. CATE, Clerk.

(Written by Elder J. N. Bartlett.)

The Tygarts Valley River Association of Old School, or Primitive Baptists, now in session with the Amnon Church, Marion County, West Virginia, to the several churches of which she is composed, and to all with whom we correspond, sendeth christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN IN SWEET FELLOWSHIP:—It is through the goodness, mercy and longsuffering of our heavenly Father that we are again permitted to meet together in an associate capacity as messengers and correspondents, brethren and sisters, to hold sweet communion together, and with our heavenly Father, as we hope, in order that we may be comforted, edified and established in the word of God. As it is our custom to address you by way of a Circular Letter, and with this in view, we call your attention to the subject of "fellowship." Fellowship is a subject worthy of our consideration, for it not only concerns our mutual fellowship with each other in the church of God, but fellowship with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ. (1 John i. 3.) Love and fellowship are joined together, and fellowship comes from love, and there can be no fellowship without love, and it must be mutual. As the words "fellowship" and "communion" are often used synonymously in the New Testament Scriptures we will use them as such. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." Now in all our spiritual devotions and worship of God, we commune with him. In their prayers his spiritual children implore their heavenly Father for all the blessings they earnestly desire, and thus commune with him in Spirit. God the Spirit, when we pray according to his holy will, hears and grants unto us what he has put into our hearts to pray for, and thus communes with us. After the resurrection of Jesus Christ two of his disciples journeyed together to Emmaus, and they talked together of all those things which had happened, and while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. He joined in this holy communion by expounding unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself, by opening their eyes that they knew him, and by causing their hearts to burn within them while he talked with them by the way, and while he opened to them the Scriptures. O, dear brethren, think of all this. Those two disciples walked with him, talked with him, and he with them, were enabled to see him and know him who they had seen suffer and die on the cross now risen and communing with them until their hearts were burning within them with love and gladness. In a measure and in spirit have we not seen him? Has he not manifested himself unto us as he does not unto the world as our once crucified but now risen Savior? Does he not open unto us some beautiful passages of Scripture for our edification and comfort, and give us faith, hope and love, until, like doubting Thomas, we say, My Lord and my God? We feel to fellowship all those of like precious faith. Oh the fellowship of the saints, it is wonderful, for it is God-given; it is durable, for it will last forever. It is that which joins us to-

gether in christian love as one, and enables us to join together in praise to God in our meetings, bow together at the throne of grace, and join our prayers together to God for his mercy, for his loving compassion and his grace, preach the unsearchable riches of Christ all in union and in fellowship, partake at the Lord's table of the same bread, drink of the same cup in commemoration of the suffering of the same Lord when his body was broken and his blood was shed for our sins. Yes, in all our worship love and fellowship flow from heart to heart, which joins us together as two drops of water in one. It is only those who are regenerated, born of God, who have the mind of Christ, having one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all, who are joined together in fellowship. Those three thousand who were added to the church on the day of Pentecost continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship and in breaking of bread and in prayers. Yes, those steadfast children of our God, steadfast in the apostles' doctrine, could also continue steadfast in the communion of the saints. They are agreed, therefore they can walk together, can commune together in sweet converse on the things pertaining to the kingdom of our God, and the things pertaining to our eternal salvation. But two who cannot agree cannot walk together, they would soon fall out by the way. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly." "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." Now, dear brethren, permit me to exhort you to love one another with a pure heart fervently, contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and may the fruit of the Spirit show forth in all your walk and conversation one with another. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

J. B. CROSS, Moderator.

J. N. BARTLETT, Clerk.

(Written by Elder J. W. McClanahan.)

The Pocatalico Old School, or Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the West Fork Church, Calhoun County, West Virginia, September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1925, to the associations with which we correspond, and to all of like precious faith with us, sendeth greetings.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We are once more permitted by the goodness of our covenant-keeping God to meet in an associate capacity to worship together in love and meekness the true and living God. We greatly desire that peace and unity of spirit abound among us in all that may be said or done during this the ninetieth annual session of the Pocatalico Old School Baptist Association. Dear brethren, we realize that in number we are few, who are earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Truly we feel the power of John's address to the angel of the church in Asia called Sardis. He said to them, "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy." Not that they feel to be worthy of themselves, but because of the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ they are worthy, for their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. Steadfastness in the apos-

tolic doctrine, and liberty wherewith we have been made free by the atoning blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is commendable and praiseworthy, while it seems to us that the spirit of exhortation, reproving and rebuking, with all long-suffering and doctrine, is also highly necessary for the health of the church. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." These are the words of Jesus after his resurrection, Matt. xxviii. 20. He was addressing his disciples, which is equally applicable to the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus through all time. Feeling as we do, that some need their pure mind stirred up by way of remembrance of their communion with the church at such times appointed for her to commune, this sacred ordinance should be observed by all who have a hope in the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross for their sins, and to fail to obey this solemn ordinance is failing to show his death till he come. A church, or individual member, that continues not to observe the Lord's supper is acting disorderly by not obeying this holy injunction given by Jesus Christ, the head of the body, which is the church. Paul in his address to the brethren at Corinth referred them to the communion with his disciples, "And when he [Jesus] had given thanks, he broke it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. * * * For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." The unworthiness of God's children, as they feel to be, is no evidence of their being unworthy. It is such as see not the body (church) redeemed by the blood of Christ that eat and drink unworthily. It is true that God's children feel their unworthiness to partake of this solemn ordinance, which causes them to examine themselves in regard to this matter. Did I not see her as one body separate from the world with all of its institutions when I went there for a home? I saw her in this light, then how dare I refuse this solemn ordinance given to the church to be observed by her? There is no doubt but what the child of God ponders this carefully, feeling it to be his or her duty to show his (Jesus) death till he come, for we see he took the cup and gave thanks, and gave to his disciples, saying, "Drink ye all of it: for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Then as dutiful children of the most high God and Father of us all, Jesus Christ being our Elder Brother, whose body was broken and whose blood was shed for us poor helpless sinners, what I say unto one I say unto all, let us be faithful in all things pertaining to the household of faith, and let us not absent ourselves from the communion table because of a feeling of unworthiness, for it is the better evidence of being worthy, showing a discernment of the Lord's body (church).

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Mod.
J. C. HAMMOND, Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

BROTHER W. M. Little having changed his address from Cedar Grove, Louisiana, to Fordyce, Arkansas, wishes his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at his home, Leesburg, Va., September 5th, 1925, William W. Engle and Mrs. Helen C. King, of Baltimore city, Maryland.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder F. Loden was born in Marion County, Alabama, December 12th, 1839, and died June 4th, 1921, in Van Zandt County Texas. At the age of twelve years the Lord visited him with his Holy Spirit, showed him his sins and gave him a good hope in Christ. He united with the church of the Primitive Baptist faith and order in November, 1851, and in 1874 he began to exercise his gift in the ministry far and near. He was strong in the faith and a staunch believer in the sovereignty of God, believing in the predestination of all things, salvation by grace, both in time and eternity, the final preservation of the saints and the resurrection of the vile bodies of the saints. He was ill for one month, and while his sufferings were great he never murmured, and was often heard to say, I want the Lord's will to be done. He leaves his wife, one brother and one sister to mourn, and I would say to them, Weep not, for he is not dead, but sleepeth, and may God give you grace that you may say, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

He was laid to rest at Grand Saline, Texas. The writer tried to speak words of comfort to a large concourse of relatives and friends, using for a text the words found in Esther iv. 16, 17.

Written by one who esteemed him highly for the truth's sake.

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

Sister **Mittie Davis Roberts** was born in Newton County Ga., Oct. 12th, 1847, died at Jackson, Butts County, Ga., Dec. 3rd, 1924, making her stay on earth 77 years, 1 month and 21 days. She joined the church at Holly Springs in the year 1880, and lived a consistent member until death. She was married to Mr. Lit Roberts (I have not the date of her marriage). They lived happily together until death separated them. He preceded her to the grave several years. Sister Roberts was a firm believer in the Old Baptist doctrine and a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. She was very spiritually-minded, always ready to converse on things pertaining to her faith. She lived with her father and mother until death separated them. She certainly was faithful in her devotion to them. She was also a fine business woman and very intelligent in matters pertaining to our government. We feel that a good woman has gone, but a great consolation it should be to us that her influence still lives. She was afflicted a great deal during the latter part of her life, that together with the distance she lived from her church kept her away from her meeting a great deal, but her faith remained strong. The unworthy writer has received many good letters from her of comfort and encouragement, always telling of her faith in the plan of salvation. She was a great help and comfort to her brothers and sisters in the flesh, all of whom were of the same faith, and they are the ones who will miss her the most, but they have the great consolation that she lived and died in the faith of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. She leaves one brother and two sisters to mourn her loss, to wit: brother A. H. S. Davis, of Jackson, Ga., sister Emma Davis Stevens, of Macon, Ga., and sister Cole Irby, of Atlanta, Ga. She is gone from earth and her works do follow her. Her spirit has gone to God who gave it, there to await the glorious time when all of his dear saints will awake in the likeness of the blessed Lord to praise him throughout an endless eternity.

Her body was consigned to the tomb near the old family home in Newton County, where her father, mother, brother and other relatives are buried. The unworthy writer tried to speak some words of comfort and consolation to the bereaved family and friends present. May the God of all grace bless this dispensation of his providence to our good, and may we ever have the sweet example that our dear sister Roberts left to encourage us on our way in this sinful world, is the prayer of the poor unworthy writer,

R. L. COOK.

Malinda Susannah Vandevender Tharp, daughter of Nimrod and Susannah Vandevender, was born October 22nd, 1861, departed this life August 11th, 1925, making her stay on earth 63 years, 9 months and 19 days. Her father, mother and three sisters preceded her to the great beyond. She was married to Caleb Tharp February 8th, 1880. To this union six children were born: Mrs. Lizzie Brittain, Miss Cora Tharp, John, Frank and Freddie Tharp, and Mrs. Margie Persell. Mother had been a continual sufferer for years, but bore her suffering with patience, and was kind and loving and easy to care for. All was done that could be for her relief, but the Lord saw fit to take her from us, and we have to be submissive to his will. She sweetly passed away in the triumph of a living faith. She received her hope in Jesus nearly thirty-eight years ago. She, with her husband, was baptized in the fellowship of the New Hope Church, near Spickard, Missouri, where she remained a member until death. She was baptized by her brother, Elder J. B. Vandevender. With the evidence we have of her hope we feel that she is now at rest in the paradise of God, nevermore to suffer the pains, trials and troubles of natural life, but to sing praises in the immediate presence of her Savior. She was a devoted wife, a dear, kind, loving mother and a good neighbor. We miss our mother, but feel our loss is her eternal gain. She leaves to mourn her departure her husband, six children, nine grandchildren, three brothers: Elder J. B. Vandevender, Philip Vandevender and William Vandevender, besides a host of other relatives and friends.

Funeral services were held at the North Evans

church-house by Elder W. T. Walters, of Stahl, Mo., and her body was laid to rest in the North Evans Cemetery to await the resurrection morn, when we hope to meet mother where there will be no more farewell tears.

Written by her daughter, and sister in hope of life beyond the grave,

CORA THARP.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. M. Perry, Ark., $1.00; J. N. Taylor, Ill., $1.00; Mrs. Hattie L. Walker, Va., $1.00; Mrs. Charles H. Glasscock, Va., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held this year with the Ebenezer Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 14th, 15th and 16th. The train arriving at Bluemont, which is the end of the Washington & Old Dominion Railway, at 4:50 Tuesday evening, October 13th, will be met. This train leaves the terminal at Rosslyn at 2:05. Those coming into Union Station, Washington, D. C., from the north or south, will take electric car in front of the station, marked "Rosslyn," and go to end of line, where the W. & O. D. terminal is located. No trains will be met Wednesday morning unless by special arrangement beforehand with the writer of this notice. We invite all brethren and ministers of our faith and order to meet with us.

EPPA NORMAN, Church Clerk.

ROUND HILL, Va.

The Salisbury Association is appointed to be held with the Indiantown Church, at Powellville, Wicomico Co., Md., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 21st, 22nd and 23rd, 1925. Those coming from the north take train leaving West Philadelphia at 10:01 a. m. Tuesday, and those from the south take train leaving Norfolk at 9:30 a. m., Tuesday. Get off the train at Salisbury, Md. If any one fails to meet those trains, and want to come on next train, take B. C. & A. train at Salisbury, Md., and get off at Willards, Md., and call for George W. Truitt. Those coming from Baltimore and Ocean City, get off at Willards. For other information write to George F. Adkins, Pittsville, Md. All brethren of our faith and order, especially ministering brethren, are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE F. ADKINS, Clerk.

The Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury will hold (the Lord willing) a two days' meeting at Halcottville, New York, the second Sunday and Saturday before in November (7th and 8th). All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 106 West 59th Street, Manhattan.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE of JOSHUA S. CORDER.

CONTENTS.

Picture of Elder Joshua S. Corder.
Chapter I.—Early Years, Christian Experience, &c.
Chapter II.—Church Division, Trials in Early Ministry, &c.
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Chapter IV.—Settling in Life, Teaching, &c.
Chapter V.—Trials During the Civil War.
Chapter VI.—Church Trouble, Associational, &c.
Chapter VII.—Doctrinal Views, Occurrences, &c.
Chapter VIII.—Boldness in the Faith.
Chapter IX.—Unspotted from the World, &c.
Chapter X.—Churches—Refreshing Seasons at Mt. Olive.
Chapter XI.—Some Extracts, Reminiscences, &c.
Chapter XII.—In Perils.
Chapter XIII.—Fell Asleep, A "Loved Disciple."
Chapter XIV.—Memorials, Poetry, Circular Letter, &c.

This little book of 152 pages was published by Elder Corder's daughter, sister Semma E. Corder, of Philippi, W. Va., and printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office several years ago, and we feel is a work that will be read with interest by any of the household of faith.

The book was originally sold for one dollar per copy, and was bound in cloth, but there were some printed sheets that were never bound, and these sister Corder has generously donated to help in publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so we have decided to bind them in paper covers and offer them to our readers as long as the supply lasts for the extremely low price of twenty-five cents per copy. If any who purchase this book feel they have not received full value they may return the book to us and we will refund the price paid for it.

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THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 93. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1925. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"CHANGE OF RAIMENT."

(ZECHARIAH III. 4.)

ADAM and Eve sinned, and the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. But they must be stripped of this fig leaf dress before the Lord clothed them with coats of skins which he made. (Gen. iii. 7–21.) Joshua, the high priest, representing Jerusalem, a brand plucked out of the fire, stood before the angel of the Lord clothed with filthy garments, and the Lord commands, "Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by." The prodigal son returns home in his defilement and rags; he is not fit to enter the house, or sit at the merry feast. But the father saith, "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry."—Luke xv. 22–24. This is putting the best robe upon the worst back. But how comely is the prodigal son clothed in the best robe. There he sits at the table beneath the smiles of his loving, pardoning father. So the believer in Christ is altogether loveliness, the perfection of beauty in his robe of imputed righteousness, and diadem of beauty, crowned with the loving-kindness of the Lord. And thy renown has gone forth for thy beauty, O believer, for it is perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God. (Ezek. xvi. 14.) How wonderful and precious is the language in Ezekiel xvi. 8–12: "Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine. Then washed I thee with water: yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee, and I anointed thee with oil. I clothed thee also with broid-

ered work, and shod thee with badgers' skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk. I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck. And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head." But before a vile transgressor comes unto this blessedness by faith in the Lord our righteousness we have to be stripped of all self-made apparel. It is bitter and humiliating that "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags," and though the sinner patch and mend, and try to cleanse his garments, they remain to his dismay and shame nothing but filthy rags, and filthy rags of self-righteousness can never be worn in the palace of the great King. We cannot be wearing our self-righteousness and Christ's imputed righteousness at the same time. What! unite our filthy rags with the spotless, lovely, fragrant, everlasting righteousness of the Lord our Redeemer? No, we must have these filthy rags torn off our backs, and then

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress,
Helpless, look to thee for grace,
Black, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Savior, or I die."

Christ Jesus in his obedience and blood is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. His righteousness is unto and upon all that believe. He of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption, that according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For he was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. We are accepted in the Beloved, and are beautiful and glorious in the eyes of the Lord. This is the fine linen, clean and white, the wedding garments of the Lamb's wife. (Rev. xix. 7, 8.) Her raiment is of needlework, her clothing wrought gold, (Psalms xlv. 13, 14), all of it the work of the hands of our Lord Jesus Christ, the covenant head and husband of the church. All our weavings are spiders' webs, but they shall not become garments, we cannot cover ourselves with our works before our God. (Isaiah lxix.) But, blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are covered. (Rom. iv. 7.)

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
'Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

A sinner thus arrayed is pardoned, and justified, and in this blessedness can sing, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."—Isaiah lxi. 10.

Take a glimpse again with me at the prodigal son. See him in his wretchedness in the far-off country; a mighty famine is in the land, and he is in want. All his substance he has spent in riotous living, and he would be willing to fill his belly with the husks that the swine were eating. But no one cared for him, no man gave unto him. The swine fared better than the prodigal son. See him again welcomed with kisses, and in his father's house he banquets with his father, and all the guests delight themselves upon the very best the house affords, and he, clothed in the best robe, eats the feast beneath the loving countenance of his father. All is happiness now, and in his heart he can say, O, my father, thy banner over me is love. What better food is there for a hungry, perish-

ing sinner than Christ crucified? "Even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." —1 Cor. v. 7. Let us keep the feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. On his hand is the ring, and this tells him he is not in the house as a slave, or as a hired servant, but he is free, welcome, a child at home; and it signifies that God our heavenly Father's love is unchanging, everlasting love. And shoes on his feet. These shoes make beautiful even a prodigal, vile, gone astray sinner. The feet and footsteps of that son going astray into a far country were not beautiful. But he has been brought back, and blessed, and beautiful are the feet that are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. In such shoes we can stand before God, and in such shoes we shall never go astray from the path of life, but we shall walk in love, in the footsteps of the flock, as the dear children of God. Oh, there is no satisfaction for contrite souls, for humble, repentant, returning sinners but in Jesus Christ. He changes our estate, give us "a change of raiment." He puts off our sackcloth, and clothes us with gladness. He gives beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Christ is our only storehouse of all good; his fullness is unto all believers the fountain of living waters. Oh the love, mercy and grace of God, our precious Savior is the fountain. He liveth in me, saith Paul. (Gal. ii. 20.) There is no want in our heavenly Father's house, there is bread enough and to spare, and our Father's love, and kisses, and forgivenesses are the sweetest part of all our feastings, they season and sweeten all things.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, North Corolina.

RANDOLPH, Maine, Aug. 12, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find a letter rich in experience, written by a brother in Georgia. I feel it is a wonderful manifestation of the almighty power of our God, and would be glad to have it appear in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Yours in love,

NELLIE M. PALMER.

COLBERT, Ga., Oct. 30, 1923.

DEAR SISTER PALMER:—When I read your experience in the SIGNS I felt much impressed to write some of my experience to you, but felt so insufficient for such a task that I have put it off until now, and I know if I write to you I shall be ashamed of what I have written. I was born April 25th, 1850, and the greatest trouble I remember having in my childhood was a fear that the bad man (the devil) would get me. Preaching was all alike to me until, I think it was the third Sunday in August, 1866, as I walked along a private road alone I was quiet and easy (the strong man armed was keeping his palace, &c.), but all at once there was an irresistible power took hold of me and I felt an empty miserableness in my bosom that I cannot express. It was a bright sunny evening, but to me the sun shone dimly and the wayside seemed somewhat darkened, and for the first time in my life I felt the need of prayer. I left the road and hid myself in the thicket, got down on my knees, with my hands and face on the ground, to try and pray to God for mercy. I do not know that I uttered a word, but I do know that I felt the need of prayer. My burden was gone. I would look back to that time and place many times and wonder what it meant, but never thought of such a thing as it being a spiritual birth,

but after that I found myself fearing God in place of the devil, and the Old School Baptist preaching was very interesting to me. I would go and hear them preach and my uncontrollable tears would betray me. The brethren would ask me for my experience, and I would honestly tell them that I had none. I greatly desired a home with them, but saw no way of getting it. So time passed on until the fourth Sunday in August, 1877. I went to the Morich Church, which was close to my home, and after preaching went in the house and seated myself to witness the communion and feet washing, but soon found I could not contain myself, so left the house, promising myself I would go there no more if I could do no better than that. But the Lord works in a mysterious way his wonders to perform, and a few days before their October meeting, at the same place, my good wife told me she had to go and offer herself to them, and wanted me to go with her, but I told her I could not for I had nothing to go with, which gave me great trouble, and the nearer the dreaded day came the heavier my burden got. Friday evening she requested me to go and let my mother (who was a member of same church and lived at some distance) know what she was going to do. I went, and stayed all night to bring my mother back to the meeting, but did not tell my business until all but mother and me had retired, and when I told her she said, Well, bless the Lord, and are you not going with her? I answered, No, I cannot go, and retired, desiring not to sleep, but to spend the night in prayer for some evidence of a hope, if indeed I had one. I finally went to sleep and awoke with my trouble getting heavier and heavier, until just before dawn, as I lay on my back with my hands folded across my breast praying for mercy, a beautiful light seemed to come down through the ceiling, centered on and fluttered over me, like unto the quivering of a bird's wings when she feeds her young (the old eagle stirreth up her nest and fluttereth over her young). This I thought was a revelation of a hope I had had then over eleven years and could not realize it as a hope. Then I saw myself, as it were, in two distinct bodies, or persons, one lay at the feet of the one the light had shined upon; it did not seem to be corporeally dead, but it knew no more of this light than a stick or a stone (the old and the new man, the stronger had come and bound him and spoiled his goods). I tried to raise my body while this light was fluttering over me, but I lay perfectly helpless, except that I clapped my hands together in praise to God. I felt sure it was the power and love of God, and was the revelation of a hope that I had not been able to realize as a hope then over eleven years, which had been years of great worry and uneasiness to me. Then I saw, as it were, other lights, or appearance of them, off from me in the dark. I tried to look after them, but my eyes (spiritual eyes) were closed to them, I was forbidden to look after them. This, I think, was other so-called churches, to which some of my friends had been directing me, and about which I had been troubled. Then I was enabled to raise my body and I beheld myself clothed in old, filthy, tattered garments (man's righteousness is as filthy rags). This gave me such great trouble that I gave myself up to fall, or go down, but I thought in falling I would disturb my father's family which was quietly sleeping. This I think, was a fear I had had that if the church would have me I would cause them trouble; but fall or go down I must. I think this was giving up the

world for the church. In place off alling I was lightly caught up by some sweet serene power, and then came to myself. I do not believe I had been asleep, but my natural mind had been dormant for the time. I then thought I had to go to the church and tell them what great things the Lord had done for me. I went that day, and my good wife with me. Their pastor was not there, and the old brother (deacon) who acted as moderator said he had not been at a better meeting in six months, which sounded very strange to me, for we had just gone through the Oconee Association, where there had been an abundance of good preaching; but I can witness with him now, for to hear one tell of the dealings of the Lord with them is the loudest preaching I ever hear. We were baptized the fourth Sunday in November by Elder William D. Chandler, their pastor. Since that time I have been a poor, hobbling, halting, doubting sinner, saved by grace if saved at all.

Now I feel to say, my dear sister and schoolmate, though we never have nor ever will meet in the flesh, please pardon me for this scribbling to you, for the only object I have in it is to try and honor my heavenly Master, who executes his own will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

Dear sister, after reading this over I am at a great loss as to whether or not to send it, seeing that I have written the same things twice and left out some of the best, but when I tell you how I have been laboring for a family that started with two fifty-three years ago and now numbers about eighty all told, and that I was with Elder L. M. Chandler in the auto wreck that caused his death in 1918, after which I suffered a partial stroke of paralysis, and either a broken or clogged blood vessel in the head and lay as helpless and senseless as a block of wood for two weeks, and four doctors and a trained nurse said I was obliged to die, but if I lived I never would have my mind, maybe you will wonder how I have done as well as I have. I could write many more ways I have been miraculously delivered from trouble. I have much to praise and thank the good Lord for his goodness to me a poor old sinner.

This is now July 15th, 1925, and I am sending this regardless of my consent. I am now 75 years old and am waiting on my second wife with a second stroke of paralysis, but I feel to say with Job, Though the Lord slay me yet will I trust him. To whom else can I go? Now this is just for you. I felt that I owed it to you.

Yours in hope of a better life in the great beyond,

GEORGE T. WHITWORTH.

EL PASO, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find money order to renew my subscription and to pay for one new subscriber. Now if the Lord gives me light and understanding I will write a few lines in expressing my appreciation of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which is of much comfort to me, and I hope the Lord will still enable the editors and all others who write for it to continue comforting his dear, lonely and scattered people. I think the SIGNS is one of God's great blessings to his people, as there are so many of them who do not have the privilege of hearing preaching, and to those the SIGNS is received as a feast of good things from the Lord. Some might say we have no excuse for not hearing the gospel, for the gospel is preached near our door in every city in this country, but I have been here in this city for over five years, and

have visited several different denominations, and if they preach the gospel and doctrine of Christ my eyes are blind to it, my hearing is closed to it and my understanding is darkened that I cannot understand it. I have been blessed and comforted in hearing the gospel preached three times here in this city since I have been here, by three visiting brethren from different parts of the country, and two of them I had never met, but we were brought together through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have received many good and comforting letters in answer to the poor letters I have written for the SIGNS, and now, my dear brethren (if I am worthy to address you as such), the thought occurs to me, Am I writing this letter through a selfish motive? Am I writing it that I might receive a letter of comfort to myself from some one who is gifted in writing of God's wonderful love and mercies to us? or am I trying to write a word of comfort to some lonely downcast sinner as I feel to be? for most of the time I am in doubt and fears and have many sorrows and trials, and am left so lonely since it has pleased the good Lord of love and mercy to call my dear wife from this world of sin and sorrow, and yet while she has gone from me and I am left here in sorrow and loneliness, the Lord has wonderfully blessed me with a hope that she is now asleep in Jesus, and will never again awake to suffer in this world of sin, sorrow and pain, as she died in hope of the glorious resurrection at the second coming of her Lord. Oh what a comfort this is to me. Sometimes I am made to hope I can say as the apostle Paul when he said, For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. We have much suffering, sorrow, doubts and fears, persecutions and afflictions, but in all these things Paul said, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God," so if I love the Lord then all those will work for good to me, though I am so prone to sin and to wander away from God and from all that is good that I am made to wonder and say, Do I love the Lord? Am I willing to submit to the will of the Lord? and can I say of truth, Thy will, not mine, be done? I view myself in sin and so much after the things of this world, then I consider the great God of all power, and think of his love and mercy to me, a poor sinner, one who has never done good, one who is justly condemned before God, being without strength or power to save myself, and here is where my hope comes in (if I have a hope). Paul in writing to the Romans said, "For when we were yet without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly." If Christ died for us before we had strength, then salvation must be by grace and not of works, for one without strength cannot do any work. Another proof that salvation is by grace is where Christ said, Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child he shall not enter therein. We know that a little child is without strength, and must perish if left to its own strength, so we, being as little children, cannot do anything to save ourselves, and then we see God in his love and mercy to us in giving us a hope of eternal life through his purpose and grace, which he foreordained and purposed in himself before the world was and before we had done good or evil. When I think on these things, and think of my helpless and sinful condition, I can only say, God be merciful to me a sinner, and am made to say that my help cometh from the Lord who made heaven and

earth and all things that are therein. This is the God that found Jacob, who is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness, and led him about and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of his eye. Was Jacob in this desert land seeking the Lord? No, but in all his wanderings wherever he went and whatever he did the eye and loving care of the Lord was ever with him, and so the love and care of the Lord is always with his people, and will be with them unto death, and it does not stop there, for Jesus told his disciples, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." This love of God to us, which is from before the world was, will keep us and lead and guide us into that eternal home beyond this world of sin and sorrow. Is this for works of righteousness that we have done? No, it is by the foreknowledge, love and mercy of God, who chose us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself according to the good pleasure of his will. What a precious thought this is to me, for it gives me a little hope of salvation; but if salvation were of work, then I would have no hope; but now, while I feel to be so sinful and so unworthy of the love and mercy of God, sometimes I am made to feel that God's love and mercy has reached me in giving me light and understanding of my sinful and lost condition, and then giving me a view of Jesus on the cross as my only Savior, and the only Savior of all who have or ever will be saved, to whom belongs all praise, honor and power.

Well, I have already made my letter too long, so I must bring it to a close. If this poor letter does appear in the dear old SIGNS and any of the dear readers care to write to me my address is 3115 Sacramento St., El Paso, Texas. If any dear Old Baptists pass this way I would be glad to receive them in my humble home, as I am always glad to meet any of God's people. I hope the Lord will still bless the editors and publishers, and all who write for the SIGNS, to still comfort God's people, and give God all the glory.

A sinner in hope of mercy,

C. M. ADAMS.

MACOMB, Okla., July 18, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been impressed to write my experience in my travel from nature to grace and have it published in the SIGNS. As some of my friends have desired to know of my experience I will now try, by the help of God, to tell something of it.

Many years ago I was made to see myself as the worst sinner that ever lived, and for several months was burdened with my mountain of sin. I felt God had forsaken me, and that I had not a friend in the world. I had lost all confidence in self and all hope of human help. I tried to pray, but all I could say was, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. I went to the Bible to see if I could find comfort, and opened at the fourteenth chapter of John, and there read, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." In a moment it seemed my burden was gone and I was made to rejoice in the Savior's love. I felt I could call him Savior and could praise his holy name for his love and mercy to me, a poor sinner. That chapter has always been sweet to me, and when I hear it read my mind goes back to the place where I first saw

the light and could praise God for his grace given me. May I ever be able to praise his blessed name. I was brought up in the Methodist faith, my father being a preacher of that denomination, but I never could believe the doctrine. I was not permitted to hear the Old Baptists preach, although there was a church near by. It was considered then, as it is now, a dangeous doctrine for children to hear, and it is, when God gives them a hearing ear and a heart to understand. I had a desire to follow Christ in baptism and joined the Missionaries and lived with them for some time. In that time I was permitted to hear the Old School Predestinarian Baptists preach from time to time, and loved to hear them. I believed they preached the truth, and wished I was able to understand such doctrine. I then went to Muskogee, Oklahoma, to live and there found a church that claimed to be Primitive Baptists. Not knowing there was any difference in the Primitive Baptists, I joined them, but soon found they did not preach like the Old School Predestinarian Baptists. I became very much discouraged, for I was seeking the truth and trying to find the true church. I believe many of God's children held captive in Babylon have never found rest or peace of mind until in the providence of God their faith led them to where they found God's people. I have a sweet hope that six years ago this summer God revealed his true church to me in a dream. I dreamed I saw a bright vessel descending from heaven and coming toward me and the closer it came the brighter it grew. I could not look at it, and fell down on my face, and said, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. I awoke and slept no more that night. It was on my mind all the time as to what the interpretation could be. That was two weeks before the Old School Baptists held their assotion at Shiloh Church, some ten or twelve miles from where I lived. I much desired to attend that association, and said to my daughter that I should be very glad if I could. She said, Well, if you want to go we will provide some way for you, which they did. I went, and enjoyed the association. I believe God gave me an ear to hear and a heart to understand what I heard preached. It was two years before I offered myself to the church, for I did not feel fit to ask a home with such good people. Four years ago I went to Burk Springs on a visit, and while there joined Liberty Church, and was baptized by Elder Skinner, the pastor. My membership is now with Shiloh Church, Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma. Elder W. P. Snyder is our pastor. I am now seventy-five years of age, and it is a comfort to me to have hope that God has revealed to me his true church, and it is a sweet comfort to me in my lonely hours to know that I have a home with those who believe in salvation by grace and not by works, though I feel to be the least of all, if one at all, and not worthy of such a blessing. I love the Primitive Baptists with a different love than I have for others, and I hope it is the love of God in my heart that makes me love them. I love to read the SIGNS, but am not a subscriber, as I am not financially able to take it, but sister Colloway takes it and she sends it to me to read, for which I am thankful, for I love the doctrine it teaches.

If there is anything in my experience that is of comfort to any let the Lord be praised. Pray for me, for I feel the need of the prayers of all God's saints.

Your sister, in hope of mercy,

M. E. HARRIS.

OTTAWA, Kansas, Oct. 16, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Since returning from the two associations I was privileged to attend in September and October it has been on my mind continually to say a word to you in honor of this great and wonderful God who inhabits eternity, who condescends to commune with us poor trembling sinners here below when we are gathered together in his name, as I had shown to me when we were all assembled with one accord in adoration and praise to his most holy name at the little association at Topeka, Kansas, which that dear old saint, brother Records, wrote you about in the October SIGNS. We were all for the time carried away from the things of this earth. The Elders, as the beloved apostle Paul, were determined, or desirous, of knowing nothing among us save Christ, and him crucified. While feasting upon this spiritual food handed out through these God-taught, God-fearing men I was made to rejoice that God had led me in the very way that seemed good in his sight, though when passing through the deep waters I thought they would surely overflow me, but here now was his promise verified that he had given me away back in nineteen hundred and ten: I will be with thee thy troubles to bless, and sanctify to thee thy deepest distress. I listened to dear Elder J. R. Hardy preach from the words found in the fourth chapter of Romans: "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." He read the whole chapter, but this was his text. Had I not given me those very words in reproof; yes, the whole book of Romans, also the third chapter of Galatians to the end of that book, when I was trying to work myself into his favor so as to receive the blessings promised in Christ Jesus? Now while listening to this dear servant of God whom I had never seen before, and had not yet spoken one word to, telling me all the way I had been led, my cup indeed ran over, and right there in my heart I thanked the dear Lord for every trial, every heartache, every sorrow, every conflict I had been made to pass through. Absolutely made, for it was not a path I would have chosen. Indeed, could I have seen the way I would have to go I would have said, I cannot bear it; I cannot endure it. Sometimes in the midst of my trials I would exclaim, Wilt thou pursue thy worm to death? Again, I would be saying, Though he slay me yet will I trust in him. I could not then see the wisdom in all these distresses. I thought they were all against me. Like Job again, though I would wash me in snow water and make myself ever so clean he would plunge me in the ditch and my own clothes would abhor me. In all those thirty years in the wilderness I never doubted the power, wisdom and righteousness of God. I never questioned his right to do his will in heaven and in earth, but I was trying to keep my heart with all diligence. I thought by so doing I would deserve and receive the blessings belonging to this time world, though again and again he would show me that this was not the way. It took a long time to bring me to the place where I desired to be still and know that he is God. I desire now to be reconciled to his will in all things. I used to think all my sincere fervent prayers to God would be answered. No, no, it cannot be so, for we know not what to pray for as we ought. We must trust to him for our eternal salvation, so let us trust him for

all things here below. He knows what we have need of before we ask him. In life, in death, dear Savior, abide with me. Many Old Baptists think they must make excuses for God. They claim we who believe in him so implicitly make him the author of sin. His answer to Job has ever settled the question in my mind: "Where was thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth as if it had issued out of the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it, and brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed? * * * Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death? Hast thou perceived the breath of the earth? declare, if thou knowest it all." "Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it. Then Job answered the Lord, and said, Behold, I am vile: what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth." Some tell us God made Adam able to stand and liable to fall. That he fell we are not left in doubt, and why he could not get back we are plainly told, for God placed a flaming sword that turned every way to keep the tree of life. Think, dear friends, how dreadful the fall. The first fruit of his body, Cain, slew his brother because God rejected his offering and accepted Abel's. Adam's first born denied God the right to do as he pleased. God does not tell us that he made Adam strong, but he does say of Jesus, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law." The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honorable." "Fear not; for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him." This alone should put every tongue to silence, but the Bible is full of such declarations. I have heard so much of conditional salvation in the past year, and so little of God's absolute sovereignty, I feel sick at heart. Peter's case should forever settle the futility of boasting in our own strength. Jesus said, "Simon, Simon; behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Peter then said, "Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death." Jesus said, "I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me." He did not say to Peter, You may deny me this day, but, You shall do it thrice before the cock crow. All Bible readers know how he denied him with cursing. One look from Jesus humbled him to bitter tears. At the association at Grain Valley, Missouri, also at Topeka, Kansas, I met many dear brethren and sisters who are strong in the faith of God's elect

and the faith once delivered unto the saints. I felt to love them all for the truth's sake. You could see the shining in their dear faces. They were all very kind to me, many of them mentioning knowing me through my letters in the SIGNS. The SIGNS is the only paper I take, and I would certainly be heart-broken to have to give it up. May the dear Lord bless all who are connected with it.

Do with this letter as you think best. I could not rest day or night until I attempted to write it.

From a sinner saved wholly by grace in time and eternity,

ANNA McKINNEY.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Della Powers.)

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists, convened with Big Walnut Creek Church, at Topeka, Kansas, September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1925, to the churches composing her body, and to the saints scattered abroad sendeth christian salutation and love.

DEAR BRETHREN IN HOPE:—With a feeling of helplessness, and depending entirely upon the strength of Israel's King, this attempt is made to perform the duty appointed at our last session. No subject has been give us to write upon except the old tried and true doctrine of predestination. Perhaps the most of us know the utter futility of trying to put aside what we hope the Lord gives us, and trying to invent something of our own. So as predestination is the basis of all our belief, and the discerning eye can see it taught from beginning to end of the testimony left on record for our learning, and without it no other point of doctrine could stand, so we wish to present a few texts in substantiation of it that cannot be gainsaid. He bids us remember the former things of old. One of the oldest is the declaration that, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Her seed was Christ, and his heel represents his body, the afterpart that follows the Head, and as the members of his body always have and always will feel the bruising of the tempter, our experience turns to us for a testimony, causing our minds often to revert to the former things of old, and we rejoice that he is God, "the blessed and only Potentate," and there is none like him. There is no power but of him. "I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." How soul-cheering it is that his pleasure is in all this. He furthermore says, "I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people," and as long as his people are "fenced by Jehovah's shalls and wills, firm as the everlasting hills," we know that they are safe, for, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged." "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." "For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us." The gates of hell shall not prevail against him, for "he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Dear brethren, there is no god like our God. "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excel-

lency in the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from thee; and shall say, Destroy them. Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places." There are no "ifs" or "maybes" in these firm declarations, and how encouraging to the afflicted and poor people who shall call upon the name of the Lord, for we see verified the truth of another declaration which is also from the beginning, that they "that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." But he tells us to "be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the Lord thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." Precious indeed is the sweet abiding faith in these promises. So, dear people of God, why should we fear what man can do, for having predestinated us unto the adoption of children, none shall be able to pluck us out of his hand. "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Then let us praise God for his mercy, for it is everlasting. Whom he loves he never leaves; and having loved his own he loves them to the end. He hath loved them with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness hath he drawn them. In this testimony can we not in our mind's eye view the consummation of all our hopes? Does it not portray the joy that awaits the faithful in Christ Jesus? "Behold I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Yes, "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Now, dear brethren, may God in his mercy keep us from falling, and feed our souls upon the riches of his grace while we sojourn here, and eventually receive us unto himself in glory for Jesus' sake.

L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator.
MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER R. Lester Dodson having changed his address to 12 Addison Ave., Rutherford, N. J., requests his correspondents to be sure and use the street address when sending mail to him, as the Post Office Department there objects to his mail being addressed only to Rutherford, N. J.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in November (29th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1925.

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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ASSOCIATIONS.

WE have been urged to write something on the subject of "associations," but have hesitated because the subject is somewhat hackneyed, having been treated upon so much, not only in the columns of the SIGNS, but in other Old Baptist papers. We know that we shall very likely cover ground already covered by others, and simply repeat many things which have been before written on this matter, but perhaps it may do no harm to have our minds stirred up to remember things which we are liable to forget. In the first place, what is meant by an "association?" It is simply what the name implies, and nothing more: an associating together of brethren and churches of the same faith and order who are in love and fellowship with each other, for the purpose of mutually comforting and edifying one another in the things which make for peace and unity among the people of God. An association is in no sense regulatory of the affairs of the churches composing it, but has a perfect and inalienable right to jurisdiction over its own affairs, including the election of its own officers and the adoption of its own rules governing its meetings and deliberations. An association has a perfect right to decide a church into its membership upon that church petitioning the association to allow it to come within its bounds; an association has a perfect right to refuse to receive a church into its membership if it so sees fit, and for any reason which may seem right to the association itself. An association also has a right to drop from its membership any church which it deems not feasible to retain within it, but it has no right to enter into the affairs of that church and to endeavor to straighten up its affairs to suit the judgment of the association. After an association has decided to drop a church from its membership, that church is then left to settle its own affairs, unless that church of its own motion should desire to seek the counsel and help of her sister churches. It would seem to us that if that church is in its right mind it would certainly want to seek the advice of sister churches of its own faith and order, inasmuch as none of us can live to ourselves nor die to ourselves; but if such church should stand aloof from all her sister churches, there would be no way by which the association or the other churches could force their judgment upon it, and to seek to do so would be wrong. However, in this case the association itself, or any and all of the churches, would have a perfect right to resolve to have nothing to do with such holding itself aloof from all the others. If any church in the membership of an association should see fit to withdraw from such association, she could do so upon asking the association to release her and stating her reasons for desiring to be thus released from the association. No church should ever be held inside an association against its will, nor in violation of the wishes of that church desiring to with-

draw. But the association has a perfect right to insist that the individual church make known its reason for withdrawing, in order that the association may ascertain whether those reasons are prejudicial to christian love and fellowship or antagonistic to gospel order and practice. Some good brethren object to associations on account of the transaction of business connected with them. They would not object to the churches coming together for worship and for the preaching of the gospel, if only the business part of the meeting might be omitted. We could ourselves almost wish that business might be left out, but how to leave out of our lives and out of our meetings the entire consideration of business, we have never found out. As long as we are here in this world, the churches will always have to attend to business to some extent, and if this business is attended to carefully, and in decency and order, it can be soon disposed of, and the other and better part of the meeting proceed forwith. Business well done needs not to be done over again; but when it is incorrectly done, it gives rise to more and more business further on. Just what does this business amount to? What is there about it which makes it so objectionable in the minds of some good brethren? It first consists of the choosing of a moderator and clerk of the meeting. Then follows the reading of letters from the churches composing the association, which letters are to apprise the association of the condition of the several churches and to record the membership of those churches. After this, there generally comes up the receiving of messengers and members from other associations and meetings with which the association is in fellowship and correspondence. This is about all of the business except the preparation of a Circular Letter representative of the doctrinal position of the association, with maybe the preparation also of what is called a Corresponding Letter, and the receiving of contributions from the several churches composing the association for the purpose of defraying the expenses of the association and of the ministers attending it. Now, what there can possibly be wrong with these matters of business, such as they are, we have never been able to see. Is it wrong for God's people individually to write letters to each other? Surely not. Is it wrong then, for churches to write letters to their sister churches? The purpose of an association is to meet together and to hear from one another concerning the state of the churches in different parts of the country. It is a medium of correspondence between the Lord's people, and it is not intended that the association shall exercise lordship over the churches and members composing it. It is a body wherein all the members move willingly and freely together without friction, or irksomeness, a meeting wherein there is no bondage, but a joying in one another's fellowship and love. When asked for our biblical authority in support of associations, we say that all the authority we need is given in the epistle to the Hebrews where we are commanded to forsake not the assembling of ourselves together. It is just as wrong for the churches of the saints to refuse to meet one with the other as it is wrong for the individual members to refuse to meet with their home church. If it is right for believers to meet with believers for the worship of God and for mutual edification and instruction, it is just as right for churches to meet with churches for the same purpose. In the days of the apostles the churches heard from one another, both

by letters and by messengers, as any reader of the New Testament can plainly see if he takes the pains to hunt up the record and examine it. But some say the word "association" was not used. Perhaps not, but what does the name amount to? What matter whether we call it an "association," a corresponding meeting, or by some other name, so long as the substance of the matter is what we want? The New Testament clearly establishes the fact that in the days of the early church those churches did not hold aloof from one another, but did seek one another's companionship, and did communicate with one another by means of messengers and letters. An association today seeks to do the same, nothing more nor less. The objection has been made against associations on the ground that there have been instances where associations have sought to regulate the affairs of the individual churches composing them. There may have been such cases, we do not know. But if there have been, shall we discard the whole matter because some one somewhere has abused the order of an association to override some church or churches in order to impose thereon their individual will? Shall we cast away both the good with the evil? Would it not be better to discard the evil or wrong practice and purge ourselves from it, rather than reject the whole matter of associations entirely? Because a certain privilege or blessing has been abused, is that any reason why that privilege and blessing should be taken away from those who have not abused it? There is no argument against an association but what can be used with equal effect against any other meeting of church or churches. If it is possible for an association to tyrannize over the churches composing it, it is just as possible for an invidual church in its church-meetings to resort to a party spirit and override the judgment of its more spiritual members. Shall we say therefore that such a church ought never to hold meetings? If no meetings are held, then how can there be any laboring together for the maintenance of peace and unity? If it be said there is no scriptural authority for associations, and none for the business part of them especially, please tell us what scriptural authority there is for holding meetings on Sunday instead of on Wednesday or Thursday or some other day, when as a matter of fact we do hold meetings on Sunday more than on any other day? What authority is there for opening a meeting with prayer and closing it with a benediction, which is the custom in nearly all our churches? What authority is there for the preacher's taking a text and preaching from it, yet nearly all our preachers do it? Philip confined himself to a text when preaching to the eunuch, but where have we in all the New Testament another instance like that? There is such a thing as trying to be so straight that we lean backward. Those who argue against associations, we notice generally like to attend them; and if they say we have no Bible for them, we wonder if these opposers have Bible authority for everything they do. Now, if there is an Old Baptist church anywhere that prefers not to belong to an association, they have a perfect right to exercise that preference and stay out of them, but they should not seek to molest those who do believe in and who want to belong to an association. Let every man be fully per-

suaded in his own mind. Those who do not regard associations, to the Lord they do not regard them; those who do regard associations, to the Lord they regard them. Here the matter should end, and no one should seek to persecute another because they do not see alike on this matter of associations. More tolerance and charity toward one another are what we need, and less fierceness of debate and recrimination. In closing this subject, let us ask if the Lord has ever blessed our meeting together in associations. If he has never done so, if he has withheld his Spirit from us at such times, then associations must be wrong. On the other hand, those who have for many years attended associational meetings will agree with us that some of the ablest and most wonderful preaching they have ever heard has been at associations. At these meetings many of us have been blessed with the hearing ear and understanding heart. How could such preaching, such hearing and such comfort abound if the Holy Spirit were not with us in these meetings? Does any one suppose for one moment that the Lord should continue to bless us with the unction of his Spirit in these meetings if we were continuing in a practice wholly wrong and directly opposite to what his word commands? The fact that the Lord has from time to time deigned to bless our associational meetings with good preaching, has comforted our hearts at such times with divinely sent messages, should silence the objectors once for all. If the high God himself condescends to meet with us at such times, what are we poor puny mortals that we should withhold our feeble preferences from such meetings?

L.

PSALMS LXXXIX. 15.

"BLESSED is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance."

The people spoken of in our text are God's chosen people which he hath formed for himself and of whom he hath declared, "They shall shew forth my praise." They were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world and grace was given them in Christ before the world was. They were lost and ruined by the fall, every one without exception is a sinner, and it is by the grace of God that they know they are sinners. By nature they are no better than others, and no power on earth can teach them the truth or point out to them their lost condition, for it is God's purpose that they shall be taught of the Lord. True, they can be told they are sinners, but it is the Spirit that convinces of sin, and through the Spirit's teaching they know they are sinners. They may be morally upright before men, yet the thoughts and intents of their heart are exposed before Him with whom they have to do. So thorough is the Spirit's teaching that they learn that he that hateth his brother is a murderer, and he that looketh upon a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery already in his heart. Such teaching causes their comeliness to turn into corruption, and they find in their sorrow that it is not what they do, but what they are. Because of their lost condition they mourn, weep and travail in bitterness of soul. Such feel as their elder brother, the Lord Jesus, did, that there is no sorrow like their sorrow. The sorrows of death compassed them and the pains of hell gat hold upon them, they found trouble and sorrow. Much of the time while under this travail they call upon the name of the Lord, and, like Esau, who

represents the flesh, they seem to be rejected, for when he would have inherited the blessing he was rejected, "for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." Thus they find the natural man knoweth not the things of the Spirit; that the flesh is flesh, and ever remains so, and they can say that in them (that is, in their flesh) dwells no good thing. "The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." Now as Esau represents the flesh, which is under the curse, so Jacob represents the new man, who has obtained the blessing. This new man is created after God in righteousness and true holiness, and John declares, "Whoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." These Scriptures of divine truth are often a distress to God's people, seeing that they feel so sinful and vile, and it seems to them impossible to reconcile what they feel within with such truth. In birth Jacob's hand took hold on Esau's heel, which to our understanding represents the new man taking hold of the past life of the old man, the flesh. It is his sore spot, for Satan was to bruise the seed's heel, and wherever there is a bruise there is a sore place. Thus the new man hates Esau; that is, he hates the old man and flees from Esau, and it is when night overtakes him that the way from earth to heaven is revealed.

Coming back to this people who are truly a blessed people. Being so sin-burdened and destitute they travel in a solitary way, yet they find much in God's word to comfort them. Job is their companion and they travel much with him. Like Job, they cannot find their God, and like Mephibosheth, they are lame on both feet. There is comfort to them in the mention of Rahab, and they are thankful that God has left on record for their comfort not only the case of the publican, but also the thief on the cross. It is the consciousness of sin that causes a separation between this people and the world, religious and profane. The Lord teaches all such that "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." In such teaching there is nothing pleasing to the flesh; in fact, it is very painful to learn that in the flesh there dwells no good thing, that all the good works the flesh can produce, which is called self-righteousness, are as filthy rags. Unless this were taught them they could not possibly know the joyful sound. Thus they are not blessed in themselves, but in the Spirit's work in them, for

> "A sinner is a sacred thing,
> The Holy Ghost has made him so."

They are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, for it is of his people that David speaks when he describes the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity." Upon this blessed people is poured the spirit of grace and supplication. Thus it is the display of divine grace that brought the publican to smite upon his breast, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner," that led the thief to supplicate the Lord to remember him, and that enabled Peter to cry, Lord, save me. Yes, they cannot help but supplicate, and they are blessed in their supplications. This is their life, their very breath, and they learn to their comfort that the Spirit helpeth their infirmities, for they know not what they should pray for as they ought, but the Spirit itself

maketh intercession for them with groanings which cannot be uttered. All such learn that vain is the help of man, so that what man can do or does do is not a joyful sound to them, neither is the curse of a broken law joyful to them, but the revelation of Jesus Christ. His name and his voice is a joyful sound. We have before said that they were not blessed in themselves, but they are blessed in Christ their covenant head. The trumpet of jubilee was a joyful sound to the captives of old, and the "great trumpet," the gospel trumpet, is a joyful sound to the poor sinners to-day. If there be an uncertain sound it cannot be a joyful sound to those who hear it. Therefore to be joyful news it must declare a full and free salvation to his people. Jesus was anointed to preach good tidings unto the meek, he was sent to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, to comfort all who mourn, to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Now this people are not blessed only in hearing the joyful sound, but in the knowing of it. Many in the valley may hear the dinner-bell rung to call the laborers to dinner, but what does it avail them if they are not among those for whom the dinner is prepared? To the outsider it is but an empty noise, but to those of the household it is a joyful sound, for they know the message it brings. Thus the preaching of the gospel is not to tell something they do not know, but rather it confirms them in what they already know. How do they know? By divine revelation; by the Holy Ghost shedding abroad the love of God in their hearts; by Jesus Christ speaking to them with peace and pardon. In the Psalm from which our text is taken a greater than David is there speaking in and through David. It is Jesus in Spirit, and he declares, "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations." Thus the dear Redeemer joys over his people with singing. He ever liveth and with his mouth he declares God's faithfulness to all generations. To this people a word from his mouth fills them with joy unspeakable. He is the messenger of the covenant containing the sure mercies of David. They know his voice by the effect it produces. To a bride there is no voice like the voice of her beloved, and so it is with this people. He makes them glad by the words of his mouth. Such love, peace and joy lift the poor beggar from the dunghill and set him among princes, lift a poor sinner from the lowest hell and

> "Makes his standing more secure
> Than 'twas before he fell."

Truly blessed are such a people whose God is the Lord, not only because they know the joyful sound, but because God the Father hath blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. Blessed, not because they have been faithful, but because they have a faithful God. When a person promises certain things we, according to our knowledge of his ability, trust in him, and if he keeps his promise we say he is faithful. God has made certain promises; these promises are applied by the Holy Ghost to poor sinners, and they worship, leaning upon the staff of God's promises. The comfort received from the promises applied enables them

to trust him who has promised. His promises are yea and amen in Christ Jesus to the glory of God the Father. Our text declares, "They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." We believe this is one of the "shalls" of Jehovah, and his people love the "shalls" and "wills" of Jehovah; they know if it were possible to remove his shalls and wills they would sink to everlasting perdition. "They shall walk." God has spoken this, and it must be. A poor sinner who has been blessed from on high to realize himself as such, is like Jacob after the angel had touched the hollow of his thigh. They cannot walk as they would, yet we believe they do walk. They do not walk after the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof, but they walk after the Spirit. They walk in Christ, who is the light of God's countenance; a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of his people Israel. Thus having no obedience of their own they walk in his obedience, and in his righteousness are they exalted. Now it is not in them to will and to do, even after they have tasted that the Lord is gracious, for they are continually finding that they are chosen in the furnace of affliction and for Christ's sake they are killed all the day long, they are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. While in the furnace Christ is very precious and they walk in the furnace in the light of God's countenance. Their desire is to walk worthy; but do they? They have a sentence of death in themselves that they should not trust in themselves, and, like Hezekiah, they turn their face to the wall and weep sore, yet they are the only people who can say they have walked in truth and with a perfect heart and have done that which was good in his sight. Jesus is the perfect heart, the heart that knoweth its own bitterness, and he is also the truth, therefore in walking in the obedience of Christ they walk before God in the truth and with a perfect heart; is not this in the light of his countenance? It is true that in themselves they are as weak as worms and feel to be vilest of them all. They know they cannot come to the light, but the light comes to them and it shines in their hearts. Not on their hearts, but in their hearts, and this gives them new life, for it renews their youth like the eagle's, so that they can run and not be weary and walk and not faint. Yes, they shall walk, and what a precious walk it is. They walk with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, with Noah, Daniel and Job in the heavenly road, and it is here they greet one another with an holy kiss, for the Lord is their light and their God their glory. Their delight is to walk in the light of his face, and like David they can say, "There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us." They desire the evidence that God notices them, that he thinketh upon them, and they are blessed indeed when they are enabled to say, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?" and whatever their walk may be, by virtue of their vital unity to Christ their head, God's countenance is never against them, but for them, so that tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril or sword are not against them, but for them, and in all these things they are more than conquerors through Christ that loved them and gave himself for them. In conclusion, Paul declares, "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." G. R.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, at his home, Salisbury, Md., October 9th, 1925, Herman Wm. Gordy, of Salisbury, Maryland, and Thelma Madeline Richardson, of Willards, Maryland.

By Elder J. C. Mellott, at his home, Salisbury, Md., October 10th, 1925, Harold Dean Orvis and Fanny Leamon, of Princess Anne, Md.

By Elder J. B. Slauson, at the home of Alex McDonald, in the township of Oxford, Ontario, September 26th, 1925, William George Gurrod and Dorothy Rosa Brown, both of Chatham, Ontario.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Bettie Fox Bennett, our sister in Christ, died at the home of her brother, Rufus Fox, Washington, D. C., October 13th, 1925, in the 76th year of her age. She was born at Vale, Fairfax Co., Va., January 10th, 1850, and was the daughter of John Fox and Jane Herley. She is survived by three brothers: one living in Washington and two, Montgomery Fox and William Fox, at Vale, Va. Then there are some nieces and nephews, and a few first cousins, one of whom, sister Mary E. Wright, of Santa Cruz, California, is well-known to SIGNS readers. Sister Bennett's husband, Joseph Bennett, had been dead to her for many years. To them was born one son, Summers Bennett, who lived to attain young manhood and then died. His death was an awful blow to her, but she was sustained by God's grace and was enabled to come safely through to patient submission to her Lord's will. I have not the date of her baptism, but she united many years ago with the Old School Baptist Church at Alexandria, Va., and was baptized by Elder Wm. Smoot. When the Alexandria Church disbanded several years ago, sister Bennett united by letter with the church called Frying Pan, since it was her heart's desire not to leave the bounds of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting. She has all these years been wholly loyal to her church and pastor. When not able to get out into the country to attend the meetings at Frying Pan, she faithfully attended the meetings of the Shiloh Church in Washington, D. C., and she highly esteemed Elder J. T. Rowe, the pastor of Shiloh Church. His ministry greatly comforted her. Both Shiloh and Frying Pan miss sister Bennett, for she was faithful in attendance at all meetings of both churches unless providentially hindred. She never spoke ill of any one, never liked to hear others do so, and would often gently reprove those who did. She was never in very good physical health and had seen during her life a great deal of affliction, yet none ever heard her complain. Whatever God chose to dispense to her, whether weal or woe, was all right with her. Her faith in God was wonderful. She was mild and gentle in her manner, dignified and courteous in her bearing, the very soul of loyalty and devotion to truth and righteousness. She was conscious in mind to the end, and her last days on earth were spent in reiterating her praise to God, talking almost constantly of God's goodness to her, and repeating over and over her love for the brethren and for her church. It was a high privilege to those who were given to hear her dying testimony.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor from the home of her brother, Montgomery Fox, after which her body was laid to rest in the family plot near her birthplace and childhood home. Her soul is at rest and we cannot wish her back because we have confidence toward God that for her to die is gain. May the Lord comfort the bereaved church and family. L.

Frances M. Cook, beloved wife of Albert Cook, died at her home in Dorchester, Westmoreland County, New Brunswick, August 26th, 1925, at the advanced age of 84 years and 16 days. She was a daughter of James and Sarah Buck, and sister of the late (Captain) William E. Buck, so well-known to the earlier readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. She leaves to mourn their loss the aged husband, three daughters and one son, also a large circle of relatives and friends. The daughters are Mrs. Elizabeth Maxwell, of Providence, R. I., Mrs. Fred Ward and Mrs. Walter Coles, of Dorchester, and Hazen, of Providence, R. I. The subject of this notice was a woman of sterling worth and exemplary life, and in her death the family sustain the loss of a faithful and loving wife and mother and the community a good citizen and neighbor, kind and sympathetic in sickness and sorrow, and many bedsides have been brightened by her words of cheer and counsel. Sister Cook obtained in early life, at the age of about fourteen years, a good hope through grace, and was baptized by Elder Joshua Bunting, and received into the fellowship of the church at Dorchester (Cape so-called), and through all the long years of her consistent life her hope burned bright and undimmed unto the end, and she fell asleep in the full triumph of that faith of which Jesus is the author and finisher, that faith that exercises the creature and works by love and purifies the heart.

At the funeral (Rector) Charles M. Biard (Episcopal) spoke very nicely from the text of her choice found in Revelation vii. 13, 14. Also was read and sang (by her request) that wonderful hymn 1296 of Beebe's collection. As one who has been called upon to walk this path of trial and sorrow my heart goes out in sympathy and love to the aged companion and family, and my desire and prayer is that God may bless this dispensation of his providence to their good, and grant unto them that spirit of peace and resignation that they may

bow in humble submission to the divine decree of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and lead them to know that earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal. The writer wishes to say that he has known sister Cook from his boyhood, and been intimately acquainted with her during the last forty-four years, being identified and associated with her in the church of her membership, and I shall miss her, for in those years I have spent many happy hours in her company and at her home, for truly her conversation was in heaven, and of our esteemed sister I would say, Sleep on, beloved, sleep, and take thy rest. We only sorrow in that we shall hear her voice and see her face no more.

WILLIAM C. HASTINGS.

The morning of April 24th, 1924, the death angel took from this life **Joseph Elwood,** of Shelbyville, Kentucky, after several days of suffering. All was done for him that the attending physician and loving hands could do, but he quietly passed to his reward. A good man has passed away. He was a kind father and faithful husband. He was born in 1867, making his stay on earth about 54 years. He was married to Miss Sarah Vawter, the daughter of Jeptha D. and Sarah Moore Vawter, of Franklin County, Ky., January 26, 1900, and to that union one daughter was born. Left to mourn were his young daughter and his good wife, who never recovered from the shock, also relatives and friends too numerous to mention. Mr. Elwood never made an outward profession of religion, but he loved the Primitive Baptists, and was always glad to have them visit him, and was pleased when they would have services at his home. The community has lost a good man. Peace be to his ashes and rest to his soul.

The funeral was conducted at his home by Elder P. W. Sawin, of Shelbyville, Ky., and his body was laid to rest in the beautiful cemetery at Shelbyville.

ALSO,

Sister **Sarah Vawter Elwood** was born December 12th, 1859, the daughter of Jeptha D. and Sarah Moor Vawter. She was born, raised and educated in Franklin County, Kentucky, and taught in many of the public schools and sometimes in private schools. She joined the church at Little Flock, in Anderson County, Kentucky, the fourth Saturday in July, 1883. She was married to Joseph Elwood January 26th, 1900, and to that union one daughter was born, now Mrs. Sarah Pearl Gale, of Frankfort, Ky. About two years before she died she suffered a serious shock from being knocked down by a large automobile, from which she never fully recovered, although she appeared in her usual health. She was weak and easily tired. Her chief joy was attending meeting with those to whom she was related by the relation of faith. She seldom missed a meeting, and was an attentive listener. Being separated from the trifling things of time and sense she was highly favored with sweet meditations upon the inspired word of God. She was left a widow by the death of her husband, Mr. Joseph Elwood, April 12th, 1924, and she was so sick and weak at the time of his death she could not recover, although she survived his death nine months, or until January 17th, 1925, but was never able to speak again. She was surrounded by relatives and friends, and all was done for her that the attending physicians and loving hands could do. She has left to mourn their loss one daughter, Mrs. Sarah Pearl Gale, of Frankfort; one brother, Henry Vawter, and four sisters: sister Mrs. Pearl Owens, sister Bettie Sharp, of Shelby County, Mrs. Doon, of Shelbyville, Ky., and sister Lettie Owens, of Franklin County. The daughter has lost a devoted and loving mother, the church a devoted and worthy member, and the community a good citizen.

The funeral was held at her home in Shelbyville, and her remains laid by the side of her husband in the beautiful cemetery at Shelbyville, Ky. The funeral was conducted by Elder P. W. Sawin, and was attended by a large concourse of relatives and friends, who followed the frail body to the grave and stood with bared and bowed heads, as well as with sorrowing hearts, in a torrent of rain until the services were over. Sweet be thy sleep, sister, until He bid thee arise to hail him in triumph beyond the skies.

Written by an humble and sorrowing brother in faith and hope,

F. MORRIS.

Sister **Margaret Carmichael,** widow of Peter Carmichael, died at the home of her son-in-law, Alex Stewart, Lobo township, Ontario, Sunday, May 17th, 1925, in the 75th year of her age. She was the daughter of Archibald and May Campbell. As a girl she taught school in S. S. No. 7 of Caradoc and at Mt. Carmel. She was married to Peter Carmichael in 1872, and to this union there were born two children, one son and one daughter: Duncan, of Edmonton, and Mrs. Stewart, at whose home she died. Sister Carmichael was received into the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church and baptized July 1st, 1906, by the late Elder S. H. Durand. Her husband preceded her in death over thirty years. During her widowhood she had made her home with her daughter, Mrs. Alex Stewart. Between the years of 1908 and 1914 she resided in London, Ontario, but for the last eleven years, being an invalid, had resided with her son-in-law in the township of Lobo, at whose home she passed peacefully away. Sister Carmichael was of a most estimable character and was much beloved by an exceedingly wide circle of friends. She spent more than ten years confined to her room, but maintained a cheerful outlook and a continued interest in her friends and rela-

tives. She loved to converse upon the things of the kingdom of God, and often spoke comfortingly of her hope in the blessed Savior. It was my privilege to visit her many times during her sickness and nearly always I found her bright and cheerful, bearing her suffering with great fortitude.

Her funeral was held from the home of her son-in-law, Alex Stewart, and was largely attended. Burial was in Ivan Cemetery. The writer tried to comfort the sorrowing friends with such as the Lord gave. May his divine grace support the sorrowing friends in their deep grief.

J. B. SLAUSON.

Newton J. Morland was born in Putman County, Indiana, May 22nd, 1837. He came to Independence township, Appanoose County, Iowa, in 1852, and lived at or near his late home until his death, December 9th, 1924, at the age of 87 years, 6 months and 17 days. January 31st, 1861, he was married to Emma Banks, and to that union eleven children were born. His companion and four children preceded him in death. Surviving are Mrs. Cal Stephens, Vada, Thomas L. Leeman, Steve L. Moreland, Mrs. Jessie Elam, Mrs. Myrtle Free, with their families of sixteen children and one grandchild, also one brother, Lafe, and one sister, Mrs. Jane Butler. Being one of the oldest settlers in Appanoose County, he was a noted factor in shaping the destinies of local concerns. His judgment was sound and his advice was often sought by his children and neighbors. He was active in thought and deed until seven and one-half years ago, when he became badly afflicted, from which affliction he never recovered. During his long sickness he showed a strong spirit of christian experience, patience and endurance, many times expressing his faith in his Savior. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church of Providence in August, 1898, and was a faithful attendant as long as he was able. He left abiding evidence that he has gone to be with Jesus.

The funeral was conducted by Elder W. T. Walters, of Stahl, Missouri.

James M. Bench was born September 24th, 1846, married to Miss Eliza Hill November 25th, 1869, received a hope in 1871, and joined the Regular or Primitive Baptist Church September, 1882. His wife died August 25th, 1890. March 1st, 1892, he was married to Miss Nannie Reed. He died September 11th, 1925, and was buried about two miles north of Spring Dale, Arkansas. He leaves four brothers, five sisters and many relatives to mourn their loss. In trying to say a few words in remembrance of my dear departed brother it seems to me that the greatest power I feel is my weakness and littleness in the sight of the just and holy God. I feel brother cannot come back to us, but that we can go to him. Blessed be the name of the Lord. Brother was sick about eight days before he died. One brother, A. J. Bench, one sister, R. J. Acord, and I were with him during his last three days on earth. It is a great comfort for us to think back over his life and to remember that in his daily walk he was a model citizen and a christian man blessed of the Lord. One Scripture appears very fitting to his stay upon earth: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful: but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither." Oh blessed thought, the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nation. Oh that we brothers and sisters may live our lives so that when we are called to die we, too, like our oldest brother, may do so without a murmur, or even a frown. Let us be comforted by the thought, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." Give to God glory.

A. D. BENCH.

Sarah Jane Rumbaugh Ferguson was born in Green County, Ohio, January 29th, 1838, the daughter of Daniel and Catheryne Rumbaugh. She was united in marriage to William Henry Ferguson September 22nd, 1865. She, with her husband, moved to Missouri soon after the Civil War. They united with the Old School Baptist Church at Oak Grove, Mo., the first Sunday in May, 1875, and were baptized by Elder Lucian B. Wright. Brother Henry Ferguson died many years ago leaving her a widow with three children, as follows: Alford D. Ferguson, deceased, Mrs. J. S. Thomas, of Lafayette County, Mo., Mrs. Theodore Jones, of Mexico, Mo., with whom sister Ferguson had made her home for many years. She passed away October 3rd, 1925, at 10:30 a. m., the disease was old age and paralysis. All that could be was done by loved ones, but to no avail. "Aunt Jane" was a good neighbor, a true and loving wife and mother, and much devoted to her church, and was always present as long as she was able to attend. The Baptists, and especially Oak Grove Church, have lost a truly good christian sister, but we mourn not as those who have ho hope.

Her funeral was held at Odessa, Mo., at the home of her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Alford D. Ferguson, Sunday morning, October 4th, conducted by Elder T. B. Fisher, of Oak Grove, Mo., and her remains laid to rest by the side of her husband in the family cemetery.

W. T. WEBB.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Miss Bonnie A. Chick, N. J., $5.00; Elder J. Hammons, Cal., $1.00; "A Friend," Ore., $5.00; J. W. Rockafellow, N. Y., $8.00; Joseph F. Hall, Me., $8.00; Mrs. George Carruthers, Va., $1.00; Mrs. Jennie Cole, Va., $1.00; Miss Hattie Garrett, Va., $1.25; Wm. Darby, Md., $1.00; Mrs. Melissa Grimes, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. W. L. Clure, Texas, $1.00; Mrs. Irene Stevens, N. Y., $1.00.

MEETINGS.

The Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury will hold (the Lord willing) a two days' meeting at Halcottville, New York, the second Sunday and Saturday before in November (7th and 8th). All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

There will, God willing, be an all day meeting at Lexington, N. Y., on the third Sunday in November (15th). Services at 11 a. m. and 1:45 p. m. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE RUSTON.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects Elder George Ruston to meet with them the fifth Sunday in November (29th), 1925. For convenience services are to be held at the home of J. E. Livingston, 64 E. Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All welcome who love the truth. Trains on the D. & H. R. R. arrive and leave on convenient time for the meeting.

(MRS.) J. E. LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 106 West 59th Street, Manhattan.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

ALL WELCOME

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

LOUISA LEE BRIDGES, Clerk, Arcada Apt. 102, Seattle, Wash.

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE of JOSHUA S. CORDER.

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Picture of Elder Joshua S. Corder.
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Chapter XIII.—Fell Asleep, A "Loved Disciple."
Chapter XIV.—Memorials, Poetry, Circular Letter, &c.

This little book of 152 pages was published by Elder Corder's daughter, sister Semma E. Corder, of Philippi, W. Va., and printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office several years ago, and we feel is a work that will be read with interest by any of the household of faith.

The book was originally sold for one dollar per copy, and was bound in cloth, but there were some printed sheets that were never bound, and these sister Corder has generously donated to help in publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so we have decided to bind them in paper covers and offer them to our readers as long as the supply lasts for the extremely low price of twenty-five cents per copy. If any who purchase this book feel they have not received full value they may return the book to us and we will refund the price paid for it.

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THE

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 93. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1925. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SALISBURY, Md., Oct. 1, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Having been asked to write an account of the meeting of the Maine Association, held with the Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1925, I undertake it with a felt sense of my inability to do so. The pen of mortal is ever inadequate to depict the beauties of the Lord's dealings with his people. To describe it in a way to give God all the glory and be profitable and instructive to those who read is my desire.

It has been my privilege, and a pleasant one, to attend the last two annual meetings in Maine. I found there a lovable and lovely band of humble, God-fearing people. For this I praise no man, for by nature they were the children of wrath even as others, but the grace of God has been abundantly poured out upon them and they bear about the marks of his suffering. In the State of Maine there are three churches of our faith and order: Bowdoinham, South Gardiner and Whitefield. Prior to this year they had a total membership of twenty-two. They have had no pastor for several years, but meet through the summer months at Bowdoinham on the second and fourth Sundays and have reading by brother Tedford, who also speaks as he is led, after which the meeting is one of general conference and a real homelike social gathering. This year on Friday, September 11th, Elder R. Lester Dodson came again to preach for the Association, which he was given to do throughout the three days with the ability the Lord gave him, to the glory of God and the comfort of those assembled. He was most surely blessed of the Lord and was given sweet comforting messages for us. It soon became apparent, even before the meeting began, that the Lord had preceded us and had performed a work that no man can do. "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings," so the Lord stirred up this nest and the young eaglets were in evidence and showing their distress. Before meeting sister Rachel Potter, of Bath, Maine, approached some and told of her unrest. After Elder Dodson had finished speaking an opportunity was given and she spoke in the agony of her soul and gave a clear testimony, satisfac-

tory and approved by all. She told of how she had gone from one to another of the various denominations, secret orders, &c., hunting and searching for food and rest, but no place could she find a crumb, nor rest for the sole of her foot. I do not think I ever witnessed greater agony in one relating their travel than I did in this one who had run from place to place and found nothing. Neither have I seen a more relaxed, restful look upon any face when one finished talking. When we went to a hall nearby for dinner Virgil Rice, of Machias, Maine, was standing with his wife near the entrance, and while speaking with him I saw he was deeply affected. Though a man of few words, yet it was plain to be seen he was near a place where he would have to cry out. As I passed on he called brother Dodson, who was passing, and said he felt he must talk with him. Elder Dodson called for some of us to come out and brother Rice told in a few words his troubles and longing for a home with these people, the only ones, as he expressed it, he had ever seen who were honest. His wife, who was baptized at the time of the Association last year, had to come to her mother's to attend the meeting. He became so troubled and distressed he could not rest, so he got up at midnight and walked a number of miles to get to a station where he could take a train to Gardiner. He said he could not see a neighbor, so turned his cattle out to pasture, feeling to leave them in the Lord's hand. Sister Beulah, knowing nothing of his feeling, was made to rejoice with joy unspeakable. We went in to lunch, but before eating sister Anna Dill came for me to speak with her sister Iva, who was much wrought upon. I called brother Dodson and we listened to a sweet little story from this one. During lunch time brother Sanford Bartlett shared his distress and longing to be at rest with this people. After the afternoon service an opportunity was given them to speak before the church in session. All were heard and each testimony accepted and they were received for baptism, which ordinance was observed the next afternoon in a flowing stream that passes near the place of meeting. Sunday morning it was evident there were others whose hearts had been touched by the wonderful grace of God. Sister Leona Dill, sister Dorothy Weeks and sister Cora Baumgardner each told plainly and clearly wherein their hope lay and in whom they trusted. No uncertain sound came from any of the seven who asked for a home, for in their coming they had found a place in the hearts of all present and were gladly received. Each one came in his or her own lonely way and had to say of all, There is none like me, but the Lord setteth the solitary in families. The last three were baptized Sunday just after lunch, after which ordinance Elder Dodson preached again, making six times in three days, and each time his words seemed to grow sweeter. Then the ordinance of the Lord's supper was observed, the first time, we were told, for many years at Whitefield. But as oft as ye do it, do it in remembrance of me, are the words of Jesus. With this beautiful and solemn scene commemorating the Lord's death there closed a beautiful meeting and one long to be remembered by those present. The truth and power of His resurrection was preached throughout the meeting and testified to by all as being the only hope of salvation. The time and place of the next meeting of the Association, if the Lord wills, is on Friday, Saturday and Sunday before the second Monday in September, 1926, at Bowdoin-

ham, Maine, when and where we hope for renewed evidence of the Lord's work in their midst. The letters of the three churches, written by sister Attie Curtis, of Bowdoinham, sister Mabel Weeks, of South Gardiner, and sister Nellie Palmer, of Whitefield, together with the Circular Letter, written by brother Tedford, were all excellent reading. I hope they may appear in print for others to read. That the things witnessed at this meeting were a joy to the writer may be imagined if I may relate an experience that came to me about two weeks before going to Maine. One evening when preparing to retire I felt, I hope, the spirit of prayer, and a desire to seek our blessed Master. There was a felt sense of being in his presence, when my mind seemed to be burdened for the coming meeting, that it be profitable and pleasant. While in this attitude of thought there came before me a strange scene indeed, that of a barren mountain-top upon which there was not a single thing growing, void of all vegetation of every description, not even a tree, a bush or a shrub. Thereon I saw a little lamb, impoverished in looks, running to and fro, bleating in distress. Its starved and distressed look moved me in love and pity. Then I looked down at the base of the mountain, in the valley, and saw a small flock of sheep walking slowly through the bushes. They were all very white, but looked sad and helpless. This all passed before me and left a lasting impression, which became burdensome as the days drew near for the meeting. I went to Maine and this meeting in an anxious, burdened state of mind, believing I would see the fulfillment of the vision shown me, yet fearing it might not be of the Lord. When sister Rachel Potter came and told her experience, how she had run from place to place finding nothing, I knew she was the lamb I saw on the barren mountain top running to and fro. As the other six came along I recognized them as those I saw walking slowly and quietly midst the bushes down in the valley. When sister Cora came I knew she was the last one of the little flock I saw, and was satisfied it was all of the Lord, that he for some reason showed to me what was shortly to come to pass in the churches in Maine. That there are others yet to come I am also convinced, and feel assured that God has begun a work in the church there; that Zion shall travail and bring forth; that this branch of his planting shall be a fruitful vine which he is now digging about and pruning that it bear much fruit.

I realize I have come far short of telling of the sweetness of the meeting, for such joys have to be lived, and we realize the truth of the words, "When thou comest into thy neighbor's vineyard, then thou mayest eat grapes thy fill at thine own pleasure; but thou shalt not put any in thy vessel."—Deut. xxiii. 24. May the Lord bless Israel, for he has a set time to favor Zion and she shall be built up and strengthened.

Your unworthy brother,

F. SELBY FISHER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pennsylvania.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am constrained to write a little for your consideration, if the Lord I adore will guide my mind in the proper channel. I know I am weak, worthless and ever dependent upon his mercy and goodness for all the rich blessings he is ever bestowing upon me day after day. I realize I am not worthy of a single one of them; I am transgressing his most holy law every day, and can never lie down upon my couch at night and say I am satisfied with the day's

work. I find the devil is ever with me; he goes to bed with me, and gets up with me in the morning. I cannot get rid of him, he torments me all the time. I know I am writing a personal letter, but I cannot help it, self is uppermost in my mind, self is the one that comes first. I know I am jealous of my fellow-men. I suppose most of you know what I mean: I have no hard feelings against any one; in fact, I love you all for the truth's sake, and look upon each one of you as better than I. I see no good in myself; that is, in the flesh; you know it is impossible for a corrupt tree to bring forth good fruit. I am in my eighty-fourth year, and why the Lord has permitted me to remain upon his footstool all these years is a mystery to me. But he has a wise purpose in all his ways, whether we can see it or not, it makes no difference to him, he will do as he sees fit, none can stay his hand, and we do not wish to; if we could, we would not know where to begin. I know that I cannot teach him anything, but judging from surrounding circumstances, some of the people of the world think they can, and that they must help the Lord with his work, and they do try very hard, but I have yet to see where they ever succeeded in accomplishing one single iota, yet they are ever boasting of doing wondrous things, but I am satisfied to let them alone. Why should I worry? They are only doing what God intends them to do, so they are only doing God's work, and instead of looking after them I have enough to do to look within my ownself, where I will find enough to engage me, and more than I am able to attend to. A friend of mine, who has long since gone to his home, had a carpenter to build a pale fence. When it was completed he said he could go out and look along the fence and see every little crook in it, but he said if he had built it there would have been many more crooks, and much greater ones, too. I find that is also my case; I have only to look within and I will find a vile and deceitful heart. I do not have to go abroad to find it, it is right in my own breast. But what can I do? I am helpless in the matter. The following hymn has come into my mind:

"Where must a weary sinner go,
But to the sinner's Friend?
He only can relieve my woe,
And bid my sorrows end."

You can read the rest of it, it is all good reading if it suits your case as it does mine. I am a poor, helpless creature, dependent upon my Lord for every blessing bestowed upon me, the very air I breathe I am dependent upom him for. I am a very ignorant and complex being, and do not know what I need. I may know (or think I know) what I want, but do not know what I need, so can only hope the Lord will provide the necessities of life, as he knows better my needs than I do. It would not be beneficial for me to have all I want, it would be disastrous to me, so I am willing to trust him. He is too good to be unkind, and too wise to err. His knowledge is great and mysterious; it has no limit; it is boundless. Our finite minds cannot comprehend his majestic power. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his thoughts above our thoughts. There is another hymn that has come into my mind, which is as follows:

"Thus far the Lord has led me on,
Thus far his power prolongs my days;
And every evening shall make known
Some fresh memorial of his grace."

The next stanza is good, and appeals to my case. I hope I know the joyful sound. I heard a pastor, one whom we all esteem highly, relate a portion of his

experience like this: He and the boys were in the field hoeing corn before breakfast, and were anxious to hear father's bell ring for breakfast. They heard a bell ring, and stopped and listened. Some one asked, Is that father's bell? The answer was, No. They hoed along for awhile, when another bell rang. As before, all stopped and listened. The same answer as before, No. By and by father's bell rang, when all hoes dropped, no one asked the question, Is that father's bell? They all knew the joyful sound. There may be counterfeits, and the worst are those that come nearest to the genuine, and are not genuine. You will see in Matthew xxiv. 24 it says, "For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." So I feel to admonish all to beware, and not let yourselves be led away, be not deceived. I feel as if I would be led away by the lusts of the flesh if not kept by his omnipotent power. We all need his watchful care and protection, for we are never safe from the darts of the evil one as he is always on the lookout to see if he can capture one of God's little lambs off their guard.

It appears as if I have written enough for this time. Not that I have told you all that is in my mind; it would be impossible for me to, as it is too long, and too broad a subject to be exhausted; it is limitless. It is like Solomon and the queen of Sheba when she said that the half had not been told; when she had seen all of Solomon's wisdom she was amazed. No doubt she had many hard questions prepared to ask him, and he answered them all to her entire satisfaction. She said, It is a true report that I heard in my own land, and howbeit I believed not the words until I came and saw with my own eyes? I have no doubt she had many hard and difficult questions prepared (in her own mind) to ask him, but nothing was too hard for him, he was prepared for them all, as the Lord prepares all of his servants to perform all the duties he sends them out to do.

As I close I will ask you to read the second chapter of Ruth. I feel it contains what I feel, so do not entreat me not to follow after you. Your company I crave, I love to mingle with you, I enjoy your fellowship. I bid you adieu for the present.

Editors, I hope you will spread the mantle of charity over what I have written. Correct all errors and make such changes as are necessary.

Yours very respectfully,

C. S. FETTER.

COBLESKILL, N. Y., May 19, 1924.

DEAR ELDER RUSTON AND WIFE:—It has been on my mind for some time to write you something of the reason of my hope, that you may judge what I am and where I belong. There are but two classes: those who are the children of God and those who are not, so I must belong to one or the other. I was born January 17th, 1858, of, I believe, christian parents. If I have been born again of a spiritual birth I know not the time or place. As far back as I can recollect I enjoyed hearing people talk on the subject of religion, and can remember taking my little chair and listening when we had company rather than play with the other children, and right here I will say that I think in those days religion and experience were more often the subjects of conversation than now, which is very lamentable, and I plead guilty to the charge. I remember when quite a young girl there was

a protracted meeting being held in a schoolhouse and I sometimes attended, and one of my very dear young friends said to me, "Addie, if you will go forward to-morrow night, I will," but I said, No. It seemed I could not. I had no faith that they could do me any good. At another time, when on my way to school with a schoolmate, she said, Addie, if you should die do you think you would go to heaven? The question staggered me. I hesitated, then said, I have no reason to think that I would. She said, Why? you have never done anything very bad. But I seemed to realize there was something lacking. I knew I was not a fit subject for heaven. Time passed and the years went by until the fall of 1875, my aunt, Orpha Borthwick, wanted me to go with her to attend the Association at Otego and visit her sister, another aunt, now sister Angell. I went as she wished, and when the people gathered the first day of the meeting I saw my lost and wretched condition as I never had before; they all looked so good and I so vile, I could not keep back the tears. That night we stayed at Elder Bundy's home. All were kind to me, and I thought they pitied me in my lost condition. Elder Bundy tried to comfort me, and said where the Lord began a good work in the heart he would perform it, &c. I thought, Oh if I only knew it was a work of the Lord in my heart, but I felt it was wicked for me to even walk on the ground or grass that God had made. The meeting and our visit ended, and then my aunt wanted to stop off at Schoharie and attend their meeting Saturday and Sunday, which we did, and there we saw more of the same happy people. Oh how good they looked, and how I longed to be like them, but there seemed to be no hope for me, mine was an outside case. We returned home. My burden did not leave me, but I did not want any one to know my feelings and what a sinner I was. I mingled with young company, going to parties, &c. Almost always after reaching home I would promise myself I would not go again, but seemed to have no excuse, so when invited I would go. I begged the Lord to have mercy upon me; I was helpless to do anything to save myself. After a time my burden left me; I could not tell how or when, but I could not get it back. It seemed for some time I was hoping I might have a hope, some evidence that God had indeed forgiven my sins. I wanted some bright evidence like Paul, but have never received it. My mind was drawn to the church; I longed to be one of them. There was no question in my mind as to who were the true church. I had twice seen them in their beauty and with them I desired to live and die. On Saturday, November 10th, 1877, I attended the Middleburg Church meeting. I do not know what I said, but they received me, and the next day I was baptized by their pastor, Elder I. B. Whitcomb. Some can tell of great joy on coming out of the water, but with me it seemed a calm, peaceful rest. All went back in the meetinghouse and attended to the ordinance of communion, and Elder Whitcomb gave the right hand of fellowship. I wish I could remember the words of his kind fatherly advice, warning and encouragement, but there is but one sentence of all that was said that day I remember, and that was after the communion and singing Elder Whitcomb said, "And they sang a hymn and went out." I have never heard those words spoken since but what they bring fresh to mind my feelings at that time. I thought, Oh, go out into the world with all its vanity and vexations? Had I not

had enough of that? and I think I had a real desire that the Lord would go with me and keep me from the evils in the world. I have never heard a voice saying, Thy sins are all forgiven thee, I have never been on the mountain-top and beheld the wonderful beauties that many have seen; I have never seen myself as a christian should be, and as others are; I do not think I could ever say, I know that my Redeemer liveth. I think I have seen times when I could say, It is enough, I will praise him for blessings past and trust him for all to come. I think I have felt something of that peace and rest that the world can neither give nor take away. When I read the Bible it seems so very little I know and understand, but when I read where it says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," it seems from my heart I know and understand something of that love, and can say, Goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life.

I see I am making this letter too long, but there is one incident I want to mention. In July, 1876, I was riding with my brother-in-law along a very narrow road on our way to his home, the young horse became frightened at an object by the side of the road and jumped to the other side off a very steep bank. My brother-in-law, being on the upper side, jumped and grabbed for me, but failed to reach me, and I was thrown down a fifty feet bank into a stream. It had been raining and the water had risen and was very muddy, so I went out of sight in the water. My brother-in-law came to my rescue and helped me out of the water, and strange as it may seem, there were no broken bones and no serious bruises. The horse in jumping off the bank caught his hind foot or leg under a log and hung head down until the men who had reached the place of the accident cut the log and let the horse down the same place I had gone. After getting him out of the water they found the three joints in his leg were all drawn apart and he had to be killed, while I was saved. Was it chance that held the horse from falling upon me, or was it God's providence and mercy to a poor sinner? It seemed plain to me then, and has ever since, that the "everlasting arms" were underneath and carried me safely over the danger. Oh that I might praise him for his mercy and protecting care over me all these years, but as I look back over my past life not one good thing can I find that I have done that would merit the esteem or favor of the holy One. Weighed in the balance, and found wanting. Now perhaps you are ready to tell me you see nothing in all this to give me any reason to hope that I have passed from death unto life, or been born again, and sometimes I think the same, but I would not exchange my little hope for all the world calls good or great. It is all I have. I know there is nothing in me, nothing I can do to make me an heir of God. If I am saved it is all of grace from first to last.

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

I will close. I hope I have not wearied you, and that this may find you all well and enjoying every needed blessing.

Your unworthy sister, if indeed I am one of God's children,

(MRS.) J. E. LIVINGSTON.

LA GRANDE, Ore., June 28, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—Some of the faithful ones of our Master's kingdom living in the northwest have expressed a desire for me to communicate with others who read the SIGNS concerning some of our churches

and events connected with them. In this expressed wish it was that the cause we love be exalted, instead of bestowing praise on any person. Many of the Baptists of our churches are from the east, and the friends we thus left are glad to know something of us, and if they travel our way at any time we are glad for them to know where to find us. I desire to write especially of three border churches that have formed themselves into a union, known as the Union of the Border Churches of Washington, Oregon and Idaho. The Mizpah Church, at Touchet, Wash., the Big Spring Church, at Elgin, Ore., and Salem Church, at Weiser, Idaho, are the churches of this union, which was made about ten years ago, and since that time one annual union meeting has been held each year. This year the meeting was held with Salem Church, and next year the appointment is made to meet with Mizpah, at Touchet, Wash., on Friday before the fourth Saturday in June and continue three days. These churches were constituted about fifty years ago by the leading Elders of that time, sound in the faith. The doctrine which exalts and glorifies the great God of the universe and his Son Jesus Christ is the bread of life of these churches. The meeting places are about 125 miles apart on the main traveled highway. Traveling brethren are invited to stop with us when convenient. The Salem Church, at Weiser, Idaho, has two ministers at present, Elders J. C. Turnidge and D. E. Robison, the latter being the pastor. Elder Turnidge is past seventy-six years old and in feeble health. He has been an able minister, and has stood in defense of the truth for over fifty years. He is honored and respected by his brethren as one of the fathers in Israel. I was called to the pastorate of the Big Spring Church after the death of Elder Mayfield, about five years ago, and have served since. Elder Mayfield was a frequent writer to the SIGNS and many readers remember his messages to the household of faith. As we recall the passing of Elder Mayfield, and also of other able Elders of the northwest, and do not see who is to fill their places, we feel to pray more earnestly that the Lord of the harvest will send forth more laborers into this field. The harvest truly is great and the laborers are few. Elder J. T. Barnes is the pastor of the Mizpah Church, which is to be commended for its faithfulness and hospitality, both toward its membership and toward all lovers of the truth who come within its borders. While commending this church I would not cast any reflection upon either of the others, but the membership of this church is more fortunate in its location, thus making it possible for them to carry out the desires of their hearts, which doubtless the others feel but cannot so easily express. Elder Barnes is not a stranger to the readers of the SIGNS, and his writings commend him to them, as does his preaching to his brethren who hear him. He is in his seventieth year and his wife her seventy-first. She has been in failing health for two years or more, but this spring has regained strength to enable her to attend the meetings. They have raised a family of seven children, of which all are living except the youngest. May 20th they celebrated their golden wedding anniversary, which, at the suggestion of Elder Barnes, was spent with the church in the worship of God. I was called to minister on that occasion and set forth the principles of eternal truth the best I could from Hosea ii. 19, 20. "I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in right-

eousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies: I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the Lord." A large number of the brethren and friends laid aside their work on this occasion to honor this faithful brother and his wife, a fitting tribute of respect in token of his twenty-four years as pastor of this church.

In behalf of these churches I wish to extend an invitation to any of our ministering brethren, or any one interested in the cause so precious to us, to visit us at any time, and especially to attend our Union meeting next June.

C. W. BOND.

SULPHUR, Ky., Sept. 21, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—I would I might say, My brethren in Christ, but that I fear is too much for such as I to claim. I am too vile and full of sin to claim this sweet relationship. Surely I am not one of this happy band, and I feel I have no right to say "brother" or "sister" to any of these people, yet I have a hope that I love them for the truth's sake. Many of us have never met face to face, and probably never will, yet there is a love shed abroad in our hearts that we have not for the world, and we hope this love is of the Lord. If it is of the flesh it will not last, but if it is of the Lord it is as firm as the Rock of ages, for what he does is done forever.

I only thought to write a few words, as I wanted to send in my subscription and to thank you for your kindness in sending me the SIGNS when it was some months past due. I am sorry it had to be changed to a monthly publication. I think the editorials are worth the price of the paper, to say nothing of the many good letters it contains. I have tried to get some subscribers, but have failed so far. May the Lord spare the editors and publishers to contend earnestly for the truth, and to comfort his people with the soul-cheering message of salvation by grace, giving all praise to his wonderful name.

From one of the least, if one at all,

ADDIE CHANDLER.

MONROE, Ga., Nov. 12, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel I would love to contribute to the SIGNS and give my testimony to the truth of what the paper has been and is now publishing. Please find inclosed check to continue it to Mrs. Wm. Adams, Mansfield, Ga. It does me good to have my children read it.

I am sending you a clipping from our local paper telling of a treat we had recently and if you can copy it in a little corner others might see it and give us another treat.

J. M. ADAMS.

"ELDER and Mrs. J. M. Adams had the pleasure of entertaining four tourists from New York to Florida last Tuesday night, in the person of Dr. Warren and wife, Elder Pickett and the widow of Elder McConnell. It was a treat to them because of former meetings together on his trips up north and east. Such friendship, connecting the north and south together, is worth while. Elder Adams told them publicly his home and the city of Monroe were on the main road to Florida and he was looking for more of the same kind to stop with them in passing."

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

W. M. Little having changed his address from Fordyce, Ark., to Thornton, Ark., requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1925.

EDITOR

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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REVELATION XII.

WE wish to submit for the consideration of our readers at this time some thoughts on the twelfth chapter of Revelation. The first six verses read as follows: "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days." The words "heaven" and "earth" in this chapter, as in other places in the Scripture, represent the church and the world, the elect and the nonelect. In the prophecy of Daniel is recorded this language: "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven [the church], and among the inhabitants of the earth [the peoples of the world]; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" The great wonder which appeared in heaven (the legal heaven), or the church under the law, was this woman, representing the gospel church among the Jews, and whereas she had been under the law, she now appears clothed with the sun, or the righteousness of Jesus, exalted above the law, the moon being under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars, or the called of God in every one of the twelve tribes of Israel. In the beginning of the previous chapter John says there was given him a reed, like unto a rod, and the angel stood saying, "Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months." Jesus had declared while upon earth, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold [the Jewish fold]: them [Gentiles] also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." Jesus was born of the Jews, and it was the church under the law that travailed, and pained to be delivered, and she brought forth a man child, Christ the Lord, the Word manifested in the flesh, as the firstborn among many brethren; it was he who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron; it was he who was caught up unto God, and to his throne. While being of the seed of Abraham, nevertheless he possessed Gentile blood, as is seen in the lineage

through which he came, and the object of his coming was that he should be made manifest as the fruitful bough to run over or break down the middle wall of partition and reconcile both (Jew and Gentile) unto God in one body by the cross, thus saving his people out of every kindred, and tribe, and tongue. That he was to encounter the opposition of the power of the beast is clearly set forth by the second wonder which appeared in heaven (the church): "And behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his head. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born." This red dragon with his seven heads and ten horns typifies the beast, with its perfect organization so far as it is humanly possible to devise, and the ten horns, the offspring. In the seventeenth chapter of this same book we are told more about "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth," and the mind which had wisdom declared, "The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. * * * And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast." "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him [the beast], whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." The city of ancient Rome was built upon seven hills, and the power that was drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, is to-day reaching forth its subtle and poisonous fangs into all the earth as never before in the history of the world. John tells us in the thirteenth chapter, the beast which he saw rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion. He is so terrible he requires the worst of three, or the worst in all three dispensations combined, to describe him. The leopard is subtle, being able to take on many forms in catching its prey, but once it is caught, like the bear it is ferocious, and then goes forth as the lion, monarch of all it surveys. The woman when she had brought forth her male child fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days, the same length of time that the holy city was to be trodden under foot, or forty and two months, but her place was prepared of God. The Lord had spoken by the mouth of the prophet Hosea, saying, "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope; and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt." After the baptism of Jesus he "was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the devil." Likewise the woman after her deliverance must go into the wilderness, but her spiritual Joseph has gone down ahead of her and prepared a place for her, and stored up for her needs, whereby she is to be fed and nourished. The seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth and eleventh verses set forth the great battle and the glorious victory, reading as follows:

"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." This was the time prophesied of by Daniel when he said, "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be written in the book." It is good, indeed, that it is written, unalterably fixed and cannot be changed, that "the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not." Jesus fought the battle single-handed, so to speak, and of the people there was none with him, yet God sent his angels to minister unto him, and he conquered him who had the power of death by overcoming death and robbing the grave of its victory, thus triumphing gloriously, leading captivity captive, and bringing his bride out from under the condemnation of the law of sin and death, putting an end to legalism, so that the place of the beast is found no more in that heaven, every stone of that legal temple having been taken down and not one allowed to remain, and none being able to lay anything to the charge of God's elect, she is now presented as being all fair, without spot, wrinkle or any such thing, and in this gospel heaven there is heard a loud voice, saying, "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night," and herein is the beast overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony. That old serpent, the devil, is ever on the alert, working day and night, accusing the brethren, and the only way in which he can be overcome or driven back is by the word of God. We must speak with the authority and in the name of our blessed Lord and Master, saying, Get thee behind us Satan, before he obeys. "And they loved not their lives unto the death." It is in the gospel heaven, or church, where one is made to hate his own life for the sake of Christ, and when this is being experienced, salvation is come, and strength and the power of his Christ is in evidence. Such an one is asking, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength?" Her Beloved's reply is, "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." "Therefore rejoice, ye heavens [Jew and Gentile], and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabiters of the earth, and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."—12th verse. "And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the

wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent."—13th and 14th verses. While unto the beast is given power to persecute the church and afflict and try her in every conceivable manner, as we see in the type of Job, yet how wonderful it is that God gives her (the church) the two great wings of faith and hope, upon whose pinions she is at times borne aloft and soars above, far from the beggarly elements of this world and from the face of the serpent. It is while she is upon these wings of faith and hope that she views the wonderful works of God in the salvation of his people and she flies away into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time. It is only for the time which God hath appointed, for it hath been declared that "while the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." Therefore, the third part, or the part which is upon the earth, he will bring through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried, the result of which shall be "they shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God."

The last three verses of this chapter read as follows: "And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood, after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." To our mind, this water represents false doctrines, and they are being cast forth to-day in such enormous quantity that nothing short of a flood could express it, and they are full of blasphemy, not only among the Modernists, so-called, but the Fundamentalists, as well; not only the mother of harlots, but her offspring likewise "have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast." We believe there is a purpose for everything under the sun, that there is not one too many denominations, secret orders, or anything else more than is needed in the plan of our God to shew forth his majesty and the honor and glory of his name. The psalmist said, All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord, and thus we see Him bringing praise unto himself through overcoming the "great whore that sitteth upon many waters" and causing her (the earth) to open her mouth and swallow up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. We are told, "The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." However strange it may seem to our natural reasoning, there is a purpose for them all, and if God raises up a Pharaoh it will be to the praise and glory of his grace. "The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." The warfare between error and truth shall be waged as long as the world stands, and the remnant of her seed, the militant church, which is only a small part of God's people, shall ever have to fight the good fight of faith as long as she keeps the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ, but though the beast (all error combined) make war with

the Lamb, "the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful."

We leave the subject for the analysis and meditation of our readers, hoping the Lord will supply all needed wisdom, and give us courage and strength to stand as faithful witnesses and to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. He hath delivered, doth deliver, and who we trust will yet deliver, and with him as our Shepherd we shall not want. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our life and we shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Farewell for 1925, and may the God of all comfort and grace and truth keep each and every one throughout the remainder of the pilgrim journey here below, taking them unto himself on high when their day is over, where they shall praise him in an endless eternity, is our prayer for Christ's sake. Amen.

R. L. D.

WATCH YOUR DATES.

We wish to request our subscribers when sending in their subscriptions to see that the date on the little pink slip bearing their address is changed. If not changed, please let us know immediately (for that signifies you have not been given credit for the money sent) and we will look into the matter. By consulting that date you can tell at a glance to what time your subscription is paid. Dec. 25 means that your subscription is paid to December, 1925; June 24 means your subscription is only paid to June, 1924, &c. If you are in arrears we would much appreciate a remittance from you.

CLOSE OF VOLUME NINETY-THREE.

With this issue of the Signs of the Times is completed ninety-three years of service in defense of the doctrine so dear to the Old School Baptists, and we suppose our readers are expecting a statement from us as to the present condition of the publication, so we will endeavor to give you a short account of the business during the past year, which has been very much the same as the years that have gone before. We have endeavored to give our readers only such matter as would be for their edification, peace and comfort, and have tried to avoid all subjects that would cause strife and contention among our people, and hope our efforts have been of some little benefit to our brethren and friends. We have received letters of commendation and encouragement, also some of censure and dissatisfaction. We know it is impossible to please all, and that we are as prone to err as the sparks are to fly upward, so ask you to cover our shortcomings with the mantle of charity and remember we are but dust.

Occasionally we receive communications telling of some trouble in the churches in the vicinity of the writer and expressing the desire that we publish them, but we do not feel it is profitable or comforting to the saints to spread such controversy and so have not given them space in our columns, but we always take much pleasure in publishing pleasant and encouraging news from any church or individual.

Our subscribers have as a rule continued with and sustained us with their support during the year, and our subscription list remains about the same as it has been for the past few years. Our receipts for the year are not equal to those of last year, as there are many who have

neglected to pay their subscriptions, which is rather discouraging, and we respectfully request all such to do what they can toward paying what is due, as we need the money to carry on the publication. During the year we sent notices to those who were in arrears from December, 1923, with the request that they forward the amount due, but many of them paid no attention to the request, which meant a heavy loss to be borne by us.

We are inclosing in each copy of this issue a subscription blank as a convenient form for remitting your subscription for next year (as well as for past dues), and hope each subscriber will not only renew their own subscription, but will endeavor to send us at least one new subscriber. A little effort on the part of each would mean a great deal to us and would make our burden much lighter. When sending your remittance please be sure and have money orders, &c., made payable to J. E. Beebe & Co., MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., for if they are drawn on some other post office they have to be sent to the office on which they are drawn to be cashed. This applies especially to foreign orders. Please examine the date on the slip bearing your address, and if your subscription is not paid do what you can for us. Subscriptions are supposed to be paid in advance, but we have never held strictly to that rule, because we have many good subscribers who are in the habit of paying at the expiration of the year, and were we to adopt the rule of discontinuing the paper at the time their subscriptions expired we would lose their support entirely, so we do not stop sending the paper to subscribers when their time is out unless notified to do so. If you do not wish your paper continued to you please send us word to that effect and we will take your name from our list, but we hope you will not order it discontinued if you can possibly avoid it. If you do not notify us to discontinue and allow the paper to continue coming to you it is not only unfair but dishonest to refuse to pay for it. During the year we received notices from some to discontinue their paper at the end of the year, and we suggest that they reconsider the matter and see if they cannot feel to continue with us for the year to come, but if they still feel they do not want the paper during the year 1926, and will send us word telling us so, we will discontinue sending it. We would rather continue sending the paper and wait a reasonable length of time for our pay than to take your names from our list.

We wish to thank our brethren and friends who have contributed toward the SIGNS, either financially or by sending matter for publication, and for their kind forbearance with our poor efforts. We also thank our editors, who have done so much toward keeping the SIGNS free from the "isms" and false doctrines of the present day; in fact, we thank all who have in any way been of assistance in continuing the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and hope that our dear Lord will put it into their hearts to continue their support. May he be with and bless us in our work, for unless he be our help and strength our efforts are worthless and must fail.

We now say, Farewell for 1925.

J. E. B. & CO.

BROTHER George W. Jackson, R. D. 3, Fayetteville, Ga., requests us to say in the SIGNS that he would like to have a Minute of each of the Associations, as he wishes to learn of the Old Baptists scattered over the country.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Deacon C. M. Turman.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the Ebenezer Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 14th, 15th and 16th, 1925, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once again we are allowed the privilege of sending you our message. Since last we met we have had our joys and sorrows, and yet we feel as the years go by to be more deeply rooted in the election and predestination of God, and will call your attention for a short time to the following words, not altogether Scripture: "Our afflictions are for our good." For had we not been smitten for our transgression we would have had no realization of our condition, neither would this fleshly nature had need to cry for mercy. Our afflictions have caused us to see our state and standing before God, and all who are thus afflicted realize their smallness before him, and are comforted in God's word. Those who are afflicted for their transgressions are the ones he came to redeem; they are the ones that feel the need of this mercy, and are as new-born babes, helpless to place themselves in his favor. While this is the case we have no desire to be found in wrongdoing. There is continually a warfare in us, and evil is present, yet we know everything is in his hands. We know it is our duty as citizens to be moral, to live clean lives, to be useful to our community, to do the best we can, but this is of no importance to merit his salvation. He first afflicts us, and causes us to cry, and, as the babe, scarcely know what we cry for, only we want mother near; we need the gentle touch and care of the protecting arms, and yield ourselves to their care, and realizing our affliction have no confidence in ourselves. Our standing is laid bare, and we know if he had not first loved us, and arrested us from our course we, too, might have been thinking we were helping to do the thing for others he alone can do. If not mistaken, our afflictions have caused us to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and have increased our hope in him, and may we day by day grow stronger in the knowledge of his righteousness and be found ready to humbly do his bidding. May his mercy be our portion through life. Amen.

Written by order of the Corresponding Meeting, this September 26th, 1925.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Mod.

K. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

(Written by Elder H. C. Ker.)

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church, October 21st, 22nd and 23rd, 1925, to the churches of which she is composed, grace, mercy and peace from our Lord Jesus Christ be unto you.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—In this, our annual Circular Letter, we desire to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance. The apostle Peter wrote to this end, and the apostle John wrote unto the churches because they knew the truth. There is nothing better than the children be established in the doctrine of God our Savior. Preaching is to this end, and all writing, along scriptural lines, should be done with the same thought in view. Genealogies, old wives' fables, topics of the day, &c., amount to nothing, either in preaching or writing. It is good that the associations of our correspondence know where the churches composing the

Salisbury Association stand on doctrine. We desire correspondence when we are all in agreement, but how "can two walk together, except they be agreed?" Some churches claiming to be Old School Baptists in different parts of our land have departed from the doctrine, in some respects, held by genuine Old Baptists. Correspondence with such is a menance rather than a benefit. It behooves us therefore to be careful along such lines. Should any church of our Association not believe in salvation wholly by grace, that member would not be considered one of us. Should any church not believe in predestination of all things, whatsoever come to pass, that member would not be reckoned in fellowship with us. Should not the same be with reference to associations of our correspondence? The doctrine of salvation by grace is no new idea, having been preached to the sinner in the garden of Eden. When Adam transgressed God's law he brought condemnation and death upon himself and all his posterity. Hence being dead in sin he could do nothing to undo his transgression, and each of his posterity has been and is as helpless as was he. This being the condition of all men it was necessary, if saved at all, to be saved by grace. Grace therefore is the unmerited favor of God. Thus the sinner, helpless, dependent and wholly passive, received the grace of God through the unspeakable gift of God. Where then is boasting? Excluded forever by the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. This salvation is for time and eternity, nor can it be divided into classes fitted and named according to the notions of men. Therefore is blessedness in obedience to God's law, written in the heart, but not reward for obedience. It is said of Jesus: "His reward is with him, and his work before him." So with God's children their work, or duty, is before them always in life and their reward is with them. Paul tells that we are saved by grace; not only that we were saved, but are saved daily and hourly by grace; not of works, lest any man should boast. No man was saved by the deeds of the law, sacrifices under the law never made the comers thereunto perfect, all such things were shadows of better things to come, of which Christ is the body. It is equally true that men are not saved now, in this age of the world, by their obedience, let their works be what they may. The churches of the Salisbury Association believe fully in salvation by grace for time and eternity, and during all the years of their existence have never been moved from this solid foundation. It is also true that they believe and preach predestination of all things. God's foreknowledge embraced all things, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, principalities or powers. The setting up kings and the falling of sparrows were all in his plan, and everything comes to pass in the order designed by him. If God predestinated salvation through his Son, he also predestinated the death of man in order that he might be saved. This embraces the existence of the devil and all his work. If God could, as he did, predestinate the death of his only begotten Son by wicked hands, and bring about every detail of the whole matter by his determinate counsel, could he not predestinate all other acts of men and not be the author of sin? If God decreed that Solomon should be the son of David, that he should build the house unto the Lord, did he not also predestinate that Uriah's wife should be the mother of Solomon? There is not the slightest question about the matter in the minds of the churches

of the Salisbury Association. In the mother the channel through which Uriah's wife became David's wife was determined absolutely; that is, it had to be as it was. David was the sinner, and so confessed it to God, even though it was God's predestination. In the case of Adam's sin, if God had predestinated salvation through Christ, and the matter left to Adam as to whether he sinned or not, and he should have decided not to transgress, God's plan of salvation would have fallen flat to the ground, hence no need of heaven and blessedness of the hereafter. We do not believe in any such god as some men set forth and worship. Our God is the God of purpose as well as the God of grace.

These are some of the fundamental principles upon which our faith and hope are builded and rest. May the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob keep us as he kept them, never allowing us to depart from the living God. Amen.

J. C. MELLOTT, Moderator.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

GEORGE W. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists, now in session with Big Walnut Creek Church, at Topeka, Kansas, September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1925, to the brethren with whom we correspond, sendeth greetings and christian love.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Another year has passed into the annals of time, and through the kind providence of the everlasting and all-wise God we are once more permitted to meet in an associational capacity, to sit together in sweet communion with the Holy Spirit, feasting together on that heavenly manna which cometh down from above, and which is unto us as a fountain of water in dry places, for which we desire to raise our voices in songs of adoration and praise to him who is the giver of every good and perfect gift. The ministering brethren have ably declared the full counsel of God, salvation by grace, and we have been comforted and built up in that holy faith, and made to trust that we are still the objects of God's love and tender mercy. We have the blessed assurance that "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his," and he will never leave nor forsake his people. His tender care is continually round and about them, wherever they may be led. He is our all in all, our Rock and our salvation, and unto whom be our unceasing songs of praise, both now and forever.

Our next session is appointed to be held with West Union Church, near Meriden, Kansas, beginning on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1926, where we hope to hear from you again in sweet fellowship and love. May he who hath watched over Zion, who hath kept us as the apple of his eye, be with you, directing your footsteps all down through the journey of life, and eventually bring you unto himself in that world that shall never end, is our prayer for Jesus' sake. Farewell.

L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Henry Hayman, Md., $1.00; F. B. Hanover, Ohio, $5.00; A. B. Corder, W. Va., $2.00; C. S. Ratliff, Ky., $1.00; John F. Davis, La., $24.00; Mrs. E. J. Bolton, Mo., $2.00; G. A. Dundas, Cal., $1.00; Jesse Ellis, Ohio, $3.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Charles W. Vaughn, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Elwood P. Blackwell, Skillman, N. J., their daughter, Miss Emma S. Blackwell, to Mr. Clarence A. Opie, of East Orange, N. J., July 18th, 1925.

By same, at Library Hall, Trenton, N. J., Mr. Randolph P. Hyde, of 427 Schiller Ave., Trenton, N. J., and Miss Charlotte L. Matlack, of 531 Stuyvesant Ave., Trenton, N. J., August 8th, 1925.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Margaret Banes White, our sister in Christ, died October 23rd, 1925, at her home, Leesburg, Virginia. She was born in the city of Philadelphia, Pa., September 29th, 1836, and was the daughter of Thomas and Sarah Bitting Banes. Her sole surviving near relative is her nephew, Robert Banes, who lives near Media, Pa., and who is the son of her brother Charles. Her only sister, Mary Banes, died several years ago. Sister White married Elder E. V. White, of Leesburg, Va., in November, 1894. After his death in January, 1907, there seemed to fall upon her spirit great concern regarding the churches served by Elder White, she was extremely anxious that the appointments be kept up, and to this end she took it upon herself to write to different Elders from time to time requesting them to visit the churches. Her efforts were blessed of the Lord to the good of the churches so that the houses of worship were not closed and the meetings were kept up, neither did any of her brethren or sisters accuse her of officiousness, but welcomed readily her efforts in their behalf. We are confident that the gift of the Holy Ghost is not confined to the male sex in the churches of the Lord's Christ, for there is neither male nor female in the kingdom of God. When very young in years, she had become a member of the Fourth Baptist Church, in the city of Philadelphia, and became very active in the Sunday-school work in that denomination. It pleased God, however, to reveal in her the Lord Jesus and she was shown very plainly the errors of the Arminian system of religion. This work of the Holy Ghost went on within her until she could no longer remain in the membership of the Missionary Baptists, lost all fellowship for them and wrote to the clerk of that body to erase her name from the membership roll of that organization. Some time after this, she was convinced by the demonstration of the Spirit within her that the Old School Baptist Church is the church of God and was led to ask a home among them. She was baptized by Elder William J. Purington on the second Sunday in August, 1869, into membership with the Southampton Church, Bucks County, Pa. Here she remained until after her marriage to Elder White in 1894, when she moved her membership by letter to the New Valley Church, Loudoun Co., Va., of which her husband was then pastor. These churches have never had a more devoted member nor one who by the grace of God was more consecrated to their welfare. She lived for her brethren, and the truth of God as it is in Christ was the very breath of life to her. About five years ago she lost her natural sight. This rendered her more dependent upon others, so far as getting about was concerned, so that her attendance upon her meetings became less and less during the past five years, until finally she was not able to get out at all; but no one ever heard her complain or murmur at her affliction. She accepted it meekly and patiently as the will of God concerning her. Often I would ask her if she had any message to send to her church-meetings and she would almost invariably say, "Give them my love and tell them I am still a sinner, but, I hope, saved by grace." Soon after she lost her sight she said she saw written across her room in letters of living light the words, "Be ye reconciled to God." She felt that this came forcibly to her from the Lord commanding her to be reconciled to her affliction and to whatever burden he might put upon her. She was given grace to humbly obey this command and showed in her conversation that the word of reconciliation had assuredly been ministered unto her. I tried to speak from these words at her funeral, but the effort was feeble and very unsatisfactory to the writer. I also read the 103rd Psalm, because she so often quoted various expressions from that Psalm. She had much to say about the goodness and mercy of God toward her. Also, the hymn in Beebe's collection beginning, "A debtor to mercy alone," was read. She could and did repeat this whole hymn to me word for word not many months before she died. It was one of her favorites. We have every reason to believe our sister is at rest in the presence of her Savior, for she was enabled to leave behind her an abundant evidence of her acceptance in the Beloved. She was buried in the cemetery at Leesburg by the side of the dear husband and companion whom she had loved so well and with whom she had spent, as she said, the twelve happiest years of her life. May the Lord be with and console all who mourn in both the church and family circles. She devotedly loved her stepchildren, the children of Elder White by his first marriage, and often said they could not have done more for her comfort and welfare had they been her own children. Messrs E. B. White and B. V. White and their families rendered her the most loving attention within their powers and omitted nothing that could possibly promote her well-being. The Lord gave her to us and now he has taken her to himself. He has taken but his own. Let his name be praised. He doeth all things well.

L.

Brother **John William Solloway** was born in Birmingham, England, September 13th, 1861, the son of John and Mary (Mills) Solloway, died at his home, 8 Fonda Ave., Oneonta, N. Y., May 17th, 1925, after an illness of only eight hours, from shock. He came to this country when a lad of fourteen and settled in Meredith, Delaware Co., N. Y., and later was employed at Kortright, coming from there to Oneonta in 1887, where he had since resided. He was married July 10th, 1889, to Emily A. Tamsett, of Oneonta, and she with four children, Stuart Solloway, of Mt. Vernon, Mrs. F. L. Sculley and Gilbert T. Solloway, of Oneonta, Howard G. Solloway, of Gloversville, and four grandchildren survive him. He also leaves two sisters, Mrs. John Haynes, of Rome, and Mrs. A. Brownell, of Missouri. Brother Solloway received a good hope in Christ and united with the Old School Baptist Church at Otego, N. Y., having been baptized by Elder Balas Bundy January 5th, 1896. Soon after he was chosen deacon, which office he filled until called from earth. He was upright and honorable in all his dealings with his fellow-men. He was seldom absent from the meetings of the church, and we feel our loss greatly.

Funeral services were held at his home May 20th, and were largely attended, his pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, of Binghamton, N. Y., conducting the services. Burial was in the family plot in Riverside Cemetery, Oneonta.

ALSO,

Sister **Alveline French Studwell** died at her home at Stamford, Conn., May 18th, 1925. She was born at Otego, N. Y., January 4th, 1852, the second daughter of George M. and Christianna (Taylor) French. She united with the Otego Old School Baptist Church September 7th, 1873. She was married to David W. Studwell, of Stamford, Conn., September 26th, 1877, and that place was ever after her home. She used often to attend meetings at New York city. Her husband and only son had preceded her in death, and she was left lonely indeed. She was also the last of her father's family.

Her funeral was held May 20th, with burial in Stamford Cemetery beside her husband and son.

ALSO,

Sister **Harriet N. Harkness** died at the home of her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. James Downey, Oneonta, N. Y., August 31st, 1925. She was born at Andes, N. Y., February 14th, 1837, a daughter of Francis and Prudence O'Connor. After some years spent in teaching she was married February 18th, 1863, to James Harkness, and until the death of her husband in 1907 she lived continually on the Harkness homestead in Kortright, since that time she has lived with her children. She is survived by six children: Edward O., of Delhi, Irving, of Denton, Kan., Mrs. Fanny Downey, of Oneonta, W. Grant, of Cato, Mrs. Anna Pick, of Delhi, and Herbert E., of Millet, Alberta, Canada. Sister Harkness was a faithful member of the Otego Old School Baptist Church, having been received by letter from the Middletown, Delaware County, Church in September, 1879.

Funeral services were held September 3rd, 1925, and were conducted by her pastor, Elder D. M. Vail. Burial was in the family plot in North Kortright, N. Y.

ALSO,

Sister **Mary E. Wilbur** died at the home of her daughter in Otego, N. Y., September 16th, 1925. She was born in Albany County July 21st, 1839, a daughter of Elder Almiron and Louisa (Pettit) St. John. She was married September 16th, 1857, to Johnson Wilbur. Since his death, in 1913, she has lived with her children. She is survived by four children: George A. Wilbur, Mrs. Paul R. Jennings, Mrs. William H. Houghston and Mrs. May Norton, all of Otego, N. Y. Sister Wilbur was a member of the Otego Old School Baptist Church, having been baptized by her father (Elder A. St. John) November, 1870, and ever after remained a faithful member of the church.

Funeral services were held September 19th, with burial in Evergreen Cemetery, at Otego.

Written by request.

ROSE TAMSETT LEONABD.

Dr. G. W. Webb was born January 1st, 1834, in Monroe County, Georgia. He took up the study of medicine, and practiced at Shady Dale, Jasper County, Georgia, until the Civil War, and when a call came for men to defend the country he joined Captain Henderson's company, and was mustered into service at Griffin, Georgia, and while camped there he had a relapse of measles, which nearly cost him his life, but good friends took charge and nursed him back to health. He then returned to his command in Virginia, where he remained during the remainder of the war. He went through many fierce battles and suffered many hardships. At the close of the war he returned to my father's home and was one of the family for six months, and his jolly, good nature made him a welcome guest. In November, 1865, he moved back to near Shady Dale and resumed the practice of medicine. October 16th, 1866, he married Miss Mattie Davidson, who was a relative of my uncle, Aris Newton, and to that union the following children were born: Lumpkins, Maggie, Lizzie, Lucy, Josie, Fannie, Robert, George, Charles, James and Annie. All are living except James, who died in infancy, and Lucy, who was a trained nurse, and superintendent of Lucy Webb Hospital, at Griffin, Georgia, where she in the discharge of her duties contracted tuberculosis, which won the victory over

her. She was a noble young woman. This grieved him much. His dear wife preceded him several years. A wife indeed was she, one who had many noble traits of character, and these two walked the walk of life together in such manner as to have the love and respect of all who were so fortunate as to have them for neighbors. No couple raised a better and more respectable set of children than they. Uncle united with the Primitive Baptist Church forty-five or fifty years ago, and a more consistent member no church ever had. He was in a way a leader among his people, and was gifted in seeing the working of the good Spirit in his brethren, bringing out the gifts he saw in them. One of the ablest Elders in his church was ordained at his move to have him set apart to this work. He loved music, and in his early life was a leader in music. A good man has gone. Children, emulate his example, for it is a great heritage.

We are so happily constituted that when we lose a relative or a good friend we can only see the virtue of such an one. In this case, in trying to portray the many good qualities of my deceased relative, my uncle, my effort is incapable of doing justice to the subject, however I desire to contribute such as I have. He was the youngest son of seven brothers of a family of thirteen children. He had six sisters. One sister, younger, died in December, 1924, at the age of eighty-nine years. My mother was his sister, and no better woman ever lived. She died in 1903.

Written by one who loved him.

J. W. NEWTON.

Elder Charles Bogardus was born November 19th, 1843, in Tompkins County, N. Y., where he lived nearly all his natural life, which ended October 12th, 1925. He was united in marriage to Miss Frances Lane of the same county April 1st, 1862. They lived happily together for over sixty-three years, and now he is taken and she is left sad and lonely. Besides his wife he is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Bertha Beard, and one granddaughter, Mrs. Victor Borst, Jr., and one brother. Elder Bogardus received a hope in Christ at the age of twenty-six years, and was received and baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Caroline, or White Church, in Tompkins County. After a few years of faithful and loyal service the church saw a more beautiful and wonderful gift had been bestowed upon him by the God of heaven, and he was ordained in the same church to the full work of the ministry November 11th, 1884, which position he filled as long as health permitted. He was pastor of several churches, among which was his home church, Burdette, Brookdale and others. For over twenty years he traveled many thousand miles each year to fill appointments, visit associations, &c. Much of which was with his faithful horse, as those years were not in the time of automobiles and good roads. January 16th, 1921, he sustained a shock, from which he never recovered, but he rallied and his ambition did not leave him, and in the last few years he did considerable work in garden, &c., with his one hand, the other being paralyzed and helpless. His last sickness was of but few days duration, and his mind was clear to the last. His companion and sister in the church, who has ever been a faithful helpmeet, both in the home and church, is left to mourn, but not as those without hope. The daughter is with her.

Elder George Ruston, of Kelly Corners, N. Y., was called, and used as a text John xiv. 1, 2, to the comfort of the family and friends. Services were held at the house, which was well filled and showed the high esteem in which he was held.

Written by request.

(MRS.) ADDIE LIVINGSTON.

Emily Hallena Gipson passed quietly and peacefully away, at the age of 71 years, 2 months and 24 days. She was born in Pontotoc County, Mississippi, July 23rd, 1854, came with her mother and family to Titus County, Texas, at about the age of twelve years, and was married to Solon Gipson in Titus County January 9th, 1873. Nine children were born to this union, five boys and four girls. There are four boys and two girls still living. She had been in poor health for some time, but was able to go about, and was not confined to her bed until a few minutes before the end came. She never murmured nor complained, and would not consent to call a doctor. In fact, we did not think she was very sick, and oh how unexpected the end came, and how sad and lonely we feel without her. She was a devoted wife and mother, and was a firm and sound Old Baptist believer, having joined the church of her choice, with her husband, in July, 1890, and was baptized by Elder J. H. Weeks. Our humble home was always a home for God's servants, and she never tired of waiting on them, and was always glad to have them visit us. She is gone to that bright world above, and there we hope to meet her, where parting is no more. She leaves her loving husband, six children, twenty-six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren to mourn.

The funeral service was conducted by Elder William Phillips. We sang "How firm a foundation," and brother Phillips read the twenty-third Psalm, and preached an able discourse to a large congregation of relatives and friends, after which the precious one was laid to rest in the old Chatfield Cemetery, there to await the resurrection morn. May the good Lord bless all who mourn, and may our last days be our best days. Farewell.

SOLON GIPSON.

Harry W. Boyd was born July 11th, 1845, and died October 22nd, 1925, at the home of his son, Charles Boyd, Centerburg, Ohio. May 10th, 1868, he was united in marriage to Sarah C. Biggs, who departed this life May 8th, 1911. To that union were added three children: E. J. Boyd, of Mansfield, Ohio, Charles Boyd, of Centerburg, Lizzie Main, of Delaware, Ohio. Five grandchildren and one great-grandchild, also two sisters, Mrs. Eliza Perfect and Sarah Boyd, both of Sunbury, Ohio, are left to mourn. "Brother Boyd," as we all called him, was a man far above the average, and while never uniting with any church it was his delight to go to the meetings of the Old School Baptists and have them at his home, and he was always ready to defend the doctrine and order of the church. Since the death of his wife, who was a member of the church called Pleasant Hill, near Delaware, Ohio, he has visited me. When I was in Cleveland he always made arrangements to be there on our meeting day. He often spoke of his unfitness to join the church, but was glad of the privilege to meet with them. He seemed to be a picket on the outside fighting the battles and warning the church of the approach of the enemy. During the last year he suffered considerably with heart trouble, which caused his sudden death, which was the way he always wanted to go. The neighborhood has lost a good neighbor, the church a sincere friend, the children a dear father, but we all feel that our loss is his gain. His work is over, well done, thou good and faithful servant. We mourn not as those who have no hope, and bow in humble submission to the will of God who doeth all things well.

The friends of the "Christian Church" offered their meetinghouse, where I tried to comfort the friends by telling them of a wonderful Savior who died for us and rose again, who overcame the world, and that in the morning of the great resurrection we would hear his voice, see him as he is, and be like him, and be satisfied. May the Lord bless the sorrowing ones and enable them to say, Thy will be done. After the discourse the body was taken to the Trenton Cemetery and laid to rest beside the mother, there to await the summons of the Master.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

Mattie Leola Inglet, daughter of brother and sister J. W. Haynes, and wife of T. B. Inglet, was born February 2nd, 1903, married April 14th, 1923, and departed this life September 14th, 1925, leaving an infant daughter four days old. Leola was an affectionate, dutiful daughter, always anxious to do everything she could to make the home a pleasant place, and especially kind to all the Primitive Baptist visitors who frequent the home. More than two years before her death she told her father and her mother she felt that the Savior had graciously pardoned her sins. She attended preaching and conference every opportunity, and told two of her sisters, who are members, that she much desired to unite with the church and be baptized. A feeling sense of unworthiness and poor health kept her away toward the last. She suffered untold agonies for hours before her death, and said often that she knew her only help must come from God. Just before the end she called for her father and asked if he could pray for her. He told her he had been trying to continually, that he was going as far with her as possible, but there was One who had promised to go with her through six troubles, and in the seventh he would not forsake. But her heavenly Father had called, "Child, come home," and she must go. After Elder J. C. Kilgore had spoken to the comfort of the bereaved family we consigned her loved form to rest in the Blake Cemetery, near her father's home, there to await the the blest morn when she shall come forth to meet her Savior and join in eternal praises to his glorious name. To the dear bereaved I would say, Weep not, she is not dead, but sleepeth.

Written by one who loved her.

LIZZIE K. FOSTER.

Sister **Martha Ellen Ogle** died at her home, in Oak Grove, Jackson Co., Mo., October 17th, 1925. At the time of her death she was 80 years, 9 months and 17 days old. She was born December 25th, 1845, in Lynn County, Missouri, the daughter of John Purden, and was one of thirteen children. She grew to womanhood near the town of Purden, Mo., and at about the age of nineteen was united in marriage to Elder R. M. Ogle, to which union twelve children were born. Five children and her aged husband survive her, the children are N. H. Ogle, of Kansas City, Kansas, Mrs. Oliver Groom and L. M. Ogle, of Los Angeles, Cal., Mrs. Dick Bowden, of Paris, Tenn., and R. M. Ogle, Jr., of Oak Grove, Mo. She, with her husband, united with Little Flock Church, Carroll County, Missouri, when they were young, and she ever lived and rejoiced in the faith until her death. She was a good mother, wife, and neighbor. Brother Ogle has lost all, and yet how wonderfully good God has been to him, in blessing him with a good wife for sixty years, and he has great assurance and a good hope that they will spend eternity praising God for his goodness and mercy to them; and you, her children, how wondefully you have been blessed in having a good mother until you were all grown.

Elder M. M. Shumate, of Kansas City, Mo., and the writer were called to conduct the funeral. May the God of all grace be with the aged husband, children, and all who mourn is my prayer.

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A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month corner 5th and 72nd Sts. N. E., in the Seventh Day Adventist church building. Take Green Lake car at 2nd and Yesler Way, get off at Green Lake station, go east two blocks. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

"THE ENGRAFTED WORD."

"WHEREFORE lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."—James i. 21.

What a sacred matter it is for a sinner to know "the grace of God in truth." It is so far beyond that carnal profession of Christ's name. The language "the engrafted word" declares there is something vital and experimental in these matters, and it is my desire to trace these operations of the Holy Ghost, and show how the engrafted word liveth in us, and we in it. Those in whom the word is engrafted are such whom the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning, hath of his will begotten with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. (James 1. 17–18.) These "firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb," (Rev. xiv. 4), these engrafted ones, are not dead trees, but are "begotten" of the Father of lights, quickened sinners, and in this experience of receiving with meekness the engrafted word they are bleeding sinners, sap-flowing branches, in whom is grafted the living word, the words of eternal life. (John vi. 63–68.) The language of the Lord in the new covenant is, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."—Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. And in the words of the Holy Ghost in James it is "the engrafted word." When the Holy Ghost quickeneth a sinner that was dead in trespasses and sins there begins that work of the Lord to put that quickened sinner, that tree, into a preparedness for the word of the truth of the gospel, the doctrine of God our Savior to be engrafted. There are branches of the tree to be cut off, and a cleft to be made in the bleeding branch for insertion of the graft. It is recorded in Acts ii. 37, "They were pricked in their heart." Thus their bleeding, contrite hearts were prepared to receive with meekness, to gladly receive that word. (Acts ii. 41.) If there is a growing up in the unsearchable

riches of Christ there has preceded this, under the teachings of the Holy Spirit, a felt destitution. "The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich: bringeth low, and lifteth up."—1 Sam. ii. 7. It is all meaningless for any one to talk about Christ's unsearchable riches, and that person to have never been brought low to feel the wretchedness of his poverty before God. But O, poor sinner, thy distressed, wounded soul cries unto the Lord for mercy, for food, for clothing, for shelter, and he, our gracious God, will hear the cry of the destitute and not despise their prayer. Thou art ready to receive Christ Jesus, the living Word, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Oh when he is thus engrafted what a sacred growing up there is in him in all things. In our ignorance, oh how foolish we are, we think this doctrine, and that of our God is not just such as we could live in. All this arises from our lack of understanding. And certain matters in Christ's gospel that we were not ready to welcome, that as yet we felt no adhesion to; our God therefore in his time and way by his spiritual husbandry ("Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building."—1 Cor. iii. 9.) prepares us to receive that which in our ignorance in times past was unknown, and when once it is engrafted it is precious, and our life is in it, in its blessedness and consolation. Sometimes the cutting work of the Lord is not in mercifulness, but in his wrath and sore displeasure, not to the saving of the soul, but is expressive of his reprobation to damnation, as when Stephen in his testimony said, "Ye stiffnecked, and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it. When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth."—Acts vii. 51–54. But in sovereign contrast look at the scene on the day of Pentecost. Here we have a people who had crucified Jesus "pricked in their heart." These the Holy Ghost graciously pricked, and shall I say it was more than a wound in the flesh? Those who gnashed upon Stephen with their teeth were cut to the heart, but these to whom Peter was preaching were pricked in their heart. They were now feelingly poor, perishing, dying sinners. Is there any remedy for such? They cry out, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Are they asking for some task to be appointed them, signifying their willingness and ability to attend to the matter, and thus rectify the trouble they have involved themselves in? Ah no! The cry of these pricked in the heart ones, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" was that they felt themselves undone, and did not know what, and could see nothing that could be done. Isaiah cried out, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips [a spiritual leper, Lev. xiii. 45], and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."—Isaiah vii. 5. In the spiritual grafting of the word in the quickened sinner there is a cutting off of branches, a putting off the old man, a crucifying of the flesh with the affections and lusts, and where the flesh is cut off there a cleft is made through the heart of that branch, and into that wounded cleft branch, held open

by a wedge until the graft, "the engrafted word" is put in the cleft, then the grafter removes the wedge, then with what ardent affection the cleft bleeding sinner holds fast the gracious living word. So, on the day of Pentecost those smitten, cleft, bleeding ones, in all contriteness, in all meekness, yes, and with divine gladness received the word. The Holy Ghost engrafted the gospel in them. It lived in them and they lived in it. Just now I am looking to my first experience of the engrafting of Christ's gospel in my distressed heart. The Lord had I felt about cut me all to pieces, and I felt I was a vile transgressor, doomed to the damnation of hell. Mercy I felt could not be for me, I was too base a sinner. But while I was thus feeling to be a lost perishing sinner the Holy Ghost put this into my mind, my thoughts, oh yes, into my heart. I felt my sin-burdened, lacerated heart took hold of it. Took hold of what? Just this: Christ crucified! A little of the sacred depths of Christ, and him crucified, was opened up to me. I saw this was the way of God's mercy, this is how forgiveness of sins flowed to poor guilty sinners, and I felt my humbled, contrite, bleeding heart did cling to the cross of Christ, did flow up with sighs and cries and tears to the crucified Savior. I wept, and cried for mercy, Oh, forgive me, God be merciful to me a sinner for Jesus' sake. I felt thus only can I, a wretched sinner, live, live in reconciliation, in friendship with the Just and Holy (and as I yearned to know him), my merciful God, my Savior.

Some of God's elect before they are called by his grace, to reveal his Son in them, have some natural understanding of some points of doctrine, and may even be talkers about such matters, but it was not so with me. I was acquainted with the historical narratives in the Scriptures, and in some fashion I understood that Christ died on Calvary's cross for sinners, to take them to heaven, but I had no idea of getting there, I did not want to have any thoughts whatever about God, eternity, heaven or hell. As to Christ's imputed righteousness, justification, God's elect people, the oneness of Christ and the church, of the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, of Jehovah's purpose and grace given his elect in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and of his having blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he had chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, of his determinate counsel and foreknowledge, of his predestination of all things, I was in utter ignorance of all such matters. But I feel I can say God engrafted these matters in the life of my spirit, and they live in me and I live in the doctrine of God our Savior, and I still find this engrafting going on in my life unto my God. Having tasted the pardon of my sins through the crucified One I lived in the blessedness of the man whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are covered, yet amidst this comfort I was troubled daily, for I found I was still sinful. I did not want to have a sinful thought; I told the Lord, and found myself needing to be ever supplicating his forgiveness through Jesus' precious blood. I hungered and thirsted after righteousness, but I could not find it in my poor Adamic life. I was ashamed, I was troubled, for I found the hours of the day polluted, that all my righteousnesses were as filthy rags; I had nothing fit to stand in before the Lord. Then in a few months it pleased God to graft into my life unto himself the imputed righteousness of Christ, who is the

Lord our righteousness. (Jeremiah xxiii. 6; xxxiii. 16.) That our Messiah was he who was to finish transgression, and make an end of sin, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness. (Dan. ix. 24.) That his people are made the righteousness of God in him; that he is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Truly the Holy Ghost has grafted this into my life, and now in my hope in Christ our righteousness I hope to be found in him, not having mine own, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. Yes, I must, I have, hope to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints, the robes of the bride, the Lamb's wife. (Rev. xix. 7, 8.) So I frequently sing

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
'Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head.
This spotless robe the same appears,
When ruined nature sinks in years;
No age can change its glorious hue,
The robe of Christ is ever new."

How manifold are the characters that Christ sustains unto his people, in all of which he is precious. (1 Peter ii. 7.) All are so sacred, so needful, so endeared unto us all as they are engrafted; we live unto our God in them. Let me mention a few of them, Christ is our Husband, Redeemer, Physician, High Priest, our Intercessor, Advocate with the Father, our Shepherd, our King, our Forerunner, Leader, the Captain of our salvation, the Bread and Water of life, he is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption; he is the Rose of Sharon, the Lily of the valleys, and were I to mention a hundred names which he in truth is unto his chosen and saved people the half would not be told. Christ is all and in you all. (Col. iii. 11.) Though I can in truth say I have engrafted many of the things of Christ, and I have my life in them unto our God, yet I cannot now with paper and ink write unto you of all these sacred matters. Indeed, read John xxi. 25. Dear child of God, there are those cutting trials and afflictions in which there was a cutting off, the surgery of cutting providences, crosses, losses, bereavements, varied afflictions; yes, there have been periods in our lives when we saw wellnigh every day new straits attending our path, and we wondered how and where the scene would end. There was the cutting off of many fleshly aspirations, those things which to the eyes of our flesh are flourishing branches, but our God is again and again cutting off, taking away this and that. Ah, we sometimes think, Why is this? But the Lord knows the thoughts that he thinks toward us, and it all is in graciousness to the engrafting of his truth in us, and when there is the revealing of the preciousness of Christ, of the mercies of the everlasting covenant, of the immutability of his counsel, when these matters are engrafted, and grow in us, become part of us, and we live in the preciousness of our Beloved, then we are all acquiesence to our afflictions, to our sore trials and temptations, to the cuttings, and woundings, that fitting of us to receive with meekness the word of the Lord that has been engrafted. Oh how the cleft-bleeding branch takes hold of the doctrine of God our Savior. It liveth in the quickened sinner, and the sinner in it, because God has engrafted it. The Lord himself does this grafting in those whom he of his own will hath begotten with the word of truth. No arm or wisdom of the flesh has any part therein. We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus

unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. We are thus the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. I live in this graft, and that graft, yes, all new covenant gospel truth as the Holy Ghost has taken of the things of Christ and shown them, engrafted them in me. (John xvi. 14.) The life of such a tree, of quickened sinners in whom the doctrine of Christ is engrafted, is divine, beautiful, and bears fruit unto God, showing forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into marvelous light. The gospel known in our hearts bringeth forth fruit in us as it doth in all the world, if we know the grace of God in truth. We are transformed by these things thus wrought in us, by the renewing of our mind, that we may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. We have our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. (Rom. vi. 22; xii. 2.) I have in years gone by grafted apple trees. Some years all my grafts would thrive and live, but sometimes an occasional scion I had grafted would not live, or after showing signs of life, and some little growth, it would die; and I have had some grow wonderfully, and then a fierce wind storm would tear, here and there, one of them out before they had gotten firm enough hold, so some of my grafting was unsuccessful, came to nothing. But there is no power can tear out and destroy the engrafted word in God's chosen. It is all skillfully, graciously wrapped up in the mantle of his everlasting love; the Lord will care for these engraftings every moment, and lest any hurt them he will keep them night and day. (Isaiah xxvii. 3.) All the powers and counsels of men and devils or the gates of hell are not able to undo, shall not prevail against the new covenant work of God with his loved and chosen and redeemed people. The Lord does not engraft every word of truth at one time, but from time to time, and sometimes daily there is a grafting in of this and that precious thought in Christ's gospel, so suited to our exercised and longing souls, so our life flows up into these so suitable and satisfying musings that are given us by the Comforter, the Holy Ghost. Ah, then there are periods as though the Husbandman has suspended any further engrafting of the word. Then the natural branches flourish, the things of our flesh appear to outgrow and hide from view those spiritual branches in our lives, and there is but very little life, blossoms or fruits of the Spirit. The word of Christ does not then appear to dwell in us richly, ah, no! but we are feeling poor in our possession of this life of Christ in the soul. I repeat, there are seasons with us when we fear, it would appear the Lord had left off to write his doctrine in our hearts, to engraft his word in us. We still can see this and that in the doctrine in the letter, see it declared in the Scriptures, but that does not suffice. It suffices carnal professors, for that is all they know, the mere letter; the Spirit, life, power, consolation, our precious Christ revealing the things of the Father in the words of eternal life is not in them. Their hearts have never been pricked, they have never been cut and cleft to receive with meekness the engrafted word. But the soul of the quickened sinner craves to know the excellency of the power of the mercies, the lovingkindness, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto the glory of his loved, his chosen, his church, whom he hath blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ according as he hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the

world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. One very blessed engrafting is the hope of the resurrection of the dead, the hope of eternal life, Christ in you the hope of glory. For God hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus. Oh there are times of growing up in earnest expectation of immortality and incorruption, that God hath predestinated us to be conformed to the image of his dear Son. We shall be like our Husband and Savior, we shall see him as he is, and dwell forever in immortal blessedness with him. Amen.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

MATTHEW I. 21.

"AND thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."

With the approaching of the Christmas day, the day we recognize as the birthday of our Lord Jesus Christ, my mind has been led to write a few lines that might connect with the occasion, for which it should be most reverently regarded, for the most wonderful, important purpose it should and does signify to the believers in the hope of eternal life by the sovereign grace and mercy of God, through the life and death, righteousness and perfection of Jesus Christ, who it was said would be born for to "save his people from their sins." In meditating upon this subject, we wonder who is this Jesus? Who are his people? How did, does, or will he save them from their sins? According to the Scriptures, Jesus was the Spirit of God, who in the divine wisdom and mind of God stood as representing a lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Rev. xiii. 8), was in due time born of the virgin Mary, which was before foretold by an angel of the Lord, and that he "shall" save his people from their sins, who was also crucified for this very purpose. I do not believe the Scripture means, teaches or intimates, that Jesus, by the shedding of his pure, holy and righteous blood in the crucifixion, made a way possible, whereby we might be saved, or offered a chance to eternal life, with all the contingencies as advocated by many, but in this act became the "way," the truth and the life (John xiv. 6), the "gift" of God, which is eternal life. (Rom. vi. 23.) In no uncertain measure, or degree of uncertainty in the plan of eternal salvation, but just as positive, sure and final of the accomplishing of God's designs as that he was to be born and his name was to be called Jesus, and that he "shall" save his people from their sins, for to believe otherwise would be to doubt the redeeming efficacy of his blood, the truth of his dying statement, "It is finished," and also the divine eternal wisdom of God in that he should do his Father's will and "save his people from their sins." I do not believe God was deceived in his wisdom when he thought the righteousness of Jesus sufficient for the sins of his people, nor when he designs it to be so, for I do not believe Jesus did just all he could do, then ascended up to heaven, leaving the matter up to the sinner to do or not to do, believe or not believe; that he made a way for their escape from their sins through and by the acts of their own volition of will, their self-righteousness, but saith he, "A body hast thou prepared me." "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God."—Heb. x. 5, 9. "By the which will we are sanctified [set apart], through the offering [sacrifice] of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."—Heb. x. 10. Did Jesus do all the will of his Father? If so, did it perfect the plan of salvation? Surely the sacrifice of Jesus for the remission of

sins was acceptable to the Father, and that there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, and of all the Father had promised, or rather given him in this covenant of redemption, he should lose nothing, but would raise it up the last day. If this work is really finished, as Jesus says it is, man is ransomed from the fall by the sacrifice and now is and abides in Jesus his Savior, therefore he is saved, and there is no condemnation to them that are in him, for he hath forever perfected them that are in him; them he sanctified. (Heb. x. 14.) I am persuaded that no power can separate them from him, for he hath loved them with an everlasting love. No, Jesus did not come into the world to make a way "possible" for the salvation of sinners, but he is the "way," and neither is there salvation in any other way, for there is none other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved, and verily I do believe all his sheep must enter through the "door" into the sheepfold, the house of the Lord, where dwelleth his children, the family of God, the redeemed by the blood of Christ, and he that entereth any other way is a thief and a robber (John x. 1), for God is a jealous God. (Exodus xx. 5.) Neither is Christ divided, nor was Paul crucified for you. (1 Cor. i. 13.) Jesus, who shall save his people from their sins, is their righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Their eternal life is a gift (not offer) of God through Jesus Christ their Lord. "As sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord."—Rom. v. 21. The apostle Paul said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."—1 Tim. i. 15. He did not say he came to offer salvation to any, not even to those who might accept him as their Savior, for it is written, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."—Matt. ix. 13. Him (Jesus) hath God exalted for to be a Prince and a Savior, for to "give" repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. (Acts v. 31.) We have it that the angel said there was one to come to save sinners, the apostle Paul said he did come into the world to save sinners, and Jesus said he came to do his Father's will, and that he finished the work the Father gave him to do, and the Father said he was his beloved Son in whom he was well pleased. Now can we view him as a complete Savior, as forever perfecting them that are in him, or "Shall we look for another?" Children of God, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me [Jesus]," for "the Son of man, hath power on earth to forgive sins." All power in heaven and earth was given unto him, and though you walk through the valley of the shadow of death, you should fear no evil, for he hath promised to be with you even in that hour. I want to say that other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, Jesus Christ crucified, the power of God unto salvation, and upon this rock is the church of God builded, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, for salvation hath God appointed for walls and bulwarks, and the work he has begun he is able and will perfect; being the author, he is also the finisher of the faith of God's children, and being the image and glory of God, upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of God on high. The apostle said he was not ashamed of this gospel, Jesus crucified, the power of God unto salvation, and

said he was determined to know nothing else among his brethren except this doctrine, and by the grace of God he was what he was, believed what he believed, preached what he preached, Jesus Christ crucified, the power and the wisdom of God, and said, If any one, even an angel from heaven, preach any other doctrine let him be accused. For us to deny or limit the power or ability or surety of the saving grace God as was treasured in his Son Jesus Christ, who having appeared once by the sacrifice of himself to put away sin, is to deny the Scriptures, for they are they that testify of him, not against him, of his power, not of his weakness, of his sovereignty, not of his helplessness, for God the Father, having declared the end from the beginning, is not slack concerning his promises, but worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and has said his name should be called Jesus, for he should save his people from their sins. All through the righteousness of Jesus, nothing more nor less, so let them that glory, glory in the Lord, for there is salvation in no other. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin, but we are not cleansed by any works of righteousness which we have done.

L. A. BOAZ.

MEMPHIS, Tennessee.

EAST POINT, Ga., Oct. 31, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Though I feel little and unworthy to thus address you, yet I have no other way of thanking some dear brother or sister for sending me a check for ten dollars except through the SIGNS, but it did me no good. I was not in the house when the mail arrived, and when I came in my wife said, George, you have a ten dollar check sent you through the mail. I asked her where it was, and who sent it. She said, It is on the dresser. I went at once and looked for it, but could not find it. My wife and I searched all through the house, but have never found it. At the time there was only my wife and granddaughter in the house and it is a mystery what became of it, but I thank the dear brother just the same. It would have helped me much in my condition. I have no other way of thanking the dear one who sent it. His name was on the check, but I did not get to see it. There was no letter. I ask him to kindly let me know if the check ever comes back to him.

Dear editors, I thank you for your kindness in sending me the SIGNS so long. Oh that I could get well and pay you for it. May the dear Lord long spare you to feed his lambs, and to stand upon the wall of Zion and cry aloud and spare not, and may you be found contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints in the future as you have in the past. May the dear brethren and sisters continue to write for the SIGNS as the good Lord gives them light and liberty, for they do comfort many of God's little children. The doctrine you preach is food to every heaven-born soul. Our heavenly Father says he has a people in every tongue, kindred and nation, and yea, the sound has gone out into all the world, and they (his people) know the joyful sound, and blessed are they (in the past tense) that know the joyful sound. Our God is all-wise, all-powerful, ever to be adored because he gave his blessed Son, Jesus Christ, to die for the sins of his people. They were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and at the appointed time of the Father he came into these low grounds of sorrow, suffered, wept, bled, died, and forever put away the sins of his people by the sacrifice of

himself. He cried out on the cross, It is finished. As far as the east is from the west so far hath he removed our transgressions from us, and at the appointed time of the Father he will send forth the Spirit of his Son in our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Yes, he has all power and will save his heart's delight, for "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Oh if I could just know I am one among the least little ones that Christ redeemed it would lift many doubts and fears from my mind. Dear friends, did you ever think how safely they are kept? Christ says, I in you, and you in me, and I in the Father. It was the love our Savior had for his people that caused him to die for the sins of his people, the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife. Oh that wonderful love that is stronger than death! I do know I dearly love my brethren and sisters and the doctrine they love; that it is by grace we are saved; that he is a full and complete Savior; but oh is it thus with me?

"'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft is causes anxious thought)
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?

If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse
Who have never heard his name."

Yes, his blood has bought them, dear the cost, and not one shall perish or be lost. He loves his people with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness he draws them. What wondrous love, O my soul, that he would give his sinless life for poor guilty sinners. Oh how thankful we poor sinners ought to be.

Dear friends, I am on my bed in much pain trying to write these few lines, but the pain is so intense I will have to stop. No one but the dear Lord will ever know what I have and am suffering. Dear brethren and sisters, remember me in your prayers to the good Lord, that I may be reconciled and submissive to him in his dealings with poor unworthy me. If my heart deceives me not, I long to depart and be at rest.

Dear editors, if you see proper to publish what I have written please correct all mistakes, and look over my imperfections with charity, and I want to say that if any child of God should get a crumb of comfort from this to give God the glory, and not me, a poor sinner, saved by the precious blood of Christ if saved at all,

G. W. ALMAND.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Dec. 12, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I am near my eighty-first birthday, and have been a reader of the SIGNS for about fifty years, I feel I cannot get along without it, although I am so blind that I cannot read it much myself, but I get others to read it for me. Please give this space in a little corner, that my friends may know my whereabouts. My address is 347 Vance Ave., Memphis, Tennessee.

MARY F. ADAMS.

BELEN, New Mexico, Nov. 24, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I am moving to Belen, New Mexico, will you please change my paper from Mountainair, New Mexico, to Belen, New Mexico, Box 319. If any of the brethren should come this way please stop with us.

P. B. CORLEY.

KERRVILLE, Texas, Dec. 10, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please state through the SIGNS that I wish the clerks of the different associations would send me a Minute of the different associations, as I want to get in touch with the Baptists in the south.

J. B. BOWDEN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1926.

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NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

THERE are three principles of Bible truth which at the present time, and for some years past, have been arousing bitter controversy and provoking strenuous antagonism on the part of those who cannot find it in their hearts to believe these principles; and the past year has witnessed a turning away from these principles on the part of some who for many years have been contending for these principles, but who now in their old age, seem impelled to recant them and to say they now see the error of their way in ever having preached them. These three principles are as follows: the absolute predestination of all things, the eternal vital unity of Christ and the church, and salvation by grace and grace alone. The SIGNS has for ninety-three years, by the grace of God, been enabled to contend for these things, and now at the threshold of our ninety-fourth year it sees no reason to swerve from them. We are not averse to standing still upon these principles, and shall proceed, with God's help, to do so.

First, as to the absolute predestination of all things. We use the word "absolute" because there has been a disposition on the part of some who hate this point of doctrine, to "limit" the Holy One of Israel. Because we believe the Bible to teach that God is wholly unlimited in his sovereignty over all worlds, principalities and powers, therefore we use this word "absolute" to certify our belief in the truth that God is one God and that beside him there is no other, that he is entirely independent of any principle or power outside of his own Godhead, hence he is "absolute," and that being so, he is contingent upon no other than himself. Those who object to the word "absolute" do so on the pretense that we ought not use any other than Bible language in expressing ourselves, but we have noticed that often these very objectors coin other unbiblical expressions to voice their own sentiments, while objecting to our use of the word "absolute." Really, any objection to the word "absolute" is merely a pretense to hide one's aversion to the doctrine itself rather than a genuine zeal for sticking to biblical expressions. Just as soon as those who oppose the doctrine stop limiting the attributes and acts of God, just that soon will we stop using the word "absolute," and not before. Both the London and the Philadelphia Confessions of Faith affirmed that God decreed within himself according to his own eternal purpose and will all things whatsoever come to pass. Is not this absolute predestination? If not, what is it? Both Confessions of Faith also go on to affirm that this does not make God the author of sin. That is just what we say, and have been saying all these years. The doctrine that God decreed freely within himself all things whatsoever come to pass, does not make God the author of sin. Yet our enemies say that preaching absolute predestination makes God the author of sin. It

does not. To be the author of sin, God would have to be the doer of sin. This he is not, and cannot be. Man, not God, is the doer of the sin. Sin is transgression of law. Where there is no law, sin is not imputed. God is under no law, is not accountable unto another than himself, because there is no authority or power higher than himself. Therefore, he does not transgress law, let him do what he will. He cannot sin. But God placed man under law and man broke that law; by the breach of the law came sin, and the man was the doer of the transgression, therefore man is the author of sin. God the Father decreed from before the foundation of the world that salvation should come to the church by his Son Jesus Christ, yet the writer to the Hebrews says that Christ is the author of the salvation. Now, if God predestinated the salvation to come by Jesus Christ and yet Christ, not God, is the author of the salvation, why could not God decree sin to come into the world by man, yet man be the author of the sin? Those who put Christ to death did only what God's hand had determined beforehand to be done, yet that did not make God the author of the death of Christ, nor did that make those who did it any the less accountable to God for their having done it. Predestination does not make void man's accountability for his wicked acts. Our enemies are fond of saying that if God predestinated all the wicked acts of men, therefore God has no right to hold men accountable for what they do. This is looking at things in the light of human reason and these matters cannot be judged that way. The Scriptures plainly teach that God is unlimited in his sovereignty over all things and in his predestination of all things, and the Scriptures just as plainly teach that man is accountable for his transgressions. It is our business to set forth what we understand the Scriptures to teach, it is not our business to reconcile these things with human understanding, nor to try to twist them to suit human intelligence. Some try to make a distinction between God's foreknowledge and predestination, and to say that his foreknowledge comprehends all things but that his predestination does not. This would be to make God unequal in his attributes, and that cannot be, because the Bible says he is equal in all ways. He is not lopsided, he is not more one thing than another; whatsoever God is, he is that altogether, not merely partly so. God's foreknowing all things can mean nothing more nor less than that the "all things" are sure to come to pass just as he foreknew they would, any thing or event which may or not come to pass cannot be known with certainty beforehand. The fact that the Almighty knew beforehand all things is proof positive that those things were sure to occur. These things being sure to occur, what made them sure? Could any other power than God have made them sure to come to pass? The truth is that foreknowledge and predestination must stand or fall together. There can be no foreknowing all things without the predestination of all things.

Second, as to the eternal vital unity of Christ and the church. Those who oppose this blessed truth fail to see that it is the key to the mediatorial and intercessory work of the Lord Jesus. Our enemies love to change this word "unity" to "union" and then charge us with holding to the "eternal vital union" of the Christ and his people. This we do not advocate. We know, as well as our enemies do, that "unity" and "union" are different. We have never contended that Christ and his people have been

eternally in union experimentally and actually. This we do not believe. The Father gave the Son power over all flesh in order that the Son should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him, this eternal life in Christ is and was always the life of the church, and was treasured in the Son for all his people from before the foundation of the world. In this wonderful sense of life-oneness is the eternal vital unity of Christ and his people. He and his people are vitally one, and have been so from eternity. This is why Christ could and did come into the world and take upon himself his people's transgressions and die to redeem them from their sins. He did not, and could not, do this for the whole race of Adam, because he did not contain within himself the eternal spiritual life of any others than those whom the Father gave him in the covenant of electing grace. Of this elect people chosen in him, Christ was the Head and Surety. It was as Surety, not as substitute, that he came to offer himself for the transgressions of his people chosen in him. Every one of his elect whose life was hid in him from eternity were in Adam dead in transgression. These were held for ransom under the condemnation of divine justice, and had not a thing wherewith to meet the law's demands. Thus it behooved Christ to suffer for them, because the Father had made the Son their Surety. Inasmuch as the debtor could not pay the debt the Surety had to pay it, and did pay it; therefore, releasing his bankrupt people from under the demands of divine justice and raising them up from death in sin to live in his righteousness. It has always seemed to us that to use the word "substitute" in connection with the sacrificial atonement of the Lord is dishonoring to him. A substitute is never so good as the genuine article, as all of us found out during the late war when we were required to use so many substitutes of different kinds. It seems to us that "Surety" is a more appropriate word to use with reference to Jesus' work than the word "substitute." Had Christ not been vitally one with his people in the covenant of grace from before the foundation of the world he could not have assumed their debts as their Surety. Thus it seems to us that without a clear understanding of the vital unity of Christ and his people there cannot be a proper understanding of the atonement.

Third, as to salvation by grace and grace alone. It used to be said that all Baptists were a unit upon this point of salvation, however much they might differ on other points, but that is true no longer. Of late years a disposition has shown itself among those calling themselves "Old School Baptists" to speak of two or more salvations, instead of one salvation, thus calling one a "time" salvation and the other an "eternal" salvation. This subdivision of salvation into "time" and "eternal" is unwarranted. There is no authority in Scripture for any such splitting of hairs. The experience of salvation which comes to Gods' people while here in this time world is a revelation to them of their eternal salvation, and is not another salvation. In order to salvation, there must be something to be delivered from. We do not understand what is meant by talking about a salvation in eternity. When God's people shall be transported from this world to the heavenly and eternal world of glory, will there be any sinners there to be saved? Will there be any sin or death there to be saved from? Certainly not. Then to talk about being saved in eternity is absurd. God's people experience their sal-

vation here in this time state, and it is their eternal salvation in Christ Jesus being made manifest to them, it is not another or different salvation than eternal salvation. All the salvation which the children of God ever receive is alone through the grace of God in Christ Jesus their Lord. Whether we save ourselves from this untoward generation, whether we work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, whether we save ourselves by taking heed to ourselves and to the doctrine, whether we are saved from error by the foolishness of preaching: all these things are God's mercies to us, and are by the grace of God coming to us through the merit and sufficiency of the blessed Christ of God. To say that we can do any of these things in our own strength and of our own creature efforts, is to say what is not true. The flesh did not begin the work of salvation and cannot carry it on, but God who begins this good work in his people will perform it to the day of Jesus Christ. It is by grace we are saved, not "were" saved; by grace we are being saved. If any of the Lord's people are saved from delusions and false doctrine through the work of the ministry, it is grace that does the saving. Grace in the preacher brings about the preaching, grace in the hearer effects the hearing and grace working effectually causes the believer to take heed thereunto. There is no salvation for God's children anywhere outside of Christ Jesus. He is their "one" salvation. His is the "one" name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved, not only whereby we shall be saved in the future, but the only "one" whereby we must be saved now, every moment, every hour, every day and always. Woe unto any child who dares trust in any other salvation than that which is for us in Christ Jesus the Lord.

As we begin this new year we can look back and see many, many things to regret in our own personal lives, but nothing whatever to regret in the doctrine we have endeavored to set forth in these pages. We are ashamed of ourselves many, many times, but never have we yet had any cause to feel ashamed of the blessed principles of eternal truth, nor do we in any sense wish to retract our advocacy of that truth. If God be with us, we shall hope to go forward this year, and yet more years, contending for the same blessed principles as have garnished these pages for the past ninety-three years. L.

2 PETER III. 8.

"BELOVED, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

The apostle Peter's desire in writing this second epistle was to stir up the pure minds of those he addressed as "beloved." Peter loved Jesus, and truly he loved His sheep and lambs, whom Jesus commanded him to feed. The reading of this entire chapter gives expression to the desire of Peter, not to have the beloved of God ignorant of the promise of His coming, or the power of the Most High in controlling and upholding all things by the word of his power. As we are now addressing the same beloved of God, who are readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, we feel to stir up your pure minds in our address unto you, by which you may be made to recall the virtues of His glorious power that has kept us all through another year of praise and service, and as we come to the dawn of the ninety-fourth volume we feel the same God reigns in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, and his people

will be kept, fed and saved with an everlasting salvation. We feel thankful to God for the many messages of cheer to both editors and publishers, and we trust your expressions were manifested by the Spirit of truth as you were made to understand the word written in spirit. The Lord has appointed all our days, and they are as much in his wisdom if in the future they were to be one thousand years from to-day and could only be reckoned by him as to-morrow, or should they have been past an equal period of time, would be as yesterday with him. We are reminded of many sad days that the Lord has directed our pilgrimage since the beginning of volume ninety-three, and if we are to remain until the close of volume ninety-four we shall expect mixtures of joy and sorrow daily to pass through, but we feel all our times are in his hand. We feel to ask you, dear reader, to bear with us, for we are fallible creatures, and the writer feels to be the least, if one at all. The duration of our lives are few days and full of trouble, but the glory of the Lord our God, that we trust has shone upon us, has given greater things than this world. David said, "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge."—Psalms xix. 1, 2. As we pass and note the events, naturally speaking, wisdom is in it, but the wisdom of God is as far above our ways and our thoughts as the heavens are above the earth. As we are made to realize the power of the Almighty, the speech of him is spoken each day, and not a day passes that the almighty power is not manifested and comprehended by his saints, and every night we are made to realize the blessings of God that have rested with us during the day. The night brings to us the time of slumber, which was embraced in his wisdom that was so necessary for man. The people of God are the children of the day. (1 Thess. v. 5.) The children of the day, naturally speaking, are very lively, and manifest life and vigor; they see light, walk in light and their conversation is in the light. Such is manifested in nature, but how much more is the light of grace to the child of God, and all the straightforwardness of the child of grace is because he is the child of the day and the power of God is proclaimed unto him (the child of grace) and he hears, sees, feels, tastes, and a sweet-smelling savor is poured forth, which is in the gospel tidings, and flows sweetly upon him as he walks during the day. As the Spirit takes of the things of his and reveals them unto us, we look at the things that transpired during the law dispensation, and the wisdom of God rested as much upon us then as now, and the children of God are not walking in shadows of moonlight, but they see more clearly, and behold a woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet, and they behold her as the fairest among women, for she is the church of God, the pillar and ground of the truth. Her light is not of this world, and her garments are not made with hands, but she is glorious in her apparel. We are, according to the word of God, assured that "every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."——1. Cor. iii. 13. According to the word of Holy Writ, the word "day" not only stands for the light that is manifested by the sun on the earth, but the light of grace that shines in the heart of every subject of the kingdom of God and to every part of his kingdom, as they have

received Him who is their light, so walk they in him. This day of the Lord is a perfect day, and his light shineth unto it. I am so much of my time in the low valley, and in darkness, is why I cannot do as I would. Brethren, I feel darkness covering me and I have no way of escape, so what can I do but grope, stumble and fall unless light springs up? then it is day with my soul, the bright morning star shines, and the Sun of righteousness arises. As children of light I trust we may be all kept, and realize from day to day we are weak and fallible creatures, and thus seeing ourselves we can forgive one another of such weaknesses we see in each other.

Brethren, sisters and friends, we now greet you in our first epistle of volume ninety-four, and trust you will spread the mantle of charity over such infirmities as are not of contradiction to salvation by grace, and such as is necessary for the comfort of Zion and we will ask you to labor with us to that end. May the God of peace be our guide during the year 1926. C. W. V.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder George Ruston.)

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Middletown and Andes Church, at Clovesville, N. Y., to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and churches with which we correspond, sends greetings.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—It being our custom to address you by Circular Letter, it is our mind to write upon the subject of "The Eternal Vital Unity of Christ and his Church," a theme full of comfort to believers, yet deep in the mystery of godliness. Like all other truth, to be rightly understood it must be taught by the Holy Spirit, and whatever is of the Spirit's teaching will be in accord with the word of God. Our first parent, Adam, is a figure of him that was to come, and it is written, "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners," and the sin of our first parent plunged the whole of his posterity into degradation and death. "Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," for they were all in Adam's loins when he received the law, and Eve herself was bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. We were not children in Adam, but our life was in him, and in that sense we were vitally united to him in the beginning, and as a consequence we are under his condemnation. To-day, as men and women we are Adam multiplied, and sin, sickness, pain and death are evidence enough to a believer that the natural man is vitally united to our first and natural parent, Adam. Whatever man may attain in wealth, wisdom and honor, at his best state he is altogether vanity, and if he is in honor and understandeth not, he is like the beasts that perish.

> "Were I possessor of the earth,
> And called the stars my own,
> Without thy graces and thyself,
> I were a wretch undone."

As we have before stated, Adam is a figure of him that was to come, and as the first Adam possessed the life of the earthly family in himself, so the last Adam possessed the life of his heavenly family in himself from eternity. Let this be rightly understood, for some of our enemies like to pervert the way of truth by declaring that we believe that we were actually children in Christ from eternity. We therefore desire to declare plainly that the family of God were not individual children in him any more than we were children in Adam when God made him of the dust of the earth; rather, our life, the life of the election of grace, was

in their glorious Head from eternity, and we believe that every member of this eternal generation, which is also called "the generation of the righteous," was sure to appear upon earth in time and all were known unto God when as children they were not. "My substance," or body, says Christ, "was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." This vital unity of Christ and the church is a vital matter affecting and permeating the whole of the doctrine of God, by virtue of which God has not beheld iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel. In the annals of eternity,

> "Christ was appointed to redeem,
> All that the Father loved in him."

The Father saw them in his Son and loved them there, and his purpose was that the children should be partakers of flesh and blood, and that his Son should take part of the same, and his word declares, "The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." Again it is written, "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Of all the election of grace there was none righteous, no, not one. Jesus Christ the Righteous undertook the work of redemption, and Job declares, "The righteous also shall hold on his way." Isaiah also declares, "He shall not fail, nor be discouraged," and so vitally united are his children with him that their sin is by imputation his, their sorrow is his sorrow, so that as they travail in pain and express their feeling it is the testimony of Jesus. David said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" It was the testimony of Jesus. He, the righteous one, bore them and carried them all the days of old. The Spirit of Christ which was in them testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. It was the apostle Paul's desire to know the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, for therein the vital unity would be manifest, even in this mortal flesh. Thus Jesus lived in them and walked in them, and when he was crucified,

> "With him, his members, on the tree,
> Fulfilled the law's demands;
> 'Tis I in them, and they in me,
> For thus the union stands."

They walk the furnace together, are crucified together, are quickened together, are raised together and dwell together in heavenly places, and as the water of a fountain can only rise to the level of the fountain from whence it flows, so eternal life coming from our eternal Head will bring every member of his mystical body to his blest presence, where there will be joy and rejoicing for evermore.

In conclusion, we repudiate the idea advanced by some who claim to be Old School Baptists that we are not vitally united to Christ until born again, which is the same as saying that we were not united to Adam until born into this world. The stone is as old as the rock from which it is hewn. None of Adam's seed by virtue of their vital unity to him can truthfully, in an unregenerated state, call God their Father. Hence the necessity of a new birth, for "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are

heavenly." To be heavenly, there is but one way, and that is, being born from above, and if we are born of an incorruptible seed God is our Father and we are his sons and daughters; holy, for his seed remains in us and so vitally united are we to his beloved Son that

"Our breaches of the law are his,
And his obedience ours."

GEORGE RUSTON, Moderator.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

The Particular Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada, to the churches composing the associations with which we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Another year has drawn to a close since we addressed you in the way of a Circular Letter, and in so doing we wish to call your attention to Scripture recorded in Proverbs xi. 1: "A false balance is abomination to the Lord: but a just weight is his delight." In considering the above Scripture we find that anything that is false is deceptive and is not true, as truth and error are opposite to each other. There is a true religion, which is revealed to the Lord's people by his Holy Spirit, and there is a false religion, which is the religion of antichrist, based upon the self-righteousness of men. Anything that belittles Christ or in any way denies the power of God in all things is antichrist, which is the fountain-head of all deception, or the source of every false balance, which is abomination to the Lord. Salvation came by the one great offering of the only Son of God upon the cross of Calvary, as the Scriptures declare that God gave his only Son to die that whosoever should believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. All offerings that have been offered upon Jewish altars were not sufficient in virtue and purity to cleanse the conscience or make the comers thereunto perfect. Therefore all offering for sin other than the one great offering of the Lamb of God is a false balance, and all hope of heaven based upon the works of the creature is a false balance and is abomination to the Lord. Faith in the works of man is weak, and is also a false balance, for it is not God-given, hence is abomination to the Lord. Prayer that is not indited into the heart of man by his Holy Spirit is not prayer, only in form, and is the production of our carnal desires, without reverence to God, who said, When I give an heart to pray I will incline mine ear. Therefore prayer, praise and all worship that is not by the Spirit of Christ is a false balance and is abomination to the Lord.

We now desire to write briefly what we understand to be meant by the "just weight." First of all is the transgression of the law of God in the garden of Eden by our forefather, Adam. In order that the demands of that law given by God to Adam should be satisfied and all of its precepts kept God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh (yet without sin) to condemn sin in the flesh, and clothed him with power and authority to meet every penalty of the law and to keep every precept, therefore our Lord Jesus Christ was a "just weight" and the delight of his Father, so God laid upon his own Son the iniquity of us all, and in bearing our sins in his own body on the cross he gave his life a ransom for his people. He could give no more, and he could not give less, so in the just weight of redemption the Son of God did not suffer one stroke too many, neither was it possible for him to suffer one less. It must be a just weight, nothing more, neither could there be anything lacking. His suffering and death was the salvation

of his bride, the elect of God who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, who shall finally come into that inheritance reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. So, dear brethren called of God, supported by his divine grace and led by his Holy Spirit, we are enabled to worship him in spirit and in truth, having no confidence in the flesh, that by the equality of salvation the blessed Lord's suffering and death was equal to our sins and transgressions, therefore we have hope of a blessed immortality beyond the grave. Hope that is the anchor of our soul, both sure and steadfast, which entereth that within the vail, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec, is the work of the Holy Spirit of God that quickens us from a death in sin to a life in holiness, and the substance of this hope is the forgiveness of our sins through the suffering of Christ, who died for us and ever liveth to make intercession for us, therefore, dear brethren, children of the most high God, having one faith, one hope and one baptism, one God and Father, who is over all, above all and in us all, may we continue our fellowship and love for each other, desiring that peace may abound in the Zion of our God.

In conclusion, will say as a church we are at peace and our meetings during the past year have been well attended with good interest shown. We have been favored by Elder C. W. Vaughn, who has visited us at our quarterly meetings in June and October, who came laden with the precious things of the kingdom of our God, knowing nothing among us save Jesus Christ, and him crucified for the salvation of sinners. We crave a continuance of your correspondence, and hope that we shall be blessed by the coming of your ministers to our quarterly meetings, which are appointed to be held as follows: at Dunwich, commencing on Saturday before the second Sunday in May and to continue three days; at Ekfrid, on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in June and to continue three days; at Lobo, on Saturday before the first Sunday in September and continue three days; at Duart, on Saturday before the third Sunday in October and continue three days.

Read and approved by the Covenanted Baptist Church at this regular quarterly meeting, held at Duart, October 17th, 18th and 19th, 1925.

J. B. SLAUSON, Moderator.
J. T. KERR, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Indiantown Church, Wicomico County, Maryland, October 21st, 22nd and 23rd, 1925 to the associations with which we correspond, sends greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We feel that the all-wise, all-merciful, all-powerful God, who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast, who is all love, has spoken love in our midst, that great cord that binds our wandering hearts together, united in spirit, united in that sweet fellowship in Christ Jesus our Lord, his only begotten Son, drawing us together, as it were, from the ends of the earth as an association, in an associative manner. Words cannot express the sweet comfort and joy there is in being here, to hear the word preached by his humble servants. There has been but one voice: salvation by grace, and grace alone. We love your correspondence, and desire a continuation of the same.

Our next Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Broad Creek Church, Sussex County, Delaware, beginning Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1926, when and where we hope to meet your messengers again.

J. C. MELLOTT, Mod.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder C. W. Vaughn, November 14th, 1925, Annie E. Bainbridge, of Trenton, N. J., and Alvin C. Stover, of Pennington, N. J.

By the same, November 21st, 1925, at the home of John Moore, Stoutsburg, N. J., Edith Rule and Hart S. Cromwell, of Titusville, N. J.

By the same, at the Old School Baptist meeting-house, Hopewell, N. J., November 26th, 1925, 3 p. m., Annie E. Bond, daughter of brother and sister Bond, of Hopewell, N. J., and Dezzie L. Casey, of Waco, Texas.

By the same, November 28th, 1925, at the home of the bride, in Hopewell township, Myrtle V. Cox and R. James Foster, of Trenton, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder John Burroughs Slauson was born November 25th, 1863, and died November 26th, 1925, making his stay on earth 62 years and 1 day. He was the son of Hiram and Sallie Mead Slauson. His brothers and sisters and parents all preceded him, except Mr. Samuel Slauson, of Johnstown, Pa., and one sister, Mrs. Erminda Todd, of Walton, N. Y. He was united in holy bonds of matrimony to Miss Mary Janetta Lawrence November 15th, 1884, by the late Elder J. D. Hubble, and to that union were born four children. One son died in infancy, and their only daughter died at the age of seven years. Two sons, Samuel Lee and Harold John, together with their mother survive, together with brother and sister and many relatives and friends to mourn their loss. He united with the First Church of Roxbury, New York, the last Saturday in September, 1899, and was baptized by the late Elder J. D. Hubble, and thus being identified with the church of God, his spirit was exercised, and a gift was discerned by the church, to their comfort and edification, so he was licensed to speak and exhort according to sound doctrine by the authority of the church of God at Roxbury, New York, and after trying the gift it was discerned to edification and the presbytery was called from sister churches of the same faith and order. In response, Elders H. C. Ker, Frederick W. Keene and D. M. Vail came to the First Church of Roxbury September 25th, 1901, together with the pastor of the church (the late Elder J. D. Hubble), organized into a presbytery to ascertain if possible the fruits of a call to the work of the ministry, which evidence was abundantly proven, as he had preached the gospel to the comfort of God's people. He was then ordained by the laying on of hands of the presbytery to the full functions of the gospel ministry. The manifested virtues of the gift were truly testified of in the faithfulness of this dear brother which proved the gift of God in his heart. After the death of his pastor he was called to the service of his home church, together with other churches in the Roxbury Association, New York, in which service he faithfully served for eight years, then receiving a call from the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, and being impressed it was of the Lord, he resigned from the First Roxbury Church, and other churches of the Roxbury Association, and moved to Canada, in 1914, and served them continuously until his death, which was a period of eleven years and six months. His labor as a pastor over the flock of which God made him undershepherd was one of faithfulness, as he devoted his entire time in their welfare and comfort, and his equal as a pastor is not known to the writer. Elder Slauson endured much tribulation and persecution, but, like a true soldier of the cross, his weapons were the word of God, as he felt faithfulness was becoming in the house of God, and unflinchingly he stood against the foe until every weapon that was formed against him and the church of God of which he was overseer was brought to naught by the hand of God before God dismissed him from his service and this faithful servant was blessed to receive some of the sweetness of peace that he left the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada resting in.

His funeral services were conducted by Elder George Ruston, of Kelly Corners, New York, and the writer, November 29th, 1925, at Duart, Ontario, Canada, text, 2 Timothy iv. 7–9: "I have fought a good fight," &c., being the same text used only a few days previous at the funeral of Elder J. C. Mellott. The esteem and love in which Elder Slauson was held was fully manifested by the emotions of sadness which flowed in silent tears as the remains were last viewed by the large concourse of friends that paid the last tribute to his memory. After services his remains were laid to rest in the cemetery near Muirkirk, Ontario, Canada, to await the time appointed of God when Jesus shall come and take his ransomed home, then the grave shall give up its dead and they shall meet the Lord in the air, and so shall they ever be with the Lord.

Brethren, sisters and friends, our loss I feel is his eternal gain, and we should not weep as though he had no hope, but say, Rest on, dear one. May God comfort our dear sister and the two sons and all who mourn and reconcile us to his will. May the blessed Lord manifest his strength to his church (the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada) and guide and guard and teach them in love and peace, that they may as his sheep lie down in green pastures and feel his leading beside the still waters, and say, Thy will, not mine, be done. It has been the pleasure of the writer to enjoy many sweet seasons with our departed brother, and the sweetness enjoyed we trust was from the sanctuary of our God.

ALSO,

Elder J. C. Mellott, our dear brother, departed this life November 22nd, 1925. He was born August 31st, 1876, making his stay on earth 49 years, 2 months and 21 days. Thus ends the course of one who was of mark and distinction from childhood. He was the son of William and Rosetta Mellott, of Riddlesburg, Pennsylvania. He was married to Miss Alice H. Hagerman June 29th, 1905, and to that union were born two daughters, Dorothy and Alice. Sister Mellott and both daughters survive him to mourn for a kind husband and father, together with several brothers, sisters and other relatives and friends, who realize their loss. He united with the Providence Old School Baptist Church, in the Juniata Association, August 17th, 1895, and was baptized by the late Elder Silas H. Durand. After being associated in the fellowship of the church feelings were manifested to the church of a gift in the ministry, which were duly considered in order by the church calling a presbytery, which was composed of the late Elders A. Mellott, E. V. White, Charles Bogardus and Silas H. Durand. The proof of his call was manifested in the labors among the churches of the faith and order he professed when he united with the church. He was called to serve churches in the Salisbury Association in 1913, in which service he continued until God called him from his labors. His first charge was composed of three churches, and after the death of Elder A. B. Francis, who was pastor of Forest Grove, he was called to serve them, and after the death of Elder Silas H. Durand, who had been pastor of Salisbury Church for about fifty years, he was called to serve them, making five churches, viz.: Indiantown, Nassaongoes, Messongoes, Forest Grove and Salisbury. His labor among them was a labor of love and was abundantly testified by the large audience of brethren, sisters, friends and relatives assembled to pay tribute to his memory.

His funeral services were conducted by Elder H. C. Ker and the writer, text, 2 Timothy iv. 7, 8: "I have fought a good fight, &c., after which his remains were laid to rest in the cemetery of Salisbury Church to await the resurrection and glorification of all the redeemed of the Lord. Elder Mellott was a very successful school teacher and business man. He held a position with John B. Stetson & Co., of Philadelphia, at the time of his call to the Salisbury churches, who with reluctance accepted his resignation when his mind was fully settled to move among them. Afterwards he accepted a position with the Jackson Shirt Manufacturers, in which position he grew in prominence until the time of his being stricken in his office. The president of the company, addressing his salesmen at a banquet, said, "We are on a scale of solid working basis and great assurance of success with such a man as Elder J. C. Mellott at the head of our bookkeeping and business department." We are constrained to say that our loss is his eternal gain and may we say, Rest on, dear one. May the God of all comfort the bereaved widow and daughters, and all brethren and sisters with whom his services were precious.

C. W. V.

Elizabeth Catherine (Robinson) Forgerson, another sainted sister, and mother in Israel, has been called to her eternal home. She was born December 11th, 1845, and departed this natural life September 12th, 1925, making her stay on earth 79 years, 9 months and 1 day. She was united in holy matrimony to J. A. Forgerson July 3rd, 1862, who preceded her in death. To that union were born twelve children, four boys and eight girls, all living, except one boy, to mourn the loss of a dear mother. The children are Z. G. Forgerson, Amerilla, Texas, Mrs. J. B. Porter, Silverton, Texas, Mrs. J. H. Christain, Lubbock, Texas, Mrs. J. E. Morris, Seymore, Texas, Mr. J. W. Forgerson, Paducah, Texas, Mrs. T. J. Briscoe, Milo, Okla., Mrs. D. H. Halmark, Lingleville, Texas, Mrs. G. W. Turner, Phillipsburg, Mo., Mrs. J. N. Christain, Paducah, Texas, Mrs. Artie Forgerson (deceased November 17th, 1900), Mrs. M. R. West, Paducah, Texas, F. M. Forgerson, Paducah, Texas. She also leaves eighty-one grandchildren and sixty-four great-grandchildren. She united with the Old School Baptists by a sweet experience of grace and baptism in November, 1884, and we believe she did fill up her portion of the suffering of the cup of Christ, but did it with thanksgiving to him who promised never to leave or forsake her, but would be her present help in time of need. Her hope was hinged upon his precious promises for both time and eternity, believing he is able to perform that he has promised. Dear sister Forgerson was loved by all who knew her, and was especially loved by her kindred in Christ. Her walk and conversation were in harmony with the hope she professed. All the brethren and sisters of the same precious faith humbly bow our heads in submission to the will of God, and we can only prize more dearly the sweet hours we have spent in her company hearing her ascribe that greatness to God that his people only can ascribe. We feel thankful to God that we have been blessed to meet this dear sister face to face and hear her godly conversation and receive some of her sweet counsel. I was her last pastor here on earth, of which honor I do not feel worthy, and her request was that when the end came I should not eulogize her, but give all glory to God, for all her righteousness was as filthy rags. When the end came I was summoned and tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved family, and all the household of the same faith who were present, from the language of Paul where he said he was persuaded that he that had begun a good work in you would perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ.

Now, dear grief-stricken children, let me say in closing this sketch of the life and death of your dear mother, Weep not as those who have no hope, but rather because you will never see her dear face on earth again, for her God has taken her to her eternal home, and she now inhabits that blissful city whose maker and builder is God, there praising and glorifying his holy name. We feel we can see her realizing what she hoped for, yet her body lies still in the Silverton Cemetery, there awaiting her Lord's appointed time, when he will come and speak to the grave and it will give up its dead, then that which went down a natural body will be raised a spiritual body. May God be merciful to all, and may he enable you to embrace the same precious faith with her, and may you be made to shout aloud, Mother's God is the one true and living God, is the prayer of the unworthy writer,

W. N. GREEN.

Mrs. Linnie E. Whitworth, wife of George T. Whitworth, of near Colbert, Georgia, died October 21st, 1925. Mrs. Whitworth was the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Thompson, and was married in February, 1906, being 65 years old at her death. She had been sick for some months from the effects of paralysis, but was very much improved, and had been able to attend the Oconee Primitive Baptist Association, which convened in Monroe, Ga., just a few days prior to her death. She was a member of Moriah Church, was one of its most loyal and consistent members, and believed in the doctrine for which it stood. Her death occurred quickly and wholly unexpected from an attack of acute indigestion, and was a great shock to her companion, her family and friends. She was laid in the family cemetery on Thursday, October 23rd. Gently, tenderly and sorrowfully was she laid to rest, being carried there by the loving hands of two of her own brothers and four of her step-sons. Those who knew her best loved her most, and to know her was to love her. The many beautiful floral offerings bespoke the hearts of so many contributors, which, if it could be termed so, made the occasion beautiful. Many were the words of praise and comfort spoken by her pastor, Elder J. Frank Chandler, using as text, She has done what she could, she has fought a good fight, she has kept the faith. To his remarks were added many other kind words by Elder J. M. Adams, Moderator of the Oconee Association, and a relative. While all this was said, I feel like some things might rightfully be added, hence this writing. It cannot be said that she was a mother in fact, but that she was in deed and service. Some twenty years ago she assumed the motherhood of several motherless children, made so by the death of our own dear mother. In a way it made our hearts sad to see another take the place of her who had been so loving and patient during the years of our childhood, and one for whose memory now adds to our present sorrow and increased flow of tears, but we cannot now say that we have ever been sorry that she came into our father's life and home, and deeply grieve now with him that she is gone. We all feel that we have been wonderfully blessed by her companionship and association on account of her every day life and christian example. For all these twenty years there has never been a hard thought, much less a spoken word, between her and my father's children, and her relationship to the family has truly been that of a mother. Our hearts are still aching on account of the loss of her as companion to our dear father and as mother and grandmother to the family, yet if we believe in and have hope in Christ we can but feel resigned to his will, and feel assured of meeting our loved ones who have gone on before.

G. P. W.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you for publication an obituary of my second dear bosom companion, written by my son, G. P. Whitworth, for our county paper. I wish to add that I am sure he has expressed the sentiment of the entire family, for she was a godsend to us all. She experienced a hope in Christ at the age of eight years, and her trust through life was in the promises of her God. She did not worry over the things of this life, and tried to keep me from it. It seems now that I had nothing to worry over then, but now, O my soul, her death, combined with that of my first dear bosom companion, makes it unbearable as I go down the steep of life in deep sorrow at the age of seventy-five years, but I do feel to say, The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken, blessed be his holy name.

GEORGE T. WHITWORTH.

Mrs. Lee J. Pollit, my sister, passed peacefully away at her home in Salisbury, Maryland, aged 68 years and 1 month. Death was caused by a complication of diseases. Lately the doctor pronounced it tumor of the brain (after an illness of eight weeks). She lived a consistent member of the Old School Baptist Church for more than forty-five years, and was always ready to speak of His kingdom and to talk of His power. She told me of how she enjoyed the sermon and singing just two days before she was taken sick, and she had the hymns read again after she reached home. She was always looking forward to the pleasure of attending her meetings. She was much company to me, and I feel to say, Sleep on, sweet sister, take thy rest. She leaves six children, two sisters and a brother to mourn their loss.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder J. C. Mellott, who spoke very comfortingly.

ALSO,

Lemuel A. Hall, my brother, fell asleep in Jesus November 26th, 1925, aged 70 years and 7 months, having been attacked with paralysis several months before. He was a member of the Old School Baptist Church, having received a hope when quite a young man. He was made to rejoice in hope of his salvation while reading the SIGNS, at the home of Elder J. T. Staton, to whom he got up and gave his hand. When mother was told of it she said, Good news! He lived a faithful member until his death, and I feel that both he and sister have left the church militant to join the church triumphant.

Funeral services were held at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Salisbury, Maryland. Our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, was with us and spoke beautifully of death and the resurrection.

Their sister,

LAURA A. HALL.

I had known brother Hall many years, and knew him to be a firm uncompromising Old Baptist. He attended meetings the county over when it was possible for him to do so. We all loved him and shall miss him, but are glad of the assurance that he is at rest. May the Lord comfort those left to mourn their loss.

H. C. KER.

Johannas F. Byrd, son of Jacob K. and Susan Fisher Byrd, died at his home in Pocomoke City, Md., 9:00 p. m., Tuesday, November 17th, 1925. He had suffered for four years from paralysis, having had the first light stroke at his sister's, Annie S. Kelly, while on a visit there, from the regular meeting at Messongoes, where he had been a member since July 26th, 1874. He was born August 31st, 1849, making his age 76 years, 2 months and 17 days. His first wife was Miss Mary A. Martin, to whom he was married September 4th, 1873. She passed away March, 1911, leaving two children: Mrs. John W. Devereaux, of Snow Hill, Md., and Mr. Clarence E. Byrd, of Newark, N. J. His second wife, who survives him, was Mrs. Augusta Benson, to whom he was married February 24th, 1920. He was a native of Virginia until 1893, when he moved with his family to a farm near Pocomoke City, Md., where he remained until December, 1908, when he discontinued farming and moved to Pocomoke City, where he spent the remainder of his life. He was a kind and loving husband and father, upright in character and honorable in his dealings.

Funeral services were held Thursday, at Messongoes, Old School Baptist Church, Va., Elder H. C. Ker officiating. Interment in cemetery adjoining.

His daughter,

MATTIE DEVEREAUX.

IT was my privilege to visit brother Byrd several times during his illness and, as in all the thirty-five years I had known him, found him steadfast in the doctrine he loved so well. He suffered long and patiently, but now has entered into everlasting rest. He was a deacon of the church of his membership. The Lord bless those left.

H. C. KER.

Mrs. Hannah M. Hutchison, our sister in God's grace, departed this earthly life at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Esther Hutchison, Washington, D. C., December 5th, 1925. She was born at Sennett, New York, November 14th, 1858, the daughter of John and Martha Wall, was the last of a family of thirteen children. In 1877 she became the wife of Luther D. Hutchison, of Loudoun County, Virginia. Of this union there are three surviving children: Mrs. Esther Hutchison, of Washington, D. C., Raymond Hutchison, of Lyon Park, Va., and Douglas Hutchison, of Pleasant Valley, Va. These children, with their father, are left now to mourn this great loss of a very loving and devoted mother. About twenty-eight or twenty-nine years ago sister Hutchison was baptized by Elder E. V. White into membership with the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church, and to the day of her passing away from earth she was most faithful to the cause of truth, loving her brethren devotedly and longing for them to be with her that she might enjoy their company up to the very last of her days. For the past few years she had been in poor health and at times suffered great pain; during the last few weeks she was in great suffering, but the Lord sustained her under all her trials and gave her the grace of patience to endure all things. She quoted in her last days the lines from the hymn beginning: "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand," and also quoted passages from the Scriptures. She was willing and ready to depart and be with Christ, and we cannot but feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Funeral services were held in the meetinghouse at Frying Pan, after which her body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Herndon, Virginia. The Lord giveth his beloved sleep. May the Holy Spirit comfort all who mourn and reconcile both the church and the family to his divine will.

L.

Mary Margaret Montgomery, daughter of George and Julia Ann Huffman, was born January 22nd, 1855, and died November 30th, 1925, in her 71st year. She was united in marriage May, 1875, to Amos Montgomery. Early in life she was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, and remained true to this faith until her death. "Aunt Mary," as she was known to the entire community, was indeed a true christian neighbor and friend, holding malice toward none and always will-

ing to lend a hand to those in trouble. Sister Mary was driving in her buggy, which was struck by a passenger train near Centerburg, Ohio, death resulting almost instantly. It seemed as though some warning had been given her beforehand, for she had made arrangements for her funeral, even to the text, the hymn and chapter to be read at her funeral. She leaves to mourn one brother, G. W. Huffman, of Centerburg, Ohio, and his family, together with a host of relatives and friends. I was called from Cincinnati to attend the funeral, and tried to carry out the program which she had prearranged, reading hymn 1246 (Beebe's collection) and reading Revelation twentieth chapter, using the sixth verse as a basis for my remarks to a large gathering of relatives and friends, after which the body was laid to rest in the Trenton Cemetery, near Centerburg, to await the call of the Master in the resurrection. Some could not understand why it was that sister Mary had come to her death in such a cruel way, as they called it, but the Lord's ways are not our ways. Although we mourn our loss, we believe that our heavenly Father doeth all things well, and we bow in humble submission to his will, believing it is her gain. May God bless them that mourn, and enable them to say, Thy will be done.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

George Baker Wood was born June 10th, 1857, in Mahaska County, Iowa, and died November 16th, 1925, aged 68 years, 5 months and 6 days. He was married in January, 1881, to Artie McQuery, at Pleasantville, Iowa, and to that union was born one son, Raymond L. Wood. His wife died May 2nd, 1900. He was married to Alma R. Colton April 5th, 1904, and moved to Oregon the same year. His second wife died April 15th, 1915. April 15th, 1919, he was married to Mrs. Rosa D. Norris, who, with the one son and two granddaughters, Sylva and Alice Wood, one brother in Iowa, beside many other relatives and friends, survive him.

Funeral services were held in the undertaking parlor November 19th, Elders J. N. Beaman and William J. Reeves officiating. Burial was in the Forest View Cemetery. We feel we have lost a good citizen, the wife a good husband and the son a good father. For some reason Mr. Wood had never united with any church organization, but was in perfect sympathy with the Primitive Baptist faith, and was nearly always in attendance at our church meetings. His father, Elder Aaron Wood, was one of the old pioneer preachers of Iowa, so we feel our loss in his death is great, but the change is a gain to him, so we rely upon Him who has said, My grace is sufficient for all trials.

WILLIAM J. REEVES.

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E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE of JOSHUA S. CORDER.

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This little book of 152 pages was published by Elder Corder's daughter, sister Semma E. Corder, of Philippi, W. Va., and printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office several years ago, and we feel is a work that will be read with interest by any of the household of faith.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

1 PETER I. 2.

"ELECT according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; Grace unto you, and peace be multiplied."

I shall consider each one of these statements of the apostle Peter, who says that he is "an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia," and it is these same strangers whom he denominates and calls the elect, or the ones chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself according to the good pleasure of his will, then how can some claim that they are all given a chance, and unless they exercise the chance that God gives them they are lost, and then after they give their hearts to God and get saved they depend upon their own good works by their own power and wills to keep saved, and if they should depart from any of the rules laid down by the Theological schools they are lost, and if they should die while in this disobedience they would be eternally lost? By their own testimony they deny that salvation is of the Lord, and that by grace through faith, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast. The Scriptures declare we are his workmanship, and that we are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. If we are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, and God has foreordained that we should walk in them, is there any chance about it? If there is, wherein does that chance lie? A chance embraces doubt, and if there is any uncertainty in God's promises it must be because there is some power which God cannot control which is in opposition to his will and glory or pleasure, and since the natural mind is enmity against God and not subject, or in conformity, to the law of God, neither indeed can be, because one is flesh and the other is Spirit, consequently they are enemies, and God in his wisdom, for the purpose of showing his almighty power, put that enmity

between the woman which is a type of the church, which is his body, and the serpent, or the devil, and this was in the beginning, before he drove the man and his wife (they were both one) out of the garden from before his presence and placed the flaming sword and cherubims east of the garden, which turned every way to keep the tree of life, lest they eat of it and live forever. Then if God has put this impassable barrier over which man cannot pass, and God has never changed, and if he had power over all flesh in the beginning, and had a plan then, his plan has never been changed, for he is of one mind and none can turn him. What his soul desires that will he do, and since he desired to choose, or elect, a portion of his creatures to be heirs of his kingdom, and it was his will that they should partake of flesh and blood in Adam and be sentenced to death, or separation from him and their inheritance on account of Adam's transgressing God's holy law, and it being his will to show his great love for them by sending his only begotten Son into these low grounds of sin and sorrow to take part of the same flesh and blood as the rest of his brethren, with all of their sorrows and temptations, so that he could be a faithful high priest or mediator between the Father and us, he being both God and man, knowing our weakness and imperfections in the flesh, also being God he knew the justice and righteousness of God's holy law, he could and did look upon us with compassion, and could say, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do; and when he presented them to his Father without spot, wrinkle or any such thing, having paid all the demands which God had against them by taking upon himself all their sins, past, present and future, he became their Surety or Husband, Prophet, Priest and King, and in this way he stands between us and God the Father as a mediator to make intercession for us. As the husband stands between his wife and the debts she contracts, so Christ stands between his bride, the church, and her debts, and she can buy without money and without price, the full amount of her debt falling upon him, and on account of the love he bears her he gave his life in order to give her the right to buy goods at the storehouse wherein all the blessings are laid up in store for them that love him. That storehouse never diminishes, but increases by reason of our using, for Jesus is this storehouse, and in him is stored every blessing that is in store for us, and will not the Father with him freely give us all things? Yes, my dear, beloved brethren, when we have him we have all things, for there is nothing we want beside, he is our all in all, and when we have him we are full. Then with how much sweet comfort do we receive the assurance of the text: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience." This was the Father's will in the beginning, and who can change his will? This will of God was given the apostle Peter to know, so that he wrote with full knowledge of these strangers whom the world would not own at that time, neither will it own them now, but Peter tells us that they were the elect of God, set apart by the sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience. Poor puny man is cut off from any honor, power or glory, even our obedience is in Him, through the Spirit, or life, which is the inner man, who after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Oh what a mystery is this. It is too high for me; I cannot attain unto it, but what a rest it is to feel that

Jesus is sufficient for all our needs, and has redeemed us with a full and complete redemption; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, and which is revealed unto us here in time by the gift of the Holy Ghost, for by grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast.

Now we come to the last part of the chapter, which reads, "And sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Christ is our passover, and upon whomsoever his blood is sprinkled he that has the power of death hath no power over, for Jesus by his death destroyed him, that is, the devil, and delivered all those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Romans viii. 1, 2: "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." I might go on and transcribe the rest of the chapter, for it is just a continuance of proof of what I have written, especially from the nineteenth to the twenty-fourth verse.

But the best of it all is the last of the text: "Grace unto you, and peace be multiplied." This grace is the same that was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, and it is the same grace that brings this peace that the apostle prays may be multiplied, and it is the same grace which Jesus told Paul was sufficient for him, when he prayed earnestly thrice that the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, which was to keep both him and us from getting puffed up, that Paul wanted to have removed. The Lord knows what is best for us to keep us humbly at his feet, and may we always be found waiting upon the Lord, so that our strength may be renewed and that we may mount up with wings as eagles, and run and not be weary, walk and not faint. We are often tempted to hurry the Lord's work, and the devil urges us on, as he did when he told Jesus to cast himself down if he be the Son of God, or to command the stones that they be made bread when Jesus was hungry. Our faith is between us and God, and not to make a show of before men to be seen of them, as though we were superior to others in power or wisdom, for God has chosen the weak, the ignorant and the foolish, so that the excellency of the power might be of God and not of us, to the intent that no flesh should glory in his presence, and now may the Lord God, who is merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, so direct our minds that we will desire that wisdom which is from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, easy to be entreated, and keep our feet in that strait and narrow way, even though it be strewn with thorns, as our dear Savior's path was, and let us walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, not in our own strength, but giving God all honor, glory and praise, and may our strength be made perfect in weakness.

I am a little improved in health, so I can sit up part of the time. May the Lord's richest blessings rest and remain upon both editors and correspondents, and give them knowledge to rightly divide the word of truth in the future as in the past.

From one of the least of all,

DAVIS BURCH.

BELLINGHAM, Washington.

TAMPA, Florida.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Maybe the Lord will give me a little to write. In Job xli. 11, we have this language: "Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine." All these ought to belong to him, as he made and created all of them. He ought to and does have the right to do with them as he pleases. "Just and right is he." The Book of books begins, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." In Genesis i. 26 it is written, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Twenty-seventh verse: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." Psalms xxiv. 1, says, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." Psalms civ. 24–27, 32, 33: "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches. So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both great and small beasts. There go the ships; there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein. These wait all upon thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in due season." "He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth: he toucheth the hills, and they smoke. I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise unto my God while I have my being." Just at this moment David has a wonderful view of God and his power and glory, but when the shadows of spiritual night gather around him, and the awful crime he committed stares him in the face, and his mind goes back to his faithful servant Uriah, whom he had killed so as to get Bath-sheba, no doubt but he sinks down and covers his face in shame, and we hear him cry out, My sore ran in the night. Ah! yes, that sore never healed. Time, the great healer, never caused that sore to cease to run. Only when God in great mercy raised him up together with Jesus did he ever forget the awful sin he committed, and yet it must be done to carry out the purpose of God. This purpose did not lessen the heinousness of his dastardly deed. He must suffer all his days for an example to those who should come after. Solomon must be born. When the psalmist sank down under the weight of his sin and guilt, and the dark threatening clouds gathered around thick and fast, like they do over and around all of the poor trembling children of God, when God "holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it," then I hear the sweet singer of Israel say, Is his mercy clean gone forever? Will he no more be entreated? Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? My days are like a shadow that declineth, I am withered like grass. No one has ever seen the deep corruption, pollution and vileness of their hearts until the Savior, who is the true light, gives them spiritual life. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. But when the Lord makes darkness and all the beasts of the forest do creep forth their heart is filled with fear, as a little child in a dense forest filled with roaring, howling, screaming wild beasts, it is then all the terrible works of the flesh are seen, and the hideousness of our flesh is plainly manifest before us.

"Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face."

But I did not start out to write this way, but to say a word about one of the most wonderful texts in the Bible:

"Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine." This is the language of God. The one who said to Moses, I Am That I Am hath sent thee. Moses said, They shall say to me, What is his name. God said, "I Am That I Am." This great incomprehensible, eternal, wondrous One is almighty in power, unlimited in wisdom, of whom it is said, "There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God," omnipotent, omnipresent, everywhere at the same time, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders, into whose hands it is a fearful thing to fall, yet who at the same time says, "As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." Can it be that he pitieth such a vile creature as I am? How many, many times when taking a cool drink of water have I thought, I am unworthy of this nice clear cool water.

"Without thy sweet mercy I could not live here,
Sin would soon reduce me to utter despair,
But through thy free goodness my spirits revive,
And he that first made me still keeps me alive."

Again it is written, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein; for he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods." The Bible plainly sets forth the fact that God is the creator and owner of all things. See that rolling, tossing, never-ceasing turbulent ocean, it is his; God made it. I have stood on the shore of the Pacific and watched the great swells coming. They come year after year, one right after the other, never ceasing; year after year they come, age after age they roll shoreward, dashing, dashing against the shore, God controls them. He says, Thus far shalt thou come, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed. Again, "He gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment." So there they stop, break and return to the ocean, but another comes, never ceasing, like the wicked they never cease to roll against the shore. Isaiah lvii. 20, says, "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." Just as sure as the waves of the Pacific Ocean never cease to dash against the bank, so certain the wicked strive to undermine the truth, and destroy it, and the church. Every stone the waves loosen so it falls, remains, and is never placed back in the bank. I have never known a church that was destroyed and become extinct that was reorganized. The people are now trying to carry the church back east to Asia, and other places where God has removed the candlestick, but they will never plant a church of God in that country again. What they establish is not the church of God. The Bible says, "As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." The travel of the church has been westward. But not one inch can the wicked advance further than God permits. They are his. He overturns the wickedness of men and devils to the good of his people and his own glory. Not a dog was allowed to bark at the children of Israel as they came out of Egypt; not a fly, frog, louse nor hailstone was allowed to cross the line between the Egyptians and Goshen where the children of Israel lived. The sea moved back and stood up like a wall at the command of God so the Israelites crossed dry-shod, and when the hosts of Pharaoh in their presumption and foolhardiness followed into the midst of the sea, at the command of Jehovah down came the waters, and Pharaoh's hosts were swallowed up and drowned. Then

Miriam and the children of Israel sang, The Lord "hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." O tell me, little one, what have you to fear? Listen while I quote, "No man taketh it [his life] from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." Who upholdeth "all things by the word of his power." The poet says,

"He whose thunder shakes creation,
He who bids the planets roll,
He who rides upon the tempest,
And his sceptre sways the whole.
Round him are ten thousand angels,
Ready to obey command,
They are always hovering round you,
'Till you reach the heavenly land."

"Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." His Father gave them to him. "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." John xviii. 10: "And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them." You get so hopeless, so downcast, dark, doubtful and despondent, and your enemies without and within seem to multiply, still you, not your name, you are graven upon the palms of God's hands. That certainly is a safe place. The Lord says, "I have covered thee in the shadow of my hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth and say unto Zion, Thou art my people." How many times have you said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me? How often does it please God to hold back the face of his throne and spread his cloud upon it, and you sink down in despair? How often does the Savior appear to you like he did to the woman at the well of Samaria? She said, Come, see a man that told me all things that I ever did. Is this not the Christ? When the Savior brings your sins so vividly before your eyes, and the billows roll over you and you are sure you will be swallowed up in the deep depravity of your flesh, and the dark clouds gather thicker and thicker as the storm increases, and your hope of ever reaching the land of deliverance seems to be gone forever, your little bark is tossed higher and higher, it is then you cannot have a particle of hope; it has sunk down in the briny waters of the sea of this life; still this hope that is as an anchor to the soul is only taking a deeper hold, entering into that within the vale. I remember once as I was returning home after the most distressing experience one could be exposed to, cast out from God and man as it seemed to me, and the waves were so terrific that it was as apparent as if it had been natural waters surging and dashing me, and all hope was gone, I was as sure I was lost as it could possibly be made clear to the mind, but God was watching, and all things were working "together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." All at once a text burst into my distressed mind: "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires," &c. In a moment there was a great calm. The Savior said to the tossing sea, Peace, be still, and there was a great calm. It had to obey him. It belonged to him, so do you. You are not your own, you are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are Christ's. But you say, The Lord hath forgotten

me. But God says, Can a woman forget her sucking child? Yes, she may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands. None is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. The Savior loved you always, therefore he came and saved you. All things are yours, and ye are Christ's and Christ is God's. All, all belong to him. Paul says, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist."—Col. i. 16, 17. The questions come up with interest, Am I his child? Am I born of the Spirit? Do I serve him with my spirit? Do I mourn on account of sin? Do I hunger and thirst after righteousness? You sing,

"'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought,)
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

You want to be free from sin. You want to be what you think a christian ought to be. These are infallible evidences that some day you will be freed from sin and sorrow and be at home with God. A few more sighs, a few more tears, a few more pains and all of you sorrowing little ones will be called home to behold that wondrous place God has prepared for you, but it seems too much, too great a boon for such a poor sinful creature as I am. The poet says,

"When the feet are worn and weary,
When the eye long dimmed by tears,
When the days are long and dreary
With the monotone of years,
When the fainting footsteps falter
In the marshes dark and deep,
When the Lord calls home his children,
There is no more cause to weep."

Yours in affliction,
ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

MACOMB, Ill., Dec., 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—My remittance is about due, so I am inclosing it, also a little to help your publication. I do not want the time to elapse or receive one number that is not paid for. The SIGNS is too precious, and I esteem it too highly to think of doing without it, and it was a sad day to me when I learned it might have to be discontinued. I could scarcely endure it. It had been in my father's family since my childhood, and when forty years ago I became a member of the Old School Baptist Church and had a home of my own I subscribed for it and have taken it continuously ever since. I have never missed a copy, and would feel lost without the dear old paper on my table. It has been a great comfort to me all these years, and I have been greatly edified and strengthened in the faith in its perusal. To know that God has a people who still believe and advocate the doctrine of salvation by grace in these days of infidelity and unbelief is a cause of thankfulness and rejoicing, and by reading the SIGNS we find there is a remnant according to the election of grace who still hold fast to this doctrine which is the vital difference between God's chosen people and the Arminian world. I have read after all the editors from Elder Gilbert Beebe down to the present time, when we have Elders Lefferts, Dodson, Ruston and Vaughn, all able writers rightly dividing the word of truth, and earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, that faith which was preached by Christ and his apostles and has been preached during all the intervening years until the present time, and is still proclaimed by his faithful servants, and will continue until the end of time, for God has reserved unto himself a people whose God

is the Lord, who will not bow to the image of Baal, but give God all the praise for their salvation. The doctrines of election, predestination, man's depravity, salvation by grace alone, the resurrection, are precious to God's children, believed and loved by them, and I hope and rejoice in these glorious truths so ably contended for in the SIGNS and are our comfort and hope. The Baptists near me bebelieve in salvation by grace, and our pastor preaches it with power and ability, and says he knows of but one salvation, that is by grace, and if any of God's children are enabled to walk in the way of righteousness it is not of themselves, but of God's grace they are enabled to follow him or have any desire to do good, for the carnal or fleshly mind ever prompts to evil, and the poor child of God knows that sin is mixed with all he does, and in his flesh there dwells no good thing, and he cannot do the things he would. So it is by grace we are saved, not only eternally, but here in time, every day of our lives, saved from ourselves, from every false way, from temptation and from the the many evils that surround us all along the journey of life. I know of myself I am weakness itself, sinful and unworthy, dependent upon God's mercy. I cannot go alone. I cannot be as those around me who are continually boasting of what they are doing to help the Lord. I tell them I cannot keep myself in the right way, then how presumptuous to think of helping God, who has all power in heaven and in earth and needs not the help of mortals. I am so thankful that the Arminian system of works is not true, for if it were I surely would fall by the way, for my faith is so weak and my little hope grows very dim many times and I can scarcely dare claim a hope in Christ. It seems I see my imperfections plainer each day I live; doubts and fears are my daily companions, yet, dear brethren and sisters, I cannot give up my little hope, and would not exchange it for all the gold of this world. I hope I love the truth set forth in the SIGNS, love to hear it proclaimed, love to be with God's people and hope their God is my God, and love the dear Old Baptist Church. These are all the evidences I have to base my hope upon. Is this enough? Can you fellowship a poor sinner like me? I am like sister Livingston wrote in the last SIGNS: I have no bright experience, and have very little evidence to go on. I wish some of the editors would feel to write an article on this subject. It surely would prove of much comfort to weak ones like myself.

But I must bring this long letter to a close. I did not intend to write at such length when I began. Dear editors, excuse me, and do with this as you think best. It is very imperfect, as is the writer, and I crave your kind forbearance.

Now sending to all who may read this, greeting in the Lord, and wishing you all a happy Christmas and a happy and prosperous new year, I remain, I hope, your sister, though least of all,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

DODGE CITY, Kansas.

DEAR EDITORS:—As it has not yet pleased God to give me the ability to fully express my feelings, I will, the Lord being my strength, endeavor with the language now at hand to thank you and all who contribute to the SIGNS, and the publishers as well, for the good tidings of our Lord Jesus Christ for the past two years. I spent years of search, visiting many who profess christianity who say "it does not make so much difference how one worships, but it is necessary

to have some form of worship in order to obtain salvation," with whom I could not agree, for if a mere form of worship and having your name appear on their books is all that is necessary our Savior would never have left the Jews and established a church of his own. But my search was not in vain, for I finally came upon a little band of Old School Baptists many miles from home, and although an entire stranger they gave me a home with them, and in their homes I found the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which beyond any doubt in my mind is a gift of God. I hope I am truly thankful for all these blessings, and can say with Jacob, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not."

Now in regard to the different forms of worship may I say just a few words? There are just two manners of worship; one, being born of the Spirit, seeks spiritual things and worships God in spirit and truth, while the other, being born of the flesh, is flesh, and destitute of spiritual light follows in darkness the whims of men. In the first offering we have record of we find Cain brought of the fruits of the ground and Abel brought of the firstling of his flock, and by going back a few verses we find that God said to Adam, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake." Then could the offering of the fruits of that which was cursed be any thing more than just a form? while Abel's offering was by the shedding of blood, the seal of the purchased possession of the perfect Savior, and the only offering acceptable in the sight of God for the remission of sin. All the patriarchs and accusers of Job brought of their flocks as God commanded them. The law also required blood as an atonement. Leviticus xvii. 11: "For it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul," and in these last times we find ourselves surrounded by a people who bring as an offering the fruits of the ground, the labor of their own hands, their own self-righteousness, and for which ask deliverance of their soul. While they may find pleasure in the same, let us, if so be the Spirit of God dwell in us, rejoice in the promises of our Lord and Savior, who said, Of all that the Father hath given me I shall lose nothing, but shall raise it up again at the last day. Though our journey in this world of sorrow at times may lead through paths lined with thorns and thistles, may we say with Peter, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time," and may God grant that we ever look upon the bleeding side of our Savior as the soul-cleansing power, the seal of our salvation, the atonement that is acceptable in the sight of God for the remission of all our sins and they are to be remembered no more, and may the Lord strengthen me to say with the psalmist, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."

Now may the love of God, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

R. L. DAVIS.

DELAWARE, Ohio.

DEAR EDITORS:—May I have a little space in your good paper to give a short sketch of the recent tour of our aged and highly esteemed brother, Elder C. C. Moore, of Clarksdale, Missouri, that his friends in the west may know he has recovered from his recent nervous breakdown and is again in the field preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ? His hands are still nervous, so, in order to let his friends hear from him, he has given me a short account of his trip to send to the SIGNS to let his brethren hear in this way rather than writing so many letters.

He left his home in Clarksdale August 19th, and arrived at Sadieville, Ky., the 21st, where he was met by brother David Mulberry, and went with him to his home and was entertained by his good wife and daughter until Sunday morning, when he went to Elklick Church, where he met an unusually large congregation, and preached to them for an hour. He then went home with brother John Jones and wife and preached at night. He spent the balance of the week visiting brethren and friends in that locality, including his much esteemed brother and sister, Jimmie Smith and wife, and family, and the next Sunday returned to the church, where another large congregation was assembled, and preached for them again. He then visited with brethren and sisters around Sadieville, going to visit an aged sister below Georgetown. Returning to Sadieville Friday before the annual meeting he was met by Elders P. W. Sawin, of Sadieville, and C. E. Jackson, of Bucyrus, Ohio. Having a two days meeting, each of them preached twice on Saturday and Sunday. They had a very pleasant meeting and every one expressed themselves as being glad to be there. In company with Elder Jackson he returned to brother David Mulberry's home, and Monday morning both took train for Cincinnati, Ohio. From there Elder Jackson went to his home, Elder Moore going to the home of his esteemed brother, Elder G. L. Weaver, of Cincinnati, where he spent the night and visited with Elder Weaver and wife, also with brother Smith and wife, who came in and spent the evening. Tuesday morning he took train for Delaware, Ohio, where he was met by brother J. S. Main, who took him to his home where he and his wife entertained him the balance of the week, this being the first time he ever met them. Elder Moore's and brother Main's birthday being the same date (just one year difference in their age) a good warm fellowship was the result of this meeting, and he wishes to express his thanks to our dear aged Deacon Main and his wife for their hospitality and for their kindness Saturday in bringing him to Pleasant Hill Church for his first time, where Elder Jackson and I met him again for our annual meeting, where he preached with the power and sweetness given him from on high and was not afraid to declare the whole counsel of God, which he did in a firm and kind way, declaring the doctrine of salvation by grace and the absolute predestination of all things, which we heartily indorse and believe to be the only doctrine that harmonizes with the Scriptures. After brother Moore had spoken so ably the unworthy writer tried to talk a little, followed by our pastor, Elder Jackson. At night he and brother Jackson preached at brother Main's, and Sunday morning our little band met at the meetinghouse where he again preached with power and sweetness; followed by Elder Jackson. After eating dinner, which was served at the meetinghouse, Elder Moore spoke again. It is wonderful how the dear aged brother is sustained, preaching from one to two hours at a time. Dear reader, you have to see and hear him to get the fullness of the

wonderful gift that is his. He has more than one talent: he is both a preacher and a pastor, and his labors have been abundantly blessed in the service of the church of his care. After he finished preaching I tried to talk a little, followed by Elder Jackson, bringing to a close our happy little meeting. Elder Moore came home with me and spent the night, and I felt I was with a man whose conversation would be profitable to me. If he were here now I know he would say, Praise God from whom all blessings flow. While we are few in number, we feel that the set time of the heavenly Father had come to favor Zion. Our strength is in the Lord, not in numbers. Our God is our great high tower, and he rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and none can stay his hand nor change his decrees.

Monday morning I took him to Delaware, where he took train for his long journey home, expecting to arrive there the next day. The first Sunday in October he expected to be at Unity Church, in Missouri, where the late Elder R. M. Thomas used to preach, and who was Elder Moore's fellow-laborer and traveled with him. When I was a boy at home Elder Thomas used to come through here as a messenger to the Indian Creek Association (Ohio) from the Western Corresponding Association, of Missouri, and I used to see him. Pleasant Hill Church belonged to the Indian Creek Association, so it seemed like a few of the old family getting together again. Sometimes I think that Pleasant Hill Church with her few members is a spared monument of God's grace and mercy.

Wishing the editors, publishers, writers and readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and all the ransomed of the Lord, well, I will say farewell for this time.

G. E. STEPHENS.

BERLIN, Md., Oct. 20, 1925.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—I feel to-night that I would like to write something for publication, if the Lord is within and will direct my mind and teach me the things of his kingdom. The subject now under consideration is just one word: "Charity," found in first Corinthians, thirteenth chapter, in many places. What is charity? Webster gives it as universal love. Then if there is no love in our hearts what is there in anything we do? It is as sounding brass. "And though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing."—1 Cor. xiii. 2. So if we have no love then we are nothing. How can we obtain love? Is there anything we can do to obtain it? I say, No, for love is the gift of God. Then we are taught right here to know that we cannot be our own guide, as many say we can, for if there is no love in what we do, then it profiteth us nothing. If we write or talk for the praise of man, and have no love in our hearts, then we are like the Pharisees, but if we are looking forward to the comfort of our brethren and are made to see them our superiors and submit our work for their comfort, then we must have some love. If it is in love we do these things, then we shall reap that which we have sown; but if we have no love in what we do, it is just for the eyes of the world and praise of man. We will consider Jonathan and David. There has been no greater love shown by man than there was with them, for Jonathan would do anything to protect his friend David. Did he receve any reward for it? I say, No. All he did for David he did through true love, "charity," for had he been paid for his work with David it would not have been through love for David, but for hire, for "charity suffereth

long, and is kind." Jonathan was kind and true to David, therefore through love and charity he served him. So if we have no love for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ we may serve him in the law all our life and it is nothing, but like the Pharisees. When Paul wrote to the Corinthians did he do it through love or for honor? I think it was through nothing other than love and charity he did his work. "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee."—Jeremiah xxxi. 3. So we see it is love, charity, that must be the foundation of all we do.

Dear brethren, I realize I have picked out a subject that is too deep for my sinful mind, therefore will have to ask you to look into this subject further for your own comfort, for I feel I can never do justice to it, for I am made to question myself as to whether I love our God and my brethren or not. All I can say is that I hope I do, for it is my chief joy when I can meet them and talk of the love of Christ for poor sinners, of which I see myself the worst of all. In conclusion, I would say that whatever we do let it be in love.

Yours in love,

J. W. S. TIMMONS.

HAVANA, Kans., Dec. 5, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending money order for seven dollars, which please apply as directed. I wish I could help more. Am trying to get some new subscribers. I think that if some Primitive Baptists who are not subscribers would take this valuable paper they would be much encouraged in reading the precious truths contained therein, and wouldd decide they could not do without it. The most dishonest are those who are financially able and do not pay for it. That money is not theirs, it is yours. I have just received the December number, and am truly glad that you receive so many letters of commendation and encouragement, and thankful that you do not publish communications telling of trouble in churches. No, it is not profitable to broadcast such controversy. Faithful and watchful editors have kept the SIGNS free from false doctrine, for which we should all be thankful. Your labors are arduous. Your editorials are always good; you contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

The SIGNS has lived a long time for a religious paper, and I feel sure it has gladdened many destitute and lonely ones, especially those who are unable physically to go out to hear preaching, and those who are far distant from places of meeting, or are otherwise deprived of hearing the precious gospel, the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, preached. We seldom have preaching here since my late husband, Elder Thomas R. Pittman, was called to his eternal home, eight years ago. I am not complaining because the SIGNS does not come every two weeks, because I know conditions made it necessary to reduce it to once a month. May the Lord sustain you in conducting the SIGNS to the glory and honor of his name and the comfort of his saints.

Unworthily,

(MRS.) MARY E. PITTMAN.

OTTAWA, Kansas, Dec. 17, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Yesterday I received a card stating my subscription had been paid for another year. My heart thrilled with gratitude to the dear Lord and the dear child of God who so kindly remembered me, though I feel to hang my head in shame, for I am so unworthy of such blessings as the Lord sometimes

showers upon me, and his mercies are new every morning, but I am too blind to see his dear hand in it at all times. O, dear children, trust him with all your hearts. He is the one mediator between God and man, the only God and Savior, the only one who can save us in time and eternity. All blessings emanate from his dear hand, and we know we are all unworthy of the least of his notice. Yes, vile and full of sin I am, thou art full of truth and grace. Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory, now and forever. If you can bear with me once more, I would like to thank the dear one, whoever he or she might be, for the precious Christmas present, but let me repeat, I am all unworthy of it. When I came west, twenty-six years ago, I was alone, so far as any one believing as I did, copies of Baptist papers were often sent me, which were all good, as far as I was able to judge, but this thought was with me: I realize I am ignorant and do not want to get mixed up with strange doctrines, so I will stay by my Bible and the SIGNS, and now can say I do not regret it, for the Bible, SIGNS and my experience teach me God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham, and "except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain," and will not the poor sinner who is trying to save himself labor in vain if the Lord is not in it? Unless the Lord keep us we will surely go in by and forbidden paths, and deny the Lord of glory, taking praise to ourselves for our wonderful works in keeping ourselves from evil. Jesus taught his disciples to pray, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."

I did not think to say so much, but I am almost overwhelmed this morning with the greatness and goodness of God. Forgive me for again so soon asking you to publish some of my thoughts.

A poor sick sinner, trusting alone in the Lord and Savior for salvation,

ANNA McKINNEY.

CHICAGO, Ill., Dec. 21, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing remittance for the SIGNS. We have enjoyed the paper during the past year, as heretofore. Am sorry it was necessary to change it to once a month, but understand the reason. I liked your farewell column in the December number, especially with keeping the SIGNS as free as possible from strife. By the way, my wife has a sister in Pittsburg, Pa., who has read quite a number of Old Baptist papers, and I am sure she has a heart experience. She has never heard a Baptist sermon, and the only thing she has to find objection to "our doctrine" (she is a Presbyterian of the Old School) is that the Old Baptists do not have more ministers, especially in the cities, and of course everywhere. She thinks we have something that is worth telling to every one, not to "make them christians," but to tell them what the Lord has done for them. She thinks there are thousands who would rejoice to hear "our doctrine." She asked me a short time ago if I could enlighten her on Genesis ii. 9, 16, 17. I told her it was too much for me, and said I would ask one of you editors to write on the text if it was felt that it was of benefit to the "little flock." If not, there is no harm done. Perhaps Elder Lefferts or Elder Dodson might do so.

I did not expect to write as I have when I began, and do not ask this to be

printed in the SIGNS, as there are so many others more gifted.

With love to all connected with the SIGNS, I remain, I trust, in a sweet hope,

M. C. REEVES.

ELKINS, W. Va., Dec. 10, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I see I am behind one year in payment for your valuable paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so am sending payment in full to the close of 1926. We feel we could not do without our family paper. We hope we believe the doctrine it advocates. I feel I have often been comforted by the good letters from the dear brethren and sisters, many of whom I never expect to meet on earth, God's footstool, but I have an humble hope we will meet when this mortal life ceases, where parting will never come. I am in my seventy-fourth year, and hope to be able to continue my subscription for the SIGNS. I have been reading your paper for over twenty-five years. My brother, Elder J. W. McClanahan, has been a subscriber for many years more. I esteem the SIGNS highly for the truth's sake, and hope for its continuation. I I am personally acquainted with Elders H. H. Lefferts, C. W. Vaughn and George Ruston. They are able ministers.

G. B. McCLANAHAN.

ST. JOSEPH, Mo., Dec. 7, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—In renewing the subscriptions of myself and several others for another year, I wish to add a line or two in appreciation of the dear SIGNS. My father, John Bloomfield, began his subscription for the paper at the printing of the first issue in 1832, and our family name has ever since been found on the mailing list of the much prized periodical. Individually I have been a continual subscriber for forty-five years, and not a waver of change have I seen in its policy or the doctrine set forth in its pages in these almost a half century of years. Its reading has often given me assurance and hope, driven away doubts and tremblings and assured me of the old paths. Many dear brethren and sisters, devoted and tried soldiers of the cross, have written their "bit" and passed on before. We salute the present editors and correspondents with a fond wish that they may be given strength by Israel's God to stand steadfast in defense of the truth the coming year.

A sinner in hope of mercy,

A. W. BLOOMFIELD.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Dec., 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—I wish I could express to you my appreciation of the SIGNS. I have read it for a long time, and earnestly hope that it may continue in the future as it has been in the past. I feel thankful that there are a few who are not ashamed or afraid to declare the truth. I think we should have no fear of using words too strong in declaring God's power or man's weakness.

An unworthy sinner,

H. L. VAWTER.

ARDMORE, Tenn., Dec. 20, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am writing you to please change my address from Taft, Tenn., to Ardmore, Tenn., R. 1, as I do not want to miss a copy. I cannot find words to express my thankfulness toward you when I read the card you sent me, telling me you were not going to stop my paper. I cannot see how you can be so kind to a poor sinner like me, who is as prone to err as the sparks are to fly upward. If the time ever comes when I can get the money I will send you pay for the paper, but if I do not live to do this I

hope the good Lord will richly bless you for your kindness. He said, The poor you would have with you always, so may I hope I am one of them? I know one thing, we are poor in this world's goods, but I had rather be poor than to be rich and neither fearing God nor man. We are told to be merciful, even as our heavenly Father is merciful. Oh if all men would take heed to that one thing the poor would not have to suffer so many heartaches, but some of them are hard-hearted, not caring for their fellow-man. I guess it is God's will for them to run their race, have their heaven here on earth, but when the great day comes they may be like the ones the dear Savior told to depart for he never knew them.

The old year will soon be numbered with the past, and we know not what the new one will bring, but will say I hope it will bring happiness to God's little children, wherever they are, and a double portion to you, for I much love this dear old paper, for it stands firm in the faith once delivered unto the saints, so please change my address, that I may not miss my next paper.

May God bless you, is the sincere desire of your unworthy sister, if one at all,

(MRS.) J. E. SISCO.

FORT SUMNER, New Mexico, Dec. 6, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If you will permit one so unworthy as I feel myself to be to thus address you. I have been a reader of the SIGNS a little over a year, and to say I enjoy reading it is putting it very mildly. I feel that the dear paper is a wonderful blessing to God's precious children; it comes each month laden with such wonderful letters it fills my heart to overflowing with love, joy and thanks to our heavenly Father for his precious gifts. I would like to take brother Lefferts by the hand and bid him godspeed. Dear brother, your writings have been a great comfort to this old pilgrim, and I can say amen to every article you have written since I have been reading the SIGNS, also to what the associate editors have written. Write on, dear brethren, in the future upbuilding of God's people, for I feel sure what you write will never divide God's children, but will build them up in the most holy faith of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I cannot command language to express myself to you. I have never seen you, yet I love you for Jesus' sake.

I want to say, God bless brother Greathouse, for he is a great gift to the church, and his writings are full of the great truths of God. I do hope the dear Lord will bless him with a fruitful mind to write some more. I have heard him preach, and he is a great man in the Lord's vineyard.

Dear brother Lefferts, I wish, if it is the Lord's will, that you would give us your views upon Isaiah iii. 12.

J. L. NAPPIER.

LAUREL, Miss., Dec. 27, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have been blessed to the close of another year, through the mercies of the God of all power, who rules all things after the counsel of his own will. I know that I have been blessed greatly with spiritual and temporal blessings, for which I hope I am thankful to God. We are at peace here at Palestine Church, and we pray God will still keep us in bonds of peace and sweet fellowship with each other, also all the redeemed of the Lord. Thy people shall be taught of the Lord, and shall see eye to eye, and speak one and the same thing. Remember us at the throne of grace.

Your brother in Christ, I hope,

T. J. KNIGHT.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1926.

EDITOR

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

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EPHESIANS IV. 30.

"AND grieve not the holy Spirit of God."

For some time it has been our desire to write upon the above Scripture of truth, but we have felt our insufficiency. We often wonder when we take up our pen or when we attempt to speak in the name of the Lord if our brethren realize what it means, or enter into the feelings of the one before them. Truly it is a solemn thing for one who at his best state is altogether vanity, to speak in the name of the Lord. There is a shrinking from such things as a beggar covered with rags would shrink from putting on a king's robes. One has truthfully said, Who is sufficient for these things?

As in times past, so now, we will present what we trust the Lord has given us, and first we will dwell somewhat upon the person of the Holy Spirit, and what his work and office is. He is the Spirit of truth, life and love, and all gifts to the church and in the church are by and through the Spirit. "For to one is given, by the Spirit, the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge, by the same Spirit; to another faith, by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing, by the same Spirit." He it is that convinceth of sin, righteousness and judgment, that takes of the things of Jesus and reveals them unto us, that searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. Thus there is no spiritual life without this Spirit, no supplication and prayer, no thanksgiving and praise, no preaching and no hearing to profit, and without the holy Spirit, none of the fiery darts of the wicked quenched by His sword, which is the Word of God. The least motion towards God or truth in a subject of grace is the work and operation of the Spirit, and all our comfort in believing and the comfort of a good hope through grace is the fruit of the Spirit. He is the Spirit of grace and supplication, so that our supplications that are real supplications are wrought in us by the Spirit, and if our testimony is to have the right ring to it we must be in the Spirit as John was in the Isle of Patmos. Our one and only access to the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort is through the holy Spirit. We are so encompassed with infirmities and ignorance that the Scripture declares "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

In this epistle to the Ephesians Paul declares that there is one body and one Spirit. This body is the church of God, and all who are manifestly members of the church of the living God are baptized by the Holy Ghost. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." Seeing by

the word of God that the church of God is one body, and that there is but one Spirit, and that this Spirit is manifestly in the church, so she travels in the enjoyment of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. Now as the above graces of the church are the fruit of the Spirit, so everything contrary to these things in churches visible, and in members in particular, is contrary to the Spirit, and as the church rejoices in the fruit of the Spirit, so she grieves through the works of the flesh, and her grief is the Spirit's grief, for she is spiritual, thus it is a grief to the Spirit when any offend against one of these little ones. We do not think it necessary to go far from the context to get at just what Paul means. He is exhorting brethren to an upright walk and godly conversation. It was a grief to Paul and to all orderly brethren to see any of the Ephesians who had been received into the fellowship of the saints walking again "as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their minds." It was also a grief to Paul and to all orderly brethren to see the Galatians turned aside by Judaising teachers, and just as it was an offense against truth so it was a grief to the Spirit. The flesh is contrary to the Spirit, and wherever there are those in the flesh they mind the things of the flesh, and it is always to the grief of the Spirit.

In the context Paul exhorts, "Be ye angry, and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath." There is much to provoke in the conduct of those whom we may consider in error and in our ignorance we are ready to resent attacks upon truth or upon God, but the spirit that is ready to fight for God is of the flesh. God does not need any to fight for him that way, and wherever one is found with such a spirit there will be things said and done that will be a grief to the Spirit, so that such an one will feel ashamed when he realizes that the wicked is God's sword. There is much fighting for God common among men, but it proceeds from the flesh and is sin. The fight that is God-honoring is when a saint whose God and whose self is evil-spoken against is able by enabling love to reign over his own spirit, for he that ruleth his own spirit is better than he that taketh a city. Under the discipline of the Spirit David could say of Shimei: "Let him alone, and let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him. It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day." Again, Paul says, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." Whenever one is left to himself, and fleshly communications proceed out of his mouth, he is then sowing to the flesh, and if an heir of heaven he will surely reap corruption, so that his course and conversation will stink. In this the Spirit has a purpose, for herein the soul is again and again taught to hate himself. From several of the epistles we find exhortations to the saints touching upon their walk as becoming saints, their conduct to each other, and their being in the world yet not of the world. There was a need be then, and we believe there is now, although we cannot boast that we are one whit better than others regarding this. World-mindedness is a grief to us, and we are often ashamed because of the evil trend of our minds. We are strangers here below and pilgrims heavenward bound, yet how much our minds and hearts are on earthly things. Well might Peter write, "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and

pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." To the formalist this is very easily done, he can of course be more diligent in prayer and more attendant on the means of grace. The legalist also will talk much about duty, which he believes the creature has power to accomplish, but we believe that as the law was given that the offense might abound, so the precepts are given in the New Testament so that the child of God under the Spirit's teaching finds he can do nothing aright but through the Spirit. It is incumbent upon all believers to walk in the precepts, which can only be done by enabling grace, treasured up in our glorious Head and received through the Spirit. In this teaching of the Spirit the flesh itself becomes a thorn, and the soul is made to sorrow after a godly sort, and as Paul wrote the Corinthians, "What carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what revenge." That which is Spirit-taught is all of a piece, so that all taught of the Spirit speak the same things, which, put in a nut-shell, are debasing the sinner and exalting the Savior, and for the accomplishment of this the Holy Spirit is manifest among the sons of men. Lying, corrupt communications, deceitful lusts, lasciviousness, uncleanness and greediness all come from the flesh, and in the flesh we cannot please God. The flesh is the same in all of us, we are all of the same lump and disobedience is stamped on it, and all through it therefore the Spirit's work is to thoroughly discredit the flesh. It is true that in the accomplishment of this the Spirit seems to withdraw himself. We do not believe that he does, for Jesus said this Spirit would abide with us for ever, but the comfort of the Spirit is withdrawn. When we as parents are reproving our children we do not smile on them, and to the children it would seem that we did not care for them, while we really think more about our children's welfare at such times than when we cover them with smiles and kisses. When walking after the flesh it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps; that is, he cannot switch over to spiritual things of himself in that condition, and there the sinner would remain unless the Spirit brought judgment to the line, and like the prophet said to David convincingly, Thou art the man. Now the Spirit had not left David, but we believe that the holy Spirit in David was grieved through David's lusts, or we would never have had such a heart-felt prayer from David as recorded in the fifty-first Psalm. Again, we believe that his offense was such that the holy Spirit in Nathan was grieved when he declared that David had given the enemies of the Lord great occasion to blaspheme. It was a true spiritual prayer from a grieved spirit that cried, "Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy Spirit from me." Who has not at times been led by the flesh and possessed a selfish worldly mind? Who has not been so worldly in his ways and thoughts that it seemed as though he were almost swallowed up? Such is contrary to the Spirit and must therefore be a grief to the Spirit in ourselves and in our brethren. Much distress is caused to the churches to-day by the wicked spirit of gossip, which is of the flesh, and is devil's food at most, yet hearts are made sad through it. Such from those of whom better things are expected is a grief to the holy Spirit. To such we would say, Awake to right-way's-ness and sin not. Speak the truth in love, walk in love, for that which is not to the comfort of God's dear saints

ought not to be a sweet morsel under your tongue. "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice." To know to do a thing and to do it not, to that one it is sin, and what a sin it must be when we would by our evil gossip destroy a brother or sister in the sight of others; such is murder, and causes much grief of the Spirit. Again, there are those who covet money, such the Scripture declares have erred from the faith and pierce themselves through with many sorrows. Others seek to gratify the flesh, and their one thought is to make provision for the flesh, to the end that they might fulfill the lusts thereof. Such things bring grief of Spirit, and it happens to them as with the true proverb, "A child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame." The unloving lives lived by some who have professed to be led by the Spirit, and the merciless way in which they would destroy those who are opposed to them, and wreck Zion if they could, has often filled the saints of God with a grief which was not of the flesh, but rather of the Spirit.

In conclusion, while we do not believe that the eternal God is grieved by man and man's doings, as though man thwarted his purpose and he grieved through disappointment, yet in his people the one Spirit is touched with the feeling of their infirmities, so that the grief of the new man is the grief of the Spirit.

G. R.

NOTICE.

J. P. HEATHERLY, Route 4, Lawrenceburg, Tennessee, requests the clerks of the different associations to each send him one copy of the Minutes of their associations.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by George R. Tedford.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1925, to the churches composing the same, sends greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We will at this time, the Lord willing, offer you some thoughts on Psalms xxiii, 5, the words, "My cup runneth over." Glad and festal moments come to the saddest and most weary hearts. We cannot tell whence such experiences come. When the Lord turns again our captivity the mouth is filled with laughter and the tongue with singing, then we say among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad. When our cup is overflowing with his mercy and loving-kindness then we can cry, "My cup runneth over." It becomes us to remember that the cup of blessing of which we drink was once filled with a bitter curse. If we had been left to drink the bitter results of our sins it would have been as when Moses ground the calf to powder and strewed it upon the waters and made the people drink. How precious are his words who has pleaded the cause of his people, "Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again." When he took it out of our hands he poured its contents into the cup mixed for himself, returning it to us emptied, even to the dregs; nay, better, filled with the wine of his love and life, while he drank our potion of wrath and woe. Remember his own words in the garden, when his agony had passed and the ruffian band was about to bind him, and Peter impetuously and characteristically drew his sword, "Then said Jesus

unto Peter, "Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" Consider the ingredients of Christ's cup, the shame and spitting, the pain and anguish, the physical torture, and above all the bitterness of our sins. If we may so put it, the chosen race stood in one long line, each with a cup of wormwood and gall in his hand, and Christ passing along took from each his cup and poured its contents into the vast beaker which he carried, so that on the cross he tasted death for his people that were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Thus our lives brim with salvation because his brimmed with condemnation. Our cup is one of joy because his cup was one of sorrow. Our cup is one of blessedness because his was one of God-forsakenness. But whatever blessing is in our cup it is sure to run over. With him the calf is always the fatted calf, the robe is always the best robe, the joy is unspeakable, the peace passeth understanding, the grace is so abundant that the recipient has all sufficiency for all things and abounds in every good work. Well may we each cry with the apostle, I have all and abound.

Finally, brethren, farewell.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1925, to our sister associations with whom we correspond, sendeth greetings in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—According to the great mercy of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who is the giver of every good and every perfect gift, we have been favored to witness a great manifestation of his marvelous work. Elder Dodson was with us and preached nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified. On Saturday, September 12th, he baptized four dear brethren and sisters, and Sunday, September 13th, three more children of the Lord were given strength to follow Him into the liquid grave, making seven in all. It was a wonderful meeting. Dear brethren, we feel that you will all rejoice with us.

Our next session, the Lord willing, will be at Bowdoinham, Maine, in September, 1926, where we shall be glad to receive your Minutes and messengers.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Middletown and Andes Church, at Clovesville, N. Y., September 16th and 17th, 1925, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and churches with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—With much gladness of heart we can truthfully say that we have had a very peaceable and encouraging session. Your messengers and ministers have come in love and meekness, and have shunned not to declare the precious truth of the gospel, proclaiming the truth as it is in Jesus, the way, the truth and the life, the only name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved, and we are made to say, How good and how pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. The only ones who can expound the unsearchable riches of God's grace are the ones in whom the perfection of beauty (God) hath shined to give them the knowledge of the light of

the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Also there must be that same light, or the power thereof, for poor worms of the dust to feed upon the crumbs that fall from the Master's table. So while we have been listening to these able sermons at this meeting we have been made to feel and say, Great and marvelous are thy works. There has been no discord, but one continual flowing together of love and fellowship.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Olive and Hurley Church, Wednesday and Thursday between the second and third Sundays in September, 1926, at Ashokan, N. Y., when we hope to meet your messengers again.

GEORGE RUSTON, Mod.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

THOSE of the brotherhood and spiritual family of our church who in their moments of human weakness may entertain the slightest doubt of all that our Savior has promised, and those who, with all the depth of their beings, have true and absolute faith, will derive comfort and reassurance from the knowledge that one more great life has passed on to the glorious reward. After eighty-seven years of increasing faith and devotion to others, our precious sister, **Virginia Beebe Bailey** went peacefully to sleep at 7:30 o'clock, the evening of December 31st, 1925, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Kathleen Noble Jerome, in White Plains, New York. She was attended by her children and family, and at the moment of parting simply, and imperceptibly, slept. Her last earthly words, addressed to her beloved grandson, were, "Believe in my God." She was faith personified, and in her very passing a proof and reassurance of the teachings of our Lord Jesus. Sister Virginia was the last remaining daughter of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, founder of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. She was born in Fairfax, Va., in 1839, accompanied her father to his new home in New Vernon, Orange County, New York. At the age of seventeen she married the late Honorable James D. Little, of Putnam County, N. Y. She then made her home at Carmel, New York, during the childhood of her eight children. Upon the death of her husband she edited and carried on for several years the operation of the *Putnam County Courier*. In acknowledgment of her brilliant success in this work she became quite famous in the newspaper circles of those times. She later entered private life and in 1890 married Mr. John O. Bailey, of Putnam County, New York, and made her residence in Middletown, New York, until his death, in 1905. Thereafter she made her home in Middletown for a few years, and then with her daughter in White Plains, New York. Sister Virginia is survived by three daughters and her brother, the Honorable George M. Beebe, of Ellenville, New York.

ONE WHO LOVED HER.

M. C. Miller was born January 9th, 1850, and passed away September 20th, 1925, making his stay on earth 75 years, 8 months and 11 days. He was baptized October 4th, 1890, by Elder D. M. Vail, uniting with the Abbington Old School Baptist Church, of Justus, Pa., of which he was a worthy member until he was called to his eternal home. He was clear and sound in all of the principles of the doctrine of Christ, and was faithful in his attendance at all of the meetings of the church when not providentially hindered. The children will miss a kind, loving father and the church a worthy member. He leaves to mourn his absence three sons, two daughters, nineteen grandchildren, fourteen great-grandchildren, one brother, three sisters, the church and many distant relatives. May God in his rich mercy and abounding goodness bless each one with a reconciled mind to his holy will. He is now with his dear Savior in heaven.

The funeral was held at his late residence, where a large company of relatives and neighbors assembled September 22nd to pay their last tribute of respect to one they dearly loved. Elder D. M. Vail spoke words of comfort at the funeral, after which the remains were taken to Edella and laid to rest beside his wife in the Miller Cemetery.

Written by ONE OF THE CHILDREN.

Mrs. James Avery died at her late home in Arkville, N. Y., November 22nd, 1925, after an illness of four months duration, at the age of seventy-six years, leaving her husband to mourn the loss of a loving, loyal helpmeet who had been a sympathetic companion in things both of a temporal and a spiritual import. Elder Ruston, of Kelly Corners, spoke comfortingly at the funeral services from Job xix. 21. The interment was in the Kelly Corners cemetery. Although her husband has been for many years a member of the Second Roxbury Church of the Old School Baptist faith and order Mrs. Avery never united with the visible church, feeling her unfitness by nature and mourning her depravity of heart, but in it all exalting Christ through whose mercy and saving grace was her only hope of salvation. She occasionally attended the meetings of the church to which her husband belongs, and assisted in many ways in ministering to the temporal necessities of

the brethren. She was born in Bragg Hollow, near Halcottville, N. Y., and bore the maiden name of Jennie E. Hewitt. She was married in 1873 to James Avery. Practically her whole life was spent near Kelly Corners, until 1907 when she and her husband moved to Arkville. At the time of her last illness sister Orpha Whitcomb came and cared for Mrs. Avery until the end came, doing all in the way of tender watchful care that human skill could accomplish. Mrs. Avery's death is deeply mourned, but not as one who was not sustained by a precious hope in an incorruptible inheritance. Since the death of his wife the bereaved husband has been making his home with a nephew, Avery Ryer, of Dunraven, N. Y.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

Carey Allen DeVore, of Mystic, Iowa, son of Nathan and Mary A. DeVore, was born near Realsville, Ind., March 5th, 1865, and departed this life July 15th, 1925, aged 60 years, 4 months and 10 days. He came with his parents to Appanoose County when about nine years of age, where he lived the rest of his life, with the exception of the years between 1911 and 1919, which were spent in Missouri, near Green City. He was united in marriage to Nettie Swan February 22nd, 1891, and to this union were born eight children, seven boys and one girl: Purley C. and Luther, of Green City, Mo.; Charley O., of Promise City, Iowa; Leonard and Andrew N., of Seymour, Iowa; William K., of Cora, Mo.; Lewis A. and Myrtle Alice, who are yet at home, near Mystic. He is survived by his wife, eight children, fifteen grandchildren, also by five sisters: Mrs. Dora Johnson, Moravia, Iowa; Mrs. Florence Law, Centerville, Iowa; Mrs. Toka Ewing, Butler, Mo.; Mrs. Susie Green, Promise City, Iowa; Mrs. Maude Lellenberg, Corydon, Iowa. He united with Spring Creek Church in Adair Co., Mo., in 1917, a Primitive Baptist Church belonging to Hazel Creek Association, and was baptized by Elder W. T. Walters, and lived a faithful member until death.

Written by request.

W. T. WALTERS.

Solomon Mayfield was born in Berry County, Missouri, April 15th, 1854. He came to Oregon with his parents in 1867 and settled in the Willimette Valley, near Oregon City. He was married to Louisa A. Breeding September 26th, 1876, and to this union four children were born: Amos Mayfield, of Union, Oregon, John Mayfield and Mrs. John Rollins, of Elgin, Oregon, and one boy who died in infancy. There are decended from this family eleven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. Soon after marriage he took up his residence at Hepner, where he lived for fifteen years, coming to the vicinity of Elgin in 1893, where he and his family have since made their home. He never made a public profession of religion or united with any church, but always held to the Old School Baptist faith and attended the services of that church. In his father's family there were thirteen children, of which he was the youngest. There remains of this family one brother and two sisters. Most of them were of the Old School Baptist faith and one brother, Elder G. E. Mayfield, was a faithful minister for over forty years. He had been in failing health for several months and knew that his time on earth was drawing to an end, but was reconciled to it and expressed a hope for the better life of the saints of God and left evidence of his resting in such a hope, which is a source of comfort to his faithful wife in her bereavement. Death came to relieve his sufferings December 22nd, 1925. Funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Elgin December 24th, after which interment was made in the Elgin Cemetery.

C. W. BOND.

ORDINATIONS.

THE Primitive or Old School Baptist Church called Pleasant Grove, located in Yakima County, Washington, called on her sister churches for their ordained help for the purpose of setting apart A. D. Hughett, one of her members, to the full work of the ministry of the gospel. The following churches responded: Mizpah, of Touchet, Washington, sent her ordained Elder, J. T. Barnes, Big Springs Church, of Elgin, Oregon, sent her ordained Elder, C. W. Bond, and with Elder W. T. Eaton, of Pleasant Grove Church, met with said church on Saturday, November 14th, 1925, and after being organized into a presbytery appointed Elder J. T. Barnes Moderator and Elder W. T. Eaton Clerk, called on Pleasant Grove Church to deliver said candidate. After the presbytery called upon him for evidence of his call from nature to grace, and also his call to the ministry, and being fully satisfied, they proceeded to the setting apart of the said A. D. Hughett to the full work of the gospel ministry, by the laying on of hands, prayer by Elder J. T. Barnes and charge delivered by Elder C. W. Bond. Then the said Elder A. D. Hughett was given the right hand of fellowship by the presbytery and the church amid much rejoicing. Now we, the said presbytery, do recommend brother Hughett to the Old School Baptists as being sound in faith and doctrine, and of a gentle and meek disposition, which we feel are beautiful marks in one who is set apart to so solemn a duty as officiating in the things of the kingdom of God, and as we have passed through some of the trials and weight of these solemn obligations, and know and have felt in our souls the power and strength of God which comes through the prayers and fellowship of the church to the young and tender who are just launching out upon the great battlefield of time, we pray God will ever remember him in all

his trials with his sustaining grace, that he may with all faithfulness in Christ Jesus be enabled to say, I have fought a good fight and have kept the faith, and may this be said with the blessed assurance that there is a crown of righteousuess laid up for him, and not only for him, but for all who love and look for the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

If this meets with the approval of the editors and publishers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we would love to see it published, that the brethren in other parts may know that there are a few of the favored of the Lord scattered over this western coast.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. T. BARNES.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Margaret Tiebout, N. Y., $24; Mrs. Sallie S. Gaines, D. C., $5; Virginia Simpson, D. C., $5; J. F. Oliver, Va., $1; Mrs. S. W. Hoyt, N. Y., $1; Mrs. F. J. Gray, Texas, $10; Elder George Weaver, Ohio, $1; Mrs. Sarah R. Johnson, N. J., $3; Mrs. A. C. Morse, N. Y., $3; Mrs. I. R. Blythe, Pa., $2; Attie A. Curtis, Me., $1; Miss E. G. Merryman, Md., $1; Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $10; Mrs. D. J. Holloway, Md., $1; W. A. Kelley, Ark., $3; A. W. Bloomfield, Mo., $2; Allie Gooch Reid, N. C., $2; G. C. Jordon, Mo., $3; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $3; Jennie C. Bower, N. Y., $1; J. A. Tandy, Okla., $5; Mary E. Pittman, Kans., $1; J. E. Holloway, Texas, $1; Mrs. Sarah Runkle, Ill., $1; Miss E. Annie Parker, Md., $3; Sarah A. McColl, Ont., $4; W. E. Bryan, Ky., $1; Miss Sarah I. Rittenhouse, N. J., $3; Miss Susie A. Stone, N. J., $2; W. H. Chaney, Texas, $2.50; Kate Swartwood, Okla., $3.10; Mrs. Maria Rees, Ky., $3; Cyrus Cross, Ohio, $1; "A Friend," Md., $1; Miss Hannah E. Danks, Cal., $1; J. P. Starr, Texas, $6.25; Mrs. J. D. Shafer, N. Y., $1; Mrs. M. E. Primm, Ark., $4; M. C. Reeves, Ill., $2; Mrs. Mary Duffus, B. C., $2.50; Mary Ann Barnette, N. B., $1; J. D. Welborn, Ind., $5; E. E. Cates, Kans., $1; Mrs. Thomas Jamison, Cal., $1; Uriah Garton, Okla., $1; Mrs. George T. Davis, Del., $1; Mrs. George Veley, Pa., $1; Mrs. Kate Rugg, Ohio, $1; Mrs. Martha E. Holloway, Md., $1; Mrs. E. L. Ferris, D. C., $5; Mrs. Val Wermer, N. J., $2; Mrs. Fannie Muir, Pa., $4; Sarah E. Rice, Mo., $2; Thomas C. Roe, Md., $3; J. B. Simmons, Texas, $3.

[WE were unable to publish the "Contributions" in the January number, therefore the above are for two months instead of one. We sincerely thank all who have so generously contributed, thereby enabling us to send the SIGNS to many dear saints who love to read it. We also much appreciate the kindness of those who have sent us money to help meet the expense of publishing the paper.—J. E. B. & CO.]

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

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THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor,
J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE of JOSHUA S. CORDER.

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Picture of Elder Joshua S. Corder.
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Chapter XI.—Some Extracts, Reminiscences, &c.
Chapter XII.—In Perils.
Chapter XIII.—Fell Asleep, A "Loved Disciple."
Chapter XIV.—Memorials, Poetry, Circular Letter, &c.

This little book of 152 pages was published by Elder Corder's daughter, sister Semma E. Corder, of Philippi, W. Va., and printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office several years ago, and we feel is a work that will be read with interest by any of the household of faith.

The book was originally sold for one dollar per copy, and was bound in cloth, but there were some printed sheets that were never bound, and these sister Corder has generously donated to help in publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so we have decided to bind them in paper covers and offer them to our readers as long as the supply lasts for the extremely low price of twenty-five cents per copy. If any who purchase this book feel they have not received full value they may return the book to us and we will refund the price paid for it.

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THE

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 94. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1926. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In order for any one to understand this experience it seems necessary to say at the very beginning that I was raised under instruction of the Methodists. As a child, I attended a large "church" in the Bronx, New York city, passed through the "Junior League," was entered on probation and learned their catechism. At thirteen I became a member, feeling I believed there was a God and that I longed to walk aright, but with no further understanding. I have attended their services and been a member of the Sunday-school all my life up to the present time. When my husband and I were married, nearly fourteen years ago, we moved to a very sightly place overlooking a valley and with a ridge of mountains in the background. There we lived for five years, and in all my life I had never seen such sunsets. They were marvelously beautiful, constantly changing and wonderful. All the years I lived there I was out of doors to watch the sunset if possible. It seemed to me that there I was taught the wonderful majesty of God, and I felt to say with the psalmist, "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handywork." I would feel filled with awe and reverence, admiration and worship, such as I had never before experienced. In all those years there was just part of a verse of Scripture that always came to my mind when watching the sunset, and it was this, "Thou hast set my feet in a large room." I did not understand it, and, through the winter months particularly, decided to study the Scriptures. I started with the New Testament, and read and meditated upon one verse at a time, looking up all references for every verse, and so in this way I studied all the books of the New Testament except Revelation. Then we moved from there, and for a number of years nothing of that kind came to my mind, but I still wondered about the verse that had been with me so much. We moved to Kingston, New York, and I carried my membership letter from the Methodists there to them here. About three years ago I expected to have a child, but was taken very ill suddenly and my desire was lost. Then I was surely in trouble of mind. Even before I was able to leave my bed I asked my doctor why it had to be so. I told him I knew many babies

came into the world unwanted and unwelcome and I could not understand why I should not be able to have even one. He looked at me, strangely I thought, for a moment, and then said, "We cannot understand or explain why these things happen, but must leave it all in the hand of Providence." That I was not able to do, and I felt God was unjust. I thought and brooded over it and became very bitter and rebellious and stubborn. I wanted to order my life after my own pattern. Time passed on and I only grew worse. It seemed to me that I was in a terrible conflict; I felt that I was sinful and wicked, and the angry, hateful feelings in my heart grew worse and worse. It grew so terrible that I felt that way toward nearly every one around me. Nothing pleased me, and every one was wrong. I had never heard an experience related or spoken of, and was entirely ignorant of what was my trouble. My conflict grew worse and worse, until it seemed to me I was surely losing my mind. I could scarcely sleep nights, and endured such agony that it seemed to me I must surely die. All this time my lips seemed to be sealed and I told no one of my trouble. I was not well, because of my state of mind, and merely said I was terribly nervous. Over a year ago when looking through my Bible, I read, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone." Just that much impressed itself upon my mind and there it stayed. I could not get away from it. It seemed to my understanding that the white stone was peace, and I desired and yearned and longed for peace of mind. I did not realize that Christ was the Prince of Peace, and that only by looking to him as the author and finisher of our faith could I get peace. I cried, Peace, peace, and there was no peace. I thought I would throw off these impressions and would try and go out more, but my burden was still there. I was merely trying to overcome in my own strength, and I could no more get rid of the burden than I could stop breathing. By this time I was in such distress of mind that I took no interest in my work nor in anything. It seemed to me that there were two spirits within me engaged in mortal combat. One filled me with evil, hateful, sinful thoughts against God and man, and the other told me I was wicked and sinful and depraved, and I felt I despised myself. Still I did not understand, and spoke to no one of these things. Finally, I laid awake through two long nights, with no rest even in the day, from the fearful struggle. The third night when I sought my bed it seemed to me I had gone to the very limit of human endurance. I thought if I did not find sleep that night I should have hysterics or lose my mind by morning. As this was all passing through my mind, I felt that I could cry to God in my agony. I had not dared to lift my voice in supplication before, but now I fairly groaned in such misery, and asked God to send me understanding, for I knew not what was my trouble. Then as distinctly as though some one spoke in the room came these words, Thou art kicking against the pricks. I trembled and was afraid, and then after a few moments I arose and came down and sought my Bible. It was two o'clock in the morning and every one asleep. I read of God speaking to Paul on the road to Damascus, and there was a reference which I found to be this, For if this work be of men, it will come to nought: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God. Oh, I was condemned, and I closed

my Bible and went back to bed. There I writhed in spirit and was brought to the very foot of the cross, where I looked up and saw such a look of compassion and love that I could say, Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief. I cried in my heart, O God, have mercy, have mercy upon me and send me peace or I will most surely die. Then such an indescribable feeling passed over me, I felt as though my whole being changed, and I could truly say from the depths of my heart, O God, not my will, but thine, be done. I felt impressed then that I must tell Mother Faulkner. She is an Old School Baptist, but had never pressed her views upon me, nor tried to influence me in any way. She takes the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I had glanced through a couple of copies years ago, but saw nothing I understood, so had never given them any more attention. But I felt she would be angry at me, for I had turned against her in thought as well as against God. Then the words of that beautiful hymn, "Lead, kindly light," came into my mind, and I felt that I could truly repeat them with faith and understanding. Oh, my heart was singing a new song, but I was exhausted, body and mind, and immediately fell asleep. The next day I went to mother and told her of my feelings, and asked her forgiveness for my hardness, and she forgave me so readily and understood me so well that I was amazed. I thought her understanding was beautiful, and I could scarcely believe any one had ever felt so. And then God gave me peace. Such peace is beyond all understanding, and I thought of those words, "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Oh, I knew I was changed, that my eyes had been opened and that I had new understanding, and I felt that all honor and glory was due to His name, that of myself I was nothing, but because of his wonderful goodness and mercy he had taught me and instructed me and given me faith. Then my body, which had been under such terrific strain, relaxed, and I was so tired that I could not get up; but I did not feel sick, simply exhausted, body and mind. We had a physician, and he said it was nervous collapse. So I laid for six weeks, sleeping eighteen hours out of twenty-four much of the time, and too weak at times to even open my eyes. But I had no fears, no doubts, no questions. It seemed I was living in a wonderful calm, and so I remained for five months, gaining steadily, but slowly, in strength of mind and body. Then in September Elder Ruston and Elder Walker came as I supposed to see mother, and Elder Ruston spoke to me of spiritual things. I told them just a little of what I felt, and he talked to me and told me that I had never learned that through man's teaching, but had been taught of God. Then he said, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." He startled me and stirred me up so that I began to question and wonder where and what I was. I decided to go back to the Methodists, and I did. I went and found myself entirely out of sympathy with everything that was preached and said. I heard several sermons, and then I felt constrained by my conscience to go to the minister and tell him I no longer believed the things I had been taught. I no longer believed in man-taught religion, for Christ said, "Born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." We had a long talk and words came to my lips that I had never thought to say. I told him Christ said, "The kingdom of God cometh

not with observation: * * * for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Also that he "neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, * * * for in him we live, and move, and have our being." I cannot give all the conversation here, but I felt God had strengthened me to do this, and had put words into my mouth which I had not premeditated. He thought I had been ill, and was confused and unhappy and did not understand, so he wanted me to wait. I told him I was not sure I could, for I felt I was living a lie to remain there any longer, and thought it my duty to withdraw from them. I let it stand then, but I felt I had cleared my conscience. In about a month's time Elder Ruston came to see me again, and I told him of my visit to the minister and our conversation, and as Elder Ruston talked to me I truly felt he had been called of God, but I told him I did not feel that I believed as he did, but did not understand why. After he had gone such an assurance and conviction came over me that what he spoke was truth and food for me that the words I had said seemed to sear me, and I longed for his return to tell him so. I left word for him to come and see me on his return from Maryland, and then I told him I fully believed all he had said to me, that I could not keep silent much longer. My heart seemed so full of the marvelous wonder and mercy of God that I felt I must speak out and tell what I felt God had done for me. I feel he has given me a hope that is more precious to me than all the treasures of earth, and I am going to the Old School Baptist Church and tell them so, for I believe it to be the living church of Christ. I have definitely withdrawn my name from the Methodists and their Sunday-school. I am poor, and weak, and miserable, and blind only as he leads me to walk in his way. "And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." I feel he is all these things to me and I would crown him King of kings, and Lord of lords.

If this is an experience of grace, all honor and glory is due to his name, for I have been led out all alone by the power of his mighty hand and no man's hand has guided me. Praise be unto his name forever and forever.

FLOSSIE I. FAULKNER.

[It has been suggested that the foregoing experience would be of interest to the readers of the Signs of the Times. Sister Faulkner's experience shows that she has not received it of man, but of God. She had not heard an Old Baptist sermon until after she had joined the church. It was my pleasure to baptize her at our last meeting at Ashokan, New York. May her testimony be a comfort to the household of faith.—G. R.]

Niagara Falls, N. Y., Sept. 7, 1925.

Dear Editors:—Please pardon me for not sending my subscription sooner, for it should have been sent in April. However better late than never, so inclosed please find New York draft for two dollars to pay for the Signs of the Times for one year. It seems to me every God-fearing man who takes the Signs will desire to pay for it, however it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps; the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. The flesh is against the spirit, so that he cannot do the things he would, hence he neglects to perform his duty in many ways, and this seems to me to be according to God's will, in order to teach him that he must really rely upon God's help, and when he comes to this stage he will become very

humble and childlike. A child must be born into this world in order to see it, much less write about it. There has always been a controversy about these things, which began in the garden of Eden between Cain and Abel and all the way down through all the ages, so when Paul and his companions went preaching that Jesus is the very Christ that was to come, their opposers cried out that they that turn the world upside down have come hither also, and they went further and cast them out of Jason's house and beat them, and said they were setters forth of strange gods. There must have been a very radical difference as to their religious opinions, and I have often wondered why or what made such animosity that one party should betray, beat and slay the other. Awful to contemplate, is it not? Both parties seemed to be religious, but disagreed as to what God had done for them, and as to what God would accept of them or what would be satisfactory worship of him, hence the friction. One party to the controversy claims that man in nature has the will and power to come into a spiritual relation with his Maker by his own efforts or will, by doing good works; the other party claims that no man can by his own efforts please God. In this day both parties try to prove their claim by the Scriptures. The self-willed party is divided into many sects and denominations, because each order has a little different way of doing it, and as a whole they are largely in the majority, however this is conceded by the opposite party, of whom I will now consider their claim, which is that man in nature cannot acceptably serve God, because he is as prone to sin as the sparks to fly upward, that God looked down from heaven to see if there were any that did good, and declared there was not one, that their mouths were an open sepulchre, their ways were swift to shed blood, the poison of asps was under their tongues, with their lips they had used deceit, and the way of peace they had not known; that they who are in the flesh cannot please God. They further claim that no man can go to the Father except by the Son; that no man can come unto the Son except the Father which sent him draw them; that it is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but it is according to his own purpose and grace given his people in Christ Jesus before the world began. Again, they are saved by grace, and not of themselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. But boasting is excluded. By what law? It is excluded by the law of faith. So the saved are saved by grace, through faith. To have faith they must have the Spirit, and to have the Spirit they must be born again. Of what? Born not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, that liveth and abideth forever. They are not born of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of man, but the Scripture plainly states it is of God. To be born you must be quickened. In nature quickened is when the heart begins to beat. It is manifest or known by the skilled physician three months before the birth. Three months later the child sees the light of this world, is frightened, and usually weeps; however, it soon learns to coo and smile. Likewise the heavenly child enjoys its heavenly bliss until it meets with difficulties in this ungrateful and sinful world. The minority say, If I believed in that I would take my fill of sin. The majority say, We have had our fill already, and abhor it, Lord, help us to overcome it. How can we who are dead to sin live any longer therein? We now

love righteousness and hate sin, but cannot fully relieve ourselves of it, and look to some other source for relief, our good works having failed even to satisfy ourselves, therefore we must through faith look to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. God has laid our sins upon him, and the blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed us from all sin; not part, but all of it. We are not our own, but are bought with a price, and the blood of Jesus is the price, and God has accepted it in full payment and given a receipt having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his," because he says, "I know my sheep, and am known of mine;" you know me not, because you are not of my sheep. A very good reason why they did not know him. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life." Herein is a great thought: He says, I give it; if so, how does any man work for it? Again, he says it is eternal. If so, how does any man fall away and lose it? as is taught by many. To lose it would be only temporal life, but in him was life, and the life was the light of men, and he says, As I live ye shall live also. Again, your life is hid with Christ in God, and, brethren, is not that a sure place to hide it? Since no man by searching can find out God, even the wise cannot find him, since he taketh the wise in their own craftiness. Again, he taketh away the understanding of the prudent and destroys the wisdom of the wise. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant." He will put it in their minds and write it in their hearts, and he will be unto them a God and they shall be unto him a people, and they shall no more teach every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know him, from the least unto the greatest. But how shall the unregenerate find out God, since none by searching can do so, for eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor does the heart understand the things that God has put in the heart of them that love him? but God has revealed it unto them by his Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God. It appears to me that the majority believe they can do big things for God by their own wisdom, while the minority believe that God does big things for them by gifts and revelation. I stand with the minority.

I have written this to relieve my mind, but if you think it of no value destroy it, and all will be right with me.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

W. E. BLUE.

HUNTSVILLE, Ala., Aug. 2, 1925.

MRS. N. H. ARNOLD—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—If one so weak as I am should claim kin with the family of God. With shame I will have to confess my faults. It has been eleven months since I received your most comforting letter. You would say, Then why did you not answer sooner? I will try and tell you why. Eleven months ago, when I was confined to my bed, just recovering from typhoid fever, this message came to me, when I was not able to read it myself, my wife, who was at my bedside, read the contents to me. No mortal will ever know the comfort it was to me. Just to think that the dear Lord was so good to me as to cause one of his servants to comfort me in my afflictions. I feel too weak now to attempt to write you, yet feel I am not treating you right by not answering your letter, and could not expect to receive another one from you. I want you to know that your correspondence is much appreciated;

yes, it is good news from a far country. I hope you will forgive my neglect, and I will try and be more prompt in answering your letters, if the Lord will. Now I will try and speak of some of his truths, and would call your attention to the word "Salvation," a saving preservation from destruction or calamity; redemption of man from sin and from liability to eternal death. Isaiah lii. 6–8: "Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore they shall know in that day that I am he that doth speak; behold, it is I. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion." The prophet no doubt had reference to the gospel church, for there is a people that see eye to eye, and lift up there voices together, that publish salvation. Bless his holy name. "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." This city is the city that the Lord keeps, the city spoken of. Zechariah viii. 3: "Thus saith the Lord, I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and Jerusalem shall be called, A city of truth." This city is the city that has walls of salvation, and besides this salvation is the bulwarks, which means fortification, or shelter. Now we see that this city of truth is completely surrounded by salvation, and I am going to say right here that this salvation is of the Lord, for he, the Lord, is the rock of my salvation. This wall and bulwark of salvation is a saving preservation to all who are in the city. Why should we not proclaim salvation, seeing it is our protection? and who is it to-day that fills the description of that city but the Old School Baptists who proclaim salvation and lift up their voices together? We hear Paul saying, Romans i. 16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth." Those who preach the power of God preach the gospel of Christ, but those who preach the power of man fail to preach the gospel of Christ. There may be some who claim to be Old School Baptists who want to credit themselves a part of their salvation, and when they do this they fail to preach the gospel of Christ; but let me have a complete Savior, one who is able to save me from everything that is wrong and I hope will give me grace to stand this dark and trying time, and may his grace embrace all of his dear children and cause them to look to him, and him alone, for life and salvation.

I would love to visit the saints in the north, but do not know whether I will meet with you or not, but have an humble hope that when done with this world we will meet in that eternal city and praise our King for evermore. In your communion with our blessed Lord remember me. Sister Arnold, I would be glad if you have the mind to write me soon.

From the least of all, if one at all,

R. A. FANNING.

RANGER, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel impressed, and have been requested, to write a part of what I hope was the dealings of the Lord with me some twelve years ago, but felt the dear people could see me as I saw myself and would think me an impostor, and think I had only copied from letters

printed in the SIGNS, as I was a reader then, and have been ever since. It seemed then when an invitation was written believers to write that it was specially extended to me, but when I would think of writing some one would to my surprise write just the same Scripture that had recently been so sweetly revealed to me, covincing me that they would not publish it, thinking surely it was copied. But now I rejoice to know there are others who have had the same things revealed to them. My experience and conscience will not let me believe any other doctrine except that called "absolute predestination," and I was made to rejoice when I read Elder H. H. Lefferts' "New Year's Greeting" in the January number of the SIGNS. I have been made to grieve on account of seeing many of those whom I thought firm and established turn away, and it was so comforting to see that the Lord still kept a few who could endure sound doctrine.

I feel to add a few lines about sister Katura Dean, as I have been so closely associated with this dear sister in Christ [and mother-in-law in the flesh] for about sixteen years. I knew nothing of grace when I was married to her only son, but when the Lord touched my heart I at once loved her for the truth's sake, and spent many happy hours with her talking of what we hoped the Lord had done for us. She read the Bible a great deal, and had, it seemed to me, much light upon the Scriptures, and took delight in telling me what she saw in them. She was a firm believer in what is called "absolute predestination," and was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years. Elder F. A. Chick was her favorite writer. She remained a believer with the editors and many of the writers of the SIGNS, never wishing to be identified with a people who would in any way limit God's power so as to give man any glory. She was a great sufferer for a number of years, but seemed to be given greater strength when there was an opportunity to be with the Lord's people, either at meetings or in her home, where she loved to have them come and visit. In her last days she was well blessed with this world's goods and will long be remembered for her generosity and sympathy among her relatives and neighbors. She was bedfast the last seven weeks of her life. The doctors said she had a cancer among vital organs near her stomach. She was very anxious to get well, but said if it was the Lord's will to take her she wished he would hurry, for she had suffered so long. I have heard her say she hoped the Lord would make her reconciled when the last hour came, and we hope we have evidence that he did. About four weeks before she passed away I was thinking, Oh if she could only get well, when the words, "Thy will be done" came forcibly into my mind, and then some lines of a poet, as follows,

> "Not a single shaft shall hit
> 'Till the God of love sees fit."

Then the thought came that if it was for Christ's sake all was well. When her dear features were composed in death her loved ones observed a sweet smile on her face, where so recently there had been evidence of pain and suffering. All were made to feel it was better for her to be at rest. Again I was made to say, "Thy will be done," and believed she was in the hands of the God of love.

Your sister in Christ, I hope,

ABBA DEAN.

(Obituary of Katura Dean in this number.)

COLUMBUS, Ga., Jan. 9, 1926.

DEAR SISTER BEEBE:—I often think of you, and what a sweet privilege I felt it to be to meet you face to face and shake hands with you, a dear sister who had for years devoted her daily life to our dear old family paper, the SIGNS, a medium of comfort, edification and communication, bearing messages of love and glad tidings to a wayfaring, poor, afflicted people scattered over God's earth, sojourning here, seeking a city not made with hands, whose maker and builder is God. If it were not for this blessed medium of love and truth many of these scattered ones would be lonely indeed. Like myself, one living alone in a heathen land, so to speak, with no church of our faith and order near me that I may hear the word expounded to my comfort and edification. There is no church of Predestinarian Baptists within miles of this big city, so you see the editorials and the texts written upon in the SIGNS and *Lone Pilgrim* (one other Old Baptist paper contending for the truth as it is in Jesus) are all the preaching I get. Through the goodness and mercy of our Lord I go by railroad miles from my home town twice a year to the church where my membership is, in Monroe, Georgia, 175 miles from here, and while up there I stay and go around to other churches of the same faith and order, and surely enjoy these visits among the brethren and sisters. I have a daughter living not far from Monroe, so stay with her and go around to the meetings that are not too far away. Elder J. M. Adams is my beloved pastor, and he deals out the precious food in such quantity and quality as our Lord in his wisdom sees each little one is in need of. I hope I am not murmuring or complaining of my lonely situation, for our God, who is all-wise, full of mercy and lovingkindness, and doeth all things well hath placed me in this lonely place and I know it is for the best. Yes, I feel sure it is for my good and his glory.

Dear sister, I beg you will pardon so long a letter and of so little worth. I often think of you and your thoughtfulness of me, and I hope you remember me. I spoke of meeting you face to face in your home town. Do you remember last June when the Warwick Association convened with the church at New Vernon, and from there Elder Dodson took Elder Lefferts and me over to your town, eight miles, to see you in the afternoon after preaching, and you so kindly received me and took me to the SIGNS office, showing me your publishing outfit and a number of the SIGNS in press? Well, sister, I appreciated the interest you felt to take in me, oh so much. My wish came true. I had said several times that if I ever went to New York State I wished to go to Middletown and visit the SIGNS office, just to see the place where our dear old paper was printed, &c., and it was through your kindness that my desire was realized. I long to see and be with you again, also all those dear Baptists I met with there, but do not now feel I shall ever enjoy that pleasure again in this life, for I am getting old, past my three score and ten years, 71 years last August, and now my children insist that I take no more long journeys from home. I tell them my health is good and I feel equal to the undertaking, but while my desire to go and be with the Baptists, the only people I love, the only company I enjoy, the only place of real joy on earth to be, perhaps I should listen to them and go as often as I can among the Baptists in northeast Georgia, where my membership is.

Well, sister, I asked you to pardon me for writing a long letter, yet kept on

writing. Now, remember me in your petitions when at the throne of grace. May the Lord in tender mercy and lovingkindness keep you and yours, and may his strong arm be underneath you sustaining you in the publication of the dear old SIGNS in this the new year, and on for years to come. I feel sure he will in the future as in the past. Sister, I would appreciate hearing from you, but know your time is all spent in the kind and loving labor that your brethren and sisters may read "glad tidings of great joy."

Good night, dear one. Think of me sometimes.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

FT. WORTH, Texas, Oct. 19, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find money order to cover Elder E. A. Moreland's and Mrs. Fred Samons' subscriptions to the SIGNS for another year, also my own. I desire to express my love for the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS. If I know anything, I feel to know I love to hear the name of God the Creator of all things exalted above every name. While I am but a vain creature and cannot of myself even think a good thought, I hope sometimes I have been made to know that every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and is not of the creature, but of the Creator, and so if we have a desire to give all praise, honor and glory to the "Great I AM" it is a gift from God.

I desire to speak of our little meeting just passed. We were blessed to have two visiting preachers, namely, Elder J. B. Reid, of Lawn, Texas, and Elder W. N. Green, of Altus, Oklahoma, also some visiting members from Lawn: brother and sister Griffin, brother Dave Berry and brother Powell from Witchita Falls. To my understanding I never heard better preaching. The dear Lord was with the speakers and the hearers until there was no room to contain more, and the manifest interest given was indeed evidence that the Lord had opened up the understanding of both speakers and hearers. It was communion time, and was indeed to me a time of sweet communion, and humbleness manifested. There was not a dry eye in our little band. We all felt to rejoice unspeakably, and try in our weak way to follow our dear blessed Master's teachings as we are made to understand them. In washing the saints' feet is the most humble manner that we can show our esteem for our brethren and sisters. While surely I did feel I was not worthy this blessed privilege, yet I desired to wash my dear sisters' feet and to live at their feet. A dear old brother united with the church on relation of experience: brother Jim Berry, of Godley. Oh! we are made to rejoice when the dear Lord sends his shepherds among us. We feel so unworthy of this remembrance. We have been blessed to have with us this year Elders J. C. Sikes, J. R. Hardy, I. R. Greathouse, W. N. Green, J. B. Reid and Elder Woodfin from Tennessee, with our dear home preachers. The dear Lord has been mindful of us, for which we hope we are thankful, and at any time a brother of our faith and order is coming through here if he will let us know we would be glad to have him stop and preach for us.

I hope the SIGNS' readers will be prompt in sending their subscriptions in, so that the editors will not have to remind us of our negligence. Love to all the household of faith, is the feeling of this unworthy sinner, saved by grace if saved at all.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) MINNIE OFFILL.

ABILENE, Texas, Jan. 6, 1926.

DEAR PUBLISHERS:—Find herewith inclosed two dollars to renew my subscription to the SIGNS for the year 1926. I cannot refrain from expressing my regards for your good paper, the splendid editorials and the good letters therein contained. I have been a subscriber for sixty years. I joined the New Goshen Church, near Lawrenceburg, Anderson County, Kentucky, on Saturday, November 21st, 1863, and was baptized the following day by Elder J. F. Johnson. I will never forget a great and glorious association that was held at the above church, within half a mile of my father's home, when he entertained over one hundred guests. Among them were brother Gilbert Beebe and daughter, and brother Thomas P. Dudley, who was moderator of the association, and several other preachers from a distance whose names I cannot recall now. The sweet faces of Elders Beebe and Dudley will always remain with me.

I was 81 years old the 29th day of last November, and my friends tell me I am good for one hundred years. I do not know so well about that. I feel my time is short here in this world of turmoil and strife, and that I will soon be going over Jordan and meet my dear father and mother, my first wife, and our little boy who died when he was six and one-half years old, and my three brothers and three sisters, who have all gone on before. I sometimes feel I would love to go where this corruption shall put on incorruption and this mortal shall put on immortality, and then we could say, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory. * * * Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." I am made to rejoice in a loving Savior when I read those good editorials and letters, and I hope and pray that God will give you a long and useful life to continue to publish the dear old SIGNS, and that all the subscribers will appreciate it sufficiently to be prompt in remitting for same at the expiration of their subscriptions.

With these last words, that my hope in Christ is small, but I would not exchange it for all the gold in this world, and wishing you a happy and prosperous new year, I remain, sincerely yours,

G. B. PAXTON.

HOWELLS, N. Y., Oct. 31, 1925.

DEAR BERTA:—I have felt impressed that I must write to you. While I have nothing special to write I may be able to say something you will think of many times in the future. When Joseph made himself known to his brethren he said, I am Joseph your brother, doth my father yet live? His brethren could not answer him, for they were troubled at his presence after they had sold him into slavery and returned a false report to their father concerning him. We may well believe all their guilt appeared to them; to them he had done no wrong, but all their wickedness came into their minds, and here was their brother ready, willing and able to save them from starving. Indeed a very prominent type of Jesus. "And thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." John said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." I have often wondered that John should have doubted, saying, Art thou he that should come, or look we for another? Jesus on the bank of the lake said to his disciples, "Children, have you any meat? They answered him, No. And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side

of the ship, and ye shall find." They cast in the net and inclosed a great multitude of fishes, so that it filled both ships. Now we see how abundantly the Lord is able to provide for us, and shall we not trust him? He is good when he gives, supremely good, nor less when he denies; even crosses from his sovereign hand are blessings in disguise.

Yours in love,

HORACE BEAKES.

(See obituary on page 69.)

MIAMI, Fla., Feb. 16, 1926.

J. E. BEEBE & CO.—GENTLEMEN:—Inclosed find check for one hundred dollars, for which credit fifty of the worthy poor with one year's subscription to the SIGNS. This will help both them and you. From a poor old sinner who loves the brethren for the truth they teach, or rather have been taught, and that not by flesh and blood. May the Lord bless the continuation of the SIGNS, and the writers for the sound doctrine they write. Their letters are full of spiritual food, which I enjoy very much.

A FRIEND.

[THE above mentioned check was surely a great surprise to us, and words fail to express our thankfulness to "A Friend," and to our dear Lord who put it into his (or her) heart to send it. Of course it takes considerable money to publish a paper like the SIGNS, and at times the way looks dark and discouraging, but so far the Lord has sustained us and enabled us to continue, and we feel to trust him for the future, knowing that as long as he has use for the paper he will provide a way for it. Just a short time ago we were looking over our books and found our receipts were considerably behind those of last year, which of course was not very encouraging, and then the One who controls all things saw fit to put it into the hearts of our brethren and friends to assist us, as will be seen by the contributions acknowledged in the February number. While these contributions were for two months, still they were much more than we usually receive for the same length of time, and we sincerely thank the givers. Not only do they help us meet our financial obligations, but greatly encourage us in our work, for they show that the donors have an interest in the SIGNS, which interest is very highly prized and appreciated by us. Again thanking all who have in any way assisted us, and hoping it may prove to them to be bread cast upon the waters, we feel to take courage and go on, praying our heavenly Father may be with us and guide us aright.—J. E. B. & CO.]

WATCH YOUR DATES.

WE wish to request our subscribers when sending in their subscriptions to see that the date on the little pink slip bearing their address is changed. If not changed, please let us know immediately (for that signifies you have not been given credit for the money sent) and we will look into the matter. By consulting that date you can tell at a glance to what time your subscription is paid. Dec. 26 means that your subscription is paid to December, 1926; June 25 means your subscription is only paid to June, 1925, &c. If you are in arrears we would much appreciate a remittance from you.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1926.

EDITOR

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

EPHESIANS II. 19-22.

In our first appearance before our readers for 1926, we shall cite subject matter which is of the utmost importance to the health, welfare and comfort of the church: "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Those who are spiritually taught will readily agree that the foregoing language is addressed to "quickened" characters; they will also agree as to how they were and are quickened: that "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." This fact is one of the fundamental principles embraced in "the foundation" which we shall dwell upon later. Another of the fundamental principles involved is, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." The apostle here forever stops the mouths of conditionalists, first, by declaring in the affirmative that it is "by grace are ye saved through faith," and second, in the negative, it is "not of yourselves." Then he enlarges upon it by saying, "It is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." He continues by showing that we are the "workmanship of God" and that we were "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained [ordered, determined or predestinated] that we should walk in them." Having made it so plain "that he may run that readeth it," he then reminds the Ephesians and "the faithful in Christ Jesus" that although they were "in times past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: but now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Thus is presented "the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart," "for he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." All who are made nigh by the blood of Christ "are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the house-

hold of God," and they are raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that he (God) in the ages to come might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. Though language be inadequate of conveying fully the things of God, nevertheless, when employed by the Holy Spirit, it is capable of presenting some beautiful gems of thought to those who have a mind to meditate in his law. How wonderful are the exceeding riches of his grace, appearing through Christ Jesus. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen." The "faithful in Christ Jesus" then are "fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." Not that they have merited these things, for after addressing them as "faithful" Paul says, "Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." "Grace" means the unmerited favor of God, and we are told in Luke, "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you," ye shall say, "We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do." The words, "are built" suggests to our mind a Builder; one who in wisdom hath designed the plan; one who in power executes, and before him "all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" This great and wise Builder has a definite foundation, referred to here as "the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." Paul as spokesman for the apostles said, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Isaiah, summing up the substance of all the prophetic shadows, says, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Jesus, "the chief corner stone," says of himself, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." A careful searching of the inspired word of God shows the prophets were looking for the dawning of some wonderful day, and by and by the wise men saw his star in the east and came to worship him, and to Simeon, a man of Jerusalem, it was revealed by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ, "And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to

lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." Again, the apostle declares, "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Surely there can be no question as to "the foundation:" the apostles, the prophets, all agree with Christ, that he is "the chief corner stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Let us consider this building which is "fitly framed together." Let us examine ourselves and those who profess to love our Lord and Master, to see whether or not we are in "the way," whether we have a "thus saith the Lord" for all we teach and do. Does the plumb-line of truth show that we are built squarely upon "the foundation," or is there an overlapping here and a shunning to declare the whole counsel of God there? Are we among those who when weighed in the golden scales are found wanting? There is unquestionably a great and blessed truth set forth in the phrase "all the building fitly framed together." Christ is not divided, neither are the members of his body who "are built upon the foundation" divided; where the mind of Christ is there unity, and peace, and a beholding the perfect work of God in reconciling his people unto himself through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and those who are deeply taught of God's wonderful works and ways bear fruit unto his name's honor and glory. They show whether they "are built" upon the foundation, whether their feet are upon the Rock, by their goings-forth being established. If the fruit is good it can only come from a good tree, and we are to judge the tree by the fruit it bears. James has it this way, "Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." All who love the Lord, indeed, will contend it is "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord." Paul determined not to know anything among the Corinthians save Jesus Christ and him crucified, and, speaking of the foundation, he says, "Let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. * * * If any man build upon this foundation gold silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." There are many who call themselves Old Baptists to-day who are building upon this foundation of wood, hay and stubble; they are teaching the doctrines of men for the commandments of God, and just as certain as God reigns he will try by fire every man's work of what sort it is and the dross shall be consumed. Neither does it become us to put forth our hand to try to help him steady the ark; there is nothing to be accomplished by holding so-called peace meetings, and crying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace, but let us rather wait on the Lord, for when he shall arise to conquer the adversary and destroy the horse and his rider of the enemy of the peace of Zion, it will be made plain and all will recognize it to be the victory of our glorious King. If the work be of men it will come to nought, but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city,

the watchman waketh but in vain." All creature effort is vanity and all conditionalism is hay and stubble. God must work in us "both to will and to do of his good pleasure," and then we shall say, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and thy truth's sake." Wherever this language is spoken it proves that the building is "fitly framed together." "And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron, heard in the house while it was in building." The work is carried on without humanity's aid, and therefore, it is said "it groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." Peter shows in his second epistle what it is to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." It is to grow out of self and turn away from all manner of legalism and become rooted and grounded in the truth that Christ is our all in all, and that without him we can do nothing. It is in Christ we are builded for an habitation of God through the Spirit. We must become bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, and made to partake of the fellowship of his sufferings, before we are an habitation of God, and this is none other than the work of the Spirit. It is worthy of noting the frequency with which such expressions as "in Chirst," "through Christ," and "by Christ," appear, and each and every time we read it there is in our heart an "Amen," for we have the witness within that we cannot even come unto God except by and in the name and through the meritorious work of his only begotten Son. Truly we have nothing of our own to commend us in the sight of a just and holy God. In our flesh there dwells no good thing.

In conclusion, let us have a little of the testimony of the great apostle as to what is "the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." In introducing his epistle he makes it plain that he was an apostle of Jesus Christ "by the will of God," and after desiring that grace and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ be to those addressed, he says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ." There is clearly set forth in this chapter the Trinity of God, the purpose of God, the doctrine of grace and of election; the eternal vital unity of his people with Christ, having chosen

them in him before the foundation of the world; the predestination of the great "I AM THAT I AM," who hath sworn, saying, "Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." These and other things Paul said "were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise," for which he ceased not to give thanks. They are the foundation of the christian's hope, the rock upon which the church is built, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. It is the foundation upon which the SIGNS OF THE TIMES was founded over ninety-three years ago and has not wavered from, lo these many years, and by the help of almighty God it shall stand firm as a medium for disseminating messages of truth to the comfort of the poor and needy and to the praise of God, from whom all blessings flow. Should the time ever come when it shall purposely deviate from "the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone," we hope it will go out of business, and before our own tongue shall teach any other doctrine and blaspheme the adorable name of our blessed God, we hope it will cease to function and lie silent in the grave. All else is chaff and will be burned up with unquenchable fire when the Lord of harvest comes upon his treshingfloor to garner his wheat into the storehouse.

R. L. D.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER J. T. Barnes requests his correspondents to address him at Freewater, Oregon, as he is now located at that place.

SELECTED.

[THE following from the page of history will clearly show how far the present day Lutherans and general protestant churches have erred from the doctrine of the reformers. Luther's reply to Erasmus is particularly good, and could easily be taken as a declaration of nonfellowship for present-day Lutheranism.—G. R.]

RAMSAY'S UNIVERSAL HISTORY, VOL. V., PAGE 414.

THE protestants were confirmed in their rights, and the peace of Germany was established, 1555, thirty-seven years after Luther began his attack on indulgences. Except in the matter of Christ's presence in the eucharist, all the eminent men among the reformers of that day concurred in the same fundamental truths: 1. Of God's eternal purpose and predestination of an elect people, ordained to life and glory eternal. 2. That man had lost all ability to do good, and freedom of will to choose it; and was in his nature as fallen, only inclined to evil. 3. That nothing ever did or can alter this propensity of the human heart but the Holy Ghost by his own immediate agency upon the souls of men. 4. That a sinner is and can be justified by faith only, and this not of himself; being unable either to comprehend or receive the things that be of the Spirit of God, and therefore the faith itself must be the gift of God. 5. That merit in creature there is none, nor ever can be. From first to last a sinner must be saved by grace. 6. That the vicarious atonement by the one oblation of Christ upon the cross is effectual, not for the many called, but for the few chosen. These are the doctrines the reformers uniformly held. Nothing in the institutes of Calvin speaks a stronger language than the answer of Luther to

Erasmus. Erasmus had attacked Luther on the doctrines of predestination and grace, and urged, "What can be more useless than to publish this paradox to the world? namely, That whatever we do, is done not by virtue of our own free will, but in the way of necessity, &c. What a wide gap does the publication of this tenet open among men for the commission of all ungodliness? What wicked person will reform his life? Who will fight against his own corrupt inclinations? Therefore where is either the need or the utility of spreading these notions, whence so many evils seem to flow?" To this Luther replied, "If, my Erasmus, you consider these paradoxes (as you term them) to be no more than the inventions of men, why are you so extraordinarily heated on the occasion? In that case, your arguments affect not me, for there is no person now living in the world who is a more avowed enemy to the doctrines of men than myself. But if you believe the doctrines in debate between us to be (as indeed they are) the doctrines of God, you must have bid adieu to all sense of shame and decency thus to oppose them. I will not ask whither is the modesty of Erasmus fled? but, which is more important, where, alas, are your fear and reverence of the Deity, when you roundly declare that this branch of truth, which he has revealed from heaven, is at best useless and unnecessary to be known? What! shall the glorious Creator be taught by you, his creature, what is fit to be preached, and what to be suppressed? Is the adorable God so very defective in wisdom and prudence as not to know till you instruct him, what would be useful and what pernicious? Or could not he, whose understanding is infinite, foresee, previous to his revelation of this doctrine, what would be the consequences of his revealing it, till those consequences were pointed out by you? You cannot, you dare not say this. If, then, it was the divine pleasure to make known these things in his word, and to bid his messengers publish them abroad, and to leave the consequences of their so doing to the wisdom and providence of Him in whose name they speak, and whose message they declare, who art thou, O Erasmus, that thou shouldst reply against God, and say to the Almighty, What doest thou? St. Paul, discoursing on God, declareth peremptorily, 'Whom he will he hardeneth,' and again, 'God, willing to show his wrath,' &c. And the apostle did not write this to have it stifled among a few persons, and buried in a corner, but wrote it to the christians at Rome which was in effect bringing this doctrine upon the stage of the world, stamping a universal imprimatur upon it, and publishing it to believers at large throughout the earth. What can sound harsher in the ears of carnal men than those words of Christ, 'Many are called, but few are chosen?' and elsewhere, 'I know whom I have chosen.' Now these and similar assertions of Christ and his apostles are the very positions which you, O Erasmus, brand as useless and hurtful. You object, if these things are so, who will amend his life? I answer, Without the Holy Ghost no man can amend his life to purpose. Reformation is but varnished hypocrisy, unless it proceed from grace. The elect and truly pious are amended by the Spirit of God, and those of mankind who are not amended by him will perish. You ask, moreover, Who will dare to believe himself a favorite of heaven? I answer, It is not in a man's own power to believe himself such upon just grounds, till he is enabled from above. But the elect shall be so enabled: they shall be enabled to

believe themselves to be what indeed they are. As for the rest, who are not endued with faith, they shall perish raging and blaspheming, as you do now. But, say you, these doctrines open a door to ungodliness. I answer, Whatever door they may open to the impious and profane, yet they open a door of righteousness to the elect and holy, and show them the way to heaven, and the path of access unto God. Yet you would have us abstain from the mention of these grand doctrines, and leave our people in the dark as to their election of God. The consequence of which would be, that every man would bolster himself up with a delusive hope of a share in that salvation which is supposed to lie open to all, and thus genuine humility and the practical fear of God would be kicked out of doors. This would be a pretty way indeed of stopping up the gap Erasmus complains of! Instead of closing up the door of licentiousness, as is falsely pretended, it would be in fact opening a gulf into the nethermost hell. Still you urge, where is either the necessity or utility of preaching predestination? God himself teaches it, and commands us to teach it; and that is answer enough. We are not to arraign the Deity, and bring the motives of his will to the test of human scrutiny, but simply to revere both him and it. He who alone is all wise and all just can in reality (however things appear to us) do wrong to no man; neither can he do anything unwisely or rashly. And this consideration will suffice to silence all the objections of truly religious persons. However, let us for argument's sake go a step farther. I will venture to assign, over and above two very important reasons, why these doctrines should be publicly taught: 1. For the humiliation of our pride, and the manifestation of divine grace. God hath assuredly promised his favors to the truly humble. By the truly humble I mean those who are endued with repentance, and despair of saving themselves: for a man can never be said to be penitent and humble, till he is made to know that his salvation is not suspended in any measure whatever on his own strength, machinations, endeavors, free-will, or works; but entirely depends on the free pleasure, purpose, determination and efficiency of another, even of God alone. Whilst a man is persuaded that he has it in his own power to contribute any thing, be it ever so little, to his own salvation, he remains in carnal confidence; he is not a self-despairer, and therefore he is not duly humbled before God; so far from it, that he hopes some favorable juncture or opportunity will offer, when he may be able to lend a helping hand to the business of his salvation. On the contrary, whoever is truly convinced that the whole work depends singly and absolutely on the will of God, who alone is the author and finisher of salvation, such a person despairs of self-assistance; he renounces his own will and his own strength; he waits and prays for the operation of God: nor waits and prays in vain. For the elect's sake, therefore, these doctrines are to be preached: that the chosen of God being humbled by the knowledge of his truths, self-emptied and sunk into nothing, as it were, in his presence, may be saved in Christ with eternal glory. This then is one inducement to the publication of the doctrine, that the penitent may be made acquainted with the promise of grace, and plead it in prayer to God, and receive it as their own. 2. The natnre of the christian faith requires it. Faith has to do with things not seen. And this is one of the highest degrees of faith, steadfastly

to believe that God is infinitely merciful, though he saves comparatively few, and condemns so many; and that he is strictly just, though of his own will he makes such numbers of mankind necessarily liable to damnation. Now these are some of the unseen things whereof faith is the evidence. Whereas, was it in my power to comprehend them, or clearly to make out how God is both inviolably just and infinitely merciful, notwithstanding the display of wrath and seeming inequality in his dispensations respecting the reprobate, faith would have little or nothing to do. But now since these matters cannot be adequately comprehended by us in the present state of imperfection, there is room for the exercise of faith. The truths, therefore, respecting predestination in all its branches, should be taught and published. They, no less than the other mysteries of christian doctrines, being proper objects of faith on the part of God's people."

Ramsay adds: These extracts are the most conclusive proof of the sentiments of Luther. No theory can be more explicit; no words can be less equivocal. It is admitted that the doctrines of the reformation have very much gone out of vogue in most of the protestant churches, but that does not give us the liberty to put a meaning upon their articles of faith the very reverse of what they were intended to convey.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

"London," Canada, $2; Paul Leigh, N. J., $1; I. P. Leach, Miss., $1; Elder J. C. Chester, Ky., $2; G. W. Burgess, Va., $1; Robert Turner, Calif., $3; C. Stevens, Ark., $1; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $1; Mrs. M. A. Somers, Va, $1; H. F. Cate, Kans., $1; Unetta K. Hamilton, Mo., $1; Mrs. I. T. McIntyre, N. Y., $1.34; Miss C. Lilly Buck, Conn., $2; W. K. Baird, Ky., $3; T. O. Turner, Ky., $1; Elder C. W. Anderson, Ark., $5; "A Friend," Fla., $100; Mrs. Elizabeth Rittenhouse, N. J., $4; Mrs. W. C. Stevens, Ga., $3; J. S. Moore, Ala., $3.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder R. Lester Dodson, at 87 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N. Y., January 23rd, 1926, Arthur F. Eastman, formerly of Braintree, Mass., and Ruth A. Weeks, formerly of Gardiner, Maine.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Esther Jane Buckwalter, wife of brother Joseph Buckwalter, passed away at her home, near Xenia, Ohio, Wednesday morning January 13th, 1926, at the ripe old age of eighty-six years. She had been in poor health for about six years, and an attack of pneumonia, contracted January 10th, caused her death. Mrs. Buckwalter was the daughter of the late Frederick and Mary Weaver Keiter, and was born on the Wilmington Pike, six miles southeast of Xenia, February 22nd, 1840. Her marriage to brother Buckwalter took place May 26th, 1874. She is survived by her husband and five children, all at home: James K., Mary J., George W., Frank M. and C. Elizabeth, two sisters: Mrs. Susan Beam and Mrs. Katherine Haines, two brothers: James F. Keiter, of California, and Edward F. Keiter, near Lumberton, Ohio. Mrs. Buckwalter came from Old Predestinarian Baptist parents, and while she had never united with the church it was the only place she attended, and her home was always open to her Baptist friends, and has been one of my stopping places for over thirty years, and it has always seemed to me just like going home. It is the first break in the family, and how my heart did ache for them when I tried to speak comforting words to them on the day of the funeral. The words of the Master, John v. 28, 29, seemed to come to me with power: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth," and I dwelt upon the subject with the assurance that the Lord had spoken, and in his time it would come to pass, for he that hath spread out the heavens as a curtain, comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance, whose word is power, who commands and it stands fast, speaks and it is done, has said, The hour is coming, and the hour will come, and when he speaks they will come. It is a great satisfaction to feel that our mother in Israel has fallen asleep in Jesus, her trials are over, sin is finished, and she is now at rest. Her place is vacant in the home, and we shall miss her sadly, but we know that all things work together for good to them that love God and bow in humble submission to the will of God, who doeth all things well. May the Lord give a reconciled mind to the aged brother and husband and children, and enable them to say, Thy will be done.

After the services, held in the Mt. Tabor church-

house, the body was taken to the Jamestown Cemetery, where all that was mortal was laid to rest, to await the hour. May the Lord bless all who mourn.

GEORGE L. WEAVER

Sister **Elmira Secor** was born April 28th, 1846, and departed this life March 20th, 1925, making her stay on earth 78 years, 10 months and 22 days. She was the daughter of Abram and Elizabeth Brooks Winn, was married to Daniel M. Secor April 19th, 1872. To this union were born three children, a son and two daughters, one daughter preceding her mother to the grave. She leaves to mourn their loss her husband, brother Secor, her daughter, sister Lizzie Secor and her son, Mr. Hewitt Secor, also two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. She was a worthy member of the Olive and Hurley Church, which church she joined September 28th, 1884, and was baptized by the late Elder David Earl. Her walk and conversation was exemplary, and she dearly loved the brethren, so that she could not only rejoice with them, but weep with them also. She was ever ready to minister to the saints, and they were always welcome visitors in her home. Her desire was to put on Christ, and often she would repeat the words of Paul to her brethren: As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him. She has gone to be for ever with the Lord, and though we mourn our loss, yet we rejoice that she is at rest. The memory of such lovely peace-loving saints is blessed. In her last sickness, which lasted several months, her daughter and husband, also a sister in the church, sister Keogan, ministered to her every need with tender and loving care.

The writer officiated at her funeral, and the interment was in the Old Hurley Cemetery.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Mrs. Eliza Ann Lamb died December 29th at the home of her son-in-law, Robert L. Gulick, of Lenah, Va., after an illness of ten days. She was the daughter of Dr. John and Huldah Corbett, and was born July, 1849, at Dumfries, Prince William County, Va., and was the last member of her family. December 18th, 1872, she was married to George F. Lamb, who died in August, 1908. For more than forty-four years she was a faithful and consistent member of Bethlehem Old School Baptist Church. Five years ago she was paralyzed, which left her an invalid during her remaining life. She was a great sufferer, but bore her many afflictions uncomplainingly. She leaves one son and two daughters: Mr. John T. Lamb, of Long Island City, Miss Clara Lamb and Mrs. Robert Gulick, of Lenah, one grandson, George S. Gulick, of Rochester, New York, one niece and four nephews, besides many other relatives.

Funeral services were held at her home on Wednesday, December 30th by Deacon C. M. Turman. Her body was laid to rest in Manassas Cemetery beside her husband.

To the above notice, copied from our county paper, I wish to add just a few words. Sister Lamb's membership at the time of her death was with the Mt. Zion Church, she having been received there on confession of faith, owing to the fact that she spent her last days but two miles from Mt. Zion and to the further fact that the church called Bethlehem has practically become extinct. She was one of the salt of the earth who rejoiced greatly in Christ Jesus and had no confidence in human nature. She was a lover of the meetings with her brethren. Owing to my being ill, I could not attend her funeral.

L.

Horace Beakes, the youngest son of William O. and Abigail Howell Beakes, was born October 7th, 1849. He lived on the farm where he was born until Dec. 26th, 1925, when his condition became such that he was taken to the hospital. He died January 5th, 1926. He had a cancer and suffered much, but was always patient and cheerful, with faith in God's goodness and a ready sympathy for his neighbors and friends. He had long been a member of the Old School Baptist Church at New Vernon, N. Y., as were his father, mother and two sisters, all deceased. The letter written by him to his niece, printed on page 59 of this number of the SIGNS, describes better than we could the life lived by brother Beakes. In a previous letter from the same niece she told of the great faith which exercised our brother during his awful suffering, and when called to conduct the last service we felt to use the language of the apostle Paul, Romans i. 8, "I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world." One more of the Lord's chosen has been called home.

ALSO,

"**Mrs. Mary E. Kolyer,** 93 years of age, was buried at Warwick Cemetery Monday near noon. The body was brought here via auto from Summit, N. J., where she lived at the home of her step-son, Mr. Abram F. Kolyer. Mrs. Kolyer was the oldest member of the Warwick Old School Baptist Church, and was born in this village ninety-three years ago, the daughter of William Welling and Elizabeth Pratt. She was a sister of the late Johanna and Sarah Welling, all of whom had their own little niche in the affections of Warwick folks. Mrs. Kolyer's first husband was a Mr. Feagles. After her marriage to Mr. Abram Kolyer she went to Summit, N. J., to live, and after his death, many years ago, she came back to Warwick and resided with her sisters, who were then living at their home on Main Street."

The above is a newspaper account of one who was a member of the Old School Baptist Church for nearly seventy-five years. The writer visited her two or three times during the last few years of her life and

found her firm in the faith of God's elect. Truly God is good to Israel in sparing such gifts so many years to the church. She died December 18th, 1925.

R. L. D.

Mrs. Katura Dean, wife of George A. Dean, and a devoted mother in Israel departed this life October 20th, 1925. Sister Dean, the daughter of A. C. and Bethney Barber, was born near Summerfield, Claiborne Parish, La., March 19th, 1858. She was the eighteenth child of a family of nineteen children, fourteen living to be grown, and all of them married except one who died in young manhood. She leaves one brother, Tom Barber, of Louisiana, and one sister, Lucinda Bethell, of Dallas, Texas, who are the only survivors of the Barber family. She was married to George A. Dean December 15th, 1875, and to this union were born four children: Mrs. Mettie Barker, Mrs Catherine Dooley, Mrs. Maud Fambrough and Mr. Farris A. Dean. The two latter are the only survivors of their mother, and were with her when the summons came. Sister Dean united with the Old School Baptist Church at Summerfield, La., in 1883, and was baptized by Elder Mark Parker. She with her husband and family moved to Texas in 1885 and settled near Wayland, in Stephens County, and united by letter with Shilo Church, at Acker Schoolhouse, in 1886, and remained a devoted member until her death. Her conversation was godly. Her story of the dealings of the Lord with a poor sinner was humble enough to comfort the best in Zion and yet bright enough to afford light and encouragement to the greatest. It is true that to know her was but to love her.

Her body was laid to rest in the Acker Cemetery October 21st, 1925, midst the moans and sobs of her devoted husband, two living children and a host of relatives and friends, the services being conducted by the unworthy writer. May God's richest blessings rest upon the bereaved family is our prayer.

MARTIN STONE.

Mrs. Sarah E. West died May 17th, 1925, at the home of her daughter. She was born August 19th, 1858, a daughter of Elder Julius C. and Susan J. Mears, and was married in the fall of 1882 to George West. Since his death, in March, 1908, she lived with her children. She is survived by two children: William J. West and Mrs. Lester Groton, one brother: Albert F. Mears, of Baltimore, Md., one sister: Mrs. Margaret A. Somers. She never joined the church, but was a firm believer in salvation by grace. She told me a few days before she passed away that this world was not her home and that she did not want to live. She was a kind and faithful wife and mother.

Funeral services were held at the home and burial was beside her husband in the family lot.

Her sister,

MARGARET A. SOMERS.

Myra Bryan Galloway passed from this life June 24th, 1925, at the home of her niece, Mrs. Harvey Whiteman, in Wilmington, Delaware. She was born January 12th, 1846, at Nivindale, near Landenberg, Pennsylvania, making her stay on earth 79 years, 5 months and 12 days. In this home she spent her life until she was married, February 6th, 1900, to Dr. James M. Galloway, of Philadelphia. She was baptized in the fellowship of the London Tract Church the second Sunday in July, 1874, by the late Elder David Bartley, a visiting minister, the church having no pastor at the time. She was received into full membership with the above named church, where she remained a devoted and consistent member until her death. She loved the "house of God" and was strong in the faith and doctrine of salvation by grace. After she married she lived in Philadelphia and was a regular attendant at the Salem Church of that city, where she always manifested a lively interest in the welfare of the church and enjoyed the love and fellowship of the brethren, but never removed her membership from her home church. Her home was always open to the Baptists and she was never happier than when entertaining and ministering to those she loved for the truth's sake. She traveled extensively among the Baptists and enjoyed a wide acquaintance among them. Sister Coulter and the writer visited her a few days before her death, and while with her she said, "I want to go home to my heavenly Father. I want to go to-morrow. Not that I am worthy. Oh I want to go." We learned later she became unconscious, remaining so until the end came.

The funeral services were held at the Oliver Bair's funeral parlors, in Philadelphia. Elder H. C. Ker spoke comfortingly to the relatives and friends who had assembled to pay the last tribute of respect, after which her body was laid to rest beside her husband in Ivy Hill Cemetery, Philadelphia.

She leaves three children, one brother, one stepdaughter, two nieces and two grand-nieces.

ONE WHO LOVED HER.

George Taylor was born in Perry County, Indiana, September 5th, 1847, and passed away at his home in Mulino, Oregon, November 27th, 1925, aged 78 years, 2 months and 22 days. He married Elizabeth C. Shuck October 21st, 1869, and to this union five children were born. Left to mourn their loss are his wife, four children: W. T. Taylor, Mulino, Oregon, Mrs. M. Hammons, Turin Falls, Idaho, Mrs. F. P. Symmonds, Stoddard, Nebraska, O. W. Taylor, Portland, Oregon, and two grandsons: W. H. Taylor, Yakima, Wash., and George Taylor, of Falls City, Oregon. The youngest son passed away in February, 1918. Although father never made any profession of religion he was a firm believer in the teaching of the Primitive Baptist faith, and for some time before he

died he talked to members of his family of the hope he had in Christ. He was always well until in the spring of 1925, when he had a cancer come on his lip. He had that removed, then another came on his left jaw, which caused him intense suffering and gradually sapped his life away. He was a very patient sufferer, and was very thoughtful for the ones who were caring for him. His one great thought to the very last was that "Ma" should be taken care of. His children were all with him the greater part of the last month he lived, and all was done that mortal hands could do to relieve his suffering. We feel his spirit has surely gone to God who gave it. In his last days he would pray God to take him from his suffering then he would say, "Thy will, not mine, be done."

Funeral services were held in the Mulino churchhouse, conducted by Elder S. B. Moffit, of Newberg, Oregon. He was laid to rest by his son Herbert, at Salem, Oregon.

Written by his daughter,

(MRS.) IDA SYMMONDS.

Elder Benjamin Hardin Irwin, aged 72 years, died January 24th, 1926, at the home of Mrs. S. D. Waldrip, Palestine, Texas. Brother Irwin was an uncompromising Baptist, who counted all things well lost for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, for whom he suffered, that he might be found in that righteousness which is of God. The afflictions of the gospel, which mark the christian pathway, were well known to Elder Irwin, who was also a great sufferer physically, but he bore all in meekness and reconciliation to his Father's will and died a victorious death, praising God to the last. He will be missed by all who loved him, but we sorrow not as those who have no hope; we think of him as rejoicing with his Savior and forever free from the sufferings of this world.

His body was laid to rest in East Hill Cemetery, Palestine, Texas, to await the morning of the resurrection, when Christ shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.

Written by (MRS.) N. C. ALSTON.

Mrs. Mahala Hammond was born March 22nd, 1841, and died December 27th, 1924. She was the widow of Minos Hammond. She leaves eleven children, five sons and six daughters, to mourn their loss. She received a hope in Christ when quite young, and was baptized in 1865 by Elder George Staton into membership with the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church, in the Salisbury Association. She lived a firm believer in salvation by grace alone, and died in the full possession of that faith.

Written by her daughter,

(MRS.) MARTHA J. JONES.

MEETINGS.

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O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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C. G. MILLER.

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE of JOSHUA S. CORDER.

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Picture of Elder Joshua S. Corder.
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Chapter VI.—Church Trouble, Associational, &c.
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Chapter XI.—Some Extracts, Reminiscences, &c.
Chapter XII.—In Perils.
Chapter XIII.—Fell Asleep, A "Loved Disciple."
Chapter XIV.—Memorials, Poetry, Circular Letter, &c.

This little book of 152 pages was published by Elder Corder's daughter, sister Semma E. Corder, of Philippi, W. Va., and printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office several years ago, and we feel is a work that will be read with interest by any of the household of faith.

The book was originally sold for one dollar per copy, and was bound in cloth, but there were some printed sheets that were never bound, and these sister Corder has generously donated to help in publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so we have decided to bind them in paper covers and offer them to our readers as long as the supply lasts for the extremely low price of twenty-five cents per copy. If any who purchase this book feel they have not received full value they may return the book to us and we will refund the price paid for it.

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THE

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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POETRY.

FLEEING TO GOD.

Under the shadow of thy wing, my Father!
  Till life's calamities be overpast,
In that sure refuge let my spirit gather
  Strength to bear calmly on unto the last.

Be merciful to me, for thoughts that crush me
  Lie like an incubus upon my breast,
Only thy voice, omnipotent, can hush me
  Into the quiet even of seeming rest.

Oh what is life but one long, long endurance,
  Of this dull heavy weight on heart and brain?
Speak to my spirit, speak the strong assurance
  That nothing thou ordainest is in vain.

Trembling amid the turmoils of existence,
  Oh let me grasp a more than mortal arm;
Father, my Father, be not at a distance
  When earth's dark phantoms thy weak child alarm.

Under thy shadow, fear cannot appall me,
  If in the Rock of Ages surely hid;
Under thy shadow harm cannot befall me,
  If thou, all-wise, all-merciful, forbid.

Nearer to thee, my Savior, my Redeemer,
  In heaven, on earth, whom hath my soul but thee?
Though for an instant, as some feverish dreamer
  Grasps at the treasure which he seems to see.

I, too, have dreamed, and waked to find illusion
  Inscribed on all I sought to make my own,
And turning from my idols in confusion,
  I dedicate my life to thee alone.

Under the shadow of thy wing abiding,
  Close to my suffering Savior's wounded side,
In the sure promise of his love confiding,
  Why should I shrink, though earthly ills betide?

Oh if the heart grow strong through suffering only,
  If but through trial it may reach its goal,
I will rejoice, although my way be lonely,
  And all thy waves and billows oe'r me roll.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The inclosed poetry is from sister McPhail, of Canada, and she requests to have it published in the SIGNS when you have space to do so.

Sincerely,

ANNIE VAUGHN.

A PRAYER.

Dear Lord, and shall it ever be,
That I cannot from sin be free?
Oh let me taste thy love divine,
And I shall feel that thou art mine.

When troubles like the billows roar,
And I am drifting from the shore,
Oh give me faith that thou wilt guide,
And be the Captain by my side.

The storms of life are so severe,
Which often makes me quake with fear;
Come to my rescue, dearest Lord,
And let me hear thy loving word.

I know I cannot stem the tide,
My arm's too short, the sea's too wide;
Oh do thou grant to me thy grace,
And let me see thy loving face.

Give me some token of thy love,
That I may look to thee above;
Oh that I soon may see the day,
And find my sins all washed away.

T. W. WALKER,

DANVILLE, Virginia.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Dec. 4, 1925.

MY DEAR BROTHER VAUGHN:—I have been thinking this morning of the spring of 1923, and of the pleasant hours I spent with you; also how your moorings are in these stormy days. Has your anchor post held in the Rock so no other rocks nor quicksands can intervene? so nothing can throw you off the sure foundation? These are days to try the souls of the faithful. Some are crying this is the way of the Lord, and others point out another, and others more than one. I do not believe my brother is so loosely rooted and grounded as to be soon shaken by these varying winds. I do not know of any professing the name of Old School or Primitive Baptist who will deny that our God did most assuredly know every event of time before time was, but many will not admit that all these events were predestinated by our God. I ask, How did and how does our God surely know that this and that event will positively occur if he has not purposed it? Is our God dependent upon some other power than his own to bring about the things which he foreknew? He most assuredly purposed to cut off the wickedness of Babylon from the land of Israel. Read Isaiah xiv. 24, 25. Did he not send the Babylonians there to destroy them? If not, who did move them to go where the Lord would show his wonderful power to save? "For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?"—Isaiah xiv. 27. If any are wise and can solve this mystery let them tell the judgments of God which he has purposed against Egypt. (Isaiah xix. 12.) Many tell us that God's purpose or predestination does not pertain to anything but those things directly connected with the salvation of the church, but the voice of inspiration tells it differently. It says, "The Lord of hosts hath purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the honorable of the earth."—Isaiah xxiii. 9. Upon whom does our God rely to see that all his purposes are done? Let us hear him: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."—Isaiah xlvi. 9–11. As we usually term it, all the things to which I have referred are evil things, and yet they are things which God purposed or predestinated. Then we declare with our afflicted and bereaved brother Job: "Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? who will say unto him, What doest thou?"—Job. ix. 12. And with brother Solomon: "Where the word of a king is, there is power; and who may say unto him, What doest thou?"—Eccl. viii. 4. Or with brother Nebuchadnezzar: "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou."—Dan. iv. 35. This I consider an array of evidence for predestination. However those of us who believe this truth are stigmatized, even by some of our brethren, as being "fatalists." Mr. Webster tells us the meanings of fatalism as follows: "The doctrine that all things

are subject to fate, or that their occurrence is necessitated by the nature of things, or by the fixed and inevitable doings of arbiters of destiny, such as the fates." No predestinarian believes any such stuff as this. There is as much difference in predestination and fate as there is in light and darkness. Predestination is the work of God; fate is the thought of men. Predestination is sure to carry to the complete purpose of God in the thing predestinated; fate never accomplished anything. Some of our brethren who are esteemed as able ministers deny the declaration of Paul, who undoubtedly spoke by the Holy Ghost when he said, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."—Rom. viii. 27. They want to divide the "all things" into two classes, but no table is furnished to show what class of things are embraced in the "all things" and what class of things is not in that declaration. I fully believe just what Paul declares. I admit that I cannot see while some things are being transacted how they can be for my good. I think Jacob was puzzled to see how the separation from his children was ever to be for his good, but when he was given to see his family's salvation in it he could say, "It is enough," &c. God had told Abraham all this in a covenant when Abraham was in a deep sleep, but he did not know the meaning of it all. Isaac was not born, but God's word was sure. God had as much purpose in raising up Pharaoh to show his power in him by destroying him and his host as he did in raising up Israel to serve him. He had as much purpose in destroying the wicked world by the flood of waters as he had in saving Noah and his family, the beasts, the birds and all the things that were with him in the ark, by the ark being borne up on the bosom of the waters. It was just as much the purpose of God to draw Pharaoh and his host into the sea by the receding darkness as it was to have Israel to go forward out of the sea by the wall of fire which was moving them forward. God did only his will and purpose in leaving out of the eternal covenant of salvation all the nonelect just as much as he did in making sure the salvation of the elect. When our Lord died on the Roman cross and said, "It is finished," the door of redemption had forever shut in all the elect of God, never to be opened again, and all the nonelect host were forever shut out. Thus the seal of God's eternal knowledge was fixed on all the chosen of the Lord and the line was permanently and perfectly drawn.

"Salvation through our dying Head
Is finished and complete;
He paid what'er his people owed
And canceled all their debt."

You may publish this if you see fit. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be your sure refuge.

Your brother in a gospel hope,

L. H. HARDY.

FORDYCE, Ark., Jan. 17, 1926.

VERY DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have just read the January 1st issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES which contains your "New Year's Greeting," and feel that I must write and tell you how much I appreciate that article. I also hope it may be the Lord's will to encourage you along your "hard path" of duty as an editor. Your position on the doctrine contained and taught in the Bible, and ever contended for by our people, is that which has ever been despised and rejected of men. The Scriptures abound with testimony that many shall rise up speaking perverse things, that they shall

be turned away from the truth; that they shall be given unto fables and shall despise, reject and pervert the right way. Surely the day of darkness has come upon us. The day when men will not endure sound doctrine is here, and right in our own camps, as men "of your [our] own selves" shall rise up, and truly they are here. For the last few years men have risen up and fought with all bitterness, trying to bring odium upon all who would not bow to "false gods," such as conditional time salvation, God's reward for obedience, &c. Some of the "big preachers" go so far as to say that the doctrine we are contending for: that God hath decreed in himself all things that come to pass, and that all our obedience and righteous acts are the fruits of his everlasting love, and that his Spirit leads us along the pathway of obedience, makes God the author of sin. The facts in the matter are that God did from all eternity, by his most wise and holy counsel, of his own free will, decree in himself all things whatsover come to pass; that even his purpose extendeth itself unto the first fall, and that not by a mere permission, and therefore all things that have, do now or ever will come to pass are absolutely embraced in this "decree within himself," and that God in his infinite wisdom and sovereign rulership has, does now and ever will make all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. That Joseph's abduction to Egypt and the lying of the woman who had him cast into prison were for the purpose of his interpretation of King Pharaoh's dreams, to the end that sufficient storage for natural sustenance of the people should be to the saving of posterity and the saving of Israel of which Jesus Christ was born, coming out through Juda, of whom the sceptre should not depart, and the lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh come, then shall the gathering of the people be. Here it all was to come through, and all of the falsehoods of Joseph's brethren, and the other wicked acts connected with this, Joseph said God intended for good, to that end to save much people and to preserve this posterity, and these were all "decreed" things, and God in the "decreed things" made them all work out together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. As we see the picture, Joseph was a figure of Christ. Yes, Jesus was hated, despised and rejected of men. All manner of evil and falsehood were charged to him. He was called a "winebibber," a friend to sinners and publicans and was found in the deepest state of humility. Born in a manger, not so much as looked upon by society and the world, but instead thereof sought for to destroy, and the intent to destroy him was so "hot" that a decree was issued from the king to slay all the children from two years old and under in order to get him. This was all to be just as it was. All these "decrees" of the king were also God's "decrees." Rachel weeping for her children, which were those so slain, and the taking of the young child and fleeing to Egypt with him, and the passing into Nazareth, and all the other places, was prophesied of, and all had to come to pass as they did, or the prophecy would have failed and the Bible would have been a book of falsehoods. So we see right in this case the fulfillment of the Scriptures, yet it was wickedness, and men did it through a vile and corrupt spirit, and were doing their own sinful wicked desires, and yet God made it fulfill the prophecy. They who slew Jesus did identically the same thing in time of wickedness, it had its

origin from the same source, yet it was God's determination, and that the Scripture must be fulfilled that there shall be a Son born, his name shall be called Jesus, for he "shall" save his people from their sins. God promised us eternal life before the world began, and that life was in his Son, and the only way this promise could reach its completeness was for the law to be fulfilled and taken out of the way by the sacrifice of the Son of God, who was without spot or blemish, and none could do this but Jesus, who was the only mediator for men, for he was the only one free from sin, and it required him to be made of a woman made under the law, to redeem them (all the Father gave him) that were under the law. In order for the completeness, and to fulfill the promise God had made it was necessary for wicked men to rise up and to do what God's hand and counsel had before determined to be done, and God spared not his Son, but delivered him up and they unknowingly crucified and slew the Lord of glory. This was all by the divine arrangement that he had decreed within himself, and it was the most wicked and heinous in the annals of all history, but this is absolute predestination, and is the truth as taught in the Bible, and although men rise up to condemn it, they only show to my mind their own folly and ignorance in so doing.

This is all I shall say now. I just wanted you to know, dear brother, how much I felt to thank God that he was with you all in the conduct of the SIGNS.

May God's rich grace be ever with you, and his holy Spirit guide you in the way of all truth, that you may ever be found standing firm and contending for the good old doctrine that the SIGNS has ever stood for.

Yours in bonds,

V. R. HARRIS.

HARDING, W. Va., Jan. 8, 1926.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel I must write a few words in behalf of our family paper, and in praise to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. I am still traveling the road that leads from the cradle to the grave, and I am not alone, for all of Adam's race must travel that way in order that the sentence of death, which we bear in our bodies, may be executed at the end of the journey. Although I am traveling the road from life to death which every one must travel, yet I must have hope that by the grace of God, through faith in the name of the Lord Jesus, I have been led to travel the narrow path which leads from death to life, which all the heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ must travel in order to receive their blessed inheritance after they have passed through the execution of death upon their mortal bodies. It is a narrow path, and I believe that every child of God learns by sorrowful and varied experiences that just outside that path are pitfalls and miry places, and we dare not turn to the right nor to the left lest our feet slip into them. Satan is ever lurking near, sees our missteps and is pleased because he thinks we are turning into the broad road that leads to destruction, but when he hears us cry to God for help he leaves us for a time.

"For Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees."

By the help of the Holy Spirit which Jesus promised his followers to guide them into all truth we travel on, but the archenemy of souls appears again in our path when we least expect him, under another name and in another guise, and tells us the Lord may have helped us thus far, but will not always hear us when we cry. We do not want to believe what he says, although our carnal minds have been trying in the same way to dis-

courage us. This vile enemy of souls appears in different guises along the path that God's children travel, and one of the apostles said he was sometimes transformed into an angel of light (I do not think he meant an angel of heavenly light) to blind us and make us grope and miss the narrow path; but again we cry to God for help, close our eyes to the blinding rays, and walk by faith to escape him. We meet with many severe trials on our way that would overcome our faith if the Holy Spirit did not teach us that our God knows what is best for us. There are foes on every hand, and the poet has truthfully said,

> "But of all the foes we meet
> None so oft mislead our feet,
> None betray us into sin
> Like the foe that dwells within."

There are many and various difficult places along our way which we can understand only by passing through, for

> "Life is one continued battle,
> Never ended, never o'er,
> And the christian's path to glory
> Is a conflict evermore."

But by the faith of the Son of God his children will be able to overcome them all. David of old said, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." And, "This God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death." In another place it is recorded, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." To the carnal mind death is dark and deep, for it is by faith alone that we can look beyond the grave and see there the glories of immortality. The child of God knows that without his help we cannot pass through the trials, temptations, conflicts and discouragements that lie in our way and be faithful unto death. The apostle Peter said, "And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" If the righteous have been saved by grace through faith in the Son of God, where shall those appear who profess to be his followers, but deny his sonship and divinity, and thereby say he is not the Redeemer and Savior? Modern professors are teaching this, and in view of such teaching the Gentile nations should tremble with fear lest the time has come that the golden candlestick will be removed from them and placed in the house of Israel, where it will be their glory and a light to make them see and confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Paul wrote to the church at Rome, "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." Paul also said, No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Spirit. Then they who deny his divinity do not have his Spirit. Romans viii. 9, reads, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

Before closing I want to say that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES still holds its standard aloft so all those "who run may read," and the editors have shown themselves to be sound in faith and doctrine, and we are comforted in reading their editorials. We hope those in arrears may be enabled to respond to the call for remittance so our family paper may still be upheld to our comfort and the glory of God, for through its columns the gospel is

preached to the poor, which is one of the signs that Christ did come as the King of kings and still reigns here in the hearts of his people. May the Lord bless all who write for, and all who read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and bless and uphold its publishers, and all those who call upon him in sincerity, for Jesus' sake.

(MRS.) E. E. WORKMAN.

WITTER, Arkansas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find check for ten dollars. Credit five dollars to my subscription and apply the other five dollars to the use of the SIGNS. I subscribed for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in 1872, when in my nineteenth year, and am now in my seventy-third year. I have received more comfort, consolation and encouragement from it than any, and indeed from all other publications except the Bible. I humbly hope through the mercy of God I will not be deprived of it through the remaining years of my pilgrimage. It seems to me to be a time of great affliction to the true followers of the Lord, a time of trial, even as gold is tried in the fire, but let us remember the patience and also the affliction of Job. He said, When he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold. When yet quite a young man I had a vision of the true application, as I believe, of the trial and affliction of Job, not only as a true and literal account by unerring inspiration of an affliction that befell a true servant of the Lord, without cause on his part, but as also a prophetic chapter in the history of the Lord's "afflicted and poor people" that trust in his name, and I was made to feel by an overwhelming and irresistible impulse that I would live to see the time of the fulfillment of this prophecy. I believe, brethren, this time has come. That it is a time of great affliction to the true disciples of Christ many of them in recent years have admitted and but few, if any, seem to doubt. The same question that was argued by and between Job and his three friends is rending asunder churches and associations and being discussed and argued by Baptist papers and from the pulpit and by individual brethren all over the country, and the same or similar arguments are being used pro and con. When Satan asked the Lord if Job feared God for naught, and argued that Job's service was prompted by the blessings that he received in consequence, he introduced the principle of doctrine that has divided and distinguished the advocates of truth and falsehood, religiously, through all the ages from Abel to the present time. Although the law covenant was a conditional covenant, yet it taught Israel in all its types and shadows and "figures of the true" to serve the Lord from a principle of love to God for what he had already done for them, and not because of any expected reward. "And it shall come to pass when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our house."—Exodus xii. 26, 27. Here the very prompting motive to service of the Lord was not any expected future reward, but an acknowledgment of duty and obligation because of what God had already done for them, and this principle was strongly enunciated and commanded by the Savior to his disciples. "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do."—Luke xvii. 10. Indeed one cannot serve God from avowed mo-

tives of conditionalists, for the real prompting would be purely selfish and nothing but serving self, and one cannot serve self and be his disciple. The religion of the Bible is one of self-denial. This was the point in dispute between Job and his "miserable comforters," but when the discussion ended the Judge of all the earth gave his decision, and said to one of them, "My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, as my servant Job hath." —Job xlii. 7. This was written for our learning. May the Lord help us all to take heed.

In hope,

C. W. ANDERSON.

VERNON, Texas, Dec. 11, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I see by the little pink slip that my subscription has about expired, so inclosed you will find two dollars to pay for the SIGNS another year. I do not want to do without it, for it is a source of much pleasure to me, as I am away from the church and do not get to meeting very often. There are many so-called religious people around me, but not the true Old Primitive Baptists, but the do and live kind. I am about fifteen miles from the church where my membership is, and it is a feast to me every time I am permitted to be with them, but I cannot see how they have any fellowship for me, for I am so vile and full of sin; sin is mixed with all I do and say. It is through the kind providence of the merciful God I am spared to see the closing of another year, and when I read in the SIGNS of so many of the old soldiers passing away to their reward I am made to wonder why I am spared; but the Lord knows best, and doeth all things well. I hope I am thankful for the many blessings he bestows upon poor unworthy me.

I have just received the December number of the SIGNS and have read it and reread it, and when I see so many good letters oh how I wish I could write and tell how much I enjoy reading them, also the editorials. I feel that the Lord is with his people, and wish I could write something comforting to those who are contending for the truth as it is in Christ our Lord, but I am not worthy to even think upon his holy name. Write on, all of you who have a mind to write, for it is a feast to God's humble poor. Write on, dear editors, and stand fast for the truth as it was delivered unto the saints. Cry aloud and spare not, and may God's richest blessings be with you and give you grace to bear your burdens, is my prayer, and may those who are behind with their subscriptions come forward and thus help you with your financial obligations. I wish I were able to send you some new subscribers, but those around me cannot stand the truth as it is in Christ, who has said, I am the truth and the light. The light they fear, lest their deeds be made manifest. But can they hide? I say, No, not from the eye of him who neither slumbers nor sleeps, but they may hide from the world, who are blind leaders of the blind. When I am made to meditate upon his blessed truths and see his everlasting decrees and know that he never changes, but is the same to-day and on into eternity, I am made to loathe myself, because I know that there is no good thing in my flesh, for when I would do good evil is always present. When I look back over my past life I can see no good that I have done, but can see much I have left undone, and I can only ask for God's mercy upon me, a poor sinner not worthy to call upon his name, but alas,

who am I to call upon but him, who has all power both in heaven and earth, who works and none can hinder, and hinders and none can work? I often wonder if there is another like me, and if I have ever been born of the Spirit, and if I love the Lord, or no; am I his or am I not? We are told in the Scriptures whereby we may have hope, but when I see myself so full of sin and blackness I am made to doubt, and feel like giving up all hope that the Lord could pardon such a wretch as I know myself to be. If I have any righteousness it is in Christ and what he has done for me; all my own righteousness is as filthy rags. O wash me, dear Lord, in thy blood and I shall be whiter than snow. If I am saved it will be by grace, free grace, and not by anything I have done to merit salvation.

Dear editors, please pardon me for trespassing upon your valuable time, for I did not intend to write so much. May the Lord spare you all to carry on the work he has assigned to you: that of keeping up the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. If it is his holy will, I hope the year 1926 may bring prosperity and health to you and your families. I wish it could be the Lord's will to give some of you Elders a mind to visit Texas and be with us. We are few in number, but all love the doctrine you so ably defend.

I will close by wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and may God's richest blessings rest upon you and upon all his humble poor everywhere.

(MRS.) M. E. PEDEN.

INDEPENDENCE, Mo., Feb. 13, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending you a letter received from brother C. A. Hunt, of Eureka, Kansas. He gave me his subscription to the SIGNS at the association at Topeka, Kansas, last September. He has since written me that he is pleased with the doctrine it advocates, and is well pleased with the paper, and after reading it sends it to his sister in Illinois, who enjoys reading it. He has written his experience, as you will see. He joined the Missionary Baptists when a boy of thirteen, and, I suppose, before he had a hope. He said that if I thought you would publish it I could send it to you, which I am doing subject to your approval.

Wishing the SIGNS much success, I am as ever, yours in hope,

THOMAS W. RECORDS.

EUREKA, Kans., Feb. 11, 1926.

DEAR BROTHER RECORDS:—Sometimes I long to go and join that immortal company which no man can number, washed in the precious blood of Jesus, but I will wait all my appointed time until my change comes. As one writer said, When I awake in his likeness, then I will be satisfied, and not until then. You surely have lived to a good ripe age as you state, eighty-five years, and the Lord will direct all your way, and if you fall he will lift you up.

Dear brother, will you pardon me if I speak a little about my travel in life, just a few words? When I was thirteen years of age I joined the Missionaries at one of their revivals. I wanted to make heaven my home, but when I was in Dearborn County, Indiana, at the age of sixteen, one morning I was reading the four Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, the crucifixion of the dear Lamb of God, and I thought it was horrible to take so good a man and crucify him. I could not understand it, but I read on, and in the evening I went up the hollow between two hills, and there had been a shower, but everything looked dark to

me, I was wretched, for I realized I was a great sinner, something I never had felt until that time. I tried to kneel down and pray, but all I could say was, God, be merciful and save me, but I found no relief. I went on a little farther and it seemed to me I must pray or perish. I fell on my knees and could only say, God be merciful to me, and it seemed I was lifted to my feet, and I looked up at the rainbow in the sky and saw the Father on the white throne and the Son standing at his side, and a voice clear as a bell said, Thy sins are forgiven, go in peace. Then the vision vanished from my sight, but I was so happy that I was made to exclaim, Glory to God in the highest. It seemed that everything was praising God, the trees, the little birds warbled more sweetly, everything in nature was brighter and seemed to be praising God. But this did not last, and I was in "Doubting Castle" before long. Something seemed to say to me, You never heard any voice or saw anything, you have been deceived. I tried to get my burden back, but could not. When I came out to Illinois, near Mattoon, I attended the Missionaries' meeting and heard them tell what good things they were doing for the Lord and they were going to make heaven their home. I could not feel that way, for sin was mixed with all I did and if the Lord did not take care of me and take me home I would never be there. I was working for W. H. Martin, a deacon in old Zoar Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, and was husking corn out in the field all by myself. I had been to hear the Old Baptists preach, but I could not understand all of the doctrine, and also felt too unworthy to ask them for a home, they seemed so good to me, but out there in the cornfield I feel to hope the truth was revealed to me in regard to the two generations, the tares and the wheat. It seemed to me I was made to understand that it behooved Christ to die for the sins of his people, and no one else, the tares were not included in that death and resurrection, but his bride, the Lamb's wife. Well right there, if I ever had any impression to try to preach the gospel it was then, and when I drove in with my load Elder G. W. Dalby, the pastor of Zoar Church, drove up and he looked beautiful to me. I went to meeting the next day, still feeling I was not fit to ask a home with them, but when the privilege of the church was extended the first thing I knew I was up there shaking him by the hand, but when the church asked me to relate my experience I could not say a word, it seemed I was dumb. W. H. Martin asked me the questions. I could answer them, but it seemed I was not answering them properly, but he made the motion to receive me, greatly to my surprise, and I was baptized. We had to cut the ice which was six inches thick. I have been tossed about since then, but my mind always goes back to that time, which makes me think I have not been deceived, and the Lord has been good to me, better than I deserve. He is, I hope, leading me all the way, and if we never meet in this world again I hope to meet you all over there, to dwell with Christ for evermore.

I was at Topeka the first Sunday and we had a good meeting. I tried to preach and the Lord gave me good liberty. I talked about one hour, but did not use any particular text, but spoke about the salvation of the people of God according to his eternal purpose and predestination which he purposed in himself.

If you think the SIGNS would publish this experience you might send it in. I will be fifty-six years of age the twenty-

third day of next August, and have been trying to preach ever since I was twenty years old. May God lead us all into a large place and keep us.

Yours in hope,

C. A. HUNT.

HERNDON, Va., Nov. 30, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—As it is time for me to renew my subscription to the SIGNS I now do so by inclosing you a check for three dollars, two dollars for my subscription and one to help the "Poor of the Flock." I am also inclosing a sweet short letter (a copy of it) I have just received from Elder James M. Adams, of Monroe, Ga., together with a copy of the Minutes of the eighty-eighth annual session of the Oconee Primitive Baptist Association, held with the church at Monroe, Ga. I am sending brother Adams' short letter, but not the Minutes. The letter brother Adams refers to about brother A. B. Lester was published in the SIGNS twenty-four years ago, March 3rd, 1901, which I had almost forgotten, but brother Adams' reference to it refreshed my memory. I would love to say to brother Adams as I said once to dear brother Coulter in a letter written October 31st, 1909, he added, "My dear brother, to say that I was glad to receive your precious letter would not half express the comfort and pleasure it gave me in reading its contents. Oh how strange it seems to me at times that I am still remembered by God's dear children, and especially by the undershepherds of the flock. I do not feel worthy of such love as is manifested in your letter to me," &c.

We all love brother Adams for the truth's sake, and hope he will be able to visit us again in the near future, and will be glad to welcome him to our homes and to our meetings. I love to receive letters from God's dear humble poor people. I would be humble if I could, but of myself I can do nothing. I know I am poor in spirit, but I often doubt the reality of being humble.

My days seem to be past for letter-writing, and I will close, by wishing all of the household of faith a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year in the Lord.

Your brother, I hope, in love and fellowship,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

MONROE, Ga., Nov. 27, 1925.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER OLIVER:—I love to think of your good home and the pleasant visits I have had with you, and this will let you know I am thinking of you now. I have just read your letter in the SIGNS of March 3rd, 1901, speaking of the death of one A. B. Lester. When you said there was no other people on God's green earth like the Old School Baptists that is the truth. I feel to say I believe you are one of them: fellow-citizens of the household of the faith of the Son of God.

I send this Minute to help out a letter to you. I wish you could have been there with us. As you see, your pastor, Elder H. H. Lefferts, was with us, which made it seem more pleasant indeed. I do hope to be with you again some time, and at old Frying Pan Church. It is a pleasant spot in my memory, and ever will be. May the Lord bless you and yours as you go down the steep of life, looking by faith toward that house that is not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Your little brother,

JAMES M. ADAMS.

LAMAR, Col., Feb. 9, 1926.

DEAR EDITORS:—Just a few lines to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It sets forth the doctrine I believe the Bible teaches, that God saw the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Could it be any other way than as he saw it? I think not. "Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Has anything ever happened with God? Surely not. He has a purpose in all things. It seems strange to me how some who claim to believe the Bible can say God made Adam able to stand but liable to fall. God surely knew what Adam would do before he made him from the dust of the earth; if not, then God did not know all things. I know sin and death came by man, and it was the will of Adam to do just as he did do, and in doing his own will he carried out the foreknowledge of God. God knows the steps we take. As for myself, I never know one moment what I will do the next, but God knows all things. "I am God, and there is none like me." God has but one way to save sinners: "By grace are ye saved." God is the author and the finisher of the faith of all who are saved. Then there is but one salvation (eternal), one Lord, one faith, one baptism. I have believed, do believe and hope to continue believing as long as there is life in my body, that when God does a work for a poor sinner it is a perfect work, and needs not to be improved by man. I am sure we are taught of God to love him, to keep his commandments as best we can, and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. If the love of Jesus Christ does not keep us, nothing else will. I know none are good, except Jesus; all have sinned, and do sin, and all have sin enough in us to kill the body. I go mourning day by day because of my sins. I have no desire to sin, and hate sin, so "it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." I have not power to conquer, but I do thank God that Jesus has power to save all the Father gave him in the covenant. The sea and the grave must give up at his command, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. He made all things, and every thing answers the purpose for which it was made. The serpent did his will, and God's foreknowledge. I do not think God was disappointed in any of his work. I am glad to see there are yet some who are contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints. I trust they may be kept by the power of God and may be led to write often to the SIGNS. May God richly bless all together, is my prayer for Christ's sake. W. C. PERDUE.

PERRIN, Texas, Jan. 17, 1926.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will try and write a few lines, as it is past time for me to renew my subscription to the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but I hope you will excuse me, as I have been very busy and have neglected it. It is cold and raining here to-day, and as I am shut in I have been meditating a great deal upon the Scriptures of eternal truth, and reading Hassell's Church History, and it is astonishing how the people of God had to suffer under the cruel hand of persecution for preaching the truth of the Bible. But Jesus says, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace. This peace passes all understanding, for he says, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." The world gives with the expectation of getting something in return, or that they

may receive the glory of men and have their reward. Peace is something great among God's people, for it denotes harmony among them, and it manifests that love that is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, and is given unto us, for love is of God, "and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him," for love is of God, and God is love. Then, brethren, see that ye love one another. "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Oh that we all could manifest toward each other that love that is of God. May the good Lord add his blessing. C. Y. OSTEEN.

WARREN, Arkansas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As my time to renew has come I will try and write you a few lines to let you know that there are a few scattered around in this part who love the old SIGNS and believe the doctrine it has so long contended for. We are surrounded by those who claim to be Old School Primitive Baptists who hold the SIGNS and me in contempt, the absolute predestination of all things is poison to them, but we deem it the doctrine of God our Savior, believing that he alone had wisdom and power to speak of things and declare them before they were. He was before all things, and by him all things consist. There was none that could say, Why or what doest thou? As he thought so shall it be, and as he purposed so shall it stand. He never saw anything that was to be only in his own wisdom and purpose. He has never permitted anything only that which was in his counsel from the beginning. It was the will of the Father that his Son should come into this world just as he did and to do his Father's will, and this is his will, that all the Father gave him should have everlasting life. There are but few who believe this precious truth. It is in him we live and have our being. To advocate that we can do anything to merit grace is to deny grace. No one has or can do so, but it is stored up in our Lord as free, and unmerited on our part.

I hope it may be the will of God that the SIGNS will continue.

With love to all who love the truth,

J. H. BLYTHE.

HANOVER, Conn., Feb. 16, 1926.

DEAR EDITORS:—There is usually a desire to write a few lines when renewing my subscription to the SIGNS, but I do not do so, fearing it is the promptings of the flesh rather than the Spirit. I certainly want to read the SIGNS as long as I live, and I hope it is as a newborn babe, desiring the sincere milk of the word. The young child cries for food or from pain, either cry is an evidence of life, but the child is not conscious of this, so the child of God cries for bread, and cries out in the agony of his conflict with the flesh, all the time unconscious that these cries show him to be one with him who said, If ye suffer with me ye shall also reign with me. Looking for evidences, giving evidences, yet seldom finding them. What an enigma the child of God is to himself. Glorying in the God of his salvation one minute and the next trying to take glory to himself. Would a man rob God? Indeed he would, nothing is too presumptuous for him, and none but God can subdue his wicked heart.

Yes, I want to contine the SIGNS, I want to hear from those who know about the experiences I am having, and I want to be built up by the expounding of the word in the editorials and the writings of others called to declare the unsearchable riches of Christ. EVA ASHBEY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1926.

EDITOR

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ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

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CAIN AND ABEL.

THE plainest, most evident principle of divine truth brought to light in the history of Cain and Abel is that of personal, unconditional election. That almighty God according to his own wise purpose known only to himself chooses whom he will unto glory and casts down to eternal judgment those whom he has not chosen unto glory, is most clearly and indisputably shown in the narrative of the lives of these two sons of Adam and Eve. There existed a radical difference between these two brothers, yet it was not a difference arising from any inequality of their human nature. Naturally, both Cain and Abel were alike. Both had the same parents and sprang from the same physical and mental heredity, both were subjected to the same surroundings and circumstances, and, so far as we know, to the same training, meagre as it may have been; yet one became a keeper of sheep and the other a tiller of the soil; one found favor with God, while the other fell under everlasting condemnation. To account for this difference one must go beyond the human nature of these two brothers to the God of heaven who alone made the difference between them. To the one, Abel, God gave faith, the fruit of his own Spirit; from the other, Cain, God withheld faith, leaving him in the ignorance and darkness of his own nature. It is alone the discriminating love of God that has always made the difference between his elect and the reprobate wicked. By nature, both the elect and the wicked are essentially the same, no difference naturally between them. All alike are sinners, all have fallen and come short of the demands of God's holy law; but in the eternal mind of Jehovah before the foundation of the world, he elected his people to salvation and glory by giving them to his Son, foreordained to be Surety for them, leaving all those not thus elected to perish everlastingly in condemnation. This principle of divine truth the human mind invariably rejects. To human judgment it seems so unjust that men in a state of nature will have none of it. Yet if we cancel from the Scriptures all those passages which teach God's personal election of his people wholly unconditioned upon their merit or efforts, we should have to discard the whole Bible. No other element of the plan of salvation is more clearly taught in Holy Writ than this of election. The modernist who would eradicate from the Bible all its mystical elements because they are at variance with his fondly cherished evolutionary theory, is no worse than the nominally professed christian who, while pretending to believe the Bible, would eliminate all those doctrinal teachings at variance with human reason, particularly this principle of God's election of his people to eternal glory altogether according to sovereign grace and in nowise according to their works. Both the modernist and the nominal christian in their opposition to the plain teachings of divine revelation represent no more nor less than the op-

posing reaction of finite minds against infinite and incomprehensible realities.

Election is an act of God. Faith is the gift of God by which this election is manifested or revealed to the elect. Abel, by the operation of this faith within him, obtained evidence that he was righteous, not righteous by any human excellence of his own, but righteous in the righteousness of the Lamb of God, which holy Lamb his own lamb typified. Not because Abel offered a lamb as sacrifice was he accepted with God. No, not at all. His acceptance with God was upon the basis of faith, and upon that alone. His offering the lamb was an expression of faith. This faith was God's gift to Abel and the fruit of God's Spirit in Abel. Because he had faith he pleased God. Without faith he no more could have pleased God than Cain did. Had Cain also been the recipient of divine faith he, too, would have found favor with God whether he offered the fruit of the ground or had offered something else. Not because he offered the fruit of the ground was Cain rejected, but because he lacked the essential gift of faith. Without faith it was utterly impossible for him to find favor with God, no matter how hard he might try to obtain it. This is just as wonderfully and grandly true to-day as in the days of Cain and Abel. No matter how sincere may be one's religious profession, no matter how honest and upright may be one's intentions, lacking the gift from God of divine faith, one is wholly left out of the way of salvation and can never possibly find any substitute ground of acceptance with God.

Cain realized that Abel had been favored of God as he himself had not and this fact made him, not humble and contrite, but angry. Cain felt that he deserved the notice of the Almighty and merited better treatment at his hands. Has not human nature always maintained that attitude? Are there not to-day thousands of people who feel as confident they are going to heaven as they are breathing? Do not these people feel that God owes them something? Will they not regard themselves grossly insulted to have the door shut against them and to hear the sentence, Depart from me, ye cursed, I never knew you? However, God asked Cain, "Why art thou wroth?" There was no good reason why Cain should have expected anything else than to have been rejected. There is no good reason why any sinner of all Adam's race should expect God to favor him. God is under no obligation whatever to have mercy upon any. Had he left the whole race of men to perish in sin, it would have been perfectly just and right. It is not surprising at all that some are lost in sin, the amazing thing is that not all are lost. One need not ask why God chose one and not another, but let us consider why God has made choice of any to be saved. Surely it is solely according to his marvelous love and wondrous mercy treasured for them in Christ Jesus before creation began. Nevertheless, to show Cain that his being angry with God was wholly unwarranted, God further told him: "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him." Thus, after God had accepted Abel's offering because it was offered in faith and had rejected Cain's because it was not in faith, so making Cain angry, God placed Cain under a conditional system to reveal if he (Cain) would do any better the second time than he had the first. Not that God needed to find out anything about Cain he did not

already know, but he designed to show Cain that he himself would stand no better likelihood of winning divine acceptance under a conditional plan than he had already met with under the plan of divine election. "If" thou doest well. Notice the "if." It was on condition that Cain did well that he was to be accepted. That it was impossible for him to do well Cain had not yet discovered, but he was soon to find it out. This seemed to Cain like giving him another "chance" to get the reward, but what a failure he made of it. God delivered Abel into the hands of Cain, he caused Abel's desire to be toward Cain, he gave to Cain the rule over Abel. In short, God delivered Abel over to Cain for to do what he would with Abel. It was now altogether with Cain as to how he should conduct himself toward his brother. What did Cain do? Did he embrace Abel or in any way act brotherly towards him? Not at all. He killed him. What a mess he made of winning God's favor on an "if" or conditional basis! His anger had been aroused when he saw God accept his brother and reject himself. Election thus manifested had stirred his ire. But when God subsequently placed him on a conditional basis he did no better. As many persons now think that God ought not to cast them off without giving them a "chance" so, speaking after the manner of men, God gave Cain a "chance" by telling him he would deliver Abel over to him and that if he, Cain, would do well he too would be accepted. But Cain did not do well, as we have seen. He committed murder. Thus the "chance" system failed. No acceptance to be found with God that way. Thus do all God's children know that if not saved by God's mercy according to his own election of them, there can be no salvation in any other way. In every instance throughout Bible history wherever God has placed men under a conditional covenant, failure is written large over all human achievements, and the end thereof has always been disaster, never peace and favor with God. The free and unmerited favor of God throughout Christ Jesus is the only Way of salvation to lost and ruined sinners.

We have seen, therefore, that by both the election principle and by the conditional plan, Cain found no favor with God. There was no reconciliation for him anywhere. Thereupon followed his condemnation. He was driven out to find rest nowhere and to labor in unfruitfulness. God marked him so that no man should kill him. What this mark was we do not know, further than it served to protect Cain from falling at the hands of creatures as erring as himself and kept him in reserve for the final disposition that God should make of him. A certain preacher once said that Cain had eternal life and that he was a child of God. His proof of this was in that God marked Cain so that none finding him should kill him, thus implying that Cain was never to die, hence that Cain had eternal life. God's placing a mark on Cain did not signify that Cain was not to die, but that he was not to die at the hand of any of his fellows; further, that Cain was reserved unto the ultimate judgment of God concerning him. In this Cain represents all who are not predestined unto glory at the right hand of God. These, whom we sometimes designate as the nonelect, are not to be delivered over to human judgment for men to decide their fate and final end, but these shall hear their sentence pronounced by the Judge of all the earth, who shall do right, who is too wise to err and too good

to be unkind. Unto God, not unto men, all his creatures stand or fall.

As substantiating what we have here set forth, we refer you to a perusal of Genesis fourth chapter, Hebrews eleventh chapter, Romans ninth chapter, John v. 25–29, Acts xxiv. 15, Matthew xxv. 31–46.

L.

JOHN IX. 5–7.

"As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said unto him, Go wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing."

We again write to you, dear beloved of Zion, some of the things that pertain to the kingdom of God and his righteousness. The words of Jesus to his disciples testifying that the rays of the sun that illuminate the whole earth and give light by day was not the light that could give light to the body. All men are in the dark and benighted condition by reason of sin and are blind as to seeing the kingdom, for they have eyes and see not, ears and hear not. The expression of carnality that all afflictions are because of some sin the individual has committed, Jesus fully refuted by saying, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parent: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." Jesus being God made manifest in the flesh, was the embodiment of light and the source of life and light. As long as he was in the flesh as a man among the sons of men he was the only man that had ever been born of woman that was life and could give or redeem a sinner from under the sentence of a violated law and make him free from the law of sin and death. Men could not behold that light any more than a naturally born blind man can discern natural light. The light we have that illuminates the whole earth is the creation of God and set in the firmament of heaven, and is held in place by the God of heaven, of which Jesus was the only Son. After his death and resurrection he declared all power was given unto him in heaven and earth, which testifies that the life enables us to see the power of God manifested in him, for no man could spit on the ground and make clay and anoint the eyes of the blind and at his command cause the obedience of the blind to bathe in the pool of Siloam. We readily understand that a naturally born blind man needs some one to lead him and direct him aright; so the spiritual, when they are sent they have One to lead, direct and bring them to the very thing commanded, which is Jesus. When he putteth them forth he goeth before them. Jesus has never called a disciple to get light, but he gave them light, which was in his word, and commands them to be obedient, and they see that in him and the works of God that were manifest to them they glorify God. The demonstration of the works of God to his disciples was the will and purpose of God before this man was born, and the command of Jesus was but the fulfillment of the purpose of God in the work that was to be manifested by his Son while in the world. Jesus, standing as a lamb slain from before the foundation of the world for the sins of his people, was in the fullness of the redemption and salvation of every sinner that will ever sing the praises of God in heaven, and the time of his coming manifestation of the power of the Father and his time of suffering, death, resurrection, ascension and glorification was all as God had purposed from the foundation of the world. Jesus commanded this blind man to go wash in the

pool of Siloam, which is by interpretation, Sent. His way was Jesus, and that way brought him to the pool of Siloam, and he washed and came forth seeing. He could truly bear testimony as to why he was what he was, and Paul used the term, "By the grace of God I am what I am." We truly believe that every heaven-born child can witness as to their blindness all the days of their life in nature, and when the power of God was manifested in their deliverance from that darkness and the benighted condition by reason of sin it was the power of God, and not man, and the way was ordered of the Lord. We have felt very much this condition during the last month or six weeks, and realizing we were expected to write this editorial we could not see any way to pass, or any light do direct our way to write it, and the question would arise, What must we do? Failure was written in all our feelings, and darkness covered our soul, and our longings were, Lord, give us light and open unto us, and we were made to repeat, What wilt thou have us to do? Then the power that has rested with us in our pilgrimage came to mind, and we felt the need of his washing, for we were so vile and sinful. Then the words of Jesus to the blind man came to our mind, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam," and these words rested with us, and, we trust, the power of the word and works of God also. If we could praise him and always rejoice in the light we would see him and ever behold him. The expression of holy writ would be ours to enjoy which testifies that you who were darkness are light in the Lord. We seldom have the feeling to utter supplication, all seems to be groaning, and the expression that he maketh intercession in our heart with groanings that cannot be uttered seems to be fully realized. We feel assured that he works his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and none can stay his hand, as is truly set forth in the Scripture referred to. We feel to ask you inhabitants of Zion to write us of the directing power that has rested with you, that has brought you from darkness to his marvelous light, for they come to us as sweet messages of the way of life. We feel here to say that our dear sister Flossie J. Faulkner's experience in the March issue was of great comfort to us, and our heart was made to rejoice in the testimony of his word that he would bring the blind by ways they knew not. In her case she was not brought in by the continued hearing and rehearsal of the truth, but by the power of God, which testifies of the works of God and his predestinating us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ himself. Dear fellow-laborers in the gospel, are not such of great comfort to you, and come to you with much assurance that the truth of the way is yet to be felt in the hearts of his people, and he hath not left himself without a witness? May the God of all grace command, guide, keep and wash the clay from our eyes, that we may come forth from the pools of natural water seeing, which is believing in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Savior of sinners.

Submitted in love and sweet fellowship to the beloved Zion of our God, which we truly feel the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES are. C. W. V.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Elder B. H. Yates having changed his address from St. Louis, Missouri, to R 1, Box 25, Harvielle, Missouri, requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

CHURCH LETTERS.

The Whitefield Old School Baptist Church, to the churches composing the Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1925, greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—Another year with its joys and sorrows is numbered with the things of the past, and by the request of our dear brother Hubbard, who has served us so long and faithfully, I make the attempt to address you.

Our little band greet you in love and sweet fellowship. This little company though composed of three churches seem more like one, as indeed we are members of one body: Christ. How are we to know we are members of that mystical body? Were we taught it in childhood? Have we learned it by study? Is there anything in the natural man, any spark that we by searching may find and fan into a flame? I answer emphatically, No. No one by searching can find out God. But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, there is no soundness in us; but we are full of wounds, bruises and putrefying sores from the crown of our head to the soles of our feet. Where, then, is our righteousness? Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. Therefore what do we see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies. Nature and grace, one at war with the other, a constant warfare, too, but thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord there is a stronger Man, and we to whom the Lord has been gracious have felt his power. I would that I might be given words to talk about this wonderful power, but words are inadequate, it must be felt to be known. He drew me and I followed after, drew me by the cords of love. The love that filled my soul when Jesus was revealed to me I have never been able to tell. Love is the fulfilling of the law, therefore he that loveth is born of God. We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. Nevertheless the warfare goes on. Though the blood was sprinkled on our doorposts and we have been made ready, with staff in hand, and have marched forth with the cloud to guide us by day and the pillar of fire by night, we oftentimes find ourselves ready to perish, the host is upon us, walled in on either side, the deep before us, no escape, whither shall we flee, and what is our cry? Lord, remember us in mercy, look upon us, the work of thy hands, and if it be thy will deliver. And what is the reply? "Before they call, I will answer: and while they are yet speaking, I will hear," and lo! the sea opens before us and we pass through dry-shod, and are ready to sing, "The Lord hath triumphed gloriously." But this is only one trial, the waters get so bitter it seems we cannot drink them, in our weakness we say we cannot; and in our own strength we could not, but the Tree of Life can sweeten even the bitterest cup, so we can say at times, I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me, and thus we journey on. O, my dear ones, you know of the pathless wastes through which we sometimes go, the hot, burning sands, the sighing for water, faint, weary and alone. "Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses." Then ever we are aware, we behold what? An oasis in this dark stretch of barren land, and lo, there is water, there is the tree bearing fruit, and green verdure whereon we may rest from the noontide heat, eat of the fruit of this tree, whereof if a man eat he shall never die; and drink from the fountain, the streams whereof make glad the

city of our God; and sometimes it is given with the words, "O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, beloved," and our strength is renewed within us and we can run and not weary, walk and not faint. "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky." Great is our God and greatly to be praised, he raises the beggar from the dunghill and sets him among princes. I the Lord doeth these things. He needeth not the puny arm of flesh, and we who have ceased from our labors and entered into that rest are glad it is so. Where there is labor there is no rest; but when Christ was revealed to us we rested, we beheld a finished work, a glorious, a complete salvation. Christ finished the work. Nothing can be added to it, nothing taken from it. May this little band stand united bearing the standard of truth, willing to serve, and esteeming each one better than himself.

"Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven who finds
His bosom glow with love."

Our number remains the same: seven. There has been no service here since our last Association two years ago. We who can meet with the little church at Bowdoinham, where brother George Tedford reads and talks to us as God gives him strength and we are permitted to have heavenly sittings together; no discord, but peace within our borders. Who shall molest or make us afraid? If Christ be for us who can be against us? Our hearts are gladdened by the presence of those who seem interested in the truth and we feel to say, Come in, thou blessed of my Father, why standeth thou without? in our Father's house there is bread and to spare.

(MRS.) NELLIE M. PALMER.

The Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church, now in session with the Maine Old School Baptist Association and the churches which compose it, at Whitefield, Maine, September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1925, sends greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Another year has passed, and we are glad to meet you with hearts full of love for the things pertaining to the kingdom of our God. It is not for worldly gain in any form or manner that we are assembled together, but to speak one to another of the way of life and salvation for the poor, helpless sinner, found only in Jesus. There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Many years it has been our custom to have letters from each church written by some member and read at this meeting, such being called "Church Letters." In all the years we have walked together in love there has been given us a desire to hear of the welfare and prosperity of the three churches which compose the Association. We like to express the dealings of the Lord with us, with the ability he gives us, realizing that no good thing can be found in the flesh, from which all boasting is excluded. One says, "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord." That is what we desire above all things, to be found speaking of the marvelous works of the Lord, giving all praise, honor and glory unto him who is alive for evermore, and because he lives we shall live also. We have a most precious hope and it can never fail or be destroyed, for it is Jesus wrought in our soul the hope of glory. How wonderful this seems to the sinner who has been made to cry, Lord, save, or I perish. "God be merciful to me a sinner." Jesus was the perfect sacrifice, and there can be no more shedding of blood for the remis-

sion of sin, for by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Here is the finished work of Jesus in the salvation of his people, and it is so wonderfully wrought that nothing can ever be added to it or taken from it. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever."

We were made glad at our last Association at Bowdoinham to have a dear sister relate her experience and follow Jesus in the ordinance of baptism. It made us think of the day we united with the loved people and the verse of a hymn expresses the feelings at such a time,

"What a mercy is this,
What a heaven of bliss!
How unspeakably favored am I!
Gathered into the fold,
With believers enrolled,
With believers to live and to die."

We have not had as many meetings this last year, but when we have been gathered together there has been a joy, peace, union, love and fellowship that passeth all understanding. We have been made sad by the death of our dear sister Wilson this last year. She was always present, unless ill. We feel our loss is her gain. We are few in number, but the Lord has been gracious to us, and upheld us all the journey, and will not leave nor forsake us. Our number is six. None added. One died.

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

The South Gardiner Old School Baptist Church, to the churches composing the Maine Old School Baptist Association, assembled with the Whitefield Church, September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1925, and the associations and meetings with which we correspond, greetings.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—Another year has passed, and the time for our annual letter has arrived. We are living in peace and fellowship, for which we have to thank our gracious God. We can take no credit for any good thing, for our natures are prone to evil and it is only as God's Spirit moves in us that we can think a good thought. Our only hope is in Jesus' blood and righteousness, and we desire that our walk might show that Christ is with us to direct our steps; and that we might not bring any reproach upon his name. We pray that we may ever be kept in the faith once delivered unto the saints. We have met with the Bowdoinham Church during the summer and have enjoyed sweet communion with them. Dear sister Beulah Rice was joined to us by baptism at the last Association, which makes our number nine members.

(MRS.) WALTER WEEKS.

WATCH YOUR DATES.

WE wish to request our subscribers when sending in their subscriptions to see that the date on the little pink slip bearing their address is changed. If not changed, please let us know immediately (for that signifies you have not been given credit for the money sent) and we will look into the matter. By consulting that date you can tell at a glance to what time your subscription is paid. Dec. 26 means that your subscription is paid to December, 1926; June 25 means your subscription is only paid to June, 1925, &c. If you are in arrears we would much appreciate a remittance from you.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Joab Stout, Ill., $2; Mrs. J. A. Hurley, Mich., $3; W. A. Corder, W. Va., $2; Mrs. J. A. McTaggart, Ont., $3; Mrs. Sarah J. Clegg, Pa., $1; J. C. Kenerley, Ga., $2; Isaac L. Kip, N. J., $1; Mrs. Mattie Morris, Tex., $1.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. J. H. Miles was born February 13th, 1885, and departed this life February 2nd, 1924. She was Miss Anna Lee Pass, daughter of W. O. Pass, Hillsboro County, Florida. She was not a member of the Old School Baptist Church. She suffered for more than a year, being confined to her bed for three months, but never murmured at any time, and bore her affliction with christian fortitude. Before her demise, with a smile, bidding all farewell, she said she was going home to a brighter world. We realize that her spirit has gone to be with her Savior, where we hope to meet her in the sweet by and by. Until that glad day we can only bow our heads in our great sorrow and say, Thy will be done, O Lord, thou King of saints. She left a sorrowing husband, who is a true and tried Old School Baptist, and six children. There is a vacant chair in the home, and her husband and children realize that the one has left us who was the comfort of the whole family, but our great loss is her eternal gain.

Elder J. W. Pittman conducted the funeral services of Mrs. Miles.

ALSO,

William Owen Miles, son of J. H. and Anna Lee Miles, was born June 12th, 1918, and went home to glory November 7th, 1925. This wonderful child was afflicted for three years, went on crutches for seven months, and was blind, almost totally, five months. He said God made him sick, and not once did he complain during all the time of his suffering. He regained his health to a certain degree for a while, and could take orders for the sale of vegetables as well as his father. When he was blind he said to his father, "Let us sing, sing the kind of songs Mr. Greathouse sings: "Amazing grace," and "Dark and thorny is the desert." He knew "Amazing grace" by heart, and knew several verses of "Dark and thorny is the desert," and could carry the tunes as well as grown people. When he was very low, and totally blind, he said more than once, "I see." We could hardly understand what he said, he was so low, but we have no doubt he saw the wonders of the glory world. Just as he was dying he called his aunt, and said, "Hold my feet while I go through the water." She held his feet as he passed from this sin-cursed world to the place God has prepared for all of his people.

There was a large and attentive congregation present while the unworthy writer officiated at the funeral services. We sang his favorite song, "Amazing grace," and he no doubt is singing praise to his Savior in eternal glory. He is delivered from the thorns of the flesh, and will no more have to wander across the dark and thorny desert. May we meet him where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. He was the most wonderful child I have ever met with in all my travels.

Your brother in hope of mercy,

ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

Mrs. Susan E. Shelburne, daughter of Braxton and Sarah Houser, was born March 24th, 1847, at Mt. Eden, Kentucky. She was the third child of six children, namely, Johnny, Mary, Susan, Caroline, Sally and Nanny. She was united in marriage to James W. Shelburne May 16th, 1869, and soon after their marriage they moved to a farm, near New London, Ralls County, Missouri, where she passed peacefully away October 11th, 1923. About forty-four years ago she related her experience, and asked to be received into the Old School Baptist Church at Flinthill, Missouri. She was baptized by Elder William Priest, then pastor of that church. At the water's edge they stood in the open door of the church and as they sang Aunt Callie came forward, and was also received into the church after she had related her experience. Mother's experience dated back to the time she was a little fourteen year old girl. Predestination had been discussed by several members of the family, and mother made the remark that the Lord would be an unjust god if he permitted such a system of salvation. After she had said that she felt condemned, and in her agony of spiritual conflict she went and laid down on a sack of wool in the wool room and wept bitterly, then she heard the "still small voice," "I will try your case." Mother's church life and her association with the members of the dear household of faith were the source of great consolation to her. Though we lived eight miles away and had to traverse the roughest roads to get to the meetings it was never too far for mother and father to hitch up to the surrey and take all us children along. After hitching the horses in the grove of woods we would walk towards the church-house, oftentimes hearing the sweetest singing of hymns. Later on five of us children related our experiences and were received into this church. There is one of us who has not yet related his experience and asked for a place in the church, but he gives good evidence of being one of God's children, and for this we are thankful. Mother was kind, loving and true to us all. She had a beautiful voice and used it to the glory of God in singing the dear old hymns of the household of faith. Father would often join in, and then we would all lift our voices in praise to the Lord of lords and King of kings, as mother always expressed it. In the twilight after supper mother would often gladden our hearts with spiritual gems in song, then would tell us the story of Jesus and his wonderful love, and father would read the Bible to us. Truly we were raised in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Mother and father often entertained the Old School Baptists on their way to the associations, and always enjoyed the spiritual feasts with these dear brethren and sisters. Elders Sutton, Hutchinson, Scranton and Hardesty were at our house many times and delighted us all with their views of the Scriptures. Mother passed away before Paulina,

Bradford and I could reach there from Chicago, but dear mother had a peaceful countenance when we beheld her in her last sleep and we knew she was happy, for as brother Bradford quoted at her funeral, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Oh, when we meet her in the homeland, "There will be no sorrow there."

Her husband and children,

JAMES W. SHELBURNE AND PAULINA, WILLIE, DAISY, ARCHIE, TOMMY, BRADFORD.

MEETINGS.

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Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday of each month at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 459 E. 5th St., Riverside, Calif., and at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. 11th St., Claremont, Calif., on the first Sunday of each alternate month, beginning with January, and on every alternate month with brother Joseph Huffman, 128 Van Buren St., Arlington, Calif. Singing at 10:30 a. m. Preaching at 11 a. m. Lunch at the place of meeting, and continued services in the afternoon.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.

O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California.

C. G. MILLER.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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A SKETCH OF THE LIFE of JOSHUA S. CORDER.

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Picture of Elder Joshua S. Corder.
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Chapter XII.—In Perils.
Chapter XIII.—Fell Asleep, A "Loved Disciple."
Chapter XIV.—Memorials, Poetry, Circular Letter, &c.

This little book of 152 pages was published by Elder Corder's daughter, sister Semma E. Corder, of Philippi, W. Va., and printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office several years ago, and we feel is a work that will be read with interest by any of the household of faith.

The book was originally sold for one dollar per copy, and was bound in cloth, but there were some printed sheets that were never bound, and these sister Corder has generously donated to help in publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so we have decided to bind them in paper covers and offer them to our readers as long as the supply lasts for the extremely low price of twenty-five cents per copy. If any who purchase this book feel they have not received full value they may return the book to us and we will refund the price paid for it.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

TOPEKA, Kans., Jan. 21, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed please find check for two dollars to renew my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I will also ask you to change my address from 1243 Polk Street to 1119 Taylor Street, Topeka, Kansas.

I have felt impressed to offer a few thoughts on the following Scripture: "Ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law; judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."—Matt. xxiii. 23. These words were addressed to the scribes and Pharisees, who it would seem knew no mode of worship nor service to God only that which was rendered according to the letter of the law, and who knew no religion only that exemplified by the outward workings of the flesh. Their religion consisted in the observance of carnal ordinances: tithes, sacrifices and offerings, the offering of which never could make them perfect, though they offered them year by year continually, for they were only shadows of good things to come and not the very image of the things. These sacrifices and offerings then, being types and shadows, we are informed the body is of Christ, and these being types, it seems certain that the paying of these tithes is also a typical service which the Lord's people render unto him. The mint and anise and cummin are also typical, being plants, and their seeds full of fragrance and perfume they answer admirably to the service of the saints, the which if they be rendered acceptably are a sweet smelling savor unto the Lord. But Jesus called them "hypocrites," because although they observed the paying of tithes, yet there was not a single fruit of the Spirit in evidence. Judgment, mercy and faith were all omitted. This is a part of the Scriptures that was written for our learning. I suppose then, the best we can do is to apply its teaching to ourselves in this present age, and if it applies to us it also applies to the saints in all ages. There are various and sundry duties which apply equally to all of the household of faith, the performance of which is binding upon all professing godliness. In our every-day life and walk we are taught to live "soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." To live, not by bread alone, but

by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Briefly stated, we are taught "to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Our Lord has never uttered one idle word nor given one single commandment that would not be for the good of his cause, and it becomes his people to observe these things and render unto him the things which are his. These are our tithes, and the withholding of these things is robbery. The prophet Malachi said, Will a man rob God? Ye have robbed him. But ye say, How have we robbed him? In tithes and offerings. The Lord's people then ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. But even the hearing and doing of these cannot present us blameless before the Lord if they be not mixed with faith. The preached word did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. Hence the language of Jesus, "Ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." These latter are the weightier matters. Let us pause and weigh them and see how weighty they are. We will find they are all indispensable to an orderly walk. Judgment; the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God. In the prophets we are told that "a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." The princes are the children of the King. If that means us, brethren, we ought to take heed that our ruling, our judgment, is in harmony with the righteous reign of our King. It is a principle that ought to be wielded in every church organization, as well as every member individually, and a failure on the part of the church to exercise this principle, this liberty, this divine right, will inevitably result in the downfall of the church thus failing to operate. In every phase of order or disorder, judgment must be brought into exercise in order to a satisfactory conclusion. In every matter of business that comes before the church, in receiving members, in dismissing or excluding members, judgment is necessary to the disposal of any case. The righteous King has given unto us the keys of the kingdom, and has said, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." "Whose soever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." There is only one interpretation to be placed upon this language of our King, and that is that he has clothed his church with authority to pass judgment upon any matter that comes before her, and if it be disposed of in accord with his righteous law it receives his divine sanction. It is the duty of every wife to keep her house in order, and so the bride, the Lamb's wife, should labor to see that all things be done decently and in order. She should keep the house of her glorious Husband and King, even the house of God, the church. Yes, judgment is indispensable. Let us not betray our trust, but let us study to shew ourselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Mercy. Do we grasp the meaning of this word, brethren? Do we feel its weight? How sadly too often its virtue is overlooked. How often brushed aside in our clamoring to gain some selfish advantage. We have in the Scripture some valuable examples set forth to teach us the importance of this virtue. The king-

dom of heaven is likened unto a certain king who would take account of his servants, and when he began to reckon one was brought unto him who owed him ten thousand talents, but forasmuch as he had not to pay his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and his children and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion for him and forgave him the debt. A wonderful display of mercy this, well worthy of imitation by all those who have obtained mercy. But alas, this same servant went out and found one of his fellow-servants who owed him a hundred pence (a very insignificant sum compared to the debt he owed) and he laid hands upon him and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me what thou owest, and his fellow-servant fell down at his feet and besought him, saying, Have patience with me and I will pay thee all. And he would not, but went and cast him into prison until he should pay the debt. Here is another example, but here mercy is omitted, and what is the result? "Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?" Brethren, have we ever witnessed a case parallel to this? Have we ever known a brother or sister whose walk and deportment was not what might be desired or reasonably required of them but whose faults were borne with through mercy, and have we seen this same erring brother or sister ready to demand full and speedy satisfaction from another brother or sister who may unwittingly have erred but whose offense is really not as great as the one under which he himself had been living? In such a case judgment and mercy have both been omitted. We cannot enlarge too much upon the subject of mercy. Mercy is the offspring of love. Love is the fruit of the Spirit, therefore if it be lacking it savors of an unfruitful bough. It was not spoken in vain when the apostle wrote, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful." "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom." But when we speak of good measure we would not be understood to mean overweight. There is such a thing possible that our sympathies will sometimes exert an undue influence and cause us to suffer the mistakes of a brother or sister too long. Such a course can only result disastrously in the end. The disciples came to Jesus with the query, "How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?" It is generally accepted among the Baptists that the word "seven" means a complete number. Used scripturally it cannot at all times be reckoned in units, but its meaning is full and comprehensive. Therefore Jesus answered, "I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven." We would learn from this there is a limit to the matter of our forgiving one who errs. If he repent, forgive him is the order. But if one should persist in repeating wrongdoing, or, in other words, if one should choose to continue in sin

that grace (or mercy) shall abound, we should say, "God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Such a case would eventually shake the confidence of the brethren. The church would have the right to question whether such an one were really dead to sin by the body of Christ. Therefore be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves. Judgment and mercy must go hand in hand. The wisdom of a serpent consists in part, at least, of being able to discern between those of his own tribe and those of other tribes. The church should exercise this same discernment, and cast out those who do not rightly belong there. But in all our deliberations we should not forget the words of the Master, "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy."

Faith. We mean the faith of God's elect. It is a gift of God, and it must not be omitted. Indeed we cannot fancy a church or an individual standing firm in the doctrine of God our Savior without faith in God. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." This is a remarkable definition of faith: "the substance of things hoped for." Christ is the substance of our hope. Or, better expressed in the words of the apostle, Christ in you the hope of glory. Christ is our faith, our strength, our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Christ is all in all to us. We can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth us, but without him we can do nothing. The evidence of things not seen. The evidence of our hope. We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. Our hope is not seen, for "hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" How often are we made to look for evidence. How often we are made to doubt the evidence. How many of God's children are not performing their duty, waiting for better evidence? To all such it is our pleasure to drop a word of encouragement. Dear child of grace, your hope is not seen, but felt. You may think and expect that God will some time appear unto you and speak to you in a way that will eliminate forever every doubt as to your eternal salvation. This is hardly likely, but the fact that you are looking for a brighter hope is of itself an evidence of a little hope in Christ. A little hope is all that any of us have, and we can only pray, Revive our hope, increase our faith. Yes, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." By faith the elders obtained a good report, &c. Faith is more than merely to formulate a sentiment, or merely to have a belief. The devils also believe and tremble, but the devils have not faith. "All men have not faith." It is a gift of God, and he bestows it upon whomsoever he will. It is to trust him implicitly as the Savior of sinners. This is faith. But the apostle James is very careful to inform us that faith should not be alone: "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and hath not works? can faith save him?" This seems to confirm the language of our text, "These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." Faith and works must go together. To illustrate the matter the apostle presents an example: "If a brother or sister be naked, or destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body;

what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." But we must emphasize the fact that faith is not the effect of good works, but the cause, and good works are the evidence of faith. It is a common mistake with many, who believe justification is based upon good works. Whereas the Scripture says, Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We are saved by grace, not by works. If it be of works, then is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. Naturally every child will reverence its parent. They trust him and love him implicitly; they look to him to provide for their needs, to protect, love and cherish; they obey, not in order to become his child, but because he is their father. Even so the children of God. They love him, trust him and walk in his commandments because he is their Father. This is works mixed with faith. The Father knows his children's wants and graciously supplies them.

"To him their prayers and cries
Each humble saint presents,
He listens to their broken sighs,
And grants them all their wants.

To them his sovereign will
He graciously imparts,
And in return accepts with smiles
The tribute of their hearts."

"Mint, and anise, and cummin." "Judgment, mercy, and faith." "Faith, hope, charity." All of these abide, but the greatest of these is charity. Nothing to be left undone if we would maintain the order of the house of God. All these virtues should be brought into exercise. If we should presume to omit one of these principles which one could we dispense with? Surely not our tithes, for that would be robbing God. Not judgment, for without that we cannot sit upon the twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Not mercy, for without that every one would stand exposed to ruthless dealings at the hands of our brethren. Not faith, for without faith it is impossible to please God. Can we lay down our hope? No, not for ten thousand worlds like this. It is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. Not charity, "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth." Surely then, not one of all these should be omitted or left undone. This may well be likened to the wheels in a great machine. If one wheel ceases to function the whole machine is thrown into confusion. Likewise if one of these divine virtues should cease to function no church organization could long endure. Then let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter, "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man."

This letter is growing too lengthy, and yet I fear I have failed to present the subject in a clear manner. Dispose of it in any way your good judgment may dictate.

L. L. SCHENCK.

NEWARK, Delaware.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel that the inclosed letter, which was in my files of the past, is of too much good to the church to be cast aside, and hope when space permits to see it published in the SIGNS. Dear brother McConnell's memory is revered by me.

J. B. MILLER.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Sept. 22, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER J. B. MILLER:—Your cheering letter received, with three others from distant brethren, all written in the same kind and loving spirit. Why the brethren continue me in their love and fellowship is a great mystery. It is certainly not for any goodness or profitableness in my life or labor among them; but I do appreciate their regard, and wish I was worthy of it in some degree. I am confident you felt what you wrote, without any thought that you were speaking a word in season to one that was weary. It is not often the time of the singing of birds with me. Most of my travel is a wearisome wilderness journey, in earnest longing to be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. When I remember how that goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, that thus far the Lord hath been better to me than my fears, my mouth should be filled with laughter, and my tongue with singing, "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." "Is there not a cause?" for every evil under the sun? "What is the cause that the former days were better than these?" Why are not my times more often the song of joy and gladness, rather than the sighing of the prisoner? It must be because my heart is not right in the sight of God, that my profession is merely a drawing nigh with my lips while my heart is far from him. "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?"

"For sure of all the plants that share
The notice of my Father's eye,
None proves less grateful to his care,
Or yields him meaner fruit than I."

There is one infallible proof whereby we may know that we do earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints: "By their fruits ye shall know them." "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." And it is commendable with God to take heed unto the commandment, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." Much of the time I question the nature of my sincerity, and fear that my zeal may be of the "overmuch righteous" kind. The apostle seems to intimate that there were many in his day who had a counterfeit love to Christ when he says, "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." He speaks of the Galatians as ready to pluck out their eyes and give them to him, although he afterwards expresses his fear that their affections had come to nothing, and that he had bestowed upon them labor in vain. (Gal. iv. 11, 15.) I love to meet with the saints, and because I believe that the nature and tendency of grace disposes God's people to not forsake the assembling of themselves together, to love the public worship of God, I am almost persuaded I am a child of God. Then I will remember that it is possible to be zealously engaged in reading the Bible, singing hymns, hearing sermons and similar exercises, even the devoting the whole of our time to them, and yet be simply a hearer of the word only and not a doer. Ezekiel preached to some who delighted in hearing the word preached, of whom it is written, "And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but do them not."—Ezek. xxxiii. 31, 32. This

Scripture applies equally to us now as it did to them, "for whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." To profit by the Bible we must read it as applying to our present experience, and not merely to that of dead generations. What God was to all other individuals and nations has the same significance for us as for them, but we are prone to think of what we read as pertaining to something quite foreign to our present experience. There is something in man which the wisdom of this world has never discovered, or the Bible must be given up as a revelation from God. If we consider the manifestations which God made of himself to men of old, we shall find his dealings with all were similar. It was so with Abraham: first a "horror of great darkness fell upon him," and then God revealed himself in a most encouraging promise. (Gen. xv. 12, 13.) It was so with Moses at Mount Sinai, when God appeared unto him so dreadfully that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and tremble, and then he made all his goodness to pass before him, and proclaimed his name, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, &c. It was so with Elijah: first there was a stormy wind, and earthquake, and devouring fire; and then a still small voice. (1 Kings xix. 11, 12.) It was so with Daniel: he first saw the countenance of the Lord as lightning, which terrified and caused him to faint away, and then he was strengthened and comforted with the words, "O man greatly beloved, fear not; peace be unto thee; be strong."—Dan. x. 19. It is abundantly evident from Scripture, and the experience of the saints, that God's dealings with his people is first to lead them into the wilderness, and then to speak comfortably to them; to bring them into distress, and make them feel their helplessness and absolute dependence on his power and grace. Before God delivered the children of Israel out of Egypt they were prepared for it by being made to see the wretchedness of their condition and to cry out unto him because of their hard bondage. (Exod. ii. 23; v. 19.)

You are not the only one who has been comforted and blessed under the preaching of brother Coulter. And he lives what he preaches. To make men see what is the fellowship of the mystery of Christ is a gift to be coveted, and that grace is given to them only who are confessedly less than the least of all saints. How unreasonable it is to the natural mind, that only "little ones," "by a new and living way," the blood of Jesus, enter into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Only subjects of that kingdom are endued with power to become the sons of God. Power supposes resistance to be overcome, and there is no promise of life for evermore save to him that overcometh. Only in crucifixion of the flesh, and resurrection to newness of life, can we know the exceeding greatness of that power which wrought in Christ in raising him from the dead.

The Lord willing, I shall attend the Virginia Corresponding Meeting and the Salisbury Association. I would like to be with you at Wilmington, but have to be back here for the third Sunday. Perhaps I may be able to stop over for one day.

I will promise not to afflict you with so long a letter again. Your letter did me good, and I hope you will write again.

Affectionately your brother in faith and hope,

JOHN McCONNELL.

REVELATION V. 5.

"AND one of the elders said unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof."

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am this day (January 10th, 1926) ninety years old, and am blessed of the Lord to be strong and hearty, and have a desire of heart to write one more article for publication in the dear old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, before I go hence and am no more. This impression has awaited my mind often for about twelve months, but because of a deep heart-felt sense of my weakness due to old age and other causes I have put it off from time to time until now, and even at this present time it seems too great and mysterious for me, a poor imperfect mortal; but again, it seems like the time is too far spent to delay any further, so casting all my care upon my dear Redeemer, I will launch out into the deep and let down the net into the deep for a draught, hoping and trusting that God in his wonderful mercy and goodness will enable me to let down the net on the right side; that is, to ascribe greatness to God. That sovereign grace is everything, and man's merit nothing. The main line of thought that has and is occupying my mind is to speak of a few of the many wonderful types and shadows of the goodness and greatness of God according to the eternal purpose which he (God) purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began, and according to the Scriptures we must look upon all the elect family of God, chosen in (not into) Christ before the foundation of the world, as his captive goods or family, his inheritance, which his Father gave his Son Jesus Christ in the covenant of eternal love, ordered in all things and sure, and which contained all things that his Son desired, for his Father had said to his Son, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, [my Son], and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."—Psalms ii. 7, 8. "Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered? But thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty [law] shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I [the Lion of Juda's tribe] will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children." That is, all the children that God gave his Son in the covenant of eternal love, who were the lawful captives, and no one in heaven (legal heaven), or the earth, or under the earth, was able to open the book that was written within and on the back side, and sealed with seven seals, or even to look thereon, therefore I wept much, "and one of the elders said unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." The same as to say, Weep not; behold, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, hath prevailed to open the book, and to search the records of this great council, and strictly calculated every farthing that the entire elect family of God was due to the law of divine justice or demand for their release, for every iota that the law demand for the release of these poor lawful captives must be met and fully satisfied before mercy could ever come to these poor helpless captives, so Jesus, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, was bound in covenant obligations for all of God's elect family, as is shown so clearly in that wonderful type: the ram that was caught in a thicket by his horns, and Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for

a burnt offering in the stead of his son. This typical ram represented Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, who was bound in covenant obligations and stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and at the very moment when "deep called unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me," was ready and did fulfill every jot and tittle of the covenant obligation and law's demand, for every wave and billow of the wrath of divine justice due the elect family of God was wreaked down upon Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, and he bore them away to a land not inhabited, never to return. As it is said, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones."—Zech. xiii. 7. The sword of divine justice never touched one of the elect family, any more than Abraham's typical knife touched his son Isaac, who was a type of all the chosen and redeemed family of God that he gave his Son in the covenant everlasting of eternal love, therefore this loving Lamb of God bore our sorrows and carried our griefs and offered himself to God, for he was both the ransom and the ransomer, who offered himself to God, the only offering that ever did or could purge a poor sinner's conscience from dead works to serve the living God; for if the law could have given life, verily righteousness would have been by the law.

Now, dear loving family, the little children of God, I want to say in conclusion, Weep not: behold the Lion of the tribe of Juda hath prevailed to open the book and settle every demand of the law, and he was the only one who was authorized or empowered to enter into that holy council and obtain eternal redemption for all the poor helpless captives, and this same Jesus is exalted a Prince and a Savior to give repentance to Israel, and the forgiveness of sins, and is by this divine council their Judge and Lawgiver, and the King also, and Governor of the commonwealth of the Israel of God, a people near unto him.

This letter is subject to your criticism and correction, and also to your disposal.

W. J. MAY.

McANDREWS, Ky., Jan., 1926.

SAYRE, Oklahoma.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please publish the inclosed letter, if you think it worthy. The writer has said much. She will be surprised to see her letter in the SIGNS, as she is a subscriber. I am past seventy-five years of age, and am really unable to subscribe, but when I was in Kentucky years ago used to take it.

Very respectfully,

J. K. NICHOLSON.

GIRARD, Texas, May 12, 1925.

MR. J. K. NICHOLSON—DEAR SIR:—I feel unworthy indeed to address you as brother, for I feel my weakness to such an extent I hesitate and even fear to address you at all, lest I should be deceiving you. I am not a member of the Old School Baptist Church, and have never heard them preach, but I have been reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for about three years. I read it several months before I realized, I hope, the precious truth its pages contained, and since that day it has been a great source of comfort to me, for the many good letters are indeed food for a poor hungry soul such as I, who feel myself to be less than nothing and vanity. I sometimes wonder if there ever

was one of God's creatures that felt themselves to be as vile a sinner as I feel myself to be, and I have been made to shed many tears in the past on account of godly sorrow for my sins. I was much comforted by your good letter in the May number of ths SIGNS, for you said these precious words: "Just as certain as you ever shed a tear on account of godly sorrow for your sins, just that certain you are one that Christ died to save, and when he died on the cross and said it was finished your salvation was complete in him." I could not keep back the tears when I read those precious words. Just to think, could I be one for whom Christ had suffered so much, and died on the cross that I might live, when I know I do not deserve any goodness and mercy from him, but only his righteous indignation? But thanks be to his dear name, our salvation does not depend or hinge upon any act of ours; if it did I should have given up long ago in despair. Hebrews i. 3, says, "Who [Christ] being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." The above Scripture says that Christ purged our sins, which means to cleanse or free from guilt. Now it does not say that he will purge our sins if we will let him, or if we do this, that and the other, but says, "When he had by himself purged our sins," already freed from sin. So our being made free from sin does not depend upon any act of ours at all, and Christ completed the work of redemption when he shed his precious blood on the Roman cross for all his people, and not one of them will be lost, because Jesus says, John vi. 37, 45, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." "And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Still the world would try and have us believe that God calls every one, and that there are many people who hear and yet refuse to come, therefore they will be lost because of their disobedience. But how different is Christ's teachings, for he plainly says that all that hear cometh unto him. I truly love the doctrine of predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace, for it is the only doctrine that gives God all the power and praise, for God is all-powerful in heaven and earth. To say that God wants every one to be saved, but that he will only save a remnant of all he wants to be saved, is certainly limiting the power of God to such an extent that there would not be any certainty about any poor sinner being saved at all, for that doctrine gives the devil all power, so much so that he would get most of Christ's people whom he died to save, and so the devil might get us at last, for if the devil has power to get many that God wants to be saved he might have the power to get them all. Christ has said, "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." No power can possibly separate us from the love of God.

I wish to ask a favor of you: you said you were in possession of Articles of Faith subscribed to in 1824 by the Old School or Primitive Baptists. I have for some time had a desire to get the Articles of Faith as subscribed to by the Old School Baptists, but did not know where to get them, so could you send me a copy of the ones you have, or perhaps tell me where I could get them? I would love to know

what they contain, as I love the Old Primitive doctrine, and always have a desire to hear and know the truth. We do not live near an organized church of Old Baptists, so if you can grant my request it will be highly appreciated, and I will always keep the Articles of Faith as a very dear treasure.

You have my deepest sympathy in your present affliction, and may it be the Lord's will to lessen your suffering, until he shall call you home, where I am sure he has prepared a place for you, where no suffering and pain can ever come. My husband and I would be glad to hear from you at any time you feel like writing.

This is a poorly written letter. I have tried to tell you in my poor way a few of my thoughts, but am afraid I have only wearied you.

May the Lord bless you and keep you, is the prayer of yours in hope of a better life,

LUCILE HARRISON.

PHILIPPI, West Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a communication written me by Elder J. W. McClanahan which I feel would be of interest to the readers of the SIGNS, and if you feel the same way please publish it.

Respectfully submitted.

J. N. BARTLETT.

POCA, W. Va., Feb. 14, 1926.

DEAR BROTHER J. N. BARTLETT:—I feel to drop you a few lines this morning, and would like to write something of interest to you, but I am destitute of power to prepare myself for the task, so will have to draw the bow at a venture, leaving the event with the Lord to direct my mind. "There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing: there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches." —Prov. xiii. 7. Who is it that maketh himself rich but the pharisee? He believes it is by works he has done that his riches have come to him, for labor done by him. He boasts of his goodness, and of his having attained unto a state of perfection, a sinless life, by his own free will, and thanks God with his lips (it being only lip service) that he is not as those who stand afar off confessing to be sinners, and that if saved it is by grace. Ask him to give you a reason of his hope, and as he has no hope he will make light of the question by telling you that he knows he is a christian, and knows that he is going to heaven. These are such as are ignorant of God's righteousness, who go about to establish a righteousness of their own, not willing to submit to the righteousness of God. These are they David speaks of when he says, "Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish. They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily."—Psalms lxxiii. 7, 8. They are without hope, and without God in the world. They have nothing, though they may boast of being christians. They have no Scriptures to substantiate their claim. "There is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches." "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." God's humble children feel their poverty, and often cry, Oh my leanness, and it is then the words of Jesus come to them, when he opened his mouth and taught his disciples, saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." These words come to comfort the poor wayworn traveler as he plods along in his downcast feelings of despair, and are a glorious message from heaven

to those of a broken heart and contrite spirit, who neither have the will nor the power until God by his holy Spirit works in them both to the will and to do of his own good pleasure. His declaration is, My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power. These are the ones who have faith in Christ Jesus the Lord. Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. They are poor in their feelings, but rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom.

Yours to serve in the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

OTTAWA, Kans., Nov. 15, 1925.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I often think of you and for a long while have wanted to write you, but the realization of my ignorance and weakness has kept me from making the attempt until this Sunday morn. To-day, somewhere, you will be preaching the unadulterated doctrine of our Lord and Savior, and how I long to be present to hear you. Indeed, dear brother, these things are my meat and my drink. I can truly say that when I am where I can hear and talk of the almighty God, who fills immensity, and consults with none of his creatures about what he shall or shall not do, I forget to partake of natural food. I am so thankful I am even permitted, as I sometimes hope I am, to worship him afar off. What am I that I should dare hope in his mercy, much less claim to be his child? Sometimes I open the Bible and read wondrous things about him, and my heart tells me it is all true. I then wonder how I dare even hope at all. The Lord and his works are all too wonderful for me, I can not attain unto it. Sometimes I get such a view of his majesty that there seems to be no life left in me, and I just sit like the lump of clay that I am. I have neither power nor inclination to contend with him, but am ready to say, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." I have no trouble now to believe him when he says he made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil. Oh how we love to hear his servants proclaiming his righteousness. "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no savior." "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." "I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and the son of man which shall be made as grass; and forgetest the Lord thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth?" You and all the writers of the SIGNS shun not to declare the whole counsel of God. You plainly say, By the grace of God I am what I am. Not unto us, not unto us, but unto Jesus give all the glory. As I search the Scriptures I find that you are taught in the school of Christ, and your testimony agrees with the dear old prophets and apostles. Salvation by grace in time and eternity, and on time, as a brother wrote me last week. Paul said he was an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead. Again, he says, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing

one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." The work of the Spirit and the works of the fleshly cannot be at peace in the same body, nor can they be in Christ's body, the church. "There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ," and it does seem to me that you, among many of his dear servants, have been given a large measure, not according to your works, but according to his own purpose in Christ before the world began, and I know you would say, God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. To tell one who is bowed down with the weight of their sins before God, one who is in continual sorrow because they cannot do the things they would, one who sees their heart as a cage of unclean birds, and their walk and conversation not what it should be, their lot cast among worldly people who never name the name of God with reverence and godly fear, to tell them all this has come upon them because they are doing what they should not, or leaving undone what they should do, would certainly bring them to the place where poor old Job was when he said to his friends, How have you helped him that is without strength? But this is not the way the dear Lord answers us, neither do his true and tried servants when one is in agony of heart, and asking why? That you may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death, was the answer given; and another time, "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." Another time when I thought my trouble greater than I could bear the words came,

"In all your distresses
The head feels the pain,
Each one is most needful,
Not one is in vain."

I could write on and on, but I must stop. I am afraid I already have tried your patience. Please write and tell me if you can see any hope in God for one who is so sinful, weak, lonely and tired of all things here below, yet afraid to die. I much enjoyed your article in the SIGNS on Associations, and heartily agree with you, I had a lovely time at two of them this fall.

Forgive me if I seem presumptuous, and pardon all I have said amiss.

With much love in the Lord from a very little sister, if one at all,

ANNA McKINNEY.

LOGANVILLE, Ga., June 7, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Having now for about five hours been in sweet communion with you, through the Spirit I hope, I desire to tell you that I have been fed and comforted to-day by reading the June issue of the SIGNS. To those of you with whom my soul has had sweet intercourse by tongue or pen I desire to say, "Thy God reigneth." To brother and sister Lord, of the Oconee Association, I send a special greeting. Often my heart is cheered by the remembrance of the kind and encouraging words which fell from your lips to me at Nances Creek, and I desire that you are often blessed with a refreshing from the presence of the Lord. I feel that you realize in him is everlasting strength. To you whose

writings have ofttimes been my meat and drink I desire to say, "Thy God reigneth." Dear Elder Keene, from the first to the last of your epistle from the words, "It is not so with me," you tell my experience, as it often proves in your writings. In telling of the travail of your soul you ofttime portray the very way by which I have been brought. Often in my journey "I am shut up, and I cannot come forth," and "in the bitterness of my soul" can only bow my head in the dust and cry, "O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me." Were it not for his intercession for the saints, according to the will of God, they could never withstand the heat and strife of the warfare. But thanks be unto God, it is written "that her warfare is acccomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." "He is the Rock, his work is perfect." Upon this Rock, and faith in that finished work, this poor vile worm of the dust is sometimes blessed to rest in perfect peace and reconciliation. Believing with all my heart the glorious plan of salvation by grace, I desire to be humble before the Lord, and without a murmur bear every stroke, because "Not a single shaft can hit till the God of love sees fit;" and, "Death and hell can do no more than what my Father please." But in our warfare we daily experience this truth, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." It is then at times our comfort to know that "he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." Having hope that I have been born again, and that the knowledge of these precious truths is mine, because of the operation of the Holy Spirit within my heart, I desire to say unto you who also hope thus, "Thy God reigneth," and he will supply all thy needs. Yea, "the eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." "Bless the Lord, O my soul." The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin, and the love of Christ constraineth us.

Living in hope that Jesus died for me, unworthy though I be, and hoping that his love constrained me to communicate with you through the SIGNS, the editors judging if it shall be permitted, I say unto you, "Thy God reigneth." "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all."

Begging your kind forbearance, and an interest in your prayers, I hope in Christ, I am your sister,

SILLA WILSON.

ATLANTA, Ga., Nov. 27, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I take great pleasure in writing you on this occasion, and hope it will find you all well and enjoying prosperous, peaceful lives. How thankful we ought to be not only to-day, but all the time, for God is good, and his mercy endureth forever. We do not serve and praise him enough for his blessings to us.

I am sending a letter from Elder James, of Illinois, I would like to see published in the SIGNS, if you see fit, as I believe it would be comforting and edifying to some, and to the glory of God. I believe he is sound in doctrine and faith. May the God of all grace bless, keep, provide for you all, preserve your precious lives

in Christ, and at last save you in heaven. Remember me, a poor beggar, at God's rich throne of grace.

Unworthily, yours in hope,

J. C. KENERLEY.

ARCOLA, Ill., Nov. 19, 1924.

DEAR BROTHER KENERLEY:—I will drop you a few lines to-night, although I hardly know what to write. I was just looking among some of my letters and saw yours, and the thought came to me that it had been some time since I wrote to or heard from you, so I thought I would try to write a few lines. When I study about the glorious work you and I are taking part in I am made to wonder at the great and all-wise God who rules all things, and who does all things well, and am made to wonder at the many different ways he has of showing us just where our power comes from, and how it is that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. We are made to exclaim with the apostles of old, when Christ was among them and stilled the storm and waves, and said, Peace, be still, and immediately there was a great calm. My dear brother, I believe this is an example of the poor sinner in his travels here. He is crossing the sea of trouble as he goes through this low ground of sin and sorrow. The waves of the sea begin to rise and the wind is very strong, he begins to be very fearful. He tries everything in his own power and nothing seems to do him any good, then in despair he cries out, Master, carest thou not if I perish? Then this blessed One arises in all his beauty and lovingkindness and speaks the words, Peace, be still. At once the waves of trouble are rolled away and the tempest-tossed soul is at rest. Then we are made to exclaim, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him? My dear brother, there is no wind that blows without his knowledge, nor are there any waves of trouble that come to the poor sinner's heart but he knoweth it all. After the storm is over we can see his blessed power working in it all. Oh how good it is to be able to dwell in the blessed sunlight of the Redeemer's love. If we could only dwell there all the time would we be satisfied? No, it must needs be that we see the night pass with its darkness to fully appreciate the morning with its brightness and God's glorious light. I sometimes think of these glorious things of God's making until I have a great desire to travel to different parts of the country telling my brethren everywhere I meet them of the great and glorious plan of salvation by grace, and then I think that I am not able to preach unto God's people in a way to edify the body of Christ, so I must not go out and try to preach when I am so weak and unworthy that I cannot feel able to preach even at home among my brethren.

I hope you can pick up one crumb from this jumbled letter, for I am just writing at random it seems, and if you cannot follow my feeble efforts just discard it and lay all mistakes and infirmities to my weakness.

Your brother in hope of a life beyond,

HAROLD T. JAMES.

JONES MILL, Ala., Dec. 17, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have it in mind to write a few lines in weakness concerning the work of God. The Bible teaches that his work is before him, he is before all things, and in his mind all things were virtually clear and naked; that he declared the end from the beginning, and called those things that were not as

though they were. God decreed in his own mind that all his work should be made manifest in time. In the trinity, there are three: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. The Father to create, the Son to redeem, the Holy Ghost to take the things that are mine and shew them unto us. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and all things were created by him. This was for a purpose, and his purpose cannot be thwarted, and he saw that everything which he had made was very good. Everything after its kind would bear fruit. He made man and gave him dominion over all these things, and gave him a law to which the penalty was death. Man by transgressing the law received the sentence of death, and we, being Adam multiplied, are under the same sentence, dead in trespasses and sin. This did not come by chance, but it was decreed in the mind of God, and it came by man, for he made him subject to vanity. So the church, the elect of God, are lawful captives, having sold herself for naught. But Jesus saw his bride dead in sin. According to the covenant he came to do his Father's will, made of a woman, made under the law, for the purpose of redeeming his bride, whom he loved with an everlasting love; he came clothed with humanity, made like unto his brethren, sin excepted, came to shed his precious blood for us poor helpless sinners. I feel to say, if not deceived, that when I was made to see myself as I am I was one of the greatest sinners on earth. I had spent all I thought I had and had given up to be lost, saying, Amen to my own condemnation. But I do feel to hope that mercy was given to a poor wretch like me. The price of his people is paid completely, and Jesus has presented them to his Father without spot or wrinkle, finishing the work his Father gave him to do, and he prayed his Father to receive back the glory that he had with him before the world began.

Here are a few of my scattering thoughts, and if you cast them in the wastebasket it will be all right with me. If you see fit to publish cast the mantle of charity over them.

B. SAWYER.

1168 HIGH AVE., TOPEKA, Kans., April 14, 1926.

DEAR EDITORS:—I would like to inquire through the SIGNS if there are any Baptists located in San Fracisco or Sacramento, California, and if so I would be glad to get in touch with them, as I am contemplating a visit in the near future with my son, who is in Government service at San Francisco. I can see him only during the evening and on Sundays, so it leaves me with much time on my hands in a strange city, and it would be joy indeed to find some of these people during my stay there. Something the world cannot understand is the sweet feeling of love and fellowship that goes out from an overflowing heart when we meet, at home or abroad, one who, to all appearance, is a stranger, and take them by the hand to exchange even the greetings of common courtesy. We are strangers only to the world, but not to each other. How fitting the words of the poet,

> "Blest be the tie that binds
> Our hearts in christian love,
> The fellowship of kindred minds,
> Is like to that above."

I feel that I have much need of the prayers of all the dear saints, for I am surely a poor, weak, stumbling creature, as prone to evil as the sparks are to fly upward, among the household of faith, but in the language of Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following

after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried."

In bonds of christian love, I remain a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

DELLA S. POWERS.

DODGE CITY, Kans., Jan. 24, 1926.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—Just a few lines to let you know that I hope the grace of God has left one on the storm-swept prairies of Kansas who can stand with you on the subject of predestination. "For by him were all things created," &c. "And by him all things consist."—Col. i. 16, 17. Thus we find it was necessary for Satan to first get permission before he could touch the substance, or body of Job. First and second chapters of Job, and likewise in 2 Chron. xviii. 20, 21, we find the command of the Lord concerning the lying spirits in the mouths of Ahab's prophets. Also the words of Jesus recorded in John xix. 11: "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." These facts as they appear in the records of God's inspired writers should be sufficient to silence all who are taught by the Spirit of God, and cause them to say, God be merciful to me a sinner, still, if there should be a doubt in the minds of any objectors, read Luke iv. 6, the language of the devil when tempting Jesus: "For that is delivered unto me." So if it was delivered unto him it was by the permission of another that he rceeived it; was it not? My dear brother, we are just as helpless to produce or maintain life as were the dry bones before Ezekiel. The power of God alone can give life, and none other can take it away. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." We find Paul also trusted in the deliverance of this God, 2 Cor. 1–9: "But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: who delivered us * * * and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us." Is it not by the power of this God that we all stand or fall?

R. L. DAVIS.

SACKVILLE, N. B., Jan. 19, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Until further notice will you kindly change the address on my paper to Box 332, Sackville, N. B., instead of 18 Russell Street, Amherst, N. S.? Being situated among the lo heres and lo theres of this day the good editorials and letters in the SIGNS are all the preaching I have, for I do not go to hear them, and I prize it for the truth's sake, but I often wonder, and am led to exclaim, Lord, what am I that thou should lead me and cause me to hope in thy mercy?

May he bestow upon you every needed blessing and grace in publishing our paper for 1926, is the desire and prayer of yours in a blessed hope, and if one, surely the least of all,

WILLIAM HASTINGS.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

WESLACO, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I wish to say I have changed my address from Kerrville, Texas, to Weslaco, Texas, and wish my corresponding brethren to know of the change. My health is still poor, and I hope the brethren will remember me when at the throne of grace.

J. B. BOWDEN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1926.

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EZRA IV. 1-3.

"Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the Lord God of Israel, then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you; for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him, since the days of Esar-haddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither. But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel, as king Cyrus, the king of Persia, hath commanded us."

It has been suggested that we write an article upon the above Scripture, as it demonstrates the impossibility of a confederacy between Israel and those who are not of like precious faith. The eternal God needs not the work of men's hands to praise him; his works praise him, and his saints bless him. "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handywork," and "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof." How differently men would write Scripture if they could. They commonly say, "We want to get the world for Jesus;" such ideas are vain. Jehovah has said, "The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool." To puny man he says, Where is the house that ye build unto me? Man has been building houses for his gods from time immemorial. In the darkest ages of the world they built temples the most. At the present time darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people, superstition and idolatry almost fill the earth. The fear of the Lord is taught by the precept of man just as it is recorded of Israel's enemies mentioned in our text. They were people that the king of Assyria had brought from Babylon and other parts of his kingdom, as the reader may see in 2 Kings, seventeenth chapter. The king also sent one of the priests of Israel who had been carried away captive and he dwelt in Bethel and taught them how they should fear the Lord. Verse thirty-three of that chapter declares, "They feared the Lord, and served their own gods." To-day they have gods many; according to their churches, so are their gods, and they are determined (as the heathen were before them) to house their gods with the best their pockets can afford. Surely, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision." He who has said, "The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool," does not need their chambers of imagery. It would seem in derision he asks, Where is the house that ye built unto me? as much as to say, How can you who are dust, and at most but creatures of a day, built a house for the eternal God to dwell in? In the time of Ezra God had raised up Cyrus and he had sent Ezra and the children of the captivity to build the temple, then the bastard nations whom the king of Assyria had brought to Samaria to dwell there came and said to Zerubbabel and to the chief of the fathers, "Let us build with you; for we seek your God, as ye do." These, mark you, were taught the fear of God by man, and so little did the fear of God affect them

that they worshipped their own gods. These hypocrites did not fear the God of Israel, but rather worshipped the gods of the lands from whence they came. Man cannot teach men to fear the Lord, those who claim they can, and say they do, are true to type, hypocrites worshipping the gods of this world. When the elders and brethren declared the truth that these men had nothing to do with them to build a house unto their God, they were enraged and manifested the hatred that was within them, and it is declared they weakened the hands of the people of Judah and hired counselors against them to frustrate their purpose. Perhaps the reason that the king of Assyria had a priest to teach the people how to fear the God of the land of Samaria was because it was generally believed among the heathen that there were certain gods over certain countries, therefore by teaching the nations he had brought to Samaria the fear of Israel's God he meant to try and appease the God of the land and secure his favor. There was nothing but vanity in this, for while the gods of all nations were gods of their own choice Israel had not chosen her God, but God had chosen Israel. It is so to-day. Protestants and papists choose their gods and make saints of whom they will, while the children of God believe that God has chosen them. Now just as the fathers of Judah said then, so it is true to-day regarding the mother of harlots and her numerous progeny. They have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God, and it is just as true we ought to have nothing to do with them in their babel-building. We should not receive them into our houses nor wish them God-speed. They may boast that there is little difference between us, and say that we ought to love every one, but there is as much difference as between a counterfeit and true coin of the realm. They speak a different language, and know nothing of the afflictions of Joseph. The truth is not desired among them to-day, and the most part of their preaching is cunningly devised fables. When their followers need improvement in morals for appearance's sake, like the Pharisee of old, they will cleanse the outside, teaching morality for christianity and reformation for regeneration. There is no fear of God before their eyes and a God of purpose is not in their thought. There were among these nations that were enemies of Judah, some who married Israelites of the lowest class of the people who were left in the land by the king of Assyria. These had children who were what we would call half-and-half. There are to-day among even the Baptists, people that are half-and-half. They partly believe in a sovereign God and partly believe in creature effort; they are at best but counterfeits. The nearer the counterfeit comes to a true coin the greater the deception, and there is no greater lie than that which has part truth to it, and if, as in our text, the nations of the earth could not aid Judah to build what was but a shadow, how can vain man help to build the temple of God? The stately buildings that the world calls churches are but repositories of the dead; to the church of God it matters not whether there be Gothic windows or lofty towers, if only her well-beloved meets with her it is the house of God, for God is manifestly there. The world of religion cannot help to build such an house, it is the workmanship of Deity; all the religious effort of the mother of harlots and her offspring cannot produce one subject of grace, or, in other words, one lively stone for God's spiritual house. The house or temple

that Solomon built was typical, so was the temple that Ezra began to rebuild; they were but a type of the house, the building not made with hands, eternal in the heavens—eternal in the patriarchal, legal and gospel heavens, as well as in the heaven of glory. The temple of old therefore was but a shadow of the true house of God. Jacob saw the house in all its glory, as did David when as yet the temple of Solomon was not, for he says, "Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honor dwelleth," and it was his desire to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of his life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple. The eternal God is the great architect of this building, the eternal Son of God is the foundation, and other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. The enemies of truth not knowing anything of the power and glory of our blessed Redeemer continue to build upon good works and creature merit, and for appearance's sake they use Jesus Christ as a make-weight or a veneer to cover and take away their reproach. Such work will not stand, neither can there be any fellowship between such babel-builders and the saints of God. David greatly desired to build an house unto his God, but the Lord said, Thou shalt not build an house for my name. God has the choosing in this matter, and the size of every stone and its place was determined, and every angel's form and size was drawn by the eternal pen. He has chosen "some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry," &c. There cannot be one more apostle, one more prophet, or evangelist, or pastor, or teacher in any age than he gives, nor is there to-day one less than he has willed. We do not consider this in the dark days through which we are passing, that he is still God, and has not changed, and raiseth up whomsoever he will, and there are just as many sermons preached, and only as many, as his Spirit indites. It is comfort indeed to the brethren when they are assured by the word of truth and the Spirit's witness within, that they are built together a spiritual house. Paul, as a master builder and a worker together with God, shows the Ephesians how they had a being in this spiritual house, and he links the strangers and foreigners up with himself, and says that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; and further, he says that it is to the praise of the glory of his grace wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved. Yes, and in this Beloved, our Lord Jesus Christ, the whole building is fitly framed. Mark you, the whole building, not a part of it, as though it was depending upon the effort of the world of religion. No, thank God, they are not of the least consideration in this matter; it is in Christ the whole building lives, moves and has its being. How precious he is, it is in him we do the will of God, fulfill the law, satisfy divine justice and rise triumphant over death, hell and the grave. Every stone from the least to the greatest is there, not a nail missing; if one stone were missing, or a nail, or the least thing that the great Architect designed, it would not be the whole building. The precious words of the Countess of Huntingdon come to my mind,

"When thou, my righteous Judge, shalt come,
To take thy ransomed people home,
Shall I among them stand?"

That is the question that exercises most of us, Shall I among them stand? If you, dear reader, stood in him when he trod the wine-press alone, burdened and afflicted through your sins, then, although

the host of hell may be determined to hinder the work, he who has begun it will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit will so teach you that you will find nothing but sin, death and hell in yourself, so that you will be like the woman who could in no wise lift up herself. David said, "My wounds stink and are corrupt, * * * and there is no soundness in my flesh." So you will find; it will need the same power to raise you and place you experimentally in the building. The world of religion will say, Peace, peace, when there is no peace. They will try to daub the wall with untempered mortar, but it is the work of God that ye believe to the salvation of your soul, and God the Spirit must and will take of the things of Jesus and reveal them unto you. The Spirit will put your feet upon the Rock and enable you (for he is the Spirit of adoption) to cry, Abba, Father. You will find then that the world of religion has no part in building this house. In conclusion, we doubt not but you will also find that they will hate you and say all manner of evil against you falsely for Christ's sake.

G. R.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in May (30th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence in Delmar, Del., April 2nd, 1926, Walter Thomas, Alexander, of Salisbury, Md., and Miss Lavinia Ellen Morris, of Delmar, Del.

By the same, April 3rd, 1926, at the home of the bride's parents, 411 Camden Ave., Salisbury, Md., Robert Milbank Seward, of Wilmington, Del., and Miss Elizabeth Laws Williams, of Salisbury, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

William M. Melton, son of E. C. and Nannie Melton, was born near Poca, Putnam Co., W. Va., September 7th, 1873, and died at his home, of internal cancer, February 13th, 1926, at the age of 52 years, 5 months and 6 days. April 23rd, 1895, he was married to Miss Allie Melton, and to that union were born four girls and one son. The son and three of the girls died in infancy. He leaves to mourn their loss his wife, their only living child, Mrs. Sylvia Ferrari, his mother, three brothers, seven sisters and three grandchildren. William never made a public profession of religion, but he was a firm believer in the doctrine of the Bible, which is advocated only by the old order of Baptists, and to those he was a warm friend, believing them to be the redeemed of the Lord. He was always willing and ready to help pay traveling expenses of those who were of the Primitive faith. He bore his affliction with patience, never murmuring, and in speaking about his disease he would say, If this is to take my life nothing can be done to prevent it, as the destiny of all men is unalterably fixed in the mind and purpose of God; my allotted time on earth will be completed, as the days of an hireling. Such were his remarks to the writer in the early part of his suffering.

By request of his wife and daughter the writer was called to speak on this memorable occasion to a large congregation, who came to pay their last tribute of respect to one who was honorable in his dealings with all men. He was a man of few words, always speaking very positively on any subject. At his funeral I used as a foundation for a few remarks the words found in Judges xv. 4, 5, after which his remains were laid away in the family cemetery to await the resurrection of the dead.

Written by request of his wife.

ALSO,

William L. Martin was born February 15th, 1872, and was killed by falling slate in a coal mine in Belmont County, Ohio, March 10th, 1926, at the age of 54 years and 23 days. He was married to Miss Mattie Melton October 3rd, 1897, to this union five sons and three daughters were born. He joined the Old School Baptist Church about the year 1913, and was truly a lover of the doctrine held and advocated by the old order of Baptists. He leaves his wife and children to mourn the loss of a kind husband and father, who never tired or became wearied in trying to take care of them. He was industrious and well thought of by all who knew him. March 14th his body was laid in the R. N. Lilley's Cemetery, near Poca, W. Va., and the writer, by request of his wife and children, spoke a few words at the grave by way of comforting them.

T. W. McCLANAHAN.

Mary Phelma Herbert, infant daughter of J. R. and Mary E. Herbert, was born September 26th, 1924, and died March 16th, 1926, aged 1 year, 5 months and 20 days. This little girl, dear to her parents and those who waited upon her during her short life, was afflicted all her life, and died with what the doctors pronounced spinal meningitis. She had all the home care that one could have and through advice of the doctor was taken to the hospital at Eugene, Oregon, where she died soon after. The parents decided to have the remains taken to the neighborhood of the mother's former home, some one hundred miles away, so the funeral was appointed to be held at the Hillside church-house, March 18th, where a short service was held, the writer officiating, and many of the old neighbors came laden with flowers, attesting their respect for the bereaved ones and the little one that had passed away, after which the body was consigned to its last resting place, there to await the summons of him who said, Suffer little children to come unto me, for such is the kingdom of heaven. The father of this mother who has lost her babe is Elder J. N. Beaman, who was ordained to the full functions of the gospel ministry at our Association last August, but through some carelessness on the part of the presbytery it was never recorded in any of our Baptist papers as is our custom, therefore I make this addition to the notice I send you. Sister Mary E. Herbert is also a member of our church here. May the parents of this little one be resigned to the will of the Lord, who gives and takes, and say, "Thy will be done."

WM. J. REEVES.

Jerry Pierce, the subject of this sketch, was born February 15th, 1847, and died January 10th, 1926. His disease was cancer. He was married to Miss Anna Pierce, but I do not know the date of their marriage. To that union were born three children, all girls, and all living. He enlisted in the war in 1862, and after three years of service was honorably discharged. He united with Lebanon Church of the Primitive Baptist faith and order in November, 1881, at the time she was constituted. He lived his profession, and was always present to fill his seat unless providentially hindered, and was always ready to give a reason of his hope and to defend the doctrine of God, also the doctrine of the Primitive Baptist faith. Nearly two months before his death he told Deacon A. P. Driscoll that when he died he wanted him to send for me to conduct the funeral service, but if he could not get me not to have any one say anything. A few hours before his death he called his wife and children to his bedside and bade them goodbye, and asked them and some friends to sing some songs and help him die, and as they were singing he passed away. One of his near neighbors and a friend came for me, and when I arrived I met a large gathering, and I tried to speak some words of comfort to those left behind. When I had finished speaking one of his old friends arose and in a feeling manner gave a full history of his life, after which his body was laid in the old cemetery known as Raliston Church of the New School Baptists. He leaves his dear companion, sister Anna Pierce, three daughters, several grandchildren, a few great-grandchildren and many other relatives and friends to mourn his departure, but they mourn not as those who have no hope. He is now with Jesus, awaiting the time to be fashioned like unto his glorious Savior and to be with him in that sweet by and by. I had been his pastor for many years, and the older he got the firmer he seemed to be.

L. F. EASLEY.

Melissa Jane Stinson was born January 29th, 1840, and died December 14th, 1925, aged 85 years, 10 months and 15 days. She was baptized by Elder John Wallace in the year 1865, and was a member of New Garden Church of Primitive Baptists. She was married to James Stinson December 12th, 1865, and to that union three daughters and four sons were born. Her husband, one daughter and two sons have gone on before to that better land. The living sons are Floyd and Albert and the daughters are Mrs. Phoebe Thompson and Mrs. Nina Anderson. She also leaves to mourn their loss twenty-six grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren and many friends. She was a member of the Cowlitz River Church for a number of years and was faithful in her church duties. She and her husband were strong believers in the doctrine of election and predestination, believing that all for whom Christ died would have a home with Christ and be with him where he is, and we feel she has gone home to this Father, so weep not as those who have no hope.

Elders J. W. and I. F. Coleman conducted her funeral.

Written by request.

I. F. COLEMAN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

E. H. Winchell, Mich., $6; Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Okla., $2; Mrs. E. C. Gilbert, Ont., $2; Mrs. W. S. Johnson, N. Y., $2; David Serviss, N. J., $1; Mrs. Elvira K. Northrup, N. Y., $1; Mrs Sirena Bowen, Ill., $1; Cyrus Cross, Ohio, $1; Mrs. C. B. Rittenhouse, Man., $3; Martha J. Disharoon, Del., $1; Lydia A. Robinson, Ill., $3; "A Friend," Kans., $10; Mildred Durand Gordy, Mich., $2; Joseph Frazier, Del., $2; Mrs. Sallie S. Gaines, D. C., $2.

MEETINGS.

The Baltimore Association will be held with the Black Rock Church, Baltimore County, Maryland, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 19th, 20th and 21st, 1926. Visitors coming to Baltimore will take train leaving Union Station, Pennsylvania R. R., at 3:04 p. m., Tuesday 18th, for Cockeysville, where friends will meet train. Those traveling by auto take Falls Road out of Baltimore and go direct to Butler. Good road all the way. Black Rock is historic among the Old Baptists. It is situated in beautiful country, and surrounded by friends who will take delight in entertaining you. Therefore we hope all who can will attend this meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all.

FRANK G. SCOTT, Church Clerk.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association meets with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, Wednesday before the fifth Sunday in May, 1926. Trains leave Broad Street Station, Philadelphia, Pa., at 1:44 p. m., May 25th. Leave Union Station, Baltimore city, at 2:20 p. m., the same day, both making connection at Perryville with the train for Conowingo, Md., arriving there at 4:17 p. m., where they will be met and cared for. We hope to see a goodly number of those who love the assemblies of the saints. Done by order of the church.

S. R. DANCE, Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects Elder George Ruston to meet with them the fifth Sunday in May (30th), 1926. For convenience services will be held, the Lord willing, at the home of J. E. Livingston, 64 E. Main St., Cobleskill, N. Y., at 11 a. m., and 2 p. m. All welcome who love the truth. The D. & H. train from Binghamton to Albany arrives and leaves in convenient time for meeting.

(MRS.) J. E. LIVINSGTON, Church Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., commencing on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (June 2), and continuing three days. Those coming by train will take train leaving Broad Street Station, Philadelphia, at 3:25 p. m., and New York, at 3 p. m., arriving at Frenchtown at 5:18 p. m. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

O. R. KUGLER.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (9th, 10th and 11th), 1926. Those coming from and via New York city will take Erie R. R. Ferry foot of West 23rd Street, or Chambers Street, for train leaving from Jersey City. Get tickets for Howells, N. Y. Those coming from and via Kingston, N. Y., will take Ontario and Western train from Kingston. Get tickets for Winterton, N. Y. Trains will be met and friends cared for. Time of trains will be announced later, when new schedules will be effective. Those coming by automobile will go to the home of Mr. Fred Beyea (The Old Homestead) on arrival at New Vernon. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, sisters and friends.

R. LESTER DODSON, Moderator.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City) Oregon, every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Take "Oregon City Bus," at 10th and Main Streets, get off at Bevlin's store, go two blocks south. All lovers of the truth are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALEE, Clerk, R. F. D. 1, Box 38.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday of each month at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 459 E. 5th St., Riverside, Calif., and at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. 11th St., Claremont, Calif., on the first Sunday of each alternate month, beginning with January, and on every alternate month with brother Joseph Huffman, 128 Van Buren St., Arlington, Calif. Singing at 10:30 a. m. Preaching at 11 a. m. Lunch at the place of meeting, and continued services in the afternoon.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.

O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California.

C. G. MILLER.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

SUPPLY EXHAUSTED.

OUR supply of the book entitled "A Sketch of the Life of Joshua S. Corder" is exhausted, and we are unable to fill any more orders for said book. This work was not electrotyped, so we do not expect to have any more on sale at any time in the future.

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These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Cloth binding. Price, $1.25 each. One dozen or more, ordered at the same time and all to the same address, one dollar each. Cash must accompany orders. Make checks and money orders payable to

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED EACH MONTH

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 94. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1926. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MARK IV. 35-39.

"AND the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship: and there were also with him other little ships. And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm." Read also the fortieth and forty-first verses.

I have had what seemed to me a comforting view of our dear Elder Brother, asleep, resting in the hinder part of the ship. If I had words to express what I hope I see in this narrative, and could be assured that my thoughts are of him, and not of the flesh, it would be a pleasure indeed. I view the ship as the church, and he as resting in the hinder part. When the Lord hid Moses in the clift of the rock, he told Moses he could not see his face, but he should see his back parts. His back parts are his body, the church. Moses was given a view of the church, the back parts, or body, which closely follows and is inseparably joined to the Head. He told the serpent in the garden, that "it," the seed of the woman, Christ, should bruise the serpent's head, and "thou shalt bruise his heel." The whole of antichrist is the serpent's head, and every word of God is a bruise to it. But the serpent could only bruise his heel, which again, or also, represents the church, his back parts. Satan could not touch the Head, but he does continually harass, torment and bruise the heel, the church. When he gets in his work soon there is a great storm beating into the ship. But the skillful Pilot is resting in the hinder part of the ship, which is the church in these last days. He is still there, still rides upon the stormy waves and manages the seas. The hinder part is the latter part of his reign on earth. He had been teaching by the sea, and he entered into the ship, and said, Let us pass over to the other side. Dear afflicted people of God, how sweetly this portrays to us that when his teaching and guidance through the stormy seas here are ended, he will still be with us as we pass over to the other side.

"And there were also with him other little ships." The ship represents the church, and Christ in it, and the other little ships with him the individual mem-

bers, the little vessels of mercy, to whom he says, "Lo, I am with you alway." "I in them, and thou in me." But a great storm arose, and beat into the ship. How awful, and how often in these last days do the great storms arise and beat into the ship, and every little ship feels the force of it. The storms that beat upon the ship from the outside do not cause us any trouble, but the waves that beat into the ship are what cause us grief, and fear, and trembling. Every little ship becomes fearful that the ship will be broken and stranded on the rough and stony earth, as we have so ofen feared during sore trouble, for the ship is now full, and how often we have felt to cry, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" But

> "Little children, do not fear,
> While Jesus lives to answer prayer."

He is still with us in this hinder part of the ship, resting there, for he knows he has only to rebuke the winds and the storm ceases.

"And they awake him." How comforting that these words are written in the present tense. Not saying, they awoke him, but, "They awake him," for he is "not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities," of troubles, sighs and fears, for they awake him and in his own good time he will rebuke the stormy waves that seem so nigh to overwhelm. They said, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" "Why standest thou afar off, O Lord? why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?" But his ears are ever open to the cry of the destitute. He said, "Why are ye so fearful?" Has he not promised in olden time that he will never leave nor forsake his people, and now how is it that we have no faith? Oh the weakness of our little faith. We may be made to consider the days of old, when all was joy and peace and love, and we could not believe that we ever should grieve, that we ever should suffer again, or have to endure any more such sore conflicts. But now a storm has come, and "trouble, like a gloomy cloud, has gathered thick and thundered loud," and our hearts dissolve with fear, for the waves beat into the ship, and every little ship feels the force of the storm, not only on the whole body, but each one feels the "perpetual war within, twixt reigning grace and raging sin," and we are crying, Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Is his mercy clean gone forever, and will he be favorable no more? Cares he not that we perish? How is it that we have no faith? This is our infirmity, this is our weakness. When trouble comes we fear that we will be cast off forever. But let us "remember the years of the right hand of the Most High," for he is touched, awakened, he is not undmindful of our toiling and rowing in the midst of the loud, roaring billows, and in great mercy he will return. Our way is not hid from him. He knoweth the way that we take. "Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands." Though for a little while the ship is left to the buffeting of the storm, "but with great mercies will I gather thee," "for this is as the waters of Noah unto me." He promised Noah that the waters should no more cover the earth, so he will not allow one ship, nor the little ships with him, to be submerged in the dreaded waves which are now beating into the ship, for they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, and the trial of your faith is more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, that we might be found enduring unto the honor and glory of God in the fiery trials that come so

unexpectedly upon us. Surely he cares, and will not let anything, not even our infirmities of doubt and unbelief, of coldness and indifference to his unfailing, tender mercies, not even our sinful lives, separate us from his love, for thine they were and thou gavest them me and none of them is lost. Let us hear what God the Lord will speak, "for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints."

They awake him, and he arose and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. When unexpected storms suddenly break in fury upon us, and "it shall hail, coming down on the forest," even the cedars of Lebanon bowing and bending in the great storm, and "the city [or ship] shall be low in a low place," my people shall rest in a sure dwelling-place, for thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee. But oh, our unstable hearts are like the troubled sea, continually drifting from the precious truth that the ship is his. He is the pilot and will bring the ship and all the little ships with him safely to port. No matter how turbulent the waves that beat into the ship, "they awake him," and he speaks, "Peace, be still," and it is done. O, little children, let not your heart be troubled nor be afraid, for no matter how fierce the storm, he leaves a peace within that none else can give or take away. By him we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, experience and hope. Oh glorious hope. It is our anchor in all the storms, and in it we rest, for no matter how furious the storm, it never quite fails. Sometimes it seems so little we hesitate to speak of it to others. We almost lay it by, but it holds as an anchor, and will not let us go, will not let us drift away and sink in the storm waves of perils and persecutions which cause so much sorrow and distress. For

"Lo, I am with you,
My promise shall stand;
Through tempest and tossing
I'll bring you to land."

I have sometimes read a precious, soul-cheering communication from some dear saint and have thought, Surely such an one is never brought into such storms and such low places, but must be continually rejoicing in hope. But I have learned that such sweet songs in Israel are sung only by those have come up through great tribulation, and the deeper their sorrow the sweeter they sing, though the singing may be only melody made in their hearts to the Lord. Satan is bruised under their feet. Their enemies are found liars unto them, and every tongue that rises against them in vile persecution and slanderous reproaches is condemned, and they sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously. He rebukes the wind and the sea, saying, Peace, be still, and immediately there is a great calm, a calm that no tongue or pen can express. Though we may look back over the ravages of the storm and grieve over the fallen ones, the green leaves and buds of promise swept away, yet the great calm is come. It is pitiful to see some tender plants crushed by the falling of others against them, but in the great calm that follows the storm let us remember the words of our Captain, "What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch." Watch for the little foxes that creep in so slyly, for they will in time destroy our vine with its tender grapes. "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion," to them who in slothfulness or carelessness pay no heed to the little foxes. They are so little, and look so harmless, let us pay no attention to

them, just bear with them and they will probably vanish by and by. So we put ourselves at ease, until, ere we are aware, a root of bitterness has sprung up that destroys the peace of every little vessel of mercy, and soon the whole "ship is now full" of the tempestuous waves which have beaten in. All because the little foxes were allowed to remain undisturbed until a leanness of soul comes on, so that instead of one being humbled by the loving, solicitous admonitions of those who watch over one another for good, one inclines to pet the little foxes that tell us to pay no heed, but go on our own way, for some one else has done just as bad or worse than ourselves, anyway. Thus we go on in demonstration of the spirit that has gained the preeminence in us. Leanness of soul, our most dreaded infirmity, will surely come upon us, and when our Master looks, if haply there be any fruit pleasing to him, he finds nothing but leaves, no peaceable fruits of righteousness to be found. How dreadful if of us it be said, "No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever." Our usefulness destroyed, no fruits of the Spirit in evidence, and our beloved brethren unable to take pleasure any longer in our green leaves, alone. By our fruits we are to be known and judged, not by our profession alone, for faith without works is dead. Oh let us watch, as commanded, for the little foxes, each one looking to himself, and watching over one another for good, lest there be any root of bitterness springing up among us, until suddenly the storm breaks and the waves beat into the ship. But though the ship, and every little ship, be filled with the troublous waves, yet in his own time he stills the storm and brings a great calm, for he will not cast off forever. "Though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to his multitude of mercies." After all these precious promises no wonder he asks, Why are ye so fearful? He is, ever has been and ever will be, our shield and our exceeding great reward. How often he says, Fear not. Though we walk in the valley of the shadow of the dreadful death of church privileges, and of spiritual enjoyment together here in this low ground of sorrow, the lusts of the flesh bringing wars and fightings among us, yet, knowing he has all power, he still rests in the hinder part of the ship, abiding with us, and will never leave nor forsake us. In due time he makes us see that his rod, from which we do shrink, and his staff, his doctrine with all its sweet assurances, are both for our comfort, and do comfort us. He is our light and our salvation, our refuge and our strength, a present help, always in the ship. He is "not a God far off," but a present help. When so cast down, we forget he is a present help. That is why we are so fearful and show so little faith. Let us, like David of old, say, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee." Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, and not with an evil conscience, to provoke each other to love and good works. Not provoking to wrath and watching for evil, not rendering evil for evil, nor railing for railing, for whosoever is born of God overcometh these evil propensities, and keeping under our bodies bring them into subjection. Then the lion and the lamb lie down together and a little child, the little child that is born to each one and we bear about in our earthen vessels, shall lead us. But oh, to

our sorrow, we find that the lion is not dead, as we once believed. He has only lain down, brought into subjection. He is not even changed, but is the same old lion, and at the least relaxing of vigilance he is ready to spring up, seeking to devour. Sometimes he rages so fiercely that sight is lost of any evidence of the leading of the little child. But this is the victory that overcometh, even our faith, and faith being the gift of God it is a God-given victory, and their pleadings awake him, crying, Lord save, or we perish. "And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" He says to the raging waves, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." So fear not, little flock, even the heaviest storms are in his hand and are for a good and wise purpose. He still controls the ship and still rests in this hinder part of it, and will still be with us until we reach the other side, where, at his behest, they had started to go with him, and there shall be no more curse, neither shall anything enter there that defileth or maketh a lie, neither shall they learn war any more. When God himself shall wipe the tears from off all faces, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away, when they awake in his likeness and shall see his face and be satisfied. Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Dear saints, let us

"Then upward look, how'er distressed,
Jesus will guide us home,
To that eternal port of rest,
Where storms can never come."

In hope of rest in that peaceful haven where not one sinful thought can come, I remain, as ever, one of the least,

MARY ELLISON.

TAMPA, Florida, Jan. 18, 1926.

DEAR SISTER SINCLAIR:—Your nice letter came all right, and I was very glad to hear from one so far away naturally, but so near in the Spirit. I have seen people who lived within thirty feet of our meetinghouse who were so far away spiritually they could not hear, and could not have the slightest idea of the glory that was so near them. They had no idea of the sweetness that was right at their door naturally. Their ears had never heard a voice from behind, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it. How astonished they would be if they could only have an ear to hear, and a heart to understand. None can understand the spiritual Hebrew language until the Lord turns them around and gives them an understanding. The prophet Zephaniah, iii. 9, says, "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." Most people think when the word "all" is used it means the whole human race, but that is not true. The angel said, "I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord," and as soon as Herod heard it he was troubled and all Jerusalem with him. So it was not good tidings to those who were troubled. Many other places could be referred to that prove that the words "all men," "every man," and "the whole world" do not mean the whole human race. "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." You know the whole human race did not press into it. On the day of Pentecost some said, These men are full of new wine. Others were pricked in their heart, and

said, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Paul says, Your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. The majority of the natural world never heard of these brethren. It is written in Hebrews i. 2, "By whom also he made the worlds." We have the social world, profane world, political world and the religious world. Their faith was spoken of throughout the whole religious world of like precious faith. The Arminian world think they have a very broad platform, because they say, "God gives every man a chance." What chance has the man who never heard a man preach, if no one is saved, as they say, only those who hear men preach and accept? The majority, and a very large majority, of the people in the world never saw a man professing to be a preacher. Then the word "chance" is an expression that belonged to the Amalekites. When Saul and Jonathan were killed on Mt. Gilboah an Amalekite came to David, and said, I am an Amalekite, and the son of an Amalekite, and I happened by chance upon Mt. Gilboah, &c. The Israelites did not use that language. I do not think they did. If no one is saved only those who hear men preach, most all the people in the world that have died are lost; but thank the Lord this is a big mistake. Their own book says that about the year 1880 only about two men out of every ten claimed to be christians. This includes babies and all professed christians. If that is true nearly all who had died up to that time had "gone away into everlasting punishment." They have always called us narrow, contracted, skin-flint, antimission Baptists, when the facts are they are the narrow, contracted folks. Benedict's history (he was a Missionary Baptist) says, "All the old divines (i. e. those who preached before the split that began in 1832) taught that all the Savior died for shall be effectually called and saved." The only mistake Benedict made was when he said "shall be." The apostle in the first chapter of Hebrews says, "When he had by himself purged our sins sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Purged means cleansed, purified. Then when he cleansed us he sat down. Under the law, when the high priest made an offering for a man, if the offering was accepted the person for whom it was offered had all of his sins for that year blotted out, but there was a remembrance made of sin every year and they all had to come once a year and make an offering in order to have their sins forgiven. Not so with the people of God under the gospel dispensation, for Jesus hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, by one offering. He offered himself, the offering was accepted, and all for whom it was made have their sins blotted out. Therefore Paul says, "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." So then and there all of his people were saved. And now it is made known to them. First they are shown by the Spirit their lost and ruined condition, God's justice in banishing them from his presence and the glory of his power; then their acceptance with God through the death of the dear Redeemer; that the law is satisfied because it has got what it demanded of the transgressors, which was their life. Jesus gave his life, and his is the life of all his people. "When

Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. Not for a few, but for an innumerable company, which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, as numerous as the stars of the sky for multitude and as the sand of the sea, innumerable. Nothing narrow in this, nothing short. They will all return and come to Zion with singing, and everlasting joy shall be upon their head. "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come," &c.—Isaiah xxxv. 10.

You can read this and then throw it in the fire. It is quite a comfort to get letters like yours, saying you were benefited by such scattering articles as I have written. I read the scrap in the SIGNS, and it looked very sorry to me, and was not a good hint at the vast amount of truth contained in the subject. I also received a letter from an invalid sister in North Carolina, saying how much she was comforted by reading the little article. I have written enough to weary you, but I hope the Lord will prevent this, for he alone can give us satisfaction when we read an article or letter or hear preaching. I am so cold, so dark, so lifeless in these dark and desolate times. The ways of Zion do mourn. We must be nearing the time spoken of in Job, where it says, "He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end." May grace, mercy and peace be with your spirit.

Your brother in hope of mercy,

ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

[THE above good letter was written to sister Flora Sinclair of London, Ontario, and sent to us for publication in the SIGNS.—ED.]

GALENA, Ohio.

DEAR PUBLISHERS:—I am one of those who are indebted to you, but not willingly. Through misfortunes of several sorts I have become poor. I have written you several letters of apology and, as I hope, christian love, only to consign them to the wastebasket, fearing that you might think them hypocritical. But we read, "Perfect love casteth out fear." Whether my love is nearer perfect or not I do not fear in approaching you to-night; I feel that you will believe me. Oh how near and dear do the dear children of God seem to be, you among the rest, and how glorious and precious is our heavenly Father, who "sits on no precarious throne, nor borrows leave to be." I have been reading to-night in Volume 1 of the Editorials of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and gazed long at his picture. He has, or had, the mark of the family of God. I hope to meet him over there, and you, too. How sweet will it be, no sin, no fear, no misunderstanding. I believe we shall know one another there, but we shall not be divided into different families. I shall love your father as well as you will, and you will love my parents as well as you love your own. My parents are over on the other shore, too. Father died last May; mother passed on ten years before him. They read and loved the SIGNS, and loved its founder.

There has been a division in our church and we are few, but in peace, and we hope that God meets with us, and where Jesus is we are satisfied, even if only "two or three" are gathered together. Having our Elder Brother we have all. The gates of hell cannot prevail against the kingdom of God. How blessed are the people whose hope is the Lord. "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee."

I wish I could tell of his love, power and dominion. I am glad you have seen and felt it, and can understand without my telling all about it. It is sometimes too overwhelming to even try to tell it. I do a great deal of writing and talking (not publicly) but sometimes I can only lay my hand upon my mouth and take the shoes from my feet when I seem to have a glimpse of the Holy One who inhabits eternity; who declared the end from the beginning; who rules and reigns over angels, men and devils; whose counsel shall stand; who says to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back; who has promised the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder he shall restrain; who is just and right; a God without iniquity. I believe that his decrees extend to all things and events, yet he is not the author of sin, neither is violence done to the will of the creature. (See Beebe's Editorials, Volume 1, page 30.) I accept that editorial, if I understand it, and I think I do. God does not sit upon a precarious throne, grieving because he cannot get people to obey. But we do disobey, but cannot go beyond his foreknowledge and determinate counsel. This in no way excuses us. In keeping his commandments there is great reward, but it is not a reward gained by our own effort, but is given us in Christ according to his purpose. May he lead me in the the path of righteousness for his name's sake.

I inclose a letter from a dear Elder who is in full fellowship with you, well known by many of your subscribers in several States. The boy he writes of being killed was my nephew.

JOIE E. WOODS.

EDGEWOOD, Texas, Nov. 24, 1925.

MRS. JOIE E. WOODS—DEAR SISTER:—Your good letter came in due time, and was as a cup of cool water to a thirsty soul. While I attempt to reply, I am sensible of my weakness and unworthiness to be even thought of by one who is so highly favored of the great God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, but my heart goes out in sympathy for the poor and afflicted and suffering saints of the most high God. Dear sister, it pleased the Lord to bruise our Savior, and I think that these light afflictions, that endure only for a moment, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. I think they are good for his children, for David said, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." "Before I was afflicted I went astray." This old flesh will shrink back and complain and want the cup of suffering to pass, but, dear sister, all things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he foreknew he also called; moreover, whom he called he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified. Now what shall we say to these things? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not by him give us all things necessary for life and godliness? Yes, he says, I have chosen you in a furnace of affliction. Read the hymn beginning

"Poor and afflicted, Lord, are thine,
Among the great unfit to shine;
But though the world may think it strange,
They would not with the world exchange."

Ah, see how he careth for you, that he so provided that you should hear the proclamation of the word, given an ear to hear and a heart to understand; that when you are cast down in Lodebar, with both ankles broken, he sends his servant and brings you to the King's table and tells you that at his table you shall eat bread continually. He does not lay down conditions for you to perform in order that

you might eat. No, it is a gracious table for the poor, maimed and halt. It was said, "The poor have the gospel preached to them," and then they can say, like Jacob when he heard the wagons coming to move him down into Egypt, Joseph is alive, and governor of Egypt. I will go and see him before I die. So as long as we can hear the glorious gospel we know that Jesus ever liveth to intercede for us according to the will of God, presenting his wounded hands and side, and the Father always hears him.

It has been my privilege to attend three associations this year, and all in peace and harmony; no conditionalism in it, but it was all by grace. We have had peace since we got shut of conditionalism. But many of them are wanting us to come together and to receive each other's work. I tell them we have not gone anywhere, therefore we have nowhere to come; so if they want to live with us, to take down their bars and come in.

Yes, my health has been bad since the first of February. I had pneumonia, then bladder trouble. I have not been able to do any work this year, but am somewhat better now, and can serve the churches of my care. They are at peace and a unit in doctrine, for which I feel very thankful. You know we do not want offenses, but they must come, and woe unto that man by whom they come. We were made to feel very sad over the death of Elder M. T. Pace, of Athens, Texas, the second Sunday in this month. I have not seen Elder H. B. Jones this year, but hear from him through others. His health is very poor; so is that of Elder White. I am sure that we three are not much longer for this world, but the Lord's will be done.

Dear sister, I am glad to hear that your boy is striving for an education, and hope God will keep him so he will be a great blessing in your old age, also give him a good hope in Christ.

I have not seen sister Free, (Mrs. Woodie Free) this year. I suppose you heard of her little son, Grover Free, being killed last Christmas by a neighbor boy playing with a gun. They are very much grieved.

I have in the churches of my care baptized two. The church did not think me able, but the Lord sustained me. One of them is a preacher and he is sound, and will not have conditionalism at all, though he came from the Missionaries.

My dear sister, Jesus will never forsake you, for you are bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, member of his body in particular, and he cannot deny himself. He will send the Comforter and will take of the things of his and show them unto you, and bring to your memory all things he has said, and when storms of sorrow come, the billows roll and the tempest is high and you feel that he is far off, he is just as near. When the clouds intervene, shutting away the sunshine, and your soul is cast down and disquieted, he speaks as never man spake, "Peace, be still." Then you cry out, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance."

I must close, for fear of wearying you with my imperfect scattering writing. May the God of all grace comfort you and keep your boy by his power, and give him a hope through grace. If we never meet again on earth may we meet where those who meet part no more. Wife joins me in love to you both.

I am your brother in many sorrows, but in hope of mercy,

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

POCA, W. Va., Aug. 4, 1925.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS: — I was feeling somewhat lonely to-day, and while looking through the many letters I had received from the brethren in different parts of the country I came across a letter from Elder J. R. Dennison, of the Tygarts Valley River Association, and after I had read it I wondered how I had forgotten to send it to the SIGNS for publication, as I had fully intended to do when I first received it. I feel that those brethren of the Tygarts Valley River Association are a lovely band of Baptists, with an humble minister. They are God-fearing men, who are standing firm in the faith of God's elect. They are children who have been brought up under the watchcare of Elder J. S. Corder, who was an able expounder of both the Old and the New Testament Scriptures, so they are well established in the faith, and will not depart from it.

From your old brother,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

SUTTON, W. Va., Feb. 23, 1923.

DEAR BROTHER McCLANAHAN: — I have had it in mind to write you ever since I read your good article in the January number of the SIGNS and tell you how much I did enjoy it, but I am so limited and ignorant that without divine guidance I know I cannot write anything worth your reading. I very much enjoyed your last letter in the SIGNS, with many others, but somehow your letter on the unity of the Head and body struck me very forcibly and favorably. I surely do think you struck the right chord, and so long as we strike the proper chord the trumpet gives no uncertain sound. You say you believe that in the wisdom and foreknowledge of God the church, or elect, were in union with Christ in the annals of eternity. I think you surely are right, but it was only in the wisdom and foreknowledge of God they had a kind of representative, or a prospective being or existence, as they were entertained in the divine mind to create them and bring them into existence in time. The apostle says we are bone of His bone and flesh of his flesh, and some say when he died they died, and when he arose they arose, and when he ascended they ascended. Now all this could not have actually been done only in a prospective sense, being the purpose of God that it should all be accomplished through the suffering, death, resurrection and glorification of the Son. Further, to say they had actually arisen would be equal to saying the resurrection is past already. I believe all these things relative to the elect were entertained in the divine mind from eternity, and in accordance with his purpose, election and predestination they are just as sure of accomplishment as if they had already been. Just as your last quotation, "Thine eyes did see all my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there were none of them." Here God by the mouth of the psalmist speaks of things which are not as though they were. It seems to me that these were the members of his body, his church, and were, as it were, written in the book of God's eternal remembrance. They were all in Christ in a spiritual prospective sense, when as yet there were none of them actually. Just as it was said of Levi, who received tithes of his brethren, that he (Levi) paid tithes in Abraham, for he was yet in his father's loins when Melchisedec met him. This could have been only in a prospective way, because at that time Abraham had no child; still

God promised the land of Canaan to Abraham and his seed for a possession when as yet he had no child, but it was just as sure of fulfillment as if they were already there. It was according to God's purpose that it should be so, and all his purposes are sure of fulfillment. Yea, he hath declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done. I am glad to know he is the God of purpose, of power and of love.

May God's blessings rest upon you in your declining years, is the prayer of your brother in tribulation,

J. R. DENNISON.

NEWARK, Delaware.

DEAR EDITORS:—Being destitute of good things, and you who have a hope, be it ever so small, know what I mean by "good things," my mind rested upon the preface of Beebe's Hymn Book, signed by the publisher, Elder Gilbert Beebe. This is a short sermon of itself. I have been frequently asked, Why do not the Old School Baptists have music in their meetinghouses? This preface is a far better reply than many can state, and if space in our precious and valuable paper will permit, some time kindly publish the copy attached to this note. A short time ago, only a few weeks, brother J. G. Eubanks was asked by a member of the East Atlanta Church to express in words just what he believed regarding the doctrine of God our Savior, and his reply was, Read hymn 233 in Beebe's selections, for that hymn expresses just his belief, far better than he could write or preach it. Elder Beebe's clear understanding of all things spiritual, especially regarding the difference of melody of the heart or head would be a good reply to publish broadcast, and I hope it would be a satisfactory one to many perhaps who have never given this much meditation. I doubt if but very few ever read it.

J. B. MILLER.

THE most important subject that ever engaged the attention of men or angels, is the worship of the true and living God; it is that in which the saints are not only engaged while here in the house of their pilgrimage, but it is that in which they hope to be employed in the unclouded regions of glory. When God delivered us from the horrible pit and miry clay, and established our goings, he also put a new song in our mouths, even praise unto his name. And when John saw the Lamb standing upon Mount Zion, he saw also with him an innumerable company employed in singing the new song before the throne of the Redeemer, which song no man could learn but those only which were redeemed from the earth. And none but the redeemed, regenerated, called and spiritually taught, can worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. The Scriptures teach us that two requisites are indispensable to the acceptable worship of God; the one is that we should worship him in spirit; because he is a Spirit, and will have none other to worship him; and the other is that we worship him in truth; for he is the God of truth. If the vocal sounds of music, embellished by all the accomplishment of science or of art, could qualify us for spiritual devotion, then others might be found besides the redeemed from the earth to join in the songs of Zion; but none besides that company who are born of the Spirit are qualified to sing with the spirit; and in the absence of that spirit, God cannot be truly worshiped. Nor is it less essential or indispensable to the worship of God,

that he be worshiped in *truth.* Not only with true heart, with pure and honest intentions, but that which should be the theme of our songs should be the truth as it is in Jesus. The accomplished vocalist, without a particle of grace, may command the admiration and charm the animal feelings of all lovers of music, and the natural passions of even christians may be stirred and warmed by the animated singing of words which are far from being in accordance with truth, but no such performance will be acceptable as worship by that God who searches the hearts and tries the reins of the children of men.

With these convictions, it has been the aim of the publisher of this book to select only such Psalms, Hymns, and spiritual songs, as are in harmony with the spirit and truth of spiritual devotion. Such subjects have been selected, and such only, as, in the judgment of the compiler, express the truth of God, and in a manner to shew forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. Such subjects generally as are addressed to God in humble but grateful acknowledgment of his being, his goodness and his great salvation, avoiding such addresses as are too frequently made to the unregenerated sinner, as being altogether out of place when used under the profession of worshiping God. The words of the song which John heard the redeemed sing were, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints," and such in substance, should be the theme of all the children of God.

God's people are not justifiable in using inappropriate words, and especially such words as are untrue, in their devotional exercises, for they are admonished to sing with UNDERSTANDING, as well as with the spirit, and so to make melody in their hearts unto the Lord. Poems have been introduced into books which are used in many congregations that are not only destitute of the essential sentiments which the spirit of pure devotion inspires, but actually express doctrines entirely antagonistic to the doctrine of the Bible. Christians should never sing what they do not believe to be true.

THE PUBLISHER.

INDIANOLA, Miss., Sept. 4, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find $2.25, two dollars for the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and twenty-five cents due on the hymn book. I cannot express how much comfort I received from the sample copy you sent me with the hymn book, for it settled my mind on the unpardonable sin. I had actually lost sleep because of fear that I might have committed that sin before I understood what it was.

I will try and tell my experience and some of my travels from nature to grace, if indeed I have ever experienced such a change. My very happiest childhood thoughts were when my precious mother was getting ready to go to the Primitive Baptist meetings. They engraved the most beautiful picture on my heart, which is still there to-day. I was thirteen years of age the last time I went to hear their preaching, then we moved so far away that I was not able to go any more. When I was seventeen years of age I married. That was in the year 1900. I had two children. During this time I had never thought of my condition. My husband died March 11th, 1905, and I moved back home. Later on, in the spring and summer, I became weighed down with a heavy burden that seemed almost unendurable. I would go to the

field with my brothers and sisters, but the burden would not leave me, and at night I could not sleep. I thought my people all would think I was grieving for my husband. Of course that was a grief, but he was sick so long I was reconciled to God's will that I should give him up. It seemed that something kept telling me I must do something I had never done before, that I had little babes to raise and must set them a good example. I was at that time twenty-two years of age, and since I was thirteen had heard no preaching but by the Missionary Baptists. Of course they taught that all we had to do was to believe in the Lord and we would be saved. When their protracted meeting was being held, during the summer of 1905, I thought I could not stand it, so went forward and gave my hand, and was baptized at the close of the meeting. I felt better and the burden rolled away, but when I reached home I found my darling mother in tears, and she looked up at me, and said, Ah, my little girl, you do not know what you have done. Time rolled on and in the year 1907 I met my present husband. After a time I again became troubled, even more than before, and realized that I could do nothing to help myself, so let my name stay on their church-book, but was not satisfied. I believed in predestination, and all the Bible said, and it came to me that if I was ever saved it would be by the grace of God, and God alone, for I knew I had never done or said anything that was of any good to myself or any one else. Then I began to feel that I was like a lost sheep strayed away from the fold, wandering around and waiting for the Shepherd to say, Come, ye blessed of the Lord, and on the twenty-fifth day of last July (1925) the Shepherd bade me come, and I felt that this whole world could not keep me from it. I do not know why they took me into their midst, for I could not tell my hope. I thought I could, but because of the tears I could not utter it. It seems that I have had a hope ever since I was a child, but did not have the right kind of food to nourish it into growth. Now I feel that I have the food that will help that knowledge grow into maturity, and that the Lord is teaching me every day. I am unlearned, and without his help I can do nothing.

This little experience, if it is one, is like myself, peculiar, but if you have space please publish it; if not, lay it aside. I am a poor, sinful, wayworn pilgrim, saved by the grace of God, if saved at all.

In hope of a better home than this,

OLIVE E. ROBERTS.

WHEELING, W. Va , March 6, 1926.

MRS. ELLISON:—I am sorry to inform you that mother passed on to her great reward February 8th, 1926. She was just completely worn out from taking care of and worrying about father's condition. She caught a heavy cold and had not strength to throw it off. She passed away peacefully and with no suffering, simply going to her last sleep. While we all hated to see her go, it was a very great relief to know she was at rest at last, for she was prepared to go if any one ever was. Father is still here, but getting weaker all the time. My kindest wishes to you. ED. PULTZ.

[THE above communication, written by the son of sister Florence Pultz to sister Mary Ellison, of Topeka, Kansas, has been forwarded to us for publication in the SIGNS. Many good letters have appeared in our columns from the departed sister, and we know our readers join with us in extending sympathy to the bereaved family. A suitable obituary will probably be published later.—ED.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1926.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
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EXPERIENCE.

ON page 32 of the February, 1926, issue of our paper, sister Sarah Runkle, after writing a most excellent letter, says: "I have no bright experience, and have very little evidence to go upon." Then she ex-expresses the wish that one of the editors would feel to write an article on the subject. It seems to be our mind at this time to comply as best we can with this request. We are told that "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." It will, therefore, be our purpose in this article to draw upon the fund of sacred truth for some evidence that may encourage and strengthen those who by experience know of the patience (endurance), as well as the comfort of those characters who were exercised by the Holy Ghost to give testimony concerning the way of life as it is in Christ Jesus. The matter of salvation is so all-important to God's humble poor that only such testimony as can be attested to by those who have actually seen with their own eyes, and their hands have handled of the Word of life, should be adduced. The life of the poor sinner is being weighed in the balance and no hear-say-evidence can be admitted; nothing so vitally concerns the interested character as the final outcome of his case. The Old Testament Scriptures contain abundant proof of the fact that not only was Israel as a nation "the fewest of all people," but that those who were called of God to lead and govern her were likewise the "least in their father's house." When the Lord called Moses to go unto Pharaoh and bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt, Moses complained of not being eloquent, and said he was "slow of speech, and of a slow tongue," whereupon the Lord asked: "Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say." The name of "Joshua," who succeeded Moses, is said to imply: "whose help is Jehovah." Gideon was the least of a poor family in Manasseh, who, through the Lord's process of elimination, lead an army of "less than the least," or less than one per cent., for of the thirty and two thousand Israelites, only three hundred comprised the number which was to conquer the host of Midian, and while his heart fainted within him, the Lord was his strength, "And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers." They were not even armed with the swords of men, but they were united in spirit and with one accord "the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal: and they cried, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." Notwithstanding the Lord's precaution in that day in

dwindling the number, "lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me," we find that same principle in the camp to-day, some going so far as to claim that Israel's salvation then was of Gideon. In the seventh chapter of Judges, ninth verse, we are told the Lord said unto him, "Arise, get thee down unto the host; for I have delivered it into thine hand," and yet Gideon was so fearful that he had to go down with his servant Phurah to the host of Israel and hear a man tell a dream of how "a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it," and to hear his fellow say, "This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host," before he was ready to command his little army. Being assured that the Lord had laid his hand upon him, "he worshipped, and returned into the host of Israel, and said, Arise; for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian." How absurd the claim of the "two-or-more-salvationists" that salvation was of Gideon. His whole army consisted of the "empty vessel type," but there were "lamps within the pitchers," signifying to our mind faith, which is the gift of God, and thus they were equipped to "blow the trumpet." It is only the vessel which has been emptied of self and filled with "heavenly treasure" which blows the trumpet to-day with no uncertain sound, and though they be as the islands of the sea, scattered here and there below the surface, they are united in Christ, and they will not shun to declare the whole counsel of God, whether men believe it or not.

We have digressed a little here to give our views as to who is the salvation of Israel in all ages of the world. The figure which was seen by the man in his dream: "a cake of barley bread," to our mind the poorest quality of all bread, showed Gideon that "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty," and he was encouraged by faith to believe God would keep the promise he had made to him, to deliver the host of Midian into his hands. On one occasion the Lord spoke to Jacob, saying, "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff." Truly, the Lord can cause one to chase a thousand, and two to put ten thousand to flight. Oh, for faith, to say with the psalmist, "The Lord is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?"

The next character to which we shall invite attention is that of Naomi, a beautiful type of the church. She went out full, having husband and sons to look to and provide for her, but the Lord took them away and brought her home again empty, and as she returned, they said, "Is this Naomi? And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi [meaning pleasant], call me Mara [meaning bitter]: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me." To have all her earthly props taken away was a bitter experience, but the humanity of our Lord in the garden was made to cry, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," but it could not pass, for "the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" There was no other way. And so

Naomi must be emptied of earth, and while she writes bitter things of herself, showing forth her emptiness and nothingness, with no encouragement whatsoever to hold out to her daughters-in-law, there was one, Ruth, who clave unto her. She was a Moabitess woman, or a sinful woman, having also lost her husband, and without any desire to return to her former country and kindred, she clings to Naomi and breaks forth with the pleading, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." In the very emptying of the earthen vessel is seen the work of God, and wherever that appears in a poor sinner's heart such a character is attracted to the church, which attraction is mutual, for when Ruth had returned from gleaning in the field of Boaz, where handfuls of purpose were let fall for her, Naomi rejoiced with her and inquired, Where hast thou gleaned to-day? and where wroughtest thou? blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee. How we do feel to thank and bless him who taketh knowledge of the poor and needy.

We could speak of David, the shepherd's lad, whom the Lord, and not man, had chosen to be anointed king, as well as other Old Testament characters, but we will pass on to the New Testament, where we shall find that "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." Of all the apostles and disciples of Christ while here in the flesh, only two or three could, perhaps, be said to stand out prominently as having an experience out of the ordinary. John, the beloved disciple, whose privilege it was to baptize our Lord and Master, had what would appear to us to be unmistakable evidence of his favor with the Lord, and, yet, though "the heavens were open unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and, lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," it is not long before we find him shut up in prison, and asking, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" It would seem almost impossible, after such manifestations of God's goodness to him, that he could doubt or question again, but he had to be shown again the works of Jesus: how the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. Likewise, his disciples in this age have to be shown again and again these thing. In order to be living witnesses they must receive their daily bread from above; they have to be quickened by his mighty power before they can preach or hear the word, and when these things are wrought in them they confess that his mercies are new every morning. We are testifying to these things when we can with the great apostle say, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." We know of no brighter or wonderful experience since the day of Jesus than that of the apostle Paul, yet the Lord said of him, I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. So we see we are not to be carried to heaven on flowery beds of ease, but it will be by actual experience that we shall be taught that tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword, death, life, angels, princi-

palities, powers, things present, things to come, height, depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Paul said, "We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." It was this kind of experience that harnessed the children of Israel together, that caused the heart of Jonathan to be "knit" to the heart of David, and it is because of this that those who are yoked together in tribulation speak often one to another now of their doubts and fears and their hopes. Only a short while ago a sister who we happen to know is bearing a weighty cross, with a burden that only the Lord can supply the necessary strength to bear up under, wrote us and subscribed herself as, "Your little sister (I hope.)" Our heart was touched to feel that she could only hope she was a "little sister." It is written, "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein." To be humbled and made as helpless and dependent as a little child is not what we according to nature desire; to have all our earthly hopes blasted is not the way of our choosing, but it is God's way of preparing the soil and making it "good ground" for the reception of the seed, the Word of God, which is to be sown in it. Jesus was said to have rejoiced in spirit, when he exclaimed, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Such words as these nourish our hope and cause us to want to confide in those of like precious faith, and so we come as "little children" speaking of the revealed knowledge of him who is above all, and blessed for evermore. What greater evidence could one give, or ask for, of having passed from death unto life, than that supplied by our sister? She says: "I hope I love the truth set forth in the SIGNS, love to hear it proclaimed, love to be with God's people, and hope their God is my God, and love the dear Old Baptist Church." This is the kind of evidence that finds lodgment in our heart; it is the kind that reflects our own life, and wherein the child of God sees himself as one standing before a mirror, and, therefore, we come, having the witness within that these things are true and we love those who manifest that they have been begotten of God. In our own case, we have listened many times to brethren relate the dealings of the Lord with them, being able to recall as though it were yesterday the spot where they experienced the forgiveness of their sins and received that peace which passeth all understanding, and we have felt, Oh if we had such an experience as brother and sister so-and-so we could never doubt, but we cannot witness with Paul and others to a light, brighter than the noon-day sun, having shown about us. If, indeed, we have been brought into a true knowledge of him whom to know is life eternal, it has been a gradual process, being taught line upon line, precept upon precept; our Beloved has stood behind our wall, looking forth at the window, showing himself through the lattice, but such glimpses as these have at times dissipated our fears, and, unless deceived, we have heard his voice, saying, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth;

the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land: the fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away." While we trust we are not a stranger from the covenants of promise, we have to confess that we believe there is verified in us that which God spoke in the days of old, that "while the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." Our life is certainly one of variations and changes; sometimes we are bewildered and at our wit's end, but we can say, "Great is thy faithfulness," and as our day our strength has been. We have been kept by some wonderful and mysterious power thus far on our journey, for which we feel to thank the God of our life, and we hope he will ever keep us faithful to his name.

R. L. D.

CHURCH NOTICE.

THE Oregon City bus having been taken off the Elyville run, we have arranged to carry the brethren and friends by private conveyance, and will give directions as to how to meet said conveyance. Those coming by Railroad over the S. P. will get off at Oregon City, take elevator, near depot, up to top of the hill, turn to your left, go one block east to 7th Street. Not later than 9:30 a. m. Those coming on Oregon City Electric get off at 7th St., take the elevator, near S. P. depot, go to top of the hill, turn to your left, go one block east, as directed above.

S. B. MOFFITT, Moderator.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

(See meeting notice on page 143.)

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Hannah M. Hobbs Strong, wife of Robert M. Strong, was born in the city of New York, May 13th, 1845, the daughter of Uriah Drake Gee, and Rebecca A. Gee, and departed this life November 27th, 1925. Children surviving by a former marriage are Frederick G. Hobbs, Wilbur S. Hobbs and Charles D. Hobbs. Five grandchildren also survive her. When quite young she united with the Baptist Church at Matteawan, New York, proving in every way a most useful and exemplary member. On removal to Middletown, N. Y., she (by letter) became identified with the First Baptist Church located there, and devoted herself to its activities. On June 13th, 1880, she became identified with the Middletown & Wallkill Old School Baptist Church, of Middletown, New York, being baptized in the fellowship of that church by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, she being the last candidate to whom he administered the ordinance. Removing her residence from Middletown, N. Y., to New York city, on March 4th, 1882, she was granted a letter (in full fellowship) to the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, of New York city, where her membership remained until her death. She was a deeply taught follower of her Lord and Master, and was favored to enjoy the love and fellowship of the saints. Her acquaintance among the members and friends of the Old School Baptist Church was very extended, and she was known far and near for her love of the truth as it is in her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. On June 26th, 1906, she married Robert M. Strong, and moved to Middletown, New York, there continuing her interest and devotion to her faith and doctrine, and was most highly esteemed.

Funeral services were held at her late home in Middletown, N. Y., conducted by her pastor, Elder R. Lester Dodson, November 30th, 1925. Interment in family plot, Hillside Cemetery, Middletown, N. Y.

ROBERT M. STRONG.

Alvah R. Elmendorf died at his home, in Kingston, N. Y., February 9th, 1926, aged 71 years. He was born at Olive, N. Y., September 26th, 1854, and was the son of the late Cornelius Elmendorf and Charlotte Bogart. He was married to Ida M. Winchell May 26th, 1880, and she survives him with one son, Lester C., and two grandchildren. Two sisters also survive him: Mrs. Emma C. Johnson and Mrs. Elizabeth Bishop, both of Kingston, New York. It was a pleasure for Mr. Elmendorf to attend our meetings, and he loved to have the brethren he knew visit him. He was not a member, but he believed the truth. For about three years he had been suffering from heart trouble, yet when the end came it was very sudden. The writer officiated at the funeral, speaking from the twenty-third Psalm. May the Lord comfort and reconcile the widow and all his relatives to his sovereign will. GEORGE RUSTON.

Catherine Walker, subject of this sketch, was born April 10th, 1853, in Goderich, Ontario. She was married to Dugald Walker, of Aldborough, Ontario, in the year 1871, and to this union were born six children, three of whom survive: Colin A., on the homestead, Dugald N., funeral director, Rodney, Ont., Dr. J. C., of Detroit, Mich., two grandchildren: John and Campbell Walker, three sisters: Mrs. Tena Kerr, Point Edwards, Ont., Mrs. M. Knapp, Detroit, Mich., and Mrs. J. J. Johnston, Saskatchewan, Canada. The husband and three children preceded her in death some twenty-eight years. Sister Walker during the last year had been in failing health, and toward the last her suffering was very intense, death ending her suffering, April 18th, 1926, at the home of her son, D. M. Walker, in Rodney, in her seventy-third year. Early in life she received a hope in Christ, and for several years wandered from place to place trying to find the people of like precious faith, visiting the Covenanted Baptist Church at one of their yearly meetings, and hearing them talk she found they were her people, and became a regular attendant, and later told her experience to the church and was received, and baptized by the late Elder William Pollard, and the rest of her life was spent with them, believing that the Lord had brought her out and established her among her people, and, like Ruth of old, she often said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee, for thy people are my people and thy God my God. Sister Walker was an exemplary member, we would say one above the average, both in the church and in the home, always ready to help the sick and the afflicted, and ready to give a reason for her hope. She will be sadly missed. The church has lost a counselor, in the home the mother is absent, the community has lost a friend, but we feel that our loss is her gain, and we do not wish her back. The appointed time has come, and he that rules in heaven and in earth has spoken, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou in the joy of the Lord.

The writer was called from Cincinnati, Ohio, for the funeral, and tried to comfort a large congregation of brethren and friends, using as a basis of his remarks the words of John, "I am the resurrection, and the life," after which the body was taken to the Duart Cemetery, and laid to rest beside the husband, to await the call of the Master in the resurrection. May the Lord bless all those who mourn.

ALSO,

Jessie Gillis Scott, daughter of Duncan and Margaret Thomas Gillis, Muirkirk, Ontario, was born September 10th, 1852, and was married January, 1879, to Donald C. Scott, who departed this life sixteen years ago. Mrs. Scott leaves a devoted family of five sons and one daughter. The sons are John D., Arthur J., Neal, Duncan A. and Don T., and the daughter, Flossie, at home, who did all that loving hands could do for their devoted mother. Mrs. Scott had been in poor health for a few weeks with a weak heart, but seemed to be improving, but had a severe stroke and only lived about three days, passing away December 25th, 1925, to her eternal rest, where there is no suffering, pain nor sorrow. She was not a member of any church, but for a number of years was a regular attendant of the Covenanted Baptist Church, and it was her meat and drink to hear the dear Lord's name exalted above every name, but she always felt unworthy of a name among the Lord's people, therefore we sorrow not as those who have no hope.

The above was handed me by brother Deacon Gillis, of Muirkirk, Ontario, a brother of the deceased. I had met with Mrs. Scott once, but had never had much talk with her about the church, and I wish to thank the family, who are all of another faith, for sending for a minister of their mother's belief and carrying out her wish. May the blessing of the Lord be with them all. The friends gathered in great numbers to pay their last respects, and I tried in my weak, blunt, erring way to preach Christ, and him crucified, the way, the truth and the life. After I was through two of the neighborhood Presbyterian ministers spoke very highly of the character of the deceased. The remains were laid to rest in the Rodney Cemetery.

ALSO,

Emma Campbell, the subject of this sketch, was the widow of Daniel A. Campbell, of Ridgetown, Ontario. April 1st, 1926, she quietly fell asleep in Jesus at her home, Cunningham Ave., Ridgetown, at the ripe old age of 84 years. I was unable to get exact dates of when she received a hope and united with the Covenanted Baptist Church, in Ontario. She was baptized by the late Elder Pollard about forty-eight years ago, and remained a substantial member, loved by all who knew her. I visited her several times and found her to be of a cheerful disposition, well established in the doctrine. My last visit was just a week before she died, and we talked about an hour of the heavenly kingdom, and as I left her bedside I did not think her time was so near at hand. God's ways are not our ways; we know only as we go along. While we as a church will miss our sister, and her place will be vacant, yet we bow in humble submission to the will of God, who doeth all things well. May the Lord bless the children, grandchildren, friends and neighbors.

I tried to comfort the brethren and friends who had assembled to pay their last respects, using as a text the words of John, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth," &c., after which, in one of the most terrific snow storms I ever witnessed, all that was mortal was laid to rest in the Greenwood Cemetery, near Ridgetown, Ontario.

ALSO,

William Kelly, youngest son of James and Mary Sams Kelly, was born September 8th, 1850. He was united in marriage September, 1873, to Miss Sarah Sutton, and to this union were born two children: Mrs. Mary Pendleton and Mr. Lester Kelly, who, with the mother, survive him. Brother Kelly was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church near Campbellsburg, Kentucky, in the year 1881, and all his life was a devoted member, who esteemed the meetings with the brethren above everything in this world, and his home was always open to them. The last year he had been in poor health and only three times was he able to attend meetings of the church where he was a member, the Cane Run Church, at Turners Station, Kentucky. February 2nd, 1926, he quietly fell asleep, and we laid his body in the old cemetery of the Sulphur Fork Church, to await the call of the Master in the resurrection. I was called from Cleveland to speak the last few words, and as they gently lowered his body in its last resting-place I felt to say, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, rest in peace; a soldier of the cross for over half a century. Lord, thou hast given, and thou hast taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. May the blessing of the Lord be with all the friends who mourn, and enable us to say, Thy will be done.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

Eugene Phillips Drake, son of Moses Stout and Eura Ann Hunt Drake, was born November 18th, 1860, died November 15th, 1925, making his stay on earth 64 years, 11 months and 27 days. He was married to Miss Lillian A. Updike November 26th, 1884, and to this union were born two children: Miss Lillian Drake and Mr. Eugene Drake, Jr., who, together with their mother, one brother, Mr. Fred Drake, and one sister, Mrs. Ira Blackwell, of Hopewell, N. J., survive to mourn their loss. He first united with the Presbyterian denomination, but being brought to see the way of the Lord in righteousness, came to the First Hopewell Old School Baptist Church and was received into their fellowship, and the ordinance of baptism was performed by the late Elder William J. Purington, April 26th, 1891, and to his convictions he was no hypocrite, but honest and sincere, and when he saw he had made a mistake he was faithful to correct and retract from it, which endeared him to his present pastor and many brethren and sisters. He was a man of considerable business ability and prospered, having the earnest and faithfulness of a good helpmeet and good children. The Hopewell Old School Baptist Church realizing his ability appointed him as a member of her Trustee Board, in which service he continued until his death. We all miss him in our meetings, socially and spiritually, but we should weep not as though he had no hope, and we feel our loss is his eternal gain, and he has gone but a few days before us, and we should say, Sleep on, dear one. We feel that according to the fruit borne, he rests from all his labors. May it be God's will to comfort all who mourn.

His funeral services were conducted by the writer, and after prayer service in his home, near Ewingville, N. J., his remains were brought to the church meetinghouse in Hopewell, N. J., where a large gathering of brethren, sisters and friends assembled with the relatives to pay tribute to his memory, after which his remains were laid to rest in the family plot in Pennington Presbyterian Cemetery, Pennington, N. J., to await the resurrection to glory in the fullness of the consummation of faith and hope where he shall ever be with the Lord.

C. W. VAUGHN.

Sam Houston Williams was born December 5th, 1840, in Jefferson County, Texas, and departed this life at his home, in Coleman, Texas, April 2nd, 1926. His ancestors came to the United States from Germany and settled in Virginia, where his grandfather, Hezekiah Williams, was born. From Virginia moved to Mississippi, thence to Louisiana, thence to Texas in 1832. His father, Charles Williams, settled in Jefferson County, Texas, and with his family moved to San Saba County in 1854, thence to Bell County, Texas, in 1855, thence to Falls County, Texas, in 1857, where his father died in 1862. Sam H. Williams served four years in the Confederate Army at Galveston, Texas, a member of Co. No. 1, Cook's Regiment, with distinction. Charles Williams was the father of fifteen children, only one survive, viz: Judge M. M. Williams, of Coleman, Texas. Sam Houston Williams was united in holy wedlock with Miss Harrietta H. McDonald, daughter of the late Elder and Mrs. G. W. McDonald, in Bell County, Texas, January 6th, 1866, Elder William Thomas officiating. To this union were born three boys (all dying in infancy) and four girls, all married, and their names follow in their order: Dona W. Wood, Ettie W. Smith, Esther W. Copeland and Drue W. Stovall. Brother Williams with his family moved from Bell County, Texas, to Taylor County, Texas, thence to Coleman County, Texas, in 1881. Brother Williams received a good hope through grace in early life, and joined the Methodists. He became dissatisfied and joined Little Flock Church of Primitive Baptists, Bell County, Texas, and was baptized by the late Elder William Thomas, and was soon thereafter ordained as Deacon. Brother and sister Williams united with Hords Creek Church, in Coleman County, Texas, in 1896, where each of them led an exemplary life, standing firm for the Old School Baptist doctrine of salvation by grace through the atoning blood of Jesus. He filled the office of deacon with fidelity and ability. Later in years Hords Creek Church had a wave of conditional

time salvation to enter her borders and divide the church and mar her peace. Brother Williams stood firm for order with the Old School order against this new innovation. Later a local trouble came on (over order) and a second division came and brother Williams stood firm for order. Under the pastorate of Elder W. B. Sikes (who is a brother of Elder J. C. Sikes, internationally known) Hords Creek Church went into voluntary dissolution, letting out her members. Through age and infirmities he never used his letter, but remained firm in the doctrine and practice of the Old School Baptists to the end. Brother Williams had been an invalid for a number of years, but bore his afflictions with patience and christian fortitude, trusting in God's promises. His funeral was held at his late residence, in Coleman, Texas, his only brother and all his children save one being present, also his friends and neighbors came with uncovered heads to view the lifeless body of this great man. Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. R. Davis, of the New School, and Elder John Shipman, of the Old School, after which his body was conveyed to White Chappel Cemetery, near Coleman, and interred beside his wife, there to rest and await the call from heaven of our Lord to set his prisoners free from the tomb. Brother Williams was an exemplary man in all the walks of life. His children cared for him as children should care for their sainted father. I feel to make special mention of the care and sacrifice of his youngest daughter, Mrs. Drue Stovall, with whom he made his home, for her untiring efforts for the comfort of her father. The writer had known the deceased for more than four decades, and a more truly righteous man I never knew. We were almost a unit in all of our church work. To his children and grandchildren I commend his life worthy of emulation. May heaven's blessings rest upon the bereaved ones, is my prayer in Jesus' name.

Written by request of his children.

JOHN R. HAVEN.

Adda L. Rumbaugh was born in Clackmas County, Oregon, January 6th, 1866, and died April 20th, 1926, aged 60 years, 3 months and 14 days. Her father and mother E. T. T. and Hannah Fisher were old pioneers of Oregon, and both members of the Primitive Baptist Church, brother Fisher being clerk of the Siloam Association many years before his death, which occurred some twenty-five years ago. Brother and sister Fisher moved, with their family, near the present site of Albany, where the deceased was reared to womanhood. September 7th, 1899, she was married to Joseph A. Rumbaugh. At the time of her death their home was at Mist, Oregon. She passed away at the St. Vincent Hospital, following an operation for what is called cerebellar tumor, never regaining consciousness after the operation. She is survived by her husband and three children, two sons and one daughter: Walter F., of New Orleans, Helen L. and Fred D., of Mist, Oregon; also her aged mother, of Salem, Oregon; two sisters: Mrs. Josephine Crooks, of Goldendale, Washington, and Mrs. Orpha Conklin, of San Jose, California, and three brothers: Earl L. and Hugh G. Fisher, of Salem, and Fred D. Fisher, of Nantes, France. Mrs. Rumbaugh was not a member of any church, but was a firm believer in salvation by grace. The writer was called to conduct the funeral services, which were held at the undertaking parlors of J. P. Finley & Son, Fifth and Montgomery Streets, Portland, Oregon. Interment in the Rose City Cemetery. May the good Lord be with the bereaved family.

S. B. MOFFITT.

William Wiley Gordon was born in Bolivar, Missouri, February 11th, 1839. In his early life his father's family moved to Arkansas. In 1859 he went to the Colorado gold fields, and in 1863 came to Oregon, where he lived most of the time since he first came, devoting the first few years to fighting and later to farming. He was married to Priscilla S. Huffman November 29th, 1868, and to this union were born ten children, eight of whom are living; five are in California and three in Oregon. He never made a public profession of religion, but was a regular attendant at the services of the Old School Baptists. His wife is a faithful member of the church, and he always seemed glad to be at the meetings with her. He was a kind husband and father and his children respected him. He took special delight in telling his friends of the hardships of early life as a pioneer in the new country of his adoption. He was never heard to complain in any kind of hardship or tribulation, but bore the burden of life bravely, as discerning the blessedness of a future inheritance. He died April 4th, 1926, at his home, near Elgin, Oregon. The following day the writer tried to conduct the funeral services, by pointing the way of life and salvation as set forth in the atonement of Jesus Christ, after which the mortal remains were interred in the cemetery at Elgin. May the sustaining grace of our God comfort our aged and faithful sister, and bring the scattered children to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus.

C. W. BOND.

Miss Eliza Serviss, of South River, N. J., passed to her heavenly home, Sunday, March 14th, 1926. The funeral service was held at her late home at two o'clock, March 17th, and was conducted by Elder Emmett J. Case, of Plainfield, N. J., at one time her pastor. The text chosen for the occasion was the first verse of the twenty-third Psalm: "The Lord is my shepherd," &c. The theme: The gracious and eternal care of the divine Shepherd, dwelling espe-

cially upon the psalmist's expressions, "I shall not want," and, "I will fear no evil," "I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." Our Shepherd provides for all our wants, protects us from all danger, and safely leads us into his eternal fold. Two hymns were sung: "My Jesus, as thou wilt," and, "Face to Face." Miss Serviss was baptized in the year 1880, with ten others, by C. H. Woolston, pastor of the Tabernacle Baptists, of South River, N. J., later on she became dissatisfied with the doctrine that was contended for by that denomination, and on November 20th, 1911, she was baptized, by Elder Silas H. Durand, in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church of South River, N. J. In September, 1924, Miss Serviss passed through a very serious operation, and fears for her life were entertained by her friends at that time. She recovered remarkably from that ordeal, and appeared strong again, but was taken seriously ill about ten days before the end came. Her faith was strong in her Savior, and she was willing to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. She lived a consistent christian life, always thinking of others more than herself. She derived much strength and comfort from the precious word of God. We think of her as having gone home to be with her Lord.

Written by request of her former pastor, Emmett J. Case.

Sister **Ann McCravey,** wife of J. McCravey, and daughter of Henry and Rebecca Caps, departed this life February 4th 1926, at the age of 83 years. She was born in the State of Mississippi, and when quite young moved with her parents to Arkansas, where she grew to womanhood. Her father died in 1869, and she with her widowed mother moved to Upshur County, Texas, and in 1872 she was married to J. McCravey, who survives her. To that union were born five children: Mrs. Margaret Kimbrough, Mrs. Belle Gink, Samuel and James, one child dying when young. In 1870 she united with the Missionary Baptists, remaining with them until 1890, when she united with the Primitive Baptists at Mt. Zion, where she lived a faithful member. She was a dutiful wife, a loving mother and a good neighbor. She had been in ill health for about thirty-five years, and had lost her eyesight, and for about three years an invalid. Her suffering was excruciating, but she bore it with the patience of a saint of the redeemed of the Lord. She requested that Elder W. W. Slaughter conduct her funeral, which he did, and paid a beautiful tribute to her, and spoke comforting words to the bereaved, and to a large concourse of relatives and friends, after which all that was mortal was laid to rest in a cemetery near Gilmer, Texas, there to await the trump of the Lord, when he shall fashion them like unto his glorious body.

Written by her daughter,

(MRS.) MARGARET KIMBROUGH.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Elder George L. Weaver having changed his address from 749 McMakin Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio, to 1310 E. 112th St., Cleveland, Ohio, requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

George Waldrip, Ariz., $2.50; Simeon Hiltabrand, Ill., $3; L. Z. Ross, N. Y., $1; "A Friend," Okla, $1; J W. Corn, Mo., $2; C. M. Adams, Texas, $1.

MEETINGS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., commencing on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (June 2), and continuing three days. Those coming by train will take train leaving Broad Street Station, Philadelphia, at 3:25 p. m., and New York, at 3 p. m., arriving at Frenchtown at 5:18 p. m. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

O. R. KUGLER.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (9th, 10th and 11th), 1926. Those coming from and via New York city will take Erie R. R. Ferry foot of West 23rd Street, at 4:20 p. m., or the Erie R. R. Ferry foot of Chambers Street, at 4:30 p. m., for train leaving Jersey City, N. J., at 4:45 p. m., on Tuesday, June 8th, or Erie R. R. Ferry foot of Chambers Street, at 7:02 a. m., on Wednesday, June 9th, for train leaving Jersey City, at 7:30 a. m. Get tickets for Howells, N. Y. These trains are operated on Daylight Saving Time. Those coming from and via Kingston, N. Y., will take Ontario & Western R. R. train leaving Kingston at 1:57 p. m., on Tuesday, June 8th. Get tickets for Winterton, N. Y. This train is operated on Eastern Standard Time. Trains will be met and friends cared for. Those coming by automobile will go to the home of Mr. Fred Beyea (The Old Homestead) on arrival at New Vernon. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, sisters and friends.

R. LESTER DODSON, Moderator.

The Washington, Oregon and Idaho, three days Union Meeting, will convene with Mizpah Church, at

Touchet, Wash., beginning on Friday before the fourth Sunday in June, 1926. All are invited to attend.

WOODSON CUMMINS, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday of each month at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 459 E. 5th St., Riverside, Calif., and at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. 11th St., Claremont, Calif., on the first Sunday of each alternate month, beginning with January, and on every alternate month with brother Joseph Huffman, 128 Van Buren St., Arlington, Calif. Singing at 10:30 a. m. Preaching at 11 a. m. Lunch at the place of meeting, and continued services in the afternoon.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.
O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California.

C. G. MILLER.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City), Oregon every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Those coming by Railroad over the S. P. get off at Oregon City, take the elevator to the top of the hill, turn to your left, go one block east. Not later than 9:30 a. m. Private conveyance. Those coming on Oregon City Electric get off at 7th Street, take elevator near S. P. depot to top of the hill, turn to your left, go one block east to 7th St., as above stated.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

SUPPLY EXHAUSTED.

OUR supply of the book entitled "A Sketch of the Life of Joshua S. Corder" is exhausted, and we are unable to fill any more orders for said book. This work was not electrotyped, so we do not expect to have any more on sale at any time in the future.

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THE

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 94. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1926. NO. 7.

POETRY.

LOOK TO THE END.

Wait thou with patience! He whose love
For thee is everlasting, knoweth all.
These buffetings, so bitter, do but call
Grace, that hath richer deeps from him, to prove
His power to hold thee in thy greatest need.
Bitter indeed the cup thou drinkest, yet doth not he know,
If sweeter draught would bring thee nearer him,
How easily his hand could set thee free?
But nay, he says, "For this is given thee."
"Cast down, but not destroyed;" God's hand is strong;
Nor earth nor hell avail to pluck thee thence.
Do thou but wait dear heart; night may be long,
But morning surely cometh, though the sky
Hath yet no sign through all its darkened space.
Yet darkness shall not hide from him thy cry,
Nor thrust from lifted hands his swift-sent grace.
Endure thou, though the knotted scourge shall bruise;
Despise not thou the chastening, though he use
Things thou would'st else call mean, to work his will;
He for thy profit worketh all things still.
The rending nails must part the shrinking flesh,
Ere the victorious hands the palm can bear;
And thorns on patient forehead mark their place,
Ere yet the conqueror's crown that head can wear.
Be not dismayed, O heart, so tried and torn,
From thee let not sweet strength be fully shorn.
Thy God is with thee, though thou see him not;
His own are ne'er forgot.
So let not tired hands hang sadly down,
So let not heaviness and sorrow be
Thy short day's company.
'Tis but a little while, he saith, who knows
Each hidden conflict, each fierce battle now;
He knoweth well the rough set ways which run
Across the shrinking ground that holds thy life;
He knows the baffling questions which do set
Their many-sided weapons in thy path.
Measures and weights he hath,
Fashioned not as the world's, which wear and fret
The longing spirit, cramped and hedged about.
God's scales are set without the narrow bounds that limit worldly ken.
Not as thoughts of men are his whose vision grasps eternity;
Not as the thoughts of men, so doth his line
Span in its perfect measuring all thy days.
"Things which are seen,"—only the outward throws
Its grains within the world's swift balances.
God hasteth not, dear heart, his righteous hand,
Tireless and patient, worketh on unseen;
Worketh unseen—so doth he ever stand.
Each hidden line that through thy pathway goes
Of sun or shadow, pain or weariness,
Each silent sacrifice, self-denial,
Each secret, bitter step through ways of trial,
God's scales receive them all; not one shall be
Thrown out or lost when he shall succor thee.
Within his balances thy life is laid.
Dear heart, be not afraid!
The world says, "Loss, and unblessed cross and pain."
God says, "Unfading crown, and joy, and everlasting gain."

HE LEADETH ME.

"In pastures green? Not always; sometimes he
Who knoweth best in kindness leadeth me
In weary ways, where heavy shadows be,
Out of the sunshine warm, and soft, and bright,
Out of the sunshine, into the darkest night."

CORRESPONDENCE.

ORDER.

ORDER is heaven's first law, and perfect order is established through unity, which bringeth peace. When we scan the peaceful heavens above us and behold the great solar system, great worlds traveling through millions of miles of unmeasured space with more precision than has ever been attained by the most perfect chronometer which the highest skill of man has ever produced, that is order; and the mists rise and the rains fall; the trees and the flowers put forth and blossom and bear their copious fruits; the seasons come and go, bringing seedtime and harvest, year after year and century after century, this is order. All this order comes without restraint or confusion, through the great power of magnetism, or by being attracted or drawn and kept by the unity of the power of God, and in these things there is no strife for the mastery; but where the selfishness of human nature enters into control the very thought of self seeks an unfair advantage, and the attempt is made to drive instead of draw, then unity ceases and disorder and confusion creep in like a thief in the night, destroying our fellowship and robbing us of our peace, for unity brings order and peace; but majorities bring envy, hatred, disorder and confusion, and majorities are instituted by man, for nowhere in holy writ are majorities authorized to control the affairs of the church, for majorities are too often attained through strife; therefore no action in the visible church should be founded upon a majority, for only where there is unity can perfect peace prevail. Neither unity nor order can ever be long maintained through impatient and hasty action, but through patience and long-suffering, gentleness, believing all and enduring all, which is charity, the greatest among the blessed three. When Peter came to the Savior and said, "How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?" Jesus answered, "I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven." This answer was not for Peter alone, but was for every member of the redeemed family of God everywhere for all time. You will recollect that at the last supper, although the blessed Savior knew who would betray him, even Judas was not forbidden to remain, and although Jesus knew that Peter would deny him thrice before the cock crew Peter was there, and breaking the bread and giving it to the twelve was only a symbol of that which he did there and which was to follow. But he said, Do these things in remembrance of me. He took the water and the towel with which he girded himself and washed his disciples' feet, the most humble and the most humiliating position which a friend or a servant could imagine or assume, and when he came to Peter, Peter said, Lord, doest thou wash my feet? He said, What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter. He was there giving his followers for all time a lesson in humility, forgiveness, love and charity, through which order may ever be maintained, and which we should ever desire to maintain, and which example we should ever desire to emulate, and with this kind of order there would be no striving for the mastery, as then the desire of each among us would be to be counted as the least of all. Then all would be unity and peace, and order would prevail. Then again, at the crucifixion of the Savior, when he was reviled and buffeted of men and spat upon, and though they gave him the bitter cup to

drink, he said, "Lay not this sin to their charge;" and again, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Let us here ponder and question ourselves, are we following in his footsteps? His was a perfect example, are we emulating it? In his life and example we see that forgiveness, although not asked, was freely given, and in the visible church to-day where there is confusion and division, may it not be the result of trying to enforce order by laws laid down by men, which laws are of their own conception and invention, and which are the result of the decision of majorities, and not through unity nor founded upon any authority laid down in holy writ, nor in accord with the teaching and the example of our Savior Jesus Christ? For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that we cannot do the things that we would. But be not dismayed, for though the outward man perish the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. You will recollect that Joseph through all the trials of being sinned against by his brethren came forth more than conqueror, and while these trials brought with them lean years, when there was no corn, all of Joseph's brethren were forced to go down into Egypt on account of the famine, and Joseph forgave all, supplied them with corn and put their money back in their sacks. He still had fellowship for them and he restored order, for he forgave them all without the asking. But he said, Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. There was reproof, but he gave God all the glory. While we deplore the evils which bring about these famines and this leanness, it is all in the eternal purpose of God, and though it may be meant for evil God means it for good, for all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to his purpose, and while we cannot see his face we can see his back parts as he passes by, and are then brought to see the blessing, and to exclaim, Surely his mercy and goodness have followed me all the days of my life. Let us bear in mind that in God's dealings with a child of grace that he draws him, for Jesus said, No man can come to me except the Father which sent me draw him; and again, And he that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. Also, that all the unity in this great universe is brought about by being drawn or attracted, also that the great Shepherd of the sheep calleth them by name and leadeth them out. He does not drive them out, they are drawn; that he not only leadeth them out and they follow him, but that througout his life here in the flesh he led them in service, for his whole life was a life of service. He led them in poverty, he was born in the lowly manger and later said, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. He led them in humility, for although he was God incarnate he washed his disciples' feet. He led them in trials and afflictions, for he suffered every human pain and trod the winepress alone, as for the people there was none with him. He led them in forgiveness, for he forgave those who betrayed him, and said, Lay not this sin to their charge. He led them in charity, he prayed for them who hated him and those who despitefully used him. He led them in mercy, for he healed the sick and led the blind, and said, I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, their sins and their iniquities

will I remember no more. He led them in love, for he died to redeem his people from their sins, and said, Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. Therefore may we through service, mercy, forgiveness, charity and love establish unity, and through unity order, and thereby endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

ALFRED TITUS.

HODGE CITY, Kans., April 25, 1925.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—A few numbers back in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES some one asked for a letter on Genesis ii. 9, 16, 17, and as I was somewhat interested in this Scripture I sat down immediately and wrote a letter, and was then afraid to mail it, fearing it was all vanity and vexation of the Spirit, but now since no one else has felt like writing on this Scripture I will mail it, subject to your approval, and if you find it to be of the flesh cast it aside and pray for me that I may not grieve the Spirit of God.

With the exception of the first three verses we find this chapter to be a summary of the creation of God, more fully recorded in the first chapter, and the first three verses of this chapter, in which God testifies he was well pleased with his work. In the ninth verse we find that God had already created and placed in order all things; the garden was already set with trees attractive to the eye, and also those good for food. "The tree of life also in the midst of the garden." The word "also," which according to Webster means "in like manner," or "in addition to," would imply that the tree of life was in addition to the original setting of the garden. We find this tree only mentioned in two books of the Bible (Genesis and Revelation) and in both books I believe it means the Spirit of God's salvation, Jesus Christ. In Revelation ii. 1–7, John, while blessed with the Spirit of revelation and writing to the church of Ephesus, said, "To him that overcometh will I [God] give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." Also Revelation xxii. 14: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." This, according to my mind, could mean nothing but the clothing of the weary pilgrims with his robes of righteousness, the gift of a never-ending life, purchased by the blood of the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." "And the tree of knowledge of good and evil." The word "and" connecting this sentence to the foregoing one would make it also a portion of that which was added. In the second verse of this chapter under consideration we find, "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made," and in the third verse, "And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it." Now, although the Scripture does not say so in plain words, would it be unreasonable to suppose that God in the sanctification of the seventh day established with them (Adam and Eve) the manner of worship that seemed good in his own eyes? If so, any variation from the pattern, be it ever so small, would render it imperfect, and therefore could not be accepted by the perfect God. Thus I believe the worship of God was established, the pattern given, and their adherence thereto required just the same as with Noah, Moses, Solomon and all whom God had chosen to perform his works. Then we could justly call this "tree" the church, the bride, or the Lamb's wife, could we not? Now we

have before us the man and his wife, all things: that which is beautiful, those good for food, and things spiritual. In the sixteenth verse God has authorized them to partake of that which was good for food, but in the seventeenth verse he has withheld that which is spiritual, saying, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: [Please note "and," "for," two connecting links.] for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The first sentence gives the command, the second the penalty. The twenty-fifth verse reads, "And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed." Naked, says Webster, means bare, also having no means of defense or protection against an enemy's attack. As I view man in his primitive state he was pure and holy and without blame, but did lack the power necessary to resist the attack of the serpent, or adversary of God's word, as is clearly shown in the following chapter, but just why he was so constructed I do not know. They were not ashamed, because they had not yet sinned, nor received the knowledge of it, therefore their eyes were closed to the terror that accompanies evil acts. Knowledge comes only by way of comparison; for instance, could we measure our own evil acts except they were reflected in the lives of others? If all was heat how could we understand the word cold? If all was light how could we measure its true value without first being plunged headlong into deathlike darkness and all hope of escape cut off? If all was joy and happiness how could we weigh the crushing grief and sorrow that is lodged within when we helplessly see our infant, our first-born son, or a long loved companion, close their eyes in death? After we have experienced both, then, and not until then, can we measure the beauty of one, the agony of the other. Was not this in the mind of the serpent when he said, "Then your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil"? There is a vast difference of opinion as to the real act by which sin entered into the world, but I believe a careful search of the Scripture will reveal the fact that it could have been nothing more nor less than improper worship of God, or to make a long story short, the help-your-self method practiced by Nadab and Abihu, Leviticus x. 1; the children of Israel, Numbers, fourteenth and sixteenth chapters; Saul, 1 Samuel xiii. 8–10, and 1 Samuel xv. 8–10, and so carefully outlined by the devil while tempting Jesus, and has now become the popular idea of the day, not waiting for the authority from the Giver of all good and perfect gifts, but taking upon themselves the task of moulding their own salvation, whose watchword is, "Save yourself before it is too late." But whatever the act might have been it brought with it the sense of shame and the knowledge of evil; their eyes being opened they could measure the corruptness of their sinful acts in the transgression of God's holy law as never before, and they knew they were naked and helpless before God. My dear reader, was there ever a time like this with you? and did you try to hide yourself with the works of your own hands (fig leaves)? and when the voice of God came walking in the garden in the cool of the day were you not afraid and tried to hide as Adam did? Had the Judge read the sentence of death to you then would you have questioned his authority or righteousness in doing so? Yes, we can all say with Adam, And I was afraid, because I was naked (helpless.) The serpent was also

speechless and accepted the penalty assessed by the most high Judge, the Court from which there is no appeal, as final. We at times eat our bread in sorrow and may feel as though we were cast away, but with the "still small voice" comes renewed courage, and a hope that God in his mercy has removed from us the fig leaf garments and has given us one of his own workmanship. Let us glory only in the wonderful work of God.

This letter has become too long already, but let us stroll for one moment more through God's creation, and standing beside the sea we ask, Did God create all these fish, and "every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly"? Do not some of the large ones swallow some of the small ones? Is this indisposition hereditary, or developed within themselves by the cultivation of selfish creed? As the case may be, the little ones suffer loss, do they not, for they are not vomited out the third day as the whale did Jonah? The fowls of the air, were they all created by him? "And every winged fowl after his kind?" Then who taught the hawks and owls to prey upon the chicken and weaker fowls? The serpents that bring the shiver to our bodies of clay as we stroll through the meadows and pastures, do they gather their food outside of God's creation? The wolf, does she still retain her primitive disposition, or has she become degenerate? After she has destroyed and scattered a flock of lambs is she suddenly seized with a deep sense of shame and repentance or acute indigestion? Does she not first satisfy her own creed and then nourish her own young at the expense of the flock? Is man just animal by nature, with superior mental powers and subject to spiritual gifts? At best he is a peculiar being, and less than nothing compared with God. "Every purpose is established by counsel; and with good advice make war."

May the merciful God be mindful to me, a sinner.

R. L. DAVIS.

BATH, Maine, Jan. 27, 1926.

DEAR SISTER NELLIE:—I have thought since my experience came to me how I would love to write it for the SIGNS, but my courage fails me each time, for I do not know that I could write it any better than I could tell it when you asked me last Saturday to tell it. Coming home I thought how little I told of it, so I am going to write it to you. I would like to tell it to the glory of God, to whom all praise is due. As a child I used to love to have the time come when the Old School Baptists would come to our home, and as I grew older to hear father preach and declare the truth, hear him tell his experience, and often thought, Will I have an experience anything like his? and how will it come to me? I felt sure when it came that the love of all worldly pleasures would be taken from me; not of my own will, but of God's. I have played a large part in the pleasures of this world since I came to Bath, thirty years ago, but not before. Of late I began to ask myself, Where do all the orders, card parties and dancing take me? and began to get tired of them; they grew to look silly to me. When talking on the subject of religion, to me the Old School Baptists' belief was the only one that gave a person a chance in this world. After mother went, March 22nd, 1922, I felt an unrest in myself, and that I was of no account to myself or to any one else. I had often thought I could do better and live a better life, but things would come up to put me out, and I

would say, I will not do that way again, but when it came again I was just the poor weak-minded sinner, only that I felt worse to think I had made a "vow to God" and could not keep it. I felt so bad I thought I was sick. I was melancholy, and the doctors said my nerves were in a bad state. The doctors did me no good, for it was not the earthly physician I needed, but I had not been brought to the place to see it. Then I thought it was on account of losing mother. It was a great loss, for to know her was to love her. For a year I did not feel I wanted the pleasure I had taken part in. As I felt no better, I was advised to go out and forget myself and I would feel better, so I tried it and went a great deal. I was ashamed when I looked over my diary that I had joined so many worldly pleasures. They did not help, and after a while I began to hate to go, and would say I would never go again, then do the same thing over again. By and by it seemed to be a sin; everywhere I went and everything I did seemed a sin. I did not want to do those things, but it seemed almost that I was driven to do them; only God knew the state of my mind. Perhaps that is why I hate the the things I once loved. "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." My mind was in such a state of torment I began to stay at home, and thought that if I got out of the orders I might feel better, and then they could not ask me to do the things I felt were a sin. I sent for a card, but instead I got a committee of four asking me to withdraw my request. I never had told any one my feelings, so I asked one of them what religion was? They told me it was not as it used to be; that I was old-fashioned. I asked them to explain this: "And be not conformed to this world: but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."—Rom. xii. 2. I withdrew my letter, but did not go much. Then I began to hunt for a place to hear the word of God preached. I would look at the "church notices," but they ran this way: "A through ticket to heaven," "Putting one over on God." I said that was blasphemy. I asked one of the members why they put them in that way instead of using a text from the Bible. He said that was old-fashioned, and for me to get out of that way of thinking, for times were advancing. Again I wondered if I was wrong. Why were everything I did and everywhere I went such a sin to me? Why could I not do as others did? They went to the "Ladies' Aid" and "Sewing Circle" from the "church" and seemed to enjoy it, but I could not. The sermons the ministers preached were not deep enough; they seemed to be sliding over the outside. I wanted them to preach to the sinner, for it was at this time I was being made to see what a sinner was, and words cannot express the agony of mind and soul I went through during the winter of 1923 and summer of 1924. I would awake in the night so frightened, I did not know what at. I have thought that if I had only gone to father and told him of my fears he could have said something that would have been a comfort to me, but I was afraid to. I might have thought I was going to get through it without telling, but what did God say to Moses? "Who hath made man's mouth?" and he was to open mine at his own time. After father went I found a paper in which was a sermon he preached when the little old meeting-house at Bowdoinham was rededicated, and as I read it I was made to see what a sinner I was; still there was comfort there, for it said, "If you have been

called to weep, then you have walked in the footsteps of Jesus." It was then that I cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner." I did not see how God could forgive me, for I was too great a sinner. I wrote sister Attie Curtis, and her letters were a comfort; they had that joyful sound. I started going to meeting again, but had the same trouble, for there was nothing for a sinner like me. I felt that if I could get to Bowdoinham and tell them all would be well, but I was not allowed that comfort. That was a hard summer. I would awake in the night with the fear I had waited too long, and that I was too late. I found the Lord is merciful, for a way was made for me to go to Whitefield to the Association, where I told my troubles to the listening ear of God's people, who were so kind as to take one so vile as I to live among them. I cannot tell the peace that came to me that day. I can only say, Wonderful. There is something in my heart words cannot express. He brought me up out of that pit of miry clay, placed my feet upon a rock, put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God. It is as I thought, all the love for worldly things are passed out of my life. I feel to say as Paul, "For I am determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." I feel the Lord has dealt kindly with this poor sinner. I can say I love the brethren, and I pray I may walk in the light of his countenance.

With much love from your unworthy sister in hope,

RACHEL BEAL POTTER.

HOPEWELL, N. J.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed please find check for two dollars for one year's subscription to the SIGNS.

Faith, hope and charity, of these three charity is the greatest. Charity vaunteth not itself. Charity endureth forever. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." Charity is love.

"Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above,
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

We love God because he first loved us. If God be for us, who can be against us? Be instant in season and out of season. Be kindly affectioned one to another. Do unto others as you would have others do unto you. Love your neighbor as yourself. Strive for peace at all times. Abstain from all appearance of evil. Be more Christlike; ask him to make you more humble. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Have I been led by the Spirit of God? The flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh; one is contrary to the other. In my flesh there dwells no good thing. In the fifty-seven years I have had a name with the dear brethren there have been times if I had been silent I would have made no trouble. How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. In unity there is strength, there is power, there is love. Peace I give unto you; peace I leave with you. "A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth. It is better to go to the house of mourn-

ing than to go to the house of feasting." The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty, he will save his people from their sins. He is a God of truth, without iniquity, just and right is he, a perfect God, no guile is found in his mouth. Oh that he would lead me and guide my steps, both day and night. May I ever look to him for guidance. His throne is in heaven and the earth is his footstool. I am not ashamed to own my Lord nor to confess his name. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honor, glory, dominion, power and majesty. We are kept by the power of God through faith ready to be revealed in the last time. We have a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother. We have this promise: that he will never leave nor forsake one of his little ones. He is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind.

From your unworthy brother,

D. L. BLACKWELL.

SALT ROCK, W. Va., May 14, 1926.

DEAR EDITORS:—The first week in December I wrote you to stop sending my paper, but suppose you never received the letter, as the paper has come on to me regularly. I was so badly afflicted I could not read anything with satisfaction, but I have lived and suffered all this long while, and am yet badly afflicted with neuralgia in my breast and side. My dearest friends on earth, and the very salt of earth, your dear writings have cheered my poor sad and hungry soul, every word you say is truth, peace and joy to me, and I can say amen to every word, and bid you all farewell until we meet above. I look and long for my departure, and daily hope to go to rest. My age is nearly eighty-two years.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by brother D. L. Topping.)

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Black Rock Church, at Butler, Maryland, May, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—For many years past it has been our custom to address you with what is called a Circular Letter, and as we desire to be found walking in the old paths we feel that it is good to continue in so doing. Man may and does change often, but our God changes not. Since this is true there cannot be any change in the worship of God nor in the order of his house. You will remember that the Lord spoke to Ezekiel concerning the order of the house of God. In the forty-fourth chapter, fifth verse, we find the following: "And the Lord said unto me, Son of man, mark well, and behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, all that I say unto thee concerning all the ordinances of the house of the Lord, and all the laws thereof; and mark well the entering in of the house, with every going forth of the sanctuary." In this we see God, law and order; that is, they are inseparable. If an Elder should be a very able and forceful speaker, and holding the doctrine of Jesus, that which is most dear to the child of God, and yet not be found walking in the order of the Lord's house, then his preaching is in vain and can be of no profit to God's dear children. From such an one withdraw. In the nineteenth chapter of Acts we find that Paul at Ephesus found disciples who had been baptized by John. We note that they were disciples, but this of itself did not and could not fit them to become members of the church of God. They had been baptized unto repentance. This was not in accord with the order of God's

house. The Spirit of the Lord was mighty upon the apostles. Hence he must see to it that the law and order of God's house must always be kept as the Lord had commanded, and at no time do we find him preaching or teaching any doctrine to the neglect of another, but that it is all one glorious and grand inspiration of God to his dear children and nothing is to be refused. In the twentieth chapter of Acts, verse twenty-seven, he said, "I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." Then there was not any portion or part of the doctrine of Christ that he did not glory in; nothing left out. In the ninth chapter of Romans it seems to us that some of the brethren were not established in believing in God's all-sovereign power. Be that as it may, it was needful for them, as it is for all God's people in all ages. "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." Then all events are under his control and work out to the fulfillment of his all-wise decree, whether they be the rising or falling of nations or the falling of the drops of dew that revive the tender plant. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Coming to Hebrews vi. 1: "Leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God." Striving to obtain a more perfect knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Not laying again the foundation of dead works. That is, not putting a stumbling-block in your brother's way, but as children of the heavenly King be found worshiping God in the beauty of holiness, and show forth your Father's praise in love, seeking after things that make for peace, for the upbuilding of Zion. So go on to seek to know the Lord, and practice what you know, that the whole body of Christ might be edified. "Leaving the principles of the doctrine." It is not that we will have no further need for them, but to continue along this one line to the neglect of all others would not be declaring all of the counsel of God, but only in part. All Scripture that is given by the inspiration of God is profitable for the Lord's people in all ages, that they may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. To some of the brethren he wrote, "I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." To the Jew, and to the Gentile, and to all men. The apostle does not mean that this saving power was within himself, for he nowhere teaches this. He is here speaking to the believer, to that little one who has not been brought to see all things in the same light that the apostle has. He would not cast such an one away, but was found striving that he might become more fully instructed in the things pertaining to the Father's kingdom, that joy and peace might abound throughout Zion, and to that end let us now draw near, that our joys may be full and the oneness that is found alone in Jesus may be ours to enjoy, that we together may be built up in God's most holy faith.

Dear brethren and sisters, we submit the above for your consideration, trusting that the Lord has been our guide in what we feel to be the truth. May the God of all peace be with you now and for evermore, is our desire.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.
F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.
E. A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

(Written by Deacon P. M. Sherwood.)

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Rock Springs Church, in Lancaster Co., Pa., May 26th, 27th and 28th, 1926, to the churches composing the same, sends greetings.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We may not be able to confine what we write strictly in bounds of what should be considered as a Circular Letter, but trust the impressions we have are given of the Lord, as we have been exercised seriously for a long time in the matter, for our consideration. Many of us have for over half a century attended and looked forward to these our annual associations with much pleasure and joy, when it was made manifest that we loved the assembly of the saints, and we could all feel to say, in beholding the beauty of the Lord, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." We recall that back in those early days, the days of our first love, that our ministering servants were more numerous, and we are compelled to believe that they manifested more interest in our associations, as they were more regular in the attendance of them than most of our ministers of the present day. There was that coming together, and apparently of one mind and of one accord, and in the spirit of humility, "with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."—Eph. iv. 2, 3. The continuance of our associations now, as in the past, depends upon the attendance of our ministers and the interest and spirit they manifest in them, and in the love and fellowship for each other. "If we say that we have fellowship with him [the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ], and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."—1 John i. 6, 7. During the past ten years there have been events which have done much to mar the pleasure and sweet enjoyment of our associations and cause many good brethren who love peace and harmony to look forward to them with apprehension for the future. We are now brought to the Scripture which has impressed us so deeply the past year: "I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you, for though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Wherefore, I beseech you, be followers of me."—1 Cor. iv. 14–16. Also Heb. xii. 1, 2, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Beloved brethren, cannot we truly say with the psalmist, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it"?—Psalms cxxxix. 6. We humbly admit, we trust, that it is with fear and trembling we venture to call upon you to consider these sacred Scriptures, but Paul assures us that "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." What Paul was as an apostle at Corinth, he is the same today to the church of Christ, as an apostle, as an instructor and as a father, he says,

"For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Wherefore, I beseech you, be ye followers of me. For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus [a minister, a man of God], who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church." Therefore he says, "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." "And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men ["of men" is supplied] above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another." "But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will; and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power." "What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?" He comes as a father, in love, and with all longsuffering he reproves, and with a rod, the Word of God, as spoken of by David, when he says, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me," for "the Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." Paul was a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, though he abased himself, in that he might be exalted. The preaching that has the effect of taking root downward beareth fruit upward, and we are made to kiss the rod and eat of the fruits of righteousness, and say, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Paul in his humility says, "Wherefore be ye followers of me." In what way are we to follow Paul? It is when we feel to say from the workings of the Spirit of truth, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief;" and, "By the grace of God I am what I am;" and, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." It was by grace he was enabled to say he was saved as the chief of sinners, and by grace he could say he was less than the least of all saints. It was by the grace of God that Saul's name was changed to Paul, which signifies "little," and Paul never was disposed to object to the name, and neither do we feel to object feeling like him, when clothed and in our right mind. At these associations we like to hear our gifted brethren in the ministry preach in the same spirit as commended by Paul. Associations are good when properly conducted. If it were not for these good meetings there are many of our able ministers in the past, as well as in the present day and time, that we should never have had the sweet privilege of hearing preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, which has been so edifying and comforting to God's hungry poor. In the past many of us know that through the visiting of our most able and gifted ministers from the north and from the south to our associations, that many of our churches here in the east have called them and been served by them as pastors, and their labors have been blessed of the Lord. The Lord has blessed these meetings in many ways, as he is the giver of every good gift, and this is one of the ways he works, in sending his servants

into all the world to preach the gospel and in feeding his sheep. But at these associations, and at all times, it is well to suffer the word of admonition, or exhortation, which your attention has been called to as above. "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us," &c. These witnesses Paul speaks of, by which we are surrounded, are the holy men of old. He speaks of the faith of Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and Moses, and these, all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better things for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. Therefore Paul included himself by saying, "Let us lay aside every weight." He does not say here what these weights are, but he has mentioned many of them in his epistles. He knew that a word to the wise was sufficient, as he learned from his own experience when he says, "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."—2 Cor. xii. 7–9. Evidently this thorn was a great weight, and while he had no assurance that it should depart from him, he did have the comforting assurance that the Lord's grace was sufficient, and he was made to realize the Lord's strength was made perfect in his weakness. When we examine ourselves may we not find that some of these weights we are to lay aside are "malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings"?—1 Peter ii. 1. Paul speaks of debate and deceit, and may we mention faultfinding and jealously, and may not some of these be the sins that so easily beset us? We heard a dear brother in the ministry once confess that his greatest fault was faultfinding, and that he had tried to lay it aside, as it was a thorn in the flesh. When we come together we should endeavor to lay aside our personal differences, and avoid strife and contention. Paul says, "Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife, and some also of good will." If we walk worthy the vocation wherewith we are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, and endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, there will be no occasion for friction, misunderstanding or explanations as to why a certain brother has not preached during the meeting, or excuses for any one to make for their conduct in order to be excused. Beloved brethren, we must remember and consider reverently, that it is Paul, as an apostle of Jesus Christ, who is speaking unto us as a father unto his children in the gospel of Christ Jesus, and we have been brought to a knowledge of it by experience and the teaching of the Holy Spirit, if not deceived, and it is the truth nevertheless, that "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation." He says, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by

us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." "We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." "Giving no offense in anything, that the ministry be not blamed: but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonment, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live: as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." When these things are considered with understanding of the truth, and to know your high calling in Christ Jesus, who has counted you worthy to put you in the ministry, and to all who have been brought to know or trust they are new creatures in Christ, and we have the promise of being heirs, and joint-heirs with Christ Jesus, may we not say with the apostle, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God"? In order that we should be able to run the race that is set before us, and to look unto Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith, it is necessary that we should have a clear vision in order to look, and that is by an eye of faith, and by an eye of faith we are enabled to see clearly how to lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and in this way we are enabled to see our own faults, and discover in that way we have a beam in our own eye, and that only a mote in a brother's eye, and as James says, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed," and then in running or pursuing this race, or course, we can walk together and sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, see eye to eye, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, and of one accord be brought into his banqueting-house (the church) and his banner over us is love; and then we are enabled to lay aside every weight; to put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness; then we can follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another, "and above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness."—Col. iii. 14.

JOHN G. EUBANKS, Mod.
C. W. VAUGHN Ass't Mod.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.
J. B. MILLER, Ass't Clerk.

NOTICE.

Providence permitting, we expect preaching, by Elder H. C. Ker, in the meetinghouse at Oak Woods, (North Berwick) Maine, the third Sunday in July, at 10:30 a. m., and 2:30 p. m., Standard Time. An invitation to all lovers of the truth is extended.

JOSEPH HALL.

BROTHER A. P. Shelburne, of 6346 Parnell Avenue (Phone Wentworth 2860), Chicago, Ill., requests us to state in the SIGNS that he would like to meet all the Old School Baptists living in that city.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1926.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

DENOMINATIONS.

Many times I bear you in mind
And many thoughts from your store-house I find,
From the treasury given you to disperse,
And would I could conversation rehearse.

But now I've a question to propose,
Hoping it may past remarks expose,
So I'll refer back to a conversation
Held at Frying Pan, on "denomination."

Remember you that brother Spindle and I
Had each asked of you an explanation,
And you defined, to my comfort at least,
"Denomination," that proved a feast.

Still, I don't recall all that explanation,
So I send you a text on "denomination,"
And ask you to write it for the "Signs,"
For I'm sure 'twill feed the readers' minds.

I enjoyed it so, and I wish that your pen
Might retrace about what you told us then,
For the substance of it I'm sure you retain,
And is well worth printing again and again.

I hope, dear brother, this is not an intrusion
And that you'll remember the time and allusion
To other sects spoken of in connection,
That you remarked "Baptists" have a distinction.

It helped me so, it may help others, too,
I can see no harm that all have your view,
So I'm bold to request it as a text
If you are able to write for the next.

(MRS.) RHODA LOUISE COOPER.
UNION, New Jersey.

In trying to follow out the sister's request, it is true we do remember the conversation to which she alludes. It would, however, be as impossible for us to reconstruct exactly that conversation as it would be for us to create a world. At best, we can but write down here some of the thoughts which have been ours regarding the wide distinction which chasm-like exists and has always existed between the true Baptist Church and all other so-called churches and religious organizations and institutions. In this article, let it be understood that whenever we use the term "Baptists" or "Baptist Church," we mean only those Baptists of the Primitive or Old School faith and order, for we do not recognize that any other than Baptists of the Old School have any right to the term "Baptist." Others have forfeited their right to the name by their gross departures from the doctrine and order of the Baptists of the days of Jesus and of his apostles. This may seem like bigotry, but we cannot help it. We do affirm that the true Baptist Church is to be found in this present age only among the primitive or old school faith and order. These alone hold to the doctrine and order as prescribed in the inspired Scriptures of the New Testament. It used to be, a hundred and fifty or more years ago, that the name "Baptist" meant but one thing, and that thing was then just exactly what Old School Baptists stand for now: salvation by grace and grace alone. But during the past century and a half, Baptists became so divided and subdivided that the name came to stand for almost anything and a mantle to cover all kinds of sectarian sins. The International Cyclopedia gives a dozen different subdivisions of Baptists existing in the United States at the present time. Outside of the one thing of baptism by immersion, these have no right whatever to the name "Baptist," for, with the exception of the Old School or Primitive Baptists, they are all of them distinctly

Arminian in their preaching and practice. The one main distinguishing feature of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the one feature which embraces all and every principle of the doctrine of God our Savior, is that the salvation of the elect church of God is by grace first last and all the way through. No body of people in this day and time, aside from the Old School Baptists, are contending for this doctrine of salvation by grace and wholly by grace. It is the one mark which more than any other one thing distinguishes the true church from all other religious bodies or denominations. No person with an enlightened understanding can possibly read the Scriptures of the New Testament and fail to grasp the great truth of salvation for the elect wholly by the free and unmerited grace of God; and no body of people preaching any other doctrine than this can expect, nor ought they to expect, to be recognized as the true church of Jesus Christ. If we are to know religious professors by their works, there can be no surer way to judge them than by their confession. If they therefore, confess that which is antagonistically opposed to the teachings of Christ and his apostles, they must expect to be branded as deceivers and falsifiers. We cannot recognize them nor fellowship them if they advocate that which the Savior himself and his apostles did not. They must, therefore, be accursed so far as we are concerned. Let them be Anathema Maranatha. (1 Cor. xvi. 22.) That which proves Old School Baptists to be in line with Christ and his apostles is that we are to-day preaching and believing the same things taught anciently by them, and that we are the only people so doing at this present time. They came to be called Baptists at the first because they were baptizers; that is, they immersed in water their candidates for church membership. John who baptized Jesus was called "the Baptist" because he was a baptizer or an immerser in water. He was the first Baptist of whom we have any record. Jesus commanded his disciples to baptize believers in water, thus making them all baptists. But if any one thinks he can hold to immersion and preach any other doctrine whatsoever than that which Christ and the apostles preached, and still be called a Baptist, such an one is in error. It takes vastly more than mere water-baptism to make one a Baptist. There must in priority, of necessity, be a baptism from above, a baptism of the Holy Spirit sent upon the believer by the risen and exalted Head of the church, Christ Jesus himself. Men can turn out Arminians by their thousands, but it takes God to make a Baptist. All the various denominations of the protestants and Catholic religious worlds to-day are distinctly Arminian in their teachings and tone, all of them without exception worship some phase of the idol "free-will." The true Baptist is not, and never has been "protestant," and it is a mistake for him to think of himself as a "protestant." His spiritual lineage goes much farther back than the days of the Protestant Reformation. All of the various protestant denominations of this present day had their inception and rise during the days of the Reformation when Martin Luther, John Calvin and many other bold spirits of that time revolted against the Catholic church and protested against its teachings and practices. For these reasons, these protesters were called "protestants." The Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcopalians and other religious bodies of that genus all had their rise in the days of the Reformation when a great and widespread revulsion against Catholi-

cism swept over Europe giving birth to these protesting bodies. But if Baptists think so little of their splendid heritage as to consider themselves on a par with these offshoots of Romanism, we feel sorry for them. As these came out from Romanism, and are unmistakably the daughters of Rome, the day will some time come when these wandering daughters shall return to their ancient mother and be again nestled fondly in her bosom. Baptists, however, for their origin go away back beyond the Reformation and back beyond the first establishment of the Catholic regime, to the very days when Christ walked this earth and was baptized by John in Jordan. Not that we mean John's baptism to have been gospel baptism, but that he was the first "baptizer." At the very time when Luther and Calvin were protesting against Romanism, Baptists were in Europe then preaching salvation by grace, and had been so doing ever since the days of the apostles. Baptists are an affirming people, not merely protesting ones. We should hate to spend our lives merely protesting. We must affirm, we must be positive. It does not satisfy true Baptists to be merely negative. Baptists do now and always have affirmed the illimitable sovereignty of Almighty God, they affirm his predestination and foreknowledge to be as boundless as his sovereignty, they affirm salvation to be wholly free to all his elect chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world on the one and only basis of grace and grace alone; they affirm the resurrection of the dead and the final and unfailing preservation of the saints to glorification at the right hand of God. True Baptists have a noble and splendid spiritual heritage, the only religious body of people on earth today that are the spiritual heirs of the apostolic church. All other so-called religious denominations were spawned by their mother, Catholic Rome, and will eventually return to her, even now they are making overtures to her in every conceivable way. There have been several historians who were haters of Baptists and yet who who were honest enough to confess that their origin went back beyond the Reformation. For instance, early in the nineteenth century, the king of Holland appointed two learned men to examine into the origin and history of the Dutch Baptists and to report to him. Both of these men were members of the Dutch Reformed Church, not Baptists at all. One was professor of theology at the University of Groningnen, the other was the royal chaplain. These men after due research and study reported their findings to the king in 1819. Here is what they reported: "The Baptists may be considered as the only christian community which has stood since the days of the apostles, and as a christian society which has preserved pure the doctrine of the gospel through all ages. The notion of the Catholics that their communion is the most ancient is erroneous." Is not this strong testimony for Bible Baptists from the pens of outsiders? Mosheim, the learned historian of the Lutheran Church, a man who hated Baptists, had the good grace to acknowledge that the true origin of Baptists is hidden in the depths of antiquity and is, of consequence, as he said, extremely difficult to ascertain. He goes on to say that before the rise of Luther and Calvin, there lay concealed in almost all the countries of Europe, particularly in Bohemia, Moravia, Switzerland and Germany, many persons who adhered tenaciously to the doctrine that the kingdom of Christ, or visible church which he established upon earth, was an

assembly of true and real saints, and ought, therefore, to be inaccessible to the wicked and unrighteous, and further that this visible church of Christ has nothing to do with all those institutions which human prudence suggests, to oppose the progress of iniquity or to correct and reform transgressors. We ask, is not this exactly what Bible Baptists to-day believe? And this testimony, you must remember, comes from a Baptist hater. The Waldenses of the Alps Mountains in Switzerland, northern Italy and southern France, during the middle ages, were true Bible Baptists. They believed in baptism by immersion for believers only, and in their confession of faith, they state, "In him (Christ) all the fullness of the Godhead dwells and that by him alone we know the Father." "We believe in the Holy Spirit as the comforter who creates us anew unto good works, and from whom we receive the knowledge of the truth." Dr. Alexis Munston says, "The Waldenses of the Alps are in our view primitive christians or inheritors of the primitive church. It is not they who separated from Catholicism, but Catholicism which separated from them." Yet, Dr. Munston himself was not a Baptist. Nobody can possibly accuse any of the above historians of being unduly biased in favor of Baptists. In conclusion, therefore, we affirm Old School Baptists not to be protestants, but to be the present spiritual heirs of the apostolic church. They have never had any quarrel with Catholicism inasmuch as Baptists originated far back beyond the setting up of the see of Rome. We are not protesters, not merely deniers, not sitting on the negative side, but we are affirmers and we feel that we have an infinitude of glorious things to contend for with all our might. L.

ISAIAH LXIII. 1–3.

"WHO is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thy apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me; for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment."

The above referred to is of deep sentiment and given in prophecy portraying the true substance of salvation. We will first give you a short historical sketch of the principal word, "Edom." This word is the name given to the land southeast of Palestine, extending from the Dead Sea south to Elath, and Exion-Geber, while on the east the Arabian desert and on the west the river of Egypt, which gives the natural boundary and the length from north to south of about one hundred miles. The inhabitants were formed of a group of kindred peoples supposed to be the descendants of twin brothers. The earliest known contact of the Edomites, as they were called, with Israel, was when the kings refused the Israelites permission to go through their land, thus compelling Israel to take a circuitous route to Palestine through Moab. This brings us into the thought of God's people, of national Israel, coming out of Egypt, and according to the Scriptures Israel was led by the power of God, God directing all things by which His power should be manifested in the deliverance of Israel. Neither kings or kingdoms of this world should glory in her deliverance or salvation. This brings us to the deliverance and salvation of spiritual Israel, which we are made to declare, is of grace first and last and all the way. The way is of the Lord Jesus Christ and is a highway in which he leadeth. These

wicked kings were viewing the kingdoms of this world and the treasures thereof as very precious, and those Israelites as pilgrims and strangers were under the command and power of God and were being brought into the deep, and there to behold the power of the true and living God, which was keeping them while in the deep, that the billows should not swallow them up, but that he divided the waters and they stood as a wall on both sides and their enemies in close pursuit that they shall hold on their way. "The righteous also shall hold on his way." This God gives instruction in the deep, and when one is brought from the deep he is made to testify of all the way which the Lord our God has led him by which he can behold the horse and his rider swallowed up in the sea. Israel could not have declared that the Lord has triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider is swallowed up in the sea, if they had not gone through the Red Sea and God closed the waters upon their enemies; hence they could sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. Our experience brings to us the way we have been led and the deliverance manifested, which we can truly say was not by the powers of kings or kingdoms of this world. This is he that cometh from Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah that spake and the powers that so incumbered his people are driven out. This nation called Israel is but the portrait in prophecy of spiritual Israel. Bozrah was the capital city of Edom, and fortified, and was viewed as a wonderful city naturally, as spiritual Israel in the Spirit of the Lord beholds the city of God as Mount Zion that cannot be moved and Jesus as the glory in the midst, and the light round about is the stronghold to them as God's fortified city with walls and bulwarks about her, which is salvation. The prophet writing as the Holy Ghost opened to him spake of one coming from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, that is glorious in his apparel, and traveling in the greatness of his strength, and the Holy Ghost knocking, the man Christ Jesus opens the door and she comes in and sups with him and he with her. So as the prophet beheld this wonderful One the answer to all these interrogations is, It is I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. As Israel was made to look unto God as the one that spake from Mount Sinai, so spiritual Israel looks to Jesus, who is her righteousness, and from whence cometh every blessing, and she realizes he is her Savior, and he will save to the uttermost all that the Father hath given him, and she beholds him coming from the stronghold of heaven and earth, conquering and delivering his people, and of the people there was none to help. The Holy Ghost moved in the heart of the prophet, by which he beheld the kingdom of God and the One that speaks in righteousness. The Son of God as was testified as Christ the Lord throughout the law and the prophets was none other than the Son of God in the trinity that was to come and have the power of the Father manifested to him, and with him and the angels should minister unto him and be called our Lord Jesus Christ. Who should fulfill all his Father's will, which not only embraced the power and works of the Father as to the coming into the world, but the purposes of God from all eternity, by which Jesus stood, as it were, a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, accordingly wisdom viewed him as red in his apparel. We note their blood shall be sprinkled on his garments and he will

stain all his raiment. We note here the pronoun "he," declares the decree of almighty God that he alone can save. All the vileness of raiment we are given to see, that we are enraptured in the cause of sin, is washed and made clean by the blood of the Lamb. Hence the language of the poet Newton:

"Since I can hardly therefore bear
What in myself I see,
How vile and black must I appear,
Most holy God, to thee.

But since my Savior stands between
In garments dyed in blood,
'Tis he instead of me is seen
When I approach to God.

Thus, though a sinner, I am safe,
He pleads before the throne,
His life and death in my behalf,
And calls my sins his own.

What wondrous love, what mystery,
In this appointment shine,
My breaches of the law are his,
And his obedience mine."

This, to our mind, was the mind of the Spirit in revelation to the prophet by which he beheld Jesus as one coming from a fortified city, and was surrounded by kingdoms which would have restrained him if possible, but the greatness of his strength was more than all the world, and in this greatness he triumphed over death, hell and the grave and led captivity captive. This triumphant power has brought his people off more than conquerors, into the sweet treasures of the kingdom of God's dear Son, which manifests the greatness of his strength, and his voice as spoken to his loved one is in righteousness and true holiness. We are made to rejoice in him because of the sweetness of his voice as the bridegroom of our souls, and behold him in his apparel as all glorious. May we be given eyes to hear and hearts to understand.

C. W. V.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Black Rock Church, May, 1926, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—We are having a very pleasant meeting. We are in peace, and our friends are exceedingly good to us, and the theme of those who have preached for us has been the same as that of our great apostle Paul: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; not to offer them salvation, but to save them, and those who have listened to the preached word with the hearing ear have rejoiced in it. We are glad of your correspondents, and hope to meet them at Harford at the usual time next year.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.
F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.
E. A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster Co., Pa., May 26th, 27th and 28th, 1926, to the churches composing the same, and the associations with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We feel to proclaim aloud, The Lord still liveth, and he still reigneth in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and that he still protects visible Zion with his everlasting arm beneath her. Your ministers and messengers have brought the sweet gospel of grace, peace and love into our hearts and we feel grateful for such sweet communion of Spirit. We feel to express this meeting has been very profitable throughout, with one continual flow of love and fellowship.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Salem Church, at Philadelphia, Pa., during May, 1927, the Lord willing, where we hope to meet your messengers once more.

JOHN G. EUBANKS, Mod.
C. W. VAUGHN, Ass't Mod.
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.
J. B. MILLER, Ass't Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Elder George L. Weaver wishes his correspondents to know that he has changed his address from 1310 East 112th Street, Cleveland, Ohio, to 2231 Lee Road, Cleveland Heights, Cleveland, Ohio.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, June 12th, 1926, at the home of the bride's father, Herndon, Va., Eugene H. Piggott, of Vienna, Va., and Miss Ada M. Long, daughter of brother Isaac T. Long.

By Elder C. W. Vaughn, at his residence, Hopewell, New Jersey, May 12th, 1926, at 3 p. m., Mr. George M. Conner and Mrs. Elvira H. Sheppard, both of Hopewell, New Jersey.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

E. D. Elder, a prominent attorney and preacher, died at his home in this city Friday evening at 7:10 o'clock, following a collapse sustained several days earlier. Mr. Elder had been in ill health for the past years, but was up about and his condition was not regarded as serious, hope being entertained for his ultimate recovery. His sudden death came as a great shock to his many friends. Mr. Elder was a native of Moultrie County, having been born in Whitley township May 15th, 1865. His parents were John Elder, who came from Tennessee, and Jane Martin Elder, a native of Kentucky. Mr. Elder grew to manhood in this county and fitted himself for the life of a teacher. He followed that profession for eighteen years in Moultrie and Coles counties. While teaching he studied theology and law and was admitted to the bar of Illinois January 13th, 1892. In religious matters he was a Predestinarian Baptist, and at the time of his death was pastor of the Zoar Church, near Cooks Mills. For some years he farmed in Jonathan Creek township, but twelve years ago moved to this city, where he formed a law partnership with Col. J. E. Jennings. This partnership was dissolved about a year ago on account of Mr. Elder's health. April 24th, 1884, he was united in marriage with Miss Barbara Janes, who with five children survive him. The children are Jesse Elder, of Johnathan Creek; Ada, wife of William Hartman, of Mattoon; Lee Elder, of Jonathan Creek; Elsie, wife of L. B. Brown, of near Arthur, and Iva, wife of Waverly Ashbrook, of this city. He leaves nineteen grandchildren; also one brother, W. E. Elder, Sr., of this county; three sisters, Mrs. Lydia Hixon, of Houston, Texas; Mrs. Nicia Tolly, of Coles, and Mrs. Thomas Janes, of Mattoon.

Funeral services were held Sunday afternoon, conducted by Mr. Oscar Irwin, of Greencastle, Indiana. In the death of Mr. Elder this county sustains a great loss. His life was a useful one, filled with many activities. He was interested and active, not only in teaching, law, religion and farming, but also took an active interest in politics, being a staunch Democrat. He aspired to office at various times and some years ago served for a time as special Master in Chancery.

[THE foregoing obituary notice of Elder E. D. Elder was published in a Sullivan, Ill., paper, and was sent to us by brother C. A. Hunt, of Eureka, Kansas, with the request that we give it space in the SIGNS. —ED.]

Brother **Daniel Stillwell,** of Hensonville, Greene Co., N. Y., departed this life March 11th, 1926. He had nearly reached the century mark, as he was born April 13th, 1827. He was a member of the Old School Baptist Church more than sixty years. He united with the Gilboa Church September 14th, 1862, and was baptized by Elder Loren P. Cole, pastor of the church. In June, 1919, the Gilboa Church united with the Second Church of Roxbury, because of condemnation proceedings by New York city of Gilboa, where his membership was when he passed away. Brother Stillwell was a faithful member, firm in the doctrine and faith of the Old School Baptists as taught in the Scriptures, and was ever ready to defend the truth. As his daughter wrote me, he loved the SIGNS, the church and Bible, and loved to sing the songs of Zion. When the writer of this was baptized he was the first to take my hand as I came from the watery grave singing the hymn beginning, "O how happy are they." To me he has been a near brother for the truth's sake. In early life, he married Mary Clark, sister of the late Elder John Clark. She was a member of the same church. They then lived near Gilboa, and their home was ever open to their brethren and sisters, and many have partaken of their kind hospitality. They always filled their places in the church as long as they could. About twenty-four years ago they moved to Hensonville, and because of the distance, and declining health, they could not do as in former years. His wife died in October, 1903. Since then his daughter Elvina has kept house for him, and tenderly and lovingly cared for him. About five years ago he was seriously ill with pneumonia, and during the past winter he was feeble, and longed to go home. He was confined to his bed about two weeks, and passed peacefully away. He leaves three daughters, one son, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Often I have heard him say, I have such good children and grandchildren. We cannot mourn as though he had no hope, for we believe he is at rest with God his Savior. His funeral was held from his late home Sunday,

March 14th, 1926. Elder George Ruston was called, but a previous appointment kept him from attending. Mr. DeMon, a neighbor anda minister of the place, officiated. His body was placed in a receiving vault until May 8th when interment was in Gilboa Cemetery, to await the resurrection morn.

Written by request.

HULDA J. LEONARD.

By request of the daughter I am sending a notice of the passing from earthly scenes April 5th, 1926, of **Mrs. Frances (Lane) Bogardus,** widow of Elder Charles Bogardus, whose labors here were ended October 12th, 1925, and whose obituary appeared in the SIGNS December following. The subject of this notice was married to Charles Bogardus April 1st, 1862. She received a hope in Christ and united with the same church with her husband, White Church, in Tompkins County, N. Y., where she ever remained a faithful member, and a true and faithful wife and mother. After the death of her husband she with her only daughter, Mrs. Bertha Beard, and only granddaughter and husband, Mr. and Mrs. Victor Borst, Jr., lived in the old home in Brookton, N. Y. Her death was very sudden and unexpected. Although she had passed her eightieth birthday she was unusually smart and active until some time in the winter she had a fall on the ice, from which she had not fully recovered. On the morning of April 5th, after dressing and preparing herself for breakfast and going to the table she said, "O dear." The daughter said, Mother, what is the matter? She said, I don't know. The daughter seeing she looked pale went to her side, and then and there she passed away in the arms of her daughter. Although it was a great shock to the family they do not mourn as those without hope, for they believe God has taken her to dwell with him forever. Elder George Ruston officiated at the funeral, which was held at the home and largely attended, after which the body was laid to rest by the side of her husband.

(MRS.) ADDIE LIVINGSTON.

Mrs. John D. Smith (nee Emma Finch) was born December 13th, 1852, and departed this life March 8th, 1926. She was not a member of the visible church, but gave unmistakable evidence to those who are qualified to judge of her acceptance in the Beloved. In the last years of her life she was terribly afflicted, but she bore it with such fortitude and patience as to cause those who visited her to wonder at the manner in which she seemed reconciled to her lot. She loved to read and converse upon heavenly things, was strong in the faith and gave God all the honor and praise for her salvation. The writer was called to conduct the services, and felt to realize while speaking the purpose of our all-wise God in afflicting her as he had was to show his people how one could suffer for the sake of Christ and to the end that his people should bear with one another in all gentleness and tenderness in love. Interment was in the cemetery at Warwick, N. Y. May the Lord comfort those who mourn and direct them into the way of his truth, is our desire.

R. L. D.

BETHLEHEM CHURCH MEETS.

Pursuant to a call of Bethlehem Church to change its place of meeting, and to arrange to have meetings more regularly, and for the convenience of more Old Baptists to visit the church, met at the residence of W. H. Meek, at 1705 West 16th Avenue, Pine Bluff, Arkansas, and held services Saturday night. Preaching by Elder John T. Everett; followed by Elder V. R. Harris, after which agreed to meet Sunday morning at the residence of Mr. John Brock, and at which time the church would transact the business as appointed.

Sunday morning (Fifth Sunday, May 31st, 1926.)—Met according to arrangement, and after preaching by Elder John T. Everett, followed by Elder V. R. Harris, organized into conference:

First. Elder V. R. Harris was chosen Moderator of the meeting and Elder John T. Everett Clerk.

Second. Called for the peace and unity of the church by the Moderator. The church reported in peace, however they had had no meeting for some years, but was in peace and unity when last services were held, and so remains.

Third. Invited our brethren and sisters who were present to seats in council with us, trusting in Him who is our Counsellor to prepare our hearts for a meeting in spirit and in truth.

Fourth. All being in peace, and the council fully organized, we invited those of our faith and order who live near and convenient to the church to place their letters with us. At this point there were some who had membership in Florida and other parts of the country who desired to become members of this church and promised to have their letters to place with us next meeting time (fifth Sunday in August, 1926). An open door was then declared to those who had not attached themselves to any church who had a good hope through the mercy of our God and who love his house and its grand and good orders, which are love and devotion to him and sweet fellowship one with another, but none presented themselves, although we feel sure the Lord has many here who love him and have been born again and are children of God, and we feel that the Lord adds to his church such as shall be saved, and that he will put it into their minds to deny themselves and follow him.

Fifth. It was suggested that this church at her next meeting prepare and present to the South Arkansas Association her petitionary letter for recep-

tion into that body of Old School Unlimited Predestinarian Baptists, which Association will meet with White Water Church, fourteen miles south of Fordyce, on the Rock Island Railroad, the third Sunday in September, 1926, beginning Friday before.

Sixth. Appointed our next meeting to be held at the residence of W. H. Meek, 1705 West 16th Ave., Pine Bluff, Arkansas, the fifth Sunday in August. Also that a copy of these Minutes be spread upon a book record of the church's action, and that we send a copy to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and the *Lone Pilgrim* for publication, that others may see it, hoping that the Lord will stir up their pure minds to visit us, and that they may again be revived as they once were when that dear old faithful soldier of the cross, Elder Daniel Westall, was their pastor and so faithfully stood by them. They have been made to feel that the Lord was in the matter and that again he would send his refreshing shower upon them.

This meeting then closed with much good feeling and interest of friends who feel to do all they can for the assistance of this little body of Old Baptists.

We feel to say that any Old Baptist minister of the regular Old or Unlimited Baptist faith would find a welcome home among these people, and that if it be the Lord's will to send some minister there he will be well received and find a welcome home.

There being no further business for this time, the conference closed.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator.

JOHN T. EVERETT, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

J. A. Crutcher, Tenn., $1; Thomas W. Records, Mo., $4; Edna A. Clark, Iowa, $2; Mrs. Sarah V. Curry, Colo., $1; Earl T. McAlister, Tex., $5; P. M. Sherwood, Del., $1; Mrs. Sarah Gaudy, N. J., $8; Mrs. Melissa Grimes, N. Y., $1; "A Friend," Mich.; $1; Mrs. W. K. Truitt, Md., $1.

MEMORIALS.

(DELAWARE ASSOCIATION.)

WHEREAS, through the dispensation of God, another of our dear brethren, **Elder J. C. Mellott,** has been removed from this sin-cursed world to his reward with his heavenly Master, therefore, be it

Resolved, that, we bow in humble submission to his will, believing by faith it was his set or appointed time to be called unto him who created him, and loved him with an everlasting love; and while the separation is keenly felt in our hearts, and hard to be reconciled thereunto, yet we feel our loss is his eternal gain. And be it further

Resolved, that, a copy of this Memorial be spread upon our Minutes, and a copy be sent to our dear sister, Alice H. Mellott, whose loss and bereavement is more severe and greater than the churches with which he was associated.

JOHN G. EUBANKS.
P. M. SHERWOOD.
JOHN B. MILLER.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday of each month at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 459 E. 5th St, Riverside, Calif., and at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. 11th St., Claremont, Calif., on the first Sunday of each alternate month, beginning with January, and on every alternate month with brother Joseph Huffman, 128 Van Buren St., Arlington, Calif. Singing at 10:30 a. m. Preaching at 11 a. m. Lunch at the place of meeting, and continued services in the afternoon.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.

O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City), Oregon every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Those coming by Railroad over the S. P. get off at Oregon City, take the elevator to the top of the hill, turn to your left, go one block east. Not later than 9:30 a. m. Private conveyance. Those coming on Oregon City Electric get off at 7th Street, take elevator near S. P. depot to top of the hill, turn to your left, go one block east to 7th St., as above stated.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California.

C. G. MILLER.

SUPPLY EXHAUSTED.

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"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

MATTHEW XXII. 37-40.

"THOU shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

The law demanded perfect and perpetual obedience. If you offend in one point ye are guilty of the whole. It is a fact that we cannot be justified by the law. In Galatians ii. 21, it says, "For if righteousness come by the law, then is Christ dead in vain." Again, Galatians iii. 21, "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." Romans vii. 4, says, "Ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ." In Romans viii. 3, Paul says, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." With these texts before us will any one say we can comply, or do what the two commandments tell us we must do? Then if we cannot satisfy the demands of these two commandments, we must look for some one to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves, or we are all lost, world without end. If we can only find one upon whom these two commandments and all the glory of the Father's house are hung, one to take our place who has the power to satisfy the law's demand in our place, all is well, and I say with one of old, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." The greatest trouble Paul had with the believing Jews was to get them to turn away from the law, which he called the "yoke of bondage," and to look to and trust in the finished work of a once crucified and now highly risen and exalted Savior, so Paul says in Galatians v. 1, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." "Only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." Again, Paul says, Colossians ii. 14, "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." Now the law is satisfied. It demanded the life of all men, and it got the life of all the people of God. He, Jesus, is the life of all of God's elect. So Paul says,

Romans vii. 2, "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband, so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband," &c. Fourth verse, "Wherefore, my brethren, ye are also become dead to the law by the body of Christ." A man under death sentence found dead in jail is never executed. Paul says, "When Christ, who was our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." In Colossians Paul says, Christ hid our life, then the law got our life. I do not love my neighbor as well as I do myself. If one of us had to be bitten by a seven-foot rattlesnake I would say, Let it bite my neighbor. I do not want my neighbor bitten, but I had much rather my neighbor be hurt than be injured myself. When you were born of the Spirit you felt like you loved every one. So did I, but this did not last all the time. The Lord demanded perfect faith and perpetual obedience. You thought when you received hope in Jesus the sin was all gone, and your troubles were all over, but ere long you found you were mistaken. The clouds of doubt and fear began to gather thicker and thicker, and you grew colder and colder, and were filled with dismay, and thought, Oh I was mistaken, I have no hope, no promise, it was all a delusion. As peal after peal of thunder shook the spiritual foundation you thought you stood upon, as the poet wrote,

"When storm and tempest loudly howl,
And clouds obscure the sky;
When lightnings flash and thunders roll,
Be not afraid, 'tis I."

"While Satan aims a fiery dart,
Temptations make thee sigh;
Believe in me; I'll keep thy heart;
Be not afraid, 'tis I."

"'Tis I who lived, 'tis I who died,
That thou mightest reign on high,
Behold my hands, my feet, my side,
And be convinced 'tis I."

The reason you loved every one when you were born of the Spirit was that the fruit of the Spirit is love. Every child is like its parents, but your flesh was not born of the Spirit. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit," and "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." You soon found the battle had just commenced. The conditionalists say when you join the church your trouble is all over. When the boys were drafted was the trouble and suffering over? Ask the boys who lay in the trenches, the mud and water, ask those who went over the top, they will tell you the greatest suffering came during the awful battles. So it is with the children of God, the world, the flesh and the devil never cease to thunder against you and you have to pass through awful, dark nights. Weeping endureth but for the night, joy cometh in the morning. I well remember before I had seen an Old Baptist to know it, when the awful storms of my flesh began to rage and all was darkness, I had no one to go to who could tell me what it meant, but I came across a hymn, the first one I ever learned. It said:

"Oh for a glance of heavenly day,
To take this stubborn stone away!
And thaw, with beams of love divine,
This heart, this frozen heart of mine.

The rocks can rend, the earth can quake,
The seas can roar, the mountains shake,
Of feelings, all things show some sign,
But this unfeeling heart of mine.

To hear the sorrows thou hast felt,
Dear Lord, an adamant would melt;
But I can read each moving line,
But nothing moves this heart of mine."

"But something yet can do the deed,
And that dear something much I need;
Thy Spirit can from dross refine,
And move and melt this heart of mine."

Then I learned a lesson that could not be undone. You will find that the battle between flesh and Spirit will rage until your vile bodies are changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus. The fortieth verse of this twenty-second chapter of Matthew says, "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Here are two commandments that all the law and the prophets are hung upon. Now if we can find what these two commandments with their burden are hung upon we have the key to this language of the Savior. In Isaiah xxii. 22, 23, it says, "And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house." Then we have a nail to hang the two commandments on, with all that hangs on them, and this nail is fastened in a sure place, and all the demons out of torment cannot pull it out, for he said, I in the Father, and the Father in me. Now I ask the question, Is he an old rusty nail? He is an old nail, but not a rusty one. The prophet says, "Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." It is a wonderfully bright nail, for in the first chapter of Hebrews it is written, in the third verse, "Who being the brightness of his glory [His Father], and the express image of his person." Then he is a bright nail, and a wonderfully bright nail. "And upholding all things by the word of his power." Did you ever hear of such a nail? He is able to hold up the two commandments and all that was hung upon them. He said, No man taketh my life from me. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. "When he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." He did it all by himself. No one helped him; not even Peter, who said, Though all men forsake thee, yet will I not. In Isaiah lxiii. 3, he says, "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me." Yes, he purged our sins. Purge means to cleanse, to purify, so when he did this he sat down. Then it all depended upon him. Everything was hung upon him. Isaiah xxii. 24, says, "And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house." The law was a part of the glory of the house of God. 2 Cor. iii. 7, 8: "But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?" This text says positively that the law was glorious, but was to be done away. So if all the glory of his Father's house was hung upon this nail the law was hung upon it. Now read Isaiah xxii. 25, "In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall." So Jesus bowed the heavens and came down, and said, I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the will of him that sent me, that of all which the Father hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day. Therefore it is written, Gal. iv. 4, "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son," &c. God removed him and sent him down here to save his people from their sins. This nail is to be removed, be cut down, and fall, and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off,

for the Lord hath spoken it. Zechariah x. 4, reads, "Out of him came forth the corner, out of him the nail, out of him the battle bow, out of him every oppressor together." So God sent him, and the two commandments were hung upon him, and all the law and the prophets were hung on the two commandments, and the whole was hung on the nail. All depended upon his keeping the law for his people, because the flesh was too weak, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh," &c. He did for them what they could not do for themselves: he magnified the law and made it honorable. Matthew v. 18, reads, "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Luke xxiv. 44: "That all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses." So when he had fulfilled all things the law demanded, and satisfied the law, then the burden that was upon the nail was cut off. The Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah liii. 6.) Everything depended upon his power, and thank God he had the strength to obey the law and rise again. If we have to love God with all our hearts, and our neighbor as ourselves, and keep these two commandments which we cannot keep, what was the use for Jesus to come and suffer and die? The burden was cut off, therefore he could rise, and said, I am alive for evermore, and as I live ye shall live also. So they crucified him and put him in Joseph's new tomb, put soldiers to guard him, put the seal on the stone, but they could not hold him. The burden was off, so he went up in the presence of a large company of the people of God. He changed the whole form of government, as it is written, "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change of the law."—Heb. vii. 12. Again, "For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious."—2 Cor. iii. 11. He established a new covenant, that says, I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities I will remember against them no more, and I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts. (Heb. viii. 10, 12.) The law given on Mount Sinai was written on two tables of stone and contained all that is in the ten commandments, and if you offend in one point you are guilty of the whole. The law demanded the life of the transgressors is the reason it was called the ministration of death. They had to go up to Jerusalem to have the priest teach them, but now the laws are put in your mind and written in your hearts, and you shall not teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they all shall know him from the least of them to the greatest. It makes no difference where you are on earth or on the sea the law is there in your mind to warn you. Under the old law there was no forgiveness. Now if my brother trespass against me seven times shall I forgive him? Jesus said unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times, but, Until seventy times seven. (Matt. xviii. 21, 22.) Are you not glad the Savior changed the form of government? Now you can sing,

"Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song,
The joy of my heart, and the boast of my tongue;
Thy free grace alone, from the first to the last,
Has won my affections, and bound my soul fast."

Now let us "stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with yoke [law] of bondage." "Only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another."—Gal. v. 1, 13.

"All hail the power of Jesus' name,
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all."

Your brother in hope of mercy,
ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

TAMPA, Florida, March 16, 1926.

HARDING, W. Va., Feb. 15, 1926.

DEAR BROTHER BARTLETT:—I have thought many times of writing you during this snowy wintry weather, but put it off because I felt I had nothing to write that could be of interest to a minister of God, and while that is still in my mind, yet another motive moves me to write (perhaps it is a selfish one), but I hope not, for I am writing because I want to hear from you all, to hear how you are standing this snowy winter, hoping that while this weather may be confining you closer home that God is opening up to you all the time some spiritual import of his word, some glad message which you will deliver to some poor, fainting, weary ones to cheer and comfort them. If this be so I hope you are realizing and receiving in your own heart the full joy of its spiritual import, that you may be comforted with the same comfort wherewith you comfort the children of the precious Redeemer. I sometimes dread the cold winter weather, but not as I dread the winter time of the soul, when the cold blasts of our natural lives seem to cover up, as it were, with a snow all the warmth and light of the Spirit, but as winter cannot last, neither can this winter time of the soul, for the pure water of life, which is ever flowing into the hearts of God's children, will melt away the ice and snow and bring forth bud and blossom that will ripen into the precious fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Although I have a great desire to show forth some of those fruits of the Spirit in my life, that it might be to the praise and glory of God, I scarcely realize it, but can behold those heavenly graces in the lives of my brethren and sisters, and as I have full fellowship for them my hope is strengthened.

I have been reading some statements made by some of the leading men of science and published in the newspapers. One man's statement leading into infidelity, another in trying to uphold the reputation of his friend says, "There is more truth to be found in nature than in the Bible, for nature will not lie." It is true that men have been enabled to bring into use the things which God had prepared for temporal blessing for the world, and in doing this they get an exalted opinion of their works, and deny God and his word. This is the work of the flesh, not the fruit of the Spirit. But this is one demonstration of where Satan is transformed into an angel of light, and the glare of that light blinds those who are guided by it, and leads in the opposite direction from the lowly manger in which was laid Christ the Savior. What a vast difference there is between that satanic light and that soft but ever radiant glow which emanates from the holy Son of God and shines in the hearts of his people. Christ, when speaking to his disciples about it, said, Let your light so shine that all around may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven. This, then, must show up which is truth. If what we do and say glorifies the heavenly Father it is of the Spirit, but if it denies him and his power it is of the flesh. But we can take comfort in the thought that if we have felt the power of that holy light in our hearts our lives are hid with Christ in God, the Christ who is our salvation, and now

reigns in heaven, and no earthly power, however high it tries to exalt itself by climbing up some other way to rob him of his glory, can ever dethrone him, and when he who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory. Then, oh then, who are those whom he says will call for the rocks and mountains to fall on them to hide them from his face? Does he mean those rocks and mountains into which the modern world is delving for proof or disproof of his written word? If so, will they be able to hide behind them then from his righteous indignation? The Lord knows, and we must leave it all with him, feeling that the God of the whole earth will do what is right.

Husband and I have kept up very well during the winter, execept slight colds. I hope you are in good health and able to attend your meetings. My husband joins me in regards to you and family, also to the brethren and sisters of Mount Olive, and we would be glad to hear from you.

Will you please write your views on 2 Peter iii. 18? How are we to discern that growth in grace, and what does that growth in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ teach us? I hope the Lord will give you light to write at length on it.

Yours in fellowship,

E. E. WORKMAN.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Feb. 17, 1926.

DEAR SISTER WORKMAN:—I received your good letter by to-day's mail, and was surely glad to hear from you, and to see from the reading of your letter that you are still deeply interested in spiritual matters, still an inquiring child of God, as God's people always have been. I am glad you and Mr. Workman are keeping up well, and in answer to your inquiry as to how I am standing this snowy winter I will say, fine for a man of my age. My health and strength seem to be improving, and I wonder why the dear Lord blesses me so bountifully, and I hope graciously, with health and proper exercise of mind, even down to old age, and above all a desire to worship him. It surely is all of his grace, for I feel to be oh so unworthy of all his blessings. Yes, this cold weather confines me at home, so I cannot go among the churches as in summer, and it seems to be winter in my soul. I have been able to attend the meetings of my home church regularly, but do not feel at liberty as I would like to. It often seems to be a dread to me to try to preach, and though I read and read, I realize that without Christ I can do nothing. I feel to realize that preaching should be in demonstration of the Spirit and with power, and in order to thus preach we must have the Spirit and the power given to us.

Now by your request, I will try to write on 2 Peter iii. 18, which reads as follows: "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory, both now and for ever. Amen." When I read your request my first thought was, What a beautiful subject to write upon, and the next thought was, Oh may God in his mercy give me wisdom to write upon it, and that is my desire now. O, my dear Lord, help me. Grace is the unmerited favor of God, and is the opposite of works, and if by grace, then is it no more of works; but if it be of works, then is it no more grace. All of our salvation in time or in eternity is by the grace of God. All the spiritual blessings bestowed upon us are by his grace, and all the natural blessings we receive are by his providence. We can merit nothing. We are by nature poor

helpless creatures. "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing."

Now your question: "How are we to discern that growth in grace?" I answer, By his blessings. He has blessed us by his grace with the Holy Spirit, with spiritual life, spiritual knowledge, sight and hearing, and all the good works we do are by and through the working of his Holy Spirit, according to his grace. We worship God in spirit. We pray in spirit. The Spirit helpeth our infirmities. By his grace we are given faith to believe on him, trust in him. By his grace we are given hope and charity (love). Hope of heaven, love to God and his people. We grow in grace by our experience of more and more of his grace. Without growth in grace we would be dwarfs. I often think that if I had never been given any more evidence of God's grace only my first experience of it I surely by now would have no faith, hope or prospects of heaven. But he has kept us by his power. He has not left us nor forsaken us. He has comforted us in all our afflictions. He in our poor and needy condition has blessed us with the spirit of prayer and true devotion. He has heard when we cried unto him for mercy. He knoweth of our groans and tears when we cry unto him for mercy. The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Also that same Holy Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. So by God's grace we are comforted in all our afflictions, and through this comforting our faith is increased, hope strengthened and our prospects brightened, and we grow in grace. In all this experience there is an experience more and more of grace, and by this experience we grow stronger and stronger.

Your next inquiry is, "What does that growth in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior teach us?" I believe a growth in grace and a growth in knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ go together, that we grow in knowledge of Jesus as we grow in grace. The more grace is given us the more knowledge we have of the gracious Giver. This knowledge of him is by being taught of the Lord. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." And Jesus said, Learn of me. When we are taught of the Lord and learn of Jesus we are taught and learn to know him whom to know aright is life eternal. He reveals himself unto us. He manifests himself to us as he does not unto the world. Through this revelation we are taught to love and worship him as the chiefest among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely. This knowledge teaches us how to pray, and what to pray for. It teaches us to know the truth, and gives us a desire to walk in the way of truth and righteousness. Again, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." Hence the necessity of the gospel ministry to feed the sheep and the lambs. To feed the church of God which he has purchased with his own blood "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." I believe that perfect man is the whole body of Christ, he being the head, for he does not say "perfect men," but "a perfect man." The body of Christ is the church, all the elect, all the redeemed of Christ. So you see all the several great gifts which he

has given to us are for the edification of the church of Christ, that in all this we may grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory, both now and forever. Amen. In this letter I have endeavored to give God all the glory, for it all belongs to him and I have tried to attribute it all to him.

I am, as ever, yours in fellowship,

J. N. BARTLETT.

GRANVILLE, Ohio, May 28, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am mailing you under separate cover a copy of the *Hopkins Journal* (Missouri) with an account of Elder Carmichael's seventieth wedding anniversary, also a letter written by him to me. He is ninety-two years old, and is a very sound Old School Baptist minister, and is very dear to the Baptists wherever he has preached. He has suggested that I send it to the SIGNS, and I had been thinking of doing that very thing myself. I know that the Baptists would be delighted to see it, but that is just with you.

Mrs. Carmichael died May 5th, 1926.

In christian love,

KATE RUGG.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY.

More than one hundred and twenty-five years ago in an old family Bible were recorded the names of Archibald Carmichael, born Nov. 23d, 1801, and Martha Pennington, born Jan. 27th, 1803, both being born in Surry County, North Carolina, near the historic Pilot Mountains, these being the parents of Elder C. J. Carmichael, of Hopkins. Elder Carmichael and his wife last Sunday celebrated their seventieth wedding anniversary, being married October 18th, 1855, in Green County, Indiana. Mr. Carmichael was born August 12th, 1833, in Monroe County, Indiana, making him past ninety-two years of age, while his wife, whose maiden name was Mary Ann Hostetter, was born in Stark County, Ohio, May 8th, 1840, being now in her eighty-fifth year.

Elder Carmichael is of Scotch-Irish decent, his grandfather being born in Scotland and his grandmother in Ireland, while his wife is of German extract, her grandparents both being born in Germany. Mrs. Carmichael has been an invalid for a year or more, but Mr. Carmichael is wonderfully well preserved for a man of his age, going only two weeks ago to Indianola, Iowa, where he filled the pulpit of the Baptist Church. He is a devoted, self-denying man, and has often gone at his own expense to labor in the Master's vineyard. In his youth there were none of our modern day conveniences, and but few schools, so those seeking knowledge got it as did Abraham Lincoln, through their own efforts and sacrifices. At that time the Red man roamed the forests, even in Indiana, and wild game was plentiful, bear, wild cats, large grey wolves, &c. He remembers his mother driving deer out of the wheat field and wild turkey from the garden. He cast his first vote for James Buchanan in 1856, being a Democrat in politics. Nine children have been born to Mr. and Mrs. Carmichael, five of whom are living: Martha Magdalene, born June 21st, 1857; Rachel E. Parks, born August 11th, 1867; Joseph D., born July 17th, 1869; Jacob, born August 7th, 1872, and Isaac, born May 6th, 1875. Besides the children, the couple have thirty-five grand and forty-six great-grandchildren. In speaking of their marriage, the grand old patriarch said to a reporter for the *Journal*, "To me seventy years ago seems as yesterday. Before the ceremony I had bought a

piece of land which had on it a one room log house, a small orchard and a spring, some of the land having been cleared and ready to cultivate. The house had a clay and stick chimney. We had no cook-stove, they were scarce in those days, so we cooked by the fireplace, baking bread on the hearth in a skillet, and endured many hardships, yet we enjoyed life. In the early years of our married life we were both converted and united with the Baptist Church and His saving grace has been precious and helpful to us during all these years. But those days of happiness had to turn to gloom and sorrow with the coming of the Civil War. I was drafted, but hired a younger man to go in my place, costing us over $1,000, which necessitated selling my home. Then it came in our minds to go west, with Missouri our objective point. We fixed up a two-horse wagon with bows and sheets for covering and with a party of five other families started for our new home in April, 1865. We were twenty-eight days on the road, although the distance is only about six hundred miles, or a matter of a day and a half in these days of the auto. We camped out, sleeping in the wagon at night. Much rain fell, making the mud very deep, no hard surfaced roads then, and we sometimes had to hitch four and six horses on a two-horse load. We finally reached Nodaway County and after only a few day's rest, set about to plow and plant to provide a living. Corn sold here then at $1.00 per bushel and flour was $7.00 per hundred. In the early 70's I felt I was called to preach, and was willing to try in my humble way to tell of the love of Jesus, and have been trying to tell of it for over fifty years. I have tried to tell the story of the cross and of Christ crucified, in eleven states of the Union. I now regret that I did not begin in early life to keep a sketch of my ramblings, baptisms, marriages, funerals, miles traveled, &c., but it is now too late. We cannot stay here much longer and regret in a way that we have no earthly treasures to leave as a legacy to our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, but we have a wish and a prayer, if it be God's holy will, that we may all finally meet in the sunlight of God's eternal mercy."

Mr. and Mrs. Carmichael have been residents of Nodaway County since 1865, with the exception of a year or two in Nebraska and some years in Ohio, having lived in Pickering and Maryville, as well as in Hopkins, and number their friends not only in Nodaway County, but throughout northwest Missouri and southwestern Iowa, where Elder Carmichael has faithfully served different churches, and it is the wish of all that this grand old couple will be permitted to live to celebrate their diamond wedding.

HOPKINS, MO., May 26, 1926.

BELOVED SISTER KATE:—Your good letter of sympathy and respect came yesterday, and the kind words filled every cavity of my poor old heart, mind and soul, yet could not heal a broken heart or bring "Mother" back that I might hear the precious voice that had spoken words of comfort to me for so many long years. I sat by her bed of suffering and saw her last breath, dying very easily, just as a lamp goes out, and she looked good in death. I now have nothing on earth to live for, and want to go and be at rest. Dear sister Kate, I may not have fought a good fight, but I have kept the faith, if indeed it was ever given me. I have loved the doctrine of God our Redeemer and the practical course he laid down for his believing children to walk in, having

an eye single to the text, Then are ye my disciples, when ye do whatsoever I command you. But I feel I must lay my armor by and go the way of all the earth. We both loved the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It comes every month laden with good things.

"Mother" had six of her grandsons serve as pall-bearers.

Give my love to brother and sister Dorey. I still remember their kindness to me. I regard Howard Stevens as a true child of God. Write again.

In bonds of love and fellowship, your aged and poor brother,

C. J. CARMICHAEL.

PLEASANT HILL, Mo., May 23, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending two dollars for my subscription which will soon be due, and I feel to tell you of our wonderfully good meeting the second Saturday and Sunday, and Friday before, in May. We had not had any ministers for two months, but were surely blessed at that time, for Elder J. R. Hardy, of Kingman, Kansas, and Elder L. L. Schenck, of Topeka, Kansas, were with us, and with our pastors, Elders W. L. Hall and T. E. Attebery, we felt indeed blessed, for there could be no sounder ministry. There was no discord anywhere, and such wonderful preaching it seemed nothing but union and peace could ever be. When there is so much discord around we feel glad, and I hope thankful, for so safe a ministry. I find words fail me.

With the best of wishes that the SIGNS will ever be upheld as now and in the past, I am inclosing a letter I received recently from sister Bonnie Chick. It seems so full of beauty I felt the many readers would enjoy it as I have. Use your pleasure about it, as also this one.

With love to all the household of faith, I am, I hope, your little sister,

(MRS.) J. W. TAYLOR.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., May 14, 1926.

DEAR, DEAR SISTER:—What a wonderful letter you wrote me. The account of your meeting is marvelous. Sister Ellison had written about Elders Hardy and Schenck going to a meeting, but never once did I think of it being near you. Sister Anna Diel is here with me and I told her your letter seemed just like a continuation of sister Ellison's. Indeed one is blessed to have sound ministers and to be in peace and harmony. How I should have loved to be there. Then, too, I would have enjoyed helping you get ready, and also doing for the ones who came. Somehow your letters breathe the atmosphere of a true home in every sense of the word. I feel sister Rowe is much like you, and her pleasant, easy manner makes all feel right at home with her. I often tell her she is a sister to me both spiritually and naturally. It seems as if strong cords drew us together.

Dear little Elizabeth, my heart fairly aches for the child, and for you, too. As I read I said to Anna that perhaps her father's and mother's hearts ached more than hers, for there is not the suspense and anxiety in a child's heart that those who are older feel. Surely, dear sister, I know all too well how often the way seems dark and how we grow discouraged, but, as you say, when the Lord restores unto us the joy of his salvation we rejoice right in the midst of tribulation. His presence disperses our gloom.

I feel to tell you a little experience I had day before yesterday. On Sunday brother Rowe had spoken from the words, "How beautiful upon the mountains are

the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth." The last three words had come to me over and over, but Wednesday afternoon I was lying on the bed thinking of all of them, and also about the many Scriptures that had come to help me through days of sadness and suffering, when suddenly a lighted path through darkness came before me and I saw it lighted by His word, and then I was made to see it was the path I had had to come. Oh I cannot tell it, for it was so beautiful and wonderful. Then came the words, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path," and oh how beautifully this Scripture opened up to me, and I saw I had seen the truth of the words right in my own experience, for I saw his word strewn all along this narrow, light path, and I could hope it had guided my feet through the wilderness and lighted my path in the darkness. Monday morning while dressing the words came into my mind, He that walketh in darkness, and hath no light, let him trust in the name of the Lord, and I was very glad when I found such words recorded in the tenth verse of the fiftieth chapter of Isaiah. One Sunday brother Topping spoke of the woman whose daughter was tormented with a devil and her faith appeared so wonderful. Even after the Savior spoke words that surely would appear to be a crushing rebuke she could tell him that even the dogs ate the crumbs that fell from the masters' table, and I thought what must her joy have been when she heard him say, "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt." It made me feel that surely I do not have faith, for there are times when I cry and cry, and it does seem the cries are wrung from me, but I have to go on and on in the trial, while her daughter was healed that selfsame hour. Then, too, I think of the words, "All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive," and, "Shall not God avenge his own elect; which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?" If the vision tarry wait for it. It is yet for an appointed time. We would long to trust him and even though the way seems hard know that he doeth all things well, that he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind.

If all is well we hope to attend meeting at Black Rock next week, and then go to Hopewell the first week in June, and may come back here and start for Maine from Baltimore, as Alice feels she would like to have us here when she and her eldest daughter start for their trip abroad. It does seem I have had a strange experience about going to Maine this year, but the way seems to be opening. Surely, "Thy God reigneth." With great joy there ever come great trials that we may not forget the Giver of all and become unmindful of the Rock from whence we are hewn.

Deepest love from

BONNIE.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in August (29th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1926.

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Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

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ZEPHANIAH III. 17.

"He will rest in his love."

While these blessed promises in the prophecy of Zephaniah had their significance for the children of God in the day of Israel's approaching captivity at the hands of Babylon, yet they contain much beauty and comfort for spiritual Israel in this present age in which the church is now living. Zephaniah was one of the last to speak to Israel as the mouthpiece of God before that nation was taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar and he sings of the judgment and mercy of God: of judgment, because Israel's going into captivity was the just punishment for her many breaches of the covenant made with her by the hand of Moses; of mercy, because the Lord will appear for her deliverance at such time as his purpose in her punishment shall have been fulfilled.

We shall not further dwell upon the primary application of our text to the literal nation of Israel, for it is with spiritual Israel we are concerned, and the love of God as manifested in the work of his Son is vastly more important to us than the shadow of the true seen during the age of prophecy. How vast and immeasurable is the love of God! No angel has ever plumbed its depth nor has seraph ever comprehended its height. God rests in his own finished work. That which his own right arm has successfully brought to pass, that alone is of such complete satisfaction to the Almighty that he is said to rest in it. He rests in his own love. There is as much difference between human love and divine love as there is between earth and heaven. God is not willing that men should love him with that imperfect human passion with which they love one another, but he wills that they love him with the reflection of his own perfect love shed abroad in their hearts. Nothing short of the return to him of his own perfection given them, is restful to the Lord. This is the very keynote of the gospel. In all that God requires of his saints, he never once exacts anything that he himself does not accomplish in them. When he commanded the man with the withered hand to stretch forth his hand unto him, Jesus did not expect nor did he require the cripple to do so in his own natural strength. To have expected such a thing would have been to exact what the crippled man could not possibly have done of himself. But when Jesus commanded the man to stretch forth the withered member, life accompanied the word of Jesus so that the command carried with it the quickening ability to obey. It was the very same way when the dead were raised, when the deaf were made to hear, when the lame walked and when the lepers were cleansed. In every miracle which Jesus wrought, not one was exacted to be performed in the strength of the sinner being wrought upon. The word of Jesus was such, and is still such, that life and healing accompany it to the fulfillment of all that is commanded to be done. No man is called to preach the gospel, nor any sinner called to believe

it, in his own human ability. The power to believe in God and in his Son Jesus Christ is the effect of the same power working in the soul as wrought in Christ when it raised him from the dead. Thus the Spirit and power of Christ's resurrection quickening our mortal bodies is the qualification necessary unto a spiritual life. No real spirituality can prevail within us otherwise. As God rests in "his" love, not in "our" love, so he may truthfully be said to find his satisfaction in the fruit of his own Holy Spirit, not in any fruit of the human spirit. There is a spirit in man by which a man knows the things of a man, but this is earthly and cannot lead a man to any knowledge above man. Nothing that this human spirit can produce of itself is restful or satisfactory to God. Without faith there can be no pleasing God. This faith is the fruit of God's own Spirit and cannot come about in the soul save by the working of that divine and holy principle. Whenever and wherever God sees this faith of his in exercise, he gladly accepts the fruit it bears. God's love ordered all the steps in the way of salvation decreed within himself before the world was. According to that love, he chose his people in Christ and ordained that Christ should be the offering for all their sins. That all his elect should in due time come to be sinners, God perfectly foreknew. To that end, when the time came, he placed all under law to himself. By this law which was impossible of obedience by human efforts, the church came under condemnation. Now, being under condemnation, the elect of God were in a prison from which they could not free themselves, because not one of them had it in him to pay the price which the law demanded in order to free them. On the other hand, his people under condemnation due to the just penalty of their sins, God would not free them at the expense of justice. Justice must be satisfied. At the same time, Mercy must have its sway. Now, Justice and Mercy seem irreconcilable. It was this apparent contradiction between justice and mercy, that made Job ask how then should a man be just with God. The solution of this mystery is with God and with him alone. In order that Mercy should flow to his condemned people, God took it upon himself to answer all the demands of his own Justice. Therefore, Christ was verily God and verily man. God came down to earth as a man, and as such he was called Jesus. This Jesus had imputed unto him by the Father all the sins of his elect, so that against him came all the demands of justice on account of the church's transgressions. Jesus offered himself to God in the death of the cross as the propitiation for the sins of his people. This offering of Jesus Christ, which was God offering himself to himself, was accepted by divine Justice as full and complete payment for all which the elect of God owed to Justice. Justice being in this way satisfied, Mercy comes to the chosen of God on the behalf of Christ and because of what he has done for them. God, after doing all this work of salvation in the person of Christ, entered into his rest at his own right hand. Something of this is what the Spirit intended when that Spirit caused Zephaniah to say, "He will rest in his love." The faith of the prophet caught the triumph from afar. His faith vanquished time and space and beheld the finished work of Christ in the salvation of his people. It is said that after the six days of creation, God rested from all his works on the seventh day. It may with equal truth be said, that God having

atoned for the sins of all his children in the person of Christ, arose from the dead and ascended unto glory and there rests in his love. It is this love in which believers rest when they are brought up from under the law into the gospel of the grace of God. This is a measure of God's likeness in which believers live while here below. As God is not, and cannot be satisfied with anything short of that which his own right hand has brought him, so his children find it impossible to approve that which does not bear the imprint of his own Holy Spirit. Hereby may we know that we are of God when we love the things God loves and hate the things he hates. L.

THE "SIGNS" TO HAVE A HOME OF ITS OWN.

It gives us pleasure to announce to our readers that on or about September 1st we hope to move the Signs' office into a home of its own, where we will have things more convenient for doing our work. The quarters we have been occupying for the past three years are not at all suited to our needs, but were the best we could find when forced to move from our old location, where we had been for about thirty-three years. We were only given about five weeks in which to find a new location and get moved, so had to do the best we could under the circumstances, and took the place where we have since been located, and at a rental of more than three times what we had been paying in our old office. Of course we shall have to borrow money on a mortgage for our new building, but what we are paying rent for the place we are now occupying will go toward paying the interest on the mortgage, &c., and we will have a much more convenient place to carry on our work. Our new office is to be located at 5 Linden Avenue, where we shall be glad to have our brethren and friends call upon us when in Middletown.

J. E. B. & CO.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder R. Lester Dodson.)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, convened at New Vernon, Sullivan Co., New York, June 9th, 10th and 11th, 1926, to the churches of which she is composed, sendeth greetings in the Lord.

Dearly Beloved Brethren:—It shall be our purpose at this time to set forth for circulation among our correspondents and kindred in Christ what we understand to be some of the fundamental principles of the doctrine of God our Savior, which we believe and whereupon we stand. The Scripture we shall consider is a portion of the tenth verse of the second chapter of Job: "What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" We are told this man was "perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil," that "there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters," and that his substance was great, "so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east." This fact is further emphasized by the Lord in asking Satan on two different occasions: "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and eschweth evil?" Job frankly confessed that all he possessed came from God. He said, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb," and also, "The Lord gave," so there was no question in his mind but that the Lord was the giver of all his blessings, the spring of all his joys and the life of his delights; God was sov-

ereign in the bestowal of his gifts. In reply to the Lord's question, Satan asked, "Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?" "And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand." Then follows the account of the different messengers coming and telling (1) "The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them, and the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away." (2) "The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep." (3) "The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away." (4) "Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: and, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead." It is evident to us that these losses were real, and not imaginary, as some claim, and this conclusion is borne out to our mind by the declaration in the last chapter of this book: "Also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before," and further by his naming at that time the three daughters which he had. It hardly seems probable that he would have waited until this time to name his original three daughters, which it is said by some never really died. Assuming, then, that he actually did lose his children and all his earthly possessions, he proclaims God's sovereign right to take it all away, saying, "The Lord hath taken away." Truly, his sorrow was great, for the record is he "rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped." Among the things he said, we find this language: "Blessed be the name of the Lord." In experiencing the loss of all things and having the very foundations of the earth shaken asunder, he realized that it was God who had sent prosperity, and it was this same God who had brought upon him this adversity, and that he was sovereign in all his works and ways, that not a single shaft shall hit, except the God of love sees fit, and so he worshipped, saying, "Blessed be the name of the Lord." Satan having exercised all his power over what Job had and finding his attempt to shake his faith an utter failure, for the Lord said of him, "And still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedest me against him, to destroy him without cause," asks that he might touch his person, which the Lord granted: "So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils, from the sole of his foot unto his crown. And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes." Again, we would say his humiliation, degradation and suffering were real; his wife said unto him, "Curse God, and die," but he rebuked her, saying unto her, "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips." The trials of Job were for a purpose. His life was hid with Christ in God, beyond the reach of Satan; it was safe and secure, and it was to be made manifest to him that the very gates of hell could not prevail against him. The great Shepherd said concerning his sheep: "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

The Lord was not experimenting with Job to discover something he did not already know, but he was proving to him that his grace was sufficient for every need. It would have seemed the losses he had sustained, his humiliation as he sat among the ashes, and the suffering he endured from "sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown," were enough, but not so, for at this very time there appear his three friends (?) to torment him further with their doctrines of conditionalism. Each one had come from "his own place;" they were not the messengers of God, but came with the wisdom that man teacheth. Miserable comforters were they all. Eliphaz reasoned that Job was to blame for his predicament, asking, "Who ever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off? Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same," and this notwithstanding God had said to Satan, "Thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause." Again, Eliphaz, while admitting man is born unto trouble, as the sparks are to fly upward, tells Job he would seek unto God, and unto God commit his cause, as though his very soul had not been poured out, like water which cannot be gathered, in prayer to God. Such reasoning as this only increased his burden and aggravated his woe, and we hear him exclaiming, "Oh that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances together! For now it would be heavier than the sand of the sea: therefore my words are swallowed up. For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me. Doth the wild ass bray when he hath grass? or loweth the ox over his fodder?" Thus he shows the reality of his trouble. These very so-called friends were used by the Almighty as his arrows to pierce still deeper the heart of his servant, and he recognized them as coming from God's bow, the poison whereof drinketh up his spirit. This was only a portion of the cup which had been allotted to him. Like David, he is made to cry, "Arise, O Lord, disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword." Thus was the seriousness of his condition laid heavily upon him, and yet he must listen to Bildad: "If thou wert pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous." And how plausible did the reasoning of Bildad with regard to God's judgment and justice sound to the natural ear, but Job asked: "How should man be just with God? If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand." Job knew when God spake there was none who could answer him. How foolish, then, to him was all this argument of Bildad. It only vexed his soul more and made Job more weary of life. The last of the three to come was Zophar, and he asks: "Should not the multitude of words be answered? and should a man full of talk be justified? Should thy lies make men hold their peace? and when thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed? For thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes." Thus was Job accused of lying and mockery, and then his accuser had the effrontery to offer this advice: "If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands toward him; if iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles. For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be stedfast, and

shalt not fear: because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away: and thine age shall be clearer than the noonday; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning. And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope; yea, thou shalt dig about thee, and thou shalt take thy rest in safety. Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee afraid," &c. Is this not the doctrine of works, of the do and live system, personified? How full the world is of it to-day. To all of this, Job replied: "No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you. But I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you: yea, who knoweth not such things as these?" He acknowledges the omnipotence of God, and tells Zophar to "ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee: or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee. Who knoweth not in all these, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this? In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind." We see in the life of Job the experience of the church as she is in Christ Jesus; there is none like her in all the earth; she is the fairest among women, the undefiled one, the only one of her mother, and when the Lord shall have brought her through the fire she shall be as gold; she will know what the world knows, and more, for she will have meat to eat that the world knows not of, and all she has in a way of providence and in grace she will freely acknowledge "cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." The pathway of Zion is laid out before her and she shall come to all that the Lord hath appointed, all for the lifting of the name of Jesus on high. She will be stripped of all her self-righteousness; her dross will be consumed in the fire of God's wrath against sin and she shall be as a brand plucked from the burning, saved by grace. The apostle tells her to think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try her, as though some strange thing happened unto her, "but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." Her life is one of change: one thing is set over against another, adversity vs. prosperity, sickness vs. health, clouds vs. sunshine, winter vs. summer, darkness against light, unfaithful and false brethren vs. brethren who are true and faithful. All of these things are in the plan which the infinite wisdom of our God hath designed:

> "His providence unfolds the book,
> And makes his counsels shine;
> Each opening leaf, and every stroke
> Fulfills some deep design."

By the experience of this Zion is made to know "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called, according to his purpose;" that nothing takes place in vain, and when she is tried she is made to trust in the Lord, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. When the Lord passes by and gives her to behold his backparts she knows for herself and not another that he is her God. Like Job, she says, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes," for "I know that thou

canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee." "Ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he;" therefore, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake." Brethren, let us "ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein." "For other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ," "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." "By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Let us, therefore, take courage, my beloved brethren, and be strong in the Lord. "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage," contending earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

And now, may "the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
R. M. STRONG, Clerk.

(Written by Elder C. W. Vaughn.)

The Delaware River Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon County, N. J., sendeth greeting and love in the Lord to all associations and churches with which she corresponds.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We are reminded of His tender mercies of which as an association we have been the partakers, and viewing these mercies we are reminded to call your attention to the penned expression of the prophet Isaiah, xxxiii. 20: "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken." As we write to you our hearts are filled with love, which is according to the love of God with which every inhabitant of Zion is loved. We have a Zion referred to in the Old Testament, which was a hill in Jerusalem on which the palace of King David rested, and all the inhabitants of his kingdom were directed to this place because of the resting-place of their king. As to exercise of the feeling in which we are addressing you our Zion is the resting-place of the palace of our King that reigns in righteousness, and to undertake to describe him and his palace seems too great for us. But a few words to you, dear brethren, if his Spirit taketh thereof and showeth it unto you will be sufficient, as you will behold Zion the resting-place of our King, but the King in his glory will appear in Zion, and all the glory round about will be of his work, beauty and perfection in holiness. As to the preaching of men, in a natural and carnal mind they are continually pointing to the palace of King David and

Jerusalem in which it was their capital city of David, but this Delaware River Association is pointing to a city that hath foundations that are not built by the wisdom of men and the sound of hammers and iron tools heard upon it, but just the opposite. As wisdom has builded her house she hath hewn out her seven pillars. (Prov. ix. 1.) She dug deep and the foundation of the King's palace is upon that foundation-stone that God hath laid in Zion, elect, precious, chief cornerstone, and the tabernacle thereof shall never be taken down. The pronoun here used in the feminine brings to us that all the wisdom of God in his foreknowledge in the salvation, redemption and perfection of the saints to glory through grace, which is the fullness of the consummation of faith and hope, is but feminine compared with God in his masculine, and the wisdom of God conceived is of the Holy Ghost, and it jointly and compactly unites his hands and his power in the masculine and is manifested in her preservation: that tabernacle shall not be taken down, for it is in God's house, and is the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, which speaks in prophecy the wisdom of God in Christ Jesus in the quickening, teaching and speaking forth of the church of God in the gospel. Jesus declared, Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. We feel to assure you this is the power and love that has rested with us as an association, hence we are what we are to-day. As an association we have been kept from using the cunning craftiness of men and made to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and the Spirit that has rested with us has tried every man's works, and as the people are exercised by the workings of his mighty power we are drawn to them, and that which is of the flesh this Spirit turns us from. For this cause we are united in love and fellowship and our hearts are drawn out to embrace all of like precious faith. We sometimes feel the strengthening of the stakes of our tabernacle, which we hope the Lord has pitched in our hearts and that the cords that unite us in him shall not be broken. This dear uniting love will not let us part. In this fellowship and love we greet you, and as the Lord has so abundantly blessed and favored us as his church, so he blessed all of Zion. What a great solemnity seems to enfold us as we now are in the depths of thought of the city of God and Zion the palace of King Jesus, and what a high privilege we have to be brought into this beautiful city, and also into the King's palace, and hear the voice of him speak and assure us of our sonship through him, and it all according to the purpose and grace of God given us in Christ Jesus, and not by works of righteousness which we have done. We feel to testify unto you that it is by the grace of God we are what we are, and we hope to be kept and directed that we may continue in true apostolic teaching and practice, and our glorying be in the Lord. This faith that was manifested by the fathers we are persuaded was the gift of God, and as we are made to continue with them we feel their God is our God and will be our guide throughout all our pilgrimage here. The peace, love and fellowship of Zion in our hearts are all through Christ Jesus our Lord, and this eternal life is the habitation of God, and the tabernacle and cords of love that bind us shall never be severed in any way. Amen.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in joint session with the several churches composing the said Association, convened in the meetinghouse of the New Vernon Church, Sullivan County, New York, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 9th, 10th and 11th, 1926, to our sister associations with whom we correspond, sends greetings in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have been favored with another annual meeting, in which peace, harmony and love have prevailed. Your messengers have been joyfully received, and a goodly number of ministering brethren have been with us, who have borne faithful testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus, so that we have felt comforted and refreshed. The churches of our body, while they report but little or no ingathering, are at peace, and steadfast in the faith of the gospel. We desire a continuance of your correspondence, both by letters and messengers, for it is pleasant and profitable to us.

Our next session is appointed to be held on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1927, the place to be announced later through the "Signs of the Times," when we hope to greet a goodly number of your messengers and receive your messages of love and fellowship. May the blessing of God abide with you and all who love the Zion of our God.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
R. M. STRONG, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

D. M. Gillis, Ontario, $2; Mrs. A. B. Engell, N. Y., $5; Mrs. Mintie B. Mapes, N. Y., $2; Mrs. Fannie Muir, N. Y., $2; Mrs. Lydia Stewart, N. Y., $2; Mrs. Kate Lunsford, Ky., $1.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, in the meetinghouse at Snow Hill, Md., June 26th, 1926. Marion S. Jones and Hazel J. Holland. Both of Pocomoke, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder John G. Eubanks passed away Sunday afternoon, July 18th, at two o'clock, funeral Wednesday afternoon, July 21st, at 1:30 o'clock, at Welsh Tract meetinghouse. A suitable obituary will be published later.

Mrs. Silena Hough, wife of John Hough, died suddenly at her home in Trenton, N. J., December 6th, 1925. She, being as well as usual, made arrangements the night previous to attend meeting that morning at Hopewell, but God ruled otherwise, and she passed away about eight o'clock. She was born June 10th, 1860, being in her sixty-sixth year of age. She was baptized by the late Elder William J. Purrington June 25th, 1892, in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church, of Hopewell, N. J., of which she was a worthy member at the time of her death.

The funeral services were held at her late home in Trenton, N. J., Wednesday, December 9th, conducted by her pastor, Elder C. W. Vaughn, who spoke words of comfort to the bereaved family, after which she was laid away in the cemetery adjoining the church of which she was a member. She leaves a lonely husband and four sisters, besides many friends, to mourn their loss. She was well-known among the Old Baptists as she traveled a great deal among the different associations, which she much enjoyed.

ALSO,

Her sister, **Mrs. Ada M. Holcombe,** wife of Jacob Holcombe, died at her home, near Ringoes, N. J., September 27th, 1925. She was born July 27th, 1865, being in her sixtieth year at the time of her death. June 13th, 1896, she was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church, of Hopewell, N. J., by the late Elder William J. Purrington, of which church she remained a firm believer.

The funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder C. W. Vaughn, who preached the gospel with power to the family, Jesus the way, the truth and the life, after which she was laid away in the Ringoes Cemetery. She leaves a husband, one son and four sisters, besides many friends to mourn their loss. Our hearts are made sad, but we do not mourn as those who have no hope, but desire to be reconciled to his will, and say, Thy will be done, for we believe our loss is their eternal gain, that they have gone a little before us to enjoy those things which God prepared for his people before the foundation of the world. For Jesus said, I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am there ye shall be also. We be-

lieve they have awakened in his likeness, and are satisfied, for they shall see him as he is and go out from his presence no more for ever.

Written by their unworthy brother-in-law, also brother in hope,

W. S. BOND.

Mrs. Louise Holland Mariner was born June 10th, 1856, and died May 9th, 1926. She was married to W. S. Mariner May 5th, 1875, and to that union ten children were born, seven boys and three girls. Five survive her: C. E. Mariner, Wilmington, Del., A. W. Mariner, New Church, Va., G. F. Mariner, Silva, Va., Mrs. J. A. Levins, Norfolk, Va., Mrs. R. A. Pilchard, Greenback, Va. She leaves to mourn, husband, five children, eleven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. The time of her married life was fifty-one years and four days.

Her daughter,

(MRS.) J. A. LEVINS.

SOUTH NORFOLK, Va.

Mrs. Mariner had been in failing health for some time prior to her death. She manifested great fortitude during her illness and at last passed quietly away into everlasting rest. She was a good woman, all that wife, mother, neighbor and friend means. She was not a member of the church, but a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and was ever present at our meetings when possible for her to get there. We all loved her for the truth's sake and shall miss her very much. The husband and children have our deepest sympathy in their great loss. The writer conducted the funeral services at her home near Pocomoke, Md. A very large company had gathered to pay the last tribute of respect to their neighbor and friend. The interment took place in the "new church cemetery." The Lord comfort all that mourn.

H. C. KER.

Mary Jane Buckwalter passed away at her home in the Needmore neighborhood, Sunday noon, June 6th, 1926. She had been ill several years, and her condition became serious last Monday, when the latest attack developed. Death was due to complications. Miss Buckwalter was born March 13th, 1877, and had been a lifelong resident of that vicinity. Her mother died January 13th, 1926. She is survived by her father, Joseph, and the following brothers and sisters: James R., George, Elizabeth, and F. M. Buckwalter, all at home. It has been my pleasure to have been acquainted with this family for a number of years. The home was known as a stopping-place for the Baptists, and Mary, as well as all the rest of the family, always enjoyed their company, and never were there too many. She would often say, There is always room for one more. Mary was of a quiet disposition, having little to say, but a ready talker with her pen, having a gift to write, and by her pen had given evidence that she had passed from death unto life, but she felt too unworthy to offer herself to the church. During the last years of her life she suffered much, but bore her afflictions with patience. Her faith was strong in the Lord, and she often said, His will, not mine, be done. We shall all miss her. Her place is vacant in the home, but we know the Lord doeth all things well, and we bow in humble submission to his will. He hath given, and he hath taken away, blessed be his name. May the blessing of the Lord be with the aged father, brothers and the lonely sister, also with the many friends.

I tried to comfort the friends with the ability the Lord gave me, both at the home and at the churchhouse, after which the remains were laid to rest beside the mother in the Jamestown Cemetery.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

Mrs. Jane Lewis Davis Martin, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. David Lewis, was born May 27th, 1847, in Wales, and departed this life at Grant Hospital, Columbus, Ohio, Tuesday, June 24th, at 3:30 p. m. She was one of a family of seven children. At the age of three she came to Ohio and her early life was spent in Oak Hill, Jackson County, April 1st, 1884, she was united in marriage with James W. Martin, and came to the present home site, where she lived a conscientious and neighborly life. Surviving relatives and other particulars will be noted in the obituary following. Elder L. E. Stephens and the writer conducted funeral services.

ALSO,

James W. Martin was born September 28th, 1841, and died April 2nd, 1926. He was married to Lucretia Main in 1866, and to this union were born three children (one died in infancy): Mrs. Charles Morgan, who died in 1915, and Mrs. Sarah Sawyer, who still survives, also three grandchildren. Mr. Martin married Mrs. Jane Lewis Davis in 1884, who preceded him in death June 24th, 1924. He had one stepdaughter, Mrs. Bertha Brenttinger, and a fosterdaughter, Mrs. Hazel Ufferman, of Delaware, Ohio, who with her three children, James, Albert and Betty Jane, survive. Mr. Martin was a member of Co. C, J. O. V. While neither Mr. nor Mrs. Martin ever identified themselves with the church they were firm believers in divine revelation and salvation by grace, and surely bore the fruit of the good tree, and by their fruit ye shall know them. They were always ready to assist Pleasant Hill Church and their home was a home for all orderly Baptists and ministers.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder L. E. Stephens, of Delaware, Ohio, and the unworthy writer, with burial in Mulberry Cemetery. While we all feel our great loss, we can say with Paul, we sorrow not as those who have no hope, for we believe

that our temporary loss is their eternal gain, and may we all bow in humble submission to the will of him who doeth all things well.

C. E. JACKSON.

GOLCONDA, Ill., July, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing a tribute to my late husband, Dr. J. W. Parmley, which I would like you to insert in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He was a firm believer in the doctrine set forth by the Primitive Baptists.

Your sister, I hope, MARY E. PARMLEY.

TRIBUTE TO DR. J. W. PARMLEY.

Dr. J. W. Parmley was born near Rock, Pope County, Ill., June 11th, 1845, and departed this life Wednesday, May 20th, 1925, aged 79 years, 11 months and 9 days. He was the oldest son of Ellsberry and Nancy Jane Parmley. His ancestors came from England to the New England States, and later removed to Tennessee, and from there to Pope County, Ill., in which place the family home has been for over one hundred years. When only a boy of eighteen years of age, he enlisted during the Civil War in the service of his country in the 13th Ill. Cavalry, where he served until he was honorably discharged at the close of the war. He loved to talk of his experience as a soldier, and his children have many pleasant memories of his reminiscences. He was married to Mary E. Ellis, of Rock, Ill., November 15th, 1866, and this devoted couple shared the pleasures and storms of fifty-eight years. To their union were born nine children, four of whom preceded him to the life eternal, namely: Albert Green, Belle, Cordelia and Lura E. Those left to mourn the loss of the beloved husband and father are his aged companion and five children, namely: Mrs. Allie Austin, Mrs. Olive Gibson, George Parmley, Jr., Mrs. India Wade and Mrs. Grace Abbott, together with seven grandchildren, four brothers and other relatives and friends.

At the age of thirty-two years he entered the American Eclectic Medical College of St. Louis, Mo., and graduated in May, 1878. He came home and began the practice of medicine and continued in active practice for more than forty years, until failing sight and bodily infirmities caused him to have to give up his loved profession. Practicing as he had for more than forty years, he was intimately associated with practically all of the present generation of the surrounding country within a radius of fifteen or twenty miles. Through snow and rain, sometimes with sleet frozen on his face, he rode at all times, day and night, to relieve the suffering of the people of the community, and often during sieges of sickness was gone from home for days, sometimes leaving sickness in his own home to minister to others' needs. His faithful wife was always his help and reliance at such times, and bore her share of the hardships which such service calls for. No one gets closer to the home life of the people than the family doctor, and he will be long remembered by those to whom his coming was a help and comfort, for they knew that he would go when called upon, regardless of compensation. He was converted about forty years ago, and although he never united with the church, his life was a living example of true religion as expressed by the apostle James, pure religion and undefiled before God is this, to minister to widows and orphans in their affliction. He was ready and willing to go, and died rejoicing in a Savior's love. He was a member of Golconda Lodge, No. 131, A. F. and A. M. for many years. He bore his last illness of seven weeks with patience and christian fortitude, and was surrounded by every loving care and attention that his loving children could give him, for which he often expressed his appreciation.

He was laid to rest in Mt. Zion Cemetery, near Rock. The funeral was conducted by Mr. Newt. Rogers and Mr. Maynor, with Masonic rites at the cemetery. A short talk was also made by Uncle Bailey Floyd, representing the G. A. R.

MEMORIALS.

(WARWICK ASSOCIATION.)

Since our last session, the Lord in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to remove from their fields of labor our esteemed brethren in the ministry, **Elder J. C. Mellott,** Salisbury, Md., and **Elder J. B. Slauson,** Ridgetown, Ontario, Canada:

RESOLVED, therefore, that it is the desire of this meeting that we express to the churches of our correspondence whom they served our deep sympathy in the loss which they have sustained, praying that God may, according to his own will and purpose in grace, provide undershepherds to go in and out before them.

Resolved, further, that we extend to our bereaved sisters our heartfelt sympathy in the loss of their dear husbands, so highly esteemed by us for the truth's sake, and that a copy of this memorium be sent to each of them.

R. LESTER DODSON, Moderator.

R. M. STRONG, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

The annual all-day meeting of the Brookfield Church at Slate Hill, N. Y., is appointed to be held on August 20th, Friday before the fourth Sunday. Elders George Ruston and T. W. Walker are expected to be with us. Lovers of the truth and friends will be welcomed.

R. LESTER DODSON.

Commencing with the third Sunday in July the Olive and Hurley Church, Ashokan, N. Y., will hold

their services, Daylight Saving Time, morning at 10:30, and afternoon at 2 o'clock.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet, in her seventy-second annual session, with Providence Church, near Plano, Appanoose County, Iowa, on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in August, 1926, and continue the two following days. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of Bible truth, and we desire an exchange of Minutes of other associations, that we may judge of our unity of faith and order to the end that we might correspond by Minutes and letter, if not in person. We deem it a great blessing and pleasure to know our best friends, and to hear from them directly. It builds us up in the most holy faith once delivered unto the saints.

J. M. CATE, Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects Elder George Ruston to meet with them the fifth Sunday in August (29th), 1926. For convenience service will be held, the Lord willing, at the home of J. E. Livingston, 64 E. Main St., Cobleskill, N. Y., at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All welcome. The D. & H. Albany and Binghamton train arrives and leaves in convenient time for the meeting.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held at the residence of brother W. I. Zinn, three miles south and one-half mile west of Meriden, Jefferson County, Kansas, September 10th, 11th and 12th, 1926. Those coming on the Santa Fe, get off at Kilmer Station. On Union Pacific get off at Grantville, seven miles south of place of meeting, or come to Topeka and change to Santa Fe. The last train leaves Topeka for Kilmer at 5 o'clock p. m., and the first one in the morning at 8 o'clock. It would be well to notify brother Zinn, if intending to stop at Grantville. Address him at Meriden, Kansas, for any further information, or write to me at 1243 Polk St., Topeka, Kansas. If more convenient to stay over night in Topeka write or phone 7535 after you get here.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the Bowdoinham Church, Friday before the second Monday in September, 1926, and continue three days, (September 10th, 11th and 12th). We expect brother Dodson to be with us. All who love the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.

TOPSHAM, Maine.

The eighty-fifth annual session of the Regular South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association will convene with White Water Church, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 17th, 18th and 19th, 1926. White Water Church is two miles northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, on C. R. I. & P. Railroad. Those coming from east and west will come on Cotton Belt Railroad to Fordyce Thursday, take Rock Island train for Tinsman. Those coming from north and south come over Rock Island to Tinsman, where conveyance will meet all trains Thursday and Friday. We invite all genuine peace-loving Old Baptists of the unlimited predestinarian faith to meet with us, especially the ministers.

W. R. HARRIS, Moderator.

W. C. HORTON, Clerk.

EBENEZER

OLD SCHOOL

BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

SUPPLY EXHAUSTED.

OUR supply of the book entitled "A Sketch of the Life of Joshua S. Corder" is exhausted, and we are unable to fill any more orders for said book. This work was not electrotyped, so we do not expect to have any more on sale at any time in the future.

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THE

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 94. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1926. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

1 PETER I. 1, 2.

"PETER, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Capadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."

The spiritual import of the above quotation is so great that it is not only beyond the reach of natural minds, but many of us who feel that we are subjects of God's grace are often unable to see but little of its beauties. However let us be assured of one thing: that here the apostle's words are not different from all other Scripture, in that they are profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Now I do not intimate that any of our people would attempt to gainsay Peter's declaration that he is an apostle of Jesus Christ, but in considering the first words of his first epistle we may commence this letter in a way which shows Christ to be the author and finisher of Peter's as well as that of being the author and finisher of all our own faith, as he is of all other things pertaining to his kingdom, which kingdom is not of this world and not by observation, so we now say, and must keep on saying, that Peter never did anything which was acceptable in the sight of the Lord, unless he was moved to do so by Christ's Spirit. Christ and his Spirit were one and the same then, as now, and shall remain so through eternity. God is the Father of them both, and they all are one. So our God is a triune God, for we know that he made this so, as it was his good pleasure to do. We first find Peter to be a fisherman, and it was while following his vocation as a fisherman that he was called to follow the Lord, and this he did, even unto death. I do not pretend to say just what were the exercises of dear old Peter's heart prior to the time of his being called of the Lord, but the doctrine of the eternal vital unity of God and his church (His people called out of the world) teaches us that Peter was foreseen, foreknown, predestinated, ordained of God the Father, from before the foundation of the world, for I am fully persuaded that he who created heaven and earth, and all things pertaining to each of them, the countless thousands of visible and invisible planets which surround

this lump of clay and sand upon which we exist, including the millions of things infinitely great, also the innumerable millions so infinitely small that neither eye nor ear can perceive, which things all the genius of men cannot invent instruments which may disclose the real truth about them, thus rendering unappreciable the wisdom of the greatest savants that ever lived, could not only foresee all things, but did predestinate every act of Peter's life. No, I cannot see how a child of Israel can deny absolute predestination in Peter's case unless he has been turned over to Satan to be sifted, as was Peter. I do not see, but the Lord knoweth. Now you are making God the author of sin, says some one. It is your carnal mind that accuseth me, and I know that your natural mind is dark. The author of sin is the doer of sin, and God is not the doer of sin. You will not deny that God brought up Pharaoh to do as he did, and that God hardeneth whom he will, and that the Lord well knew just what Peter was going to do, for he told him so, and later events proved the truth of our Lord's words to Peter, just as present day events are proving his truthful sayings.

I did not start to write this letter in defense of the doctrine of predestination, which doctrine is most glorious, and is the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, but I found myself in it while writing, and I love it, for it ascribes all power, praise, honor and glory to my Master, and in him I find my rest (sabbath). This is real rest, and it matters not what my temporal troubles may be I continue to enjoy the sabbath, and no power here or elsewhere seems to be able to disturb this rest. Now, are we to be careful and take heed unto all words of the apostle Peter, and unto all others of Christ's apostles? Yes. Hear the Lord say, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word."—John xvii. 20. Notice that word "shall," and remember its potency, for it is of the potential mode. So we shall believe on Christ through Peter's word, and at the same time be the blessed beneficiaries of his sweet mediatorial work (prayer to his Father). So when we receive the true spiritual import of his words, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," we are then ready and willing to confess that all obedience of whatsoever kind that we render unto God is of our Lord, and not of our own creature efforts. If it were otherwise he would not be Lord. So may the Lord lead us unto such sufficiency of grace as will give us strength to reject any and all doctrines which attempt to discount his power, honor, glory and grace, such as trying to subdivide his salvation. "Time salvation" is taught of men. The Holy Spirit does not teach it, neither does the Bible. The carnal mind finds much in the Bible that God's Spirit does not teach. Carnal constructions are oft-times taken as truth, but are always opposed to truth, so the child of grace can do nothing but look unto the Rock of his or her salvation for all (not a part) of the needs of his or her soul. May we read his blessed word with understanding hearts, having the guidance of the Holy Spirit as much as is the divine will of God to give us. Let us not be discouraged, but contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. I feel that we all know who is the great Head of the church, and that we are made willing by his Spirit to trust in him for all things which are for the good of his church. We know that

there is a falling away from the truth, but God's eyes are not holden that he cannot see. We are in the minority, but numbers do not prove anything; the numerical strength of a congregation does not prove that it is the church of the living God, for the teachers of false doctrines always have big congregations to hear their preaching. No man is more unpopular than the preacher of the truth, the truth that makes God's elect free.

Now I conclude by saying that if I have written any truth, that such truth is to the church. I am not writing to the world, but to those who are God's people, whom I love. Pray for me, and cast the mantle of charity over my many imperfections.

E. V. LASSITER.

ATLANTA, Ga., March 7, 1926.

EL PASO, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription has expired I am sending money order for three dollars, two dollars for my paper and one dollar to use as you see fit. I want to tell you of the joy and comfort I have had in reading the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for it has contained many letters comforting to a poor wandering sinner like me, for I am far from any church or people of our faith. I do not get to hear any preaching here, and have no one to talk with that can understand me, but I hope I am truly thankful to the Lord that he has so wonderfully blessed the editors and others with the gift of writing for the comfort of the poor lonely scattered strangers and pilgrims on the earth. At this time I feel like writing a few lines about my travels and experience, which goes back forty-one years, when I was only fourteen years of age. I was in the field at work, and not feeling well, and being very tired I went out and sat down under the shade of a pine tree. I soon fell asleep, but in a short time awoke and all seemed to be darkness and my sins began to appear unto me, and I felt that I was the most sinful being in all the world, but thought this darkness and awful feeling of sin was because I was not feeling well. I got up and went about my work, thinking it would leave me, but how miserable I did feel. It was then that I began to see myself a lost and condemned sinner before God, and as I thought of my sins, which appeared to be many, my first thought was to call to the most high God to stop my sinning, as I had heard that in order to be saved we must turn from our sins to God, so I began to try and put evil thoughts from my mind, but the more I tried the more it seemed evil was present with me and that I was justly condemned before God. I did not tell any one of my feelings or troubles and in a few days this feeling began to leave me, and for a few months I had but few thoughts of my sins and condemnation before God, but then they appeared unto me again, and it seemed as if there was no hope for me, as I could not do good. So time passed in this way until the summer in which I was seventeen years old, and at that time the Missionary Baptists held a revival meeting which I attended. I had never heard a Primitive Baptist preach, so depended upon my good works and upon an arm of flesh for salvation. I remember one day while the preacher was preaching, it seemed that I must sink into an everlasting hell, as I felt so miserable and sinful. I got up and went out to a lonely spot and fell upon my knees and tried to pray to God to have mercy upon me and save me, but it seemed as though my prayers were in vain and there was no hope for me, so I

arose and went back to the meeting-house, and soon the services were over and I went home. That evening I spent most of the time in a lonely spot weeping and mourning because I could not cease sinning and had about lost all hope of ever being saved. That night I went back to their services and my hopes were to some extent revived, as I was determined to use my entire strength and efforts to give up sinning and be saved. I went in gloom and darkness, under an awful weight of guilt and sin, feeling that this was my last chance. That night when they called for mourners I went up, feeling just as if I were going to the altar to be slaughtered. I fell down upon my knees and began to pray as best I could, and depending upon the preachers to pray for me, but felt no relief, and could see myself a lost and condemned sinner. I gave up all hope and could see nothing but an everlasting hell awaiting me. It seemed that I began to sink and lost all view of the world and man, and that there was a high wall around me and I was cut off from the world and from the help of man, and I must then perish as there was no help and my strength and hope were gone. Then there seemed to appear a great light from above, but I could see no man or anything of the world, as this great wall had cut off the view of all the world, and it seemed as if I were alone, but I could see the light, power and glory of the Lord, and it did then appear unto me that salvation is of the Lord, and I believe and hope I was there made to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Oh how happy I did feel, and was made to rejoice and praise God, from whom all blessings flow, as I then did not feel the guilt of sin. I felt that my sins had been forgiven, but not according to my own works of righteousness, for I had been brought to the end of my own works and was made to see a complete and finished work in Christ Jesus our Lord. Then it seemed the great wall was removed. I looked around and one of the preachers was standing near me, and I told him what great things I hoped the Lord had done for me, but he could not understand me, and told me that my talk might discourage others, so I said no more. The congregation was soon dismissed and I went home and went to bed, but could not sleep for some time, but still felt to be rejoicing in the Lord for the great things I hoped he had done for me. The next morning I was thinking of the things that had taken place the night before, and thought of what the preacher had said to me, and again began to doubt and fear that I was mistaken and deceived. I did not go to the meeting that day, but stayed at home with doubts and fears, and went out to a lonely spot in the woods and sat down on a log and thought of the things that passed the night before, and in great doubt and fear fell down upon the ground with my face to the earth and prayed to God to give me light and understanding and deliver me from doubts and fears. The joy I had the night before appeared unto me again and I felt to rejoice in the Lord. I went back to the house feeling the Lord had been gracious to me, and that my sins were forgiven. That night I went back to the meeting and listened to the preaching, but it did not correspond with my experience. I still felt I had been blessed of the Lord, and wanted to join the church and follow our Lord in baptism, but when they gave an opportunity for members I did not go, but there were others who did, and I listened to their experience, which did not altogether correspond with my own, yet I

wanted to join the church. So the next day I went back, and when they gave an opportunity for members I went up and told them a part of my experience and was received, that being on Friday, and on Sunday following I was baptized, and believed I was in the church, but could not believe all of their doctrine, as it was not according to my belief or experience. Time passed on and I attended very regularly for about two years, and then visited some friends in an adjoining county. It being Sunday they told me it was meeting day for the old "Hard Shells," and asked me if I wanted to go and hear them. As I had never heard an Old Primitive Baptist preach I told my friends I would like to go, so we went out to the church-house, which was a small log house. There were only a few there, but they kept coming in until there were about twenty. Some one said, The preacher is coming. I looked out and saw an old man riding upon a mule. Some of the people got up and went out to meet him, and they seemed very glad to see him. Then all came into the house, and it being time for preaching to start he took his hymn book and Bible out of his saddle-bag and walked up into the old board pulpit and took his hymn book and read "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound," and they began to sing. I noticed the tears began to run down the cheeks of one old brother, and after this good old song this old and feeble preacher got down on his knees and prayed a different prayer from any I had ever heard. He then read a text, which was, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." There I heard the gospel of Christ preached for the first time in my life. The dear old brother was blessed with a gift from God, and did know and preach Christ as a complete Savior, and then my poor soul was made to rejoice in the gospel of salvation; not the gospel that saved me, for if saved at all I was saved before I heard the gospel. I then could see why I was fenced in with this great high wall: it was to show me I was cut off from the help of man, and I could not get out to help myself, and was left there to perish, so far as my own strength or the help of man was concerned. But, blessed be God, when I had gone to the end of my strength, and the strength of the arm of flesh had failed, God in his great power, love, mercy and grace did show me of that love and mercy, and my poor soul was made to rejoice to know that they had reached me a poor vile sinner. So this is my only hope of eternal salvation. I do not know why, but I again became entangled with this people of the "do and live" faith. I could not forget that Old Primitive Baptist meeting, but every one seemed to think they were so few, and ignorant, that they could not be the church of Christ. I tried to put them out of my mind, and "do and live," but I soon found I could not even do that. Then my hope failed, and I soon came to the place where I doubted if I had ever had a hope, and for several years I had no interest in any denomination, but had become attached to two fraternal organizations, and was satisfied with them for a few years, and then again I wanted to go back to the church, so I once more went back to the Missionary Baptists, as they did not object to those secret orders. From 1914 to 1917 I was a member with them, and tried to work with them, but could not see as they did, and they could not see as I did. In the fall of 1917 they were holding a revival meeting and I was going every night. One night the

preacher took his text, and was trying to preach on the prodigal son, and made him out a very bad boy, and said he never was a christian or a son until he decided to go home and do good, then his father owned and blessed him. It was at this time that I saw myself as a prodigal son, and I had even wandered much farther in sin than he had. This preacher was trying to preach and these people were worshiping an idol god, who could not do anything. Then these words came to me: "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues," so before I knew what I was doing I was out of the house and on my way home. When I got home my dear wife, knowing it was not time for the services to be over, asked me why I had come home. I confessed I hoped I had been turned from worshiping idols and had been turned to the living God. Since that night I have not felt any fellowship for those people. Being at Fort Worth, Texas, at that time, and the Primitive Baptists having a church there, my dear wife and myself often went to their meetings and enjoyed their preaching, but I had not given up my secret orders, so did not ask these dear people for a home with them. December, 1919, my dear wife's health having failed the doctors advised us to come here to El Paso. After coming we found there was no Primitive Baptist Church here, so our sweet privilege of hearing the gospel had passed. As some of you will remember, November 18th, 1924, my dear wife passed from this world of sin, cares and trouble, and I have a sweet hope that she is now at rest, while I am still here in this lonely world, away from the church and the people I so dearly love. I have given up my fraternal orders, and now stand alone in the world, like one who has no friends, or any resting-place, yet at times I am made to believe and hope that beyond this world of sin and sorrow there remaineth rest for me. Is not this a sweet hope for one so sinful and unworthy as I, to know that salvation is by grace, and not by works, for if by works, then I have no hope?

Well, as I have already made my letter too long will bring it to a close. Do with it as you think best. If you see anything in it you think would be of comfort to any one publish it in the SIGNS; if not, cast it into the waste-basket, and forgive me for troubling you with it. If this does appear in the SIGNS and any Old Baptists ever pass this way, please remember my address is 3115 Sacramento Street, and you will make glad the heart of an unworthy sinner by calling on me. May the SIGNS continue to comfort the lonely, scattered and afflicted poor in hope of God's mercy.

C. M. ADAMS.

FREEWATER, Oregon.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have had a longing desire to write you in way of expressing my hearty endorsement of the principles of the gospel as set forth by you and the other editors and writers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but a feeling sense of my inability to express myself as I would has so far deterred me. I have now decided to throw myself upon your charity and make the attempt. I have been a reader of the SIGNS for a long time, and the principles set forth by the editors to-day are the very principles on which dear old brother Beebe founded it: salvation by grace, and grace alone. I do believe that God is a sovereign and works his will not only in the army of heaven but among the inhabitants of the earth, and none dare say, What doeth

thou? I have had some very comforting thoughts on the apostle's letter to the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus, as recorded in his letter to the Ephesians. After introducing himself to them, he gives vent to the fullness of his heart in these words, which plainly show the fruit of the Spirit, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Paul seals the fact that all spiritual blessings to the saints are in Christ. Everything which is profitable and blessed to the saints is treasured up in Christ, and the apostle is very careful to not leave us to guess why this is so. It is according to God's election, according as he has chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world. So this forever puts a seal on the notion that some of these spiritual blessings depend upon what the saints might do. It does not say God has blessed us with spiritual life then leaves us to get our spiritual blessings here in time by our obedience. Paul says "all" spiritual blessings, which complete our salvation for time and eternity. The purpose of all this glorious work of God is that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, and well might the apostle say there is nothing able to separate us from the love of God which we have in Christ Jesus. Dear ones, it was all given to us in Christ before the foundation of the world, and I firmly believe that every one who was chosen in him shall enjoy the fullness of all these spiritual blessings treasured up in Christ. The apostle continues with the security of these blessings, and tells us that God, who chose us in Christ, in whom we enjoy all these heavenly blessings, has predestinated us unto the adoption of children, and then says that all this wonderful work is according to his will. He then comes to the very heart of this blessed work, and declares that it is all to the praise of his grace wherein we are so gloriously accepted in the Beloved. Oh how good and rich to the soul to enter in as did Esther before the king and have the sceptre handed out until her trembling fingers could touch it, and to hear the king gently say, What is thy request? Then the soul answers, If I have found favor before thee come thou to my banquet. The apostle opens up to our poor troubled soul more of the riches of grace: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Sins, not only one, but many sins. As John has recorded it, The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. Oh I am so glad that the atoning blood of the Son of God is complete and full to meet every demand of the law. Such sweet and heavenly blessings my soul doth find in Jesus. He has abounded to us in all wisdom and has made known to us the mystery of his will, and this wisdom is made known to us according to his good pleasure which he has purposed in himself, and we find that all this glorious purpose of God was to the end that he might gather all things in one (in Jesus), in whom all God's spiritual blessings are treasured for his suffering Zion, both them which are in heaven (Jewish heaven) and those who are on earth (Gentiles). Jesus said while here on earth, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them I also must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." Then in the eleventh verse of this first chapter of Ephesians Paul declares that it is in

Jesus we have obtained an inheritance, and this being by the predestinated purpose of God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will. There are some among the Old School or Primitive Baptists who say God predestinated all the good things and who declare that all the bad things are against and contrary to the will and purpose of God, and they set their poor imperfect minds against the perfect mind of God and tell us what is good and what is bad. They seem not to realize that all God does is good and right while much of his works with his creatures seem evil to us. None dare say that Job's afflictions were sent upon him for his disobedience, for God said to Satan, who was to tempt or afflict him, Hath thou considered my servant Job, a perfect and upright man, one who eschews evil and does that which is good? Now this forever seals the fact that Job was no greater sinner than the rest of mankind, but if we by faith follow the trials of Job to the end we shall see God's purpose in every event which was working to this end. After all Job's earthly possessions were taken and he was afflicted in person, so wretched was his condition that all earthly friends, even his wife, so abhorred him that she asked him to curse God and die. This is just what Satan said he would do. But listen to the tried saint, he said to his wife that she spoke as one of the foolish women. He said, If we have received good at the Lord's hand, shall we not receive evil? Job's earthly blessings were good to him, but his afflictions were evil. No chastening at the time it is administered seems good to us, but is grievous (evil).

I wish to call attention to one more passage of Scripture and then try to conclude. In the ninth chapter of John is recorded one of the greatest miracles Jesus performed while here. It was to open the eyes of a man who was born blind, and the question was asked, Who hath sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus says, Neither has this man nor his parents sinned that he was born blind. Now this being so, we must look for some other cause, for there is bound to be a cause for every effect. Listen to him whose words are Spirit and Life. He says that the cause is that the works of God should be made manifest. If we could look for God's works to be made manifest in all our deep heart exercises, instead of marking out the way God should do, we, too, like Job, could say, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Let us step back to our text, where all our heavenly blessings are, and see that they were all stored there for us before the world was, and we were chosen heirs of all these blessings there. It is according to the will and purpose of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will, and we firmly believe that the great purpose of our God in all things is the salvation of his elect people, whom he chose in Jesus before the foundation of the world, and every link in that golden chain from the beginning of time is only manifesting to that dear people God's fixed purpose or decree, to the end that his blessed name shall be glorified in all things. In Jesus I hope I see the purpose or predestination of God in all things, and to him be glory, honor and power, now and eternally.

In christian love,

J. T. BARNES.

RANDOLPH, Maine, Oct. 21, 1925.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I would love to talk with you on the things of our Father's house, but my insufficiency looms up before me, and I feel like shrinking from what would otherwise give me pleasure.

Our meeting at Whitefield, to me, was one fraught with much comfort, and I would that I could live it over again, such a wonderful manifestation of the power of our God. No missionary had been laboring in our little band for the salvation of souls, nothing exciting had been talked to the children, but they came, drawn by the cords of love, came in humility and with nature shrinking from the steps they were taking. It was all so wonderful, not even a minister among us since your last visit, one year before. How plainly it shows that our God is not dependent upon the puny arm of flesh, that when he says to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back, they do come, and I feel there are others who will soon follow. We have had a long, dark, dreary winter, and it looked as if the Whitefield Church was about to lose her visibility, not an addition for twenty years, and my anxiety has been so great concerning her welfare, and my love for her so fervent, I have feared I was overzealous and might be likened unto those who tried to steady the ark, but for all that I far rather remain as we were than have some one come with an uncertain sound. Our little meetings this summer have been sweet to me. I have felt afraid something would come to mar the love which has flowed like a river. It must have looked foolish in the eyes of the world to see us journeying such long distances to meet together, only a handful, with no minister to address us, but surely the Lord has been with us, and we have found ourselves strengthened. Brother Tedford has served us according to the ability God has given him. Sister Attie Curtis has an excellent gift, as also has sister Belle Dunlap, and so we have found it sweet to meet together and sing and talk of the wonderful works of our God. I see so much here in my lonely home. God is very near to me and I have sweet communion from the throne.

"Alone, yet not alone, am I,
Though in this solitude so drear;
I feel my Savior always nigh,
He comes the lonely hours to cheer."

And when he comes there is cheer, something this world cannot give, neither can all the devils in earth or in hell take it away. How quickly this glorious truth would be swept away if Satan could do it. How he does torment us at times, and we seem captives, but thanks be to our God, He led captivity captive. We are free sons and daughters of God through the finished work of our dear Savior. "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise," and they do; they are the only people who do show forth the glory of our God; none others can, for they know him not, to them he is not precious. We talk about the things we have seen, heard and felt, and to the world they are darkness; it is no wonder we seem peculiar.

Not long since, during a storm I saw a small flock of doves on a building top; they were all sitting facing the storm, and it was a most beautiful picture to me. I saw the little church facing the storms together, not one had turned its back. Soon they flew off, and soon down to the ground, where they were eating their scanty food; all eating the same food, no strange bird among them. They were quiet, too, facing the storms of adversity. As they flew from the roof I heard only

a call or two, and they all went to the deserted garden, eagerly eating whatever found; and do not we? Oh the storms, dear brother, that it has been my lot to face. I have been overwhelmed, as it were, and sunken to the depths of despair, not as quiet as the dove, oh no, but down, down to the very depths of human misery. But even in that I have been comforted, and a feeling given that rather than have God's will changed (if it could be so) I would rather suffer, for if one thing could be changed all could be, and so I have found he can sweeten the most bitter cup; there is nothing too hard for our God, and in the seasons of deepest distress he is not forgetful of us. He kills and he makes alive, he wounds and he heals, the Lord doeth these things, and now after all these years I can say,

"Though I have him oft forgot,
His loving kindness changes not."

I have, as it were, tested his promises and found him faithful. We are in a safe place, in the cleft of the rock, and no harm can befall us.

Now, dear brother, may God be with you, sustain and uphold you. Fight the fight of faith, fearing not the face of clay. May you be found with your face set as a flint, looking always to the God of Israel. Be faithful, bearing the reproaches of man rather than desiring the approval of the world, and at eveningtide it shall be light. Your flesh can do none of these things. Oh how weak we are, just nothing at all.

Unworthily, in hope of rest beyond,
NELLIE M. PALMER.

NORTH WHITEFIELD, Maine, Sept. 16, 1925.

DEAR SISTER NELLIE:—How I wish I could be with you now, for I have no one to talk with, only my own thoughts. Oh if I could only have told in the social meeting what since has come to me. I have lived over in a way my whole experience (if so be I can call it that) from the very first. You know how Elder Dodson spoke Sunday: that we go down to hell in our experience, &c. I had never used that word only to myself, but surely I was in hell for months; it was all I could compare it to at times. I felt I suffered the pangs of hell, and while there I had to stand still, like Israel, pleading for mercy, hedged in on every side, no way of escape, until in his own good time and way he brought me up out of that awful place of miry clay I wish I might be able to write it all like I have seen it since Sunday. I have been made to recall much since, but I can say God's people are the only people I love or feel at home with, and I do wish my husband were able to get along alone for a few days, so I could be with you and tell you everything as I live it over again. I do not mean I am in that hell again, but am able to go back and see it all, that it has all been brought back to my remembrance again. I have been much in the dark, and been so cold, even careless in my feelings, vile. I go back to that again; in other words, must I soon experience that coldness and hardness of heart again? I hope not. I am glad you are where you can see some of the brethren and those just brought into the fold. Surely the God of Israel reigns. I did not know but Etta would come, but never thought of Sanford, and I believe Helen (Etta's sister-in-law) will come soon. She certainly is under conviction, but she must travel the whole road to the Red Sea. God's grace is sufficient for us all, and I am glad it is by grace he saves us all, and that we are not left to save ourselves by works. We are all great sinners, but he is a great Savior,

able to save to the uttermost. He knows no failure. All glory belongs to him. He is the resurrection and the life. He is all and in all to his people, and some day we will be free from this old sinful self, and this body shall be changed and made like unto his most glorious body. It was this old sinful body that he died to save, for that is the sinner, and as surely as he died to save it, so surely will he raise it up in the appointed time. (Elder Ruston wrote upon that subject in one of the "Minutes" in the Circular Letter.) We are glad it is so, for if we had hope in this world only we would be of all men most miserable. I have asked myself, Where is heaven? He called the firmament heaven; he also set the planets in the heavens; but the only answer is, Where He is is heaven. "It is heaven below, my Redeemer to know."

I cannot help thinking of the letter you wrote for us, what a wonderful one it was, and how the Lord did speak through you. It made me look smaller than ever. I have not even the one talent; if I ever did have it it has been taken and given to him who hath many.

I almost felt condemned to have Sanford bother with me as he did, for I did not feel as if I ought to stay Saturday night. I hope if I live until another association I can leave everything and go.

Do you dread winter? I do sometimes. We get along all right if husband is not sick, but it comes to mind now, Trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, but you know it is in nature to worry sometimes, and when I think of winter I feel a sort of dread.

Lots of love from your unworthy sister,

MARTHA E. GLIDDEN.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Oct. 20, 1925.

DEAR SISTER PALMER:—Your letter came yesterday and seemed so good to me. I read it over twice and felt that I could sit right down and answer it. It was too bad that you could not have a meeting, but in a way you did have a meeting after all at sister Attie's, did you not? and by Attie's letter you are hoping to have another meeting before winter sets in. I do hope you can meet during the winter at Aunt Mabel's, or your place, or somewhere, for it is good to talk of these things, and we know that where two or three are gathered together in His name He will be in their midst, and it is sweet to know this. We had a very pleasant meeting Sunday. Brother Hill spoke with great liberty from Genesis vii. 6–17. He took for his text, "And the Lord shut him in." He brought it all out beautifully. I found myself lost in his preaching, lifted up out of my natural state, and did not feel conscious of my natural being. When he stopped talking how I wished that he might talk on and on, for I felt I could never tire. I could have sat there indefinitely, listening. How Noah sent out the raven, (typical of our earthly natures) blackest bird, ready to feast upon the floating carcasses, wandering here and there from one thing to another, but satisfied to eat dead things, as our earthly natures are ready to feast upon dead things (things pertaining to the world). Our natures are as black and restless as the raven. When Noah sent out the dove (the spiritual being) she returned to the ark, for she did not find rest for the sole of her foot, but the third time he sent her out the waters had abated and she did not return to the ark, for the storm had passed, and, like us, after the storm is over we are ready to leave our Savior

and wander into the world again. It is in trouble that we seek him, and when his light shines upon the cloud we see the rainbow of promise, but we cannot see the rainbow unless his light shines upon the cloud. How wonderful it all is. I have been living, it seems, in the book of Genesis lately. I read and read and could not seem to leave it. It seemed so wonderful to feel that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is my God, too, and when I think of the wonders he performed, and all for them, I feel that I can never doubt, but sometimes when I am tormented with doubts and fears I have to cry with Rebecca, If it be so, why am I thus? and, like Rebecca, two nations (natures) are struggling within me. The hymn, "It is I," flashed into my mind as I awoke the other morning. I awoke with a start and the words startled me, for they seemed to come before I was quite awake, and with such power and such sweetness I felt the Lord was dealing with me. I have been much burdened lately, harassing doubts and fears have made my very being shake and tremble, and when these words came, as though spoken to me, I felt a rest and peacefulness hover over me. But now and then the clouds appear and I am afraid again, and as they pass over, then comes the beautiful rainbow, "It is I," and I am assured that he is nigh, and that I am his and he is mine, and that the devil and all his angels cannot separate us, no matter how terrible they appear to us. God is our strength, and he is our shield and buckler, and who can harm us? He can make us as strong as a lion, and in an instant can make us as helpless as a baby.

I had a letter from Dorothy Weeks this morning, and it surely manifested her love for her Savior, and her desire to be like him. It was a wonderful letter and could not have been worded or expressed more beautifully by an older and more educated person. This shows the power of God more than ever. The Lord has given her a keen conscience and a clear understanding, and all I could think of was innocence and purity as I read her words. They were sweet and beautiful to me. I have a deep, deep love for her. I always thought I had a keen conscience, but not so keen but that I would try to deceive myself into believing that I could see no harm in what I was enjoying, but Dorothy's conscience is so keen that she cannot even try to convince herself she enjoys things when she knows she does not. I was trying to satisfy my fleshly desires, and I knew it, but did not have strength to resist, for my natural desires got hold on me and the devil came in his sleek way and told me it was harmless, and tried in many ways to show me how innocent it was, and as I saw all the others (who were possessed of him) there dancing around (the beautiful flames), it looked enticing to me. I only saw the glare, the gorgeousness of the flames, but did not know they were hot and would scorch me as they touched me, but I soon found that they were as cruel as they were alluring, and always when I went I felt the flame of wickedness scorching me, my conscience hurt me and I hated myself and was cast into darkness, and had to cry to the Lord for help. I had to cry for him to deliver me from the lions' den and lift me out of the fire the devil had set to consume me. He heard my cry of agony and lifted me out with every assurance that he would not leave

me to be devoured by the flames of destruction, but that the fire would consume the dross and refine me, melt me down and make me purer and purer, and when all the dross is consumed I will be one in him, and spotless before God, and will live forever with him and never know suffering again. How wonderful to feel this. It seems we can go through hell fire and everything, only to be with him and know that we are his and he is ours. I feel I could drop to my knees this moment and cry with an unworthy but thankful heart to him and pour out my feelings before him, but he knows our hearts and we do not need words where he is, but I feel at times he makes us fall on our knees in prayer, and how sweet it is if we can do this, but it means terrible suffering. He can make the bitter sweet, and does. The memory of my bitterest times are the sweetest to me. It is in trouble that we flee to God and find sweet comfort in him. Then he puts his loving arms about us and we long to fall asleep enwrapped by his protecting arms, resting on his bosom, only to awake in his likeness, never to suffer pain and torment again. It makes me long to leave this dreary world and return, as the white dove, to the ark of grace forever.

It seems that I have rambled from one thing to another, but I have written as my pen has been directed, for when I sat down I did not feel I could write anything, but I longed to tell you how I appreciated your dear letter. It seems a burden has dropped off since I have written this letter, and I feel like singing, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow," a sweet solemnity seems to surround me.

With deepest love, your little sister,

ANNA DILL.

NIAGARA FALLS, N. Y., April 13, 1926.

DEAR EDITORS:—It becomes necessary for me to write you in order to send in my subscription. You will find inclosed four dollars for my renewal, and please send the SIGNS to Albert Smith, Cassopolis, Michigan, for one year, and discontinue his at the end of the year. As for me, I shall try to take it as long as I rejoice in reading it as I have heretofore. It is of great comfort to those who feel themselves alone and have no opportunity of hearing the gospel preached as it is set forth by the Old School Baptists. A dear lone pilgrim came to my house and introduced herself by saying that she had read my article in the SIGNS, that she never knew there was an Old School Baptist living here besides herself. We had a good visit, and I hope she comes again, for it is a great pleasure to meet one of the Lord's little ones whose trials are legion. No people on earth are tempted, tried and bruised as are the people of the Lord, hence they seek companionship, and desire to tell of the great things that the Lord has done for them. It is fightings without and foes within, and God has left in the midst of them an afflicted and poor people, yet in all their affliction he was afflicted and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them and he bare them and carried them all the days of old, for they are mine sayeth the Lord. Again he says, This people have I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise. This same Lord gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works, and so he and his people suffer together. If ye suffer with him ye shall also reign with him, for unto you it is given not only to believe on his name, but also to suffer for

his sake. He said, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer I have overcome the world. Oh what cheering words are these to the sin-tossed and tried, those who have come up out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God; he that loveth his brother abideth in light. Now have we not noticed a peculiar drawing toward those people we believe to be the children of the heavenly King, and do we not feel a great love for him when we think of that great love wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sins, having forgiven us all trespasses, and do we not feel to say, like one of old, He took me up out of the mire and clay and placed my feet upon a rock, he put a new song in my mouth, even praise to my God? Or like the virgin Mary, she said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. If we have felt this way is it not a witness to us that we are his? In the Lord's sermon on the mount he tells his disciples how they might know how they were blessed, nine different ways to test themselves. Blessed are the poor in spirit. When we were without strength, having tried all our own power and failed, surely then we felt poor in spirit. Try them all and you will find the Lord knew just what attitude you would be in when enlightened to know the truth, even when men shall revile you. Such things the world knows nothing about; it knows us not, because it knew him not, and being ignorant of God's righteousness go about to set up their own righteousness, and have not known of the righteousness which is of God, therefore they are always ready to dispute with the people who know the Lord by experience, always ready to persecute and overawe the Lord's little ones, who have so many things to contend against, and more especially their own inward sins bred and born in their flesh, the temptation of Satan, who accuses them day and night, the persecutions of wicked and sinful men. Yea, all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. It is so fixed, whether men understand it or not, and ye shall be hated of all men for a testimony against them and the Gentiles, and when all these terrible deeds are done to them it shall turn to them for a witness. We have many witnesses, yet we are always saying, If I only knew I was his. The trouble is we seek an outward sign, while all the time the witness is inward. He that believest that Jesus is Christ hath the witness in himself. He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. When men persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely for his sake, rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven. Now I say that all of these things do turn to us for a witness, and let us thank God and take courage, for we shall soon be called home, where there will be no more sickness, pain or death, where God shall wipe away all tears and where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.

May the Lord bless those who control the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and may judgment be given unto them to conduct it to the good and glory of his name.

Remember I do not ask you to publish this, for I feel you will know best, and I shall be satisfied with your decision.

In love to all the household of faith,

W. E. BLUE.

POCA, W. Va., March 15, 1926.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—As I have spent this long and dreary winter at home it has been to me very lonesome, so this morning I feel I would love to speak with my pen to all the faithful in Christ Jesus. I have been reading in my Bible the prophecy of Isaiah, which has given me quite a bit of contemplation, feeling as I do that the spiritual import of this wonderful prophet has its application to the Israel of God in this gospel dispensation as well as to ancient Israel in the oldness of the letter. The letter kills, but the Spirit makes alive. Surely the turning of things upside down by those who take bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter are becoming very numerous. As it was with ancient Israel so it is now, there seems to be a state of confusion brought about by designing men who are striving for the mastery. The prophet says, "Therefore [for this cause] hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure." I think a state of confusion and disturbance brought about by designing men for the purpose of getting to themselves a following is the hell under consideration; that spirit seems to be as prolific as foxes, as she hath opened her mouth without measure. It is not confined to the law dispensation, neither to the prophetic age, but without limit, without measure. It has its prevalence in this gospel day with those who are carnally minded. The prophet seems to be contrasting between the true and the false worshipers of God, he says, "Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah." We see God has been pleased to reserve to himself a remnant according to election and grace given in Christ Jesus before the world began. Referring to the gospel day, he says, "And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man [the man Christ Jesus], saying, We will eat our own bread [conditional bread], and wear our own apparel [self-righteousness]; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." The wrath of man shall praise God and the remainder he will restrain. All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. When Balaam would have cursed Israel for Balak "the Lord put a word in Balaam's mouth, and said, Return unto Balak, and thus thou shalt speak. * * * How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy, whom the Lord hath not defied?" Paul, in the ninth chapter of Romans, referring to the Israelites, says, "To whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen. Not as though the word of God had taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel." With the testimony of Paul I feel safe in saying that not all who claim to be Primitive Baptists are of the Primitive faith. Again, "For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the people [elect] shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations."—Num. xxiii. 5, 8, 9. Sin is hell begun, as religion is heaven anticipated, the gates of hell are the power and policy of Satan in setting up men-made institutions; dividing and subdividing seems to be the policy of the evil spirit seeking whom he may devour. He came to Jesus with his temptations and "taketh him up into an

exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world [the kingdoms of antichrist], and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." The service of God is a pleasure to the true and faithful followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God. When the saints of God can meet for the purpose of praising him from whom all blessings flow, all in peace and harmony, with one accord, their hearts being tuned by the Spirit of Jesus to sing, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in his excellent word," the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts for the welfare and prosperity of Zion. Such are refreshing seasons from the presence of the Lord. God sends these refreshing dews upon the tender plants, the right hand planting of the Lord. Jesus says, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." It seems to me that there are some in this gospel day who have the title of "Elder" who disregard their title as an officer of peace. Such seem to be ready runners, as was Ahimaaz, who was anxious to run, and Joab gave him to run, and he ran by the way of the plain. Not being burdened with the word to the king he overran Cushi, and all he could tell was that he saw a great tumult, but knew not what it was. So it is with those of a tumultuous spirit, which is a disorderly spirit striving for numbers, seeking for quantity instead of quality, for the majority and confusion rather than the minority and peace among the true and faithful followers of Jesus.

Your brother in bonds of affliction,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

SUMNER, Wash., Sept. 14, 1925.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—I have been a reader of the SIGNS for a great many years, and while I am not a member of the visible church, I do believe what the SIGNS stands for. Some of my people are members. Your editorials are very comforting to the poor lost sheep of Israel, as I feel myself to be. I feel as if I were in a waste howling wilderness, and the things of this world seem so vain, everything seems so mixed with sin. Your editorial on Zaccheus was certainly a revelation to me. I hope I have a sound belief of the things the Bible teaches. I have wondered if my belief was natural or spiritual. I know I am a sinner and if I am ever saved it will be by the grace of God. I never can put any trust in man, poor frail creature of the dust. I know the Lord can bring me low, and I hope with all my heart that he will reveal his love to me in a way I will know that I have passed from death unto life and have an advocate with the Father. The letters in the SIGNS are very comforting. I hope you will cast the mantle of charity over this, for I feel to be poor and little.

Your unworthy friend,

JENNIE CLIFFORD.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Elder J. B. Bowden having changed his address from Weslaco, Texas, to Route F, Box 59, San Antonio, Texas, requests his correspondents to address his mail to the latter place. His health has been such this year that he has not been able to do any work, and he would be pleased to hear from any of the brethren who feel to write him.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1926.

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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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ISAIAH LIV. 1.

"SING, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord."

A member of the Christian Science order has asked an Old Baptist for an exposition of this Scripture, and we, in turn, have been requested to give our views. That it has to do with the church of the true and living God, there is not the shadow of a doubt in our mind. There are but two ways spoken of in the record of divine truth: Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; but strait (difficult) is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. If Old Baptists had nothing else in their favor, the above would be weighty evidence, but when we come to consider the household of faith, and to trace her history down through the channel of time, we soon discover that this vessel of mercy has from time immemorial sailed the sea "wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby." Sarah, the wife of Abraham, spoken of as the father of the faithful, to whom the Lord had said, as the stars of heaven for number, "So shall thy seed be," was barren; she was old and it had ceased to be with her after the manner of women before even the promise was made; according to nature all hope had expired, so much so that she laughed at what seemed to her the absurdity of the thought, nevertheless "at the set time of which God had spoken" she bare Isaac, (there is a set time for God to favor Zion) and when he was weaned, or separated from the consolations of the breasts of his mother, Humanity, Abraham, the man of faith made a great feast. The word which had gone forth out of the mouth of the Lord, which he declared should not return unto him void, had accomplished his pleasure in the thing whereto he sent it, and the barren was made to sing unto him who works and none can hinder. Abraham, who, by faith, staggered not at the promise of God, saw his day, the Lord's day, the day of his power, and was glad, worshipping as he did at the altar when God staid his hand and provided himself an offering in the ram caught in the thicket; what a time of rejoicing and singing and crying aloud there must have been at the "great feast" which he made. When Abraham sent his servant to seek a wife for his son, Isaac, he commanded him, saying, "Thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell: but thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac." He further told him that "The Lord God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land, he shall send his angel before thee; and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence." The success of the journey

proved conclusively the selection to be of the Lord, but when Rebecca was brought unto Isaac and became his wife, behold she was barren, "And Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren: and the Lord was entreated of him, and Rebecca his wife conceived." What a beautiful type we have here of Christ and his church: she is barren and destitute, but she has a Friend, yea, an Husband, whose prayer is always heard by the Father, and through the work of the Holy Spirit causes her to conceive, travail and bring forth, according to the seed of promise, and, oh, what a struggle there is. As with Rebecca, so with her: two nations are within her, and she is made to inquire of the Lord, "If it be so, why am I thus?" Dear child of God, do you not realize that to be fruitful unto the Lord you must be killed all the day long? Oftentimes, no doubt, your prayer is that the Lord will cause you to bring forth fruit to his name's honor and glory, and it may be you ask, if it be his will, that he use you to the comfort and edification of the saints, not knowing that if he grant your request it will necessitate your passing between the upper and nether mill stones; that you must, through great darkness of mind and depravity of soul, suffering persecution, peril and sword, be conformed to the image of his Son. How very different is the case of Ishmael, Abraham's son by Sarah's handmaiden, Hagar: The sons of Ishmael were "twelve princes, according to their nations," with their castles. How fruitful and prosperous they were. It is true of the "ites" to-day. They are numerous and abundant in good works, so-called, but it is also that the bride, the Lamb's wife, "My dove, my undefiled is but one: she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her." She does not appeal to the nature of man; by nature he sees no beauty in her and nothing to attract him to her. Solomon said, "We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for?" How blessed the thought that the Rose of Sharon shall take note of her, that he shall come in unto her and entreat our heavenly Father on her behalf, and that he will cause her, though barren as the desert, to be fruitful and to blossom as the rose. Surely she can say, My beloved is mine, and I am his; he is the chiefest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely, and, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." What about her children? It was said concerning national Israel, "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt." The flock of God to-day is a "little flock," and they are "little" in a two-fold sense: so few in number that they are not reckoned among the nations of the earth, and so little and helpless and dependent that of themselves they can do nothing, the Father doeth the work, and so by experience they are barren and can bring forth no good thing except the Lord be entreated of them and bless them in fruit and in store. And when she does bring forth it is with great travail, the flesh lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, the warfare of two great opposing members, the flesh serv-

ing the law of sin, and the mind serving and delighting in the law of God after the inward man. Out of this strife we are made to cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" with no alternative but to "thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Let us now consider Rachel, the free wife of Jacob, whom he loved. The record is that Leah, the bond wife, was fruitful and she bore Jacob sons, but Rachel, seeing that she bare Jacob no children, "envied her sister; and said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die." How desperate was her case. But "God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb, and she conceived, and bare a son; and said, God hath taken away my reproach: and she called his name Joseph." What a wonderful field for thought appears here. Time and space demand that we confine ourself to certain bounds, but we would like for our readers to pause and consider the true substance of which this is but a shadow: how that when we were wrought upon by the Holy Ghost, and our spiritual Joseph, which is Christ the Lord, was conceived in us and born the hope of glory, we were no longer barren, but fruitful, and our reproach was taken away by the Lord Jesus. It is in him we stand clothed upon with that righteousness which is from above; it is the merit, and that alone, of the fruitful bough which ran over the wall to the Gentiles, those who were barren and afar off, without God and without hope in the world, bringing them nigh unto God by his blood that causes them to sing and cry aloud the praise that is his due. It is the Lord who brings his people up out of the land of bondage and liberates them from the hand of Pharaoh, enabling them to sing the song of his glorious triumph. It was King Jesus who sat down with the Father in the council of eternity and figured out all the cost that would be entailed through the sufferings and death necessary to redeem and pay to the last farthing the debt of his loved one, by which she was to be released from condemnation and set free, whereof it was declared of her, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." As Joseph served seven years, or a perfect number, for Rachel, even so must the service of Christ for his bride be perfect, and all other sacrifices and offerings being but a shadow of good things to come, by "one offering," and that himself, hath he himself perfected forever them that are sanctified. He, then, is the true Vine, and the fruit he bore was the laying down of his life for his friends. Of himself he said, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Though rich, he became poor; though "all things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made," yet he testified, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Shall it be said of the servant that he is better than his Lord and Master?

In conclusion, it would seem to us that the church among the Gentiles is being considered here in an especial manner. Truly, she was barren and didst not bear; she did not travail with child, for the man child, Jesus, was born of the church under the law, the Jews, and yet, since he came to make of the two flocks one fold, or gospel church, she, the Gentile part of the church, as well as the Jews, must perform all of her six day's labor and of necessity be brought by the great

schoolmaster, the law, to Christ, who tells her what she knows inwardly, that she is no longer married to any of her former five husbands of the law; she knows only too well that they cannot provide for her needs, for having been stripped and shorn of all her righteousness under the law, which was proven to be nothing but filthy rags, her only hope now is GRACE, the unmerited favor of God, and she is made to desire that this living water shall be a well springing up unto eternal life, and we have thought that the children of this married wife, the gospel church, embracing both Jews and Gentiles, or every nation, kindred and tongue, are but a remnant of God's people as compared to those who are still in Babylon, under the law, or the children of the desolate. Many are called, but few are chosen as the visible church to fight the battles of the Lord under the leadership of him who shunned not to declare the works of his Father. He will not leave himself without witnesses, and when he brings them out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, creature works under the law, and sets their feet upon a Rock, and establishes their goings, they that were barren will sing praise unto our God. Those whom he calls out and separates into a visible organization are said to be as a city that is set upon a hill, whose light cannot be hid, and when he teaches them the pure language known only in Zion they will break forth into singing. The poet says:

"Let those who inhabit the Rock,
And out of his fullness receive,
Proclaim him the tower of the flock,
Still precious to them that believe:
Our prophet, our priest and our king,
'Tis life everlasting to know;
His blood and his merits we sing,
For Christ is the end of the law.

'Tis here, when with sorrows oppressed,
Believers in Jesus should flee;
For those that are weary, here's rest
For sin-burdened sinners like me.
If justice pursues thee for blood,
His righteousness stands without flaw,
And he that redeemed thee to God,
Is Jesus, the end of the law.

The types and the shadows are fled,
With all that prediction foretold,
Since Jesus on Calvary bled,
His sheep shall return to the fold:
Shall build upon him as a Rock,
Not fear, when the tempest shall blow,
And nothing the building shall shock,
For Christ is the end of the law.

How sweet and delightful the strain,
Salvation by grace to repeat;
Shall sinners redeemed e'er refrain,
Who stand thus in Jesus complete?
From him as the Fountain of life,
His saints their existence shall draw,
And live, though encompassed with strife,
For Christ is the end of the law."

R. L. D.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder John Greene Eubanks was born near Union, South Carolina, September 8th, 1843, and his mortal life was ended July 18th, 1926. He was married to Mary Massey Rogers October 5th, 1865, in Dallas, Georgia. His wife preceded him in death February 15th, 1924. He leaves a family of five sons and four daughters: James R. and Sylvester Hassell, of Louisville, Ky., Wm. Beebe, of Washington, D. C., Oliver Perry, of Wilmington, Del., Benj. T., of Newark, Del., Miss Eugenia, of Newark, Del., who was his faithful nurse and companion to the end, Mrs. George Pyles, of Hudson, Kansas, Mrs. Henry H. Townsend, of near Phoenixville, Pa., and Mrs. Dorothy Lee, of Wilmington, Del. Seventeen grandchildren also survive him. At the age of three years his family and his wife's people removed to Georgia, where they took up a grant of land as pioneers, among the Indians at that time. At the age of ten he was bitten by a rattlesnake and his life despaired of for a time. He was drafted into the Confederate army at the age of eighteen and served until captured, the latter part of the war, and removed to Fort Delaware, where he was a prisoner for ten months and twenty days, after which he was exchanged, but did not reenter the service. He was burdened and convicted of sin at about the age of twelve. One day while walking in the woods these words came into his heart: "Created in Christ Jesus unto good works." He had never read a Bible, for at that time, and for years afterward, he could read and write but very little, and ever after he often remarked he was convinced there was no other way for the salvation of sinners but by

the life of Christ in the sinner: salvation by grace. He first united with the Missionary Baptists, but soon found that salvation by grace was not taught in that school. They saw a gift in him to preach, but on his first trial he failed miserably, and decided never to try it again. He secured a position on the railroad and did not enter a meetinghouse for several months. One day his train was derailed and he was thrown under the cars, but was miraculously protected from death by his Creator, and while in that precarious position these words came sweetly into his mind (as he has told it many times), "Are you willing to be a little preacher?" and his reply was, "I am willing to be God Almighty's anything." He immediately left his position and returned home, was baptized in the summer of 1865, and was ordained at Acworth, Georgia, in November or December of the same year. He served Sardis, Maloney Springs and Mt. Zion Churches until about 1876, was then called and served Shoal Creek, Holly Springs, Buleah and Jack's Creek Churches until about 1890, when he was called to Campbellsburg, Kentucky, to serve Sulphur Fork, Mays Lick and Mount Pleasant Churches. In the spring of 1902 he was called by Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, and served her until his demise. He was an ever faithful watchman on the walls of Zion, and the principles and doctrine of God our Savior were ever promulgated by him. He was blessed with a unique gift, doctrine and experience were so sweetly and originally blended that it seldom failed to reach some, if not all, the hearers. Hymn 233 was one of his favorite poems, and expressed better his belief than he could have written it himself. He was a master of vocal music in his time, and his voice will be sadly missed in leading the singing by many of the churches and associations. It can be truly said that a great gift in the church militant has fallen, but our loss is his eternal gain. Eternity and space with him was awe, and of late he often dwelt upon Paul's words: "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." He firmly believed this by the faith of the Son of God if ever man did believe it on earth. He suffered much for forty-eight days and endured it patiently until the end, not one word of complaint did he utter, and a few hours before his death he repeated his Savior's words: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" but not in a spirit of complaint, for he seemed to look to him all of the time for support and endurance to the end.

The funeral service was conducted by the following brethren in the ministry: Elders Rowe, Ker, Vaughn, Lefferts, Ruston and Dodson, who spoke feelingly of him, and, with the sad hearts in the congregation, keenly felt the passing of this dear brother and gift in the church. His favorite poem, "Death is only a dream," was read by brother Rowe. It was befitting to such a character, and now he realizes it in fact. He was laid away in mother earth, there to await the change; his spirit has flown to rest with Jesus.

Much more could be said, but he would rather not have it that way if he could be questioned.

Written by request of the family.

J. B. MILLER.

Deacon Archibald McAlpin was born October 3rd, 1856, and died May 27th, 1926, at his home near Bothwell, Ontario, in his seventy-first year. In the year 1877 he was united in marriage to Miss Christena Myers, and to this union were added three children: Maud, now deceased, Henry Harvey, on the homestead, and Mrs. John H. McKeown, of Sarnia, Ontario, who with the widow, Sarah, one brother, John, and one sister, Barbera, are left to mourn. Brother McAlpin was twice married; his first wife departed this life in March, 1887. In the year 1901 he married Miss Sarah McAlpin, who survives him. In the spring of 1890 he received a hope in Christ and was received into the fellowship of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church, and was baptized by the late Elder William L. Beebe. February 28th, 1892, he was chosen Church Clerk, and June 10th, 1910, he was appointed and ordained Deacon. The church was his greatest pleasure, and nothing but sickness would keep him from his meeting. As a counsellor he was considered one above the average. The appointed time had come, and in the triumph of a living faith the Lord has called him home.

I tried to comfort the brethren and friends who had assembled to pay their last respects to one they loved, preaching Christ, and him crucified, the way, the truth and the life, salvation by grace, and grace alone. After services at the residence the body was conveyed to the cemetery near by and all that was mortal was laid to rest, to await the call of the Master in the resurrection. May the Lord reconcile us all, and enable us to say, Thy will, O Lord, not ours, be done.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

Elder W. J. Stephens was born in Morgan County, Alabama, August 29th, 1874, and died May 16th, 1926. In early life he with his parents moved from Alabama to Texas. His parents were Elder S. N. and Fannie Stephens, sound Predestinarian Baptists. Brother Stephens was baptized in the fellowship of the Hopewell Church, Erath County, Texas, at the age of eighteen years. August, 1902, he was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, and was indeed an able defender of the truth, uncompromising as to truth and error, rejoicing in the omnipotence and omniscience of the eternal God, was kind, patient and forbearing with his brethren, and delighted to have them visit in his home. January 2nd, 1895, he was married to Miss Stella Fewell, and to that union three children were born, one dying in

infancy, two survive, with the mother. Brother Stephens died from lung trouble, with which he suffered greatly for several years, feeling all along that his pilgrimage was hastening to a close. He often stated that he was ready and willing to go, only awaiting God's will, but that he regretted leaving his wife and children. The bereaved have lost a kind and affectionate husband and father, and the church a sound and faithful pastor. Elder Stephens lived in Farwell, Texas, for the last five years, until he was called home to his reward, which is an inheritance of eternal life. Those of us who live will miss him, but our loss is his eternal gain, and while we sorrow, yet it is not as those who have no hope. Our hope is that we shall see him, with all the redeemed of the Lord in their glorified state, around the throne of God, singing praises to his holy name for ever and ever. May it please the Lord to reconcile us all to the dispensation of his providence in all things, and may we be enabled to say from the heart, The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

Written by request of our bereaved sister.

W. S. BOURLAND.

J. C. Spruill, our dearly beloved brother, was born in the State of Alabama September 16th, 1851, and was called to his eternal home May 6th, 1926. Later in life he moved to Mississippi, where May 13th, 1879, he married Miss Sarah Isadora White. To this union were born ten children, two of whom preceded him in death, leaving eight, together with his dear wife, to mourn his departure. Our brother professed a hope and joined the Primitive Baptist Church in the year 1894 (name of church not known to the writer), where he remained a faithful member in full fellowship until dismissed by letter November 7th, 1907, which letter was received by Friendship Church, Carroll County, Mississippi, where he lived until death. He was ordained to the office of Deacon, officiating in that humble and godly way that so beautifully adorns that office. He was a plain, unostentatious man, ruling his family in that godly, fatherly, loving way that begets obedience and love. He lived to see four of his children united with the dear old church of his membership, where they still remain. He leaves two brothers in the flesh, one of whom is a Primitive Baptist minister. He has gone. God has called him to his reward. We loved him and were loth to give him up, but hope that by the grace of God we are made to humbly bow in submission to the will of him that does his will in heaven and in earth, and can truthfully say, Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord. His dear wife and children have lost a loving husband and father, the church a faithful member, but we believe that heaven has gathered a jewel home.

The humble writer tried in much weakness to speak a few words of comfort to a large company of grief-stricken relatives and friends, after which he was laid to rest in our Friendship Cemetery, there to await the resurrection day. May God's holy presence fill up his absence and bless and comfort the bereaved, is the prayer of his humble pastor,

J. H. RICKS.

A LETTER.

The Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church, of Snow Hill, Md., to the churches composing the following associations and meetings: the Salisbury, Baltimore, Delaware, Delaware River, Warwick, Lexington-Roxbury, and Virginia Corresponding Meeting, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We earnestly desire that you send Elders and Deacons to sit with us in council, the fourth Sunday in November (28th), to consider the advisability of setting brother G. E. Coulbourne apart to the full work of the gospel ministry by ordination.

Done by order of the church at our regular church meeting, held Saturday before the fourth Sunday in June, 1926.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

M. A. HALLOWAY, Clerk.

BOOK NOTICE.

A great many old Baptists throughout the country are deeply exercised over the subject of PREDESTINATION. In the hope of supplying food for thought to the earnest seeker after truth, I propose to collect and publish in pamphlet form perhaps a dozen of the ablest articles obtainable written by men recognized to have been greatly gifted of the Lord. These writings will probably cover a period of at least the last five hundred years. The pamphlet will doubtless consist of 100 pages, or more, the price not to exceed $1.00 per copy, or less, depending somewhat upon the number to be printed.

Will all who are interested in obtaining information on this subject kindly inform me the number of copies they desire for themselves and friends, addressing R. LESTER DODSON, 12 Addison Ave., Rutherford, N. J. It may be several months before the pamphlet is ready, as I intend to make it well worth the price to be paid.

R. LESTER DODSON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Nellie M. Palmer, Me., $1; E. I. McAlister, N. Mex., $10.

MEETINGS.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held at the residence of brother W. I. Zinn, three miles south and one-half mile west of Meriden, Jefferson County, Kansas, September 10th, 11th and 12th, 1926. Those coming on the Santa Fe, get off at Kilmer Station. On Union Pacific get off at Grantville, seven miles south of place of meeting, or come to Topeka and change to Santa Fe. The last train leaves Topeka for Kilmer at 5 o'clock p. m., and the first one in the morning at 8 o'clock. It would be well to notify brother Zinn, if intending to stop at Grantville. Address him at Meriden, Kansas, for any further information, or write to me at 1243 Polk St , Topeka, Kansas. If more convenient to stay over night in Topeka write, or phone 7535 after you get here.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the Bowdoinham Church, Friday before the second Monday in September, 1926, and continue three days (September 10th, 11th and 12th). We expect brother Dodson to be with us. All who love the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.

TOPSHAM, Maine.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will, the Lord willing, hold the association with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Shokan, N. Y., September 15th and 16th, 1926. Trains will be met Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us at that time, especially ministers of our faith.

JOHN J. SECOR, Church Clerk.

The eighty-fifth annual session of the Regular South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association will convene with White Water Church, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 17th, 18th and 19th, 1926. White Water Church is two miles northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, on C. R. I. & P. Railroad. Those coming from east and west will come on Cotton Belt Railroad to Fordyce Thursday, take Rock Island train for Tinsman. Those coming from north and south come over Rock Island to Tinsman, where conveyance will meet all trains Thursday and Friday. We invite all genuine peace-loving Old Baptists of the unlimited predestinarian faith to meet with us, especially the ministers.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator.

W. C. HORTON, Clerk.

The church in Baltimore, Md., (210 E. Madison Street) will hold an all day meeting on the third Sunday in September (nineteenth). A cordial invitation is extended to all.

ALVIS S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The eighteenth annual session of the Sulphur Fork Association of Primitive Baptists of the Regular Predestinarian faith and order will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Spring Hill, Morris County, Texas, five miles south of Omaha, on Cotton Belt Railroad, commencing on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1926. All peace-loving Baptists of our faith and order are invited to meet with us.

H. B. JONES, Moderator.

J. S. MCLEOD, Clerk.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held this year with the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Va., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 13th, 14th and 15th, 1926. All trains arriving at Leesburg Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning will be met. Trains for Leesburg leave Rosslyn, Va., at frequent intervals. Electric cars from Union Station, D. C., marked "Rosslyn" connect with Leesburg cars. All lovers of the truth, especially ministers of our faith and order, are cordially invited to meet with us.

T. S. TITUS, Church Clerk.

The Welsh Tract Church yearly meeting is appointed to begin Saturday, October 16th, 1926, at 2:30 p. m., and continue two days. Those coming from Philadelphia and Baltimore will come via B. & O. R. R. to Newark, Delaware, on Saturday. Train leaves Philadelphia at 1:10 p. m., and Baltimore at 10:18 a. m. (Mt. Royal Station.) Ministering brethren who expect to attend the Corresponding Meeting in Virginia, and on to the Salisbury Association the week following, are especially invited to be with us, as well as all lovers of our faith and doctrine. The early trains on Sunday morning will be met also on both railroads.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday of each month at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 459 E. 5th St , Riverside, Calif., and at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. 11th St., Claremont, Calif., on the first Sunday of each alternate month, beginning with January, and on every alternate month with brother Joseph Huffman, 128 Van Buren St., Arlington, Calif. Singing at 10:30 a. m. Preaching at 11 a. m. Lunch at the place of meeting, and continued services in the afternoon.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.

O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

SUPPLY EXHAUSTED.

OUR supply of the book entitled "A Sketch of the Life of Joshua S. Corder" is exhausted, and we are unable to fill any more orders for said book. This work was not electrotyped, so we do not expect to have any more on sale at any time in the future.

HYMN BOOKS.

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THE

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., Jan. 12, 1926.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more I feel I must write a few words to those who are dearer to me than life itself. I have had it in mind many times in the last year to write for the SIGNS, but as many times gave it up, for fear that I might darken counsel with words without knowledge, but since getting the dear old SIGNS for January and reading Elder Lefferts' New Year's Greeting, which is surely the truth, if I know the truth as set forth in the Bible, I feel to praise God that we still have such able defenders of the truth as he and Elders Vaughn, Ruston and Dodson, and I had been wondering in my mind if God had not forsaken the Old School Predestinarian Baptists as his church, and wondering what would come next, for in looking around I could see little real brotherly love manifested toward each other, unless they were willing to side in with these (I was going to say new, but something stopped me and said there is nothing new under the sun) ideas. When those we have esteemed as sound in the faith of God's elect get so far out of the old paths as to preach an independent devil, having power all his own not ordained of God, and that it took God six thousand years to make the world, instead of six days as stated in Genesis, apologizing for the great miracle, overlooking the fact it is said that God made the sun to rule the day and the moon and stars the night, and this divison of time has never been changed. But is this any more a mystery than bringing the dead to life, or in changing our vile bodies and making them like His glorious body, or the creating life, either natural or spiritual? and in his creation of light all he had to do was just to speak and it was done: "Let there be light: and there was light." They claim God is a sovereign, and was wise enough, and had all power at the beginning, so that he did create all things and set them in motion, each in its own sphere and place, and nothing that was made could be improved upon, and they acknowledge he had perfect control over all his works then, but that now the work has gotten too big for him and so he needs our help. The word "predestination" is as offensive to them as Satan and his imps, while there are others who go so far the other way as to say that God is the author of sin, and de-

clare Christ did not come to save his people, because they were never lost, yet claiming to be the soundest of Old Baptists. Notwithstanding all these contradictions and misconstruing the word of God, I believe so strongly in the absolute predestination of all things that I believe not one of these things could fail to be manifested, and I am sure they will redound to God's glory. We do not know what is in the future only as it is revealed to us, and as the Scriptures teach, but in looking back to the time before Christ was crucified, there were certain things which must occur in order to work the people up to a necessary state of frenzy, and all this wrath of man was for the lifting of Jesus on high, crowning him King of kings and Lord of lords, and dare we say that the all-wise God did not predestinate every wicked act that leads up to the most heinous crime that was ever committed? Thus it behoved Christ to suffer and enter into his glory, but if Jesus had not paid it all could we, who are nothing, and less than nothing, do anything to finish paying the debt? I know that I could not, for I cannot fully appreciate what Christ has done, I hope, for me, but I do know that if he ever did anything for me he has done it all, and all I can do is just praise, honor and glorify his dear name, and I cannot ever do that unless he gives me grace whereby I can serve him with reverence and godly fear. In John vi. 37, is recorded, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." Not make a start then backslide or fall by the way, but "come to me." Jesus told the Jews, and that is not the best part of it, but he told them that "him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Why? Because, says he, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." But the Jews murmured against him then just the same as unbelieving Jews do now, for there is no difference now, and never was, between Jew and Gentile, spiritually. They all murmur against him now, and even the Arminian clergy say (or most of them do) that Christ was not the Son of God, but just an ordinary man, and an impostor. But Jesus told them then, and he tells us now, and we know it is a fact, that no man can come to Jesus unless he is drawn by the spirit of love, and God is love and Jesus is love. I in you and you in me and I in the Father. Oh it is all love, and perfect love. Thus perfect love casts out fear, for it is Christ in us the hope of glory.

I was so built up over the articles in the last (January) SIGNS that I felt I must tell them that here is another one away off here on the Pacific coast who rejoices in the doctrine that the SIGNS stands for, absolute predestination, and although weak and unworthy I am glad and rejoice if I am even counted worthy to suffer reproach for upholding the sovereignty of our God, who loves us with an everlasting love, which cannot fail nor grow cold. I am passing through one of the darkest periods I ever knew, and it is as though God's hand was laid upon me shutting out every vestige of light, but I would be satisfied if I could only know that I am in the cleft of the Rock, as Moses was when God put his hand over him, keeping him safely until he passed by; for no man can see his face and live, but oh how we do shout for joy when we are by grace divine permitted to see his back parts and realize that he has been

thinking good of us, and not evil, as we so much feared, for only in his light can we see light. I am so thankful it is recorded that the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder he will restrain. This, to my mind, is one of the many clear and decisive declarations in support of the predestination of all things. Another one is, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." How could these things be unless God did predestinate all things?

Now may the grace of God freely rest upon both editors and correspondents, leading them out into the perfect light and liberty of the children of God.

An old sinner saved by grace,

DAVIS BURCH.

IONA STATION, Ontario, Feb. 12, 1926.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am herewith inclosing a letter recently received from brother J. B. Miller which I felt might be suitable for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, omitting portions erased. I am also inclosing lines on the subject "Stillness," which I will leave to your judgment whether to publish or not. Perhaps I am asking for too much space.

Yours truly,

J. T. KERR.

NEWARK, Del., Dec. 27, 1925.

DEAR BROTHER KERR:—Your Christmas card and letter received, and as I have to work this morning I will try to pen a few words in reply. We have our church troubles, particularly in the loss of two of our dear pastors, and so far distant, yet to us it seems but a short span, for God's people are united as closely as if we were but within speaking distance. This unity began with Christ and his people before all worlds were formed, for he says himself: I was set up from everlasting. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth; while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth; when he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of the deep; when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men. Now therefore harken unto me, O ye children; for blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord."—Prov. viii. 22–35. If this is not the unity of Christ in his people before all worlds, then what is it? Ponder over this meditation and record of the Son with the Father, saying, "I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him," and, with his children God gave him, "and my delights were with the sons of men." Yet the only Begotten, the Lamb, was sacrificed for the sins of these very people, our sins helped to nail him to the tree. The mystery will never be known

or solved on this earth. Those who are given a hope are surely blessed. "Harken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways." I am the way, the truth and the life. He is the way and he leads his children in many crooked paths, but he works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Sometimes he gives us tribulation, so that tribulation may work experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, for it is the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost. Other times he leaves us to follow our own lusts, that we may be turned over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that we may endure to the end; here is patience tried in the soul, for every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, enticed, then when lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. There is that terrible warfare, which made Paul say, Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Yet he has promised there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man, but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation make a way of escape that ye may be able to bear it. He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be my son. But we cannot overcome anything of ourselves, it is all grace and mercy, for if we "overcome," it is because he works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. We are taught of him daily; to-day it might be temptation, to-morrow it is the rod, either of affliction or of chastisement; our way is in crooked paths, with many thorns on each side to prick us; many times we are lost in darkness, yet that guiding hand is leading us in these paths we know not. We feel, we grapple, we stumble, but he is there. I remember a dream I had before I had to go into the church. I was suffering the tortures of hell, and did for nine long years before I was crushed and made to come into the fold. I was on a stormy sea, in a boat without a helm or sail, and the waves were rolling hard and high upon me, ready to be swamped. I looked around for succor, but all I could see was a piling that seemed to rise up out of the sea, and coming close to it, being wafted there without my help, I endeavored to reach out and grasp it, but a covering seemed to be overhead and no way to reach outside for help to grasp the piling, and then I looked around, and beheld a man, a pilot, beside me. The danger then seemed past. It was all calm. I thought many times of the words of this pilot: It is I, be not afraid. He calms the waters at will, at his appointed time. He leadeth me beside the still waters. Still water is usually clear, is it not? To me this thought has rested in my mind for some time: when we are led beside still waters we can see the mud and stones and refuse lying on the bottom, not stirred up, and this Light shows us these things lying on the bottom, representing the works of the flesh. He has led us to see our own vile natures within, and it is only his discriminating grace and mercy; he shows us that we are in the flesh, but when it is stirred up it is like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. Stillness is synonymous with peace. When our Savior whispers, "Peace, be still," then it is still. We then see Jesus exalted; for a time he takes us away from this sight of ourselves. He can make us to lie down

in green pastures, and lead us beside the still waters. Or our daily bread may be the waters stirred up, and all for the destruction of the flesh. A christian's life surely is a paradox. As Paul quotes it, For that which I do, I allow not, for what I would, that do I not: but what I hate, that do I. There is no discharge in this war. You have many spiritually-minded members in your church, and I hope when you meet, even without a pastor, the Pilot I speak of here will be in your midst. He will. He has promised, where two or three are gathered together in my name, there will I be in the midst. I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.

I read your letters to brother Eubanks, and the last one which had reference to the hymn which brought you so much comfort recalled to his mind the time he lost a boy, almost grown to manhood, in Georgia. He worked very hard the day he lost his mind, and died in that condition. Brother Eubanks said this terrible experience made him preach as he never did before, and was more profitable to him and his hearers than any preaching he ever did. But oh the suffering produced mentally in such trials. I have been at the place myself, when I thought I would go insane. I have been persecuted by the powers of darkness, turned over to them as it were, by the Lord himself, yet this is my experience, it required all this to bring me into the church, to crush and humiliate me in the flesh, and to-day he still applies the chastening rod, and I merit it, for, like Job, I know, and can say, Corruption, thou art my father, O worm, thou art my mother and my sister. I am all this.

Kind regards to all, and love to the brethren.

Your brother in hope of life eternal,

J. B. MILLER.

STILLNESS.

(BE SILENT TO GOD—LET HIM MOULD THEE.—LUTHER).

"Thy lesson art thou learning, O tried and weary soul?
His ways art thou discerning who works to make thee whole?
In the haven of submission, art thou satisfied and still?
Art thou clinging to the Father, 'neath the shadow of his will?
Now while his arms enfold thee, think well, he loveth best,
Be still, and he shall mould thee for his heritage of rest.

The vessel must be shapen for the joys of paradise,
The soul must have her training for the service of the skies;
And if the great Refiner in furnaces of pain
Would do his work more truly, count all his dealings gain,
For he himself hath told thee of tribulations here;
Be still and let him mould thee for the changeless there.

From vintages of sorrow are deepest joys distilled,
And the cup outstretched for healing is oft at Marah filled.
God leads to joy through weeping, to quietness through strife,
Through yielding into conquest, through death to endless life.
Be still, he hath enrolled thee for the kingdom and and the crown;
Be silent, let him mould thee, who calleth thee his own.

Such silence is communion, such stillness is a shrine;
The fellowship of suffering an ordinance divine.
And the secrets of abiding most fully are declared
To those who with the Master Gethsemane have shared.
Then trust him to uphold thee, 'mid the shadows and the gloom;
Be still, and he shall mould thee for his presence and for home.

For resurrection stillness there is resurrection power;
And the prayer and praise of trusting may glorify each hour;
And common days are holy and years an Eastertide
For those who with the risen One in risen life abide.
Then let his true love fold thee, keep silent at his word;
Be still, and he shall mould thee; oh rest thee in the Lord."

Copied by

J. B. MILLER.

WHITESBORO, Texas, March 15, 1926.

DEAR EDITORS:—Since January I have been impressed to write and tell you how much I appreciate your firmness in the doctrine of Christ. I feel very thankful to our God that he has a few bold and fearless servants who are not afraid to stand up and face the enemies of the true doctrine of Christ. I cannot express the joy it gives me to see there is yet, and always has been, a small remnant not afraid to contend boldly for and defend the cause of our God in doctrine and practice. It is encouraging to me to read the editorials of these dear brethren on absolute predestination, the vital unity of Christ and the church and salvation by grace. I am very sorry to see so much antagonism among the Old Baptists, but remember, dear brethren, Israel has always been a stiff-necked people, and when it gets to a point where men are so corrupt in doctrines (yes, I say doctrines, for the doctrine of Christ is ever in the singular) there must be a sifting out. Our God has all along drawn the line, sifting them out, so it does not amaze me to see these divisions, for thereby we know them by their fruit, and it is good for us that God sifted them out from among us. Some say that Christ came as a substitute. I was in the Civil War and sometimes the bread gave out and they had to substitute bran for bread, but it was not as good as the genuine wheat flour. I never could say Christ was a substitute; it always suited my conscience to say a surety, for that means a sure thing. A substitute means if you do not I will (try). The truth is God's children were in vital unity with Christ before the foundation of the world and eternal life was in Christ for every one of the elect children of God and in vital unity with him. He was and is their Surety and not a substitute. I hear some say they never use the word "absolute." It is an English word and is the only word I can find that fits predestination. We all know God is a sovereign God absolutely. He works all things after the counsel of his own will, and none can stay his hand. Now, brethren, stop saying Christ was or is a substitute, and stand upon the walls of Zion as undershepherds and "cry aloud, spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." Let us inquire of God when we are about to make an assertion and if the Bible will not bear us out turn from it. Contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." We must try the spirits, and if one confess not that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh receive him not into the church, for he surely will give you trouble.

I am now passing my seventy-seventh mile stone and I hope I can say with the apostle, I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, and I hope to receive the crown of eternal life at the end, and to sing the song of eternal redemption through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Dear brethren, may the Lord spare you many years after I am gone to ably defend the blessed truth that Elder Gilbert Beebe held to ninety-three years ago, for it is the doctrine Jesus Christ delivered unto the apostles.

Will you please publish the inclosed letter? It is so comforting to me in my declining years that I would like to see it in the SIGNS.

C. C. TYLER.

O'DONNELL, Texas.

ELDER C. C. TYLER—DEAR FATHER: —Your sound and cheering sermon came to hand Saturday, and it came in a very acceptable time, for I have been down in the dark valley so long that such good preaching is like good news from a far country. It cheers us for the time being, but I am so sinful I soon get back down into the dark valley of sorrow, doubts and fears. Lord, if indeed I am thine, why do I languish and pine, and why are my winters so long? If I were as sure of my own case as I am of the one offering of Jesus' blood forever sealing the salvation of his church I would not be always in doubt and fear. The Jewish passover is a beautiful figure of Jesus' blood. The Jews still keep that feast, but do not look at it in a spiritual sense as we do. If I am one of that spiritual throng that is to inhabit that beautiful city of God when the Savior comes to destroy the wicked, if he finds me hungering and thirsting after righteousness (not my own righteousness, for I have none to trust in) he will see the blood on the door of my heart and save me from eternal hell, which I feel I would have been in long ago had he dealt with me according to my sins, but thanks be to God for that wonderful sacrifice Jesus made to redeem us from our sins his children are already saved. Oh I do hope I am one of that number Jesus died to save; if I am I am as surely saved as the sun rises in the east and sets in the west, but how long I shall have to sorrow and suffer I know not. I sometimes wish I could soon go and be at rest, but I must await my Maker's nod. Wait, O my soul, and trust thou in Jesue for life, both temporal and spiritual. A man's life consists not in the things he possesses; he may have an abundance of this world's goods and yet be very unhappy, for true happiness is in spiritual things. We have no abiding city here, but we seek one to come whose maker and builder is God. I look back over my span of fifty-four years and it seems but a short time. As Job said, "Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble," but that life which is given in Christ Jesus shall never fail. I believe that life begins here, for Jesus says, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." I trust I drank of that spiritual water forty-five years ago, but I have traveled in darkness most of my time. No, there is nothing I can do in a time salvation. I lay my hand upon my mouth and repent in sackcloth and ashes. It is all of God, both here and hereafter.

I have found some Old Baptists through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but only two ordained ministers in this great plains country: Elder Stephens lives at Farwell, Texas, and Elder Rutledge lives at Portales, New Mexico. I am over one hundred miles from a church. I wish I was close to an Old Predestinarian Baptist church. It may be I can visit those churches some time, especially at Farwell, Texas, which is, I think, about 125 miles from here; Portales is about sixty miles from Farwell.

I can think of nothing more of interest to you so will close, hoping to hear from you again in the near future.

Your son, in hope of eternal life through the grace of God,

S. H. TYLER.

ENLOE, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As my mind has been impressed for some time to write a few lines, I will now make the attempt. In Ephesians i. 5, it says, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Not our will. I want to say that God's predestination, decree, foreknowledge, purpose, his choice or election of his beloved children, are so closely knit together in regard to the salvation of his people that I in my weak mind cannot divide them, for right where one would fail the rest would fail; but thanks be to the Lord, they are all sure, fixed, for I hear Paul saying, Ephesians i. 3, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." If God has blessed his people with all spiritual blessings, what else do they need? Will he not take care of them? He says, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." There are no conditions or works of the creature in this, for it was before we were born of the flesh; the election was over before our time. 1 Peter i. 2, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." They were elected according to God's knowledge, not man's. John xv. 16, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." Who did the choosing? God, not man. He never makes a mistake. Romans viii. 28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Who works the things? Our God, who has all power and knowledge and purpose in all things. Romans viii. 29, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." We see here that he foreknew some and predestinated them to be conformed to the image of his Son. Oh what a blessing it is to be like Jesus. Romans xi. 5, 6, "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works." This choice embraces all the elect family of the Lord, and they must and will be born of the flesh, and must and will be born of God by his Spirit, quickened into life and brought to the light by his Spirit, which causes them to mourn and repent, and they cry out, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. I feel the need of Jesus; I need a Friend like him. I know that if I am ever saved the Lord will have to save me by his grace. O Lord, help me to look to thee for salvation. Lead me through this life, and let me rest at thy right hand. We, as poor mortals, look forward to the time when Jesus shall come and gather up his little children and carry them home, sweet home, where they shall rest for ever and ever. In John xiv. 2, 3, Jesus says, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Oh what a blessed promise this is, from One who never fails. Yes, he will call every one of them who are scattered from one end of the earth to the other, his people, his children, the elect, those the Father gave him, he shall

lose none of them, but will raise them up at the last day, where they will enjoy sweet peace and love, and there will be no pain, no death nor sorrow there.

I will close. Much love to all God's dear children.

W. H. TATUM.

HAMMOND, W. Va., June 8, 1926.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will write you a few lines and will say I am the most unworthy one of all the flock, if one at all, yet I hope I have a hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. My subject will be on the one plan of salvation and the one salvation which Jonah said was of the Lord. Now Jonah was called to go to preach to Nineveh, and he said he fled from the presence of the Lord, for he feared the Lord, and he paid his fare to go to Tarshish, but God intended him to go to Nineveh, and his plan must be carried out, he must go, so God sent the storm upon the deep to carry out his purpose. God decreed from eternity a whale to swallow Jonah right at the time and place in the deep where he purposed it to be, and sent the storm at the right time to carry the ship to the whale's mouth, instead of going to Tarshish, where Jonah had planned to go. Was that two salvations? Oh no. The shipmen tried to bring about peace and quietness, by crying to the Lord and by lightening the ship of its wares, but to no avail, the storm still raged until it landed Jonah in the whale's belly, where he learned that salvation was of the Lord, and that it was not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Then there were not two salvations at all, there was but one, and that one was of the Lord. Jonah lost the fare he paid to go to Tarshish, and all his fleeing from the presence of the Lord was of no avail, and he got no time salvation out of it by his plan in any way, because he must be that sign which was given. Jonah was in the whale's belly for three days and nights, so must also the Son of man be in the heart of the earth for three days and nights. It was there in the whale's belly that Jonah learned that salvation was of the Lord. Then the Lord is our salvation, and there is but one true and living God, so let us see whether Jonah got any blessing or enjoyment out of his obedience when the Lord hedged him in, and did not even tell him to do anything in order to get out of the sea. No, he spoke to the fish and it obeyed and landed Jonah on dry land. Jonah said while yet in the whale's belly that it was by reason of his afflictions that he cried unto the Lord and the Lord heard his cry. Yes, he was compelled to cry, and he was compelled to learn that salvation is of the Lord, then he was made thankful that salvation is of the Lord. Let us follow him a little further and see if he received pleasure out of his obedience to the heavenly call. When the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, saying, Go to Nineveh and preach the preaching that I bid thee, Jonah arose and went and preached. He went out to see what would become of the city, and when he saw the result he was angry and vexed, instead of being full of joy and peace. But when the Lord prepared the gourd then Jonah was glad, because it delivered him from his grief. But not so when the Lord caused the worm to cut down the gourd, he was vexed, so when Jonah was watching to see what would become of the city he did not get a blessing of joy for his watching. You see there is but one salvation, and that every time is of the Lord. We mourn and weep as well as rejoice, and all is of the Lord, the whole is the dispos-

ing of the Lord. What did John get for his obedience in telling Herod that it was not lawful for him to have Philip's wife? Did he get joy and peace? Oh no, he got beheaded for it. What did the apostles get for being obedient to the heavenly callings? They got evil reportings, persecutions, beatings and threatenings, and, yes, some were killed. So then there is but one salvation, and that is of the Lord, and every time he comes to deliver us out of our distresses it is the same Lord, and it is done for us here in time, it is here he delivers us out of our distresses, and it is he that works the will and the do in us, and it is he we shall see and be satisfied in eternity when we awake in his likeness. It is the same salvation all the way through. Oh may we all see eye to eye, and not be carried about with every wind of doctrine.

Yours in hope,

JAMES W. LINN.

BERLIN, Md., July 25, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel I would like to write something once more for your consideration, and if it is the Lord's will I will start by asking a question: What is the seventh day? Is it not a day of rest, the sabbath, first established by God himself? We are told in Genesis that God ended his work and rested on the seventh day. He rested from all his work. He had no more to do, therefore he entered into the sabbath. Is this day one certain day of the week or month, as the world seems to think, or rather preach? I say, No, and it is, I hope, by the divine revelation of the most high God. Has there ever lived upon this earth one single man who has found himself able to live through one natural sabbath, or what the world calls sabbath, without doing some manner of work? I doubt very much if there has, but when that sabbath that God speaks of comes to a man there is no more work for him to do, for he has been made to see there is nothing he can do to place himself in the love of God, and he is made to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Therefore the seventh day is the end of the law, for the law gave man a certain amount of work to do, and it was of a class that he could not of himself perform, and must pay the penalty, which is death. So it was with the children of Israel, they were pressed to the Red Sea and all escape cut off, and were made to see their work was of no avail and they must perish by the hand of Pharaoh, a type of the law. Then there was a great miracle brought about, one that was impossible for man to perform: the sea was opened and they were allowed to pass over dry-shod. Then their work was done, that is, their work of fleeing from the law, they had entered into that beautiful land that flowed with milk and honey, which is a type of that sabbath. That miracle was nothing more than the love of God made manifest to them. So I believe it is with every one that is born of God, he feels that if he ever reaches that beautiful land it is absolutely by the mercy of God, and not by anything he has done. Then it is they who have entered into that sabbath that God speaks of, and they will rest forever from all manner of work. The sabbath day is a perfect day, and therefore is compulsory. Naaman was commanded to go wash in the river of Jordan seven times, and he made haste. He could not stop with less, for he dipped six times and was still a mass of sores, but when he dipped the seventh time he came forth clean of all his diseases, and had nothing more to do to get cured of his incurable

disease, which was a type of sin. It was by the power and mercy of God that he came forth out of that beautiful river a clean soul. He did not go down to the river of Jordan of his own free will, as the world has it, but he was commanded by God himself through the prophet. Notice how angry he got when he was told to go wash seven times in that beautiful river. He rebelled and started away angry, but God commanded it to be so and it was so, and he was healed. I believe he was made to see the power of the most high God, and no doubt was made to desire to praise him the remainder of his days. I want to say right here, my brethren, if I may call you brethren, you would never have entered into that beautiful rest had not God brought you there by his own good power, and you would not remain there if there was any other way, but there is no other way whereby man must be saved but by the power of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and blessed be his holy name. Do not all God's children rebel when brought to see themselves poor hell-deserving sinners, and would they not go to the end of the earth if they could hide there? But as one of old said, If I go to the end of the earth he is there. So it is we cannot hide from this load of guilt that we feel. Our eyes have been opened and the light has shone around us and we see ourselves as we are, and are made to see after long experience that there si nothing we can do to hide from God, and are made to wonder what it all means. It is a strange thing to us, but there comes a still small voice that God is our Savior and then our burden is gone and we enter into that joy that the world knows nothing about, and are made to praise the most high God for deliverance, thinking we will never have any more trouble, but after a time we begin to doubt that we have ever been given a glimpse of his great love. I believe that just as sure as one is shone that he is a sinner and made to realize that there is nothing he can do to escape punishment, just so sure he has been born again and has entered into that great and glorious sabbath and will never from it stray, for we are told in that Book of books that wherever God begins a good work he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Oh if I could have the assurance, as many of you seem to have, that I have been brought into that great and glorious day I believe I could be happy, but I feel it is for my good that I am not given that assurance, for we are told that everything works together for good to them that love God, and to love God is to love one another. I sometimes question myself to know if I do love the brethren as I ought. I can only say I hope I do, for it is my chief joy and delight when I can meet them and speak of his wondrous love for poor sinners, of which I feel myself to be one of the vilest.

Written in love.

J. W. S. TIMMONS.

FLETCHER, Oklahoma.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I note that I am behind on subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so I am herewith sending postal order for two dollars to renew my subscription. The SIGNS has long been a welcome visitor to my humble home, and many times in the past when it was my lot to be cast down under great clouds of doubts and fears, it has come laden with good news from a far off country, causing my weary soul to rejoice. Surely the Lord of hosts is the real editor of this dear old veteran of the cross, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The

editorials to me have been mines of great wealth, also the many good letters from brethren and sisters from all parts of our land and country have been cheering to my hungry soul.

I am now going to offer a few thoughts on this text: By their fruits ye shall know them. This language applies to all fruit-bearing trees, both good and bad, for it is written that a corrupt tree cannot bear good fruit. The tree bears the fruit, hence the tree must first be made a good tree before it can bear good fruit. A good tree cannot bear corrupt fruit. This question propounds itself to my mind: What is a good tree and what is a corrupt tree? Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of heaven (church). One more exception: Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. The newborn soul, born of the Spirit of God, is a good tree. The unregenerate is a corrupt tree, and cannot bear spiritual fruit. Every spiritual tree feeds and thrives on spiritual food, they are they that have no confidence in the flesh; their own righteousness is seen as filthy rags. They dare not lean on an arm of flesh, having been born of the Spirit they have eyes to see and ears to hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. Indeed they have the witness in themselves, that bears witness to their anxious, hungry souls of the atoning blood of a crucified, dead and risen Christ. These are a poor and afflicted people. To will is present with them, but how to perform that which is good they find not. These are a peculiar people, zealous of good works; their faith and hope is predicated on the obedience of the Son of God; the Spirit of God is their teacher, hence they glory in a sovereign God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will, and these "all things" work together for good to them that love God, &c. Every good tree bears good fruit, to the honor and glory of God. God's chosen and called people have ceased from their own labors (that is, they are not working to get God to save them), for they have entered into their rest, the rest that remaineth for the people of God. This sweet rest is theirs by inheritance, not for any good deeds of their own. This rest was wrought out for them on Calvary's rugged cross by their covenant Head, their Elder Brother, who in the agonies of death bowed his head, and said, It is finished. What was finished? The salvation of his people who were given him in the annals of eternity by his Father. In eternity, before the work of creation, before the foundation of the world, this precious Lamb, the adorable Son of God, stood as the surety of his spouse, his bride. He loved her (the church) with an everlasting love; he carried her sins all the days of old, and at the appointed time he came to the earth dressed in garments of flesh and forever put her (his church) sins away by satisfying the law to a jot and tittle. Dear reader, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. God's decrees and promises are sure and will stand unchanged forever and ever. God is not slack concerning his promises, as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Real true repentance is the fruit of the Spirit of God. The carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. The trees of the Lord are full of sap, the cedar of Lebanon which he hath

planted. The kingdom of heaven (church) is a spiritual kingdom, and will stand when all the gates of hell (false institutions) have gone down in defeat. Every plant that my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up.

In conclusion, I will say, Fear not, little flock, for it is your heavenly Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Dear brethren Lefferts, Dodson, Ruston and Vaughn, and all lovers of the truth, my heart's desire is that God will give us one and all grace that we shall shun wicked ambition and fight the good fight of faith, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." I beg an interest in the prayers of all of God's humble poor.

If you give this poor scattering letter room in the SIGNS please correct all errors.

I am, as ever, yours in hope of sweet rest beyond the toils, trials and sorrows of time,

L. E. SKINNER.

HERNDON, Va., May 12, 1926.

DEAR EDITORS:—In reading all the good letters in the May issue of the SIGNS my eyes rested for some time upon the headlines of Elder W. J. May's letter, stating that he was at the time of his writing, January 10th, 1926, ninety years of age, and blessed of the Lord to be strong and hearty. Yes, strong and hearty in healthful strength, but stronger and more powerful in the things of the kingdom of God's dear Son. I have been reading dear Elder May's writings for many years, and have often felt after reading his wonderful, gifted letters like writing him a letter, although in broken language, telling him how much I enjoy his beautiful letters. But alas, I am so deficient in letter-writing that I am continually feeling I am going to stop writing to the saints of God altogether. I am now in my seventy-eighth year of age, and doubtless dear brother May feels stronger at the age of ninety than I do at seventy-eight. Dear Elder J. W. McClanahan is about my age and is still writing to the saints of God, and I love him for the truth's sake. Sister Anna McKinney still wields the pen of a ready writer and I enjoy reading her letters. Elder Ruston's editorial in the May issue of the SIGNS is rich and timely, for he knows how to rightly divide the word of truth. I might go on and mention all the writers' names in the May number, but will forbear doing so now. I know that it is good for God's children to write and speak often one to another, for a book of remembrance is written for them that fear the Lord and think upon his name.

With love and best wishes, I beg to remain your brother,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

BRIDGEVILLE, Del., April 9, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—For quite some time I have wanted to write a little of what I hope to be the Lord's dealings with me, but when I would begin to think about it I felt to be so unprepared I would give it up, and I feel just as unprepared now as ever. I know I can write nothing of comfort to any of the household of faith unless the good Lord guides me in it. When I was a little girl of some seven or eight years I used to study a great deal about my future in eternity, and I would tremble with fear of everlasting torment, for I felt much impressed that that was my portion, so finally I resolved I would be good and do good. I felt impressed to ask my mother about it,

so one day as I was walking behind her I said, Mother, if one does the best they can, will they go to heaven when they die? She said, No, they have to be changed in heart. Well, it seemed I would die, for she tore my castle down right there, I said in my aching heart, Oh what shall I do? I suffered what I cannot utter. She did not turn to look at me or to ask me anything, and I was glad she did not, for I could not tell her. Finally my suffering passed away, only to return at different times, in ways that I cannot explain, until I was about twenty-four years of age, when it took hold on me with such force that my mind was drawn to reading the Bible for the essence of it. I had read it before through curiosity, but now I was searching for something for consolation. Sad to say, I felt condemned more and more as I read in the Old Testament, so I began reading in the New Testament, in many different parts of it, and when I read where it says, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled," I felt to receive hope. There is much more I could tell, but do not want to make this letter too lengthy. I had been to many Old School Baptist meetings, and felt a love for them, but did not understand things as I hope I do now. Elder Durand preached at Salisbury, Maryland, one Saturday afternoon in April, 1888, and told the exercises of a sin-sick soul under conviction, and it wound around me so closely that I was lifted beyond all expression, and April 5th, 1891, I was baptized by Elder A. B. Francis, at Rewastico, Md. I have seen many ups and downs since, but have ever loved the Old School Baptists, and I pray the God of all grace to ever keep me contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

If you feel this fit for publication, all right; if not, all right, for I know it is very imperfect, like the writer.

Your sister in hope of eternal life,

MARTHA J. DISHAROON.

KNOX CITY, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—Many are trying to do away with the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but although poor in this world's goods still I have another dollar that I am sending to pay for another six months. I love the doctrine it teaches and do not want it to go down, for it is about all the good preaching I get. There are many of the so-called Baptists here, but they limit the Holy One of Israel. I think they are afraid they will make God the author of sin if they teach the good old doctrine of predestination in its full sense. They will accept anything that will defeat that good old doctrine. Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and wonderful works to the children of men. It seems that we are few, and like Elijah when he thought they had killed all the prophets and he was left alone and they sought his life, he prayed to the Father, and the answer was, "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal," so I feel that he has reserved a few who are willing to give him all honor, glory and power, for he says he rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, nor say unto him, What doest thou. Paul said, "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou

wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"—Rom. ix. 17–20. Read all the chapter. Do we not now hear it said, Why doth he yet find fault? I think we do. The Bible says, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turneth it whithersoever he will." Oh that this poor sinner could praise him for his goodness to poor me, for at times he has wonderfully blessed me. Dear brethren, I can see and feel my dependence upon him, and I believe that all his dear ones feel their dependence upon him. I also think that when we can see and feel our nothingness and sinfulness we are nearer Christ than at any other time, for John says, The light shineth in the darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not, so when he is formed in us the hope of glory then he is our light, and oh how great is that light. "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" I wish I could express my thoughts to the sons of God. If I could comfort one of the least of his little ones how happy I would be.

Well, I will stop, for I feel this letter is as imperfect as the one who is trying to write it, so throw the mantle of love over it and do with it as seemeth good to you, for this is my first attempt. Pray for me when at the throne of grace.

I remain as ever, your poor sin-defiled brother in the hope of eternal life,

W. W. JONES.

FORSYTH, Ga., Oct. 16, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Human nature wants something to boast of that it has accomplished, notwithstanding the declaration that at its best estate it is vanity. We cannot realize this from a natural standpoint, for we are always taking to ourselves credit for the many good deeds we have done, saying to ourselves that we have given as much as a cup of water to the little ones, have given to the many demands for good deeds upon us, therefore the reward is promised us for such. We forget the principle that we do these things because of the blessings bestowed upon us, and not to obtain the blessing. When put to the test for these things would we be any different from the one who went to Christ and asked what good thing he could do to inherit eternal life? When told to keep the commandments and he would have treasure in heaven, this he claimed he had done. Then he was told he lacked one thing: to sell all he had and give to the poor. That was too much for human nature to do, for he was rich in this world's goods (good works), for he expected to purchase eternal life with his own efforts. This is what every human being expects to do in a state of nature: do good and purchase eternal life. Paul was of this faith when he was persecuting the church, a Pharisee of the Pharisees, but when the scales fell from his eyes he saw it was by grace and not by works. The difference between this man and Paul was that the scales had not fallen from his eyes. To give away all his good works and become as a little babe was more than he could do, so he went away sorrowful. Being very rich in good works, having all the honor and glory taken away from him was too much, and to say that all of this was as but filthy rags he could not; instead of doing this he wanted to know what additional good things he could do to add more stars to his crown. This is human nature in

its fullness. The religious world is full of this pharisaical religion to-day; it can be seen on all sides: we have preached so many sermons, have baptized so many members into the church, have had so much paid into the treasury, organized many benevolent societies, have obeyed the law in its fullness, therefore we have been greatly blessed. They say that Jehovah has sat upon his throne and watched and sanctioned their good works for him, so the poor servant who has given all of his good works to the poor has to sit idly by and say that salvation is of the Lord, to smite upon his breast and say, Lord be merciful to me a poor sinner. If this is not the principle taught, I pray the Lord to show us a more excellent way that we may have charity for each other.

I submit these sentiments for your inspection, to do with as you see fit, and if you see any error throw them aside and all will be well. I am a great lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, believing it to be the best publication among our people, always affirming what it believes the Scriptures teach, and not trying to force others to believe its doctrine. Human nature cannot be forced, but can be led in the way of all truth. Then let moderation be our watchword in all our walk in this life.

Yours in hope,

J. W. NEWTON.

FT. WORTH, Texas, June 21, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending the subscription of brother and sister Moon for another year. She wishes me to tell you she is sorry they did not send their renewal sooner, for she loves the doctrine contended for by the SIGNS. Neither of them ever joined the Old School Baptist Church, yet they are nearly always in attendance at our meetings and give bright evidence of their love for the truth. We would admonish them as Moses did his father-in-law: "We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel [his church]," and as we are very few in number it is very needful that when any give such unmistakable evidence as these two do that we admonish them of their duty, but we feel to trust in the Lord, and would not have them do anything that may cause them regret. May the Lord lead and guide us all to walk humbly and quietly before him. We know we are weak worms of the dust and are born unto trouble (sin), and feel we know not what is best for us, so how can we advise others? I cannot. Sometimes I draw a conclusion about something and afterward find I was judging after the flesh. So I find every day that I know not what is best, but feel the Lord knows, so if it is his will to bring his believing children into his church here he will do it. Let us submit to his will.

MINNIE OFFILL.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in October (31st). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Naomi A. Dryden, Md., $1; Mrs. M. Perry, Ark., $1; W. M. Shoemaker, Ohio, $1.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1926.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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REVELATION, TENTH CHAPTER.

A SISTER in Christ many months ago requested us to give our views upon some things in this tenth chapter of Revelation. This chapter deals with a profound mystery and we feel that we can but skim the surface of the subject. There are many things in this chapter that we cannot understand at all and those who read this article may form the opinion that we know nothing at all about any of it; however, we are willing to give our thought about such portions of it as seem to appeal to us. This whole book of Revelation is declared in the beginning to be the revelation of Jesus Christ. Since this is so, it seems that in this tenth chapter Jesus Christ is set forth. The character and personality of Christ are so infinite and so mysterious that it takes the whole Scripture, and much more, to show forth the various phases of Christ's life and work. Christ was in the beginning with God, and was God. It was the mind and purpose of God from eternity that this, his eternal Son, should in due time come to earth, should partake of flesh and blood, should work the works of him that sent him and that he should redeem from sin and death all whom the Father had given him before the world began. The mighty angel which John saw coming down from heaven clothed with the cloud, and a rainbow upon his head, his face like the sun and his feet as pillars of fire, was this Christ, the Son of God. He came as a messenger of God's grace; he came to take away the first covenant and to establish the second; he came to make an end of that law which stood in rites, ceremonies, holy days and divers washings and to bring in the better and everlasting covenant of God's perfect salvation through the shedding of his blood for the ransoming of all his people from under the curse and condemnation of the law of sin and death. In his character as messenger of the new covenant, Christ is portrayed in this chapter as being clothed with a cloud. This means that he was veiled, or hidden. Truly Jesus was, in his true character, hidden as though by a cloud from the understanding of the Jews as a nation, and from the perception of natural men. In those days of his life here upon earth he was to be the Son of Joseph, the Son of that carpenter in Nazareth. His Godhead, his divine essence, his eternal Sonship were concealed. Men had to be given that faith which is the fruit of God's Spirit in order to rightly view Christ and believe in him as the Son of God. Without this revelation of himself to the faith which he alone can give, none ever rightly know him. In this sense he was wrapped about as by a cloud. Not only was this so during the earthly lifetime of Jesus, but it is even so in this present time when he has ascended into the heavens. It is not strange that the world by wisdom cannot know him, for it has never been the intention of God that the wisdom and prudence of men should be able to pierce through this cloud of

mystery that wraps about his divine worth.

The rainbow upon the head of this Angel is significant of God's promise to his people made in Christ Jesus before the world began. This rainbow was about his head, and God the Father is the head of Christ the Son. It was from God the Father that the promise or covenant came. It was in the Son, Jesus Christ, that the Father purposed beforehand to make this covenant effective to all his heirs. It would be impossible in a short space to set forth the fullness of the promise of God to his people. In this promise treasured in Christ Jesus the heirs of glory were guaranteed all the spiritual blessing that they should ever need. In this promise they were predestinated unto the adoption of children, which meant their being translated from the disgrace and dishonor which was their lot in Adam, to that glory and virtue which shall be their inheritance when they awake in the likeness of Jesus Christ. In this promise it was certified that God should be their God, that they should be his people and that God himself would teach each one of them in order that their peace should abound forever. As there could be no rainbow without the falling of rain drops while the sun is shining, so there has never been a revelation of God's goodness and mercy to a poor sinner except as that sinner is made to see the glory of the promise mirrored upon the background of Christ's sufferings and death caused by the eternal judgment of God being visited upon Christ to atone for the transgressions of his people. This vision of God's electing love written upon the storm clouds of divine wrath poured upon the person of Christ comes home to the sinner in the midst of his own personal experience of sorrow on account of sin. This falling of the rain while the sun is shining, representative of Godly sorrow for sin made manifest through the light of God's truth shining in the sinner's heart, is the experience through which one is brought to appreciate in some measure God's pledge in the rainbow, according to which God has said he will never again smite the earth with the curse for man's sake; that never again will his elect come under condemnation.

The face of this Angel was as the sun. This shows that out of the countenance of Jesus Christ, not out of his face as a man, but out of his face as the Angel and Messenger of God, shines the very glory of God himself. The Scriptures teach that nowhere but in the face of Jesus Christ is the glory of God in salvation revealed, and as the literal sun is the center of the system which revolves about it and is the giver of light and warmth to all within that system, so Jesus Christ, the Sun of righteousness, is the center of the spiritual creation, and gives spiritual light and understanding and divine warmth and healing to each and every member included in the spiritual creation.

The feet of the Angel were as pillars of fire. The feet are those members of the body which are upon the earth, and they signify that part of the body of Christ which is the visible or militant church of Jesus Christ in the world. This part of Christ's body, the church, which is upon earth, and which is still in the flesh, is a pillar. It is the pillar and the ground of truth. It is, however, a pillar of fire. Fire represents trials and afflictions. That part of Christ's body which is upon earth, and as long as it is upon earth, must suffer trials and afflictions. These trials, or fire, which this pillar of the truth endures, are the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, and

one of the main evidences that she is his church. Every member of the militant church must be dealt with as sons, hence they must experience the bearing about in their bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus so that the life of Christ shall be made manifest in them.

This Angel of God had in his hand a little book open. In another part of this book of Revelation it will be remembered that a book was spoken of which was sealed and that no man was found able to loose its seal and open the book until the Lion of the tribe of Judah came. He it was who loosed the seal and opened the book. This Lion of the tribe of Judah and this Angel which is spoken of in this tenth chapter, are both of them the one and same Jesus Christ. The law and the prophets constitute the book which was sealed up until the coming of Christ. There was no proper understanding of the meaning of the law and prophets until Jesus by the key of his Holy Spirit unlocked those treasures of hidden wisdom and revealed them to his gospel church. The fact that this book in the hands of the Angel is open, and not closed, proves that the events dealt with in the tenth chapter of Revelation have reference to the gospel dispensation and not to the legal. This Angel with this book of law and prophecy now opened stands with one foot on the sea and the other foot upon the land. This shows that the work of this messenger of the new covenant is world-wide among the nations and the kindreds and the tribes and the tongues of the human family. It shows that the dominion of this gospel messenger is throughout all the earth, and to both Jews and Gentiles, to all God's elect scattered throughout all the earth. This Angel lifted up his hand to heaven and sware by God that liveth forever, and who is the Creator of all things, that there should be time no longer. This declaration to the effect that time should be no longer belongs to the gospel dispensation and not to the law. Under the legal dispensation there were times and places appointed for everything; there were certain times to feast and other times to fast; there were times set for prayer and other times for dancing; there was a definite time for the high priest to go into the Holy of holies; there were other times when he dared not so enter. In short, the entire Jewish year was taken up with a definitely arranged program which took care of every sacrifice to be offered and every ceremony to be observed. All this ritualism is done away with in the gospel age. In this gospel age there is no one day that is the Sabbath any more than any other day, but it is all one continuous Sabbath. There is no one time more than another set aside for prayer, for the whole church is commanded to pray without ceasing. There is no one time to worship God more than another, for he is worshiped at all times and all places by all of his children throughout all the earth. Under the legal order of things there were certain times and certain places in which the Jews were to worship, but now in this gospel regeneration it is not in Jerusalem, nor in the mountains of Samaria that God is worshiped, for he is the Spirit and he seeketh out those to worship him in Spirit and in truth. No man can set bounds or pronounce limits to the work of God; none of us can say that we will worship God this day or that. Whenever and wherever his Spirit calls us we shall bow before him and render up unto him the tribute of our hearts in spiritual sacrifices of thanksgiving. Thus it will be seen that the legal covenant was the dis-

pensation of times and seasons, and that in the gospel covenant these times and seasons are abolished. All this is because of the perfect and finished work of Jesus Christ, by which he has sworn that these times and seasons to which the church was formerly in bondage shall have dominion over them no more forever.

Farther on in this same chapter John was commanded to take the book out of the hand of the Angel and to eat it up. Upon doing so he found that in his mouth this book was sweet as honey, but in his belly it was bitter. This book, as we have said, was the testimony of Christ as opened up in law and prophecy. This testimony of Jesus Christ is bitter in the belly. To the human nature of men the testimony of Jesus Christ is repulsive. There is no principle of the carnal nature that will accept, digest or enjoy the testimony of Jesus Christ. To the sensualities it is always bitter, but in the mouth the testimony of Jesus is sweet. The head of John is Christ, just as the head of every member of the church is Christ himself; all their spiritual powers of seeing and of tasting and of hearing and of understanding are in their head, Jesus Christ. We have none of these spiritual powers in and of ourselves naturally, hence to the mouth of John, which was in his Head, and in the mouth of every believer the testimony of Jesus Christ is the most sweet and precious. By the mouth we mean not the literal or physical mouth, but the spiritual ability to taste the truth, which ability is alone in Christ, the head. All who truly believe in Him by the grace of God have tasted of Jesus that he is precious, all such love his truth; it is to them truly sweet as honey.

In conclusion, we beg to say that we have scanned this chapter hastily, and truly feel that we have but skimmed the surface of a deep and wonderful subject. Our readers will notice, if they have followed us carefully, that we have said nothing regarding the seven thunders mentioned in this chapter. Even if we had the understanding of what the seven thunders mean, which we have not, time and space would now forbid our treating upon them. If any brother who reads these lines feels that he has had given him a revelation upon the significance of the seven thunders, we should be glad to have him give us his views for the benefit not only of ourselves but of all our readers and subscribers. To the sister who many months ago requested us to write upon this subject, we desire to say we have given such thoughts as have come to us upon it, and trust she may accept them as evidence of our desire to comply with her request, although we feel to have written very inadequately.

L.

IN OUR NEW HOME.

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES is now being published in a home of its own, this number being the first issue from our new quarter. We are a little late with the October number, but feel our subscribers will forgive us under the circumstances. We also beg the indulgence of the Associations that have sent their Minutes to us to be printed, and will do their work for them as soon as we can. It was no small task for us to take our machinery apart, move and set it up again in our new place, but we hope this will be the last time we will have to change our location, but we feel repaid for our work, as we now have a place much better suited to our needs.

J. E. B. & Co.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, N. J., June 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1926, to our sister associations, and other meetings, with which we correspond, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—It is once more our privilege to address you in this our Corresponding Letter, wishing you well in the Lord, that peace and joy abound within your borders to the glory of God and to your mutual comfort. We are pleased to report a most pleasant and profitable session of our Association. The attendance has been good, the order perfect and the preaching to the glory and honor of God. We have been much encouraged and strengthened by the coming of your ministers and messengers, all of whom have been gladly received and cared for after a godly sort. Your Minutes have been received and passed upon by a committee appointed to examine and distribute them. We desire a continuance of your correspondence, to the end that we keep in touch with you from time to time.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., to begin at 10:30 o'clock a. m., Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1927, when and where we shall hope to meet and greet your messengers again. Until then farewell in the Lord.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
DAVID VOORHEES, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, September 9th, 1926, at the home of the bride's parents, Vienna, Fairfax County, Va., Russell S. Craig and Miss Eunice L. Glasscock.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. A. M. Byrd, the subject of this sketch, was born in Geneva County, Alabama, being the talented daughter of Deacon J. L. Collins, and the granddaughter of Elder J. W. Collins, who for thirty-five years was pastor of Mt. Gilead Primitve Baptist Church, and Moderator of the Western Primitive Baptist Association at twenty-three sessions. Mrs. Byrd was taken to a Dothan hospital for an operation September 5th, after a brief illness. She died Sunday night, September 12th. She had lived at Hartford, Ala., R. No. 2, all her life, having been born there December 15th, 1892, the beautiful daughter of J. L. and Alma Collins, who survive her. In her childhood days, in school and social activities, she formed a large circle of friends and during later life she constantly added her acquaintances to this circle of friends. To know her was to admire the traits that she possessed. In January, 1910, she became the bride of A. M. Byrd, and for sixteen years they lived a life of devoted service to each other and to humanity. To that union were born three sons: Acrel Louis, Otis Clinton and J. T., also two young daughters: Bertha Mae and Alma Birnell, the latter being only sixteen months old. To these she was a true mother, training them in that way that is right and acceptable. In November, 1914, she became a member of Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church, having related an experience of heavenly bliss. Although she was the youngest of the flock she remained true to her profession and was ever found faithful in her christian duties. When she realized that the time for her departure was near at hand she told her father, mother and oldest brother that there was nothing in the way, that everything was all right with her and to let her go to sleep. Her sufferings were intense, but she placed her trust in Jesus, and breathed her life out sweetly there. As she passed from time to eternity's shore there were present her husband, father, mother, two sons, Acrel Louis and Otis Clinton, three brothers, J. J., Charles T. and John F., sister Jewell, and faithful hospital attendants. She was a lover of all sacred music, and with her devoted companion attended singings far and near. She also took an active interest in educational work, and it was her desire to train her children well to meet life's struggle. Although her labors have ceased we believe her influence lives on.

The remains were taken to her beloved church September 13th, where her pastor, Elder F. A. Collins, delivered an able funeral sermon, from the text, "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do

follow them." Surrounded by sorrowing relatives and friends, and enshrouded with many beautiful floral offerings, she was tenderly laid to rest with loved ones gone on before, asleep in Jesus, resting in a heavenly clime from which none desire to return to earthly sorrows. Gertrude, we hope to meet you again on the celestial plains and sing songs of praise to Him throughout an endless eternity.

Written by her brother, J. J. COLLINS.

James A. Cope was born May 3rd, 1858, and died October 30th, 1925, at his home, Ft. Worth, Texas. Mr. Cope had been in failing health over five years, but was able to work most of the time until a few days before his death. Two days before his death he was stricken with a sharp pain under his shoulder-blade, which the doctor pronounced neuritis. That was Thursday before he died Saturday, but on Friday he seemed to be better and thought he would be all right. He got up and wanted to go outside, and sister Cope assisted him out and waited in the yard to assist him back in the house. She thought it was time for him to call for her, and on investigating found him all crumpled up, lying face forward, having died from heart failure. Mr. Cope gave evidence of a love for the truth many years ago, and was a regular attendant of the Old Baptist meetings. He never united with the church, but we feel assured he was one of those for whom Christ died. I have often heard him speak of loving the doctrine that exalted God above all, saying that if he was saved it was alone by the grace of God, for he knew that in his flesh there dwelt no good thing. He was a great talker and enjoyed conversing on spiritual things. He was a deep thinker, and was a true and tried friend to the Old Baptists. His home was a home for them, and up until three years before his death they lived close to the meetinghouse and almost every meeting they had the members in their home. I feel, if I may speak for all, our little church here has lost a true friend, which grieves us sorely, but we desire to bow in submission to Him who doeth all things well. In May, 1925, Elder J. R. Hardy was at our church and I heard Mr. Cope say he never enjoyed a discourse more in his life. It was our regular communion meeting and Mr. Cope left the house in tears, telling brother Smith he just could not stand it to stay inside. We have no doubt that his spirit is now basking in the sunshine of his blessed Redeemer, and we would say to his dear wife and children that they sorrow not as those who have no hope, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. He leaves to mourn his departure his wife, dear sister Cope, and two children, Warren Cope, of Beaumont, Texas, and Mrs. Maude Landon, Ft. Worth, Texas, also seven grandchildren.

Elders J. H. Smith and E. A. Moreland spoke comforting words at his funeral, after which his remains were laid away in Greenwood Cemetery, Ft. Worth, Texas, there to await the glorious resurrection morn, when this vile body shall be changed and come forth a spiritual body, fashioned like unto Christ's body. Indeed that will be a glorious morn. Having known Mr. Cope and family since my early childhood, they having been kind and good to our family many years, it makes me feel very sad in the death of this kind friend. May the dear Lord be with sister Cope in her lonely hours that she can feel truly to say, Thy will be done, O Lord, and not mine.

Written in tender remembrance of a dear friend, and, I feel to hope a brother.

(MRS.) MINNIE C. OFFILL.

Mrs. Carrie F. Lane was born August 20th, 1847, and departed this life July 16th, 1926. She was married to Samuel J. Lane March 26th, 1871, and there are two children who survive: Mr. Frederick W. Lane and Mrs. Martha Morgan, also nine grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. Sister Lane was baptized in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, in New York City, November 13th, 1898, by Elder William L. Beebe, where she remained a consistent and faithful member to the end. Due to a very weakened condition, she was prevented from attending meetings during the last few years of her life, but the writer and others of the church visited her from time to time at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Martha Morgan, who cared unceasingly for her, and she was ever glad to hear from her kindred in Christ and to talk of the things of Jesus. She was gifted with a sweet alto voice which will be greatly missed, and while we mourn our loss, it is not as those without hope, feeling assured as we do she has departed to be with Christ, which is far better. At the time of her demise the writer was absent in the south and the funeral service was conducted by Elder T. W. Walker. Our desire is to be reconciled to the will of him who doeth all things well.

R. LESTER DODSON.

Mrs. Elizabeth Casey passed away at the home of her son, T. J. Casey, Adairsville, Georgia, May 25th, 1926. Her stay on this earth was eighty-five years, one month and three days, of which sixty-three years were spent as a faithful member of the Primitive Baptist Church. She was the widow of Elder F. M. Casey, who was an able defender of the truth, and was called from this earth in the year 1889. Mrs. Casey was a firm believer in salvation by grace and grace alone. She leaves four sons, a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren, as well as many friends, to mourn their loss, but they do not mourn as those who have no hope, for their loss is her eternal gain.

Written by her grandson,

DEZZIE L. CASEY.

MEMORIALS.

Inasmuch as it has pleased almighty God to remove by death our dear brother and pastor, **Elder John B. Slauson,** who having labored faithfully in the Master's service with the Particular Covenanted Church in Canada for eleven years, we, realizing our great loss, desire to bow in humble submission to the dispensation of Providence by which he was called to that haven of eternal rest where sin and sorrow cannot come.

Resolved, that a copy of this memorial be spread upon our Minutes and a copy be sent for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

D. M. GILLIS.
A. C. CAMPBELL.
J. T. KERR.

MEETINGS.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held this year with the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Va., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 13th, 14th and 15th, 1926. All trains arriving at Leesburg Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning will be met. Trains for Leesburg leave Rosslyn, Va., at frequent intervals. Electric cars from Union Station, D. C., marked "Rosslyn" connect with Leesburg cars. All lovers of the truth, especially ministers of our faith and order, are cordially invited to meet with us.

T. S. TITUS, Church Clerk.

The Welsh Tract Church yearly meeting is appointed to begin Saturday, October 16th, 1926, at 2:30 p. m., and continue two days. Those coming from Philadelphia and Baltimore will come via B. & O. R. R. to Newark, Delaware, on Saturday. Train leaves Philadelphia at 1:10 p. m., and Baltimore at 10:18 a. m. (Mt. Royal Station.) Ministering brethren who expect to attend the Corresponding Meeting in Virginia, and on to the Salisbury Association the week following, are especially invited to be with us, as well as all lovers of our faith and doctrine. The early trains on Sunday morning will be met also on both railroads.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

The Salisbury Association meets with the Broad Creek Church, Laurel, Delaware, on Wednesday before the (fourth) Sunday in October, and will be in session three days (October 20th, 21st and 22nd). The express trains leaving Broad Street Station, Philadelphia, will be met at Bridgeville, Delaware, at 12:49 p. m. and 6:08 p. m., Tuesday, and the express leaving Broad Street Station at 10:01 a. m., on Wednesday will be met at Laurel, Delaware, at 1:15 p. m., Wednesday. The north bound express trains from Salisbury and points south that arrive at Laurel at 3:35 p. m. will be met on Tuesday, and the same train will be met on Wednesday.

C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor.
(MRS.) A. J. DOLBY, Church Clerk.

The Second Roxbury Old School Baptist Church will hold, the Lord willing, a two days' meeting at Halcottville, New York, the second Sunday and Saturday before in November (13th and 14th). Trains will be met Friday evening and Saturday morning.

ESTHER RUSTON, Church Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expect Elder George Ruston to meet with them the fifth Sunday in October, 1926. For convenience services are to be held, the Lord willing, at the home of J. E. Livingston, 643 E. Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., at 11 a. m. and 2:30 p. m. All welcome who love the truth.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

A great many old Baptists throughout the country are deeply exercised over the subject of PREDESTINATION. In the hope of supplying food for thought to the earnest seeker after truth, I propose to collect and publish in pamphlet form perhaps a dozen of the ablest articles obtainable written by men recognized to have been greatly gifted of the Lord. These writings will probably cover a period of at least the last five hundred years. The pamphlet will doubtless consist of 100 pages, or more, the price not to exceed $1.00 per copy, or less, depending somewhat upon the number to be printed.

Will all who are interested in obtaining information on this subject kindly inform me the number of copies they desire for themselves and friends, addressing R. LESTER DODSON, 12 Addison Ave., Rutherford, N. J. It may be several months before the pamphlet is ready, as I intend to make it well worth the price to be paid.

R. LESTER DODSON.

SUPPLY EXHAUSTED.

OUR supply of the book entitled "A Sketch of the Life of Joshua S. Corder" is exhausted, and we are unable to fill any more orders for said book. This work was not electrotyped, so we do not expect to have any more on sale at any time in the future.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

EXODUS XVIII 7.

"THEY asked each other of their welfare: and they came into the tent."

The fare of "wayfaring men" (Isaiah xxxv. 8.) in the King's highway has ever interested me since, through the sovereign kindness of the Holy Ghost, I have, I trust, been brought to travel in the highway unto Zion. Often I am as a very fool, I need to have that Friend to hold me by my hand, so foolish am I, and ignorant (Psalms lxxiii. 22, 23). But the highway is so good, there are no mudholes, no pits and snares therein, no stumbling-blocks, all has been so "cast up," so made plain that the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein (Isaiah xxxv. 6). This way is the way of holiness; our High Priest, our Redeemer, our Forerunner with "holiness to the Lord" inscribed upon his brow cast it up, and by his obedience and blood, by his obedience unto death, by his righteousness he hath consecrated it. Oh the anguish, the strong crying and tears that were his in opening up this highway for his ransomed people! "The redeemed shall walk there." This is the new covenant way, the "new and living way." It will never get old, get out of repair, need any mending; it never wears out. It will be just as good, just as new, just as much life therein when the last vessel of mercy shall journey over it as when Abel, the first one, with faith in the Lamb, made his pilgrimage over it, through the wilderness, and at the end was ushered into glory. Oh it suits, marvelously well, all poor sinners called by grace, and their grateful songs are often heard as they walk in this "path of life." Have you seen this path of life? Oh, believers in Jesus, I know you have. "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."—John viii. 12. It is the "living way," in the pathway thereof there is no death. Each step of faith therein is a step of life, sweet, precious, animating, triumphant, "eternal life." We are lifted up in our walking in the King's highway. We are therein high above the wilderness on either side, high above sin and condemnation; above the curse of the law, and all the powers of Satan. It is too high for any lion or ravenous beast to climb, they shall not be found there. It is too lofty, too pure for the vulture's eyes to see. It

is too sacred for the uncircumcised, the unclean, the unregenerate, the unwashed to travel upon. The hypocrite cannot be found there, though he pretends to be walking in Christ. But poor sinners whom God has called by his grace, who experimentally have been taught of the Lord to feel themselves foolish, weak, base, despised things, things that are not, just poor nothings (1 Cor. i. 26-29) these shall walk in the highway, guided into all truth by the Spirit of truth. They find it to be ever new, never stale. It is the new and living way by which we enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. Who shall lay anything to our charge? Who shall point the finger of scorn? Where is the dog that shall move his tongue at the redeemed of the Lord walking in this highway, the path of life, the new and living way? Not a word of condemnation is heard, it is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who also maketh intercession for us. The accusers are cast down. The dogs are silenced by the Passover Lamb. The light of life shines on the travelers in the highway, and the ravenous beasts of the wilderness slink away from the light (that beams from Emmanuel's lovely face upon his redeemed), to hide themselves in their dens. That passage through the Red Sea was the way of life and salvation to the tribe of Jacob. "By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land."—Heb. xi. 29. This was "the salvation of the Lord unto Israel." But the Egyptians assayed to pass through the sea in pursuit of God's ransomed ones. Said the Egyptians, "I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them."—Exod. xv. 9. Oh presumptuous enemies! "The angel of God which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: and it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night."—Exod. xiv. 19, 20. "And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians." The Lord, in the greatness of his excellency, overthrew them, and brought his ransomed ones with gladness, and in triumphant rejoicings they sang, saying, "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously."—Exod. xv. 1. Thus the Lord put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel. Oh the sovereignty and riches of that grace which is brought unto us by our Lord Jesus Christ! This is grace abounding to the chief of sinners, "that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord."—Rom. v. 21. O poor, vile sinners, humbled and contrite in heart, what a mercy it is that the Holy Spirit has interested us in these sacred realities. Ah! though I am often sorely tried in my soul, and see straits attending my way every day, and I am sometimes buffeted by the enemy, yet I live, yet not I, but Christ, I trust, verily liveth in my heart, my hope, my salvation, whose precious sin-atoning blood cleanseth me from all my iniquities; yes, "the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."—Gal. ii. 20. Would you take a glimpse of the faithfulness, the immutable constancy, the unquenchable

mercy and love of God to vile sinners? Then look at Jeremiah li. 5. Some time ago I looked at that text, and my heart was moved, and I burst into tears. I know that my life is what people call circumspect, but there is an inward view which no one sees but our God; I do not fully see it, neither do I wish to. I will not attempt to tell it; it is an inward leprosy. Over it I sigh and moan unto God, I am ashamed, I blush, and at times I cannot look up (Ezra ix. 6), but I pour out my groanings before him; I put my mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope; and then in great pitifulness, in marvelous compassion he tells me my iniquity is purged. Emmanuel's blood cleanseth us from all sin; and washed in the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, I am whiter than snow. Our fair and sweet Lord Jesus smiles, and puts gladness, precious, grateful sunlight from his face in my heart, saying, I have redeemed thee; thou art mine; thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee. His own kind, almighty hand puts off my sackcloth, and girds me with gladness, and he giveth me the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Oh this is no fiction, but sacred, divine realities transpiring in my soul; but the world knoweth it not. "The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy."—Prov. xiv. 10. My life, from many causes, has of late been a tossed about one, but I feel it has been a sacred and gracious one, for I have lived, I have been both driven and drawn to live in nearness to Jesus Christ our Lord, in sighs and groanings, tears, and supplications at his footstool, and truly he despiseth not my prayers. "Fear not, thou worm Jacob."—Isaiah xli. 14. That word came to my heart, quieting my fears. I knew the voice. "Thou worm;" *He* called me such, and I said, He knoweth me altogether. I had felt myself to be such a poor, crawling thing in the mire, unsightly, having no beauty, to be despised, whom no one would pity and no one would save, but his eyes were upon me, and his heart was toward me, and he said this to my heart. I know it is a wondrous thing for a creature, a sinner, to say, and yet in these moments so reviving is the power of Jesus' voice in the soul that the thought springs up, and, as I have intimated, I am saying, "I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me." Yes, as I muse upon the doctrine of Christ it is all saying to me, "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel [ye few men]; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel." Let me tell the whole story in a few words:

> "Poor, weak and worthless though I am,
> I have a rich, almighty Friend:
> Jesus, the Savior, is his name,
> He freely loves, and without end."

I will own Christ has my heart, all my desires are upon his excellencies. His sacrifice, his blood, his righteousness, his intercession, the work and fruits of his High Priesthood draw me to him, and he only is my expectation, and now he so kindly speaks to my heart, saying, "Fear not, thou worm."

I am your brother in Christ's gospel,

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

TOPEKA, Kansas, July 7, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN:—While renewing my subscription I wish I could express the comfort and pleasure of which I was yesterday the unworthy recipient when the mail brought me the SIGNS and three precious soul-cheering letters from dear saints in Maryland, Oregon and Texas. "Scattered strangers" indeed. One of them spoke of having recently received a "Benjamin's mess" in spiritual enjoyment, and here was I enjoying "a feast of fat things" of all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which the Lord has laid up for us at our gates. Dear saints, I may say, "'Tis my happiness below not to live without the cross." Often "I sink in deep mire where there is no standing." Isaiah said, We are the clay and thou our potter. There is no more worthless soil than the clay. No profitable vegetation grows in the clay; no pleasant fruits are gathered from it. It is indeed miry and sticky. "We are the clay," and how often we echo the mournful cry, "O wretched man that I am!" Why was such an one as Paul, who tells us to be followers of him, so wretched? Do we not from our hearts follow him in the reason he gives for his wretchedness, because he says, For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing? Is there one who has not shed bitter tears of shame and wretchedness for this very cause? Yet the flesh, with its total lack of any good, the worthless, sticky mass of clay, adheres to us, until we ourselves do groan within ourselves, being burdened with the load we must carry until it shall return to the earth as it was, and the spirit to God who gave it. Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him? Yet here am I, fettered and chained up in this worthless, sticky, miry mass, in which there is not now, nor ever will be, any standing in him, partaking of such dainties as worldlings have never tasted. As I laid down the precious missives I found myself saying,

"Pause my soul, adore and wonder,
Ask, Oh why such love to me?
Grace hath put me in the number
Of the Savior's family."

May I not truly say, I was brought low, and he helped me? Dear saints, when we have sunk low in the miry works of the flesh, and realize that every effort we make to extricate ourselves only sinks us deeper, and then be uexpectedly delivers, lifts us out of it, if only for a moment, the new song is put in our mouths, even praise to our God. This deliverance will come at the appointed time. "Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry" beyond the Lord's appointed time. Wait, dear, downcast, troubled ones, wait upon the Lord, and "to do good, and to communicate, forget not," thus speaking often one to another, and as face answereth to face in water, so will many another heart respond to yours in all deep places.

It seems to me that the inclosed letter contains suitable matter for the SIGNS, and, being seconded by sister McKinney, I am submitting it to your disposal. Your unworthy sister, saved by hope, yet often feeling too poor, weak and worthless to utter in words the inward cry of my heart,

MARY ELLISON.

TOPEKA, Kansas, Jan. 30, 1926.

DEAR COUSINS, and I hope brothers and sisters in Christ:—I will try and write a few lines in answer to yours, which came to hand some time ago. I feel I owe you an apology for not having written sooner, but as a matter of fact, I have been in the dark so much of late I felt I could hardly write anything that

would interest any one; nor do I feel different now, but I do feel the weight of duty to such an extent that I am resolved to at least try to acknowledge the receipt of your good letter. I am brought to realize more and more as I grow older that the way of man is not in himself. It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Our way is often hedged in, so that we cannot perform even in natural things as we would like, much less spiritual things. The dear Lord brings about conditions which often impress us with the truth of his divine teaching, and force us to acknowledge his sovereignty over all worlds and events, and oftentimes we are able to glean a little comfort from the fact that we know. We know that all things work together for good to them that love him, to them who are the called according to his purpose. I never have doubted this glorious truth, but I often doubt that I am one of the called.

"If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse
Who have never heard his name."

Is this a christian experience? Do all the Lord's people feel so much the weight of sin and condemnation as is felt by me, or is mine an outside case? Do I stumble more than the rest? "You who love the Lord indeed, tell me, is it thus with you?" Sometimes I fancy I can see some good arising from these conditions. It at least creates a fellowship within us for those old servants of God who wrote these things for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. If it were not for the fact that we are sometimes brought low we could know nothing of the excellency of God's power in raising us up. If we were not sometimes subjected to sin and temptation we never could rejoice in his salvation. We never could sing the sweet songs of deliverance were it not that we often come into places and conditions from which no power but of God can deliver. Thus he manifests himself unto his people as their Savior. Thus he teaches them that there is salvation in no other, and thus he leads them along and teaches them little by little that all praise is due him. There was a curse placed upon Meroz, "because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." This surely does not mean the Lord's people, because they have all come to his help. Not to help the Lord, but to be helped of him. If we were never shown our weakness and utter helplessness we would never come to him for help. But do we ever reflect that there is a sense in which we are a help to him? If we are what we profess to be, the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife, there is a certain responsibility resting upon us, as there is upon every wife, to keep her house in order. When Adam gave names to all the beasts of the field and fowls of the air, there was not found among them a help meet for Adam. This should not be pronounced "helpmeet," as often it is. Some digress even further, and say "helpmate." This is also incorrect. But "an help meet for him" is briefly defined by saying, a help that is fit for him, one that is especially prepared for him. Thus the Lord made Adam's bride, and he brought her unto man. In this we have a figure of Christ and his bride. God brings her unto her glorious Husband and she is a help meet for him, or for help fit for him. But the place for the wife to work is in the house. It is not her place to go out in the field and undertake to do the work which her husband has pronounced finished. Our glorious Husband has declared, I have finished the work which thou gavest me

to do. His work was to save his people from their sins. His bride, the church, will not dishonor him by going out into the world to save souls, as we see many professing to be doing, but do not. Professing to be the bride of Christ, but are not. His bride is willing to leave the matter with him. She trusts in him. She knows his dying words are true: "It is finished." But her implicit confidence in him does not excuse her from her own obligation. We must bear in mind the fact that she is a help, a fit help. Let us look now at the church and we can see our own obligation. We must keep our house in order. This is where the bride is a help to her husband. It is his to provide food for his family. It is her's to set it before the little ones. It is his to provide them with raiment; that is, to clothe them with his own righteousness. Is it not the duty of the wife to see that their garments are kept clean? Thus to watch over one another for good and not for evil. This bride, the Lamb's wife, has experienced a most wonderful transition. He found her in poverty and rags, she possessed nothing, her state was of utter dejection and shame, misery and self-loathing was her lot. But listen. Oh rapturous surprise! She heard her Beloved speak, and say, Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away. Joy unspeakable and full of glory! Being raised from her abject poverty and loneliness he causes her to sit down in the presence of her heavenly Lover. He looks upon her in admiration, and says, Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee. Instead of being an object of contempt, his servants now address her as, "The elect lady" and her children. What has brought about this wonderful change? Ah, here it is: "But God, who is rich in merey, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together, in heavenly places in Christ." No wonder we love to sing the songs of grace. We remember our poverty and destitution, and oh the joy to hear our Beloved say, All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. It is pleasing to know he has given all things, and no less pleasing to know that we are his. Our desire shall be unto our Husband and he shall rule over us. May it never be otherwise.

Write me when you can. We are always glad to hear from you.

L. L. SCHENCK.

FLEMINGTON, N. J., Aug. 27, 1926.

MY DEAR ELDER KER:—I feel that I must write and tell you of some of my feelings. There is no one left for me to go to with my thoughts and exercises of mind, every one sees things entirely different, and I often think that if I only had one in the family I could talk to without being criticised how glorious it would be. When I look back over my past it is to me a miracle that I have been led so gently along, that one whose life has been filled with iniquity and sin should ever have the promise of God within my heart. Surely he moves in a mysterious way. I have only to look back just a short space of time when I was made to see myself a miserable creature, worse than nothing, thoughtless, denying the great and mighty God, and while my father was gradually going down, and every day I could see his strength failing, and every day from his lips I could hear him pour out praise to His most high and holy name, I thought if I could only have the heart that he

had, but oh no, that could never be. The months of torture before and after his death, night and day my soul was tormented, and every time I tried to pray for forgiveness I would think in my distress, Who is this God that I am trying to call to deliver me, is it the same God that I have been denying, can I a wicked sinner like me expect an answer? This went on for months, and one night, worse than all the rest, I felt myself sinking it seemed to the very bottom of hell. While all the rest were sleeping around me, with nothing worrying them, a picture of the sins of my life came before me, and I cried from my heart, O God, save me. I was made to see the sufferings on the cross and this hymn rang through my mind:

"Oh what a sad and doleful night
Preceded that day's morn,
When darkness seized the Lord of light
And sin by Christ was borne."

The verse, "Mocked, spit upon and crowned with thorns," &c., seemed to impress me more than all the rest. Oh was it for me? O God, speak peace to my soul. After tossing around until nearly morning I fell into a doze, and out of the stillness of the night, just before the dawn of the natural day, came this message with all its sweetness and blessed assurance: "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." It was to me astonishing. Could it be possible that He had listened to my cry and had spoken peace to me? The burden was completely lifted and I was made to rejoice and sing his praise, everything was changed, and he had put a new song in my mouth and had made me to taste his glory. Matchless, unspeakable and unmerited grace! There seemed no words to express my feelings, and I sat in awe and amazement at this wonderful change. He had spoken peace to me out of his boundless mercy, he had pity on me, and Jesus all the day long was my joy and my song. How could I ever doubt him? Had it not been his hand that led me and his lovingkindness guided my footsteps all the way through from the cradle to the present time? Almighty God, a God who from eternity stood, and shall to eternity stand. What a true and glorious thought. I might tell you of a dream I had several years ago, and in spite of my trying to forget it has come before me so many times during my life that I do feel now it has been a part of my experience. I was standing in a place of confusion, armies were marching, swords and weapons of war were at hand, people with helmets and breastplates, a babble and shouting of strange tongues, and I stood in fear and trembling and did not know where to go, I was afraid, when a friend, a member of the church at Locktown, who has long since passed away, came to my side, and took my arm and said, Come with me where all is peace. She led me through a narrow lane, or path, to a place beautiful to behold, the grass was velvet green, there was a stream of water so clear it was blue, and there was a company of people. My mother was there with an open hymn book, and my friend led me along and repeated the Psalm, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters," &c. I tried to forget it, and to think of it as being only a dream, but the more I tried the more forcibly it came to me. One evening, a few months ago, I was setting on my porch with my family and friends, and they started to talk religion, and of course I became the object of ridicule. I stood it as long as I could, then I got up and went into the house. I

picked up my grandfather's New Testament, worn and fingermarked, it dropped open, and lo, before my eyes was a verse marked with a cross with a pencil. It just seemed his dear old hands had marked it for me. It was Hebrews x. 23: "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)." As I turned the leaves on page after page were verses marked, so wonderful to me that I feel this was God's way of showing me the right, and I know he has made me to hate things I once loved, and the things I so much hated have been made the perfection of beauty to me. I feel to thank the gracious and heavenly Father that I was born among the Old Baptists, for to me it is an inheritance far above what this world can ever give.

I could go on and on, but feel that I have written more than I should, for I do not want to take up too much of your time. This is the first time I have ever told my experience to any one, not even to my own near relatives. I felt I wanted to tell some one who knows and understands it all. Do you think, dear Elder, it is the experience of a child of God? Oh how many doubts and fears come to me day and night. I think sometimes I have such a blind understanding of things. Oh for a heart to love him more. I want to tell you that the little church at Locktown is a peaceful place to me, and I believe the true church of God wherein his honor dwells. They that worship there are born of him, and he has chosen them for his own habitation.

"Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God;
He, whose word cannot be broken,
Formed thee for his own abode."

I often wonder if the time will ever come when I can go and tell them what my feelings are. God alone knows the time, if there is to be a time. I do not feel fit to face such a good people, a sinner like me, for they are all faultless to me. You, dear Elder, on our last meeting day at Locktown spoke of your transgressions, and I said to myself, Look at me, behold one ten thousand times worse. I am always sorry when you close the Book, for it seems to me it would be everlasting bliss to sit and listen to you on and on. If this great love and sweet assurance he gives us here is a foretaste of the joys to come, then what must heaven be?

"Beyond the reach of time,
Beyond the pale of death,
There surely is some blessed clime,
Where life is not a breath."

How often I have listened to my parents sing the above hymn. I was sitting at the piano one evening and singing the words, "Majestic sweetness sits enthroned upon the Savior's brow," and as I sang it seemed to me I could hear my parents as plainly as I ever did singing with me. It seemed so real I dropped my hands from the keys and their voices died with the music. I started to play again, but their voices were gone. I know it was only in fancy I heard them, but it was blissful, and the memory of their singing will ever be bright to me. It seems to me sometimes there are no words to express our feelings.

"A solemn reverence checks our songs
And praise sits silent on our tongues."

I have written more than I expected to. Some time I should love to hear from you.

With much love to you and Mrs. Ker, I remain an unworthy friend,

GERTRUDE PYATT.

MANSFIELD, Ga., Sept. 13, 1926.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a copy of a letter that was written to me about a month ago by Mrs. D. K. Hicks, of Covington, Ga. She is a niece of Elder and Mrs. H. H. Lefferts. I enjoyed reading it, and would like to see it published if you think it worthy of space; if not, it will be all right. My father has been taking the SIGNS forty years, and likes to read it. I have been reading it twenty years myself, and I always read it through as soon as I can when it comes.

Your friend,

NETTIE COOPER.

COVINGTON, Ga., Aug. 18, 1926.

MY DEAR MISS NETTIE:—Over a year has passed and still I find myself no better prepared to attempt an answer to your highly appreciated letter. I wrote you, not even expecting an answer, and while in bed with a third baby boy only two days old your letter was brought with several others to be read aloud to me, but I had to read it over one time with my own eyes, then I had it read and reread, and kept it under my pillow as long as I remained in bed. To-day it is put away with this inscription on it, "A keepsake." I felt that I could never answer it, but hoped that I might visit you and talk face to face. Since this has not been my privilege, may the Lord guide me as to what I shall write. If there was anything good in the letter I first wrote you give God the praise and all the weak things charge to me, for what is man that thou God is mindful of him, or the son of man that he visiteth him? All my righteousness is as filthy rags, and when the Lord appeared to me in the night I cried, Who am I? Oh I saw myself such a vile and sinful creature. The Lord heard my cry, and lifted me up out of that horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and placed my feet upon a rock, and put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto God. It is no longer I that doeth it, but the Lord who strengthens me. Had I gone about to choose my own way I would look for the short and easy way, but the Lord's way is a long way. Take my yoke upon you. Perhaps it is the yoke of tribulation that worketh patience; patience, knowledge; knowledge, hope; and oft that hope causes me anxious woe. 'Tis a point I long to know, am I his, or am I not? Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love. The good that I would I do not, but the evil, which I would not, that I do. "Oh to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be." There are so many good things, Miss Nettie, I do not have time to think of the bad. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled, "and running over," then it is I have to write some one. It is a happy privilege that you let me claim you as a correspondent. I love God's people and I feel you to be one, is what prompts me to write. I know your experience would be wonderful to hear you tell it, and let me hope that I may get to see you soon; or, could you come and see us, and just stay and stay, and keep on staying? Papa has come back from Washington now, and I am having all the children together at his home (where I am living). It is so sweet to dwell together in unity. It is the old time religion that makes me love every one.

I could write on and on, and then the half could not be told. From your letter your faith is in these words, "For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him."

In closing, Miss Nettie, I would say just continue in that faith, it was good enough for Paul and Silas, and it is good enough for me. God bless you and keep you with an everlasting love, is the wish of a devoted friend,

MAGGIE HICKS.

TEHUACANA, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I will once more, the Lord willing, let you hear from me, though it may not amount to much, but I want to let you know that it amounts to a great deal to this old sinner to hear from you and feast upon the truth in your writings as set forth in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as there is none of our kind of Baptists in this country; that is, there are no preachers, and but very few laities, and I seldom get to see any one of our faith that I can enjoy talking with of the wonderful goodness, love, mercy and sovereign will and power of the unlimited, unchangeable, unconditional, independent God. There are some very good people here, who claim to be Primitive Baptists, who talk and preach very well until they come to the predestination of all things, then they begin to dodge and switch, and say that God suffers these wicked occurrences according to his permissive will. God never has suffered, allowed or permitted anything that he did not have a predestinated purpose in allowing to occur. Such statements are misleading and deceiving. They have another prefix: "conditional time salvation," which is not taught in the Scriptures. If we save ourselves from this untoward generation, or save ourselves in any sense, it is Christ in us the hope of glory, working in us both the will and the do. If I am a child of grace, which I sometimes feel to hope that I am, it is a free unmerited favor bestowed upon me, an unworthy worm of the earth, and if I ever was obedient in the least thing it was through Christ in me working that obedience. If the conditionalists can obey at option they can surpass Paul, for he said the things that he would he did not, and the things that he would not those he did. I would be more obedient than I am if I could, but there is so much sin in me that when left to myself I go wrong.

Brethren, I did not intend to get into this channel, but I am not my own keeper. I only intended to write a few lines in way of extending my thanks to you for sending me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES another year. It has been a great source of satisfaction and pleasure to me in my lonely and afflicted condition. I underwent an operation for bladder trouble in June. I am able to be up a good part of the time, but am not getting along very well, and may have to undergo another operation, which would be very serious for one of my age. I will be eighty-two years old December 11th, if the Lord sees fit in his mercy to spare me until that time.

This very likely will be my last communication, as I am very shaky, just write a few words and then rest awhile. I will close by asking you to excuse all imperfections and to cast the mantle of charity over this. I ask an interest in the prayers of you all.

J. H. BOZEMAN.

LITTLE ROCK, W. Va., Dec. 8, 1925.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have received the December number, but have not quite read it through because of severe suffering, but oh it has cheered my poor hungry soul, as all the numbers do. I can respond heartily to every word they contain. I am now past my eighty-first year,

and longing and looking for my release from this body of death.

I am sending you a good letter from Elder J. W. McClanahan, which was such a comfort to me I feel that I want the dear aged pilgrims, like myself, to have it to comfort their souls, if you can find a little space in your columns for it. I am sending it without his consent, but know he will not care, as the command is, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people."

I will bid you all farewell until we meet.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

POCA, W. Va., Nov. 8, 1925.

ESTEEMED SISTER:—I shall try to drop you a few lines to-day, the Lord willing. I feel very unworthy to make the attempt, as I feel you to be a precious old sister, indeed a mother in Israel. I have thought from time to time since receiving your good letter that I must answer sister Johnson's letter, but felt to wait a few days for the Minutes to come so I could send you one, but as they have not reached me yet I just feel that procrastination is the thief of time, and I will wait no longer, so please pardon me for delaying so long. I hope this may find you in usual health for your age. We realize as we get older that we suffer with many aches and pains we knew nothing about in our early life. But there is a purpose in our suffering, as we must ripen for the grave as a shock of corn comes in its season. It seems to me the more we suffer the greater we desire to be released from this time state, hoping that when this earthly house of ours be dissolved that we will have an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. There are times when we do feel reconciled to his will, and can say in truth, Thy will be done. Such seasons are far apart with me, but in due time he comes to me in the power of his holy Spirit and revives my drooping soul by reviving my hope and making me feel to press forward toward the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus, ever looking unto him who is the author and finisher of our faith. These seasons are not lasting, but soon pass away, then it is that I am left to grope in darkness, and feel to wonder if I am a poor deluded mortal, have I been deceived, and am I deceiving others? Then from the depth of my poor aching heart a cry is made,

"Return, O holy dove,
Return, sweet messenger of rest,
I hate the sins that make me mourn,
And so disturb my breast."

At best we are but sinners, and if saved it is all of free grace, not merited by creature effort.

When the Minutes come I will write you again and send you one. As it is near mail time I will close for this time, hoping to hear from you soon.

From your old brother in tribulation,
J. W. McCLANAHAN.

INDEPENDENCE, Mo., Sept. 13, 1926.

DEAR KINDRED:—As I have a subscription to send for the SIGNS, I will write you a few lines about the First Kansas Association, held at brother W. I. Zinn's, near Meriden, Kansas, September 11th, 12th and 13th. Elders J. R. Hardy, of Kingman, Kansas, T. E. Attebery, of Kingsville, Mo., W. L. Hall, of Blue Springs, Mo., and L. L. Schenck, who is pastor of the two churches in this Association, which contains twenty-one members, preached with power and demonstration of the Spirit of God in respect to his decrees and purposes respecting all events, without leaving one event out (for fear of making God the author of sin), to the comfort and edification of all

who are established in the truth, and from the expression of the brethren and sisters of these two churches I never met a church so unanimously in accord with the counsel of God. The congregation came hundreds of miles from over Kansas and Missouri, and there was one from Oregon, and they all seemed filled and running over with the glorious truths handed out so bountifully by the undershepherds, and from appearance and expression I think it was a feast for every subject of grace to be remembered as long as reason lasts. I am planning to attend the associations at Broad Creek Church, Sussex Co., Del., and the Salisbury Association, held some time in October, where I hope to meet some, if not all, the editors of the SIGNS, whom I love for the truth they preach.

I am, as ever, yours in an humble hope,
THOMAS W. RECORDS.

MALVERN, Pa., May 5, 1926.

DEAR BRETHERN EDITORS:—Inclosed please find check for two dollars, renewal of my subscription to our dear family visitor, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Again I find myself a delinquent, gone over the time I should have made my remittance, for which I most humbly beg your forgiveness and forbearance. A winter of invalidism has kept me from fulfilling my obligations. Physically, as well as spiritually, I find myself unable to do the things I would. A delinquent in all things, but more especially in the spiritual things am I weak, a poor miserable sinner, not able to perform the things I would, but find evil ever present, a burden pressing me and darkening my pathway much of the time. Not often is it with me the time of the singing of birds, but rather the gloom of the mourning prisoner. Why is this so? I know God's lovingkindness and mercy has been shed around me all my life, yet why can I not continually rejoice as one plucked as a brand fom the burning? Why can I not say with the assurance that I have heard some say, I know I am saved? (Not Old Baptists have I heard say this.) I would not dare say so, for looking at my sinful flesh I see therein no good thing. I am like unto a whited sepulchre, full of dead men's bones, and I only dare say, I hope I am saved, and that little hope is as a straw to a drowning man, a hope of life; not life here, but life eternal. When I look at our blessed Savior I see in him all the beauty of perfect sinlessness, altogether lovely, without spot or blemish, and the magnitude of the gift of eternal life to a creature clothed in all the rags and filth of unrighteousness is past understanding. For this great gift we have nothing in ourselves to offer, nothing in our hands to bring. First, last and always it is a work of God's grace, and not of works, lest any should boast. To the natural mind this is inconceivable, we must work for whatever reward we get, and naturally our pride is gratified, but in the gift of eternal life we stand naked to be clothed upon by the perfect garment of Christ's righteousness, which covers us as a bridal robe, a royal wedding garment. Is it mine? I hope it is so. In August, thirty years ago, I was received and given the hand of fellowship in the church at Hopewell, N. J., and I am still a weary traveler in the wilderness, longing to be delivered from the bondage of sin and death.

I had no thought of writing so much. Thank you for your kind forbearance at all times.

A sister, I hope, in Christ,
JOSEPHINE DRAKE HAVILAND.

OROVILLE, California.

DEAR EDITORS:—I see that it is time for me to renew my subscription, so I am inclosing money for same. I am very poorly, but want to take the dear old paper as long as I can. How dear are the statements made by Elder Lefferts in the May 1st, 1924, number. Surely one so sinful as I would be eternally lost if my salvation depended upon anything I could do. I fear and quake when I consider what an awful vile creature I am, and hope burns very low, and I say, Is it possible that God will save such a worm as I? Then again, I wonder if there is such a thing as a God, and a place for those who are dead. How I would love to hear a real gospel sermon before I am called to leave this old world. It seems strange that I have never been permitted to be among God's children. I think sometimes it is because I am too vile.

Well, I did not intend to write a letter when I sat down. Now may the grace of God be with you and all the true followers of God. Remember me and my child when at the throne of grace.

Your sister in tribulation and in hope of eternal life,

MARION S. BROOKS.

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have read only a few copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES during the last eighteen months, as I did not know how long I would be here, but get lonesome without it, as we have no preaching here. I do not know of any other Primitive Baptists in this State, except my two aunts and myself. Sometimes I think power from on high is given us isolated ones to appreciate more the things we do get, for there certainly is time and cause for us to hunger for truth, but we know even this hunger must be given of the Father, so when grace is given us to say, "Thy will be done," we can rejoice, for we know he knows what we need and doeth all things well.

Your sister in Christ, I hope,

LENA LANGFORD.

SIMPSON, Ill., Aug. 17, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing a letter from a sister, written to the church at Rock Springs, of which she is a member. This letter has been written ever since April 30th, 1926, and I have neglected sending it until now. Sister Parmley has often written the church since old age and poor health have overtaken her, and how enjoyable it is to the church to receive such letters as hers.

Yours truly, N. A. ROGERS.

GOLCONDA, Ill., April 30, 1926.

To the Church at Rock Springs, Johnson County, Illinois.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I would be glad to meet with you all and hear the sweet songs of Zion, and hear the gospel of salvation by grace proclaimed, but my old age and poor health will not permit it. The Lord knows what we need. He is all-wise, and has said he will never forsake his people; he will be with us in all our troubles. In this short life he will not put on us more than we can stand. He suffered on the cross for his people and at his appointed time they will all be gathered in.

Dear Elder Rogers, I will send you a little present, as I feel under obligations to you for past favors. Do with it as you think best. You can have my little church letter published in the SIGNS if you wish.

With love to you and wife, and hoping you can come soon and see us, I am your sister, I hope,

MARY E. PARMLEY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1926.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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ISAIAH XLII. 16.

"AND I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."

The blind is the one to be brought, and the power that brings, and the way and the knowledge that the blind hath, is the matter to be considered. The blind to be brought must be guided, as otherwise he would fall by the way and not reach the goal. The one that is designated by the pronoun "I" is one of power, authority and love. His power cannot be broken or weakened that there could be any failure, but to the fullness of perfection all things will be according to His will. The blind usually have keen perception and the way is observed by close attention, so that they may pass that way again, but the blind have not known this way and they do not know the course of the way. We are not naturally blind, and we that have eyes are the guides to them that are blind; and those who have eyes can only guide with certainty the way they know, so they of themselves are not the way, but only guides in the natural ways of men. The power of Him that is speaking is not a mere guide, but is the way as well as the guide; and he is their strength and they lean upon him. Israel as a people were blind, as pertaining to righteousness, which is by faith, and all the righteousness they knew was the tradition given them through the keeping of the law. The Spirit in the prophet Isaiah, speaking to Israel, was testifying to their blindness, and also of the shortness of their attainments to righteousness. The righteousness of God, that is reveald by faith, is the spirit of the language we have called your attention to, and Israel is just as blind as any Gentile, and knows as little about the righteousness of God as though the law had not been given to Israel. So all that come to Jesus must come by the one and same way. If salvation had come by the law, then the Gentiles would be the only people that Christ suffered for. There is one fold and one shepherd, and they are no more pilgrims and strangers, but fellow-citizens with the saints. After one is made a citizen with the saints he cannot walk and go at his will, for He says, "These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." Having these things manifested to us, how can we stand the trials and fight the good fight of faith? We live by faith, and all we see should be weighed in righteousness. We are continually weighing matters, and we should be very careful that we do not weigh with fleshly scales. When a brother or sister has been overtaken in a fault are we, as the church of God, to weigh them in the fault, or in the manifested repentance and love for the brethren, by which they are constrained to continue to follow the church, and speaking, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge"? All these

words are manifested in the life of the individual. Our hearts go out to them in love and fellowship. The way the Lord has brought those who stumble and are overtaken in a fault is a way of destruction to the flesh, for they can truly say, I abhor myself, and the sins I have committed weigh heavy upon me. O Lord, forgive, is their cry. When this is seen should not the ear of the church be inclined to hear the voice of these little ones and give them the judgment of the righteousness of the tribunal of God? Our heart goes out to those that mourn. We, as brethren, are commanded to forgive and restore when repentance is manifested. For what sins should forgiveness be granted? The words of Jesus should guide us, and he said, "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto them." We fear and tremble often in considering the rights of fellowship to individuals who have been overtaken in a fault, lest we should be guided by a selfish motive and do injury to the house of God. Read the fifth chapter of first Corinthians and the second chapter of second Corinthians and note the advice for dealing with adulterous and fornicating persons, and we are told in the manifested spirit of love to execute righteousness. If we have evidences that the Lord has led them and is with them, we will not call what the Lord hath cleansed common or unclean. We fully believe that the Lord works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure, which embraces the sinner that is brought to repentance, and the church to understand and know of their repentance. This brings to the church of God the manifested power that was given in the spirit by the prophets. These are the paths we have not known, for had we known we would have tried to avoid the rough and stony places, the thorns and the briars that come up in our pathway. When we have passed a part of the way we do not turn back and pass over the same way again, but continue on to the end, and what a sweet time it is to the poor pilgrim to feel His presence with him while passing through life's pilgrimage. Oh, if we cannot see afar off to behold him as our guide, everything is dark and vain, and we exclaim, Can we deem ourself a child? When this darkness is made light we behold him as our all-sufficiency and the light of the way. All obstacles that were encountered while we were walking in the darkness are cleared away and all is peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. As we write for the household of faith, we consider faithfulness to the cause of Christ, and truly hope your hearts have been enlightened with grace and the darkness of nature taken away, by which we can behold the One who hath brought us in the path of righteousness for his name's sake, and are made to exclaim, Surely his goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. This is our hope, that the Lord has brought us in a way we knew not and that the darkness that was before us is light, and we can see his power surrounding and keeping us all the way, by which we can bless his holy name for our salvation for time and eternity. Our own experience shows us that we are continually seeking justification by the law, which neither gives life nor spiritual comfort. So may we be guided by the Spirit, and not by the letter, but rather by the word of God in righteousness consider all these things.

C. W. V.

VERY IMPORTANT NOTICE.

MANY of our subscribers have neglected sending in their subscriptions this year, and now it has reached a point where it is a very serious matter with us. From time to time we have requested those in arrears to do what they could toward sending what they owe us, but as a great many have paid no attention whatever to our requests they have made our task a hard one indeed. Brethren, let us look at this matter in a fair and honest light. Here it is: The publishing of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is at best a "labor of love," and if all our subscribers would keep their subscriptions paid right up to date we would have very little surplus at the end of the year, but when they neglect us as they have during the past year it is a hard task for us to meet our obligations. We have to pay our accounts when due, and we feel our subscribers should see to it that we are not embarrassed through any negligence on their part. We cannot run the publication unless they pay their subscriptions, and if they do not we will have to give up publishing the SIGNS. We very much dislike having to mention this matter so often, but the fault is with the subscribers who do not do their duty and thereby make it necessary for us to keep calling their attention to it. Please examine the date opposite your name on the pink slip on your paper (or on the wrapper in which it comes to you) and if you are in arrears send us the amount due. To each one, individually, it is a small matter, but when the grand total amounts to thousands of dollars, as it does with us, it is a very serious matter. Most publications depend upon advertisements to help sustain them, but with the SIGNS it is different, we depend alone upon our subscriptions, and when these fail to come in as they should there can be but one result. To be frank with you, brethren, if you want the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to continue you will have to pay your subscriptions, but if you do not do you part we shall be compelled to discontinue its publication. It remains with you whether or not the SIGNS is to continue. Some of our subscribers are very particular about keeping their subscriptions paid, and to them we extend our sincere thanks, and we want them to know we appreciate it.

As a majority of our subscribers' time expires with the December number we are inclosing a subscription blank in each copy of this issue as a convenience to them in sending in their remittance for next year, also for those whose subscriptions are past due, and hope all will do what they can toward helping us continue publishing the old family paper that for the past ninety-four years has earnestly contended for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

J. E. B. & Co.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by T. L. Rosberry.)

To the Elders and messengers of the Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, in session with Providence Church, Appanoose County, Iowa, and the churches they represent, and the faithful in Christ Jesus, greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED OF THE LORD:—By the love and mercy of the all-wise God, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift, we are spared to meet in another association, to try and give praise unto our God, who is too good to do wrong and too wise to err.

Very dear brethren and sisters, the Association said at our last annual session, that I should write the Circular Letter

for this year, so I will try and do the best I can, and leave it to the consideration of the brethren. For a starting point I will call your attention to a portion of the tenth chapter of St. Matthew. In the first four verses we learn Christ called his twelve apostles to him and gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness. Then he told them where to go, and where not to go, saying, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, or into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Directing them to his own sheep that were lost, for he said unto them, "Whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence." The Lord spoke through the old prophet Jeremiah, saying, "My people hath been lost sheep; their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting place."

Now, whatsoever town or city ye enter, inquire for them that are worthy, and there abide until ye go thence. The ones who were found worthy for the apostles to mingle with were a part of the lost sheep of the house of Israel. We do not think a man can change his heart. He cannot rise above that which he is, he still remains earth, as "dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Man never put life in his heart, neither can he cause that life to exist one moment longer than appointed of God the Father, but on account of God giving man dominion over the things of this earth he feels able to control his own destiny, the same as he does earthly things about him. Therefore the natural man has never trusted the eternal sovereignty and mighty power of God to bring the blind by a way they knew not and lead them in paths they have not known. The natural man never believed he was blind until his blind eyes were opened. He cannot believe he is blind, and has no capacity to see or believe that God's doctrine drops as the rain and distils as the dew, but the natural man thinks he must work for salvation in the same way as he works for the things of this earth. Man never did labor for the things of this world until he was born into it, neither can he know anything about the Spirit world or kingdom until he is born into it. The only way to enter either is by birth. Jesus said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The first birth is of the earth, and is flesh and blood; the second birth is from above, born of God, his own heir, and joint-heir with Jesus Christ. The natural man hungers and thirsts after natural things, and the spiritual child hungers after righteousness, which is spiritual food unto him, and comes from above. Before the transgression in Eden there was no need of hope, man had all things to be desired, and needful to his natural being, there was no need of increase of the things of the earth to cause him to look forward with hope of better days. The garden was fruitful and pleasant to the eye, and the river eastward in Eden well watered the garden, and furnished plenty of water for man and all created things. Every beast and fowl of the air, and fishes of the sea, were at his command, with nothing lacking, and there was no need of hope. But when man sinned then something was wrong, and at once he began to hope that he might hide his naked condition from the Lord by making an apron of fig leaves, which entirely failed. Thousands are hoping still to hide their

sins from God by their good works, but universally fail. It seems strange when such hope failed in the beginning of the world that intelligent men and women will continue to make fig leaf garments to cover their sins, but the blind cannot see, and the dead in sin cannot hear anything pertaining to God and godliness. Yes, dear brethren and sisters, hope is always in the future, therefore we still look for a heaven wherein dwelleth righteousness, where we shall see him as he is, and be like him, where that one glorious song shall be sung, which none but the redeemed can learn, where the saints shall dwell with Christ their Savior throughout eternity. Amen.

W. T. WALTERS, Mod.
J. M. CATE, Clerk.

(Written by Elder J. R. Dennison.)

The Tygarts Valley River Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists, now in session with the Mt. Olive Church, Barbour County, West Virginia, to the several churches of which she is composed, and to all with whom we correspond, sendeth christian salutation in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN in sweet fellowship of the gospel of the grace of God:—Another year with all the vicissitudes of time has passed and gone since we last met in an associate capacity, and it is alone through the unbounded grace and mercy of the divine supreme Sovereign of the universe that we are again spared and blessed to meet once more, as we hope for the sole purpose of worshiping, praising and glorifying his infinitely holy and adorable name, and for the comfort and edification of his dear children. Dear brethren, as one of old said, it seems to us that this is none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven, and the dear Savior said, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." "In my Father's house [in the church] are many mansions." We understand a mansion to be a dwelling, so the church has many dwellings, and oh if she is only blessed to dwell in sweet fellowship and peace, and to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, instead of warfare, dissensions and divisions, what a blessing it is, for then she dwells in love, in peace, in fellowship, in union, having the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Now the dear Savior says, "I go to prepare a place for you." We understand that his holy presence is the preparation of the place (heaven), for without his holy, peaceful, approving presence heaven would be incomplete. But he says, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." "And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." But he will come again and receive all the redeemed and sanctified unto himself on the sunny side of sweet deliverance in that fair, bright world of glory prepared for the ransomed of the Lord. There we shall bask in the sunlight of God's smile, clothed in white robes, the garments of salvation, with a crown of glory on our heads, palms of victory in our hands and anthems of praise and glad hallelujahs on our tongues. Then, dear brethren, let us with David say, "Praise ye the Lord." "Praise him for his mighty acts;" for having chosen us to salvation from the beginning, for having blessed us

with all spiritual blessings in Christ before the foundation of the world; for having predestinated us unto the adoption of children, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; for having called and justified us, and for the hope that he will glorify us with himself in glory, where there will be no more sorrow, no more suffering, no more sad farewells, no more deaths, but all will be love, peace and joy a whole eternity along.

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen.

J. N. BARTLETT, Mod.

J. R. DENNISON, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon Robert M. Strong was born in the city of New York, January 9th, 1850, and departed this life September 24th, 1926, at his late home, 41 Prospect Street, Middletown, N. Y. He is survived by one brother, two nephews and one niece. He was united in marriage to Hannah M. Hobbs, on June 26th, 1906, who predeceased him ten days less than ten months; her obituary appeared in the June, 1926, issue of the SIGNS, the same having been written by him. They were perfectly devoted to each other, and after she passed away he was very lonely and sad. Like his wife, he was the only one of his immediate family who was affiliated with the Old School Baptist Church. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, in New York city, by Elder William J. Purrington, September 2nd, 1883; chosen Deacon February 1st, 1891, and elected trustee April 27th, 1891, serving as Chairman of the Board of Trustees since June 16th, 1893, or over thirty-three years. Deacon Strong was held in very high esteem because of his knowledge of the truth; he was sound in the faith, having excellent discernment, and was blest with the gift of imparting to others of like precious faith the glorious things of our adorable God. He also felt it was just as important to walk in the order of the house of God as it was to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. His counsel was sought after and he will be greatly missed, not only by the membership of his own church, but by the Middletown & Wallkill Old School Baptist Church, in Middletown, N. Y., and the Warwick Old School Baptist Association, of which he was the Clerk.

The funeral service was well attended, many going up from New York city, with a goodly representation from all of the other churches in the Warwick Association. The writer, his unworthy pastor, was called to officiate, September 27th, 1926. Interment in family plot, Hillside Cemetery, Middletown, N. Y. Our loss is great, but it is his gain, for he has gone to be with Christ, which is far better, and we are left to mourn, but not as those without hope. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away, and he is the refuge of his saints. May he guide and direct us in the way of truth and give us grace to know and do his will.

R. LESTER DODSON.

Mrs. Ellis Thomas Popkins passed away from this earthly life September 2nd, 1926, at the Garfield Hospital, Washington, D. C. She was the wife of Mr. Paul P. Popkins, of Purcellville, Va., and the only child of sister Kate Thomas and of our late brother I. H. Thomas, former Deacon and Clerk of the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun County, Va. She was forty-one years of age. Her illness covered a period of six months, much of which time she was confined to her bed. When her condition showed no improvement she was removed to Washington, where she was given every medical advantage. She is survived by her husband, her mother and two sons, the younger being about six months old. Mrs. Popkins outlived her father, our brother Thomas, exactly fifteen months, he having died June 2nd, 1925. While she had some years ago united with the Missionary Baptists, there was that indefinable mystery about her personality which made me feel she was taught of the Lord. She never threw herself wholeheartedly into the missionary scheme of things, and I am personally satisfied she knew that the way of salvation is not in one's self, but alone through the merit and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. She would never have made an enthusiastic church-worker from the Arminian standpoint, for the reason that her heart was not in it enough for that. I have seen her much affected under the preaching of the gospel, and I am told it was even so with her in the days when she sat under Elder Badger's ministry. There is no doubt but that she had been made to realize the depravity of her own human nature, and that her sole hope of heaven was in the all-embracing sufficiency of her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. She was buried at Ebenezer, the same ground where lies the body of her father. While at first she did not want to die and leave her family, especially her little ones, yet before the end came she was made willing even for that. May the dear Lord comfort all who mourn.

L.

Elder J. W. Bowers was born June 14th, 1849, and died of flu and pneumonia January 26th, 1925, in his home, near Fairfield, Texas. Elder Bowers felt from the beginning of his illness he would not recover, and so told his many friends who came to visit him and minister to his wants, and said he desired to be reconciled to the will of God in death, as he had tried to be in life. No more humble, devoted brother has lived among us than was Elder Bowers. He was honest, truthful, charitable, patient, forbearing, sound in the faith, uncompromising with truth and error. He was a subscriber and reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for fifty years and agreed with the writers perfectly on the doctrine of unconditional election, predestination and salvation by grace. He was married three times, but all three of his companions preceded him to their reward. Elder Bowers joined the Old School Baptists at the age of twenty-four years, much against the will of his first wife, and soon became much troubled about impressions to preach, which he vowed from time to time he would not do, but his chastisement was so great he could not forbear, and while under the chastening rod prayed the Lord to give him wisdom and strength and he would try. Hence began the preaching career of one of the most notable men of our day, who went far and near visiting destitute churches at his own expense, and he was himself always foremost in helping the poor. The sick and afflicted he never turned away, but set an example worthy of imitation by the most devoted christian. He was ordained to the full work of the ministry the second Sunday in August, 1892, and was Moderator of Big Creek Association for twenty-five years. The writer has never known a more lovely, God-fearing man, and while he is gone, yet his life and preaching speaketh. We realize our loss is his eternal gain, that he fought a good fight, kept the faith, finished his course, and now is called to his reward, which is eternal life, to be around God's throne with all his holy angels and sing anthems of praise to his adorable name forever and ever.

Written by request.

W. S. BOURLAND.

James Alexander Phillips was born August 16th, 1866, and departed this life October 3rd, 1926, aged 60 years, 1 month and 17 days. He was married to Tolitha Bowers February 26th, 1891, and to this union were born eight children: Granville, Murray, Archie, Coy, Mary, Jessie, Lorell and Annie V. The Lord took his wife from him March 18th, 1920, thus ending a period of more than twenty-nine years of pleasant life, in which they shared their joys and sorrows together. His son Murray, who had been afflicted for some years, preceded his father in death three months and seven days. Brother Phillips was married the second time to Mrs. Wilmoth Harrison December 18th, 1921, and leaves his sorrowing wife, seven children, two brothers, one sister, three daughters-in-law, two sons-in-law, five grandchildren and many other relatives and friends to mourn their loss, which we feel is but his eternal gain. Brother Phillips was greatly afflicted in his last days and suffered much, yet bore his sufferings with christian forbearance, often calling on the Lord to relieve him. His family, skilled physicians and loyal friends did all that loving and willing hands could do to relieve him, yet the Master's call to come up higher came, and he could but answer. He had been a soldier of the cross for many years, as was evidenced by his meek and humble life of interest in and to the Lord's service, going far and near to mix and mingle with the followers of truth. Though we have much evidence that brother Phillips was a member of the church triumphant for many years, he was not enabled to take up his cross and follow his Lord and Master in baptism until Saturday before the fourth Sunday in July, 1926, when he was received, a very worthy member, into the fellowship of Cane Creek Primitive Baptist Church, of near Martin, Tennessee. The home has lost a safe and pleasant counselor, the church one of her most loyal and worthy members, the community one of her most obliging and helpful neighbors, the State one of her best citizens. The brethren, neighbors, relatives and friends have very much enjoyed the sweet fellowship and hospitality of brother Phillips, and while he will be with us no more in our pleasant assemblies on earth we hope one day to join him and all the blood-bought throng and sing the glory of His grace wherein He has made us accepted in the Beloved. His pastor, Elder T. J. Prince, and the writer tried to speak words of comfort to a large assembly of sorrowing friends at Cane Creek Church, after which kind hands conveyed the mortal remains to the adjoining cemetery to rest from his labors, while his works do follow him. Inasmuch as "we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

ALSO,

The death angel has visited us and taken from our midst our beloved son and brother **James Anthony Shaffer.** He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Shaffer, and was born July 19th, 1897, in Graves County, Kentucky, near Hardmoney. His age was 29 years, 2 months and 2 days. Surviving him are his father, mother, five sisters and three brothers: Mrs. J. L. Glidewell and Mrs. H. W. King, both of Dodge City, Kan., Mrs. W. H. Dunaway and Mrs. J. R. Jones, of near Paducah, Ky., and Mrs. T. S. Mason, of Tunice, Miss., Elder W. J. Shaffer, of near Wingo, Ky., E. E. Shaffer, of near Hardmoney, Ky., and H. H. Shaffer, of Detroit, Mich. Besides these a host of relatives and friends are left to mourn our loss, yet we sorrow not as others who have no hope. James was

much loved by his family and many friends, and was very devoted to his afflicted mother, and had talked freely with her in regard to future life, even of death, saying he was not afraid to die, and at times desired to depart from this life of sin and disappointment. He stood high with the firm in Detroit, Mich., with which he had worked for more than ten years, as was evidenced by his continued rise to leadership, and by the messages of condolence sent to the bereaved family on learning of his sudden death, which occurred while en route home with his brother Herman, by the overturning of his car, in which he sustained injuries from which he died in a few hours, while his brother was slightly injured, thus showing more of the great mystery in the dealings of the sovereign God with his creatures.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved, at Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, in Graves County, Kentucky, after which the mortal remains were laid by kind hands in the adjoining cemetery to await the resurrection of his sleeping dust.

J. C. CHESTER.

Eliza Larue Beebe Clark, the subject of this obituary, was born October 23rd, 1869, at Covington, Georgia, and was the second youngest daughter of the late Elder William L. Beebe. She was baptized in Warwick, New York, in the fellowship of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church by her father, in her eighteenth year. She was married to John W. Clark, of Muirkirk, Ontario, in 1898, where she lived until a few years ago, when she moved to Chatham, Ontario, to be with her daughter. Following a long severe illness of fifteen months duration, she died at Chatham, Ontario, June 6th, 1926. She leaves to mourn their loss one daughter, Kate, and three sisters: Mrs. Samuel Macdonald, Vancouver, B. C., Mrs. James C. Macdonald, Ridgetown, Ont., and Mrs. Samuel Paxson, of Leesburg, Va. Her husband predeceased her about fifteen years ago. Sister Clark, after taking up her abode in Ontario, united with the Covenanted Particular Baptist Church by letter, and remained faithful to the end, always attending the meetings as long as her health would permit. I visited her at her home in Chatham last April, and although she had been confined to her bed for months her mind was active on spiritual things, and she felt that the end was near, and soon she would be with her Savior, and the pain and suffering here would be nothing compared with the glory of meeting the Lord and being like him, and as I bade her goodby she said, Dear brother, the next time you are talking in this house I will not hear you. The words of Paul, "I have fought a good fight" seemed to come to me, from which I tried to speak at the funeral, which was held in Duart meetinghouse, after which the body was laid beside her husband in the cemetery near by. May the blessing of the Lord be with all who mourn, and make us submissive to his will, and enable us to say, Thy will be done.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

Sarah Elizabeth Van Meter Runkle was born in Graven County, Ky., October 25th, 1851. She came to Illinois with her parents and five other children by boat on the Ohio, Wabash, Mississippi and Illinois rivers, landing at Frederick, Ill., in March, 1855. There being no railroads into Macomb they came by wagon and settled on a farm northeast of Macomb, where she grew to womanhood. She was married to Darius Runkle October 25th, 1876. To this union were born four children, three sons and one daughter, namely, Arthur, of Pueblo, Colo.; Walter, at home; Mrs. Grace Garrison and Earl, of Macomb. She professed a hope in Christ in early life and joined the New Hope Primitive Baptist Church the third Sunday in October, 1884, and was baptized by Elder Smith Ketchum. She was a faithful and devoted member until it pleased her dear Savior to call her home from her suffering on earth to where suffering and sorrow are never known. The call came September 13th, 1926, making her stay on earth 74 years, 10 months, and 20 days. She was a loving companion, a true mother, and a very dear friend to all who knew her. To know her was to love her, but not enough to say, for she loved her Savior better than all the earthly ways. Besides her immediate family she leaves a host of other relatives and friends to mourn her departure.

The funeral services were conducted from the home at 918 East Calhoun street by Elder Baxter Hale, of Carlinville, Ill., Wednesday morning at ten o'clock. Interment at Oakwood.

PRAIRIE CITY, Ill., Sept. 30, 1926.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a copy of sister Sarah Runkle's obituary, which I wish printed in the SIGNS. Many of your readers have become acquainted with her through her writings, for she had been a reader and writer of the SIGNS for many years. She also had been a faithful member of our church for over forty years, always writing to us each month when she was not able to meet with us. We sorely miss her, but realize she has lived her appointed time here on earth, therefore we must bow in humble submission to God's will.

We are readers of the SIGNS here in our home, and get much comfort from it each month. Write on, dear writer, for you are comforting many throughout this broad land of ours.

A little one, I hope,

CASSIE BOWEN.

Deacon French W. Gainer, son of Elder George E. and Mary J. Gainer, was born August 10th, 1869, and departed this life August 15th, 1926, making his stay on earth 57 years and 5 days. He was united in marriage to Miss Sallie Hymes November 2nd, 1903, and to that union were born five children, two boys and three girls: Hubert H., G. Gene., Mary S., Martha K. and A. Ruth, all living. He is also survived by his wife, mother, three brothers and four sisters, who mourn his departure. Brother Gainer had been a member of our church for sixteen years, and was deacon for fifteen years. He and sister Gainer were faithful in their duty, and were always looking to the welfare of the church and were faithful in caring for those who came from a distance. When we meet at the church and see his seat vacant we are made to mourn. He was firm in the doctrine and talked it and lived it. A few days before he passed away Elder J. N. Bartlett visited his bedside and he requested brother Bartlett to stay through the night with him, which he did. He loved the brethren and loved to talk with them on the doctrine of predestination. He was ready to speak a word in behalf of the church at any time or place. My wife and I would always stop at brother Gainer's on returning from meeting while they were on the farm, and when he told me they were coming to Belington to live I was built up, and thought how nice it would be to have a family of Old School Baptists in our town; and it was nice. My wife and I were with them very often, and I was present when he passed away. All was done that could be for his relief, but the Lord saw fit to take him from us and we have to be submissive to his will. His body was consigned to the tomb near the old home, at Little Bethel, his home church. The writer tried to speak words of comfort to a large concourse of relatives and friends.

Written by one who esteemed him highly for the truth's sake.

J. J. POLING.

Melissa A. Shearer was born January 11th, 1861, in Franklin County, Illinois, and passed away at Forest Grove, Oregon, August 27th, 1926, aged 65 years, 7 months and 16 days. She crossed the plains with her parents by ox-team in 1864, locating in Mason County, Oregon, where they lived for two years, then came to Washington County, locating near Forest Grove November 2nd, 1876. She was married to Jacob Shearer, and had she lived until November 2nd of this year would have been married fifty years. They located on a farm seven miles northwest of Forest Grove, now known as the Seavey farm, where they lived until 1910, when they moved to Forest Grove, where she had since lived. Three children were born to them: Ottice, Arthur and Carrie. She leaves to mourn, her husband, two sons and five grandchildren: Alice and Sylvia Wood, of Thatcher; Harold, Genevieve and Lois Shearer, of Forest Grove. Her daughter, Mrs. R. L. Wood, passed away a little more than a year ago. She became a member of the Primitve Baptist Church at the age of eighteen years, and continued in that faith until death.

Funeral services were held in the undertaking parlors conducted by the writer, song service by Mr. Isaacs, after which his body was laid to rest in the Forest View Cemetery, there to await the resurrection.

WILLIAM J. REEVES.

MEMORIALS.

(EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY.)

WHEREAS, it has pleased almighty God to remove from our midst by death our beloved brother, Deacon Robert M. Strong, and

Whereas, he was an officer in this church, serving in various capacities for thirty-five years, and

Whereas, we desire to place on record a tribute to his memory, therefore be it

Resolved, that in the separation we have lost a valued member, one firmly established in the doctrine of God our Savior, and was gifted in talking of the things of the kingdom.

Resolved, that we shall greatly miss the faithful service he performed as deacon, ever having the welfare of the church at heart, desiring order in the house and ever watchful to preserve it.

Resolved, that as president of our Board of Trustees for thirty-five years we shall miss his counsel and good judgment in matters of business.

Resolved, that these resolutions be spread upon our Minutes, and a copy published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Approved and adopted at our regular monthly church meeting October 3rd, 1926.

R. LESTER DODSON, Moderator.

CYRUS RISLER, Church Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

D. L. Blackwell, N. J., $2; Elder J. H. Hammons, Cal., $1; Mrs. E. J. Bolton, Mo., $2; Mrs. Clara A. Parker, Ore., $2; J. N. Hill, Ill., $1; L. D. Rose, Texas, $1.

A LETTER.

The Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church, of Snow Hill, Md., to the churches composing the following associations and meetings: the Salisbury, Baltimore, Delaware, Delaware River, Warwick, Lexington-Roxbury, and Virginia Corresponding Meeting, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We earnestly desire that you send Elders and Deacons to sit with us in council, the fourth Sunday in November (28th), to consider the advisability of setting brother G. E. Coulbourne apart to the full work of the gospel ministry by ordination.

Done by order of the church at our regular church meeting, held Saturday before the fourth Sunday in June, 1926.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

M. A. HALLOWAY, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

The Second Roxbury Old School Baptist Church will hold, the Lord willing, a two days' meeting at Halcottville, New York, the second Sunday and Saturday before in November (13th and 14th). Trains will be met Friday evening and Saturday morning.

ESTHER RUSTON, Church Clerk.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday of each month at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 459 E. 5th St., Riverside, Calif., and at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. 11th St., Claremont, Calif., on the first Sunday of each alternate month, beginning with January, and on every alternate month with brother Joseph Huffman, 128 Van Buren St., Arlington, Calif. Singing at 10:30 a. m. Preaching at 11 a. m. Lunch at the place of meeting, and continued services in the afternoon.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.

O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER

OLD SCHOOL

BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City), Oregon every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Those coming by Railroad over the S. P. get off at Oregon City, take the elevator to the top of the hill, turn to your left, go one block east. Not later than 9:30 a. m. Private conveyance. Those coming on Oregon City Electric get off at 7th Street, take elevator near S. P. depot to top of the hill, turn to your left, go one block east to 7th St., as above stated.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

A great many old Baptists throughout the country are deeply exercised over the subject of PREDESTINATION. In the hope of supplying food for thought to the earnest seeker after truth, I propose to collect and publish in pamphlet form perhaps a dozen of the ablest articles obtainable written by men recognized to have been greatly gifted of the Lord. These writings will probably cover a period of at least the last five hundred years. The pamphlet will doubtless consist of 100 pages, or more, the price not to exceed $1.00 per copy, or less, depending somewhat upon the number to be printed.

Will all who are interested in obtaining information on this subject kindly inform me the number of copies they desire for themselves and friends, addressing R. LESTER DODSON, 12 Addison Ave., Rutherford, N. J. It may be several months before the pamphlet is ready, as I intend to make it well worth the price to be paid.

R. LESTER DODSON.

SUPPLY EXHAUSTED.

OUR supply of the book entitled "A Sketch of the Life of Joshua S. Corder" is exhausted, and we are unable to fill any more orders for said book. This work was not electrotyped, so we do not expect to have any more on sale at any time in the future.

HYMN BOOKS.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 94. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1926. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NEWARK, Delaware, July 28, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing another one of our late dear brother McConnell's letters, which I have been holding for some time. One day before leaving Newark for the Salisbury Association in October, 1920, brother Eubanks was stricken with paralysis, and it appeared his time on earth was of short duration. The brethren were much disturbed, thinking his time with us had come, and among the correspondence I received was the inclosed letter from brother McConnell, late of the New York Church. His writings and preaching were precious to many, and this eulogy of brother Eubanks should be presented to the brethren living. Truly a great gift in the church has fallen among us, but our loss is his eternal gain. The same can be said of our late brother John McConnell.

I am also inclosing a good letter from Elder J. W. McClanahan.

J. B. MILLER.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Nov. 13, 1920.

DEAR BROTHER MILLER:—I was glad to receive your letter, but very sorry to hear of Elder Eubanks' affliction. We had heard he was ailing some, but did not know how seriously he was affected. I can understand how distressed and sorrowful you all are, and how your sympathies go out to him in his sufferings. No doubt this interference with his labor among you will be viewed by many as a calamity, for "the harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few." He has been a faithful servant and made full proof of his ministry, holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, and studying to shew himself approved unto God, a workman that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. This cannot be said of all ministers, for some have gone out of the way in teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, and the churches have suffered through their unfaithfulness. Sometimes I fear that many of us are running after the imaginations of our own heart, instead of in the fear of the Lord; walking in our own judgment of what the Lord would have us to do, rather than following after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. Elder Eubanks' life has been singularly free from reproach. He will not be remem-

bered as ever having set brother against brother; of hurting the oil and the wine; of being an occasion of stumbling to any, and the memory of such a man is blessed. Remember me to him in love and sympathy.

There are many things in the world, and in my life, that do not suit me. Perhaps if I could control them there would "no wave of trouble roll, across my peaceful breast." But I have not the gift of some to regulate the order of churches, deportment of ministers, and determine the conduct of other men's matters, but I am a huge success in failing to take heed unto myself and do the things I ought to do. What you have to say of your unhappy frame of mind in the consciousness that in your flesh dwells no good thing, does not impress me as being an evidence of a walk unbecoming the gospel. When a man is conscious of being led by a right spirit, and in all things shewing himself a pattern of good works, he will not be trying the spirits whether they be of God, there will be no needs-be for such exercise. Security and ease are not companions with tribulation. But seeking to know the truth, to know the right way and what manner of spirit he is of, becomes sound doctrine. It seems to be the doctrine of the apostles. I am glad you are troubled in the consciousness of a rebellious spirit dwelling in your flesh. It is good for a man to know the enemies of his own household. He knows then who is responsible for his trouble and sorrow, and it makes him careful to resist the influences of that evil spirit, and to maintain good works. The spirit that causes him to consider his way and ponder his path must be a right spirit, for it loves righteousness and hates every false way. The gifts which Christ received for me; "yea, for the rebellious also," he gave them in their time of need. (Psalms lxviii. 18; Eph. iv. 8.) A repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of, is given unto them who sorrow after a godly sort; and that gift is inseparably associated with the exaltation of Jesus. (2 Cor. vii. 10; Acts v. 31.)

Remember me in love to all inquiring brethren and friends, and continue me in your fellowship of hope of life in Jesus.

Your brother,

JOHN McCONNELL.

POCA, W. Va., July 7, 1926.

DEAR BROTHER MILLER:—I have thought of you and your lovely family many times since I was there, the brotherly kindness you have shown to me, a poor old illiterate sinner, whose hope of heaven and immortal felicity beyond this mortal life is the atoning blood of the Lord Jesus. We hear the Spirit of the Lord speaking by the mouth of Isaiah, saying, And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. My dear brother, I often fear and tremble, thinking that I may be an intruder upon the rights belonging to the redeemed of the Lord, for their inheritance which is theirs, they being heirs of God and joint-heirs with his Son Jesus, their Elder Brother. This question is often in my troubled mind, Have I any right or evidence that I should call these dear Old School Baptists my brethren and sisters in the Lord? If not deceived, forty-five years ago this spring I was made to love them and desire to be in their company above all others. I had before this date been a despiser of the doctrine they believed and preached. Oh what a sudden change had taken place in me; the things I once

hated I now loved, and *vice versa.* Oh how anxious I was to hear them preach and talk of the wonderful works of God in the salvation of poor hell-deserving sinners, as I felt myself to be. I felt it was pure presumption in me to try to get into their company, to listen to those dear old soldiers of the cross give a reason of their hope in Christ. How anxious I felt for the evidence of eternal life in me that I realized I could see in them: mercy had been extended to them, their sins had been blotted out to be remembered against them no more, and that forever. Every pulsation of my troubled heart was for mercy. The fire of God's everlasting love once kindled in the bosom of those for whom Jesus laid down his life, whose fan is in his hand (power) and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat (the elect) into his garner (church triumphant), but the chaff (every taint of conditionalism) he will burn with fire unquenchable. But who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire and like fuller's sope.

Brother Miller, I am suffering so much I will have to close for this time. A growth of some kind has filled my right side full, and is causing me much misery. I feel to be in my last row, and when I get to the end I hope God will give me faith, revive my hope that I may be able to say that grace has brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.

July 8th.—After resting awhile I feel an impression to continue with some thoughts I have on my mind of the spiritual application of this Scripture: "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith. A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife."—Prov. xv. 17, 18. It appears to me there is much comfort for God's little ones to be found in the Old Testament Scriptures. While gleaning in the field belonging to Boaz, who is a beautiful type of Jesus, our spiritual Boaz, we notice on the side of nature, after a cold chilly winter has passed away and vegetation begins to come forth, how anxious we are for a dinner of herbs. Now from a spiritual view of this text I understand it to be applied to the spiritually taught children of God who are hungering after words of comfort, and under the appellation of sheep and lambs are to be fed by the called and qualified servants of the most high and holy One who inhabits eternity. So it is said by Solomon, "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is." This question was put to Peter by our Lord three times: Peter, lovest thou me more than these? I suppose the great quantity of fish that had been caught by the letting down of the net, as Jesus commanded his disciples to do, were those Jesus was alluding to: "Lovest thou me more than these?" Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. Then feed my sheep, feed my lambs. These herbs are not gathered out of nature's garden, but are gathered out of the spiritual garden, the grace covenant. "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." So when one bolts from the grace covenant, or garden, to gather herbs he is sure to come with a lap full of wild gourds and shreds them into the great pot. The children will then cry, O thou man of God, there is death in the pot. One that is skilled in gathering herbs for dinner (a spiritual

feast) has the cause at heart, which is love, for it was love that spread the gracious feast, it was love that made my soul a guest, it was love that brought him (Jesus) from above, it was boundless, matchless love. When the humble minister of God is called to feed the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made him overseer, he is determined to know nothing among them but Jesus Christ and him crucified, the only Savior of lost sinners; no dead flies are to be found in the ointment of the apothecary, no poisonous herbs such as conditionalism, time salvation, no hellism, no nonresurrection, for such are found only in nature's garden, and such is food for the carnal mind, the natural man. It seems to me that we of the primitive faith should esteem this heaven-bought privilege more highly than some of us do. We should let no frivolous thing of this time world hinder us from our monthly meetings, members of the church especially, for there our kindred and best friends dwell. It is the highest privilege we have on earth to meet and exchange with each other, giving a reason of our hope in Christ. "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give unto your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again." A real feast of love made manifest by our presence, presenting our body a living sacrifice, which is our reasonable service. So it is said, "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith." May we watch and pray for Zion, her peace, and the fellowship of the faithful in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Yours in full fellowship,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

PLEASANT HILL, Missouri.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing a recent letter I had from dear sister McKinney, which I feel the household of faith would enjoy as I hope I have. Use your pleasure with it. I have her consent to send it.

In a humble hope,

MARGARET S. TAYLOR.

OTTAWA, Kansas, Sept. 13, 1926.

MY DEAR SISTER:—It has been a long time to me since I have had one of your dear letters. Many times I have thought of and wanted to write you, but would immediately be overcome with such a feeling of weakness that I felt incapable of addressing even a few lines to any of the dear children of God. I just returned from attending the association near Topeka. We had some wonderful preaching. All the ministers seemed especially blest to shun not to declare the whole counsel of God. Much of it, I hope, the dear Lord had been pleased to reveal to me in the silent hours of the night, and indeed all he has taught me has come when alone with him. Dear sister, what seems so distressing in my case, and my tears almost blind me as I try to tell you, I am as one standing outside the King's palace, being permitted to look in and behold the beauties of his kingdom, but not daring to take these holy things and apply them to myself as mine. Why it seems it would be as presumptuous as the one who went to the wedding without the wedding garment on, and I would expect and deserve the same fate: bound hand and foot and cast into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. I fear to rush into the presence of the King of righteousness in my nakedness, or clothed in filthy rags; I must wait until he bids

me, or forever stay away. I am very thankful to even have had a glimpse of the beauty of the Lord, but this makes me so fearful I am one of the number who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the glory of his presence.

I was glad to meet with dear brother Taylor again. He is certainly one of the lovely children of God, so tender-hearted, you just could not help loving him. Elders Hardy, Hall, Atteberry and Schenck preached the same truth, the scarlet line ran all through, so far as I could see. A dear little one came at the close of the meeting asking a home with the church. After telling a sweet experience she was gladly received. I have no doubt in my mind that she is one of the precious jewels in his kingdom. It was certainly written in her face.

I am glad your little girl is so well and able to go to school. Dear sister, my heart has been touched with your sorrows since I have known you. We are not promised much else in this world: "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." If indeed I do know the Lord this is the way I have been brought to trust in him, by being shown that in God only is salvation. O, dear Margaret, how could I endure if I did not have the dear Lord and Savior to go to? who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and we hid, as it were, our faces from him. How often do we find ourselves doing this, turning away from him to the weak and beggarly elements of the world for help and pleasure. The voice that crieth in the wilderness was told to cry, "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever." "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Job says, "He is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him. Therefore am I troubled at his presence: when I consider, I am afraid of him. For God maketh my heart soft, and the Almighty troubleth me." I can witness with old Jeremiah: "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know, therefore, and see, that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of hosts." "Though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much sope, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God." "Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way? thou also shalt be ashamed of Egypt, as thou wast ashamed of Assyria." What is the matter with the old soldiers of the cross that they are denying the good old way they long declared the Lord had led them when they were sure there was no strange god with them? "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world," says the apostle, "through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning." Paul says, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)." Under the new covenant He

puts his laws in their hearts and in their minds; he writes them in their hearts, and their sins and iniquities he remembers no more. We cannot change God's precious truth. It is we that change, unless kept by the power of God we will be sure to deny him and bring upon ourselves swift destruction. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. We must keep in the old paths, we cannot bring in any new thing that will be acceptable with God. Peter once said to the Savior, Though all men deny thee, yet will not I. Are we stronger than Peter? Oh no. Paul says, The just shall live by faith, but if any man draw back my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them that draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Pray for me that I may not deny him who is my life, and that I may some day see him as he is, then will I be satisfied. One thing he has told me in his word I have ever found true, and have as yet found no way to escape: In this world ye shall have tribulation, but in me peace. If I ever know any peace it is in him alone, our dear Elder Brother.

Dear sister, I am never well, and often feel it is not long until I shall be called to try the realities of eternity. I may deceive my brethren, sisters and friends here, but cannot deceive the Lord. May the God of all grace be my stay and prop as I cross the dark river to come no more back forever. I hope you will write to me before so long, I have missed your letters very much.

With much love to you all, and very best wishes,

ANNA McKINNEY.

FORSYTH, Ga., Nov. 4, 1926.

DEAR EDITORS:—I inclose my remittance to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Seeing that so many of your subscribers are in arrears with their remittance, and that you are threatened with lack of ability to be able to continue the good work of publication, it concerns me very much. I regard the SIGNS as being the most needed periodical of any paper we have. It being the oldest and the soundest we have it would be a great loss to the cause, as I see and feel it, to have it discontinued. It has been opposed to accepting advertising matter, but would it not be better to do that than to discontinue? You cannot force payment without damage to the cause, and why any claiming to love the doctrine fail to pay their subscription (who are able) I do not understand. There may be none of this class. I know you have many who are not able, and if this includes all of your delinquents I suggest that you either solicit advertisements to enable you to continue rather than suspend, or if you have enough subscribers who are able and willing to contribute to a fund that will relieve you, I am willing to subscribe fifty dollars to it. I would want those who are able to, to match my subscription. When this is done inform me and I will respond. Now if you or any have a better plan I will be glad to hear it. I submit this in the best motive I know.

Man was made upright, but he has sought out many inventions. Who can enumerate the many inventions man has made? Look at the numerous plans he has made in the name of benevolence to help the needy, the many oath-bound societies that have been formed, all to benefit their membership. One who is maimed or defective in any way is not eligible to membership in some of their

orders. Most of these orders are religious: they open and close their meetings with prayer, to show they are religious, and claim to be a help to the church that Christ set up, and yet do not reverence him as their Savior, do not recognize him as the Son with the Father. Are they yoked with unbelievers? It is impossible to see how any can affiliate with such orders. Now let us see if the church which Christ set up is not better than any order, secret or otherwise. He said he had said nothing in secret, that he taught openly in their synagogues, that he loved his enemies and ministered to them. This no benevolent order does, yet they claim to be his followers. No one is required to be secret in doing good except in almsgiving, but one having an evil motive wants to be secret in it. If we will obey the ten commandments and the order of the church that Christ set up we will need no benevolent order. Then let us study the teaching Christ taught his disciples, it will be sufficient.

Wishing you success in some plan, I am yours to serve in love and fellowship,

J. W. NEWTON.

PHILIPPI, West Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find a letter from Elder J. R. Dennison, which if it meets with your approbation please publish in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Respectfully submitted.

J. N. BARTLETT.

CANFIELD, West Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER BARTLETT:—I have thought a great deal upon the subject we were talking on at brother Ferguson's and I feel I would like to write and extend the subject a little further, hoping that you may feel to write on the same subject. The apostle says, By grace ye are saved. So I understand that we are saved entirely by grace; if not, it must be by merit. It was grace that gave us to the Lamb, and grace hath made us recipients of the atoning blood of the dear Redeemer, and of the quickening power of the Holy Ghost. The poet says,

> "Hail sovereign grace, that first began
> The scheme to rescue fallen man;
> Hail matchless, free, eternal grace,
> That gave my soul a hiding place."

The apostle says that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. It was of grace that we were chosen in Christ and blessed with all spiritual blessings in him before the world was. It was of grace that we were foreknown, and predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ, to be called, to be justified and to be glorified. It was said of Apollos that when he went into Achaia he helped them much which had believed through grace. So it was grace that gave them faith, or they could not have believed. If we had not grace given us in Christ we would not be saved by Christ. It was all of grace, mercy and love that Christ came and suffered and died to redeem his church, his bride, that through grace had been chosen in and given to him before the foundation of the world. In him we have redemption and forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. The apostle hinges it all upon grace through Christ. Grace was the moving cause of Christ leaving the shining courts of heaven and offering himself a sacrifice for the sins of his people, by which offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, those who through grace were set apart to be the happy recipients of his redeeming grace, of his justifying and sanctifying grace. So it is all of grace through Christ that we are saved

temporally, spiritually and eternally. That is all my hope. I feel it was grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved. The poet says,

"Grace first ordained the way
To save rebellious man,
And all the steps that grace display,
Which drew the wondrous plan.

Grace first inscribed my name
In God's eternal book;
'Twas grace that gave me to the Lamb,
Who all my sorrows took."

"Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

So, then, as one has said,

"If I must sing, I'll sing of grace,
Which raised me from the fall,
And led me to a hiding place,
Jesus, my Lord, my all."

Submitted in love. Write soon.

J. R. DENNISON.

MERRYVILLE, La., Aug. 31, 1925.

DEAR BROTHER R. A. HAWTHORNE:—Of course you will be surprised to get a letter from me. I saw your name in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and also learned of your sad bereavement through the same. Dear brother, it is grievous to have to part from loved ones, but we are told that "A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth."—Eccl. vii. 1. You and the dear sister who has conquered the last enemy (death) were both strangers to me in the flesh, but if I can claim God as my Father, and Jerusalem, which is above, as my mother, I feel that we are of the same family. From the testimony I have before me, written by dear Elder J. J. White, I have no doubt of your heirship to that kingdom; but as for myself, I am made to doubt, but hope I have a sweet hope that I would not exchange for ten thousand worlds like this. I hope I am one of those peculiar beings who trust in a God that is supreme, who rules all things after the counsel of his own will, who stretches forth his hand and none can turn it back, who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast, one who declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. There are a scattered few in this country who believe as I hope I do, and there are many who do not. That is a consolation, too, for they have always been few in number.

I will try to identify myself. I am a son of William McMillian, of St. Landry Parish. Father used to visit the Louisiana Association nearly every fall, away back thirty or thirty-five years ago. I have often heard him speak of you and brother White, and many others in the bounds of your Association. I have never met brother White, but have tried to get in correspondence with him. I do not know his address, and suppose my letters went astray. There have many storm clouds arisen since those days, but the old ship of Zion is safely gliding down the stream of time unmolested, and will land in yonder port safe and sound. He has said in his blessed word, "Thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." It is the prayer of this worm of the dust that when the old ship lands my name may be found in the old log book which was prepared before the foundation of the world. There is one thing that I do know, it is this: That not one of those whose names are written there will be lost. The blessed Savior has said, All that the Father has given me shall come unto me, and I will raise them up at the last day. I am one

who believes the "wills" and "shalls" of Jehovah are just as sure as that there is a God on the throne.

I had no thought of writing but a few words when I commenced, and hope what I have written will not weary your patience. If you have a mind to do so please write to me, for I am always glad to communicate with God's humble poor. Please give me brother White's address. Pray for a poor unworthy sinner.

J. P. McMILLIAN.

COVINGTON, Georgia, Aug. 19, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I wish to express through the SIGNS, the paper I esteem above all others, my heartfelt appreciation of the kindness and pleasant time I had at your association. While visiting my son, A. D. Adams, in Washington, D. C., I attended the Baltimore Association at Black Rock, and enjoyed it very much, and receiving there such a cordial welcome among so many good friends I decided to remain with Mr. John E. Ensor for the all-day Sunday meeting, at which time Mrs. Pratt united with the church by experience. From there I visited with brother John B. Miller, at Newark, Del., where I had a good home. Brother P. M. Sherwood carried me in his car to the Delaware Association held with the Rock Springs Church, where I met Elder J. G. Eubanks, who has since passed away from earth. It was my privilege to visit Elder Eubanks and his good and devoted daughter, Miss Eugenia, and to talk over the many pleasant things of the past with them. The fifth Sunday in May was spent in the company of the Welsh Tract brethren and friends, along with Elders Eubanks and J. W. Wyatt, and brother M. Westbrook. Accompanied Elder Vaughn to his most hospitable home, at Hopewell, N. J., and in his company and with his wife and father I attended the Delaware River Association, held with the Kingwood Church, and had a most excellent time. From here Elder Dodson conveyed me to Nutley, N. J., where I visited with brother H. T. Lefferts and family, with them attending meeting at the Ebenezer Church in New York City, on Sunday, June 6th, then went with Elder Dodson to his home, where I had a pleasant visit with him and his family, going from there to the Warwick Association, stopping on my way to visit the SIGNS office and to dine with Mr. Gilbert Beebe and wife. At the "Old Homestead," near the New Vernon meetinghouse, together with all other guests at the Warwick Association, I was royally entertained. The preaching was highly edifying, the doctrine set forth being the same as that preached by the apostles, if I am any judge. It was the doctrine of Christ, the doctrine that builds us up. Some of our brethren falsely call it "Beebe" doctrine. They might just as well call it "Adams" doctrine, inasmuch as my father preached it and my brother, Elder J. M. Adams, preaches it now; or "Ker" doctrine, because Elder H. C. Ker preaches it. I am truly glad that God gave us the Beebes, father and son, as well as so many other ministers called of God to preach the word as taught by Christ and his apostles. This is "the doctrine." There are many doctrines, so-called, but only one true doctrine. Following these associations, I spent some time visiting my brother-in-law, Elder H. H. Lefferts, and his family, together with my many Leesburg friends, and with the good brethren and sisters of the New Valley, Mt. Zion and Frying Pan churches, witnessing the very impressive baptism of sister Cole at Mt. Zion, in July. After finishing my visit

with my son and his family, near Washington, D. C., and while on my way home, I stopped off to attend the Staunton River Association, in Virginia, where I had the pleasure of meeting many brethren, sisters and friends, including many preachers. I must not fail to mention the kindness shown me by brother D. M. Worley, of Hurt, Va., whom I met through the courtesy of his daughter, Mrs. Short, of Nutley, N. J., and who treated me so cordially. I take this means of expressing to all whom I met on my trip, my sincere thanks and appreciation for the many kindnesses shown me by them all. I feel that I have been spared from the grave to enjoy this trip more than any other trip of my life, as I had been given up to die not long ago.

Your unworthy brother,

W. A. ADAMS.

MERIDEN, Kan., Nov. 10, 1926.

DEAR KINDRED:—I have received an extra number of the SIGNS, and am sending it where I hope it will be appreciated, and the subscription blank with it. I am sending you some names which you will please put on your subscription list, though sorrowfully I scan the "Very Important Notice" you are at last compelled to insert in its columns. Not only the grief its suspension would bring to the deserving poor of the flock and to those who love and appreciate it enough to pay for it, but the sadness of knowing that "among my people" are those who heed not the words contained in our "instruction in righteousness," to "owe no man anything." If one of my brothers should refuse to pay an honest debt, or, after repeated entreaty, neglect to take any tangible notice of it, I would feel it was a disgrace to the family. But pride must be brought low. I remember when I felt a kind of pride in hearing that Old Baptists could always be depended upon to pay their debts, and I am loth to believe yet but that in ordinary affairs if unable to meet an obligation as it falls due, they would borrow again, or at least go to a creditor and make some satisfactory arrangement about it. Why, then, will they be so negligent in that which to each individual is such a small matter, but which so vitally concerns the whole family of scattered sheep, many of whom have no other way of hearing from those "of like precious faith," no other way of "speaking often one to another," though the speaking may be only as "heart answers to heart?" Surely it is a forgetting of at least one of the "benefits" which the Lord has graciously provided for his people for nearly one hundred years. Oh may it be his will to "stir up the pure mind" (of which all his people who have the mind of Christ are possessed) "by way of remembrance" of the very ordinary duty of paying all debts, and in this case to avoid depriving all of the benefit of the comfort and instruction derived from the pages of the SIGNS, to say nothing of lightening your heart and relieving the burden which is now threatening to sink you, our generous forbearing, longsuffering creditor. May the Lord grant patient endurance to the end, and may he be with you to own and to bless you in your labor of love, to comfort and sustain you until the weary warfare is over, and give you then to hear the welcome plaudit, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord, where we shall see and hear and know all we have desired and wished below, and every power find sweet employ in that eternal world of joy.

With love,

MARY ELLISON.

FORDYCE, Ark., Nov. 12, 1926.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I have just received and read the November issue of the SIGNS, and note with much regret another appeal to delinquents, and the warning that unless those who are in arrears pay up the amounts due for the paper that suspension of the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES must follow as the result. I have tried to consider this condition and weigh it thoroughly, but hardly feel adequate to the occasion as to how to advise. It has been my chief desire ever since I commenced to take the SIGNS to do what I could for its support, and even its advancement, and did so by paying my subscription strictly in advance and getting all the new subscribers possible. I, however, have come to this conclusion, and that is: Those who love the doctrine as published in the SIGNS will pay for their paper or else make arrangements for the delinquency for a limited time at least. Those who do not do that surely have not the love of the doctrine in their hearts, only reading the paper for speculative purposes. I have ever held, and yet hold, that Old Baptists (they who love and fear God) are honest and will do right; they are people who have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, and will not heap burdens upon their brethren and sisters to the extent of forcing them to bankruptcy.

Now, the thing to do, as I see it: Chop off the dead limbs. Jesus when here said, Every branch that bringeth forth not fruit is taken away. Also, The axe is laid at the root of the trees: every tree, therefore, that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Those who are not willing to pay for the SIGNS are surely branches that are not fruitful, and to try to carry such is a burden greater than I think you will ever be able to bear. I say this: If you will lighten your burden by dropping those who pay not and send your paper to those who do pay, and with the extra contributions for "the poor of the flock," I believe you can continue the SIGNS. The genuine Old Baptists are willing to pay their subscriptions, and pay some extra for "the poor of the flock," but we cannot support it and you send it to those who do not care for it. We love to support the paper, and also to help send it to those who love it but cannot pay for it, but we do not feel that we, or you either, should strain ourselves and sacrifice to send it to those who do not care for it. You may think me too severe, but this is my feeling, and the only relief I see available, or it is death to the paper sure. With the great expense of printing and the high price of material that goes into publishing the SIGNS it takes a lot of money, and when you have a paper like the SIGNS, which looks alone to its subscribers for support, it can send the paper only to those who are willing to pay for it. In the first place, those who read papers are supposed to pay in advance, and in reality it is the only system by which a paper can really exist, as all material and labor have to be paid for when received or done. Organized labor is such that it has to be paid (and it is right that it should be), and when payday comes if you have not the ready cash you have no helpers, and then where are you going to get your paper published? I hope those who love and feel they are not willing for the SIGNS to cease will send in what they owe, and if they do not I hope you will just drop them from your list in order to save the life of the paper for those who love it.

We will send you some money in a few days, the Lord willing.

In bonds of fellowship to the SIGNS, and those who love it, I am yours in hope, V. R. HARRIS.

PHILLIPSBURG, Mo., Nov. 10, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am ashamed of myself for being so neglectful in not paying my subscription in advance, much less letting it run past due and you having to remind us about our carelessness, and especially in such a gentle, brotherly, loving way, which we do not deserve when it is nothing more than neglect on our part. We all say we love the paper and cannot do without it, and it is all the preaching we get, &c., and it is all true of every individual, and yet we are so careless as to neglect our duty in your behalf, and you are so patient, loving and forgiving to us, just like Jesus was to his people; he bore their sins and took their burdens upon himself, and you are also bearing a heavy burden for those who do not keep their subscriptions paid up (God's people they are, we do believe, or they would not love this God-honoring doctrine the SIGNS advocates), so let all pay and strive to keep our dues or subscription paid in advance when possible, so that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will not have to be discontinued. O brethren and friends, it seems a disgrace would be the result should this dear paper go down. If I know my heart's desire, it is to praise, honor and adore Him who rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and I know no better way to do this than to devote my life to my brethren, for he has said, As much as you did it unto the least of these my brethren, you did it unto me. This surely applies to the publishers of the SIGNS, so let us one and all do our duty toward them and find rest, sweet rest, to our souls, and the approving smiles of our blessed Redeemer are sure to follow every righteous act.

I will conclude by saying that my heart's desire and prayer to God is to stir up the pure minds of spiritual Israel, that they may worship him in spirit and in truth, for he seeketh such to worship him.

Your sister, I hope,

(MRS.) GEO. W. TURNER.

ATHENS, Okla., Nov. 9, 1926.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am glad you put the "Important Notice" in the SIGNS. It startles me to even think of letting the paper go down. It just seems like the most despairing, desolate thing that could happen, for how could we do without food or raiment? I hope the readers of the SIGNS will have a divine shock to wake them up to a sense of their duty and interest. J. J. KIRBY.

WHITESBORO, Texas, Nov. 9, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I see in this number of the SIGNS that the publishers are in distress because the subscribers do not pay up their subscriptions. Dear brethren, this ought not to be so. It is painful for them to be forced to have to stir us up about not paying our subscriptions. Now think of it. How can you expect them to publish a good paper and not receive the money to pay their expenses? As they say, they will have to discontinue the paper if we do not pay up. Now, brethren, let me stir up your pure minds. I know you do not intend to serve them in this way. You may think that your little mite amounts to but little, but to them it amounts to thousands of dollars, which is enough to disable them so that they will be forced to cease publishing our paper. Brethren, we all know these facts, so let us do all we can to hold up the good old paper that has (and is) earnestly contended for the truth for ninety-four years. I am situated a

distance from any church of the absolute faith and order. There are a great many here who claim the name of Primitive Baptists, but they believe in two salvations, when there is but one.

But I did not intend to write of anything but to send in my subscription for 1927, and to try and stir up the pure minds of the brethren to pay up their dues and not let the paper go down. Brethren, wake up. Know ye not that you are muzzling the ox that treadeth out the corn? How can they do us service if we do not hold them up?

In love, C. C. TYLER.

CLARKSBURG, W. Va., Jan. 27, 1926.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will write you a few lines to let you know I am still among the living, and to thank you for continuing sending me the dear old SIGNS, also to tell you my address is changed, as you will see. I am a stranger in a strange land and feel very sad and lonely. My only hope is in the Lord. I feel to be the least of his, if one at all, and if saved it will be by grace and grace alone. May God be with you all.

ELIZABETH PHILLIPS.

CHICAGO, Ill., Nov. 1, 1926.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—We have no church here yet, but have meetings as often as we can get a preacher. Elder Baxter Hale, of Carlinville, Ill., will, God willing, preach for us this coming Sunday. We want to hear from every Old School Baptist here in Chicago, so we can tell them where the meetings will be held.

With much brotherly love for all the dear household of faith, I am, I hope, your brother in a glorious hope,

A. P. SHELBURNE.

6346 Parnell Ave. Phone Wentworth 2860.

1929 Lorraine Place, ANN ARBOR, Michigan.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If any one has a copy of "Songs in the Night," published by Elder Silas Durand, which they would be willing to part with, kindly let me know. I will gladly pay for it.

MILDRED DURAND GORDY.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Tygarts Valley River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Mount Olive Church, Barbour County, W. Va., to the sister associations with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Your messengers were gladly received, and we feel to hope and believe they were sent of the Lord with messages of peace and love unto us in their preaching of the glorious gospel of the Son of God, which was unto us glad tidings of good news. The preaching was in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, giving God all the glory. We want to say also that Elder Isaac Greathouse was also received by us as a visiting minister from the Miami Association, of Ohio, whom we feel to be a wonderfully gifted brother in the ministry of the word of our God, which was to us, we felt, God-sent, which made our hearts warm to him with christian love and fellowship. Our correspondence with you, dear brethren, has been very pleasant and we hope it may continue.

Our next Association is appointed to be held with the Valley Church, Randolph County, West Virginia, to commence on Saturday before the last Sunday in August, 1927, and to continue two days, where and when we hope to meet your messengers again.

J. N. BARTLETT, Moderator.

J. R. DENNISON, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1926.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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PREDESTINATION AND PURPOSE.

"DEAR BROTHER:—If it meets with your approbation, I would be glad to see your views in the SIGNS on predestination and purpose. Many of our good brethren are firm and sound on salvation by grace, foreknowlege and purpose, but deny the predestination of all things."

The above is part of a letter received from brother Thomas W. Records, Independence, Missouri. In endeavoring to accede to his wishes it would seem desirable to write in such a manner as would clear up differences of opinion upon this profound and fundamental point of doctrine. If we know our own heart, we can truthfully say we do not desire to hold the personages of men in view, either to please or to offend, for we hope we realize our accountability to God, and desire first and above all else to be faithful to him. We pray, therefore, that he, by his Spirit, will direct our thoughts and, if it be his will, open the eyes of the understanding of our readers and cause brethren to see eye to eye and speak one and the same thing. Much has been written with regard to the predestination and purposes of God, but volumes still remain unsaid. At the most, we can only hope to drop a hint to the wise on such a vast and important subject. If our readers will go with us back to the first chapter of Genesis we believe it can be found that in the very beginning of all of God's creation he then and there established and set in motion the machinery necessary to accomplish all his pleasure, and that that machinery works so perfectly that not one thing of all which he hath designed shall ever fail to come to pass, neither shall anything which he hath not planned ever take place, for "who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" The record is that "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep." Had God's work stopped there what a deplorable state of affairs would have existed, but since the purpose in creation was for the glorifying of himself and the lifting of the name of Jesus on high, he who had begun the work, carried it on. "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness." Herein is seen the work of his sovereignty, for he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. "And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night." "And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth. And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good." In the setting of these great lights in the firmament he determined their course so minutely, and their action so accurately, that even mere

man with the slight knowledge he has of them and the law which governs and controls them can tell, years in advance, to the very moment when they shall pass one another, eclipsing the light of each other. What infinite wisdom is seen in God's system, not only of lighting and heating the earth, but in bringing darkness upon it, during which season there is to be growth and development, and in shutting up the sea with doors and decreeing its bounds, saying, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed," lest they cover the earth and destroy that which it was to produce; and further in dividing the waters, under and above his firmament, that they should cool and supply the earth with the necessary moisture for it to bring forth, "the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after its kind, whose seed is in itself," &c. Here is presented the great machinery about which we spoke, the law of nature, by which everything is to yield seed or bear fruit after its kind. Does not this law forbid and forever stamp its disapproval upon the theory of evolution, or elevation? On the other hand, is not this law the key to a great and sacred truth? Has not God given each and every creature of his wonderful creation a law of nature whereby it is governed and controlled? As by the law of gravitation objects fall to the earth, so by the law of their nature the lion, the bear and the wolf prey upon the lamb, and does not this same law work in all the creatures of the earth, of the air and of the sea; whether it be serpent-like or dove-like, are they not all motivated by the nature which was given them in creation? Can the leopard change his spots, or the Ethiopian his skin? Are they not so circumscribed and bound by this law of their nature as to make it utterly impossible to do other than manifest what they are? Can the apple tree bring forth grapes? Can the hawk become the dove? What shall we, then, say to these things? Will it bring us any nearer the truth to deny that there is anything, from the tiniest insect to the greatest monsters on land or in the sea, that was not created by him, however contrary may be their natures? "By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Does the Lord require us to make apologies for him? He most certainly does not. Therefore, let us not add to, nor take from his word of truth. It needs no adulteration. We are not using extreme or unsound expressions when we quote such Scripture as: "Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy."—Isaiah liv. 16. Some one might ask, What kind of a God is he to make a poor, little, helpless sparrow and then make a hawk to catch him? Yet, since the creation, notwithstanding all the hawks and birds of prey, and other enemies, there still are other little sparrows. What is the answer? Our sovereign God is watching over and keeping his universe, and when he is ready to display his power and make his goodness known he will cause the lion to lie down with the lamb, neither to harm nor molest, and the Lord alone will be exalted in that day.

We have now come to the point in our article where we propose to deal with

what some term "the crowning work of God," his creation of man: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. * * * So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."—Gen. i. 26, 27. In what sense was man created in the image and likeness of God? We do not understand God was a being with a head, arms, hands, legs, feet, &c., for we are told that he is a Spirit, and that no man hath seen him at any time. Neither was this man which the Lord God had "formed of the dust of the ground" a spirit, for the apostle Paul declares, "The first man is of the earth, earthy."—1 Cor. xv. 47. Being a creature of earth, his field of operation is confined and limited to the earth, and the only possible way by which he can ever hope to attain to those things which are above is through the work of the Holy Spirit, by which he is born again. Adam, as we have said, was a natural creature, and there is no authority in all the written word, that we know of, that will justify any other conclusion, and yet there is a wonderful sense in which he was created in the image of God. Before the dust of the highest hill was formd, in the counsel of eternity, God's workmanship, the church, had been created in Christ, his Son; his bride was in him before ever Adam was created, the same as Eve was in Adam when they were created. There was the masculine and the feminine in the original, Christ and his church, therefore it could truly be said of man that he was created in the image of God, male and female created he them. The church stood in Christ; Eve had her standing in Adam. All power in heaven and in earth was to be vested in Christ; in like manner, God gave Adam dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. As a creature of earth there was also given him a law of nature by which he was to play his part in the great plan of salvation. Eve, being verily Adam, for she was bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, was only acting out what was in her in partaking of the forbidden fruit. She was so constituted as to be susceptible to the temptation of the serpent which God had formed and placed in the garden: "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave also to her husband with her, and he did eat." The man which the Lord God had formed of the dust of the ground was weak, but he had no knowledge of the fact; therefore, God gave him a law, which he could not keep, a measuring rod, as it were, to show him how frail he was; it was to be the scales in which he would be weighed and found wanting. No fault could be found with the law, or with God for giving it. The law was good, but by it was to come the knowledge of sin, for had not God given the law there would have been no transgression. Adam, through the weakness of the flesh, transgressed the law, thereby plunging himself and all his posterity into the ditch, and thus sin entered the world, and that by man. That Adam realized his guilt is shown by his trying to hide from the Lord. What mercy that God had before prepared an animal, the skin of which was to be a covering for man. Having created the heavens and the earth, and the fullness thereof, could God be accused of not knowing how to make just the kind of man he required in his plan? Before what tribunal can he

be arraigned for his lack of power or wisdom? "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?"—Rom. ix. 20, 21. Why not ask of him who "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think" for wisdom to rightly understand his word of truth? Truly, his judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out, but let us stand still and know that he is God. "And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it." Solomon, the preacher, tells us that "He hath made every thing in his time," and that "to every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven. A time to be born, and a time to die: a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted: a time to kill, and a time to heal: a time to break down, and a time to build up: a time to weep, and a time to laugh: a time to mourn, and a time to dance: a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together: a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing: a time to get, and a time to lose: a time to keep, and a time to cast away: a time to rend, and a time to sew: a time to keep silence, and a time to speak: a time to love, and a time to hate: a time of war, and a time of peace." Could predestination be presented any stronger than this? And, yet, the word does not appear. If there be those who hate predestination, how can they love the Bible, which is full of it, from cover to cover, whether we take the first chapter of Genesis or the last chapter of Revelation? Solomon, the wisest of men, and the greatest of all the kings of Israel up to his time, exhausted all his wisdom and power as a man, only to confess as he looked on all the works his hands had wrought, and on the labor he had labored to do, that "all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun." The wisdom of man, however much he may strive to change God's decrees or to soften the hard doctrine which the Savior preached, will utterly fail and be condemned. Solomon was taught that man in his best estate is altogether vanity. He did not find fault with God for man's condition, even though he said, "He hath set the world in their heart; so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end." No, he had the wisdom to behold and say, "I have seen the travail which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it." If God has given this travail to the sons of men that they should be exercised in it, hath he not predestinated it, hath he not purposed it, and is there any power in heaven, in earth, or under the earth, that shall hinder or prevent their coming to all which God hath appointed? The wonder and the glory of it all is that because of the oneness of Christ and his church, she being verily bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, he was responsible to God the Father for the debt of sin which she had incurred, and he did not falter in the least to come to her rescue. How wonderful that in such a time of shame, and disgrace, and distress, she has such an Husband, who is the very embodiment of love, mercy, grace, truth, power, humility, meekness, gentleness and tenderness, and all that is good. Herein did he glorify God, the Father, in coming in the fullness of time and doing the will of him that sent him into the

world to save his people from their sins, and God glorified the Son with the glory that he had with him before ever the world was by accepting, without the loss of any, all that he had given him, owning the work as finished and complete by exalting him at his right hand on high. His body, the church, was sown in weakness; it was raised in power, to the glory of God and the praise of his Christ. God purposed, or predestinated, even before Isaac was born, that the seed of Abraham should go down into Egyptian bondage, and the glory that should follow, saying to Abraham, "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their's, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years: and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance."—Gen. xv. 13, 14. He determined all the events that were necessary to bring it to pass just as he said, even fixing the number of years Israel was to serve. This prophecy embraced all the wicked acts of Joseph's brethren: it embraced the raising up, and that by God himself, of wicked Pharaoh, "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth."—Rom. ix. 17. But it also embraced the certainty of Israel's deliverance, by which they were to be made possessors of the great substance which was to be given them. There was no possible way of escaping the affliction; the destination was prearranged, or predestinated, and they must go by the route which God had ordained, in order that they might behold the wonders of their God and reach at last their desired haven. The way of life leads down through death. The journey had to be made according to schedule, the times and seasons, the seven years of plenty and the seven years of famine, all must come in their proper order, and clock-like it all worked out. As brother Records quotes later in his letter to me: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."—Isaiah xiv. 24. But, it did not stop short of saving much people alive, and making them eyewitnesses to the mighty power, love and mercy of their God, which was the purpose from the beginning. Without such faith how could we endure? for we are all Jacobs, and in times of darkness and distress cry out, All these things are against us, but faith says wait on the Lord, and when he has passed by and shown us his glory, we are made to realize that he is Alpha and Omega, that he is God, and there is none like him, "declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," and we can and do feast upon the unsearchable riches of his grace stored up in Christ, who has gone down into hell and has conquered death for us, then we can say with Israel, "It is enough," our spiritual Joseph lives. This is the travail which the sons of men are to be exercised in, that they should know for themselves and not another him whom to know is life eternal. This is that great substance which he gives to them that hunger and thirst after righteousness. Only by going down to the sea in ships, and doing business in great waters, can we see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. We can then say with John, "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light,

and in him is no darkness at all," for we have seen with our eyes that "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord," and in our own life we have known, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." What a mercy he hath restrained the wicked forces of our nature, else we would have plunged headlong down to destruction, and have we not been taught by bitter experience that the end of that way which seems right unto man is death? Have we not stood with Daniel in the den of lions, and the three Hebrew children in the furnace, in our experience, and been made to know that he is God? Have we not lain in the belly of hell with Jonah and vowed again and again that, Salvation is of the Lord, that there was none other able to deliver? O, my brethren, you who have made your bed in hell and whom God has searched, and is acquainted with all your ways, and from whose presence there is no fleeing, have you not found when you have dwelt in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there his hand has led you, and his right hand has held you? Have you not considered in your own dreadful life of death and mortification the lily of hope rising up in your breast in such beauty and grandeur that nothing in all the world could compare with? And when God's Spirit has rested upon you and carried you out to see that the whole house of Israel is the "valley of dry bones," and you have seen that wheel within a wheel, your flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and yet the wheel only moving forward, God's power being manifested in you and directing you step by step, teaching you line upon line and precept upon precept, causing you to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, have you not been made to cry out with David, Let all that is within me praise his holy name? We do not claim, nor do we believe, that every one understands predestination, or can feed upon it. In the "great house" there is a variety of vessels, and God has placed many different gifts in the church, "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man," &c., but we beseech those who differ with us, especially our brethren in the ministry and those who write for Old Baptist papers, not to lay down any iron-clad set of rules, and say because they do not like predestination that we shall not use it or preach the doctrine to the flock of God over which we hope he has made us the overseer. If every man would stand in his own lot and preach what he knows by way of having handled and tasted of the word of life, he will have little time to be telling the other side of the question, which evidently he does not understand.

In the last paragraph of brother Records' letter he says in his limited views predestination, purpose, decrees and the foerknowledge of God all stand or fall together, they have all been a comfort to him for nearly fifty-five years, &c., and we wish to assure him in our conclusion that we would not disturb that feeling for the world, for if that structure falls we will go down with it, one of the most miserable and sadly disappointed creatures that ever walked this earth, but we are persuaded, both by what is written in the Book, and our heart as well, that it is the truth and will stand when all things else decay. May God give us to rightly understand his word and bear with one another, is our prayer.

R. L. D.

CLOSE OF VOLUME NINETY-FOUR.

THIS issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES closes the ninety-fourth volume of the publication which has for all those years earnestly contended for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and which is so precious to the hearts of Old School Baptists. This is a long time for a paper like the SIGNS to continue, and but for the grace of God it would have ceased publication long, long ago, but it was according to his plan to continue it to the present, and we know that as long as he has use for it it will continue, but not one day longer.

The year just closing has brought its joys and sorrows, its encouragements and its discouragements, and we can but feel thankful it is as well with us as it is. We have been blessed with plenty of good letters for publication, and have been given the necessary health and strength to perform our work. Our subscription list remains about the same as in the last few years, but we are sorry to say that many of our subscribers have let their subcriptions get behind, of which we made mention in our last issue under the heading "Very Important Notice."

In conclusion we wish to thank all who have shown an interest in the SIGNS, either in a financial way, or by sending us good matter for publication, especially do we thank our good editors, who have done so much toward keeping our columns free from the "isms" of the day.

Praying that God's blessing may be with and abide with us all, and that he will guide us in our labors, and keep us from presenting in our columns any but the pure unadulterated gospel of Christ and the apostles, we will now bid you farewell for the year 1926.

J. E. B. & Co.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder C. W. Vaughn, June 19th, 1926, at the bride's home, Hopewell, N. J., Miss Sarah Blackwell and Mr. Walter Durling, of Rocky Hill, N. J.

By the same, September 11th, 1926, Miss Maud Hartwell Titus, of Hopewell, N. J., and Mr. Howard Butcher, of Trenton, N. J. Miss Titus is the great-granddaughter of the late Elder Hartwell.

By the same, September 25th, 1926, Miss Bertha Sharp, of Trenton, N. J., and Mr. Edgar Kintnor, of Pennington, N. J.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at the home of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. William C. Mitchell, Salisbury, Md., Sept. 15th, 1926, Wilmer E. Carey, of Philadelphia, Pa., and Miss Olive C. Mitchell.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder George A. Reid was born of humble but respectable parentage, in Floyd County, Virginia, April 2nd, 1848, and departed this life in Princeton, W. Va., August 16th, 1926, at the age of 78 years, 4 months and 14 days. Elder Reid grew up on the farm after the manner of the boyhood of his day, and was taught to eat his bread in the sweat of his face. Early in life he realized a condition of loneliness, in which he found it not good to be, and October, 18th, 1868, he was married to Miss Malinda Hall, of Montgomery County, Virginia, to which union there were born eight children, five boys and three girls, two of whom followed their mother to the land beyond, who departed this life January 10th, 1890. It should be said of her that as a helpmate to her husband she was true to the divine injunction, which left our dear brother to realize the more keenly the loss of a true companion. March 5th, 1894, he was married the second time, to Mrs. Lizzie A. Akers, of Pulaska County, Virginia, who survives him, and has been to him a true and faithful companion. To this union were born four children, two of whom preceded him to that better land. Brother Reid was reared in a religious element known as Dunkards, but he drifted into the Methodist camp and soon began to speak in public for the Methodists, but upon becoming acquainted with the Primitive Baptist doctrine he found that his church and doctrinal identity was with them, whereupon he went before the church at Wilson's Grove, Pulaska County, Virginia, about the year 1881, and was received into their fellowship, and baptized by Elder J. M. Matherly, and soon began to preach for them, and in due time was ordained to the full work of the ministry by Elder Amos Dickerson, the writer and others, and was soon called to serve churches as pastor. He was thus serving three churches at the time he was called to lay his armor by to enter into rest. Elder Reid stood well in the

confidence of the brethren. He was clear in his conception of the doctrine, and was conservative in its proclamation. For several years he was somewhat unsettled residentially, which enabled him to serve in the churches in different localities, during which time he removed his membership to Roanoke, from which, after some years, he removed it to Princeton, W. Va., and became a constituent member of the thriving church there, which he, together with other faithful members organized, and which he served as their beloved pastor until the Great Master of assemblies bade him depart and come up higher, where he might cease from his labors while his works follow on. It would be well to mention at this point that he, with associate pastors and loyal members, organized a church at Bluefield, W. Va., a short while before his demise. It is a well known fact among his intimate associates that the welfare of these two churches lay very close to his heart. Elder Reid dwelt much among his brethren and his friends, and in a special manner he was much with the sick of his community. He was peculiarly congenial with the afflicted in speaking words of comfort and ministering to them from his own hand. These special ministrations were fraught with confidence and encouragement and were remedial in their effects. In those visits among the sick there was nourishment to them in his coming and was to them as the coming of Titus.

Funeral services were held in his home church, at Princeton, W. Va., by Elders S. J. Priddy and S. L. Wood, whereupon his remains were removed to the residence of his son, F. B. Reid, in Roanoke, Va., from which place, after brief services by the writer, was consigned to its final resting place in Evergreen Burial Park and committed to the keeping of Him who declared Himself to be the resurrection and the life, and to whose name be present and everlasting dominion, world without end. Amen.

P. G. LESTER.

Sister **Catherine Rebecca Proffett** died at her home, Locust Bayou, Calhoun County, Arkansas. She was born February 26th, 1851, was married to W. H. Proffett, and lived with him in sweet companionship for fifty-one years; was married by that grand Old Baptist minister of God, William McDonald, and was later baptized in the fellowship of Antioch Church in the bounds of the South Arkansas Old School Baptist Association, in the year 1900, by Elder Thomas Peterson, who was the moderator of that association for many years. There were six children born into this family, three are dead and three living. The surviving are Jewel and Stewart Proffett, and one girl, Mrs. Sam Higgs. For the last few years sister Proffett's health had not been very good and she and her husband stayed near the two sons, where they could help look after their mother and father. Brother Proffett ran a store and the boys and their good wives helped care for the household duties, and when company came to see them during their meeting days. It surely was a rich blessing from God's preserving hand they were so blessed in having such sons and daughters-in-law as they had, who did everything that could be done to comfort and bless them in their declining days. I was called to the care of their church some years ago, and it was a great pleasure to visit with the dear people of God. Surely God made them rich and we feel that sister Proffett has just gone over to that sweet resting-place she used to love to talk of and trusted so much would be her everlasting resting-place when done with the sufferings and trials of this life. Sister Proffett was one of the girls of an old pioneer family, known as the Reuben Riggs family, who emigrated from Jackson County, Ala., into this country when it was a wilderness and raised one of the most upright and honorable families known to the country. It is with much sadness that we all have to give up sister Proffett. She was one always at her post of duty at the church when able, and we shall miss her, but not as much as those of her household. Poor old brother Proffett had walked with her all these many years and his loss is irreparable, but still he has his good children and daughters-in-law to care for him, also his daughter, Mrs. Higgs, and they will see he has everything for his good the few more days he shall have allotted to him here.

I was called to conduct sister Proffett's funeral, and spoke to a large concourse of friends who had been with sister Proffett almost continually from the days she began to sink until the last tribute of respect could be paid. It was my delight to make mention of her life as the "living figure" of that good tree that cannot bring forth evil fruit, and that the Savior said, By their fruits ye shall know them. Surely she bore these rich fruits of God's love shed abroad in the hearts of his people. May God's rich blessing continue with those who mourn and may they be reconciled to him in humble submission to his will.

ALSO,

Brother **James Coston** was born in the State of Alabama, February 27th, 1856, and at the age of three years moved with his parents to the State of Georgia, where he lived until the year 1881, and there married his wife, afterwards moving to Arkansas, where he and his good wife made their home. Brother Coston, with his wife, united with Antioch Old School Baptist Church, and lived in that faith and in the esteem of their brethren and sisters in sweet fellowship until his death, which occurred at his home near Locust Bayou, Arkansas. There were nine children born to them, seven boys and two girls, all living but the oldest, and were present at the funeral, which was conducted by the writer, in the church near the cem-

etery. There was a large and sympathizing assembly of friends and members of his church, who came to pay the last tribute of respect. Brother Coston was a noble man in his community, and was well liked by his neighbors, and dearly loved by his brethren and sisters in the Primitive Baptist Church. We shall miss him much, but hope to be reconciled to God's will, believing that he does all things well. The loss of such men is great, both to the family and to the church. Brother Coston was indeed a noble husband and a great and good father to his children. He was blessed to live to see all of them grown up and established in their avocation in life and in his departing days could say, I have fought a good fight, and am now ready to depart and be with Christ. May God ever be with his dear children and be their guide, that they, too, may be brought to the fullness of his rich grace, and to acknowledge him before all, and to continue to live to his honor.

V. R. HARRIS.

Miss Frances E. Hearn departed this life October 11th, 1926, in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Roland Phillips, Delmar, Del., aged 72 years. Her early life was devoted to the care of an aged mother. After her death, a brother, Samuel Hearn, was afflicted for years and Miss Hearn devotedly cared for him until his death. About that time another brother, Luther M. Hearn, lost his wife and Miss Hearn went to live with him. Not long after this he was taken ill with a complication of diseases and died December 1st, 1923. He was a good man, a firm believer in the doctrine of grace. While in good health his house, at Clayton, Del., was always open to the Old Baptists and friends. The writer had often enjoyed his hospitality. After his death Miss Hearn came to Delmar, Del., and made her home with Mr. and Mrs. Phillips. During her illness, of five months, her niece, Mrs. Eunice Culver, gave her untiring attention night and day. Mr. and Mrs. Phillips were more like children to her than friends. Miss Hearn never united with the church, but was a lover of the truth, and attended our meetings everywhere in this section of country. She knew and felt her unworthiness, yet her hope and faith were strong and her life above reproach. We shall all miss her, but know for her that death was gain.

The services were conducted by the writer in the Old Baptist meetinghouse in Delmar, October 13th, where a large congregation had gathered to pay the last tribute of respect. The interment took place in the family plot at the Hearn graveyard near Delmar, Del. As she quietly rests in death, may the family and friends rest in the peace of God.

Written by request.

ALSO,

Alton Graham Wilson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Wilson, died at the home of his parents, in Vienna, Dorchester Co., Md., September 16th, 1926, aged 22 years, 2 months and 29 days. He was taken August 20th with typhoid-pneumonia, and grew worse until the end. He was a good, kind-hearted young man, and had a host of friends. From childhood he attended Old School Baptist meetings with his father and mother, and in later years seemed pleased to make a way for his grandmother and other members of the family to attend meetings. Just before he passed away he said to his mother, "I am going home, I am going home."

The funeral, conducted by the writer, was one of the largest ever held in that community, showing the esteem in which he was held. Interment was in the family plot at Mardela Springs, Md. The Lord comfort the family.

Written by request.

H. C. KER.

Jonas Mellott, son of the late Elder Ahimaaz and Catherine Mellott, departed this earthly life at his home, Hustontown, Fulton Co., Pa., October 26th, 1926. He was born July 22nd, 1861, and is survived by four brothers and three sisters of his father's and mother's family. He was married December 8th, 1889, to Miss May Mellott, daughter of Joshua and Mary Mellott. Of this union, one boy, Roy, died in infancy. There are living the following children: Lester Mellott, of Rockledge, Montgomery Co., Pa.; Mrs. Beatrice Barmont, near Knobsville, Pa.; Melvin Mellott, near Six Mile Run, Pa., and Walter and Thelma at home with the mother. Other than these there are two grandchildren living. Jonas never united with the Old School Baptist Church, but we believe him to have been an experienced man. He loved the truth of God as it is in Jesus Christ, realized the depravity of human nature and knew full well there was no salvation anywhere for him but in the grace of God through Jesus Christ the Lord. He regularly attended the meetings whenever able to get there, but for nearly two years had been afflicted with heart trouble, which made it impossible for him to venture often very far from home. He was a great sufferer and often wanted to die, feeling that all the pleasures of life had lost their attraction for him. He was a great believer in the predestination of all things and in the absolute weakness of puny man to perform any good thing of himself. It pleased him to hear God glorified and man abased. I was sent for to conduct the funeral and read the forty-ninth Psalm and commented on it. He was buried in the cemetery at Sideling Hill. May the Lord comfort the dear ones, and especially our sister May Mellott, his wife and companion.

L.

BOOK NOTICE.

PREDESTINATION, the book which the writer has had in contemplation, should be ready by December 15th. The price is to be for single copies $1, six copies $5, and twelve copies $10. Every reader of the SIGNS would, no doubt, gladly own a copy. Where there are a number who are members of the same church desiring copies, let them order in group lots through one member. These books will make most excellent Christmas remembrance for friends who love the truth. Remember the poor of the flock and give them something they will appreciate. Any one who is unable to pay for the book, and will so write me, shall receive one with my compliments.

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MEETINGS.

The Beulah Old School Baptist Church, of Cleveland, Ohio, will hold their meeting on the fourth Sunday of each month, at 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio. All lovers of the truth are welcome. Strangers wishing to make inquiries can address Elder George L. Weaver, 2231 Lee Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

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Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday of each month at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 459 E. 5th St., Riverside, Calif., and at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. 11th St., Claremont, Calif., on the first Sunday of each alternate month, beginning with January, and on every alternate month with brother Joseph Huffman, 128 Van Buren St., Arlington, Calif. Singing at 10:30 a. m. Preaching at 11 a. m. Lunch at the place of meeting, and continued services in the afternoon.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.
O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City), Oregon every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Those coming by Railroad over the S. P. get off at Oregon City, take the elevator to the top of the hill, turn to your left, go one block east. Not later than 9:30 a. m. Private conveyance. Those coming on Oregon City Electric get off at 7th Street, take elevator near S. P. depot to top of the hill, turn to your left, go one block east to 7th St., as above stated.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

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OUR supply of the book entitled "A Sketch of the Life of Joshua S. Corder" is exhausted, and we are unable to fill any more orders for said book. This work was not electrotyped, so we do not expect to have any more on sale at any time in the future.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

PLANT CITY, Florida.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The apostle says, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen," &c. The poet wrote,

"Dark and thorny is the desert,
Through which pilgrims make their way,
But beyond this vale of sorrows
Lie the fields of endless day;
Fiends loud howling o'er the desert,
Make them tremble as they go,
And the fiery darts of Satan
Often bring their courage low."

In Deuteronomy xxxii. 9, 10, it is written, "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, in a waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." So it is with every one born from above. They find themselves in a desert land, in a far worse waste howling wilderness and desert land than a natural one. A natural desert has no water for miles and miles, no grass, no shade trees, burning sands, piercing thorns. Many poisonous reptiles and creeping things whose bite and sting are dangerous to life, and some said to be fatal if one is bitten or stung by them. You find all of these in your flesh and in the world in human shape. You have met some who were members in the church. John the Baptist called some people a generation of vipers. Sometimes we get in a hurry for members and get some of these vipers in the church, then we have sorrow, pain and death. When you received a hope you thought all the sin and sorrow was gone, and you never expected to have an enemy. So bright and glorious was the sight, you said, I am the rose of Sharon, the lily of the valley, the beauty and fragrance was so plain, and you seemed so white and clean, like the lily, but in a short time all the beauty and fragrance was gone that came from the Savior, and only the thorny bush was left, for every petal had withered and fallen off. The lily only blooms and remains for a few days then droops and dies. Solomon says, "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters." Again, ii. 16, 17, "My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away." The lilies are his loved ones. The shadows are the law dispensation. Paul says,

Heb. x. 1, "For the law, having a shadow of good things to come," &c. Again, Col. ii. 16, 17, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come."

When "the day break" is the third morning, when the Savior arose. So the prophet said, Hosea vi. 2, "After two days he will revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." But alas how soon you found you were still in a world of sin, and a desert land, and "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing," and the piercing thorns of the flesh were there to cause you pain. Paul says, Because of the abundance of the revelation there was given me a thorn in the flesh, &c., and was told, My grace shall be sufficient for thee. When the Lord put the curse on the earth he said, "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee."—Gen. iii. 18. As sure as the natural earth brings forth thorns and thistles to all the sons and daughters of Adam, just that sure the flesh brings forth thorns and thistles to all the children of God. So the poet says,

> "But of all the foes we meet;
> None so oft mislead our feet,
> None betray us into sin
> Like the foes that dwell within."

"The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."—Gal. v. 17. Jesus said, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace. All of you little ones have found this true, not only natural worries, pains and losses, but anguish of soul, fightings without and foes within. Oh the horrid desert, the blasting, blighting, withering winds that sweep over the hot sands, the fearful howling wilderness, the awful thirst and fainting by the way, the dark and cloudy days, the long nights, and tears shed over and over on account of sin. Jesus is a covert from the tempest, an hiding-place from the wind, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, as rivers of water in a dry place, (Isaiah xxxii. 2,) but when he "holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it," Job xxvi. 9, you cannot find the covert, rock, or the rivers of water. Job x. 10, 11, "Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese? Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews." Little mourning one, you will have to wait and suffer on and on until the Lord takes down the fence and calls you home. "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." Then you will find Paul told the truth when he wrote that all of our afflictions were light, and but for a moment compared to the glory of eternity. Paul says, For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. Not to us, but in us. Then you will "be filled with all the fullness of God."—Eph. iii. 19. God has not forgotten to provide for you in this awful desert land and waste howling wilderness. He says, Isaiah xliii. 20, "I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen." Again, Isaiah xxxv. 3–7, "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you, then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be

unstopped: then shall the lame man leap as an heart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass, with reeds and rushes." Jesus says, Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.. The children of God have sorrows and trembling the world knows nothing of. Psalm lxi. 2: "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I." Again, 1 Cor. xv. 9: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." The wicked are the ungodly. Psalms lxxiii. 12: "Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches." James says, "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" No wonder Paul was full of sadness, and had a desire to depart and be with Christ. Listen to what he says, 2 Cor. xii. 15, "Though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved." Have not some of you met this on this rough, sad and weary way? Have you not sometimes had to sweat drops of blood, as it were? Have you had the flesh to crawl on your cheek bones on account of the slaps you have received, both in the world and among false brethren? Is it not written, "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." The Book says so, Matthew xxiv. 12. So often your burden seems so heavy when some great wave of sorrow comes sweeping and rolling over you, and you say with David, The waters are come in unto my soul. So heavy was the burden you were ready to give up all hope. Little one, this was only preparing you to leave this land of disappointment. Every sigh the people of God ever uttered, every pain, sorrow of distress they have borne Jesus held them up, they could not sink to rise no more, for "He is set for the fall and rise again of many in Israel."—Luke ii. 34. He suffers with you. Isaiah lxiii. 9: "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them: and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." The poet says,

"I feel at my heart all thy sighs and thy groans,
For thou art most near me, my flesh and my bones;
In all thy distresses thy head feels the pain,
Yet all are most needful, not one is in vain."

Hear Jonah in the whale say, "The earth with her bars was about me for ever." No way of escape. Then he says, "Salvation is of the Lord," and God caused the whale to spew him out on the land. Look, little distressed one, see the patriarchs, they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain by the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom the world was not worthy); they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens, and caves of the earth. You have never passed through such awful trials as these. Many have been burned at the stake, and smothered to death by fire in caves, &c. Then think of the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace. Look there, who is that in the fire with them? Hear the king say, "Did we not throw three into the fire and lo! there are four, and one like unto the Son of God." See Daniel in the lions' den. Lions' mouths all shut. So God will shut every enemy's mouth

except such as are to afflict you for your good. David says, "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word."—Psalms cxix. 67. A sad countenance maketh the heart better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, and "blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." Then do not forget Jesus in the garden for you. So precious blessed of God are you. Now dry your tears and remember Solomon says, Better is the day of one's death than the day of one's birth. All of your sorrows, distresses, pains, heartaches and tremblings are only for a moment compared to eternity, and is for your good, and works for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. It was not an accident sin entered into this world, but was to cause you to rejoice when you were delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of his dear Son, but when you reach the eternal shore of sweet eternal deliverance you will find Paul told the truth when he said, Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works (produces) for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Here you have the foretaste, there you will have all the fullness.

Your brother in hope of mercy,

I. R. GREATHOUSE.

COZAD, Nebr., June 6, 1926.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel a desire to call you all brethren, and truly hope, by the grace of God, I am related to all of his redeemed. I have often called the Baptist people my brothers and sisters, as you know it is customary among some of our people to do so, and I think it is right, but I have often wondered if it is as often felt as it is spoken. To feel indeed to belong to the heavenly family and to be able by the same experience to say brother or sister is a gracious state, if we are made to view it as it is, but I am so often in doubt as to the relationship that exists between me and the dear ones. I read their experiences in many of the good papers published by the Baptist editors, and also listen to many tell their travels in life, and am made to feel that we are traveling the same lonesome road, but I see them so bright in their experience of grace, that to me there is no doubt in their case, for they have the seal in their foreheads, and it is so distinct that we feel to know them to be of the fold; but for myself, I cannot tell of anything so sure, I am only hoping to be one, but this I really feel to know: that if I am one, and he is pleased to call me by his own power and grace, I am the least of the whole family, for oh how blind, how helpless I am. I am always full of sin, and can never feel to be free from it as I wish I could. I am not able to be what I desire to be, or what I hope I desire to be. The Lord alone knows whether I desire anything as I ought, but if I am not deceived in myself I think I desire to live an upright life that I can feel is pleasing to my Creator, and most of all I desire to know of a truth that I am one of the blessed number for whom it pleased the dear Savior to suffer and die. It seems that if I could be sure, or have positive knowledge that I am his, so that there could never be a fear or doubt arise, I would enjoy the hope better. But we are told that we hope for the things not seen, and our hope is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, for Christ is our hope. When we feel too weak to even cry we are made to view him as the Rock for which we long, and as our strength to deliver us. I realize I am in a hopeless condition if it is

left to me, for I have lived thirty-six years, and as far as I can remember I have longed to live a christian life, but my whole life has been full of sin and darkness, and fears as touching the hereafter. I have, it seemed to me, ever since I can remember desired to be saved in the glory world. I sometimes fear it might be only of nature, for I have always desired it, but there was a time in my life when I was just like a child, that I felt to know I certainly was a sinner, lost in sin, and could not go to heaven in my sinful condition, so I began to cry to him to save me. Of course I felt the debt, and tried to do something to make my condition better. I tried to pray, to see if I would be better. I thought I would have to do something good if I ever went to heaven, and would have to live a perfect life. This began when I was seven years old, and as there was at that time, or very near it, a few days meeting going on, I went up to be prayed for, but it did not seem to help me at all, I only felt to be a worse sinner. Finally, in God's own good time, I received a hope. I was then between seven and eight years of age, and was made so happy I could not help shouting his praises aloud. So for a while I felt good and free, with nothing to grieve or distress me at all. I then wanted to join the church and be baptized, but at that time many of the Baptist people did not believe in children's experience at all; but the church received me, and I was baptized, so I felt good and thought I had done as I should. I did not even feel to be a sinner for a long time after that; then I began to doubt, and was in much fear. I knew I was still a sinner, but wanted so much to be a christian. I had thought that after sinners received a hope they were not sinners, but christians, and would not feel again to be sinners, but my feelings were telling me differently. I truly knew I still was a helpless sinner, depending upon the mercy of a loving Savior if I ever was permitted to enter heaven. Little by little I received a foretaste of his love, and was made to shed tears of joy, and also made at times to rejoice above my own control, and would shout his praises until I was made to feel it was enough. I was truly satisfied, and felt to know at the time that I was his child, but as soon as it was withdrawn I began to doubt, and such thoughts would arise: Now what have you done? There is no use in that, you could have helped that. Then I began to study over it and to think it might be as the world and those who have never tasted his love or the power of the world to come believe it is; that it was just a weak mind, or of nature, and maybe there was nothing in shouting or rejoicing in his love, but just an imaginary mind, and I felt badly. In doubt I said, I never will shout or show any sign again, if I can help it. I will know next time whether I can help it or not. If it is of myself I know I can help it, and will. These were my thoughts, and are yet. Then sometimes I would be so cold in spiritual life and enjoyment I would begin to desire to feel again some spiritual life and ask Him to fill me with his love and cause me to rejoice once more, that I could feel to not be left alone in a desert land, such as I felt to be in, for it seemed that the streams were dried up and I was dying spiritually for food and drink from that good land where all is peace, love and happiness. In his own good time he fed me, and I sometimes am made to feel that he is a God at hand, but I am often wondering in mind whether or not it is of the Spirit. I know this, that there are

times with me when I am desiring a better country, and I have feelings concerning all things, and his work and my condition as a sinner, that the world nor I cannot control; whether it is of God, or not, I certainly am not able to tell, but I hope it is. I know at times I am so disgusted with wordly foolishness I just do not want to hear it talked, and then again, I am found in their company, joking and laughing and enjoying life here, but I cannot enjoy false doctrine at any time, for my experience (if I have one) teaches me that there is only one way, and Christ is the way; only one truth, and he is the truth; only one life, and he is the life; he is all and in all, from eternity to eternity; we are dead and our lives are hid with Christ in God. Thus we are (if children) in a safe place. How sweet to feel his love burning upon the altar of our sinful lives, for he is as a consuming fire. Consuming what? The sinner? No, but consuming our sinful lusts, destroying the work of Satan, and forever perfecting them that are his, sanctifying them; the flaming sword is ever keeping the way of the tree of life. Men would love to have the honor of keeping it, but it is not left to them, for we are kept by the power of God, and we are not our own keepers. I am glad it is on a sure foundation, and Christ is the chief corner-stone; he is also the topmost stone, the beginning and the end, for it is Christ formed in us the hope of glory. There is never a doubt in my mind concerning his kingdom, as to the surety of it, for the one that created and made all things, and controls all things, is able and will bring out his bride, the Lamb's wife, more than conqueror over all evil, for even the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. He has already conquered all for his chosen people, and is only manifesting it as the pages of time unfold his purposes. He is not deceived in anything, for all things were and are open before his face, and he is not failing in any of his work. Neither can Satan deceive him and get or destroy one soul of his chosen people, for their deliverance is in Christ, their eternal head, and his will and pleasure is being manifested as time rolls on. Neither is he disappointed concerning anything, but has told us in his word, or in his testimony, that these things will come. Read Jude, the fourth verse. He was admonishing the church in the first of the chapter, and on to the fourth verse, to write unto them of the common salvation, and to exhort them and us, that we should earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. It never has been delivered to any but his saints. Thus he tells us in the fourth verse of a certain people who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; they were ungodly men. Also read Romans ix. 21–24, and 1 Peter ii. 8; Exodus ix. 16; xiv. 17, and many others I could mention, but these are enough to get us started reading.

Well, I do not know whether I have said anything that is worth your notice or not. If you feel it is as worthless as the writer feels to be just cast it aside. I have told a few of my feelings as I have gone along in life, and if you can witness with what I have written you may publish it, if not, please do not. You know it does us little ones good to find that the strong able ministers and soldiers of Christ have the same to battle with, but my feeling is (O you of little faith) sometimes I am afraid I have not any God-given faith, but hope I have. If you are ever given a mind to turn your thoughts towards me in asking for

his mercy to his little weak ones, please do so.

Your little sister in the grace given his people in Christ, I hope,

(MRS.) WILL MATHIS.

TRENTON, N. J., Sept. 12, 1926.

MY DEAR COUSIN:—I have thought many times of your visit, and think it did me a lot of good. I hope that in future we may not have to wait so long between visits, because life is short; at least, I feel at times that mine is and I want to see often those I love. I naturally love my family, but the love of God in the brethren is so much above the natural love of man that sometimes I feel I cannot live in this world without the fellowship and love of the saints. As I grow older and the things of earth get staler, I feel that the only thing which matters is the communion of the loved ones, the sharing of the sacrifice of Christ, the inheritance of the kingdom of God. It is a wonderful thing to be led in green pastures and beside still waters. While rushing torrents and great falls of water are wonderful to show the power of God, it is the still waters that comfort the thirsty ones and make them realize the love and care of the heavenly Father. It means so much to me to feel that I may be one of the little ones, just able to know and feel that God is good. It is all I need. No flaunting of banners nor blowing of trumpets telling me that God is King, but just the still small voice in my soul saying, I am God, and beside me there is no Savior. Is not that the most wonderful thing that could come to a poor little soul? Just to know that without any effort on my part he has made me feel his everlasting love; to know that if chosen in him one can never be lost. We may be asked, as I once was, How do you know that you are saved? Just by the revelation of God's power, as to Jonah, or to Paul, or to Peter, and on down to now. It is given to every redeemed soul to feel that God is over all, through all and in all; and when he says, "Follow me," we never question, and by the following we acknowledge to ourselves and to the world that we have been bought with a price. Even the blood of Christ has not been too much in God's sight to save his people from their sins. We can have no doubt of our salvation while Christ is leading us. Is it not a glorious thought and is it not worth all the suffering of mind and body to just feel the love of God? To-day we had, to me, another wonderful sermon. The text was the last clause of the fourth verse of the fifth chapter of Mark, "Neither could any man tame him." He spoke more of experience than I ever heard, especially his own. A portion of the fifteenth verse of that same chapter has been in my mind this last week: "And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid." I have been thinking recently of the old Jewish rites and ceremonies and what they must have meant to the devout men of old, but for us all of those things are over. At different times in our experience we see the beauty of predestination, election and atonement, but to me it seems that when we enter into the overwhelming light of God's love, enter into the fullness of his grace, all other points of doctrine are swallowed up in the mighty greatness of the sacrifice of the beloved Son of God. It is the greatest of all things, and because of its greatness we can so fully understand why God is over all, through all and in all; why it is his will to save out

of his creation some to give glory to his name and to be witnesses of his love; why his Son must shed his blood for the atonement of our sins. It is enough, we need nothing more. If God is mine, then present things and things to come are mine. Sometimes I feel like leaving the "if" out, and saying, God is mine and I cannot depart from him. I wonder sometimes if Moses did not fully realize the greatness of Christ, even though living years before his birth, when he said, If I have found grace in thy sight shew me now thy way that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight, and so on through that chapter (Exodus xxxiii), until in the twenty-first verse, "And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: and I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts; but my face shall not be seen." Is there any greater prophecy than that in the whole Bible? Moses is told, "There is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock." I fully believe that the rock of salvation was shown to Moses at that time, and only through Christ can we stand upon the rock of salvation and be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. These things are wonderful to me, I cannot attain unto them.

With love,

E. P. FETTER.

[THE foregoing letter was written to sister Rounds of Nutley, N. J.—ED.]

1627 DICKSON STREET, CHICAGO, Illinois.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription expires with the November issue, will send in my renewal, please find money inclosed. You may also have my paper sent to the above address instead of Cozad, Nebraska, as I have not been there since last July. I certainly hate to lose a copy, for I love to read the many good sermons in them. We have been here in Chicago since the latter part of July last, and have been blessed with the privilege of going to hear an old Baptist preach four different times. I do not know of any preacher living in Chicago at present, but there are, I find, nearly twenty members living in this city, and all seem to be interested in meeting and listening to the word preached. I have often wondered if there is not an ordained minister of the Old Baptist faith living near enough to come once each month, at least, and call the little few to order and hold meetings here. We all feel lost in a way, not having any certain place to meet, and no moderator. It seems to be the mind of all the members here to rent a hall to hold their services in and be organized into a body. They have talked this for quite a while, but, like Abraham's offering, where is the preacher? The one who comes to preach lives quite a distance from here, and is old and feeble, but, I must say, a faithful servant, but it is impossible for him to be here at each time, being located so far away. I hope it may please God to direct a true humble servant of his own to this place to feed the little few that live here, and bring all together in a church capacity, for that is all the lasting pleasure the children of God enjoy here on earth; the things of this world are foolishness to them, and they desire a time when they can meet each other in one place and hear the sweet songs of Zion sung, and listen to and feast upon the precious truth as it is delivered from God by his true and tried servants. Not tried in a

way the world calls tried. They say God tries us to see what we are. But I believe each child is tried to show them what they are, and the minister, being placed in a sacred place by the mighty hand of God, is tried with stronger trials than the little ones, for to them has been given the message to deliver, and they are called out to feed his sheep and lambs, and if left to themselves the office they hold would exalt them and cause them to think they were better than the average child, and they could not feel an equality existing in the church. Our trials and lonely feelings bring us face to face with the exact truth of our own natures, and cause us to see ourselves as we really are, and this view of ourselves is what humbles us and makes us feel so little and weak and often brings us in deep doubts and fears and causes us to cry to the Lord for help, and to be delivered, and brought out again where it is light to our souls, where we can feel the sweet assurance of peace and love from our Creator. We are then sure of the fact that God is our life, our strength and our all, and we are only sinners, miserable and weak, and we then feel our unworthiness, and can look at our dear brethren and sisters and see how pure they look, and oh how we do long to be just as good as we believe they are, and desire a hope that we can feel is as sure as our brother's or sister's, for to me all of my dear brethren and sisters have a bright hope shining in their countenance, and how good it is, but I am a "doubting Thomas," wondering if I really and truly am a child. I often believe I am, and a few times I am satisfied I am, but the greater part of my life is full of dark doubts and fears, begging the Lord to be merciful to me, for I feel and know I am a sinner, and if ever saved it is only by his sovereign love, which was manifested when he shed his precious blood on the cross.

Your unworthy sister in hope of eternal life,

(MRS.) BESSIE MATHIS.

BREWERS, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have often thought of trying to write for publication, but when I turn my eyes within all is vain and dark and wild, so that I can scarcely deem myself a child, yet, if not mistaken, I do love the principles of life and salvation advocated by the SIGNS and its many writers and supporters who become as a great number of witnesses who are faithful and true, and I often feel while reading from the pens of the ready writers, with my eyes dimmed with tears, I would like to reach forth and give them a hearty handshake as a token of love and fellowship, which I do hope is begotten within by our blessed Lord and Master, without the help of poor, puny, weak and sinful man. We read in God's word that we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began. Then he, being a faithful and true witness of himself, it matters but little with me (at times) what men say or do concerning "so great salvation," "but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Surely one who has been shown the exceeding sinfulness of sin has no thought nor inclination to serve the devil, who was a liar from the beginning, but instead feels to fall in the dust and beg the Lord, who speaks and it is done, for mercy, and His word shall stand forever. Yes, he has but to say, Let there be light, and the darkness is already gone. His word is quick and powerful, so powerful it never fails, even to kill or make

alive, always accomplishing that which the Father desires. One of old has said, With thee, O God, is the fountain of life. The underservants continue to proclaim that there is life and salvation in none other, for truly it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. After life's toils are over we hope to receive that crown of righteousness, not for works which we have or can do, but because of his love which was so great he sent his own darling Son into this low ground of sin and sorrow and redeemed us to God by his blood out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

I do hope the Lord will put it into the hearts of his people to do their duty in maintaining the SIGNS, which to me is the greatest periodical of our land. As we are called to number our joys of the fast fading year (1926) we cannot pass by the many good articles of our dear able editors and worthy contributors to the SIGNS, which we have read with our hearts leaping forward with praise and our eyes filled with tears of joy.

Desiring an interest in your prayers, and the fellowship of God's humble poor, I am your brother, I hope,

J. C. CHESTER.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., Dec. 11, 1926.

DEAR EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS:—I feel I must write and tell you of a dream I had last night. After reading the dear old SIGNS through for the second time amid many tears I went to bed and dreamed the postman came and handed me the SIGNS and I opened it with the expectation of reading as usual the many cheering and soul-comforting letters, but, alas, it was only a farewell announcement from the editors and publishers, and I wept much, for they said our brethren have forsaken us and we feel that our God has, too, and I started to pray, O our Father, thou that inhabiteth eternity, look down from thy throne and see, and when thou doth behold us in our sin and iniquity pity us in our sad condition, for we are lonely and feel forsaken. Oh wilt thou in mercy restore unto us that which has been our meat and drink so long, for we are languishing from hunger and thirst? It seemed it was more than I could bear, and I wept much. Then I thought of the wise counsel and rightly divided word of truth given us by dear Elders Lefferts, Dodson, Ruston and Vaughn, and the sweet, cheering, comforting letters of Elders Keene, McClanahan, Harris, Schenck, Greathouse, Hardy, and the others who write to the comfort and edification of the readers of the SIGNS, also the dear letters of Anna McKinney, Mary Ellison, J. R. Dennison, Bartlett and others who get so close to our sorrowing hearts over the afflictions of our Joseph, and still weeping I prayed, O Lord, if it be in accordance with thy holy will, remove the hindering cause and let us have the dear SIGNS again to give us food and comfort from our many brethren and sisters, many who are, like myself, poor and old and do not have the joy of going to meeting where they can hear the gospel preached in its purity. Then I looked, and, behold, the SIGNS was full, as usual, of soul-cheering, comforting letters, and I awoke, weeping and praising God, and my mind went over my dream and I was minded to get up and write it down, but words fail to describe the sorrow I experienced at the loss of the dear old SIGNS, or the joy I felt when I saw it full as of old. I must say in conclusion, while it is my wish, and I believe my prayer, for the SIGNS to continue, but except the Lord build the

house they labor in vain who build it, and except the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain. I also realize that unless we respond to the just call of the long forbearing publishers, the SIGNS will be suspended, and the many poor and old who cannot get to meeting will be deprived of the comfort of its cheering letters and editorials, which in one issue alone are worth more than a year's subscription. I feel that we should not be actuated by any other motive but love, and let each one give as the Lord has prospered him (or her), and thus trust God, in whose hands are all things, and he will dispose of it as it pleases him, and I hope and pray that if it is his will to let it go down that he will give us grace to say, "Thy will be done," but oh how dark and lonely it would be without its precious visits. I have only been well enough to work and earn any wages eight months since 1922, four in 1922 and four this year, from July to November, and now I am sick again, but the Lord knows all about it, and he does all things well. If I could only trust and praise him enough, but this also is of him, so I try to be still and know he is God. I am sending a money order for two dollars to pay for another year's subscription to the SIGNS.

A poor old sinner,

DAVIS BURCH.

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53 E. BUTTERFIELD ST., WEISER, Idaho.

DEAR READERS:—While I am sending five new subscribers for the SIGNS I want to tell you that a little band of lovers of salvation by grace, predestination, and complete redemption through Jesus Christ, lives near Weiser; fifteen within less than forty miles, and eight further away, up to four hundred miles. The church (Salem) was organized just forty years ago last month. They bought a lot last March, and now have a new church-house which cost them $1477. It is 20x36, with seats for one hundred or more, and the house is well furnished. When any Old School Baptists are passing our way stop with the writer. Meetings are held on the second and fourth Sundays at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. Elder D. E. Robison is the pastor.

M. N. WEBB.

ATLANTA, Georgia.

DEAR EDITORS:—Nothing has caused me greater concern during this year than the "Very Important Notice" published by you in the November edition of the SIGNS. I am one of those who have fallen behind with you. I have just kept putting the matter of sending my subscription off for a more convenient time, when I should have attended to it promptly. I know your work of publishing the SIGNS is at best "a labor of love," and I feel that we who love the doctrine it so ably defends are manifesting much ingratitude towards the publishers and its gifted editors when we fail to give it our support. I am now paying up my arrears and adding two dollars for you to use as you wish. I would do more, but I am only a small salaried man with a family, however I feel God will bless me in a way that will enable me to do more for you in the near future. I feel that if all subscribers to the paper, who can do so, would advance a year's or two year's subscription it would help you much. I am sending you eight dollars, renewals for some of my friends, and two dollars for one new subscriber. Please pardon me for past negligence, and I will try and do better in the future.

Yours in love,

E. V. LASSITER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1927.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

THE habits of life show a tendency to crystallize into rigid forms and set routines, much as ice tends to form on water in cold weather, and when behavior does solidify into routine, it is very apt to degenerate into drudgery and what was once a pleasant and agreeable act becomes a dreaded and hateful duty arduous to perform. We do not want our New Year's Greeting to become any such dreaded thing because it so persistently comes around to us each year. The years come and go all too swiftly, much more swiftly than they used to, so that these Greetings seem to come more and more closely together the older we grow. It has long been the established custom of the SIGNS for its editor in behalf of the publishers and his associates, to greet our readers and subscribers in this manner at the year's beginning. If we do it merely because it is a custom, it amounts to little more than pursuing the beaten path of rigid form, but if these greetings really spring from our heart and are the real and sincere expression of our feelings and desires, they may be of some value to those who read them. As to this, we shall leave you to judge, for we fear often to say that we are prompted by a right motive in these things. So often when we think the Spirit of God is leading us, it may turn out to have been the flesh; and often when we think the flesh is dominant, it turns out to have been the Spirit. It is hard to know what spirit we are of. In looking back over the long life of the SIGNS and in marking the many evidences of God's care over it and of his provision to meet all its necessities, we cannot but be encouraged to look forward to another year with hope in the Lord and with confidence that he will supply all our needs if it be his holy will that the paper be maintained. The difficulties of the paper have been great, but not so great but what they have been surmounted through the help and strength afforded by Israel's God. During all these years of the SIGNS' long career, there has been that quality about the paper which has aroused either antagonism on the part of some or love and devotion on the part of others. The SIGNS, in other words, is either hated or it is loved; there seems to be no middleground of lukewarmness or indifference toward the paper. It has its enemies, and has always had them, but so has it always had its devoted friends and champions. The reason of this is because the SIGNS has sought to occupy no middle-ground on any of the great principles of eternal truth. It says what it believes and believes what it says. Therefore, those who believe with us, love us; those who do not believe with us, wish the paper would die. So be it. We love peace and desire to see peace reign in all the churches of the saints, but we want it to be peace, and not an imitation of it; we do not want peace at the expense of what we believe to be the truth, and are not

willing to refrain from the publication of the truth for the sake of having peace with anybody, for any such peace bought at such a price would be no real peace at all, but only a smouldering cauldron of dormant opposition liable to burst forth and to rend us apart at any unguarded moment. It is often emphasized that Jesus came into the world to establish peace, but it is as frequently lost sight of that he came also to send a sword. His living Word is a sword which will not allow error to blend with truth, nor flesh to mingle with spirit, nor law to merge with grace, but it is a discriminating and searching sword which pierces even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. The upshot of all this which we have been trying to say in these words, is simply this: we have been endeavoring these past years in the pages of the SIGNS to set forth what we believe to be the truth, and we shall expect to keep right on doing this through 1927 and the coming years, so long as it shall live, God being our helper. We can do no more than this, and surely we ought not to do less. Not long ago a brother in the south wrote us a very kindly letter indeed in which he expressed his sincere desire to convert the SIGNS and its editors from the error of their way. This was a very plausible desire for him to have, so we thought, and we truly hoped he might show us our error, if error it was, that we might repent of it and do it no more. It turned out that the error which our brother thought us to be guilty of was the publishing of the doctrine of absolute predestination and our utter avoidance of the theory of conditional time salvation. He greatly desired that we might leave off predestination as we advocate it and go in instead for conditional time salvation. Now, we do appreciate the brother's sincerity, but indeed we cannot, for the lives of us, see any reason why we should adopt his point of view. Would it not be better for him to remove the beam out of his own eye, before he tries to remove the motes from the eyes of his brethren? If he cannot, or if any one cannot, agree with the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS, we do not feel to condemn them for that. If we know anything whatever of the truth of God, the SIGNS' editors have not been taught it of men, but by the revelation of God. If so, this revelation came not by our will, but by God's grace. If, therefore, there are those who cannot believe these things, it is evident they have not been taught or led as we have. It is God's pleasure to make known his truth to whom he will and to conceal it from whom he will. Arguing or disputing with those who cannot see these things will not cause them to see, nor will it stop the mouths and pens of those who do believe these things, to whom the Lord has been pleased to shew something of his deep and hidden mystery. Therefore, debate and controversy are of no use. They simply stir up ill feelings and more and more misunderstandings. For this reason the columns of this paper have long been closed to any debates or controversies over points of doctrine. We think this rule to be a wise one and shall continue to observe it through 1927, and further, the Lord willing. The children of God do not necessarily all of them see alike on all points of doctrine, but the fact that they do not, is no proof that they are not the children of God. Some of God's children are led deeper than

others, some do business in deeper depths than others; some are called to severer trials than others, some have to test the furnace fire while others face a den of lions, some endure isolation and loneliness, as did John on Patmos, while others live all their lives in evenness of temper and in the companionship of kindred spirits. Paul could not have written the book called Revelation, nor could John by any crook have written the letter to the Roman church. John could not have written the epistle that James did, nor could James have penned the epistles of Peter if his life had depended on it. Each wrote according to the gift measured out to him by the great Head of the church. Can God's servants in this day do any more than this? Are not each of us dependent on the ability God has given us? Well, then, if a brother can see farther than we can into the deep things of God, why quarrel with him for it? Shall we forbid his angling in deep waters because our little bark cannot venture as far as he? Surely this is foolish. Let each of us wait on our ministry, let each of us serve with the measure of the Spirit given us of God, and let God be our judge; for Judge he is, and not man. To him we either stand or fall, and to him shall each of us give an account of our stewardship. Let us preach the gospel, then, and stop quarreling. To this end, then, the SIGNS expects to go on publishing the truth as God gives us to see the truth, and we expect to let others do the same. We seek no quarrel with any one, and shall refuse, as heretofore, to enter into any controversy over points of doctrine. With these remarks we leave you. May the peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen. L.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

WE wish we could, in at least a small degree, convey to our readers the feeling of thankfulness we have in our hearts toward all who have come to our aid and so generously given of their finances to help us on our way. We have also received many loving letters, which have been of much encouragement to us, for we had gotten to a state where we felt the interest in the SIGNS was at a very low ebb, and it seemed the brethren did not care much whether or not it ceased publication, but, as said before, the many kind letters we have received have given us renewed hope and courage and we feel the good Lord, who put it into the hearts of the donors and writers to encourage us as they have, still has use for the paper, and if he has we know nothing can stop it until he has accomplished his purpose with it. Also, a number of the subscribers who were in arrears have forwarded the amount due, but still there are many who paid no attention to our appeal, and to those we once more make the request that if they are in a position to do so, to please send what they owe us. We dislike to say so much about financial matters in our columns, but feel our readers would rather have us mention these matters when necessary than to keep silent until we were forced to discontinue publishing the paper. Following is a list of the names of those who have since our last issue contributed toward helping the SIGNS, and to aid in sending the paper to "the poor of the flock:"

Grace V. Smith, Mo., $2; "A Friend," Okla., $2; W. E. Bryan, Ky., $1; Margaret B. Tiebout, N. Y., $24; S. W. Shipway,

N. Y., $3; Jesse C. Ellis, Ohio, $3; J. H. Shambaugh, Ohio, $1; Mrs. Joab Stout, Ill., $1; Allie G. Reed, N. C., $2; "An Oregon Friend," $5; Virginia L. Simpson, D. C., $10; Elder George L. Weaver, Ohio, $1; Martha C. Holloway, Md., $1; A. C. Carter, Ohio, $3; Mrs. I. R. Blythe, Pa., $1; Mrs. M. E. Drake, N. J., $1; Jennie Bower, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Wm. Fischer, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Sarah R. Johnson, N. J., $3; B. V. White, Va., $6; Laura Greenland, Pa., $5; James Ashurst, Ill., $3; J. E. Holloway, Texas, $1; J. B. Miller, Del., $2; Mrs. T. H. Young, Ohio, $2; Mrs. B. W. Jefferes, Ga., $1; Mrs. Affria Fooks, Md., $2; A. W. Bloomfield, Mo., $2; Mrs. S. E. Enoch, Kans., $3; Sarah McColl, Ont., $6; "A Friend," N. Y., (per Elder G. Ruston) $10; Woburn Church, Mass., $10; Mrs. B. Gordy, Mich., $2; Mrs. J. M. Miller, Texas, $3; F. Morris, Ky., $2; D. A. Koontz, Ill., $1; W. A. Kelly, Ark., $3; J. W. Caudle, Texas, $1; J. T. Everitt, Ark., $2; Virginia C. Ross, D. C., $2; M. J. Warford, Ky., $2; Dr. W. R. Presley, Texas, $4; C. C. Ketchum, Colo., $3; Jesse Myers, Mo., $1; Mrs. Effie J. Nethaway, N. Y., $1; Elder G. E. Coulbourne, Va., $2; Mrs. Rachel Owens, Iowa, $3; H. C. Sledge, La., $1; Mrs. S. J. Gray, Texas, $10; Col. J. R. Cox, Okla., $1; G. W. Horner, Cal., $3; Mrs. J. A. McTaggart, Ont., $2; S. J. Rudd, Ky., $3; Mrs. J. D. Shafer, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Mary J. Ege, N. J., $3; Mrs. Henry Hayman, Md., $1; Mrs. Mary E. Pittman, Kans., $1; "A Friend," Ont., $1; Mrs. Mary Duffus, B. C., $3; Mrs. Wm. Conklin, N. Y., $2; Mrs. Emma L. Ferris, D. C., $3; Duncan R. Black, Canada, $3; Elder V. R. Harris, Ark., $1; Ella E. Nelson, Texas, $1; Mrs. Duncan McCallum, Ont., $2; J. D. Welborn, Ind., $10; Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $10; Mrs. Ola Hodgers, Ala., $1; Mrs. Will Groom, Ohio, $1; Mrs. C. B. Rittenhouse, Man., $1; J. S. Moore, Ala., $2; Dennis Watkins, Ore., $1; Elder F. L. Riffe, Wash., $1; Mary A. Barnett, N. B., $1; E. V. Lassiter, Ga., $2; Miss E. G. Merryman, Md., $1. Total, $224.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Oconee Association of Primitive Baptists, in session with the church at Black's Creek, Madison County, Georgia, October 8th, 9th and 10th, 1926, to the churches of our Association and to all of our faith and order sendeth greetings.

DEARLY BELOVED:—Once more we have been blessed to meet to worship together our heavenly Father. The injunction is to preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine, for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine. We understand that Jesus is the Word, and was in the beginning, and was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the only begotten Son of God, who came into the world to save his people, clothed with all power and wisdom that was necessary to do the work of his Father, and he said that he had finished the work his Father gave him to do. Holy, harmless and undefiled, and separate from sinners, yet he was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we should be made the righteousness of God in him, hence his righteousness is imputed to us, so in the body of his flesh through death to present us holy, unblameable and unreprovable in his sight, a wonderful work indeed for poor sinners who are in this warfare, flesh against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, contrary one to the other, so that we cannot do the things that we would. So let us rejoice in the truth that we are not our own, but bought with a price, and that price is the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanseth us from all sin; not part, but atoned for all our sins, hence man at his best state is altogether vanity. He was at his best state in the garden when he was good. God had a wise pur-

pose in putting the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the garden, at the right place, so it would accomplish his purpose, will and decree. Nothing took place in that garden contrary to his purpose, for "as I have thought, so it shall come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." There was a precious promise made to Abraham and his seed; then, too, Isaiah had so many sweet visions. One was a virgin shall bear a son and shall call his name Emmanuel. Another was, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace," referring to the same word that should be preached; no other name given whereby we must be saved, hence, salvation is of the Lord. Just as this doctrine is in the singular, this doctrine is in the gospel which is the power of God unto salvation to the believer. Our destiny is in his hands in time as well as in eternity. He leads his people and instructs them (as many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God.) There is constraining power in the Spirit, so good works are fruits of faith and the fruit of the Spirit is faith. So this Word is King of kings and Lord of lords, and the end has been seen from the beginning, and all things are coming to pass just as they were seen, and all things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. There is no power but of God, and he does as he pleases in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and none can stay his hand, and his will, decree and purpose are being executed in spite of man or devils. All the grace that was treasured up for him for his people will be received by them, and not on any conditions upon their part, for all that the Father has given him shall come to him, and him that cometh he shall in no wise cast out.

We feel that the above is part of the sound doctrine, and our Association is enduring it and contending for it in soberness and love. We feel that we have been kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, and we are proud of the sweet memory of our fathers who enjoyed the principles of this doctrine, and left the record of their day and generation. Let us continue to contend for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints. Our Articles show where we stand, and we want no change now, and never will.

J. M. ADAMS.

(Written by Elder G. E. Coulbourne.)

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Broad Creek Old School Baptist Church, October 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1926, to the churches of which she is composed, grace, mercy and peace from our Lord Jesus Christ be unto you.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—It is our desire, if the Lord will, that in this, our Circular Letter, our minds may be stirred up as to salvation. What salvation is, how received, and some of the exhortations to those who have received it. When Moses, acting under God's command and direction, was leading the children of Israel out of Egypt, being pursued by Pharaoh and his host, upon reaching the Red Sea, with no apparent way to cross, the sea before them, the mighty host behind them, it was but natural that they should murmur as they did, but it was not natural that Moses should say what he did, it was by the Spirit of God that he said,

"Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." Here we find that this man of God was taught by God that salvation was not of man, but of God, and this salvation was their deliverance from bondage, a beautiful type of that salvation which was to follow, to deliver us from the bondage of sin. This salvation was shown the prophets of old and they prophesied that a virgin should bring forth a son, and he should be called Mighty, Wonderful, The Prince of Peace, and that he should rule over a kingdom that should never be destroyed. To have a kingdom there must be subjects of that kingdom, and these were and are all subjects of his grace, saved by his grace and mercy, and he is to all of them their salvation. We find the prophecy fulfilled, the angel appearing to Mary with the message from God that she should have a Son by the power of the Holy Ghost, and his name was to be Jesus, for he should save his people from their sins. We find here no conditions, but the positive assertion that "he shall save his people from their sins." This he must do, and this we have his word that he did do, when he prayed, and said he had finished the work his Father had given him to do. That work was made complete in the atonement, and sealed by his own blood, which was the redeeming and saving, or salvation, of those the Father had given him, and who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. As Eve was in Adam in the creation, afterwards taken out of and from Adam and given to him as his bride, or wife, so we understand the church was in Christ before the foundation of the world and in God's time and way was taken out of Christ his bride and presented to him without spot or blemish. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Here we see the unity of Christ and his church (which is his body) from before the foundation of the world. After he had finished his work he did not leave himself without witnesses, among whom we find the apostle Paul, a chosen vessel unto God, to testify as to this wonderful Savior, who is the salvation of all saved. Throughout Paul's testimony we find nothing said of taking credit unto himself or his own works for this salvation, but all through his testimony we do find him giving credit and praise to Jesus, his Savior, his salvation. Paul is so zealous in his love for this salvation that we find him from time to time exhorting the churches as to their manner, and as to their walk in the churches and before men. On one occasion in the letter to the Hebrews the question is asked, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" Not if they neglect to try to obtain salvation, but how shall they escape temptations, and condemnation of the brethren, if they neglect to give praise to God for the salvation they already have, for it is clear that one cannot neglect something he does not have. Also the apostle exhorts the "beloved" to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. This being to the church at Philippi, and not to the heathen, for the apostle goes on to say that they are in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom they shine as lights in the world. So here we find the apostle has in mind the manner in which those saved and who have a hope that Christ is their salvation should work it out: let it be known, not boastingly, but fearfully, remembering that it is God that worketh in them both to will and to do of his own pleasure. May the God of the prophets

and apostles keep us in peace, in meekness, as he did them, that we may work out our own salvation in fear and trembling, so we may always realize that we have nothing of self of which to boast, and that we may hold forth the word of life as our salvation in such manner that we shall not depart from the old ways and the old school, in which "it is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God."

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. W. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

(Written by Elder Dell Smith.)

The Pocatalico Old School, or Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with Providence Church, Lincoln County, West Virginia, September 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1926, to the associations with which we correspond, and to all of like precious faith with us, sendeth greetings.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We are once more permitted by the goodness of our covenant-keeping God to meet in an associate capacity to worship together in love and meekness the true and living God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We greatly desire that peace and unity of Spirit abound among us in all that may be said or done during this the ninety-first annual session of the Pocatalico Old School Baptist Association. Dear brethren, with much meekness I try to write this our Circular Letter, but do so with the ability God gives. We are not self-sufficient of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of Him who loved us and washed us in blood and gave us a sweet hope, which is an anchor to the soul. Dear brethren, if we are the Lord's people we are the purchased of the Lord. You are the pearl of great price and his blood was shed for you, for so sayeth the Scriptures. You are not your own, for you are bought with a price. (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.) This is our hope. Nothing we have done of ourselves, but we believe the promise is sure to all the seed who are the covenant children, those the Father gave the Son, for he paid their debt on the cross, and said, It is finished. The work of redemption rests alone with the triune God, not with man or men, and we believe when the blessed Master gave up the ghost on the cross it satisfied every demand of that debt and set us free. We had not with which to pay, for our garments were as filthy rags and our best deeds a mixture of sin, but he took off the filthy garments and covered our nakedness with the imputed righteousness of Christ, therefore we are not our own, we are his by choice and by redemption and sanctification. We are the choice of the Father, the redeemed of the Son, set apart by the Holy Spirit, therefore who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies, therefore we believe he has redeemed his people, and the Holy Spirit makes it manifest to them in due time.

Dearly beloved brethren, I submit this to your better judgment, hoping you will throw the mantle of charity over my imperfections.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Mod.
J. C. HAMMOND, Clerk.

NOTICE.

OWING to the usual severe cold, and uncertain conditions of the weather, there will be no meeting of the Woburn Old School Baptist Church the fifth Sunday in January, 1927.

H. C. KER, Pastor.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Broad Creek Church, Sussex County, Delaware, October 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1926, to the associations with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As time has brought us to another session of this Association, to meet in an associate capacity, we feel to rejoice in the fact that we have been gathered together from the different parts of the earth by the love and fellowship that only the people of God feel and know. We feel thankful to the God of all grace that we have your messengers and friends from the churches and associations with which we correspond to mingle with us in sweet fellowship. This session has been one of joy, peace and love, not one jarring note to mar our peace. Our attendance is good, and the preaching has been to the point; all come to us laden with the rich things of the kingdom, preaching Christ as the way, the truth and the life. We desire a continuation of your correspondence.

Our next session of the Association is appointed to be held with the Little Creek Church, Delmar, Sussex County, Delaware, beginning Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1927, at which time and place we hope to meet your messengers again.

C. W. VAUGHN, Mod.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

G. W. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

PREDESTINATION.

A book every subscriber to the SIGNS should own. Contains several of perhaps the ablest articles ever written on the subject. Single copies $1, or in lots of six copies $5.

R. LESTER DODSON,
12 Addison Avenue, Rutherford, New Jersey.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

J. H. Bozeman was born December 11th, 1884, in Houston Co., Ga., and passed away from us on November 10th, 1926, making his stay on earth 81 years, 10 months and 29 days. He joined the army at the age of seventeen years and fought in the battle of the Kenesaw Mountains in the year 1864. When the war was over he returned to his home and was married to Miss Mary Frances Everett, in the year of 1865, who was his faithful companion for over sixty-one years, and still survives. To that happy union nine children were born; two have already preceded him to the better world. The seven children living are Mrs. M. Petett, G. J. Bozeman, Mrs. H. M. Crow, S. D. Bozeman, Mrs. R. Moon and R. E. Bozeman, all of whom were present when he died, except S. D. Bozeman, of Eldorado, Okla., who was delayed on account of sickness. He had thirty-seven grandchildren, twelve great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild, also one brother, S. A. Bozeman, of Tipton, Okla., who was at his bedside when the end came. They came to Texas in the year 1888, moving to Miliam County, Texas, where they lived for six years, then moved to Mexia, Limestone County, Texas, in the year 1894. He lived in and about Mexia until the year of 1904, when he moved to Tehuacana, Texas, and began carrying the mail, which he continued to do until the year 1916, when he became disabled and could not work. While he carried the mail he bought and paid for a home, in which he died. In May, 1867, he joined the Primitive Baptist Church, where he held his membership until his death. I can say that no one ever lived a purer or better life. He was always ready and willing to help any one in any way he could.

Funeral services were held at the family residence, by Elder Willie Phillips, where a large concourse of friends and relatives met and followed the remains to their final resting place, the old Awrmor Cemetery at Coolidge, Texas.

The character of grandpa Bozeman was as open as the day, neither darkness nor shadow ever rested upon it. There was nothing concealed that should be known. In active life he was anxious to live so that he might leave an honorable name to his dear children. In his death his friends and loved ones have sustained a great loss, but we believe his soul has found eternal rest in the presence of God. He asked his dear companion just a few days before he passed away if there was not an Old Baptist close enough to hold service. Brother Phillips lives close to us and he spoke in a most kindly way, saying that God saw fit to take this dear old companion from us. He also asked for this hymn to be sung as they were lowering his body to its last resting place: "Hark, from the tomb a doleful sound," &c. The writer knew him for six years, he and his family being our near neighbors. Oh how near and dear he was to us all.

Written by a friend,

(MRS.) LESLIE NEWMAN.

Malcolenson McAlpine was born July 24th, 1877, near Bothwell, Ontario, and died August 16th, 1926. He was married November 20th, 1918, to Miss Caroline Wilson, and to that union were born two daughters: Isabell (age six) and Ruby (age three) who with the widow, four brothers, two sisters and a host of friends are left to mourn, realizing we have lost a friend and neighbor highly respected and loved by all. It was also evident by his conversation he had passed from death unto life, his love for the Baptist people was evident. Although he had never united with the church his mind was with them, but feeling his unworthiness so keenly, never was given courage to offer himself to the church taking comfort in the assembly of the saints, going through this life as a guard on the outside, defending the truth and living an exemplary life among men. We mourn, but not as those who have no hope, believing that for him to live was Christ and to die was gain. May the blessing of the Lord be with all friends and enable them to say, Thy will be done. I tried to comfort the friends at the funeral, after which all that was mortal was laid to rest in the Rickard Cemetery near by.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

Elder John A. Teague passed away at his home three and a half miles northwest of La Monte, Missouri, December 2nd, 1926, at 4 p. m., after an illness of two years. He was born January 15th, 1846, and was the son of Elder James and Prudence Teague. He moved with his parents to the farm northwest of La Monte where he spent the remaining years of his life. He was married to Miss Emma Gardner, of La Monte, Mo., November 2nd, 1882, and to that union two children were born: James A. Teague and Mrs. Harry Sparks. He joined Walnut Branch Primitive Baptist Church in 1886, and was baptized by Elder R. M. Ogle in a pond on the home place in order that his mother might be present, she being unable to go a distance. He soon felt impressed to preach, and on June 9th, 1900, was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry. The churches, seeing his gift, soon began to call for his services, and he had the care of four churches, until on account of ill health he was forced to resign. He was a graduate in music, and spent several years in his younger life teaching music. He was a good singer and very much enjoyed the song service at meetings. He leaves to mourn his departure his widow, Mrs. Emma Teague, son James A. Teague, of Sedalia, Mo., daughter Mrs. Harry Sparks, of the home address, and the following grandchildren: Ralph Teague, Charles and Jewel Sparks, also numerous other relatives and friends, and the churches he had served so long. I was personally acquainted with brother Teague from my earliest recollection, and there was a tie of brotherly love that bound us very closely together. A stronger desire to be a real father, a true husband and a faithful church member and pastor is seldom found in any man, and he was blessed of God to live very near his desire, as viewed by others. He was humble and placed a very low estimate upon self. As a minister he was sound in the faith, uncompromising with error, yet kind and forbearing with any who opposed his views.

The funeral services were conducted at the Missionary Baptist meetinghouse, in La Monte, and interment was made in the La Monte Cemetery. Being unable to secure a Primitive Baptist minister, Mr. Guinn, the Missionary Baptist minister of La Monte conducted the services in a very satisfactory manner. May the comfort which God alone can give be the support of his lonely companion, who has been a real preacher's wife, and may the children and grandchildren be taught of the Lord, is the prayer of the writer.

ELMER D. BOTTS.

Mrs. Dora Myers, the subject of this memoir, was the daughter of Peter and Catherine Kessler, late members of Black Rock Church, Baltimore Co., Md., and was born September 14th, 1872. She was baptized by the late Elder F. A. Chick June 4th, 1893, and proved a faithful member unto death, which occurred suddenly on November 21st, 1926. She was married to George U. Myers July 3rd, 1895, and to that union were born three children: George U., Jr., who died in infancy, Paul and Ella Myers, of 3803 Clifton Ave., Baltimore, Md. The writer was sister Myers' pastor for more than twenty-seven years, and can truly say of her that she was of the very highest type of christian womanhood, faithful in every relation of life. In her death her husband has lost a dutiful wife, her children a devoted mother, the church a much beloved and worthy member, who was ever ready to help her church and pastor with her presence and with her means. Sister Myers was blessed with a good hope through grace, and she loved to talk of spiritual things, and was favored to do so in a very interesting way, as many can testify who have been comforted and encouraged by her ability to see something to be thankful for in the midst of every affliction and disappointment. I feel that it can be as truly said of sister Myers as of any one, that to know her was to love her. Her husband and children (though both are grown) feel their loss keenly as do her brothers and sisters and many devoted friends. The church and pastor mourn the loss of a dear faithful sister. She was a friend and dear sister indeed to me and mine, and we sorrow that we shall see her on earth no more nor hear her sweet words of consolation again. But we sorrow not as those without hope, for we believe that her spirit is now resting with Jesus her beloved Savior, about whom she so much loved to talk and in whom was her hope for all good things in this life and also in that to come, and we know that according to the

promise of Jesus her Lord that he will one day come again without sin unto salvation and raise her sleeping dust (which we laid to rest in the cemetery at Black Rock Church November 24th, which was witnessed by many sorrowing friends), and "then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." The writer spoke with much emotion from parts of the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians, also from Mark xiv. 8. Brother Topping also spoke. May God bless all the bereaved ones and enable them to bear their loss with holy resignation.

Written by her pastor,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

Sister **Polly Ann O'Connor** died at her home in Halcottville, New York, August 9th, 1926, in her 83rd year. She was born in Vega, New York, February 23rd, 1844, the daughter of Jonathan and Rosina Ballard. She was united in marriage to Harmon Slauson December 15th, 1869, and settled on a farm in the same locality where she had lived. She united with the First Baptist Church of Roxbury, and was baptized by the late Elder J. D. Hubbell October 31st, 1891, and remained a faithful and worthy member of that church as long as she lived. Our dear sister had passed through sore trials in life in the loss of friends. Her father, mother, brother, and lastly her husband, all dying in less than one year, the year 1893. She acknowledged the hand of the Lord in her afflictions, saying she felt that she was situated just as the Lord would have it. She had three half-brothers, but they all preceded her to the grave, she being the last one of her father's family. In the year 1899 she was again married, to Francis O'Connor, whose death occurred February 27th, 1902, leaving her again a widow, with a stepdaughter, who remained with her. In 1912 she disposed of her farm and they moved to Kelly Corners, and in 1917 settled in Halcottville where her remaining days were spent. Sister Polly Ann (by which name she was widely known) was noted for her hospitality, and nothing gave her more pleasure in life than to entertain her friends at her home, especially her brethren and sisters of like precious faith, and was faithful in her attendance at meeting as long as her health permitted. She was afflicted for some time with heart trouble which at times caused her much suffering, which she patiently bore, desiring to be reconciled to the will of the Lord in all things, and when the end came she passed peacefully away to be at rest, we believe, with her Savior in that home where parting is unknown and no farewell tears are shed. Her stepdaughter, who is now sister Prudence Hinkley, together with her husband, cared for her in her latter days. Her funeral, which was largely attended, was held at Halcottville, conducted by her pastor, Elder George Ruston. Interment in the Vega Cemetery.

MARIETTA MEAD.

Sister **Bethiah Crosby** was born May 16th, 1840, and departed this life November 8th, 1925, at the home of her son, Mr. Wallace Crosby, Halcott Center, New York. She was the daughter of Isaac and Sally (Jones) Brown, of Brown Station, New York. She leaves to mourn their loss a son, Mr. Wallace Crosby, and two daughters, Mrs. Herman Smith and Mrs. Verne Dumond, also six grandchildren. Sister Crosby at an early age was given a love of the truth and enjoyed meeting with the Old School Baptist brethren, but never felt she was worthy of a name among them until she was made willing to follow her Lord in the ordinance of believer's baptism at the advanced age of eighty years. We remember that day well, for it seemed that if she did not speak the very stones would cry out, and with tears she told of her travel, and ended up by saying, "I felt I must come to-day even if I had to walk all the way." She was loved and esteemed by all the brethren as a precious sister in Christ. She always had an open door for the brethren to visit her, and it was her pleasure to minister to their needs. For a number of years she made her home with her son Wallace, visiting her two daughters at various times during the years. She was highly favored with loving children whose joy was to do all they could for their mother. Few brethren show more anxiety than sister Crosby did to get to meeting; the last time she was able, her son brought her to our Association, in September, 1925, and in less than two months she was taken to her heavenly home to be forever with the Lord. How her dear children miss her, yet their loss is her eternal gain. May they be comforted with the blessed thought that she is at rest.

G. R.

Mrs. Elizabeth Susan Chiswell, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life at her home, Licksville, Frederick County, Maryland, December 4th, 1926. She was born at Poolesville, Md., July 21st, 1852, and was the daughter of Thomas N. and Eleanor White Gott. She leaves surviving her two brothers and three sisters: William Gott, of Licksville, Md., Benjamin Gott, of Washington, D. C., Mrs. Thomas Davis, of Washington, D. C., sister Eugenia Gott, of Licksville, and Mrs. Dora Carr, of Leesburg, Va. She was married to John A. Chiswell November 1st, 1876. Of this marriage, three daughters are living, all of them at the Licksville home: Misses Mary and Eugenia Chiswell and Mrs. Eleanor Bourke. Sister Chiswell was baptized several years ago by Elder E. V. White into membership with the New Valley Church, Loudoun Co., Va. She was a sufferer for several years from diabetes, but the direct cause of her death was Bright's disease. Despite her failing health, she was very faithful and devoted to her church and always met with her brethren whenever possible, sometimes when it did not seem possible

for her to be there. After she became unable to get to the meetings she loved to have the members come and hold meetings in her home. She loved the truth as it is in Jesus, and her hope of salvation was entirely based on the grace and mercy of God through his Son Jesus Christ. No one suffered more patiently than she and she seemed to await with calm submission the unfolding of her Maker's will concerning her. We believe her to be at rest in the presence of her Redeemer, for she was favored to leave behind her a gracious evidence of her acceptance in the Beloved.

Funeral services were held at her home, the writer speaking from the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians. Interment in Monocacy Cemetery, at Beallsville, Md. May the dear Lord comfort all the bereaved ones, especially the daughters who so tenderly and lovingly cared for their mother all through her illness. L.

It becomes my sorrowful duty to write the obituary of my little grandson, **Jesse Paul Ragan,** who was born May 24th, 1924, and died August 10th, 1926, aged 2 years, 2 months and 16 days. This dear little boy was a bright child and all the relatives and friends loved him. He had been afflicted nearly all his life, but seemed to get well, and we all thought he would continue to live, except his dear mother. "Mother" had always thought the Lord had only loaned him to her for but a short time. It pleased the dear Lord to take him from this family here below and put him in the family of immortal glory. We feel sure that this sweet child died in the Lord, and when the trump of God shall sound the body of Jesse Paul shall rise in the image of the blessed Son of God, who says, "I am the resurrection," and join in with the heavenly host to praise the Lord around his throne. His remains were buried in the graveyard near his home after services by Elder L. H. Hatcher, and the singing of some appropriate songs on the occasion. "Father" (N. G. Ragan), we greatly sympathize with you, oh how you do miss his dear form, but just think that he has been taken home, freed from every trial of this life. "Mother" (Katie Ragan), how often have you sat by that little cradle watching your little darling, Jesse Paul. You often realized your dear Lord had loaned him to you for a little while, and so he did, and then took him from you. Your dearest Lord visited his garden, at his appointed time, and gathered his lily, little Jesse Paul, from your bosom of tender love, because he thought it best, though sad indeed to you and to all the family. May God cause you to say, The will of God be done. Children, you have lost a very dear and loving brother, but just think that your loss is his eternal gain. Mother and father, you have fought the battle of life bravely, and have had to give up others of your dear children; you are left to mourn and weep. May God be with the bereaved family, and give them comfort in every need.

J. R. HATCHER.

Hepsah Trumbo McMillan, daughter of Davis and Susan Trumbo, was born April 22nd, 1845, and died November 14th, 1926, age 81 years, 6 months and 22 days. She was united in marriage to Edward B. McMillan in December, 1895. She was a member of the Pleasant Hill Old School Baptist Church, of north of Delaware. She leaves to mourn their loss one brother, two sisters, three nephews and one niece, with many other relatives and friends. She became a member of Pleasant Hill Church at a session of the Indian Creek Association when held with the Cæsar's Creek Church, and was baptized September 5th, 1902, by Elder George Weaver. She was highly esteemed by the church. As she lived some distance away she would come to Delaware by train to meeting when circumstances would permit. I was called to attend her funeral at Westerville on the 16th, at 1:30 p. m., and held a short service. Read hymn 822 (Beebe's collection), also read from John xi. 32–35, and made a few remarks, after which her remains were taken to New Albany, Ohio, to her last resting place. She looked so natural and so peaceful when I stood beside her casket I felt I could surely say, Asleep in Jesus, and when I saw her lowered in the tomb I felt that Jesus would raise her up again. We feel our loss, but my desire is that God in his great grace may enable us to bow in submission to his will, and enable us by his grace to say in our loneliness, Blessed be the name of the Lord. She died at the home of J. B. Mason, Westerville, Ohio, where she made her home. Mrs. Mason was her great-niece.

L. E. STEPHENS.

Mrs. Ruth L. Rountree was born December 11th, 1857, in Hunt County, Texas, and departed this life June 16th, 1926, at her home in Santa Anna, Texas. She was confined to her bed for four months and eight days, and then passed away without a struggle. She was married to R. Rountree December 13th, 1877. She was the stepmother of three children, the mother of four children, and at the time of her death was the loving mother to three grandchildren. She professed a hope in Christ early in life and joined the Missionary Baptists, but July 19th, 1924, she joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Munday, Texas, and lived faithful to that faith until her death. Her husband preceded her to the grave more than two years, and a daughter nearly two years ago. She leaves to mourn six children, one brother, a number of grandchildren, and a host of relatives and friends. One daughter, being sick, could not attend the funeral.

The substance of the above was handed to me on the day of sister Rountree's funeral, this making the second time I had been called to this home on such a sad occasion, but I thank God for the manifestation of his grace shown by the children. I feel that I

could see the image of Jesus in their faces. Yes, a picture of grief colored with that satisfaction of a hope beyond the grave. May God's richest grace be poured out upon the bereaved family is the prayer of the unworthy writer,

MARTIN STONE.

ORDINATIONS.

According to appointment, the Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church, of Worcester County, Md., met November 28th, 1926, it being the time of its regular yearly meeting. The special feature of the day was the ordination of brother G. E. Coulbourne, of Cape Charles, Va., a member of the Swan Hill Church. The ministers present were C. W. Vaughn, H. H. Lefferts, George Ruston, R. Lester Dodson and H. C. Ker, pastor. These elders represented the Delaware River Association, the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, the Lexington-Roxbury Association, the Warwick Association and the Salisbury Association.

Hymn 872 (Beebe's collection) was read by Elder C. W. Vaughn. Prayer by Elder George Ruston. After which a verbal program of the order of the services was given by the pastor. The ordination sermon was preached by Elder H. H. Lefferts, text, Isaiah lii. 7. Elder H. C. Ker was chosen Moderator and Elder C. W. Vaughn Clerk. The moderator called the council together, composed of the above named Elders, and Deacons as follows: Snow Hill, J. H. Truitt and T. B. Walters; Salisbury, DeWitt Rounds and Henry Rounds; Nassaongo, J. M. Shockley and W. D. Fooks; Indiantown, Geo. F. Adkins; Little Creek, W. S. Marvel, Sr. and M. F. Hastings; Messongoes, James Hall; Forest Grove, J. D. Workman and J. R. Layfield; Frying Pan Church, of Va., W. A. Thompson and G. C. Spindle; New Valley Church, Va., H. J. White; Hopewell, N. J., W. S. Bond and J. S. Yard. Brother Coulbourne was presented to the council for questioning and a relation of his exercises and call to the ministry. After which it was unanimously decided to proceed with the ordination. The laying on of hands by the presbytery, composed of the above named Elders, followed. The ordination prayer was made by Elder Dodson; the charge was given by Elder Ruston. The right hand of fellowship was then extended by the presbytery. The closing hymn was chosen by the newly ordained minister, Elder G. E. Coulbourne, who also pronounced the benediction.

Lunch was served in the basement of the meetinghouse, and at least six hundred served.

In the afternoon at 1:30 Elder Ruston preached. The pastor made a short address. Thus a wonderful day, long to be remembered, closed.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

C. W. VAUGHN, Clerk.

MEMORIALS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Broad Creek Church, Sussex Co., Del., October 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1926, desires, though in sadness of heart, to bow to the will of God in the removal of **Elders J. C. Mellott, J. B. Slauson** and **John G. Eubanks** from our ranks by death since our last session.

Elder J. C. Mellott was young, faithful and useful in his large field of labor. His gift was very acceptable to his brethren, who loved him for the truth's sake.

Elder J. B. Slauson was beloved by many, and a faithful gospel preacher, not much past middle life when called suddenly away.

Elder John G. Eubanks was old and tried, had served more than fifty years in the Master's vineyard, a sweet preacher and singer. We have sustained great loss in the death of these dear brethren, but have every reason to believe they have entered into the joy of their Lord. May the grace of God rest upon the families of these servants of God and the churches they so lovingly and faithfully served.

We resolve, that this memorial be printed with our Minutes and published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the families and churches left by these dear brethren.

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

GEORGE W. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

MEETINGS.

The Beulah Old School Baptist Church, of Cleveland, Ohio, will hold their meeting on the fourth Sunday of each month, at 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio. All lovers of the truth are welcome. Strangers wishing to make inquiries can address Elder George L. Weaver, 2231 Lee Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 134 Moody ave., Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City), Oregon every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Those coming by Railroad over the S. P. get off at Oregon City, take the elevator to the top of the hill, turn to your left, go one block east. Not later than 9:30 a. m. Private conveyance. Those coming on Oregon City Electric get off at 7th Street, take elevator near S. P. depot to top of the hill, turn to your left, go one block east to 7th St., as above stated.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

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OF

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THE

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CORRESPONDENCE.

EPHESIANS I. 3-6.

"BLESSED be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

This letter of Paul's is addressed "to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus." All those saints at Ephesus which Paul had in mind have long since been removed from time, but the letter and its words are still in effect, and to a people even to-day, for there are yet some "faithful in Christ Jesus," who love this doctrine as did our eminent apostle Paul, who so earnestly contended for the truth as he had been taught it, giving God preeminence in all things. Man of himself has never believed the truth, never will. The vital truth of God and the fundamental principle on which it is founded have ever been distasteful to man, for one prime reason: it robs man of any glory and places the invisible God preeminent in all things. Of all creatures and things in existence man has the least right to boast or array himself in any way as prominent in the least things, or capable of even thinking a thought, much less putting one into execution, for man was the last manifestation in creation. Even the beasts of the field, grass and herbs, were brought into a manifest existence before man was, and man after being formed of earth was an inanimate lump of clay until the Lord God breathed the breath of life into his nostrils and he, man, became a living soul. Now since he has become a living soul by reason of the God-given breath he exalts himself above the Creator and limits the Holy One, circumscribes his movements and places him in an inferior position to man. If there is one thing God wishes to do or have done and he cannot do it or cause it to be done then he is not omnipotent. If there is anything, even the minutest detail that his all-seeing eye has not seen, even "from ancient times," then he is not omniscient. If there is any vacuum in space that is not filled with his presence at any and all times, then he is not omnipresent, and many have borne false witness, for Bible writers declare these three attributes as

belonging to him, and to no other. They who feel they can keep the law, or even a part of it, and reap a reward, in claiming this ability to procure a benefit for doing righteous acts and receiving blessings thereby, either in time or eternity, have broken the commandment that reads, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." For to say that salvation, all of it, or any part of it, for time or eternity is in any way conditional is bearing false witness against Christ and overthrowing the testimony of the holy men of old who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The teachings of Christ are in no uncertain terms. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Here is a positive declaration of Christ that forever bars man coming of his own free will: he must be drawn. They are not drawn against their will, as some affirm that we believe. The psalmist says, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." God's ways are equal. When he draws one he makes that one willing. There is much could be written about one's willingness and acceptance. Of course God's people accept him and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. The "elect according to the foreknowledge of God" are the only people that do, ever have or shall accept God the Father and his Son, or the salvation which he has wrought. When one talks about accepting Christ as his Savior and feels he can do something to aid his redemption or final preservation in glory, he has not accepted Christ, but he who is wholly and solely dependent upon Christ for salvation, both now and forever, does accept him as his Savior. There is not a text in the whole Bible that can be claimed as foundation for conditionalism that is not to their destruction, for such "they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." Scripture means what it says; if not, it would say what it means. No mortal hated this doctrine more than the writer, but by hard and trying experiences, both in providence and grace, he learned that all power in heaven and earth is of God, and was given unto Jesus Christ, who is God manifest in the flesh, for the accomplishment of God's purpose in earth. Then if all power in heaven and earth, which is time or eternity, the church or the world, providence or grace, is in him it is a foregone conclusion, an undeniable fact, that there is none in man. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Are we going to doubt Jeremiah's word, "the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath?" who said, "He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light." Would any walk in sadness and affliction if it could be avoided? It was by faith that Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Faith is the gift of God, therefore it was of God, and not of Moses, that he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Would Paul have been struck down and turned about in a career of which he was so zealous if left to his own will? Most assuredly not, for his will was to go to Damascus, but like all other of God's chosen, elect and precious, he was made willing in the day of God's power. This power revealed Jesus Christ, whom he was persecuting as an impostor, and now he sees "Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor," as his Savior, and accepts him whom he had rejected, because a power over which he had no control smote him to the

ground and blinded him. By the power and magnificence of "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" he was now willing to accept God the Father and God the Son. Now it was no wonder Paul could write the words at the beginning of our writing: "To the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus." Who are the faithful? They who are full of faith. These are the people to whom this writing is addressed and for whom it is kept, and it does not apply to the ones who feel they can help the Lord in his work, either for time or eternity. In sending this message to the faithful he could boldly and freely speak of them as being chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. It is useless for man to speculate on such solemn truths, or expect to reconcile them to reason. It is a senseless undertaking for one to try to make God's ways plain to any natural mind. Our finite mind cannot grasp the nearly six thousand years of time, then why dispute or attempt to explain away the mystery of that which took place before time began? There is no measure in eternity. Time and time things alone are measurable. As God is immeasurable, so are all his ways and attributes. Were his mercy or love measurable we would sometimes come to the limit and be without the mercy and law of God, but his mercy endureth forever and his love never fails. Because we cannot measure and understand God is no reason why we should deny the testimony of Paul, this faithful witness, who declares that God chose certain ones in Christ before the world was. It is essential that he did, and this being true there is a living unity between Christ and his people, for he was with the Father before the world was, and we were chosen in him. Then we must have been alive through him, or else he was then composed of dead members. It is not incredible then to one who sees God as sovereign to believe that all his people were foreknown and chosen in Christ Jesus before the world was, for when Christ came in the flesh he was just as verily God as he was verily man, God manifest in the flesh, otherwise he could not be seen, could not suffer, bleed and die; neither could he have been born of a virgin except in the flesh. When man starts out to make the Scripture plain and understandable to natural reason he has reached the height of folly. No man dares question the prerogative of God, for all he does is right. The very fact that he does it is positive proof it is right. It is according to the blessing of spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ that he chose us. It is a blessing, and not a recompense due us. "For the children [Esau and Jacob] being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." It was said unto her (Rebecca), "The elder shall serve the younger." "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." One would necessarily have to blot out such Scriptures as these in order to establish a conditional salvation for either time or eternity, and when he has eliminated this truth he has no foundation on which to stand, much less to build. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." The foundation of God is sure and unless we build on this foundation our building must surely fall, so why try to remove some of the foundation which God has laid and eliminate a timber or stone that is objectionable to the natural mind, or

try to smooth over a rough place, or make this hard and unendurable doctrine a soft, pliant thing that any man can bend about his finger to suit his own taste? Having faith in God no doctrine is too hard, and we glory in it because it abases man and exalts God. Makes us dependent creatures upon an independent God. By reason of the fact that God chose us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will, we were appointed to be children of God before time, and the appointing or choosing is done, the election is past. By an unchangeable purpose, irrevocable, impossible of change, sure and certain, all that were thus chosen are surely safe in him. Nothing that I can do can make me any other than the son of my father. Yet not for one moment does one of God's children wish to take advantage of this truth, or use it as a cloak for sin to excuse his wrong doing. Being children there is a law and reverence and a desire to do that which is pleasing in his sight. Having seen his holiness we long to be holy as he is holy; we long to live right, being dead to sin, or separated from sin, by the blood of Jesus Christ which cleanseth us from all sin. We hate sin and hunger and thirst after righteousness. He saw all from the beginning, even the behavior of all men, nothing is hung on a contingency and nothing comes as a surprise, for each event is so fitted as to be in perfect harmony with its predecessor and successor, all things going along in the stupendous plan that God alone saw and determined, and he executes his decree according to the good pleasure of his unchangeable will. The doctrine of predestination of all things is so clear that it seems all could see it, but God did not determine that all should see. This doctrine does not in any way charge God with being the author of sin, for how can he who is above any law commit sin? for sin is the transgression of the law. Further, the fact that man is not able to resist sin is not a misdemeanor chargeable to the Creator, for even in this his purpose is so far beyond our finiteness we are lost in the infiniteness of his plan. He had as rich a purpose in the transgression of our foreparents as he had and has in everything else. In speaking of Pharaoh the wicked king, it is written, "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." To which Paul also refers in Romans. If God sees fit to manifest his power in this way what right has man to interfere? All the acts of God are alike good. Also we read of the suffering of Christ in which Peter says, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." In type Joseph was also taken in the same way and sold into Egypt where he was evil treated, but afterwards he could look at his brethren who had sold him and say, Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good, to save much people alive. It is because we cannot see far enough into God's plan, and lack of faith, that we cannot see and believe in the predestination of all things. God had some wise purpose in sin coming into the world, and remember this, had he not seen the awful consequences of sin, that it would condemn the whole world by the act of one man, he would not have prepared the antidote for Adam's transgression. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

This is not contingent upon the act of any mortal, Christ alone could and did atone for all sin. "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." The atonement has been made by one offering by Christ himself without blemish or spot unto God, which is the only acceptable sacrificial offering for sin. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." The perfect gift is Christ, the good gifts refers to the temporal blessings we enjoy in nature. God's plans are as unalterable as they are unchangeable; he having designed from all eternity the course of events as they come along. Knowing exactly what Adam would do, to prepare for this he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. As we were in Adam, so also then were all that ever should be born of the Spirit in Christ. We may take two apples, and before they are ever opened there are just so many seeds in each one. Manifesting them does not add nor diminish the number. The number is fixed. As in Adam there is a fixed number of people to be born on the earth, so there is also a fixed and certain number in Christ. There is not one thing by chance. No event too large to have been managed, designed and planned by him, nothing too finite to escape his decree. It is a truth that he will be glorified in all he does and in all that is done. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." There are no teachings in the Bible to warrant the assertion that salvation for either time or eternity is contingent, or conditional, or that God is not sovereign, all-powerful, all-knowing, all-seeing. It is an admissible fact that if we do certain things the result will be so and so. If we fall into the water we shall get wet. If we put our hand into the fire we shall be burned. "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." No one denies the "if" in this, but this does not alter the predetermined act, step or thought of any man, being or thing; neither do we have the ability to alter our course, and the fact that one does or does not do a thing is proof positive that they were to have done, or refrained from doing, the thing. If by the grace of God we refrain from an evil act, it is done by his grace, and we are not rewarded for doing, but in the doing we have our reward; and, further, this does not frustrate the eternal plan of God. It is the only sure foundation upon which one can rest. Inasmuch as God saw and foreknew all things and determined this course, he saw who would and who would not live a godly life and walk carefully. There is no disposition on the part of a child of God to enjoy the pleasures of sin, for being made dead to sin he has no desire to live any longer therein, but longs to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Even while in this ungodly world he longs to keep unspotted by its evils, even though he be ostracized and have to live alone. There is no pleasure in the transient things of this existence, for there is a continual longing of the heart, soul and mind to be at rest. The only support we have here is the hope that is in mercy given us in Christ Jesus, that we are children, and if children, heirs, joint-heirs with Christ. The plan of God is so sure and certain that all hell, with ist legions of tormenting devils, can never pluck us out of his hand, but all for

whom he died, which were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, are eternally safe. This, then, is our rest, our only rest in this life. May the Lord enlighten his people that they be not entangled with unsound doctrine.

F. S. FISHER.

ATHENS, N. Y., Jan. 24, 1926.

DEAR BROTHER RUSTON:—My mind has been led back to the first love I had for the brethren, and our Elder Brother, Jesus Christ. When I was young I went to the Methodist meetings, but never believed just what they preached. I wondered a great many times how a person could get religion. It would be in my mind sometimes at their meetings to wonder if they were worshipping God in the Spirit, which I thought we had to be born with. This was a great mystery to me, how I could be born with the Spirit of God, but when it pleased God to call me from nature's darkness to his marvelous light it was plain to see that it was all of God. I was under conviction and exercise of mind for some time. I was worried, and made to realize I was a sinner. In winter I would go to the barn to milk my cows, and when I entered the door it would seem that my cows were better than I. I was so impressed with my sins that I would drop on my knees near the cows and pray to God to have mercy upon me, a sinner. It seemed that I was the worst sinner on God's footstool, and that there was no help for me. I could not help, though, asking God to have mercy upon me. I was made to know that I could not do anything of myself. I realized that God was the only one who could forgive sin, or deliver me from this state of mind. I was led to read the Scripture, but it seemed it condemned me, that I had not any part or share in the matter, and that I was an outcast, that hell was my just due. I remember one night I was going on terribly, and my wife was trying to comfort me, when there came a knock at the door, and in came my father. He said, "Hewitt, what is the matter?" and my wife said, "I believe he is going out of his mind, he is worried so about his sins." My father said, "No, he isn't, God will deliver him from under his condemnation; we must be condemned in sin before we know what deliverance is; I have experienced just what he is going through. It says in the Bible that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Oh how refreshing to one when brought to realize there are others whom the Lord has called to pass through the same affliction I was passing through. However, I was praying to God continually for mercy, but it seemed that no mercy came. I would ask God what I must do to be saved. At the time I was under conviction I belonged to the I. O. O. F., and was holding the office of N. G., and I attended the meeting every Saturday night, rain or shine; it did not make any difference what happened, I would be there. My mind was more on this than on God, but God showed me such things are the work of men, and not of God. I was condemned in it, so I had to leave the lodge. On the last night I attended I vowed to God that would be the last time I would ever be seen in an Odd Fellows' meeting, and it has been. Most of the members urged me to come back, and attend the meetings. To be condemned in sin is something the world knows nothing about, and they cannot understand it. I realized that God was just and good; if he sent my soul to hell, his righteous law approved it well. I read in the Scrip-

tures that the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned. I thought that meant me, for I knew I was not in possession of the Spirit of God, and I was doomed to destruction, but that did not stop me from praying to God for mercy, for I was made to believe that God could forgive sin; but would he forgive me my sins? that was what I wanted to know, and what worried me. One day my wife was away from home, and I felt very badly. My sins were very much impressed upon my mind. I went to the house to get my dinner, and all the time I was getting my meal I was praying to God to forgive me my sins, and prayed him to show me the way to life everlasting. I sat down to eat my dinner, and was about half through when such a change came over me. It seemed I heard a voice saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, thy sins are all forgiven thee. I was looking out of the window, and everything of nature was changed; the trees and everything I saw were praising God. I was made a new creature, everything pertaining to this world was under my feet; all earthly cares were gone. My mind was all on Jesus; the sweetest of all names is Jesus. At his name my heart doth leap. I realized that he was the way, the truth and the life. I loved him, for he first loved me and gave himself for me. It is a heaven below my Redeemer to know. I was led in this way for six months or more. I realized all things work together for good to them that love God, and who are the called according to his purpose. About that time the Methodists were holding protracted meetings, and my wife went forward. I prayed to God that if it was according to his will, to bring her to the knowledge of the truth, for I believed God had brought me from nature's darkness into his marvelous light, and his banner over me was love. Previous to this, my wife heard my father and me talking over the doctrine of the Old School Baptists, and she said it was the most terrible doctrine she had ever heard, and thought if it was true that God was very unjust to save some and the rest to send to destruction. When it pleased God to bring her to the knowledge of the truth, she believed the doctrine she once despised. She never joined the church, but was a firm believer in salvation by grace. When my wife was on her death-bed, just before she died she raised her eyes toward heaven and said, "Oh, how beautiful it looks," and after she said this she soon passed away without one struggle. It is a great comfort to have a companion pass away in this way, trusting in God, and having no confidence in the flesh. It is about twenty-three or twenty-four years ago since I first received a hope, but I did not join the church until July 19th, 1925. In this number of years I have had a great many doubts and fears. Sometimes my faith seems nearly gone, but it says in the Scriptures that if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed you can remove mountains. I would not exchange my little hope for the whole world, even if I could, and what a blessing it is to be made to believe on God and his Son Jesus Christ. I believe the Old School Baptist Church is the church of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, that he has all power in heaven and upon earth. He speaks and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast; he is of one mind, and none can change him. He is the same yesterday, to-day and for ever. I feel that God has abundantly blessed us to give us a minister of the

gospel who can open up the Scripture to his flocks that are scattered through Ulster and Delaware Counties as our pastor can. I have been thinking of the wonderful works of God in bringing a man from England to preach Jesus, and him crucified, to a few believers in America who believe in Jesus, the way, the truth and the life, and may His holy name have all the glory forever and ever. This is from a poor sinner, saved by grace if saved at all.

Your unworthy brother,

HEWITT OSBORN.

LEXINGTON, Ky., October 14, 1925.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing this good letter from sister Ellison, which I feel will be read with interest by many of the dear readers of the SIGNS. I do appreciate her kind, loving, sympathetic words, as well as those of the dear little band at Cave City. I desire to send loving greetings to the dear readers of the SIGNS, and to say that though blind my health is good, and I yet try to serve the church at Elk Lick, who seem yet willing to listen to a poor little worm of the dust.

Please change my address from Shelbyville, Ky., to 124 Warren Court, Lexington, Ky., where I live with my daughter, Mrs. White. May grace, mercy and peace be with you all.

Yours in hope of life eternal, a poor sinner saved by grace,

P. W. SAWIN.

TOPEKA, Kans., July 29, 1926.

DEAR BROTHER SAWIN:—Brother in that blessed relationship which teaches us to "be pitiful, be courteous," to have compassion one of another, even as God for Christ's sake hath had compassion on us. Knowing that you have been deeply taught in these things gives me courage to try to address you. I well remember the kind words of comfort and encouragement sent me by you a few years ago, when I was feeling cast down, which I tried to acknowledge, but do not know if my letter ever reached you. Many times since then I have wished to commune with you, but a sense of deep unworthiness to intrude myself upon your notice, and fear that it was only fleshly impressions, hindered me; and neither do I feel any more deserving of an audience with you now, but a very kind letter recently from a dear sister, hitherto unknown to me, contained a request that I should write to you, hence this effort, which I make with the knowledge that of myself I can do nothing, and without the guidance of One who is able to help I know I can write nothing of any value to one who knows all things so much better than I. But to hear of the love the little band at Cave City has for you, as expressed by sister Owens, stirred anew, I hope, the same love in my heart, and I took courage in the words, "He made the stars also." He made the greater lights, and he made the little lights also, and set them in the firmament of the heaven, and they are for signs and for seasons. I have thought much on this, and know I never can portray the beauty I hope I see, and in an attempt to mention a few things I do not expect to speak a word you do not already know. I think we all agree that the moon, with her borrowed light, is a sign of the law. All the light it has is reflected from the sun, and represents the law, with its dim light reflected from the gospel day. It was the only light of that dark time, coming of the greater light. I have often wondered why it was written, "The evening and the morning were the first day," and so on, instead of saying the morning and the evening,

but was it not so written because the evening, or night of the law dispensation, came first, before the morning of the gospel day. The law was our schoolmaster, not to bring us unto Christ as the supplied words make it read, but unto Christ. We were under its dominion unto Christ until he came and fulfilled it for us, blotting out the handwriting of ordinances which was against us and taking them away. None were left, so that if now we feel bound by one item of it we are debtors to do the whole law. But we are told to touch not, taste not, handle not any of these dead things, for they all perished with the using of them. The moon was a fit type, or sign, of that long, dark season of the law's dominion. The translators tell us that the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, which is another fallacy, for the law did perfect the very thing which it was ordained to do. Leave off the supplied word and read: The law made nothing perfect but the bringing in of a better hope, or perfected nothing except the bringing in of a better hope, for by its thunderous exactions the one atoning sacrifice was made, whereby was perfected and brought in a better hope than the law itself could ever give. The moon gives light enough by which we may grope our way until the dawning of the morning. The law gave such a dim light that only a few could see the end of the law in its workings, as Abraham. He could see, and rejoiced in the view he had of the day of Jesus Christ. "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." After the rising of that Sun, John saw the vision of the "clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet." The woman, the church, the new Jerusalem, clothed with the imputed righteousness of this glorious risen Sun. In the brightness of that Sun, the moon sinks into oblivion. The old types and shadows flee away, and as long as this day lasts, as long as the Sun of righteousness continues to shine, we have no further use for the moon. "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." "Behold now," (leave out the supplied word "is"), and, "Behold now the day of salvation." "Arise, shine; for thy light is come," and the Sun of righteousness rules this long looked for day. What a brilliant sign is the Sun of this glorious gospel day. We cannot steadfastly behold it for the brightness of it. The glories of the Sun of righteousness can only be seen through a glass darkly. While in this mortal frame we could not bear the dazzling brightness of a view of him without the vail of flesh between. He shall arise with healing in his wings. It is as though the prophet had said, He shall arise with healing in his rising. His wings signify his rising, and in his rising is our healing, our hope, not only in his appearing in this glorious morning, but in his rising from the tomb when the law could no longer hold him, for if he be not risen he is yet held by the law, and we are yet in our sins, our hope is vain and our preaching vain, for the bringing in of that better hope is not yet perfected if he be not risen from under the law. But glory to his name, the name of Jesus, which means he shall save his people from their sins, he is risen and ascended up on high and led captive the captivity of his people who were held under the law, and "he made the stars also." I had no thought of writing as I have. My mind was on the little lights and I wished to speak of them, for they seem to me to represent the little individual hopes of each one of the Lord's

people. He set them in the firmament of the heaven. There is the place where our hopes are stayed, and, dear brother, have you not seen times when the darker the night, when the moon gives no light, the brighter the stars shine? When the moon shines clearly, or when we get to looking back to the law and see how condemned we are by its ministrations, its mandates eclipsing our better hope, and all seems so dark and vain and wild, then our hope almost fades away, but soon amid all the surrounding darkness the one little star of hope that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren stands out with a vivid brightness that never quite fades away. The wise men followed the star until it came and stood over where the young child lay, and so if we follow the leadings of our hope it will always lead us to Jesus, and not to our loathsome self-righteousness for justification. Again, dear brother, have you not seen nights so dark that gloomy clouds of doubt and unbelief, sorrows and tribulations, perils and persecutions, have gathered so thick that the little star is hidden from view, and you felt that these things were against you, and feared his mercy was clean gone forever? When truly it seemed that the heavens above us are of brass and the earth beneath us is iron. Oh what a hard place to be in! Our prayers cannot penetrate the heavens; they seem to fall at our feet as empty sounds. There is no rest or comfort to be found in this hard old earth. Our cry is, "Oh that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence." He alone is able to rend the barriers that separate between us and him. O, Lord, "my goodness extendeth not to thee." In us there is no merit, but his goodness does reach down to poor finite worms of the dust. "I was brought low, and he helped me."

> "A glimpse, a single glimpse of thee,
> Would more delight my soul,
> This vain world, with all its toys,
> Could I possess the whole."

With a view of him and a manifestation of his presence the mountains of trouble and distresses which had weighed so heavily upon us melt away and flow down at his presence. There is a rift in the clouds, a little gleam of light breaks through, we look, and there is the little star of hope still shining, sure and steadfast. It never entirely fades away, but with darkest clouds all about it looks the brighter. The darker it is the more we prize the light of hope. Sometimes as we gaze at a star it twinkles out of sight for a moment, and seems to vanish away, but soon twinkles back again. So does our hope in the perplexing vicissitudes of life, it twinkles and shines, and twinkles, but always there, whether we keep it in sight or not. Sometimes it seems so little we almost lay it by. But it will be sufficient when we are called to die. But perhaps a lurking enemy suggests that in some way we have merited the little light we have. Our hands have gotten us this. Fleshly pride is stirred, and we forget the greater Light from which all the little lights obtain their brightness, and ere we are aware our little star has twinkled away in darkness. Sometimes for days we sit in darkness and eat no pleasant bread; we are looking only at earth and see nothing but gloom, and oh for me the way is dark, and I am often sighing for the dear Sun of righteousness to rise. It is to thee, dear Lord, that I am crying, Illumine with righteousness my darkened skies. But the stars are set in the firmament of the heaven, and are for signs and for seasons. We must look above for our hope.

"Sorrows like a surge may roll,
And wild the storms may be;
Look above, O trembling soul,
The sun still shines for thee."

We long for the companionship of those of like precious faith, and also of like trials and conflicts, and in our longing comes with renewed sweetness the one ever-abiding hope that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. In our abstraction we had for a little while forgotten that sweet assurance, but in that love for each other we see a reflection of the greater love of the Father of light for his afflicted and poor people. In great mercy he has returned unto us, the mountains flow down, and, lo, our little star has twinkled back again. What true typical signs the little stars are of our seasons of darkness and of light. These are the morning stars that sang together, saying, The Lord hath done great things for us whereof we are glad. "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul," for we are saved by hope. Oh give thanks unto the Lord, for his mercy endureth forever, for he made the stars also. But one star differeth from another star in glory. We see that it is so. Some shine so brightly and some are so dim we can scarcely see them, yet, though their brightness may be partly hidden under a bushel, still we do discern them, and long to see them shine that God may be glorified. The command to let your light shine is unheeded. They do not glorify our Father in heaven by keeping concealed the good work he has done for them, because they feel that the bushel or measure of themselves shows them to come far short of what they think the measure of a christian should be, so it is hidden under the vail of flesh and never mentioned. But glory to his name, whether we ever see the outward evidence of their little hope or not, they are of that innumerable host that no man can number, and none of them is lost for whom that better hope is perfected, for the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.

"There all together we shall meet,
Together we shall sing;
A countless throng to swell the song,
Of Moses and the Lamb."

I know I should apologize for this long letter, but that is my failing. If it is of God and of the truth you will enjoy it; if not, it will fall to the earth from which it sprung. In that case, then I ask you to think with charity of a poor weak creature who has tried only to show remembrance to a precious old servant of the Lord. Do not let what I have written do any harm. I often feel that I should not send my imperfect thoughts to those young in experience and perhaps not fully estabiished in the truth, lest I should lead them astray, while in my great unworthiness and ignorance I feel diffident in approaching those whom I esteem great in the kingdom of heaven, yet I feel that it is safer for me, for they will more surely detect my errors, and correct me as I need. So I am trusting you to not let pass any thing that seems to you as idle speculation, or contrary to sound doctrine. I greatly need the prayers and loving watchcare of all saints. Dear old soldier, you will soon be discharged. The bounty which has been dealt out to you so plenteously here will be enlarged. The night is far spent and joy cometh in the morning. I, myself, am in my seventieth year, and will not be far behind you, if indeed I do not go on before.

"Oh may we meet and be complete,
And long together dwell,
And serve the Lord with one accord,
And so I bid farewell."

Pardon if you can, and remember at the throne of grace the least of all, your unworthy sister,

MARY ELLISON.

HAVRE, Mont., Nov. 8, 1926.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—I hope you will pardon me for attempting to address one so gifted in setting forth the deep things of the Scriptures, but I felt so blessed and enlightened in reading your editorial on Revelation x. in the October SIGNS that I feel to drop you a few lines on what I believe those "seven thunders" are, or rather what they represent, and if in error, I hope you may be given a clear view of them, and not be misled by what I write. Thunder always follows the lightning's flash and is not representative of characters, as the "four beasts" and "four and twenty elders," but as the lightning's flash of God's revelations has been sounding down through all the dispensations of time, so also, these "seven thunders" have been rolling on and on, proclaimed by the prophets and confirmed by Christ and the apostles, together with all the hosts of the redeemed throughout all ages. I feel constrained to believe they represent the seven-fold government of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in this connection I wish to quote a little from Huntington. First. He is King of glory. "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory."—Psalms xxiv. 9, 10. Second. He is King of Zion. (Pasalms ii.) Third. He is King of nations, "Who would fear thee, a King of nations? for to thee doth it appertain: forasmuch as among all the wise men of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, there is none like unto thee."—Jer. x. 7. Fourth. He is King of all (earthly) kings. "And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords."—Rev. xix. 16. Fifth. As the God of armies he is King over all devils. "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."—Eph. iv. 8. Sixth. As the holy One is King over all sins. "For sin shall not have dominion over you," &c.—Rom. vi. 14. Seventh. As the resurrection and the life, he is King over death, the Lord of life and of death. "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes."—Hosea xiii. 14. "For to this end Christ both died and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living."—Rom. xiv. 9. Again those seven thunders, or seven-fold goverment, are spoken of in Proverbs ix. 1: "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars." God is wisdom, and those seven pillars I understand to be the seven-fold government upon which this wonderful house, or the eternal sovereignty of God, doth rest for time and eternity. It seems to me to be broadly encompassed by Christ when he says in John xiv. 2, "In my Father's house [Christ] are many mansions." As the eternal King they are all treasured up in him; all those mansions of grace, mansions of eternal love, of mercy, of judgment, of an eternal priesthood to whom and for whom all creation shall render eternal praise and glory. "And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not," showing here that this great mystery of God's eternal sovereignty is sealed, hid away from the eyes of the unbelieving world, and can never be received into the heart of man as true knowledge but

by the Spirit of revelation, but when this great change takes place the believer then begins to see how wonderful is Revelation v. 13, 14: "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. And the four beasts [the redeemed] throughout all ages said, Amen."

Yours in weakness,

JOHN GIBSON.

CARTHAGE, Mo., July 7, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The July number of the SIGNS is at hand, and it reminds me that I have not yet paid you the price that I have established in my mind as what I ought to pay, and so I am inclosing payment for the last six months of the year. I think I have some appreciation of the sweet and deep spiritual truths it sets forth, but I cannot say whether it brings more joy or more sorrow. The only basis I have for a hope is the sorrow for sin. I thank God that he still permits me to hunger and thirst after righteousness and to grieve for my sins. I think this proves that he has not cast me utterly away, and that his mercy is not clean gone forever. But when I perceive the heights and depths of the understanding of spiritual things that some of the writers have I wonder if indeed I have ever been a wayfaring one on the way that is said to be so plain that even a fool (if a wayfaring man) cannot err therein. If I have been on the way, and still am, why have I learned so little while others have learned so much? I ask myself, Has God blessed them more than others in grace and knowledge of the truth, or have they attained to it by continual striving to show themselves workmen that need not be ashamed? It seems that the July number is unusually good.

I had an experience last spring so unusual that I think it worth telling: The Missionary Baptists of this city held a meeting that they called a Bible Conference. The speaker with the biggest reputation was Dr. Louis of New York City. He edits a paper for his denomination that is said to have the greatest circulation of any of their periodicals, but I do not remember its name. There were two other speakers, one a minister in the nearby city of Joplin, Mo., and the other a teacher of the Bible in some college. The meeting lasted eight days, with two sessions daily. I attended every one that I could, and now I come to the wonderful part: I did not hear any Arminian doctrine. One discourse was devoted to a discussion of Arminianism, and it seemed to me I had never heard a clearer or more truthful exposition of the subject. This speaker, Dr. Madeoris (teacher), I thought about equal to Dr. Louis. He said he would have it taught that salvation is by grace alone, and regretted that Arminianism was preached in some Baptist pulpits. They were entirely free from all objectionable exhortations to "accept the Savior," &c., as is the custom with popular preachers as a rule. They said very little about missions, if anything. I cannot recall anything except that Dr. Louis said he had sent his daughter somewhere as a missionary, and spoke of how hard the parting was. Carthage is preeminently a city of religions, but I have not heard anything else here like these meetings were. How do you explain a meeting like that among Missionary Baptists?

Lest I grow wearisome I close.

Your sister in hope,

GRACE VEECH SMITH.

LIMA, Colorado.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—Just a few thoughts on Paul's admonition to Timothy, as found in 1 Tim. iv. 16: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." I think what Paul wrote to Timothy is to all God's ministers to-day, and forever will be. The first thing for a preacher to do is take heed to himself: Am I walking right before others? Am I letting my light shine? Am I doing unto others as I would have them do unto me? Am I leading an honest, upright life before all the world? If not, I am a stumbling-block, no benefit to my Master's cause or to his church. Am I preaching the doctrine, Jesus Christ the foundation-stone, "in whom all the building, fitly framed together, growth unto an holy temple in the Lord"? for he is the author and the finisher of all God's elect people. "For in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." Paul did not mean to convey the idea to give them eternal life, for they already had eternal life, he meant their walk, their duty to God, to the church, to one another, and before the world, too. I have heard some say they did not care what the world said about them. I do, for we read in God's word that we must have a good report of them without as well as within. My desire is to treat all right, and live up to the principles of the Bible, but when it comes to the doctrine I know no man, for I know the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto them which are saved it is the power of God. It seems that some are trying to bring in new things, or depart from the old landmarks that our forefathers taught from the time of John the Baptist until the present, but thanks be to God, some are standing firm upon the old apostolic doctrine and practice. God will not leave himself without a witness, so the true doctrine will be preached until the end of time. Brethren, stand fast to the end though we meet with many trials, think what our blessed Savior suffered for us: some of his disciples went back and walked no more with him. We read he that will live godly shall suffer persecution, so let us take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine. I have had a hope in the Lord Jesus for nearly fifty years, and find W. C. Perdue is hard to control, yet I try day after day to keep the old man (flesh) down, but when I would do good evil is present. Here we stagger along like a drunken man, seldom on that straight road which leads us to Jesus, so if we ever reach heaven it will be by grace, and grace alone.

With christian love for all God's little ones, I ask an interest in your prayers.

W. C. PERDUE.

VERNON, Texas, Nov. 29, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As the year 1926 is nearing the end and my subscription has about expired, I will once more subscribe for the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which still is fighting for the truth. When I am made to meditate upon the works of the blessed Master I wonder how long the great Jehovah will have mercy upon me. I cannot see how he can be merciful to such a wretch as I am, for I cannot see one good thing that I do. The good I would I do not, and the evil which I would not that I do, yet he has spared me to see another year about to close.

I wish to tell you how I enjoy reading the good old SIGNS. The editorials and letters are a feast to this old sinner, and

when I read the good letters of those dear brethren and sisters who are so far from the church it makes my heart ache for them. The Lord has blessed our little church with a good pastor and our little flock is at peace, which is a great blessing I hope I am thankful for. Dear brother Hardy was with us at our October meeting, as was also brother Green, our pastor. They were blessed with the Spirit, and each had a message that comforted and fed all to whom it was sent. God knows just what each one of his children needs and prepares each to receive such blessings as they nave need of.

I see that some are careless about sending in their dues for the SIGNS, and do not see how any can be so neglectful of their duty. I want the good old paper as long as I can pay for it, but when I cannot pay for it I will ask to be cut off, for I do not want to be a burden. I am only a poor old sinner, saved by grace if saved at all. My desire is to help, not to hinder. I hope as God has blessed each one they will come forward and pay their dues. If we love to read the SIGNS we should love to pay our dues and help the editors and publishers who labor for our comfort and enjoyment, and they are standing firm in declaring the truth as it is set forth in the Scriptures without fear of what man may say or do. Oh how I would hate to see the SIGNS go down. We are commanded to help bear one another's burdens, so now, dear brethren and sisters, let us try and help hold up the hands of the editors and publishers, that our dear old paper may not have to discontinue. I hoped to be able to send in some new subscribers, but the great religionists of to-day cannot bear the truth as it is in Christ our Lord.

I must close. Forgive me for trespassing upon your valuable time. May God bless and prosper you and may his richest blessings rest upon you and your families. Now that I have written I beg you to pardon all mistakes, as this may be the last time I will be spared to send my dues, for life is uncertain but death is sure.

I remain, as ever, your old sister in hope, (MRS.) M. E. PEDEN.

SHELBYVILLE, Ky., Jan. 11, 1927.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—Were it possible for me to wield the pen of a ready writer I might consume pages in telling you my appreciation and enjoyment of your "New Year's Greeting," and many other pieces written by yourself and other dear writers for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but as I have not I want to in a feeble way tell you your "Greeting" brought tears of joy to my eyes, and I trust aroused a feeling of thankfulness that we still have the dear old SIGNS with us. May it continue to be published in the same old way as long as I am permitted to stay here, for I consider it one of my greatest blessings. It would be a great pleasure to meet you and your associates, but if we never meet in this world I trust we may when this life is finished.

Yours in hope,

H. L. VAWTER.

LEXINGTON, Ky., Dec. 27, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please give notice through the SIGNS that my address is now 124 Warren Court, Lexington, Ky., instead of Sheelyville. I am centrally located, and any inquiring Baptists will have no trouble in finding me. I will also be glad to hear from any of the dear saints, as I am a shut-in all winter.

Wishing the SIGNS and all its dear readers a bright and prosperous new year, I am, yours in hope of eternal life,

P. W. SAWIN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1927.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PHILIPPIANS III. 1.

"FINALLY, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe."

As we now address you we are much impressed with the thought as to who we are, and our aim is what we do. We feel that the truth of God has been printed in our paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for ninety-four years, and we are quite sure that the truth of God as set forth by all the editors and correspondents has not met with favor by all those who have read it; but the truth will stand. We are glad that we are permitted to write the household of faith and to have such imperfections as may be noticed, borne with by all the dear brethren. In writing you, brethren and sisters, we can only call attention to such thought as we are blessed to have, which we hope may be to the stirring of your pure minds and greater and richer things than are written be brought to view. Where does all this come from? If we behold righteousness, it is because of the great love wherewith he has loved us, and in what a wonderful manner these things are brought to our understanding. To confess the truth, if one has greater gift in understanding he has no reason to boast, because both are of the Lord. Communication, either by writing or speaking, is made by the righteousness of God revealed in the heart, and out of the abundance of the heart we communicate to each other of the riches of God's grace, and to the worshipper of God rejoicing in Christ Jesus springs up. Jesus in speaking of the living water which he would give, says it would be as a well of water springing up into everlasting life. The virtues of life in the children of God are continually connecting into the relations of the gift of God, which faith represents the virtues, and is referred to as the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen, but with patience wait for it. The treasure reserved in heaven is of such abundance the child of grace can live on just a foretaste, and the foretaste gives strength for every trial that the poor pilgrim is called to pass through during the entire pilgrimage in this time state. Paul, in the address referred to, must have beheld a rejoicing which was not in the Lord as we find in our day. Some have rejoicing because it comes to them that they are specially appreciated by the brethren, which is exaltation of the flesh. If we love the brethren we are considering the binding relations that unite them in one bundle of love, which is in Christ. We are often in meditation concerning the history which is written in our walk and conversation, and when we would be weighed we are found wanting and cannot do the things we would, which gives us nonfellowship for the flesh and there is no confidence in the flesh. The fruit is proof of the tree, and when we find fruit such as self-justification in worldly lust and rejoicing in our self-esteem, lifted up with pride, we are sure

that those showing such manifestations are not rejoicing in the Lord, but in their own works; yet they express love for the brethren, but such will not strive to keep the unit of the Spirit in the bonds of peace. We believe that those who rejoice in the Lord will not sacrifice the order of the house of God to satisfy the lust of such evil designers and lovers of self. Hence they are drawn into the drafting of the soldiers of the cross, and their commanding General is possessed of such infinite wisdom that he knows the ways of the enemy and turns every way and leads his soldiers into victory. The victory was not won by the physical prowess of the men, but the standing is in him and when he commands his soldiers are obedient and they are brought to victory without carnal weapons. They behold Jesus as their all-sufficiency in all their warfare, victory and eternal peace. Oh that all men would praise the Lord. We feel at times that if all men would praise the Lord we would enjoy our religious relations among the brethren in greater degree, but if such were the case the flesh would not be crucified and we would be without cares, which is in contradiction to His way, and the way the apostle puts it, which states, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live." Dear brethren, press toward the mark of the high calling of God in Christ, rejoicing in the Lord, and when you are made to pass through fiery trials think it not strange concerning those trials as though some strange thing had happened. You must go through Samaria. We have a feeling of thankfulness for the abundant mercies bestowed upon us through volume ninety-four, and truly hope to feel the arm of power to bring salvation resting with us through volume ninety-five, and desire to greet you, brethren and sisters, in our rejoicing in the Lord, and truly hope that you are drawn in love to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to give contributions of your feelings in love for the truth for its columns, and also to give it financial support in the way of prompt payment of your subcriptions, and encourage others of the faith to subscribe, and those who can afford to subscribe should not depend upon the reading of a copy belonging to another, else you rejoice that you have saved the two dollars. The publishers are serving us in publishing the truth and should be amply supported in their assistance in adding to the comfort of Zion. We love you and hope you may be made to rejoice in the Lord during the coming year, and may we be kept in the unity of Spirit and bond of peace. Brethren and sisters, we thank you for your kind forbearance during the past year, and we feel that perhaps you have not agreed with all we have written, but the mantle of charity you have thrown over our infirmities gives us encouragement to continue, and should you in volume ninety-five note expressions in which we might not be fully agreed, we hope the Spirit will lead us all in the way of truth, that we may behold our Lord and Savior and be made to rejoice in the Lord. C. W. V.

WATCH YOUR DATES.

WE wish to request our subscribers when sending in their subscriptions to see that the date on the little pink slip bearing their address is changed. If not changed, please let us know immediately (for that signifies you have not been given credit for the money sent) and we will look into the matter. By consulting that date you can tell at a glance to what time your subscription is paid. Dec. 26 means that your subscription is paid to December, 1926; June 25 means your subscription is only paid to June, 1925, &c.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder H. H. Lefferts.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 13th, 14th and 15th, 1926, to the churches composing the same, and to the churches, meetings and associations with which we correspond, sends greeting in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—We take pleasure in following the custom long established in this Meeting, of addressing you in the form of a Letter to be circulated among ourselves and among those with whom we correspond. It has been suggested that this year we take up the question of church sovereignty and state to you our position as a body upon this question of vital importance to true Baptists. By church sovereignty is meant the right of each church of our faith and order to govern its own internal affairs. The question has been propounded: To what extent is each separate church organization independent of other church bodies of its same faith and order, and to what extent are these separate entities responsible to one another for the maintenance of good order and sound doctrine? The Scriptures of the New Testament abundantly prove the wonderful and vital union that binds together the churches of the saints. Whether these churches are in the east or in the west, whether in the north or in the south, they are in a most lively sense tied together in one bundle of life in Christ Jesus. "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."—Eph. ii. 19-22. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."—Eph. iv. 4-6. We are further told in this same chapter in Ephesians that Christ is head over all things to his church, and that from him "the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." These Scriptures will suffice to show our position on the doctrine of the wholeness and the oneness of the church of Jesus Christ. While scattered over different parts of the country, all brethren of the one true faith and of the one true gospel order are all parts and members of the one complete and spiritual body of the Lord Jesus Christ. But we do most emphatically assert that of this body, Christ himself is the one and only living Head. He, it is true, has ascended into heaven is set down at the right hand of God, yet this does not by any means make him absent from his church on earth. From the throne of God and of the Lamb, proceeds the living water of the river of life, his own eternal and pure Spirit which directs and governs the church here in the world. By this living Spirit ministering gifts are called and qualified to serve the Lord's people, and by this same Spirit the church is kept alive and members from time to time added unto her. This same Spirit reveals God's doctrine to the subjects of his grace, and this same Spirit through the same grace teaches each one

the denial of worldliness and ungodly lusts. We emphasize this Headship of Christ over his body, the church, because we want it understood that no man or body of men has ever been delegated the right or power to lord it over the house of God. From ancient times this has been one of the outstanding features of all true Baptists, that they have ever denied the right of men to govern them ecclesiastically and have ever refused to hand over their consciences into the keeping of men equally as fallible as themselves. Centralization is the tendency of this present age in which we live. Local forms of self-government are gradually becoming obsolete, and authority finds itself more and more concentrated in the central government. This same tendency grows apace among the various religious denominations of the day, so that we find presbyters, synods, councils, bishops, &c., with powers granted them by their respective bodies to legislate for the various individual organizations and to tell them what must be preached and what not, what must be practiced and what not. This tendency toward centralization of spiritual power in the hands of men, Baptists have ever resisted and will resist so long as they remain true Baptists. While it is blessedly true that all the churches of the saints are members of one and the same spiritual body of Christ, let it be remembered that this is a union in which all are in one great fellowship and the word "fellowship" means an associating together and a communing together of equals, not of superiors or of inferiors. These brethren are all on the one spiritual plane, no one superior to the others, no one of them inferior to the others. This makes the churches of the saints fellows one of another. It does not make any one church superior to all the others, nor does it endow any one church or any one man with such spiritual superiority above his fellows as to make them or him able to guide and direct the others in their spiritual affairs. Inasmuch then as the churches of the saints are equals one of another, it is their blessed privilege and right to confer together upon all matters concerning their welfare, it is right that they should seek counsel and advice from one another. This will they do if they are right-minded toward one another and if charity abounds in their hearts towards the brotherhood. Each individual church has its own inalienable right to govern its own affairs in the light of God's written word and by the guidance of his Holy Spirit; but no church has any right to set aside the New Testament as its rule of faith and practice. Just as soon as it does defy and set at naught the New Testament, that moment, unless that church repents and returns to its first works, it ceases to be a gospel church. So long, however, as any and all the churches of the saints continue to walk in the doctrine and order of the gospel, that long it is the privilege and right of each separate church organization to judge who are proper persons for baptism into its membership, to judge who shall be maintained among them, and, if necessary, who shall be excluded from membership; each church has its own right to choose its own deacons, to call its own pastor, to regulate its own business affairs, to fix the times for regular meetings and to appoint its seasons for observing the Lord's Supper. No sister church has any right to interfere in these internal workings of another church. But, if churches become satisfied in their own minds that a sister church has in any measure sidestepped true gospel procedure in any instance, it

is the right of these churches to call, in the right manner, the erring one's attention to her mistake. If such notice goes unheeded, sister churches may and ought to proceed to labor gospelly with the erring church, but they must not forcibly inject themselves into her midst and compel her to take their advice in straightening up her affairs. If she will not hear them after the proper laboring steps have been taken, then these churches can and should withdraw fellowship from her and let her alone until she either is brought to her right mind or left to go into extinction. Several years ago some Baptists conceived the idea that Associations were in some measure endowed with ruling powers over the churches belonging to these associations. This is a new-school idea and has no place among us. The Virginia Corresponding Meeting was organized at a meeting held with the Occoquan Church, Prince William County, Virginia, in October, 1836. The brethren composing the meeting represented churches that had withdrawn from the Columbia Association on account of their connection with the New School party. One of the objects in forming the Virginia Corresponding Meeting was to do away with the assumed authority sometimes exercised over the churches by constituted associations. For this reason the name "Corresponding Meeting" was decided upon instead of the word "Association," which term had come to possess, in the minds of some, a disposition to wield usurped authority over the churches. The name "Corresponding Meeting" means just what it says, and no more: a meeting of sister churches of the same gospel faith and order to learn of one another's condition and welfare by means of letters and by messengers.

It has been indeed to us this year, as ever, a sweet and precious privilege to welcome among us your ministers, brethren and messengers. May you long be spared to favor us at these stated times with your presence and encouragement. The Lord willing, our next session is appointed to be held with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, beginning on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1927, and continuing three days, at which time we shall hope to again greet your messengers and ministers and to receive your correspondence.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Mod.

K. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at the home of the bride's parents, near Snow Hill, Md., Nov. 20th, 1926, Preston West and Miss Beatrice Sirman.

By the same, at his residence in Delmar, Md., December 23rd, 1926, Glenn Wilson and Miss Mary Bell. Both of Vienna, Md.

By the same, at his residence, December 29th, 1926, Clyde Shockley, of Salisbury, Md., and Miss Lucinda Hales, of Snow Hill, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Asa Howard was born February 15th, 1845, near Ft. Worth, Texas. At the age of seventeen he volunteered in the Southern Confederacy cause, and served two years in the Cavalry service. While in the army he became greatly troubled over his lost and ruined condition, and returning home, at the age of nineteen, went to old Bethel Church, near Ft. Worth, and related an experience of grace, and asked for a home among the brethren, who were of the Regular Predestinarian faith and order. He was received in full fellowship, and baptized by Elder William Bedford. Soon thereafter the church saw a wonderful gift in this young brother and liberated him to speak in church meetings wherever God in his providence cast his lot. At the age of twenty-two he was ordained to the full work of the ministry, by a presbytery consisting of Elders Bedford, Dethridge and others. Thus began the preaching career of a very noted and able servant of God. He traveled on horseback over several states preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ. He was married in early life to Miss Mary Hensley, she living thereafter

seventeen years. After her death Elder Howard did little else than go among the churches, and was associated with such men as William Rogers, I. W. Bowers, Sam McKelvey, J. S. Collins, A. D. Bourland, Solon Gipson, J. A. Rutledge, L. E. Skinner and many others of like faith and order. Elder Howard was poor in this world's goods, but rich in faith, reserved in manner, bold as a lion in the stand, uncompromising between truth and error he stood squarely upon the principles of doctrine held to and published by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He had no fellowship for conditional Arminianism, but preached the eternal sovereignty of God in all things. I have spent many pleasant hours in our home with this man of God talking of the beauties and glories of God's kingdom and have traveled much with him, but his life's work is finished and his days accomplished and the Lord of hosts has been pleased to call him home to his reward, which is eternal life, where all the saints of God will have ceased from their labors and entered into that rest which awaits all the redeemed of the Lord, and there by grace be enabled to praise his blessed name forever and ever. Elder Howard passed out of this life November 2nd, 1926, at Austin, Texas.

W. S. BOURLAND.

Mary Susan Rogers was born August 17th, 1843, and died January 6th, 1927, at her home in Cleburne, Texas, aged 83 years, 4 months and 19 days. She was born in Brandon, Mississippi, her father being R. G. Crozier, a Methodist preacher, and a native of Enniskilleen, Ireland, who died at the age of ninety-eight years. In early life Mr. Crozier moved with his family to Galveston, Texas, and later to Dallas, Texas, where sister Rogers was, at the age of seventeen, married to R. C. Donaldson, a surveyor, and to that union were born seven children, four of whom survive. Mr. Donaldson died in 1890 and four years later she was married to Elder W. L. Rogers, an Old School Baptist preacher, who preceded her to the tomb by three years. Her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren number more than one hundred and fifty. In her early life she was a devoted church and Sunday-school worker, being deeply impressed (as she thought) to help save lost sinners, and entered the work with a zeal known to but few people, and so labored, believing she was doing God's service, until after her first husband died and she married Elder Rogers, who from the beginning (being a preacher of righteousness) instructed her more perfectly. She has often said to the writer of this memoir that it pleased God, through the abundance of revelation to her last husband, to show her her error in the works of the flesh and manifest that salvation is of the Lord, and for the past thirty years it can be truthfully said of sister Rogers that no one has been more firmly established in the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God in all things than was this dear sister. Few people in this world are possessed with the stamina and courage this beloved woman had. It seemed to have been her meat and drink to serve others, never thinking of her own welfare, but living almost wholly for her neighbors. Being a cancer specialist, she spent much of her time in waiting upon and doing for suffering humanity, and oftentimes without one cent of remuneration, yet amid all her cares and labors for the poor it was the pride of her life to wait upon and entertain the Old School Baptists in her home, and often at associational meetings she would provide for more than one hundred, and never retire until all were comfortably located. Such christian love, energy and charity are seldom seen. The little church at Cleburne, Texas, has lost a faithful and worthy member, the city and community a beloved and honored citizen, her children a wise, kind and prudent mother. But her days and labor on earth have ended; God in his wise providence has seen fit to call her home to her reward to an inheritance which is pure and undefiled and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, and we trust and believe our dear sister, with all the redeemed host of the Lord who have been called from this state of mortality (even the multitude that John saw on the isle of Patmos), are enjoying the election of God and the meritorious benefits of the shed blood of Jesus Christ, and are enabled by his divine grace to sing praises around his throne to his worthy name for ever and ever.

Written by request.

W. S. BOURLAND.

S. Frances Collard departed this life in Warwick, N. Y., December 20th, 1926, after an illness of about three hours. She was the devoted wife of Deacon Hiram S. Collard, to whom she had been united in marriage on December 23rd, 1874, by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, in the Old School Baptist meeting-house in Middletown, N. Y. Five children were born of this union, all dying young, the last, a daughter of twelve and one-half years of age, having been drowned. This was a terrible blow to our late sister, but she was given to see the hand of the Lord in the matter. Sister Collard was born September 13th, 1851, near Bloomingburg, Sullivan County, N. Y., of the parentage of Deacon Jairus L. and Elizabeth Purdy Harding. She was baptized in the fellowship of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church, July 6th, 1879, where she remained a faithful member until her demise. She was a kind and friendly neighbor, ever willing to serve to the best of her ability when opportunity afforded, and her kindred in Christ will long remember the warmth of the spirit with which they were always received and en-

tertained in her home. About three years ago she lost her sight, and finally she and brother Collard sold their little farm at New Vernon, N. Y., and during the past year moved to Warwick, N. Y., to live in the home of her niece. A few months ago she was induced by some good friends in New York City to go there for an operation on her right eye by a noted specialist, with excellent results, and after the recovery of her sight in the right eye she returned to the home of her niece, where it seemed she had every reason to believe that she would be spared many years to attend her meetings and see again her husband, friends and brethren in the Lord, but as she arose on the morning of December 20th she complained of not feeling well and within a very few hours the candle of her life had gone out. It is hard to understand why she should have been called home at this time, but the Lord doeth all things well, and we desire to be submissive to his will.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer, and interment was made in the New Vernon Cemetery. May the Lord console our brother during the remaining days of his sojourn here and enable us all to feel that for us "to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

R. LESTER DODSON.

Mrs. Jane Barker was born January 1st, 1851, in the village of Bungay, Suffolk County, England, the daughter of Charles and Eliza Kemp, and died December 16th, 1926, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Ruth Pierce, Cleveland, Ohio, in her seventy-seventh year. When three years of age the family moved from Bungay to Ipswich, England, where they remained until she was about nine years old, when she was hired out in domestic service and the shoemaking industry, where she learned the trade of shoebinding. At this time shoes were all made by hand. The privilege of attending school was denied her on account of funds, and her education was obtained by reading books and papers as she could find and attending a school on Sunday. Early in life she received a hope, and December 6th, 1869, was received and baptized in the fellowship of the Bethedsa Strict Baptist Church by the late Mr. Thomas Polk. The hymn used on the occasion was "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand." She was married in the same church May 9th, 1871, to Mr. William Barker, and to this union were born ten children, the husband and three children having preceded her in death. In the year 1881 the family moved to Canada, residing in London, Ontario, for two years, then came to Cleveland, Ohio, and after many years of hardship they established a home. March 16th, 1902, sister Barker united with the Beulah Old School Baptist Church, of Cleveland, where she remained a steadfast and faithful member, always attending the meetings of the church, and her home was always open for the entertainment of the brethren. She also served the church as clerk. We, as the church, will miss her. Her counsel and presence will never be forgotten, but we believe our loss is her eternal gain and bow in humble submission to the will of God, who doeth all things well.

I tried to speak words of comfort to a large gathering of relatives and friends, using by her request Isaiah xxvi. 4: "Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." After the services at the church we laid the body in rest beside the husband to await the call of the Master in the resurrection. May the Lord bless the children, the grandchildren and many friends, and may they all be given strength to trust in the Lord forever, and may we be made to see that in him only, is everlasting strength.

GEOBGE L. WEAVER.

Charles E. Miller was born October 3rd, 1851, and departed this life December 15th, 1926, aged 75 years, 2 months and 12 days. He leaves to mourn their loss, his wife, sister Sarah E. Miller, four sons: Burdice A., Chinchilla, Pa.; Melvin R., Dalton, Pa.; Marvin L. and Howard D., at home with their mother, one daughter, Mrs. Maude A. Johnson, of Binghamton, N. Y., three sisters, Mrs. Ellen A. Ward, Montdale, Pa., Mrs. G. W. Goodrich and Mrs. Elizabeth Nichols, Oliphant, Pa., fifteen grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. One daughter, Mabel E., died May 15th, 1890, and a son, Floyd A., September 29th, 1901. He was married to Sarah E. Stanton October 27th, 1872. Brother and sister Miller were received into the fellowship of the Abington Old School Baptist Church at Justus, Pa., about thirty-eight years ago. They had a pleasant home, where Old School Baptists were always welcome. Brother Miller was chosen Deacon in August, 1914, which office he held at the time of his death. He was a devoted husband, a kind and loving father and a good neighbor. He will be missed in the family, in the church of which he was a worthy member and in the community where he had lived all his life. As a brother he was deeply conscious of his own imperfections, and did not look for perfection in his brethren. He was always ready to confess his own faults, but slow to speak of the faults of others. He loved peace rather than war, and deplored any tendency to strife and contention among his brethren. In doctrine he believed in the absolute predestination of all things and events, the eternal vital unity of Christ and the church, salvation by grace, and grace alone.

Funeral services were held at his home on Saturday, December 18th. Elder D. M. Vail spoke words of comfort to the mourning ones, using as a text Psalms xlvi. 7, 8, after which his mortal remains were laid to rest in the Miller Cemetery, near his

home. May the Lord in his infinite mercy comfort the mourning ones, is the prayer of the unworthy writer, who had known brother Miller for more than fifty years.

Written by request.

G. W. GOODRICH.

Robert Buford Tompkins, the subject of this sketch, was born at Whitmell, Pittsylvania Co., Va., June 26th, 1876, and died December 7th, 1926, at his home at Vinton, Va. When about twenty years of age he united with the Primitive Baptist Church in his county, and was a faithful member. At the age of twenty-six he was married to Miss Nunce Graves, of Bedford County, and to that union were born five children, three sons, and two daughters. After living in Bedford a number of years he moved to Vinton, Va., where for more than twenty years he held a responsible position with the Norfolk & Western Railway Company. In 1918 his faithful companion was called from the family circle. She was a good woman and a member of the Primitive Baptist Church. Later he married Miss Nancy Ruth Dyer, of Roanoke. Several years ago his health began to fail and he underwent several operations, but to no avail, and about fourteen months ago he was forced to give up his work, after which his health failed rapidly. He was a great sufferer from a dreadful and incurable malady, but he bore his sufferings with patience, and was never heard to murmur or complain. He was always submissive to his Master's will, and it made those who saw him suffer have a different outlook on life, for they felt if he could bear his pain with a smile they had no right to complain. The good Shepherd has claimed another of his flock, so we who are left to mourn our loss can only say, "Thy will be done." He loved his church, and the ministers and brethren always found a welcome in his home. His seat was always filled in his church when he was able, and he attended the association whenever possible. He was a good husband and father, and his children always respected his word and obeyed him. He was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for more than fifteen years and loved its teachings. November 31st he was taken ill and suffered great pain until the end peacefully came. He was conscious until the last, and a beautiful smile passed over his face at the last breath. Only three of his children were with him at the end, the two oldest being away from home. Thursday afternoon, in the presence of a large gathering of relatives and friends and brethren, Elder E. L. Blankinship preached his funeral, after which he was laid to rest in Fairview Cemetery, there to await the summons on high. The beautiful flowers bore evidence of the love and esteem in which he was held.

A relative who loved him,

(MRS.) HARVEY PAAGE.

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MEETINGS.

The Beulah Old School Baptist Church, of Cleveland, Ohio, will hold their meeting on the fourth Sunday of each month, at 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio. All lovers of the truth are welcome. Strangers wishing to make inquiries can address Elder George L. Weaver, 2231 Lee Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

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IN

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S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

WHY ARE THE WICKED ALLOWED TO LIVE AND CARRY ON?

THIS question has been asked by many without calling forth a satisfactory answer, and some even question the reality of an almighty, sovereign God, because the wicked are not all destroyed, but allowed to live and carry on. The writer believes in a supreme, ruling God, and that the wicked are not destroyed because the same God had a purpose in their creation and preservation. It is not for man to know all of God's purposes, but some of them are revealed for man's benefit. Now, let us mention a few for serious consideration. First. The wicked may be used, in the hands of God, as instruments to bring about good, though the wicked intend it for evil. God turned the wickedness of Joseph's brethren into good by saving many lives, even the lives of his wicked brethren. Because he was sold into Egypt Pharaoh was raised up and allowed to live as a subject of God's power and wrath, to impress the Israelites with the greatness of the true God. The wicked Jews who strove to kill Christ from the day of his birth were allowed to live, but were restrained until his time had fully come, then they were allowed to slay the Divine Sacrifice, spill the holy blood which made the atonement for the sins of God's chosen people. Those false accusations, the buffetings, the crown of thorns and the nailing to the cruel cross until death, was the most wicked of all acts, and none but the wicked would do it, yet God had sent his Son into the world for that very purpose, and those wicked Jews were allowed to live for that purpose. Christ came into the world to carry out his part of the covenant of grace. This covenant was made before the world was, and certain wicked Jews were reserved to slay the Offering. Without the wicked there would have been no crucified Son of God, and therefore no atonement made for sin.

Second. The wicked furnish a field for Christ's work of redemption. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Had there been no sinners there would have been no need of a Savior. Without the wicked there would have been no need of a loving Savior going about doing good, healing the sick, raising the dead, opening the eyes of the blind, changing a murdering Saul into a

preaching Paul, calling ignorant fishermen to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, changing a dying thief into a saint ready for Paradise, and establishing a spiritual kingdom on earth among wicked men. The wicked seem too numerous to many of us, and the righteous too few, but God is able to protect his chosen people from the numerous wicked until they have lived in this world, been regenerated, cleansed from sin, tried in the furnace of affliction, and made ready for the kingdom of God. While we cannot number God's people, they are few compared to the wicked, and one is taken here and one taken there, among every nation, kindred, tongue and people, without regard to meirt, works, race or nationality. Christ's atonement was made in a wicked world, among wicked people, for wicked sinners, but it cannot be stolen, earned, merited or bought, and will be applied to every one whose name is written in the book of life. This is salvation by free grace, unmerited, and is of divine origin. This stream of atoning blood flowed in two directions, or two streams. One stream flowed backward to Abel and the beginning of time, and the other stream flowed forward to the end of time, thereby cleansing all for whom Christ died, and no others; none lost that was cleansed, and none of the lost cleansed.

Third. The wicked are used as a chastening rod to purify God's people. The persecution of the righteous has a purifying effect, and it can only come from the wicked. The persecution of God's people is not the work of the righteous, but of the wicked, and in their sore trials they are made to see their weakness, their need of divine help, the folly of relying upon the arm of flesh, and are made to cry out to One who is able to save. God's people are persecuted by falsehood, misrepresentation, by wrong counsel, by trying to deceive, and many other ways which try them as by fire. They have been persecuted in all ages, but most severely by the Jews in the early days of the church, and by the Roman Catholics in the days of the Inquisition and the martyrdom of the saints. The gospel was scattered by wicked persecution into many new places, and their faith tried. In our present day the wicked are using evolution, modernism, false science, human theology, denominationalism, Arminianism and many other schemes to invalidate the faith, the hope, the spirituality, and other redeeming qualities of God's people, thus leading off the false and purifying the true.

Fourth. To demonstrate God's justice and mercy. As God's laws are all just, and all of Adam's generations are sinful, first by nature, and then by practice, divine justice condemns all alike, so that the punishment of the wicked is just, and man cannot in any way by his own powers escape the penalty of the broken law. Justice must be satisfied. But God is also merciful. He allows the wicked to live out their allotted time, although they have been long condemned and worthy of death. Apostate angels receive mercy by not being called to judgment before their time. Again, his mercy is shown in another way, by sending his only begotten Son into the world to redeem his chosen, peculiar people by fulfilling the law in their behalf, and to suffer the awful death penalty of the broken law, thereby freeing them from its penalty through mercy. If the wicked were all justly condemned without mercy, and destroyed when they sinned, then God's mercy would return unto him void for want of a subject.

Fifth. The wicked are sometimes used

to exalt God, or to humble man. When God acts as a supreme sovereign over all things, including the wicked, limiting or overthrowing their works, he is exalted and man is humbled. This was illustrated when the wicked cast Daniel into the lions' den, and when they cast the Hebrew children into the fiery furnace, their wickedness was returned to humble and overthrow them, while at the same time God was exalted. You may call to mind Nebuchadnezzer, Pharaoh, Shimei, Baal's prophets. The wicked with all their works are surely perishable, even though allowed to live and carry on for an allotted time, are finally brought down to the end of their strength, and all must bow in humility sooner or later. Romans xiv. 11: "For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." God is exalted by his dealings with the wicked, and the wicked are limited, humbled.

Sixth. The wicked are allowed to live and carry on for the elect's sake. Strange to say, the wicked are preserved for a purpose as well as the righteous, yet it is true, but of course for a very different purpose. All Adam's generations are wicked by nature. There are not two seeds according to the flesh, for God hath made of one blood all nations for to dwell upon the face of the whole earth. All are alike, naturally speaking. The children of the righteous are not necessarily righteous, nor the children of the wicked necessarily more sinful than the children of the righteous; that is, not so by nature. Environment makes a difference. But there is a seed which is righteous, and it comes from God. This seed is the life of God's elect, that life that will never die, neither does it generate through the flesh and multiply that way, but is born or implanted by the Holy Spirit into wicked people of Adam's generations. All Adam's generated people whose names are written in the book of life, and who Christ came into the world to redeem, and who were the children of wrath as others, will have this spirit of adoption, this divine life, will be born of the Spirit, and throughout all their lives will be kept by the power of God in such a way that while Satan may afflict their Adamic bodies and minds he cannot touch that divine life. These elect ones are chosen from among the wicked generations of Adam, taken one here and one there, as it pleases God, without respect of person, or personal works, merits, nobility, wealth, worldly wisdom, honor, position or nationality. This choice was in no way left to man, for the choice was made before man was. In due time God's Spirit is implanted in those wicked people chosen of God, and they become children of God, like Paul, like three thousand on the day of Pentecost, like every christian who has been quickened by the divine Spirit of God. These regenerated people are the redeemed of the Lord whose sins are washed away by the blood of Christ. They are the salt of the earth that preserve the wicked, for the wicked are preserved for their sake, for the elect's sake. Every name written in the book of life will be given each its own body somewhere along the line from Abel to the end of time, and those corrupt bodies, which also possessed wicked spirits, will henceforth be possessed of God's Holy Spirit, the Spirit of righteousness, warring with their carnal spirits. Now, the wicked will be allowed to live and carry on until all God's chosen people have been generated from Adam, lived in the flesh, been regenerated by the Spirit and fulfilled their purpose on earth, then, and not until then, will the wicked have ful-

filled their purpose on earth. The world will be rolled into a scroll, all nations will be called to judgment, God's elect wearing the spotless robe of Christ's righteousness will appear as white as snow, the wicked will be there in their robes of self-righteousness, stained black with sin, and the holy angels will separate them as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. Strange thoughts from one of the wicked generation of Adam.

M. N. WEBB.

WEISER, Idaho.

"LET US HOLD FAST OUR PROFESSION."

THIS language is found in Hebrews iv. 14, and in the same book (x. 23) we have, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering." The word "profession" is found only a few times in the Bible, and means a declaration or announcement, a confession. In this connection it seems to refer to our expressed faith in Christ as our Savior. It points out that we have embraced and declared in a public way that we hope and believe Jesus Christ is the only Savior of sinners. In Hebrews iii. 1, Paul says, "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." Here the people of this calling are said to be holy brethren, and that Christ Jesus is the High Priest, or Intercessor, for this profession. So we see again that Christ is our only hope for reconciliation with God and the remission of our sins, for he is the only one to make the atonement. Now, friends, if Jesus Christ is the High Priest of our profession it will behove us to hold on to our profession, for there can be no other so good. Christ is not the High Priest of any other profession, and there is but one people who has a holy calling or a heavenly calling. They were a holy people in the sight of God, therefore were given a heavenly calling under their High Priest, even Jesus Christ. If the people of this calling and this profession should fail to hold fast to their profession they would have nowhere to go. "To whom shall we go?" There are other high priests who make a different offering, and to another god, and over a temporal priesthood. We cannot go there, for we have an eternal priesthood. Paul tells us that Christ witnessed a good confession before Pilate. Christ did bear witness that he was the Son of God. He also witnessed that Pilate was in God's hands. This is the same profession that Paul recommends to us, that we should hold fast to it and not deny it, nor forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is. We are also admonished to walk worthy the vocation wherewith we are called. It seems that there is a vocation, or state, whereunto God has called his believing children. They are called to be soldiers of the cross; even made "prisoners of hope." In this we must surely conclude that our profession will hold fast to us, and if Christ Jesus is the High Priest of our profession, it will hold forever.

In the fourth chapter, first verse, of Ephesians Paul says, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." Here Paul claims, or admits, that he is a prisoner of the Lord. He is held fast unto the profession, even made a prisoner of the High Priest of his profession. He is bound up in the belief in Christ. Are we so bound that we cannot accept the reproaches of Christ? Some people are. In one sense the word "profession" means the body of people en-

gaged in a certain vocation or calling. In this sense I believe Christ to be the High Priest of our profession. He is the High Priest of the class who believe in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. That is the belief he tells us to hold fast unto. Now I must admit that if I am not bound up as with bands and chains, the ends and links of which will not open, this poor man will never hold fast to any good profession. You all know me, from the least unto the greatest, for the Lord has taught you the frailness of the flesh. I do desire and must desire the love and fellowship of this profession. It is a good and true confession, but who can attain unto it? Only the holy brethren who have the heavenly calling, unto whom Christ Jesus is made the High Priest of their profession. No other can ever receive the atonement or hear the calling. May God ever accept the offering as made in our behalf.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

E. G. WEBB.

KINGMAN, Kans., Jan. 25, 1927.

DEAR EDITORS:—The inclosed letter was sent by our dear brother Webb and his faithful wife to their home church (Pleasant Valley) which meets at Kingman, Kansas, to be read at the regular meeting in January, because the weather was so bad they could not be present in person, as they live some fifty miles from the meeting place of the church. We feel that their example is commendable and the substance of the letter is wholesome, and I am passing it on to your judgment as to its suitableness for the SIGNS.

I was very much gratified by the interest manifested by the renewals and contributions to the SIGNS as shown in the January issue. That was a good start, and if the Spirit of the Lord is directing them I feel confident that the remainder of those on your delinquent list will shortly discharge their duty to the paper. One thing I am quite positive of: that no child of God can purposely withhold that which rightfully belongs to another who is in need, and have a "conscience void of offence." The word of inspiration says, "Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" This is a very searching question, one I fear too few of us could qualify under. So far from us being able to prove that we possess that principle of love to God, which identifies us as having passed from death unto life, while we withhold from those that have need that which belongs to them we are disqualified if we refuse to relieve our brother in need with that which is our own. By this evidence "we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him." These are most solemn and sacred considerations. But "if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." Perhaps I have said enough, but with your indulgence I shall add a few more thoughts that are crowding into my mind just now. It is only by our conduct that the sincerity and genuineness of our profession can be known by our brethren, whose love and fellowship we desire, and by all men, to whom it devolves upon us to prove that we are the followers of Christ. When we act in such way that we fail to do this we reproach the cause we revere and dishonor the name of him

whom we profess to follow. The Master has said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." There is no way for men to see that you have love one for another only by the way you act toward one another. Should I pursue a course of unfairness toward my brother, pull him down in the mud and humiliate him in the presence of a crowd, and keep saying, Just look how I love him, do you not think I would have trouble establishing my claims in their judgment? My actions would most certainly be the deciding factor; and this is as it should be, for the Master has said, By their fruits ye shall know them. This illustration does not apply only to smiting with the fist of wickedness. God is the embodiment of all that is good and right. In the spiritual birth there is a transmission of those holy principles of right to his children. They are present and manifest in that divine nature of which the children are made partakers. They serve as a lamp to their feet, and lead them in the way of all truth. It leads them in the paths of righteousness for the sake of his name whom they claim to serve. It teaches "that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." Now, brethren, if these fruits and evidences are not present we have no way of proving our claim of sonship. Just now the management of the SIGNS tells us they are in need of what is due them on delinquent subscriptions. By our neglecting to remit what we owe them we have pulled them down in the mud and we are exposing them to a most humiliating condition, yet we stand up and face the world, and say, Behold how I love the truths published in the SIGNS, and the servants of the Lord who declare them, yet we do nothing for their relief. Is this not what the apostle calls loving in word and in tongue? He says do not do it that way, but love "in deed and in truth." That is, make your actions harmonize with your words; prove by your actions that you love your brethren; prove by your actions that you love the cause of the Master; prove by your actions that you are holding the kingdom of God and his righteousness above earthly possessions; show to all men that you are the disciples of Christ. If this is done by our actions it gives weight to our words, but they are of little significance while our actions contradict them. Brethren, think on these things, and may the Lord enable you to yield your members as instruments of righteousness.

Submitted in faithfulness,

J. R. HARDY.

CHICAGO, Ill., Dec. 16, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN:—At this time of the year I usually send my renewal and occasionally as a layman write a few lines. Not being a minister what I say may not be of interest, but occasionally a layman can say things that a minister would not, so if anything is wrong herein just overlook the source, or do not publish it.

My mother and father never united with the Old Baptists, feeling their unworthiness, but they were always sharing their worldly things with the members, entertaining brethren enroute to the meetings and at the associations (Indian Creek, of Ohio). My grandfather and uncle were Elders, and among some of the older Elders who were entertained were Gilbert Beebe, Wilson Thompson, Joseph Furr, E. M. Reeves (my uncle), Levi Bavis, George L. Weaver, and many others whom I cannot now remember. My father would sometimes show me the

SIGNS and say please read this or that article. Also I used to go with my parents to the associations and other meetings near by. We lived near a town in which were a Campbellite and two Methodist "churches" and we occasionally went with other children, and during meeting we were urged to unite and have our sins washed away, but the little something in my heart (perhaps my conscience) told me that they were wrong, although I believe they were sincere. I would not say they were morally better or worse than others, but as for myself I knew I was a sinner, and perhaps some time I might have a great light shine into my heart and then I would know for certain whether or not I was "changed," as I had heard many of the brethren tell of their experiences. I still wish for that great light. Somehow I love the Old Baptists and the church, and if I were put out I would try and hang on some way. If I have any consolation it is that I hope He is able to keep me from evil. Never having this sure evidence, I do sometimes have hope. I cannot say that I have faith, I only can say it is hope. My thoughts are that if there is a church it is the Baptist, whether called by that name or some other, if the Bible is true. I am not very well schooled in it, or rather would say that the Old Testament in general is not opened to me, except parts of Genesis, Jeremiah, Psalms, Isaiah, and a few others.

While yet a young man I went to the Pacific coast. One lonely night I felt I should buy a Bible, so I went through the rain and bought one and sat up until late reading it. It showed me that if there is a church it is the Baptist, for they are the only people who preach what the Bible teaches. It is plain to me, but not that I am one of them, but I still have that little hope. Now I am getting to the point I aimed to come to first. Some twenty-five years ago I returned from the west to Paris, Illinois. There were six or more churches near here and I was elated to know I could go and hear preaching. Elder M. B. Moffit lived in Paris, and was pastor of several of the churches, and baptized my wife and me. Most of the churches had good congregations and were at peace. Although I grew up with the SIGNS (I took it from about the time I left home) I did not know there were some who opposed predestination. I did not know there were two sides. However, I found but few who did not preach it as strongly as the Baptists in Ohio and Washington state. There was very little trouble among the churches. I found them to be lovely brethren, who preached salvation by grace only, and as a rule preached predestination just as strongly. I believe the Old Baptists are one. I can understand how there is a question whether or not it is absolute. If one does not believe it he cannot believe it, and if one does believe it he cannot believe the other way. Well, that is all right if they are conscientious about it. Why a breach over it? There is but a handful of us ("the little flock"). I can see the side of absolute predestination, or think I can, but some do not see it that way. I cannot fall out with one because he does not see it the way I do. He is sincere, so am I, but he is my friend, my brother. Why hate my brother because he does not see it the way I do? Our Savior said, Not seven times, but seventy times seven (490) times we should forgive a brother. If brother A believes in absolute predestination and brother B does not believe it, if both are sincere why not let each believe what his conscience dictates? Conscience is usually right, and

I think it is very much akin to the spirit. I may be wrong there, but if we follow it we usually do the right thing morally. I am not dictating to any one, but I see the Baptists torn apart almost everywhere, and being only a layman I feel free to discuss the topic, and am open to criticism. I am hoping (the Lord willing) the little flock will still be kept in the truth as it is given us by our Father and cause us not to throw the first stone.

If I have said anything that might be helpful to the readers of the SIGNS and you care to publish this it is all right, but if I am wrong put me right, or if the article is too long and nothing to it please destroy it, for I would not knowingly hurt any one.

With love to the editors and publishers of the SIGNS, together with the subscribers, I am, I trust, yours in a precious hope, M. C. REEVES.

PLANT CITY, Florida, Dec. 31, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending you a wonderful letter, written by Elder Ried's wife, of LAWN, Texas. The poetry is her own. I. R. GREATHOUSE.

LAWN, Texas.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER GREATHOUSE:—Oh how I wish I could say for sure, My Savior, my God and my King. But if we could say that what would we have to hope for? We have a sweet promise, and a hope that all will be well with us: "They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by springs of water shall he guide them." Dear child of God, these shalls and wills that are written in the blessed word of God are very comforting to us, when we can think on them, when we are made I hope by the sweet power of God who spoke the world into existence, when we try in our weakness to think how gently his love and power is so tenderly guiding our wayward feet, and then we think of the power he has, that he could cut us off, even when we are not expecting it, for we are as the small dust before a mighty wind in his power. When he says we shall do, we will do, regardless of all powers that be, for "as the Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand," all things whatsover he has purposed shall stand, and all to his glory and for the good of his people. His powerful hand is stretched out upon all nations, and when he speaks it is done. Oh the mighty power of God, his all-loving power; the power that says to the proud waves of the sea, Be calm, and they obey him; the power that rebukes the winds and they obey him; the power that rebukes the winds and the boisterous waters, and says, Peace be still, and there is a great calm. But the most glorious and loving power to me is when he stills the troubled soul. When he speaks to Satan's rage, and causes him to come out of us. That great and wonderful power makes the devils to tremble, but to our poor souls it causes peace, and banishes all our fear, and makes us to rejoice and look up and smile with gratitude unspeakable. To think he has power to say to Satan, "Come out." Then all we can say is, "What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" Our feeble minds cannot comprehend nor understand what his great power is. Then we want to say,

My Savior, my God and my King,
Thy presence to me is most sweet,
Thy beautiful face is divine,
Thou art my drink, my all and my meat.

Oh how we would praise him if we only knew how, but our weakness, oh our weakness, we have no power, all our strength is from his power. He has power over all powers that be, so that leaves us entirely out. The prophet says, "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." Yes, his great and mighty power makes the beautiful light to shine on his little children when they are walking in the dark. Yea, in the shadow of death, mourning, wandering souls that could neither turn to the right nor left until the light shined in their hearts. Then how grateful, how peaceful are we when in us the light is revealed. When we see the light, and begin to wonder and meditate upon the power from whence it came we are powerless to do aught but sit quiet and behold the beauty and glory of the light, knowing full well that we are not worthy to see the light, much less to walk in it, so we say again,

Such joys as these are untold,
And so full of glory are they,
We witness his love in our soul
And pleasure it brings to obey.

Yes, the witness sometimes we hope we feel in our souls of his power and love, makes us shed tears of joy and gladness that we have been brought out of darkness into this marvelous light of his power, and we look within to see ourselves so sinful and so unclean that we are all in a tremble for fear we are deceived, and maybe we have not seen the light, and then in our feeble way we cry out, I own my guilt, Lord, my sins I confess. Oh let me trust in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. Here his great power is mentioned again. He bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city, he layeth it low, even to the ground; he bringeth it even to the dust. These high and lofty cities of ours are all brought down with his stretched out arm of power, and man cannot turn it back. We are made to repent and trust alone in his strength to raise us up again. He is always tender in administering his strength, and when he speaks it is in kindness and love. "Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem." Oh I know he has redeemed his people, but am I included with the blessed host of the redeemed? I ask myself the question, Am I among the holy family? Oh if I could speak of what I sometimes hope I see and feel, it does not seem I ever would get weary; I think I could tell it on and on. But ere long it is withdrawn and I am in fear and trembling, and I wonder, Is there a strong power and a bright light, or have I just imagined all these things? But, dear children of God, somehow it is a sweet imagination to poor me as I pass this way. Then it is

Oh the depth of the riches of our Lord,
Both his wisdom and power are not known,
Then why not be content with his word,
And trust in his arm that's so strong?

At times I feel I can and will trust him, and maybe for a few moments I will find that sweet peace that we can never explain, and I want to sing hymns of praise to his great and powerful name, or read his precious promises he has left for his children here, for he says, There is none can pluck them out of my hand. He has all power, and his promises are sure, and are sweet to think upon.

Thy power, strength and love combined,
Is sovereign balm for all our wounds
How pleasant, lovely and divine,
This precious ointment to our souls.

It is cooling, healing and soothing, and

gives us rest that nothing else can. We feel so refreshed after the Physician has visited us and poured the oil of gladness in our sick hearts, and we go in peace for awhile. Only then it seems we forget; we feel easy, and ere long try to rely upon our own strength, then we fall down into the valley, and have to have the chastening rod used upon us to make us remember that he is God and there is none else, for he says, we shall, and he will. Oh why do I forget so quickly? But oh the blessed promises. He says he is a God of power, of love and truth, and what he does is right and just, and I hope he will make me remember, and if I need the correcting rod I hope he will not spare the rod that will make me to know and understand that he is God, and beside him there is none can deliver. I hope and believe I want to be submissive to his will, and I hope I want to be corrected. But oh Lord, just thy will be done, and not mine.

Oh might I once more mount up and see,
The glory of thy beautiful face,
Then would I forget my pains and be free,
To sing thy wondrous bountiful grace.

(MRS.) J. B. RIED.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Dec. 4, 1926.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is with a sad heart that I take my pen in hand to write you a few lines; a feeling of sadness because of the thought that the SIGNS may have to be discontinued. It seems impossible that any Old School Baptist would be so careless and neglectful that they would not pay their subscription and support the paper that proclaims the doctrine we all love. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES comes as a welcome visitor to the home of an Old School Baptist, one who loves the glorious doctrine of election and predestination, and should I not be thoughtful enough to pay my subscription and thus help the dearly beloved brethren who are defending the truth by publishing the SIGNS? The question enters my mind, How could we do without it? I can truthfully say I would miss it, and I hope it may continue to be published as long as we live in this world. I am inclosing a money order for five dollars to renew the subscription of brother E. W. Priest and to renew my own subscription, and use the balance for the benefit of the paper. I am renewing the subscription of brother Priest again at Christmas time because he is a true and faithful member of the dear old Mt. Olive Church (my home) and I know he will enjoy and appreciate reading the SIGNS another year. I love the glorious doctrine the SIGNS advocates, and may each and every one of God's little ones be faithful and true to their profession by worshiping the only true and living God in spirit and truth. I love to worship a God who has all power in heaven and on earth; one who reigns and rules over all things; one who has predestinated all things and shall bring them to pass at his own appointed time; one who saves with an everlasting salvation and none can pluck them out of his hand. God sent his only begotten Son into the world to save his people, and he saved them with an everlasting salvation. He did not give them a chance to be saved, nor is he going to save them by what they do, but he saved them and they were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began. The doctrine of election is very precious to me, because I know that the elect of God are eternally saved, and if I am one of that number I will some day meet around the great white throne ever to be with him. It is alone by the grace of God that I have been saved, if saved at all. But I am made to wonder, and say,

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought;
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

We are told that we know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren, and if I know my own heart at all I hope and pray that I have felt a love for the dear children of God and for the blessed Savior who shed his blood for his loved ones. We love him because he first loved us and gave his life a ransom for his people. He saved them and when the last trumpet shall sound he will gather them all home to glory, there to be with him in that heaven of bliss. Not one of the redeemed shall be lost; no, not one, but every one he shed his precious blood for will meet in that world without end, ever to praise him. Oh, what a glorious thought it is that all the redeemed shall meet in that heaven of bliss, ever to be with him and praise him for evermore. Oh may it be our happy lot when this earth and time shall be no more, that we may all meet in that happy land where there will be no more sad partings, sorrow or shedding of tears, but all will be joy and peace to be with him and be like him. This is too good for a poor sinner like me, but "By the grace of God I am what I am." "'Tis heaven below our Redeemer to know," if our meetings here in this world afford us the greatest joy and pleasure of our life, great will be the joy when we meet to part no more.

I only intended writing to express my appreciation of the SIGNS, and my prayer is that you may be enabled to continue publishing it as you have in years gone by. You may publish this if you think there is anything in it that would comfort God's little ones; if not, dispose of it in the wastebasket, and all will be well with me. I realize that I cannot write, because I am only a poor unworthy sinner begging for God's mercy every day, and my daily cry is, God be merciful to me a sinner. May we be ever blessed to give him all the praise, honor and glory, both now and for evermore.

A sinner saved by grace, I hope,
ELSIE GALL.

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1 CORINTHIANS II. 2.

"FOR I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

This inspired Paul was called by God's grace to preach the unsearchable riches of this Jesus. He was not thus called because of his good works, for he was a blasphemer and persecuted the saints. Many of the saints were put to death because of Paul, and when he was called to the work that our God appointed unto him to do he left this office work, and he was no longer a persecutor of the church. He was taught of God and saw his great power manifested, and saw the Lord of glory. God had wrought such fullness in him that he determined not to know anything among these brethren save this Lord, and him crucified. This was sufficient for him, and is sufficient for us now. Having said this, I wish to appeal to the experience of the dear people of God, who have been led out of sin's wilderness into his marvelous light. It was not for anything which you had done. No, no. If it was not for anything good which you had done, then it was all in Jesus, and him crucified. All the riches of his grace, all the fullness, the wisdom, yes, all things pertaining to life and godliness, were in our only Lord. This mystery is preached, and this wisdom is a hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory. It is not the wisdom of men, for the world by wisdom knows not

God. It is of him that ye are in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. What more do we need? I tell you these things go deeper than the dry skeleton of natural words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. Everything that the saints need was embraced in the ancients of eternity, before there was an earth, a sun, moon or stars. So minutely fixed in their precise order that all the powers of darkness cannot prevent the saints from receiving all the fullness of God in Jesus our only one Savior. Their inheritance was reserved in heaven for them, and not one thing shall hinder the saints from receiving all the riches of Jesus ordained for them before the hills were formed, before there was a Bible in which to read the glad tidings of great joy. In the divine record we have the following evidence: "And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals." There "no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon." What a vision from glory to this exile John. I hope I am one poor sinner in that Sion, and our God was speaking of the things that must shortly come to pass, and every one of them was in the predestination of God. A Savior about to come in the world who "shall save his people from their sins." This Savior was the "Lion of the tribe of Juda," and he prevailed. The elders "sung a new song." Yes, always new when the Spirit reveals it to the saints. They said, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Here is complete redemption through our Lord. No man nowhere could do this. It was all in Jesus. Paul felt this very thing, and therefore he said, "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." If Jesus had needed any help, then there was none, but he needs no man, for he trod the winepress of his Father's wrath alone, and of the people there was none to help. Jesus did it and completed the work on the cross. He came a full and complete Savior, and came full of grace and truth. He was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.

Dear editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, how I love you I never can tell in this world, and also the dear ones who write for the paper. I would comfort you if I could, but then I might seem one who would help the Lord; but I hope I have experienced a few of the things which are in the only Savior, and if so, then we are heirs, and joint-heirs with Jesus. I feel thankful that it has pleased the Lord to continue our monthly SIGNS to us. I could not help shedding tears of spiritual joy, I hope, when I read brother Davis Burch's letter. Oh how strong his God-given faith was when he dreamed that dream. I only refer to his article as I have not time to say much, and very unworthy to say anything. I do desire, and pray my God, if it is his will, to spare the brother awhile longer. I was full while reading his loving gift of God, and when I got to where he said, "A poor old sinner," and then signed his name, my cup ran over. Oh what a glorious message from (Mrs.) Bessie Mathis, also from E. P. Petters to his cousin, sister Rounds, and, in fact, all of the messages are sweet to this poor old crippled sinner. Naturally crippled, and

I hope I am spiritually crippled, because I feel I need all that is in Jesus to bring me to eternal glory. I need every drop of his shed blood, and every intercession he is making for his saints at the right hand of his Father, according to the will of God, for I hope that all the fullness of God belongs to every saint just alike, one Lord, who is all and all, and in you all. We hope we all share the rich inheritance in Jesus, then we are all rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom. If he has not done all this for me, then I am lost. Dear loved ones, can it be possible that I should bear such a relationship with my only one Lord? I must confess that I do desire to know no name but his.

"Lord, I believe thou hast prepared,
Unworthy though I be,
For me a glorious free reward,
A golden harp for me.

'Tis strung and tuned for endless years,
And formed by power divine,
To sound in God's, the Father's, ears,
No other name but thine."

If you see this writing as I do you will throw it aside, but if you think it will not be in the way of better matter you can publish it.

I am a great sinner in hope, and saved by grace, if saved at all,

J. R. HATCHER.

LYLES, Tennessee.

OTTAWA, Kansas.

DEAR PUBLISHERS:—Your letter telling me my subscription to the SIGNS had been again paid for another year, and by whom it was paid, has caused me to beg for space to acknowledge some of the wonderful kindness of dear brother Colbourne, through the mercies of our covenant-keeping God, who has promised never to leave nor forsake us, and this promise has been verified several times in this dear brother by substantial checks since he read my letter in the SIGNS three years ago, telling of my sad bereavement, and, for the first time, my inability to promptly pay my subscription. God moves in mysterious ways, and his ways are past finding out. Those to whom I would have naturally looked have long since forgotten me. It must come through this stranger in the flesh. I would also mention sister Bonnie Chick, who was very kind indeed. Being of a sensitive but very proud nature, God has seen fit to humble me through great and sore trials. But, bless his holy name, he has never taken away himself, nor has he taken from me reverence, love, faith, hope, and a desire to give all praise, all glory to him who is the great and mighty God, and who is the Judge of us all. I hope he has also given me the desire to pray him for reconciliation, patience to endure and to keep my tongue from evil and my lips that they speak no guile. When my eyes are opened I see all kinds of evil things in my nature. I have proven many times that the desire to do good is present with me, but how to perform I find not. May the Lord bless this precious brother with all things needful and cause him to remember that except the Lord build the house they labor in vain who build it, and except the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain, and may he ever enable him to say with the psalmist, "Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed; let not mine enemies triumph over me. * * * Shew me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day." May he keep him a faithful watchman upon the walls of Zion.

This relieves a long suppressed desire. Love to you and all the dear brethren

and sisters everywhere who love the truth as it is in the precious Jesus and as I believe the dear old SIGNS publishes it.

In great weakness, your sister in a precious hope,

ANNA McKINNEY.

PRINCETON, West Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed a check for two dollars for renewal of my subscription to the SIGNS for another year, also a memorial of our pastor, who passed away last August, and a letter written by him to his daughter, Mrs. Anna Kincannon, about two years before he died. Please publish in the SIGNS.

S. J. PRIDDY.

PRINCETON, W. Va., Nov. 26, 1924.

DEAR ANNA:—I am going to write you a letter if I can. You may call it a Thanksgiving letter if you wish, but you will not get it in time for Thanksgiving, but perhaps you can keep it for future reference. I have been writing more for the last few days than I have for a long time. Brother John Wilson, of Michigan, asked me to give him my views on the twentieth chapter of Revelation, and I just finished it last evening.

I suppose there are people living to-day who hardly realize what Thanksgiving means, and many, very many, will be thankful only that they have a day off from their labor that they may spend it in revelry, gambling, drinking and all kinds of sports. Others, no doubt, will spend it as they do Sundays, for rest, sleep and the enjoyment of being with their families, which is better and more commendable. The day has been set apart by the authorities who control the government of our nation for a different purpose. Things do not just come about by chance. There is a ruling power that controls all things, the same that causes the sun to rise upon the evil and upon the good and sendeth rain upon the just and the unjust. The day was set apart that men and women should return thanks to the Giver of all blessings for his abundant mercies and tender care for them during the past year, and as they feel they can enumerate the blessings for which they are thankful. I, for one, have many and varied things for which to be thankful. First, I thank God for the hope I have of heaven and immortal glory and the evidence of the application by the Spirit of the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, the Savior of sinners, for the preservation of my life to a ripe old age, and for the gift of my children and companions of my life, who are more precious to me than gold or great riches, who have been so kind and considerate of me in my declining days as I near the parting of the ways. I am hoping and praying that mercy may be extended them to lead them out of error into the marvelous light and liberty of God's dear Son. Second, I thank God for the gift of the true ministry, who stand firm in the faith once delivered unto the saints. Grant, O God, that they may glorify thy name and feed the church that was purchased with Christ's own blood. Give them thy Spirit to lead them and holy boldness to face all opposition to gospel truth. Third, I thank God for the little flock over which I have been made overseer. Keep them, dear Lord, in peace and fellowship, for thou knowest they lie near my heart. Keep them from the evils of the world; cause thy saints to so live that they may show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into light, even as a city set upon a hill that cannot be hid. Fourth, I am thankful the Lord has kept me from my youth in his fear,

that I can look back and say as one of old, Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life. There is so much to be thankful for it cannot be enumerated, so I will close this letter with a quotation from David: "O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now also, when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not, until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come."—Psalms lxxi. 17, 18.

With lots of love for you from you father,

G. A. REID.

(See memorial on page 69.)

SALISBURY, Md., Dec. 18, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please find inclosed two dollars for my subscription for the year 1927. This present year closes with my being a subscriber and an interested reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for forty years, and in some of those years I have had not much success in a financial way, but my God thus far has blessed me with the two dollars, and disposition to pay, which I generally do in advance, for which my thanks are due to the Giver of all good, for I realize that there is no good in me, only as my God works it in me, which he does of his own good pleasure. For forty years I have never seen any change in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES contending for the same glorious truth which gladdens the hearts of God's humble poor. Blessed thought, the poor still have the gospel preached unto them. I feel that the paper has been a wonderful blessing to me; it has served me well, and I am sure there are very many others can say the same of themselves; then, this being the case, if it has ministered unto us of spiritual things why not us be prompt in rendering unto the publishers of our carnal things? Now I have reference only to those who have the money to pay but neglect doing so, much to the hurt of the publishers. Think of this. Should we not bear each other's burdens? The burden I know is a heavy one, but if each one would bear a part how much better it would be than to have some overburdened. Of course it might be the case with some that have gotten behind in keeping their dues paid up, that they have lost all interest. Well, if that ever comes to me, to lose interest, which I hope it may not, for I feel that would be a great loss, but if such a thing should take place my desire is now that I might have the moral courage to say so and have my name removed from the subscription list, and not be a dead weight and an unnecessary expense to the publishers in sending the paper to one who did not appreciate it.

Your little brother,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

PHILIPPI, West Virginia.

DEAR PUBLISHERS:—Inclosed find check for four dollars, two dollars for the renewal of my subscription to the SIGNS, and two dollars to help a little in keeping it up. I certainly feel thankful to the One who never forgets nor forsakes his little ones for the aid you have received from those who love the joyful sound and who wish to uphold sound doctrine and not have the paper leave us now in these dark and trying times when we so much need the comfort that we read through its columns. The good writers have much comforted and cheered poor little unworthy me with their gifts with the pen for many years. To read from others who have the same trials and conflicts in traveling through this wilderness of woe

we feel that perhaps we are not alone; that there may be a little hope for us, and that these are our kindred, our friends, who understand and can sympathize with us in the things that the world cannot enjoy. Elder Lefferts' "New Year's Greeting" is good and full of truth, and certainly worthy of attention. Brother Greathouse writes a soul-cheering letter that comforts one so unworthy as I. May the Comforter be with the Lord's servants to feed the flock to the end, that they may cry aloud and spare not, and declare the whole truth.

A little unworthy sister in tribulation, if one at all,

(MRS.) IVY A. COLE.

ARDMORE, Tenn., Dec. 4, 1926.

DEAR PUBLISHERS:—I am herewith inclosing check for four dollars, for the years 1926 and 1927, for which please give me credit. I am sorry I am so neglectful of my duty. One of the writers in the December number said that all who do as I have done surely have not the love of the doctrine in their hearts. I am afraid that is true with me; I fear it is just a fleshly desire that prompts me to read it, but it does seem to me that I love the doctrine the SIGNS advocates and that I love all the good writers of the paper, and I feel that they are my friends. I do not feel worthy to call them brethren, for I am so sinful, unthankful, unholy and unrighteous, no good thing in me, that is, in my flesh, and if they knew me they would not want me to call them brethren. I think sometimes that I will have the paper discontinued, but when the time comes to order it stopped I just feel that I am forsaking the only thing and the only people I dearly love. I would like very much to have a home with these dear people of God, but I cannot, for the Lord adds to his church daily such as should be saved.

Please pardon me for not remitting sooner, and pray for me.

A friend,

W. G. PYLANT.

NEW PHILADELPHIA, Ohio.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a money order for two dollars, for which please send me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for one year. I am not a subscriber, but love the doctrine it sets forth and stands for, if I know my own heart and am not deceived. I believe it to be God's eternal truth, whether it embraces me or not. I can only say I hope it does, yet I feel too unworthy. I am not a member of any church, and have not heard an Old Predestinarian Baptist sermon preached in the past eight years. My father, E. I. Wiggins, of Plant City, Florida, is a member of the Mt. Enon Old School Baptist Church, and is a strong advocate of God's absolute predestination of all things. I believe it is the only doctrine that sets up a God who is able to save such sinners as I. I know if I had to depend upon any good work of myself I would be eternally lost. But thanks be to God, he is able to save without any effort on the sinner's part. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

I did not intend to write such a long letter, and hope you will forgive me for taking up so much of your valuable time.

Yours in hope,

IRVING WIGGINS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1927.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

2 THESSALONIANS III. 5.

"AND the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ."

The above Scripture was the fervent prayer of the apostle Paul for his beloved brethren of the Thessalonian Church, and should be the desire of all God's servants towards the household of faith. We say servants, and it would be well at all times to remember that no matter if the servant be a Paul or an Apollos, yet he is but a servant, and neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth, but God who giveth the increase. In the salvation of the church of God there are three persons actively interested, and in the above Scripture the three are mentioned. First, "the Lord" (the Holy Ghost). He, and he only, can direct your hearts into the love of God (God the Father), and into the patient waiting for Christ (the Son of God). The Lord, the Spirit, is the Spirit of truth, the Comforter, he it is who leads and directs his saints, "for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." The persons addressed in the text were sons and daughters of the Most High, yet they were chosen in a furnace of affliction, subjected to persecution and tribulation, which Paul tells them is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that they might be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which they also suffered. No doubt they thought it strange concerning the fiery trial which was to try them, as though some strange thing happened unto them. Paul says, "The Lord direct your hearts," as much as to say, You have no wisdom or power of your own, for although they were born of the Spirit, alive from the dead, yet they needed direction, and in the leading and direction of the Spirit their sonship was manifested and the fruit of the Spirit seen. In the Scripture the gospel church is referred to as having one heart. Jesus said, "Let not your heart be troubled" (singular), but here Paul says, "The Lord direct your hearts" (plural). The church is a body with many members, each member having trials peculiar to himself. Collectively they were to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. Individually every man was to bear his own burden. Thus there were hearts in heaviness through manifold temptations, others distressed because of the roughness of the way, others were accused of all manner of evil, falsely, and others with a knowledge of the depth of human depravity and their own proneness to evil, were fearful of themselves. These are but a few of the many and varied experiences of the saints of God. Such hearts Paul loved, he thanked God for them and prayed that their faith fail not, and he knew that when the Lord so led them that they could see the love of God in all their trials that it would give them joy unspeakable. The Spirit had directed Paul and shown him beforehand that in every city bonds and afflictions abode him, yet the love of God enabled

him to say, "We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us."—Rom. v. 3–5. Thus faith was tried in the furnace of affliction and it was proven to them that it stood not in the wisdom that man teacheth, but in the power of God. By the Spirit's direction they could resist the devil by the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; such direction is a source of much comfort to God's tried and afflicted children, for when it seems that the trial is most severe and Satan's fiery darts cutting so close, the Lord directs them to look up, and helps them in their infirmities, for they know not what to pray for as they ought, but the Spirit maketh intercession for them with groanings that cannot be uttered. At such times also the love of God is sweetly enjoyed, when, as David says, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies," for by the Spirit, who is the Remembrancer, they are enabled to remember all the way the Lord their God has led them in this wilderness world. Humbled by the rod of chastisement they adore the matchless love of a covenant-keeping God, and say, "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!" They rejoice in his blessed Son, who is the son of his love, seeing him smitten for them, and walking the furnace with them, for in all their afflictions he was afflicted. Being directed into such love, they glory in the cross, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Thus they endure chastisement, for God dealeth with them as with sons. To those who are young in the way, it would seem that God's chastening hand is far opposite to love; no doubt it seems at times as though the Lord was not in it at all. In their first love they were carried above sin, temptation and pain, the world was under their feet. Their testimony was wonderful, and many said, Oh if only I had such an experience, I would not doubt again. Since then the Lord has brought them into darkness that can be felt, has chastened them sorely and it seems as though the Lord's mercy is clean gone forever, that he has forgotten to be gracious, "Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" So low have they sunk they are ready to question their former testimony. Thus pride is hidden from them, and humbled they walk in the fear of the Lord, looking up to the brethren and esteeming them better than themselves. Such a spirit has been manifested in them since their trial that they are esteemed highly in love for the truth's sake. Humbled under the rod, to them God's grace is amazing, his love unfathomable and their joy at times unspeakable. God's dealings with his people as we have shown, directs them, not to the love of the world, for "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him," neither does it direct them to hate their brother, for he that hateth his brother is in darkness; neither does it direct them to be busybodies in other men's matters, for the word says, "Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people," nor does it direct to many of the doings of those who are supposed to name the name of Christ in this dark and cloudy day; but the Spirit does direct tenderhearted sinners into the love of God's word, a hatred of sin, so that they cannot sin lightly, an honest desire to tear every

idol down that dares to rival him. When so directed there is manifested a love for the brethren, and a ministering with the ability that God giveth, a zeal for the cause of truth and a sincere regret that they are so unprofitable. To-day, the Old School Baptist Church has in the midst of her an afflicted and poor people, and they believe whatever cross lies at their door it cometh from the Lord. His promise is that he will be with them and will not forsake them. "As the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until that he have mercy upon us." Not only does the Spirit direct into the love of God, but also into the patient waiting for Christ. Under the chastisement the soul is directed to the Lord and hopes in him; sometimes like Job they can say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him;" yet it is seldom they can say they are patient under affliction, rather rebellion, self-pity and a legion of other things so fill them with shame and humble them that at times they lay their mouth in the dust if so be there may be hope. Now hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. This is the patient waiting mentioned in our text. Hoping for Christ to appear, a patient waiting for him, there is a set time for his appearing, yet to man he will come as a thief in the night. Yet the hour is appointed and he who bids the tempest rage can bid the tempest cease. Jonah must learn in the belly of hell that salvation is of the Lord, faith in Abraham said, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb," yet he and the lad must journey to the place and the knife be ready to strike the lad before ever the Lord turn his hand. The three Hebrews must be cast into the furnace to walk with the Son of God. The flame could not hurt them, neither can tribulation, or distress, or famine, or persecution, or nakedness, or peril, or sword, for in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. What a mercy in all these things to have a hope, "a good hope through grace," that is anchored within the vail whither the forerunner, even Jesus, is entered, for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. "My cross and my crown are both willed by my God," and he has declared, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you," and God is not slack concerning his promise as some men count slackness. Paul tells us in his first letter to the Thessalonians regarding the appearing of Christ, that the Lord "shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

G. R.

NOTICE.

We expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old Baptist meetinghouse the 4th Sunday in March (27th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by sister Maryetta Mead.)

The Lexington-Roxbury Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, Shokan, New York, September 15th and 16th, 1926, to the several associations and churches with which we correspond, sends love and fellowship.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year, with its mingled joys and sorrows, is numbered with the past, and through a kind Providence we are again privileged to meet as an Association, while some, who met with us a year ago, and whom we loved for the truth's sake, have been taken from the shores of time and we shall see their faces no more, and while this thought brings sadness to our hearts we would humbly bow in submission to the will of him who doeth all things well, and has an undisputed right to do whatsoever seemeth him good. In writing this article as a Circular Letter we would address you on that most sublime and glorious subject, the "sovereignty of God," and while it is in much weakness that this attempt is made, we trust it is with a feeling of reverence for his great and holy name. Only as he is pleased to reveal something of himself to our finite minds can we realize anything of his blessed character, for none by searching can find out God, that Being who is possessed of all power, all wisdom, and is everywhere present. He declared the end from the beginning, and all events that ever have or ever will transpire throughout all time were embraced in his wondrous foreknowledge and predestination, which are inseparable, and he has said, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." As we look around us on the face of nature everything proclaims the work of a sovereign God, from the smallest blade of grass and the humblest flower that grows to the gigantic oak that crowns the mountain top, all speak forth his power and wisdom. Can one gaze upon the starry heavens at night and the silvery moon as she traverses the vault of heaven in all her beauty and grandeur and not be impressed with the thought that the heavens declare his glory and firmament sheweth his handywork? He speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast, saying to the raging sea, Thus far shalt thou come and no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed. The winds and the waves obey him and all nature proclaims him sovereign Lord of all. Leaving the things of nature we would meditate for a time upon his wondrous work in the salvation of his people, bringing them from nature's darkness into his marvelous light, and from the power of Satan unto God, causing them to love his great name, his truth, his people and his ways. He brings the blind by a way they knew not, leads them in paths they have not known, makes darkness light before them and crooked things straight; this he says he will do unto them and not forsake them. He carries on his own effectual work in the hearts of his people, without the aid of finite mortals whose strength is weakness, whose wisdom is folly and whose righteousness is as filthy rags. We are told that vain is the help of man, and also that cursed is man that trusteth in man or that maketh flesh his arm. He has said, "I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no savior." He has loved his people with an everlast-

ing love, and it is with lovingkindness that he draws them.

"His love is as large as his power,
And neither knows measure nor end."

He is the author and finisher of their faith, and it is by his sovereign grace that they are kept and sustained through all the trials and conflicts which they are called to experience in their journey through this world of sin and sorrow. He says, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: * * * all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." Truly, great and marvelous are his works, and what a sure foundation, founded upon the wills and shalls of an omnipotent God. In the Savior's prayer for his disciples, recorded in John xvii., we have these words, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory." How safe and secure those who are included in that gift.

"More happy, but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven."

But the question often arises in the mind when filled with doubts (which is often the case with us), Are we of that number? Can it be that thoughts of mercy were extended ere time began, to us who are so worthless and insignificant? If so, we must ever say, it was because it seemed good in his sight. But notwithstanding all our many doubts and questionings this sacred truth forever remains the same, "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Here may he enable us to rest and

"Praise him for all that is past,
And trust him for all that's to come."

GEORGE RUSTON, Mod.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Shokan, New York, September 15th and 16th, 1926, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and churches with which we correspond, greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is with pleasure we have received your messengers as they have come to us in love and fellowship of the Spirit. The preaching has been good, the theme has been Christ and him crucified, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. God's people believe that salvation is of the Lord. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. We hope that we shall be blessed to hear the gospel again set forth by our visiting ministering brethren at our next session, which is appointed to be held with the First Roxbury Church, Vega, New York, on Wednesday and Thursday between the second and third Sundays in September, 1927. Until then, dear brethren, farewell.

GEORGE RUSTON, Mod.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

MEMORIALS.

Inasmuch as it has pleased the almighty God to remove by death our dear brother and pastor, **Elder G. A. Reid,** who labored faithfully in the Master's service with the church at Princeton, since its organization June 21st, 1913, we realize our great loss, and desire to bow in humble submission to the dispensation of Providence by which he was called to that haven of eternal rest, where sin and sorrow can never come.

Resolved, that a copy of this memorial be spread upon our minutes and a copy be sent for publication to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, also, *Lone Pilgrim* and *Zion's Landmark* please copy.

S. J. PRIDDY, Moderator.
DANIEL LILY, Clerk.
PRINCETON, West Virginia.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Natalie Gruwell, wife of Lewellyn Gruwell, departed this life Sunday, December 5th, 1926, at her home in Wilmington, Delaware. She was born at Petersburg, Delaware, in Kent County, October 11th, 1864. Her parents were the late Peter C. Frasher and Mary A. Frasher, of Petersburg, Delaware, near the Cow Marsh meetinghouse. Besides her husband she is survived by two brothers and one sister: W. Edgar Frasher and Edith M. Frasher, of Wilmington, Del., and Henry E. Frasher, of Viola, Del. The departed was united in marriage with the writer December 22nd, 1889. We lived on the farm for four years, after which we made our home in Wilmington, Del., except during a little more than a year, when we lived in Salisbury, Maryland. Wherever she lived she was always an interested and faithful attendant at the Baptist meetings. She loved to mingle with those godly, and, to her, lovely people. She never asked for a place in membership of the church, but was known to be much concerned, and many years ago experienced convictions and exercises of mind which were decidedly grounds for a hope, which she said but little about, but fondly cherished and often doubted. Although ever anxious to mingle with God's people, she was always satisfied to occupy the lowliest position, seeking no exaltation, being of a modest and retiring disposition. She was firm in her belief in the absolute predestination of all things, steadfast and unyielding in her adherence to that which she considered right, but with charity to all. Her life was as nearly as humanly possible an exemplification of the golden rule: she ever strove to do unto others as she would have them do unto her. On the morning of the day set apart by the Governor of our state as Golden Rule Day, she was called to her just reward. God's mysteries are past finding out, but many times his presence seems to come very close to us, with power to give and take according to his own good pleasure. To her virtues, she made no claims for herself, always regretting that she could not live a better life, and emulate the good she saw in others. She sought few worldly encomiums, pursuing her duties with a sense of pure satisfaction. Throughout her final illness those about her ministering to her wants and anxious for her welfare were inspired and encouraged by her patient and cheerful demeanor, indeed many who came to cheer her in her affliction were cheered in turn by her hopeful manner. Her temporal wants were faithfully ministered by her sister, who was with her constantly during her last illness. As strength and hope grew fainter during the last weeks her manner seemed to indicate a realization of the Savior's promise, "My grace is sufficient for thee." This throughout her life had been a very precious promise to her, as it is to many others, and once it came home to her with great force and satisfaction when she heard it preached, if my memory serves me right, by the late Elder B. F. Coulter. His grace was ever sufficient for her.

Interment was in the cemetery at Cow Marsh. Elder Benjamin E. Cubbage, pastor of the church at that place, conducted the services. Her departure leaves us in profound sorrow, for we feel deeply that a pure gem is lost to us in this life, but we are enabled to know with some degree of satisfaction that our great loss is her eternal gain.

LEWELLYN GRUWELL.

Mrs. Martha L. Cole died at her home in Otego, N. Y., December 12th, 1926. She was born in Prattsville, N. Y., November 15th, 1851, a daughter of Peter H. and Malinda (Morse) Leonard, and she was united in marriage to Loren P. Cole November 19th, 1873. Their home from that time until 1906 was at Conesville, N. Y., then they moved to the village of Otego, which had since been her home. Mrs. Cole was a woman of sterling qualities, a faithful and devoted wife, a kind and obliging neighbor and a loyal friend. She is sadly missed, not alone by her own immediate circle, but by a large number of sympathizing friends. Though not a member she was an attendant of the Old School Baptist Church all her life. She is survived by her lonely husband, two brothers: John M. and Abner B. Leonard, one sister: Mary I. Leonard, one niece: Martha Leonard Hawkins, and one nephew: Appleton J. Leonard, all of Otego.

The funeral was held at her late home December 15th, conducted by Elder D. M. Vail, of Binghamton, N. Y. Burial was in the family plot in Bundy Cemetery at Otego.

Written by request of the sorrowing husband.

ROSE T. LEONARD.

George W. Wines, a well known farmer of Chelan and Douglas Counties, Wash., was born in the state of Ohio March 13th, 1861, and departed this life at his home in Wenatchee, Washington, February 21st, 1926. In the year 1866 his parents moved to the state of Indiana and settled near Vanburen, where he grew to manhood. His parents were among the early settlers of that State, and he was one of fourteen children. July 16th, 1884, near Warren, Indiana, he was married to Miss Rachel E. Waters, and to that union five children were born, two dying in infancy and three still living to share the loss of a loving father and to help the widow in her old or latter days. Brother Wines was moved in mind to leave Indiana and move west in the spring of 1893, and located among strangers at Walla Walla, Washington, where at first he was unable to obtain employment, but later found work at Oakesdale, Wash-

ington, where he remained for two years. He then removed to Douglas County, Washington, where he was blessed to secure a good home and enjoy the comforts of life, until his health failed and he was forced to leave his ranch and seek medical treatment. I had known brother Wines for thirteen or fourteen years, and can say that he was always kind and humble, and always ready to help in time of need, and ever wished to be found in a godly walk and conversation. About the year 1896 or 1897 he professed a hope and was baptized in the faith of the Primitive Baptist Church, and remained a faithful member as long as he lived. He believed in salvation through the precious blood of Christ, and said the only begotten Son was the Savior of sinners, for in the name of Christ is salvation, and that without any conditions. He desired to declare Christ as our Surety, and as he talked he emphasized that hope as a gift of God, and said that without Christ we can do nothing. The widow is not a member of the church, but her kindness is ever manifest as a sister, and the two sons and one daughter are credits to their parents.

PETER JONES.

William Bowen Taylor, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Taylor, was born July 26th, 1925, and died December 3rd, 1926, making a short stay on earth. He was sick only a few days with that dread disease, pneumonia. While we feel deeply grieved to give up this little treasure, yet we know that God, who rules among men and doeth all things after the counsel of his own will, saw fit to take him from us, and we can only submit, knowing that he doeth all things well.

The funeral was conducted at the home Sunday, December 5th, by Elders W. L. Hall and T. E. Attebery, after which the body was tenderly laid to rest in the Pleasant Hill Cemetery.

His aunt,

(MRS.) T. E. WYATT.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

C. Stevens, Ark., $6; Mrs. Ira V. Blackwell, N. J., $2; E. T. McAllister, N. Mex., $1; W. K. Baird, Ky., $3; L. P. Leach, Miss., 50 cents; Mrs. S. A. Bird, W. Va., $2; J. P. Starr, Tex., $10; E. R. Myers, S. Dak., $1; Isaac C. Kip, N. J., $1; Mrs. Kate Reese, Mo., $1; Elder J. C. Chester, Ky., $3; Sarah E. Rice, Mo., $2; Mrs. W. R. Davis, Del., $2; H. W. Norman, Ark., $3; Mrs. J. A. Phillips, Tenn., $2; E. J. Morse, N. Y., $4; Mrs. S. S. Gaines, D. C., $4; Mrs. U. K. Hamilton, Mo., $1.

BOOK NOTICE.

PREDESTINATON, a book containing twelve excellent articles on the subject. One Elder in Alabama writes: "Have sold all the books, and have orders for more. It is something that our people here are hungry for. Think I can sell fifteen more very easily, so inclose find check for $10, for which please send me fifteen copies." There are many Baptists who should have a copy who have not ordered. Single copies $1, six copies $5, special to ministers, fifteen copies for $10.

R. LESTER DODSON,
12 Addison Avenue, Rutherford, N. J.

MEETINGS.

The Beulah Old School Baptist Church, of Cleveland, Ohio, will hold their meeting on the fourth Sunday of each month, at 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio. All lovers of the truth are welcome. Strangers wishing to make inquiries can address Elder George L. Weaver, 2231 Lee Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday of each month at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 459 E. 5th St., Riverside, Calif., and at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. 11th St., Claremont, Calif., on the first Sunday of each alternate month, beginning with January, and on every alternate month with brother Joseph Huffman, 128 Van Buren St., Arlington, Calif. Singing at 10:30 a. m. Preaching at 11 a. m. Lunch at the place of meeting, and continued services in the afternoon.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.
O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 245 Lacadana Drive, Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Cedar Creek Church meets in Elyville (Oregon City), Oregon every fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. Those coming by Railroad over the S. P. get off at Oregon City, take the elevator to the top of the hill, turn to your left, go one block east. Not later than 9:30 a. m. Private conveyance. Those coming on Oregon City Electric get off at 7th Street, take elevator near S. P. depot to top of the hill, turn to your left, go one block east to 7th St., as above stated.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

REVELATION XXI. 1-4.

"AND I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

It is a common theory of the different Arminian sects to put the fulfilling of this Scripture to some future period, where in they hold either to the post, or premillennial dawn doctrines, but as we believe in neither, but rather "Heaven must receive Christ until the time of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."—Acts iii. 21. What eternity shall be I feel no disposition to cavil about, but rather to rest in the confidence of the word as recorded in 1 John iii. 2: "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is," and in this time state seeing as through a glass darkly; that is, separated by the veil of the flesh, no mortal can discern or know the divine fullness of the glory that shall afterwards be revealed in us who are looking for Him to appear the second time without sin unto salvation, for Christ having once borne the condemnation for sin, in that he suffered death and satisfied every demand of the law, sin nor death can have no more dominion over him, and the grand result of his crowning victory is the bringing in of the better covenant wherein he is revealed the Lord of life and of death, established his everlasting dominion and set up "a new heaven [the new ecclesiastical government of the new covenant] and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth [the legal ministration under the law] were passed away; and there was no more sea." "Sea" here undoubtedly conveys to our mind the tempestuous tumults and chastenings of national Israel under the law, but God speaking by Isaiah (lxv. 19) says that "the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her [the new heaven and new earth], nor the voice of crying." Also Revelation vii. 17: "For the Lamb,

which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes," and under his omnipotent guiding hand Isaiah (li. 11) tells us, "Therefore [a prearranged certainty] the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." Here I wish to say that the "shalls" and "wills" of Jehovah are the eternal, unchangeable fiats of the eternal sovereign God. We may be often cast down in spirit and suffer many persecutions in the flesh, life's road at times seem strewn with thorns wherein the temptations of the adversary seem to encumber us on every hand, but these things belong unto the crucifying of the flesh and the filling up of the sufferings of Christ in the body, yet in him who is our life, our peace, consolation and joy, there is indeed "no more sea." "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you."—John xiv. 27. All the peace of the world has to offer, even its most lasting and sweetest consolations to those "who are of the world" and "love the world," are only temporal and can never be immortalized, for however precious they may seem will pass away in death and prove to be nothing better than a burial shroud, for mortality shall be swallowed up of life, but the peace that Jesus gives is infinite. Isaiah tells us (ix. 6) that Christ is "The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace;" also (xxvi. 3) that he will "keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee." When our sinful bodies are laid in the grave that sweet peace flows on like a mighty river to all eternity. "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Speaking of this spiritual Jerusalem Paul says (Hebrews xii. 23), "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." Again, in Isaiah lii. 1, "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." This peaceful righteousness, the new Jerusalem, this "tabernacle of God which is with men," is our divinity which teacheth us to discern between the righteousness of the law and christian righteousness and place them both within their bounds. Christian righteousness appertaineth to the new man, and the righteousness of the law appertaineth to the old man, which is born of flesh and blood and must be crucified daily that the new man, the man of faith, may enjoy the kingdom and the inestimable gift of grace, Christ Jesus. This righteousness is heavenly, which, as it is said, we have not of ourselves, but receive it from heaven; which we work not, but which by grace is wrought in us, and apprehended by faith, whereby we mount up above the law of works, being brought into citizenship of the new heaven and the new earth. Bearing the heavenly we now, in this time state, become, and are come, unto Mount Zion, wherein is no more the law, no sin, no remorse or sting of conscience, no death, but perfect joy, righteousness, grace, peace, life, salvation and glory; where the twelve manner of fruits hang

pendant, and the wonderful tree of life yields her fruit every month. There are no barren seasons there, and in this heavenly righteousness sin can have no place, for there is no law, and where no law is there is no transgression. (Rom. iv. 15.) Viewing this heavenly state John said, "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not,"—1 John v. 18, for where Christ is truly apprehended by faith there must needs be full and perfect joy in the Lord, with peace of conscience, which most certainly thus thinketh, as Luther said, although I am a sinner by the law, yet I despair not, yet I die not, because Christ liveth, who is both my righteousness and my everlasting life, in that righteousness and life I have no sin, no fear (for it can never fail), no sting of conscience, no care of death. I am indeed a sinner as touching this present life and the righteousness thereof, as the child of Adam; where the law accuseth me, death reigns over me, and at length would devour me. But I have another righteousness and life above this life, which is Christ the Son of God, who knoweth no sin or death, but is righteousness and life eternal, by whom this my body, being dead and brought unto dust, shall be raised again and delivered from this bondage of sin, to be sanctified together with the Spirit. O glorious Redeemer, all-conquering Savior, who hast given us a never-failing refuge! Oh "beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion," for "out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined."—Psalms xlviii. 2; l. 2. Its walls are great and high. "In that day [the day of the new covenant wherein the gospel is preached] shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks."—Isaiah xxi. 1. "Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders: but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates [twelve gates] Praise."—Isaiah lx. 18. We may often have to fight with "beasts at Ephesus" and be compassed round about with the raging and bellowing of the "strong bulls of Bashan," but in this strong city of our God we are safe for evermore, for "no lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there: but the redeemed shall walk there."—Isaiah xxxv. 9. Saved in this haven of rest, weary wayworn travelers find sweet repose, the precious balm of the holy Comforter is poured into every wound, the "pure river of water of life" is food and drink, for "in the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life," Christ Jesus our Lord, to guard it and keep it from every blight and curse, for therein he rules as the almighty God by the might of his power, and as the Lamb, the crucified one who has redeemed her (Rev. xxii. 3), he is therefore her life, light, Comforter, peace and joy for time and eternity.

JOHN GIBSON.

HAVRE, Montana.

FORT BENNING, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—If you can find room in your dear old paper for this I would like to have it published, but if it is in the way just throw it in the wastebasket and it will be all right with me. I have been wanting to send in a few lines to go out over the States and see if they can find any one like me. I am a lonely soldier boy, and a long way from home and friends. I do not get to hear any one talk or preach who I can believe ever had any light; they all have the same

story. I have been here for two years and have not found a single one like me. I was born and have lived in Texas the most of my life. I was raised among Old Baptists. My mother and father are members, and my father is a minister. When I was about seventeen or eighteen years old I was a very bad boy, but did not stop to think of it until I was that age, when I dreamed I was in a little bunch of woods near my home and my father and a preacher I knew well were with me. He told my father I was a preacher, and they wanted me to preach for them. I felt very proud, and very confident that I could do it with all ease. But when I got in the little stand they had fixed for me I discovered the stand was filthy. I then had a tub of water and was going to wash it out, when it became so dark I could not see what I was doing. I then struck a match and lighted a lantern, but the light from it was so dim I could hardly see. All I could see was the filth I was standing in, and I also saw it was all over me. I noticed my light was getting so dim that I thought it was about to go out, when the one who was with me offered me a clean basin of water and a bright light, but I said, Oh I have some water and a light, and I would not have his light or water. Just when I thought I had it and myself clean the brightest light I ever saw came shining down, and then I could see very plainly where I was and what I had all around and on me. I was so sick and tired I thought I would faint, I could see no way out, and when I looked at the water in the tub I saw it was as black as tar and almost as thick. Then came the sweetest hour of my life: clean, pure water was coming through the stand and around my feet, then all over me, and before I knew it the black was all gone. The little stand I was in had been cleansed and was as white as snow, and the clothes I had on were also snowy white. I was so happy I could only stand and look around me and rejoice. When I went away, I do not know where I went, but my father was there. It seemed he left while I was in the dark, but the minister was with me, and he told my father that I did preach and that he had never heard anything to equal it in his life. I had this dream three times in about a week, and the last time I dreamed it I thought my father said I should join the church and be baptized. It was on my mind continually and I could not get rid of it. I tried to change my life and do what was right, but I could do no better; in fact, I got worse and worse all the time; sin was mixed with all I did. I began to think of my eternal life. One day I was working alone in the field, when suddenly it seemed I did not know where I was, and the first thing I knew I was saying, I am lost, no power on earth can save me. It was impressed upon my mind so strongly that I was almost crazy. Everything was dark and I could see nothing but my sins and condemnation to my poor soul, when a voice spoke to me from some place, I knew not where, saying, No power on earth can save you, but there is a power in heaven that can and will save you from your sins. Then I saw what I sometimes hope is the light, and all my hope is based upon that one thing: free salvation. I had to give up working, for indeed there is no power on earth that can save souls. As I said in the beginning, my parents are Baptists, and I thought I was, too, up to that time, but after that I did not know what they did believe. I did not know what I was. I thought I had found something new.

One Saturday I was expecting to attend our home meeting, but my father gave me some work to do and I was unable to get there. The next day I was sick and did not go. That month I suffered more than I can tell. The next month I went, and heard the first sermon I ever heard preached, and I had been going to that same church all my life. The next month I was baptized by Elder W. B. Roberson. I was happy for a few short months, and then I began to feel I was doing a greater wrong by staying in the church than I would if I were out of it. I felt that I was deceiving them, and was afraid I had never had a call to join the church, which worried me for some time. When between nineteen and twenty years of age I left home, and remained away until I was twenty-one years old, when I returned, but I still was dissatisfied. I finally made up my mind to get away from them, and stay until I got rid of that feeling and forgot about Primitive Baptists and everything pertaining to them, so I joined the army for three years. It is a pleasant life when I can forget, but it is seldom I can do that. I want to find some Baptists who are like me, who are in some place where the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is all the preaching they get, for I want to correspond with them. I have been trying to find some such in Georgia, but have not been able to do so. One time when we were camped away out in the jungle I heard there was an Old Baptist church five miles from where we were. I had no way to get there but to walk, so I obtained a pass and went out to see them, and was disappointed to find they were "Conditionalists," for I would as soon listen to a shouting Methodist as to listen to one of them.

Please excuse mistakes, as I am a failure from start to finish, and bear with me in my weakness and inability; of myself I can do nothing. I have written more than I intended, and if it takes up too much space cast it aside as trash, and I will think nothing of it, for I know you always have enough letters to fill the paper with something worth reading. All the preaching I get are the good letters in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. May the Lord's richest blessings be with the dear old paper and its editors.

I will not write any more, for I cannot say anything worth reading, but if I could write as some of the dear brethren and sisters do I would be happy, and write all the time I could.

Your little unworthy brother, in hope of a better life,

O. F. WALL.

COLUMBUS, Georgia.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If I could feel as sure that I am worthy to thus address you as I am that the doctrine set forth in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is the doctrine of the Bible I would have no fear and trembling in claiming this sacred kinship. Sometimes when I look back over my past life I feel that I have deceived the dear people of God in asking a home with them, but where would my peace and happiness be if they had no fellowship for me? I can find no spiritual comfort outside the fellowship of this peculiar people. The God they worship is the God I love to talk about and meditate upon. With Ruth I would say, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. He has all power in heaven and in earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? All things are under his control, and whithersoever he will

he turns them. The world lieth in wickedness, but God's power is over all; and we read, The wrath of man shall praise him and the remainder he shall restrain. The God we hope we worship is sovereign over all worlds, dominions and powers. Omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient is our God, and he is Israel's strength, the Rock of Zion's habitation. He has been our dwelling-place in all generations, and says, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Fear not what man can do unto thee, for I am with thee, no harm shall come to thee. My grace is sufficient for thee. Oh what precious promises for our comfort and uplifting. Like Jacob's staff, they strengthen us in the way, and, dear ones, if God be for us who can be against us? Persecutions and fiery trials may assail us, but Jesus the Master suffered these, much more than are sent upon us, and we must suffer if we would reign with him. Paul was a persecutor of the saints until Jesus took up his abode in him and killed him to the love of sin, and afterwards we hear him saying "that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." So we find Paul the persecutor becomes the persecuted, like the humble Nazarene he learned obedience through suffering, an obedience even unto death. See the power of God manifested in this miraculous change. Yea, we are told to rejoice in persecution for truth's sake, for great is our reward in heaven. We often think over the miracles our Lord Jesus performed while here on earth, raising the fallen, cheering the faint, healing the sick and leading the blind, but the grandest miracle the Master ever performed while his feet trod the streets of earthly Jerusalem was when he gave eternal life when he bade a wretched sinner live. All the way down through time we see the same miracles wrought before our eyes when we see the blessed Son of God working mightily in these temples of clay. We see the old man with his deeds cast down and the new man rejoicing gloriously, singing the new song put in his mouth, even praises to God. Like Abraham of old, have we not longed to see His day, and have we not seen it and are glad? Though we walk through a fiery furnace the Son of God will be with us, and like the three Hebrew children we shall be brought safely through and not even the smell of fire on our garments, "For I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless, and sanctify to thee thy deepest distress." We read how that the old apostles were sanctified in fires of persecution: they were reviled and learned not to revile again. This is why the martyr Stephen could pray, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. He had learned it of his royal Master. It was not of the flesh, but by the grace of God that he could pray this prayer. Grace all the work shall crown through everlasting days. What a long array of martyrs we read about, who said over and over again that in their flesh there dwelt no good thing. What a legacy of comfort Jesus left behind for us, not only in his own life of holiness, suffering and in his atoning even unto death, but it pleased him that he should have many witnesses from the sons of men, making his power known in working miracles in earthen vessels. We thank our Lord for these spiritual gifts to the church by which God so wonderfully and graciously

manifests himself as working and abiding in his chosen vessels, and by which they are made to so live that others seeing their good works may glorify their Father in heaven, and hereby are rich in comfort to the scattered flocks as they journey through the wilderness toward that city not made with hands, eternal in the heaven. May the Lord keep and bless you editors in your labor of love, and bless each and every one of his loved ones.

Yours unworthily, in love,

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

PHILIPPI, West Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—I kindly and cheerfully submit the inclosed letter to you, hoping it may be published.

J. N. BARTLETT.

POCA, W. Va., Jan. 1, 1927.

DEAR BROTHER BARTLETT:—I received your good letter in due time. Indeed I felt a rejoicing in my heart to think of your promptness in answering one who feels to be the least of all, if I be one of the redeemed of the Lord. I am always glad to hear from you and the brethren of your association. To express myself freely and truthfully, I love all true faithful Baptists, and love to get letters from them, but my ill qualification to answer their good letters bothers me, as I have no learning, never studied grammar a minute in my life, so cannot command language. I have many times in my feeble efforts while trying to preach seen the tears creeping down the cheeks of some who were under the sound of my voice, and for a moment a feeling of sadness would come upon me, thinking they were feeling sorry for me, a poor illiterate mortal, saying in mind, Why don't he sit down? and when the services were closed the very ones I had noticed shedding tears were often the first to come to me expressing themselves, by saying, The Lord blessed you to-day with a glorious message to the comfort of my poor hungry soul. Oh how I felt the words of Joseph to apply to me at such times: "It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace." Eulogy has never had a tendency to puff me up, but more to humble me, causing me to retrace what I had felt as an experience, if not mistaken, to be a call to the ministry. Yes, time after time have I gone back in my mind to my old woodyard, while chopping wood for the night the impression of preaching came with power into my mind, so much so that I dropped my ax and began to speak aloud of God's goodness and his loving-kindness, oh how great to poor helpless sinners, who feel to be lost and justly condemned, feeling they are without hope and without God here in a sin-cursed world. The breathing of my soul in prayer was, Lord, save or I perish, while my mind was completely taken away from the cares of this time and placed on heavenly happiness beyond this mortal life. While I was engaged in speaking to a heavenly host, as it appeared to me, my wife and two little children came to where I was, with tears streaming down their cheeks, my wife caught me by the arm, saying, Jim, you have gone crazy, and what will become of me and the two little children? come, go with me to the house. I told her I was not crazy, that the good Lord had, as I thought and felt in my heart, spoke peace to my soul out on yonder lonely mountain, as I was on my way this morning to the store, and that I would never have any more trouble, and I hurried home to tell you, which I did, and as I was chopping wood a dark cloud came upon me. Oh the darkness of that cloud,

to me it was dark as midnight, and a voice in my heart, as it appeared to me, said, The Spirit of the Lord has anointed you to preach the gospel of the Son of God, cry you must. I said, Lord, what shall I cry? Cry unto Jerusalem, tell her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquities are pardoned, and that she hath received double at the Lord's hand for all her sins. Dear brother, my rebellious disposition to wear out these impressions has pressed me with many sorrows; it seems to me that I have learned obedience only by what I have suffered.

January 2nd.—This morning finds me with a desire to continue, as my mind is on Christ's sermon on the mountain to his disciples. He speaks of those who are blessed. It seems for the comfort of his chosen ones through all time he opened his mouth and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. The birds of the air have nests, and the foxes have holes, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. The Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings and crying which cannot be uttered. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Hungry, faint and poor, behold us, Lord, again assembled at thy mercy's door thy bouuty to obtain. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. We understand the strong man (nature) armed keeps his palace, and his goods are in peace, until the stronger than he comes (Christ) and binds the strong man (evil spirit) and cast him out. It is then the Spirit enters in and dwells there. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God; for ye are the temple (natural bodies) of the living God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God and they shall be my people. In covenant from of old the sons of God they were, the feeblest lamb in Jesus' fold was blessed in Jesus there. Paul said to the brethren at Rome, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."—Rom. viii. 9, 10. Paul to Titus, "Unto the pure all things are pure." "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." —Rom. viii. 28. David says, Blessed are they that do know the joyful sound. Every blessing was treasured up in Jesus Christ in eternity, so the little ones will get them in due time, Jesus being their spiritual head. Jude says, Sanctified (set apart) by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called. So we are not left to guess at what Jesus meant by saying, Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God, as grace had been given them in him by the Father before the world began. The purifying power, which is the fire of everlasting love, was in him, and they being a gift of the Father to him, truly he could say, Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God, and with that loving spirit in him for all the Father had given him he could say, All thine are mine, and I am glorified in them. David, who is a beautiful type of Jesus, says, "With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure: and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward."

The gospel of the Son of God is a savor of life to the living, while it is a savor of death to the dead. The hidden man of the heart is the subject of gospel address, "for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."—Rom. x. 10. My dear old brother, it is to us a glorious consolation that the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. In Paul's epistle to Titus, "Mine own son after the common faith." (Common to all the redeemed family.) "Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." In the closing verses of this first chapter he points out those who do not believe the truth, and he says, "But unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."

Now, my brother, I will close for this time, fearing I may weary you, but I felt that I wanted to talk awhile with you. I have many letters to answer if my bodily strength does not fail me, and as I have but one eye, it gets very weak when I write lengthy letters. I sit by my fire and write on my knee. Should I live until the 15th of this coming April I will be seventy-eight years old, so I am not expecting to be able to get out among you all much longer, as I am feeble.

May the God of love be with you, and all the faithful in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

FAYETTEVILLE, Ga., Feb. 13, 1927.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I finished reading "Predestination," and my only objection to it is, it is not larger. I wish every one of God's people could read it. I also enjoyed your editorial in December SIGNS. You expressed some of my views, but of course you can see and write much deeper than I can. When I had read only part of the article it seemed that some of the wonders of God opened up to my mind, and it was too wonderful for me to comprehend, I was made to tremble, as one in a small boat in a large sea. Such an one would tremble at fear of being lost, or drowned, but I trembled with wonder and amazement. I have believed this doctrine, so far as I could understand, from my youth. Have been confused many times, as it was too deep for me to understand, and I must confess I do not fully understand it yet, but there is one thing I can say: I know, according to my understanding of the teaching of the Scriptures, that God is sovereign, above all law, made all things, and for his purpose, cannot sin, does all things from eternity, does as he pleases with all things, nothing excepted, works and none can hinder, hinders and none can work, does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, &c. "New Year's Greeting" in January SIGNS was also good. I enjoy reading the SIGNS more than all other publications, though I have read but few others. Some of the reasons I like it best are, the truth as I understand it, the spirit of forbearance and love, and the way you answer false charges. I have heard so much said about what the SIGNS' people believe and teach, I was confused for awhile, though I saw none of such things in the SIGNS, so I began to inquire, and found that the worst trouble was with the enemies of the

SIGNS. I found these to be either prejudiced, or ignorant of your sentiments. I have become disgusted at the way some editors and writers accuse and abuse those who differ with them, and do not care to read their writings, but any one who would become offended at the way the SIGNS' people answer charges are of the "easy to offend" kind. One Elder, some years ago, said the SIGNS had done more to poison the minds of God's people than anything else, but that did not keep me from loving to read it. One thing, that is the age of the SIGNS, is something to consider. It is the oldest Old Baptist paper I know, and has ever contended for the same principles upon which it was founded. Where is another with the same record? Many others not so old have not this record. If God has not been with the SIGNS' people how has it stood through all the storms and floods of persecution that have been hurled against it? This, if nothing else, would cause me to consider. It will stand as long as God has a purpose for it to fulfill. He has a purpose in its existence, and it will exist until that purpose is fulfilled. May God bless the faithful to continue so, and show the erring ones their error, and bring peace to his dear peace-loving ones, for Christ's sake.

Yours in humble hope,

GEO. W. JACKSON.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Nov. 17, 1926.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been a reader of the SIGNS for fifty years and a subscriber for forty-seven years. I feel that I could not do without it, and that I have been greatly blessed this last year by being able to hear Elder Dodson preach every fourth Sunday since April, and have also heard Elder Ruston, besides going to an association and the meeting at Slate Hill, but the cold weather and my poor health will prevent my going this winter, so what would I do without the SIGNS?

(MRS.) O. E. BOWEN.

CARDIFF, Maryland.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—I have your book, which I appreciate more than words can tell. I have read and reread it, and it is truly wonderful. With this and the dear old SIGNS, to which I have been a subscriber for a number of years, I pass many hours away these dreary winter evenings. Each tell the same sweet story: salvation by grace, and grace alone, no merit of their own.

Wishing you health and success, and that you may be spared many years to proclaim the truth, I remain yours sincerely, in hope of a better life,

V. H. ENSOR.

MIAMI, Florida.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—This is to inform you that my address is changed from 4262 N. W. 22nd Avenue, to 2934 N. W. 22nd Court, Miami, Florida. Please insert this notice in the SIGNS that my brethren and friends may know where to find me. If Elder Pickett, or any other brother or sister, knows of any genuine Old School Baptist in or around Miami, I would be glad to hear from them. May the Lord bless Zion and lead her in the paths of righteousness for his own names' sake.

I am an old sinner, who can sometimes rejoice in the hope of having been saved by grace.

J. E. SMITH.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1927.

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HEBREWS X. 23-25.

"LET us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) and let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching."

A member asked us about six months ago to write using as our subject the words: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is." This member having observed some whose attitude towards attending their meetings seemed of more or less secondary consideration was rightfully deeply concerned. It is a matter which calls for self-examination on the part of each and every member of every true Old School Baptist Church throughout our entire country. The life of each member of the visible church should be as a lighted candle placed on the candlestick; it should not be put under a bushel, or submerged beneath the things of this world, all of which do but perish with the using. The kernel, or substance of the teaching of our Lord and Savior, both by word of mouth and the life that he lived while here in the flesh, was "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." In that great and wonderful address, his sermon on the Mount, the place where he had gone apart from the multitudes, "when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them," saying, "Be not ye therefore like unto them [the heathen]: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him." How prone we are to forget that the hand of Providence supplies our temporal needs. We have to be reminded from time to time that the gold and the silver are his; that the cattle which graze upon a thousand hills are the Lord's; yea, the world and all that in it is, and that it is he who clothes the lilies of the field, whose hand feeds the lone sparrow upon the housetop; and, if not a sparrow can fall without him, will he not give his children bread? The great apostle declares in our text that "he is faithful that promised." Do we really believe and act out the belief that the Lord is our shepherd? The good Shepherd will surely provide for his sheep; he will cause them to lie down in green pastures and lead them beside the still waters. But, those of us who profess to love the Lord in sincerity and in truth, are we holding fast the profession of our faith without wavering? Do we show by a well ordered walk and godly conversation that we are the Lord's, or is our service only of the lip? Is it consistent to say, Lord, Lord, in the meetinghouse and then engage in worldly conversation and jesting until meeting time again? Do we live daily so as to prove that we have been with and learned of Jesus and that our treasure is in heaven? How searching and solemn should these questions be. And do we consider one another to prove unto love and to good

works? The apostle says we should do these things. Jesus said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." What was under consideration was, "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me." These things are accomplished among the saints when they are assembled together and communicating one with another, as those who receive can well testify, even though those who give or minister are unaware of it. The servant which Abraham sent to take a wife unto his son, Isaac, went questioning and praying, but when he was convinced that the Lord had prospered his journey, "he bowed down his head, and worshipped the Lord," saying, "Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." "*I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren.*" This deserves to be repeated again and again. Only those who have been in the way and have experienced it know of a truth the joy which is inexpressible and full of glory that is witnessed by those who are raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord. Such characters were said to have been quickened, made alive; their affection was set on things above, not on things on the earth, and they were seeking, yea, as for hidden treasure, those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. The psalmist said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Where such scenes are beheld there is no lack of the brethren assembling themselves together; meeting time does not come too often, but rather it seems Sundays are too far apart, even when they are privileged to have meeting every Sunday. Is not the true test of the fruit of the Spirit a considering one another and provoking unto love and to good works? Let us pause for a moment and analyze the definition of the word "consider." Does it not mean that we are constantly, yea, every waking moment, as it were, thinking good concerning those we love and endeavoring in every way to show them kindness and manifest our affection? Such provokes unto love and to good works, for love begets love, and the brethren would do well to remember this and bridle their tongues lest they poison the mind of one another against a brother, at the same time walking so as not to offend a weak brother. Paul says, "Let us [the household of faith] consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is." So we are not only told what to do, but what not to do, thus showing that the holy Scriptures, which were given by inspiration of God, throughly and thoroughly furnish unto all good works. While the manner of some is indifference, coldness, walking in the course of this world, the riches whereof choke out the good seed, the exhortation is not to be as they are, but rather to live righteously, soberly, to visit the fatherless and the widows and to keep ourself unspotted from the world. This, James says, is pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father. Old Baptists of all people, need to study to show themselves approved unto God, workmen that need-

eth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. They should search the Scriptures, to know what they teach, both as to doctrine and order, which go hand in hand. David said, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful: but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." It is truly good to think and talk upon the things of the upper kingdom. One said, "My heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue, Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am." We often think of a band of brethren, three churches composing an association, where they have no regular pastor or minister, only a visitor usually once a year, and yet these brethren are very much alive; they assemble themselves together and talk and sing of the things of Jesus; the theme of their conversation is truly heavenly, and the Lord is wonderfully blessing them with an outpouring of his Holy Spirit, which has been evidenced by an ingathering of twelve during the past three years. This is referred to by way of encouraging churches that may be without undershepherds or supplies. By way of contrast, we would also call attention to another band of most lovely brethren, among them being (we think) a gifted brother, and yet they seldom meet. Is it not a mistake? Are they not forsaking the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is? This the apostle says they should not do. These things are referred to for the earnest consideration of the brethren. We like to see the brethren holding fast the profession of their faith without wavering. We can never tell what time or by whom the Lord will send a message. It is not always necessary for one ordained of men to be present. At best man is but an earthen vessel and the Lord must fill the mouth before it can speak forth his praise, and "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." Therefore let us be found in the way; who can tell but what the Lord will lead us to the house of our Master's brethren? Let us be found assembling ourselves together, exhorting one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching. If we rightly discern "the signs of the times," there is no mistaking that these are the days prophesied of "when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." It is the time when God's called and qualified ministers should "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine." The true soldier must stand his ground and meet the enemies of truth; he must put on the whole armor of God that he may be able to stand the wiles of the devil. The warfare in which he is engaged calls for the helmet of salvation, the breastplate of righteousness, the girdle of truth, the shield of faith, and his feet to be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, for the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; it is not by might, nor by power, "but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Let us, therefore

take "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," and go forth to victory. If we are ever brought forth more than conquerors it will be through him that loved us and gave himself for us. This is that "new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh," that the apostle is writing to the Hebrews about in the chapter wherein is found our text. He begins his epistle by saying, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son." He was the true substance of all the law had shadowed forth. It was not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin, so the Lamb of God was slain from the foundation of the world, in the purpose of God, as a propitiation for the sins of his people and by this "one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." This is all our hope and we are determined not to know anything "among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." Again, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." God forbid that we should be as Ananias and Sapphira, who "kept back part of the price." There are those in the world to-day who are professing to love the Lord with all their heart, &c., who declare boldly they have forsaken the world for the "pearl of great price," and almost with the same breath contend that only eternal salvation is of God, and that salvation in time is of men. In the apostle Peter's day those who were guilty of such had to give up the ghost and were carried out and buried. These are perilous times and there are many who are departing from the way of the Lord, but the faithful in Christ Jesus will not be found among the number, they are to hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering. Therefore let the pastors be ensamples to the flock over which God hath made them the overseers; let them be faithful in doctrine, in order, in practice, and shun not to declare unto them all the counsel of God. Likewise, members, be faithful in holding up the hands of your servant; support him in the manner set forth in the Scriptures and encourage him by your presence at meeting; let it be seen that you do delight in the law of God after the inward man. We can speak feelingly from experience and say that we thank God continually for having surrounded us with faithful brethren, who have not forsaken the assembling of themselves together. Many, many times have we wondered that they should continue to come out, but therein their faithfulness has been manifested. We do not know how we could have gotten along thus far without them. Surely God has been better to us than all our fears. May he give us all to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Finally, brethren, Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhort one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists, when convened with our sister church of West Union, September 10th, 11th and 12th, 1926, to the churches composing our body, and to the saints abroad, greeting and christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—The writing of a Circular Letter should be a labor of love, and a pleasant duty, but often the one upon whom it devolves feels such a sense of weakness that it is only in hoping for and trusting in the strength of Israel that an attempt is made to write for the comfort of the Lord's people, who, we hope, will find us not of a strange language. Our mind reverts to thoughts we have had on the words found in Revelation iii. 20: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." We find a reference in connection with this in Hebrews xii. 6: "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." On these two texts, mainly, we base the views we wish to present. In controverting the Arminian theory that the Lord is knocking on the door of the dead sinner's heart, and failing to gain admittance, has to turn sorrowfully away, a disappointed God, we notice he does not say, If any man will hear, or, If any man will open the door. He speaks and it is done. "A people whom I have not known shall serve me. As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me." "Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice." There is no questioning or consulting man's will about it. Dear saints, can we sup together a little while of the sweetness of these words, as you, no doubt, have often felt to sup with the poor and afflicted, as they tell of their joys and sorrows, and the knocks, or scourgings they have received in all the way the Lord has led them. He does not say he knocks at the door; neither do these words convey that impression to one taught in the Old School. Of himself he says, "I am the door." He knocks, and he tells you to knock, and it (this door) shall be opened unto you. If we would enter by this door into the sheepfold we find that he stands there and knocks, and every idol of whatever nature we seek to bring in with us receives a knock by the word of his testimony. Arminianism receives a knock, the whole tenor of the Scriptures condemning it. Though loathing it as we do, we still find it lurking in our nature, as the Canaanite still in the land. Every old tattered rag of self-righteousness must be stripped away. Every goodly Babylonish garment, as the many inventions of men which are pictured in a way so fascinating, and made to appear so plausible and helpful, as the various secret societies, wherein some are falsely led to trust, how loth we are to relinquish them, but they, with all other like inventions, receive many knocks, and must be left out. The pure testimony of the Scripture is the weapon by which the knocks are administered. Every "golden wedge," as love of money, with all its resultant train of evils, which has caused many to err from the truth, must be knocked away, for they will split and divide wherever they gain an entrance. The many (so-called) "innocent amusements," all provision of the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof, the Scripture abounds with knocks against them. Such "wedges" do divide our wandering hearts, and leave but half (too often it

seems like less than half) for God. He is the door. We must enter into the sheepfold only by and through him, and remain there only by the word of his testimony, for if by any connivance we climb up any other way we are thieves and robbers, and will sooner or later steal away the peace and harmony of his people, and rob them of the feeling of fellowship, without which there is no dwelling together in unity. Sometimes one stubbornly refuses to let go of a cherished idol, but the Lord our God is a jealous God, and if such an one is one of "them also I must bring," he will surely receive the knocks, as many of us can testify, until in the day of terrible manifestations of God's power he is made willing to give up the whole world if he might but be granted fellow-citizenship with the saints, and have right to the tree of life, a home and standing in the true church with the people of God. Then how gladly he is made to hear the voice of him who speaketh, "It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled." How sweet his voice, and how gently it knocketh, as we hear him say, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." We hear and open unto him our hearts, bruised and aching with the cares and sorrows of this life, and the weary and ever increasing load of sin, in supplication for help and forgiveness for our idolatrous loves. And whosoever thus cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out, but will come in and sup with him and he with me. Yes, dear tried, discouraged people of God, he sups with us, shares in all our griefs and pains, for in all our afflictions he is afflicted, for he is not an high priest who cannot be touched with our feelings of infirmities, of mournings for unworthiness, of doubt and unbelief, of dullness, coldness, indifference; all touch him, and he will come in and sup with all such mourners who open to him. He is the door, and we open this blessed door by our cries for mercy and help in such times of need, for his ears are ever open to the cry of the destitute. Even in our temptations he sups with us, for himself having been tempted he knows how to help and feel for those who are tempted. When clouds of troubles have gathered in thick darkness about us, and storms of sorrows fall on every hand, when foes and fears of every shape without and within have united to terrify us, every earthly friend fails and the knocks come thick and hard, we feel that all these things are against us. But "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." We are thus brought into closer fellowship with the sufferings of Christ when in his hour of trial, all his former friends forsook him and fled. In our lonely, forsaken feelings we are given a taste of his suffering and do sup with him.

"And yet how light our sorrows be,
To his in dark Gethsemane,
He drank the cup with stifled groan,
And said, Thy will, not mine, be done."

Oh, that agonizing scene, when in transports of suffering, his humanity craving sympathy and companionship, we see him running back and forth to his sleeping disciples, and pathetically asking, Could ye not watch with me one hour? O, dear kindred in such a Brother, when in slothfulness we may feel tempted to stay away from our meetings, where he has lovingly promised to be with us, think of his mournful eyes being turned on us with that pleading appeal, Could ye not watch with me one hour? With such a picture before us could we beg to escape the chastenings of the Almighty, knowing

that every true follower of him is thereof a partaker, but pray that we patiently sup with him, enduring all things for his sake, and that he would in his own way

"Give us, Lord, our sins to mourn,
Our sins which have his body torn;
Give us with broken hearts to see
His last tremendous agony."

We are too often only slothful, sleeping disciples. It is grievous to us when misplaced confidence in one very dear to us proves him to be, after all, only a fallible lump of clay. But that is scarcely a sip in the draught of the bitter cup which our dear Elder Brother drained to the dregs. When we reflect on these things we realize how truly he could say,

"I feel at my heart all thy sighs and thy groans,
For thou art most near me, my flesh and my bones;
In all thy distresses thy Head feels the pain,
Every stroke is most needful, not one is in vain."

For the Lord will not lay upon man more than is right, yet we are tempted to reply against him, and ask, Why? Why hast thou made me thus? Why must these things be so? Why is it some have flowers strewn along the path of life, while others' feet with briars torn, are bleeding in the strife? Again we are reminded that our Head feels our pain, and "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." He is touched. The Door is opened and he hears their cries as they open unto him their full hearts, pouring into his listening ear all their woes. He comes in and sups with them and they with him. No child of God can escape the knocks, for he will visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes. "For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation." But, dear saints, these things are not all against us, but his chastenings are signs of his love, for as a father chasteneth his own son whom he loves, so will our heavenly Father chasten his own. As the Israelites on one occasion drew water, and poured it out before the Lord, and said, We have sinned, so in the knocks we receive, whereby we are led to make confession unto salvation, water is drawn from our eyes, and our tears are poured out before him, as the eyes of Job poured out tears unto God, and said, "O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbor," so we cry and confess our wrongs, open to him with a plea for mercy, and as he gives us once more to feel his forgiveness he comes in and sups with us in the joys of salvation, and, O, dear children of God, we sup with him, and with one another. Here it is a continual mixture of joys and sorrows, but there it will be unalloyed rejoicing through all eternity, "shouting glory to our King, till the vaults of heaven ring." "Sometimes a light surprises the christian while he sings, It is the Lord that rises with healing in his wings," and "as one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you," saith the Lord. When every earthly hope and ambition is blasted, every dependence in earthly friends has failed, "when my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." "I the God of Israel will not forsake them." Our Beloved comes gently knocking with a voice full of love and compassion, our hearts are opened unto him with songs of praise, for his mercy endureth forever. Sometimes we are given to feel his very presence among us, and as he rejoices always in the habitable parts of his earth, his saints in whom he dwells, so do we rejoice in his manifest presence among us, a mutual rejoicing and supping to-

gether. Oh have we not all supped with him, and with each other, in the bitter things and sweet? Have we not all, at times, joined in the song of deliverance, for he hath triumphed gloriously? He is not a disappointed God. He would not be entitled to the name of God if he could be disappointed. We could not worship a disappointed God, for we could not ascribe unto him all power, all might and dominion, if it was possible for him to be disappointed. He shall not fail nor be discouraged. The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied. We love these emphatic declarative "shalls." He speaks and it is done.

"This God is the God we adore,
Our faithful, unchangeable Friend;
Whose love is as large as his power,
And neither knows measure nor end.

'Tis Jesus, the first and the last,
Whose Spirit shall guide us safe home;
We'll praise him for all that is past,
And trust him for all that's to come."

There is another phase of this subject we ought to consider, each in his own individual case: What if he did not stand and knock, "breaking our schemes of earthly joys to make us seek our all in him," but allowed us to accumulate wordly treasures to our hearts' content? To gather about us and retain all the loves and friendships of this world? What if friends never proved false, the partners of our blood never failed us, would we then ever care to open to him seeking his love and supping with him in the joys of salvation, which it is his pleasure to give? Would we ever pray to be transformed to his image and so sup with him in his suffering, or even value his unfailing faithfulness and love? When we sing with more or less fervency and zeal,

"The dearest idol I have known,
What'er that idol be
Oh come and tear it from thy throne,
I'll worship only thee."

Do we ever think of the grievous knocks we must endure before our idols are torn from us? But we have this assurance, that he who saved us by his blood, makes every sorrow yield us good. We do not always recognize the grievous conditions that befall us as coming in answer to prayer, yet it is by terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation, and "the thunder of his power, who can understand?" But we know that however remote it may be, in some way the ultimate result will be for good to them that love him. We resolve to strive more earnestly to keep our hearts with all diligence and so escape the knocks, but ere we are aware we are again in forbidden paths, doing things we hate. Then it is the voice of our Beloved who knocketh, saying, Return unto me, O ye backsliding children, for I am married unto you. "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you." But, O dear ones, have you ever opened your aching hearts unto him, pouring out heart-breaking woes and beseechings, only to feel that our Beloved has withdrawn himself and gone? Have you called but he gave no answer? If you have, oh then let us all sup together, for we know not what to pray for as we ought. Often when some woe betides us, our selfish plea is, If it be possible, let this cup pass from us, and cannot from our hearts fervently say, Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done. We call but get no answer to our selfish, sinful prayer. We ask and receive not, because we ask amiss. More knocks are needful, they do come, and still must come, as long as we are cumbered with this load of sinful clay which constantly causes us grief and shame be-

cause of our many defections. But in his own good time we again hear his voice gently knocking, saying, Though for a little while I have hid my face from you, yet in great mercy will I return unto you. But do we not each of us at times feel to cry, Tell me, Oh thou for whom my love is the one abiding hope, that I have passed from death unto life; is there any one like me, or am I one alone, as I so often feel to be? Oh set me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thine arm, that we might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. He answers, "I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." "I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

Brethren, pray for us. Farewell.

L. L. SCHENCK, Mod.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists, now in session with West Union Church, Sept. 10th, 11th and 12th, 1926, to the brethren with whom we correspond, sendeth greeting and christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Through the kind providence of an ever-indulgent Lord we are again brought together in an associate capacity, and we feel that we have been abundantly blessed with the outpouring of his holy Spirit upon us. Evidently he has been pleased to favor us again with a visit of his peaceful presence. His servants have come laden with the good things of the gospel, and have shunned not to declare all the counsel of God. They have delivered the glad tidings in demonstration of the Spirit and in power, and we are led to hope that our faith does not stand in the wisdom of man, but by the power of God. It is a season which will be long remembered and cherished in the hearts of those blessed with the high privilege of meeting together at this time and place. We have felt to pray as did Samson: "Strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once more," and we feel that God has graciously granted our petition.

Our next session is appointed to be held with Big Walnut Creek Church, to begin on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1927, and continue three days, the place of meeting to be decided upon later, when we hope again to be favored with the happy privilege of meeting our corresponding brethren and all those of like precious faith. We desire a continuance of your correspondence.

L. L. SCHENCK, Mod.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

BOOK NOTICE.

More than half of the books on Predestination have been disposed of. One able minister says, "It has the cream of Primitive or Old School Baptists expressions in it." Another brother says, "It would be a valuable book to add to the library of every subscriber of the SIGNS."

Send in your order if you want a copy. Single copies $1, six copies $5, special to ministers, fifteen copies for $10.

R. LESTER DODSON,
12 Addison Avenue, Rutherford, N. J.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

G. W. Golden, Iowa, $1; Elizabeth Rittenhouse, N. J., $4; Miss Altha Drake, N. J., $2; Hewitt Osborn, N. Y., $3; E. J. S. Lee, Tex., $1; J. C. Nelson, Ky., $3; Annie E. Putman, Iowa, $1; Mrs. J. A. Hurley, Mich., $3; Mrs. B. H. Shearon, Tenn., $3; Joseph Frazier, Del., $1; J. I. Foster, Tex., $10; Mrs. Sarah J. Clegg, Pa., $1; Mrs. A. B. Engell, N. Y., $10; Mrs. W. A. Hightower, N. Y., $1; J. R. Nuckles, Ky., $3; Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Okla., $2; Earl T. McAlister, N. Mex., $1.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Judge George M. Beebe departed this life March 1st, 1927, at his home in Ellenville, Ulster Co., N. Y. He was born at New Vernon, Orange Co., N. Y., October 28th, 1836, the son of Elder Gilbert Beebe and Phœbe Ann Cunningham, and was the last of a family of thirteen children. Judge Beebe was the last Governor of the territory of Kansas. In 1872 he was nominated for the Assembly, and succeeded himself the following year, elected a representative from the fourteenth New York district to the forty-fifth Congress. In 1883 he was made Judge of the Court of Claims, in which position he served for seventeen years most acceptably. He is survived by his dear companion Marie Louise Markey. From early childhood he always felt an interest in those professing Old School Baptist doctrine, but it was not until about six years ago that his desire for spiritual things was such that he began to attend our meetings and to manifest lively interest in the truth preached and in the believing brethren. About this time it was our pleasure to meet him, and from our first acquaintance we were impressed with his wonderful grasp of the truth, and it was very gratifying to see that the truth, and nothing but the truth, would satisfy him. He loved to meet with the brethren, though he felt unworthy, "vilest of them all," yet many times we have seen his face aglow while listening to the preaching by various Elders. Spiritual things seemed to be uppermost in his mind most of the time, so that his conversation was in heaven. For more than a year before his death we noticed that his bodily strength and endurance was failing, yet his mind was active to the end. Being over ninety years of age when he died, he often realized the solemnity of the earthly house of this tabernacle being dissolved and longed for brighter assurances of his acceptance in the Beloved. Sometimes while conversing upon these things he would tell of his daughter Nell, who, while upon her deathbed, looked up and said, "Father, all we can do is to trust in God." Those words were to him "fitly spoken." We heard him speak a number of times about "waiting faith," and on one occasion he showed us a hymn (Beebe's collection 530) which had been very helpful to him, the first and two last verses were found written out after his death in his coat pocket. A week or two before his death he was at times very cast down, sometimes fearing that he was lost, and the agony and distress of mind at such times was distressing to those near and dear to him to witness. These dark seasons continued until about three days before he died, when he was given such comfort and assurance that he could "weep to the praise of the mercy he found." With this comfort he seemed to be strengthened, not only in mind but in body, even the doctor believed his health improved in every way, and the Judge himself was hopeful, if it were the Lord's will, that he might be spared to attend another Warwick Association, but this was not to be, for on the evening of February 28th his dear companion noticed a change, and from then he sank rapidly. Some time before the end he mustered up his strength, and with a clear voice repeated, "All hail the power of Jesus' name," three times, his face reflecting the comfort and joy he felt. His dear companion, who was with him and cared for him constantly, is left to mourn her loss, but the blessed privilege of companionship with him in the things that are spiritual, as well as temporal, is an abiding source of comfort and consolation in her bereavement. We sorrow that we shall see his face no more, but there is comfort in the knowledge that he is "for ever with the Lord."

The writer tried to speak words of comfort to those gathered to pay the last tribute of love to the dear departed one.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Elder B. H. Yates was born April 23rd, 1843, in Dixon County, Tennessee, and departed this life January 26th, 1927, making his stay on this earth 83 years, 9 months and 3 days. He was married to Laminty V. Pestal in 1860, who preceded him by twelve years. To this union were born six children, of whom four are still living, one son and three daughters: A. J. Yates, Tulsa, Okla., Mrs. Fannie Hall, Fellows, Cal., Mrs. Azil Vandone, St. Louis, Mo., Mrs. Mollie Gibson, Meeleysville, Mo. Left to mourn their loss, besides his children, are thirteen grandchildren, twenty great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren. He was a devoted husband, a kind and loving father and grandfather. After the death of his loving companion he lived a very lonely life, making his home with the youngest daughter, Mrs. Azil Vandone, and Vergee Peryin, one of his grandchildren, with whom he was living at the time of his death, who gave him all the care that mortal could give. He was loved by all who knew him, and was strong in the Baptist faith, and had a great hope of the beyond, and often of late had said that he was longing and only waiting for God to carry out his will in calling him home. The writer does not know just when he professed a hope in Christ, though it was when he was quite young. He was ordained to preach some forty-five or more years ago. At his death he was a member of Boaz Chapel, Graves County, Kentucky. He was laid to rest in the graveyard of the New Hope Church, which he helped to build and had charge of for years, at Purman, Ripley County, Missouri. He spent a great deal of his time since the death of his companion with the brethren in Kentucky, whose fellowship he enjoyed more than any other, and his home was always open to the Lord's children, and we feel

that God's will has been done, yet our hearts are sad over the death of a dear father, but, on the other hand, we are made to rejoice that (if it be God's will) beyond this world of sorrow we shall enter the land where there is no more parting. There was no funeral sermon, as there was no preacher of his faith and order near enough to call upon. (That was according to his request.) The good sisters sang "Amazing Grace," which was one of his favorite hymns, and the writer tried in his weakness to offer a prayer at the grave, after which all that was mortal was laid to rest to await the resurrection morn, when mortal shall put on immortality and all shall come forth to meet our Redeemer.

Written by his son,

A. J. YATES.

Willam A. Demory departed this earthly life at his home near Kenmore, Fairfax Co., Va , February 25th, 1927, due to three strokes of paralysis which followed each other at short intervals of time. He was born February 13th, 1860. His first wife was Miss Mary Margaret Thomas, daughter of the late faithful and beloved sister Thomas of the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun County, Virginia. The first Mrs. Demory died in 1906. Later, Mr. Demory married Miss Sue Oliver, of Fairfax County, a member of the Bethel Primitive Baptist Church. His widow survives him, and though alone in one sense of the word, yet we believe not alone in that the Lord is with her and gives her to comfortingly realize his divine presence in her sad bereavement. Mr. Demory never united with the church, but was a firm believer in the doctrine preached by the Old School Baptists, and was a very faithful and regular attendant at the meetings, and loved very much to come to the meetings at Mt. Zion, notwithstanding it meant a drive of several miles. We are persuaded he possessed a good hope through grace and firmly believed in the absolute sovereignty of God over all worlds, principalities and powers.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder A. J. Garland, of Washington, D. C., using Revelation xiv. 13, the burial being in the cemetery adjacent to Andrew Chapel. May the Lord comfort all who mourn.

Written by request.

ALSO,

Mrs. Fannie Baldwin, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life at the home of her niece, Miss Fanny Davis, 2110 G Street, N. W., Washington, D. C. She had been in failing health for a long time and suffered greatly from heart trouble the past winter. She was the only surviving child of her parents, Benjamin and Emily Thomas Cockrill, and was born near Mt. Gilead, Loudoun Co., Va., May 19th, 1847. Her husband was brother James Baldwin, who died several years ago. There were no children. She was baptized July 17th, 1887, by Elder E. V. White into membership with the New Valley Old School Baptist Church. Funeral services were conducted at Leesburg by her pastor, using the words, "She hath done what she could," in the fourteenth chapter of Mark. Interment in Leesburg cemetery. Sister Baldwin was faithful and devoted to her family, to her friends, but most of all to her church. Hers was a remarkable character, truly a christian if ever there was one, plainly showing in her walk and conversation the marks of her Savior's grace. She loved her meetings with the church and greatly rejoiced in the preaching of the gospel of Christ. The doctrine of God her Savior was her food and drink. It can be truly said of her that she was never heard to speak ill of any one, always having a kind word for everybody and showing abundant charity toward the failings of her erring fellow-creatures. We feel confident she is at rest in the paradise of God, and though we shall greatly miss her, we sorrow not as those who have no hope. May God bless and comfort the mourning church and family and friends.

ALSO,

Ruth Middleton Starr, infant daughter of Joseph C. and sister Matilda Starr, living near Herndon, Va., died February 28th, 1927. This child was born May 5th, 1925. Death was due to congested lungs and whooping-cough, of which the child had been ill for five weeks. Funeral services were held in the Frying Pan meetinghouse, the writer speaking from the words 2 Samuel xii. 22, 23. The dear mother, writing to me of her sorrow, says, "It was hard to give her up and I know she is better off, but we mourn for ourselves, not for her. She died on my fortieth birthday and I feel that it is the first real sorrow that ever came to me." May the Spirit of the Lord direct the parents in their grief to look unto him for succor.

H. H. L.

Nancy Daily Horner was born at Springwater, Oregon, August 3rd, 1861, being at the time of her death 65 years, 6 months and 14 days of age. She was the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Albert Savage, who were early pioneers of this State. At an early age her parents moved to what is now Bedlands, Clackamas County, Oregon, and later they moved across the mountains to Wamic, Wasco County, Oregon. At the age of seventeen she was married to the late Elder Amos Horner and to this union eight children were born of whom five survive. Those surviving are W. R. Horner, of Columbus City, Oregon; Mrs. G. W. Weddle, of Sweet Home, Oregon; George A. Horner, of Lebanon, Oregon; Mrs. E. R. Gainer, of Sweet Home, Oregon; Levitt D. Horner, of Brownsville, Oregon. She also leaves two brothers: William E. Savage, of Chiloquin, Oregon; John R. Savage, of Hullt, Oregon, a sister, Mrs. Amy French, Lebanon, Oregon, and thirteen

grandchildren. In 1883 she received a hope in Christ and united with the Primitive Baptist church called Cedar Creek, at Oregon City, Oregon. At the time of her death she was a member of Bethel Church, at Tallman, Oregon. Sister Horner was a faithful companion to her dear husband, who passed on nearly four years before her, and when not providentially hindred she always accompanied her husband to his meetings; the weather and storms were seldom too severe for them to go to the house of God to meet his dear children, and for him to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ our Redeemer. She was a kind and affectionate mother, a good and kind neighbor, always ready to give a helping hand in time of need. In her death the church has lost one of her most devoted members.

Funeral services were held in the "Christian Church," at Sweet Home, Oregon, conducted by her pastor, Elder W. M. Rose, of Lebanon, Oregon, in the presence of a large and attentive audience, after which she was laid to rest in the Gilliam Cemetery, near Sweet Home, there to await the coming of her Lord.

Written by request.

C. E. SMITH, Church Clerk.

Minerva Catherine Couch was born October 27th, 1856, near Harrisonville, Mo. She was next to the oldest of a family of twelve children, and the fourth to be taken. When she was twenty-two years old she received a hope and united with the Old School Baptist Church of her community and was baptized by Elder Sperry in the winter of 1878, at a time when the ice was twelve inches thick. She had poor health for several years because of malaria and was induced by some of her brethren in Oregon to try a change of climate, which she did, coming to La Grande, Ore., in 1890, and taught school. January 4th, 1892, she was married to Willard F. Couch, of La Grande, and lived near there on a ranch until the death of her husband, September 9th, 1917. Her only child, Roy Couch, is an electric engineer of Klamath Falls, Ore., and his business called him to situations not suitable for his mother's feeble health, but he saw that she was comfortably provided for. Sister Couch was a most faithful member of her church, and the same zeal manifested in her baptism under trying conditions followed her through life in her unwavering faith in the doctrine of grace. An affliction of palsy on her right side was a severe trial to her, but she would write regularly to her friends with her left hand until it, too, was affected, and with this continual shaking wearing her out she waited patiently for her call to the better world, and often expressed her desire to depart and be at rest. February 19th, 1927, this call came while at her home with friends at Corvallis, Oregon. The remains were brought to La Grande, and on the 22nd the writer tried to conduct the funeral, in accordance with her request and in harmony with her precious faith, after which her body was laid to rest beside that of her husband. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

C. W. BOND.

Sister **Martha Ann Richardson** was born in Thomasville, Georgia, March 11th, 1846, and departed this life February 22nd, 1927, at the age of 80 years, 11 months and 11 days. Late in the afternoon, just as the winter sun was sinking behind the western hills, the messenger death entered the peaceful home of this old mother in Israel, and said, Child, your heavenly Father calls, come home, and with the quietness and gentleness which had characterized her life, being alone in her room, not even the aged husband she had lived with, loved and honored so many years being present, sister Martha Ann Richardson stepped gently through the threshold of death, there to rest in peaceful sleep from all her labors until that glorious morn when she shall be (as we are very hopeful) raised in the likeness of her glorious Savior to spend the endless eternity in his divine presence. About forty years ago, because, as we believe, she was known in that covenant which was confirmed before of God in Christ Jesus, she was begotten again into a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and asked for a home among the Old School Baptists, and was of that faith which worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. So void indeed of the confidence in the flesh that the many good works she performed before and in the sight of all who knew her she praised not herself, preferring to give all praise, all honor and all power to her Maker, who alone is worthy to receive it, and for this faith she was termed "an absoluter." Sister Richardson is survived by her husband, brother Amos Richardson, who is now in his eighty-ninth year, one son, Hardy Richardson, three daughters, Mrs. J. T. Walters, Mrs. J. T. Martin and Mrs. C. C. Railey, twenty-one living grandchildren, sixteen great-grandchildren, two sisters and one brother. Three sons, Richard, Samuel and Polk, preceded her in death.

She was laid to rest in the old Antioch Cemetery, near which she had lived for many years. The unworthy writer, tried, though in much weakness, to speak over her remains, using as a subject Rev. xiv. 13. Sleep on, old mother in Zion, and take your rest, for the storms of this world shall never more disturb you. Weep not for her, dear ones whom she loved, for your loss is her eternal gain.

S. D. NEWTON.

Mrs. Louisa Jones Sawin, wife of Elder John G. Sawin, fell asleep to awaken in newness of life, January 28th, 1927, at the home, in Mattoon, Illinois. She was born May 26th, 1846, a daughter of the late Dumas and Lucy Jones, pioneers of Coles County, Illinois, who came from Kentucky in 1836, shortly after their marriage. August 31st, 1842, she was united in marriage with Elder John G. Sawin, of Edinburg, Indiana, and to them were born a son, William G., of Mattoon, Ill., and three daughters, Mrs. Joab P. Stout, Springfield, Ill; Mrs. W. M. Ewing, Pocatello, Idaho, and Mrs. J. E. Spaulding, Anderson, Indiana. In the year 1865 she was baptized in the fellowship of the Little Bethel Church, of Mattoon, Ill., by the late Elder J. G. Jackson. Although the visibility of this organization has been gone for several years, she held a deep love for those belonging to the same faith and order. Through many trials she gave evidence of having seen the light of God's love and goodness by her own love for her friends and family, of whom she was the first to pass on, and her gracious, kindly way toward those with whom she came in contact. It had always been a deep sorrow to her that she alone was left of her own family, four sisters, two brothers, father and mother having gone on before, though it is as an open book to her now; we saw it, in the last moment when the dear eyes opened in a look of surprise, a sweet smile came, then the "wearied springs of life stood still," and our mother was beyond all power of earth to hurt, in suffering or otherwise, safe in the infinite love of God; for her the change was all gain. Those surviving are the husband, the four children before mentioned, eleven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. At the funeral service, which was held in "Central Church," Mattoon, Elder Burton Nay, of Cedar Falls, Iowa, spoke most comfortingly, he having known her many years; he was assisted by Mr. John Codd, pastor of "Central Church." The interment was in Dodge Grove Cemetery.

IDA FRANK STOUT.

Aaron J. Benedict departed this life in Summitville, N. Y., February 22nd, 1927, after an illness of about ten minutes. He was the devoted husband of Jane Benedict, to whom he had been united in marriage on October 18th, 1873, by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. Besides his wife, one daughter, four sons, fourteen grandchildren and one sister survive him. He was born March 2nd, 1849. He was baptized into the fellowship of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church in the year 1886, where he remained a faithful member until his demise.

The funeral was conducted by Elder R. Lester Dodson, and interment was in the Hurleyville Cemetery.

L. F. BENEDICT.

MEETINGS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Salem Church, at Philadelphia, Pa., in Park Avenue Hall, 1315 Columbia Ave., commencing on Wednesday, May 25th, and continuing the two following days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us, especially ministers of our faith and order.

T. C. KOCH, Church Clerk.

On account of the bus being taken off the Elyville route we were compelled to change our place of meeting from Oregon City to Portland. To reach our present location take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, Portland, Oregon. Get off at Tremont Station and go one block west to Dr. Thomas Stakely's residence, 7029 Fifty-ninth Avenue S. E., Portland, Oregon.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the above address. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Beulah Old School Baptist Church, of Cleveland, Ohio, will hold their meeting on the fourth Sunday of each month, at 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio. All lovers of the truth are welcome. Strangers wishing to make inquiries can address Elder George L. Weaver, 2231 Lee Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 245 Lacadana Drive, Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us

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Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday of each month at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 459 E. 5th St., Riverside, Calif., and at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. 11th St., Claremont, Calif., on the first Sunday of each alternate month, beginning with January, and on every alternate month with brother Joseph Huffman, 128 Van Buren St., Arlington, Calif. Singing at 10:30 a. m. Preaching at 11 a. m. Lunch at the place of meeting, and continued services in the afternoon.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.

O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND LATER WRITINGS

OF

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THE

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 95. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1927. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FAYETTE, Alabama.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The "blueprint" is to the building about what the pattern is to the garment, and serves the architect as the pattern does the tailor. We read in the Scriptures of types, shadows and figures; in fact, the Lord's way of teaching is in a great measure by this method. In the first chapter of Genesis we have the following: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." We are persuaded that the word "image" not only means that Adam looked like his Creator, but it reaches beyond that, it simply means that in every leading act of his life he was the figure of his Creator. "Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come."—Rom. v. 14. "Him that was to come" is Christ, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, a quickening Spirit. I cannot agree with those who teach that Adam lost this "image" of his Creator when he fell under the curse of the law. If Adam was the figure of Christ he was not the real Adam, any more than a natural Jew is a Jew, or circumcision in the flesh is the real circumcision, and Paul tells us there is not anything real about either. "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Therefore the first Adam was not the real Adam, he was of the earth, and earthy, and the second Adam was the Lord from heaven, a quickening Spirit. The first shall be last and the last first. First in manifestation, but last in duration and honor, glory and majesty. So according to our modern way of expressing it, when God formed Adam of the dust of the ground he could have said truly, There is going to be an Adam that will come into this world in a future age, and I am going to give you a real figure, or blueprint of him. When the Lord breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man be-

came a living soul, he gave us a figure of that eternal life which was hid with Christ in himself before the world began. When God caused that deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and performed that operation, and formed a helpmeet for him, he prefigured that deep sleep that fell upon Jesus Christ, and the sword thrust by the wicked men, which is God's sword, and men of earth are his hand (Psalms xvii. 13, 14), by which came out blood and water, the only means by which the second Adam could have a helpmeet, or bride, and if Adam was the figure of him that was to come, surely Eve was the figure of her that was to come, the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife. If it was not good for the first Adam to dwell alone it evidently is not good for the second one, "the Lord from heaven," to dwell alone. When Eve was beguiled by the serpent and fell under the curse of the law, she prefigures the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife, in the same condition, and when Adam voluntarily went under the same curse for the love for which he had for his bride, and thereby justified her, by becoming as guilty as she, he beautifully portrays the second Adam, as made under the law, and made a curse and sin for his bride. I wish here to call attention to the fact that in studying the types and shadows in the Bible we should remember when the type is set for the paper it reads backward, but when it is imprinted upon the paper it reads from left to right, so when God created Adam (the figure) he was "upright" and a "very good man," but he represented his posterity in sin and ruin. The second and the real Adam was made under the law, and under its curse; in fact, he was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. So in the creation and life-work of the first Adam the type was set, and it reads backward, or directly from God. The bringing in of the antitype, Jesus Christ, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, a life-giving Spirit, the imprint reads right, for he, Jesus, assumed the responsibility of the sins of all the world and in all ages of the world. He lived for them, kept the law for them, suffered all its penalty for them, died for them and rose again from the dead for their justification. If Jesus was "made sin for us," and a curse for us, and died and rose for our justification, will we stand justified before God? or will he punish two persons for the same crime when there is but one guilty? In other words, if Jesus stood in his people's place before the judgment-bar of God and suffered the vengeance of his holy law in their stead, will his people have to stand there and suffer the same sentence? No, in no wise.

G. W. BERRY.

REEDSPORT, Oregon.

DEAR BRETHREN:—"All scripture is given by inspiration of God." We believe it because it bears witness with our experience. We know it is true because of its fulfilled prophecies. Only he who works all things after the counsel of his own will could minutely and accurately delineate future events as the living God does by the Scripture, both by type and detailed prophecy. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."—Gen. i. 1. Before Joseph and Mary were married she was found with child of the Holy Ghost; "that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."—Matt. i. 20, 21. "Neither is there salvation in any other:

for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."—Acts iv. 12. "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders." "That old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world," beginning in the garden of Eden, has waged an incessant warfare to exalt the powers of darkness of this world above the holy Son of God has ever held up legal or conditional salvation and belittled salvation by grace. God said, In the day thou eatest of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt surely die, which is equivalent to saying, "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight," "by the law is the knowledge of sin," "sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Paul was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came sin revived and he died. For opposition Satan introduced a legal or conditional salvation, both to perpetuate life and become as gods. The whole law and the prophets hang on the one word "love," and that is why it is so deadly. Love is not a fruit of the flesh. All men have sinned and come short of the glory of God; dead in trespasses and sins. As Paul said, The law is just, and holy, and good, but I am carnal, sold under sin. Every one has heard this "do and not die" religion advocated, and the whole world wondered after the beast, "whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." In Revelation xii. 9, John saw the dragon cast out into the earth, and the accuser of our brethren is cast down, and they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony. The skins with which God clothed Adam and Eve typified the righteousness of saints, the blood of the Lamb. Novation and his followers who follow the Lamb whethersoever he goeth withdrew from, or cast out, this "do and and not die," "free will" element from the church about 250 A. D. (Rev. xii. 9), and went into the seclusion of the Alps mountains, where they were preserved some twelve hundred and sixty years until the reformation. Rev. xiii. 1: John saw a beast rise up, and the dragon gave him his seat and power, and they worshipped the dragon and the beast. Constantine came to the throne of Rome and championed the cause of Cornelius, the leader of the do and live element, from whom Novation withdrew fellowship. Their creed was a mixture of Judaism, Paganism, &c. This beast had power to continue forty and two months. Like the serpent of old, he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, &c. All the world whose names were not written in the book of life of the Lamb from the foundation of the world followed the beast. Revelation xiii. 11, John saw another beast rise up out of the earth (from where the dragon was cast out), exercising all the power of the first beast, and he, too, spoke like a dragon, upholding the wisdom of this world: legal or conditional salvation. At the time of the reformation reform churches rose up and have multiplied, running more and more into "rational" or "modernism," church confederation, christian civic federation, false charitable orders, &c., always grasping for civil power to enforce their pernicious beliefs, merchandising in the things enumerated in Revelation xviii. This second beast may easily be identified as the false prophet of Revelation xvii. 13, by comparing Revelation xiii. 14 with Revelation xix. 20. Peter gives some light on this subject in 2 Peter ii. 1–4, and Revelation xvi. 13, 14. After the sixth angel sounded John saw three

unclean spirits like frogs coming from the mouth of the dragon the beast and the false prophet, for they are spirits of devils working miracles which go before kings of the earth and the whole world to gather them to the battle of the great day of God almighty. Modern missions merchandising every kind of confusion, preaching everything but the gospel of grace, the new covenant, and perhaps some of it. Jesus the Christ gathered a few of his disciples together and opened their understanding so they understood the Scripture, and told them to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, and they did it before Paul died. Rom. x. 18: "Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." Col. i. 23: The gospel which you have heard, and which has been preached to every creature under heaven. See also Acts ii. 5. Think of the great cumbersome modern gospel machinery just now getting the devil's message to all the world. Rev. xvi. 15: "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." We find this great machinery and its end predicted in the eighteenth chapter of Revelation. If this is written by the will of God it is to emphasize the command recorded in Revelation xviii. 4: "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." In summing up, or showing the mystery of the mother of harlots, chapter seventeen, we note in verses sixteen and seventeen they shall hate the whore, and make her desolate and naked, and burn her with fire, and give the power back to the beast. At the time of the reformation new churches under various leaders and names began to rise up and multiply; they hated their mother and laid bare or naked the doctrines of devils she had practiced these twelve hundred and sixty years. The whole world is swiftly receiving the mark of the beast and agreeing and giving the power back as stated here and typified by the tower of Babel. In the news dispatches of June 10th, 1910, we read, "There is gathering at Edinburgh, Scotland, the world's missionnary conference, the greatest religious gathering in the history of the world, with six thousand delegates, from all countries of the world in proportion to the amount of money they had contributed to the missionary fund. Every branch of protestantism from the ritualist party of the church of England to the quaker meeting is represented, and nothing will be allowed to enter into the deliberations of the conference which is bias to the Roman Catholic faith." So far as the leaders are concerned they have agreed and given the power to the beast, and the swift trend of events indicate the whole world whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world are following. "He that hath an ear let him hear." It is better to suffer reproach with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, than to be found in the tents of wickedness when our Lord comes as a thief quickly. May we be found in him, not having our own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is by the faith of Jesus.

G. O. WALKER.

MERIDEN, Kansas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—With a deep sense of weakness and unworthiness, I will try and write a brief sketch of the life of our dear brother, Elder J. H. Hammons, which I know can at best be only a faint tribute

to his memory. Following is an extract of a letter from his daughter:

DEAR MRS. ELLISON:—I am writing you a few lines for my dear mother. Dear old father passed away Friday evening, January 14th, at ten minutes to six. He was sick only a few days. The doctor said he had flu-pneumonia, but he never suffered a pain, but talked and preached until the last, and then with a smile on his beautiful old face, passed away like one going to sleep. He was ready and wanted to go. We laid him away yesterday, January 19th. Mother is very lonely. We were all here with him but dear little Etta, our sister in Nebraska, who was sick and could not come. We did not have a sermon preached over his bier, because there was no Primitive Baptist minister here. Mrs. Ellison, it is mother's wish that you write father's obituary notice for the SIGNS, and that Elder Schenck, on their meeting day, preach a few words in father's memory. And write to mother. Father was planning on being with you all at the Association this fall. But God's will be done.

This letter is written in behalf of mother and the rest of the family by

CARRIE.

Lovely in life, his death, as described in this letter and a later one from sister Hammons, must have been sublime,

When in the gloomy shades of death
He set his seal that God was true,
Finished his course and kept the faith,
And died with glory full in view.

James Henry Hammons was born near Milgrove, Mercer Co., Missouri, March 8th, 1856. He was the son of James Henry and Mary McCurn Hammons, and was the last survivor of their eleven children, his last brother having died less than a year ago. He was married to Delilah Katherine Vanderpool fifty years ago. They were the parents of seven sons and two daughters, all of whom, with their mother and forty-two grandchildren, survive him. He left Missouri in September, 1885, and went to Kansas, thence a year later to Ruskin, Nebraska, where he lived twenty-four years. There he united with the Old School Baptist Church of Little Flock thirty-six years ago, and was baptized by Elder James H. Ring. He was ordained to the work of the ministry October 27th, 1894, by a presbytery consisting of Elders J. H. Ring, C. M. Cooper and John Chapman, of Lincoln, Nebraska, and Elder A. D. Jones, of Topeka, Kansas. In an humble manner he ever adorned his calling by an orderly walk, and I feel I may say the most godly conversation of any man I ever met, fully appreciating the sacredness of the work whereunto he was fitted, called and sent, not by man, but by the Lord Jehovah. Neither would he allow man to set his bounds, but went everywhere preaching the Word. During the same meeting at which he was ordained his brother Joel also united with Little Flock Church, and two years later he, too, was ordained. Brother Joel was also an able minister, and their hearts were knit together in love while they lived, and in death they were not long divided, brother Joel having suddenly passed away in June, 1924. In 1909 brother Hammons, then a prosperous farmer, moved to Atchison County, Kansas, but there through the perfidy of one whom he trusted he was defrauded and broken up. In 1915 he moved to Twin Falls, Idaho, where brother Joel then lived, but having no church privileges there he could not be content, and in two years returned to Kansas. In his now approaching old age he endured hardships uncomplainingly, seldom refer-

ring to the financial loss he had sustained. During wartime he did government work at Junction City, Kansas, for some time, where he was in some way caught between trucks and crushed so that he never was quite as strong as before. Previous to this he was of rather a striking figure, tall and erect in carriage, which he retained to a remarkable degree the rest of his life. In 1924 he moved to Yuba City, California, where he bought a small chicken ranch, for which by the united efforts of himself and wife, assisted by their one single son, who is still at home with his mother, they had but recently finished paying for, and there in his own little home he laid his armor by and went to dwell with Christ at home, having lived and died in the faith, and, conscious to the last moment, preaching Christ and him crucified to the last hour of his life. A noble man of God is gone to his reward. He was so manifestly led by the Spirit of God of him it could truly be said, He walked with God, ever tender-hearted, and loving all his people. To see an evidence of a work of grace in the heart was enough for him to recognize such an one as a child of God, to be tenderly nurtured and fed beside the Shepherd's tent. He never made a brother an offender for a word, or for a different manner of expressing his belief. Though always deeply grieved over a brother's misstep, yet I never heard him utter a harsh, unkind word of censure, or hurt any one's feelings, for was not the erring one also a child of the same heavenly Father? Born and reared in pioneer times, he was limited in natural education, having learned to read by spelling out words in the Bible, yet none could be in his company without seeing that he had been with Jesus and learned of him. Learned to endure hardness as a good soldier. Deeply learned in the knowledge of the faith of God's elect. It was a joy to be in his presence, for his theme was all-redeeming love. When talking to one he would often rise to his feet and preach as though he was standing before a congregation. Never seeming to tire, he would become so absorbed in the view he had of the beauties of the truth he would sometimes apparently become oblivious to his surroundings, and on one occasion talked all night, never realizing the passing of time until the lady of the house said she must begin breakfast. At another time he heard a "Campbellite" preach. Bold and fearless as he was, he determined on this occasion, while in "the lion's den," so to speak, that he would not say a word, and did not, until after their services were closed the preacher stepped up to him, and in a chesty manner said, "Well, sir, what did you think of my sermon?" Brother Hammons said when he came to himself he saw that the congregation had seated themselves and were listening attentively to him. Needless to say his opinion was not asked again by that man. Many interesting incidents I have heard him relate. Truly the words of Christ were spirit and life to him, but now

His work is completed and finished below,
His last tear is fallen, I trust,
He has preached his last sermon, has met the dread foe,
Has conquered, and now is at rest.

Such a life and death makes one from the heart feel to say, Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his. Monday before he was taken sick, he came in, picked up his Bible and read for a time, then said he would lie down awhile, which was very unusual for him. Then he said, "Ma, it has been made plain to me that I have only a few more days on this earth." Presently he ate a

light dinner, then went about his work as usual, until Wednesday about 10:30. He finally took to his bed on Friday. The doctor said his lungs were all right, but his heart was bad. He would take his medicine, but said all the time it would do no good. On Tuesday he must undoubtedly have had a vision of Christ, and those who had come up through great tribulation. Sister Hammons came in the room and he said, "Ma, did you see that man? Oh I know you did not, but he led me around and into a room where there were a lot of people, all in black, weeping and mourning for their sins. Then we went into another room and they were all in white, singing and rejoicing. I was with them a long while, and that is where I wanted to be. Then I woke up." She said every time he closed his eyes he would say he had been to meeting. Surely for him

It was not death to die,
To leave this weary load,
And midst the brotherhood on high,
To be at home with God.

She, with all the children, while mourning the loss of a kind husband and loving father, feels to sumissively give him up, having not a shadow of doubt that he has gone to rest, and could not wish him back, because he was so eager to go, and would say he could hardly wait for the time to come. Truly, for him to live was Christ and to die was gain. At the time of his death he was a member of West Union Church, in Topeka, Kansas, having joined by letter from Little Flock Church, in Nebraska. Sister Hammons is also a member there, and in compliance with her request the church has arranged to hold a memorial service for him the first Sunday in March, feeling grateful to God that no one hating the truth our dear brother so ardently loved was permitted to preside at his funeral, which we consider to be the height of inconsistency, if not an actual breach of order. We who are left to wait a little longer here until God shall call us also to our longed for rest, feel that his going is a great loss to the Kansas Association, for, though so far away, yet it was strengthening to know that he was one with us, and his heart's desire was to meet with us once more, having planned with all the certainty in human power to be at the next Association, and was appointed alternate to preach the introductory sermon. But God willed it otherwise, and will himself supply all our need, and our heart's cry is, "Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men." Too much could not be said of the marks of grace evidenced in this dear brother's character, but space forbids. In our mourning there is hope and confident belief that he was

"A chosen blood-bought heir of heaven,
Called to his mansion in the skies;
'Twas through the strength of Israel's King
He proved a conqueror when he fell,
So to the praise of grace we sing
While of a dying saint we tell.
Why should our eyes with sorrow flow,
Our bosoms heave the painful sigh?
When Jesus calls the saint must go,
'Twas his eternal gain to die.
Fearless he entered death's cold flood,
In peace of conscience closed his eyes,
His only hope was Jesus' blood
In sure and certain hope to rise."

"Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

MARY ELLISON.

COLBERT, Georgia.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter from a sister in Maine which I would be glad to see in the SIGNS, but will submit it to your better judgment. If you should not publish it please return it to me in the inclosed stamped envelope.

Yours unworthily,

GEORGE T. WHITWORTH.

RANDOLPH, Maine.

DEAR BROTHER WHITWORTH:—Yours of October 30th at hand, and I have read it over four times already, and it grows better each time. How glad I am you sent it to me, for it is a wonderful revelation of the almighty power of our God. His name shall be called Wonderful. There is no God like unto our God, who carries on his work undisturbed by men or devils. How glad I am that man, who would so gladly take the place of our God, cannot control one thing. Nothing takes place contrary to the will of almighty God, neither in time nor eternity; not a dog wags his tail, or a spider spins his web, contrary to the will of our God, and are we not glad? Yes, I can say I am. How could we bear the crushing weight of sorrow if we felt we could have done something to avert it? But no, he wounds and he heals, he kills and he makes alive; he brings us low and he raises us up, so we can and do sing his praises in the midst of sorest trials. Nearly one year has elapsed since I laid my dear mother away. It has been days of trial, days of grief, which at times have been nearly unbearable, yet I have had much sweet comfort at times. The Lord has not forgotten to be gracious. He alone can sweeten the bitterest cup. I have had some sweet thoughts about the children of Israel and journeyed with them in a sense. The blood sprinkled on the door posts and lintels of their doors. It was sprinkled on yours and mine, and how they were made ready for their journey, their sandals on their feet after they had eaten of their passover lamb; but they went forth in the night, the darkness was about them, darkness that could be felt. Although they were free from Egyptian bondage they were not free from trials, but they were children, had been delivered. They will never get back under Pharaoh again, even if the flesh did desire the leeks and onions that grew down in Egypt. Well, they go forth, a cloud by day, and how often, dear brother, you and I have journeyed under the cloud, a pillar of fire by night, and how many times we have beheld the pillar of fire, the brightness of the light which shines from the throne of God in the night in times of trial, and was it not sweeter than honey and the honeycomb? Did it not give us strength and courage, make us feel that we could endure all things? Then again the Red Sea, the enemy behind, no escape on either side, and how often has that sea opened for you and me, and what has been our song? Was it not identical with theirs: The Lord hath triumphed gloriously? Yes, that is the only triumph we know. Then after the deliverance and the sweet song they were so thirsty, and the waters so bitter (trouble again), and how they were sweetened by the tree. Are not ours sweetened by the Tree of life? "As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons." How many times we are led to this apple-tree, how we love to sit under the branches of this tree. How restful to be overshadowed by the arms of the Almighty. We can eat its fruit and drink its wine; there is life in this tree. Learned men are doing a lot of arguing over the Bible now. I do not have to argue to prove the Bible true. I know it is true, my own experience teaches me so. Is there any greater miracle in the Bible than the revelation of God to us, poor vile ignorant worms of the dust? Do we not know how David felt when he said, I am a worm and no man? What are we before the God of the universe? Of ourselves nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity, and when

we remember the cost of the sacrifice for us, does it not melt these hearts of ours? We can scarcely comprehend that our names are written on the palms of his hands and are continually before him, and we are made to confess, Great is the mystery of godliness.

You said that letter was for just me. Now, dear brother, I consider it of such deep interest that it would be too bad to hide it under a bushel, and so with your permission I shall forward it for publication after reading it to the loved ones here. My son is not a professor, and is, as you said you used to be, afraid of hell; loves the world. I asked if I might read your letter to him. He said he did not mind my talking (I do sometimes), but he did not seem to want to hear the letter. But I read it to him, and when I had finished he said, "You will answer it, won't you?" The first part was so much like himself I think it was well for him to hear it.

Now I will soon close, but I want to tell you about us as a church. There is only a handful left of the Maine Association, a small remnant of the three churches composing it, only one male member in each, and one of them too far away to be with us. We have no minister, but our little band (those who could) gathered at the little church at Bowdoinham two weeks ago, and in the forenoon brother Tedford read a chapter from Psalms and talked, and we sang hymns. We had dinner, then brother Tedford read again. After a very able prayer offered by sister Attie Curtis we again had singing and testimonies from some of the sisters. Sister Bonnie Chick, from New Jersey, was with us. Twelve church members (twenty-two all told) were present and we had a sweet and profitable season. Next Sunday those who can will meet there again. I am a member of the Whitefield Church, but live here in Randolph. If I attend meetings I go with brother and sister Weeks of the South Gardiner Church. It is some twenty miles, but they have a car.

I hope I have not tired you, but I always feel interested, and thought you might be glad to know about us as a church. I shall take your letter (if I go) and read it to them. There are a few outside who take an interest, and I know in my youth I dearly loved to hear an experience, and it is even so now. I wish people would write more about that. Is it not a glorious and wonderful theme? The revelation of God to man.

Yours in love,

NELLIE M. PALMER.

FAYETTEVILLE, Georgia.

DEAR BRETHREN:—"BEHOLD, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."—Psalms cxxxiii. 1. "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."—1 Cor. xiv. 33. "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not; and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."—James iii. 14–18. "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."—2 Cor. xiii. 11. Suppose we had one brother in each church who was as much concerned about

the welfare and peace of Zion as Paul was, do you not think she would blossom as the rose? (Isaiah xxxv. 1.) Read all the second chapter of Corinthians, and let us examine ourselves to see if we are in the spirit of Christ; see if we are humble and meek, and following him. There are a few in this day of wickedness and pleasure loving who are following the lowly Jesus, as there has been in all ages, and will be as long as time lasts. But we know that when we are advocating something new that is causing confusion we are not in the way that Jesus went, for there never was confusion among God's people when he was with them, so when there is confusion, or anything other than peace, we know it is not of God, but of the flesh. When his people are fighting and trying to devour one another we know he is not in their midst to own and bless. Paul was deeply concerned about their welfare, and besought them to love each other, live in peace, &c. His love for God and the brethren was so great that he did not regard his life, his comfort nor his well-being, but was self-sacrificing, and ready to spend and be spent, and suffer anything for the good of the church and God's glory. Are there any of his people now who have such love to-day? It seems that many of them want the love of men more than anything else. They forget that they are bought with the price of the precious blood of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world to save sinners from their sins. He has done for us what man or any other power cannot do, but we forget the many blessings showered upon us every day of our lives. God's people should be one united family, living in peace, love, fellowship, esteeming others better than themselves, doing unto others as they would have them do unto them, letting brotherly love continue. We are taught that when we live in obedience to his blessed commands, even though we have to make seemingly unreasonable sacrifices, we never lose anything in the long run, but he knows what we need and will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly. (Psalms xxxiv. 11.) Dear persecuted brethren, your faith must be tried, then "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you."—1 Peter iv. 12. And the balance of the chapter. But rejoice that you are counted worthy to suffer for your faithfulness in Christ, to suffer with him, for as he suffered he said we must also suffer, but he suffered alone, but he gives us grace to help along the rough, stormy way of life. These trials will not last always, there is peace and rest awaiting us in the future; if not in this world, there is peace and joy unspeakable awaiting us in that haven of rest where there will be no sin, sorrow nor trials.

Brethren, pray for me and mine, for there is not any one who needs prayer more than I.

Yours in hope of that rest,

GEORGE W. JACKSON.

MALVERN, Pa., Jan. 9, 1927.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—With my remittance of two dollars to pay for another year's subscription to the SIGNS, I wish to add a few words of love and appreciation of our dear paper and my joy in feeling that it may still be continued for 1927, and that it continues true and steadfast in doctrine, and that it maintains the same principles of eternal truth as it has ever done. Would that I could aid the SIGNS financially, but it is not given me so I might do so. Words

are feeble things at best, and you may not understand all our dear paper means to me, cheering me in my isolation and loneliness, for I am like a traveler in a far country among a strange people. But the trials and tribulations of a lonely way show me to myself as I am: nothing to boast of, nothing in myself to merit God's loving mercy in giving his own beloved Son as a sacrifice for our sins, and unto him, our blessed Savior, is imputed all our righteousness, and if so be we are saved it is his righteousness that clothes our nakedness. It is this robe that permits us to come in and sit down at the marriage supper. It is a gift of love and grace, and my heart swells with love and gratitude that it is so, for I find nothing in self that can attain to so rich an inheritance. Naked, he clothes us; hungry, he feeds us on the crumbs that fall from the rich man's table, and the crumbs are unto us a feast of fat things full of savor, and like a fountain of pure water springing up in the wilderness, our parched tongues are laved by this fountain of righteousness, and we are praising the name of the Lord, that in his goodness and mercy he has bestowed upon poor sinners, poor worms of the dust, such a glorious inheritance that we become coheirs with even our dear Savior, that he has become, as it were, our Elder Brother. Can we jointly claim such a glorious heritage? There is nothing in poor, weak and sinful flesh to justify such a claim. Then where can we go, but to the crucified and risen Savior, on whom all our sins were laid? So great, and past human comprehension is the mercy meted out to sinful man that we are lost in love and adoration to the Lord, who has done all these things. No, we cannot attain to the mystery and godliness of such a great and wonderful gift. Natural intellect cannot understand nor explain its magnitude, even in the smallest way. Only by faith, and that the gift of God, can any of these mysteries of God be made manifest unto us, and I am made to hope that I may have some part in the salvation that he has given unto all whom he will, not from any merit of mine, but of his loving mercy, and I trust that in my lonely way I may be made to feel all the depravity of the human heart and the transcendent glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and his love and mercy to me, who am one of the least in his kingdom, if one at all.

May the riches of his grace abide with all connected with the SIGNS and enable you, if so be his will and purpose, to continue the SIGNS as a watchword to his little ones who dwell in the wilderness. I had little thought of writing more than a few words, but as I have done so may it have been his hand that has directed the pen.

A sister, I hope, in his name,
JOSEPHINE DRAKE HAVILAND.

NEW YORK, N. Y.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter from sister Rachel Potter, which I felt others might enjoy reading. You can use your judgment.

Trusting all is well with you, your sister in hope,

BONNIE CHICK.

BATH, Maine, Feb. 21, 1927.

DEAR SISTER BONNIE:—Your letter received, and I was glad, as I always am to hear from God's people. There is always consolation, and in some way one gets good from reading them. I can see much good in the brethren and much vileness in this body of mine. It seems I grow worse. Perhaps God is giving me

light to see my sins for some purpose. He has also given me a hope of eternal life, which is far superior to anything else in this life. I was reading this morning, "Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us therewith be content." As I read and think how good God has been to me I am content, but as I go out among my friends and they have so much more in worldly goods the first thing I know I am nursing that dissatisfaction, wanting more than God has seen fit to give me, and I know what he does is for my good, but Satan gets in his work. I have that feeling of unrest, wanting and striving for more. What does it amount to? Vanity. "But they that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."—1 Timothy vi. 9, 10. How much better off I am without it. I often think what good I could do, but perhaps what I would do would not be good for those I did it for. How we would mess up God's plan if we had our way. We do not know what is good for us. I seem to learn so little while others seem so far ahead of me. I often think if God did give me wisdom I might get too big for my clothes, as is sometimes said of people who think they know a lot. I feel I am better off at the foot of the cross, where I can look up to the others. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." I cannot even do that, but he prays the Father that he give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever. Wonderful words. "Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." What else matters? If God be for us who can be against us? Then we have nothing to fear. "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

The time is drawing near for our meetings and I am looking forward to seeing you again. We surely enjoyed last summer, and I hope we can meet the same this coming summer, if the Lord wills.

Sister Bonnie, I will close this with lots of love and fellowship.

Your sister,

RACHEL POTTER.

LONDON, Ontario.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—Inclosed find this good letter from Elder Dodson, which I read with much comfort and spiritual joy, and felt it good matter for the SIGNS. If published I hope that others will be given the joy and food I received, if it is the Lord's will.

(MRS.) FLORA J. SINCLAIR.

RUTHERFORD, N. J., Oct. 2, 1926.

DEAR SISTER SINCLAIR:—I was glad to get your letter of September 25th, and it helps me a little to know I was given to say something during my recent visit to Canada that reached you. That the parched ground should be refreshed is unmistakable evidence that the Lord was in the place and his sovereignty was brought to view as his doctrine dropped as the rain, and his speech distilled as the dew, &c. To be the recipients of such is to establish a relationship which earth knows nothing of, and we do delight to

come together and speak often one to another of the glorious things of our heavenly Father. I was not in your home long before I had seen the mark in your forehead, and it was good to listen while you told of the goodness of the Lord and his mercy to poor sinners. As you say, the time passed only too quickly. Yes, indeed, the Lord can and does come to us in the night season, and how true the words are: All the fitness he requires is to feel our need of him. I read those words in the *Gospel Standard* many years ago, and the response of my whole being was, My soul put in thy claim, for surely I felt my need of the great Shepherd of the sheep. To behold him as our Shepherd causes the heart to leap for joy, which is inexpressible and full of glory, and only those who have felt the power of his love and have heard the sweetness of his voice, saying, Rise up and come away, can understand the things of Zion and why she exults in the glory of her King.

I would like to write more, but, I, too, am quite busy, and sometimes hardly know how I shall get through with what seems to be ahead. May the Lord direct your way and bless you to hear the gospel's joyful tidings as often as it shall please him.

Your brother in hope,

R. LESTER DODSON.

KINGSTON, N. Y.

DEAR EDITORS:—It affords me much pleasure to be able to send a new subscriber for our beloved family paper. I only regret I cannot make the number larger. It is of much comfort and strength to me. I feel I could not do without it. I wish every one who has a hope in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone could have the SIGNS to read. It has been coming to my family ever since I can remember. I think for over eighty years. The dear editors and brethren write the travail of a child of God so clearly it is food indeed to a poor sinner like me, who can witness but can never tell the dear old story (ever new) as others can. I feel confident the dear Lord will uphold and sustain the SIGNS, as he has so evidently in the past, as long as he has need of it for the comfort of his people.

Yours in hope of a better life beyond,

MARY E. SMITH.

BIVINS, Texas, April 11, 1927.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Being the mother of the soldier-boy whose letter was printed in the April number (wishing for correspondence), I would like space to correct the mistake in his address. Intead of Ft. Benning, Texas, it should be Fort Benning, Ga., Serv. Co. 29th Inft. Suppose his mind was on Texas when he was writing, which caused him to make the mistake. I often wish I was able to express my appreciation of this medium of correspondence between the Baptists, for I feel that many of the letters are well worth the sum we pay for a whole year.

For fear of crowding out better matter I will close.

Your little sister, if not deceived.

MAY WALL.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Elder George L. Weaver has changed his address to 2260 Oakdale Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, and requests his correspondents to address him at that place.

NOTICE.

We expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old Baptist meetinghouse the 5th Sunday in May (29th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1927.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
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IN REPLY TO A FRIEND.

HAVING very recently received a good and fervent letter from a friend of the Old School Baptists whose address is Paducah, Ky., our own mind has been stirred up by some things brought to our attention in that letter. The writer is not a member of the church, but we gather from what he writes that he is a believer and a follower. His letter gives us the viewpoint of one outside the membership and notes down the impressions of himself, and doubtless of many others who, like himself, are outside the fold yet longing to come in. He is particularly dismayed and discouraged by some things which he sees going on within the church, particularly is he disturbed by the dissensions and contentions that seem to be rending the ranks of Old School or Primitive Baptists in some sections of the country. We must confess that we are not surprised he is hard put to it to explain satisfactorily to himself the reason why there should be differences regarding doctrine and order among those professing to follow in the footsteps of the apostolic church. Certainly all cannot be right or all would believe the selfsame thing and view the Scriptures in the selfsame way, therefore the question arises as to what is right and how shall one know what is right. These things have often puzzled ourself and we do not wonder they puzzle one who is on the outside looking in.

There never has been, and never will be, perfection in doctrine and practice in the visible church here on earth so long as its members are partakers of flesh and blood. Even in the days of the apostles, mighty and able as those men were through the gift of the Holy Ghost granted unto them, they had to contend most earnestly for the right against that which was false and legalistic. Even the apostles themselves did not at all times agree among themselves. As witness the record in Galatians where Paul testifies as follws: "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" It is quite evident that Paul must have considered Peter's defection from the truth of the gospel serious enough to call for a public rebuke, for Paul did not take Peter off by himself and talk to him secretly, but Paul came out in public and reprimanded Peter before them all. A very serious matter, indeed. Now, in this present day, there are some Old School Bap-

tists so pacific in their tendencies that they are willing to condone anything and everything rather than have any disturbance. Paul was not so. If a thing were not true, he said boldly it was not true, and he said it openly and before all. No one of the apostles loved peace in the churches more than did Paul, no one of them wrote more beautifully about peace than did Paul, but Paul did not want peace at any price. There is such a thing as crying "Peace, peace" when there is no peace. Such false security is not gospel peace. There is such a thing as the peace of death, then there is that other peace which is the peace of life, that peace in which healthful activity is going on, in which dead tissues are being torn down and removed and healthy substance built up in its place. Such is the kind of peace that ought to be in the church of Christ, and that kind of peace is there when the body is in health and functioning properly. Real life both tears down and builds up, it both casts down and raises up. "I have this day set thee over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant."—Jer. i. 10. Viewed from the standpoint of the lofty and perfect standard of doctrine and discipline as set forth in the Scriptures of the New Testament, any departures from that ideal are certainly to be deplored. But, on the other hand, such departures have ever been, even from the days of the early church. Paul in his first letter to the church at Corinth rebukes the disorders among the brethren there, he does the same unto the brethren of the Galatian Church in his letter to them. We are prone to regard the churches of the apostles' day as having been perfect, but they were not so. They were far from measuring up to the perfect standard unto which the apostles were continually exhorting them. In many respects we believe the doctrine and order of the church at the present time is purer than even in those days. It must be so if there is such a thing as growing in grace and in knowledge of the truth; not simply an individual growth in these matters, but a growth in the church as a body collectively from age to age. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."—Prov. iv. 18. It is needful that offenses come. They are part of the divine arrangement for the purging of God's people. This does not mean that we should compromise with those by whom the offense comes, nor does it move us to do evil that good may come. God forbid. There is a woe which comes surely and unfalteringly to him who offends the church of God, yet it must needs be that which is false shall arise in order that that which is true shall be made manifest and be established. Had there been no disorder or false teachings among the churches in the days of Paul, there would have been no occasion to call forth his superb letters rebuking those things; and had those letters never been written, we should in this day have been deprived of his instruction and example when like perils beset us now. Witness what Paul writes to the Corinthians: "I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must also be heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." Paul here gives the reason why he believed the report to be true which said there were divisions among the Corinthian brethren. Believing, as he did, that some Corinthian brethren were indeed professing that which was right, he was not surprised

that there should be divisions there, because Paul knew such things must arise from time to time in the church in order to slough off that which did not belong there and to make manifest that which was approved of God as being the truth. Among those marks which have always characterized the militant church from earliest times, is this ineradicable mark of division. This does not justify any one of us in trying to bring about division in order that good may come out of it, but it does justify every one of us in standing our ground when trouble comes and not in running away at the first sign of danger. We are justified in contending earnestly for what we conscientiously believe to be the truth according to the light which we feel God has graciously given us, God himself being our Judge, who will himself in due time make manifest to his church that which is approved of him.

Our friend who writes the letter referred to in the beginning, says he feels that troubles in the church have kept himself and others out of the church. We regret that he feels this way about it, and there may, perhaps, be others who do feel that way about church troubles. But the history of the church from ancient times as a rule goes to show that her times of greatest ingathering have been in those times of greatest affliction and distress. The church does not grow much in membership when Zion is at ease; it mostly takes the periods of storm and stress to rally to the defense of her those lovers and friends of truth who need to be stirred deeply before it can be made manifest to them where they really stand. Again, we do not for one moment say that we are justified in trying to have trouble in order to stir up the outsiders to rally to our support. No, not for one moment. Kindling a fire of our own and walking in the light of the sparks of our making, are bound to end in our lying down in sorrow. Church trouble never kept anybody out of the membership of the militant church, whom God intended to be there. If the lovers of truth are not graciously added to the church, it is because it is not God's mind to have them there. Then, too, our inquiring friend must know he himself is by no means perfect, and that he has no right to expect perfection in others. Should he come into the membership of the church, the brethren would have to bear charitably with his imperfections. Is it then too much to ask of him that he should bear with the irregularities he sees among them? When the right time comes for him, or for any one, to unite with the church by baptism, he will be very decidedly more concerned about his own unworthiness and lack of qualifications than about any troubles there may be in the church. Evidently he has not been humbled enough yet. In the humiliation of our dear Lord and Savior his own judgment was taken away. It is the same way with those who are called to follow Christ. When grace has sufficiently humbled them their own judgment is taken away and they cease using their own measuring-rod to judge the church, feeling to be at the feet of the brethren and that the church should judge them. It is plain from the tone of our dear friend's letter that he has not yet been brought to this point. Until then, let him, and let others like him, wait upon the Lord to direct them aright. However, we are deeply convinced from our friend's letter that the root of the matter is in him. That being so, and God being the author of that heart-work, he will unfailingly carry on that work to fruition, whether it be destined to bear fruit in membership in the militant church here upon earth, or to bear fruit within the

church triumphant on the shores of eternity beyond time.

It is a great thing indeed that God has given to his people these friends because of the truth, and sad indeed is the lot of that church which has not a following of friends outside its membership who attend the meetings and seek the company of the saints because they are drawn hither by the power of the truth. "A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly."—Prov. xviii. 24. Some people behave themselves in a friendly manner in order to get friends. Thus, it is the manner of the worldly religions to act in such a way as to gain converts to their cause. Such is not the way of Zion. Unto to her the Lord graciously gives friends, not because she has acted especially friendly in order to get friends, but because of the power and savor of truth which is Zion's treasure. Therefore, God having given us these friends for the sake of his truth, it is right that we should act as friends towards these lovers of truth and not to rebuff them. Not that we should endeavor to proselyte them to our cause, not that we should persuade or coax or urge them to join the church. Not that. But we should encourage them, we should talk to them and try to draw them out, should carefully answer their inquiries. How do we know but that some hesitating, trembling soul may need just the word we say to them to clear up the problem that has been troubling them? We should not be indifferent in these matters. We should in every way behave ourselves as friends toward those who are our friends because of the truth. The Lord often uses us to encourage one another, and often does he give us a cup of comfort to hand on to some poor soul sorely in need. A word of cheer means a great deal to the soul wanting it. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by brother James E. Hubbard.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 10th, 11th and 12th, 1926, to the churches of which she is composed, and the meetings and associations with which she corresponds, sends greetings in the Lord.

DEARLY ESTEEMED BRETHREN:—It is our duty and privilege to once more address you with a so-called Circular Letter. It is only by these letters that the churches and meetings of our correspondence can be kept informed of the welfare of the different branches of our Father's family. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Webster defines the word "unity" as the state of being one, harmony. Therefore to dwell in unity there must be agreement, confidence and love. So far as we know among the churches here in the northeast there are no false doctrines entertained or preached among them, and it then follows that there is confidence and good-fellowship among us, and when those exist there is love, and we believe that love for the church and love for each other individually is the cord that binds us together. In Jeremiah xxxi. 3, we read, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Also in John iii. 16, we read, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." We could go on indefinitely quoting passages expressing God's love for his people. But one more, from Isaiah xliii. 21, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall

shew forth my praise." Why did God form this chosen people? Because he desired before time was to do so, and, as he formed this people for himself he also loved this people with an everlasting love, and because God revealed himself to us as our Savior, as the one altogether lovely, and shed his love abroad in our hearts, we love him and we love those of like precious faith. "Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."—Matt. xi. 27. There can be no mistaking the evidence of that condition. Where once we were blind, now we see. The things we once were indifferent to, or hated outright, now we love, and the company and pleasures of the world no longer have any charm for us, and so it follows that we love this people of like precious faith. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."—1 John iii. 14. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."—1 John iii. 1. "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love."—1 John iv. 7, 8. There are times in our experience when we are so cold and lifeless that we are led to doubt if we have any part in the religion of Christ. But those doubts and fears are a sure evidence of spiritual life within us. It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. The highway was cast up before time was and no man can change it. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."—1 John v. 3. How can we who are as prone to evil as sparks to fly upward keep the commandments of God? If we walk in our strength we surely cannot, but God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. If we are among those who have been called from nature's darkness into the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, it is our desire to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, to live orderly and soberly, and not to bring reproach upon the cause of Christ. "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God."—1 John iv. 15. "Perfect love casteth out fear."

We will leave these rambling thoughts for your consideration, brethren, hoping they will do no harm, even though they do not comfort or edify you.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 10th, 11th and 12th, 1926, to our sister associations and other meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We have been granted the privilege of another glorious meeting. The churches here are enjoying that peace that passeth all understanding and a foretaste of that love and joy which is unspeakable and a gracious manifestation of our Savior's love and grace that enabled four dear sisters to follow him in baptism. Our hearts were made glad by visiting brethren from Hopewell, N. J., New York, N. Y., Salisbury, Md., and North Berwick, Maine, and we were glad to grasp their hands and look at their faces and witness their love for us and the dear Savior. We de-

sire a continuance of your correspondence, that we may hear from you from time to time.

Our next session is appointed to be held at Whitefield, Maine, to begin on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1927, where we hope to meet your messengers again. Farewell in the Lord.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence in Delmar, Md., March 21st, 1927, Leroy Stephen Thompson, of Choseton, Ohio, and Miss Margaret Davis Shockley, of Salisbury, Md.

By Elder R. Lester Dodson, at his residence, Rutherford, N. J., April 14th, 8:30 p. m., Lewis Carlton Webb and Abbie Ruth Pyatt, both of Flemington, N. J., the parents of the groom being Mr. and Mrs. William G. Webb, and of the bride Mr. and Mrs. Edward U. Pyatt.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Samuel B. Paxson, our brother in Christ, passed away from this time world at his late home, Leesburg, Va., March 26th, 1927, after an illness lasting over five months. He was born November 10th, 1842, and his parents were Charles E. and Eleanor Hough Paxson. He is survived by one brother, William E. Paxson, of Purcellville, Va. He was married in May, 1868, to Miss Sallie E. Williams, daughter of Sidney and Eleanor Craven Williams. She died in May, 1905. Of this union there were five children, one son, Charles, having died in 1894, about 25 years of age. The children living are Mrs. Nellie Welch, of near Purcellville, Va., Mrs. Alma Shumate and Mrs. Sallie George, of Leesburg, and Joseph F. Paxson, of Leesburg. There are also sixteen grandchildren. Both brother Paxson and his wife were baptized the same day, July 20th, 1884, into the membership of the New Valley Old School Baptist Church. Brother Paxson was baptized by Elder E. V. Whitem, his wife by Elder Joseph Furr. For many years brother Paxson served the church as one of her deacons and held this office at the time of his death. He was one who used the office of a deacon well and thereby purchased unto himself a good degree, having the respect and esteem not only of the church but of the world without. December 18th, 1912, brother Paxson married sister Florence S. Beebe, of Middletown, N. Y., daughter of the late Elder William L. Beebe. She survives our brother. He engaged for some years in business in Leesburg, and also served on the school-board. Notwithstanding that the doctrine he believed is not popular with the world, yet brother Paxson as a man was well liked and had the reputation of being honorable and upright in all his dealings with his fellow-men. When it came to the truth, our brother was not at all ashamed of what he believed and was firm in standing by his religious convictions; indeed he had the courage of his convictions on all subjects in which he took an interest. He believed strongly that the Scriptures are the inspired written record of the Word of God, and that God is an immutable and independent sovereign over all worlds, principalities and powers; that salvation for poor sinners is alone by the grace of God through Jesus Christ. In short, our brother rejoiced in Christ Jesus and had no confidence in the flesh. As the end of our brother's days on earth drew near, he was so patient and submissive, so calm in his mind. His spirit seemed to serenely wait his Master's will with not a murmur or complaint. At the last, he fell quietly asleep without pain or tremor. One hardly knew when his spirit departed into the vast unknown eternity. We shall miss him in the home and in the church, most of all will our dear sister, his wife and companion, miss him, but our sadness is assuaged by the fact that we feel he is at rest. We have hope for him that he is with his Lord in paradise. May the Holy Spirit dwell with and comfort those who mourn. Funeral services were held from his late home by his pastor. Burial in the cemetery at Leesburg.

ALSO,

Elijah Brockenborough White, son of the late Elder E. V. White and of Elizabeth Gott White, died at his home "Selma," near Leesburg, Va., Dec. 17th, 1926. About eighteen months before his death he was taken down with a serious attack of typhoid fever, and although he seemed to a certain extent to get over the illness and to be able to attend to his business to some degree, yet he never fully recovered from the ravages of the disease and its pernicious after effects, to which he finally succumbed. He was born in Page County, Va., in the spring of 1863, during the Civil War in which his father, a colonel in the Southern army, played an important part. He first married a Miss Pancoast, and to them were born two daughters, one of whom, Miss Elizabeth White, survives her father. He is survived by two brothers: Benjamin Viers White, of Leesburgh, Va., and John Gott White. Mr. White leaves also to mourn his passing, his widow, who before marriage was Miss Lalla Harrison, daughter of the late Powell Harrison, of Leesburg, Va. He leaves also several nieces and nephews and a host of friends and relatives, who

sincerely mourn their loss. Mr. White was a man of great influence throughout his native county and state, a man prominent in business and in agricultural circles, and was serving the people as a member of the State Senate at the time of his death. Most of all, that for which we Old School Baptists loved him was because of his plainly evident interest in the truth of God as revealed in Christ Jesus. We feel satisfied he possessed a good hope of salvation through grace, although Mr. White never united with the church. On the other hand, he belonged to no other religious denomination, nor did he ever allow himself to become aligned with any lodge or secret order, not hesitating to say that he did not believe in them, and that membership in secret orders was not essential to even worldly success. He would most dearly have loved to have been baptized if only he could have gotten rid of his keen sense of unworthiness. This is no mere speculation on my part, for he avowed it to me with his own lips more than once. When a lad of eighteen years of age, he was in deep exercise of mind regarding spiritual things. At that time he wrote to Elder P. D. Gold, of Wilson, N. C., telling him of these exercises in detail. Elder Gold sent this letter to Elder E. V. White. This letter showed plain evidence that young Elijah was being led of the Lord in the way of salvation. This leads us to believe that he must have had a hope in Jesus for at least forty years prior to his death. For the sake of his own comfort and peace of mine all of the church would greatly have desired to see him baptized, but the will of God was not so. The sovereign God, we feel, has granted him something infinitely better than membership in the militant church, in taking him to dwell with the church triumphant. Mr. White was greatly interested in all matters pertaining to the welfare of the church and its pastor. I have assuredly lost a staunch and valued friend. He was ever ready and willing to contribute of his substance to the upkeep of the church and to the support of the pastor. It was my sorrowful duty to conduct the funeral services from his late home on December 20th. A very large assemblage of people attested to the love and respect in which Mr. White was held. We laid his earthly body to rest in the cemetery at Leesburg, believing there shall be a resurrection, both of the just and the unjust, when all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. May the Holy Ghost comfort the members of the bereaved family, especially his sorrowing widow and daughter and the brothers.

ALSO,

Mrs. Mary Titus Tschiffely, our sister in Christ, passed away from this earthly life at her home in Leesburg, Va., March 21st, 1927, after a serious and painful illness of almost five months. She was the daughter of our brother T. S. Titus and his deceased wife, sister Laura Burch Titus, and was born May 3rd, 1880, being one of eight children, and now survived by four brothers and two sisters, as follows: Albert Titus, of California; Edgar and Robert Titus, of Leesburg, Va.; Dr. Elijah W. Titus, of Washington, D. C.; Mrs. John T. Hourihane, of Leesburg, and Mrs. Karl W. Hickman, of Richmond, Va. She was married November 17th, 1903, to Stuart A. Tschiffely, of Washington, D. C. To this union there were born three children, one son, Logan O. Tschieffely, surviving, a young man of about nineteen years of age. Two children, Dolly Brown and Stuart A. Jr., died when quite young. Beside her son, our sister is survived by her husband, who has been in poor health for over four years. To both the father and the son this bereavement is a heavy stroke, but it is our prayer that both may be led by the Lord to see his divine hand in it, that they may be given faith to realize that the just and holy God is dealing with them in love and mercy. Sister Mary was baptized the third Sunday in June, 1918, into membership with the New Valley Old School Baptist Church, and though it seems not to have been the will of the Lord to leave her with us very long, yet we can truthfully say we rejoice that he gave her to us, and can now do naught but bless him in that he has taken her to himself and thus set her free from all her pain and trouble. We feel assured she is at rest with her Redeemer. Every member of the bereaved and afflicted family has our sincere sympathy, and we truly desire the Lord may comfort all who mourn. Especially do we desire the consolation of our dear brother T. S. Titus who in his old age is called to suffer this sad loss. May he be given to feel that his loss is truly his dear one's eternal gain. Our brother Titus has served the New Valley Church faithfully as clerk for many years, but some months ago on account of his feebleness because of age, the church appointed his daughter, sister Tschiffely, assistant clerk to aid her father in his duties, none of us for one moment thinking she would be called to her eternal home so soon. The ways of our God are past finding out. Sister Mary truly loved her kindred in Christ and was faithful and true in every relation of life, whether it was as a mother, or as a wife, or as a daughter, or as a sister, or as a member of the church. She dearly loved the truth of God as it is in Christ, and firmly believed the doctrine of God's unlimited sovereignty and of salvation by free grace. She will be sorely missed by all the church and by all her family, and very greatly indeed by her pastor and by his family, to whom she was so kind and of whose welfare she was so solicitous.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer, the text being 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18. Interment in Union Cemetery, Leesburg, Va.

ALSO,

Mrs. Laura Franklin, our sister in Christ and one of our members at the Frying Pan Church, passed away from this earthly life at her home near Sterling, Va., March 30th, 1927. She was born in lower Loudoun February 26th, 1851, making her stay here a little more than 76 years. Her father and mother died when she was quite a young child, so that she was reared to womanhood by a very devoted aunt, Betsy Shryock. Her name before marriage was Laura L. Caylor. About fifty-four years ago she married William H. Franklin. Of this marriage there are living seven children, as follows: Mrs. Mamie Tavenner, Sterling, Va.; John William Franklin, Berryville, Va.; Mrs. Ida Green, Leesburg, Va.; Badger White Franklin, Sterling, Va.; Benton Lester Franklin, Washington, D. C.; Miss Margaret Franklin, Sterling, Va.; Miss Minnie Pearl Franklin, Sterling, Va. She is also survived by her husband and eighteen grandchildren. Sister Franklin was baptized by Elder E. V. White upwards of thirty years ago, and was a faithful and orderly member of the Old School Baptist Church. She loved the doctrine of God's free grace, believed that salvation is for all those included in the covenant of God's election from before the foundation of the world, and she rejoiced in the absolute sovereignty of an omnipotent God.

The funeral services were conducted by her pastor at the Greenwood Chapel, near Daysville, Va., using as a text the words in the one hundred and fifteenth Psalm, seventh and fifteenth verses. Interment in Sterling Cemetery. We believe our loss to be her gain. May the Spirit of God be in the souls of those who mourn to reconcile them to his divine will.

ALSO,

Miss Alice Amelia Gulick departed this earthly life at her home, Lenah, Loudoun Co., Va , November 16th, 1926, her death being due directly to an attack of influenza, from which she had been ill about ten days, though she had been a great suffer from asthma for the past five years. She was a daughter of Sanford and Nancy Gulick, both deceased, and was born near Aldie, Va., July 30th, 1863. She lived all her life in and near the neighborhood where she was born. Miss Alice is survived by two sisters and two brothers: sister Mollie Gulick and Miss Ella Gulick, living at Lenah, Messrs Robert L. and Sanford Gulick, also living with their families near Lenah. Miss Gulick had a host of friends, and was a good friend and neighbor herself. While she never united with the Old School Baptist Church, she often attended the meetings when her health would permit, and was a friend of the church and always ready to do her part in entertaining and looking after guests who would come to the meetings. Her family misses her sorely and her going is a loss to the community. Funeral services were conducted by the writer at Mt. Zion, interment in the cemetery at Middleburg.

L.

In the removal by death of **William M. Griffin,** who passed away May 11th, 1925, the Second Roxbury Church, of the Lexington-Roxbury Association, and the community in which he resided, sustain an irreparable loss. He leaves behind him the priceless legacy of sweet and cherished memories, the worthy record of a wonderful and useful life and the many unmistakable evidences of the fruit of the effective work of the Spirit of Christ. The subject of this sketch died in the peaceful assurance of a blessed hope in a glorious immortality, and a part in that inheritance reserved in heaven for the saints of the most high God. His life was a splendid example of an upright walk by that faith wherewith Abraham was justified before God and it was accounted unto him for righteousness, and his profession of experimental knowledge of salvation by grace was replete with a wonderful manifestation of bright evidences. He was born on January 28th, 1846, in Bedell, N. Y., where he grew to early manhood, attended district school, and by dint of hard work and faithful endeavor prepared himself for the teaching profession, which he followed for a few years before the pursuit of more enterprising activities. In November, 1870, he married Miss Carrie Davis, of Roxbury, N. Y. This happy union was blessed by four children: Edward, Orra, Grace and Leland, of whom only Edward survives. For a few years brother Griffin conducted farms in the towns of Roxbury and Middletown, and later had charge of the railroad station at Halcottville, N. Y., for several years, abandoning this work in 1895 to assume the management of a general country store. He was a careful and successful business man, willingly supporting all worthy local enterprises, and his honesty was proverbial among all who knew him in a business or social way. He was deeply interested in the doctrine of the Old School Baptists, and his greatest joy was to attend meetings whenever possible, and to read and meditate upon spiritual topics. Even after bright evidences of being born into the kingdom of God's dear Son he remained for many years outside of the visible church, feeling his unworthiness by nature, but in 1924 he felt he could no longer remain away from the fellowship of his kindred in Christ and was baptized by Elder George Ruston, and united with the Second Roxbury Church, of the Lexington-Roxbury Association, and felt that peace which passeth all understanding. His life was not without those trials which belong to the redeemed of God. His devoted wife died in May, 1920, and he felt her loss keenly. For over forty years he had served as postmaster at Halcottville, which position he filled at the time of his passing away, having a few years before his death relinquished his former important part in the management of the store. His unassuming ways and his exemplary life have left a lasting impress on the community in which he spent most of his life, and

his association with the church of his membership has been truly a living testimony of the excellency of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Elder George Ruston spoke words of comfort at the funeral services.

ALSO,

The sad occasion has befallen us to note the passing from time to eternity of our highly esteemed brother **James Avery**, who died August 10th, 1926, at the home of his nephew, Avery Ryer, at Dunraven, N. Y., at the age of seventy-eight years. His departure is not mourned as of one who had no glorious hope of salvation effected through the atoning blood of a covenant-keeping God. We treasure his memory because of inestimable personal qualities, for the distinguishing marks of his calling from the darkness of nature into the glorious liberty of the children of God, for his evidences from time to time of having been taught of the Lord, and for his earnest desire for the peace and upbuilding of Zion, and a willing spirit of conformity to the wishes of his brethren in the church of his membership. The life of a deceased member is his best and most fitting monument, yet it is fitting in the consideration of a member who was actively associated in church activities for forty-seven years that mention be made of his life, though words of praise are not necessary. He was born May 5th, 1848, at Shandaken, N. Y., and moved in 1855 to Kelly Corners, N. Y., where he attended school, applied himself with characteristic energy to school activities and became well versed in the course of study in the district schools of that time. He was married in 1873 to Miss Jennie E. Hewitt, daughter of Wheeler Hewitt, and moved to Fleischmann's, N. Y., where he resided for a year before returning to Kelly Corners, in which vicinity he continued to reside until 1907, when he and his wife moved to Arkville, N. Y., which was their home until the death of his wife in 1925. Blessed with a happy marriage and endowed with ambition, thrift and excellent judgment, and having the earnest co-operation of a faithful and capable helpmeet, he was successful in farming and business ventures and was blessed materially in temporal things. He was a student of the Scriptures and familiarized himself with much concerning not only the letter of the word but the historical and spiritual setting as well. He was baptized by Elder Isaac Hewitt in 1897. He was prominent in church activities and for thirty years was clerk of the Lexington Association. He strongly favored the uniting of the Lexington and Roxbury Associations, and labored for peace and sweet fellowship among brethren who had once been divided. After the death of his wife he made his home with his nephew, Avery Ryer, who cared for him with all the tender devotion of a son in his last illness, and ministered to his temporal needs at the Kingston City Hospital, where he received operative treatment for a chronic malady a few weeks before his death.

Elder George Ruston preached the funeral sermon. The interment was at Kelly Corners.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

Mr. Presley H. Thomas, of Lawrenceburg, Mays Lick, Kentucky, a son of the late William and Elizabeth Thomas, of Farmdale, Kentucky, familiarly known locally as Uncle Will and Aunt Betsey Thomas, departed this life at his home at Mays Lick, Kentucky, February 7th, 1927, at the advanced age of eighty-nine years. Mr. Thomas formerly lived at Lawrenceburg, in Anderson County, and for a number of years was the efficient and popular clerk of the Circuit Court of that County, having finally retired from the office to rest upon the laurels of a long, efficient and faithful service. In his domestic relations of life he was first married to Miss Sallie Johnson, a daughter of the late Elder John F. Johnson. To this union were born two daughters: Mrs. Lena Booth, who passed away some years ago, leaving one daughter who still survives her; and Mrs. Lutie Swearingen, who still survives her husband and one daughter, who have passed on into the life beyond. This lovely and beloved companion after some years expressed a good hope in the faith that was first in her illustrious father, and was received into the fellowship of the church under the pastorate of the writer, and was baptized by him; soon after which she passed away to rest in the bosom of her heavenly Husband, where she sleeps, sweetly sleeps. After several years Mr. Thomas was again married to our dearly beloved sister, Miss Sallie Laytham, of Mays Lick, Kentucky, a daughter of the late Elijah and Azuba Laytham. Aunt Azuba still surviving and living with her daughter Sallie, and being loath to break up and leave her old home Mr. Thomas sold his home and came to care for her as well as for his wife, her daughter, and such faithful, loving, tender care could not have been surpassed for his own dear mother as this son-in-law rendered to this mother-in-law. In this relation to each other they were alike most exceptional. I might instance many rare and fine qualities in the character of Mr. Thomas, but those who knew him know them far better than I can tell them. He was a plain, substantial, old-fashioned man, a citizen, neighbor and a friend, such as you would like to know and have. While each of his wives were and are of the excellent of the earth, church, and he lived happily with both of them, and would go to church with them, and held with them the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God, yet he could not take up his cross and follow the Lord with them. Mr. Thomas was truly a husbandman, industrious and frugal. He loved his home and served faithfully to make it true to the name, and a place most desirable. He loved to have the

brethren and his friends visit with him. He was indeed a fellow-citizen, a neighbor and a friend. A true fellow as a man, a friend and a neighbor. When his beloved Southland seemed to demand his service he entered the army and endured the rigors of war like the soldier he was. But now he has pitched his tent in the paradise of God, to ever dwell with Jesus, the Captain of salvation and of peace.

With peace to his memory, respectfully submitted.

P. G. LESTER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

I. H. Evans, Md., $1; Mrs. L. W. Hastings, Md., $1; Mrs. Sirena Bowen, Ill., $1; Mrs. L. B. Ward, Tex., $5; Mrs. G. E. Anderson, Va., $1.

MEETINGS.

The Lord willing, the Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Harford Church, Harford County, Maryland, commencing on Wednesday, May 18th, and continuing the two following days. We invite our friends and lovers of the truth of our faith and order. Those coming by train from Baltimore will leave there Tuesday on Md. & Penn. Co. R. R. train arriving at Forest Hill at 4:20 p. m. Those coming in their own cars come direct to Forest Hill, and ask for Mrs. Twining's house.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expect Elder George Ruston to meet with them the fifth Sunday in May (29th), 1927. For convenience services to be held at the home of James E. Livingston, 64 East Main St., Cobleskill, N. Y. Services to begin at 11 o'clock a. m., and 2 o'clock p. m. The Binghamton and Albany train arrives and leaves Cobleskill in convenient time for meeting. All welcome.

(MRS.) J. E. LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Salem Church, at Philadelphia, Pa., in Park Avenue Hall, 1315 Columbia Ave., commencing on Wednesday, May 25th, and continuing the two following days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us, especially ministers of our faith and order.

T. C. KOCH, Church Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Pa., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1927. Lovers of truth and order are invited to attend. Those coming to South ampton on Tuesday will inquire for Caswell Reeves. Those coming to Ivyland, Pa., will inquire for Wm. Hobensack. Morning trains Wednesday and Thursday will be met at Southampton.

H. C. KER, Pastor.

WM. HOBENSACK, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at New Vernon, Sullivan Co., New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (8th, 9th and 10th), 1927. Those coming from and via New York City will take Erie R. R. Ferry foot of West 23rd Street or Chambers Street for train leaving from Jersey City. Get tickets for Howells, N. Y. Those coming from and via Kingston, N. Y., will take Ontario and Western train from Kingston. Get tickets for Winterton, N. Y. Trains will be met and friends cared for. Time of trains will be announced later when new schedules may be effective. Those coming by automobile will go to the home of Mr. Fred Beyea (The Old Homestead) on arrival in New Vernon. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, sisters and friends.

R. LESTER DODSON, Moderator.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Beulah Old School Baptist Church, of Cleveland, Ohio, will hold their meeting on the fourth Sunday of each month, at 2593 Canterbury Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio. All lovers of the truth are welcome. Strangers wishing to make inquiries can address Elder George L. Weaver, 2260 Oakland Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us

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SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

BOOK NOTICE.

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THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"

(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 95. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1927. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JONAH.

FROM our earliest recollection we have heard Jonah spoken of by our people, also by the world at large, as being so rebellious, and many, no doubt, refer to him in this sense who really do not know the true biblical account of the action of the prophet. So prevalent is the thought that he was only a rebellious, wicked man who openly disobeyed God's ways and thereby got himself cast into the sea as a just desert for his rebellion, until any contrary thing or person is called a "Jonah." To us now this appears sacrilegious, but we agree that there was rebellion in his heart and that he did in his own way attempt to flee from the presence of the Lord. Many before and since then have done the same thing. How about Moses, the meek? He stayed away forty years after the Lord called him to lead Israel out of Egypt, and many other times he replied to God and sought to have his own way. Jeremiah replied and told the Lord he could not do the things he was called upon to do. There are many rebellious characters mentioned throughout the Scriptures, and even in this present age there are some. I know a man that is just as rebellious as Jonah. It is not in this light that I wish now to consider Jonah, if the Lord wills that I see him differently, for whether I see it or am able to picture it and portray it to others or not, it is a fact that Jonah is a clear and pronounced type of the Lord Jesus Christ, and it is in this role that he is presented here. There are three things to remember: First, the Lord called Jonah to "go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee." Second, while it is true the Lord told him to go, he did not tell him which way to go. Never did he tell him to not go by Joppa and the sea, although Nineveh lay in an opposite direction and all by land. The third and important thing is that he did go to Nineveh and preach to it that which he was bidden to do. The Lord knew all the time that Jonah would go to Joppa and sail for Tarshish, which was in Spain, at the farther end of the Mediterranean Sea. Therefore, knowing this, the Lord could with all certainty prepare the great fish to be ready to swallow Jonah as soon as he was cast into the sea. Undoubtedly, as a reasonably intelligent being, had

Jonah known the storm and the fish lay in his path to consume him and he could have avoided it he would have never gone aboard that ship. The revealed will of God was that Jonah go direct to Nineveh, but the secret will of God was that he go down to Joppa, and go aboard this ship sailing for Tarshish, and he paid the fare thereof. It does appear that when one deliberately goes wrong they do pay the price. This side of the account of the Lord's dealings with Jonah while truly a part of the whole, yet it was not my intention to dwell upon it, but come more directly to him as a type of Christ, but it is a fact that the truth of God and his dealings with his subjects, or anything pertaining to him, cannot be preached without declaring the predestination of all things and events, and his sovereign, unchangeable will concerning all beings and things. This is a corner-stone in the foundation of the structure and building of God, which if possible to remove, destroy, or even impair by limiting the Holy One in any degree, would bring about the collapse of the entire building, which building standeth sure, Jesus Christ being the chief corner-stone, who came, lived and died by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, so also did Jonah, and every step of his way was by the same determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God the Father.

Now if I may I shall point out a few of the prominent features in this narrative that establish Jonah as a type of Christ. In the first place, he was called of God to cry against sin, and sent into that wicked city. Then in his attempting to flee from the presence of the Lord he portrays the weakness of the flesh in the which Christ came; for it was in the likeness of sinful flesh that he came and for sin condemned sin in the flesh. Had not Christ come in the flesh he could not have atoned for sin, for the one and only way to atone for sin was through death. After the ship had gotten out at sea a mighty storm arose, and the mariners, every one of them, set about to seek help of his god. There was no unity manifest in this, for every man cried to his god. Each one going about to save himself. Jonah was asleep, for his hour was not yet come. We recall that once Jesus was aboard a ship, and his disciples with him, when a tempest arose, the ship covered with the waves and he was asleep, and they awoke him, he rebuked the wind and the sea and there was a great calm. (Matt. viii. 23–26.) Jonah lay asleep while this storm raged, until the shipmaster went to him and asked him to get up and call upon his God that they perish not. The mariners began to see that their gods could not save them, and never do any come to Jesus as the Mediator, as the Savior, until satisfied that the gods to whom they have been looking for help cannot reach their case. For with each one it is a most desperate case. They are in a mighty tempest upon an angry sea whose yawniug mouth gaps wide to receive them, and all help fails. So then, and not until then, do we come to Jesus.

To carry out this type there must needs be one to sacrifice for the rest that they be saved, and to determine this they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord," which we clearly see in this, for the Lord had appointed Jonah for this very place. He must needs go down to the sea in this ship, though it was contrary to the revealed will of God. Jesus must needs go through Samaria, which according to the revealed will of God to the Jews was

contrary to all law and custom, for the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans, but God's hidden will was that he go that way and for a purpose. When Jonah was confronted with the awfulness of the situation he confessed his heirship, saying, I am a Hebrew, I fear the Lord, the God of heaven. While the lot fell upon Jonah, yet it seems they would spare him of being cast overboard if possible. Jesus told his disciples for what he was come, yet they would have spared him this death if possible, and even he in the weakness of the flesh begged the Father if possible to be spared. So we have here not only Jonah as a type of Christ, but also the mariners as a type of the church, who know not God until Jesus comes, and it is by him and through him that we know anything at all of the goodness and mercy of God to us by the sacrifice of himself for us that we perish not. The mariners now put their efforts together and rowed hard, but it availed nothing; neither crying every man to his own god or their united efforts could save them. No creature help, singly or united, can ever save a sinner, so these mariners found and gave up, and looked to Jonah, the sacrifice, and cast him into the sea, which is acceptable, and through this sacrifice of Jonah rest came to these mariners, who were now converted from the error of former ways, and they feared the Lord and became one with their sacrifice, for Jonah feared the Lord, and when all our strength fails and our whole dependence is in the sacrifice of Jesus for our sins then do we fear the Lord and become one with Christ our Mediator. The Lord had this all most accurately planned and timed, so that the minds of the men were so wrought upon that they cast Jonah into the sea at the right spot, for the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow him. We are apt to get a very wrong idea of this fish that was prepared, and think perhaps the Lord created it at that moment. This may have been one hundred or five hundred years old, more or less. The word does not say how long the preparation was going on. We feel that it was an ordinary whale, and not that the Lord spoke some phenomenal and unheard of fish into existence for this occasion. No new thing has been created since the ending of the six days of creation, but everything has been producing after its kind. The preparation being that the fish was old enough, big enough and hungry enough to swallow a man, and in his journeying through the sea all the years of his life he came now in this before ordained place and condition of his preparation and was ready to swallow Jonah as soon as he was cast into the sea. Jesus says, As Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so shall the Son of man be in the heart of the earth. Which means that he has paid the price of redemption for his people in all three dispensations. Jesus was buried in Joseph's new tomb, wherein no man had lain, showing that he is first and preeminently before all others. Jonah was received in the belly of the fish, wherein none other had ever lain as he did. There is no counterpart in all history to this case of Jonah, for he stands out preeminently first and alone in this experience. Jesus lay down his life and took it up again. No man took his life, no man took Jonah's life, though to all appearances, as in the case of Jesus, it seemed they did, and in the weakness of the flesh he had forgotten his vows, but his true life came to him as he lay in the fish's belly, that is, in the very internals of torment. He was cast into the midst of the sea, in the most

terrible suffering, and all the billows and waves passed over him, so with Jesus all was laid upon him and the wrath of God was poured out upon him. He went down to the bottoms of the mountains; that is, down to the lowest hell. While Jonah was in this terrible place he said, Yet thou has brought up my life from corruption. In the Psalms it is written of Jesus, Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer thine holy one to see corruption. Jesus was not left in the grave, neither did he see corruption. Jonah saw no corruption in this, but his life was preserved and kept. Before all this came upon him he had vowed that salvation is of the Lord, so now he pays this vow, and at the word of the Lord the fish vomited Jonah out on dry land. "Salvation is of the Lord," is the word of the Lord that caused the fish to vomit Jonah out on land. It has often come to my mind that the truth cannot be buried in the earth. There is something about it that cannot remain hidden. The earth cannot receive the truth, and as the whale typifies the earth, or the natural man, it could not hold Jonah, which was a witness to the truth. The earth, or natural mind, cannot digest and assimilate the truth any more than the whale could Jonah, or the grave could Jesus. In order for the whale to keep and digest Jonah he must decompose, or go into corruption, but as a type of Christ, his truth and his gospel, he could not die and go into corruption. In order for a body to go truly into the earth it must become corrupt and decompose before assimilation takes place. Jesus could not become so, therefore the earth could not receive him, and he came up out of death, because he was not received by the earth. Therefore the natural mind, regardless of how religious it appears or claims to be, will spue up the truth when presented to it, as the whale did Jonah. They subsist upon that which is corrupt and goes into corruption, perishing with the using, and cannot digest and assimilate the truth. There is something so sickening about the truth to nonbelievers that they cannot stand it, but will vomit it up, throw it out of their element, as the fish vomited up Jonah on dry land, that is, clear out of their element. Salvation that is of the Lord, the predestination of all things and events, the resurrection of the dead, is all vomited up and spued out by them. They will not, cannot, live on such things. Neither can the truth be hidden. Its enemy has fought, schemed and planned to do away with it, but has not, and never shall be able to accomplish this wicked design. It seems to my mind that the Lord uses these things as a furtherance, as it were, of spreading his truth. The Jews sought to put a stop to the teachings of Jesus, therefore had him crucified and slain. They were evil, but the Lord's will was done and sin atoned for. Man talks about sending missionaries to foreign lands. The Lord's way of sending his ministers is more often by persecution. All effort to stamp out this obnoxious doctrine is a failure, not one thing in this line has ever been accomplished. That which to our mind seems so against it is that which the Lord has predetermined to further it. So to outward appearances for Jonah to set sail for Tarshish was hindering the will and work of God, but not so, the mariners must have the truth preached to them, and he must do it, which lay in the hidden will of God, though not revealed to Jonah.

As I said in the beginning, we have no record that God told Jonah by what route he was to go to Nineveh. Also I may

in all safety add that God did not tell him what day he was to be there. The will of God as Jonah saw it was directly by land, and at once, but the hidden will was by the way of the sea and the whale's belly, thence by land. Just how many days were consumed in the journey is not given, although it is spoken of as being a three days journey, typifying the three dispensations of time. Of this we are sure, that no amount of disobedience on the part of Jonah or any other can ever thwart or change the plan of God one iota. The older I grow the more I see that we fail to understand the Lord's way with us, and are most sure to misconstrue his messages to us until he opens our understanding. I feel safe in saying that even after Jonah's experience in the belly of the whale, notwithstanding the fact that he did by the command and power of God preach that which he was bidden, yet he did not understand it himself as did the ones to whom the message was sent, or he would never have gone off and waited to see the literal destruction of the city, but the city was overthrown at the very outset of his preaching. Perhaps no other man was ever called and qualified to preach repentance with such an enormous result as Jonah in this case, for the whole city of more than six score thousand people repented. Surely it was an overthrowing and a mighty turning from sin by both king and people. The mandate went out from the king, who also took off his kingly robe, put on sackcloth and sat in ashes, commanding all the people to do the same. Jonah failed to see it because he felt sure that an earthquake or a tornado or some form of literal destruction would come upon them. He is not to be blamed for this, for it is also our conception of the destruction of wickedness, but when God sends the preaching of repentance to people it destroys the wickedness, but not the people, in a literal sense. They repented at the preaching of Jonah and God did not destroy them as Jonah thought. God saw their works that they repented, therefore he turned from the destruction that seemed imminent. He knew they would repent, for his word is ever attended with power. It is a good thing Jonah did not see that his preaching accomplished the conversion of more than six thousand people. But he did know that God is merciful, slow to anger and of great kindliness; that he never dealt evilly with his people, that he would save and not forsake them, even though they lay in wickedness. Now that Nineveh was not destroyed, as he felt it would at the start, he was so beside himself in a feeling sense of worthiness that he wished to die. Oh so unprofitable, displeased and angry, compelled to prophesy against the city, though he chose another way, and now see the result. This is all because he could not grasp the infiniteness of the plan and love of God, and his mercy that endureth forever. The power of God and the weakness of the flesh are plainly manifest in Jonah. Styled as one of the lesser prophets, yet a clear type of Christ, at whose preaching many turned to the Lord. A most unusual awakening to sin and wickedness and turning therefrom to the true and living God. Can it be thought for one moment that God did not foreknow all this, and that at the preaching of Jonah they would repent? (Luke xi. 32.) Whenever one preaches the word that God gives there is ever a result, and just as he intended, for his word shall not return unto him void, but shall prosper in the thing whereunto he sent it, and accomplish that he pleases. Jonah had to

learn again from whence cometh all our help. When the gourd came up and sheltered him as he sat in the booth he was glad for it, but must be humbled again, so this same preparing God that prepared the great fish and prepared the gourd also prepared a little worm to smite the gourd, and with the east wind that God also prepared the comfort of shade of the gourd was taken away, so that Jonah learned once more that salvation is of the Lord, that the wind and the sea, the worm and the gourd and wickedness are all in his hand to do with as he pleases, and all is prepared for that which is prepared for it.

In closing I wish to observe that as Jesus before his death and resurrection gathered a small body of believers about him, and since his resurrection a greater number has been gathered, for he said, Greater works shall ye do, for I go unto my Father, (John xiv. 12,) so at the testimony of Jonah before he was cast into the sea the few mariners turned to the Lord, then after his deliverance a greater number, that is, more than six score thousand Ninevites repented, turning to the Lord, and in each instance we see that the work was complete, and not one was lost of all that the Lord sent him to.

F. S. FISHER.

LAMAR, Colo., Nov. 22, 1926.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter from Elder J. M. Whitenton, and if you think it will not crowd out better writing would like to see it in print, as I received so much food from it thought others might, too. Brother Whitenton is an old-time Baptist, believes in one faith and one baptism. There are but few of us now in Bethel Church, located in Lamar, but we meet once each month, the third Sunday and Saturday before, and try to worship God in spirit and in truth. At our November meeting (just passed) the church, by motion and second, liberated brother R. L. Davis to exercise his gift wherever the way is opened. Brother Davis' home is Dodge City, Kansas, but he is very regular in his attendance at meeting. According to my judgment brother Davis is sound in the faith.

Yours in gospel bonds,

W. C. PERDUE.

WILLIFORD, Ark., Sept. 29, 1926.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER PERDUE:—We received your highly appreciated and instructive letters Saturday, which we read with pleasure. We certainly enjoy such lovely letters; they seem like food from a far country. It does much good when we can read the truth as it is in Christ. It feeds us to the full and builds up and cheers our poor souls in love and fellowship, and makes us feel happy in the Lord to be the recipients of God's truths through one of his true and tried servants. For you have been thoroughly tried by false brethren through the wily cunning of the devil to overthrow the doctrine of God our Savior, of which you are an able defender, but God has held you up and led you through the Red Sea dry-shod, as he led Moses. So God is entitled to all the praise, honor and glory for your deliverance, and God will yet deliver his children from the fiery darts of Satan, for he has promised that the gates of hell (the devil) shall not prevail against us (the church). He is not slack concerning his promises as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to usward (the church), not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. So we

see that all are safe, and in safe hands, in the hands of the true and living God, who is power itself. For there is no power only that that is of God and ordained of him, and we feel thankful that it is so.

You wanted to know of me what that coat represents. I cannot say that I know, but it occurs to my mind that it represents the righteousness of God, because the Arminian world has proved it. They (the Arminians) have, or do, divide His garments among themselves, claiming that they are entitled to part of the work of our (or their) salvation, but when it comes to the righteousness or honor of the salvation of souls they want all the honor to themselves, therefore they cast lots among themselves to see which of them can outstrip the other, so as to see who shall have all the honor and glory of saving souls, by doing the most righteousness, giving and begging for money to turn the people to come their way and they will save them. They are crying, Give, give, give of your money and substance and we will save the world. But they cannot divide that coat, for it is seamless, cannot be torn, for they have not the power to tear it, then they are not saved by God's righteousness, have no use for God's righteousness, but are going about establishing their own righteousness. God's people are saved by the righteousness of God, which is Christ; then we can say it by God's grace we are saved in time and on into eternity, for we know we are not saved by our own righteousness. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Then that seamless coat of Christ must represent the righteousness of God, which God put upon his Son to be given to all those that he gave to his Son, and it will not be divided out to other people, for it cannot be divided, it is seamless. May God open our eyes to the truth and reveal to us and all his children just what the Scriptures do mean, if it is his will, is our prayer.

I am glad you went to Hasty and was blessed to preach for the sisters there. We feel proud that we left a good name with the true Baptists and friends in that country, for a good name is to be chosen rather than many riches. But when we examine ourselves we are made to cry like one of old, Our leanness, our leanness. We ask ourselves the question, Why is it, and what is it in us, or that they see in us, that has caused those in Colorado to remember and appreciate our remembrance by stooping so low as to write us and to sing those good old songs we used to sing, in remembrance of us? There must be a cause for this. We must have been taught at the same school and have the same teacher; that is, God must be our teacher as well as yours. He has people in every nation, kindred and tongue; all are taught of God. Having been taught of the Father they come to Christ, for no man can come to Jesus only those who are drawn by the Father, which is love. Therefore we feel thankful to God, who works all things after his own counsel and will, for guiding and leading us by his Spirit in such a way that his children love us and we love them, and by this we know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren with a pure heart fervently, and love God with all our mind and soul, and we feel that we do love God's children, and cannot help it, and we feel they love us indeed and in truth, and we appreciate it much since we are

away over here where we never see or meet with any of the children of God to talk about the goodness of God, and sing the songs of Zion, and pray and preach together, and enjoy ourselves in the service of God and one another, and give God all the praise, honor and glory that is due his high and exalted name. When we read your letters as good news from a far country we can hardly agree to stay in this place any longer, but we try to be reconciled to our lot, and say, Thy will, O Lord, be done, not ours, for we believe and know all things work together for good to those who love God. Therefore we ask an interest in your prayers when at the throne of grace. We often sing those good old songs here alone (only we hope that God is with us) and enjoy them. The 233rd number in Beebe's collection sets forth what we believe the Scriptures teach. May God bless us all as seemeth good in his sight and reconcile us to himself in all our future lives, is our prayer. I hope to hear from you again soon. Our love to you both, and all true Baptists and friends.

Your little brother and sister in Christ,
J. M. AND L. J. WHITENTON.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST JESUS:—When I survey the inward exercises of my soul in the things pertaining to God I see much to be hidden, locked up in my bosom. I feel it could not be portrayed in words, and it is that secret between my soul and God. But that which language cannot express I have comfort in believing is all well understood by the Almighty. Before the eyes of the Holy One of Israel all is laid bare, all is naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

"Great God, from thee there's naught concealed,
Thou knowest my inward frame;
To thee I always stand revealed,
Exactly as I am."

This is very comforting to me sometimes, but at other times it brings shame and confusion upon my soul. "O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hidden from thee."—Psalms lxix. 5. A child of God once quoted these words in my hearing, and with emotion of heart added, "And I am glad of it." Instantly my soul said within me, I am glad the Lord knows all my foolishness; he knows that only exceeding riches of grace in Christ Jesus can save and bring a sinner like me to eternal glory. It is an unspeakable favor to be drawn to Jesus, to commune with him of all that is in our hearts, and to come before him with our hard questions that try our souls. (1 Kings x. 1–3.) Sometimes with one sigh in his presence, at the foot of his throne, I feel I have told him all. I feel he knows all my griefs, every trial, and all my conflicts, and all the yearnings of my soul, and one sweet word from him, one sweet thought, will set everything right, and heal all the disorders of my soul. Oh, that I could live in simplicity, as a little child, in close intimacy with Jesus, the friend of sinners. When Christ our Savior gives us peace in our borders how quiet and restful is our land. The invader cannot molest us when the Lord is our defense. The land yieldeth us its precious increase, we gather the precious fruits of the gospel and eat them with praises in our hearts to the Lord in the courts of his holiness. Our meditation upon salvation, in Emmanuel's precious blood, the imputed righteousness of Christ, and the hope of eternal life in Christ Jesus, all is so satisfying. God hath blessed us all with all spiritual blessings in our dear Savior, and we are

led and instructed by the Holy Spirit to live upon the Son of God, and we are enabled by the power of the Comforter to do so. Believing through grace (Acts xviii. 27) according to the working of his mighty power (Eph. i. 19) God fills us with all joy and peace that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Ghost. (Rom. xv. 13.) Emmanuel, God with us, is our inexhaustible storehouse, for he of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. During the early years of my hope in the new covenant I enjoyed long seasons of tranquillity and joy in the things of Christ. I knew but little in those days of the cares of life, except that for nearly three years I was incapacitated for work, through a weak and sickly body. My time was very largely spent in the perusal of the Bible, and I was much indulged, as I hope, by the Holy Spirit with sweet and instructive meditations therein. But now I am seldom long at ease. Short seasons of repose, indeed, I find in the sure mercies of David. Here, even amidst the tumult of my foes, upon the field of battle, so secure has my soul felt in the Captain of our salvation, and that I, with all the ransomed, would ultimately be more than conqueror, I have laid me down upon the precious promises, that are yea and amen in Christ Jesus, and have slept. Truly the Lord our God giveth his beloved sleep. "I awakened: for the Lord sustained me." So refreshing is it to my soul to repose upon my God that when I awaken again, and I see the enemies of Zion, and of my soul, still in the field, but feeling I am still with God (Psalms cxxxix. 18), and that my God is on my side, I have joined with David, and could say, "I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about. Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God; for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly. Salvation belongeth unto the Lord: thy blessing is upon thy people."—Psalms iii. 6–8. But I am very inconsistent, I do not keep this pace very long at a time. I cannot always tell how or why, but I get careless. I forget, I become indifferent, yea, hardened through the deceitfulness of indwelling sin. All that is in this world I find in myself, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, these are not of our heavenly Father, but they proceed from my vile, depraved nature. Ah, my business is, by grace of God, to mortify them; but in straying away from my God, instead of diligence in business, I find I am toying with sinful vanities, suffering them to show their faces, tolerating them taking liberties with me, until at last I awaken to the dismal fact that I am their captive. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." Surely the greatest affliction is my own vileness. This I mourn over before my God. There are moments when I feel my conscience is made very tender (Oh, that it were ever thus with me), every sinful thought inflicts a wound, and sometimes it seems as though my poor heart were a target for all manner of polluting thoughts. As one in a far off foreign land I wander as an outcast from the realms of the blessed. But the Lord does not leave me destitute of mercy, for he pours upon me the spirit of grace and of supplication, and I pour forth my complaints and say, "I have gone astray like a lost sheep: seek thy servant." Ah! I have been enticed away from the soul-satisfying mercies of the new covenant, the world, the flesh and

the devil, with their deceitful allurements, have brought me into a woeful land. O come, thou Shepherd of Israel, and bring me forth from these barren heaths of my vile ungrateful backslidings. Here I languish and faint in my soul's affliction, even unto fainting, for how can I live, O Jesus, unless thou dost pardon my sins and smile upon me again? There are no pastures to eat away from thy care, and my soul is disquieted within me, and is in heaviness through manifold temptations. In thy precious gospel there are fields of living green. Bring me into those fields again, for all is a wilderness, briars and thorns everywhere.

Such things as I have here been recording are the oft recurring changes that these exercises are such as belong to the life and walk and trials of faith; if so, "then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."

The veil of our flesh so oft intervening,
The things of our God but obscurely we see;
As through a glass darkly, we look on his glories,
But soon face to face with Emmanuel we'll be.

Like one that is outside of the palace I wander,
Yet, at times, through the lattice the King I have seen:
The King in his beauty—oh, such ravishing glimpses
That my heart ever since taken captive has been.

As one veiled aside, after him I am pining,
Such a dreary waste desert is all unto me,
When Jesus, most lovely, my hope, my salvation,
Is absent, and I his dear face cannot see.

The glimpses, which, even to me, have been given
Of the lovely Redeemer such compassion I've seen;
My heart's drawn toward him, I'm yearning and hoping
To live 'neath his smiles, and have no veil between.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

MACOMB, Okla., Jan. 15, 1927.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter I received from dear old sister Little. If I mistake not she is now in her eighty-fourth year. We thought it too good to lay away, so are sending it to the SIGNS to be published that all the household of faith may enjoy it with us. We have not her consent, but know it will be all right with her. I had my granddaughter typewrite it, so it will not be much trouble for you to read.

From one who feels to be the least of all those who have a sweet hope,

M. E. HARRIS.

STUART, Okla., Nov. 1926.

MRS. M. E. HARRIS—PRECIOUS SISTER:—I desire, the Lord being my helper, to write you, for he says, "Without me ye can do nothing," and when I consider myself, that I am less than nothing, it is with fear and trembling I attempt to write to those whom I deem to be of the household of faith, the children of the most high God. But often I find myself trying to tell them in the silent hours of the night (if I could write then) how little, weak and sinful I feel to be, and am often in heaviness through manifold temptations, fearing there is within me an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. The great apostle Paul claimed to be the chief of sinners and less than the least of all saints, and said when he would do good evil was present with him, and many, even to the present time, can attest the same. My mind, I trust, has been carried back and confirmed in the hope that in my deliverance from the power of darkness into the glorious light of the gospel of God I had a view of his church, her deliverance and travail, for when I was expecting the vengeance of a just and holy God to be meted out to me and banish me forever from his presence, these words came to me, The Lord hath chosen the poor of this world. I saw, or seemed to see, a woman in a sitting posture, in great trouble, her hand smote upon her breast,

and standing a little above was a man: I felt to exclaim, Who art thou, Lord? My burden was gone and a feeling I have never been able to describe passed through my whole being. I felt I could trust Jesus as my Savior; yea, I could trust him for all things, forever. This all came so suddenly it was as the lightning that cometh from the east and shineth unto the west. I pondered in my mind what does it all mean? Oh if I could have heard the words, Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee, I thought I would have been satisfied. Six months later it was my sweet privilege to hear a true gospel sermon preached from Eph. ii. 4, 5: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;)" delivered by a "Hardshell" preacher, as they were then called. I have ever since loved the term. He preached a God of power, love and mercy, who so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life, who is the way, the truth and the life, the unity of Christ and the church, so ably and beautifully I felt that it was all to me and for me, that I was surrounded with a feeling that was incomparable to anything. Recently, I read the 133rd Psalm, which brought these things to my remembrance: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments." Though a little more than sixty years have elapsed since then, I seemed to live them over again. Surely I felt that we were being made to sit together in heavenly places, and when I returned home I got the Bible and read the book of Ephesians. I do not know whether I have ever read it before, it all seemed very plain, and during his sermon he told some of his experience. My desire then above all things was to go to the church and be baptized. There was no cavil in my mind as to which, or who, was the church, but it was more than a year before I had an opportunity of going, but it was continually on my mind, and now I think I can almost hear that, to me now, dear old song, "Am I a soldier of the cross?" While they were singing it, I felt to be borne, as it were, on the wings of his love, to present myself to them and try to tell them what great things I hoped the Lord had done for me; and now, as it was then, I could give only a little portion or glimpse of what I desired to tell. My unworthiness, yea, my nothingness, ever looms up, and sin is mixed with all I do. Doubts and fears sorely oppress me.

I commenced this letter some time ago, and this question came to me in regard to the woman I saw in my delivery. I have for a long time thought it was a representation of the church. Why was she sitting down? I was assailed with these thoughts: Can one who is such a sinner have any part in anything like this? You have done and said things, and do continually, that you would have condemned in others. The older you get the meaner you are. Dear sister, this is not a mere formality, I feel the bitterness in the very depths of my heart, and my continual plea is for mercy, yet hoping for some evidence that it was not all a delusion. This Scripture came to me, "The people which sat in darkness saw a great light: and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up."

Now let me quote a little I have just read in a Circular Letter in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of November 15th, 1907: "Isaiah, when he saw in his weakness and the corruption of his heart (as well as that of the people with whom he dwelt) at that time, by faith, saw the Lord high and lifted up, and his train (the church) filled the temple. He saw the glory of God, the perfect work of Jesus, the vital unity of Christ and his church; she was with Jesus in that high sphere of refulgent glory, immortality and holiness. No sinner has ever seen Jesus, the head, without seeing his body, the church, for there never was a time (nor will there ever be) when the head and body were disconnected." These precious truths are so comforting I feel to exclaim with gladness, "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."—Rom. viii. 34. Seeing "we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are," let us not fear any of the fiery darts which Satan and his host of conditionalists may hurl at us. God is the rock of our salvation, and our rock is not as their rock; our enemies themselves being judges. For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God.

I like the *Lone Pilgrim*, the editors and writers are surely and fearlessly contending earnestly for the true faith. I hope you will pardon me for keeping your papers so long. They have been a source of much comfort to me, and I appreciate the favor of you sending them. They, like the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, never get old. You can read them over and over, and always find something sweet and comforting in them. I hope I can subscribe for them in the near future.

Some thirty years since, when we were surrounded by conditionalism, after hearing a sermon of that stuff preached, I was asked how I liked the preaching, and this Scripture I verily believe was given me for an answer: "Try the spirits whether they are of God." After replying thus I did not feel sure it was Scripture, but I found it in 1 John iv. 1, which reads, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." There are many papers being published claiming to be Primitive Baptist, which, when I have read, I invariably find death in the pot.

Dear sister, if you can find any comfort, or anything in this that you can fellowship, give God all the glory, and let me subscribe myself, less than the least of all who may claim a hope.

E. F. LITTLE.

LINTHICUM HEIGHTS, Maryland.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a very good letter from dear brother John Miller, which I feel to share with the household of faith. It came to me in the hour of need and I felt to take courage and say, Praise God from whom all blessings flow. It did my poor sinful heart good to know that I was not alone. One of old said, He hath led me and brought me into darkness and not into light. Yes, dear ones, he not only leads his people in darkness, but he brings them there. Jesus said, As the branch cannot bear fruit except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me, without me ye can do nothing. We may get up before the break of day, but we cannot hasten the rising sun.

Yours in a blessed hope,

D. L. TOPPING.

NEWARK, Del., Sept. 19, 1926.

DEAR BROTHER TOPPING:—Another disappointment for me to-day, but I do hope I may not rebel against Him, for we believe what is to be will be; predestination includes just such things as overcome us in disappointments. Not one available man was to be had to relieve me, and I must bear it; and again, I hoped that as long as I had to work against my will that the Porter would open unto me, a sinner in fact and indeed, but that is why he hides from me, I do not merit his holy Spirit, for I seem to live in sin the older I get, and the more helpless and weak am I with it all. When he kills the flesh burns the dross, as he was doing with you when you wrote the last letter to me. I could but feel you would come out of the furnace unscathed and not even a hair burned. I feel he was glorified in you to-day (I hope), yes, even if he shut you up, but I do not believe he did that. For he can shut and none can open, and he can open and none can shut. We are surely dependent upon him for one good thought. I thought when I came to work I would write you a long, comforting letter, for myself as well as yourself, but now it is one o'clock and I am still shut up. It would seem my comfort comes only through a trial I am to face and I dread it, as none of us like to be scorched in the fiery furnace. Yet our desire is to live in the house of God, to dwell with him from day to day, but he leads us in the cloud by day and fire by night. He is there, but we cannot view him when we would, yet he is there, his everlasting arm is always underneath us. But that does not suffice, we desire to hear that still small voice speak unto us, to be on the mount. We dread the valley of despair, but it is in the dark valley of death we live most of the time, it is there we grow in grace, like a tree growing more in the night than in the light. But when that still small voice speaks, Peace, be still, it is I, then we are exalted above earth. But when we are wandering in the wilderness (flesh), as you said, we walk afar off from him, the flesh warring against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh. But the younger always overcomes the elder. There is no temptation that is common to man but that there is always a way of escape. What a grand and wonderful subject is to be found in the conception of Esau and Jacob. To begin with, see how helpless Rebekah was in the manner of even conceiving them in her womb. Isaac entreated the Lord in her behalf and she conceived. Then the struggle commenced which was to be made effective when the new covenant was established. And the children struggled within her and made her exclaim, If I am so blessed, why am I thus? Here is election brought out, even if no other Scripture referred to it. "Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people, and the elder shall serve the younger." Spiritual Jacob overcomes the fleshly Esau, but it required the blood of the Son of God to establish this covenant. I wish I could expound the many rich thoughts that pass in my mind, but words without knowledge are of noneffect. I do hope you dear people had a glorious day in Baltimore. I am dead, a dead dog, as it were, as a stove in a room without fire, cold and lifeless, yet he is there, hiding in the cloud, "for there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand

upon me." Whither shall I go, or whither shall I flee, yet thou art there? My substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret. "Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee: but the night shineth as the day." Thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written." There is election, and the Christ speaking it. Remember me at his throne of grace and mercy, if you can.

Your little brother, I hope, and in hope,

J. B. MILLER.

MILTON, Oregon.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I feel like expressing some of my thoughts on the wonderful works of God recorded in the Scriptures of eternal truth. I understand the Scriptures to be a record of the truth of God to his chosen people, or church, and the truths there recorded are as unchangeable as God himself, and not one of her cords can be broken nor her stakes be removed. This being so, we can with delight and much comfort read its sacred pages. We read in the fifteenth chapter and twenty-first verse of Paul's first letter to the saints at Corinth, "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." Now we have the plain truth recorded that death came by man, also that the resurrection from death came by man. We understand that this is the word of truth that the apostles commanded to be rightly divided, and in order for this we must know that the apostle is setting forth the fact that there are two men under consideration, and in following him on to the forty-fifth verse we see the division: "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." I have given the above testimony in order that we can divide the truth here recorded. Jesus says we are to know the tree by its fruit. A corrupt tree cannot bring good fruit, neither can a good tree bring forth corrupt fruit. We understand it is as impossible for this first man to bring forth life or divine fruit as it is for the corrupt tree to bear good fruit, because the very heart or life of this first man has been so corrupted by sin that there is no good thing in the flesh, says the same apostle, and we only have to go back to the beginning to learn how and where this first man Adam lost or forfeited all claim on anything but death. In the day that thou eatest of the fruit of which is forbidden, thou shalt die. This being a fact, we can see how it is that all die in Adam. We can see by the disobedience of this one man many were made sinners, for it was by the disobedience of this one man that sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death has passed upon all, for all have sinned. Such is our awful state by nature, but blessed be God, by man came the resurrection of the dead. By man, which is the Lord from heaven, and is called the man which is my fellow, the lion of the tribe of Juda, which is Shiloh that was to come, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. It is through the obedience of this one man many were made righteous. It is through the death and suffering of this man that our sins were put away, and it is by this heavenly man, by his having

all power over death and the grave our redemption is sealed. The apostle continues this sublime subject by saying, As we have born the image of the earthy we shall also bare the image of the heavenly. So we who have tasted of the grace and mercy of the heavenly know and feel what the greatness of sin is which is condemned in the flesh, and we with Paul can and do groan within ourselves as we are bearing the image of this earthy man by which all these pains of heart come. We find this same law in our members warring against the law of our mind, so we cannot do the things we would. We are often made to say, Father, here is the wood and the fire, but where is the lamb for the offering? In this we are bearing the image of the earthy, but blessed answer of the father, God will provide the offering. Yes, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but when he, the heavenly, shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Oh glorious thought, bear the image of our dear Lord. When I awake with his likeness, then will I be satisfied. This is my hope and my all.

May the dear Lord bless and keep his dear and afflicted people in this blessed faith and hope until the true light cometh and the darkness flees away, is my prayer.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. T. BARNES.

LAUREL, Miss., Dec. 27, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has pleased the Lord to spare us through another year, and he has blessed us greatly, and we do hope we are thankful for every blessing he has given us, though we do not feel we have done anything to merit any of the blessing we have, and we know it is through the mercy of the God of all power that we still live and have our being.

I am sending a letter we would very much like you to publish in the SIGNS when it is convenient to do so. The writer seldom gets to our meetings. She is a widow and lives several miles from the church. We are at peace here, and Elder L. F. Easley is our pastor, who we esteem highly for the truth's sake.

I wish you all a happy and prosperous new year, and hope the God of all power will guide us on to the end, and bless his children everywhere, and give us grace to help us contend for the faith and practice of the apostles, which we have in his divine word. Brethren, remember me and mine at the throne of grace. May the God who rules all things by his mighty power bless the editors, publishers, brethren and sisters who write for the SIGNS.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all the least of all,

T. J. KNIGHT.

To the members who make up the dear church of Palestine.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I am filled with a desire to commune with you all this beautiful morning, but feel destitute of anything to write, yet as I hesitate for that reason, I remember the psalmist said God would regard the prayers of the destitute, so I take courage and make a most feeble attempt. Very dear brethren and sisters, it seems as I journey on through this vale of tears that faith in self and creature help are removed and I find that my only hope and strength is in my ever-living Head, and I feel this morning that I must lean heavily upon him or I cannot stand. Dear ones, can you remember when you could not stand alone? If not, I must be one alone, for I often feel that both feet are

destitute of strength, and that my right hand is withered. Of late I have felt to beg the Lord to touch me and restore my hand whole, that I might be able to write and speak a word in season to them that are weary, then fears come that it is only a fleshly desire, and I feel to bow my head in shame. Again I ask, Were you ever so afflicted? I gather many sweet crumbs from the pen of inspiration, and I feel (at times) to yet feast upon the rich food that was handed out at the association at Lebanon Church, in Mobile County, Alabama, and feel that I, a poor worm of the dust, was granted a great privilege. I felt it was indeed good to be there, and, too, the kind hospitality that was bountifully given us is still sweet and fresh in my memory. Dear brother and sister Easley, I deemed it a precious privilege to be sheltered under your roof and so kindly ministered to by your dear hands, a privilege I never expected to enjoy, for it was so far from my home, and I feel to ask God's richest blessings upon you as you journey down the hill of time, and that your cares and trials in this life may be sweetened by the presence of him whose name is called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, and may these same blessings rest and remain with you and family, dear brother Graham, and to the household of faith. How sweet it was to sit under the sound of the pure gospel of truth that was given you to hand out to the little flock.

Unworthily,

ANNA WINDHAM.

HOMEWOOD, Miss., Nov. 16, 1926.

BUNA, Texas, Dec. 17, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I am renewing my subscription I want to write a few lines for publication in the dear old SIGNS, if it be God's will to direct my mind and you see fit to publish it; if not, cast it aside. I have no education at all, cannot spell correctly or write well, but that does not keep me from loving the dear brethren and sisters, and I want to try in my weak way to let you all know I love your good letters and spend many happy hours reading them, and do not want to do without the good old SIGNS, and am going to subscribe for it just as long as I can. I am poor in this world's goods, but I am living in the hope of being rich in the kingdom some sweet day, when this life I live here is over. I am glad you all are defending the truth as I see it. I wish I could tell some of my thoughts as I would like to, for my mind is continually on the Lord and his wonderful works and ways. What a great thing it is to know that the Lord can work and none can hinder and can hinder and none can work. It is wonderful to know that he is the cause of all causes, great or small, and has all power in heaven and on earth, and works all things after the counsel of his own will and none can stay his hand. I am one who believes he has a purpose in all things whatsoever come to pass, it matters not what they may be. God's ways are not man's ways, and I am glad to know the devil has got to get permission from the Lord before he can do anything. He has got to stay behind. Jesus said, Get thee behind me, Satan, and what he says stands fast. If I am one of God's children I am not a bit uneasy, for he says he has the keys of heaven and earth, and he can shut and none can open, and he can open and none can shut, and I know he will be with his children to the end. I have a little hope that I may be one among the elect children, and I love to read about the elect lady and her children and think how wonderful it all is. It is always the same sweet story, always new.

I just wanted to write a few lines to let you all know how glad I am there is still a remnant who are not afraid to declare the whole counsel of God and defend the truth as you editors do. Sometimes I read the dear old SIGNS and wish I could write good letters like some brethren and sisters do. I wish the SIGNS was published every week instead of once a month, as it is so good. I am always glad to get my paper, and read it through before doing anything else. It surely is good news from a far country to me.

Well, I will close, as I see no good in this, but it is a comfort to me to write to you all, for it seems I must write to some one who will understand my feelings, which I feel you do. I am like old Peter was when Jesus said to him, Will you also go away? Then Peter answered, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. I am writing to you because I do not know who else to write to who love the kind of doctrine that suits my mind as you all do. This doctrine does not suit the world, and they do not know anything about it.

This is the first I have written for publication, and I hope if you see fit to publish it I have said nothing that is offensive; if I have, it is through my ignorance, and I hope you will forgive me, as I know nothing as I should, and am altogether imperfect. I cannot see how you are now going to publish such a poor letter, but ask you one and all to pray for me.

Your sister, I hope, in eternal life,

ARA COCHRAN.

SPRINGFIELD, Illinois.

DEAR PUBLISHERS:—I am herewith sending you my check for ten dollars, to apply either on my subscription account or that of supplying the more needy of the faithful followers of the blessed Shepherd of the flock, as you may elect. In the past few years I have passed through deep trials and adversities, both financially and otherwise, but you have kindly kept on sending the SIGNS to my address, which I have appreciated to the fullest extent. Now that I have a small income I wish, though in the ninetieth year of my age, if the Lord will, to remit to cover all arrearages, and you may continue to send my paper to the old address, and my son will forward it to me wherever I am stopping, as my home is now broken up and I will be with my good children, who are widely separated. If spared you will have another remittance during the present year, perhaps near the close, from me. I hope to be able once more to communicate with the readers of the SIGNS, even though it be in my weak way. I have been a reader seventy-five years, and up to the past few years an occasional correspondent, and a subscriber for sixty-three years. It has often made me very sad to think that a lack of support from the brethren might cause a suspension of its publication. Trusting yourselves and the able editors may be given grace and strength divine to go on with the good work of wielding "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon," I am, unworthily, your brother, I hope,

J. G. SAWIN.

PORT JEFFERSON STATION, N. Y., March 10, 1927.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find money order for two dollars to renew my subscription for the SIGNS. I enjoy reading its contents. Unless one is born again he cannot enjoy reading the precious word of God. I know I am a poor old sinner, nothing good in my flesh, but the blood of Jesus cleanseth us from all unrighteousness, and I am resting on the

finished work of Christ. It is sad to see the people seeking after wordly enjoyments. How true: lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. We read, If ye be risen with Christ seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth, for ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. What precious promises for the believer. In Ephesians i. 13, 14, "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

I trust this will find you all well.

Yours in that blessed hope in Christ our Redeemer,

(MRS.) CARRIE SMITH.

LOS ANGELES, California.

DEAR EDITORS:—I would like to say to friends of Aunt Lizzie Langford that she passed on to her long desired rest February 19th, 1927, in full faith. She had suffered so much it was a relief to know it was ended. She had been blind and in bed about six years and longed for the time to come that she could be with Jesus.

I certainly do enjoy the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and wish I could help financially. I do hope the all-wise God will continue to guide the editors and writers to feed his sheep.

Please change my address from Scottsdale, Arizona, to 2855 Verdun Avenue, Los Angeles, California. I should like to hear of any others of like faith here.

Your sister in Christ, I hope,

LENA LANGFORD.

VANCOUVER, British Columbia.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Although I have never made a profession of religion, I consider the SIGNS the only source by which pure food is delivered to the hungry, half-starved soul. Although it is canned goods, in a sense, it is far more suited to my taste than the insipid quality handed out from the pulpit in this day and generation. To my mind, true religion is a revelation, and cannot be passed on from one to another. Flesh and blood did not reveal it to Peter. Paul knew nothing about it until it was revealed to him. Men and women are working overtime trying to get young people in the "church," and with greater zeal inventing means and entertainment to keep them in the "church." They seem to think when the Master told his disciples to feed the flock he meant sweet cake and pie. I was at a meeting lately when this matter was being discussed. Remaining silent I was asked to give my opinion. I replied I knew of no wordly organization where the young could have more fun than in the "church" as conducted at the present time, but I had always considered the church to represent the Lamb's bride, pure and spotless, and I thought when he came to claim her he would object to her flirting so extravagantly with the world. I am called old-fashioned, and I guess I am.

Yours truly,

A. G. DIXON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1927.

EDITOR

Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

ROMANS IX. 13.

"As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."

The names quoted above were those given to two twin boys born unto Isaac and Sarah, and were grandsons of Abraham, according to the flesh. By reading we note the manifest virtue of God's election, which does not start with the distinction between Jacob and Esau, but at the time of Cain and Abel, as Abel by faith made an offering which God respected, and ever since this manifestation God has identified his people according to election. The election of God manifested is but the type of his election to glory through grace given in Christ before the world was. All along the line the distinctions are given to draw the reader to the source in God's purpose in all his work, and his Son is the one to be glorified, and his people are glorified in him. Many sons and daughters who are of the same blood, according to the flesh, are not mentioned in holy writ. God spake to Abraham, saying, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called."—Gen. xxi. 12. The other children of Abraham, after the flesh, were not recognized as worshipers of God, but God blessed them with natural blessings, by which great nations have been established. God loving Jacob and hating Esau does not signify the flesh, but because of the working of God's power in Jacob, which is the gift of God according to the Spirit, which the flesh cannot attain to or understand. The distinction referred to does not imply that Jacob, according to the flesh, was better than Esau. As we note the birth of these two boys a wonderful portrait is displayed in testimony of Jacob holding Esau's heel, Jacob representing the spiritual and Esau the natural. Jesus, who was to come at the appointed time of God, is testified as Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, holds on to his, given him by the Father, and as he has all power nothing can separate us from him. The faith of God's elect is given to every one who worships God in the spirit, from a righteous Abel to the present time, and none have that faith but those according to the law of the spirit of life in Christ which has made them free from the law of sin and death. This distinct electing favor was manifested in Joseph, Solomon, David and all the prophets to the coming of John, which was the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. (Isaiah xl. 3.) Jesus now appears and makes manifest a God-man, Christ Jesus the Lord, and called disciples to follow him to testify of his works and power, which is spoken of by the Son of God to behold his glory. (Matt. iii. 3.) "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field."—Isaiah xl. 6. So we have the word of God testifying that glory in his presence. The righteous by faith are swallowed up of life and that part that is vile is made perfect even as he is perfect. The word testifies of him that he shall change our

vile body and fashion it like unto his glorious body. (Phil. iii. 21.) We, poor sinners, are Esaus according to the flesh, as we are under the law of sin and death and cannot extricate ourselves from this condition, as we have sold ourselves for naught, as Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, so it was impossible for him to inherit the blessings, but must be as a servant. Do we not utter the same language as Esau did to Jacob when he sold his birthright? Our lives are unprofitable, and it had been better for us if we had not been born, but God's eternal purpose must be fulfilled. For we truly believe that "the steps we tread and the station we fill our Father determined and wrote in his will." It is strange language to hear men and women tell of their trials and afflictions because of sin, and no carnal mind can understand or perceive of the power that has wrought such wondrous changes in the desires of an individual. The expressions with such power that the individual in speaking to others weeps, and every one of like precious faith will rejoice in the manifested feelings and tears will flow from every one who has been led by the Spirit. Jacob was made to flee from the presence of Esau and was brought to the place where he saw the angels ascending and descending, as it were, upon a ladder that reached from earth to heaven. All the experience of Jacob is wonderful, and every subject of grace rejoices in the divine favor of God bestowed upon him as he has witnessed a power that has directed his steps and led him in paths not known and ways past finding out. Jacob was kept by the power of God in nature as well as grace, and the things purposed of God were brought to pass, and the flesh cannot receive of it, for had Rachel known God would bless her she would not have given her handmaids to her husband that she might have children born to her. We understand in reading the life of Jacob that which is born of flesh cannot be recognized in the Spirit, for Joseph's half-brothers did not enjoy Joseph's dreams, as they were called, but they were visions from God, and testified of things which must come to pass, and all obstacles thrown in his way were removed as God was preparing the preservation of Jacob and all his household, though they were hidden. Only the present is all we can testify of, the way we shall pass God has reserved to himself, and only reveals a small portion at a time by his Spirit. The tribulations of Joseph could not make the purpose of God noneffectual. Moses was preserved to do the will of God, and no decree of man can change it. These sovereign purposes of God are wonderful in a historical sense, and to feel the strength of his power against sin is more wonderful, and every one who feels the hand of his power will beg for mercy.

The expressions here penned cause us to feel we are far short of coming to the fullness of God's love for one child of grace, or every subject of his love and grace, and we cannot say positively that our expressions are perfect, but rather ourself imperfect, and we hope every reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will read the Scriptures following up the expressions, and thereby know the word of God relative to what we have written. The light of grace shines in all his children and the Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God. In love to the household of faith.

C. W. V.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence in Delmar, Md., April 27th, 1927, Lawrence W. Adkins, of Willards, Md., and Miss Laura E. Gordy, of Salisbury, Maryland.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon John W. Caudle, youngest son of John W. Caudle and Margaret Ann Caudle, was born January 1st, 1865, and died March 21st, 1927. He was married to Miss M. S. Bachelar December 19th, 1886, and to them were born thirteen children, six boys and seven girls. One son, Roy, was killed three years ago, the other twelve survive. Brother Caudle professed a hope in Jesus as his Savior and joined the Old School Baptist Church March 12th, 1902, at Valley View, Texas. He, with his family, moved several times, and moved their membership to different locations. It was my privilege to meet brother Caudle and family about five years ago. The following year they moved close to Ft. Worth, and put their membership in the Ft. Worth Church. Brother Caudle was meek, humble and kind to all, and to my understanding there never lived a more devoted husband and father. His great desire was to live an upright honest life and as much as in him was to live peaceably with all men, and set as good an example before his children as he could. The dear Lord had given him a deep insight of his written word and of spiritual things, and it was a great pleasure to me to hear him talk on the Scripture and his feeling of weakness and inability to do the things he desired. He had no confidence in the flesh of any man, his hope was alone in God. He had no apology to make to any for what he felt was the truth, yet he was kind and tender to those who disagreed with his convictions. I would say to his dear ones left behind, Sorrow not as others who have no hope, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. Brother Caudle died with an attack of heart trouble. He had had an attack one week before his death, but recovered, and was as well, apparently, as ever, and the night before he died he remarked he never felt better in his life. He was found dead, lying in his yard, by his family early in the morning. Brethren J. H. Smith and E. A. Moreland spoke comfortingly at his funeral, which was attended by a large concourse of relatives and friends, after which his body was laid by the side of his son Ray, near Grapevine, Texas. He leaves to mourn his departure his faithful wife and twelve children, two older brothers and an aged dear sister. We feel, if I may speak for our church, we have lost a worthy member, a burden-bearer, for he was so good to see after the necessities of our church, but we bow in submission to the wise and holy God, who is too wise to err, and is too good to do wrong, and works all things after the counsel of his own will. May it be his holy will to give his loved ones left behind a reconciling spirit, and fill the vacancy left by the death of their dear husband, father and brother with his holy Spirit. I want to say I have never known a more lovely God-fearing man, and while he is gone, yet his life speaketh. We realize our loss is his eternal gain; he has gone from the evil to come. He fought a good fight, kept the faith, finished his course, and now is called to his reward, which is eternal life.

Written in tender memory of a dear esteemed brother, of which I hope I am one of those to whom Jesus said, Then shall the King say unto you, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, as we feel will be said to this dear humble brother.

(MRS.) MINNIE C. OFFILL.

Loueaseanna Jones Ratliff was born June 7th, 1836, and died March 3rd, 1927, making her stay on earth 90 years, 8 months and 26 days. She was born near Sharpsburg, Kentucky, and was the daughter of the late Elder Samuel and Nancy Bailey Jones. She was received into the fellowship of the old Bald Eagle Church, near Sharpsburg, in the year 1857, and remained a faithful member until death. She passed to rest at the home of her son, T. L. Ratliff, and wife, near Mt. Sterling, Ky., where she had made her home for a number of years. She leaves to mourn their loss five sons: Caleb G., of Irvine, Ky.; Samuel J., of Mt. Sterling, Ky.; T. J. and R. N., of Mt. Sterling, Ky.; N. Rol. Ratliff, of Winchester, Ky., and six grandchildren. She is also survived by one sister, Lizzie Jones Burbridge. She was married to J. W. Ratliff about the year 1856, who preceded her to the grave twenty-five years, also one son and one daughter: C. B. Ratliff and Elizabeth Ratliff Myers. Her home was always open to Baptists and she was very devoted to the cause and loved to sing the good old hymns, and would join in with us just a short time before her death. Oh how we miss her no tongue can tell. She was always good company and was of a cheerful disposition before her health began to fail. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord. She was a good wife, and a loving mother to us all. We feel she has been called home to her blessed Jesus, there to await the resurrection morn.

Funeral services were held at the home of T. J. Ratliff, conducted by Elder P. W. Sawin, who spoke words of comfort to the sorrowing family and friends, after which her remains were tenderly laid to rest at Sharpsburg, beside her husband and children in Crown Hill Cemetery.

Written by her son,

T. J. RATLIFF.

Martha Emily Green was born in Baltimore County, Maryland, May 22nd, 1851, and died in Baltimore, March 11th, 1927. She was married September 12th, 1871, to John Green. Nine children were born to this union, four of whom are dead, and four daughters and one son living. She received a hope in the Savior very early in life, and on the first Sunday in July, 1875, was baptized in the fellowship of Harford Church, Harford Co., Md., by the late Elder William Grafton. She proved her love for the church and her brethren by walking a distance of three miles to and from the church in order to attend her meetings until age and infirmities rendered her unable longer to do so, then some of the members would arrange to take her, thus showing their love for her and their desire for her presence with them in the service of God so sweet to them all. How sweet to remember the life of such faithful ones. Six years ago she was stricken with paralysis, and as time passed she became less physically able to be taken, yet, though many times absent from the meetings, her love for the meetings increased more and more. It can be truthfully said of her that no one was more firmly established in the sovereignty of God in all things than was this dear sister. She had many trials and sorrows, but bore them all with christian fortitude, and though she possessed very little of this world's goods she showed to the world her great riches by her fear of God and her close communion with him. May we all be blessed to emulate her good examples. She was laid to rest in the cemetery at the church where she for so long loved to go, on March 14th, to await the call of her dear Savior, whom she loved and in whom she trusted. Brother Douglas L. Topping, of the Baltimore Church, spoke on the occasion to the comfort of the bereaved ones. May God bless her aged husband and children with that living faith which he was pleased to give to her.

Written at the request of her daughter, Mrs. Laura Dawson.

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

May Ellis, wife of Arthur W. Ellis, departed this life at her home, near Seaford, Delaware, March 19th, 1926. She was born May 30th, 1878, making her stay on earth 47 years, 9 months and 19 days. She was the only daughter of the late James W. and Lavina Hastings. Her mother having died when she was a little child she was reared in the home of her paternal grandparents, where she remained until her wedding day, Dec. 27th, 1899. She was married by the late Elder W. W. Meredith. A more dutiful, conscientious person is seldom, if ever, found. Though frail and afflicted nearly all her married life, she did not murmur or complain, even under the most trying circumstances, believing that whatever is is right. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, having no confidence in the flesh, and I have no doubt a keen sense of her unworthiness in her own estimation kept her from asking a name with dear old Broad Creek Church, which she loved so well. She was never happier than when entertaining those she loved for the truth's sake in her home. She loved the assembly of the saints, and attended our meetings far and near when health and strength permitted.

Elder H. C. Ker was called to preach her funeral, at Smith Mills, then her body was laid to rest in the burial plot where lie many bodies of loved ones gone before sleeping that blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep. She leaves a devoted husband, two half-brothers and other relatives and friends, who believe for her to die was gain. The loss is ours.

Written by her aunt by request.

MARTHA HOLLOWAY.

Mrs. Martha L. Elliott passed away at her home near Sciotaville, Ohio, March 13th, 1927, at the age of eighty-one years. She leaves to mourn their loss two daughters, three sons, three sisters and three brothers, but we mourn not as those without hope, for we feel she has passed from death unto life, because she loved the brethren, and blessed are they who have part in the first resurrection, for over such the second death hath no power. We feel she had come up out of much tribulation, having her robes washed in the blood of the Lamb. She was an Old School Baptist and the Bible was her daily companion.

Our dear father, **Truman Wayne Taylor,** departed this life at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Fred Paepke, in the town of Pierson, Michigan, on the morning of April 15th, 1927. He was the eldest son born to John Pike and Rebecca Perfect Taylor, and was born near the town of New Albany, Ohio, May 28th, 1848. March 13th, 1870, he was married to Sophronia Wingert, and to this union six children were born: Georgia, Sylvia, Metta, Johnnie, Lana and Rebecca. The little son dying in infancy, little Lana dying in the ninth year of her life. His wife also preceded him to the grave seven years ago. His health had been failing for several years. He was blessed with an experience of salvation by grace, and was a dear lover of the truth, though, like so many others who are thus favored, he had never been baptized in the fellowship of the visible church. He always enjoyed conversing on spiritual things, for he was a great reader of the Bible and loved to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Both his father and grandfather were ministers of the Predestinarian Baptist Church. He leaves to mourn his departure one brother, one half-brother, one half-sister, besides his four daughters, grandchildren and great-grandchil-

dren. We feel assured that while we are toiling in this world he is entered into his rest prepared for him before the foundation of the world.

Ater his funeral, on this beautiful Easter Sunday afternoon, his mortal body was deposited in the grave, but the immortal spirit is in the city of our God.

Written by his daughter, REBECCA.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

A. B. Corder, W. Va., $1; Mrs. Jay MacTavish, Can., $4.25; Mrs. W. E. McGregor, Ky., $1; Mrs. Willard Beauchamp, Md., $1; C. W. Stratton, Neb., 83 cents; L. Z. Ross, N. Y., $1; L. D. Perry, Tenn., $1; Mrs. M. J. Mundy, Mo., $1; R. T. Turner, Cal., $3; Elder J. G. Sawin, Ill., $10; "A Friend," Okla., $1; Samuel Hostetter, Iowa, $1; Mrs. Fred W. Paepke, Mich., $2; Mrs. Sarah V. Curry, Colo., $1.

MEETINGS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Pa., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1927. Lovers of truth and order are invited to attend. Those coming to Southampton on Tuesday will inquire for Caswell Reeves. Those coming to Ivyland, Pa., will inquire for Wm. Hobensack. Morning trains Wednesday and Thursday will be met at Southampton.

H. C. KER, Pastor.

WM. HOBENSACK, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at New Vernon, Sullivan Co., New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (8th, 9th and 10th), 1927. Those coming from and via New York City will take Erie R. R. Ferry foot of West 23rd Street at 4:20 p. m., or the Erie R. R. Ferry foot of Chambers Street for train leaving Jersey City, N. J., at 4:45 p. m., on Tuesday, June 7th, or Erie R. R. Ferry foot of Chambers St., at 7:02 a. m., on Wednesday, June 8th, for train leaving Jersey City at 7:30 a. m. Get tickets for Howells, N. Y. These trains are operated on Daylight Saving Time. Those coming from and via Kingston, N. Y., will take Ontario and Western R. R. train leaving Kingston at 1:57 p. m., on Tuesday, June 9th. Get tickets for Winterton, N. Y. This train is operated on Eastern Standard Time. Trains will be met and friends cared for. Those coming by automobile will go to the home of Mr. Fred Beyea (The Old Homestead) on arrival at New Vernon. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, sisters and friends.

R. LESTER DODSON, Moderator.

The Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, Shokan, N. Y., will, the Lord willing, hold a two days' meeting on the third Sunday, and Saturday before, in June (18th and 19th), 1927. Trains will be met on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning. A cordial invitation is extended to all.

GEORGE RUSTON.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
SCHOHARIE, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday of each month at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 459 E. 5th St, Riverside, Calif., and at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. 11th St., Claremont, Calif., on the first Sunday of each alternate month, beginning with January, and on every alternate month with brother Joseph Huffman, 128 Van Buren St., Arlington, Calif. Singing at 10:30 a. m. Preaching at 11 a. m. Lunch at the place of meeting, and continued services in the afternoon.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.

O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 245 Lacadana Drive, Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us

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(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

FREE WILL.

THIS subject is one that was never advocated until Arminius Jacobus in the sixteenth century began to teach this error, in 1604, if the encyclopedia is correct. "Free," means not tried, not held down, not in prison, not under sentence of death, not arrested by an officer, not controlled by something or some power. "Will," Webster gives a number of definitions: To have a wish, to desire, to resolve, &c. My definition is, The will is controlled by surrounding circumstances, a state of the mind controlled by that before, or presented to it. Hence Adam was controlled by that before him, as other people of to-day are. His love for Eve controlled him, and caused him to act, to eat the forbidden fruit. The apostle Paul says, "And Adam was not deceived; but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression." Then Adam knew what he was doing. What caused him to eat? What power moved or made him willing? The love he had for Eve. Love is a wonderful power. God is love. Is he not an irresistible power? Many mothers have been made willing to jump into the water and drown, and into the fire and burn to death, moved and the will controlled by love. Many people have been caused by love to take their own lives. The will overpowered by love. To prove the people of God cannot control the will, but are made willing, is one of the easiest things to do that is found in the Bible. How many of you who read this did not want to join this sect "that everywhere it is spoken against," but were made willing? What caused you to be up there giving your hand to the preacher when just before your will was not to go? Paul can tell you, "For the love of Christ constraineth you."—2 Cor. v. 14. Again, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."—Psalms cx. 3. Here we have the testimony of the Bible. Not what I believe as I hear spoken from the pulpit and fireside, but what God says by his servants, from the Book of books. The first text says, "The love of Christ constraineth us." Webster says "constrain" means "to compel." If constrain means to compel, it was the love of your dear Savior that drew you by the irresistible cords of his love and added you to the church in spite of your unwillingness. I

know it is said by all Arminians that God does not cause his little ones to join the church, but they are mistaken. David says in Psalms lxv. 4: "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple." Have you not been satisfied with the church, and made to rejoice because God by his grace caused you to turn your back on the world and brought you to his banqueting-house, and his banner over you was love? Maybe some of you have not, but I have shed tears of joy to think God would pick me up like a little, filthy, burry, muddy, lost, starving sheep, if one at all, wool full of spanish needles, and wash me and make me "white like wool." God says, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."—Isaiah i. 18. He picked you up and brought you back and put you down in the green pastures. (Psalms xxiii.; Luke xv. 4–6.) Paul says, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." What was it caused you to obey?

"'Twas all of thy grace we were brought to obey,
While others were suffered to go
The road which by nature we chose as our way,
Which leads to the regions of woe."

Free. The Savior said, John viii. 32, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Thirty-sixth verse: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." How? If they had been free how could the Savior have said, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed"? Did the Savior know what he was talking about? Jesus knew they were under the control of sin. He knew they would have to be delivered, from the power of darkness, to be separated better than Paul, who said, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." Listen to Paul again as he thunders to destroy forever this erroneous idea of man's "free will." Eph. ii. 2: "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of the flesh," of the mind, &c. This spirit Paul speaks of here controls all alien sinners. They would act much worse than they do, but the wrath of man God will restrain. (Psalms xxvi. 10.) What? Free when God restrains him? Any one who argues man's will is free certainly must be blind. Webster says, "To have a wish, to desire." Can you control your wish? Can you help having desires? Do you not desire many things, and cannot help it? Say yes, or stand up and lie. It is as positively set forth here that we were under the control of Satan as English language can set forth. Just as clearly taught here man in a state of nature is controlled by the devil as it is where the Savior said to the wicked spirits in the Gadarene, Come out of him. He was in the tombs cutting himself with stones, he had often been bound with fetters and chains, but had broken and burst the bindings and gone back into the tombs. Say, my brother, have you not been there? If you have not, I have. Free? I would say not. Listen to the prophet Zechariah, ix. 11, "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein there is no water." Is a prisoner free? Isaiah xlix. 9: "That thou may-

est say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that sit in darkness, Shew yourselves." Again, "To hear the groaning of the prisoner, to loose those that are appointed to death."—Psalms cii. 20. If man was free why say to loose any one? People who are free do not need to be loosed. Isaiah xlix. 24, 25: "Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered? But thus sayeth the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children." If you had been free you would not have needed some one to fight for you, but you were a captive and could not get away, and therefore your dear, blessed, sweet, lovely and all-powerful Savior had to deliver you. He did this because he loved you and is your blessed, sweet, holy, wondrous, loving, tender, compassionate Husband, and you had "sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money."—Isaiah lii. 3. "Thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; * * * The God of the whole earth shall he be called."—Isaiah liv. 5. "And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." Then, little trembling one, look to and trust in this holy, wondrous, gentle, sweet and all-powerful Husband, who spoke to the wind and sea, and said, Peace, be still, and there was a great calm, and when Satan has you in his grasp, and you are controlled by him, and some one has done you a great injury and the waves of your carnal anger are raging, and you are breathing vengeance against your enemy, all your sweet, ever-watchful, loving Husband has to do is to breath upon you, or in your poor heart, and you will say, Vengeance belongeth unto the Lord, he will repay. How wonderful it is to have such a deliverer. He that keepeth Israel shall not slumber nor sleep. Do you think he would allow something to come upon you that is not in some wonderful way for your good? Oh no, little one.

"Though plagues and death around me fly,
'Till he commands I cannot die;
Though men or devils aim to kill,
They cannot exceed my Father's will."

Now let us have some testimony from the New Testament. "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." The word "reign" means to rule. Sin ruled in us unto death. Again, "For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. * * * But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." Paul says this. Do you believe he knew? (Romans vi. 20-22.) You were first servants of sin and then were made free from sin. Then you became servants to God. Please tell me when you were free. "Ye are not you own." "Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." Jesus bought you and you belong to him. "Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money." The negroes before the war between the states belonged to their masters, and had to do what their masters told them to do. Where is the man who will come up and say they were free? Paul says, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you," &c. Is a prisoner free? If he is then Paul was free. Paul is the pattern to them that should afterwards believe on the Lord Jesus unto life everlasting. Prisoners of men get away, but no one can get away from God. David says,

"Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." Where are you now, free-willer? Here is the testimony from God that you cannot get away, and that he leads his people and holds them; and all in a state of nature are controlled by the spirit of the devil, as I have already proven by Paul in his letter to the Ephesians. Paul says, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."—Rom. ix. 16. "If I do this willingly, have I a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me." Again, "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."—Rom. vii. 18. The old confession of faith I have that was printed one hundred and twenty-one years ago (not a copy), says, "Man by reason of the fall hath wholly lost ability of will." Again, "By the transgression of the law, the moral rectitude of human nature was entirely lost, so that man has not only become dead in sin, and incapable to keep the law, or restore himself to the same state of uprightness, but wholly unable to accept of salvation by Jesus Christ till regenerated by the divine Spirit." Those who teach the bad seed was in the dirt, and Adam was a sinner before he transgressed are mistaken. For Solomon says, "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright."—Eccl. vii. 29. "Sin is the transgression of the law."—1 John iii. 4. By the disobedience of one man many were made sinners. (Rom. v. 19.) But you may say, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Yes, if he only had the will. Suppose he is not thirsty. If God has by his Spirit shown him his lost and ruined condition, and he has been trying to satisfy the law, and has worked himself out of works, and sweat and toiled trying to comply with the law's demands until he is thirsty, we say, Come ye to the waters. Hard work makes men thirsty, and Paul says, It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. "He that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." —John iii. 21. Again, "Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit."—2 Cor. v. 5. Now then, let us see if the will is controlled by something outside or by surrounding circumstances. Here you are, two hundred of you, listening to me trying to preach, all willing and having a desire to hear. One definiton Webster gives is "desire." A man comes running into the house and says, Get out of here quick, there is a great bomb under the floor, has a time fuse, will explode in a quarter of a minute. Every man's, woman's, child's will is changed, and of all the scrambling to get out of a house we ever saw we would have it. One more illustration. A man starts out to look for a companion. Meets a young lady. She is exceedingly homely, sagged teeth, cross-eyed, scraggily hair all over her face, dirty, ragged, and an idiot, would this nice intelligent gentleman be willing to marry this ugly creature? No. But some great power transformed her into the most beautiful and most intelligent lady in the world, and some relative leaves

her a million dollars, and he finds out she loves him, and God puts his love into this man's heart and causes him to adore and love this same girl, what about his will now? He would die for her. His desire would be uncontrollable. That is what Jesus has done for you, poor little one, he has transformed you and made you gloriously beautiful to him. He looks on you as you will appear in glory. John says, "Given us an understanding." "Then opened he their understanding."

Yes, brethren, I could write on and on and tell you what Jesus has done for us, how he has made us willing to serve him, how he has changed our desires, &c. Here is the way you appear in the sight of your blessed Jesus, washed and cleansed.

"Who is this fair one in distress,
That travels from the wilderness,
And pressed with sorrows and with sins,
On her beloved Lord she leans?

This is the spouse of Christ our Lord,
Affection sounds in every word.
Lo, thou art fair, my love, he cries,
Not the young doves have sweeter eyes.

(Sweet are thy lips, thy pleasing voice
Salutes mine ear with secret joys,
No spice so much delights the smell,
Nor milk, nor honey, taste so well.)

Thou art all fair, my bride, to me,
I will behold no spot in thee,
What mighty wonders love performs,
And puts a comeliness on worms.

Defiled and loathsome as we are,
He makes us white, and calls us fair;
Adorns us with that heavenly dress,
His graces and his righteousness.

He calls me from the leopard's den,
From this wide world of beasts and men,
To Zion, where his glories are;
Not Lebanon is half so fair.

Not dens of prey nor flow'ry plains,
Nor earthly joys, nor earthly pains,
Shall hold my feet nor force my stay
When Christ commands my soul away."

Your little brother in hope of mercy,
ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

DUTTON, Ontario.

DEAR BROTHER VAUGHN:—You no doubt will wonder why I am so long in answering your good, kind letter, which I received a long time ago. Well, I have no apology to give, only a barren mind, and feeling unable to write to such wonderful gifts as the dear servants of God. I feel to be so ignorant, and know so very little of the deep and mysterious things of God, I shrink sometimes from saying anything about his mercy and goodness. I am such a poor, vile sinner, not deserving of the notice of my dear brethren and sisters in the church, and often wonder how they can love me as they do, for I feel they are my best friends and kindred in Christ, and more especially the dear servants of God who come to us laden with the rich bounties of heaven. Truly many times I feel it is heaven below my dear Savior to know. I have always felt it a great privilege to have a home in the church among his dear people, unworthy as I feel to be. How any could leave so lovely a people, after such kindness shown, I am not able to yet understand.

When I started I thought to write you some of my experience and of the great things the Lord has done for my soul, as you wished me to do. It would take a book to hold all the ups and downs I have passed through since I had a hope in the mercy of God. I will have to ask you to pardon all mistakes, for I make many, I know, but I feel you have charity enough in your heart to look over my blunders, as I am not able to express myself as I wish, for I am only a child and talk as a child. Well, I cannot remember the day and date, as some of my dear brethren and sisters can, but I know one thing, that whereas I was once blind now I see, and the things I once loved and in-

dulged in I now hate with a perfect hatred, and I also feel that I love my dear brethren as I never loved them before, so I feel I can say there are some evidences I know and cannot forget, for I was one time a stranger to those very things, and had a desire only for the vain and perishing things of this sinful world. In my girlhood days I was very fond of dancing; that was my chief pleasure. I never could have any love for cards, neither could I learn to play, as they were so very obnoxious to me. When first I saw myself a sinner I was at home on the farm, and my dear mother was a very gracious woman and offered up many prayers for her children, for the Lord to guide us in the right way and keep us from evil. Both my parents were members of the Baptist Church. I was only a child when my father died and left my dear mother with a family of nine to care for, but I had a dear uncle, brother Kerr's father, and he helped my mother in many things. But I have got to pass over many years of my life, as it would take up too much space to tell all. The first sermon I remember of hearing, was at a May meeting, when our dear old pastor, Elder Pollard, opened the meeting by saying they had gathered together to hear of Jesus and his love to sinners. I am ashamed to say I did not go to that meeting to hear the truth, for the truth had no charms for me at that time. Our dear pastor began by saying some came for one thing and some for another. He said some came to hear the gospel preached, some came to see their friends and some to see and be seen. Oh how that sentence sank down in my heart, for I felt I was of that character. That was the beginning of my hearing the word. I felt to be a guilty criminal before God. I will pass over many years more, and come to where I was in great distress on account of my sins, the burden being heavy to bear. In the meantime my dear mother died, and oh what a sore trial it was for me to give her up. I was the youngest daughter and I felt I could not live without my mother, and when the time came it was a sad time. Just a little before she passed away she asked us to sing "The hour of my departure came," and indeed it was hard to sing, but she spoke to us three girls, and said, Weep not for me, but for yourselves. After she was gone, and as I stood looking at her dear form, mourning our loss, these words came into my mind:

> "Whate'er on earth we call our own,
> Belongs to heaven's great Lord;
> The treasures lent us for a time
> Are soon to be restored."

I think that is the way it reads. Then after a while I was to be married, and the thought came to me, I cannot be a christian until after I am married, then I thought it would be much easier, as there would not be so much to do, but I found it was no easier than before, so many things needed attention. So time went on, and in place of getting better I got worse and worse. Then my trouble came upon me in double force, and I was driven to my wit's end, and all I could do was cry, God be merciful to me a sinner, and pardon and forgive me my many sins, for they were like mountains before me. I tried to drown my feelings by going into the company of the world, and was again left to go to the dance. I went a few times and the condemnation I felt was terrible. I seemed justly condemned, and felt that hell was my portion; no hope for me now. Three times I went, and felt all the time to be so guilty before God I did not know what to do. Before I went the last three times, I would put my house in order, and leave plenty of

provisions, as I did not expect ever to return home again. The last one I went to, I was determined to have my fill of sin, for I was condemned already, and it could not be any worse than it was, for I truly felt that hell was my awful doom, and to make matters worse, I would promise the Lord if he would spare my life that time I would never go again, and broke my promise every time. Oh think of it, my dear brother, was there ever a sinner like me? As I said awhile ago, I felt I would never see home, but I was spared once more to return, and I was glad, so I went to bed, but not to sleep. I was afraid to sleep lest I would awake in hell, which I felt was just and right. I dropped off to sleep some time before morning, and awoke and found I was permitted once more to see the light of another day, so I got up, and as I put my feet upon the floor these words came sweetly into my mind, "There is, therefore, no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." That was my desire all the time, to be led by the Spirit of God. That was a happy day to me, everything seemed praising God; but it was not long before I was plunged in darkness again.

Now I will pass over a time, for my letter is so lengthy that I cannot tell of the time when I came before the church, how I was exercised about baptism. When I came before the church I was afraid I could not say anything, but this thought came to me, Think not what you will say beforehand, for it will be given you then. These words came to me one day when I was working, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." I was baptized thirty-nine years ago this May meeting. There were four of us: brother Deacon Campbell and wife, a Mr. McIntyre and myself. It was one of the happiest days of my life; it was the answer of a good conscience toward God, and I could sing,

"I'm not ashamed to own my Lord,
Or to defend his cause,
Maintain the honor of his word,
The glory of his cross."

Dear Elder Pollard was always as a father to me, and I loved him dearly for the truth's sake. Oh what sorrow I felt when he passed away, for he was indeed a true friend to us.

It is a week since I started this letter and laid it away, fearful to send it, as it seems so imperfect. My dear brother, how very different I found the path from what I thought it would be. All was love, joy and peace for quite a time, and so foolish was I to think that any one professing the name of the Lord could not do or say anything wrong, but I have had to learn many things by painful experience, that he is all the time leading us in a way he would have us go, whether it is in a smooth path or in one of briars and thorns, to bring us nearer to him. Our flesh is so prone to evil we cannot do the things we ought to do, but I am glad he knows all the way we take, and that it is not in man to direct his steps. When I first began to learn the trials of the way, I could not understand his way of dealing with us. It was so different from what I had marked out that I was astonished. One thing that made me realize it was the Lord's hand that was leading me, was one day while I was passing through the fire and felt I was about to be consumed, in a moment these words came to my mind, When thou passest through the fire I will be with thee. Then when I was meditating upon the roughness of the way, and why I should have to suffer as I did, the thought came to me, If I could only know that it was the hand of the Lord that was leading me I would be willing to suffer anything. So as I sat there the still small

voice spoke from behind me, saying, I am performing the things that are appointed for you, and many such things are with me. That is a day never to be forgotten. In a moment everything was as clear as day, and I saw plainly that it was the Lord's hand that was leading me, and I said aloud, It is enough, Lord. I was made willing to suffer all that come my way. That night after I retired, but not to sleep for some time, I dropped off in a dose and awoke with these words sounding in my ears, and repeating the last clause of the verse, where it says, I have taken you out of an horrible pit of mire and clay and set your feet on the rock Christ Jesus, and put a new song in your mouth, even praise to his holy name. That morning these words came to me, to convince me that the Lord was still leading me, He leadeth me in a right way, to a city of habitation.

I have written much, but the half can never be told of the goodness and mercy of God to me, a poor sinner; yes, the very chief of sinners. Dear brother, pardon me for this long letter, and if you have not time to read it cast it aside, as I love to tell of Jesus and his love to guilty sinners, Jesus, the sweetest of all names. I can neither read nor hear of his name but I am overcome with emotion. I often feel I am not fit to be among his people, as I cannot keep up with the others, for I am not half as good as they are.

I will close, and hope this finds you and yours well, and will look forward to your coming as soon as possible. Do not be afraid you come too often. Love is the tie that binds our hearts in christian love. We join in much love to you all. May the God of heaven bless you, is the desire of your little, unworthy sister in sorrow,

(MRS.) THOS. E. LILLY.

SULPHUR, Ky., Dec. 19, 1926.

DEAR FRIENDS:—As I could not get to meeting to-day I feel a desire to pen you a few lines, and I only hope it is of the Lord, but a terrible fear grips my heart that it may be of the flesh; if it is it will profit nothing. I have not been feeling well the past week, because of a cold, and my mind has been drawn to you people several times, and this being our meeting day at old Sulphur Fork Church, and as I did not feel like going am trying in my very weak way to write to the people I hope I love for the truth's sake. Elder George L. Weaver is our pastor, and as it is now almost time for the service to begin I think I see him taking his place in the stand. I hear him outline some hymn to sing in sweet melody to the Father above, and see him bow his head in prayer. How solemn is the service, not one word amiss, but all in praise and thanksgiving to the great Giver of every good and perfect gift. I hear him read a text, and hear him preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ. He is setting forth Christ and him crucified as the only way of life and salvation. His preaching is clear and discriminating and he shuns not to declare the whole counsel of God. It seems to me the service is too solemn for one so vile as I to be trying to tell about, but it is my meat and my drink. I love to be there, though I know I am not fit to go among these good people, but where can I go? there is no place I would rather be, for there my best friends, my kindred dwell, there God my Savior reigns. We are few in number, but fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. For myself, I must be the least in the kingdom, if one at all. In all I do I can see the works of the flesh, but marks of grace I

cannot show. It is now almost time for the solemn service to close, and I hear them singing a song. Elder Weaver dismisses them and they go out, each one to their respective place of abode, having been fed with manna from heaven, which only the heavenly Father can give. He permits us to worship under our own vine and fig tree, and none dare molest us. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." They are precious in his sight, for he has redeemed them by his own precious blood, and not one, even the least, shall ever fall or perish, for the everlasting arms are underneath and they are safe and secure in that wonderful love given them in Christ the dear Redeemer. May we all be given more and more of that sweet spirit and brotherly love and kindness one to another, and may we all see and speak the same things, forbearing one another in love, yet being found faithful in all things, having our feet firmly on the sure foundation of Christ and his righteousness, and following after the things that make for peace. May he lead us all in the strait and narrow way that leads to life, and may he be with his people everywhere and uphold us by his free Spirit, and at last us take us home to himself in that upper and better kingdom where no sorrow is.

(MRS.) ADDIE CHANDLER.

NEWARK, New Jersey.

DEAR SISTER SMITH:—After so long a time I feel impressed to write you. But you write such good letters, and seem so spiritually-minded, that I am ashamed of my weak efforts. I am still at 245 Roseville Avenue with my daughter, where I have been since I left Middletown. Eva is exceedingly kind to me and leaves nothing undone that will add to my comfort. As far as I know there is not a single member of the Old Baptist faith living in the big city of Newark. If it were not for the kindness of Elder Dodson I would not hear an Old Baptist sermon. He often comes after me and takes me over to the New York church, where I hear two sermons, and then brings me back to my door. He is a good preacher and a noble man. I heard an Old Baptist say the Lord had called all his best preachers home, but I do not feel that way. I think there are four near here who do preach the unsearchable riches of Christ: Elders Ruston, Dodson, Lefferts and Ker, and how I do love to hear them. There are others whose names I will not mention, as I hear these oftener. The arm of the Lord is not shortened, for he can fill and fit them whenever it is his good pleasure. I feel to say, Blessed are our ears, for they hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. Just now it occurs to my mind that Paul discovered he had a thorn in the flesh, and he asked the Lord thrice to remove it. The Lord did not say, Yes, Paul, I will remove it and it shall never trouble you any more, but he did say, My grace is sufficient for you. Now I feel it is by the grace of God that I am what I am. In the Bible we will find these words, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." I feel I come very far short of obeying those teachings. When I would do good evil is present with me, so the good I would do I do not, but the evil that I would not that I do. What can I say to these things? If God be for us

who can be against us? My mind runs on the hymns so much. One says,

"If God is mine then from his love
He every trouble sends,
All things are working for my good,
And bliss his rod attends."

I know what he appoints is best, yet murmur at it still. Read the 614th hymn and that will tell you how the New York members appear to me. Also the Bible tells us, How good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. The 1265th hymn has been on my mind all the past week, and 1046 is one that expresses my desires; it seems a prayer.

"Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come,
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

I have but little room left and have not said half I wanted to. If you attend our Association I shall look for a letter from sister Smith telling me all about it. I fear I will not be able to be there. After you get home and rested up write me.

CAROLINE A. MANNING.

(See obituary notice on page 164.)

FRANKFORT, Ky., Dec. 7, 1926.

DEAR PUBLISHERS:—I am herewith sending my check for four dollars, two dollars to renew my own subscription and two dollars to send the paper to some good brother or sister less fortunate than myself. Some of your delinquents are probably afflicted and in straitened circumstances, and while I wish those who are able would send in their subscriptions promptly, I hope and pray to God that the poor may not be cut off your list, for there is nothing that comes to my home now that is dearer to me than the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We have no pastor at our church, and there is no preaching nearer than thirty-five or forty miles, and my health and afflictions and the high cost of transportation keep me from getting to meeting often, so I am in a position to sympathize with those who are in straitened circumstances who are as good by nature and better than I by practice. While the publishing of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is a business matter, in a money sense, yet I hope there are some things more divine, more soul-cheering, more sympathetic, through love and kindness, in the good Old Baptists than the love of money and looking solely after the fleeting things of this earth, and so let each one of us who can pay his own subscription and a subscription for some one less fortunate than ourselves.

With love and best wishes for the SIGNS, its publishers and its readers, I remain, as ever, your humble brother in faith and hope,

F. MORRIS.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Elder T. W. Walker having changed his address from 847 Lee Street, Danville, Va., to R. F. D. 6, Danville, Va., requests that his correspondents address him at the latter place.

NOTICE.

We expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old Baptist meetinghouse the 5th Sunday in July (31st). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

Brother E. Small, of Longview, Texas, R. 1, writes they seldom ever hear preaching there, and if a brother in passing would drop a card to them and stop over and preach for them, they would be very welcome.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1927.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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ZECHARIAH XIII. 8, 9.

"AND it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off, and die; but the third part shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God."

There are several requests for our views on portions of the Scripture which, to take them in the order that they have come to us, should be considered at this time in preference to this one, but as our mind seems to be inclined to the above text, we hope to be pardoned for taking it out of its proper turn. In making the request, a brother in the south says there is one in his section who claims that this Scripture "means that one-third of the human race will be saved with an eternal salvation," and that he seldom speaks in public without mentioning it. While the record is "no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation," it is not intended that the true servant of God should regard lightly, and speculate at will, with that which should be treated as sacred. The great apostle in his second epistle to his own son in the ministry, Timothy, admonished him to, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." This language was inspired of God, therefore, like all Scripture, is full of meaning, and we should "study," search the Scriptures, comparing Scripture with Scripture, in order to arrive, if possible, at their true meaning. They are themselves their own best interpreters. Not long ago one of the oldest and ablest ministers in the east remarked to us that when he was very young in his ministry a dear old father in Israel advised him never to use a text without first reading the connections. It is a good custom to practice. In coming, now, to a consideration of our text, let us see what light, if any, the connections will shed upon the subject. This prophecy, with but one brief exception, closes the Old Testament, and in common with other prophets, Zechariah, in this and other chapters, speaks of the coming of a day which, to our understanding, was the third, or gospel day. In the eighth verse of his first chapter he says, "I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom; and behind him were there red horses, speckled, and white." Here are presented the three dispensations: the red horses typifying the first, dark or bloody period, during which Adam sinned and was driven out of the garden and blood had to be shed as a sacrifice to obtain a covering for his nakedness; Cain slew Abel, his brother, whose blood cried out against him; God destroyed the world, excepting Noah and his family, because of wickedness; "a ram caught in a thicket by his horns" was offered by Abraham in the stead of his son, and other types could be brought forward on up to Moses, or the legal dispensation, which was represented by the "speckled" horse. This period,

though brighter than the previous one, yet had only a reflected light, the moon and the stars, representing the law and the prophets, which pointed to the coming of Christ. It was under this faulty and weak dispensation that Zechariah had his vision and beheld "a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom." This man was a type of Christ, or King Jesus, whose majesty and glory were evidenced by his being mounted and riding, and the red horse set him forth to be a man of war, and the fact that he stood among the myrtle trees in the bottom showed him to be the Friend of Israel in her humble and low estate. The white horse typifies the gospel day, or the day of perfection—salvation by grace and grace alone. There is no flaw in this, and the fact of the red, speckled and white horses all were behind him shows him to be preeminently first, the great Leader and Captain of our salvation.

Now, in the beginning of the thirteenth chapter, wherein appears our text, Zechariah says: "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness." We venture the assertion that the vast majority in the ranks of the Old School Baptists are agreed as to what is meant here. There is little, if any doubt, but that in the evening of the legal day, or dispensation, which was followed by a long night of utter darkness, when not a single star (prophet) appeared for five or six hundred years, the prophet was moved to write for the comfort and hope of the saints during the period of time which intervened between Malachi and the coming of Christ, assuring them that that dreadful night would end in the dawning of a new and glorious day, when the Sun of Righteousness would arise with healing in his wings; when Michael, the great prince, would stand up for the children of thy people; when the blessed Lamb of God would, by the shedding of his own blood, open to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, a fountain wherein all the elect family of God would be washed and made white, for these living waters were not only to flow toward the former sea, embracing all from Adam to Moses, and from Moses to the coming of Christ, but also were to flow toward the hinder sea, embracing all that were to come after Christ. Thus we see Christ presented as the only way of salvation for all three dispensations. A similar figure is to be seen in the ark which Noah was moved by fear to build; it contained lower, second and third stories, but only one door. He is also presented as the substance of the two witnesses, the Old and the New Testament Scriptures, the one pointing forward and the other backward, by the two cherubims, one on each end of the mercy-seat, facing each other, which mercy-seat was just as long and just as wide as the ark, a figure of Christ, upon which it rested, thus showing him to be the foundation of all mercy that is extended to God's people. God gave his only begotten Son, nothing more, nothing less, and we have nothing but that which comes to us by and through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, neither do we desire anything outside of him, for in him all fullness dwells; he is chiefest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely. Therefore, "it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered; and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land. And it shall

come to pass, that when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shall not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of the Lord: and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth." Daniel said, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." Therefore, when Christ came and opened that fountain to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness, he cast out the idols and stopped the mouths of prophets by fulfilling in every jot and tittle all that had been prophesied of him, and whoever prophesies now that the work is not finished and that something else is required "speakest lies in the name of the Lord," and God in his word as the father, and the churches as the mother, having the mind of Christ her head, of whom they are begotten, are in one accord in saying, "Thou shalt not live." This sets forth very clearly what is to be done in the true gospel church. John says, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." Any one who preaches that there is salvation in any other than in Christ does not rightfully belong in the Old School Baptist Church. The mind of God, as set forth in his word, and the church when gathered together in heavenly places in Christ, are both agreed that "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." And when the Word is made flesh and dwells among us, there is mistaking him, for do we not see the wounds in his hands and behold that it was he who was wounded in the house of his friends; that he was "wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed"? Therefore, we are closely drawn to him and are zealous for his honor and glory, and nothing short of bringing forth the royal diadem and crowning him Lord of all will satisfy us. How it does pierce us through and through to hear him lightly spoken of or belittled, especially by those who profess to love him. It was "the Lord of hosts," however, who spake by the mouth of the prophet. He was not only Lord over the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but "the Lord of hosts," or God over all, even the powers that be being ordained of him, and so when the day arrived in which the fountain was to be opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, he commanded the wicked to arise and do that which he by his determinate counsel and foreknowledge had before determined to be done, saying, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." The church was under the sentence of condemnation and death and the law was inflexible in its demands for pay-

ment. It looked to the Husband, who was legally responsible, and when he met the demands of justice the law had no more authority or dominion over the wife. The legal dispensation was thus cut off and died, and there was not one stone left upon another, so complete was its destruction. We wish that all who profess to be Old Baptists could realize in their hearts that "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Many of the Lord's people cannot seem to realize that they are no longer under the law, but under grace. The gospel dispensation is not one of "if ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land." The best fruit of the land is but vanity, even could one comply with the condition, which has been proven to be impossible since the days of Adam, but the gospel day is the day in which God's power is manifested, when all creatures must keep silence and God speaks, saying, "I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel." "I will put my law in their inwards, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." This is what he has in mind when he says, "I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried." Silver and gold are quarried out of the earth and are so intermingled with dross that it is necessary for it to pass through the crucible to be separated and fit for use; the fire does not hurt the pure metal, but destroys the dross and thereby purifies the silver and the gold until by and by the refiner's image can be seen and then it is pure. So God has declared he will not leave himself without witnesses, and he hath even predestinated that they shall be conformed to the image of his Son, and to that end he will bring them through the fire, refining and trying them. Let it be said to the comfort of his afflicted and poor people that they shall not be left in fire, for he says, I will bring them through the fire. The purpose he has in bringing them through the fire is that "they shall call on my name, and I will hear them." Would any one ever call on the name of the Lord if they were not carred into the fires and floods? We are certain they never would, neither would they know what it is for the Lord to hear them. This means far more than the ordinary conception of the word. For the Lord to hear means deliverance, salvation, bringing them up out of their distresses. "I will say, It is my people, and they shall say, The Lord is my God." The Lord's portion is his people, and "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." All, no doubt, will claim they desire to say, "The Lord is my God," but it is only in the fires of affliction and burnings that he is seen and known to be the God of our life, and our flesh surely will not seek its own destruction by going into the furnace. The path of the righteous leads down into sufferings and death, and how wonderful when we are brought into the depth of despond to find the Lord there as our helper. We are often reminded of the time when we were set apart to speak in

the name of the Lord, when in our misery and anguish of soul we knew not what to do, the Lord put into our mind these words: "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior." To have our Creator thus speak to our very soul was a sure promise that has been precious to this day. The promise carried with it the certainty of having to pass through the waters, the rivers and the fire, but God has been faithful to his word and we have felt to realize, many, many times, that he was with us. We are confident there are no overhead or underground routes by which these waters and fires can be avoided by the children of God, "for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth," and "if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." What we desire is evidence that we are heirs and joint-heirs with Christ to that inheritance which is "incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." We recall some years ago that there was one in southern Virginia who set out to number the Lord's people, and he began with one-third of the human race, which he claimed died in infancy, or before reaching the age of accountability, &c. To us, all such speculations are wholly unwarranted and unauthorized by the Scriptures and are, therefore, unprofitable to the flock. The Lord's anointed comprise a host which no man can number, and it is far better to follow the example of the apostles in declaring only that "which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life." May the Lord give us to fight the good fight of faith and to hear him say, "It is my people." Then shall we say, "The Lord is my God," and may we know no other, neither worship any save the God of Israel, for he is God, and beside him there is no Savior. R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. T. Rowe.)

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Harford Church, May 18th, 19th and 20th, 1927, to the churches composing the same.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—The apostle Peter in his first epistle, second chapter and ninth verse, addressing the strangers scattered abroad, says, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." "A chosen generation." The Lord's chosen people are one family chosen out of every nation, kindred and tongue, redeemed and called in the Lord's time to know, love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ. They

differ in their nationality, race and color as the sons and daughters of the first Adam, but as children of the second Adam they are one family or generation. "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted unto the Lord for a generation." —Psalms xxii. 30. These are all begotten of God and therefore are one generation, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, and are vitally related to him and to each other. The beloved of Jesus Christ is but one, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood; not that they merely have priests among them, but they all are priests, and are a royal priesthood, being such by the authority of their King, and he directs them in their priestly offerings. Paul says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."—Rom. xii. 1. No man can make sacrifice for you, but many times you offer the sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart, which is in the sight of God of great price. Sacrifice your bodies, put off the old man with his affections and lusts, mortify your members which are upon the earth (Col. iii. 5), and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness (Eph. iv. 24), an holy nation, holy in the holiness of Jesus, who hath said, Be ye holy, for I am holy, and without holiness no man can see the Lord. The perfect righteousness of Jesus is imputed to each individual of his generation, and in this holiness they stand before God acquitted of all their sins. "A peculiar people." Not unlike others as the sons and daughters of Adam, but the grace of God has made them to differ from all others, both in their faith and practice. Their faith is in Jesus for the comforts of salvation in this life and the joys of the life to come. They have no faith in works as a means of salvation, and yet they are careful to maintain them. "That ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." Brethren and sisters, are we doing this, or are we giving heed to the institutions of men instead of following closely the instructions given us in the word of God? Paul says, "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works." —Titus iii. 8. These things are good and profitable unto men. Dear ones, there are no works so good as obedience to Jesus, our spiritual lawgiver, therefore let us turn from every false way and be true to the cause which we have professed to love, forsaking all others, cleave unto our husband (Jesus), who hath said, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."—John xv. 10. Surely he who hath chosen us in Christ and redeemed us by his blood, and called us by his grace from death in sin, and hath made us kings and priests unto God (Rev. i. 6; v. 10) is worthy of all the praise that his loved and saved people can render unto him. Without him they can do nothing, but through Christ they can do all things. Paul said, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."—Phil. ii. 5. Which mind was to do the will of his Father. May it be our mind, dear ones, in this day of falling away to serve Jesus as he has given us commandment, whatever the world may think or say. The truth is all that can do us good, and to walk in truth is the only way of comfort and rest. May the Spirit of truth stir up our pure minds to a strict following of Jesus our blessed Lord, to whom be glory now and forever. Amen.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.
EDWARD A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

(Written by T. C. Koch.)

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Salem Church of Philadelphia, Pa., May 25th, 26th and 27th, 1927, to the churches composing the same, sendeth greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more we have the blessing of meeting in a yearly association, coming together to worship the true and living God, whom to know is life eternal. In presenting some parts of the Scriptures and a few thoughts as an attempt to write a Circular Letter, I hope I do it in fear and love of our God through Jesus Christ, for only as the Spirit of Christ is in us do we know the things of God, which things come to us by revelation. That this is so, is plainly and frequently set forth in the Scriptures. Very forcibly this appears to us when the apostles were asked by the Savior whom they said he was. Peter, answering for the apostles, said he was the Christ, the Son of the living God. The Savior told him that flesh and blood had not revealed it to him, but the Father, who is in heaven, and so it is with us, only as we see Christ as Peter saw him can we enter into the knowledge of the glory of God, whom to know is life eternal. Paul in writing to the church in Corinth, said, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." This the way the children of God know the heavenly things, which are freely given them of God by the Spirit that dwelleth in them. Paul, in another letter, said the gospel preached of me is not after me, for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. He also says, When it pleased God to reveal his Son in me, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood. And from that time on he preached Christ, whom he once persecuted. Only when all our confidence in self and in power of man has been destroyed does God give his children faith to trust in him. They are accepted in Christ and walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. What a great comfort it is to know that our destiny is in the hands of God, who is almighty, who rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth and none can stay his hand. There is no power but of God. He leads his people and instructs them. The Lord knoweth them that are his. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me," and to them Jesus says, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." He called them a little flock. As in those days so it is to-day. They are few in number and scattered. The great multitude of the world know not God, nor his Son, because, as the Scripture says, the carnal mind is enmity aganist God; is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But concerning his own peculiar people says the Lord, I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. To them there is no more comforting truth than that their eternal destiny is not affected by what they do, or not do, while here on earth. Their works can never save them. Christ did it all. He saved his children and

enabled them to walk in the straight and narrow path, in the strength of the Lord. When not knowing whether to turn to the right or to the left they hear the blessed voice from behind, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." They walk in Christ and abide in him, because they were created in him. This is the way the vulture's eye hath not seen, nor the lion's whelp trodden.

May the Lord bless his children in all conditions of life and grant them grace to serve him acceptably.

CHARLES W. VAUGHN, Mod.
JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Salem Church, May 25th, 26th and 27th, 1927, to our sister associations and churches, with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The Lord has greatly favored us again with an enjoyable meeting with your ministers and messengers in an associate capacity, and the preaching has been with much power, to the comfort of those who were present and love the pure gospel of the Son of God. We ask a continuance of your correspondence, and as messengers and ministers those commendable and in gospel order in striving for peace and harmony.

In addition, we are glad to report we have received the Oconee Association as a body into our Delaware Association, and have opened direct correspondence with them beginning with this meeting.

The next session of the Association is appointed to be held with the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, in May, 1928.

C. W. VAUGHN, Mod.
JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, now in session with Harford Church, May 18th, 19th and 20th, 1927, to the brethren with whom we correspond, sendeth greeting and salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—It is through the kind providence and mercy of our heavenly Father that we are again permitted to meet in an associate capacity. The preaching has been good, and our temporal comforts have been well cared for by the brethren, sisters and friends.

Our next Association is to be held with Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore City, Maryland.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.
EDWARD A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Thomas Sydney Titus, our beloved brother in Christ, departed from this earthly life June 1st, 1927, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. John T. Hourihane, Leesburg, Va. Brother Titus was born near Taylortown, in Loudoun County, June 24th, 1846, and was one of the eight children of our brother Tunis Titus and his wife Mary Ann Hunter, both of whom died some years ago and were both members of the New Valley Old School Baptist Church. Brother Titus has two sisters living, Mrs. Sarah Plaster and Miss Lucretia Titus, both of Leesburg. In January, 1871, brother Titus married Miss Lucinda Burch, and to them were born eight children. Of these, the following are living: Mrs. John T. Hourihane, of Leesburg; Mrs. Karl Hickman, of Richmond; Albert Titus, of San Francisco, Cal.; Dr. E. W. Titus, of Washington, D. C.; Edgar T. and Robert Titus, of Leesburg. Brother Titus also has ten grandchildren. Our brother lived most of his life in this county, except a short time in Washington, D. C. He had been engaged in farming and in other business, and was considered by all who knew him and by all with whom he had business dealings, to be strictly honest and upright. That he had a host of friends and that he was widely respected and loved, was proved by the very large congregation which gathered from all parts of the county to attend his funeral. Very few business men have ever been given to possess an unblemished reputation for honesty and integrity such as did brother Titus. He was baptized into member-

ship with the New Valley Church in 1880, by Elder E. V. White, and during all the forty-seven years of his connection with the Old Baptist Church his walk and deportment, as well as his conversation, were beyond all reproach. He lived a clean life and was of a plain and clean speech. For many years he served as clerk of the church, and held this office at his death, serving the church also as one of her deacons. He was at all times faithful in the discharge of his duties, and regular and constant in his attendance at all the meetings of the church. During all of my twenty-three years acquaintance and friendship with brother Titus I have had no better or truer friend than he, nor one who has had my welfare and that of my family more at heart. He was firm in his belief in the absolute predestination of all things whatsoever comes to pass, and lived the doctrine as well as believed it. His life had not been without its sorrows and cares, its losses and crosses, yet no matter what befell him brother Titus always accepted it as the will of God and never murmured or complained. I have watched him when business was bad with him, have seen him when it was good, have observed him when bereavement and sorrow came to him, and when joy was his portion, but he was always the same in weal or woe, always that calm acceptance of whatever the Master divided out to him as his portion. In the passing away of brother Titus and of brother Samuel Paxson, who died just a short while ago, we are sadly bereaved and the Old Baptists in this section have met with a great loss in the going from us of these two noble and upright men. We are satisfied our loss is their gain, but it is exceedingly hard to give them up. These two brethren loved each other devotedly for years and were known all over this community as "Brother Sid" and "Brother Sam." They were knitted together in christian love and fellowship during their lives, and in their deaths they are not divided. The Lord made these two men what they were, the Lord gave them the character they had; to the Lord be all the glory. At the funeral we sang two of brother Titus' favorite hymns, and I tried to speak from the words in 1 John iii. 1-3, after which we laid the remains of his mortality to rest in Leesburg Cemetery, believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing. May the Holy Spirit minister unto all who mourn, the word of reconciliation.

ALSO,

John Frank Gulick, a well-known and highly esteemed citizen of Loudoun County, died at his home, "Mt. Beulah," near Aldie, Va., after a protracted illness. Mr. Gulick was born in Loudoun sixty-nine years ago and had been a lifelong resident of the county. The past forty-two years of his life had been spent at the homestead where he died. Early in life he engaged in farming, to which he gave his entire attention until eighteen years ago, when he assumed the agency for the New York Life Insurance Company. The last years of his life were devoted to the insurance business, in which he gained a reputation for efficiency and ability that won for him many honors at the hands of the company with which he was associated. As a member of the insurance business he was known throughout the state for his remarkable success and ability. Characteristically Mr. Gulick was a man of kind impulses and sympathetic understanding. Personally he was genial and social by nature, which, combined with a gracious manner, won for him many friends. He is survived by his widow, who before marriage was Miss Flora Saffer, of this county, four daughters: Mrs. E. R. Feagan, Del Ray; Mrs. Clarence Mills, Herndon; Mrs. Frank Riticor, Watson; Miss Gladys Gulick, at home, and one son, Mr. John Allan Gulick, Aldie. Six grandchildren also survive.

Funeral services were held at Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, the church he attended during life. Interment was at Union Cemetery at Leesburg. Elder H. H. Lefferts officiated at the funeral.

To the above extract from our county paper, I wish to add that I knew Mr. Gulick for several years, that he regularly attended the meetings of the Old Baptist Church unless hindered by sickness or otherwise, that I have known him to go to the meetings often under difficulties. While he never united openly with the church, I have a hope for him that he knew the truth and loved it.

ALSO,

Miss Minnie Octavia Furr died June 14th, 1927, at the Loudoun Hospital, Leesburg, Va., after a brief illness. She had been in ill health for several months, but had been confined to the bed but a few weeks. She was born June 30th, 1871, near Leesburg, but for the past several years had made her home in Washington, D. C., where she was employed by the U. S. Government. Her parents were Richard and Octavia Franklin Furr, Miss Minnie being one of six children, all of whom are now gone, so far as is known. She leaves some nieces, nephews, cousins and a circle of numerous friends, but no near relatives. Miss Minnie was a person of very sensitive temperament and of good taste, one who loved the finer things of life. She loved good people and sought their company. While she never became a member of the Old School Baptist Church, she loved the doctrine of God our Savior and those who believed that truth, she being a believer herself. I have never known a person who had a deeper or keener sense of her unworthiness and of her own littleness and nothingness, than had she. It was this lack of sufficiency, as she felt it, that kept her from uniting with the church, and she never seemed to be able to get above that feeling, much as she loved the meetings of the church and greatly as she desired to be one with them. Outliving all the

members of her immediate family, she was thrown more or less on her own resources and lived rather alone and to herself. But the Lord watched over her, gave her needed strength for her daily duties, so that she was provided for and had all necessary comforts of this life and was cared for lovingly and devotedly by her cousins and friends at the end.

The funeral services were held at the home of Mrs. Bruce McIntosh, conducted by the writer, the burial in Union Cemetery at Leesburg. Her life's work done, we have a hope for her that she is at rest and at peace, her cares and worries at an end forever.

ALSO,

Joseph T. White, our brother in Christ, departed this earthly life at the Sibley Memorial Hospital, Washington, D. C., June 11th, 1927, after an illness of about fourteen weeks. His father was Dr. Stephen N. C. White and his mother Elizabeth Chiswell White. He was born near White's Ferry, Md., April 1st, 1854. Of his three brothers and one sister, brother White is survived by one brother and by one sister, our sister Sallie Williams, of Poolesville, Md. His first wife was Miss Anna Frances Duke, of Jefferson County, W. Va., whom he married Nov. 27th, 1877, and who died July 18th, 1887. Of this union there are living two daughters: Mrs. William Williams, of Boyds, Md., and Mrs. Elmer Hoyt, of Brunswick, Md. His second wife was Miss Laura A. McGarry, of Jefferson County, W. Va., whom he married on Dec. 3rd, 1889, and who died Sept. 7th, 1890, leaving an infant daughter who is now Mrs. Charles Hammond, living near Kearneysville, W. Va. Brother White is survived by his last wife, Miss Margaret Urner, of Newmarket, Va., whom he married in 1896. Of this last marriage there are living two sons. Their names, I have not. There are also several grandchildren. His early life was spent on the farm. He taught school awhile, and was county commissioner for four years. During the last years of his life he was employed in Washington, D. C. He was respected by all who knew him, as an honest man and a christian. Elder E. V. White baptized him May 5th, 1886, into membership with the New Valley Old School Baptist Church, of which body he was a member at the time of his death, although of late years he was not able to get to our meetings. He regularly attended the meetings of the Shiloh Church in Washington, D. C., and very much esteemed and loved the pastor, Elder J. T. Rowe. I called on him at the hospital a few days before he died. He spoke beautifully of the good hope through grace which had sustained him for over forty years and which was still holding him fast as he approached the hour of death. He told me he had no fear whatever of the end and that he greatly desired his God to take him.

Elder J. T. Rowe conducted the funeral services, which were held first in the burial parlor in Washington and concluded in the chapel of the Monocacy Cemetery at Beallsville, Md., the interment being in that cemetery. Elder Rowe preached from the twelfth verse of the fifteen chapter of first Corinthians, and a few remarks were made by Mr. Thompson of the denomination of which our brother White's wife is a member. We feel that our brother is infinitely better off than when in this low vale of sin and sorrow. He was one of those blessed characters of whom the Scripture says, Their conversation is in heaven, from whence we look for the Savior, who shall change our vile body, and fashion it like unto his own glorious body, by the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself. May the Spirit of the Lord comfort those who mourn.

L.

Mrs. Caroline A. Manning, our sister in Christ, passed away at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Eva K. Wyckoff, 245 Roseville Avenue, Newark, N. J., May 23rd, 1927, with whom she had lived for over a year after leaving Middletown, N. Y. Before her marriage to Ephraim Manning, November 21st, 1861, she was Caroline A. Rundle. Two children were born of this union, Albert and Eva Katherine, the former having preceded her in death by three years. Besides her daughter she is survived by a grandson, F. L. Manning, Hillsdale, N. Y. She was born April 22nd, 1843. The writer and his family enjoyed the privilege of being entertained at dinner by Mrs. Wyckoff in honor of her mother's eighty-fourth birthday anniversary last April. Words cannot adequately describe sister Manning's true worth. She was baptized into the church fellowship of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church in September, 1868, where her membership remained for nearly fifty-nine years. She was greatly loved and highly esteemed for the truth's sake by her brethren, and a letter written to sister Mary E. Smith, Kingston, N. Y., a short while before she bid adieu to earth and all that pertains to it (which letter is published in this issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES) proves that her eye of faith did not grow dim, neither did she become barren or unfruitful in spiritual things as long as she remained here below. In addition to the beautiful hymns (Nos. 614, 1046 and 1265, Beebe's collection) referred to in her letter which we publish, the writer recalls many beautiful passages of Scripture quoted by her to him during some of our last visits. One of the passages appears in the 116th Psalm: "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" which Psalm was used as a foundation for our remarks at the service in commemoration of her life. Another Scripture was, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." She attended our meetings in New York City frequently and was much endeared to all. At our Conference meeting the first

Sunday in May she was blest to talk most beautifully. This was the last time she was with us and her parting benediction will long be remembered. Truly, a saint has gone to her heavenly home above, and we desire to be reconciled to the will of the Lord, thanking and praising him for the manifestation of such gifts among the children of men. The esteem in which she was held by friends outside of the church was amply in evidence at the gathering on her funeral occasion, one of her many friends having opened her house for the service in Middletown, N. Y., after which the body was taken to New Vernon and interred in the cemetery adjoining the New Vernon meetinghouse of which church she had been so long a member. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

(See communication on page 153.)

ALSO,

Sister **Elmira L. Clark** was born near Winterton, New York, December 14th, 1847, of the parentage Samuel and Maria Carmichael Clark, and departed this life April 26th, 1927, at Howells, New York, where she had resided nearly two years with her niece, Miss Ida Clark. Besides her niece, she leaves a sister, Mrs. E. W. Cook, Pasadena, California, and two nephews, Edgar C. Howell, of New York, and Herbert J. Howell, of Howells, New York. During her last illness, covering a period of about ten weeks, she suffered dreadfully from neuritis. She was baptized into the fellowship of the New Vernon Church, July 3rd, 1898, where she remained a faithful member until called home by her heavenly Father. Sister Clark was loved and esteemed for the truth's sake, and shall be much missed by those who are left to mourn her passing, which we do not as those without hope, being assured as we are that it is far better for her to be released from a body of suffering and to depart and be with Christ.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer, after which interment was in the New Vernon Cemetery. May the Lord remember Zion and bless her as only he can.

R. L. D.

D. F. Baker was born in Keokuk County, Iowa, March 6th, 1857, the second son of David and Julia Ann (Williams) Baker, died at his home near Walla Walla, Washington, September 4th, 1926, being 69 years, 5 months and 28 days old at the time of his death. He crossed the plains with his father's family, with an emigrant train, when he was a small boy, settling at Gaston, Oregon, where he grew to manhood. March 2nd, 1879, he was married to Alice M. Wilcox, and to that union were born one son and three daughters. He then moved to eastern Oregon, in 1883, settling on a preemption claim near Ione. September 12th, 1892, his wife died. November 26th, 1893, he was married to Miss Lillian Walton, and to that union five sons and four daughters were born. They moved to Walla Walla County, Washington, in 1906, where he lived until his death. Mr. Baker never united with the church, but embraced a good hope through the atoning blood of Jesus, and while he never could feel worthy to confess his dear Lord in baptism, yet his chiefest joy was to meet and associate with the Lord's people. He was a splendid singer and understood music, and enjoyed singing the sweet songs of Zion. He was our leader in singing here at Misphi, and we miss his presence very much, but we truly feel our loss is his eternal gain. Mr. Baker was not only devoted to the faith of God's elect but was devoted to his family. Sister Baker has lost a faithful companion, the children a loving father and the community a noble citizen. While Mr. Baker never united with the church, he had all the true qualities of a child of God. When he moved from his home in Oregon to Washington he had a good home, and doing well financially, but there was no church near him and he made a great sacrifice to get where he could be with the Baptists and where he could attend meetings. He traveled many miles with the writer to meetings and associations. The cause of his death was cancer, from which he suffered for over two years, but bore his suffering with that patience which God alone can give. Elder C. W. Bond, of La Grande, Oregon, was called to assist with the funeral, which was held in the Primitive Baptist meetinghouse in Touchet, Washington, after which the body was taken to Ione, Ore., and laid to rest with other relatives. Those left to mourn are sister Baker, his loving companion, and the following children: Mrs. Lula Biddle, Mrs. Emma Koester, of Portland; Henry, of Ione; Mrs. Willis Dirk, Charles, Byron Vernan, Laurel, Grace and Golda, of Walla Walla, and one sister, Mrs. A. M. Markham, of Freewater, Oregon.

J. T. BARNES.

Mrs. Permelia Annie Shipman was born June 16th, 1854, in Perry County, Tennessee, and died January 9th, 1927, in Hermleigh, Scurry Co., Texas, making her stay here on earth 72 years, 6 months and 23 days. She was married to A. B. Shipman August 24th, 1873, who passed away March 29th, 1913. The two oldest daughters, six grandchildren, and one great-grandchild also preceded her in death. There were eight children born to that union, six of whom are left to mourn their loss: one son, John W. Shipman, Hermleigh, Texas; Fannie Halder, Gardenville, Texas; Etta Sturdivant, Ruth Carley, Ethel Ethredge, Laura Shipman, all of Hermleigh, Texas. Besides her children there are thirty-eight grandchildren and thirteen great-grandchildren surviving her. She was a kind and loving mother and grandmother. After the death of her companion she and the youngest child, Miss Laura, lived a very lonely life, being

by themselves most of the time. She professed a hope in Christ in early age and joined the Primitive Baptist Church in the year 1879. She believed in the absolute predestination of all things, and in God's unlimited power. She, with her husband, moved to Waxahachie, Texas, Oct. 11th, 1882. She was the youngest child of Jeremiah and Harriet Harder. She had three brothers all Confederate soldiers: Captain William Harder, Willis Harder, France Harder, four sisters, all of whom preceded her in death, except one, Aunt Sallie Harder, of Missouri.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder John Ellis, after which her body was laid to rest beside her dear companion in Pyran Cemetery.

Written by her unworthy daughter-in-law.

ALSO,

Brother I. S. Kidd died January 23rd, 1927, being in his seventy-third year. He was the father of fifteen children, five dying in infancy. One daughter died in May, 1926, and his dear wife passed away in the year 1924. There are nine children, several grandchildren, besides other relatives, friends and the church left to mourn the loss of a kind and loving father and the church a dear brother, but we know our loss is his gain. He professed a hope in Christ many years ago and joined the Missionary Baptists, but soon found he was not at home among them, and afterward joined the Primitive Baptist Church called County Line, near Snyder, Texas, May, 1925, and lived a faithful member until death claimed him.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. W. Shipman, at Lamesa, Texas, after which his body was laid to rest in Lamesa Cemetery beside his companion. I will say, Weep not, dear children, as those who have no hope. May God bless and comfort all who mourn.

MAY SHIPMAN.

Elizabeth Race Hotaling was born June 28th, 1841, and departed this life at her home in Cobleskill, N. Y., May 17th, 1927. She became the wife of William Hotaling in March, 1889, who is left to mourn the loss of a true wife and companion. Mrs. Hotaling retained all her faculties to a remarkable degree. Besides doing her work in the house and among her flowers she spent much time reading her Bible, SIGNS and other good books, and understood and remembered what she read. She was not a member of the Old School Baptist Church, but loved to attend meetings and associations and firmly believed in salvation by grace alone, and had a good hope in the same, and we believe was "a child of Jehovah, a subject of grace," and is now at rest. May God comfort and sustain the bereaved husband. Elder George Ruston conducted the funeral services from her late home May 21st, 1927.

Written by request.

(MRS.) J. E. LIVINGSTON.

Frances E. Britton passed away from this time world at her home at Justus, Pa., May 5th, 1927, rather suddenly. She was born November 6th, 1845, making her stay here on earth eighty-one years and six months. She lived a wonderful example of christian life and love, always saying (whenever something might worry her) "It is all right and for the best," and would often remark, "Oh that I might love him more and be reconciled to his will at all times." She loved to read her Bible and enjoyed its truths immensely, and believed that all things were for the best and for the good of his people. In her early girlhood she joined the Missionary Baptists, but for the past thirty years or more she loved the "Old School," and the doctrine they preach was her solid faith and belief, firmly believing the doctrine of God's unlimited sovereignty and of salvation by grace. On February 1st, 1869, she married Jerome Britton, making their married life more than fifty-one years of happy association. The writer was the only child. She is also survived by her husband, two grandchildren and one great-grandchild. We shall miss her loving kindness and advice, but our loss is her great gain, and we should not mourn as for one who had no hope, for we feel sure she is resting in the arms of the God she so dearly loved.

Funeral services were conducted at the home by Elder D. M. Vail. Interment was made in the family plot at Mt. Bether Cemetery.

A. J. BRITTON.

MEMORIALS.

We, the Baltimore Association, desire to express our regret and sense of loss in the death of our highly esteemed brother, **Elder J. G. Eubanks.** While he was not a member of our body, he was for many years a regular visitor to our Association, and other meetings in our churches. His aptness to teach made us anxious to hear him, and we as a rule hung upon his words with pleasure. We sorrow that we shall see and hear him no more; but we desire to bow with becoming reverence to him who doeth all things well. May God bless the churches left destitute by his death. J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

EDWARD A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

WHEREAS, it has pleased our sovereign God in his all-wise providence to remove from their labors in his vineyard our very dear and highly esteemed brethren, **Elders John G. Eubanks** and **J. B. Slauson,** and

Whereas, these brethren were faithful and able ministers of the New Testament, standing firmly at all times for the faith of God's elect and for the good order of his house, therefore be it

Resolved, that this Association extend its sincere

love and sympathy to the churches which our brethren served as pastors, and to all who are bereaved, and that we bow in humble submission to the will of our heavenly Father, praying him to give us grace to stand as faithfully in our lot as they.

H. H. LEFFERTS.
C. W. VAUGHN.
P. M. SHERWOOD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

C. M. Adams, Texas, $1; Mrs. Sarah Gandy, N. J., $3; Thomas W. Records, Mo., $2; "A Friend," Ont., $2; Franklin S. Terry, N. J., $1; Mrs. Melissa Grimes, N. Y., $1; Simeon Hiltabrand, Ill., $1; Mrs. M. E. Smith, N. Y., $1; James R. Crutcher, Tenn., $2; Mrs. Mona McGregor, Ky., $1; I. J. Lecates, Md., $4; "A Friend from Ark.," $2.

MEETINGS.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expect Elder George Ruston to meet with them the fifth Sunday in July (31st), 1927. For convenience services to be held at the home of James E. Livingston, 64 E. Main St., Cobleskill, N. Y. Services to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. The Albany and Binghamtom train arrives and leaves Cobleskill in convenient time for the meeting. All welcome.

(MRS. J. E. LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday of each month at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 459 E. 5th St., Riverside, Calif., and at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. 11th St., Claremont, Calif., on the first Sunday of each alternate month, beginning with January, and on every alternate month with brother Joseph Huffman, 128 Van Buren St., Arlington, Calif. Singing at 10:30 a. m. Preaching at 11 a. m. Lunch at the place of meeting, and continued services in the afternoon.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.
O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 245 Lacadana Drive, Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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IN

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All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 95. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1927. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ABILENE, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am herewith inclosing an article I have written "Concerning Regeneration," for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, of which I have been a subscriber for over sixty years. I have one copy dated October 15th, 1864, at which time I think I was a subscriber. It is a paper I have always delighted to read, and have always, I think, paid in advance. I would hate to see it suspended on account of nonpayment of subscribers. It is the best religious paper ever published. I can remember when I was a small boy that my father was agent for it, and got subscribers for it yearly. I have shed copious tears many times in reading the experiences of brethren and sisters. I want to be a subscriber as long as I live, if I live to be one hundred years old. My friends here tell me that they think I am going to live that long. I would love to see my article published, but if it will crowd out better matter you can return it. I will inclose stamps for return if you do not publish it. If you do, I will want one dozen copies to send to different friends. I am inclosing two dollars for the twelve copies. I am also inclosing two dollars which you can use in whatever way that is to your best advantage. If you do not publish it keep the latter named two dollars and return the former mentioned two dollars that I am sending for the twelve copies.

I will be eighty-three years of age this coming November 29th, if God lets me live that long. I feel that I am not long for this world, and for several years I have been bothered over some passages of Scriptures that cause me to doubt I have ever been regenerated and born again. I united with the Primitive Baptists at New Goshen Church, in Anderson County, Kentucky, on Saturday, November 26th, 1863, and followed Christ in the liquid grave on the following Sunday, being baptized by Elder J. F. Johnston, which will now soon be sixty-four years that I have been trying to serve the Lord in my poor way. How my thoughts love to go back to the good old days, when I attended the associations, especially the one that was held on my father's farm, where I heard fine gospel preaching by Elders Gilbert Beebe, Thomas P. Dudley, J. F. Johnston, and his son from Indiana, Silas H. Durand, Wallingford, and others

whose names I cannot recall. Brother Beebe's daughter accompanied him. On this occasion my father entertained over one hundred in his home, among them were brethren Beebe, Dudley and Durand. I will never forget the sweet faces of brethren Beebe and Dudley. Elder Dudley was Moderator of that Licking Association, and had been for many years.

With reference to the thoughts that have been troubling me I will take for a heading: Concerning Regeneration. Why I doubt I have been regenerated and born again:

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."—Matt. v. 8. I do not believe I am pure in heart, because sometimes I have evil thoughts. "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." —Matt. v. 44. I do not see how I can love an enemy who despitefully uses and persecutes me. It is against my nature to do that. I can pray for the salvation of my soul.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."—Matt. vii. 21. I do not know what his will is, but I pray to him daily to teach me his will, and to let me do his will.

"And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also."—Luke vi. 29. If a man should strike me on one cheek I would be sure to strike him back, if I were able to do so, which is my nature, bred and born in me; and should he steal my cloak, I certainly would have him arrested and prosecuted, if he could be caught.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." —Luke x. 27. It looks like it is impossible to love any one as you do yourself, wife and children. I surely love the Lord for the shedding of his precious blood on the cross of Calvary for me, but I doubt if I could love my neighbor as well as myself and wife and children. If Christ was here on earth I believe I could leave all and follow him.

"Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it."—Luke xi. 28. I am afraid I do not keep his word.

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."—Luke xiv. 26. I believe I could follow Christ, but do not believe I could hate them.

"And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God."—Ezekiel xxxvi. 27-29. I am afraid I do not walk in his statutes and keep his judgments.

"Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men, because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity, unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness, unto holiness." —Romans vi. 18, 19. I know I am not free from sin, and I am not holy, which causes me to doubt and fear that I have never been regenerated and born again.

"Woe to them that are at ease in Zion,"

—Amos vi. 1. I am afraid I am too much at ease in Zion, and not doing as much worrying as I should. Because faith without works is dead. (James ii. 20.)

"Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."—Hebrews xi. 6. I am not as diligently seeking Christ now as I was when seeking salvation.

"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." —James i. 22. I am afraid I am not a sufficient doer of his word: too cold and lifeless.

"Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, neither known him." "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning." "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."—1 John iii. 6, 8, 9. So I must be of the devil, because I have committed sin since believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, joining the church and being baptized.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."—1 John ii. 15. I am afraid I love the world and the things that are in the world too much.

Why I have a little hope that I have been regenerated and born again:

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."—Matt. v. 6. I certainly hunger and thirst after righteouness.

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."—Matt. vii. 7. If any one ever sought the Lord more earnestly, and prayed more than I did for salvation and the forgiveness of my sins, I never heard of it.

"Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God."—Luke xii. 8. I have confessed Christ before men, and am not ashamed to confess him at all times and under all circumstances.

"If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him."—Luke xvii. 3. If he trespass against me seven times in a day, and turn again to me saying, I repent, I will cheerfully forgive him.

"Whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John iii. 15, 16. I believe in God, in Christ his Son, and the Holy Ghost, these three being one, unless my belief is in vain. Sometimes I am fearful I have grasped the shadow instead of the substance.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."—John v. 24. I heareth his word and believeth on him.

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."—John xiii. 35. I certainly love the people of God.

"And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."—Acts ii. 21. When seeking salvation I called on him day and night, and am still calling on him day and night for the forgiveness of my sins.

"For I know that in me (that is, in my

flesh,) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."—Rom. vii. 18–23. Rom. x. 9: "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." There is a continual warfare going on between the two natures, (that is, if I am a saved man) between the old Adamic nature and the spiritual nature, and I have confessed with my mouth the Lord Jesus, and believed in my heart that God hath raised him from the dead.

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."—Romans x. 13. In seeking salvation, I called upon him day and night in tears, weeping myself to sleep many nights.

"Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep."—Rom. xii. 15. I rejoice over the conversion of a soul, and weep with God's children who are in sorrow.

"Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded."—1 Peter ii. 26. I believe on him with all my heart.

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."—1 John i. 8. I am full of sin; that is, this old fleshly nature of mine, and I cry out, Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I realize that no human agency on earth can do this, and the Scripture tells us that was done when Christ was nailed to the tree, and that we now have a Mediator at the right hand of God, making intercession for us.

"He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, there is none occasion for stumbling in him."—1 John ii. 10. I certainly love the people of God, as I have stated before. 1 John iii. 14: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God."—1 John iv. 7.

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."—1 Cor. i. 18. The preaching of the cross is not foolishness to me. I love to hear such preaching, rejoicing in it. I hunger and thirst after righteousness. As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. One might say, That being the case, why do you have doubts and fears? It is because of the sin that dwelleth in me; evil thoughts for one thing. I am not possessed with them all the time, but at times I cannot keep them from entering into my mind. When seeking forgiveness of my sins before uniting with the church I prayed God to forgive me of them, and give me knowledge of the forgiveness, if possible, by the word of mouth. It was almost a continuous prayer with me when sitting in the family circle, when going on an errand, when working in the field, when retiring to my bed for sleep. Oft did I weep myself to sleep, and bathe my pillow in tears. In going to church, on entering

it, I felt like I was on holy ground, and that it was too sacred a place for me. At one time when in the woods cutting timber, I accidently cut my foot pretty severely, and was confined to the house with crutches. I felt one day that I must seek a lonely place to pray, where no one but God could see and hear me. I hobbled off to the woods through which led a path to a country schoolhouse, and across the path lay a log by which a tree had fallen. I knew where it was, for I had stepped over it many times in going to school. On reaching that log I bowed my head on it and cried to God for mercy and the forgiveness of my sins. At another time my father sent me on horseback on an errand to a neighbor's house, a distance of about three miles. I prayed all the way there and back, and returning I came near a small cornfield. I knew of a stump in the middle of the field, as I had plowed around it many times in plowing the corn, so I hitched my horse to a large rail fence, and went to that stump and kneeled down against it and prayed. At another time, I had spent an very restless night over my sins, weeping and praying to God for mercy and forgiveness of my sins; I arose very early in the morning, about daylight, and sought a place on the hillside of a horse-lot, where there was not a sprig of grass, and fell down on the dirt on my face and stomach, and poured out my heart to God for mercy and forgiveness of my sins, for I felt I was the greatest sinner in the world. I was about fifteen years of age when in all this trouble. Finally my trouble all left me and I felt happy. At one time when riding horseback through a dense thicket on both sides of a public road, I was singing at the top of my voice, some familiar hymn, I cannot recall now, maybe "Amazing grace," "How firm a foundation," or "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand." I had learned these hymns when quite small, and in a short curve in the road I met a lady friend, and she said, You must have religion. In those days they had church conferences on Saturdays before the following Sundays for preaching service, only having preaching once a month. I went before the church on Saturday, November 21st, 1863, related some of my experience, and was received, and on Sunday following preaching services we repaired to Salt River, about two miles from the church, where brother J. F. Johnston, the pastor, immersed me in the cold liquid gave, representing the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. I lacked seven days of being nineteen years of age the day I joined the church, and in going home through a woodland adjoining the church I felt so happy, the trees seemed to praise God, and they looked more beautiful than I had ever seen them before.

There is another thing that gives a little hope, and that is in my great sorrow for sin when seeking salvation, and now while I am sorrowing for my sins that awful sorrow does not come back. In my doubts and fears I have prayed to God that if I am not a saved man, to let those troubles of sorrow for sin come back to me. My daily prayer to God is to teach me to know his will, and to do his will, and to show me the footprints of my Savior to walk in them, and to help me to lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily besets me, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of my faith, though sometimes I fear that that faith is too weak to be genuine. I have been trying to serve the Lord in my poor way for sixty-three years, and I feel that I am not long for this world, and that I would love to go now any time that the Lord

sees fit to call me, to join my sweet precious wife, who passed away March 11th, 1926, then I would be where there is no sorrow and where God will wipe away all tears from my eyes.

O God, give us calm and thoughtful hearts,
From every murmur free;
The blessings that thy grace imparts,
And may we live to thee.

May God bless and crown your every effort in publishing the truth that is in Jesus, and may the Primitive Baptists everywhere sustain the publication of the dear old SIGNS.

With much christian love and fellowship, and wishing you continued prosperity in the publication of the grand old paper, I remain, in love of the gospel,

G. B. PAXTON.

FOREST HILL, Md., June 18, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a letter written to me by a dear brother, J. B. Miller, of Newark, Del., just after the Baltimore Association, which convened with the Harford Church. It has been enjoyed very much by quite a number, and, having the consent of the writer, I am sending it for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Hoping this will meet with your approval, I am most sincerely,

MARY F. WHITAKER.

NEWARK, Del., May 25, 1924.

DEAR SISTER WHITAKER:—We were safely conducted home Friday eve by the same power and Friend that guided us to your Association, and our pastor, brother Eubanks, was rather stronger in many ways than when he started from home. His preaching and physical condition demonstrated and confirmed Elder Shaw's text Friday: "For my strength is made perfect in weakness." God sustained him wonderfully in both mind and body, especially when he presented to us the story of the "Marriage Supper." So far he has been upheld and made strong. A few moments ago he started for Rock Springs. I do not know what you need this morning for your daily sustenance, for He gives us each day our daily bread to live upon. Perhaps your cup is full to overflowing after the gospel tidings and the association with the brethren last week. He only knoweth what we need. The bitter must come, the wormwood and the gall precede the sweetened waters, as of Marah, for they could not drink of the waters, for they were bitter, and they inquired of Moses, What shall we drink? And the Lord showed him a tree, for that tree was Christ, which when it had been thrown into the waters they were made sweet to their taste. So the murmuring of the children of Israel commenced immediately after they were saved from Pharaoh, and to this day we are but murmuring, ungrateful creatures. It was the same man that cast in the meal in the pot that saved the sons of the prophets from death. (2 Kings iv. 38.) To my mind, that one that went out into the field to gather herbs went of his own accord. He surely was not a called preacher of God. Note he went out, not sent out, like the false messenger that ran to David after the death of Absalom, and very much like some in our time, running of their own accord, making room for what they think is a gift to preach from God, but if it were from him he surely would make room for his gifts, for he never revealed a gift unless he had use for it to the honor and glory of his name. My mind reverts to those earthen pitchers of Gideon. I do not remember of ever hearing this Scripture preached from, but when it came to me some days ago it was of such force that I hope the Holy Spirit

indicted it in my heart, for the time at least, for it came with such power I could not cast it off, nor can I now. It would seem to me Gideon represents spiritually one of Christ's ministers, the trumpet, the gospel of Christ, and when a poor, forsaken, dejected sinner hears this glorious gospel this earthen vessel is then broken, his own strength exhausted when he falls upon that Stone. "Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."—Luke xx. 18. This is the line of discrimination between the elect and nonelect. When a sinner falls upon that Stone God has made him to see his own corruption and unrighteousness and then and there he is a regenerated person; but, on the other hand, upon whom that Stone falls there is no redemption for him. Note the first falls upon the Stone, the other the Stone falls upon him and he is ground to powder. Now these earthen vessels of ours, when they are broken, when our strength is exhausted, when we are made to cry out, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner, then and there His strength is made perfect in us, in our own weakness, and not before. "But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." This is the man that has fallen upon the Stone, begging for mercy at the throne of God, which is that Stone, the foundation Stone, the Stone the builders rejected and set at naught. When these earthen vessels were broken in Gideon's little band what did they reveal? Light. So many of them in the dark of night, the opposing forces, thought (and that thought was fear put in their hearts by the Almighty) there was a myriad of soldiers after them and consequently routed themselves in confusion. But the sword of the Lord won this battle, not Gideon. When one of his earthen vessels is so broken on this Stone this tenement of clay falls to pieces and reveals a light which comes with the trumpet, the glorious gospel spoken of in John first chapter: the Word. "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." This light was in God's elect before all worlds were made; it was there in eternity, only to be revealed in his appointed time, and that time comes in regeneration, when we are made to see ourselves sinners, brought to this Stone by his grace alone. Paul says, "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." Here Paul discriminates again between those who fall upon this Stone and those upon whom it falls. "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." He is the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. This surely means his spiritual world, for John says further, He was in the world, the world was made by him, yet the world knew him not (in the Spirit, as Christ), and further, He came unto his own, and his own received him not. This was the same stone the builders rejected. Now we come to the spiritual world in his relation to his people: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were

born [in eternity], not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." This confirms the unity of Christ in his people before the foundation of the world, in eternity, for did he not say, Prov. viii. 22-31, "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth; when he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of the deep; when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." Then he must have known his elect in eternity. This is another confirmation of the unity of Christ in his people before all worlds. This is the same light that appears when these earthen vessels are broken and made to fall upon the stone, the light and the stone are one, our Redeemer in hope.

May you be blessed and comforted your remaining days on earth, your trials and distresses sanctified unto you, is my prayer and desire.

Your brother in hope and christian fellowship,

J. B. MILLER.

BREWERS, Ky., May 13, 1927.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—While shut in on account of rain I noticed a letter I wrote some time ago to Grace Veech Smith which was returned to me. If you consider it worthy space in the dear family paper you may insert it, or should you not have space will you please mail it to her if you know her correct address? I felt carried out to her in sweet fellowship when I read her exercises concerning the working of a people who have gone out from us to deceive, that it might be made manifest they were not of us. Desiring the well being of the SIGNS and all lovers of the truth, I am, a beggar and sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

J. C. CHESTER.

BREWERS, Ky., Feb. 13, 1927.

DEAR SISTER SMITH:—Possibly I should not so address you, but after re-reading your article in the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES some unseen power to natural eye is as "a hidden fire" about me until I am beginning to write, fully knowing that I of myself cannot write anything that would interest or comfort you, so I come trusting the Lord to guide my mind and pen. First, I am glad to be blessed of the Lord to be numbered with you as a reader of the SIGNS, and, I trust a believer and lover of the principles of doctrine set forth therein. We have learned by experience (if not deceived) that there is no way of escape for a poor, lost, helpless, condemned sinner but through mercy and grace by Christ Jesus our Lord. God encourages his people by his servant and apostle to the Roman brethren by saying, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." You will note he did not say we have peace through Christ and the preacher, or

any other being through Christ alone. Surely it is as is so abundantly taught in God's word, that Christ is a full and complete Savior, the only mediator between God and man, and all the blessings of the all-wise, sovereign, eternal and merciful God must and do come to his children by Christ Jesus the righteous One, as it is said in God's word that as sin hath reigned unto death even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Christ Jesus our Lord, and no man has ever reached a point in this world's attainments whereby he can reach out and procure this grace. Neither do I find anywhere in God's word where he has granted to any one to be a custodian of his grace but his only Son, in whom dwells all the fullness of the godhead bodily. Then Christ is given to be head over all things to the church, which is his body; yes, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. Oh what a beautiful picture of Christ and the church is presented to our view just now, but I will not attempt to write of it, but will leave it, hoping God will carry you out into green pastures and show you some of its beauties, and remember he is the Rock and his work is perfect. David expresses his grandeur by saying, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined."

I began to write thinking I would venture a few remarks concerning the "Bible conference" you spoke of attending, in which the speakers in charge would adhere so closely to the teaching of the Bible. Have I not been an eyewitness or a hearer of just such workings, and possibly in their next gathering or assembly of the kind they would take up "missions" or some other man-made hobby whereby they might ride into prominence and make merchandise of the souls of men? Have I not heard one of their advocates while in prayer to the Father, on a funeral occasion, thank God that "we could come to his grace?" Have you, my dear sister, found that you could go to God's grace while in sore trial or deep affliction? Must not that Comforter take of the things of God and show them unto you, even the very riches of his grace? It does seem at times that the "Conditional Time Salvation Baptists," Missionaries and almost all conditionalists, come to a period of their career where they would adhere to the Bible teaching. I will give it to you as my opinion, and that from observation, most all of them study or read the Scriptures by sections, books or chapters, and all follow an adopted course from headquarters, and while thus engaged the Scriptures are so plain, positive and pointed that even the carnal man or mind cannot dispute their truthfulness. I tell you, my dear sister, designing men with itching ears have been using bewitching sorcery to deceive and beguile unstable souls since the days of the apostles, and God tells plainly in his written word that they shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived by their speech, but they shall proceed no further than is the will of God, and will never deceive the very elect, or lone witnesses. Surely God will not leave himself without a remnant of witnesses to testify that salvation is of the Lord, first, last and all the time.

Now, my dear sister, I trust you may ever have charity, which hides a multitude of sins, and cast the mantle of charity over this scattering attempt to relieve my mind.

I am, I hope, your brother in fellowship of truth, a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

J. C. CHESTER.

2 TIMOTHY III. 12.

"YEA, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

This, we understand to be one of the most impressive and instructive epistles of the apostle Paul to Timothy, and most certainly carries forth that instruction that God himself has given to this eminent apostle for instruction to all of like precious faith. To start with in his epistle, he begins by giving Timothy to understand that in the latter times perilous times should come (not may come), that men should be lovers of their ownselves, covetous, boasters, blasphemers, unholy doers of all kinds of corrupt conduct, but above all that they were a very religious people, too; that they had a form of doctrine, and what they called godliness, and were great worshipers after these forms, but denied the power of God. "For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." Surely the day of fulfillment of these words as spoken by Paul the apostle to the Gentiles and to all who shall believe to life everlasting. We see the things mentioned of people from every viewpoint. Morals have declined to an alarming extent, high-mindedness and wickedness are going by leaps and bounds, the so-called religions have opened their doors to anything and everything, and were it not for the jealousy for leadership among the many so-called institutions, both religious and secular, there would be a "union" of all these institutions and true and undefiled religion and worshipers of God would soon be executed. But God has reserved unto himself a remnant that shall not bow to Baal's images, who prefer, as of old, to suffer affliction with God's poor and afflicted people rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. So let us not forget the fact that God has built his church, and that it is founded upon the Rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Yes, all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. They, like their Head, are despised and rejected of men. We will not have this man to reign over us. Let his blood be against us and our children. We do not care. They, as given out by Paul to Timothy, have their religious support, and it is all based upon their "form of doctrine," and they are satisfied and are not alarmed. They feel they are not under bondage and are all free-born and have free-will and can do at their will, and that their god will come down and do their biddings; they despise and hate those who preach the doctrine of man being a poor, helpless, ignorant nothing, and say as they did about Jesus, Away with him. This man is a falsifier. He claims he is from God, his statements are untrue. His father and mother we know. They are here with us, he is the carpenter's son. This is just as much as any natural man knows of God and godliness. Great is the mystery of godliness. It is the mystery that was hid from ages and generations and is only known to us by the appearing of Jesus Christ. Yes, they hated him, and will hate you, and as it was of old will cast you into prison and despise you with the same hatred that was against Christ, and to that end Paul said to Timothy: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." That would seem very poor encouragement to Timothy for his living a godly manner of life. Going to receive persecution for such a life. Yes, that was exactly what Paul's inheritance was.

I will show him what great things he shall suffer for my name's sake. Yes, persecution and hatred of all the great leaders of religious services and despised, rejected and hated of all men. This is exactly what all God's poor people have as their heritage here in this world. In the world you shall have tribulation, but in me peace. Yes, all your peace is in him, and all your tribulations, are in the world. It is a positive fact that in the world you shall have the troubles and in him you shall have the peace. If language means anything, and the Bible is to be our only rule of faith and practice, and is a thorough furnisher of all things necessary to good works, then we are forcibly bound to admit that all things we are doing are the fruits of his Spirit working in and leading us in the same paths as those of ancient times, and that our steps are ordered of the Lord in righteousness, "For the steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord," and are despised and rejected by all workmongers and pharisees. The natural man receiveth not the things of God's Spirit, cannot know them, but he loves the ways of nature and the things that the wisdom of the world teacheth, and, of course, which is darkness, and loves darkness rather than light, because his deeds are evil. Paul says to Timothy, second chapter, twelfth verse, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him," &c. Oh yes, suffering precedes the reigning, and the reigning with him in this suffering is the great evidence that we are accepted with him. Being crucified with him and having died unto sin as he himself likewise died once for sin, then we also are dead to sin, and how can we who are dead to sin live any longer therein? Yea, we are dead to its love and hate it with all the dislike and bitterness we can marshal in our forces against it. The light of the knowledge of God's glory shines in our hearts, giving us to see how exceedingly sinful and depraved we are, then how this suffering comes to us with much bitterness, and how we beg and pray for God's rich grace and mercy to deliver us. These, however, are the fellowship of his sufferings in that we are reigning with him and have fellowship with his sufferings, and therein is the manifestation of our acceptance with him, but oh how crucifying to the flesh. "We are killed all the day long," but we glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart. So we see if we had not the suffering we would not have the experience, and if no experience we would have no hope, so the suffering and tribulation are the foundation evidences that we are in sweet fellowship with him and those of like precious faith. May our Lord ever give us grace sufficient that we may be enabled to endure the trials and sufferings that are the "waymarks" of his pilgrimage and those who shall follow as he leads.

Yours in bonds and afflictions,

V. R. HARRIS.

FORDYCE, Ark., April 14, 1927.

ASHLEY, Ohio, May 25, 1927.

DEAR EDITORS:—By your kind permission I wish to make some statements through your publication, as it is coming to my ears that throughout the States of Ohio, Virginia, Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Arkansas and Tennessee it is reported that Elder W. M. Shoemaker is a Progressive Baptist. I wish to say that in the month of June, 1876, in the State of Iowa, when at the age of twenty years, I joined the Missionary Baptists. They were progressive. In the same year I came to Ohio and was married to Lucy Sherwood, a niece of the late Elder L. B.

Sherwood, who certainly was a man of God. In the month of October, 1876, I, being dissatisfied with the Missionaries, united with the Primitive Baptists. Old Elder Gregg Thompson did the preaching that day at the Predestinarian or Primitive Baptist Church at Ashley, Ohio, and served as its Moderator, the day I was received into the fellowship of the church being the second Saturday in October, 1876. The next Sunday I was baptized by Elder Sherwood, Elder Thompson preaching again that day. I felt then that I had done right in leaving the Missionary Baptists and asking a place in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church, and I have ever felt and known they are right, and have ever felt I did right in so doing. I still feel to-day that they are the salt of the earth, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and that Jesus Christ is the chief corner-stone of this great spiritual building, and that when he said, "I give unto them eternal life," the life he gave was spiritual and eternal, and independent of all means and instrumentalities whatsoever, ministers included. When I joined the Primitive or Predestinarian Baptists I accepted and believed the articles of faith upon which the Primitive Baptists were and are founded, and have ever believed the same, and am an advocate of those principles to-day. I am not a Progressive Baptist, in the sense or terms used to-day, that is, organs, Sunday-schools, choirs and such like. I am not a Progressive Baptist, I am not a member of the Progressive order. I do not advocate their doctrine, because I know it is not the truth. I have never preached the doctrine. I am not now preaching for any church that believes the doctrine or uses an organ or a choir, or any such thing, neither do I ever expect to. Let it be sufficient to say that I am in no way allied to the Progressive denomination, and never expect to be. I had rather live alone, and my hope is that I may die in the old Primitive faith, and if saved saved by grace alone.

Yours in hope,

W. M. SHOEMAKER.

LOGANVILLE, Georgia.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—The inclosed is a copy of some of my father's writings. Should you deem it worthy of space in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES I would be glad to have you publish it. You see he expresses a desire that some one may be blessed to write upon the subject, and I hope it will please God to so direct. The SIGNS comes to us each month and we very much enjoy the good news from a far country. We are poor and afflicted and feel to be strangers here below, but have a sweet hope that we are of that number who rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. May God incline your heart to pray for us.

In hope, SILLA WILSON.

JOHN XVII. 22.

"THAT they may be one, even as we are one."

Could it be the pleasure of the Lord I would like to pen a few thoughts on the subject matter contained in the Scripture here quoted. Realizing my weakness and inability in this, or anything good, I would beg the Lord to guide me in the right way: the way of truth. There are several very important things to notice in these words of our Savior. First, this is a part of his prayer to his Father. Second, the people he is praying for. Third, the oneness in the Godhead. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. For a long time I have read and reread this memorable prayer, and I hope with much interest. It seems this prayer was uttered but a short time before our Savior was crucified, just a short time before he received the vinegar and said, "It is finished." This prayer therefore seems to be his last one before he was crucified. He was praying for people, his disciples. "I pray for them," he says. There were also people he did not pray for. "I pray not for the world," those who were not his by the gift of the Father, "but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." Well, some tell me this was only his disciples he was praying for. Very well, we will suppose it was. "They [the apostles] are thine." Then what about his next words

in this memorable prayer: "And all mine are thine, and thine are mine"? Surely we all believe the apostles were his, then equally all for whom he shed his precious blood are his. All for whom this memorable prayer is made to his Father. "That they are one, even as we are one." Now as to this oneness. He prays for his disciples, his people whom he came to save from their sins. We feel sure they have it in the sense they are all taught of him, for left alone to answer for themselves they would answer with the man who was made whole and the one whom he blessed with his sight, so that he followed Jesus in the way. So I believe they would answer as did these were it not for those judiazing teachers teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. This doctrine of God our Savior is not now nor ever has been popular with the learned and rich of the earth, but to the poor and needy, the lame and the blind it is sweet. They know it is not for anything good in them they receive such great blessings, but attribute it alone to Him from whom they know the blessing came, and left without so much carnal teaching they follow Jesus in the way, and in this sense they are one. But in a nobler and higher sense they will be one with him in heaven, there their praise will be one to the triune God in all eternity. No big "I's" or little "u's," but all one in him. I in you and you in me and I in the Father. One indeed! Our heavenly Father calls Christ and his members one, we the dear children of his love and he the firstborn Son.

I feel now that I have missed almost the whole of what I thought to write. I hope the good Lord will put this subject in the mind and heart of some able writer so he may write more fully of what it seems to me it contains, and that I, a worm of the dust, may get to read it.

With the sweet hope that I am embraced among that people for whom the Savior prayed, I am, yours in hope,

JOHN R. WILSON.

MONROE, Ga., July 1, 1927.

DEAR EDITORS:—I just want to give an expression of our gratitude to the brethren, sisters and friends of the Delaware, Delaware River and Warwick Associations for their kind hospitality shown us while we were with them. The honor and great privilege to be numbered with them in these associations was an inspiration for better things, faith being the substance of them, being the fruit of the Spirit, causing tears of joy to flow from my eyes at times when the servants of God would drop handfuls of food of purpose for the poor in Spirit, as we felt to be. I am still feeding upon it and hope it will be as bread cast upon the water, that I will get many days. There seems to be a special tie of love between us of more than fifty years, and it gets stronger and stronger as the years go by, because of the sweet dwelling-place in the Lord, for his name is a strong tower and I hope to run into it and feel safe. I would love to mention the names of all who took part in our wellfare of the three weeks up there. I remember each one of you and your names are engraved in my heart to love and cherish in winter as well as summer, and I want it known, too, that our home here in Georgia is your home whenever you can use it, for I feel indebted to all we met in New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Virginia.

May the SIGNS and its editors live on another century to tell us when and how to get to these associations, in order that we may be built up in the most holy faith that was once delivered unto the saints.

With much love and best wishes, I hope to continue to live in your sweet fellowship. J. M. ADAMS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1927.

EDITOR
Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

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WHAT OF THE NIGHT?

(ISAIAH XXI. 11.)

A VOICE called unto the watchman. This anxious inquiry as to the night came out of Seir. Seir was a mountain in Edom lying somewhat southeastward from Canaan, and Edom was the land of Esau. Jacob and Esau were children of Isaac: Jacob was chosen of God but Esau abode not in God's favor. Jacob obtained the blessing. Afterward when Esau greatly desired his father to bless him Isaac did so, but not with the blessing which Jacob had obtained. What had been done was done and could not be recalled. Though Isaac had been deceived in the matter God had not been deceived, and so the matter stood. But the blessing of Esau included the fatness of the earth, that he was to live by the sword and to be a servant of his brother. Thus, Jacob stands for the spiritual character of the children of God and Esau for the fleshly or earthly character. The portion of the natural man is this natural world with all its furnishings, and such was the lot of Esau; the portion of the spiritual man is the promised inheritance which is being reserved incorruptible and undefiled for the chosen people of God, and such was the lot of Jacob. Now it is out of the land of Edom and from Seir, that the inquiry comes as to the night. That is, it is out of the world or out of the earth that the question comes. All of Edom is not inquiring, nor is it any of Esau's progeny that makes the inquiry, for such have no disposition to ask anything about the things of the Spirit of God. It is not the flesh that inquires after God, nor is there any principle whatever in the natural man that is so disposed. Nevertheless, the quickened believer who asks the question is a habitant of the flesh and, therefore, out of the flesh, out of Seir, comes the question. Babylon desired to know nothing of Israel's God, but the Israelites while in Babylon wanted to know. The world today has no inquiring mind to search into the truth of God, but the people of God who are in the world do so inquire. The question was asked of the watchman, and Isaiah was that watchman to whom the inquiry came. Both the watchman and the inquirer were in the night. That night was the legal dispensation. The lesser lights were made for the night. These are the moon and the stars, and these are the law and the prophets. The Sun, Jesus, had not risen from the dead, therefore the morning had not come; but the reflection of the Sun was seen through the night of the law, as is shown from the types and shadows and from the moon and the stars of the law and of prophecy. The inquirer asks, What of the night? He wants to know how far the night has advanced and how near he is to the dawn and to the morning. The watchman or prophet replies, The morning cometh. This much the watchman is given to know, and this only by faith: that the morning is sure to come. But the watchman does not tell the inquirer how far spent is the night nor how near is the

coming of the day; he does not tell this because he cannot, God has not revealed to him the exact time of the Savior's coming. This was one thing about which all the holy prophets anxiously inquired. They wanted to know what or what manner of time the Spirit within them did signify when they testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and of the glory which should follow; but this they did not know. That a virgin should conceive and bear a son and that his name should be called Immanuel, meaning God with us; that much Isaiah was given to know and that much he could declare with positiveness. As to the date of time when that should take place he could not tell. We who live in this age to-day know that Isaiah lived six or seven hundred years before the coming of Christ, but Isaiah himself did not know that. Hence, when the anxious and hungry question was asked him, What of the night? Isaiah could not say whether half the night had gone or what portion yet remained of the night, but he could and did say with no evasiveness or lack of definiteness, The morning cometh. That the Savior was sure to come the prophet by faith knew, and he did not waver in this respect. All the watchmen of the legal dispensation were men called of God and inspired by his Spirit to testify certainly of the coming of the Son of God, of his coming to suffer and to die and to be raised again from the dead, and to testify of the bringing in of the kingdom of God. But the year, the month, the day in which all of this was to take place not one of them knew. Thus the essence of all the prophecies was, The morning cometh. But this is not all the watchman said. Not only did he say that the morning was coming, but also the night. Another night was to follow the morning. This night that was to follow upon the ushering in of the gospel day after the rising of Christ from the dead was the night of falling away, or of apostasy. Unless we are very much mistaken, this is the night through which the church is passing at the present time. The apostle Paul declared during his ministry, and so did others of the apostles, that there was sure to come a falling away from the truth. They declared that the love of many would wax cold, that deceivers would wax worse, deceiving and being deceived, that the time would come when sound doctrine would not be endured. This apostasy, or falling away, is one of the symptoms of the last days of this present gospel age, the Scriptures so declare it. Also, it is told us in the New Testament that this falling away must necessarily precede the coming of the Son of God the second time. Just as the watchmen of the old dispensation knew of a surety that the morning was coming, but could not tell how far the night was spent, just so it is at this present time, that the watchmen upon the walls of Zion well know we are in the night of falling away, but not one of them knows how far this night of apostasy has spent itself. Like the watchman who said, The morning cometh, so we can say with assuredness that unto them who look for Christ, unto them shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation. Not one of us can give the exact year, month, day and hour of his coming, any more than could the watchmen of a former age give the year, month, day and hour of his first coming. There have been various attempts made by those who profess to be godly wise to name the exact date of the second coming. All such attempts are foolish and vain and have deceived many. The night of apostasy, for all any of us

know, may be just begun and matters may yet have to get exceedingly worse before the remedy will appear; then again, on the other hand, the falling away may have well-nigh spent itself and the day of his reappearing may be nearer than any of us think. Either way, it is a secret and we cannot know it yet. Nevertheless, though we cannot fix and cannot scan the time-table of these events, we have the blessed promise that he will surely come again. There are those who regard the second coming of Christ a purely experimental matter and such are satisfied to interpret all the Scriptures mentioning the second coming of Christ, upon a strictly experimental basis. We have no quarrel with any man, certainly not with any who would wish to refer the second coming to the experience only, but we are free to say that such interpretation does not satisfy us as giving the Scriptures their true import. Christ did actually come the first time. Who among us will dare deny it? The holy men of former dispensations realized his coming by the faith that was given to them, but did not live to see the actual event of his first coming. What a blunder it would have been for those holy men to have supposed that Christ would never come in any other way than as he did come to them in their own experience. Some good brethren to-day, we fear, are in danger of making this blunder regarding the second coming of Christ. That Christ does appear right now in the experience of his children in this present age not one of us will deny, but we are not willing to believe that the second coming is confined alone to the present experience of the saints of God. His coming the first time to perform the sacrificial work of atonement was an actual event not confined simply to the spiritual experience of his people, and it is our conviction that there will assuredly be an actual second coming of the Lord from heaven. That this is bound to occur the New Testament plainly declares, but the how and wherefore of it no man knows. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." And we are further told to comfort one another with these words. The comfort arises from the fact, not that we are able to tear the secrecy from these words and thus expose their full meaning, but in knowing that the Lord himself, not his Spirit merely, or some other part of him, but that he himself shall descend from heaven for the final glorification of his saints and for the ultimate consummation of his eternal purpose toward which the whole creation moves. We thus have the assurance given us in the inspired record that this night of falling away or of apostasy through which we are now passing, shall be followed by the glorious morning of our Lord's coming again; and while we cannot, any of us, tell how far the night is spent, we assuredly know the vision will not tarry, but will arrive on schedule time according to the eternal purpose of God whom none can thwart, and with whom there is no turning, not even the shadow of turning. L.

NOTICE.

We now have a supply of the small cloth bound Hymn Books and have filled all orders we have received for the same. If any have not received their book we would be glad to hear from them.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder H. C. Ker.)

The Delaware River Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Southampton Old School Baptist Church of Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., sendeth greeting and love in the Lord to associations and churches with which we correspond.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Following our long established custom, we again thus address you with a Circular Letter, telling you of our welfare in the Lord and of our faith in the doctrine of God our Savior. In so doing we call your attention to 1 John, fourth chapter, verse eighteen: "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth, is not made perfect in love." As we put our pen upon the paper we realize before us we have the highest and most glorious subject of holy writ. John was given to write more upon this sublime subject than any of the apostles, not that he loved more than they, but it being in the purpose of God, he so wrote. Love is the power that dominates heaven and earth. First it was with God and made manifest to man in the gift of his only begotten Son, that through him man should live. This love passeth understanding, in that he loved his enemies and gave his Son to die for them. The love that man can understand is the kind that man loves them that love him. The secret of God's love to man lies in the fact that he loved his people in Christ before the foundation of the world; before they sinned in Adam, and his "everlasting love" changed not when they became sinners by transgression. Christ the head of the bride, or church, was responsible for her debt. Had there been no debt, there could have been no payment, no payment no salvation or eternal blessedness with God in the haven of rest. "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world."—1 John iv. 17. The love of God in the heart of man produces boldness in the day of judgment. In it the sons of God face all enemies of truth and godliness; put to silence every tongue that riseth in judgment, and triumph over every weapon formed against them. The people of God have no fear of man whose breath is in his nostrils, knowing that in his love they are without fault, according to his eternal purpose, which he purposed in himself before the world was. Perhaps in no age of the world has judgment been more rampant against the truth than now. Men have risen up blaspheming the name of God in denying his word, denying the sonship of Christ, denying the creation and formation of man, ridiculing those whose faith is in God and whose hope is in the blood of his Son. Yet through it all, because of no fear, they abide safely alone. "As he is, so are we in this world." He is delivered from the terror and demands of the law, he is exalted above all principalities and powers. Neither death nor life, things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth shall ever again have dominion over him, and as he is, so are we in this world. Blessed truth that his people are one with him in all things, hence how secure. When men rise in judgment to condemn the elect of God, Paul, though dead, still lives, and asks, Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? Who shall separate us from the love of God? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again and sitteth at the right hand of God. If God be for

us, who can be against us? Therein is love made perfect, that we have boldness in the day of judgment. Perfect love casteth out fear. If any thing in this world, or in that which is to come, is perfect it is love. Love thinks no evil, love suffereth all things, love believeth all things, love abideth forever. Fear hath torment, and because of this the world to-day is keeping the regions of woe, with all its horrors of fire and brimstone, before the people, ever endeavoring to frighten them into the service of God, but we have failed to find, by the Scriptures, where man was ever frightened out of hell into heaven. The journey is not made that way from nature to grace; the translation out of the kingdom of darkness into the marvelous light of God is not wrought by force, but by love, with loving-kindness he draws men to run after him. There can be no incentive to serve God other than love to God, to his church and kingdom. This love is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost. Love is the source of all obedience, as well as every act of kindness to the Lord's children. Being made perfect through love, death and the grave have lost their terror, death its sting, the grave its victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Southampton Church, at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., June 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1927.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is a pleasure to address you once more in this, another Corresponding Letter, wishing you rejoicing in the Lord and having no confidence in the flesh. We are thankful to report that the Lord has graciously blessed us in our meeting, and we have been made to rejoice in him and built up in the most holy faith. The preaching has been good, all setting forth salvation by grace, Jesus the way, the truth and the life. Your Minutes have been received, to be distributed among the churches. We desire a continuance of your correspondence in the future as in the past.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J., beginning at 10:30 a. m., Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1928, when and where we hope to meet and welcome your messengers again with love in Christ.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

D. M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder L. L. Schenck, April 17th, 1927, at the home of the bride, Robert L. Davis, of Dodge City, Kansas, and Della S. Powers, of Topeka, Kansas.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Ann R. Benedict passed away from this earthly life June 24th, 1927, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Elbert L. Hulse, Warwick, Orange County, N. Y. She was born at Port Colden, N. J., Feb. 18th, 1844, and was the daughter of Elder Wilson Housel and Eliza Manning Housel. Her father, Elder Housel, was pastor of the Warwick Old School Baptist Church from 1862 to 1865, and also served the Ebenezer Church in New York City as a supply for a number of years. Her grandfather, James Manning, was the inventor of the first mowing-machine. Manning Avenue in Plainfield, N. J., was named for the family as a large part of it was at one time owned by the family. Mrs. Benedict's aunt, Dr. Clemence Lozier, was one of the pioneer women physicians, and was the first woman to be Dean of the Women's Medical College. Mrs. Benedict was married to James Augustus Benedict April 3rd, 1862, and to them were born six children, only two of whom survive: Mrs. Alice Hulse, at whose home she passed away, and David W. Benedict, of Ridgewood, N. J. The funeral services were held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Elbert Hulse, Warwick, N. Y., on Monday

afternoon, June 27th, conducted by Elder R. Lester Dodson, the present pastor of the Warwick Church. Burial was in the family plot in the cemetery at Warwick. It has been my good fortune to have known Mrs. Benedict and her family for over twenty years, and all this time she has proved to be never wavering in her kindness and friendship toward me and mine. Especially during our three and one-half years residence at Warwick, N. Y., did we come to know her more closely and found her to be a lover of the truth as it is in Jesus. This love for the truth was manifested in her regular attendance at the meetings of the church and in her devotion to anything which concerned the welfare of the church, as well as the welfare of the pastor and his family. She was a person who was very outspoken in her views and opinions and I believe had as little deception and dissimulation in her makeup as any person it has ever been my lot to know. She never united with the church by baptism, but believed firmly in the omnipotence of God and in the predestination of all things and in salvation by grace and by grace alone. She loved the plain, positive, discriminating preaching of the Word, and I have great reason to feel that she had a good hope through grace. I have had many talks with her on spiritual things in the years that are gone and feel satisfied her affections were set on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. She had known many trials and afflictions throughout her life, many cares and disappointments, but with it all and through it all her faith in the justice and mercy of God never seemed to waver. Feeling confident she is at rest from all her labors, I hope the Holy Spirit may comfort the bereaved daughter and son and reconcile all of us to his divine will.

L.

Miss Fannie Brittingham, of Salisbury, Md., departed this life May 7th, 1927, after suffering two years with cancer. She was born December 21st, 1842, making her stay on earth 84 years, 4 months and 16 days. She was a woman of distinguished character, and of straight, pure, devoted virtues. She was born near Berlin, Md., but spent the greater part of her life in Salisbury, Md. Her home was always open to true Old School Baptists, and the manifested virtues of the Spirit were the scales in which the spirit of her heart weighed every one. It was a great comfort to converse with her of the way of salvation by grace, which is the only way to save sinners. To her pastors she was very loyal. The late Elder Silas H. Durand was the pastor of the Salisbury Church for fifty years, and sister Fannie's home was headquarters for him while in Salisbury. The late Elder J. C. Mellott was called to succeed Elder Durand, to whom sister Fannie was very loyal, and loved him for the truth which he defended. Both preceded her, and visiting her in her last illness, and speaking of her loss sustained in losing her pastors, she requested the writer to conduct her funeral services and write her obituary, and owing to the existing conditions and communion services to serve the writer could not leave to conduct the funeral services, and no Elder could be obtained. Brother John L. Hastings conducted the services by reading the twenty-third Psalm, spoke in prayer and read three hymns in Beebe's collection, 68, "God moves in a mysterious way; 1256, "It is not death to die;" and 1257, "Asleep in Jesus;" and spoke befitting and comforting words to those paying tribute to her memory, after which her remains were laid to rest in the Salisbury Old School Baptist Churchyard until it shall please God to call her forth to be with him and behold his glory for ever and ever. May God comfort all who mourn. We feel our loss is her eternal gain.

C. W. V.

Mrs. Mary Janet (Lawrence) Slauson was born in Halcott Center, New York, February 26th, 1859, and died at Ridgetown, Ontario, Canada, June 9th, 1926. She was the daughter of Walter and Lola Warren Lawrence, and was the devoted and loving wife of the late Elder John B. Slauson, who for nine years served the four churches of the Roxbury Association and was for over eleven years pastor of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada. It was her lot to bear, with her husband, many and varied trials, at times being without what many would call the necessities of life; this as a faithful wife she patiently bore, and when in the providence of God she removed with her esteemed husband to the bounds of the Covenanted Baptist Church it was not only her lot to be far from her life-long relatives and friends, but she was called on to endure much for the name of Christ. She loved the truth, and being of a quiet and retiring disposition one had to be with her and in her home to rightly estimate her worth. The kindness and love of her brethren and the many friends she had, both in Canada and here, was like sunshine, bringing cheer and gladness to her. Sister Slauson united with the First Roxbury Church, Vega, New York, by baptism September 27th, 1902, being the first person baptized by her husband. She leaves to mourn their loss two sons, Samuel Lee and Harold John, both grown to manhood; she also leaves three brothers and four sisters. The writer was called to officiate at her funeral, and the large assembly of brethren and friends was a silent testimony to the love and esteem of those among whom both Elder and sister Slauson lived and died. Her remains were interred by the side of her beloved husband in the Duart Cemetery, Ontario, Canada.

Written by request.

ALSO,

Phebe, wife of Edwin **Secor,** departed this life April 6th, 1927, aged 37 years and one month. She was the daughter of William and Sarah Dymond, and was married October 20th, 1917, since which she has resided much of the time at the Secor homestead, Ashokan, New York. Our departed friend never had a strong constitution and had been ailing ever since we first knew her. The last few years she spent much of her time upon a bed of sickness, sadly afflicted in body. All that loving and gentle care and medical skill could do was done for her, but of no avail, it being the will of the Lord that her sickness should bring her to the grave. She was not a member of the Old School Baptist Church, but was a believer in the truth; her experience covered a number of years, yet not until a few months before her death did the Sun of Righteousness shine in her heart with healing in his wings. The joy she experienced filled her heart with gratitude to God and was a source of deep comfort and consolation to those who dearly loved her. The writer felt it a privilege to visit with her on spiritual things, and we believe that although her name was not upon any church book it is written in heaven, where we believe she is forever with the Lord. The writer tried to speak words of comfort to her bereaved relatives. The interment was in the Winchell Cemetery, Ashokan, New York. May the God of all comfort bless and sustain her relatives and sorrowing husband in their bereavement.

G. R.

Mrs. Amanda L. Bricker passed away at her home with her daughter, Mrs. T. E. Attebery, June 9th, 1927, after an illness of five weeks. Mrs. Bricker was the daughter of James and Maria Rafferty, and was born in Macoupin County, Illinois, July 2nd, 1854, being 72 years, 11 months and 7 days old at the time of her death. October 10th, 1875, she was married to David C. Bricker, and to this union five sons and one daughter were born. With her family she came to Greenwood, Mo., August, 1885, and continued to make her home in this vicinity until her death. Those left to mourn their loss are her four sons: James H. Bricker, Kansas City, Mo.; John L. Bricker, Grandview, Mo.; Oscar D., Grover C. and Mrs. T. E. Attebery, of Greenwood, Mo., one son having died in infancy, one sister, Mrs. J. P. Taylor, Harrisonville, Mo., two brothers: Joshua Rafferty, Carlinville, Ill., and John Rafferty, Guthrie, Okla., also nine grandchildren.

The funeral service was held from the home June 11th, and was conducted by Elder W. L. Hall, of Blue Springs, Mo., pastor of the Primitive Baptist Church of which Mrs. Bricker had been a consistent member since June 3rd, 1893. Interment was in the family lot in the Greenwood Cemetery.

Her son,

J. H. BRICKER.

Mrs. Hannah Fisher, aged 86 years, died at her home here to-day. She was the widow of Ezra T. T. Fisher, at one time Linn County surveyor. Mrs. Fisher was born near Peoria, Ill., July 8th, 1840, and crossed the plains by ox-team to Oregon in 1853. She was the daughter of the late Elder Ezra Stout. Mrs. Fisher was married Dec. 27th, 1856, and later located near Molalla. In 1866, she and her husband moved to a farm four miles north of Albany, where they lived until 1893. They then located in Albany, where Mr. Fisher, who at one time served in the United States Land Office, at Oregon City, died in 1899. Mrs. Fisher had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church since 1864. Five children survive. They are Mrs. Josephine Crook, of Goldendale, Wash.; Hugh G. Fisher, of Salem, Ore.; Fred D. Fisher, of Santos, Brazil; Mrs. Orpha J. Conklin, of San Jose, Cal., and Earl Fisher, of Salem, Ore.

Funeral services will be held from the Fort Miller mortuary, at Albany, Monday, with Elder Moffitt, of Portland, officiating.

The above is a clipping from a local paper printed in Salem, Oregon, and I will add this one thing more: Brother Fisher, late husband of the dear old mother in Israel, was also a member of the Primitive Baptist Church and was at the time of his death, in 1899, Clerk of the Siloam Association, and was highly esteemed by all who knew him. The dear old mother was buried beside her husband in the cemetery near Albany, there to await the resurrection of the just, when we feel assured that they will come forth immortalized, made and fashioned like unto his glorious body. May we all, who have a hope in Jesus, be prepared for that great and notable day of the Lord God Almighty is my prayer for his dear name's sake. Amen.

From one who feels less than the least in my Father's house.

ALSO,

Elizabeth Watkins Rose was born in Dada County, Georgia, September 10th, 1842, and departed this life June 12th, 1927, making her stay on earth 84 years, 9 months and 2 days. She moved with her parents to Iowa in 1849 and settled near Knoxville, Marion County, where she resided until her marriage to Jacob Smith, May 3rd, 1868, and to this union were born three children, one dying in infancy. The two living are Guy Smith, of Chicago, Ill., and Miss Zona Smith, of Buenos Ayres, South America. They lived on their farm until her dear husband was called home above on June 5th, 1902. The following fall, she with her daughter Zona, moved to Des Moines, Iowa, where they resided, until she returned to Marion County. Our dear sister was united again in marriage July 24th, 1910, to Elder Wm. M. Rose, and in 1920 they came to Oregon, and to Lebanon in 1921, where she resided until June 12th, 1927, when she

passed away as above stated, after several weeks of most intense suffering. All was done for her that loving hands could do, but her dear Lord and Master knows what is best for his dear ones. In her death she leaves to mourn her dear children and husband, one brother, Dennis Watkins, of Jefferson, Oregon, and Mrs. C. E. Smith, of Lebanon, Oregon, and a host of relatives and friends. She united with Little Flock Church, in Iowa, in 1908. At the time of her death she was a member of Bethel Church, at Tallman, Oregon. She was laid to rest in the Odd Fellows' Cemetery, near Lebanon, Oregon, there to await the call of her Master and Lord. Services were conducted by Elder S. B. Moffitt, of Newberg, at her home in Lebanon, at her request, who used for a text John xi. 25: "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Her funeral was attended by a large and attentive congregation. May the dear family, together with our beloved old brother and father in Israel, be reconciled to the will of our merciful High Priest, and bow in humble submission, saying, Thy will be done.

S. B. MOFFITT.

Benjamin Franklin Chilton was born March 4th, 1836, and died June 19th, 1927, in his ninety-second year. He was united in marriage to Mary Ann Ramsdell Feb. 27th, 1857, and to this union were born two children: Dora Chilton Lindsey, who departed this life Dec. 9th, 1888, leaving one son, Matt Lindsey, and Robert J. Chilton, who resides on the old homestead, also eight grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren, all residing near Turners Station, Kentucky, except the daughter's son, Matt Lindsey, who resides in Des Moines, Iowa. Brother Chilton and wife, better known as Uncle Frank and Aunt May, united with the Cane Run Predestinarian Baptist Church in June, 1887, where they both remained faithful, always attending the meetings of the brethren, and their house was always open for their entertainment until the last few years, when Uncle Frank's hearing became so bad it was almost impossible to talk to him, yet his faith was not shaken. I would visit him almost every time I came to Turners Station and he would tell me he would like to go hear me preach, but it would be impossible to hear anything so he would stay at home. I visited him last April and he was then confined to the bed, and on leaving he said to me, Brother, I will see you no more in the flesh, but hope to meet you in heaven, and from that time he gradually grew weaker, and finally on our meeting day in June passed from earth to, we hope, a better place. We will all miss him, and it will be lonesome in the home, where everything was done for him. His son and wife waited upon him continually. The friends have lost a neighbor, and the church a brother, but we feel that our loss is his gain, and we bow in humble submission to the will of God, who doeth all things well. The day of the funeral I tried to comfort the friends with the ability the Lord gave me, after which the body was laid to rest beside his wife to await the call of the Master in the resurrection. May the Lord comfort the friends and enable us all to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

GEO. L. WEAVER.

My father, **Christopher S. Fetter,** was born near Southampton, Pa., Jan. 24th, 1842, and died Sept. 16th, 1926, at the home of my sister, Mrs. David M. Voorhees, near Hopewell, N. J. He was the son of Casper G. and Anna M. Fetter. He was married to my mother, Mary C. Van Dyke, daughter of Deacon John S. and Caroline Van Dyke, of Hopewell, N. J., Dec. 27th, 1866. To this union were born nine children, of whom eight are still living; there are also thirty-seven grandchildren and sixteen great-grandchildren. My father never joined the visible church, but was a faithful follower after these people all the years I can remember him. He wrote many articles for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and many will remember him that way who never met him. I have many times wished I had been as faithful in meeting with the brethren as he has been. As long back as I can remember him, and up to the time of his death, I think there were but very few Sundays he did not meet with the saints of God unless he was hindered by sickness. After leaving Southampton, Pa., he moved to Philadelphia, where he attended the meetings many years. During the last few years he spent part of the summers with my sister and brother-in-law, where he died, and went with them to the meetings at Hopewell, N. J. We have every evidence he had a good hope through grace, and I believe now is at rest with his Savior. Elder C. W. Vaughn spoke words of comfort to the bereaved family and friends, after which his remains were buried in the cemetery adjoining the Southampton meetinghouse.

Written by his son,

CASPER G. FETTER.

Lofton Delmort Poyner was born July 27th, 1847, and departed his earthly life April 24th, 1927, making his pilgrimage in this old world of trials and afflictions 79 years, 8 months and 27 days. He was married to Virginia Josephine Bullion in 1870, and to this union were born eight children, four sons and four daughters, all of whom survive him. He also leaves thirty grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. Mrs. Poyner, his wife, departed this life January 23rd, 1914. Brother Poyner was one of the oldest members of old Cain Creek Old School Baptist Church of Obion County, Tennessee. He spoke in public over forty years, yet was never ordained. His ordination was spoken of, but he rebelled so strongly against it the church let it pass. He had a

gift to go among his Baptist brethern to sing and pray and tell his little story (as he called it) of Jesus Christ the Lord, the way, the truth and the life. He was sound in doctrine and was loved by the Baptists far and near, and we all miss dear old brother Poyner, but feel assured and satisfied that our loss is his eternal gain, for his much suffering is over now and we feel satisfied that he is at rest. I have traveled with him visiting different associations for several years passed, and have some knowledge of how he was afflicted, yet he had a great zeal to go. He surely did love the cause of Christ and his little children, but his labor is ended, yet his works do follow him. It was his request that I would speak at his funeral, which I did with the ability God gave me. The great number of people who came to pay the last tribute of respect showed he had many friends on earth. His body was laid quietly away beside his dear companion, in the old Cain Creek Cemetery, to await the resurrection of the body.

Written by one who loved him.

T. J. PRINCE.

Brother **George T. Hayden** departed this life June 14th, 1927, aged 69 years. He had been afflicted for thirty years with gall bladder of the liver. He was baptized in the fellowship of Concord Church by Elder G. W. Caldwell about the year 1888. He was an uncompromising Predestinarian and a dear lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The last twenty years of his life he was seldom able to attend meeting on account of his illness, but often expressed a desire to be with the brethren. His last words were, "I am not afraid to die; I want to go." Elder W. K. Smith, of Lillie, La., was called and held services at the family residence, and spoke to the comfort of the bereaved, after which his body was carried to the Baptist Cemetery and laid away to await the resurrection morn, when he shall be owned and crowned and fashioned like unto the glorious body of his dear Redeemer, to shout God's praises forever. He leaves a wife, eight children, all grown and married but one, thirteen grandchildren, one brother and many near kin and friends to mourn their loss, but we hope our loss is his eternal gain. The writer is the only surviving one of the family.

L. E. HAYDEN.

Andrew David Newman was born Oct. 11th, 1857, in Boone County, Indiana, and passed away June 23rd, 1927, after an illness of twelve weeks of intense suffering, all of which time he bore it patiently, giving every evidence by word and manner of his full trust in an all-powerful God, in whom he had been blessed to trust for over forty years. He was one of eight children of Herman E. and Mary Eleanor Newman. Of this family only one, Mrs. Sarah E. Sparrow, of Sheridan, Indiana, is left. April 4th, 1879, he was married to Mary Caudell, to which union a daughter, Mrs. Eleanor Banks, of Independence, Mo., and a son, Clarence Earl, of the home, were born. They came from Indiana to Kansas in 1884, and later moved to Kansas City, where they lived for twenty-two years, and where he helped all he could in the building of Mt. Vernon Church. Later they came to Cass County, Missouri, where they have since lived. Mr. Newman never united with the visible church, but was ever at our little meetings when able, and was sound in the doctrine, not wanting anything added to or taken from the precious truth. There are left with his sorrowing companion the two children and six grandchildren: J. Vernon Banks, of Tulsa, Okla., Florence Eleanor, Mary Margaret, Lillian Irene and Sarah Earline Newman.

The funeral was held June 26th at Little Flock Church, and was conducted by Elder T. E. Atteberry, who spoke from John xiv. 1-3, to a large assemblage of relatives and friends. Interment was in Wills Cemetery.

Written by request.

(MRS.) J. W. TAYLOR.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is with a sad heart that I report the death of **Elder W. J. May,** which occurred June 30th, 1927. You will please publish notice of his death in the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and state that an obituary will follow as soon as it can be prepared.

G. B. BIRD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Elder G. B. Paxson, Tex., $2; Mrs. J. W. Taylor, Mo., $1; Mrs. Clara Parker, Ore., $2; Mrs. Lydia B. Stewart, N. Y., $2; Elder V. R. Harris, Ark., $1; Mrs. M. A. Tanner, Miss., $1.

MEETINGS.

Denton Creek Association of Old Primitive Baptists will meet in Dallas, Texas, State Fair Grounds, August 12th, 13th and 14th. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us, especially ministering brethren. Plenty of room and an ideal cool place to meet.

The seventy-sixth annual session of the Siloam Association of Primitive Baptists will be held with the Cowletz River Church, near Riffe, Washington beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in August, 1927, and continuing two days. Those coming by rail come to Chehalis, Wash., take stage about forty miles southeast. A cordial invitation is extended to all.

J. W. PETERS, Moderator.

WM. J. REEVES, Clerk.

The Slate Hill annual meeting will be held this year in the Slate Hill, N. Y., meetinghouse, on Friday, August 26th. Elders H. C. Ker, George Ruston and Charles W. Vaughn are expected to be with us. A large attendance is desired.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The North Berwick Old School Baptist Church, of Maine, has appointed an all day meeting to be held the fourth Sunday in August. Elder H. C. Ker is expected to be with us. Service at 10:30 a. m., and 2 p. m., standard time. An invitation is extended to all who may desire to meet with us.

JOSEPH HALL.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, at Whitefield, Maine, on Friday before the second Monday in September, and continue three days, Sept. 9th, 10th and 11th, 1927. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.

Ebenezer Church, Baltimore, Md., will hold an all day meeting on the third Sunday in September (18th), 1927. We desire the brethren, sisters and friends to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The next annual session of the Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to meet at Macedona Schoolhouse, near Dalark, Dallas County, Arkansas, beginning on Friday before the third (3rd) Sunday in September, 1927. About the nearest point by railroad to reach this place will be Arkadelphia. The place of meeting is about ten miles from the railroad. Arkadelphia is situated on the St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern Railroad, and easily connected with Cotton Belt & Rock Island roads.

We invite all genuine Predestinarian Unconditional Old Baptists to meet with us, especially ministers of this faith.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator.

W. C. HORTON, Clerk.

The seventieth session of the First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held with the Big Walnut Creek Church, in Topeka, Kansas, at 1168 High St., in the western part of the city, two and one-half blocks south of 10th Street, and one block west and half a block south from the end of the Lowman carline. For any further information address me at 1168 High St., Topeka, Kansas.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

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Send in your order if you want a copy. Single copies $1, six copies $5, special to ministers, fifteen copies for $10.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,

PUBLISHED EACH MONTH

AT TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 95. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1927. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE THREE BOOKS OF DIVINE WRITING.

FIRST. The first book of divine writing which God's people are most interested in is the book of life. This is a record in which are found all the names of God's chosen people, the elect, the foreordained to life and those predestinated to eternal life, whether they have lived, or will live before the end of time, the mystical body of Christ complete. Those names were written there before the world was, and no powers of man or devils can take a name from this divine list, nor add one name to it. This list of names is a part of the covenant of grace with God and Christ. This first book also contains all the decrees and promises which were necessary to complete the covenant of grace, redeem all those mentioned in God's will, settle all the accounts of those for whom Christ became surety and died in their stead, and bring those blessed people off more than conquerors through him that loved them and gave himself for them. When John was caught up in the Spirit before the throne of God this book was brought out, but it was sealed so that no man could look thereon. Heaven was searched, the earth was searched and under the earth was searched, but no man was found able or worthy to open the seal and look thereon. No man to-day is able or worthy to open that book, or to change its records. John wept because no man was found worthy to open and read the book, and millions of poor sinners have wept because the book was closed to them, and feared their names were not in the book, but oh joy unspeakable, a still small voice says, Peace, be still, do not despair, the Lion of the tribe of Judea has opened the book and seen your name there, paid your debt, Jesus is your Savior. When Christ opened the seal he saw the names of all God's elect, and the decrees and promises which make up the covenant of grace, to the end of time, and whether these records are of God's church, or of nations, or of good or evil, or whether to build or to destroy, they will all be carried out.

Second. The second book is the Bible, the book of inspiration, the oracles of God, an abstract of the first book, and its ordinances, its sacrifices and its priesthoods all point to the coming of Christ

and the carrying out of the covenant of grace, as it is recorded in the book of life. All blessings are given in Christ, and each privilege, each promise, each grace, and each hope of the christian is but a leaf from the book of life mentioned in the Bible and viewed as through a glass darkly while here on earth, but in the realms of bliss the first book will be wide open and we shall see Jesus face to face, chief among ten thousand and altogether lovely. We should read the Bible, because it is always new, never wearing out nor out of date with God's people, like other books. Because it tells of the Father's will and of Christ carrying out that will, without leaving any part of it to conditions, uncertainties or to mortal man. In this second book are found many types, shadows, symbols and pictures of Christ, his life, his suffering, his death and his triumph over all enemies of Zion. While this second book was written by the hands of man, God's Spirit directed them, so it is in harmony with the first book and one of the three.

Third. The third book is the book of christian experience, in which Christ is revealed by the Holy Ghost. This third book is the key or interpreter of the first and second books. You may have a Bible, you may go to church, you may join the church and hear and read much about the first and second books, but unless you have read some in the third book, which reveals the truths of the others, you will not understand them, neither will they comfort you. Unless this third book has been read by the preacher he cannot preach the truth in its purity, and unless the hearer has read some in the third book he cannot understand the truth when it is preached, for these three books contain all the spiritual truths revealed to man, and the third is the interpreter. This book contains many leaves which tell of the work of the Holy Spirit, as regeneration, sanctification, quickening, spiritual birth, creating anew and raising a dead sinner to life in Christ, all this work is divine. Other leaves contain arrows of conviction which are sharper than a two-edged sword, a wound which no earthly physician can heal, a drop of blood from Calvary, a leaf of spiritual adoption, a leaf of justification, a leaf of righteousness to be worn and a leaf of triumph through Jesus Christ. Other leaves contain brotherly love, peace, long-suffering, kindness, virtue, faith, hope, hatred of sin, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, humility, the spirit of dependence and willingness to give God the glory. This third book is the work of the Spirit changing a lost sinner into a christian alive and active, bearing the fruits of the Spirit. Wonderful divine change. While the second book reveals Christ to his people, the third reveals Christ in his people. Blessed is he who hath a part in these three books.

Hoping that you and I both have a part in these books, I am your unworthy brother,

M. N. WEBB.

WEISER, Idaho.

FLEMINGTON, N. J., March 29, 1927.

MY DEAR MISS CHICK:—You requested me to write to you, and it is with fear and trembling I make the attempt, for I feel so unfit, blind and ignorant, and know there is nothing in me worth while. I enjoyed my visit with you all in New York. I felt at home, though many were strangers to me. I was sorry to hear of Elder Dodson's family being sick, I hope they are better by this time. I enjoyed his sermons very much in the afternoon, but we were so late getting in

for the morning service that I missed much of it, but it was all to the glory of God and him alone. How wonderful is the doctrine of predestination and the determinate council of our all-wise Creator. It seems strange to me sometimes that I was never made to see these wonderful works of God in my younger days, instead of not until about four years ago, I believe it was, that he began his work in bringing me out of nature's darkness into the glorious light of his love. There is nothing can explain it so well as the verse,

"My Jesus sought me from above,
When destitute of grace and love,
And rushing blindfold down to hell,
He reached and caught me as I fell."

I know you have read my experience in the SIGNS and know what my soul passed through. I shall never forget the dawn of that day, a new day, a spiritual day, and as I looked from my window I never before beheld the works of God so beautiful, the birds, the trees, flowers, mountains and valleys fairly thundered the name of God, and to think of such a God looking in pity on a wretch like me. Had I received what I deserved it would have been complete destruction. Oh my heart and soul were so filled with his love I could not speak. I went outside, with tears streaming down my cheeks, and I think if my heart ever burst out in prayer it was then: Oh give me a thankful heart for all thou hast done for me, keep me in the strait path and teach me thy way, O my Savior and my God. It seemed these words were given me. I never cared for the Old Baptists, despised them, and never paid much attention to their preaching, why was it now that I found myself being drawn to them, that the pleasures of this world were fast fading? Why was it these people looked so good to me that I could not see a fault in any of them, and in myself I see nothing but faults? Can I doubt the works of God? There are times when I fear I am wrong, darkness surrounds me and I feel my hope is almost gone, yet there is always a little gleam left, and He returns to me and whispers to me that I am his. I have been called to pass through some trying times, and felt my feet would slip from beneath me, I have built up hopes upon worldly things, only to see them totter and fall, and I can look back now and see God's hand guiding me through it all, teaching me the lesson of obedience, to "be still and know that I am God," that the arm of flesh will fail, that nothing lasts but heaven.

"Trials make the promise sweet,
Trials give new life to prayer;
Trials bring me to his feet,
Lay me low, and keep me there."

I feel I have a very blind understanding of God's word, and I often wonder if there is any one that can grasp all of the sermons they hear. I do know there is always some sweet remembrance of His truth left with me after hearing the preaching.

I must tell you of what happened last summer. I had for a week or more had these words running through my mind: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," &c. Sunday of the same week I was invited to go to Southampton to meeting, and our beloved Elder took those words for his text. I can never tell you how I felt, for I had such a desire to hear them preached from. I thought I could never again doubt God's work. Oh the comfort that came to me from that sermon. I think I have thought more of baptism since then; I feel that I am not giving the whole price. "Come unto me." How sweet the command. "And ye shall find rest unto your

souls." How sweet the assurance, and I know since he has revealed himself to me there is rest in him, and when a poor miserable sinner has been given a hope in his mercy is it not then he can sing, "All hail the power of Jesus' name"? There is none in my family that sees as I do. I am alone, yet not alone, God is with me, and he is my light and my life, an ever-present help in time of need, and I know he is able to point the way to them as he has shown it to me. I know there is nothing I have ever done or ever can do to merit the least of his blessings; there is nothing in me but iniquity, sin, lust and weakness, and it is these things that make me doubt, and it seems to me that all evils rise from unbelief. But it is Jesus' name that calms our fears, and bids our sorrows cease.

I must close. This is more than I had thought of writing. Excuse all errors. I shall be looking for a letter from you (please) real soon.

I remain an unworthy friend,

GERTRUDE PYATT.

BATH, Maine, April 10, 1927.

DEAR SISTER BONNIE:—Wordly things seem to have taken my time for the last two or three weeks, as much as I try to prevent it, many times I feel that I cannot do as I would, and how I hate myself for it. Sister Bonnie, I feel I am living in a land of strangers. I cannot talk to them of the things that are dear to me and nearest my heart, they do not understand me, even in my own home, and sometimes it is hard. But God is good to me, for he gives me faith to believe that he will give me strength to continue to hold fast to the end. I feel so unworthy of his goodness, and still it is manifest to me day by day.

I had a lovely letter from sister Nellie. I think she is wonderfully blessed with an insight into God's word. She speaks of the gift of the knowledge of Christ, and says it ought to employ our whole mind, and I, too, sister Bonnie, think so. It seems sometimes when I have to talk of other things, go and do things not pertaining to God's word, that I am wasting much valuable time. Things of this world come thick and fast and I get very tired, and feel that if I could only get away and be by myself for even a little while how good it would be and how restful. If it were not for the nice letters I get life would be kind of a blank.

I liked Elder Dodson's sermon on Hebrews x. 23, 24. I read it three times. I often think of our Association this year at Whitefield, and think of what a sweet peaceful place it was two years ago, and wonder if I will have that rest and peace come to me as I did then. It is the one time of my life I look to with a longing to feel again. Elder Dodson says, "He is faithful that promised," and we know he is always near to comfort. I can also remember how I cried out of the depth of my heart for forgiveness. It seems at times I could say with the dear Savior, as he said on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" I felt at that time that if he had forsaken me it was no more than I deserved, for it seemed that God could never have anything to do with one so vile. But I was to learn of his wonderful kindness and of his mercy, and I was given it at the Association. If I could only tell others of those things, but I suppose they are for me alone. It seems as I think of those times I can say that my heart burns within me. There are some things I cannot tell, but you, sister, know them. One is that joyful sound, and when God sees fit he makes the heart sing within you.

What a wonderful being that can make a being thrill with the love of Jesus Christ in his heart. I often wish God would give me words to sing his praise to my satisfaction, and then I think he knows best, for I might be like the fool known by his much talking. Never satisfied, I am a very ungrateful person, still there are times when I feel satisfied. Always wanting something not good for me, but the all-wise Being who rules in heaven and in earth knows our needs. "He is faithful that promised," and it reads, "But without faith it is impossible to please him." Sister Bonnie, we know he is faithful, and we know what he has shed abroad in our hearts, so how can we help having faith? He has given it to us, "and if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." These words sound good to me, and I often wonder what share they hold for me: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." We are told, "We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope. * * * But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." How one could write on and on and tell of the sinner's hope. Do you ever think and think about these things until it seems you grow weak in thinking and it seems as if you had to get away into the woods, or somewhere that you could see nothing made by man, but just God's handiwork, and it would be rest? But the flesh will always be present with us in this world, and it is right that it should.

Well, sister, I guess this is enough, for I do not want to tire you. I shall be glad when I hear that you are coming to Maine, and it is near the time of our meeting.

With love and fellowship to you from sister Rachel,

MRS. RACHEL DATTER.

SPRINGFIELD, Illinois.

DEAR EDITORS:—Through the abiding mercy of the never-failing sovereign Lord of all I am addressing you, the household of faith, and through our family paper, after several years of silence because of home environments that practically left me stranded as to church privileges and association with those of like precious faith. Now I find myself inadequate, both physically and spiritually, to put thoughts into words and sentences to reach the hearts of the weary and heavy laden that they may have comfort and peace of soul. God alone, in his matchless wisdom, can do this. He is a Spirit and seeks such to worship him as do worship in spirit and in truth, and until the Spirit takes of the things of God and shews them unto us all our efforts to worship him acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, will be in vain. While in the years gone by I have drank deeply of the waters of affliction, yet the Lord has always proved a very present help in every time of adversity and trouble. There have been times when my pathway seemed dark and forbidding, tempestuous billows lashed furiously about me, shutting out the joy of salvation, the light of peace and hope became dismally obscured, the river of water of life ceased to come into my soul, the heavenly manna that had appeased my hunger in other days of want and sorrow was withheld, the heart once filled with

praise and thanksgiving to the Lord become stubborn and unbelieving, and out of the depths have I cried, "Bow down thine ear, O Lord, hear me; for I am poor and needy." "Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul." Truly God's ways are in the deep. Even there he can restore unto his children the joy of salvation and lead them in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. How helpless and dependent we are when for a moment the Lord withdraws his helpful arm. Then how unspeakably wonderful when he opens the windows of heaven and with great mercy he gathers them in his arms again. Thus the Lord "raiseth up the poor out of the dust," and the trembling, faltering, dependent little child once more realizes what the psalmist said, viz., "He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake." The songs of Zion become once more sweet and musical. Faith, sweet living faith abounds in heart and soul, because of the never-failing "fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness," and this is equivalent to what is expressed in the beautiful hymn:

> "There is a fountain filled with blood,
> Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
> And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
> Lose all their guilty stains."

Here, too, we are reminded of the Lord's message by the prophet Isaiah: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem [Zion or church], and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double [a full, complete measure] for all her sins." The warfare will go on as long as we are in the flesh, but the victory of the cross was complete. In all our afflictions the blessed Jesus was afflicted; yea, more, when we remember Gethsemane and the weary way to Calvary. Our sins, our cruel sins, past, present and to come were laid to his account. Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. The inheritance of the saints, incorruptible and undefiled, and that fades not away, is the purchase of the blood of Christ, the one only offering which perfected them that were sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, who maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. Now, dear, trembling, halting child, your pathway may appear to be dark, dreary and cumbered with harrowing thorns, and you are near fainting by the way, pause and think for a moment, turn your eyes back to the magic scene in Gethsemane, and compare these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, to the agonizing appeal to the Father that the cup might pass, but "nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done." The law claimed its victim and Jesus bore the cross alone. His children are not alone, for Jesus, the good Shepherd, lives and intercedes for them. They have a constant "advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

This may be my last message direct to you, only God knows, and I want to impress upon you that after nearly sixty-seven years of my feeble attempts to preach Christ and him crucified the promises of the Lord have never failed to support me, even in the very darkest moments of my life, when I could lose sight of all human strength and give all into his gracious hands. Remember the Savior's words: "Without me ye can do nothing." "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Yours in blessed hope,

J. G. SAWIN.

ATLANTIC, N. C., June 27, 1927.

DEAR BROTHER VAUGHN:—It is with fear and a great deal of timidity that I undertake to write you this morning, but I must undertake it. I am thinking of Esau and Jacob, the sons of Isaac by his wife, Rebekah. They represent the chosen of God in the case of Jacob and the nonelect in the case of Esau. They were just as much two men as they would have been if they had had two sets of parents. Jacob and Israel represent the flesh and the Spirit. They are both in one: one is now the servant of God, and the other is governed by him, and in the arrangement of grace will eventually be sweetly united in the kingdom of God. This will be when the old man (the carnal mind) is completely destroyed, to live no more forever. We have no promise that the carnal mind shall ever be made a spiritual mind or know anything of the Spirit; to the contrary, the carnal mind is enmity to God, not subject to the will of God, nor can it ever be. This enemy shall be fully destroyed in death, while that which is spiritual shall be delivered in the life of our dear Jesus. Esau showed that he was of this world. He never showed any sign of love to God nor any of his ways. If he did I do not find it in the word of God. But sometimes Jacob fainted and Israel spoke the praises of eternal God, and He is called the God of Jacob. Just so when we are so afflicted that we have no confidence in the flesh, or Jacob, we are pleased to serve and please God. We cannot please God in the flesh. They that are in the flesh cannot please God. Not that they do not want to, but they cannot please him. Therefore we must be brought to have no confidence in the flesh before we can please him. This is one reason why I cannot accept any conditions in the service of our God, but must believe that all is absolute. In the days of old Noah was the only preacher of righteousness, and we do not hear of him trying to get any one to help him hold a protracted meeting to get these antediluvians to believe his teachings. God had ordained to destroy them and he did not hold out any inducement to them to believe what Noah preached, nor send any other preacher because Noah was too old-fashioned to do a good work. It is a significant fact that Noah did not make a single convert in the five hundred years he was preaching. He would have made a very poor Missionary, but he did the will of God, and it accomplished the purpose of God. So it is with all the Lord has called to do his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. I do not know what is the Lord's will concerning Esau, and I dare not say. The same is true concerning Jacob, but they will both do the purpose of God. That cannot be thwarted by any one nor in any way. I am God and will do all my pleasure, saith the Lord.

My brother, I did not think to say much. I feel that I love Jacob, and wanted to say something about him. I do not think the Lord has any place in his church for the sons of Esau, nor will he ever have. I am satisfied they are just as well satisfied with their position as the sons of Jacob are. It is like they were in the days before the flood. Noah preached, but the wicked world attended their own business until the waters were on the earth. We have no record that one ever believed his teaching, or ever wanted to enter the ark. The reason is they were not commanded to do so. I have no thought that any one but those commanded will ever want to enter into Christ, the eternal Ark of salvation.

Just those the Lord calls, that many, and no more, will be all he will own in the day of reckoning, that will be the fullness of the train of the Lord Jesus Christ, all the heirs of promise. Is not that enough? What would we do with more? Have we any place to put more? If so, where is it? No, they are the heirs of promise and the fullness of the kingdom of our God and a sufficiency with all his saints. Not one left out and not one added. It is done, well done.

Brother Vaughn, you and others who may read this must bear with me. I have written it by littles, as I had to do, for I cannot commence and write through as I once did. Do with it as you think best, and all will be well with me.

Yours in hope and love,

L. H. HARDY.

SHILOH, Ark., May 25, 1927.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In renewing my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES I am also sending a letter to the paper for publication, if you think fit and worthy. What I hope the Lord has done for me I once thought I could do for myself, accept Jesus at any time or place I wished or thought proper. I had need of the pleasures of the world and was not much afraid but what I would do it, until the year 1875, when the hand of death first broke our family. We just had one darling girl, a few days over thirteen months of age, and as the hand of death took her away I began to think that if God had seen fit to take me instead of her, what would have been my fate. That caused some serious thought upon my eternal destiny. I soon fell in line with my faith and set a determined resolution to leave off my sins, which I thought but few, just three, swearing, getting drunk and horse-racing. I soon had them (in my own mind) cast from me. I had wandered away from the house and seated myself by an old forest-oak, so I arose and started homeward. It was the first day of October we laid her away to rest. In a few days I went to my work of gathering my cotton crop. I had a fine horse, well cared for, and I tied him to a swinging limb and went on to prepare a cotton-pen. The horse tore off the limb and came tearing through the well opened cotton. I cursed before I thought. I decided to watch closer and not to do it again, but in a few days I forgot again. So it went on until the third time, when I ceased trying, for it seemed no use for me to try. I got worse, and cursed when mad or in a good humor, until my friends said I cursed when asleep. Then in 1887 it pleased God to visit my family again with the hand of death. We had three children, two boys and one girl four years old. God took the little girl, her mother's favorite. My wife had a hope in Christ, and would often pray for me. The night before the little girl died we were all alone. I thought her asleep with her face turned toward me. Her mother was on the opposite side of the bed, when the little one turned to her mother and said, Here is room. At the time I looked at it this way: There is plenty of bed room, but when death rested on her little frame and I saw it I began to seriously reflect. I believed there was room for her mother, but oh! where was I? God pity any one in my condition. I had made promises and broken them until I could do that no more. My heart was shrouded in darkness when several friends came in to help wait on the darling child, and I wandered away in the dark to pray. I tried every way I could think of, but got no relief. I thought of an old Presbyterian preacher

once talking to some mourners, he told them to say, "Here, Lord, I give myself away, it is all that I can do." I repeated those words, but no relief came and my burden seemed heavier. I tried again, when my strength seemed taken from me, and I fell to the ground. When I arose something spoke to my troubled heart, and seemed to ask if I could trust in God at this time. I thought, Cannot you give up your darling baby? I spoke out, Yes, Lord, wife and both the others. I felt perfectly reconciled to God, praising him for the grace and strength to bear my troubles. It has been his good will to take away my wife and one of the boys, so I have only one boy left to me. He is twenty-five years old and not home much, so I live a lonely life. From my first little hope I felt myself a disobedient servant, if one at all, and began praying God to spare my family. I felt I could bear anything but giving them up. I was trying to choose my way of being chastised. I would ofttimes think of being banished for my sins. It seemed to me it would be like John on the isle of Patmos. But I find that God can banish one, and him in his own native land. I am a wanderer here, but what I am is hard to know. I wish to have your prayers. I love to read your letters, and am getting old and cannot do much but read.

Yours truly,

W. T. BIRDSONG.

BUCYRUS, Ohio.

MR. JAMES BUCKWALTER—DEAR BROTHER:—Your kind and welcome letter was received some time ago, and I was glad to hear from you, and that you were all in medium health, and hope this may find all well. I have tried to write an answer to your letter several times, but when I get ready find I am so barren of anything of interest to one of the Lord's dear children that I just have to give up trying, and I do not feel any more capable at this time. I was very sorry to miss the December meeting, but my wife was very poorly and I was afraid to leave her alone over night. But the Lord brought her through, and she is better again. While sitting here resting, after getting home from Delaware, I have thought some of the sabbath of rest spoken of in the Scriptures, and of how it corresponds with the modern idea of the sabbath, or Sunday as observed to-day. In the first place, one cannot rest unless one is weary, and no rest is promised except to those who are weary and heavy laden. The blessed Master says, Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest. Again, There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. Not a seventh day or a first day rest, but a rest that remaineth, a rest into which they enter when they have ceased from their own works as God did from his, and we are told that the Lord created the heaven and the earth, and finished all his works and rested on the seventh day, so with the heirs of promise they worked and tried everything and every way to bring themselves into favor with God, until the Lord showed them that all their works were nothing; that they were justly condemned by a righteous and holy law, and that there was only one way of escape, and that was through the satisfying of that law, every jot and tittle, and they were made to see that was utterly impossible. They had worked until they were weary and heavy laden and were made to cry, Lord, save or we perish, and now he appears unto them as the sabbath of rest into which all of those who are

weary and heavy laden do enter and find rest to their souls. They see how he has fulfilled the law in their name and stead, and redeemed them from under its curse, clothed them with that righteousness which he brought out for his church when he died on the cross and bore their sins in his own body and delivered them from under the curse of the law and blotted out the handwriting of ordinances, &c., and declared unto them that there remaineth a rest to the children of God, no more legal works or offerings, no more sacrifices for sin, for by the one offering he has perfected them that are sanctified or set apart as his chosen vessels of mercy, and are partakers of that inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, which is reserved in heaven for them that are kept by the power of God through faith ready to be revealed at the last time, and knowing these things they do enter into rest. They rest in the finished work of Christ and look to him as the author and finisher of their faith. No more do they cry, Do, do, but it is done, it is finished, the work is complete and finished, nothing for man to work out or accomplish, for when the blessed Lamb of God bled and died for the sins of his bride he cried, It is finished, all that the Father gave him to do, and according to his own word that was to save his people from their sins, redeem them from all iniquity and purify them unto himself, so well might the apostle declare that this rest remaineth to, or for the children of God, and the old prophet declare, Comfort ye my people, cry unto them that their warfare is accomplished, that their iniquity is pardoned, for they have received of the Lord's hand double for all their sins, and they shall enter into that rest that remains, and with that hope which is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth that within the vail, look forward to the time when these vile bodies shall be changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body and they shall see him as he is and be satisfied. On the other side, the laws of our land have set apart the first day of the week as the sabbath, but by reading the Scriptures we find that in all the crimes charged to Israel from the time of creation until the Lord rained manna in the wilderness they were never charged with the crime of sabbath-breaking, and here for the first time they were commanded to remember the sabbath, not as a day set apart for worship and visiting, but as a day of rest. No one was allowed to gather manna or go out of his tent on that day, and in the decalogue it was written to remember the sabbath-day to keep it holy. It did not require either faith or grace to keep the day holy, for all it required was a cessation from all manual labor; and if one did any labor, such as gathered sticks, kindled a fire or lift their tents the penalty was death. How will this compare with the Sunday of our day? They have not only changed the day from the seventh to the first, but they have changed the entire meaning of the command. They say works of necessity or chastity are all right, but we find no law or command in the Scriptures requiring any one under the new covenant to keep any day of the week as the sabbath, for Paul says, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come," and all point to the substance, which Paul says is Christ, the rest that remaineth to the children of God, and may we all be enabled by his grace to rest in him, to

enter into that rest and to look unto him as the author and finisher of our faith, as our Surety, Redeemer, Prophet, Priest and King.

Well, dear brother, I must close. I have not written as I had thought, but have just penned these thoughts as they came, if after careful perusal you think there is anything in it that would be of comfort to the children scattered abroad you can send it to the SIGNS, and let them use their judgment as to whether it will do to publish or not.

Hoping to hear from you again soon, and to see you at meeting whenever the Lord opens the way, and with love to brother Joe and all the family, and inquiring friends, I am, your unworthy brother and pastor, in hope,

C. E. JACKSON.

LA GRANDE, Ore., June 26, 1927.

DEAR EDITORS:—If you think it profitable to the household of faith, I shall be glad to have published in the SIGNS the following information: There is an Old School Baptist Church at Weiser, Idaho, called Salem, one at Elgin, Oregon, called Big Spring, and another at Touchet, Washington, called Mizpah. These churches are on the highways and railroad, and on a direct line about 125 miles apart, with Elgin in the center. A few years ago the Elders organized these churches in a Union, known as The Border Union of Old School Baptists, and since that time an annual meeting is held each year with one of the churches, in June, at the time of the regular meeting of that church. This Union meeting is similar to an association, but the purpose of it is for worship and the business as of an association is omitted, except to receive letters and reports from the churches of the Union. These Union meetings have been of increased interest every year, and since our improved highways and automobiles make it possible for so many to attend them they are looked forward to with much anxiety, and those attending are blessed with the fullness of the gospel message. The total membership of these three churches is about seventy, all sound orderly Baptists, mostly from the east. We shall gladly welcome any brethren or Elders desiring to locate or visit with us. The meeting was held this year in June with the church at Elgin, and I have not language to express the blessings of joy and fellowship that was then manifested. Next June we are to meet with the brethren at Weiser, Idaho, where a welcome is extended to lovers of the truth. Our brethren and friends traveling our highways at any time will do well to remember these meeting-places and stop with us.

For the prosperity of Zion,

C. W. BOND.

FARMINGTON, Kentucky.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Find inclosed two dollars, for which please continue to send the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to my address. The dear old paper comes laden with too many good things for me to think of laying it down as long as I am able to pay for it. I will write some thoughts for its readers, and if you think them suitable you may publish them; if not, all will be right with me. Unconditional election, salvation of the elect by grace unconditional, I think I believe this doctrine, but it is of no use to say I believe it unless I can prove it, so I will try and give you the search I made some years ago for the truth of this doctrine: Is it the truth that God has a chosen or an elect people here in the world? 1 Thess. i. 4: "Knowing, brethren be-

loved, your election of God." I know God has an elect people here in this world, and knowing this it made me want to know when and where this election took place, and what those creatures did or what condition they performed to become elect. Ephesians i. 4: God has chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world. Then I knew, and now know, God has an elect people here in this world, and that their election took place before the world was. I then wanted to know, and I still want to know what conditions the creatures performed that moved God to make the choice when as yet there were no creatures. Now I know God's purpose according to election stands, not of works, but of God that calleth, and knowing unconditional election stands according to the purpose of God, it makes me want to know if after all this if he winds them up in conditionalism; or, in other words, I want to know if the salvation of the elect here in time is conditional on their part? 2 Thess. ii. 13: "We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation." Now I know the salvation of the elect is unconditional on their part here in time, their salvation comes wrapped up in the same bundle with their election, chosen from the beginning to salvation; not chosen halfway to salvation, and then walk, or work, the other half, but they are chosen to salvation. Salvation is what they are elected or chosen to, and there is no space between election and salvation to perform conditions; it is the same lump. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God to the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, then elected to salvation, for the blood of Jesus saves, it cleanseth us from sin. All the spiritual blessings of the elect come according to God's choice of them. Then if their election is sure and unconditional, even so are all their blessings sure and unconditional, then if all their blessings come according to their election, or according to God's choice of them before the foundation of the world, then it is certain they do not get one blessing according to what they do. If the children could get salvation by their works, salvation would not be by grace at all, but would come to them as a debt paid for the work done, without one particle of grace in it, for to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt, so salvation is by grace, now, and in all time to come.

A poor sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all,

J. B. ADAMS.

PRINCETON, Ky., April 20, 1927.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have often thought of trying to write for publication, but when I turn my eyes within all is vain and dark, so I can scarcely deem myself a child, yet, if not mistaken, I do love the principles of life and salvation advocated by the SIGNS and its many writers and supporters, who become as a great number of witnesses who are faithful and true, and I often feel while reading with tear-dimmed eyes from the pens of the ready writers that I would like to reach forth and give them a hearty hand shake as a token of love and fellowship, which I do hope is begotten within by our blessed Lord and Master, without the help of poor, puny, weak and sinful man. We read in God's word that we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began. Then he being a faithful and true witness of himself, it matters but little with

me at times what people say or do concerning so great relationship, for I am persuaded it is all of grace, nothing good that I ever did, but it is all of the Lord, who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast.

I am making this too long, so will just say that inclosed you will find a money order for five dollars, for which please give me credit on my subscription for the years 1926 and 1927, and the remaining dollar you may use as you see fit. I hope to be able to mail you another order in the near future, if the Lord will, but if I cannot you will please discontinue the dear SIGNS until I can. I do not see how I can do without it, but I do not want to be a burden to you, so I hope I will be able to remit for the year 1928.

If you are ever given a mind to turn your thoughts toward me in asking for God's mercy for this little weak one, please do so.

Your little sister, with a precious hope of rest beyond this vale of tears,

(MRS.) W. E. McGREGOR.

EUREKA, Kansas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The past year I have enjoyed reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for it is a feast to us lone pilgrims as we journey here below as our blessed Master opens our understanding to understand what you write to us. I surely try to thank him who is the Giver of every perfect gift for such men as you all are to declare the whole counsel of God with such meekness. Praise the Lord, O my soul, let all that is within me praise his holy name. God bless you, dear brethren, and enable you in the future, as he hath in the past, to continue to publish the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES to the comfort and edification of the Lord's humble poor. Pray for poor me when you are at the throne of your eternal Father, for I am nothing but a sinner still, and if not saved by grace I am not saved.

I inclose two dollars to renew my subscription another year. Send to the same address, 121 North School Street, Eureka, Kansas. The Lord leads his sheep out into pastures all fertile and green, and by his own hand he guides them all the way from earth to heaven. Farewell, dear brethren. C. A. HUNT.

ATTENTION, ASSOCIATION CLERKS!

OUR directions for mailing the corresponding Minutes to the different associations are very old, and as we have recently received word of Minutes not reaching the association to which they were sent, we would suggest the clerks of the different associations send us their names and addresses so we may revise our mailing list. We use all the care we can in mailing these packages, but if the person to whom we have been directed to send them dies or changes his address and we are not notified of the fact we do not feel we should be censured if the Minutes go astray, so please send us the name and address of the person to whom you wish us to send the Minutes of the associations with which your association corresponds.

J. E. B. & CO.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Mrs. J. A. Phillips requests us to state that her address has been changed from Rives, Tennessee, to 229 Moody Avenue, Martin, Tennessee, and she asks her correspondents to address her at the latter place.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Lena Langford, Cal., $1.50; J. N. Hill, Ill., $1.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1927.

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Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.
Elder George Ruston, Kelly Corners, N. Y.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
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PSALMS L. 2.

"OUT of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined."

First, we desire to call the attention of our readers to the perfection of God in the Trinity, as he is God. "Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God."—Isaiah xliv. 8. The Trinity of the Godhead includes Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."—John i. 1. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."—Gen. i. 1. These expressions bring to our minds the perfection and unity of the Godhead and all the Godhead embraces, perfect wisdom in creating and predestinating all things by his mighty power. As we look about us in natural wisdom we are made to note every herb, yielding seed and all animal and vegetable are perfect in his divine decree, and are made to fill the purpose for which he created them. "And hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."—Acts xvii. 26. And in his perfection he created separate every nationality in the first man Adam. We are speaking of God in his perfection and work, and we do not mean or infer that all nations of men are perfect, but that God's work in creation is perfect, and all things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to his purpose. The differences in men are classified into five great races, and to us the customs and order of living are very much varied, yet God's word shall not be moved, and all must come to one great end. The above statements testify of things in nature, and we note that "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined," so the perfection of beauty comes out of Zion. Zion is the city of God and hath foundations, and other foundations can no man lay than is laid, and no foundation could have eternal life like God's foundation. The word of God declares, Behold, I lay in Zion, a tried stone, elect, precious chief corner stone, which, according to the Scripture, was Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The inhabitants of Zion are members of the bride of Christ, members one of another, and members in particular. Our bodies are composed of many members, and, according to God's will and purpose, work together with such pleasure to serve the body in the unity by which they are one body. The body of the bride of Christ, or the bride of Christ, has many members, all doing the will of God, which is done by the working of God's mighty power in each member, working both to will and to do of his good pleasure. The perfection of all beauty shines out of her (the Zion of our God), that there is no spot in her, and is beautiful to behold. No eye has ever beheld her except the eye of the God-given faith that is in every one that is born of an incorruptible seed by the word of God

Jesus declared of her that she was all fair, and that there was no spot in her. Her salvation is everlasting. She is saved by the Lord. One, speaking of her garments, said they were of fine needlework and she was glorious in her apparel. John saw her coming down from God out of heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, and another, speaking of her, saw a wonder in heaven, "a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet." All beauty that can be perceived cannot be compared to the beauty that shines forth from Zion. The Sun of righteousness is her illumination, the glory in the midst and the light round about. When we look upon Zion we behold the blood-bought throng, which are poor sinners saved by grace. No people can be like the people saved by the Lord. Jesus was sent of the Father to save his people from their sins. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, for it separates from the power of death and brings them into the kingdom of God's dear Son, and of peace and increase they shall know no end.

There are many expressions to which we feel to call attention as to Zion, which was a hill in the midst of Jerusalem, upon which the palace of King David rested, and he was the man who wrote the Psalms which come to us experimentally, for they testify of the depths of God's riches in our hearts. James says, "Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works."—James ii. 18. If we have faith we will be concerned in the peace and welfare of Zion. Humility, love and beauty in perfection are beheld by every one brought from darkness to His marvelous light. They, in his light, see just the personality of self, and are made to cry, Unclean, unworthy to be in the midst of such beauty, and with fervency call out, Rock of ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee. This bride, the Lamb's wife, beholds her children, and with tenderness and love embraces the poor ones, and while in such embrace they cry, "Unworthy," beholding her in such glorious apparel, and their garments are so unclean. All her paths are peace and her ways are righteousness. Sin is mixed with all I do, and for me to be in her company would defile her that shines in perfection of beauty. Oh, the cry comes from the heart of this poor, vile, destitute one, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee," for I am alone in the world and unless the blessings you have are bestowed I must perish. Then the Zion of our God, the church of God, the pillar and ground of the truth, which is one and the same, says, Come home. By the strength of the power of the Father this poor child is brought in and given honey in the honeycomb and milk. We trust we love Zion because of the many things we have seen of her. We love to serve her entire body, as such peace and harmony exists in all her body, and we would be perfect if we could, but we know when we would do good evil is present, and instead of getting better we see we are more vile, which presses us down and we are made to declare of a truth,

"Mixtures of joy and sorrow
We daily do pass through."

"Mid scenes of confusion and creature complaints
How sweet to my soul is communion with saints."

Brethren, sisters and friends, look upon Zion and behold the perfection of her beauty, and may we be kept from trying with works of righteousness that we can do to put any defiled garment upon her garments. God hath shined out of Zion

unto a perfect day, when every one chosen in Christ from before the foundation of the world will be saved with an everlasting salvation, which is by grace and grace alone, and will shine in the perfection of the Son of God, and the message will be given, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you." This whole world is not rich enough to purchase the perfection of one of the members of her (Zion) body's perfection in Christ. Of this glorious city and the perfection of her beauty we cannot write the half, and the half has never been told, for "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined."

C. W. V.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder R. Lester Dodson.)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, convened at New Vernon, Sullivan Co., N. Y., June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1927, to the churches of which she is composed, sendeth greetings in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—At our last session Deacon H. T. Lefferts was appointed to write the Circular Letter for this year, but he has insisted he could not do it, and, being urged by him, the writer undertakes it. The purpose of a letter of this character is to communicate to those of like precious faith, especially those with whom we correspond, what we believe and where we stand concerning one or more of the points of doctrine and the truth of God our Savior. Throughout all ages of the world Israel, because of the weakness of the flesh, has, from time to time, departed from the way of the true and living God, but it has been said that never has God left himself without a true prophet or witness. It, therefore, behooves the band of believers constituting the Warwick Old School Baptist Association to make certain of their ground and to use great care and clarity of speech in sending forth their message of love. The importance of this is greatly accentuated to-day by reason of the uncertain sound which is being heard in various quarters of what purports to be the camp of Israel. We can expect no less of those who are aliens and enemies to God, but we should and do expect better things of those claiming to be friends and brethren. We would, therefore, earnestly desire to present the truth in such light as will establish and bind us more closely together and that much people may be saved from the false delusions and error which are abroad in our land. The words which we wish to analyze, in part, at this time are those of a true and faithful prophet: "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."—Jer. x. 23. It is clearly to be seen that the language has to do with a living character, one who has been regenerated and born of the Spirit, because the man "walketh." The dead cannot and do not walk. Many are free to acknowledge God's sovereign and independent work in quickening and making alive, but they teach that "possessing life" it is in man that walketh to direct his steps. Such teaching is absolutely contrary to and opposes the truth, and there is not a "Thus saith the Lord" for it in all the inspired and sacred volume, yet thousands are so imbued and saturated with this falsehood that they seem determined to preach it until the end of time. It is contrary to the life of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, Job, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, the three Hebrew children, Jonah and all the other prophets and spiritual characters of the Old Testament. It was not the life, nor is it the teaching

of the great Head of the church, neither of any of his apostles, from the least to the greatest of them. Jesus declared, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me;" also, "I can of mine own self do nothing." Paul said, "The good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do;" also, "For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." He affirmed, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." This harmonizes with what the Master said as recorded by John: "I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." The branch cannot bear fruit of itself. The prophet whose words we are considering said in connection with them, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself." We are told plainly, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Notwithstanding the great cloud of witnesses found in the divine record, men will persist in denying the truth, but where is the true minister or child of God who can truthfully say they ever have or are now directing their steps? Are not all continually confessing to being brought by a way they knew not, to being led into paths they have not known; that the Lord hath made darkness light, crooked things straight, rough places smooth and the desert to blossom as the rose? It has all been the work of him who "made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his understanding," for he is the former of all things; and Israel is the rod of his inheritance and Jacob is his portion. This we trust is the God of our life, for

"The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will."

Each day, and every hour in the day, brings new and unmistakable proof to us that "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," and how comforting and consoling to be assured by God's word that such is the lot of his chosen and redeemed people. Even with regard to the things of this natural life, is there a single child of God who can boast that he is able to direct his steps? Reviewing our own course from the time of our earliest recollection to the present moment, we are compelled to say,

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will."

We are still walking by faith, not because we really want to, but because we are so hedged in and about that we cannot choose our way. Our hope is that God is guiding, directing and instructing us in the way of righteousness. This letter is being written while we are out upon one of God's great oceans, with no visible evidence whatever of land, and how we do wish that the mind and heart of all who love the Lord in sincerity and in truth could be lifted above earth and earthly things and be fixed, immovably, upon the eternal truth of our blessed God, rendering unto him undivided honor and praise and abasing the creature where he belongs. As we pen these words we realize our physical presence

here upon the mighty deep is not a way of our own choosing, but through bodily affliction necessity has been laid upon us and we were compelled to seek rest and health, and is it not true of things that are spiritual that none will seek after God unless by reason of circumstances and need they are forced to look and cry unto him who is their strength? And

"How strange is the course that a christian must steer,
How perplexed is the way he must tread;
The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
And his life he receives from the dead."

This truth men and devils will assail and endeavor with all their powers to overthrow, but vile infernals cannot prevail. God is above all and none can stay his hand. Those who do not understand the truth criticise us for believing and preaching the doctrine of the predestination of all things and at the same time opposing those who preach and teach falsely. They say, If God has in his infinite wisdom determined beforehand the coming to pass of all things and events, we should fold our hands and sit down calmly and silently, lest we be found fighting against God. Thus do they err and show their ignorance and lack of understanding of the Scriptures. God's purpose and predestination has not stopped where they seem to think it has, but it actually embraces ALL THINGS, even to the raising up of men in all ages of the world who would choose to be burned at the stake, head downward, rather than yield an inch of ground so God-honoring and glorifying as that of his sovereignty over all worlds, principalities and powers. We only need call Jude as a witness to prove that certain ungodly men were before of old ordained to a certain condemnation, who turned the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denied the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. At the same time, Jude said it was needful that he should write to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called, and exhort them that they "should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." God does not work at cross purposes, however bewildered some may become in trying to search him out by natural wisdom. His judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out, and while he blinds the eyes of some, that they should not see, others he opens and reveals unto them the beauty and grandeur of the things of his kingdom. He may, and did, raise up a Pharaoh, and may, and did, direct that his people should go do down into captivity and bondage, yet he never did, and never will, leave them there, but calls and qualifies leaders, such as Moses, to lead them out of error, and such leaders will make no compromise; not an hoof can be left behind, but the whole counsel of God must be declared and the deliverance of his people shall be perfect in every sense of the word, and not a dog shall wag his tongue, or bark, to arouse the enemy against the complete salvation of the children of Israel. While Christ was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and was taken by wicked hands and crucified and slain, nevertheless, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil," which was accomplished when he arose from the dead and was exalted at the right hand of God, with all power in heaven and earth given into his hands. Thus it is seen "that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." It is becoming in man to stand still and know that he is God.

Submitted as the letter of this Association for the consideration of her kindred in Christ, in the hope that the Lord will give us understanding in all things needful for the welfare of Zion and keep us faithfully in the strait and narrow way.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.

HENRY T. LEFFERTS, Clerk.

THE NEW VERNON CHURCH.

A REVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH SINCE ITS ORGANIZATION, ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

Letter Appears to Have Been Written in 1885.

THE second day's services in celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the organization of the Old School Baptist Church at New Vernon were held Sunday. There was a large attendance and much interest was manifested. The service was opened with preaching by Elder W. J. Purrington, of New Jersey, from the ninth and tenth verses of the third chapter of Zephaniah. After the sermon an intermission was taken, during which dinner was served, as on the previous day. In the afternoon Elder William L. Beebe, of Warwick, N. Y., preached from John iii. 14, 15. The closing sermon was preached by Elder St. John, of Watkins, whose text was the first clause of the fifteenth verse of the first chapter of Luke. The service was closed by remarks from the pastor, Elder Benton Jenkins, of this village. The church was organized March 2nd, 1785, with a membership of sixteen persons, and the meetings for many years were held in the houses and barns of the members in the neighborhood. The organization meeting was conducted by Elder James Finn, of Pittston, Pa.,—The Deerpark Primitive Baptist Church, the organization taking place in what was then the town of Deerpark, in Sullivan County. The first pastor was Elder Eleazor Welsh, who came from Pennsylvania, and at whose house the services were held for several years before the erection of the first church. Elder Welsh participated in the battle of Wyoming and was wounded and left to die on the field of battle, but a horse happening to pass near him at night, he caught it, and making a bridle of bark, mounted the animal and rode some distance, where he found friends who cared for him until his wounds had healed. Elder Welsh served as pastor for nine years, when he died. His remains now lie in the cemetery which was once a part of the Whitlock farm, in the town of Mount Hope. The second pastor of the church was Elder Benjamin Montanye, who was called in June, 1794. The present site of the church was selected in 1807, and the first church building was erected the following year. This was a small frame structure and in those days was considered a fine church for the back woods of Orange County. This building was replaced by the present neat and commodious church about thirty years ago, and the latter is within a few feet of the foundation of the old building. Elder Montanye served as pastor of the church until his death in 1825, and his remains were interred on Christmas Day of that year. In February, 1826, Elder Gilbert Beebe, who had filled the pulpit during the illness and after the death of Elder Montanye, was called to the pastorate, and with the exception of two years, during which he preached in Alexandria, Va., and the pulpit was filled by Elder Broome, of Sullivan County, he continued in charge of the church until his death, May 2nd, 1881.

May 25th, 1826, the name of the church was changed to the "New Vernon Primitive Baptist Church," which it still bears. September 3rd, 1881, Elder Benton Jenkins, the present pastor, who had for several years preached at New Vernon as the assistant of Elder Beebe, was called to the pastorate. During the hundred years of its existence this church has had but three pastors. The first pastor of the Deerpark Primitive Baptist Church, Elder Welsh, served nine years; Elder Montanye thirty-two years. Elder Beebe served the New Vernon Church fifty-five years. Elder Jenkins served seventeen years. The following ministers were licensed and ordained in the Deerpark Church: Elder Amos Harding, licensed in 1813, and ordained January 27th, 1825; Elder Gabriel Conkling, licensed July 31st, 1829, and ordained soon after; Elder Daniel Harding, licensed to preach in December, 1852, and shortly afterward ordained. Elder Conkling, both the Hardings, and Elders Montanye and Beebe, former pastors of the church under two names, lie buried in the cemetery at New Vernon. The body of Elder Beebe rests under the spot upon which was located the pulpit of the old church building. The first person buried in the cemetery was Mrs. Eustich, a daughter of Elder Montanye.

Elder H. C. Ker served as pastor for twenty-three years and six months, whose presence we are favored with at this our 1927 session of the Association. The organization is now 142 years old, present site 120 years old, present name 101 years of age and present membership eight, or just one-half of the original membership.

[THE New Vernon Church is a member of the Warwick Association, and we feel the forgoing history will be of interest to our readers.—ED.]

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Thomas J. Jones, son of Benjamin and Hannah Snelling Jones, was born May 18th, 1838, and was one, and the tenth child, of twelve children, seven sons and five daughters, and was the last one to be called away. He died April 9th, 1927, at 10 p. m. His companion died May 20th, 1920, and he with his daughter Ellen at home continued to live on the old homestead until November following, when he found, owing to her affliction and he being called from home so much to the care of the churches, it was impossible to live longer at the old home, and he with his daughter went to the home of his daughter Millie and husband, where he found an agreeable and congenial home, pleasant for all. He was united in marriage to Martha J. Bell, September 19th, 1861; to this union were born eight children, three sons and five daughters, of whom only two are living: Frank Jones, of Alabama and Millie Cox, of near Sheridan; he also leaves eight grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren. He was born in Rush County, Indiana, and came with his parents to Boone County when he was eleven years old, where he remained until his death.

When he came to manhood he began life on a farm of forty acres and by hard work and frugal living he managed to obtain a good home of two hundred and thirty acres, on a part of which he ended his days of a long and profitable life, not only to himself, but to all who came in touch with that life. He is gone his works follow him. He united with the Eagle Creek Church of Regular Baptists in Boone County, Indiana, in 1867, in the month of February. In the year 1870 he with eleven others united in the constitution of the Antioch Church, in Boone County, Indiana, which he served as a trustee, clerk, deacon, pastor and moderator, and in the capacity of pastor and moderator he served his church for more than half a century, and ended his work as pastor of his church by preaching his last discourse on New Year's day, while sitting in his chair. He was considered one of the Baptists' strongest ministers and ablest defenders, in both doctrine and practice, conservative, yet firm, and could always be relied upon. In his labors in the ministry he traveled in the states of Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama and Missouri, and was always welcomed by the Baptists.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I am sending you the obituary of Elder T. J. Jones, of Indiana. I was personally acquainted with him, and visited his home, and the Antioch Church, of which he was pastor, three or four times. Also, he was with us twice when the Pocatalico Association convened at my home church (Hopewell). He was a man of a kind fatherly spirit, and we loved him for the truth's sake.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

Mrs. Sarah Vansickler, our beloved sister in Christ, widow of Frank Vansickler, of Arcola, Loudoun County, Va., departed this earthly life at the home of her son, Holmes Vansickler, at Lakeland, Florida, July 30th, 1927. She was born in the neighborhood of Woodburn, this county, October 21st, 1838, and was one of the children of Joseph and Elizabeth Davis. She is the last of her parents' family. Sister Van Sickler is survived by four children, three sons and one daughter, as follows: Mrs. C. J. C. Maffett, of Clarendon, Va., Mr. Joseph Vansickler, near Falls Church, William, living in Washington, D. C., and Holmes Vansickler, in Florida, at whose home she passed away. She was baptized by Elder J. N. Badger on the fourth Sunday in August, 1878, into membership with the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church. For almost forty-nine years she was a faithful and devoted member of the church, a regular attendant at all the meetings, firm in her belief of the doctrine. She had been through many trials and had many cares and burdens, but through them all her faith held unwaveringly She believed in the absolute predestination of all things and in salvation wholly by grace and by grace alone. It was her wish to be brought back to Mt Zion and to be buried there. Her family saw to it that this wish was complied with and all was done for her comfort and welfare that could humanly be done by loving hands and hearts. At her funeral, I used the words in Matthew xi. 28, the same text used by Elder Badger the day of her baptism. Our church has lost a valued member, one devoted to our interests. May the Lord comfort and sustain all those who mourn.

L.

George W. Adkins was born near Parsonsburg, Wicomico Co., Md., March 3rd, 1862, and died July 8th, 1927, aged 65 years, 4 months and 5 days. He was united in marriage to Martha E. Phillips January 20th, 1885, and to that union were born three children: Mrs. Cliff Radcliff, of North Carolina, G. Virgil Adkins, of Salisbury, Md., and Clarence O. Adkins, near Parsonsburg, Md., all of whom survive him; he also leaves one brother W. S. Adkins, of Morgan, Mich., and three sisters: Mrs. Elizabeth Perdue, of Showell, Md.; Misses Rhona and Fannie Adkins, near Parsonsburg, Md.; six grandchildren, beside several other relatives and friends. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Old Baptist Church at Forest Grove by Elder A. B. Francis June 10th, 1894, and remained a faithful member until death. Soon after becoming a member he was elected clerk of the Forest Grove Church, and later was elected assistant clerk of the Salisbury Association, and performed his duty in such a manner as to cause the Salisbury Association to be proud of him. He was a firm believer in predestination, election and salvation by grace. The writer has had the privilege of being at his home and in his company many, many times, therefore has had many pleasant talks with him. He had a pleasant disposition, and when talking of spiritual things never doubted the power of God, believing in one God, the Creator and Ruler of all things. I feel I can say in truth that as a husband, a father, a friend or a brother in the church he was second to none. By his walk he preached what he believed, and by his actions he proved that the hearing of the gospel was indeed food and drink to him. His home was always a welcome place for visitors, especially those of his faith. Not only the Forest Grove Church, but the Salisbury Association has lost a good member, and while we feel a great loss, yet we believe that our loss is his eternal gain. May we all be able to say in spirit and in truth, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

The funeral was conducted by Elder G. E. Coulbourn, who spoke words of comfort to the bereaved family and friends. Interment was in the Forest Grove Cemetery.

Written by request.

A nephew,

GEORGE F. ADKINS.

Miss Marietta Mead was born at Vega, New York, April 14th, 1851, and died at Roxbury, New York, May 20th, 1927. She was the daughter of Erastus and May Mead, both of whom preceded her to the grave. She leaves to mourn their loss one sister, Miss Phebe Mead, two nieces and one nephew. Sister Marietta lived at Vega until the year 1883, when with two sisters, Misses Chloe and Phebe, she moved to a farm at Stratton's Falls, where for seventeen years the Mead girls, as they were affectionately called by brethren and friends, successfully worked the farm and maintained a home always open to those who loved the truth. In the year 1902 they moved to Roxbury village, where they loved to entertain their brethren, and it was our pleasure to occasionally hold services in their home. The Lord cast a shadow over their home by removing the oldest of the three by death, October 11th, 1920; this saddened us all, but especially the two remaining sisters, and we believe sister Marietta never got over that loss. Sister Marietta united with the Old School Baptist Church June 12th, 1892, and from that day to the day of her death she showed by an exemplary walk and godly conversation that she had been with Jesus and learned of him. For twelve years she was clerk of the Second Roxbury Church and faithfully discharged that office until August, 1922, when she resigned. She was a gifted sister, excellently able to express her mind to the comfort and edification of the brethren. Sister Marietta had been failing for a long time, but her end came suddenly. Her remaining sister, Miss Phebe, feels her loss se-

verely, and only the Lord can sustain her under it. The sadness we feel at the loss of a lovely sister is only softened by the blessed thought that she is forever with the Lord.

G. R.

Mr. William Laws departed this life July 5th, 1927, at his home in Ocean City, Md., aged 56 years. He was born in Parsonsburg, Md., December 23rd, 1871. For many years he had been in the employ of the B. C. & A. Railroad and had made many friends by his genial disposition, and his home was always open to his friends and relatives. He was not a member of the church, but a believer in God, and enjoyed the doctrine of salvation by grace. In life and purpose he was one of the finest men I ever knew, a true and faithful friend, a better husband and father cannot be found. His widow, who before her marriage to Mr. Laws was Miss Mazie Parsons, survives him, together with three children: William, Elizabeth and John, one sister, Miss Florence Disharoon, of Philadelphia, Pa., together with several nephews and nieces survive him.

The funeral service was held at his late home, conducted by the writer, and was largely attended by relatives and friends, who came from most every section of our surrounding country to pay their last tribute of respect to "Billy" Laws, by which name he was familiarly known. The interment took place in the family plot in Parson's Cemetery, in Salisbury, Wicomico Co., Md. May the grace of God sustain and comfort the family.

H. C. KER.

MEMORIALS.

Since the last meeting of this Association it has been the pleasure of Almighty God to remove from the church militant to the church triumphant our beloved brother and minister of the gospel, **Elder John G. Eubanks**, therefore,

Resolved, that we place on record this tribute to his memory, and express to all the churches of our correspondence whom he served our sorrow in the loss of one who was an able expounder of the doctrine of God our Savior.

ALSO,

Since the last meeting death has taken from our midst **Deacon R. H. Strong**, clerk of the Warwick Association, whose loss is deeply felt, therefore,

Resolved, that we express to the churches of this Association our sorrow in the loss of this dear brother.

Resolved, that these resolutions be printed in our Minutes and a copy sent to the bereaved family.

R. LESTER DODSON, Moderator.

HENRY T. LEFFERTS, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, at Whitefield, Maine, on Friday before the second Monday in September, and continue three days, Sept. 9th, 10th and 11th, 1927. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at Vega, New York, Wednesday and Thursday, September 15th and 16th, 1927. Trains will be met on Tuesday p. m., at Roxbury, New York. Those coming Wednesday a. m. by train get off at Halcottville, New York. Those coming by auto Tuesday via Oneonta will turn to the left on leaving Roxbury and go to Vega. Those coming via Kingston either go to Elder Ruston's, Kelly Corners, N. Y., or to the Baptist friends at Halcottville, N. Y.

VIRTUE BALLARD, Church Clerk.

Ebenezer Church, Baltimore, Md., will hold an all day meeting on the third Sunday in September (18th), 1927. We desire the brethren, sisters and friends to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The next annual session of the Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to meet at Macedona Schoolhouse, near Dalark, Dallas County, Arkansas, beginning on Friday before the third (3rd) Sunday in September, 1927. About the nearest point by railroad to reach this place will be Arkadelphia. The place of meeting is about ten miles from the railroad. Arkadelphia is situated on the St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern Railroad, and easily connected with Cotton Belt & Rock Island roads.

We invite all genuine Predestinarian Unconditional Old Baptists to meet with us, especially ministers of this faith.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator.

W. C. HORTON, Clerk.

The South Ouchita Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1927, with Union Church, which is six miles east of Marion, Louisiana, on the Missouri Pacific Railroad, running from El Dorado, Arkansas, to Farmerville, Louisiana. All who come to this Association from the north and west will be met on Thursday afternoon at Marion, and all who come from the south and east will be met on Thursday afternoon at Haile, Louisiana, two and one-half miles southeast from the church. We would appreciate any orderly and peace loving Baptists with us.

R. W. RHODES.

The Sulphur Fork Association of Predestinarian Baptists will convene with the Beech Creek Church, three miles east of Atlanta, Texas, on the T. & P. R. R., and on highway and five miles west of Bloomburg on K. C. S. R. R., on Friday before the first Sunday in October.

H. B. JONES, Moderator.

J. S. McLEOD, Clerk.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church, of Fairfax County, Va., October 12th, 13th and 14th, 1927. Those coming by train will take Electric cars at Rosslyn, Va., and will be met Tuesday and Wednesday at Herndon, Va. May the Lord's will bring many saints in one assembly is our desire.

K. C. SPINDLE, Church Clerk.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Little Creek Church, in Delmar, Sussex County, Delaware, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 19th, 20th and 21st, 1927. Trains leaving New York at 12:00, noon, and Philadelphia at 2:50 will be met at Delmar on Tuesday. Those coming from Philadelphia and north on train leaving Broad Street Station at 10:05 a. m., Wednesday, will go directly to the meetinghouse on arrival here. Train leaving Cape Charles, Va., at 12:25 will be met Tuesday. Those coming from either north or south on early trains Wednesday will go directly to the meetinghouse. We extend a cordial invitation to those of our faith and order, including friends, to meet with us, and hope the ministering brethren will not wait for a special invitation.

H. C. KER, Pastor.

The seventieth session of the First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held with the Big Walnut Creek Church, in Topeka, Kansas, at 1168 High St., in the western part of the city, two and one-half blocks south of 10th Street, and one block west and half a block south from the end of the Lowman carline, September 9th, 10th and 11th, 1927. For any further information address me at 1168 High Street, Topeka, Kansas.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 245 Lacadana Drive, Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday of each month at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 459 E. 5th St., Riverside, Calif., and at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. 11th St., Claremont, Calif., on the first Sunday of each alternate month, beginning with January, and on every alternate month with brother Joseph Huffman, 128 Van Buren St., Arlington, Calif. Singing at 10:30 a. m. Preaching at 11 a. m. Lunch at the place of meeting, and continued services in the afternoon.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.

O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 95. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1927. NO. 10.

POETRY.

DEITY.

The Great, All-Seeing and unseen
With power supreme is fraught;
Created all that e'er has been,
Will be, or is; from naught.

Whose reign unmarked by fleeting years
Endures when time has fled;
Above all judgment, doubts and fears;
No law above his head.

No object, howe'er small or great,
Is hidden from his sight;
He knows and holds the keys of fate
And all he does is right.

There is no creature anywhere
But he has given birth,
And all without his tender care
Would perish from the earth.

His power the universe upholds,
E'en heaven's jeweled dome,
While he the book of life unfolds
As centuries go and come.

The face of every lily fair
Was painted by his brush,
And 'twas his love for beauty
That caused the rose to blush.

He knows all things that were and are,
And which are not yet done;
Ordained them from his throne afar,
Before time had begun.

And though he hath his face concealed,
No power from us can sever
The matchless love he hath revealed,
Which shall endure forever.

He speaks and countless worlds roll on,
Or cease at his decree;
High Priest and Lord, The Great Three One,
The infinite Deity.

ALFRED C. TITUS.

TRENTON, New Jersey.

CORRESPONDENCE.

EXODUS XI. 7; PHILIPPIANS III. 2.

"BUT against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast; that ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel." "Beware of dogs."

That God should so distinguish Israel from the Egyptians must ever be resolved into this, that it was the good pleasure of his will which he hath purposed in himself. Some of mankind are declared to be "vessels of mercy," and others "vessels of wrath." (Rom. ix. 20–24.) This we must leave to the holy sovereignty of Jehovah. The Son of God, Christ Jesus, our dear Savior, said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."—Matt. ii. 25, 26. "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but unto them that are

without, all these things are done in parables."—Mark iv. 11. Now, if we have tokens that we are loved, and called, and taught of God, "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou didst not receive it?"—1 Cor. iv. 7. It was the good pleasure of Jehovah's will, which he purposed in himself, to call Abram out of Ur of Chaldees: "I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him."—Isaiah li. 2. The seed of Abraham on the night of the Passover were in Egypt, and his dealings with them then were all in sovereign kindness. The Lord told them often that it was of his grace, all of love, all because of his covenant that he dealt so wondrously in lovingkindness with them. Read Deut. iv. 37; viii. 6–8; x. 14, 15. The Lord did put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel; this was very manifest when the Lord stretched out his hand and smote Egypt with all his wonders, and now on the night of the passover they are to march forth out Egypt, the house of bondage, and "against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue." There are times when the Lord suffers dogs to bark against his people; instances of this are recorded in the Scriptures which we will look at shortly. But on the night of the slaying of the passover lamb they could not move their tongues against any, either great or small, of the children of Israel. This was all of the sovereign graciousness of God unto his people. It was even so because it seemed good in his sight. These transactions of the Lord with Israel, as seen with an eye of faith, are blessedly opened up to our view to be in consequence of Israel being in God's purpose and grace, put in such association, such intimacy with the blood of the passover lamb: typical of Christ our passover sacrificed for us. (1 Cor. v. 7.) He put away all our transgression, freed us from reproach and curse and bondage far worse than Egyptian. So no harsh words, reviling, accusing voices were heard against Israel that passover night. Saith the Lord, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you."—Exod. xii. 13. "Against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue." "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died." Israel marched out of Egypt, and in their freedom from the house of bondage "there was not one feeble person among their tribes. Egypt was glad when they departed; for the fear of them fell upon them."—Psalms cv. 37, 38. But how soon those Egyptians were turned unto their hatred again against the people. Their mouths were opened, and thus they barked in their irritation, "Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us? and off they started in pursuit of them. Hark! Hark! how these Egyptian dogs bark, "I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them."—Exod. xv. 9. But the Lord rose up against them, and sent forth his wrath and consumed them as stubble. "Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters," "the depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone." "There was not one of them left."—Psalms cvi. 11. Not a dog returned to tell Egypt the story. The holy and allwise Lord has his own sacred counsels to fulfill in the barking of dogs, and so at times he suffers them to move their

tongues even against his own elect. Oh how the dogs did howl and bark against Jesus, the incarnate Son of God. Christ exclaimed, "Dogs have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet." —Psalms xxii. 16. They sharpened their tongues like a serpent, adders' poison was under their lips. (Psalms cxl. 3.) They so hated the Holy One they laid to his charge things he knew not. These vile dogs said he was a gluttonous man, a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners, and their meaning was, not that he was pitying, befriending, helping, delivering them, but that they were his associates, that he was their companion in wickedness, that he himself was a wicked one. Oh their deceitful, lying tongues compassed him with words of hatred. (Psalms cix. 2, 3.) They made wide their mouths, and drew out their tongues, and loud and viciously barked, Away with him, crucify him, crucify him, and when they nailed him to the cross they railed upon him until with a loud voice our almighty Savior exclaimed, "It is finished;" he bowed his head and gave up the ghost. Their barkings were hushed, were ended, they could move their tongues no more. "And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned."—Luke xxiii. 48. Barking dogs have annoyed and filled with trembling many a dear child of God. But God, who closed the mouths of lions (Daniel vi. 22), can stop the mouths of all the dogs who dare to move their tongues at his redeemed. For by Christ's precious blood every togue of accusation (Rev. xii. 10), every tongue that riseth against them in judgment they shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. (Isaiah liv. 17.) There was one Shimei, described as "this dead dog," who moved his tongue against David and cursed him, saying, "Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial." Ah, wretched, chastened David said, "Let him alone, and let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him. It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day."—2 Sam. xvi. 11, 12. Oh what ignominy and reproach he heaped upon David. The chastening hand of the Lord was upon David, so God had lengthened the chain of this dog and suffered him to move his tongue and belch forth his vicious reproaches and curses upon the king. Oh how David must have suffered, but his chastened soul is looking to God in all his afflictions. Wicked Shimei was God's sword, his hand to smite David. (Psalms xvii. 12, 13.) Oh to be able under all our chastenings to look up unto our God, and with the prophet Habakkuk say, "Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction." See that pack of vile hypocritical dogs how they barked against that adulterous woman. The scribes and the Pharisees brought unto Jesus a woman taken in adultery. Oh the hypocrites! Why did they not bring the man also? (Lev. xx. 10.) This is how they barked about and against her, "They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground,

as though he heard them not." But they are still moving their tongues, "So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." There was nothing in what Christ said that set aside the law that was given of God to Israel by Moses. Jesus was not antagonistic to Moses. He came not to destroy, but to fulfill it. His very reply to those yelping hypocrites was calling upon them, if any of them imagined themselves fit to do so, to execute the penalty of the law upon the poor woman. She had no word to say, she could not excuse her shameful act, she could not silence the tongues of her accusers. According to Moses' law she must die, there was she felt no mercy for her. "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two witnesses." —Heb. x. 28. Ah, it appeared that Christ himself would not rescue her from her tormenters, for from the lips of Jesus, who is meek and lowly in heart, the words have gone forth, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." And again Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground. Did her shamed downcast eyes read what Jesus wrote on the ground? Oh I think her eyes only read that writing: it was for her only he wrote on the ground. None of her accusers could read a word. Those vile hypocrites had no pity for the woman. They snarled and barked against her, and had they dared they would have dragged her away and stoned her to death; they let the wicked man go free. But what is this that has happened to these men? They have ceased barking, their clamorous accusations are hushed. They have heard what Jesus said to them. They are silenced, not a stone is cast at this adultress. There goes the oldest dog out, and the others, one by one, in silence follow him out. "And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even to the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst." Will Jesus rise up and stone her to death? Can he release her? Redeem her from the curse of the law? Can he, will he, has he magnified the law and made it honorable? Hear the glad tidings, poor sinner, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us."—Gal. iii. 12. "When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." Oh those words, "Sin no more." They entered not merely her natural ears, but the blessed voice of Christ, the Lamb of God, entered her heart, and ever after all her days that graciously sweet voice was saying in her heart, Sin no more. Dear child of God, your hope is in the blood of the dear Lamb of God shed for the remission of sins. You may have been kept in your outward life from all shameful behavior. What a mercy is this, and yet in the dreadful knowledge that has been given you of the depravity of your adamic nature you have often felt you were the vilest of the vile. The self-righteous cannot understand this, for they hold their heads up high, and glory in their superiority in holiness if they keep the outside of the cup and platter clean, and yet all the while they are as whited sepulchers, fair to behold on the outside, but inwardly full of dead men's bones, and all uncleanness. If we are taught of the Lord we in some measure will know the plague of our heart (1 Kings viii. 38),

and there will be sacred times when in our distress we will be drawn to seek our God and the Lamb, and cry,

"Foul I to the fountain fly,
Wash me, Savior, or I die."

"Beware of dogs." They are troublesome, bark and bite, and have often distressed the chuch of God. Jeremiah was much plagued with perverse men who, as dogs, said one to another, "Come, and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words."—Jer. xviii. 18. And in his lamentations over their treacherous and vile conduct his yearning soul exclaims, "Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men, that I might leave my people, and go from them! for they be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men. And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies; but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth: for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the Lord. Take ye heed every one of his neighbor, and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbor will walk with slanders. And they will deceive every man his neighbor, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity. * * * Their tongue is as an arrow shot out; it speaketh deceit: one speaketh peaceably to his neighbor with his mouth, but in heart he layeth his wait."—Jer. ix. 2–8. The poor and the needy may suffer from the flattering, proud tongues of the wicked (Psalms xii. 2–5), but the time will come when the Lord will shut their mouths forever. When our precious Christ was crucified the reproaches against his people fell upon him. The dogs barked at him, yet amidst all their revilings his people were in his thoughts, his heart, and so in his agonies in their behalf, he cried unto the Father, "Deliver my soul from the sword; and my darling from the power of the dog. Save me from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns."—Psalms xxii. 20, 21. "Without are dogs." They are not of God, they are not of the assembly, and church of the Firstborn, whose names are written in heaven, but their company, their meet associates are "sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." —Rev. xxii. 15. Let them prowl around, and bark as they may, they are not of the city of the living God. But the nations of them which are saved dwell there. "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."—Rev. xxi. 37. Here we but taste the earnest of our eternal blessedness of immortal glory with Christ the Lamb of God, our Husband, Savior, our immortal Friend, and so our souls are moved in earnest expectation, in fervent longings we breathe after the bliss to come, "The glory which shall be revealed."—Rom. viii. 18.

"Without are dogs." No dogs will be found in the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God, but in everlasting blessedness we shall live and reign with Christ our Redeemer.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

WILLIFORD, Ark., Nov. 8, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find two dollars to pay my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES another year, for my wife and I cannot do without the paper. We certainly enjoy reading it,

and indorse the doctrine it sets forth: salvation by grace and grace alone, both in time and on into glory, the absolute predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass, the resurrection of the dead. God is not the author of sin in any sense whatever, although some claiming to be Old Baptists say that the phrase "absolute predestination of all things" does carry in it that God is the author of sin, but they surely do not understand the language. "Absolute" means certain, sure, unlimited, &c. "Predestination" means the unchangeable purpose of God. Inspiration says, I am God and change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. Every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. We know that God is not changeable. As to "all things," let inspiration answer: "As I have purposed, so shall it stand." Whatever he has purposed he will do it. There is a time and season to every purpose under heaven, &c. So there is nothing in the phrase that intimates that God is the author of sin. What is sin? The transgression of the law. Who transgressed the law? Man. Man then is the author of sin, and not God. We love the doctrine set forth in the SIGNS. Why? Because we are taught it by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Therefore, dear editors and correspondents, write on, and earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints of the most high God, and by this you will feed the children of God. We indorse the doctrine of the SIGNS, for it sets forth the truth, if we can judge of the truth.

Inclosed you will find a copy of a letter written by Elder W. C. Perdue, of Lamar, Colorado, who is a sound Old School Baptist. He and I preached in Colorado together for two years, and stood together on the doctrine of God our Savior. We would like you to publish his letter if you see fit, but do not crowd out better matter. May God bless us all with the hearing ear, understanding heart and forgiving spirit, is our prayer.

J. M. WHITENTON AND WIFE.

LAMAR, Colorado, Oct. 12, 1926.

DEAR BROTHER WHITENTON:—Your good letter came to hand in due time, and was read with pleasure and love. We like to get letters from you, for they always bring food to a poor, weak sinner like me; I need some one to encourage me in my old and last days. I surely have been tried somewhat like old Job. Instead of words of comfort they were words of sadness, sorrow, grief and vexation of spirit, but none of these things moved me, for I will stand alone before I will fellowship such work as some are doing. I hope God will open their eyes, for they are captured and led by the devil at his will. If I understand what the Bible teaches, they get worse every move they make. O Lord, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Your views on the seamless coat are good. It does not need any patching nor any help from man. God's work is perfect, needs nothing added nor anything taken from it. It is all complete in the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the way you preached it when you were here, and that is the only doctrine the prophets and the apostles taught. Jesus also taught it, and I believe it with all my heart, and would preach it to all the world if I could; yet I know that none would believe it but those God has called by his grace. Jesus is the head of the church, which is his body, and the coat covers the body, and the body is pure and does not need the

help of man to prepare it for heaven. So our righteousness is all of Jesus, and when he who is our righteousness comes to take the body home we will be pure, as the Head is pure, no spot or wrinkle in us, washed in the blood of the Lamb. His blood cleanses us from all sin. Then this is the robe of righteousness, Jesus. Jesus paid all the debt his bride owed and satisfied the law and the Father by his death, and redeemed his bride and ascended back to the Father, and is now making intercession for them (his bride, the church, the Lamb's wife), for Jesus must see the travail of his soul and be satisfied. He could not be satisfied without the last one that he died for and redeemed. If you and I were reckoned in the number the Father gave the Son we will be there. Oh glorious thought. We look back and think how he suffered for us. Even the prophet tell us, "For dogs have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet. * * * They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." So we see our God knew all things from the beginning, nothing has ever happened to him, all things were in his mind before he made any thing, so all things must come to pass just as he saw they would from the beginning. If anything could come to pass that was not in the mind of Jehovah, then that would do away with the Godhead, so I have it in my mind that God saw all his works even before he made any thing, and all things must come to pass just as he purposed they would. He made all things, both visible and invisible. What am I that I should ask why he made the devil, or why he raised up old Pharaoh, or why he put it in the heart of Joseph's brethren to sell Joseph? Surely God meant it for good, and had a purpose in it all, for all things work together for our good and for his glory. We see Jesus coming over all God blessed; no more, no less. Amen.

Well, brother Whitenton, I will stop for fear I weary you. If I could see you it might be that I could make myself more plain. We are both as well as common. I hope you and sister Whitenton are well and doing well. Remember us when at the throne of grace.

You may send this to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES if you wish to.

W. C. PERDUE.

EL PASO, Texas, March 11, 1927.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have felt for the last few days that I would like to write something for the readers of our dear paper, and your consideration, and tonight if it is the will of the Most High I will make the attempt.

Proverbs iii., last part of thirty-second verse, reads as follows: "But his secret is with the righteous." Whose secret is referred to here? To my feeble understanding it is the secret of God himself. Who is the righteous the secret is with? None other than the holy Jesus, for he is the only righteous one who has ever lived in this world of sin without committing sin, therefore he is the righteous one it is with, and he will reveal it to whomsoever he will. What is the secret here under consideration? It is none of the way of poor, weak sinful man, but it is the secret of God's ways, and they cannot be known by any other than Christ himself. Why cannot they be known by any other than Christ? Because he said, I in you and you in me. Then if the church is in Christ the secret is through Christ to the church of the most high God. Some inquiring sin-sick soul might say, Who is in that church? Just as many as Christ

came to save, and no more, and at his appointed time he will bring them out and place their feet upon that Rock that is sure and steadfast and that cannot be moved. Then it will be that they are brought low and made to see their brethren far better than themselves and made to esteem them highly because they esteem the chosen race of God, and are made to say, Oh I wish I could live the life I see in them. I feel it is for our good we are brought to see ourselves poor hell-deserving sinners, for if we could see ourselves as we see our brethren what would be the result? We would soon be acting the part of the Pharisee, boasting of how good we were, and saying we were glad we were not as other men, even that poor publican, and we would forget all of God's tender mercies toward us, and would be no longer worthy to mingle with the saints, neither would we want to, for they realize and claim to be sinners, and the Pharisee did not want to mingle with them. Then we would know nothing about the secret and love of God. When is this secret revealed to poor sinful man? It is when he is brought low and made to realize that there is nothing he can do to merit the love of God, but that he must depend upon him for all his support, and when he has been shown these things and made to trust him for all things then he will say, Praise God from whom all blessings flow. I want to say here, my brethren (if I may thus address you) that when you are made to see what these words really mean it will be one of the happiest moments of your life. Oh if I could only know that one little bit of this secret had ever been revealed to me how happy I would be, for then it seems to me I would have more hope, for we are told in the Scriptures that wherever he begins a good work he will perform it to the last day. I believe, or at least I think I do, that when one begins to realize he is a sinner in the sight of God then it is that that secret is being revealed, and will continue until it is all made plain, then you have finished the work he put you here to do, and then, like your Mediator, you will bow your head and give up the ghost of natural life, to reign with the Most High in glory, where you will praise God for evermore.

Dear editors, do with this as seems good to you. Change it in any way, or burn it if you see fit, and all will be right with me, for I do not feel I can write anything of much comfort to any one, but for some reason I cannot help making the attempt.

Yours in love,

J. W. S. TIMMONS.

HOPEWELL, New Jersey.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed please find check for four dollars, two for the SIGNS one year and two for the poor of the flock.

I will pen a few lines for publication. For there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. As many as are led by the Spirit, they are the sons of God. If Christ be in you the hope of glory the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is alive because of righteousness. There is one body, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, one Father of all, who is above all, through all and in you all. He ascended up on high, led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men. He first descended unto the lower parts of the earth and was seen by five hundred of the brethren. We are not our own keepers. We are kept by the power of God through faith, there-

fore being justified by faith we have peace with God, unto whom we have access by faith into that grace wherein we stand and rejoice in the Lord. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven. Who knoweth the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor? The wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the heavenly Father, the Prince of Peace, he rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. John said in Revelation, "I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." He must reign until all things are put under his feet; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." He arose triumphant over death, hell and the grave, giving us the greatest victory that has ever been won, all for his people. The Lord's portion is his people, chosen out of every kindred, tongue and nation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I am God, and there is none beside me. Be still and know that I am God. Art thou not he that divided the Red Sea and made a way for the ransomed of the Lord to pass through dry-shod? which the Egyptians assayed to do and were all drowned, Pharaoh and all his host. Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all these things will be added unto you. It seems to me that these things are his goodness, his mercy, his power, his loving-kindness, his everlasting love. We love him because he first loved us and gave his only begotten Son that the world might be saved: those who love his precious name. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honor, glory, dominion, power and majesty. He is a God of truth. He is the rock, that rock is Christ. Jacob was the lot of his inheritance; he kept him as the apple of his eye, and led him about and instructed him. As the eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, taketh them, beareth them, so the Lord alone did lead Jacob and made him suck honey out of the rock and oil out of the flinty rock. That rock surely was Christ, he was a man acquainted with grief, and as a lamb before her shearers is dumb, so he said not a word. If it be possible, let this cup pass from me, yet not my will, but thine, be done. Those wicked men cried out, Crucify him, crucify him. They did not know what they were doing. He is too wise to err and too good to be unkind.

I can hardly realize as I pass into my ninety-fifth year that I have lived twenty-four years beyond the allotted time of man. I have been greatly blessed in being able to attend our meetings quite regularly for fifty-seven years, and it has been one of my geatest pleasures to meet with the brethren for so long a time. There have been many changes in that time and many have been removed from our midst. We miss them, but it is far better to be with Christ, where there will be no more pain, to be like him, to abide with him. If ye abide in me I abide in you. Think of those who are afflicted and not able to meet with us, pray for them that they may be restored to health again, if it be his will. Can I say with the psalmist David, The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he

leadeth me beside the still waters. He storeth my soul. He leadeth me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. His rod and his staff they comfort me. He preparest a table before me. He anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy will be with me all the days of my life?

I have written more than I intended, but there seems to be no stopping-place. As is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly, and as is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy. The outward man perisheth, the inward man is renewed day by day. As thy day so shall thy strength be. "Brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."

From your unworthy brother,

D. L. BLACKWELL.

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE AND EXPERIENCE OF JOSEPH CALVIN KILGORE.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF IN THE YEAR 1921.

I was born of humble, but honest parents January 28th, 1847, in Decalb County, Alabama, near Valley Head. My father was J. M. Kilgore, my mother's maiden name was Rachel Moore. She died while we children were yet young. Father moved to Walker County, Georgia, where I grew to manhood. Then we went to Jackson County, Alabama, and there on the third day of May, 1874, I was married to Miss Hettie Henry. To us were born four children: Lizzie, E. P., W. H. and C. M. Kilgore. September 5th, 1915, she was taken from me, and for four years I lived a lonely life, but was blessed to find another good companion, and I was married the second time, October 20th, 1919, to Mrs. Mahala Roach, who is my present wife. Some time in August or first of September, 1886, I was smitten with the thought that I was a sinner; more than that, a condemned sinner, which gave me very great trouble for some two or three weeks. September 19th, 1866, while alone in the timbered hills of Walker County, Georgia, with my face bowed to the earth, this blessed thought flashed through my mind, Jesus is your sacrifice for sin. Here I want to say that my mind has never been able to grasp nor my tongue to express the joy that flooded my poor soul at that place and time. In 1882 I was received into the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, Steeles Creek, and baptized by Elder M. M. Gibson, in Limestone County, Texas; in 1886 was liberated to exercise the gift in me. In 1887 was ordained to the full work of the ministry. Almost from the time of my ordination until the present, 1921, I have had the care of from two to four churches. The field of my labors has been mostly in some ten or twelve counties here in central Texas, where I have traveled almost constantly, and tried to preach Jesus the sacrifice for sin, as he was first shown to me, with the liberty God in his goodness has been pleased to give me.

RISING STAR, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—About one month prior to Elder Kilgore's death he told his daughter where to find the above sketch, that he realized he would never be well again and that he wanted the children to erect a stone as near like their mother's as they could procure and to have inscribed upon it his name, date of his birth and death, and this inscription, "A sinner saved by grace." He passed from earth on the morning of May 25th, 1927, making his stay on earth eighty years, three months and twenty-seven days. He left to mourn his death, his wife, a daughter,

three sons, a brother and sister, and fourteen grandchildren, of whom ten are boys, and seven of them bear the Kilgore name. All the above mentioned family attended the funeral services, also a large number of sorrowing relatives and friends. His friends were numbered only by his acquaintances. Words of comfort were spoken by Elders Stone, Edwards Steele, Noe and Hardin, after which he was laid to rest in the Blake Cemetery, in the northern part of Brown County, Texas, by the side of his first wife, there to await the second coming of his Lord and Master, whom he loved so well to serve, and who has promised to raise his sleeping dust and fashion it like unto his glorious body, by that same power that he raised Lazarus from the grave, and, according to his promise, all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth, &c. Brother Kilgore was blessed with a pleasant home, his children were very kind and obedient, ever-watchful of his needs, and are honest, upright, loyal citizens, and are all church members, and so also are their companions. I had known brother Kilgore for about thirty-seven years. Our membership was in the same church, to wit, Macedonia, for about twenty-five years, and he had the pastoral care of that church even longer than that, and both by precept and example he was an ensample to the flock they would do well to pattern after. I have gone with brother Kilgore on many different occasions to his appointments and have enjoyed his sweet fellowship and company very much. He always seemed much like a father to me, and I have been made to feel that he was a father in Israel, considering his manifest love and watchcare over me, of which I could never feel worthy, yet did much appreciate. I will say that I was clerk of this church, in my little way, almost continuously during brother Kilgore's pastoral care of it, and this in a way seemed to make the ties between us even closer, if possible.

Sister Kilgore and his children, I commend you to the sustaining grace of almighty God in your sad bereavement, for he is a present help in every time of need. Weep not as those who have no hope, for of this we are assured, that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear he shall also appear with him in glory. Glorious thought. Then "Comfort one another with these words."

A friend and brother,

J. W. HAYNES.

[THE foregoing sketch of the life and death of Elder J. C. Kilgore was sent to us by brother J. I. Foster, of Rising Star, Texas, with the request that we give it space in the SIGNS.—ED.]

WHITE PLAINS, N. Y., June 6, 1927.

DEAR EDITORS:—The time has come for my renewal another year for the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which I do so much enjoy reading. I have been seriously ill and under the doctor's and nurse's care since January 29th last. The third Sunday in February I suffered a stroke, and for many weeks I was shut in, and in this condition truly I felt the strong arm of the almighty God underneath me. I am glad to say that although I am not well, I am much improved. For the last few days I have been suffering much from a cold, yet I am up and around and can walk and am not left lame. I do miss my meetings at the dear church, which I prize above my chief joy. While sitting under the gospel's joyful sound I feel to thank the dear Lord for such a gift as Elder Dodson. Times without number have I felt I am too vile to be

given a home with this dear people, yet I often feel to say with the hymn writer, "Where must a weary sinner go but to the sinner's Friend?" I have read the Bible a great deal since my illness, and many sweet letters from my dear kindred in Christ, if I am not deceived in what I hope has been the dealing of the Lord with me, a poor vile worm of the dust. I know if the dear ones could see me as I see myself truly they would not come near me, much less take me in. But sometimes I am given an eye of faith to see that ties which are felt are far above the strongest ties of nature; that is, love, that God gave his only begotten Son to come down suffer, bleed, groan and die that all who were chosen in him before the world began might be redeemed from under the law of sin and death. This is the finished work, and it can never be destroyed, for love is stronger than death, many floods cannot drown it. See the many floods that are raging against this pure undefiled love to-day, and has been in all ages, but the almighty God of heaven and earth hath declared, My word shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. I am given at times to say, Holy and righteous art thou, King of saints, and I find myself a poor beggar, and then my mind seems to in the whole world sing, O Lord, have mercy upon thy people, and then this love seems to grow stronger for them. As I was lying on my bed yesterday (Sunday) morning I had this heartfelt love toward the dear saints everywhere, and with not a word uttered without, but there was much being said within, and I thought of the gathering of the dear saints in the little New York church. I seemed to see each one sitting in their place, and it seemed I was there and filled with tears and felt to thank the Lord I was spared to meet in spirit with the dear saints the world over. My mind was directed to read the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, first, second, third, fourth and fifth verses, which was very comforting to me. I feel as I grow older I know more of this vile spirit that is at war with the gentle spirit, which is a great trial to me.

I could write on in my weak way trying to express my view of this wonderful subject, but after all the half would not be told.

You may do as you think best with this and all will be right with me. All I desire is to give all glory to God and to be kept at the feet of the dear saints, who are all little children and need each other's love and fellowship. May the Lord bless you, dear editors, and the dear ones who comfort the afflicted and scattered ones, is my desire.

Inclosed find money order for three dollars. You can do with the extra dollar as you think best.

From one who feels very unworthy,

MELISSA GRIMES.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

DEAR EDITORS:—You who have stuck to the SIGNS year after year. What will be your reward? I trust you will be satisfied with what you have done to keep it moving, for all rejoice that it is kept up, and it is gladly received in many homes. I have shed tears over many letters written by distant sisters. I look for it every month and am glad when it comes. It seems there is no other paper like it. I have thought many times I would like to write for it, for I have not seen a letter from Middletown in a long time. There used to be a strong church here in Elder Gilbert Beebe's day, but

now, owing to the death of members, it has dwindled to less than one-half of what it was when I first knew it. One day while Elder Beebe was preaching in the Brookfield Church, at Slate Hill, he said, It is strange there are no shoots here. In my heart I said, There will be. I had had no thought of joining anywhere and was astonished at myself. Elder Benedict preached there every two weeks. There was a stir in the church and three joined at first, and after that it gradually built up, one or two at a time, until Elder Benedict died. They have had no pastor since then and through death the membership has been reduced to three. They are all old and soon will depart, but I can only say, It is well. I love God's people wherever they are found, and hope they love me. I have seasons of understanding, but cannot talk as I would like to; in fact I cannot talk at all; what I say is in broken words. I wish all to pray for me, and I hope I can pray for myself. I am alone and lonely.

I am inclosing five dollars to help the paper along. I have long thonght of doing it, but had no opportunity to hand it to you. Next Sunday will be Elder Dodson's day here. I hope I can go.

Do with this as you think best, and all will be well with me.

(MRS.) F. R. S. MILLER.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in October (30th). All are welcome.

L. B. FORD.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in joint session with the several churches composing the same, being convened in the meetinghouse of the New Vernon Church, Sullivan County, New York, June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1927, doth send greetings in the Lord to our sister associations and meetings with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more we are privileged to meet and greet your messengers and receive your correspondence, which we greatly value, and desire a continuance of the same. While we are a small body and have suffered several losses during the past year, we are nevertheless endeavoring to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and so far as we are aware there is no strange doctrine among us. Your ministers have come to us bearing precious fruit in the preaching of the Word, which has been food, indeed, to those who were hungering and thirsting after righteousness. May they ever be kept faithful.

Our next session will convene, the Lord willing, on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1928, continuing for three days, the place of meeting to be announced later through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, when we hope to meet a goodly number of your messengers.

In love and fellowship.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.

HENRY T. LEFFERTS, Clerk.

INFORMATION WANTED.

Any one having a copy of the first volume of the Editorials written by Elder Gilbert Beebe they are willing to part with will please write to Elder R. J. Norris, Samantha, Alabama, and state the price of same.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1927.

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MATTHEW XXII. 14.

"For many are called, but few are chosen."

A good friend, in whom we are persuaded the secret of the Lord has been confided, in asking us to express ourself on the above Scripture, says, "I cannot seem to distinguish between called and chosen; I have felt that in using the two words spiritually that they were interchangeable, but that use upsets my mind as to that." Our Lord in connection with this fourteenth verse of the twenty-second chapter of Matthew, as well as the sixteenth verse of the twentieth chapter, where we find language very similar to this, had been setting forth what "the kingdom of heaven" was like unto. If by "the kingdom of heaven" we are to understand he is speaking of the church in the gospel dispensation, we may be able by scriptural illustrations, both from the Old and the New Testaments, to shed some light upon the subject. From the very beginning concerning Israel, Moses said, "The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth," and declared the Lord did not set his love upon them, nor choose them because they were more in number than any people, for they were the fewest of all people. Even unto the day of Paul, and to this day, "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty." Not only did he choose Israel, the fewest of all people, but of that nation Israel he hath chosen a remnant to be manifested as his army rooted and grounded in the truth, to fight the battles of the Lord and to be saved in a gospel sense from false delusions, lest they be blown about by every wind of the doctrines of men. In the days of Hezekiah we are told the king of Assyria sent his messengers with a great host against Jerusalem, and their message was such that "it came to pass when king Hezekiah heard it, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord. And he sent Eliakim, which was over the household, and Shebna, the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz. And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth. It may be the Lord thy God will hear all the words of Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God; and will reprove the words which the Lord thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up thy prayer

for the remnant that are left. So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah. And Isaiah said to them, Thus shall ye say to your master, Thus saith the Lord, Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me. Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumor, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land." —2 Kings xix. 1–7. "And now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may enlighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage."—Ezra ix. 8. "Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah."—Isaiah i. 9. "I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds, and they shall be fruitful and increase."—Jer. xxiii. 3. "Yet will I leave a remnant, that ye may have some that shall escape the sword among the nations, when ye shall be scattered through the countries."—Ezekiel vi. 8. Thus we find holy men of old as they were moved by the Holy Ghost prophesying that "a remnant shall be saved." In the days of Gideon there were thirty and two thousand called Israelites, which the Lord said were too many for him to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against him, saying, "Mine hands hath saved me." So, the Lord, by his own processes of elimination, chose an army of three hundred and equipped them with his own weapons, "a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers," who were to be divided into three companies, and every man to stand at his place about the camp, and at the proper time blow the trumpet, brake the pitchers, holding the lamps in their left hands and cry, "The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon," and thus put to flight the vast armies of their enemies. This inspired pen picture from the Old Testament presents a clear and wonderful view of the gospel church in this, the twentieth century of our Lord, notwithstanding the scene was laid thousands of years ago. To our way of thinking, we only have to look out upon the field of our southland and the prairies of our great western country, among those calling themselves Primitive or Old School Baptists, to see that there are too many in what might be called the militant church of God in the world to-day, and, unmistakably, to our mind, the Lord is eliminating and weeding out, by his own processes, however mysterious they may seem to the natural mind, and reducing them to the number where Israel shall not vaunt themselves and say, "Mine hand hath saved me." The Lord is bringing the third part through the fire, refining them as silver is refined, and trying them as gold is tried, to the end they shall call on his name. He is separating the precious from the vile, and those whom he is pleased to purge of the dross and who call upon him in sincerity and truth, he hears them, and says, It is my people, and they say, The Lord is our God. We do not question for a moment but that many of them are the called children of the heavenly King and that when that complete and perfect number surround the throne in eternity to praise him from whom all blessings flow not one shall be missing, but in this time state but few of the many who are called are chosen to

stand in the furnace of affliction and bear faithful testimony to our Lord. John, who was in the isle that is called Patmos, "for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ," in writing to the church in Sardis, "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy." This could not be said of the many, or the bulk of the Sardis church, and what shall we say of the few: Were they not kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed, or manifested, in those last times?

Let us now turn to the New Testament and learn from the parable of the sower "Many are called, but few are chosen." Matt. xiii. 3–8: "Behold, a sower went forth to sow; and when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up. Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was up, they were scorched, and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them. But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold." By carefully examining the interpretation of this parable by the Master, as recorded by Matthew, Mark and Luke, we can but reach the conclusion that the seed sown is typical of the preached word of the gospel, and that the wayside, stony place and thorny ground hearers were types of the many who are called among the children of God, while the good ground hearers are the few who are chosen. In behalf of this position we will only quote from Luke viii. 11–15: "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. But that on the good ground are they, which, in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience." The word "saved," used in connection with the wayside hearer, we would say applies in a doctrinal sense, while the word "patience," used with reference to the good ground hearer, implies that they shall bring forth fruit with much endurance. The Lord said unto Eve, a type of the church, when she had partaken of the forbidden fruit, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow, and conception: in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."—Gen. iii. 16. The great wonder which appeared in heaven to John, "A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered."—Rev. xii. 1, 2. As was the firstborn, so are all who are born of God. So the "good ground" signifies that portion of the Lord's field wherein he hath wrought mightily, to the pulling down of strongholds, uprooting all the trees and plants of natural growth and preparing with special care that chosen, or garden spot, which he has inclosed, as

Zion that is walled about with a wall of fire, before entrusting to its keeping that precious seed, or the gospel of his only begotten Son. It is upon the good ground, or by those chosen few of his people whom he is pleased to separate and keep from idol gods that the fruit is borne. There are many who oppose the true church and its ordinances, for broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat, which is set forth in the first part of the chapter in which our text appears, by those who would not come to the marriage of the king's son, and some are so bitter against the truth that a few of their leaders, or "the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them."—Matt. xxii. 6. In some parts of our country these things can be seen to-day, and Zion is enduring much trial amid the turmoil and strife, but she shall bring forth her children in God's own time and he will be her deliverer. "Strait [meaning difficult] is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it."

Let us step on the scales of "Many are called, but few are chosen," and be weighed and see where we stand in this all-important matter. Are we among the many whom the cares and riches of this world are choking into indifference and coldness, or even worse, those who are seeking leadership and praise of men to the point that they are willing to divide the living child? What kind of fruit is the tree bearing? Judge it according to the fruit it bears, for there is no better way of determining whether it be good or bad. If it be a good tree it will bear the fruit of the Spirit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold, all to the honor and glory of God, and not of men.

We might take one more view of the subject, in conclusion, which is this: Of the many of the Lord's people, among all nations, kindreds, tribes and peoples of the earth, a number which no man can number, but a very small percentage, or a few, are walking in gospel order, confessing before men Christ to be their Lord and Savior and being baptized into the likeness of his death and resurrection. Our friend is one of whom we would ask, Why standeth thou without? To all who give satisfactory evidence of having passed from death unto life, we feel to entreat, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord." For many years we have been satisfied in our mind, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that the Old Baptist Church is God's visible organization of witnesses on earth, but we are persuaded that she is but a remnant of that people chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Neither do we mean to say by this that all whose names are enrolled upon her church books are chosen vessels of God's mercy, for we are told, They are not all Israel who are of Israel, and this is where our trouble commences. Am I a child? is a query that is with us much of the time, and it causes anxious thought. And, If I am a child, am I one of those few chosen to be faithful? and, if a servant, am I rightly dividing the word of truth? What a solemn place to stand upon the walls of Zion and speak to the inhabitants thereof? Who is equal for such an exalted position? We have to confess to being and feeling unprofitable.

We hope what we have written will be of some satisfaction to those who are inquiring concerning these things, and that those who feel to receive a crumb of mercy from the Master's table, will remember the source from which cometh all light and give him all the praise.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Mary O. Cate.)

To the Elders and messengers composing the Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, and churches they represent, when in session with Providence Church, Appanoose County, Iowa, and to all who love the Lord.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—We realize it is through the loving-kindnoss and tender mercy of the ever-blessed One that we are again permitted to meet and enjoy the communion of kindred spirits and greet one another after another year. Dear brethren and sisters, this is a very gracious privilege, coming down from God our Father, when we stop to meditate upon these things, for it is God who makes us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and we feel and think that just such meetings as these are the "heavenly places in Christ Jesus." The places where we meet for no other purpose than to worship Him in spirit and in truth. So we hope we can lay down the cares of the world and think of things spiritual, for the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Such beautiful fruit! we exclaim when we pause to think of the deep things of the Spirit. Dear children of God, to you it is given to know these things that have been taught of God, by that still small voice that spoke peace to your souls as Jesus said, "Peace, be still;" "It is I; be not afraid," and so we hope that we meet again to be refreshed by that heavenly manna that falls as the gentle dew from heaven, and to praise and glorify his most holy name. Yes, glorify the One who is the giver of every good and perfect gift, our guide, protector, our all in all along the way.

Dear brethren and sisters, it seems to have been your desire that I write the Circular Letter to be printed with our Minutes. Why, I do not know, for I never have felt my inability to write as much as I do now, and can truly say, Of myself I can do nothing. I remember of reading in one place where Christ said to John, "Write," and in another place "What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia." So if our Association has seen fit to say unto me, Write, with fear and trembling I am making the attempt, but my fear is, Will there be any food for the children after it is done? You know the children of Israel after they had been brought safely through the Red Sea wanted to go back, for fear there would be no food, but they went on, and, lo, the food was supplied. So many times we get fearful and want to turn back.

Dear brethren and sisters, if I can just write a few lines only about the little word "hope" I shall be truly thankful to God our helper, for our hope is built on nothing else than Jesus' blood and righteousness. Then we should be presenting Jesus as the way, the truth and the life, for we see him as the author and finisher of our hope, as well as our faith, and although Paul told the Corinthians that of the three gifts, faith, hope and charity, that charity, or love, was the greatest. He classed hope as one of them, and he also tells the Romans, Experience worketh hope and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. And again, to the Thessalonians he says, "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." Another writer says, Let me not be ashamed of

my hope. Also Job complained, and said, My hope hath he removed. So you see by these quotations, and many more, that these characters regarded hope as a very great treasure. We might all have our own definition for the word "hope," but the hope we have in mind, and the one we treasure above all else, is the one Paul said experience worked, the one we had after we had worked out our own salvation with fear and trembling, after we had been changed from nature's darkness into his marvelous light, after he had been revealed to us as the fairest among ten thousand and the One altogether lovely, the one we tried to hide so long, and did not want any one to know we had. This is the one we prize and love to talk about and the one that causes us to leave our homes and meet together. How and from whom did we get this treasure, this pearl of great price? It is one of the gifts and comes from the Giver of all good and perfect gifts. So you see it came by grace, as a gift of God, because of his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and in sins. In 2 Corinthians iv. 7, we read, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." This treasure is our hope, or gift, that is within us, freely bestowed upon us by grace, and grace alone, and it is by grace that we love God and the fellowship of each other in his kingdom. Yes, dear children of God, hope is an anchor both sure and steadfast, here in time, and it is a comfort to know it reaches unto that within the vail.

Now, dear brethren and sisters, much could be written upon this subject, but we will leave these few thoughts to your own meditation, as we feel that the subject is always "both new and old" to the regenerated child of God, and that we should always be ready to give a reason of the hope that is within us, and regard it as a most perfect treasure. As a sister has beautifully expressed it:

What is so dear as the christian hope,
  So dear as "the pearl of great price;"
A king's ransom could not buy,
  Although it were trebled thrice?

Sometimes this hope seems to fade,
  And faintly the light we see,
'Tis then we cry with broken heart,
  Dear Lord, remember me.

But when the gloom is darkest
  Lo, 'tis rifted by rays of gold,
And though we could speak with angels' tongues,
  The half could not be told.

W. T. WALTERS, Mod.
J. M. CATE, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder W. J. May departed this life June 30th, 1927, at his old home, at Shock, Pike Co., Ky. Elder May was born near the head of Pond Creek, Pike Co., Ky., January 10th, 1836, making his sojourn on earth 91 years, 5 months and 20 days. He was married January 8th, 1857, to Miss Sarepta Rutherford, to which union were born 13 children, 141 grandchildren, 334 great-grandchildren and 21 great-great-grandchildren. He united with the Old Pond Creek Church, of the Mates Creek Association of Primitive Baptists the second Sunday in September, 1861, and was baptized the same day by Elder George Pinson. He, with other members, withdrew from that church July 6th, 1872, and were constituted into a new church called Little Hope, on the Pinson Fork of Pond Creek, where his membership remained until death. He was licensed to preach the gospel of the Son of God Jan. 1st, 1873, and was ordained to the full functions of the gospel ministry the first Saturday in July, 1874, to which high calling he devoted about fifty-four years of his life, traveling hundreds of miles over rough and towering mountains through heat and cold, through sunshine and storm, to serve the children of God and to preach to them the salvation by grace of poor lost and helpless sinners. Elder May served the Association as clerk for many years, and truly he was a gifted clerk. During his ministerial labors he served as moderator of many churches and was a father in Israel in very truth. Many of the family of God were instructed and comforted by his wise counsel and able preaching and writings through the SIGNS and other Primitive Baptist publications, and both his preaching and writ-

ings were clear and easy to be understood. He was one of the most resourceful preachers I ever met, deep and sound in that God-given and God-honoring doctrine of the sovereignty of God. He was a leader in the family, yet he led gently. His time was more fully taken up in behalf of the cause he loved so dearly, perhaps, than that of any other man in the mountains of Kentucky, being often called for funerals and to visit outside sections in addition to his regular appointments every Saturday and Sunday. He taught school in his early life, and was very industrious, working hard on his little rough mountain farm to support his large family, receiving but little help from the churches and people he served for Jesus' sake. He was once a candidate for Representative from his district, but was defeated, as we believe the Lord destined him for a higher calling. He was very "bookish" and well informed in the letter, as well as richly endowed with wisdom in the Spirit from above. His loving companion, who was truly a helpmeet to him in all his toils and trials, both spiritual and temporal, preceded him to the glory world, departing this life Oct. 10th, 1914. His last discourse was in the old Big Creek meetinghouse on Sunday, June 19th, 1927, from "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

His funeral was held Saturday, July 2nd, 1927, conducted by Elders W. M. Stanley, J. D. Riffe and G. B. Bird, and was attended by a very large multitude of mourning relatives and sorrowing friends. The church, the Association, together with his many relatives and friends mourn the loss of a man sent from God; we miss Elder May, but our loss is his everlasting gain. His troubles are over now, no more weary waiting, but a full and complete realization of the things he was patiently longing and waiting for on the shores of time.

It is in compliance with his request that I am trying to write this token of love and fellowship for one I loved dearly for the truth's sake. It was my privilege to be with him often in the past fifteen years, and of myself I feel to say I have lost one of the dearest and best friends I ever had on earth. His mortal remains were gently laid beside his wife in the family cemetery Saturday evening, there to return to mother earth. G. B. BIRD.

Deacon D. A. Berry, youngest son of the late Elder and Mrs. Elijah Berry, was born September 21st, 1857, in the state of Alabama, and died August 19th, 1927, at his home near Lawn, in Taylor County, Texas, and was buried at the Silver Valley Cemetery August 20th, 1927, beside his eldest son, who died in 1911. Brother Berry leaves surviving him his sorrowing wife, sister Lelia Berry, three daughters, six sons and their names follow in their order: Ola Berry Rucker, Coleman, Texas, Ella Berry Wagnon, Miss Delia Berry, brother Gid Berry, Nolan, Texas, Charles, Calvin, Lige, Louis and Allen, all residing near Lawn, Texas, also one brother, J. E. Berry, of Johnson County, Texas. All were present when the end came. Brother Berry moved from Alabama to Johnson County, Texas, in 1878, where he was married to Miss Leila Watson December 26th, 1886. He professed a good hope of life through the blood of Christ and united with the County Line Church and was baptized in the fellowship of said church by his brother, the late Elder John Berry. He moved from Johnson County, Texas, to Coleman County, Texas, and joined Hoods Creek Church by letter, and was in the division of said church over the innovation of conditionalism. He and sister Berry were members when it went into voluntary dissolution when letters were granted to all orderly members. Brother and sister Berry moved from Coleman County, Texas, to Taylor County, Texas, and joined Pilgrims Rest Church, in Taylor County, and he was soon thereafter ordained to the office of deacon, which he filled with the ability given by the great Head of the church. Brother Berry was a great sufferer and spent much money and time in hospitals seeking relief, but found little. He told his wife when he returned from the sanitarium he had seen the reaper and his passing would be lingering. He was resigned to Him who does all things well and did not complain. Surely a great man in Israel has fallen. It was brother Berry's request that I should talk at the grave. I complied with his request, and read from 1 Corinthians, fifteenth chapter, and the latter part of Philippians. I am an old man, and this is the first time in life for me to try and comfort sorrowing ones. Brother Berry stood for what he believed to be right in the church, regardless of what others believed. He was useful in his church and in the betterment of what he felt was for the benefit of the general public. The writer had been intimately associated with this dear brother for many years and can truthfully say that he was a good man in all his affairs. To his sorrowing wife, I would commend you to God's grace for comfort. Time only can heal the sorrow made by death. To his dear children I would say, Your sainted father left you a rich inheritance of deep and sincere piety, which it would be well to emulate. I feel impressed to adopt the words of the prophet and think they are appropriate: Precious in the sight of God is the death of his saints. To sister Berry and his aged brother I will say, Your sorrowing will soon be over. Trust in the rich promises of your King. He will be with you to the end and will come again and take his jewels where there will be no more sickness, sorrow or pain. If we suffer for him we shall rejoice in him. May it be God's pleasure to reveal his Son to this bereaved family, is my prayer in Jesus' name.

JOHN R. HAVENS.

Barnet A. Thompson died at his home near Walled Lake, Michigan, in June, 1927, as the result of what would humanly be called an accident, but we believe there are no accidents with the Lord, who rules all things. He was working in his field with a tractor which upset and caught him underneath, causing his death He was about forty-eight years of age and leaves a wife and four daughters to mourn their loss; his wife and oldest daughter being in poor health. Mr. Thompson was born and raised in southeastern Kentucky. His parents were Henry and Letitia Thompson, good Old Baptist people, but I do not know whether they were members of the church or not. Both his parents and grandparents were believers in the truth. In 1914 he moved with his family to Canada, where he remained until 1924, then moved to Michigan, where he remained until his death. His spiritual exercises of mind began several years ago, while he yet lived in Kentucky. After his removal to Michigan he had a burning desire to meet some Old School Baptists and to hear them preach, but with the exception of sister Gordy in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and of his own brother, who lived about two miles from him, he was able to find no one who felt and believed as he did. Some time in the year of 1926 he succeeded in hearing that a people who believed as he did worshipped in Ontario, so he left his home and his afflicted ones and attended the Quarterly Meeting of the Covenanted Baptist Church at Lobo last September. When he alighted from the train at Komoka and inquired his way to the meetinghouse at Lobo he engaged some one to take him over to the meetinghouse there and would not be left there by the driver until he made sure he had found the right people. Listening a short time at the door to the preaching, he soon detected the right ring in the sound and told the driver he might depart. Words cannot express Mr. Thompson's enjoyment of this meeting at Lobo. He had at last found the people for whom he had been searching and among whom he felt to be spiritually at home. After this visit, he returned again in October and attended the Duart quarterly meeting. After that meeting, and all through last winter, his mind was greatly exercised and he could scarcely wait for the time to roll round that he might attend the meetings again. Therefore, at the Dunwich quarterly meeting this past May, Mr. Thompson attended again, but under great difficulties and under much anxiety of mind, owing to the fact that neither his wife nor daughter were at all well; and he left them, if I remember rightly, both in the bed when he departed for the Dunwich meeting. However, so great was his burden of mind he could not rest at home, but had to come to the meeting. At this meeting Mr. Thompson came before the church at the close of the three-day services and asked a home with those whom he believed to be God's people. He had great liberty in talking to the church and was able to clearly and readily give the reason for the hope that was within him. He showed he had been convicted of sin and had felt severely his just condemnation before God; he also showed he had been delivered from this burden and had received a blessed hope of salvation through the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. Mr. Thompson was strong in his belief of predestination and in salvation wholly by grace. He was unanimously received by the Covenanted Church for baptism and, at his request, the ordinance was postponed until the June quarterly. Before the June meeting arrived he had passed away. Surely the ways of God are mysterious to us poor mortals, yet all God does we believe to be perfectly just and wise. Our hearts go out in sympathy to the sorrowing and distracted wife and daughters and to the disappointed and bereaved church. It looked to us as though our brother might have had, had he lived, a life of usefulness in the church. God has willed it otherwise.

L.

Simeon Morris Kennedy, son of John and Lucinda Kennedy, was born at High Point, North Carolina, Aug. 4th, 1835, and died at the summer home of his son, John R. Kennedy, at Black Mountain, North Carolina, Aug. 5th, 1927, aged 92 years and 1 day. In the year following his birth, his parents migrated to McDonough County, in western Illinois, and here Simeon grew to manhood. He took part in the development and upbuilding of the new State. He was married to Melinda Harris, of Hancock County, Illinois, in 1854, and to them were born seven children. The oldest daughter (Susie) became my wife in 1879. The mother died in 1878, and was followed by all the children except the youngest son, John R., with whom the father spent the last eleven years of his life, at Orlando, Fla. John brought the remains to Plymouth, Ill., for interment in the family lot in the Scott Cemetery. Elder Webb, pastor of Providence Primitive Baptist Church, in Hancock County, was called and delivered a comforting discourse from 1 Cor. xv. I was able to attend these obsequies. Father Kennedy was a man of sterling qualities as a neighbor and citizen. At the age of twenty-two years he was given a good hope in the mercy of God. He was ever ready to ascribe all praise to the atoning blood of Christ alone for salvation. He related this hope to Little Flock Primitive Baptist Church, at Fandon, Ill., and, together with mother Kennedy, was baptized by the late Elder I. N. Vanmeter. They remained steadfast members of this church so long as they lived. Father Kennedy was ordained a deacon June, 1870, and served this church for sixty-five years. In his ordination counsel sat Elders S. L. Dark, R. M. Simmons, I. N. Vanmeter, Benjamin Bradbury, and Jacob Castlebury, all able ministers

of that day. Father Kennedy was gifted in singing and prayer, and his daily walk was such as should become every subject of redeeming grace. His home was always a welcome retreat to the Baptist brotherhood. He died as he had lived, humbled in hope, but rich in faith.

A. W. BLOOMFIELD.

Mrs. Myrtle May Hennigan. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."

Myrtie was born April 24th, 1888, and the death angel came for her July 17th, 1927, making her stay on earth 39 years, 2 months and 23 days. She was the daughter of Joseph A. and Elizabeth (Foster) Whitman, and was the youngest of a family of thirteen children, twelve of whom lived to be grown and have families of their own. Her mother, two brothers and two sisters preceded her to the grave. Her eighty-six year old father, five brothers and two sisters survive. She was married to the writer December 30th, 1906, and to this union nine children were born. Two dying in infancy. Those surviving are Goldie 19, Sylvia May 17, "Bess" 14, Frank 11, Hope 9, Joe 6 and Gilbert Wagner 2. Myrtie was not a member of the visible church, but had a sweet hope in salvation by grace and grace alone, and never tired of waiting on the brethren, sisters and friends when they came to our humble home. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Her remains were laid to rest in Bethlehem Cemetery, near Merryville, Louisiana, where hundreds of sorrowing relatives and friends had gathered to pay their last respects. Comforting words were spoken by Elders W. H. Newton and P. H. Jacobs, using as a text, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." The writer feels to be heart-broken, yet we must bow in humble submission to Him that doeth all things well. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." My friends who have had this same, seemingly to me, terrible experience tell me that "Father Time" is a great healer. I know that I have received a blow from which I can never recover, but it is sweet to know that "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit."

Her sad and lonely companion,

GILBERT F. HENNIGAN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. F. S. R. Miller, N. Y., $5; Mrs. J. W. Hardy, Kans., $10; J. David Thompson, Tex., $2.

MEETINGS.

The Sideling Hill and Fairview Old School Baptist churches of Fulton County, Pa., have appointed to hold a joint two days' meeting at Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa., Saturday and Sunday, October 8th and 9th. Those coming to this meeting by rail will be met at Hancock, Md., on Friday before the meeting, provided they will write beforehand to Deacon J. C. Mellott, Needmore, Pa., or to brother Marcus Mellott, Dott, Pa. Hancock is reached by either the Baltimore & Ohio or Western Maryland Railroads. Those coming by auto and over the National Highway will turn north at Hancock and follow cement road to state line, thence over motor route 46 to meetinghouse. Those coming by auto over Lincoln Highway will turn south at Harrisonville and follow motor route 46 twelve miles to meetinghouse. Routes are plainly marked by markers at frequent intervals along the wayside. We invite all who desire to do so, to come and be with us; and ministers intending to visit the Virginia Corresponding Meeting a few days after our meeting, will find it not much out of their way to come to the meeting at Needmore. We earnestly invite them to do so.

ROLLA MELLOTT, Church Clerk.

PLUM RUN, Pa.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 12th, 13th and 14th, with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia. Those coming by train will be met at Herndon, Va., Tuesday afternoon and evening, October 11th, and also Wednesday morning. Trains leave Rosslyn, Va., for Herndon at 2 o'clock, 5 o'clock, 5:30 and 6:30 p. m. and 7:30 a. m. Those coming into Union Station, Washington, D. C. will take cars marked Rosslyn and go to end of line, where will be found the trains for Herndon. Those coming to the meeting in their own cars via Washington will go over Key Bridge and follow Lee Highway Fairfax Courthouse, then over Lee-Jackson Memorial Highway to Chantilly and then turn east and go three miles to meetinghouse. We invite our brethren and lovers of the truth to meet with us, and shall be especially glad to welcome with us any ministering brethren of our faith and order.

K. C. SPINDLE, Church Clerk.

CLIFTON STATION, Va.

Welsh Tract Yearly Meeting is to begin on Saturday, October 15th, 2:30 p. m., and Sunday at 10 o'clock a. m. and continue all day. Those coming from Philadelphia and Baltimore will come via B. & O. R. R. Train leaves Philadelphia at 1:22 p. m. and Baltimore at 10:06 a. m., Mt. Royal Station, and will be met at Newark, Delaware. Please consult the latest time-table for change of running of trains.

Those of our faith and order are cordially invited to be with us We hope some of the ministers who expect to attend the Corresponding Meeting of Virginia and Salisbury Association the week following will arrange to be with us.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Little Creek Church, in Delmar, Sussex County, Delaware, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 19th, 20th and 21st, 1927. Trains leaving New York at 12:00, noon, and Philadelphia at 2:50 will be met at Delmar on Tuesday. Those coming from Philadelphia and north on train leaving Broad Street Station at 10:05 a. m , Wednesday, will go directly to the meetinghouse on arrival here. Train leaving Cape Charles, Va., at 12:25 will be met Tuesday. Those coming from either north or south on early trains Wednesday will go directly to the meetinghouse. We extend a cordial invitation to those of our faith and order, including friends, to meet with us, and hope the ministering brethren will not wait for a special invitation.

H. C. KER, Pastor.

The next session of the San Marcos Association will be held with Mount Zion Church, in Weslaco, Texas, Friday, Saturday and the fourth Sunday in October, 1927. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially the ministers of the regular predestinarian faith and order. Weslaco is in the Rio Grande Valley, on the St. L., B. & M. R. R. All trains will be met Thursday evening and Friday morning.

J. B. BOWDEN, Moderator.

E. B. AULT, Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expect Elder George Ruston to meet with them the fifth Sunday in October (30th), 1927. For convenience services to be held at the home of James E. Livingston, 64 E. Main St., Cobleskill, N. Y., at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All welcome. Also meeting on Saturday before at 2 p. m.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 245 Lacadana Drive, Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday of each month at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 459 E. 5th St., Riverside, Calif., and at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. 11th St., Claremont, Calif., on the first Sunday of each alternate month, beginning with January, and on every alternate month with brother Joseph Huffman, 128 Van Buren St., Arlington, Calif. Singing at 10:30 a. m. Preaching at 11 a. m. Lunch at the place of meeting, and continued services in the afternoon.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.
O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 95. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1927. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MACOMB, Okla., July 7, 1927.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you another good letter I received from sister Little. She is a dear mother in Israel and we all love her and love to read her letters and be with her, though we do not get to be with her often. She gives her consent to have this published if the editors so desire.

Yours in that blessed hope in Christ our Redeemer,

(MRS.) M. E. HARRIS.

STUART, Oklahoma.

DEAR SISTER HARRIS:—I feel we have been taught in the same school and have been led by the one Spirit to drink at the same fountain of God's everlasting love and mercy. I am not offended at you for sending my letter to the SIGNS. I had no thought of you doing so, but ever since we were together at our association, and afterward reading your experience in the SIGNS, I had a great desire to write to you, and did try to, but felt it was so near telling nothing of what I wanted to write I never sent it to you, and now if the God of all grace will guide my mind and enable me I desire to give you some more little glimpses of my wilderness journey, which, if you so desire, you may send to the SIGNS to dispose of as the editors and publishers see fit, for I believe that paper is as nearly in accord with what I believe the Scriptures teach as it is possible for a paper to be.

Now let me go back to that memorable sermon preached from Ephesians ii. 5, in a grove among the hills of Graves County, Kentucky, by Elder W. A. Bowden, who was then pastor of Mt. Zion Church, but who has long since passed away to his reward in the heaven of eternal glory. Of all the preaching I have heard since none has ever stayed with me like that. Until then the thought of baptism had never entered my mind, but afterward I could hardly think of anything else; it was in my thoughts by day and in my dreams by night for more than a year. It was just at the close of the Civil War, and my mother, who was a member of the church, was in very poor health at the time. We had no conveyance, and my only sister, my two brothers and all my young associates had joined the Methodists, but at length a cousin, knowing how anxious I was to go

to the church, a distance of ten miles, planned for my aunt and myself to go, and walk to her house (which was half way) on Friday before the meeting, and she would go with us. But rain prevented us until Sunday morning. My brother had procured a two-wheeled cart and yoke of young oxen, with which he conveyed us to the meetinghouse, and when opportunity was given any desiring to talk to the church I tried to tell something of how I for a period of seven years had tried to work myself into the favor of the Lord, and of my complete failure; then a little of how I hoped the Lord had shown me my lost, ruined and helpless condition, as I wrote you; only when I came to speak of the two personages I seemed to see in my deliverance, which had not been made clear to me, there I halted. Then the dear old brother exclaimed, "Sis, you have told what I have been trying to preach for forty years." After that I had rest for a few days until the tempter came along. I did not know the inspired apostle Peter had said, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." Also, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." It seemed that all my hope had been swept away in a moment of time, and I had so much desired to be baptized. I thought, I am deceived, and have deceived the church, oh what shall I do? What can I do? I cannot suffer them to baptize me, and I cannot recant. For awhile I was miserable to the extreme, but somehow when the time appointed for my baptism came I had become reconciled, for the Lord has promised that he will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear, but will with the temptation make a way of escape. On the day following my baptism I had been at work in the field, and at noon when I had a little leisure, I opened the Bible and commenced reading at the forty-first chapter of Isaiah, and had read three or four chapters when my sister reminded me that it was time to return to work. Had I the pen of a ready writer I could not begin to tell you all that I saw of the power and wisdom of almighty God, of his love, mercy and care of his church, of the nothingness of man and the futility of idols (anything that man can invent or plan by which he may obtain salvation, or work himself into God's favor, or cause him to change his purpose). My heart was filled with the love of God, and for a time, like the eunuch, I went on my way rejoicing; Jesus all the day long was my joy and my song. My heart always thrills with joy when I can through the guidance of the Spirit read or hear those truths proclaimed by his chosen and called ministers: that which exalts God and abases man. "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counselor hath taught him?" "Who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things." "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." If it were not for these things, for God's predestination, how could we feel assured of anything? Therefore he says, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Jesus said,

"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." "And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." The apostle Paul said, "We walk by faith, not by sight." What I desired then, and ever have desired above all things, was to be in the assembly of the Lord's people, the Old School Baptists (Conditionalism had never been heard of then), and have gone to meeting under adverse circumstances. I recall one Sunday I went alone five miles and rode a blind horse. It was not the expectation of being rewarded for doing so, but as one desiring the sincere milk of the word. To me it was always very grievous to be hindered from going to my meetings. Should there be no preaching, no message, it was a great joy to even meet with and greet the brethren and sisters, notwithstanding my nothingness and sinfulness, often feeling that I was beneath their notice, esteeming them as the excellent of the earth, more than mere human. Such, dear sister, were my feelings when we were together last at our association. How I desired to talk with you, but that and my bad hearing prevented me.

You speak in your letter of denying our dear Lord and Master by our actions. Had he not told Peter that he should deny him, and also that he had prayed for him, that his faith fail not, I surely would give up in despair. Of one of the many times, right here I wish to tell you. You are aware of the many years I have by distance, age and infirmity been isolated from the churches. About six years ago, our pastor, Elder Snider, and Elder Bell sent us an appointment to preach on Saturday night and Sunday at a nearby schoolhouse. Of course the community Sunday-school had to be attended to on Sunday before we could have audience, and one class formed in front of me, and one of the class held the book to me, with her fingers under a verse of Scripture for me to read as though for her accommodation, and ere I was aware of what I was doing I had read it. Now I have never believed in my heart that Sunday-schools are sanctioned by the Lord. Brother Bell was sitting within a few feet, and that being the first time I had met him, when I realized what I had done I was filled with anguish and shame. I thought, If I approach him and try to explain, he cannot believe me. I can say in truth that this was one the "sometimes" I remember of going to meeting and wishing I had stayed at home. I recall when, as I hope, he was revealed to me as my Savior, the chiefest among ten thousand, I indeed felt that I could trust him for all things for all time and eternity, but ere long, when brought into darkness, with fiery trials and temptations, did I inquire, "Will the Lord cast off forever? and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" and I said, My strength

and my hope is perished from the Lord. "Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope." Cannot we witness with Paul, who is our pattern of longsuffering, of afflictions and persecutions of every phase, when he could say, "We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." Yes, this is glorious and comforting, to know that his promises never have and never will fail, neither are they conditional, for all the promises of God in his Son Jesus Christ are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God, and we know that he has all power, and governs and controls all things, and know that the "all things" work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Dear sister, I commenced writing this in February, bad weather, bad health and many other things have hindered me. I am in my eighty-fourth year and very feeble. I hope you can forgive me for being so tardy and write another good letter, and remember me in your prayers as one who am less than the least of all.

With much love to all, yours in a little hope,

E. F. LITTLE.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Aug. 28, 1927.

DEAR BROTHER MCCLANAHAN:—If one so unworthy as I may thus address you. I hope you will not feel that I am placing a burden upon you when I send you these few lines to tell you how much I enjoyed meeting with you once again at our association. My heart was made to rejoice when I received the news that you would once more be permitted to meet with us and bring a message of the glorious doctrine of salvation alone by the grace of God. Oh how thankful we should be that the Lord has spared our unprofitable lives for another year and blessed us with the wonderful privilege of meeting together once more and extending the hand of love and fellowship to one another in bonds of love. Your sermon this morning was food to my poor hungry soul, and I feel to thank God for enabling you to deliver such a sweet message to the dear children of God, whose hearts are prepared to receive the message by the power of God. Those precious words you spoke were sweeter than the honey from the honeycomb, and may you be enabled by the grace of God to stand on the walls of Zion and declare the unsearchable riches of Christ as long as you live in this world. May you be enabled to stand steadfast and proclaim the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace many years in the future, ever contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints and give God all the praise, honor and glory, both now and for evermore. I sometimes feel that if I could only have the evidence I can see in the faces of the dear old brethren I would never doubt again, yet though my hope be ever so small I would not exchange it for all the joys and pleasures of this world, which will all fade away and be no more. Thank God for the precious hope that he has given each and every child of God, though it be small it is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and entereth into that within the vail, whither Christ, the forerunner, hath gone. The love of God is manifested in the hearts of

God's children when they come together from their homes many, many miles apart, and mingle their voices in hymns of praise, then their cup of joy is filled to overflowing when some dear brother speaks words of comfort in a way that this precious promise is fulfilled: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." A poor hungry soul meets at the house of God, hoping to receive a message of love as revealed in the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace, and if the Lord gives him an understanding heart and an ear to hear he goes back home with a heart full of loving words and thoughts that he can feast on for many days and months in the future. Your words of comfort and peace spoken to us this morning were a wonderful manifestation of the power of almighty God, for without the help of God we can do nothing, and without the Spirit of Christ our worship would all be in vain. He is all in all, the One altogether lovely; he is the first and the last, the beginning and the end, and no man is able to change one item in God's wonderful plan of salvation. He is an all-wise God, and needs not the help of puny man to complete the work. When Christ begins the work of grace in the heart of a poor sinner he will complete it, regardless of what man may say or do. Blessed be God for giving us a hope that we are included in that innumerable company that shall meet around the great white throne, where we shall ever be with him and be like him, then our joy will be complete. My greatest pleasure in this world is meeting with the dear saints of God for the purpose of worship of God in spirit and truth, and oh what joy it will be when we meet to part no more, if we receive so much enjoyment while mingling our voices together here in words of praise and glory to our blessed Redeemer, who shed his precious blood to save poor unworthy sinners from death, hell and the grave. I need not tell you these things, for you already know them and I am only intruding on your valuable time. I only intended to write you a few words to tell you how much I enjoyed your message of love, and I hope you will pardon all mistakes and cast the mantle of charity over these rambling thoughts, for I am only a poor worm of the dust, and feel that this letter is like the writer, very unworthy and unprofitable. My prayer is that if we never meet again in this world of sin and sorrow we may be enabled by grace divine to meet in that heaven of bliss, that world without end, where we will never say farewell, but ever be with our blessed Savior where all tears shall be wiped away and sorrow and sighing shall be no more, then our joy will be complete. Give God all the praise, honor and glory if there be one word of comfort in what I have said.

Your unworthy sister in bonds of love,

ELSIE GALL.

JULY 24, 1927.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—As I am much too happy for slumber, I should like to tell you by writing some of my thankful thoughts about to-day's heavenly services. I have never succeeded in finding words to express my religious emotion, therefore this note will of course be a failure which will need much charity from you. While I listened to you preaching to-day I wished so much to try to explain to you the divine bliss to which your message lifted me. You seemed to repeat every thought I have ever entertained about this, and if there were any phases omitted by you the beautiful hymns expressed these. You

know all about it any way, and you know how to say it. But it seems to me you fight such a furious battle, comforting so many, I wish I could tell you about my very small battle, then you would know that some one else in Vancouver falls down very far into despair, only to be lovingly lifted up to very high places where my happiness is speechless.

I shall probably burn this, because the fact of my writing it is going to make some one think I am good. However, I do wish you knew what a joke I really am, with my education and all my reasoning ability, which are handy for mercenary purposes, but very destructive for religious purposes. My sweetest experiences have brought me to many conclusions which were naturally unreasonable, but very beautiful to me. In my natural profession I hear much about discipline and justice, but God's discipline is very different from this, and I am satisfied that my little brain will never begin to understand his methods. I have worshipped so far secretly, so it is difficult to try to tell you about it. I remember creeping away trying to pray when about nine years of age. There was serious illness to be prayed about. Then throughout my school life prayer always came to me at crucial moments, such as examinations, despite the fact that my father's illness never disappeared as I had asked. I was allowed to be clever and to commune with heaven through the soul of music. I always realized that the music was God's, but he allowed me to play to other people, making them wonder what gripped their souls. I was often troubled because I knew that the listeners gave me the credit when I felt I had no control of the gift. I have been knocked down many times and always, always thwarted in my ambition by unsurmountable obstacles. Always I was allowed to doubt, became bitter, exhausting my natural power of resistance until I could only call for help, which always came at the right time. Then when my horizon cleared a little I would find myself wishing he would knock me down again so I could feel him lifting me up again. I suppose my mind could never stand the strong power of his presence for many consecutive moments, so he knows just how long to remain with me before he withdraws. But he has never failed yet, and never will when I really need help. In the last few years I have been favored by such frequent seasons of grace, because I was continually ready to cease striving, but he would not let me stop. He was there almost before I had time to try to ask for this. I am afraid I cannot describe this presence. It is too wonderful. I might mention one night when he came shining in the window to me in the moonlight. My mother was ill and she asked me to go to the telephone and call my brother, but I went to the window and found God ready for me. Then our doctor was stricken with serious illness. No other doctor could take his place, and I learned to lean on the one Doctor who has healed her sufficiently to come here three thousand miles with me. The longest time I have basked in that divine light was during an afternoon, two or three hours, I think. I was supposed to be asleep, but instead I was lying very still, afraid to speak or move or think, for fear he would withdraw, and well I knew I could not hold that spell. That was two years ago when he told me to come to New York alone and leave my frail mother, who would be well while I was away. I was very sure about all this.

I have been suppressed in my teaching

by an aggressive combination of people until the superintendents and inspector have wondered what the trouble was. Logically I should have advanced to a special position in music. This helped me to be bitter, because I wondered if God were in the school system. Last spring the stern leader (inspector) came in close contact with death in his family. When he visited my room I met a very human man, whose head was bowed a little, and I realized that God would very easily move any school system if he wished. I was weary of the fight, but now since I have heard you I think I will go back to Vancouver and fight some more. I know nothing that will not bow to the power that is in you. I wish I could just remember a little faith, but I am even incapable of that. I am sure you will never cease the struggle any way.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE M. DUFFUS.

[THE above was written after midnight on July 24th, by one who attended our services at Warwick and Middletown, N. Y., and on the second Sunday in August was baptized into the full church fellowship of the Ebenezer Church, in New York City. She had visited us once before, but this year brought her mother, who is a lovely sister and is a member of the Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada. We feel the Lord has wonderfully taught sister Catherine, and that he has most graciously brought her into the fold, for all of which we desire to render unto him praise.—R. L. D.]

LENOIR CITY, Tennessee.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I have changed my address again will write you to please send my paper to Route 3, Lenoir City, Tennessee. On account of my husband's health we had to leave Chicago in July, and if it is the Lord's will to bless us with life we are going to stay in Tennessee for awhile. We have been visiting some of the Old School Baptist churches here in east Tennessee and have found some good sound Baptists. We went to the association held here in September and heard good sound preaching. All enjoyed it and we had a sweet meeting all through the association. How good it is that God has and does pour out his Spirit upon his people and cause them to feast upon him and to feel that they are yet remembered in love by their Savior. They are thereby strengthened and their love is increased in him, for according as he has chosen us in Christ we shall be holy and without blame before him in love. The only way we are perfect is in his love, and every one that is born of God is born of love, for God is love, and perfect love casteth out fear. There are times with us when we fear and doubt, and I have heard it preached that it is because of our disobedience we are found in darkness and fear, but I cannot believe it is so in every case, yet I do believe that these doubts, fears and dark times are good for us. I have not the words to express what I understand about these things, but if it pleases God to direct my feeble mind to see the truth it will also please him to give me a door of utterance that I can tell it in sound words. The love we feel in our souls is not of the flesh, but is of God, therefore it is perfect and will bear righteous fruit, for it is of God, and when it pleases him to cause the cold, wintry winds to blow, and we feel chilled and in need of food and find it is not in us to get these comforts we so much desire we are then made to know that it is all of God. We, if left to ourselves, are destitute of all, and cannot go forward nor

backward, but must stand still and know he is God. As Christ said on the cross, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? We feel to be left alone, and oh how sad it is, but if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him. Naturally speaking, we do not want to suffer at all, be it pain or someting else. There is no one who desires to suffer the things that time brings, and we would all, if we could, shun them, but it has pleased God to let it be so, and we are not able to deliver ourselves from them, neither are we able to deliver others. We must learn by experience, if it pleases God for it to be so, for thereby we grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. Therefore the love of God constrains us to follow after him, and because of that love we cry unto him for deliverance when trouble and fear come. We have been made to see ourselves so weak and full of sin, ready to fall if not held up by the power of God, until we feel afraid to be alone (that is, to walk in our own righteousness), because we realize we have none. That is why we beg to be led and desire to be kept by his power, and when it pleases him to cover this earth (the child) with a shower and cause the dark clouds, rain and wind to beat down over us what are we that we can stop it? We must wait until it pleases him to show his face again and give us hope that all is not in vain. It is good for the child that these rainy, dark, cloudy days come, for when the Sun shines again and causes the fruitful season to come it will bear its fruit unto God, and he is pleased with the work of his own hands, for he is the eternal Husbandman and will dig and work his vineyard to please himself, and will send the seasons as he has prepared them, for he is all-wise, declaring the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. I am glad he will, for it is a perfect work. We may not be able to understand it, or even think of it, but that does not change the handiwork of God. As time comes and goes it will unfold his purpose in all his creation, and not one thing will fail. Satan is the one that is fooled. He is the one that is making big promises and failing to keep to his contract. He is the deceiver, the antichrist, no truth found in him, and his delight is to boast of his power, but we see just how far he can go, even just as it pleases God to let him, then the work of Satan, with all his boasted power, is done away with and God shows himself as God of all. No power is able to go beyond the limits of God's eternal wisdom and knowledge, for he is from everlasting to everlasting, and his love is eternal, too, for it is all one.

Well, dear brethren, if you can feel this is true (and I believe you are able by divine revelation to discern the truth) do with it as you think best and it will be all right with me. May God's love and sustaining grace ever be with you all, and may it please him to deliver the church, the Lamb's wife, from false doctrine and false preachers, and cause her to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth, until it pleases him to come and call for his bride to live with him in his kingdom above for ever and ever, is my desire.

A sinner saved by the death and suffering of our Lord, if saved at all,

(MRS.) WILL MATHIS.

EL PASO, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—As it is time for me to renew my subscription for this dear old family paper I am inclosing a post-office money order for five dollars, two dollars for myself, the other three dollars

to be applied as directed on the inclosed subscription blank. As my mind is led to Elder Lefferts' editorial in the May issue, if the Lord will give me light, I feel a desire to write a few lines in connection with his article and also the letter he referred to, and will first say, as some of you know, I am not a member of the dear old Primitive Baptist Church, a church and people I hope I am made to love. I do know I am sometimes made to rejoice in being with them in their meetings, but that is not often, as there is no church near this place, but I hope I am thankful I am sometimes blessed with the sweet privilege of hearing a sermon from one of the dear Old Baptists, and I am often comforted with good letters from dear friends scattered throughout the country (I say friends because I do not feel worthy to say brethren). I have received many comforting letters from one dear friend in England who is far from me. I have never met him, and we are supposed to be strangers to each other, and are strangers in the flesh, but I am made to hope that I do know him in the Spirit of our Lord, and have some little hope that we both have been taught by the same great Teacher. He wrote me that he and Elder Ruston were old time friends.

But this is not what I had in mind to write, as I thought of telling a few reasons why I do not belong to the dear Old Baptist Church. I will say my best reason is I do not feel to be a fit subject for this church of God's chosen people, whom I hope I dearly love, and right here I must confess I believe in a way that the trouble in the church has had something to do with keeping me out of the church, but not in the same way as the friend of Elder Lefferts. As I have viewed those troubles and divisions in the church it seems I could always see some one there a little like myself, who was causing the trouble. I was blessed with the privilege of being at Ft. Worth, Texas, the first Sunday in April, which is over six hundred miles from here, and I want to write some of my own feelings in that meeting. After hearing two preachers, old time friends, and one of them I heard preach thirty-two years back, and seeing that dear little band in peace and sweet fellowship, and after they had finished preaching they gave an opportunity for any who wished to join with them, and one lady went forward and gave testimony and a sweet experience of grace, and was received by the church for baptism, oh how I did long to be with them. It seemed I could hardly keep from asking them for a home with them, but the thought came to me, Here is a sweet, lovely, peaceful little band and yon must not mar the peace and sweet fellowship of this lovely little band, but it is my desire that the God of all power, mercy, love and grace will fit and prepare me, a vile, unworthy sinner, for a home with those lovely people who are near and dear to me. I say again, when I see trouble in a church I feel there must be some one in that church just like myself, and I am unclean and among the chiefest of sinners, but I hope there are times when I can say, as did David, I will sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt bountifully with me. I often think that if God had dealt with me according to my sins that his mercy and grace would have been withdrawn from me and I would have been cut off from among the living and from the presence of God. Is it not wonderful to think that we have a God of love, mercy and grace, who has dealt so bountifully with us and has given us a hope of life

eternal beyond this life of sin and sorrow? I find comfort in Paul's words, where he said, This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. It is a glorious thought to me that Jesus saves sinners, for this is one thing I do know, that I am a sinner, and if saved at all it will be by grace and not of works. Oh sweet thought, for if it were of works then there would be no salvation for this old unworthy sinner. "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me." When I look back over my past life, and think of how ungrateful I have been, and think of how God in his love, mercy and patience has so wonderfully blessed me, it is then I hope I am made to say, Praise God from whom all blessings flow. How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God.

As I am making my letter too long, I will close by saying that if the editors see fit to publish this letter, and any of the dear Old Baptists feel like writing to this old, lonely, unworthy sinner, I will be glad to hear from them, and will try and answer them. I also wish to say any one passing this way will be welcomed in my home, 3115 Sacramento Street, El Paso, Texas. May God's love and mercy be continued with the household of faith, especially the editors and publishers of the dear old SIGNS.

An unworthy friend, in hope of God's mercy,

C. M. ADAMS.

CARTHAGE, Mo., Sept. 25, 1927.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I notice in the SIGNS for August of this year an article from the pen of J. C. Chester, of Brewsters, Ky., inquiring for the address of Grace Veech Smith. I am writing for his information, and the information of any others who care to know, that really there is no such woman, though I write for the SIGNS over that signature. That was my name at one time, and during that time I sometimes wrote for the SIGNS. Ten years after the death of Mr. Smith I became the wife of H. N. Crosier, and feeling that the matter of my second marriage was of no interest to the readers of the SIGNS, and wishing to be known as the one who had signed her name Grace Veech Smith, I continued to use that signature when writing for our family paper. It never occurred to me that it might cause some one inconvenience. My present signature is (Mrs.) Grace V. Crosier, and my address is 1640 South Garrison Avenue, Carthage, Missouri.

I wish to thank brother Chester for his kind interest in me, and to add that owing to illness I was able to attend the next Bible Conference but very little, and I did not find the one discourse I heard as edifying as those of the first Conference had been.

You may publish this if you think it worth while. I had no thought of deceiving any one by using my old name. I wish to add that the SIGNS is still a comfort to me, and I am thankful it still circulates among the lovers of the truth.

Your unworthy sister, in hope,

GRACE V. CROSIER.

MONROE, Ga., Sept. 7, 1927.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I just want to tell you after reading your Circular Letter of the Warwick Association in the SIGNS how good and comforting it was to me. While I heard you read it at the association at New Vernon it impressed me that it was written in the spirit of love, even to those who do not understand the old doctrine as you do.

It expresses the doctrine in a way that constrains me to love you for the truth's sake. The testimony was written by inspiration and left on record for our comfort by witnesses whose testimony cannot be altered in any way. I am still enjoying the good things that were given out to us last spring at your associations. The sweet fellowship, union and brotherly kindness bind me closely to all of you of like precious faith, and it seems to separate me from those who say hard things about this blessed old doctrine of predestination of all things. I wonder what thing comes to pass that God did not determine it should. He saw the end from the beginning and fixed everything just as it pleased him, and it is coming to pass just as he determined it would, and men and devils cannot unfix it.

All is well with us, and I hope this will find it the same with you and yours.

Your little brother,

JAMES M. ADAMS.

WHITE PLAINS, N. Y., Sept. 7, 1927.

MISS C. M. DUFFUS—DEAR SISTER:—You have been in my mind often since that beautiful day I saw you baptized, and truly I have rejoiced with you in your peaceful rest that none can ever describe but those who have the witness within, and they can say the half has never been told. The thought came to me this morning that we do weep with those that weep and rejoice with those that rejoice. None but the afflicted of Zion know about these joys and sorrows. The darkness comes first when the power of God is working in our hearts and we are awakened to see our lost and ruined condition, but when we are delivered from this dark state of distress and our blessed Savior appears, saying, Your sins are all forgiven and your soul is set free, then we are free indeed. My friend and sister in the same faith, sister Hightower, who goes with me each time I can go to meeting, and is very kind to me in my affliction, said to me last week that she shed tears of joy with you one morning. It seemed you appeared to her and your face shined with much brightness, and the words came to her, Happy art thou, O Israel, who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord? Last Sunday was our church meeting and sister Hightower spoke about this in the meeting, but did not tell all of it as I have written here. I said to her on our way home, Why did you not tell all of how sister Duffus appeared in your mind that morning? She said, I could not.

I am much improved in health and feel thankful to the Lord that I am enabled to attend meeting again. Dear sister, I do hope some time I will try and tell you some of my travels from darkness to the light, if not deceived. Elder Dodson preached two wonderful sermons last Sunday, and I enjoyed your good letter to the church. I have, it seems, both you and your mother in my mind, and this letter is for both of you. The text Elder Dodson used in the morning was Isaiah xliii. 5–7, and in the afternoon 2 Kings xix. 3. The hymns sung were numbers 1184, 751, 495, 765 and 142.

Write me if you can and I will be glad to hear from you. Love to your mother.

Yours in hope,

MELISSA GRIMES.

(See obituary notice on page 261.)

WANTED.

First and second volume of Elder Gilbert Beebe's Editorials. Write, stating price for the books, to Box 3, Troy, Alabama.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1927.

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LUKE XVI. 2.

"GIVE an account of thy stewardship."

These words were spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ to his disciples, and are a part of one of those parables which he spake, as it was written of him that he should open his mouth in parables and utter dark sayings. The parable from which the words under consideration are copied is one of a cluster of parables which Jesus took occasion to put forth when the Pharisee murmured because he received publicans and sinners, and associated with them, the first three of which were addressed to the murmuring Pharisees, viz: The lost sheep with joy returned to the fold; the lost piece of money found, and the prodigal son returned to his father's house; on each occasion producing great joy instead of murmuring. Next follows the parable of the unjust steward, and this with several in succession was spoken to his disciples in the hearing of Pharisees.

In the preceding parable the lost sheep, the lost money and the prodigal son, represented the lost sheep of the house of Israel, unto whom the Messiah was sent, and unto whom he sent the primitive pioneers of the doctrine of salvation by grace, including these poor lost publicans and sinners. These were originally a part of Israel, but, like the lost sheep, had strayed away from the government of the house of David, and become lost sheep; like the piece of money, they were lost and could not be reckoned among the doers of the law, and like the prodigal son, they had been prodigal of their privileges, had spent all, were reduced to poverty, wretchedness and extreme distress. These parables are given to show that Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

In the parable of the steward, we understand the "certain rich man" to represent the nation of the Jews, or the government of Judah. This portion of Israel had not revolted from, nor become lost to the house of David, but the ten tribes had, like the younger brother, taken their portion and gone into a far country, and at the time our Lord spake this parable were hired out to a citizen of that country (the Romans) to feed swine, (gather tax from the Jews to support the Roman government,) and had wasted their inheritance in Israel, &c. While the revolted tribes were reduced to poverty, the Jews remained in their original estate, as Jews, and boasted that they were rich. The law and the prophets were with them; "They have Moses and the prophets;" the ark and the temple, the priesthood and the service of the worldly sanctuary; and were compara-

tively clothed in purple, and fared sumptuously every day. But this rich man had in his house an unjust steward. The character of this steward answered well to the condition of these murmuring Pharisees and scribes, who occupied the place of stewards in teaching and expounding the law, and in dealing out to the household those things which were under their charge. But they had acted the part of an unjust steward, and were accused of wasting the goods (making void the law of God by their own traditions), were accused by Moses in whom they trusted. The day of reckoning had overtaken them and they were summoned to prepare their accounts, for they could no longer hold the stewardship. Being thus notified to render an account of his stewardship and give up the office, his wisdom, not his honesty, was commended by his lord, for like the scribes and Pharisees, whom he represented, he was an unjust steward, and his course in making provision for himself by defrauding his lord was well calculated to illustrate the wisdom of the scribes and Pharisees, in regard to those who are debtors to the law. As the unjust steward said unto that debtor who owed his lord a hundred measures of oil, Take thy bill and sit down quickly and write fifty, and to him that was indebted a hundred measures of wheat, Write fourscore, so these scribes had dealt with the debtors of the law, requiring them to be very exact in minor matters, tithing, of mint, &c., but remitting the weightier matters of the kingdom. Several examples of this kind are given by our Lord, the following for instance: "Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with unwashed hands? He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you, hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit, in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men: for laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honor thy father and thy mother; and, whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profiteth by me; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do aught for his father or his mother; making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such things do ye."—Mark vii. 5–13. But the unjust steward, when about to lose his stewardship, made provision for himself, that when he should be destitute the debtors of his lord might receive him into favor, and it was in reference to this that his lord said he had done wisely. The Pharisees and scribes, were, at the time this parable was spoken, about to be removed from their stewardship, the temple worship to be abolished and the Jews as a nation to be scattered abroad, and their wisdom was displayed in making friends of the rulers of the Gentiles and in sending forth their foreign missionaries to make proselytes to their faith, by modifying the requirements of the law and suffering the Gentiles to sit down and write their bill as they saw fit. This ancient order of Pharisees and scribes were to give place to a more modern order of their brethren, which extends, we can all

witness, down to the present time. Our modern Pharisees and scribes are received and largely renumerated by the children of this word, by a corresponding system of craftiness, by accommodating their doctrines to the bills which men have made out for themselves, saying for an hundred measures, fifty, or fourscore. Pharisees of the present day who profess to be stewards, or expounders of the law, say for instance to sinners, How much owest thou the law? If the poor debtor reply, I have transgressed the precept, and am under the sentence of death, I owe my life, our modern crafty scribes and Pharisees will tell that debtor to set down quickly and alter his bill to the amount which he feels able and willing to pay. If the law demands your life, alter the bill and make it require your obedience, or your efforts to obey. If the word of God requires that you shall be slain by the law, and made alive by grace, through the quickening operation of the Holy Ghost, the bill is so altered as to place the whole settlement in the power and inclination of the delinquent. As the ancient stewards made void the law of God by tradition so do those of our day teach for doctrines the commandments of men, the devices and inventions of men. But as the day of the Lord has overtaken the ancient order of scribes and Pharisees, so shall the day of retribution come upon those mockers of the last times, who have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam, for a reward, and have perished in the gainsayings of Kore, for their judgment now, of a long time lingereth not and their damnation slumbereth not.

Some have found it difficult to understand the useful lesson of practical instruction which our Lord directed his primitive disciples to learn from this subject, when he commanded them to make to themselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness. He certainly did not direct them to copy the example of the unjust and wicked steward, for that would be in opposition to every principle of true religion, but he told them that "the children of this world are, in their generation, wiser than the children of light." They have none of the wisdom that cometh from above, but that wisdom which is peculiar to the children of this world, and which is opposed to the wisdom of God. The wisdom of this world is exemplified in the case of the unjust steward. The children of the kingdom of Christ have no occasion for that kind of wisdom, but still they are exhorted to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. But if they lack wisdom, instead of seeking that which is from beneath, they are directed to ask it of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not. By the mammon of unrighteousness, we understand worldly riches, earthly possessions, &c. Some of the disciples of Jesus undoubtedly held some of this kind of mammon, which could be of service to them but a little while at the most, as, in consequence of their profession of faith in Christ, they were cast out of the synagogue, viewed as outlaws, no longer entitled to protection, persecuted and scattered far away from their houses and homes. As freeholders they were about to fail, and as stewards of good things bestowed on them in providence it was proper they should make such disposition of their estates before they were confiscated, as should render them availing when they should be driven out by persecution. It is believed that the disciples who sold their possessions after the day of Pentecost, and laid the money down at

the apostles' feet, acted in accordance with the instruction of this parable, and when they failed, or were reduced to want, poverty and distress, this common fund supplied the poor saints in general. We certainly are not at liberty to suppose that our Lord commended the dishonesty or injustice of the unjust steward as an example for his disciples to imitate, but rather for them to profit by the lesson of instruction taught in the parable and make to themselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness by making such disposition of their property, which was subject to confiscation, as to secure a fund out of which the common necessities of the saints should be relieved.

[THE foregoing editorial was written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for November 15th, 1843.—ED.]

SUBSCRIPTION BLANKS.

IN each copy of this issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we are inclosing a Subscription Blank as a convenient form for our subscribers to send in their subscriptions, the majority of which expire with the end of the year. If each one will examine the date opposite their name on the little pink slip pasted either on their paper, or the wrapper in which their paper comes to them, they can readily see to what date their subscription is paid. Dec. 27 signifies your subscription expires with the December, 1927 number; June 27 signifies your subscription expired with the number for June, 1927, &c. It would greatly encourage the editors and publishers to receive some new subscription, together with the old ones, and if each one would try and get us at least one new subscriber it would assist us greatly. Brethren, sisters and friends, will you see what you can do?

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. N. Bartlett.)

The Tygarts Valley River Association of Old School or Primitive Baptists, now in session with the Valley Church, Randolph County, West Virginia, to the several churches of which she is composed, and to all with whom we correspond, sendeth christian greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN IN SWEET FELLOWSHIP:—It is through the goodness, mercy and long-suffering of our heavenly Father that we are again permitted to meet together in an associate capacity as messengers and correspondents, brethren and sisters, to hold sweet communion together, and with our heavenly Father, as we hope, in order that we may be comforted, edified and established in the word of God. As it is our custom to address you by way of a Circular Letter, and with this in view, may the dear Lord help us to call your attention to the doctrine of God our Savior on which our faith is founded. "It is an important tenet of our faith, to believe, &c. God hath decreed in himself from all eternity, by the counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever shall come to pass; yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin nor hath fellowship with any therein." (Philadelphia Confession of Faith of 1742.) We believe this, not simply because it is set forth in the Philadelphia Confession of Faith, but the substance is set forth in God's word to us by the apostle Paul: "In whom [Christ] also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." —Eph. i. 11. Also the prophet Isaiah says, "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the begin-

ning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." —Isaiah xlvi. 9, 10. The shalls and wills of Jehovah in God's word prove this doctrine of predestination and our eternal destiny is fixed according to the unchangeable purpose of our God.

"Life, death and hell, and worlds unknown,
Hang on his firm decree;
He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be."

The doctrine of election is also plainly set forth in God's word and is a fundamental principle of our faith. We believe God hath chosen whom he will to serve him. "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." Those to whom the apostle Peter wrote his first epistle, he denominates them as "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God." The apostle Paul says, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." He also says, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." We also believe in the total depravity of all mankind since the fall of Adam, all by nature being dead in trespasses and in sins. All come under the sentence of death by the transgression of God's holy law. But God, according to his predeterminate counsel, even before the creation of the world and all things therein, entered into a covenant of grace. His covenant is an everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure. His chosen ones being sinners in the sight of a just and holy God, children of wrath even as others, lost and helpless, yet they were God's, the Father's, by choice. Jesus said, Thine they were and thou gaveth them me. God the Father gave his chosen ones to Jesus that he should die for each and every one of them: to redeem them from death, redeem them from sin, redeem them from hell, and by his atonement satisfy divine justice, fulfill the law and be the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth; that is, all his chosen people. Yes, they are all redeemed to God by the blood of Christ out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation. Yes, through the atonement of Christ and by his grace we are saved in time, saved in eternity, saved in heaven at God's right hand, there to praise him forever. The Lord's chosen, redeemed people are called to a knowledge of this salvation, called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. They are called out of darkness into his marvelous light. They are born from above, born of God, born of the Spirit, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and thus they see and enter into the kingdom of God where Christ the King of kings and Lord of lords rules in and over them, working in them both to will and to do according to his good pleasure. Jesus our Savior, our Lord and our God, will never leave us nor forsake us. He will keep us by his power. Oh blessed be God, he will be with us through life, be with us in death, hand us to our graves in peace, and in the blessed morning of the resurrection change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. This mortal body is raised a spiritual body. It is raised an incorruptible body, raised in glory, there to be ever present with the Lord. Yes, forever present with the Lord

in that heaven of bliss, where there is no more sin, no more suffering, no more death, all will be peace, joy and praise to God for evermore in that world which will never end. Amen.

J. N. BARTLETT, Mod.

J. R. DENNISON, Clerk.

(Written by Elder L. L. Schenck.)

To the Elders and Messengers composing the First Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association called Kansas, greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In presenting this, our annual Circular Letter, we do so with a feeling sense of weakness and inability, with which being encumbered we tremble to proceed, and without which we realize one is not fitted to approach the sacred testimonies of our God. Thus the life of the Lord's people is a puzzle, a riddle which none of us are able to divulge, even to ourselves, in a satisfactory way. So complicated are our joys and sorrows, our fears and hopes, and so obscured is our pathway before us, that none of us are able to comprehend the measure of our own faith. Sometimes we are enabled to rejoice in the faith of God's elect, and sometimes we are doubting if we have any faith, and we are led to pray, "Increase our faith." But it may be a comfort to the tried souls to be reminded that the best evidence of your faith is a desire for more faith, and the best evidence of your hope is the fact that you constantly pray, "Revive our hope." There are three abiding elements in the christian life: "Faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Although charity is conceded to be the greatest of these virtues, yet in the absence of either faith or hope the life and the walk of the Lord's people would be incomplete, for our imagination cannot conceive of a christian without faith, nor of one without hope, nor one that is void of charity. Faith is indeed a heavenly virtue, and is the gift of God. Then if we are led to survey these gifts of God we find that the whole structure of our faith is based upon the sovereign mercy of God. It being a free gift he bestows it on whomsoever he will. For God is a sovereign, and he counsels no one as to where or upon whom he will bestow his gift. When we look for a manifestation of this gift we need not turn to men of high degree, but the meek and the lowly are the happy recipients of this heavenly favor. "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence." It is a well defined fact that this faith cannot be picked up nor laid down at the instance of mankind, for it is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. God himself is the dispenser of this. He is the author and finisher of our faith. In this, as in all things, he is our Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. In view of this fact we are made to wonder why some, even men of intelligence, will insist upon the unregenerate and ungodly to exercise faith. We would naturally inquire, How can this be done? "All men have not faith." It would therefore be presumptuous to insist upon one to exercise something which he has not. What is faith? It is not a mere whim or fancy. It is not

merely a belief. It is not a mere notion upon which one may predicate his desires or ambitions. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Time and space would fail us to recite all that has been accomplished by faith. But so closely interwoven is faith and hope that it is evident the one does not exist where the other is not seen or felt, for the substance as well as the evidence is Christ the Lord. There is one Lord, one faith and one baptism, and we might add, there is one hope for lost and ruined sinners, and it is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast and entereth into that within the vail, whither the Forerunner is for us entered. Indeed our hope is in the fact that he entered there, and for us. That is to say, "He died for us," and by that God-given faith we are enabled to trust in the efficacy of his shed blood. We can never doubt nor dispute the full accomplishment of that which was written of him beforehand, "He shall save his people from their sins." This is the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls, and this is the blessed hope by which we live. While we live we live by hope, but "hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." The works of our hands are plainly visible. They can be seen, therefore we hope for nothing from that source. But our hope is in Jesus, "whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." Brethren, it is ours to engage in the full exercise of this faith, and to lay hold on eternal life by virtue of this good hope through grace. "Lay hold on eternal life." This is a divine injunction, but should not be construed to mean that one may at his own pleasure put forth his hand and take of the Tree of life and live forever. The flaming sword and the cherubim forbid that. But inasmuch as God has given his people eternal life, it is theirs to lay hold upon it; that is, to attend to every duty and enter into every privilege incident to this eternal life. It is conceding nothing to Arminianism to say there is a work for each and every one of the Lord's little ones to perform. While we spurn the idea effecting anything in the way of salvation by our works, Baptists should not be blinded to the fact, nor seek to console ourselves with the thought that there is nothing to be done. To say you have not a work to do is equal to saying you have no duty to perform. Every wife has her work to do, as well as her husband, but his work is not her work. It is his to provide food and raiment and a comfortable home, it is hers to enjoy the same and to keep her house in order. It is hers to set the food before the little ones, and see that their garments are kept clean. It is his to stand for her defense and protection, to assume obligations and pay all her debts. It is hers to confide in him, to love, honor and obey him as her head and husband. This is the relation of a husband to his bride, and of a bride to her husband; but in the words of the apostle, "I speak concerning Christ and the church." It is a matter of true love for her that led him to suffer, to bleed, to die. He did it that she might live, and it behooved him to suffer these things and to enter into his glory. She had nothing with which to buy his favors. Behold her as a woman ten thousand talents in debt and not a farthing to pay. Indeed, our God has no

favors to sell or barter away, but he has much to give and he gave his bride all he possessed. "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." Yea, he hath said, "All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." Then let us "behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Let us pause and reflect on the manner of God's love. It has been urged that if you will love the Lord the Lord will love you. But this is not the manner of God's love. Inspiration informs us, "We love him because he first loved us." Moreover, it has been taught, If you will choose the Lord the Lord will choose you, whereas the words of Jesus are, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." The manner of his love is not based upon any merit or demerit of ours, but through his rich mercy he loved us even when we were dead in sins. The manner of his love is such it cannot be swayed even by the manner of our lives, but on the contrary our lives are influenced by the measure of the gift of his love to us. God is love, and whosoever is born of God is born of love. He is the great fountainhead of love, the source of all charity, than which there is no greater virtue. Through the providence of God it is ours to exercise this charity toward each other, forbearing one another in love. Charity is love, the love that is willing and able to forbear. It is the root of humility, the foundation of fellowship. It is a sign for those who have passed from death unto life. It is that which holds together the fragmentary parts of the house of God. If this crumbles the house will fall. It is the banner over God's little ones when they are brought into his banqueting-house. Our banner describes our nationality. It is an emblem of the cause we espouse. It is a diadem of beauty upon the heads of God's little ones, a silent sentinel in time of peace and a weapon of warfare when we go forth to battle. It should be on display at all times. I cannot conceive of an army going forth to battle having not their banner, and neither can I conceive of brethren walking in peace where there is no love nor charity. I cannot conceive of a country which is ashamed to unfurl her banner, and neither can I conceive how a church can thrive where love and charity do not abound. Well has it been said, "The greatest of these is charity." It becomes the saints to look well to the upholding of this banner. The enemy will seek to destroy it, which if he succeeds, will result in utter confusion and consternation. "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." If ye do this ye do well, so fare ye well.

L. L. SCHENCK, Mod.
MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

WANTED.

In order to place in the New York Public Library for permanent preservation every copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES since its inception in 1832 the writer needs the following papers: all of volvme 11, year 1843; all of volume 12 year of 1844; all of volume 13, year 1845; and single copies of May 15th, 1852 and April 15th, 1858.

Any one having any or all of these to spare will please communicate with Cyrus Risler, 904 Ogden Ave., New York City.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists, to those with whom we correspond, and to all who love us in the faith, greeting.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Through the ever-abounding goodness and mercy of the one God and Father of us all, we have again been permitted to meet in an associational capacity, and feel that we have truly been made to sit together in a heavenly place, with the one great Moderator and Head of the church in our midst, to own and to bless us with all spiritual blessings. Our visiting ministers have come to us as heralds of the King, proclaiming in no uncertain sound that the Lord God omnipotent rules and reigns supreme in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. They have in their hands the one great chain which John saw in the hand of the angel, the Scriptures of eternal truth, not one link of which can ever be broken; and by it man has been thoroughly abased, and God exalted and crowned Lord of all. Mutual, fervent love in one delightful stream has manifestly pervaded every heart, and all speaking the same things, not a jar nor a discordant note has been heard. A dear saint of God in poetic strains has described our meeting in more beautiful language than we can command, as

"A place where Jesus sheds
The oil of gladness on our heads,
And as a scene where spirits blend,
And friend holds fellowship with friend.

Ah, whither could we flee for aid
When tempted, desolate, dismayed,
Or how the hosts of hell defeat
Had suffering saints no mercy-seat?

For there on eagles' wings we soar,
And sin and guilt seem there no more,
And heaven comes down our souls to greet,
And glory crowns the mercy-seat."

Our next session is appointed to be held with West Union Church, at the residence of brother W. I. Zinn, two miles north of Meriden, Jefferson County, Kansas, to begin on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1928, where we ask you, if it is the Lord's will, to meet with us again. To Providence Church in Kentucky in particular we wish to say we feel great concern and anxiety as to why we have had no report from you for so long, nor have we been able to elicit an answer to letters of inquiry sent by some of our members. Sincerely hoping that all may be well with you, we beg you to give us some information of your welfare, and may the God of peace abide with you and with us, is our prayer for Jesus' sake.

Done by order of the Association, and signed in her behalf.

L. L. SCHENCK, Mod.
MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, it hath pleased almighty God in his wisdom and providence to remove from his labors our dearly beloved brother and **Elder, James H. Hammons,** and

Whereas, our brother was held in high esteem in the First Kansas Association as an able minister of the gospel of Christ, and also as an humble follower of the Lamb, therefore, be it

Resolved, that we express our gratitude to God for so noble a gift, and also express our sorrow, which is occasioned by his departure from this life, in January, 1927. We wish to be resigned to the will of Him who giveth and hath taken away, and say, "Blessed be the name of the Lord."

Resolved, that a copy of this Memorial be spread upon the Minutes of our Association, and that a copy be sent to our beloved sister Hammons, commending her to the care of him who will ever be Husband, Brother and Friend in every lonely hour of need.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence in Delmar, Md., September 21st, 1927, George Henry Truitt and Miss Bernice Evelyn Ball, both of Snow Hill, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Harriet L. Bellows died of pneumonia, May 6th, 1927, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. James Bradley, Edgewater, New Jersey. She was born in Conesville, New York, June, 1862, the daughter of Edmund and Louisa Davis. When a young girl she was adopted by Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Hill, of Roxbury, where she lived until March, 1883, when she married Sniffin K. Bellows. They resided at Halcott, N. Y., until 1900, when they removed to Roxbury, where she was still living at the time of her death. She was the mother of fourteen children, of which large family twelve remain: Arnold H. Bellows, Mrs. Martin G. Cantwell, Mrs. James Bradley, Mrs. Robert Daley, Merrick W. Bellows, Casper S. Bellows, Mrs. Harvey Travis, Miss Hazel Bellows, Miss Elizabeth Bellows, Mrs. Howard Lawrence, Mrs. Malvin Wright and Charles Bellows. At the time of her last illness she was on a short vacation, visiting two of her daughters. She leaves to mourn their loss, her aged husband, who is nearly eighty-five years old, twelve children and seventeen grandchildren, also two brothers. She united with the Old School Baptist Church eleven years ago, and was a faithful and consistent member, always in her place whenever possible, manifesting in every way that she loved the brethren. She was a woman of rare and excellent qualities, and is greatly missed by her brethren and friends, but especially by her aged husband and family, who feel that their loss is irreparable. May the Lord reconcile them to his will, enabling them to say, "Thy will be done."

The funeral service was held at her late home and was very largely attended by those who knew and loved her. Interment was in the Old School Baptist Cemetery, Roxbury, New York.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Melissa Grimes, a member of the Ebenezer Church in New York City, passed away at her late residence, 53 Brookfield St., White Plains, N. Y., September 14th, 1927. Several months previous she suffered a paralytic stroke, and the second one proved fatal. She came to New York from Williamston, N. C., about twenty years ago, where she was a member of the Missionary Baptists, but after coming to New York she asked for a home with the Primitive Baptists. The writer was present when she asked for a home in the visible church over thirteen years ago and well remembers the good reasons she gave of the hope that was within her. This was on January 4th, 1914, and she was baptized on the 25th of the same month by Elder John McConnell. She adorned the profession she made by a well ordered walk and was very highly esteemed by the church of her membership, as well as others with whom she became acquainted and with whom she corresponded, because of her clear understanding of the truth. One of the last letters she wrote, to sister Catherine M. Duffus, Vancouver, B. C. appears in this issue of the SIGNS.

Several members of the Ebenezer Church attended her funeral in White Plains, N. Y., where a large congregation had gathered to pay their last respects to a friend whom they held in high regard. Hymn 1092 (Beebe's collection) was often referred to by her, and the writer read this at the services and endeavored to speak with such ability as God gave from the words: "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." She leaves a husband, William Grimes, and many friends to mourn their loss. As a church we have sustained a great loss, but we desire to bow in humble submission to the will of him who doeth all things well.

Written by her pastor,

R. L. D.

(See communication on page 251.)

Samuel H. Berry was born April 14th, 1844, and died June 4th, 1927, aged 83 years, 1 month and 21 days. He professed a good hope in 1880, and soon united with the Primitive Baptist Church, and lived a devoted life with the same until death, as was evidenced by his walk and talk. He and his dear wife were baptized at the same time by the late Elder J. B. Hardy. He was a staunch pillar of Zion Church, in Livingston County, Kentucky. Not only did he attend his home church when possible, but he and his wife visited many churches and associations in western Kentucky, western Tennessee and southern Illinois. Brother Berry much enjoyed singing and his voice was clear and melodious, even after he was blind and had to be led by his devoted son Moten, or loving daughter Iona, who tenderly cared for him in old age, and especially did Moten render respect and loving care for him in his last days and until the death of this faithful old servant of the Lord, who kept the faith until the end, and we have much reason to believe the Lord he so much loved, honored and served welcomed him by saying, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joys of the Lord. Truly it can be said of him, He fought a good fight. We feel sure he is the rich recipient of that crown of righteousness laid up for all who really love the appearing of the Savior. He was married to Mrs. Mary E. (Brown) Franklin July 28th, 1867, and to that union were born three sons and five daughters. Two sons and three daughters survive.

ALSO,

Mrs. Mary E. Berry, his devoted wife, was born October 24th, 1843, and died June, 1923, aged 79 years, 7 months and 29 days. She professed a hope about the time of her companion, and was blessed to adorn her calling by an orderly walk. Sister Berry was in-

deed a jewel of great price to her home, neighborhood and church. The Baptists far and near were always glad to welcome this father and mother in Israel into their homes and had sweet fellowship for them. They two were one, as to the service of God and in the esteem of their friends, who were numbered by their acquaintances. We feel to join with inspiration, and say, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth. Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." May the Lord in mercy sustain and comfort the dear children, and all who mourn, is the prayer of their unworthy servant,

J. C. CHESTER.

J. N. Shelton, my dear father, was born February 9th, 1853, and died July 2nd, 1926, making his stay on earth 73 years, 4 months and 21 days. He was a member of the Old Baptist Church for twenty-five years, and if he had yielded to his inclination he would have been a preacher, but for some reason he never did, but his family knew he had a calling. Dear father and mother were married May 4th, 1882, and to that union ten children were born, of whom six preceded him to the grave, leaving four, together with our dear mother, to mourn our loss. He was a kind husband and a loving father and we miss him much. Father was well read and could enlighten his family on almost any subject we went to him with. He was a good neighbor and much liked by all who knew him. Mother is left with a grandson she and father were trying to raise. He is now twelve years of age. As her children are all married, mother had to break up her home and is now living with her children. Father's death has made us all very sad, for we feel that a pure gem is lost to us in this life, but we feel that our great loss is his eternal gain, and how comforting it is to know that our loved ones are at rest.

Written by his daughter,

(MRS.) DONIE MEADOWS.

S. P. Smith, our beloved brother, departed this life January 22nd, 1927, at his home, near Sadieville, Kentucky, after a lingering illness, in the full hope of eternal life. He was born at Tazewell, Tenn., November 2nd, 1842, and consequently was 84 years, 2 months and 20 days old. He came to Kentucky in 1865 and lived the balance of his life on the same place where he first secured employment. He and Miss Eva Burgess were united in marriage November 15th, 1868, and to this marriage were born two children, a son and daughter. He was baptized by Elder J. M. Theabald in the fellowship of Elk Lick Church, the second Saturday in August, 1881, and was chosen a deacon of the church the first Saturday in April, 1889. He was a true and faithful member of Elk Lick Church for nearly forty-six years, and his house was always open to the Old Baptists and he was glad to have them with him. He was always ready to bear his part of any burden that fell upon the church, and did it cheerfully. He attended all the meetings of the church except when providentially hindered. Brother Smith was a firm believer in the doctrine of predestination and was at all times ready to defend it. Elk Lick has lost a true and faithful member, his widow a loving and kind husband, his children a kind and loving father, and while we deeply feel our loss, we mourn not as those who have no hope, for we believe our loss is his eternal gain. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

With short funeral services at the grave we laid the body away, there to remain until "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore, comfort one another with these words." —1 Thessalonians iv. 16–18.

A. M. M. BRADLEY, JR.

Martha Emline Osteen was born near Roanoke, Texas, March 2nd, 1872, and died at her home, near Perrin, October 4th, 1927, making her stay on earth 55 years, 7 months and 2 days, dying without a struggle, and as the last breath left her body a smile came over her face, which remained until after we took our last look at her, giving evidence that she was sleeping in the Lord, asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep. It seemed I could not give her up, but oh how short the arm of poor puny man. I cannot seem to be reconciled to his will, but must be submissive, believing that whatsoever the Lord does is right, for he does as he pleases in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, nor say, What doest thou? for man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower and is cut down. He fleeth also as a shadow and continueth not. But the reconciling thought is, If a man die shall he live again? Yes, Job says, all the days of my allotted time will I wait till my change come. I believe that when Jesus comes the second time without sin unto salvation she will be among that number that is shouting everlasting praise unto God and to the Lamb for evermore. She received a hope about the year 1900, and united with the old Denton Creek Church on Saturday before the first Sunday in May, 1902, and was baptized by old Elder A. D. Bourland, one of the noblest men I ever knew, and was loved by all who knew him.

The funeral service was conducted by Elder J. H. Smith, who preached a very appropriate discourse.

A large concourse of people gathered to view her face for the last time, and I heard many say they had never looked upon a more peaceful face in death. Brethren and sisters, one and all, pray for me if you can, for I need your prayers.

Written by her husband,

C. Y. OSTEEN.

Nellie Frances Easton, widow of T. Horton Easton, died at 10:10 o'clock p. m., Saturday, October 15th, 1927, at the home of her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. H. A. Holley, Otisville, N. Y., where she had made her home during the years of widowhood. Afflicted, many years a patient sufferer, with rheumatism, release came at the age of 72 years, 2 months and 11 days. She was born at Otisville, N. Y., August 4th, 1855, the daughter of Dimmick and Sylvia (Cadwell) Wilkin. March 24th, 1875, Nellie Frances Wilkin married at Otisville, Thomas Horton Easton, son of James and Hannah Elizabeth (Corwin) Easton, of Otisville. The surviving members are their three daughters, Harriet D., wife of Henry A. Holley, Nellie Easton, wife of Joseph Knapp Corwin, of Otisville, and Sylvia Elizabeth, wife of Bruce Arthur Penny, of Montague, N. J.; thirteen grandchildren: Henry E., Elizabeth C., James Easton, Richard Arnoys and Grace S. Holley, Gilbert S., Francis E., Josephine, Louise and Sylvia Corwin, Charles, Frances and Harriet Penny, and two great-grandchildren: Henry J. and John Easton Holley, sons of Mr. and Mrs. Henry E. Holley, also John Wilkin, a brother, of Mrs. Easton, living at Matamoras, Pa. Mrs. Easton lived and died in the Old School Baptist faith.

Funeral services were held at 1 o'clock p. m. Tuesday, October 18th, at Otisville, conducted by Elder R. Lester Dodson, of Rutherford, N. J., pastor of the Old School Baptist Church of New York city. Interment at Howells, N. Y.

She was a dear mother, loved grandmother, and a friend beloved by all. Our loss is her gain.

Written by her lifelong friend,

E. J. K. PENNEY.

Mrs. Wm. Tanner was born November 7th, 1865, and departed this life at Melbourne, Ontario, Canada, March 15th, 1927. Beside her husband she is survived by two sisters, Mrs. W. A. Jones, Tillsonburg, and Mrs. W. C. Young, Toronto, and one brother, James Carter, Pontiac, and other relatives. Our sister was very quiet and unassuming in her disposition. She was not a member of the church, but a believer in God as a sovereign of the universe. At times we have been in conversation with her and have felt much impressed that she knew and loved the truth as it is in Jesus. She had no confidence in the flesh, but enjoyed hearing the name of God exalted and the doctrine of salvation by grace proclaimed. She was a subscriber of the SIGNS for years, and showed an interest in church affairs. The funeral service was conducted by Elder George Ruston, of Kelly Corners, N. Y., who spoke comfortingly from the twenty-third Psalm. The high esteem in which she was held was manifested by the large attendance from the different denominations.

HER SISTER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. John T. Cockrill, Va., $2; E. E. Staggs, Tex., $1; Melissa Grimes, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Fannie Muir, N. Y., $2; E. H. Richardson, Iowa, $3; Mrs. M. Perry, Ark., $1; A. F. Jones, Ga., $3; Mrs. Georgie Carruthers, Va., $2; John W. Rockafellow, N. Y., $8; Mrs. F. J. Gray, Texas, $10.

MEETINGS.

The Second Church of Roxbury, New York, will, the Lord willing, hold a two days' meeting the second Sunday, and Saturday before, in November (12th and 13th), at the Halcottville meetinghouse. A cordial invitation is extended to all.

ESTHER RUSTON, Church Clerk.

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JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 95. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1927. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SELMA, North Carolina, Sept. 6, 1927.

DEAR BRETHREN:—This rainy day I have a desire to write on a text that has been as badly misunderstood as any part of the Bible. I know I have to face a proposition that has been rooted and grounded in most people's minds for ages, and a great many may think any one who would deny the erroneous idea that has been instilled into the minds of the people on this language is a presumptuous, silly person. The text is "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it."—Proverbs xxii. 6. This has been written on by our people, and some have said, This is not to teach a child to be a christian, nor to become a child of God, but to teach it to be a moral, truthful person, honest and upright. I beg leave to differ on this point. It is all right to try and teach your children to be truthful, honest, honorable, virtuous, &c., but this text is not on that subject. If it means you must teach your children honesty, morality, &c., and they will not depart from it when they are old, Solomon was mistaken, for a boy I went to school with was the model for all the boys in the town. His parents took him to Sunday-school and to preaching nearly every Sunday, and did their best to train him right, and after I began to try to proclaim salvation through a once crucified but now highly risen and exalted Savior, I met this boy, then a grown man, and he said with an oath, "I don't believe there is any such thing as religion." There are hundreds of thousands of cases where the parents did their best to train their children up in the way they should go who did depart. Then the text must refer to something you have not seen. At that time Solomon was not writing to the Gentiles, but to the Jews, and telling them to train their children up according to the Mosaic teaching. Teach them to observe the law and keep it, to go once a year with their offering and give it to the high priest, and he offer it to God, and if it was accepted by the Lord their sins were forgiven for that year. But the Scripture says there was a remembrance of sin every year. Hebrews x. 3: "But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year." Teach them they must be circumcised, they must be purified according to the custom

of the law; train them up in the doctrine of the Jews and they will not depart from it. You never knew a Jew to depart from the teaching of the priests and the fathers unless God taught him Jesus was his Savior and he learned the law was only a shadow of things to come. Heb. x. 1: "For the law having a shadow of things," &c. Again, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."—Col. ii. 16, 17. When a child was born to Jew parents if it was a boy it was circumcised the eighth day, and all of them, both boys and girls, were taught the doctrine of the Jews just as soon as they could understand what their parents meant when they talked to them. Their parents never tried to teach them before they were born, like people do now, trying to teach their children the things of the Spirit before they are born of the Spirit. Paul says, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14. Just as soon as a child of God is born of the Spirit it has an understanding and can hear and understand the gospel. 1 John iv. 6: "We are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us." What does he mean by this language? He means, if you are not born of God you cannot hear "us," the apostles. "He that knoweth God, heareth us." Now turn to John xvii. 3: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hath sent." Then if they can hear they have eternal life, and can both hear and see. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Then if he is born of an incorruptible seed he is ready to be taught, and trained up in the way he should go. God teaches all of his children they are sinners, lost, ruined and helpless, but evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. When the children of God are born of the Spirit and taught by a sound ministry they do not depart. I heard an Old School Baptist preacher say, When God gives a church a sound preacher it is a sign he is going to establish that church in the doctrine. Paul says, Eph. iv. 11–14, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." Then the true ministry train them up in the way they should go, and when they are old they will not depart from it. Peter says, "As new born babes, desiring the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."—1 Peter ii. 2. Paul says, 1 Cor. iii. 2: "I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able." First verse, same chapter, Paul says, "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes." So if we have babes among us do not set up bars, but feed with the sincere milk of the word. 1 Cor. xiii. 11: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as

a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things." Hebrews v. 11–14: "Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." Many of our brethren have to be fed on milk; they cannot discern both good and evil, and so many are frightened by teachers who are beating the bush and crying, "Look out there, that doctrine is horrid, we teach the old doctrine," when a part of it is not fifty years old, and they themselves are as much afraid of the real old doctrine as I was when I first joined the Old Baptists. They would read the Minutes of the meeting, and read "The Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Jesus Christ at Sebree called Salem." I thought of all the long, horrid words I ever heard that word predestinarian was the longest and most terrible. It would make me shudder and cause my flesh to almost crawl on my bones, but when I became a man, if I was ever anything, I put away childish things. "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" I learned that God predestinated to build a world and built it, and that Jesus was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and you by wicked hands crucified and slew him. I learned God determined before the world this should be done, and that the wicked men who killed him were wicked before they crucified him, and it made them no worse to do this, the wickedest thing that ever has or ever will be done; that their hatred of him, with the devil to aid and influence them, caused them to do this awful thing. My Bible says they hated him without a cause. Isaiah says, "He is despised and rejected of men," and Jesus said, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." "Of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Herod and Pontius Pilate were enemies before this, but when the Savior was to be killed they were made friends. Just get into an argument with one Arminian, and if there are a dozen standing around who had been enemies, as soon as the battle begins the whole crowd will join in to try to overthrow the Old Baptist. They will all be made friends, and the Gentiles were there to help, when it was unlawful for the Jews to have anything to do with the Gentiles. "They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them." Train up a child born of the Spirit in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. So many little ones are like our little baby girl was. She went into our sitting-room, looked into the closet, ran out in the center of the room and began to scream. Her mother ran in, and said, what is the matter, Mary? She said, Oh there is something in the closet; there is something in the closet. Her mother looked, and it was a striped kershaw, or squash as some people call them. Her mother took her by the hand to lead her up to where it was, saying,

Mary, that is a kershaw, we make pies out of that. Mary took a step or two, and then pulled back, and said, "Yes, kershaw; yes, kershaw." She was a little baby girl then, but she grew up and her mother taught her how to make pies out of squash and kershaws. Then when she had learned there was no harm in squash, or kershaws, she could sit up to the table and eat the pies. So it is with the children of God, when they find out how glorious and how wondrous the doctrine of predestination is they can feast upon it, for it is found on God's table he prepares for his people and for his little babies. If my wife had not known what a kershaw, or squash, was no doubt she would have told Mary to run, and she would have come after me to get me to kill the thing, like a great many of our brethren do in regard to predestination. Train them up in the way they should go. When some go too far, and say, The lust was in Adam, and he was a sinner before he ate the forbidden fruit, and the bad seed was in the dirt when God made Adam, and lust caused them to eat, they certainly need a little training. One thing sure, I am not going with them in that path, for God only knows where it will lead to. The first command given Adam was, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." Marriage is honorable in all, but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. (Heb. xiii. 4.) Lust is sin, and if Adam and Eve lusted after the forbidden fruit before they ate God created sin in them, and I am sure our great preachers never taught any such thing. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners."—Rom. v. 19. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."—Rom. v. 12. Here we are told positively how sin came into the world. Elder Gilbert Beebe never said or wrote that God created a sinner when he created Adam, or rather that Adam was a sinner before he ate the forbidden fruit. I have his editorial published in Hassel's history before me. He says, on page 948, "Men act voluntarily when they commit sin." Page 949: "If sin has entered this world in opposition to his will, or because he had not the wisdom and power to prevent its entrance, what assurance have we that it will not also enter the world to come?" but he never taught God created lust. Lust is sin, for James says, "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin." The first time I visited the Beebe Baptists one of the first things they said to me was, Brother Greathouse, do not run predestination too far. James says, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin." Eating the forbidden fruit was not raising children, as many think, for God married Adam to Eve, for God said, "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife," &c. If Eve was Adam's wife and God did not join them together in the holy bonds of matrimony, please tell me who did. Love is as high above lust as heaven is above earth, as God is purer than the devil, as light is brighter than darkness, as righteousness is better than sin. When God made Adam he was upright, for Solomon says, "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." There is not an upright man on earth since the fall, except so far as the grace

of God causes them to walk uprightly. Do not run predestination too far. If you do, you are the ones who are widening the breach. "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set." Long years ago Baptists wrote, "Man by reason of the fall hath lost all ability of will." Again, "By the transgression of the law * * * * so that man has not only become dead in siu, and incapable to keep the law, or to restore himself to the same state of moral uprightness, but wholly unable to accept of salvation by Jesus Christ." Do not say, God created us like we are, for if you do, you had better ask wisdom of him who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not. He can train you in the way you should go.

Your brother in hope of mercy,

ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

OTEGO, N. Y., Jan. 28, 1878.

DEAR ELDER BEEBE AND SON:—In the month of May, 1873, the church of Otego, together with brethren of sister churches, met in council, and by solemn ordination set apart the unworthy writer to the work of the gospel ministry, since which time I have been deeply sensible of the fact that I but faintly expressed to them the bitter and sore conflicts my soul endured for eleven long years, before I felt a real willingness to come forth and declare to the saints the glad tidings of salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord. Many times since the impression has been on my mind to give through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a brief relation of my exercises on that subject, but for many reasons have kept silent. One is, I fear it would not honor the Lord; and another is, I fear it would be unprofitably occupying space in the SIGNS, and fearing also of getting out of my place. Again, brethren do not commonly indulge in writing their experience in the way of preaching, and I do not wish to break over general rules. But with these, and very many more pleas, the impression still remains, and I will with much trembling make the attempt.

I had been in possession of a hope, and had stood in the fellowship of the brethren about ten years, before there was any trouble on my mind about preaching, and then it did not seem trouble, for I was entirely ignorant of what was signified by what was presented to my mind. Elder St. John was our pastor, and while I sat listening to the truth proclaimed by him there appeared to my mind such an inexpressible glory and beauty in the doctrine of the gospel that I was lost to all the surrounding circumstances of the occasion, and my joy was so great at this view of the way of salvation that I found my soul deeply anxious to be able to go and tell what I had just received at the Lord's hand; for it was to my heart as a precious plant, a lovely jewel, and my heart swelled with gratitude at thus being so delightfully favored in viewing the whole work of the Redeemer in the salvation of his people. But before reaching home I was strangely arrested and bound by these words, "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." There was a wonderful power that attended these words, and I felt quite powerless to resist, and said in my mind, What does all this mean? It is not possible that the Lord would call such a poor, ignorant thing as I to preach. Yet I trembled under the sacred power of these words, and a secret fear arose that even so was the will of God. But to forget, or in any way get rid of the meditations of this Scripture, was impossible. By day and night they haunted me, and I felt that they would tire me

out. I asked the Lord that I might be released from them, for there seemed room in my mind for nothing else. But instead of this being granted, that saying in the prophets, "I will search Jerusalem with candles," came with such sovereignty that I felt myself quite undone and greatly burdened, and felt fully determined that no one should know anything of what a terrible tempest was within; and such awful rebellion as I indulged in against the Lord makes me now blush at the remembrance of it. I said in my own mind that I would die a thousand times, rather than obey, and sure I am that could a gratification of my then present mind been granted, never to this day should I have opened my mouth in his name. My proud heart forbade the thought that a poor, unlearned, obscure creature like me should ever think of such a thing. Like Moses, I was a stammerer; like Gideon, my family was poor; like Jeremiah, I was a poor child and a weakling. All this I pleaded with the Lord, and often told him that my terrible ignorance would debar me from doing honor to his sacred cause. Oh, thought I, how I shall have to pity the poor saints for the mortification they will have to feel (and I still share largely of that pity). All the comfort I could get in the matter was that no mortal knew of the terrible state of mind I was in, and my firm resolution was that though I died it should never be known. At about this time our pastor left us, and now an increasing responsibility seemed to fall upon me as to the welfare of Zion. My mind soon became greatly impressed to ask the Lord to watch over the church, and often I pleaded with him to send us a pastor to go in and out before us, for the thought that the cause might go down was by me much dreaded, and my daily cry was, Come, good Shepherd feed thy sheep. I said nothing to any one about my anxious feelings that the Lord would send us a pastor, and being the youngest of the brethren, I thought it becoming for me to keep silent. As we were assembled at the church meeting, one of our old brethren spoke of our destitute condition, but, said he, I have not felt to ask the Lord for a preacher. Now, thought I, why need I worry any more about the matter? I will be quiet like he is. But instead of quietness, behold there was still a constant cry in my soul that we might be blessed with a preacher from the Lord. While thus burdened with anxiety for the church, and not being able to understand my own trial of my mind, I was awakened in the night by these words, spoken within, with a strange solemnity, "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion." But my proud heart quickly replied, I cannot, neither will I. It must be that the Lord will call some one of our brethren, but not me. I looked them over, and could see any of them far my superior, and much better able to fill such a position. Oh, thought I, let me be banished to some lonely, far off island of the ocean, or become a vagabond upon the earth, to beg my bread from door to door, rather than to preach. My earnest reply was, Not so, my Father; not so, my Father. I could not think of asking to be made reconciled, but to be excused. I told the Lord of my weakness, of my ignorance of the Bible, that I had no education, how I should dishonor his cause, how much the church would be ashamed of me, how the world would sneer, and many such like objections, but all these were swept away by his powerful word, "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself." I now thought, Perhaps if I am right dili-

gent in the cause, if I give liberally of my goods for the support of the cause, and look after the general good of the church, that may do; but with no such sacrifice was I excused. Then I thought, You have brought all this upon yourself, and are making a great fool of it; so I will stop reading the Bible, and cease thinking about the subject altogether. This rule I adopted for a time, but oh the misery I felt. When in the field his word followed me; in the night I was scared with dreams and terrified with visions; when I came into the house my eyes would involuntarily rest upon the dear, neglected Book as it lay on the table; but I said, No, I will look therein no more. Now all my evidence of a hope seemed gone, and that I was given over to Satan altogether. Awful and wicked thoughts filled my mind, temptations to doubt the existence of God, doubts of the authenticity of the Scriptures, or the reality of revealed religion. A horror of great darkness covered my guilty head, and still my rebellion against the will of God was unabated, until I was afraid some awful calamity would come upon me. Yet I said, I cannot, I will not obey, though he slay me. The thought of that word "preach" was clothed with an awfully solemn sound, and when I heard men say they preached at such a time, I could but wonder how they could speak so unqualifiedly. I was a constant reader of the SIGNS, and I think in the year 1867 brother George W. Staton wrote his exercises therein of his call to the ministry, which was the first I remember reading. His leadings of mind were so very much in harmony with my own that I felt astonished, for now, thought I, it is evident that he is called of the Lord; for as he had written often for the SIGNS I had become much attached to him, thereby I was overpowered in this testimony, and yet I would not consent that such a poor thing as I could be called, and this plan I fully resolved to adopt: I will go away to some far off country, where no one ever knew me, settle there with my family, and never say to any one that I ever professed a hope, or had any relish for spiritual things, and surely that will end my trouble. Accordingly in the fall of 1868 I left my friends behind, with darkness in my soul, and a guilty conscience attending me, but as I started it seemed that the little church of Otego was with me, and my love was increased ten-fold towards it. As I bent my course westward my heart wandered back to count over the mercies of the Lord to that dear, chosen band, to the many refreshing seasons we had enjoyed together, and my soul within me did mourn, and a more wretched, unhappy creature than I could not exist. In traveling up the Mississippi River I was made to feel ashamed and confounded before the Lord. As we sailed along I frequently noticed small huts along the bank of the river, denoting much poverty and a low way of living, and from a feeling of curiosity to know, I asked who lived in this secluded way. Oh, said my friend, these men are fishermen. At the word fishermen my mind immediately reverted to the scenes of Gallilee, when the great Redeemer passed that way, and speaking with the voice of Zion's King, said to just such poor worms, Follow me: and straightway they obeyed him. This served, measurably, to put an end to my pleading ignorance, and much weakened my opposition to the way and wisdom of God. He then made me see his glories shine in taking a poor, weak fisherman to be mouth for him, far more to his glory than if an angel from heaven

should declare his truth. Then the words of the psalmist came home to me, and were my companions for many days, "Whither shall I flee from thy presence?" After I arrived at my stopping place in Minnesota, although the country was fine, and much to be desired, yet my spirit had no rest. Up, and away, for this is not your rest, continually sounded in my ears, and the thought of having left my dear brethren behind embittered all my prospects, and I saw my great folly in trying to escape from my impressions to speak in the name of the Lord. After spending a few weeks in the western States I returned, feeling dejected and disappointed, and a terrible bitterness in my mind to all worldly pursuits, so that to engage in worldly affairs seemed to me a deadly poison. Nothing of my affairs went well or pleasantly, my earthly effects began to dwindle away, and I felt indescribably miserable as to the future prospects of my family. The word of the Lord was in my heart, and often in the watches of the night I was awakened by my own voice, speaking to the people of the wonders of grace. Many times my own name was called with a strange power, as from the Lord, and seemed to me a reality that I must preach or die; but I said to the Lord, Let me but be a footstool, or some low servant, as a pack-horse in thy house, for I was willing to do anything else but preach. But now I dared not say any more that I will not, but, Lord, I cannot. My mind was in awful darkness still, but there was yet a little comfort, that no one knew my mind's agitation. Brother Staton's letter was much on my mind, and I felt so drawn to him that I wrote him some of my trials, with the strong injunction that he should forever hold it as a secret. An answer came, and he told me I should obey the call, for he was sure it was from the Lord. I felt a measure of relief in having told him my mind, but with a new trial, fearing it might get to the public. My wife had often asked me if it was not on my mind to preach, and I strongly forbade her to address me more on the subject. I called on one of our sisters on an errand, when with much earnestness she said, "Brother Bundy, how would you feel were you called to preach?" To which I hastily replied, "I would rather die." After a few days, meeting another sister, she said, "You will have to fish, I think that many of our brethren think so, too." This was more than I could bear, for what, thought I, have I done or said that any one should entertain such thoughts of me? My strength was exhausted, and I consulted my physician, thinking he would tell me I had consumption, or some other fatal ailment. Sometimes the thought would come that I had never experienced a hope, and that this was the work of grace. At this time there was an increasing interest in the church. We had occasional preaching, and the saints seemed to be revived. One brother spoke on the subject of preaching, and said it was often the case that if one had the gift of exhortation he would think it was a preaching gift, and make himself and the church trouble. I heard it all, and now the story was told. Surely, I thought, I will never be guilty of that trouble in Israel, for my gift is but exhortation, and weak at that. So I made all I possibly could of the gift of exhortation, and now called myself a fool for not having found it out before. Matters were prospering in the church, and some were added to our number. We saw the necessity of calling a pastor, and did so by choosing brother S. H. Durand, who

came to us in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel. I soon found my heart much interested in him, and felt confident that the Lord had sent him, and that I would be relieved of much responsibility in the church, and could once more settle down and rest. But in this I was disappointed, for the searching word of the Lord followed me still. That portion in Ecclesiastes xi. 6 took full possession of my mind: "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." I earnestly asked the Lord to make me feel a satisfaction whether he designed me for the ministry; and if not, that he would be gracious and relieve my troubled mind, and not suffer me to have such thoughts any more. But all that came were these words, which only made me wonder the more, "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." I sought diligently to find even one qualification in myself to preach, but alas, it was not there; and thus again I did plead with the Lord for a reason of my disobedience. My friends indulged more and more commonly in hints and sly suggestions about my having to preach, while others told me plainly their minds. At last my mind was so full that I felt I must tell brother Durand my trials, and he also, like brother Staton, said plainly to me that I would certainly have to come forth and proclaim the salvation of God, which had the effect to relieve me in some little degree of my burden. Finally I told the affair to my wife, who readily said that she was not at all surprised. But yet the same unwillingness remained, and I said, Lord, I cannot. While thus agitated, and feeling unfit for the company of any one, while at work in the field, there was presented to my mind a new view of the matter, and of my standing in the church, my relation and obligation thereto. I saw Jerusalem to be my own mother, and the question came to me whether I ought not to obey my mother (the church). An humbling view of the long forbearance of the Lord to me, in not casting from him as a rebellious worm, his goodness in giving me to hope in his mercy melted my heart to thankfulness and my eyes to tears, and my tongue spoke out, and said, Lord, do just as thou wilt with me, only let me glorify thee. If to be a poor, little, weak preacher will do it, even so let it be. God will be the director in this solemn affair, and now let the brethren do as they shall see fit, and all will be right. A strange willingness came over me, and for a time a spirit of submission took the place of opposition, and sweet rest from all my labor was given, and if ever the time was that I did preach surely it was then and there, with no living creature present but my team.

But I must close, for I have taken too much room already. Let me say that the church saw fit to liberate me to preach. Brother Durand gave out an appointment for me in my presence, which at first quite shocked me, and for the time almost angered me, for he did not ask my consent; but I was quickly reminded of that feeling of willingness I had felt, and the desire that the Lord would take the supervision of the affair, which served to close my mouth. On the second Sunday in July, six years ago, I made my first attempt to speak in public, which was as great a failure as I had anticipated, and seemed to me terribly mortifying; but a little comfort was mingled with it, for I felt sure the brethren would know they were mistaken, and I would dishonor God

no more in that way. But still the word was with me with great power, and often in my sleep I was before the congregation speaking of redeeming love. My next effort was so different, and such liberty of soul given, that I thought I had told all, and should therefore have to speak no more in his name. And so continues the strife to this day, trying to preach, and yet trying not to preach.

Dear brethren, I submit this to your judgment, to dispose of as you think best. Although my name seldom appears in the SIGNS as a correspondent, it is not from any feeling of disinterestedness that I have, but to the contrary. I have received it for twenty-five years as a highly valued medium of correspondence for the dear saints of the Lord. May grace, mercy and peace be abundantly given to you and all the followers of the Lamb.

Yours in gospel bonds,

BALAS BUNDY.

(See editorial on page 283.)

ATLANTIC, North Carolina.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—If I were left to decide the case, I would say you should stay always on the rough and restless sea, for from the bosom of the great deep we have received many things which we might otherwise have not known. When Jonah was received upon the dry land he was a witness of the time our Lord lay in the heart of the earth, and he gave it in an everlasting testimony of the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord. Thus on his voyage to Nineva to do the commandment of our God he received this witness, though in himself he was rebellious. This proves that God was not dependent on Jonah. Jonah had to do the word of God, though he did it in his rebellion. I do not know that Jonah was sick, but he must do the will of our God, even if he had to become whale-vomit to do it. Our Lord had to go in the heart of the earth to save his elect, even though he had to be persecuted of wicked men to do so. I am sure that was the path the Father had marked out for him and he could go no other. We find Paul at one time on a ship which was destroyed and the seamen thought to save themselves from the ravages of the sea by escaping, but Paul, being a predestinarian, told the shipmaster that the only salvation was for them to abide in the ship, not one must escape. But all of them should go on a certain island. Our God is the Ruler of the sea as well as the dry land, and had given Paul all that were with him in the ship. Our Lord walked on the sea at one time when his disciples were in trouble. Peter thought if it was the Lord he could walk on the rough waters. This he could not do, though the Lord bid him. Peter was too full of doubts and began to sink. However the Lord demonstrated that he had power not only to save Peter, but himself also, and not only Peter and himself, but all who were on the boat with him, for they were immediately at the other shore, whither they went, and there was great deliverance, and the sea was calm. Even so our Lord in saving himself has saved all who were in him. Satan could have no power over him nor destroy one of his chosen people. He may tempt them, as he did our dear blessed Jesus, but our God will serve his heart's delight. This world was a great deep to him, and it is to his people, but he has overcome the world, both for himself and his people. Thus he has saved them. I cannot believe that some acts of mine will in any way, for good, or for worse,

change our God. He has said, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." This shows to us that our only salvation is in the fact that our God knows no change. "By grace are ye saved." Brother Dodson, write again. Wife and I have both very much enjoyed the article in the September SIGNS.

Your brother in the Lord,

L. H. HARDY.

PALISADE, N. J., Dec. 6, 1926.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find check for renewal of my subscription to the best paper (to my mind) printed, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for when reading the many good letters from the dear ones they divert my mind for a time from the worry and turmoil of this life of vanities and lusts of the flesh, which cause me many hours of doubt, fear and sadness of heart. Many times I am in doubt and ask myself, Can it be God has chosen such a poor sinful worm as I as one of his chosen vessels?

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

Surely if it is so it is all of the grace of God; not by my works. I often wish I could talk as do the brethren and sisters of the New York Church, but who hath made us to differ?

I did not think to write thus when I began, but having so far to go to attend meeting, and the day being stormy, I am at home with my thoughts and with a restless, drifting mind, and when I turn my eyes within all is dark and vain and wild, which makes me ask, Can I deem myself a child? I fully believe God has predestinated all things, even babes to praise him. When in the depths to whom can we go but to the blessed Jesus, who bled and died for our transgressions? If he has begun the work of grace within our hearts surely it will be a finished work. I will be your God and ye shall be my people? I love to think of the determinate "wills" and "shalls" of the heavenly Master.

I wish I was financially able to send more for those unable to take the SIGNS. May all be as prompt as possible in renewing their subscriptions, for we would not wish to part with the dear old paper.

From an unworthy sister,

(MRS.) M. COONS.

SPRINGFIELD, Ill., Oct. 11, 1927.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—Your most inspiring letter of September 5th only reached me less than a week ago. After reaching Mattoon, Ill., my old home, it fell into the hands of my son and was soon delivered. Words are too feeble to express my gratification and unstinted appreciation of your assuring words on the eve, to all human appearance, of my departure, as I humbly hope, to be with Christ, which is far better. My life of sixty-seven years in the service of my blessed Lord has not been what my ideals pictured it should be when I started out in my early ministry. It seems now in looking back over a long pilgrimage that very little, if any, has ever been added to the one talent received. Sometimes I find myself wondering if Paul's language to which you refer and quote can in a true sense be applicable to my case. Yet if I have ever earnestly contended for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and under the guiding hand of God delivered messages of peace and comfort to the household of faith, then it seems plain that what the apostle said must be true, viz., "The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits."

Thus then I have been enabled to witness of the blessed fruits, love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, meekness, faith. This faith, my brother, never was more strongly entrenched in my heart and soul than now, and I am, I trust, patiently awaiting the summons of the Master to come up higher. He has been my very present help in all times of need along the entire journey, and he does not leave or forsake me now.

Again I thank you for your encouraging message, and will say, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." "Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ."

I should have written more at length but for the fact that it is getting to be quite an effort for me to write. My correspondence is quite heavy, and while I have my strength physically I feel to answer my correspondents, even though it be but in a brief way. Brethren and sisters in a number of States and in Canada write me. I am as well physically as one need expect to be at my age. If I live until March 1st next I will pass my ninetieth mile stone. I am blessed with a lovely loyal family, three daughters, and one son who lives in Mattoon, Ill. My companion's death was the first break in our family, and the first in her father's family. She passed away last January. My home is still in Mattoon, but I will spend most of my time here with my widowed daughter, as she is alone and in a comfortable home. Many of my friends address me at Mattoon and my son forwards their letters at once. A letter addressed to me at Springfield, without the street and number, as yours was, cannot be delivered, for my name is not in the directory, but if addressed 1929 South 4th Street, Springfield, Ill., it will reach me. I beg your pardon for imposing all this upon you.

Your brother in the blessed hope,

J. G. SAWIN.

RULE, Texas, Sept. 23, 1927.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I see my time is up for renewal for the SIGNS. I am now traveling on to my ninety-fourth mile post, and have my second eyesght and cannot get any glasses to fit my eyes. I will send one dollar when my time is out, but in case I should fail to send the money then you can stop the paper, because my eyes are in such condition I cannot read. I feel I got double pay in the January, 1927, number. When you commenced sending the paper it came in my mind I had lost trace of brother Greathouse. We were together half of the time for eighteen months, in New Mexico, near Potallus. We had no church, but preached to the two branches of brethren every month. Not knowing about brother Greathouse or the brethren, I got in a carnal stupor. Do not ask me why, for I do not know, nor do I know how low I got, but when the message of brother Greathouse to me, at Rule, Texas, with the doctrine of God our Savior that I serve, the carnal stupor lifted from me. The darkest hour is just before day. Then came the foundation or identity of the church, when the name of Dear Park Church was changed by the brethren and called New Vernon; it settled what I had been hunting for and desiring to know, and was certainly another message to poor unworthy me.

I must stop, for I cannot see to write any more.

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

BENJAMIN R. HARRIS.

MILLER, Ala., June 7, 1927.

DEAR PUBLISHERS:—I wish to write a few lines and thank you for continuing to send the SIGNS to me. I appreciate your kindness more than I can tell, but feel unworthy of such a favor. The SIGNS is a great comfort to me, as I live far from any church and seldom meet with any one who loves the cause of Christ. It is now two years since I have heard preaching, so I look forward to the coming of the dear SIGNS, and many are the times I think if I could write in a way to tell the editors and correspondents what comfort I enjoy when reading from their pens, I would love to write and tell them to write on, for they know not how many poor souls they feed and comfort; but I cannot write as I would like to. The Lord has blessed them and filled their hearts with spiritual food to feed his lambs. May he continue to bless all his people. I will gladly send money order for the SIGNS this year if I can.

Thanking you again, I am your sister, I hope, in eternal life,

L. E. ROGERS.

WALLA WALLA, Washington.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Will you please change my paper from Freewater, Oregon, to 108 N. Touchet St., Walla Walla, Wash., and give notice of my change in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES? I moved here on account of my wife's health. She still is very poorly, but we have two daughters living here who can help me attend her. I am very thankful to you for continuing the SIGNS to me, for I dearly love the doctrine it sets forth. It was quite humiliating to me to be a burden to you while you are passing through such a hard strait. I was truly glad to see so many were able to come to your rescue.

Trusting that God will continue his blessings upon you that you will be able to continue to send the dear old SIGNS to the household of faith, I am, I truly hope, yours in gospel bonds,

J. T. BARNES.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Addie Livingston.)

The Lexington-Roxbury Association, now in session with the First Roxbury Church, Vega, New York, September 14th and 15th, 1927, to the several associations and churches with which we correspond, sends love and fellowship.

DEAR BRETHREN:—At the last session of this Association it seemed to fall to our lot, much against our mind and judgment, to write the Circular Letter for this year. The thought came to us if we must write we will write of love, and there has no thought come to change that first impression, but when we ask, What is love? and read that God is love, then we know that subject is too great, too high, too wonderful for us to even grasp the meaning, much less to write of it. But let us look for a few minutes at some of the effects of love, the love of God. "Love is the fount from whence all true obedience flows." "Love is the golden chain that binds our hearts in christian love." Charity suffereth long, and is kind. When the love of God is shed abroad in the heart of a poor sinner he is made to see the hidden evils there. Yes, hidden, for he would not have believed his heart was deceitful and desperately wicked; no, he thought his heart was good, perhaps better than many of his friends' and neighbors', but the light, the love of God, reveals to him what a wretched state he is in: lost and undone, ten thousand talents in debt and not one farthing to pay. Try as he may to extricate himself from this terrible condition only seems to sink him deeper in the mire of sin and guilt, and he finds himself at the end of the earth, the end of all hope of any earthly help, and he is made to cry to God for mercy. The very breathing of his

heart is, God be merciful to me, a sinner; God save or I perish. Then this same love that first showed him his lost condition comes in a still small voice and speaks peace to his troubled soul, and says, I am the way, the truth and the life, take my yoke upon you and learn of me. Oh what wonderful love is this that takes a poor sinner from the filth and mire of sin and uncleanness and places him among princes. Not in his filth and dirt, but washes him, makes him clean, puts a new robe on him, even the robe of Christ's righteousness. Wonderful love! But the enemy is still in the land seeking whom he may devour. He will pursue, he will overtake and perplex, but, blessed be his everlasting love, he is ever watchful and will deliver his little ones, his chosen ones, his elect, and will not suffer them to be destroyed or tempted above what they are able to bear, but will with the temptation also make a way of escape. How often we find the barrel of meal and cruise of oil is almost gone, hardly a handful left, and we feel hope is almost gone, but the same God that ruled in Elijah's day is our God, and the promise is fulfilled, That as thy day thy strength shall be. God has not promised to fill the barrel that we may have to waste or give, but it shall be just according to our need. Then what manner of person ought we to be? How often Paul in writing to the churches entreats and exhorts them to love one another, to let brotherly love continue. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor. One of the best evidences that we have passed from death unto life is because we love the brethren. Then let us lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us and let us run with patience the race set before us, ever looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith. Charity suffereth long and is kind.

This Association believes in and proclaims the same Bible gospel truth it ever has: Salvation for poor sinners by grace, and grace alone, without the help of poor, weak, puny man. Our God needs no help. He has all power, all wisdom; he rules supreme in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. He will do all his pleasure, and "not a single shaft can hit till the God of love sees fit." Oh how safe are all his chosen ones. If God be for us who can be against us? The God who created the heavens and the earth, and all that therein is, is able and will govern, control and dispose of all things and beings just as he purposed when he saw the end from the beginning. His power and wisdom are unlimited.

This Association indorses and is in fellowship with the writings contained in the book lately compiled and published by Elder R. Lester Dodson, which proves they believe in God's predestination, foreknowledge, immutability and personal election. "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in christian love," and how beautiful

> "When each can feel his brother's sigh,
> And with him bear a part;
> When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
> And joy from heart to heart."

Charity suffereth long and is kind. What a blessed privilege to meet in these assemblies called associations! What but love has drawn us at this time from the north, south, east and west to meet and greet our kindred in Christ and hear of their welfare and hear the true gospel proclaimed by God's servants, God's mouthpiece, and hear of the wonderful love of God, matchless love? When love abounds we are not looking for faults in our brethren. Charity (love) suffereth

long and is kind. May these sweet gatherings continue from year to year in unity of spirit and bonds of peace.

"Led as a lamb to meet the sword,
He bowed beneath the stroke;
Not one revengeful, angry word
The dear Redeemer spoke.

Oh may his meekness be our guide,
The pattern we pursue;
How can we bear revenge or pride
With Jesus in our view?

May love, that shining grace,
O'er all our powers preside,
Direct our thoughts, suggest our words,
And every action guide."

GEORGE RUSTON, Moderator.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

(Written by Elder C. W. Vaughn.)

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Little Creek Church, to the several churches, associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting and love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year with its many changes has passed, and many of us are highly favored of God to assemble together, and we trust we are made thankful unto God for the manifold blessings bestowed. We are rejoicing to note we are dwelling in the unity of spirit and bonds of peace, and also God's servants are of one accord, declaring unto us the gospel. They stand under the commission of God from on high to preach the word. Paul in his charge to Timothy commanded him to preach the word. (2 Timothy iv. 2.) We would call attention to the above charge; as we feel the matter of vital importance we will offer some thoughts. To preach the word we preach that which was with God in the beginning. When the beginning is spoken of we are minded of God's eternal purpose in all things, predestinating from ancient times the things that are not done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. According to the good pleasure of God we were chosen in Christ from before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. What a great love we have in our hearts and to comfort one another in. That word was God. What great delight the Father had in his Son, insomuch Jesus declared, I in the Father the Father in me, we are one, and all the saints are one in Christ Jesus. When we hear the gospel's joyful tidings what a glorious message: the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes. As long as we are guided by the Spirit the church rests in peace. We have no other reason to offer why this Association is resting in peace and harmony than that we are kept by the power of God. In the preached word Jesus as God gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. (Eph. i. 22, 23.) The head over all things to the church is wonderful indeed, for it embraces both nature and grace, hence we have the declaration, He directs all things, and maketh them work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to his purpose. This glorious blessing is bestowed upon us we hope, but feel unworthy of these blessings. For us to realize such unworthiness keeps us esteeming our brethren better than ourselves and we are ready to serve one another. We feel there is no greater service than serving the bride of Christ, and as we have witnessed the passing to their reward of so many of our faithful servants we question how those remaining are given the strength to meet with and endure so much, but often we note they are

overtaxed, so, dear brethren, we ask you, with us, to consider our undershepherds, and provide for their necessities, that they should have our manifested appreciation in the natural as well as the spiritual. Dear brethren, as we close this epistle is not enough to embrace our love to you, and we hope the same manifested virtue may continue in us.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

G. W. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the first Roxbury Church at Vega, New York, September 14th and 15th, 1927, to the associations and churches with which we correspond, sends christian salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Another season blessed with tender mercies and manifest favor of a sovereign and covenant-keeping God has passed, and once more in an associate capacity we enjoy the precious privilege of meeting together. It is in spirit rather than in form that we are assembled, earnestly desiring that God's will shall be done in us, that we shall more fully realize the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ and the power of his resurrection, being made conformable unto his death. The preaching of the gospel in its purity and beauty and the peace and order of our churches are among the priceless blessings for which we are thankful. We have feasted upon fat things upon the mountain of God's holiness and partaken of the mingled wine of the old and the new dispensations and found the banner over us to be love. Therefore we do earnestly desire to continue our correspondence with you, and to rejoice together in the things hidden from the wise and prudent of this world and revealed unto babes in Christ. May peace and loving fellowship abound to the praise of the glory of his grace. Our Minutes will announce the date and the place of the next meeting of our Association.

GEORGE RUSTON, Mod.

AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Little Creek Church, Delmar, Sussex County, Delaware, October 19th, 20th and 21st, 1927, to the associations with which we correspond, sends greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more in the providence of the all-wise Creator, God of heaven and earth, we are gathered together in an associate capacity, to mingle together and talk of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God and to listen to the precious gospel of the Son of God proclaimed. This session has been one of peace and quietness, our attendance has been good and the preaching has been with the demonstration of the Spirit and with power. We appreciate the presence of your messengers and the continuation of your correspondence. May the God of truth keep us in this fellowship is our sincere prayer.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Snow Hill Church, Snow Hill, Maryland, beginning Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1928, at which time and place we hope to meet your messengers and receive your correspondence again.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

G. W. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1927.

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JOHN X. 27.

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."

The Shepherd of the sheep spake this language of his flock, which testifies of the wisdom of the Shepherd to know his sheep, and also the wisdom of each sheep to know the Shepherd, the binding relations between the Shepherd and his sheep. The Shepherd here considered gives a wonderful description of Jesus Christ as the Shepherd of the flock of God. Brethren, this theme does not bring out anything new to the child of God, but merely points out the things you have both seen and heard. We hope the above Shepherd referred to is our Shepherd, and truly we believe he is the Shepherd of every son and daughter of Adam's race that will sing the praise of God in glory. We wish to pen a few thoughts regarding the calling of this Shepherd. The Scriptures testify of this Shepherd's call, and the discriminating virtues by which his sheep will hear his voice, but the multitudes know nothing of it at all, for it is very much to the opposite of nature, as to compare light with darkness. A voice to call out every one close enough that the vibrations of the air are audible will hear the sound, but the voice of Jesus, the Shepherd of the flock of God, goes direct to those called, and the individuals know they are the ones called, for he calls them by name. They realize the power of his voice, for it separates, commands and draws, all at the same time. The separation brings each sheep in paths not known and ways past finding out. The animal sheep will travel from place to place in the pasture in such a definite route that very smooth, beaten, narrow paths are made, and they know these paths and where they lead. The paths of the flock of God are not known, and the sheep of the fold of God cannot pass along these paths only as the Shepherd leads, guides and directs their steps. We witness that we often feel to be alone, and wander to and fro, when we are brought (by his Spirit) to know where we are and note our condition we know we have wandered from him, and the cry comes from this poor one, Lord, restore thy wandering sheep. Often we note members who have walked with the church and from an outward sense seemed to bear fruit as the manifested fold of God, but for some great cause they are separated from that standing in the church that church fellowship no longer could be meted out to them, and they are no more in the embrace of fellowship in the church than a heathen and publican, and as members of the church of God or the household of faith none have the right to step out of the way to console such individuals and

spread to them regrets for the action of the church of God, for she is his flock, and guided by him, but some find fault with the church, and say we should labor with them. The church labors with every erring one in the secret emotions of her heart, and prays her Husband to restore and heal the diseased member. If it is not his will to heal, and they perish to the fellowship of the church they can no longer remain in the body. We often hear some brethren speak of the ninety and nine and one had strayed, and infer that the duty of the church is to seek after this wandering sheep, but that is contrary to the plain teaching of the word of God, for the Shepherd is the only one who has knowlegde of where his sheep has strayed, and the only one who can pay for the trespasses and take away its sin. If the sheep are after these wandering ones, and they are trying to find where they are by following up their footsteps, they are all gone astray and are in by and forbidden paths of unrighteousness. This erring one must be brought back by the Shepherd, and when his flock beholds him and the erring ones He comes right to her and the whole flock is safe in the fold. No part of the salvation of one of his flock depended upon one of the sheep, but the flock's entire salvation is of her Shepherd. When we behold our salvation thus we can repeat the twenty-third Psalm, and enjoy the sweetness of the expressions, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: * * * he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever," which is good enough for the entire flock of God. But we hear there is so much good we can do for the brethren. Mark the words of Jesus: "Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother; and sister, and mother."—Matt. xii. 49, 50. Now we answer the interrogator, Why and how do we do the will of Jesus' Father which is in heaven? By the working of his mighty power in us, which is both to will and do of his good pleasure, and not by the works and righteousness of the flesh, which is the carnal mind. All these manifestations are manifested in his bringing to the fold his wandering sheep. There is no question regarding fellowship in the perfect work of the Shepherd that makes them one fold. The good Shepherd gave his life for the sheep, and redeemed them with an eternal redemption. He declares, I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish. Brethren, what fellowship has light and darkness, righteousness and unrighteousness? So this wonderful flock (his sheep, the church of God, which is the pillar and ground of the truth,) has no fellowship with the powers of darkness in which the entire human race is involved by reason of transgression, and when one is manifested as led by that power the church is in disorder to hold that one. There is but one name given under heaven among men whereby one of these sheep are saved, and only one way, one truth and one life, which is our blessed Shepherd. Jesus Christ the Lord, and to him may we ascribe greatness, in our walk and

conversation, which must be directed by the Spirit of the life of the Shepherd, which permeates the whole flock of God. Brethren, we feel to reflect the thoughts and expressions we have, and weigh them in the testimonies we have in our hearts, but we are always found wanting, and if we are not kept by the power of our Shepherd we are lost. The word declares, Ye "are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." There is one fold and one Shepherd. Every one brought into this fold by the Shepherd had manifested to them by his love shed abroad in their hearts, meekness, gentleness, long-suffering, kindness and there is no fleshly animation in it.

C. W. V.

AN EXPLANATION.

CONTRARY to our usual custom, we are republishing on page 269 in this issue the personal relation of the late Elder Balas Bundy's call to the ministry written by himself, printed before in 1878. Very many times before this, we have refused requests to republish old articles; and while we are now, for the second time, publishing this letter of Elder Bundy's, we serve notice hereby on all concerned that we are not changing or annulling our rule to not reprint old articles. We simply could not comply with every one's request to publish again articles previously published. It would be a physical impossibility to do this: first of all, the SIGNS is not large enough to give space for reprints; further, nearly all the readers of the SIGNS have old copies reaching years back and nearly all these readers have some favorite article which they would like to see reprinted. If we let the bars down and accede to all these demands the SIGNS would resolve itself into a mere review of years gone by and there would be no room for the articles of those written to-day. Still further, subscribers, many of them, feel it is unfair to pay their yearly subscriptions merely to read over again articles for which they have paid before in other years. But in the case of Elder Bundy's relation of his exercises of mind regarding preaching, what he writes is especially apt just at this present time; and he expresses himself in so honest and sincere a manner concerning himself that we believe it will do all of us good to carefully read what he writes; especially will it do those of us good who are ourselves yoke-fellows in the ministry, many of us able to witness for ourselves to the personal truth of what brother Bundy has written: this testimony of one dead these many years, whose life and ministry still live in the hearts of those who knew and loved him. Elder Bundy's testimony is undying, just as infallibly true to-day as when he wrote it. Being the truth, it can never grow old. As long as God sees fit to continue calling mortal men to preach the Word, just so long will this testimony of the dear brother find ready response from the souls of those engaged in the ministry. When the gospel of Jesus Christ ceases to be preached anywhere in all the earth, then, and not until then, will Elder Bundy's testimony be out of date and no longer valid. Never in all ages has a man ever been called either to prophesy or to preach but what that man has felt a drawing back from the work to which the Spirit impelled him. Our churches will do well ever and always to treat with suspicion any man who manifests too much readiness to enter the ministry. It is a calling which requires equipment which Israel's God can afford. It stands

to reason, that if God really impresses a man's soul with the call to preach, that man cannot help but have such a view of his own unfitness for the great work that he will draw back from attempting it and will resist the impulse to preach with all his might. The Bible proves this to have been the case with all the prophets as well as with the apostles. Not necessary for us to name specific instances, your own Bibles will show them to you if you care to look them up. It is a well-known fact that the direct cause of nearly all the dissensions and contentions that have ever come within the ranks of the Old Baptists throughout the United States has been the ministry; and in the ministry it has invariably been those men about whose genuine call to the ministry there has been some question. One of the vital things for our people to observe is to have their ministers prove their gifts before ordination. If a man does not preach before ordination, he is almost sure not to preach afterward. Ordination should not be given to a "novice," that is, to one who has not been proved. Let him be proved as to the doctrine he preaches, as to the gospel order he maintains, as to his daily walk and behavior before his fellow-men. If these things are found to be satisfactory to the household of faith, then lay hands on him in ordination, but not otherwise. It is a well-known fact that among the churches of our faith and order in the eastern and northeastern sections of the United States, ministers are much scarcer in number than among our people in the south and west. This scarcity of preachers is not due to the fact that we believe and preach the predestination of all things, though our enemies affirm so, but to the fact that Old School Baptist churches in the north and east are much more careful as to the men they ordain to the ministry than are our churches in some other sections. Talking experimentally or in the way of exhortation is not necessarily preaching, though it is often mistaken for such. We have some most excellent brethren throughout the churches of our northern and eastern correspondence who talk very well indeed, and to the comfort of the church, in our regular conference or covenant meetings, but the churches have never felt these men were called to preach. We believe, however, that if these brethren were among churches in other sections, the brethren would ordain them without hesitancy. It might be that no harm would result from so doing, but we feel assured many a good brother with a gift to speak in conference or covenant meetings has been spoiled by ordination to make a poor or indifferent preacher. Some excellent deacons, instead of being left alone to fill their office as such, have been by ordination thrust into a ministry they could not fill. These things ought to be seriously considered by all of us.

We have written these convictions of our own, not to stir up opposition, but in the hope of furthering, if we may, the peace and prosperity of Zion.

L.

CLOSE OF VOLUME NINETY-FIVE.

NINETY-FIVE years is a long time for a publication to continue, but with this issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES it has attained that age. Why has it been allowed to exist so long? We feel the answer is, Because God has had use for it. Surely it would not have survived all these years had it not been according to his plan to have it do so. We can but hope it is his will to continue it longer, otherwise it will go down. The year just

closing has had its problems and discouragements, but God has blessed us with the strength to overcome them, for which we are thankful, and his watchcare over us in the past makes us hopeful that he will be with and guide us in the future so we may publish nothing that will bring strife or confusion among the churches, but to the contrary, will enable us to feed the flock with wholesome food that will strengthen and encourage them.

There is nothing new to tell you regarding the business condition of the SIGNS. Our subscription list remains about the same as last year, which means our receipts have remained about the same. We have been blessed with plenty of sound matter for publication from our editors and correspondents, and blessed with health and strength to perform our duties connected with the paper, for all of which we sincerely thank our heavenly Father, and, if it is his will, hope he will continue to bless us with the same during the year 1928.

Before closing we wish to thank all who have in any way assisted with the publication of the SIGNS during the past year (not forgetting our faithful editors), and hope the Lord will put it into the hearts of the brethren to continue to write for the paper.

Praying that God's blessing be with you all, and that he will be with and guide us in our future work on the SIGNS, we will now bid you farewell for the year 1927.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Elder J. B. Bowden having changed his address from Boerne, Texas, to 322 Victoria Street, San Antonia, Texas, requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon James Riley Meadows was born in Pike County, Alabama, March 3rd, 1856, and died at his residence in Bowie County, Sept. 19th, 1927, aged 71 years, 6 months and 16 days. Funeral services were held at the residence, conducted by his beloved pastor, Elder W. T. Meador, and Elder D. J. Talley, a former pastor. Both delivered very beautiful and comforting discourses in the presence of all the family now living, and a great concourse of brethren, friends and neighbors, in which the life and work of the deceased was beautifully portrayed, after which the body was conveyed to the Sand Hill Cemetery for burial, there to await the resurrection day, when all that are in their graves shall come forth. Brother Meadows leaves surviving him his sorrowing wife, sister Sarah J. Meadows, and three sons: Charles C., Hubert L. and Carl T., and several grandchildren, all residing near-by in Bowie County, also one brother and one sister, residing in Texas, and one sister in Florida. Two daughters, Eula Lee and Della L., two very beautiful daughters preceded their father in death, both dying about the year 1900. Brother Meadows married Miss Sarah J. Hudgins in Pike County, Alabama, December 16th, 1875. He moved with his family to Cass County, Texas, January, 1889, where they resided until the winter of 1899, when he and wife and three sons moved to Bowie County. The writer of this notice professed a hope in Christ on Saturday before the second Sunday in November, 1890, and on the next day at the water brother and sister Meadows professed a hope in Christ and all three of us were baptized into the fellowship of Beech Creek Church by Elder J. H. McWilliams. When the dear brother and sister moved to Bowie County they united by letter with Siloam Church. Brother Meadows was ordained deacon of Beech Creek Church in May or June, 1896, which office he filled to the satisfaction of the two churches, and with the ability given him by the great Head of the church. He was very useful to his church and to his community, as he always stood for the right in the church and in his community as he saw it for the betterment of all. Brother Meadows and the writer began to live our lives together in Alabama. We could always agree, it seemed that our souls, like Jonathan and David, were knit together in love. I can think of no one of whom I can more truthfully say that he was a good man in all his walk of life. I considered him the best friend I had living. For quite awhile before he was taken sick with heart trouble he often spoke to his dear companion, and more especially to his son Carl, about the reaper death; he felt that his stay on earth was short. The writer was with him during the last three days of his life and we talked freely concerning the goodness and mercy of God. He said

that while his life had not been satisfactory unto himself at all his faith in God was strong and he was ready to go at any moment. He died after walking from his bed to a rocker by the fireside where he sat down, filled his pipe with tobacco, dying with the pipe in his hand. To the sorrowing wife, I would commend you to God, for it is he only that can heal and comfort the bereaved. To the dear children who I so much love, your dear sainted father has left you the richest of inheritance: a life of sincere piety and love, which I hope God will enable you to emulate. To my precious sister Meadows, I hope that our God will enable you to place your trust in him at all times. Your suffering will not be long, when you, too, will lie down to rest in sweet sleep until our blessed King will come again to carry his dear children to receive their great inheritance. My desire is that God may reveal himself to all the beloved family.

J. S. McLEOD.

Miss Elizabeth Lee Davis, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life November 9th, 1927, at the home of her nieces in Clarendon, Arlington County, Virginia, after a long and painful affliction, the culmination of which confined her to the bed for the last five weeks of her life. She was the daughter of Edwin and Jane Davis, and was born near Leesburg, in Loudoun County, Va., December 19th, 1871. She is survived by three sisters and one brother: Mrs. Minnie Thomas, Miss Ada Davis, sister Lena Davis and Gilbert Davis. She was baptized by the writer in June, 1912, into the membership of the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church. At her funeral we used as a text the words in the eighth verse of the twenty-sixth Psalm, "Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honor dwelleth." This Scripture came to our mind with especial force at this time, because sister Lizzie was a most devoted member of the church and esteemed the assembly of her brethren above every other thing in this world. She would go through thick and thin and suffer any inconveniences whatever in order to get to her meetings. She regularly came to the meetings long before she united with the church, keenly felt her littleness and unworthiness, and was favored of God to maintain an upright walk and conversation, both before the church and before the world without. She was patient, meek and mild, charitable always toward the weaknesses and failings of others, never being heard to speak harshly or unkindly of any one. Thus did the grace of God make its saltness the savor of her life. In her affliction she was patient and submissive to the will of her Savior. She was uncomplaining and thoughtful of those who waited upon her, not exacting of them more than she could possibly help. I want to bear witness in this notice to the self-sacrificing devotion of her three sisters, who gave up everything else and made sister Lizzie their special care, doing for her everything humanly possible to make her last days on earth as comfortable and as easy as they could. Seldom indeed have we ever seen four sisters who loved each other more than these, who seemed to live for one another as much as they. The going of their sister into the realms of eternity leaves the three sisters sad and bereft indeed. In writing this, I am not unmindful of the love and interest of the brother Gilbert, but he, having his own life and family to care for, could not give his undivided attention as could the sisters. Likewise, the two nieces at whose home sister Lizzie died, were most careful in their love and attention, providing for their aunt the things needful. I called to see our sister a few days before her death, at which time she was perfectly conscious of all that was said, although too weak to talk herself. With emphatic nods of the head she affirmed her faith and hope in Jesus, showing unmistakably that the same truth which had been her support in life was still holding her fast as the ebbing of her life-tide bore her slowly out into the vast unknown sea of eternity, her frail bark under the management of the faithful Pilot who had guided her life and who was not failing her in death. She was buried in the cemetery adjoining Andrew Chapel, the same ground in which lie the remains of her parents and other ones loved in life. She was a precious gift to the church, and we pray for strength to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." May the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead reveal the comfort of the resurrection in the souls of the sorrowing family and of the bereaved church.

H. H. L.

William R. Sellers passed away at his home, Troy, Alabama, March 31st, 1927, after an illness of two weeks. He was born near Perote, Bullock County, Alabama, December 16th, 1860, being 66 years, 3 months and 16 days of age at the time of his death. He was married November 23rd, 1881, to Edie Doray Carter, who preceded him to the grave seven years ago. To that union were born eight children. In 1921 he was married to Miss Sophronia Brannen, who survives him. He is also survived by two sons: Hubert and Leon Sellers, one brother, John A. Sellers, Montgomery, Alabama, two sisters: Mrs. N. R. Jenkins, of Banks, and Mrs. N. C. Wilkes, of Coffee Springs, Alabama. He was a member of Beulah Primitive Baptist Church of Troy, Alabama, for about thirty-five years, being baptized by Elder J. E. W. Henderson, and was a devout christian man. He always enjoyed having the Old School Baptists in his home. He was ordained deacon in June, 1925. The presbytery consisted of brethren Ward, McLeod and Wilson.

The funeral service was held at the home April 1st, 1927, conducted by his pastor, Elder B. J. Wilson, assisted by Elder H. M. Curry. Interment was in the family lot in Oakwood Cemetery.

(MRS.) NANNIE R. JENKINS.

Janet Gillies died at the home of her nephew, Duncan B. Gillies, 41 Dinnick Crescent, Toronto, Ontario, March 23rd, 1927. She had reached the age of 98 years, and until quite recently was exceedingly active and took a deep interest in passing events. At an early age, she being the eldest of twelve children, and owing to the mother being called by death, the care of the family, to a considerable extent, rested upon her, and later on, owing to the death of a brother's wife, by whom seven children were left, she, regardless of personal consideration, took charge and filled the place of a mother to those children, and left ample evidence of her capabilities in such undertaking. She never united with any church, but was an adherent of the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada, where both her father and mother were members.

Written by request.

JOHN T. KERR.

Mrs. John Beamond, who was Elizabeth J. Rimer, daughter of Jacob and Elizabeth Rhodes Rimer, was born October 23rd, 1843, near Rimer, Ohio. She was a respected citizen and an old pioneer in the community. She died October 25th, 1927, at the age of 84 years and 2 days. Interment at Ottawa River Cemetery, October 27th, 1927. She was not a member of the Baptist Church, but firmly believed in it throughout her life. She was a reader of and a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES all of her life. She derived great comfort from reading letters from old friends and church members. Two sons, one daughter and two brothers survive.

Dictated by

L. J. BEAMOND.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Albert Garber, N. Y., $3; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $3; J. A. Tandy, Okla., $5; Attie Curtis, Me., $1; Durwood H. Bradley, Texas, $2; Belle Neal, Va., $3; Henry Hayman, Md., $2; W. H. Chaney, Texas, $1; Mrs. A. C. Morse, N. Y., $3; Mrs. E. J. Bolton, Mo., $1; Anna E. McConnell, Pa., $1; James A. Ashnet, Ill., $3; Mrs. Maria Rees, Ky., $3; G. C. Jordan, Mo., $3; Annie Parker, Md., $3; Mrs. George T. Davis, Del., $1.

MEETINGS.

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IN

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.

O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 245 Lacadana Drive, Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 96. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1928. NO. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ACTS IV. 23-32.

It is a matter of consoling satisfaction to contemplate the eternal purpose which Jehovah purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, and at this moment the immutability of his counsel, declared in the crucifixion of the incarnate Son of God, occupies my thoughts. Christ Jesus, the dear Lamb of God, by whose precious blood we are redeemed, was verily foreordained before the foundation of the world. (1 Peter i. 20.) He bare our sins in his own body on the tree. (1 Peter ii. 24.) "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."—Gal. iii. 13; Deut. xxi. 23. "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree."—Acts v. 30. Come, contemplate with me the language of the Holy Ghost in the mouths of that company of believers who "were of one heart and one soul." My very heart goes out to them, I feel they are my "company," my companions. There was at that time "a multitude of them that believed." What did these believers believe? Let us read what is recorded of them. Peter and John being let go, "went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is; who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, by stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the

Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common."—Acts iv. 23–32. They were of "one accord." Are we? Are you in accord with them? Or are you out of tune, singing a tune of your own composition? I confess, I would ever have my soul tuned by the Holy Ghost, in harmony, in strict, and sweet, and God-glorifying accord with this company of believers. Let us examine ourselves whether we are in the selfsame faith as these believers. This is embraced in what they spake, being filled with the Holy Ghost, "Of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Will you muse with me upon this word, "determined before"? It is in the Greek "*proorizo*," written in five other places in the Scriptures of truth. In Romans viii. 29, 30: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate [*proorizo*] to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate [*proorizo*], them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." In Ephesians i. 5, 11: "Having predestinated [*proorizo*] us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated [*proorizo*] according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." In 1 Cor. ii. 7, 8: "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before [*proorizo*] the world unto our glory: which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." So, we may read Acts iv. 27, 28: They "were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel predestinated [*proorizo*, determined before, ordained before, marked out beforehand] to be done." Why, this "company," Acts iv. 23, "the multitude of them that believed [who] were of one heart and one soul," Acts iv. 32, were Predestinarians! They, "filled with the Holy Ghost," proclaimed themselves unto their God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is, to be believers that in the counsel of his own will he predestinated whatsoever pertained unto the crucifixion of Christ, the dear Lamb of God; embracing therein the most wicked acts that the human race has ever been or ever could be guilty of: the crucifixion of Christ. Jesus did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; he was without blemish and without spot; he had not transgressed the law of God, Roman law, or Jewish law, he was the just One; they murdered the holy child Jesus. These wicked ones with wicked hands took Jesus, crucified and slew him. They transgressed Roman law, Jewish law and the law of God, but they thus fulfilled the eternal, immutable counsel of Jehovah's will wherein he predestinated that thus Jesus, the Word made flesh, should suffer and die. This was fully foretold in the Old Testament Scriptures, "For dogs have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they

look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture."—Psalms xxii. 16–18; John xix. 23, 24, 37; Zech. xii. 10. And the manner of his death was foretold by Jesus himself. (Matt. xx. 19; John xii. 32, 33; Matt. xxvii. 34, 35.) That God should will things to be is to decree them. Our wishes, our purposes can be disappointed, frustrated, broken (Job xvii. 11), but the counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart unto all generations.—Psalms xxxiii. 11. God decrees all things harmoniously, but to us poor creatures, in our finite understanding, we fail at times to see the harmony of the purposes of the Lord. It needs the teaching, the enlightenment of the Holy Ghost, to see that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. All the bitter trials and afflictions of Job worked together for his good. We have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy. (James v. 11.) The God-given thorn in the flesh, "the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure," that the apostle Paul speaks of in 2 Cor. xii. 7–10, was all for his good. Our God is infinitely, eternally, immutably happy. If all things are immutably determined by God, some would say, What is the use of praying and striving, of our hungerings and thirstings? Why, perplexed one, all such things are included in the all things, thus the harmony. So, in the thirty-sixth chapter of Ezekiel God declares the sure unconditional mercies of the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, and then saith, "I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them." How blessedly the Lord our God speaks in this covenant, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."—Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. That God decrees all things harmoniously is most sacredly declared in the crucifixion of Christ, as we have already traced. The criminality of the murderers of Jesus is presented to be altogether in harmony with Jehovah's eternal and immutable decree to deliver him into the hands of men to be crucified. Pilate boasted that he had power to crucify Christ Jesus, the dear Lamb of God, or to release him, but Jesus answered, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin."—John xix. 10, 11. God did not deliver Jesus into innocent, harmless hands. Were there such men, having such hands how could they have crucified and slain the Holy Child Jesus, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth? Christ was not a transgressor. The dying thief was made to know and to say to his fellow malefactor, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily, I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."—Luke xxiii. 40–43. Crucifixion was the decreed death of the incarnate Son of God. All these transactions that we have been considering very clearly declare the all-embracing, unfrustrable and eternal purpose of God in

Christ Jesus, who declared "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."—Isaiah xlvi. 10, 11. All our salvation and all our desire is found in the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, and it was all ordained before the world unto glory. Am I, a poor, vile, lost sinner, embraced among those who are predestinated to be glorified together with our Lord Jesus Christ? What is Christ and him crucified unto me? I have, I trust, been taught by the Holy Spirit to look unto Jesus, and innumerable times my heart has said,

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly,
Wash me, Savior, or I die."

Was it for crimes that I have done he groaned upon the tree? Did not the beloved Savior say, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, singnifying what death he should die"?—John xii. 32, 33. Yes, I have been drawn to the crucified Lamb of God.

"I cling to his cross, here I see my salvation,
'Tis finished, complete, I'm redeemed from all woe;
I read, and rejoice there is no condemnation
To those in Christ Jesus, ah never, oh no!"

Is it thus with you? Do you believe in him that was led as a Lamb to the slaughter? with all thine heart? (Acts viii. 37.) "As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed."—Acts xiii. 48.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

SADIEVILLE, Ky., Oct. 16, 1927.

DEAR BRETHREN:—By request of Elder P. W. Sawin I am sending you a letter from his brother, Elder John G. Sawin, who will soon be ninety years of age. I think it will possibly be his last writing and would like to have it appear in the SIGNS. His address is 1929 South Fourth Street, Springfield, Ill.

With love and fellowship for you and all connected with our paper, I am your unworthy brother,

W. V. MULBERRY.

SPRINGFIELD, Ill., Aug. 31, 1927.

DEAR BROTHER MULBERRY:—I received your kind letter ten days ago, while at Anderson, Indiana, and was glad to hear from you, though sorry to hear of sister Mulberry's affliction, and I sincerely hope she may with God's blessing soon recover her normal condition.

I am now convinced, my brother, that it will not be prudent for me to attempt the trip to be with you at your yearly meeting. I am telling you this that you may not have to be at any train on my account. I would love to meet with you all again, remembering, as I do, the joy and pleasure it gave me to witness your love, loyalty and devotion to the truth as it is in Jesus. It is a great blessing for brethren to dwell together in love and in that sweet peace that passeth understanding. The blessed Savior said, My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you. His is a peace that cannot be given by the world. Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in love and christian unity. This love is of God and its lengths and breadths and heights and depths have never been explored by finite creatures. "Of the depths of the riches

both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out," exclaimed the venerable apostle Paul when nearing the end of a toilsome journey in the service of the Lord whom he delighted to serve, even though he esteemed himself as being less than the least of all saints. Then, to his Galatian brethren he says, I certify to you, brethren, that the gospel which I preached unto you was not of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Now in the assemblies of the saints, I would that we could always feel to say deep down in our hearts and in the spirit of true worship, Praise ye the Lord; praise him, O ye servants of the Lord, ye that stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God, praise the Lord; for the Lord is good; sing praises unto his name. Then we shall see Jerusalem (the church) a quiet habitation, with peace, love and fellowship abounding, and a book of remembrance being written before the Lord of them that feared him and thought upon his name. When you have met in the name of the Lord I will be with you in spirit.

I hardly know why I have written as I have, my brother, but, since it is done, if you feel that any of the little band of believers might get a morsel from what I have said you have the privilege of dividing it with them, for what applies to one applies to all. May grace, mercy and peace be with and in all your solemn deliberations, is my earnest and, I trust, sincere prayer.

With hope of a blessed immortality, I am your unworthy brother,

J. G. SAWIN.

GARDINER, Maine.

DEAR SISTER BARBOUR:—It seemed good to receive your card with its message of love. The way appears so dark to me at present I cannot see the way. My feelings are tempest-tossed and distressed and I keep hearing the words of the hymn,

"Shine, Lord, and my terror shall cease,
The blood of atonement apply,
And lead me to Jesus for peace,
The Rock that is higher than I."

I feel to need his presence and guidance more than ever before, and I see myself so vile, so sinful, such a mass of pollution, surely I am no company for man nor beast. My heart is overwhelmed and cast down. It surely fainteth within me. Like Peter, I have to cry, Help, Lord, or I perish. When all is calm how easy it is to feel safe, but when, like Jonah, we, as it were, are in the bottom of the sea, with seaweed wrapped about our necks, we do indeed have to vow that salvation is of the Lord. We believe this glorious truth, but when our faith is sharply tried we find ourselves leanness yet. We have to be brought into some terrible place where all help of man is vain to pay our vow and know the fullness of the truth, "Salvation is of the Lord." Our God knoweth the way we take, and when he has tried us we shall come forth as gold. I cannot see anything but scum in myself, but there is One who is able to remove this as he sees fit, and if there is any gold it will be manifested. Sometimes I hope he gives me a glimpse of the glory that shall be revealed in us and my soul panteth after him. Then again there are times we cannot perceive his presence and all is dark and vain and wild and we are filled with unbelief and sin. We are shown that all our help must come from him, and that all, all is of his mercy. If we could claim the very tiniest particle

of goodness all the glory would not be his, for we would have something whereof to boast. I feel to need the prayers of the saints, for my way is hard to understand. I know God has a way of escape prepared and he will open the way, but I grow fearful when the storms beat upon me.

I would love to hear from you and of your experiences, but I feel too unworthy to ask for this. I know it is hard for you to write and would not impose an added burden, but when it is well with you remember me at the throne.

Deep love from

BONNIE A. CHICK.

HERNDON, Va., Nov. 28, 1927.

DEAR EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS:—In years that are passed and gone when I used to send in my subscription to the dear old SIGNS I would most every year in renewing my subscription write you a short letter of praise and commendation to the worth and the sweet comfort of the dear old paper. But alas, in the latter days and years of my life I have felt to be more dead than alive to letter writing. But since receiving the November issue of the SIGNS I feel I want to tell you that every letter published in it was a feast of fat things to me. The first letter in the list of correspondence is by a sister by the name of Mrs. M. E. Harris, the next is from a dear sister and a mother in Israel by the name of E. F. Little, telling how God's children are taught in the same school and have been lead of the same Spirit to drink at the same fountain of God's everlasting love and mercy. Now I pass on to the next in the list, that of Elsie Gall, who testifies to the things of Jesus, giving to him all the honor and glory, which belongs to him and no other. But I must pass on to the next in the list, that of Catherine M. Duffus, who wrote her letter after midnight July 24th, 1927. Elder Dodson's comment on her letter and how she was graciously taught and brought into the fold seems wonderful indeed. The next in the list is that of Mrs. Will Mathis, who testifies to the things of Jesus, and closes her letter by the words, "A sinner saved by the death and suffering of our Lord, if saved at all." Now I turn to the next in the list, that of C. M. Adams, who loves the truth and the doctrine of the Old School Baptists, but feels should he unite with the church he might bring trouble into it. I have had a name with the church for more than forty years, and it has been my greatest fear all these years that I might bring trouble into the church, but thus far my brethren have let me stay with and mingle with them in the joys of our meetings. I do hope and trust it will not be long before God will enable our friend Adams to come to the church and offer himself for baptism. Next comes the letter from Grace Veech Smith, who has changed her name from Smith to Crosier. I hope she may write often for the SIGNS, for I always enjoyed reading her letters. Next comes the short sweet letter from our dear and lovable brother, Elder James M. Adams, who I hope I fondly love for the truth's sake. If I could write like brother Adams, and like all the names I have mentioned, I would often be found seated writing to God's little children. But alas, I am so deficient in letter writing. I will now mention the letter of sister Melissa Grimes, who has passed over to the better land, and then close with best wishes for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Your brother, I hope,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

BELLINGHAM, Washington.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—Yes, dear brethren and sisters in a precious hope through grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, and which continues to the present time. This we know by reason of his Spirit dwelling in us, causing us to bear the fruit of his Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, meekness, temperance. This fruit is not of ourselves, neither is it a part of this old body which Paul rightly and justly calls this body of death, for there is no good thing in or emanates from it. It is only the earth wherein dwells the treasure, and that treasure is Christ in us the hope of glory, and the greatest reason we have to give for our hope is because we have tribulations whereof all are partakers. All of our losses and crosses in this world are not evidences of a work of grace in the inner man, for all men suffer losses, crosses and reverses in this world, but it does not humble this proud and haughty spirit, but stimulates them to greater efforts and often causes them to resort to more selfish or unfair means to gain their ends, which is all of this world. But the things which cause me to mourn and grieve and shed tears of sorrow are the sorrows which I suffer for the afflictions of Joseph, our spiritual Joseph, and it is no different in me than it is in each and every one of the dear children of God, for it is Christ in us, and as that principle is just as pure and holy as Jesus is, it is grieved over every wrong act we do, and suffers whenever one of our brethren or sisters are made to suffer, for it is the spirit of God's love shed abroad in our hearts answering to one another; and likewise we rejoice when they are made to rejoice, thereby showing our love one for the other, thus fulfilling the law, for that law is love, pure and undefiled, and is an everlasting love, a love that has no fear, for it comes from God and returns to him, for it is the Spirit of his Son in us, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. Oh that the dear brethren and sisters would think more of this love, the tie that binds our hearts in christian love, and less about the unimportant points of doctrine which only gender strife and confusion, for we only know in part and see in part, but God knows all things. I do not want you to think that I mean we should join hands with the Arminians; no, indeed I could not, but give God all the honor, glory and power for all things, for all power is of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God. Therefore the wrath of man shall praise him.

Inclosed please find money order for two dollars to pay for the dear old SIGNS another year. I want to read it as long as I can pay for it, for it contains much of comfort to this old sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

DAVIS BURCH.

HIRAM, Ga., Dec. 4, 1927.

DEAR EDITORS:—You will find inclosed two dollars for which you may send me the SIGNS for the year 1928. I believe it is supported by able and called ministers of the gospel of God our Savior, and think it is indeed a privilege to be able to read the many good letters I have been permitted to since I became a subscriber. The first promulgation of the gospel came to me by reading a copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES while I was in the navy. At that time I was in great trouble and fear of everlasting punishment. I would have been willing to jump overboard and go down to the bottom of the deep if I could

have only escaped that awful burden that lay before me. I had given myself up for lost, and without hope in the world, when I had done all I could do and had failed. The Lord, I believe, revealed himself to me and I was able to sing the old song, "Amazing grace," with power and understanding. Then I could understand it was by grace we are saved through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any should boast. I can think as one of old: He raised me out of the horrible pit, and out of the miry clay, established my goings, put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto his name. I am not worrying about the Lord's church. He will add daily to the church them that shall be saved, and there is going to be a remnant according to the election of grace. He will prosper the church without the puny help of man's wisdom. It seems as though some people are worried thinking that others believe God is forcing people to sin. In a state of nature all sin willingly, rolling sin under their tongues as a sweet morsel. It takes the power of God to keep man from sin, for he is as prone to sin as sparks are to fly upward, therefore God is not the author of sin. He has controlling power over all things after the counsel of his own will. It takes sore chastising and trials to keep the flesh down at the bottom and give God all the glory and praise. There are no powers but of God, or he ordained

I do not want to make my letter too lengthy, so will close by wishing the editors and readers of the SIGNS a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. May God keep us all by his wonderful love and power.

Yours in hope of a better life beyond this vale of tears,

JEWELL O. CROKER.

FLETCHER, Oklahoma.

DEAR EDITORS:—No doubt you have long ago decided that I am a very ungrateful subscriber (to know the tree by the fruit it bears) and you are justifiable in doing so, for I am at best nothing, and less than nothing. I claim nothing in the flesh but sin, and I am one who has no confidence in the flesh. I am prone to wander away from the mercies of the eternal sovereign God, who from my earliest existence on earth hath been merciful to me, a poor, depraved sinner. At this late date I am acknowledging your kindness in sending the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to me the past year free. Dear brethren editors, though I have been slow in acknowledging the kindness shown me by the publishers of the SIGNS, I am herewith sending you four dollars. Please extend my subscription to the dear old paper, and accept my heartfelt thanks for past favors received from your kind hands. I know I am unworthy of such kind friends, though there is a principle that dwells in my sinful breast that makes me try to render thanks and praise to Israel's God for giving me a place in the affections of his humble poor. With me and mine this has been a year of sore afflictions, but the mercies of God have held us up, making us rejoice to know that we have been made worthy through the atoning blood of his beloved Son to suffer for his name's sake. God is not slack concerning his promises as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. God has declared that he would be a God unto his people and that they (his chosen people) should be a people unto him. God's promise is that he will remember their sins and iniquities against them no more forever. He writes

his laws in their hearts and leads them in ways they knew not. It is the will of God that his afflicted and poor people shall see their errors and cry unto him for mercy. Because they are his chosen sons and daughters he sends his Spirit into their hearts, and thus he leads them to repentance. God's humble poor walk not by sight. He has decreed (ordained) that the heirs of promise shall trust in the name of the Lord, hence they walk by faith. I do not know that I am one of his chosen, though I do know that I am a poor sinner unable to satisfy the demands of his holy law. If not deceived, I am living in the embrace of a sweet hope that was wrought out on Calvary by the adorable Son of God, who became the end of the law for righteousness to all that believe in him.

Dear brethren, please accept my heartfelt thanks for sending the SIGNS to me as before stated, and use the other two dollars as you please.

With brotherly love to the publishers and readers of the SIGNS, I am, I hope, a poor sinner saved by grace,

L. E. SKINNER.

KNOX CITY, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As it is time for me to renew my subscription to the SIGNS I wish to write a few lines to the household of faith. Inclosed you will find check for two dollars for which you will please forward my date for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It is about all the good preaching we get, and it is of much comfort to my poor soul to read the good letters from the brethren and sisters. I have passed my eightieth mile post and am nearly blind and can hardly see to write, or to read the good letters in the SIGNS. I get very hungry before it comes and long for it, so, dear brethren and sisters, write on, for it is food to my poor soul.

I have been impressed to write and ask some one to write on the subject of the talents which the man gave to his servants, and what they represent, and what the man also represents. Matthew xxv. 14–16: "For the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straighway took his journey. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents." Now I think the man who gave the money is an old miser, and the two that gain others are not honest men, and pleased their lord, and the one who had the one talent was an honest man and did not mean to put usury on his neighbor. Psalms xv. 5: "He that putteth not out his money to usury, not taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved." Exodus xxii. 25: "If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury." Many other Scriptures speak against usury. The poor man that received the one talent knew his lord was a hard man, reaping where he had not sown and gathering where he had not strewn, and was afraid and went and hid his lord's money, and his lord saw that he was a righteous man and would not oppress his fellow-man, and that the other two would do it to please him, so he did not want him any longer and cut him from his employ, and the poor fellow was cast into darkness and had to suffer for his kindness to his fellow-man. Now, dear brethren, if I

am wrong please show me and give me to understand the truth, for I do want to know the truth, if I know my poor heart. I do know I am a poor, ignorant, unworthy creature. Pray for me when it goes well with you, for I need the prayers of all saints. I often wonder whether or not I am one of his chosen ones and if I am a soldier of the cross, a follower of the Lamb, and if I shall fear to own his cause or blush to speak his name.

I am, I hope, your poor unworthy brother, saved by grace, if saved at all,

W. W. JONES.

TAFT, Tennessee.

DEAR EDITORS:—Once more I try in my imperfect way to write you a few lines, trusting alone in the Lord to direct my pen that I may say one word of comfort to you, for you have been very kind in sending me the SIGNS all this time free, which I hope I have fully enjoyed. It is as glad tidings to poor unworthy souls. All the writers, together with the editors, to my mind prove by their writings they have been taught of the Lord, and are lead by his own unerring Spirit or they would not know him as the way, the truth and life, for the world cannot know him as their Savior, neither do they want to, for they are perfectly satisfied to go on enjoying the pleasures of this old world, which will perish with the world, but those who are born again, born by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, wish to know more of his love than they do. They continually say,

"Let worldly minds the world pursue,
It has no charms for me;
Once I admired its trifles, too,
But grace has set me free."

Is this not our hope, that grace has set us free? I feel too little and unworthy to say "us," yet I am as one of old, who said, Where else can I go? If this little band to whom I believe the Savior spoke when he said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," would not let me live with them I would be alone, for I could not live with those who preach for doctrine the commandments of men. I am not trusting in an arm of flesh, but, if not deceived, my hope is in a crucified and risen Redeemer, one who is able to save to the uttermost all those who come to him by Jesus Christ.

Dear editors, I just meant to write a few lines to tell you of the change in my address from Admore, Tenn., to Taft, Tenn., R. 1. I regret very much to put you to the trouble of changing it, yet if you have a mind to send me the paper I want to get it and not let it be lost in the mail. I hope the Lord will bless you for your kindness toward me, and that some day I may be able to pay all, though I am getting old and not able to work as I once did. May the peace of God be with you, and asking an interest in your prayers, I am yours in hope,

(MRS.) J. E. SISCO.

GRAND SALINE, Texas, Nov. 14, 1924.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am living in this town of 1500 inhabitants, with only one Old Baptist sister that I ever see. She visited me to-day and brought me the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which I have read with pleasure to-night. I see your kind offer to send it to the "poor of the flock." I am in my sixty-ninth year, homeless and penniless, and have had a precious hope for nearly thirty years that I am one of the flock, but if so the least of all, and if through your kindness and the mercy of God you can send it to the poor unworthy writer it will surely be appreciated, as my church membership is fifty-five miles away and I seldom have the

opportunity of going there. There are seven so-called churches in this place, meeting and preaching nearly every day, but not one bit of the gospel of Christ in it all. It makes me feel sad to hear them give man all the power and glory, instead of the God of heaven, to whom it belongs.

My father took the dear old SIGNS long before I was born, and continued taking it until his death, which occurred in 1882. He was a Deacon, and a writer for the SIGNS when it was first published. My husband also took the paper. He was an Elder for over forty-seven years, and also wrote several articles for the SIGNS. I have an article now that he was writing, but never finished, on the predestination of all things, of which he was a strong defender up to the time of his death, which occurred in June, 1921. I have read other so-called Old Baptist papers, but none of them sets forth the pure, unadulterated gospel truth as does the SIGNS.

Pardon me for asking such a great favor. Oh that it was the dear Lord's will for me to have the price to pay for it, instead of the way it is, for it is much pleasanter to give than to receive, but I will not murmur or complain of my lot. Though he kill me all the day long, yet will I trust him.

When it is well with you pray for me, an unworthy sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all,

(MRS.) FRANK LODEN.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., March 28, 1927.

DEAR BROTHER HATCHER:—Elder J. W. Linn gave me your post office address some time ago, saying you desired me to write to you, but I, being near seventy-seven years old, forgot your request until brother Linn reminded me of it last Saturday, when he was here attending our church meeting. Now, brother Hatcher, I had forgotten you in a personal way, but I certainly remember you in a general way in my travels with brother Linn in Tennessee and Kentucky for six weeks, preaching nearly every day, and frequently at night. I met many good, sound, orderly Old School Baptists, which was such a pleasure to me that it will be a pleasant memory so long as I live. Oh how kind and good you all seemed to me. Then I met many good strong preachers, so wonderfully gifted in preaching the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace through the atonement of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Our preaching was generally received wherever we went, preaching with the ability, as I hope, God gave us, so that a bond of unity, love and fellowship sprang up between us that remains with me until now, and I believe it will still remain. Now let me, who will likely never see your faces again in this world, exhort you all to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Seek and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein and ye shall find rest for your souls. I beseech you that ye walk worthy of the high vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of love; and be not tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. Here in the Tygarts Valley River Association of Old School Baptists we are living in peace and fellowship, no divisions or controversies for some time.

Now then, brother Hatcher, may the God of grace keep and bless you all for Jesus' sake. Write me when you

feel like doing so, and if you think this letter would interest the brethren whom I met with during my visit among you all, you may send it to the paper you all, or the most of you, read, that it may be a message of love to you all.

Yours in fellowship,

J. N. BARTLETT.

LYLES, Tennessee.

DEAR EDITORS:—The foregoing letter from dear Elder J. N. Bartlett was of real comfort to me, and I feel it would be to all the brethren and sisters with whom he met several years ago, and if you decide it worthy a place in our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, please publish it.

As ever, your brother, I hope,

J. R. HATCHER.

HAVANA, Kansas.

DEAR KINDRED:—I am sending five dollars for the renewal of my subscription to the SIGNS, also that of Elder Nathan Reeder, of Niotaze, Kansas, and one dollar for the "Poor of the Flock." My late husband sent this amount for many years, and sometimes a new subscriber, and I wish to keep up the custom as long as I can. I wish every subscriber would pay in advance and thus lighten your "labor of love." "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." Our pastor, Elder Nathan Reeder, is quite feeble in health, but still loves to read the precious SIGNS, and sometimes feels able to declare the unsearchable riches of Christ to us and we are always glad to meet with him, though few in number. Jesus said, Where two or three are gathered together in my name I will be in their midst. We sit together in heavenly places. How sweet it is when brethren strive to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Jesus has bought us with his own precious blood, and he will keep us to the end. He taketh away the sin of the world. He has loved us with an everlasting love and with lovingkindness has he drawn us. He loved us when we were dead in trespasses and in sins. What a wonderful relationship, to be permitted to claim Jesus as our Elder Brother. He will not leave us comfortless, he will come again. How prone we are to leave the God we love, until trouble overtakes us, then we are willing to fall at his feet. God is merciful and tender, he chastises in love, not in anger; our afflictions are measured out to us by his unerring hand. We should be ready always to give the reason of our hope with fear and trembling and others will be greatly edified by hearing the christian experience of brethren. We can know these things only by revelation. Jesus revealed himself to me very sweetly and clearly. He also constrained me to tell it to my kindred in Christ and they rejoiced with me and gave me a home with them, which has truly been a haven of rest to my soul, such a sweet home with the dear Primitive Baptists, and although an unworthy member I still feel to say, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: * * * thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." It is an unspeakable favor to be chosen of him who is meek and lowly in heart. The Lord's people are chosen in the furnace of affliction, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but these wonderful and most precious things are kept from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. Oh that we could trust him fully and implicitly and crown him Lord of all. He is Lord of lords and King of kings. We have the assurance that we shall live, and we shall awake in his likeness and be satisfied,

then we shall enjoy that sweet peace which passeth all understanding. God shall wipe away all tears, and there is no night there. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." Oh that we all could live nearer to Christ. Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in christian love. We have this promise: that he will never leave nor forsake one of his little ones.

Dear editors and publishers, may the Comforter be with you to feed the flock of God. Give him all the praise, and continue to contend earnestly for the truth as it is in Jesus.

With best wishes for the SIGNS, in christian love your unworthy sister in hope of eternal life,

(MRS.) MARY E. PITTMAN.

GLASGOW, Kentucky.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Early in childhood I saw for the first time, as in a flash, that the religion of Christ to its possessors was not something to make them miserable, but something to make them happy. It is this secret, so far as I have learned it, that I shall try and tell you about. All of God's children I believe feel in their moments of divine illuminations that a life of inward rest and outward victory is their inalienable birthright. Can you not remember, some of you, the shout of triumph your souls gave when you first became acquainted with the Lord Jesus and had a glimpse of his mighty saving power? How sure you were of victory then. How easy it seemed to be more than conquerors through him that loved you. If our religion has made us miserable and our hearts have sunk within us day after day and our early visions of triumph have seemed to grow dimmer and dimmer, and we have been forced to settle down to the conviction that the best we can expect of our religion is a life of alternate failure and victory, one hour sinning and the next repenting, and then beginning again, only to fail again and again to repent; if this is the condition we are in we have only found Jesus as our Savior from the penalty of sin and not from the power of sin. Did the Lord Jesus intend to leave us struggling under a weary conscience of defeat and discouragement? Did he propose to himself only this partial deliverance? Did delivering us out of the cruel bondage of sin and delivering "us out of the hand of our enemies" mean that they should still have dominion over us? Did "always causeth us to triumph in Christ" mean constant defeat and failure, or being sound to the uttermost? Did this not mean from the power and dominion of sin, and not a hint anywhere given that this deliverance was to be partial or limited? We learn that "for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil," and can we imagine for a moment that this is beyond his power? Then we must believe that Jesus came to save us now, in this life, from the power and dominion of sin, and to make us more than conquerors through his power. "And thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." "That he would grant us, that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." "Unto you first, God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or

any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish," and to teach us "that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world," and adds as the reason of this, that Christ "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify us unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." "Even hereunto were we called," because Christ also suffered for us, "who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree." Take no thought for yourselves. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee." A childlike trust in God is the key to its atonement. We grow in grace by the power of an inward life-principle that cannot help growing, it grows because we live, and therefore must grow. He who has planted us has planted a growing principle in us. The divine Husbandman who has the care of the vine will care for you who are his branches, and will so prune and purge and water and tend you that you will grow and bring forth fruit, and you shall be as a tree planted by the waters, her leaf shall be green, neither shall cease from yielding fruit, and this life hid with Christ in God. Let this wonderful life flow through all your spiritual veins, working in you all the good pleasure of his will, for this is the secret of a happy life.

Dear brethren, I submit this to your judgment to dispose of as you think best.

Your brother in hope of mercy,

C. W. FRODGE.

BERLIN, Md., Oct. 23, 1927.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel to-night I would like to pen a few feeble thoughts on Colossians ii. 21, 22: "Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using; after the commandments and doctrines of men." What was Paul here referring to? He surely was not referring to the things to which the natural world applies this. He was not referring to strong drink; a thousand times no, not by any means, he was referring to nothing other than false religion, and was warning them (his brethren) not to have anything to do with it in any way, for in the twenty-second verse he says, "Which all are to perish with the using." These brethren had been given to know the ways of God, and it was Paul's desire that they hold fast and walk worthy therein, and he warned them that they must be strong in the Lord. We are told in another part of the New Testament that that which is not for us is against us. Therefore we should have nothing to do with this false doctrine that Paul was talking about. Neither do I believe any who have been with God can accept it, for there is no food in it for a poor, condemned, hell-deserving sinner, for he has been made to see that there is nothing good that they of themselves can do, therefore they cannot and will not handle that unclean thing. How many of you, my brethren, have been where this doctrine was being preached and have been made most miserable by it? Could you accept it as the doctrine of your God? I say no, for you have been with Jesus and learned of him. What have you learned in his school? You learned, like Jonah, that salvation is of the Lord. When this is learned by a poor soul he will never have any more love for the things of this world, which are to perish with the using. He will care no more for the gay life of this world, or for the honors of poor sinful man, or for anything that belongs to this

world. If he had to give up any of the love of God, or turn against his people, he would hold them and God's laws far above all things, and stand ready to give God all honor, power and dominion, for he has learned that it is not man's way, but God's way. God's ways are as far above man's ways as the heavens are above the earth, and it is absolutely impossible for man of himself to guide his way, for we are told in the New Testament that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, and that man is as prone to evil as the sparks are to fly upward. Then when you, my brethren, have been made to know these things by experience you will pray God almighty to keep you from evil, for you will not want to have anything to do with the things Paul was speaking about when he said, "Touch not; handle not; taste not," for you know it is all the work of man and must perish with the using. When the children of Israel were in the wilderness and were left to themselves they fell to worshiping the works of man, by raising up an image as their god. Read the second chapter of Jeremiah. I feel this chapter will make what I have been trying to set forth plainer than I have been able to do.

Dear editors and publishers, do with this as you think best, and if it is of comfort to any one give God all the praise.

Yours in hope of mercy,

J. W. S. TIMMONS.

VERNON, Texas, Dec. 11, 1927.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It is through the kind providence of the great and all-wise God that I, a poor sinner, have been spared to see the closing of another year, but I know not for what purpose, only that it has pleased him to do so, and it is to him that I hope I am thankful for all the blessings he has bestowed upon me, a poor unworthy sinner, not worthy of one blessing he has blessed me with. When I am made to look within and see how vile and sinful I am it makes me cry for mercy for a poor sinner not worthy to call upon his name; but to whom else can I go but to the Father who is able to forgive all our sins through the shed blood of the blessed Lamb of God? Yes, Christ has said that he came into this sin-cursed world to seek and to save all those the Father gave him, and not one will be lost. But the thought comes, Am I one of those he came to save? Can he be a just God and not condemn me to everlasting punishment? Yet I have a little hope that I would not give up for all this world, though so small that I almost give up, and am made to doubt and to wonder if I am deceived and am deceiving the dear saints of God. My prayer is, Lord, be merciful to me, a poor sinner, and if I am deceived undeceive me. We are told in the holy Scriptures that we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. I feel I have a love for the saints of God that surpasses everything else in this world. It is the greatest joy of my life to meet with the saints of God, and I ask for no greater blessing than to have their fellowship and love.

Forgive me for intruding upon your valuable time, but as my subscription has expired I thought to write a few lines and to renew again for the year 1928, and to tell you I cannot do without the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It is a welcome visitor in my home and I enjoy the good editorials, also the letters written by the brethren and sisters; though we are strangers in the flesh, I hope we are not in the Spirit. Inclosed you will find a money order to pay my subscription an-

other year. My only regret is that I cannot send more. I hope those who are behind with their dues will come forward and pay all they owe.

I wish for you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year, and may God's richest blessings rest upon all of God's saints everywhere, especially you, dear editors and publishers of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and enable you by his grace to still contend for the truth, and the whole truth, as you have done, and as all the dear editors and publishers have done before you. Long may the dear old SIGNS live.

I only intended to write a few lines, so please cast the mantle of charity over my imperfections, for this letter is like the writer, very imperfect.

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

(MRS.) M. E. PEDEN.

FLORENCE, Ala., Dec. 17, 1927.

DEAR BRETHREN:—You will find inclosed two dollars for renewal of subscription to the SIGNS. I am taking the *Lone Pilgrim* also, which is contending for the same eternal truth as does the SIGNS: That the Lord is leading us who are the antitype of national Israel that he might prove us, humbling us, that it might be best for us in the latter end; neither does he deliver us for our sakes, but for his own name's sake. God's ancient people "wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses. And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation." Our blessed Lord is leading us by the right way to that city of habitation. Four times in the one hundred and seventh Psalm, after the Lord had delivered his people from their distresses, the psalmist cried out, "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men." Men are neglecting that great salvation, because they are not praising God for it, but contributing it to their works. Let us praise him for delivering us from so great a death, and doth deliver us, we trust he will yet deliver us. All the blessings for the poor trembling saint are in Jesus, so let us praise him and trust him at all times.

Yours in love,

LYTLE BURNS.

SULPHUR, Ky., Dec. 19, 1927.

DEAR FRIENDS:—I am sending two dollars to pay my subscription to the SIGNS, and one dollar for the "Feast of Fat Things." I would like to write a good letter to the SIGNS, but feel I cannot. I am not very well and am very nervous, so this may be difficult for you to read. I seem to be bereft of every good thought, and it makes me wonder what I am and where I stand. Is there such a thing as pure and undefiled religion? Oh yes, there must be. I can see the mark in others, but woe is me, with a heart that is deceitful above all things, and of myself I can do nothing, cannot make even one prayer as I ought, yet I would ask you, my friends, to think of poor unworthy me when you go to Him in prayer, as I know you must do, for you are drawn by cords of love to pray and cannot help it. May grace, mercy and peace be with you through this Christmastide, and also throughout the coming years. May the Lord be with us all to keep us humble and obedient to his most righteous will, and make us more lovely and loving one to another, esteeming others better than

ourselves, and enable us to run with patience the race that is set before us, ever looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

ADDIE CHANDLER.

PALISADE, N. J., Dec. 12, 1927.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars for the renewal of my SIGNS, and two dollars to aid in sending the good paper to some one else who would enjoy reading it. I certainly would be lost without it. I have read the different Old Baptist papers; they may be all right, but to me the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES is the more satisfactory. If I were only half as good as the dear ones who write it seems I would be content and could go on and on with my ramble, but how empty it would all seem after reading it. I do feel to say, Jesus, pilot me over life's tempestuous sea. When the blessed Jesus is at the helm all will be well. When he causes the light to shine in our hearts it is then we can say that Jesus is mine and I am his. Many trials await us each day, and in this world we shall have tribulation, but in him he has said we shall have peace. May God bless the editors, and give them health and strength to continue with the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the edification of the chosen of the Lord, is the wish of a poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

(MRS.) M. COONS.

HERMLEIGH, Texas, Dec. 10, 1927.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As it is time for me to send in my subscription for our dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I want to tell you that I surely enjoy reading the good editorials, and also the letters of those who write from all over the United States and Canada, for it creates a love for those dear ones that nothing else can. I only wish I could get the dear old SIGNS every week instead of once a month, as it contains about all the preaching I ever get. I am sending two dollars to pay for my own subscription and one dollar to do with as you see fit. I hope and trust in the Lord that it is his will to have our family paper continue for years to come.

Wishing all a happy Christmas, and hoping you may be able to continue to publish the dear old SIGNS to the comfort and edification of the saints, I will close by asking an interest in the prayers of the writers and publishers for a poor little sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all,

M. E. WILLIAMS.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

(Tygarts Valley River Association)

DEAR BRETHREN:—Your messengers came to us proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation through the suffering and death of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, which was to us as good news from a far country. The preaching was all a unit, giving all the praise and glory of the salvation of souls to the Lord. We greatly appreciated the coming of your messengers among us. We love your correspondence, and greatly desire that our correspondence and fellowship may continue.

Our next Association is appointed to be held with the Leading Creek Church, Randolph County, W. Va., to commence on Friday before the last Sunday in August, 1928, and to continue three days, when and where we hope to meet your messengers again.

J. N. BARTLETT, Mod.

J. R. DENNISON, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1928.

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NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

"BE perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."—2 Cor. xiii. 11.

The necessary condition to perfection, to good comfort, to living in peace and to oneness of mind, is that the God of peace and love be with us. Without the presence of the God of peace and love there can exist no perfection, no comfort, no unity, no peace. The perfection of the children of God is Jesus Christ. Human nature is not perfect, nor can human efforts accomplish perfection. The perfect man is Jesus Christ and the end of that man is peace. The perfection of Christ is not for himself alone, but extends to all the saints which are in all the earth. The God of Israel recognizes and reckons the righteousness of Jesus Christ as the perfection of all his children. Having counted all their iniquities as the sins of their Head, he counts the righteousness of the Head as the purity of the body, his people. Insofar as the children of God are able through grace to realize and to manifest the perfection of Christ in their walk and conversation, to that extent are they being perfect. When we walk after the flesh and manifest its carnality we are not being perfect, but are, instead, showing plainly the imperfection of our fallen nature. "Put off concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it be once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient; but rather giving of thanks." The way of perfection, therefore, is the way of life in Christ Jesus. It is not so much that we believe a certain form of doctrine, not so much that we can subscribe to certain principles which we avow the Scriptures teach, as that we act out in our daily living among men the essence of these principles. Precept has its value, of course, but much of its value depends upon whether one's life squares with the precepts. In this modern age with which all of us are surrounded and in the midst of its very seductive allurements, the church of God needs more than ever to show its faith by its works. May God, therefore, graciously accompany his own with peace and love to the end they may be perfect.

"Be of good comfort." There are false comforts, those things which lull us into ease and carelessness, which seem for the moment to comfort but which result in restlessness of conscience and in disquiet

to the soul of the child of God. Good comfort, real and solid comfort, can be derived nowhere for the children of God except in the spacious and infinite gospel of Jesus Christ. The Word of God should be the soul's only comfort, and if one is spiritually and actively alive to the things of the kingdom of God nothing less than the truth will satisfy. This is a good way to test one's state of being. If we find that the things of earth engross us interestingly, and that we are to a great degree satisfied to have it so, the evidence is that not much spiritual activity is going on in us. If we go for comfort to every source but to the Scriptures of living truth we may deceive ourselves in thinking we are comforted; but such comfort is bound to be but fanciful and will disperse as the mists of the morning when the heat of trials and temptations arise upon us.

"Be of one mind." We cannot make ourselves of one mind however much we might desire to do so; but the presence of the God of peace and love with his children instantly brings unity into evidence. The mind of Christ is one mind and all true believers have the mind of Christ. The natural minds of God's children are diverse and various, giving rise to all sorts of clashes among them, but the spiritual mind is Christ's mind, and it is one mind, and all true believers have this mind. When this Christ-mind is in the ascendancy, unity prevails among the people of God; when the natural mind predominates, there is anything else except unity. The way to fight the good fight of faith is to lay hold on eternal life, not to hold on the natural life, nor on carnal aids and supports. A faithful fight cannot be waged by fleshly means, nor can fleshly purposes be accomplished through spiritual processes. That which is of the Spirit is Spirit, that which is of the flesh is flesh. No more can the pretended devoutness of the natural mind bring about true unity of man among the children of God. Much of the exhortation to the church of God which comes to our notice in Old Baptist periodicals seems to carry the idea with it that if we would but do so things might be much better with us; but we must carefully remember that fleshly energy of any sort will not carry us anywhere in a spiritual direction. The exhortations of the apostles are directed to the new creature, not to the old; to the believer, not to the unbeliever; to the spiritual mind, not to the carnal. To the extent that all true believers everywhere have the mind of Christ, just to that extent have they one mind. All true believers are taught of the Lord by revelation, and the things they thus know are taught them not by flesh and blood, but by the Father in heaven. Thus, they believe the same things, though these believers may never meet one another in the flesh and may be scattered among all nations of the earth. However, the moment any of us venture beyond the range of revealed truth and advocate our opinions and theories, immediately diversities appear: contentions, strifes and divisions.

"Live in peace." This will we do, God being with us. Whatever has a tendency to mar the peaceful living of the children of God, let it alone. Remember, however, there is the peace of death as well the peace of life. We do not want a cemetery peace but a living peace. Living in peace does not mean an inactive peace. It is not a do-nothing peace. It is God's peace, the peace of love shed abroad in our hearts, the peace of God which defies all the mind of man to understand it. It is that living peace in which is seen the activity of spiritual life. Where there is spiritual life, there will be

seen the fruits of the Spirit. These fruits are love, joy, gentleness, meekness, temperance, faith, &c. When believers are living together in peace, these fruits will be seen ripening in the gardening of grace, and how sweet indeed are those fruits to the spiritual taste of all who truly believe in God and in his Son Jesus Christ.

We can think of no better way to greet you at the beginning of another year than in the above manner with the above words from Paul's second letter to the church at Corinth. It is in great humility of soul and with much fear and trembling that we enter upon another year of editorial work with the SIGNS. We are not worthy this position and have so far failed to fill it as it ought to have been filled. God alone is our sufficiency; we are a poor, miserable worm without him. May our dear readers and subscribers and friends continue to bear lovingly with us as you have never failed so far to do. Pray for us that we may be kept in the right way and that we may faithfully discharge all the duties devolving upon us. May the Lord bless all of you with the precious communion and fellowship of the Holy Ghost through Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.

L.

WATCH YOUR DATES.

WE wish to request our subscribers when sending in their subscriptions to see that the date on the little pink slip bearing their address is changed. If not changed, please let us know immediately (for that signifies you have not been given credit for the money sent) and we will look into the matter. By consulting that date you can tell at a glance to what time your subscription is paid. Dec. 28 means that your subscription is paid to December, 1928; June 27 means your subscription is only paid to June, 1927, &c.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Deacon John F. Oliver.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 12th, 13th and 14th, 1927, to the churches composing this Meeting, and to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—According to the custom and practice in our Meeting for many long years, we desire to send you our annual epistle of love in the form of a Circular Letter, and while we are writing our mind seems to be directed to the following named Scripture recorded by Paul, the great apostle, to the Ephesian brethren: "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. [Not "bone," but "bones," for it takes many bones to constitute a body.] For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." —Ephesians v. 30–32. When the woman was presented to Adam, after the Lord had made her of one of Adam's ribs, Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Thus we see that as the woman "Eve" was a member of Adam's body, bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, so likewise Christ's children are members of his body, which is the church, members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. Therefore there is no law now given that can ever be able to separate his children from his body. "Dead to the law by the body of Christ." "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become

dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."—Romans vii. 4. The apostle, in addressing the saints, uses the words "ye," "we," "us" and "our," meaning the one family of the elect of God, members of Christ's body, of his flesh and of his bones, "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ." Bones joined together with sinews which can never be separated. The church of Christ is composed of many members, members one of another. Not one too many, nor one left out. His members are made complete in him, he being their Head and they being his body. Oh what a unity we see in this mysterious marriage, married to Christ, made members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. Paul states the fact as a great mystery, but adds, "I speak concerning Christ and the church."

Dear brethren, we feel too shortsighted to continue this wonderful subject, and we feel that this imperfectly sets forth what we would desire to say in this Circular Letter written for the consideration of our dear brethren composing the Corresponding Meeting of Virginia. Before we close, however, we wish to give Paul's testimony to the love of Christ to his church. Notice that Paul is but addressing the church, the body of Christ, as we have already stated. He uses the words "ye," "we," "us" and "our," meaning God's people, and no others. Paul asks the question, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written [referring to the Old Testament Scriptures, Psalms xliv. 22], For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Romans viii. 35–39. The above declaration of Paul to the Roman Church confirms to our minds the vital unity of Christ and his church. This declaration of Paul is a great comfort to us. We committed it to memory in the days of our youth and these words have returned to our mind even in the silent watches of the night, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Brethren, we love to mention this language in every letter we write, for it was sweet to us over forty years ago and is sweet to us yet. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"

We will conclude by using the words of the same apostle, "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Jesus Christ, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."—Ephesians iii. 20, 21.

The next session of this Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1928, and to continue three days, at which time we hope to receive again your members and messengers, and to welcome among us the ministering brethren of our correspondence who come to preach unto us the Word of life.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Mod.

K. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Sister **Maud Hardin,** wife of Elder W. R. Hardin, Clariette, Texas, was born in Pontotoc County, Mississippi, August 15th, 1853. Her parents were Dr. William Henry and Sophronia (Singleton) Rush. She was married to Richard Freeman in 1871, and to this union were born three children: Allie, Henry Simeon and Sophronia Blands. Mr. Freeman died in 1876. She was united in marriage to Mr. W. H. May in 1879, and to this union three children were born: Linburn, Lona and Florence. Several years after the death of Mr. May she was united in marriage to Elder William R. Hardin, the marriage taking place in the year 1902. She lived with him twenty-five years and twenty days, dying on the night of October 4th, 1927, being ill only one hour. Sister Hardin received a hope in Christ in early life and united with the Methodists, but soon became dissatisfied and united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Lafayette Springs, Miss., and was baptized by Elder A. B. Morris. A dear sister of heirs in the flesh, and also a sister in the church, writes to me of her thus: "Sister Maud lived her religion each day she stayed on earth, and was truly the most charitable person I ever knew." The writer was acquainted with her about twenty-five years, and intimately for the last several years, so can truly say that her daily life was most exemplary. She was very spiritually minded and was truly a mother in Israel, leaving a bright example for those following her footsteps, both outside of the church, and also within its sacred precincts. It is good to know that her dear husband and all who knew her do not mourn her loss as those having no hope. Is it not blessed to believe that she is asleep in Jesus, awaiting the eternal glories of immortality in the resurrection for all the redeemed family of God?

Written by request. J. I. FOSTER.

Virgie Bond Rautt was born in Vernon County, Missouri, March 20th, 1876, and was the youngest child of T. H. and Elizabeth F. Bond. Her mother died when she was a little over a month old, and her father, with his four small children returned to the home of his parents in Anderson Co., Ky., where she was cared for by different nurses until her father chose a good step-mother for her a year later. She had three half-sisters born of their second marriage, which made her the central child of a family of seven children, a place which she seemed in reality to especially fill. When she was about sixteen years old she received a hope of the better life, and united with the Missionary Baptists of her community and lived faithfully the precepts of her profession as she understood them. February 27th, 1910, she was married to C. S. Rautt, to which union three children were born; Herbert Clark, aged 16, Rachel Frances, aged 13, and Jaunita, aged 12. Her affections and ambitions were centered upon her children, but these did not occupy her attention so much that she could not be of service to the needy of her acquaintances, for hers was a life of service whenever a helping hand was needed. As the cares of life developed the substance of a living faith was manifested by her taking consolation alone in the sound principles of the Old School Baptists as interpreted by Elder L. B. Rogan, whose preaching was bread to her hungry soul. For three years her health had been gradually giving way to infirmities beyond the power of physicians to relieve until as a last effort a surgical operation was undertaken. Two days after (Sept. 2nd, 1927) complication set in, which brought lasting relief, when she fell asleep in the blessed hope she so faithfully showed during her life. I commend her life and example to her bereaved husband, and three children, and to those of her father's family who now mourn for her as the first broken link in their family circle; despair not, for death to the righteous is but the entrance to joys for evermore.

Affectionately her brother, C. W. BOND.

Mrs. Mary C. Baker, of Burdette, Schuyler County, N. Y., died November 29th, 1927, aged 81 years. Her husband and four children preceded her to the grave. Three daughters remain to fill the loss of an affectionate mother. She was a kind and faithful neighbor, and a sound, substantial member of the Old School Baptist Church at Ingleside, N. Y., and was esteemed very highly by her brethren and sisters in the church for her peace-loving, christian character. She was naturally of a bright and lively nature, which made her company cheerful to all she came in contact with. She was blessed with a good hope through the grace of God many years ago and was baptized by Elder Charles Bogardus about twenty or twenty-five years ago, uniting with the Old School Baptist Church at Burdette, N. Y. Old age and infirmities consequent to it were the cause of her death. She was living with her daughter, Mrs. Hendricks, at Burdette, N. Y., who, with her husband, and the other daughter and near friends, did all that loving hands could do for her comfort, but the dear Lord in his mercy saw fit to call her to her heavenly home to praise his great and adorable name, world without end. I believe that while the three daughters loved their dear mother, they were given by the grace of God to say, The Lord's will be done.

Funeral services were held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Hendricks Friday, December 2nd. Burial was at the cemetery near Bennettsburg, N. Y. The writer tried to speak to a large company words of comfort to those who love the Lord in sincerity and in truth. I was requested to write this and send to the publishers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as she had been a subscriber for it for many years.

D. M. VAIL.

Olive Louisa Humphries Warren was born in Iowa, December 26th, 1862, the daughter of John and Helen Humphries, and passed away at 7:30 p. m., Nov. 8th, 1929, after a very short illness. She was married to George W. Warren at Grain Valley, Mo., Oct. 23rd, 1881, and to them were born ten children, three of whom preceded her in death. Four daughters and three sons, with their father, are left to mourn their loss. These are: Mrs. Helen Lang, Mrs. Agnes Chiles, Mrs. Beatrice Backenstette, Leona Vesta, Chester E., Guy W. and Harry O. At the September meeting, 1922, brother Warren united with Little Flock Church of Primitive Baptists, and at the October meeting she, too, was received and they were baptized that day by the writer. She ever after adorned her profession in an humble, meek and gentle manner, both in the church and in the home.

W. L. HALL.

A CORRECTION.

In writing the obituary notice of sister Elizabeth Davis, which was published on page 286 of the December number of the SIGNS, I stated that she is survived by three sisters and one brother. I should have written "four sisters" instead of "three sisters" are living. The sister I neglected to mention is Mrs. Bessie Turner, of Frederick, Md. I cannot understand how I made this error, knowing Mrs. Turner as well as I do. However, I hope Mrs. Turner and the family may pardon my oversight, and be assured the omission was not intentional on my part.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. S. S. Bloomfield, Colo., $2; J. E. Holloway, Tex., $1; J. E. Powell, Tex., $1; H. Osborn, N. Y., $3; John F. Oliver, Va., $1; Mrs. Sarah E. Enoch, Kans., $3; L. E. Skinner, Okla., $2; Mrs. Lucinda Turner, Va., $1; Jesse C. Ellis, Ohio, $3; J. W. Newton, Ga., $3; Mrs. Mary J. Ege, N. J., $8; W. S. Aydelott, Kans., $3; W. E. Bryan, Ky., $1; A. R. Nolen, Okla., $2; Anson Quint, Me., $3; Sarah A. McColl, Ont., $3; Mrs. J. D. Shafer, N. Y., $1; M. Jack Coleman, Va., $5; Mrs. Allie Gooch Reid, N. C., $2; Mrs. W. R. Davis, Del., $2; Ben F. Wilson, Mo., $2; Mrs. M. E. Drake, N. J., $1; Mrs. Duncan McCallum, Ont., $2; Joseph F. Hall, Me., $8; Mrs. Mary Pittman, Kans., $1; Mrs. J. A. McTaggert, Ont., $2; Mary E. Lammers, Neb., $1; B. F. Davis, Texas, $1; "A Friend," Ore., $5; Hannah E. Danks, Calif., $1; Col. J. R. Cox, Okla., $1; Mrs. Jennie Black, Ont., $1; M. E. Reeves, Ill., $2; Mrs. M. E. Williams, Tex., $1; Mrs. Mary Duffus, B. C., $3; J. P. Starr, Ga., $8; Mrs. Mildred Durand Gordy, Mich., $2; Mary A. Barnett, N. B., $1; Mrs. J. T. Buford, Ark., $1; H. C. Sledge, La., $1; Mrs. A. J. Owens, Ky., $2; Elder G. E. Coulbourn, Va., $2; Martha J. Disharoon, Del., $1; Elder J. G. Sawin, Ill., $3; J. H. Shambaugh, Ohio, $1.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor,

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 245 Lacadana Drive, Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the fourth Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

SELF-PRONOUNCING BIBLE.

These Bibles are printed on a good quality of paper, in large, clear type, and contain Marginal References, a complete system of helps, with a good Concordance, and many other things which space will not permit us to mention. Size of page 8⅝x5½ inches. Bound in French Seal Leather, with extended covers, red under gilt edge. The "Open Flat" Binding on these Bibles is far superior to any method of binding yet devised. Its many advantages over all other Bible bindings will be at once apparent. The Bible will lie open absolutely flat. The back of the Bible will at all times retain its shape. With this perfect binding the Bible will not break in the back. This is a Bible we know will please our people. Price $4.50 each. Postage paid by us. Any person wishing one of these books can secure one by sending us eight new yearly subscriptions.

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,

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"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 96. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1928. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION.

Do you believe in election, unconditional election, divine choice? Yes, I believe that God chose a people in Christ before the world was. These people are called God's elect, and were chosen from every nation, kindred, tongue and people, without regard to merit, race, color, human nobility or any other human qualities. Just God using his divine right of choice. Well, what reasons have you for believing that God has an elect people?

First. Because of such a great cloud of inspired witnesses. Jesus Christ says, He shall send his angels; they shall gather together his elect. (Matt. xxiv. 31; Mark xiii. 21.) "Shall not God avenge his own elect?"—Luke xviii. 7. If it were possible they would deceive the very elect. (Matt. xxiv. 24.) For many are called, but few chosen. (Matt. xx. 16; Matt. xxiv. 22; Mark xiii. 20.) Paul says, Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? (Rom. viii. 33.) God hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world. (Eph. i. 4.) Even so at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. (Rom. i. 5; 2 Tim. i. 9; Rom. ix. 11; 2 Thess. ii. 13; Rom. i. 7.) Peter said, Elect according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father, &c. (1 Peter i. 2.)

Second. Many creditable witnesses all down the ages. The most heroic servants of God. The greatest confessors of the faith. The noblest martyrs for the truth. The outstanding theologians of the true church, and the deepest experimental christians have all boldly claimed and held sacredly valuable this revealed doctrine of the word of God.

Third. The Bible teaches the doctrine of election so strongly that the word "elect" is found eighteen times and the word "election" is found six times.

Fourth. The sovereign nature of an absolute God requires or demands election. If God be eternal, immutable, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, and has foreknowledge, his work must be in harmony with these attributes. Now, if he be eternal surely all his works are not perishable. The material world that God created in six days is perishable, and if that is all that God has before him, when time ends he will be alone, as at first. "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handy-

work." But when time ends what will declare the glory of God or show his handywork? God created man in his own image and in his own likeness, and for a definite purpose, and that purpose is seen in God's elect, who will glorify him forever. If God be immutable, unchangeable, he must work to a prearranged program. He could not be immutable and then wait for man to make his program, for that would keep Him dependent, learning, guessing and not knowing what to do. God made his program in the beginning, it included all his works to the end of time, including his elect and their redemption and eternal glorification. What the Lord doeth, he doeth forever. If God be omnipotent, and has all power, will he not use that power in the preparation of something that will glorify him throughout all eternity, that will sing his praises when this material world has fulfilled its purpose and passed out? An all-powerful God surely has created something from which he could choose, select or elect to be continued when this material world shall end. Yes, he created a spiritual world, which will not perish with time, but will be as everlasting as God himself, and this is to be the home of the elect, and as that spiritual world is a part of God's creation, and was made before man was made, its accommodations are just sufficient and suitable for the "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father," &c., and for no others. If God be love and is unchangeable, he must have something to love continuously. He must love with an everlasting love. Could his everlasting love rest on the perishable things of this world? No. Must he not have something that is also everlasting, as unperishable as he is? Yes, God has created two worlds, or kingdoms, the material, which is perishable, and the spiritual, which is everlasting. He has filled the material with creatures that are also perishable. Now what will a sovereign God do about the spiritual? He will fill it with creatures of his love, and as he cannot love sin, or admit creatures with a corrupt nature, he will choose and purify some of his creatures and fit them for the spiritual kingdom, the elect. This must be carried out with a definite program, and that program must be set up in the beginning, before man came on the arena. If God be omnipresent, everywhere, and omniscient, all-seeing, and also has foreknowledge, then his whole program must be complete from the beginning. Nothing left undecided, nothing depending upon the condition brought about by man, and as God's spiritual kingdom is to be peopled from the inhabitants of his material kingdom, all this arrangement must have been made before man came into the material kingdom and began to pass out, otherwise where would he go? This spiritual kingdom was prearranged to accommodate a definite number, and no more. No waste accommodations, only enough for God's elect. Then to prepare the creatures of the material kingdom for a life in the spiritual kingdom there must be a very great change wrought upon them. The provision for this change was made in the covenant of grace which was made before the world was. As all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, then all are condemned, lost and undone alike, and none able to appease the wrath of God. None are sufficiently meritorious to demand life, nothing but grace will save. There is only one name given under heaven or among men whereby lost sinners were ever saved, or ever can be saved, and that is Jesus Christ, the

hope of glory. In the arrangement of the covenant of grace the Father chose his elect in Christ, wrote their names in the book of life, and the Son agreed to and has redeemed the elect by fulfilling the law for them, suffering, bleeding and dying as their surety, and the Holy Ghost as time rolls on is regenerating, revitalizing and transferring into the spiritual kingdom by spiritual birth all of God's elect as they take their places in the material world. This divine choice was not made because of merit, nobility, worldly wisdom, or any other distinguishing human qualities. 1 Cor. i. 26: "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." Jesus said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." Here is one reason for the divine choice, for the elect, for the mysterious dealings with those predestinated to life: it seemeth good to the Father. There is another reason in the divine attributes: they require it. A God having the above mentioned attributes must work to a prearranged program, and that of his own making. Any other conclusion is utterly impossible. Then why, if not for meritorious qualities, would God choose some unworthy sinners to life eternal and not choose all, seeing all are alike sinful, lost and undone? This is a hard question to answer, and has caused many to question God's justice, his impartiality and the reality of his plan of salvation by grace. The writer believes that God has a purpose in allowing the wicked to live in their sins, as much so as he believes he has a purpose in calling the elect unto righteousness.

In the March, 1927, SIGNS you can find his six reasons why God allows the wicked to live and carry on, as he sees it.

1. They are used in the hands of God to bring about good. 2. Furnish a field for Christ's work of redemption. 3. Used as a chastening rod to purify God's people. 4. To demonstrate God's justice and mercy. 5. To exalt God and humble man. 6. They are allowed to live and multiply for the elect's sake. Worldly men cannot comprehend, nor in any way help God carry out his grand plan of election, predestination and redemption through Jesus Christ. All who will not accept election and God with his divine attributes, must go away from the Bible, away from inspired witnesses, away from sound theology, away from christian experience, and drift out with the modernist, the evolutionist, the worldly-wise, the blind leading the blind.

May God's holy Spirit guide our minds in the way of truth, may it protect us from the evil lusts of the flesh and the deceitful wiles of Satan and of scheming men; may it sustain us in our efforts to do our duty to God and man, and may it help us to render all due honor and praise to our heavenly Father. Amen.

M. N. WEBB.

WEISER, Idaho.

ENLOE, Texas, Dec. 19, 1927.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As my time is out, and I want to renew, thought I would write a few lines, as my mind seems to lead that way. To begin with I will quote Ephesians ii. 1: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Quickened them to give them life from that dead state they were in. What kind of a life? Eternal life. They had natural life before they were quickened, so they were walking after the

flesh. Ephesians ii. 2: "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world," &c. Ephesians ii. 3: "Fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Oh look what a contrast between these two lives, natural and eternal life. In the natural life he is dead to all spiritual or eternal life, so he must be given that eternal life if he is ever saved. So we see that conditional salvation is a complete failure. No man, or men, can give that life or take it away, for it is eternal. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved.)" "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."—Eph. ii. 4, 5, 8, 9. We see it is not by work, for the Book says it is not by works of righteousness which we have done, so the works of man are a failure. How came man dead in sin? By the disobedience of one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all, for all have sinned. In speaking of the tree of knowledge of good and evil the Lord said, For in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. Did he eat? Yes. Did he die? Yes. What did the serpent say? "The serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die." So the dispute commenced back there between our God and the serpent, and it still goes on. The Lord said the man would surely die, and his people say they are dead in sin and cannot help themselves out, either individually or all together, for they are all alike dead. But the serpent said they would not die, and the religious world says they must make the start, and come to Christ, or get willing, or he will never save them. What, a dead man start, or come, or get willing? They say they must believe. What, a dead man believe? Whose side are you on anyway, are you for the Lord or Satan? They say you can if you will. Has a dead man any will to come to God? He is just as destitute of the will as he is of the power. Christ says, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." He also said, No man can come to the Father but by me. They say no one is elected until they run for office, but our God's election is not that way. His people were elected before they were born of the flesh. Yes, before the world was, they were chosen in Christ and elected to salvation. Oh how thankful we should be for what he has done, what he is doing and what he has promised he will do for his children. Oh let us praise him for his mercy and his kindness to us.

With much love to you all, your little brother,

W. H. TATUM.

ANSON, Texas, Feb. 11, 1923.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Have you ever thought that predestination of all things is the grandest doctrine ever preached? It is the only doctrine that has stood the test from the very beginning until the present time; all things that have been, are being and are to be as long as this old world stands were predestinated by God himself. Nothing ever has happened by chance, and those who went out from us were not of us, that is why they went out, and I think sometimes that we old believers in predestination should be a very happy people; not sometimes, but all the time. We should live close, yes very close, to God, and ask him

to bear our troubles, trials and persecutions. If we will do that he will bear them for us, for he has said that his yoke is easy and his burden light, and I find it so. The Arminian world and the conditionalists left us because they seem to think our God has too much power and they want to limit it in this world until death comes, then they are perfectly willing to let God have all his power, but we poor old absoluters want God to have all the power, glory and honor. We know we are not worthy of our practice of it, and we know that our heavenly Father cares for us as a shepherd cares for his sheep. We all should be happy because we have no Sunday-schools, no big revivals, do not follow a multitude to do evil and do not try to save souls. God has taught us that we cannot save our own souls, then why should we try to save the souls of others? The Arminian world has said that if they could get rid of the old absoluters they could convert the world. The Arminian world does not want to get rid of the conditionalists, but they want God's own chosen predestinated children out of the way. It seems they cannot understand that when God removes the last one of his chosen people from off this old world it will be the end of the world and all its inhabitants. In my mind that is why this world is standing, but the time is not far off when our heavenly Father will call the last one of his children home. My dearest loved ones (absolute predestinarians), what are we sacrificing to the benefit of each other? It is nice of us to pray for each other and to tell our brethren and sisters how much we love them, but our many words of loving-kindness and our many kind thoughts do not buy the paper on which the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is printed, or do not hire printers to print the paper or typesetters to set the type, neither do our kind words send the SIGNS to the financially poor of our faith and order. I have just read the beautiful letter from sister Jennie Loyd and am sending the money to our dear editors and asking them to start her subscription from the date it stopped. Bless her heart, she enjoys the paper as much as I do, and she must have it as long as she lives. God has led me thus far and he will lead me on. I am a poor man financially, and those who know me know that I run my delivery wagon six days out of the week (rain or shine) to make a living, still it is God's hand that leadeth me, and when he impresses it upon my mind to do his will I do it, because I know he cares for me and know he never impresses me with something I cannot or should not do. Oh he is such a great God! Help me to praise him. I know you will. My old eyes are dimmed with tears, but I must write joy and gladness and banish sighs, for perfect love disperses our fears, and forever from our eyes God shall wipe away our tears.

Brethren and sisters, I do not know how many subscribers the SIGNS has, neither do I know how many unpaid subscribers it has, or how many of God's children want to read it and are not financially able to pay for it and have too much pride to say they cannot pay for it. Now listen, brethren and sisters, must I go before my heavenly Father and say, Father, thou hast given me financial aid to read the SIGNS, but thou hast withheld this aid from others so that I could aid my brethren and sisters, but I have not done it, feeling too poor financially? Loved ones, if I fail to obey my Master how, oh how, can I ask him to help me do his will, when he knows that if he helps me I will not do it?

What I have written came to me while resting on my bed at night. I do not want to hurt any one's feelings, no, I do not, but I want every one of us to do what our Master says do, and in his word he says owe no man. How could I read the SIGNS if it was not paid for by me or some one else? I think the SIGNS is to others just as it is to me: all the preaching I have. Just think, here I am with no one seemingly who cares for my soul, seldom hear God's word preached in its purity and simplicity, and must I do without the SIGNS? Brethren, how many of us take our daily or weekly or semi-weekly papers and pay cash for them before we can read them, but read the SIGNS on credit. The SINGS has no advertisements, nothing of the world, the flesh and the devil within its covers, then why should we let our subscriptions get behind? Pay up, and do what God says do (owe no man), and let us see that every one of our faith and order who wants to read the SIGNS for their good can receive it. Do not say, I will send my old papers to some brother or sister, but subscribe for it. May God bless each one of us, and may he teach us to do his will as long as life lasts. God has been very merciful to me and has led me in the ways I knew not. He has warned me against danger; yes, he keeps me from the snares of the devil, though sometimes it is very hard for me to resist the devil. It is then I fly to my Master and he steps between us and the devil flees and I am happy. Sometimes I think I would give anything I have if I could hear some brother or sister shout God's praises aloud, but alas, I fear I will never hear such a thing again. I know I am the least of all of God's children, and that my strength will not protect me, but I am my Savior's lamb and he will not neglect me, for my path before shines more and more as I near the garden city. Do not forget to pray for this poor worm.

Your old brother in a sweet hope,

H. L. HOLMES.

DALLAS, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—For some time I have had a desire to write in memory of my mother, Mrs. Wm. F. Kennedy, but have put it off, hoping to feel more worthy, more capable or competent, but as I attempt this morning, after having thought of it hourly for several days, and often during the night, I do not think at any time I have felt more unworthy, but I trust the Lord will enable me in my weakness and stammering way to pen a few words in loving memory of her faithfulness and devotion to the end. She was Miss Alice Yarbrough before her marriage, and was born July 12th, 1856, married December 17th, 1872, was baptized by Elder McDonald, of Camden, Arkansas, in the year 1874, together with my father, in the church known as Bathesda, in Ouachita County, Arkansas. She passed away Sept. 3rd, 1927, thirteen years from the date of father's funeral. Never was one more lonely or longed to follow one than mother was to be with father. There were five children, one boy and four girls. One daughter, the oldest, preceded her some nineteen years, the other four are living, together with eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of predestination and salvation by grace, attended meetings and always feasted upon the crumbs from the Master's table. She was noted for her joy in singing, and few who ever heard her forgot her voice. She spent many hours singing in her loneliness after father's death, often with tears dripping from her

eyes, and that voice was clear and sweet, and she sang almost daily until the spirit took its flight. I was called to her bedside over two weeks before the end came. She had a fall and dislocated her hip and was confined in a hospital at Hope, Ark., and only a few days passed that she did not sing a verse or two of some old hymn. I would close her door and join her as best I could. Once she sang, "Will the waters be chilly?" and I sang the old treble, her part always in church meetings. When she finished she said, My child, the world does not know anything about the joys we have, the waters will not be chilly; bless the Lord, O my soul, let all that is within me bless his holy name. She often talked and quoted passage after passage of Scripture, and spoke of the goodness and mercy of God all the days of her life. The last song she sang was, "We will stand the storm and won't be very long, we will anchor by and by." After she sang she repeated by saying, No, it will not be very long, we will anchor by and by, and when the call came she talked clearly and freely, told us she was being carried just like a little child and raised her feeble trembling hands close together and waved them, as one carries a baby. Her voice was clear, her face an expression of joy, her eyes clear and happy, and she sank into unconsciousness and never spoke to us any more. Life lingered in her body and she slept on without one struggle. It is indeed a blessed thought to meditate upon with great reverence to such faithful parents, to feel in one's heart that the great I am that I am is able to subdue all things unto himself. The same God who created, rules and governs all things sent his only begotten Son into this world to suffer, bleed and die on the cross to pay the debt of all the redeemed, and when he gave up and said, It is finished, he set aside all the charges that ever can be made against those the Father gave him, and he said I will raise them up at the last day, without spot or blemish or any such thing, and of all that the Father gave him none shall be lost. No wonder one has said, Great and marvelous are thy works and thy ways past finding out. He works and none can hinder, commands and it stands fast, has all power in heaven and in earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou, Jehovah? As far back as I can remember, the old SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been in our home. It was always welcome, and had its many readings, and never one was allowed to be destroyed. I have a few very old copies, and wish I had every one from my chilhood. I enjoy them very much, and am a subscriber.

May the grace of God enable us to walk in the footsteps of those gone on before, ever looking to the arm of salvation in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Yours in humble hope through Christ,
(MRS.) H. A. STRUBE.

KENNEDY, Alabama.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I will with this poor, little, weak hand try and write something of the wonderful book that John saw that was sealed with seven seals, if the blessed Lamb that had the power to open the book and to look thereon will open this poor weak mind of mine and enable me to see some of the wonderful things in that book, for no one can see anything in it except the Lord reveals it unto them. The book as I see it is the will, decrees, purposes, predestination and foreknowledge of God, which embraces all events that have ever taken place from the foundation of the world and on through eternity. "No man in

heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." God alone can open the book and reveal his will and purposes and wonderful works to his children. He alone can open the book and turn the leaves of time, and as the leaves of time are turned it often reveals the wrath of God upon the people; but it is right, for everything that has ever taken place in this world or will come to pass in the worlds to come, even every wicked or good event, is recorded in the book of the knowledge of God. There are no new or old things with him, and he is just in punishing the people in any way he sees fit for their sins and wickedness, and all the blessings that his poor people receive in this world and in the world to come are alone through the great mercy and love he had for them before the world began. All the wonderful works of God, and his precious written word, are a sealed book to every human being on the earth unless the blessed Lamb loose the seals and enables them to see by an eye of faith some of the things recorded in it. Under the law covenant the Lord loosed the seals and enabled the old prophets to look to the coming of Christ and to look for their redemption in him. Under the law covenant they had the law written on stones and their worship was obedience to the law. Now Jesus is the end of the law worship. He seeketh such to worship him as do worship him in spirit and in truth. He said, I will write my laws in their hearts and print them in their minds, and I will be unto them a God and they shall be unto me a people.

"And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." The Lamb had seven horns, which is all power in heaven and in earth, to open the seven seals of time, and had seven eyes to look thereon, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth, from the foundation of the earth until the end of time. God sees all things, yea, his Spirit searches all deep things; nothing is hid from him.

"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Then John saw all God's people giving him all the glory, honor, power, riches, blessings and praise. God's people have always given him all the praise. David, the sweet singer of Israel, gave God all the praise for everything in heaven and on earth, and called on everything that hath breath to give God all the praise. The Primitive Baptist is the only church on earth to-day that is giving God all the praise. They are still singing that new song, and will be singing it when their blessed Lord comes to gather up his precious jewels from this earth. This new song was new in the beginning of the world and will still be new at the end of the world. The praises of God never grows old, that is why our old primitive songs never grow old, because they give God all the praise, glory, power, honor and blessings. They suit our experiences

because the blessed Lamb has loosened the seals and let us see that we are nothing but poor sinners in the sight of a just and holy God, and all the blessings we poor sinners receive at his precious hand are absolutely free gifts, that is why we want to praise him all the days of our unprofitable life in this world and through eternity, even then the song of his praise will still be new. I sometimes feel that if I could praise him every minute of my life in this world and through eternity I could not praise him enough for the many blessings he has seen fit to bless me with. I do not feel worthy of the very least blessing, and if I ever reach heaven and immortal glory it wlll be by free grace, and grace alone.

Your unworthy sister,

B. A. CROWLEY.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Dec. 20, 1927.

DEAR EDITORS:—Another year has passed since I last took my pen in hand to renew my subscription to the dearest paper on earth to me, and I find myself more unworthy of writing to the household of faith every day, yet there seems to be a longing, or desire, in my heart to proclaim the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace to the many saints of God scattered abroad in the land to-day. I can only hope and trust that this desire is guided by the hand of the all-wise God, and that everything said and done may be to the honor and glory of the name of our blessed Redeemer, who shed his precious blood that we might have eternal life, that fadeth not away, but is everlasting. Jesus said, I am the way, the truth and the life; and the one that climbeth up any other way the same is a thief and a robber. He is the only way from earth to heaven, and it is alone through his rich atoning blood that our sins have been washed away and our robes made pure and white in the blood of the Lamb. Jesus came to earth, suffered and died the ignominious death of the cross that his people might be saved everlastingly. When he hung on the cross and cried, "It is finished," he forever put away the sins of his people, and he has promised that he will remember their sins against them no more. He paid the debt for one and all that will ever bask on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance, where Jesus has gone to prepare a place for those who love him. They are looking forward to a home in heaven, a house not made with hands, where Jesus, their blessed Redeemer, ever sits at the right hand of God making intercession for his people, and when their task on earth is done great will be their joy when they hear the command, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of the Lord. To those on the right hand, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the earth." The home prepared for them by the ever-blessed Savior, who came to do the will of his Father, and may we be given grace to be submissive to his will, and say in all things, O Father, not my will, but thine, be done, for we know that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord. We love him because he first loved us. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Jesus Christ came into the world, suffered and died for the elect of God; their sins were laid upon him and he bore them in his own body, thereby giving us a hope and home (in heaven) not made with hands. He said, I go to prepare a place for you,

that where I am there you may be also. In his presence there is fullness of joy, and at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore. The elect, the chosen of God, shall meet with him in that home beyond this vale of tears, ever to be with him, where their joy will be complete. They are one unit here in this world, bound together by the sweet cords of love, and nothing shall be able to separate them from the love God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, when they meet to part no more. A remnant shall be saved, and oh, do we not feel like a very small remnant sometimes when we meet for worship with only a small congregation? But the precious promise has been given by Jesus, where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in their midst. Oh what joy is felt when Jesus meets with his chosen ones and gives them a hearing ear and an understanding heart to receive the message of salvation alone by the grace of God. "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." Without the Spirit of Christ our worship would all be in vain; we of ourselves can do nothing, and when he withdraws his presence we are left with a dark cloud hanging heavily over our heads. There is joy unspeakable and sweet communion beyond measure when the light shines again in our hearts after we have been made submissive to his will and ready to say, "God be merciful to me a sinner," in and of myself I can do nothing:

"But drops of grief can ne'er repay
The debt of love I owe;
Here, Lord, I give myself away,
'Tis all that I can do."

He is all in all, the one altogether lonely, and how thankful we should be for a precious hope of heaven and immortal glory. Praise God for enabling me to see the beauty of the doctrine of election and predestination, for I know that if I am one of the elect my salvation is sure, but I can only say, By the grace of God I am what I am.

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

Since writing this, we have lost our dearly beloved pastor, Elder J. N. Bartlett, which makes us feel very sad and lonely, but the One who cares for us at all times is able to supply our need in times of trouble. We have the blessed assurance that our beloved brother is now at rest, and our loss is his eternal gain. He has entered into that rest and peaceful sleep for all the dear saints of God. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Cast the mantle of charity over these rambling thoughts; and all will be well with me if this is consigned to the waste-basket.

Wishing you a prosperous and successful year for your paper, I remain your unworthy sister in bonds of love,

ELSIE GALL.

BREWERS, Ky., Dec. 25, 1927.

DEAR EDITORS:—On this, the day in which the whole world would be more or less engaged in celebrating the birth of a Savior in one way or another, it seems to be my lot to write some about the dead in a way called an obituary, and as I pen the word "dead" a striking presentation comes to me with such force that I will attempt to write a few lines. When we begin to consider the word, "dead" we are led out in at least two lines of thought: life and death, activity and inactivity, moving and dormant. Death, absent from or apart from life,

without life, so in any way of considering we understand it to mean without life, yet the world is slow to acknowledge this grand truth. We all know from actual observance that our loved brethren, sisters and friends who were once with us in the flesh but who are lying beneath mounds of earth are not visible nor acting with us any more, in a natural sense, and when God tells us plainly that sin entered into the world by man, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned, we understand by this the guilty distance of the entire human race, so far from God and godliness that without the mercy, love and grace of God bestowed upon them the entire course of their pilgrimage through time and in eternity is to be absent from life, or as it were, true holiness and pleasure, rest and satisfaction, but to the contrary, punishment and torment with demons and damned spirits. Yet we see the all-wise, infinite, unchangeable God of grace, mercy, love and truth at the helm of the whole creation, electing a people unto salvation, or deliverance from this horrible condition in death and sin even before the highest dust of the hills was formed. This we consider encouched or specified in that counsel the God of the whole earth declared though his servant, the prophet, should stand, and he (God) would do all his pleasure. If there is one link or event, no matter how small or great, even from the very dawn of creation to the present, or will ever be, that was not embraced in that counsel I would like some one to tell why it was not, and how it could be and God remain all-wise. Now I see I am leaving the subject, as usual when I try to write or speak of godliness. Then to the subject, "Dead." Surely the Scriptures abundantly prove, as one of the old servants declares, With thee, O God, is the fountain of life. Then I am astonished at rational beings attempting to give spiritual life, seeing it is as high above all creatures as God is above his creation, and he has emphatically declared, My glory I will not give to another. We understand by virtue of that perfect work planned by the Father in eternity that God sent his only Son into this world to redeem a people from the curse or sting of sin, death, and by virtue of that great covenant sworn to and proven by two immutable things this great work has been and will be carried on above all opposition of men and devils, and the Son acknowledged by the inspired John, As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. Then seeing that the Father has given all power, both in heaven and earth to the Son, is not the whole matter in the hands of the Son, who is a faithful and true executor of the Father's will? and when God sends forth the Spirit of his Son into the stony heart of a son of promise that one at that time lives and begins to see the corruptions of his ways and life. Here no longer is death, but as the apostle would express it, I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came sin revived and died. Here is a quickening of the dead, or being born again, and that of an incorruptible seed, the word of God, which lives and abides forever. Indeed this is a mystery I cannot express, but one passes from death unto life, and when the Lord shall have performed his great work on the whole house of Israel the entire lump will be holy, because the first fruit is holy.

Beloved brethren, I have written to relieve my poor finite mind, and should you see anything in the above feeble attempt you may insert it in the SIGNS

when convenient, correcting mistakes, otherwise cast it aside, and all will be right, only allow me, a poor sinner saved by grace, to have sweet fellowship within and to the things contained in and advocated by the SIGNS.

I am, I hope, your brother in sweet fellowship, J. C. CHESTER.

ZANESFIELD, Ohio.

DEAR EDITORS:—My remittance is a little past due, so please find inclosed money order for two dollars. My grandfather, Elder Mahlon Peters, subscribed for the SIGNS at its beginning in 1832. My father, Elder John Peters, also was a subscriber, and I have been a reader of the paper for at least sixty years, so I trust I am at least somewhat acquainted with its doctrine of grace. I am the only member left of the Harmony Primitive Baptist Church, of Shelby County, Ohio. Sister Esther Line, of Piqua, Ohio, who died about one month ago, was a member of that church and her death leaves me alone, so far as church membership is concerned, but I have enjoyed the loving christian fellowship of many good brethren. My wife and I have traveled about two thousand miles this summer and fall in going to five associations in Ohio and one in Indiana, besides attending many different church meetings, in which the preaching was, for the most part, good and comforting. I am not connected with any association, but my wife, who was Joie E. (Wickham) Woods, and whose writings you have published, is a member of the sound party of the Marlboro Church, which was divided about two years ago. This church at present has a sound pastor (in my judgment) in Elder U. G. Porter, who is also an excellent man. I find many good brethren in Ohio, and a number who have been fed upon milk and herbs, with not enough strong meat, who are weak in the sovereignty of God, though strong in salvation by grace. I gladly fellowship these brethren and they express fellowship for me. They claim to stand upon the London Confession of Faith. My wife and I certainly did enjoy the article by Elder Isaac Greathouse in the December number of the SIGNS. I never met him, but my wife is acquainted with him, having heard him preach in Texas, where her sister, Mrs. J. J. Darnell, (now a member of the church at Cash) lives. We both enjoy Elder Beebe's editorials, especially the one on predestination, which proves that God is a sovereign, but is not the author of sin. We read that "all things are yours," things present and things to come, and that they (the saints) are the salt of the earth, which stands for them, and that all things work together for good to them. I have a faint hope that I am included in their number. I have no other hope than the righteousness of Christ imputed to me and my sins imputed to him. The SIGNS has been a great comfort to us, and we hope we may continue to read it as long as we live. Reading the Bible and the letters from the brethren will probably be our chief encouragement during this winter, as we are not near any church and I am getting along in years, being in my seventy-fourth year, and have not fully regained strength after two operations which were performed last winter, but am as well as could be expected. We were shut in all last winter after Christmas, but the Lord remembered us, giving us considerable spiritual comfort in meditation and in conversing together of divine things. I would be glad to hear personally by letter from any reader of the SIGNS. My address is Box 79, Zanesfield, Ohio.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

G. D. PETERS.

KNOX CITY, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—By the kind mercy of the all-wise God I will try and write you once more, but can hardly see what I am doing. First, I want to thank dear Elder L. H. Hardy for his kind reply to my letter on the talents. Now I will tell him what caused me to write it. There was a man selling here in town who handled poor goods. He said he could make more money on that kind than he could on first class merchandise. One day I was present when he bought twenty bushels of apples from another man, and his hired man was marking the baskets. The man who was selling them failed to mark one basket full, and told him he had not marked it, and he got angry and took his pencil and said he would mark it. After the man who sold them had gone he told his hired man he had beaten him out of a bushel of apples. His man asked him if he did not correct mistakes. He told his man that if the man who sold the apples made a mistake it was his own fault. You see he wanted to get that bushel of apples for nothing, or cheat him out of them, and that made me think of the talents, and I was bothered about it, so thought I would write to the SIGNS and see if some kind brother would write upon that subject, and I again thank brother Hardy for doing so. I am sending his letter for your disposal.

May the Lord bless us all and show us what is truth, and keep us in this life by his mighty power, and at last save us together in heaven, is the prayer of a poor old sinner, saved by grace if saved at all. Pray for me when at the throne of grace. W. W. JONES.

ATLANTIC, North Carolina.

DEAR BROTHER JONES:—I saw your article in the SIGNS for January, and since you requested correction on the same I will write a few of my thoughts to you. I cannot agree with the exposition you have made of that parable. The man who is set forth as a traveler going into a far country is undoubtedly the Lord Jesus Christ. He was going, but would leave his kingdom in perfect safety, therefore he called his own servants to him and delivered to them his goods. I feel sure the one to whom he gave the five talents is represented by Paul, who grew until he got to be less than the least of all saints, and those of his character whose full time was devoted to the service of God, his master. In his faithful service of God he was the gainer. It is not unlawful to take pay, for that is lawful interest. If one did not exact that, it would be charity in him as a giver in the service of God. Doubtless those of Paul's character never received any usury, only the service, yet they gained much in the service of God. Then he who received the two talents represents the apostles who did the things of God, and they gained much, as is represented in the parable, and have just as high a representative life in the kingdom of heaven as Paul had. They used all they had, and could do no more. Their gain was equal to that which had been given to them and they stood as highly recommended as he who had received and used the five talents. One cannot put to the exchangers more than that which he has. That which all the apostles did pleased the Lord and received the "well done." All of them received alike and yet one received more than another, for he had more given to him. He had greater ability than the one with only the two talents and could use that which was given to him. The third man received only one talent, that was all he could use.

From scriptural circumstances that talent was the management of the finances of the church. That servant was Judas Iscariot and those of his character in the church. He had no mind to follow the Lord. He had the bag and bare what was put in it. He was the servant in the betrayal of the Lord. Peter could deny the Lord, but he could not sell him for money. The Lord must spill his blood for his people and the son of perdition must betray him. "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" said the Lord. The work of a devil had to be done and a devil was chosen to do it. When he had done his work he gave up the money he had received and hanged himself. He was cast into outer darkness. No child of God was ever there. We have darkness, but we are never into outer darkness. His talent is taken from him and given to Paul. In his epistles he uses that talent, exhorting the churches on their finances.

Now, brother Jones, I have faithfully given this parable to you as I believe it to be, and when you have read it you can send it to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if you will.

I am yours in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

ST. THOMAS, Ontario.

DEAR EDITORS:—In sending in my subscription to the dear old SIGNS I would like to write just a few lines to try and thank the dear ones we met at New Vernon, N. Y., last June. I never will find words to express how much I enjoyed that association, also our visit at Elder Vaughn's home, and I know I am expressing the feelings of the dear friends who took me with them: Mrs. (Dr.) P. J. French, Mrs. A. Jones and son Ross. Mrs. French and Mrs. Jones are daughters of the late Mr. amd Mrs. George Skates, of Ekfrid, Ontario. They are not members of the church, but are sound Old School Baptists. As well as unworthy me they took along two of their cousins, Mrs. W. Jones, of Gillsonburg, and Mrs. W. Young, of Toronto, Ontario, who are dear sisters in the church. When I think of those dear ones and the love that was shown one for another the words are with me,

"When thou, my righteous Judge, shalt come
To fetch thy ransomed people home,
Shall I among them stand?"

If there is any good in me I certainly cannot see it. Vile and full of sin I am, nothing, and less than nothing.

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

The only thing that I do know is that God's people are the ones I love and love to be with. My brother-in-law, Dr. T. H. McColl, of Tilberry, Ontario, has for several years sent you my subscription as a Christmas gift to me as I am away from my home. I do not know but what he has already sent it in; if he has you may take my two dollars to aid the SIGNS. I cannot express to the Doctor how much I have appreciated his gift. The dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES has always come as a feast of fat things to we poor hungry creatures without a pastor, but we know that He who took our dear pastor is able to send another.

In christian love to the household of faith, from the least, if one at all,

EFFIE MALCOLM.

FORDYCE, Ark., Jan. 16, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—You will find inclosed my check for five dollars for subsubscription, as directed in remittance blank. You will note that I am sending you one dollar to aid the SIGNS. I wish I was able to send more, but I am sup-

porting a family and none able to help, consequently I am not in a position to send more to aid you. It is my great ambition to see the SIGNS continue to send forth the truth that it has ever contended for. I was talking with a good brother a few days ago, and he intimated that he might have to stop his subscription to the paper, but regretted very much to do so, I said, Well, I am not going to stop mine, although I have not much to spare, and I do feel we should remember that the SIGNS has been standing for the doctrine we are contending for to-day, and, too, that it fought the good fight of faith against the innovations of those who were trying to suppress the truth, and that this good old paper has been standing against every form of Arminianism, and standing fearlessly against all opposition to the truth, and now to forsake it looks to me almost like traitorism and I just cannot afford to do it, and God, being my helper, do not aim to. This is a day, as I see things, that the faithful in Christ Jesus should marshal their forces together and stand up and contend without fear or favor for the doctrine the SIGNS has ever stood for, and that for which all genuine Old Baptists have ever stood, viz.: The absolute sovereignty and unchangeableness of God; that he is the only true and holy God, and was before all things, and by him all things consist; that he saw the end from the beginning; that all things are naked and open before him of whom we have to do; that nothing happens by mere chance, but all things that come to pass are exactly as he saw it, and will and must fulfill some deep purpose, and in the end all work out for good to them who love him. I hope all will continue to support the paper and, too, I believe that God will put it in the minds of his people to do it. I am sure that if it is his will for it to continue that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The SIGNS is, and has ever been, a sweet messenger to many poor Old Baptists who cannot enjoy the privileges many of us have, because of poverty or infirmity, and I say, Who is it that would mind donating a little to spread gladness to those poor old pilgrims who are only waiting the summons? We can spare a little from some worldly expense that is of but little value to us and thereby give them a cup of cool and refreshing water. May the Lord ever bless and support the SIGNS and us with all spiritual blessings in Christ.

Yours in bonds,

V. R. HARRIS.

OTTAWA, Kansas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I would be glad to have you publish that my address is changed from 118 South Locust Street to 427 South Ash Street, Ottawa, Kansas, also would like to thank dear Elder Coulbourne for his continued kindness in renewing my subscription to the SIGNS. The dear Lord has ever been mindful of me, though undeserving of the least of his mercies, and this is one of the greatest blessings, for I would not know what to do without the SIGNS. I have not seen an Old School Baptist for three months. In this town of ten thousand inhabitants I know of no one who believes the truth as I hope I have been taught it. I very much enjoyed Elder Lefferts' "New Year's Greeting," also dear Bonnie Chick's letter touched my heart. I truly believe I can enter into her experience.

With love and best wishes for dear Elder Coulbourne and all the household of faith wherever they may be,

ANNA McKINNEY.

MARTIN, Tennessee.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—If you will allow me to address you thus. We are strangers in the flesh, yet I hope kindred in Christ. Inclosed please find money order for two dollars to renew my subscription to the SIGNS for another year, as it seems to me I cannot do without the paper. When I sit here alone and read the good letters from the different ones from far and near it makes my heart rejoice, and oh how I wish I could meet them and talk with them face to face and shake hands, for it seems they tell my experience better than I can myself, which gives me a little hope that there are others who have the same travels that I do. Sweet fellowship flows from heart to heart no matter where we live. All the true and sweet pleasure I get in this life is when I can be with the dear people who believe as I do. As I am cast further from my church I hope it will be the Lord's will to permit me to go as often as they meet, or as it pleases him, for without him we can do nothing.

I began taking the SIGNS OF THE TIMES about the year 1914 and have been receiving it regularly ever since, having missed but one number during that time.

In love and sweet fellowship,

(MRS.) J. A. PHILLIPS.

CARTHAGE, Missouri.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The swiftly flying years have left me still here and able to read and enjoy the SIGNS. I hope I am truly thankful for these blessings, and that I receive and enjoy them in a spirit of humility becoming in one who is the recipient of so many unmerited blessings.

I inclose four dollars, to pay my own subscription and the subscription of Mrs. Ellis Roberts, of Stronghurst, Illinois, if you care to continue it to her, but if you can use the money to better advantage some other way, do so and discontinue the paper to her.

I am very thankful that the hearts of our people have been moved to supply funds for the continuance of the SIGNS, and that there are still spiritual leaders able and willing to preach the truth through its columns.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) GRACE V. CROSIER.

ELKINS, W. Va., Dec. 22, 1926.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending my remittance of two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for 1927, for we feel we would be very lonely without the paper, as it always brings joy to our home, setting forth the same glorious truth of Christ and the apostles, giving no uncertain sound. Where you find the SIGNS in the homes of brethren and sisters you are sure to find sound absolute predestinarian Baptists, who stand firm in the doctrine of Christ and his apostles. We deem our family paper one of the many gifts of God to his scattered children, as he is the giver of every good and perfect gift. Those who write such good and sound letters, viz.: Elders Lefferts, Greathouse, Ruston, Vaughn, and many other dear brethren and sisters, we feel are great gifts to God's humble people, whose only hope is in the finished work of Christ our Redeemer. I am now in my seventy-fifth year and have been a reader of the SIGNS twenty-five years, and hope to be able to pay for the paper the remainder of my natural life. My wife and I are members of the Leading Creek Church, in Randolph County, W. Va., our home is two miles west of Elkins, where we would be glad to have traveling ministers of our faith and order stop with us. Yours in gospel bonds,

G. B. McCLANAHAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1928.

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JOB XXVI. 13.

"His hand hath formed the crooked serpent."

Many wonderful and remarkable characters are found in the Bible. Not the least among them is Job. Should one desire to study "character" and to understand its real worth, outside of the Lord Jesus Christ we know of no better subject than Job. It is said of him that he was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil. He was greatly blest by a kind Providence with temporal and material things, so much so that for substance he was "the greatest of all men of the east," and when the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, and escheweth evil? Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? He would have us believe that Job served God simply because the Lord paid him well for his labor. This same spirit is alive throughout the earth to-day, but the devil has from the beginning been a liar, and the father of it. The Lord said unto Satan, "Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand," and Satan went forth to try Job and to sift him as wheat. He immediately began dispatching his messengers (presumably) with false reports and all manner of lies, causing Job to feel that his children and all his possession had been destroyed, nevertheless he sinned not, nor charged God foolishly. Satan failing in his first attempt, contended that if the Lord would but put forth his hand and touch his bone and his flesh Job would curse him to his face, whereupon the Lord said unto Satan, "Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life." He then proceeded to afflict him as, perhaps, mortal was never before nor since afflicted. If anything was left undone it was because it could not be conceived of by his satanic majesty, and after causing him all the physical misery possible, he appears in the form of his three pretended friends to tantalize him in his agony until Job seemingly could stand no more, and asked, Shall vain words have an end? Showing his pitiful case, he confesses, "God hath delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over into the hands of the wicked." "I was at ease," he says, "but he hath broken me asunder: he hath also taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces, and set me up for his mark. His archers compass me round about; he cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare; he poureth out my gall upon the ground." He was not ignorant of the doings of God, and saw only the hand of sovereignty at the helm, piloting his little craft through troubulous waters,

but not without a purpose, or goal in view, for faith verily believed "when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." God's way is in the sea, and his steps we cannot trace, and yet we are persuaded that "Deep in unfathomable mines of never-failing skill, he treasures up his bright designs, and works his sovereign will." Job was often bewildered and at his wits' end, not knowing what to do. We hear him saying, "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him." Nevertheless, he adds, "But he knoweth the way that I take," and continues by declaring, "My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined. Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food. But he is of one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him." Thus we see he realized he was in the hands of the Lord, and not only he himself, but all things else. How wonderful is such knowledge! In the chapter containing our text Job sets forth the unsearchableness of God's power, declaring that "hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering. He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them. He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it. He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end. The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproof. He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud. By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?"—Job xxvi. 6–14. "Moreover," he said, "As God liveth, who hath taken away my judgment; and the Almighty, who hath vexed my soul; all the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils, my lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit." "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him," was the rock upon which he stood. To him there was but the one God, and the powers that be were ordained of him, and whether he was being preserved or destroyed, it was the same God. The God whose candle shone upon him in his youth was the one who fenced up his way, that he could not pass and set darkness in his path in his later life. The God who gave was the God who took away, and when his wife told him to curse God, and die, he said unto her: "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips." His faith in this God was so unshakable that he verily believed that though after his skin worms destroyed his body, yet in his flesh he would see God, whom he would see for himself and not another. As he desired, his words were written, they were printed in a book, yea, they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever, for the comfort of God's afflicted and poor people, and they can and do join with him in saying, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he

shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." God, the giver of such faith, is great in his faithfulness, and will not deny the least of his flock that food which is necessary to sustain and keep alive their famishing souls, but how prone we are to disown the hand of God in adversity. When trials and afflictions come upon us, we ask, What place can they have in the plan of a merciful and loving Father? Some deny that God had anything to do with the devil and all his devilish work, but they are no fit companions for Job and his brethren, who only see that the hand of God "hath formed the crooked serpent." God having formed him, they are assured at all times that he has absolute control of him, that he hath fixed his bounds, beyond which he cannot go, and therein is their safety. Their life is hid with Christ in God, so that Satan with all of his infernal hosts shall never be able to destroy the weakest of the fold. He is a good watchdog and is made use of by our heavenly Father in correcting his wayward sheep and causing them to turn unto him for help and deliverance, where they find rest for their weary souls, and where they eat bread continually at the King's table. Strange doctrine is unwholesome and children cannot play with fire without being burned, but it is only by experience they learn the lessons they never forget. Job said, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee," and he could then say, "I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee." Such knowledge made him abhor himself and repent in dust and ashes. To behold the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filling the temple, caused Isaiah to say, "Woe is me, for I am undone," and for men and women of Adam's fallen race to receive of God's goodness and mercy today makes them feel, "I am a worm, and no man." In whatsoever heart the light of the knowledge of the glory God shines, therein the name of Jesus is exalted and lifted on high, and the creature is abased. What is he, then, that he should reply against God, of whom it is written, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Are not all things working for our good? The apostle so declares concerning those who love God and who are the called according to his purpose. He further assures us in this connection that nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. The psalmist affirms, "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom." "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES has passed its ninety-fifth milestone and is rapidly approaching the century mark. Whether it shall be God's pleasure for it to live another hundred years, we know not, but we are sure of one thing: that the principles of truth upon which it was founded and for which it has stood, lo these many years, are as eternal as the everlasting hills. Desiring for our readers that faith

which waivers not, but believeth that all things are possibe with God, who doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and that you may all walk in his strength throughout this and all other years that have been alloted to you, we bid you adieu for our first appearance for 1928.

R. L. D.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence in Delmar, Maryland, Dec. 24th, 1927, Calvin Freeny Jones, of Seaford, Del., and Miss Maggie May White, of Laurel, Delaware.

ALSO,

Louis Bennett Richardson, of Salisbury, Md., and Miss Eva Frances Powell, of Salisbury, Md., on Jan. 4th, 1928, at his residence in Delmar.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder John N. Bartlett, our brother in Christ, departed this life near Philippi, W. Va., Dec. 22nd, 1927, of paralysis. He was born May 20th, 1850, making his stay on earth 77 years, 7 months and 2 days. He was united in marriage Feb. 24th, 1870, to Miss Anna Belle Corder, who preceded him to the grave seven years. To this union were born five children: E. M. (deceased), W. P. Corder, Virginia D., and F. E. Corder, with whom he made his home. He is also survived by eleven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. One granddaughter, Mrs. Gertrude Cross, he baptized, who lived in the church with him. He was a type of true citizenship. He followed farming for a livelihood, and was strictly honest and prompt in all his business transactions. He was of a sensitive disposition and cowered through fear of doing wrong. He was ever ready to lend a helping hand to relieve the cares of those who were near and dear to him. As shown forth in a character this is all very fine, but it is not what I want to write most about in the life of brother John. A miracle was wrought in him, as in all the redeemed of the Lord, when the Father delivered him from the power of darkness and translated him into the kingdom of his dear Son, manifesting his power and glory. He was convicted of sin at the early age of eleven years, and given faith to believe that God for Christ's sake had pardoned his sins. (See relation of his christian experience and call to the ministry, published in the SIGNS, Vol. 71, No. 3.) He soon after joined the New School Baptists, his father's household being of that persuasion. Having "tasted the powers of the world to come, he became fully convinced that his worship among them was "ye know not what," and he wanted to live with a people whom the Lord had "formed for himself," worshiping in the spirit, rejoicing in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh; and in August, 1877, he became a member of Mt. Olive Primitive Baptist Church. In April, 1884, he was licensed to preach the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in August, 1886, was ordained to the full work of the ministry. In 1885 he was elected clerk of the Tygarts Valley River Association, and served satisfactorily for forty years. In 1926 and 1927 he served as moderator. He faithfully served the Valley Church as pastor fourteen years, and in 1913 he was chosen pastor of Mt. Olive Church, and served until his death. He was well established in the doctrine and order of God's house, and preferred Jerusalem above his chief joy. He might have been called a text preacher, expounding every clause of his text of Scripture separately, speaking generally from the New Testament. He desired to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of his life, to meet, serve and comfort the brethren and sisters, to walk and talk about Zion, and "enter in through the gates into the city," and this he did faithfully. If he were miles away he would arrange to return to meet with us on our stated days of meeting. At 1 o'clock p. m., Dec. 24th, the appointed hour of our church meeting, we were there, our pastor's body in the casket. Elder J. S. Murphy conducted the funeral services, assisted by Elders J. R. Dennison and J. W. Linn. Hymn 328 (Beebe's collection) was sung, (a request of the deceased). Text used, 2 Tim. iv. 6-8. We consigned his body to the grave until the great resurrection day, and separated, sorrowing most of all, that we should see his face no more.

Written by request.

SEMMA E. CORDER.

G. H. Rose, our beloved brother, was born in Trigg County, Kentucky, July 1st, 1857, and died at his home in Calloway County, Kentucky, December 20th, 1927, aged 70 years, 5 months and 19 days. He was first married to Miss Bettie Hay March 21st, 1880, and to that union were born two sons, Oscar and Clarence, and three daughters, Mrs. Grace Townley, Mrs. Nellie Meadows and Miss Addie, who were all very much endeared to their father, their mother having been called away from this pleasant and lovely family many years ago by the God who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. Brother Rose and his children battled on in life sad and lonely for a number of years when he was married the second time, to Miss Hannah K. Galloway, and to that union was born a daughter, little Ruth, who was left by her mother, sister Hannah, when quiet tender for her father and Miss Addie to care for, with the help of a merciful God and loving relatives and friends.

Sister Hannah died March 12th, 1819, leaving brother Rose to battle on as old age and disease would prey upon him. Brother Rose professed a good hope in our blessed Savior many years ago and soon united with the Primitive Baptists, and lived a devoted and useful member of the same until death. The Lord blessed him with a sweet melodious voice which he cultivated and the Baptist friends far and near can attest his usefulness, with the sweet strains of his voice still lingering to his memory. Not only was he a help to the church as a "sweet singer in Israel," but he served faithfully for a number of years as a Deacon of Shiloh Church, in Calloway Co., Ky. Many Baptist friends can attest of the faithfulness and devotion of this soldier of the cross who was not ashamed to own His cause, neither did he blush in speaking His name. We shall never forget how gently his sweet voice would rise in strains of love and praise in singing hymns and psalms of praise to the great King. Most any hymn sung by the Old Baptists in this country was familiar to him. The writer, his unworthy pastor, will never forget the impressive mood of brother Rose and brother John Holland, so humbly engaged together in the solemn communion services last May, both attesting they felt it to be the last time for them to engage together. Indeed their love and sweet fellowship was from a sense of true devotion to the blessed Lord and Master, and it was truly an heavenly place to be engaged with them and others at that time. At the death of brother Rose the grief-stricken children sent friends for me in the night for his funeral, which was held at the home December 21st, at which time I felt the Lord gave me to speak words of comfort from the text, "To die is gain," after which his mortal remains were quietly conveyed to the cemetery at Concord, in Calloway Co., Ky., and gently laid to rest, to await the call of the Master, Come up higher.

ALSO,

Ere the benediction was pronounced at brother Rose's burial the message came that I was wanted for the funeral of **Benjamin F. Nord,** who was born in Henry County, Tennessee, Nov. 14th, 1853, and died December 21st, 1927, aged 74 years, 1 month and 7 days. He was married to Elsa R. Adams Dec. 13th, 1877, and to that union were born three daughters, two of whom died when young, the other, Mrs. Nettie Simmons, with her heart-broken mother, four grandchildren and other relatives and friends are left to mourn this sad dispensation of God's providence in removing a true and devoted husband, loving father, obliging neighbor and christian citizen, and though we all feel our loss very keenly, we have much reason to believe our great loss is his eternal gain. The Lord blessed brother Nord to see he was a sinner saved by grace many years ago, as was evidenced by his relating an experience of grace to the church of Primitive Baptists at Beaver Dam, Henry County, Tennessee, Oct. 25th, 1890. He was received, and baptized the following day, Oct. 26th, by his much loved friend and pastor, the late Elder F. P. Chandler, and lived a true and devoted member of said church until the Lord saw fit to remove him from his field of labor. The beloved brethren, sisters and friends of and around Beaver Dam Church assembled in the church-house December 22nd while the unworthy writer attempted to speak to the honor of God and comfort of sorrowing ones from 1 Cor. xv. 20: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." We have some assurance that there is a remnant according to the election of grace who have eyes to see, ears to hear and hearts to understand something of the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. I would say to sister Nord, the church and all who mourn, We have much reason to believe brother Nord only sleeps and rests from his labors, while his works do follow him.

One who loved him,

J. C. CHESTER.

ALSO,

Mrs. Mary Ellen Townley, daughter of William Chilton, of Christian Co., Ky., was born in Henry Co., Tenn., June 10th, 1847, on the same farm, near Buchanan, Tenn., where a long life of usefulness was spent, and ended Nov. 20th, 1927, aged 80 years, 5 months and 10 days. She was married to George C. Townley, Sept. 13th, 1866, and to that union were born nine children: Emily P., Laura F., John Alvy, William R., Mary Annie, Loyd C., George L., Mrs. Bettie Oliver and Gentry C. Loyd C. and John Alvy preceded their mother to the grave. She leaves her aged and loving companion, who is eighty-five years of age, together with seven children, three grandchildren, one sister, Mrs. Julia Morgan, and other relatives and friends to mourn the loss of a dear wife, a loving mother and true friend, who had endeared herself to all by a long and useful life of devotion. Mrs. Townley professed a very bright and strong hope of salvation in her girlhood and was a strong believer in and lover of the Primitive Baptist doctrine, and much enjoyed the theme salvation by grace proclaimed for forty years, but never united with the visible church, yet her life was such in the home and community as to give the living strong evidence that she was a good woman, and had tasted of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come. Surely she was a good woman, a devoted companion, a loving and tender mother; in fact, a mother in Israel, who reared a splendid family of children, who deserve much credit for their kindness and devotion to their aged and dependent parents. Sister Townley was an excellent neighbor, old time hospitality was ever dispensed at the house, and her many friends were numbered by her acquaintance. She was a great favorite, not only with

her own children, but with all of the neighborhood, and made them feel glad and welcome when in her home. She was very patient in her afflictions and bore her sufferings with christian fortitude. All her children and aged companion and grandchildren were with her in her last sufferings and ministered to her with true devotion, yet the Lord loved her best and took her to himself. While loved ones are left to mourn the loss of one dear to their hearts, we have much evidence to believe our loss is her eternal gain. On account of the troubled condition of phone service friends could not get a servant of her faith for the funeral, and had no services but Scripture reading and prayer, led by a devoted neighbor and friend, after which the mortal remains were tenderly laid to rest in the cemetery near Buchanan, Tenn., there to rest silently until the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. My heart's desire and prayer to God is that all who truly mourn may have part in that resurrection.

J. C. CHESTER

Mrs. Margaret E. Hastings, aged 85 years, died at the home of her daughter, sister Rosa Stevens, at Cordova, Md., Feb. 26, 1927. She had for some time been feeble and in failing health. She was not a member of the visible church, but a believer in God and loved the doctrine of grace. She was the mother of ten children, six of whom, five sons and one daughter survive. A good, faithful woman in all the walks of life. The writer conducted the funeral service in the Little Creek meetinghouse, near Delmar, Delaware; burial took place in the family plot adjoining.

ALSO,

Mrs. Mary L. Jones, a sister of the above subject, died at her home in Delmar, Del., Aug 23rd, 1927, aged 79 years, after a short illness of heart trouble. She had been a member fifty-two years, was baptized by the late Elder F. A. Chick. She was strong in the faith and faithful to all her church obligations. The doctrine of salvation by grace was her delight, and she loved to sing the songs of Zion. She was the mother of five children by brother John Henry Ellis, a former husband, one of the children, sister Beriba Tomlinson, of Delmar, Del., together with two grandchildren survive. Sister Jones had many friends and her funeral was largely attended Services were held at her late home, conducted by the writer; burial took place in the family plot in the Little Creek graveyard. We all miss her, but desire to be reconciled to the will of the Lord.

ALSO,

Bessie Durand Tull, youngest daughter of the late Daniel and Margaret Halloway, and wife of Lewis J. Tull, of Newark, Md., died in the University Hospital of Philadelphia, Oct. 5th, 1927. She was born Feb 23rd, 1878, thus making her stay on earth 49 years, 7 months and 12 days. She was married by the late Elder T. M. Poulson to Mr. Tull, Nov. 25th, 1903, and went with him to Philadelphia, where they made their home for several years, but on account of his health moved back to Newark, Md., about fifteen years ago. For the last few years she was assistant cashier to her husband in the Home Bank in Newark. She was well-known and greatly endeared herself to all with whom she came in contact by her genial manner. She never made a public profession of religion, but was a lovely character, following in the footprints of the flock. Her death was a great shock to her relatives and friends, so unexpected was her death. The writer conducted the funeral service, from her late home, which was largely attended; interment was in the Newark Cemetery.

H. C. KER.

Mrs. Emily S. Weaver passed away Friday, Dec. 2nd, 1927 at the home of her son, Elder George L. Weaver, 2260 Oakdale Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio. She was born near Galion, Ohio, Nov. 1st, 1853, and had reached the age of 74 years, 1 month and 1 day, her death following closely the death of her brother, L. E. Reed, whose late home was east of Galion. Her death marked the passing of the last member of her family. In the year 1871 she was united in marriage to John W. Weaver, with whom she lived many years in the old Reed homestead, two and a half miles east of Galion. To this union were born three children, George L., of Cleveland; Homer J., of Filer, Idaho, and Ida Sherer, west of Galion, with whom she made her home after the death of her husband, which occurred about nine years ago. She stayed at her daughter's home at Galion until September 1st, when she went to her son's home at Cleveland, and was bedfast most of the time until she died. In the early part of 1874 she was given a hope in her Savior, and upon relation of her experience was received and baptized into the fellowship of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church called Bethel, near Galion, Ohio, by the late Elder John H. Biggs, where she remained for many years a constant and faithful member. Upon her removal to Cleveland, about 1914, she was received by letter and became a member of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church, of Cleveland, Ohio, where she remained until her death. She was held in high esteem by the Cleveland Church, and could be rightly called a mother in Israel, for her counsel was wise. She was well versed in the Scripture, often speaking to herself in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody in her heart unto the Lord. She was a great comfort to our beloved brother and fellow-laborer Elder George L. Weaver, her counsel, encouragement, and she herself, will be much missed

by him. May the Lord stand by him, whose he is and whom he serves, and may he bless all the bereaved family and reconcile them to his will.

The writer was called to officiate at her funeral, which was held at the home of her daughter at Galion, Ohio. Interment was in the Fairview Cemetery.

GEORGE RUSTON.

Mrs. Florida Hutchison, our sister in Christ, died at the home of her nephew, Mr. Melbourne Hutchison, at Pleasant Valley, Va., Jan. 11th, 1928. She was born March 21st, 1848, one of the eight children of Melville and Lucinda Hutchison, and is the last of her family, although she is survived by several nieces and nephews and a large family connection. Her husband, R. B. Hutchison, died in 1902. They had no children. Sister Hutchison was baptized by me into membership with the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church, May 12th, 1918. As she came up from the water, she said, "Oh I am so happy." She had been a follower of the Old Baptists for many years, but was not able to unite with the church until the above date. A great burden lifted from her soul when she was baptized. She loved the truth and the church, was faithful and devoted to the interests of her pastor and of her brethren. All fear of death was taken from her and we feel that she died triumphantly rejoicing in the God of her salvation. Upon calling to see her a few days before her death, she requested me to read the Scripture and offer prayer. I did so, and read the twenty-seventh Psalm. Tears welled from her eyes as the reading and prayer went forward and the precious truth was verily food to her soul. At the funeral services I used the twenty-seventh Psalm. She is with her Savior, we truly believe. There is no death unto those who believe in Christ Jesus. For such, the grave has lost its victory and death its sting. May the Lord comfort all who mourn and reconcile the bereaved church and family to his holy will.

L.

Miss Ella Weckel departed this life April 19th, 1927, at the home of her brother, George Weckel, in Roxbury, N. Y. She suffered with heart trouble, and received kind care and attention from her brother and wife. She was baptized Feb. 11th, 1888, into the fellowship of the Second Church of Roxbury, and was a faithful and consistent member to the time of her death. Sister Ella was afflicted with deafness, which shut her off from as close an intercourse with the brethren as she desired, but she was always at meeting whenever possible, often walking part of the way, although her health was poor. It was her chief delight to meet the brethren. She was of a quiet, unobtrusive disposition, and was very appreciative of the love and fellowship of those she loved so well. We miss her very much, but feel she is with the Lord, which is far better. Elder Ruston was called to conduct her funeral. Interment was in the cemetery adjoining the Yellow meetinghouse.

ONE WHO LOVED HER.

Mrs. M. E. Ware passed away at her home near Gibsland, La., Dec. 27th, 1927, after an illness of twelve months and eight days. She was raised in Alabama, and moved to Lousiana in 1904. She was 73 years, 3 months and 17 days of age. She was married to R. A. Ware in the year 1875, and to that union were born seven children. Her husband and one daughter preceded her to the grave. She was a lover of the truth, and had been an Old School Baptist for forty years. She was a kind, loving mother. She leaves a host of relatives and friends to mourn their loss. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Let us not sorrow as others who have no hope, for we believe that as Jesus died and rose again, even so will God bring with him those that are asleep in Jesus.

The funeral service was conducted by Elder G. T. R. Baker.

Written by her heart-broken daughter,

(MRS.) J. M. DOWNING.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Elsie May Gall, W. Va., $1.50; Elder J. C. Chester, Ky., $3; Miss E. G. Merryman, Md., $1; Mrs. Emma L. Terris, D. C., $3; Mrs. Wm. Conklin, N. Y., $2; L. P. Leach, Miss., $1; Mrs. Frank E. Wyatt, Mo., $1; Elizabeth Buller, Ont., $1; Elder W. I. Wade, W. Va., $1; Mrs. M. A. Somers, Va., $1; "A Friend," N. Y., $1; R. N. Williams, N. C., $1; Mrs. M. E. Furman, N. Y., $1; Mrs. M. D. Sizemore, Tenn., $1; J. S. Moore, Ark., $4; Mrs. Jasper Seal, Ark., $1; Mrs. M. R. Blythe, Pa., $1; Mrs. Joab Stout, Ill., $1; Hubbell Bros., N. Y., $10; C. Lilly Buck, Conn., $2; Mrs. Lena E. Wilson, Md., $1; E. L. Hoskins, Ky., $1; Mrs. Val Werner, N. J., $3; J. D. Welborn, Ind., $10; Paul T. Leigh, N. J., $1; Dezzie L. Cosey, N. J., $1.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 96. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1928. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SELMA, N. C., Nov. 10, 1927.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I realize my ignorance and nothingness very vividly. I also see just before me that in a very short time I shall never try to write another article for any of our papers, as I am now past seventy-five years of age. What has caused me great anxiety of mind is, have I always tried to speak in public without authority from God? It often appears to me the greatest sin I ever committed was to try to preach the first time. There is now, and has been, great strife among those claiming to be followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God. I read in the Bible where it says, God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost held a counsel before the world was created with all of its innumerable men, beasts, reptiles, insects, microbes, germs, fishes of the sea, &c. David says, "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches. So is this great and wide sea, wherein are creeping things innumerable, both small and great beasts. There go the ships; there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein. These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good. Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled, thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth. The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever: the Lord shall rejoice in his works."—Psalms civ. 24–31. Why did God preserve and bring ferocious beasts and birds of prey across the flood, if he had no use for them? God held a counsel before the world was, and being unlimited in wisdom and almighty in power he had the wisdom to plan and the power to carry out his designs, and "none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" How could God enter into a covenant with his Son to save all the Father gave him and not hold a counsel first? All classes of Primitive Baptists in the United States say God made a covenant with his Son before the world was, and gave to him all he was to suffer and die for, and that Jesus saved in time on the cross all the Father gave him before the world was made. Every one who

preaches this, and then turns and says God did not have a purpose in the fall of Adam, and could not prevent his eating the forbidden fruit, is blind on this point or they would see they were crossing themselves, and denying that God gave to the Savior in covenant before the world all God loved and all Jesus was to save. Hassel's history says: Wilson Thompson was the ablest minister in the United States and I can prove he taught God had a purpose in the fall of Adam. Peter says, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands crucified and slain."—Acts ii. 23. Isaiah says, xlvi. 10, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Again, "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."—Heb. vi. 17, 18. Here God confirmed it by an oath. Do you not think God will carry out his plan when he swore to do so? I am sure he will, for Isaiah says, "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."—Isaiah xiv. 24. Then in this counsel his Son agreed to bow the heavens and come down and redeem his people from the curse of the law, wash them in his blood, strip off their filthy rags, clothe them in wrought gold and fine needlework and make their sinful lips sweeter to him, a thousand times sweeter, than any man's wife's lips ever were to him. Therefore Solomon says, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." "Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb; honey and milk are under thy tongue; and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon."—Solomon's Song iv. 7, 11. When the blushing bride of long ago was arrayed in the best clothing her parents could buy for her, with the vail over her face, the jewels on her person, and then the perfume, and she came slowly, blushingly with her maid, and her long trail, not with a little, short dress, she was considered to be the most beautiful creature on the earth. This is only a shadow of the real bride of Jesus, which is the substance, prepared by him, refined and made white. "Chosen you in the furnace of affliction." Shedding his love abroad in your heart, bringing you up out of the wilderness, where "All we like sheep, have gone astray," you leaning upon him every step, not able to even walk by yourself. As Solomon says, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" bedecked with jewels. Covered with the robe of his righteousness. Isaiah lxi. 10: "He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, clothed me with the garments of salvation." Grace and salvation through the blood of Jesus. The sweetest perfume you ever inhaled on earth, giving you more joy and gladness than all joys you ever enjoyed, "as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels." This is only a hint, little trembling one, at the way you appear in the eyes of your blessed Husband, who is King of kings, and Lord of lords, when you are washed in his blood; not in some other blood, but in his own blood, for, "Without shedding of blood is no remission." "Wherefore Jesus also, that he

might sanctify the people with his own blood," &c. Think, little one. See, there on that cross, your dear Savior nailed hard and fast. Look at those awful spikes driven through his precious hands that had only ministered to the sick and afflicted. The last act of his life was to put back the ear Peter cut off. Look at those dear feet that had tramped round and round, while the rich rode in the finest vehicles of that day. He walking to minister to the needy. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many [not for a few]."—Matt. xx. 28. "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." Listen, poor trembling one, Hear that cry? As it rends the heavens the sun refuses to shine, the rocks rent, the earth quaked, darkness was over the earth from the sixth to the ninth hour. Listen as that cry echoes from hilltop to mountain peak, back to valley, and over the earth, as it is repeated by the servants of God in many nations. What he said in agony as he cried to his Father, saying, "Eloi, Eloi, lama, sabachani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"—Mark xv. 34. Hear that awful cry? It was his love for you caused him to suffer. Paul says, "For his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ."—Eph. ii. 4, 5. Again, "Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."—Heb. xii. 2. This was all arranged, and agreed to in the counsel. He knew the suffering he must pass through to enjoy the love of his redeemed people. He knew the sweetness of their lips. He knew the joy that was to be. He was not blind to the eternal glory, the praise, the wondrous love and adoration of the innumerable company of his people as the eternal song of praise would burst forth from the very depths of their hearts, in all ages of eternal glory. Ah yes, he knew all of this before Adam was ever created. He purposed all this as sure as the Bible is true. Listen, O listen, you little ones who are fearful and afraid, like the twenty-two thousand that God sent back when Gideon called for volunteers to go fight the Midianites. Listen, O listen, you brave three hundred who were divided into three companies, and shouted, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." Listen while Paul thunders by the authority of God, putting to silence the hisses, sneers and false accusations of false brethren when he says, "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known, by the church, the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Yes, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. Who dare say one stake, or thread, or cord, or occurrence can be changed, moved or shaken by all the howling, raging, ranting or abuse heaped upon his witnesses by all the wicked men and demons on earth combined, when he says, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed"? Take courage then, you remnant that God has reserved unto himself.

"Lest Satan rage and vent his spite,
Yet God will save his heart's delight."

"This truth, like its author, eternal shall stand,
Though all things in nature decay;
Upheld by Jehovah's omnipotent hand,
The righteous shall hold on his way.

They may on the main of temptation be tossed,
Their sorrows may swell as the sea,
But none of the ransomed shall ever be lost,
The righteous shall hold on his way."

If God had an eternal purpose that Jesus should come, suffer and die for his people, and save them from their sins, and if Jesus Christ was ordained before the foundation of the world (1 Peter i. 20), and Paul says to Titus, "In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began," and Paul says, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," and, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world," now if God did all this before he made the world, where is the man so blind, professing to be a Primitive Baptist, who will say the fall of Adam was not in the purpose of God? Still some little ones who have fallen in the ditch, being led by the blind, say God did not have a purpose in Adam's transgression, and God could not prevent Adam eating the forbidden fruit. It looks like there is eyesalve enough in the foregoing quotations to anoint the eyes of any poor little one desiring to see. Rev. iii. 18: "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see," and then you will see, and know that God was not mistaken in foreordaining the Lord Jesus, before the world was, to die for you and that he knew you would be a sinner and need him to deliver you from the curse of the law. God did not give you a purpose and grace in Jesus before the world began, and give you eternal life in Jesus, and choose you in him before the foundation of the world because he thought maybe you would need all this, but he did all of this before he made the world. The Bible says God declared "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." If I can, is that what he said? O no, little one, "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world."—Acts xv. 18. He, God, in his wondrous wisdom arranged everything in his counsel that would be for your good and his glory. If Adam had not disobeyed God and transgressed and brought sin into the world, you would never have sung

"Hail, sovereign grace, that first began
The scheme to rescue fallen man!
Hail, matchless, free, eternal grace,
That gave my soul a hiding-place!"

And you never would have had anything to love the dear Savior for. You never would have sung with tears of joy flowing down your cheeks,

"Once on the raging seas I rode,
The storm was loud, the night was dark,
The ocean yawned, and readily blowed
The wind that tossed my foundering bark.

Deep horror then my vitals froze,
Death-struck, I ceased the tide to stem,
When suddenly a star arose,
It was the star of Bethlehem."

"Now safely moored, my perils o'er,
I'll sing, first in night's diadem,
Forever and forever more,
The Star, the Star of Bethlehem."

The glory of the pure unadulterated love of Jesus must be manifest to his people. Isaiah says, "As a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as a bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." When this wonderful love was shed abroad in your heart you said like it is written in Song of Solomon, "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for

thy love is better than wine." You will feel the fullness of his love, you will enjoy the glory and sweetness of his presence, his kisses will cover your face, holy sweetness, unsullied, ravishing pure love, not a speck of sin can enter that glorious home prepared for you. You could not stand the power of that glory now. Free from taint of sin, all, all, will be equal in beauty and intelligence. Every one will be just as beautiful and intelligent as Jesus. Paul says, "We shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." All this was arranged in the counsel, determined before the world was, or Jesus would never have been foreordained to be put to death by wicked hands. These wicked men did what they wanted to do. "They hated him without a cause," but they did not know they were carrying out God's purpose when they put our Savior to death. Adam harkened unto the voice of his wife, and ate the fruit, but he did not know when he was doing what he wanted to do that he was fulfilling God's "eternal purpose which he purposed in Jesus Christ, our Lord." Here we fear and tremble, and our hearts are heavy with deep sorrow, suffering on account of our sinfulness, spending nearly all our time in mourning on account of our vileness, but Paul says, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Not to us, but in us. Again, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. I stop, I wonder, can it be possible one so poor, one so weak and sinful as I am, will be gathered home with the people of God? If so, it is enough, God knows it is enough.

Your brother in hope of mercy,

ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

PARABLE OF THE TALENTS.

IN the January issue of the SIGNS is a request from brother W. W. Jones, of Knox City, Texas, for some one to write on the above subject. I do not claim any superior knowledge or special light on the subject, neither do I have any special reason to offer for volunteering to comply with the request. I desire that what I may submit for the disposal of the editors of the SIGNS, if published, shall not prevent others with better understanding of the profound mysteries of godliness from freely expressing their views. The parables of Jesus were spoken to the multitudes, and for the express purpose of leaving them in the darkness of ignorance respecting the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. His disciples asked him on one occasion why he spoke to the multitudes in parables, and he answered, "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given."—Matt. xiii. 11. The parables, as all other portions of the word, contain a spiritual lesson, and if we pass them by with only a literal interpretation we have missed the spiritual food and comfort they contain, and like the multitudes see without perceiving and hear without understanding. "But," said Jesus to his disciples, "blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear." The time the parables were spoken was just when the legal dispensation was drawing to a close and the gospel of grace and mercy was dawning as a lamp unto the feet and light unto the path of the children of the kingdom. The church, not in its organic form, but as the called out of the Lord, had been confined under the law and the ceremonial worship for more than a century, and was reckoned by the "schoolmaster"

(the law) as on the same footing with those who were ignorant of God's righteousness and went about to establish their own righteousness. In other words, the spiritual Jew differed nothing from the carnal Jew in so far as his relation to the letter of the law was concerned. "The heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father." Both alike were required to observe the precepts and examples contained in the law. But when the legal night ended and the gospel day dawned a new order of things was ushered in, a separation took place. The command was, "Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman." It has seemed to me that the parables in general were descriptive of the conditions under the law in contrast with the conditions as they should be under the gospel. In some respects there was a similarity, while in other respects they were very dissimilar. But in every parable there was something comparable to the kingdom of heaven, either under the legal or under the gospel dispensation, or under both. The parable of the "talents" seems to present first the condition under the law and then the better condition in the kingdom of grace. The man traveling into a far country represents the Lord God of Israel, who had called his servants out of Egypt, delivered unto them the law, planted them in the goodly land of Canaan and commanded them to occupy until he come. The law including the commandments and the ceremonial service was his "goods." The gospel with its promises and enjoyments had not yet been revealed. However in the ceremonial service under the law these better things were pointed to and typified. Thus Christ as the salvation of his people and their righteousness unto the law was shadowed, and those who were given living faith to trust in him looked beyond these typical offerings under the law and viewed him as their sufficiency, as the great antitype of them all. But the only description of Christ that was furnished to Israel was what was given in the law, and neither grace nor mercy was to be found in the letter of it. His servants under the law were made up of both carnal and spiritual Jews, and when he gave unto them his goods (the law), he gave unto "every man according to his several ability." The carnal Jew had no ability to see beyond the letter of the law, while the spiritual Jew could by faith enter into the spirit of the "divine service" under the law and with exultation embrace the hope of eternal life in Christ, the glorious object of his faith and hope. The carnal Jew was the man with one talent, and while he was bound by duty to keep the law, he was woefully lacking in ability. The apostle says, "For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law."—Gal. v. 3. Every Jew was required to be circumscribed and circumcision was a seal of duty. We must not confuse duty with ability, neither should we conclude that duty ceases where ability is lacking. Duty arises out of the right of God to command. The inspired record declares, "Fear God and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." But those who have "no fear of God before their eyes" can neither fear him nor keep his commandments, even though it is their duty to so. Man is not reckoned with upon the basis of his ability to perform, but upon the basis

of his duty to perform. The carnal Jew could not keep the law; first, because he was carnal and the law was spiritual; second, because he could only understand the letter of the law, and the apostle declares the letter kills while the spirit gives life; and third, because his efforts were not prompted by the right motive nor directed toward the right end. He confessed that fear prompted his acts when "love is the fulfilling of the law," and "perfect love casteth out fear." Therefore he was an unprofitable servant; he might have striven for a thousand years more and still would have gained nothing. His efforts only served to obscure the true principles of righteousness exacted by the law, as do the efforts of the carnally-minded yet. Self-advantage is what the carnal mind invariably seeks, while self-denial is the first requisite to being a disciple (follower) of Jesus. It is only as we can forget self that we can enter into the acceptable service of our Lord. The one talent servant hid his lord's money by digging in the earth. If he could have been looking by faith into the "perfect law of liberty" while doing the work, instead of digging in the earth (self) doubtless he would have realized that "godliness with contentment is great gain."—1 Tim. vi. 6. The carnal Jew was blind to the fulfillment of the righteousness required in the law by Christ, as shadowed in the ceremonial service, consequently he could only see hard service under the law, and severe punishment for every infraction. It is not to be wondered that he complained of being under a hard master. The carnal Jew, the servant with one talent, represents the Lord's redeemed children even now when they are carnally-minded. When they approach the law with a feeling of their ability. How quickly they are cut down when it thunders forth, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die;" and again, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offended in one point, he is guilty of all." The whole scene changes: instead of that complacent trust in Christ as their strength and deliverance, they are filled with terror at the thunderings of Sinai. "To be carnally-minded is death." But the spiritual Jew, which is represented by the servants who received five and two talents, received more in the law than the carnal Jew did. While they were required to observe the law, as was the natural Jew, they were given to see by faith in Christ of whom the law testified, the great sacrifice and the perfect righteousness which was the antitype of all of this service. To them there was a precious increase, a glorious transition by faith from the shadow of good things to come into the contemplation of those very things. While they served under the law, their hope rested upon Christ and the better things that were promised through him. Not so with the natural Jew: to him keeping the law to escape its penalty was the end for which he labored, and indeed it was a hard service. His talent could never gain anything, because if he did all of his duty under the law he could claim nothing for having done so, but must say he is an unprofitable servant. But he not only failed to do what the law required, he digged in the earth and hid his lord's money. Even the motions which he did make toward keeping the law, both the moral and ceremonial, were prompted by a selfish motive. Fear of the penalty for violating the law was what prompted to obedience; when it is declared by the inspired witness that love is the fulfilling of the law. What was true of the carnal

Jew in his service is true of the Lord's children yet when they are led by the flesh to pretend to serve the Lord when the fear of loss or hope of gain is the impelling influence. They are not serving God at all, but are seeking to benefit self. Such service is wholly unprofitable. It neither profits the one who performs it nor the one served. It does not honor God nor advance the cause of his kingdom. When the Lord came to reckon with his servants, he gathered those that were "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man," into his kingdom, where they entered into the joys of their Lord; but the unprofitable servant under the law was cast into outer darkness. His table became unto him a snare and a recompence, a trap and a stumbling-block, his eyes were darkened that he could not see. (Rom. xi. 9, 10.) Even the law and the law worship was taken away from the unbelieving Jews, and they have been dispersed to the four quarters of the earth. When the lord of these servants came to reckon with them, he had the right to demand the law and its perfect fulfillment. The law is what was given, a perfect righteousness in obedience to it is what he required of his servants. This was his "own with usury." The natural man depends on his own works and can make no progress, for though he should keep the whole law and offend in one point, he is guilty of all. But the spiritual man viewed the perfect righteousness of Jesus, the antitype of the offerings under the law, as his by imputation, while all of his sins were transferred to Christ. Here was a marvelous increase; in fact, double. As the prophet has said, We have received of the Lord's hands double for all of our sins. The law as it has been fulfilled by Christ has been taken from the legalist and given to the redeemed. The Lord has made "the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." He has revealed that covenant promises of the New Testament were concealed in the Old, while the glory of the Old is revealed in the New. It was all fulfilled in Christ, and he honored and magnified the law and made it most glorious and delivered it unto his church, not as a rule for their conduct, but as a corroborating evidence of their acceptance in Christ. For it is written, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Again, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." That is, the Spirit that actuated the holy men of God under the legal dispensation bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. Some of the richest feasts that have been spread for the Lord's little children have been uncovered in the Old Testament Scriptures. When that which is in part is done away and that which is perfect is come, then the redeemed will understand how each transaction as recorded in his holy word from the beginning to the close was a part of one great plan and achievement, designed to unfold the riches of God's glory. Should we be permitted to awake in his likeness and behold his glory we shall be satisfied.

Submitted in bonds of fellowship.

J. R. HARDY.

KINGSMAN, Kansas.

HAVRE, Mont., Jan. 16, 1928.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—In the January issue of the SIGNS brother W. W. Jones, of Knox City, Texas, has given some thoughts on the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, beginning at the four-

teenth verse, where our Savior likens the kingdom of heaven to the servants to whom a man traveling into a far country delivers talents of five, two and one, according to their several ability, but it seems to me that our brother has taken only a literal view of this parable by the construction he has placed upon it. I beg to ask if a deeper spiritual meaning is not here portrayed by our Lord? It doth evidently appear to me to bear a very close relation in the parable of the ten virgins just preceding it, and this man, verse fourteen, traveling into a far country is none other than Christ, who in that "far country" sits upon the throne of his glory and gives to his servants what he receives back from them with usury, or praise, prayer, thanksgiving, &c., which he also accredits to them through their being made partakers with him in all that he has, and is, and does. This parable is not likened unto the kingdom of this world, which is the kingdom of darkness, but is likened unto the "kingdom of heaven," or that kingdom Daniel had a vision of when he said, In that day shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, &c., and Christ having partaken of this earthly life hath ascended up to glory, setting up his spiritual kingdom that shall never be destroyed or taken down. He, therefore, in time, or in this time-state, calleth "his own servants," yet a servant is not necessarily a son, for a servant, unless he be also a son, abideth not in the house forever, but a son abideth forever, "Beloved, now are ye the sons of God." The servant to whom he gave the one talent is typical, to my mind, to the five foolish virgins. They took their lamps, which is the word of God, for the word in the Scriptures is called a lamp, but they had no oil in their vessels, that is, the Holy Spirit of God dwelling in their hearts by faith, therefore they are called "foolish." Their lamps, or talent, was buried or hid in the earth in the darkness of this world, and not put to usury to shed abroad the light of Christ's holiness and righteousness as shining forth in the great plan of redemption with which the true servants of God become daily more and more enlightened through a growth in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. The apparently seeming boasting spirit of the two servants receiving the five and the two talents, recorded in verses twenty and twenty-two, is not the boasting of self-righteousness, but is the much humbler boasting recorded of so many of the most eminent servants of God in the spirit of thankfulness and praise that the blessed Master of his gratuitous love and mercy has lifted them above the sordid cankering things of this present evil world, that they henceforth dwell not in the seat of the scornful. The servant receiving the one talent manifests no such spirit, but only the spirit of fearfulness at God's judgments, as all must do who remain under the law seeking salvation by their works. Such are ever under condemnation, their self-righteousness cannot appease the divine law given or gain the victory over sin, for the law can but terrify and reveal the threatenings and judgments of God, and when these are applied to the conscience of those who behold their works alone, Christ to them is set aside and lost sight of in His work of redemption. Christ being lost to them, there is no counsel nor succor now remaining, so desperation, destruction and hatred of Christ must needs follow. Therefore, he must seem to them an "hard man," reaping where he has not sown and gathering where he has not strawed. (Verse 24.) The following verse

(twenty-five) gives a very lucid description of the fearful and unbelieving when God's judgments do appear as they at one time appeared to me. "And I was afraid, and went, and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant," &c.

I would offer further comment on this parable, for a great field of thought is here opened before us, but I feel unworthy to thus take up your time. What I have written will no doubt appear disconnected, but desiring to be brief I have only touched upon it. Should you find me in error, I beg pardon for troubling you.

Yours most unworthily,

JOHN GIBSON.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Sept. 27, 1927.

DEAR SISTER GALL:—To-night, sad, lonely and without cheer, except for the chatter of three little ones round about me, I cannot refrain from trying to write you a few words. In my agony I am made to cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" For many months it has seemed that the greater portion of the time I have been made to cry thus, yet at times I am exalted from on high, and a ray of hope shines forth as the rays of the morning sun. As I try to write my expression is best expressed by the words of my little girl, "What is the matter, mamma? "Mamma I like you." Oh the innocence of childhood, yet so expressive. The last two meetings I attended were very impressive to me; one at home, dear old Mt. Olive, and the other at Leading Creek. It seems to me that I am such a vile sinner, so corrupt and full of sin, until I am ashamed for my dearly beloved brethren to see the tears I sometimes cannot repress, though I freely admit that when I see I can no longer refrain I turn my attention to my little ones, crying, yes, crying within my heart and soul, "Hide me, O my Savior, hide me 'neath the shadow of thy wing." "Still support and comfort me, O my Savior."

Dec. 14th. Some lapse of time since I started this and I do not know whether or not I can write even now. My feelings are somewhat different from what they were when I wrote the first part of this. Since then I have had the wonderful privilege of entertaining, or trying to, some of our dear brethren and sisters. Brother and sister Priest, grandfather, (Elder J. N. Bartlett) and uncle and aunt spent one Sunday with me. Since then I have had the happy privilege of having with me the dear sister who was such a comfort to me in hours of trouble eight years ago, when I joined dear old Mt. Olive, sister Irena MacDonald, of Washington, D. C. Elsie, there are no words, as you have often said to me, to express the joy of being in the presence of "His little ones." "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in christian love." We who hope to be of one Father, one Lord, one baptism in communion with the Holy Spirit, depending solely upon unmerited grace for salvation from sin and iniquity, oh how we cry, how we hope, how we try to pray that we are of those whose vile bodies shall be changed to the incorruptible and fashioned like unto his glorious body. By grace are ye saved, and that not of works, lest any man should boast. Born of the Spirit and saved with an everlasting salvation, for except ye be born of the Spirit ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven, but they that are born of the Spirit are of the Spirit, and shall in no wise be cast

out. Is not this something great and wonderful to bind our hearts one in love, one in unity and one in spirit?

Sister, as I write this I blush with shame to utter the Savior's name, because of my own unworthiness, and tremble at the thought that some may say, She is as a goat crept in unawares, yet again I am made to say, Judge not, lest ye be judged with the same judgment. He knows his own and whom he did foreknow them he also did predestinate. Many shall seek to enter, but few there be that shall enter in, for broad is the way and wide is the gate that leadeth unto destruction, but strait is the way and narrow is the gate that leadeth unto eternal life. He alone knows my heart, and even though this earthly or fleshly body is vile and corrupt it only returneth unto dust, but the spirit returneth unto God, for the spirit is of God and the spirit is God. It is alone by the grace of God that I am what I am, and if it be his holy will that I be numbered among that few who shall enter in, I can only say, "'Twas grace that brought me safe thus far, and grace shall lead me home."

Sister dear, I scarcely know what to say next, for there are so many things which I would like to convey to you, as I would to all my brethren and sisters, but space will not permit. My three babies are all tucked away asleep and I am alone at a late hour before the open fire, and as I look into its slowly dying embers there are many beautiful things presented to me. How easily can I replenish those embers with a little coal and make a brilliant flame. How easily can the child of God be down in the valley of darkness, and yet with a renewing of the divine Spirit, through the preached word, or even through the presence of a dear brother or sister, be lifted up and made to sing praises to his glorious name, all by the divine grace of God, who doeth all things after the counsel of his own will.

Dec. 25th. Elsie, O Elsie, the anguish of our weary souls and bleeding hearts in the loss of that dearly beloved pastor, and my dearly beloved grandfather, Elder J. N. Bartlett, whose precious body was lowered into the silent tomb just yesterday. How can I write, for tears blind my eyes, my hand trembles and words will not express my grief? Where is our pastor, our shepherd which God had appointed over the little flock at Mt. Olive? Gone, yes gone, never to return; gone to see Him face to face; gone where no earthly trials shall touch his brow, where but joy and peace forever reign. A voice we loved is stilled, the voice that spoke the words, ten years ago in May, which set fire burning within my heart and soul. "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," was his text at Mt. Olive. Sister, from that time on I have experienced that which only they who have passed through the same can understand. I was then a Missionary Baptist, but could not remain so, and two years later came to dear old Mt. Olive for a home, and had grandpa for my pastor. He led me into the shining water and took me into his care. Oh how can I give him up? He was very precious naturally, but listen, sister, the tie that binds our hearts in christian love is one that can never be broken. It had been my intention for him to read this very letter and tell me if it contained anything contrary to unmerited salvation, salvation by grace and grace alone, but now what must I do, cast this into the wastebasket, or trust my dearly beloved brethren to forgive my errors, if such there be, and pardon the sins of one who feels to be the chief of sinners, seeking the crumbs

which fall from the Master's table? Oh for the touch of His hand on mine, oh that I might touch just the hem of his garment.

Sister, I cannot write, I yearn for grandpa, and I long to hear him preach grace, and grace alone, but alas I am resigned to His holy will, and must say, "Thy will be done." He fought a good fight, his work is done. Christ alone is our only comfort, our only salvation, our light, our all in all. Oh may God enable us to fight a good fight, and may we all meet together around our Savior's throne, there to praise him throughout all eternity.

Come and see me, for I need you, and write soon. Do with this as God directs.

Your unworthy sister in love,

GERTRUDE BARTLETT CROSS.

[The foregoing good letter was written to sister Elsie Gall, of Fairmont, W. Va., and she sent it to us for publication in the SIGNS.—ED]

ZANESFIELD, Ohio, Feb. 15, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending an exact copy of a good letter received from my pastor, Elder U. G. Porter, which I think is too valuable to be hidden away. I have his consent to send it for publication if you desire it. The original is better written, but it is so precious to us both, husband and I, that we wish to preserve it.

(MRS.) JOIE E. WOODS PETERS.

NASHPORT, Ohio, Jan. 24, 1928.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER PETERS:—I think very often about you. How I enjoy visting with you, and miss you much when you are not at Marlborough. Some way you seem a little nearer than most other Baptists. Wife wants me to thank you for the apron you sent her Christmas. Besides enjoying the gift, I have enjoyed the meditations it caused. My mind was carried back to the fig leaf aprons. Sin caused shame and necessitated a covering to hide their nakedness. Toil and sweat for food also resulted, and finally corporeal death. Why? Does echo answer, or God's word? I am sure the wisdom of man, without revelation, cannot answer. Were it not for God's blessed word, and the understanding he has given us of it, revealing its meaning by the Spirit, we would be left in darkness. "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness." "O, send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me." "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." God has not left us ignorant concerning his purposes, but "he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ." God's purpose in Christ embraces all things. Paul said to the Corinthians, "All things are your's; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are your's; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." Again, he says, "All things are for your sakes." And to the Romans, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Evidently his purpose "is that God may be all in all." "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." He says, "My glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." God was manifest in the flesh, in the person of his Son,

and all was for lifting of Jesus on high. How all things work together for the good of his people and the glory of his name may be hard to understand, but such is the plain teaching of holy writ. "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." He is able to bring wisdom out of ignorance, strength out of weakness, honor out of disgrace, glory out of shame, victory out of defeat and life out of death. "The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men." Paul says, "When I am weak, then am I strong." "And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." The heresies among the Corinthians made manifest those approved. "Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?" Answer, "To do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done," namely the crucifixion of Jesus. Why did David sin? (Psalms li. 4.) "That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged."—Rom. iii. 4. Why did God raise up the wicked Pharaoh and place him on the throne of Egypt? "That I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." How are we made to see and appreciate God's righteousness? (Rom. iii. 5.) By our unrighteousness. It is by comparison we estimate the size or value of things. Moses was considered a glorious character until Christ came. The ministration of condemnation and death was glorious until the ministration of righteousness shone with such bright glory that it did away with law's glory. We know good only by having known evil, and *vice versa.* Adam and Eve knew neither good nor evil until they sinned. A person born blind is in darkness, but does not know what darkness is. But some will say, If God makes use of man's sinful acts to accomplish his purposes, and to manifest and commend his own attributes for his glory, then man is not accountable. That, if God intentionally, and purposely, made man, "subject to vanity," (or sin,) and intended that he should sin, then man has not resisted God's will, and God should not find fault. (Rom. ix. 19; iii. 5–8.) That, that would be equal to saying, "Let us do evil, that good may come." But God nowhere told man to do evil that good may come. God made man subject to sin, but did not make him sin. Instead, God told him not to sin, and warned him of the consequences. God had the right to make man as it pleased him. "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" God also had the right to forbid man doing something it was his nature to do. It was David's nature that caused him to sin, but that did not excuse him. He knew better. People feel like doing what it is their nature to do, but if that is a valid excuse for wrongdoing, then all crime is excusable. It was God's will to show his mercy and his grace. How could he show mercy on those who had never sinned, or save them by grace? With no redeemed, what song would be sung in heaven?

Thanking you again for your kind remembrance, and praying God's choicest blessings on you, I am your unworthy pastor,

U. G. PORTER.

LAUREL, Miss., Jan. 16, 1928.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has pleased the God of all power to spare us through another year, and through his mercy he has blessed us greatly, for which we hope we are thankful, and hope he will continue to bless us according to his will, for we know that without his blessing we could do nothing, We are at peace here at Palestine Church. Elder L. F. Easley is our pastor and we esteem him highly for the truth's sake.

I am sending you a letter from sister Anna Windham and would be glad to have you publish it in the SIGNS. She is a widow and lives a long distance from the church. She is a member with us and we esteem her highly.

Inclosed find check for fourteen dollars, to do with as directed on the accompanying subscription blank.

Dear brethren, pray for us when at the throne of grace.

Hoping he will keep us in sweet fellowship with each other, your unworthy brother,

T. J. KNIGHT.

HOMEWOOD, Mississippi.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I have been thinking of you all much of late (not that it is anything new for me to think of you). I am thinking this is the last meeting time for 1927, and oh how many blessings the old year has held in store for us, and hope the new year may hold for us more abundantly of the blessings of our God, and that he will keep us in the way, for he is the way, and the truth, and the life. How sweet to feel to be sheltered safely under his protecting love, even for a small moment, as is the case with the writer, who is the very least of the flock, if one at all. While sheltered there we are safe from the storms of this life, for in him is fullness of joy. Then we can rejoice in the sweet fellowship of the saints, and say, I know that my Redeemer liveth. It seems that I have no new thing to write unto you, neither have I the excellency of speech or of man's wisdom. If indeed I do know anything I have not been taught it of man, for man cannot teach us the love of God and of his little flock. Oh how thankful we should be that it pleased the Father to give us the kingdom! What a glorious inheritance, one that cannot be left to other people, neither will it ever grow old, but will abide throughout eternity. Dear ones, might we not comfort one another with these thoughts? for they are our meat and drink, and in the dark hours of the night when we are permitted to think on these things oh how refreshing. Is it any wonder we love to speak and write about these things so near our hearts? They that feared the Lord spake often one to another. Here I am sometimes made to wonder if I am one of that number, for it is so seldom I speak of these things, being so isolated from those who would understand, yet my thoughts are almost continually upon these things. If it were not that you all know how I am situated, and that you are so kind and forbearing with me I would be ashamed, for when I do write I write so at length, but I feel that my people understand and will pardon my short comings. When at the throne of his rich grace, and you can feel to remember the most unworthy one of all, pray for me.

Unworthily,

ANNA WINDHAM.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1928.

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MARK VI. 5, 6.

WE have before us a request for an explanation of the Scripture in Mark vi. 5, 6: "And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief." It is here declared that Jesus could do no mighty work in Nazareth. The reason why he could not was because of the unbelief which prevailed among those dwelling in Nazareth. For a little more confirmation of this hindrance in the way of Jesus, let us turn to the fourth chapter of Luke, where is recorded in more detail this visit of Jesus to the place of his boyhood. Here it is told us that Jesus went into the synagogue at Nazareth and read and interpreted a portion of the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah. At this time also, he read the thoughts in the minds of those who heard him. He knew full well they did not believe what he said, he knew, too, that they wondered why he did not perform in Nazareth the same marvelous works which had been reported of him in Capernaum and in other parts. He gave them the reason why he did not do miracles in Nazareth. The reason he gave them made the people mad and they were ready to kill him and attempted to do so by leading him out to the brow of a hill with intent to hurl him over it. His hour had not come however and they could not carry out their purpose, for "he, passing through the midst of them, went his way." Now, let us examine the reason why Jesus was prevented from making known his wonderful power in Nazareth. He himself said it was because of their unbelief. This is true. We dare not doubt it. But why was it that the people in Nazareth as a general thing did not believe him, while many in other parts did? This leads us to examine what belief is. Again, let us take Jesus' own words, John x. 26–28: "But ye believed not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." In order to believe in Jesus as the Christ and as the Son of God, it requires the power of God working in one's soul. In the absence of this quickening power of God, no one can really believe in Jesus Christ. Now, had the people of Nazareth been the sheep of Jesus Christ, they would have believed; they could not have withstood the power of God. Paul in his letter to the Ephesians says plainly that the same power which raised Christ from the dead is the very same power which works in sinners to cause them to believe in Christ. The fact that the people of Nazareth did not believe in Jesus

is proof that they were yet in a state of death in sin. In this dead state, they had no power to believe in Christ no matter what wonderful works he might have done there. Therefore, he did no wonderful works there. What would have been the use of his doing them? The evidence that they were not his sheep proves that Jesus was not sent there to work miracles among them. This is further corroborated by a continued reading of Luke fourth chapter. Christ told the people of Nazareth that in the days of Elijah the prophet there were many widows, but that Elijah was not sent to all the widows, but only to the widow of Sarepta. God picked her out, or elected her, and sent Elijah to her. The widow knew nothing of God's choice of her until Elijah came to her. Also, Christ told the Nazarenes that in the days of Elisha the prophet there were many lepers in Israel, but to none of the lepers was cleansing brought except to Naaman the Syrian. God could just as easily have preserved all the widows from starvation as he did the widow of Sarepta. If God did not do so, there can be but one reason why he did not: and that is, it was not his will to do so. God could as easily have cleansed all the lepers as he did Naaman. If he did not do so, there can be but one reason why he did not. It was not his will to do so. Now, this same reason explains why Jesus could not and did not do many mighty works in Nazareth. The reason was that Jesus was not sent to Nazareth to do those works. It was not God's purpose that he should work there. Had it been the purpose of God for him to perform his wonders there, God would have wrought powers in them by which they would have believed him. By the "sheep" is meant the elect of God. All those given by the almighty Father to the Son in the covenant of grace before the foundation of the world, are the "sheep." To all who are the elect of God and who were given into the Son's care, that is to all the sheep, comes in God's time the quickening power of his Holy Spirit by which they pass from a state of unbelief in the Son of God. This power was absent in the case of the Nazarenes, therefore they remained in unbelieve, thus it was a proof that few, if any, of the "sheep" were there. For this reason, Jesus could not work there. He was sent only to the sheep, only to those given him of the Father before the world began. Evidently the Nazarenes saw what Jesus meant, because it made them mad and they were ready to kill him, and tried to do so. That which made them mad was his declaration of the fact that he was not sent to all men, but only to some of them, in other words, the doctrine of election angered them, and it will do the same to-day to people who cannot believe it. If you want to call down upon your head the wrath of men, just begin to declare at every opportunity the doctrine of God's discriminating choice of his people in the way of salvation, and you will find all the persecution coming your way, and more of it, than you will care to suffer. Yet, this glorious principle of doctrine is one of the plainest and most prominent throughout the whole Bible and is the foundation of the hope of every sinner saved by grace. If God had not chosen his people first, certainly never would they have chosen him. Without election, not one would be saved. With election, some are saved. Is it not far better that some be saved than that all be lost? God is under no obligation to save any.

L.

EPHESIANS VI. 4.

WE have a further request for an explanation of Ephesians vi. 4. "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." This has reference to the spiritual upbringing of the young believer in the house of God, and not to the bringing up of natural children. There is no way under heaven by which a natural child can be taught the things of God. Human nature cannot conceive of spiritual things. One must be born again before he can see the kingdom of God. The natural man knows not the things of God; neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned. In the absence of God's Spirit they cannot be discerned. The exhortation above quoted says to bring up the children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Will some one please tell us how a dead substance can be nurtured? In the absence of life, of what use would nurture be? Nurture means to nourish, to feed, to cultivate, &c. Does any sensible person ever waste his or her time in feeding or cultivating that which is dead? Spiritual nurturing will avail nothing if performed upon the dead sinner, and this applies as well to children who are in an unawakened state, never having been quickened by the Spirit of God. The very first verse of this sixth chapter of Ephesians furnishes us with the key to the right interpretation: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord." Parents in the Lord are one thing, natural parents are quite another. Evidently the apostle here has in mind a spiritual relationship, and not a natural. The whole exhortation applies to the relationship of the members of the church one to another, and not to natural or fleshly relationships. Those who are young believers and who are young in their church-life should not be dealt with harshly and impatiently by those who are more mature and more experienced in the things of grace. The older ones should seek to lead along gently and forbearingly, and to instruct carefully, those who are young in the grace life. It is often the case that the young in grace cannot clearly understand all the points of doctrine as believed by the fathers and mothers in Israel. In this case, the fathers and mothers should not provoke to wrath the younger ones because of their lack of discernment. There should be a laboring with the young and a sincere endeavor to enlighten them upon the points which are obscure to them. If these young ones are brought up in the way of sound doctrine and order they will not depart from it when old. On the other hand, if the fathers in Israel deal in haste and impatience with the inability of the young in grace to clearly comprehend the deep things of God, the children of the church may be unnecessarily hurt and alienated in their feelings from the older heads. This sometimes results in split churches and in the declaration of nonfellowship, the one for the other. Such ought not to be. Are we not commanded to be patient and gentle and forbearing? Are the strong not commanded to bear the infirmities of the weak? Are we not told to receive him that is weak in the faith, but not to doubtful disputations? We would like some one to tell us what has become of all this virtue on the part of the church? In this day and time, instead of manifesting tolerance toward them who err, instead of laboring with them as we ought, we immediately set up bars of fellowship and cut them off. Why is this? Do you think it right that it should be

so? Is this the right way for parents to treat children? Let us far rather, not anger these young children in grac, but let us labor by the grace of God to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and seek to teach them the way of the Lord more perfectly, somewhat as did Aquila and Priscilla teach Apollos.

L.

POETRY.

GEMS OF THOUGHT.

I love to think of Abraham's faith,
To sacrifice his only son,
And that the angel stayed his hand,
'Twas faith the victory won.

I love to think the cloud by day,
The pillar of fire by night,
Restrained the hosts of Pharaoh
And led the hosts of light.

I love to think of Noah's faith,
And righteousness he preached;
Salvation rode within his ark,
All else destruction reached.

I love to think where Moses stood,
Thereon was holy ground;
And hidden in that cleft of rock
Mercy and grace were found.

A Joshua to lead them on
Where Jordan's billows roll;
In lands of plenty, corn and wine;
It feeds my inmost soul.

I love to think of Bethlehem's babe,
Born in the lowliest earth,
And heaven descends in dove-like form,
It meets my humble birth.

I love to think of sacred words
Repeated, as was written,
"Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God;"
By them was Satan smitten.

Or, "Change this rocky stone to bread
If thou be Christ the Lord:"
"Man shall not live by bread alone,
But by God's spoken word."

He saw at once the Father's will,
His faith could never swerve;
"The Lord thy God, and only him,
In worship thou shalt serve."

The tempter sank, rebuked, with shame,
Beneath oblivion's sea:
Messiah bent his sacred steps
Toward the Sea of Galilee.

I love to think of Gethsemane
Where prayer was his, alone;
"Forgive, they know not what they do,"
"Thy will, not mine, be done."

I love to think of piteous moan
Of thief upon the tree,
For looking at my inmost soul
I cry, "Lord, remember me."

I love to think his dying words
Redeemed me from the fall:
"'Tis finished!" ('tis not left for me),
His Father's will and all.

Rent tabernacle of his flesh,
His spirit now is free
To bring his bride triumphant home,
Ordained of God to be.

I love to think of Stephen's faith;
With heaven's veil removed,
'Mid cruel taunts and crushing stones,
He slept in arms of love.

I love to think of that mystic bride
In heaven—clothed with the sun,
Her crown of stars and robes of white,
And hear that voice, "Well done."

Wondrous espousal, bride arrayed
In white, before his throne,
Chosen, redeemed and justified,
In pity, love and mercy shone.

In mortal guise, immortal power
Beloved disciple given
To baptize the Lord of glory, thus
Uniting earth to heaven.

In glorified humanity,
Incarnate light, behold her now;
The Bridegroom meets the bride alone,
No spot nor wrinkle on her brow.

I love to think on this elect
'Neath his protecting wings;
Kept in the hollow of his hand,
Triumphantly she sings.

JAMES E. MOORE.

(See obituary on page 67.)

PEACE ON EARTH.

There's peace on earth, and good will to man,
As the angel said there'd be,
Not peace of this world, but the peace of God,
In the hearts of you and me.

This peace shall reign, though kingdoms shall fall,
And war is rife in the land,
As man hies him forth to kill and destroy
A strong and desperate band.

The peace Christ brought on that Christmas morn,
Is of this vain world apart,
For it neither gives, nor can take away,
The peace of God in the heart.

NELLIE H. ARNOLD.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Brother **Morris Faulkner** died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. B J. Sanford, Margaretville, N. Y., December 15th, 1927. He was born in the town of Halcott, Greene County, N. Y., February 4th, 1840, to William and Susan (Kelly) Faulkner, and was the youngest of their seven children. When about eleven years of age he went to live with his sister, Mrs. Smith Jenkins, in Vega, N. Y., where he resided until he was past twenty-one years of age. The Jenkins's bought a place in Pines Brook, Walton, N. Y., and Mr. Faulkner went with them for two years. In 1863 he came to Weaver's Hollow, where he and his brother Luther bought a farm. They worked this farm two years, when he bought his brother's share. March 22nd, 1865, he married Mary Catherine Faulkner, and they resided at Weaver's Hollow until 1867, when the farm on Beeman Hill was purchased. In 1902 they rented their farm to their youngest daughter and took up their abode with their eldest daughter, who was by this time a widow with five children, and there our brother remained until his death. Brother Faulkner never sought public office, but served as town assessor for two terms. In 1915 he and his wife celebrated their golden wedding anniversary, and for three more years they enjoyed the happiness of each other's company, until November, 1918, when he lost his dear companion. This was a severe blow to him, which he was never fully able to overcome. He leaves to mourn their loss three daughters: Mrs. B. J. Sanford, Mrs. Harry Sanford and Mrs. William L. Kiff, also eight grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Brother Faulkner united with the Middletown Church, Delaware County, N. Y., in July, 1884, and was baptized the same month by the pastor Elder John D. Hubbell. Meeting then was held in the Red School House, in Platte Kill Valley. In later years the Middletown and Andes Churches united, and from that time they met at Union Grove. Brother Faulkner was for many years a deacon, and faithfully served the church. The writer once heard him say that for over forty years he never missed a meeting of his church. His delight was to be with those of like precious faith, or to entertain them in his home. After he lost his companion mentioned above he was very despondent, until one afternoon while resting on his bed, whether in the body or out of the body he could not tell, he saw a man standing at the foot of his bed, whose face did shine as the sun and his raiment was white as the light and he was girt about with a golden girdle. He spake and said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Brother Faulkner said, "Just as I realized who it was he vanished out of my sight." This wonderful vision greatly comforted and encouraged our dear brother. His despondency over the loss of his wife seemed to be gone, and he went in the strength of that meat many days. With what comfort and pleasure he told the above experience over to his brethren, at the same time confessing himself the chiefest of sinners! He would often on retiring at night continue in prayer, praying for himself, his family, his church and its pastor; and those favored to care for him in his declining years would often stand at his room door to listen as he communed in prayer with his God. As he lived so he died, strong in the faith, giving glory unto God. He took cold, and pneumonia developed, and in spite of all the loving care of his three daughters and families he passed away. He suffered very little pain. The peace of God seemed to overshadow him even to end. He was taken sick while the writer was in Ohio, and we hastened back with the hope of seeing him alive. We arrived there just in time to see him breathe his last. We felt, "Absent from the body," "present with the Lord," and while we miss him much, yet we sorrow not as those without hope. He was a man of irreproachable character, in every sense a noble man, an ensample to the brethren in every way. Humble, faithful and of good report from those that are without. His funeral was held at his late home, December 19th, with interment at Kelly Corners Cemetery.

ALSO,

Brother **James Moore**, departed this life Monday, November 21st, 1927, at the residence of his daughter, Mrs. Arthur Burgess, Rutherford, New Jersey. He was born at Lexington, New York, seventy-six years ago, to John and Candace (Bailey) Moore. At the age of sixteen years he began teaching in public schools, and continued in that profession for about twenty years. In 1872 he married Emma Miller, of Lexington, and in the year 1893 moved with his family to a farm in the town of Athens, New York. Here he lived for more than a quarter of a century, and conducted a large milk business. In 1920, after his wife's death, he sold the property, and thereafter made his home with his daughter, Mrs. Burgess. He was a kind husband and father, a good neighbor and friend. He leaves to mourn their loss two sons, Mr. Charles Moore, of Athens, N. Y., (at whose home the funeral services were held Wednesday, November 23rd) and Mr. Horace Moore, of Brooklyn, N. Y., two daughters, Mrs. Arthur Burgess, above mentioned, and Mrs. Willis Brandow of Athens, N. Y., also six grandchildren. Brother Moore united, by relation of experience and baptism, with the Old School Baptist Church at Lexington, N. Y., where he remained a faithful member until his death. He was a peaceable and peace-loving man, ever ready to help in a good cause, frank in expressing an opinion when he felt he was right. He loved experimental preaching and tried to attend meeting when able. For som

years brother Moore had poor health, and the last few months he lived was confined to his home, and part of the time to his bed. The writer was called to his funeral, where he spoke from Isaiah xi. 10: "And his rest shall be glorious." The burial was in the Jefferson Rural Cemetery, Jefferson, New York.

GEORGE RUSTON.

(See poetry on page 66.)

Mrs. Nancy (Reynolds) Corder, the subject of this sketch, daughter of B. S. and Lucy Reynolds, was born October 20th, 1860, and departed this life December 5th, 1927, making her stay on earth 67 years, 1 month and 15 days. She was united in marriage to Deacon W. A. Corder, with whom she lived a happy, enjoyable life for the period of forty-three years. To this union was born one son, Stanley Corder, who resides at Philippi, W. Va. Mrs. Corder was hospitable and kind, receiving into her home all the brethren and sisters who were minded to go thither, and spared no pains to render them comfortable and happy. She very much enjoyed sitting and listening to them talk on spiritual things, and her door was always open to the preaching of the word by the ministry of the old order of Baptists, which she seemed to greatly enjoy. She attended the church meetings with her husband, and always at associations or union meetings prepared dinner for all who wished to eat with her, so we can say of her, as the apostle Paul said of Phebe, "She hath been a succorer of many, and of myself also." Although she was not a member of the militant church, we feel assured that she was a member of the triumphant church, and while her body is lying in the still, silent tomb her spirit is resting in the sweet paradise of God who gave it. She left good evidence behind that all would be well with her, so from the bright evidence she left, and the beautiful, exemplary life she lived, we feel assured that she had received an abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness. The Savior appeared to her just a few days before her death and told her twice it would not be long. We have good hope that she is now in the sweet heavenly Canaan in God's holy peaceful presence, basking in the blessed sunlight of his smile on the sunny side of sweet deliverance, in the fair bright world of glory.

Funeral services were conducted at the home by Elder J. N. Bartlett, after which the body was quietly consigned to the tomb, in the Mt. Olive Old School Baptist Cemetery, to await the resurrection morn, when it will come forth a glorious spiritual body, fashioned like unto the glorious body of our Lord and Savior, then the eye that has been closed in death will reopen, never again to be closed by sleep or death, but will ever gaze on the majesty and glory of Deity and heaven, the ear, too, that has so often heard the sounds of woe and lamentation, and mourning, will reopen to the melodies of heaven, the songs of the redeemed and the voice of the heavenly Bridegroom. May God in mercy bless and comfort all who mourn.

Written by request. J. R. DENNISON.

Our dearly beloved sister, **Virgie Grant,** daughter of brother and sister James Culpepper, was born October 31st, 1869, and died January 1st, 1928, aged 58 years, 2 months and 1 day. She was married November 9th, 1892, to Mr. Andrew Grant, and to that union were born nine children, two having preceded her to the great beyond. Sister Virgie was truly a saint on earth, having given evidence of a precious hope years ago, and lived a life highly commendable, and was a bright and shining monument of God's mercy, and her everyday walk was such as becometh saints. Acts of kindness endeared her to all who knew her, and to know her was to love her. She was dearly loved by her family and was a devoted companion and mother, and was industrious, and devoted to her church. She joined the Old Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church in July, 1923, and was baptized by the writer in August, 1923, and lived a consistent and loyal member until death. Sister Virgie was in poor health the last year, but it seemed for a while she was gaining, until December, when she was taken quite ill, and the doctor decided an operation was necessary. She was removed from her home at Stockdale, Texas, to the P. & S. Hospital at San Antonio, Texas, where she underwent an operation, from which she never recovered. No one knows how she suffered, yet she bore her suffering with christian fortitude. All was done for her that loving hands could do, but God's will must and was done. The time had come in the appointment of her Savior when she must go home, to which place she went, leaving us all to rejoice in the blessed thought that she went to the arms of Jesus, entered into the full fruition of that blessed hope that had so long been her daily companion, enjoying now not in part, but in the fullness of those mansions prepared for the dear children of God. She leaves to mourn her departure, her husband, children, mother, brothers and sisters, and a host of relatives and friends. The writer was called to speak words of comfort to the bereft family and friends, and tried in much weakness to speak from John xiv. 1-4, at her home in Stockdale, in the presence of a large concourse of loving friends, after which her body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Stockdale, to await the morning of the resurrection, when all the redeemed family of God shall arise in the image of Jesus, to forever sing praises to him who died to redeem us to God. I would say to the dear children, husband and relatives, Weep not for Virgie, for she has gone home, never to suffer, but is now at rest, sweetly resting in the arms of her blessed Savior.

J. B. BOWDEN.

Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Banks, daughter of Jesse and Elizabeth Hubbard, was born October 31st 1843, and died May 12th, 1927. She was married to Warren L. Banks, October 23rd, 1859, to which union were born three sons and eight daughters, two dying in infancy, and one son when he was reaching manhood. Those of her children now living are Mrs. N. E. Jackson, Mrs. L. A. Caldwell, Mrs. Beulah Banks, J. W. and S. S. Banks, all of Fayetteville, Georgia. She also leaves thirty grandchildren, a host of great-grandchildren and several great-great-grandchildren. About two years ago a photograph was made of her with descendants comprising five generations. Her parents were Old Baptists, and I think her grandparents, and I do not know how far back, but some of her children and grandchildren were members with her at old Raimah Church, making four generations belonging to the same church. All her children have a hope, but some are lingering outside. She and grandfather joined the church June 9th, 1867, and were baptized by Elder Johnson Pate, who also performed their marriage ceremony. They were both faithful to the church as long as they lived, and at one period were the only ones at meeting, but they did not give up, and the Lord revived the church. The church was just reviving from a drought when she died, and one of her greatest desires was that if it was God's will that he would build up the church for the comfort of his dear people, and his praise. Their home was indeed a home for God's people, especially ministers. They preferred Zion above their chief joy. She fell April 23rd, 1926, injuring her hip, which caused her much suffering, which she endured in much patience, without complaining, desiring to be reconciled to God's will, which was a bright characteristic of her christian life. She sorrowed that she was a burden. With all her christian traits, she realized that she was a sinner, and it was by the grace of God that she was given a hope, no merit of hers, and without him she could do nothing. She was a strong predestinarian, and loved to read the good letters in Old Baptist publications. I heard her say she had never tried to "fool" any one, though she was accused of trying to do so once, and she could not keep from crying when she thought of it, some years afterward. (The act being an act of charity, yet she did not want to "fool" any one.) After having flu, she suffered with her heart, growing weaker, trusting in God, waiting patiently for the summons. Nothing was left undone for her comfort and relief, but she could not go beyond her appointed days. The large gathering at her funeral showed some of how she was loved by all classes, both white and black. Her pastor, Elder Morgan Williams, preached the discourse, after which she was buried in the family cemetery, to rest in peace until the resurrection morn, of which she loved to talk and think, when she hoped to be raised in the likeness of the blessed Redeemer, to be forever free from sorrows and trials, to praise him for evermore. She was a mother in Israel to the unworthy writer, and is sadly missed by all, especially the church. Grandfather was a deacon.

Her grandson,

GEO. W. JACKSON.

Ora Lee Barnett, son of brother John T. Barnett, departed this earthly life at his home in Henry County, Kentucky, January 31st, 1928. He was born September 20th, 1890, making his stay on earth almost thirty-eight years. He is survived by one brother, Price Barnett, of near New Castle, Ky., and his father, John Barnett; his mother, Althea Singleton Barnett, preceded him in death over thirty years ago. Since that time father and son have grown up together. Orah was a great home fellow, hard working and conscientious, and was held in high esteem by his neighbors. He never united with any church, but I believe he was an experienced man. He loved the truth of God as it is in Christ Jesus. He realized the depravity of human nature, and knew full well there was no salvation for him but in the grace of God through Jesus Christ the Lord.

I was called to officiate at the funeral, and used as a text Psalms xix. 7: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul," speaking to a large congregation of friends, after which the body was laid to rest in the cemetery nearby to await the call of the Master in the resurrection. May the Lord bless the father, brother and many friends, and enable us all to see, realize and understand, and bow in humble submission to the will of him who doeth all things well.

GEO. L. WEAVER.

W. L. Timmons was born November 11th, 1857, and died December 16th, 1927, aged 70 years, 1 month and 5 days. He was united in marriage to Mary I. Timmons Jan. 7th, 1880, and to that union were born five children: Orrie D., E. Hartwell, J. W. S. and Ida K., survive, and Martha A. who died when 7 years old. He also leaves seven grandchildren. Brother Timmons was baptized in the fellowship of the Indiantown Church by Elder T. M. Poulson, in October, 1885, and lived a very faithful member until death. The writer had been personally acquainted with him for more than thirty years, and knows that he never missed going to the meetings of his faith when it was possible for him to be there. He enjoyed talking of the things of his Creator and Savior more than all things else, and learned many years ago the weakness of man, often speaking of his own life as an unprofitable one, and expressing a desire that he might live upright, always esteeming his brethren better than self. He was a good husband, father and

friend, as well as a good brother in the church, and always seemed interested in its welfare. While he did not possess very much of this world's goods, yet he was always able to help, and did so willingly. Not only the family but the Indiantown Church has lost a faithful member. Our loss is great, yet we believe that our loss is his eternal gain. May the Lord enable us at all times to feel like saying, Not my will, but thine, O God, be done. Brother Timmons was born and lived all his life near Berlin, Worcester County, Maryland, and always enjoyed good health until about one year ago, when he began to decline, until November 11th, when he was taken worse.

The funeral was conducted by Elder G. E. Coulbourne, who spoke words of comfort to the family and friends. Interment was in the cemetery near Liberty.

Written by request.

GEO. F. ADKINS.

Baptist Hardy was born four miles northeast of Mendon, Ill., October 20th, 1850, and died February 8th, 1928, aged 77 years, 3 months and 19 days. He was the youngest son of nine children, all of whom preceded him in death. He was married to Mary J. Stowe, by Elder Rice Harris, March 1st, 1871, and to them six children were born, of whom three are still living, three passing away at the ages of eight, six and four years, the oldest and youngest of these three dying within three days of diphtheria. Both brother and sister Hardy united with the Primitive Baptists at New Providence Church Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1878. After going west, where some years were spent, they settled in Lorraine, Ill., where he passed away, leaving the wife, three children, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

The last services were conducted by the writer, and the remains were laid in the cemetery which surrounds the church of his memberships, north of Ursa, Illinois.

CLAUD E. WEBB.

Curence Ervine Wilmoth was born March 23rd, 1882, and departed this life June 11th, 1927, making his stay on earth 45 years, 3 months and 18 days. He was the son of Johnson R. and Julia C. Wilmoth, of Montrose, Va. He was a pious young man in his young days, and professed a hope in Christ several years ago, and talked sound doctrine to his mother, who is a member of the Old School Baptist Church, but for some reason he went with his wife to the New School Baptist meetings, and joined them. He was an orderly walking man, and all who knew him spoke well of him. In 1904 he was married to Effie Leisure. His home was in Clarksburg, W. Va. He leaves a mother and wife, four brothers and two sisters to mourn their loss.

ALSO,

Norman Perry, my wife's grandson, departed this life December 20th, 1927. He was eleven years of age, and was the son of Alvin and Ettie Perry, of Elkins, Va. He will be missed by his family and relatives, for he was an affectionate boy. On his dying bed he told his mother he knew that Jesus loved him.

G. B. McCLANAHAN.

Elder Rufus Dodd Bennette was born January 17th, 1855, and fell asleep December 28th, 1927, making his stay among us 72 years, 11 months and 11 days. He was married to Myria Starks, daughter of L. B. Starks, January 4th, 1877, and to that union was born one son, Eddie Bennette. Death claimed Myria as its prize September 1st, 1887. August 12th, 1888, he was married to Augustus Yates, and to that union three sons were born: Prester, Hester and Chester. He is survived by a wife, four sons, three brothers: Joe Bennette, of Clinton, Ky., John Bennette, of Memphis, Tenn., and Si Bennette, of Missouri, also a number of friends. Brother Bennette was born, reared and lived in this community within a radius of a few miles. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Bethel some thirty years ago, and was ordained for the ministry by the Primitive Baptists June 30th, 1912. He took an active part in supporting the Primitive Baptist cause in this section, and was a strong believer in and advocated the doctrine of absolute predestination, and salvation by grace. He was widely known among his brethren of western Kentucky and Tennessee, and was loved by them all. Brother Bennette had been afflicted for a number of years, although he bore it all cheerfully. He was a kind father, a loving husband and a good neighbor, and will be missed by his family, relatives, brethren, neighbors and friends.

I, being the pastor of the church at Bethel, of which Elder R. D. Bennette was a member, was called to conduct his funeral, and tried with the ability God gave me to speak to a large assembly of people, and set forth as we understand the doctrine of God our Savior, salvation by grace, through the atoning merits of the shed blood of the crucified Redeemer.

T. J. PRINCE.

Mrs. Nannie Dickerson White, wife of our brother and Deacon Harvey J. White, of Poolesville, Maryland, departed from this earthly life February 8th, 1928, after a serious illness of several weeks. She was in the 58th year of her age and was the daughter of Wallace and Avilda Allnutt Poole, both deceased. She is survived by her only brother, Wallace Poole, of Poolesville, Md. She was married to brother Harvey White in February, 1922. She was a member of the Protestant Episcopal denomination

and the funeral services were conducted by her pastor, burial in the Monocacy Cemetery, at Beallsville, Md. Mrs. White had a very charming cultured and refined personality which endeared her to a large circle of friends and acquaintances. She attended very often the meetings of the Old School Baptist Church and did not hesitate to say she enjoyed the preaching whenever she did so. Her home was open to the entertainment of the brethren and friends of her husband and it was her constant endeavor to make all of us feel perfectly at home there. She loved to entertain, and could do it most beautifully, hospitality being one of her many fine traits. Our hearts go out in sympathy to the surviving brother and his family, but especially to our brother Harvey, who has twice been called upon by the Almighty to give up his companion, his first wife having died seven or eight years ago. May the Lord comfort them in their sorrow. The heavenly Father doeth all things well.

L.

It is with a sad heart that I notify you of the death of my dear companion, **W. H. Connelly,** who passed away July 26th, 1927. He had been a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for a number of years, and enjoyed reading it very much, I also enjoy reading it, and still want it.

CLARA E. CONNELLY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Virginia L. Simpson, D. C., $30; Daniel Ferguson, Ont., $3; Mrs. A. P. McDougald, Ont., $2; "A Friend," Ont., $2; Harry S. Fenney, N. Y., $2.25; Mathias Burgher, N. Y., $2; Woburn Church, Mass., $10; Sarah E. Rice, Va., $1; H. W. Norman, Ark., $3; Unetta Hamilton Hargitt, Ky., $1; E. J. S. Lee, Tex., $1; Douglas Topping, Md., $2; Mrs. J. A. Hurley, Mich., $3; Mrs. Mary A. Drew, N. Y., $1; Elizabeth Rittenhouse, N. J., $4; W. K. Baird, Ky., $20.

PREDESTINATION.

One party has sent about twenty orders for this book; about six hundred have been distributed, yet there are a large number of brethren known to me personally who seem indifferent. I am willing to send to any one on approval, and will make a gift to any one who cannot pay for a copy.

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R. LESTER DODSON,
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MEETINGS.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 245 Lacadana Drive, Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

THE Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., meets every second, third and fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m. in the meetinghouse on Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday of each month at the home of brother J. W. Haynes, 459 E. 5th St., Riverside, Calif., and at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. 11th St., Claremont, Calif., on the first Sunday of each alternate month, beginning with January, and on every alternate month with brother Joseph Huffman, 128 Van Buren St., Arlington, Calif. Singing at 10:30 a. m. Preaching at 11 a. m. Lunch at the place of meeting, and continued services in the afternoon.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

HEBREWS XI. 8.

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; for he went out, not knowing whither he went."

To the eyes of sense how foolish all this appears. If any one had accosted Abraham when he was starting upon that journey, saying, Whither goest thou, Abraham? He would have answered, I know not the land to which I am going, I have not seen it, but God hath said, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee." Whether it were north or south, east or west he knew not, but he obeyed the voice of the Lord, that voice so graciously wrought in him. Moved by faith in God he took his first step, and all the steps from day to day to the promised land were "steps of that faith of our father Abraham."—Rom. iv. 12. He walked by faith and not by sight. He knew not where the country was situated, or the way to this promised land, but his feet were guided by the Almighty. "He went out, not knowing whither he went." But did he not know why he went, and with whom he was going unto the place that he should after receive for an inheritance? What impelling power constrained him to forsake the land of his nativity, and all his father's house to go whither he knew not? God himself tells us, "I called him alone, and blessed him," Isaiah li. 2, and Abraham told the king of Gerar, "God caused me to wander from my father's house."—Gen. xx. 13. This is what the Lord said unto Abraham, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."—Gen. xii. 1-3. The voice of the Lord took hold of him, and moved him to believe in, to hope in, to be obedient to him who spake. "So Abraham departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him." Abraham believed God. What mercy it is to be a believer in God. What a wonderful thing it is that Jehovah should be mindful of a poor sinner, incline him unto himself, and that that sinner should be so

wrought of God's grace that he should become the friend of God. (James ii. 23.) Yes, it is all of his gracious workmanship in us that we are drawn and persuaded to confide in him, and find repose and strength in our trust in him. We believe according to the working of his mighty power. "I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him." This was the eternal purpose in Christ Jesus, according to Jehovah's sovereign, eternal, electing love. When that wonderful, gracious voice entered Abraham's heart it apprehended him, ravished his spirit, and he was transformed from being an idolater to worship the Almighty. He was drawn and held fast to God, who from eternity was his friend, and now henceforth Abraham is the friend of God. Oh what a Friend Abraham had!

"There is a Friend that sticketh fast,
And keeps his love from first to last,
And Jesus is his name;
An earthly brother drops his hold,
Is sometimes hot, and sometimes cold,
But Jesus is the same.

He loves his people great and small,
And grasping hard embraceth all,
Nor with a soul will part;
No tribulations which they feel,
No foes on earth, or fiends of hell,
Shall tear them from his heart.

Is the Savior Jesus Christ my friend? God loved Abraham from everlasting, and came revealing himself so rich, so kind, so bountiful. He came in his call of Abraham unbosoming to him his eternal thoughts, not only with respect to the things of time, but also relating to eternity. Thus the eternal counsel of Jehovah was unfolded, "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."—Gen. xii. 2, 3. Who was Abraham that he should be thus called of God and blessed? Was there anything in him that could merit esteem or give the Creator delight? Oh no. Abraham was alienated from the living God, a sinner, an idolater. It seemed good in God's sight to call Abraham. Jehovah's love for him (in Christ Jesus) from eternity was set upon him, and in due time he thus began to make it known to him. So "I called him alone, and blessed him." This is sovereign grace indeed. No others were called at that time out of Ur of the Chaldees. No other one that we know of was separated from his idols to serve the living and true God. When that wonderful quickening voice of the Lord came speaking so to Abraham there was power and grace, all-conquering and captivating in it. It was a voice beyond all human voices, surpassing all the imagined, fictitious voices of demons and idols. Indeed, by the voice of the Lord all fabled gods were scattered, cast aside to the moles and to the bats. Abraham was turned to God from idols, a heart was created in him to hear and to know God, Abraham listened to the Lord. How humbled that frail sinful man must have been. Such a poor consumed nothing he felt himself to be. He called himself, "Dust and ashes." What a name, what a self-humbling designation. Humbled, lowly, contrite in heart, but alternated with delighted and adoring amazement he was taught and drawn to worship God, his almighty, gracious, eternal friend. The Lord was with him in his heart by faith as he journeyed to go into the land of Canaan, and into the land of Canaan he came (Gen. xii. 5), and in due time the Lord said unto him, "Arise, walk through the land, in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee."—Gen. xiii. 17.

Abraham confessed it was God who caused him to wander from his father's house; so in all his pilgrimage days it was the Lord's graciousness that moved, upheld and defended him. Yea, he reproved kings for his sake. Abraham walked through the land, in the length and the breadth of it. But though this land was a country flowing with milk and honey, yet it was not all that Abraham desired; it was unsatisfying. What! A land so fair, so rich, that drinketh the water of the rain of heaven, a land which the Lord thy God careth for, the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year unto the end of the year, the glory of all lands (Deut. xi. 11, 12; Ezek. xx. 15) and yet Abraham not satisfied with it? He did not care to live in it forever, it was not his permanent rest, it was not his home, for thus it is written of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned: but now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city."—Heb. xi. 13-16. The land of Canaan was only an imperfect type of the better country, and God gave Abraham some glimpses of the better heavenly land and the eyes of his faith were looking to this better country. So they died in faith after their pilgrimage of faith, filled with fond desire for the heavenly land, and the city, which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. (Heb. xi. 10.) Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness. So do all in due time whom God hath ordained unto eternal life. (Acts xiii. 48.) We believe according to the working of his mighty power, we then live unto God our Savior. He succors us by the way. He will not leave us a prey to sin, the world and Satan, but we shall be more than conquerors through him that loved us.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

TOPEKA, Kansas.

DEAR EDITORS:—It seems to me the inclosed letter will be fruit sweet to the taste of those who have been led to the banqueting-house under the same banner of love, and also to others "seeking mourners" who are traveling the same "wilderness way." It is submitted to your judgment, to publish if you see fit to do so.

Still permitted to cherish a hope of immortality beyond this life, I remain, with love to all the household of faith, your unworthy sister,

MARY ELLISON.

PERRY, Kansas.

DEAR SISTER ELLISON:—If one so unworthy as I may thus address you. I will try, by the help of the blessed Master, to write some of my travels in the way I hope the Lord has led unworthy me. When I first saw myself a sinner before God I was about twelve years old. I was made to mourn and cry unto the Lord to have mercy on poor me. But as time went on, sometimes for months I had no trouble, then all at once, as it were, I would see myself an awful sinner in his sight, and would grieve because I could

not be better, and would promise my God on bended knees to be a better boy; but alas, how soon I would forget, and be doing the very things I had promised not to do. Thus it went on until my thirty-fifth year, when I was brought down to grovel in the dust. I could not see how God could be just and forgive such a great sinner as I saw myself to be. I had lied to him, times without number, not yet knowing I had no power to do otherwise. Many were the times when out at my work I was made to fall upon my face and cry unto my Maker that if it were possible to forgive such an one as I, that he would remove my load of sin and give me rest, or else let the earth open up and swallow me out of his sight, for I was not worthy to be seen among his creatures. It went on thus with me until I lost all track of time. The day came that I thought I must die. After an almost sleepless night, I was obliged to go to Oskaloosa to sign some papers. I got on my mule and started. I looked back at my wife and children and said in my heart, Goodbye. I never expected to see them again. When I started to return, about two miles from town I had to cross a hollow, and when I came to the top of the hill and looked down, it seemed to me a voice said within me, Down there you die; and I believe I did die. I stopped to let my mule drink and I layed over on the saddle, expecting to fall dead, when all at once my great load left me, and I saw a light above the brightness of the sun shining around me, and I was praising his great and glorious name for having compassion on such an unworthy creature as I. When I came to myself I was some distance from there, when it seemed a voice said, You are mistaken, you never saw what you think you saw, it was only a delusion. I rode on home, most of the way in tears, but with once in a while a glimpse of the smiling face of the Savior, with this assurance, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." I made up my mind to say nothing about what I hoped I had seen, but some time afterward I was walking with Sam Sater, and he began to tell his experience, and ere I knew it I was telling what great things the Lord had done for me, and had compassion on me. When I got home I began to tell my wife, when she threw her arms around me, and began to praise God for his great mercies, and told how he had compassion on her, and had revealed his smiling face, and had manifested himself to her as her Savior through the forgiveness of her sins. What a happy meeting! Some months later, on Saturday at noon I asked my wife if she was going to meeting. She said she was. I said I would come when I saw them gathering. We also agreed to still wait, but the Lord willed it otherwise, and when the opportunity was extended, my wife went forward and was received. When giving her the right hand of fellowship the opportunity was further extended, and, let God be my Judge, when I found myself Elder Peters had me by the hand. I told a few words of what I have here written, was received and we were baptized. In a few months Elder Peters died and Little Flock Church was left without a pastor. By invitation Elder A. D. Jones and Elder P. M. Gibbs began to preach there once a month. Then my troubles began anew, and, if possible, worse than ever. I wanted to be in order, but why had I, seemingly, been in where I was? I prayed earnestly and almost constantly to the good Lord for guidance. I mourned and I shed many tears. At last, one day I was on the road to town with a load of

stone, in the deepest of the trouble, when seemingly in the very depth of my being a small, still voice said to me, The Savior was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. The question was asked, Are you better than he? The answer was, This is your wilderness. I was satisfied. The next meeting was when my wife and I offered ourselves to the church, were received and baptized in order by Elder A. D. Jones.

I have only sketched my wayward travels in my imperfect way, and hope you will let the mantle of charity fall over my imperfections. If the Lord wills, some time I will write of my travels on to the present time, hoping it may prevent some other little one from committing the error I have committed. Sister, pray for me, that the Lord will strengthen and keep me in the strait and narrow way that leads to life, and that way is Christ. May the Lord bless you, and keep you, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

Dear sister, if the Lord wills, I will try with the ability he giveth to continue my narration of what I hope is his dealings with me. After being baptized by Elder A. D. Jones I enjoyed several years of sweet fellowship and peace with all the brethren, then the world, the flesh and the devil got the better of me, and I absented myself from the church until the brethren were forced to exclude me. Let me say there was no one to blame but myself. I felt I was all alone, and I was better by myself, but O, my sister, what bitter anguish I suffered no tongue can tell. I sometimes went to hear so-called ministers of Christ preach, but seldom could stay until they were through. When my own baby girl joined the Methodists I could not go to see her baptized, knowing it was only the desire of the flesh. Then again for awhile I was left to the flesh, and went on my way in peace and security, until the Lord looked on me, then, O, my soul, as did Peter of old, I went out and wept bitterly. At times, when I least expected, the Lord would reveal a smiling face, then oh what joy for a short season. But too soon that joy was gone, and all was dark and vain and wild, filled with unbelief and sin, could I deem myself a child? Sometimes I would be humming some of the dear old songs, and ere I knew what I was doing I would be on my feet, reaching out my arms toward the part of the city where I knew some of the brethren dwelt. Thus for years I strove, sometimes living at ease with myself and the world, but one little sound of that still, small voice and my tranquility was gone, and I was of all men most miserable. I feel I can say that the way of the transgressor is hard. At last I could stand no longer to be alone. I offered myself to the church and they received me back in fellowship, which to me is another great mystery. As it is written, Beyond controversy great is the mystery of godliness.

Now, sister, I have left out many things, some of them were very sweet to me, and some were the very dregs of misery and self-degradation. Let me admonish all of God's little ones to not do as I have done, but as much as in you is, cast all your care on Jesus, for he careth for you. Seek that strait and narrow way, and look to him for his blessing, for there is no other name given under heaven, among men whereby we must be saved. May the Lord bless us all as he seeth we have need, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

I am, I hope, your brother in hope of eternal life,

S. E. WEBB.

COLUMBUS, Ga., Feb. 28, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—Another year has passed and still I am left to read and enjoy the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I believe I am truly thankful for these blessings, and hope I receive and enjoy them in a spirit of humility becoming one who is the recipient of so many unmerited blessings. The SIGNS is indeed a welcome visitor each month to me in my lonely state, separated so far from my church and the people I love for the truth's sake. I am always looking for its coming with gladness, for it is a feast of fat things to a poor stammering heart like mine. Surely the editorials are edifying, full of instruction, opening up to us many lovely truths, explaining and expounding the word of God, bringing to our remembrance the wonderful finished work of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and the exceeding great and precious promises left on record for us, which are all for our comfort and encouragement as we walk on in the way, and, too, I do enjoy the many good letters written by the dear ones scattered here and there over the world, for I find in them like faith and hope and like experiences and thereby am comforted and encouraged. Sometimes I feel I would give anything just to spend a little while with some Old Baptist; not that I feel worthy of their company, but I have such a love for them that this desire comes, and I cannot help it. Perhaps it is not right, but oftentimes I wish it were my lot to live in the midst of a company of them and a church nearby, that we might meet together often and hear the preached word and sing the songs of Zion in praise and honor of the Lord. But I must not complain, for the God of wisdom and love places his children where it is best for them and for his glory. We are a scattered people, one here, one over there, one in among the brethren, another is isolated, and so on as pleaseth him. But these all trust in the name of the Lord. He is rich in mercy and nothing can separate us from his love. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved)." So we find there is no other way to obtain eternal life but in him, or temporal life either, for he is all in all to the christian. It is wonderful indeed that we who "were by nature the children of wrath, even as others," should be sought out and called by his grace from darkness into his light. When I (at times) review my life and see what I am by nature, and what I see in myself, I can hardly think it possible I am a chosen one. But how comforting to read in the word that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief," and that he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, and that his people were chosen in him before the world began, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. The source of our holiness is Christ Jesus, for, "This is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness." What wonderful, wonderful love, that passeth understanding! Oh the depth of the riches of God; how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out. So often I am made to say, What am I that he takes knowledge of me? Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him? Often I feel like a sparrow alone upon the housetop, or as an owl in the desert, cannot do anything but mourn and grieve over a hard heart. Looking back over my course from the time of

my earliest recollection to the present moment I am made to say,

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

We walk by faith and not by sight; not because we want to, but because we are so hedged in and about that we cannot choose our way. Our hope is that God is guiding, directing and instructing us in the way of righteousness. The desire of all the Lord's dear children who love him and his truth in sincerity is that their hearts and minds be lifted above earth and earthly things and be fixed immovably upon the eternal truth of our blessed Lord, rendering to him undivided honor and praise, and abasing the creature where he belongs. May it be our Lord's will that the dear old SIGNS continue long years to come. Many of us will soon pass over to that city not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, there to dwell with Jesus, to bask in the light of his love, to see him as he is and praise him as we ought, perfect and complete in him. But so long as time shall last there will be witnesses of his truth and love who will hunger and thirst for these blessed things, and our Lord will supply and sustain them in all their needs. As Elder Dodson said in his editorial in last September SIGNS, We know not how long it shall be God's pleasure for this dear paper to live, but we are sure that the principles of truth upon which it is founded and for which it has stood now nearly a century are as eternal as the everlasting hills. Oh for that faith which waivers not, but believes all things are possible with God, who doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, that we all may walk in his strength throughout our remaining days. "Zion, city of our God." The wills and shalls of Jehovah are around about this city keeping and preserving it through all time and eternity. It is a garden inclosed by his grace; no harm can come to it. But where do the inhabitants of the city get their comfort and sustenance? We are told the glorious Lord is in our midst, he will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams. Jesus our Savior dwells in the midst of this Zion, city of our God, and has fixed all things for his glory and for the joy and comfort and happiness of the people he has fitted to dwell with him there. It is only by faith we are enabled to see these beautiful things, and oh if we only had language to tell the half we feel to see and enjoy in beholding them what a consolation. I pray you blessed ones remember those of us who are deprived of so much which you enjoy: the hearing of the gospel preached regularly, meeting one another in church capacity, watching over each other for good, helping to bear one another's burdens, thus fulfilling the law of Christ. May brotherly love continue and peace abound among all the dear people of God, is the earnest desire of this little sister, the least one of all.

Yours in love and hope,

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

MONTROSE, West Virginia.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—After some delay I will try in my weakness to answer your letter I received some time ago. I can say I was surely glad to hear from you.

Yes, Elder Lefferts, I remember very well of your visit in this part of the country, and I do not think I can ever forget it, or the wonderful sermons you preached. You are not only remembered by me, but by many others. Father often speaks of you and of his

pleasant visit in your association, and says he would like very much to be with you all again, but he has a very poor opinion of himself. Elder Lefferts, do we not all have a poor opinion of ourselves? I am sure I do. I am all in all a mere nothing, always doing the things I should not, leaving undone the things I should do. I often think that if only I could live and be good, and not do so many things I should not, I would feel better satisfied. But we can only go so far. There was an Arminian preacher in our little town holding a revival meeting this winter, and he stood before the congregation and told them he never sinned in his life, and he had lived nearly twenty-five years. Tell me what you think of a man like that. There is no Bible for such. We are sinners from beginning to the end. When sin is finished it bringeth forth death. We live in sin and we die in sin. 1 John i. 10: "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." We find in second Timothy, fourth chapter, third and fourth verses: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." Those words are being fulfilled every day, and how true they are. Many are the false teachers in the land. If it were possible they would deceive the very elect. But the most high God will care for his little ones, not one of them shall be lost; no, not one. He will never leave nor forsake them. Oh what a blessed Savior he is. All power is his.

"All hail the power of Jesus' name,
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all."

Yes, he has all power, both in heaven and in earth. Yes, Elder Lefferts, we have been blessed for some time with peace in our churches, and hope it may continue that way. We cannot hold our meetings regularly all the time during the winter, as father's health is very poor, and in bad weather he cannot get out to attend the meetings.

I will bring this to a close as it is very rambling and lengthy. I hope to hear from you soon, if you care about writing to such an one as I.

From an unworthy brother, if one at all,

BENTON D. MURPHY.

POCA, W. Va., Feb. 12, 1928.

ELDER G. B. MCCLANAHAN:—You are my dear brother in the flesh, and I feel to hope we are brethren in the Spirit, by being born of the Spirit. As you have requested me to write on some portion of the Scriptures, I quote this text for a foundation for a few remarks, Luke xxiii. 42, which reads as follows: "And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." In the beginning of this chapter, and on, we have a wonderful account of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and the two thieves that were crucified, the one on the right hand and the other on his left, and in the agony of death "one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." His speech proves clearly that he was ignorant of the character and the mission of Christ into the world to save poor lost and ruined sinners, that he was in a state of carnality, without God and without Christ in the world. "But the other answering, rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? and we indeed

justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss." This poor thief confessed the justice of his condemnation, he felt the power and justice of God's holy law resting upon him in the agony of his suffering in soul and body, and with a broken heart and a contrite spirit he turned to Christ the Savior of lost and helpless sinners, the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, and said unto Jesus, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." He was a poor beggar at the door of mercy, where every poor sinner is brought before he can rejoice in a finished salvation through the blood and imputed righteousness of Christ our precious Savior. But let us remember that Jesus heard the plaintive cry of the poor man hanging by his side, though they were both suffering the pangs of death, "and Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Oh how this tried soul must have leaped for joy when the words of the Lord Jesus Christ saluted his ear and filled his soul with joy that passeth all understanding. This was about the sixth hour, and so terrible was the scene that darkness covered the earth until the ninth hour. The sun, the greatest light of this world, was eclipsed because of the suffering of Jesus the Christ of God. About the ninth hour Jesus cried, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." The vail of the temple was rent in twain. It was then that Jesus said it was finished and gave up the ghost. His Spirit that he commended into the hand of his Father left his body still in death on the cross. His Spirit went to paradise, as he told the poor thief: "To day shalt thou be with me in paradise," the home of the spirits of just men made perfect, as the apostle says in Hebrews xii. 23. As the elect people of God were all sinners by the transgression of Adam in the garden of Eden, which brought sin and death upon his posterity, for that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, Jesus Christ, the second man Adam, a quickening Spirit, came into this world clothed with authority and power to seek and save all God had given him. Jesus, the atoning sacrifice, who offered himself without spot to God, and by this one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, set apart to this end, in the annals of eternity. They are the covenant family of God's mercy, and made heirs according to the hope of eternal life which God promised before the world began. I now feel to notice the words of our Savior Jesus Christ: "Verily, verily," a double note of attention, "I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life." Again, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." This is proof that every poor sinner that has heard the voice of Jesus and believeth in God that sent him has eternal life. They were once dead in trespasses and sin, but are now quickened, raised up in higher order of life, death can have no more dominion over them, for they have passed from death unto life. Then Jesus tells them, I say unto you, "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Yes, they that hear shall live, they shall live in the Spirit, for God gave them the hearing ear. Let him that

hath an ear to hear, hear what the Spirit saith unto the church. They live in vital union with Christ, their living head. Jesus said, Because I live ye shall live also. When death comes the body returns to the dust, and the spirit to the God that gave it. I speak of the children of God to join the disembodied saints that have gone before to paradise, to God and the Lamb in the world of eternal glory. "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."—2 Cor. v. 1-4. The Scripture just quoted proves that there is a conscience entity in the spirit only, as flesh and blood cannot enter the paradise of God. Yes, called soul, the hidden man of the heart, the inner man, while the old man, the outer man, is to go back to dust, for dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return. The Spirit of God dwells in his elect, chosen, redeemed, regenerated children, and when they put off this body at death, their spirits will go to the glory world. To-day there is no day to succeed this gospel day, so to-day applies to all the saints of God who have died since Jesus Christ gave up the ghost on the cross, saying, It is finished. The dying thief said, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom, and in reply Jesus said, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

My dear brother, I must say this has been the saddest winter of my life. I have been in darkness much of the time, and am made often to wonder, Am I a poor deceived mortal? or is there any one like me, a poor, old, sinful worm of the earth? When I received the telegram that my son had dropped dead, and I was not able to go see him buried, I wept bitterly, and in the midst of my weeping these words came to me: The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. Oh can I say, Blessed be the name of the Lord? It seemed to be a hard task for me while there was a wrestling between the flesh and the Spirit, if indeed I have the Spirit of God dwelling in me. Then this Scripture came to me with power: "The children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Then I felt within my aching heart, If my boy was a Jacob his spirit has gone on to glory, and if he was an Esau there is no power that can change the decrees of our God, so be ye reconciled to God, for the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knows them that are his.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

SUTTON, W. Va., Feb. 6, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending a letter from dear old brother James W. McClanahan to me, which I would like to see published at your convenience, if it meets your approbation.

Yours in a blessed hope,

J. R. DENNISON.

POCA, W. Va., Dec. 29, 1927.

DEAR BROTHER DENNISON:—I have delayed writing you so long that I almost feel ashamed to make the attempt. I

have been in great darkness and trouble, until I could not collect anything together that would be worth writing, or that I would not be ashamed to have you read; however I know there is no brother living who would be more willing to cast the mantle of charity over my imperfections than you. I hope you and yours are all well, and that you are blessed with spiritual light and comfort. O my dear brother, what a blessing when the blessed Jesus by the power of his holy Spirit drives away the dark clouds that have gathered so thick and thundered loud in our troubled souls, with doubts and fears, anxious to know, Am I his, or am I not? And when the power of his love is poured into our aching hearts it is then we feel the joy of salvation springing up in our souls the praise and glory of our adorable Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who died for our offences and rose again for our justification.

Since I took up my pen to write you this text has been on my mind, so if the Lord is moving me to express my views on the text it will be of interest to you. The text is found in the book Hosea iii. 1, 2: "Then said the Lord unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the Lord toward the children of Israel, who look to other gods, and love flagons of wine. So I bought her to me for fifteen pieces of silver, and for an homer of barley, and an half homer of barley." To my mind the Gentile sister is the woman beloved of her friend, Jesus being the lover and friend of helpless sinners. "Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the Lord toward the children of Israel." This Gentile sister, or woman, stood in the covenant of redemption beloved of her friend (Jesus) equally with the elect or Jewish fold, or church, while she was debarred from the fellowship of the Jewish fold. Jesus, speaking of the elect Gentile, said, Other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them I must also bring, and there shall be one shepherd, and one fold. Now to me it appears that Solomon spoke of this woman beloved of her friends when he said, "We [the Jewish fold] have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day [gospel day], when she shall be spoken for? If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver: and if she be a door, we will inclose her with boards of cedar."

"So I bought her to me for fifteen pieces of silver." The full price Judas received for betraying Christ was thirty pieces of silver, which was equally representing the purchase of both elect Jew and Gentile. In this I see the silver representing the preciousness of the atoning blood of Jesus Christ which bought his bride to himself, so he tells her, You are not your own, for you are bought with a price. Zechariah ix. 12: "So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver." "So I bought her to me for fifteen pieces of silver, and for an homer of barley, and an half homer of barley." To me barley in the grain, or ground to meal or flour, represents unleaven bread, Christ being the bread of life, an homer being a Hebrew measure. "And she said, These six measures of barley gave he me: for he said to me, Go not empty unto thy mother in law."—Ruth iii. 17. To my mind Ruth is the type of the woman beloved of her friend and Boaz is a type of Jesus her friend. We notice Naomi, and Ruth her daughter-in-law with her, came to Bethlehem in the beginning of the barley harvest. I think this means in the beginning of the gospel dispensa-

tion, for we see that Peter was convinced that God had a people among the Gentiles. In this cluster of typical Scriptures we see much beauty and comfort to be gleaned from them. It was thought by the Jews to have no dealings with the Gentiles, and the sheet was let down to Peter with all manner of unclean beasts and creeping things, at the command of God to kill and eat, and Peter refused to do so, because he felt them to be unclean. God told him that what he (God) had cleansed call thou not common or unclean, so when he got where Cornelius was he soon learned the lesson God had designed. Then Peter said unto them, "Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean." After hearing Cornelius relate the dealing of God with him, "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." Now this being the beginning of the gospel harvest, and Peter the reaper, the gospel, the sickle, and every little Gentile Ruth gleans in, and keeps their eye on this field.

For fear I weary you I will close my rambling thoughts.

From your old brother in full fellowship with you,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

OTTAWA, Kansas, Nov. 8, 1927.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I have very recently returned from a delightful visit to relatives and friends in Virginia and West Virginia. After an absence of almost twenty-eight years many changes had taken place. I had the privilege of attending the Virginia Corresponding Meeting. I wish I could say I heard much good preaching, but what I can say is, that all the sermons preached were good, comforting and helpful. I wish especially to mention brother Coulbourne. This Scripture came to me at the time and has remained with me ever since, as applicable to him: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." He will, I hope, pardon me for speaking of this, for I verily believe it came from the dear Lord. Elder Ruston's sermon was one from which we would all do well to take heed. Elder Ker's preaching was clear and it could not be denied that it belonged to the Old School Baptists exclusively. Elder Rowe's sermon was beautiful to me. The preaching was all good, as I have already said, I just mention these as being special to me. I heard Elder Lefferts at Kearneysville the fourth Sunday, and his sermon has remained with me. Other passages of Scripture come to me at times as proof of the truth of what he said. Now that is all the preaching I heard, which to me seemed very little. My great grief and disappointment was that there was not more speaking of "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my

name, there am I in the midst of them." How dishonoring to him to not once mention his blessed name. Surely he did not mean that to be only when gathered together in a church capacity. I hope I have felt his visible presence when all alone, and such seasons are more to me than anything the world has to offer. One of old said, Take not thy Holy Spirit from me. He knew that things temporal perish with the using, and in one hour all our earthly possessions can be destroyed. God's presence will be with us wherever we are. "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there," said the psalmist. Some tell me they tire of spiritual things, yet they are hoping to spend eternity where all things natural are destroyed, left behind rather. Listen to one of old speaking for the Lord, "Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? yet my people have forgotten me days without number." It is said, Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price; and what a terrible price he paid. He laid down his life for his sheep; not one of them can ever be lost. Oh would eternity be too long to praise him for such a sacrifice? Paul says, "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." Our natural inclinations are to forget him and wander away after the pleasant things of the world, but the time will surely come when we can say, I have no pleasure in them.

If I have said anything that will offend do not publish it, but let me say this, A hope of heaven and eternal life is more to me than ten thousand words like this.

Love to all the brethren and friends I met while at the meeting.

ANNA McKINNEY.

BALTIMORE, Md., Feb. 14, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a check for five dollars, three of it is for renewal, and two for "the poor of the flock." I should have sent it before this, and my only excuse for not doing so is that I fall far short of doing the things that are required of me as a professed follower of the Lord Jesus, very far short of what I had hoped it would be the day I first heard the words, Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. I said within myself, I am no more a sinner, and shall forever be free from the curse that rests upon all men. My Savior was indeed near, and his ears were ever open to my cry. I feel to know that this was so, for I felt the witness within, saying, Thy sins are forgiven thee; I will be a Father unto thee, and thou shalt dwell in tents of righteousness. His praise was my song, and I hymned the great I Am all the day long. Thus was my soul full of praise to my God because he had made manifest to me that he was able to save even me. Life to me was one golden dream. I walked the highway of the righteous and fed among the lilies, with no thought that I should fall from so lofty a state. He had so sweetly said, Thy sins are all forgiven thee, could they ever return? I had read, I will remember them no more forever. Then, O my Savior, let me abide in the shadow of thy wing forever, stay me upon thee and lead me to the fountain of living waters, where the streams of life so freely flow. This is a fond remembrance of my Creator in the days of my youth. Does it carry you back, dear reader, to the time when he said, Come, for all things are now ready; come, O friends, and eat, &c.? But many years of trials and conflict have bedimmed this hope so I am often made to cry in the

valley for bread. Sin has returned with renewed force, so that I cannot do the things that I would, and sometimes I fear I shall be cast forth as a branch and burned up with the fire of unbelief. So many are my foes within that I seem to be living in the past. I am no more fit to be called a son. Thus do I see in myself all that is vile, can I deem myself a child?

I trust the Lord has been most gracious to you in your labor for the truth. My mind often goes out to the dear editors. How the dear Lord has blessed Zion in keeping faithful watchmen upon the wall, ever ready to cry aloud and spare not. May God bless you, my dear brethren, with his most gracious mercy, and give you that wisdom which is found alone with the Most High, then shall you be welcomed home with the blessed words, Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joys of your Lord.

With love to all who love the Lord Jesus, I am, I trust, your brother in a hope that shows the marks of many conflicts, D. L. TOPPING.

MACOMB, Okla., Dec. 12, 1927.

DEAR EDITORS:—I wish to write a few lines and thank you for sending me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the past year. I appreciate the favor, but do not feel worthy of such a blessing. It has been a great source of pleasure and comfort to me in my lonely hours. I enjoy reading the good letters and editorials very much. I live quite a distance from the church and my health is poor, therefore I cannot get out much in cold weather, so I can hardly wait until time for the SIGNS to come with the good news from a far country. I have many doubts and fears, and feel too unworthy to hope I am one of God's children, which makes me weep and mourn, but still I cannot give up my little hope. The best proof I have is that I love God and the brethren. Paul says we live by hope. John says we know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren, so that gives me renewed hope. If I am one of his children it is by his grace and mercy. May God continue his blessings, is my prayer.

Your sister in hope,

M. E. HARRIS.

CASTLEWOOD, Va., Feb. 27, 1928.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have been requested by many friends to have my father's pamphlet, "Life and Experience of Elder Lewis Edwards," republished. It was first published more than thirty years ago, just before his death, and as many of his brethren and friends have not a copy of this book, and after, I hope, prayerfully considering the matter I have consented to comply with their request, and while this was on my mind I was impressed through love of the truth to write some of my thoughts on doctrine and order, and to save expense have my writing put under the same cover with my father's book. Those who wish only to read my father's able and comforting book can do so without mingling it with my scattered remarks. I hope the reader will not take this amiss. Work of this kind is very costly and I am only fixing the price at about what it cost to get father's book printed, so the brethren, sisters and friends can get a copy of both books for thirty-five cents, or twelve or more copies, ordered at one time and all to the same address, at $3.60 per dozen.

Dear Brother Lefferts, I would dearly love to see you. I am inclosing one of my books under separate cover as a gift, if it is worthy to be called such. However I feel father's book is worthy, and hope it will meet with your approval. If it does, please have this letter published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as soon as circumstances will permit, that the brethren may know they can get a copy of this book upon receipt of price. Address, W. L. Edwards, Route 3, Castlewood, Va.

When it goes well with you remember me, one of the least, if one at all,

W. L. EDWARDS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1928.

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BAPTISM.

HAVING been requested by several of our friends to write on the subject of "Baptism" we would offer to our readers what the Lord has blessed to us upon this important ordinance of our God. There seem to be in the world a number of rituals called "baptism," but in the New Testament Church there are but two: baptism by the Holy Ghost and baptism by water. This would seem to be a contradiction of the Word, for Paul writes to the Ephesians, fourth chapter, fifth verse, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism," but in Hebrews, sixth chapter, second verse, he mentions "baptisms," as though there were more than one. We believe the baptisms spoken of by Paul refer to both the baptism of the Holy Ghost and that of water, while his reference in Ephesians to the one baptism is to water baptism, for was he not addressing the church at Ephesus (a body of baptized believers), and was not this baptism an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace? Some have thought that baptism in the New Testament took the place of circumcision in the Old Testament, thus giving them an excuse for sprinkling their children. This is not so, for circumcision was a type, not of baptism, but of that circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ. (Colossians ii. 11.) In the old covenant only male members were circumcised; in the new covenant all believers, male and female, that confessed their faith in Jesus Christ, were baptized. Paul tells us, "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." Sprinkling is not baptism: it was originated by the church of Rome, as was the baptistry used by the New School to-day; the Roman Church was the first to build baptistries; evidently the baptistry was one of the steps that the Roman Church took, from the river to the font. The Word says, "See * * * that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount." Calvin says, "The church granted liberty to herself to change the rites (of baptism) somewhat." With all the changing that has taken place for nearly nineteen hundred years, it behooves all God-fearing souls to go, not to man, nor to man-made institutions, but to the Word of God. How was Jesus baptized, and where? The Word says, "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, to be baptized of him;" and John did not use a small vessel, pouring on water, as we have seen in pictures, for the Word

says, "Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water," and this was not shallow water, that John dipped with a cup, for it also says, "And John also was baptizing in Ænon, near Salim, because there was much water there." It is thought by some that when Jesus said to John, "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness," that he was baptized for his people, and they then and there were baptized with him, yet we find these very people cling to infant sprinkling and call it baptism. If John's baptism of Jesus was the only baptism needed, then why did the disciples Jesus baptize during the time he was with them and afterwards? They did not baptize any but believers, for did not Jesus say, He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved? which clearly shows, even if sprinkling be baptism, that it is a presumptuous sin to baptize those who have not given evidence that they believe. It is true Jesus said, "Suffer little children to come unto me," &c., but nowhere did he tell them to baptize such unless they confess their belief in him. The Word is clear enough that "he may run that readeth it." We find in Acts, Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they that believed were baptized, both men and women, when as yet the Holy Ghost had not fallen on any of them, only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Evidently the preaching of Philip was God-honoring, for the angel of the Lord sent Philip to preach Jesus to the Ethiopian eunuch, and what is more, in preaching Jesus he preached baptism by immersion, for the eunuch said, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" and Philip tells him and us what is the requisite: "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." It is written, "They went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." Thus our readers have a true picture of believers' baptism, a "pattern from the mount": the minister sent of God, the person a believer in Jesus. How different from the sight of man taking an infant to a basin of water and sprinkling a little upon its head! The one is received directly from the Word of God, the other can truthfully be traced back to the apostate Roman Church, and began centuries after the time of Christ. We would not dwell upon these points as we do, but there have many come near to preaching the truth, but have denied that baptism is essential, substituting sprinkling for it. There are those the same to-day, therefore we would write plainly. Peter told the Jews to repent and be baptized, and when he was in the house of Cornelius, having been led there by the Holy Spirit, Peter preached the gospel, and the Holy Ghost fell upon all them which heard the word. Peter then said, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" John's baptism was a baptism unto repentance, and while he himself taught that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire, yet John's baptism was not sufficient for the apostle Paul, for on finding disciples who had been baptized of John at Ephesus, and who had not heard that there was a Holy Ghost, he preached unto them Jesus Christ and they heard and were baptized in his name. Because there have been men who preached salvation by grace and yet could not see baptism, shall we deny it or avoid the subject, or admit it

to be unessential? We say emphatically, No. If those men could not see baptism as a gospel ordinance, just in that much they were blind; that is, their eyes had not been opened to see it or they would have preached it. Teaching infant sprinkling as they do, they teach an ordinance received, not from God's word, but from the mother of Harlots, and in so much are partakers of her fornication. The Word saith, "Come out from among them, * * * and touch not the unclean thing." Whatsoever is of man is unclean and an abomination unto the Lord, and why do some say baptism is not essential? Was it not instituted by our Lord? Who dares to say that a command of the King of kings is not essential? It was an open confession to the world that the believer was dead to the world, and until dead that person should not be buried in baptism, for it is an awful thing to bury a living person. When a believer on confessing his faith in the Son of God is baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost he is dead to the world, his former life and associates, and he lives anew, for old things have passed away and all things have become new. A sister only a few days ago said, "It seems as if since I joined the church and was baptized I have just begun to live; I am living a different life altogether. I have new friends and enjoy the love of the brethren." Former things have evidently passed away with her. This was our own experience when as a stranger the church took us in, and our delight from that day was with the saints, and we felt we were at home. We have known those who would have gladly sat at the Lord's table with us and partaken of the bread and wine, whom we loved for the truth's sake, yet they could not see baptism. To us, baptism is a door of entrance, for a believer, into the visible church; and as Philip preached Jesus, and in doing so preached baptism, so we say with the fear of God and the good of souls in our heart, the baptism that was ordained for us by our Lord shall be still presented as the ordered way in which true believers walk and have fellowship with him. Jesus said, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee." He also said, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

"'Mid scenes of confusion and creature complaints,
How sweet to my soul is communion with saints,
To find at the banquet of mercy there's room,
And feel in the presence of Jesus at home."

There is salvation in the church of God, and from experience we know that after the church received us and we walked in their love and fellowship none sought our company but those who loved the truth. Peter tells us that baptism does not wash away the filth of the flesh, but that it is the answer of a good conscience toward God. The ordinance of believers' baptism is God-honoring, and we believe they are honored of God who turn from man's opinion and institutions to God's command, not admitting any substitute or accommodation. It may be said in favor of the baptistry, What if there is no stream of water near? We answer, Jesus went from Galilee to be baptized of John in Jordan. "Where there is a will there is a way." Suppose there is a drought? We ourselves remember with comfort a person coming to the Second Roxbury Church, and on being received she asked to be baptized that day. As there was a drought we questioned if there was water enough in the stream. When we arrived at the place to our astonishment there had been boys there and they had put planks across the stream to dam it up for

swimming purposes, but our God had meant it for us also, and we baptized her there. But some will say, You cannot warm the water in a stream, and is there not danger of catching cold? We answer, no, not to a right candidate.

"Christian, if thy heart be warm,
Ice and snow can do no harm."

We have proved these things, therefore speak. Another will say, Is baptism at all necessary? Our answer is, "Jesus commands," and until he commands men had better wait. Our chief editor once wrote, "We would rather see five persons out of the church who ought to be in, than one person in the church who ought to be out." Should we try to persuade people to be baptized? We remember a lovely man (now in glory), once relating his experience to the church, but at the close he said he could not be baptized. It was a discouragement to us, we felt that the children had come to the birth but there was not strength to bring forth. We waited upon the Lord. Darkness surrounded that man in his experience, and after several months, while crying to the Lord to restore unto him the joys of his salvation, the Lord said to him, "Arise, and be baptized." He came before the church, was received and baptized, and we felt the Lord and not man had brought him to see and desire the blessed ordinance that he and not man has commanded. Such a command cannot be denied, and those who value their own souls will not speak lightly or ignore an ordinance of God. G. R.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in April (29th). All are welcome. L. B. FORD.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

King Chandler Spindle, clerk of the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church, died at the hospital in Alexandria, Va., March 11th, 1928. His death was due to a serious attack of appendicitis, and although he was hurried to the hospital and operated upon, death followed within a week's time. He was the son of our deceased brother Robert L. Spindle, and was born July 6th, 1877. He has two brothers and four sisters still living: Gilbert Spindle, of Clifton Station, Va., Deacon Grover C. Spindle, of Washington, D. C., Mrs. Agnes Robey, of Centreville, Va., Mrs. Gertrude Williams, of Baltimore, Md., Mrs. Lorena Darr, of Falls Church, Va., and Mrs. Catherine Cockrill, of Herndon, Va. Brother Spindle is survived by his wife and four children. His wife before marriage was Miss Ora Brady. His children are Mrs. Evelyn Gleason, of Washington, D. C.; Roger B., King C., Jr., and Fenton K. at home. Brother Spindle was baptized into membership with the Frying Pan Church in June, 1912. His father had for many years served the church both as a Deacon and as Clerk, and upon his death his son was chosen Clerk by the church. In this capacity our brother served faithfully and well. His home was seven miles from the meetinghouse and we have known him upon several occasions to walk from home and back again, to the meetings when no conveyance was available. The last meeting he attended was on Saturday and Sunday, February 11th and 12th. He walked the fourteen miles on Saturday and again on Sunday in order to be at the meetings. He frequently talked in our meetings on Saturdays and showed that the Lord had blessed him with a good mind in the Scriptures. He was a thinker and Bible reader and a man of deep experience and of good understanding spiritually. He loved sound doctrine and believed in maintaining good order and discipline in church matters. He was not afraid to speak his honest convictions at all times whether others agreed with him or not. As his pastor and brother in the church, I had no one more ready and willing at all times to hold up my hands and to encourage me many times when I felt fainthearted and weary. No language can adequately express our loss at Frying Pan in the death of brother King Spindle. He was right in his prime and in the midst of his usefulness to the church, to his family and to his neighborhood. He was respected by all who knew him and had served the public in the office of justice of the peace, and had several times been census enumerator. His wife and children are left sad and lonely indeed. They have the genuine sympathy of all the brethren and of all their friends. Brother Spindle has also for many years served as the Clerk of our Association, the Virginia Corresponding Meeting. His place will be exceedingly hard to fill. He was careful and correct

in keeping all his records. The funeral services were held near his late home at Centreville, Va., in the Methodist church-house, interment in the ground where rests his father and others of the family. The attendance at the last services was one of the largest ever witnessed in that community, a silent tribute to the regard in which all the people held him. May the Lord comfort the bereaved family and the church.

ALSO,

Mrs. Sarah White Williams, our beloved sister in Christ, departed this life March 7th, 1928, at the home of her son, Mr. H. M. Williams, Poolesville, Maryland. She was born January 15th, 1849. Her father was Dr. Stephen N. C. White; her mother Elizabeth Chiswell. She has one brother living, Mr. Nathan White, of Boyds, Md. She was married in 1865 to Mr. John Henry Williams. He died in 1909. To them were born twelve children, eight of whom are living, three sons and five daughters: Mrs. Betty Edmonston, Mrs. Wallace Poole, Mrs. Walter Pyles, all of Poolesville, Mrs. Wilson Ward and Mrs. Carter Claggett, both of Rockville, Mr. Otis Williams, of Round Hill, Va., Dr. Frank Williams, of New York City, and Mr. H. M. Williams, of Poolesville, Md. Sister Williams was baptized into membership with the New Valley Old School Baptist Church at Broad Run, Md., in 1909. She had received a hope in Jesus some years before her baptism and it was a season of rejoicing with her, as well as with the church, when she was given strength to come forward and confess her Savior in the solemn, sacred ordinance. She was gentle, patient and gracious in her manner. All of us feel the better for having known her and shall sadly miss her at our meetings and in the beloved family circle. She was very faithful to the church and devoted to the welfare of her family, her brethren and her pastor. She believed firmly in an omnipotent God and in the sufficiency of his grace through Christ Jesus to save all who come unto the Father by the Son.

Funeral services were held at her son's home in Poolesville, her mortal body laid to rest in Monocacy Cemetery, believing that Christ is the resurrection and the life and that we shall be like him and see him as he is at his appearing and his kingdom.

ALSO,

Mrs. Margaret J. Moon, our sister in Christ, departed this life at the home of her niece and husband, William and Mabel Coe, at 163 First Street, Perth Amboy, New Jersey, March 8th, 1928. She was the widow of brother Edgar Moon, who died in Camden, N. J., Jan. 4th, 1906. Sister Moon was one of the three children of Robert Davenport and Mary Ann Jenkins, all now deceased. She was born and raised in Lancaster County, Pa., in the neighborhood of Rock Springs. She was for many years a member of Rock Springs Old School Baptist Church, and was baptized by Elder Thomas Barton in the year of 1869. About three weeks before her death, she had a fall which greatly shocked her nerves, while no bones were broken, this led up to her death although not the direct cause, which was cerebral hemorrhage. She was born April 16th, 1843. It was my privilege to make my home with brother and sister Moon twenty-eight years ago while being employed in Camden, N. J. At that time we became closely associated and acquainted, spiritually as well as temporarily, and the fellowship and love of all those years have never been broken. I am assured by those present with her at her death that her passing into the great beyond was calm and peaceful, beautiful to witness, verily a falling asleep in the Lord. She was conscious to within three minutes of the end. A short time before her death she could be heard repeating the words of what is commonly known as the Lord's prayer and endeavoring to sing the words of a hymn. Sister Moon was very firm in the doctrine of God our Savior, was settled and established in her belief that salvation is wholly of grace through Christ Jesus and not according to the works of man. To her God was a Sovereign over all worlds, principalities and powers, working all things after the counsel of his own will. The funeral services were conducted at Rock Springs by brother D. L. Topping, licentiate, of Baltimore, Md., and myself. Brother Topping is at present serving the Rock Springs Church as supply. Those whose sacred privilege it has been to live with sister Moon and to be associated with her in the church, appreciate her character and personality. She will be greatly missed by the family with whom she lived at Perth Amboy and by all of us who loved her for the truth's sake. Especially will the little band at Rock Springs miss her. While sister Moon was not able to meet often of late years with the church, yet she kept in touch through correspondence with the members and never forget them. Her mortal remains were laid to rest beside those of her husband in the burying-ground at Rock Springs. She believed in the resurrection of the body at the last day when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first.

H. H. L.

Mrs. Mary Lefferts Leedom, wife of Jacob S. Leedom, was born January 26th, 1856, and died January 4th, 1928, making her stay on earth 72 years. In early womanhood she was married to brother Jacob Leedom, to which union nine children were born, five sons and four daughters. One son and two daughters died in infancy. Brother Leedom, four sons and two daughters are left to mourn their great loss. Sister Leedom had been in failing health the last several years, but her death came suddenly and

unexpectedly, she having been confined to bed only a short time. She was baptized by the late Elder William J. Purington in the fellowship of the Southhampton Old School Baptist Church of Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa , when only fifteen years of age, hence her membership with the said church was fifty-seven years. During my service as pastor of the Southampton Church I found her faithful, loving and kind, both in the church and in her home. She loved the doctrine of grace and the songs of Zion. The last sermon she heard was preached by Elder C. W. Vaughn, second Sunday in December, 1927, at which time the writer was sick and Elder Vaughn kindly filled the appointment at Southampton. Sister Leedom was much comforted, and so expressed herself to him. She was a good, faithful wife, mother and friend and we all shall miss her very much.

The writer conducted the funeral service at her late home, Saturday afternoon before the second Sunday in January, using for a text, "Thy will, O Lord, be done." Interment took place in the family plot in the Southampton Old School Baptist Cemetery. May the Lord comfort the family. H. C. KER.

Hattie Walonia Hudson, daughter of L. T. Bowden, was born February 22nd, 1877, and departed this life January 14th, 1928, making her stay on earth 50 years, 10 months and 23 days. She professed a hope in Christ the year of 1898 or 99, and was united to the church at South Mt. Zion the third Sunday in July, 1900. She was married to Jess N. Hudson June 17th, 1896, and to this union were born two daughters: Arvena and Lucile. Arvena departed this life August 25th, 1917. Sister Hattie leaves a husband, one daughter, a mother, one sister and five brothers to mourn their loss. She is gone but not forgotten. She was of a loving disposition, and all who knew her loved her for her kindness toward them. I will say to those to whom she was very dear by the ties of nature, Weep not for sister Hattie, for we feel satisfied she is released from all the sorrow and suffering of this old sinful world and is at rest with her loving Savior. We know her departure from time is a great loss to those who are left, but we feel assured that our loss is her eternal gain. It was God who gave and it is God who has taken her away. Oh that we could be reconciled to God's will, and be able to say, Thy will be done.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral service. Her mother being at the time afflicted and not able to leave her bed, short services were held at the home, and afterward at the church-house, where there was a large gathering of people waiting, after which sister Hattie's body was laid to rest in the narrow limits of the tomb to await the resurrection morn, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. T. J. PRINCE.

Elder J. J. White was born Feb. 1st, 1850, and departed this life Oct. 24th, 1927, making his stay on earth 77 years, 8 months and 23 days. He was born in Newton County, Mississippi, and when eight years old moved to Bienville Parish, Louisiana, where he lived the remainder of his life. He was married November 6th, 1870, to Miss M. J. Wood, and to this union were born five children, three boys and two girls. One boy and one girl preceded him in death. Sister Anna Bryan was the only one of his children to make a public profession of faith. She and Jeff have gone on before, John, Billy and Louisa still survive. His married life was one of joy and peace at home, sister White being an helpmeet indeed and in truth in every respect. April 9th, 1870, he joined the Old School Baptist Church and soon began preaching and was ordained in the seventies (I have not the date of his ordination) and was in active service the remainder of his life. When conditionalism was introduced among our people Elder White stood firm in the doctrine of God's sovereign decrees embracing all things, and by the grace of God withstood all the trials and persecutions that were hurled against him, the extent of which but few have ever experienced, but he endured them all with patience and was resigned to the will of the Master in all things. Brother White was greatly beloved by all his brethren, sisters and friends, and was one of the ablest gifts among us, and is greatly missed. We are left to mourn, but there is not a doubt our loss is his eternal gain. As a leader he was unexcelled, earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints. May the God of all grace fill up his absence with his divine presence, and may his grace be with all the bereaved giving them a mind reconciled to the will of the Master. They have our greatest sympathy in their distress. The writer tried to speak words of comfort to a large congregation of relatives and friends at Little Hope Cemetery, where his body was laid to rest, there to wait the resurrection of those bodies when all the redeemed of the Lord shall meet to part no more.

ALSO,

Mrs. M. J. White was born Feb. 14th, 1850, and departed this life June 4th, 1927, making her stay on earth 77 years, 3 months and 27 days. She was married to Elder J. J. White Nov. 6th, 1870, and to this union were born five children, three boys and two girls. One boy and one girl preceded her in death. I have not got the date when sister White joined the Old School Baptists, but it was in her younger days, and she was a real mother in Israel, as well as in her home. She was greatly loved by all who knew her, and was a firm believer in God's sovereign decrees embracing all things, and had no fellowship for conditionalism. Her deportment was unblemished, and she was an helpmeet indeed, both natural and spiritual. In all her trials and afflictions she was given

grace to bear them with patience. In her lonely hours she was often heard singing the good old songs of Zion. She dearly loved her brethren and sisters, family and friends. Sometimes her cup would run over and she would be made to shout the praises of her Redeemer. It was her joy to serve her brethren and sisters when with them, and her home was a sweet lodging place for them all. She was never heard to murmur over her trials, but would say it was her portion. Her memory will ever be a green spot in the minds of those who knew her. May the good Lord give us all grace to walk in his footprints as did Mother White. We feel our loss is her eternal gain. I will say to all the bereaved that they have our heartfelt sympathy. May it please the God of all grace to give them a reconciled mind to his will, and may his love and mercy dwell richly with them, is the prayer of the unworthy writer, who, according to her request, tried to speak to a large congregation of relatives and friends, after which her body was laid to rest in Little Hope Cemetery, there to await the resurrection, where parting will be no more.

Written by the least of all, if one,

W. B. VALENTINE.

Sister **Mary Slauson** was born in Vega, New York, July 14th, 1850, the daughter of Thomas and Prudence Faulkner and died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Earl C. Beardsley, in Halcottville, New York, February 13th, 1928, of pneumonia. In the year 1869 she became the wife of Cyrus Slauson, and they then settled on a farm at Denver, New York. To this union were born two daughters, one of whom died in infancy. After living at Denver for a number of years they moved to Halcottville, where they lived very happily until her husband met with a fatal accident while working in the woods, so for about twenty-six years sister Mary lived a widow. During her husband's lifetime she did not particularly care to attend meetings, but accompanied him, as he found comfort in them. They were very devoted to each other, and his sudden death was a great shock to her. For a long time she traveled in great distress of mind, for in addition to her grief at the loss of her husband, she was heavily burdened with a sense of her sinfulness. She was delivered by what seemed to her as an audible voice calling her by her name, "Mary," adding, "Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee." Soon after this happened one of her sisters found her singing. Her sister said, "I thought you said you would never be able to sing again." Her answer was, "I thought I never should, but I believe the Lord has put a new song in my mouth." A few days before her death, while lying very ill, she said, "Who called me? some one said, Mary," and we believe she heard that same voice speaking to her again. She united with the Old School Baptist Church at Vega, New York, May 5th, 1907, and was baptized by Elder John B. Slauson, and remained a faithful member of that church until her death. Sister Mary's home was open to the brethren at all times, and many are the brethren and friends who loved to go there for entertainment. She was always cheerful and ever ready in the community to help those in need and care for the sick. Her heart was in the church of God, and whenever she could be in the assembly of the saints it was her delight. She will be greatly missed by all of us, but especially by her only daughter, who gave her all the loving care possible. Sister Mary was not only a loving mother to her, but also shared in helping her to care for an afflicted husband. As her pastor, sister Mary's love and esteem has meant very much to me and my family. We all mourn our loss, yet our loss is her eternal gain. To her daughter, she said a few days before she died, "Hattie, I am going home, you won't weep for me, will you? I am perfectly happy, it is not death to die." Later she said to us, "The Lord has been very good to me all these years, and he will be good to you, my dear children."

The funeral was held at the Halcottville meeting-house, a large gathering of brethren, relatives and friends showing by their presence the high esteem in which they held the departed. We spoke from the words in Luke x. 42: "But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." Interment was at Kelly Corners Cemetery. Absent from the body, present with the Lord.

G. R.

Mrs. Lina Grafton Nicoll, our dear sister, passed from the scenes of time to those of eternity, Dec. 25th, 1927, at the home of her sisters, near Forest Hill, Md. The deceased was the wife of Thomas Y. Nicoll, and the daughter of the late Elder William Grafton. Though sister Lina had been in poor health for several years, yet none of us knew the seriousness of her condition until a few weeks before the end. At that time she and her husband closed their home at Aberdeen, Md., and came to the old home of sister Lina's childhood at Forest Hill, where her sisters could help care for her, and with the hope, too, that the change and complete rest from all care might have a beneficial effect upon her health, but it was not so to be. Though her kind husband and sisters did all that loving hearts and hands could do, she steadily grew worse, for the verdict had gone forth and the summons, Child, come home, and all the sighs and tears of loved ones could not change it. Sister Lina's doctor wanted to send her to a hospital, but she said, "No, I am not going to a hospital. I will live all the days of my appointed time, and prefer to live them among my friends and not in a hospital." When quite young our sister was baptized

by her father in the fellowship of the Harford Church, Harford, Co., Md., where she always remained a faithful, devoted member. Since her marriage, twelve years ago, she was so situated that she could not meet regularly with the church of her membership, but she remembered the home church with many loving messages, and never failed to do her part financially. After locating at Aberdeen sister Lina attended the Wilmington Church, that being more convenient for her than any other of her faith. She loved the assemblies of the saints, and there, indeed, she found her chief joy, her meat and her drink. Our dear sister suffered greatly, but never complained. As was characteristic of her through life, even during extreme suffering she was thinking of others, fearing lest those who were caring for her might be having it too hard. I never knew a more unselfish, self-sacrificing disposition. The smile that lit up the face of our dear one after the spirit had taken its flight seemed to speak volumes to me. I think I have never before seen such a decided smile on a dead face. As I gazed upon it I thought, Surely she is seeing her Savior face to face in that land of pure delight. Sister Lina leaves to mourn their loss, her husband, T. Y. Nicoll, one brother, Milton Grafton, of Aberdeen, Md., and three sisters, Misses Jennie and Mary Grafton, and Mrs. Howard Durham, all of Forest Hill, Md., besides many relatives and friends who loved her.

Elder W. S. Alexander, her pastor, spoke very beautifully at the funeral, from Revelation xx. 6, after which all that was mortal of our dear sister was laid to rest in the cemetery at Harford to await the resurrection morn.

Written by request. JENNIE GRAFTON.

Missouri Whitt, nee Cox, was born August 22nd, 1846, and died February 22nd, 1928, aged 81 years and 6 months. She was united in marriage to J. P. Whitt March 7th, 1864, who preceded her in death, and to this union were born five children: W. B., Henry and Sidney Whitt, who preceded her to the great beyond, Susie, James and Arminta Jordan, who survive. She leaves twenty-four grandchildren and twenty-four great-grandchildren. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Baptist Church when but a young woman, and lived a true and faithful member until death. Mrs. Whitt was hospitable and kind, receiving into her home all the brethren and sisters who were minded to go thither, and spared no pains to make them comfortable and happy. Her door was always open to the preaching of the world by the ministry of the old order of Baptists, which she seemed to enjoy. Mrs. Whitt is also survived by two brothers: James Cox and J. R. Cox, and two sisters, Phoebe Lyons and Ellen Durham, who sadly miss her. She left good evidence behind her that all would be well with her, and we feel assured she had received an abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness, and we have good hope that she is now in the sweet heavenly Canaan in God's holy peaceful presence, basking in the blessed sunlight of his smile, on the sunny side of sweet deliverance, in the fair bright world of glory. She was a grandmother in Israel to the unworthy writer, and will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

Her granddaughter, MISSOURI JAMES.

Mrs. Alice L. Hartford, our beloved sister in Christ, departed this life February 19th, 1928. She was born in Orange County, near Middletown, N. Y., February 24th, 1860. She was united in marriage with Mr. P. B. Hartford, now of New York, N. Y., and is also survived by one daughter, Miss Helen E. Hartford, New York, N. Y., one son, Nelson Hartford, Omaha, Nebr. One daughter (Beulah) Mrs. Leonard Jones, late of Winfield, Kans., predeceased her in May, 1927, leaving three children. She also leaves two brothers: Mr. Isaac V. Ellis, Pompton Lakes, N. J., and Mr. Eugene Ellis, near Middletown, N. Y. Sister Hartford was received on relation of her experience into the Middletown and Wallkill Church and was baptized by Elder Benton Jenkins, June 8th, 1890. The Ebenezer Church in New York City received her by letter April 7th, 1901. One of our most faithful members has been removed from our midst and we deeply mourn our loss, though not as those without hope. Her constant attendance at her meetings and the evidence she gave of enjoying the preached word has helped to confirm the unworthy writer in his call to the work of the ministry.

Interment was near Middletown, N. Y.

R. L. D.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, on February 12th, 1928, it pleased our heavenly Father to take from our midst by death our beloved Deacon and brother, **J. W. Newton,** and

Whereas, a more consecrated member was not to be found. He fought the good fight, he kept the faith, having earned that good degree in the office as a Deacon, and for many years served faithfully as Clerk of the Ocmulgee Association, and

Whereas, we all deeply deplore his death, but our loss is his eternal gain. He is resting from his labors, but his good works will live on. Our hearts are filled with grief, but we humbly bow to God's will, therefore be it

Resolved, that we, the church at Smyrna, extend our sympathy to his dear wife, our sister in Christ, Mattie Newton. Also that this be spread upon our Church Minutes, a copy sent to his family and a copy to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, at Middletown, N. Y.

Done by the church while in conference this 26th day of February, 1928.

T. G. WRIGHT, Moderator.

G. W. WEBB, Church Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

G. B. Paxton, Tex., $1; Mrs. Minta Mapes, N. Y., $2; R. T. Turner, Cal., $3; Miss Altha Drake, N. J., $2; Mrs. Bessie Williams, Ark., $1; Sarah A. Bird, W. Va., $1; Elder W. S. Bourland, Tex., $6; W. T. Judy, Nebr., $1; Sarah Clegg, Pa., $1; E. H. Winchel, Mich., $2.50; Mrs. Elbert L. Hulse, N. Y., $3; Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Okla., $2.

MEETINGS.

The Baltimore Association will be held with Ebenezer Church, 210 E. Madison St., Baltimore City, on May 16th, 17th and 18th (Wednesday, Thursday and Friday), 1928. A cordial invitation to meet with us is extended to all. Also Ebenezer Church has asked for the ordination of brother D. L. Topping to the ministry. This ordination to take place during the session of the Association. Therefore the ministers of our immediate correspondence are particularly urged to attend. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will (the Lord willing) convene with the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, on Wednesday, May 23rd and continue the two following days. Train leaves Philadelphia Wednesday morning via Pennsylvania R. R. Broad St. Station at 7:53 a. m. Get tickets for Newark, Del. Those who find it more convenient to come Tuesday evening can come on either the Pennsylvania R. R. or B. & O. R. R., and go to brother J. B. Miller's or Chas. Jarman's. Those coming by train from Delmar on Delaware Division and other points on that road Wednesday morning, will change cars at Wilmington and take train at 10:10 for Newark. Those coming Wednesday morning will be conveyed direct to place of meeting. As there may be some change in time of running trains you will please consult time table. Ministers of our faith, and brethren and lovers of our faith are cordially invited to meet with us. P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

The Middletown Old School Baptist Church expect Elder George Ruston to be with them the fifth Sunday in April (29), 1928. For convenience services to be held at the home of J. E. Livingston, 64 E. Main St., Cobleskill, N. Y., the Lord willing, at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. Also on Saturday before at 2 p. m. All welcome who desire the truth.

(MRS.) ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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IN

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ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

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(Park Avenue Hall)

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Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 245 Lacadana Drive, Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday of each month at the Swedish Lutheran church-house southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, Riverside, Calif., and at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. 11th St., Claremont, Calif., on the first Sunday of each alternate month, beginning with January, and on every alternate month with brother Joseph Huffman, 128 Van Buren St., Arlington, Calif. Singing at 10:30 a. m. Preaching at 11 a. m. Lunch at the place of meeting, and continued services in the afternoon.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.

O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 96. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1928. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THOUGHTS ON DEPARTED SAINTS: ARE THEY YET LIVING?

"Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him."—Luke xx. 37, 38.

During the past year the church of God, the Tygarts Valley River Association, as well as this association and other sister associations, have sustained a great loss, in the taking home to himself by our gracious Lord our dearly beloved Elder John N. Bartlett, of Philippi, W. Va., a notice of which is found in the February number of the SIGNS. We have, in our judgment, lost one of the best men of our age. He was a man most true in his personal piety, as we know from having enjoyed his private friendship; a man most firm in his faith in the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; a man intensely active in the cause of God and truth. If it is not possible that he was absolutely perfect, it is equally impossible for me to mention a single fault, for I saw none. He exhibited scriptural perfection, inasmuch as he was sincere, true and consecrated. He felt that there was a vital and eternal difference between truth and error, consequently he did not act or talk as if there was much to be said on either side, and therefore no one could be quite sure. We shall know for many years how much we miss in missing him; how great an anchor he was to this drifting generation, and how great a stimulus he was to every movement of the true church to hold to the old faith. While he lived for his home, for his brethren, for his church, he lived still more for God. He has finished his course, and while we do not sorrow as those who have no hope, yet we can but mourn that a great man in Israel has fallen. Surely the righteous are taken away from evil to come and we are left to struggle on under increasing difficulties. It must always be so. The godly must fall asleep, even as others. Though our life be perfectly consecrated, yet it cannot forever be continued in this world. It is appointed unto men once to die, and that appointment stands. We expect the present rule to last until He shall come who shall destroy the last enemy. We are not troubled with Sadducean doubts; to us, seeing that Christ rose from the dead, it is a matter of certainty that all

his followers must rise also; and seeing that Jesus ever liveth, it is equally a matter of certainty to us that all the saints are still living, for he hath said, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

The Scripture quotation at the head of this writing was fashioned in a place which has the air of death, burial and resurrection about it. The figurative voice came to Moses in the desert. This was a strange place for Moses: the living, active, well instructed mind of Moses, might in all the wisdom of Egypt, and full of noble thoughts concerning the living God, was buried in a desert. It is singular to see the foremost mind of the age in the remotest part of the desert, hidden away among the sheep. He who was a born king is here feeding a flock. It is death to Moses. Rest assured that Moses cannot be kept in this living tomb; he must rise to life and leadership. While there is a God and a providence Moses cannot continue in obscurity. There are certainties wrapped up in him which cannot fail. A man need not be a prophet to stand at Horeb and prognosticate that Moses will emerge from the desert, and shake Egypt by his resurrection. While Moses is in the desert he is thinking about another case of death, burial and resurrection, namely, Israel in Egypt. The people of God, the favored nation of Jehovah, with whom he had entered into covenant, saying, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people," these were in Egypt ground down by relentless oppression, begrimed with brick-earth, and black and blue with the blows of taskmasters. It has come to this, that they are compelled to cast their male children into the river and so to be the destroyers of their own race. The children of Israel have become a herd of slaves, yet they are God's elect people, God's favored family. It does not require a prophet to declare this death in Egypt cannot last; the elect nation must live, and rise, and go forth free to serve the Lord. No, Israel, thou shalt never perish. The voice must yet be heard: "Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go, that they may serve me." So while Moses in the desert is thinking of Israel in Egypt he sees a bush, and that bush is all ablaze. An ordinary bush upon the heath needs only to be touched with a match and in one moment there is a puff of flame, and then all is over; nothing is left but a trace of ashes. Yet here was an extraordinary thing, a bush that continued to burn, and was not consumed. Here was life in the midst of death, continuance in the midst of destruction. This was an emblem of God abiding with a people, and yet suffering them to live; or of the fires of affliction being rendered harmless to the chosen of God. He who spoke to Moses was the God of life, the God who could sustain in the midst of destruction, the God who could preserve even a bush from being devoured by the intense fury of flame. Is it not plain that the surroundings of Moses and the bush all favor a display of life in death, and resurrection out of death? Out of the midst of the bush there came a voice which said, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. From this voice our divine Lord teaches us to gather this fact: that God's people live when they appear to have been long dead: for he who cannot be the God of the dead, or non-existent, still avows himself to be the God of the long buried patriarchs. Our Lord proved from that utterance at the bush the continued life of the Lord's chosen, and also their resurrection. How did he do this? I will not go straight to the answer, but

wish to say a few things first which will, I hope, ultimately lead to the answer. In these words we have a glorious relationship declared. Moses called the Lord "The God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." The Lord at the bush as good as said, These three men have chosen me to be their God. So they had; through the grace of God they had deliberately chosen to part with their natural kindred in the country of Chaldea, and journey to a land of which they knew nothing except that God had promised that they should afterwards receive it as an inheritance. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were three very different characters, yet this was common to the three, that they believed God, and took to their God alone. They nestled in the bosom of Jehovah, while the rest of the world went after their idols. In all of their troubles they flew to Jehovah; for all the supply of their needs they resorted to him alone. They were men who had through divine grace attached themselves to Jehovah the Most High through the whole of their lives. It is a most sublime thing to see a man trust in God as Abraham did, and obey the Lord as he did in the case of Isaac, when he accounted God to be able to raise him up even from the dead. Surely there must be everlasting life in a being who could thus confide in Jehovah.

Next, these three men learned to commune with God. How wondrously had Abraham spoken with God! Full many a spot was consecrated as "the place where he stood before the Lord." Isaac also walked in the fields at eventide, and there, doubtless, entered into secret fellowship with God. The Lord also appeared unto him at night and led him to build an altar and call upon the name of Jehovah. Jacob also was favored with heavenly visitations. We can never forget that mystic dream at Bethel, nor the wrestling at Jabbok, nor the many times when he turned to the God of his father Abraham, and Isaac, and God spake to him as a man speaketh with a friend. Can those eyes cease to be which have seen the Lord? Can those souls perish which have conversed with the Eternal? We think not so. What was still more notable, the Lord entered into covenant with them. He made a covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob which he remembered, saying, "Surely, blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee." Could one imagine as wise a being as He is entering into a compact with a thing of the hour? More, would he give his Son Jesus to die to seal the everlasting covenant for mere insects of the day? I am sure it is not so. God the Father did in the everlasting covenant, before the highest dust of the hills was laid, according to his own good will (not because he saw any good thing in the chosen) choose out of the world to be created a people and gave them to his Son Jesus Christ, who shall at the appointed time come to Christ, believe on him, accept him as their personal Savior. In John we read, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." I feel that these beings so elected, called out, ordained to eternal life so graciously predestinated, were, by God the Father, imparted to them an existence which is not for to-day and to-morrow, but for eternity. A living God is a God of liv-

ing beings, and Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are still alive. This goes to show that the bodies of these saints shall yet live. God reckons his covenanted ones to be alive. He saith, "The dead are raised." He reckons them to be raised, and as he reckons nothing falsely, it is said by way of anticipation, "Thy dead men shall live." Inasmuch as a portion of these chosen ones are still in the earth, God who reckons things that are not visible to us, as though they were, looks upon their bodies as possessing life, because they are to possess life so soon. God is not only the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as well as every other covenanted one's soul, but of their whole bodies, souls and spirits. The hour is coming, in the which those who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and shall come forth. Our beloved saints who are sleeping shall continue so until it shall please the Lord to come with a shout and awake them, then the body of every saint shall come forth, no matter where they are, and they shall ever be with the Lord.

If Jehovah was the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, he is the God of all the rest of the elect, and he keepeth covenant to all. Wherefore we should be edified. This God is our God. He is a God to us and we are a people to him. May the God we trust, which is Jehovah, help us to act as an elect. If we are his choice we should be choice characters, and that we are if it be that he shaped our character.

May the Lord bless you and your work as publishers in carrying glad tidings of great joy to the many saints who are not yet fallen asleep, by the medium of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

J. C. WOODRUM.

CHARLESTON, West Virginia.

DALLAS, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have no desire for writing other than a desire that seems to take up a great portion of my time of late, and do so to get it off my mind. It may be that this will be consigned to the wastebasket before mailing; I cannot tell, for I do not know, and if it is cast in the wastebasket should it reach you it will be all right.

The people I want to talk to are those who have come up through tribulation, those who have borne the burden of sin and guilt, until it pleased the Lord to reveal himself unto them as the Savior of sinners, for he said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." I sometimes find myself in deep meditation over the whole affair, and wonder if I know what that yoke is, for it says, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." If it means join together it lightens the burden, and thus he enables us to know that if joined together he is ever with us our burden to bear, and as long as we live we learn of him. As often as it pleases him to come to us in darkness, in sorrow, in sadness or distress, we learn of him. He enables us by his grace and mercy to view the blessed Savior on the cross, where he put away the sins of all the redeemed children of promise. When he bowed his head and said, It is finished, he forever satisfied the penalty of death for those the Father gave him, and he said he would raise them up at the last day and present them without spot or blemish or any such thing. Have you not seen him and his bride? Can you not look yonder in the land of promise and behold

the bride and bridegroom? How lovely she is leaning upon the arm of her beloved. Behold, thou art fair, my love, there is no spot in thee. Leaning upon the arm. Do not miss the beauty and the most glorious sight of the view. Leaning upon the arm. Oh that the members of this body could feel at all times that the arm was near, that we were leaning upon that arm and that nothing can ever separate us from its protecting care, for he says all power is given unto him, both in heaven and in earth, and his promise is to you, dearly beloved of the Father, even when you are in darkness and downcast, and seeking again the smiles of his loving grace and mercy. It even pleased him to hide these mysteries from the wise and prudent and reveal them unto babes. We are all of us but babes in Christ, dependent upon him for all that we are or ever hope to be.

I greatly enjoyed brother J. R. Hardy's writings of yesterday's SIGNS, about the talents. It has many times in days gone by occurred to me that if I had a talent I had digged in the earth and buried it. But if we look by faith unto the perfect law of liberty we do not consume time to dig in the earth to hide things. This is most beautiful to me. I am so glad he wrote thus, for I enjoyed the entire writing. I have often viewed those I felt had been given five talents, as it were, and were improving them by using them very becomingly. When we fail to get the spiritual meaning of these things we miss all, for the letter itself has very little meaning toward any other source.

This calls to mind an experience I had when I was only thirteen years old. I had seen mother and father read the Bible at different times all my life. I knew it was sacred history, and good literature or they would not read it. I was in very poor health in the fall and had to spend most of my time lying or sitting around, so I decided to read it through, and I did, page after page. Many names and words I would not pronounce correctly, and all I got out of it was the consolation of saying I had read it through. A few years later, after it pleased the Lord to reveal himself unto me and give me a little hope in Christ, I opened to read again and every passage I read, skipping here and there on the pages before me, showed me something I had never seen before. I would read and cry, then read again. I was soon convinced I had never read it like that before. The more I read the more I wanted to read, but would not let any one catch me at it. I soon found a witness within to perform a duty, and this seemed to crush me so that I had to cease reading for some time. So when it pleased the Lord to lead me willingly and anxiously to this duty I felt all had been accomplished then and I would rest all the days of my life. But just here I want to tell you, most beloved, is where the warfare began, and it continues to this day. I have never been able to see myself as I would be. I have sat in the congregation when I wished I was where I could hear and not be seen. I have viewed the countenances of those I thought the most beautiful in all the world, and have seen, satisfactorily to me, that mark in the forehead, that evidence of having tasted that the Lord is precious to their souls. Yea, he leadeth them by the still waters, and enables them to drink at the fountain. He is the Shepherd of his sheep, and when they hear his voice they obey. Not one thing in all creation can resist him, for when he speaks it is done, when he commands it stands fast. Great and marvelous are his works, and his ways are past finding

out. We lean on him, and we learn over and over again that salvation is of the Lord. Sometimes I have a short season when my mind is fruitful and I enjoy some gracious sweet moments, and afterward thrive on the thoughts of them for days, and soon I find myself sensing a hope that all is well and that darkness will not appear so great again, and just as sure as I do I find myself mourning again his love to know. Thus the warfare continues. Sometimes it is sweet to know and to feel that these things must need be, for we would soon be puffed up in ourselves. Since I spend so much time alone I have hours to meditate upon these things, and often I find myself going way back years and getting a new feast on some picture in my mind or discourse I heard delivered by some able minister. It does not compare with the time being, but seems sufficient. I shall never forget the dream I had when perplexed about who and what the bride was. It was shown me that it was the church in all her glory. When some years passed and I was permitted to sit and hear it proclaimed from one of God's able defenders I thought I never heard anything so great, so grand in its beauty. I was satisfied with it all, and rejoiced to hear it proclaimed, for there was a witness, but to see myself a part of that body is where I fear. I cannot believe one so weak and unworthy, so unable to do that which I would, so often doing that I would not, could be a part of such a spotless and most beautiful bride. It is only when enabled by grace to view the promised land by faith that one can hope to be a part of that bride, and all through the great and matchless power of the all-powerful God, who made all things for his own purpose and glory. "Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." We are not to sail through this world as on flowery beds of ease. Our Savior suffered, he who knew no sin, bore our sins away in his own body. Have you stopped to think how they persecuted him, what they gave him to drink, how awful must have been the taste? He cried, "O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." That glory was as one, and as they are one so will be the glory of the children of promise. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." But that hope is anchored yonder in Christ. There is nothing new nor old with him, he saw the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that were not yet done, declaring, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. If we are unable to believe in that foreknowledge how can we believe in predestination? This to me is as sweet as the sufficiency of the shed blood upon the cross. The plan was all arranged and fixed before the earth was created. All things were created for a purpose, and are fulfilling that purpose for which they were created; no disappointments or surprises with him. It is, I will and you shall. Poor old Jonah thought he would get away. He did not want to go down there and deliver that message, but he did go, and he went exactly the route that God knew he would go. He was ready and willing. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good

pleasure. We have Jonahs in this world to-day. Some of our beloved brethren are true types of him, roaming here and yonder trying with all their power to keep from standing on the walls of Zion and declaring the whole counsel of God, but when the appointed time comes they will feed the flock, and there will be plenty to receive it. Just as long as this old world stands God will have a few of those children of promise in it. They may be scattered here and yonder in all parts of the earth, but they will be cared for, yea, kept as the apple of his eye. Have you ever thought how careful we are about protecting the eye, how tender it is, and how the least atom pains it? It was that protection that the old gourd vine was grown to keep old Jonah from suffering more. His punishment was sufficient, and he said he would pay that which he vowed not, and went on his journey declaring that salvation is of the Lord. I believe every child that is born of the Spirit has some revelation of what that old servant meant when he described his dwellingplace in that fish as the belly of hell. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise to us that he will be with us in the sixth trouble, and not forsake in the seventh. We may be cast down and in utter darkness, as it were, but that all-seeing eye and that all-hearing ear are ever wakeful to our needs, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. The suffering of this present world is not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us, for the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. He that searcheth the heart knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. Notice, according to the will of God. His will embraces all the heirs of promise. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Is it not enough? But let us go on. Our little hope in Christ and the revelation of his teachings enable us to believe that his power endureth forever, that when he begins a good work in us he finishes it till the day of Jesus Christ, and here is his promise. It is to you who have come up through tribulation and sorrow, yea, those poor and afflicted people zealous of good works, who tested and tried their own strength until made to cry out, Lord, save or I perish. We know from past experiences that in our flesh dwelleth no good thing, that we are corrupt from the top of our heads to the bottom of our feet, cannot even think a good thought unless aided by the divine Spirit. Here is what oftentimes is of great comfort, consolation and encouragement, as it were, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth,

nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." No wonder the poet wrote that old hymn, How firm a foundation, &c., and no wonder it is so often sung. I love that old hymn, especially the verse,

"When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace, all-sufficient, shall be thy supply;
The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine."

Sometimes I feel a desire to pray, but do not know how, and I grieve for the spirit of prayer. At other times I feel the desire to pray is a prayer unuttered. Just here I want to say I believe many prayers have been prayed and answered by those going about their duty. I may give you a better insight to my meaning, but the times have been with me when I hunted a place to pray, many times. Often I have wished I could ask if any have such seasons. I feel so alone in the world; surely none have such trials as I have experienced.

I shall now close by asking those of the household of faith to remember me when it goes well with them. May the love of the cause, grace and mercy enable you to publish and stand by the old landmarks of the SIGNS, is the prayer of the unworthy writer, who loves the doctrine of salvation by grace.

Yours in humble hope through Christ Jesus our Lord,

(MRS.) H. A. STRUBE.

HAVRE, Mont., March 18, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter from sister Elsie Gall, which she has given consent to have published in the SIGNS if you so desire. I am also inclosing postage for the return of the original, for such letters are very precious to me, situated as I am, with none of the Primitive Baptist faith near me. Such letters and the SIGNS are all the preaching I get.

Sincerely yours,

JOHN GIBSON.

FAIRMONT, W. Va., Feb. 26, 1928.

DEAR BROTHER GIBSON:—I shall not attempt to call this an answer to the precious and highly esteemed letter I received from you a few days ago, because I (a poor sinner begging daily for God's mercy) am so unworthy and lack the ability to answer such a letter as you wrote. However I hope that what I may say will let you know how much I appreciate hearing from one of God's chosen ones who can tell of the riches of salvation by grace and grace alone. Though we be strangers in the flesh I trust that we are traveling in the straight and narrow road, in the path the saints of old trod, ever asking for the old paths and walking therein, striving to be followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, humbled at his feet and ready to declare the whole counsel of God, at all times earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Oh may we ever be found worthy of the profession we have made, and may the grace of God keep us free from all the errors and delusions of the world, for if we were of the world the world would love its own. Thanks be to God that we have no fellowship with the things whereby men and women attempt to win souls for heaven, far be it from me to ever attempt anything that would not be giving all the praise, honor and glory to our blessed Redeemer. In and of myself I can do nothing; the carnal mind is enmity against God. Christ is all in all, the first and last, the beginning and the end, he has all power in heaven and earth, and none can stay his hand or say, What doest thou? He is an all-wise God, who needs not the help of man to

complete the wonderful plan of salvation. When he begins the work of grace in the heart of a child of God he will complete it, regardless of what man may say or do. He has a chosen people in every kindred, tongue and nation, and oh how thankful we should be that we have been given a hope of heaven and immortal glory. The doctrine of election and predestination is sweet to me; it embraces every one for whom Christ shed his precious blood, and not one of his chosen ones shall be lost, the elect, a remnant shall be saved. Should we not be thankful that we are few in number, compared with the great universe, for Christ said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom"? "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." He knows all things, and the covenant of grace embraces every one of his chosen ones, from the least unto the greatest, even though we feel unworthy and helpless sinners. Did not Paul say, Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief? Yes, if I know anything at all about the feelings of a child of God, each and every one feels to be the chief of sinners, willing to sit at the feet of their brethren with a humble spirit of love and fellowship for the household of faith. Oh what are the pleasures of this world? Nothing, they all vanish and fade away like the flower, but the grace of God is everlasting, to a home in heaven, a house not made with hands. One moment in the presence of the Lord is worth more than all the world to me. In his presence there is fullness of joy, and at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" He who has predestinated all things and will bring them to pass at his own appointed time has all power over all things, and how sweet to know that the elect of God shall receive a home above where joy forever reigns and praises will be sung forever and ever to the name of our blessed Redeemer. I ask in all meekness and lowliness of spirit, What could be sweeter and more secure than the doctrine of election and predestination? The people who have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began, and at the appointed time they are brought to a knowledge of the truth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is then they are made to see that salvation is alone by the grace of God, and what they say or do only sinks them deeper and deeper into the horrible pit and miry clay. They are brought to a realization of their own sinful condition and are made to cry, God be merciful to me a sinner. Lord, save or I perish. By his grace and unmerited salvation they are lifted from the shadow of darkness into the marvelous light of salvation through the rich atoning bread of our blessed Redeemer. Sweet is the hope then of immortal glory and the blessed assurance that Jesus forever washed away the sins of his people when he hung on the cross and cried, "It is finished." He finished the work of his Father and forever redeemed the chosen ones from death, hell and the grave. The sins of his people were laid upon him and he bore them in his own body. He was wounded for our transgression and bruised for our iniquities. He trod the winepress alone, suffering and dying for the chosen ones, the elect of God, thereby giving us a hope which is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail;

whither Christ the forerunner hath gone. We hope for that we see not and we do with patience wait for it. If we have hope only in this life we are of all men most miserable. The child of God has a hope of heaven and immortal glory, a home in the world above, where Jesus our blessed Redeemer ever sits at the right hand of God making intercession for his people. We are saved by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. Oh how happy we feel when the still voice speaks, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Yes, what could be sweeter and more precious to weary, heavy laden souls than a message of salvation spoken to them through the Spirit of Christ? It is the Spirit of Christ that keeps alive the little spark of love in the heart of every child of grace. He has taken away the old stony heart and given them a heart of flesh, a longing and a desire to be numbered with the saints of God, where there is joy and peace forever. "'Tis heaven below my Redeemer to know."

Brother Gibson, I just returned from home this evening, where I attended our regular meeting at Mt. Olive on the fourth Sunday in each month, and as my mind seemed to be wandering and thinking of the wonderful plan of salvation I found myself attempting to write to you. Please forgive me for intruding on your valuable time and for bothering you with this poorly written letter, but my soul delights in proclaiming the gospel of God's rich reigning grace, and, like you, I sometimes feel that I should not have written a letter or sent it after it was finished. I hope I have said nothing amiss. This is ever the fear of my heart and makes me hesitate to speak or write of things pertaining to the heavenly kingdom. I beg of you to cast the mantle of charity over these rambling thoughts, for I know and realize that my mind is wandering to-night. If there be one word of comfort in this for you give all the praise, honor and glory to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. I am teaching school and my address now is 1108 Locust Ave., Fairmont, West Virginia.

In bonds of love,

ELSIE GALL.

MONROE, Ga., Dec. 29, 1927.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I feel I want to give you some of my impressions or experience since I embarked upon the old ship of Zion, fifty-five years ago, when all the crew seemed to be lovely, praising God, from whom all blessings flow, making sacrifices of my time to visit all around to all the associations and churches within reach. Many tears of joy were shed when the men of God were feeding the flock, feeling to hope that I was one. I had some special ones who seemed to have more food than others. I soon felt some impressions to speak of the things of the kingdom, and was accused of having a gift, and was liberated to exercise it wherever I went, though I protested against it, saying that they (the church) were making a target of me to be shot at, but I was slow to get into any place unless there were some charitable churches there to encourage me on the way, being led along by some unseen hand, until one little church called for my ordination, and then my cares and responsibility were more than I felt I could bear. Then the way was made open for me to take charge of three more churches and I began to feel less and less qualified for the task, yet by the grace of God and the kind and loving encouragement of the brethren, sisters and friends that love has

grown stronger and stronger until this day, and I have been very bold at times to speak of things being the truth according to the Scriptures, receiving it not of man, but by revelation of God, being encouraged by hearing other men of God saying the same thing. But of late one of them told me he had seen his error after thirty years, and he hoped I would see mine, so I have been made to wonder if he has had another revelation from God, or man. Another good minister, who has been my right hand man, has been telling for over forty years that the same old doctrine of predestination was his meat and drink, and is still saying it with all his power. It is hard to say that it is false and that he never received it by revelation. Now I want to say that I have never had but one revelation, and sometimes I am made to doubt that one, and now for the doors to be closed to this old doctrine that is still my meat and drink, and has been for over fifty years, I feel that I am needing the sympathy of God's people until I have another revelation. The SIGNS has been advocating this old doctrine since before I was born, and this is the way that our fathers trod. It now appears to be a hateful doctrine to some of our own people, but I still want to keep company with those who believe this old doctrine, because their company is sweet and their union is dear, and I feel that there are enough of them here yet to keep house for the God of Jacob.

I hope you can visit us next spring. You will find enough doors open for you to visit. We are still believing that all things work together for good to God's people, and nothing can come to pass except it is in the will, purpose, decree and predestination of almighty God, for he has seen and fixed everything that ever will come to pass and all the men and devils cannot unfix it, and all our destiny in time and eternity is in his hand to dispose of.

Your brother,

JAMES M. ADAMS.

ATHENS, N. Y., Jan. 10, 1928.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—Just a word to explain my long delay in replying to your exceedingly welcome letter of 15th ult. I have felt my eighty-two years a bit heavy, and a rather persistent cold has kept me housed for a few weeks, until within the past three days, and then on Christmas night I mistook my way in the dark, and instead of passing through the back hall enroute to my den, I opened a side door and fell the full distance to the cellar. Fortunately no bones were broken, but I received many cuts on my face and head. They are now nearly healed, and I am thinking (I hope thankfully) of God's care over and for me, so constant and tender. I am afraid I may be burdensome to you with my too frequent and too long letters. Let me here say that while I greatly enjoy and appreciate your letters I am aware that you are a very busy man, so do not feel under any obligation to answer more promptly or fully than you can with comfort. I will understand you, and I am confident you catch my meaning.

I attended the funeral of my old friend and neighbor, Mr. Moore. The large attendance of his old friends and neighbors testified to the respect and esteem in which he was held. Elder Ruston spoke for the edification of his hearers, with nothing of eulogy for the departed, although he did pay tribute to his consistent walk before men, and of his restful trust alone in the work of Christ. To my mind it was the correct message. In the

SIGNS I read with deep interest the letters of my fellow old-timers, and this because I have so much fellowship with their hopes, and alas, also with their troubles. It is the same story I would tell of myself. A bright lining to the cloud is the fact that this depression is in itself a sort of proof that we have life. If the adversary did not assail us it would tend to show that we were willingly his. That is to say, this willingness to believe and trust, is an evidence of that life which is in Christ alone: eternal life.

Nothing but Christ as on we tread,
The gift unpriced—God's living bread.
With staff in hand and feet well shod,
Nothing but Christ, the Christ of God.

Everything loss for him below,
Taking the cross where'er we go;
Showing to all where once he trod,
Nothing but Christ, the Christ of God.

Nothing save him, in all our ways,
Giving the theme for ceaseless praise;
Our whole resource along the road,
Nothing but Christ, the Christ of God.

The editorial "New Year's Greeting," (signed L.) in January SIGNS is splendid. I have read and reread it with deep interest and appreciation. May our Lord in mercy keep us all very near to himself. With him as our centre we shall not be far separated from those who are in him.

Needless to say, I am always glad to hear from you, and my prayer is that as you seek to lead others in green pastures your own soul may be fed.

With much love in our Lord,

P. W. KING.

KNOXVILLE, Tenn., Jan. 29, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed is a copy of a letter from Elder G. W. Goin, of Oklahoma, one of our beloved faithful veteran predestinarian watchmen, who a few in our country assuredly believe that the exceeding great God called, placed "on the walls of Zion" and has kept firm in the truth for more than forty years. He was born and remained in Tennessee for several years after he became a minister, and has at all times and places where his lot has been cast verily proclaimed the high, deep and glorious doctrine. Although when he first forcibly felt his call to preach he could scarcely read or write, yet he has been wonderfully taught of the Lord. I am sending his letter for publication, by his request, in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and please forward one of the SIGNS to his address in Oklahoma. May the Lord enable you while you sojourn here below to always wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, and when you have served your appointed time raise up others to carry on the work.

An old predestinarian sinner,

W. B. ELY.

CRAWFORD, Okla., Jan. 17, 1928.

DEAR BROTHER ELY:—I will give you a brief sketch of my faith the best that God will enable me. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." I believe that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will and that he has a wise design in every event which he permitteth or causeth to come to pass; that each event and all transactions of men, even the vilest, are so many links in the great chain of Providence by which the eternal purposes of God are connected together and drawn on to their ultimate and glorious consummation; that from eternity God drew the wondrous plan of his government, viewed the operations and bearings of every event, and assigned each its place and usefulness. His will, purpose, decree and predestination are inseparable. He viewed through time and declared the end from the beginning

and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, and this all tends to the honor and glory of the infinite, holy, eternal and unchangeable God. What he has declared must come the very way that he foresaw and purposed it should come, and was so divinely arranged, seeing the wickedness of all worlds, purposing that the wicked shall do wickedly, without forcing or infusing it in them to cause them to act, he overrules all events and acts of wicked men to the praise of his glory and the good of his people. His eye is in every place beholding the evil and the good, permitting nothing to take place that would tarnish his justice. Destruction being uncovered and hell naked before him, he stretched the north out over the empty place and hanged the earth upon nothing. Every wheel is moving in its designed direction, rolling in various ways, performing the purpose decreed, every cog meeting its place and all rendering glory to the most high, holy and infinite sovereign God. Having willed and purposed every atom and particle of the earth, giving every creature of every kind its form and being, feeds the fowls of the air and makes grass grow for the cattle. This is he who hath chosen a definite number of Adam's race and hath affirmed that they shall be holy and without blame before him in love, having bequeathed to them in his will all the graces that accompany their salvation, sending his Son, our adorable Redeemer, down from the shining courts above to save this elect people, bearing their sins in his blessed body on the cross and putting them away forever. We hear him who cannot lie cry with a loud voice, loaded with mountains of sin for the objects of his love, saying it is finished, going down into the heart of the earth and rising triumphant the third morn. All the transactions of this wicked work God's hand and counsel determined should be done by wicked men. But he rose a conquering King over death, hell and the grave, and ascended back to his native heaven, which fills my poor heart with comfort and my eyes flow with tears to know that our blessed Savior this moment is making intercession for us with groanings within that cannot be uttered. He has fulfilled and rendered satisfaction, but his salvation to poor sinners is still going on and will until the last one is delivered from the kingdom of darkness and robed in that spotless robe, crowned with glory and brought in sweet fellowship with God himself.

This is a part of my views. My heart is so full I cannot write more.

Your little brother in gospel bonds, saved by grace, if saved at all,

G. W. GOIN.

LONGVIEW, Texas, April 16, 1928.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If you can allow one so unworthy and so sinful as I feel and see myself to be to call you brethren. I feel like you all bear the name of the Lord's children, and are called and chosen of the Lord, and I hope he will remember us out here, and that the brethren will remember us, a little bunch who feel we love to hear the doctrine that Primitive Baptists preach. If any of the Lord's preachers ever pass through here remember we live about five miles east of Longview, on Route One, between Longview and Hallsville. My brother-in-law's name is J. M. Farr and he lives five miles east of Longview, on route one, on the pike road leading from Longview east down the Marshall road. Longview is our postoffice.

I am, as ever, I hope, your little unworthy brother, E. SMALL.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1928.

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1 CORINTHIANS XIV. 34, 35.

"LET your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak: but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church."

In this day of so-called advanced thinking and progress, when the leading enlightened nations of the earth have recognized the equal rights of woman with man by granting to her the privilege of suffrage, the door has been opened wide to hear by the vast majority to, almost without exception, enter upon any field of endeavor and engage in any occupation or calling that may seem alluring or inviting for any reason whatsoever. Whether the sanctity of the home, which is the foundation of civilization, is not seriously endangered by reason of this supposed liberty is open to debate, but, however much we might approve or disapprove of the political aspect of this question, we do not regard our personal views of sufficient value to air them on this occasion. At best they would afford evidence so immaterial to the real point at issue that any competent judge would have to disregard them as being irrelevant and refuse to admit them to the record. We regard a discussion of this phase of the subject entirely foreign to the true lesson intended to be learned from the inspired teaching of our text. While to a great extent, perhaps, the Mosaic law has been the foundation of the legal structure of every civilized country in the world, the gospel church is not under that law, but is under grace. Our chief concern then, should be for an ear to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. Let us, therefore, leave legality and politics to Rome and her daughters; that is all they have and all they want, if we are to judge them by some of their illuminary stars. To read or listen to much that is said from their pulpits or broadcasted over the air is heartsickening to the true born child of God. Man, indeed, has sought out many inventions. Few of them are so mystic as the radio. What an amazing instrument it could be for the proclamation of the gospel if so employed by the Lord, but, alas, so far, we fear it is being used principally by the prince of the power of darkness and his angels for the advancement of error. As remarkable as this device may seem, it cannot be compared in wonder to God's method of having his truth preached and heard. Sometimes there is static in the air and we cannot secure the desired station, or when obtained it may be unintelligible, but when God directs a message to one of his saints, whether on land or sea, or in the belly of the fish at the very foot of the

mountains, there is no interference, for his word cannot return unto him void, but must accomplish that which he pleases and prosper in the thing whereto he sends it; and of all the wonders earth has ever known, none can compare with that which is experienced by the soul in the depth of despair on account of sin when it hears the still small voice of the Lord of hosts, saying, "Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee."

Let us now take a closer-up view of our text. By reading this fourteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians it is to be clearly seen that the apostle is dealing throughout with the subject of "prophecy," and it would seem he desired to make it plain that only men were to prophesy, giving much exhortation to them, which they would do well to take heed unto. Using himself as an example, he says, "Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?" That is, only that which the Lord hath revealed, which has been made known by the handling and tasting of the word of life, which the unction of the Holy Ghost inspires us to say, or the setting forth of the doctrine of our Savior is profitable. All else had better be let alone. He further emphasizes this line of thought by saying: "For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" "So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air. There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification. Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian; and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me." He later declares that he would rather speak five words with understanding, that by his voice he might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue. That the woman is not to prophesy, or teach publicly is specifically shown in the first verse of our text: "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak: but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law." In 1 Timothy ii. 12, 13, he says, "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve." The curse which God pronounced upon Eve at the time she transgressed the law was, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow, and thy conception: in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."—Gen. iii. 16. Eve here is a type of the church, whose children are brought forth through a great travail of soul, but her desire is unto her husband, Christ, who indeed rules over her. He is head over all things to the church and there is none upon earth she desires besides him. The woman, then, as a type of the church is to keep silence, she is not permitted to speak in her own right as one having authority, but is commanded to be under obedience to her husband. To this agreeth also the law. Under the Levitical priesthood no woman was allowed to officiate at the altar. The occupant of that office was supposed to speak as the oracles of God, or in God's stead. We understand no woman was permitted to even read the law in the synagogues or in the congregations, as it was thought a dishonorable thing. The office of Bishop, or gospel minister to-day is of the highest

importance, and nothing shall take precedence over the duties of the anointed of the Lord. The things of this world are secondary; so much so that not even the honor of childbearing or rearing is to interfere with this work of the Lord. Some of our ministering brethren are too eager to look for excuses to get out of filling appointments. What shall a man profit if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Some of our good sisters have construed our text to imply that they should not speak in our conference meetings, or to have any voice in the affairs of the church by voting on the various questions which come up in her order of business. Certainly that cannot be the meaning, else the Scriptures would at least seem to be inconsistent, for we find a different teaching to that version, both in the Old and New Testaments. In Malachi iii. 16 it is said, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." In first Peter iii. 15 we find this: "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." There is certainly nothing in either one of these portions of Scripture to indicate any distinction between the sexes, for in this sense all are one in Christ Jesus, and instead of their keeping silence in speaking of the goodness and mercy of the Lord to them, they that fear the Lord are specifically enjoined to go home to their friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for them, and hath had compassion on them. Truly the church has been too highly favored of the Lord in every age of the world with spiritual mothers in Israel for them to keep back from their kindred the glorious things which have been revealed to them. They are the Lord's gifts to Zion and she should receive full benefit from them, so let them speak out in their own way and place in the church. The second verse of our text is: "And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." There is a disposition on the part of some to be too literal in their interpretation of this. Some of our sisters are either maidens or widows, while some have natural husbands who have no knowledge or understanding of the truth, and we cannot belive that there is any loophole, or conditions, in all the divine record whereby a single one of the fold can be left out. Those who are members of the body of Christ are married unto him, and him only in this sense; therefore they have an husband and we think the meaning here is that they who are desiring to know of the things of God, whose hearts and minds are fixed upon him, should go to their pastor, or the one whom the Lord has placed in their midst to go in and out before the flock at the place of their membership or where they are privileged to assemble with the saints. They undoubtedly do go to God, the Husband of husbands, in prayer, from whence all knowledge and understanding must come. "For it is a shame for women to speak in the church." In the spiritual church there is neither male nor female, neither marrying nor giving in marriage, but in the visible church, which is composed of both men and women here below, there is a distinction made, and yet we find the so-called churches of the world pretending to ordain women to the work of the gospel ministry. The teachers them-

selves of their Sunday School classes are largely school girls and young women. By no stretch of the imagination can many of them be said to be qualified for the work they undertake to do. Personally, we do not object to the letter of the Bible being taught. We wish we were far more familiar with it than we are. But they are not content to stop at teaching the letter of the Bible; they attempt as they claim to simplify it so that children can understand and grasp it, the truth of the matter being they place wrong spiritual construction on the written word and teach falsehoods. A work of grace not having been wrought in their own hearts they know absolutely nothing about grace. Even when the Bible sets forth, as it most certainly does, in a clear and plain manner, so clear in fact that the wayfaring man though a fool shall not err therein, that salvation is not of works, lest any should boast, but is all of grace, they cannot seem to comprehend that it means what it says. They also are blinded to the fact that the Bible condemns their very acts of teaching publicly as one having authority. Paul further supports the contention that only the man must preach and teach in his epistles to Timothy and Titus. In recording the qualifications of a bishop in 1st Tim. iii. 2 he says, "A bishop then must be blameless, *the husband of one wife*, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach," &c., and in Titus, first chapter, refers to the bishop as being in the masculine gender, "Holding fast the faithful word, as *he* hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers."—Titus i. 9. We are thankful that we live in a country where we are privileged to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and yet in this land of boasted freedom the communicants of that organization which for strength, numbers and shrewdness in its ministry has no equal in the land, the members must surrender private judgment in matters pertaining to religious thought and accept in toto whatever the powers that be are pleased to dictate. There is no freedom in the error of darkness; only those are free who know the truth, and "if the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." With those who know him whom to know is life eternal, there is no halting between two opinions. They know that cursed is the man that maketh the arm of flesh his trust, and their only hope is in the Lord. If not deceived, we feel to know that the Lord our God is one Lord, and we hope we desire to love him with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our mind, and with all our strength.

Having been requested from different sources to write on this subject, we submit the foregoing for the consideration of our inquirers and our readers. Now may the peace of God which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

R. L. D.

WATCH YOUR DATES.

We wish to request our subscribers when sending in their subscriptions to see that the date on the little pink slip bearing their address is changed. If not changed, please let us know immediately (for that signifies you have not been given credit for the money sent) and we will look into the matter. By consulting that date you can tell at a glance to what time your subscription is paid. Dec. 28 means that your subscription is paid to December, 1928; June 27 means your subscription is only paid to June, 1927, &c.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT.

For some years the need of an organized system of aiding and caring for indigent members and friends of the church in the east has been apparent. It has also been apparent that there are those who would gladly give of their financial means, either while living or as a legacy when they are gone, provided they could be assured such funds would be wisely used. The matter has been considered and favorably acted upon by churches in the following associations: Baltimore, Delaware, Delaware River, Lexington-Roxbury, Maine, Salisbury, Virginia Corresponding Meeting and the Warwick Association. "The Primitive Baptist Home" has been incorporated under the laws of the State of New Jersey for the purpose of receiving and handling such funds. The present officers of the Company are as follows: President, Hewitt Osborn, Athens, N. Y.; Vice-Presidents, John H. Truitt, Snow Hill, Md., and Casper Fetter, Trenton, N. J.; Treasurer, Henry T. Lefferts, Nutley, N. J., and Secretary, Cyrus Risler, 904 Ogden Ave., New York, N. Y. Under the proposed Constitution and By-Laws each association is to choose two of its lay members to represent them on the Board of Managers, which Board is to have full authority in all matters pertaining to the Home. It is earnestly desired to obtain and accumulate as early as possible sufficient funds to enable the Board to secure or build a suitable place for the accommodation of those who are to be eligible, according to the By-Laws, which will soon be sent to the proper parties for ratification, after the necessary changes are made. The By-Laws will describe in detail the conditions under which one may enter the Home or become a beneficiary under the fund. The object of the organization shall be to receive and disburse funds to the greatest advantage of those who are in need. Legacies, donations and annual subscriptions are earnestly solicited and will be gratefully received. Each association should elect at their next meeting two of their number to represent them: one for a term of one (1) year and one for a term of two (2) years, and then one annually thereafter for a two year term. An annual statement of the Home shall appear each year in the Signs of the Times. Let every one give this cause their moral and financial support. Send all funds to H. T. Lefferts, Treasurer, Nutley, N. J.

R. LESTER DODSON.

P. S.—The following form should be included as a clause in a will or attached a codicil where it is desired to leave funds for the Home:

"I do hereby give and bequeath unto The Primitive Baptist Home, having its business office at Nutley, Essex County, New Jersey, the sum of ..... dollars, to be applied to the uses of said home, or said society, in such manner as the Trustees of said corporation in the exercise of their own judgment and discretion, may deem advisable."

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Katie Cottrall, Ark., $1; A. B. Corder, W. Va., $3; W. A. Kelly, Ark., $1; I. H. Evans, Md., $1; Mrs. W. S. Johnson, N .Y., $1; A. B. Bickers, Kans., $2; Mrs. Serena Brown, Ill., $1; Mrs. W. Hightower, N. J., $1; Miss Kate Rugg, Ohio, $1; Pleasant Hill Church, Ohio, $5.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, April 5th, 1928, in the meetinghouse at Mt. Zion, Loudoun County, Virginia, James I. Coffey and sister Margaret C. Badger, both of Washington, D. C.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Edwin B. Greenland, Deacon of the Huntingdon Baptist Church in Trough Creek Valley, Huntingdon County, Pa., died March 20th, 1928, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. John Yocum, Huntingdon, Pa. His death was due to heart disease, from which he had been a sufferer a long time. He was born at Bennington Furnace, Pa., February 22nd, 1866. His father was Barton Greenland, his mother's maiden name was Susan J. Baird. One brother, Harry B. Greenland, died in 1925. Brother Edwin is survived by four sisters and one brother: sister Laura Greenland, of Colfax, Pa., Mrs. J. W. Mattingly, of Altoona, Pa., Mrs. W. L. Wright, of Colfax, Mrs. B. W. Kurtz, of Huntingdon, and A. Curtis Greenland, of Colfax. Brother Greenland married Miss Anna Mary Taylor, daughter of John W. and Louisa Taylor, in 1894. To them were born three children, of whom one daughter and one son are living: Mrs. Alice Yocum, of Huntingdon, and Mr. John Greenland, also of Huntingdon. Our brother Edwin and his wife were both baptized the same day, July 6th, 1919, into membership with the Old School Baptists, by the late Elder J. M. Fenton, who was then pastor of the church in Trough Creek Valley, myself succeeding him in that capacity in 1924. Brother Greenland was appointed Deacon of the church in December, 1926, and while he had not held that office long prior to being taken from us, yet he really was Deacon in all but name before the church publicly appointed him to the office. The church in Trough Creek Valley is 153 years old and the Greenland name and family have been associated with it all through those years, either being members of the church itself or of its attendant congregation. Our brother was a lover of good people. He showed it in that he loved God's people, there being no better folks on the earth. In this love and devotion to the truth and to those who believe the truth as it is in Jesus, our brother proved his calling and election sure, and bore evidence that he had already passed from death unto life. He was a respected and loved man in the neighborhood where he lived, maintained an humble and God-fearing walk and deportment before men and the church. Our loss is great, but we cannot question the fact that God knows best what is for the good of each of us and for his church collectively. May it be his holy will to comfort our dear sister Greenland in her sorrow, now that she is left a widow, and may the dear daughter and son find grace in the sight of the Lord. We desire, in the name of the Lord, that the sisters and brother of the deceased may be reconciled to the will of the Lord. Last, but by no means least, may the great Head of the church minister to the little branch of his vineyard in Trough Creek Valley, reviving them in their affliction and causing them to wait upon him for the renewing of their strength. Just a short service was held at the home in Huntingdon the evening before the burial, at which we read hymn 751 and spoke from the last part of the fourteenth chapter of John. The next day at the meetinghouse we read hymns 1256 and 1218 and spoke from Revelation xiv. 13 and Revelation xx. 6. Interment in the quiet and beautiful ground opposite the meetinghouse. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

ALSO,

"**Miss Annie Miller Johnson,** a lifetime resident of Prince William County, Virginia, died early Monday morning, Feb. 6th, 1928, following a week's illness due to paralysis and complication. Her death occurred at Clover Hill Farm, the old Johnson home, where she was born Oct. 13th, 1850, and where she spent her entire life with the exception of the time the family "refugeed" south during the war between the states. Miss Johnson was the daughter of Joseph and Eliza Wheatley Johnson, and was the last surviving member of her immediate family. She leaves a number of nieces and nephews: Mrs. Egbert Herrill, Messrs. Lee and R. L. of Manassas, Va., Mrs. G. L. Hutchison, of Aldie, and five children of the late J. B. Johnson, of Clover Hill. Funeral service was held at the home on Tuesday and her body laid to rest in the family burying-ground, her nephews serving as pall-bearers." This is copied from the *Manassas Journal.*

Let me add to the above that Miss Annie Johnson was an Old School Baptist in her belief, but never united with the church. The old Johnson home is very near where the Bethlehem meetinghouse used to stand and there may be some who read this notice who will remember visiting the hospitable Johnson home at such times as the Virginia Corresponding Meeting met with the Bethlehem Church in the years that are gone. If so, such persons will doubtless remember Miss Annie. She is the last of her father's family. Her mother was a member of the Bethlehem Church, her father was not. Miss Annie was also a niece of the wife of Elder R. C. Leachman. After Elder Leachman's death his widow made her home with the Johnson's for about thirty-five years.

Written by request.

H. H. L.

Brother **J. W. Newton,** the subject of this sketch, was born in Butts County, Ga., Dec. 26th, 1848, and departed this life Feb. 12th, 1928, making his stay on earth 79 years, 1 month and 16 days. In February, 1880, he was married to Martha Ann Head, daughter of William H. Head. To this union were born two sons and three daughters, all of whom are still living. In his early life he was engaged in farming, but in the fall of 1887 he moved to Forsyth, Ga., to enter the banking business with his brother-in-law, Mr. R. P. Brooks, continuing in this business until 1900,

when they gave up banking to enter manufacturing; and they, with Mr. C. A. Ensign, organized the Trio Manufacturing Co., Cotton Mills at Forsyth, Ga., of which he was made president, and continued at its head until his death. In 1917 he became sole owner of the mill and took his two sons in business with him, who became active partners. Brother Newton was considered a good business man; his outstanding characteristic being devotion to duty. In all his business dealings he was open and clean, and had no patience with anything clandestine. He was kind and considerate of his employees, and they all loved him. One of his laborers stated publicly since his death that he always loved to see him around, that if he did not speak a word his very presence inspired him to greater energy. At the age of thirty-five he and his good wife united with the Smyrna Primitive Baptist Church at Forsyth, Ga., of which he remained a faithful and consistent member until the Lord called, Come home. Being a spiritually-minded young brother, and also of modest demeanor, the church in 1897 called for his ordination as Deacon, which office he faithfully filled. He was also Clerk of his church, and Clerk of Ocmulgee Association. In all these church offices he served faithfully until death. Being a deep thinker his counsel was often sought in church troubles, and also by those on the outside, and those who abided by his decision seldom regretted it. He was strong in his convictions, but kind, gentle and considerate of those who failed to agree with him. He was not excitable, but unyielding when principle was at stake, and had no compromise for error. He was very charitable but in dispensing charity he sought not the plaudits of man, but rather the approval of his God, whom he loved above all things. He was firm in his belief of God's sovereign overruling grace, and exemplified his belief in the same by an orderly walk and godly conversation. Truly a father in Israel has gone to his reward. His death is all but a calamity to his little church which he loved so well, but God is able to raise up one to fill his place. We mourn the departure of brother Newton, but God who doth all things wisely and well, is too good to do wrong, and too wise to make a mistake. We thank God for the noble life that he lived, which is an inspiration to so many of us. We also thank Him for letting us have him as long as we did, for we know that the influence of his life will be felt for years, not only by those who knew and loved him, but by his town, his county and his state. We feel that our loss is his eternal gain, believing that when his spirit took its flight from earth the gates of heaven opened wide for his entrance, and he heard the welcome plaudit, Come in, ye blessed of my Father, to the home prepared for you, enter into the joys of thy Lord, so we try to humbly bow to God's will.

The funeral, conducted by his pastor, T. G. Wright, was held at his home, attended by a large concourse of friends, after which his body was laid in the family lot at Forsyth, Ga., to await the resurrection morn. Sister Newton, though bereft of one whose place in your heart and home can never be filled, you are favored with having two loving, loyal and moral sons, and three kind and accomplished daughters, also a host of sympathetic friends to turn to in this time of loneliness, but above all, you have the everlasting High Priest and Father brother Newton loved to lean upon. He has promised to be a Husband to the widow, and a Father to the fatherless. May you ever have His blessed presence. May he comfort you.

T. G. WRIGHT.
G. W. WEBB.
J. H. HEARD.

Deacon Levin Hastings was born Aug. 11th, 1846, and departed this life June 21st, 1927, at his home in Delmar, Del., aged 81 years. Jan. 15th, 1872 he married Miss Olivia A. Ellis, to which union seven children were born, two girls and five boys. Three boys died in childhood. Two daughters, Alice and Susie, lived to be grown, married, but died in young womanhood. Two sons, Theodore and Chauncey, survive, both of Delmar, Del., together with two sisters, one brother, one nephew and several nieces. Brother Hastings was baptized nearly fifty years ago and served as Deacon more than half that time. The home of brother and sister Hastings was always open to their brethren and friends, and many found it a pleasant resting place. Brother Hastings was well versed in the Scriptures and loved to talk of them. He was sound in the faith and loved the doctrine of grace. The writer feels his loss in the death of brother Hastings very keenly. He was always present at meetings as long as he was able to be up and around. For more than fifty years he was in active business here and was quite prosperous.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer, his pastor, in the meetinghouse in Delmar, the interment took place in the family plot in the Delmar Cemetery.

ALSO,

Sister **Mary E. Shockley,** widow of William J. Shockley, departed this life May 24th, 1927. She was born September 6th, 1847, making her stay on earth 80 years. She was the daughter of John P. and Elizabeth Sermon. Sister Shockley united with the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church, of Powellville, Md., in her early life, baptized, I think, by the late Elder T. M. Poulson. After moving within the bounds of the Snow Hill Church she united there by letter and continued faithful and steadfast until the end. In disposition she was bright and cheerful and it was a pleasure for her friends to visit her. Not a word of complaint escaped her lips during her long illness of several years. She is survived by one

daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Disharoon, of Salisbury, Md., at whose home she died, together with several grandchildren. The writer conducted the funeral service in the meetinghouse at Snow Hill, Md. The interment took place in the cemetery adjoining. Peace be to all who love the Lord Jesus Christ.

H. C. KER.

Seymour Craig was born at Versailles, Ohio, March 22nd, 1844, and died March 22nd, 1928, his birthday, making his age eighty-four years. It was his expressed desire to live until his birthday, which was granted him, his death occurring a few minutes after midnight. The cause of his death was a tumor within the chest, which caused his heart to become displaced, and making breathing difficult, until a hemorrhage ended his suffering. He was one of eight children of Elder Seymour and Elizabeth Craig. When he was eight years old his parents moved to Mercer County, Ohio, to a farm west of Celina, where the family resided until after the death of Elder Craig in 1856, when the farm was sold and the family moved to a small farm just east of Celina, where Mr. Craig lived nearly all the rest of his long life. He was therefore a citizen of Mercer County seventy-six years. His occupation was principally that of farmer and dairyman. During the Civil War he carried mail from Celina, Ohio, to Huntington, Ind., furnishing his own conveyance, for fifty cents a day. In partnership with his brother-in-law, Elder Henry Hole, he conducted for fifteen years one of the first dairies for Celina, the firm enjoying the confidence of all their patrons by reason of honesty and integrity in dealing with men. He was a staunch believer in the doctrine of the Old School Baptist Church, but never made a public profession of his faith. He and Elder Hole, with whom he lived, made their home the stopping-place of all Old Baptists who passed that way. Elders Bartley, Cornell, Curry, Peters, Wilkins and many other ministers, as well as lay members, enjoyed the hospitality of his home, where the old church, called Chickasaw, held her meetings principally until the death of Elder Hole in 1900, when the meetings ceased and the old church has become extinct. Mr. Craig was never married, but lived with his sister, Bettie Hole, and since her death some years ago resided with his niece, Miss Ada Hole, who cared for him the last years of his life, and during his last sickness with kindness and patience. He leaves to mourn their loss, one sister, the only surviving member of the family, sister Rhoda Greek, of Celina, several nieces and nephews, Mrs. Ida Suty, Miss Ada Hole, both of Celina, Ohio, Mrs. Rose Lewis, of Fremont, Ohio, Mrs. Fanny Touvelle, of Youngstown, Ohio, Mrs. Jennie H. Purdy, of Spencerville, Ohio, Frank Greek, of Celina, Ohio, and J. A. Hole, of Zanesville, Ohio.

Funeral services were held at his late home. He desired that a Baptist should preach at his funeral, but there being no minister of our faith available, the Methodist minister was called upon to conduct a short and simple service, after which his remains were conveyed to their last resting place in North Grove Cemetery, near the city, to await the call of the angel of the resurrection. May God comfort the dear aged sister who is left to mourn the loss of a dear brother.

Written by request.

M. V. PURDY.

S. N. Melton, the subject of this notice, was born Dec. 9th, 1850, died Dec. 17th, 1927, aged 77 years and 8 days. He was a son of Elder William A. Melton. In 1876 he was married to Miss Sarah F. Wood, and to this union were born two girls and six boys, one girl, Mrs. Lilly Holly, and the six sons are yet living. Mr. Melton never made a public profession of religion, but heartily endorsed the doctrine advocated by the old order of Baptists. He was a good neighbor and a loyal citizen. His health began to fail and he gradually went down to death. He was no hand to complain. The doctor was called and pronounced it to be the flu, and said he thought the worst was over. After the doctor had gone Mr. Melton said to his wife, I reckon I will have to stay a little while longer. Very often he had said to his wife and daughter, sister Allie Melton, who had moved in with her father and mother to take care of them through the winter, that he would be lying on the hill while they would be by themselves through the winter. He was a kind father and husband, and a good neighbor. The writer lived by him for forty years, and there was never a hard thought between us, so by request of his wife, sister Fannie, and the children the writer spoke to a large congregation words of comfort to the bereaved family and friends who were gathered from many parts of the country to pay tribute of respect to their friend who was now cold in death, using the Scripture God so loved the world he gave his only begotten Son, &c. He leaves his bosom companion, one daughter, six sons and several grandchildren, two brothers and two sisters to mourn their loss.

ALSO,

Sister **Allie Melton,** the oldest daughter of S. N. Melton, was born May 10th, 1877, and died January 6th, 1928, making her stay on earth 50 years, 7 months and 26 days. She was married to W. M. Melton April 23rd, 1894. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church called Hopewell about the year of 1910 and lived a consistent member to the end. She was of a noble disposition, always ready to do anything that was in her power to relieve any one in distress. She was firmly rooted in the faith of God's elect. She never took trouble to heart as many do, but considered there was no mistake in the words of Paul

when he said, All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. She faithfully waited upon her father up to a few hours of his death, when she had to take to her deathbed, and never saw him again. I went to see them every day and one morning after her father was buried she reached out her hand, and said, Cousin Jim, you must be interested in my recovery, as old as you are to come through the cold to see how I am getting along. She then said, I will tell you a dream I had last night. I dreamed the Savior told me there were ten shocks of corn on a high mountain and for me to go and bring them down. It seemed this was to prove my faith. I took my time, and went and brought one by one, until I got nine, and when I went for the tenth one a bright cloud came down upon me and I was completely enveloped in that cloud from all natural scenery, and I never got down with the tenth shock. As she told me the dream I felt she would not get up again, and likely in ten days she would be laid on the hill by her husband and her father, which was so. She leaves one daughter, Mrs. Silva Fraisar, her mother, four grandchildren, one sister, Mrs. Lilly Holley, and six brothers to mourn their loss, but we feel their loss is her eternal gain. The writer was requested to preach on this funeral occasion and used for a text Job xiv. 13, "O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me."

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

T. B. Cunningham was born May 28th, 1848, and died Feb. 28th, 1928, aged 79 years and 9 months. He had been married twice. To the first union were born six children, and to the second union were born nine. He leaves eight children and wife to mourn their loss, two by his first wife and six by his last wife. He also leaves thirty-five grandchildren and twenty-three great-grandchildren. He was baptized in the faith of the Primitive Baptist Church at Mt. Horeb the third Saturday in September, 1881, and was appointed clerk at the same time, and continued clerk until he died. He was a faithful member as long as he was able to attend to his church duties, and was a kind and peaceful neighbor, who would choose to suffer rather than to have the ill-will of any one, but would speak his mind on the Bible. He was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for nearly twenty-four years, and surely did enjoy reading it. The last nine years he lived he did not attend meetings regularly, on account of bad health and poor means of transportation, as he lived about four miles from his church. We miss him much, but believe our loss is his eternal gain.

Funeral service was conducted by J. E. Stakley, after which his body was laid to rest in the Advent Cemetery, near Souwilpa, Alabama.

Written by his youngest son,

E. E. CUNNINGHAM.

I WANT to say a few words in regard to brother T. B. Cunningham's life, as I was acquainted with him for over thirty-five years and had been in his humble home many times. I tried in my weak way to serve the church he belonged to for thirteen years, and I can remember his not being present but one time during the thirteen years. He was Clerk of his church for forty-five years, and seemed to be full of the grace of God and had an orderly walk and godly conversation. He was a good husband, father, and neighbor, and if he had an enemy he did not know him. He always filled his seat at his meetings, and we feel sad to think we shall see him no more in this life, but feel we will see him in that upper, better kingdom, where Jesus and all the redeemed of the Lord are, for with all the evidence he gave of the sweet hope he had we are bound to say he bore the fruit of a christian. Jesus says, By their fruits ye shall know them. Brother Cunningham was the leading member of his church and was its leading singer. We can say to his bereaved family to pray God to give them grace to help them bear their troubles, and we hope he will prepare each one to meet him in heaven, where parting will be no more, where all tears will be wiped away from their eyes, where there will be no more sorrow or trouble, but all will be happy for ever.

Written by one who loved him.

W. J. MOZINGO.

BROTHER Cunningham has always been in my heart as a brother beloved since I first knew him forty years ago, and I can but express my sorrow that I shall see his face no more. If one thing drew me to him more than another it was this, I knew that he would honestly speak his mind. I shall sorely miss him. The family do not need to be told that my sympathy goes out to them, one and all.

A. J. DOUGETT.

Sidney ("Sid") Minton. For the benefit of those of his many friends and brethren who do not know of his death, I will write a few words in memory of this faithful old soldier. He was born in Logan County, Alabama, June 7, 1844. At the age of seventeen he answered the call of his country, seeing four years of active service in the Civil War. Two years after the War he married Miss Nancy Adline Douglas, who bore him seven children, two of whom survive: Tom Minton, near Little Rock, and Burrell Minton, near Hazen, Arkansas; he also leaves a large number of grandchildren. The last fifty years of his life were spent on his farm near Hazen, until his death, from

paralysis, on December 9th, 1927. He was the life of his home and community as well as his church, Mount Pleasant. He was the last surviving member who took part in organizing Mount Pleasant Church, and was still its most active member. All who knew him deeply feel their loss, and the waning fortunes of his church have received a blow from which they may never recover. He lived in the faith of the Primitive Baptists for more than fifty years, always taking an active part in the affairs of the church. Though we can but feel deeply the loss of so valued a friend, is not our feeling of sorrow and grief a little unkind and selfish? Should we not be more willing to sacrifice our love and pleasure for his own good?

A loving grandson,

REUEL SPARKS.

Flora D. Murphy was born October 6th, 1866, and departed this life March 31st, 1928, making her stay on earth 61 years, 5 months and 25 days. She was the daughter of Granville and Ollie Evick, and was married to Willam D. Murphy August 16th, 1882. To this union were born fourteen children, seven having preceded her in death and seven still living: Mrs. Addie Oldake, Mrs. Virgie Ferguson, Messrs. S. H., L. T., T. D., W. H. and E. R. Murphy. She also leaves one sister and one brother: Mrs. Annie Swick and Mr. L. L. Evick. She joined the Old School Baptist Church at Montrose, W. Va., in February, 1888, and lived a faithful member until the end came, and was always present at meeting time unless providentially hindered, and was always ready to help with the expenses of the church. She will be greatly missed in the church and by all who knew her, but there is not a doubt our loss is her eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted by my father, Elder J. S. Murphy, after which her body was lowered in the grave, there to await the resurrection morn.

BENTON D. MURPHY.

Jennie McAlpine Anderson, wife of John Anderson and the daughter of the late Neil and Mary McAlpine, died at the home of her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. T. W. Oats, London, Ontario, March 3rd, 1928. She was born in Dunwich January 22nd, 1861, making her stay on earth 67 years, 1 month and 11 days. Sister Jennie was not a member of any church, but her conversation showed she had been taught in the school of Christ, and while her body is lying in the silent tomb her spirit is resting in the sweet paradise of God, who gave it. All that loving hands could do was done for her. Her funeral was conducted by Mr. McNair, of London, Ontario, burial in St. Thomas Cemetery. She leaves to mourn besides her husband, four daughters, five grandsons, six sisters, three brothers and a host of relatives and friends. May God in his mercy comfort and bless all who mourn.

Written by her sorrowing sister,

EFFIE MALCOM.

Mrs. Ellen Jane Keene, wife of Elder Frederick W. Keene, departed this life April 5th, 1928, to be (as we hope) with Christ, which is far better. An account of her experience of the grace of God was published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES many years ago.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

MEETINGS.

The Baltimore Association will be held with Ebenezer Church, 210 E. Madison St., Baltimore City, on May 16th, 17th and 18th (Wednesday, Thursday and Friday), 1928. A cordial invitation to meet with us is extended to all. Also Ebenezer Church has asked for the ordination of brother D. L. Topping to the ministry. This ordination to take place during the session of the Association. Therefore the ministers of our immediate correspondence are particularly urged to attend. Visitors coming on Tuesday, 15th, will go to meetinghouse, 210 East Madison Street, which will be open from 2 p. m. to 5 p. m.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will (the Lord willing) convene with the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, on Wednesday, May 23rd and continue the two following days. Train leaves Philadelphia Wednesday morning via Pennsylvania R. R. Broad St. Station at 7:53 a. m. Get tickets for Newark, Del. Those who find it more convenient to come Tuesday evening can come on either the Pennsylvania R. R. or B. & O. R. R., and go to brother J. B. Miller's or Chas. Jarman's. Those coming by train from Delmar on Delaware Division and other points on that road Wednesday morning, will change cars at Wilmington and take train at 10:10 for Newark. Those coming Wednesday morning will be conveyed direct to place of meeting. As there may be some change in time of running trains you will please consult time table. Ministers of our faith, and brethren and lovers of our faith are cordially invited to meet with us.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Hopewell Church, Hopewell, Mercer County, New Jersey, on May 30th and 31st, and June 1st, 1928. Ministers of our faith and all lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. Trains will be met on Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning. All coming by train will come on the P. & R. R. R.

DAVID M. VOORHEES, Church Clerk,
R. D. 1, PENNINGTON, N. J.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at New Vernon, Sullivan Co., New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (6th, 7th and 8th), 1928. Those coming from and via New York City will take Erie R. R. Ferry foot of West 23rd Street or Chambers Street for train leaving from Jersey City. Get tickets for Howells, N. Y. Those coming from and via Kingston, N. Y., will take Ontario and Western train from Kingston. Get tickets for Winterton, N. Y. Trains will be met and friends cared for. Time of trains will be announced later when new schedules will be effective. Those coming by automobile will go to the home of Mr. Fred Beyea (The Old Homestead) on arrival at New Vernon. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, sisters and friends.

R. LESTER DODSON, Moderator.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

SOME THOUGHTS ON ADOPTION.

Ephesians i. 5, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children." Thus decreeing something which was to be brought to pass in the future, and also telling by whom it was to be done. It is a fact beyond question that all of God's works were known unto him from the beginning, and thereby is predestination an established fact, for all power is of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God, so for him to know a thing would come to pass it must necessarily be fixed by his unalterable decree, and inasmuch as God did from everlasting, or ever the world was, sanctify, set apart, choose, elect and call a portion of the sons of Adam for his people, God had a set time when he was going to adopt these. "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."—Gal. iv. 4, 5. All through the Old Testament is foretold the Savior's coming; and David foresaw the Lord always before his face; he was on his right hand that he should not be moved. That was several hundred years before Jesus was born of a woman. Now God, the great architect and master builder, laid the plan and specifications of the only perfect house or building in the ancients of eternity, and Jesus Christ is the foundation, the head and the chief corner-stone, and other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, and like Solomon's temple, it comes together every piece in its own place, without the sound of a hammer or any other tool upon it, either to prepare or force them into their places, but God placed them in the building as it pleased him; neither are they brought together by man, but are taken out of the hole of the pit from whence they are digged, by the hand and power of God, through the mediatorial work of our dear Savior, for he takes our feet out of the filthy, miry clay and places them upon the rock, and puts a new song in our mouth, even praise to our God. The material used in this building is not such as the world uses in a building of honor. They would use the fine, straight grained, the smooth and polished pieces, that stand out in bold relief in their own superiorty and beauty, polished by the hand of man, but God

chooses the weak, the halt, the blind and the lame, those who have no beauty nor comeliness, nothing about them that men would desire; neither does he polish them up so they shine in the eyes of the world, nor are they strong, as the world defines strong, but he chooses the weak to confound the strong and mighty, the foolish to confound the wise, and the base things, and the things that are naught, to bring to naught the things that are, and he takes these base and uncomely ones and makes the crooked ones straight, the rough ones smooth, and those who have no beauty he spreads the robe of his righteousness over them, hiding them from the eyes of the world, and to him they are beautiful in their apparel, shining in the beauty of holiness, and we hear him say, Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee. "How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices! Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb; honey and milk are under thy tongue; and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon." "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away. O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." These are the babes to whom he has revealed himself as King of kings and Lord of lords, the little ones unto whom he said, Fear not, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom, who have eyes to see him high and lifted up and ourselves as nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity. Therefore do we worship him. Then to think that he in all his glory should speak in such endearing terms about such worms of the dust; it humbles me until like the poor publican, I cannot so much as look up, but cry, Lord, be merciful to me a sinner. This is the kind of subjects he gave his life for. Well might it be said that love was manifest, not because we loved him, but because he first loved us and gave his life for us; and greater love hath no man than that he lay down his life for his friends. But his love was manifest, in that while we were enemies Christ died for the ungodly. "Oh for such love let rocks and hills their lasting silence break, and all harmonious human tongues the Savior's praises speak." Yet, ought not Christ to have suffered and entered into his glory, since this was the work his Father sent him to do, and he could not return to his Father and receive the honor and the glory which he had with him before he descended into these low grounds of sin and sorrow unless he finished the work he gave him to do? In John vi. 38, 39, we read, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." He came not of himself, but was sent by the Father, at this set time, and for the purpose of redeeming those who were under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons, and this was the fulfilling of the decree recorded in Eph. i. 5: "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will," and now because ye are sons (Gal. iv. 6) "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father," and giving us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, in whom we have obtained an inheritance, being predesti-

nated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, in whom we also trusted after we heard the word of truth, the gospel of our salvation; in whom, after we believe, we were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance; the eyes of our understanding being enlightened, that we may know (says Paul) what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward, who believe according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead and set him at his right hand in heavenly places.

Now let us take up the main object of this poorly expressed subject, which is Jesus come in the flesh. If I with any degree write about him in a way that would be comforting or edifying to my people (at least I claim them, for they speak the same tongue that I do, and they know as I do that I nor any other mortal can speak or write a word to his honor or glory, which is the comforting of his people, unless he first prepares the tongue, and also goes before the message and causes a hungering and thirsting for the food contained in the message) all honor and glory belongs to him. With this in view I want to try with his guidance to follow him from the time of his conception to the grave, by giving sketches from the Scripture. In Luke i. 26, 27, "The angel Gabriel was sent from God, unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth; to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary." And the angel told her that she should conceive and bring forth a Son, and she was troubled, and could not believe, but the angel said, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God, for thou shalt bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David." When Mary could not see how this could be the angel told her that with God nothing was impossible. Then Mary said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." Then Mary went with haste into the hill country to the house of Zacharias and saluted Elizabeth, who was with child in her old age, and when Elizabeth heard her salutation the babe leaped in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost. Joseph, being a just man, did not want to make a public example of her when he found her to be with child, he thought to put her away privately, but while he thought on these things, behold the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, and told him to fear not to take unto him Mary, thy wife, because that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost, and she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins, and Mary brought forth her first born son and called his name Jesus. This is the fulfilling of the prophecy of Zech. xiii. 1: "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness." John speaking, says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men." He was in the world, and the world knew

him not; but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God; even to them that believe on his name. We first behold him wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger, because there was no room for him in the inn. Then we behold Simeon taking him into his arms, a wee babe and saying, Now lettest thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation. Next we see him in the temple at twelve years old, astonishing the wise men by his wisdom, in his questions and answers. Then we hear John as one crying in the wilderness, as the forerunner of Jesus, saying, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God," for behold all eyes shall see him. There are so many branches leading out from this subject that I can scarcely hold on my way; it is the river which flows out from the throne of our God, the streams whereof make glad the city of our God. But it is a glorious subject to even think upon, following our dear Savior in his work of redeeming his people. He next appears among the crowd, where John was baptizing, and John tells them there is one among them whose shoe latchets he is not worthy to stoop down and unloose; but they did not see or know him. The next day John saw Jesus coming to him, and he pointed him out, saying, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world. "And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God. Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; and looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus." When Jesus saw them following him he asked them, What seek ye? They asked him where he abode, and he told them to come and see; and they came and dwelt with him that day. Now comes the time for Jesus to call his disciples (the twelve) that were to go with him to the end of his pilgrimage here on earth, and see how smoothly everything worked. "One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas." The next day Jesus went into Galilee, and found Philip, and said, Follow me. Then Philip findeth Nathaniel, and said unto him, we have found Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph, and Nathaniel said, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip said, Come and see. When Jesus saw Nathaniel coming he said, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile. Nathaniel said, Whence knoweth thou me? Jesus said, Before Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathaniel knew him then, and said, Rabbi thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel. Then what beautiful things Jesus told him. He said he should see heaven open, and the angels

of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man. Then we see him at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, with his mother, there turning the water into wine, this being the beginning of his miracles. Then we see him at Jerusalem, at the passover, where he found in the temple those that sold oxen, and sheep, and doves, and the changers of money sitting, and he made a scourge of small cords and drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep and oxen, and he poured out the changers' money and overthrew the tables, and said to them, Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise. Just note what power he exercised over those men, and we hear the Jews asking for a sign of his authority, and how strangely he answered them: Destroy this temple, and I will raise it up in three days. They could not believe that one man could do in three days the work that it took so many men forty-six years to do, but he spoke of the temple of his body, and when he was risen from the dead his disciples remembered this saying, and they believed the Scriptures and the word which Jesus had said and he knew what was in man, and needed not that any should tell him. Then Nicodemus came unto him by night, and, dear brethren, we all went unto him at night in the beginning of our experience, for we were ashamed for any one to see us or know we were seeking to know what we could do to be saved. How amazed we were when we found there was nothing we could do to get relief, for the more we tried to do it just got us that much more in the wrong. Is it any wonder that Nicodemus wonderingly asked, How can these things be? and as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Then Jesus and his disciples came into Judea and tarried with them and baptized. Then he left Judea and departed into Galilee, for he must needs go through Samaria. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, being wearied, sat on the well, and there cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water, and Jesus said unto her, Give me to drink. His disciples had gone into the city to buy meat. The woman said unto him, How is it that thou being a Jew, asketh drink of me, a Samarian, seeing the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans? Jesus said unto her, If thou knowest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him and he would have given thee living water. She said, Art thou greater than Jacob, which gave us the well? Jesus said, Whosoever drinketh of that water shall thirst again, but whosoever drinketh of the water that I give shall never thirst, but it shall be in him a well of living water, springing up into everlasting life. He told her to go call her husband. She said, I have no husband. He told her she had well said, for she had five husbands, and the one she had then was not her husband. She said, Thou art a prophet. Then she hastened into the city and said to the people, Come see a man which told me all things whatsoever I did, is not this the Christ? and many more believed because they heard him, and not because of what she said, and they said, We know this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world. From then on he went about healing the sick, cleansing the lepers, giving sight to the blind, unstopping the deaf ears, restoring the dead to life, feeding the hungry, and still notwithstanding all this most noble work the people sought to kill

him, and he said to his disciples, Will ye also go away?

But we must pass on to the time when he must be offered up once for all. He tells his disciples, Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. These things, says he, I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son may also glorify thee. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him, and this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth. I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do, and now, O Father, glorify me with thine own self, with the glory I had with thee before the world was. Now comes the sad and sorrowful part: Jesus' farewell to his disciples. We hear him praying for them, saying, Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are one, and now come I to thee, and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I pray not that thou should take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me, for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world, and I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them. Then we see him going forth to meet his betrayer and the band of men whom he had brought with him. Then we hear him tell Pilate, Thou sayest I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. Then Pilate asked him, What is truth? Then we see Jesus going forth wearing the crown of thorns, and Pilate in derision saying, Behold the man! We then see him going forth bearing his cross to where they crucified him, and see the inscription which Pilate meant for evil, but God meant it for good, written in blazon letters so all could see and read, Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews. Little did he know he was writing words of truth. Now they supposed they had gotten rid of Jesus, when he bowed his head, and saying, It is finished, gave up the ghost. But by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God they did by wicked hands take and slay the Lord of glory. He died for our offenses, he arose for our glory to the justification of life. Thus we see him proving to Thomas, the doubting one, that he had indeed risen from the dead. I am like Thomas, for I have to be shown over and over again, and, like him, when Jesus appears to me I cry, My Lord and my God, and for a time I do praise and glorify him as much as it is in me to do. But oh my leanness, my unfeeling heart and my stubborn will.

Now what I have been trying to set forth is this, that God did in the beginning predestinate all things, setting the bounds of the wicked, causing them to

praise him, and restraining the rest. It seems to me this is enough to prove beyond any doubt the absolute predestination of all things. As to the author of sin, it is the one who introduced sin into the world, and as by one man's disobedience sin entered, was not Adam the one by whom sin entered? This being so, was not Adam the author of sin, even as Christ was the author of eternal salvation, for God did send his Son to redeem those who were under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons? All these were known unto God from the beginning, just as the architect sees the building and knows every stick, nail and screw that is to go into it, but there is a time ahead for the actual building of the house, just as there was a time set for Jesus to be crucified, although he was a lamb slain from the foundation of the world in the plan of the salvation of his people. He only died once, and that was when he gave himself a ransom, and did by the one offering forever perfect them who were sanctified, set apart, the ones who died in Adam and were made alive in Christ. When the time came to preach Christ to the Gentiles Peter was shown in a vision that what God had cleansed was not to be called unclean, and we are Gentiles, made nigh by his blood. At that time, when they were Gentiles in the flesh, they were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. They were lost, and totally depraved, sold for nought, and without a farthing to pay in return for their salvation, but now in Christ Jesus you who were sometimes far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ, for he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition, and abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace, therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord, in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit.

I pray that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye being rooted and grounded in love may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and the length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled with all the fullness of God. My prayer while writing this has been that I might be given knowledge of God to rightly divide the word of truth, but I greatly fear and tremble lest I have failed. Now may the joyous communion of the Holy Ghost comfort our hearts and stay our minds through the rest of our pilgrimage during the time of our labor and sorrow.

DAVIS BURCH.

BERLIN, Md., April 2, 1928.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find a letter I received from brother G. F. Adkins, which was of much comfort to me, and thinking it might be of some comfort to others I am sending it to you for publication, if you see fit to do so. While sending this in I feel I would like to make a few remarks upon "comfort," if the Lord will direct my mind along that line. How or by what means is comfort meted out? Can we comfort any one except we have experienced the same

thing in which we are trying to give comfort? In Isaiah xl. 1, we read, "Comfort ye, comfort ye." O my brethren, how can we do this if we have not been led in the same paths as the one we are trying to comfort? We have got to go down to the very depth of hell, so to speak, to know the pangs of it, and when we have been brought down to the lowest pit and made to abhor ourselves then it is we know what it is to be in trouble and made to have love and respect for our brother who speaks of his dark nights of grief, for the deep will return to the deep, and so it is that our dark hours will return or mingle with dark hours of our brethren, and how comforting it is when we can talk or write of these things one to another. Is not this comforting one another? I think it is, for I know personally for me it is my chief joy and delight when I can meet with the brethren and talk about what I hope and trust the Lord has done for me. Not what I have done for him, for how can we do anything of ourselves except God gives us the mind and power, for we have no more power of ourselves than did Adam before God breathed the breath of life in him.

I must bring these rambling thoughts to a close, for there seems to be no end, so will leave it here for your consideration. Please excuse errors, and do with this as your mind may be led, for I feel that there can no good come from my pen. If there is anything in this of comfort to any one then it must belong to God, and not man. May God be praised, is my prayer.

J. W. S. TIMMONS.

PITTSVILLE, Md., March 30, 1928.

DEAR BROTHER JOHN:—I received your very good letter some time ago and feel that I owe you an apology for not answering sooner, but have been shut up; it seems I have had no mind regarding spiritual things, and am very much in the dark now, your letter however has given me very much to think about. You spoke of the condition of your mind, also that I might write something to comfort you. Comfort is just what I am begging for, and the question arises, How can one who needs comfort give comfort to another? The only possible way I can see for it to be done is by telling each other our troubles, thereby it becomes a mutual secret, and we are enabled to share each other's troubles; we become aware of the fact that we are not alone. Brother John, I believe you can imagine how Elijah felt when he cried out, Lord, they have dug down thine altars, they have slain thy servants, and I alone am left. Do you not know that he was in a miserable condition? Do you not think it was a heaven here below with him when the Lord answered, and said to him, I have reserved seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal? What a happy thought. Do you not think that Elijah could cry out, Praise God from whom all blessings flow? Not only was the power of God manifest, but his tender mercy and his ever-watchful eye, showing that he (the Lord) was indeed looking after and taking care of Elijah. We are told and believe that the Lord lives forever, from eternity to eternity, that he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever; that he is without limit of power; that he rules all things, both in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; that his will is done (not going to be done, but is done); that he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast; that he did come into the world, born of a woman, under the law, for the

very purpose of redeeming his people from under the law and said, I am not to do mine own will, but the will of the Father who sent me, which is that of all that the Father hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day; that he did establish his power here on earth, both before and after his crucifixion by raising the dead, healing the lepers, making the blind see, the lame walk, the deaf to hear and many other wonderful things after his crucifixion by again taking up the life and coming forth from the tomb, conqueror of death, hell and the grave. I wish to go back a little right here. He also said, The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick; I came not to call the righteous, but to call sinners to repentance, of whom Paul says, I am chief. (I think Paul was mistaken, he did not know me.) He bore the cross, was nailed to the accursed tree, poured out his blood for the remission of the sins of his people, who he says were sinners, lost sheep. The prophets declared beforehand what the Lord should do, and he himself declared that he came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it, and cried on the cross, It is finished. Brother John, do you not believe that after considering all this we can say with Paul, If God be for us who can be against us? I want to ask, Who can deny the Lord?

I have failed utterly to write as I started out to, but will leave this for your consideration, and may you cast the mantle of charity over it and excuse all errors.

Your brother in hope,

GEORGE F. ADKINS.

NIAGARA FALLS, N. Y., April 14, 1928.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing my remittance for another year, please find draft for two dollars.

Now a certain Scripture is on my mind, it is found in Romans v. 21, and reads, "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." These consoling thoughts were no doubt written as a summing up of other declarations previously written. The fourteenth verse reads, "Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come." I understand that Paul was comparing those two characters as to their actions, and what they accomplished but whence came these characters? To find out we must go back to Genesis i. 27: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." An image or a figure is like or compared to something else. Paul compares and contrasts these beings and their actions throughout their lives. In some respects they were alike and in other respects they were decidedly opposite. The first Adam was made a living soul, the second Adam was made a quickening Spirit. The first Adam was of the earth earthy, the second Adam was the Lord from heaven. A vast difference in them, and from whence they came, but they were alike in the sense that both had a wife, both had families, both stood at the head of a generation and both their wives were deceived and fell in sin, but neither Adam was deceived, but both knew the consequences, that there was great trouble brewing. Yet Adam took of the fruit offered by

Eve and did eat, and did fall in the transgression, and so was held accountable by his Creator. So it is written the soul that sinneth shall die. But Christ did not sin, neither was there guile found in his mouth, so they cannot be compared to one another in the sense of their goodness. Adam could not redeem his generation, nor were any of his kind able to open the Book or loose the seals thereof, so that sin reigned unto death and kept all of his posterity in that state to this day, because sinful things cannot redeem sinful things, but he says grace did reign in righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. Paul says this was according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ before the world began, and this is done according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, because all things were created for him and by him, and for his purpose and pleasure they are and were created, so we can safely say that everything is going to transpire just as God planned it. To deny this would be telling as big a falsehood as Satan told our mother Eve, but that lie deceived her and fastened itself so strongly upon the minds of the Adams that there was no love, no fear, no feeling, no desire to love, counsel or obey God and every imagination and thought of the heart was only evil, and that continually. They were dead in trespasses and in sin, which in time brought death to the body. Sin reigned unto death even unto them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression. The lie had been implanted in the mind of Eve, and she was the mother of all living, so her issue would bring forth after its own kind, so they go forth from the womb speaking lies; not only lies, but many kinds of sin, for when Adam and Eve were driven out of Eden Satan must have passed out with them, for we read he tempted Christ. Paul was not ignorant of his devices and that he goeth about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. Even to this day many can testify to his cunning craftiness, and in God's plan of salvation Satan must be reckoned with, for sin is the work of Satan, and death, and Satan himself, must be destroyed. I think that is too big a task for mortal man to accomplish, notwithstanding some men will claim their work and preaching will save, provided they get enough money to carry on the work. For two thousand years men have been trying mission work all over the world, and the other day a man at the head of a theological school wrote in the paper bemoaning the slow progress religion is making, and said we need more educated men like Paul, that there was too much ignorance among the clergy, they must go to college and be educated. But what says the Scripture? It says they shall not teach every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for I will put my laws into their hearts and in their minds, and will write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. That is how they learn, and they can learn spiritual things because they are born of the Spirit and are taught by the Spirit, because the Spirit of God reveals it unto them. Paul said he never received it of men, neither was he taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ, then why all this ado about colleges, missions and money? God declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. This same Jesus Christ as King shall reign in righteousness, and the govern-

ment shall be upon his shoulder, and of his peace and dominion there shall be no end. All this work is the gift of God, and is called grace, because it is a divine favor. Paul tells us that those who have received abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness shall reign unto life by one Jesus Christ, for we are saved by grace, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed. "A seed shall serve him; and it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." So those who are saved are of the generation of Christ, and God shall finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness, for a short work will the Lord God make upon the earth, and so grace reigns by Christ unto eternal life. We have been taught that Christ is a quickening Spirit, for it is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. He says, My words are Spirit and they are life. As the Father raises up the dead and quickeneth them, so the Son quickeneth whom he will. It is written, You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins. Then if any man be in Christ he is a new creature, old things have passed away, and, behold, all things have become new. This is the new birth which manifests itself in those who were created in him, chosen in him from before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, accomplish by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. Thus grace still reigns through righteousness unto eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ. But some will say, Does not preaching ever quicken a dead sinner and give him faith to believe? Without faith it is impossible to please God. Paul said, We have no dominion over your faith, but that we might be helpers of your joy. He says, Let no man think too highly of himself, but to think righteously and soberly, according as God has dealt every man the measure of faith. He also says all men have not faith, that Jesus is the author and finisher of their faith, also some had the gospel preached unto them, but it did not profit them anything, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. When the gospel is preached which the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven it is a power of God to every one that believeth, but no power to an unbeliever, for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, so it is a power to reveal his righteousness and not to quicken dead sinners, notwithstanding he has made his angels spirits and his ministers a flame of fire.

I fear I have extended this letter too long, so do with it as you think best, and all will be well with me.

Fare you well.

WILLIAM E. BLUE.

SPRINGFIELD, Ill., May 10, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—In looking over a package of congratulatory letters received on my seventy-fourth birthday anniversary, I came across one from our late esteemed brother and fellow-laborer in the gospel ministry, Elder Silas H. Durand, who, on account of his rare christian experience and far-reaching knowledge of the Scriptures, and extensive travels, was widely known throughout the United States and Canada. Now, having reread the letter, after having passed my ninetieth anniversary, its inspirational effect is beyond words to express. I am therefore

asking you to publish the same, with such comments thereon as I may be able to write, if you deem the same worthy a place in our dear old family visitor. The event of our first meeting, in Indiana, sixty-six years ago, is clearly before me as I write. He and the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, then one of the fathers in Israel, were both present at the association referred to. Though strangers in the flesh they were not such in the Spirit and power of God. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES had come into my father's home for many years, and was at that time coming into my own home, and I had learned to love and rejoice in the God-honoring truths as set forth by these able ministers of the New Testament. Now that I was meeting them, and was accorded the privilege of hearing them both preach, a sweet joy filled my soul. There were a number of ministers present. On Sunday there were probably a thousand people in the audience, and Elders Beebe and Durand were to occupy the stand, the former going first and the audience was held at close attention for an hour. Such a discourse had probably never been preached in that place before. The true believers and real lovers of the truth were built up in their most holy faith. Then one of the sweet songs of Zion was sung, the audience rising. The melody of the song seemed to melt the hearts of all. Then Elder Durand rose up, opened the Bible, and read from Isaiah xxvii. 13, in a clear, unemotional voice, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem." I can see him at this moment as he appeared to me then, as the subject opened and the Spirit gave him utterance. His clear elucidation of the text carried me back in my own experience and travels from darkness to light in a way that no words of mine can ever express. The great trumpet, the voice of God, the poor and needy seeking water where there is none, the ready to perish, the oppressed and despised of Egypt, and yet they "shall come" and "worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem." My very soul was lifted on high, for out of the depths I cried unto the Lord. Then I wondered if we were not at that very time worshiping in "the holy mount at Jerusalem," the quiet habitation, the Zion or church of the living God, the chosen generation, the royal priesthood, the holy nation, of whom a book of remembrance was being written before the Lord of them that feared him and thought upon his name. These are now dead to the law, but alive to Christ, and with them the first legal heaven and earth have passed away, and the new heaven and new earth that John saw (Rev. xxi. 1–3) becomes to them, in their experience, the putting off of the old man and the putting on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. All of this and much more was brought out in the application of the text, experimentally, to the gathering together of the nation whose God is the Lord in the fulfillment of the prophecy of Ezekiel xxxiv. 12: "As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day," (of the law dispensation.) "And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God." These solemn truths were so comfortingly

impressed on my mind that they became as apples of gold set in pictures of silver. Though this able minister of the word and testimony of Jesus has, with other faithful witnesses, entered into the promised rest, and his unimpeachable works and testimonies do follow him. The time of my own departure is near at hand. My days however, are in the Lord's hand. Looking back along my entire pathway, from my youth up to the present time, the presence of the guiding hand of God is clearly visaged. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." Now, to the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit, may grace, mercy and peace from the God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ dwell richly in you, that you may behold the manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. This is the prayer of one who feels himself to be less than the least of all saints, but blessed of God with a good hope through grace alone of glorious immortality. Farewell.

J. G. SAWIN.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 26, 1912.

ELDER JOHN G. SAWIN—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I learn that Friday of this week is the anniversary of your birth, and that your relatives and friends are going to remember you by letter. This will be a pleasant thing for them to do, and I want to be among those who have that pleasure. I met you first, I think, in August, 1866, at an association in Indiana, also your father and mother and two or three brothers. You have been from that day to this a faithful minister of the gospel, zealously and steadfastly engaged in the glorious work of preaching the gospel, and in serving churches of the saints as pastor. May you realize that the true, spiritual rewards have been yours, in the comfort you have had in that work, another assurance you have from many of the Lord's dear children that they have been helped and comforted by your ministration of the word through the Spirit. I remember with great pleasantness my visits with you and your dear wife and family at your pleasant home, and at various other places. May the Lord continue to bless you with manifestations of his favor, and to gird you with strength unto the work that he has yet in store for you to do. My wife and daughter and sister Bessie join with me in love and best wishes for your welfare.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

HIRAM, Georgia.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I have thought several times, I would like to write a few lines for the SIGNS, but felt too ignorant and unworthy to make the effort. I surely enjoy reading the good letters the Old School Baptists have written, and if I have a kindred on earth or a people I love they are the ones. I have been with them fifteen years, although I feel too unworthy to have my name with them. All the real pleasure I have is being with them and hearing the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and singing praises to his great name. The good letters in the SIGNS are full of the Spirit and power of the great God above. My mind often runs back to the psalms of David in praising the Lord for his goodness, mercy and power. He is my light, my strength and my salvation. Is it not wonderful to be blessed with the spirit of love in

our hearts? Then we can praise him like David. I wish all Baptists and lovers of the truth could take the SIGNS; I feel it would be a great help to them, for it strengthens me to read the good letters of a people who are traveling the same path. I have been made to see and feel the power of God more of late than ever before. His great love and power is being revealed to each and every one at his appointed time; not one shall be left out. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise. I have a dear son in the navy, and he has been on the west coast most of the time for three years. I sent him some good articles from the SIGNS and he enjoyed them so well he wrote me to know the address, as he wanted to subscribe for it. He told me about seeing the announcements of meetings at different places, one at Mount Vernon Church, Seattle, Washington. His ship is going to Seattle, will get there about the first of August and stay there several months. He said in his letter that he was going to meeting when he got there and get acquainted with some of the Primitive Baptists in that section. I surely would enjoy being up there with them all at their meetings, and feel it will be a great pleasure to him to go to their meetings, as he is so far from home. The Scripture says all things work together for good to them that love the Lord. Things happen that we cannot see at the time how they can be right, but later we can see they were for our good and His glory.

Well, I must close this unprofitable letter. May the great God above uphold you in keeping this good paper in circulation, for it is the best book I ever read, except the Bible. If you think this letter will be worth printing, do so; if not, it will be all right.

Your unworthy sister,

KATE CROKER.

LEXINGTON, Kentucky.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—My Father, Elder P. W. Sawin, now just passed his eighty-fourth milestone, much enjoys the SIGNS, and looks forward to its coming each month. He always wants me to read the names of the contributors, then the obituaries, and then I begin with the first article and read at intervals until that number is finished. Father's health is splendid, his mind being as keen and active as that of a much younger man. I often feel the fine patience and courage which he and my dear uncle John have borne through their afflictions could only have come through their faith and love in their Master and a lifetime spent in his service. Father remembers many of the writers of the SIGNS, and would be glad to hear from you or any of them at any time.

GOLDIE S. WHITE.

PORT JEFFERSON STATION, N. Y., March 12, 1928.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—Through the tender mercy and loving care of our heavenly Father my life has been spared to again renew my subscription for the dear SIGNS. My heart goes out to you all in love and sweet fellowship, although strangers in the flesh, but brethren and sisters in Christ. Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. We read in Romans viii. 38, 39, For I am persuaded that neither death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. This surely is a precious promise God has given to the believer. If we were depending upon our works for salvation we would be lost. In Ephesians ii. 8, 9, we read, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." God in mercy sent his Son to a world by sin undone and Jesus Christ was crucified for sinners. May God's blessings rest upon you all.

(MRS.) CARRIE SMITH.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1928.

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ISAIAH XL. 31.

"BUT they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary, and they shall walk, and not faint."

The above Scripture was presented to us with the request that we write for publication of its spiritual relations, and we will now confess to the precious readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that it has been quite a heavy burden to write, and have waited until now for the quotation to brighten.

First, they that waited upon the Lord shall renew their strength. The word "they" expresses plurality. The multitude that wait upon the Lord is an innumerable company. We truly believe there are those who wait upon the Lord and those who run after their own designs. We have the consideration, why they wait. We have but one way to describe them, and that description takes up the expressions of the Lord's people. They have no strength or wisdom to attain to his wisdom and righteousness and are made to see that in themselves dwells no good thing, which brings the realization that they have no strength, and are in a vile, helpless and ruined condition. The only way to them is to wait upon the Lord. It is none other than the work of God manifested to the poor sinner, by which they see themselves vile, helpless, ruined and undone, and when his mighty power against sin is felt there is no other source to look for help. When the help the God laid upon his Son is felt poor sinners feel strong in the Lord, so their strength is renewed, they trust in the Lord and have no confidence in the flesh. This wonderful change lifts them up on high to the embrace of the Lord Jesus Christ and their strength is renewed, for if God be for us who can be against us? since he is mine and I am his, what can I want beside?

"They shall mount up with wings as eagles." The eagle is the greatest bird of flight, which would impart to our mind that the mounting of those who wait upon the Lord has the greatest power of flight in heaven or earth, as it is the Holy Spirit communing in the heart of the love and power of God, and no power can hinder this mounting up, for he sends forth his Spirit in our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Jesus answers the mind of the Spirit which rewards us openly. We hunger and thirst after righteousness and Jesus feeds us, as we are sheep of his pasture. This mounting up with wings as eagles causes one to see from on high and behold God's creation and his mighty power upholding and controlling all things. He works his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. This wonderful

virtue brings poor sinners into a haven of rest with Jesus, for they have Christ in them the hope of glory. No wings are as strong and mighty as to take such flight as the poor sinner, for the tie is so strong that declares, I in you, you in me, I in the Father, the Father in me, we are one.

"They shall run, and not be weary." This is one of peculiar strength according to nature, a condition nature would declare impossible, for whenever we exert ourselves, which raises the heart action and respiration becomes more rapid and the muscles are overexerted we are wearied. They that wait upon the Lord shall run and not be weary. We know that is not a natural physical condition, so the question arises, How, and in what way do they run? Paul speaks of "run" in writing, and said "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."—Heb. xii. 1. This command or entreaty of Paul to the Hebrews is to run with patience. In the "run with patience" the child of God contends for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and with continued searching gleans from the word of truth and the evidences of his mighty power manifested in them, here a little, there a little, all the way, which is Christ Jesus working in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure, which would be well expressed in the word "run." They never weary in these things, though they often feel to give up in despair, but they do not, for Jesus is always present and they feel that underneath is the everlasting arm, and are made to exclaim, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God almighty, thou King of saints. All his ways are righteousness and all his paths are peace, but the poor pilgrim does not always feel that he is in the path of peace. What wonderful running, searching, inquiring rests with the child of grace.

"They shall walk, and not faint." The word "faint" according to Worcester's definition means: weak; feeble; to grow weak; swoon. Instead of weakening, they grow stronger in the faith and have less confidence in the flesh, and as they walk about Zion they consider the high towers and strong walls, and in these considerations they can exclaim, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" After running and not being wearied with the things of the Spirit for over thirty years, I rejoice more in the beauty of his kingdom and grow stronger, which gives me courage to hope I am one of those the poet refers to in the hymn, "How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord," &c. This eternal life Jesus gives his elect has no perishing relations, no fatigue, no growing weak, no fainting. All weakness is of the flesh.

Dear readers, we trust the thoughts submitted will be of some comfort to you in the exercises manifested in you, and the language such as becomes sound doctrine. Spread the mantle of charity over all imperfections and pray for your poor unworthy servant. C. W. V.

WATCH YOUR DATES.

We wish to request our subscribers when sending in their subscriptions to see that the date on the little pink slip bearing their address is changed. If not changed, please let us know immediately (for that signifies you have not been given credit for the money sent) and we will look into the matter. By consulting that date you can tell at a glance to what time your subscription is paid. Dec. 28 means that your subscription is paid to December, 1928; June 27 means your subscription is only paid to June, 1927, &c.

IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION.

A SPECIAL request has been made that the writer answer through the SIGNS the following question: "Was Adam a sinner before he transgressed the law?" We do not know why such a question should arise, but since it has been asked, we will reply by saying, in our opinion, Adam most certainly was not a sinner before he transgressed the law. Sin is defined in 1 John iii. 4, as follows: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." It would appear perfectly plain from this that until Adam had actually transgressed the law he was not a sinner. Our understanding is that Adam, the first man, was made of the earth, and that he was earthy, with all that that implies. We do not believe, as some claim, that he was made able to stand, but liable to fall. The evidence proves that he was constructed of material that would crumble when the test came. His nature was corrupt and he was capable of and did lust, or desire to unlawfully eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil when it was seen that it was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise. (Gen. iii. 6.) The fact of this having been spoken more particularly, perhaps, concerning the woman, Eve, does not in the least exempt Adam, for she was verily bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, they being inseparably one. Adam as he stood in the garden of Eden, having been formed of the dust of the ground, was only a natural man, or a creature of the earth. He was confined to the earth and the things of the earth, and the law which was given him there, to our mind, was but a physical law. The desire to partake of the forbidden tree, in and of itself, was not a transgression, hence not sin. God had not forbidden that, but what he had said was this: "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."—Gen. ii. 16, 17. Therefore, only the eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was forbidden, and until they had eaten of the fruit thereof there was no transgression. Under the laws of our own land, regardless of the fact that one may be a murderer at heart, until he has committed some outward act by which he may be brought into account the teeth of the law cannot close down upon him. One has well said, "Transgression made no change in Adam's nature, but did change his status or condition. The transgression simply made manifest what his nature was capable of. That liability of his to transgress was there all the time, but liability to do a thing cannot be called sin until the liability awakens into action and the sin is committed." Adam could offer no real excuse for his act, and God, to be sure, held him strictly to account, but the sentence of death was not meted out to him until he had actually transgressed the law which had been given him. He was susceptible of temptation, but James says, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." "Wherefore, as by one man sin

entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law, sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.)"—Rom. v. 12, 13. The spiritual law of the just, holy and pure God, under which are his chosen and peculiar people, can be summed up in the following reply made by Jesus to one of the scribes: "The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel. The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment." Here the very thought of evil is a transgression of this holy law, therefore it is sin. Under this law, Jesus taught in his memorable sermon on the mount "that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." In the new creation, where God is said to look on the inward part, the thought and intent of the heart is discerned by him and he judgeth accordingly. Since the first and great commandment requires complete and perfect obedience and the giving of one's self wholly and entirely, in thought, word and action, unto the Lord, the very least infraction of that by any of our faculties, even to the thinking of something other than that which concerns him, constitutes a breaking or transgressing of that law, which is sin. Who, then, is able to stand in the presence of him of whom the heavenly host of old did sing, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory?

We hope what we have written will prove of benefit to the cause, and that our questioner will receive satisfaction out of it.

R. L. D.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Ebenezer Old School Baptist Association, in joint session with the several churches composing the same, being convened in the meetinghouse at Baltimore, Maryland, May 16th, 17th and 18th, 1928, doth send greetings in the Lord to our sister associations and meetings with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more we are blessed to meet and greet your messengers and receive your correspondence, which we greatly enjoy, and hope the Lord will permit us to meet again, as there is nothing so wonderful to the children of God as the assembling of ourselves together to look upon Zion, as our dear brother Elder Vaughn so beautifully expressed in his sermon Wednesday night. Although we are small in number we feel that we are faithful in upholding the doctrine of salvation by grace through our Lord Jesus Christ, not trusting in any works of righteousness which we may do.

Our next session will convene on Wednesday before the third Sunday in May, 1929, the Lord willing, continuing for three days, the place of meeting to be announced later through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, when we hope to meet a goodly number of your messengers.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.

EDWARD A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Calvin E. Jackson, son of John C. and Adelia Reed Jackson, was born June 30th, 1865, near Galion, Ohio, and died May 1st, 1928, making his stay on earth almost sixty-three years. In the year 1891 he was married to Mary E. Dean Jackson, and to this union were born six children, four of them dying in infancy. He is survived by his widow, George Jackson and Frank Jackson, all of Bucyrus, and one sister, Mrs. Emma Sloan, of near Kansas City, Kansas, besides a host of friends. August 15th, 1896, he received a hope in the Savior and upon relation of his experience to the Old School Predestinarian Church, of near Galion, he was received, baptized by Elder Benjamin Martin, then pastor of the church. Shortly after the same church ordained him Deacon, and also chose him as Clerk Feb. 17th, 1900. He soon began to speak in prayer and talk about the Scriptures, to the comfort of the brethren, who granted him license to exercise his gift wherever God in his mercy deemed fit to cast his lot, and for several years he assisted me in the care of the churches. In the fall of 1908 the church called for assistance to consider the propriety of setting him apart to the full work of the gospel ministry. The churches responding to the call were Caesars Creek, of near Jamestown, Ohio, Pleasant Hill Church, of near Delaware, Ohio, Providence Church, of Lightsville, Ohio. Elder Geo. L. Weaver was chosen Moderator and Elder Newton Peters Clerk, together with three Deacons and members constituted the presbytery. His call to the ministry was very satisfactory, and upon motion and a unanimous vote he was set apart to the full work of the gospel ministry, and the remainder of his days were spent very satisfactorily to his brethren. In May, 1913, he was chosen pastor of the Pleasant Hill Church, which position he filled until death. Elder Jackson was a person we all liked, especially for his wanting to have a thus sayeth the Lord for his arguments. He was quiet and calm in his talk, and could not see the consistency in the doctrine called "conditional time salvation," of ten remarking that if some of it was left for "poor me" to finish it would be a bungled affair. The Scriptures teach me that our Savior did it all, and that settles it. "The steps that I tred and the station I fill, my Father determined and wrote in his will." He was a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and the *Lone Pilgrim*, and took great comfort in their perusal, and wrote at times for their columns. He followed the trade of painting and paper hanging, and while at work was stricken with a terrible pain in his stomach, but they could not persuade him to go for an operation until I was sent for, but before I arrived they had operated and found a very bad ulcerated stomach, peritonitis had set in and the chances for him to live were small. He rallied from the operation, and we thought there was a chance of recovery, but the Lord had ordered otherwise, and after eight days suffering he calmly went to sleep. During the last few days his mind was on the house not made with hands. He said, Everything is all right, I am going home, weep not for me. I tried to comfort the friends at the funeral, reading hymn 1252 (Beebe's collection) and Deut. xxxii. 1–9, and used as a text, Psalms xix. first clause of the seventh verse, after which his body was laid to rest beside his four children to await the call of the Master in the resurrection. May the good Lord reconcile us to our loss, as we feel it is his gain, and enable us all to hope in his mercy, and say, Thy will be done.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

Ira Hayman, son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hayman, of Salisbury, Md., was born near Berlin, Worcester Co., Md., March 14th, 1908, and died April 7th, 1928, in Salisbury, Md., his parents, with whom he made his home, having moved to Salisbury in 1911. Ira was educated in the Salisbury High School, and completed his education by taking the commercial course, and finished his school work with much credit to himself and family. He was quiet and reserved by nature, and was awarded the Rotarian prize for the best conduct, &c., of any student in the school. Just after finishing his school work he was given a position as bookkeeper with the Thelman Brothers Furniture Company, which position he filled with much satisfaction to his employers until his death, and it was in their office that death overtook him after he had completed his duties of distributing the pay-roll on Saturday night, his death being from the discharge of the pistol he kept on his desk while distributing the pay-roll, as was explained to the writer the pistol discharging as he was attempting to put it away in the desk drawer. His death came as a shock to the town in which he lived, and especially to his employers, and a crash to his parents and family. Ira was regular in attendance at the Old School Baptist meetings in Salisbury, where his mother is a member and his father a regular attendant. He seemed to enjoy the meetings, and would often say to his mother after hearing the discources, "Mother, was not that a good sermon?" While not a member of the visible church at Salisbury, it is our hope that he was of the real church that is invisible to the natural eye. The writer was with the family the day before the funeral, and it was really wonderful to him to see how sister Hayman and also Mr. Hayman, the parents, were reconciled to God's will in this dispensation of his providence, for while they were, as they expressed it, just crushed, yet not rebellious, and the writer felt he never saw such a manifestation of faith as shown by this sister, his mother, at that hour, and would like to think that he was as much comfort to her as she was to him. The

writer conducted the funeral services at the Salisbury Old School Baptist meetinghouse Tuesday afternoon, April 9th, using as a text, The day of one's death is better than the day of one's birth, &c.

Interment took place in the cemetery of the Forest Grove Old School Baptist Church.

May the Lord continue to comfort the family.

G. E. COULBOURN.

Charles Edward Smith, son of David and Caroline Smith, was born near Madison, Wisconsin, August 14th, 1849, and departed this life at his home in Lebanon, Oregon, March 30th, 1928, at the age of 78 years, 7 months and 16 days. When a boy he moved with his parents to Marion County, Iowa, where he spent the greater part of his life, and where, on April 30th, 1876, he was united in marriage to Miss Hannah Watkins, who survives him. To this union one son, Ray W. Smith, was born. In the year 1898 the family rented their farm near Caloma, Iowa, which had been their home since marriage, and made a trip to Oregon, locating in Corvallis, but returned to Iowa in the fall of 1900. During their stay in Oregon both he and his wife united with the Luckiamute Primitive Baptist Church, under the pastorate of Elder Vincent Turnidge. Brother Smith served as Deacon and as Church Clerk for many years in Iowa, and was serving in that capacity, and as a trustee in Bethel Church, at Tallman, Oregon, at the time of his death. The family came to Oregon the second time in 1920, first locating at Philomath, and later moving to Lebanon to make their home. He was a true and faithful member in the church, an ideal husband and father, a man who was held in high esteem by his friends and fellow-citizens. He leaves to mourn their loss, his wife, sister Hannah Smith, of Lebanon, Oregon, the son, Ray W. Smith, and four grandchildren: Maxine, Velta, Fern and Charles Smith, all of Barlow, Oregon, besides many other relatives and friends. Bethel Church will also feel her loss deeply, as he was a regular attendant at the meetings, and was ever ready to bear his part of any burden that fell upon the church, and did it cheerfully, and his home was a hospitable and welcome retreat for his brethren, and a place where church services were often held.

The funeral was held at Howe's funeral home in Lebanon, at 2:30 o'clock on Sunday afternoon. Brother Smith had requested that Elder S. B. Moffitt conduct the services, but the message failed to reach him in time for the Elder to make train connections for Lebanon, and brother J. S. Locke, of Iowa, filled the place, using as a text, Romans viii. 18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Brother Locke spoke comfortingly to the bereaved, and the mortal body of our beloved brother in Christ was then laid away in the Lebanon Cemetery to await the resurrection morn, when, we trust, and believe, it will come forth a spiritual body, fashioned like unto the glorious body of our Lord Jesus. Let us be reconciled with this thought: Absent from the body, but present with the Lord.

MINNIE W. BANKS.

James Judson Rittenhouse died on the morning of October 27th, 1927, at the Good Samaritan Hospital, at Zanesville, Ohio. He was afflicted with paralysis, which caused his death after twelve days of helplessness and suffering. Following the stroke he was removed from the hotel where he made his temporary home to the hospital, where he remained until the end. His two brothers and one sister hastened to his bedside when the news of his affliction reached them, and there they were allowed their last, but blessed, brief visit with him. His body was brought to Frenchtown, N. J., where funeral services were conducted by Elder H. C. Ker, of Delmar, Delaware, from the home of relatives of the deceased, Mr. and Mrs. Martin F. Bellis, on Monday, November 1st, 1927. The interment was in the family plot of the Frenchtown Cemetery. Judson, a native, and almost lifelong resident, of Hunterdon County, N. J., was born April 30th, 1857. He was a son of the late William and Ida Brewer Rittenhouse. In his early life Lillie Udy Shepherd became his first wife, and was his loving companion until her death, which occurred nine years ago. Their only child, Erma, died in early childhood. During the later lonely years of his life his home was, for the greater part of the time, with his brother Oscar and family in Clinton, N. J., or with his sister, the writer. Pressing business demands called him from his home and friends so that his last days were spent among strangers. But such was the geniality of his nature that he soon endeared himself to many friends in the distant home who loved and comforted him in his illness. Although not a member of the church he was firmly established in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and to him the glad tidings of the gospel brought reverent joy. He suffered from a feeling of unfitness, but his life was a shining example of the work of divine grace. The little church at Locktown, N. J., mourns with the two remaining brothers, Gabriel C., of Paulsboro, N. J., and Oscar, of Clinton, N. J., the sister, Alwilda R. Stryker, of Flemington, N. J., the many loving nephews and nieces, and a large circle of friends, the loss of a loving, self-sacrificing and dependable brother, uncle, and friend. Surely a prince among men, "a child of Jehovah, a subject of grace," has been removed from our midst. Our hearts ache in this new loneliness that his absence brings, but we are humbly glad that his troubled days are ended and that he is, as we believe, at rest.

ALWILDA R. STRYKER.

Brother **Noah A. Darnall**, son of the late Elder J. L. B. Darnall, was born February 27th, 1879, and departed this life April 12th, 1928, making his stay on earth 49 years, 1 month and 15 days. In 1899 he was married to Miss Emma Capps, and to that union were born ten children, six of whom are left to mourn the loss of their father, together with his afflicted wife, two brothers and five sisters. There is no doubt we have lost a loving brother, a good father and husband. He united with the Dry Creek Old School Baptist Church, Trigg County, Kentucky, Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1926, and was baptized by the unworthy writer, a brother in the flesh, and I hope, in the Spirit. He was elected Church Clerk on Saturday before the second Sunday in December, 1926, and made a faithful Clerk, and was always at meeting unless something serious prevented. He was a strong believer in the predestination of all things, and was not afraid to talk on the subject with any one. May the true Israel's God uphold his wife and children in their sorrow and enable them to say, God doeth all things well. We know their loss is great, but believe our loss is his eternal gain. He told me the day before he died that he wished the blessed God would draw the line, and say, Lie down and go to sleep. So we believe he fell asleep in Christ to await the resurrection morn. He requested that his funeral be preached at the church by Elder G. D. Clark. May we be enabled to say with the servant Job, The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.

J. N. DARNALL.

Elizabeth Catherine Shuck Taylor was born August 9th, 1850, in Perry County, Indiana, and died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Nora Hammons, near Twin Falls, Idaho, May 5th, 1928, aged 77 years, 8 months and 26 days. She was married to George Taylor October 21st, 1869, and to this union were born five children, of whom four are still living: W. T. Taylor, of Mulino, Oregon, Mrs. Nora Hammons, of Twin Falls, Idaho, Mrs. Ida Symmonds, of Stoddard, Nebraska, and O. W. Taylor, of Hood River, Oregon. The youngest son, H. H. Taylor, died in 1918. In 1896 Mr. and Mrs. Taylor moved to Iowa, where they lived two years. From there they moved to Smith County, Kansas, living there twenty-five years. In 1903 they moved to Willamette Valley, in Oregon, making their home there until death. Mr. Taylor died two and one-half years ago, and since then Mrs. Taylor spent a great deal of her time with her daughter, Mrs. Hammons. Sister Taylor united with the Old School Baptist Church called Little Flock, in Nuckolls County, Nebraska, about the year 1895, and lived devoted to her faith until death relieved her of her suffering here.

Funeral services were held in the home of her daughter, Mrs. Hammons, May 6th, at 2 p. m., Elder J. R. Arnold, of Rupert, Idaho, officiating. The body was then moved to Salem, Oregon, to be buried there by the side of her husband. J. R. ARNOLD.

Reuben Curtis Culpepper, the subject of this sketch, was born March 29th, 1879, in Lavaca County, Texas, and moved with his parents to Stockdale, Texas, in the fall of 1903, where he lived until the time of his death, which occurred April 5th, 1928, making his stay on earth 49 years and 6 days. Curtis was sound in the doctrine of grace, believing in the absolute sovereignty of God, unyielding in his convictions, although he had never attached himself to the church of his choice, the Primitive Baptist. He loved the Baptists, and was a good defender of the doctrine, and his home was a welcome place for all the dear brethren, and he was faithful to see his dear old mother was carried to her church meetings. Although he never made a public profession of his faith, yet he left evidence of a hope beyond this vale of tears. He was greatly loved by all who knew him, and was strictly honest in all his dealings, and by his honesty and kindness endeared himself to the community in which he lived. He was married to Miss Ella Reese May 1st, 1912, by the writer, at Fentrice, Texas, and to this union were born two children: R. C. and Merril. His father, James Culpepper, two brothers and two sisters preceded him to the great beyond. He leaves to mourn, his wife, mother, five brothers, five sisters and a host of relatives and kind friends.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral service, which was held at his home in the presence of a large concourse of friends and relatives, the texts used were 1st Cor. xv. 21–23, and 1st Thess. iv. 15, 16, and in much weakness I tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved relatives and friends, after which his body was laid to rest in the Stockdale Cemetery, there to await the morning of the resurrection of the dead, when Jesus shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound and the dead in Christ shall rise first. I will say to his dear mother, who is eighty-seven years of age, and to all the dear relatives and friends, Weep not, as for one without hope, and may the dear Lord reconcile each of you to the dispensation of his wonderful providence, for the fullness of his grace is the only power that can heal the wound. J. B. BOWDEN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

T. O. Turner, Ky., $1; Mrs. M. Smith, B. C., $1; L. G. Ross, N. Y., $1; Isaac L. Kip, N. J., $1; F. B. Hanover, Ohio, $3; Mrs. Sarah V. Curry, Colo., $2; J. W. Garrison, N. Y., $1.

MEMORIALS.

We, the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada, have learned with deep regret of the passing away of **Elder C. E. Jackson,** of Bucyrus, Ohio, who has visited us for a number of years, by invitation, and whom we esteemed highly for the truth's sake, therefore be it

Resolved, that we express to the churches he served as pastor our sincere sympathy in their deep affliction, especially to the sorrowing widow in this her hour of great bereavement, therefore be it

Resolved, that a copy of this resolution be spread upon our minutes, and a copy sent to Mrs. Jackson, also a copy sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

GEORGE RUSTON, Moderator.

ANGUS D. GILLIS, Clerk.

APPOINTMENTS.

The Lord willing, I will be at Decipher Creek, Gurdon, Ark., June 9th and 10th; Monday, June 11th, at Little Hope; Tuesday, June 12th, at Masedonia; Wednesday, June 13th, Chaple Hill; Thursday, June 14th, at Bethel; Friday, June 15th, at Camdon, where sister Bettie Ellis may arrange; Saturday and Sunday at Fordyce, as Elder V. R. Harris may arrange. Then at Pine Bluff, June 16th, at night, at 1705 16th Ave., at brother W. H. Meeks' residence; and from there to Memphis, Tenn., June 23rd and 24th; and then through the Mississippi River Association, as Elder Kerley may arrange, so as to reach Martin, Tenn., by July 3rd, to meet the church at Cane Creek July 3rd. Boaz Chaple, July 4th and 5th; at Bethel, 6th, 7th and 8th; Mud Creek, July 9th and 10th; Mt. Zion, Graves County, July 14th and 15th. Then to the Soldier Creek Association, at Mayfield, July 16th; Kansas, July 17th; North Mt. Zion, 18th; Pilgrim Rest, July 19th; Harmony, July 21st and 22nd; Soldier Creek, 23rd; Shiloh, 24th; Providence, 28th and 29th; then to the Obion Association at Walnut Fork, Henry County, Tenn., July 30th and 31st, and as brother R. L. Veasey may arrange after three days rest.

J. B. BOWDEN.

SAN ANTONIA, Texas, May 6, 1928.

A CORRECTION.

I wish to correct, for the sake of his children, an error in the obituary of Elder J. N. Bartlett, published in the February number of the SIGNS, and appearing later in the *Lone Pilgrim.* In speaking of his children it should read thus: E. M. (deceased), W. P., of Gassaway, W. Va.; J. Corder, of Clarksburg, W. Va.; Mrs. Virginia D. Chenoweth, of Elkins, W. Va., and F. E., the youngest, with whom he made his home, near Philippi, W. Va. Also, the year of his reception into Mt. Olive Church should be 1879 instead of 1877.

Lone Pilgrim, please copy.

SEMMA E. CORDER.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., April 24, 1925.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, &C. REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.

Of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, published monthly, at Middletown, N. Y., for April 1st, 1928.

State of New York, County of Orange, ss.:

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Gilbert Beebe, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 41, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publishers, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publishers, J. E. Beebe & Company, Middletown, N. Y.; Editor, Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.; Business Manager, Gilbert Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

2. That the owner is, Josephine E. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagers and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent. or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear on the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

GILBERT BEEBE,
Business Manager.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 10th day of May, 1928.

(Seal) FRANK P. COX.
(My commission expires April, 1930.)

MEETINGS.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at New Vernon, Sullivan Co., New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (6th, 7th and 8th), 1928. Those coming from and via New York City will take Erie R. R. Ferry foot of West 23rd Street at 4:20 p. m., or the Erie R. R. Ferry foot of Chambers St., at 4:30 p. m., for train leaving Jersey City, N. J., at 4:45 p. m., on Tuesday, June 5th, or Erie R. R. Ferry foot of Chambers St., at 7:02 a. m., on Wednesday, June 6th, for train leaving Jersey City at 7:30 a. m. Get tickets for Howells, N. Y. These trains are operated on Daylight Saving Time. Those coming from and via Kingston, N. Y., will take Ontario and Western R. R. train leaving Kingston at 1:50 p. m., on Tuesday, June 5th. Get tickets for Winterton, N. Y. This train is operated on Eastern Standard Time. Trains will be met and friends cared for. Those coming by automobile will go to the home of Mr. Fred Beyea (The Old Homestead) on arrival at New Vernon. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, sisters and friends.

R. LESTER DODSON, Moderator.

The Olive and Hurley Church of the Lexington-Roxbury Association, the Lord willing, will hold our annual two days' meeting the third Saunday and Saturday before in June (16th and 17th), 1928. All are invited to be with us at that time. Trains will be met Saturday morning at Ashokan.

J. J. SECOR, Clerk.

The New Hope Association will be held with the Mt. Zion Church, ten miles south of Greenville, Texas, instead of with the Sabine Church, six miles north of Greenville, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in August. Trains and busses will be met at Cash, Texas, Thursday afternoon and evening, and Friday morning. All expecting to attend this Association please notice the change.

J. J. DARNELL.

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ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday of each month at the Swedish Lutheran church-house southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, Riverside, Calif., and at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. 11th St., Claremont, Calif., on the first Sunday of each alternate month, beginning with January, and on every alternate month with brother Joseph Huffman, 128 Van Buren St., Arlington, Calif. Singing at 10:30 a. m. Preaching at 11 a. m. Lunch at the place of meeting, and continued services in the afternoon.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.

O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 245 Lacadana Drive, Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First. "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, Convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second. The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Eld. Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third. "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Eld. H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio. Fourth. "Fatalism." By Eld. H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio. Fifth. "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth. "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 96. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1928. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

1 SAMUEL XX. 39.

"THE lad knew not any thing: only Jonathan and David knew the matter."

The narrative in the Holy Scriptures of Jonathan and David is peculiarly interesting to my heart. "As David returned from the slaughter of Goliath, the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand. And Saul said to him, Whose son art thou, thou young man? And David answered, I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Bethlehemite. And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his garments, even to his bow, and to his girdle. And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, and behaved himself wisely: and Saul set him over the men of war; and he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants. And it came to pass, as they came, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music. And the women answered one another as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands. And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: and what can he have more but the kingdom? And Saul eyed David from that day and forward."—1 Sam. xvii. 57, 58; xviii. 1–9. Ah, from that moment so viciously cruel was Saul's jealousy, and so persistent his determination to kill David: but Jonathan's determination was to save him from the murderous jealousy of his father. I love to think that this was love's determination in love's covenant, for Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. (1 Sam. xx. 16, 17.) In this covenant is pictured forth that

everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure (2 Sam. xxiii. 5), concerning Christ and his church. (Jer. xxiv. 7; xxxi. 33-35.) "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."—Jer. xxxi. 3. And in this Love's covenant is love's determination, love's eternal election, love's predestination as declared by the apostle Paul, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."—Eph. i. 3-6. In all the transactions of Jehovah, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, there is ever being revealed to the chosen in Christ Jesus Jehovah's eternal delight in them. But more of this a little further along in our writing.

So persistent was the hatred of Saul and his determination to destroy David that he surely would be successful. But the counsel of Jehovah's will was otherwise, for "the Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."—Isaiah xiv. 24. Thus also it was in relation to David; and is unto every thing in creation. Every atom in the universe God gave being to, it has its decreed place, its sphere, and will fulfill neither more or less than Jehovah's eternal purpose therein who gave it being.

But though God had spoken to David in the past, yet he is troubled, filled with fears, and said to Jonathan, As the Lord liveth, there is but a step between me and death. (1 Sam. xx. 3.) Please read this entire twentieth chapter; it is one of the most interesting narratives of the love of two men, Jonathan and David, ever published among the children of men. "Jonathan said unto David, Come, and let us go out into the field. And they went out both of them into the field." And there they made a covenant. Jonathan promised to find out definitely what was the purpose of Saul, his father, concerning David; and he would come and tell David, and made an arrangement how he would let David know how it was, whether life or death. So David hid himself in the field. Jonathan found out that Saul was determined, if it were possible, to destroy David. "And it came to pass in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the field, at the time appointed with David, and a little lad with him. And he said unto his lad, Run, find out now the arrows which I shoot. And as the lad ran, he shot an arrow beyond him. And when the lad was come to the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried after the lad, and said, Is not the arrow beyond thee? And Jonathan cried after the lad, Make speed, haste, stay not. And Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows, and came to his master. But the lad knew not any thing: only Jonathan and David knew the matter. And Jonathan gave his artillery unto his lad, and said unto him, Go, carry them to the city. And as soon as the lad was gone, David arose out of a place toward the south, and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times; and they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded. And Jonathan said to David, Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn

both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, The Lord be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever. And he arose and departed; and Jonathan went into the city." And when Jonathan was slain in battle against the Philistines, David in his soul's distress exclaims, "How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high place. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women. How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!"—2 Sam. i. 25–27.

"The lad knew not any thing" of the covenant, the love, and the signification of the shooting of the arrows, it was Jonathan's and David's secret. So in the deep and spiritual sense there are transactions between the Most High and his people, between Christ and his church, of which the world knows nothing. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant." Jesus said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."—Matt. xi. 25, 26. "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given."—Matt. xiii. 11. There are such glorious, unspeakable matters between the Lord and his people which are known to no others. Yes, all the spiritual matters between Christ and his church are so personal and in such privacy that only he, the Head, and they, the church, the members of his body, only the Lamb of God, and the bride, the Lamb's wife, know. It has pleased the Lord to call them "my darling," my only one; he has no other. "You only have I known (Amos iii. 2), and the spouse of Christ sings, My beloved is mine, and I am his, he feedeth among the lilies, (Solomon's Song ii. 16), and Christ, speaking of the church, says, My dove, my undefiled, is but one, she is the choice one of her that bear her. (Solomon's Song vi. 9.)

Let us read together in the forty-fifth of Genesis, "Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph: doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you, to preserve life. For these two years hath the famine been in the land; and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest. And God sent me before you, to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt. Haste ye, go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not: and thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy

children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast: and there will I nourish thee, for yet there are five years of famine, lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty. And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you. And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste, and bring down my father hither. And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck. Moreover, he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that, his brethren talked with him." Oh what a meeting was this between Joseph and his brethren! Too sacred, too touchingly intimate for any others to witness. The Egyptians knew not anything, only Joseph and his brethren knew the matter; and the intimacy of a poor lost sinner, that mercy, and salvation, and reconciliation felt in the forgiveness of sin through Jesus the dear Savior, in his precious blood is so sacredly personal and secret that no other one knows the matter in those moments but the Lord and that favored sinner. "The lad knew not any thing: only Jonathan and David knew the matter." Look at this picture in John viii. 3–11. There stands the adulterous woman with downcast eyes before Jesus and her yelping accusers, who say, "Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground." What did Jesus write? Only Jesus and the woman with downcast eyes knew this matter. No one but the woman read what Jesus wrote; the rest knew not anything of this matter, and while Christ was writing with his finger on the ground he, by his Spirit, in his sovereign, abounding graciousness is writing in her heart, and oh that voice, those words! All her days that sweet gracious voice is saying this in her heart, and bearing its sacred fruit in her life: "Go, and sin no more." This also is a matter, oh unspeakably blessed in her life, which only Jesus and the woman knew. The apostle Peter while in the garden of Gethsemane was a valiant defender of Christ, and would have slain any one who would lay a finger upon him, and did with his sword cut off the right ear of the high priest's servant, "The servant's name was Malchus."—John xviii. 10. But as he warms himself at the fire, in the palace of the high priest, when a maid challenges him, and accuses him of being one of Christ's disciples, where, Peter, is thy bravery? There he is denying Jesus, denying him with oaths and curses. Are you, child of God, saying, I would never have done that? Oh there is the precious Savior knowing, hearing all that Peter is, and is saying. But amidst the revilings, mockings, insults, cruelties to which he was subjected he has thoughts of Peter, and turned and looked upon Peter. Oh only Jesus and Peter knew all this matter. When their eyes met, and Peter remembered that word, "Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice." What took place in those moments only Jesus and Peter knew, the rest, that wicked throng, knew not anything. That look! Was it a look of scorn, of utter loathing?

Oh no! Words cannot portray what was in that look; it passes all telling. It went all through him; so transformed the denying, cursing Peter. He leaves that fire where he was warming himself; he went out a broken-hearted, contrite sinner. "Peter went out, and wept bitterly."—Luke xxii. 62. Very many instances are given us in the Scriptures of the personal intimacy between God and his chosen ones, as between the crucified thief and the Savior. To this dying thief was given a vision that Christ crucified was the King of glory, the Lord of hosts, the King of Israel, through his sufferings, his blood, his travail, entering his kingdom, soon to ascend into the heavens, and he is moved to cry, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."—Luke xxiii. 42, 43. Only the crucified Jesus Christ and the crucified thief knew the matter; that reviling mob knew not anything. When Saul of Tarsus was on his way to Damascus, and a light shone round about him above the brightness of the sun, and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, in the Hebrew tongue, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest: it is hard to kick against the pricks." Only Jesus and Saul of Tarsus knew the matter; to the men that journeyed with him it was meaningless, they knew not any thing. (Acts ix. 1–7.) There are frequent experiences that are ours, between us and our God, so personal, of which it can be described in the saying, "The lad knew not any thing: only Jonathan and David knew the matter."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

WALLA WALLA, Washington.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—The SIGNS is always so full of comforting matter I feel that my poor writings would only crowd out some of those dear ones who are able with their pens to set forth the precious truth of the gospel of God our Savior so seasoned with grace that it makes the soul glad. As my mind has been exercised upon a subject of divine inspiration that has been very sweet to my soul in my meditations, I will try and offer some of my thoughts, and you can be the judge whether they should be given to the household of faith. It is a subject which to my mind is as much perverted or misconstrued as any part of the written word of God. Paul in his second letter to Timothy, second chapter, fifteenth verse, says, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." I desire to notice the "dividing the word of truth." It seems to my mind that a great many of our brethren at this day and time are trying to divide the gospel, but this is impossible, for the gospel is all of one piece and cannot be divided. Their reason for dividing the gospel is that Jesus says, Feed my sheep and feed my lambs, and the lamb cannot eat the same food that the old sheep can. The old sheep (saint) can eat the strong doctrine of election and predestination, but the lamb cannot eat such strong food. I am not able to see how election or predestination can be divided so part of it will be milk and part of it will be strong meat. I have had some experience with sheep, and I never thought of trying to divide the grain and forage which I fed the sheep so the lambs could eat it, but was very particular to select good pure feed for the old sheep, realizing that the health and growth of

the lamb depended upon that same food which the mother ate. So in like manner in the kingdom or fold (church), if the old members (sheep) in the church are fed on the pure gospel of God our Savior you will see the little lambs (young saints) grow and thrive in the truth of the gospel, but if the word of truth is not rightly divided, if the law and gospel (works and grace) are mixed it so pollutes the food that neither old nor young can thrive on it. From such spring all the diseases which have bothered the church since it was set up on earth.

With these few remarks let us examine the word of truth which must be rightly divided. I believe it is the law and the gospel, or old and new covenants. It is true that God made two covenants with his people. The first was made with Israel naturally, the second was made with Israel spiritually. Now while these two covenants were made by God, and made with Israel they cannot be mixed, for all the stipulations in each are as foreign as light and darkness, and the two being made with the same people, Israel, is the cause of the deep studying to divide them, for they are the word of truth. The first which God made with our fathers when he led them out of Egypt is made by God, and is his word, which is truth. Jesus settles this fact when he says, I am come not to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfill; and again he says, Not one jot or tittle shall pass from the law until all be fulfilled, so we see that his first covenant was sure to be fulfilled, and the same God who spoke the truth in the first covenant also says by the prophets which were under this first covenant, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers." It not being like the first or old covenant, how necessary it is that they should be divided so that each should fill its place and harmony prevail. Now as God did make two covenants with his people, and only the two, we have them both typified or shadowed in the prophetic day, and declared by Jesus and his disciples. We might go back to the beginning of creation and the type, but to be as brief as possible we will go no farther back than Abraham, to whom the promise is made. God called Abraham out from among his kindred and made a promise to him, which according to the wisdom of this world was impossible to be fulfilled, but all things are possible with God. The promise was that he should have a seed, and that seed is Jesus, and in him all the families of the earth should be blessed. According to nature this promise could never be, and there is where the parable of Jesus typified where Jesus said that the good man sowed good seed in his field and while men slept an enemy sowed tares. Jesus in his explanation of the parable says that the good seed sowed is the word of God, the world was the field and the devil was the enemy that sowed the tares. Now here in Abraham was the good seed sown, the promise. While this precious promise of God to Abraham was by nature impossible, yet Abraham and Sarah were overanxious that it should be fulfilled, and, being asleep to the knowledge of the sovereignty of God to perform that which his soul desired, Satan, or the wicked one, took this opportunity to sow his seed (tares) and this suggestion of Satan is very easily worked in all the saints who are not established in the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty. The overanxiety of Sarah and Abraham was such that they felt through

the influence of the flesh they could help God bring about the promise, so by the consent of both Hagar the handmaid was given to Abraham, and by this work Ishmael (the tares) was manifested, and both were satisfied until God fulfilled his promise in Sarah, the legal wife, through which the promise must come, and as soon as the good seed (Isaac) was manifested the fruit of the tares was manifested in Ishmael. Then the servants (Abraham and Sarah) wanted to cast him out, but God said not so, lest they root up the good seed also, but let them all grow together until harvest, and then he would send his angels (reapers), and that they should first gather the tares in bundles to be burned, but the good wheat they should gather in his garner (church). Now we have the word of truth here, that is Abraham had two sons, and if we will turn to Galatians, fourth chapter and twenty-second verse Paul will tell us how the word of truth is divided, "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons; the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman." Paul does not mix this word of truth, but rightly divides it: "But he who was of the bondwoman was born [manifested] after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." It is the word of truth that Jerusalem under the law, or old covenant, was in bondage under the law, but the new Jerusalem which John saw coming down from God out of heaven, clothed and adorned as a bride to meet her husband, if free, for her husband (Jesus) has made her free through the everlasting covenant. If the Son make you free ye shall be free indeed; ye are no more under the law, but under grace. The old covenant is a law covenant and the law knows no mercy, neither does it promise or offer mercy, but it demands strict obedience. The new covenant is a covenant of mercy, the subjects of this new covenant are sinners saved by the grace and mercy of God. Jesus in all his teachings while here on earth was dividing or showing the difference in the two covenants. Most all his parables brought out in full the nature of the two covenants, and in nearly every one of the parables he takes two to illustrate and show how the tares are separated from the good seed. In the parable of the two brothers, the prodigal and the elder brother, the prodigal brings out the character of the poor wayward sinner coming to all the rich provisions of the grace covenant, and the elder son shows all the nature of Ismael, who is born (manifested by the flesh) after the flesh. Some brethren seem to believe that this elder brother represents a disobedient child of God, and the younger, who had spent his all on rioting, and returned to his father, represents an obedient child of God. I believe he represents the child of God in both disobedience and obedience, and the elder represents the self-righteous pharisee, which Jesus says makes the outside the cup clean, but the inside is all filthy and unclean. We can take the ten virgins, they represent two things. Jesus begins this parable different from all the rest of the parables, yet it represents the two. In all his parables he says the kingdom of heaven is like the man who had the two sons, and the man that sowed good seed, &c., but in this one he says, "Then shall the king-

dom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins." This "then" follows what has taken place in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, and is to be yet in the future. This is his last parable, and represents that day of harvest spoken of when the tares are to be bound in bundles and burned, and the wheat is to be gathered into his garner (church). These ten virgins went forth to meet the bridegroom (all growing together under the law covenant), five were wise and five were foolish. (Some say the reason some of them were foolish was because they were disobedient). It says they went to meet the bridegroom just the same as the wise, they were just as obedient as the wise. The wise had oil in their vessels with their lamps, but the foolish took no oil in their vessels with their lamps, and the reason they took no oil in their vessels is because they had none to put in. There was no oil (grace) in the law covenant and that is where they were foolish to think that their favor in meeting the bridegroom depended upon their obedience. This was fully demonstrated when Judea and all the region round about went out and were baptized by John, confessing their sins, the oil that was in their vessels showed on the outside (grace). But John saw the foolish coming without oil in their vessels and he called them a generation of vipers, and said, "Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." (Bring evidence of grace). Do not say you had Abraham to your father, for God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. At midnight the cry came (the dividing of the old and new covenant day), Go ye out to meet the bridegroom, and they all arose (grown together) and trimmed their lamps. The foolish virgins' lamps had gone out. Yes, behold, your house is left unto you desolate. They said to the wise, "Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves." While the foolish were gone the bridegroom came, and they that were ready went in with him, and the door was shut.

I will now close with one more thought on "they that were ready." The being ready was the effect of the oil in their vessels. How were they made ready? John (the holy spirit) the forerunner of Christ, came to make ready a people prepared of the Lord. So the Holy Spirit is the one that takes the things of Jesus and shows them unto us, and through this knowledge we are made able to divide the word of truth, preach salvation by grace through Christ the good seed, in whom all the families of the earth are blessed. Amen.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. T. BARNES.

ROCKPORT, Texas, March 11, 1928.

DEAR PUBLISHERS:—Inclosed find a letter written to me by my youngest daughter, Martha, which is self-explanatory, and it is to me a source of great joy to know that God is yet revealing himself to the children of men as the chiefest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely. Being questioned by Martha in a letter relative to spiritual things, I wrote her as best I could, trying (though in a weak way) to set forth the plan of God's salvation, through grace, treasured in Christ for the heirs of promise before the world began. If the editors of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES feel her

letter would be comforting to any of the Lord's little ones I ask that they give it a place in its columns, otherwise all be well.

Inclosed find my check for ten dollars, two dollars of which apply to the renewal of my wife's subscription, two dollars to be applied to new subscription for my daughter, Mrs. W. W. McClennan, 1412 17th Street, Wichita Falls, Texas, the remaining six dollars to be used as seemeth good to you to supply the poor in Zion. May the God of all grace be with, strengthen and keep you, together with the editors, that this medium of communication of the dear saints of God may be perpetuated to the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Wife and I have been spending the winter on the Texas coast for the benefit of our health, but hope to soon be at home again at Vernon, Texas.

Yours in an humble hope of immortality,

W. S. BOURLAND.

OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla., Feb. 17, 1928.

MY DEAR FATHER:—I received the letters from you and mamma to-day, and certainly did enjoy them. It has been a long time since I have had a real letter from you, papa, and I wish I could write you one that would be just half as interesting, but I cannot, yet I want to tell you your letter was enjoyed and appreciated very much, and I hope you will feel like writing me again before long. There are so many things I cannot understand; in fact, it seems there are few I do understand. I do not know whether it is because I have always heard you talk in just the same manner that you wrote, or whether there is some other reason, but it comforts me to read those things, and I seem to understand them more clearly when I have you tell them to me. My dear father, it must be the most wonderful blessing in this world to be able to read, understand and remember like you do. When I read the Bible I enjoy it, but there are so many mysterious things to me. The things I think I do understand are those I have heard you so often talk of. I do believe and accept them as true for the reason I know we are of a carnal mind and are not good. I do not believe when we are disobedient it is because we desire to do those things. Do you? I know I try with all my heart to do good and live as nearly right as I can, and my conscience smites me when I have done wrong, and I wonder why I did. But my doings to a certain extent are like my thoughts: they come and go and I seem to have little control over them. When I try to pray I feel it more than at any other time; I am lost, and feel so alone, and that my prayers are not heard, and wonder if the things I ask for are of the flesh. I am afraid I am selfish, and know I am not deserving, but that is not the way I want to be. O my dear father, if I could just understand and have one little ray of light, I feel I could then bear those dark hours better. Or is it so that when you once have tasted the goodness of God and have seen the light you are satisfied, or do you have dark despairing moments, when you feel so unworthy? O, papa, I feel so low and unworthy I am afraid even to try to pray to God, or utter his holy name, or to ask him to give me understanding. Often I feel I cannot stand it; I am so alone. Oh is there any one like me? I am made to wonder why there are so many temptations here before us, and why we are so weak we cannot withstand them. There were many things I wanted to ask you when I started

writing, but my mind is completely blank now and I will have to wait until another time. I ask that you always remember me in your prayers, I need them. I may be rebellious because of the things put upon me, which I am, that is why I am never satisfied. The Lord is good to me, but I always want something I do not have. I do hope and pray that it pleases the Lord to comfort me with an understanding heart, for we cannot feast upon and relish worldliness and be happy, for it is so empty, wicked and vague, yet ever ready to take us into its grasp. That is why I pray for the love and protection of God.

Do write to me again, for I am always glad to hear from you, and especially upon the things which pertain to the kingdom of our God.

I am your affectionate daughter, in hope of eternal life,

MARTHA BOURLAND.

SULPHUR, Kentucky.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I want to send in my subscription to our dear family paper, and some have asked me to write, though what any one can see in my writing that would be of comfort to them is more than I can tell. No one can write or speak to the comfort of the Lord's poor and afflicted people except it is given them from above, and according to my feelings I have no gift and had better keep silent, for I have a fear that I may darken counsel with words to no profit; but O, dear Lord, forbid that I should write anything not according to the truth. I can very easily see the marks of grace in others, but in myself it is only the sinful flesh that appears, and when I read over my own letters I am ashamed to send them, and especially so after reading such letters as Mrs. H. A. Strube had in the May number of the SIGNS. It was excellent, she told my thoughts and feelings better than I can. Many times I have the desire to pray and know not how to approach the throne of grace, for I feel to be too weak, too little, too sinful, while he is high, holy and good; but the poet says prayer is the soul's sincere desire unuttered or expressed, and dear old Paul tells us that we know not what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. We know the Lord is great and greatly to be praised. He hath done great things for his people, whereof we are glad, a most kind and loving Savior, ever he teaches his people to know he is their whole dependence. He is their all in all, and without him we can do nothing. He saw his people deep in sin and folly with no strength to extricate themselves, he found them all in a waste howling wilderness, and he led them all the days of old. He was and is their only instructor. He brought them up out of the horrible pit and the miry clay and set their feet upon a rock, established their goings and put a new song in their mouth, even praise to God for evermore, and I want to say none others can sing that song; they do not know it; they do not want to know it; they see no beauty in it. Moses could sing this song when he saw their great deliverance from the Egyptian hosts. His people were hungry and He gave them manna from heaven; they were thirsty and they smote the rock and the waters gushed out; he brought them out of bondage from darkness into light to serve the true and living God and gave his only begotten Son to die that they might live. All of this, and more than mortal tongue can ever tell, and then some say we must first make the start, but the Bible says not so. Paul says we

believe according to that mighty power that was wrought in Christ when he was raised from the dead, and for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, and hath raised us up together with Christ, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Yes, it is salvation by free unmerited grace, given in Christ in covenant love before the world was made. Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. Who hath saved us and called us, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace. So it is grace from first to last. It was all of his grace we were brought to obey, while others were suffered to go the road which by nature we chose as our way, which leads to the regions of woe. A few nights ago I awoke in the middle of the night with these words in my mind, Because I live ye shall live also, and just one line of a song, I through grace a member am, and I wondered much if these gracious words were given for me, and the thought came, Why were they given to me? Why were they in my mind in the dead hours of the night? He neither slumbers nor sleeps. He works and none can hinder. I have not been able to recall any more of the song, but I know if it is my happy lot to be a member with the chosen of the Lord it is through the grace of a kind heavenly Father. We hope this God is our God. He will be our guide even unto death.

If you think this is fit for a place in the SIGNS please correct all mistakes, but if you see anything in it that is not according to the truth I would not have you publish it, and please do not let it crowd out any one of the many good writers, for their writings are well worthy of space. The last SIGNS seems to me unusually good. I enjoyed every article in it. May the Lord bless you and care for you and our dear editors with all things needful. May he be with us all throughout the uneven journey of life and not forsake us when we come down in death, but take us home where our dear Savior is, there to see him as he is and be like him.

"Hide me, O, my Savior, hide,
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide,
Oh receive my soul at last."

Unworthily yours in a precious hope,
ADDIE CHANDLER.

ATLANTIC, N. C., June 5, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—Wife and I arrived home to-day, after a very comforting trip with the churches in the Country Line Associations, the Pig River, Mountain, New River, Delaware Association, New York city, and the Delaware River Association. We found all in peace, as we did on our last visit. I felt that there is peace and brotherly love with the Old School Baptists and my poor heart was made to rejoice at the goodness and tender mercies of God. We desire to extend our love and many thanks to the brethren and sisters who were so very kind to us on our trip, and may the blessings of our heavenly Father ever attend them in his tender mercies, is our prayer for Christ's sake. The Lord bless you all by his grace, in the finished work of Christ.

Your brother in love and sweet fellowship,

L. H. HARDY.

ROANOKE, Va., May 30, 1928.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Would you do me the kindness to say to the readers of the SIGNS that I can furnish the Hymn and Tune Book in the shaped note only, at $1.00 per single copy, $10.00 per dozen, postpaid?

Yours in hope,

P. G. LESTER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1928.

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"CHARITY."

(1 CORINTHIANS XIII.)

It has often been a serious and solemn question with us as to whether we were in any way a possessor of this blessed and heavenly grace, especially as we hear of confusion and strife, dissension and divisions up and down the land. There are false doctrines and there is the true doctrine of God our Savior, and there is a false love and a true, or perfect, love. Much talk there is to-day the world over of a charity which consists of giving to the poor and sacrificing of one's self for the good of others, which in itself may be good according to the standards and opinions of men, but that is not the charity of which Paul writes. The charity of which he writes in this thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians is love, the love of God, and none can know or possess this love only as it is bestowed on them; as John declares, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." There cannot be the least motion of love in our hearts toward God, by a love that is divine, until he sheds abroad his love in our hearts, for our love to him is the result of his love to us. As with all of the fruits of the Spirit there can be found a counterfeit, so with love, as we have before said, there is a false love and a true love. The false love is from the creature and is prompted by some ulterior motive. We remember a dear brother once asking if we thought a God-given love would be found loving a brother to-day and hating him to-morrow. A false love, which is hypocritical, may do so, but a true love cannot: possessors of it might not approve of a brother's disorderly conduct and would be very grieved, yet would still love that person although they could not fellowship him in his wrong course. It is our desire to write of "Perfect Love." There is no other subject so dear to us, nothing can be compared to it. It's

"A portion worth more than the Indies of gold,
Which cannot be wasted, nor mortgaged, nor sold."

David often spoke of the love of God, and in Psalms cxvi. he tells what we should all call a good experience; he, like every elect vessel of mercy, could never have told a word about divine things but for the love of God. Where the Spirit of God convinces of sin, bringing the soul guilty before him, a thousand talents in debt without a penny to pay, then, wretched and worthless as he is, God, who is rich in mercy, according to his great love wherewith he loved us, hearkens to his cry and speaks peace to his soul. Like David he can then say, "I love the Lord," and the reason he gives for loving the Lord is, "Because he

hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live." Thus this love bestowed upon us begets love to him in return.

"I love the Lord with mind and heart,
His people and his ways,
Envy and lust and pride depart,
And all his works I praise."

Jesus, the embodiment of God's love, is made precious to us as we by the mighty power of God are enabled to believe. No matter what our sins have been, it is love and love only that can break the heart of stone, and it is such love that makes our cheerful feet in swift obedience move. It enables us to take the spoiling of our goods joyfully, to rejoice in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, patience experience, and experience hope. It is the love of God shed abroad in the heart of a poor sinner that makes him to forget his poverty, and to esteem highly in love for the truth's sake all who can testify of God's love and mercy to them. What is there that a mother will not do for the comfort of the child of her womb? and that is but natural love; how much more will spiritual love enable us to bear all things. Would the mother see her child in need and turn away and not minister to its need? and can one with the love of God in his soul ignore his brethren in need? Can such an one pass by his brother naked, in poverty, and say, "Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled," and not attempt to supply the needs of such? "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." Without this love, no matter what ability a man may have, he is nothing. Balaam, who had the tongue of an angel, loved the wages of unrighteousness, and in the end died, sword in hand, fighting against the Lord's people. "And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." Surely such language should cause each of us to examine ourselves carefully to ascertain what spirit we are of. It is very easy to deceive ourselves and others, but we cannot deceive God. As we look over this thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians it is with sorrow and sadness that one feels how utterly they have failed: can it be possible that we have ever possessed such charity? We will repeat what charity does, and it will be well for each of us to examine ourselves as we read. "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; * * * seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things." We might well ask, Where do we come in? Be sure of this, wherever these marks are in evidence it is God's doing. In this also we should be thankful that we are not our own judges, "God is judge himself. Selah." Perhaps we can truly say that we do not rejoice in iniquity, and we know that we often "rejoice in the truth." A love that springs up in the heart from a consciousness of God's mercy in the forgiveness of

our many sins, through the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, will enable one to walk softly before the Lord and before the church of God. Such an one is not easily puffed up, for the love of Christ to vile and undone sinners makes them loathe themselves and feel that they are less than the least. How unseemly the person is, whoever he be, who creeps into the church unawares and manifests by his behavior and disorderly course that he is a stranger to this love and its effects upon the soul; but where this love is, such an one doth not behave himself unseemly. Only this love shed abroad in the heart will enable its possessor when he is smitten on the right cheek to turn the left also. Love begets love, just as hatred often begets hatred, and it cannot be a loving spirit that saith, I will do unto him as he hath done unto me, neither does God's word approve such a course, for it is written, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." The love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost is a clear evidence that the Lord delights in his people and that they are his. "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price." Ought we not therefore to delight in one another, desiring not the hurt, but the good of all who name the the name of Christ in sincerity? Ought we not to comfort the feeble-minded and support the weak and be patient to all men, and as much as in us lies be at peace with all men? When we have seen men determined to set brethren right, how unseemly it has seemed and how miserably they have failed. When the disciples disputed who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven Jesus set a little child in their midst; how we need our blessed Jesus to set little children in our midst to-day. There is a spirit of criticism that we fear is not directed by love; there is a watching over each other, we fear not for each other's good, but to the hurt and distress of each other. Charity! where is it? We remember the day when as a stranger we first saw the church of God. It was to us then as a palace built for God to show his milder face, and surely that milder face was reflected in the faces and deportment of that people. Hardly could one enter the place but he would be met with a loving welcome and a look which said, We are glad to see you. These things, small perhaps in themselves, show just where the heart is, and declare plainly that just as God delights in us we also delight in each other. We should not live for ourselves, but for the comfort of those we speak of as our best friends and kindred. John says, "Every one that loveth, is born of God," also, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," but let us always remember that if we see the brethren without their glorious and living Head, our Lord Jesus Christ, we see a body without its head, and if such a thing could be it would mean death, and such a love is a dead love; that is, where one sees and loves the brethren and does not and has not seen Jesus. It is,

"The blood of Jesus can inspire
Our hearts, and warm with heavenly fire;
The blood of Jesus can set free
Our tongues in sweetest melody.

Oh here was love! the Father's love,
That enemies his heart could move;
To such compassion, make him give
His Son to die, that we might live.

If you would know the Father, see
His Son made sin on Calvary's tree;
There, writ in characters of blood,
Sinners may read the love of God.

Oh glorious love! the just One dies!
Thus God will bless his enemies.
The Son's own blood must freely flow,
That foes and rebels love may know.

God's power in nature I may trace;
But the still voice of gospel grace
Alone this stubborn heart can move,
While softly whispering, God is love."

G. R.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, to the churches composing the same, greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We propose at this time to call your attention to Isaiah xl. 1, 2, which reads as follows: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." In the preceding chapter the prophet is telling the king what shall befall him as a result of showing his house and all his precious things to some men from Babylon, and although there seems to be nothing in his message to comfort him, yet Hezekiah said, "Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken," and then follow the words, Comfort ye my people, saith your God, &c. While the Lord always visits his people with judgments when they sin he has provided a remedy in Jesus, his blessed Son, and his people are led to see that the Lord's ways are right, even in their punishment, and though he in a little wrath hides his face and scatters his people he also in great mercy gathers them again for the praise of his great and holy name, and we have his promise that he will never leave nor forsake his own, for they are dear unto him, and he keeps them as the apple of his eye. So, dear ones, though we are few and scattered and sin daily, and the prospects before us from our standpoint are gloomy, yet our God still reigns and all things are naked and open to his eyes. When our father Abraham was an hundred years old and Sarah was ninety the prospect of his being multiplied was as gloomy to him as our own multiplication is to us now. He complained, saying, I go childless. Yet his faith was in his God and he believed that he was able to do that which he had promised, so in all the gloom through which we walk we believe that our God is able and will visit his Zion in his set time, and we are comforted in the assurance that the battle is not ours, but the Lord's, and that it has already been fought and won, and this is that which the gospel preaches to us that Jesus has finished the work and through his perfect righteousness and intercession our sins are forgiven, and not only a full and free pardon, but justification by the blood of the Lamb. One is always justified by the payment of his debts, so being members of the body of Christ we are justified by his obedience which he rendered to his Father by which he canceled all the debt of those chosen in him. He gave himself for our sins. He got our sins and put an end to them. We get him, and this is a legacy that will never waste, but remain the same yesterday, to-day and forever. May we be blessed ever to look to and depend upon him and walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called and give all the glory to Jesus our blessed Savior and only comforter.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

E. A. JOHNSON, Assistant Clerk.

The Delaware Association of Old School Baptists, in session with Welsh Tract Church, May 23rd, 24th and 25th, 1928, to the several churches, brethren and messengers composing the same, greeting.

The custom of preparing the Circular Letter has devolved upon one who feels incapable of performing such a task. The writer realizes "words without knowledge" are not profitable to the Lord's people, especially when His ministers and messengers convene in a general association, hoping for the unction of the Holy Spirit in their hearts; as John says, "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things," in speaking of the last time when there shall be many antichrists, "whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." Thus the Lord purges his churches in his way since the time of the seven churches in Asia; antichrists have crept in unawares, wolves in sheep's clothing, and none but the Father can purge, for he only knoweth his sheep and they follow him, he leadeth them out. We do not know them all, but he does; even we are in doubt regarding our own salvation. We feel the older we grow the more we are under the conviction of the man of sin, the total depravity of the Adamic creature is revealed more clearly to our hearts, and to be released from such captivity we pray daily, but the warfare being established by the Holy Spirit in regeneration of the creature, separates the dead from the living, "there is no discharge in that war." We have been brought under such strong captivity to "the strong man" of late our mind reverts to the words of the prophet, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." This one Scripture proves "the Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." This command of Jehovah through Zechariah the prophet predicting the coming of the Messiah, "to save his people from their sins," was verily a command to Satan himself, for He knew the Son had to come down from heaven, "under the law," to suffer and to die for his people, "him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," thus his divinity and incarnation was predestined to live upon earth, and to die by wicked hands. "Awake, O sword." The Lord of hosts surely was addressing Satan, or his forces. Did he not create the crooked serpent for his own purpose? In his arraignment to Job, he enlarged upon the powers of his satanic majesty, to prove to man that he is incapable within himself to resist his powers. He calls him "behemoth" and "leviathan": He saith of him, "He is the chief of the ways of God: he that made him can make his sword to approach unto him." "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." He further saith, "Lay thine hand upon him, remember the battle, do no more." Every child of grace knoweth of many battles in which they have been engaged with Satan, and retain the many scars which they shall carry to their graves. He saith further, "I will not conceal his parts, nor his comely proportion, * * * his heart is as firm as a stone; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone; * * * upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear.

He beholdeth all high things: he is king over all the children of pride." Then with all this array of Scripture proving the power of Satan in a creature of flesh, which the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, how can a child, once regenerated, believe and practice conditionalism as some do to-day, endeavoring to separate God's people, and which system is but legalism in its old and true form? "Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." "And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God." "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded. * * * He is near that justifieth me. * * * Behold, the Lord God will help me." Our Christ (the lowly Jesus) suffered all this, even in the ancients of eternity, as he stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was," and God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Father and Son knew the infallibility of man, whom He created, and foreknew of the "fall" and the ultimate descension of the Son to save his people from their sins. The sword (Satan) is just as essential to day to carry on his judgments and fulfill all things to the end, that "sword" is just as necessary to our "walk" in life to-day as in ancient times; the warfare must go on, battles must be fought and new scars made in our earthly pilgrimage, to the end. There is no discharge in this war, yet his hand is always turned upon the little ones. We are chastised daily: without it we would not be sons, mercy is our only hope; I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy, and harden whom I will harden. Zion once said, "The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me," but what did he say to her? "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion upon the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget, thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another." "And even to your old age I am he: and even to hoar hairs will I carry you." "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; * * * when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned." "Even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him."

H. H. LEFFERTS, Mod.
JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk.

(Written by brother C. V. Hill.)

The Delaware River Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the First Old School Baptist Church of Hopewell, Mercer County, N. J., sendeth greetings and love in the Lord to all associations and churches with which she corresponds.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Having been appointed to write this Circular Letter, I

attempt it with much fear and trembling, feeling my inability to write anything that will either edify or comfort the brethren. The thought just occurred to me, a building to be substantial and lasting must have a good foundation, one that storms and floods of time cannot move or wash away. It cannot be built of earth and simply rest on the sand if we expect it to stand for many generations. I often think of that great palace or house where the strong man lives. I picture it as a magnificent castle with beautiful grounds adorned with flowers and shrubbery around it. "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace." He lives there in luxury with his house filled with goods (good deeds) and feels he has the power and ability to guard it with all of its stores. He feels assured nothing can disturb it. His barns are full, the granaries are overflowing with splendid achievements. He is more than happy and content with his surroundings. Like King Nebuchadnezzar, saying, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?" Perhaps while the words are in his mouth (like the king) he heard a voice from heaven, saying, Thy kingdom is divided. Not will be divided in the near future if you do not mend your ways and give me at least part of the glory, but is already divided, without warning, notice or even a chance to defend or protect the precious spoils. He also finds the foundation of his beautiful castle very much disturbed. "Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places." "But when a stronger than he [Christ] shall come upon him, and overcome him [the belief of the natural man, his resting-place where he abides], he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." He maketh his self-righteousness to become as filthy rags. He brings a famine in the land, in the strong man's soul. He no longer can feed on the herbs of self-righteousness and drink of the rivers that flowed from his power and ability heretofore. The God of heaven says, "I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools." When the storm of God's wrath strikes the strong man's house it soon tears away part or all of its foundation, as it is not built on the rock, the omnipotent power of Jehovah, but rests upon the sand (works of the flesh, the earthly). He that is earthly can only bring forth that which is earthly. There is not a single thing in nature that has power to bring about any radical change within itself. Everything bears seed after its own kind. God only gave man dominion over the things of earth, the same material that he is made of, therefore his wisdom, knowledge and all of his attainments are earthly. The foundation and house of the natural man's belief is only earth or sand, as he has no other material to work with and cannot bring forth or produce only that which is earthly. Think of this earthly man, a transgressor of God's law without power or ability to justify himself, a polluted creature, conceived in iniquity and born in sin, without one good deed or thought to offer, standing before the bars of justice in the high courts of heaven to be judged by that One who has all power in heaven and in earth; that one who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast. No wonder Job asked his friends that question which has been on the tongue of millions of poor sinners:

"But how should man be just with God?" Job realized it was not in man neither to walk nor to direct his steps. Job believed in God, he had unwavering faith and trusted him. On one occasion while speaking out of the abundance of his heart he said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." How wonderful it is for a poor sinner to trust in the Lord, the blood and righteousness of Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. No one can do this except the God of heaven has worked in his heart both to will and do of his good pleasure. I often think how God leads his people from darkness to light. How he brings them by a way they knew not and leads them in paths they have not known. He instructs them and keeps them as the apple of his eye. But who can tell of the affliction and travail of a soul of that great company which no man can number? God said to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: I will bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth. I know something about the experience and travail of a soul of a certain poor sinner, how he was brought from the end of the earth, led out of the prisonhouse into the light and liberty; yes, made free. He was a strong man and kept his palace for a time. It was a good castle and surrounded with all the beauties of nature. It was the house of his belief, the work of his own hands, and his house was filled with goods from the bottom to the top. He lived there in luxury, happy and content, feasted on the fat things of his own works. He cherished the home and thought it to be a good house in the sight of God, thus thinking it would stand forever. He was a sinner, but did not know it. He felt he had the power and ability to please God and win salvation. He thanked God he was not like other men; but alas, the stronger man entered his house, bound him, and divided his spoils. The storm of God's wrath tore away the foundation which was built on the sand (works), the house tottered and fell to earth from whence it came. All of this man's wealth invested in his house and the goods stored therein. He became poor, poverty stricken, and was made to dwell in the streets and lanes of the city (the legal city). Yes, he became an outcast without food or shelter; he now felt himself to be a sinner, a condemned sinner in the sight of a just and holy God. Yes, he became a beggar in the highways and hedges, an inhabitant of the desert, and was made to wander in the wilderness in a solitary way; but thanks be to the King who sent his servant out into the highways and hedges, compelling this poor sinner to come to the marriage feast of his Son. He took him to his banqueting-house and his banner over him was love. This poor sinner was made to rejoice in the finished work of Christ and look beyond the things of time to a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, whose builder and maker is God. This house will stand forever and ever, its foundation is built on the Rock of God's eternal power, Jesus Christ being the chief corner-stone. All the storms of time, with the powers of earth, hell and devils combined can never disturb the foundation of this house. It is beyond the reach of earthly powers. What a wonderful difference between this house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, and the house the strong man lives in, which is subject to all the elements of time. It can stand but a short while. The stronger man enters and destroys it or it returns to dust with its builder.

C. W. VAUGHN, Mod.
DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at Parsonsburg, Maryland, March 28th, 1928. Ernest E. White, of Parsonsburg, and Mrs. Bertha E. Townsend, of Salisbury, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Lewis B. Ford, son of the late Caleb F. and Susan (Tibbetts) Ford, of Bauneg Beg Hill, North Berwick, Maine, was born April 9th, 1867. He married Miss Ella M. Libby, daughter of the late Moses H. and Martha (Moulton) Libby, of Sanford, Sept. 12th, 1894. He lived on his father's farm until the fall of 1889, when he came to Boston, Mass., working in a butter and egg store, and was engaged in the butter and egg busines the most of his life. He was baptized Sept. 3rd, 1889, by the late Elder F. A. Chick. A son, Myron T., died in 1909. Mr. Ford was struck by a train at Pleasant Street crossing, Stoneham, Mass., Feb. 16th, 1928, and died at the Winchester hospital Feb. 28th, 1928. Funeral services were held at his home in Melrose Highlands, conducted by his pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, March 1st, 1928.

The following is from the North Berwick paper: "Words fail to express the love and esteem in which Mr. Ford was held in this community, where he was born and educated and was so well known, where he passed a happy boyhood, beloved by all who knew him. His passing was heard of with the deepest regret. The bereaved family have the sympathy of their many friends in their bereavement."

His widow,

ELLA M. FORD.

I first met brother Ford at North Berwick, Maine, in 1902. Had been his pastor twenty years and during that time he had been faithful and kind. He was strong in the faith and loved sound doctrine. We all loved him and miss him beyond words, but fully believe he is at rest.

H. C. KER.

At her home in Leeds, N. Y., May 20th, 1928, occurred the death of **Mrs. Helen J. Potter,** following a long illness. Mrs. Potter was born in the town of Broome, Schoharie County, N. Y., Oct. 6th, 1839, being one of nine children of the late Benjamin and Nancy (Bortwick) Brayman. One sister, Mrs. Levi Alger, of Preston Hollow, N. Y., and one brother, Azano B. Brayman, of Livingstonville, N. Y., survive her. She was married to Smith H. Potter, also of the town of Broome, Feb. 19th, 1863, and to them were born four children, three of whom are living: Earle R. (deceased), Lloyd E., of Buffalo, N. Y., Chauncey C., of Preston Hollow, N. Y., and Ruth Luella (Mrs. Samuel Fowks), with whom she had her home. Mr. and Mrs. Potter began housekeeping on a farm near Livingstonville, but four years later sold that and moved to a larger one near Preston Hollow, Albany County, N. Y., where he died April 20th, 1886. In December, 1901, the home farm was sold and the following August Mrs. Potter and her daughter moved to Leeds, where she had since lived. She united with the Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church Aug. 18th, 1867, was baptized the same day by Elder More, and was a loyal and faithful member, attending its services as long as her health and circumstances would permit. She was quiet and unassuming, loving her home and children, denying herself for them and living an humble and upright life.

Her funeral was held at her late home May 23rd, 1928, at one o'clock, standard time, her pastor, Elder George Ruston, of Kelly Corners, officiating, paying a high tribute to her christian character. Burial was in the Jefferson Rural Cemetery by the side of her husband, whose remains were removed to the Jefferson Cemetery in September, 1919. Although the home is lonely without her we do not wish her back, knowing that our loss is her eternal gain, that she has gone from her earthly home to be with her Savior in an heavenly one. The many flowers bore mute testimony of love and esteem. Four nephews were bearers.

RUTH POTTER FOWKS.

I would like to add a word to the above obituary of sister Potter written by her daughter, who so lovingly and faithfully cared for her through her long illness. Sister Potter was ever loyal to her church, and when circumstances would not allow her to meet with them many are the good letters she sent to be read, showing her love and interest in the church and brethren, always giving God all the praise, honor and glory and feeling herself unworthy. She had been a faithful member of the Middleburgh Church over sixty years, and we believe our loss is her great gain.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON.

Mrs. Martha Barton Bagley was born Dec. 4th, 1864, and died at her home in Birmingham, Ala., April 25th, 1928. She was married to Samuel G. Bagley Feb. 21st, 1884, and to this union were born nine children, seven girls and two boys, one boy dying when small. Eight children, all grown, with her husband, survive. Sister Bagley was raised by Missionary parents, but, with her husband, she united with Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, and was baptized by Elder L. A. Moon May 16th, 1921, and lived a consistent member until her death. It was her lot, together with her husband, to bear many and varied trials, he having been stricken blind about eighteen years ago; this, as a faithful wife, she patiently bore. It was my good fortune to be intimately associated with sister Bagley for many years,

I never heard her complain of her lot. Personally speaking, I never had a better friend, and I feel the loss greatly. Her home was always open to the Old Baptists, and she numbered her friends by her acquaintances. I have never known a more congenial and devoted couple than brother and sister Bagley; she was a faithful wife, and to us, in our weakness, it seems hard that he should be left in his affliction, but "who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor" that he might instruct him? His ways are passed our understanding. Sister Bagley was a good mother, and raised an honorable family, to be proud of, and truly can it be said, Her children rise up and call her blessed. I might go on to enumerate her many virtues, but her life stands out as a far more fitting memorial than any feeble words that I might say.

Funeral services were conducted at the home by Elder J. W. McLeod and the large assembly of brethren and friends, also the beautiful floral offerings, were a silent tribute to the esteem in which she was held. Her body was laid to rest in Forest Hill Cemetery.

Written by request.

EFFIE EDWARDS.

Mrs. Julia M. Clark, widow of Elder John Clark, of Halcottville, Delaware County, N. Y., was born Jan. 24th, 1842, and passed from earthly scenes May 3rd, 1928, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Livingston, Cobleskill, N. Y., where she had gone April 21st for a visit and to attend the fifth Sunday meeting there. She was taken ill Saturday evening, April 28th. A doctor was soon called, but medical skill and loving care failed to restore her to health, and when her Master called, "Child, come home," she willingly obeyed, and without a gasp or struggle, as one going to sleep, she passed to the world beyond, which we believe was far better for her. Her body was taken to her late home in Halcottville on Friday, and funeral services were held from the Old School Baptist meetinghouse near the home May 7th, Elder George Ruston officiating, after which the body was laid to rest in the Halcottville Cemetery by the side of her late husband. Sister Clark, whose maiden name was Roberte, united with the second Roxbury Church, Roxbury, N. Y., in the year 1866, where she remained a faithful member until death. In 1870 she was united in marriage to Linus Webb and moved to Michigan, and in 1874 was left a widow with two little children, a little girl who died young and a boy, Victor L. Webb, who survives. She soon returned to her father's home and in 1876 was married to John Clark, whose obituary appeared in the December SIGNS of 1922. Surviving are three sons, Victor, the one above mentioned, who lives in Little Rock, Ark., and who hastened here to attend his mother's funeral, Leverne Clark, of Margaretsville, N. Y., and Scott Clark, the youngest, living with his mother and kindly and lovingly caring for her, whose death he deeply feels. She is greatly missed by the church of her membership and the brethren and sisters of sister churches. Her house was ever open to the brethren and very convenient at times of meeting, but we believe our loss is her eternal gain and desire to be reconciled and say, Thy will, O God, be done, and not ours.

(MRS.) J. E. LIVINGSTON.

M. M. Anderson was born near Marion Ferry, Texas, Feb. 14th, 1857, and departed this life April 16th, 1928, aged 71 years, 2 months and 2 days. He was married to Nancy Lowing, June 27th, 1879, and to that union were born eight children, five boys and three girls, five of whom are still living. Brother Anderson leaves a devoted wife, five children, one brother, one sister, twenty-one grandchildren and a host of relatives and friends to mourn their loss. A large gathering of relatives and friends were present at his funeral which was held April 17th and conducted by Elder R. Lowell, after which his body was laid to rest in the old Union Cemetery. Brother Anderson's life was a straightforward one and he was a man who believed in truth, honesty and morality. He never united with the church, but many times expressed a bright hope to the writer. His home was always open to the Old Baptists, and the latter part of his life was spent standing for and defending the true order of God's house. To know him was to love him, because of his brotherly kindness and noble traits of character. His dear wife is a most devoted church member and christian, and to know her is to love her. While we mourn with her in her loss we would not call him back, for we feel that to depart and be with Christ is far better. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to sister Anderson and her dear children, and would call their attention to the Scripture which reads: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."—Rev. xiv. 13.

Written by

W. A. BURNS.

Mrs. Margaret Louisa Withers, wife of W. J. Withers, was born December 13th, 1854, and was married to W. J. Withers December 29th, 1875. To this union were born ten children, eight of whom are living, six boys and two girls, and all are married. She was a member of one of the pioneer families of old Jasper County, Texas, and was an example of true womanhood. There were eleven children in her father's family (R. A. Richardson's) of whom three boys and one girl are living. She joined the Primitive Baptists of the old predestinarian order, and

was baptized by Elder W. J. Newton in 1904, and was a devoted member until she was called by death, October 29th, 1927. She was a worthy sister, always setting a good example, a mother who trained her children so they are all highly respected, a member of the church we sadly miss, for her seat was seldom vacant. Her sons were particular to see that she got to meet with her church on conference days. Besides her brothers and sister, her children and the church, she leaves a host of relatives and friends to mourn the loss of one who was loved by all who knew her. She was laid to rest in Huffman Cemetery, the writer speaking from Revelation xiv. 13. There were present people from all parts of Jasper County. May God bless all the bereaved, and fill our sad hearts with his grace, is my prayer.

J. M. MARTIN.

Alice Miller Boll was born Jan. 24th, 1859, in Miami County, Ohio, was married to William W. Wien April 8th, 1878, when nineteen years of age, and to them were born four boys and three girls. Wm. W. Wien died in 1899, and in 1920 she and her brother, Clinton Miller went to California to live. July 11th, 1920, she was married to William D. Boll.

The above she wrote herself before her death, which occurred May 18th, 1928. Sister Boll united with the Old School Baptist Church in Spencerville, Ohio, July 1st, 1894. The morning before she died she repeated the hymn, "O land of rest," and others.

Written by her brother,

C. G. MILLER.

MEMORIALS.

Inasmuch as the good Lord in his all-wise providence, March 17th, 1928, took from us by death our beloved brother, **Deacon J. William Sockwell,** we, the church at Harris Springs, desire to have recorded on our minutes our appreciation of him. He joined this church by letter nearly fifty years ago. He served as Clerk until he was ordained Deacon. As this church is but little over one hundred years old he was a member of it nearly half of its existence. His whole soul was always for its peace and welfare. Always present at the meetings, when not providentially hindered. Patient and prudent in his walk and talk, always giving good admonition, encouraging the brethren and sisters to attend their meetings. We feel that we can say he was a Deacon in the true sense of the word. It makes us feel sad to have to give him up, yet we feel to be submissive to an all-wise Providence who does all things well, and desire to thank him for the long life of our dear brother. We feel he has left behind a well spent life that we would do well to emulate. He lived and died in the faith, and has gone to rest with the saints gone before. Peace to his ashes. We desire to express our heart-felt sympathy to the bereaved family. May the God that dear brother Sockwell so much loved and tried to serve be with them in this sad hour to reconcile them to his holy will and keep them by his almighty power is our prayer, and when life is over with us all, may we bask in the sunshine of his love, and praise the Father, Son and ever-blessed Spirit in that world that has no end; therefore, be it

Resolved, that we record this on our church minutes, and a copy be sent to the bereaved family, also one to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and *Zion's Landmark* for publication.

Done by order of the Church while in Conference this 19th day of May, 1928.

J. H. ADAMS,
B. A. MALCOM, } Committee.
R. L. COOK,

ORDINATIONS.

In answer to a call made by Littleblue Sni-a-bar Church for help to ordain brother J. B. Alumbaugh to the office of Deacon, the following response was made:

Elder J. R. Hardy, of Pleasant Valley Church, Kingman, Kans.; Deacons Marion Webb, D. J. Owing, Oak Grove Church; Deacons F. M. Corn, Sr., N. T. Leap, F. M. Corn, Jr., Pleasant Grove Church; Deacons George Jackson, C. C. O'Dell and Elder T. E. Attebery, Little Flock Church; Deacon J. E. Barnes, Bethel Church; Deacon James Copeland, Zion Church. The above named brethren, with the home help, Elders W. L. Hall, T. B. Fisher and Deacons James Webb and D. J. Adams, formed a presbytery by choosing Elders W. L. Hall Moderator and T. E. Attebery Clerk, which presbytery proceeded to ordain brother Alumbaugh by laying on of hands. Ordination prayer by Elder T. E. Attebery. Charge delivered by Elder J. R. Hardy. Elder M. M. Shumate not getting through in time to be in the organization was asked to take a seat in it. After the church accepted the work the presbytery by motion and second dissolved.

W. L. HALL, Moderator.

T. E. ATTEBERY, Clerk.

GRAIN VALLEY, Mo., May 26, 1928.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Simeon Hiltabrand, Ill., $3; James R. Crutcher, Tenn., $1; Franklin Terry, N. J., $1; Mrs. J. B. Hill, N. J., $2; Thomas W. Records, Mo., $3; Mrs. Sarah F. Gandy, N. J., $3; W. D. Elliott, Okla., 50 cents; Mrs. Sydney Delos, Sask., $3; Mrs. D. MacTavish, Sask., $5; Duncan M. Gillis, Ontario, $2; Mrs. Jay MacTavish, Sask., $3; J. W. Corn, Mo., $2.

APPOINTMENTS.

The Lord willing, I will be at Deceipher Creek, Gurdon, Ark., June 9th and 10th; Monday, June 11th, at Little Hope; Tuesday, June 12th, at Masedonia; Wednesday, June 13th, Chaple Hill; Thursday, June 14th, at Bethel; Friday, June 15th, at Camdon, where sister Bettie Ellis may arrange; Saturday and Sunday at Fordyce, as Elder V. R. Harris may arrange. Then at Pine Bluff, June 16th, at night, at 1705 16th Ave., at brother W. H. Meeks' residence; and from there to Memphis, Tenn., June 23rd and 24th; and then through the Mississippi River Association, as Elder Kerley may arrange, so as to reach Martin, Tenn., by July 3rd, to meet the church at Cane Creek July 3rd. Boaz Chaple, July 4th and 5th; at Bethel, 6th, 7th and 8th; Mud Creek, July 9th and 10th; Mt. Zion, Graves County, July 14th and 15th. Then to the Soldier Creek Association, at Mayfield, July 16th; Kansas, July 17th; North Mt. Zion, 18th; Pilgrim Rest, July 19th; Harmony, July 21st and 22nd; Soldier Creek, 23rd; Shiloh, 24th; Providence, 28th and 29th; then to the Obion Association at Walnut Fork, Henry County, Tenn., July 30th and 31st, and as brother R. L. Veasey may arrange after three days rest.

J. B. BOWDEN.

SAN ANTONIA, Texas, May 6, 1928.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in July (29th). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

MEETINGS.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expect Elder George Ruston to be with them the fifth Sunday in July (29th), 1928. For convenience services to be held at the home of J. E. Livingston, 64 East Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., the Lord willing, at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. Also on Saturday before, at 2 p. m. All welcome who desire the truth.

(MRS.) J. E. LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

The New Hope Association will be held with the Mt. Zion Church, ten miles south of Greenville, Texas, instead of with the Sabine Church, six miles north of Greenville, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in August. Trains and busses will be met at Cash, Texas, Thursday afternoon and evening, and Friday morning. All expecting to attend this Association please notice the change.

J. J. DARNELL.

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Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday of each month at the Swedish Lutheran church-house southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, Riverside, Calif., and at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. 11th St., Claremont, Calif., on the first Sunday of each alternate month, beginning with January, and on every alternate month with brother Joseph Huffman, 138 Van Buren St., Arlington, Calif. Sing-

ing at 10:30 a. m. Preaching at 11 a. m. Lunch at the place of meeting, and continued services in the afternoon.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.

O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 245 Lacadana Drive, Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 96. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1928. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SALVATION BY GRACE, AND GRACE ALONE.

"I AM the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."—John xiv. 6. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him."—John vi. 44. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."—John vi. 37.

The word of God tells us that in the midst of the great mass of men there are to be found a special people, a people who were chosen of God out of the common race before the stars began to shine; a people who were dear to God's heart before the foundation of the world; a people who were redeemed by the precious blood of Christ beyond and above the rest of mankind; a people who are the especial property of Christ, the flock of his pasture, the sheep of his hand; a people over whom Providence watches, shaping their course amid the tangled maze of life; a people who are to be produced at the last every one of them faultless before the eternal throne, and fitted for the exalted destiny which, in the ages to come, he shall reveal. All through Scripture we read about this particular and special people. Sometimes they are called a "seed," at other times "a garden," at other times "a treasure," and sometimes "a flock." The common name in the New Testament for them is "the church," "the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." The great question of to-day is how to obtain admission into this church. Where is this community to be found? Who are the members of it? What is the way to become a partaker of the privileges which belong to it? Jesus Christ here tells us in plain words that salvation is by grace, and grace alone, and to be saved is to be admitted into the true church. He says that he is the way. He does not say that he is a plan by which men may, if they choose, come to the true church. He does not only say that he is the way, but asserts that no man can come to him except the Father who sent him draw him. He also states that all that the Father gave him SHALL come to him. I feel that the answer to the question is briefly set forth in the words of our Master at the heading of this writing: John xiv. 6; John vi. 37, 44.

Christ tells us that the only way to enter the church is through himself. He is the way, the only way. There is no way of admission into his church but by him. A great number of people agree with us, in that there was a covenant entered into by God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost before the highest dust of the hills was laid, but they claim it was only a plan or scheme of redemption, which is entirely left to the freedom of the will of the people to choose and accept and thereby become members of his church, and in such capacity, "if they hold out faithful," they will be saved; that it depends upon their own power or human will to hear, believe and accept. But we, the church of Jesus Christ, known as the Primitive Baptist Church, do not only believe that such a covenant was held, but it was a covenant of grace whereby the Triune God elected, chose, ordained, set apart and called out of the great mass of men a people dear to God's heart, whom he gave to his beloved Son. In God's election he did not choose any of the elect because he foresaw any good or merit in them, but it was for Christ's sake, and that alone. God foresaw that all mankind would fall short of his righteousness; that all alike would be sinners, and for his name's sake he chose and purposed in his own mind the salvation of a people who shall, after the fall, come to his beloved Son, because he gave them to his Son by being born again. This coming to Christ, as we stated above, was divinely fixed before the world was spoken into existence. Every one of the church was elected a member then, and shall at His own appointed time be made manifest to the other members, by a confession of faith in Jesus as the Son of God, though some may never have the opportunity of making such open confession. The people who believe in salvation by works often ask us, Is there not something on our part which we can do to bring about salvation? We answer, Absolutely nothing. They say, We can believe if we choose to do so, and Christ says we in that case, shall be saved. They ask, Did not Paul command the jailer to believe, and assured him if he would do this thing he would be saved? We still answer, There is absolutely nothing to be done on our part. How could we, who are dead, believe any thing? How could one believe on one whom he had not heard or seen. I could not believe that which had not been revealed to me in some way. So we hold that belief is not a means of salvation, but it is a result of salvation. Therefore, we believe because we are saved. Belief is the evidence of salvation, and never a means. When it pleases the God of heaven to reveal his Son to one of his elect, it is then the individual believes, and not before. Peter on being asked who the Savior was, said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Christ gave him to understand that this belief was not revealed to him by flesh and blood, but by the Father who is in heaven. Therefore, Peter could not have professed a belief in his divinity until he knew him as such. Salvation is of the Lord, and he does not ask us to take any part whatever in the matter. Salvation comes by a new birth. We did not take any part in our natural birth, did we? Then, we hold that we are just as helpless in the second birth, which is brought about by the will of the Father through the Spirit. Christ uses a birth as a parable to show our inability to save ourselves by means of our own device. A child must be naturally born into this

world before it can believe, see or know anything about its parents or kin, so one must be born of the Spirit before we can believe, see, hear or know anything of Christ or the kingdom. "Ye must be born again;" ye shall come to Him. How is this new birth brought about? The office work of the Holy Spirit is to quicken the dead sinner and lead him to see the need of redemption; to bring him to the blood of sprinkling; give him faith; give him every grace; cause him to listen to God's word in which he sees His holiness and his own sin; and he is caused to see the suitability of the gospel to his case, and then he is made to accept Jesus Christ as set forth in the gospel, then the soul believes in Jesus as the Son of God, at which time he is born of the Spirit. We might be asked, Who hath everlasting life? Christ answers this in John iii. 36: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." You ask, Who is he who is not condemned, and who is he that is condemned? We shall let Christ answer in John iii. 18: "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." So we see that belief is an evidence of salvation, and not a means. I dwell on this because some of our faith and order in some parts of this country seem to think that we in some way hold the key in our own hands, which they claim is the matter of belief; that it is imperative on our part to believe. Should that be the case salvation would cease to be a grace; it would be a reward of merit. Yes, we must believe; but what causes us to believe? Is it not because we have come to know something to believe, and that is a true knowledge of Jesus as the Son of God, and that it is revealed to us by the Father? We have no way to know but by him.

May the blessings of God be with all Israel everywhere, and may the SIGNS OF THE TIMES reach every son and daughter of Zion, that they may read a paper which stands for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. The more I know of the drifting of the present age, the more I love the paper which advocates the true doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone. We down here are known as "Absoluters;" we like this name.

Yours in hope,

J. E. WOODRUM.

GENESIS I. 3.

"LET there be light."

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the deep. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." In these first words of revelation we read how God gave light to the natural world. But he is also the author of spiritual light, and by the same almighty fiat he dispelled the darkness of the moral world, for when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, who is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and he said unto the church, which was to be illuminated by him, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come." —Isaiah lx. 1, and the people which sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, saw a great light. (Matt. iv. 16.) Now the Scriptures mark a certain analogy between the creation of natural and spiritual light, and show that both are produced by an exertion of the same almighty power. "For God, who com-

manded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. iv. 6. Under the authority of this analogy we may be permitted to inquire, Which is the grander display of the divine power, the creation of natural or of spiritual light? The production of the sun which shines in the firmament, or spiritual illumination by him who is called "The Sun of Righteousness," connected as it with those stupendous events in heaven and earth, "which angels desire to look into," the incarnation of the deity; the passion, death, resurrection and ascension of the Mediator; the coming of the Holy Ghost; the gift of tongue, the promulgation of the gospel; and the liberation of millions of souls from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God? Doubtless, the glory of the spiritual dispensation far transcends that of the natural creation, both in the importance of its effects, and in the extent of its duration. Let this then be our subject, to contemplate the spiritual illumination which comes by Jesus Christ, who, when the world was in darkness, "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel," by the diffusion of this heavenly light. We shall notice first, the promulgation of the gospel by Christ himself. We are first to review that grand era of light when "the sun of righteousness" himself appeared. The period of this event has been observed as an epoch of time by almost all civilized nations of the world, and with good reason, for the world was in darkness until Christ came. The Spirit of God, indeed, moved upon the face of the earth, and to the patriarchs and prophets an intimation was given that a light would come. Yet it was true that, with the exception of the chosen people who were themselves the harbingers of the light, darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. Such was the state of the moral world when He came, who is called "The desire of all nations."—Haggai ii. 7. It was not unlike the state of the natural world at that period of creation, when "the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep." But while mankind was involved in this spiritual obscurity "the word was made flesh," that the eternal Word by whom all things were made, and without whom was not any thing made that was made (John i. 3), by whom God made the worlds (Heb. i. 2), that same almighty Word which spake at the first creation, said a second time, "Let there be light, and there was light." "I am come," said our Savior, "a light unto the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness."—John xii. 46. Christ came to reveal "the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandments of the everlasting God, made known to all nations."—Rom. xvi. 25, 26. What then was this mystery which Christ came to reveal? He revealed the love of God the Father. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John iii. 16. He revealed atonement of God the Son, in assuming the human nature, and offering himself up a sacrifice for sins of men. My flesh, saith he, I will give for the life of the world. (John vi. 51.) A body hast thou prepared me. Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. (Heb. x. 5, 7.) He revealed the inspiration of God the Holy Ghost, which

was now to descend from heaven and to abide with men forever (John xiv. 16), even the Spirit of truth which should "reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."—John xvi. 18. The Holy Spirit which should be given by our heavenly Father to them that ask him. (Luke xi. 11.) These were the doctrines which were to give light to the world. They are comprehended by the apostle Peter, in one sentence he addresses believers as being "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."—1 Peter i. 2. These doctrines our Savior embodied in a short commission, or charge, which he delivered, after his ascension into heaven, to one of his apostles. It was given to that apostle whom our Lord called the chosen vessel, to bear his name to the Gentiles. (Acts ix. 15.) For when Paul was proceeding on his way to Damascus a light above the brightness of the sun shone around about him, and our Savior spake to him from heaven in the following words: "I send thee, [to the Gentiles] to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."—Acts xxvi. 17, 18. Here is first established that fundamental truth, that the Gentiles are under the power of Satan. I send thee, saith our Lord, to the Gentiles, to turn them from the power of Satan unto God. This is a truth which the wisdom of this world will not receive, and it is assaulted by a false philosophy continually, but like a rock assailed by the restless waves, it will remain forever immovable, for the revelation is that all men are by nature in darkness and under the power of Satan, and that Christ hath come "to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God."

Written in love to all the household of faith.

C. W. FRODGE,

GLASGOW, Ky., May 10, 1928.

SAN DIEGO, California, May 28, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find two dollars for 1928 SIGNS. I am sorry to have been behind five months in my dues. It is the first time in over forty years, but I was disappointed in getting what was due me. I wish I could send more, for it seems such a small amount for so much soul-cheering reading I receive in each number of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I always look forward to its coming each month, for I love the good letters, editorials and christian experiences of all the dear brethren and sisters. I have often felt I wished I could write as they do, and have often had a great desire to write, but felt that many others were so much more capable that I did not want to take your time and space. A dear friend asked me to write some of my christian experience, and, the Lord helping me, I will relate what I believe my dear Savior revealed to me along my journey of seventy-eight years. As far back as I can remember my one greatest desire was to do or be good. If I saw a man or woman I thought was a christian I envied them, and wished I were them. When quite young I used to wish that my mother would keep me in a room by myself, I would willingly live there my life. I thought she could pass my meals in to me. I felt by not coming in contact with others I would do no wrong thing, not realizing I was a sinner when I entered the room. I have heard different ministers tell their hearers that

it was their own fault if all were not saved before leaving the church. I knew if people could be saved when they wanted to I would have known my dear Savior years before I did, for it was my one greatest desire. My parents were Presbyterians, and I went to Sunday-school and committed hymns and paraphrases to recite to the teacher, the words of which often were so beautiful to me I could not keep the tears back. There was a small band of Methodists near my home and I used to beg my mother to let me go Sunday afternoon, for they said many things I loved to hear. They knelt when praying, and I was so glad, for I could not keep back the tears and did not want any one to see me weeping. There was also an Episcopal sect in our village, and as some of my friends were going to be "confirmed" I begged mother to let me join them, and she consented. I was willing to do or go anywhere if I could only find what I was seeking; but I simply got no comfort, all was mere form. I married my dear husband. He was not a "christian." His parents were Primitive Baptists. His mother's brother was Elder William Pollard, of Lobo and Duart, Canada. He preached there for many years. My husband and I attended one of their associations and heard the only true gospel sermons we ever did hear. We heard Elders Silas Durand, William L. Beebe, F. W. Keene and Elder Pollard preach the gospel. I used to feel sorry when they stopped, for it certainly reached my heart. I had never attended a Baptist meeting until I was married. I told my husband I would belong to any denomination but a Baptist. I thought it foolish to go into the river to be baptized, but the dear Savior showed me different. We attended Missionary Baptist meeting, as there was no Primitive Baptist Church in that vicinity. The pastor was a very old man, not able to take charge of the meetings, but he had been with them so long that they did not have the heart to dismiss him. They got an evangelist to come and hold meetings for several weeks. He was an Englishman and a fine speaker, at least I then thought so. For his first sermon he used the text, "I ask therefore, for what intent ye have sent for me?" He announced his next evening text would be, Ye must be born again or ye cannot see the kingdom of heaven. How delighted I was, for I had long wanted to find out what the second birth was. I would read about it in the Bible and how I would grieve and mourn because I did not know what I must do to be born again, now I thought I certainly would known the truth about it. That seemed the longest day I ever lived, I felt night would never come so I could go to meeting and find what I longed for, and when it was time to go I thought that if I had wings and could fly how glad I would be. I was almost running and my husband said, Do not hurry so, we have plenty of time. I thought if he only knew how I felt he would not say, Do not hurry. Well, the minister preached all evening on that text and I came home no wiser than when I went; man could not give it to me. I certainly was disappointed. I could not work, or think of anything but my lost condition. I tried to pray, but felt the Lord did not hear me because I was such a sinner, but it was not many days until my blessed Savior revealed himself dying on the cross for me; not for sinners, but for me, my own personal Savior. How sad I felt to think my sins made him suffer and die for me, but the exceeding joy I could never tell. When the burden was removed the joy of that

first love cannot be told. I went about my work for two days constantly repeating, All things old have passed away, all things have become new; the things I once loved I now hate and the things I once hated I now love. I would think, I will not repeat that again, but I simply had to, I could not stop, for so long I had wanted to know what it was, and now it was so impressed upon my mind I just could not get away from it. Then I did not think of self, but thought of all my loved ones, that if they could only know the wonderful loving Savior I had found. I felt I would like to carry them all and lay them at Jesus' feet. I thought, No wonder Jesus said if these should hold their peace the very stones would cry out. I felt like telling every one of the wonderful loving Savior I had found. I knew my dear husband was anxious, and I hardly stopped praying for him. One noon he came home and I knew as soon as I saw his face that all was well. He told me how he had to get down on his knees on the plowed ground where he was working and praise and thank his Savior. He said it seemed as if the trees, birds and all nature were praising and rejoicing with him in his new found love. How rejoiced we both were, and he certainly always lived a true christian life as far as is possible in this sin-cursed world. He feasted on the Bible. He thought Elder Gilbert Beebe was the most wonderful man that ever preached, and he loved to read the SIGNS. He would read and reread them, and digested the truths they contained. Twelve years ago he left me. Dropped dead on the street. His work here was done, and his Savior took him home, shut his eyes to this world without a pain, not even needed a drink of water, and what a comfort to know he was happier and much better off than he could be here. He had an enlarged heart and could not work, but his life-work here was done. It was a shock to me, but it was a beautiful death, and I could not wish him back. We were converted about the same time, baptized together, and I used to pray that we could go home together, but I had a work to do here. My daughter has eight dear children, I lived with them and could help a great deal in caring for the dear ones, so I am now waiting for my appointed time to go home. It was but a short time after knowing my Savior until I had a great desire to follow him in baptism. My husband and I, with several others, were baptized in a small river. It was a happy day for us. I felt when I went under the water that I would be willing if need be to die there for my dear Savior. We joined the church, but it was not long before we found we could not go with them. I had never heard predestination preached, nor even read anything about it until I found it in the blessed Book, and it was so impressed on me that I had to believe it. It was not taught to me by man. My husband's mother who was a true christian, believed the doctrine of ordination and predestination of all things, so I used to love to hear her talk. I truly believe there is nothing taking place in this world by chance, and believe every step I have trod along life's pathway was all planned before I came into the world, and I think it is a comforting doctrine to know that no matter what takes place it is because our heavenly Father wills it so, because I know he doeth all things well, and all for our good, although at times we do not understand. I know that all things work together for good to those

who love the Lord, to those who are the called according to his purpose. The Bible was a new book to me. The Lord opens the blind eyes and unstops the deaf ears. I know no man by searching can find out God, and it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. He brings us by a way we know not; he makes crooked things straight; he makes us willing in the day of his power. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." We have not chosen him, but he has chosen us. What a blessing our Savior knows the frailty of our frame, and that he is always making intercession for his children with groanings which cannot be uttered. There is one Lord, one faith and one baptism, but the different faiths and beliefs that man has invented are without number. An old lady was talking to me and I told her what the Bible said about it. The Bible, she said, I hope you do not read that stuff, it is nothing but a fairy tale. She said the Jews never crucified Christ, and there never was a Christ on earth. That stuff was written so long ago and translated so many times there is no truth in it. I told her it is true, that since it was written all through the ages some have tried to do away with the Bible, but it is here, and always will be as long as this earth stands. I said, Give me the Bible and you can have the world. When I read those blessed truths and promises how it melts my heart, and I think, What would I do without the Book of books? No wonder so many of God's dear children look forward to the coming of the SIGNS when it is all the preaching we get. I do believe the dear Lord will uphold you, dear editors, so that his children may be fed with the precious truths that we find therein. I can realize how hard it is for you to try to carry on your good work where people are careless in renewing and keeping their subscriptions paid up, and I pray we all may realize the need of keeping our dues paid. I have often wished it was in my power to help, and relieve the worry you must have in trying to keep up the good work you are doing. One paper alone is worth the price of the year.

I have written much and said little of what I wanted to, but I am leaving it with you to do with as you see fit. I know there are so many able writers that I do not wish to take up your time and space with this poorly written letter. I find the Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak, so much I wished to say I have left unsaid, but this letter was prompted by the love I have for all the dear children our blessed Savior died to save; not one can be lost, as he did not shed a drop of his precious blood in vain. Oh sometimes how I long to have some one to talk with who understands what I would love to talk about. I have met only one person in all these seven winters I have spent here who I really could believe has experienced the spiritual birth. It is this world that interests the vast multitude; money and pleasure are their god.

I hope you will correct this if you see any good for any one in it; if not, cast it aside.

With love and best wishes for all the dear children of God, and hoping the Lord will bless and prosper you so you may be able to carry on your good work, I am, yours sincerely,

(MRS.) THOMAS JAMIESON.

"AMAZING GRACE."

"Amazing grace, (how sweet the sound,)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, bnt now I see."

I have many doubts and fears that I have ever had grace made known to this vile and sinful heart of mine, and often fear I have been deceived and am deceiving the precious saints, and that my trust in the saving grace of Jesus is only a vain imagination of a vile and sinful heart. It is true that at one time I was as profane and wicked as it seems I could be, and that something did burden me, but a great deal of the time I fear that it was only my own imagination. A very few times in my poor life it seemed when under the sweet preaching of God's humble servants that I have been lifted up, as I hope, from the valley and my mind taken away from the perishable things and placed on Jesus. Just a glimpse of his lovely presence when darkness comes again and I am made to doubt more than ever. But, dear ones, as fleeting as my little star of hope is, it is my all in all. It is my prop and stay while struggling here below, and as much as I am made to doubt I would not give the little hope that dwells in my poor aching bosom for all this world and its riches. Precious readers, I know that if Jesus ever did manifest himself to me that it was amazing to my poor burdened soul, and oh how sweet it seemed. If the Lord ever has found me, it was wonderful indeed, because I was the most sinful wretch that ever lived (and am yet) and it could not have been justice to display to me "Christ and him crucified," but only his mercy. Surely, surely I was lost, and oh so blind. I believe I felt as secure as any one; not a single trouble ever rolled across my breast. I loved to boast that I was as good as any one, and I firmly believed that after I had had all the good times that go with youth I would turn to God and live a christian life. I held to that belief and I practiced it as fully as any one ever could. I cursed much and it did not bother me at all, until in the spring of 1924. I am as unable to tell why it left me as I am to tell why, if not deceived, that God should manifest his everlasting love toward the chiefest of sinners. If, as I hope, the Lord did remember me on Calvary's cross, I was blind for some time (and still doubt whether I see or not) about the Bible. I was in a conditional country and they taught me that if I would join "the church" the Lord would bless me bounteously. They taught me that God was not limited in power and that he was a complete Sovereign, but they told me he did not work all things after the counsel of his own will, or, in other words, that the predestination of all things was not taught in the Bible, and that it was God-dishonoring. I believed all this until I hope the Lord opened my eyes. I said the hardest things imaginable about the "old absoluters," and it made me angry to tell me I believed what was to be would be. Even after I came back home and found they believed in predestination here, I was, as I thought, sorry I did not join while away. As time went on my burden got heavier and I began to read after some of the precious brethren who advocated predestination. The more I read the more I wanted to read and the more it all seemed to fit the little hope I possessed.

"Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

How consoling, dear reader, to know that you do not have your own way to make. It is not only grace that lifts your feet

out of the miry clay and places them upon firm ground, but it is grace that keeps them there. If poor weak mortals could keep themselves Christ's keeping would be useless, but if I were left to keep my own rambling feet I would not go wrong because I would already be wrong.

I started out to try and write upon predestination, but my thoughts are something I have never been able to control. For some time I have had the following words of Jesus on my mind, and try as I may I cannot shake them off: "Father, the hour is now come."—John xvii. 1. If there was not another sentence within the lids of the Bible that sounded of predestination this one would be sufficient to prove there was a certain hour in which the crucifixion of the blessed Jesus was to take place. I am so ignorant and foolish (and as some people accuse us, unreasonable) as to believe he was put to death at an appointed and a fixed time. (Read Matthew ii. 45, and John xiii. 1.) If it was not a fixed time I am sure that it would have taken place much earlier. If it had been left to chance or "happen so" I verily believe that Herod's decree to slay infants would have left us without a Savior. It is useless to say that "good" men could have crucified the Lord. Since it was brutal and heinous to do this, what kind of characters did it take to do the work? Is it possible for men to say that the crucifixion of Christ was left to chance? If so, then the salvation of the elect is left to chance, and if the salvation of the elect is left to chance then the coming of them into the world is left to chance and it is perfectly possible for not an elect to be saved. Away with such a thought! Inasmuch as God foreknew that Adam would fall he prepared before the world a ransom for sin. Since God foreknew that Adam would fall, it was a fixed thing for him to fall. (If, as some claim, he could have kept the law we could have been righteous until now). Since it was a fixed thing for him to fall, it was a fixed ransom to redeem him from under the fall, and Christ proved that the sacrifice was to take place at a certain hour. Now let us go back to our question above: What kind of characters did it take to crucify Christ? We are all agreed that it was a brutal crime. If so, then they were brutal characters who crucified him. If it was predestination for the Savior to be crucified was it not predestination for these wicked men to do it? If one single act of it all was left to chance then that one act could make all of God's plans go wrong. But I believe that predestination was behind the whole plan from beginning of creation until time shall be no more. Nor do I like the word "permission." If you say that God permitted Adam to fall and Christ to be crucified, and all other events to take place because it is his will to do so, then that is all right, but if you just say that God permits, then add nothing, you leave us to think that he permits just to be permitting. I do believe God permits things to come to pass, but because it is his divine will for them to do so.

When you have prayed for all others will you remember this poor burdened boy?

A poor beggar,

W. DORRIS GRIFFIN.

KENNEDY, Alabama.

MACON, Georgia, July 7, 1928.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS:—It is with a heart overflowing with thanksgiving to the Lord for his blessing that I desire to send this message to you.

Surely it is wonderful that Jesus has said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." When the word came that the much beloved and highly esteemed editor of the SIGNS, Elder Horace Lefferts, intended visiting in Atlanta, Georgia, that he might be present when his son graduated from college there, and he would preach there, how our hearts filled with prayer to the Father, that if it could be, let us, who feel to hunger for the beautiful truth of the kingdom of heaven, partake of this feast. Truly "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth." Many of us heard a wonderful message of the love and sovereign mercy and power of our God at East Atlanta Church, preached by dear Elder Lefferts the second Sunday in June, and we were made to feel, Oh, how our hearts have been filled once again. Then the following Saturday and Sunday at old Harris Springs Church, in Newton County, Georgia, where Elder Gilbert Beebe visited and preached, we were again fed of the bountiful hand of Him who has promised, by two beautiful sermons from Elder Lefferts. But our cup of joy and praise was filled to overflowing the following Wednesday at Monroe Church, at the annual meeting of the Oconee Association, when the Lord again wonderfully blessed Elder Lefferts with liberty to declare the unsearchable riches of our God. From the words proclaimed by the servant of Abraham when seeking for the bride of Isaac: "I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my Master's brethren," Elder Lefferts was given to declare in no uncertain sound the omnipotent will and purpose of God. Truly is Elder Lefferts a teacher in Israel, so clearly does he set forth the truth of the kingdom. We were made to pause and wonder: What are we that God should so wonderfully bless us? How I wished, could it have been the purpose of God, that every word that fell from the lips of Elder Lefferts on this glorious occasion could have been broadcast throughout the world and all those who love the appearing of onr Lord could have been tuned in to hear. May the Lord be praised.

In hope,

ELLA B. JONES.

KNOX CITY, Texas, March 21, 1928.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If you will allow one as weak and sinful as I am to address you thus. I received a Bible through the mail from your office and cannot think who ordered it, and do not know who to thank but the great Giver of all good. I want to tell the one who ordered it that they could not have given me anything I would have appreciated more highly, for I was wanting a Bible very much, and feel to thank the donor from the very depths of my poor sinful heart, if I know myself, but I cannot think of words to express my thanks, and I pray the Lord's blessing may always be his or hers, as the case may be. I will be eighty-one years old May 4th, if I live until then, and do not think I ever received anything in my life I appreciated more than that Bible, for it is the Book of all books, and I hope the good Lord will give me a heart and mind to read it prayerfully, and that he will give me an understanding heart, for I know I will not understand unless he does give it me, for I am a poor, weak and helpless worm without him, for he said, Without me ye can do nothing, and

Paul said, Without Christ I can do nothing, but with him I can do all things. So we can only lean on his arm and trust him for what we have and are. I feel the Lord prompted the act of sending the Bible, and once more I wish to thank the one who sent it, and also to thank the Lord for putting it into their heart to send it.

I am a poor old sinner, saved by grace if saved at all, W. W. JONES.

OROVILLE, California.

DEAR EDITORS:—Once more it is time to renew my subscription to our dear old paper. I wonder why I love it and keep taking it, for surely I am as one dead, and all my bones are dry. Oh what grace some of the dear writers are filled with, while it is impossible for me to say one word that would comfort one of God's little ones. I have just received my July SIGNS, and in the letter of Elder Frederick W. Keene he quotes (Jer. xxiv. 7; xxxi. 33-35,) "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Now I wonder if he loves such a sinner as I, or is all my hope vain? How dare one so vile look up or hope? When I look within it scares me, and oh I am so helpless to change my ways or do any better. Am I one of the foolish virgins, one without oil in my vessel? It surely seems so to me. I wonder why I have never been permitted to see a real minister of God's word, and if I am one of the saved in Christ why I am deprived of being with God's dear people. I see one writer thinks it necessary that God's children be baptized. I would not let these Arminian preachers baptize me, nor do I feel fit to be baptized if I were among God's little ones. I doubt if they would accept me.

Well, I see my letter is only the ramblings of a distressed mind, so please when at the throne of grace pray God to give me wisdom and grace and make me to walk in the light.

Your sister in tribulation and sorrow,
MARION S. BROOKS.

BURLINGTON, Ky., July 19, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am writing to tell you my health is such that I am asking you to discontinue sending the SIGNS to me. I am now in my ninety-first year and am growing more feeble daily. I have had much pleasure and comfort in reading messages of love from those who tell my experience much better than I can myself. I am now sitting here reconciled and awaiting the time and will of the Lord to call me from the scenes of this beautiful world, for of myself I know I can do nothing.

Yours in christian love,
MARIETTA GAINES.

INDEPENDENCE, Mo., '28, 1928.

DEAR KINDRED:—As it is time to renew my subscription to the SIGNS I will tell you of our good May meetings, in Jackson, Cass, and Bates Counties, which have just closed. We had as Elders J. R. Hardy, from Kingman, Kansas, T. E. Attebery, of Greenwood, Mo., W. L. Hall, of Independence, Mo., M. M. Shumate, of Kansas City, Mo.. T. B. Fisher, of Oak Grove, Mo., and I think their preaching was edifying to every one who believes the truth of the Bible, and so ably advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for more than ninety-five years, and I hope it will be published in the future to the edification of God's elect, not only for ninety-five years, but until the end of time, and if it is God's will I feel sure it will be, for I feel it has been sustained by God's predestinated purpose all the ninety-five years past.

Your weak brother in an humble hope,
THOMAS W. RECORDS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1928.

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ANGELS.

We have a request of long standing to write on the subject of "angels." The one making the request says she does not recall ever having read anything from an Old Baptist in this country on the subject. Her mind appears to have been stirred up while reading after some of the English writers, who presented the idea that "some of the angels fell from heaven," and we are asked particularly to explain 2 Peter ii. 4, and Jude 6. Almost as far back as we can remember we recall having heard that the origin of the devil was that he was "a fallen angel." For our views on this we refer our readers to an article written by us on the text "His hand hath formed the crooked serpent," appearing in the February, 1928, Signs. Doubtless for centuries people who have been students of the Bible have undertaken to describe their version of what an angel is. Many have given pen pictures, while others more artistically inclined have endeavored to portray their conceptions on canvas, most of which to us has been far from the truth. Some have attempted to prove from the Bible that "angels" are a body of spiritual creatures, inhabiting the climes of eternal glory, sent or dispatched by God at will to earth on some definite mission, &c. They claim the creation is to be likened unto the human family, only on a much higher plane, a spiritual or heavenly race. Personally, we do not accept such a view. It will doubtless be agreed by most Bible readers that the number "seven" in the Scriptures is used as a perfect number, or signifies perfection. John in the fifth chapter of Revelation says he beheld "a Lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth unto all the earth." These seven Spirits of God set forth his fullness as it is known in the earth, the infinity and immensity of him that filleth all in all. Solomon asks, "But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth?" and then says, "Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee." David said, "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." Surely there is no fleeing from his presence. Such is our conception of the Almighty, and wherever, either in the Old or the New Testament, there is any mention made of the appeance of an angel, or a ministering spirit of God, to our finite mind it means nothing less than a manifestation of God himself. He is not limited in any way or sense of the word,

therefore cannot be confined to certain forms or fashions in which he appears unto his people, but in every time of deliverance or salvation the essence of the whole matter is "the angel of his presence saves us." None can administer the things of the Spirit except God be with him, and wherever one has the witness within of having received as much as a cup of cold water in his name they have rejoiced in Spirit and given thanks to God, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift and with whom is neither variableness nor shadow of turning. God dwells in his people and they are moved by him "to will and to do of his good pleasure," so that none has ought of himself. Ministers and pastors are said to be angels of God, as testifieth John, for instance, concerning the seven stars, or the seven angels, of the seven candlesticks, or churches, in Asia. Those seven stars, or angels were said to be held in the right hand of him who was in the midst of the seven candlesticks. This signifies that God's ministers exist and have their being by reason of his favor and that they are kept by his power. Without this there could be no gospel ministry to-day, and it is because he calls, qualifies and sends them forth that they go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, which the powers of hell are unable to prevent or hinder; they carry glad tidings of great joy to the spirits which are in prison. There is still balm in Gilead to soothe and to heal the broken-hearted, and when such characters are sought out and ministered unto through the preached word there is no question at all in their minds but that the messenger is an angel of God. It is nothing less than God manifested in the flesh.

To come now to the verses which have been pointed out, we feel that to "explain" them is an order far too big for us to fill, nevertheless we shall give such views as we have. The fourth verse of the second chapter of second Peter reads as follows: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;" and the sixth verse of Jude reads, "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." The language is very similar and the meaning must be practically the same. The connections in both cases show very clearly that it is the prophets of Israel in the "old world" that are under consideration. Peter follows up his statement with the following, contained in the fifth and sixth verses: "And spared not the old world, but saved Noah, the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly." Peter thus reaches back into the history of Israel and shows conclusively, and there is an abundance of evidence all through the Scriptures to substantiate his claim, that there were many prophets who descended from their high and lofty plane as prophets of the most high God and prophesied falsely, leading the people astray and causing them to err and to forsake their God. Peter does not leave the matter there, but couples it up with the very time in which he himself was living, saying, "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you,

who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." Jude confirms and clinches what Peter has been saying and because "there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ," he felt constrained to give all diligence to write unto "them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ" regarding their common salvation, or the salvation that was Israel's of old, when the Lord led them out of Egypt, as being the salvation of the apostles, it being declared, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Therefore Jude exhorted them that they should earnestly contend for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints. The faith of the apostles was the same faith which Abraham had embraced; it was that same faith which the apostle Paul in his letter to the church at Rome declared was spoken of throughout the whole world, and for which he gave thanks to God. He did not mean that it was spoken throughout the literal world as it existed in his time, but that in every age and among all nations, kindred, tribes and tongues, wherever there was one who had experienced that salvation is of the Lord. History is constantly repeating itself, and we find ministers to-day who have not kept their first estate and through the weakness of the flesh have fallen and turned from the old paths, and have been cast into chains of darkness. Being overseers of the flock they usually carry with them a following, causing divisions and strife and distress that often lingers for years. Without doubt, the bulk of the trouble which is brought into the church comes through the ministry, in one way or another. There are times when Satan appears as an angel of light and takes captive whomsoever the Lord will turn over to him, and there are many who are willing to follow him. It is sad, but nevertheless true. Such things are spots in Zion's feasts of charity, and such ministers become "clouds without water" and are no longer held in the high esteem of days that are gone by lovers of the truth. Such trials must be necessary to the life of the church. Jesus said, "For it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than, having two hands or two foet, to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire." The church needs faithful brethren to counsel and deal with her ministers and pastors, as well as faithful ministers and pastors to go in and out before the flock. They need to watch over each other for good. All are weak, and this Jude must have realized, for while he said, "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life," he evidently knew of their inability to perform such, and, therefore, closed his epistle with these words: "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with ex-

ceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

We realize we have hardly touched upon our subject, but will leave it for the present, and it may be that some of our readers or correspondents will have a mind to write upon it.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder R. Lester Dodson.)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, convened at New Vernon, Orange Co., N. Y., June 6th, 7th and 8th, 1928, sends greetings to those with whom she corresponds.

DEAR BRETHREN:—About a year ago, at one of our Spring Associations, after having made some reference to "our accountability to God" we were asked to write on the subject. Not having been able to do so before, and considering it a doctrinal point, we will take this occasion to comment upon it for the consideration of our correspondents. The particular verse cited was Romans xiv. 12: "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." We sometimes wonder if we write and speak upon this phase of doctrine as much as we should. David must have realized his accountability to God when he confessed, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." Paul in writing to the Hebrews says, "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." We can but believe that every true child feels justly condemned in the sight of God for his shortcomings and sins. If he did not, how could he ever pray, "God be merciful to me a sinner"? He knows that God is of "purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity;" that he himself is vile, by nature corrupt from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, and that in his flesh there dwells no good thing. Because of this inability to do the thing he would he is made to cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Were it not for the grace (unmerited favor) of God, he would be without hope, and for this he must "thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." The Scriptures declare, "Ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." If the tree be minus of this fruit, what evidence is there that such an one is a subject of grace, for does not the grace of God that bringeth salvation teach us that "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world?" If these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul said he was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and he died. And the commandment which was ordained to life, he found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived him, and by it slew him. It is our schoolmaster, teaching us many needful lessons, and brings us again and again to Christ, of whom Isaiah prophesied, saying, he "shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

Our accountability to God is what makes us take refuge in his Son. God the Father held his only begotten Son strictly to account for all the sins of his people, and his justice was not satisfied until Jesus had finished the work that was given him to do and fulfilled in every jot and tittle all that was written in the volume of book concerning him. The payment of the debt, to the very last farthing, was duly acknowledged when God exalted his Son at his own right hand, but as the members of his mystical body are brought into his fellowship through suffering and enduring the contradiction of sin in the flesh, so are the branches of the true vine taught their accountability to God through the knowledge that every branch in him that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit, while every branch in him that beareth not fruit the Husbandman taketh away. But as Christ testified, "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise," so every branch is made to know it cannot bear fruit of itself, "for without me ye can do nothing." This is as it should be, that he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. Every branch must be kept continually mindful of its dependence upon the vine. It owes its life in every sense of the word to the vine. Therefore, every holy desire, every pure thought and every good deed is but a manifestation of the life of the vine in the branch of God's goodness to us through Christ, and even though we are told to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, we are not left to surmise that this can be done through our own effort, for we are distinctly told, "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Paul declares in his first epistle to the Corinthians that it is "according to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." He not only shows here that it is by the grace of God we are what we are, but declares in so many words that no flesh shall glory in the presence of the Lord, and that all things will be proven, whether they be of God, or man. If the work be of God, it shall stand forever, but if it be of man it shall be consumed as chaff. The flesh is prone to blow its bubbles and build its air castles, but the day of reckoning is sure to come, and woe be unto that house which is builded upon the sand. Paul is confirmed by John, who said, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: whose fan is in his hand, and he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." And we bring over from the Old Testament the following: "Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place." The testimony of these witnesses establishes the doctrine that "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." As children of the

heavenly King, it behooves us to shew ourselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. We should shun profane and vain babblings, which we are told will increase unto more ungodliness. Those who have been called to stand upon the walls of Zion have received the highest honor that was ever bestowed upon mankind; they should remember that it carries with it great responsibilities, and as much as in them is they should strive to acquit themselves as good soldiers of him who has called them to the cause of King Jesus. When an accounting of their stewardship is required, may it not be found that they have proven unjust stewards. The Lord our God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God, and he will not divide his honor with another. The conditions surrounding the church to-day are such as to call for those possessing unfeigned faith and that courage which only the Lord can give to go forth to battle. The armor of men is not adequate for the need, but let us not fear nor falter, for he who said, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty," is still in the midst of the seven candlesticks and is still holding the seven stars in his right hand. We would that all might realize their accountability to God, and that there should be no turning aside from following after him. It would appear as though the history of Israel in the days of Joshua is being repeated now, for to many it seems an evil thing to serve the Lord, and they are choosing among the false gods, but there is a remnant according to the election of grace that is being saved to-day, whose will it is to serve the Lord. Isaiah in speaking of the day when seven women should take hold of one man, saying, "We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach," said, "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel." The question of Jesus could well be asked again: "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?" How beautiful and glorious, indeed, is the branch of the Lord to-day. We want our correspondents to know that those who compose the Warwick Old School Baptist Association are what the name implies, Old School. We are satisfied with the doctrine and order of God's house as it is plainly set forth in the Scriptures. We want no new thing, but desire to be found standing in the way and asking for the old paths, where is the good way, and to walk therein. Our hope and trust is in the Lord, and we believe that it is as said in connection with our text: "Every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." He is sovereign over all, and the powers that be are ordained of him and are subject unto him. We desire to ascribe greatness unto him, for he is the Rock, and his work is perfect. If there be any who are keeping back a part of the price that is his due, may they be turned from the error of their way and be made to know that "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

Yours in hope of eternal life through Christ our Lord,

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.

HENRY T. LEFFERTS, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, May 23rd, 24th and 25th, 1928, to our sister churches with whom we correspond, sendeth greetings in the Lord.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—According to the mercy of our covenant-keeping God and Savior Jesus Christ, from whom all blessings flow, we have been favored again to meet your messengers in an associate capacity. We enjoy and value your continued correspondence, and desire a continuance of same, and urge that your ministering servants, who are able in expounding the word to the general edification of the saints, continue to visit us as your messengers. We feel that most, if not all, the ministers have preached to the comfort of those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. But we feel to covet the best gifts.

The next session of this Association is appointed to meet with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in May, 1929, where we shall hope to receive your messengers.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Mod.

J. B. MILLER, Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Hopewell Church, at Hopewell, Mercer County, New Jersey, May 30th, 31st and June 1st, 1928.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more we have met together with much rejoicing in the Lord. We are glad to address you in this Corresponding Letter, telling you how our minds have been stirred up by way of remembrance. Our God in his kind providence has favored us during the meeting, sending his servants to us laden with the good things of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which they preached in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, thereby feeding the hungry and giving drink to the thirsty, building up his people in the most holy faith. How pleasant it is to dwell together in unity and hear the word of God setting forth salvation by grace, and grace alone, giving God all the praise and all the glory. Your Minutes have been received, to be distributed among the churches. We desire a continuance of your correspondence.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, New Jersey, beginning at 10:30 a. m., Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1929, at which place and time we hope to meet and welcome your messengers again with love in Christ.

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.

DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in joint session with the several churches composing the same, convening at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, June 6th, 7th and 8th, 1928, sends christian greetings to our sister associations and meetings of our correspondence.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Again it has been our great privilege to meet your messengers and receive your correspondence, which we value highly and desire to have continued. Our meeting has been most enjoyable as we feel the Spirit of the Lord has been present with us throughout. The doctrine of God our Savior has been preached and we are encouraged to press forward, trusting that God will direct our steps and keep us from error. Your ministers have come to us laden

with that heavenly manna that feeds the hungry soul and we pray that God will watch over and keep them all their journey through.

Our next session is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1929, the place of meeting to be announced through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, when we hope to meet your messengers again.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
HENRY T. LEFFERTS, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder C. W. Vaughn, at his residence, Hopewell, N. J., June 12th, 1928, Miss Myra D. Blackwell, of Hopewell, N. J., and Mr. Wilmer C. Scudder, of Trenton, N. J. Miss Blackwell is a daughter of brother Morgan D. and sister Carrie Blackwell, of the Hopewell Church.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Levi J. Findley, son of Levi Findley and Emeline Kittle Findley, was born in Randolph County, W. Va., December 24th, 1860, and died September 29th, 1927, making his life here 66 years, 9 months and 5 days. He was married to Manerva Jane Taylor November, 1871, and to that union were born five children: Floyd, French and Gordon Findley, Mrs. Arthur Benson and Mrs. Albert Riffle. French was killed suddenly by the explosion of a railroad engine, and though his father was well and strong before that he could not entirely recover from the shock and at the age of fifty-four years he had two severe strokes of paralysis, which destroyed the use of his left side. His physician used all his skill to relieve him, but for three years he suffered untold pain, then gradually but slowly partially recovered, so he could turn himself in bed and sit up a little, and although he lived for twelve years he was confined to his bed most of the time. The family did all they could to relieve him and get him on his feet again but the paralysis had so badly injured nerve and muscles it was impossible for him to walk. During all those years of suffering he did not murmur or complain, but said the hand that afflicted him could raise him up to walk again if it was his will. During his illness he read his Bible and believed in Christ as the author and finisher of the christian's faith. Six months before he died his general health failed and he suffered greatly with a severe kidney and bladder trouble. As his physical condition became more serious he had great heart searchings, as though he wished to realize more fully his acceptance in Christ that his faith might be strengthened and his hope renewed. About that time Elder J. S. Murphy, pastor of the Valley Primitive Baptist Church, visited him and he talked freely and very satisfactorily of his hope of heaven, and requested him to preach his funeral sermon, telling him when he bid him goodbye that he would be called on soon for that purpose. He believed firmly in the Primitive Baptist faith, and told us he was perfectly willing to trust himself in the hands of the Lord, and two days before he departed said his trust was in the Lord and he was willing to go. He was honest and upright in all his dealings, was a good husband and father, a true friend and neighbor, and highly esteemed by all who knew him. Besides his wife and children he leaves to mourn their loss four sisters: Mrs. W. J. Rowan, Mabie, W. Va., Mrs. I. J. Scott, Elkins, W. Va., Mrs. G. M. Koon, Queens, W. Va., Mrs. A. J. Workman, Harding, W. Va., also two brothers, John K. and Adam L. Findley, of Harding, W. Va., besides many nephews, nieces and other relatives and friends.

The funeral services were conducted at the home by Elder J. S. Murphy, Montrose, W. Va., after which his body was laid to rest in the Findley Cemetery. May his loved ones all be comforted by his resignation to God's will and his faith and hope of heaven.

His sister,

EMELINE E. WORKMAN.

ALSO,

Jane Findley Rowan, daughter of Levi Findley and Kittle Findley, was born in Taylor County, W. Va., September 7th, 1850, and died at her home at Mabie, W. Va., April 29th, 1928, making her stay on earth 77 years, 7 months and 22 days. When she was one year old her parents moved with her and an older child to Randolph County. She was married to William J. Rowan December 8th, 1872, and to that union were born seven children: Delbert and Herbert Rowan, Mrs. George Ryan and Mrs. C. C. Corley, all of Mabie, W. Va., Mrs. George Philips, of Coalton, Mrs. Emma Pritt, Elkins, and Mrs. Paul Scott, of Aubry. In their early married life they bought a farm, and built a home in which they lived all those years and reared their family, who are all married, except the youngest son, who has remained at home and been a great help and comfort to them in their declining years. In 1891 she professed a hope in Christ and joined the Valley Primitve Baptist Church, and held her membership there until her death. For many years she had not been able to assemble with the church or to mingle with the world, but proved

her usefulness as a guiding life and comfort in her home, and remained faithful to her early profession, believing fully in salvation by grace through and in the shed blood of her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, trusting in him for help and strength at all times. As David said in the one hundred and twenty-fifth Psalm, "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever," so through this faith she had a blessed hope and was thereby enabled to show forth the true christian virtues in her daily walk. During the last twelve years she suffered two paralytic strokes, from which she only partially recovered, and during the latter part of last December she fell, breaking her hip joint. The shock was too much for her declining strength and years, and she lingered until April, when her heart weakened and gave way. Through all her suffering she was patient and did not murmur or complain. She was a subscriber to her church paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and greatly enjoyed its contents. During the last weeks of her illness while reading it or the Bible to her her face would light up with the joy and comfort which she received. At the last when asked how she felt in regard to death she replied, "I will be glad to go," and when the end came she went suddenly, without a struggle, leaving on her features a look of rest and peace that was awe-inspiring and made us feel as though "She is not dead, but sleepeth." For fifty-five years she was a faithful and devoted wife, a kind mother, a true friend and neighbor, and highly esteemed in the community in which she lived. She leaves to mourn their loss besides her devoted husband and children, two brothers and three sisters: A. L. and J. K. Findley and Mrs. A. J. Workman, of Harding, W. Va., Mrs. I. J. Scott, of Elkins, and Mrs. G. M. Koon, of Queens, W. Va., twenty-seven grandchildren and many nephews, nieces and other relatives and friends. She was well cared for by her family, those living nearest were untiring in their efforts to comfort and relieve her. As her condition became more serious all her children and several of the grandchildren were with her most of the time, and everything was done for her that loving hands could do, but her work on earth was completed, and the heavenly Master had said, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. May the memory of her orderly, upright life and her wish to depart and be with Jesus ever be a comfort to her loved ones, and in time cause them to feel that it was best for her to go from this world of pain and sorrow to one of endless joy.

The funeral services were conducted at her home by Mr. Ross Linger, the Methodist Episcopal pastor at Mabie, after which her body was laid in the Mabie Cemetery to await the morning of the resurrection.

Her sister,

EMELINE E. WORKMAN.

The passing of brother **Theodore E. Welch,** at the Soldiers' Home, in Bath, N. Y., on June 20th, 1928, witnesseth the loss to the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in New York City of one of her oldest members. He was received into her full fellowship from the Middletown and Wallkill Church in the year 1872, which extended his membership with the Ebenezer Church over a period of approximately fifty-six years. Elder Gilbert Beebe baptized him on February 12th, 1860. Several years prior to his decease he lived with his surviving son in the upper part of New York State, his wife, sister Welch, having predeceased him a few years ago, but a short while before his death he went to the Soldiers' Home in Bath, where we understand he was made very comfortable during his last days. He had just passed his eighty-eighth mile stone. We were personally acquainted with brother Welch before he took his departure from New York City, and well remember how he used to tell in our Conference Meetings of the goodness and mercy of the Lord to poor vile sinners, of whom he made claim to being the chief. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

R. L. D.

Sister **Bettie Laytham Turner**, of Mayslick and Maysville, Kentucky, daughter of the late brother Frank and sister Martha Laytham, of Mayslick, Kentucky, was born January 15th, 1862, and departed this life November 17th, 1927. She professed a hope in Christ and joined the Primitive Baptist Church about 1880, and lived in a manner respectful to her profession until she was called to come into the realization of an immortal state in the paradise of God. Her life was beautiful, by which she maintained an abiding confession unto salvation. She loved the church, and was glad when it was said unto her, "Let us go into the house of the Lord," and she was ready to go, and went far and near to be in meeting with the saints in the service of God. She was richly experienced in the fellowship and doctrine of the church. She adorned the order and faithfulness of a gospel profession of salvation by grace. At a suitable age of young womanhood she was happily married, by the writer, to brother Robert L. Turner, of Turners Station, Kentucky, to which union were born two children: Frank and Irene, who survive her. She lived truly in the love of her husband, her home and her children. In all appearances she was a good wife, a good mother and a good home keeper. No one can be more pitiable and apparently helpless than a good man who has sustained the loss of a good wife and a good keeper at home. Early in the morning of time our Creator saw and declared that it was not good for man to

be alone, and therefore he made an helpmeet for him, which when taken away can but leave the man helpless. The sanctum of the heart of a good husband is made sacred by the presence of a good wife, which is rendered desolate when she is taken therefrom, and while I feel that in special instances I would if I could come as a comforter into this sacred place, and yet I feel that her tender loving presence must have so garnished this sanctum that my presence in any respect could but tarnish and spoil the picture, therefore I feel that any effort in that respect on my part could but be repelling to its sacredness and must be abandoned. But is this separation improbable? I have thought to be with our loved ones in that better existence will be as a translation, not recognizable only in substance. We will likely know Elijah and Moses and Abraham and others of like character transfigured, or in a state of transfiguration, as a spiritual presence, as a disembodied existence, and yet in such comprehensible form as this one and that one. I have thought should I be there I would in some sense know my mother and my wife and those ministers of the gospel with whom I have intimately labored in this life, but I have only this thought of this matter of knowing each other there, but I do not know, only that we shall know as we are known. May the dear brother be comforted with these thoughts with such thoughts as the Lord may seal to the comfort of his heart to the praise of the glory of his grace.

P. G. LESTER.

Isaac Newton Watson, a well-known resident, passed away at his home, Saturday, March 10th, 1928, after an illness of several months. He was born in Bloom Township, Seneca County, Ohio, the son of Thomas A. and Nancy J. Watson, January 7th, 1852 At the time of his death he was aged 76 years, 2 months and 3 days. November 23rd, 1876, he was united in marriage to Susan Dane, who survives him, with one son, Ervin Watson, of Bloomville, Ohio. Besides his wife and son he leaves two grandchildren, Edwin Watson, Tiffin, Ohio, and Miss Belle Watson, of Bloomville, Ohio, and one grandchild, Donald Watson, of Tiffin, Ohio. He is also survived by two brothers, Charles Watson, of St. Joseph, Mo., and William Watson, of Bloomville, Ohio. Mr. Watson united with the Honey Creek Primitive Baptist Church, in July, 1928, and was baptized by Elder A. F. Dane. He remained a faithful member of this church and attended services as long as his health would permit. He was a kind husband and father.

The funeral services were held in the Honey Creek church-house Tuesday afternoon, 2 o'clock, and were conducted by Elder Hugh Williams. Burial in the adjoining Cemetery.

Written by his widow,

SUSAN WATSON.

NOTICE.

Do not forget to leave something in your will to

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST HOME,

ALSO

Special Donations.....Any Amount.
Regular Subscriber, annually.....$10.
Sustaining Subscriber, annually .....$25.
Associate Subscriber, annually .....$1 to $5.

Send all funds to H. T. Lefferts, Treasurer, Nutley, New Jersey.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

W. E. Beene, Tex., $2; Mrs. Lydia B. Stewart, N. Y., $2; J. K. Buckwalter, Ohio, $1; J. W. Groom, Mo., $1

MEETINGS.

The New Hope Association will be held with the Mt. Zion Church, ten miles south of Greenville, Texas, instead of with the Sabine Church, six miles north of Greenville, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in August. Trains and busses will be met at Cash, Texas, Thursday afternoon and evening, and Friday morning. All expecting to attend this Association please notice the change.

J. J. DARNELL.

The regular annual meeting is to be held with the Slate Hill Church, Slate Hill, N. Y., on Friday, August 24th, next, and we cordially invite brethren and friends to be with us on this occasion. Elders George Ruston and C. W. Vaughn have agreed to attend, the Lord willing.

R. LESTER DODSON.

Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists has appointed her next annual session to be held with Spring Creek Church, near Stahl, Adair County, Missouri, Saturday before the fourth Sunday, and the two following days, August 25th, 26th and 27th, 1928. Those coming by rail will be met both Saturday and Sunday at Novinger and Stahl.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator.

J. M. CATE, Clerk.

The annual all day meeting of the North Berwick (Oak Woods) Old School Baptist Church, of North Berwick, Maine, will be held the fourth Sunday in August (26th). All who desire to attend will be gladly welcomed. We expect to have Elder H. C. Ker, of Maryland, with us.

JOSEPH HALL.

First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held at the residence of W. I. Zinn, two miles north of Meriden, Jefferson Co., Kansas, to convene on Friday before the second Saturday in September at 10 o'clock a. m. The month coming in on Saturday makes the date 7th, 8th and 9th. Meriden is on the Santa Fe R. R. Hard surfaced road from Topeka to Meriden. For further information write to W. I. Zinn, Meriden, Kansas, or L. L. Schenck, Moderator, 1119 Taylor St., Topeka, Kansas.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

GRANTVILLE, Kansas.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Bowdoinham Church, beginning on Friday before the second Monday in September (7th, 8th and 9th), 1928. We look for Elder D. L. Topping to be with us. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.

TOPSHAM, Maine.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday of each month at the Swedish Lutheran church-house southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, Riverside, Calif., and at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. 11th St., Claremont, Calif., on the first Sunday of each alternate month, beginning with January, and on every alternate month with brother Joseph Huffman, 128 Van Buren St., Arlington, Calif. Singing at 10:30 a. m. Preaching at 11 a. m. Lunch at the place of meeting, and continued services in the afternoon.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.

O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sunday at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 245 Lacadana Drive, Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Old School Baptists of Chicago meet, the Lord willing, every Sunday at 11 a. m. and 2:30 p. m. (Daylight Saving time), at the home of W. N. Spitler, 11332 S. St. Louis Ave., Chicago. Take 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue street car to the end of car line. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Midweek song service at the home of W. C. Cox, 7040 S. Eggleston Ave., at 7:45 p. m., on Wednesdays. Preaching by Elders Jones and Jaynes. Basket lunch. For further information telephone Wentworth 2860.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 96. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1928. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GOD'S MANIFESTATIONS TO MAN, GRACE-PROVIDENCE-MIRACLES.

EVERY good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, in whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. These gifts are from the same source, but they come in three different forms: (1) Grace, spiritual blessings, given through God's Spirit to the elect only. (2) Providence, general or temporal blessings, given in creation or through fixed and unchangeable laws, for general purposes and for all alike. (3) Miracles, suspension of fixed laws, special blessings or punishments, given direct by divine power to a few or many for special reasons. God manifests himself to man, and for man's benefit, in the above three ways. He is a Spirit and many of his works are great and wonderful mysteries. His ways and thoughts are as far above man's ways and thoughts as the heavens are above the earth, as perfection is above imperfection, as Spirit above flesh. It is not likely that all will agree with my use of the three words of this article, Grace, Providence and Miracles, for some say that grace and providence mean the same thing to them. They have a different meaning to me, and I shall use them as seems right to me, allowing all others the same rights of opinion. Now, the first division of this article is grace. Spiritual manifestations. To me that includes all spiritual blessings to the elect, and to the elect only. God's people, christians, are not under the law, but under grace. Christ went under the law for them and redeemed them from its curse. All blessings given in Christ are spiritual blessings, graces, and show by these wonderful manifestations God's wonderful love to his chosen people. Here are some of the ways God manifests himself to his people in graces. New birth, spiritual life, knowledge of sin, repentance, faith, hope, pardon, new heart, new law in the heart, spirit of prayer, spiritual rest, spirit of love, spiritual joy, humility, meekness, long-suffering, sanctification, justification, and a hope of glorification, robe of righteousness and eternal life. All graces are spiritual blessings, and all spiritual blessings are graces. Man, with all his wisdom, has never discovered any law or rule by which these graces are given, or any way by which he could direct them,

add to them or prevent them. They are all divine blessings, under God's control, man's. If you are one of God's elect these spiritual manifestations are yours by free grace, not merit, not as pay for your works, but because it was so arranged in the covenant of grace before the world was, because that is his way. Blessed are they to whom God manifests himself through the many graces.

The second division of this article is providence, temporal or material gifts. These temporal blessings, or providential manifestations of God to his creatures, are not for the elect only, but for all alike in one sense; that is, they were created for the general use of man in the beginning, or given later by fixed and unchangeable laws of nature, without regard to individuals or classes. These providential blessings come from the same source that the graces come from, but are not spiritual, nor special, but general blessings or manifestations. Let us mention some providential blessings which are general to all alike. Light, heat, air, electricity, water, rain, snow, hail, frost, wind, storms, lightning, clouds, spring, summer, winter, animal life, soil, stones, metals, &c. Some of these temporal blessings are everywhere, as air and electricity, while others are fairly general, as rain, clouds, water, plant life and animal life, while some others are placed here or there as God saw fit, metals, oils, stones, sands, but while some are not everywhere, they are for general use. The providential blessings are not given direct to the individuals like the graces are, but are placed here and there in the material world where man can find them and use them, or he can leave them alone, go to them or go away. God sends his rain on the just and the unjust alike when they are in the same locality, country or climate. So does he send his light, winter, summer, snow, &c., on all alike in certain localities, certain climates and certain seasons. Man may choose to live in a wet climate or in a dry climate, in a cold or in a warm climate, in a fertile or a desert land, in a valley or on the mountains, on the sea or on the land. All these differences were arranged in the creation. Now, while God's providential blessings are somewhat general, and were here before man was, their appropriation by man is somewhat conditional with man. He is so limited that he cannot use all at once, so he must choose, according to circumstances and his ability, which of these he will use, some more, some less. Some like to farm, some raise stock, some mine metals, oil or coal, some hunt, some fish, some are hirelings and some are officers. So also when man has chosen the way he is to use these providential blessings his success is somewhat conditional on surroundings, seasons and his ability. God's spiritual blessings, the graces, are not conditional on the part of man, nor were the creating and the general arrangements of the temporal blessings conditional on the part of man, but man's use of these providential blessings are both circumstantial as to locality and conditional as to choice and ability. We do not know of any of God's providential blessings, such as light, heat, rain, air, seasons, &c., which man can add to or take from, except plant life and animal life. Man can take life, and while he cannot increase or diminish the light and heat of the sun, he can substitute artificial light when it is dark, and heat when he is cold. These material blessings, or providential blessings as I call them, were all created by the great Giver of all good and perfect gifts for the general use of man, but in many cases man can use

them or leave them alone, while some are essential to life and must be used, as air, water, light and heat.

The third division of this article is miracles. Suspension of God's laws. Miracles manifest another form of God's power in suspending one of his fixed and unchangeable laws of nature, or the laws of material things. When God created the heavens and the earth he placed each and every part of visible creation under fixed laws, which cannot be overthrown, suspended or changed by any power except the power that created them. We believe in miracles, for God is as able to suspend one of his laws as he was to make that law. He does not overthrow or destroy his laws, and we do not think that he will destroy any of them while time lasts, neither can any man by his own power even suspend one of them and perform a miracle. The days of public miracles seem to have passed, or at least somewhat decreased. God dealt more direct in the long past than he does now, probably for the reason that man in those days had fewer sources of information, and also to build up a record by which man is to be guided. These records which have thus been built up and handed down to show man the three ways that God manifests himself and his will to man, now take the place of his more direct way of dealing with man in the long past. As the rich man, who wanted Abraham to send one from the dead to warn his brethren that they might not come into torment, was told that they had Moses and the prophets, and if they would not hear them that they would not hear though one arose from the dead, so God's miracles and Christ's miracles are on record, and if the people of to-day will not believe in miracles unless they are performed in their day, and before them, they would no more believe in the divine nature of miracles than the Jews believed in their day. Now, as a miracle is the suspension of one of God's laws, and not an overthrow of that law, I will mention a few miracles and comment on them. Dividing the Red Sea for Israel to leave Egypt, and dividing the river Jordan for Israel to enter the Canaan land. Here in each case the law of gravity was suspended for a day or so, but it was not overthrown or the water would have never returned when the miracle was at an end. Christ walking on the water is a miracle of suspending the law of gravity, but not destroying it. If you believe the law was destroyed, just try walking on the water and see. Healing of the ten lepers. Leprosy was an incurable disease in the Jewish nation in Christ's day, and was sometimes called the King's evil, or chief of all diseases, yet when the ten lepers came to Christ he suspended the law of disease and decay and healed them by divine power. The law still goes on. The man who was born blind that God might show his power in a wonderful miracle, by changing the course of nature and giving sight where none had been. The withered fig tree, a suspension of the laws of plant life in one tree. Feeding the multitude in the desert, a miraculous increase of a few loaves and fishes, a suspension of the regular law of production and increase. Raising of Lazarus was the suspension of the laws of disease, decay and death, in which the decaying body was restored to health and the departed soul was returned to a body suited for its abode, but from which decay had driven it. Disease

and death still go on with us, because they were only suspended in the case of one person and not as touching the whole human family. Before Christ's day God performed many miracles on plants, animals, armies, nations, waters, &c. Some miracles are blessings and others are punishments. God's records are made for man's benefit, let us all profit by them so far as our knowledge and ability will allow us. His graces are for the elect, his providences are for all mankind, and his miracles are for a special few. All these manifestations are from the same source: the sovereign God to man. My hope is that many of his graces have been bestowed on unworthy me, and his providential blessings have sustained my natural life for seventy-five years, while the record of miracles is in harmony with my views of an all-wise, all-powerful God. Let us praise his holy and matchless name for the three wonderful manifestations of God to man: Grace, Providence and Miracles. And now, O heavenly Father, may thy rich mercies, coming from the fountain of unwasting fullness, continne to flow down through those three great streams of thy blessings to man to the end of time, if according to thy will. We ask it in his name.

M. N. WEBB.

WEISER, Idaho.

[THE above article is placed before our readers because of brother Webb's originality of thought and for the sake of his thoughts upon an interesting subject not frequently touched upon in our columns. It is to be understood that his expressions are not to be taken as our own, but setting forth the subject as he sees it, for the judgment of all who may read according to the light that is in them.—EDITOR.]

GRANTVILLE, Kansas, July 30, 1928.

DEAR PEOPLE OF GOD:—With the permission of the editors and publishers, I will now try, as I was requested to do, to give a brief account of my recent trip to the west, not to exploit my own adventures, but to tell to others of the dear ones of like precious faith whom I met there, who were surely embraced in the covenant of grace before the foundation of the world, and are now engaged in singing that old, old song, which is ever as new to us as it was to John, saying, Not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory, because thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood. I was led to take this trip to Oregon to visit a dear brother in the flesh, whom I had not seen for nearly a quarter of a century. The hope of spiritual enjoyment with my dear sister-in-law, who is as a lone sheep in the desert, as a sparrow upon the housetop, singing alone in her own heart the same sweet song, consoled me in a measure for the reluctance I felt in absenting myself so long from our own little meetings at home. She was indeed a comfort to me, a helper in my joy, as we shared with each other our mutual joys and sorrows. My brother with his interesting boys went with us to visit the church in Portland, which also I had anticipated, but had no expectation of finding others, nor of the joys which awaited me among them. Our trouble and difficulty in locating the place made us so late we did not hear much preaching, which we regretted, but what we did hear sounded good to me. Their meetings are held in the home of Dr. and sister Stakely. When the services closed the cordial expressions of love and fellowship which were showered upon me were both a joy and encouragement, as well as humbling to one so unworthy to receive them.

Though my worthless name was familiar to some, yet I was a stranger and they took me in, and the dear, lovely people that they are, made us at once to feel at home with them. Presently some one called out, "Every body stay for dinner." That sounded like home, too, and I think every one accepted, bringing in their baskets, and a bountiful meal was served. Missing the morning services, sister and I had consoled ourselves with the expectations of afternoon meeting, but that not being the arrangement we enjoyed ourselves just as well when they all got their books and sang the dear old familiar tunes and hymns until some had to go to their trains. And the singing, though it might grate on the ears of trained Babylonish musicians, yet the spirit with which they sang, and the evident understanding of the soul-cheering words, singing and making melody in their hearts to the Lord, in which I felt my heart to be joining, was sweeter to me than "the sound of the dulcimer sweet," than any human invention can ever produce. As my sister said, I just forgot everything. As I rode home reflecting on the many aged ones, with their whitened locks, who according to nature must soon lay their armor by and enter their long sought rest, the words of the prophet came to my mind: "Art thou not from everlasting. O, Lord, my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die." No, dear old saints everywhere, fresh courage take, for though with weary hearts you are waiting to depart from this land of toils and tribulations, yet "we" shall not die, for when Christ comes he shall find faith on the earth, for Paul said, "Then 'we' which are alive and remain." The same "we" whose hope is now in his coming. Some of us will still be here to be caught up together with those gone before. The Lord will not leave himself without witnesses, so let us all fresh courage take, for we shall not die. I found myself planning to stay another month longer than I had intended, in the hope of meeting with them again. In the meantime I had received from brother James Groshong, of Corvallis, Oregon, another dear old saint who has visited our association a few times, a kind invitation to visit the church of his membership, at Lebanon, perhaps a hundred miles from Portland. I felt some hesitancy about this, and such a shrinking as I do often feel from being seen as I really am by "the highly favored few, knowing they can but find my bodily presence weak and my speech contemptible. Yet in my eagerness to meet with His dear people, the compassionate Lord sometimes permits me to forget my unworthy self, and gives me sweet communion with them. So I found myself eagerly waiting for the time. Brother Groshong instructed me to get my ticket to Albany, and he with two others would meet me there, and all go on together. Sister Maggie said, Mary, I will be uneasy about you. I told her not to worry about me, for if brother Groshong met me I would be all right, and if he did not I would take the first train back, for I did not know the name of a soul to inquire for, if I went on alone. This might seem very imprudent for one of my age, but as our fathers in the flesh watch over and care for their own, much more does our dear Father in heaven guide, guard and protect even the very least of his. So I felt not the least trepidation as I started. Arriving at Albany, after about an hour's waiting I saw brother Groshong coming, accompanied by a brother and sister Edwards. We entered the train and seating ourselves near each other, soon found

that we were no more strangers, but fellow-citizens of the same dear household of God. We arrived at the place of meeting, but were saddened to find the aged brother Smith, at whose house the Saturday meetings were held, so seriously ill it was not prudent to remain there, much as I would have loved to be with them. (I have since seen his obituary notice in the SIGNS.) So we repaired to the home of brother Gainor, where the pastor, recently bereft of his wife, was staying. Brother Edwards, the Moderator, spoke first, and with joy springing up in my heart I loved him for the truth's sake before he closed. Then Elder Rose, weak from a recent severe illness, but strong in the Lord, arose, and again I felt lifted above earth and earthly things. When services closed I could no longer keep my seat, nor restrain myself from giving them my hand in token of fellowship and love that passes the understanding of the outside world. How marvelous it seemed to find them, more than two thousand miles from us, and practically never heard of each other before, yet speaking the very same things, thus showing that all have travelled the same rugged road, to the same old school, and been taught by the same infallible Teacher, while those taught in the schools of men have only a confused language at best, some teaching one thing and some another. The Sunday meeting was held at Tallman, where they have a neat building with the name "Primitive Baptist" over the door, so poor wayfarers may see that there is a resting-place. The members, as in many other places, except one, have been dispersed by death and removals, yet a goodly number drove in from surrounding territory for another sweet season of praise to Him whose presence I felt to be in their midst. I hope time will never efface the memory of the fervent supplication that was poured out to him in my behalf, that he would guide and keep me all my way and supply all my need. My heart responded, Amen and amen, for oh I thought, humility, humility is what I need that I become not exalted above measure, because of the good things so bountifully dealt out to me by the Giver of all good. To him all the glory belongs.

"How loth we are to leave the place
Where Jesus shows his smiling face."
"But our several engagements called us away,
Separation was needful and we must obey."

"Through heaven's indulgent care," I safely reached my brother's home, after having enjoyed another of the heavenly places in Christ with his beloved in Corvallis. The following Sunday we went again to Portland, where we had the pleasure of hearing both Elders J. C. Turnage and S. B. Moffitt, then a repetition by the same lovely company, of singing and inexpressible joy in the brotherhood of Christ. But "time's rapid motions soon compel with grief to say, Dear friends, farewell." I knew I must now turn my face homeward, and in all probability every goodbye was final until the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and with the trump of God, and shall gather his elect from the four corners of the earth. I had learned through the SIGNS that Elder J. T. Barnes had moved to Walla Walla, Washington. Through his writings in the SIGNS, and his kind letters to me, I had long felt to be acquainted with him, and I found that by a little extra effort on my way home I could see him, and be at his church meeting also. His wife being an invalid, they kindly asked me to come a few days before, so as to visit in their home, as she cannot go to meeting. Here again the protecting care of the

covenant-keeping God was exercised for me. I arrived after dark, not knowing a single face in the town, but my feet scarcely touched the pavement until a lady said, "Is this Mrs. Ellison?" adding that she was Elder Barnes' daughter. Then the dear brother came forward, saying, "And this is Barnes." Did I feel like a stranger? No, no. The feeling of kinship was immediately established, and during my never-to-be-forgotten visit there, I, "poor weak and worthless though I am," was made to feel that we were equal sharers "in the commonwealth of Israel." Dear, afflicted sister Barnes is truly an example of patient, submissive reconciliation to God's hand, an inspiration to others to run with patience the race unalterably set before them. Elder C. W. Bond and others from La Grand, Oregon, one hundred and twenty-five miles away, joined them Friday evening, and Saturday, and all went to Touchet, where the church building stands, and another lovely company met, and again I was given to feel that the kind Father above had led me to the house of my Master's brethren. The gates of the nobles of Israel were opened, and I, a poor worm, was permitted to enter in with the righteous nation that keepeth the truth, where the banner of love given us to be always on display was held aloft, and one could but think, Behold how these love one another. It is their custom to take their baskets both Saturday and Sunday and spend the day together, preaching and singing, an example truly worthy of emulation by all our people. As David said, "O, give thanks unto the Lord; call upon his name; make known his deeds among the people. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wonderful works." Too much time cannot be spent this way. The services, as in other places, was nourishing food to a poor hungry wayfarer as I was. My one regret is that I could not retain more of the comforting things I heard, to carry away with me, but my chief memory is of the bitter herbs of unworthiness and unfitness with which I had to eat of the rich feast of good things. I can only remember that, otherwise, it was good and soul-cheering at the time. "I drank, yet still I thirst for more. Only the Fountainhead above can satisfy the thirst of love." I would love to call by name each of the dear ones I met at the different places, and say, I hold you each in loving remembrance, but space forbids. Neither can I express my appreciation of the unmerited kindness shown me. I had to leave this place at 2:30 on Sunday, so both Elders Bond and Barnes preached in the morning, then after a social hour at lunch I left with an indelible picture in my mind of the little church, and the loving ones still visiting together.

"O, my soul, adore and wonder,
Ask, Oh why such love to me?
Grace hath put me in the number
Of the Savior's family."

As I rode away the words of the Bridegroom recurred again and again to my mind: "How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!" Full of delightful fruits of the Spirit, pleasant and satisfying indeed she is to the hungry poor. Now I must go out into "the world's wild wilderness." My visit thenceforward for several weeks was among relatives in other States. Dear indeed they are to me in a natural way, and I am glad to have seen them once more, but I never realized more keenly in my life, that "the friends that most cheer me on life's rugged road, are the friends of my Master, the children of God." Outwardly cheerful, and know-

ing I was loved by dear nieces and nephews, as I also loved them, but inwardly I went down in the depths and my mind seemed to become dulled and blank in spiritual things until I reached my lonely old brother, I. D. Schenck, in Greybull, Wyoming. He understands and loves our language, being a firm believer in sound doctrine, but does not know of another in the State who believes as he does. After a visit with him I went on to the home of Elder W. C. Perdue, in Lamar, Colorado. His godly conversation was truly refreshing. I had attended a pleasant church meeting there as I went away in November, and hoped to meet them all again, but only a few were out, rippers up (see Amos i. 14) having gotten in their work, and "thus divisions and contentions have sorely wounded the dear Redeemer's cause." Oh why do brethren, sharers alike in the atoning blood of Christ, sometimes "cast off all pity," and "tear perpetually" keeping their wrath forever? Comes it not from the lusts of the flesh? This dear old Elder is in very poor health, and, like many others, must soon lay his armor by and enter the peaceful land where there shall be no more curse, neither shall they learn war any more. Dear faithful old soldiers of the cross,

"You'll soon be discharged;
The war will be over,
Your bounty enlarged,
With singing and shouting,
Though Jordan may roar,
You'll enter the haven
And rest on the shore."

My son-in law, R. L. Davis, of Dodge City, Kansas, met me at Lamar, and I went home with him, where I spent two weeks with my oldest daughter and family, then came on home, arriving Sunday morning July 1st, just in time to attend our own little meeting at home once more.

"Oh happy time long waited for,
The comfort of my heart,
At home to meet the saints once more,
And could in union with them part."

Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and this will I seek after that I may dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Dear ones, all who have asked me to give an account of my trip, striving for brevity I must necessarily leave out much I would have loved to mention, but fullness of joy comes in the thought that the truth is the same the world over, and in that bright world of never-ending unalloyed peace to which we are all hastening

"Eternally with Christ to dwell,
We'll no more hear the sound, Farewell."

MARY ELLISON.

KINGSTON, New York.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I have a precious hope that the above greeting is true, and although sometimes I am doubting and trembling, and other times walking in darkness or weary, yet the assurance comes in the Lord's time that whom once he loves he never leaves, but loves them to the end. Oh that I could trust him more, and walk as becomes a member who has professed a hope in Christ. I have proven often that without him I can do nothing; I cannot trust or praise him only as he puts these things within. For several weeks the twenty-seventh Psalm has been almost constantly in my mind, and especially the fourteenth verse; "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord." My mind has been led in many directions from this until I feel these thoughts so crowding for expression, that perhaps writing may relieve it. It has seemed to me that David through

this psalm is telling some of the things that the Lord has done for him. He has evidently been in various places, and the Lord has been his light, his salvation, his strength and his hiding place, and his trust and faith in the Lord have so increased that he looks to the Lord for deliverance from all evil. Because these things have been proven to him in his own experience he can say, "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." This is a looking to the Lord, a waiting for his appearance to subdue David's enemies. The children of God are chosen in the furnace of affliction, they are called to meet trials and storms, buffetings, temptations and tempests. In all these things they learn their own weakness and then there is a crying to the Lord.

"Could the creature help or ease us
Seldom should we think of prayer,
Few, if any, come to Jesus
'Till reduced to self despair.

Long we either slight or doubt him,
But when all the means we try,
Prove we cannot do without him,
Then at last to him we cry."

So when the fight seems hardest and we so weak, there is a looking and crying to the Lord. Thus we wait on the Lord and look unto him, for he comes in the appointed time and is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, for he has overcome all things and is able to make us more than conquerors. We conquer in his strength, and each victory adds strength, so we are more than conquerors. If we are of the Lord's planting it is through these overcomings that we grow in grace. But we are not only to wait on the Lord, but the admonition is given to be of good courage. Courage, I think, means facing danger without fear, and all through the testimonies of national Israel, as well as in the gospels, the Lord is telling to his people, "Fear not." They are to fear the Lord, but this must be taught of the Lord, for he has said he would put his fear in their hearts, and no man can do the Lord's work. It is written, And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. So I believe it is with a sinner who is laboring under the condemnation of the law. There is no man's work in it when Christ is revealed as their Savior and salvation. Our spiritual Joseph teaches silently. It is a heart work, for "the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit;" so they are taught to fear the Lord, but in all other things he says, "Fear not." When the children of Israel came in their journeying to the Red Sea Moses told them, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord. When David went to fight against Goliath and the Philistine, he asked, "Who is this * * * that he should defy the armies of the living God?" He also said, "Let no man's heart fail because of him, * * * the Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine." By the mouth of Isaiah the Lord said to Israel, "Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." The Savior when talking to his disciples, said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." In other words, they are to be of good courage; but it is only possible when the word comes directly to the soul, for we are so weak and only worms of the dust, but how wonderful to believe that he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust. What a mercy that we may cry to a God that changes not: so he gives us strength to

conquer and "They go from strength to strength." Each conflict from which we are delivered gives added strength to believe that the Lord will eventually appear, for, "He shall strengthen thine heart." I have thought this to be true not only of a subject of grace, but also of the church as a body. They must wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen their heart, for he has said, "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." I feel many beauties have been shown me lately in the "shalls and wills" of Jehovah.

This letter has become entirely too long and now I feel a deep hesitancy and reluctance to send it. I hope I have a deep reverence for the gift God gives to his ministers, and know they are able to see much deeper into the Scriptures than others, but if there is any truth in the things I understand, it is all to the honor and glory of the Lord; and if not, I hope you may have charity for one who feels to be less than the least of all.

Your sister in hope,

FLOSSIE I. FAULKNER.

ST. ALBANS, W. Va., June 12, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter to you written by a young lady not twenty years old. Less than two years ago she thought the Old Baptist doctrine, which is the truth, was foolish and contradictory. You can put this in the SIGNS if you wish to. I think it wonderful, as she is so young, and not two years old spiritually.

Sorry I did not get to the association, as I wanted to see you and the place where the SIGNS is published.

Your brother in hope of mercy,

I. R. GREATHOUSE.

HURRICANE, W. Va., June 3, 1928.

ELDER I. R. GREATHOUSE—DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I was just reading an article in the SIGNS, when I felt moved to write to you. It has been a long while since I last wrote you, but I have not been led to do so until now. I feel so little and weak, so much like a worm of the dust, that it is a task for me to write to any of God's little ones. It seems to me that I am so very much a part of the world and cling so tightly to the vain and foolish things of life that I am often made to wonder and doubt whether I have ever been given any understanding of God and his wonderful works. I love the doctrine of the Old Baptists, enjoy being with them and talking (or rather hearing them talk) of the great things that God performs. How base and sinful is man! and to think of having special meetings to tell what they are doing for the Lord. Helping God! a God who is from everlasting to everlasting, all-wise, the Creator of all things. Some one said in my presence a short while ago that God could do nothing without man, and that man could do nothing without God. I know the latter is true, but what an untruth the first part is. I have been deeply hurt many times since I have hoped to believe this wonderful doctrine of predestination, by things that have been said to me by some of my very near and dear relatives. But no doubt these things are brought about for some wonderful purpose of God's. I have explained to them time after time that I do not attend Sunday-school and preaching services here simply because I do not believe as they do and do not care anything about meeting with them. They cannot understand why I changed my way of believing so suddenly. I did not change it, but I hope I thank the God of

mercy for changing it for me. The great Father of love, who decreed, predestinated and foreknew all things, saw fit to change my heart which was so set upon the works of man and upon doing something for the Lord and Master. Oscar gets the blame (some would call it, but I would say credit) for my change of heart. He has borne it well. Far better than I have, because I have been so angry and hurt by what has been said that I have said things which I should not have said probably. You can imagine the hardships and heartaches I have gone through, but it seems only to make me more steadfast in my belief. I often feel to say with the poet,

"The billows swell, the winds are high,
Clouds overcast my wintry sky;
Out of the depth to thee I call,
My fears are great, my strenght is small.

O Lord, the pilot's part perform,
And guide and guard me through the storm;
Defend me from the threatening ill,
Control the waves, say, Peace, be still.

Amidst the roaring of the sea
My soul still hangs its hope on thee;
Thy constant love, thy faithful care,
Is all that saves me from despair.

Danger of every shape and name
Attend the followers of the Lamb,
Who leave the world's deceitful shore,
And leave it to return no more."

This poem fits my case the most of the time. We were over at Hopewell Church last Sunday. Elders Wade, Mullens and Murphy preached. I enjoyed Elder Murphy's sermon very much.

Well, I will close these rambling torn up thoughts now, as I expect my letter is a very tiresome one. Write when so directed, as we love to read your letters. Give my best regards to Mrs. Greathouse. I would love to be with both of you.

From an unworthy sister, if one at all,

(MRS.) OSCAR J. BYRNSIDE.

"GOD."

THE term or name "God" has in truth but one application. We see and hear it applied in blasphemy, in that God is represented to be a being no stronger than man, that Satan himself is in power, and stated by some to be stronger than God. It is done in the statement, that God wants things different than they are, but the devil, or Satan, has played havoc with God's wants, that the devil has influenced men and women to do things contrary to God's will. To represent the God who is God of gods and Lord of lords in this light is very confusing to our understanding of God, to say the least of it. God has all power, in the truest sense of the word power, then why the statement that he wants things different than they are, when it is written, "What his soul desireth, even that he doeth"? He rules among the inhabitants of the earth and in the army of heaven, and none is able to stay his hand, or say, What doest thou? He setteth bounds to the waves of the sea, and saith, Come thus far, and no farther. He setteth bounds to all the inhabitants of the earth, and the times are appointed of him. These are parts of his ways, who can declare his mind, when he speaks not? or who hath been his counselor? or who hath given to him that it might be recompensed to him again? How disappointed God must be if he ever thought or willed things, circumstances, times or conditions would be different to what they have been or are. Such a God would be no God, man would be his equal in power, and true logic would say Satan was God. To offset this conclusion the idea is set forth that he will in the end have his wants, in that he will punish the wicked, but logic of truth says no, for he, as some assert, wants to do many

things, or wants his creature man to do many things he will not do. One thing he wants, as asserted, is to save all men, but they will not let him; so his wants are not accomplished, for the devil has the upper hand in influencing man to do contrary to his (God's) will. If God's wants are equal to his will, and it is true as written, that he does his will in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, will not all be saved he wants to save? Satan in the garden was the first to deny the truth, in that he said, Ye shall not surely die. God hath said, In the day ye eat ye shall surely die, and since that day men and angels have been apostatizing to the doctrine of devils, saying, God wants to, but men will not let him, when it is a fact, unless Satan told the truth, man died in the day he ate the apple, and if God cannot handle a corpse then Lazarus was not raised to life, neither did our Master arise from the dead. The doctrine that sets forth God as wanting to but we will not let him denies his existence as God, and sets forth no ray of hope in this life or beyond the grave. To the christian such an idea is death in the pot and serves to direct him to a closer walk with God, a calm and heavenly frame, a light that shines upon the road that leads us to the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world; not merely wants to, but does, and in this exercise he is led to see himself the equal of all men: nothing, yea, less than nothing, and in due course will be exalted and caused to sing,

"Grace, 'tis a charming sound,
Harmonious to the ear;
Heaven with the echo shall resound,
And all the earth shall hear."

So God reigns and does his will. Christians are satisfied, but their enemies are discomforted, because their god cannot do what he wants to. Our God is not their God, even as their ways are not our ways, neither their thoughts our thoughts. Thus our God hath spoken of them, and he is the Judge and his judgment is true.

The above are thoughts expressing my belief in God, yet I feel words fail me in expressing as I would, because I am finite, but he is infinite. He is holy, I am unholy; he is all-powerful, I am weakness; he is all-wise, I am ignorant, this makes me cry, Lord, be merciful to me a sinner.

J. F. PIERCE.

BEAUMONT, Texas, Jan. 8, 1928.

POCA, W. Va., July 2, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter from our highly esteemed Elder J. N. Bartlett (deceased), which I found when looking over many letters I have received from my correspondents, and he having been a precious and loving brother to me I felt if it were published in the SIGNS others could share with me in its comforting words, so I leave it to your judgment to do with as you may think best. If I had felt well enough I would have copied it, as it is written on both sides.

Yours in affliction,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Dec. 11, 1925.

DEAR BROTHER McCLANAHAN:—I received your kind brotherly letter and was certainly glad to hear from you and to read your kind message. As you say in your letter, "Please write me a long letter real soon," I will try and write you, though I do not feel to be a good writer. I will try and write as my mind may lead me.

In the days of Moses were the days of types and shadows, those types and shadows were given to the children of

Israel by the Lord, set forth in the writings of Moses, in the law and in the offerings for sin, under that law. There were priests who were set apart to make an offering of blood in the sanctuary of the tabernacle. There must be a preparation of those offerings under that law, a shedding of the blood of the lambs, the bullocks and the turtle-doves. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin, and while those offerings did not cleanse them, they were a type of the blood of Christ, which cleanses us of all sin. Those only whose eyes were enlightened could see Christ in all these things. Later on the prophets Samuel, David, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Daniel prophesied of the coming of Christ, of his suffering, of his shedding of his blood as an offering for sin. Isaiah said in his prophecy, "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." Yes, by that one offering he satisfied all the demands of the law, he satisfied divine justice, he cleansed his people of all their sins and unrighteousness. The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin. But the children of Israel under the law would not hear Moses and the prophets, many of them went into gross idolatry, worshipped gods their own hands made. There were many false prophets in the days of the prophets. The prophet Elijah said, "The children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword: and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life." Poor old prophet, he must have felt very much distressed; but the Lord told him, "I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him." Though the children of Israel were a hard-hearted and idolatrous people, yet the Lord kept them a separate people. He kept them under the types, shadows, priests, prophets and kings until the coming of Christ, and when he came God's people had a new dispensation. Types and shadows were done away. He was the great antitype of all those types. He was the substance of all those shadows. He fulfilled all the law and the prophets. To his spiritual people he was their prophet, priest and king. He was, and still is, their Savior and their salvation. He is their lawgiver and their judge, their ruler and governor. He rules in and over his people, and governs them according to his holy will. Unto his people he is their Lord and their God, and they must worship him in spirit and in truth. As the children of Israel had their tabernacle in the wilderness, and later on their temple in Jerusalem, so Jesus Christ has his church, and he is the great builder of his church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. As there were prophets under the former dispensation, so Christ had his apostles, his disciples and his ministers. Under the old dispensation we have the Old Testament Scriptures under the new dispensation we have the New Testament, all given by the inspiration of God, all in which we have the law governing his church and people in all time, his inspired apostles and writers. Under the new dispensation the inspired apostles had been with Jesus and learned of him, and his true ministers and all his spiritual people are taught of the Lord. The apostles were commissioned to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. "He that believeth, and

is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." Christ spoke these words to the eleven disciples, and he told those disciples, "These signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover," and they went everywhere, the Lord working with them, confirming the word with signs following. I believe the apostles only were able to fulfill that commission, and I believe they fulfilled it completely, and these signs did follow, and they went everywhere preaching the word. Paul said, "Have they not heard? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." In the early setting up of the church there was a wonderful revival commenced, and many were added unto the church. The power of the Holy Spirit worked many wonders. Many believed and were baptized. Persecution set in, the apostles were arrested and imprisoned, but the Lord delivered them. They went among the Gentiles, and of them "as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed." The Lord sent them wherever he would have them to preach, and they preached what he would have them preach. Thus the good work went on until there were many churches organized among the Gentiles. Unto several of these churches the apostle Paul wrote his epistles, which to us are a portion of the Scripture of eternal truth, in which we have the doctrine the apostles preached, which is the doctrine of the true church of Christ ever since, and will be to the end of time. Paul taught the doctrine of election, predestination, particular redemption of all his people, effectual calling and salvation by grace, and the Lord's preachers still contend earnestly for the truth once delivered unto the saints. I believe the Old School Baptist Church is the true church after the apostolic order, though few in number and persecuted.

Now, brother McClanahan, I have written you a long letter as soon as I well could. May the Lord bless you and yours and keep you by his grace. Write soon.

I am, as ever, yours in fellowship,

J. N. BARTLETT.

HIAWATHA, W. Va., June 6, 1928.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I have often thought I would like to write a little to you through our good paper, the SIGNS, but have felt, and do yet, too ignorant and unworthy to make the attempt, but now in much sadness, yes, with a broken heart, I want to tell you of my great loss in the death of my dear old father, Elder W. R. Craft, who I feel to know fell sweetly asleep in Jesus at my home, May 12th, 1928, after a short visit of four weeks with us. O my dear kindred in Christ, as I humbly hope, no one but God knows how our poor hearts are bleeding over the loss of our dear and noble father. He was good and kind to us and it was a great pleasure to us to have him come to our home and to hear him talk of the goodness and mercies of our God. I am sure many of you have met him and heard him preach and know better than I can tell you of his faith in Christ and his soundness in the doctrine of our God, but you do not know of his noble and Christlike walk through life as we do who have lived with him. O my dear brothers and sisters in the flesh, who mourn for our dear father as I do, you know what we have lost. Oh could it be God's will that we may all meet him

again at the end of all time. I pray Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend what is the length, breadth, height and depth to know the love of Christ. Brethren and sisters, my heart is so full of sorrow I know I cannot say anything to comfort the least one of you, but I do feel in my heart that your good letters have been of great comfort to me, and I want to thank all the brethren, sisters and friends who may read this letter for all the kindness they have at any time shown our dear old father, especially those who were so kind to him while he was sick, and I feel to thank you all for your sweet words of comfort to poor little me since his departure.

Dear brethren editors, I am inclosing a letter my dear father began writing to his wife and family just a week before he passed away that I would love to have you publish in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I also wish the *Lone Pilgrim* would please copy. A copy of each of these two good papers was the last reading dear father ever did. He spoke very highly of the doctrine they advocate, and said they are the soundest papers we are now blessed with. Dear father was not able to finish this letter, but it is sweet to me to know he died in good faith in Jesus, as he lived in that faith. You will see by reading his letter that he had given up all hope of ever getting to see his wife, my dear step-mother, but the Lord blessed her and my two half-brothers to get here and see him. He knew them, and my step-mother was by his bedside when he fell asleep. If it is the Lord's will, dear father's obituary will be written later.

Your little sister in hope of eternal life through Christ, for if I am saved it is by grace, and grace alone, and not for anything I have done.

SAMANTHA J. WALKER.

HIAWATHA, W. Va., May 3, 1928.

MY DEAR WIFE AND FAMILY:—I think I will write you a few lines regarding my general health. I can scarcely walk across the floor with help, and have lost hope of seeing any of you again. I am not able to make the trip home at this time, but trust the Lord will provide a way that we may meet again. Do not worry about me, but make the best of yourselves you can. I have the utmost confidence that when this life is over I will be done suffering. I feel confident the good Lord has guided me all the way and what I have preached is the truth, and the church that I have represented is the true church of Jesus Christ. Some of you children seem to think differently, but I am glad I have pursued the course, regardless of my children, that I have. I am sure the Lord has guided my course for all ages that none of my walk has been crooked. Paul advises Timothy, "Be not thou ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." Also remember the first chapter of the first epistle of Peter, which reads, "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Capadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the

foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."

[He went on and quoted all of the chapter, and there his letter ended, without a signature.—Ed.]

Flemington, N. J., June 10, 1928.

Dear Editors:—I am inclosing for your consideration a letter from a dear old Elder in the south. To me it has been as a precious jewel and I have read it many times. How wonderful and how good to look upon those the Lord has kept as the apple of his eye, whom he has chosen to be followers of him "as dear children," "e'en down to old age," and to that child who has once felt his divine presence no power of earth or hell can poison his mind, for as He has spoken so let it be, and in the twilight of life how sweet to rest in his love.

GERTRUDE PYATT.

Samantha, Ala., May 10, 1928.

Dear Sister Pyatt:—I will try and answer as best I can your good letter, which I received some time ago, and was glad to hear from you. I enjoy reading your letters, for they contain good news from a far country. Words fitly spoken are like apples of gold pictured in silver. That would be something very beautiful, so are your words to me. You speak the full Hebrew language, and that is the sweetest language I have ever listened to. It is like this: "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: * * * salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." That is, a city of habitation, and none but the redeemed of the Lord will dwell there, and that city hath foundations. Ye "are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord," and man has nothing to do with it, the building of the church is all the work of the Lord. Except the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain; except the Lord build the house they that build it labor but in vain. Paul may plant and Apolos water, but it is God that giveth the increase. He said, Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. So man's planting is not worth anything. There are but few people in my country who believe this doctrine and I know they are the people of the most high God, and heaven will be their home after this life. I know, my dear sister, that this doctrine you believe will do for you, but the question is, Will it do for me? Have I been taught it by the Lord, like you have? You believe according to the working of his mighty power. Behold I and the children which God hath given me. All thy children thall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. They were given him by the Father before the world began, and they will all be saved with an everlasting salvation, without the loss of one, and in this life they will all hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. He came, suffered, bled and died for their offences, and rose again for their justification. He says, Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee. The King's daughter is all glorious within; her raiment is of wrought gold. He has cleansed her from all her sins. He says, I have taken off my coat, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them? So his bride can never be defiled, never can be separated from him. He says, I

have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. So his people are the only ones he came to save, the only ones he suffered for, and were preserved in him before the world began. "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." I sometimes hear women say they have lost their preserves. They did not lose the preserves, for they never were really preserved or they would not have spoiled; but Christ's preserving will never be lost. "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

Well, there are many things on my mind, but I had better close lest I weary you, if I have not already done so. I hope you will understand this rambling letter. O, Lord God, I am but a child, I cannot speak. I wish I could see you, for I could say much more than I can write. If you ever have a mind to write me I would very much enjoy hearing from you again. Remember me when at the throne of grace.

With love and best wishes to you and all the household of faith in this life and in the world to come,

S. J. NORRIS.

MACOMB, Okla., Jan. 13, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—I wish to write a few lines, and thank you for your kindness in sending me the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the past year. It has been a great comfort and pleasure to me. I enjoy the editorials and many good letters; they are good news from a far country. I received the January issue and my heart was filled with joy to know I was to be blessed to get the dear SIGNS another year, for it is such a sweet pleasure to me in my lonely hours. I am seventy-seven years old and not able to do anything but read. I cannot find words to express my heartfelt thanks to you for your kindness to me, a poor sinner. I do not feel worthy of such a great blessing, for I am so prone to sin. I find myself begging every day for grace to sustain me through the temptations and trials of the day, for they are many, and I can do nothing of myself. With Christ we can do all things, without him we can do nothing. I, like David, do not feel worthy of the least of his blessings bestowed upon me. I do not know that I am one of God's children, but I have a sweet hope that I received many years ago. I often have doubts and fears, but when my mind goes back to where I first was made to rejoice in a Savior's love and felt I could call him Savior I cannot give up that sweet hope I have in Jesus.

"Oh sacred hour, oh hallowed spot,
Where love divine first found me,
Wherever falls my destine lot
My heart shall linger round thee.

And from earth I rise to soar
Up to my home in heaven,
Down will I cast my eye once more
To where I was forgiven."

Dear brethren, I again thank you from the bottom of my heart for your kindness to me, a vile sinner, saved by grace if saved at all. I ask the prayers of all the saints. Remember a poor vile worm of the dust when at the throne of grace. I pray God's richest blessings may rest upon you that he will bless you in your good work. I love the doctrine the SIGNS advocates. I hope you will excuse this badly written letter, as I can hardly see to write.

From one who feels her unworthiness to claim a place with God's people,

M. E. HARRIS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1928.

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ACTS XIII. 47.

"FOR so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth."

This thirteenth chapter of the Acts of the apostles records to us the experience and trials of Paul and Barnabas in their labors preaching the gospel to every creature. It appears the Jews were quite anxious in hearing of Paul and Barnabas of these wonderful things, which was only from the curiosity of their carnal minds, which is proven by the records here recorded: When they saw such a great multitude gathered to hear these apostles they were filled with envy, and spoke against those things spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming, which did not in the least discourage these apostles; but they waxed bold, and declared, "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." You, dear readers, have all the history of the Jewish nation as recorded in God's word, and how God favored them in natural blessings and caused them to wax strong and wonderful in the land wherever he cast their lot, which all nations of the earth were made to acknowledge, that God was their friend and none could stay the hand of the God of Israel. This people, to our mind, was according to the infinite purpose of God: predestinated unto the inheritance of these natural blessings, because the virgin was of the first Adam that should bear him, which was the only begotten Son of God, as it was appointed that he should be born of the seed of David. We are well aware that the Jews, not only during the time Jesus was on earth as a man and the days of the apostles, contended and blasphemed against the Son of God, until this day, and will, according to the word of God, until the end of time, together with all carnality. The prophet beheld the infinite decree of almighty God in his all-wise counsel, the way Jesus was to make his advent into the world, and the preparation according as was decreed, that a virgin shall be found with child, and we find Jesus was the fullness of all the law and the fulfillment of all prophecy. The favored nation (Israel) was that wonderful field in which was a great treasure, and the Lord must be the possessor, and we note Jesus came of the seed of David, which the apostles declare as the sure mercies of David. These apostles had light and strength to preach the gospel, was why they waxed bold and spoke to the Jews and testified of the riches of the kingdom of God as they did, and for this liberty and strength to be

taken they would have fainted and denied knowing Jesus, the same as Peter did. The truth of salvation God appointed, must first be spoken to Israel as a nation, which to our mind proves the word of God which testifies, He came to his own and they received him not. As the son of Joseph and Mary, according to the word of God, they received Jesus, but they could not behold him as the Son of God, or in any way discern him in the Spirit. Only those who were born again of that incorruptible seed by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, knew Jesus as the Son of God. The Jews thought, according to the traditions, they were the only people of the kingdom of God, and when the Gentiles received the apostles this enraged them the more, and they were more assured, according to the knowledge they had, all this wonderful stir about Jesus being of the Jews, or the Son of God, was untrue, for the Jews and Gentiles had no dealings. Paul's preaching was not to the Jews only, but to the Gentiles as well, as the Gentiles could receive just as much as a Jew, naturally speaking, and they each received Paul's preaching in a spiritual sense when they were born of God, and Paul's expression, according to the Scripture referred to, was for the condemning of carnality in the Jews and acknowledging of the spiritual relations in the Gentiles. This must first be spoken to you, and your rejecting the truth thus spoken was condemnation to you and the setting of Gentiles free, which brings in the truth of the words of Jesus that "He came unto his own, and his own received him not," and we also receive the expressed word that as many as did receive him gave he them power to become the sons of God. This power was given in Christ Jesus before the world, and was manifested at this due time that the witness should be in them (or in their hearts) and not in the carnal wisdom of their own perception. The Lord has thus commanded, saying, "I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles." This wonderful light the Lord set to be a light of the Gentiles was not the brilliancy of Paul's natural wisdom, but the light that shines above the brightness of the noonday sun, and shined forth from Paul's heart and bore record to all that which was declared by him was the truth of God, and his testimony was received by all that heard him that had received the gift of the Holy Ghost. This apostle was not just set to be a light to the Gentiles only, they represent every nationality in every region, kindred and tongue outside of the Jewish nation, but that Paul "shouldst be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." The Lord set this light to shine forth and to bear record of the salvation God had appointed unto the ends of the earth, and cannot be moved. We note the lights God has set in the firmament of the heavens to give light by day and by night, and are for signs and seasons, days and years, are fulfilling God's purpose in them, and cannot be thwarted. So this wonderful light the Lord has set shall shine forth to the ends of the earth, and every one that has light beholds light, and they behold him (Jesus) they see light, according as it is written, In his light we see light. Seeing the light the Lord set they saw light, and hearing the word spoken they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord, and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed, and the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region. All the publishing of the word of the Lord did not make the Jews believe, which proves that by publishing the word of

the Lord to the uttermost parts of the earth cannot make men and women believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. They must be born again before they can see the light of the Lord which reveals salvation. Dear readers, what wonderful sweetness and joy is beheld in seeing the light of the Lord, liberty and freedom of Saul from condemnation and death, realizing the deliverance from dark dungeons of the death chamber, to light and liberty, which was given us through the Lord Jesus Christ, which is an everlasting salvation. The word declares that we were not only in the darkness of the death chamber, but ourselves were darkness, and our light in the Lord.

We might go on and on adding to the expressions regarding this text and the half would not be told, but we trust these remarks may have the mantle of charity of God's love spread over them that perhaps you may see the love and fellowship that abounds in our hearts to all the readers of the SIGNS. We are very glad to have the communications from brethren, sisters and friends, bearing glad tidings of the truth as it is in Jesus, and we trust we are given to see the light of the Lord shining from your hearts, which makes us glad, and when we come to the time to write you we feel unqualified and know we cannot edify you with expressions of carnal reason, but when this duty devolves upon us we have to draw the bow to venture and leave the result with God. God being our witness we desire that all our goings forth might be to his honor and glory, either in speaking or writing. C. W. V.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in September (30th). All are welcome. E. M. FORD.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder J. H. Blythe was born in Tissemingo County, Mississippi, near Iuka, August 9th, 1856, and departed this life February 7th, 1928, near Warren, Bradley County, Arkansas, and was buried February 8th, at Monticello, Arkansas, making his stay here on earth 71 years, 6 months and 28 days. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Mt. Pleasant, near Iuka, Mississippi, August 18th, 1877, and was baptized the next day by Elder B. F. Casey. He was licensed to preach June 21st, 1880. He moved to Arkansas in 1881, and joined the Primitive Baptists here by letter, we cannot find the date of his ordination, but think it about 1893, he ever remained a faithful minister until his death. He first married J. Ulla Castleberry Dec. 22nd, 1879, who preceded him in death twenty-six years. To this union were born ten children. Etoil (daughter), James H. Jr. (son), Ersel (son) and Wister (son) preceded him in death. Those living are, Dean, Pope, Irma, Sidney, Maxine, and Vashti. May 31st, 1904, he married his present wife, Ella Johnson, and to them were born five children: James, Elijah, John, Buchanan and Mary who are living. Brother Blythe was a grand man, and liked by all who knew him. He was a wonderful preacher, and stood firm on the doctrine of predestination of all things, and salvation by grace, never being willing to divide the child or keep back part of the price, but giving God all the honor and glory. He stood firm when the conditionists broke out in this part, though with much sorrow, seeing the preaching brethren parted from him was like giving up his right hand, and was often heard to say, "If my death would only bring peace to my brethren I would gladly go." He was a constant reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and heartily advocated the doctrine contained in its pages. He was sick only about three weeks with influenza and pneumonia, but never complained of any pains. All was done for him that a loving companion, with the aid of his children and a physician, could do to keep him here, but alas, none could stay the hand of death. We believe if any man in our time could say with Paul, I fought a good fight, I kept the faith, that brother Blythe could, and we believe that crown of life which the righteous Judge will give was his. We hated to give him up, but hope to bow in submission to the will of him who is too wise to err, too kind to be unmerciful, and pray that he will reconcile us to his will and teach us to know that he only took what belonged to him, and that he has not done an injustice to us. We say to the bereaved ones, Weep not, for while he is dead to us we believe he is asleep in Jesus. Blessed sleep, where none never wake to weep, there to await the resurrection morning, when his body will be raised and fashioned like the glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ. He leaves to

mourn, a loving companion, eleven children, two brothers, one sister, nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, also a host of church relations. A great man in Israel is gone. May God in his richest grace comfort those who mourn is our prayer for Christ's sake.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the family and concourse of friends who had come to pay their last respect to one who was beloved by all who know him, which was manifested by the beautiful floral offerings. Funeral service was conducted at the cemetery.

H. H. PHILLIPS.

Mrs. Isabella Graham, was born June 21st, 1861, and died June 11th, 1928, making her stay on earth 77 years, lacking 10 days. She was the daughter of the late Malcom Campbell and Janet McCalpine. She was married to John C. Graham Feb. 20th, 1873. Her husband predeceased her seven years. After their marriage they endured a pioneer's life of toil and sacrifice to establish their comfortable home, a short distance from our Dunwich meetinghouse, where many of our members were baptized in the stream of water which flowed through their farm, and found a welcome retreat to their hospitable home. I think she and her kind husband fed more people then any at our May meeting. He was baptized on his own farm by the late Elder A. B. Francis. A work of grace was begun in her early life, and she loved to attend meetings with father when the dear old ministers used to come to Canada, such as Elders Beebes, Puringtons, Johnstons, Biggs, Bundy, Hassell, Gold, Jenkins and Durand. Elder William Pollard was then her loved pastor. After her husband's death she went to Detroit to spend the winter with her daughter, Margaret, a nurse, and when the spring came she came down to spend the summer with her son and sisters and brother on the old homestead and attended the meetings. Last fall shortly after returning to Detroit to her daughter's apartment, she was stricken with a slight stroke, but gradually regained her strength somewhat, and in January she was able to come across from Detroit to Sandwich to visit a son and family before coming down for her summer visit among us all. She evidently desired to attend the June meeting, and was preparing to come, when she was stricken with heart trouble and lived only five days. Her family were all with her to the end. I also was with her the last two days. She could say but little for shortness of breath and a filling of the lungs. Once I asked her if she felt the presence of Jesus. She faintly said, He is the only one. Another time she said, If he will give me patience to endure. Another time when we thought her going, I said, You will soon be at rest. All I could make out was, My dear, then sank into unconsciousness and passed away. On or about the day her daughter was to have taken her down, instead her lifeless body was taken by train to Dutton. Thus man proposes, but God disposes. Blessed truth. He holds our destiny in his hands. Blessed of all comforts is to trace his hand in our goings forth. Though seemingly having the command to come home to her beloved people (the church) her unworthiness hindered, and she silently lingered around the fold and in the decree of God never came to the church. Her trials and conflicts were many, and truly patience by faith had its perfect work. Now for dear sister there is no more conflicts, sorrow nor death, her body consigned to its mother earth, the spirit gone to God who gave it. In the final resurrection oh what a glorious awakening in his image, see him, our precious Savior, as he is, and be like him. Burial was in Fairview Cemetery, near Dutton. A short service of reading and prayer was held at the graveside by Mr. Dixon, the Presbyterian minister of Dutton, no minister of our faith and order being in Canada at the time. She leaves two sons and one daughter: Dr. Mac Graham, head of the Essex County Tubercular Sanitorium, Sandwich, Ontario, William, living on the old homestead, and Margaret, a nurse in Detroit, four half-sisters: Mrs. Malcom Graham, Mrs. James Small, of Dunwich, Mrs. Lena McTaggart, of London, one half-brother: Samuel Campbell, of London, and the writer of this notice,

(MRS.) JOHN McPHAIL.

Sister **Frances A. Green,** widow of H. H. Green, and daughter of the late Elder G. W. Malcom, of Walton County, Georgia, was born Dec. 27th, 1833, died July 22nd, 1928, aged 94 years, 6 months and 25 days. She joined the church at Jack's Creek Sept. 9th, 1868, and was baptized by Elder F. M. McLeroy. She was the mother of eight children, four of whom survive her: Mrs. M. E. Robinson, of Good Hope, Mrs. John Bostwick, of Bostwick, Mrs. G. Clara Adams, of Newton County, and Mrs. V. V. Harris, of Good Hope. In addition to the four children she leaves forty-one grandchildren, seventy-eight great-grandchildren and ten great-great grandchildren. She was a wonderful woman and hath done what she could. Her husband was a soldier in the war of 1861, and was shot in battle near Atlanta, the ball passing through his lungs and causing him to cough for months and she nursed him until the wound in his breast and back healed. She was a widow over twenty years, and a reader of the SIGNS over fifty years, and to the end enjoyed the doctrine contained in them.

Elder R. L. Cook, her pastor, conducted her funeral in the presence of a large concourse of people. We all, with the family, believe our loss is her eternal gain.

ALSO,

Mr. Rice B. Green, her son, died April 23rd, 1928, at his home in Bostwick, Morgan County, Georgia, at the age of seventy years. When a young man he was married to Miss Rosa Barrett, daughter of Dr. W. S Barrett, of Walton County. The widow, with the following children survive: Mrs. R. G. McElvany, Conyers, Ga., Mrs. W. H. Pendergrass, Mrs. W. H., R. B., Jr, and Henry Green, of Bostwick. Rice Green, as he was called, was one of the best men in Georgia. He was not a member of the church, but was a strong believer in the doctrine of the Old School Baptists, and was ever in their company, helping in every way he could, making a good name that will live on and on. He enjoyed reading the SIGNS, with a perfect understanding of the doctrine it contained.

His funeral was conducted by Elder R. L. Cook and myself, in the presence of a large gathering of people, at Bostwick, Ga. Our sympathy goes out to the beloved family.

JAMES M. ADAMS.

Joseph Isaiah Killion was born near Winston, N. C., Nov. 9th, 1835, and died July 16th, 1928, aged 92 years, 8 months and 7 days. He was married to Mary Smith Feb. 8th, 1857, in North Carolina, to this union six children were born: John W., Michael C., Elizabeth C., Joseph A., Charles H., and Louisa B. Of these children two are living: Charles H. and Louisa B. The brother passed on July 16th, 1882, just forty-six years before brother Killion. January 1st, 1865, he was united in marriage with Caroline Wicker, and to that union six children were born: Mary L., Lucian E., Levi, Joicy Jane, Flora F. and Edgar. Of these three are now living: Lucian, Joicy and Flora. The mother of these children crossed over the dark river, death, Feb. 11th, 1907. Since that time uncle Joe lived with his youngest son, Lucian, nearly all the time. Quite a long time ago uncle Joe began his religious life, first joining the Missionary Baptists, and I suppose was reasonably content, at least for a while, but he was of that nature that wanted to know things for himself, and reading much, he became dissatisfied, and finally came to the Old Baptists, where he was considered a little too hard. He believed in the predestination of all things and in the eternal oneness, or life unity of Christ and his church. I have met but few men who were as well posted in the Scriptures, and his understanding was very good, and his gift as a fireside talker was wonderful. When young he much enjoyed singing, and so did those who heard him.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort to relatives, using as a text Job xiv. 15. Now he sleeps until he awakes in the likeness of his blessed Lord, and then he will be satisfied.

T. E. ATTEBERY.

Sister **Sarah P. Majors,** wife of James Majors, died at the home of her son-in-law, Albert Bailey, Athol, Maryland, Saturday, December 24th, 1927, in the seventy-seventh year of her age. She is survived by eight children: John Majors, of Athol, George Majors, of Mardela Springs, Mary Smith, of Princess Anne, Barrie Furbush, of Wetipquin, Belle Hearn, of Mardela Springs, Hattie Bailey, of Athol, Francis Majors, of Athol, and Nellie Brittingham, of Baltimore, Md. Sister Majors was received into the fellowship of Rewastico Baptist Church and baptized Nov. 16th, 1892, by the late Elder A. B. Francis. Sister Majors was of a most estimable character and was much beloved by an exceedingly wide circle of friends; she always maintained a cheerful outlook and a continued interest in her friends and relatives. She loved to converse upon the things of the kingdom of God, and often spoke comfortingly of her hope in the blessed Savior. She was a kind and loving mother, and we all miss her very much.

Her funeral was held at Rewastico meetinghouse, conducted by Elder H. C. Ker, and was largely attended. Burial was in the Russel graveyard. Sweet be thy sleep, mother, until He bids thee arise to hail him in triumph beyond the skies.

Written by her daughter,

HATTIE BAILEY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Clella McAfee, Mo., 50 cents; Dr. J. B. Garrison, N. J., $2; Mrs. Laura R. Elgin, D. C., $2; George Barnett, Ky., $3; J. Ryan Jackson, Ga., $1; "A Friend," $2.

MEETINGS.

First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held at the residence of W. I. Zinn, two miles north of Meriden, Jefferson Co., Kansas, to convene on Friday before the second Saturday in September at 10 o'clock a. m. The month coming in on Saturday makes the date 7th, 8th and 9th. Meriden is on the Santa Fe R. R. Hard surfaced road from Topeka to Meriden. For further information write to W. I. Zinn, Meriden, Kansas, or L. L. Schenck, Moderator, 1119 Taylor St., Topeka, Kansas.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

GRANTVILLE, Kansas.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Bowdoinham Church, beginning on Friday before the second Monday in September (7th, 8th and 9th), 1928. We look for Elder D. L. Topping to be with us. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.

TOPSHAM, Maine.

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will meet (God willing) with the Second Roxbury Church, at the Yellow meetinghouse, Roxbury, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday after the second Sunday in September (September 12th and 13th). Trains will be met at Halcottville Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth.

GEORGE RUSTON.

The Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to meet with Mt. Paran Church, seven miles north of Fordyce and one and one-half miles west of Ivan, Dallas County, Arkansas, September 14th, 15th and 16th, which embraces Friday, Saturday and third Sunday of the month. This church is seven miles north of Fordyce, on the Rock Island Road. Good highways for cars. Those coming from the east and west will come to Fordyce Thursday evening or Friday morning in order to get trains up to church. We extend a cordial invitation to all regular unlimited peace-loving Baptists, especially ministers, to meet with us.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator.

W. C. HORTON, Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects Elder George Ruston to be with them the fifth Sunday in September (30), 1928. For convenience services are to be held at the home of J. E. Livingston, 64 East Main St., Cobleskill, N. Y., the Lord willing, at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.; also on Saturday before, at 2 p. m. All welcome.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 17th, 18th and 19th, 1928. The meetinghouse is situated right on the Lee-Jackson Memorial Highway, about forty miles from Washington, hard road all the way. Those coming on Tuesday before the meeting will take the Winchester bus leaving Pennsylvania and 9th St., Washington, D. C., at 4:30 p. m., and get off at Lenah, Va., where they will be met and cared for. Those coming Wednesday morning will take the Winchester bus leaving Pennsylvania Avenue and 9th St., Washington, D. C., at 7:30 a. m., and get off at the meetinghouse. We invite all believers in our Savior and all who love his truth, especially ministers of our faith and order, to meet with us.

C. M. TURMAN, Church Clerk.

The Original Obion Association of Old School Baptists will convene (the Lord willing) on Friday before the third Sunday in October, and two succeeding days, at Hepzibah Church, in Henry County, Tennessee, twelve miles east of Hazel, on the N. C. & St. L. R. R. Train will be met on Thursday evening. Ministers of our faith and lovers of truth are cordially invited to meet with us. As this Association will be one hundred years old at that time the brethren and friends are desirous of celebrating the one hundreth anniversary in love and good-will toward God and all interested parties that ever had any connection with this band of worshipers of the only true and living God.

Also the Soldier Creek Association, of the same faith and order, will convene at Pilgrim's Rest Church, in Graves County, Kentucky, six miles east of Viola, on I. C. R. R., on Friday before the second Sunday in October, and two following days. I feel that it would be a pleasant and profitable time (in the Spirit) to any ministering servant who believes in and holds up an unlimited God in the salvation of dependent sinners. Any one desiring to correspond in regard to the Obion Association notify T. A. Lax, Buchanan, Tenn , or to learn of Soldier Creek; address J. C. Chester, Brewster, Ky.

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The Old School Baptists of Chicago meet, the Lord willing, every Sunday at 11 a. m. and 2:30 p. m. (Daylight Saving time), at the home of W. N. Spitler, 11332 S. St. Louis Ave., Chicago. Take 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue street car to the end of car line. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Midweek song service by appointment Preaching by Elders Jones and Jaynes. Basket lunch. For further information telephone Wentworth 2860.

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"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz First. "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, Convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second. The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Eld. Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third. "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Eld. H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio. Fourth. "Fatalism." By Eld. H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio. Fifth. "The Celestial Railroad" This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth. "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

"THE BUILDERS."

I NOTICE in these days there is a great effort being made by preachers and evangelists to help build the church of God, and I now would like to express my opinion as to what constitutes the church of God, of what it really is, of the process of building it, and of the real builder. This church is referred to in the Bible as "church," "house" and many other titles, but all signify and mean the same: the spiritual dwelling-place of christians, the believers in God and Jesus Christ. And that this dwelling-place, church, house is builded out of lasting material, has a solid foundation, and its builder is a wise, able and efficient builder, notwithstanding the great efforts of builders of to-day to alter its construction by adding to or taking from it such material as seems good to them. The psalmist said, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." The Lord said to Peter when the apostle told him he was the Christ, the Son of the living God, Blessed art thou, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee (that is, no one hath taught thee to know me), but my Father which is in heaven. And now, "Upon this rock [the wisdom and power of God] I will build my church." —Matt. xvi. 18. The apostle Paul said of this "building," Let every man take heed how he buildeth on this foundation, for other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ, (1 Cor. iii. 10, 11), showing very clearly that the mortal builder could not even lay the foundation, and just here let us consider, for an illustration, the truth of the ability of a piece of natural building material to build a foundation, or to be able to select, measure, carve and fitly frame together, build or add to a natural building. Just so the comparison applies to the Builder of the spiritual building, for neither can he, the preacher or any other natural individual do so, for he would have to regenerate the sinner, shape and fit him for the building. I say this is not an incorrect illustration, but does most favorably compare, and one is just as absurd as the other. There is no place in the Bible where the command is given the preacher to help God build his holy temple, although it is taught they did try to build, but if you will observe, about the first thing they did, and do to-

day when they try, is to deny the sovereign, eternal wisdom and power of God (the rock) for a foundation, substituting creature ability (sand) for it, and setting at nought the chief corner-stone, Jesus Christ and his righteousness and using for their "scribe and level" instruments of self-righteousness which have become as wood, hay, stubble, precious stones, silver and gold. (1 Cor. iii. 12.) The apostle Paul was a preacher, a pattern, and he said the reason he was what he was was not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father. He said, By the grace of God I am what I am. Also, I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. (1 Cor. xv. 10.) In addressing the church at Ephesus he says, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, * * * having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."—Eph. i. 4, 5, 7. Christ having loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath "quickened us together" with him, and hath "raised us up" and made us to "sit together" in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, for by grace are ye saved through faith, and that (faith) not of yourselves, it is the gift (not offering) of God, not of works, lest any man should boast, for we are His workmanship (not builders or makers, but already builded or made), created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained (not just greatly desired) that we should walk in them. (Eph. ii. 4–10.) Now if there is any room for builders in these Scriptures I fail to see it, for it is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy he hath saved us; having loved his servants with an everlasting love therefore (for this reason) hath he drawn them. Then it is of him, of his sovereign, eternal love, they (his servants, believers in Christ Jesus, God's power unto salvation, the sons of Jacob, the lot of God's inheritance) are not consumed. God being the author and finisher of their faith, therefore the work he hath begun he is able to perform until the day of Jesus Christ (resurrection). "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."—1 Cor. i. 30, 31. I see no room for builders in these Scriptures. My opinion is that the church, the holy temple of God, was conceived and the material selected in the mind of God before the world began, in the figure of Christ his Son, as a lamb slain for their sins, and was "fitly measured and scribed" and assembled in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, for he said he came to do his Father's will, and that he came to save sinners, and he finished the work. I do not believe all the so-called religious builders, with all their efforts and great zeal, can add one piece of material to this holy temple of God, or by crying, Lo here and there, can add one cubit to its statue, for known unto God are all his works. He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, doing his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. He speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance. The Lord looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of

his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth. He fashioneth their hearts alike: he considereth all their works."—Psalms xxxiii. 12–15. There was a command given to go into all the world and preach the gospel, and he that believeth shall be saved, but it does not say the ones you get to believe it would be saved. What is this gospel, and why preach it? It is the power of God unto salvation, Christ crucified, the power and wisdom of God, a gift, not an offering of God, for eternal life is the gift of God. According to the apostle Paul, he was determined to know nothing else among his brethren, for it was by grace he was what he was, that he had not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God, and that he labored more abundantly than they all, yet not he, but the grace of God which was with him, showing clearly he of himself had nothing whereof to boast as a builder or make-believer to increase the household of God. The Lord himself saith, This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel (the church of God), I will put my laws in their minds, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people, and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall known me, from the least to the greatest. (Heb. viii. 10, 12.) I believe to claim to be able to help build God's spiritual kingdom by teaching sinners to know the Lord is to deny the power and operation of the holy Spirit of God, which is a divine attribute of him and is just as perfect and effectual and sovereign in its executive ability as any other attribute of God. The apostle said, Although he knew nothing else, that if he or an angel of heaven preach any other gospel unto you than which he had preached, let him be accursed for it. Christ crucified is the life, the truth and the way, and neither is there salvation in any other (gospel), for the apostle seemed to be inspired to preach, and could not preach anything but inspiration, such as the power of the great architect and builder of his spiritual kingdom. Indeed did he feel his calling as not to increase the fold, but to feed the lambs and sheep of the fold as commanded by the Lord, and to cry unto them that their warfare is accomplished, that their iniquities are pardoned, for they have received at the Lord's hands double for all their sins; that the Lord is their shepherd, and by his righteousness have they obtained justification and redemption; that there is no other name (power) given whereby they must be saved, and that he is their surety, for all power in earth and heaven is given unto him, which is indeed good news, glad tidings to the house of Israel of the sovereign ability of the all-wise, all-powerful, gracious, omnipotent God (the master-builder), immutable and sovereign in all his designs and purposes, to whom belongeth praise, honor and glory.

I will close by saying that I believe the Scriptures are they which do testify of the sovereign perfection of God in all things, yet I have written in fear and trembling, not that I could teach (or help build), but believing the anointing which the believer hath received of him abideth in them and that they need not that any man teach them, that the same anointing teaches them of all things and is the truth, and no lie, and even as it hath taught them shall abide in them. It is of God they are in Christ Jesus, working out their salvation, for it is God working in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and there is no power that can separate them from him, for he

hath loved them with an everlasting love, so then he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord.

A poor sinner in hope of eternal life,
L. A. BOAZ.

MEMPHIS, Tennessee.

ATLANTA, Ga., August 7, 1928.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—If one in my low estate may be permitted to thus address one of God's elect. I feel to write you and forward check to pay my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. My brother wrote this check some time ago and asked me to write you and send it on in, but I have put it off from time to time until now, for this neglect I beg forgiveness. You will notice that the check is for three dollars, two for the SIGNS, and the other to be used as you see fit. I only wish we could make it more, but we are poor in this world's goods. If we are as poor in Spirit as we are in worldly goods we are bankrupt indeed. Indeed I feel to be so now while trying to find words to express my appreciation of the SIGNS and your efforts in Israel. I have just read sister Jones' letter, published in the last issue, and think she expresses the feelings of us all. Your visit with us was indeed a pleasure to us. Your text at the East Atlanta Church (No weapon formed against thee shall prosper) has lingered with me more than anything I have heard in a long time. Perhaps it is because I connect it with our national affairs. I seem to see the time coming when we will be (carried into Babylon) denied the right of free and open worship that we and our fathers have enjoyed so long. Perhaps that fear is prompted by the natural love I have for our children, but if it be God's will to chastise us I can only pray that the God of all grace will cause us to stand and be reconciled to his will. This I know, that unless he keeps the city the watchman waketh but in vain, also except he build the city they labor in vain that build it.

Brother Lefferts, I wish I could write for the SIGNS as I really wish to write for the comfort of those who have so much comforted me. I think also of those who sit quietly at the table, but I must confess that I am only a poor publican and cannot so much as raise my eyes to heaven, being able only to say, Lord, be merciful to me a sinner, and, furthermore, it is by the grace of the great God that I have been enabled to say that much; whether I be saint or devil, I am dependent upon the same power for such ability as I have. It is by him we live, move and have our being. It is grace worked in me to do good by his will and guidance, and for his glory only, or, being left alone, to do evil according to my nature, and that also for his glory, for it is written, The wrath of man praises God, the remainder he restraineth. We profit not by doing either good or evil, for what doth it profit a man though he gain the world if he lose his own soul? Also, when we have done all the good it is possible for us to do, by giving alms, visiting the sick and afflicted and those who are in prison, the fatherless, the widow, &c., presenting ourselves unspotted from the world, a living sacrifice, it is only a reasonable service, and we unprofitable servants profit not by the rejection of our enemies, in the deliverance. When we are enabled to see the great depths into which we have gone, and all our evil nature is apparent to us, when we can by revelation see what a sacrifice was made for us, then we know to whom the profit is due, profit and glory, all. My dear brother, my heart being deceitful above all things

and desperately wicked, I need no assistance to do evil, but do need the mighty working of his power to keep from doing evil all the days of my unprofitable life. I fear and tremble lest my little hope proves to be an illusion. But thus it is written, I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me, and the will of him that sent me is, That of all that was given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up in the last day. In this world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace. What of it then if oppression come? For as it is written, No weapon formed against thee shall prosper, &c., and in the end we shall be satisfied, when we can see him as he is, and be like him.

I have written too much and am afraid you are wearied with it, but please cast the mantle of charity over my imperfections, and consign this to the waste-basket. Now may the peace, and love, and grace of God the Father, Jesus our Savior, and the Holy Spirit be with you and all for whom he died.

RYAN JACKSON.

DODGE CITY, Kansas, Feb. 1, 1928.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending a check for the renewal of my subscription to the SIGNS for another year. When I examined the tag on my paper a few days ago and saw that my subscription had expired some time ago my mind quickly went back to the first days of my subscription, when I promised within myself that surely I would never read a copy of the SIGNS that was not paid for in advance. Yes, I was as positive in the matter as Peter was when he said to our Savior, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee," but when the truth reveals to us our leanness all we can do is to go out and weep bitterly, for "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." So this brings me to a sharp sense of shame each time I think of how much more thoughtful you have been of me than I have been of you, for the SIGNS comes regularly each month laden with messages from all points of the compass, all of them glorifying the same God, he who "hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love," all speaking the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Truth, "exact accordance with that which is, or has been, or shall be," and that is just what we find published in the SIGNS, and is more precious than silver or gold. It is nothing but the gift of God, drink to us when we are thirsty and meat to us when we are faint, a comfort to us in the dark and dreary days and strengthens when we grow weary in this world's journey. Our Savior said, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness of the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." Again, he tells us, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Is not this the gospel that Paul preached for thirty years or more with the "thorn in his side?" and the thorn was given him that he might not be exalted above measure through much revelation; so may we all be humble and at the feet of Jesus, is my prayer, for "he that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory," and every teaching that bends the Scriptures to suit the whims of men is not the truth, and has not come down from the "Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning," but is of the earth earthy.

So may the God of all truth strengthen all those who contribute to the SIGNS and keep them in the knowledge of the truth, so that all with one accord may glorify him that "knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."

Now dear brethren, since I have looked this over I fear I have spoken too boldly, for many times my doubts seem to be by far heavier than my hopes, but this I do know, we either stand or fall before a just God, and if in that day I should have a name with that glorified throng it will be by his grace, and his grace alone, for most assuredly I am wholly dependent upon that good Samaritan that gave the two pence to the host and said, "Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee," for "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling."

This has met with another unexpected delay, so I am sending enough for two years' subscription, instead of one.

A brother in hope,

R. L. DAVIS.

LAWRENCEBURG, Ky., March 10, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER SAWIN:—The winds of March shake the house and foundation and rattle the roof overhead while I write. The day has been like March and myself, for winds of doubt have made me tremble, and cloud after cloud, with but little sunshine, have swept over me to-day. While trying to preach to-day words came fast enough, and I felt that the truth could not be shaken, nor one of His loved ones lost, but it was not for cold, unworthy me. Here in my room to-night some little peace has come, and rereading your last letter has helped me, especially the closing part, viz.: "May God for Christ's sake keep you and deliver you from every slough of despond that may lay in your way, and give you comfort in every trial, is my earnest prayer." If the Lord gives us the love of the brethren, will he not care for us? At least I have confidence in you and your prayers. Sometimes I feel if I could lay my head on my father's knee, and tell him all my grief and pain I would feel better. But God has called him home, and I must "trust like a child, while I strive like a man." I suppose no one but a preacher knows what a burden he has nor how many kinds of trouble press him down. I cannot say I know I am a preacher, far from it, but I do know I have anxious cares and earnest longings for the welfare of the church and the lambs about the fold. In a sense I believe I carry them in my bosom, for they are ever with me, and I have an abiding desire to feed and comfort them. But it is a comfort to know that Christ carried them in his bosom and gently led those that were with young. Oh that God would favor us with his love and revive us that we might once more feel he has not forgotten to be gracious. Surely he could not lead one to love his poor and afflicted ones and then cast him off. His love and mercy abounds from generation to generation. It seems I know so little, and am made to wonder often if I do preach as his called servants preach At any rate I cannot give it up, and I want to comfort his little ones, and my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that she should be saved. How it hurts me to see brethren careless and working so as to bring reproach on the cause, and how my heart aches for those who seem too weak to stand when they try to resist temptation. The God of heaven rules and doeth all things well,

and favors us at times with the spirit of reconciliation and a patient trust in him. Then I can say to my troubled soul, Wait, wait, I say, upon the Lord, and he shall strengthen thy soul. They all are safe in the everlasting arms, and cannot be lost. Jesus says, This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that all the Father giveth me shall come to me. So may we not rest in this, and from other trials and sorrows take refuge in the thought that, "Not a single shaft can hit until the Lord of love sees fit?"

I hope I have not troubled you too much this time, and that you may feel to write me soon.

Brother Lester has gone back to Virginia after visiting some of our churches. His preaching was tender and comforting to us and a help to the churches. Remember me in brotherly love to sister Sawin and family. The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble.

Your brother in hope,

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.

SPRINGFIELD, Illinois.

DEAR EDITORS:—The above I have copied from the original, because a small part had become somewhat unintelligible for the compositor. It was my privilege to assist in the ordination of this brother, whom I had known from early childhood, at the Little Flock Church, near Lawrenceburg, Ky., many years ago. His father was the late Elder John F. Johnson, who had often been a guest in my parents' house in my boyhood days. The son had endeared himself to me by his loveable companionship and sweet christian fellowship, and also by his orderly walk and godly conversation, which is so plainly implied in the letter written twenty-seven years ago. Though afflicted physically, his life was an unbroken benediction to every one who came in close contact with him. The son, like the father, has gone home.

Grace, mercy and peace that passeth all understanding, be with all that love and have delight in the service of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

J. G. SAWIN.

ELGIN, Oregon.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter that I wrote several years ago, and if you see fit to publish it, do so; if not, it will be all right with me. I am seventy years old now and no better than I was when I wrote that letter, am still a sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

Your sister in hope,

L. A. MAYFIELD.

JANUARY 5, 1903.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—If one so unworthy may address you as brethren. As it is time for me to renew my subscription I will try, if the Lord will enable me, to write you a few lines to let you know that I appreciate the SIGNS very highly, and feel that I cannot do without it, for it is all the preaching we have now. I have not been to meeting for about three months and do not know when I will get there again, though I would like very much to be at Elgin the third Sunday, if the Lord wills, for there is nothing so dear to me as to meet with the saints and join with them in singing hymns of praise to him who hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, and to hear them proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ, who is head over all things to the church, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Then

it is all of grace, from first to last, and not of works, lest any man should boast, yet many are boasting of the good they are doing in helping Christ save souls, but God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has done so much for me.

Dear brethren, it has been two months since I started to write this letter, and for some cause I have not destroyed it, as I often do, but laid it aside, thinking I could not write, and I still feel I cannot, yet there is a longing in my heart, a desire to write, and if I knew it was of the Lord all would be well, but I fear it is only of the flesh, and surely I have no confidence in the flesh, but have long since learned that without Christ I can do nothing. May God help us to realize that all our help must come from him, and to trust him for his grace, for he says, My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness, and I feel so weak, so sinful and so destitute of anything that is spiritual that I have to mourn because I cannot do the good I would, but the evil which I would not that I do. I feel to be less than the least of all saints, if indeed I am one at all. John says, We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren, and, Every one that loveth is born of God. Then if we love him it is because he first loved us and manifested himself to us as the chiefest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely, for had we been left to ourselves we should never have known him whom to know is life everlasting. Oh what a blessing to realize that nothing shall separate us from the love of Christ. I am glad salvation is free, for if it depended upon our good works surely I would be left out, for I realize more fully every day of my life how impossible it is for me to perform one good act; to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not, yet I do desire above all things to be found walking in that strait and narrow way which leadeth unto life, though few there be that find it.

I often read the good letters in the SIGNS and think how I would love to write if I could only write such good letters, but it was not so ordered that I should, but unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ, and we should be content therewith. But how can I be content? I once thought I might grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, but oh how far from it; it seems I know less each day. Where is the blessedness I knew when first I saw the Lord? I often think what peaceful hours I then enjoyed, and how sweet their memory still, but now I find an aching void the world can never fill, and I feel to say with David, Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation.

But I must bring this letter to a close, for I know it is very imperfect, like the writer. Pardon me for troubling you with such a long letter. I have written just as it came to my mind, and I feel now that I cannot send it, but if I do I ask you all to pray for me, that my faith fail not.

(MRS.) L. A. MAYFIELD.

KNOX CITY, Texas, April 22, 1928.

DEAR BRETHREN:—By the kind mercy of God I am permitted to write you a few lines, but I am in the dark and cannot see afar, and feel my dependence upon the blessed Lord. I know I am nothing but a poor old sinner, saved by grace if saved at all, and am looking for the coming of my blessed Master. He

said, "What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch." If I am included in the "all" I think that I am blessed. Oh that he would give me faith so that I may trust in his word, for his promises are sure and he is faithful and just to forgive us all our sins if we will only trust him, for he speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. I feel very thankful he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him. Peter said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."

I did not intend to write as I have, but followed my mind, so will stop for fear I weary you. Pray for me when at the throne of grace. I am a poor helpless sinner, begging for mercy.

W. W. JONES.

LOS ANGELES, Cal., March 17, 1928.

ELDER J. W. MCCLANAHAN—DEAR BROTHER:—If you will again allow this unworthy creature to address you in this manner. I wrote you in the month of December requesting that the church give us a letter of dismission, as we thought at that time we had found a church here in sound doctrine, but at the present time we are not satisfied with the food we have thus far received, for it seems to us to be mixed; not that we can call ourselves judges, for our sins are many. It seems, dear brother, if I know anything at all in regard to the calling to me-ward of God, that I am compelled, I hope, to look back to my father's house for wholesome food, and therefore I am bound to say, my dear old father, that if you and your church have found me at any time unworthy of a place with you do as seemeth best to you, but we beg you to let us follow after you. We know within our own hearts that we have neglected our duty by not writing to you dear people oftener, but if we are held accountable for all our sins and transgressions we will not be found in the glorious resurrection, for we can find no way of doing good, we must indeed bow to the will of that absolute Sovereign and lie low in the dust and await his call. My dear brother and Elder in bonds of the gospel, I feel if I could once more hear you proclaim the sound doctrine as you did at the old schoolhouse on Kelley's Creek, while your face was made to shine with wisdom, that it would be great and blessed food and, as I hope, water to the weak and thirsty. It was there, I hope, that the love of God entered this structure of the dust and hath bound it forever. While, dear brother, I do not feel worthy of using the expression, for I am perpetual sin and feel the need of the great

God that can lift me up when I go down in the mire, I hope it is God's will that I can hear you preach again in this life.

If you received my former letter just pass it by, and if the church counts us worthy we beg to stay with them.

Your very weak brother in hope of better things to come,

W. L. PENNINGTON.

LOS ANGELES, Cal., March 19, 1928.

DEAR BROTHER MCCLANAHAN:—I think Willard has written all that is needful in regard to the other letter. I made the mistake of addressing it to Poca, I do not know why, but suppose because that is your nearest railroad station I must have been thinking of that.

My dear old brother and father, too, in Israel, I hope, my condition is the same now as when the dear people of Hopewell received me as a member. I am just as unworthy as I was then and can do nothing to better my condition, I can only say, "God be merciful to me a sinner," for a sinner is all I can be. God is mighty to save and his absolute predestination is my only hope. The Scripture says we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. I think this gives me more hope than any other Scripture, for I hope I love the brethren, for when I hear one give God all the praise and say everything is absolutely in his power, then I feel that here is one I love. There is one dear old sister here, and her grandson, who say that Willard has given them more comfort than any one since they have been in California. Her membership is in Texas, but she has been here seventeen years. The grandson is not a member, but we feel he has a hope. I think it would do him good if you would write him. He seems to be satisfied with the sound doctrine, but feels his unworthiness and feels that he is only a dead stone. His name is Winford Berry, and his address is 124 Brooks Avenue, Venice, California. I hope you have a mind to write him, for we have told him about you. Sister Berry (the grandmother) is sound in the doctrine, if we know anything about it, and we hope we do. She is very humble and childlike.

We see in the SIGNS that Elder Bartlett has passed away. How it hurt our hearts and how much we sympathize with his family and loved ones. We remember his sermon at Byrnside when he preached on the text, The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad. May God comfort his dear ones at home, and also his brethren and friends. I know you will miss him in the associations, but we must bow to God's holy will.

Now, dear brother, remember us kindly to brother and sister Null, brother and sister Higgenbothem and all the other members of Hopewell, also brother Mullens. I have a very close feeling for him, as you know he baptized me, but I hope I love all God's dear children.

I will bring this poor excuse for a letter to a close. It is imperfect, as the writer.

Your unworthy sister, I hope,

OTHA PENNINGTON.

LEXINGTON, Ky., Aug. 9, 1928.

DEAR BROTHER RUSTON:—I cannot tell you how glad I was to meet you and hear you preach God's eternal truth, and deeply regret I could not be with you longer and hear you preach and talk more. I want to say now, that should you ever come again, which I hope you will, we want you at Sadieville on Saturday and Sunday, or any two days in the week. I regret to say I have to give up

my trip to Canada. I had thought brother Baird would go with me, but he feels he cannot get away.

Regarding the editorial, it is in the SIGNS of October 15th, 1868. I hope to see it printed again in the SIGNS, as it is certainly plain in the new birth, and clearly sets forth its effect in the chosen heirs of salvation. All true Primitive Baptists see it as Elder Beebe has written it: that it is the man that is born again.

I hope you arrived home safely and found all well. My short visit with you seems like a dream, but I hope we shall meet again. I would be very glad to hear from you at any time you feel to write.

With love and best wishes, I am, yours in hope of eternal life,

P. W. SAWIN.

[IT is seldom we republish articles in the SIGNS, because we feel our readers would rather have us devote our space to original matter, but as Elder Sawin feels that republishing the editorial referred to in his letter would be for the good of the cause we are making an exception in this case, and hope it may be of profit and comfort to our readers.—ED.]

(*See editorial on page 230.*)

TO THE EBENEZER CHURCH, NEW YORK CITY—DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—I have been thinking of writing you for some time, but my leanness and unworthiness have prevented, or is it just plain coldness? I know there is no good in me, and unless the Holy Spirit directs my thoughts I shall not write anything worthy your reading. Sisters McConnell and Ashbey called on me in September. It was good of them to take so much trouble to see me, and it did me much good to see them, I have not heard from any of the churches since they were here, only through the SIGNS, hope all are well. You are in my mind much of the time. I love to think, and I believe I truly thank God that there is still a remnant left who have not bowed the knee to Baal, who have not been led away captives to the modern idea of progress in religion, which to one of the Lord's little ones seems simply the worst form of backsliding, and is plainly departing from the straight and narrow way. I feel to thank the dear Lord that he has kept a few. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, but a stranger will they not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." "I am the Lord, I change not." His people see and believe, with the faith he has given them, that his teachings are the same now, and always will be, as they were in the beginning. There is a growing in grace and in that knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, but if I understand it this shows us our own weakness and unworthiness, and the sinfulness of our hearts rises up to show us that there is no good thing in the flesh, not one thing that can give a child of God hope of eternal life through his own efforts. Salvation is of the Lord, and may he keep us all to the end. He that endures to the end, the same shall be saved.

Since beginning this I have had letters from our pastor, Elder R. Lester Dodson, and sister Ashbey. I hope all are in usual health, and will sometimes think of me and pray for me, one of the least.

NELLIE H. ARNOLD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1928.

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LIGHT.

JUST at this moment it comes to our mind that "Light" is one of the most entrancing subjects in all Scripture. Light is the very personality of God himself. Some there are who believe that God has no personality, but that he is Spirit only. That God is Spirit we do not deny, but that he is at the same a personality, we also aver. God is not material and his person is not that of matter, but the Scripture declares that Christ is the express image of his person. Now, if God is not a person, then Christ cannot be his image. Not being a person, Christ would be the image of that which is not. Being the image of that which is not, he would himself be nothing at all. This would reduce the Scripture to an absurdity. No man hath seen God at any time. It is only by the revelation of Jesus Christ that anything can be rightly known of God, for the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. There is at the center of the whole universe and also circumscribing all things, and upholding all things by himself, the very being of God. What this being called "God" is, no one of us can define. His being defies definition. If we could define him, it would follow that God could be limited or contained within measurable metes and bounds. This cannot be, for he is eternal and infinite. Such a character cannot be comprehended by us except as he pleases to give us the light in which to view him. No light of human nature can show us the true God. It is said that God can be seen in nature, that all creation shows his handiwork. We do not deny it, but God cannot be seen in any of his works except he gives within the beholder the proper light in which to see him. Hundreds of men have devoted their time and their efforts to the study of nature only to end up with the conclusion that their studies and observations have not shown to them the existence of a God. Intelligence and reason alone, without the enlightenment of God's gift of spiritual insight, cannot show us the personality or being of the true God. That there is this wonderful, eternal and infinite being called "God," those who truly believe in God cannot help but feel. There is the consciousness of God within his people, a mindfulness of him of which they cannot rid themselves. A feeling after God which defies explanation, and which cannot be conveyed to those who do not have it, constitutes something of the "secret of the Lord" which is with them that fear him. In the record of creation that is given us early in Genesis, it nowhere says that light was created. "And God

said, Let there be light: and there was light." Light was already in existence, just so surely as God himself existed before the beginning of things, but there was no shining forth of the light, no making known of it, until his word spoke it forth. The sun was not made until the fourth day of creation, therefore the light which shown from the beginning must have been other than sunlight; that is, must have been uncreated light which shown forth out of the very personality or being of God himself. The light which began to come forth out of the created sun on the fourth day, and ever thereafter, was not infinite radiance, but was contained within the orb which was made to emit it, therefore it is as material as all other created things of the natural realm. But that light which from the beginning shown forth and disclosed the unorganized chaos of the earth and the heavens, and which began to bring order out of confusion and to bring distinction out of formlessness, was uncreated light shining forth out of the Deity himself. This light was dependent upon no created orb to contain it, but was self-existent and sufficient within and of itself to do the will of God in bringing into revelation anything or all things which the mind of God wanted to be made known. Now, this light which from the beginning shown forth out of the very character and personality of God is the only light that has ever been able to show forth in any individual the proper knowledge of God. Only in his own light, can God be rightly known. This is the same light which God has commanded to shine in the hearts of his people to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Without this spiritual illumination of our souls we cannot believe in God nor comprehend any of his ways. When Saul of Tarsus was arrested by the grace of God as he went down to Damascus on his errand of persecution, he tells us that light brighter than the noonday sun shown round about him. If Saul gives us a true testimony of this matter, and we believe he does, then the light that disclosed to him his true standing before God must have been some other light than created light, for he says it outshone the created sun at midday. It stands according to reason that if it eclipsed created light, it could have been none other than uncreated, that is, it certainly was the light of God's infinite and eternal being which appeared to Saul showing him his true state. This light of God depends on nothing outside itself to do its work of revelation. The Lord Jesus Christ, who is himself God manifested in the flesh, is the transmitter of the eternal light. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." Power was given the Son of God over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him. The entrance of this life gives light or illumination. Sometimes it is said that "light" means understanding. In a sense this is true, but it is not all of the truth. Light is illumination. It is in this sense of its meaning that the word "light" is used in second Corinthians where it speaks of the light shining in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. In this Scripture the word "light" is translated from a Greek word *phos*, meaning light and from *photismos*, meaning illumination. Therefore, it means far more than simply "understanding." When light appears, immediately things are disclosed which the darkness had kept hid. That which is disclosed by the

light may not be understood for quite awhile afterward, but whether the revelation is comprehended in all its full force or not, the disclosure is there just the same. The illumination wrought by this uncreated light of God's own being within his people makes them see things and feels things as never before, but the interpretation of these revealed things may not take place in the soul for a long time afterward. A newborn babe sees the light and loves to play with its beams, but it has no understanding of that which delights it and causes it to rejoice. Exactly so the newborn babe in grace sees in the light of God the truth which nature's light never was sufficient to show him, but as for understanding anything about what it is that has taken place with him, this comprehension can only come as he moves along the path of grace and grows in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. It is right here and for this purpose that God has called men to preach the gospel and has given to his ministers the ability to interpret the word of God and the experience of those in whom the light shines. The believer is instructed by the ministry in the meaning of his own exercises of mind, thus coming little by little into an understanding of the matters which the true light has disclosed to him. The light can be enjoyed just as fully by a babe as by an adult. The adult may know more about what the light means, but the babe, though it knows not so much, enjoys basking in it just the same. The light of the created sun shines on all alike, whether they know nothing, or much, or little. Just so, the light of the Sun of Righteousness, the Lord Jesus Christ, shines on all and within all the subjects of God's grace, irrespective of their individual differences as to the measure of the gift of grace given unto each. All of us may not be able to preach it or to explain it, but every child of God believes in the light and shares equally in its radiance. The man of science may be able to tell us many things as to the nature of light which most of us do not know, but the man of science gets no more of the sunshine than the rest of us. The minister of the gospel may be able to deal with the matters which light discloses, most wonderfully and ably, and may bring things both new and old out of the Scriptures which most of us cannot see for ourselves, but for all that the minister is no more illuminated by the Spirit than the rest of us.

H. H. L.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE NEW BIRTH.

"MARVEL not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again"—John iii. 7.

At the conclusion of our article on "Regeneration," in Number 17 of the current volume, we proposed to give a more full expression in a subsequent number, on the subject of the New Birth. This we have felt inclined to do in order to correct the impression entertained by some of our readers that we have changed our views on this vitally important subject.

The very emphatic manner of our Lord's declaration to Nicodemus forbids the thought that any one of all the race of Adam can ever see the kingdom of God except he be qualified for such perfection by a spiritual birth. Our natural birth capacitates us only for a knowledge of natural things, but cannot qualify us for an understanding of things beyond the sphere of nature. If it were possible

for the natural faculties and perceptive power of a natural man to be so improved by education, moral, intellectual or religious culture, as to enable him to see the kingdom of God, or comprehend, receive or know the things of the Spirit of God, our Lord would not have thus positively declared its utter impossibility. Nor would the Holy Ghost, by the inspired apostle, have corroborated the testimony, as in 1 Cor. ii. 14: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." By a natural man we understand is intended a man that is born of the flesh, or an earthly man, possessing all the natural elements and properties of a man. Adam, both before and after his transgression, was a natural man. The qualifying adjective is used in a scriptural sense to distinguish a man who is made of the dust of the ground, and inspired with vitality and intelligence, from a spiritual man who is born of the Spirit. The distinction between the natural man and the spiritual is fully set forth in the two distinct headships, from whom the two distinct natures are derived. These two distinct progenitive heads are called, as such, the first and the second Adam, the one of the earth earthy, the other is the Lord from heaven. The first was made a living soul, the second Adam is a quickening Spirit. From the first or natural Adam emanates all our natural or earthly being; from the second Adam emanates all that spiritual, holy, heavenly and eternal life in which we are manifested as the sons or children of God. As our natural life, or natural man, or nature, descended from the earthly Adam, by natural generation, was developed by a natural birth wherein we were born of the flesh, even so our spiritual, eternal life is developed and brought into manifestation by a spiritual birth. That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. As we were totally ignorant and unconscious of all that was transpiring in this world in the development of the things of nature until we were born of the flesh, so that it could in truth be said of us, Except we were born of the flesh we could not see or know the things of nature, so it is most positively declared of all who are born of the flesh that, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." If without a natural birth we could not come into this world nor see the things of this world, must it not follow that a birth of the Spirit is an indispensable perquisite to capacitate us to either see or know the things of the kingdom which is purely a spiritual kingdom, which flesh and blood cannot inherit? Then, let us not marvel that Jesus has said, "Ye must be born again." As neither spiritual life or spiritual capacity can be born of the flesh, so neither can natural life and natural capacity be born of the Spirit. No amount of spiritual gifts can change, enlarge or perpetuate our natural man, or shield the earthly man from hunger, thirst, disease or death; neither can any development of our natural powers, either physical or metal, contribute in the smallest degree to our spiritual life, perception or enjoyment. That nature in the christian which is born of the flesh must, as well after the new birth as before, subsist on the productions of the same earth out of which our mortal bodies were fashioned, and that spiritual life or nature which is born of God must subsist on bread that cometh down from heaven, from whence that life proceeded. If spiritual consola-

tions would sustain our earthly nature Stephen would not have died in the full and rapturous view of the opened heavens, and of his exalted Savior; and if earthly comforts could sustain our spiritual nature, no child of God would ever despond while abounding in wealth and luxury. In contemplating the gospel doctrine of the new and spiritual birth we should not confound the birth either with redemption or remission of sins. As transgressors of the divine law we could not possibly be saved from sin and wrath without redemption, but even redemption by the blood of Christ, and the forgiveness of all our sins, would not supply the place of being born again. Redemption has met the demands of eternal justice, borne the pains and penalties which are due to our transgressions and so secured for us the remission of our sins. All this was accomplished for us, if we are interested in it, many centuries ago, but still, untli we were born again we could not see the kingdom of God, or feel the joys of his salvation, or know anything about the things of the Spirit of God. If it were even possible for us to put away from us all our transgressions and perfectly obey the holy law of God, that would free us from condemnation, but could by no means make us any more spiritual than we were in Adam before sin entered into the world. For we are expressly informed that the first Adam was not spiritual, but natural; but the second Adam is spiritual. It is true, if we were not sinners we could not leave this present world, for the sting of death is sin; we could not be sinners if we were not subjects of God's government, for sin is a transgression of the law, and where there is no law there can be no transgression. Hence we are told, "The strength of sin is the law." Nothing short of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus could deliver us from the power or strength of sin but a power fully equal to that sin, and that must be equal to the law which is the strength of sin, therefore if we are saved we may well exclaim in the inspired language of the apostle, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Redemption has removed the insuperable impediment which forbade our exemption from everlasting wrath, abolished death, opened the everlasting doors which were closed upon us, and bade the everlasting gates of life and immortality be lifted up, and thus brought immortality to light through the gospel. All this belongs to our redemption, but to qualify the redeemed of the Lord to come to the heavenly Jerusalem, and see the kingdom of God, and to behold the King in his beauty, and feel the power of the resurrection of the Son of God, and to enter into his resurrection life and immortality, we must be born again. The question has been repeatedly asked and urged, What is it that must be born again? We would not dare attempt to improve on the words of our Lord: "Except a man be born again." The man that has been born of the flesh and is flesh cannot see the kingdom of God except he be born again; this is necessary, not to make him a man, nor to change him from a man to an angel, but to bestow on him a new spiritual, immortal and eternal life, which he never before had, and which he could never have without being born of the Spirit, as he had been before born of the flesh. That man who was chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and consequently before he was manifestly the subject of any birth, before he was born either of the flesh or of the Spirit. We think it will not be disputed by any

intelligent christian that all the children of God were personally elected or chosen of God in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, according to Ephesians i. 4. If this be admitted, it must follow that they all had a personal identity and existence as members of the mystical body of Christ before Adam's dust was fashioned to a man, and therefore prior to their first or second birth. The developments of time have demonstrated to us that it was the purpose of God that every one of his elect should, in the fullness of the dispensation of times, be born first of the flesh, and then be born again of the Spirit. Both of these births were ordained and provided for by the wisdom and decree of God, not to give them being or identity, for these they had in Christ before the world began. By the first birth they were to be developed in their earthly and fleshly nature in common with the whole natural posterity of the earthly Adam. This first birth was necessary, that they might see and know the things of nature, for except they were born of the flesh they could never have known the things of the flesh. "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" In the stupendous mystery of the hidden counsel and purpose of God this fleshly birth and identification of God's elect with the family of mankind was indispensible to the development of the great eternal purpose which God had purposed in himself before the world began, that in the first Adam they should all die, and in Christ they should all be made alive. If we admit that God has saved us and called us according to his purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, then we cannot consistently deny that the purpose and grace provided for our being born of the flesh, and identified with all the rest of Adam's posterity, and with them sink into death by the transgression of Adam, and be quickened from the dead, and raised up from condemnation and wrath, be washed, cleansed and purified, and freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Whether brethren can agree with us, that the absolute purpose and immutable decree of God embraced our fallen state and condition, as well as our salvation from sin, death and hell, through his dear Son, or whether they regard our fallen condition as an afterthought, occasioned by some unavoidable failure of his purpose, if it be admitted that our redemption from sin and death was predestinated, we must also and unavoidably (we think) admit the indispensible necessity for the fleshly birth of all the children of God which were from everlasting identified and personally chosen unto salvation in our Lord Jesus Christ. By our natural birth then we enter into and become a part of this world, are capacitated to see it and to sojourn in it until like an hireling we shall have fulfilled our allotted number of days; but our first, or fleshly birth, while it capacitates us for a knowledge of the things of nature, can supply us with no capacity for anything beyond bounds of this world, and hence the necessity that we should be born again in order that we may see the kingdom of God and know the things of the Spirit of God. In being born again, then, this man, who was chosen of God in Christ before the foundation of the world, and born of the flesh since the foundation of the world, must, at some period still later than his fleshly birth, be born again, or he cannot see the kingdom of God; must be born of water and of the Spirit, or

he cannot inherit the kingdom of God. As our first or natural birth belongs to and results from natural generation, so our being born again belongs to and results from regeneration. The seminal life of all the posterity of Adam was created in him, in the day when they were created. So the spiritual eternal life of the generation of our Lord Jesus Christ was given and secured to all the children of God in Christ when he was given to be the head over all things to his church. The words of our Lord which we have placed at the head of this article were addressed to one who was already born of the flesh, and they are applicable to such only as are born of the flesh. A birth can only develop, or bring forth into manifestation, the same nature of which it is generated and born. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The first birth brings forth that life, flesh and nature in which we were created in the earthly Adam, but the second birth brings forth into manifestation that life, spirit and immortality which was given to us in Christ Jesus, as the second Adam, and the Lord from heaven.

Having thus briefly considered the subject doctrinally, we will now offer some remarks on the personal experience of this birth by the children of God, and point out some of the prominent evidences by which we know that we have experienced it, if indeed we are of that happy number. These evidences are discovered by comparing and contrasting the state, condition, capacities, elements and exercises of those who are, with those of them who are not born again; as also by the peculiar exercises produced by the birth, while under the quickening operation of the Spirit in our passage from death unto life. First. Before we were born again we were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein we walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, among whom we all had our conversation, in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath even as others. (Eph. ii. 1–3.) In the full possession of all the elements of a carnal, depraved and sinning nature, and totally destitute of any spiritual life or knowledge. The carnal mind, which was all the mind we had, was enmity against God, our selfish depraved propensities, with every imagination of our hearts, were evil, and only evil continually. Possessing at the same time exalted views of our own imaginary virtues, and of our ability to commend ourselves to the favor of God, and to secure for ourselves an inheritance of glory by our own works. He[illegible] under chains of darkness and strong delusion, believing lies, and sporting with our own deceivings. Every ray of divine truth shut out from our mind totally incapable of receiving, appreciating or even desiring a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus; hating that truth, and hating all who love or contend for it. Condemned already, and the wrath of God abiding on us, yet boasting of our goodness, and holding that God was obliged in justice to view things as we viewed them, and to save us on such terms as we proposed. In love with sin, at enmity against holiness, at war with heaven, and in league with hell, calling light darkness, and darkness light; truth error, and error truth; and altogether ignorant of our real condition. In this wretched state we all were by nature, and nothing belonging to or emanating from our earthly

birth could by any possibility comprehend or know the condition we were in. By the new birth a new life is implanted in us, and that life is light. The nature of that light is to make manifest the things which by the power of darkness had been concealed from us before. Quickened by Christ, the second Adam, who is a quickening Spirit, we are made to see and feel our sinfulness, and our lost and helpless condition. We are alarmed to find that we are much worse than we had ever before supposed. The law enters, and sin revives, the purity as well as the inflexible severity of the divine law appears, and the same light which reveals this also shows us the enormity of our guilt, the justice of our condemnation and the impossibility of salvation by the law. All our boasted abilities to save ourselves are withered and vain. Lost, helpless and despairing our legal hopes yield up the ghost. The commandment Come, sin revived, and I died. The incorruptible seed by the word of God is deposited in our heart, and all that is felt of conviction and despair are but the legitimate consequence. The light of life now begotten in us reveals a holy God, a righteous law, and a poor guilt-stricken, helpless and despairing sinner just sinking into everlasting perdition. All this is, however, the effect of life. All this is a struggling for deliverance. As the birth into liberty draws near the conflict becomes the more intense. "God be merciful to me a sinner," is now uttered in the most terrible earnestness, as quivering under the unsheathed flaming sword, which justice has raised to strike the decisive blow, when lo, the birth reveals the almighty Savior, who has died for our offenses and arisen for our justification. The fiery sword was quenched in his blood. Surely he has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. Lo, now the guilt is all removed, the terror is gone, the darkness vanquished by bursting light and refulgent glory. God's method of saving sinners now appears, and the sinner is born again. This is the birth, and that which is born is spirit. It is not flesh. It is born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Being begotten and born of God, it manifests not only a new life, but a new relationship. The life which is manifested by this birth is not a revision of our Adamic life, but it is the life of the Father, by whom it is begotten; and it is the vitality of that which is born, hence in this new and heavenly birth we are made partakers of the divine nature. Christ who is our life, is formed in us, and his sonship, his heirship, his inheritance of glory and immortality is born in us, and we are one with him, even as he is one with the Father. From this heaven-born spirit flows all the fruits of the Spirit, which testify that we are born of God. As we have shown what are the works of the flesh which characterize the fleshly birth, so the new and heavenly birth is demonstrated by all the fruits of the Spirit of Christ which is given to us. Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, temperance, brotherly kindness, charity, &c., are some of the living fruits of this heaven-born child, this new man, which after God (not after Adam) is created in righteousness and true holiness. Now in the man who is born again, two natures appear. The one is born of the flesh, and is flesh, full of lust, and in opposition to holiness, warring against the Spirit, and constantly performing the works of the flesh, as described by Paul, Galatians v. 19, 20.

The other is born of God, and yields the fruits of the Spirit, as described above. A conflict between the old man and the new, between that which is born of the Spirit, a love for holiness and hatred of sin, a love to God and loathing of self, a love for the truth and aversion to error, a love to the saints and desire to be in company and communion with them, an appreciation of the beauty of the ordinances of Christ, baptism and the Lord's Supper, a veneration for the order and laws of the kingdom of Christ, and a desire to walk in them, with a deep sense of our own unworthiness, an ardent desire for the peace of Jerusalem and prosperity of the church of God, with a relish for the doctrine of the gospel, and willingness to suffer reproach for defending it, these are all of them scriptural, and therefore reliable evidences that those who possess them are born of God, and heirs of immortal glory, and joint-heirs with Christ to an inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that cannot fade away. As our earthly nature which is born of the flesh is depraved and sinful, nothing pure and heavenly can proceed from it, and so that life which is born of God is pure and heavenly, no evil can proceed from it. It cannot sin, because it is born of God. The conclusion is inevitable, that all that is unholy and sinful in us is of the flesh which is born of the flesh, and all that is spiritual, pure and heavenly in us is born of God, born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. No man can therefore glory in the flesh, for in our flesh dwelleth no good thing. He that glorieth must glory in the Lord, in that which God hath done for us. Every spiritual emotion, aspiration or thought, is of that spirit which is born of the Spirit, by which we are qualified to see the kingdom of God.

"Then give all the glory to his holy name,
To him all the glory belongs;
Be ours the high theme, still to sound forth his fame,
And crown him in each of our songs."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., October 15, 1868.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. R. Dennison.)

The Tygarts Valley River Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists, now in session with the Leading Creek Church, Randolph County, West Virginia, to the several churches of which she is composed, and to all with whom we correspond, and all of like precious faith, sendeth christian salutation in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Since our last assembling together in an associate capacity another year, with all its many changes, has passed and gone, and some of our loved ones have been called from the shores of time to reap their reward in endless eternity, as we hope and believe, in the peaceful presence of God and the Lamb, where there will be no more sad farewells, but all will be peace and joy and love basking in the sunlight of his smile. Dear brethren, how thankful we should be for the kind hand of divine Providence over us, in sparing and blessing us to once more meet together for the purpose of offering a tribute of worship and praise to his holy and adorable name, and oh may he in his infinite wisdom and mercy enable us by his Spirit's power to worship him in spirit and in truth. The dear Savior said, "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." It

is only the spiritually born that can worship in spirit, they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But we are not in the flesh if so be the Spirit of God dwell in us. We trust, dear brethren, we are of those who can in the power and love of the Spirit say, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people." Has washed them from their sins in his blood, having by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified, and is of God made unto them "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." Yes, glory in the Lord for what he hath done for us, for God so loved us when we were dead in sins that he sent his only begotten Son to redeem us from sin and iniquity, that he might purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works, and although he was rich, yet for our sake he became poor that we through his poverty might be rich. Yea, he died for our offenses, and rose again for our justification, and this all of free and unmerited grace. Oh the breadth and depth and length and height of the superabounding grace of God, and of Christ Jesus our Lord. May we ever be enabled to worship, praise and glorify him for his great love wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sin. God forbid that we should do as others, trust in the flesh, but enable us to worship him in spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh, for it is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. Then let us praise him for all the blessings given us in Christ before the foundation of the world, for having predestinated us unto the adoption of children, for having called us with an holy calling, and translating us out of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son. So if we are of the chosen, called and faithful we may be, and are, forsaken and persecuted by a blind and persecuting world, who know not Christ and the power of his resurrection, but are built up in a fleshly confidence, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, worshipping and serving the creature more than the Creator. O then, dear brethren, let us stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints, preaching Christ the way, the truth and the life, and the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Yes, he is our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, in him is all our salvation, both in time and eternity, then let us praise him who is the health of our countenance and our God. May grace, mercy and peace rest on all the Israel of our God henceforth, world without end. Amen.

J. S. MURPHY, Moderator.
J. R. DENNISON, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Your messengers came to us laden with the glorious gospel of salvation through the redemption of Christ Jesus our Lord, preaching Christ the way, the truth and the life, and the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. We greatly appreciate your correspondence, and desire a continuance of the same.

Our next Association is appointed to to be held with the Little Bethel Church, to commence on Friday before the last Sunday in August, 1929, and continue three days, when we hope to meet your messengers again.

J. S. MURPHY, Moderator.
J. R. DENNISON, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence, in Delmar, Md., June 18th, 1928, Louis Norman Holloway, of Darien, Conn., and Margie Elizabeth Adkins, of Parsonsburg, Md.

By the same, at the home of the bride's brother, in Delmar, Del., Aug. 18th, 1928., Albert V. Krewatch and Pattie Bailey, both of Delmar.

By the same, at his residence in Delmar, Md., Sept. 1st, 1928, William R. Layfield and Lillie A. Miller, both of Delmar.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder W. R. Craft was born in Kentucky November 24th, 1843, and died May 12th, 1928, at the home of his daughter, sister Samantha Walkers, Hiawatha, W. Va., and was laid to rest near the same place. He moved from Kentucky to North Carolina in September, 1892. He received a hope in Christ and united with the Old School Baptist Church, and was baptized December, 1875. He was liberated to speak in public in 1879, in 1880 was licensed, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry August 13th, 1881. He was married to Miss Emily J. Seargent June 21st, 1868, and to this union were born thirteen children, four of whom preceded him in death, one in infancy, and nine lived to be men and women. We will omit the names of the children, as space may not permit. Elder Craft's first wife was taken from him by death in 1906, after which he married the second time, to Miss Laura Philips, and to that union were born three children, one dying in infancy. His last wife and two boys, together with nine of his first family survive. Elder Craft was nearing his 85th milestone when the good Lord saw fit to remove him from his troubles and trials here. He laid his armor down at a ripe old age. We feel sure that he felt to say with the apostle Paul that he had fought a good fight and finished his course and kept the faith. He had traveled in fifteen of the United States, and a portion of Canada, preaching the sovereignty of God over all things, and salvation alone by the grace of God. We heard him preach several times in his last days and he was firm until the end. When dictating a letter to his family on his deathbed he said in part that he was sure the church he served was the church of Jesus Christ and the doctrine he preached was the truth and that the Lord had regarded his cause through all ages and none of his walks had been crooked.

Elder S. J. Priddy, together with Elder J. T. Mabe and Elder Barton Rose spoke comforting words to his bereaved family, after which he was laid to rest, the sleep from which none ever wake to weep.

Written by request of his daughter.

S. J. PRIDDY.
H. V. SNOW.

J. Byrd Lankford, son of Edward J. and Nancy Mezick Lankford, died at his home, on William Street, Salisbury, Md., Jan. 2nd, 1928, after an illness of several days of pneumonia, aged a few minutes less than 59 years. He was born on a farm near Princess Anne, Md , Aug. 12th, 1869. On Dec. 26th, 1902, he was united in marriage, by the late Elder A. B. Francis, to Miss Mary G. Sturgis, to which union two children were born: Lee and Joanna. These with the widow survive him and are at home with their mother. Mr. Lankford was a prominent citizen of Salisbury, where he had been in business many years, and by his kindly disposition had made a host of friends. He was a nephew of the late Geo. W. Mezick, who for years was a deacon of the Salisbury Old Baptist Church. Mr. Lankford's sympathies were with the Old Baptists and he attended their meetings. His mother was a faithful member and delighted in having her son attend the meetings of her church.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer, in the home and was largely attended. Interment took place in Parson's Cemetery, in Salisbury.

Written by his friend at the request of the family.

H. C. KER.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, it hath pleased almighty God in his infinite wisdom to remove from his labors, and our midst, our dearly beloved brother and **Elder John N. Bartlett,**

WHEREAS, our dear brother was held in high esteem as an able, faithful minister of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and a meek humble follower of the Lamb, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we humbly bow to the will of Him who doeth all things well, believing that our loss is our brother's eternal gain.

RESOLVED, that a copy of this memorial be spread upon the Minutes of our Association.

J. S. MURPHY, Moderator.

J. R. DENNISON, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. W. E. Short, N. J., $1; W. H. Proffett, Ark., $1; Mrs. Editha Corwin, N. Y., $1.

MEETINGS.

The Lord willing, there will be an all-day meeting at the New Vernon meetinghouse on Friday, October 12th. Elder George Ruston expects to be with us.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Snow Hill Church, at Snow Hill, Worcester County, Md., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 24th, 25th and 26th, 1928. Those coming from the north by train will take train leaving Broad Street Station, Philadelphia, at 3 o'clock p. m., Tuesday, changing cars at Harrington, Del., for Snow Hill. This train will be met and friends cared for. Those coming by auto on Tuesday will doubtless be sufficiently acquainted to locate our members and friends in and around Snow Hill. We cordially invite all of our faith and order to meet with us, including friends. Especially do we hope that our ministers will make a special effort to be with us.

H. C. KER, Pastor.

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IN

NEW YORK CITY.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

The Regular Old School Absolute Predestinarian Baptists (unconditional) meeting every second Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, at 245 Lacadana Drive, Riverside, California. C. G. MILLER.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Old School Baptists of Chicago meet, the Lord willing, every Sunday at 11 a. m. and 2:30 p. m., at the home of W. N. Spitler, 11332 S. St. Louis Ave., Chicago. Take 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue street car to the end of car line. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Midweek song service by appointment. Preaching by Elders Jones and Jaynes. Basket lunch. For further information telephone Wentworth 2860.

O. P. SHELBURNE.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday of each month at the Swedish Lutheran church-house southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, Riverside, Calif., and at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. 11th St., Claremont, Calif., on the first Sunday of each alternate month, beginning with January, and on every alternate month with brother Joseph Huffman, 128 Van Buren St., Arlington, Calif. Singing at 10:30 a. m. Preaching at 11 a. m. Lunch at the place of meeting, and continued services in the afternoon.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.

O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sunday at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

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"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz First. "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, Convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second. The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Eld. Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third. "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Eld. H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio. Fourth. "Fatalism." By Eld. H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio. Fifth. "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth. "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 96. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1928. NO. 11.

THE ORDER OF THE SERVICE UPON THE OCCASION OF THE ORDINATION OF ELDER D. L. TOPPING.

HYMNS 603 and 579.

PRAYER BY ELDER R. LESTER DODSON.

Almighty, all-wise, eternal, unchangeable and ever-merciful God, if not deceived in our hearts, we yearn after thee, the true and living God, and we do beseech thee, dear Lord, at this time to take entire charge of us and this meeting. O Lord, direct our thoughts, and do grant that we may seek diligently to know thee, whom to know is life eternal. We do realize, O Lord, that we know not how to pray as we ought, and yet we are assured by thy Spirit that thou wilt make plain our path before us. Do grant, O Lord, that thy blessings may be poured out upon thy people gathered here in this place and, Lord, bless him who is to speak to us here on this occasion; fill his mouth with things that are suitable and profitable and that shall be comforting and edifying to thy people, and do cause him whom thou hast called and sent forth to preach thy everlasting gospel to realize in deed and in truth that he cannot sink with such a prop as his eternal God. Lord, be with him and bless him and choose his times and seasons for him, and grant, O Lord, as he shall go forth bearing glad tidings that his words may fall into prepared ground, that they may take root and spring forth. Do bless those among whom he shall labor, and grant that they may uphold his hands, that they may minister to him the things needful for thy servant. Furthermore, thou who hath purchased him with thine own blood, be pleased to strengthen his heart and fill his soul with thy goodness, and grant, O Lord, that he shall from time to time feed upon the word he preaches, that they that minister shall receive a portion themselves. Bless him and go with him in all of his life. O Lord, may he go to those hearts that are bowed down, who are mourning because of sin, who are depressed, who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, that they may be given to eat of the bread of heaven and may drink from the fountain of the water of life. Be with us now and forever. Amen.

HYMN 488.

SERMON BY ELDER C. W. VAUGHN.

Beloved Zion of our God, it seems that the lot has fallen to me to address you at this time as a servant of God, as an un-

dershepherd, of his flock in this sacred and solemn service, and to preach, if I am given the Spirit of God, what we call an ordination sermon. This sermon, to my understanding, is none other than the preached gospel of God our Savior, upon this occasion no greater than at any other time. I fully realize my helplessness as a man to attain to the kingdom of God or his righteousness and to feed the flock of God. This matter to me is very sacred. I did not receive these things from man, neither was I taught by man, but by the grace of God, if I am a minister of the gospel. The Scripture I will read to you as a text for this service you will find recorded in the twentieth chapter of the Acts, twenty-eighth verse, which reads: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseer, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." This Scripture has one key word in it that is most precious in my feelings at this time, and that is the word "flock." The church of God is the flock of God. She is the sheep of his pasture. Jesus alone is her shepherd. He feeds his flock. He gathers his lambs with his arm and carries them in his bosom. He directs his flock. David in the Psalms declared that he restored his soul; he made him to lie down in green pastures; he led him beside still waters. Now brethren and sisters, I have none other to point you to only the great Shepherd of the sheep, and what you are, and every member is, is by his grace. The bride of Christ is the body, and it has pleased him according to his infinite wisdom to all flesh to place you in the body, or in the church, which is his building, as it has pleased him, and it is wonderful indeed to note according to our experiences that he has been so mindful of us that he has considered the low estate of our tabernacle, that we should feel he has brought us also up out of the pit and hath established our going, put a new song in our mouths, even praise to his name, and hath given us an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away, but is reserved in heaven for us who are called according to his purpose. When we look upon Zion as all of the household of faith which is the purchased bride of Christ, the church of God, the pillar and ground of the truth—his beloved bride. Note her devotion. She is leaning upon him, leans upon his arm. Note her reverence. How she reverences him, and that new Jerusalem; such a quiet, peaceful mother. How she embraces all her children. She loves them fervently because she can see within their countenance the beam and joy of her husband. She reverences her husband, and he loves her with such a fervent love that there is nothing can separate her from his love. This great Shepherd of the sheep sends forth his messengers unto them, bearing glad tidings, commits to them the dispensation of the gospel by which they shall come, bearing the sheaves for the feeding of the flock of God. For a man to be called of God, my brethren, separated unto the gospel, is one of the greatest callings that has ever been bestowed upon mortality. I am speaking to you as your servant for His sake, calling your attention to these sacred relations of your shepherd to you, and how He is mindful of your welfare that you that hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled. Not one of them shall be left to hunger, but he says they shall be filled. The apostles were also speaking to those elders whom God had called. They received and ordained from the hands of the shepherd. Jesus

called them and ordained them to be apostles. The Father gave them to be with him, to behold him as the Shepherd of the sheep to note his sufferings and righteousness manifested in him as their Shepherd, and to note also the virtues of life that attested that he was the beloved Son of God, that they should hear the proclamation from heaven, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him. Those apostles have recorded these things by the inspiration of God for the church of God that she should be perfect and thoroughly furnished unto all good works. It is not, my friends, that He should have a manner given him by which he could go forth and manufacture good works, but that He should have the testimony and evidences that were wrought in him. The apostle bore evidence from God that Jesus was the Christ and testified of that truth before men, that it was not by the will and power of the carnal mind, but of God, that those who had realized the working of his mighty power, which is both to will and do of his good pleasure, could testify of the work of God that was in the heart, that they through patience and comfort of the Scriptures should have hope. That hope was and is to each subject of his love and mercy an anchor to the soul sure and steadfast, and, my friends, not a single one of them shall be lost, but he will save them with an everlasting salvation, which attests this, the wonderful wisdom and power of him who is the Shepherd, to keep his flock, guide his flock, continue faithful, to warn them of every evil that might come upon them.

Now, brethren, this that I have rehearsed to you is touching upon that great Shepherd of the sheep, the eternal God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, which has ordained to us the ministration of the gospel, and in that he has given these servants to go in and out before you, which are represented in holy writ as undershepherds. Brethren, where do these undershepherds receive their authority to stand before you and in the presence of almighty God to feed the flock, to watch over them and direct them? My brethren, I appeal to you, is not this the thing that God has committed to faithful brethren or faithful servants, to go in and out before his flock, to feed them, to watch over them, to guide them and show them the way they should take lest they should be led into captivity and snares of the devil? I affirm to you it is, and any man that sets himself up against them and against the army of the living God is warring against the church of God and God's anointed. My brethren, this anointed one has this testimony given him from high heaven and he stands by the virtues committed to him by the Spirit of God. He is not his own. He is not given to serve himself and to seek those things that are presented to him in the flesh, but like the beloved apostle Paul, he was made willing to suffer for the truth and your sakes. How many of us as brethren and sisters esteem these our servant brethren and look up to them with the sacredness of the dispensation that God has committed to them? My brethren, I realize the sacredness of these things. Time goes on, my friends. We find from the Scriptures the relation of the ministers of the gospel that had been set apart and ordained of God the things that these undershepherds show necessary for the welfare of Zion called upon christians to bring to them seven brethren possessing special qualifications that they might be set apart and ordained under the hands of the ministry to the work and office of deacon. The deacon receives

from the hands of the undershepherd the setting apart for the church of God the work necessary for the comfort, naturally speaking, of the church and for the church under the authority of the shepherd the undershepherd and in the things that are ordered of the church, and in no sense have they the right or authority to go beyond it. My friends, the dispensation of the gospel has never committed to the deacon the right, the authority or charge over the undershepherd, but they are subject to the church and under the undershepherd to serve the church with the ministers, that the ministry should not be neglected because of the necessary and daily ministration, but they (the ministry) should give themselves wholly to the ministry. When an undershepherd comes to you to serve in the faithfulness of the gospel and you receive him, and you have deacons to serve in the church with him, they have no authority over him as your shepherd but as the church has ordered, and if you see he is not living with that order it is evidence that he is not your undershepherd, and it is your right to call his attention to it, but when he lives in that church with longsuffering and truth it is not that he would displease, but he is doing it for the love he has for the welfare of the flock, that she should go forth in the way she should go, honoring and glorifying him who is her shepherd that she might live orderly and uprightly before God. Brethren and sisters, we must live together, we must be of one fold, we must be under one shepherd if we are called with that hope of our calling, so we must abide in the Vine if we are of the Vine. We cannot go beyond the Vine and set about to do things according to the lust of the flesh, for if we go according to the flesh we shall of the flesh reap corruption, which is an evidence that it is not of the Spirit of God. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves." I recall a personal experience when I was a boy in the ministry, as well as in youth. There was an appointment published in the community. An Elder and I were to speak at a schoolhouse. Many people had assembled and I was fearful and trembling in my soul because of the requirement, as I feel, brethren, at this time that I am just a poor, vile sinner in the flesh, and if I am anything in the church of God it is by the grace of God. Just what Paul declared when he said, "By the grace of God I am what I am." This thought came into my mind and I recall the time and place just as though it had been yesterday, and that was nearly thirty years ago. These words came to me, "Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine." That has been my desire in speaking before the people and to the church of God, to speak words that become sound doctrine, and in speaking words that become sound doctrine we must know what sound doctrine is, and for one to know what sound doctrine is he must know thoroughly what salvation must be. He must know the doctrine of God. Our Savior stands for no other doctrine than that which is sound. Now I will explain what I mean. By that, I mean no other doctrine; any other way would be setting up the flesh, and you know in the flesh is corruption, but the doctrine of God our Savior is from above and comes from the fountain of life, and there is nothing impure in it. One should speak only words that become sound doctrine. He must consider himself: "Take heed unto yourselves," and I say in explanation and with him upon this subject there never was a time that came for him to speak before the people but he was

made to examine himself as to whether the things that were in his mind were of the Spirit or of the flesh. Brethren, if we take heed to ourselves we are considering of what manner of man we are. We know the apostle said that in us is the warfare of two, the flesh against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, so he said, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me," and there was a warfare in his members, the flesh against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, but thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory, we want to speak things that glorify Him that gave us virtue, that testify of the way. They speak and testify truthfully of the footsteps of the flock. Go rather by the way of the footsteps of the flock. We want to abide in that way. We want to be careful of our goings forth lest we should dishonor him who is our kind Shepherd. Now brethren and sisters, he says, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." He does not say part, but to all the flock, the least is just as necessary as the greatest. The one who is in poverty is just as precious in the sight of God as one in wealth. My friends, you must be crucified to the world to serve Him. You cannot serve both God and man. I cannot serve myself and my brethren. I suffer things they do not know anything about; I bear burdens that they know nothing about. I do not go to them and tell them my troubles. I would rather hide them. I do not look upon them to note all the infirmities they have in the flesh, but rather for the work of God. I would rather look over them and bear with them because I know we are all vile and polluted, and in that relation I wash and feed them, and do not look upon them for the works of the flesh, but rather pray for them. I trust I love not only those God has given me to be mine, but the people of God everywhere, and that is what causes me to tremble to speak to you in his name. I say to you brethren and deacons, and I say to you presbyters, Be mindful of what you do. We cannot live too careful, but we cannot do the things we would, Paul said. Be careful of our goings forth. Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, for what we do should be done with clean hands, and not wrest this sacred ordinance to honor a man in the flesh, but rather receive and deliver to the church the anointed of God, which is the case to-day. Brethren, the anointed of God are not considering themselves, but all the time the brethren consider you, and I am thankful. Brethren, be mindful, and that I am blessed with the privilege of being with you today, and I trust that he has given me the fellowship of your association and that he will permit us to sit together in heavenly places. It is in him we live and move and have our being. He says, Take heed unto yourselves and all the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers. It is not just a mere person who is in the church that has made you an overseer, but the Holy Ghost which conceived the same virtue into the virgin to bear the Son of God, of the same virtue that has made you the overseer, just the same which were to feed that which he had purchased with his own blood. Now we do not feel to spread abroad to all the world and to speak to them of these things and address them as being partakers, but we speak to them that bear fruit, that testify of the fruit that they are in the Vine. They are the ones here addressed, for we have no right to address

any other than these, because they bear the fruit. He is the Shepherd, and as the manifested ones they are born of God, so we are to consider them and feed them that he has purchased with his own blood. We do not know who they are only as they bear fruit of it. The prophet John, when he came preaching, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb, and he beheld Jesus. He saw him in the person of the man who was to take away the sin of the world, and He was born and He it was who came to His baptism and he, John, baptized those who bore the fruit of repentance, and those who came to His baptism and did not bear fruit He did not receive, but refused them, and called them a generation of vipers. So, my brethren, the church of God has no right to receive any except those who come bearing the fruit.

These things, my brethren and sisters, that I have demonstrated unto you are from the experience of my heart, and not from the touch of flesh relation, but I trust these things I have spoken of come to you with the same sacredness and the same regenerate virtue that are in all the household of faith of the Holy Ghost, that has brought you from darkness to his marvelous light, that we might serve one another in that newness of spirit and bond of peace in which he unites his people; so we stand together as one flock, one fold and one spirit, as we have one Shepherd. I will now bring my remarks to a close, and will commend you to him and to his keeping.

REMARKS BY ELDER JOSHUA T. ROWE.

We come to another very important and solemn service, and as the ordination of a minister of the gospel is not the business of an association, we, as a church, invite the brethren to seats with us in a church capacity. As many of you know, the church published a notice in THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES of their desire at this time, while the ministers and deacons were present to set apart to the full work of the gospel ministry our dear brother and Deacon, Douglas L. Topping, and made a special request that the ministers of our immediate correspondence be with us on this occasion. Some have come, and we are glad; some have not come, and we are sorry. And now as pastor and moderator of this church I ask the ministers and deacons present to sit together as a presbytery to examine, and, if thought proper, to proceed to ordain our brother.

Elders C. W. Vaughn, T. W. Walker, R. Lester Dodson and J. T. Rowe and Deacons E. A. Johnson, F. G. Scott, P. M. Sherwood, W. E. Baily, D. M. Voorhees and Harvey White took seats.

I will now ask our Deacon Johnson to present the brother whom the church wishes to have ordained. Brother Johnson conducted brother Topping to the altar.

I shall now proceed to read the Articles of Faith of the Ebenezer Church in the presence of these brethren, and ask our brother Topping to answer yes or no to them. These articles are the expressed faith of the brethren who were in the organization of this church over one hundred years ago. It will take a little time, but I feel that it is worth while, and in a case of this kind we shall not be in any special hurry.

Brother Topping answered to each article as read, and he heartily approved all of them.

Now this is to me a very sacred, solemn and blessed occasion, and a blessed privilege. I have been trying to preach what I believe is the gospel of our Lord and

Savior Jesus Christ nearly fifty-two years, and this brother is the only white man I have baptized who has manifested a gift in the ministry. I baptized one colored man in North Carolina, who became a minister among his people, and so far as I have ever known or heard he has behaved himself and preached the truth. I began the service of this church in January, 1899, and on the fourth Sunday in May following, twenty-nine years ago next Sunday a week, I baptized this dear brother, and I want to say, not with any intention to flatter brother Topping, or to influence the vote in this matter (which we shall ask for presently), that in every relation of life, both inside and outside the church, he has proven faithful. I do not have in my mind now just the time he was chosen and ordained Deacon of this church, but in all these years he has been competent and faithful in the discharge of his duties as a Deacon. He has been true and faithful to his church and to his pastor, and I love him I think as much as I ought to love him. We have been very close, and I cannot tell you now how I feel. How thankful I am to the Lord for the gift manifested in him. The only thing that would embarrass me in addressing him as my son in the gospel as Paul did Timothy, is my own felt sense of unworthiness to be such a father. I think now without further ceremony I will ask these brethren, ministers and deacons if there are any questions in their minds they would like to ask. If so, it is your privilege, and I request that you do so now.

Elder Dodson asked brother Topping to give his reason of a hope in Christ, and his impressions to preach, which he did. All being satisfactory the ordination proceeded.

ELDER ROWE:—I firmly believe there are experiences of mind through which one called of God to preach the gospel has to pass that others do not have, but after all the only evidence the rest of us have that one is called to preach is that he does preach the gospel, and the church of the Lord Jesus Christ is judge of that. I took it upon myself before this move was made to inquire, not only of brethren and sisters of our own church, but of other churches also to whom he has been preaching, and all have expressed their gratification and edification, and their judgment is a strength to us.

ELDER VAUGHN:—Before we proceed further, I wish to state that about one year ago brother Topping had a vision in which his pastor, Elder Rowe, laid his hands on him and prayed, and also gave him a charge, and he, of course, feels he wants it to be that way. I make this statement in order that all may understand that Elder Rowe is not acting selfishly in this matter.

ELDER ROWE:—Let us pray. Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations. Thou art the creator and preserver of all things, in whom we live, and move, and have our being, and we acknowledge no God besides thee. Thou art the God of the heavens and of the earth, and naked and open to thine eyes are all things. Thou knowest our hearts and thoughts afar off. We feel, O Lord, to know that we are poor and weak and subject to mistakes. We know that thou art wise, and that thy ways are just and true, and that it is impossible for thee to make a mistake, and we feel, O Lord, that thou hast shown us that thou hast called this, our dear brother, to the ministry of thy word, and now we ask thee to be with and assure our hearts that what we are doing now is that which thou dost

approve, and would it please thee, our heavenly Father, to be with this our dear brother. Thou knowest that like all others he needs thee, that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Thou knowest that as a man he cannot interpret thy word, but to do so he must have the light of thy holy Spirit. Grant that he may be blessed to speak the things that are true concerning thee, that it prove a word in season to them that hunger and thirst after righteousness. Do thou grant him communion with thee, and comfort and strengthen him in every trial all the days of his life. Father, we remember that we are not heard for our much speaking. Thou knowest what he needs. Bless him, we pray thee, in every necessary way. Keep him unto thine everlasting kingdom, for thine is the kingdom, power and glory forever, Amen.

The ministers proceeded to the laying on of hands.

ELDER ROWE:—In giving this charge I will call your attention to 1 Timothy vi. 16: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." Brother Topping, the church has now set you apart, by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, to the full functions of the gospel ministry, not only to speak in the way of preaching to the people, but to the administration of all the ordinances of God. You are now at liberty, if called upon, to serve churches as you may feel the Lord directs. Preach to them, administer communion to them, baptize persons who come and give the church satisfaction, and whatever else devolves upon an ordained minister of the gospel of Christ. I understand the apostle in the Scripture referred to, to mean that you should be careful of your conduct and also of your words. He said a bishop must have a good report of them that are without; his is a good work and his conduct must be in line with the work in all things, showing thyself a pattern of good works, whatever we attain to, or whatever we accomplish in the kingdom of God is by grace. As to the doctrine: use a form of sound words, and there is no form of words so sound as that given to the apostles by the Holy Ghost. Be careful, therefore, to say nothing that is not in perfect harmony with what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ have said. Sheep love clean food in a clean place, so as well as giving them the truth as it is in Jesus, let it come from a clean life, setting examples worthy for them to follow. Having now accepted ordination at the hands of the presbytery upon the authority of the church, if called upon to serve churches you are not at liberty to refuse to do so without very good reasons. You go forth now, my dear brother, with the fellowship of the church and these brethren of the presbytery, and our prayer is that the God who has called you to this blessed and glorious service will go with you and so bless your service to them that they will glorify the God that is in you. We bid you God speed. Amen.

WATCH YOUR DATES.

WE wish to request our subscribers when sending in their subscriptions to see that the date on the little pink slip bearing their address is changed. If not changed, please let us know immediately (for that signifies you have not been given credit for the money sent) and we will look into the matter. By consulting that date you can tell at a glance to what time your subscription is paid. Dec. 28 means that your subscription is paid to December, 1928; June 27 means your subscription is only paid to June, 1927, &c.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TRENTON, N. J., May 24, 1928.

DEAR SISTER DOLSON:—While I feel it is not quite right to answer your dear letter so promptly, yet it means so much to me that I just feel like telling you so. The portions of Scripture you mentioned have been much on my mind, but until I received your letter I could see no real meaning in them. As you say you had a glimpse of what it meant to you, how I wish you could have written me more about it. In the eighth verse of the eighth chapter of Solomon we read, "We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for." To me that is the church under the law, not developed to the full usefulness of motherhood. We know that she was in God before the world was made, but to be perfected unto the day "she shall be spoken for" she must needs to grow slowly and surely, must by every effort on her part do the thing that tends for growth. No knowledge is given her that she is not her own, but bought with a price. "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."—Eph. ii. 12. This I think plainly sets forth the undeveloped church of God under the law. In the seventh chapter of Song of Solomon, first verse, it reads, "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes [shod with the preparation of the gospel], O prince's daughter," and in the third verse, "Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins," showing the perfection of the church in the gospel, fully able by the blood of Christ to comfort and succor those that make the perfect kingdom of God. In another place we read, "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed," which again shows the church under the law kept by the heavenly Father until the day of the Lord. Isaiah beautifully speaks of it: "I the Lord do keep it: I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night [under the law] and day [in the gospel]." Now, sister, this is a poor expression of the beauty I have in thinking on these things, and may God grant you charity as you read it. There is no place in the word of God that shows us that the church, or bride, is or ever has been separate from her husband. It is not given to her to work out the salvation of his people, but to comfort those the Lord brings out from the world to show forth his glory. As brother Dodson in a recent editorial, and brother Lefferts in a letter to me, so beautifully shows, that while women may not become preachers and teachers in the church, yet they are given strength to bring forth fruit unto his glory. Brother McClanahan's letter in the April SIGNS is beautiful, and as I read it over it is sweeter than ever. Many times I read a letter the second time with much more understanding that with the first reading. I had the glorious privilege of going to the Baltimore Association, and enjoyed every minute of the time. The preaching was good, and the ordination service of brother Topping was touching and beautiful. The hospitality of the friends there was sweet and generous. I often wonder why such blessings come to me, who am so unworthy of them all. I

have never felt the force of the words so strongly or so beautifully as I did in Baltimore when I met brethren and sisters and they expressed by words and hand clasps their love and fellowship for me. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

"Lo, what an entertaining sight
Are brethren that agree,
Brethren whose cheerful hearts unite
In bands of unity.

When streams of love from Christ the spring,
Descend to every soul,
And heavenly peace, with balmy wing,
Shades and bedews the whole."

It is when the flesh comes between us and our God that darkness covers the people, that we cannot see the beauty of Christ in his church, nor the mark in the forehead of his elect, but it is still there as beautiful as ever, and when the day star arises in our hearts we know and feel that the prophecy is true: "And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness."

I am so glad sister Naomi could be with you for a little while; she is such a comfort.

Many times I feel like writing to you, but dearly as I love you for the truth's sake I do not feel to intrude, and cannot expect you to take your time in reading and answering my poor letters. I hope to see you at New Vernon, if it so pleases God that we both are there. Wish you could be with us at Hopewell next week, and could spend the nights with me.

Love and fellowship from your little sister,

ELIZABETH L. FETTER.

[The above is a letter written by sister Fetter, of Trenton, N. J., to sister Dolson, of Warwick, N. Y.—ED.]

BATH, Maine, Dec. 17, 1927.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—It is with gladness in my heart I can thus address you. I hope you will not think it strange I write you again so soon. I did not tell you what I wanted to, as the devil was saying to me, Oh he will not care to hear what one as ignorant as you has to say, but God gives me the assurance that I can talk to you with an open heart and you will overlook my ignorance and all my mistakes and have charity in your heart, for Christ has given me to love what I see in you and I wish I could tell you of that love. One said, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." That is a wonderful evidence, and if we have that love for our brethren how much more does He love his children. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." So he has put that love in our hearts. I feel that you are an undershepherd and I am one of your flock and it is to you I can go for counsel; as God gives it to you you comfort the little ones. It was you who baptized me of that water John baptized Christ in of Jordan. "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." That means unity and one in Christ Jesus, nothing outside of him. When we have had these wonderful things revealed to us what can we want outside of Jesus? It is all in him, for in him we live and move and have our being. We are told, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." I forget how rich I am in God, his goodness to me, the boundless grace and mercy he has stored up for them that love him, how he took

me from that mire and placed my feet upon that solid Rock and put a new song in my mouth. How I like to sing that song of how he called me from darkness into his marvelous light, how he taught and instructed me and led me in paths I knew not. Paul said there was no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, and if it is after the Spirit the Spirit of God dwelleth in you, and if Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. How I hope I have some of that Spirit in me. Paul said, Hope that is seen is not hope, but if we hope for that we see not then do we with patience wait for it, so I pray God give me the patience to wait and see what lies at the end of the race. How I wish to-day I might hear you talk of that wonderful grace, for I know you are speaking to-day to some of God's people. I am thankful God keeps the desire in my heart to hear his servants proclaim the truth, for I know it is not the desire of the natural man. Now that winter has come we cannot assemble ourselves together, but it will not be for long, as time passes away quickly. I often think of the church at Bowdoinham and the few members: brother and sister Tedford, sister Bell and her daughter, Attie, Agnes, Nettie, my own sister as well, sister Annie and myself, the least of all, and I pray we will be kept in love, peace and fellowship in the future as in the past. They are all as well as usual, with the exception of sister Tedford, she is not. I get to see sister Attie occasionally. She is a comfort to me and I have loved her ever since she used to come to our home when I was a girl. When she talks I think it wonderful she is given such ability to tell what I would like to, but cannot. I hope I will always be kept to be a help to the little church and not a hindrance. I do not want to do or say anything not in accord with it. My life seems to have been made up of mistakes and blunders, but the Lord has been good to me all my days. I know not why.

Well, brother Dodson, I hope I have not wearied you so I cannot write again, for I often long to write, but always ask, What have I of interest to tell? I received your good letter, also the book. Thank you. May God give you strength day by day as you need it, is my prayer.

With love and fellowship from a very unworthy sister,

RACHEL BEAL POTTER.

ALTON, Kansas, March 20, 1928.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—If you will allow me, a poor and sinful worm of the dust to address you thus. Inclosed find check for six dollars to apply to my subcription to the SIGNS for the past three years. I acknowledge and am thankful for your kindness in sending the paper to me, for it is the only preaching I get as there are no Old Baptists about here, and I do not care to hear anything that does not sound right. We had a church here at one time with about thirty members, but many have gone to their eternal rest and the balance have moved to other States, so I am left alone with the church book. I am seventy-six years old and am as sinful as I am old. I wonder sometimes if I have been born again, yet when I look back fifty years over my experience hope springs up anew. I know it takes the power of God to keep man from sin; we cannot even control our thoughts. I was born and raised in the Lutheran faith in Germany, and in September, 1880, I joined the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, in Jack County, Texas.

I have been slow in acknowledging the kindness shown me by the publishers of the SIGNS, but now accept my heartfelt thanks for past favors received from your kind hands.

With brotherly love to all, I am, I hope, a poor sinner, saved by grace and grace alone,

JOHN L. BECK.

WEISER, Idaho.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I very much want two back numbers of the SIGNS, and am willing to pay for the same if you can send them and your bill for copies and expenses. First, February 1st, 1919, containing the subject "Prayer." Second, a copy of the SIGNS containing "God is equal in all his ways," found some time between May 1st and December 1st, 1924.

Hoping you can find one or both and will let me pay you for all trouble and expenses, I remain,

Your friend in need,

M. N. WEBB.

[IF any of our readers have either or both of these numbers of the SIGNS and are willing to part with them, they will please communicate with brother Webb, whose address is N. M. Webb, R. D., 53 E. Butterfield Street, Weiser, Idaho. —ED.]

PLEASANT HILL, Mo., Sept. 14, 1928.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I have felt I would like to tell you of the blessed privilege I had in being able to attend the First Kansas Association, held in the home of brother and sister W. I. Zinn, near Meridan, Kansas, the 7th, 8th and 9th of September. Services began each morning at 9 o'clock, also held afternoon and evening sessions, and the time between seemed spent in spiritual conversation, and all were a unit, seeing eye to eye and speaking the same thing. It was truly a lovely place to be. The preaching brethren were Elder T. E. Attebery, of Greenwood, Mo., Elder L. L. Schenck, of Topeka, Kansas, and brother W. T. Huett, of Jacksonville, Ill., and brother Davis, of Dodge City, Kans., and it was a feast to sit under the sound of their voices. We were very comfortably cared for and made to feel one with them. There is no band like that elsewhere, and I hope I may be able to visit them again in the near future and to welcome them, or any of the true Israel of God, into my home.

With love to all the household of faith I am unworthily,

(MRS.) J. W. TAYLOR.

CLAIRETTE, Texas, July 8, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—After so long a time I will send in my subscription, and I beg you to overlook my being so slow. I could have sent it before, but have had so much trouble I just put it off from time to time, so please excuse me and I will try and do better next time. I wish every Old Baptist who is able would take the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for I think it is the best Baptist paper ever published, and I ask you writers to write on and tell the good old story of salvation by grace that gives the good Lord all power, glory and honor.

Our little church here at Clairette asks all peace-loving Baptists to visit us and affiliate with us, so if any Old Baptists who want peace on the terms of the Bible, that is, in giving the good Lord all the power, glory and praise, come this way we ask them to stop with us and behold our order and preach for us, and we will be glad to have you. We want peace and love multiplied. May the good Lord be with his people and keep us all of one mind and one accord, is my prayer.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

W. R. HARDIN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1928.

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EXODUS III. 5.

"PUT off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

We have just had another wondeful meeting of the Lexington-Roxbury Association, and with the fragrance and joy of this meeting in our soul, and Old Baptist company in our home, we retire to our room to write once more to our brethren and friends at home and abroad. What shall we write? Surely it should be easy out of the fullness of one's heart to ascribe greatness unto the Lord, to declare that he is a rock and that his way is perfect, and to the living in Zion, those who have been lame from their mother's womb, or who may be blind and halting, to them we can say, "Such as I have give I thee." While about our chores this morning, realizing it was our time to write, that this writing was a duty to our brethren and friends that we ought not to shirk, the question arose, On what subject shall we write? The words came to us, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." The angel of the Lord appeared unto Moses in a flame of fire out of the midst of the bush. This bush was found on the mountain of God, and it was the only bush in all the world that the angel of God dwelt in. This bush is a type of the church of God, "the mountain of the Lord's house," which is at "the top of the mountains." It is the blessed city that is set upon a hill, that cannot be hid, and in this glorious gospel day, to every one unto whom Jesus the angel of the Lord appears, this blessed bush, the city of our God, is a "great sight," the most wonderful sight that eye hath ever seen.

"Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God,
He whose word cannot be broken,
Formed thee for his own abode."

The name of the city in that day shall be called, "The Lord is there." "And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush." What a wonderful light this flame of fire sent up from the midst of the bush, and this very light lighteth every man that cometh into the world. One of old said, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." Fire is not only for a light but it also destroys and consumes, it cleanses and refines. This fire then is the word of God spoken by his own sent servants, for it is written. He "maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire." The angel of the Lord was in the flame of fire, Jesus is in every God-sent message spoken by his servants in the church to-day. Paul tells Timothy to "Preach the word," and God says, "It shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I

sent it," and so the brush burned, and just so the election of grace shall know of his presence and talk of his power. Isaac of old said, Father, here is the wood and fire, and such things are sure to all the seed. In all ages holy men were blessed to testify of Jesus, and their testimony, as clear as a flame of fire, continues its course, for the angel of the Lord was in it, right through the night of Judaism to the dawn of the gospel day, and it came from the midst of the bush. Now when Moses saw that wonderful sight he said, "I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt." And God called from "the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." If Moses, who afterwards was the lawgiver, with his body full of vigor and his eye keen, could not come nigh, how much less we who are afar off. There is no way that we can see this great sight except as the Lord appears to us. Jacob did not find the Lord, but the Lord found Jacob; Moses did not appear to the Lord, but the Lord appeared unto him. Job said, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee [that is, when the Lord appeared unto him]. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Now Moses not only saw the great sight, but the Lord spoke to him, saying, "Moses, Moses," which means this, that the Lord makes no mistake in his call, it is not a universal call, but it is a discriminating call. Moses is a stranger to others and to himself, but he is no stranger to God. Why, it was God who saw fit he should be "a proper child," and when laid in the little basket of bulrushes by the riverside, and he as a helpless child cried, it was the Lord's kind providence that preserved him from all harm and provided a place for him in Pharaoh's house to be the son of Pharaoh's daughter. The Lord knew Moses, and he knows each of us, just what we are and how we are. Long after the time that the Lord called Moses, there was a man who hated the name of Jesus and despised his cause, and he, in the height of ambition, went his own way, but the Lord knew him, and the Lord said, "Saul, Saul." Oh what a light, and what a voice, surely it is enough to make the vilest and hardest heart to tremble and be astonished.

"Put off thy shoes from off thy feet." On this holy ground the feet are exposed to the scrutiny of God himself, no covering of man's making will do there, no self-righteousness or human attainments, for we must all come naked before him with whom we have to do."

"The place whereon thou standest." There are but two places presented in the Scripture where the whole of the human race can stand. Some stand as they ever did, in Adam, having no other righteousness but that of the flesh, and there are a number that no man can number which stand in the second Adam, the Lord from heaven. Those who stand in no other righteousness but that of the flesh stand only upon a foundation of sand, that cannot hold their building. When the tempest of God's wrath comes upon them, they will be like the "chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish." Those who are led of the Lord, kept and preserved unto his

blessed appearing, these stand in the second Adam, our Lord Jesus Christ. Chosen by God before the world began, and given in covenant love to the Son, and the Son saith, All that the Father hath given me shall come unto me, and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. He calls them by name and they answer him, these stripped of all self-sufficiency, knowing that they cannot deceive God nor hide anything from him. God says to them by his own mouth, "The place whereon thou standest is holy ground." At another time God said to Moses, "Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock." What wonderful words, "There is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock." This is the blessed Rock of Ages, and that is the place that is by God's appointment and God's revelation and it is holy ground. The shoes of legalism must be taken off here, the effort of the creature is vain, for all creatures that shall witness this "great sight" shall "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." They shall realize that there is a place for them, and no other place for them will suit them but the "Rock." Put in the Rock, not by man, for man has never been able to point out the place, but put there by God's electing love. No wonder Moses hid his face and was filled with fear. We, too, cannot even think of these things without feeling our insufficiency for these things. Our feet exposed, yea, conscious of what unworthy wretches we have been all our life long. Ah! but it is God who says, "The place whereon thou standest is holy ground." It was as he stood upon this holy ground that Paul could say, "O wretched man that I am!" but could also add, "I thank God through Jesus Christ." Who shall separate us from the love of God? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. All these things are according to the word of God, the flame in the midst of the bush, and though the church endures these things, yet like the bush it is not consumed. Is it not wonderful, my dear readers, that in this dark and cloudy day the church still shines in the light only of her Lord? Our poor cold hearts are still warmed at times by the same flame that warmed the hearts of the two disciples who journeyed from Jerusalem to Emmaus. And what a wonderful flame is God's love which is shed abroad in our hearts, so that each can feel his brother's sigh and with him bear a part. As we see this in the church to-day it is a "great sight," and to this poor sinner such a place is holy ground.

G. R.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANKS.

In each copy of this issue of the Signs of the Times we are inclosing a Subscription Blank as a convenient form for our subscribers to send in their subscriptions, the majority of which expire with the end of the year. It would greatly encourage the editors and publishers to receive some new subscriptions, together with the old ones; if each one would try and get us at least one new subscriber it would assist us greatly. Brethren, sisters and friends, will you see what you can do?

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Elder J. T. Barnes having changed his address from Walla Walla, Washington, to Freewater, Oregon, requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by sister Della Davis.)

The Elders and messengers composing the First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists, to the churches composing our body, and to the saints abroad, greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD :—With a realizing sense of the weakness of the flesh, and utter dependence upon the God of all wisdom and power, it is with much fear and trembling that this attempt is made to perform the duty appointed to me at our last session, yet with a desire to be obedient to your request, and in so doing trust it is with a feeling of reverence to his great and holy name. It is my desire, if the Lord wills, to call your attention to the words found in Isaiah xxxiii. 20, 21, which have been impressed upon my mind for some time: "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby." There is nothing more beautiful to the spiritual view than the city which God has chosen to put his name there full of the solemn praises which the inhabitants bring to God, the builder and maker of this city of solemnities. He keeps it as a tabernacle that shall not be taken down, not one of its stakes, or points of doctrine shall ever be annulled, not one of the cordon of blessed promises and sweet assurances of joy, peace and rest in him shall ever fail. In all these precious things the glorious Lord, Maker and King, is unto us a place of broad rivers and streams. This all-over glorious place is from whence flows the pure river of water of life, the streams of which make glad this lovely city of our solemnities. As the rain comes out of heaven and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth, so do the lovely streams of mercy, truth and grace flow out from this holy place. The joys of these gently flowing streams come not by works of righteousness which we have done, but from the Place, the source of all good. No galley with oars, no slavish servitude with the oars of self-righteousness and imaginary good works, can ever soil the quiet streams of this river of life. None of the gallant ships, the worldly churches with their costly edifices and their boasted number of thousands, and hundreds of thousands of adherents, shall ever pass by, or have even a view of this city of solemnities, this "little city with few men in it." These few men, trusting alone in "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon," can all say with one voice, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, not unto us, for the Lord is our Lawgiver, Judge and King, he will save us, and unto his name be all the glory. He is unto us a place, a hiding-place from the storms, and a covert from the adverse winds that beat upon us. That lovely Place from which flows the gentle streams of all the sweet fruits of the Spirit in which we delight to walk is synonymous with the words of the prophet, in which he says, An highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called, The way of holiness; and the redeemed of the Lord shall walk there. No ravenous beast (as the horseleech's daughter, crying, Give, give,) shall go up thereon. The vulture's eye scanning the world for the richest places on which to feed, has

never seen this "way." It is only for those, the poor wayfarers, the fools for Christ's sake, they shall not err therein. This way is Christ. ("I am the way.") He has put his name there, and his name is Jesus, for he shall save us. He hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, and nothing shall ever be able to separate us from the streams of love, mercy, joy and peace in "the Way." "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord," for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by my name, thou art mine, and this people I have formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise. Oh what a wonderful Savior, and just as surely as he has an elect people, just as surely he will come again and gather them to everlasting rest. He says, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

"And gathered around the great throne
Where bright golden crowns we shall wear,
Hosannahs to sing till the heavens shall ring,
Oh what must it be to be there.
To feast on his heavenly charms,
And bask in the smiles of his love;
Throughout ages to come, with harp and with tongue
Singing unceasing anthems above."

Now we are of the earth, earthy, but then shall we bear the image of the heavenly, and when we awake in his likeness then shall we be satisfied, for we shall see him as he is. "Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem." Oh what a glorious thought, that all the redeemed of the Lord shall meet in that heaven of bliss. Can any thought be more precious to the poor and afflicted people of God? And there shall be no night there, for the Lord God giveth the light, and he shall wipe away all tears from our eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for all the former things are passed away. Oh may it be our happy lot when time shall be no more, to enter into that heavenly place prepared for those who diligently seek him, ever to be with him and praise him for evermore.

Our burdens at his feet lay down,
And change the crosses for a crown;
In songs of adoration raise
Each tuneful voice to him in praise.

L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator.
MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

(Written by Elder J. C. Woodrum.)

The Pocatalico Old School, or Predestinarian Baptist Association, in session with Bethel Church, Lincoln County, West Virginia, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, August 31st, September 1st and 2nd, 1928, to the associations with which we correspond, and to all of like precious faith with us, sendeth greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Having been selected by your body at our last association to write a letter, and having consented to do so, I will by the help of the Holy Spirit attempt to write on a subject which I hold dear and precious: Election, absolute, eternal and personal. (Scripture: 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14.) If there were no other Scripture in the sacred word of God except this one, I think we all should be bound to receive and acknowledge the truthfulness of the great and glorious doctrine of God's ancient choice of his family, though numerous other texts are found in his word bearing as strongly as this one. We read, "By the decree of God, for the manifestation

of his glory some men and angels are predestinated, or foreordained to eternal life through Jesus Christ, to the praise of his glorious grace; others being left to act in their sins to their just condemnation, to the praise of his glorious justice. These angels and men thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished. Those of mankind that are predestinated to life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, out of his mere free grace and love, without any other thing in the creature as a condition or cause moving him thereunto." By the sin of our first parents, commonly called original sin, the image of God was utterly defaced in man, and he and his posterity of nature became enemies of God, slaves to Satan, and servants unto sin, insomuch that death everlasting has had, and shall have, power and dominion over all that have not been, are not, or shall not be, regenerated from above, which regeneration is wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost working in the hearts of the elect of God an assured faith in the promise of God revealed in his word, that from the eternal and immutable decree of God all our salvation springs and depends. The Bible does not only back up the truth of the doctrine of election, but also the doctrine of absolute election and predestination. We must say that election is absolute; that is, it does not depend upon what we are. God hath from the beginning chosen us unto salvation. I am sure this choice is not made because God saw anything in the creature of worth or merit, or that by his foreknowledge, as some believe, he saw that the creature would have faith. All the faith we have God, by free grace, gives to us, then why elect for that cause? Some ask, Why does God elect some and leave the rest in their sins? We answer, It is God's sovereignty, he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, he saves because he will save. Some say, He knew who would believe, and elected them. No one can come to the Son except the Father who sent him draw him, and all that the Father gave to the Son shall come to him. Yes, he knew all things, he saw the end from the beginning. No one can say that Jesus is the Christ only by him. No one can believe a thing until they know something to believe, or that something has been revealed. Peter could not have said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," had it not been that it pleased the Father to reveal his Son to Peter as such. So we, without hesitation, say and believe that every one of God's family was chosen, elected, ordained, called out, predestinated, absolutely from the beginning.

In the next place, election is eternal. God hath from the beginning chosen you unto eternal life. I cannot tell when the beginning began, can you? We might go to the time when all the universe slept in the mind of God, as yet unborn, until we enter the eternity where God, the Creator, lived alone, everything sleeping within him, all creation resting in his mighty gigantic thought, we have not guessed the beginning. Then our election, if elected, is eternal.

In the next place, election is personal. The Arminians say that election does not mean the church, but it means nations. God hath from the beginning chosen you. Then election is personal. It must be so.

Every one who reads this text, and others, too numerous to mention here, like it, will see that the Scripture continually speaks of God's people, one by one, and speaks of them as having been the special subjects of election.

"Sons we are by God's election,
Who by Jesus Christ believe;
By eternal destination
Sovereign grace is here received."

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Mod.
DELL SMITH, Assistant Mod.
H. J. BIRD, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists, to those with whom we correspond, and to all the household of faith scattered abroad, greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Under the faithful watchcare of him who never slumbers nor sleeps, and who has kept us as the apple of his eye, our lives have been preserved, and as monuments of his unfailing love and tender mercies we are again permitted to meet in an associate capacity, and in one accord to mingle our voices together, ascribing all honor and praise to him who is the chiefest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely. We have been enabled to feast upon that heavenly manna which comes down from above, from him who is the giver of every good and perfect gift, and the blessed tie that binds our hearts together in sweet fellowship and love has been manifest among us. Our visiting ministers have come to us proclaiming the glorious gospel of Christ, who rules and governs all things after the counsel of his own will; an unchangeable God, who is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. He is of one mind and none can turn him.

Our next session is appointed to be held with Big Walnut Creek Church, to begin at 2 o'clock on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1929, the place to be decided later. To the brethren of our correspondence, we rejoice in your expressions of love and fellowship, to you, and to our visiting brethren now with us, and to all of like precious faith, we say, Come again.

Now may grace, mercy and peace abide with us all, now and for evermore.

L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator.
MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Peter Campbell was born December 18th, 1849, in Lobo Township, son of Archie and Effie Campbell, who were both members of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada. He was married to Effie Jane Gillies in 1899. They lived for a short time in Lobo Township, and then moved to St. Thomas, Ontario, and lived there until he died. He began at the carpenter trade when a young man and followed that trade as long as he was able to work. He was in poor health about five months, and died August 7th, 1928. He was not a member of the church, but was a believer and a dear friend to the Old School Baptist cause and regretted on his deathbed that he had never been baptized. His home has been one of my stopping places for fifteen years, and any hour, day or night, heat or cold, his door was always open and one was always made welcome. I had heard that he was poorly and seemed to have an intimation that something was going badly with him and for two days he was continually on my mind. It worried me until I wrote him a letter inquiring after his welfare, the letter arriving there just about the time he died. They wired me to attend the funeral, which I did, using for my text, by request, Peter's favorite chapter, the eighth of Romans, after which all that was mortal was laid to rest in the St. Thomas Cemetery. Brethren, we have lost a friend indeed, and may the Lord reconcile us, and may his blessing rest upon the lonely widow who is left to mourn, and enable us to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

ALSO,

William E. Chilton died very suddenly September 22nd, 1928. He had been in poor health for the last two months, and on the afternoon of the 22nd had driven his car to see the doctor, arriving home he fell on the stone walk, where he was found uncon-

scious by his sister-in-law and brother, with whom he had made his home. He was born July 5th, 1865, making his stay here 63 years. About twenty-five years ago he was baptized into membership of the Old School Baptist Church at Turners, Ky., called Cane Run, and was one of the pillars of the Church, always filling his seat. He was a man of few words, honest, and held in high esteem by his brethren. He was well established in the doctrine, often saying, They cannot preach too hard for me, the Lord has all power and cannot be moved. He will be missed in our meetings, in the home and in the neighborhood. We feel our loss is great, but that is his gain, and we bow in humble submission to the will of God, who doeth all things well. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. He is survived by one sister and two brothers: Mrs. Sam Dunaway, Ashby Chilton and Noble Chilton.

I tried to comfort the friends on the day of the funeral, using the words of St. John: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my words, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life." There was a large gathering of brethren and friends. We laid him to rest in the cemetery at Port Royal, Ky., to await the call of the Master. May the Lord comfort the brethren and friends.

ALSO,

Mrs. Archie McAlpine died at the home of her nephew, Malcom Galbraith, of the township of Ekfrid. She was the widow of brother Archie McAlpine, who predeceased her about two years. Funeral services were held from her residence, in Euphemia, and interment was made in Rickard Cemetery. Deceased was a daughter of the late Malcom McAlpine, one of the early pioneers of Ekfrid Township, and was in her seventieth year. She is survived by one brother, Duncan, of London, and one sister of Strathroy, besides a large circle of friends in Ekfrid.

I was asked to send the above to the SIGNS, as I had officiated at the husband's funeral, but was not available at the time of her death. Dear friends, we ask the Lord to reconcile us, and may he comfort those who mourn.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

Mrs. Nettie Hyatt Brown was born at Warwick, N. Y., July 13th, 1881, and departed this life April 6th, 1928, at Warwick Hospital, where she underwent an operation for gallstone a few days previous. Thirteen years ago she was afflicted with atrophy of the optic nerve, which caused her to be blinded from the scenes of earth, which grief was terrible for her to bear, as well as the family. But the endurance of the trial was wonderful indeed to us all, and many the tear she shed, and two weeks before, while at her mother's home, she made a misstep, and exclaimed so pitifully, Oh I am so tired limping around in the dark. But the time was shorter than we all realized, and she developed the trouble that ended the long night for her. Nettie knew, and loved the church of God, lived to sing the songs of Zion, and loved those who believed the truth as it is in Jesus, and loved to entertain the friends at her home, and the evidence, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," was surely her evidence. She suffered much before the operation, but we are told that afterward she did not regain consciousness sufficiently to talk, but sweetly passed away. She left her heartbroken husband who did all in is power, sparing nothing to make her happy at all times, a daughter, Ruth, her mother and sister Minnie, a sister Jessie died March 8th, 1915. Her funeral was held at her home, conducted by Elder R. Lester Dodson, who spoke from 1 Corinthians, 15th chapter, 13th to 16th verse, and read one of her favorite hymns (1247). Her cousins acted as bearers. There were thirty-two large floral pieces, which spoke for those who loved her dearly. Her remains were taken to Middletown, N. Y., for interment in Hillside Cemetery.

ALSO,

April 30th, 1928, **Mary E. Hyatt** passed away from earthly cares and sorrow, after a few days of severe suffering. She was born at Warwick, N. Y., June 5th, 1844, making her stay on earth 84 years. She was married November 14th, 1866, to Thomas M. Hyatt, to which union were born three daughters: Minnie, at home, Nettie, who preceded her in death twenty-four days, and Joie, wife of Arthur Gravel, who passed away March 8th, 1915. Mamma united with the Warwick Church, and was baptized in October, 1871, by Elder J. N. Badger, later the family moved to Middletown, and she then united with the Middletown and Wallkill Church by letter, and never changed, though in after years she again took up her residence in Warwick. Her life was a life of trial, and it can be truly said of her, as of her dear Redeemer, she learned obedience by the things she suffered. She was a devout Methodist fourteen years and was brought out so clearly and miraculously, election and predestination were made so plain to her. She talked freely about it to her mother, and she replied to her, If you get a religion that will save you and not your brother you better get rid of it. But in after years she, too, was brought to ask how God could be just and the justifier of an ungodly sinner, after worshipping with the Methodists thirty-two years. Mamma never had good health, and that coupled with the trials she endured made her sufferings intense, but the sweet consolation that came with the trials made her endurance wonderful at times, but, as in Nettie's affliction and death, she said there was no strange God with them.

Her funeral was held at the Warwick meeting-

house, and Elder Dodson spoke from the words, Hitherto the Lord has helped us, Praise ye the Lord, and read the hymn so wonderfully appropriate to her, 1252, using the word "she." Six of her brothers acted as bearers, and her remains were taken to Phillipsburg and interred in the family plot.

One who loved them and reverences their love,

MINNIE E. HYATT.

John M. Sparks died at his son's, Ed. Sparks, near Little Rock, Arkansas, January 11th, 1927. Brother Sparks was born in January, 1841, making his stay on earth 86 years. He was married to Elizabeth Jones when a young man, and they raised a family of several boys and girls, and all were of much honor to their parents. Brother Sparks was a soldier in the Civil War and served with the highest degree of honor, being a good and faithful soldier to the day of his discharge. He joined Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church about twenty-two years previous to his death, and lived a true and faithful member to his faith. Brother Sparks was uncompromising with what he felt to be Arminianism, believing in the unlimited power of God, and that His purposes were decreed to the transpiring of all things whatsoever come to pass. I was called by the family to conduct the funeral, which was held north of Little Rock, Arkansas, at his old home and home church, where he had lived and worshipped God for all those many years. It was a very cold day and I had to drive by automobile about 130 miles to be present. There were present on the occasion many of his good old friends who loved him and held him in highest esteem, to whom I tried to speak words of comfort. We feel to say: Surely another good and faithful soldier has passed on to his reward, which is an inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away.

ALSO,

Thomas Gray died at the home of Thomas Gray, his son, at Smackover, Arkansas, May 18th, 1927. Brother Gray was born in the year 1859, making his stay on earth sixty-eight years. He was married to Mary Barnes in 1878, to which union were several boys and girls born. I have not the names of them all, but know they were men and women of the highest character who lived to honor their parents. Brother Gray joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Salem, in Union County, Arkansas, and was baptized by Elder Dean, who was pastor of the church at the time, and one of the able defenders of the doctrine of salvation by grace from first to last, and which dear old brother Gray was an uncompromising contender for. Brother Gray was clerk of the Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association for many years, and was very proficient in his work. He was loved by all genuine Baptists, and many sought his counsel, both in and out of the church, and he usually was able to help those who needed assistance, and was always glad to assist as best he could. He was Justice of the peace of his township for forty years, and was regarded as one of the best, and his decisions were rarely appealed to higher courts. We realize that another wonderfully good and great man is gone, and that the Baptists, as well as the community at large, have suffered a great loss, but feel that while we lose, it is his gain, and that he has only gone on to the reward of the faithful soldiers who are to come to "the King's highway" to rest in peace. May we all bow in humble submission to God's will, and be able to say, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

I was called to conduct the funeral, which was held in the old burying ground where the old church used to stand. There were many friends and brethren present to show their last tribute of respect. I used for a text, 1 Corinthians xv. 50: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption," trying to comfort with the truth that we must drop this fleshly body to take up the incorruptible one, and that death is the gateway to that celestial city. May God give comfort to us all, that we, too, may feel to welcome that day when we shall be released from the earthly house of this tabernacle to be with our Lord and ever live with him.

V. R. HARRIS.

Mr. Thomas Y. Nicoll, son of the late Benjamin B. and Mary A. Nicoll, was born August 28th, 1854, died October 4th, 1928, and was interred in Bethel Cemetery, near Chesapeake City, Md., October 8th. His first wife was Miss Ella Boulden, and the second Miss Line Grafton, both were members of the visible church. The latter was a daughter of the late Elder William Grafton, of Harford Church, she preceded him in death about a year. Mr. Nicoll left evidence of a hope of life in Christ beyond this earth, having related an experience to the writer on at least two occasions, and while not a member of the visible church, he was in his late years a faithful attendant of the Welsh Tract Church and the different Associations where he could attend. He will be missed by many friends, as he was widely known, having been engaged in railroad transportation service for nearly forty years. Elder H. H. Lefferts preached his funeral sermon at the undertaker parlors of E. C. Wilson, Newark, Delaware, from the text, Revelation xx. 6, to the comfort of many who were blessed to hear it. He completed the assignment to the grave, at the house, on account of train connections too close to go to the cemetery, and the service of the Brotherhood of Trainmen concluded the final interment at the cemetery.

Written at the request of his sisters.

J. B. MILLER.

James A. Groshong was born in Wisconsin, Feb. 19th, 1849, and died of heart trouble Sept. 23rd, 1928, at his daughter's, Mrs. E. B. Horning, in Corvallis, Oregon, aged 79 years, 7 months and 4 days. He was married December 25th, 1869, to Miss Rhoda Hamar, and to this union were born seven children, six of whom survive him, viz., Mrs. E. B. Horning and Frank Groshong, of Corvallis, Oregon, Spencer L., of Centralia, Wash., Merril E, of Cloverdale, Oregon, Mrs. S. L. Burnaugh and Fred M., of Portland, Oregon, one brother "Roe," of Los Angeles, Calif., and one sister, of Topeka, Kansas, besides the church and a host of other relatives and friends. In early life, he, together with his parents, moved to Kansas, settling on a farm near Topeka, where he grew to manhood. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church in 1865 or 70, and was baptized by Elder Pence, before the division. He moved with his family to Oregon in an early day, settling near Corvallis, where he has since resided. After the death of his wife he broke up housekeeping, and has since lived among the children. After coming to Oregon he joined the church called Luckiamute, by letter, and afterward he removed his membership to Tallman, joining Bethel Church at that place, where his membership was at the time of his death.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral, which was held at the Hollingsworth Parlors, in Corvallis September 25th, and used for a text, 1 Corinthians xv. 51: "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep," speaking to a large and attentive audience. He was laid to rest by the side of his wife in the cemetery near Corvallis, there to await the sounding of the trumpet, which shall awaken the sleeping dead, and change our vile bodies from mortal to immortality, and so we are admonished to comfort one another with these words.

Written by one who feels to be less than the least in my Father's house. In bonds,

S. B. MOFFITT.

G. W. Holland was born August 23rd, 1851, and died August 8th, 1928, making his stay here on earth 70 years, 11 months and 15 days. Brother Holland was sick about eight days, but did not complain any. A doctor was called, but medical skill and loving care failed to restore him to health, and when his Master called, Child, come home, he obeyed without a struggle; as one going to sleep he passed on to the other world, to be, we believe, with those dear ones who have gone on before. Dear brother Holland was a member of the Old School Baptist Church, and was always faithful to the cause. He truly believed in gospel order, and had no use for disorder. We surely do miss him, but believe our loss is his eternal gain. His wife's maiden name was Nancy Moss. His children's names are as follows: Emma, Polk, Mary, Howell, John, George, Phoebe, Nute, Joe, Nell Forshee, Bessie Forshee, Jessie, Pete, Exil Forshee, Ivy, all of Vowells Mill, Ga., except Emma and George, Emma, of Lotus, Ga., and George, of Pearson, Ga. He also leaves one brother, Henry Holland, of Hornbeck, one sister, Rebecca Hale, of Jacksonville, Texas. We desire to express our heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family, and pray the God dear brother Holland so much loved and tried to serve be with them in this sad hour, and may he reconcile them to his holy will and keep him by his almighty power, is our prayer, and when life is over with us all, may we bask in the sunshine of his love, and praise the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in that world that will never end, where there will be no sickness, sorrow, pain nor death, but all be one in glory.

MARY SHARP.

Mrs. Naomi Graham died at her home, in Mardela Springs, Md., July 10th, 1928, aged 71 years. On December 17th, 1884, she was married to Levin H. Graham, to which union four children were born, three preceded her in death. One daughter, Effie, and Mr. Graham survive. Mrs. Graham's maiden name was Myers. In July, 1898, she was baptized in the fellowship of the Rewastico Church by the late Elder A. B. Francis. She continued steadfast in the faith to the end, esteemed by all who knew her. Mr. Graham and the daughter are left sad and lonely, but know it is better for her. She had been a great sufferer for years.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer, at the home, July 12th, and were largely attended. The interment took place in the family plot in the Methodist Cemetery at Mardela Springs.

By request.

H. C. KER.

Amos Showalter was born in Virginia August 25th, 1845, and died at Othello, Wash, September 28th, 1928, being 83 years, 1 month and 3 days old. He moved with his parents to Beardstown, Ill., when five years old, where he grew to manhood. October 17th, 1867, he was united in marriage to Elizabeth Moor, and to this union ten children were born, six girls and four boys, one girl dying while young, the rest living to be grown and married. Sally, the oldest girl, died a few years ago. Two boys and three girls live in Kansas, one girl lives in Colorado, Charles and Edward live in Othello, Wash., where brother Showalter died. Brother and sister Showalter united with Charity Church in Johnson County, Missouri, in 1888, were baptized by Elder R. M. Ogle, and proved their faith by their walk all through their lives. Brother Showalter was an ordained deacon in the church. Sister Showalter was called to the better world August 8th, 1923, and since that time brother Showalter had made his home with his children. For the last three or four

years he had made his home with Charley and Edward here in Othello, and he, by letter, placed his membership with Mizpah Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists and his funeral was conducted by the writer in said church September 30th, 1928, after which his body was laid to rest in the Touchet Cemetery to await the call of God, in whom he so long trusted. Brother Showalter was well known among the Baptists of eastern Kansas and Missouri. May the dear Lord reconcile us all to his gracious will, is my prayer.

J. T. BARNES.

Belinda Elizabeth Morlan Conner was born in Appanoose County, Iowa, December 29th, 1853, and passed away at her home at Promise City, Iowa, September 21st, 1928, at the age of 74 years, 8 months and 22 days. She was united in marriage to T. J. Conner April 15th, 1875, and to this union were born five children. Isis Ann having preceded her in death, she leaves to mourn their loss her husband, two daughters and two sons: Mrs. Charley Roberts, Lee and Ray, of Promise City, Iowa, and Mrs. E. J. Bryant, of Shelbina, Mo., eleven grandchildren, four brothers, Marion Morlan, of Mystic, Iowa., Robert, of Plano, Iowa, Henry, of Los Angeles, Calif., and Bluford, of Monmouth, Oregon, and many other relatives and friends. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church called Providence, near Plano, Iowa, August 16th, 1876, of which she was always a faithful member. Her seat was never vacant, unless providentially hindered, as long as her health permitted her to go. She was a great sufferer for years, bearing her sufferings with the patience of a christian. It is very hard to give her up, but we could not call her back to see her suffer any longer.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder W. I. Walters, of Stahl, Mo., at the Christian Church, in Promise City, on Sunday, September 23rd, 1928. Interment was in the Promise City Cemetery.

MAGGIE ROBERTS.

Anna Short Durand was born in St. Clair County, Mo., January 20th, 1857, and departed this life September 13th, 1928, aged 71 years, 7 months and 23 days. She was married to John B. Durand, of Prairie City, Mo., December 11th, 1877. Having resided at that place ever since. To this union were born four children, two boys and two girls: Walter, of Wyoming, Oscar, of Sumner, Wash., Jessie, of Excelsior Springs, Eugenie, the youngest, passed away at St. Joseph last January. There were eight grandchildren, one great-grandchild, one brother and sister in Los Angeles, Calif. She united with the Methodists early in life, and remained with them through life. She was a strong believer in salvation by grace and always attended the Old Baptist meetings and associations with her husband. During her last illness she told her husband and daughter that she was going to join with him when she got able to go to church. She was stricken with paralysis September 7th, 1902, from which she never recovered. She was stricken again August 7th, 1928. She was taken to Excelsior Springs to the hospital where she could be near her daughter who is a trained nurse, where she remained in a helpless condition for six weeks, when she had another stroke, and only lived about and hour. Her husband and daughter were with her when the end came.

The funeral was conducted at the schoolhouse in Prairie City by the writer and a Methodist minister, Mr. Miller, after which the body was laid to rest in the cemetery just north of town to await the call of our Master.

M. M. SHUMATE.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Jane Farrington, N. Y., $3; Mrs. M. Perry, Ark., $1; Mrs. Alice A. Bailey, N. Y., $1; G. A. Dundas, Cal., $1; Mrs. Virginia Dolson, N. Y., $3; Curtis Spitler, Ohio, $1.

MEETINGS.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects Elder George Ruston to be with them the First Sunday in December (2nd), 1928. For convenience services are to be held at the home of J. E. Livingston, 64 East Main St., Cobleskill, N. Y., the Lord willing, at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All welcome.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

SELMA, N. C., Sept. 25, 1928.

TO THE CHILDREN OF GOD SCATTERED FAR APART:—I want to drop you a few lines on the following text of Scripture: "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Allemia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." If this language teaches anything it shows that the people Jesus died for, and saved, are not a little few, as I have heard from the lips of some of our ministers, and have read in one of our papers, that the Savior "died for a little remnant." This has caused it to be imbeded in the minds of the people that Old School Baptists teach that none will be saved but a few Old Baptists. Nothing can be further from the truth than to teach Jesus died for a few people. The writers of the Bible when speaking of the church in her visible organization use the terms "few," "little flock," "remnant," but when they refer to all of the elect of God they use the words, "many," "innumerable company," &c. "Many be called, but few chosen." Out of this "many be called" God chooses a few, he reserves to himself a remnant who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. All that God calls will finally land in glory, for it is written in Acts ii. 39: "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Now listen! "In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise. Which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."—Eph. i. 13, 14. Again, 2 Timothy i. 9: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Every single soul God calls is called with an holy calling, and grace was given them in Christ before the world began, and God is not so variable as to give one of his people grace in Christ before the world began, and then they fail to receive it. Paul says grace teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. Can we find where the Bible teaches many shall be saved? Any one ought to know that a remnant

is only the small part of a bolt of cloth of the same color, same make exactly, that has not been bought and carried away. No one knows where the cloth is that has been bought and carried out in different parts of the country, so the remnant that God has reserved to himself is only the small part of his people, of the same material, same texture, same color, same stripe, &c. I heard one of our preachers quote, "God did not set his love upon you, nor choose you because ye were more than other people, for ye were the fewest of all people." Sure they were few then, but they were to multiply and increase until no man could number them. So God said to Abraham, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." They said to Rebekah, "Be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them." And it is written, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end."—Isaiah ix. 6, 7. This proves without a doubt his people would increase in numbers. Lister to Jesus. Do you think he would misrepresent the case? "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."—Matt. xxvi. 28. Here is the word "many" for the remission of sins. Now come with me to one of the most noted chapters in the Bible, Isaiah liii. 11, "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." Here the prophet says he will bear the iniquities of many. Now the last verse of this same chapter: "And he bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." He made intercession for the many. Let us find what Jesus says again. I think you will believe him, Mark x. 45: "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Matthew xx. 28: "Even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Jesus said this both in Mark and Matthew. Now what is said about the ransomed? Isaiah xxxv. 10: "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." This many shall come to Zion with songs and sighing and sorrow shall flee away. Not a few, not a little remnant, but, thank God, little ones, they are many. Let us resume our search and see if Jesus died for only a few. Romans v. 15: "But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many." Here we have many again. Romans v. 19: "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." "Many," yes, "many be made righteous." "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." They said to Rebekah, "Be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them." So it is very clear that this produced by an incorruptible seed that the flesh lusts against, and seals the natural man, who is the purchased possession, is not a few, but a great multitude. Now let Paul talk a little. He-

brews xi. 12: "Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable." I am very glad this is true. I have never looked at anything that encouraged me like this does. Oh I am so sinful, so polluted, so unworthy, so, like Solomon says, "I am black." I have been, and am yet, a sinner, and most of the time I see myself so sinful I say I do not want to go to heaven, for I am not fit to be there; I would pollute heaven, and every one there would shun me. Oh if I had never been, or if I had died when I was a babe, or had I been some little worm, or never had a being; if I only could be blotted out of existence and not be at all. I would give up all the beautiful hymns I have been given to sing without a book, and all I know or ever heard, just to be no more, but when I read Jesus died for a multitude as the sand of the sea shore innumerable it gives me a little hope that possibly I may be one the Savior washed "from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father." "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it." Many shall seek to enter in, but shall not be able. That is true. This is the church under consideration, and the gate is narrow. Here you find life, here is spiritual singing, here is preaching that has life in it. The other denominations are said to lead to death. Proverbs ii. 18: "For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead." Proverbs iii. 3-5: "For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil. * * * Her feet go down to death, her steps take hold on hell." Proverbs vii. 27: "Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death." Of the church it is written, Isaiah xxvi. 2, "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." The gate into the church is so narrow that no Free Mason, Odd Fellow nor any secret society party can enter in, for those who have that kind of spots on them will lodge on the gate posts. Paul says, "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." So if you think any secret society is a better husband than Jesus, take to it. They can pay for your funeral, &c., but none but Jesus can take care of you when death comes. So Jesus will not have a virgin if she has any husband but him, the King of kings and Lord of lords. If you found your wife had another husband would you live with her? I dare say no. So it is with our Savior.

I will quote one more text and then close. Revelation vii. 9, 10: "Lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, * * * clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." So here you are, so many that no man can number them. Will I be there?

> "Then will he own my worthless name,
> Before his Father's face,
> And in the new Jerusalem
> Appoint my soul a place."

If that be our happy lot among that innumerable company that no man can number it will be enough.

Your brother in hope of mercy,

I. R. GREATHOUSE.

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST HOME.

WHAT many of us have been hoping and working for is now within grasp of reality. There are two homes, either of which could be ideally arranged for our needs. They are both situated in one of the largest Old Baptist communities in the east. The surrounding country is very productive of practically everything necessary for the maintenance of the Home, all at moderate cost. The climate is mild and well suited to all-year-round comfort of those who desire to reside in it. Either place is within a few blocks of an Old Baptist meetinghouse. A Committee is investigating all the details, and will be prepared to report to the Board of Managers when it is officially convened and organized on the second Saturday in January, 1929.

Let me state again briefly the object of the Home: First, It is to provide for the necessities and comforts of the destitute (those who are without means of support, both members and friends of the Old Baptists within the bounds of the Eastern Association). Those who, because of affliction, or for any good reason should not be removed from their present environment, are to be provided for by the Board of Managers from the funds of the Treasury. Second, It is to provide comfort and pleasant surroundings to those who have means of their own, but are not pleasantly situated at present. There are those among us who are able financially to care for themselves, but are isolated from their brethren, and for various other reasons would gladly exchange their present mode of living for a place in the Home. Third, It has been realized, on the one hand, that there are brethren and friends whose church connections are unable to render them the assistance they need, while, on the other hand, there are brethren and friends whom the Lord has blest in a two-fold sense, (1) with a portion of this world's goods, and (2) with a desire in their heart to share their earthly possessions with those less fortunate in this respect, and the object of the organization is a means of bringing the two together. It is nothing more nor less than the bearing of one another's burdens, and thus fulfilling the law of Christ. Let me emphasize here, once and for all time, that no Association, church, member or friend is to be assessed for any amount, at any time. Whatever funds come to the Home are to be given purely voluntarily, and the sole object of the organization is to see, as far as it is possible to do, that such funds as are given for this purpose shall be wisely administered. It is combining in a common fund certain of our resources for the welfare of the whole, to the end that the household of faith shall partake one with another of such blessings as the Lord has been pleased to bestow upon them.

In conclusion, there are three classes from whom I would like to hear direct: 1. Those who are without funds and are really in need of assistance. 2. Those who have means, but would like to live in the Home. 3. Those who would like to contribute of their means to this cause. As the first meeting of the Board is to convene on the second Saturday in January, next, please address a letter to the undersigned, stating your case. This is necessary in order that we may know how to provide for, and the amount of funds that will be available for that purpose. If desired the undersigned will treat in confidence for the time being what you have to say, so write freely and fully. Should those who are to contribute prefer to make their contributions in

installments, please state when, and the amounts. If there are needy cases who are unable to write me direct, will some brother or friend furnish me with the particulars of such cases? While this letter concerns particularly our brethren and friends in the Eastern Associations, it is earnestly hoped that the Lord will use it to the end that the pure mind of the brethren throughout the country will be stirred up with regard to their duty and privilege toward the poor of the flock. May they not look upon their brother or sister who are naked and destitute of daily food, and say, "Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body." Let every one give according as the Lord has prospered them, remembering it was our Lord who said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." It is also written, "Whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" Brethren, let us show our faith by our works. Let us not be hearers only, but doers of the things which pertain to the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Again I would impress upon you the importance of writing to me promptly, January 1st, next, at the very latest.

Yours in love and in the fellowship of the gospel,

R. LESTER DODSON.

12 ADDISON AVE., RUTHERFORD, N. J.

COLUMBUS, Ga., Aug. 31, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have a desire to write and tell you how comforted and encouraged I have been lately by many words written in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, they were as crumbs fallen from the Master's table. Jesus is the life of every one who loves him, and I do hope I have been made to love him and praise him forty years. We love him because he first loved us. Again, he says we know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. I do believe I love all God's dear children from my heart, but whether I am one of this favored people or not is my fear. I am so vile, so prone to sin, I fear I am not born again; a poor afflicted creature, a worm of the dust, not anything good I can do. That which I would I do not, and that which I would not that I do, so if I am saved it is through God's great love and mercy. But should we complain of our afflictions? David did, but only unto the Lord, so we carry all our troubles and trials unto this same Father of love, and whose mercy endureth forever, and says, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. I feel to be waiting and hoping to see my Savior and be like him. For some days past the comforting and lovely words, "Good things to come," have been with me, causing me to rejoice in hope that I have an interest in this, and the many, many good and precious promises given this favored people in Jesus. Christ's everlasting gospel ever heralds glad tidings of good things to come; yes, from step to step in all their pilgrimage God's dear children have this declared unto them, There are "good things to come." In sickness, in health, in poverty's vale, abounding in wealth, in all our distresses this hope is set before us: There are good things to come. In life and in our dying hours these good things will be flowing, ever be coming to believers in Jesus, and throughout eternity there will be good things coming, coming from the

throne of God and of the Lamb. While sojourning here we have bitter, evil things coming to us, but enough new covenant things to sweeten all, to hold us up and cause us still to be hoping for the good things to come. Present mercies are blessed, sweet, refreshing, but we are looking and longing for an abundant harvest; yes, an infinite harvest of good things is stored up for the saints to reap. All is promised, all is secured and sure to all the elect ones in Christ Jesus our Lord. He is our High Priest of good things to come. The children of God on earth have their fears and sighs, yearnings and anticipations in regard to eternity; they are of God and his works in them exercise them to know him now by faith in the face of Jesus Christ and in eternity to know him by sight, face to face in our Jesus Christ. Now we see as through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I know as also I am known. We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. With the saints the time on earth is but a sojourn; they are pilgrims and strangers journeying home to that better, heavenly country, sighing and longing for that city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. These are believers in the gospel and are sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory. (Eph. i. 13, 14.) There are many precious Scriptures left on record certifying to the faithful that these things are truth and reveal to them things that are eternal. Listen! "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ."—Titus ii. 13. "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better."—Phil. i. 23. "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus."—1 Peter v. 10. "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."—Psalms lxxiii. 24. "Christ in you the hope of glory."—Col. i. 27. "And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."—Rom. ix. 23. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory."—Col. iii. 4. "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."—Heb. vi. 19, 20. These and many more Scriptures declare the eternal truth that Christ, our Head, Husband, Redeemer and High Priest made his way then in our behalf, through seas of affliction, with strong crying and tears, in agonies and death, for our sake. He arose and ascended and passed into the heavens, there he appeared in the presence of God for us, our King and High Priest, upon his throne of "good things to come." This is that day that shall witness and yield to us all that we now hope for. Our Lord Jesus Christ, who reigns in heaven in eternal glory, is expecting this day, for he, "after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool."

"Triumphantly glorious, our Head has ascended
O'er death and the grave, all their powers laying low;
This gives us a rising when time shall be ended,
Death no more shall hold us, ah never, oh no."

By faith we have only a taste of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. But because Christ is our Head,

our almighty Husband and Redeemer, because he is risen from the dead his ransomed body, the church, shall not as now in faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, but glorified, immortal, incorruptible, shall appear with him and sit with him in his throne, in the image of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Then shall the church, the Lamb's own bride,
Both crowned and seated by his side,
Outshine the sun's meridian ray."

This is the earnest expectation of all the little flock whose trust is in the Lord and who love his name. These are hoping and longing for that infinite harvest of good things stored up for the saints to reap. O, dear kindred, I hope I shall be with and like our Lord and dwell with him for evermore.

"I hope I shall soon be landed
On yonder shores of bliss,
There, with my powers expanded,
Shall dwell where Jesus is."

I will close, hoping to find as much comfort in the pages of the dear old SIGNS in the days to come as in the past. May the Lord continue to bless you in your labor of love.

Your little sister, the least of all, hoping and trusting in Jesus,

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Oct. 27, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER COULTER:—In consciousness of the fact that your love and fellowship for me has been unabating for over thirty years, and that your regard for me includes the people I serve, I am confident you will be present to assist us in the Council called with a view to ordaining brother R. Lester Dodson, so I am not writing in fear lest you will not come, but to ask that you urge others of your churches to be with us. It is written, "In multitude of counsellors there is safety," and an assembly of them who are zealous of the peace and prosperity of Jerusalem is desirable. Not only the welfare of churches is involved, but also the welfare of the candidate is involved, in ordination. It has seemed to me that separating, setting apart, of one to the ministry of holy things is so manifestly an ordinance of God that we cannot be too careful against laying hands suddenly on any man. Hastiness in this respect has caused great trouble in the churches. Not only in past times, but even to-day, there are contentions and strivings, confusion and all manner of disorder among brethren, due primarily to the advent of men in the ministry who had never been proved as possessing the qualifications of a servant of Christ. Too often are we persuaded that glibness of speech, a seeming zeal to promote the good and welfare of the brethren, disposition to talk frequently and much of spiritual things, is a call to preach. It may be, but too often it is not, as has been abundantly proven. The test of all profession is the rule Jesus applies: "By their fruits ye shall know them." And again: "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." Therefore a profession of loving the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity is also a profession of all that is necessary in order to keep his commandments. We cannot take one part and leave out another that is essential to it. To preach the truth, and not DO the truth, is having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. It is nowhere said, Ye shall know a man's calling by his talk, by hearing his good words, or by what he says about his experience, &c., but, "By their fruits ye shall know them," for every tree is known by its fruit. We like to hear a preacher say he feels himself less than the least of all saints; that

he is not worthy of the loving-kindness of the brethren; that his wicked heart and unprofitable life are a burden and reproach to him; but when there appears nothing in his deportment savoring of such humility it looks like that man's religion is vain. His profession is not "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." It is not "being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." It is written, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" Their walk is worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called; the word of the Lord is in their heart and in their tongue, and as preachers of righteousness they follow after the things which make for peace. "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places."

The church here feels that the Lord has called brother Dodson to the work of the ministry, and our reason for thus judging is, he has ministered, and does minister, in word and deed, the things which make for peace, and for the edifying of the body in love. Please persuade as many as you can to come and confirm our judgment.

Affectionately your brother in Christ, I hope,

JOHN McCONNELL.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Oct. 31, 1921.

DEAR BROTHER McCONNELL:—Your expressions of love and fellowship for me during the past thirty years have filled me with pleasure and strengthened my hope that it has not been in vain. I firmly believe that our love and fellowship have in no wise emanated from an earthly source, but an heavenly, from heart to heart. It is a sweet evidence that we are Christ's, and he is our light and our salvation, and he is revealed in us by the Holy Ghost, having put away our sins and iniquities by the offering of himself in his suffering, in his death and resurrection, fulfilling every requirement of the law under which we were sentenced to death. I have traced your life-work through all the years, and can gladly attest that you have been with Jesus and learned of him, but with myself I fear, yet have a little hope from time to time.

It is in my mind to be with you on November 8th, as I feel the judgment of the Ebenezer Church is sound and correct. I will be glad to bid brother Dodson Godspeed. It being election day, some of the brethren feel they cannot go away from home. My wife and sister Galloway expect to be there, and I hope brethren Yerkes and Koch can be present.

With love to you and yours from us all, affectionately,

B. F. COULTER.

HOLLYWOOD, California, Oct. 8, 1928.

BRETHREN AND FRIENDS:—The unworthy writer learned Sunday, September 30th, that brother G. W. Horner was run down by a reckless driver the evening before, almost under the shadow of his own home, Second Street, Sautelle, California. Last Friday I learned he was unconscious, and the nurses gave little hope of his recovery. Saturday I could not find him in the General Hospital where he had been carried to receive treatment for a fracture of one lower limb and other injuries, and when I returned home I found a messenger wait-

ing with the sad intelligence of his death; he died some time the night before.

Brother Horner loved the truth in its simplicity and purity. While he was a frail man, physically, he was strong in the faith of Jesus and in the power of his might, and it would be more becoming, no doubt, for those who had known him before to write in his praise. I cannot refrain from saying, however, that I had been made to love him for the truth's sake. I am now trying to keep the tear drops back, in a measure, as I remember his strong belief in the extensive sovereignty of the everliving God, and would, if possible, describe how I was drawn the more to him every time I met him, from the first time I was introduced to him by my friend and brother, G. O. Walker, of Oregon, about a year ago, and it may be that he (Elder Walker) or Elder Arlidge will prepare in the near future a suitable obituary. I know he had been in perils that are common to the true and the tried during their earthly pilgrimage, and I know also he had been in perils among false brethren, and that lately, but it only made me love him more, if I know my own deceitful heart, and I grieve because I shall see his face no more in this life, yet hope through rich and reigning grace, yea, through the tender mercy of the covenant-keeping God to meet him in glory, for that God who gives grace gives glory, that excellent glory to every heir of promise, so in the midst of grief I have a measure of joy, and the comforts of hope abound from the simple fact that even though this man had his enemies, he has met the last one, and the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For the Lord doeth all things well, and He must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet. You know it is written, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." The Lord shall come, he "shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words," and may the Lord bless them to the comfort of the bereaved family, and all who mourn, being burdened in this earthen vessel, because of the weight of dull mortality, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin, in this we do groan, being burdened, but mortality is swallowed up of life in the resurrection of the just, and all the days of my appointed time will I wait until my change comes.

"Though plagues and deaths around me fly,
'Til he wills I cannot die;
Not a single shaft can hit,
'Til the God of love sees fit."

The abounding comfort we find at this time in these lines increases in a measure with the song he no doubt sang in other days,

"It is not death to bear
The wrench that sets us free
From dungeon chain, to breathe the air
Of boundless liberty."

"It is not death to die—
To leave this weary road,
And 'midst the brotherhood on high,
To be at home with God."

Even though the attendant circumstances at the time brother Horner was struck by the automobile make us think of his death as tragic, it was the Lord's way and Lord's time to call him that he go hence and leave the walks of men, and while his body is wrapt in the strange and indescribable dignity of death, and must be committed shortly to the narrow

limits of the tomb, faith declares that this corruptible must put on incorruption. The body is sown in weakness, but must be raised in power, mortality must be swallowed up of life, and in this hope we rest, we shall awake in the likeness of the glorified Son of God, and made fit to enjoy him forever and forever, and see him as he is. Though we who remain, because of the infirmities of the flesh, see not all things put under him, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, yet he hath put all things under his feet and must reign until the last enemy, which is death, be destroyed, so we sorrow not as those who have no hope, for Jesus declares, "Because I live, ye shall live also," and tremblingly in the midst of the things that seem so adverse and contrary to us, we on the field of battle sing and triumph in His triumph, while we fight the good fight of faith, and take up the refrain again,

"It is not death to fling
Aside this sinful dust,
And rise, on strong, exulting wing,
To live among the just.

Jesus, thou prince of life,
Thy chosen cannot die;
Like thee, they conquer in the strife
To reign with thee on high."

I must close, leaving this for your disposal, hoping that an abler and more worthy writer may be moved to write for the comfort of those visited by this sad dispensation of the unfrustrable providence of that God who doeth all things well, and who is declared to be able to do much above anything that we ask or think, turning the darkest events for our good and for his glory, who knows what we have need of even before we ask him, whose arm is not shortened that he cannot save or deliver, and show us mercy for Jesus' sake, and for his sake alone bind up the broken-hearted and comfort those who mourn.

Written in sadness, yet the comforts of hope, by one who loved him, and, if not deceived, hopes through rich and reigning grace to meet him, together with all the glorified, in that land where sadness can never come. In the comfort and conflicts of the gospel, we find ourselves cast down, but not destroyed; as dying, and, behold, we live; by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as poor, yet making many rich; as unknown, yet well known. It is written, We who live are always appointed unto death. Yea, we are counted as sheep for the slaughter, but if we are what we hope we are, who is able to pluck us out of the Father's hand?

I seem yet to be unable to express myself, but trust you will receive this in the spirit I desire to manifest in writing it. You will note the cause of my writing, and show reasonable forbearance, and rest assured that if any part of this disconnected, poorly written missive, or all of it, goes unpublished it will please me, if my wishes are all that should be considered. Pray for me when you find access to the throne of grace, that I may honor the High Priest of our profession, pass the time of my sojourn here in the love and fear of God, be a blessing to his people and live and die reconciled to the dealings of that God who is too wise to be mistaken and too good to do wrong; and may he put it in your heart and mind to mention those who weep, and those with whom we weep, and if it be his will may he give us the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness in due time.

I am, I hope, your brother in the common faith, T. D. WALKER.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Elder George L. Weaver has changed his address to 2197 Edgewood Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, where he requests his correspondents to address him.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1928.

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MATTHEW XXIV. 35.

"HEAVEN and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

We have been asked to give our views on the above quotation from Matthew. In order to rightly understand what is written, either in profane or sacred history, some knowledge of the time, condition and the intent of the writing is necessary. By reviewing the chapter, with its connections, one is brought to certain definite conclusions. Jesus had just said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." He was talking to legal Jerusalem, and it would appear from the development of the theme as it is recorded in the beginning of the chapter of our text that he was in one of her synagogues at the time he addressed her, for it is said he "went out, and departed from the temple." Then "his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." Whereupon his disciples inquired of him, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Darkness must precede light. Therefore, Jesus answered their questions as to what the sign of his coming and the end of the world would be by admonishing them and telling them some of the things that would come to pass, saying, "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars, and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in

all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." A search of history will doubtless verify the literal fulfillment of the foregoing prophecy. It is claimed that his disciples, with possibly one or two exceptions, were all killed and died as martyrs to the cause of Christ. How good it must have been to have him personally assure them, "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." He then declared, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come." While by his sufferings, crucifixion and death he had finished the work which the Father had given him to do, which was to put an end to the law by fulfilling its every requirement, the gospel of his kingdom was not preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations until the day of Pentecost was fully come, when "they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them: and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." It is declared that there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven, and that when that which had taken place was noised abroad, "the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language." It was on this occasion that the poor, ignorant, Galilean fisherman, Peter, stood up and declared so wonderfully these words, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words, Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him, in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." Old things had passed away and, behold, all things were new. Daniel had prophesied of these things when he said, "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people, and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book."—Dan. xii. 1. Therefore, Jesus said unto them, "When ye, therefore, shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains: let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." Peter said, "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord." But he added, "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved." Jesus, continuing on in the chapter we are considering, said,

"And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." It was by the imputing of our sins unto him who was able to bear the stripes that were laid upon him as the responsible Head, and the imputation of his righteousness unto us, that the days of the law, or strength of the law was ended, were shortened, or not accomplished against the elect, but it was Christ who wrought salvation for them. To such he says, "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: Behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together." He has come as the lightning from the east, and his light hath shown unto the uttermost parts of the earth, even unto the west, and his glory, as of the only begotten of the Father, is being beheld and God is being worshipped in spirit and in truth, but the eagles, significant of birds of prey, or those who would rob him of his honor and glory, are still gathered around the carcase, or wreck and ruin of legal Jerusalem, proclaiming its means of salvation. He said, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be taken, and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man, in heaven [the true church]: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory." This embraces the Gentiles. "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." His gospel has been preached since the day of Pentecost, and in the preaching of his word his people out of every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue are being gathered together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. His angels, or ministers, are lifting up their voices and blowing the gospel trumpet, and will continue to do so as long as time lasts, whether men hear or whether they forbear. Jesus told his disciples, "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." How true were his words, for did not they witness the very things which he told them, even to his death and resurrection? Having been made witnesses to the fulfillment of his words, they could speak as having authority, which they did; neither can any man declare his generation except he hath been made a witness to the sufferings of Christ, his death, yea, and the power of his resurrection. They must see and feel these things before they can declare, with John, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea." All such have seen the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, and they have heard a great voice out of heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people,

and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Let us remember and cherish well his words that "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." In the fifth chapter of Matthew, seventeenth and eighteenth verses, are recorded these words of his which were uttered when he had gone apart from the multitudes, up into a mountain, and when he was set, or ready, his disciples came unto him, and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot [the very least] or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." We see, then, plainly and clearly that the legal heaven and the legal earth must pass away before we can pass from death unto life, and glory be to his great and adorable name, that he hath fulfilled every jot and tittle of the law and his people are liberated from its condemnation and death and given life and set free in the glorious liberty which he has wrought by leading captivity captive and giving gifts to men. Let us never cease to sound forth his praise, and to declare his faithfulness, that he will perform all that he hath promised and will bring us forth more than conquerors though hell and death into that freedom whereby we shall be free indeed. Yes, his words shall not pass away. All he has spoken shall stand forever, and all the powers of earth and hell shall never be able to alter or change in any degree whatsoever a single word he hath spoken, nor to separate from him the weakest of the fold. He is the shepherd and bishop of their souls, and will keep them, world without end.

In conclusion, let us suggest this: Jesus was talking to the Jews; as a prophet he was sent only to the Jews. Hear his own words to the woman of Canaan, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." The four gospels, were they not written to the Jews? and the epistles of James, Peter, John and Jude, were they not all addressed to the same people? John in the very beginning of the book of Revelation says it was "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants *things which must shortly come to pass*," and in the very last chapter the voice of the Bridegroom said, "Behold, I come quickly," to which the "Spirit and the bride" answered, "Come." Was not all this prophetic of the setting up and establishing of the gospel church? Only the apostle Paul, who spake of himself as being one born out of due time, or to our mind manifestly called to be an apostle after the death and resurrection of Jesus, and designated by the Spirit to be the apostle unto the Gentiles, wrote unto others than the Jews, but even he addressed one epistle particularly to them. We verily believe if the brethren would keep in mind the thought that, with the exception of the writings of the apostle Paul, they are all addressed to the Jews and concern the destruction of the old heavens and the establishing of the new, a great deal of that which has hitherto seemed mysterious and incomprehensible will be clarified and become understandable. *Before his death and resurrection* Jesus sent forth the twelve "and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of

the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." *After his death and resurrection* he appeared unto the eleven, and said unto them, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." The middle wall of partition had then been broken down and the law of commandments contained in ordinances done away with, so that the word of God was no longer confined to the Jews, neither were the Gentiles any longer aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenant of promise, but were fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. The gospel day had dawned, the Sun of Righteousness had arisen with healing in his wings. If what we have said be true, and we urge every man to read for himself, are not many things otherwise hard to be understood made plain?

R. L. D.

CLOSE OF VOLUME NINETY-SIX.

WITH this issue the SIGNS OF THE TIMES adds another year of its existence to those gone before, making ninety-six since it was established in 1832. The year just closing has been very similar to those preceding it. It has brought its joys and sorrows, sunshine and shadows. We have done the best we could to give our readers sound doctrine through our columns, and hope we have published nothing to cause contention among the brethren or bring reproach upon the cause. If we have been given to comfort any, may God have all the praise, for we realize that without his guidance our feeble efforts would amount to nothing. It is wonderful indeed when we think how he has sustained the publication all these years, for we know that without his guiding hand it would have perished at the start, which makes us to hope he may continue with us in the coming year and bless our poor endeavors to the comfort of our readers and to the praise of his glorious name.

The business condition of the SIGNS is about the same as it has been for the past few years, except that our list of subscribers is not as large as it was this time last year, owing to the fact that we were compelled to drop between two hundred and three hundred names because they were far in arrears with their subscription, and we could not afford to carry them if they did not care for the paper. We sent each one of them two separate notices, and after waiting a reasonable length of time and receiving no satisfactory answer discontinued sending them the paper. Of course none of the above were any of "The poor of the flock" who receive the paper through the kindness of those who are better blessed with this world's goods.

In conclusion, we wish to thank our loyal editors for all they have done, also all who in any way have assisted in the support of the SIGNS, either by contributing articles for its columns or helping in a financial way. We also greatly appreciate the encouraging words received from some of our brethren and friends, for they are of much help to us.

Praying that God's blessing may be with and rest upon us all during the coming year, we now bid you farewell for 1928.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in December (30th). All are welcome. E. M. FORD.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Deacon Amasa J. Slauson.)

The Lexington-Roxbury Association, now in session with the Second Roxbury Church, Roxbury, N. Y., September 12th and 13th, 1928, to the several associations and churches with which we correspond, sends love and fellowship.

DEAR BRETHREN:—While with a heavy burden of weakness at this time in thinking of trying to prepare a letter for this occasion, we feel to say, Oh what a merciful God we have. If it was not for God's mercy we would all be consumed; had it not been for the mercy of God we would not have been spared, nor would our minds have been so directed as to desire to meet at this meeting to hope and pray from our very hearts that we might receive some evidence and comfort to strengthen our hope, that we may have some assurance that we have been called from nature's darkness into the light and liberty of God's dear Son. Now we feel we would not have the least true desire for these things were it not for the mercy of a covenant-keeping God, who does all things after the counsel of his own will, and none can stay his hand, nor say, What doest thou? While we are continually asking and trusting in the mercy of God, yet it is far too great for poor mortal man to ever consider. Only for the mercy of God toward man there would have been no salvation for any of Adam's poor fallen race. When the thief upon the cross said to Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom, the answer was, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise. Oh what mercy that was for that poor man who was praying from his very soul for the Lord to be mindful of him and to have mercy on him, knowing and realizing that unless the Lord would have mercy on him there was no salvation for him, but when the words came, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise, was not this mercy? Yes, we will say it was, great, great mercy.

> "Jesus, the great, the mighty God,
> A man of grief became,
> In paths of meekness here he trod,
> And bore the sinner's shame."

Jesus said, I am the way, the truth and the life. He did not say, I am a way, as though there were many ways and he was one of them; no, but he said, I am the way, meaning what he said, the only way. Yes, we believe that now the important question in our minds is, Are we in that way? Yes, that new and living way, yes, that straight and narrow way that leadeth unto life. Here again is where we find ourselves looking and hoping for mercy. Oh how could we as sons and daughters of Adam, who are but Adam multiplied, and came from the loins of Adam, who made the debt that we could not pay, atone for that debt? for God said to Adam, The day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die, and so death passed upon all. Now this is law, for it came from the Lawgiver, but through the mercy of almighty God he spared not his own Son to come down from the realms of eternal glory and be crowned with a crown of thorns and suffer, bleed and die. What for? Was it not for the mercy of his people that the debt was so great that they could not pay it, ten thousand talents in debt and not a farthing to pay? Yes, more than that, and something greater than that, we were dead in trespasses and in sin. But again we will say, mercy is manifested, God sending his Son, his only Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the

law of sin and death. By the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, and by the obedience of one man many were made righteous, brought to a knowledge of the right way, to a knowledge of the true and living way, that way being Jesus, for he said, I am the way. Many have found it so. When every other way failed they have been made to trust in him, and him only, as being the only name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved, and he also being the truth for us, for he is truth. Neither was there guile found in his mouth, for were it not for him there would be no truth in us, for there is no truth in man that came from Adam, for man is conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity, and came from the womb speaking lies; neither is there any life in man but the life he received from Adam, which is but natural, for that which is born of the flesh is flesh, so to have any life more than that there must be something more. Jesus said to Nicodemus, Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. So when one is regenerated and born again, born from above, raised to newness of life, then Christ is that one's life and Christ becomes all and all, for without him we can do nothing, for it is a free, unmerited favor, and by the mercy of almighty God, that one is brought from nature's darkness and made able by grace divine to see Jesus as the way, the truth and the life. We are told, By grace are ye saved through faith, not of works, lest any man should boast. It is the gift of God, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift.

"God is the refuge of his saints
When storms of sharp distress invade;
Ere we can offer our complaints,
Behold him present with his aid."

So whatever we have it is a gift, we have nothing but what is given us; we are not our own keeper. May we be blessed with mercy, love and peace, and when time shall be with us no more may we see him as he is and be like him, and his name shall have all the praise.

GEORGE RUSTON, Mod.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

(Written by brother J. F. Rosebery.)

To the Elders and messengers composing the Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, and the churches they represent, now in session with Spring Creek Church, Adair County, Mo., and all the household of faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—Another year has passed since we have met in an associate capacity. We are made to feel thankful that we are again permitted to meet and enjoy the fellowship of our brethren and sisters and all who love the Lord. We read in the Scriptures that we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (1 Peter i. 5.) This should be comforting to us indeed, since we realize that of ourselves we can do nothing to save ourselves. Dear brethren and sisters, we are sometimes made to wonder if we are really the children of an all-powerful God and have been born of that Spirit that will lead us into all truth. (John xvi. 13.) We are thus reminded that the children of Israel were the chosen of God, and we find recorded in the Scriptures that all Israel shall be saved. (Rom. xi. 26.) We also find that they were made to doubt, and many times were led off into unbelief, just like we are to-day, even after they had been led by the hand of God across the Red Sea over into the promised land, and as they were led off in disobedience

and unbelief they received the chastening rod, the same as his children do to-day, and were reminded many times how they were led through the land of Egypt and delivered over into the promised land. So we are thus brought down to the Red Sea (our experience) many times, just like the children of Israel were in their day. We find according to Scripture that by the fall of Israel salvation is come to the Gentiles (Rom. xi. 11), and that God is not the God of the Jews only (Israel), but of the Gentiles also. (Rom. iii. 26.) So if we can thus be made to realize that we are a part of God's chosen, and that we are led by the hand that directed the children of Israel through their many trials and tribulations while they journeyed through the land of Egypt and delivered them safely over into the promised land, we can truly say in the language of Paul, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."—Eph. i. 3–5.

W. T. WALTERS, Mod.
J. M. CATE, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Second Roxbury Church, Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., September 12th and 13th, 1928, sends christian greeting in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Through the kind providence of a merciful God we are again permitted to meet in an association, there to meet our dear brethren and to listen to the songs of Zion and to hear our dear Savior set forth as the way, the truth and the life, and the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone, proclaimed by God's servants, whom he has qualified and placed on the walls of Zion to preach the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ. Though few in number, we are still contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Your messengers have come to us laden with the good things of the Master, and there has been one flow of love and fellowship all through our meeting.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Middletown and Andes Church, at the Clovesville Church, Clovesville, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday between the second and third Sundays in September, 1929, where we hope to again meet your messengers. Until then farewell.

GEORGE RUSTON, Mod.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

ORDINATIONS.

The Salem Old School Baptist Church at Weiser, Idaho, called for a presbytery to meet October 13th, 1928, to consider the ordination of Ed. N. Fields and B. O. Jeffrey to the full work of the gospel ministry. The presbytery was organized, composed of Elders J. T. Turnidge, D. E. Robinson and ——— Hall, Deacon D. C. Leddington, of Salem Church, Elder C. W. Bond, of Big Spring Church, of Elgin, Oregon. Elder Bond was chosen Moderator and D. C. Leddington Clerk. The business of the ordination was set for Sunday morning, October 14th, when the candidates were delivered to the presbytery and related their experience and call to the ministry. The presbytery was satisfied with the evidence given, and both brethren were set apart by ordination. Elder J. T. Turnidge delivered the ordination prayer, the presbytery laying on hands and Elder C. W. Bond delivered the charge, after which the candidates were delivered back to the church and the right hand of fellowship given. These brethren stand well in their church and we believe have gifts worthy of the consideration of their brethren wherever their lots may be cast, and we heartily commend them.

C. W. BOND, Moderator.
D. C. LEDDINGTON, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, October 27th, 1928, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Chester Baker, in Delmar, Md., Elmer C. Bunting, of Snow Hill, Md., and Miss Elma Hancock, of Snow Hill, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Rose Allder, our sister in Christ, departed the life of the lower world October 30th, 1928, in Washington, D. C. She was born September 6th, 1856. Her father was Norval Silcott, her mother before marriage was Margaret Glasscock. Sister Allder was married to James Allder, November 4th, 1891. He died in 1910. They had no children. She is survived by two brothers and five sisters, namely: sister Annie Palmer, of Bloomfield, Va., sister Margaret Oliver, of Herdon, Va., and Mrs. Emma Humphrey, Mrs. Hume Duvall and Miss Jennie Silcott, all of Washington, D. C., Robert W. Silcott and T. J. Silcott, both of Washington, D. C. Also she left many nieces and nephews whom she loved and who are devoted to her memory. Sister Allder and brother Allder were baptized with five others by the late Elder E. V. White into membership with the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church, November 8th, 1896. Funeral services were held at Ebenezer, Loudoun County, Va. Burial at the side of her husband in the adjoining cemetery. Used the twenty-seventh Psalm. The death of this sister was a great shock to all of us. While she had been declining in health for quite awhile, yet we were not prepared to give her up so soon. She was able to attend the Corresponding Meeting this fall at Mt. Zion one day only, but seemed to esteem it a blessed privilege to meet with her loved ones in Christ. She was a faithful member of the church and always attended the meetings unless hindered in some way impossible for her to overcome. Whether present or absent, however, she never neglected her duty to the church and to her pastor. She will be greatly missed by the members of her family, and very much indeed by the little band at Frying Pan. We would not wish her back with us again, for we believe she is at rest in the presence of the Lord: infinitely better off than any of us who are left behind. She retained her conscious mind up to the end, knew that her end was inevitably approaching, talked calmly and resignedly of her departure, and gave implicit directions to her family as to her funeral arrangements down to the smallest detail. May the dear Lord comfort the bereaved family and the sorrowful church, reconciling each one to his holy will. Just a few more days or years at most, and the rest of us shall also depart, and the places that once knew us shall know us no more forever.

H. H. L.

Deacon James Sylvester Main, son of James and Anna Coal Maine, died very suddenly at the home of his son, Clinton, in Troy township, Delaware County, Ohio, November 5th, 1928. He was born January 6th, 1852, and all his life was spent in this locality. November 1st, 1871, he was married to Rebecca J. Biggs, and to this union were five children born: Arthur, Clinton and Clarence Main, who survive him, two daughters, one dying in infancy, and one, Anna R. Main (Bush) who died Jan. 9th, 1915. Rebecca, his wife, predeceased him Dec. 26th, 1912. He was married the second time to Roberta Bolen Stephens, Aug. 17th, 1915, who survives. In the year 1886 he became troubled on account of his sins, and tried all in his power to live it off and forget it, but He who rules in the hearts of men had laid his hand upon him, and in spite of the opposition of his wife, who threatened to commit suicide if he ever joined the Old Baptists (notwithstanding her father was the pastor of the church in the neighborhood) he was given a vision, a light seemed to shine about him, and these words came to him, Do your duty and all will be well. At the next meeting he told the church of his hope and was received, and baptized by his father-in-law, Elder John H. Biggs, and, strange as it may seem, a few months after his wife came very humbly to the church and was also baptized, and all their lives were spent in the same church, a happy couple, and their home was surely an Old School Predestinarian Baptist home, a pleasant place to visit, and many pleasant times the writer has spent there with the brethren. His second wife was also a member of the same church and the home remained the same. Brother Main served the church as trustee for many years, and September 13th, 1919, he was ordained a Deacon, and in both offices he served well until his death. Brother Main came from Old School Baptist stock. The writer served the church as pastor from 1900 to 1914, and since has visited the church whenever convenient. Elder Jackson served them from 1914 until his death. Elder L. E. Stephens is also a member there, and will no doubt have the care of the church. In matters of the church brother Main will be missed, as his counsel was wise, but we do not wish him back, for his trials are over, and we feel our loss is his gain. May the Lord reconcile us, and raise up others to wait on the table and give them another undershepherd to watch over the flock.

I was called from my home in Cleveland for the funeral, and tried with the ability the Lord gave to comfort the brethren, using the words of Paul, 1 Cor. ii. 2: "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Elder Stephens assisting me. Then we laid the body to rest in the cemetery near-by. May the blessing of the Lord be with them all.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

Deacon Caswell Barnes Reeves departed this life at his home in Southampton, Pa., August 18th, 1928, aged 78 years. He was the son of Howell and Mary E. Reeves. December 4th, 1875, he married Anna Mary Allen, to which union were born three children: Elias Allen, Mary Stuart and Caswell Harold. The daughter preceded him in death a few years. Brother Reeves was baptized by the late Elder Silas Durand May 10th, 1885. He was soon chosen deacon and served well until affliction overtook him. He had been blind for some years, and also quite deaf. He was as patient as possible for man to be under such affliction. His spiritual sight was indeed remarkable and such hearing acute. His chief joy was to mingle with the brethren and listen to the gospel preached. Sound doctrine was his delight and his home always open to those who loved the truth. He was seldom absent from meetings and we all miss him very much. His last illness was of short duration, but his suffering was intense. He fully realized the call had come and was reconciled to the will of his God.

The funeral services, conducted by the writer, were held in the Southampton meetinghouse and were largely attended. He had spent most of his life in that section and had many friends. The interment took place in the Southampton Church Cemetery adjoining the meetinghouse. Thus another one rests from his labors and his works will follow him. The widow, sister Reeves, and the sons have the sympathy of all who know them.

Written by request, by his pastor,

H. C. KER.

M. N. Webb was born in Illinois in 1856. He chose the teaching profession for several years of his early life. In 1881 he was married to Miss Emma Taylor, of his native State, and they made their home there until 1905, when he brought his family to Washington County, Idaho, and settled on a farm in a fertile valley on Mann's Creek. He raised a family of nine children: Eva, Owen, Edith, Harold, Calvin, Arval, Lillian, Beatrice and Reba, five girls and four boys, who have made homes of their own and live in the States of Washington, Oregon and Idaho. Of these families there are twenty-one grandchildren, the first one being the only one of his descendants to precede him in death. Brother Webb's life was largely that of a public man. He served his native State in the Legislature in 1893, and in the Legislature of Idaho in 1914, and at various times held positions of trust and responsibility, which he always filled to the satisfaction of his fellow-men. Fourteen years ago he united with the Salem Old School Baptist Church, of Weiser, Idaho, and since that time had been one of its most faithful and active members. His home was truly a Baptist home, where he and his faithful wife, who united with the church in Illinois, welcomed and ministered to their friends and brethren. Five years ago he was ordained deacon of his church, and also acted as clerk a large part of the time. He was a good counselor and conservative in his views and his church relied upon his judgment. He took a leading part and great pride in the building of a house of worship for his church three years ago, which was completed much sooner than any of the church thought possible when it was undertaken. This is the first regular home or meeting place this church ever had in the forty years of its organization. After the Union Meeting in June of this year, which met with the Salem Church, brother and sister Webb undertook to make a visit to their children. This was looked forward to with much pleasure, for the children were located many miles apart, and to visit them all was quite an undertaking, and required a vacation of some length, which brother Webb said he thought they had earned. This visit was finished and they were on their way home when he was taken with pneumonia at the home of a son they stopped with on the return, and who was to bring them home after harvest was finished. He lived but a few days and was reconciled to whatever might be the result, but desired to get home before he died. This was not granted to him, for he died at Yakima, Wash., at the home of his son Owen, September 25th, 1928, and his body was brought to his home at Weiser, where his children, brethren and friends met to pay their respects to his memory on Saturday, September 29th, in the little church, where the writer was called to minister at his funeral, after which interment was made in the Weiser Cemetery to await the glorious awakening of the righteous which is promised. Brother Webb will be missed by his family, church and his host of friends, but his example will live in their hearts and his writings on religious subjects will long stand as a monument to his faith and a comfort to those seeking the truth.

ALSO,

Emma C. Roweth Parks was born near Ft. Scott, Kansas, April 24th, 1869, was married to Andrew J. Parks May 31st, 1888, came to Union County, Oregon, February, 1891, and united with the Big Springs Church of Primitive Baptists of Elgin, Oregon, June 22nd, 1895. She was the mother of three children. Charles died in his twentieth year. Lee and Eunice are living here in Union County. In the autumn of 1920 she suffered a paralytic stroke, another one June 3rd, 1925, and the third stroke November 1st, 1925, but lingered on until October 14th, 1928, when she passed away. Through all her afflictions she never murmured, and always met us with a smile. In the forty years of her married life she never gave her husband one cross word. She had a noble soul, and lived the life she professed. She was a God-given jewel, but the Lord has taken his own.

These notes were furnished by brother Parks, who

is an ordained deacon of the Big Spring Church, where he and his faithful wife have been held in the highest esteem since they held membership there. For several years they have lived quite a distance from the meeting place of the church, and both have been much afflicted, but they never missed an opportunity to be present in the congregation, especially in the summer time, and there faithfulness under such adverse circumstances should be an example for others more favored. It was indeed an inspiration to us to see our sister come into the little congregation leaning upon the arm of her husband on one side and her son or daughter on the other, after having come thirty-five miles in an automobile. She loved her church and the assembly of brethren, and her modest and faithful example will live long in the memory of those who knew her.

The writer was called to minister at her funeral in the little church-house at Elgin October 16th, taking as an appropriate text, "Behold, I make all things new," after which burial was made in the Elgin Cemetery. Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of the Lord.

C. W. BOND.

James Edward Shelton departed this life at the home of his son, C. T. Shelton, in Upshur County, Texas, September 10th, 1928, at the advanced age of 77 years, lacking two months and twenty-two days, having been born in Talapoosa County, Alabama, December 2nd, 1851. He was a great sufferer with kidney ailment, and was confined to his room some six or eight months before death came to his relief. I do not know the date of his coming to Texas, but am sure it was when he was quite young. He was married to Miss Fannie Tuttle September 2nd, 1875, and to this union were born ten children, seven sons and three daughters, six (three sons and three daughters) of whom with his aged widow, and other relatives, besides brethren, sisters and friends, are left to mourn, His other four children departed this life some years ago. Those living are: C. T., A. L. and D. C. Shelton, Mrs. J. W. Free, Mrs. Lizzie Pettis and Mrs. C. G. Westerman. Brother Shelton was given a hope of an interest in the atoning blood and finished righteousness of Jesus Christ in his youth and united with the Missionary Baptists, with whom he remained about eight years. Becoming dissatisfied with their doctrine and order, and feeling that he had found in the Old School, or Primitive Baptists a people who stood for the doctrine and order of the house of God as set forth by Christ and his apostles in the New Testament, he united with the Fellowship Church, in Upshur County, Texas, and together with his companion was baptized by the writer the second Sunday in September, 1890. Of this church he remained a member until his death. His daughter, sister Free, writes me that he was a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for more than thirty years. This itself indicates what kind of Baptist he was. He was a good citizen and neighbor, and evidently a kind and devoted husband and father. He left a well respected family of children, and no doubt they, together with their mother, kind neighbors and physician, did all they could for his comfort, but his time to go had come. The Master had called and he must go. The Scriptures speak of this passage of the saints as a sleep. So Paul comforts the brethren at Thessalonica by saying, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." (Read 1 Thess. iv. 13–18.) So we believe our dear brother has just "fallen asleep." It is God's ordained way, a necessary part of that change appointed for all his dear people, a change from mortal to immortal. So he will (in that great day when Jesus shall come, the second time, without sin unto salvation) be awakened out of his sleep, but not in the image of the earthy, but in the image of the heavenly, no more to know sin nor sorrow, pain nor death, earthly relationship and ties are forever dissolved and heavenly relationships forever perfected. There is awaiting us full and complete change, which we have not yet experienced, but which all the redeemed of the Lord are to experience, for the inspired apostle Paul says, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be received incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"—1 Cor. xv. 51–55. We believe that in spirit our brother is now with his blessed Master in climes of eternal bliss, but this does not militate against the doctrine of the future resurrection of the dead, and that change of corruptible mortality to incorruptible immortality. I am told as the end drew nearer and nearer that brother Shelton grew more interested in the Scriptures and spiritual things and most of his conversation was along this line. This, together with the many other evidences he left behind that he was one of the beloved of the Lord should be a great comfort to you, his bereaved and sorrowful companion and children. May our ever-gracious Lord and Savior apply them to your comfort and give us all from the depths of our hearts to say, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."

The body was laid to rest in the East Mountain

Cemetery on the evening of September 10th, after an effort on the part of the writer to speak a few words of comfort to the bereaved, there to await the call of the last trump.

Written by request of the family for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

H. B. JONES.

Martha J. (Walden) Allen was born December 5th, 1855, and died at her home in Milton, Oregon, October 26th, 1928, aged 72 years, 10 months and 21 days. Sister Allen's parents were among the pioneer settlers of the Pacific coast, and that being the case sister Allen was deprived of much which the children of today enjoy, and one among the greatest of these was the opportunity to obtain an education. But notwithstanding all this she achieved a good degree of knowledge and taught school for many years, and later received a chiropractor's certificate. Sister Allen's first husband was Dr. Lee, by him she raised two children to be grown: Benjamin Lee, of Pendleton, Ore., and Gracie Ohmart, of Salem, Ore. I have not the date of the death of her first husband. March 12th, 1910, she was married to Dr. E. W. Allen, of La Grande, Ore., where they practiced their profession for several years, later moving to Milton, Ore., where they continued their practice. I have given this short sketch of sister Allen's early life as handed to me, for I was not acquainted with her early life, but have been personally acquaintd with her for twenty-seven years and will tell of her life since I have known her. Sister Allen was a woman of sterling character, and had a deep and broad mind of natural things. I wish to speak of that mind (Christ Jesus) which was so manifest in her life. Her father and mother, with five or six others of the same faith, settled here in eastern Oregon, near the town of Weston, and their (the first Old School Baptist Church on the east side of Cascade Mountains) was constituted in 1876 or 1877, and called Mizpah. It is still in existence, but meets at Touchet, Wash. The old church book shows sister Allen to be the first member received in that church by experience and baptism. Sister Allen was widely known by the Baptists here on the coast, being well grounded in the doctrine of the sovereignty of God, believing in the predestination of all things, but denying that such a faith and belief made God the author of sin, as the enemies of this faith were and are continually waging against the faithful who believe that he (God) is and is a rewarder of them who seek him. God blessed her with wonderful knowledge of his greatness and with grace to manifest it in the defense of the truth. I could write volumes in testimony to this glorious faith which stands as a monument to the glory of God, and not to us. While sister Allen labored so faithfully in this precious doctrine she, like the old apostle Paul, always felt to say, Not I, but the grace of God which was given me. I visited her two days before she died, while she was too weak to talk, only to answer. I took her hand and asked her how she was. Her only answer was, I am waiting for dear Jesus to come for me. Her husband said her last words were, Come, dear Jesus, and take me home. While it grieves our hearts to give up our loved ones in death, yet we do not grieve or weep as those who have no hope, and the evidence of this abiding faith in the trying hour of death is very strengthening to our hope. May the dear Lord help and strengthen our hearts to meet every condition of life and save us all in heaven for Jesus' sake

J. T. BARNES.

Mrs. Sarah R. Johnson departed this life Tuesday, October 9th, 1928, aged 87 years, 9 months and 14 days. She was born near Locktown, New Jersey, her parents being the late John T. and Keturah Rittenhouse Risler, and was married to Charles Sidney Johnson in the year 1870; three children were born of this union, one dying in infancy. Being baptized by Elder Gabriel Conklin, pastor of the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church over sixty years ago she remained a faithful member of that body until the time of her death. She was a sister of the late Cyrus Risler, who for many years was deacon in the same church. She is survived by one son, Howard Johnson, and a daughter, Mrs. Ella R. Emmons, with whom she resided, one brother, John Risler, and three grandchildren. She will be sorely missed by her children, who were particularly devoted to her, and by many relatives, friends and the church.

Because of the absence of her pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, the funeral services were conducted by Elder D. M. Vail, who read the seventeenth chapter of John as a foundation for his remarks, on Saturday, October 13th. Interment was in Rosemont, N. J., cemetery.

A FRIEND.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. T. H. Young, Toledo, Ohio, $1; D. Ferguson, Ont, $1; Mrs. Henry Hayman, Md., $2; Mrs F. J. Gray, Texas, $8; C. S. Ratliff, Ky., $1; A. C. Morse, N. Y., $3; G. C. Jordan, Mo., $3; A. B. Corder, W. Va., $1; Mrs. D. A. Forrest, Tenn., $1; J. W. Rockafellow, N. Y., $8; Mrs. Maria Rees, Ky., $3; Mrs. Katie E. Rogers, Ont., $3; Sarah I. Rittenhouse, N. J., $8; T. H. Richardson, Iowa, $5; Anson Quint, Maine, $3; A. J. Griffith, Mo., $1.

MEMORIALS.

Our beloved brother, **D. L. Hatcher**, departed this life May 29, 1928. He was an old man and united with the Hopewell Church late in life and was faithful. He lived about sixteen miles from his church yet walked that distance, seldom missing a meeting.

Be it resolved, that we do mourn the loss of our dear brother, and be it further

Resolved, that we send a copy of this resolution to be published in our Minutes, and that we send a copy to the bereaved widow.

ALSO,

Sister Alley Melton departed this life January, 1928. Sister Alley came to the church early in life, and was a devoted sister, seldom missing a meeting, and her door was always open to those of the faithful in Christ, be it

Resolved, that we do mourn the loss of our dear sister, and be it further

Resolved, that we send a copy of this resolution to be published in our Minutes, and that we send a copy to her bereaved mother.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Moderator.
J. C. HAMMOND, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects Elder George Ruston to be with them the First Sunday in December (2nd), 1928. For convenience services are to be held at the home of J. E. Livingston, 64 East Main St., Cobleskill, N. Y., the Lord willing, at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All welcome.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

The Old School Baptists of Chicago meet, the Lord willing, every Sunday at 11 a. m. and 2:30 p. m., (Standard Time) at the home of W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street, west three blocks to end of 114th. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Midweek song service by appointment. Preaching by Elders Jones, Jaynes and Clayton. Basket lunch.

W. N. SPITLER.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sunday at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First. "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, Convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second. The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Eld, Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third. "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Eld. H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio. Fourth. "Fatalism." By Eld. H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio. Fifth. "The Celestial Railroad" This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth. "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

"FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE."

(1 JOHN III. 14.)

There is a class of professors who talk about loving the brethren, and thus proclaim themselves to be passed from death unto life. But, do they declare that Christ is precious to them? Do they tell how he became dear and precious to them? Have they seen and felt themselves to be base, things to be despised, vile transgressors? Is Christ Jesus the Lord that altogether lovely One, whom having not seen they love, in whom they rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory? Do they always manifest they have ever felt themselves to be poor lost sinners, that with a broken and contrite heart they were brought to Jesus' feet, and there in the crucified Lamb of God they found forgiveness, justification and hope of eternal salvation? God hath called his own unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, and in due time Christ is revealed in them, he dwells in their hearts by faith. "Christ liveth in me," saith the apostle. (Gal. ii. 20.) Do I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me? Oh this is the all-important question, a vital matter with a poor sinner like me. I know the apostle John speaks of the love of the household of God, one toward another, and speaking of the family of God he says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."—1 John iii. 14. We have been taught of God, our heavenly Father, to love one another. But this love of the brethren is not apart from Christ and him crucified, but it is the fruit of, and flows from, our divine nearness to the Father, and to Christ, the Son of his love, our precious Savior. If we look into this epistle we find who they are that the apostle John is speaking of when he says, "We know," &c. They are the very family of God, they are fellows, the household of God, who are such in vital knowledge and experience of the things of the Father and of Christ, and that thus in this fellowship, this kinship, this union and communion, they love one another and so they are passed from death unto life. Let us hear the apostle declaring this matter: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have

handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."—1 John i. 1-3. What ministrations of the Holy Ghost have been our portion to bring unto us this divine fellowship. Christ saith, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."—Matt. xi. 27. Jesus saith, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."—John xiv. 6. In the times decreed in Jehovah's counsel the Holy Ghost quickeneth the elect, who by nature are children of wrath even as others, dead in trespasses and sins. He convinceth them of sin, to know themselves to be under the curse of the law, he leads them to Jesus, to the crucified Savior, he takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto them. And into the teachings and guidance of the Spirit of truth, into the truth of Christ's gospel we are led graciously yearningly into the blessed fact that we must be redeemed from under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons. (Gal. iv. 5, 6.) So in this fellowship of the gospel we have fellowship one with another. In the beginning of the knowledge of Christ the called of God have repentance given, a humble, contrite, supplicating heart, and that precious cry is put forth in their heart, "God be merciful to me a sinner." And oh when in Jesus it is ours to taste we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, what union then we have with our Savior, what fellowship! And, joined to Christ we are one Spirit with him. We have the Spirit of Christ, we are his, and he is ours, our dear Savior, and by his gracious Spirit in us we cry, "Abba, Father." Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. Without this union with Christ no sinner can be in truth of the household of God, and consequently can have no knowledge of kinship to the family of God. We must be born of God to love God, and to love the brethren. (1 John iv. 7.) For he that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. (1 John v. 1.) Beloved of God, this love of the brethren is more than mere lip love, for there have ever been carnal men among the people of God, who, as the Holy Spirit describes them to Ezekiel, "They sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not."—Ezek. xxxiii. 31, 32. "Love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous."—1 Peter iii. 8. If we have passed from death unto life, and in this life love the brethren, our love will be more than words, there will be love's deeds. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."—1 John iii. 18. The carnal religionist with his superficial profession of love of the truth and to the brethren knows nothing of the work of the Holy Ghost in his heart, he has never known the burden of his vile transgressions, has never been ready to perish in his condemnation under the curse of

the law, he knows nothing of repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ; he has never mourned unto God over his iniquities, was never prostrated at the feet of the Lord with a humble and contrite heart. Neither has he tasted the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works. Oh blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. (Rom. iv. 6-8.) If through grace I am a believer in Christ what a favored sinner am I.

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress,
Midst flaming worlds in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

If Christ and him crucified be not in the heart's experience our consolation, our hope, our glory, then all this talk about loving the brethren, believing certain points of doctrine amounts to nothing and will be found of no account before the throne of God. These matters are of eternal importance, and that counsel of the apostle is not to be tossed aside as though we were beyond such counsel. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates." —2 Cor. xiii. 5. If Christ be in us, and we are his, then, "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."—Gal. v. 24.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

FAYETTEVILLE, Ga., Oct. 21, 1928.

DEAR BROTHER ADAMS:—I received your card a few days ago, and was glad to learn you are better. When I wrote you last I did not think I would wait so long to write again.

I enjoyed the preaching at the Yellow River Association. It seemed more like Old Baptists were before they became confused by leaders and dictators, who have led many astray. I have heard so much that is not according to my experience and understanding of the teaching of the Bible, and have grown so cold, I fear that I am not included in that "covenant, ordered in all things, and sure." Since the association I have been thinking much of God's supreme power, love, purposes, mercy, &c. "And be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."—1 Peter iii. 15. I have heard people tell what they believe, without giving a hint as to why, and I have sometimes thought their belief was only a fancy of the mind, as it seemed that they had not a particle of foundation for what they believed, and such belief is worthless. When one believes a thing, and has solid foundation, able to give a reason, it is a comfort to him, and he can tell it comfortably to others that are exercised on the same subject. It is impossible to believe anything without evidence, either in nature or Spirit, and when any one contends for this or that without giving good reasons for so doing we had better think well before we follow them, for there are many saying, "Lo here and lo there," and would deceive the very elect if possible. Long before I ever heard of absolutism and conditionalism among Old Baptists I believed that God was sovereign ruler over all things, and that he rules all things according to his will and pleasure, and that not one thing ever has or ever will transpire contrary to his will, but I could not give a reason why. Elder N. B. Hardy, formerly of your association, was sound on these points. He was the only preacher I knew in my boyhood days, but

I learned ere he died that he was a deep preacher. I remember very little about what he preached, but remember hearing him talk of God's supreme power, and that all events were under his control. In later years I began to hear things that were new to me, and not being thoroughly established in the faith and doctrine I became confused. Finally I heard that certain preachers advocated this and that which I had never heard, so I began to investigate and found that Old Baptists are contending for the same principles they have always contended for, but that the accusers were not satisfied with the goodness of God's house and were teaching new things. The first brother I heard mention conditional time salvation was, like myself, not able to see the deep hidden mysteries of God, but is now one of the faithful ones. With all that was said against so-called absolutism, I could not understand how God could be supreme ruler over all things and not do his will with all things, for I believed he made everything that was made, and for some purpose, and I did not believe any of his purposes could ever be frustrated. Some brethren say foreknowledge is an attribute of God, but predestination is his act. If the latter be true, am I not right in saying that foreordination is the same? The Scripture is plain that the crucifixion of Christ was in the mind and purpose of God, and was in the plan laid before the foundation of the world for the salvation of sinners. As there is so much objection to predestination, I will not say that this was predestinated, but what I have just written shows where I stand. If God predestinated the crucifixion, and is his act, then he crucified Christ. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." This is one of the conditionalist's texts, so this looks as much like God's act as predestination. If so it kills conditionalism. Some brethren say that God knew before the world began that Adam would sin, and knew how sinful humanity would be, did not intend that it should be that way, but seeing it as it is the three-in-one God went into covenant agreement as to the plan to save those chosen in Christ. God made a covenant to save those the Father gave the Son. This, to my mind, makes God's works dependent upon Satan's works. It seems that God, who knew all things that would ever transpire, even before he began creation, before Satan was made, had to know what Satan's plans were before He could arrange for his work, that he must look all down the line through time and arrange his work to offset the work of Satan to hinder that which he did not want done. If God was this weak some of his and Satan's work would be sure to get crossed and he could not do all his pleasure. I understand that God not only foreknew all things, but all things were in his will and purpose, he did not have to consult any one, but had the whole plan laid out, and made everything according to that plan, made everything for some purpose, pronounced all things that he made very good, and will use them for the very purpose for which they are made, even Satan was good for the purpose for which he was made, and God is using him, and there is no power that can hinder the least part of his will, purpose, plan and, I might say, predestination. God is above all law, therefore he cannot violate any law; can do what he pleases with any and all things and do no sin nor be the author of sin. It seems that sinful man can be compared with a a vicious dog. The dog must be chained

to prevent him doing things contrary to his master's will, but when the master wants the dog to chase an intruder he has only to loose him. The will to do these things is already in the dog; the master does not put it there, nor does he entice the dog, he is ready and surging to go. If the dog be trained the master has only to tell him what to do; but the untrained dog has to be directed. Satan, "as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." He is not like a trained dog, but is surging at the chain's length, seeking every opportunity to devour, and it seems that he would go at random if left to himself. I may be saying too much here, but if God made man for a purpose he does not just turn him loose and allow him to go where he pleases, but "the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain," so God restrains him from doing the very thing he loosed him to do. (Here is some of the deep water I wrote you about, and I fear to express myself on some of the deep things of the Spirit, fearing I am wrong.) If I have a lion chained and should loose him he would prey upon the first thing in sight; it might be my best cow, my child or me; but when God looses Satan he does not have to take notice which way he goes and pull him back until he goes right and then let him go. What I am saying about Satan applies to sinful man, even God's people when not led by his Spirit.

Since starting this I received your last letter, in which you say the deeper the water the better we can swim, and mention what David says about deep waters. I have always been afraid of deep waters as I cannot swim, but all God's people can swim in still, deep waters of his love. Yes, I love to get into this kind of deep waters, that is, enjoying the deep things of the Spirit when we can understand them, but in those things I do not understand I fear to wade out too deep, for I may say something not in accord with the Scriptures and cause trouble. I have seen more trouble now than I wanted to see among God's people, and have been accused of causing some of it, because I contended for the right as I saw it, and our old deacons and tempest-tossed preachers were with me. There was a time when I thought these things would cause coldness among God's people, but now when I hear them preached in their purity it touches a responsive cord in my being, and I feel glad there are a few who have not bowed the knee to Baal.

I have only hinted at what I wanted to write.

Yours in fellowship,

GEORGE W. JACKSON.

ST. ALBANS, West Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed are two good letters which were very comforting to me, and I feel like handing them to you for publication, if they meet your approval, for I think they would be comforting to the household of faith.

Yours in hope,

HARVEY BIRD.

HURRICANE, W. Va., July 13, 1928.

MR. HARVEY BIRD—DEAR BROTHER:—It is with much fear and trembling I begin this letter. I know of a truth that unless I am given the power from on high that it will be utterly impossible for me to write anything the least interesting to one of God's children, but my prayer is that I will be led to write and talk always according to those principles of doctrine as believed by the Old School Baptists, which doctrine I believe to be that contained in the holy Bible from end to end, or cover to cover. If I know my mind, it is my desire at this time to write

a little about my experience. I say a little, because it would be impossible for me to tell it all. It is a thing that ever grows and grows. Sometimes I am led to wonder if I have any hope or if I have ever had an experience of grace. Oh, I remember how light-hearted I felt when I hope I was first delivered, then I felt like all was peace, and that there would never be any more heartaches or tribulation. But oh that is not the case. After a few wonderfully happy months I began to wonder if I had not been deceived, if I were not under a false delusion. At times all things seemed very dark, as the poet says, "How tedious and tiresome the hours when Jesus no longer I see," &c. Then when he was pleased to again reveal his blessed face, how tranquilly happy the moments were. I am made to realize more and more that in this world we shall have tribulations. I would not have it any other way. There are so many dark and gloomy days with me that I often wonder if I am not deceived when I think I have bright moments. I wonder if I really do have a hope. I am made to say, How can I have? Surely I would be less vile if I did. Oh I am full of iniquity to running over. But we are not pure as long as we dwell in this tabernacle, but are continually sinning, and fall short within ourselves. As written by the inspired Paul, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost," &c. I notice in the above explicit language, which was addressed by Paul to Titus, the "he," not themselves, did the saving; that the word "saved" is in the past tense, having taken place some previous time, not going to take place in some future time, which was according to the Creator's will. Then that little pronoun "us" is in the way. Not in my way; no indeed, but in the other fellow's way. "Us" takes in all of God's elect, as recorded in 2 Timothy i. 9: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Some might say, How particular God is. Certainly he is particular, so much so that he explicitly says a certain "us," not the whole Adam family, and it is he who hath saved. Again in the past tense. How can any one who claims to be born again believe otherwise? I believe with all my heart and mind that it is a finished thing, made sure, and cannot be changed one whit by anything on earth or in hell. Unless my God be all powerful, &c., I would be afraid to lie down at night, for I might never wake to see the day again, I might die in my sleep and go to a demon's hell, never to see his all-glorious presence again. But I beiieve if God be my Father I am always upheld by his omnipotent hand so that none can pluck me out of his hand. Then if I be deceived why do I believe this most wonderful doctrine which says that God has declared all things from the beginning; that he commands and it stands fast; that he has created all things, yea, the wicked for the day of evil, and that he speaks to the dying soul and it is made to leap for joy past telling, it is so wonderous? Sometimes I am made to feel that he has spoken peace to my dying soul, not because of my works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given me in Christ Jesus before the world began. For if he had given me according to my deeds I would long ago have been cast off and sent to a demon's hell, and, I say, justly so. Oh

my brother, what a wonderful doctrine is this as believed by the old order of Baptists. May the grace of God permit us to worship in peace and liberty.

Your brother,

OSCAR J. BYRNSIDE.

HURRICANE, W. Va., July 12, 1928.

DEAR BROTHER BIRD:—I feel at times that I have a hope, although I cannot see why God would be so merciful to as weak a worm of the dust as I to give me such a precious hope of eternal salvation. I feel to know that if I am one of God's little ones that it is not because of anything good which I have done, or will ever accomplish, but through the tender mercy and divine love of God who reigns eternally on high. I know I am full of wickedness and sin, and knowing this how could I believe that I could ever merit a place around God's throne singing praises to his high and holy name? I hope I am thankful for the few bright hours which I have, for there are so many dark and stormy days in which I despair and feel I have probably been deceived in my experience, and that my desire to be with God's children is only a fleshly desire, and my love for those people only earthly love and not the love which is born of God. Then comes a bright day, and I feel that God has been very merciful and good to me in giving me a little hope. I do not know whether I will ever go to the church or not. At the last meeting, on Saturday, I could hardly stay away. I had the greatest desire then I have ever had to unite with the church, but I could not, for something held me back. I stood and trembled as a leaf shaken by the wind and could not keep the tears back. I was miserable. I felt like I imagine one would feel to have to see some one drown, or burn to death, and not be able to help them, so great was my desire to go home to the church. That shows very plainly that we are governed by a higher power, "for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."—Phil. ii. 13.

Excuse these few broken thoughts. I did not aim to write to you when I sat down at this table, but was so led. We will be glad to hear from you at any time, for we get so few letters.

Yours in hope,

EULA B. BYRNSIDE.

GALATIANS IV. 24.

"WHICH things are an allegory."

What things are here called an allegory? The things mentioned in the two verses just before: "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons; the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise." So the things which pertain to these two women and their children under the two covenants are, or constitute an allegory. Then what is an allegory? Our dictionary tells us it is the "description of one thing under the image of another," "a figurative sentence or discourse in which the principal subject is described by another subject resembling its properties and circumstances," &c. So then we get the idea that Abraham, Sarah, Agar, and their children, as well as what happened to them, are not the real subject of Paul's address, but only a figure. The apostle is evidently talking of the Jewish kingdom, or the Lord's people in the flesh, and the kindom of grace, of Christ's people in the Spirit. Yes, and these two peoples and the things pertaining to them are what Paul is separating before the eyes of his church brethren, and ours,

I hope. He tells that Agar is Mount Sinai, in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem, which is above, is free and is the mother of us all. All of us represented by Sarah, the freewoman by grace. The woman, or Jerusalem above, is mother to all the children of promise, and Agar is only mother of the natural Jew while under the covenant in his allegory. Sarah numbers her children so long and wherever the Lord has a child of grace, for these things are an allegory, and the two covenants. The Jews were a chosen people, but they were under bondage to keep the law, or first covenant, until He should take it away to establish the new. So Agar and her son were taken away so as to establish Sarah and the heir, or son of promise, in their proper rights under the husband and Father. But remember it was the promise of God, and the husbandry of God fulfilled this covenant. The law of the flesh here was dead and inoperative, but with Agar it was in force, so her son was said to be born "after the flesh." No Gentile nation was ever under the Agar or Mount Sinai covenant, and the Jews are not under it, although the Jews and many Gentiles try to make themselves under the law of circumcision. They may be under the law of sin and death, but the power of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made the children of promise free from the law of sin and death, and they cannot now be under law to a husband who is dead. The nation is dead, and their law is dead, and the children under that dead law are all numbered. Not so with the children of grace; no man can ever number the children of that Jerusalem above. Then Paul gives another allegory of the same nature to present his spiritual thought to the man of God. He quotes in part: "Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not; for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband." Now to be brief, Sarah in the allegory and in her most desolate period of life had no husband, for she had given him to Agar, the woman, or law, "after the flesh." Agar was not desolate at that time. Sarah, being so desolate and unbelieving at the time the angel made the promise to her she laughed, but God promised to be a husband to her, and was and is, so that her blessing and increase shall and does surpass that of Agar, the Jewish woman, or church. Every religious body or church is typified by a woman, and the Lord's chosen is but one, and is free, yet her children and blessings outnumber and surpass any of them. She has a wonderful hope and promise in which she is abundantly able to "break forth and rejoice." But she must cast out every bond child that tries to come in or remain under the first covenant, or after the flesh. For we know it is as Paul said, "But as then he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." Here Paul makes it plain that it was the natural Jews who persecuted the believers in the gospel church, for they were the antitype of Ishmael. In this day it is the religious world that persecutes those born of the Spirit wherever found, and yet none of their church memberships equal the Lord's people in Christ.

I realize the readers will see I have made this long and trashy, while it is an effort to leave out the bondwoman and her son, for we know they cannot feel desolate while they rule the house and claim the husband; still when they are cast out in a dry place they must then

cry and look to God for a temporal blessing or salvation. Even so did Agar and her son, and they were given great blessings in this life. So are all false churches to-day, and if they were under the law of circumcision in the flesh, as were the Jews, they could do no bettter than Agar did in the type. They may circumcise in the flesh, but the children of promise, as Isaac was, are circumcised in heart and in spirit. I cannot see the irreligious world anywhere in this allegory, but I think I can see the doctrine of free grace, as preached by the "little flock," points to the salvation of more children in Christ than any or all other denominations, yet we are most desolate in the flesh, and have no husband, as Mary and Elisabeth.

Yours in hope,

GUSTAVA WEBB.

CULLISON, Kansas.

CLARKS SUMMIT, Pa., Sept. 22, 1928.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter received many years ago from my husband's sister. It was enjoyed then, and on looking over our correspondence decided to send it to you for publication, if you think best.

Your sister in Christ,

SARAH E. MILLER.

JUSTUS, Pa., Oct. 9, 1889.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER IN CHRIST:—If poor unworthy me can be allowed to thus address you, you who seem so much above me. I feel a great many times as though I had no right to call you, or any of the dear people of God, brother or sister. We found the children all right when we got home, and a welcome letter waiting for us. After reading I felt that if the Lord would guide my pen I would try and answer it, but fear it will fail to be of interest to you. I had a splendid visit to-day, but as we were coming home I thought it all over, and thought, Now Sarah was disappointed and did not enjoy it as I did. Oh how good it does seem to me to talk with or to hear the people I love so much talk of the wonderful work of the Lord, and to give all honor and glory to him. I feel that I ought to praise him both day and night for what I hope he has done for my soul. I do love the Lord's people, and the Bible says, "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I can truly say that to go to meeting and hear them speak and to hear the gospel preached (and I do believe we have it preached to us) is my meat and drink, but I feel so small and unworthy to be among the Lord's people, yet still I feel to say as Ruth did, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." It seems at times that things are not right as they are and that I would like to have them move to please me, and then the thought comes, "Be still, and know that I am God." We read that "God is love," and what he does is right, just and true are all his ways. All things work together for good to them that love the Lord. I know that is so, but poor mortals cannot always see it so. The week after I was baptized I felt very dark and bad, and thought I would go up to mother's, that she would say a word or two that would comfort me. I went two or three times, but in vain, as she did not say a word to me about what was on my mind, and the last time I felt as if I could not stand it. I think the Lod led me in that way to show me where to look: that I am to look alone to him for comfort and strength, for

I do feel that my strength is perfect weakness. I cannot think one good thought unless he gives it to me. Sometimes I feel it is all a dream, that it cannot be possible I have a home and name among the people I believe are the Lord's, but I suppose it is true, and I hope I will be kept from bringing a reproach upon his name.

I am glad Elder Durand is coming.

Well, I have not written as I should wish, and feel more like putting it in the stove than sending it to you, but please overlook mistakes and think them of the head and not of the heart.

I must stop, for it is now 10:30 p. m., but if I were down there I could talk all night, but I think you are tired now.

Your sister in love,

SEBINA GOODRICH.

PLEASANT HILL, Mo., Oct. 26, 1928.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I am inclosing you a copy of a letter I received last week, and feasted upon it, and if you see fit would be glad for it to appear in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Sister Beebe, I must tell you I am the proud possessor of your and your son's picture, also a picture of the Brookfield meetinghouse, and of many dear ones, which sister Davis sent me. She and her husband took them while on their tour of the east, and I cannot tell you how I prize them, and the one who sent them to me, telling of her lovely trip also.

Your little sister in hope,

MARGARET S. TAYLOR.

SAN FRANCISCO, California.

DEAR SISTER MARGARET:—Yes, I was indeed very pleasantly surprised to hear from you and tears of joy did flow. I long many times for good letters, but much of the time my mind is so blank I do not feel I have anything worth writing to any one. It cheered me very much where you said you were traveling my way and could echo every thought I expressed, and we do hope it is the Lord's way. I feel so lonely away out here in this worldly place, and often wonder when I look on this multitude of people if there is even one among them who feels the way I do, and how I pray sometimes when I am out walking around, Oh if I could only get away from all the turmoil of this big city. The Lord has fixed the bounds of our habitation and placed us where we are. My faith in the Lord is firm. He has placed me away off from the people I love to be with for his own purpose, but it is hard for me to know the why and wherefore of it all. I am so weak that without him I would fall into the temptations by the wayside, and how I pray for him to create in me a pure heart and guide my footsteps aright. That longing for some one to talk with of the things I love to talk and hear about is beyond explanation. Sometimes my landlady and I will be talking about events that transpire, and I will express my belief about it, and she will say, That is a good way to think about it if you can. She is a lovely lady and we get along nicely together. I know she thinks I am peculiar and cannot understand me, but I cannot even understand myself. We are a peculiar people, like the verse in the song I love so well:

> "We are a garden walled around,
> Chosen and made peculiar ground;
> A little spot inclosed by grace,
> Out of the world's wide wilderness."

How my heart rejoiced to know you were blessed to attend the First Kansas Association. How I would love to have been with them again. I hope you were also blessed to attend our association at Adrian. I just missed it last fall by

having to come home here, but it was not for me to be there, but hope my mind was. What a relief to know, What is to be will be, and sometimes when disturbances come into my life I feel I can say, Though he slay me yet will I trust him, for without him I can do nothing. I receive much comfort from reading my Bible and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Well, sister Margaret, I thought I was prepared to write you a letter of news, but my mind would not be directed that way, but I will send it nevertheless. Give my love to all in Little Flock Church, and to all the household of faith. May the Lord bless and keep you and yours.

Your unworthy sister,

MABEL LINDSAY.

HIRAM, Georgia.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am, I hope, glad to hear the plain, simple and pure gospel of God our Savior as I have heard it in the past, and I hope to hear it as long as I am permitted to remain on earth. I am a young man, twenty-three years of age, and it seems a long time before I will be old, but the truth will never grow old. I hope the Lord showed me by an eye of faith what I was by nature and showed me what I must be by grace. I like to hear people talk about a sovereign God, a God of purpose, love and mercy. Christ paid all the debt his people owed and canceled it all. I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation. I know I am a weak vessel when I am left in nature's darkness, but at times the Lord gives me a ray of light of his most merciful and righteous plan of salvation, predestination, election and the love he had for his people before the world began. When the grace of God is in a man's heart he is cut loose from carnality, and everything but the great God of high heaven seems weak and frail. I want to honor God, but it takes the grace of God in a man's heart to be able to honor him, for man is but vapor and cannot direct his steps, it takes the blessed Pilot, Christ our Lord. What love the Master had for his disciples when he caused the angry sea to be calm, and said, Peace, be still.

Your unworthy brother, a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

JEWELL O. CROKER.

PROVENCAL, La., Oct. 18, 1928.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If you will allow me to address you thus. I am seventy-seven years of age, and have visited two associations this month, each of them a long way from home. One was in Wood County, Texas, where I met a great many Predestinarian Baptists, and when they began singing the sweet songs of Zion I commenced feeling my unworthiness. When those old servants got up and told of the dealings of the Lord with them it seemed that I could see the very image of Jesus in their countenances, and their words were food for my hungry soul, so I was made to rejoice and feel glad I was there. Twelve preachers were present at the Sulphur Fork Association, and I heard ten of them and all their preaching was in harmony, the same old story of the cross. I returned home, and after a few days rest went to the Louisiana Predestinarian Baptist Association, where I met another band of loving brethren and sisters. The Louisiana Association has but two ordained ministers, brother Baker, an old man, aged about seventy-nine years, and brother B. Valentine, who is aged about fifty-one years, but we had visitors from Texas who were very able preachers and we had a good meeting,

and were made to feel that the Lord was with us. I returned home, where I have a married daughter keeping house for me, found all well, for which I feel thankful to the Giver of all good. We have a little church here where I live, but on account of not having more preachers in our associations we do not hear much preaching. The church called brother Valentine, but because of the distance he could not come regularly.

From a poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

R. A. HAWTHORNE.

ELKINS, West Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—We are sending our subscription for our highly esteemed paper that stands so firm in the doctrine of God our Savior. Wife and I hope to continue our subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as long as we are able to pay for it, for surely it is a great comfort to us in our old age. My wife is seventy-six years of age and I am seventy-seven. We live near Elkins, West Virginia, about two miles from the depot, but the buss line runs west from Elkins by our home and any orderly Predestinarian Baptist passing our way would be gladly received by us. Our membership is with the Leading Creek Church. Elder J. S. Murphy is our pastor, and he is a dear brother, sound in the doctrine of Christ and the apostles. Our association, the Tygarts Valley River, is few in number, only seventy-five members, but is standing firm in the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things.

G. B. McCLANAHAN.

WINNSBORO, Texas, Nov. 26, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription expires with the December number I am inclosing my personal check for a year's subscription to the dear old SIGNS, and one dollar to aid in its publication. I do not see how I could get along without it, for it is all the preaching I get, as I am partly deaf and cannot hear public preaching. I read the SIGNS every month and it is like good news from a far country and water to a thirsty soul. Fourteen years ago I began reading the dear paper and each number seems more interesting and I am drawn closer to the writers. I love each one for the truth's sake, and wish I could write as they do, but there is nothing good in me and sin is mixed with all I do. I sometimes think there is no hope for one as sinful as I am. I am not a member of the only church (it is the only one I will ever believe in), but how I wish to be. I want every one to pray for me when at the throne of grace.

(MRS.) F. S. PETTY.

WEISER, Idaho, Nov. 21, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—I want through your columns to thank the brethren and sisters who so readily complied with the wish of my husband for two back copies of the SIGNS in which were some of his writings. I have received several copies, but he who requested them has gone to his reward. He has fought a good fight, he has finished his course, he kept the faith.

Again thanking you, I am your little sister in loneliness,

(MRS.) M. N. WEBB.

BREWERS, Kentucky.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am made to rejoice as I move around among God's humble poor and hear them express what the Lord has done for them in giving out the pure gospel by pens of ready writers, through the dear old SIGNS and other such peridocials. Just as I write the word "periodicals" I am made to think

of the comparison as to the number of papers coming from the press of to-day that are filled with all kinds of corruptible and deceivable literature and the few that contend for truth and solely engaged in sending out that which tends to edify God's dear children and honor the great Giver of every good and perfect gift.

I herewith inclose my check for two dollars as renewal of the subscription of Mrs. M. J. Warford, of Hickory, Kentucky, for one year, which was handed me yesterday. I hope to send you more soon.

I am, I hope, your brother in fellowship of the gospel,

J. C. CHESTER.

CEDAR RAPIDS, Iowa, Dec. 10, 1928.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have lately become so nearly blind I cannot read the SIGNS. I can write better than I can read. I had my eighty-fifth birthday October 27th last, and I think this is the last of my subscription. I am in the Home for Aged Women at Cedar Rapids, Iowa. This Home has been running for thirty years, and is a very good and comfortable home. It was instituted by the ladies of Cedar Rapids for women over sixty-five years of age, or during their life the applicant is to be a citizen of Linn County, must pay $600, and after six months if she is satisfied she becomes a member; if not satisfied, she pays for her board and her money is returned. We have twenty-one now, and have not room for more. We have meeting, but there is no Old School Baptist nearer than ten miles, and that is the only trouble I have. There is only one lady here that has a name with the Old School Baptists.

There is quite a preacher at Cedar Falls who comes here to visit, but I have never taken the liberty of asking him to preach, for it is not stylish enough. My SIGNS is all the preaching I get and I have to get some member to read it to me.

I cannot write more.

RACHEL OWEN.

LONDON, Ontario.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—Your letter in the SIGNS about His hand hath formed the crooked serpent was wonderful indeed to me, and so comforting that my soul did eat it greedily. O, dear one, how often in days gone by in my distress I would turn to Job's writings, and would say, weeping, You are my brother in affliction. Job was often bewildered and at his wit's end, not knowing what to do, and so was I away back in my girlhood, sitting on the lowest step of my mother's cellar, where I thought no one would see me, and crying aloud. Mother came to get something she wanted, and said, What is the matter? I replied, O mother dear, I am lost forever. She said, No one in such distress as you will ever be lost, adding, I have noticed for some time that you were not the girl you used to be. I do not want to say much about myself, but want to tell you, dear brother, how glad I was to read your sweet epistle, and there was one here in Canada who was greatly comforted by your good letter. I believe God gave you to write to my comfort and to the comfort of others also. Write on, dear brother, and may God give you plenty out of his storehouse to feed his lonely ones who are without a pastor.

Dear brother Ruston was here last month and visited at our house over night, and preached at London. Large gatherings greeted him at the different places of meeting. I heard him at St. Thomas and Ekfrid and it was good to be there. He is a good preacher, both in the pulpit and in the homes where he visits.

Your sister in hope,

FLORA J. SINCLAIR.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1929.

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NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

THIS greeting at this time will be rather an odd one, for it will take the form of a personal confession to our readers and editors and publishers, which we grant is somewhat unusual. For several months I have had it impressed upon my mind that I ought to resign my connection as editor with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. This feeling on my part is not at all due to an unkindly feeling toward a living soul connected with the paper. So far as I am aware, I have in my heart nothing but cordiality and goodwill toward my brethren editors and publishers with whom I have long been associated, nor is there any strained feeling toward any who read the paper or who subscribe for it or who write for its columns. My reasons for feeling that I ought to get off the paper are as follows: first, a disinclination to write, due to the fact that I have so little time for writing in the midst of my busy life, but due more to a total lack of impression that I ought to write. It seems to me that if God meant me to be an editor on the SIGNS, he certainly would incline my mind more toward writing, and such is not my experience. If I have any gift at all in the way of gospel ministry, it certainly is not in the writing line. Whenever I sit down to write, my mind shuts up and whatever is written is brought forth in much intense labor. I cannot reconcile myself to this mind condition on my part, cannot see why one who is really an editor should be so indisposed toward writing. Second, besides my lack of inclination to write, is the busy life I lead, which leaves me little time for writing. Good writing must be born of meditation and reflection and a good writer ought to have time for reading and research along the lines upon which he is supposed to write. I have not time for all this. What writing I do must be done mostly at night after the business of the day is over, and I am generally too tired at that time to collect my thoughts for writing and to concentrate them upon any given subject. At present I am supposed to have the pastoral care of eight churches, and these scattered over a wide area. Too many, you say. I grant it. But how is one to help it when otherwise churches would be destitute entirely of ministerial services owing to the paucity of preachers of the predestinarian faith and order in this part of the country? We could get plenty of conditionalists and limited predestinarian preachers to serve these churches, but these churches say they will not have them. So what is one to do? The churches I am serving are located as follows: three in Virginia, and one of these has a branch across the river in Mary-

land, one in West Virginia, three in southern Pennsylvania and one in Delaware. Besides my service to the above churches, which is enough to take up any one's time and thought, I hold a position as bookkeeper with a firm here in Leesburg which requires all my time through the week except such time as is needed to attend to funerals and to visits to the sick and isolated ones, whom I fear are not visited by me as much as it is my duty to do. Now, I want to say right here that the fact that I hold a secular position is not to be regarded as any reflection on the churches I serve. Every church I serve contributes according to its ability to the support of myself and family. They are willing to give me of their substance according as the Lord prospers them, and are continually doing so. But I have a large family and our expenses have been and still are great. Any one raising a family in this day and time knows by experience something of what it takes financially to get along and try to keep out of debt as much as possible. If I had not had a secular position and had depended entirely on the contributions from the several churches, my family would have had necessarily to do without some things which the income from my own secular efforts has enabled us to have. It might have been better, possibly, to have started out in the beginning by exercising a little more self-denial and thus to have avoided somewhat the necessity of a strenuous life. Anyway, so it is. If I retain my health and strength with which I have been blessed so far, a few years more will see my children doing for themselves, some of them already are, and I hope by that time to be able to ease up, possibly give up altogether all secular employment and devote my whole time and labor to the churches. My third and last reason for wanting to resign my place on the SIGNS is the fact that it is the duty of the editor to examine all manuscripts submitted to the paper for publication and to pass upon them before they go into its columns. I have not been doing this and am not going to do it. I have not any mind for such work, and if this duty of editorial censorship is essential to my being on the paper, then I quit right now. Many articles go into the paper which I never see before they come out in print. This must be so if I continue as editor, for I cannot take upon myself, and have never taken upon myself, the work of editing all that goes into the paper. The publishers have more than once offered to submit to me for my judgment all that goes into the paper, but I have steadily refused to have them do so. I cannot be burdened with it.

For all of the above reasons, I recently submitted to the publishers of the SIGNS my resignation from the editorial staff and they have refused to accept it. Because they have refused and because they insist on my remaining on the paper, I have decided to make this open and honest confession to them and to all connected with or interested in the paper. If they are willing to still have me on the staff after reading the above explanation and are willing to grant me the reservations which I am compelled to make if I stay on the paper, I am ready to agree to such an arrangement and will allow my name to remain on the staff. I feel it a great honor to be associated on such a venerable and staunch advocate of truth as the SIGNS OF THE TIMES with such splendid and whole-souled brethren as my three associate editors, and with the publishers of the paper for whom I

have the utmost respect and esteem. Our association together the past fourteen years, first with our previous editor, Elder Ker, and now with the present staff, has always been the most cordial. For the future, I can promise nothing. If my mind is led to write occasionally, I will do so. I cannot agree to write a certain specified times nor promise to write so many articles within a year. I never could contract to do so much preaching for so much money or within a given time, nor can I promise to write under contract. If I have any gift in the ministry, I do not control it, it controls me. I cannot exercise it at my pleasure, but I hope it exercises me as God wills. With best wishes and with sincerest love to all my dear brethren and to all who love the doctrine for which the SIGNS stands, I am yours to serve as best I can, God willing.

H. H. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder H. C. Ker.)

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Snow Hill Church, to the several churches, associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting and love in the Lord.

Following our usual custom in writing what is called a "Circular Letter," we have chosen the word "faithfulness" as a foundation. Perhaps no one word embraces more real importance to the church than this one, and likely its full meaning is more neglected than that of any other word used by us as a denomination. The word faithfulness has many definitions, and here we shall give some of them in order that we all have better conception of the fullness of the word and what it should mean to the church: "Fidelity; loyalty; firm adherence to allegiance to duty; truth; veracity; strict performance of promises, vows, or covenants; constancy in affection." These definitions present almost the full rule of the life of the followers of Jesus, yet how few of us so live! Faithfulness becometh the house of God and in its absence there is no evidence of the life of Christ in our mortal flesh. His was a life of faithfulness to God his Father, and to all chosen in him before the foundation of the world. The broad meaning of the word "faithfulness" embraces every duty of both men and women who profess hope and faith in the blood of Christ Jesus the Lord. Faithfulness in the minister to the church, in every sense, demonstrates his call to the work. It matters not how wonderfully a man may preach, if unfaithful his preaching means little indeed. His duty is to take the oversight of the flock of God, over which he has been made overseer. This does not mean merely to visit the church once a month, or oftener, as the case may be, and preach, but to visit the sick and the well and minister to them in their homes; to advise them in the things pertaining to the order and ordinances of the church; to warn them of error; false doctrine and wolves in sheep's clothing. It also means that a pastor should be faithful and brave enough to refuse to receive, or allow any man to occupy the pulpit who does not preach the truth. It matters not who he is, nor from what part of the world he comes, neither his correspondence with another association. Such faitfulness will be condemned by the unfaithful, but such condemnation only proves the unfaithfulness of those who criticise. It is a very small matter to talk of faith and love, but to prove our

faith by our works is altogether another thing. "Love not in word only, but in deed and in truth." To say we love a brother is an easy matter, but how shall we know of that love unless there is some demonstration of it? When a brother or sister is sick and we never call to see him or her to inquire for their welfare and to manifest that love we talk so much about, where is our faithfulness? If a member of the body of Christ is poor and destitute and we shut up our bowels of compassion against that one, how dwelleth the love of God in us? Where is our faithfulness? Just a glance within will show us our unfaithfulness and covetousness and should cause us, indeed, to ask whether we be of God or not?

Along another line we would call attention to the word "faithfulness:" Whenever the meetinghouse is open for service it is the duty of each member to be present if not sick and if there be no serious illness in the family. Such faithfulness is expected, and unfaithfulness is manifest when members are absent. No company, entertainments or pleasures should ever interfere with such duty. No minister would be reckoned faithful who did not meet his appointments; the same is just as true of any member who fails to be present at all meetings of the church. Nothing is more discouraging to a pastor than to find members of the church absent. This matter of "faithfulness" is not one-sided. There are duties of the church to the pastor as well as duties of the pastor to the church. One is, to visit him in his home and try to make life as cheerful and pleasant for him as possible. The life of a minister of the gospel of the grace of God is not a bed of roses. His trials and cares of life are many and must be endured alone, hence frequent calls and visits help to encourage him to go on.

"Faithfulness" also means that the church should look after the temporal welfare of its pastor. In these days of high cost of living, the expense of automobiles, used in the service of the churches, their depreciation, upkeep, and such like, should all be taken into consideration. Often the depreciation on a medium priced car is more than the minister receives each year from the churches he serves. "Faithfulness" should not allow the pastor to serve at a loss.

"Faithfulness" also means dependableness. The word of every Old School Baptist should be his bond. "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." We should all be careful about making promises which bring us under special obligation, but when made, live up to them. This is a duty that every member owes the church. No church can afford to have a member who is not strictly truthful, not strictly dependable. It is a reproach upon the church to have a member whose life is not in keeping with the rules of the New Testament Scriptures. "Faithfulness" also means that every member of the church should, as far as able, help bear the burdens of the church, such as the upkeep of the house and premises is concerned. No one, two or three should be expected to do this when others are equally able. May the Lord not only give us to meditate upon these things, but to live the life of faithfulness in his church, as well as to all men. In so doing we shall glorify him and magnify his grace so freely bestowed upon us through Jesus Christ our Lord.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

G. F. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

(Written by Elder H. H. Lefferts.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 17th, 18th and 19th, 1928, to the churches composing this Meeting, and to the associations and churches with which we correspond, sends christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN:—"Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" This solemn question was asked the disciples by the Savior, not to indicate any uncertainty in the mind of Jesus as to whether he would find faith in the earth at the time of his coming, but to search the hearts and souls of the disciples themselves, to arouse within them the need of constancy to the faith, that is, to the doctrine of Jesus Christ the Lord. This question may well search our own hearts at this time, for do we not stand forth as the professed followers of Christ? If so, then there is committed to us a dispensation of the gospel to which we need to take heed and to examine ourselves whether we be in the faith. The doctrine may be considered in two aspects: the preaching of it and the living of it. By the latter is meant the manifestation of the doctrine in the lives we live. The preaching of the doctrine is nothing more nor less than earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and it should be done with earnestness, as though our lives depended on it, for do they not indeed? The pulpit is no place for indifference, and the declaration of the great theme of salvation should never be done in a half-hearted way. If what we preach be true, it cannot be too true and cannot be affirmed too vigorously or too whole-heartedly. Who does not like to hear a man who has the courage of his own convictions? And surely the righteous conviction that the minister is declaring the truth should spur him to sound it forth in no uncertainty and with great plainness of speech. The doctrine should be declared in its wholeness, and not in one aspect of it to the overlooking of some other aspect just as vital. We in the Corresponding Meeting of Virginia understand the doctrine of God our Savior to embrace the following principles: the omnipotent sovereignty of God over all worlds, principalities and powers; the personal and unconditional election of the children of God in Christ before the foundation of the world, the salvation of the elect alone by the grace of God in Christ, and by grace only, without human means or helps, the effectual calling unto repentance and belief of the truth by sovereign grace of all who before time were foreknown of God and predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ according to the good pleasure of his will, the preservation of all the chosen of God unto final glory, the resurrection of the dead and the final judgment of the righteous unto life eternal and of the wicked unto everlasting punishment. No one need conclude from this that we are endeavoring to set metes and bounds to the truth of almighty God, for the truth is limitless and cannot be compressed into human expressions, but the above will serve to outline our position in the main.

Beside the preaching of the faith or doctrine, there is what is equally important: the living of it. This has to do with the walk and deportment of the professed children of God. Preaching lacks power if the life of him who believes and contends for the truth does not deport itself in accord therewith. The church of God right now is face to face with the

question as to whether we shall neglect scriptural proofs of what a child of God ought to be and of how he ought to do, and fall in line with the lax standards of the world about us, standards of morality and right living which become more and more obscured as time moves on. Men are becoming more and more openly lovers of self and worshippers of wealth, grasping more and more for the material things of life with less and less regard for honesty and honor. The times are marked by fast living, looseness of morals, disregard for family life, decay of legitimate natural affections. In the midst of a naughty world, they that are wise unto salvation should shine as the stars of heaven. The much fine gold should not become dimmed. "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind," so says Paul to the faithful at Rome, exhorting those of that day not to conform to the standards of the Roman world in its heathenish idolatry and paganism, but to let the eyes of their faith look above and beyond it to the high plane of spiritual godly living taught by the grace of Christ in the souls of those to whom this grace has appeared bringing salvation. It is to be hoped that there ever will be those in the earth, subjects of divine grace, who will have no desire to conform to the world, but who will fervently desire to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is their reasonable service, being enabled effectually to do so by the virtue of that Sacrifice which was made on Calvary for them. No one knows at what time the Son of man cometh. It may be now, or it may be hereafter, the end of this present dispensation may be much nearer than we think. But however and whenever it is to be, will He find faith in the earth awaiting him? This is the question that indicates no uncertainty whatever in the mind of God, but ought to cause us to pause and consider whether that faith is really in us and whether we are being faithful in our allegiance to it, or is there on our part a tendency to shun the doctrine, or some part of it, a disposition to sidestep our responsibility in contending for it? And above all, is there lacking in any of us the courage to fearlessly live according to what we believe to be right for fear of incurring ridicule or persecution at the hands of those who know not the truth? The more we reflect upon these matters and the more we measure ourselves in the light of Scripture testimony, the more shall we feel the need of great grace, of constant prayerfulness and watchfulness lest we be found false witnesses of God.

Our next session of this Meeting will be held, the Lord willing, on the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday following the second Sunday in October, 1929, the place of meeting to be announced later through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, at which time we shall hope to be favored again with your messages and ministers, praying to be kept in your love and fellowship through Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Mod.
G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

WATCH YOUR DATES.

WE wish to request our subscribers when sending in their subscriptions to see that the date on the little pink slip bearing their address is changed. If not changed, please let us know immediately (for that signifies you have not been given credit for the money sent) and we will look into the matter. By consulting that date you can tell at a glance to what time your subscription is paid. Dec. 28 means that your subscription is paid to December, 1928; June 28 means your subscription is only paid to June, 1928, &c.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in joint session with the several churches composing the same, convening at Snow Hill, Worcester, County, Maryland, October 24th, 25th and 26th, 1928, sends christian greetings to our sister associations and meetings of our correspondence.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Again it has been our privilege, and we hope blessing, to meet and receive your messengers and correspondence, which we trust may be continued. Our meeting has we feel been most enjoyable, and we hope all present have shared the joy. We are glad that Christ has been preached, in the gospel the "power of God," and also as our redemption from iniquity.

Our next session is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1929, with the Salisbury Church, at Salisbury, Maryland.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
G. F. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

James Ashurst, Ill., $3; John F. Oliver, Va., $1; Mrs. S. E. Enoch, Kans., $3; Mrs. Mary E. Ellis, Md., $2; M. C. Reeves, Ill., $2; Mrs. Charles M. Richardson, Va., $1; Mrs. George T. Davis, Del., $1; Mrs. F. S. Petty, Texas, $1; Mrs. Mary J. Ege, N. J., $3; Mrs. E. Annie Parker, Md., $3; Jesse C. Ellis, Ohio, $3; Cyrus Cross, N. Y., $2; Mrs. I. R. Blythe, Pa., $1; "A friend from Oregon," $5; W. E. Bryan, Ky., $1; Effie Franklin, Ill., $3; H. W. Burford, Ark., $1; Mrs. Mary Pittman, Kans., $1; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $3; J. E. Holloway, Texas, $1; Mrs. J. A. McTaggart, Ontario, $2; Mrs. M. E. Drake, N. J., $1; Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., (In memory of Elder J. D. Hubbell), $10; W. T. Judy, Neb., $1; A. F. Jones, Ga., $3; Mrs. Mary Duffus, B. C., $3; Mrs. M. J. Myers, Okla., $1; Hannah E. Danks, Cal., $1; Mrs. Allie Gooch Reed, N. C., $2; "A friend," (In loving memory of Mrs. Harriet Harkness) $4; Attie Curtis, Maine, $1; Elder George Coulbourn, Va., $1; H. C. Sledge, La., $1.; Hewitt Osborn, N. Y., $6.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Sarah Jane (Parks) Barnes was born in Monroe County, Missouri, June 23rd, 1854, the daughter of W. F. and Nancy Parks, and died at the home of her son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Showalter, Freewater, Ore., November 24th, 1928, aged 74 years, 5 months and 1 day. May 20th, 1875, she was united in marriage to J. T. Barnes, and to this union eight children were born, four boys and four girls, the oldest dying in infancy, the others living to be grown and married. Edd, the oldest son lives in Bates County, Missouri, Anna and Rebecca live in Walla Walla, Wash., Fred, Sam and Edith live at Freewater, Oregon. Josephine, the youngest daughter, preceded her in death seven years. Sister Barnes received a hope in Jesus when young, and on Saturday before the second Sunday in July, 1882, she united with Little Rock Church of Old School Baptists and was baptized by the late Elder John Copland. In November, 1901, she with her family moved to Touchet, Wash., and with her husband united by letter with Mizpah Church of the same faith and order, in which church she lived and loved until the dear Lord called her home. The funeral was held in the Old School Baptist Church November 30th, conducted by Elder C. W. Bond, of La Grande, Oregon, who was blessed to point our sorrowing hearts to the great gain in the death of the saints of God. The house was filled with relatives and friends, after which we laid her precious body to rest in the Touchet Cemetery to await the final call and precious promise of God, whom she loved and so faithfully served all her stay here on earth. The mortal to be made immortal and the natural to be made spiritual. This blessed hope she cherished, and made great sacrifice, which made her life an open book to her brethren. She was the wife of one who felt in his soul to be called of God to comfort his brethren in the gospel of grace, and none but those who have borne the burden of the preacher's wife know the lonely and toilsome hours which they have to endure, and I can truly say to the praise of the grace of God that this dear woman was not only a helpmeet in nature, but a helpmeet in the gospel of God our Savior. She never was too tired nor too sick when my appointment came but what she insisted that I should go. She often said she had rather sacrifice than have her brethren disappointed. Oh I could write so much to the praise of God's sovereign grace which was so wonderfully manifested in the life of my dear companion, but will only say she truly was a Lydia in the house of the Lord. During the last six years of her stay on earth she was confined mostly to the house, and in all that time I never heard a word of complaint come from her lips against the providence or dealings of God with her, but she often prayed for grace for her day of

trial. She dearly loved her children, and when the end came she was blessed to have them all at her bedside but Edd, the oldest son, who lives in Missouri, and her last farewell to us was one of the sweetest smiles I ever beheld. While my soul feels the great loss of her presence, yet I could not wish her back in this poor world of suffering, and oh may God in mercy give us all grace to say, Thy will be done.

J. T. BARNES.

Jesse Rufus Jones, youngest of the family of Isaac and Mary Boothe Jones, was born in Marion County, Iowa, November 2nd, 1874. He passed away at the Mercy Hospital in Des Moines, Sept. 28th, 1928, after an illness of four months, aged 53 years, 10 months and 26 days. He was united in marriage to Grace Jordan, at Winterset, on Nov. 29, 1905. To this union was born one daughter, Helen Jane. They made their home seven miles northwest of Knoxville until 1921, when they retired, and moved to the former place. After five years there, they moved to Des Moines to be with their daughter while attending Drake University. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church in July, 1909. Besides the wife and daughter he is survived by one sister, Mrs. Mary A. Antle, of Norwalk, and five brothers, Charles H. and Elder George J., of Knoxvile, Z. I., of Battle Creek, Neb., Elder John Q., Council Bluffs, and Ed. M., of Des Moines, all of whom were with him during his last illness. It is with a sad heart I give an account of this great and good man's life. I had learned to love him and his brothers many years ago. I first met them at their mother's funeral eleven years ago, and the tie between us has grown stronger and stronger as the years have gone by. "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?" Brother Jones was a life-long reader and subscriber of the SIGNS and for many years a strong believer and defender of the doctrine set forth in its columns. His church membership (with his wife and daughter) was with Sharon Church, Guthrie County, Iowa, where he was a beloved and faithful member. He was an inspiration to all wherever his lot was cast. From almost the time of his affliction he was impressed he would not recover, being afflicted with cancer internally. He arranged his business, and requested the writer to conduct his funeral. He was a great business man, and loved by business men for his honesty, and by his church for his honest devotion. We shall never forget his smiling face and words of cheer as we have met him in the house of the Lord. A short service was held at his late home, 2723 Carpenter Ave., Des Moines, at 10 a. m. Sunday morning, September 30th, after which his body was conveyed to Knoxville, fifty miles away, where the regular funeral was preached at 2 p. m., to a full house of relatives and friends, many coming miles to attend, with a large number of old friends who had known him all his life, being of a very noted family. Elder Holmes, of Newton, by request assisted at the funeral. May the God of all grace comfort his devoted wife and daughter in this their sad bereavement.

G. E. EDWARDS.

Archibald A. Graham was born July 18th, 1844, in Lobo township, Ontario, and died October 3rd, 1928, in his 84th year, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Lindie Crossan, near London, Ontario. He was one of eleven children. He was married to Miss Mary Smith, who died about forty-eight years ago, and to this union were added two children, one daughter, Annie, died at a young age, and Mrs. Crossan, with whom he made his home, survived him. He received a hope in the Savior in the year 1910, and was received into the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church and was baptized June 28th, 1910, by Elder H. C. Ker. His father's name was Archie, who died at the age of sixty-two. His mother's name was Flora, she died at the age of eighty-two. She was a member of the Covenanted Baptist Church for a great many years, receiving a hope while young. Brother Duncan died twenty years ago at the age of 73. Sister Jane, Mrs. McIver, died eight years ago, at the age of eighty-one. Both were members of the Covenanted Baptist Church. There are only three now living of the eleven: Neil, who lives with his son Lorne, in Vancouver, Canada, Mrs. Margaret McLachiln, 25 Stanley St., London, Ont., who are both members of the Covenanted Baptist Church, and Dougald A., the youngest of the family, now living at 7 Perry St., London, Ont. Archibald in his younger days worked several winters in the lumber camps in the State of Michigan. He married Miss Smith some fifty-two years ago, then farmed in Lobo a few years. After his wife died he went west to Clearwater, Manitoba, and farmed for a few years, then returned to Lobo and farmed with his brother Dougald about twelve years, then moved to London, and secured the position of night watchman in the Middlesex County jail. He retired at the age of seventy-five years, and after that helped his son-in-law garden until within six weeks of his death.

I am indebted to sister McLachlin, and Mr. Dugal Graham for the foregoing. I wish to state that I had been acquainted with brother Graham for several years, and he was a coscientious member of the Covenanted Church, always filling his place, and his presence will be missed, especially by the little band that held their meetings in the city of London. Our brother lived to a ripe old age, and the Lord has called him home, may we be given strength to understand, and say, Thy will, O Lord, be done. I was called from Cleveland for the funeral,

which was held in the undertaker's parlors in London, and tried to comfort the friends with the ability the Lord gave me, after which all that was mortal was laid to rest in the family plot in the cemetery near Lobo, Ontario. May the Lord bless the remaining members of the Covenanted Church, as they are without an undershepherd, and if in accordance to his will send them some one to go in and out among them.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

Deacon Garrett W. Horner was born at Cassville, Mo., May 3rd, 1866, and moved with his parents to Oregon the same year. He died Oct. 5th, 1928, at the General Hospital, Los Angeles, Calif., from the effects of an auto accident, aged 62 years. He was married to Miss Carrie Cooley April 2nd, 1893, who, with two sons, two daughters, one sister and his aged mother, survive him, one son and one daughter having gone before. They moved from Oregon to Canada in 1917, and to California seven years ago. He and his wife professed a hope in Christ as their life, salvation and resurrection thirty years ago, and were baptized by Elder W. S. Matthews, uniting with the Pilgrims Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church, at Sweet Home, Oregon. His whole life is worthy of emulation. He believed and contended for the faith delivered unto the saints of the only living God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will, no confidence in the flesh: hoping in salvation by the free, unmerited grace of God in his Son, who was God manifest in the flesh for the redemption, salvation and resurrection of his brethren.

The funeral services were held at Price & Daniels' funeral parlors, conducted by Elder James Arledge and the writer. The remains were laid to rest in Westwood Memorial Park Cemetery to await the voice of the Son of God, when all that are in the graves shall come forth.

G. O. WALKER.

Gertrude Peters Myers, daughter of Elder Newton and Rachel Peters, was born in Darke County, Ohio, April 6th, 1874, and departed this life October 10th, 1928, aged 54 years, 6 months and 4 days. Since early childhood she had resided near Portland, Ind. She was a student in local and Portland Normal schools. She was united in marriage to George W. Myers April 12th, 1899, and four children were born to them: Ruby and Helen, deceased, Paul and Harold, living at home. Also, left to mourn, besides her husband, are three brothers: Harry, George and Jesse Peters, of near Portland, and many relatives and friends, as was attested by the large attendance at the funeral services. She was most loving and affectionate toward her husband and children, a kind friend to all, and was universally loved. Hers was a devout religious nature. She was a firm believer in the Old School Baptist faith, though not a member of the church. Shortly before her death she told her brother Jesse to read the fourth verse of the first chapter of Ephesians, and the nurse, housekeeper and all who were there heard the entire chapter read. Elder Johnson, of near Hartford City, Ind., preached the funeral discourse largely from this chapter. Although she suffered greatly through ten weeks, those who attended her declare they never saw such patience, calmness and meekness as she possessed, seeming to be resigned to all the Lord pleased to send. She expressed her willingness to go, regretting of course leaving her youngest son without a mother, and almost her last words were, Thy will, not mine, be done. Much space might be filled truthfully telling of her virtues and sweetness, for she was so motherly and kind and such a home maker. How we shall miss her until we meet again never to part.

JOIE PETERS.

Mrs. Clara Blue, widow of Donald Blue, of Duart, Ontario, Canada, our dear sister and mother in Israel, departed this natural life July 11th, 1928, in her ninetieth year. She had been in failing health for ten years. Her step-daughter, Mrs. Gillis, a nurse, came to wait on her, and constantly ministered unto her all those years. There was nothing spared that could give comfort to the afflicted one. During the last two years of sister Blue's affliction she was confined to her bed, having fallen and broken her leg. She endured her suffering with patience until the messenger of death came and relieved her of the trials of this world. She passed away like a child falling asleep in its mother's arms. We feel assured from the evidence she has left on record that she is now at rest. Sister Blue was received, and baptized in Ekfrid in May, 1877, by Elder Beebe. She was a faithful member of the Old School Baptist Church, always attending the meetings when not providentially hindered, and her home was always open for her many friends. She leaves to mourn her departure one step-daughter, Mrs. Minnie Gillis, and five stepsons: Frank, William, Alexander, Nelson and George, also one brother, Philip Corneil, and two sisters, Mrs. Alexander McDonald and Miss Letitia Corneil, all of Ekfrid, also the church of which she was a member, and a great many relatives and friends, which was made manifest by the large concourse of people who gathered to show their respect for one they held in high esteem. Her six nephews, Robert McDonald, Will Corneil, Fred and Richard Eaton, James and Albert Blue, bore the remains to the Duart Cemetery, where it was consigned to the mother dust, there to await the resurrection morn, when all that are in their graves will come forth, when the last trump shall sound. On account of none of the ministers of our faith and order being in Canada at that time they had a Presbyterian min-

ister conduct the services. He had lived beside her for many years and knew her well and spoke in highest praise of her. All we can say now is, The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away.

Written by request.

ANGUS D. GILLIS.

John F. (Dadge) Lynn, a Confederate veteran of the Civil War, died at his home in Grundy Center, Iowa, Wednesday morning, November 7th, 1928, and his funeral was held Friday afternoon, November 9th, at the family home. Mr. Lynn was born near Cumberland, Maryland, April 9th, 1846, but as a child he became a resident of Loudoun County, Virginia, where he grew to manhood, but since 1873 he had lived in Grundy Center, Iowa. He was married to Miss Laura P. Dowdell October 15th, 1872, who, with eight children, survives. A DAUGHTER.

Edgar Alger died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. George Beams, in Oneonta, N. Y., September 11th, 1928, following a long decline, due to hardening of the arteries and other infirmities of advanced years. Brother Alger was born in Oneonta April 22nd, 1850, the son of Delos and Cornelia Ceperley Alger. In the year 1870 he married Caroline Bugbee, of Otego, N. Y., where they resided several years, both having been members of Otego Old School Baptist Church since June 7th, 1874, when they were baptized by Elder Balas Bundy, both having been faithful members of the church until called from earth. Sister Alger died September 23rd, 1923. Brother Alger is survived by one son, one daughter, three brothers, fifteen grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held September 13th, conducted by his pastor, Elder D. M. Vail. Burial was in Oneonta Plains Cemetery.

Written by request. ROSE T. LEONARD.

My dear sister, **Barbara Ann,** passed away November 6th, 1928, at three o'clock in the morning. Interment was in the Rickerd Cemetery October 8th.

JOHN C. McALPINE.

MEETINGS.

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The Bethel Church of Chicago meet, the Lord willing, every Sunday at 11 a. m. and 2:30 p. m., (Standard Time) at the home of W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street, west three blocks to end of 114th. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Midweek song service by appointment. Pastors Elders Jones and Jaynes. Basket lunch.

EMMA BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor,

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sunday at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First. "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, Convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second. The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Eld. Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third. "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Eld. H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio. Fourth. "Fatalism." By Eld. H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio. Fifth. "The Celestial Railroad" This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth. "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND LATER WRITINGS

OF

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

LUKE XI. 1.

"LORD, teach us to pray."

There is no subject more misunderstood or abused than prayer. It is a hard matter for us to give a correct answer or definition of that which is called prayer. In almost all gatherings of men and women, whether it be club, lodge, school or prayer-meeting, they have a form of prayer, but the true prayer I have under consideration cannot be learned, comes not by education, neither is it handed down from sire to son, not a form of sayings, not a form of repetitions of the Scriptures to be heard of men for their much speaking. It does not emanate from the flesh. It is not of the world. Who is it then that in reality prays? I answer, None but those who have been led beside the still waters and have been made to lie down in green pastures; they who have been born again, not of a corruptible but of an incorruptible seed, kept by the power of God. They are the ones that pray. Unto them the Lord hearkens and hears; his ear is open to their cries and he knows their needs long before they ask of him. The great Redeemer in the mountain, with his chosen disciples around him, gives us an example of prayer: "But thou [addressing his chosen], when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly." What a lesson is taught here. Here is a figure protraying great depths for the edifying of his chosen people. Notice, we enter into our closet, all the outside world is closed around us. When we have shut our door to all the works of the flesh and the world all natural light is shut out. We are in darkness. Yes, darkness that can be felt. The natural eye cannot see, the natural ear cannot hear. Many of the Lord's servants know of this solemn place and from the heart can breathe a prayer illuminated only by the Spirit of the great Jehovah, in this manner, O, dear Lord, just once more may I be given strength and an understanding in thy mysteries. Unworthy as I am, O God, be merciful to me. In spirit and in truth may I approach the throne of grace, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. The poor publican was surely in his closet and his door was shut when he smote on his

breast, feeling unworthy to look toward heaven, and asked God to "be merciful to me a sinner." Here is a prayer that was more justified than the other of the boasting Pharisee. He prayed with himself, the prayer of the world to-day, I am better than they. While the publican prayed to God in humility, he went down to his house justified rather than the other. Only from the heart can we address our prayers to our Father which art in heaven. The kingdom of God must be in us before we can address our petition to him, for he is a Spirit and seeketh such to worship as worship him in spirit and in truth. Not with our hands, not by our works, nor the deeds of the law, only by his Spirit. He knows our needs before we ask him. He shows us our weakness and inability to even think on his name. Prayer is an offering up to God for things needful. Not our wants, for we, like children, often want things that would be our ruination. He knows our needs and will supply them through Christ. Christ himself, the great example of his elect, taught us to pray and how to pray: Thy will be done in earth (in us) as it is in heaven. In our prayers we adore him, confess him, plead with him, give thanks to him for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins. Prayer is the outpouring of a broken and contrite heart, the inward cry of a wounded child that knows there is salvation in no other name but Jesus, the reflection of grace in our hearts, Christ in us the hope of glory. As it is written, My Father's house is a house of prayer, the ground and pillar of truth, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone. All the prophets and apostles prayed, Jesus the great example fell on his face and prayed to his Father, If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. This life of the Lord's people is a life of prayer. Hardly a moment of their life is spent without breathing a prayer, for his mercy is so great it endureth forever. Often we hear our brethren say, I cannot pray, I am too unworthy; I am so vile, so prone to sin, I cannot pray, and all the time there is in their hearts the groanings that cannot be uttered, the secret prayer of the righteous. Prayer is the balm that heals the broken-hearted, the good Samaritan that came where he was, bound up his wounds and took care of him, the still small voice to the heavy laden. Oh how sacred is prayer, the redeemed of the Lord can come to the throne of grace, led into the banqueting-house under the banner of love, and led in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. May we be kept humble and at his feet, clothed and in our right mind. Pray without ceasing that we may be kept faithful.

"Prayer is the saint's sincere desire,
Unuttered or expressed;
The motion of a hidden fire,
That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.

Prayer is the christian's vital breath,
The christian's native air,
The watchword at the gate of death;
He enters heaven with prayer."

The above thoughts on prayer are submitted to the SIGNS for publication, if deemed worthy a place in our paper.

I read with much comfort Elder Dodson's article regarding the Baptist Home. I have met the trustees that were ap-

pointed by the several associations and am satisfied the business will be done in a straightforward way, and I recommend them to the Old School Baptists here in Ohio and Kentucky, and to the brethren the Lord has prospered in this world's goods I will say that if they feel to contribute to the cause it will be gratefully received.

While I am writing I wish to speak of some Baptists who have been taking the SIGNS and not paying their subscriptions and have compelled the publishers to discontinue their subscriptions because of nonpayment. I do not see how they can sleep soundly. Why not, brethren, if you cannot afford to pay for the paper, be kind enough to write and tell them so? Do not let it run on and then come to the conclusion that you cannot pay for it. How long do you suppose they can let their paper and ink bills go unpaid? Is that acting according to the teaching of our Savior to do unto others as you would have them do unto you? I am talking to a people who have a hope in Christ. The world does these things, and some of them think it smart, but among christians these things ought not to be. Think it over.

With best wishes to all the household of faith, I remain yours in hope beyond,

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

GRANTVILLE, Kansas.

DEAR SISTER BEEBE:—I began to copy this inclosed letter to send to certain ones and it occurred to me to copy it for the SIGNS, as it seemed to me to be suitable, but I leave that to your judgment, and I also wish to fulfill a request made by my daughter, Della Davis, that I write and tell you of her affliction and the reason she had not written to you, after having had the pleasure of a little visit with you and the joy of having looked upon your dear face, and others with you. She was much drawn to your dear son Gilbert and his wife. She was taken sick the next week after reaching home and was confined to her bed several weeks. She is of a very nervous temperament, and subject to utter prostrations, which increase in frequency, duration and intensity until it does not seem that she could endure many more. This last attack has been most distressing. This is the sixth week, and I have been right with her nearly four weeks, and last week brought her back to Topeka to her old home and her old understanding physician. She is now very slowly improving, and we hope will eventually get up again, but to what purpose only the wise Disposer of all events knows. Her life has been filled with griefs, sufferings and disappointments, but the Lord "will not lay upon man more than is right," and "when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

She wished me to tell you that she has the pictures, and they are all good, and she means to send you some as soon as she can get to it. It has been a great pleasure to me to look upon the likeness of those of whom I have so often heard and have loved for Jesus' sake.

I also have wished to express our appreciation of the work done on our Minutes, but so much sickness has been a hindrance to me, too, and I begin to feel eager to get home and rest, for I am not well myself. Once in the hospital I sat right by her for thirty-four hours, leaving her but once long enough to go and get myself a meal. She is now at the home of her daughter, and I hope she will be so I can leave her by the end of this week.

This letter of my brother's, in which he

speaks of Jesus walking on the water to get to his few tempest-tossed and troubled disciples, seems very timely, as he goes on to speak of how he still comes to his own walking on the waters of affliction and tribulation. Surely he maketh the clouds his chariot, and how eagerly we watch and wait for the brightness of his appearing.

May the blessing of God attend you to guide, help and prosper you in all his ways.

With love to each one as though named, I remain as ever,

MARY ELLISON.

PERRY, Kansas.

MRS. MARY ELLISON, R. L. AND DELLA DAVIS—DEAR SISTERS AND BROTHER:—Your letter received a few days ago and I was glad to hear from you, but sorry to know Della is so ill again, and hope this will find her much improved. But whether in sickness or in health, I wish we could be resigned to the will of our Maker, for he works all things and never errs. His works, all of them, are laid deep in divine wisdom, and just a portion, a very small portion, is given to us to understand. Through his gracious providence he has arranged to send both sickness and health, and has appointed a time to every purpose under heaven. The night as well as the day proclaims his providence. The winter as well as the summer bespeaks his infinite wisdom. He has created man for his own glory, and therefore if he has appointed one to strength and vigor and another to pain and suffering, his glory is accomplished in the one just the same as in the other, for each one must fill the sphere allotted to him. No one can do more nor less than that. All things are the work of his creation, and he has created nothing too small nor too great to be subservient to his will. The ants are not beneath his notice. They are a people not strong, they have no guide, overseer or ruler, yet they gather their meat in the summer, and gathereth his food in the harvest. The conies, the locust, the spider, they all have no leader nor king, save their Creator, and they all dwell in their respective habitations. Behemoth moves about and dwells in his jungle, as he is ordained to do. Leviathan, that crooked serpent, is just as much subject to the will of his Creator as any other creature, small or great, weak or strong. I have been impressed with the language of the one hundred and fourth Psalm: "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches. So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. There go the ships; there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein. These wait all upon thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good. Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled; thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust." He has ordained the moon and the stars so that they move with amazing regularity. He placed the sun in its orbit. It has always ruled the day, and always will, according to the earliest word spoken concerning it. Once upon a time it stood still, according to the command of its Creator, and hasted not to go down about the space of a whole day. It shines in dazzling glory, but can shine on only half of the earth at once. Its Creator far excels it in glory and his brightness shines to the four corners of the earth. The winds and the waves obey him. Is he a complete Sovereign?

We may say he is. "Life, death and hell and worlds unknown, hang on his firm decree." Death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. They cannot come forth to prey upon us until God himself shall send them forth. Satan is cast into the bottomless pit and the angel of the Lord holds the key. He was bound with a great chain, which no doubt represents the legal tenets which bound the beast. He must remain bound with this great chain until God in his wisdom and providence sees fit to loose him for a little season. Sometimes it looks as if these legal shackles were about to be taken off, but when they are, whether it be soon or a long time hence, it must be remembered that the angel of God shall have turned the key.

Speaking of the wind and waves obeying him, I tried to speak from Matthew xiv. 25, where it is recorded that Jeeus came to his disciples walking on the sea. It impressed me as a wonderful example of the way he traveled while here on earth, for whose sake he traveled and the final result. A master mechanic will build a machine, and oftentimes he sends forth a small pattern, an exact duplicate of his machine. If he receives a patent it is an evidence that his machine is a good workable machine and he has the sole right to it. This may be a rather crude illustration, but when I think of that little band of disciples in the ship in the midst of the sea, and Jesus walking on the sea, it seems to be an exact pattern of the great work of salvation which he came to accomplish. It was necessary that he walk on the waters to accomplish this. The waters, an emblem of tribulation an affliction. This is the way he walked while here, "A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." He trod the winepress of the wrath of almighty God alone, and of the people there was none to help. It was alone for the sake of this little band of disciples that he walked out upon the boisterous sea. To accomplish their salvation was his whole intent. Did he reach the ship in time? He did. Glory to God in the highest, their little barque did not sink. It would have been the utmost folly to have urged this little band to exercise free agency, for they were utterly helpless; or to make the start and Jesus would meet them half way. Peter did try that, only to find that he was entirely at the mercy of Jesus after all. Hear his pitiful cry: "Lord, save me." Their whole salvation depended entirely upon Jesus coming to them. He came, and when he had entered into the ship immediately they were on the land whither they were going. The pattern is admirably workable, but no more so than the whole work of salvation which he wrought while here, and it is his. He worked it out himself, and therefore it is his. Any one else claiming any credit for this great work is an impostor. The pattern has been accepted of the great Master Builder, and he has granted to Jesus the sole right to all the praise, honor and glory of it. Hear the Father speak of him: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Hear the Son's triumphant response: "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." He must walk upon the waters of affliction to accomplish all this. He must be reviled, persecuted, crucified. He must go down in death and rise again before he could sit in triumph at the right hand of God. But ought not Christ to have suffered these things and entered into his glory? It is certainly good, but solemn tidings, to know that Jesus has walked upon the waters for us. In all our

afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them. He has come in and suffered with us and we with him.

Our Jesus has walked on the waters,
This truth is most sacred to me;
'Twas sacred to those few disciples
When tossed on the boisterous sea.

He walked on the sea of affliction,
He trod the winepress alone,
He murmurs not at reproaches,
But graciously comes to his own.

And when we come down to death's river,
We dread the dark waters to cross;
But Jesus has walked on those waters,
And softened the billows for us.

You may take the foregoing thoughts for what they are worth. They are like myself, quite imperfect.

With much love for you all,

L. L. SCHENCK.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., June 26, 1928.

DEAR SISTER WORKMAN:—I have never written you a letter, but missed you so at our three days' meeting that I feel compelled to write to you or to some one of the little few. We had a very fine, yet very sad meeting, because of the absence of our aged pastor, my grandfather, who has been gone from our midst now six months. Sister, I think of all the days of the week that Monday after a good meeting has closed is the saddest for me. That may seem strange, but those parting hours are very sad to me, and it is on Monday when my little ones are at play and I am at my work that my mind is carried away into the great beyond and I reflect on those precious hours with the dear brethren, and it is then that perhaps I may recall a loving hand clasp or a tender word from a dear brother or sister. It is then I see myself and feel to be such a weak, unworthy one, so vile and corrupt, and I marvel at the thought that any one could so tenderly call me sister. Oh the anguish of my soul at the thought of deceiving and being deceived. What good is there in me? None. No, positively none, and except it be by the divine grace of the just and righteous God there is no help for me; no, nothing less than eternal damnation. How can there be good in me when there are times I am angry and cross when about my work, and at times even become impatient with my little ones? But, O sister, that is not my heart, and even though I cannot shed tears as I once did my heart is made to cry in anguish, yes, bitter anguish, Lord, have mercy upon me, a vile, corrupt sinner, a sinner lost and ruined without that saving grace which flows from on high.

September 5th.—Months have passed since I started this letter, but even though pen has not written my heart has ever held that same feeling of weakness, and the same yearning love has always been with me, and his presence divinely sweet.

Since I started this we have, as you know, had the sweet privilege of being together at the association and spending a night at the same place. Oh what a pleasure it was to me to hear those brethren and sisters and you relate your experiences, especially the McClanahan brothers, who are both old, yet what a task it was for me to hold my peace, but the younger must always listen to the older ones. I tremble to say it, but many of the things said were identical with my own experience, for I cannot see how one so weak and subject to sin as I could ever have experienced anything like those noble and dear ones who talked that night. Oh no, just to-night I said to a neighbor, Such a sinner as I must not stay in the church, thus mocking God and man. But again, I must say he knows them that are his own; he has called them

from far and near, and has called them after the counsel of his own will, neither will he forsake them; no, not the least among them, for he has called them with a holy calling. "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified," and them he also called not of the flesh, but of the Spirit, which is of God, for God is a Spirit, and if I be numbered among the few who are called none can take me from that number. But oh am I one? That is my cry. He says, Ye shall know them, inasmuch as they love the brethren. Sister, if I know my own heart, I do love the brethren, for there are no people on earth as dear to me as the Old Baptists, and there is no name as sweet to me as the name of that Holy One above.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear;
It sooths his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

How sweet those words are to me, yet am I deceiving and being deceived? God alone knows my heart, and even if my fleshly ways are sinful, if grace be in my heart none can pluck it from me. God knows I merit nothing of myself; no, not one farthing, but by the grace of God I am what I am. His sheep are of one fold, and they that have a hearing ear shall hear, and they that have an understanding heart shall understand. Many, many are the nights that I close my eyes with the prayer on my lips, O Father, if it be thy holy will this night, wouldest thou come to me by dream, vision, or in some way by thy precious presence, and tell me if I may only have a small share in thy glory, or tell me, O God, am I deceiving my brethren and myself? Come closer to me to-night and give me just a little brighter evidence of life eternal, that I may rejoice in thy name and praise thee forever and forever.

Sister, I do not believe I ever expressed myself quite thus plainly to any one before. Do you realize how I feel, or am I pushing myself unworthily upon you? Forgive me for writing so much.

I will close by saying that even though I tread through much darkness, and am vile and sinful, I feel that I once saw the Savior's face and heard him call me into his presence, and that is my only hope. He is my rock, my salvation, my life, my all in all. Praise be to his holy name for my dear brethren, dear old Mt. Olive Church, my family and mother. These little tots around me, that I so often caress bring vividly to me his precious words: Except ye become as little children ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Join me a moment in memory of dear grandfather, whose voice was so precious to me proclaiming His glorious gospel. Forgive my errors, and pray for me when at the throne of grace. Please write.

Your sister in hope, if one at all,
GERTRUDE BARTLETT CROSS.

BERLIN, Maryland.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I hope you will pardon me for thus addressing you, for I often feel I should never call one of God's little ones by that title as I am so unclean. I feel I would like to pen a few thoughts for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I think it is the standard of all gospel truth and a great comfort to many who have no other preaching, also to many who are blessed of the Lord to hear the preached word often.

I did not intend to write along these lines, so will call your attention to Mark xvi. 15: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel

to every creature." This command was given by Jesus to his disciples just a short time before his ascension, and I do not think it means we are to send missionaries into all the world as the world seems to think it does; that is, the natural world, for had the Lord so intended it so it would have been, for we have no record of any of his commands ever failing of fulfillment. He told Jonah to go to Ninevah. Did he go? Of course he did. Jonah said he would not, but see how God prevailed upon him to go, and while forcing him to do his bidding he also taught him a lesson, and that lesson was that salvation is of the Lord and not of man, for he of himself thought to go to some other place, but God had told him to go there and his command must be obeyed. I verily believe that his disciples are to this day preaching the gospel everywhere God intended it to be, and he intended it to be in all the world. To my mind there are always two things, subjects or kinds to be considered, and in this particular case there is a spiritual world and a sinful or natural world. I do not think God meant for his disciples to go into all the natural world and preach the gospel, for he said, I give them (referring to the nonelect or unregenerate) the spirit of slumber, eyes that they see not, ears that they hear not and hearts that they understand not, so he must have meant for them to go into the spiritual or christian world and preach to his people, for he said to Peter, Feed my sheep; feed my lambs. In another place he said, If I go away I will send the Comforter. Does he not send the Comforter to our poor souls when we are cast down and ready to perish, when some one comes along who we look upon as one of God's little ones and can take us by the hand and go with us in all of our troubles? We can say it is the hand of the Lord leading us out of the wilderness and from under the bondage of the old Mosaic law, which was one of the hardest taskmasters that ever existed, for there was only one ever lived upon this earth who could keep that law, and that was the Son of God, who was slain for your sins and, I hope, for mine. Then when he sends his servants to all the saints of God and they are assured of their sins being forgiven is it not a comfort? But how long does it last before we are made to doubt again and commence to hunger and thirst for another evidence? When the children of Israel were in the wilderness they had to gather manna every day, except on the sabbath, so it is with us to-day, we must be fed daily with that heavenly food.

He said, Go preach the gospel. There is a vast difference between the gospel and the works of poor sinful man. What is the gospel? It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. We must admit there is nothing good that we can do for ourselves, all things must come from above. Then if all things must come from above, where do the works of man come in? When they are preaching the works of man they are not preaching the gospel, for the gospel is the work of God.

I did not intend writing so much, but there seems to be no end. Do with it as you see fit and all will be right with me.

Yours in hope of mercy,

J. W. S. TIMMONS.

CHATSWORTH, Ga., Sept. 27, 1928.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—If indeed I may be permitted under the Spirit of Jesus to claim such precious relationship, I would be pleased, the Lord giving you the spirit and desire to do so, to have you

comment at some length upon the seventeenth chapter of John, especially the second verse. From my very limited conception, the sentiment contained in this second verse seems to be the very fundamental principle and capstone covering the salvation of God's people. Not one more nor one less. It seems to me it covers it, and should put an end to all doubts whatsoever as entertained by the world's religion. It seems these, whomsoever they may be, were given to the Son by the Father before the hills were formed. These are they that fell in the transgression of Adam and whom Christ, the Son of God, in his crucifixion and death redeemed from their lost and ruined state. These are they whom God in his mercy has invited to drink from that fountain whose springs never run dry. These are those to whom the Scriptures were written as a guide to lead them in paths of righteousness. These are those referred to by the angel of God when Joseph was told that Mary should bear a son, and that "he shall save his people from their sins." There are many, many more who come under this; in fact it seems to cover the entire scope of the plan of salvation.

Dear brother, please pardon me for having unnecessarily taken up your time, but for the time being I almost lost sight of myself, and of the object in view. I have a few special friends, and although they belong to the religions of the world, yet they seem to have an ear for the truth of the Scriptures as advocated by the Old School Baptists, therefore I am very desirous that you comply through the columns of the SIGNS on said Scripture for the benefit of said friends, and for my special comfort and consolation. I take several Old Baptist periodicals, but in none of the others do I see and read the deep things of God and his truth that I do in the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. When I was married (in the year 1882) my dear departed companion, whose maiden name was Nannie B. Woodall, was then taking this dear paper, and it continued coming to her, but under the name of Mrs. G. M. Edwards, until her death, March, 1923. I have continued taking it since then, and if it is the Lord's will I hope to never be without it as long as he shall spare this poor undeserving and unprofitable sinner.

I beg you to remember me when at the throne of God's sweet grace.

In sorrow and tribulation,

GEORGE M. EDWARDS.

LONDON, Ontario.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—Great is the mystery of godliness, and so it seems to me very mysterious that I should take my pen to attempt to write to any who have been enabled by the power of God to stand upon the walls of Zion and preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation. "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself [or power of God] beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him." —Rom. viii. 15–17. The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly. The things I hate I do. So it has pleased him who has subjected the same in hope. The sufferings are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Paul says we are saved by hope, which is as an anchor of the soul.

The editorials of the SIGNS have been of much comfort and strength in the Lord to me, and though I was saddened, and somewhat surprised, when I read the "New Year's Greeting," yet was made to feel it was consoling to the poor and needy whose trust is in the strength of Israel's God. While choosing a back number of the SIGNS for perusal July 15th, 1905, was before me, and I was made to feel that Elder Chick's able editorial was wonderful in explaining Paul's experience of the things of the kingdom. He who felt to be less than the least of all saints was brought to know or comprehend the love of Christ which passeth knowledge (natural comprehension) in its breadth and length, depth and height. What a mysterious contemplation! Alone with God, seeing things inexpressible and full of glory, our life hid with Christ in God. How safe, yet to feel it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, who works and none can hinder. Elder Chick says he did not climb to this state, as though he had anything to do with it, but was caught up. Then he must feel, I am become a fool, &c. He must know the pricking of the thorn in the flesh. The grace of God is the all-sufficiency. Jesus is the way; he alone gives strength in every time of need. No lion shall be there. There may appear to be, but the poor trembling traveler will find they are chained. Thus far, and no farther, shall they be permitted to worry and afflict, but when Jesus says, Peace, be still, the billows subside and the mariner is safe in the desired haven, Jesus our hope. Paul was made to gladly glory in his infirmities, that the power of God might rest upon him. The one thing needful, who made the world and all things. The heavens declare his glory.

"Who can resist the almighty arm
That made the starry sky?
Or who elude the certain glance
Of God's all-seeing eye?"

Now I feel it best to bring these disconnected sentences to a close.

If the Lord so wills, I would like to see an editorial from your pen on the same text that brother Snyder requested.

With very best wishes to you and yours for a good and happy new year, I am, I hope, yours in gospel bonds,

(MRS.) D. T. GILLIS.

GREENFIELD, Tenn., Oct. 7, 1927.

DEAR EDITORS:—I desire to inform you that I am still receiving the SIGNS each month, for which I trust I feel thankful for your kindness in sending it to me. Many times I feel too sinful and unworthy to be the recipient of such kindness, and often wonder why such a poor sinner loves the gospel truth the SIGNS so ably contends for. When you think best you may drop my unworthy name from your mailing list and I will try and get along without its very welcome visits. I pass my paper on to a dear sister who greatly enjoys reading it.

Nov. 2, 1928.—I am again reminded with a desire to write a few lines and try in my very weak way to sincerely thank you all for the great privilege I have been allowed the past year in reading each issue of your most excellent paper, though I have been, and still am, unworthy of such a great blessing. I am so poor in this world's goods, and make so many failures, that I am still without means to help (in a financial way) in keeping the dear messenger going to carry such God-honoring messages to the scattered few. Some of my richer friends boast of the dues they pay to the Lord, while I am very much like poor Lazarus, not able to pay, just a poor beggar; in fact, I am in need each

moment and not brave enough to launch out on the sea of doing, giving, works or dues. As to works, I do not know what to do, and as to dues, I do not know who to hand them to.

Please pardon me this little liberty I have taken in expressing my sincere thanks for the good truths the SIGNS brings to me. I still pass my copy on to a dear sister who is sorely afflicted and who speaks very highly of it. I repeat, when you deem it proper you may drop my name from your free list, and I will, by God's help, still love the truth as it is in Christ, who, I hope, will save my soul.

I am inclosing a good letter, written by Elder J. R. Hatcher, of Lyles, Tenn., that may meet with your approval for publication in the SIGNS.

A sinner who sins,

W. F. STAFFORD.

LYLES, Tenn., March 18, 1927.

DEAR BROTHER STAFFORD:—Your unexpected letter received, read and reread with much interest. I say unexpected, because I do not think I ever saw you, but when I find that a person reads the SIGNS OF THE TIMES I have to believe he is a subject of grace. I notice you do not belong to the church, but I discover you trust in Jesus. I also note that you are fifty-six years of age, live on a hillside farm and are alone in the world. I passed my seventy-first year February 23rd last. I was injured in my left knee joint by an axe in the year 1900, which crippled me for life, and I cannot work or get around much. I was raised on a farm, but now have none, except a garden I work in. I was born eighty miles east of Waverly, the county seat of Humphreys County, Tennessee.

My brother, you close your good letter by saying, "Write to a poor helpless sinner like me." Oh what good words! How they suit my feelings! "Helpless," means that our Savior has done and must do all things for us. He must be, and is, made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. He is all these things to us, as we hope, though we often doubt. We feel too unworthy for such glorious things. We not only feel to be sinners before we are quickened, but we are yet sinners, and I am glad this is so, for "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I [Paul] am [now] chief." Jesus is our prophet, priest and king. He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the Almighty. Then he is all things to us, for we are helpless, and he is the Almighty, no power but of him. The powers that be are ordained of God. Listen: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him."—Col. i. 13-16. Read all the chapter. This proves the universal reign of God's government over all worlds, creatures and things, from the smallest atom that floats in space to the great archangel around God's throne. I do not believe that the great supreme God looked through time and there saw who would do good, and then fixed his purposes to suit the convenience of his creatures, for such an idea would make him a God subject to influence. This is not the character of the God of all power, but I believe God was before

all things, and therefore there was none that could influence him, and so our God, without any influence, declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Yes, he declared this, and who but an enemy would say, Jehovah, why doest thou? I hope your pure mind of Christ will grasp this eternal truth. If God is before all things, and he alone inhabiteth eternity, then who can hinder even one of these things coming to pass in its precise order as he declared it? Listen: "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell." Do you ever read in the Bible of any fullness dwelling in finite men? No sir, but all the fullness dwells in Christ. Men and devils must bow to God's divine control. God's government is above all governments. He raises up kings to develop his purposes to his people, and he says of Pharaoh, "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." Pharaoh was a persecutor of the children of Israel, and was just as sinful in persecuting those Israelites as he would have been had God had no purpose in it. Pharaoh meant it for evil, but God meant it for good, as in the case of Joseph's brethren. When Joseph, the type of Christ, made himself known to his brethren he said, "Be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you, to preserve life," &c. So he raised Pharaoh up for a purpose to persecute the children of Israel, the type of his people of all nations. Pharaoh is still living and persecuting the children of God and through this persecution God has the gospel declared throughout all the earth. Look at the persecution of the Son of God through the Pharaoh principle which God ruled over to the salvation of his people. Look at the persecutions of the prophets and apostles. See where many of the saints were put to death, but our God stood by them and ruled it over for the good of his people and still held the preeminence. The holy apostles were persecuted from one city to another, they preached the gospel of the grace of God everywhere. God ruled all these things over to his own divine purpose and to his own glory and still held the preeminence. In this crowning work of grace you see how helpless men are in God's sight. All these things are in your experience and you are made to say in your dear letter that you are a helpless sinner. God holds you under his divine control, and best of all, he keeps you by his omnipotent power and has saved you by his grace. This power of God in you causes you to not desire to persecute the saints. You are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God, and "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Our dear Lord will allow his children to drift away from him only so far, and no farther, and then he gives them repentance, and thus they are taught to feel humble, for had not God given them repentance they could not have returned, for all are poor helpless sinners, trusting in the living God. Yes, without strength, helpless. Then all the strength we have comes from our dear Lord. In him all fullness dwells. This fullness lies in none other; but in him. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual bless-

ings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Now listen to the best of all: "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Listen: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Oh I cannot quote all on this glorious subject. God's government is above all the governments of this world. "The government shall be upon his shoulder [power]; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." He is all these things to his people. How strange to think that some would limit God's absolute predestination of all things, or think that one link of his chain of divine providence could be left out. We poor finite creatures cannot sit as judges of what God shall do or what he shall not do. It has often been said that God predestinated the good things but he did not predestinate the bad things. Now what man, or set of men, is able to sit as judge of the Almighty and prescribe boundaries for our God, and draw the dividing line, seeing that men are altogether helpless, and vanity? But inspiration says they limit the Holy One of Israel. While they do this very thing, the truth remains just the same: no change in the government of God; never has been, and never will be. Death or hell can do no more than what the Father please. This chain of all the events of time is linked together so minutely that even our God told a lying spirit to go and entice Ahab to go to Ramoth-Gilead and to be killed, so the dogs should lick his blood to fulfill the word of the Lord. Jesus said to Judas, "That thou doest, do quickly," to fulfill the prophecy of God which says, "He that eateth bread with me, hath lifted up his heel against me." When Judas betrayed the Son of God he made him known to the enemies by giving the Lord a kiss. If God did not predestinate those most sinful acts what is it he has predestinated? If he only predestinated the good, and left the wicked men and devils to drift along upon the scale of blind chance, may it not upset the government of our God? If he has only predestinated the good actions of men, and has left evil men and devils to drift along as they desire, is it not a fact that they might enter heaven itself and destroy the inhabitants of God's supreme government? Suppose that God in the setting up of his planetary system had placed one single star in space to run at random who could know what the destruction of the multiplied millions of stars might be? and might not all things, with men and angels, have gone into nonentity, and not a single soul left to tell the sad story? God might have been dethroned and with all of his royal family sunk in oblivion, and not a trace of anything to be found in all the eternal purpose of God; that is, if all things had not been predestinated of God. To my mind, God has predestinated all things, or else he has predestinated nothing. It is said by holy inspiration, "The wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain [keep from being]." O my brother, how this view of the high an lofty One has brought us down to the dung hill in deep contrition of soul, and he sits upon the throne of his majesty in the highest heavens working all things after the counsel of his own will.

I have not written as I expected, but hope you can understand me, and that

God may give you a crumb of spiritual food to feed your hungry soul. Write again, my brother, when God gives you a mind. Remember poor me at the throne of grace.

A poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

J. R. HATCHER.

TITUSVILLE, New Jersey.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find check for the SIGNS, and one dollar to aid in sending it to the "poor of the flock." I am also sending you a letter lately received from Elder H. H. Lefferts for publication in the SIGNS, if you think best. I have not his consent, but think he will not object when there are many who would love to read more from his pen, and have often expressed the wish that he write oftener, also a dear letter from Elder F. A. Chick when he was my pastor; no doubt it would be a joy for others to read it.

Sincerely,

OLIVIA NORRIS HELLINGS.

LEESBURG, Va., Dec. 26, 1928.

DEAR SISTER HELLINGS:—Among the many letters I receive, no one is appreciated more deeply than this one from you this morning. That your mind should turn to me, and that you should be impressed to impart unto me your sweet message of encouragement, is a favor from God, because I believe he moved you to do it. I rejoice that you had a visit from that shining Light which faith alone perceives and which the natural eye can never behold. You have indeed tasted the power and beauty in that old hymn which you mention in your letter. At best nature has but a borrowed light, and cannot of itself give forth that Light which never was on land or sea, but which floods at rare times the souls of the children of Light, of whom I believe you are one. Paul saw that light and it made another man of him, a new creature; even so all those who are visited by the power and glory of that Light are made new creatures in the Beloved.

You speak about my writing more for the SIGNS. Indeed, dear sister, I should love to be able to do it, but of late years my mind has been but little exercised in a writing way. Generally I have to do my writing at night, after the work of the day, and my mind is usually tired and inactive at that time. I do not want you and others to think I have lost interest in the SIGNS or in the welfare of the flock. I hope I have not, but my way is so hedged about, and my time so occupied with various things, that my editorial work has been pushed aside. I do not feel that the SIGNS or yourself are any loser by it, but really it would be a great pleasure to me at times to have the mind to write and to be able to reflect and meditate upon the blessed theme of eternal truth in order to write. It is a good thing that I am blessed with able and faithful associates on the SIGNS to help out, otherwise I do not know what would become of the paper. If it depended on me it would have ceased publication long ago.

You speak in your letter of the dear ones gone home to their eternal inheritance, especially of Elders Purington and Chick. While it is indeed sad not to have them with us here in the church on earth, but what a blessing it has been in my life, and in yours, to have known and to have been fellowshipped with such men as they were. To have sat under their ministry Sunday after Sunday was a divine privilege of which we are not worthy and which we appreciated all too little when we had it.

It saddens my heart to see the churches dwindling and to see so few ministers equipped to go in and out before the flock of God. It is a condition that ought to make us examine ourselves with care and with prayer to see if the fault lies within ourselves. All these things have a cause. As David said to his brethren, Is there not a cause? May God reveal to us the cause of our delinquency and give us grace to correct the wrong, if wrong there be, is my sincere desire for Zion's sake.

Please remember me to Mr. Hellings and to every member of your family, especially to that daughter of yours, Mary, I think, who always seems so glad to see me. My wife joins with me in sincere love to you and all of them.

Yours in the best of bonds,

H. H. LEFFERTS.

HOPEWELL, N. J., March 14, 1904.

DEAR SISTER HELLINGS:—I received your kind and interesting letter of March 4th in due time, and feel like replying with a few words this morning. I feel glad for the blessing the Lord gave you through his word, of which you spoke, and hope that many such blessings are still in store for you. How precious are such summer seasons when they are given to the soul. They are like refreshing sunshine after a long dark time. "My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning," and his coming is like the rising of the sun. You were thus favored, and were glad in the favor. I am glad you wrote me about it. I am glad always in the gladness of the children of God when I know of it. But you also speak of dark seasons, and of the sense of your own vileness and weakness. This is a common experience, and it is a needful one to all of us. As we learn to know ourselves we come to know the fullness of the grace of God more and more that can save such sinners as we are.

I hoped you would be able to meet with us yesterday. We had a good meeting together. I used as a text the words found in 2 Chronicles xx. 26. I had a very pleasant exercise of mind while speaking. Because the people did not need to fight in the battle, as the Lord fought for them, therefore they could only bless the Lord for the victory. It is truly a valley of blessing. It is only when we are humbled and occupy the lowly places that we ever do really bless God, and the one thought that came to me with comfort was this: that we never do need to fight for ourselves. No matter who or what the enemy may be let us go forth only singing and praising God and the Lord will undertake for us. If some one speaks unjustly of us let us still not contend against him, but go forward in the way in which we are commanded of God steadfastly, only remembering to sing to his praise, and we shall soon come to the cliff, where we see the enemy, all dead bodies on the plain. So Israel was bidden to go forward, with the singers and players upon instruments in the forefront; not swords and shields and spears, but instruments of music and praise. I was glad I was enabled to speak.

I must close now. May God bless you and yours in all things. Remember me to Mr. Hellings and to all. We all join in kind regards to you. Bonnie is now steadily mending. Little Mary has been sick since last Wednesday, but is now better, though as yet in bed.

I remain as ever, your brother and pastor,

F. A. CHICK.

CHICAGO, Ill., Nov. 21, 1928.

DEAR BROTHER RUSTON:—We very much appreciate your kind wishes for the church in Chicago, and are inclosing a copy of the Minutes of the Presbytery which met to aid in the church organization. Will you please publish them in the SIGNS? Let us assure you that if you ever come to Chicago you will be most welcome among us. From what father Keene tells us you are in full accord with the beliefs of Elder Chick and Elder Hassell. We feel the same toward these beliefs, therefore feel in closest fellowship with you. May God's blessing be upon you and yours.

WESLEY N. SPITLER.

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY FOR THE ORGANIZING OF THE REGULAR PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH OF CHICAGO.

CHICAGO, ILL., NOV. 17, 1928.

Elder Blair chosen as Moderator of the Presbytery, J. B. Smith as Clerk.

The following members composing the Presbytery: Elder J. H. Blair, from Harmony Church, Grant County, Indiana; Elder H. T. Jaynes, from Zoar Church, Coles County, Illinois; Deacon J. B. Ashby and brother J. B. Smith, from Blue Grass Church, Newton County, Indiana.

Owing to the fact that the letter sent to Hazel Creek Church, near Greentop, Missouri, was delayed, Elder Charles A. Jones was not a regular member of the Presbytery, but was invited to sit in council with them.

Letters called for, read and accepted by the Presbytery.

Covenant read, and agreed to by the following members: brethren Wesley and Keene Spitler, sisters Emma Brunow and Ruth Keene Spitler.

Articles of Faith read and accepted.

Motion made and seconded, that the matter be taken in advisement.

Motion made and seconded, that the request be granted to the brethren and sisters for the organizing of the church.

Motion made and seconded, that Elder Blair deliver the charge to the church. The text was Jeremiah vi. 16.

Extended the right hand of fellowship, in recognition of the legality of the organization of the church at this place.

Short talks by Elders Charles A. Jones and H. T. Jaynes.

Motion made and seconded for the adjournment of the Presbytery.

Signed:

ELDER J. H. BLAIR, Mod.
ELDER HAROLD JAYNES.
ELDER CHAS. A. JONES.
J. B. ASHBY.
J. B. SMITH.

POCA, W. Va., Feb. 20, 1928.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I was truly glad to hear from you, your good letter was indeed a comfort to me in my declining days. I read it and thought I would write you in a few days, but having quite a number of letters to answer I fet to take them in turn, so to-day just felt to write you a few lines, as I am getting old and fully realize that my race is nearly at an end. While I have been kept to a reasonable old age for some purpose best known to God, there is in my heart a desire to serve him in a way that would be acceptable to him. Much of the time I am in gross darkness, feeling there is a great drought in the land. Not a drought of natural bread, but of spiritual, the bread of life, which makes me cry unto him for daily bread and refreshing showers from the presence of the Lord. The words of Jesus, when opened

up to my understanding while in these dark seasons, give me much comfort, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." It is then that I for a time become reconciled by the spirit of reconciliation; that leads me to his banqueting-house and his banner over me is love. We love God and all his children because he first loved us. When the blood-stained banner of King Emmanuel floats in the heavenly breeze over our drooping souls, it is then that our feeble knees are given strength. "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary, and they shall walk, and not faint."—Isaiah xl. 31. These cheering words of this dear old prophet come to us in the spirit of reviving the poor, weak, trembling children of God as they plod along through this sin-polluted world, feeling much of the time down in the ruts of almost a dispirited condition, their inquiry is, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God."—Psalms xlii. 11. The first verse of this chapter reads thus: "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." Oh what a glorious promise to the poor child of God is found in Isaiah xli. 17, 18: "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." When the refreshing seasons come to us from the presence of the Lord we then rejoice to know that our God, the God of our salvation, "is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any [of his elect] should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Submitted in love by

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

HAVANA, Kansas, Dec., 1928.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—As my subscription is due I am sending two dollars for myself, two dollars for Elder Nathan Reeder, of Niotaze, Kansas, and one dollar for the "poor of the flock." I am always glad when the SIGNS comes to my home, for in reading it I am comforted, edified and established in the word of God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will. All things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them that are the called according to his purpose. Our blessings are so many they cannot be enumerated. One of the greatest blessings, it seems to me, is that Jesus has revealed himself to poor sinners as their Savior and Redeemer, has promised us eternal happiness in a home in heaven, and has said that he will never leave nor forsake us. He gives us salvation by grace; yes, amazing grace, that saved a wretch like me. There was a time when I did not know the sweetness of this. If I am not mistaken, I have a sweet hope that Jesus mercifully forgave my sins and set my soul free, even for unworthy me. Surely his goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my sinful, unprofitable life. We praise the Lord for the hope that we have. He taught us that we are sinners, and this gives him all the praise and glory. Before this revelation we were not hungering and thirsting after righteousness, for we did not know the need of a Savior.

He knows all our wants and wishes and provides all things needful.

I attended the Turkey Creek Association last September. It was held at a farmhouse sixteen miles south of Fort Scott, Kansas, and we were all together during the meeting. There were eight ministers present; all preached salvation by grace, and we had a very pleasant meeting. If it is the Lord's will this association will next year convene with Shiloh Church, in Crescent, Oklahoma. Only those who have the witness within can know the joy and comfort of these associations. I have loved the Primitive Baptists ever since I heard the first sermon with the hearing ear and understanding heart.

May God bless you in your labors of love and give you grace to continue to feed his sheep and lambs, and to publish the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I wish you joy and contentment at Christmas time, and a prosperous new year.

Unworthily,

(MRS.) MARY E. PITTMAN.

INDIANOLA, Miss., Dec. 6, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars, for which please send me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES another year. It is all the preaching I have, and being situated in a desolate place it is like news from a far country, an heavenly country. A dear old servant, as he calls himself, comes about seventy-five miles to preach to a little handful here. I feel that he is a pearl of great price, for he comes laden with that pure and unadulterated gospel of grace, and grace alone, if this poor, old, ignorant worm of the dust is not deceived. The precious Book of our Savior says, "He that is greatest among you, shall be your servant." He feels he is only a poor old servant, but to us poor worms he seems to be greater than we are for the truth's sake. I do not know that I am one of God's chosen vessels of mercy, believing in grace, and grace alone, but I do know I love all those who do believe it, and I also know I have been perfectly contented about my resting-place since I have had a home with the dear Old School or Predestinarian Baptists. At times I am made to feel that I have been brought out of darkness (works) into his marvelous light (the gospel of grace), and I feel to hunger after things pertaining to a better resting-place than this, and sometimes I grow weary of this sinful life and catch myself longing to depart and leave this world behind. My health is poor and I want all who believe in the gospel of our Savior to poor lost sinners to pray for me.

If not asking too much, please publish this short missive; it may comfort some poor old sinner who feels to be as unworthy as I do.

A little sister, I hope,

OLIVE E. ROBERTS.

WARREN, Arkansas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am writing to ask you to please discontinue sending the SIGNS. For many years I have been a reader of the paper, but now my precious companion is gone and I am no longer able to take it. My dear husband was born August 9th, 1856, and passed away February 7th, 1928. He joined the church near Iuka, Tishomingo County, Mississippi, August 18th, 1877, and was baptized the next day. Mt. Zion Church licensed him to preach June 20th, 1880. I cannot remember just when he was ordained, but he had been preaching nearly fifty years. He served from four to five churches; was serving five at the time of his death. He was a strong predestinar-

ian, and I do not believe there ever was a man who suffered more persecution, and all I ever heard him say was that he hoped they would be made to see their error. He was confined to his bed about two weeks and not once did he groan or complain, not suffering one moment of pain. The dear Lord took him without suffering. He finished his work here and the Lord called him home. All my joys are gone and I, too, long to go. Remember me when it is well with you.

Yours in much sorrow,

(MRS.) J. H. BLYTHE.

HOLLY SPRINGS, Miss., Nov. 7, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—After so long a time I acknowledge my neglect of duty in not sending in my subscription for our good paper, the SIGNS. Please pardon me. I admit openly that I could have sent it sooner, but just kept putting it off from time to time. I trust I may do better in the future. I pray that God may continue to fill the good writers with spiritual food from on high. I truly am thankful the editors keep confusion out of the paper, for in such there is no food for the true seeker. May God bless the dear writers.

Yours in Christ, I hope,

(MRS.) M. C. JONES.

CULLISON, Kansas, Jan. 15, 1929.

DEAR PUBLISHERS:—In the January number of the SIGNS the article from Cullison, Kansas, should be signed by E. G. Webb rather than Gustava Webb. The daughter copied my letter on her school paper and we should have erased her name from its heading. We are both sorry for the mistake. Will you please correct it in your next issue and each reader can make the change on his own paper? Find a check inclosed for your trouble. E. G. WEBB.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1929.

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MATTHEW VII. 19, 20.

"Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and is cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

This truth, spoken by Jesus, was recorded by Matthew for the testimony of Jesus relative to the people of God bearing fruit of eternal life. We know, regarding the truth as to natural trees, that if the tree bears good fruit the tree is good, so, naturally speaking, the tree is preserved by the husbandman and the fruit gathered. The tree and fruit here spoken of is to the Scribes and false prophets of every description, which embraces those who falsely profess Christ Jesus, or claim to be the kingdom of God. One born of God is of the good tree. This sets forth God as the good tree, and every other is of the flesh, in which the embodiment of corruption and iniquity is put forth, which is recorded as the corrupt tree. (Matt. vii. 17, 18.) The

text we have here quoted declares that "every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." Whoever hews down and casts into the fire must have the authority of ownership in order to be able to discriminate as to the quality and kind of fruit it bears. We know the fruit of carnality, because we have tasted the bitterness thereof and know that it is not good. The question arises, What is the fruit of carnality? It is in every way at enmity against good fruit and is destructive to, instead of the building up of life, and the more we are given to note the bitterness of it the more condemnation or death we feel reigning in us. Good fruit nourishes, and life and vigor are felt as the effect of our partaking of it; in other words, it has been given to us to eat. These remarks are to present the true results of fruit given us in the state of nature. So we turn to the spiritual relation of poor sinners. We know if a man or woman is not born of God they have no good fruit in them, hence they cannot do the works of God, and when one is born of that incorruptible seed by the word of God they bring forth fruit unto the seed of which they are born. What do we expect to find upon the good tree? That which is produced by the Spirit of God in the heart, and that fruit will remain the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith. (Gal. v. 22.) The fruit of the Spirit as given by Paul to the Galatians to be manifested by mortal creature, and we know he was controlled by a higher power than that conceived in mortal flesh. Jesus knew the fruit of all the trees, and we, in nature, hew down the trees bearing bitter fruit and use them for fuel and other purposes, but the apple tree is preserved because of its fruit. Man in nature is hewn down or brought low by the Spirit, and all the stay formerly felt, as we would term the root of the tree, is cut off, all his strength is gone, and he goes down and is cast into the fire for the consuming of all pertaining to the flesh. "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons." The first taste of the fruit of the Spirit is love, and love is stronger than man. We know we cannot create love, and love casteth out fear. When Ananias was commanded of God to go to Saul he was told, "Behold, he prayeth," and Ananias immediately went to him and called him brother Saul, and this manifested humility by which he was hewn down and cast into the furnace of affliction because of his sins, and the fruit was manifested in the life he lived, for instead of persecuting and going forth to the satisfaction of the flesh he was made to bear the fruit of the Spirit: love, gentleness, longsuffering, faith. All the spiritual relation was manifested in the apostles, who are our ensamples as faithful disciples of Jesus. The church looks upon every member for these fruits of the Spirit, and when there is no fruit coldness is felt and all the relations of life are dormant. The fruit of the Spirit was what Paul had under consideration when he said that when he would do good evil was present with him and he could not do the things he would. If we were permitted to live as becomes saints what a great difference we would witness among the brethren, as each one would show his love for his brother, treat each other gently, expressing brotherly kindness, and joy would shine out in each countenance, expressing relations of love and fellowship, and meeting-places would be a bethel to all of like precious faith, peace would abound and we would never hear the expression, "I am for peace," for

peace would be there, and longsuffering would abound in the heart of every one. What is longsuffering? To our mind it is the manifested forbearance of one with another, in which all their faults and personalities are not collected and bundled to bring accusation against another brother. Faith, one of the quoted fruits of the Spirit, bears with vital importance on the evidences of eternal life, as we note that without faith it is impossible to please God, and is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, but with patience we wait for it. What wonderful fruit is born by faith! Faith is easily entreated, patient and is kind. The fruit of the Spirit in the church is the drawing cord that binds in one bundle of love all the members, and makes them sit together in heavenly places in Christ, and in these manifestations each can say, There my best friends, my kindred, dwell, there God, my Savior, reigns. What wonderful rest belongs to the people of God, to be partakers with the household of faith in the fruits of the Spirit, giving such strength that one feels rested, and the virtue of holy writ is felt which says, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." We have noted some very sweet fruit borne forth during the past year in the beautiful expressions of love and fellowship communicated to the editors and publishers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which was much appreciated. Our writing has been a labor of love, and we trust you may have found some of the sweet fruit of the Vine in it, and in the many other communications found in the pages of the SIGNS. We crave your support in soliciting new subscriptions and urging those in arrears to forward the amounts to the publishers. We trust it may be the will of God that we serve you during the year 1929 in the Spirit of God, that you may be built up and strengthened in the most holy faith, which will bear to you of the tree of life good faith.

C. W. V.

AN EXPLANATION.

THROUGH sickness, and the death of one of our working force, we have had a hard struggle getting out the January and February issues of the SIGNS, and ask the indulgence of our subscribers until we are able to get our working force functioning smoothly again. Mr. Thomas Kain, who has spent many years in this office, and who at different times has been engaged with three generations of the Beebe family in the publication of the SIGNS, was called home to his eternal reward Wednesday, January 23rd, after being confined to his home by sickness since December 29th last. We feel we not only have lost a valued employee, but a very old and dear friend. The death of Mr. Kain, coupled with sickness of others of the SIGNS' staff, has put us behind with our work, but if our subscribers will be lenient with us we will do the best we can toward getting the SIGNS out on time. The past two months has indeed been a strenuous time for us, and we hope our readers will bear with us and cast the mantle of charity over our short comings.

J. E. B. & Co.

ERRATUM.

ON page 5, column 1, lines 21–23, of the January issue of the SIGNS, in the article written by brother George W. Jackson, it should read, "So God restrains him from doing more than the things he loosed him to do," instead of, "So God restrains him from doing the very thing he loosed him to do."

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Alexander P. McDougald departed this life Wednesday, December 5th, 1928, at his home in Melbourne, Ontario, Canada, aged 77 years, 7 months and 7 days. His father was Archibald McDougald and his mother Elizabeth McTaggart, and he was born to them in Ekfrid, Ontario, April 28th, 1851. Mr. McDougald was a man very highly esteemed in the community where he had spent most of his life. He had many notable traits and excellent qualities that distinguished him among his fellow-men. He was a lover of the truth and was fearless in expressing himself plainly, so that men knew just where he stood. He never felt himself worthy of a name and a place in the church, yet in his death the Covenanted Baptist Church has lost a dear and faithful friend. For several years before he died he was in failing health, which unfitted him for the business and public life in which for years he had been engaged. He took even his failing health patiently, and by his conversation with his dear wife showed that death had lost its terror. Although he was a constant care, yet in the partner of his life he was blessed with one who ever stood with loving hands to minister to his needs. He leaves a wife to mourn, but she is comforted with the assurance that her loss is his eternal gain.

The writer was called to the funeral, which was held at his late residence, Melbourne; the interment was in Mayfair Cemetery.

G. R.

Mrs. Sallie Gulick Powell, our sister in Christ, died of pneumonia at the hospital in Staunton, Virginia, December 22nd, 1928 Funeral services were held Christmas day at Mt. Zion meetinghouse, Loudoun County, Virginia. She was the last surviving child of Francis and Nancy Gulick, and though the oldest of the daughters, she outlived them all. Her exact age is not known, but is thought to be about seventy-six years. She was baptized into membership with the Old School Baptists by Elder Joseph L. Purington about fifty years ago. She was married to Israel G. Powell July 25th, 1911. He died in March, 1915. Sister Ida Norman and sister Emma Young, both her sisters in the flesh and both younger than she, passed away before her: sister Norman in November, 1912, and sister Young in July, 1916. Her brother, J. F. Gulick, died in June, 1927. During the last years of her life she was not able to attend the meetings of the church, owing to her being afflicted. She loved the doctrine preached by the Old Baptists and was a faithful reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We have hope for her that she is now at peace in the presence of her Redeemer, the destiny unto which all saved by grace hope shortly to come, through Jesus Christ the Lord, other than whom there is no Savior.

H. H. L.

Mrs. Fannie Ann Lanham, the subject of this notice, departed this life December 7th, 1928, at the age of 59 years, 8 months and 2 days. She was born April 5th, 1870, and was united in marriage to William R. Lanham February 19th, 1896. To this union were born six children, three of whom died in infancy. The living children are Mrs. Lizzie McClanahan and Mrs. Emma Maddox, both of Poca, and Miss Baetie Lanham, of Charleston. She also leaves three sisters: Mr. Evert Melton, of Gallipolis, Ohio, Mrs. Henry Williams and Miss Lucinda Bailey, both of Rockyfork, W. Va., and four brothers: Wesley, Henry and Sam Bailey, of Charleston. Mrs. Lanham was the daughter of Bushrod and Elizabeth Bailey. She was well known and beloved by all who knew her. She was the widow of William R. Lanham. A host of other relatives survive her, including four grandchildren. Mrs. Lanham was a warm friend of the Old Baptists, but so far as I know never made a public profession of religion. I visited her twice while she was on her last bed of sickness and she was firm in the faith and doctrine of the Primitive Baptists.

The writer conducted the funeral services in the presence of a well ordered congregation in the Missionary Baptist meetinghouse in the town of Poca, where but few of the old order of Baptists reside. I used Luke xliv. 43 as a text, and although nearly eighty years of age the Lord blessed me with liberty to speak for nearly an hour by way of comforting those who were of a sorrowful heart. God alone can bind up their broken hearts.

Written by request.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

Edna A. Clark, daughter of W. H. and Elinor McQuerry, was born near Pleasantville, Iowa, February 10th, 1866, and died at her home in Pleasantville September 26th, 1928, at the age of 62 years, 7 months and 16 days. Deceased was united in marriage to W. A. Clark February 2nd, 1890, and to this union three children were born: McQuerry, Callie and one who passed away in infancy. Those left to mourn are her husband and daughter Callie, now Mrs. H. H. Phillips, two grandchildren, Carrroll and Bermiel, besides other relatives and a host of friends. She was preceded in death by her father, mother, four sisters and one brother. She was the last of the immediate McQuerry family. Deceased became a member of the Primitive Baptist Church in 1910, in which faith she was a strong believer until her death. She was a woman of noble, christian character, and her life was devoted to doing kindly acts. With the exception of about six month's residence in Missouri, her entire life was spent in this immediate neighborhood, and she was loved and respected by all who knew her. She was devoted to her home and family, but was always ready to assist a neighbor in time of need. She was a good woman and will be greatly

missed in the community where she resided so long, as well as in in the home.

Funeral services were held at the home, in West Pleasantville, Friday, September 28th, conducted by Elder Milton Young, of Indianola. Burial was in the Graceland Cemetery, at Knoxville. Many beautiful floral offerings decked the casket, contributed by loving relatives and friends as a last tribute to one they admired. (MRS.) H. H. PHILLIPS.

Mrs. Jennie C. Hubbard departed this life November 21st, 1928, at her home in Winthrop, Maine, after a short illness of grippe, followed by heart failure. She had been a great sufferer from chronic bronchitis for several years, but bore her sufferings with patience and fortitude. She was born in the town of Pittston, Maine, May 12th, 1866, the daughter of William H. and Louise Little Moody. She was married to James E. Hubbard June 19th, 1888. The surviving relatives are the bereaved husband and two double cousins: Mrs. Nellie M. Palmer, of Randolph, Maine, and Mrs. Sadie A. Turner, of Palermo, Maine. She was baptized by Elder Frederick W. Keene October, 1895, in the fellowship of the Whitefield Old School Baptist Church, at Whitefield, Maine, and remained a beloved and consistent member of that church until her death. Her life and deportment were always above reproach. Her word was never questioned, and she was highly respected by all who knew her. She loved sound doctrine; all the fundamental truths of the Old School Baptist faith were dear to her. She was quiet and retiring in disposition and ever ready to render aid and smypathy to those in need, to the limit of her strength.

JAMES E. HUBBARD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Lena E. Wilson, Md., $1; B. F. Davis, Texas, $2; E. J. Grogan, N. C., $1; Woburn Church, Mass., $5; C. Stevens, Ark., $3; Mrs. Val. Werner, N. J., $2; Sarah M. McColl, Ontario, $3; Miss Jennie Black, Ontario, $1; Miss Lilly Buck, Conn., $2; H. F. Cate, Kans., $1; Paul T. Leigh, N. J., $1; Miss Editha Corwin, N. Y., $2; Mrs. W. N. Hines, Ind., $3; Mrs. J. D. Shafer, N. Y., $1; Joseph F. Hall, Maine, $8.50; "A friend," Ontario, $2; F. B. Paxton, Texas, $1; Maud Hurlburt, N. Y., $1; Mrs. M. A. Somers, Va., $1; Mrs. A. J. Owens, Ky., $8; Royal E. Smith, Texas, $1; Elder J. G. Sawin, Ill., $5; J. R. Nucols, Ky., $1; Earl I. McAlister, Texas, $5; Mrs. Jasper Seal, Ark., $1; Mrs. W. P. Carter, Tenn., $1; Mrs. A. M. Hellings, N. J., $1; W. H. Chaney, Texas, $1; Mrs. A. P. McDougald, Ontario, $1; P. L. Disheroon, Pa., $1; Mrs. Florence Bean, Ky., $1; Elder D. L. Topping and niece (in memory of her grandmother), $5.

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11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

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The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, every Sunday at 11 a. m. and 2:30 p. m., (Standard Time) at the home of W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street, west three blocks to end of 114th. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Midweek song service by appointment. Pastors Elders Jones and Jaynes. Basket lunch.

EMMA BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

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(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday of each month at the Swedish Lutheran church-house southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, Riverside, Calif., and at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. 11th St., Claremont, Calif., on the first Sunday of each alternate month, beginning with January, and on every alternate month with brother Joseph Huffman, 128 Van Buren St., Arlington, Calif. Singing at 10:30 a. m. Preaching at 11 a. m. Lunch at the place of meeting, and continued services in the afternoon.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.
O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 97. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1929. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE STORY OF RUTH.

NOT long since, I attended services of the Baptists in the city, and heard the preacher tell "the story of Ruth," and also showed on the screen what were purported to be the leading events of her life, and as there have always been two ways of telling a story, it made me want to tell it in my own little way; hence the attempt.

Back in the depths of antiquity God called Abraham out from among the Chaldeans, and told him to get out of the country, and from among his people, and from his father's house, to a land that he would show him, and it is said that he went out, not knowing whither he went. Therefore we conclude that Abraham in all his journey toward the promised land walked by faith and not by sight. So Abraham came to the land of Canaan, and Lot, his nephew, came with him. Abraham was rich in cattle, gold and silver, and Lot also had great flocks and herds. Abraham, Lot and their servants were strangers in the land of Canaan, and in that "their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together," and their herdsmen got to fighting, and they had to separate. Evidently this was a sore trial for faithful Abraham, but he bore it patiently, giving Lot his choice: You go to the right and I will go to the left, or *vice versa*, so Lot "pitched his tent toward Sodom." Later we find him living in Sodom, we find also the men of Sodom were sinners exceedingly before the Lord, so much so that the Lord sent his angels to Sodom to inspect the city, and overthrow it if the report were true, but they stopped with Abraham and told him about their errand, and faithful Abraham sued for the city, for the sake of Lot. He probably did not have faith to pray for Lot's family individually, but he put him in with a number, first fifty, then forty and on down to ten, and the angel granted his every request. But lo, and behold, there were not ten righteous people there, but the Lord is ever mindful of his own, and he led Lot and his two daughters out of the city, hastening them, for, said he, I cannot do anything until you get out. "But his wife looked back from behind him, and became a pillar of salt." This all looks sad, but remember they were the dark hours before day. Lot and his two daughters

went and dwelt in a cave and saw the smoke ascend as of a furnace when the four cities were destroyed, and they naturally concluded they were the only ones of the human race that were left, so these daughters formed a plan to propagate the human race, and both of the daughters became with child by their father. The firstborn brought forth a son, and called his name Moab; the same is the father of the Moabites. The younger brought forth a son, and she called his name Benammi. He is the father of the Ammonites.

Now let us recapitulate a little, and see if it is not a fact that all the good things and all the bad things are absolutely necessary to the carrying out of God's great, grand and noble purposes. If the servants of Abraham and Lot had not "strove together" they probably could have lived together, and Lot would not have moved to Sodom. If the men of Sodom had not been "sinners exceedingly before the Lord" the Lord would not have destroyed Sodom. If Lot's wife had not looked behind she would not have become a pillar of salt. Could she have gone on with her husband and dwelt in the cave with him she would no doubt have protected him from his daughters' incestuous crime, and if his two daughters had not lain with him there would have been no Moabites or Ammonites, consequently no Ruth, for she was a Moabitish damsel. Had there been no Ruth there could have been no Obed, for no other woman in the world could have been his mother. Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David, and Christ came of the seed of David. Look over this line of events as we may, and there is not a single one that could have been taken out or changed without breaking the chain of events that led down to the coming of the Savior. God could, I doubt not, have brought him through some other line, but inasmuch as he did not do it, but chose that line and method, why not just believe that in his omniscience and omnipotence he has ruled and managed all these things according to the good pleasure of his will and the salvation of his chosen? Then why not say as one of old: "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Notice he does not say, How shall he give us all things? but how can he fail to do it, having given such an enormous price as his only begotten Son?

One more point, in Psalms lx. 8, and in Psalms cviii. 9, we find this Scripture: "Moab is my washpot." Every family needs a washpot, and had any one of the foregoing events failed to take place God's family would have been minus a washpot, and his dear little children could not have been purified, and made white, and tried. (Dan. xii. 10.) When the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and through forty years in the wilderness, their last camping-place was in the border of Maob (near the washpot), and Balak, king of Moab, was frightened nearly to death at an army of 603,550, and he sent for Balaam to come and curse Israel, and the Lord suffered him to come, with orders

that he was to speak nothing but such words as God was to put in his mouth. So he came and sought enchantment, but God put a blessing in his mouth every time. One of the blessings God put in his mouth was this: "Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any diviniation against Israel: according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and Israel, What hath God wrought!" As much as to say, Look at Israel (the church) and see the work of the great God. But Balaam gave Balak this instruction: Send out the daughters of Moab to dance before Israel, and get them to sacrifice to your gods, and so transgress God's law, and you will be able to overcome them. He followed the instruction and all the unworthy and unfit of the land of Canaan yielded to the temptation and were destroyed as filth from the washpot. Israel now being washed in the pot (Moab), they were ready to cross over Jordan into the promised land (church).

Just a few more words. As I have shown before, Christ came through the genealogy of Ruth, the Moabitish damsel. In the spirit of the case, Jesus Christ is the great spiritual washpot, whose blood cleanses all his little children from all their filthiness and uncleanness and prepares them for that heavenly Canaan, that rest at God's right hand.

So the story of Ruth, the little Moabitish damsel, is a much more interesting story than the one I saw at the picture show.

G. W. BERRY.

HAVRE, Mont., June 19, 1928.

DEAR SISTER GALL:—The past few months have been such a lifeless, barren season with me it seemed I could not find one agreeable moment to reply to your precious letter. I feel to be such a poor ignorant worm of the dust I tremble at attempting to address one I feel to be so devoted to the love and service of the Lord, and at this time I confess to be writing more from a sense of courtesy and duty than with the hope of setting forth a comforting, spiritual message. Having previously written you something of the doctrine of the resurrection, and finding it a theme inexhaustible, I desire again to call to your remembrance the precious declaration of Paul as recorded in the fourth chapter of first Thessalonians: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." He also declares it shall be "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." We see here what a foundation-stone the resurrection of the dead had in the apostolic preaching, what comfort and solace it had, and how often throughout the New Testament Scriptures

it is repeated, to edify, refresh and strengthen the saints. What a rich and glorious message it was for the early church to hear and receive, what a volume of inspiration, oft repeated and received into the heart of faith as the fundamental hope of the gospel; it was the light of hope, and without it all things else pertaining to the gospel were vain. Through its inspiration they endured martyr fires, and persecutions even fiercer than martyr flames, and in this day of falling away, when it seems the whole world is forsaking the truth of God for the doctrine and commandments of men, our faith demands to be fed anew by its life-giving power, that it may remain with us in all its strength and beauty. So far as I am able to learn by a research of the many creeds in existence at this time, the Primitive Baptists stand alone on the resurrection of the body. German rationalism, science, philosophy and evolution seem to have reached their highest conception in natural reason, but our modern Sadducees have advanced no new arguments to refute the doctrine more weighty than the one with which the Sadducees of old thought to confound Christ, and modern Pharisees have no higher conception of it than the carnal Pharisees of old. Human reason can analyze and understand natural things, but when attempting to go beyond its bounds its sight is so dazzled and confounded it is lost in the darkness of imagery. The great mystery of Divinity is hid from natural eyes and can only be perceived by the eye of faith, through resurrection of the human body. Its coming back into life from the ravages, decay and oblivion of the grave is a supernatural thing, and an anxious and tearful question, and has been disputed all down through the ages, and many substitutes and theories have been advanced to quiet the fears of an unbelieving world and reconcile them to the giving up of their loved ones to the silent dust of the tomb, and over these phantoms of reason the world continues to sigh out their upbraidings, emptiness and despair, but the most illustrious of skeptics can reach no higher end than the displaying of gifted mental powers, by which they often darken truth by their brilliant feats of mental debauchery and depravity. The doctrine of the resurrection of the body belongs exclusively to the revelation of God's word; it is found in the Bible, and nowhere else, and so must be apprehended by grief. Faith therefore makes no appeal to reason, philosophy, evolution or the so-called "fitness of things," its appeal is to the word of God, and whatever is therein revealed faith accepts as true and rests upon its truth without doubt or question, having the witness of the Spirit within, which God has declared shall lead us into all truth. Faith therefore hushes these sighs, fills this emptiness, lifts this dark despair, lights the darkness of the grave and sheds the luster of the resurrection day upon the night of the tomb. Christ declares, I am the resurrection and the life. He is the sure foundation for the resurrection of the body. The Scriptures link these two facts together: the resurrection of Christ from the dead and the resurrection of man's body from the grave. The resurrection of Jesus is the great offering and cementing fact of the resurrection of the body, by it he was declared to be the Son of God with power; it is the fitting, necessary complement of his advent and crucifixion; it binds into a complete whole all the facts relating to Christ in his sevenfold government, and puts the seal of truth on his eternal priesthood; it re-

deems his crucifixion from scorn; it puts divinity and glory on the cross; without it he never could have established the truth of his mission and put the seal of all-conquering power on his gospel. His death met the law, in that he bore our sins and satisfied divine justice. His resurrection sent the proclamation of liberty winging throughout the courts of heaven that Jesus had led the conqueror death in chains, opening that book sealed with sevens seals that St. John saw in the hand of the angel (Rev. v.), "written within and on the back side," takes him up to his glorious coronation in heaven. Peter's rapturous shout is still ringing, lighting with life and hope every heart wherein faith has wrought its wondrous work: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice." That the resurrection of Christ is the cause of our resurrection, Pearson on the Creed says, "By a double causality, as an efficient and an exemplary cause, as an efficient cause in regard that our Savior by and upon his resurrection hath obtained power and right to raise all the dead, 'for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' As an exemplary cause in regard that all the saints of God shall rise after the similitude and in conformity to the resurrection of Christ: 'For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.' He shall change our vile bodies that they may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. As we have borne the image of the earthly, we may bear the image of the heavenly. This is the same hope of the christian that Christ rising from the dead hath obtained the power and is become the pattern of his resurrection." Paul puts it clearly as follows: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." God hath raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power, "knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you." The Scriptures bear ample and continuous evidence that the faith of the resurrection of the body lies in the faith that Jesus Christ died and rose again, and this faith is not an opinion nor a child of reason, but the Holy Spirit inspired confidence that apprehendeth Christ as the Redeemer and Savior, the Lord of lords and King of kings; the gift of God through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, by and through which we are often given a sweet foretaste of heavenly bliss and a hope which reaches into the realms of a blessed immortality; a faith that feeds upon God's blessed word and counts all things but dross apart from Christ. The faith of God's elect that teaches us as Paul hath declared, that if the flesh of Jesus rotted in the sepulchre of Joseph, then our hope of coming out of the grave rots also; if his body went to the dust of Palestine, then our faith, fancied faith and vaunted hope of the resurrection, is as pulseless and dead as dust. "But if there be no resurrec-

tion of the dead, then is Christ not risen. And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." But continuing, the apostle asserts all these appalling consequences and throws a flood of light and hope and life over the darkness of the tomb by this restatement and reassurance: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept." Lifting the darkness and dread from the tomb, spanning the abyss which separates us from our loved dead; implanting in the heart of faith the strength and hope of a glorious reunion in the face of a separation most painful and despairing. The resurrection of Jesus both assures and patterns our resurrection: the two are conjoined. The nonresurrection of the body relegates Jesus back to his grave and seals it as forever dead. Paul plainly shows there could be no redemption of man without an invasion of the realms of death, no sunlight of hope while the clouds and night of death forever sealed the tomb; the great Emancipator must break the thrall of death, dismantle its empire, uncrown its king, until every one of Christ's imprisoned ones shall shout, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." Jesus holds in his own person the death of death. "I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Christ, the master over death, Life against death, the eternal source of all deathless energy, the destruction of death in that great day, the last day, the closing of this world's history, "the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God," the day when "the dead, small and great, stand before God" raised from the dead. The day of God's glory and power, the day of terror and alarm to the impenitent and unbelieving, their eternal doom, the day of infinite comfort to all his saints, infinite in measure and infinite in length. Oh glorious resurrection! Our coronation day!

Yours in gospel bands,

JOHN GIBSON.

ZANESFIELD, Ohio, Nov. 20, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—We are sening a portion of a letter received from Elder U. S. Porter, with his consent, and it is yours to dispose of as you please, but if you decide to not publish, please return it to us for preservation. Brother Porter is one of the faithful followers of our Lord, and seeks to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and shuns not to declare the whole counsel of the Lord as he sees it, both from the pulpit and through the press. He is fighting a good fight, is a peacemaker and an earnest and faithful pastor. Brother Porter lives as well as talks his religion, is loving and charitable to all who love the Lord, living in peace insomuch as he can while still keeping the order of the house of God.

Two members were received at our last fifth Sunday meeting, the man by baptism and his wife by restoration. They

seem to be sound in the faith. Elder Gail Hanover preached at the last regular meeting and talked very ably indeed. He is a grandson of Elder Liman Hanover, who journeyed all the way to New York (when a young man) to see Elder Gilbert Beebe. He used to fill appointments in my grandfather's house (Jacob Ekelberry, Sr.). How I wish all who love the truth could live in peace together, not compromising with error, but sitting at the feet of one another to learn of our Jesus and his ways. If the strong could bear with the weak and the weak not be contentious, each esteeming others better than themselves. There is much to gain by humbly desiring the sincere milk of the word; of course the desire as well as the spiritual food is of grace. We can only look to the Lord to bring peace to troubled Zion, give charity to all, correct the erring and fill us all with love and submission. Oh that all who love him knew how to give all the glory to him to whom all the glory belongs. But we may take comfort, for God has said, This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise. Yea, even evil men and devils shall praise him. All things were created by him that his praise and glory should be made manifest. He shall not fail nor be disappointed. All his purposes he will cause to be fulfilled. He created all things and by him all things consist. There will be no failure, for what his soul desireth even that he doeth. May he keep us reconciled to his will and enable us to wait patiently for him, for he will come (always) and will not tarry beyond the due season. Since he is all-wise, almighty and love in perfection, we may safely cast all our care upon him, for "he careth for you." So come, Lord Jesus, lead and uphold us by thy free Spirit. Thou art our foundation, the wall around us and the capstone, speed the day when all shall say, Grace, grace unto it.

JOIE WOODS PETERS.

THERE are more than two hundred religious denominations in the United States. The christian church has been divided and subdivided over various differences, some of which continue to cause trouble and division. Inability to account for sin and wickedness has caused much speculation and many theories. The question of how and why sin entered the world, and of how and why it continues to rage, has, perhaps, caused more trouble among Primitive Baptists than any other question. The Savior built his church and gave the laws for her government. He told the apostles the things they should teach, and Paul said he had not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God. Teaching more than this causes trouble, and not teaching all of it leaves a place for trouble to come into the church. Every subject treated on in the Scriptures is a proper subject to be investigated and discussed by the ministry and the church. The church is the pillar and ground of the truth. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." A knowledge of God's word brings peace and harmony, not strife and confusion. Knowledge is an important part of the christian character, which Peter tells us to add. What then saith the Scriptures? First, How did sin come? By man. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."—Rom. v. 12. Here is a mystery. God is before all things, and by him all things consist; he is eternal, unchange-

able, omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. He created man in his own image, but subject to vanity. Sin is a transgression of the law. Man, though subject to vanity, could not sin when there was no law, but as soon as the law was given there was a possibility of his sinning; with God it was an eternal certainty. Sin is by the law. (Rom. viii. 5.) Those motions or passions (not actions) were, before the law, natural. They, by the law, brought sin, and by sin came death. James, speaking of these passions, says, "Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." As in biology both sexes are necessary to the propagation of all plants and animals, so James makes the union of opposites, positive and negative, to bring forth sin. God said, Thou shalt surely die. Satan said, Ye shall not surely die. "Your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Her vain desire for these things conceived the idea of disobeying God, and when the transgression was completed sin was the result. Adam also ate and sinned and died. What part did the law play? It condemned the guilty. (Rom. iii. 19.) It made the wrong a crime and punishable. (1 Tim. i. 9.) What then? Is the law sin? On what principle of law and justice does the law rest? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind." God, inherently, has all right, all authority. There is no power nor authority before or above him to deny him these things. (Dan. iv. 35.) He owes no one and is under no obligation. (Rom. xi. 35.) Man owes everything he has to God; he has nothing of his own. (1 Cor. iv. 7.) He has no right to find fault with God. (Rom. ix. 20.) What God has done for man entitles Him to all man's service. God had the right to require man to do anything, regardless of whether it was his will. Sin is a transgression of God's law, not a failure to do his will. If God foreknew all things, he evidently intended man to sin. If he did not intend for man to sin, then man did what God did not intend him to do, which is the same as doing what God intended for him not to do. If God meant for man to sin it was his will that man should sin. If he intended for man not to sin it was his will that he should not sin. God either intended for man to sin or for him not to sin, or he had no intention about it. It was either God's will for man to sin or for him not to sin, or he had no will in the matter. If God had no will in the matter man could not obey or disobey his will. God's will and his law are not the same. Will and law are not synonyms nor synonymous. If God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will and according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, then there must be some sense in which it is God's will for sin to be, and the London Confession of Faith is right in saying, "God hath decreed in himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever come to pass." This brings us to the question which is the pith of the whole matter: Could God knowingly, intentionally and purposely make this world so there could be sin, without being to blame? To say that he could not is to limit his power and wisdom. Our English brethren believed that God could decree sinful acts and wicked deeds without being the author of sin, or

having fellowship with any therein. God's immunity from blame, and his exemption from being the author of sin, is established by his right to man's undivided service. God did not require of Adam more than he was able to do. Jesus said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." Not more. Adam sinned in doing. Had he not been able to do what he did, he could not have done it, and it would not have been done. How much ability was required to do it? God gave him the ability to do it, and let him do it because it was a part of his plan to have a redeemed people, saved by grace, to praise him. It was determined before the foundation of the world, "that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Jesus Christ." God's command to Adam no more proves that he intended for him to obey it than his command to Abraham to offer Isaac for a burnt offering proves that he intended for Abraham to slay his son. Sin causes affliction. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Paul says, "All things are for your sakes. * * * For which cause we faint not." Also, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good." "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so." We have sinned and brought on ourselves the curse of the law; "howbeit our God turned the curse into a blessing." This is different from saying, "Continue in sin, that grace may abound," or "Let us do evil, that good may come."

In love of the truth,

U. G. PORTER.

BELLINGHAM, Washington.

DEAR BRETHREN:—There has been a portion of Scripture on my mind for some time which has given me much pleasure and comfort as it has unfolded its beauty to me, and if the Lord will be with me while I write of some of its beauties I will make the attempt. The Scripture I want to write upon is 1 Corinthians vii. 23: "Ye are bought with a price." If I could tell of the joy and comfort this Scripture has been to me it would not be in vain for me to write, but as the preparation of the heart and the answer of the tongue is of the Lord I leave it to him, and pray for his blessing to rest upon me while I write and upon all those who read it.

"Ye are bought with a price." The ones Paul had in mind at that time were the children of the true and living God; in full, not a part of them, and since he bought and paid the full price for them they are his, body, soul and spirit, and his Spirit dwells in them. The body is of the earth earthy, and profiteth nothing, and returns to the earth from whence it came, but will be changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body at his appearing. "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." It is Christ in you the hope of glory. He says, Because I live ye shall live also; the words I speak they are spirit and they are life. He was in the world and the world was made by him and the world knew him not. He went unto his own and his own received him not; but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become sons of God. This power was not vested in the ones who became sons, but Jesus gave them this power, and he says, All power is given me, both in heaven and in earth, that I should give eternal life to

as many as the Father has given me. So it is not a matter of guesswork as to who or how many, for John tells us that it was those who believe on his name, who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Now Christ was a Jew, born of a Jew, and of the lineage of David, who was a Jew, and while they were looking for a king to be born unto them (for it had been foretold by their prophets that God would raise up a king to sit on the throne of their father David), and they being a proud and self-righteous people, supposed a king born unto them would be born of high and noble parentage, and in splendor befitting a king of their nation, and when he came of such humble parentage, and from such a mean and no-account place as Nazareth they would not receive him as their king, but sought to kill him. He made himself of no reputation, but the works he did proclaimed what he was: King of king and Lord of lords. He was truly King of the Jews, not as a nation, for he never served in that capacity, but he was King of spiritual Israel, for he did serve as their king. Paul tells us that although Israel be as the sand of the seashore for number, a remnant shall be saved. He is an Israelite indeed who worships God in the spirit, rejoices in Christ Jesus, and has no confidence in the flesh, for all flesh is as grass, and the glory of man as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof fadeth, but the word of the Lord endureth forever. The things which were written aforetime were written for our learning and for our comfort, and we should study to show ourselves approved of God, as workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. Paul tells us in Romans ix. 8, "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." The promise is sure to all the seed. They that are born of the flesh are of the earth earthy, without any power or life of their own, and can only move as the Spirit gives them power of action. There is a natural spirit which is given us of God to govern us in natural things, and by it we reason out natural things. This is the spirit that is in the world, and by it men seek out all the inventions which have turned the worldly minds all to pleasure, and should we, as the children of God, blame them, when we know that they can only see and understand as natural men and women? Yet that does not excuse us from sounding out the warning, both from the press and the pulpit, to come out of her, my people, lest ye be partakers of her plagues. Herein is our warfare, for there is a Spirit which is of God, which every one that is born of God is endowed with, and by it we see, hear, taste, feel and understand the things which be of God. When Jesus told the disciples, Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold, them also I must bring with me, and of the twain (he says) I will make one fold, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd. It was hard for them to believe this, and they could not until it was shown them of God that he is no respecter of persons. But in every nation they that feareth God and worketh righteousness are accepted of him. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father," and this is given us of God that we might know the things that are freely given us of God, which things we speak

of, not with the wisdom which man teacheth, but with that wisdom which is from above, which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. It is the same with us to-day as it was with the holy men of old, who spake as they were moved of God, and God is still the same to-day. We have noting in the flesh of which to boast, for who maketh thee to differ from another? Have we anything we did not receive? If we speak or write anything edifying or comforting to the children of God it is given us of God to feed his sheep and lambs; we are only embassadors, called and sent to a certain people with a certain message which this certain people are longing to hear, for they have been prepared of God, by his giving them a hungering and thirsting for the very message which is sent by the great Shepherd of the sheep, and we should esteem these undershepherds very highly, because they are sent and qualified of God to feed us who are the sheep of his pasture. The time being fully come when the middle wall or partition which separated between Jew and Gentile was to be broken down, we see God, who is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, the same unchangeable God, working this according to his own will, preparing Paul to preach his salvation to the Gentiles, and at the same time he is preparing the Gentiles to receive Paul's testimony of Jesus. We first find Paul (or Saul as he was then called) with all the zeal of the best of the nominal professors, verily believing he was working out his salvation, and for the good of those who were under the law, which was the Jewish nation. He was very zealous and was on his way to Damascus with letters of authority to bind all that worshipped God and bring them bound to Jerusalem, there to be punished, and at noonday, when the sun was at its zenith, there was a light from heaven shown around him, above the brightness of the sun, and a voice saying, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Saul said, Who art thou, Lord? and Jesus said, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecuteth. Saul said, What shall I do, Lord? The Lord told him to go on into Damascus and it shall be told thee what is appointed for thee to do. That sounds like predestination all the way, does it not? These are some of the "wills" and "shalls" of Jehovah, but he was a chosen vessel unto God and had a special work to do that was to distinguish him from all other men. He was the thirteenth apostle and an especial one to the Gentiles, and as one born out of due time, for although he labored more abundantly than they all, yet he was the last apostle to see Jesus. The most distinguishing feature was his conversion, which was the first one on record, and was in unison with our own change from a state in nature to a state of grace, so he could truthfully say that he was an ensample to all who should after believe to the saving of the souls, and the experience of each child of God is so much like his in substance and effect that they can say, "Brother Paul," for they were, like Saul, doing things contrary to the spirit of grace which was taught them in their experience, so they could say with Paul, "I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died," and the law which was unto life he found to be unto death. So the law of the Spirit of life in Christ shined in his heart, showing him the sin and wickedness of his deceitful heart. Was it any wonder he died, when he saw himself without hope and without God in the world? "The soul that sinneth, it

shall die." "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." God does not work without a purpose, and what he has purposed that will he do, for having determined beforehand that it should be done, he, having all power, both in heaven and in earth, can do his will, for there is nothing to oppose him. Therefore predestination stands out in bold relief through all his works, and is so plain that it seems as though any one who realizes who and what God is could see it. But we should not boast, since we were once blind and could not see. I wonder if I can truly see now any more than the Jews could when Christ came unto them and they would not receive him. If I can I know it is because Jesus has given me power to become a son of God, and not because I am any better than they, and I am just as blind naturally. When Jesus told his disciples that he had other sheep, which were not of that fold (meaning the Jews) they could not understand what he meant, neither could we now unless it was revealed to us by that Comforter who is to teach us all things, and to the Jews. God was going to bring about one of his hitherto hidden mysteries, and do it in a way and manner that would leave no doubt in the minds of those who were given eyes to see that the power was all of God, for it was all contrary to the nature of man, and since God determined beforehand that it should be done, and then did it, was it not predestinated? If not, what was it? When God begins a work he finishes it so fully and completely that there is no place left open where man can get in any of his works, and if they are not already foolish he takes away their understanding so completely that they are left a blank. Saul was going to Damascus in all his strength, satisfied, both with himself and with the authority given him by the mission board which sent him. The missionaries say Paul was the first missionary ever sent out by a missionary board, but I tell them Saul was sent by the board, but God stopped him and turned him around, and caused him to go and tell a different story than what the missionary board gave him to tell, even changing his name to Paul. At that time it was a gross error for a Jew to go into a house of another nation, or even talk with them, but while God was preparing Paul to go as an apostle to the Gentiles he was at the same time preparing the Gentiles to receive him, and it came about in this way: "There was a certain man in Cæsarea, called Cornelius, a centurian of the band called the Italian band, a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway," and while he was praying an angel came and spoke to him, and he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? How relieved he must have been when the angel said, "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do." He called two of his servants and sent them in haste, after telling them of his vision and what the angel had told him. While the Lord was preparing Cornelius he was at the same time preparing Peter to receive the messengers, and while Peter was on the housetop praying, "about the sixth hour: and he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready,

he fell into a trance, and saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet, knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth; wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven." While Peter was wondering in his mind what the vision meant the men that were sent by Cornelius came and made inquiry for Simon, whose surname was Peter. "The Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, dobting nothing: for I have sent them. Then Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek." This must have been a surprise to those men, for no man had told Peter about them, and he asked them why they had come, "and they said, Cornelius the centurian, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nations of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel, to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee." So the next day Peter went with them, taking certain brethren with them, and on the morrow they entered Cæsarea and Cornelius was waiting for them, having gathered his near friends and kindred, and I believe they had a real Old School Baptist meeting there that day, with much rejoicing because Peter told them God had shown him that he was no respecter of persons, but that in every nation they that feareth God and worketh righteousness are acceptable with him. He preached unto them Jesus, and when the Holy Ghost was fallen upon those who heard the word, and they of the circumcision which came with Peter, which believed (being Jews), were astonished, because on the Gentiles was poured out the Holy Ghost, as well as on the Jews. Then Peter said of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, and now can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? and they were baptized in the name of the Lord, and henceforth there shall be one fold, one Shepherd, one Lord, one faith, one baptism. So Paul was called and qualified and sent to the Gentiles to preach Jesus.

In hope of eternal life,

DAVIS BURCH.

RISING STAR, Texas, Jan. 21, 1929.

DEAR BRETHREN:—By this time we, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES family, as we sometimes denominate ourselves, have in a great measure given much prayerful thought to Elder Lefferts' proposed resignation as editor. I do not feel to be a safe and wise counselor. But few of us knew that brother Lefferts' editorial labors are done against such disinclination, due he believes to such a busy life. Then he says, "If I have any gift at all in the way of gospel ministry, it certainly is not in the writing line." This expression recalls to my mind the deep and beautiful letters of his before being added to the editorial staff, and so his appearance as editor filled my soul with joy, and in my narrow circle of acquaintances among the brethren I find it so with them, and an unanimous admission that our God has fitted Elder Lefferts for one

of the editors, and his pen productions are with such clearness and ability that our belief is more and more confirmed. If I should speak for all I would here say that the same glorious truth applies equally and as forcibly to the other three editing brethren. Brother Lefferts uses the word "certainly" to emphasize the assertion that he is not suited to the work, but his conviction is doubtless due more to an inwrought knowledge of self-inability, although while thus feeling he is wielding the pen of a ready writer. A felt sense of inability as he feels is attendant on all occasions of well undertaken duties toward God and his church, especially matters of great moment. After Moses had brought forward every excuse, then implored against God's every convincing power by saying, "O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send," as much as to say, By the instantaneous affliction and cure of my leprosy and the momentary transformation of the rod to a serpent, I know now that you can make me able to perform this, your requirement, but yet a natural disinclination clings to me, and, besides, I fear on account of the Egyptian whom I slew, &c., and yet for meekness there was no other man on earth like him. Although he was a type of Christ, it makes his natural disinclination not one wit less ours upon whom the Lord imposes special duties such as has come to our dear brother from the hand of the Lord. After all, busy life, an inattendant mind, and the like, is but, no doubt, only your way, brother Lefferts, of seeing yourself as not suitable, while we are thousands and a long time ago came to regard you as the dear brother whom God ordained and set apart to this work. Again, my dear brother, if all these things did not stand in the way you have no assurance that your way would be clear, your mind applicable and your pen ready, but, no doubt, a thousand other "storms" would arise to trouble your easy sailing. As said before, not many of us knew of your troubles as editor, and now that you have made us acquainted with some of them we feel that we are going to God in prayer, with one consent from you, that if it be his omnipotent will that he will be gracious to relieve you in a measure, if not altogether, so your life may be more tolerable in the way of discharging your many and varied duties. I do not believe the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES did wrong in not accepting your resignation, for I think I would have done likewise, because they most assuredly know that as an instructed scribe unto the kingdom of heaven you are constantly bringing forth from the Lord's treasury such valuable things as the church of God strongly stands in need of at this present time. I feel to indorse the eight churches of your charge, brother Lefferts. I wish from my heart that the predestinarian churches everywhere were like-minded in prefering predestinarian ministers to those of the conditional and limited predestinarian kind. Oh how we do cling to them! Such ministers are very essential to a continuance of soundness of the faith and the orderly conduct of the house of God. Oh may the Lord of the harvest send a bountiful supply of them, for the laborers are so few. Let not a member of these eight churches think that in their choice they have thus burdened brother Lefferts, so long as they continue to divide their living with him to the utmost of their ability, as he says they are doing. It is a

cheerful thing to be enabled of the Lord to give bountifully of our earthly living to feed and clothe the dear minister and the helpless of his family while he administers to us the gospel of the kingdom of God.

Dear brethren, I have, as you see, given this letter a heading for publication, if in your judgment it is suitable, but I ask that you do not leave out better matter to make room for it. I felt I could not be satisfied to keep silent, and though I knew it would go into the wastebasket I would, I think, have written along this same line of thought. May the Lord continue to bless Zion with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if it is in accordance with his blessed will, is the prayer of this unworthy writer.

J. I. FOSTER.

HICKMAN, Ky., Jan. 14, 1929.

DEAR EDITORS:—Our church at Mud Creek requested that a memorial be written of our dear brother Verhines and sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication. This paper he loved and had welcomed in his home many times. We feel that much could be said about his orderly walk, but words alone cannot carry with them the love we wish to express for our brother. This love is not understood by the world; it is a love that is felt more than spoken. Our church is few in number, and has suffered the loss of several fathers and mothers in Israel in the last few years. We being of the younger ones, it is sad and makes us tremble when we look around and wonder what will become of us in later years, but if it pleases the Lord to continue in caring for this little flock no power can overthrow it.

I wish to thank you for the SIGNS being sent to me through kindness. I truly feel unworthy of such consideration, but have enjoyed it much. Sometimes after reading it I almost attempt to write, but tremble at the thought of such a thing, for when I turn my eyes within all is dark and vain and wild, but the God I hope I love is able to bring light out of darkness. I ask an interest in your prayers.

Find inclosed the memorial, which we hope to see in the SIGNS when you have room.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

(MRS.) L. C. CAMPBELL.

(See memorial on page 70.)

LA PORTE, Texas, Nov. 8, 1928.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If I may be permitted to thus address you. Inclosed please find two dollars to pay my subscription to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I am from September until now behind with my subscription and I want to thank you for continuing to send it, for I do not know what I would do without it, as it is the only preaching we get here in the big State of Texas. There is a church about fifty miles from here, but I do not attend as often as I would like, being tied down with the cares of this world. I have been reading the SIGNS ever since I can remember. My father has been taking it for about thirty-five or forty years, off and on.

I will close by thanking the brethren and sisters for the many good things they write for the dear old SIGNS, and also again thank you for not cutting off my subscription, and begging you to overlook all mistakes.

I am your small brother, if one at all,

J. H. SMITH.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1929.

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1 PETER V. 7.

"CASTING all your care upon him, for he careth for you."

The children of God often find themselves utterly at a loss to understand or comprehend the ways of divine providence and grace, and can only say as one of old, His ways are past finding out. It is he himself that teaches that he ruleth in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? They confess this, and at times are thankful it is so, for is there not comfort and security in such a doctrine? In it we see that not a dog can move his tongue, or a devil either, unless it be subject to the will and purpose of him that worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Men are also subject to him, even the rulers of this world, for when Pilate said to Jesus, "Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." He is before all things and by him all things consist. An understanding of such a doctrine, imparted to us by God himself, is of great comfort to the soul, but few are able to travel long in the path of life, reconciled, with a calm and thankful heart, from every murmur free. God has ordained a furnace of affliction, and if he gives faith that believes that he who has promised is able to perform, he will try that faith; and just so, when we, as we hope, by his Spirit, have been taught to trust in his name and to rejoice in the truth that not a single shaft can hit, until he, the God of love, sees fit, we find the question asked, Do you believe God had anything to do with the sinking of that vessel, or the burning of that family and home? How has God anything to do with the sickness of this man? or with the death of his wife at such a time as this, when he needed her so much? Thus we ask ourselves many questions, and are asked many such questions by others, and often such questions, when asked in the face of terrible trials, and what men call accidents, are almost staggering, especially if we are ourselves affected by the trial. If a terrible bereavement comes upon us we find it not so easy to live the doctrine, yet Job, sorely afflicted, did, when he said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."—Job xiii. 15. He has said, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father. * * * Fear ye not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows." Again, he saith, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I

say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed as one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" It is the trial of faith that will show to us how little faith we have, and how little we truly believe the doctrine to which we have subscribed. There is not one of us but has his, or her, trials; some hard to be borne, and we do well to consider that

"Whatever cross lies at thy door,
It cometh from the Lord."

It is a crook of the Lord's making, and as long as he sees fit for it to be, none can straighten it. It may be to bring down our pride, to "hide pride from man," or to show us wherein our strength lies, or to make us of comfort to the saints, or to prove to men and devils, as in the case of Job, that our religion is not a fair weather religion, but that it can stand fire and flood; and in all these trials, and many others, too numérous to mention, the presence of Christ is seen, as he was in the furnace of old, thereby proving that he careth for us. In all the ages the Lord has proven his care for his people in the furnace of affliction; such a way is needful or it would not be. He raised up a wicked Pharaoh who knew not Joseph, and he set over Israel taskmasters, to afflict Israel with burdens, but the more they were afflicted the more they multiplied and grew. The Egyptians made their lives bitter with hard bondage, yet the Lord still cared for them. Moses was born, and was hidden three months by his mother, who feared not the wrath of the king, and when she could no longer hide him she took for him an ark of bulrushes and laid it in the flags by the river's brink, the very river where the wicked Pharaoh had commanded them to drown their sons, yet God cared for him there. He was taken by Pharaoh's daughter and nursed by his own mother in the house of Pharaoh, the very man who wished to destroy all the male children of Hebrew origin. From this we can take this lesson: that the church of God nurses her children in the furnace of affliction. They are strengthened in the doctrine; the more they are afflicted the more they are trained up in the nurture and admonitions of the Lord. In the word of God there are many instances that seem just happen so, mere chance, yet when we trace the chain of circumstances connected with the particular case we find a wonder-working Providence governing all things: as, for instance, the Syrians had gone out by companies and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid. Who can describe the terror and abject loneliness of that little maid? Think of the parents, her mother, if mother she had, wringing her hands, sighing and pining for her little daughter. Many would there be in Israel then who would say, Tell us, did the Lord have anything to do with that? Thank God there were some then, and doubly thankful we ought to be, there are some now, who unhesitatingly would declare, It is the Lord. Some who by faith could see the companies of Syria going just so far and doing just whatsoever God's hand and God's counsel determined before to be done. The child must leave the arms of the parents, must go into a strange and foreign land, and must go into Naaman's house. God cared for that little captive maid; he had a purpose. In Naaman's house she witnesses to the truth, and her testimony was for one whom God cared for, though in God's purpose he was held

by a more relentless foe than even the captive maid. He was none other than Naaman, the captain of the host, but he was a leper. Yes, he cared for Naaman. He cared for Saul of Tarsus, even while he went about breathing threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord. Saul did not understand, he had no eye to see, the Lord using his persecution for the furtherance of the gospel. It is written, "As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and hailing men and women, committed them to prison." The following verse declares the result in the purpose of God. It says, "Therefore they that were scattered abroad, went every where preaching the word." Thus a persecuting Saul of Tarsus, in the purpose of God, did more then than all the missionary boards can do to-day, although they claim to be on the Lord's side, for there has never been a preacher of the word sent by man, anywhere. Why is it that Saul of Tarsus, Naaman and his companies, Pharaoh and his host, or the devil himself, can do nothing other than God's hand and his counsel determined before to be done? The simple reason is, "He careth for you." For God's dear saints there is a covenant, ordered in all things and sure, and in this covenant

"Jesus is engaged to save
The meanest of his sheep,
All that the heavenly Father gave
His hands securely keep.

Nor death, nor hell can e'er remove
His favorites from his breast."

They are loved with an everlasting love. God has predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. As this is his purpose he will care for us along the line that we must travel. I might predestinate my trunk to go from here to New York City by railroad. To bring that about, the track must be there, the sleepers in their place, the station, the signal boxes, the men, the engine, coal, steam, and all other requirements must be there or ever my trunk can safely be delivered to its destination. Thus we believe Pharaoh was in the purpose of God, foreordained to that very condemnation, as was the devil himself, and as were the companies of Syria, and if the word be true, that God has created the waster to destroy, and these wasters of Israel were in Israel's life of old, in the life of the captive maid, yes, and in the life of our blessed Lord, who shall say they will not be in our lives? Peter tells the scattered saints of old of a fiery trial that was to try them, and it is true to-day. God's dear scattered saints are a poor and afflicted people, having fiery trials; yet Peter by inspiration says, "Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you." There comes before our mind one dear sister, over eighty years of age, whom we once saw lying on her couch under terrible distress. Trouble had come upon her in her advanced age and was crushing her to earth: we said, Why should these things be? Faith answered, "He careth for you."

"Blind unbelief is sure to err
And scan God's work in vain."

He is a very present help in time of trouble.

"The flame shall not hurt thee, I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine."

We have seen another, younger in years, afflicted in body so that she could hardly move a limb, given up by earthly physicians, having little to look forward to but death and that which is beyond, and to the honor of his name we have seen

that he careth for her. Is he not the helper of the helpless? We visited such an one one day, and while there she said, "Sing Rock of Ages." We sang that and "Father, we'll rest in thy love," and as we got in our car we heard the afflicted one singing by herself in the house, and all we could think of was, "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God." Later we asked why she sang when we left her a few nights before, and the reply was, "Because I was happy." It is because "he careth for you" that the theme of Jesus and his love makes the captive's portion sweet. It is his care that made David say, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." His care for Israel of old was wonderful. He brought them from under Pharaoh's yoke with a high hand and an outstretched arm and led them through the sea, gave them bread from heaven, water from the rock, a cloud by day and pillar of fire by night, their shoes did not wear out, nor their clothing decay, all because "He careth for you," for were they not a type of Israel to-day? They rebelled and we rebel, too. There is nothing that brings out the spirit of rebellion more than trouble. "The trial of your faith." It is easy to say, "Thy will be done," but his will is a cross, and under the trial he sends we kick like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke. It is galling and so humiliating, especially if it affects our personal reputation, we feel ashamed to be seen among the brethren, we ask the reason why. Pride must be abased. He made himself of no reputation; we would be his, yea, be like him, but it is unpleasant to die daily, to take buffetings. Oh the strugglings and strivings we have to be freed from the yoke! Paul prayed very regularly to be delivered from a thorn in the flesh, but his request was not granted, and there is not a doubt in our mind the reason for it was that "He careth for you." All these trials, crosses, losses, thorns and snares we must and shall endure in this life are for the lifting of Jesus on high. They are to show us, as we are exercised thereby, how base and vile, unworthy and helpless we are, and, like Paul, we are taught of him to know that when we are weak, then are we strong, and we glory in our infirmities (that are made plain to us in the furnace) that the power of God might rest upon us. Thus his care is such towards us that we shall at last confess, as did Israel of old, that the Lord delivered us, and that "there failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass."—Joshua xxi. 45.

G. R.

WATCH YOUR DATES.

We wish to request our subscribers when sending in their subscriptions to see that the date on the little pink slip bearing their address is changed. If not changed, please let us know immediately (for that signifies you have not been given credit for the money sent) and we will look into the matter. By consulting that date you can tell at a glance to what time your subscription is paid. Dec. 29 means that your subscription is paid to December, 1929; June 28 means your subscription is only paid to June, 1928, &c.

NOTICE.

Providence permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main St., Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in March (31st). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Mary V. Hall, our sister in Christ departed this earthly life at the home of her daughter, near Ballston, Va., January 25th, 1929. She was born June 9th, 1851, the daughter of James and Nancy Oliver. Her first marriage was to Nathaniel Thompson, the date of whose death I do not know. To this union were born four sons and one daugther, of whom the following survive: Mrs. Lucy L. Shockley, of Oakton, Va., Chapman Thompson, of Washington, D. C., Harry Thompson, of Clarendon, Va., and Franklin Thompson, of Fort Myer Heights, Va. By her last husband, William E. Hall, sister Hall was the mother of one daughter, Mrs. Mabel V. Brooks, at whose home she passed away. Besides her husband and children left surviving her, sister Hall has twelve grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Sister Hall is also survived by one brother, our brother John F. Oliver, of Herndon, Va., with whom many SIGNS readers are acquainted through his writings. The funeral services were held Sunday afternoon from the home of her daughter, Mrs. Shockley, the burial being in Oakton cemetery. Quite a large gathering of friends, neighbors and relatives testified by their presence to their love and respect for sister Hall. She was a member of the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church, having been baptized over forty years ago by Elder William M. Smoot, who was at that time numbered with our people. When he saw fit to go out from us sister Hall did not follow him, but stayed with the church at Frying Pan, and through all these years no member has been more steadfast in the faith nor more unwavering in her devotion to the cause than she has been. For several years she was a great sufferer from physical pain due to injuries received when she narrowly escaped death, once by being struck by a trolley car, and again by an automobile. Neither time did any of us expect her to survive, but she did, and lived several years thereafter, becoming strong enough to go about her round of duties and to attend the meetings of the church. At the last she succumbed no doubt to inward trouble brought on by these injuries of the past and from the shocks resulting therefrom. She was a person of wonderful vitality and splendid resolution, overcoming obstacles that would have daunted many a weaker person. All this she owed to the Lord, and she knew it. In him alone was her hope and strength and he was the support of her life, her present help in trouble. While she will be greatly missed in the family circle and in the meetings of the church, we cannot wish her back. She gave abundant evidence of her acceptance in the Beloved, and we believe her to be at rest with him.

At the funeral, by request of brother Oliver, her brother, I used as a text the first verse of the fifth chapter of second Corinthians.

ALSO,

Mrs. Matilda Middleton Starr, our sister in Christ, wife of Joseph C. Starr, daughter of Howard Middleton and the late Mary Templeman Middleton, died at her home, near Floris, Fairfax County, Virginia, February 14th, 1929. She was born February 28th, 1887. With the exception of two small children who died in early years, sister Mattie is the first of her parents' children to pass away. She was the oldest. She leaves three sisters and four brothers, besides her aged father. She was married to Joseph C. Starr in April, 1915, and went with him to live in Bedford County, Pennsylvania. After a few years there they moved to Virginia, in the vicinity of her former home. To them have been born eight children, seven of whom are living, ranging in ages from thirteen to less than two years. Our dear sister was the last person baptized by Elder E. V. White while he was pastor of the Frying Pan Church. She was firm in her belief in the doctrine of salvation by grace and in the confidence she had in Almighty God to rule all things as he pleases after the counsel of his own will. She was very faithful in her attendance at the meetings of the church and staunch in her devotion to the cause of truth. She was a clear discerner of preaching and could tell when it failed to have the right sound. She was blessed with one of the most remarkable temperaments naturally that it has ever been my privilege to know. She kept her worries and troubles to herself, mostly hiding them behind smiles and a most genial exterior. Whatever was her lot, whether of weal or woe, seemed to be accepted submissively by her without complaint or murmuring. This may not have been any credit to her, for she was just what God made her, and I am sure she wanted no credit for it, but her disposition certainly made life easier for those about her and endeared her much to all the church and her friends. Her being called from earth leaves the husband with the care of seven little children, he himself a man of well-nigh seventy years of age. A most sad and pitiful state of affairs. Mr. Starr himself knows the truth and is a better talker than he knows, on spiritual things. He has had a hope for many, many years in the grace of Christ Jesus, but has never united with the church, much to the regret of all of us who know him and who have no doubt of his standing in grace. He is now indeed a sad and lonely man and the hearts of all of us go out in sincerest regard to him in the burden that now weighs heavily upon him, not knowing what is best to do for the seven left for him to look after. His post-office address is Herndon, Virginia, and if any who read this feel like writing him a word of cheer to lighten his load, and if any feel to help him financially, I recommend his case as a worthy one to any who feel to help him in any way. He deserves it. He is not asking for it; he is no beggar. If he knew I was writing this appeal for

him I am sure he would object. Financially, they are in straits and need help. May the Lord provide for them by putting it in our hearts to do what we can for them. The Lord does these things through his creatures and by inspiring whom he will with the disposition and means of giving. He does not hand money and food right down out of the clouds.

Funeral services were held in the meetinghouse at Frying Pan, a dearly loved spot to sister Mattie. Interment in Herndon Cemetery.

H. H. L.

Sister **Bessie Gillies** was born June 1st, 1851, and died July 16th, 1928. She was the daughter of John G. and Jane Gillis. She is survived by three sisters: Mrs. Graham, of Dutton, Mrs. J. T. Kerr and Mrs. Peter Campbell, both of Iona Station, Ontario. Sister Bessie professed a hope in the mercy of God and found a home in the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, and was baptized in Lobo October 4th, 1902, by the late Elder Carnell, from which time to the day of her death she was a consistent member, walking in love and sweet fellowship with her brethren. She learned that it is through much tribulation we enter the kingdom. Her exercise of mind seems to have begun after hearing the late Elder Wyman preach in Detroit from Malachi iii. 3: "And he shall sit as a refiner, and purifier of silver," &c. She had never heard preaching before as she did then. It pleased the Lord to subject our dear sister to much affliction and sorrow of heart, so that for nearly two years she felt to be under the fearful yet righteous hand of a just and holy God. During this time that the Lord was teaching her she was not left entirely destitute, for the Spirit applied several passages of Scripture, causing her to hope, but it was not until July 31st, 1902, that she was delivered. To use her own words: "My burden was increasing; I could not stand much more. Oh for a resting-place. I clung to those words of comfort. I prayed the Lord to make it known to me whether all this was from him, or was I deceiving myself? When suddenly I was surrounded with great power that made this body tremble, and something smote my breast with these words: I have chosen you before the foundation of the world, why doubt any more? I cried out, My Lord and my God, praise be to thy holy name, thou Lamb of God. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name for his goodness and mercy toward me. While in the midst of these praises I noticed my burden was gone, my heart was so light. I thought of Christian when the burden rolled off his back. My sins were forgiven; I was free. I felt I could not praise the Lord enough. Was there ever a greater miracle performed than what was done for me? I thought I would never doubt again, that I should always be happy, but alas, there came a time when I thought I had deceived the Lord's people, deceived myself and that all this experience was imagination." Thus sister Bessie could tell of the travel of God's dear saints. Her language was the language of Canaan. She lived the life and died the death of the righteous, and her end was peace.

The writer was called for the funeral service, which was held at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Graham, of Dutton.

G. R.

Elder J. F. Tipton was born in Schuyler County, Missouri, August 28th, 1858, was married to Miss Emma J. Gage April 14th, 1886, in Monroe County, Iowa, and died September 15th, 1928, making his stay on earth 70 years and 17 days. To this union were born ten children, five boys and five girls. One girl died in 1905, leaving his wife and nine children to mourn his death, together with seventeen grandchildren living, and eight dead. Dear brother Tipton lived to see all of his children married except his two youngest boys. This dear brother professed a hope in Christ in February, 1886, and he, with his wife, later joined the Methodists, in Monona County, Iowa. In a few years they began to see the Methodists did not preach what they believed. A neighbor gave them some copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to read and God saw fit to show them the true church about the year 1890, and brother Tipton and his wife offered themselves to the Soldiers River Primitive Baptist Church of Monroe County, Iowa, and were baptized by Elder W. M. Dickerson, of Mapleton, Iowa. The church seeing the great gift he had soon liberated him to speak to the people where God saw fit. His health became very poor because of a paralytic stroke (the writer not knowing the exact date), and he with his wife and five small children left Iowa for Montague, Texas, hoping the change might improve his health. He did receive some benefit from the move, but his affliction remained with him until God saw fit to call him home. In 1896 he, with his wife, joined by letter the Primitive Baptist Church known as Lone Star, in Montague County, Texas. In 1897 or 1898 (his wife is not sure which year) he was ordained to the full work of the ministry. A few years later he, with his family, moved to Greer County, Oklahoma, and homesteaded a place on which he lived until three or four years before his death; the four years before his death were practically all spent in Washington County, Arkansas, except a short period before his death, when his health became so bad that one of his sons went after him and brought him back to Greer County, Oklahoma. He stayed with his children here awhile and then was taken to a son's in Quay County, New Mexico, where he died September 15th, 1928, and September 16th his body was laid to rest in the Plains Cemetery. Elder Shipman, of Snyder, Texas, conducted the funeral service.

He surely was a man of God, and to know this dear brother was to love him. Brother Tipton stood solid for God's foreknowledge and predestination of all things, and on February 28th, 1909, he helped to organize and constitute Hopewell Church, at Reed, Oklahoma, and his membership remained with that church until his death. Elder Tipton was an able defender of the faith of God's elect. We were very closely associated with him for more than fifteen years and never heard him when in prayer that he failed to pray for the king on his throne or the beggar in his cottage, so we will say to sister Tipton and children and grandchildren, Weep not as those who have no hope.

Approved by order of Hopewell Church in conference at Reed, Oklahoma, February 19th, 1929. It is the request of the church that a copy be spread on our church-book, a copy be furnished sister Tipton and a copy be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

W. H. PUGH
J. C. PRESLEY } Commitee
J. D. HATCHETT

Park C. Ferguson was born February 22nd, 1857, and died January 29th, 1929, aged 71 years, 11 months and 7 days. He was married to Malissa Ellen Gainer February 22nd, 1883, and to that union were born nine children, six sons and three daughters. His wife, one son and two daughters preceded him to the grave. He was later married to Dosia Fitzwater, September 24th, 1913, and to that union five children were born, all living. He joined the Old School Baptist Church called Leading Creek, at Montrose, West Virginia, October 24th, 1886. He leaves a wife, eleven children, two brothers, one sister and many relatives and friends to mourn his departure. He will also be sadly missed in the church.

Funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Elder J. S. Murphy, after which his body was lowered in the grave, there to await the resurrection morn.

BENTON D. MURPHY.

J. F. Fuller was born near Vellarica, Georgia, Sept. 3rd, 1853. His father moved to the State of Arkansas in 1857, and settled near where Hope, Arkansas, is now a nice town. He was married to Mattie Burns June 28th, 1876, joined the Predestinarian, or Primitive, Baptist Church at old New Hope, in Hempstead County, the third Sunday in August, 1886, and departed this life February 15th, 1928, making his stay on earth 74 years, 5 months and 12 days, and was buried in the cemetery of the New Hope Church, where he had been a consistent member ever since he joined. Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. R. Rawls. Brother and sister Fuller never had any children of their own, but raised two or three sets of orphan children, to which they were as devoted as real parents. The writer had known brother Fuller for about fifty years, and to know him was to love him. He was a man who was always meek and lowly, and would rather suffer wrong than to have trouble, always esteeming his brethren better than himself, desiring peace and trying to make peace when there was confusion. He leaves a widow to mourn for him who is a widow indeed. The church has lost a dear devoted christian brother, but heaven has gathered one of her brightest jewels, if we are left to be the judge.

Written by one who loved him, and, I hope, a brother in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began to them that love him,

JOHN G. RATELIFF.

MEMORIALS.

INASMUCH as the good Lord in his all-wise providence September 7th, 1927, took from us by death our beloved brother, **Deacon J. P. Verhines,** we, the church at Mud Creek, desire to have recorded on our Minutes our appreciation of him. He joined this church by experience and baptism September, 1888, over forty years ago. As this church is one hundred years old, he was a member of it nearly half of its existence. His whole soul was constantly for its peace and welfare, and he was always present at the meetings unless providentially hindered. He was patient and prudent in his walk and talk, always giving good admonition and encouraging the brethren and sisters to attend their meetings. We feel we can say he was a deacon in the true sense of the word. It makes us feel sad to have to give him up, yet we feel submissive to an all-wise Providence, who does all things well, and desire to thank him for the long life of our dear brother. We feel he has left behind a well spent life that we would do well to emulate. He lived and died in the faith and has gone to rest with the saints gone before. Peace be to his ashes. We desire to express our heartfelt sympathy to his bereaved family. May the God that dear brother Verhines so much loved and tried to serve be with them in this sad hour and reconcile them to his holy will and keep them by his almighty power is our prayer, and when life is over with us all may we bask in the sunshine of his love and praise the Father, Son and ever-blessed Spirit in that world that has no end. Therefore be it

Resolved, that we record this on our church Minutes, and that a copy be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication, and also a copy be sent to the bereaved family.

Done by order of the church while in session this 25th day of November, 1928.

G. M. CAMPBELL, Pastor.
L. C. CAMPBELL, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

W. A. Kelly, Ark., $1; Annie Putnam, Iowa, $1; C. T. Riggs, Okla., $1; "A friend," Mo., $1; Albert Garber, N. Y., $2; Mrs. M. L. Rich, Texas, $1; Elizabeth Rittenhouse, N. J., $4; George Varnes, Pa., $1; Mrs. U. K. Hamilton, Mo., $2; Mrs. Kate Cottrell, Ark., $1.

MEETINGS.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects Elder George Ruston to be with them the fifth Sunday in March (31st), 1929. For convenience services are to be held at the home of J. E. Livingston, 64 East Main St., Cobleskill, N. Y., the Lord willing, at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. Also on Saturday before at 2 p. m. The D. & H. trains from Albany to Binghamton arrive and leave Cobleskill in convenient time for the meeting. All welcome.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday

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All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday of each month at the Swedish Lutheran church-house southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, Riverside, Calif., and at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. 11th St., Claremont, Calif., on the first Sunday of each alternate month, beginning with January, and on every alternate month with brother Joseph Huffman, 128 Van Buren St., Arlington, Calif. Singing at 10:30 a. m. Preaching at 11 a. m. Lunch at the place of meeting, and continued services in the afternoon.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.
O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, every Sunday at 11 a. m. and 2:30 p. m., (Standard Time) at the home of W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street, west three blocks to end of 114th. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Midweek song service by appointment. Pastors Elders Jones and Jaynes. Basket lunch.

EMMA BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sunday at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 97. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1929. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE POTTER AND THE CLAY.

"THE word came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel."—Jeremiah xviii. 1-6.

"My poor clay ever wants to teach God how to be a good potter."—Berridge. I read those words awhile ago; how similar have been my thoughts. I have many, many times prayed to the Lord to mould me as clay in the hand of the potter, that I might show forth his praise, and be just such a vessel in the service of my God as he would have me. I have thought while thus I have been praying that I was altogether sincere, and surrendered to his sovereign good pleasure, and that I was, and would be, all acquiescence to whatever shape he would fashion me, so long as I could but glorify him in my body and spirit, which are his. I thought it is

"Sweet to lie passive in his hands
And know no will but his."

But when the Potter has wrought me upon the wheels, and this poor sinner has been in affliction, with trials, oppressions, temptations, buffetings, I have thought some other way of moulding me into some shape and making me a vessel would be better, and as Berridge says, "My poor clay ever wants to teach God how to be a good potter." O my soul, how weak, how foolish, how presumptuous thou hast been. I feel ashamed, I blush, I hang down my head, I am in confusion; for just at this moment the words come into my mind, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?"—Isaiah xl. 13, 14. Mere natural clay is passive in the hands of the potter; but we poor, puny, sinful pieces of humanity would sometimes resist the Potter, cry out under his forming hands, complain at the hard usage we are subjected to upon the wheels. But how shall we poor clay resist Omnipotence? or frustrate his all-wise, and, unto his elect, the all-gracious, determinate counsel of his will? The

chosen of God are described as vessels of mercy, who, as pieces of clay are so wrought of God, they are afore prepared unto glory, and upon whom the Lord will make known the riches of his glory. (Rom. ix. 23.) This is the ultimate end of their calling, their sanctification, their redemption, their glorification in the resurrection at the last day, when in their whole spirit and soul and body they shall be conformed to the image of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore all the fashioning of the clay, all the forming that the elect undergo in the hands of the heavenly Potter is unto God's glory, and to make them an eternal excellency. Most blessed is the knowledge for the clay to know that it is our heavenly Father who is our potter, and the clay are his children. How sacredly instructive is the scene when Israel in sore afflictions under the chastening hands of the Lord appeals unto God, saying, "But now, O Lord, thou art our father: we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand."—Isaiah lxiv. 8. An earthly potter in his work may make mistakes, and cannot always perfectly carry out his designs, but our God never makes mistakes, the thoughts of his heart stand fast forever.

"In heaven, and earth, and land, and seas,
He executes his firm decrees,
And by his saints it stands confessed
That what he does is ever best."

"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?"—Rom. ix. 21-24. I find there can be an assent that we may give to the absolute sovereignty of God; we can at times contend for it with our lips, prove it to be taught in the holy Scriptures, and yet when God in the good pleasure of his will showeth us hard things, and giveth us tears in great measure to drink, we can fret and murmur, be angry and quarrelsome with the Lord our God. It is dreadful, shameful, but so it is. Oh how corrupt, perverse, how vile is a sinner. I, poor base clay in the hands of the Potter, have thought the Lord is moulding me to some shape; his dealings with me are such doubtless I am being made meet for some service in the household of God. Then some providence has befallen me, some new trial has been put upon me, and I have been moved, worked up in this increase of trouble. All my pleasing thoughts that I was arriving at some shape, to be a vessel of some use to honor in the church are gone, and I feel marred in the hand of the Potter, and am now a shapeless mass, no vessel at all, just a useless, confused mass of clay in tribulation upon the wheels. And I have not been as clay should be: submissive to the will of the Potter. To be in acquiescence to the moulding hands of God in his working me upon the wheels of tribulation I need our heavenly Potter to tell me, even while he doeth his pleasure with me that he is my Father, that I am his child, and that I may learn that he foreknew me from everlasting, and that he hath predestinated me to be conformed to the image of his dear Son, and that he hath called me unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, our dear Friend, and Husband, and Savior. Oh, in the consolation of this hope there is rest in all dispensations with me, a vile transgressor. I find no pleasure in telling of those seasons of

irreconciliation to the dealings of the Lord with me; except that amidst these trying times I have proved his mercy endureth forever, that his covenant faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds, and I confess once more that it is very iniquity to quarrel with God, our heavenly Father. "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?"—Isaiah xlv. 9. Even when in unreconciliation to the fashioning providences of my God how I have sighed over my ways, and mourned unto our heavenly Father, and entreated that he would show me mercy, show me his covenant, that he would give me meekness, and cause me to cleave to him, that I might say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." The language of Isaiah lxiv. 8, has, in my heart, been mine: "But now, O Lord, thou art our father: we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we are the work of thy hand." Oh, it is very blessed in the aboundings of God's grace to say, Amen, Thy will be done. "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise."—Isaiah xliii. 21. And when the apostle Paul reaches unto the heights of our glory and blessedness with Christ Jesus, when we shall be like him, and see him as he is, when we shall be glorified together with him, when mortality shall be swallowed up of life, and his elect, his redeemed, his bride, shall be presented to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish, he says, "Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit."—2 Cor. v. 5. The elect are God's workmanship, and his workmanship is wrought in their regeneration, and sanctification, by the renewing of their minds, by the revelation of Christ in their hearts, by the efficacy of his redemption, by the preciousness unto them of Emmanuel's atoning, sin-cleansing blood.

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
'Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

In all of which God maketh us meet to be partakers of the glory that shall be revealed, meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. Christ hath redeemed us from the power of the grave, and redeemed us from death. So, when, on the day the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed, we look for our precious Lord Jesus from heaven, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. Then this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality. Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

"Then shall the church, the Lamb's own bride,
Both crowned and seated by his side,
Outshine the sun's meridian ray;
While Jesus, smiling at the sight,
Shall then with a supreme delight
The travail of his soul survey."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

HERNDON, Va., Nov., 1928.

DEAR BRETHREN:—After filling out the subscription blank for another year's subscription to your paper I feel like writing you a few lines in regard to the language of David. David, to my mind, was a man after God's own heart, for he was almost all his lifetime praising his God. Although a sinner like other men, yet he was made to say, "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men." I have in mind now his words, "Salvation belongeth unto the Lord: thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah."—Psalms iii. 8. David was sometimes high up on the mountain top, then again low in the valley, just like all of God's people feel to be at this day: down and up. I am now reminded of his words when he was down, he said, "I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me."—Psalms lxix. 2. Yet we hear him saying, "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God," &c.—Psalms xl. 2, 3. David is telling in this Psalm what great things the Lord is doing for him. The modern preacher of to-day when he get up to speak tells what men are doing for the Lord in bringing souls unto God, but David is telling what the Lord hath done for him, and for all the elect of God. Yes, David, he brought me up out of an horrible pit and miry clay. This horrible pit and miry clay denotes to my mind the pit and mire of sin and degredation that the Lord found his children in when he sent his darling Son down to this lowly ground of sin and corruption to redeem them from under the curse of the law, and to make them white in the blood of the Lamb. David not only said he brought him up out of the horrible pit and miry clay and established his goings, but he also said that he (the Lord) put a new song in his mouth, even praise unto our God, &c. When God's dear children are first brought to the knowledge of sin they find themselves in the miry clay and sinking fast, and the greater effort they make to extricate themselves from this mire of sin and degredation the lower they sink, like Peter when trying to walk on the water, and finding himself sinking fast, was made to cry out, Lord, save, I perish. David was sinking fast, yet he said he waited patiently for the Lord and he inclined unto him and heard his cry and brought him up out of the horrible pit and miry clay. There was no man there to throw down the "life line" so that he could grasp it and hold on until he was pulled out, but the Lord alone did the work. As it was said of Jacob, The Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him. David, after being delivered from his horrible condition, doubtless was made to sing sweetly, for he said, He (the Lord) hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God. My mind sometimes reverts to the times of the long passed year when I was made to rejoice in the sweet seasons of David and in his language when he said, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters," &c. All through this beautiful twenty-third Psalm David is telling what the Lord has done for him. No man's work for him to praise, but all the praise to his merciful God.

This may be the last time I shall be

able to write for your valuable paper. I am too old to write with pen and ink, so must be content to write with pencil. If you see fit to publish this in our family paper, the SIGNS, do so, if you can put it in readable shape; if not, cast it aside and all will be well with me. Pray for me, brethren, that the Lord will enable me to hold out faithful unto the end of my journey here below.

I am inclosing a letter received from Elder J. W. McClanahan some months ago, and leave it to your judgment as to publishing in the SIGNS. Elder McClanahan is, like myself, old, and it is not likely he will write much more for publication.

Your brother, I hope, in fond fellowship,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

POCA, W. Va., July 2, 1928.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER OLIVER:—To-day while thinking over many things of the past, and the many precious saints of God with whom I have been blessed to meet and hear them give a reason of their hope in the atonement of Jesus Christ on Calvary for the sins of his people, you both came into my mind with much pleasure and comfort, to think of it being a fact that I had been at your home and received of your hospitality, with a manifestation of lovingkindness to me, a poor worm of the dust. My dear brother and sister, it is of much pleasure to me oftentimes when alone to retrace my many visits among those of like precious faith with me. Now in my old age I am deprived of mingling my voice with God's little ones as I have in the past, while I am aware of the fact that the race that was set before me is almost run. Now in the eightieth year of my age, the indications are that I shall soon leave the field of labor that I have felt the Lord called me to labor in about forty-two years ago, when my soul was filled with love to God and his little ones, as it were a mighty rushing wind, and, as it were, a voice within saying to me, You must cry. In reply I said, Lord, what must I cry? The voice within said, You must cry unto Jerusalem, telling her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she hath received at the Lord's hand double for all her sins. So I have been trying to preach these many years for no other cause than to publish the name of Jesus Christ, the Savior of all who praise him for their deliverance from the land of sin and death to that bright world of glory.

Your old brother in love,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

NEWPORT NEWS, Va., Nov. 11, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you the experience of my dear sister, N. Grace Holloway, which to me is most sweet, and I feel that others will enjoy reading it.

BERTHA C. RICHARDSON.

SALISBURY, Md., Oct. 27, 1928.

DEAR BERTHA:—It is nearly a year since I was baptized and I wrote you that I would tell you my experience when I saw you, but it seems that I have not been enabled to do so.

As a child I did not go to meeting very much. The first words that ever made an impression upon me were those in the eleventh chapter of Matthew, twenty-eighth to thirtieth verses: "Come unto me, all ye that labor," &c., taken as a text by Elder Poulson at Indiantown when I was twelve or thirteen years of age. I was visiting either Cousin George or Uncle Jim Adkins' folks, and I went

with them to the services. From that time I went to meeting if I had the opportunity; if not, it made no difference, I spent my Sundays mostly reading my school books or a novel. You used to tell me I was perfectly happy if I had a box of candy, a book and a rocking chair, and I think I was. After awhile I did attend meetings regularly, but they did not mean much to me. I tried to listen, but my mind was mostly on business. I could not understand why I should even go, but it seemed as though when services were held I wanted to go. When Ruth died it seemed the only consolation I could get was that she was a member of the church. I miss her yet. About four years or more ago I thought I would read the Bible through. I had read it some, but wanted to read it from cover to cover, but I got nothing out of it. I remember that Elder Ker said in one of his sermons at Forest Grove that if you were reading the Bible and got nothing out of it to keep on reading it, and I did. Elder Mellott used to take me with his family to the Broad Creek yearly meetings, and I thought the Saturday afternoon meetings were especially sweet, but I thought I should have told him to take some one to whom it would have meant more, yet I went. Two years ago last spring, when I had headaches so I could hardly sleep, one night these words came to me: "I know that my Redeemer liveth." (You will find them in Job xix. 25.) I supposed they were in the Bible somewhere, but did not remember of ever having seen or heard them, and I was puzzled to know what they meant, but did not want to ask any one. In December Elder Coulbourn took his text in Job and quoted and explained the above words. I went to services here in the morning, but did not always go to Forest Grove in the afternoon, for I did not feel I had the physical strength, but there was one Sunday in the summer when I felt I could go. On the way home I was miserable and could hardly run the car. I was rounding the curve at Walston's when I seemed to be struck with the words, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." I came home to find them in Job xiii. 15. I did not stay home any more, and even went to all the yearly meetings from Welsh Tract to Messongoes, and wondered where my strength came from. The sermons of Elders Lefferts and Dodson last year at the association at Delmar touched me deeply, and on the following Saturday morning while at work I burst out crying and it seemed I could not stop. I wondered what was wrong with me, and the answer was, Your sins have found you out. If ever mortal tasted the bitter dregs of degredation I did, and if any one ever needed to cry out, Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner, I did. You were never so low, were you? The first of the week hope came in the hymn, "I love the Lord; he heard my cries, and pitied every groan." I did not remember ever having seen or heard the hymn. The next Saturday was meeting day, and a day or two before the meeting Miss Minnie called me over the phone and said she heard Elder Coulbourn was not coming, and asked me if I knew anything about it. I could not answer her for a moment, then I said, I think he will be here. He came, and well do I remember the text: "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." I went before the church that afternoon, but I could not talk much for the tears streaming down my face. Little did I think that it would be that way, for Grace likes to hold her head up, but with a broken heart, and in humiliation, I had to go.

After communion the next day I started to walk down the aisle and a peace came over me that is inexpressible; it seemed as though I could hardly walk lest I lose it. I thought, If heaven is like this I shall not mind when the time comes for me to depart from this earth. As I neared the door I looked back, vain thoughts came into my mind and it was gone.

In love,

GRACE HOLLOWAY.

SPRINGFIELD, Ill., Jan. 15, 1929.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—Brother and companion in tribulation. I read with much interest your editorial on the entering of the new year. Much, very much, that you have experienced in your labors of love among the churches of our faith and order, became vividly associated with my own thoughts and impressions on the subject at times during the long period of nearly sixty-eight years in which, and in much weakness, I have been trying to set forth Christ as the way, the truth and the life, the only name given among men whereby we must be saved. To raise my family, clothe and educate them, and at the same time try to respond to all the Macedonian calls, it has always been necessary for me to have an income from different kinds of secular employment to meet the expenses of my growing family. Even to do this we had to do away with all thoughts of extravagance. Brought up without even a good primary education in the country schools of three-quarters of a century ago, I could not think of my children having to start out into the world to do for themselves without a good collegiate education that would help them whether we could do anything more for them or not. This we succeeded in doing, and my three daughters, two of them taught in the public schools, and the other was a competent music teacher and made her way in that work. Now they are all married and settled in life and have families and are in comfortable circumstances. My son, the youngest member of the family, and now past fifty years of age, became, and now is, a successful business man of Mattoon, Illinois. Now, my brother, I could not possibly have done so much for my family had I been compelled to give up my secular work and depend entirely on the free-will offering of the churches that I labored for since 1864, the time I was ordained and began serving churches as pastor, &c. I was born and raised on a farm, and all but fourteen years of my life have been spent on the farm. For nearly forty years my farm lay adjoining a railroad station. I thus lived on the farm and built up a business that helped out more than the farm. Now my age, nearly ninety-one, is such that I can get out but little during the late fall and winter months. During the spring and summer I get out more, but am not as active as I once was. You probably are aware that I lost my companion of nearly sixty-five years. It will be two years ago the 28th of this month (January) that she gently and peacefully fell asleep in the blessed Jesus in whom she had professed a hope many years ago. Of course the old home was then broken up. I am now with my oldest daughter, who is a widow, which is my winter home. As soon as the mother passed away, I broke up and turned everything over to the children and let them divide it among themselves, which they did, except a reservation of enough for the income to give me all I need in the few days I may yet sojourn on earth. Brother Lefferts, what I have

done does not reflect upon the churches for which I labored. There are but a few instances that I can recall where they did not give me as they had been blessed in basket and in store. I am glad you brought out the subject just as you did, and trust you will still go on as head of the editorial staff. May God bless you and direct you.

Your brother,

J. G. SAWIN.

[I HAVE not brother Sawin's permission to publish the inclosed personal letter to me, but feel sure he will not object, because it has been such a comfort to me, and I want to share it with others of the SIGNS fellowship. Deeply do I appreciate the understanding sympathy of brother Sawin, and also of brother J. I. Foster, of Texas, whose letter appeared in the March number, and the exceedingly kind and encouraging letters I have received from various parts of the country since my article in the January number. I had no idea that my feeble and inadequate articles in the SIGNS had touched such deep responsiveness in the hearts of our readers and subscribers. These expressions of love and fellowship have come to me at a time of deep discouragement and have been worth more than money to me. Your kind and understanding words have made me feel that I must keep on the best I can, with the Lord's help. Thus I feel to say that as long as you need me to serve you, and so long as the Lord may spare me to do so, I am dedicated to your service. I should like to answer each one personally, to acknowledge each, and separately, the many letters that have come to me, but I ask you one and all to kindly accept this brief note from me as my thanks for all you have said and done for me, in lieu of a person letter from me to each of you.—H. H. L.]

HARDING, West Virginia.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—I feel that I would like to write a few words for our family paper, which seems to me like a large table spread in God's house, around which we all gather to partake of the precious things which Christ has given to his servants to place thereon for our comfort and encouragement. When we with humility receive those refreshing viands we are filled with gladness, and praise to the Comforter who so graciously provides them, and have sweet fellowship for those who serve them to us. February number of the SIGNS has come to us laden with the precious fruits of the Spirit, manifested in both editorial and correspondence. In less than fifteen months death claimed one sister and two of my brothers. Two of them were members of the Valley Church with us, the other one had been taught to trust in the Lord and was a firm believer in the doctrine we advocate. The lives they lived and their faith in God are evidence that they have gone to rest. The last one taken will be sadly missed in our lives and in the church. It made me feel as one of old said, "All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me," but after reading brother L. L. Schenck's letter in the SIGNS I was comforted by the thought that the precious feet of Jesus had walked over and conquered those billowy waves, and when we feel ourselves being overwhelmed by them, or sinking as Peter did, like him we cry to Jesus for help, and he takes our hand and leads us to the ship of safety and immediately guides it to the shore. After reading brother Lefferts' good letter to sister Hellings I, too, realized that it is indeed a blessing to have been fellowshipped by those whom we have esteemed as true followers of the Lord, in believing they have entered into their

rest our hope is strengthened. The above mentioned letters were not written for me, but they became as bread cast upon the waters and were carried by the waves from shore to shore. Doubtless many others, like myself, have been fed and strengthened thereby, and after many days when it shall return may is comfort and encourage your hearts also. Elder Chick's letter made me feel that "he, being dead, yet speaketh." When we can feel as brother Chick did, that the Lord fights all our battles for us, it is an entering into the rest that remains to his people. One of the apostles said, Cast all your care upon him, for he careth for you. He says it is only when we are humbled and occupy the lowly places that we ever do really bless God. I, too, have felt that our hearts have to be crushed and bleeding, as it were, before we can render unto God the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving due to him, and own that all his ways are just and right, and that whatever he does is best for us and will redound to his honor and glory.

On account of the isolated condition of the few members of our church and the location of our church-house we have no services during the winter months. It is a long time to be without gospel preaching. I believe that many readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES whose only preaching is through its columns can understand how I feel about it. When I have the opportunity it is a real pleasure to entertain the brethren and sisters in my home, as Martha when she entertained Jesus, also many women spoken of by the apostles who ministered unto them. Many times when I am shut off from hearing the gospel preached for months, then am blessed again with the privilege of assembling with those I love for the truth's sake, I have such a longing to hear them preach or talk at the homes where we are entertained that I want to sit at the feet of Jesus, as Mary did, and feed upon his gospel ministered unto us by his servants. This is one of the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

We are glad that Elder Lefferts can remain on the editorial staff of the SIGNS, and hope the Lord will yet open a way that will give him the time and inclination to assist in the editorial writing. We feel we are blessed in having a staff of editors who are sound in faith and well qualified to uphold the cause of the Lord Jesus. I sincerely hope the readers of the SIGNS may fully realize the importance of such a publication and be willing to sacrifice something less needful to them and to the cause in order to pay their subscriptions on time, so the publishers may be able to carry on their work as they have so faithfully done in the past. May the Lord enable us all to give more liberally for the support of our pastors, that they may have time to exercise the gift of their holy calling as the Holy Spirit may direct, and to read, and, as Paul told Timothy, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." May the children of God everywhere hold his cause above riches and every earthly gain, remembering Christ's words to Peter, Lovest thou me more than these.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

(MRS.) E. E. WORKMAN.

BENSON, N. C., Nov. 1, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a copy of two good letters for your disposal. One is from Elder R. Lester Dodson and the other is from Mrs. Lizzie F. Anderson.

Sincerely,

ELIZABETH H. BARBOUR.

RUTHERFORD, N. J., Nov. 12, 1927.

DEAR SISTER BARBOUR:—I feel very unworthy of even the notice of such as yourself, and why you should write to me from time to time and express love and fellowship for me I do not know. If I could show more of the spirit of humility and meekness, and be as reconciled to my heavenly Father's will as you appear to be, it would seem I might make some claim to the fellowship of the brethren, but I am at best but a lump of clay in the great Potter's hand and have to be fashioned as seemeth good unto him to fashion me. Sometimes I am made to feel that he does condescend to those of low estate and that he blesses me to speak and write to the honor of his name and the comfort of his people. That you have been comforted and edified by my writings is an evidence to me of his having been mindful of his servant, though unworthy as I feel to be. I am also glad you are enabled to glean some precious food to your hungry soul from the book "Predestination." As you know, about the only part I had in the matter was to help gather and have published the able writings of others, and even in this I feel to hope the dear Lord directed my mind, and I have been assured from many sources time and again that he has stamped his seal of approval upon it, and this fills me with gratitude to him for all his benefits toward me. But what shall I render unto him in return? "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling," is all that I can say.

I regret to learn of any impairment in your physical eyesight, but though it may and must grow dim, I hope the eyes of your spiritual understanding may ever be clear in beholding that highway wherein the redeemed of the Lord walk.

Really, I thank you for your good letter, and pray God may bountifully bestow upon you such blessings as you may stand in need of.

Yours in a precious hope,

R. LESTER DODSON.

WILSON, N. C., Sept. 30, 1928.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—Many times have I thought of you, and many times planned to write, since receiving your sweet letter in April, but as the days go by I am more painfully conscious that I am nothing and less than nothing and vanity. Two weeks ago to-day I visited a church in the country which I had never visited before. I had a very enjoyable time, but during the day several people spoke to me about my writings, and kindly said they wanted me to write again. Well, you know I do appreciate that, but it makes me feel sad because I know what a sinful creature I am, and how can such an one ever make another attempt to write anything that would be of any consolation to the Lord's afflicted and poor people. Almost all of my letters seem to be a complete failure, and I wonder sometimes if you are disappointed in me and thoroughly disgusted, but for some unknown cause you seem to put up with my short comings, and, too, there seems to be some deep understanding between us, even though we can never fully express it, for you said in one of your letters, "Most of the time I am so empty of everything that is good that it seems my letters are more of a nuisance than anything else." You said also, "Many of my trials are so much of an earthly nature." How true that is with me. We seem to be traveling the same road. I am made to wonder if we have truly entered in at the strait gate and are traveling the narrow way which leadeth unto life. Are we among the few there be

that find it? I trust that it is so. At the end of the journey may we be able to say with Paul, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, and may we enter that city which hath foundations, whose maker is God. "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

I should have very much liked to have attended the association at Benson, especially to have seen you again, but there really were several reasons which prevented my going. Cannot you come to our association, which convenes the fourth Friday, Saturday and Sunday in October, at Upper Broad Creek, near Lucama? I hope to attend, and would be very glad to meet you there.

Well, I have enjoyed trying to write to you, but do not know that you can get anything from it. Physically, I am real well now, and do desire to be thankful, but oftentimes I am mentally sick from worry.

Trusting that you are as well as usual, and that your eyesight has improved, I remain as ever, your friend,

LIZZIE F. ANDERSON.

BELINGTON, W. Va., Feb. 18, 1929.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been so long sending in my remittance for the SIGNS I feel to offer an apology, or rather to express to you my gratitude and appreciation of your kind forbearance of my seeming negligence; but truly it has not been a mere matter of neglect, but a very serious proposition with me as to whether I should write and have it discontinued or allow it to keep on coming, not knowing just how or when I could pay for it. I have thought for the last couple of years that owing to financial conditions I would be compelled to give it up, and on one occasion intimated such thoughts to a dear sister. A month or so later, to my surprise, I found the date on my paper changed and my subscription extended, and my cup was filled to overflowing. Though I tried, I never could express my feelings for such unmerited lovingkindness. I was humbled and my heart was filled with gratitude, not only to the donor, but to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, to whom this dear precious sister would join me in rendering praise and thanksgiving for his lovingkindness and tender mercy to us at all times. So at last I am sending a check to cover another year's subscription, which will soon be out, and whether or not I shall be able to renew again the dear Lord only knows. I hope it may be his will to provide a way, but should I not renew promptly you are at liberty to discontinue it at any time, and I prefer that you do, as I do not want to get so far in arrears. Many times have I thought to write for its discontinuance, but each attempt has proven such a task that I have never been able to finish it. To do so really seems like discarding a much loved member of the family, it having been in the family so long. I can hardly remember when father began taking it, some time in the eighties, I think, and continued it as long as he lived. Since then it has been coming regularly to our home, we never having missed, to my recollection, but one copy, and that was the issue for last November. For many years its coming has been looked forward to with pleasure and anxiety, and since it has pleased the good Lord to call home my dear husband it has been my chief companion—meat and drink to my weary, heavy laden soul.

Thanks to our heavenly Father for such worthy and efficient editors and contributors, whose sweet messages are like the refreshing dewdrops on the withering plant. They tell the same sweet story, old, but ever new, of Jesus, our Savior and King, who suffered and died that we might live. Can it be he died for me? I, who am so vile and sinful, not worthy to speak his name, or even look toward heaven, yet cry unto him continually for mercy. No other help I know, nothing but the blood of Jesus can save a poor sinner like me.

I bid you all Godspeed. May his grace abide with you and ever enable you to fill its columns with the same precious truth the SIGNS has always stood for. To all the dear loved ones who know my weak frame, how lonely and isolated from church privileges I am, and those to whom I am indebted for greetings and letters, I would, but cannot, write, so please do not think me ungrateful, but cast the mantle of charity over my seeming indifference, and if you have a fruitful mind and feel to share it with unworthy me, either by pen or with a friendly visit, it will be gladly received. Your loving messages are healing balm to my wounded spirit, sweet incense to my drooping soul. To all the dear household of faith, love and greetings in the Lord. Pray for me.

With an earnest desire for the peace and welfare of Zion, I submit these very imperfect lines, which fall so far short of the purpose intended that I hesitate to send them. Do with them as you see fit. If you deem them unfit for publication cast them in the wastebasket and pardon the effort.

In hope of immortality beyond this vale of tears, from the very least, if one at all,

(MRS.) F. W. GAINER.

MACOMB, Okla., Dec. 10, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—Another year has passed and I am still left here in this world of sin and suffering, for some purpose I know not what, but God has a purpose in all things, and it is his will that I stay here. I pray he will give me grace to sustain me through the trials and temptations of this life.

I wish to thank you for your kindness in sending me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the past year. It has been of great comfort and pleasure to me, for I love the doctrine it advocates. The only thing that grieves me is that I am not financially able to help you send your good paper, but I am the poorest of the poor in this world's goods, still I have a sweet hope I have cherished for forty years that I am a child of a rich King, and if so

"How sweet to reflect on the joys that await me
In yon blissful region, the haven of rest,
Where glorified spirits in rapture will greet me,
And lead me to mansions prepared for the blessed."

Jesus says, In my Father's house are many mansions. How often it comes to my mind, Is there one for me? Am I one of the blessed? But I have many doubts and fears, for I feel so unworthy of such a great blessing. Paul says, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love him. I love God because he hath heard my pleadings for mercy and hath forgiven my sins and given me a hope that I am one of those his dear Son shed his precious blood for that I might have eternal life. Jesus says, I will not leave you comfortless; I will come again. Let not your heart be troubled; neither let it be afraid. Jesus has given us many precious promises. John says, We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. I know I love the church better than anything on

earth, and nothing gives me more pleasure than to meet the brethren and sisters in love and fellowship, though I do not feel worthy of a home with such good peoeple, yet I have a hope they will bear with me if they can, but if they should turn away from me where would I go? I love the Old Baptists with a different love than I have for any others, and I hope it is the love of God in my heart that makes me love them. I love the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass. I believe God has a pupose in all things. I love the SIGNS OF THE TIMES because it teaches the doctrine that Jesus taught. I very much enjoyed brother Lefferts' editorial in the August number; in fact, I enjoyed all the good letters.

"Oh happy day, when saints shall meet,
To part no more! the thought is sweet!
No more to feel the rending smart,
Oft felt below when christians part."

I am now in my seventy-ninth year and have been greatly afflicted for the past two years. Paul says that our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more and exceeding weight of glory. It is needful for us to be afflicted lest we forget God, from whom all our blessings come. He says that in our afflictions we will seek him early.

Dear editors, I will bring my letter to a close, for it is like the writer, very imperfect. If you think it worthy of space you may publish it; if not, just throw it aside. I only thought to write a few lines to thank you for sending me the SIGNS, but have written as my mind has directed me. I ask the prayers of all the saints that I may never do anything to bring reproach upon the church I love so well.

With love and fellowship to all the readers of the SIGNS, I am your unworthy sister, in nope of eternal life,

M. E. HARRIS.

MONROE, Ga., Feb. 5, 1929.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am impressed to greet my fellow-citizens of the household of faith in a short letter to those who read the SIGNS. Being afflicted, and in my eightieth year, feeling that I am rounding out my career in this world, I am still remembering that your company has been dear and your union sweet since I entered this warfare fifty-six years ago. I hope that we have been made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus many times. I had planned to visit up north and east for one more time, in the spring of 1929, but the prospect looks gloomy now, yet we know that all our times and our destiny are in the hands of God, and that all has been fixed according to his will, decree, purpose counsel and predestination. We may rest assured that his perfect wisdom and power are working all things together for good to all his people. We feel that this blessed relationship with those born of that incorruptible seed by the word of God, when we are in company with each other, is made manifest by the oneness of sentiment expressed. Often I feel that you have a key which unlocks my very being so I can see plainly the Lord has been our dwelling-place in all generations and that his name is a strong tower into which we run and are safe. I have been wondering whether we shall be made bold enough to continue to meet all the opposition being brought against the truth. I have been instructed by some of our best brethren not to discuss predestination among them. Inasmuch as the apostle has instructed us that all Scripture is given by inspiration, and that it is profitable for doctrine, can it be possible that this one part of the truth has become unprofitable and should be discarded? I think of Peter's boldness when the enemy wanted

him to cease discussing the doctrine of Christ. He said, Whether we obey you or God, judge ye. I love to think of his boldness in continuing in the doctrine which he had both seen and heard, and of the result of it when he was in prison: the angel with the light, the chains falling away, his putting on his clothes and following the messenger through the gate that opened mysteriously before them, of the damsel who heard Peter's knocking at the gate and recognized his voice, and who announced his coming and his safety to those within the house who seemed to be holding a prayer meeting. No doubt this damsel had heard Peter's voice before, probably in preaching. Is not this sweet testimony? I can say the same about your voices that I have heard. Tears of joy fall when I think of you. Yes, surely the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and live. Now, to those whom I have seen and whose voices I have heard, as well as to those I have neither seen nor heard, may you remember me, a poor sinner.

Yours to serve,

JAMES M. ADAMS.

LOS ANGELES, California.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I feet that I would like to write a few lines concerning the late Deacon G. W. Horner, for since his death many things have come to my mind. The faithful as well as the unfaithful must sooner or later go from us, but God is able to raise up others. He never has nor ever will be left without a witness. Ever since I first knew brother Horner he was to me a source of comfort and inspiration. To describe his godly walk and christian virtues is but another way of telling how God works in his people both to will and to do of his good pleasure. As he very often said, It is not I, but the grace of God that is with me. Brother Horner was one of the most spiritually-minded men I ever met, and it was like heaven below to spend time with him talking about Jesus and his love. Brother Horner had no enemies, yet any one who contends for the truth as earnestly and conscientiously as he did is bound to be misunderstood sometimes. On the occasion of his funeral there was a large number of his friends met to pay their last tribute of respect to him. After reading and prayer by Elder Walker Elder Arledge preached and beautifully described the resurrection and the glory that shall be revealed in his saints. There was hardly a dry eye in the audience. His body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Sawtell, California, to await the glad morning when our vile bodies shall be changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of our dear Redeemer. He leaves to mourn their loss his wife, two sons, two daughters and a host of friends.

Dear Elder Lefferts, I have written this at the earnest request of his dear wife, and I hope you will see fit to publish it; not as an obituary, for one has already been published, but as a token of love and esteem for him and the cause he loved so well.

Written in loving remembrance by an unworthy brother,

I. E. OSBURN.

BELLVILLE, N. J., Feb. 5, 1929.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—If you will pardon me for thus addressing you. I have often felt to be such a sinner that I could not call any of God's little ones by that title. I feel as if there was not enough said Sunday for you people to receive me. I would like to express myself as some do, but am unable. I felt

myself to be a sinner thirteen years ago. Elder Charles Evans preached at Weatherford Church, in Virginia. He used as a text Revelation xxii. 17: "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come: and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." I was then twelve years of age and that Scripture has been with me many times since. I went on from time to time all wrapped up in worldly things. I would beg the Lord for mercy when I was out in large gatherings. I would say when I got home, I will not go to that place any more, but in a short while I would be back there. I went on in that way until four years ago. I was in a hospital and underwent an operation and was suffering a great deal. I found myself begging for mercy; I closed my eyes, thinking I could not rest. I was crying aloud for the Lord to have mercy on me, a sinner. I opened my eyes to find the doctors and nurses standing by my bed and wondering, I guess, what was wrong with me. My doctor said, You are not sick? I said, Not now. I came home and asked my husband if it would be any trouble for him to take me to meeting. We went to the meetinghouse on Home Street, and there I found that those people were my people, and their God my God. They were strangers in the flesh, but I felt they were not strangers in the Spirit. From that day I have wanted to be baptized. There have not been many times in the four years when the subject of baptism was not on my mind. It has been a pleasure to sit and mingle with God's children, and how thankful I am that I can sit among you. I can say with Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

I must now close or I will weary you, for this is like the writer, very imperfect. But by the grace of God I am what I am.

Unworthily,

JENNIE SHORT.

[THE writer of the above letter was baptized the second Sunday in February, 1929, into the full fellowship of the Ebenezer Church in New York city.—ED.]

CAREY, Texas, Feb. 8, 1929.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find check for three dollars, two dollars for SIGNS OF THE TIMES and one dollar to help towards sending the paper to "the poor of the flock." My mother is sending the one dollar. She is seventy-five years of age and has been united with the Old Baptists for over thirty years. She is almost blind and helpless, but still loves the doctrine the SIGNS sets forth. When she could see she read her Bible a great deal and it seemed to be her great delight. Her name is Mrs. M. L. Rich. If you should see fit to publish this letter and any of the brethren or sisters who know her should read it, I will say to them, Please write to her.

Dear editors, will you, or some of the brethren or sisters who write for the SIGNS give your views on the two witnesses, spoken of in the eleventh chapter of Revelation? Mother talks a great deal about it, and wants to know who these two witnesses are. Mother's address is Mrs. M. L. Rich, Carey, Texas.

Your little sister, in hope of eternal life,

(MRS.) L. L. ARNOLD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1929.

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MARK VIII. 34.

"AND when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

It appears to us that we wrote on this subject previously quite awhile ago. However that may be, we shall attempt it again, not knowing what we wrote before, and making no attempt to recall it.

The ancient meaning of the "disciple" was that of a student in a school. Modernly, the word has come to mean a follower. Taking it in its original sense, a disciple of Jesus Christ is one who is a student in the school of Christ. The school of Christ teaches by experience due to the operation of the Holy Spirit in the soul of the spiritual learner. Our text gives three qualifications of a disciple, or of one who follows Jesus through learning of him. First, the will to follow; second, the denial of self; third, taking up his cross. The truth as to what constitutes a true follower of Jesus is one of the most vital concerns of living characters. There is so much nominal profession of Christ-following in the world, so much lip-service to God among men, that it is with much anxiety and searching of heart that true believers inquire to know whether they are really following Jesus or merely thinking they do. There must first be the will to follow him. "Whosoever will come after me." Only of those who have the will to follow Jesus are self-denial and cross-bearing required. The word "will" may mean determination or it may mean desire. Of God, when he wills to do a thing, it is meant that he determines to do it. However, in this instance the "will" means desire. This can be verified by going back to the original Greek word which is here translated "will." That original word means "desire." In the same sense, Paul said that to will was present with him, but how to perform the good he found not. He did not mean that he was able to determine to do good, but that he desired the good. The first requisite of a follower of Jesus is having the desire or prayerful wish to come after him. The natural man is full of desires, but this is not one of them. No man of himself alone can possibly have any desire to follow Jesus in the true sense. As water seeks its own level and cannot rise above its source, so no human soul can do aught but seek its own satisfaction in natural things, and is without power to transcend the Adamic head from which its being is derived. The natural man knows nothing of the things of God, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned. Jesus at one time told the Jews, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." By this he did

not mean the Jews could have come if only they had determined to do so. No, he meant they had no desire for him, nor for anything Jesus had to give. Having no desire, they had no life. The absence of desire to come to Jesus proved them still to be dead in sin. Had they possessed spiritual life they would have had pantings of soul to come after him. Life is always the antecedent of activity. No souls can aspire after divine things except they be quickened with and into the life of God. These hungerings and thirstings after Christ and his righteousness are themselves blessings, because they evidence eternal life in the souls thus moved.

Granted then that the soul by the Holy Spirit has been given the will or desire to be Jesus' disciple, we pass on to the self-denial. Again going back to the original language out of which the New Testament was translated, we find the expression, "deny himself" means self-renunciation. It does not mean self-denial such as is meant by most people who talk about denying themselves. It is not denying self at one point or in one direction in order to gratify that same self in some other way. It means painfully more than this. It is the renouncing of the whole natural self. Jesus was verily God and verily man. He had his own will as a man, but it was not his man-will he came to do. He came to do his Father's will and to finish his work. His man-will was totally denied in order to satisfy the God-will. Even when he cried, "If it be possible, let this cup pass," that had to be denied, and he acquiesced divinely, saying "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." Just look down the list of those who were Christ's true disciples when he walked on the earth, and you will find not a single one of them who became his disciple through their own natural volition. Peter and Andrew and Philip, James and John, and others, all followed him because they were powerless to resist his call. They tried to draw back and to make excuses, but all to no avail. On the other hand, there was one who came to Jesus and volunteered to be his disciple. This one Jesus rejected. No volunteer can serve in the army of the Lord. All are enlisted therein by the effectual calling of divine grace. Certainly Saul of Tarsus had never a thought of becoming Jesus' follower. Such a thought, if he had ever had it, was odious to his natural and pharisaical self. However, that self of Saul's was utterly renounced, and we find him in consequence "the great apostle to the Gentiles." It is an utter impossibility for any follower of Jesus of himself to deny himself. Since it takes an absolute renouncing of self, divine grace must do it. The strength of grace takes the believer's natural life and self and places them upon the altar to serve God's own purpose and glory. This is not upon a bloody altar. Only Jesus himself was offered bloodily. An altar of incense is the place of our offering. As Jesus offered his own body without spot to redeem his people from their transgressions, so his Spirit in his followers causes them to render their bodies living sacrifices unto him, their reasonable service in view of what great things he has in mercy done for them.

This brings us to the third factor in discipleship, that of cross-bearing. Jesus says, Let him take up his cross. Notice, "his cross," not "my cross." Not one could bear Jesus' cross, nor does God require that any should, only a part of the way. Simon of Cyrene might be made to bear the cross of Jesus, but not for long. The suffering and the bleeding

and the dying for sin, no Simon could bear. It must be the lot of the Redeemer alone. However, each follower of Jesus is required to bear his own personal and peculiar cross. With all of Christ's followers there is the cross of the Spirit against the flesh, of the old man of sin against the new man of the heart. All true disciples know this by experience. Not all may suffer it to the same degree, but all must know it in their measure. No child of God is exempted from fighting in that holy war staged on the battleground of man's soul. Aside from this conflict between the flesh and the Spirit, there is the peculiar cross which each follower, himself or herself, must bear. Some are called to leave family connections and earthly kindred and friends in this following of Jesus. Some witness the perishing of earthly ambition and of worldly advancement. Some undergo the disuse of their natural talents according to which they might have won some measure of ease and convenience to themselves, in order to serve arduously in the vineyard of the Lord. Still others meet with persecution and misunderstanding at the hands of their brethren, because of their unselfish honesty in standing loyally to their gracious convictions. Against heavy odds, in the midst of barrenness of mind and destitution of soul, in the midst of dwindling churches and congregations and faced with coldness and indifference, still others labor on. Other followers are those who are called to bear the cross of frail bodies and failing health, often in heart-breaking poverty and in isolated circumstances. Some there are who have the cross of not being near churches of their own faith and order, who are denied church privileges, who never meet an understanding heart or shake the hand of a fellow in the Spirit. In one way or another, each true follower of Jesus has his or her especial cross. The result at the end of all this spiritual learning in the school of Jesus is that the flesh and self are all used up that Jesus may be all in all. All is for the glory of God and not for the gratifying of man. If this following could be of one's self and the result of one's own efforts, one might have something in which to glory before God. But not so. "We are unprofitable servants." God only is glorified. H. H. L.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

THE Primitive Baptist Home will be opened in Salisbury, Maryland, the early part of May. Members and friends within the bounds of the churches composing the Eastern Associations are eligible to enter.

Please direct all requests for information to Cyrus Risler, Secretary, 904 Ogden Avenue, New York, N. Y.

DEATH OF ELDER P. G. LESTER.

OUR hearts were saddened to learn of the death of Elder P. G. Lester, but as yet we have received no obituary notice for publication in the SIGNS.

WATCH YOUR DATES.

WE wish to request our subscribers when sending in their subscriptions to see that the date on the little pink slip bearing their address is changed. If not changed, please let us know immediately (for that signifies you have not been given credit for the money sent) and we will look into the matter. By consulting that date you can tell at a glance to what time your subscription is paid. Dec. 29 means that your subscription is paid to December, 1929; June 28 means your subscription is only paid to June, 1928, &c.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by brother George R. Tedford.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, Bowdoinham, Maine, September 7th, 8th and 9th, 1928, to the churches of which she is composed, and the meetings and associations with which she corresponds, sends greetings in the Lord.

DEARLY ESTEEMED BRETHREN:—It is my lot to again address you with what we call a Circular Letter. The things pertaining to the children of God are hid from the wise and prudent and are revealed unto babes. This must be a most important and wonderful thing, for the dear Savior rejoiced in spirit and thanked the Father that it is so. (Matt. xi.) How good it is for the babes. If these things were to be given according to our ability to learn and to understand them, and our worthiness to receive them, then the babes and others that are weak and poor and helpless would come short altogether. So there comes a time in the experience of every child of God when he feels he has great reason to join with the Savior in thanks to the Father that these are revealed only to babes. Except a man be born from above he cannot see the kingdom of God. One who is newly born is a babe. The wise and prudent cannot see the kingdom of God by virtue of any powers that they possess in their natural minds, and cannot therefore talk understandingly about anything belonging to that kingdom, for they do not know anything about it. As the apostle says, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14. It was God's purpose that it should be so. In the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, and this is the only reason ever given, or ever to be given, for anything which the Lord does. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. But the babes can prattle and talk sweetly and understandingly about these things, for they know them, they are born into them. These babes do not know that they are talking most clearly the language of Canaan any more than the natural babe knows it is talking the language of its mother. Farewell.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 7th, 8th and 9th, 1928, sends christian greetings to the sister associations and meetings of our correspondence.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Again it has been our great privilege to meet your messengers and receive your correspondence, which we greatly appreciate and hope to have continued. Elder D. L. Topping was with us all three days, Elder R. Lester Dodson Friday and Saturday, and brother C. V. Hill Saturday and Sunday. We all felt to be wonderfully blessed in listening to these dear brethren, for they came laden with food that feeds hungry souls, and we pray that God will bless them.

Our next session is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday before the second Monday in September, 1929, the place of meeting will be given in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, when we hope to meet your messengers again.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

William H. Wicks was born January 1st, 1840, and died October 7th, 1928, aged 88 years, nine months and 6 days. Mr. Wicks died from the infirmities of advanced age, yet he was confined to his home but a very short time before the summons came. It had been his custom for many years to hold family reunions, so Sunday, October 7th, about one hundred relatives and friends gathered at his home to pay their respects to "Uncle Will," as many called him. It was then apparent that his stay upon earth could not be much longer. Some of his relatives thought it better not to hold the reunion at that time, but no persuasion could turn his mind, saying, I can hear their voices, and it must go on, even though I cannot talk with them. Many of them had not reached their homes before his spirit had ceased to strive with mortal flesh and had returned to God who gave it, passing out in peaceful slumber to where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. Mr. Wicks was united in marriage to Miss S. Emeline Jenkins about forty years ago. Shortly thereafter they went to West Philadelphia, at which place they lived happily in the love of one another. About the year 1917 they returned to the old neighborhood, near the Rock Springs meetinghouse, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Mr. and Mrs. Wicks were not members of the church, yet they knew of no greater joy than to meet with the Lord's people in praise to his holy name. Baptists always found a hearty welcome in their home, and we are saddened by the thought of such homes being closed to the Lord's dear ones, yet he is able to open up others, and we trust it may be his pleasure to do so. Mrs. Wicks preceded Mr. Wicks to the great beyond, her death occurring July 14th, 1921, she being in her seventy-eighth year. Mrs. Wicks was one of thirteen children of the well-known Jenkins family of Rock Springs Church. Of this large family there are but four left upon the shores of time: sister S. R. Dance, of Towson, Md., sister Lillie Jenkins, of Rock Springs, Pa., Mrs. Maggie Day, of Philadelphia, Pa., and David Jenkins, near Rock Springs. Mr. Wicks was of a very cheerful disposition and was much thought of in the community, and was especially beloved by the members of Rock Springs Church, which he showed by his actions was dear to his heart. He seldom missed a meeting, though he was not able to walk without support. Our hearts are sad when we think that we shall see him no more in our midst, yet for him, we have no doubt, to depart is far better. When talking to him about his hope in Jesus, I said, Uncle Will, do you not feel sometimes like coming to the church? His answer was, I did years ago, but now I am so unfit I do not think I ever will. Years have passed but I still remember how these words came to my ears: He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, and he said this is my hope that he will. I believe he did.

His body was laid to rest in the Rock Springs Church cemetery, there to await the summons from on high. The writer tried to speak to a large congregation of relatives and friends that had gathered to pay their last respects to one for whom death had ended a well spent life. I used the twenty-third Psalm as the basis for my remarks.

ALSO,

Professor Milton B. Wicks, for many years a leading educator in Philadelphia, was a brother of William H. Wicks. Professor Wicks was a native of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and was buried in the Rock Springs Church cemetery. At the time of his death he was survived by his widow, one daughter and one son, Clayton. His widow was the fifth daughter of George and Susan J. Jenkins. Sister Wicks was baptized by the late Elder William Grafton September 11th, 1881, and was a worthy member of the Rock Springs Church until the time of her death, which occurred May 15th, 1923, at the age of 73 years. Sister Wicks delighted in entertaining her Baptist friends, which was also the delight of the Professor, and many were the enjoyable hours spent in talking of the wonderful works of God, among the children of men, while in their home. It has been said by those who have had the pleasure of visiting in their home that even the chairs seem to say, Welcome. The Professor was not a member of the church, yet he loved the church of God and the order of the Lord's house, which he proved by his willingness to uphold that which was most dear to his heart. He was seventy-five years of age at the time of his death.

Written by request.

D. L. TOPPING.

Jesse B. Snyder, our brother in Christ, departed this earthly life at his home near Plum Run, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, February 24th, 1929, aged 76 years, 6 months and 5 days. He was born Aug. 19th, 1852, the son of Johathan and Mary Snyder. His brother, John Snyder, survives him, also one sister, Mrs. Thomas Garland, of Carversville, Pa. He was married in the year 1875 to Miss Annie Elizabeth Powell, who survives him. Brother and sister Snyder were baptized in 1882 by Elder Thomas Rose into the membership of the Tonoloway Old School Baptist Church, in Fulton County. Two daughters, Miss Anna M. Snyder, of Worcester, Mass., and Mrs. Iley Hyatt, at home, survive their father. Brother Snyder had a spiritual mind and loved to talk on the Scriptures, being a great Bible reader and able to quote correctly from the Scriptures to sustain his belief in the truth. He was firm and unwavering in his belief in the omnipotence of God and in the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone in Christ Jesus.

For the last three years of his life he had been a sufferer and unable to leave his home for much of the time. Thus, during these three years he was not able to be at the meetings, but previously had attended them whenever he could. At the time he came into the church, and for some years thereafter, his mind was so exercised on the Scriptures, and they were so much in evidence in his conversation, that it was thought he might have to preach. As far as himself was concerned, he never felt that he had to preach, but he nevertheless comforted many by his talk and became a welcome visitor in the homes of those who loved to hear of Christ and him crucified. In the last years of his life and all through his suffering, it is but right that we should set down here the record that his daughter, Mrs. Hyatt, was unfailing day and night in her untiring devotion in waiting on and ministering to her father in every way possible to make him comfortable. Funeral was held at the Tonoloway meetinghouse, burial in the ground there. May the Lord comfort and sustain the bereaved family. H. H. L.

Adam L. Findley died January 4th, 1929, at his home, near Harding, W. Va., of tonsilitis and complications, aged 72 years, 2 months and 11 days. He was the oldest son of Levi Findley, Sr., and Emeline Kittle Findley, and was born October 23rd, 1856, on the Findley homestead. He married Margaret E. Taylor November 17th, 1878, and to this union were born three sons: Silas H., Charley and Porter, and three daughters: Mrs. Luceba Allauder, Mrs. Maud Collier and Mrs. Ella Nesbit. After his marriage he moved to a farm adjoining the home place, where he lived until his death. He served as Justice of the Peace in Roaring Creek District for twelve years and was highly commended for his just decisions. His wife died September 7th, 1902. He married Nora E. Musem November 10th, 1904, and to them one daughter, Mrs. Lena Bennet, was born. September 26th, 1914, he made a public profession of his faith in Christ, and joined the Leading Creek Primitive Baptist Church, was baptized by the pastor, Elder J. S. Murphy, and was a highly respected and beloved member. In May, 1928, he and his wife asked for a letter of recommendation from that church and joined the Valley Primitive Baptist Church, which was nearer his home. (Elder J. S. Murphy, his former pastor, was also pastor of the Valley Church.) He was chosen deacon of the Valley Church and was ordained at the July meeting. He was honest and upright in his daily walk, and respected by all who knew him. He was a useful man in his community and useful in the church, where he will be sadly missed, also throughout the Association, where he was well known and esteemed for the truth's sake. He had been a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for several years and highly appreciated the editorials and the many good letters contained in its columns. He was sound in the faith and doctrine of our Lord and Savior and was ever ready to give a reason of his hope in Christ. He was a good husband and father, a kind friend and neighbor. He leaves to mourn their loss his faithful and devoted wife, seven children, thirteen grandchildren, one brother, J. K. Findley, three sisters, Mrs. I. J. Scott, Mrs. A. J. Workman, Mrs. G. M. Koon, many nieces, nephews and other relatives and friends. He was active and able to attend to all his work until one week before his death, when he was taken seriously ill. His doctor and family did all they could to relieve him, but his work here was completed. He realized his condition, and told them he was going. His children were summoned and most of them reached his bedside while he was able to speak to them. We all realize our great loss, but feel sure it is his eternal gain. May the Holy Spirit comfort the hearts of all who mourn, and in his own time make them glad that he is done with sorrow, pain and death and has entered into his eternal rest. May his children follow the example of his orderly walk through life.

By previous request of the deceased, the funeral service was conducted by Elder J. S. Murphy at the home, and his body was laid to rest in the Findley cemetery, there to await the resurrection.

His sister,

EMELINE E. WORKMAN.

Mary Margaret Ennist Harkness was born in the town of Olive, Ulster County, New York, March 26th, 1842, the daughter of the late Joohn Ennist and Margaret Barringer, died September 13th, 1928, making her stay on earth 86 years, 5 months and 17 days. She was married to Andrew Harkness in August, 1866. There were no children, but her niece, Josephine Ennist Boice, whose mother died when she was in her seventh year, was brought up by her, and she was truly a mother to her. Her husband died April 16th, 1916. She leaves to mourn their loss her niece, Mrs. Josephine Ennist Boice, three great-nephews: Burton, Raymond and Harold Boice, and a great-great-niece and nephew: Virginia and Burton Cudney, besides a host of brethren and friends. She received a good hope through grace, and was received into fellowship with the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, and was baptized by the late Elder John Clark April 30th, 1893, and remained a very worthy and faithful member until her death. She was a firm believer in the predestination of all things and salvation by grace and grace alone. She attended all the meetings for miles around for a great many years, and her delight was to be with the brethren whenever she could. Although she was eighty-six years of age she attended the meetings and associations up until May 19th, 1928, when she was taken with mastoid and was taken to the Benedictine

Hospital for treatment. At first it was thought they could operate, but found that because of her advanced age and a weak heart they could not, so all was done that could be to relieve her, but she suffered much, and was confined to the hospital for more than three months, when she was taken to the home of her great-niece, Mrs. Olive Cudney, at Ashokan, N. Y., where she passed away. While at the hospital she was visited by a great many Elders, brethren and freinds, which showed the high esteem in which she was held.

Her funeral was held from the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, of which she was a member for many years, September 16th, 1928, and was conducted by Elder George Ruston, her pastor, and was very largely attended, after which her remains were laid to rest in the Cold Brook Cemetery.

Written by request.

ORVILLE WINCHELL.

SISTER **Susan Stark,** widow of Frank Stark, died at the home of her son-in-law, R. W. Freeman, Saturday, July 7th, 1928, in the seventieth year of her age. She is survived by nine children: T. F. Stark, May Teal, J. D. Stark, B. W. Stark, Ida Smyth, Dora Bilbo and Ellen Brown, all of Orange County, Texas, Perlie Peveto and Bettie Freeman, of Beaumont, Texas, one sister, Mrs. Calie West, of Oakdale, La., and one brother James Myrze, of Merryville, La. Her funeral was held at the home of R. W. Freeman, conducted by brother S. Newton, of Orange County, Texas. We all know she has gone to rest. She was a woman of most estimable character and had many friends who were very fond of her. She loved to converse upon the things of the kingdom of God, and often spoke comfortingly of her hope in the blessed Savior. We all miss her much. Burial was in the Hudson Cemetery, Newton County, Texas. Sweet be thy sleep, mother, until he bids thee arise to hail him in triumph beyond the skies.

Written by her daughter,

BETTIE FREEMAN.

Mrs. Etta M. Tedford departed this life October 3rd, 1928, at her home in Topsham, Maine, after a short illness of pneumonia. She had been a great sufferer for years and had undergone several operations at a hospital, all of which she bore with remarkable patience. She was a wonder to the doctors and nurses because of the way she bore her different complaints. She was born in Carmel, Maine, September 27th, 1859, the daughter of Peter B. and Hariet N. Newcomb. She was married to George R. Tedford January 26th, 1887. The relatives are the bereaved husband, two sisters: Mrs. A O. Prescott and Mrs. F. C. Whitten, two nieces and a nephew. She was baptized by the late Elder Z. M. Beal August 13th, 1905, in the fellowship of the Bowdoinham Church, and remained a beloved member of that church until her death. She loved God's people and attended the meetings of her church when she was really too weak to do so. She loved her home and a Baptist home is broken up, to which fact all who have visited us will testify. I am left to mourn, but not without hope.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. H. McCormack, Pa., $2; Effie Graham, Ont., $2; L. P. Leach, Miss., $1.75; Elder J. S. Moore, Ala., $4; Mrs. Kate Lunsford, Ky., $1; Isaac Kip, N. J., $1; S. W. Peacock, Cal., $1; Mrs. Sarah Clegg, Pa., $1; I. H- Evans, Md., $1; E. G. Moore, N. Y., $1.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, &c. REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.

Of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, published monthly, at Middletown, N. Y., for April 1st, 1929.

State of New York, County of Orange, ss.:

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Gilbert Beebe, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the owership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 41, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publishers, editor and business manager are: Publishers, J. E. Beebe & Company, Middletown, N. Y.; Editor, Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.; Business Manager, Gilbert Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

2. That the owner is, Josephine E. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortagees and other security holders owning or holding one per cent. or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear on the books of the company, but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears on the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the

company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

GILBERT BEEBE,
Business Manager.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 22nd day of March, 1929.

(Seal) FRANK P. COX.
(My commission expires April, 1930.)

MEETINGS.

The Baltimore Association is appointed to be held at Black Rock, Maryland, May 15th, 16th and 17th, 1929. Those coming by rail will reach Baltimore in time to get the 3:30 P. M. train from the Pennsylvania R. R. Station for Cockeysville, on the 14th, where they will be met and taken to places of entertainment. We hope a goodly number will come.

F. G. SCOTT, Church Clerk.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday of each month at the Swedish Lutheran church-house southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, Riverside, Calif., and at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. 11th St., Claremont, Calif., on the first Sunday of each alternate month, beginning with January, and on every alternate month with brother Joseph Huffman, 128 Van Buren St., Arlington, Calif. Singing at 10:30 a. m. Preaching at 11 a. m. Lunch at the place of meeting, and continued services in the afternoon.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.
O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, every Sunday at 11 a. m. and 2:30 p. m., (Standard Time) at the home of W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street, west three blocks to end of 114th. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Midweek song service by appointment. Pastors Elders Jones and Jaynes. Basket lunch.

EMMA BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sunday at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 97. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1929. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MATTHEW XXV. 32.

"AND before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats."

Cain and Abel were divided. One had the Spirit of Christ that saw the sacrifice of the new covenant that took away sin, and the other could not see it, it was foolishness unto him, for the natural man receiveth not the things of God. Several times John, looking forward by the spirit of prophecy, saw all the world whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world wandering after the beast, and recorded it for us. (Rev. xiii. 8; xvii. 8, &c.) The same thing separated Noah from his neighbors, Lot from his friends, &c. The carnal mind is enmity against God, is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. "The children of the flesh, these are not the children of God."—Rom. ix. 8. The word divides, it is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. It divides because it teaches salvation by grace to the poor and needy who have no confidence in the flesh, and that is foolishness to the natural man, who teaches salvation is conditional upon the works of poor, puny, unstable man, which is idolatry, being led by the spirit that taught conditional salvation in the garden. Conditional in that if Eve partook of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil she should not die, but become as a god. Conditionalists still teach it everywhere. The truth is God is my salvation, for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song and is become my salvation. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Men have tried to commercialize the gifts of God: buy or sell them for money, as did Simon. But men are changeable and uncertain and are not to be trusted, being ignorant of God's righteousness and going about to set up their own righteousness, and that would not do to trust in when this body shall be moulding in the dust, nor any other time. God's elect bride is not only quickened but is kept by the power of God, the same power that hung the world on nothing, placed the planets in their harmonious circuits and fixed their bounds and also numbered the very hairs

of your head. Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. The question of salvation divides so it makes a man's enemies they of his own household. Read Matthew x. 28–42. "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

In Matthew xxiv., preceding our text, Matthew xxv. 32, and in Luke xxi., the Watchman who never slumbers nor sleeps was telling his disciples by what signs they should know of the approaching end of the Jews' nationality, the terrible admonition of desolation when Jerusalem should be destroyed with famine and slaughter. "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judæa flee to the mountains."—Luke xxi. 20, 21. About thirty-six years after he told them, while that Jerusalem had not yet passed away, Jerusalem was surrounded by a Roman army, 68 A. D., and those who feared and obeyed him fled to the mountains, and were not there when the city was destroyed, 70 A. D., and the daily sacrifice taken away the Jews scattered throughout the earth, the middle wall of partition broken down and the times of the Gentiles ushered in. Another sign by which they were to know the approaching end of the Jewish world was, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come."—Matt. xxiv. 14. Without any Sunday-school, theological seminary or missionary board Jesus opened his apostles' understanding that they might understand the Scriptures, and told them to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, and they (the apostles) did, and left a clear record that it was done (Col. i. 6; i. 23; Rom. x. 18), and then came the end of the law and the prophets. Our faithful Prophet, Priest and King has also left in his will and testament a record by which we Gentile believers shall know the approaching times of the fulfillment of the Gentiles, and the work of truth to divide: his commandments reveal of what spirit we are: "By their fruits ye shall know them." It is necessary in stewards that a man be found faithful. He sits as a refiner and he will thoroughly purge his floor. A faithful steward said, "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."—1 John ii. 3, 4. Little children, love one another. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. Keep yourselves from idols. A careful study of St. John i. 12, 13; iii. 1–4; x. 26–32, clearly tells who do and who do not believe, and why it separates the goats from the sheep, also what the unbelieving do when the truth is preached to them. The spirit of reconciliation and obedience I believe is the sweetest thing a sinner saved by grace ever experienced. Obedience born of covetousness is an abominable sacrifice of corruption and is compared to filthy rags. (Isaiah lxiv. 6.) The unjust steward told his lord's debtors to sit down quickly and write fifty or eighty measures on their bills, when they knew they owed a full one hundred measures of obedience. (Luke xvi. 1–8.) Our Savior bore their full one thousand talents of debt in his own mangled body in humility, anguish and shame on the cruel cross when they had nothing to pay. A

faithful steward says of the institutions of men, Come out from them, and be ye separate. For many months I tried to loosen the seals of prophecy, or revelation, and see what was written for this generation, without any light, until one very busy day in the year 1910, when I picked up my Bible and stood reading the twenty-two chapters of Revelation, seeming to understand it, much as one reads the fifty-three chapters of Isaiah. If God did open my understanding then, John saw and recorded and hid for us in similes, metaphors, figures, &c., a foretold history of the times of the Gentiles, both of the church that was founded upon the Rock and antichrist, the gorgeously arrayed woman. Hoping the desire may be of the Lord, I want to mention a few landmarks. He saw the body of Christ as a woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet and upon her head a crown of twelve stars, and he saw paganism at Rome, personated as a dragon, chapter twelve. Catholicism, personated as a ten-horned beast (Rev. xiii. 1–11), and Protestantism as a two-horned beast (Rev. xiii. 11–18), also called the false prophet, as we see by comparing Revelation xiii. 11–18 with Revelation xix. 19, 20. The dragon gave his seat at Rome, power and great authority, to the ten-horned beast (Rev. xiii. 2) when the last Pagan emperor laid down his sceptre and Constantine took it up, 312 A. D. And the two-horned beast spake as a dragon. So they have very much in common. It is antichrist under three successive heads, and John sees three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of their three mouths, spirits of devils working miricles, going out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather to the battle of the great day of God Almighty. (Rev. xvi. 13–21.) John by the spirit of prophecy saw these things nearly 1900 years before as we see them now in nearly every city, village and hamlet, miracles and all. It is the great Babylon whose shadow, or type, is seen in the tower of Babel. Its collective name is the world church confederation, in which the daughters are fast uniting under one head and making overtures to give the power back. They have hated the whore with intense hatred, but no more. John xvii. 16, 17 reveals it. It is the spirit of antichrist denying his divinity, the power of the resurrection, &c. Following closely in chapter eighteen is the fall. The result of this battle is recorded in Rev. xix. 19–21. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." No member of the body of Christ, no church of his, can disregard his commandments without the penalty. No member of his body can be yoked to the worldly institutions of men that take their membership indiscriminatingly from the world without being unequally yoked together with unbelievers, contrary to 2 Corinthians vi. 14–18. The Savior said, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."—Matt. v. 24. I have seen this verified more than once. If you call these things to the attention of one who has a name to love and obey God and is also bound or promised to serve the elements of the world and he is blessed with the spirit of obedience he will come out and be separate, hating the sins that separated between him and his God; if not, he will hate you and his cross, and refuse to take it up and follow him, without which no man can be his disciple. (Luke xiv. 27.) I have seen

some do one and some the other. I have heard some say, I do not see what harm it can do when I do not neglect the church, even though I do not meet with them often. But you would not for a moment tolerate a man who was bound to two women, even though he only contributed a few dollars toward the support of one of them and but very rarely went to her house. It is adulterating one's marriage to Christ, the holy, harmless and undefiled Husband, who kept himself separate from sinners and gave his life for his bride, his only beloved. It might be all right with the lewd woman that is described in the seventh chapter of Proverbs, but God is a jealous God. See Canticles vi. 8, 9. A just and faithful steward puts it in its true light in James iv. 4. If this was my own judgment it would be worthless, but it is the judgment of One from whom there is no appeal, recorded for our learning. "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." That is, be separated from the head and deprived of the guiding spirit of truth and peace. I have seen churches tolerating the adultery of the spirit, and crying, Peace, peace, when there was no peace, nor can there be in a body trying to serve God and mammon.

Hidden in four different figures in the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth chapters of Revelation is a period of about 1,260 years, beginning about 300 A. D. and ending in the reformation. In chapter eleven the two witnesses, Old and New Testament Scriptures, were laid low about 300 A. D., when the last pagan emperor sent out an edict to burn the christians' books and punish the christians, or rather all who would not bow the knee to the pagan gods, and the Bible was diligently kept from the popular 1,260 years, until Luther and others translated it into various languages. The printing press came into use and the Scriptures were revived, stood on their feet as it were, witnessing of Jesus. They were never put entirely out of sight, or buried. During this 1260 years the Donatests, Waldenses, &c., were hid away in the Alps mountains, and a Catholic historian said nearly every man, woman and child of them could repeat the entire New Testament.

Chapter 12. A worldly element of idolators crept into the church, from 200 to about 250 A. D., and they elected a loose disciplinarian named Cornelius bishop at Rome, and like-minded men throughout the kingdom, and a minority at Rome, and pious, God-fearing men elsewhere, contended that church members should bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and observe such Scripture as 2 John 10, 11. And there was war in heaven (the church) and the pagan element called the dragon was cast out, much as in the fore part of last century, when Andrew Tuller, Alexander Campbell and other worldly-minded conditional salvationists crept into the church and tried to load it up with cunning devices of men, dress the bride to suit the world, in filthy rags of self-righteousness, as it were. And those who loved not the world rose up and were cast out. At the Red Stone Association, 1872, the Black Rock Convention, 1832, and elsewhere.

"His tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth." Isaiah says, ix. 15, "The prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail." So with false teachers, some of the saints, both in 250 A. D. and in 1832, were deceived. (2 Peter ii. 1–3.) Still he is separating his sheep from the goats. When the fires of persecution are kindled there are those who love not their lives even unto death and those who will not stand

the fire and it separates. After the dragon was cast out the woman fled away into the wilderness of the Alps, where they were nourished for 1,260 years, until during the reformation when they were driven out and scattered through Europe, and some fled to America and were called the Pilgrims, and their church order was in part the pattern for our tolerant, democratic government. Jesus said, On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The question of which is now that church rests entirely on which of the two that separated in 250 A. D. is the church and which is not. The church is seen as a lily among thorns. She is kept as the apple of his eye. She is leaning on the arm of her Beloved, &c., while the other is described in Proverbs v.; 2 Thessalonians ii.; 2 Peter ii.; Revelation xviii., &c. The ten-horned beast continued 1,260 years, dominating the world from 312 A. D. and putting upwards of fifty million martyrs to the most torturous death demons could devise. It does not remove the stain from them to say it was the government that did it, when they ruled the government so completely. Did it divide the sheep from the goats that John saw the world wander after the beast, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world? He received a deadly wound in the reformation, yet he lived. The two-horned beast (protestantism) rose up in the reformation, gradually increasing in numbers until I understand there are now the full number of denominations, &c., 666. (Rev. xiii. 18.) Satan is now bound, in comparison to the time of martyrs, when rivers of blood flowed in every kingdom reigned over by the beast. When the popular modern movement of to-day is ripened, and all the world but the remnant according to the election of grace (Rom. xi. 1–10) are wandering after this beast that speaks as a dragon, when the spirits of devils working miracles have gathered the kings of the earth and the whole world to the battle we may expect the fires of persecution to flame again. Antichrist will be alert. John heard a voice from heaven, crying, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." (Rev. xviii. 4; 2 Cor. vi. 14–18; Jer. xvii. 5–10.) Such prophecies as Amos ix. 9, 10, does not mean that God will literally rebuild Jerusalem and set up a temporal kingdom there and there will be a millennium of perfection in the flesh, but it refers to the setting up of the gospel kingdom on earth, in which there is no difference between the Jew and the Gentile. The circumcision is of the heart and not of the flesh. Peter and James say so. (Acts xv. 7–19.) There is not one thing in the covenant of this kingdom left to such an uncertainty as the works of man. There is no "if" in it. Read Jeremiah xxxi. 31–35; Hebrews viii. In this kingdom he will take one of a city and two of a family, even as many as the Lord our God shall call, "and as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed."

May it please God to give us, every one, the sweet spirit of obedience that we be not found sleeping, or drunken with the glittering deceptions of the world when he comes at such a time as ye know not.

Dear editors, I am just offering this for your disposal. It seems clear in my mind, but I do not know that I have written intelligibly. I wanted to know whether it was of the Lord, and it came to my mind that if it was others would be proclaiming it in due time, and I have

heard a few. I sypathize with you in the loss of your help, and appreciate your wonderful labor of love in keeping up the SIGNS under such trying circumstances.

Writtten in the fear of God, I hope,

G. O. WALKER.

TORONTO, Ont., Feb. 4, 1929.

DEAR EDITORS:—In renewing my subscription for our dear family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I have a desire to express my appreciation and praise to its worth, as it contains much comfort and joy to my oft cast down soul. With my renewal I am inclosing a copy of a letter I received several years ago from dear sister Pultz, whose writings have appeared in your paper from time to time. It bespeaks much of my own heartfelt experience, but she had the gift of expressing it much better than I can, so if you see fit you may publish it. May God continue to bless you in your labor of love, is the sincere desire of my heart.

Your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) W. C. YOUNG.

WHEELING, W. Va., June 22, 1916.

DEAR SISTER YOUNG:—Ever since your letter came I have wanted to answer it. I started to write last evening, but soon found that my mind was in a state of great confusion, so I laid it by and retired for the night. It was wonderful how my thoughts flitted about from one subject to another. I felt sure if it were possible for me to keep pace with them bodily I would soon be judged insane. Finally I slept, but the mental tumult went on so that there was no restfulness in sleep. I finally aroused and felt to beg the Lord to calm my mind that I could rest in sleep. From that on my dreams were pleasant and I slept until eight o'clock. So, dear sister, I do not see how I can deny that my poor feeble prayers are heard and answered, just as yours were when your dear child was passing away. O, dear sister, my heart yearns to pour forth its sorrows, but I remember we are to speak evil of no man, so I forbear, but please read Genesis xxvii. 46. My life has been much embittered by such things as good Rebecca feared. But we know the Scriptures must be fulfilled in this respect as in all others. Oh how I feel to pray to be protected from Satan's darts. How eager I have been to escape the things our Savior had to bear, and he had all power. (I mean just a little of his persecutions.) How often I feel ashamed of my complaint when I am reminded what he suffered so meekly and patiently without a murmuring word. It is strange to me that I was brought to think on this word when unjustly condemned. "Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?" I am well aware that it is only his grace that enables me to bear with some degree of humble patience, and returning good for evil, not expecting anything in return, and I have tried to pray that the stony heart might be taken away and a heart of flesh given wherein his laws, his precepts and his commandments and statutes are written. I often find my mind going back over these bitter things, and it stirs up indignation and wrath against ungodliness in my heart.

My dear sister, I had to lay aside my pen and lie down awhile such a heaviness came over me. Now I think I will be obliged to lay it aside again unless the blessed Master be mind and wisdom, for I feel shut up, and we read that he shuts and none can open, he opens and none can shut. I am very glad this is so, as I would not want to run where he does not

lead. I often feel that I will have to give up writing to the saints, and yet I cannot. When I say I will cease then the desire to commune with them comes stronger than ever and I find myself more in the spirit of writing than usual. Each time during the last year that I have been brought down by sickness that I thought would surely be my last I was raised up with the hope that I would again write and commune with God's chosen ones, and that was the only hope set before me as to an earthly source. My mind almost entirely fails to take any thought of the morrow. I have longed to live after our Savior's admonitions in these things, and have been brought into it through much affliction of the flesh. When I pray for more of his grace I wonder if the means will be severe, but I do earnestly crave some manifestation of himself to me which will turn midnight into noon. He has caused me to desire him above all things, I hope. My whole soul's desire is for a

"A closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame,
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb."

I do hope this weak communication will find you in health, also your family.

Your poor unworthy sister in hope,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

COLUMBUS, Georgia.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is time for me to renew my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so please find inclosed the price for the coming year. Surely it seems a member belonging to an old, old family of love, sending comfort, cheer and encouragement to a scattered people whose God is the Lord. Sadly we would miss this dear old companion (for so it is to many isolated ones who are denied the blessed privilege of hearing the preached word, and enjoying the sweet company of the saints,) should it cease coming to our places of abode, causing a vacancy and a longing in our hearts for the many precious things written by God's dear children for good and benefit to one another. The Lord helpeth the needy. Oh how precious are the things of the Master! How glorious his plan of salvation, just suited to our needs! What a sovereign and gracious work! What wondrous love, O my soul, when sinners are dead in sin and the Holy Spirit quickeneth them, bringing them to the knowledge of their lost and helpless condition as vile transgressors of the law of God, and revealing with power the salvation of God in the blood and righteousness of the Son of God, filling ransomed souls with praises unspeakable to the Father in heaven. We can say these blessed things become more and more precious as the days glide by, and we are called to walk amid trials, vexations, disappointments and tribulations. Yes, here we find the way beset with many thorns, traveling through a barren land with dangerous thickets on every hand. We have no abiding city here. That which gives us delight to-day may cause us bitter sorrow to-morrow. But we are promised Jesus is leading and guiding all the way. We know not what is for us to bear and endure. All our times are in the Lord's hand. Jesus is the christian's hope, wrought in us by God's power, and it is this hope and trust that stays with us in distressing times. Hope pierces through the darkest cloud and waits upon our Lord. We are looking out for great blessings, they seem long in coming, yet hope will wait and wait, for this hope given us is as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast. God is our support, our hope. He is eternal and his loved ones cannot sink

with such a prop. As I live, ye shall live also. All earthly things are polluted. Christian, this is not your rest. The Lord hath appointed thus, that we should not build our nest in this lower world. We are told, "In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him." Now, beloved kindred in the Lord, as all our steps are ordered by our God we can but believe that all that befalls us is for our good; that the all-wise God our Savior knows what is best for his children while they sojourn here. He hath promised to supply all our need. He will give plenteous manna, or leanness of soul, according to his will and purpose, giving reconciliation to his will. Oh for faith to rest in the Lord and patiently wait for him.

"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain."

Jehovah our God is righteous in all his ways, and all his providences that befall us are laden with lovingkindness. We shall ever find it so, even unto the end. As we review our life all the way the Lord hath led us we find his dealings with us tender and full of pity; we shall acknowledge to his praise that he hath graciously led us on, and by his sure word of promise he will lead us all the days of our life. Then in joyful, grateful songs we shall sing, He hath done all things well. All earthly things are vain and fleeting, sooner or later they wax old, decay and pass away, yet for our everlasting consolation the word of the Lord abideth forever, even by that word which by the gospel is preached unto us. The things that are not seen are eternal. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. Blest is the children's estate. It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be we suffer with him that we also be glorified together. An inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for thee, O believer in Jesus, and our souls will ever be tuned to sing, Unto him that loved us and washed us in his blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Every provision was made for God's chosen people, and therein is secured every blessing for time and eternity. It was made with Jesus for his bride. Before the sinner fell it was signed and sealed in all things ordered well. Dear children, how sweet the thought that though all earthly things fail, in Christ Jesus we have abiding joy and everlasting salvation, and in all our trials, afflictions and buffetings we are called on to endure we will prove him a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother. He hath said, I will never thee nor forsake thee. Having God for our helper we shall hold on our way. The christian's hope shall never fail. We read that no power in earth nor hell shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. We shall be more than conquerors through him that loved us and saved us. Having hope through grace, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversations and godliness? Oh that we might show forth his praise at all times, who hath called us out of nature's darkness into his marvelous light. May his grace abound in all his loved ones everywhere,

causing them to manifest abundant fruit to the glory and honor of our God.

I will close by wishing our dear family paper unbounded success. May God speed it on its mission of light and comfort to all the loved ones, wherever they may be found, whether in the discharge of duty in the camps of Babylon or sitting outside of the fold feeding on crumbs from the Master's table. May it still continue to come laden with the precious truth of the gospel to strengthen the weak and feeble ones, is my prayer.

Your unworthy sister in hope,

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

DODGE CITY, Kansas.

DEAR SISTER BEEBE:—With a feeling of much weakness, both naturally and spiritually, I will attempt to fulfill the promise I made you at the time of our visit with you last summer, to send you some of the pictures, and I am inclosing with them some we took while visiting sister Bonnie Chick in Maine, all of which I prize very highly. My mind often reverts to the dear saints we were privileged to meet during our trip, and I feel grateful to him who is the Giver of all good that we were permitted so great a blessing, and it has afforded me many hours of sweet meditation since, and especially during the trying days of illness that followed soon after our return home. When I look back over my unprofitable life I am often made to wonder that I have been the recipient of the many and wonderful blessings at the hands of the wise and gracious God that have been strewn along my pathway all down through my journey of life. Truly it is not by works of righteousness which I have done that I have been thus remembered, for I know there is none; no, not one, so weak and unworthy of his notice as I am. How I do long to live closer to him and learn to praise him as I ought, but when I would do good evil is present with me, and how to perform that which is good I find not. I am so prone to go astray in by and forbidden paths, doing the things I should not, and were he not a God of grace he would frown and spurn me from his side. I have many times been called to pass under the rod, and the crosses of this life are often heavy to bear, yet his loving-kindness he has not taken from me nor suffered his faithfulness to fail. Though his purposes are often enshrouded in darkness and I am not permitted to see nor understand, yet I know he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. If I walk in darkness and can see no manifestation of his guiding hand, still I know it is there, leading me on as I stumble along crying and begging for light, and praying for faith that will not shrink though pressed by every foe, knowing he will in his own good time remove the clouds and make crooked paths straight and rough places smooth.

"His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower."

And when the flower opens out in all its glory before me, then I am made to rejoice in tribulation, "knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us," and I am filled with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory. I remember, a few years ago, when the weight of the cross seemed crushing me into the very dust, and in anguish of spirit I cried out, Oh why must these things be? Why am I so burdened? Suddenly a light broke over me and I was filled with the

words, Why, there is a cross for every one, and there is a cross for me, quickly followed by the thought, Where there is no cross there will be no crown, and before I could hardly realize it I was rejoicing that I could even feel I had a cross to bear and to joy in the hope that I might be counted worthy to suffer for his name's sake. Another time when I groaned beneath the weight, in agony of mind I walked the floor praying for relief, and with uplifted hands I cried, Into thy hands, O Lord, must I commit it all. When it seemed I had come to the end of my strength these words were opened out before me, The way of the cross leads home, and a sweet peace that passeth all understanding flooded my soul, the burden was lifted and again I was made to rejoice in the cross and to find strength in the same blessed assurance given the apostle when he besought the Savior to remove the thorn in his flesh: "My grace is sufficient for thee." On another occasion, I was in California working in a canning factory, along with sister Hammons (wife of the late Elder J. H. Hammons). We were seated side by side at the same table. I was meditating with much sorrow and great heaviness of heart, with the weight of the cross again upon me, with apparently no way of escape. My heart grew faint within me and I asked myself the question, Oh can I ever have the strength and courage to go forward and perform that which seems inevitably before me? In a seemingly audible tone I heard the words spoken, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." I quickly turned to sister Hammons expecting to see a look of comprehension on her face, that she, too, had heard, but she was busy and did not even notice my look of inquiry. I then felt the sweet morsel was mine and hugged it to my breast with a feeling that with this blissful assurance I could face a whole army and not flinch. I did not remember of ever reading the words, but when Elder Hammons found them for me, in Philippians iv. 13, I read them over and over, and to my tempest-tossed soul they were as a shadow of a great rock in a weary land, as rivers of water in dry places, and the strength and comfort found in them served to bear me on through the sore trial that awaited me, and has many times since been my stay in times of distress. In my recent illness, when the hand of the Lord was upon me and I seemed drawing very near the banks of the dark river, one night when my strength was well-nigh spent and the darkness closing around me was darkness indeed, in great anguish of body and mind, aloud I raised my voice in prayer, crying, Dear Lord, help; only thou alone can save me, and in answer to my agonized plea he beautifully manifested himself to me as the one great Physician, an ever present help in times of trouble and distress and enabled me to feel the sweetness of his presence, that he was with me and would gently lead me through the dark valley of pain and suffering, and I can yet see in memory the shadowy forms, as of angels that hovered around my bed, and sometimes they came so near me I reached out to grasp them, but when my dear old mother took hold of me to lay me back gently on my pillow she could not see those beautiful forms which no words can describe, that to me were guardian angels sent, and bespoke the love and tender watchcare of him who never slumbers nor sleeps, who is ever mindful of the weakest cry and who tenderly gathers up the shorn lambs and carries them in his bosom, where they are safe and secure from all the trials and vicissitudes

of this unfriendly world; and since it has pleased him to raise me up again and restore me to those who so faithfully cared for me (for what purpose he alone knows) I can, as in many times past and gone, see the markings of his mighty hand through it all: how he works and none can hinder, how he wounds and he heals, he kills and he makes alive, and all these things are needful and must be for a trial of our faith that is more precious than gold. "I will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God." Truly the land in which we dwell is one of hills and valleys, but "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." And so I want to press on, leaning on the Staff until I have served out my allotted time here, trusting in that unseen Presence whose hand will ever guide, guard and direct me through all that is to come while I sojourn here, giving unto me daily such strength as he seeth I stand in need of, and my desire is to be resigned to him in all things, who has said that not even a sparrow falls to the ground without his notice, and to pray not for things to be different from what they are, but to be reconciled to them as they are, knowing we are all in the hands of the just and righteous God, who doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, nor say unto him, Jehovah, what doest thou?

"My God, I would not wish to see,
My fate with curious eyes;
What gloomy lines are writ for me,
Or what bright scenes may rise."

Dear sister, this writing, like myself, is very imperfect. I will close lest I weary you. Remember me to those of your household, who seemed very dear to me. I shall always treasure the memory of having looked upon your dear face.

From one of the least, if one at all,

DELLA POWERS DAVIS.

CHICAGO, Illinois.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—The desire to speak a few words to you, who are scattered throughout the length and breadth of the land, is in my heart, engendered perhaps by the letter I am sending to the SIGNS to be published. Brother Foster speaks of the SIGNS family rejoicing over the goodness of God to us in Chicago, and of the prayers arising in our behalf. How gracious a thought! Our meetings together are precious, and looked forward to during the week as precious seasons must be. We are of one heart, one mind, and our pastors are unanimous in belief. It is a source of unending wonder to us that God should have so abundantly blessed us in them. They not only are sound in doctrine, both seeking diligently the old paths (which is a wonderful blessing in this age of innovation and reform), but having each passed through much tribulation they are sweetly able to comfort those who are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith they themselves are comforted of God. Their preaching is Jesus Christ, and him crucified, yea, more, risen from the dead, the first-fruits of them that slept. The Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom they preach to us, is not yea and nay, but yea. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and forever. O, people saved by his name, you who read this, do not neglect to help together in prayer for us, that our house of God may continue here, that we may be enabled to be a true bethel to many who labor and are heavy laden.

We are infinitesimally small in number so far, yet we are frequently enabled to see with the eyes of our spirit and behold that they which are with us are many and greater than they which are with our enemies on every side, for our God is Lord of hosts. The two or three (almost literally) that we are, but with the Son of God with us and to bless us, we are nevertheless a church, and as beloved, as invincible as a big church. We have especially blessed seasons at our communion. You who have often had the privilege of obeying Jesus in remembering his death until he come again, can scarcely realize what it has meant to us after years of deprivation, to gather together in sweet remembrance of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for us. It is a time of solemn heart-searching to all of us, I know. To the Lord's table we cannot come with aught against a brother or sister, here we must gather as sinners saved by the merit of His atonement; here must we, by faith, as little children, believe that Jesus' own precious body was broken for us, his life-blood poured out for us, his soul was in turmoil for us, his soul was in travail for us, that he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, that we, like sheep, all went astray, that God laid on him the iniquity of us all. Remembering the Lord's death until he come again. How it lightens every affliction, sweetens every bitter trial. Did Christ, my Lord, suffer, and shall I repine? Could he forgive, and shall I dare to be unforgiving and hard? Did he gather unto himself publicans and sinners, and shall I dare to be proud? Our communion time is the fourth Sunday of each month. We felt very sweetly enlarged last Sunday by the presence of a brother and sister from Mount Ayr Church, who partook of the Lord's Supper with us.

With love to all the household of faith, in which my husband and eldest son join, I am yours, the least in Christ,

RUTH A. KEENE SPITLER.

RISING STAR, Texas, Feb. 9, 1929.

DEAR BROTHER SPITLER:—Most likely this letter will be a surprise, coming from one whom perhaps you never heard of. I address you as "dear brother," but do so with much fear that perhaps I myself am not a brother to you in being born again. In all letters written this feeling is present with me, as is also a prayer (if I know what prayer is) that I am not an impostor. It might be well enough to say of myself that immediately after, as I hope, the Lord added me to his visible church I told a dear brother I supposed there was not a Baptist paper published advocating in full my belief in predestination, to which he replied that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES did. Instantly I recalled seeing some numbers as a child. I at once subscribed, and have been on the subscription roll ever since, except for a short space of time once or twice. I recall the good letters written by your wife when she was quite young, and also that she is the daughter of our highly esteemed Elder Frederick W. Keene, also your mrrriage to her, the beginning of your and her accounts of the preaching appointments, which have grown into a newly constituted church. How my heart rejoiced to hear of its constitution. Oh the brightness and glory that surrounds it no one can tell. The SIGNS family is praising God for his kindness toward you, his chosen in your city, knowing that his poor and needy ones are made rich in his provision for your needs, and his honor and glory. I note that your stand is supplied by two of God's dear, chosen and faithful ministers. The Lord be praised for such a bountiful sup-

ply of his grace. You recently wrote, concerning the church, of there being many, no doubt, in your city who have church connections and of whom you do not know. This is a fact, no doubt, and my prayer is that he who has given you this little sanctuary will bring them into this glorious tabernacle he has so recently pitched. Never was a house built but that avenues of egress and ingress were provided. The Lord in his wisdom has provided as many ways as there are numbers of them, his people, and although they be so mixed with the tens of thousands he is able to show them the way, as the church is a city set upon a hill, which cannot be hid. In the Lord's good time he will bring them into the fold; not passively, but actively, as you were brought into it, for he has ordained that "they shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten."—Jer. l. 5. His prophecy holds good, and I feel that this description will be fulfilled in the hearts of future comers. The Lord be praised for giving you this glorious resting-place. I see also that the Lord has minded you to give him two services each Sunday. What devotion! How beautiful such often coming together! It is an almost continuous gospel feast in this banqueting-house of the Lord. May it ever continue. May God's name be thus often exalted throughout the life of this city of God in Chicago for his perpetual glory and honor. She (your church) is the new mistress of the scores of handmaidens (so-called churches) in the city, though they know it not. Rather would they grieve her for her barrenness, not knowing that they as the desolate have many more children than she which hath an husband. Do we see here the wisdom of God? He has ordained that in all they say about her they should acknowledge her as their mistress, and they her handmaidens. The old prophet meant this when he said, "There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number. * * * The daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her." These daughters, queens and concubines, would do well to cease prophesying in the name of the Lord, casting out devils in his name, doing so many wonderful works, long enough to get acquainted with their new mistress, who, on the seventeenth day of last November, came into their midst; but no, thus addressed, they with one breath would say, "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow," and, if more said, would add, I shall be a lady forever, neither shall I know the loss of children. We number our children by hundreds, yea, thousands, while you number yours by the half-dozen, possibly a score or more. Brother Spitler, I am not speaking of your church and the other denominations in the city comparatively in a boasting way, but sincerely, yet if I should be judged by them as boasting I would further add, with David, "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord." The wayworn travelers, the lame, the blind, those in the highways, the hedges, as well as a few of the baser sort, the Ephraims, Magdalens, a few of all stations of life, from the lowest to the highest, these all will God bring through the furnace of affliction and the refiner's fire, to purge them from all their filthiness, so they can serve him with one consent and one heart. These will he make to come from all quarters of your city and country; yes, he will bring them and add them as dear brethren and sisters because they are

worthy, and great rejoicings of your souls will attend their coming. This is the way God will make your newly-set plant to grow, for, no doubt, Bethel Church of Chicago is of his right hand planting. How sincerely and joyfully do all God's children who know of its condition ask and pray for its prosperity, that God will water it with the dew of heaven, the gospel of God our Savior, that it may continue to be to the glory of the great city in which it is situated, and the brightness of the country round about it; that both the city and country will in God's multitudinous ways be the recipients of his blessings among men in nature because of its divine presence among them. Such prayer is going up to God, who has built this glorious dwelling-place, as the petition of one man by countless hearts, and what more could we say of this lately manifested glory than, after we have said all and written all, that the half has not been, nor ever can be, told?

This letter is already too lengthy. I must soon close. I could not pass this, your great blessing from the hand of our God of all grace and glory, without adding my little, feeble, imperfect tribute of praise to him for building you all as lively stones together for an habitation through the Spirit, to live with you, dwell with you, walk with you, as he did with the primitive churches at the beginning of the gospel dispensation. Throughout the future life of your church may God's richest blessings rest upon her, the brightness of his glory be her light. May Christ, her head and constant attendant, ever consent to come walking upon the bosom of every storm-tossed sea of trials and troubles, saying, "Peace, be still." May this household of his guests ever feel grateful, lowly and humble, ever thankful to be so highly favored of our gracious God as to be made to sit at the King's table all the days of their lives, to eat, drink and be satisfied with the goodness of God's house. May you ever esteem your heavenly land far greater and richer than earthly riches, and if there be a last word by tongue or pen may it be, Thine, O Lord, shall be all the honor and glory and majesty now, henceforth and for evermore. Amen.

I am informing you that I have written a sort of introductory letter to be presented to you by a young friend in your city. His parents are members of the Old School Baptist Church here. I have sent him clippings from the SIGNS containing the notice of Bethel Church and its location.

Brother Spitler, please overlook the many imperfections in the composition of this letter, and the Lord enable you to grasp the truth and wisdom so poorly hinted at. It seems of so little worth I cannot ask you to give it more than a passing notice, and feel that even then I may be asking too much of you; if so, please pardon this intrusion upon your busy time.

Your brother, the least, if one at all,

J. I. FOSTER.

FAYETTEVILLE, Georgia.

DEAR EDITORS:—Christ told his disciples that without him they could do nothing. He is the true vine, and as the branches cannot live and bear fruit without the vine, neither can his followers bear spiritual fruit unless they abide in him. Paul said, I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Before his conversion Paul, or Saul, was very good, and no doubt held his head high, and had the highest opinion of himself. After the change he would have lost all identity had his features changed

like his heart. His sinful nature was not changed, but subdued. He was changed in that he saw his weakness and inability to do anything in spirit except by the leading of the Spirit. The tree was made good by the planting of the Spirit of the Lord in his heart, and his fruit was made good. Before this he bore much fruit of the flesh, which was acceptable to the world, and he was highly esteemed, perhaps worshipped, like some people in this time who are rich in worldly goods and works. Since the change he continued to bear fruit, but of the reverse quality. This fruit is not only not relished by the world, but is hated. It is death to them, but life to the saints. The world has been trying to get rid of it ever since Cain and Abel's day, but this fruit is the salt of the earth, and as long as there is any on the earth the earth is preserved, and when this fruit ceases to be borne time will end.

Paul said, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God," &c. What are these "all things?" He did not enumerate them. Several years ago I heard a preacher say these "all things" were the Lord, Christ and the Holy Ghost. I will not attempt to say how much ground these words cover, but it cannot be disputed that they include everything, whether good or bad, that works for good to the called according to his purpose. The Lord said, in Isaiah xlvi. 9, "I am God, and there is none else," &c., on through the thirteenth verse, We read in Ephesians i. 11, "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." More "all things" not specified. Some brethren say they are the things under consideration; that is, those mentioned in this chapter, His love, redemption, being enabled to praise him, &c. "All my pleasure," in Isaiah xlvi. 10, is concerning the things mentioned in this chapter. It seems (to those who cannot see and understand deep things) that if God does all his pleasure with all things, and all things, good or bad, work for good, nothing takes place contrary to his will, that all the teachings of Christ and the apostles in the line of obedience and exhortation is vain, for these exhortations and teachings do not change the course of events. In 1 Corinthians, tenth chapter, Paul admonishes the brethren how they ought to live, and calls attention to some of the blessings, sins and sufferings of Israel, and says, These things were written for our admonition. These are some of the "all things" that work for good to the Lord's people. Because God saw the end from the beginning, and saw all things as they are, and had a purpose in all those things, does not lesson the duty enjoined on his servants to admonish, exhort, &c. There is no contradiction nor conflict in his work, word or command, all work in perfect harmony. When one is impressed with the spirit of exhorting the same spirit impresses others with the duty of heeding and obeying, and God is glorified in it. We are forgetful of his love and mercies, and need to have our pure minds stirred up by way of remembrance, thus the need of teaching.

This subject gets deeper, beyond my grap, as I try to tell it, and it seems that I know less about it. I have not told it as I wanted to, but I hope those who read can see the truth as it is and accept or reject it according to the directing of the spirit of truth as it is in Christ, and remember, if this is worth anything to the Lord's people that it is from the One who "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

GEORGE W. JACKSON.

WEST MANSFIELD, Ohio.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Loving greetings to you all. Along with the obituary of my husband, George De Bolt Peters, of Zanesfield, Ohio, I am sending a copy of his christian experience, written to Elder George Weaver, in replying to his letter. I would be glad if it could be published in the same number as the obituary. I have heard him relate his experience more fully, but cannot fill in exactly as he told it, as a part of his letter to brother Weaver is gone.

Pray for me. My loss is great.

JOIE E. WOODS PETERS.

ZANESFIELD, Ohio.

DEAR BROTHER WEAVER:—My wife and I drove over to the old Jessie Lines' house and were given the key to the house by a nephew of sister Esther Lines. We entered the old home and found the old church book (I still have it), and we searched through old numbers of the SIGNS, dating back to 1850. We brought quite a number of them home with us and found several articles written by my present wife, as she has been quite a writer.

As for myself, I have visited several associations that were not in full fellowship with the old church, yet I believe they are of the church of God, but preachers who cannot eat strong meat sow discord and scatter the flock. Also, I find members wherever I go who are strong in doctrine but are quiet about it. My wife and I are agreed upon all points of doctrine. I am now in the seventy-fifth year of my age. I enjoy going about rather a listener and a looker-on. I have been attacked several times, sometimes by able ministers and lay members, but have always stood firm on the sovereignty of God in all events, both natural and spiritual, and found that they in the end differed but little with me. I think, as you state in your letter, the time is coming when there will be a great sifting out, unless some great persecution of the saints takes place, then the sound Baptists and all the Lord's people among the Babylonians will come out and suffer together for the Lord's sake.

Now, brother Weaver, it behooves me to state some of the travels of my own mind, why I am a Baptist at all. I have been driven to be a Baptist by my own experience, if I have not been deceived. But there are some things I am sure of. I was made to see my own sins in reality. I did not only think so, but knew so. I envied the brute beasts their position in life. I thought what they did they did ignorantly, and what I did I did knowingly. I could see no one's faults but my own, and the Baptists shone to me like angels. Of all things I wanted most was to be pure and holy and I was further from that than anything I knew. So there I was. I craved a sudden forgiveness and to see a bright light shining around me, and craved that light for many years, but almost gave up, forgetting that I was trying to choose my own way of being brought. I finally came to the end of the law. I awoke in the night and my sins and iniquities had me hemmed in, and they were piled up so high I could hardly see over them. I said, Lord, where is there a way of escape? There was a rushing thought came into my mind: That is why Christ suffered on the cross. I was shown plainly my way of escape. All my iniquities were brushed away, and all around was a smooth plain, just like a sea of glass in every direction I looked. I was given a little hope in this experience of mind and soul, that we being Christ's flesh and

bones, he being the head and life, so that his righteousness circulates through our souls, that is why we escape. He suffered for us, and it was lawful for him to suffer for us: that is why God can be just and save a poor sinner like me. But, like Paul, I have to endure a warfare between flesh and Spirit. Paul desired that thorn to be removed, but God told him his grace was sufficient. I was made to see the church as the visible kingdom of heaven and I on the outside. I craved to be in the kingdom, but hoped to see myself worthy to enter. I waited several years, but made no progress, until the desire was so strong that I panted for the church. I saw that if I ever entered in I must take my carnal nature in with me, to my regret. But I ventured and went thirty-five miles in cold weather and asked a home with the Harmony Church, near Sidney, Ohio, and was received after relating a few of my travels of mind, and was baptized the following fourth Sunday in April, 1894. My first wife, Bettie, was baptized at the same time, by Elder Breece. I am the only one left of that little band of precious brethren, but feel unshaken, as yet.

With much love,

G. D. PETERS.

(*See obituary notice on page 118.*)

WHITE PLAINS, N. Y., March 21, 1929.

DEAR EDITORS:—It has occurred to me that some of the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES can assist me in my effort to collect information concerning the Slawson family genealogy. I am particularly interested in the family of Eliphalet Warner, who were among the early members of an Orange County, or possibly Chemung, Tioga County, New York, Old School Baptist Church. Betsey Ann Warner, daughter of Eliphalet Warner, married Nathan Slawson, my grandfather. Can any one tell me, where, when and by whom they were married? I am also interested in the Polly family, members, I believe, of an Old School Baptist Church either in Orange County, N. Y., or in Potter County, Pennsylvania. Mary Polly, daughter of Hugh Polly, a Revolutionary soldier, married Moses Slawson, my great-grandfather. Can any one tell me where, when and by whom they were married, and where they are buried? I feel sure that some of your readers can help me in my search for this information, and it may be that some one can tell me what has become of the old records of the churches mentioned. If this is so, I assure you I will be more than grateful if they will communicate with me at 58 Davis Avenue, White Plains, N. Y.

Yours truly,

JOHN WALLACE SLAWSON.

HICKMAN, Ky., March 13, 1929.

DEAR EDITORS:—I wish to correct the mistake I made in signing the memorial of brother Verhines, which was published in the March issue of the SIGNS. Instead of G. M. Campbell, Pastor, it should have been G. M. Campbell, Moderator pro tem. I am very sorry for the mistake.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

L. C. CAMPBELL.

WATCH YOUR DATES.

WE wish to request our subscribers when sending in their subscriptions to see that the date on the little pink slip bearing their address is changed. If not changed, please let us know immediately (for that signifies you have not been given credit for the money sent) and we will look into the matter. By consulting that date you can tell at a glance to what time your subscription is paid. Dec. 29 means that your subscription is paid to December, 1929; June 28 means your subscription is only paid to June, 1928, &c.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1929.

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GENESIS XXVIII. 10, 11.

"AND Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set: and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep."

A dear sister in Canada has asked for our views with regard to the stones which Jacob took and put them for his pillows, and we have quoted the above verses for a text. As Abraham was commanded to "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee," so must Jacob, the seed of Abraham, be made to betake himself into a far country. He must forsake father and mother and flee the wrath of his elder, or earthly brother. That which is natural, or of the flesh, is first, and as Cain rose up and slew Abel, so would Esau take his brother's life were his bounds not set and fixed by the unalterable decrees of Almighty God. In the purpose of God both the old and the new man, the flesh and the Spirit, are to the end that he (God) shall be glorified. Neither did he wait to see what they would do, but chose them to both ways and ends, and this before either was born or had done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth. He hath, therefore, determined beforehand their bounds and their habitation, and each one in the Lord's time and way must be manifested to fill and fit in the place which he hath designed. Esau and Pharaoh, both types of the flesh, hath God raised up, that he might show in them his power, and that his name should be declared throughout all the earth. The Lord's peculiar portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance; he is ever mindful of his own, and when he comes down to deliver Israel with a high and mighty hand all the earth must keep silence before him. But his people must be taught to know that as the heavens are high above the earth, so are his thoughts above their thoughts, and that his ways are past finding out. The Lord himself will so lead them as to cause them to confess, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Jacob had just obtained the blessing of his father, Isaac, which embraced "God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham," was sent out on his lone and solitary journey, which all must travel who would know God for themselves. He was directed where to go,

"to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel, thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban, thy mother's brother." To go among his kindred seeking a wife for himself, would seem at first thought a most pleasant mission, and one greatly to be desired, but the way is strewn with obstacles and difficulties which try the heart of man on every hand, and finally he is make to give up completely in despair. Jesus told the Gadarene to "Go home to thy friends," thy mother's kindred—the church—"and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee," but he also indicated very clearly in another place the route by which we are to enter in to the city: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be which find it." Job said he had heard of the Lord by the hearing of the ear, but after he was made to say, "I know that thou canst do ~~anything~~ EVERYTHING, and that no thought can be withholden from thee," he said, "but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." This is the way no man will choose; he goes out not knowing whither he is going, nevertheless he must be on his way. Necessity is laid upon him and he is compelled to seek other quarters. Of all the servants in his father's house there was none sent to accompany Jacob. Isaac commits him to the care and keeping of Abraham's God. After all, is it not only He that is able to keep that which we commit unto him? Truly his eye is on the sparrow, which cannot fall without him, and if we are indeed his people we are of much more value than many sparrows. But as Jacob went, there can be no question but that some unseen hand was directing his course, for we are told, "And he lighted upon a certain place." How good to realize the definiteness and certainty of all that God does. There was but one place in all the world in the purpose of God for Jacob to light upon, and there he must remain and wait the appointed hour of him who hath made the day and the night.

"And tarried there all night." It does not say how long the night was, but it does declare that he tarried there all night. This night may vary as to length of time in the experience of the children of God, but whether it be but a few days or weeks or months, or many long and wearisome years, each and every one must stand in their lot and wait on the Lord, abiding his good pleasure, and every one who has known the exceeding sinfulness of sin, of that separation from God which is blackness itself, knows how dark the night is and knows full well that no earthly creature, nor all of them combined, can hasten the coming of the morning one thousandth part of a second. There is nothing which can be done but to tarry there all night. In the nineteenth Psalm we are told, "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge," and we understand that it was while Jonah was in the whale's belly at the very foot of the mountains that he was taught that "salvation is of the Lord," and so the night season is most essential in the preparation of the Lord's true witnesses; they must go down to the sea in ships and do business in great waters before they can see the wonders of God in the deep. The reason it was night with Jacob was "because the sun was set." Jesus said the children of the

bridechamber cannot fast as long as the bridegroom is with them, and so there is never any darkness in the soul when the Sun of Righteousness is shedding forth its warm and lifegiving rays into it, but when the bridegroom takes his leave then are we left to mourn our sad and benighted condition. It was during the night, when the sun was set, and there was no light by which he could see to travel, that Jacob pondered the dreadful state he was in, and while he was musing the fire burned; amidst all of his difficulties and distress his mind no doubt was led to think upon the sure and precious promise which God had made to his father Abraham, which had been repeated by Isaac when he began his journey, and the Holy Spirit having stirred up his pure mind to think upon God's faithfulness and his power to perform all that he had promised by faith he was given to embrace that promise as belonging to himself, and was persuaded that though heaven and earth pass away God's words would not fail. The stones which he took and put them for his pillows, evidently were the words, or promises of God which came to him at that place, on that occasion, and having found his word he verily did eat it, and they were as nails in a sure place. Stones are among the most enduring things of nature, and, therefore, are used as a type of the word of God which abides forever. It may be said that they make a hard pillow naturally, which is all true, and natural reason does not choose them for a place to rest the head upon, but how different is the case where one has tried and proven to be failure all that the earth can produce, who have labored and are heavy laden with their burden, feelingly sinking into utter despair, to find something solid, something that will endure when all that is earthly has been consumed in the using. Such characters know that there is but one foundation, the one resting-place, and how blessed it is to be given some word, even though it be but the one, which we are convinced with all our heart and soul was God's precious gift to us, in that place, during that time of darkness when all thy billows encompassed us and we felt to be poured out like water upon the dry ground which could not be gathered. There are some experiences in our own life when we were so distressed that we knew not what to do or where to turn, and while our very soul seemed to be agonizing in death, the still small voice of Jehovah soundeth forth some promise which fell as seed into good ground, and it brought forth fruit which abides with us until this day. At such times truly one can "lay down in that place to sleep," and there is none to harm or make them afraid, for God that keepeth Israel neither sleeps nor slumbers, and "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Do we not realize of a truth then "that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose"? One has said,

> "Day and night in this agree,
> The're both alike, great God, to thee."

The seasons must continue, and when winter is yet upon us we confidently look for the coming of spring, when nature will awake from its state of dormacy and the power of life shall be in evidence on every hand. So it is in our experience. We hope what we have written will be of some encouragement to our sister and to the household of faith.

R. L. D.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Abraham S. Miller, our brother in Christ, deacon of the Mill Creek Old School Baptist Church, departed this earthly life at his home, Kearneysville, West Virginia, early in the morning of Saturday, March 23rd, 1929. Funeral services were held at the home on the 25th, interment in Elmwood Cemetery, at Shepherdstown, W. Va. He was born December 24th, 1847, one of thirteen children of Jacob J. and Catherine Snyder Miller. Of these thirteen children one brother: William Miller, who is eighty-nine years old, is living. In 1874 brother Miller was married to Miss Mary S. Turner. Of this union there are two daughters and three sons surviving: Mrs. Alice Mullaney, of Ohio, Mrs. Laura M. Thompson, of Kearneysville, W. Va., Gilbert B. Miller, of Morgantown, W. Va., Herbert C. and Paul Miller, both of Kearneysville, W. Va. There are fourteen grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Brother Miller was baptized by Elder E. V. White November 25th, 1883. Previously he had belonged to the Presbyterian denomination. Having been shown in his experience of grace the folly of trusting in human free-will, and being taught by the Spirit that salvation of sinners can never be by their own works, but wholly through the blood of Jesus, he left the Presbyterians and on relation of his experience and being baptized my immersion, he came thus into membership with the Old School Baptists. For many years brother Miller served the church as her Deacon and her Clerk. His going from us leaves the Mill Creek Church, of Jefferson County, West Virginia, with but two members, both sisters. His death will most likely terminate the holding of any reglar meetings at that place. This saddens us much, but it is beyond human power to keep the sacred light going unless the Spirit of God continue it. Man, of himself, cannot begin, maintain or finish true gospel church organization. It can only be effected through the operation of the Holy Spirit of God. For the past twenty years it has been my privilege to serve this church as pastor with more or less regularity. I have enjoyed my visits with them, not only with brother and sister Miller, now both gone, and with others of the church, but also with the members of their families. Always have they shown the utmost respect and reverence for the Old School Baptist Church and for the preaching of the word. Brother Miller was a man who walked apart from the world, maintaining a correct life in the neighborhood where he lived, and had the respect of all who knew him: a quiet, humble man, whose personality was marked by an entire absence of any sort of strife or contention with his fellow-man: a lover of peace and a lover of God. He loved to read his Bible, the hymn-book and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He was satisfied to let the world and all in it move on as it might, subject to the will of God, but as for himself he was content if he could but serve and worship the Lord his God. His departure marks the end of a chapter, maybe of the final one, in the history of the Mill Creek Church. Pray for us, brethren, that we may not be overmuch discouraged through these dispensations of an all-wise Providence. We believe all things are in His hands and greatly desire that every one of us may be submissive to his holy will.

ALSO,

Army J. Peck, our brother in Christ, passed away from earth April 9th, 1929, at his home, near Warfordsburg, Fulton Co., Pa. He began to be afflicted several months ago with an internal incurable trouble of a cancerous nature and suffered in consequence great inconvenience and indescribable pain. For several weeks last fall he was at the University of Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia, where he had the benefit of the most skilled nursing and surgical treatment, all of which helped to relieve his suffering and to make him more comfortable, but it meant nothing permanently. In August of last year, when he was at times in intense agony and when his life's end seemed very near indeed, I spent part of an afternoon with him. He talked freely of his interest in the doctrine of God our Savior and expressed his earnest conviction that his only hope of salvation was in the name of Jesus, whom he believed verily to be the Son of God. At that time he asked us to sing Cowper's hymn beginning, "God moves in a mysterious way," which we did, also reading a portion of Scripture and attempting a prayer for his comfort. At that visit he said not a word to me of wanting to be baptized, but three days later he sent his brother-in-law and wife to me and to the deacons of the Sideling Hill Church, asking if we thought him a fit subject for baptism and requesting to be baptized if possible. Thereupon a meeting of the church was called to assemble at his home, when he related his exercises of mind and confessed that God in Christ was his All in All. The church voted to receive him. Strong men picked him up from his sick-bed and carried him down to a running stream near his home, where with the assistance of Deacon J. C. Mellott I baptized him. He was then tenderly conveyed back to his bed again, was given the right hand of fellowship, the ordinance of the Lord's Supper being observed by the church in company with brother Peck in his bedroom. Those who witnessed that day will not soon forget the impressive solemnity of all that took place. After this, our brother seemed to grow stronger physically and became able to walk about the house and even to go outside and walk about outdoors. He also became able to attend two meetings of the churth, one in October and the other in December. It was also during this time that he went and spent several weeks in Philadelphia for treatment. Last August no one of us, however

optimistic, believed that he would live eight months, which he did. He was born October 20th, 1876, the son of James and Sarah Peck, and is survived by one sister, the last of seven children, Mrs. E. W. Evans, of Pinehurst, Washington. Our brother was never associated with Old School Baptists until after his marriage to our sister Etta Peck, the daughter of brother Dennis and sister Alice Mellott. He loved the company of believers in Christ and always attended the meetings unless providentially hindered. Besides his widow, he leaves two young sons to mourn their loss: Fred M. and Floyd H. Peck, both at home. His funeral was held at the Sideling Hill meeting-house. Before his death he selected the hymns to be used at his funeral, the portion of Scripture to be used as a text, the friends whom he wished to act as pallbearers, and attended to many other little details, requesting his wife that if an Old Baptist could not be had to preach his funeral, not to have a minister of any other belief. We believe our brother to be with him who heals all our diseases and who forgives all our iniquities, and we cannot wish him back, feeling assured he is in that blessed rest which remains for the people of God. May God comfort our sister in her widowhood and may he direct in his unerring wisdom the steps of the youthful sons.

H. H. L.

George De Bolt Peters, son of Elder John Peters and Ruth De Bolt Peters, was born at Lightsville, Dark County, Ohio, February 23rd, 1854, and died January 10th, 1929, at his home, in Zanesfield, Ohio, lacking a little more than a month of being seventy-five years of age. In March, 1876, he was married to Bettie Shoots, and to that union were born four children: Royal S., Benjamin F., Deota Underwood and Leota Clingerman. Brother Peters was a man above reproach, faithful to friends and loyal to an unusual degree to his church, Primitive or Old School Baptist. After his death his townsmen were heard to say, "He never had a superior, and seldom, if ever, an equal." "We have lost the best man on Mad River," &c. He was considered to be the most learned in the Scriptures of all in Logan County, Ohio. Often it was said, "You cannot contradict him and stick to the Bible." Hearing preaching and conversation on divine things was his chief delight. He was universally loving and beloved, charitable to a superlative degree, not offending, but firm and uncompromising in the faith. He, with his wife Bettie, was baptized into the fellowship of Harmony Church, Mad River Association, in April, 1894. His wife having died early in 1925, on August 24th, 1926, he was united in marriage to Joie E. Woods, of Galena, Ohio, with whom he lived ideally happy, going near and far to attend meetings, and with his wife having many a fireside meeting at home, his not being a "Sunday religion." On Sunday, January 13th, Elder J. H. Adams preached the funeral discourse from the text, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain," preaching ably and with liberty, much to the comfort of friends. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

JOIE WOODS PETERS.

Omar W. Whaley was born in Bath County, Kentucky, May 16th, 1846, and departed this life at his home, 6712 Agnes Avenue, Kansas City, Missouri, December 25th, 1928, aged 82 years, 7 months and 9 days. He was married to Margaret Robinson April 25th, 1870, and to that union thirteen children were born, two dying in infancy. Their names are: Clarence C., Ada H., Berton V., Charley G., Barton H., Alfred M., Harvey K., Henry S., Frank W., Willie C. and Nellie F., all living except Henry and Frank. The children were all present whith the exception of two son, one of whom lives in California, the other in Michigan. His aged companion, two brothers, two sisters, twenty-three grandchildren and six great-grandchildren are also left to mourn. Brother Whaley, with his wife, professed a hope in Christ and united with the Palestine Primitive Baptist Church, in Jackson County, Missouri, June, 1898, and were baptized by Elder Allen Sisk. After locating in Kansas City they united with Mt. Vernon Church. Brother Whaley was a faithful member, always in his accustomed seat if he was able to attend. Without question he had been taught of the Lord, for his daily walk and godly conversation evidenced the work of grace in his heart. "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

The funeral was held at Lindsey's funeral home in Kansas City, and was attended by a large gathering of relatives and friends, the writer conducting the services, after which the body was laid to rest in the Forest Hill, Cemetery, there to await the call of our Master. May God's grace reconcile the family to his will, especially his aged companion, is our prayer.

M. M. SHUMATE.

Sarah M. Turnidge was born November 17th, 1850, in Smith County, Tennessee. She, with her father's family, moved to Missouri, where June 3rd, 1868, she was married to J. C. Turnidge. In February, 1869, she united with the Primitive Baptist Church, of which she was a faithful member. In the fall of 1874 the family moved to western Oregon. In 1883 they moved to eastern Oregon, where they lived on a homestead for six years, moving from there to northern Idaho in 1889. In 1895 they came to Weiser, Idaho, where she made her home until her death, November 6th, 1928. She is survived by her husband, Elder J. C. Turnidge, seven children, twenty-three grandchildren and fifteen great-grandchildren. Such were the facts in her life, as far as this world is concerned, but I have known her for quite a number of

years as a sister church member and mother-in-law. She was always a faithful member, filling her place and encouraging others. As the wife of a minister she always made a way for him to fulfill his church duties. I never heard her speak ill of any one, always loving peace and peaceful ways. She was at meeting as long as her health permitted, and when the end came died in full triumph of the faith. Two days before she died when asked how she felt, said she felt happy. Her life will always be a loving remembrance of good things. Her labors are over, her work is done, and she is asleep in Jesus.

Written by her daughter-in-law,

(MRS.) ARCHIE TURNIDGE.

Creed Thomas Boothe, infant son of Ardelia and Thomas Boothe, and a grandson of Creed M. Bird, after whom little Creed was named, was born October 11th, 1924, in Putnam County, West Virginia, and departed this life November 19th, 1928, making his stay with his loving parents 4 years, 1 month and 8 days. Ardelia is a sister of the unworthy writer and my heart goes out to her and her loving and dutiful husband in their lonely hours around the home that was made so happy with the childish pratter, the light and love in that once warm and active form that now lies cold and still in that calm and mystical condition that we mortals call death. But our dull faculties are unable to comprehend that God's little ones cannot die, that it is only in Adam they can die; in Christ, who is their eternal life, is no death, but life eternal. Little Creed was very bright for a child of his age, and would talk of things beyond the common grasp of children of his age. His death was the result of that dreaded malady diphtheria. May it please our blessed heavenly Father to so fill the poor aching hearts of the bereaved parents with his wonderful love that they may become reconciled to the sovereign will of him who in mercy calls his little ones home to forever dwell with him in eternal bliss.

G. B. BIRD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. J. A. Hurley, Mich., $3; Miss Altha Drake, N. J., $2; Robert Turner, Cal., $3; Mrs. Leonard Hales, Ont., $2; Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Okla., $4; Mrs. Sirena Bowen, Ill., $1; Mrs. E. E. Julian, Okla., $2; Mrs. M. E. Kuns, Cal., $1; H. M. Bowden, Mo., $2; Wm. H. Leslie, $10; Mrs. W. A. Hightower, N. Y., $1; Miss Kate Rugg, Ohio, $1; Mrs. M. E. Smith, B. C., $1; Mrs. E. L. Saul, W. Va., $2; Miss Sadie T. Nicoll, Md., $3; Mrs. C. E. Smith, Ore., $3; Mrs. G. E. Anderson, Va., $1; L. Z. Ross, N. Y., $1; Walter Peacock, England, $1.

MEETINGS.

The Baltimore Association is appointed to be held at Black Rock, Maryland, May 15th, 16th and 17th, 1929. Those coming by rail will reach Baltimore in time to get the 3:30 P. M. train from the Pennsylvania R. R. Station for Cockeysville, on the 14th, where they will be met and taken to places of entertainment. We hope a goodly number will come.

F. G. SCOTT, Church Clerk.

The Delaware Association will be held with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, beginning Wednesday, May 22nd, 1929, and continuing three days. Friends coming from the north get tickets for Conowingo Station on Tuesday, May 21st, at Broad Station, Philadelphia, P. R.R., at 1:49 p. m. Those coming from the south get tickets at Union Station, Baltimore, Md., P. R. R., for Conowingo at 3:13 p. m. Change cars at Perryville for Conowingo, where they will be met and conveyed to places of entertainment. We hope for a goodly number of brethren and friends, especially ministering brethren, who will be most welcome. Trains will be met Wednesday morning by appointment. The church-house is directly on the Robert Fulton Highway, about one mile north of Mason and Dixon line, which is marked.

Done by order of the church.

S. R. DANCE, Church Clerk.

The Delaware River Association is appointed to be held with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, Hunterdon County, New Jersey, commencing on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June and continuing three days, May 29th, 30th and 31st, 1929. We extend a cordial invitation to all of like precious faith to meet with us. Those coming by rail will take train to Trenton Division of the Pennsylvania Railroad to Frenchtown, N. J., where they will be provided for.

O. R. KUGLER, Church Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (5th, 6th and 7th), 1929. Those coming from and via New York City will take Erie R. R. Ferry foot of West 23rd Street or Chambers Street for train leaving from Jersey City. Get tickets for Howells, N. Y. Those coming from and via Kingston, N. Y., will take Ontario and Western train from Kingston. Get tickets for Winterton, N. Y. Trains will be met and friends cared for. Time of trains will be announced later, when new schedules will be effective. Those coming by automobile will go to the home of Mr. Fred Beyea (The Old Homestead) on arrival at New Vernon.

A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, sisters and friends to meet with us.

R. LESTER DODSON, Moderator.

The Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday at 1 p. m. at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Orange and Eleventh Streets, Riverside, California, and every alternate first Sunday, beginning with January, at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. Eleventh Street, Claremont, California, at 10:30 a. m., all-day session, with lunch at place of meeting; and every other first Sunday at Riverside, California, same place and hour as mentioned above for third Sundays.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.

O. P. SPEIRS, Clerk.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting every Sunday 10:30 a. m.

Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sunday at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

Argentine, Kansas, Oct. 1, 1891.

Elder Wm. Beebe—Dear Brother:—It has long been on my mind to at some time relate my christian experience, thinking perhaps it was showing ingratitude to my heavenly Father to withhold what might be of comfort or interest to his little ones, as I am well aware of the pleasure I derive in reading each experience in our little family paper. These things it seems to me, are not given us to conceal hidden in our bosom for our own selfish comfort, but they are to be used as a sort of password to show that we are one entitled to enjoy the company of those who know the secret of the order of the house of God, for the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him. He surely leads all his children in the same narrow path, but each has his own experience to tell, and judging from my own, I think it is a delight to each to recall, and proclaim how wonderfully he has been led. I feel that I was miraculously saved by the power of God, from being a Missionary Baptist, and probably a missionary for it was the sincere desire of all my friends and relatives that I should fill such a position, and they worked hard to accomplish it. But how puny and insignificant are the labors of man before the mighty power of our great Jehovah. My grandfather was the so-called Rev. Dr. Price, who went on a mission to Bermuda with Dr. Judson the missionary. While there my father, Stephen W. Price, and a brother were born, and Stephen became a Baptist minister. He met my mother in Washington, D. C., and was married just before his ordination took place. She was a niece of the Hon. Amos Kendall, who before his death completed a second beautiful edifice, which was called the "Calvary Baptist," or the Hon. Amos Kendall's church. His first building was burned to the ground. His father, too, was a very great worker, in his way, and his religion was his idol. He would sacrifice anything for the religion he professed. So you see all my kindred were very zealous in doing all they thought they were able to do for the Lord and

his cause. When I was only a few months old my dear father died. My mother was intending to marry again and go to China on a missionary tour, but the Lord's way seemed to be different from her way, and before the time appointed for her wedding she too, died, leaving me an orphan indeed, at three years of age. But when my mother and father forsook me the Lord took me up, and I have found it to be better to fall into the Lord's hands than to be left to the management of man. From that time until the time of her death, last February, I have been with an aunt of my mother, to whom I became so attached that I soon learned to call her mother. She was an Old School Baptist in sentiment, and joined that church before the division. I tell all this that it may be seen how true is the Scripture, Man proposes, but God disposes, and to show how wonderfully he works to accomplish his wise purpose in the face of all that man may do to oppose his will. You can easily imagine I inherited the "do and live" disposition, and surrounded by those of the same spirit, is it not wonderful how the Lord led me out from among them and their idols? My relatives all had ample means, and were ready and willing to lavish their wealth upon me should I do their bidding, i. e. finish the work my mother had commenced, but as soon as they heard of my joining the Old "Hard Shells" all communication ceased, and I never heard from them any more, but since it was for His dear sake I only smile at my grief and hope I may claim the promise to the blessed. I do not remember the time when I felt no interest in religion, for I always longed for purity, and many times have thought, Oh that I might be as free from sin as God and his bright angels are, I then could be extremely happy. Repeatedly I resolved to commit no sin during the week, but pray every morning and evening, read a chapter in the Bible each day, go to Sunday School regularly (as my adopted mother felt it could do no harm, and there were none of the Old School Baptists in Catskill where we then lived and she attended the Dutch Reformed meetings) but in all my endeavors I came far short of my expectations. I wanted to gather together the poor children in our neighborhood to tell them about the blessed Jesus, and ask them to be good and try and go to heaven as I was trying to do. One day in Sunday School our teacher asked, Who has prayed to God this morning, thanking him for his care during the long dark night? All who have done so may raise their hand. To my great surprise I was the only one whose hand was not raised at her request. Imagine my feelings when I saw a girl (one who was a constant torment and terror to me each Sunday, as she made fun of my clothing, and in every manner taunted me, if perchance she overtook me in my walk to or from Sunday School) raise her hand with an air of confidence and gaze at me triumphantly as I timidly blushed and settled back in my seat, thinking, Can it be possible that even this bad girl prays in the morning and I do not? I was sorely tempted to raise my hand, but I felt I

could not tell a lie about it, and so resisted the awful temptation. My teacher opened her large black eyes in astonishment, and said, Why Adela, is it possible you are the only one who does not say her prayers? I replied, At night I say, "Now I lay me down to sleep" (the verses my own mother taught me) but in the morning I do not. She then told us, among other things, that all little children who did not pray, would go to hell, and described the terrors of that dreadful place in such a manner as to lead one to suppose she might have been plunged into the depths of that undesirable place some time herself, so vividly did she describe the surroundings of the devil and his worshiping angels. Then too, she told of the raptures of heaven, with its streets and harps of gold, adding that all good little children who said their prayers woud go to live in this beautiful place. I went home so excited and anxious, it made me feverish and sick. I said, Mother, I know when I die I am going to hell. I then repeated what my teacher had said and that put an end to my attending Sunday School. After a few years we moved to Middletown, Orange County, N. Y., where I was blessed with the privilege of hearing the gospel truth fall from the lips of one who received it direct from the Author of all purity and perfection. One to whom it had been said, Feed my sheep, feed my lambs. I used to enjoy dear old Elder Beebe's preaching, but he was preaching to christians and there was nothing for me. He dealt out to them the spiritual food, and occasionally a little crumb would fall into my hungry soul and it was very sweet, but oh so rich they did not satisfy my craving nor strengthen me in any way, for I was in too sickly a state to receive anything so strong. I longed to enjoy it with them, and felt they could not refuse me the little comfort I received, but the dear Lord had not yet seen fit to prepare me to receive such food as christians thrive upon, so I gathered only crumbs for years. One night I dreamed that all thought me dead. I lay in a beautiful casket, surrounded with sweetest flowers. So real did it seem that I could plainly see the coffin's satin lining, hear the pillow's light rustle under my head and distinctly smell the perfume of the flowers. As I lay there I thought with pleasure of my future home in the unknown world, and my entrance into the better land, but also thought, It seems almost too good to be true though I hope it is. It may be only a lovely dream, and to make sure I will ask my mother and she will not deceive me, but tell me the candid truth. She sat quite near the marble topped stand upon which my casket rested, and I said, Mother, am I really dead? She turned and looked at me, smiling, and replied, Certainly, you are dead and going to heaven. We seemed to be on a large Hudson River steam boat and the continual jar of the boat I felt so distinctly thatI thought, Yes, it must be so. But still to make doubly sure I asked again, Mother, are you sure you are not mistaken? Can this be a dream, or is it truly so that I am dead and going to heaven? She smiled, as if to say, How

can you doubt it? and replied, Why my dear child, I am not mistaken, and this is no dream, for you are really dead and going to heaven. Then I felt content. I knew it was no dream, for she had told me so, and I was overwhelmed with happiness. We sailed on for a long time, until we reached a beautiful green island devoid of everything but nature's own creation, except that there were wide steps reaching far above us, and as my mother led me by the hand nearer to them I saw that on each step there stood a beautiful chariot. The one on the first step was ours to occupy. How can I describe its wonderful beauty? It was a two-wheeled carriage, like the war chariots of olden times. Every part was made of the purest white and glistening pearl, with occasionally a precious stone flashing out a ray of color from among the rich carving. One mass of beautiful white pearl and precious stones! The two beautiful horses attached to it were white as snow, with arching necks and flowing manes, and faultless in their form, and needed nothing stronger to guide them than lines of narow white ribbon in an angel's hand. The angel was arrayed in spotless white, and seemed more like a figure of beautiful marble than a form of flesh and blood, because of the fair beauty of his face and form. He put out his hand and helped me into the chariot, and as I turned to speak to my mother I found I was alone with my beautiful angel, and immediately the snowy steeds began a steady, graceful stepping, stepping, rising in the air with as much ease and grace as a feather wafted by a summer breeze. When at a dizzy height I looked down upon the earth (I had never in childhood looked from any great height upon the earth below, and so I wonder that my little brain could dream of things so real.) the people on the island seemed like tiny specks as they came near and entered the chariots awaiting them. The rivers winding in and out among the lovely mountains looked like yards of silvery blue ribbon, and the cities and towns along their verdant banks semed but a handful. It was indeed a lovely picture. But gradually, like a morning fog, there gathered around us a fleecy white cloud, which shut out from my view the earth with its sunlight and shadows, and I could see nothing but my angel driver and his beautiful prancing horses. We went up and up so long I began to feel weary of the monotony, but at length the upward motion ceased and we descended for a short distance, the cloud gradually vanishing, until all motion ceased and then it had floated away. I found we had settled on the edge of a tiny stream, the chariot standing in the water, which was only deep enough to trickle over the small white pebbles with a pleasant soothing sound and was as clear as crystal. On either side were trees of extraordinary luxuriance of foliage and under which sat groups of happy souls reading, talking and in various ways enjoying the dense shade. We were directly in front of an immense brownstone building, which stood in the midst of beautiful grounds surrounded by an iron fence. My angel driver stood on

the bank and helped me to alight, and as I put out my hand to open the gate it was swung open by some invisible power and I ascended the huge stone steps, singing as I went a song of thanksgiving and praise, the tune and a few words of which I remembered a short time after I awoke. The massive double doors were in the same mysterious manner thrown open as if to welcome me. Turning to my left I saw a congregation of people listening to the Savior's gentle voice as he stood before them. He was dressed in a robe of purple, a beautiful golden halo around his head, and a large book open on a desk before him, and with his raised hands he seemed to be explaining the Scriptures to them. At his feet I observed a beautiful crimson velvet cushion edged with a heavy fringe of gold. I recognized my father and mother at once and saluted each with a kiss, then running to my blessed Savior, with clasped hands and bowed head fell upon my knees on the cushion at his feet. He gently laid his hands upon my head and blessed me, and I awoke. I looked about in perfect amazement for a time. Yes, I could see the paper on the wall, the curtained windows, my mother lying sleeping by my side, and as the truth gradually dawned upon me my agony of grief cannot be told. I sobbed and cried so violently that I shook the bed and awoke my mother, who was very much alarmed, and taking me fondly in her arms tried in vain for some time to find the cause of my distress. I trembled like a leaf and could not speak. At last I repeated again and again, O mother, I am so disappointed, so disappointed. You told me it was not a dream. Oh I am so disappointed. This terrible feeling of disappointment lasted a number of days. I was quite a child at that time, and this dream seemed rather remarkable for one so young. Some years after this, when listening to Elder Beebe, he took for his text the words, "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him." His discourse was very interesting. He represented our sins as having pierced the dear Redeemer, and also quoted the lines, 'Twas you, my sins, my cruel sins, his chief tormenters were." It seemed I could not control my feelings and my poor heart was cut to the core as I realized my guilt and vileness as being the cause of His dreadful suffering and death. It seemed as if I myself had helped to nail him to the cross by my transgressions, and just as he was taunted and tormented by the sponge and spear, so my continual sinning had added to his agony, while with great mercy and forgiveness he had said, Forgive them, Father, for they know not what they do. Oh how vividly I could imagine the terrible scene. It seemed I could see the crimson drops trickling down his aching, throbbing brow. (I did not then know the crimson flood was dripping upon my poor hungry soul to wash away the inky stains it bore.) I seemed to hear his pitiful groans of agony, could see his dear parched lips, parted for one cooling drop of water to quench his awful

thirst, and he said, It is finished, and gave up the ghost. He turned those beautiful, mild, compassionate eyes and looked at me, and oh that look. I shuddered, and covered my face with my hands and could scarcely control my feelings sufficiently to remain during the remainder of the service. Yes, I thought, it is finished, I have crucified my dearest friend and it is finished. My doom is sealed; there is now no pardon and no Savior for me. Dear brother, you know the sound of those awful words to a poor crouching sinner, and you,too, know the joy and the gladness which rings through the breast of a christian when he hears and knows it is finished, his redemption is complete, his toils and anxieties are forever done, and he rises with his Savior's triumph over his mighty foes. In November, 1869, I went to Washington, D. C., my birthplace (both naturally and spiritually, I hope) to finish my musical education, and lived for a time with my grandfather Kendall. I was then again surrounded with my missionary relatives and friends. Now that my eyes were open to search the deep recesses of my sinful heart I found that in the sight of the just and holy God I was naught but a loathsome bundle of vileness and sin. All my good works and attempts at christianity were but an abomination in the sight of Him whom I desired to serve. What more could I do, but sink lower and lower as my strength to do grew less and less, and in discouragement sink into the depths of endless woe, and yet I must beg for mercy, though I found no reason to expect it. So for days and nights on bended knees I pleaded for mercy and forgiveness, but so feeble was my cry it scarcely left my sinful lips ere it fell back again with a sickening thud upon my poor troubled heart. One day my grandfather proposed that we should call upon the minister who baptized my own mothear and also performed the ceremony at her wedding. He called him the Reverend Mr. Meadows. While there he kindly laid his hand upon my arm, and said in a very solemn tone, Do you love the Lord? I made the only reply I really could make under the circumstances, and said, "I hope so," and I was both surprised and grieved when he turned to my grandfather,who was very deaf, and said, She tells me she has a hope. Why, replied the poor old gentleman, I knew nothing of it. Oh how tried I felt with the man, that he should misconstrue my meaning. I wondered how he could have expected me to answer No to such a question. Months passed and I seemed still sinking to my doom, but still crying for help, and knowing how others sought their Bible to comfort them, I, too, sought mine but all availed me nothing. I attended meetings regularly, as my grandparents would have been much grieved, and perhaps angry, had I refused, but it was not done because I desired it. The Hon. Amos Kendall's family I know felt quite hurt because I could not enjoy the splendor of their house of worship, but I preferred rather to attend a place nearer

my grandfather's house, where the people were more humble in their dress and worship, which seemed to me more Christlike. The last time I attended meeting with Uncle Amos there stood before the altar a most beautiful banner and after service and the superintendent of the Sunday School came forward and presented it in behalf of a little girl and boy to the Sunday School. Oh how he praised and flattered those dear little children, who, as he said, were trying to work for Jesus, and showed such an interest in the Sunday School, and said he wished all little children woud bear such love to Jesus and the Sunday School. Oh how it angered me, and it seemed I could not keep quiet until he finished, as my heart went out in deepest sympathy to the poor little ones who were daily bringing the hard earned pennies of their fathers to this Sunday School, when thew needed it themselves to buy food and clothing and who would have gladly given twice as much as their wealthier companions to have received half the admiration and praise. I do not remember ever entering the edifice again.

One Sunday I was particularly sad and opened my Bible to try once more to find a word of encouragement, but the Scripture I opened to was addressed to the disciples or followers of the Jesus I wanted to love and worship, and as I tried to read the good news addressed to them I could not comprehend the meaning of the words I saw, and as I found no word of comfort or advice for one like me I laid the book aside and wept as if my heart would break, then dried my eyes and got ready to go to meeting, for many had found comfort there. I do not know what the preacher chose for his text, or if he created one for his own convenience, but I know there was little which could have been construed as Bible truth in the whole discourse. He was representing the road to heaven as a rugged, slippery hill, upon the top of which stood the pearly gates ajar, and beseeched poor dead sinners to strive to reach there, and though they might slip back times without number they must not give up or be discouraged, for if they persevered he said they should at last come off victorious and receive the reward they merited, a dazzling crown and a harp of gold. But alas for the weak and faint-hearted, they must work or die. If they did not keep up and struggle on they would gradually sink lower and lower, until at last they would fall helplessly into the bottomless pit and be eternally lost. I listened to the terrible words of discouragement and when he finished was thoroughly convinced that I was eternally lost and there was none to help. My strength was gone (the strength I thought I once had) and all my works of self-righteousness were as nothing, and I could do no more. Verily I could say, "Oh wretched man that I am," &c. I could scarcely control my feelings until I reached my room, then bursting into tears wept until I could weep no more. I received the "Signs of the Times" regularly from my mother,

which was welcomed by me, but not by my grandparents, and my grandmother showed her disgust for them one day in particular when, taking the precious little messenger from my mantle where it was lying, and throwing it into my lap (as one might cast away a piece of broken china) she said, Here is one of old Beebe's books again. The only time my uncle's family ever showed their feelings in regard to the difference of sentiment was one day when I dined with them. Something, which I do not now remember, was said, and my aunt replied, Why they (the Old School) do not believe in Sunday Schools do they, Addie? I answered, No, mam, they do not. My uncle turned to me, almost fiercely, and exclaimed, Do not believe in Sunday Schools! Why they are worse than the heathen. That hurt, but did not stagger me. I continually asked of grandpa to explain some passage of Scripture to me, then unbeknown to any one repaired to my room and wrote a letter to my mother, asking her explanation of the same passage. One did not know of the other's interpretation. When her reply was received I compared the two, and generaly came to the conclusion that hers seemed more like Bible truth, and more in accordance with the character of Christ as the Savior, than his. One night while preparing to retire I heard my grandmother say to my grandfather, It is a pity that Daisy is wandering off with the old side Baptists. (Daisy was the pet name given me in my infancy by my mother.) Oh how I suffered all those terrible, long, gloomy days and nights. It seemed I was sinking, sinking sick and despairing, with no hope, no Savior, no pleasure in this life and no hope in the life to come, and could cry out unheard but could not pray, for my words were leaden and could not rise to the throne of grace. Again one Sunday morning I attended meeting, expecting to hear, as before, of the duty of unworthy sinners to struggle in vain to obtain the starry crown, and quite prepared to hear of works to be attempted which could never be performed, and all the discouragement I had met with before, but go I must for grandpa's sake, as I loved him and did not wish to grieve him. A stranger preached that day, a man of many years. His thin white locks and withered form testifying to the many chilling winters he had seen. If he were not a man of God, his trembling voice proclaimed a message which he had received, pure and fresh from the portals of the glorious King, which through him was sent directly to my poor heart, a comforting, soothing balm, which, like the oil upon the troubled waters, quieted its anxious throbbings and filled it full of hope, love, joy and peace. Oh such peace! He spoke of his extreme age, and said he would probably never preach another sermon, and when he finished his discourse bade us an affectionate farewell. God grant the dear old man never was permitted to preach again unless it was to proclaim the same joyful tidings of truth as is in Jesus Christ. He chose for his text

the words, As the lily among thorns, so is my beloved among the daughters. He represented the church as a bride in her great beauty, adorned for her husband, wearing in her bosom the Rose of Sharon and Lily of the valley. Christ, the bridegroom, came to meet her, bearing on his heart a faded,drooping, dying lily. He pointed to the flower she wore, saying, This is my image, pure and fair, and beautiful, which you wear upon your heart, I am the Rose of Sharon and the lily of the Valley, &c., while this (pointing to his faded flower) is an emblem of yourself as you were before I bought you with my precious blood. He then represented Christ as telling her how he had seen it standing forsaken, helpless and alone among the rank and poison weeds, rubbish and thorns. It was drooping, dying, stained and torn, but he loved it. Oh how he loved and pitied it, and his love and compassion were so great that in spite of piercing thorns and painful toil he reached forth his hand and took it to himself, and now it is forever safe, clasped affectionately and tenderly against his loving breast. Now see the bleeding hands and feet, but all his precious blood was shed for the love of his happy bride, the church. I would gladly repeat the sermon as the old gentleman delivered it, that of course is impossible, and I am sure any christian can tell or know what were my feelings when I heard the joyful sound: a love so strong that it could come and take me,even as I was, in my weakness and poverty, a pity so intense that it could not spurn me, because of my many sins and imperfections, but with forgiveness so free that it sought to hide my blemishes against a heart so warm and full of compassion, and it melted the icy crust of discouragement, and I found myself being led beside the still waters. If all this is true, that he will come to me (as I have no strength to go to him) and will accept me as I am, without one plea, but that his blood was shed for me, then I am saved, weary, sick and sinful though I be. That night I prayed, and I think it was probably the first prayer I ever uttered. It was the old, old story of the publican crying, Lord, be merciful to me, the chief of sinners, and the flood of penitent tears which accompanied that prayer seemed to cleanse my words of their leaden weight and they floated away like incense and arose to the One who is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. I laid down on my pillow like a sobbing child and suddenly I felt such a peace as I had never known before. If you can imagine a little child that is lost, running this way and that, tired and frightened, and calling loudly for its father, and when at last it feels the great strong arm around it and the soothing, comforting voice of its father, and looking up into his face sees the tender look of love and pity in his eye, and with childish confidence snuggles its little head against his manly bosom and falls into a quiet and peaceful sleep, you will know just how I felt that night I felt my Savior's love and

sobbed myself to sleep. It was morning when I again opened my eyes, and a more beautiful morning had never dawned on this sinful earth. It seemed to me a holy silence had fallen on all around, as it had done upon my heart. The blessed "Peace, be still," had been been spoken, the tempest in my heart had ceased and the very air I breathed seemed to partake of the love, joy and holy calm I experienced. Like David, I felt that everything was praising and must continue to praise the Lord, and it seemed to me that all nature was praising him in silence. I sat by my open window, for though snow was on the ground the sun was warm and bright and was turning the snow into little streams, and occasionally a tiny songster would warble forth a little song of praise, for it, too, was praising God, as was the air, sun, streams and all else on earth. How like my poor unworthy self: first hard and cold and dark, then the glorious Sun of righteousness appeared and warmed me with his rays of love until I was melted to tears, and when I saw the day had surely come and night had fled my heart sang out with joy and gladness, as did the little birds in sunny nature. My Bible was no more a sealed book, but laden with the most precious promises for me. I wondered why I never saw them before. So in peace and happiness the remainder of the winter passed. I then returned to my home and to the preaching of dear old Elder Beebe. But now the tempter came, day after day, saying, Yes, I know you feel perfectly happy, but do you really know that your sins are forgiven? Perhaps after all this is only imagination and you will find you are deceived, and that would be awful. This so annoyed and worried me that it threw me into a nervous headache and I was obliged to remain home from school and go to bed. I laid there thinking over my trouble and hearing the heavy clank, clank of the heavy machinery in the factory near which we boarded, when I seemed to be climbing a steep mountain side. My cousin Minnie, a girl of my own age (Deacon Inman's youngest daughter, who died the year of my marriage, 1873) was with me and seemed to have less trouble in climbing, as she got far ahead of me, and would turn and beckon to me, calling, Come on. My feet would slip on the rolling stones, the thorns caught and tore my clothing, and I could distinctly hear the clanking of the machinery, and looking up in despair would answer, Oh I am so tired, I wish I could get away from the noise and clamor of this world. I at last got to the top, and found there a large rock upon which I sat down to rest. Minnie had disappeared and a large fleecy white cloud enshrouded me so I could see nothing. Presently I felt a great weight in my lap, and looking down found an immense book lying open before me with leaves of spotless white. While wondering at this I felt a weight and warmth upon my shoulder, and turning my head could see nothing but an arm and hand, the beautiful index finger of which pointed to the

leaves of the book I held, and ran along under the words, "Your sins be forgiven you." All printed in letters of jet black across the middle of the two pages. I strained my eyes to see more, but there was nothing more there. I then awoke, and as I was thinking it over felt a great sense of comfort and peace. I wondered if those words were in the Bible, and as my mother entered the room I said, Mother, are there any words in the Bible like these? and quoted the words of my dream. She assured me they were, and wished to know why I asked. I told her all, and added, But I wonder why I could not see more? She said, Well, that was all you was troubled about, was it not? You had no need of anything more. I never had any confidence in dreams, but this one had such a quieting effect upon my mind I sometimes think it was sent for that purpose.

In the year 1869 I tried to tell my experience to the Middletown Church, but was so timid and overcome that I said very little, and was much surprised when they received me among them. I was baptized June 13, 1869, together with six others, and just as I was the youngest among them in the church I felt the weakest spiritually. Never can I forget that lovely day in June. The tempter, frustrated in his first attempt, attacked me again while riding to the water, with these suggestions: Now Elder Beebe is a very old man, and not as strong as if younger, and you have just read an account of a young minister letting the candidate slip from his hands and she was drowned, and how awful it would be if you should be drowned in the same way. Besides, there are holes into which you might step and you have never waded into the water before and something may happen. Then came a peaceful calm, and I think he left, both discouraged and ashamed, for I smiled in the face of his impudence as I replied, If my heavenly Father has appointed this as the time and way to take me to himself what could be sweeter than to step directly from the path of duty into his loving arms? How could I ask for greater bliss? I smiled as I contemplated such a happy ending of a day like that. I was as a rule very timid about water, but now I knew no fear or anxiety, nothing but love, joy and peace in the extreme. Since that happy day I have been led, as I hope by my Redeemer, sometimes midst scenes of darkest gloom, sometimes where eden's bowers bloom, still I feel that it is his hand that leadeth me and I am content. I never yet have lost my little treasured hope, and if it is his holy will he will finally take me to dwell with him in glory and I shall then see him as he is, without a veil between, and nothing to hinder me from praising him acceptedly, and enjoying his blessed presence and the company of his dear children for ever and ever. I sincerely hope I am not deceived, but that I may subscribe myself

Your unworthy sister,

ADELA JONES.

[The foregoing experience of sister

William Jones, written over thirty-seven years ago, has just been sent to us for publication. Sister Jones, with her husband and two daughters, now resides at No. 1, Edgewood Park, New Rochelle, N. Y.—R. L. D.]

Kennedy, Alabama.

Dear Editors:—I feel I want to write a few lines, but do not know whether or not the feeling is of the Lord, yet I know he has revealed some things to me concerning his purpose, will and predestination. I believe God has a purpose in all things that come to pass, both good and evil. He made the old serpent, the devil, and put him in the garden to fulfill his (God's) purpose, and he (the devil) was the cause of the first sin that was ever commited, and will be the cause of the last one. We all know that sin is the transgression of God's holy law. If there had been no sin there never would have been a birth, and there never would have been a death. As it is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law, but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, victory over death. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. God hates sin, but it took sin to bring about the birth and death of his saints, and God's people hate sin and want to be free from it, but it will take death to free them from it, then it will take eternity to praise the blessed Lord enough for delivering them from sin and the troubles and trials of this sin-cursed world.

Your little sister, in hope of this blessed deliverance,

(MRS.) B. A. CRAWLEY.

Mount Bridges, Ont., Nov. 13, 1928.

Dear Editors:—I have been a subscriber of the "Signs of the Times" for twenty-three years, and I intend to take it as long as I live. When you do not receive my subscription you will know I have passed away, and discontinue my paper, for I have no one who would care to take it. I am eighty-three years of age. May God prosper you in your good work. My hope is built upon nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness.

HARRIET A. GIBSON.

Choudrant, La., Nov. 15, 1928.

Dear Editors:—I am writing you a few lines to tell you to discontinue sending our paper. Not that I have any fault to find with the doctrine it sets forth, for I heartily indorse it, and it is with a feeling of sadness that I feel I must give it up, but my husband and I are in our eighty-second year and not able to work as my husband has been blind for two years and I am afflicted with neuralgia and rheumatism.

Wishing you great success, that you may continue to publish the "Signs" for many years to come, I beg to remain, as ever, your friend,

(MRS.) J. M. L. ALLEN.

[We deeply sympathize with this aged couple, and if the "Signs" is any comfort to them gladly send it to them free of charge.—Ed.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1929.

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THE COMFORTER.

That the things which are invisible are more real and more lasting than the things which are seen, is plainly established in Holy Writ. Yet so material a creature is man that he risks his life and everything connected with it for the things that are seen. There is not a thing which the senses of man can appreciate but what passes away. The evidence of this transitory state of affairs is written clearly over everything natural, yet so hemmed in is man by the short-sightedness of his natural being that he cannot learn by nature that it is foolishness to center himself in the things that perish. There is present throughout all the universe the invisible Being of him who has created all things by the word of his power. That God is a Spirit, all of us believe, but he is at the same time a majestic, infinite and eternal personality. When we say that God is a person some may take us to mean that God has a body somewhat like man's body. When the Scripture says that man was made in the image of God, it does not have to mean that God has a body like man's. A person means more than a mere body. A person has character, feeling, will, mind, affection. A person loves and hates; he is grieved and glad. All these things the Bible speaks of as belonging to God. Therefore the Almighty is a more real, intense and all-pervading personality than any human person can possibly be. In this Person of the eternal Godhead there are three: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. It is this third Personality of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit or Comforter, of whom we are thinking now. In speaking of this Comforter the Savior in the sixteenth chapter of John does not use the neuter pronoun "it," but the masculine pronoun "he," "him" or "his," showing that the Comforter or Holy Spirit is a Person and not a mere spiritual abstraction. When there comes into the experience of believers the felt presence of this wonderful personality who is the Governor of spiritual Israel in this gospel dispensation, the life of the believer is thereby enlarged and illuminated to such a degree that he is made to bear burdens, efface temptations,

endure trials and to suffer losses which without the companionship of this divine Person it would be impossible. There is no grander thought in all the gospel than that no believer is ever called upon or required to do anything in his or her own strength without the enabling strength of the Comforter. This glorious personal Presence which never leaves nor forsakes the children of God in this gospel age is indeed a true Comforter. But he is far more than this. The word translated in our English Bibles "Comforter" is from the Greek word *"Parakletos."* This Greek word literally means, "One who stands by." Therefore when Jesus told his disciples that it was expedient for him to go away or the Comforter would not come, he meant not only that they would in that case be without comfort, but would be without One to stand by them in all that might arise. Jesus answered them that if he went from them he would send the Comforter, that is, One to stand by them, and that this Person,though unseen to them physically, would lead them in the way of all truth, and that he would take those things which Jesus had said to them and reveal to them their meaning. All through the ministry of the apostles, and all through the lives of those who made up the membership of the apostolic church, the companionship of this divine Person is ever in evidence. While he himself cannot be seen, the effect of his being constantly with his people can be clearly traced. The one sufficient reason why the church of the apostles' day could not be swept from its foundation was due to the presence of this One who stood by them. No merely human society or organization could ever have successfully withstood the terrific blasts of persecution hurled against the early church during the first three centuries of its existence. The capacity of the early church for endurance and its propensity for fruitfulness in those dark days was due solely to the presence of the Comforter or *Paraklete,* without whom the early christians would have been wiped out. No one of us amounts to anything from a spiritual standpoint except this divine One be with us. Of our ownselves we can do nothing, but through the presence of this One there is nothing too hard for us to do. Instead of miracles being past and done with, those who are attended by the Comforter live with a power continually performing miracles. Thus it was a miracle for an illiterate fisherman such as Peter to be taken from his nets along Gallilee and enabled to preach the gospel of the grace of God. It was a miracle for Saul of Tarsus, who bitterly hated the truth, to be turned about from his persecuting, man-killing spirit and to be sent instead to preach the gospel of love and peace to the saints whom he had evilly treated. It was a miracle that brought Cornelius, whose upbringing, both secularly and religiously, had been both Roman and pagan, to believe the truth of Jesus Christ as preached by Simon Peter. It is a miracle that makes the lame man leap as an hart, that causes the

tongue of the dumb to sing, that makes the blind see, the deaf hear, and the dead come to life. All these miracles, and many more like them, have been accomplished since the coming into the world of the divine Person, the One who stands by God's elect throughout this present gospel age. Without this divine One there is no spiritual life or ability whatever. Without him we cannot hear or sing or read or preach with any understanding or comfort. Jesus said that when this Comforter should come he would reprove the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment. This saying of Jesus shows that the work of the Comforter was to be throughout the whole world and not confined to the Jews as had been the legal dispensation. This world-wide work of the Holy Spirit therefore has been going on for almost two thousand years, gathering God's people from among all nations to the knowledge of the way of salvation through Christ Jesus, bringing into the souls of believers everywhere the experimental proof of the resurrection of Christ and his church. This Comforter reproves. This word "reproves" means to prove over again. The Holy Spirit works in the heart and soul of the sinner by proving again and again the fact that he is a sinner and that in his human nature there dwells no good thing. This is the way conviction of sin comes, by the proof of sin being repeated again and again. This primary lesson in grace (that one is a sinner) cannot be proved by one person teaching another; it cannot be proved by one merely reading the letter of the Scripture; nor can it be learned by merely listening to the preached word. It is the prerogative of the Holy Spirit or Comforter to teach men that they are sinners. It cannot be taught any other way. But the reproving or convicting work of this Comforter does not end with the proof of sin. This divine teaching begins with the proof of sin, and goes on to prove righteousness, that is to prove that righteousness such as will avail for the saving of the sinner is nowhere to be found but in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Jesus had said that when the Comforter came he would take of the things of his (that is, of Jesus) and would show these things unto his people. So when the Holy Spirit has brought within the individual the revelation of sin, and when that revelation has been so firmly driven in that the sinner cannot forget he is a sinner, then the Holy Spirit brings to view the righteousness of God in Christ which alone suffices to atone for sin. When the sinner thus realizes what a sinner he truly is, and what a holy and righteous being God is, he becomes keenly alive to the great distance that lies between the sinner he is and the righteousness God is. Now comes the third proof of the Holy Spirit, which is judgment. In this judgment the sins of the sinner are imputed to or laid on Christ and the righteousness of God is imputed through Christ to the sinner. Thus the judgment in the case of God's elect is the joining in marriage of the sinner

to the Savior, the sinner losing his sins in the cross of Christ and becoming clothed with the righteousness of God. Thus the old man of the sinner is taken away and there is put upon him the new name, which name is, "The Lord Our Righteousness." As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so is the angel of God's presence round about them that reverence him. This Presence is no mere imaginary or theoretical something or other, but a real, actual, living Personality who is constantly with the Lord's people, whether in the day or night, in sorrow or in joy, in prison or out of it.. This Person guided and watched over the Baptist Church when it was hidden away in the mountains and forests of Italy and France preceding the Protestant reformation. This divine Person, we believe, was with the man who invented the printing-press, which invention more than any other one thing was the means of giving to every one the Bible translated in their own languages so they could read it and know for themselves what it contained. This divine Person of the Comforter stood by Luther and Calvin and gave them courage to denounce spiritual wickedness in high places, and to defy hypocrisies and blasphemies at that time dominating nations in the name of religion. This divine Person of the Comforter guided across the stormy ocean the frail barques of those who fled from persecution in Europe to establish settlements of religious liberty in the new world. It was this divine Person who guided the hearts and hands of our forefathers in the humble beginning of American government so that the principles of religious liberty have been handed down to us for us to enjoy, so that God's church in this day and time is able to contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints without any daring to interfere therewith. It was this divine Person who at the Black Rock convention in 1832 stood by those who were there and who caused those faithful men of God to set their faces as a flint against the encroachments of Americanism. We believe it is this divine Person, the Comforter, who put it into Elder Gilbert Beebe's heart to establish the "Signs of the Times." Under the unction of this glorious Personality of the Comforter the "Signs" in the ninety-seven years of its life has brought edification and spiritual cheerfulness to thousands of believers. Without this presence of One to stand by us at all times the gospel can never be preached by any man, nor without the convincing work of this Spirit in the soul can the gospel be believed. This divine Person is guiding, controlling, managing things throughout this gospel dispensation, and will continue so to do until the fullness of the Gentiles has been brought into the kingdom. Then will the kingdom be delivered up unto the Father that he may be all in all.

L.

AN EXPLANATION.

Owing to the death of our dear mother, Mrs. J. E. Beebe, and to the failure of the company from whom we we purchased a typesetting machine to deliver it on time, this issue of the "Signs of Times" is late in reaching our subscribers, but if all goes well we hope to have the future numbers out on time.

If it is the will of him who is the Director of all things, we hope to continue publishing the "Signs of the Times," and while we shall miss our mother's assistance in this work more than words can express, yet we know that if the dear Lord so desires he can point out the way for us to continue; but if it is not his will to so direct and help, all our feeble efforts will be worse than useless. It is with a sad and heavy heart that we make the attempt, trusting we may be sustained by the all-powerful arm of him who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. We hope the brethren and friends will continue to write for the paper and do what they can to help sustain its publication. G. B.

NOTICE.

The Primitive Baptist Home in Salisbury, Maryland, opened on May 1st. Those desiring to enter should write to Mr. Cyrus Risler, 904 Ogden Avenue, New York, N. Y., for particulars. Members and friends residing within the bounds of the Eastern Associations are eligible.

R. LESTER DODSON.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the Black Rock Church, Baltimore County, Maryland, May 15th, 16th and 17th, 1929, to the churches composing the same, Greetings.

Dear Brethren:—In this cloudy and dark day, when so few remain faithful to our beloved Master, it becomes the few who do to examine themselves closely to see whether they are really walking in the path marked out for them by Jesus and his apostles. It is necessary that we preach the truth, which we feel we are doing, and so sure are we of this, that although it is very unpopular with the world, and very few come to hear it, we would not exchange it for the world, believing that we are teaching the truth according to the Scriptures of eternal truth. So we are determined to continue, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. But, brethren, are we walking in the ordinances of the Lord's house as becometh those who love his name and preach his truth? Do we as churches observe a strict discipline in turning our backs upon the world and all seem right ways and walk according to the word of God? Do we require all who profess to love our cause to show their faith by their works? Or do we allow them to live only in name, while they are dead branches and should be removed in order to the health of the vine? "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and

the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked."—1 John ii. 4--6. Is our light visible to the eyes of those whose eyes have been enlightened so that they know what that good and acceptable and perfect will of the Lord is? If so, do we teach them to observe all things whatsoever the Lord hath taught us to observe? Do we ask the dear Lord for an awakening by his Spirit, that both they that teach and those taught in the things of the kingdom may be given such holy zeal that they will follow Jesus through evil as well as good report? Love as brethren, be courteous, be pitiful? Love our God supremely, love each other for his sake, and, like David, be glad when they say to us, Let us go into the house of the Lord? He gives us all our blessings, both temporal and spiritual. Should we not honor and praise him with all the power within us?

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Mod.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.
E. A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

NOTICE.

Providence permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in June (30th). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MRS. JOSEPHINE ETTELA BEEBE, our beloved sister in Christ, passed away from earth at her home in Middletown, N. Y., April 28th, 1929. She was born at Olive, N. Y., March 9th, 1847, the daughter of Dr. John Raymond Travis and Hulda Sophia Huestis Travis. She was married to Benton Lafayette Beebe, the youngest son of Elder Gilbert and Phebe Cunningham Beebe, August 24th, 1860. She had lived in Middletown since 1860, was baptized by Elder Gilbert Beebe, and spent most of her life as a member of the Middletown and Wallkill Church. She had been associated for twenty-five or thirty years in the publishing and editing of the "Signs of the Times." She is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Lillian Beebe Pierson, and one son, Gilbert Beebe, both of Middletown, N. Y., two grandsons, Gilbert R. Beebe, of Auburn, N. Y., and Uzal T. Hayes, of Hackettstown, N. J., also two great-grandchildren.

The funeral was conducted by Elders Dodson and Ruston. Burial was in the Hillside Cemetery, Middletown.

In the passing of sister Beebe the Old School Baptists of this country have lost one of their most useful and devoted members. The subscribers and readers of the "Signs of the Times" for the past twenty-five or thirty years have realized little or nothing of the burdens and responsibilities, due to the faithful efforts and unflagging efforts of sister Beebe, in the continuation of the paper, often against heavy odds and in the midst of discouragements that might well have daunted a less persevering person. Yet her perseverance and courage all these years, as she would have said herself, was due to God-given faith and to her spiritual love for the cause of truth. In the years when her husband's health was failing, and when it was known that he sooner or later would be compelled to cease his labors she entered the "Signs'" office and began gradually to enter into his labors and cares concerning the paper. This resulted in the whole responsibility eventually falling on her shoulders. But in this matter she has had the faithful cooperation of her son, Mr. Gilbert Beebe, who now, owing to his mother's death, is left with the entire charge of publishing the "Signs of the Times." Whether it will be the mind of Mr. Beebe to continue the "Signs of the Times" we do not know, or whether he could carry on, even if he wanted to do so, we do not know. The issue of the matter belongs with the God of Israel, in devotion to whom the paper has been maintained for ninety-seven years. Whether God wants the paper kept up, we do not even know. If he does, he will open the way by which it is to be done. If he loes not, Mr. Beebe's efforts as publisher and our efforts as editors will avail nothing. In either event our hearts are cast down at the loss we have sustained in the death of sister Beebe. In the epis-

ties of Paul and other writers of the New Testament are mentioned sisters in the church in that apostolic day who ministered faithfully to the saints then. Sister Beebe in her time has rounded out a life of spiritual service and usefulness in the church of this age. May the God of our salvation direct by his unerring counsel all our steps according to his infinite knowledge and wisdom, and may he reconcile to his holy will through the felt presence of the Comforter all who are bereaved in this instance. L.

DEACON JAMES IRWIN MONEY was born in Barren County, Georgia, August 5th, 1850, and died July 13th, 1927, at his home in Tidwell, Texas. He was married to Phatama Martin October 10th, 1869, and to that union were born six children, four boys and two girls, two of whom died in infancy. The surviving children are Mrs. Polly Tatum, of San Antonio, Texas, Mrs. Nancy Samples and Caleb Money, of Tidwell, Texas, and Owen Money, of Sulphur Springs, Texas. He moved to Texas and located in Hunt County in 1871, where he continued to make his home until removed by death. His wife preceded him in death, dying May 29th, 1904. He was married again to Mrs. Sallie A. McBrayer, April 20th, 1905. Two children, a boy and a girl, were born to the union. The daughter died in infancy. The son, Baily, and his mother live together at the home in Tidwell, Texas. Brother Money was called by grace about the year 1880, and united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Saline, where he continued in fellowship and faithful service to his pastor and church for nearly half a century. He was baptized by the late Elder J. M. C. Roberson, and soon afterward the church discovered in him the gift of deacon and set him apart to that office, which he used well and gat to himself a good degree. Brother Money was a good husband and father, a good provider, a good neighbor and a good citizen. His manner of life was so circumspect that the confidence of his friends in him was unbounded. He was well grounded and uncompromising in the fundamental principles of the doctrine which establishes the sovereignty of Jehovah, and exalts salvation by grace, yet withall he was gentle and charitable toward those who were weak in the faith.

Brother Money was one of the most conscientious men it has been my pleasure to be acquainted with. He has been known to voluntarliy return and reimburse one with whom he had business dealings when it became evident to him that in the transaction he had gotten the better of the bargain. He was not only a hearer, but a doer of the word. He faithfully lived his profession. He was guided by his impressions of duty and was punctual in his performance of it. I wish here to record two circumstances in his life that will not only serve to acquaint the reader with the characteristics of this good man, but I feel they are worth preserving and emulating. In a dream a neighbor came to him and solicited a donation to help bury a poor person who had died in the community, and as he was about to make the donation a voice said to him, The living, not the dead. The voice was so impressive that it awakened him, and he could not sleep the balance of the night. The next morning this neighbor he had seen in his dream came to him and requested him to go and take a certain poor and afflicted brother in the community to the poor-house. He made an excuse that he could not, that he had some business to attend to, and hitched to his buggy and drove away and was gone nearly half the day, but attended to no business. He was never able to explain why he should make that trip under such trying exercises of mind, or why he should have told his neighbor what he did, but he returned home with a decision of mind and told his wife he was going to bring this poor brother to their home and give him a home while he lived. Her answer was, I wish you would. He ate his lunch and drove over and got the brother, who had been apprised of the effort being made to send him to the poor-house, and as they were driving along the old brother asked what the poor-house was like, and brother Money tried to tell him. He said, I do not want to go. No reply was made until they drove up to brother Money's gate, when he said, This is the poor-house to which I am taking you. The sequel was doubtless joy unbounded. This was done without charge to the church; and with all his liberality the Lord prospered him. Another circumstance which, in order to relate it intelligibly, will require some personal mention. Elder J. C. Sikes was pastor of brother Money's church at this time, and he often contributed to the temporal wellfare of his pastor, but usually in response to his impressions. On this particular occasion his impression directed him to give brother Sikes ten dollars. On the way the impression came to him not to give it to brother Sikes, but to give it to sister Sikes. (She was sick at the time and on her death-bed.) The impression was so forcibly impressed in his mind that he stopped and pondered: Why give it to sister Sikes? Can it be possible brother Sikes is not providing her with such things as she needs? But the impression continued and he went on, and when he went in to bid sister Sikes goodbye he left ten dollars in her hand. But he could not dismiss the troublesome thought of "Why give it to sister Sikes" from his mind. In a few days he was directed by an impression of mind to go to Greenville, a distance of about five miles, and he would meet a sister there from a church below there, and to give her ten dollars. Here he was completely nonplussed. She was in good financial circumstances and did not need any charity, and, besides, at that particular time he did not have ten dollars, all of which he revolved in his mind as an offset to the impression, but the answer was, "The Lord will provide." He hitched his horse to

the buggy and started, but not without much heart-searching to know what it all meant. Just after arriving in Greenville he started up the street and a man called to him, and it proved to be a man who owed him fifteen dollars and wished to pay it. He took the money and walked straight to the bank with which he did business and the sister to whom he had been directed to give the ten dollars was in the bank. He handed her the ten dollars with the explanation that he had been impressed to give her that amount. She was surprised, of course, but took it. He turned and walked out of the bank, and having no more business in town drove home. The sister was on her way to visit sister Sikes. In their conversation sister Sikes made known that she desired to purchase her burial shroud before she died, which she felt would not be long, and which was true, and she did not wish to trouble her husband's mind by mentioning the matter to him. The sister gave her the ten dollars brother Money had given her that morning, and that amount, with what she had, solved the problem for her, and she gave directions and had the purchase made at once. This fact was not known by brother Money for some years afterward. These very remarkable circumstances show to my mind the wonderful hand of Providence on the one hand, and the patient, willing, submission of an heir of grace and glory to the benificient leadings of the Holy Spirit on the other.

Elder J. C. Sikes conducted the funeral services from the late home in Tidwell, Texas, in the presence of the bereaved family and a large concourse of sorrowing friends, after which his body was laid to rest in the cemetery by the churchhouse in which he had delighted to meet with the saints and worship the God he loved and honored with a beautiful and faithful life devoted to his service. I do not doubt but that life will be perpetuated in the full blaze of glory to all eternity.

ALSO,

MARY ANN (JONES) BURGESS was born in Jackson County, Alabama, June 24th, 1852, and died at her home in Dallas, Texas, January 4th, 1929, aged 76 years, 6 months and 10 days. She was married to J. O. Burgess August 26th, 1869. To that union were born six children, one son and five daughters. Two of the daughters preceded her in death. The remaining daughters are married and live near the home in Dallas, and the son was making his home with his parents at the time of his mother's death. She, with her husband and family, moved to Texas in 1880, since which time, except about three years, their home has been in Dallas, Texas. Early in life she was given a good hope in Christ, but did not unite with the church until about the year 1900. Her husband united with the Missionary Baptists and preached for them for several years, but sister Burgess could never see her way clear to go with him under a banner of legal works for salvation. He finally saw the error of his way and was ready to come with his wife when she offered herself to the Primitive Baptist Church, at that time an arm of Sabine Church, Hunt County, Texas, which held its meetings in Dallas. They were both received by the church, and baptized by the writer. Brother Burgess was afterward ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, and his faithful wife has discharged the duties and obligations that became hers, both toward the church and in her home, with such patience and willingness as that no doubt could remain of her love and devotion to the church and to the cause of truth. After the church was constituted at Dallas, of which she was a charter member, it had no house of worship of its own, and for about twenty years held its meetings in sister Burgess' home, where she gave a hearty welcome to all who came. Age and affliction had weakened her, though she was not confined to her bed until the last few hours of her life. She sweetly fell asleep in Jesus January 4th, surrounded by her family and friends. The writer tried to speak some words of comfort to the bereaved family, the church and friends who had gathered. He was assisted in the services by Elder J. H. Smith, of Fort Worth, Texas. Her remains were intered in the South Park Cemetery to await the final summons to awake in the likeness of the Redeemer, when he shall come to raise the dead to eternal glory. To the bereaved husband and children I would say, Submit in patience unto the ways of the Lord, all of which are just, righteous and glorious. May he give you reconciling grace, that you may be still and know that he is God.

J. R. HARDY.

JAMES FRANKLIN SAVAGE, son of the late Dr. John and Mary J. Savage, was born in Jackson County, Missouri, December 28th, 1848. In 1850 the family crossed the plains from Missouri to Oregon by ox teams, arriving in Marion County late in the fall of the same year. Doctor and Mrs. Savage took their donation land claims about seventeen miles east of Salem, in the Waldo Hills, in Marion County, where they reared their large family of sons and daughters. Frank Savage, as he was always known to his many acquaintances, remained on his father's farm until he reached his majority, receiving his education in the public schools of his neighborhood, and attending Willamette University for a time. He married Margaret J. Savage, of Linn County, Oregon, April 21st, 1872, and they traveled the road of life together for nearly fifty years, Mrs. Savage dying February 12th, 1922. To that union were born ten children, as follows: Mrs. Elva M. Martin, of Salem, Oregon, Mrs. Maud Knapp, deceased, Miss Genevieve Savage, deceased, Lewis Franklin Savage, deceased, John I. Savage, of Portland, Ore., Miss Pearl Savage, deceased, W. Ernest Savage, of Salem, Mrs. Lucille Smith, of Portland, Mrs. Ruth Pound, of Salem, Miss Grace Savage, of Clatskanie, Oregon. Two brothers and one sister also survive, they are Dr. Benjamin Savage, of

Kansas City, Kansas, Albert T. Savage, of the Waldo Hills, Marion County, and Mrs. Beebee, of Woodland, California, besides twenty-six grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, many nephews and nieces, most of whom reside in Marion County. He had followed farming and dairying until ten years ago, when he and his wife left the farm and moved to Salem to spend their declining years. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church when a young man, and ever afterward lived a consistent, charitable, benevolent and spiritual christian in the fullest sense of the term. He was a loving husband, an affectionate and thoughtful father, a true friend, a good neighbor and an upright citizen. His death occurred suddenly and unexpectedly in the afternoon of April 23rd, 1929, at the home of his sister-in-law, Mrs. Lillie Nadstanek, in Salem.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral services, which were held at the funeral parlors in Salem April 25th, 1929, using for a text Job xiv. 14. He was assisted by the Missionary Baptist minister of Salem. His body was buried in the Hillside Cemetery, near Salem, there to await the sounding of the trumpet, when the dead in Christ shall be raised, immortalized, glorified and made like unto his glorious body. "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Brother Savage was a member of Cedar Creek Church at the time of his death.

Written by his pastor,

S. B. MOFFITT.

MRS. SAMUEL MACDONALD, nee Frances Volumnia Beebe, passed away at the home of her sister, Mrs. James C. Macdonald, Ridgetown, Ontario, Friday morning, March 29th, 1929, aged 69 years, she having been born in Covington, Georgia, December 31st, 1859. She was the eldest daughter of the late Elder William L. Beebe and his second wife, Mrs. Eliza Henderson Hawkins. She was a niece of the late Honorable George M. Beebe, Judge of the New York Court of Claims, ex-Governor of Kansas, Assemblyman and State Senator for New York, who was the last surviving child of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, as he died in 1927. Mrs. Macdonald was a granddaughter of Elder Gilbert Beebe, the founder and organizer of the "Signs of the Times." On her mother's side she was the granddaughter of Elder James Henderson, of Monticello, Georgia. The late Mrs. Macdonald at the age of seventeen removed from Georgia with her parents to Ontario, Canada, where her father for some years served the Covenanted Baptist Church as pastor. In February, 1882, she was married in Duart, Ontario, to Samuel Macdonald. Shortly afterward she was received into the Beulah Baptist Church, of which her father was founder and pastor. She was baptized in the River Sydenham, and remained firm in the faith until her death. Mrs. Macdonald leaves to mourn their loss a son, Gordon Alexander, of Vancouver, B. C., Canada, and a daughter, Clara Virginia, Mrs. Alfred Cummings, of Fernie, B. C. Her eldest child, Eliza Larue, died in infancy. She is survived also by two sisters, Mrs. Phoebe Louisa Macdonald, of Ridgetown, Ontario, and Mrs. Florence Paxson, of Leesburg, Virginia.

Funeral services were held in the Covenanted Baptist meetinghouse, Duart, Ontario, and were conducted by Elder Watt, pastor of the Beulah Baptist Church, Brooke, Ontario, after which her body was interred in the Duart cemetery beside her late husband and baby.

Written by her daughter,

VIRGINIA MACDONALD CUMMINGS.

MRS. SUSIE FRANCES OSBURN, wife of Peter W. Osburn, passed away at her home, 160 Beacon Street, Middletown, N. Y., May 4th, 1929, after an illness of about nine months. She was born in Elmira, N. Y., a daughter of George Hunt and Clara E. Carey. With her mother, in June, 1898, they were baptized by Elder A. B. Francis, and she believed in this faith until the last. She was married to Peter W. Osburn February 2nd, 1898, by Elder William L. Beebe. Besides her husband the living relatives include four daughters: Mary Emma, wife of Albert Norris, Gladays Evelyn, wife of Nathan Nichols, both of Scotchtown, N. Y., Claribel, wife of Harry Campbell, of Winterton, N. Y., Lila Frances, wife of Daniel Patten, at home, two sons, Clinton W. Osburn, of Middletown, N. Y., and Robert P. Osburn, of Central Valley, N. Y., one brother, Benjamin K. Hunt, of Middletown, N. Y., and one sister, Mrs. Ida E. VanSchaick, of Richmond Hill, N. Y., also two grandchildren.

The funeral was held in the Middletown and Wallkill church-house Monday, May 6th, at 2:30 p. m., Elder R. Lester Dodson speaking with much comfort to those left with sad hearts, and yet with joy to think that the Lord called her from her suffering to the land of peaceful rest. We all knew that she longed to bid this world farewell and be at home with God, our heavenly Father. Elder Dodson read her favorite hymns, 881 and 1228, and took his text from Job xix. 23--27. The burial took place in the Wallkill Cemetery at Phillipsburg, N. Y.

Written by her nephew,

STANLEY B. HUNT.

ANITA DURAND BRONSON died Saturday, April 13th, 1929, at her home in Gordon, Pennsylvania. She was born in Herrick, Bradford County, Pennsylvania, October 10th, 1860. Her father, Warren Durand, and her mother, Urania Stockwell Durand, were members of the Old School Baptist Church at Vaughn Hill, Pennsylvania. After their death she and brother Victor made their home with their uncle, Elder Silas H. Durand. She attended Hopewell Seminary, at Hopewell, New Jersey. She was married by Elder Durand at his home in Southampton, Pa., August

27th, 1885, to Dr. A. F. Bronson. They had two children, one son who died in infancy, and a daughter. Many readers of the "Signs" will remember seeing Anita in her uncle's home. She suffered a great deal from ill health during her lifetime, but made very light of her sufferings. Her life was lived in unselfish devotion to others. She had a peculiar gift for entering into the lives of others with sympathetic understanding, and was always ready to give freely of her time and thought to all who came to her for help. No one ever came in contact with her without feeling the influence of her gracious personality and being helped by it. The great number of people who came to the bereaved home and the innumerable letters of sorrow which poured in testified to what she had meant in the lives of all who knew her. She had been ill for about a month with pneumonia and complications, and her suffering during that illness was very great in spite of all that the faithful nurses and many doctors could do. But the call came to her to come up higher, and now her spirit is freed from that suffering. Her passing has left a vacancy that nothing on earth can fill. Many are the hearts that are asking, How can we live without her? But we do not mourn as those who have no hope. She had a sweet hope in the mercy of God. Her favorite hymn was, "Blessed be the tie that binds," &c., and it was read at the funeral, which was held at the home in Gordon. She is survived by her husband and her daughter Alberta, Mrs. A. C. Conner, of Ardmore, Pa. and by six grandchildren. May the Lord comfort them in their overwhelming grief.

MILDRED DURAND GORDY.

MARY LOUISA BLUE, daughter of Moses and Loucinda Nellans, was born April 4th, 1858, and departed this life August 25th, 1928, making her sojourn here 70 years, 3 months and 21 days. In 1878 she was married to William E. Blue, and she bore him nine children, as follows: Maude E. Blue, of Newark, N. J., Rhesa C. Blue, Grand Rapids, Mich., Blanche B. Blue, Newark, N. J., Myrtle S. Redwood, Detroit, Mich., John S. Blue, Maurice Blue, deceased, Thurman Blue, Hammond, Ind., Ralph Blue, deceased, Delta N. Arnold, New Brunswick, N. J. All of the children live hundreds of miles from our home, but all were able to come to their mother's funeral to share the grief of their father, for they all dearly loved their mother. My cup runneth over and I can hardly write. She was a dear wife and companion, a true and helpful helpmeet, a very devoted mother to her family, giving them that thought and care that only mothers can give. Moreover she was a believer in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and by the grace of God was enabled to confess him before all men, therefore in the year 1885 she was added to what was then known as the Walnut Grove Old School Baptist Church, Benton County, Indiana, to which church her husband, the writer, belonged. For some unknown reason our God chose to call away from that section of country several of the members of that church, we with the rest, so we lost our church privileges, and could never fellowship the teachings that are taught here, so we remained alone, having no preaching but the "Signs of the Times." Many have been our trials, which my dear one bore with meekness and patience.

My nerves are very unsteady and my heart too full to write more, yet I must say I have a little hope that I may meet with our Lord and all his redeemed, to dwell together for evermore.

WILLIAM E. BLUE.

JANIE D. FISHER, my dear wife, was born September 4th, 1848, in Monroe County, Missouri, and departed this life in Accomack, County, Virginia. We were married March 11th ,1873, spending a little over fifty-six years together in this happy union, in which were born four sons, two dying in infancy, leaving two, with myself, to mourn this loss, but not as those without hope. She received a hope in the finished work of Christ and was baptized in the fellowship of Berea Old School Baptist Church, in Audrain County, Missouri, the fourth Sunday in August, 1874, and lived a consistent member in this faith to the end. The hope that had been her stay and comfort in life was her support in death. I have ever felt that she was God's gift to me; she was a faithful helpmeet and companion. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

MARTIN D. FISHER.

ORDINATIONS.

Harmony Church of Primitive Baptists met the third Sunday in April to ordain brother A. Y. Whitmer to the work of the ministry, and John Egneu and brother Cisro Fettinger to deaconships. The presbytery was composed of the following ministers: Elder Irwin, of Greencastle, Ind., Elder W. S. Jones, Redmon, Ill., Elder Goff, Gessie, Ind., Elder Harpster, W. S. Elder, of Gays, Ill., Elder Smith, Gessie, Ind. After choosing Elder Wm. Fettinger Moderator and W. S. Jones Clerk, the presbytery proceeded to the work, and after the Moderator had called upon brother Whitmer to tell his experience and call to the ministry, which he did satisfactorily to the presbytery, he was received by the church, and the presbytery was discharged. The meeting continued the entire day and ten sermons were preached during the session and all were made to rejoice. May God have all the praise.

W. A. WATERS, Church Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. W. S. Johnson, N. Y., $1; T. J. Ratliff, Ky., $3; Simeon Hiltabrand, Ill., $3; Mildred Durand Gordy, Mich., $1; Mrs. Sarah V. Curry, Colo., $2; G. W. Golden, Iowa, $1; Wm. E. Blue, N. Y., $3; "A friend," Mich., $2; Mrs. Amelia Tomlinson, Pa., $1; Miss Editha Corwin, N. Y., $2.

MEETINGS.

The Olive and Hurley Church of the Lexington-Roxbury Association, have appointed our annual two days meeting to be held the third Saturday and Sunday in June (15th and 16th), 1929, the Lord willing. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Trains will be met at Ashokan Saturday morning.

JOHN J. SECOR, Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expect Elder George Ruston to be with them the fifth Sunday in June (June 30th, 1929). For convenience services are to be held at the home of J. E. Livingston, 61 E. Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., the Lord willing, at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m., also on Saturday before at 2 p. m. The D. & H. trains from Albany to Birmingham arrive and leave Cobleskill in convenient time for the meeting. All are welcome.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, every Sunday at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. (Daylight Saving Time) at the home of W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.. Midweek song service by appointment. Pastors, Elders Jones and Jaynes. Basket lunch.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

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Preaching First and Third Sundays

ALL WELCOME

The Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday at 1 p. m. at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Orange and Eleventh Streets, Riverside, California, and every alternate first Sunday, beginning with January, at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. Eleventh Street, Claremont, California, at 10:30 a. m., all-day session, with lunch at place of meeting; and every other first Sunday at Riverside, California, same place and hour as mentioned above for third Sundays.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.

O. P. SPEIRS, Clerk.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sunday at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First. "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, Convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second. The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Eld. Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third. "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Eld. H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio. Fourth. "Fatalism." By Eld. H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio. Fifth. "The Celestial Railroad" This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth. "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 97. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1929. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

OROVILLE, Cal., March 20, 1929.

DEAR FRIENDS:—I am sending you a letter to publish in the SIGNS if you see fit. I have not the consent of the writer, but as he is one of the editors I do not think he will care. I am the one to care, for it shows my ignorance in blazing colors, but it seems too good to keep to myself. It is the most wonderful letter I ever received, and there might be some other poor sinner would get comfort and understanding from it as I did. I am not a member of the church, but if I know myself I surely do love the dear old SIGNS and all who write for, read and believe what it contends for. I crave an interest in the prayers of all God's saints, and may his richest blessings rest upon the publishers and editors of the SIGNS.

A friend,

MARION S. BROOKS.

Rutherford, N. J., Jan. 26, 1929.

MRS. MARION S. BROOKS—DEAR FRIEND:—Your letter of the 14th was duly received, and read with interest and appreciation. It is encouraging to me that you should have felt my editorial in the December SIGNS OF THE TIMES was worth reading over and over again, and since you say you are not privileged to hear the gospel ministry and are desirous of my answering some of your questions and giving my views on what is termed "the second coming of Christ in a bodily form on earth again," I shall endeavor to give you the essence of my understanding of the subject, though let me assure you in advance that I make no claim whatever to having any corner on knowledge of spiritual things. I can only say, in line with one of the apostles on a certain occasion, Such as I have give I unto thee, and my views may not be the facts in the case at all. Just consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things that are needful for you.

You ask me to read the seventh verse of the first chapter of Revelation, which I have, and will here quote, that we may

get in our minds thoroughly what it is you wish to consider. The verse reads as follows: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen." The word "behold" implies an exclamation, or, Come see an unusual sight, something out of the ordinary and, perhaps, never before witnessed, and such indeed was the case with John here. I would remind you here of something I said in the article referred to, that this book of Revelation is introduced as being "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass." It is addressed to "The seven churches that are in Asia." The number seven being a perfect Bible number, every one of the churches, or shall I say branches of the vine at the different points of the compass, embracing God's humble followers of every nation and tribe, both Jew and Gentile, in this the gospel day. The Scriptures were given for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of them might have hope, and we do well to search them. I do not feel that I can do better than say what is meant in this seventh verse of the first chapter than that his people should behold him, by faith, as the risen Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords. In the days of Noah, following the flood, God's promise was that he would put his bow in the cloud, which was to be an evidence that he would no more destroy the earth, &c., and this was the promise of the coming of the Word, or the Son of God, to be made manifest in the flesh, which is a cloud, for even his own brethren in the flesh, the Jews, did not discern or comprehend Jesus to be the Messiah, for it is declared they received him not, neither did they see any beauty in him, for he was as a root out of dry ground. The Old Testament Scriptures are full of the signs of his coming; they are but arrows pointing to the one and only way of salvation from sin. The prophets are spoken of as stars, shining or reflecting in the legal dispensation, the glorious light of him who was to be the light of every man that cometh into the world—the spiritual world. Isaiah, in the sixty-third chapter, voicing to my mind the mind of the church under legalism, or the night season, looking down through hundreds of years before the coming of Christ in the flesh, asks, Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? By faith he saw the substance of every christian's hope, Christ, and him crucified and risen. Edom means earthly, or weak, which implied that Christ be manifested in the flesh, take upon himself, not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, be clothed with humanity and thus experience the weakness of the flesh and be able to succor his people in all their temptations and trials and satisfy the demands of justice against them by suffering, pouring out his life's blood for the sheep of his pasture. Bozrah means sheep-

fold, thus it was that Jesus being made in the likeness of his brethren, came up as one of them and bled, dyed his garments with his own blood for them, but this was not all. Isaiah not only saw him come up out of weakness as the Lamb of God which should take away the sin of the world, but he was "glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength." He was every wit a King, and all power, both in heaven and earth, was given into his hand. What a glorious, yea, an unusual sight to behold him coming in the clouds; he is obscured from the sight of mortal man, no one can behold him, or see God in this sense, and live, but those who are born of the Spirit, being new creatuses in Christ, do behold him travelling in the greatness of his strength. His answer to that query of the church under that dispensation, as it was spoken by her leader, Isaiah, who prophesied, The morning cometh, though he knew not how long the night would last, yet the fire of faith burned in his inmost soul and he was persuaded that however long the night might be prolonged, the morning would come, and with joy, and he was looking and waiting and watching, and Jesus never disappoints one who by faith looks for his coming, his word was, I speak in righteousness, mighty to save. How wonderful that it should be he who speaks in righteousness: he being the head of the church, or the Husband of the wife, was rightly bound by God the Father or held as the one responsible for the sins of the church, and he, Jesus, could not have maintained his honor except by paying the debt and redeeming her from under the curse of the law which she had wilfully trangressed, and thus was manifested the great love wherewith he loved her. Nothing must or can separate her from him, and God accepted and honored the payment of the debt by exalting him at his own right hand, and therefore there is none who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect. Isaiah was right in the vision which he had, which extended beyond the Jewish fold, for when Christ came he broke down the wall of partition which separated the Jew from the Gentile and made of one blood all nations that dwell upon the face of the earth, therefore "every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him." The law was given to Moses for national Israel, and the Gentiles, not being able to claim Abraham as their father, could have no part in that kingdom, so that a new and better way had to be made whereby the Gentiles could come in, and it was by the shedding of his blood that those who were afar off, meaning the Gentiles, were brought nigh and made fellow-citizens in the household of faith. Indeed, it was their sins as well as the sins of the Jews which nailed him to the rugged cross, and unless his side was pierced for them they are still without hope.

"And all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen." When one is brought to a knowledge of sin, to know it in all of its hideousness and to see it reach the height of its climax in the crucifixion of the holy, harmless, undefiled and spotless Lamb

of God, on the ignominious cross between two thieves, does it not open to our view the bottomless pit of sin and hell into which wicked hands can descend? and when we are made further to realize that this wicked principle is in us, that our heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, is there anything less than the unspeakable mercy of the never-changing God and the riches of his grace as he in his infinite wisdom saw fit to store up in Jesus Christ for their needs, adequate for a basis of even hope of salvation from the eternal banishment of the presence of him who is holy and pure in every sense of the word? Is there then not a wailing when we realize how depraved we are and how wicked we have been, and still are? What a great need there is, and how comforting to those who have been bitten by the serpent of sin and know the malady of their soul, to have the doctrine of salvation by grace, God's unmerited favor bestowed upon the sinner, preached unto them. Is it not, indeed, the most amazing and astonishing sight in all the world that a way should have been prepared by the God of love to snatch such brands from the burnings of his wrath against sin and uncleanness? "Even so, Amen." Yes, even so let it be, for such is the way that God in his infinite wisdom hath designed the plan to be: that sin should come by man and that he should be the wretch that he is, that he, God, might show forth his power and glory in rescuing and delivering such a creature from the very belly of hell. Oh that we could speak forth his matchless worth for his unspeakable kindness and his wonderful works among the children of men. Moses exclaimed, "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth, * * * * because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, and his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." His dealings with Moses had been in a cloud, but at the end of his journey, for Moses was now ready to go hence, the Lord having shown him something of his purpose in grace in preserving his life, when king Pharaoh sought to destroy him; in bringing him up in this same king's household, to the end that Moses must be taught the ways of the Egyptians and prepared for that which God had stored up for him, to be the leader of his people out of the land of Egypt, and all that God had done for him, which I will not take the time here to enumerate, seemed so overwhelmingly wonderful to him as to fill him with adoration for the majestic glory of the God who had been the God of his life, as to cause him to desire that both heaven and earth should join forth in the praise of his great and adorable name. So it is when poor sinners are given to behold the way of salvation, Christ, and him crucified and risen; if they had all the tongues in the world multiplied by an innumerable company, they could not praise him as they feel he deserves to be praised for the unspeakable gift of his only begotten Son

for those whom he chose in him before the world was.

In the first chapter of Acts we find language treating upon the subject under consideration. The writer here declares regarding the fact of the resurrection of Christ, that he "shewed himself alive after his passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God; and being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith ye have heard of me: for John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence." Were they not baptized "not many days hence" when the day of Pentecost was fully come and they all heard, every man in his own tongue? He told them that they would be witnesses unto him, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth, after they had received power and the Holy Ghost had come upon them. Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the "uttermost part of the earth" shows how far reaching and all embracing his power would be felt and witnessed to, no bounds, no conditions, since the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.

"And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." They had looked for him to restore the kingdom of Israel, as you will see from the sixth verse, and they were commanded not to depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father. They were to be made to realize that his kingdom was not of this world, but that he came from heaven, and to heaven he must return. He came from heaven to do the will, or work, of the Father, and having finished that work he is received back up into heaven by the Father, and a cloud received him out of their sight. As they stood gazing up into heaven, unable to see him with the natural eye, so when he comes it is in like manner, or in a cloud, neither is any able to see him but by the eye of faith. His kingdom is a spiritual kingdom and he dwells in light which no man can attain unto, and to this testimony stand the two witnesses in white apparel, the Old and the New Testaments, the prophets and the apostles; the Scriptures all harmonize and are not contradictory, as you seem to think. The contradiction is in you and in me. You say if Christ does not come again in the flesh, or in a bodily form, you will be like the child that discovers there is no Santa Claus. How about this? The child's vision is that there is a man, so to speak, with red coat, white wiskers, &c., and yet when they outgrow this childish

view they realize something of, shall I say, the spiritual aspect of it? that there is something far greater than any man, something which works more or less in all men, by which they are moved to do acts of kindness, &c. To comprehend this is to comprehend in larger measure than ever before. To your question, If we do not look for the coming of Christ, what do we look for? Let me answer in the language of the great apostle, To depart and be with Christ. This in a spiritual sense is far greater and more wonderful, beyond words to compare, than any physical body which our natural eyes can behold. Furthermore, the apostle has declared that, Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet know we him no more in this manner. Even though he should come in the form which you mention, is there any reason whatever to believe that we would recognize him as the Christ? His mother who bore him in a natural sense took him to be the gardner after his resurrection as he appeared there, neither could she know differently until he revealed himself, and it was only necessary for him to speak—Mary. Then she knew and confessed him, and so does every one to whom he makes himself known. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven. God is a Spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. The members of his mystical body, like their glorious head, if I have any right understanding of this matter, had their beginning in him (Christ) before ever time was, and at the appointed time and manner were manifest in weakness, born of Adam, the earthly man, and by nature were all the children of wrath, even as others, but in due time they are brought forth as children of light, born of an incorruptible seed, which liveth and abideth forever, and this world is not their home, for they are journeying to another, even an heavenly country, and here among all the weakness and depravity of their vain nature they are made to witness to the power of God in quickening them and raising them up in newness of life and causing them to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. This is all typified by Israel as they dwelt in the land of Egyptian bondage, under the power of Pharaoh, whom God declared he raised up that he might show in him his power and that his name should be declared throughout all the earth. There is a time in which that which was sown in weakness shall be, so far as you and I are concerned, if indeed we be the children of God, raised in power and great glory, and we shall know of a truth that ear hath not heard, eye hath not seen, neither hath it entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, which we understand he reveals unto us by his Spirit. When in our own order we shall be brought forth in his likeness we shall see him as he is, be like him and be satisfied, and when our day here is done we shall go home to God, there to be with and praise him for ever and for ever.

I have no doubt but that the church of God as it is here in this world has

been and will continue to be subjected to many traditions and customs of the fathers; perfection shall not be attained here on earth, and while I do not wish to be guilty of bringing in anything that will disturb the peace and welfare of our beloved Zion, I hope I would not be so faithless as to shun to declare the whole truth of God as it is given me to see it, if thereby she might be sheared of her superstition and awakened to the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, who declared himself to be the way, the truth and the life. I desire to know nothing but Christ, and him crucified, and if the truth is applied by him as a sword which is sharp and divides asunder, &c., and shall set us free, we shall be free indeed. I hope you will continue to read the Bible and ponder the things therein written in your mind and heart, and as it may please him from whom all knowledge and understanding must come, may you receive the spiritual meaning of his written word into your very soul as seed that is sown in good ground, to the bringing forth of a copious fruit. That you can feast upon the fat things appearing in the SIGNS from time to time is evidence to me that you have passed from death unto life. The apostle says, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." If, indeed, we are in him that is true, we cannot be holden of death, for he hath conquered even this last enemy and it shall be made manifest in us when the time comes for us to experience it.

Lest I darken counsel with a multitude of words to no meaning, I will bring this to a close, hoping what I have said may prove edifying and comforting to you. Should other questions arise in your mind that you wish to ask me, as much as in me is I will endeavor to give you such light as I have, desiring that in all things our God, the blessed God of spiritual Israel, may have the praise.

Yours in hope of the life beyond this vale of tears,

R. LESTER DODSON.

PHILIPPIANS II. 12, 13.

"WORK out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.'

Jude also writes about the common salvation. "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed."—Solomon's Song iv. 12. (Marginal reference is "barred" instead of "inclosed.") Jesus did not claim to do any of his works of himself, but said, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. He did not claim as much as men do. I often hear it said, "God saves us with an eternal salvation; we have nothing to do with that, but there is a salvation that we must work out," &c Also, "We must cultivate faith or it will not grow, as we must cultivate crops to keep the weeds down so the crops can grow," &c. "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and

bulwarks."—Isaiah xxvi. 1. The eighth chapter of Romans teaches us the inability of flesh to follow after the Spirit; that it is through the Spirit we are drawn away from the world to follow Jesus.

There is a vast difference in the view of Elder Hassell and some brethren about the common salvation. He wrote in the *Gospel Messenger*, February, 1913, in answer to the question, "What is meant by the 'common salvation?' " His answer was, "The salvation shared by all the people of God, purposed for them by the Father, wrought for them by the Son, and applied to them by the Spirit." This does not sound like a salvation that is ours if we work it out. We work it out because it is ours. Salvation is given us in Christ or it would not be ours to work out. It is not something worked in us and left with us to work out or not as we please. Of course we do as we please, for when we are led by the flesh, or Satan, we please to follow him, but when we are led by Jesus we are pleased to follow him. To work out our own salvation is to live after the Spirit—live a Christ-like life, manifesting that the Spirit of Christ abides in us, that salvation of the Lord has been given to us, or it would not be ours. All the salvation we know anything about is in time. We have not entered eternity to know anything about it. We hope it is ours, and our work is to show forth the fruits of this life. Christ said he is the vine and we are the branches. If we abide in the Vine we bring forth much fruit, but if we do not abide in him we are dead to the works of the Spirit.

A garden is a plot of ground chosen from the surrounding ground, usually fenced, and is used for a specific purpose, so is the church called out from the world, separated, and protected. If left to itself any kind of weeds, except what is wanted, will grow, but the good have to be planted. The bad will grow and bring forth much fruit without cultivation, but those that are planted must be cultivated. All kinds of evil grow in the sinner's heart, but the Spirit must be planted in the heart and then cultivated, and it is not left for the sinner to do or it would soon be choked, but is planted and cultivated by the Husbandman. Garden plants are a delight to the husbandman. He has a variety of flowers, spices, &c., so all christian virtues are in the christian's heart and the Lord delights to dwell there. He also cares for the walls, as men care for fences, &c. In dry weather the garden must be watered. Christ is a living fountain to the church. This in substance is copied from Cruden's Concordance. David prayed to the Lord, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." Why did he do this if he could get those joys by working out "your own salvation?" The husbandman cultivates his garden, destroys the weeds, and the plants flourish. Does he tell them to do anything? What can they do? They can do only what is their nature to do, bring forth fruit after their kind. They only manifest what they are by their fruits, do not make themselves into something

else, neither do they plant, fertilize or cultivate. As long as we are in the flesh we grow or bear fleshly fruit, but when the Spirit enters, our nature is not changed, but overruled, turned about, and the good seed is planted in our hearts. Our nature is not killed to the love of sin, (I have often heard that we were killed to sin, but I could not see that principle in me, for my nature loves sin as much as ever) but there is a new principle put in our hearts that hates sin, and it rules over the flesh and makes us hate sin according to the measure of that gift in us. If we were killed to the love of sin where would be the warfare? There are many exhortations in the Scriptures as to how God's people should live and conduct themselves, but there are also Scriptures to show the poor weak sinner how this is done. "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do modify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Christ is our life, spiritually, and without him we are nothing, less than nothing, and vanity. Can one imagine what it is to be less than nothing? That is degrading self-exalted humans very low, and how is "less than nothing" going to do anything of its own strength? It may be said that I am surely setting forth a "stool of do nothing people," but not so, for Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." God's people are a busy people when they are exercised by the Spirit of the Lord. He has done more for them than they can ever pay, and they owe him service and praise all their lives, and praise through all eternity. How do we praise him? The only way I see is to be humble at his feet, saying, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven," and be willing to be used as he sees best, and do what he commands us to do looking to him who is the author and finisher of our faith. In this way we are cultivating our faith. Faith is a gift, and the ability, or tools, with which to cultivate is a gift, so all our salvation is by our Savior, who is a perfect Savior, and working out our salvation is only the effects or fruits of that salvation given us in Christ before the world was.

"A garden inclosed." "Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." A strong city! The husbandman is careful about the fence. He is jealous of his plants. The fence may be ever so beautiful, but is far eclipsed by the walls about the strong city. God said he is jealous and will not give his glory to another. Salvation is a perfect defense. There is no dog, wolf, power, or anything that can penetrate it. The world does not want it. It is life to christians, but death to the world. It not only keeps the world out, but keeps the Lord's people in. They are saved with an everlasting salvation, and cannot finally be lost, neither can any power pluck them out of God's hand. This does not mean that wolves in sheep's clothing cannot deceive us sometimes and join the church, but they can never penetrate the wall of salvation. They may sit with us around the Lord's table, but they cannot see it in spirit, nor eat of the feast spread

thereon, and sooner or later they make themselves manifest, as many are doing now, worshiping idols and forgetting God and their first love, and some of the idols are men.

Sometimes I can write with an easy flow of mind, but not so in this letter, and I fear that it is of no profit. I do not want to advocate anything contrary to the truth as it is in Christ, nor sow seeds of discord. If this is of no comfort throw it away, and pray for one who is in continual need of prayer.

Unworthily,

GEORGE W. JACKSON.

FAYETTEVILLE,, Georgia.

PHILIPPIANS II. 2.

"FULFILL ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind."

Here the apostle is exhorting the Philippians to unity of spirit and humbleness of mind, that as the ambassadors of Christ they might be found as examples of his humility, that they might thereby also be partakers of his exaltation, and Paul's exhortation following is one of the most specific to be found in the New Testament Scriptures, and is a divinely beautiful enlargement of our text, which, although brief, embraces the true essence of the communion of the saints, which is, according to the Scriptures, preserved by two bonds: agreement in sound doctrine and brotherly love, by being "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." The church thus being established on the doctrine of Christ and the apostles cannot admit the inventions of men in their many false theories and doctrines without forsaking this sure foundation and her right to be called the house of God, the pillar and ground of truth, (1 Tim. iii. 15,) and in Isaiah xxix. 13, 14, God has declared he will visit such with spiritual blindness. This sure foundation set forth by Christ and the apostles is founded upon the election of God and cannot fail but with the subversion of his eternal providence; it is also united with the sure stability of Christ in his seven-fold government as "Lord of lords and King of kings," declaring that all which the Father hath given him shall come unto him, and that no man is able to pluck them out of his Father's hand. In Deuteronomy xii. 32, we hear the Master declaring, "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it." Also Proverbs xxx. 5, 6: "Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." These things are spoken expressly to the church, and were accomplishments of the law as relating to the church and are not abrogated, but shine forth in all their clearness under the gospel dispensation. In this respect it behooves us to remember that no change takes place in the Lord, who declares he cannot be offensively worshiped with the traditions and commandments of men, and if we would have communion of the saints we must hold sacred the commands of the Lord

and seek to obey him with one common consent, that the conscience of the church, or members in particular, shall not be burdened in conscience for God's judgments against sins or individual offenses, but with open hearts be enabled to call upon him daily, Lord, forgive us our trespasses. Judges viii. 27, informs us how the ephod of Gideon produced such fatal consequences to himself, his family and all the people, and these things are recorded no doubt for our admonition to "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees,"—Matt. xvi. 6, that is, of every doctrine and commandment of men of their own they endeavor to mix with the pure word of God. To this end the churches should have well informed and faithful pastors who through wise judgment will be able to refute and shut the doors against all corrupt opinions and theories injurious to sound doctrine and discipline, and thereby maintain all things "decently and in order" for the preservation and spiritual polity of the church. In the sixteenth chapter of Matthew we read how Christ commissioned Peter, and promised to give unto him the "keys of the kingdom of heaven," saying, "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." Here Christ has commissioned unto the church the power of discipline, and hear him further, in John xx. 22, 23, when he says to his disciples in commissioning them to go forth and preach the gospel, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." He is not here setting himself aside as the Redeemer from all sin and who alone hath power on earth to forgive sins and present those so blessed before his Father's throne justified in his righteousness, but relates more particularly to the preaching of the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation. In 2 Corinthians v. 18--20, Paul sets forth how God hath committed unto his ministers the "word," not the work, "of reconciliation," that in the name of Christ, which is by his authority, they might daily exhort the people to be reconciled to God, thereby confirming pious consciences, through the preaching of the gospel, of the certainty of God's promises in the hope of pardon and remission. The Lord in committing the gospel to the apostles at the same time invested them with the power of binding and loosing according to its precepts; for what is this glorious gospel but that, the whole human race being all slaves to the "law of sin and death," we are loosed and delivered alone by the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, and that those who do not thus receive him as their Deliverer and Redeemer are condemned and remain under the sentence of eternal death? Any minister endowed with any other gospel cannot be a true minister of Christ, for any other gospel is vain and ineffectual to the deliverance or salvation of any for the remission of sins. The promise of eternal life through Christ is the true message of salvation, and is not in the power of

man; only the ministration of it is given to men, through the preaching of the word, of which all down through the ages he has appointed and called forth men to be the ministers of, and he has so inseparably connected the discipline of the church and the preaching of the word that they cannot be separated and maintain the true ministry of the word and jurisdiction of the church. The saving doctrine of Christ is no less essential in setting forth God's plan of redemption than the admonitions of church government as set forth by Paul in 1 Corinthians v. 11: "I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one know not to eat." Again, "If any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed."—2 Thess. iii. 14. Again, I have judged to deliver such an one unto Satan, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. (1 Cor. v. 3, 5. In conjunction with this we are admonished to the law of forgiveness, to uphold the feeble hands and strengthen the feeble knees, and that with paternal gentleness, not calculated to confound or exasperate the offender, but to bring him unto a knowledge of the deceitfulness of sin and the cunning artifice of Satan, whereby he lieth in wait to deceive, that such an one may be thus rightly admonished, and not swallowed up with overmuch sorrow, but rather restored to the fellowship of the church, counting him not as an enemy, says Paul, but admonishing him as a brother. Thus admonitions become an intrigal part of the gospel and require wise and just judgment to deal with and maintain the communion of the saints, for such is the discipline of Christ in leading his people from grace to grace that he is ever propitious to their cries for mercy and supplications for sins that we should be mindful of the same spirit.

Dear editors, after reviewing the inclosed I feel somewhat undecided about troubling you with it, but feel certain you are fully able to decide if it is worthy of space in the SIGNS, and if not you will not hesitate to cast it aside as useless. I so deeply feel my littleness that I often tremble, not only in spirit, but also in body, at the alarming extent of my own ignorance. Of one thing I feel certain: that regardless of any light we may have, or seek to have of the holy Scriptures, it is only as a passing sunbeam, for here indeed we see as through a glass darkly and thus only get glimpses of God's eternal glory.

Unworthily yours,

JOHN GIBSON.

HAVRE, Mont., April 12, 1928.

LOS ANGELES, California.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have been requested by some of the readers of the SIGNS to try and write a few words in memory of Elder J. M. Arledge, who passed from this sin-cursed world April 8th, 1929, after a short illness that confined him to the

hospital but three weeks. I was called upon to try in my weak and stammering way to conduct the funeral services. As I stood by his bedside twelve hours before the final summons came these words came into my mind, recorded in Luke ix. 58, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head," which seemed to be most appropriate to the life, character and disposition of this dear servant of God. As far as a business man, or a politician, or any calling of affairs pertaining to the things of this life are concerned, Elder Arledge was a failure, but in the pulpit he was a power. His gift was almost immeasurable, but he was not appreciated as he should have been, as is the case in many instances, which seems so fittingly illustrated in the text referred to, and so typical of a true follower of the dear Lord and Master in his personal ministry here in this world. When buffeted he complained not, when rejected and falsely accused he threatened not nor retaliated, but submitted his case humbly unto his Lord and Master, as unto a faithful Creator. Through the faithful efforts of a few and tried friends a sufficient sum was raised among the Baptist families to purchase a burying site in the beautiful Evergreen Cemetery, in East Los Angeles, California, where his remains were followed by a large concourse of brethren and friends, there to await a better resurrection. In conjunction with contributions from churches in Iowa, where he began his ministry, we are erecting a monument at his grave, where he fell fighting the good fight of faith, with his face toward the "new Jerusalem." Thus another of God's tried and faithful servants has been removed. His time on earth has been fulfilled, God has called him home, the world was not worthy of him. The last sermon he preached, on the third Sunday in March, three weeks before his death, I shall never forget. He set his "stakes" as a nail driven in a sure place, and as his countenance shown with the grace of God he unraveled to us the revealed mysteries of the gospel of the grace of God. Oh that we all as ministers of God might have the humility, the self-denial, and put on as the elect of God the whole armor of God and fight the good fight of faith, putting our whole trust in him who is able to keep us from falling and present us holy and unblameable before him in love. If my poor heart deceives me not, I rejoice that God has counted me worthy to sit in the stand with such an able gift and to have an ear to hear his words of counsel, and ability to expound the mystery of God. I consider him the ablest gift that has visited the western coast since my time in the west. This I say with all due respect to any and all my yoke-fellows, and I am thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift that he has given us such gifts, that our glorying might be in God and not in men.

Yours in gospel bonds,

W. F. McCORMICK.

EDITORIAL.

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EZEKIEL I. 15—17.

"Now as I beheld the living creatures, behold, one wheel upon the earth by the living creatures, with his four faces. The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the color of a beryl; and they four had one likeness: and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel. When they went, they went upon their four sides; and they turned not when they went."

This wonderful vision was given to the prophet Ezekiel when the heavens were opened, and it was of God. Now as we come to consider the above we must note that the heavens were opened and he saw visions of God. In this vision he beheld living creatures. These, to our mind, are those to whom were given eternal life, who shall inhabit eternity with Jesus, for none have spiritual life except it be given by the Son of God, and he giveth eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him, and they shall never perish. He beheld one wheel upon the earth by the living creatures with his four faces, and the appearance of these living creatures were like burning coals of fire. This wonderful wheel, to our understanding, represents God's eternal purpose in all the world, and his creatures in this wheel, which has its four faces, and we hear this expression from him that inhabiteth eternity: "I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth." These words bring out what we understand to be represented in the expression, "With his four faces," for we believe that everything is as present with him, nothing old nor new with the Lord, and his all-seeing eye is ever beholding his people, and this wheel represents, to our mind, his purpose in the salvation of his people. This wheel was upon the earth by the living creatures, and when these living creatures went the wheels went by them, which is expressed in the New Testament: "I will never leave nor forsake you," and they are kept as the apple of his eye. We note the prophet saw living creatures and the creature. These creatures were in the vision of God and only revealed to the prophet when the heavens were opened. The Spirit of the living God must open to his people, as declared in the word given to John on the isle of Patmos, when he beheld the book sealed with seven seals, and no man in heaven nor in

earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book and look thereon and he was grieved, then the voice that spake said, "The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book."—Rev. v. 5. All these creatures had one likeness, which is the likeness of Jesus. As one declared, I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness. These creatures are spoken of throughout the Scriptures as the people of God, the saved of the Lord. God's salvation is the wheel that stands as walls and bulwarks about Zion, and they are directed by the Spirit, and they go where the mind of the Spirit is for them to go, as the people of God are led by the Spirit, and as many as led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God. All these creatures are as one in Christ Jesus, led by one Spirit, and are as one wheel in the middle of a wheel. Their work is manifested as we are in him, and he works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. This wonderful vision of God not only embraces the salvation of his people, but testifies that his people shall be manifested by the Spirit of the living God, and it is in him they live and move and have their being. This glorious truth brings to our mind the predestinated purpose of God in all things, whether visible or invisible, for we are so finite we cannot comprehend God or see his kingdom until we are born again by that incorruptible seed by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever, which reveals to us Jesus, the way, the truth and the life. What is it that is old or new with the Lord? We believe his infinite wisdom embraces all his purposes, and as he thought so shall it come to pass. "As I have purposed, so shall it stand."—Isaiah xiv. 24. These words call out the certainty of God, and his thoughts are the searchings of God, distinguishing his people and making their calling and election sure through grace. How can we poor mortals limit his wisdom or his predestinated purpose in all things? We believe, as is declared in his word, that he upholds all things by the word of his power, and there is no power but of God, and he works his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. The prophet saw this vision which embraced Jesus and the wheel, and all these living creatures were in him as a wheel in a wheel, and as we follow the prophet on in the vision he heard the wings of these creatures as the voice of great waters, and as the voice of the Almighty which was over their heads, which takes from the natural the power to attain unto these things as it was above their heads. We note these creatures were lifted from the earth and the wheels were lifted up over against them, for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels. The child of grace is kept by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. What a wonderful all-wise God, and by him all things consist. We do not feel to discern between his predestinated purpose in

all things and his infinite wisdom, knowing all his work from the beginning, but we are assured that he has set the bounds of iniquity, which cannot be taken away, for Jesus declared, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." When we examine ourselves for the evidence of a hope and note the rooting and grounding, it is builded upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ the chief corner-stone, and all their strength is the love of God. In all these relations we are constrained to believe that the "steps we take and the station we fill, were determined and wrote in his will." We offer the quotation, "The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope."—Rom. viii. 20. Paul was given to see the creatures of righteousness, and also gives their earnest expectation which waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. We want to behold the power of God in them, and his Spirit humbling them, by which they are continually crying out, I am unclean, and, behold, I am vile. We pass through this life's pilgrimage being subject to vanity, and would be separated from it if we could, but our little hope God has given us in Christ keeps us and causes us to look away from self and look unto Jesus. Our faith is in him because of his mighty power realized in delivering and keeping us, and is always a present help in time of trouble. The spirit of our groanings are,

"Oh that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still;
Oh that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will."

It is so dark at times we cannot see our way and grope about in darkness, and we cannot behold these things until he gives us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, then we see how wonderfully his people have been led and directed from a righteous Abel to the present time. He shields them as though he were the shadow of a great rock in a desert land, and how his glorious hand covers them, and underneath is the everlasting arm, and all our times are in his hand, and not a weapon that is formed against us shall prosper. Jesus said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." The wheel in a wheel the prophet spoke of represents Jesus and his people in him, and everything in his kingdom is directed by the Spirit.

Now to thy praise, eternal King, be all my thoughts employed.

C. W. V.

In the editorial written by Elder H. H. Lefferts, and published in the June, 1929, issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, on page 133, last line, the word "efface" should be "face." On page 136, first column, fourth line, it should read "old name" instead of "old man," and on the same page, seventeenth line, second column, the word "Americanism" should be "armenianism." In the same number, page 121, second column, tenth line, the word "Bermuda" should be "Burmah."

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster, County, Pennsylvania, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1929, to the churches composing the same, and to the meetings and associations with which we correspond, sends christian greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In the Psalms of David it is declared that Mt. Zion, the city of the great King, is beautifully situated on the sides of the north. As the temple of old on the literal Mt. Zion faced eastward, looking toward the rising of the sun and the dawning of the day, it is infinitely more true that in the spiritual antitypical temple the outlook of the church's faith is constantly toward the Day of the Lord and the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. The new testament of grace had its beginning in the announcement of the angel to the virgin Mary that she should conceive by the Holy Ghost and bring forth a son whose name should be called Jesus, because he was ordained to be the salvation of his people from their sins. And the new testament of grace which began with such a glorious proclamation finds its ultimate consummation in those words of the church's expectation which conclude the book of Revelation: "The Spirit and the bride say, Come." "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." This appearing of the Lord is the one all-absorbing hope of the christian's experience. It is impossible for there to be a genuine believer anywhere who does not desire and hope for the appearance of Christ. As surely as one has been quickened by the Spirit of the living God, so will that spiritual life in that one continually reach forward toward the giver and the object of that life, the Lord Jesus Christ. As the natural life in our human nature is bound to hunger for the things which will appease that life, so will the divine life in the spiritual nature of all believers pant after God and for those things which develop and bring to fruitage the spiritual life. It is said, "The just shall live by faith," that the saints must walk by faith, and that those things which are seen by faith are not the things which appear to the natural powers of man. So whatever may be meant by the appearing of the Lord, and whatever circumstances or events may be involved in the coming of the Lord, it is evident these things must transcend and far eclipse the natural expectations of human beings. The prophet Amos declared to national Israel that the coming of the day of the Lord to them would be a time of woe. The expectation of national Israel was for a Messiah to come and establish at Jerusalem the throne of a brilliant earthly government which should lift the Jews politically to a place of preeminence from a worldly standpoint. Amos knew the Jews expected this, and he also knew by faith that this human expectation was to be disappointed. The Lord God did come to Israel, but his coming to them as a nation was a time of darkness, confusion and condemnation. They did not recognize

him as their King. They rejected him and crucified him, thus bringing upon themselves, according to divine foreknowledge and purpose, their destruction as a nation. The natural and fleshly expectations of men as to the coming of the Lord are bound from the very nature of things to be disappointed. The natural man knows not the things of God, and there is no possible way by which the natural man can bring himself to know them. The things of God are spiritually discerned. As no man knows the things of a man except by the spirit of man which is in him, even so knows no man the things of God except by the Spirit of God. The eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard, neither hath there entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love him. The only way in which these glorious things reserved for the people of God can be known is as his Spirit gives us the revelation of them. That Jesus does and will appear the second time without sin unto salvation is believed by all the faithful in Christ Jesus, but of the times and seasons of such appearing the human mind knows nothing. The power and glory which the disciples experienced when Jesus was with them here on earth meant absolutely nothing to those outside the company of the elect, neither does it mean anything to-day for those not included in the work of spiritual regeneration. The natural world is one thing, the spiritual world is infinitely quite another. Those living the life of the Spirit know full well that which is natural, but those who are living in the natural world, and living only there, can understand not in the slightest degree anything of the spiritual. Now to define in literal terms just what it is that our faith looks for is exceedingly difficult. The apostle tells us that when Christ shall appear we shall be like him and shall see him as he is. This is surely the end of our faith, but where is the man however spiritual he may be who can tell us in all its fullness what it means to be like Christ and to see him as he is? The faith of God's elect looks unto the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. This faith also looks for the changing of the vile body and fashioning it like unto His glorious body by the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself. But who is the man, however much enlightened by the Spirit he may be, who can define for us in all its wonderful length and breadth and height what this redemption and this changing involve? Whether in the ordinances of the church, such as the Lord's supper and baptism, whether in the preaching of the word or in the singing of the hymns or in the reading of the Scriptures, it is always for the appearing of Jesus that the believer looks and desires. If to the believer the appearing of Jesus is not seen and felt in the communion of saints and in the preaching of the word, he feels himself sadly out of tune in the company of his brethren. If there is, on the other hand, a realization with us of the appearing of Jesus in the affairs and deliberations of the church, then we lose

sight of earth and its cares and are absent from the body, present with the Lord. Mortality is for the time being swallowed up of life. "If such the sweetness of the stream, what must the fountain be?" If so satisfying and comforting to the soul are these foretastes of heaven which are vouchsafed to us a little here, a little there, as we travel on below, no wonder it lies infinitely beyond our powers to fully describe or even to fully think of all the glories wrapt up in the ultimate appearing of the Lord. The gospel church in all her history and in all her spiritual concerns, in all her experience, whether of trials or deliverances, has the eyes of her faith looking with hopeful expectancy and with blessed assurance toward the appearing of her Lord. Nothing satisfies her short of his coming, and she looks for nothing beyond it. Her Jesus is all she wants on earth, and in heaven there is no one she desires beside him. "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him," that ye be not moved from the steadfastness of your faith by the alluring but vain imaginings of human minds which seek to make literal and material the expectation of our hope, which expectation can be fully and completely satisfied only in the spiritual and invisible appearing of the Lord in glory. When we say invisible, we mean unseeable by mortal eyes or human powers. May the grace of God which has brought us to the revelation of salvation, and which teaches us to live soberly and godly in this present evil world, keep us ever watchful for the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, that we may through the preparation of God's grace within us be kept in readiness for his coming whenever and however it may please the Father to gather us from this terrestial state to that celestial inheritance preserved for the saints in light.

DOUGLASS L. TOPPING, Mod.
JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk.

(Written by Elder H. C. Ker.)

The Delaware River Old School or or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church, at Locktown, New Jersey, sendeth greeting and love in the Lord to the associations and churches with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In attempting to address you by way of a Circular Letter, we have chosen the word "Peace" as a foundation, and shall hope to consider it in some of its phases. Literally the word means: State of quiet; calm; repose; harmony; concord. Perhaps the world has never known less of such peace than at the present time, except while the world was going on. To-day when nations are clamoring for peace, wars and rumors of wars are going on, and likely will continue to the end of time. Man is not so constituted as to be peaceable at all times. This disposition was in evidence when Cain killed his brother Abel. Such demonstrations have followed in men and nations. The condition of unrest in the world to-day evidences the ab-

sence of peace. There is a sense, however, in which the world, nationally, has peace, and it of this we desire to write more particularly. It was because of the nature of man that everything distressing, contrary to peace, entered into the world. The creature, or man, was made subject to vanity, and vanity has always been the very root of evil, hence when man can change his nature and the leopard his spots, international peace, literally, will be brought about, but not until then. The disobedience of man in the beginning of the world brought to him and his posterity separation from peace with God. This wrought in him unrest, affliction of mind and body. This condition, notwithstanding the dealings of the Lord with man during former ages of the world, continued until peace everlasting was brought in. Affliction of mind and body will continue while the world stands, but the distress of mind in this sense is not the same as in ages past. This is not because there has been any change in man by nature, nor because of the efforts of men to christianize the world. Man could never undo what he did, hence the peace we have under consideration did not come through the efforts of men. Man having separated himself from God by wicked works could never again have peace with God by anything he could do. Therefore it was necessary that something be done for him that he himself could not perform. The unspeakable gift of God to man was the "Prince of Peace." He undertook for us, coming in the likeness of sinful flesh, or man, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. In this work of the Redeemer, peace was wrought between God and sinners. God is holy, righteous and good. This peace was not known by the saints of old except by faith. They all died without receiving the promises, but saw them afar off and embraced them. The church of this age of the world has entered into this peace manifestly and rejoices in the hope of the glory of God and his grace wherein she stands. This is the peace the world cannot give, nor take away. The blood of Christ brought us who were afar off near unto God, never again to be separated, for the reason that by the one offering he hath forever perfected all them that are sanctified. There is no law in existence to-day of which the transgression thereof would bring condemnation, or death, upon the redeemed of God. All such law was fulfilled in every jot and tittle by the "Prince of Peace," hence forever put away. Therefore the church is under grace instead of law. Wonderful, wonderful work of the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world and bring in everlasting peace and righteousness. Having peace with God, through Christ, we are admonished to have peace one with another, endeavoring to keep the unity thereof in its glorious bond. Peace in the church of God—unity of the spirit—is the salvation of it in the sense of visibility and order. No man has right to set himself up as a standard to which all others must bow, and any man who

thus thinks and acts will, sooner or later, fall by such temptation and become an abomination in the house of God. The church is sovereign in all her acts, hence let us all understand and remember that no man has more than one voice in any matter pertaining to church government. Wirepulling in the house of God is an abomination in his sight and the man who does it will sooner or later come to grief. Unity is the only safe rule, and to maintain peace within the borders of Zion is the chief thing for us all to consider and strive for. The church has no lords, monarchs nor kings. All therefore being on one equal plane let us act accordingly, to the glory of God and the peace of his kingdom.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, in session with the churches of the same Association, being convened in the meetinghouse at Black Rock, Baltimore County, Maryland, May 15th, 16th and 17th, 1929, doth send greetings in the Lord Jesus Christ to our sister associations and meetings with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Again have we been blessed with the privilege of meeting your messengers and receiving your correspondence, and it has been a great pleasure to us to be able to dwell together in unity of the Spirit of Christ Jesus our Lord with you all, and as so many expressions of love have been spoken it makes us feel to look forward to another meeting of the same kind, for where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them. We trust you will all remember and come and meet with us again next year, which meeting is appointed to convene, the Lord willing, on Wednesday before the third Sunday in May, 1930, and continue three days. The place of meeting to be announced later through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.
F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.
EDW. A. JOHNSON, A'sst Clerk.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, May 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1929, sendeth greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We feel to express our appreciation of the love bestowed upon us by our heavenly Father in sending so many of his servants and messengers to us, edifying us in the gospel of grace, salvation by grace alone, drawing us together closer than ever as an association. We hope for a continuance of your correspondence and presence with us,feeling much comfort in the preached word, and your company in our homes has so sweetly increased our love for you all.

Our next Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Salem Church, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, during May, 1930, at the usual time.

DOUGLASS L. TOPPING, Mod.
JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MRS. LUCY JANE (nee Roberts) **WHITENTON,** my dear companion, passed away from earth at the hospital in Memphis, Tennessee, April 14th, 1929, at 6:20 a. m. She was born October 14th, 1856, making her stay on earth 72 years and 6 months. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder J. W. Kerley, April 15th, 1929, and burial was in Elmwood Cemetery. She was a member of the Primitive or Old School Baptist Church of Christ at Memphis, Tennessee, and was a true Primitive Baptist in every sense, believing the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone, the doctrine of the predestination of all things, election, the final preservation of the saints in glory by grace through Jesus Christ our Savior, and the resurrection of the dead. She was first married to William Hay, and to them were born six children,one boy, Lee Hay, and five girls: Mrs. Frankie Mason, Mrs. Ethel Norton and Mrs. Mary Rush, two daughters dying in infancy. She leaves to mourn their loss two daughters, Ethel and Mary, five granddaughters, six grandsons, one great-grandson, one great-granddaughter, with myself, though we mourn not without hope, for we believe our loss is her eternal gain. She was a true and loving mother, and was devoted to her church, her neighbors and friends, and was beloved by all who knew her. She had no enemies that we ever knew of. She and I were married November 14th, 1921, and she was a loving companion to me until death separated us. We never had a cross word, and lived in our honeymoon all the time, so my heart is broken, and will be as long as I live. We were happy together, and loved to talk of and sing the songs of praise to our Savior, but now I am very lonely, no one to comfort or console me when in distress but Jesus. She has gone to rest, her spirit to God who gave it, her body in the tomb, and will remain there until God bids it rise. She is through with her suffering and is with her dear Savior to live and praise him for evermore, where there is no more pain or sorrow, but one eternal joy forever. Her last words to me were, I am gone. I hate to leave you, but God will take care of you. Grieve not. I know I should not grieve, but I cannot help it, and mourn and weep for her. All who read this pray for me. May God reconcile me to his will is my prayer. Amen.

J. M. WHITENTON.

AUGUSTA LEE EDWARDS was born February 14th, 1913, at Lubbock, Texas, and was drowned in the Columbia River, at Vancouver, Wash., Aug. 7th, 1929, aged 15 years, 5 months and 24 days. He leaves to mourn father, mother four brothers, John, Roland, Robert and Dwight, and two sisters, Verda and Irene. The undersigned was called to conduct the funeral services, which were held in the Knapp parlors, in Vancouver, August 19th, in the presence of a large and attentive gathering. The dear boy was well liked by all who knew him, which was attested by their kindness, words of sympathy and the beautiful floral offerings. It is hard to give up our loved ones, and doubly so under such tragic circumstances as this. He and his father and older brother, John, were employed in the paper mill, and while eating supper, after their day's work was done, he remembered he had left his dinner-pail at the mill, only a few blocks away, and said he would go and get it, and in less than an hour they received word that he was drowned. The police force, sheriff's force, kind friends and neighbors dragged the river until eleven o'clock that night before they found his body, about fifty feet from where he was last seen, where the water was only about four feet deep. Such occurrences make up the great mysteries of God's providence. Our finite minds can never understand these things, and it is ours to be still and know that he is God. Let me say to the dear family, Let us bow our heads in humble submission, and say, Not our will, but thine, be done.

Written by one who feels to be less than the least in my Father's house,

S. B. MOFFITT.

ISAAC M. DARLAND was born in Park County, Indiana, July 10th, 1840, and was married to Eliza Cunningham January 14th, 1858. To this union were born eleven children: Lydia, A. C., Rebecca, I. N., Jennie, Ella, C. R., Emma, John, Maude and Prior. His wife, Jennie, Rebecca, Prior and Ella passed away before him. He had forty grandchildren and sixty-four great-grandchildren. In 1861 the family moved to Iowa, locating in Mahaska County, and in 1882 to Audubon County, where he had since lived, except five years spent in Guthrie County. He, with his wife, joined Sharon Primitive Baptist Church at the November meeting in 1888, and were very devoted members. His greatest ambition was the service of his Savior. He passed from this life at the home of his daughter, Lydia Chandler, in Audubon, May 18th, 1929, at the age of 88 years, 10 months and 18 days. The funeral was held from his home. Elder George J. Jones, pastor of Sharon Church, preached from the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians. The body was laid to rest in Maple Grove Cemetery beside that of his wife. As long as he was able to talk he expressed strong faith in a hope beyond the grave. He had been a subscriber and reader of the SIGNS for over fifty years.

Written by his son,

CHARLES R. DARLAND.

GEORGIA ROSALIE PYLE, daughter of Elder John G. and Mary Eubanks, was born March 18th, 1874, in Cobb County, Georgia, and departed this life May 18th, 1929, at Halsted, Kans., from the effects of an operation, aged 55 years and 2 months. She was united in marriage to W. A. Pyle, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, December 27th, 1894.

To this union five children were born: Carroll, of Wright, Kansas; Edith Marie, who died in infancy; John, also of Wright, Kansas; Everett, of Sawyer, Kansas, and Mrs. Alton Long, of Dodge City, Kansas. Besides her immediate family, she leaves to mourn their loss, seven brothers and sisters, namely: James R. Eubanks, of Louisville, Kentucky; Eugenia Eubanks, of Phoenixville, Pennsylvania; Beebe Eubanks, of Norfolk, Virginia; Perry Eubanks, of Wilmington, Delaware; Mrs. Henry Townsend, of Phoenixville, Pennsylvania; Hassell, of Louisville, Kentucky; Benjamin, of Newark, Delaware, and Mrs. James Lee, of Wilmington, Delaware. She was preceded in death by her husband, who died November 8th, 1926. She, with her husband and family, moved from Campbellsburg, Kentucky, to a farm near Hudson, Kansas, in 1907, where the greater part of her life had since been spent, she, with her sons Carroll and John, having recently moved to a farm near Wright, Kansas. She was the daughter of an Old School Baptist minister, and true to her belief placed her life in the hands of a higher power, and had implicit faith that "What is to be will be."

Services were held from the Baptist Church, Stafford, at 2:30 Sunday afternoon, May 19th, Mr. A. W. Lee, of Stafford, conducting the services. Interment was made in the beautiful Stafford Cemetery, where her body was laid to rest beside that of her husband.

Written by her son,

CARROLL P. PYLE.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Sarah F. Gandey, N. J., $3; Mrs. Calvin Cubbage, Pa., $1; "A friend," N. Y., $2; Herbert McLeod, Ala., $4; Thos. W. Records, Mo., $3; Alfred E. Titus, N J., $4; T. J. Everett, Ark., $3.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Cane Run Predestinarian Old School Baptist Church, of Turners Station, Kentucky, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 10:30 a. m., also, the Sulphur Fork Church of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, of the same faith and order, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 2:30 p. m.

GEO. L. WEAVER, Pastor.

The Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every third Sunday at 1 p. m. at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Orange and Eleventh Streets, Riverside, California, and every alternate first Sunday, beginning with January, at the home of O. P. Speirs, 143 W. Eleventh Street, Claremont, California, at 10:30 a. m., all-day session, with lunch at place of meeting; and every other first Sunday at Riverside, California, same place and hour as mentioned above for third Sundays.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator.

O. P. SPEIRS, Clerk.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, every Sunday at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. (Daylight Saving Time) at the home of W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.. Midweek song service by appointment. Pastors, Elders Jones and Jaynes. Basket lunch.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sunday at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

POCA, West Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing two letters written to me by highly esteemed sisters in the faith. In my old age it gives me some comfort to know that I have preached comfortingly to even one of God's little ones, so if you think them worthy of a place in the SIGNS I would be pleased to have them published; otherwise, if you think not, just leave them out, and it will be all right with me. I have sister Parson's consent to do as I think best with hers, and I am sure sister Gall will not object.

Yours in hope of life eternal through Jesus Christ our Lord,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Aug. 28, 1928.

DEAR BROTHER McCLANAHAN:—It is alone by the grace of God that I may claim such relationship with one of God's called and qualified ministers of the gospel. Brother McClanahan, I am a very peculiar person and I have never been able to understand myself. After spending a sleepless night Saturday I had a great desire to talk with you on Sunday morning before we started for meeting, but for some reason which I cannot understand I failed to convey my thoughts and feelings to you. I have never had the pleasure of having a "heart to heart" talk with one of God's children, and I feel that it would do my soul good some time if I could only pour forth the deep feeling within my heart. But I am such a poor, weak worm of the dust that I remain silent, feeling I might say something that would not give God all the praise, honor and glory. Nevertheless, I must be submissive to the will of God, and I can only try and pray for the ability to talk with the brethren about the glorious theme of salvation alone by the grace of God. There are many things bearing on my mind that I would love to have talked with you about, because you have the God-given ability to speak in such a comforting manner and with such tenderness of heart that it just seems to melt my eyes

in tears. Oh have I been deceived? and if I am writing because of a fleshly desire may God stop my pen forever. I hope I am writing because I love the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace, and I humbly hope I love the brethren who are dearer to me than any other people in this world, the ones who took me in and gave me a home at dear old Mt. Olive Church.

With these few words to serve as an introduction, I am unable to tell you why I am writing to one so wonderfully blessed with the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. I humbly hope that if this ever reaches you it will not prove to be a burden to you, and that you will not hesitate to inform me if I have said anything that is not in accordance with the eternal words of truth, and if there be one word of comfort to you, give all the praise, honor and glory to God; in and of ourselves we can do nothing. Salvation by grace is a glorious theme, and I felt while sitting under the sound of your voice Sunday, that it was all too good for such an unworthy creature as I am, yet I cannot keep from shedding tears when you proclaim the glorious doctrine in such a beautiful manner. May I always be blessed to sit at the feet of my brethren and gather the crumbs as they fall from the Master's table. Oh what a wonderful meeting we had, and I felt it was good to be there; yes, just a foretaste of the happy meeting when we meet to part no more. 'Tis heaven below my Redeemer to know, and when his Spirit is shed abroad in the hearts of his children they are given a hearing ear and an understanding heart. They are made to rejoice and give thanks to God for his great mercy toward them. Oh how happy we feel when one of the dearly beloved children of God feels it his duty to go home to his people and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for him. He has done it all and they are brought to a realization of the fact that in and of themselves they can do nothing. They only sink deeper and deeper into the miry clay until they are brought out by the power of the all-wise God and a new song is put in their mouth. They are made willing to be submissive to the will of the Father, and say, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. Lord, save or I perish. My people shall be willing in the day of my power. Not may be, but shall be, making the declaration of God firm and sure. He declared the end from the beginning, the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. He leads them in paths they have not known and draws them with never-ending chords of his unchangeable love. He will take away the old stony heart and give them a heart of flesh, causing them to love the things they once hated and to hate the things they once loved. They are born of the Holy Spirit and are living in a new world; the pleasures of this world have lost all their joy for them and they are seeking the old paths, striving to follow in the footsteps of their Lord and Master, ever looking unto Jesus as the author and finisher of their faith. Oh what joy is felt when

a child of God is led into the water to be buried with Christ in baptism; there is great rejoicing that one of the elect, the chosen saints of God, has been brought home to his people, where there is joy and peace untold awaiting them in the meeting together and mingling their voices in songs of thanksgiving and praise to their blessed Master, who shed his precious blood that they might have a home in heaven. The greatest pleasure in this world for a child of God is listening to the gospel proclaimed by a true servant of God, or hearing some dear brother or sister relate their experience, which reveals the fact that they all are taveling in the same way, the strait and narrow way that leads to joy eternal, the way that leadeth from death unto life. There is only one way from earth to heaven, for Jesus Christ said, I am the way, the truth and the life. No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him. He is the only way for a poor sinner to receive comfort for his heavy laden soul when traveling here in this low ground of sin and sorrow with a cloud of trouble hanging heavily over his head. Jesus suffered and died for his people. He came down to earth to do the will of his Father, and when he hung on the cross and cried, "It it finished," he forever put away the sins of his people and saved every one that will ever bask on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance. He did it all, all to him I owe. He saved with an everlasting salvation every one who was chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began, and it is impossible for man to add to or take away one from that number. The Lord adds daily to the church such as should be saved, and at his own appointed time he causes them to repent and be baptized in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. They are all bound together by the sweet chords of love into one unit of one faith, one Lord, one baptism. Nothing shall ever be able to separate them, and great will be their joy when life with all its cares is ended, and they shall hear the joyful sound, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world. Yes, he has prepared a home for them, a house not made with hands. He said, I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am there ye may be also. When life is ended in this world (how sad and solemn a thought) the child of God goes home to rest, asleep in Jesus until the morning of the resurrection, when they will be fashioned like unto his glorious body, and ever be with the Lord in that heaven of bliss, that world without end.

Oh how we miss dear old brother Bartlett, the one who so faithfully and tenderly cared for and watched over the little flock at Mt. Olive, yet we would not call him back if we could, because we feel he is at rest and will never more be bothered with the sorrows, trials and cares of this world. We feel thankful that it hath pleased the Lord to send another one to watch over us, and we have been blessed by having a message of salvation by grace

brought to us each meeting day since the death of our dearly beloved pastor.

"Salvation, oh the joyful sound,
'Tis a pleasure to our ears,
A sovereign balm for every wound,
A cordial for our fears."

Dearly beloved brother, I hope you will pardon me for intruding upon your valuable time, and forgive me for sending you such a poor excuse for a letter, but I could not ease my mind until I had written something. I know if there is one word of truth and comfort in this all the glory belongs to God, and everything said amiss is due to the weakness of this poor sinful mortal. Very weak and unworthy I feel to be, too humble to ask you to write to me, yet in my heart there is always a longing to receive a word of comfort from one who knows the joyful sound. Tell brother Smith that I enjoyed his message more than words can tell, and my prayer is that he may continue to grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I trust that if we never meet again in this world it may be our happy lot to meet in that world without end, ever to sing praises unto the name of our blessed Redeemer.

In bonds of love,

ELSIE GALL.

KENTUCK, W. Va., July, 1928.

DEAR ELDER MCCLANAHAN:—It is with fear and trembling that I try to address you on the things I have felt for some time I must tell, of how I have been led, I hope, in the way to life eternal. In the hills of Dickenson County, Virginia, when I was about twelve years of age, I began to fear the devil and his hell. I thought I could pray to God and he would keep me from that awful place, and would go out in the woods, to a place where I thought no one could see me, and would pray, as I thought. I would go twice a day most of the time.. I thought I could pray myself out of all the trouble that was upon me. About that time we moved to West Virginia. I was then nearly seventeen years of age. I had never attended any but Old Baptist meetings until we came to West Virginia, where they were mostly of other denominations. Here I went to all the big meetings I could, and all the preaching was very much alike to me. It seemed that they were saving a great many people, and I wanted to be saved, too, so I went to the mourners' bench and tried that occasionally for ten or fifteen years. I wanted to be happy and shout like the rest of them. I thought there would be some kind of change and I would feel different, but did not want to be deceived and act like a hypocrite. I thought some time I could save myself. I had no fear of God; it was the devil I seemed to be afraid of. I though I could read and understand many of the Scriptures and could tell others how to do right. Then for two or three years I was miserable, but did not know what was the matter with me. I did not feel sick, but wanted to cry most of the time, yet there was nothing to trouble me that I could see, and thought I must be losing my mind. I answered the advertisement of a medical firm, but ex-

perienced no relief from that. All the time I was trying to pray. At times it seemed that God had turned against me and I would be lost, for I felt to be a hopeless sinner. I was going through the field one day and was trying to pray, and was crying as usual when alone, and all at once the load that had bowed me down in sorrow was lifted, and I was very happy and loved every one, even the one I cared the least for I thought of and wanted to take her by the hand. It seemed that all was well and that all my troubles were gone. I went to the Missionary Baptist and Methodist meetings because they were the nearest, and it seemed to me there was not very much difference in their preaching. I read the Bible a great deal, and liked to hear it read and talked about. It was not long before I became doubtful and to be afraid I had been deceived, but my trouble was not as great as before. I kept trying to pray for guidance to know what was the true gospel. It went on this way for some time and I began to be puzzled about the Scriptures, and found I did not understand them as much as I thought. I read where it said our God is a consuming fire, and that seemed to be on my mind and puzzled me most. I continued trying to pray to know the truth, and while all this was going on I went to old brother Charlie Duffy's funeral. I had been to meetings several times where you preached, but never was given a hearing ear until then, and never had I heard anything that sounded as sweet as that sermon. Things I had been puzzled about were made plain, and you explained very beautifully that Scripture where it says that our God is a consuming fire, and it was a great comfort to me. I was over to Pleasant Run a few weeks after that and you all preached the same truth. The Scriptures were fully, sweetly and comfortingly explained. No others preach as sound or as good as do the Old Baptists. It seemed that I could see a vast difference between them and others. Then I thought it might be because my parents were Old Baptists in belief that made me see as I did. I was alone one day after the meeting at Pleasant Run and read the Scripture you preached from and it seemed so good that surely it must be the truth. I tried to pray to God that if the Old Baptists were right, and I had not been deceived, that I would feel I was blessed, and if not that I would remain in doubt as I was. I kept trying to pray for guidance until in the afternoon, when I was assured that all was well. I thought I never would doubt again, and felt that I could stand anything that might come upon me and all would be well. I knew the things I once loved I now hated, and my joy was perfect, no fear, no doubts. I have never since once doubted the Old Baptists being the true church in doctrine, faith and practice, but I have doubted my being worthy of standing with them. I told no one about any of this, and thought I could stay out of the church and keep

it all to myself and I would be better off. Later I thought I would be baptized, as that ordinance was impressing me very much. I went to hear Elder Dell Smith when I could, and oh how glad I was to hear him preach, for he expleined much Scripture to my comfort. I went to the last association held with the Elium Church, just five years ago, and there I was made to say within myself, How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of great joy to poor mourning souls. Not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy name belongeth the glory. It seemed I could say, How can we hear without a preacher, and how can they preach except they be sent? I knew I believed the doctrine of the Old School Baptists, and felt they were my people, and their God was my God, and I wanted to stand with them, but my unworthiness was a hindrance to me in offering myself for membership with them. I do hope the good Lord made me willing to go home to my friends, the dear Old Baptists, and tell them what great things he hath done for my soul. My hope seems small most of the time, yet I know if I had to depend upon my own righteousness I would surely be lost, world without end.

Please pardon me for writing so lengthy a letter, but I wanted to speak of the words of comfort I have received from those who have been called of God to preach the gospel. I hope you may be at our next meeting.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) LIZZIE PARSON.

EXCELSIOR SPRINGS, MO., March 28, 1929.

DEAR EDITORS:—This is to ask you to publish the inclosed letter in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at an early date. So long as I can remember the SIGNS has been in the home of my grandfather, Thurston Knight, and that of my mother, Melissa Knight Mundy, or as you have it, Mrs. M. J. Mundy. The reading of the correspondence contained in its columns has been a great pleasure and comfort to my mother, and almost her only way of keeping in touch with those of her own faith this past winter, for she was not able to attend her church services. The last time she was permitted to go was with her sister, Mrs. Hamilton, in Kansas City, the second Sunday in December. Her Bible, the SIGNS and letters from her friends meant much to her. Mine was a most wonderful mother, so loving, kind and true, always doing the things to make for another's happiness, never thinking of self. It seems losing her is more than I can bear, yet I know my loss is her gain, and I would that I might become more like her. I wish I knew more of the doctrine she loved, the doctrine preached by the Old Baptists. I wish to renew her subscription, if you will write me when it is due, also wish to send money for one more, so that it may be delivered to some one unable to subscribe for it. I have quite a number (no doubt all) of last year's SIGNS, and if you will suggest the name of some one who would enjoy reading them I will be glad to express the package to them. Mother often did this, but I know not to whom she sent

them. I feel I do not want to part with this year's papers, for it was from the January and February numbers I read so much to her while she was sick.

I hope you will pardon me for taking so much of your time, but I feel that mother's friends are my friends and will bear with me; at least I know that those who love her have endeared themselves to me.

Thanking you for all courtesies shown, I am, sincerely,

(MRS. B. W. CRABB.

GRANTVILLE, Kansas, March 26, 1929.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—By request of the bereaved daughter I will try and write a brief memorial to Mrs. Melissa Jane Mundy, a lovely sister in Christ, who entered into her rest March 8th, 1929, at 10:30 p. m. I think I never received a request which I felt more incompetent to perform, though to do so in a fitting way would indeed be a labor of love.

I will not soon forget the first time I met this dear sister. She wrote me she wished to attend our association and I met the train, and amid the throng of strangers who alighted we had no difficulty in recognizing each other as she came toward me with a smile on her face, though neither of us had ever seen the other before. So I had not the privilege of a long acquaintance with her, but from that time forth she, with sister Unetta Hamilton (her sister in the flesh) attended our meeting each year until last fall, when neither one felt able to come. Her quiet demeanor and evident love of the truth, and the weariness she would endure to hear it proclaimed, endeared her to us all; and her love for those who believed the same precious truth, and her joy in meeting with them gave the infallible proof that she had passed from death unto life, and thus she made her calling and election sure and undoubted to us. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," has been a comfort to many tried and tempted saints when it seemed that every other prop was gone. It is in actions, the orderly walk in her every day life, and her godly conversation that this love was attested, and which drew us all to her in the same love. I feel that I can truly say that to know her was to love her. This is proven in a degree by the many precious letters she received and treasured, several of which are before me now, having been sent by her daughter. One especially, from the wife of her pastor, Elder W. L. Hall, contains a little poem very applicable to her, from which I make a few extracts, as space will not permit it in full:

"Your life to us who are younger
  Has been as a light to our feet,
And I hope when our life here is ended
  We all with the Savior shall meet.

The church has been blessed by your presence,
  The members all love you, I know,
May Christ and his angels attend you,
  As on through life's journey you go.

The King in his glory is with you,
  We know by the light of your face;
Oh may we all share his rich blessings,
  And every one saved by his grace."

On this sister Mundy had written an expression of unworthiness to apply it to herself, but hoped it might be a

comfort to others. Much might be written in her praise, but she would not wish it. She constantly ascribed all praise for every good and perfect gift bestowed upon her to grace, and grace alone, feeling that in and of herself was no worthiness or merit. So it is

"To the praise of grace we sing,
Though of a dying saint we tell,
For through the strength of Israel's King
She proved a conqueror when she fell."

I feel that I voice the sentiment of all who knew her when I say that I feel to have lost a precious friend and neighbor, a neighbor in the true Scriptural sense, made near and dear to us by the blood of Christ. She loved such neighbors as herself. Christ in you the hope of glory, walking and dwelling in them made her ever esteem them better than herself, ready to minister to them of all he gave her, and by her humble letters kindly sharing with me of her good gifts.

She was the second daughter of Thurston Knight and Mary Jane Hardesty Knight, born in Kentucky March 11th, 1846, thus lacking only three days of being eighty-three years old. She was a member of Little Blue Church, near Blue Springs, Missouri, having united with the church in early life, and had lived most of her life in Missouri. She had one brother and six sisters, all of whom preceded her to the grave, except Mrs. Unetta Hamilton, of 1190 East 65th Street, Kansas City, Missouri, who is the only surviving one of her family. She was married to J. E. Mundy August 30th, 1866, who departed this life September 11th, 1922. They were the parents of two children, Claudius Knight Mundy, who passed away August 12th, 1912, and Leola Leone Mundy, now Mrs. B. W. Crabb, of Excelsior Springs, Missouri, who is now left lonely and desolate indeed, the only other survivors being the three children of the deceased son: Mrs. George B. Foster, Tulsa, Oklahoma, Mrs. Charles Ford, of Independence, Missouri, and Mrs. Prewitt B. Turner, Kansas City, Missouri. They revered their grandmother, and with Mrs. Crabb were kind and attentive too such a degree that it was remarked by the attending physician that she was fortunate to have such devotion. They quickly assured him that they were the favored ones in having such a mother and grandmother, for in her natural life also she was of a kind and sweet disposition. She became ill the eighteenth day of December, but unexpectedly improved enough to write me, saying she had walked out a little. Later she had a relapse and her suffering was intense. Not a word of murmur or complaint was uttered, but when her suffering seemed so grievous to her daughter would smile, and say, It is all right; the Savior had to suffer. She loved the SIGNS, and when able to listen Mrs. Crabb would read to her, to her evident enjoyment. The last few days she seemed not to suffer, her breathing seemingly became easier and easier until she gently and sweetly fell

asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep.

"Me thinks I see her now at rest,
In the bright mansions love ordained,
Her head reclines on Jesus' breast,
No more by sin and sorrow pained."

Thus was the prayer of her faithful daughter answered: that she might be given a gentle release from her suffering. The meek and gentle spirit returned to God who gave it, and the precious form laid to rest in the Blue Springs Cemetery to await the sound of the trumpet, when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and the dead in Christ shall arise, and oh blessed assurance, that then we which are alive shall be caught up with them, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Brief services were conducted by her pastor, Elder W. L. Hall, at the home and at the cemetery. May God comfort the lonely sister and the sorely bereaved daughter. and all who mourn. He has said, As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you. We feel our loss, but our sorrow is not without hope that when it is ours to lie down and die that we also may share in the gain it was to her to depart and be with Christ, which is far better than all this world can bestow. Faith is now ended in sight, and hope, no longer needed, is ended in full fruition, but love, the greatest of all, in which was all her joy while here, will still abide with her through endless eternity.

"What more can he say than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

"Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Written in love and deep humility,

MARY ELLISON.

THE SHEPHERD AND THE SHEEP.

There are sheep that have no shepherd, but there cannot be a shepherd without sheep. Our Lord has said, "He that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep." What is this door? The Lord has said, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." He goes in by the door. "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." Therefore our Shepherd entered in by giving his life for the sheep. No one else ever did this, for the sheep were the gift of the Father to him, and he never gave them to another. Hence no one else is capable to save the sheep. They must be saved, they are saved, but altogether by him who gave his own life for the sheep. Each human being is a sinner, and of the earth, therefore must die for himself or herself. But after he or she has died only a sinful sacrifice has been made and is of no effect. Our God is pure and only sees a pure sacrifice for sin. Our Shepherd is from heaven and he is pure. He is of purer eyes than to look upon sin and doth not behold iniquity; none else but the pure One can be accepted in sacrifice for sin. He who has appointed and chosen the sacrifice is pure and the sacrifice must be pure, thus it is by the imputation of Christ, the pure One, for us that a perfect sacrifice is made. Our sins were imputed to him and by imputation became his sins. Thus he takes the place of his sheep and the sheep are his

own, he bearing their sins and their grief. Is he worthy to be trusted? Did he do a perfect work for them? Were they worthy of all this? This is why they feel so unworthy, for in themselves they know they are nothing but poor condemned sinners. Not fit to receive the mercies of God, yet the mercies of God are given to just that class of beings. The Lord said in his glorious new covenant, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." The righteous, the good folks, have no such promise as this, it is altogether for sinners. No man knows of himself that he is a condemned sinner before God, he must be taught by the grace of God. Thus the righteousness of Christ became ours by imputation, and even so our sins became his by imputation. This is the righteousness which exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees. Paul was a Pharisee, and he said, As touching the righteousness which is of the law, I was blameless. None could be better than he was, yet he was less than the least of all saints. I am sure that the more that grace shines in the heart, the greater sinner one sees himself to be and the less as a saint. When we think what our Shepherd bore for us we can but think of the undershepherd, or pastor, and what he has to endure for the sheep. Sometimes the sheep little realize what he (pastor) endures. His work, much of it, is in secret, and sometimes he is spoken of as an hireling. They tell him, You do what you are hired to do; that is, preach, as if the undershepherd did not have to look after the flock which is under his care. Such expressions are disgraceful to the church and the pastor. No one can hire a true gospel preacher. He feels his obligation to the great Shepherd of the sheep. The sheep are not his, but the Father's, and he is under obligation to the Father to keep and feed the flock. Not as an hireling, but as one in whose heart is the love of God for the sheep. No church needs any other kind of undershepherd as pastor. No one can know the obligation he is under to God for the sheep. Such things occur at times as getting to think that the pastor is having too good time. These know nothing of what they speak and are not worthy of the name of sheep. The Lord chooses his undershepherds, they are not appointed by man, and only as the Lord wills.

I am your brother in gospel bonds,

L. H. HARDY.

ATLANTIC, North Carolina.

GARDINER, Maine, May 24, 1929.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending you a letter written to us by our son just before my wife's death, which was a comfort to each of us, and it was her special request that I send it to you for publication, which if you feel to place in your columns I shall appreciate. I feel lonely without her, yet could not wish her back in this life of sorrow and pain. The last weeks of her stay her suffering was intense, though she was conscious to the last and gave full instructions as to her burial.

Your brother in sorrow, also in hope,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

GARDINER, Maine April 5, 1929.

DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER:—I do wish I could write some word of comfort for each of you, but I feel shut up and cannot think clearly. I do know that our God has a wise purpose in all he does, and there is nothing that can come to pass that he has not ordained should come to us. All our times are in his hand. I know you know this as well as I do, for you have lived longer in these things than I have, yet as unlearned in this school as I see myself to be, it is a help to know we each have been called to the same understanding of his sovereignty and his wonderful mercy, and that he has never left one to sink. None have ever failed to bring away from the throne of grace sufficient grace to help in time of need, who have gone in the name of the dear Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us. This has been the christian's hope in all ages of time, and there will never be any other while time lasts, but this hope is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, which entereth within the vail, whither the forerunner has gone, and he is at the right hand of God the Father, the sovereign Ruler of all things, making intercession for the saints, and he ever prays according to the will of the Father, therefore his plea will ever have an answer. Being at the right hand of God is being in power. All power in heaven and earth is given unto him, and we who have been called were chosen in him before the world was, that we should be found in him, wanting nothing; that is, we do not lack one thing that is needful for the perfecting of the saints. Paul desired that he might be found in him, not having his own righteousness, which was of the law (creature works), but clothed in that pure,spotless robe of righteousness that is of him, which without, we stand naked before him. But being so clothed by his work then do we stand before God holy and blameless, without spot, wrinkle or any such thing, and in that blessed beyond, whither our forerunner has entered, we shall all at his appointed time stand in the glorious reality of the hope that is given us in him. We have a sweet foretaste of the glory of this future life, and if it has been sweet to us, and caused us for a time to be lifted above this world of care, what then must be the eternal weight of joy that shall be ours when we by his grace and in his mercy have triumphed over the last enemy, which is death, and have been delivered through him from the grave, entering into the fullness of that joy prepared for us before time? If one glimpse of him who is the chiefest among ten thousand is a rapturous delight, indescribable and beyond our finite minds to grasp, what then must it be to have come into the blessed reality of his eternal presence and find rest to our weary soul, which pants as a hart does for the water brooks? All this blessed hope and transcending beauty of immortal bliss has been prepared for none other than sinners. Redemption was never designed for any other, for none but sinners need it, and if we were perfect we could have no hope in his

mercy. It was the lost sheep that he came to seek and to find, and when he cried unto the Father, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do, he had found and delivered from death every lost sheep, and none can ever stray beyond the limits of his love. The deepest dye of sin is forever purged by his one offering for sin, and there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, because there is no need of it, for he has forever perfected them that are sanctified, or set them apart to this end, and the sinner was set apart to be redeemed. I love to think that this blessed eternal salvation is for none other than the sinner, and that his blood has cleansed the foulest stain that ever blotted the soul. We are given a hope in this life, and God has never given one a hope that will not stand and bring them off more than conquerors through him that loved us. Every one has the same hope, and that is in the finished work of Jesus, who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He poured out his soul unto death. He was numbered with the transgressors, and he bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. As you know, this has for a long time been a source of joy to me, to have this to look forward to, that there is an appointed time for man to die. While it is true that we must wait all our appointed time, yet when that time comes there is no power that can withhold from us the joy that shall be ours, nor the rest that remaineth to the people of God. This is a rest that remaineth. It is ever-abiding. We have seasons of rest in this life, but they are of short duration, followed by long seasons of unrest and travail of soul, many buffetings by Satan, who is ever at hand to discourage us and tempt us to throw away our hope and deny the Lord that hath purchased us with his own precious blood. All our doubts arise from this arch enemy of our souls, but in the end it proves to us the faithfulness of our God, who will never suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear, for his grace is sufficient for every assault of Satan. All is for a trial of our faith, which is more precious than gold, though it be tried by fire. Why certainly this faith is more precious than gold. Would we give it, though it seems small at most times, for all the gold in the world? Then if gold is tried by fire, this faith, which is more precious than gold, must be tried by a test more severe than fire, but as gold is not destroyed by the most severe test, so shall this faith of God never fail nor perish. It shall bring us to the desired haven; that is the purpose for which God gives it, but it must be tried. It ever has been tried, and shall ever be while time lasts. This faith makes us say with the eunuch, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. This confession was sufficient in the mind of Philip to cause him to baptize this stranger from the covenant (according to the old covenant) or the commonwealth of Israel and thereby recognize him as a fellow-citizen with the household of saints. It is a wonderful confession to make, and one cannot be truly made but by the

power of faith. Satan then comes to us and tries to make us retract and disbelieve our confession, but as God gave the faith to believe it, he will also give strength to withstand the wiles of the devil. To all who do so believe this, that he is the very Christ that should come, he is already come in our life, and our heart is the temple of the Holy Ghost, but we must remember that when he sets up his kingdom in one then the warfare begins, for Satan, who hates all things pertaining to this truth, will not release his hold upon one without a fight. Though he knows he can never overcome, yet he finds pleasure in tormenting us with unbelief and doubts, and so long as life endures we are in this warfare. Paul said, "I have fought a good fight." Not that he fought good; no, he was never satisfied with his fighting, but the fight was a good fight, an honorable one, and one in which he was not ashamed to be seen. He says, I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation. He came to the place where he was ready to be offered up and to desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.

May the peace of God that passeth understanding, the love and fellowship of the saints and the communion of the Holy Ghost rest upon and abide with you now and in that eternal world of rest, and unto him who has called us with an holy calling and saved us by his grace be our song of praise. Amen.

Yours unworthily, in the fellowship of the sufferings of our dear Savior,

SELBY FISHER.

KELLY CORNERS, New York.

DEAR BRETHREN:—With this I am inclosing a letter written by Eliza Mac Donald which her friends would like to have published. Kindly return to us when you are through with it.

Sincerely yours,

ESTHER RUSTON.

Victoria Hospital, London, Ont., April 22, 1915.

DEAR AUNT JENNIE:—Just a little line, for I felt I could not go to the operating room until I told you that I enjoyed your good letter very much. Words cannot express the feeling of love and deep fellowship I have for you, and oh I felt so little and unworthy when your dear letter came. I knew I was not worthy to know the secret breathings of your heart, but oh how glad I felt for you. Glad that God in his infinite love and mercy had been pleased to show you Jesus as your Savior. For many years, no doubt, you felt that God had a chosen people, that Jesus had died to save them, but the question is a vital one: whether or no we (each of us) are of that number. Here we only see as through a glass darkly and we can never be sure, but we are saved by hope, and hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for it? But there are times when with Paul the veil seems to be lifted, and we can say, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," and, again, we can say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and we look back over the past and can see that all the way his watchcare has been over

us, and with Paul I feel to say, "I am what I am." I know I have been a very wayward child, and oh so prone to evil, and it seems that but for his lovingkindness there is nothing my wicked hands and heart would refrain from doing. But surely he is a God that changes not, nor knows a shadow of a turn; his love is from everlasting to everlasting, not for time only, but for eternity. What is the little time we spend here on earth? But the mist of a morning. When Jesus was on earth Satan tempted him and told him he would give him the whole world if only Jesus would worship him. At times we are tempted in like manner, and our minds are occupied with the things of time and we forget the Lord that has led us up out of Egypt, but when troubles come we realize how little there is in this world, and I have truly felt to say, "I would not live alway, I ask not to stay." But I know my times are in his hands and he cannot do wrong. I have been made willing to suffer all things if it might be to his honor and glory. I know that "if my soul were sent to hell, his righteous law approves it well," but I have a sweet hope that whether we live or whether we die we are the Lord's, for Paul says that neither life, nor death, &c., can separate us from the love of God. I know that

"If Jesus once upon me shined,
Then Jesus is forever mine."

Paul says to be ready at all times to give a reason of the hope that is within you, and all I can say is that nothing less than the grace of God could have lifted me up out of that miry clay and placed my feet upon a Rock and established my goings, and put a new song in my mouth, even praise to his name. All my powers had utterly failed and it seemed that I must sink into utter despair. Indeed the cry of my heart was,

"Naked, come to thee for dress,
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the Fountain fly,
Wash me, Savior, or I die."

I knew that nothing short of the blood of Chist could cleanse my soul from guilt, but when he spoke peace all was still. Oh how wonderful is the peace of God. It passeth understanding. It seemed for a season then that nothing could ruffle the smooth surface. Oh how unsearchable are his ways, and his thoughts past finding out.

I only thought to write a little, for this morning my nurse told me I must stay very quiet and rest to-day and tomorrow. On Monday Dr. Williams expects to operate. I came here last Monday, but the doctor said he would not operate until he had seen me a few times, and Thursday night he told me he would not operate before Monday. I am gaining since I have been here. The nurses are all lovely to me, and all the friends have been very good to come and see me. Yesterday Elder Slawson came, and never have I enjoyed a visit from him so much. They are all so much better to me than I deserve. Oh what a longsuffering God we have.

But I must stop. I have thought of you very often since I have been here, and all winter I wanted to write to you, but so much of the time I was physic-

ally unable, and what is worse, so much of the time my mind seemed little exercised. Perhaps in the silent hours of the night I would write you in my mind, but when daylight appeared I was unable to put my thoughts on paper. It is six months, all but a few days, since I was taken sick, and oh it seemed so long to be away from the meetings, and of course I will not be able to go in May, but I feel I have had much to be thankful for in days passed in being privileged to attend the meetings, and I know I should never murmur or complain. Oh that in all things I might be patient and await God's time. Pray for me that my faith fail not.

Yours lovingly,

ELIZA McDONALD.

OTTAWA, Kansas, May 20, 1929.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—After having read your editorial in the May SIGNS several times, I have felt a desire to tell you how I have been comforted and encouraged to hope on to the end. You have written out of my own heart. Indeed the Lord has led me in the way you describe poor old Jacob's journey in the wilderness. The night has often been long and weary, but day has not yet failed to follow the night. We have been brought by a way we knew not, and in paths we had not known. We, too, go out not knowing the way. We would never choose this path. We would see our way, and it would be free from obstacles and difficulties that try the heart on every side. By terrible things in righteousness he answers his people. Job could not have repented in dust and ashes, abhorring himself, had he been able to continue offering conditional sacrifices to God for sin. It took all the terrible affliction he had to endure for him to be able to say of a truth, I know that thou canst do anything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Jonah had come to the end of all earthly help, there was no way by which he could extricate himself, so he was well prepared to say, Salvation is of the Lord. How truly you say, The Lord himself will lead his children so as to cause them to confess, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.

I am saying too much. I just wanted to tell you how I felt to rejoice in the truth as you have so wonderfully told it, in how the Lord leads his people about and instructs them and keeps them as the apple of his eye. I feel to thank God that he has given us this blessing in earthen vessels, the true and tried ministers. If we are taught of God we have the same teacher, and he teaches us to know that he is God, and there is none like him, declaring the end from the beginning. He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast.

I will be sixty-five years old if I live until August. I was baptized by Elder E. V. White at the age of seventeen. The Lord is all my hope. Without him I can do nothing. If my soul is sent to hell, his righteous law approves it well, yet, Save a trembling sinner, Lord, is my only plea.

In hope of eternal life,

ANNA McKINNEY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1929.

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1 SAMUEL XXX. 6.

"But David encouragel himself in the Lord his God."

We have often felt what a mercy it is that the child of God has a God to whom he can go in his troubles. David found him many times a present help in trouble, and that vain was the help of man. He had learned where to look in time of need. God was his refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble, and David was often in trouble, so that once he cried, "Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort," and again, "Thou, Lord, hast holpen me, and comforted me." As a boy he had learned what God's presence meant to him when confronted by both a bear and a lion. David knew he would have been a certain prey to them if the Lord had not been his strength. This was true regarding Israel: they were the fewest of all people, yet there was no nation able to overthrow them as long as the Lord did not give them into their enemies' hands. Much instruction can be drawn from a study of David's life. He was often in trouble, yet the Lord delivered him out of it all. He had reason to say, "I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth," for he says, "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of his troubles." The chapter from which our text is taken tells of David returning to Ziklag and finding it burnt with fire. The Amalekites had done this and taken the women captive with their sons and daughters who were therein; they slew not any, either great or small, but carried them away. As David and his men beheld this they lifted up their voices and wept until they had no more power to weep. "And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God." Many times we have been thankful for this testimony. There could be no darker hour than this for David. His loss was as much as theirs, and his grief as sincere, but as he had been their leader, they, of course, blamed him for it all. His case was desperate, but be it said to the honor of God, it was not too hard for

the Lord. True, the Lord could have protected Ziklag from the Amalekites, but he did not; there was a cause, and these Amalekites did just what God's hand and counsel determined before to be done. Therefore David knew that the first to look to in his trouble was the Lord who saw fit for it to be. Undoubtedly, his thoughts ran over the many trying scenes through which he had passed in which the Lord had not only brought him low, but lifted him up. At such a time the goodness of the Lord passed before him to encourage him, and he was encouraged in his God. Some of us have traveled with David in this matter, we believe, or we could not feel the sweetness and comfort that there is in our text. Jeremiah must have been there or he could not have testified, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not." Both he and David could truly say, "If it had not been of the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us; then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us." In this instance it was his own people that spake of stoning him. No wonder that David was greatly distressed, when those who should have had sympathy were turned to be his enemy: but even that drove David to his best and only Friend. It is such trouble that stops one from putting confidence in man, for it is not always that brethren understand. Joseph's brethren did not understand him; they hated him for his dreams. David's brothers did not understand, and accused David of coming down just to see the battle. Job's friends did not understand, and thought there was some secret sin for which the Lord was punishing Job. How good it is that though man may misunderstand, God does not. He is acquainted with all our ways and it is of his mercy that we can encourage ourselves in him. There are those of our readers who have little rest or comfort in this life, who can say,

> "This world's a wilderness of woe,
> This world is not my home."

You would not give up the few evidences you have of the Lord's mercy for the world, and though your way is dark, and few, or none, can enter into your case with comfort for you, yet just think how desperate your case would be if you had not God in whom to encourage yourself; just think of the many mercies which are innumerable that are from him; and when we remember how base and vile we are, surely we account the longsuffering of God salvation. We believe that it is impossible for man that walketh to direct his steps; and if David was encouraged in his God it was because the Holy Spirit helped his infirmities, bringing to his remembrance God's lovingkindness, and it must be that way with us. There is a sweetness inexpressible when in our distress we are enabled to remember the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. It is the remembrance of such mercies that encourages us to come boldly to the throne of grace that we may find mercy and grace to help in every time

of need. "And David inquired at the Lord, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them?" How simple and direct his questions. It was not a lengthy petition to please the ears of man. No, like so many other all-prevailing prayers, it was of a few words. Peter, sinking, put his feelings into as few words as he could speak, and be understood. Another cried, "Lord, help me," and yet another whose attitude and actions expressed far more than words how he felt, cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Such were the prayers of the saints of old, such they are to-day; and the Lord who encouraged David to be encouraged in his God, answered, "Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all." Ziklag was burnt, the wives and children in the hands of wicked men, yet God was protecting them and man could do them no harm. Oh how blessed was David to have such a God: and are not we just as blessed? David's all was gone, and when everything was restored David felt the Lord had done it, and he blessed him for his mercy and faithfulness unto the sons of men. He could say, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" and, melted under a sense of God's goodness, it was easy for him to put the men of Belial to shame, wicked men who were among them, and would have withheld the spoil from the two hundred men who tarried by the stuff. David regarded not their selfishness, but generously gave each man his part of the spoil. Dear brethren, it is God's love and mercy that help us to press on; though at times the way is rough, we have reason to encourage ourselves in our God. The apostle Paul tells us on two occasions of the Lord standing by him, and, doubtless, there were many other occasions that the Lord proved himself to be the strength of his life. At Rome, when all men forsook him, the Lord stood by him, whose he was and whom he served. David, it seems to us, was forced through the extremity of his case to call upon his God; and often, to our shame, we should confess, that God, instead of being the first upon whom to call, seems the last resource, and when all helpers fail, he proves to be the help of the helpless. The many witnesses, by whom we are encompassed, mentioned in God's word, should encourage us to wait upon him.

"He in the thickest darkness dwells,
Performs his work, the cause conceals;
But though his methods are unknown,
Judgment and truth support his throne.

Wait then, my soul, submissive wait,
Prostrate before his awful seat;
And 'midst the terrors of his rod,
Trust in a wise and gracious God."

G. R.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Please notice change of address of Elder George Ruston from Kelly Corners, New York, to Dutton, Ontario, Canada, to take effect August 1st, 1929.

The Primitive Baptist Home in Salisbury, Maryland, opened on May 1st. Those desiring to enter should write to Mr. Cyrus Risler, 904 Ogden Ave., New York, N. Y., for particulars. Members and friends residing within the bounds of the Eastern Associations are eligible.

R. LESTER DODSON.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder L. L. Schenck, uncle of the groom, June 29th, 1929, at the residence of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. C. R. Roberts, 833 Morris Ave., Topeka, Kansas, Firman A. Ellison, only son of Mrs. Mary Ellison, and Miss Florance Roberts.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER POSEY GREEN LESTER was born March 12, 1850, about five miles west of Floyd Court House, Floyd County, Virginia. He was the son of William Terry Lester and Mary Amanda Simmons. His brothers were John Thomas, Hiley Washington, Asa Willivin, Charles Hugh Dillard and Cary Houston. (All brothers dead.) His sisters were Serena Matilda, Arabelle Emily and Permelia Rosabelle (called Jennie). Arabelle Emily (who is Mrs. A. L. Boothe, of Indianola, Iowa,) is the only sister living. He was educated in the common schools. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church on Saturday before the second Sunday in June, 1873, and began to preach on Saturday before the second Sunday in December of the same year. He was ordained as a minister on Saturday before the second Sunday in October, 1876. In 1883 he became Associate Editor of ZION'S LANDMARK, and became Editor at the death of Elder P. D. Gold. He traveled and preached in twenty-one of the States, and in Ontario, Canada, traveling as much as 13,000 miles in a single year. He served churches in Kentucky for several years. In 1888, without any solicitation, and in his absence, he was nominated by the Democratic party to represent the Fifth District of Virginia in the United Staes Congress. There he served during the fifty-first and fifty-second Congress. He served the churches of Washington and surrounding territory also while in Congress. He declined the third nomination in order to retire to more active service of the churches in his native county and town. Elder Lester served as clerk and then as moderator of the New River District Primitive Baptist Association. For twenty years he served as president of the Peoples National Bank of Floyd County. June 22nd, 1898, he married Miss Emmette Harris, of Reidsville, North Carolina, and to this union were born three children, as follows: P. G. Jr., Masten Harris and Annie May (now Mrs. I. N. Hollans, of Christiansburg, Va.) He was called to serve the church at Roanoke, Virginia, as pastor and moved there in August, 1921, serving there until his death. Elder Lester died at his home in Roanoke February 9th, 1929, at the age of 78 years, 10 months and 27 days.

As Elder Lester was the former moderator of the New River District Primitive Baptist Association I deem it therefore prudent that we write this obituary of our estimable brother, although our words will be inadequate to express our high esteem of him.

His mother, Mary Amanda Simmons Lester, of whom he often spoke, taught him, when a child, to shun rude company and to avoid the use of vain language. As his mother said that he did, for he loved her; he grew morally upright. After finishing the common schools he engaged in teaching vocal music and literary schools.. I first met him in September, 1872, at an association. He kept near and listened to the conversation of Elders Thomas Dickens, Amos Dickerson, John Hall and Isaac Webb. The interest he manifested in these men of God begat love and fellowship in me for him, though neither of us had joined the church then. In June, 1873, he left me in the cold world and joined the church at White Oak Grove, and in December of the same year he began to preach with the demonstration of the Spirit and with power. The old Elders said of him that he was a Godsend and strength given to the church in due time. They ordained him in October, 1876, and he began to travel extensively, as stated above. He was heartily received, loved and approved of among the Primitive Baptists everywhere he went. He was well established in the faith, firm in the doctrine of God our Savior, zealous in maintaining good works an earnest laborer for peace and an able writer. As a statesman he was the most efficient member of Congress that we ever sent from the Fifth District of Virginia. For that reason our people would have continued to hold him in office, but he preferred Jerusalem as his chief joy. As before stated, he became Associate Editor of ZION'S LANDMARK in 1883, and when dear brother Gold passed he became Editor and wrote many comforting editorials to the people of God all over the United States. June 22nd, 1898, he became the worthy husband of sister Emmette Harris, the daughter of Elder J. M. Harris. When he would speak of his wife he called her "Sister Lester." The dear sister did much appreciate his kind, loving companionship, his counsel and his great care for his family, feeling that as God had blessed them with two sons and one daughter he would therefore give unto them wise counsel after a Godly manner, feeling responsible unto God for their moral training. He hath done what he could, with promise, that they will not depart from it. To dear sister Lester I will say, God hath set an open door before thee. As Noah sent forth the dove from the ark, and she returned to the window and the man of righteousness reached forth his hand and took her in, even so is the ark of the covenant of God's grace open to you while you are seeking reconciling rest, that consolation is that the same Hand that sent you forth will take you in where you will be safely housed.

For the last few years brother Lester suffered with high blood presure. In January he developed something like pneumonia, from which he never recovered, although two of the best doctors were employed to serve him in his sickness. Many friends visited the home and viewed the remains.

The funeral services were conducted by Elders H. V. Cole and O. J. Denny, who preached to a full church-house of people, with many standing outside, unable to get in. There was a large quantity of beautiful flowers brought and sent by friends from far and near. He was laid to rest in the Evergreen Cemetery, not far from his home. Not only his dear family, but many others, will remember his worthy companionship, his wise counsel, sound judgment of righteousness and truth.

He requested that brother H. V. Cole and I conduct his funeral service whenever he passed from this life. I was sick and could not attend. Too much cannot be said in truth of Elder P. G. Lester, for he was a man of God. I loved him and I know he loved me. He came from God and God hath taken him away. Blessed be God for the wonderful gift.

D. SMITH WEBB.

HILLSVILLE, Virginia.

WILLIAM HENRY JONES, son of Evan and Elizabeth Wayman Jones, was born at Royalton, Indiana, July 29th, 1852. With his parents he moved to Iowa in childhood, and from there to Kansas in 1868, settling in Nemeha County. April 12th, 1874, he was married to Miss Esly Schenck, of Leavenworth County, Kansas, where he afterward located, moving on a few years later to Jefferson County, where the major part of his life was spent on a farm near Oskaloosa, until the infirmities of age compelled a cessation of the activities of his energetic life. He then retired from the farm and moved to Topeka, Kansas, where he spent the remainder of his life. He was the father of nine children, three of whom preceded him in death: "Little Johnny," in March, 1882, Elizabeth E., aged nineteen, in 1901, and Zeru G., aged forty-four, in 1920. Those surviving are Cyrus F., of Cheyenne Wells, Colorado, Alverda Wells, of Concordia, Kansas, Mabel Snell, of Sharon Springs, Kansas, and Will L., of Topeka, Kansas. Also sixteen grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, with his lifelong companion, survive him. He and his wife joined Mt. Vernon Church, in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1913, and were baptized by the late Elder W. T. Brown. His membership remained there until released by death, though the last few years his condition and environments prevented his regular attendance there, though he attended meetings in Topeka as long as he was able to go. He had the one infallible evidence of having passed from death unto life which has been the comfort and stay of many poor doubting souls, in that he loved his brethren. If he could not see a point of doctrine he was not contentious about it, nor given to "doubtful disputations," preferring to attribute it to his own limited undersanding. He was esteemed by his brethren and in the communities in which he had lived, and was respected as a moral, upright citizen. During the long illness which preceded his death he talked calmly and frequently of his approaching demise. "He fell, but felt no fear," passing away October 24th, 1927. Services were conducted by Elder Leon Clevenger, of Excelsior Springs, Missouri, to the great satisfaction of his relatives, some of whom had never heard a Primitive Baptist sermon before. He was laid to rest in Mt. Hope Cemetery, there to await the great and notable day when "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words," while a few more days we are going sorrowing here, but rejoicing in hope.

Written by request.

MARY ELLISON.

JAMES HARVEY ANDERSON, beloved husband of Martha Anderson, passed away at 3:45 o'clock Friday afternoon, at his home in Lebanon, Oregon. He was born October 1st, 1843, in Platt County, Missouri, being one of fifteen children born to James and Elanore Anderson. At the early age of four he with his father's family migrated to Oregon, setting near Salem. July 10th 1870, he married Martha Shanks, a marriage that continued for over fifty-eight years before it was severed by his death, He took his bride to Waldo Hills, and in 1880 moved to Scio, where Elder Matthews baptized him in the Primitive Baptist faith. He was employed as a school teacher for some time in his earlier years. In the year 1892 he located at Stayton, and resided there until 1918, when he moved to Lebanon. He was the father of four children: Clarence, now deceased, and three living daughters: Mrs. Stellia Ray, of Lebanon, Mrs. Bertha Rhodes, of Oakland, California, and Mrs. Roxey Mac Clements, of Portland. Surviving him also are his widow, Mrs. Martha Anderson, nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Elder Rose conducted the funeral service at Love Chepel. Burial Sunday afternoon at Stayton, Oregon.

W. M. ROSE.

MRS. NANNIE PEEK, our beloved sister, was born August 24th, 1854, in the State of Alabama, and was married to Mr. John Herring January 14th, 1870. One child was born to them, but died in infancy. Later they adopted a little boy named David Taylor and reared him to manhood. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Beech Creek, near Atlanta, Texas, October 11th, 1879. Mr. John Herring died March 10th, 1904. In 1908 she was married to Mr. T. B. Peek. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Long. She leaves her husband, one brother, B. D. Long, one sister, Mrs. Annie Hayes, of Bivins, Texas, the adopted son, David Taylor, of Belcher, Louisiana, eight step

children, five girls and three boys (to whom she was a kind and loving mother), and a host of friends to mourn their loss. She was sick for a long time, but was confined to her bed but a short time. She passed away January 3rd, 1929. The writer was at her bedside the morning she died, and saw her suffer untold misery, but she bore it with great patience, and breathed her last in sweet peace. She was always appreciative of everything done for her. Our loss is great, but we feel sure of her sweet rest. I often wish I could be half as good and kind as she was. One could see the love of God in her sweet countenance.

Funeral services were held at Spring Hill Church, conducted by W. B. and B. F. Robertson and D. J. Tolley, after which the body was laid to rest in the Spring Hill Cemetery to await the morning of the resurrection.

Written by her unworthy sister in hope of eternal life,

(MRS.) W. B. ROBERTSON.

SARAH ROBIN DAVENPORT, wife of Ira Davenport, departed this life at the home of her sister, Mrs. William Dawson, Cohoes, New York, June 2nd, 1929, aged 59 years. Her home was at Stewart, New York, where she and her husband lived until she had to go to the hospital for an operation. The remainder of her life, about one year, was spent with her sister at Cohoes, where all that loving hands could do for her was done. We have known of Mrs. Davenport for several years and felt that she was taught of the Lord. She loved to converse on the things of God, and when she heard anything that agreed with what she had passed through her face would light up, giving evidence of the comfort she felt within. It was our privilege to visit her several times at Cohoes, and we were glad to see hope was built upon nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. The hands that patiently cared for her did not grow weary in their labor of love, but the Lord put an end to their labor by calling our dear friend home. May the Lord comfort her dear husband in his loneliness and her sister and niece who showed her such devoted attention.

The writer was called to the funeral, and the interment was in the Albany Cemetery.

G. R.

ROBERT LEE TURNER, the subject of this notice, son of J. B. and Caroline Ringo Turner, was born in Henry County, Kentucky, August 7th, 1863, and departed this life October 12th, 1928, aged 65 years, 2 months and 5 days. He was found dead in a field on his place by his son, Frank Turner. After eating a hearty breakfast he had gone to the field where the men were cutting corn, and was apparently feeling as well as usual when he left the house, but had been in impaired health for some time. He had been dead but a few minutes when his son came to join him in the field. Robert, as he was familiarly known, was in early manhood married to Miss Bettie Laytham, daughter of the late Frank and Martha Laytham, of Mayslick, Kentucky, where he made his home to the time of his death, and was a successful farmer and stock trader. In the spring of 1896 he united with the Mays Lick Primitive Baptist Church, and was baptized by the late Elder John G. Eubanks, the then pastor of that church, and remained faithful to his church and fellow-man, uncompromising in the doctrine of the Bible (as set forth and contended for by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES). Brother Robert (a brother in the flesh to the writer) was conservative in his views, and uncompromising in his convictions, a man of sterling qualities, revered and loved by all who knew him, having served his purpose on earth, filling up the measure of his days, peacefully fell asleep in Jesus, strong in the faith in which he had ived. He leaves to mourn their loss one son, Frank Laytham, one daughter, Irene Turner Hutchins, three brothers and two sisters, together with a host of loving friends. His companion preceded him to the grave November 17th, 1927. Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, they rest from their labors and their works do follow them. May the God of all grace, love and mercy rest and abide with us all, is the sincere prayer of the writer.

G. R. TURNER.

MRS. JAMES P. CLARK BEARD, my beloved mother, was born in Scott Township, Pennsylvania, August 2nd, 1848, and slipped into her last long rest July 13th, 1929. She was Mattie Anne Vail, the daughter of Daniel and Margery Elizabeth Vail. My father and mother were married by Elder Almiron St. John, in Wavery, New York, April 12th, 1868. They had five children: Curtis James, George Henry, Fred Silas, Nellie Elizabeth and myself. Nellie died at the age of six, and George many years later, while father left us ten years ago. Mother was for a long period of time a member of the Old School Baptist Church in Waverly, New York, but for the past thirty years had been a member of the Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of New York City. She was a faithful member, a devoted wife and a loving mother. Though grief-stricken and lonely, yet I know she is at rest in Him, where there shall be no more pain, neither sorrow nor crying. It was my privilege to care for mother the last few years of her life, and she was very patient, and though seldom able to attend meeting, her heart was in Zion.

Elder R. Lester Dodson, our devoted pastor, spoke comfortingly at her funeral, and read Hymn 1046, which was dear to mother's heart. Mother's brother, Elder D. M. Vail, spoke sweetly in prayer at the grave in Waverly, New York. Besides my brothers, Curtis and Fred, Elder Vail and myself, mother is survived by one sister, Mrs. Emma Butler, five grandchildren: Mrs. Dorothy Beard Little, Mrs. Victor Borst, Rowena Watie

and Annie Frances Beard, and Laird Clark Addis, also two great-grandchildren: Margery Elenor and Stephen Curtis Little.

RUTH BEARD ADDIS.

BATH, New York.

MRS. EMILY J. FOOKS was born September 20th, 1855, and died at her home in Snow Hill, Maryland, June 12th, 1929, at the age of 72 years. She was a daughter of Uriah F. Shockley, a prominent resident of Coulbourne's District, and was the last, but one, of nine children. She was married August 27th, 1884, to Purnell M. Fooks, who died in 1909. There were four children, two of whom died at an early age, leaving a daughter, Miss Lottie Fooks, of Snow Hill, Md., and a son, Burleigh C. Fooks, of New Haven, Conn., to mourn the loss of a devoted and understanding mother. Mrs. Fooks was indeed a wonderful woman, loved by young and old, and held in highest esteem by all who knew her. She dearly loved the Baptist doctrine, and seldom failed to attend her meetings. She took great pleasure in our last Association and in the entertainment of our friends. The church has indeed lost a friend, and I one of my best loved ones.

The funeral was held at the home, Elders Ker and Coulbourne being present, and interment was made in Parson's Cemetery, in Salisbury. The number of friends present and the floral tributes spoke eloquently of the love which was felt for her.

(MRS.) H. W. PERDUE.

ELDER J. W. BRADLEY was born in the State of Mississippi May 29th, 1853, and departed this life March 14th, 1929, in Banks, Arkansas. He joined the Primitive Baptists at Mt. Pisga Church, Drew County, Arkansas, March 5th, 1898, and was ordained Elder October 19th, 1914. Those composing the presbytery were Elders J. D. Bert, Moderator, J. H. Blythe, T. J. Evers, Clerk, Deacon T. G. Welch. He leaves a wife, one son and four daughters to mourn their loss, but we do not weep as those who have no hope, for we believe he has gone to rest, as he said, Everything is all right, the way is clear.

Written by his wife,

(MRS.) J. W. BRADLEY.

I will add to the foregoing that a good man has fallen and will be greatly missed by his brethren. Brother Bradley was faithful to the cause he loved so well, and earnestly contended for the faith once deliverel unto the saints. I tried to speak words of comfort to his sorrowing relatives and a host of friends, after which his body was laid to rest in Banks Cemetery, Banks, Arkansas. I will say to his loved ones, Weep not, for we believe he has gone to rest, but look unto God, who doeth all things well.

Yours in hope of sweet life beyond the grave,

T. J. EVERS.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, it has pleased our heavenly Father to take from our midst by death our dear sister in Christ, **Martha Head Newton**, we humbly bow our heads in sorrow to God's will, and say, Not ours, but thy will, be done. May God in his goodness and mercy bind up the hearts of her children and loved ones, is our prayer.

Sister Newton was born October 6th, 1855, and died May 21st, 1929, making her stay on earth nearly seventy-four years. She loved the church, and lived a consistent life since having received a hope in Christ. Her body was tenderly laid away March 22nd, beside that of her husband, Deacon John Willis Newton, who departed this life in February, 1928, in the Forsyth Cemetery, where their bodies shall rest, as we hope, until Christ shall come again to gather his jewels, when their mortal bodies shall be brought up and fashioned like his glorious body to be carried home in heaven, to be with God for evermore.

RESOLVED, That we, the church at Smyrna, spread this on our Minutes and send a copy of same to each of her children, also send a copy to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, at Middletown, N. Y., and the ADVOCATE AND MESSENGER, at Luray, Virginia, for publication.

This done by order of the church while in conference this 26th day of May, 1929.

T. G. WRIGHT, Moderator.

G. W. WEBB, Church Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

"An Old Predestinarian," Okla., $1; Franklin S. Terry, N. J., $1; Mrs. J. R. McAfee, Mo., 50 cents; Mrs. Mary Ellison, Kans., $1; Mrs. J. W. Taylor, Mo,, $1; Lydia B. Stewart, N. Y., $2; Mrs. B. W. Crabb, Texas, $3.

MEETINGS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 6th, 6th and 8th, 1929. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

TOPSHAM, Maine.

The regular annual meeting is to be held with the Slate Hill Church, Slate Hill N. Y., on Friday, August 23rd, 1929, and we cordially invite brethren and friends to be with us on that occasion. Elder C. W. Vaughn and myself expect to be present as ministers. Meeting to open at 11:00 o'clock (Daylibht Saving Time), at the close of which lunch will be served, to be followed by preaching in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will meet (God willing) with the Clovesville Church, Clovesville, New York, Wednesday and Thursday after the second Sunday in September (September 11th and 12th). Trains will be met at Halcottville, N. Y., Tuesday p. m., and at Fleischmanns, N. Y., Wednesday a. m. Those coming by auto come to Halcottville Tuesday, and direct to meetinghouse Wednesday. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth.

GEORGE RUSTON.

The seventy-second session of the First Kansas Association is appointed to be held two miles southeast of Perry, Kansas, at the schoolhouse near the residence of Elder L. L. Schenck, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 13th, 14th and 15th,1929. Perry is located on Highway 10, and on the Union Pacific Railroad. For any other information address Elder L. L. Schenck, Perry, Kansas, or myself, at Grantville. Kansas.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

Hazel Creek Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will hold their seventy-fifth annual session, if the Lord wills, with the Providence Church, near Plano, Appanoose County, Iowa, commencing on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in August, 1929, and continuing the two following days. All lovers of the truth are invited.

W. T. WALTERS, Moderator.

J. M. CATE, Clerk.

The Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association will meet in its eighty-eighth session, with Little Horn Church, fourteen miles west of Malvern, Arkansas, on the Murfreesboro Pike, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 13th, 14th and 15th, 1929. Those coming to this Association from the south and west by railroad will come to Camden, Arkansas, get tickets to Malvern, and those coming from the north and east will come to Little Rock and get tickets for Malvern, where trains will be met Thursday, only. A cordial invitation is extended to all genuine unlimited predestinarians, or Baptists of the Old School, to visit this meeting, especially ministers.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator,
Fordyce, Arkansas.

W. C. HORTON, Clerk, Ellisville, Arkansas.

The Old School Baptist Church at Otego, New York, has appointed a two days meeting to be held Saturday p. m. and evening and all day Sunday, August 31st and September 1st, 1929, the Lord willing. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

ROSE T. LEONARD, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets on the first and third Sundays of each month at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, Riverside, California. The third Sunday is the Conference Meeting. All services begin with singing at 1:00 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.

O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk,
143 W. 11th Street, Claremont Cal.

The Cane Run Predestinarian Old School Baptist Church, of Turners Station, Kentucky, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 10:30 a. m., also, the Sulphur Fork Church of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, of the same faith and order, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 2:30 p. m.

GEO. L. WEAVER, Pastor.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, every Sunday at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. (Daylight Saving Time) at the home of W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.. Midweek song service by appointment. Pastors, Elders Jones and Jaynes. Basket lunch.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sunday at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First. "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, Convened at Black Rock, Md , September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second. The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Eld. Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third. "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Eld. H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio. Fourth. "Fatalism." By Eld. H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio. Fifth. "The Celestial Railroad" This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth. "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 97. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1929. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GENESIS XXXII. 24.

"And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day."

The life of Jacob is most interesting and instructive. His pathway, amidst the providences of his God, was a succession of changing scenes, wherein he proved the faithfulness and compassion of the Lord. The future scenes of our lives are hidden from our view. We know not if the dark or bright shall be our lot; if that wherein our souls delight be best or not. To-day our portion may be in paths of pleasantness, to-morrow the storm may overwhelm us. Says Job, "I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came."—Job iii. 26. This was Godsent trouble, else it never could have touched Job. All the vicissitudes of our lives are in the hands of our God, who apportions to each one according to the good pleasure of his will. The chapter from which our subject is taken gives us a glimpse of the varied scenes which God's providences accomplished in the life of Jacob. Having parted with Laban, his father-in-law, "Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim." This day had a gladsome beginning for Jacob: God's host escorted him on his way. Are not the angels "all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"—Heb. i. 14. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." Jacob forthwith sends messengers before him unto Esau, his brother, to acquaint him of his coming. "And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him. Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed." The day dawned with every encouraging prospect, and now dense clouds are gathering, and before night enfolds the earth in its dark mantle Jacob is in trouble indeed. He ex-

hausts all his wits contriving for the safety of his family, but in all his troubles he is graciously helped to pour forth his distresses unto the Lord. "And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant: for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he come and smite me, and the mother with the children. And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude."

"Jacob was left alone." His family and all that he has have passed over the brook Jabbok, and now in the darkness of the night there remains the solitary one. I suppose he felt he could not pass over with the rest of the company, he could not lodge with them that night. In the deep distresses of his soul he chose to be separate from all earthly intercourse. It is not uncommon to those who fear the Lord to feel that their peculiar case separates them from their former companions, and beneath the chastenings of the Almighty the child of God sitteth alone, and keepeth silence. (Lam. iii. 28.) He feels unfit to associate with the family of God. Isolated, by temptations, distresses or guilt, from all the kindred, he spends the night in pensive disquietude. "I am like a pelican of the wilderness; I am like an owl of the desert. I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the housetop."—Psalms cii. 6. "Jacob was left alone." There was no friendly one to whom he could appeal for help, and like David, when in the cave Adullam he could say, "I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul." Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed, his cogitations troubled him. How tossed to and fro was his soul! What will the morning bring forth? Truly we know not what shall be on the morrow. Will it be dark or bright? All now looks dark. Esau and four hundred men are coming to meet him, he remembers his brother's threats to kill him. (Gen. xxvii. 41.) He remembers how because of Esau's anger he fled from him to Padan Aram. His conscience accuses him of his guiltiness in supplanting his brother, the deception he practiced upon his father Isaac, and how he cried out, "Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him." It was night.

> "'Twas in the night, when troubles come,
> I sought my God for thee,
> But found no refuge in that name
> That once supported me."

There was darkness, of that Jacob was not afraid, for oftentimes in the darkness of the night he had kept watch over his flocks, and sleep departed from his eyes. (Gen. xxxi. 40.) But there was a night felt within. His soul was laid in darkness, in the deeps. His

fears and unbelief, the remembrance of his sins, the accusations of Satan, all combined to make this night the hour of darkness to Jacob left alone. "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it."—Jer. xxx. 7. Was Jacob also for a little while left alone by the Lord? Did God hide his face from him? "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer."—Isaiah liv. 7, 8.

"Jacob was left alone," but not for long. In the shades of the night there cometh one that layeth his hands on the distressed, solitary one, and or ever he is aware Jacob is in his grasp, and this one begins to wrestle with him. "There wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." Is it Esau that has stealthily approached in the darkness that now has Jacob in his grasp? Once he struggled with his brother (Gen. xxv. 22, 23), and Jacob was the stronger. No, it is not Esau, it is the angel of the Lord in human appearance. (Heb. xii. 4.) This was not, as some have erroneously taught, the preexisting manhood of Christ the Son of God. For the manhood of Christ was the seed of the woman, of the seed of Abraham, which when the fullness of the time was come (Gal. iv. 4) was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary, and she by the power of the Highest overshadowing her was the mother of the manhood of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is far better to abide by the clear testimony of the Bible concerning the manhood of Christ than by a perversion of the Holy Scriptures to build up a fanciful theory of an everlasting preexisting manhood. The angel said unto Mary, "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus." The virgin Mary was Christ's mother according to the flesh. He sucked the breasts of his mother. (Psalms xxii. 9, 10.) "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law," and this time was, "In those days that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria."—Luke ii. 1, 2. How explicitly stated.

But let us return to the wrestlers. The man took hold of Jacob, then Jacob took hold of him. We never take hold of God, we never wrestle with the Lord until he takes hold and wrestles with us. We never come to the Lord except he draws us. (John vi. 44.) We love him because he first loved us. (1 John iv. 19.) We are apprehended of Christ Jesus. (Phil. iii. 12.) Then we reach forth to apprehend the things that are eternal. We are arrested by the reigning grace of God, and the result of this grace of God in us is that we lay hold of God, on Christ, on eternal life, and by a divine power we wrestle by faith and love, with prayers and tears until the blessedness of Christ is imparted to us. The Lord wrestles with his people to bring them down in the dust. He over-

throws Jacob and raises up Israel. He is humbled in the dust, a poor, sinful, unworthy worm, but is so marvelously strengthened by the blessing of God who wrestled with him, that he arises strong in the Lord and the power of his might as a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth, to thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and to make the hills as chaff. (Isaiah xli. 15.) "I was brought low, and he helped me." —Psalms cxvi. 6. There are times when the Lord has a controversy with his people. (Hosea xii. 2.) There are seasons for the trial of our faith, he pleads with his people. (Micah vi. 1, 2.) Yes, in various ways the Lord wrestles with his people, by his providences they find themselves in straits, in afflictions and temptations. The Scriptures afford us records of such wrestlings. Paul had such a wrestling. (2 Cor. xii. 1--10.) Moses also. What a wrestler he was for the tribes of Israel. (Exodus xxxii.) The Lord wrestled with Job, and as he approached him said, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me." And when Job was abased and cast to the earth he answered the Lord, "Behold, I am vile: what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth." Again the Lord challenged him, and took hold of him (Job xl. 3--7), and again, Job is prostrated, and he answered the Lord, and said, "I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? wherefore have I uttered that I understood not: things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

As the Lord wrestles with his people and bringeth them low they are enabled to lay hold upon his promises, to plead with the Lord his own immutability, and the honor of his name. This is a divine miracle that a sinful creature should wrestle with the Lord. A miracle of God's own invincible grace in the heart of a poor sinner. Draw near and look with sacred eyes at Jeremiah wrestling in prayer with God. "Hast thou utterly rejected Judah? hath thy soul loathed Zion? why hast thou smitten us, and there is no healing for us? We look for peace, and there is no good; and for the time of healing, and behold trouble! We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers; for we have sinned against thee. Do not abhor us, for thy name's sake; do not disgrace the throne of thy glory: remember, break not thy covenant with us."—Jer. xiv. 19--21. When the Syro-phenician woman came to Christ in behalf of her daughter, he wrestled with her and she wrestled with him. First, he answered her not a word, then again he answered, I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the household of Israel. But she still clings yet the more to him, and wor-

shipped him, saying, "Lord help me." But Jesus replied, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." Is she not now cast from him, overthrown, a dog in the dust? But, like Jacob, she wrestles still, she clings to Jesus still, and her faith is saying, I will not let thee go except thou bless me, and she said, "Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." She prevailed, and Jesus blessed her there, and said unto her, "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour."—Matt. xv. 22.

"Wrestling prayer can wonders do,
Bring relief in deepest straits;
Prayer can force a passage through
Iron bars and brazen gates."

The night is far spent, and the angel and Jacob continue their wrestling. But the Lord will not contend forever, he will bring his dealings with his people to a gracious conclusion. Our heavenly Father ever has our welfare in view, no matter how severe the discipline. Though he casts us down, and we are laid in the deeps, he will bring us up again from the depths of the sea, and exalts us in due time at his own right hand in heavenly places. Thus, when the angel of the Lord "saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his [Jacob's] thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him." Thus as the ascension of the morning was approaching, by a mysterious and divine touch Jacob's thigh was out of joint. This was a master stroke. Jacob can no longer stand upon his feet, he sinks, he falls in his anguish to the ground. Did Jacob loosen his hold of the man as he sank prostrate to the earth? No. The man who wrestled with him all night is down with him, too, held fast in his embrace. When we in our troubles could hold up no longer, did we yield to despair? Did not our hearts rather cry out,

"Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on thee."

When Jacob was lowest, then he was uppermost; when he was weakest, then he was strongest. Out of weakness he was made strong. This is a divine paradox so often verified in the experience of the saints. There can be no mistake in affirming that a divine power was imparted to Jacob, a poor, sinful creature, to wrestle with the man. But surely, with his thigh out of joint, Jacob is done for, vanquished, he will slacken his hold, for he can rise no more. Will he not now cry out, Enough, I yield, thou hast gained the mastery? Not so! Shall I say that amidst his agonies the poor, prostrate cripple tightened his grip? What a scene is this just before the break of day; wrestling still, though no longer able to stand upon his feet. What tossings to and fro have also been going on in the heart of Jacob. Before the man began to wrestle with him he was greatly agitated, and his conflicts then taxed all his energies. So Jacob now is engaged in a two-fold conflict. This inquiry also exercises his soul, Who is this that wrestles with me? The darkness of the night is upon me,

and I cannot see his face. So the child of God often inquires, These sharp temptations, adversities and trials that I wrestle with, are they friends or foes?

The day breaketh. Draw nearer with me, fellow-witnesses of this scene. See, one of the wrestlers weepeth. There course the tears down his cheeks. Listen, he maketh supplications. The weeping wrestler is the one, the hollow of whose thigh is out of joint. (Hosea xii. 4.) Jacob wept and made supplication. The day breaketh. It was then Jacob obtained his first glimpses of the face of the mighty wrestler, and such glimpses did he have of the one bending over him, that his heart was wholly persuaded it was not a foe, but one whose look was tender mercy toward the fallen one. When the Lord has brought you low, has it been revealed to thee, as the day breaketh, that he who has afflicted thee, whose providences have prostrated you, is thy gracious Friend, full of pity? Jacob wept and made supplication unto him. All the dear family of God have their times of weeping. Indeed, to some much of life's pilgrimage is in the vale of tears. A tearless religion is not the religion of those who are Christ's. The Spirit of God so teaches the elect that in a heart-feeling way they are made to feel their estrangement from the Holy One of Israel, and they mourn every one for his iniquity. (Ezek. vii. 16.) The causes of the tears of the saints are manifold. They weep when in captivity to the enemy (Psalms cxxxvii.), and when they tread the homeward journey they come with weeping and supplications. (Jeremiah xxxi. 9.) Contrite souls even in our day water their couch with tears. (Psalms vi. 6.) Peter wept bitterly. (Matt. xxvi. 75.) Hezekiah wept sore. (2 Kings xx. 3.) There are seasons when the daughter of Zion "weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks."—Lam. i. 2. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Then she sings, and her face is radiant with smiles, for the Lord has forgiven all her sins, he hath scattered her foes, he has lifted up the light of his countenance upon her.

"And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." Jacob might say, Shall I let thee go, and wilt thou leave me, a poor, disabled cripple, in the dark?

"Lord, I cannot let thee go,
Till a blessing thou bestow;
Do not turn away thy face,
Mine's an urgent, pressing case.

No, I must maintain my hold,
'Tis thy goodness makes me bold;
I can no denial take
When I plead for Jesus' sake."

"Except thou bless me." Thy blesings shall dry my tears, heal my woes and strengthen me. With thy blessing I will fear no evil, I can face Esau and his four hundred men. "Let them curse, but bless thou."—Psalms cix. 28. Leave me not, neither forsake me, give me first thy benediction. Thou camest as an adversary, and hast brought me in anguish into the dust of the earth, now, only as a Friend can I let thou go. Thou camest with a frown, now leave thy smile with me. Thou

was angry with me, let thine anger be turned away, and comfort me with thy blessing. O, dear reader, whatever thou hast, if thou lackest the blessing of the Lord, how destitute thou art.

"And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob." This inquiry and Jacob's answer is full of meaning. There is signified in it Jacob's unbrotherly conduct. Esau in his exceeding bitter cry exclaimed, "Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing."—Gen. xxvii. 36. The Lord is constantly drawing forth from his people the confession of their low estate, and it is not with a trifling tongue they answer the Lord's searching inquiry, but in lowliness of heart they bow at his feet, confessing their name is Jacob. A worm. (Isaiah xli. 14.) The chief of sinners. (1 Tim. i. 15.) Ready to perish. (Deut. xxvi. 5.) Dust and ashes. (Gen. xviii. 27.) When Jacob had acknowledged his name did the angel say, Thou art too unworthy, thou hast been too contemptibly mean to have my blessing? Oh no! In such exceeding riches of grace the Lord deals with the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory; for on them he will make known the riches of his glory, and Jacob was one of such vessels of mercy. "I have loved you, saith the Lord: yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains, and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness."—Malichi i. 2, 3. Here we have displayed the holy and glorious sovereignty of Jehovah's love.

"And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." Oh, this in truth is raising up the poor out of the dust, and lifting up the beggar from the dunghill, to set him among princes, and to make him inherit the throne of glory. (1 Sam. ii. 8.) As he spake these words methinks I see the man and Israel arising from the dust. Yes, when the man arose Israel was with him. The everlasting arms lifted up the lame man, and in tender compassion put his thigh in joint again. (Although he ever after had a remembrance of this in the sinew that shrank.) The Lord bringeth low and lifteth up. How often are believers brought low through oppression, affliction and sorrow; our pride and self-sufficiency have to be brought to naught. He brings down our heart with labor, we fall down and there is none to help. "I was brought low, and he helped me."—Psalms cxvi. 6. This is ever the experience of the household of God.

"Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel." The Lord gives his people another name, a new name. (Isaiah lxii. 2.) The first name is what we are in our fallen estate, base and sinful, earthy, a name declaring our dishonor, a name upon which reproach and condemnation rest, a name in which we are ashamed and weep

before God. But "thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken: neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married."—Isaiah lxii. 4. "Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God."—Eph. ii. 19. "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."—Gal. iv. 7. The Lord pronounced Jacob a prince. This honor have all the saints, for our mighty Savior, who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father. "As a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." This was Godgiven power. Glorious illustrations of this are given in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. Through faith they "subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouth of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valient in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens." The people of God according to their day, the circumstances they are in, the work to be performed, are endued with power from on high. Even the wonderful privilege of having power with God flows from the gracious power of God. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much, and this spirit of supplication the Lord pours down upon the suppliants. (Zech. xii. 10.) Our power with God in prayer at his footstool ever proceeds from the glorious and precious fact that we have an Advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous. Through him, through his sacrifice and blood, his obedience and eternal excellency, acceptance, favor and power with God are ours, and in triumphant faith we sometimes sing, "We shall be more than conquerors through him that loved us."

"And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there."

"Thy name." In what relationship do we stand to each other? How shall I think of thee when thou art absent, removed from my sight? From the very dawn of the Lord's dealings with his own they begin to ask after his name. How hallowed is his name! and as the name of the Lord is unfolded to them by the Holy Spirit they reverently, affectionately and prayerfully think upon his name; and his wondrous works in creation, his providences, and the gospel of Christ declare to them how near is his name. (Psalms lxxv. 1.) "Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name?" Ah, Lord, thou thyself knowest. So poor, weak and sinful am I. Is thy name Jesus, art thou my Savior? Is it Redeemer, and hast thou ransomed me from hell? Is thy name Shepherd, Husband, Friend, the Lord our righteousness, Emmanuel, Incarnate Love? Art thou all this to a poor sinner like me? And he

blessed him on the field of conflict. He anointed him with his blessing. The dark, bitter night is over, and the morning finds Jacob no longer "greatly afraid and distressed," for there he stands in princely majesty, for his name is Israel. Now he can meet Esau. "And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." "And as he passed over Peniel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh. Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh,unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew which shrank."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

BEAUMONT, Texas, June 8, 1929.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—Having just come across the inclosed article in my files, written as date on same shows, I decided to send it to you, and if you think it would be of benefit to any you may give it to them. It is my expression of belief in how the knowledge of "salvation" is wrought and obtained. I am fifty-six years of age, have tried for over thirty-four years to tell this story, and never have tired of telling it, yet I never have been satisfied that I have told the whole story; if I was I would quit. If there are any Old School Baptists here in Beaumont beside my wife and myself I do not know it. I have lived here for more than three years and know of none within one hundred miles of us.

I am yours in hope by grace through faith, and that not of myself, yet unworthy,

J. F. PIERCE.

BEAUMONT, Texas, Dec. 5, 1927.

DEAR BRETHREN:—You who believe in salvation by grace, "through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." —Eph. ii. 8--10. To you who thus believe, even according to the working of God's mighty power, as when he raised Christ from the dead, even so hath he quickened us together with Christ, that our faith and hope might be, not in ourselves, but in God, even so in Christ, for the Father in Christ did make himself manifest, even so he hath ever done in divers ways since the world began, and hath in these last times made himself manifest unto us by the Holy Ghost, and what we see and hear and feel I am persuaded doth not in the least differ from that which hath been seen and heard and felt by those whose testimony we have on record in holy writ, for if we are not deceived that testimony is in perfect harmony with what we see, hear and feel, even as we believe. So we believe our salvation in time and eternity is the work of God in Christ, and this belief is produced by the working of his mighty power wrought in and on us by the Holy Ghost, and we are enabled by the same to acknowledge, or confess, that Jesus is the Christ. As it

is written, No man can say that Jesus is the Christ but by the Holy Ghost. If I am not deceived, I believe the same, and have for over thirty-four years, but have not always been able to express my belief as plainly and fully as I feel now a desire to do. My inability to express myself in the past was because of the lack of wisdom in the understanding of the truth. God gives that wisdom to us as our understanding of the truth develops, or as it is put in the word. "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." To this end, when he ascended upon high, he led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men. He gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers. (See Ephesians iv. 11--16.) So we to-day must say these gifts are still in existence, still doing just what they were given to do, and will "till we all come in the unity [one] of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ," &c. I believe such is being performed until God's purpose in Christ is fulfilled, and that will be when we all come to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Then all will see eye to eye, and speak the same thing. There will be no more cause of difference, no more declarations of nonfellowship, all will be one in Christ Jesus. To this end I desire to labor, and feel I have labored, and I have no regrets, for all that has passed is that which was to pass, and it is only tending to that end to which we hope to come. The word "absolute," in connection with predestination, expresses what I believe as to the works of God, in respect and in relation to all that comes to pass, to the end he is glorified in the salvation of his people. Therefore I could not feel I had fully expressed my belief unless I spoke of absolute predestination. I do not believe anything that has come to pass could have been, or come to pass, any other way than it has, so I say I do not regret anything that has passed. It had to be, therefore it must glorify God. He brings peace out of confusion, turns darkness into light, makes crooked things straight, rough places smooth. That is more than man can do, for he says, "Without me ye can do nothing."

These are a few expressions of what I believe.

J. F. PIERCE.

LONDON, Ontario.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I am sending this excellent letter and poem, which I much enjoyed and which was to my spiritual comfort, to be published in our dear SIGNS, that others of like precious faith may enjoy it. I wrote this dear brother to that effect.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) JOHN SINCLAIR.

PERRY, Kansas, March 3, 1929.

DEAR SISTER SINCLAIR:—Your kind and unexpected letter of recent date came duly to hand. I have read it and reread it with much interest. Although as you say, we have never seen one another in the flesh, yet the spirit of your

letter stirred me with the hope that we may be members of the same household: the household of God. Although I do not feel worthy to claim relationship with the people of God, yet when I can see the manifestation of a work of grace in an individual I feel a fellowship for that one which I cannot restrain. Your letter bore the marks of one who has been with Jesus and learned of him, and this learning which we receive from him is not like the learning we receive from the world. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." So he, being meek and lowly in heart, that is one of the very important lessons we learn of him. I am led to believe that meekness and lowliness is one of the prime essentials to an orderly walk, and I fear that I oftentimes fall short of it. "A proud look" is one of the things mentioned in Proverbs which the Lord hates. If we learn of him we learn obedience through the things which we suffer, even as he learned it. In fact, the greater portion of our learning comes that way, or at least it seems it has been that way with me, and I feel that I have been a very slow learner. The makeup of the Lord's people is peculiar indeed. We learn many lessons, by the way we seem to forget, and we must be reminded over and over again concerning our duties. Sometimes our gracious Instructor even applies the rod in our correction, but there are some things we have learned that we never can forget. We cannot forget that we are sinners by nature as well as by practice, for we are daily and hourly reminded of this fact. We cannot forget how helpless we felt when we were awakened to the fact that we were sinners justly condemned in the sight of the just and holy God. We cannot forget the darkness and gloom, the distress of mind and the burden of our heart while we were passing through that particular period of our life. We cannot forget the joy that was ours when we heard that still small voice, at the sound of which our fears fled away and the burden was lifted from our heart. We cannot forget the scene when we were first led to view Jesus as our burden-bearer, our law giver, our Redeemer, our Lord, our God, our Savior; in fact, our All in all. All this we have learned of him and all of this we cannot forget, for it is written with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever. Thus we know that our Redeemer liveth. To learn of him it is necessary that we take his yoke upon us. To be yoked with him means that we must walk by his side. According to nature, if one is privileged to walk with one of the kings or notables of earth it is attended with a certain degree of haughtiness, but contrary to nature, if we walk with Jesus we are learning to be meek and lowly at heart. While we dwell here upon earth, God's footstool, it should teach us that we ought always to be found at his feet. Perhaps it might be said there is such a thing as humble pride. We pride not ourselves upon our worthiness, for we have none, but in the hope that grace has

placed us in the number of our Savior's family. God's people have learned many things which the world has never learned and can never know. We know our salvation is not according to our works, but according to God's purpose and grace. The world evidently does not know this, for they are constantly preaching a system of works which is supposed to bring them into favor with God. We know there is an election of grace, and this also is denied by the world, and it is taught instead that Christ died for the whole human family and they all have an equal chance to be saved. We know that Jesus finished the work, thereby glorifying his Father upon the earth, but this glorious truth is also hidden from the world, and it is taught that Jesus came and did all he could to save sinners, but if the sinner does not help him his work, his suffering, his death and resurrection are all of no avail. But we have not so learned Christ, we have not so learned of him. Our hope is in what he has done for us and not in what we can do to help him. Through the gracious providence of God we are enabled to view him the Savior of sinners indeed. "And ye shall find rest unto your souls." Yes, there remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. There is nothing sweeter or more acceptable than rest to a weary way-worn pilgrim. There is nothing more acceptable than a cup of cold water to one who is thirsting, and this also Jesus has promised to provide.

Dear sister, I hope you can pardon me for the foregoing disconnected thoughts. I have not written as I hoped I might. I should be glad to hear from you again some time.

I am sincerely, though very unworthily,

L. L. SCHENCK.

(*See poetry on page* 212.)

VAN ZANDT, Wash., July 23, 1929.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please change my address from 2515 Kulshan Street, Bellingham, Washington, to Van Zandt, Washington, where I wish my correspondents to address me in the future. Inclosed you will find stamps to pay for mailing me the July number, as we do not want to miss a single copy, for it is the food this poor hungry soul longs for, and I find it very nourishing and strengthening to my drooping spirits; it builds me up when I am cast down, and it gives me joy and comfort; it is truly as a table laden with good things coming direct from the hand of my dear Savior, so that I can say indeed and in truth, The Lord has prepared a table in the presence of mine enemies. It is meet to eat that they know not of, for it is sweeter, more precious and more lasting than all the treasures and pleasures this world contains, for it is the only substance which does not perish with the using, and it is eternal, everlasting and it fades not away, but grows bigger and brighter unto the perfect day, where I hope to meet all the redeemed at Jesus' feet some day.

DAVIS BURCH.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1929.

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ACTS V. 3.

"BUT Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?"

This incident of Ananias and of Sapphira his wife occurred at a time when the church at Jerusalem was in a highly spiritual state, as witness Luke's description of it: "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses, sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need."—Acts iv. 32--35. Here we have an instance in the apostolic period of the church, of successful community living and of successful community sharing on the part of those who were believers in Jesus Christ. Since that far distant day, various religious peoples have attempted this community sort of life, but always with less success than those of the apostles' day. There is always one thing necessary to the success of such a community life among God's people, that is, the elimination of selfishness and greed. Unless the self-interest of human nature be held in check, community life cannot succeed. To hold these fleshly principles in check, the active presence of the Holy Spirit is needed. The apostles and the brethren of the Jerusalem church at the above stated time, had the Holy Ghost given them in great measure. Therefore, they could and did live successfully in a community life so long as that Holy Spirit abode with them in sufficient measure to suppress their individual interests. "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost."—Acts iv. 31. When a vessel is full there is room for nothing more nor nothing less. Being filled with the Holy Ghost, there was no room in them for self interest to get in its greedy, selfish work. The case of Ananias an Sapphira proves what the flesh does when not restrained by the Holy Ghost. As Peter told Ananias, he had not lied to men but to

the Holy Ghost. The land belonged to Ananias before he sold it, the money was his after he sold it; then was it not his own to do as he pleased with? To whom then, did he lie? Peter had not exacted any tribute from Ananias, nor had the other apostles. No one of all Ananias' brethren had compelled him to give his money to the common fund. No tax of any sort had been levied by the church on Ananias or on any of the others. What they had done, they did because they wanted to do it; and they wanted to do it because the Holy Ghost filled them. There is no doubt but that the Holy Ghost put the desire in Ananias' heart as in the hearts of the others, to sell the land and give the proceeds to the church. Afterward, however, Satan suggested to Ananias he had better keep back part for himself; and to that self-interest prompted by Satan, he listened and heeded accordingly. Thus, he cheated not Peter, nor the church, but his own inner, better, spiritual self. His deception was against the Spirit, not against men. He experienced as a result, death. Such is always the case of those who go against the promptings of the Holy Ghost and heed the fleshly impulses instead. His wife also met death because, instead of exhorting her husband to heed the Holy Spirit, she catered to his self-interest and was accessory to his willful withholding of part of the price of the land they had sold. So, there is not only death to those who lie to the Holy Spirit within their own breasts, but death as well to those who bid godspeed in such selfishness. Every true child of God has a pure conscience whose standards of right and wrong are altogether different from the conscientious scruples of natural and unregenerate men. All men by nature have a conscience of some sort, some code or system of right or wrong by which they try to square their lives. This conscience of the natural man, we must not confuse with the pure conscience of the regenerated child of God. The conscience of the believer is, by the blood of Christ, purged from dead works to serve the living God. (Hebrews ix. 14.) What formerly was judged to be wrong, is to the pure conscience right; what once was deemed right, is to the pure conscience wrong. So Paul found it to be, and so do all believers. The life of the pure conscience is the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. This principle in the believer makes him or her feel keenly alive and tender to the righteousness of their lives not only before the world, but especially before their brethren and the God of their salvation. It was against this pure conscience within him, that Ananias and his wife sinned. So it is with all of us who fail to live up to the best that is in us, and realize shame accordingly. Very few of us do as well as we might do, certainly not as well as we ought to do. Sometimes we say, and possibly we feel, that we have done our best. But have we? "Our best," if it be simply "our best," and not anything more than that, is but poor indeed. However, the best that is in a believer is not his fleshly best, for that is but bad at best; but the best that is

in him is the Holy Ghost, the new inner spiritual self, the new creature created within him in righteousness and true holiness. How many of us live up to this best? What one of us is sufficient for it of one's self? It is of grace, all of grace. This great grace, the church had, in that day told about in the fourth chapter of Acts. This pure or good conscience in the believer is evidenced in that he who has it, is in all things willing to live honestly. (Hebrews xiii. 18.) Did Ananias do honestly when he held back part of the price? Did his wife do honestly when she connived with him in it? No, but their lie hurt themselves more than it hurt the church. It resulted in their death to the church, but the church did not die. So it is with us when we do despite to the spirit of grace within us and hold back such service as the Spirit within us bids us render the church. Very few of us get all out of our spiritual life and all out of our blessings and privileges that we might get out of them. It is so easy to listen to the promptings of fleshly self- interest. But to do so, means death just in the measure that the old man influences us. The preaching and the epistles of the apostles were full of admonitions to the brethren as to how they ought to live and walk. These admonitions we need ever so much to-day. The Holy Ghost would not have inspired the apostles with such exhorting messages to the brethren, unless there is some sense in which we can heed them, but are liable not to heed them. What would be the use of a parent telling his child to do something which the parent knew the child was utterly not able to do? We cannot believe that God our heavenly Father would by his Spirit exhort his children unto obedience to the truth, unless there is some wonderful sense in which his children are able to render that obedience. The children of God are not mere inanimate pieces of machinery which move only when the power is turned on, but they are living spiritual members of Christ's body having his life flowing through them, and every one of them is a partaker of the divine nature. Thus, to such characters as these, are the exhortations addressed; and God has provided them with the ability whereby they can render obedience to all that he commands them. This they do, not by appealing to their human fleshly nature, but by laying hold on the eternal life which he has given them and which dwells within them. Read 1 Timothy vi. 12. For instance, Paul commands the saints in his first letter to the Thessalonians to "Quench not the Spirit." If there is not the slightest possibility of any one of us quenching the Spirit, then why tell us not to do it? If it lies not within the power of believers to keep from it, why tell them to keep from it? Sometimes believers have been known to excuse their transgressions by saying, "Well, I could'nt help it." This will not do. Such an excuse seeks to throw all responsibility for wrongdoing back on God, and is not scriptural. David did not excuse his relations with Uriah's wife by saying he could not help it. No, he con-

fessed his sin and blamed himself, not the providence of God, for it. (Psalms li.) "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."—Gal. vi. 7, 8. Let us then not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. Let us ask ourselves, those of us who feel we are called to the ministry of the word and to the oversight of churches, are we holding back from giving the best that is in us? Do we consider our own ease and convenience, or do we esteem first the service of the churches, no matter what sacrifice it may mean personally? Are we instant in season, out of season, or only when we feel like it, or as it suits us? Do we visit the sick and those who are shut-in? Do we seek to encourage the fearful, doubting souls who are seeking that rest and peace which comes only within the courts of the Lord in his earthly tabernacle? Or are we afraid to encourage such characters for fear some one will think we are coaxing them to join the church? Are we ready always to give a reason of the hope that is within us, in meekness and in fear? And those of us who are not in the ministry, but are members of churches of the Old School Baptist faith and order, are we always in our places in the meetings of the church just as we expect the pastor to be, or are we staying home to entertain company, or because we have worked all the week and need a rest on Sunday? When does the pastor get his rest? Are we giving our money and earthly blessings to help the pastor bear his burdens and pay his debts, or are we holding back, as did Ananias and his wife Sapphira? Are we reading our Bibles, or letting the dust accumulate on them from disuse? Altogether, pastors and brethren, are we living up to the best that is in us, or are we cheating ourselves and thereby dying while living? "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty."—Prov. xi. 24. There is a kind of spending that maketh the spender rich; and there is a kind of economy that makes the withholder poor. A preacher who considers his own ease and convenience more than the service of the churches becomes spiritually poorer and poorer. Instead of growing, he becomes spiritually stunted. Brethren who sacrifice their church privileges and associations for worldly gain become spiritually poor thereby. They withhold more than is right, they come to poverty in their souls. Whenever such conditions become general among our churches, or among the ministers, it spells death for us so far as the visibility of the church is concerned. Never yet did an Old Baptist church die out, but there was a cause for it. Often a condition of some sort that was not right and which was not repented of, caused the candlestick to be removed out of its place. Brethren, these are fearful times for the church. Let us examine ourselves and see if there be any root of bitter-

ness springing up to trouble us. Such unrepented of, is fraught with dire concequences to us as a people.

L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder R. Lester Dodson.)

To the Elders, messengers and members composing the Warwick Old School Baptist Association, convened at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, June 5th, 6th and 7th, 1929, *Greetings.*

BELOVED BRETHREN:—It has just dawned upon us that we were delegated to write the Circular Letter of our Association for this year. In keeping with the precedent established last year, we will again use a subject upon which our views have been requested, the particular verse being the twenty-seventh of the seventeenth chapter of Matthew, reading as follows: "Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them, for me and thee." The one making the request says that while she was reading this chapter, especially the last few verses, it seemed she was void of understanding and she asks, "Do you see anything in the last verse?" In a hurried sketching of the chapter, there seems much to consider, containing as it does an inexhaustible fullness. The name of Jesus certainly stands out preeminently, as Paul declares, "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." Of a truth, "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.' The chapter opens with an account of his transfiguration, and while there appeared with him Moses and Elias, what followed proved conclusively his preeminence over them, for when the mist of the cloud which overshadowed them had cleared away "they saw no man, save Jesus only." He is the sun which outshines and eclipses all others. Second, while Elias, or John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, was to "have done unto him whatsoever they listed," yet, Christ must have the preeminence in suffering and shame and ignomy. It was not to end there, however, for he must also have the preeminence in glory, and while he told them that "the Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men, and they shall kill him," he did not finish speaking until he had said, "And the third day he shall be raised again." The glory of conquering death was to be his, and his alone. Thirdly, when he cured the lunitic who was brought to him, whom it was declared his disciples could not cure, his preeminence in power to heal, where others had failed, was in evidence.

In the fourth instance, we are told, "And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What

thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their children, or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money, that take, and give unto them, for me and thee." In those days tribute money was exacted for different purposes and by different ones. For instance, when tribute money was paid to Cæsar, it must bear his image and superscription. On one occasion, there were those who tempted Jesus, asking, Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not? He said, "Bring me a penny, that I may see it," and when they had brought it and it bore the image and superscription of Cæsar upon it, he said unto them, "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's." It appears that there was also a custom among the Jews of exacting a tribute of half a shekel from those twenty years old and above, rich and poor alike, no more and no less, "for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation." See Exodus xxx. 12--16. It was evidently for this purpose that those who received tribute money at Capernaum asked of Peter, "Doth not your master pay tribute?" That it was being taken by the Jews is further borne out, we think, by the question which Jesus asked of Simon: "Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?" Peter's answer was, "Of strangers." "Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free." According to the record, neither Jesus nor Peter were strangers in Capernaum, both having spent considerable time there, but a great lesson must be taught by the Master. A different order must be followed in the temple, or the church, from that which is common among the "kings of the earth" and men of the world. Love must be the motive and ruling spirit; the children must conduct themselves in such a manner as to provoke unto love, being careful not to offend one of his little ones. What a great example of the consideration of others is shown here! How careful he was not to offend the brethren. We would do well to take heed and follow his example. The first and uppermost thought that is in our mind, however, in connection with this Scripture, is that it portrays in a marvelous and miraculous way the absolute sovereignty of our Lord. He established beyond the possibility of contradiction that he was the "wondrous sovereign" of the sea, as well as the fish that was in it. It seems almost unbelievable and uncanny to our natural reasoning powers that such a thing could take place. By faith, we realize that nothing is impossible with him, but here seemed to be a visible manifestation of his power beyond our imagination or ability to perceive, and does it not hold us spellbound in awe and admiration of him whom we worship as King of kings and Lord of

lords? So far as we know, Peter obeyed his Lord; he went to the sea,and cast an hook, and took up the fish that first came up. He did not have to catch a lot of fish and find pieces of varying amounts in their mouths, the sum of which might have totalled more or less that required, but he was told to open the mouth of the very first fish that came up and he would find a piece of money: "that take, and give unto them, for me and thee." Think of it! Of all the fish in the sea, in the mouth of the first one to be caught there should be found a piece of money of the exact amount of that required for the occasion. It is thought to have been a sheckel, or enough for the two, Jesus and Peter, since the tribute price according to Moses was half a sheckel each. We also see in this that he came not to offend the law, but to fulfill and meet its every requirement, thereby satisfying its demands and setting the prisoners free. It seems wonderful indeed to be given some understanding of him "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." How comforting and blessed to realize of a truth that help has been laid upon one that is mighty, one who is able to succor and save to the very uttermost. To look upon nature alone, and to consider the heavens above with all that we know of them and what they contain, would seem sufficient to satisfy and convince the most skeptical that there must be somewhere, even though unknown to them, a God of providence with power to create and operate and control all things and events. Scientists give us to understand that the earth in its rotation around its axis has not varied as to time a great many thousandths part of a second since they have claimed to have known anything about it, and yet we find in *The Literary Digest* of May 4th, 1929, a group of seven hundred men, said to be composed of five hundred ministers in charge of churches and two hundred students in five theological schools, twenty-nine per cent. of whom, or two hundred and three out of the seven hundred, denying "That God is omnipotent." How shocking to our senses and how abhorrent to all that is in us, that men calling themselves ministers, and would be ministers, should disgrace humanity and stultify their profession with any such declaration as this. There seems to have been fifty-five other questions asked, but we are sure that our readers are not interested in them or their answers, since such a large group admit that their god is so limited in his power. Such questions as the omnipotence, sovereignty and holiness of our God are not debatable ones with us. Those who do not believe all this, and more, of him, are unworthy of our notice. How truly is our God magnified in all of his works! They all praise him, and his saints bless him; they speak of his glory and talk of his power. It is contained in the Psalms that "the heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their

voice is not heard," &c. John tells us, "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." How true is the word of God! "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Jesus said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Yes, all that can be known of him, must be revealed. It is upon this rock the true church is built, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. If we have any knowledge of the spirituality of that which is written, it is due to the fact that the "Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." If we can read our title clear and, by faith, see our names written in the Lamb's book of life, we ever must sing, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake."

Regardless of what others may believe and preach, we of the Warwick Old School Baptist Association can glory only in the Lord, and we feel to say, one and all,

"Keep silence, all created things,
And wait your Maker's nod;
My soul stands trembling while she sings
The honors of her God.

Life, death, and hell, and worlds unknown,
Hang on his firm decree;
He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be."

Submitted in love to those of like precious faith in the hope that they may be comforted with the same comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
HENRY T. LEFFERTS, Clerk.

NOTICE.

Providence permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in September (29th). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

POETRY.

Have you ever heard the story, in the Bible it is told,
How the blessed King of glory came to earth in days of old?
How he came to save his people from their sins, the story goes,
And to ransom his disciples from the world and all its woes.

Have you ever heard the story of the sufferings of Christ,
And the glory that should follow when our Lord was sacrificed?
With his garments dyed, and glory, when he bowed his head and died,
Have you ever heard the story of a Savior crucified?

Have you ever heard the story how they laid him in the tomb?
How he burst death's bars asunder and ascended from its gloom?
Have you ever heard the story of the victory he won
As he rose from earth to glory when his mission here was done?

Have you ever heard the story of a Savior and his love
Bringing many sons to glory? Have you ever felt that love?
Bringing many sons to glory! How I love that blessed theme.
Have you ever heard the story? praise ye, praise his holy name.

RESPONSE

Yes, I think I heard the story when a lad of tender years,
When it pleased the Lord of glory to wipe away my tears,
And I think I heard the angel when he came to me by night,
As I lay upon my pillow, and it filled me with delight.

For his form was robed in glory, and his words were few and sweet,
As he told to me the story of a Savior good and great.
Lo, "Thy sins are all forgiven," were the only words he said,
Then he flew away to heaven, yea, the blessed scene had fled.

But it was a wondrous story comprehended in that line,
All the attributes of glory were vouchsafed to me as mine,
And it filled my heart with wonder, and I never can forget,
And I often sit and ponder, for it lingers with me yet.

Nearly forty years have drifted since that vision came to me,
But my burden has been lifted, and my spirit now is free,
For the blessed words were spoken, and the story sweetly told,
And the tidings gently broken to a sinner lost and cold.

I should love to tell the story, but, alas, I cannot speak;
Yea, my pencil seems to falter, and I find I'm very weak;
It is not for man to utter words unspeakable as these;
We can only seem to mutter, and our efforts cannot please.

But that angel, robed in glory, he has borne the tidings sweet,
He has told the blessed story which no mortal can repeat,
For that angel, It was Jesus, he has paid his sacred vow,
He has died to save his people, and is crowned with glory now.

L. L. S.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

J. Y. Vanhook, N. J., $1; Archie McPhail, Ont., $1; T. J. Howe, W. Va., $3; H. W. Norman, Ark., $1; W. S. Bourland, Texas, $3; E. H. Winchell, Mich., $1; J. C. Chester, Ky., $3; Mrs. Mintie B. Mapes, N. Y., $2.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at Leesburg, Virginia, July 25, 1929, brother Harvey Jones White, of Poolsville, Maryland, and sister Alethea Brewer Jones, of Dickerson, Maryland.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at Leesburg, Virginia, August 5, 1929, Fred Lewis Corbin, of Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, and Miss Laura Catharine Wright, of Colfax, Pennsylvania.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MARY ELIZABETH EDWARDS, wife of James Edwards, was born in Little Rock, Arkansas, September 6th, 1861, and died at her home in Corvallis, Oregon, August 5th, 1929, aged 67 years, 10 months and 29 days. She was the daughter of David and Susan Tabos. She was first married to Anthony H. Hood, December25th, 1878, and to that union were born fourteen children, seven of them having preceded her to the great beyond. Those living are Mrs. Jewell Black, of Cashmere, Washington, Mrs. Esta Groat, of Corvallis, Oregon, Mrs. Mary Ratcliffe, of Easton, Washington, David Hood, of Medford, Oregon, William Hood, of Portland, Oregon, A. E. and Percy E. Hood, of Spokane, Washington. Mr. Hood died in February, 1921, and May 10th, 1926, sister Hood was married to brother James Edwards, of Corvallis, Oregon, who also, together with five sons, survives her. Two sisters and four brothers of the deceased reside in Mexico. Sister Edwards experienced a hope in Christ while quite young (betwen seven and eight years of age), and joined the Primitive Baptist Church called Antioch, in Runneld County, Texas, at the age of sixteen years, and was baptized by Elder Fitzgerald, her father joining at the same time. Her membership at the time of her death was with Bethel Church, at Tallman, Oregon. Brother Edwards' membership is also at Tallman. Sister Edwards had not been feeling well for some time, but was not considered in a serious condition until Friday before her death on Monday following. She and brother Edwards were shopping downtown, when she suddenly complained of her head hurting her. She was placed in an automobile and taken home, where she continued to grow worse until the end came. Three physicians were called, but nothing seemed to do her any good. Her time had come and the Master called, and she, like the rest of mankind, obeyed the summons. So let us be still and know that he is God.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral services, which were held at the Keeny Parlors, in Corvallis, at 2 p. m., August 7th. Burial was in the Crystal Lake Cemetery, there to await the last, loud trumpet.

Written by one who feels to be less than the least in my Father's house,

S. B. MOFFITT.

J. P. STARR was born July 27th, 1849, and died April 26th, 1929, making his stay here below 79 years, 8 months and 29 days. He was the father of thirteen children, one preceding him to the great beyond. Twelve were present to say farewell, father, for a father he was indeed. Truly we all who knew him can say, A great man has fallen. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Shoals Creek, in Newton County, Georgia, August 27th, 1881, was baptized by Elder J. G. Eubanks, and lived a life of devotion to his church and family, also was loyal to his country. He was a sound and deep thinker, always ready to assist his neighbors in the problems of life, and was a pillar of the church in which his membership was. He was a good financier and had plenty of this world's goods, and was ever ready to assist in the financial needs of his church, and ready at the right time to defend the doctrine of the sovereign God who works all things after the counsel of his own will. Brother Starr, the last fifty years of his life here on earth, trusted in the finished work of the blessed Son of God, and was ready and willing to give up the earthly ties which were great (he loved his family and the church) that his faith in Jesus might become a reality. Oh precious hope, that in that eternal world hope will pass into knowledge, and he will see him as he is, be like him, and be satisfied. I would say to the mourning family, Let your countenances brighten and sorrow flee away, for your treasured one is not dead, but is passed safely from earth to that world that shall never end, there we view him in that blessed abode, free from sin and sorrow, shouting praises to God for the gift of his precious Son. To those who are the subjects of his grace and faith, let us all with patience await our appointed time, when our hope will end and knowledge be a reality, and we, too, as the subject of this notice, will be permitted to join that happy throng and sing songs of praise, honor and glory to the worthy name of Father, Son and ever-blessed Spirit, in that world that shall never end. Amen.

By request of the family the writer was summoned when the end came, and tried to hold up to the family and a large concourse of friends brother Starr's God, harmonizing his life, or the fruits of the Spirit, as was seen by his life, with the testimony or examples of God's promises through his inspired prophets and apostles, I hope, to their comfort.

Written by request of the family, and, I hope, by the direction of the Spirit of God.

W. N. GREEN.

MARY SANDAL DYKES, daughter, and the last one of the family, of the late Elder R. T. Webb, was born in Russell County, Alabama, November 18th, 1858, and died in Wood County, Texas, July 13th, 1929, making her stay on earth 70 years, 7 months and 25 days. She was married to M. B. Dykes July 28th, 1878, and they lived happily together for over fifty years. To this union ten children were born, four boys and six girls. Two boys and four girls are left to mourn. She professed a sweet hope in Jesus in 1882, and was baptized into the fellowship of Hopewell Church the fourth Sunday in July, 1883, by the late Elder W. B. Stringer, where she continued a faithful and devoted member until she was called home. Her chief delight was to attend her meetings, always filling her place when not providentially hindered, and was blessed to attend many associations. She was a sweet singer and enjoyed taking part in the singing. She was a true and faithful wife, a devoted mother, ever ready to administer to her husband, children, neighbors and friends. Our home was always for our brethren and sisters. It is so hard to give her up. Oh that I could say, Thy will be done. We have the blessed consolation to believe she is enjoying that sweet rest, and praising that mighty God from whom all blessings flow. She was a lifelong reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and was established in the doctrine it sets forth. I want to say that my nature is such that if I could have her back in health I would, but hope I have another mind, that I would say, The Lord giveth and taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord.

Her remains were laid away in the Hopewell Cemetery July 15th in the presence of a large concourse of sorrowing relatives and friends. The funeral was conducted by her pastors, Elders H. B. Jones and R. E. White, who spoke comforting words to the bereaved.

In conclusion, I want to ask the prayers of all who see this, that the God of all the earth reconcile me to his dealings.

In deep sorrow,

M. B. DYKES.

MEETINGS.

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will meet (God willing) with the Clovesville Church, Clovesville, New York, Wednesday and Thursday after the second Sunday in September (September 11th and 12th). Trains will be met at Halcottville, N. Y., Tuesday p. m., and at Fleischmanns, N. Y., Wednesday a. m. Those coming by auto come to Halcottville Tuesday, and direct to meetinghouse Wednesday. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth.

GEORGE RUSTON.

The seventy-second session of the First Kansas Association is appointed to be held two miles southeast of Perry, Kansas, at the schoolhouse near the residence of Elder L. L. Schenck, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 13th, 14th and 15th, 1929. Perry is located on Highway 10, and on the Union Pacific Railroad. For any other information address Elder L. L. Schenck, Perry, Kansas, or myself, at Grantville, Kansas.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 6th, 6th and 8th, 1929. All who love the truth are cordially invited.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.
TOPSHAM, Maine.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

Please take notice, that the meeting place of The Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association has been changed from Little Hope Church, Malvern, Arkansas, to Bethel Church, Bearden, Arkansas. Bethel Church is two miles north of Bearden, and all coming from any direction by railroad will come over Cotton Belt Railroad to Bearden, where trains will be met Thursday evening and Friday morning, September 12th and 13th, 1929.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator, Fordyce, Ark.

The Ebenezer Church, 200 East Madison Street, Baltimore, Maryland, will hold an all day meeting on Sunday, September 15th. We extend a cordial invitation to all who desire to attend.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects to have meeting (the Lord willing) the fifth Sunday in September (September 29th) at the home of J. E. Livingston, 64 East Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. We have the promise of having some ministers with us, but not decided who it will be.

All are welcome.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with Ebenezer Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, October 16th, 17th and 18th, 1929. Instead of holding this session of the Corresponding Meeting at the meetinghouse, it is planned to hold it in the Auditorium at Purcellville, because the latter place is easily reached by railway and highway, accessible either by auto or by electric car from Washington. Those coming Tuesday evening to Purcellville in autos will proceed to the Auditorium, where some one will be in attendance to direct them to places of entertainment for the night. Those coming Tuesday evening by rail from Washington will be met at Purcellville station. Trains leave Rosslyn for Purcellville at 2 and 5:30 p. m. and 7:30 a. m. Any coming Wednesday morning will proceed directly to Auditorium, which is about a half mile from station. Any coming into Washington by rail from the north or south will take Rosslyn car in front of Union Station and go to end of line where will be found the trains for Purcellville. All ministers of our faith and order and all lovers of the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ are invited to meet with us.

EPPA NORMAN, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Cane Run Predestinarian Old School Baptist Church, of Turners Station, Kentucky, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 10:30 a. m., also, the Sulphur Fork Church of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, of the same faith and order, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 2:30 p. m.

GEO. L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Little Flock Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every first and third Sunday at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, at 1 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.
O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk,
143 W. 11th Street, Claremont Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, every Sunday at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. (Daylight Saving Time) at the home of W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.. Midweek song service by appointment. Pastors, Elders Jones and Jaynes. Basket lunch.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

The Primitive Baptist Home in Salisbury, Maryland, opened on May 1st. Those desiring to enter should write to Mr. Cyrus Risler, 904 Ogden Ave., New York, N. Y., for particulars. Members and friends residing within the bounds of the Eastern Associations are eligible.

R. LESTER DODSON.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First. "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, Convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second. The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Eld. Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third. "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Eld. H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio. Fourth. "Fatalism." By Eld H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio. Fifth. "The Celestial Railroad" This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth. "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 97. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1929. NO. 10.

POETRY.

THE BRIGHT STAR OF HOPE.

When torn by such grief as I never had known,
And every relief which I sought for, had flown;
Full of guilt and despair, were the hot tears I shed
In loneliness, where I had pillowed my head.

My sins like a mountain, rose up to my view;
I could not cross over, I could not pass through;
The gloom which inclosed me was darker than night,
In weakness and trembling, I prayed for the light.

And out of that darkness, where I could not grope,
A light had arisen, the bright star of hope;
Brought joy out of mourning, turned gloom into cheer,
Once blind I could see, and once deaf I could hear.

My fears had departed, my doubts now were gone,
That star which had risen, was leading me on.
'Till I on a mountain of ecstacy stood,
Which the soft light of peace had bathed in its flood.

And now filled with joy was my once troubled breast,
So free from alloy was that heavenly rest,
That I felt that I never again should despair,
Since all things to me were so beautious and fair.

The paths I once traversed where thistles had grown
Were fragrant with lilies, their pale faces shown;
And though they toiled not, nor yet did they spin,
They were bright with the glory which God clothed them in.

The doctrine I hungered for, dropped as the rain,
And I felt that I never should hunger again,
Where weeds once entangled, fair flowers now grew
Refreshed by his speech, which distilled as the dew.

The milk and the honey no sweeter could be
Than that hope which my Savior had given to me;
And though in the valley I oft wander far,
I am kept by the light of that glorious star.

ALFRED E. TITUS.

TRENTON, New Jersey.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"WHO IS ON THE LORD'S SIDE?"

(EXODUS XXXII. 26.)

This most important question was asked by Moses after he came down from the mount and found the children of Israel worshiping a golden calf, which Aaron, one who was called of God, had made, and it might well be asked to-day. As Moses stood in the gate of the camp the above question was asked. Of all that host of Israelites only the sons of Levi came over to him. After this earth had stood about two thousand years and was populated by much people only eight souls were found to be perfect in their generation before God. (Gen. vi. 9.) Again, we find where the Lord commanded Moses to send twelve spies over into the land of Canaan and ten of them came back with a lie in their mouths. But two of

them came back declaring the truth. Still they were all Israelites. "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established."—2 Cor. xiii. 1. Gideon's vast army of thirty and three thousand was culled down by the Lord to three hundred. They were all the people of God, but the majority were not considered. "Many are called, but few are chosen."—Matt. xxii. 14. I believe that every heaven-born soul will be housed in immortal glory, without the loss of one, and without the help of poor finite man, but many of them will be snared by the devil and suffer untold heartaches and stripes, but there will be a few true witnesses as long as this old world stands; they, too, must suffer many hardships. "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—2 Tim. iii. 12. From the earliest morn of time down to this day we find that the true followers of that meek and lowly Lamb have been in the minority, still we hear some who claim to be Predestinarian Baptists, some of them able preachers, contending that church discipline must be decided by the majority, and that the only way to settle church matters is by majority vote. Take "Thus saith the Lord" for our guide. "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord."—Jer. xvii. 5. "The best of them is as a brier; the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge: the day of thy watchmen and thy visitation cometh; now shall be their perplexity."—Micah vii. 4. Judging from the language of inspired men of old there was not much confidence to be placed in man in those days. Maybe in these times of enlightenment he has become more perfect. Listen to inspiration again: "For wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it."—Matt. vii. 13, 14. Here we find majority excluded again. I hope I can say from the very depths of my sinful heart, "Let God be true, but every man a liar."—Rom. iii. 4. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."—Zech. iv. 6. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."—Rom. viii. 28. Finite man is not able to discern the good in all things, but I believe that God permits the devil to do his work and sift His little ones in order to limber their stiff necks and humble them down at the feet of the brethren; and when they are at the feet of the brethren they are at the feet of Jesus. Dear children of God, the Bible is full of evidence from Genesis to Revelation to prove that those who are traveling that strait and narrow way have always been in the minority. Turn to Revelation and we find that five (some say six) out of seven of the churches of Asia were not right before God. (Revelation second and third chapters.) "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil: neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many

to wrest judgment."—Exodus xxiii. 2. It appears to me that I have introduced sufficient proof to convince any enlightened Bible reader that it is not safe to trust in numbers. I sometimes feel that I have been made to witness with old Elijah when he said to the Lord, "The children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword: and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life."—1 Kings xix. 10. Are we any better than they? Not a whit. I did not intend to mention this, but since I have some might think I am trying to equal myself with the old prophet. I will just state that I have felt the torture of the sword. At one time I stood against the judgment of my association and two corresponding associations. Not a human on earth, that I knew of, agreed with me. The good Lord has been pleased to reveal this error to a little band of brehtren and sisters who are living together in peace and fellowship and have been recognized as standing in order by orderly Predestinarian Baptists. Dear brethren, be ye not slothful in business. (Rom. xii. 11.) "He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster."—Prov. xviii. 9.

I hope that what few scattering thoughts I have tried to pen are not dishonoring to the great cause of all causes, and will have a tendency to stir up your pure minds.

If the editors of the SIGNS deem this worthy of space please publish it; if not, cast it aside, and it will be satisfactory with me. Cast the mantle of charity over my imperfections, and when at the throne of grace pray for a sinner saved by grace alone, if saved at all.

J. P. McMILLIAN.

MERRYVILLE, Louisiana.

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1 JOHN III. 14.

"WE know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death."

I have been thinking for some time that I would write a few lines for the dear old SIGNS, but have felt too unworthy to attempt it, and I know I am too ignorant and unlearned, and cannot write to the comfort of the dear children of our God. It has been a long time since I have written, and I seldom get to read the SIGNS, only through the kindness of some brother, yet I still love the doctrine it advocates and the brethren who write for it.

The above text has ben on my mind for some time, and I must confess that I do not know whether I have the right thoughts on it or not, yet I feel that the editors will not let any unsound expressions enter the columns of the SIGNS.

The word "love" is found in the fourth chapter twenty-five times, and forty times in the first book of John, and some as good testimony as can be found in all the Bible relative to the manifested children of God. The word "love" is the strongest term used in the Bible relative to the dealings of God with his children, and his children one with another. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of

God." Never was the like known in all the world, that a man should lay down his life for his friends. Behind all that, the love of the Father was so great that he gave his only darling Son to suffer and die for miserable wretches like us. His love was from everlasting to everlasting; his love surrounded the whole elect from all eternity. "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore [or for this reason] ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."—Mal. iii. 6. We often look back over our past life and view our ruined condition, our sinfulness and unworthiness, and can but wonder why we should stand in the congregation of the saints with a hope of the final entrance into the peaceful presence of God, who is pure and perfect, but that love which the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God, is from everlasting, and in time he leads us to his banqueting-house, where his banner over us is love. (Songs ii. 4.) There is nothing more beautiful and pleasant than to meet with the churches and find the brethren in love with each other, find them a unit, find them united in the holy bonds of sweet fellowship. One's mind is carried back to the days of his first love, when he could see a perfect reflection of God's love mixed with all their deliberations. It is then he remembers the words of the preacher, when he says, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth."—Eccl. xii. 1. Yet we have to travel over many paths that are not smooth, and, like the poet, mixtures of joy and sorrow we daily do pass through. But the dear Lord leads us through many conflicts and distresses and his love is the same.

The above text sometimes gives us something to study over. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. Oh what a test! If we could only realize that we truly and honestly did love our brethren and sisters, what could be of more joy? How could we want any stronger testimony of our acceptance with God if we could only know, without a doubt, that we do love the brethren? All day long I find myself hoping that I sincerely love the brethren. Then again, "Every one that loveth, is born of God."—1 John iv. 7. Oh what a test! God is love, and he that is born of God is born of love. My mind goes back to my childhood, fifty years ago, when a small boy, my parents would go to their regular meetings at old South Mount Zion, in Kentucky, and while listening to a lengthy sermon delivered by the late Elder W. A. Bourland tears of joy would run down the cheeks of those old grey-haired brethren and sisters, and it seemed to be the happiest time on earth with them. Of course I did not realize the great beauty of it then, but now I can look back to their manifested love one for another and realize what David meant when he said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments."—Psalms cxxxiii. 1, 2. Many

times it has looked like a perfect fulfillment of Paul's writing to the Ephesian brethren where he said, "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ." The love manifested among the saints in those days is in perfect harmony with the doctrine of the apostle in describing the future state of the church, for he says that here we see only in part, as through a glass darkly, but then we shall see face to face, and shall realize to the fullest of our hope. I sometimes weep and mourn over the coldness that seems to exist among the saints. For the last few years there is, it seems, a falling away, and coldness. We do not hear the dear saints talking of the wonders of God's love, and telling of the great mercy they hope the Lord has had for them, as we did in the olden days, and the love that once was plainly shown does not seem to be so great. I well remember several years ago of hearing a conversation between two people which ran something like this: Did you ever see such people as those Old Baptists? (Hardshells, as they called them.) Why, the weather is never so bad they do not go to their meetings. They will go farther, and against more obstacles, than any people I ever saw. Yes, and I will say that they usually show plainer the love of God in their walk and their Godly conversation than is noticable among the worldly people. In days past it was a part of the articles of the conference to make inquiry into the welfare of the brethren, and if any were in need it was generally reported and then something was done for their benefit. This should be a part of the business in all the conferences of to-day. It is their duty as much to-day as in the days of Paul, when he gave orders to the church at Corinth for the relief of the poor saints at Jerusalem. Love covers a multitude of sins. True love stands between the brethren and their little faults and causes them to go to the relief of their brethren in need. John says, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compasion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"—1 John iii. 16, 17. Love is the underlying principle of all good works, for all the works we perform, either to God or his people, are wrought in us by the Holy Spirit, for it God which worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

I have written what I have for the consideration of the brethren, and if it should miss the waste-basket, and be of comfort to any of the Lord's humble poor, give God the praise. If any should have a mind to write me it would be appreciated. My health is still poor. Love to the household of faith.

Your brother in bonds,

J. B. BOWDEN.

SAN ANTONIO, Texas, May 22, 1929.

SULPHUR SPRINGS, Ky., April 26, 1929.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have a mind to write a few lines to you. This mind may be of the flesh; if it is it will profit nothing, and if when you have read this you think it only of the flesh cast it aside as being unworthy a place in our family paper. You are to be the judge, and I am sure it will be right.

I want to say a few words about myself. (Yes, a poor subject I know.) I was born March 30th, 1869, near Beaver Lick, Boone County, Kentucky, so am just turning into my sixtieth year. My parents were Warren and Calista Sleet Ashbrook, and I was the youngest of nine children, six girls and three boys. All lived to be grown men and women, but at the present time most of this large family have gone to their reward. My parents were sound Old Baptists, and they lived in faith and died in faith, rejoicing to go home. As for myself, I have always been called a "Hardshell" Baptist. It may have been, and I suppose it was, many times spoken in ridicule, but it always sounded sweet to me, as I never wanted any other name, though I did not know at that time what the name stood for. I understood but a very small portion of Baptist doctrine, and I fear I am not much wiser now, but I have been given hope that I love these people and believe what they believe, and what they preach is food and drink to me. I cannot remember a time in my life when I hated these people, as I have heard others tell in their experience, and not for a moment have I ever doubted what I have heard others tell, and it has been a great trouble to me, it causes me to fear I am not one of them. Where do I stand?

"'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought),
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

No truer words were ever penned. How I do long to know for myself. I long to read my title clear. I am always wanting more evidence that I am his and he is mine. If I could see myself as I see others I think I would not be so miserable. But Paul says we are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for? May the the Lord give us grace to hope to the end, and give us to know his grace is sufficient for every thorn. As one has said, Our Master is great. Yes, he is great indeed. I believe he has all power in heaven and in earth. He rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? Nothing can move without him. He speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast. How good it is to know he is God and he changes not; the same yesterday, today and forever. He alone is Sovereign over all worlds, times and events. He holds the winds in his fist; he rides upon the stormy skies and manages the seas. He looks and ten thousand angels rejoice, and myriads wait for his word. He speaks and eternity filled with his voice reechoes the praise of her Lord. He speaks to his people and they hear. He calls them and brings them out of nature's darkness into his marvelous

light. Oh wonderful and boundless love, to come to die on the cross to save his people with an everlasting salvation. He comes and speaks peace to them and draws them with cords of love. If we love him it is because he first loved us and gave himself for us, and not one shall ever be lost for whom Christ died, because what he does he does forever. Forever, O Lord, is thy word settled in heaven. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so is the Lord round about his people, henceforth and forever. He has loved them with an everlasting love, and with lovingkindness draws them. He finds them all just where he found Jacob: in a waste howling wilderness of sin, and you hath he quickesed who were dead in trespasses and in sin, and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ. By grace are ye saved, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. There were a certain number chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, they are the ones for whom Christ died, not one more nor one less, the rest were fitted to destruction. I cannot think this would make him unjust, for has he not a perfect right to do as he pleases with his own? I believe he has foreknowledge of all things, for known unto God are all his works from the beginning, and I believe he predestinated all things to come to pass just as they do come to pass, and he had a purpose in it, known to himself, and they cannot preach predestination too strong for me. I hope and believe I love predestination, unconditional election, the sovereignty of God and the eternal vital unity of Christ and his people. This covenant of grace was ordered in all things and sure, firm as his throne his promise stands. In experience, if indeed I have ever had any experience of grace, and in reading the Scriptures, I see no place for any works of the creature in the wonderful plan of salvation, for he says, Saved by grace through faith, and not by works; not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us. Again, Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. We shall be saved from wrath through him, and we shall be saved by his life, and kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. So it is always, and in every case, saved by grace, both in time and eternity. To-day while about my work I thought what a miserable creature I am, and what a miserable condition I felt myself to be in. I do not know how to pray as I ought. Then the thought came that Paul said we know not how to pray as we ought, is it possible that Paul, a chosen vessel sent to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, did not know how to pray? But he goes on to say that the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. Then prayer does not consist of words, but in spirit, and he that searcheth the heart knoweth the mind of the spirit, and he maketh intercession for the saints according to

the will of God, and not according to anything we have done or can do. We have no strength of our onw to rely upon, but the dear Lord knows our weakness, and in his own time and manner he comes to us and sheds abroad in our hearts his wonderful love, causing us to love him and to hope in his mercy, and to love one another, and to esteem others better than ourselves, and may we all be found at the feet of our Savior, clothed and in our right mind. The mind of Christ the Lord is the only right mind. O, dear Lord, give us more of that mind. Give us grace to help in every time of need. Keep us from evil, and lead us in the way that leads to life. Bless thy people everywhere as thou seest they have need. Be with us throughout the uneven journey of this life, and when we come to stand by the dark river, O Lord, be with us then, and lead us into that haven of rest and peace in the Lord.

I would like to ask a special favor for the publishrs and editors of the SIGNS: May they be given strength and courage to continue steadfastly in the work the Lord has called them unto. May it please him who rules all things to put into the mind and the hearts of his people to pay what they owe to the SIGNS, if they can do nothing more. Lord, bless our ministers who labor so faithfully for us, that they may have free course to finish with joy the race set before them to the glory of Christ.

I feel to sympathize with Elder Lefferts in his many burdens, but I rejoiced to read in the last SIGNS that he has consented to leave his name on the editorial staff. He is a wonderfully gifted man, and we all would miss him very much. We hope he may see his way clear to stay with the SIGNS, and we hope he may be spared for many years to preach and write to the comfort of the Lord's people. I think we are wonderfully blessed in having such editors as we have on the SIGNS' staff. They are all sound in their writings, and I feel sure they comfort many weary ones. I have never had the pleasure of hearing any of them preach, with the exception of Elder Ruston, and I cannot speak too highly of his preaching. He gave good evidence that he had been with the Lord and learned of him.

I have had a home with the Old Baptists a little more than twenty years, and while I am no better now, and feel not fit to be with them, yet I hope their God is my God. There is nowhere else for me to go, there is no other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved, but when thou, my righteous Judge shall come to call thy ransomed people home shall I among them stand? I have a hope, nothing more.

(MRS.) ADDIE CHANDLER.

FLEMINGTON, N. J., June 10, 1928.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter from a dear old Elder in the south for your consideration. To me it has been as a precious jewel and I have read it many times. How wonderful and how good to look upon those whom the Lord has kept as the apple

of his eye, whom he has chosen to be followers of him "as dear children," "e'en down to old age," and to that child who has once felt his divine presence no powers of earth or hell can poison his mind, for as he has spoken so shall it be, and in the twilight of life how sweet to rest in his love.

GERTRUDE PYATT.

SAMANTHA, Ala., May 10, 1928.

DEAR SISTER PYATT:—I will try and answer as best I can your good letter, which I received some time ago, and was glad to get it and hear from you. I enjoy reading your letters, for they contain good news from a far country. Words fitly spoken are like apples of gold in pictures of silver. That would be something very beautiful, so are your words to me. You speak the full Hebrew language, and that is the sweetest language that I have ever listened to. It is like this: "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: * * * * salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." That is, A city of habitation and name, but the redeemed of the Lord shall dwell there, and that city hath foundations. Ye "are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord," and man has nothing to do with it, the building of the church is all the work of the Lord. Except the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain; except the Lord build the house they that build it labor but in vain. Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but it is God that giveth the increase. He said, Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. So man's planting is not worth anything. There are but few people in my country who believe this doctrine, but I know the Old Baptists are the people of the most high God and heaven will be their home after this life. I know, my dear sister, that this doctrine you believe will do for you, but the question is, Will it do for me? Have I been taught it like you have, taught by the Lord? You believe according to the working of his mighty power. Behold, I and the children which God hath given me. All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. They were given him by the Father before the world began, and they will all be saved with an everlasting salvation, without the loss of one; and in this life they will all hear the voice of the Son of God, and those hearing shall live. He came, suffered, bled and died for their offences, and rose again for their justification. He says, Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee. The king's daughter is all glorious within, her raiment is of wrought gold. He has cleansed her from all her sins. He says, I have taken off my coat, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them? So his bride can never be defiled; never can be separated from him. He says, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. So

his people are the only ones he came to save, the only ones he suffered for, and they were preserved in him before the foundation of the world. "Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ, and brother to James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." I sometimes hear women say they have lost their preserves, but they have not lost them; they never had them preserved is why they could not keep them. But the preserved of Christ will never be lost, for of all the Father gave him he shall lose nothing. All the Father gave me shall come to me, and he that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out, but will raise him up at the last day.

Well, there are many things on my mind, but I had better close lest I weary you, if I have not already done so. I hope you will understand this rambling letter. O, Lord God, I am but a child; I cannot speak. I wish I could see you, for I could talk much better than I can write. If you ever have a mind to write me I would love to hear from you again.

Love and best wishes to you and to all the household of faith, in this life and in the world to come. Remember me when at the throne of grace.

S. J. NORRIS.

CASH, Texas, June 13, 1929.

DEAR BRETHREN:—John xiv. 15, says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Notice, "If ye love me." No word spoken to those who do not love, and this love I understand is indited into a poor sinner's heart from above; cannot be gained by all the efforts we can put forth. Those words, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," were spoken to the disciples, and men in a state of nature do not seek in their hearts to obey, for they choose darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. Christ said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." When the light of divine love shines into a poor sinner's heart that light makes manifest to him the darkness here: the evil of his own depraved nature. He is made to weep and to cry with the publican, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. Repentance comes when that light reveals us sinners. But "Blessed [already blessed, to my mind, beforehand] are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." Not may be so if they will be good and obedient children. Not all the obedience in the world could make one a child if not called. One writer has said, The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord. Christ said, With their mouth they make confession unto me, but their heart is far from me. In another place, They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. You who have mourned on account of your sins have felt the need, have seen yourselves not able to keep even one of the least of his commandments; without him ye can do nothing. Saul, bear in mind, was of the strictest sect of religion of his day, but persecuted and wasted the true church until he saw the light, and he then immediately cried out, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? He was shown what to do, as I

believe his people are to-day. This same Saul, later called Paul, said he profited in that way above many of his equals. There is profit for some in so-called religion now. Their story is to the natural mind a plausible one, but see what Paul said, "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jew and Greek, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." There are some spoken of as having the form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. You must make the start, they say, just make the start and the Lord will save you. Now I ask you, What kind of a start did Paul make? It was after he was called that he said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." Paul did not call himself good, but the chief of sinners. The Lord knows our thoughts, even afar off, and if our thoughts then our deeds also; if they be good it is because of his law written in our hearts. Then to him, not to us, the praise is due. He who has said, My glory I will not give to another.

Now that I have written I begin to hesitate to send these weak lines, not wishing to intrude, for always, since first received, I have, and do yet, if not deceived, desire some most humble place at the saints' table, but never on any account to cause them any trouble.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

(MRS.) NELLIE PERRY.

JOHN I. 12, 13.

"BUT as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

The reason for the statement in verse twelve, viz.: "As many as received him, to them gave he the power to become the sons of God," and, "Even to them that believe on his name," is given in verse thirteen: "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." When Adam fell his posterity fell with him, hence all by nature are sinners and aliens to God. But God decreed in himself before time began to form in himself a people that should show forth his praise, and since that people were dead in trespasses and sin, he sent his only begotten Son on earth "in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." The atonement of the sins of God's people being then carried out, the evidence of that atonement is manifested to that people in the "new birth." As they had no part in their natural birth even so they have no part in their spiritual birth. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."—John iii. 5, 6. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who

hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."—2 Cor. v. 17--19. "He that commiteth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."—1 John iii. 8, 9. Herein lies one of the mysteries of godliness. The chosen of God know they were "shapen in iniquity," and that in their flesh there dwelleth no good thing. When they would do good evil is present with them, yet because they are born of God their sins are all blotted out. "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness. and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."—Heb. viii. 12. The visible or outward evidence of the new birth is that where once they were blind now they see. The things formerly hated or treated with indifference are now the chief delight of the believer. The ways of sin, the follies and vanities of the world have lost their charm. The believer has a sincere and abiding desire to so live as not to bring reproach upon the cause he loves, or sorrow to the people of God. "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."—John iii. 18, 19.

J. E. HUBBARD.

NORTH JAY, Maine.

RANDOLPH, Maine, Sept. 11, 1929.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—Dear brother in a good hope through grace. I have read and reread your editorial in the September issue of the SIGNS, and to me it contains some very searching questions to those who profess a love for the church of Christ, and to those of like precious faith. Have we profession without possession? As you truly say, if there were not danger of professors coming short of the things needful, in an orderly walk and conversation before their brethren, and in their intercourse with the world, the apostle would not have written the admonitions contained in his letters to the churches at that time. Peter said in substance that he wrote his epistles to "stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance." I feel that a careful and prayerful consideration of the editorial will be profitable to all believers.

Our Association for 1929 is a past event, but I believe the memory of it will be pleasant to all who were privileged to attend it. Elder Dodson was enabled to show us "glad tidings of the

kingdom of God," and I believe those present will agree with me when I say, "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." I hope and believe there are not many among us who excuse their wrong doings with a "can't help it." It seems to me that only a degenerate would try and justify ill conduct in that way. But, brother Lefferts, I believe there are "can't help its" of an entirely different order, and I hope I am one of them. In my youth I had no desire to belong to the unpopular people called Old School Baptists. I felt that when I got ready to "settle down" I would join the Congregationalists and be thought something of in the world. Well, I tried to carry out that plan, but I could not, and the time came when it was the supreme joy of my life to be taken into the fellowship of this poor, despised and afflicted people. I was literally forced to confess that I "believed the report." Now do you not think I am a "can't help it?"

But I only intended to write a note, expressing in my imperfect way my appreciation of your editorial. If I know anything of the inmost desires of this deceitful heart of mine, it is to have the gospel preached in its purity, either spoken or written, and may the undershepherds throughout the length and breadth of this great country of ours proclaim the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, without fear or favor.

Your most unworthy brother,

JAMES E. HUBBARD.

West Mansfield, Ohio, June 12, 1929.

Dear Editors:—I have just reread the June number of the Signs, with tears of rejoicing, as also at the first reading, and my heart cries against the possibility of the Signs being discontinued. Oh it must not be! True, I know that the Lord can comfort his poor, little, hungry bleating lambs without any paper at all, but the Signs has been blessed, in so great a degree, to the comfort of the pilgrims of the Lord that I cannot at present believe that he will let it be discontinued. I am reading two other Baptist papers, with comfort, but none so comforting and quite so sweet to the taste as the dear old Signs, which contains not only milk for the weak, but much juicy, well prepared, strong meat for the more advanced, who have so grown in grace (not in works) as to relish and to crave the strong meat, even a taste, or sweet reminder of what our hope rests upon: the eternal, almighty God, our Rock. How comforting to rest upon this Rock, which is not only described as our foundation, but as a shade under which we may rest. It is also a wall about us to shield us from all harm. It is a still small voice within, to admonish, to cheer and strengthen; also a guide to say, This is the way, walk ye in it. Yes, walk in Him, not in ourselves. Do not understand me to mean that the Signs is this Rock, but it has so faithfully portrayed and reminded us of this, our Rock. His way is perfect. The Signs spreads a feast, without gourds in the pot. His will be done, but I hope it will be his will to continue

the SIGNS. I feel sure that all lovers of the paper mourn the loss of sister Beebe, and that many prayers ascend that God may comfort all those who mourn. Surely few have done more than sister Beebe to comfort the family of the redeemed. May her mantle fall upon some one else, and may they as faithfully perform the duties involved in the undertaking. Preaching face to face to congregations, and children of the Lord, speaking often one to another, are wonderful works, also when the truths of the gospel are sent forth to so many homes what a vast company may be cheered and comforted. Sometimes, when I think what a great factor for good or evil a communication to such a medium of correspondence may be, I tremble, and, also, wonder if I will dare to again venture to send forth my thoughts and feelings. But there are times when it is very hard to refrain, such a beauty appears, and such love for the brethren springs up, that we long to share with them the thoughts which prove so comforting to us, and I fear that I shall trouble the editors more often in the future. Since Mr. Peter's death I have no way to go to meeting, very often, and when I get so full, with no brother or sister to tell it to, I must write, or talk to my Methodist neighbors, some of whom, I am thankful to say, seem to know the Lord. But one cannot speak with the same liberty as when addressing those of our own "household of faith."

If this should be published, I beg the prayers of all, that I may be comforted of God, and be guided and led by his Spirit into, and be kept in, the truth, and that my walk and conversation be becoming to my profession.

JOIE WOODS PETERS.

YAKIMA, Wash., May 23, 1929.

DEAR EDITORS:—I surely love the precious doctrine the SIGNS sets forth, and in reading the letters from different ones I feel I know them by their writings. I have met with many dear ones in my time, as my father's house, in Nevada, Missouri, was a home for the Old School Baptists. His name was W. S. Lee, and if any who knew him read this they will know there is one of his family left who is a believer in the same doctrine. He has been dead nearly twenty-five years. Oh how I yet feast upon those good times and meetings gone by. My christian experience started in early childhood, and I joined the church in my father's home. We are surely blessed in having good meetings. While there are but few of us, we feel the Lord dwells there, too. Elder A. D. Hughett is our pastor, and he is an able speaker. Our regular meeting time is the third Sunday in each month. The meetings are held near Emerald, and the first Sunday in or near Yakima. We have been blessed by having sister Hess, widow of Elder Wm. Hess, with us at some of our meetings. She seems very cheerful, although she is helpless in some ways, and rejoices to be with us. We all send christian greetings to the dear ones wherever they may be.

Your sister in a sweet hope,

LILLIE BLYSTONE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1929.

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SOLOMON'S SONG I. 6.

"LOOK not upon me, because I am black."

We have been requested the second time to write on the above words. We are sorry not to have been able to comply more promptly with the request, but as our turn to write comes only three or four times a year it is impossible to give our views on all the portions of Scripture desired. Besides, we can by no means write at all times on spiritual things. We are wholly and entirely dependent upon the Holy Spirit to take of the things of Jesus and show them unto us. The above words are found in what is called the "Song of Songs, which is Solomon's." It is referred to by some as being the Song of Love between Christ and his bride, the church, and of all the music earth has ever heard, to be sure, nothing can compare with the voice of Jesus to a poor sinner, assuring him of the forgiveness of his sins and of his acceptance with the Father. Solomon, the man of wisdom, summed up all the works of his hands by saying, "All was vanity and vexation of spirit,and there was no profit under the sun." He was representative of the characters who are not only made wise to the need of salvation, but to salvation itself, with all that it means to be delivered from the darkness of nature into the marvelous light of the blessed truth as it is revealed by and through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who came to save his people from their sins. The Song opens with the pleadings of the bride. One has well said, "All the fitness he requires, is to feel your need of him," and here we have the church desiring with all her heart the evidences of his love towards her. In olden times a kiss was regarded as a token or proof of an espousal, therefore the chapter begins with, "Let him kiss me with kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine. Because of the savor of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee." The poet has wonderfully enlarged upon "thy name is as ointment poured forth" in that beautiful hymn, where he says,

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear,
It sooths his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.
It makes the wounded spirit whole,
And calms the troubled breast;
'Tis manna to the troubled soul,
And to the weary rest.

Dear name, the rock on which I build,
My shield and hiding place;
My never-failing treasury, filled
With boundless stores of grace."

"Therefore do the virgins love thee." Because he is the one altogther lovely, the chiefest among ten thousand. The Song continues, "Draw me, we will run after thee." How different this is from what the worldly teachers are saying. They say, Run after him and he will draw you, but the virgin, that one that is pure in heart, born of the Spirit. the undefiled and choice one of her that bare her, knows that except he draw her, she cannot run after him. To begin with, she knows not where to find him. She has sought him on her bed at night, she sought him, but found him not. Whereupon she said, "I will rise now, and go about the city; in the streets, and in the broad ways, I will seek him whom my soul loveth:I sought him, but I found him not." She then inquired of the watchmen, "Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?" but they could not tell her where she might find him. The ministers, or watchmen who stand upon the walls of Zion, are just as helpless and dependent as the weakest member of the church. She had to go beyond them to find him whom her soul loved, and so does every one to-day have to go beyond the preacher, but when she had found him she said, "I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me." How precious, indeed, he was to her! There seems to be a two-fold meaning, individual and collective, in the expression, "Draw me, we will run after thee." The Lord deals individually with his people, bringing them one by one, but he gathereth together the solitary in families, and they are all taught of him. For this reason the church testifies, "The king hath brought me into his chambers." How highly favored is she that the King himself hath come for her; not that he sent one of his servants to extend an invitation to her, but he sought her in person and brought her into his chambers, where he communed with her in secret and bestowed his loves upon her, not before outsiders and the curious to mock and deride, but first he takes her into his own chambers, in the privacy of the royal palace, and there she is made to know of a truth that "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." What a great privilege it is to be called out and separated from the crowd and the multitudes and sanctified, or set apart to some special and peculiar blessing and favor, and all this by the very King of kings and Lord of lords. Was there ever such love as this displayed before, that the King of Peace should leave his princely throne, descend into ignomy and shame, and suffer and die in order that he might seek and save that which was lost and ruined? In order that she should appreciate and properly value the greatness of that love she must know what

she is and the great price that was required to redeem her from the horrible pit of sin and death. When, therefore, God commands the light to shine into her heart it reveals her terrible condition. She says, "I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon." First, she confesses that she is black, as black as the tents of Kedar, steeped in sin and knows that in her flesh dwells no good thing, and this confession is made to the daughters of Jerusalem, her kindred in Christ, who thoroughly understand her language and the longings of her heart, desiring to be holy even as her Beloved is holy, but the one who has taught her this does not desert her to her foes, but by his Spirit works in her the peaceable fruits of righteousness, and she becomes meek and lowly of heart and is clothed upon from above and is, therefore, comely as the curtains of Solomon. The conclusion of the whole matter then, is, "Look not upon me, because I am black." Are not the Lord's people continually writing bitter things against themselves, not able to find one good thing to their credit? They have the desire to do right and good, but how to perform they find not. Seeing themselves to be such vile and black sinners, both by nature and by practice, and being convinced that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, that they have no strength or ability in and of themselves to even think a good thought, they cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Their only possible hope of salvation is through the mercy of God, and they can and do join with the apostle in saying, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." They are still black in nature; the flesh is not changed, but if they have received the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, and had the eyes of their understanding enlightened, they know what is the hope of their calling, and what the riches of the glory of their inheritance is: "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."

We hope our brother and our readers will be edified and comforted by what we have written, and will leave the subject for their meditation and consideration.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by brother James E. Hubbard.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 6th, 7th and 8th, 1929, to the churches of which she is composed, and to the associations and meetings with which she corresponds, sends greeting.

BELOVED FOR THE TRUTH'S SAKE:—

In accordance with a long established custom, we address you in a so-called Circular Letter. The words recorded in Philippians ii. 12, 13, seem to be impressed upon our mind as a foundation for our letter: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." It is a well known fact that the above words, or a portion of them, are, and always have been, used by the religious world to persuade prospective converts to "make a start" in the service of the Lord. They adhere to the theory that God cannot, and will not, save sinners unless the sinner does his part; viz.: work out his own salvation. While, by detaching these words from their connection, they doubtless deceive many, yet, when it is considered to whom the letter was written, and the context as well, there is absolutely no foundation for their claim. The inspired writers of the New Testament found it necessary to write the exhortations and admonitions contained therein, to the churches of that time, and they are no less essential to the saints which are in Christ Jesus to-day. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."—2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."—Titus ii. 11--16. "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."—Col. iii. 12, 13. The above quotation shows how believers are enjoined to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, also, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin:

but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."—Rom. vi. 12, 13. By their fruits ye shall know them, and because they are believers, and are saved with an "everlasting salvation," through the blood and righteousness of Jesus their great High Priest, do they abhor their proneness to the evil and vanity of this present world. It is their desire before God to manifest the fruit of the Spirit, which is "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law," and in the manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit do they work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. "With fear and trembling." The chosen of the Lord love him because he first loved them, and because they love him they desire to walk softly before him, to do that which is pleasing in his sight, and there is a fear born of that love, but through the weakness of the flesh their feet slip, and they bring reproach upon the cause they love, and sorrow to the hearts of their brethren, thereby. It is only as they are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, that they are enabled to manifest the fruits of the Spirit, and keep themselves unspotted from the world. When God in his wisdom sees fit to withdraw his presence from his people, and they walk in darkness and have no light, no earthly agency or power can restore the joys of his salvation unto them. By faith they "trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon their God." God declared by the prophet Isaiah, "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." There are trials, temptations, losses, crosses, and disappointments from without, and trials without number from within. But God has promised never to leave nor forsake his people. "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."—Deut. xxxiii. 26, 27.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

The Tygarts Valley River Association of Old School, Primitive Baptists, now in session with the Little Bethel Church, Barbour County, West Virginia, to the several churches of which she is composed, and to all of the faith of God's elect, sendeth christian greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more we are through the mercy of God spared to meet in the capacity of an association of churches and brethren, for the purpose of keeping up a friendly correspondence among us, and corresponding brethren who meet to worship the true and living God, and have no confidence in what men do.

"When Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." So is every one of God's elect directed by the Holy Spirit to the same answer. They have not learned of man, but it has been revealed to them by the Holy Spirit, through Jesus our Redemer, the living God, to declare positively that he is the only true God, and besides him there is no other. He it is that reveals his Spirit to his people through Jesus Christ. There is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved, only through the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus. It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. This is why brethren love to meet in an associated capacity. It is love that has drawn them together to speak of the goodness of God, and to worship him in spirit and in truth, for he seeketh such to worship him in spirit and in truth. The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. His blood has cleansed his people; they have been made white in the blood of the Lamb. His grace is directing his people day and night. Flesh and blood have not revealed it to us. Paul, the apostle, declares, "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace." This separation here clearly shows that Paul did not go back to any one of his kindred in the flesh to learn the things of the Spirit, but it was revealed by the living God.

Now, dear brethren, we will notice the church which Christ has built on himself and the gates of hell shall never prevail against. No earthly power can destroy it. Christ is a King and has all power, and his kingdom is not of this world. He loved the church and gave himself for it. It is composed of a regenerated membership who worship God in spirit and in truth. The Lord adds to it such as shall be saved.

May the Lord keep you in peace. Amen.

J. S. MURPHY, Mod.
J. R. DENNISON, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon County, New Jersey, May 29th, 30th and 31st, 1929, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In the kind mercy and lovingkindness of God we have been privileged again to enjoy another session of our Association, hence are addressing you by way of a Circular Letter, telling you of our pleasure and comfort. Your messengers and Minutes have been gladly received. The preaching has been sound and good. We ask a continuance of your correspondence.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Southampton Church, at Southampton, Bucks County, Pennsyl-

vania, to begin Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1930, at 10:30 a. m., Daylight Saving Time, when and where we shall hope to have your messengers again.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in joint session with the several churches composing the same, convening at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, June 5th, 6th and 7th, 1929, sends christian greetings to our sister associations and meetings of our correspondence.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the goodness and mercy of God we have been blessed to meet again and receive your messengers and correspondence, for which we trust we have thankful hearts. We feel that the Giver of every good anl perfect gift has overshadowed us and made us to sit together in a heavenly place. Your ministers have been blessed to preach the truth with no uncertain sound, which comforts, strengthens and builds us up in His most holy faith. May the Lord continue in us this desire to meet together and bless us with hearing ears and understanding hearts.

Our next session is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1930, the place of meeting to be announced later through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, when we hope to meet your messengers again.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
HENRY T. LEFFERTS, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence, in Delmar, Maryland, August 29th, 1929, Samuel Linwood White and Miss Dorothy May Pusey, both of Delmar.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **ROXY SLAUSON** departed this life February 4th, 1929. She was the loving wife and devoted companion of the late brother Seeley Slauson. She was the daughter of James G. and Nancy Ballard, and united in marriage with Seeley Slauson in the year 1875. He preceded her to the grave nine years. She leaves to mourn their loss two sons, Amasa J., of Halcottville, N. Y., and Orley H., of Roxbury, N. Y. Sister Roxy united with the church, along with her husband, and they were both baptized by the late Elder John B. Slauson, November 1st, 1918. She was a faithful wife and mother, very devoted to her husband and family, patiently filling her place in the lives of those near and dear to her, she was a help meet indeed. In the church she was always in her place, faithful and steadfastly minded, rejoicing in the truth. She was favored with good health almost all her life, and was of a cheerful disposition, so that her presence was often like a ray of sunshine in the home. She was only sick a few days of acute bronchitis, and to the sorrow of all, she was taken to her eternal home. Her sorrowing family miss her much, but with a feeling that their loss is her eternal gain they desire to say, "Thy will be done." She was staying with her son Orley, at Roxbury, at the time of her death. The funeral service was held at the Halcottville meetinghouse and the interment was in the Vega Cemetery.

G. R.

THE death angel took from this life our dear beloved sister in Christ, **MRS. EMMA WASDEN,** wife of Mr. Willie Wasden, of Frisco City, Alabama. March 28th, 1929, she was sixty-three years old, and departed this life May 8th, 1929. She suffered for three weeks, but bore her sufferings patiently. All was done for her that loving hands and physicians could do. She leaves to mourn their loss a husband, four daughters, three sons and a large circle of friends and relatives. She united with the Old Primitive Baptist Church in September, 1918, and had been all these years loyal to her church and pastor. Her faith in God was wonderful. She was mild and gentle in her manner, dignified and courteous in her bearing, the very soul of loyalty and devotion to truth and righteousness. She seldom missed a meeting, and was an attentive listener. She was a woman of sterling worth and exemplary life, and in her death the family sustains the loss of a faithful and loving wife and mother, and the community a good neighbor, kind and sympathetic in sickness

and sorrow, and many bedsides have been brightened by her words of cheer and counsel, but God saw fit to call her to her eternal home, where there is no more sorrow and affliction.

The funeral was held in the Shiloah Church, where her membership was. Elder B. Sawyer, together with Elders R. D. Hendrix and T. M. Moseley, spoke comforting words to the bereaved family, after which she was laid to rest, the sleep from which none ever wake to weep, in Shiloah Cemetery. Her soul is at rest, and we cannot change God's will. Sweet be thy sleep, dear sister, until he bids thee arise to hail him in triumph beyond the skies, where I hope we may meet again.

Written by a sister in Christ, I hope,

(MRS.) L. A. GREENE.

MRS. ELIZABETH ANN GILLISS, widow of Edward J. Gilliss, died at her home at St. Martins Station, Maryland, Tuesday afternoon, August 6th, 1929. She was the daughter of John C. and Mary Fassitt Hall, and was born near Ocean View, Sussex County, Delaware, August 26th, 1846. For a number of years Mrs. Gilliss was a teacher in the public schools of Wicomico and Worcester Counties, and the influence of her strong character still lives in the lives of those who were her pupils. Mrs. Gilliss attended the Old School Baptist Church from childhood, and more than thirty years ago was baptized by Elder Silas H. Durand, and became a devout member of the Old School Baptist Church in Salisbury, Maryland. June 17th, 1918, Mr. Edward J. Gilliss, husband of the deceased, died, and from this sorrow Mrs. Gilliss never fully recovered. At the time of his death she wrote: "We sadly miss his dear presence, but feel that our loss is his gain, and desire to say from our hearts, The will of the dear Lord be done." Five years ago Mrs. Gilliss suffered the first paralytic stroke. The third stroke came July 25th, and on Tuesday afternoon, August 6th, her spirit passed into the haven of rest. Mrs. Gilliss was very fond of children and perfectly devoted to her three grandsons: James, John Hall and Robins Gilliss. She always referred to them as "my boys." Mrs. Gilliss is survived by one son, Mr. John Gilliss, one daughter, Miss May Gilliss, both of St. Martins Station, also one brother, Mr. James H. Hall, and one sister, Miss Sallie Hall.

The funeral services were conducted in her home at St. Martins Station, August 8th, by Elder H. C. Ker, assisted by F. R. Holland and J. B. Pettus. A large number of friends gathered for the services, and burial was in the family graveyard on the old Fassitt farm.

The above is a clipping from one of the county papers, and speaks none too highly of sister Gilliss. It was my privilege to call on her several times during her years of affliction and I always found her steadfast in the truth and glad to have me talk with her. She will be much missed in the town of St. Martin, as she had long made it her home. Owing to her affliction she was not able to attend the meetings of the church, but never forgot the blessedness of the years of long ago. May he who only can, comfort the family.

H. C. KER.

MRS. AGNES BRINK, wife of Mr. Sylvester Brink, of Kirkwood, N. Y., died April 5th, 1929, aged 64 years, 10 months and 21 days. She was the daughter of George and Sarah Bishop. The cause of her death was pneumonia. She united with the Brookdale Old School Baptist Church May 20th, 1906, and remained a faithful and loving member until called to her home above. She was esteemed very highly by her church friends, as well as by all who ever knew her. She leaves to mourn deeply her absence her lonely husband, one brother, with many other relatives and friends, who mourn the loss of one they loved dearly, but she is in heaven with her dear Savior, praising his holy name in a world without end. May God bless all who mourn and give them grace to uphold them in their sorrow.

Funeral services were held at her home April 8th, the writer officiating. Burial was in Kirkwood Cemetery.

Written by request of her husband.

D. M. VAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. E. J. Clary, Ohio, $1; "A friend," N. J., $1; Mrs. M. C. Martin, Tenn., $2; J. P. Fallin, La., $1.

MEETINGS.

The Sideling Hill and Fairview Churches have appointed to hold a two days meeting at Needmore, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, Saturday and Sunday, October 12th and 13th, 1929, and we invite ministers of our faith and order and all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Those coming by train and wishing to be met either by way of the B. & O. at Hancock, West Virginia, or by way of Western Maryland R. R. at Hancock, Maryland, will write beforehand to brother Jefferson C. Mellott, Needmore, Pennsylvania, or to myself at Plum Run, Pennsylvania.

ROLLA MELLOTT, Church Clerk.

An all-day meeting will be held in the New Vernon meetinghouse Saturday, October 12th, 1929. We hope to have one or two visiting ministers.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with Ebenezer Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, October 16th, 17th and 18th,

1929. Instead of holding this session of the Corresponding Meeting at the meetinghouse, it is planned to hold it in the Auditorium at Purcellville, because the latter place is easily reached by railway and highway, accessible either by auto or by electric car from Washington. Those coming Tuesday evening to Purcellville in autos will proceed to the Auditorium, where some one will be in attendance to direct them to places of entertainment for the night. Those coming Tuesday evening by rail from Washington will be met at Purcellville station. Trains leave Rosslyn for Purcellville at 2 and 5:30 p. m. and 7:30 a. m. Any coming Wednesday morning will proceed directly to Auditorium, which is about a half mile from station. Any coming into Washington by rail from the north or south will take Rosslyn car in front of Union Station and go to end of line where will be found the trains for Purcellville. All ministers of our faith and order and all lovers of the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ are invited to meet with us.

EPPA NORMAN, Church Clerk.

The Welsh Tract Church has appointed her yearly meeting to begin on Saturday October 19th, at 2:45 p. m., and on Sunday preaching to begin at 10:00 a. m. and continue all day. We expect two or more ministers with us, trusting the dear Lord may bless the occasion to our mutual edification. Those coming from Philadelphia and Baltimore will come via. B. & O. R. R., and get tickets for Newark, Delaware. At present train leaves Philadelphia at 1:20 p. m., but consult the new time table which will be issued before the time of the meeting. All lovers of the truth and of our faith are cordially invited.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Church Clerk.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Salisbury, Maryland, Church on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday (October 23rd, 24th and 25th), 1929. All incoming trains will be met on Tuesday and Wednesday. Busses stop near the church. A cordial invitation is extended to ministers of our faith and order and all other lovers of the truth.

W. J. HOLLOWAY, Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

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Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70 h Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us

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OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Cane Run Predestinarian Old School Baptist Church, of Turners Station, Kentucky, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 10:30 a. m., also, the Sulphur Fork Church of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, of the same faith and order, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 2:30 p. m.

GEO. L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Little Flock Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every first and third Sunday at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, at 1 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.
O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk,
143 W. 11th Street, Claremont Cal.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sunday at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Primitive Baptist Home in Salisbury, Maryland, opened on May 1st. Those desiring to enter should write to Mr. Cyrus Risler, 904 Ogden Ave., New York, N. Y., for particulars. Members and friends residing within the bounds of the Eastern Associations are eligible.

R. LESTER DODSON.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First. "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, Convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second. The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Eld. Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third. "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Eld. H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio. Fourth. "Fatalism." By Eld H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio. Fifth. "The Celestial Railroad" This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth. "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding. Cloth binding 75c each. Paper covers, single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and all to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 97. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1929. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TRENTON, N. J., Sept. 19, 1929.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—It is with a feeling of unworthiness that I thus address you, yet I know that the love I feel for you is very different from what I feel for my earthly friends and relatives. I have been somewhat impressed to write, telling you how much your messages through the SIGNS mean to me. I see the all-powerful love of God in the experience of each one as they write. The word "all-powerful" means something over and above all things, able to perform all things, and is applicable only to the Lord. "In the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." So God is not only all-powerful, but eternally so. We marvel not at the strength and wisdom of God, except as it concerns us eternally. The things of natural beauty, the sky, the sea, the birds and flowers, and all things, are made for the comfort and pleasure of man and are accepted as his due, but the salvation of the people of God, the church, is the manifested strength and love of God that is so marvelously great to those who hope in that salvation. To be strong is the opposite of weakness, and as God is the perfection of strength so the natural man is perfectly weak in the ability to save himself eternally. But the Lord's people have their strength in the Lord, for while they were yet without strength Christ died for the ungodly, so giving them the strength of his salvation. In this day, as in past time, it is well that God's people stand firm in that strength, ready to defend the truth at all times. We are told to be instant in season and out of season, also to "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." That does not mean to boast before man, but rather in all humbleness in the house of God give to the kindred in Christ the reason we hope in God, for "God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." When one stops to think of the immensity of God and his wonderful love, giving his Son for the redemp-

tion of the elect, using his strength for the love of his people, what kind of people should we be who are the recipients of such love? Ought we not to so live that Christ is always first in our thoughts and actions? "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." So if Christ is the leaven of the whole lump, then indeed is the good work of the Lord manifest in our walk and conversation. Never yet has man received any reward for good works. It is not for doing them, but in the doing of them that we find happiness. If ye know them, blessed art thou if ye do them, was not spoken to any but those who know the works of godliness. He gave his disciples power to heal the sick, cast out devils, and other miracles, but always in the name of Christ, never in Paul's, or Peter's, or any other name except the name of Christ, so to-day all things must be done in that same glorious name. John baptized in the name of Jesus, not in the name of any church, neither in any man's name, and so all things to be done decently and in order must be done in His name, and nothing is right that is not so done. What prayer and supplication it takes to so do. I have heard it said that one cannot pray without the spirit of prayer is given. I grant that, but if we have Christ do we not also have all of his traits? Is not the spirit of prayer also love and forbearance with us? Yet we heed not the commands which are given in love and for his glory. The disciples were told, Freely ye have received, freely give. Did they do it? Yes, in the Lord's strength they obeyed, yet found no reward for so doing, but suffered all things for his sake. They were working the work of Christ and found happiness in so doing, for Christ was first and all to them. They had the Spirit of Christ, so to-day the yoke is easy and the burden light to those who follow in his commands. James calls to our minds, "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure." I am glad that Christ, the head of the church, is powerful and able by the word of God to the "dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." This brings to my mind the parable of the cursed fig tree, found in Matthew xxi. 19. So the soul that yearns for the flesh pots of Egypt, that manifests no fruit, shall be cut off from the privileges and pleasures of church fellowship, for it is written, "By their fruits shall ye know them." How many of us utter with our lips lies that are not from the heart. How many times we say with our tongues things that we know are not in our hearts. Why? To teach us the weakness of our flesh; so that the word shall be proven to us that God is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. He will have his strength manifest and needs no words to make him acquainted with our weakness. All of the chosen material of the house of God was

known and fixed before the world was made, and God gave to his Son the plan and pattern, that he, through the strength of suffering, should mould and bring together all things for the setting up of that house, the church of God. Not one bit or portion was lost or misplaced, but all, both Jews and Gentiles, and from all the nations of the earth, were, through that supreme sacrifice, sealed and brought together a perfect building. That is the strength of the love of God. "But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end." If once we are chosen and built in that great and wonderful church of God, then we are safe indeed. We can and do neglect the privileges of the visible church on earth, we shun our duties and cast off our cares, all through the weakness of the flesh, and we suffer death or separation from the joys of the companionship of the saints. Brethren, is it right? "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him."—Heb. ii. 1--3. How easy it is for one to neglect the duties and privileges of the church. How many things there are in this world to lure the flesh from right. As Christ gave the order and rules of the church they are to be heeded. James says, "Do not err, my beloved brethren." Again, "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath," "but be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." The branches of the vine must bear the fruit of the vine, and the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. So when we walk in the Spirit, and bear the fruit thereof, we are indeed free from strife, confusion, hatred, envyings and heresies which kill. Adam had the fruits of the kingdom and enjoyed them, but as soon as he tasted the forbidden fruit he suffered separation from his Eden and his God, and so do we if we kill a brother, if we strive for supremecy in the house of God, if stir up strife and yield to hatred in our hearts and spread reports that lead to division. Brethren, is it worth it? How can we have a foretaste of that heaven we hope for if we neglect the fruits of righteousness? "Freely ye have received, freely give." "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." Those words were spoken to the people who know and have enjoyed the blessings of God, the lively stone in the building, and they were not spoken in vain. Pray without ceasing, is one of Paul's admonitions. Prove all things, hold fast that which is good, abstain from all appearance of evil, are others, and they were not spoken to a people who did not know the truth. We glory in the

strength of God, our wills always subject to the will of God in all things, let us so live that the glory of God is manifest in our walk and conversation.

This is submitted to my kindred in Christ in this land of ours, and may love prompt the readers to overlook the imperfection of expression. I feel to be less than the least.

Yours in love and for the peace of the household of God,

ELIZABETH L. FETTER.

[To my way of thinking, this a most excellent article. Some Old Baptists cannot suffer a word of exhortation without charging the one who thus exhorts with being a conditional time salvationist. What a pity that we dare not exhort without being falsely accused for so doing. To me this is a lamentable sign of our declension from what is right. Unless we repent, what can the end be but eclipse?—H. H. L.]

BENTON, Ky., July 14, 1927.

DEAR EDITORS:—In looking over stored away letters and articles on this rainy Sunday I came across a folded letter, dimmed with age, but which is very dear to me, the writer having been the wife of Elder J. P. Jenkins, who has been pastor of the Soldier Creek Church since before my birth, in the year 1887, making his care of the church over forty years. She was one of the first women I ever heard discuss the Bible. When I was a small child she visited our home often, and my recollection of her was always talking along lines of God's sovereignty. She had been dead several years when her daughter-in-law found this letter among some embroidery work that she wanted me to have. It seems she was alone at the time of the writing, and addressed it to whoever might read it. It is such a good and sound letter, and was of so much comfort to me that I thought it would have the same effect upon others, so am sending it to the SIGNS.

EFFIE BLAGG.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—In my lonely meditations this morning my heart is overflowing with love and pity for all christendom the world over. I love every one whose only hope is in God for life and salvation in time and eternity, and greatly sympathize with those whose hope for happiness even in this life depends upon conditions to be performed by themselves. Oh how I do pity them, as their happiness here is so very uncertain, but how safe and sure to trust in God alone. They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abideth forever, and as the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people, from henceforth, even forever. (Psalms cxxv. 1, 2.) The Lord speaking by the mouth of Ezekiel says, "For thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day." Again, "I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to

lie down, saith the Lord God." "I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season: there shall be showers of blessing."—Ezek. xxxiv. 11, 12, 15, 26. Dear reader, these are precious words from our Lord and Master, sure and unconditional promises of blessing to his children. Oh how can children of God doubt the words of their heavenly Father and depend upon creature conditions? All worldly "christians" believe (as far as my knowledge extends) that the obedient child enjoys blessings that the disobedient child does not, yet God says he will cause these showers of blessings. There never has been an effect produced without a cause, and if we are obedient servants of God he is the cause, and the effect is manifest by us. He writes his laws in our hearts and they are so indelibly fixed there with such an irresistible force that they are all fulfilled to a jot and tittle. We could not afford to believe otherwise, unless we were to take the position that God had no purpose at all in writing his laws in our hearts, yet all are ready to admit that God wrote them there for the purpose that they should be fulfilled. However, some think that we can obey them or let them alone at our option, regardless of God's will. But our dear Lord says, The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed so shall it stand. Let us never be guilty of disputing our dear Lord's solemn oath by saying that God's purposes are not accomplished here in time in all things. I maintain that there are not principalities or powers enough on earth to thwart one of God's purposes, and as all spiritual blessings were treasured in Christ for his children before the foundation of the world they are just as sure to receive them as that God sits on his throne, because they were deposited there for the heirs of promise, and every one will get his legacy. We cannot perform certain acts to procure certain blessings. Conditions we perform of our own free will would not be acceptable of our God, but when he works in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure we always do that which is wellpleasing in his sight, and if we ever walk in the strait and narrow way we will walk by faith and not by sight. (The redeemed of the Lord shall walk there.) As faith is not a production of our own, and the Lord says he will deal to every one the measure of faith, let us look to God alone, as the apostles did, for an increase of faith, and never try and act faith, as some say we can, for we would surely be acting the hypocrite. Let us ever ascribe all obedience and good works to God, the great fountain-head of all good. He is the sovereign Ruler of the universe. He speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. Even the waves obey his will, and the cyclones that sweep the land are controlled by his almighty power. Ah yes, he made everything according to his purpose, and everything will fulfill its purpose, and to take the position that it does not would be accusing God of ignorance or lack

of power to carry out his purposes. All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. I feel to hope at times that I have realized some of these things, as I have had many sore trials in life, and also afflictions. Many sad and lonely hours have I spent, with no earthly hand to protect or eye to watch over me while staying at home trying to take care of what the good Lord had blessed us with, and make all I honestly could while my companion went away to preach. This has been a considerable trial to me, yet I believe it has worked for my good. It has caused me to feel my dependence upon One who is able to save me from trials, persecutions and affliction, if it be his holy will. I feel assured at all times that God is good, and he will do right, and I feel that I am a poor, dependent, imperfect creature and need the sustaining grace of my God every hour, and in him, and him alone, do I trust to save me in time and in eternity, for there is no other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved. Many times I have sat alone long hours after the inhabitants in our little town were in bed, trying to read the dear old Bible, studying to find out if I could whether or not it was free will agency and conditions to be performed by the creature. I knew that if it was conditional the Old Baptists had been advocating a false doctrine ever since they had accepted the London Confession of Faith as their faith and practice, which was over two centuries ago. I also knew that my experience contradicted it and that my understanding of the sacred Scriptures would not admit of creature conditions, so long hours I have spent reading and searching into the matter, feeling I did not want to be deceived, and desired to become fully convinced. It seems that it is plainer than ever to me to-day that salvation is by grace. We have his solemn oath, As I have thought so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed so shall it stand. He says, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. Predestination and purpose are synonymous terms, therefore I think that all who oppose this grand old doctrine of predestination and the purposes of God should fall down and bury their mouth in the dust, as they are certainly disputing the oath of the almighty God, who holds the issues of life and death in his hand. He can say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth, even every one that is called by my name, for I have created him for my glory. Again, he says, This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise. Not that they may, or he rather they would, but they shall.

> "God's purposes they ripen fast,
> Unfolding every hour;
> The bud may have a bitter taste,
> But sweet will be the flower."

So our trials and afflictions here, dear reader, are only blessings in disguise. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,

and I believe our trials bring us closer to our God.

"Trials make the promise sweet,
Trials give new life to prayer,
Trials bring us to his feet,
Lay us low, and keep us there.

If I knew no trials here,
No chastisement by the way,
Might I not in reason fear
I'd be a castaway?"

Our blessed Savior, in speaking of his dear children, says, In this world ye shall have tribulation. Therefore these things are unavoidable on our part, it matters not how many conditions we may perform.

Whoever may read this letter, please excuse me for denouncing this "conditional pony." I "can't help it." It will not work to save me. I have tried with all my power.

SUSAN JENKINS.

ELKINS, W. Va., Feb. 10, 1929.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I am sending you a letter I received from brother J. W. McClanahan to do with as you think best. If you think it will not be in the way of better manuscript you can send it to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office for publication. My very dear brother, we often think and talk about your visit in our country, the Pocatalico and Tygarts Valley River Associations. You do not know how glad we would be to have you come among us again with such glorious messages from heaven. I often think of our trip over in Putnam County, and the liberty you had at sister Byrd's. It seemed to me the congregation was feasting upon the gospel truths falling from your lips. We notice in the January number of the SIGNS that owing to your being laden with so many cares, and having the pastoral care of five churches, that you had thought of resigning as editor of the SIGNS. We would hate to give you up. My wife remembers you and your preaching. She had some conversation with you at Mr. Chenoworth's, where you preached the last sermon in these parts. My wife joins me in love to you and yours.

G. B. McCLANAHAN.

POCA, West Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER GEORGE AND WIFE:—This morning finds me pondering over the many trials and troubles I have had to pass through. I have often wondered if there was any one else had suffered as I have, yet at times there is a sensation within me telling me these bitter trials I have to pass through are for my good. I know the apostle Paul said all things work together for good to them that love God. Do I love God? is the question that springs up in my mind. I want to love him. My greatest desire is to love him, but do I love him with that pure love that purifies the heart? Yes, all things work together for good to them who are the called according to his purpose. Is my calling real, or is it imaginary: my imagination? These questions are often presented to me, and in a way at times, seemingly, to arouse within me a greater desire to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Then for awhile I rejoice with joy unspeakable, and feel within my heart that my Redeemer

liveth and that I shall yet see him and be like him, when this vile body shall be raised an immortal body. Oh how sweet this good old hymn rings in my very soul:

"Hail, sovereign grace, that first began
The scheme to rescue fallen man!
Hail, matchless, free, eternal grace,
That gave my soul a hiding-place!

Against the God who rules the sky
I fought with hands uplifted high;
Despised the mansions of his grace,
Too proud to seek a hiding-place."

These verses apply to me with much comfort now in my declining days as I totter around about my every day avocation. I fully realize that my time is short here upon the earth and that soon all my labors will end. I feel to say that I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith and have earnestly contended for it at all times with the ability that God has given me. Now we being brothers, and in our old age thrown far apart by distance, I do hope we may continue steadfast in the doctrine of God our Savior to the end of this mortal life, and may we go down to our graves in honor to the glorious cause we have so boldly, earnestly and lovingly stood shoulder to shoulder for many years, when we were young and active and in the prime of life.

From your old brother,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

MACOMB, Okla., Sept. 14, 1929.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have a desire this morning to write you a few lines in regard to your valuable paper, which you have been sending to me for the past two years. I appreciate your kindness, but do not feel worthy of such a blessing, and if I were able to pay for it would not think of doing without it. I see each month the contributions to help the poor get less, and I know it is a burden to get it out each month and I do not wish to be a burden to you. While I love to read the good letters and editorials, which are a great comfort and pleasure to me in my lonely hours, still I feel it is not right for me to continue a burden to you. My Bible, the SIGNS and the *Lone Pilgrim* are all the pleasure I have, as I do not get to mingle with my dear brethren and sisters very often. I have only heard one sermon in the last year. Sometimes I get low down in the valley and feel that I am not worthy to have a home with you dear people. Solomon says, Acknowledge God in all your ways and he will direct your paths, but oh how often I find myself denying him in my actions. I sometimes fear I have had no change of raiment and am still clothed in my filthy rags instead of Christ's righteousness and salvation, but when my mind goes back to that sacred hour when love divine first entered my heart I cannot give up that sweet hope I have cherished so many years that I am one of those for whom Christ shed his precious blood that they might have eternal life. I pray God that he will lead me in the way that he would have me to go, and that I may ever be found humble and at his feet pleading for grace and mercy to sustain me through the rest of my days in this vile world of sin and suffering. I pray that he will ever be my guide and help me to overcome all temptations to

do evil, for I know that without him I can do nothing good, and if left alone I cannot stand.

"When thou, my righteous Judge, shall come
To fetch thy ransomed people home,
Shall I among them stand?
Shall such a worthless worm as I,
Who sometimes am afraid to die,
Be found at thy right hand?"

I will close by again thanking you for your kindness. My prayer is that God will bless you in your good work, and that he will enable you to still publish the dear SIGNS that we love so well. I pray that you will remember this poor sinner when at the throne of grace, for I feel I need the prayers of all the readers of the SIGNS, that I may ever be found at the feet of Jesus.

From one who feels her unworthiness,

M. E. HARRIS.

VENICE, California.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find money to pay for the dear old SIGNS. Please let us know if it is paid up to date, and we will try and be more prompt in the future. We certainly enjoy the SIGNS. My husband's grandmother, who is living with us, reads and rereads them and enjoys them very much. I sometimes hope I can see beauties in what it sets forth. My husband and I are not members, but can see no other way, and hope to have a home with them some time, if it is God's will. But I feel sometimes (of myself) it can never be, for I am so vile, so prone to sin, I fear I am not born again. We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. But how are we to know whether we really love them or not? Sometimes the verse runs through my mind:

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

Yes, often, so often, I feel no peace for days. I have just read in the editorial of the October number of the SIGNS these words: "All the fitness He requires is to feel your need of him." That seems so easy, but the question that bothers me much is, Do I feel my need of him? I would love to say from my very heart, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. But do I? No one knows but the One who knew all things when as yet there was nothing. I often feel I would like to talk with or write to some one and ask them if it was ever so with them, but I am afraid it would only sound foolish to them, and that it would seem to them I was trying to be something I am not. We have meetings in our home every second Sunday for sake of Grandmother Berry, who is crippled and not able to go from home. She is a strong believer in the doctrine of Jesus Christ our Savior, and she enjoys the meetings very much. Perhaps some of the older writers will remember her: Mrs. Hattie A. Berry, whose home used to be in Texas, but has been in California for about eighteen years. Elders T. D. Walker, of Tennessee, and G. O. Walker, of Oregon, preach at or home nearly every meeting, and if I should be allowed to say anything about it, they surely set forth the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. But oh I fear I am taking on myself too much and

taking upon myself the name of One of whom I have no knowledge. O Lord, grant that it is not so. I am the only daughter of W. L. and Otha Pennington, who are members of the church, and they have written a few times for the SIGNS. They are kind and loving parents, which fact I did not realize enough when I was with them. The late W. C. Pennington, who has gone (some years ago) the way we all must go, was my uncle. We truly hope and believe he is at rest on his dear Savior's breast, in whom he was a strong believer. I hope I can say truthfully that I believe in the same way they do: that it is by the free and unmerited grace of God that we are what we are, and that if I have been saved it is alone by His mercy and not of any good that I have done, for I do nothing but evil day after day. When I would do good evil is present with me. I can see no way to save myself. I get lower and lower every day and every hour. Although I am altogether unworthy of the notice of the dear ones, I ask my dear father and mother, and all the rest of the dear children of God who find it in their hearts, to pray for and remember me, a vile sinner,

(MRS.) W. J. BERRY.

STEM, N. C., Oct. 15, 1929.

DEAR PUBLISHERS:—Some time ago in reply to an inquiry from me in regard to buying some back numbers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, you very kindly offered to insert a notice in the SIGNS, hoping to help me secure the missing copies. I had hoped to be able to find them without asking you to do this. Since that time some copies have been added to those I have, but there are still some lacking. Elder Dodson and others very kindly sent me some. Elder Dodson wrote us that he was forwarding a list of those desired to you to be published in the SIGNS. As a few have come in since then, I am inclosing a corrected list to be used in place of the one he sent.

Appreciating sincerely your kindness in doing this, which I feel is not only a favor to me, but to those who may come after me, and thanking you gratefully for the deed, I am, with every good wish for you and the comforting paper you send out,

Very truly yours,

J. H. GOOCH.

[BROTHER Gooch would very much like to obtain the following issues of the SIGNS, as he is starting a library for his church. If any have any of the copies, and are willing to part with them, they will please communicate with or send them to Mr. J. H. Gooch, Stem, North Carolina. The numbers desired are: December 1st, 1899; June 1st, July 15th, August 1st, August 15th, 1902; January 1st, February 1st, May 1st, June 1st, October 1st, November 15th, 1903; September 15th, 1904; May 1st, June 1st, July 15th, October 1st, November 1st, 1905; May 1st, June 15th, July 1st, 1906; January 15th, February 15th, April 1st, August 15th, October 1st, 1908; September 1st, September 15th, October 15th, 1916; November 1st, 1918.—ED.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1929.

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1 PETER I. 2.

"ELECT according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."

The principle we wish to notice in this passage of Holy Writ is the use of the word "obedience." Let us not overlook the fact that "election" and "foreknowledge" are the divine sources mentioned here, from whence springs the "obedience" of saints and believers. If, then, the "election" of the saints by the Father was a divine act which took place before the saints were in evidence; and since "foreknowledge" also was before the saints were manifested, then it must surely follow that their "obedience" was divinely prearranged before there were any of them visible as yet. If it is granted that the "election" and the "foreknowledge" were unconditioned upon the acts of the creature, then it must follow that their "obedience" also is not conditioned upon the act or acts of the individual. The Holy Spirit of God is the principle in the children of God which sanctifies them, or sets them apart from the world, the flesh and the devil unto the obedience of Christ and unto the sprinkling of his blood which purges their consciences from dead works to serve the living God. Jesus Christ is head over all things to his people, and among these "all things" is their obedience. The human nature of the saints is not obedient to the truth. Neither can it ever be. The natural man knows not the things of God, and is wholly incapable of ever knowing them. This means the human nature or natural man of the believer. The carnal mind is enmity against God. This means the carnal mind of the believer. It is not with one's human nature, nor yet is it with one's carnal mind, that the believer assents to the principles of divine truth. In the work of regeneration, the natural man and the carnal mind are not born again. They remain as they were, unchanged. The new or heavenly birth brings the believer out into the spiritual world and into the manifestation of heavenly or spiritual life. This having been effected in the believer by the Holy Spirit, the believer now has the mind of Christ and the nature of Christ, in contradistinction to the human nature and to the carnal mind which he also continues to have as

formerly. Hence arises within every believer the spiritual warfare: the flesh lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh. Now, to assist the believer in this warfare and to aid him in keeping in subjection the human nature and carnal mind, he needs and must have the things which grace furnishes him for the contest. The apostle Paul was granted, through grace, a sufficiency of strength to enable him to withstand the prickings of that thorn in the flesh, that messenger of Satan, which was sent to buffet him. The preaching of the gospel is one of those divinely ordained things which God has ordained for the salvation of them that believe. Preaching does not save the unbeliever, but under the unction of the Spirit it does establish them that believe in the truth, and does save from error, delusion and human traditions. But it must have the unction of the Spirit in order to accomplish this salvation in them who believe. The mere mechanical or formal act of preaching will accomplish nothing. Likewise, the word preached must be mixed with faith in the soul of the hearer or else the hearer will not heed. Thus, this salvation through preaching is not conditioned on the will of the creature or on the will of the believer himself, but is conditioned on the presence of the Holy Spirit both in the one who preaches and in the one who hears. If there are any such things as conditions in the covenant of grace, one thing is sure: they are not conditioned on the acts of sinners or believers, but every condition is met and fulfilled in the completeness of Jesus Christ, for he is the obedience of his people and they are every one complete in him. The righteousness of God's holy law is fulfilled not by the believer, but in the believer, by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in him. This effectual indwelling of the Spirit of Christ in his people constitutes their obedience. Without this effectual indwelling religion is nothing more than form, devotion languishes and prayer becomes but parrot chatter. That the blessings enjoyed by believers here in time are contingent upon their obedience, cannot be proved by Scripture. All our blessings are in Christ, and have ever been in him from before the foundation of the world. We are told that God has blessed his people with all (not some) spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus according as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. How many of these blessings will God's people miss through their failure to be obedient? Will there be any blessings left over through their failure to obey? On the other hand, will there be any shortage of blessings through their being more obedient than God expected them to be? If, therefore, the "election" and the "foreknowledge" of God from which "obedience" is derived, are certain and definite, there cannot be anything uncertain or indefinite about the extent of their "obedience." God does not bribe his people to be obedient by offering them blessings, as we have seen some parents promise their children money or candy if they will behave themselves. The mercy of God endures

forever and his people have always been bountifully blessed in all ages, regardless whether they have been obedient or not. Not a believer anywhere but what he must say, if he tells the truth, that God has blessed him far above anything he has ever merited. And it is because of what one feels God has done already that the child of God earnestly prays that he may be able through grace to walk acceptably before the Lord; and not at all for blessings he expects to receive in the future for thus having been obedient. Obedience is the effect of grace and the fruit of obedience is the outcome of mercy graciously bestowed.

H. H. L.

AN EXPLANATION.

It has come to my knowledge that, in some quarters, there has been a gross misunderstanding of my article on "Ananias and Sapphira" in the September Signs. I have been told that certain men and others in some sections of the country are construing my article to bolster up their theory of "conditional time salvation." It grieves me to know that any such misconstruction should be put on my article so as to afford a weapon in misguided hands of designing men against our own people who believe and love the principles for which the Signs has always stood, and for which principles the Signs does still stand, all misapprehensions to the contrary notwithstanding. I have no patience with the theory of "conditional time salvation" and no fellowship for those who advocate it. I understand this theory to mean that the blessings enjoyed by believers here in time are conditioned upon their obedience to the precepts of Christ, and that believers may or may not, as they please, render this obedience of themselves. I do not believe any such theory, and I am at a loss to know what part of my article in the September Signs can be so misconstrued as to support any such notion. In the middle of the second column on page 205 I plainly say, "To hold these fleshly principles in check, the active presence of the Holy Ghost is needed." In the middle of the second column on page 206, I repeat, "The life of the pure conscience is the indwelling of the Holy Ghost." At the bottom of second column, page 206, I say, "Our best, if it be simply 'our best,' and not anything more than that, is but poor indeed." At the top of first column, page 207, again, "It is of grace and all of grace." What more could I have said to plainly show that such obedience as the believer acceptably renders to his God is always of grace, and not of human ability in his own fleshly self? At the top of second column, page 207, "We cannot believe that God our heavenly Father would by his Spirit exhort his children to obedience to the truth, unless there is some wonderful sense in which his children are able to render that obedience." To say that God's Spirit would exhort or command his children to obedience, and they not render that obedience, would be to say that God's Spirit would in that instance fail. Such cannot be. Where the word of a King is, there is power. True believers have received this ingrafted Word. Can the

issue of that Word in them fail of accomplishment? Perish the thought. When he speaks it is done. When Jesus commanded the man whose arm was withered, to reach forth his hand, the man did so. The power to do so accompanied the Word. When Jesus said to the lame man, Arise, take up thy bed and walk, the man immediately did so. Power accompanied the Word. So it is in this present dispensation in which God's people are a willing people in the day of his power. His law is written, not on tables of stone as formerly, but within them; and the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. Now, where any one can get "conditional time salvation" out of what I have written, I fail to see. Believers in Christ are in living union with him, and his life and virtue flow through each one of them; they are not to be compared with mere bolts and screws and gears of mechanisms which have no life or consciousness. They are not like dumb driven beasts guided here and there by bits and bridles, but are in lively spiritual oneness with their divine Head who has given unto them his life and his mind and his divine will within them moving them to will and to do of his own good pleasure. However, it is very difficult to so write and so express one's self as that one's enemies cannot twist it to mean what the writer never thought of. Even the Bible itself has been wrested by misguided men to their own destruction. If they treat God's own word so, what better can one expect of our own writings, we who are mere men and who can lay no claim to verbal inspiration? I sincerely regret that any words or expressions of mine should ever have been used as a sword against our own SIGNS people. Such an outcome never passed through my mind when I wrote the article before referred to. H. H. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder L. L. Schenck.)

To the Elders and messengers composing the First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists, Greeting and christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—In preparing this Circular Letter we enter upon the task with fear and trembling; but if the Lord will direct our mind and pen we desire to notice briefly some things in connection with the language recorded in the twelfth chapter of Hebrews: "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." A witness is one who is called to bear testimony. It is according to the testimony of the witnesses that a case is tried and a verdict rendered in our common courts. The witness is sworn to tell the truth, and if the testimony in an earthly court be attended with such solemn sanctimony, how much more the testimony of those witnesses who testify in the court of divine justice, whose judge is the Lord

God Almighty. We desire to notice some of the testimony of this great cloud of witnesses. The fact that they are designated as a "cloud" is worthy of consideration, for there is a difference even in the clouds. Jude speaks of some whom he designates as clouds without water, carried about of winds; but this which we have under consideration is not clouds, but "a great cloud." There are those who view a great cloud with dire apprehension, while others hail it with joy, hoping that a blessing may come out of it, and so with this cloud of witnesses, some view their testimony with doubt and alarm, but the lovers of truth accept it with joy. It would seem that our dear Redeemer has been on trial ever since his advent into this world. There have been witnesses for and against him. His blessed testimony has been set aside by many, and false witnesses are seeking to overthrow his sacred work, saying, You must do something or you cannot be saved, whereas his own testimony is, "It is finished." If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater, for this is the witness of God, which he hath testified of his Son. Whether accepted or rejected of men, we will accept the testimony of God as the standard of all truth.

Now "to the law and to the testimony." One witness testifies "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us." The false witnesses declare, The Lord is offering salvation to all, but is able to save none only upon condition of acceptance by the sinner. This would place the King, the Judge, in a very awkward position. In such a case the Lord knoweth not them that are his until the sinner himself decides the case for him; whereas one of this great cloud of witnesses testifies, "Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." This great cloud of witnesses comes forward with those dreaded wills and shalls of Jehovah. "He will save us." A dangerous looking cloud, indeed, to those who cherish a fancied system of free agency, but to the lovers of truth it showers a blessing upon your heads. To the one a savor of death unto death, and to the other the savor of life unto life. The great Judge has taken note of this testimony, but for the comfort of his chosen ones he calls another witness from the great cloud, who testifies, "Salvation is of the Lord." This was the prophet Jonah, and the truth of this testimony he learned through sore affliction. His condition was desperate. The belly of hell was his bed. Free agency could play no part in his deliverance, but God was there. "If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." But "thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." This is the testimony of one witness and corroborated by all the rest. The testimony of Jonah was written in the divine record, and Jonah was placed in the roll of this great cloud of witnesses whose testimony looks so appalling to those who contend salvation is a matter to be decided by man and not of God. But he calls yet

another witness to testify in his gracious court. God has never yielded his position as King and Judge and Lawgiver, therefore he calls whomsoever he will. This time an angel from heaven. He came proclaiming the advent of the great Messiah whose "name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." His testimony was not blurred by carnality, nor was it fashioned after the manner of earthly traditions, for this was the angel of the Lord. His testimony is unimpeachable, and it is agreeable to that which is gone before, but there are those who rise up and say that he came only to make a way possible and passable whereby all may be saved. It will be observed this saying was never written into the divine record. The pure testimony is all that is written there. All else is superfluous, and all that is opposed to this pure testimony is false. The "shalls" of Jehovah are preeminent and cannot be construed to mean anything but "shall." "He shall save his people from their sins." The unyielding doctrine of God, our Savior, coming as it does from this great cloud of witnesses, falls as thunder upon the ears of those who are not prepared to receive it, but to the people of God it drops as the rain. It comes as a refreshing shower upon a parched and dreary land. "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." Yes, the doctrine of God our Savior settles down upon his people, strengthens and settles them in things pertaining to his kingdom, while the enemies of Jesus look on him with astonishment, and prefer to give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. But let us further notice the testimony, for we are not ashamed of the testimony of our God. The apostle testifies, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." It is not necessary to produce all the testimony bearing upon the matter of salvation, but "in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established."

We will pause a moment and review the testimony, and we find one witness has testified, "He will save us." Another has said, "He shall save," while yet another has declared, "He hath saved us." The blessed truth is established, the verdict is rendered and written in the divine record: Christ crucified, his people justified and God is glorified. "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

But let us turn again to this great cloud of witnesses. Their testimony concerning the sovereignty of God is very important. God is a sovereign, or else he is not a sovereign. We have already viewed him as King and Judge and Lawgiver. If he be a King he is a sovereign. His jurisdiction extends over all the universe. Heaven and earth are subject to the sway of his scepter. Heaven is his throne, the earth is his footstool. Declared to be

the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, he proclaims from his majestic highness, "I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." The working of his providence is subject to no creature nor circumstances. His works are ordered after the counsel of none, save his own sovereign will. His reign is absolute. His scepter is a scepter of righteousness. Whatsoever comes to pass is ordered according to his own righteous providence. Every creature and every circumstance must conform to his eternal desire. Men and devils yield obedience to his righteous government. They proceed on their way, performing their carnal devilish designs only so far as it accomplishes God's righteous designs. They all can only fill the sphere that the King eternal has allotted to them. They can do no more than that, and they can do no less. Even the assassin in his gruesome work of death can do no more and no less than to conform to God's eternal decree. Just why tragedies are included in the providence of God is not our province to state. But to deny that it is so is to deny divine testimony, for one of this great cloud of witnesses has thundered forth this unerring prediction, "Some of you they shall kill." We can only "be still, and know that he is God." Death and hell were cast into the lake of fire, and are therefore made subject to the reign of God's sovereign power. They cannot come forth to prey upon us, until God himself speaks the word.

> "Though men and devils aim to kill,
> They can't exceed our Father's will;
> Though plagues and death around me fly,
> Till he commands I cannot die."

Satan himself was cast into the bottomless pit, bound with a great chain. He is helpless to come forth and tempt God's little ones until God himself turns the key. Such is the array of testimony of this great cloud of witnesses. But even this blessed testimony is viewed with alarm by those who say, If God has predestinated all things it would make him the author of sin. This argument was not given place in the divine record. But it is recorded there, "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." He is the author and finisher of our faith, but not the author of our sins. "I am God, and there is none like me." This answers all questions relating to his kingly powers. This truth forbids that we compare him to puny man. There is nothing baffles his gracious providence or thwarts him in his eternal purpose. The witness speaks again: Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called. This also is viewed with alarm, and even disdain, but coming from this great cloud of witnesses it is hailed with joy of those that are chosen. Some have sought to soften this language by saying, If you will choose the Lord the Lord will choose you. But this choice is according to God's foreknowledge, and the

Lord himself has testified, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." It matters not how men may view this cloud of witnesses, God's people will ever stand as that "remnant according to the election of grace."

The limits of a Circular Letter will not admit of a full review of all the testimony set forth to honor and glorify the King of saints. We submit the foregoing in sincerity, in love, and, we trust, in humbleness of heart.

L. L. SCHENCK, Mod.
MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists, to those with whom we correspond, and to the saints scattered abroad, sendeth greeting and christian salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Another year, with its joys and sorrows, trial and triumphs, has passed into the annals of time, and we are still spared as monuments of grace, and permitted by a kind Providence to meet again in an associational capacity. Love and peace abound with us, and our visiting members came bound together with us in the same bonds of love and fellowship. Through the never-failing mercy of the kind, indulgent Father of us all he has sent to us able ministers of his gospel, who as a unit have proclaimed the same unsearchable riches of his grace, in demonstration of his Spirit and the power of his Christ, and to them, and to all of like precious faith, we heartily say, Come again.

Our next session is appointed to be held with West Union Church, near Meriden, Kansas, to begin on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1930, when, if the Lord wills, we hope to meet again in the same love and fellowship in which we are now blessed and permitted to rejoice. Until then we bid you farewell in the Lord.

Done by order of the Association, and signed in her behalf.

L. L. SCHENCK, Mod.
MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

The Tygarts Valley River Association of Primitive Baptists, in session with Little Bethel Church, West Virginia.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Your messengers came to us with sweet messages of salvation through the finished work of the adorable Redeemer, preaching Christ as all in all, as the way, the truth and the life, and the only name given among men whereby we must be saved. Dear brethren, we greatly appreciate your correspondence, and earnestly desire a continuance of the same.

Our next Association is appointed to be held with the Amnon Church, Marion County, West Virginia, to commence on Friday before the last Sunday in August, 1930, at eleven o'clock a. m., and continue three days, when and where we hope to meet your messengers again.

J. S. MURPHY, Mod.
J. R. DENNISON, Clerk.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 6th, 7th and 8th, 1929, sends christian greetings to our sister Associations and meetings of our correspondence.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the goodness and mercy of God we have been blessed to meet again and receive your messengers and correspondence. We feel that God has been gracious to us and blessed us with that peace that passeth all understanding. Brother Dodson was with us all three days and preached Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

Our next session is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, before the second Monday in September, 1930, the place of meeting to be given later through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, when we hope to meet your messengers and receive your Minutes again.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANKS.

IN each copy of this issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we are inclosing a Subscription Blank as a convenient form for our subscribers to send in their subscriptions, the majority of which expire with the end of the year. It would greatly encourage the editors and publishers to receive some new subscriptions, together with the old ones; if each one would try and get us at least one new subscriber it would assist us greatly. Brethren, sisters and friends, will you see what you can do for us?

POETRY.

POEM ON LORD'S PRAYER.

During the Civil War a unique composition by an unknown author was fond on a battlefield in South Carolina. It was a poem into which the Lord's prayer was uniquely fitted. Being a literary curiosity, and because of its worthy and beautiful sentiment, it was widely circulated. At one time it was printed on heavy satin. Many of these old satin prints are still in existence. The poem, dated Charleston, South Carolina, July 4th, 1823, follows:

"Thou, to the mercy-seat our souls dost gather,
To do our duty unto thee, **Our Father**
To whom all praise, all honor, should be given,
For thou art the great God **Who art in heaven,**
Thou, by thy wisdom, rul'st the world's whole frame,
Forever, therefore, **Hallowed be thy name;**
Let never more delays divide us from
Thy glorious grace, but let **Thy kingdom come**
Let thy command opposed be by none,
But thy good pleasure and **Thy will be done**
And let our promptness to obey be even
The very same **On earth as it is in heaven;**
Then for our spirits, O Lord, we also pray
Thou wouldst be pleased to **Give us this day**
The food of life, wherewith our souls are fed,
Sufficient raiment, and **Our daily bread;**
With every needful thing do thou relieve us,
And to thy mercy, pity **And forgive us**
All our misdeeds, for him, whom thou didst please
To make an offering for **Our trespasses,**
And, forasmuch, O Lord, as we believe
That thou wilt pardon us **As we forgive,**
Let that love teach, wherewith thou dost acquaint us,
To pardon all **Those who trespass against us;**
And, though, sometimes, thou find'st we have forgot
This love to thee, yet help, **And lead us not**
Through soul or body's want to desperation,
Nor let earth's gain drive us **Into temptation**
Let not the soul of any true believer
Fall in the time of trial, **But deliver**
Yea, save them from the malice of the devil,
And both in life and death, keep **Us from evil;**
Thus pray we, Lord, for that of thee, from whom
This may be had, **For thine is the kingdom,**
This world is of thy work, its wondrous story
To thee belongs **The power and the glory**
And all thy wondrous works have ended never,
But will remain forever and **Forever,**
Thus, we poor creatures would confess again,
And thus would say eternally **Amen.**"

Mixtures of joy and sorrow
I daily do pass through;
Sometimes I'm in the valley,
And sinking down with woe;
Sometimes I am exalted,
On eagles' wings I fly,
I rise above my troubles
And hope to reach the sky.

Sometimes I'm full of doubting,
And think I have no grace,
Sometimes I'm full of praising,
When Christ reveals his face;
Sometimes my hope's so little
I think I'll throw it by;
Sometimes it seems sufficient
If I were called to die.

Sometimes I shun the christian,
Lest he should talk to me;
Sometimes he is the neighbor
I long the most to see;
Sometimes we meet together,
The season's dry and dull,
Sometimes we find a blessing,
With joy it fills my soul.

Sometimes I am oppressed
By Pharaoh's hand,
Sometimes I look over Jordan
And view the promised land;
Sometimes I am in darkness,
Sometimes I'm in the light,
And then my soul is winged,
And upward speeds its flight.

Sometimes I travel mourning
Down Babel's ancient stream,
Sometimes my Lord's religion
Appears my only theme;
Sometimes when I am praying
It seems almost a task,
Sometimes I find a blessing
The greatest I can ask.

Sometimes I read my Bible
And 'tis a sealed book,
Sometimes I find a blessing
When'er therein I look;
Sometimes I go to meeting
And wish myself at home,
Sometimes I find my Savior,
And then I'm glad I come.

Lord, why am I thus tossed,
Thus tossed to and fro?
Why are my hopes thus crossed
Wher'er I'm called to go?
O Lord, thou never changest,
And 'tis because I stray;
O grant me thine assistance
And keep me in the way.

Oh may thy counsels guide me
And keep me while I live,
In death be thou my portion,
And then my soul receive,
To praise my blessed Savior,
And magnify his grace
Bestowed on such a sinner,
The chief of all the race.

There with the holy angels
That stand around the throne,
And saints of every nation,
Our voices join in one;
We'll sound aloud the praises
Of our Redeemer God,
Who saved us by his sorrows,
And washed us in his blood.

[After her death the foregoing poetry was found in the Bible of sister Emily Hershaw, whose obituary appears in this number, and as it was in her handwriting was sent to us for publication in the same number as her obituary.—ED.]

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. E. Coulbourn, June 17th, 1929, at the home of the bride. Mr. Austin J. Pusey and Miss Ruth Morris. Both of Salisbury, Maryland.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

WILLIAM A. THOMPSON, our brother in Christ, one of our deacons of the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, passed away from this life at his home, Sunnyside Farm, near Herndon, Virginia, Tuesday, October 8th, 1929. He had not been well for several months and suffered from a diseased condition of the heart. At the end he passed away peacefully. For two weeks prior to his death he had felt that he was away from home and talked much about going home, although he was in the midst of his family all the time and in his own earthly home. However it was not this earthly home he meant, but that better home beyond which is reserved for those who are being kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Brother Thompson's parents were David and Mary Ellen Thompson, of West Virginia, and he himself was born in that State, May 14th, 1857. He is survived by two sisters and one brother: sister Ida Hauger, of Shepherdstown, West Virginia, sister Emma Jones, of Vienna, Virginia, and Robert Thompson, of Herndon, Virginia. Brother Thompson was married in 1878 to Sarah Myerly, of Tough Creek Valley, Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania. Of this union there are living the following children: Mrs. J. A. Gulick, Aldie, Va., Mrs. Walter Fox, of Vale, Va., Mrs. Jether Dove, of Navy, Va., Miss Hattie Thompson, at home; Albert Thompson, of Pender, Va., and Earl Thompson, at home. There are eleven grandchildren. At the time that brother and sister Thompson united with the Old School Baptist Church they were living near Kearneysville, West Virginia. They were baptized by Elder E. V. White into the Mill Creek Church. In 1900 they moved with their family to their present home in Virginia, and joined by letters with the Frying Pan Church. Brother Thompson had served the Mill Creek Church as her deacon prior to his moving to Virginia. The Frying Pan Church appointed him her deacon, and in this capacity he served faithfully and well. He was devoted to the cause of Christ, and in the nineteen years I have been serving as pastor of the Frying Pan

Church I have known him to be absent from his place in meetings but very few times, and then only because he was not able to get there. He was a staunch believer in the omnipotence of God and in the unlimited sovereignty of Jehovah. He had no patience with any conditionalism in salvation, believing firmly that salvation in whole or in part is altogether of grace in Christ Jesus. He was an humble, God-fearing brother, esteeming all his brethren better than himself, and showing at all times a willingness to spend his substance, time and energy in behalf of the church. His home was an open house for all attending the meetings, and there is no counting how many lovers of the truth have at different times found entertainment and hospitality beneath his roof. No words can express how I myself will miss him, his presence and his help, his love and devotion to all things which affected my interest and welfare as pastor of the church. Neither can words express our dear sister Thompson's loss and that of the family, to say nothing of the loss which his going from us entails upon the church. We are comforted, however, with the assurance that the same God who gave brother Thompson to the Old Baptist Church yet reigns and rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and that this same God, if it be his will, can raise up others endowed with the same graciousness to take up the work where our brother laid it down. To the Lord alone we look for strength to bear our cross and heavy loss. By the grace of God our brother was enabled to leave behind him in this life among us the evidence of a gracious walk and conversation which proved his calling and election sure. May the Holy Spirit of all real comfort and solid consolation comfort our dear sister Thompson, and the bereaved church and family.

He was buried in the cemetery at Herndon, Virginia.

ALSO,

MRS. ROSIE WHITE FURR, our sister in Christ, passed away from this earthly life at her home, Adamstown, Maryland, September 27th, 1929. She was born October 18th, 1847, making her stay in this world nearly 82 years. Her parents were brother Joseph and sister Ann White, both deceased several years ago. She is survived by one sister and four brothers: Mrs. Mary E. W. Pratt, of Morgantown, W. Va., Mr. John White, of Terre Haute, Ind., Mr. Furr White, of Poolsville, Md., brother B. Frank White and Mr. Arthur White, both of Adamstown, Md. Sister Roosie was married many years ago to Mr. Henry Furr, son of Johnson Furr, and nephew of the late Elder Joseph Furr. Her husband preceded her to the grave several years ago. To them had been born three girls, all of whom died of diphtheria in rapid succession. To these sorrows which had befallen her she was in addition afflicted with blindness. Her life was indeed one of suffering and sore trials, yet was she given grace through the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to bear all patiently and without either complaint or murmur. She was baptized by the late Elder Furr, in 1877, into the New Valley Old School Baptist Church, and at the time of her death was the oldest of our members in the New Valley Church, both in age and in membership. She had not been in good health for many months, had been confined to her room since June of this year, but not all the time in bed. The end came to her very peacefully. She was in her right mind to the last, but suffered no pain when death came, just falling peacefully asleep as a tired child might in the bosom of its mother.

Services were held at the home in Adamstown on Monday afternoon, September 30th, the writer speaking from the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians. Burial was in Union Cemetery, at Leesburg, Virginia. May the Lord comfort the bereaved family and church, giving us the blessed assurance that for our sister to depart and be with Christ is her eternal gain.

H. H. L.

JOHN K. DUNCAN was born September 14th, 1863, and died October 9th, 1929, being in his sixty-seventh year at the time of his death. November 16th, 1882, he was married to Virginia Turner, and to that union were born eight children, one dying some years ago. The children are as follows: Anna Taylor, of Manzanolo, California, Oscar B. Duncan, of New York city, Charles G. Duncan, of Louisville, Kentucky, Samuel G. Duncan, deceased, Mary S. Harmon, 3696 East 18th Street, Cleveland, Ohio, Elizabeth L. Dobson, Joseph B. Duncan and Lorena K. Hamilton, all three of Louisville, Kentucky. The widow and seven children are left to mourn. Brother Duncan spent most of his life in the employ of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad Company, until about four years ago, when, on account of ill health, he was retired on a pension. As an employee he stood high among his railroad friends. Both brother and sister Duncan were members of the Sulphur Fork Church of Predestinarian Baptists of Campbellsburg, Kentucky. Sister Virginia Duncan was baptized by the late Elder John G. Eubanks at the August meeting, in 1890, and brother John by the writer, in August, 1928. Brother Duncan wished above all things that he might die in the church, and the Lord granted him this request. It surely was a day of rejoicing to him and to the brethren when he was baptized. On account of his failing health he and sister Duncan spent most of their time with their daughter, Mrs. Mary Harmon, here in Cleveland, who took care of him, and at whose home he died. The week before his death he was taken to his bed and I visited him almost daily and tried to comfort him and the family. His appointed time had come, he had fulfilled his stay here on earth, and quietly fell asleep, with the full assurance of hope of a glorious awakening the morning of the resurrection. We will all miss him, his place will be vacant, may the Lord reconcile us

and make us say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

I tried to comfort the friends at the funeral, using by request the Scripture found in John xiv. 1-6, more especially the words, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God." "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." After which we laid his body to rest in the Lake View Cemetery, in Cleveland, Ohio. May the Lord bless the dear ones.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

MRS. SABINA JOSEPHENE GREATHOUSE was born in Mead County, Kentucky, January 5th, 1853. She was born and raise a Catholic; was married to I. R. Greathouse September 1st, 1870, and died in Selma, North Carolina, September 19th, 1929, making their life together 59 years and 18 days. She never fussed at any one in her life, and there never lived a more faithful and affectionate wife nor a more patient and loving mother than she was. She received a hope when about twenty-five years of age. She left the Catholic Church and united with the Primitive Baptists at Sebree, Kentucky in the year 1878. She lived a quiet, christian life until it pleased the Lord to call her home. The brethren and sisters over the United States where she traveled with her husband spoke of her in the highest terms. Elder Colier, of Selma, North Carolina, in speaking of her, said, "She is an exception." It was her delight to cook for and wait upon the brethren and sisters. She could follow me and knew by heart any song I could sing, and if my mind wandered off so I could not think of the next words she would sing on, and I knew the song all through, but she did not know one song by heart. She was the mother of eleven children. Two of them preceded her to the grave, leaving us to mourn for them. From Christmas morning until God called her home at different times she suffered more than any one I ever saw. We buried her precious body in the cemetery at Cortales, New Mexico. We miss her sweet voice and delightful presence, but our loss is her eternal gain. May God give us grace to bear the loss.

I. R. GREATHOUSE.

REBECCA JANE CULVER was born December 14th, 1854, in Clinton County, Missouri, the daughter of James and Rebecca Groom, and died September 9th, 1929, at the age of 74 years, 8 months and 25 days. February 10th, 1874, she married Millard Filmore Culver, and to this union were born eight children: E. C. Culver, of Denver, Colo., J. B. Culver, of Lathrop, Mo., Charles and Benjamin Culver, of Oregon, Mo., Mrs. B. J. Wilson, of Oregon, Mo., Mrs. Thornton Cash and Elizabeth and Ina Culver, of St. Joseph, Mo., all of whom are living. She is also survived by two sisters: Mrs. Mary Poage and Mrs. Rhoda Brown. Her husband preceded her in death about ten years. She united with the Primiitive Baptist Church known as Mt. Zion, at Gower, Missouri, the third Sunday in September, 1877, and was baptized the next day by Elder William Tillery. Later she united by letter with Little Flock Church, at St. Joseph, Missouri. Her faith was firm and immovable. She was humble, letting her light so shine that when men saw her good works they glorified her Father in heaven. She often said that any virtues she possessed were the fruit of the Spirit of Christ Jesus who dwelt in her and not of the flesh. Her departure leaves a vacancy in our midst, and though we will long mourn her, yet we are comforted in the belief that she is with her Lord and Master whom she loved and served while with us. May her children look to Him who was the author and finisher of her faith for strength and guidance and comfort. May they never forget her forgiving spirit, her faithfulness to her church and all that it stood for, her gentleness and meekness and her beautiful character and blameless walk in life. May we all who knew her be better men and women because she lived and walked in our midst reflecting in her life the grace of God that was in her heart.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer at the family home, Elders Walter Cash and J. C. Jones assisting. The funeral was well attended.

MORTE H. CRAIG.

Sister **EMILY HENSHAW** was born December 4th, 1844, in Forsyth County, North Carolina, and died January 26th, 1929, at Monta Vista Home, in San Bernardino, California. Her mother died when she was only a child, and after her father's death she and her sister lived with an aunt. During the Civil War her sister's husband died and she and her sister and her aunt lived together, and when her sister and aunt died sister Emily kept house for her sister's sons, Sanford and William Reese, both of whom are still living, William in North Carolina, and Sanford in San Bernardino, California. In 1890 she and Sanford came to Sonoma County, California. In 1897 she moved to Riverside, California, and was baptized by Elder Hagan, of Illinois, about that time. October 18th, 1908, Little Flock Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California was constituted with eight members having letters from their home churches, and sister Emily was one of them, and continued to be a most worthy member of that precious little band of believers until the dear Lord called her home. She could relate a sweet experience of grace, which dated back to early childhood. She was a constant reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years, and a firm believer in the doctrine of sovereign grace alone. She was numbered among the poor of this world, but was rich in faith and a precious heir of the kingdom. Brother J. W. Haynes, Moderator of the Little Flock Church, Riverside, California, conducted the funeral services and a few of her brethren who loved her for the truth's sake saw her body laid to rest until that glorious morn of

the resurrection, when she, with all the redeemed of the Lord, shall be raised up in his image, and shall be satisfied. This is the hope of the unworthy writer of these lines,

G. A. DUNDAS.

W. N. HAYNIE was born May 6th, 1853, in Pulaski County, Arkansas, and departed this life February 22nd, 1929, at the home of his oldest daughter, Mrs. M. C. Samons, of Ft. Worth, Texas. Brother Haynie was married to Miss Mary Estes December 5th, 1872, and to this union ten children were born, three dying in childhood. One son was shot and killed after he had grown to manhood. Brother Haynie left to mourn his dear companion, six children and many relatives and friends. The children are Mrs. M. C. Samons, of Ft. Worth, Texas, W. F. Haynie, of Quail, Texas, Mrs. Tishie Norris, of Lawn, Texas, Mrs. Abbie Blake, of Lubback, Texas, Mrs. Clara Askew, of Wolcoth, Texas, Mrs. Tennie McMillan, of Gulan, Texas. Brother Haynie joined the Predestinarian Baptists about twenty-two years ago, and was a true and faithful member of his church, and was also a true and faithful husband and father, and a real friend to the poor and needy. A friend in need is a friend indeed, and such a friend was brother Haynie. I feel we can truly say of him, Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them. Brother Haynie endured inexpressible suffering for three years, caused by cancer, but he bore it patiently.

His mortal body was buried in the cemetery of the church of his membership, Pilgrims Rest, Lawn, Texas. Elder John Smith and Elder J. B. Reid, his pastor, conducted the funeral service. I would say to his loved ones, Weep not as those who have no hope, for your loss is his eternal gain.

A sister in hope of mercy,

(MRS.) M. N. GRIFFIN.

MARGARET ELIZABETH HAVENS, daughter of S. A. and Julia Ann Kelley, was born August 13th, 1857, in Polk County, Arkansas. January 15th, 1874, she was married to F. H. Walker. They moved to Comanche County, Texas, in the year 1877. To them were born four children: S. T. Walker, Clyde, Texas, Howell, who died at Medina, Texas, in 1911, Iona, who died here in Rising Star, Texas, in 1896, and Mrs. Viola McClure, of Rising Star, Texas. In 1892 Mr. and Mrs. Walker went to Hot Springs, Arkansas, for her health, and in a few months Mr. Walker died there. She and the four children accompanied the body back to the old home in Polk County, Arkansas, for the interment, returning to their home in Eastland County, Texas. In 1895 she moved to Rising Star, Texas. In 1994 she was married to John R. Havens, moving with him to Coleman County, Texas, but returning in seven years to her home in Rising Star. Brother and sister Walker were baptized into the fellowship of Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church, Comanche County, Texas, by Elder Wm. Burke, in the year 1880. She died September 21st, 1929, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Viola McClure.

J. I. FOSTER.

MRS. MARTHA ELLEN ANDERSON, widow of Harvey Anderson, departed this life Wednesday, September 18th, 1929. Her demise, which was both sudden and unexpected, was due to heart failure. Mrs. Anderson was born in Iowa February 22nd, 1855, the eldest of six children born to Abner and Elizabeth Shanks. There were also six half-brothers and two half-sisters. At the age of ten years her family was one of a party that braved the rigors of driving across the plains and mountains. Their home was made at Waldo Hills, Marion County, Oregon, and for seventy-one years Mrs. Anderson's life was spent in that and Linn County. She was in every true sense one of the pioneers of this great State of Oregon. Surviving are three daughters: Mrs. Stella L. Ray, of Lebanon, Mrs. Bertha M. Rhodes, of Oakland, California, and Mrs. Roxey Mac Clements, of Portland, also nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Saturday afternoon at the Lowe funeral chapel, conducted by Elder W. M. Rose, and interment was in the family plot in the cemetery at Stayton, Oregon.

HER GRANDDAUGHTER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. E. J. Bolton, Mo., $1; G. A. Dundas, Cal., $1; John W. Rockafellow, N. Y., $8; Mrs. M. Perry, Ark., $1; J. W. Black, Manitoba, $2; Mrs. Laura R. Elgin, D. C., $3; Mrs. Charles H. Glasscock, Va., $1; Joseph Buckwalter, Ohio, $3; Mrs. Kate E. Rogers, Ont., $3.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, &C. REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.

Of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, published monthly, at Middletown, N. Y., for October 1st, 1929.

State of New York, County of Orange, ss. :

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Gilbert Beebe, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the owner of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 1st, 1912, embodied in section 41, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse side of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publish-

ers, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publishers, J. E. Beebe & Company, Middletown, N. Y.; Editor, H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

2. The owner is, Gilbert Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagers and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent. or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear on the books of the company, but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stocks, bonds or other securities than as so stated by him.

GILBERT BEEBE,
Owner.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 18th day of October, 1929.

(Seal) FRANK P. COX.
(My commission expires March, 1930.)

MEETINGS.

NOTICE.

The Woburn Old School Baptist Church has decided to have its next meeting the first Sunday in December (December 1st) instead of the fifth Sunday as usual. We expect our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, to be with us.

E. M. FORD.

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IN
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11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday
10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 97. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1929. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

POCA, W. Va., Oct. 30, 1929.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I just felt to drop you a few lines this morning to let you know that I heartily indorse your editorial on the subject of exhorting the church members to their duty. The apostles did it, and I am sure it is right, as it was done by them. Good brethren become careless and need to have their pure minds stirred up. I have thought, and still think, the spirit of exhortation to be a gift, to edify and comfort the hungry and thirsty who are anxious for a crumb that falls from their Master's table. Paul to the Thessalonian brethren said, Now we beseech you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble minded, support the meek, be patient toward all men. Again, to the Hebrew brethren he said, Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily while it is called to-day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, for we are made partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end. Now to accord with the apostles it is a duty by holy writ enjoined upon all who profess to have a hope in the atoning blood of the Lord Jesus Christ to warn, exhort, persuade. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. He that converteth a brother from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sin. The spirit of exhortation is profitable and edifying.

When I began to write I had in mind to speak of some things as they appear to my mind: the words of Jesus to his disciples shortly before his crucifixion, which read thus: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that

where I am, there ye may be also."—John xiv. 1-3. Jesus had demanded John the Baptist to baptize him, saying to John, It becometh us to fulfill all righteousness, and it being John's mission to make ready a people prepared for the Lord, the time was drawing near that the church militant should be organized, by a supernatural power, and he tells his disciples, It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. These words were spoken by Jesus to his disciples by way of comforting them, and are comforting to his followers through all time; and as the body of Christ is but one heart, so he said, Let not your heart be troubled. This address is to a people of one heart, one mind and one language. In my Father's house are many mansions. Wisdom hath builded her house. To my mind, the foreknowledge of God comprehended all the inmates of that house, which is a spiritual building, not made with hands, eternally in the heavens. So the church, the home for the redeemed and regenerated sons and daughters of Adam, to have while they remain on earth, was organized by the power of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. Daniel, referring to this great and memorable event, said, In the days of these kings (earthly kings, natural, carnal-minded kings) shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty rushing wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. Yes, how true the words of Jesus are: "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." These precious words are from the mouth of our adorable Lord and Master. The mansions are the chosen vessels of God's mercy in the covenant of redemption prepared by grace divine.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

CHICAGO, Ill., Sept. 9, 1929.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter I received from a dear sister in Tennessee, and as it was such a good and comforting letter to me I felt I must share it with the rest of the family of God, so am sending it to you to publish in the SIGNS, if you see fit to do so. The Holy Spirit surely reigns in this

dear sister's heart. I learned to love her when she was living here in Chicago, and I love her for both the truth's sake and her own sake.

If any of our eastern ministers, or brethren or sisters ever come to Chicago we would be very glad to have them look us up and come to our meetings. I am sure they would meet with a hearty welcome from the little Bethel Church of Chicago.

I hope the inclosed letter will meet with your approval, and that it will comfort others and that they will enjoy it as much as I did.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW.

LENOIR CITY, Tenn., Aug. 20, 1929.

DEAR SISTER BRUNOW AND FAMILY:—Tongue cannot express my feelings in full this morning as I sit down to try and reply to your sweet, and I must say truly, very, very comforting letter. Sister, it did me good all over when I read your message of love. I had been feeling somewhat down in the valley of gloom, wondering if I am serving God, and if I have ever been taught anything of that glorious work, or if what knowledge I have is only of the head, and if I am only wise in my own conceit. All these things, and more, have been, and were then, running through my mind. O, dear sister, if I could only understand wisdom. You know he tells us that with our getting to get understanding also, for without understanding we would not know how to apply wisdom. It is all in one; that is, it all works together, each in harmony with the other. Wisdom gives us the capacity, or power, to use our knowledge. Knowledge is (seemingly to me) our experience. We experience these things, therefore we can understand them in a way to know the meaning of it, and by wisdom we are able to tell it, or profit by our experience, knowing that it is God who worketh in us (if children) both to will and to do of his good pleasure, for we learn obedience by the things we suffer, and our suffering is not in vain, for Christ tells us that if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him, and it is good for us to wait on the Lord. I believe this means not to try and be too hasty, but wait on God, the Lord and Savior, he is our Captain and must go before in these battles if we are to win, for our strength is in him, and he has already overcome it all, and is now set down on the right hand of God, making intercession for his children. He is the mediator between God (Justice) and man (the guilty offender). He is the middle man, on whom the whole wrath of God fell; the stroke struck him, and he suffered the full penalty of God's broken law of justice, and submitted himself to death, for death is the end of the law. So Christ suffered it all, the whole penalty, to satisfy the commands of God's justice. We see, then, that God's holy law of justice is satisfied, and Christ died, the stroke of his wrath fell upon him. He was buried, must go into the earth, into the very heart of his creation. Why? Did Adam's transgression reach that far? Listen! Where sin did abound grace did much more

abound. Now we see him dead, buried in the grave. Can this death hold him there? No, for on the third and appointed morning Christ was raised. His resurrection is the fruit of this satisfied justice. Just as soon as justice (the law) is satisfied the power of God's wrath is appeased and we see him arise a glorified Savior. So it is through his resurrection that we are justified, and the power of death cannot touch us. Christ is our mediator, God is a God of purpose and he will remember our sins against us no more forever, because Christ himself made intercession for us. His blood is his life, and, behold, he is alive for evermore, and is sitting on his throne of eternal glory. His throne is in our hearts, and there he is reigning to his own praise, and just as long as Christ lives the church (his redeemed people) will live also, for he is our life, therefore we are alive inside (the inner man, the soul). He is not afar off, as some think he is, but he is in us, if we are his. So we can plainly see that Christ's resurrection is the first fruit that was manifested. This is his glorified state. God promised him this before he died, and Christ being a perfect Being, could believe in God, for he was, and is, God in the Spirit, and in him dwells all the Godhead bodily This is, I think, what it means. He is a man, as touching the flesh, but God as a Spirit, for he has all power both in heaven and in earth, and he is wisdom, knowledge, strength, love, mercy, peace and union, all in one man. We are sometimes persecuted here in this world for our faith. Some think we are too hard. They think it would be hurtful if every one believed as we do, for then they could not have their protracted meetings, for there would be no one to fall victim to their traps. But they need not worry, for the majority of the people in the world still want to hold on to their theory, because in the end of their meetings they get their reward (the dollar). There are some claiming to be true Old Baptist preachers here in the south (and I believe they are true ministers of God and have a gift to feed the flock) who sometimes are found practicing in these protracted meetings, using the mourners' bench, as they call it. Sometimes they call it the mercy-seat, but we who have been taught of God know better, for our experience teaches us there is only one mercy-seat, and that is in the heart of every child of God where Christ is. He sits on the mercy-seat now since justice is silent and shows his mercy to all the beloved family. Some are not able to discern between their right hand (where their strength lies) and their left (where weakness is), but that does not hinder the cause of Christ in his kingdom, not one jot, he goes on and rules, putting to silence evil workers in his own good time and way, exalting his own right hand and working his own good pleasure. It hurts me to see the people we love be so foolish as to believe in these things just because of the traditions which some have received. We who have been led out of these things feel very thankful to God that it has pleased him, our great Deliverer,

to lift our feet out of the sand and place our goings on solid rock, where the very gates of hell (road to destruction or trouble) cannot prevail against our faith, or have the victory or mastery over it, for God is the foundation of this faith. Dear sister Brunow, sometimes I suffer on account of the evil that is spoken against us sound Old Baptists because of our faith (that is, the doctrine we believe), and I feel that the things I have sufferd caused me to earnestly ask of the great Jehovah to teach me his will, and if I have been taught of God to keep me immovable, that I may be found living in the truth, walking in the path of obedience to him, fearing not man nor the devil. The world is out teaching the people to fear the devil, fear the eternal punishment, thinking they will have greater success in their work of proselyting if they can deceive the people in fearing the devil, but God said fear him (God). We cannot find one place where he tells us to fear the devil or the lake of fire, but fear God, who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell, which I think means trouble, misery and distress. I do not understand that one of God's children ever has or ever will be on his or her way to that lake prepared for the devil, but we are saved from our sins (our weakness in the flesh). If we were not saved from our own sinful nature, or lusts, we would soon be destroyed by our own lusts, but we are saved from the effects of sin in the flesh. If left to our own arm it would lead us off into perdition, but God saves us from ruin, and if we are led off after our own lusts, and sin, we have an advocate, Jesus Christ, he suffered it all before we were yet born into the world, and he will not let us be led away by our own lusts beyond his reach, for he is ever near us, and when we are shown how weak and blind we are he carries us back to the fold, and we have learned a lesson from God, taught by him, and are made to desire to be near him at all times. We are taught in our travels of experience that God is all-wise and all-powerful, able to declare the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. We fully realize that what he desireth and hath purposed he is able to bring to pass, therefore we fear him, because we have learned of God and find there is nothing too wonderful for him. This knowledge of him causes us to fear and tremble before him. This is why he said, The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. It all works together. The preachers can to the end preach to the people to fear Satan and the lake of fire, but it will not cause one soul to be born into the kingdom of Christ, for they are not added in that way, nor will it keep out a soul from being born. God has it all planned and predestinated to come to pass just as he desires it should, so if we have faith in God we must confess that he is God, for without this faith we are dead. God is the author of our faith, which in bearing fruit brings forth our salvation. You ask me if I do not believe that all our punishment is here in this life. Yes, dear sister, I under-

stand according to the reading of the Scriptures that in this life here in this world comes all the chastisement upon his disobedient children, to teach them the will of God and to cause them to fear before him. If there is any punishment for the redeemed of Christ after they leave here I have not been able to find it in the Scriptures. There is none of the redeemed of the Lord who will not be with him, for he is a God of purpose, and no power under heaven is able to separate them from that love he has loved them with, for God is love. They are given to Christ by God, the eternal Father, and sealed with the blood of Christ. How could it be made any more sure?

Well, dear sister, I may have wearied you; if I have let me know. I would love to see you all. If you knew how little, weak and helpless I am, and how I fear before God that I might not say things as I should, you would hesitate to speak so highly of me. I have said in the past that I did not think I would ever try again to write anything concerning God, for I am so sinful and blind, and much of the time wandering, yet longing to be taught in the true gospel, until I am afraid and fear I may not speak as I should. But this I do know: that when I am possessed with a fruitful mind I am so full of the things I am trying to tell that I cannot begin to keep up with the traveling that my mind goes through and only tell a little of it. Oh I wish I were able to tell it all, that others could feast also. If I am a vessel I am so small that I can only hold a drop, as it were, compared with the glorious mysteries of the kingdom. It does me good to feast on his love and hope in his mercy, trust his grace and believe his promises.. Dear sister, oh that I could take you by the hand in token of that sweet fellowship we have with the Father. It is sweet to feel his love burning upon the altar of our hearts, consuming all that is contrary to his will, and causing us to lean upon him, as a babe leans upon its mother in solid comfort. That is my feeling now. I hope God will fill you with the same sweet love when you read this poorly expressed letter. I am so imperfect in my own way, but hope I have been rejoicing in the Spirit all the morning, and feel that I am not alone. Praise his high and holy name. Oh that he would continue with me, but there are dark times for us all. We can then appreciate the light when it comes. Pray for us.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) WILL MATHIS.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Nov. 7, 1929.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—This morning after I had dressed I sat musing, very comfortably, on your sermon at Welsh Tract, and I saw that I fully agreed with you in what you said. Then this blessed word came to me: "We glory in tribulation also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us."—Rom. v. 3-5. Those words became very sweet to me, because

I saw that they embraced the blessing of the resurrection of the saints who are dead in the flesh, even from our brother Abel until the end of time. That notwithstanding all the things which seem to be impossible to men, all things are possible with God. (Matt. xix. 26.) I reasoned, Where is Abel? Likely the winds have blown away his dust. Can it be found? Then I saw that nothing is too hard for God. It is sure that all the saints shall come forth in the first resurrection, and shall come with Christ in his glory. Nothing can act so as to render this impossible, for with God it is not only possible, but *sure*. Our God changes not, and as he has made the Bridegroom perfect in the resurrection, will he not make the bride the same? She shall be prepared to dwell with him in glory, and she shall be like him. Here I saw that Abel's time that he had been dead was and is with the Lord as one day, for there is no time with God, but one eternal now, and all things are in that "NOW." Hence Abel's death was but as yesterday with God. The time that the righteous shall lie as men dead in the earth is as one day with our God. He speaks and it is done. He spoke by Isaiah and seven hundred years later it came to pass, but it was the same day in which our God gave the word. Read Luke iv. 18. When we die as men and women it may be days or thousands of days, but with God there is no time. It is evident that all the saints shall live with him, for they are members of his body, the bride, the Lamb's wife. There could be no marriage of the Lamb and his bride if this were not so. Here we are carnal, sold under sin, but when this body dies, this carnal is dead and must not live again. Hence the carnal cannot know anything of the resurrection life. It is altogether in the Lord. When Peter, James and John saw Moses and Elias they were with Christ in glory. Though glorified, they knew them. As men they had never known them, for Moses lived many years before, and when he died no one knew the whereabouts of his grave. Elias did not die, but went to God when the Lord took him, yet when the apostles saw them in glory with the glorified Lord they knew them. So shall all the saints see him and be with him in glory, and be with him where he is, and be like him. I am satisfied that these blessings will come to us about the end of this dispensation. Then the dead, small and great, shall stand before God and shall receive according to their works as they are found written in the books. But the children of God shall receive according to that which is written in the Book of Life, and which is approved and indorsed by the God of heaven and immortal glory. This is the life and happiness of the saints, their life and their immortal glory with God and the Lamb.

Brother Lefferts, I would love to write more, but my eyes forbid and rheumatism in my right hand is bad to-day. The Lord continue to bless you to know and declare his truth.

Yours in this hope,

L. H. HARDY.

BERLIN, Md., Oct. 23, 1929.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—I for some reason feel I would like to write something for publication in the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if the dear Lord will direct my mind in the right channel, for I know by long experience that of myself I can do nothing. My mind has for some time been kept from the things of the Spirit on account of sickness and death in my family, but for some reason it now seems to be led to the one hundred and seventh Psalm, nineteenth verse, which reads as follows: "Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble; and he saveth them out of their distresses." I know of a certainty that I cannot do justice to the above text, if I may thus call it, for except God interprets the Scriptures no man can understand them. Let us see who David was talking about. It could not have been the Scribes or the pharisees, for they were of a class that knew no sorrow or pain on account of sin, for they boasted of how good they were and how they could serve the Lord by their good works. Then it must be to or of the ones born of God. Why was it the ones born of God? In the New Testament we read, Ye are dead in trespasses and in sins. If we are in sin how can we know anything of the Spirit until our eyes have been opened and we have been made to see what great sinners we are? Then it is that we come to cry unto the Lord, for we see ourselves as poor lost sinners, for the light has shined in our hearts and we have been led by the Spirit to see what a mass of filth lies beneath the soil of our bodies, and then it is that we are made to cry unto the Lord for help and mercy. "And he saveth them out of their distresses." We read in the New Testament, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."—Matt. v. 6. Is not this a blessed assurance? for when our eyes have been opened and we have been shown the beauty of God's love, and how his flocks lie down together, and how lovely it all seems, do we not mourn on account of the sin that we see in ourselves? Did Job feel and see this sin in himself? It seems to me he did. "He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain."—Job xxxiii. 19. Job was a righteous man, and was made to see the many sins that seemed to lie between him and his God, and he with no power to put them behind him. Then it was that the Lamb slain for sinners came in and revealed himself to him as the Savior of sinners. If that pure and holy One comes between you and your sins with God, and pays every farthing you owe, then it is you are made to see Jesus as your Savior; then it is your distresses are gone, and as long as you see Jesus as your refuge you will sing praises to his dear name. Then it is you are made to repent on account of sin. It must be the one who sees himself a poor sinner that Christ came to save, for he says, I came to seek and to save that which was lost. When was this people lost? They were lost and ruined through the fall of Adam, long before they were

born. Could they of themselves right the wrong that had been done long before they were born of the natural birth? A thousand times no. We are born in sin and of ourselves cannot get away from it, and except God has mercy upon us we can never see Jesus as our Savior. Then it is we will beg for more mercy and abhor ourselves on account of sin.

I think I had better stop here, and leave this subject for your consideration, dear editors and publishers. Do with this as seems best to you, for I do believe God has appointed you to a good work and he will sustain you to the end.

This has been written in love, I hope, and if it should be printed and any get comfort from it, then let God be praised, is, I hope, my prayer.

J. W. S. TIMMONS.

STEM, N. C., Nov. 14, 1929.

DEAR EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS:—The mail this morning brought the final copies needed to complete the files of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, beginning with 1897. The volumes are now ready for the binder. The response to my request, which you so kindly published, has been more than adequate to supply the numbers desired, and with them has come such a cordial interest in our undertaking that I am unable to express my gratitude as I feel it. May I ask that you give this notice space in your next issue, that the brethren and friends may be spared the trouble of sending further copies? I have been taking the SIGNS since early manhood, long before I united with the church, in June, 1897, and regard it as the most orthodox paper published that I know of, and wish that it was in the home of every Old Baptist in the United States. I thank you for the notice given, and wish for you a continued success in the valuable and comforting paper you send out. After having them bound I propose to give them to our church (memorial), in the town of Stem, North Carolina, and establish a church library, that others may read the comforting messages contained in the same when I have passed from the scene of action.

Your unworthy brother, I trust,

J. H. GOOCH.

SAN ANTONIO, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I received the October number of the SIGNS, and was surely glad to get it. I was feeling sick when it came and I read a little at a time until I had read it through carefully. It did me much good, and I want to thank you for sending it. Only one mistake in my article, and that was, you have Elder W. A. Bourland and it should have been Elder W. A. Bowden. Please correct. There was so much good, sound writing in that number that I was proud of it. I was taken with the "flu" October 12th and am still very weak. My health at best is poor and this attack made it hard for me to get up.

Again thanking you for sending me the October SIGNS, and with love and fellowship for the household of faith, I remain, as ever, a poor and affectionate brother in hope,

J. B. BOWDEN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1929.

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HEBREWS X. 35.

"CAST not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward."

As we are reminded that it is time for us once more to address the household of faith, we are conscious of our inability to command the spirit, or even of ourselves, to speak one word in season to those that be weary. It is an act of divine mercy if one shall comfort another, and when the occasion arises that one must write, the thoughts are ever present, "What am I that I should presume to give my opinion or attempt to write to God's dear saints?" Perhaps it was this feeling under which Gideon labored, when the angel of the Lord appeared unto him and sat under the oak which was in Ophrah, as Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress to hide it from the Midianites. The angel said unto him, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor." Let us consider Gideon's reply. He said, "Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites." It is evident that Gideon mourned an absent God, feared the common enemy, and the only way to obtain food, that which sustained him at that time, was to hide away behind the winepress, so fearful was he of the Midianites. Let us continue with this blessed man for a while. It is written, "And the Lord looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee? And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." It is evident from the above that Gideon had little confidence in the flesh, and the subsequent experience through which he was made to pass taught him also to cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of. Gideon was stripped of all false confidence and his only hope was the presence of the Lord in accord with the words He had before spoken unto him. Thus it is, we hope, with us, we have foes without and foes within, and we at times would hide behind the winepress which

Jesus trod, to get our morsel of sustenance for fear of the enemy. It was there where the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon. He has appeared to us, and all the confidence that is worth while, that is true and not false, is wrought in us by Jesus, the angel of the Lord. There is much false confidence in man and it is not a pleasant thing to be stripped; the Lord has a place where he strips each of us, if we be what we profess to be. We do not know, either, what we need, but we believe the Lord knows, it is very mortifying to the flesh when the Lord takes us into the stripping-room. Humbling grace not only teaches us to look to Christ, but to trust in him, also, and to come to Christ one must be killed to self and self-confidence, and often when we seem to have attained unto this the Angel of the Lord shows us greater abominations, so that we despair of self and self-confidence. It is God's teaching when one learns that it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes. Peter, full of self-confidence, could say, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. How humble Peter was under the teaching of his God. He went out and wept bitterly. His self-confidence left him before the knowing eye of the maid. Just as it is God that humbles, so it is he only can lift us up, and it is often by his word in which he has caused us to hope. The psalmist David said, "For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy works; I will triumph in the works of thy hands." It is the Lord who is the confidence of all the ends of the earth and all of them that are afar off upon the sea, and it is his love and mercy manifest in us that is our joy and gives us confidence in him. Thus when persecuting Saul was changed to praying Paul such was the blessing and favor showered upon him from above that he did not even consult with the brethren of Jerusalem, but such was his confidence in the Lord that he went about preaching him whom he once destroyed. Sometimes this confidence is manifested in a person who is made to know they have passed from death unto life because they love the brethren. Others find their afflictions are those of the saints of God. Some are enabled to-day to endure a great fight of afflictions, partly being made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly while they became companions of them that were so used. Paul in Philippians tells that many of the brethren in the Lord waxed confident by his bonds and were much more bold to speak the word without fear. Thus by a diversity of operations the brethren are given confidence in the Lord, and such a confidence have they in him that they know that he who hath begun a good work in them will continue it until the day of Jesus Christ. Yet at times there are those who creep in unawares, to which condemnation they were before of old ordained, teaching a duty religion, some effort of the creature, instead of a continued work of the Creator. Where

such a doctrine is listened to and believed there is a casting away of their confidence, for creature attainment will carry with it creature glorying, and Paul says, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." He had confidence only in Christ Jesus the Lord. Job was sorely tried, his house destroyed, his cattle stolen, his children dead, and, last of all, he was afflicted with boils. In the dust he mourned an absent God, searched for him forward, backward, and to the right hand, but could not find him, yet such was his confidence that he declares, "He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Just as Job was tried, each of us will have our portion, for if we are to walk with Jesus it will be in the furnace of affliction, and we shall ever prove that the mount of danger is the place where we shall see surprising grace. It is often in trials that we learn what wretches we are and how very little real religion we have when put to the test. It is at such times that Satan will harass and tempt us to despair. His efforts are always directed to undermine our confidence in the Lord. We remember very well an occasion, some years ago, when after a season of joy in believing, we felt forsaken of our God, and in our distress it seemed that ours was a stony ground hearer's experience. We experienced nothing but condemnation. Day and night his hand was heavy upon us. What with Satan's temptation and a heart of unbelief we had almost come to the place where Peter said, "I know him not." Our former confidence was gone and we believed Satan's lie rather than what our living, loving Lord had spoken to us. The day came when by a word from on high our confidence was renewed, for he said, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Then our mountain was strong and we thought we should never question his love and mercy towards us again. Paul has been putting the brethren in mind of their fellowship with him and those of like precious faith, and says, "Cast not away therefore your confidence." They could not cast away that which they had not, and they would learn, even as Paul himself had learned, that it is only the grace of God that enables us to hold fast this confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. The grace of God is an enabling grace, and the faith of God's elect is an overwhelming faith, and it is in and through these blessed and heavenly gifts that the righteous does hold on his way. Paul says this confidence hath great recompence of reward. Each evidence of God's love and mercy is a sweet foretaste of what heaven hereafter will be, and the rougher the way the sweeter is the rest that remains for the people of God. It is true that there seems little account of what heaven will be, but we are confident that when He shall appear we shall be like him, and what a recompence of reward it will be to see him as he is, and be like him. It was in the

confidence of faith that Paul said, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." His whole ministry was a plain declaration of the truth that was revealed to him and of which he was confident, and in his concluding testimony he said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." We have loved his appearing in the past, for it is in his appearing that our confidence abounds. May he grant us grace to stand fast and hold our confidence even unto the end.

G. R.

CLOSE OF VOLUME XCVII.

WITH this issue the SIGNS OF THE TIMES completes another year of its existence, making ninety-seven years since it was established in 1832.

The past year has indeed been full of sadness for us, owing to the death of two of our staff. In January Mr. Thomas Kain, who had at different times been in the employ of three generations of the Beebe family, and who was a tried and true friend, was called to lay his armor by, and in April Mrs. J. E. Beebe, who had spent most of her life in the work of publishing the paper, was taken from us, to, we feel sure, that home where she will have no more worry, trouble or sorrow, but all will be sweet rest in her dear Savior for evermore. Through the death of these two props the task of issuing the paper became hard indeed for those remaining, but we hope that He who is able to do all things has been with and helped us with our work, and we can but hope he will be with and guide us in our future work. If he still has use for the SIGNS, nothing can stop it; if he has not use for it, nothing that men can do can change his plan.

The past year has also been one of many changes in our office. One of them being the change from setting the type by hand to machine set, and we hope our readers are pleased with the new and clearer faces of type now used. Of course it takes some time to accustom ourselves to the changes, and mistakes are bound to creep in, but we hope that after we thoroughly acquaint ourselves with the new ways our work will be better.

Now for a short review of the business of the SIGNS: Our subscription list has not changed much during the last twelve months. Some subscriptions have been discontinued and others have been added. We have not had as much good copy to select from as in former years, and would suggest that our ministering brethren especially write for publication when they feel to be so led. We have in mind a new feature for the year 1930 that we think our readers will enjoy, and that is, Elder H. H. Lefferts has consented to try and write an editorial for each issue, and each of the associate editors are to write in their turn, which will make two editorials for each number.

In conclusion, we wish to thank all who in any way have assisted with the publication of the SIGNS, either financially or by writing for its columns, not forgetting our faithful editors, who have done so much for the good of the cause the SIGNS stands for.

Again thanking all our friends, and praying that God will be with us and be our guide in the future, we bid you farewell for the year 1929.

J. E. B. & CO.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Arnold H. Bellows.)

The Lexington-Roxbury Association, now in session with the Middletown and Andes Church, at Clovesville, New York, September 11th and 12th, 1929, to all the churches composing the same, sends greetings in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Pursuant to a commendable and long established custom among Primitive Baptists, whereby the unity, order and doctrine of God's house, the church, are set forth for the examination and consideration of inquiring brethren, this Circular Letter is submitted. It has seemed appropriate to present some thoughts suggested by the sixteenth verse of the second chapter of the Song of Solomon: "My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies." Remembering that the inspired author of Hebrews emphasized the primacy of the principles of the doctrine of Christ before going on unto perfection, and that Timothy was admonished by Paul that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, and to take heed unto it that both he and his hearers might be saved from error, we find that the Scripture under consideration presents most beautifully the one doctrine of our Lord and Savior in which is embraced his electing love, his predestinated purpose in conforming to the image of his crucified and risen Son Jesus Christ all that are the called of God in him, and through his covenant-keeping office by effectual saving grace presenting them faultless and sinless before God. Because of the finished work of Christ on earth, and his continuing heavenly priesthood, every heir of glory is as complete and perfect in him as the ineffable holiness of Almighty God before whom the winged seraphims veiled their faces in Israel's wondrous vision. It is written by the pen of divine inspiration that God having completed the creation of the earth, its contents, and of man, knew that it was not good for man to be alone, and made a companion for him by causing a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, during which God took from the side of the sleeping man a rib and made it into a woman, and brought her unto the man, who said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." The woman was not taken from the feet of man that she should be trodden under his feet, nor from the front of his body that she should be his shield, nor from his back that she should be thrust behind him,

but from his side, from the place nearest his heart, the seat of his affections, that eventually she should be equal with him. The woman Eve represents the true church of Christ, of which he is the blessed and glorious head. The woman had nothing to do regarding the time, manner nor purpose of her miraculous birth, and this is equally true of the bride of Jesus Christ. The woman was in the man before her manifestation, therefore all that comprise the election of grace were in Jesus Christ from the ancients of eternity, but spiritually manifested and redeemed by the atoning work of the Son of God, from whose spear-pierced side upon a Roman cross there came forth blood and water bearing witness, for there were three that bear record on earth: the spirit, the water and the blood, these three agree in one. Therefore Solomon in his deathless song so full of spiritual melody to the hearing ear in portraying the ravishing love of Christ for the church and her responding affection could declare, "My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies." Through the crucifixion of her heavenly Husband for her transgression, by which the penalty of a broken law cursed and separated from fellowship with God, and from holiness itself, all the children of Adam and Eve and rendered them helpless to relieve their condition, find a perfect sacrifice or render a holy offering for sin, all that are chosen of God in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world are saved, forgiven, redeemed and justified, and walk in newness of life, knowing the fellowship of the suffering of Christ and the power of his resurrection and being blameless and unreprovable before God. Because of their identity in Jesus Christ all of the spiritual seed of Abraham experience release from guilt, which is justification, and wear the seamless robe of the imputed righteousness of Him whose name they take. In marriage the wife assumes her husband's name, so of the bride of Jesus Christ, who is none other than the glorified subjects of grace. Jeremiah was led by the Spirit to declare, "And this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness." In the subject under consideration it is stated of Christ, "He feedeth among the lilies." Here is presented a beautiful symbol of Christ and his people feeding together and they upon him. It is written that Israel shall grow as the lily, and to his disciples in the sermon on the mount Jesus said, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." The spiritual flowers in the garden of grace, like the natural lilies of the field, do not grow by and of themselves. The growth, life and development of the natural lily come from the sun; it has its winter season, its time of drought and coldness to bear root downward that it might bear fruit upward; it is refreshed by the natural dew and rain; it is not quickened except it die, and from the lifeless, inert, conscienceless soil it grows toward the light and

toward the sun, sustained by a higher power than itself, that causes a manifestation of life and growth within itself. So the spiritual lily is nourished and given life and activity and strength by the Sun of Righteousness, Jesus Christ; it feels the blighting effect of the cold north wind of desolation and deadness in itself so far as natural powers are concerned; it has its night of gloom and sorrow, its period of mourning and self-abasement because it cannot do the things that it would, its seasons of hope and expectation, finding that two opposite forces of life and death are operating within itself. But though weeping endureth for a season, its long night ends with the joy that cometh in the morning, and the warm, life-giving south wind of the life-giving, life-reviving spirit blows again into God's inclosed garden and with the dew of the word that cometh from above upon the spiritual lily, clothes it with a spotless robe of beauty and purity that it may shed its fragrance forever. "He feedeth among the lilies," said Solomon. This is both true in type and in antitype. Before Joseph revealed himself to his guilty brethren they sat at his table and ate with him, and the banner over them was love. Often the children of God feast upon heavenly manna and know it not, and realize not its source at the time in the peculiar experience that is theirs. Again, they are gladly conscious of the source and quality of that bread that cometh from above. Jesus said, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." The kingdom of heaven is within his children; they sit down in that kingdom with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, having entered into rest, and do sit in judgment upon the admission into the gospel church of members, exclude from church fellowship unrepentant and erring brethren, and judge the qualifications of ministers and deacons. When Jesus finished his work of atonement and ascended into heaven he sat down at the right hand of God, therefore his people find that he has kept a holy law for them and blotted out forever the handwriting of ordinances which was against them, and which was contrary to them, and took it out of the way, nailing it to the cross. Through the ministration of the Holy Spirit Jesus is glorified, for all things that the Father hath are his, and the Spirit of truth hath taken of them and shown them unto the bride, the Lamb's wife, which is the new Jerusalem from above, and she is thereby enabled to discern the heavenly manna upon which she feeds, and her bridegroom the end of the law for righteousness, also her shield and preserver, also her fount of all excellency, the sum of all perfection and the brightness of all glory. In all these things the church is experimentally led to realize that divine justice has been satisfied, the infinite holiness of God vindicated, and Zion revealed as the perfection of beauty.

GEORGE RUSTON, Mod.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

(Written by brother H. J. Bird.)

The Pocatalico Old School, or Predestinarian Baptist Association, in session with the Hopewell Church, Kanawha County, West Virginia, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, August 30th and 31st and September 1st, 1929, to the associations with which we correspond, and to all of like precious faith with us, sendeth greetings.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—It has once more fallen to the lot of unworthy me to try and write what is termed a Circular Letter, to be spread upon our Minutes and to be scattered abroad among the faithful in Christ Jesus. I know this one thing: unless the Lord undertakes for me the effort will prove a failure, for I am in no sense equal to the task. Unless the Lord be pleased to take my mind from the transitory things of this life, lift me above the darkness of carnality and center my thoughts and affections upon him who is the Captain of our salvation, I will in no wise be able to write anything that will be comforting or worthy the notice of God's humble poor. My desire, if I know my heart, is to ascribe greatness unto our God, to extol the name of Jesus above every name. Well could the psalmist David say, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"—Psalms viii. 4. How often do we feel the depths of this language in our experience when we are tried and brought low. The more we see of the power, glory and majesty of Him who upholdeth all things by the word of his power the more do we abhor self. Then when we contemplate the theme of God's salvation, how that when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. (Rom. v. 6.) How that he "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."—Rom. iv. 25. "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."—Isaiah liii. 3-5. In wonder and amazement we cry,

"What was there in you that could merit esteem,
Or give the Creator delight?
'Twas 'even so, Father!' you ever must sing,
'Because it seemed good in thy sight.'"

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."—2 Cor. v. 21. Oh how incapable are we of praising him as we ought. "O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."—Rom. xi. 33-36. No wonder

Paul could say, "And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."—1 Tim. iii. 16. When we are given to behold some of the wonders of God's grace, and to feel the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, when we can behold Jerusalem a city of habitation, and are enabled to walk about Zion, the city of our solemnities, and are enabled to eat, as it were, the crumbs that fall from the Master's table, that heavenly manna, and, as the poor Gadarene, are clothed and in our right mind, and at the feet of Jesus, then can we adore his high and holy name, then can we sing praises unto him and rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. With the woman at the well we can say, Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? The more the light of the glory of God shines into our poor benighted hearts the more do we loathe ourselves. The brighter the light shines the more do we see the blackness, the guilt, of our nature. Oh the awful vileness of our nature, the deceitfulness of our hearts, our proneness to wander from our God, forgetful of him and his wondrous mercies; but he is longsuffering to usward, he is ever mindful of us, however forgetful of him we may be. "As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." Oh how full of compassion, of tender pity and love, "even as a father pitieth his children." Any loving earthly father pitieth his children, and when the rod must be applied it is through love that he applies the strokes. "So the Lord pitieth them that fear him." Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son.

"If he is mine, then from his love
He every trouble sends;
All things are working for my good,
And bliss his rod attends."

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." May the Lord bless Zion. May his love be shed abroad in our hearts.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Mod.
OSCAR J. BYRNSIDE, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Clovesville Church, in Delaware County, New York, September 11th and 12th, 1929, to the several associations and churches with which we correspond, sends love and fellowship.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Although we have recently been saddened by the removal of our pastor to Canada, we would bow in submission to the will of almighty God, and desire to be thankful to the Lord for his mercy that we are again permitted to assemble as an association. We welcome all who love the doctrine of salvation by grace, giving all praise and honor to the Lord for the salvation of sinners. The Lord has so blessed the preaching of the word that it has dropped as the rain and

distilled as the dew, and has built up his people in their most holy faith. We desire a continuance of your correspondence, and hope the visiting ministers will be moved to visit us again.

Our next session is to be held (the Lord willing) with the Olive and Hurley Church, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday between the second and third Sundays in September, 1930. Until then, dear brethren, farewell.

GEORGE RUSTON, Mod.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

The Pocatalico Old School, or Predestinarian Baptist Association, in session with the Hopewell Church, Kanawha County, West Virgiaia, August 30th and 31st and September 1st, 1929, sendeth greetings in the Lord to our sister associations and meetings with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more we are permitted to meet and greet your messengers and receive your correspondence, which we greatly appreciate and of which we desire a continuance in the future. Although we are a small body, we are endeavoring to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. So far as we know, there is no strange doctrine among us. Your ministers have come to us preaching Christ Jesus the only Savior of sinners, which is food to the hungry soul. May they ever be kept faithful.

Our next session will convene, the Lord willing, on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1930, with the Providence Church, Lincoln County, West Virginia, when we hope to meet a goodly number of your messengers. In love and fellowship.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Mod.
OSCAR J. BYRNSIDE, Clerk.

CHURCH LETTERS.

(Written by sister Effie Givan.)

The Nassaongoes Old School Baptist Church, to the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, to be held with the Salisbury Church, October 23rd, 24th and 25th, 1929, sends greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In addressing you we are reminded that another year has passed since we met in this way. A year brings many changes to us creatures of earth and time, but not so with God. In the third chapter of Malachi, sixth verse, we read, "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." In this God was speaking, through the prophet, to national Israel, or the Jews. He had given a law, or covenant, to this nation and they, according to his purpose, had not kept that covenant. They had not honored God as the God of truth; they had not made offerings and sacrifices that were pleasing to him; "But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law: ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the Lord of hosts."—Malachi ii. 8. All these things they, the sons of Jacob, had done, and yet because He changes not they were not consumed, but through his purpose the Gentiles were brought in to enjoy

equally with the Jews the unspeakable blessedness of the kingdom of God. When we are given to see our own heart, by the Spirit of God, are we very different from the old disobedient Jews? God never gave a law or decree that was not kept, and according to his all-wise purpose the law given to Adam could be kept in no other way than by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world." Such a God the natural mind cannot conceive. From the beginnig of the world he knew just what man would do when tempted and tried. He knew man could not keep the law he was placed under, and it was not in his purpose that man, by nature, should keep that law. Let us suppose for a moment that our Lord did change as man does. Would there be any foundation for our hope in his never-failing mercy, in his promise never to leave nor forsake his people, even though they pass through the furnace of affliction? Should our Lord be a God that changes, would we not give up in despair when our sins appear as huge mountains before us, fearing that he who is pure and holy would spurn us from his sight? But, thanks to our mediator, Christ Jesus our Lord, no such condition can ever exist. John says more than once in his first epistle, "God is love." Perhaps we can grasp why, in as far as he gives us the ability to do so, he changes not. We know what natural love is. How by its power and influence we, though creatures of time and earth, can overlook and excuse many failings and shortcomings in the object of our love. If this be true in nature, and we know that it is, how far above and beyond natural love is the love of God for his people. Even the strongest natural love would hardly be sufficient to cause one to sacrifice his only begotten son for his enemies. But because of God's everlasting love, that changes not, our blessed Jesus came in the likeness of sinful flesh to redeem and justify all his chosen people from under the curse and condemnation of the law. Our sins were imputed to him and his righteousness became our righteousness, so we are blameless and without fault before God in love, by and through the cleansing blood of Jesus.

Since last year Elder G. E. Coulbourne has accepted the call extended by the church to become our pastor. He comes the first Sunday in each month, when possible, preaching salvation by grace, through the atoning blood of Jesus, the absolute sovereignty of God, who changes not, and the doctrine of election according to the all-wise purpose, plan and foreknowledge of God.

A CORRECTION.

In the November issue of the Signs, page 260, second column, in the obituary notice of William A. Thompson, it reads, "Brother Thompson was married in 1878 to Sarah Myerly." This should read, "Brother Thompson was married in 1878 to Matilda Myerly, daughter of George and Sarah Myerly."

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER E. A. MORELAND, our beloved and precious pastor, fell asleep in Jesus on the morning of October 9th, 1929, after being sick only two days. He preached at our little church Sunday before, seemingly in the best of health, and on Monday following he went to his usual work, but early in the morning he was stricken with a sharp pain in his breast, but was able to reach his daughter's home by ten o'clock. They called a doctor, and he pronounced it acute rheumatism. He did not seem to be seriously sick, but Wednesday morning at about 6:30 o'clock he had another attack and died in just a few minutes. He leaves to mourn four daughters and two sons: Mrs. E. P. Payne, T. A. Keenan, Will Meikell, Walter Ray, Hugh and Elton Moreland, sixteen grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, also two brothers, two sisters and a large number of nephews and nieces. His wife and three children preceded him in death. His wife died in 1900. Brother Moreland practically was both a father and mother to his family. He was born in Terrell County, Georgia, October 22nd, 1858, moved with his parents to Webster Parish, Louisiana, in the fall of 1869. In the year 1880 he married Miss Susan Alsey Hawkins, and to that union were born nine children. He united with the Old School Baptist Church Mount Mirrah, Louisiana, July, 1889, and was baptized by Elder M. C. Parker. He moved to Texas in the fall of 1898, and united with the Sardis Church, near Arlington, Tarrant County, Texas, and in 1903 was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry. Afterwards the church dissolved, lettered each member out, and then he put his membership with Liberty Church, near Grapevine, Texas. He lived there a few years, and then moved to Ft. Worth, Texas, and placed his membership with the Ft. Worth Church soon after he was called as pastor of the church, which office he ably filled until he was called home in death. Brother Moreland possessed beautiful virtues of charity, was a kind, good, gentle man, easy to be entreated, not puffed up, but meek and longsuffering. He was loved by all who knew him, and if he ever had an enemy no one ever knew it. I have often heard him tell his experience when he first felt to be a poor undone sinner. How wretched he felt. He was forced to go away from all earthly eyes and try and beg the dear Lord for mercy. When he had gone he fell down prostrate on the ground and lay there some time before he could utter a sound. When at last he was able to speak he could only smote his hands upon his breast, and say, O Lord, be merciful to me, a poor, weak, vile worm. Then it seemed his dear Savior came to him in a vision, and he saw him pressed down as a cart pressed under many sheaves. He wept, for he felt his sins were pressing his dear, loving Savior, yet he rejoiced to feel his precious Savior was his sin-bearer, for he knew within himself was no good; that is, in his flesh. While he was in this deep wonder there came to him this Scripture (at the time being he did not know it was in the Bible): "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth." In his humiliation his judgment was taken away, and who shall declare his generation, for his life is taken from the earth? In this he saw his dear Savior suffering for his people. He could but weep and mourn, yet hope sprang up that he was one of that true generation. He saw the old order of Baptists as the true witnesses on earth, and he immediately resolved to join them if they would receive him, but before the next meeting day he was in doubts and fears, yet he did go and offer himself, and they received him gladly. He often said he never had a doubt that the Old School Baptists were the true people of God, but often had doubts about himself being one of them. He loved his church above everything in this world, never missing a meeting unless because of sickness. He loved his children and his children loved him. The dear Lord gave him one of his daughters (Mrs. Keenan) to live in the church with him during the last six months of his life. He died in her home in her loving embrace. It will be a sweet consolation to her during the remainig days of her life to know her father's God is her God, and to remember that she ministered unto him during his last moments here in this world. His other children have given evidence they love the truth, and at God's own appointed time he will bring them out if it is his most holy will.

His funeral was held at his daughter's home in Ft. Worth, but his remains were taken about eighteen miles east, near Grand Prairie, Texas, and laid to rest beside his wife, there to await the resurrection morning. Elders J. O. Burgess and W. N. Green spoke comfortingly at his funeral, setting forth the God brother Moreland's hope was in. We shall miss him. Our little church has lost the most faithful member, but we know God is able to raise up another to take his place if it is his will. His dear children are lonely and sad, but let us think of him as being with his dear Savior, whom he loved so well, and all his trouble is over. He has gone where there will be no more sickness, pain nor partings; gone from the evil to come. Oh that we could live as close to our Savior as brother Moreland did, trusting him in all things. Many more things could be said in honor of this dear servant of God, but possibly he would not have himself praised, for he often said, All honor and praise belong to God and not to sinful man. May the dear Lord comfort all the bereaved.

Written by one who loved this dear brother as a father, he having baptized me, and he seemed to look upon me as a child. In deep sympathy with all who loved this dear man of God,

MINNIE C. OFFILL.

THERESA (PERRY) BONE was born January 25th, 1901, and died June 29th, 1929, making her stay on earth 28 years, 5 months and 4 days. She was married to D. F. Bone June 23rd, 1918, and to this union were born a daughter, Edith, and a son, Fulton Lee. The latter died in infancy. Her husband, D. F. Bone, little Edith, father and mother, L. D. Perry and wife, two brothers, Fred Perry, of Detroit, Mich., and Willie Perry, of Nashville, Tenn., together with other relatives and many friends mourn their loss, yet sorrow not as those who have no hope. The cause of sister Theresa's death was tuberculosis. She was confined to her bed most of the time for fifteen months and suffered much, yet bore her afflictions with christian fortitude. While suffering bodily pain her gentle spirit would look forward to a release, and she would say, "Oh when will my cup of suffering fill?" and would continue by saying she understood the perfect work of God was evidenced by a profession of a good hope in Jesus. She was given to see the beauty of the church, and united with the Primitive Baptists in sweet fellowship on the first Sunday in August 1917. This young sister was much loved by the children of God, and was faithful to her obligations to the end. She was well established in the doctrine of God our Savior, as was minifest by her life and the many expressions of love and devotion made known to those around her. That knowledge which surpasses the understanding of carnal minds gave her to see and understand the perfect work of God her Savior to the end, and she would express this truth to her mother and those around her, by saying, I will cough and suffer just what the Lord has planned for me, and then it will all be over. She would speak of death as one would of going to meeting, and even told how she wanted her hair combed, saying, Fix it like I did when I went to meeting, for I am going to a meeting that will never end. It was her request that the writer should speak words of comfort at her burial, but because of the distance and the troubled conditions of the telephone lines I failed to get the message in time, so the husband called on a friend near by, who held burial service. I would say to all who mourn on account of her going, We have much reason to believe her spirit is safe in the Hand which gave it; yes, "asleep in Jesus." While her mortal body lies in the tomb, with the all-seeing and powerful watch of God's everlasting arm, he will on the resurrection morn speak to her sleeping dust, and in a moment, yes, in the twinkling of an eye, the natural will be changed to spiritual, soul and spirit reunited and in the presence of God and all his holy angels will realize it is free from sin, sickness, pain and death. Yes, will know it was a sinner saved by grace, and will cry out, O death, where is thy sting? Oh grave, where is thy victory? and will join with the ransomed of the Lord and give thanks unto God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

ALSO,

RACHEL A. McNEELY, her grandmother, wife of J. Y. McNeely (deceased), departed this life September 12th, 1929, at the ripe age of 84 years and 21 days. She had been sad and lonely since the death of her husband, in the year 1922. The many shifting scenes of this dull mortal life made this mother in Israel desire to give up the battle of this life and dwell with her Christ at home. The end came very suddenly, and was a great shock to her loved ones and those around her. She lay down for her afternoon rest, and when called for supper she could not be awakened. Alas, her gentle spirit had taken its flight and was sweetly sleeping that sleep from which none ever wake to weep. This soldier of the cross had been a member of the Primitive Baptist congregation for about forty years, and was a firm believer in and a strong adherent to the doctrine of predestination. She leaves to mourn their loss five children: W. T. McNeely, of Obion, Tenn., Mrs. C. N. Perry, of Sylvia, Tenn., Mrs. Maggie Jones, of Union City, Tenn., M. C. McNeely, of Dyersburg, Tenn., and G. G. McNeely, of Wingo, Ky., one sister-in-law, Sophia P. Copeland, of Owosso, Mich., several grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and other relatives and friends who mourn their loss of one who desired to pass away and not have to suffer longer. I would say to those who mourn, All those who really believe that Christ died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him from the sleeping tomb and in the great end they will be with the Lord, be like him and be satisfied.

J. C. CHESTER.

ELDER EDWARD LEE ANDERSON, our precious brother and pastor, died at his home in Cave Spring, Kentucky, Tuesday, September 17th, 1929. He had been in failing health for several years, and although he had seemed as well as usual for some time, his death was expected at almost any time, for his doctor had told him some time ago that there was no cure for his disease (kidney trouble). It was only about twenty minutes from the time he was last stricken until his death. His suffering was great, but God took him away at once. None of his family, except his loving wife, was with him at the time of his departure. Had he lived until September 24th, 1929, he would have been seventy-four years of age. He leaves to mourn their loss a devoted companion, two daughters, one son, six grandchildren, together with great-grandchildren. Words of comfort were spoken by brethren W. T. Clayton and Rose Malroy. He was laid to rest in the family burying-ground near his home. He united with the Methodists early in life, but later asked for a home with the Primitive Baptist Church. He had been a Primitive Baptist minister for nearly forty years, preaching salvation by grace and grace alone. His home was a home for all

Old Baptists. He lived and died in the neighborhood of his birth, and was loved by all who knew him. He was a kind and gentle husband and father. He spent the night in the home of the writer the Sunday before he died. Elder Anderson served all the churches of the Red River Association. Oh how we will miss him, but we feel sure our great loss is his eternal gain. He told his congregation the Sunday before his death that they might never see him again. He was ready, willing and anxious to go home, where sorrowing would be no more.

Written by one who loved him.

(MRS.) B. H. SHEARON.

EZRA JOSEPH MORSE died June 11th, 1929, at his home, in West Conesville, New York. He was the son of Joseph and Alba C. Ellis Morse, and was born December 22nd, 1845, on Hubbell Hill, near Halcottville, New York. Many years ago brother Morse moved from Hubbell Hill to West Conesville, where he spent the remainder of his life. He married Mary Case May 22nd, 1882. She died March 16th, 1911. April 3rd, 1912, he married Abigal H. Mead, and she survives him. Brother Morse was a firm believer in the truth from his youth up, and always whenever possible was found in his place at meeting. For many years he attended the Gilboa Church, Gilboa, New York, where he delighted to do whatever he could for the comfort of the brethren and for the good of the cause. When the Gilboa meetinghouse was taken by the New York City waterworks the nearest place he could attend was Lexington. There he attended, and it was there that he was constrained to ask a home with the church. The writer baptized him in Schoharie Creek, opposite the meetinghouse at Lexington, and it was a time long to be remembered. Brother Morse was a very meek and humble man, a good husband, brother and friend, and was respected by all who knew him. Besides his widow, he leaves one sister, Mrs. Eunice Stillwell, of Oneonta, to mourn their loss, but we believe their loss is his eternal gain.

The funtral and interment were at West Conesville, New York.

Written by request. G. R.

JOYCE RUNYON, infant daughter of Irving and Elizabeth Runyon, was born September 9th, 1926, in Pike County, Kentucky, and departed this life September 26th, 1929, making her stay on earth 3 years and 17 days. She was a victim of that dreaded disease known as T. B. Meningitis, for which our ablest doctors know no remedy. Her parents and friends did all that was humanly possible, laboring with loving and tender hands, but her time had come, the Lord had called her home, and there is no power that is able to resist our blessed Lord when it is his good pleasure to call one of his precious jewels home. But now the home of these bereaved parents is made desolate, and in their hearts is an aching void the world can never fill. Little Joyce was a very brilliant child, far above the average in wisdom, gentleness and pleasantness. She was a choice pet of all who knew her, and it is hard to give her up. But O, beloved, sorrowing friends, there is a balm in Gilead, a solace for all our aching hearts, it is found in Jesus, the Friend and Savior of sinners, and oh what a heaven-bought privilege to turn to him in our deepest sorrows, like poor, helpless, wayward children.

Funeral services were conducted September 28th, 1929, at the home of the parents of the deceased, by Elder W. M. Stanley and the writer, in the presence of a large congregation of sorrowing friends, after which the mortal remains of little Joyce were tenderly deposited in the tomb in the family cemetery.

In hope of immortality, G. B. BIRD.

JOHN C. McALPINE departed this life Thursday, August 6th, 1929, at his late home, Aberfeldy, Ontario, aged 71 years, 3 months and 17 days. He was the last surviving member of a family of twelve, his sister Barbara Ann having preceded him in October, 1928. In the spring of 1927 he was taken ill with influenza, then pernicious anæmia set in, from which disease he never fully recovered, but gradually grew weaker, until the above mentioned date when he passed peacefully away. All through his illness he never complained, but bore his suffering with great christian patience and fortitude. In his life he set an example that was helpful to many, being the soul of integrity and honesty, and he clung to his religion and belief in God, thus giving him a strong anchor in his life and a pleasant contemplation of a union beyond the grave. He leaves to mourn the loss of a loving husband and father his wife, three daughters and one son. The funeral was held from the home, burial was in Rickard Cemetery.

(MRS.) JOHN C. McALPINE.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. W. E. Short, N. J., $1; A. B. Corder, W. Va., $2; Mrs. Mary Ellison, Kans., $1; W. H. Proffit, Ark., $1; Miss Annie E. Parker, Md., $3; Sarah I. Rittenhouse, N. J., $8; G. C. Jordan, Mo., $3; Mrs. Mary J. Ege, N. J., $3; R. L. Davis, Kans. $1; Mrs. Mary A. Drew, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Maria Rees, Ky., $4; S. F. Carruthers, Va., $1; Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $10; Mrs. Henry Hayman, Md., $1; Anson Quint, Me., $3; Attie Curtis, Me., $1.

NOTICE.

Any one having a copy of Hassell's Church History they are willing to part with, will please notify R. L. Davis, 1000 Avenue G, Dodge City, Kansas, as he is anxious to purchase one.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sunday at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, every Sunday at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. at the home of W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Midweek song service by appointment. Pastors, Elders Jones and Jaynes. Basket lunch.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

The Cane Run Predestinarian Old School Baptist Church, of Turners Station, Kentucky, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 10:30 a. m., also, the Sulphur Fork Church of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, of the same faith and order, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 2:30 p. m.

GEO. L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Little Flock Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every first and third Sunday at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, at 1 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.
O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk,
143 W. 11th Street, Claremont Cal.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

REVELATION XIX. 6.

"For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

The words of this text were given out by John, who, with his fellow-servants, was made to rejoice, together with all the saints whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life, while nearing the end of his mission, on the isle of Patmos. He had received the testimony of Jesus Christ, being in the spirit, on the Lord's day, all of which was to be written in a book, to be shown unto his fellow-servants. We should remember that John saw one book that was sealed with seven seals, and wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and read the book. He was told by one of the Elders to weep not, for, behold the Lion of the tribe of Juda hath prevailed to open the book and loose the seven seals thereof. And what marvelous things were recorded therein. Read the fifth chapter of Revelation; it will surely be worth the time to all lovers of the truth who remember when the light of the knowledge of the glory of God was revealed to them, in the face of Jesus Christ.

The subject of the head of this article reminds one of the universal and eternal domination of "the Lord God omnipotent" over all things, animate and inanimate. He hath declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. As sovereign Ruler over every created thing ("and without him was not anything made that was made") his matchless glory fills the heavens and the earth with its grandeur, is full of his praise. There are no limitations to his power, might and dominion. He hath set the sun, moon and stars in the firmament, and for thousands of years they have been the silent but unimpeachable witnesses of his marvelous and uninterrupted reign. No wonder that John could exclaim in the language of the text, or David, in like manner, in divine acknowledgment, say, Let all the earth stand in awe of him. The world has always denied the

Lord, and has always persecuted his followers. This will continue until the close of time. Just at this time the whole world appears to be going headlong after the beast. The mystery of iniquity and open defiance of God seem to abound everywhere. Pure and undefiled religion, before God the Father, is becoming very rare. Just a short time ago a noted lecturer came out and said, "Religion is a science," and plainly intimated that it must be attained through scientific processes. How dishonoring to the name of the blessed Redeemer and the apostolic teachings! In all the dark ages, since the creation of the world, it has always been a source of gratification to the worshippers of the true and living God that their adorable Redeemer never changes in the administration of the affairs of his kingdom, that he is not imposing new laws, strange theories and unprofitable ordinances upon them; to the contrary, it is declared that he is God and changes not, and that in consequence of his immutability the sons of Jacob, though sinful and disobedient, are not consumed. The commands that go forth from his throne are equally as unchangeable as their Author. His promises to his loyal God-fearing children have never failed of fulfillment. This knowledge of his veracity sustained the ancient prophets when they were the subjects of Jewish hate, and tortured inmates of Roman bastiles, under Nero. It secured the apostles and disciples of Jesus against the artful devices of the scribes and Pharisees and enabled them to contend earnestly for the faith of God's elect. Now, in these modern times, those who fear and love the Lord are kept by the power of faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last times. Without such safe assurances of divine protection all would be despair and hope would vanish as doth a vapor; and without that hope we are destitute of the anchor that is sure and steadfast. However small the hope may be at times, yet it is a sure anchor. Many are the sore trials that the dear beloved children of God have to pass through in this world of conflict and care, but, dear one, remember that the Master has said that in the world ye shall have tribulation, but adds, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Afflictions, temptations, death, sorrow, disappointments and many other shadows may cross our pathway, yet we are told that all things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose. True, sometimes, from a literal or fleshly standpoint, it may be very difficult to see how God can bring anything good out of what appears to be an impossibility, but we must remember that there is nothing impossible with God; that he is his own interpreter. The faith he gives us is a living faith, the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. Redeeming love and grace through his only begotten Son belong to him. Wisdom, one of the divine attributes, reaches his children through

the beloved Son, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. The writer has failed, often, in his long ministerial life, of nearly sixty years, to grasp the riches of the free unmerited grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, feeling many times that if the brethren and sisters knew me as I know myself they would not and could not have any fellowship for me. While in my failings there never has been any doubt, as regards the truth of revelation, the plan of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ, and all things else that Christ and the apostles taught, there arises doubts and fears as to my own interests therein. But the language of Peter brings some relief: Lord, to whom shall I go? for thou hast the words of eternal life. Then, too, it is said, There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. A safe retreat is provided for the poor, needy and helpless ones when adversity overtakes them. Then, too, when weary and heavy laden we forget and lose sight of the joy of salvation, that had sustained us in the dark hours of our earlier experiences, through the infirmities of the flesh. If the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts, or, in other words, if we have been renewed in the spirit of our minds, born again, not of a corruptible, but of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever, there is no earthly power that can cut us off from our refuge, and alienate us from God our Father. Paul says, "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us." The weaknesses of the flesh are many. But it is in weakness that strength is made perfect. As our own strength fails us, so, in like proportion, as was Paul, we are made to glory in our infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon us. Our ways are imperfect; God's ways are perfect. His ways are as much above man's ways as the heavens are highen than the earth. Sure the scattered household of faith should be alert while false teachers and unscrupulous deceivers are abroad in the land, "who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

This may be my last message to those I love for the truth's sake. Be that as the Lord rules, but, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. Keep yourselves in the love of God, by an orderly walk and godly conversation, and thus, too, let your light shine before men that others may note your good works and glorify our Father in heaven. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to

present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

Dear editors, I am inclosing herewith an article, which after reading over two or three times seems so unlike what I had in contemplation to write that I find it difficult to decide whether to let it go into the waste-baske or send it to you and let you decide as to its merits, and whether or not its publication in the SIGNS will crowd out other and better matter. Whatever your decision may be, rest assured that it will be respected in brotherly sincerity. I have been a reader of the dear old family visitor for about seventy-seven years and have never taken offense at anything published in its columns, and my sincere desire and prayer to God is that its publication may go on for many years to come. To this end may the Spirit guide and direct both editors and publishers in their great and good work.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. G. SAWIN.

HIRAM, Georgia.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:--Though we are strangers in the flesh, your writings and the principles of the doctrine set forth in the SIGNS are so much to me that I see you to be my brother indeed, and that we are brought into sacred relations with the household of faith in matters relative to the cause of our Lord and Master I love to think of the goodness of God toward the children of men. He has so arranged that his children, though many miles apart, are made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and walk in company together to his banqueting-house, where his banner over them is love. I love to go back to the place where he first appeared to me, more than fifty-seven years ago, and said, Son, be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. Thy sins are forgiven thee. Truly goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and I would rather render unceasing praise to his name but for the many things that step in my way. I look out upon this beautiful world by day, and up at the twinkling stars by night, and the thought comes to me that every created object is a medium through which a divine thought is conveyed to the mind, and that such mediums (objects) are the words of him whose thoughts are conveyed. Therefore all that surrounds us in this life bespeaks the handywork of our God, and indeed "the heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." God is good to all men and his tender mercies are over all his works. His people are recipients in common of his providential blessings, and much more by reason of his everlasting love to them when as yet there was none of them. "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret,

and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."—Psalms cxxxix. 15, 16. And wisdom sayeth, Proverbs viii. 22-31, "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth; when he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of the deep; when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." He being from everlasting to everlasting, a thousand years is as one day and one day as a thousand years with him, all things were present with him. It is in this sense that his delights were with the sons of men when as yet there was none of them. They were yet without life, without existence, having this record, They have eternal life, but this life is in the Son. While they were yet sinners Christ, who is their life, died for them. And at the fullness of time, because they are sons, God sends his Spirit into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father, and they are made to know him whom to know is life eternal. Then they are brought into communion with God and into the fellowship of his sufferings, and there is a union, a vital union, because of life; and they should henceforth serve him with reverence and godly fear, knowing nothing but Christ, and him crucified, for other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ. "Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." The works, gold, silver, precious stones, are such as God approves. The fire serves to make the path of the righteous shine brighter and brighter unto the perfect day; while they who preach for doctrine the commandments of men, wood, hay, stubble, suffer loss, their works are burned and they are saved yet so as by fire, for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness. They, being ignorant of God's righteousness, are going about to establish their own righteousness; and some are willingly ignorant, that they may gain the applause of men. Thus it is that thou-

sands of God's regenerated children are in the broad way that leads to destruction. Though all Israel shall be saved with an everlasting salvation, there is but a remnant, the very elect, who save themselves from this untoward generation. This was true in Elias' day, and even so at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace who are not carried about by every wind of doctrine, but continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship through evil as well as good report. This is the narrow way that leads to life, and few there be that find it. In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honor and some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself from these he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work, and yet not so wise above that that is written as to tell the extent of predestination, or the difference between it and foreknowledge.

With best wishes for the welfare of Zion, and fellowship for all Predestinarian Baptists, I am

Yours in brothly love,
W. A. HARRIS.

Ere long before the earth was made
God's sovereign power was then displayed,
To save his chosen elect race
Alone by his redeeming grace.

He saw the creatures of his hand,
He saw his own in every land,
And freely gave his only Son
To die for sins that they had done.

He ransomed all who were embraced
In that sure covenant of grace,
And in their day they shall exclaim,
Their sins forgiven in Jesus' name.

They shall henceforth their Lord obey,
And walk the strait and narrow way,
In honor to their Lord and King,
By whom their free salvation came.

His grace sufficient for their day,
For every trial of the way;
All their needs he will supply,
And no good thing to them deny.

Sometimes they would not longer stay
Where dark clouds rise o'er the way;
By faith they see a city fair,
And wish to be with Jesus there.

W. A. HARRIS.

ONTARIO, California, Nov. 28, 1929.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—I want to thank you heartily for your encouraging letter received several months ago. I also desire as much as I can to thank you and all connected with the publishing and editing the SIGNS for your great labor of love. We know in a large measure the reproaches of all who love to exalt the name of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will: the one only living God who changes not, fall largely upon the editors of such a paper, publishing what the world, the flesh and the devil hate. You are in that sense partakers of the sufferings of Christ.

I read your editorial in the September number, and your explanation in the November number, and I want to say concerning exhortation it is not too much to say "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him," for a blessed apostle, moved by the Holy Ghost, said so in 1 John ii. 4. Another apostle, regardless of being called a conditionalist, commanded a minister to reprove, rebuke and exhort. (2 Tim. iv. 1-6.) This same apostle affirms that God hath created all things

in heaven and earth, both visible and invisible, and that he works all things after the counsel of his own will. Jesus affirms, Of mine ownself I can do nothing, and upbraided a young man who called him (Jesus) good, saying, There is none good save one, that is God. If our blessings are conditional upon our good deeds, then I have done no more than God's own Son, who could do nothing of himself, and I am in debt for every blessing I have ever received. I know that in me; that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing.

I hesitate and am loathe to presume upon your patience, and I am wondering if it would be worth anything to you to know what I believe about heeding and not heeding the admonitions. I am unlearned and bungling in language, and may misinterpret others, and may not make my thoughts clear in words. The fact that he who saw the end from the beginning gave the law and the commandments is not to me proof that men can obey them, excepting Christ, who was also the Son of God, The law, and, I believe, the commandments of the gospel, were given that the offense might abound (or appear). The law was given that every mouth might be stopped and that all the world might become guilty before God, and it exactly served that purpose. The foundation of the law is love, in harmony with its Giver, who is love, and measured by it we all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. So there is not a just person on earth, one who liveth and sinneth not. There was just One who was tempted in every point like as we are, yet without sin. It puts us in debt that the blessing might be of grace and not by works of righteousness which we have done. For "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," through Jesus Christ our Lord. Yet if a man say that we say, Let us sin that grace may abound, he slanders us, for we say no such thing. If God has written his law in one's heart and put it in his inward parts he hates the things he once loved and loves the things he once hated, and sin is no longer a sweet morsel, but a festering thorn, and every transgression brings a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation. There is nothing sweeter to such an one than the gift of obedience, for it is a gift, as is also repentance. Every good and every perfect gift proceedeth from and cometh down from the Father of lights. For the protection and peace of the church of God, the pillar and ground of the truth, the doctrine, commandments and the gospel are written. If any come and bring not this doctrine receive him not into your house, &c. (2 John 10, 11.) Withdraw from every brother that walketh disorderly. By their fruits ye shall know them: know whether they are led by the flesh or the Spirit. If one comes glorying in his sins, of any kind, and for any reason, and persists when his deeds are measured by the admonitions, &c., let him be to thee as a heathen man and a publican. Blessed (already) is the man that endureth temptation; that is, his blessing is that he can and will receive the

crown of life. (James i. 12.)

I do not know that I have written intelligibly. Briefly I wanted to say that I believe the admonitions do not make a brother better or worse, but measure his deeds. The law is just, holy and good, but I am carnal, sold under sin. We had not known sin but by the law; that is what it is for. Doubtless, if our Lord's wisdom had so dictated, he could have begotten his children in the courts of glory without the tarnish of sin, instead of in the furnace of affliction. But according to his wisdom "the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." "We have this treasure in [these poor weak] earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." May it please the Lord of the harvest that we have grace to preach the word, because it discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart; being foolishness to one, but the precious power and wisdom of God to the other, because it divides and separates the precious from the vile. What matter if it cuts down the number from 3300 to 300? If we are of the three hundred there is still more with us than with them, for with them is an arm of flesh and with us the Lord our God. (2 Chron. xxxii. 8.) If the Midianites encompass the company of the saints, and are even found inside spying out our liberties, yet the Lord hath delivered us, doth now and will yet deliver. Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. Three unclean spirits of devils working miracles are now loose in the land, and busy going to and fro gathering the Midianites, and every other ite, and only in weakness are we made strong. Our deliverance and our defense are as sure as the resurrection of our King if we are his indeed, and that deliverance will be numbered with the great cloud of witnesses catalogued in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. Our strength is to sit still, or wait upon the Lord. Such texts as James iv. 1-9, 2 John 2-4, &c., are powerful, quick, dividing, discerning, when accompanied by the power of the Spirit. If we shun not to declare the whole counsel of God we need not be surprised at a falling away, and at perilous times. It is good to stir up the pure minds of the brethren by way of remembrance, as you also do.

As to conditional salvation, with my very limited knowledge of language and of the Scriptures, I believe our salvation in time and our eternal destiny are conditional. In fact, everything in this broad universe, except the unchangeable God and Creator, is conditional, or dependent. The important question is, What are they conditioned upon? If anything is conditional upon man, then man is conditioned upon God, as are the innumerable planets. The very hairs of our heads are numbered, and not a sparrow falls to the ground without him. Faith is the gift of God. Man's ways are not in himself. A man's heart directeth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps. In fact, there is no

power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. A man's goings are from the Lord; how then can a man know his way? Job says the world was hung on nothing, and no man has ever found what it is hung on. We build larger and still larger telescopes and find out no more than that there are more and still more stars, farther and still farther away; and build microscopes and find there are smaller and still smaller living moving creatures. They are all upheld by the power of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

Your brother, I hope, but in fear,

G. O. WALKER.

THE HOLY BIBLE.

THE account of Creation in grandly simple language; the generations of men and the formation of families; the flood and the miraculous preservation of the human race; the history of nations in the world's infancy; the divine call of Abraham, and God's covenant with him, and its renewal with Isaac and Jacob; the sojourn and oppression of Israel in Egypt, and her deliverance; the history of the wondrous theocracy; the captivity of the covenant people for their sins; the preservation of the kingly tribe of Judah, who ruled with God until Christ came; the record of the virgin birth; the Savior's life, given in touching simplicity; the account of his death, told in awful dignity and majesty; his resurrection, and ascension into heaven; the day of Pentecost, and the subsequent and consequent ministry of the everlasting gospel, and its glorious success; Christ's care of the newly-planted churches, exhibited in the epistles; the descriptive and prophetic book of Revelation; all these matters constitute the Bible, and were given by inspiration. The inspiration of the Scripture sets it alone, above and different from every other book that has existed, does exist and shall exist. The Bible is what it is because it is the inspired word of God. It is therefore absolutely unique. We call it the "Holy Bible;" it is supremely, exclusively so. It is holy in the sense of being written by inspiration, and infallible. It is not composed of words chosen by the human writers of it to express thoughts which the Holy Ghost suggested; they spake as them were *moved* (inspired) by the Holy Ghost. They constantly say the word of the Lord came to them, the Spirit of God spake to and by them. Inerrancy requires that God should choose his own words. The revelation of himself, of his will and purposes, must needs be made to man in his own pure words. The man of business will dictate his own words to his secretary in all business letters; he will not trust that his secretary will correctly express important, delicate and complicated matters, which might be given to him in general terms. Much less would the Holy Ghost say to his penmen, Write to the *effect*. No, the deep things of God must be expressed by himself. The words must be his own words. He must say his own things in his own words. His things are eternal. They are the Being

of God, his eternity, his perfections, his subsistence in three Persons, bearing the essential names of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, showing their distinct Personalities, their eternal equality. Only God could, in the first place, utter the sublime sentence, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," it is too profoundly incomprehensible and glorious for merely human expression. And again, John i. 14, 18, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." A mere suggestion of such divine truths would have shattered the mind which was required to express it in correct and adequate terms, by its very weight, mystery and glory. Only an involuntary pen, under the absolute control of the divine Dictator, could write such awfully grand and blessed words. Thus the Bible makes revelations of the eternal, internal acts of Jehovah, and who but himself knew how to put those mysteries into human language? This divine Book states most explicitly the fall of man. It tells us that man was made upright, and under the law to God, his Creator. Here we must find man's responsibility to God, a better word perhaps is accountability, accountability of which we cannot divest ourselves. The Bible reveals the second Man, the last Adam, who is a quickening Spirit to his seed.

It must not be omitted to state that a holy and wise providence has a prominent, honorable, important place in our inerrant Bible; it is, as it were, the handmaid of grace. The lives of some individual persons, the histories of some nations, are related. Its accuracy in these is matchless; its impartiality, inimitable. Viewed from every standpoint it may be confidently affirmed that no merely human mind or hand could have produced our infallible Bible. *It is the very and immediate word of the Holy Ghost.* The penmen were his instruments. The holy, beautiful words of revelation, of description, of history, of promise, of threat, were traced on the original parchments as he dictated them. Both the Testaments, Old and New, thus bear the ineffaceable stamp of divine origin; that is, of verbal, plenary inspiration. Moreover, by his numerous quotations from the Old Testament the Lord Jesus Christ has welded it into the New Testament, and thus they are manifestly one organic whole. They have but one voice. They stand or fall together. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. The sanction of the holy Trinity is on holy Scripture.

I judge we are now in a position to adopt and lay down the proposition with which Dr. Owen opens his work on the divine original of the Scriptures, viz.: "That the whole authority of the Scripture in itself, depends solely on its divine original, is confessed by all who acknowledge its authority." I hold that that portion is absolutely correct. The word of God can receive

no accession of authority from any human source. It is a perfect Word. It is the sole and everlasting rule of faith and practice. Against this divine rule both the Papist and the Modernist object. The former, that he may introduce and place above holy Scripture his necessary tradition; the latter, that he may honor his own intellect and inner consciousness—whatever that may be. Alas, divine authority is abhorrent to fallen man. The Papist has numberless idols, the Modernist has but one. He must rid himself of the incubus of authority, otherwise he must bow down to the Bible. Rejecting that, as to its full, complete inspiration, he thinks himself at liberty to edit it, correct it, criticise its facts, question its doctrines, shorten it, omitting what he objects to, and to tell us what God ought to be, what He cannot do, and what He is ever attempting to do, but is unable to accomplish. Be it given to us to bow before Jehovah and reverence his word, which he has exalted above all his name.

[THE foregoing is an address delivered at Brighton, England, October 3rd, 1929, by Mr. J. K. Potham, editor of *The Gospel Standard,* of London, England. Volumes have been written on the subject of the inspiration of the Scriptures, but for brevity, conciseness and forcefulness, this address of Mr. Potham's in defense of the integrity and verbal inspiration of the Bible, surpasses anything that has come under our notice recently.—H. H. L.]

DODGE CITY, Kansas, Nov. 9, 1929.

DEAR EDITORS:—We are now doing what should have been done sooner, that is, sending a check for the renewal of our subscription, and we are indeed thankful to you for your kindness in keeping our name on your mailing list, for most assuredly the light that is in the SIGNS is the only brightness to us in this little city and vicinity, for truly the place is in darkness; yes, gross darkness. We have heard of darkness that could be felt, and now we, at least partly, believe it, although we have in our midst the greatest meeting that has ever been held in this vicinity, so they say, in which all the leading organizations (we should not use the word churches) have united in one great effort to make the light shine in the hearts of men in this great darkness,and they are unconscious of the fact that "the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." The efforts of the greatest evangelists in the world (according to the testimony of newspapers and men) has been secured, and a very large tabernacle erected, and had to be dedicated before this coming event, so, as it had never been convenient for us to witness a ceremony of dedication of any kind, our curiosity was aroused insomuch that we attended, and were somewhat surprised, but not shocked, to hear him that delivered the main address repeatedly say that they were there for the purpose of finishing the work of Jesus. That was their business, and that was the purpose for which the tabernacle was built, and they were now ready to

go forth in the completion of the unfinished work of Jesus. Now we hardly expected all of this at once, for we felt as though one who had obtained a college decree, supposed to be teaching the way of obedience, and in years of studying, and standing before congregations for the purpose of handling the word of God, that surely at some time he would have noticed the words uttered by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in his prayer to the Father, just before he was taken to be crucified by those who followed Judas: "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."—John xvii. 4. Or his dying words: "It is finished." No doubt all these things come before us daily to remind us that God is true and no variableness is in him, for Isaiah writes, "He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see him with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them."

Just now another thought comes to my mind that grew out of a remark made there concerning the beheading of John the Baptist, which is related by Mark in the sixth chapter, fourteenth to the twenty-eighth verse. In the actions of these characters, Herodias, her daughter, and Herod, in the slaying of John the Baptist we see a very good illustration of the persecution and martyrdom that has been brought down recently upon the heads of the true believers in our Lord and Savior from the days of Jesus on down through all ages, and gives some thought of what the end may be. We find that Herodias had a quarrel with John and would have killed him, but she could not. So did the church at Rome have a quarrel with the truth, the church of Jesus Christ, and would have gladly removed every true believer from the face of this old earth had they been able to do so, but the earth helped the woman (not Herodias, but the bride of Jesus) by opening up its mouth and drinking in the floods that the dragon cast out of his mouth to consume her (Rev. xii. 16), and the reformation was the result, or a daughter was born, for those of the reformation have now come to adopt many of the practices of the old mother church, so we might say that if all were united (except the true church), as they are now striving for, would they not make a good likeness of their mother? They are as one in the unbelief of the true gospel, but stand in many groups. As the daughter that danced before Herod was a likeness of her mother, so they are the likeness of their mother, are they not? Now when the birthday of her king is come and he becomes drunken, will not she dance before him and please him? And ask for the head of John the Baptist (the true church) for her mother? And what will the end be?

Yours in hope of eternal life,

D. L. DAVIS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1930.

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NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

It is, we hope, with a deep feeling of gratitude to the heavenly Father that he has seen fit to keep alive and to prosper the Signs of the Times through its long life of ninety-seven years. As we enter upon the ninety-eighth year it is with a keen sense of our own weakness and inability to measure up to the high standard which ought to continue to mark the editorial department of such a spiritual medium of correspondence among God's people as the Signs has proved to be. In all our own intercourse and relationship with the Lord's people we feel more and more, as time passes, our constant need of sustaining grace. No man, much less ourselves, is sufficient for these things of himself. It is the desire of myself, as well as of each of the associate editors, that the Lord may see fit to graciously use us to the comfort and instruction of his people scattered abroad. We can find no words to express our sincere appreciation of all the kind words of love and encouragement which have come to us from the readers and friends of the Signs from different parts of the country. If it were possible to do so, we should like to answer by personal letter every missive that comes to us; but should we attempt to do this, it would create an amount of correspondence and would consume so much time that it would be humanly impossible for us to do so. Therefore it is our hope that each of you who have been so kind as to give us your good wishes and your valuable help during the past year will take this greeting in lieu of a personal letter to each of you. During the past year some of you have sent us requests for our views upon portions of Scripture, about the meaning of which you were individually inquiring, and upon which you wished us to enlighten you. We want you to know that there has been no intention upon our part to ignore your requests, and whenever possible we have tried to comply with some. However it is never possible for us to give views upon Scripture when we have no views to give. There is no one man anywhere who can possibly explain all passages of Scripture, and no explanation can be given unless the Spirit of God has exercised our mind in that direction, and given us light

thereupon. It would be folly to give an interpretation when no understanding has been given. Such understanding as we have concerning the Scriptures we are willing at all times to share with the brethren, for freely have we received and it is our aim to pass it on to you just as freely. We are not trying to hold back anything, and are not ashamed of such views as the Spirit has been pleased to give us. At the same time, we hope to be kept from darkening counsel by using words without knowledge, which surely we would be doing were we to attempt interpretation without revelation.

It is not our desire for 1930 to give place to any departure from sound doctrine in the columns of this paper. We know that the supporters of the paper would fellowship and tolerate no variance from the principles for which the SIGNS has always stood, and if by chance any error in doctrine or sentiment should be noticed in our columns, we should thank you who detect it to call it to our attention.

The hope has been expressed that during 1930 we may be able to have two editorials in each number of the paper each month. We cannot guarantee this, because it is not in our power to say what we will or will not do. It must be as God wills, and as he leads us. Writing along spiritual lines is a matter self cannot control. To enter into definite bargain to turn out twenty-four editorials a year is not possible with us, yet if it pleases God to have it so, it shall be so. Thus if he sets before us an open door of gospel liberty to write upon spiritual themes it shall be our pleasure and privilege to give you the benefit of this service, his grace enabling us so to do.

So far as we are aware there is naught but good will and sincere harmony prevailing among the members of the editorial staff and with the publisher of the paper. As chief editor, I can heartily say that my associates and Mr. Beebe himself have been very lenient and forbearing with me. They have dealt most charitably with my shortcomings, and have been most patient with my frequent disinclination to write for publication.

Something more is needed than a staff of editors and a publisher. We need beside a faithful and loyal band of subscribers, readers and friends who will continue to give their support, financially and otherwise, to the maintenance of the SIGNS. This support you have not failed to give in the past, and we believe you are not going to fail us now. As God by his Spirit has moved in and through you heretofore to will and to do of his good pleasure, thus keeping the paper alive for ninety-seven years, we have hope toward God that this same spiritual willing performance will be with us through 1930, and for so long as God may have use for this medium of correspondence among his beloved people.

With charity for all and with malice toward none, we greet you for the coming year, trusting that God may graciously bind us together in christian fellowship and unity more closely than ever before, bearing in mind that no

man lives to himself, and no man dies to himself; that if we live we live unto the Lord, and if we die we die unto the Lord. Whether we live, therefore, or die we are the Lord's.

L.

ROMANS II. 12.

"For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law."

By request, this quotation in Paul's letter to the Romans is presented to the readers of the Signs. We feel to say that the one who made the request is better qualified to write upon this subject than we are, yet we will give some expressions of our mind in answer to the request.

Paul in thus addressing the church at Rome was teaching them relative to Jew and Gentile. First, we will remind you that God created of one blood all nations of the earth, and the first Adam, who was of the earth earthy, was the first of all men, and God gave him a law which was his government while in the Garden of Eden, and was the strength of the conviction of Adam in transgression, and all nations of the earth being in Adam's loins were involved in Adam's transgression and became dead in trespasses and sins, and must remain there until One stronger than he, who had the power of death, delivers them. Israel (or the Jews) was given a law written upon tables of stone, and when Moses saw the children of Israel worshipping idols he threw down the tables of stone and broke them. This proves to our understanding the impossibility of man to keep the spiritual law, for his carnal mind cannot behold the spiritual import thereof, and the written commandments are all he can see, and in the services under the law they transgress instead and are therefore judged by the law, while the Gentiles are not judged according to the law of Moses. Jew and Gentile are alike under the law of sin and death. The Gentiles having sinned without the law of Moses must perish without it, and the Jews having the law must be judged accordingly. Christ coming in the flesh was the end of the law for righteousness. Those who worship God in spirit and in truth are judged as sinners after the first Adam's transgression, and as the saved of the Lord, and are judged in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Jesus made the twain one new man making peace, bringing Jew and Gentile to the knowledge of the truth as it is in him, and causing them to see eye to eye and speak the same things and behold Jesus as their Savior. The child of God has the manifestation of God's word spoken by the prophet Jeremiah in the covenant he said he would make with the house of Israel after those days: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."—Jeremiah xxxi. 33. Also, Hebrews viii. 10, says, "I will put my law into their minds." As all are condemned by one law all must be justified by one law, which is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Those justified in Christ live by faith and are doers of the law, for he works in them

to will and to do of his good pleasure. The child of God is not a hearer of the law only, but the doer as well, and is justified. (Romans ii. 13.) When brought in such realizations they have the experience that Paul spoke of when he said, "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."—Rom. vii. 33. Just preceding this expression he says, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man." He realized the dying to the things of the flesh and the desire to live unto God, and not being able to do the things he would he exclaims, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Having such depression of spirits we find Paul saying, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." What wonderful words the apostle Paul has written in all his epistles to the churches and ministers to encourage, teach and exhort them according to the grace given him by the God of heaven. He fully realized that he stood before God in the immediate presence of Jesus. This was why he felt to be wretched, as all children of grace desire to be Christlike. When the sunshine of God's grace shone in Paul's heart he could say, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority."—Titus ii. 11-15. The law of the Lord put in the inward parts and written in the minds causes deep thinking, and close watch on our conversation and deportment of life lest we dishonor God. The truth we feel to stand for as it is in Jesus, and in our daily vocation of life the truth must come either to justify or condemn, and we feel the children of God will triumph over the powers of darkness, for Jesus is their Savior, and he bringeth them off more than conquerors. Truth is mighty and will prevail, and when the truth is spoken men may rise up against it, but never to the crushing of it. Having this grace teaching us we desire to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. Dear reader, does the law of the Spirit of life teach or uphold evil speaking, backbiting, strife, envy and malice, or does it rather condemn? By this law we are either justified or condemned, and in the language of Paul to Timothy, "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality."—1 Tim. v. 21. Paul, having this law, could not face condemnation and sow

to his flesh, neither can any other called man of God, unless the Lord suffers the devil to take him, as he did Peter, but he told him, When thou art converted strengthen thy brethren. Peter's confession of his sins was strengthening to them, and we do believe when any of God's children walk in by and forbidden paths of unrighteousness they strengthen the brethren when they see the humiliation manifested by the spirit which abides upon them and they come to the church desiring to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world with the brethren, and not as Orpah who turned back, but like Ruth cleaving unto Naomi. This truth lives in the heart of every member of the bride of Christ, and they will stand and contend earnestly for the truth and order of the house of God.

Now, in conclusion, brethren, sisters and friends, the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES wish you much spiritual comfort during the year 1930.

C. W. V.

NOTICE.

THE Board of Trustees of the Primitive Baptist Home, Inc., voted at their last meeting to buy the property in January, 1930. It is the desire to pay cash in full, if possible. Those desiring to support this cause can do so by sending their contribution to the Treasurer, Henry T. Lefferts, 151 Coeman Avenue, Nutley, New Jersey, not later than January 15th, 1930. Any assistance will be more appreciated at this time.

R. LESTER DODSON.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by DEACON W. A. THOMPSON.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the Ebenezer Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 16th, 17th and 18th, 1929, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and churches with which we correspond, sends greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I being appointed to write this Circular Letter at our last association, tried at our meeting in August to get some one of our churches to relieve me of the same, but could not. Owing to the fact that the first week in November I was taken down with heart trouble and asthma, I felt I could not write it; but I will try and do the best I can.

Dearly beloved in the Lord, once more in the good will of our covenant God we are privileged to meet on the shore of time to render homage to the Lord, and show that as we believe the apostolic doctrine to be the doctrine of God our Savior, we hope and believe our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. So we are reminded of the fact that if any will live godly in Christ Jesus he shall suffer persecution, having been brought to know Him whom to know is life eternal. We ought always to remember that he kills and also makes alive, and that he wounds and also heals, for when he opens no man can shut, and when he shuts no man can open. Furthermore, when the Lord makes straight none can make crooked, and when he makes

crooked who can make straight? Yet his saints, in their experiences of his grace, are brought to know and feel that it is given them not only to believe on his name, but also to suffer for his sake; and as they are made willing in the day of his power, one would be loath to think they would ever forget this wonderful lesson. Yet as we are dealing with members of churches, men and women who profess faith in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, it is no small matter that we refer to the importance of their standing and of the certainty of the faithful dealings of God with them. Of course, a Circular Letter to this or any other number of churches as an association will be of no use to them by way of stirring up their pure minds only as the Lord by his Spirit applies it in their personal interest, yet remembering that the Lord speaks and sends by whom he will for the comfort of his people when in trouble, to point them to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, and to turn them as prisoners of hope to their stronghold. This view by faith of life hidden with Christ in God prepares the tried child of God to rest with sweet confidence in the Captain of their salvation, who hath loved them and hath given himself for them. Then, like the faithful Moses of old, they choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season. For time with all the saints on earth is but a short season compared with eternal glory and blessedness in the presence of Jesus as the only wise God our Savior and Jesus Christ our Lord. For he is God over all and blessed for evermore, and the momentary trial here is not worthy to be compared with that glory that shall be revealed in us. And now we know there is joy in believing, for unto them that believe the name of Jesus is precious, for there is no other name given under heaven whereby they must be saved. So they that believe according to the working of his (God's) mighty power in them do enter into rest. They cease from their own works, as God did from his, by entering the antitypical Sabbath, the gospel day of rest. "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." So those of his children who live in disobedience and under the rod have their own burden to bear. But God will have manifest witnesses on earth among the people who will believe and preach and practice the truth. Though they be but two or three in a place, they will be acknowledged by him when gathered in his name, and they shall be hated of all men because they are not of the world, although in it. When they as believers in Jesus follow where he leads or puts them, they love not the world that lies in wickedness or unbelief. They as witnesses love the truth as it is in Jesus and love them that are begotten of him. Love works no ill to its

neighbor, it is a fulfilling of the law. Such in the trial of their faith are prepared to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. For his sake alone such fight manfully the good fight of faith, and quit themselves as men. Living godly in Christ Jesus is in the measure manifest by the persecution borne of chastisement, for if you endure chastening God dealeth with you as sons. So tribulation worketh patience, &c. The poet is right:

"He who would to Jesus press,
Must fix this firm and sure:
Tribulation, more or less,
He must and shall endure."

The furnace is set in Zion. It is the lot of the Lord's afflicted and poor people in their profession of faith in Jesus, as they find rest in their souls in obeying, and learn of Jesus, to soon find that in the world they shall have tribulation. One particularly living and bright example was the apostle Paul, who in the description of his life showed how God dealt graciously with him as a subject of his heavenly grace, letting Satan and false brethren work intrigue, and unbelieving men condemn, yet holding him in the hollow of his hand. He raised him to heaven's height in mind to behold the glory of God, and hear words unlawful to utter, and then led him to feel the pricking sensation of the thorn in the flesh. All showing that the godly life of Paul was most fully set forth in the things that he suffered. Thus in conformity to the will of God we but prove that if the will of God be so, it is better to suffer for well doing than for wrong doing, and proving also that Jesus learned obedience by the things he suffered, becoming an ensample to his people, to witness the truth in their own heart, and judgment in the things of the kingdom which is not of this world. So, my dear brethren, may we prove our interest in Jesus Christ, and in the fellowship in his church on earth, by being followers of God as dear children, walking in love, seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, with the view of tribulations and all other things being added to us, being persuaded with Paul that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The next session of this Virginia Corresponding Meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, with the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, to begin Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1930, and to continue three days, at which time we shall hope to again receive your ministers and messengers.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Mod.
G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

WE request our subscribers when sending in subscriptions or changes of address to be sure and give the *exact name and address* to which the paper is now coming; otherwise we are liable to give the credit to the wrong person, as we may have two subscribers of the same surname at the one post office.

J. E. B. & Co.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Salisbury Church, Wicomico County, Maryland, October 23rd, 24th and 25th, 1929, to the several associations with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—It is once more, we hope, the blessing of God that we meet once more as an Association. We feel that God has manifested his power in our midst, in that he has directed a goodly number of ministering brethren, who have come to us laden with the riches of his mercy, and all declaring the power of God, also a good attendance from other associations. We value the visits of your messengers and your correspondence and desire a continuance of the same.

Our next Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Forest Grove Church, near Parsonsburg, Wicomico County, Maryland, beginning on Wednesday after the third Sunday of October, and continuing the two following days, at which place and time we hope to meet you all again.

G. E. COULBOURN, Mod.
GEORGE F. ADKINS, Clerk.
J. H. TRUITT, Ass't Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

G. G. Turner, Texas, $1.15; Miss Jennie Black, Ont., $1; Flora E. McColl, Man., $9; B. V. White, Va., $1; A. W. Bloomfield, Mo., $4; Jesse C. Ellis, Ohio, $3; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $6.75; Mrs. W. R. Conklin, N. Y., $2; Jacob S. Leedom, Pa., $2; Mary E. Pittman, Kans., $1; Martha E. Holloway, Md., $1; "Good Will Donation," N. Y., $2; D. R. Black, Canada, $3; Joseph F. Hall, Maine, $8; Mrs. J. K. MacKenzie, Ill., $1; Sarah A. McColl, Ont., $3; M. C. Reeves, Ill., $6; Mrs. Duncan McCallum, Ont., $2; Mrs. J. A. MacTaggert, Ont., $2; Mrs. S. E. Enoch, Kans., $3; W. T. Hughett, Ill., $6; Lillie M. Jenkins, Pa., $1; Mrs. M. Coons, N. J., $1; Mrs. I. R. Blythe, Pa., $1; Gilbert B. McColl, Man., $1; J. W. S. Timmons, Md., $1; "A friend," Ore., $5; Mrs. M. E. Furman, N. Y., $2; W. E. Bryan, Ky., $1; Mrs. Mary Duffus, B. C., $3.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DUNCAN M. GILLIS passed away October 31st, 1929, at his late home, in Muirkirk, Ontario. He was a son of the late Duncan and Margaret Thompson Gillis, and was born August 6th, 1859. In 1893 he married Christena Campbell, of Lobo, who died in 1916. On relating an experience of grace he united with the Covenanted Baptist Church, and was baptized May 28th, 1899. Our dear brother was not long a member of the church before he manifested the gift of a deacon, which the church saw, and set him apart to that office, although he protested his feeling of unfitness. His life and conversation in the church was spiritual and gave abundant evidence that the church made no mistake in setting him apart for such an office. His manner and deportment before the church, as well as those who are without, gave dignity to his office, and won him the esteem and affection of a host of brethren and friends, who will greatly miss him. March 29th, 1919, brother Gillis married sister Jennie A. Bateman, of New York, who remains to mourn her loss. For several years before his death brother Gillis was not in the best of health, yet while he felt that his outer man was perishing, yet the inner man was renewed day by day. For several months previous to the time of his death, although his interest in the church and all that pertained to his office of deacon was unabated, yet those near to him saw a change, and feared we should not have him with us long. His tongue was free to talk of Jesus and his love, and we felt he was ripening for glory. When his departure came it seemed sudden to us all. He was loved by young and old, and is greatly missed by all, especially by his dear companion, who was constantly by his side and lovingly ministered to his every need. He delighted to entertain his brethren from far and near, and at such times he loved to hear brethren talk of better things. He leaves to mourn their loss besides his wife, one sister, Mrs. A. J. Mitchell, of Rodney, and one brother, A. D. Gillis, of Muirkirk. A very large company of relatives and friends gathered at his funeral to pay their silent tribute to his memory. The funeral service was held in the Covenanted Baptist meetinghouse in Duart, and interment was in the Duart Cemetery. The Lord enable his dear companion and all who dearly loved him to say, Thy will be done. We cannot close this obituary

notice without expressing our own personal loss in the death of our dear brother, whose love and devotion to his church and to his pastor will be sweet in our memory for years to come. He was a noble man, and while we mourn our loss we feel he is enjoying the sweet and blessed presence of his Lord. The memory of the just is blessed.

ALSO,

CATHERINE (McINTYRE) KENNEDY departed this life November 3rd, 1929, at her home, in Duart, Ontario. She was the daughter of Duncan and Nancy McIntyre, and was born in the year 1844, and was one of nine children born to them, of which number there is but one surviving, Mrs. Williams, of Petersboro. She was married to William Kennedy in 1865, who died in February, 1893. A son, John W., also preceded her to the grave. Many years ago sister Kennedy was shown what a sinner she was and the Lord spoke comfort to her with the words, "He brought me into the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." She was constrained to unite with the Covenanted Baptist Church, and was baptized by the late Elder Pollard, in October, 1877, and was a faithful and consistent member, showing by her walk and conversation that Christ was in her the hope of glory. She loved the brethren, and showed it; her home was a home for the Old School Baptists, and until her death her interest in the church was very great. For nearly two years our dear sister was unable to leave her home, suffering intensely at times from gangrene in her feet. She was very patient through it all. She leaves one daughter, Miss Nancy M. Kennedy, to mourn her loss, also the sister above mentioned, and a daughter-in-law, Mrs. John W. Kennedy. Her daughter and daughter-in-law cared for her with untiring devotion, and all that loving hands could do for her was done,of which she was very appreciative. To know her was to love her, and while we mourn the loss of such a faithful sister from our company here, yet would rejoice that she has joined that blessed throng where sickness, sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more.

The funeral service was held in the Duart meetinghouse, with the interment in the nearby cemetery. G. R.

MRS. MARY JANE WAGGAMAN, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life November 26th, 1929, at her home, 912 Grand Place, N. W., Washington, D. C. She was the widow of George E. Waggaman, who died in 1917. She was the daughter of James B. and Hortensia Havener, of Leesburg, Virginia, both deceased, and she was one of nine children, of whom three survive her, all members of the New Valley Church, and all living at Fort Myer Heights, Virginia. They are sisters Sallie Havener, Hattie Kelley and Martha Roller. She was born near Darysville, Loudoun County, Virginia, February 7th, 1866. She was baptized by the late Elder E. V. White, October 20th, 1889, into membership with the New Valley Old School Baptist Church. For several months she had been failing in health, but did not take to her bed until Sunday night prior to her death Tuesday morning. Beginning Sunday, she was suffering indescribably, and though it became necessary to use opiates to deaden pain, she retained consciousness nearly to the end and knew death was approaching, although it had no terrors for her, because her faith was all in Jesus Christ, who alone can take from death its sting and from the grave its victory. The end came as a sweet release from pain and suffering. Many months before her death, she was heard to say that earth held no charms for her and that there was in all the world nothing for which to live. Her confession was that of one for whom this world is not a home, no abiding place here for her weary soul. Like all God's chosen saved by the blood of Jesus, she confessed herself to be but a pilgrim and a stranger here. Jesus Christ was all her hope, the sole object of her faith. We feel she is at rest in the paradise of God. Saved by grace, and grace alone.

Funeral service was held at 809 Tenth Street, N. W., Washington, D. C. She was buried in the grave with her beloved husband, in the National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia. May the Lord God who knows our frame, that we are but dust, comfort the bereaved family and bereft church. We desire for all who mourn, sincere reconciliation to the divine will.

L.

W. D. MARTIN, of Bracy, Virginia, passed from this life December 3rd, 1929, dying as he had desired, suddenly and without a struggle. I know not the date of his birth, but he was nearly 80 years of age. He was what I would call one of nature's noblemen, having been endowed with extraordinary sense, and the ability to use it properly. He was full of determination, feeling, as every honest and industrious man does, a desire to help his fellow-man in every way possible, thus proving himself to be a very good and useful citizen. He was wonderfully blessed in choosing a companion in the person of Miss Pattie Smith, to whom he was married November 12th, 1872, and a noble gift and helpmeet indeed she proved to be. To this union nine children were born, four sons and five daughters. Two of the daughters, Mrs. J. H. Walker and Miss Lula Martin, preceded him to the grave. The seven who survive are, J. T., W. M., F. L., and G. G. Martin, Mrs. J. H. Ridout, Mrs. C. W. Massurhemer and Miss Geneva Martin. A nobler set of children are nowhere to be found, perfectly devoted to their parents and to each other. I have visited many very lovely homes, but I must say that to meet this family at the home of our brother and hear them talk on spiritual things and sing the songs of Zion and to partake of their hospitality surpasses them all. Brother Martin was blessed to

see his children believe in salvation by grace, all of them (I think), which is a blessing few men enjoy, and it must have gladdened his heart to the last. He and his dear wife joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Raleigh in 1904, if memory serves me correctly, telling the most wonderful dealings of God with them I ever heard, and it can be said of our dear departed brother that he proved by a well ordered walk and godly conversation that he had been with Jesus and was taught of him. We miss him greatly, but none will miss him like his dear companion, for they were indeed companions. May God bless her and resign her to his will in this and all other trials she may yet pass through. He was a good provider for his family, was honest and industrious, and his labors were blessed, and he was in good circumstances when he passed away. He was one of the most generous men I ever knew, always ready to help his pastor, also every other good cause. I am glad to say for his children that they show in their walk the great value of good parential training. Several years prior to the death of brother Martin, he, his children and a few faithful others, built a house of worship near Bracy, and organized a church there, of which he was a member at the time of his death, and he was buried there December 4th, 1929. The funeral was conducted by Elder Williams, his pastor, in the presence of a large concourse of friends.

I could write on and on of the virtues of our departed brother, but feel that his life was and is a living epistle written in the hearts of all his friends and acquaintances. He was much loved and respected, and he deserved to be. The very name of Martin carries with it respect in that community. May God bless his dear wife and children in this and in the world to come. My prayer is (I hope) that God provide them with sufficient grace that they may follow the example left by their dear husband and father.

Written by request of his wife.

W. A. SIMPKINS.

COSBY CALLEY COUNTS, the subject of this notice was born December 12th, 1854, and departed this life November 20th, 1929. She was married to Goolsby Counts October 17th, 1872, and to this union were born five children, three boys and two girls: Marion, Gordon and John Counts, Mrs. Lizzie Parsons and Mrs. Emma Kiser. John and Gordon, together with her husband, preceded her to the grave. Sister Counts became a member of the Old School Baptist Church called Elium, of the Pocatalico Association, upon an humble profession of her faith in Christ Jesus her Lord, and was baptized by Elder J. W. McClanahan the third Sunday in August, 1919. She gave a good reason of her hope, dating it back about forty years prior to her becoming willing to go home to her friends and telling them what great things the Lord had done for her soul. We feel a true mother in Israel has fallen asleep in Jesus. We will miss her in the church, and her children will miss her kindness to them, for a loving mother's voice is hushed, to be heard on earth no more. She will be missed by all who lived near her, for she was kind to all her neighbors. We must be reconciled to God's appointments, for it is appointed unto man once to die. Sister Counts bore her affliction with wonderful patience and christian fortitude, having been afflicted for a long time. May the grace of God be with her dear children to comfort them in the sadness of their loss, for he alone can bind up their broken hearts. Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep. The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved children and friends on the day of her burial.

DELL SMITH.

[IN September, 1929, mother dreamed that she, father and Bonnie were hoeing corn above the house. Father and Bonnie finished their rows first and went to the house. Mother said it appeared to her that some of the corn in her row was missing and that she sat down in the row. Father came back to her and told her to come to the house. She replied that she would come before long.—LIZZIE PARSONS.]

W. F. DRAKE, husband of sister Caroline Drake, of Hopewell, New Jersey, died Tuesday, November 12th, 1929, at his home, aged 77 years. He had been a resident of Hopewell for more than fifty-five years. He was ill for nearly a year of heart trouble, part of the time being confined to the house. He was the last member of his family, and is survived by his wife. He retired from active business only a few years ago. He was a subscriber of the SIGNS for many years and was a lover of the thruth, but always felt too unworthy of the joys of the church. He was highly esteemed by his many friends. May God bless all who mourn and give them grace to uphold them in their sorrow.

The funeral, which was largely attended, was conducted at the late home by the writer. Burial was in the Old School Baptist Cemetery at Hopewell, New Jersey.

Written by request of his wife.

C. V. HILL.

R. G. MORSE was born in Jasper County, Texas, September 29th, 1856, where he spent all his mortal life. He died December 17th, 1929. He was married to Miss Nannie Wood October 15th, 1874. They had no children of their own, but took a pair of little twin girls and raised them to be honorable women. Sister Nannie preceded brother "Gip" (as he was called by his brethren) three years in death. They were both members of the Absolute Predestinarian Baptist Church for more than twenty-five years, and brother Gip was one of the most faithful brethren I have ever known to visit the sick and afflicted and to attend his church

meetings regularly. Many times he drove five miles through sleet and freezing weather to be at meeting, and when he failed to be there we knew there was a providential hindrance. He was appointed church clerk shortly after he united with the church, the duties of which he performed faithfully until his death. He was indeed a sweet singer in Israel and made many friends by his singing. His body was laid to rest in the old churchyard at Antioch to await the resurrection morn, which was his most comforting hope.

Elders S. D. and W. H. Neuton spoke comforting words to a large congregation of his brethren and friends.

Written by request.

LEONARD RICHARDSON.

MARY BLANCHE HASTINGS, daughter of Henry and Clara Hastings, was born April 20th, 1921, and died August 14th, 1921, aged 3 months and 24 days.

Funeral services were conducted by the late Elder J. C. Mellott. Interment was in the cemetery of Little Creek Church, Sussex County, Delaware.

ALSO,

WILSON HAINES HASTINGS, son of Henry and Clara Hastings, was born November 25th, 1925, and died October 29th, 1925, aged 1 year, 11 months and 4 days. Funeral services were conducted by Elder H. C. Ker, at little Creek, and his body was laid to rest beside that of his little sister. Both were lovely children, and none know but by experience how it grieves the hearts of the parents to have those little ones taken from them Jesus said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. May we be enabled to say at all times; The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

By request of the parents, I am asking you for space in your columns to record the death of two of their dear little children, and grandchildren of the late James W. Hastings, of Broad Creek Church, Sussex County, Delaware. The parents are not identified members with us, but are good, useful friends.

M. E. HOLLOWAY.

MRS. L. C. BURNS, wife of A. W. Burns, was born November 2nd, 1850, and died October 12th, 1929. She was married to A. W. Burns August 18th, 1867, and to that union were born ten children, of whom eight survive: Mattie, Sarah, W. L., Mary, Mrs. Willie Wilburn, Alvil Burns and Allie Young, also eighteen grandchildren. About fifty years ago she was given a sweet hope in Christ, but from a feeling sense of unworthiness never united with the church, yet was always at meeting when not providentially hindered. Her husband preceded her some forty-one years. She reared an honorable family and they were all present at the funeral. The cause of her death was cancer of the eye and she bore her afflictions patiently. I will say to the bereaved, Sorrow not as others who have no hope, for your mother is not dead, but asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to mourn, but shall be awakened to sing God's praises with all the blood-washed throng for evermore. The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved.

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Little Flock Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every first and third Sunday at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, at 1 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.
O. P. SPEMS, Church Clerk,
143 W. 11th Street, Claremont Cal.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, every Sunday at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. at the home of W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Midweek song service by appointment. Pastors, Elders Jones and Jaynes. Basket lunch.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E B. AULT, Church Clerk.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

ROXBURY, N. Y., Dec. 2, 1929.

DEAR EDITORS:—Having been requested to present for publication some views upon the twenty-second verse of the forty-ninth chapter of Genesis: "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall," I am submitting such interpretations as seem to be in harmony with the truth.

It has been recorded in the New Testament that whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our instruction; and with this thought in mind this article has been attempted, with a certain feeling of fearfulness lest the precious word of God be not divided aright, but with the hope that the gospel truth prefigured by the text will be presented to the comfort of those who have been taught of God.

Joseph is one of the most outstanding of all the wonderful characters of the Old Testament, whose birth and life and work set forth in a divinely drawn picture the life and mediatorial office of Jesus Christ in type and shadow. In treating Joseph in his similitude to Christ one must ever bear in mind that the shadow cannot approach the substance in perfection of detail any more than the picture can be the thing of which it is the likeness. The pattern must always fall short of the finished product. The fact that Joseph was the eleventh son of the patriarch Jacob, and the elder brother of Benjamin, is of deep spiritual significance, since Jacob had two wives, one who was dull-eyed, therefore in a sense disfigured, and bore the name of Leah, and the other, or true wife, whom he loved with a ravishing tenderness of devotion, and for whom he served fourteen years, and was named Rachel. The term of servitude represents a period of two sevens, the number seven being regarded by the ancient Hebrews as a perfect number and used to denote perfection, and is frequently referred to throughout the entire Bible to express completion or

fullness. Leah represents legalism, for the church must first be married to the law before she can espouse Christ as her heavenly husband, by becoming dead to the law by the body of Christ that she might be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that she might bring forth fruit unto God, as is so emphatically set forth by Paul in his epistle to the Romans. Rachel represents the gospel church as spiritually manifested in the gospel dispensation for which Jesus served, both under the law before his crucifixion and also in his resurrection, when he became the first fruits of them that slept and their Elder Brother and joint-heir. So it was fitting in the divine harmony of the unchangeable plan of a wonder-working God that Jacob should serve fourteen years before winning Rachel, and that in figure the first ten children of Jacob should be born under bondage, typifying Israel after the flesh. Rachel mourned her barrenness and desired children, and in the birth of Joseph, who was Jacob's well beloved son, her desire for a child was gratified. In this Joseph we have Jesus prefigured in many striking and brilliant respects. Another figure presents itself in the birth of Benjamin, Joseph's younger brother, as representative of the gospel church with its believers of all peoples and nations, and Joseph therefore the elder brother, also the beloved son of Jacob and the object of his father's choice. It is here a noteworthy occurrence that Jesus Christ is foreshadowed as God's beloved Son, for on the mighty breast of the snow-crested heights of Hermon in the transfiguration of Jesus Christ there came a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." So in considering Joseph we may expect to find spiritual treasures of priceless worth. With parental fondness Jacob made for Joseph a coat of many colors, which distinguished him from all the other brothers and denoted him as the heir and his father's favorite, being the child of his old age. The many parts or colors of this remarkable garment set forth in glowing beauty the peerless spiritual excellencies and the faultless attributes of Jesus with perfect typical portraiture. The prophets and patriarchs of the old dispensation in one or two, or few at most, of their characteristic traits, qualities of character, and work, typify Jesus Christ in his birth, life, ministry and redemptive office. But in Jesus we behold with the eye of faith all of the attributes of his perfect character as signified by Joseph's coat of many colors. For instance, in Adam we have the headship of Jesus presented, for the first Adam was made a living soul, and the second Adam was made a quickening spirit. As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. Eve was created in Adam, so the church has existed in Christ and will never be separated from him and his blest presence. Enoch is a figure of the ascension of Christ and of the church in him, for Enoch walked with God and was not, for God took him. Jesus walked with God and was not of the earth, and also

it may well be said that they who comprise the church are not of this world and walk after the Spirit, not after the flesh. Noah provided a refuge for certain characters chosen out of the world, who found safety in the ark. So Jesus is the safe refuge of all who go in true faith to him, confessing him as the author and finisher of their faith. If Abraham represented faith, Isaac no less denotes submission to his father's will, and Jesus had perfect faith in God and submitted to the cruel and shameful death of the cross, being made a curse for the Israel of our God. Jacob served for the beautiful Rachel, and Jesus also for his bride, the church, which he presents before the throne of God without spot or wrinkle and all fair and lovely. The mighty Samson in breaking and carrying off the gate of the city of Gaza typically broke the seal of the tomb and loosed the bars of death. As a miracle-worker Elijah prefigures Christ. Samuel was faithful; so was Jesus. Jeremiah was rejected as a prophet; so was Jesus rejected by his own people. As a prophet, priest and king Moses was a figure of Jesus in a very remarkable sense. Jonah by being cast out from the belly of the big sea monster on the third day was a figure of Jesus being raised from the dead on the third day. Joshua represents Jesus in the miraculous crossing of Jordan, entrance into, and conquest of, Canaan. What a wonderful lesson in Joseph's coat of many colors is presented, were it possible to unearth and divine all the hidden meaning.

We notice Joseph incurring the enmity of his brothers as he fed the flock with his brethren, and brought to Jacob their evil report, and by the dreams which he had, in which his brethren bowed down to him and paid him homage. As Jesus ministered unto the flock of his Father he encountered the enmity of his brethren after the flesh, whose sinful thoughts and dreams of aravice and fleshly attainment he interpreted and denounced. In the dark and evil planning hearts of Joseph's brethren lurked the artful scheme to accomplish revenge and prevent the realization of his dreams. Jesus interprets the dreams of wicked men to-day when the Holy Spirit works in their hearts and convicts them of their sins. The prophet Joel declares, "Your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions." When the Spirit of God is poured out upon all flesh (both Jewish and Gentile believers), as it was at Pentecost, and men behold themselves vile and undone before God, and Jesus is made manifest, revealed to them as their salvation, they find that through the Holy Spirit Jesus is interpreted to them and they are complete in him who is the head of all principality and power, and are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, the handwriting of ordinances which was against them, and which was contrary to them, being taken out of the way and nailed to the cross. Only by his death and resurrection and exaltation could Jesus accomplish the salvation of his people and present them as holy as the thrice holy

God before his Father's throne in his heavenly priesthood, and the Comforter, or third person of the Trinity, reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment, and show unto the heirs of glory the things of God the Father. To do this work Jesus had first of all to be sent to his people in the flesh, the Jews, be condemned falsely by them, stripped of his seamless robe, scourged, crowned with thorns, humiliated, crucified and put in a pit, the grave, be raised from the dead, and to manifest himself as a risen Savior, ascend into heaven, and be exalted at the right hand of God. The grain of wheat is not quickened except it die, and so the heirs of glory must die to sin to live in Christ. As Jesus is the Elder Brother of the church, they have their life in him and with him and by his life and resurrection are justified, all guilt being removed and full atonement made. So in figure Joseph was stripped of his coat of many colors, indignantly treated by his brethren, and cast by them into a pit without water, when he was sent to them on an errand of ministration by Jacob. While Joseph languished in the pit his accusing brethren ate bread. So at the time of the condemnation of Jesus Christ the Jews ate their passover. Joseph was finally taken out of the pit, a figure of Jesus being raised from the dead, and sold for twenty pieces of silver, which was the price of a slave of the age of seventeen, being Joseph's age. Juda sold Joseph for this sum, and it was Judas (the Greek word for Juda being Judas) who sold Jesus for thirty pieces of silver, which was the price of a full grown slave. Later we see Joseph in Egypt, tempted by Potiphar's wife, but refusing to yield, and cast into a dungeon, where he interpreted the dreams of the butler and the baker. From this place he is finally exalted as a ruler over Egypt after making known unto Pharaoh that monarch's dreams, which foretold the seven years of plenty and the seven years of famine. Before Jesus interpreted or revealed himself to his disciples he withstood the temptation of the wilderness when Satan by cunning wiles attempted to ensnare him. Jesus first endured the cross before he wore the crown, submitted to the darkness of the dungeon of death before he ascended on high and led captivity captive. While in Egypt Joseph married Asenath, a Gentile woman, and was there given a name which means a revealer of secrets. It was in this world by his sacrificial death, and by the abolution of the law commandments and the breaking down of the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile that Jesus could be enabled to espouse the Gentile church as his bride with the Jewish church, thereby making of twain one man. It is in this world in this gospel dispensation that Jesus is the revealer of the secrets of God to sinful men, for the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and only the revealed things belong unto God's children. Joseph is a fruitful bough by a well because without the water of the word there would be no spiritual life, just as without natural wells there

would be no natural life in parts of the world where wells supply water. Jesus is a fruitful bough by the well of salvation, and the roots of this bough are as deep as the well itself, for all the recipients of God's grace are rooted and grounded in the faith of Jesus Christ. His predestination with its fine root filaments reaches to the bottom of that well, and the fiat of his almighty power makes the water of the well of salvation an inexhaustible supply springing up into eternal life in the regenerated sinner's heart. Jesus is referred to in Jeremiah as the branch of righteousness that shall grow up unto David, and Zechariah speaks of Jesus as "the man whose name is the Branch" and who shall build the temple of the Lord, bear all the glory, and sit and rule both as a King and a Priest upon his throne. Jesus revealed himself to the Samaritan woman by a well whose waters would not perpetually allay thirst, in striking contrast to the ever-flowing well of salvation. In the one well which may signify the inefficiency of the legal sacrifices and ceremonial forms to take away sin was the Samaritan woman drawing water. The antitypical well of Joseph signifies the fulfillment of the law in Jesus and all satisfaction rendered, and eternal life as the gift of God. Joseph found his brethren in Dothan, meaning a place of two walls, for the well of legalism was manifest before the well of salvation gave its healing and refreshing water to the perishing sinner. Jesus found his brethren under the law, dead in trespasses and in sins, and without hope in the world. How fitting the expression, "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall." So in the experimental knowledge of saving grace the guilty and needy sinner learns of the two wells in the Dothan of this world, and of warfare of flesh and Spirit.

The expression, "Whose branches run over the wall," has a beautiful significance in the destruction of that middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile when Jesus died and the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, and the observance of those ordinances that distinguished Jew from Gentile should be forever at an end. In his descent from Tamar, a Gentile woman, later with Rahab as an ancestor, and afterwards with Moabitish Ruth, then with Bathsheba as ancestors, all Gentiles, there was a strain of Gentile blood in Jesus Christ, so that in espousing the Gentile church as his bride he could be to them an elder brother, could claim for them the right of redemption in respect to kinship, and not violate a jot or tittle of any ordinance forbidding a Jew to marry a Gentile; rather Jesus was enabled thereby to fulfill the law, and to be a fruitful bough with branches that run over the wall. Where the law has said "do," we find that grace has said "done," and the finished work of the crucified Jesus is the poor sinner's hope, and the branches of that fruitful bough yield love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, longsuffering, meekness, temper-

ance, joy in tribulation, and patience in affliction, and all fruits of salvation.

There is a lesson taught by the refusal of Joseph to yield to the entreaties of Potiphar's wife, that the children of God do well to heed, for being espoused to Christ as the true and rightful husband, no professor of Christ should fellowship worldly denominations whose testimony, faith and order give the lie to their being true followers of the Lord of life and glory. One must be dead to the first husband, the law, to be married to the true husband, Jesus Christ. False denominations to-day would welcome with open arms the fellowship of the churches of the Old School Baptist faith if such churches would come to them upon the terms with which they, the Armenians, would lure into church fellowship.

The consideration of Joseph as a fruitful bough would not be complete without reference to the butler and the baker, to the former of whom Joseph was a savior of life, and to the latter a prophet with a fatal import, while they were confined in an Egyptian dungeon. The butler saw in his dream a vine with three branches, which budded, blossomed and bore fruit. In the dispute among the Israelites in the wilderness journey as to the one who should exercise the function of priesthood, Aaron was designated by the miraculous budding, blossoming and fruitage of his rod to officiate as high priest. Jesus is foreshadowed here in his fruitfulness as a high priest in his ministry, as the Savior of life to his people. The number three is the number denoting life from the dead, as Jesus was raised from the dead the third day. The number three very often refers in Scripture to the three dispensations, patriarchal, legal, gospel, and there is in the gospel dispensation a life from the dead in manifestation, as the buds, blossoms and fruit of Aaron's rod and of the butler's vines signified. The butler was released from prison, but the baker was hanged, who saw in his dream three white baskets of bakemeats, which were of course the product of human effort and carnal instruments. This signifies that in each of the three dispensations certain death awaits those who would attain salvation through human means and carnal efforts. The bakemeats, like the rejected offering of Cain, illustrates the flesh and creature means. Jesus is the means of life and liberty and salvation to his people, and the discriminating work of the electing grace of his ministry means death to the finally impenitent, as illustrated by the two thieves on the cross, one of whom confessed his sins, believing in Jesus, and was saved, while the other continued unrepentant to revile the dying Lord.

Before concluding this subject one must not fail to note the soul exercise of Joseph's brethren when the famine came upon the land and Jacob's family faced extinction by starvation, and no food could be obtained by human effort. It was necessary for Joseph's brethren to go to Egypt to buy corn stored up in abundance there through the administrative means of Joseph, whom they supposed to be dead or in

serfdom, except that Benjamin was in the instance of their first visit to Egypt left at home with the sorrowing Jacob, who had years before beheld the blood on Joseph's coat of many colors and had supposed him torn asunder by ravenous beasts. The ten brethren who went to Egypt for food met Joseph, who recognized them at once, without recognition on their part. To try and prove his brethren, who knelt before him and gave assurance that they were true men and no spies, Joseph treated them roughly and put them in prison three days. How true to-day that false believers who profess Christ, but know him not, claim themselves to be true men and servants of the most high God. Joseph's brethren had to be tried in order that their consciences might be wrought upon and contrition evidenced. They were released the third day with the injunction that their going forth to Canaan with corn meant that one of their number must remain as surety until their return with Benjamin. The sinner must give up the dearest desire of his heart before he can become a true disciple of Jesus and feast on heavenly manna, the broken body of Christ. Into what woe the sin of Joseph's brethren had plunged them. What anguish of soul was now theirs to experience. How typical of the poor sinner who knows the famine of his own soul, his inability to provide food, and sees his sins like towering mountains ready to fall down upon him. So Benjamin had to be given up by his sad father and come with his brethren the next time into Egypt, as the famine spread and increased in severity. Joseph's brethren had to be taught the needful lesson, when the silver divining cup was found in Benjamin's sack by Joseph's steward, when they set out for home the second time with the corn, and the money for the corn was returned to them in the sacks' mouths, that a sin committed against a neighbor or brother is a sin against God. Arrested and brought before Joseph, they felt themselves justly guilty of the terrible wrong done to their brother, deserving of death, and though sorry and fully penitent, they expected a speedy sentence and immediate execution. Instead of fiery judgment pronounced upon them, they heard with fearful hearts the strange words, "I am Joseph, your brother," and they were commanded to come near unto him. Their fears were allayed, pardon, peace and liberty were theirs to experience, and food in abundance was provided. What a counterpart this all has in the lives of those who are called out of nature's night into the light and knowledge of the gospel to find instead of execution of judgments of a broken law the welcome words, "I am Jesus, your brother," falling upon their opened ears with the sweetest of spiritual melody, and in addition to all this, such stores of grace and just the nourishing food in unmeasured quantities that a soul hungering for righteousness desires are the gift they receive, without money, without price. When Joseph's brethren dined with him before he made himself known to them as a fruitful bough, five times as much food was

placed at Benjamin's plate as at any of the others. There were five books of the law written by Moses, and the curse of the whole law rested upon one who violates a single commandment. But we see in the church, as typified by Benjamin, that she receives double for all her sins, for all the transgressions of God's people are covered by the Mercy-Seat, Jesus Christ, who keeps the law for them. So all the sins that may affect any of God's chosen and sanctified ones in all of the books of legalism are washed forever away. "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered."

The money that was found in the sacks of Joseph's brethren denotes faith, which is the real currency in the spiritual kingdom and accomplishes all things. In the book of Revelation it is written, "A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny." Jesus is the finest of the wheat, in whom there is no unevenness at all, and the price was one penny. The three measures of barley for the same price signify the church in its history and experience in the three dispensations to which previous reference has been made: patriarchal, legal, gospel, and every heir of glory is justified by the same faith as was Jesus Christ. "A man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ."

The silver divining cup found in Benjamin's sack not only symbolizes redemption because made of silver, the same metal as the half sheckels, for it is written, Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price, the precious blood of Jesus, but the silver cup in the sack of one who represents the church signifies that the gospel church alone divines and judges gifts in the church, the admission of members, the qualification of their servants, and the true from the false in those who profess to preach Christ.

The fact that Joseph's bones were carried out of Egypt and buried in Canaan prefigures the completeness of the body of Christ, the church, of which not a bone was broken that prophecy might be fulfilled, and all the members of which shall be taken from the Egypt of this world in the person of him who is a fruitful bough by the well of salvation, with branches including all the chosen of God from all peoples, tribes and tongues.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

POCA, W. Va., Dec. 23, 1929.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more I attempt to address you by letter, which is quite a task for me, as I am a very poor scribe, but feeling quite lonely and much cast down it gives me some pleasure to speak with my pen to those of like precious faith with me. We are taught in the Scriptures that we may know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren, and if not greatly deceived I surly do love the dear Old School Baptist people, and feel of a truth their God is my God. My only hope of heaven and immortal glory is in what their God and my God has done for me, a poor helpless sinner. While I read articles in the SIGNS OF

THE TIMES and the *Lone Pilgrim* from those I have never seen ofttimes the briny tears gush from my eyes as it seems some secret spring of my heart had been touched by the finger of God's eternal, unchangeable and everlasting love, and oh how my poor aching heart expands with love to them for the glorious truth of the gospel they have been blessed by divine revelation to present afresh to my mind. Not long ago, I was reading an article written by sister Mary Ellison, of Grantville, Kansas, and she beautifully expressed my thoughts in regard to the hairs of the head. Christ tells his disciples that even the hairs of your head are all numbered. (Luke xii. 7; Matt. x. 30.) It appears to me that more was meant by those words of Jesus to his disciples than the natural hair of the natural head. While it is not impossible with God to number the hairs of their natural head, he spoke of the head in the singular, as one. The church of Jesus Christ is made up of many members, but one body, and Jesus is head over all things to the church, his body. Even the very hair of your head. Jesus Christ your head. As hair gets its life from the head, so it is with our spiritual life. We understand that our spiritual life is hid with Christ in God, and our spiritual growth in grace and knowledge of the truth must come from our spiritual Head. It applies to all the redeemed of the Lord individually and collectively as the body of Christ. Again he tells them, Not a hair of your head shall perish. We believe and preach that doctrine, that not one of his redeemed children will ever perish. They may feel that they are ready to perish, but listen, poor trembling soul, to these precious words of the dear old prophet: "And ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel. And it shall come to pass in that day [gospel day], that the great trumpet [gospel ministers called and qualified of God] shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria [enemy's land], and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem."—Isaiah xxvii. 12, 13. It is all with him, and to him, and in him, that we move and have our being. Solomon says, Give strong drink to him that is ready to perish. Oh how we relish a good draught: doctrinal discourse from the mouth or pen of God's called and faithful servants. God has never, neither will he ever, leave himself without witnesses, God-honoring ministers who will not shun to declare the truth as it is in Christ. As we glean after the prophets in their prophecy we are made to rejoice, feeling of a truth they were moved by the spirit of inspiration to pen down for our comfort in this gospel day, in which Jesus is our Prophet, Priest and King. In the fourteenth chapter of second Samuel we notice the request of the wise woman of Tekoh and the king's answer. She was a widow. She represents the church and her dead husband the law. That is dead to her. The king said to her, "As the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of thy son fall to the earth." That was a comforting mes-

sage. Jesus, our Prophet, Priest and King tells us that not a hair of our head shall perish. We view Samson to be a type of Jesus. The angel, speaking to Manoah's wife, said, "For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb." The seven locks of his head, to my mind, represent his people through the seven dispensations of time, the same as St. John's address to the seven churches of Asia. So it is that Samson, being a type of Christ, the locks of his head were woven in the web of transgression. As all his elect, chosen of God, become to be sinners by transgression of God's holy law, so the gainsaying world of Philistines could not detect where Samson's strength lay until betrayed by Delilah. Then the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought money in their hands. We see the spirit that actuated Delilah also actuated Judas, who betrayed our Lord, the antitype of Samson, into the hands of wicked men; not until then could they lay hands on him to put him to death. The shaving off the seven locks of Samson's head, to me represents the separating of the old covenant, with all its rituals, and the setting up of the grace covenant, ordered in all things and sure, as the type ends in the antitype. Now as old things have passed away, and, behold, all things become new, we no longer worship in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the spirit as we still discover the life of the hair is in our spiritual Samson's head by it beginning to grow out again under the grace covenant.

I will close by saying, dear brother and sister Oliver, I never expect to see your friendly faces again on earth, but I hope we are heirs to that inheritance reserved in heaven for all the redeemed of the Lord. Oh can we claim such a legacy, bequest unto us by our heavenly Father? When you have a mind to write think of an old helpless sinner away down in the southwestern corner of West Virginia who is trusting in the Lord for all things and write him a few lines.

From your old brother in tribulation,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

[THE above was written by Elder J. W. McClanahan and sent to brother and sister Oliver at Herndon, Va.-ED.]

MONROE, Ga., Dec. 11, 1929.

DEAR BRETHREN:—My mind has been impressed to write you of my affliction, yet not with these crippled hands of mine, as they are no good, except to feed myself, and my knees are all drawn with rheumatism, but I am thankful to be able to dictate this to you while lying on my bed. David said it is good to be afflicted, that he might meditate on the law of the Lord both day and night. My meditations have been numerous, and I have gotten things out of it that would never have come to me otherwise. It has been sweet to my soul, even though I have been helpless for eight months, not having walked a step in all that time, but feel I am blessed to be able to feed myself. I feel I have been blessed in the past more than I deserved, having

been made to sit together in many heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord. It was hard for me to give up driving my car, after having driven eighty thousand miles, sad to think I would never be able to drive again, but my dear children promised to take me anywhere I want to go, if I am able to ride. In addition to this, I have had the pleasure and privilege of visiting associations in the north and east, for which I desire to thank God. I have a hope that I have been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, where we have a King, even Jesus, who has a great storehouse in this kingdom, and many bundles of grace have been given out to me in prosperity and in adversity, with my name written on each package, without cost of any kind, and I have enjoyed very many of them. The last bundle of grace that has been handed out to me is my affliction, and on this bundle I feel is written, "My grace is sufficient for thee," and I am trying to be reconciled to believe, or with the belief, that it is sufficient. I have shed more tear of joy in my affliction than tears of sorrow. I have been traveling in this way fifty-seven years, reaching my eightieth milestone last Monday, when I was surrounded with my family and friends to cheer me up, and received letters of encouragement from many of those with whom I have been associated. My soul was made to bubble over with joy on this memorable occasion. I feel that my race is run, but have a hope that I have fought a good fight, kept the faith and now am ready to be offered, &c. I am now thinking of that inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for me, who have been kept by the power of God, through faith,ready to be revealed in the last time. I feel to hope I have that faith which was once delivered unto the saints, which is the substance of things hoped for, evidence of things not seen, believing that these are some of the things. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." It is exclusively for those of whom the apostle spoke: "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son," "moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called," &c. This is the Royal family that I hope I belong to, born of that incorruptible seed, by the word of God that liveth and abideth forever.

Now, brethren, if you think this letter worthy of a place in the SIGNS I would love to have my brethren read it, for I feel it will be my last effort. If we meet no more on earth we hope to meet in that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Submitted in love.

Your brother in hope,

JAMES M. ADAMS.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Dec. 17, 1929.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—A brother in Oklamoma has requested me to write through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on Romans xv. 41, 42. I do not

see what I can say to him for his enlightenment, still I must try and be instant in season and out of season. If I can so write, the apostle is treating directly on the resurrection of the dead, which he calls the gospel which we preach. Belief in the resurrection is faith in our Lord Jesus, and the resurrection is the power of God which he calls the gospel. I do not know of any chapter in the Bible that more fully sets forth this wonderful truth. He tells us that some would say, "With what bodies do they come forth?" and tells us of the glory of the various bodies, as of the sun, or the moon, or any of the stars. The glory of saints in the resurrection is far above these. These are bodies terrestial and bodies celestial, and all creatures of God to do what he hath appointed for them, but they can do nothing without him. Moses asked that he might see the glory of God, but was told that he could not see God and live. This shows that to see God in his glory would take this natural life. At one time Jesus was transfigured before Peter, James and John, and his raiment was exceeding white and his face did shine as the sun, and they saw Moses and Elias in glory with him. Therefore the natural sun and moon and stars were in their places in the natural firmament which God had created for them, and their shining was the glory of those elements, but one must be in an entirely different element to be with the Lord in his glory. This glory is the final destiny of those who are raised from the dead, and they have no earthly ties, but are looking for the glory of God and to be glorified with him in his glory. This is the great hope which the Father has prepared for them. A dear sister had a vision of this at one time: she was expecting the coming of the Lord and was exceedingly happy. Her two daughters stood by her in much fear, with distorted faces. She knew them in the vision, and their condition did not affect her happiness, but that happiness was to glorify Jesus with her whole being. One blessed thing in this gospel: all the carnality is left behind. The old man is the carnal mind, but this body which some people are pleased to call "the dust body" shall as surely rise again as that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead. There will be nothing carnal about it. To be carnally minded is death, for the carnal mind is enmity against God, not subject to his law. But the body shall be like unto his glorious body. This body of Jesus Christ is the central figure in the glorious kingdom of our God, and all things are put under his feet. The spirits of just men made perfect are witnesses of God to this glorious truth.

Brother Lefferts, I would be glad to be able to present this great gospel truth with much more beauty and glory to our brother and to your readers than I have, but my heart is heavy, as I am sitting by the bedside of my aged sister, expecting her demise at any time.

Your brother in much tribulation,

L. H. HARDY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1930.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

So complicated is life in this modern age and so far removed are we to-day from the simplicity which marked the lives of our forefathers, so varied are the activities of mankind in all nations everywhere and so tangled are the threads of human existence, that the whole field of events as they are transpiring in the world to-day present to our minds an exceedingly puzzling maze, yet to Divine Mind all is plain. Plain it all is to God, because he has ordered it all in infinite wisdom, has foreseen it all from the beginning, and works it all after the counsel of his own will. Our finite reason may puzzle over this item and over that, we may ask what this means and what that means; but the answer is supplied by revelation only, and then only to faith which derives itself from God the giver. The year 1929 was an exceedingly interesting one and together with the decade preceding it formed, we believe, a very significant era so far in the world's history and has a very meaningful bearing upon the church's life as well. We have seen in the past few years the impossibilities of yesterday become the commonplaces of to-day, and we take as a matter of course in our modern lives things which would have made our forebears gasp in astonishment. All this means not that the world is getting better, nor that our age is any real improvement over former eras, but it means we live more speedily than formerly, see and hear more than ever, have a wider view than ever of world happnings because our facilities for viewing and hearing world occurrences are better than ever before, so that a person living no matter how remote from the beaten track can, if he so wishes, place himself in immediate touch with all going on. We have witnessed in recent years a most marvelous unleashing of the mechanical genius and inventiveness of men. The providence of God has seen fit to release for his inscrutable purpose this ability of the human nature and mind so that many mechanical appliances unknown to our ancestors have become the casual equipment of our present-day life. Distance is being annihilated, and with distance time also. Now can be done in a few hours what used to take days to do. Miles which used to take days to travel

can now be gone over in a short time. The automobile, the airplane, the telephone, telegraph and radio have all contributed their bit to draw together more nearly than ever the farflung peoples of the world. And the end is not yet. Perhaps the next few years may witness more astonishing developments. There is no reason why all this could not have been done a thousand or more years ago, except that the time for it had not come, and until the time set for these things, all prearranged in the purpose of God, did arrive, none of these things could take place. It is not because men to-day are wiser and abler than ever before. Men have always been wise and able, and there is no disputing the fact that men of finer minds and nobler characters have lived in former ages than are living to-day,but just because the time had not arrived for God to unleash human capacities to bring about these discoveries and inventions which have so much to do with our daily lives, none of these things could have been accomplished in any earlier time than this. But only because it was not God's will to have it so. That the peoples of the world are being drawn nearer together than ever before, is not to be doubted. Not nearer together necessarily in love and fellowship, but nearer together in means of transportation and communication. Pericles busy building Athens was but eight hundred miles away from Nehemiah busy rebuilding Jerusalem, yet we doubt if these two men ever heard of each other. Eight hundred miles in those days was a long way and communication between these two there was not. To-day eight thousand miles means very little and nothing takes place in the world anywhere but that people thousands of miles away soon hear of it.

The past few years have witnessed an awakening of national self-consciousness among the teeming peoples of the Orient. What this stirring of the East portends we are not prophets enough to foretell, but we doubt not it is a warning and a threat to the self-satisfaction of the white race which at present dominates the world. As soon as these Oriental people realize their potential strength and vast resources the Western world may certainly look for significant things to come out of the East. India is clamoring for independence from Great Britain and her demands cannot longer be ignored by England. Japan watches all this most closely and with understanding, retaining with one hand her Western friendships but neglecting no opportunity to consolidate her interests in the restless Asiatic world. Then, by no means to be despised, is that remarkable regime of Sovietism ruling Russia to-day, that condition so puzzling to us who are used to the capitalistic order of things as we know it here in America. What does Russia mean to us? Much more we fear than we are aware. Democracy and capitalism cannot live together with communism and socialism. Which of these will be triumphant in the world of the future? Soon or late the test of strength between these rivals is bound to come. In the

Europe of the present we note the trend away from democracy and monarchy toward one-man dictatorships. There are five of these in Europe today, of which the dictatorship in Italy is the most thorough and complete. It has succeeded in stifling all opposition and dominates king and senate, allows no criticism of its authority either privately by expression of individual opinion or publicly from press or pulpit. The year 1929 witnessed a restoration in measure of the temporal power of the vatican lost for fifty-nine years, but now coming into effect again by treaty with Italy, by which the pope again emerges from retirement and becomes recognized not only as a spiritual but a temporal head, with absolute sovereignty over a section of territory which, while small in itself, establishes the principle of civil as well as spiritual government. What does this portend for the world and for God's people? It will bear watching. The summer of 1929 alarmed the whole world with the fearful massacre of Jews in Palestine by the Arabs. Under the Balfour Declaration of 1917, England promised Palestine to the Jews for a national home and the Jews have been going back there in increasing numbers, until by June 30th, 1929, official statistics give the number in Palestine as 154,330, or slightly less than one-fifth of the total population, the bulk of which are Arabs and Moslems. These latter resent the Jews' coming to Palestine and this resentment is crystallizing into a determination to resist to the last extremity the return of the Jews to Palestine. Equally determined are the Jews that the Holy Land belongs to them by divine right and by Great Britain's promise, and they are bent on going back, let the consequences be what they may. This dilema threatens Britain's empire, because the whole Moslem world, comprising sixty million people, threatens to revolt if Great Britain persists in keeping her promise to the Jews. When Joshua led the Israelites across Jordan into Caanan, the various tribes already occupying the land resented this Jewish invasion. Their resistance failed, however, because God had promised the land to Israel, and Israel therefore had to possess it. This they did. Some of the Canaanites were killed, others were driven out and the rest reduced to subjection. Will history repeat itself? In a manner, we believe so. No matter how fiercely the opposition may wage, the Jews will be gathered back to the Holy Land. We understand the Bible to say so, and the word of God must be fulfilled.

There is evidence in the signs of these times of a prevailing desire on the part of the leading nations of Europe to draw together with the United States into an alliance to prevent future wars by reducing, according to mutual agreement, armaments on sea and land. Burdened with debts and with social and industrial discontent as most of Europe is in consequence of the World War, they know they cannot afford to drift into another general conflict. Yet, God's people know that world peace cannot come about by human

contracts. In the day when it does come the Lord himself shall be exalted and the idols of the nations shall be cast to the moles and the bats. If world peace can come through national pacts, then man would have himself to thank and not God. This can never be. It will come about, however, in God's own time and way in some future age, that the nations shall not learn war any more, but shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks; but when it does come about it shall redound to God's glory alone and not to the credit of national diplomacy nor to the perspicuity of the wise. At the moment of writing these words Russia and China are occupying the position of antagonists to each other, though not much attention is being given to it by the world at large; yet just such little and far-off struggles sometimes set in motion more momentous strife likely to involve the whole world. A great conflagation is often kindled by a spark. Such was the cause of the great war of 1914 to 1918. Human help always fails in the last extremity. In God alone is help to be found, either spiritually or temporally. So long as there remains anywhere in the world an area of discontent, so long there will exist a possibility of crises arising having the likelihood to draw the whole world into war. For sure protection against such dangers there is but one remedy, and that is the world-wide government of the Son of God ruling by love in the hearts of all men everywhere.

In our own United States, the greatest exigency that faces our people and our government is the breakdown of law and order, the prevalence of crime throughout the country and the inability or disinclination of the forces of government to cope with it. We are the most lawless nation on the earth to-day. A prominent member of the police department of one of our largest American cities estimates the total income from crime in the whole United States to be not less than $11,800,000,000.00. The total annual output of the automobile trade is valued at $5,000,000,000.00. The total expense of the United States government annually is $4,500,000,000.00. Thus, you see, crime is the biggest and most profitable business in the United States to-day. We have no desire to be an alarmist, but from this cursory glance around at what is going on in this present world, events which any one can see if they but take the trouble to notice current history, it is no exaggeration to say that humanity to-day is like a city built on the side of a dormant volcano which may become actively eruptive at any moment. The bright thread of God's eternal purpose is running through all this criss-cross of human doings and his sovereign will is being accomplished and unfolded to our gaze as time moves on. Unless we are very much deceived in our interpretation of these signs of the times, it is our honest conviction that we are not far from the expiration of the "times of the Gentiles" spoken of by the Lord in Luke xxi. 24, and that we are getting

near to the "times of restitution of all things" declared in Acts iii. 21. Let none of you be so deceived as to think Scripture fulfilling is a thing of the past and not of the present or the future. It is an error to think that Matthew xxiv., Mark xiii., Luke xxi. and Acts iii. refer entirely to the past and that those Scriptures have no place in the unfolding of to-day's history. "Knowing the time, that now is it high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." Romans thirteen not only had its application to the church as events in that day drew near to the destruction of Jerusalem and to the Jewish dispersion, but it has its application now to us as we draw near unto the end of the gospel dispensation and to the eventual collapse of Gentile world-dominion. Through all this, and beyond, the church of God shall emerge gloriously triumphant into the radiance of the full glory of the Son of God. All these things are being worked together in God's sovereignty to make his name known among men and to enthrone his redeemed bride in uncreated light and eternal beauty.

H. H. L.

We request our subscribers when sending in subscriptions or changes of address to be sure and give the *exact name and address* to which the paper is now coming; otherwise we are liable to give the credit to the wrong person, as we may have two subscribers of the same surname at the one post office.

PSALMS CXXXIX. 15, 16.

"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."

A request has been made for our views through the Signs on the above Scripture. So far as we know, this portion of the Word has to do with what we have understood to be one of the fundamental points of doctrine, believed and contended for by readers of the Signs from its very beginning: namely, the eternal vital union of the church with Christ. We do not understand that there was merely a sufficiency of eternal life in Christ for each and every member of his mystical body, the said body to be created at some future time and a portion of this eternal life allotted to the individual members of it at the time of regeneration after they become the sons and daughters of Adam. This idea does not harmonize, as we see it, with other portions of the Scripture. In the first chapter of Genesis, the record is that God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." In the fifth chapter of Genesis, first and second verses, we have this language: "This is the book of the regeneration of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them; and blessed

them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created." These quotations appear to confirm what we understand to be taught in the Bible, that Eve was created in Adam, to be later separated and manifested as an help meet for him; he said of her, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." As they were created in the image and likeness of God, it seems clear to us that the bride, the Lamb's wife, the church, was the workmanship of God, "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Therefore the psalmist could well say, speaking in Christ's stead, "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in a waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." The apostle Paul says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God," and in the verses we are considering there are some of the deep and mysterious things of our God hidden from the wise and prudent of this world, neither can any man by searching find them out; they must be revealed if known at all. We seem to see something of the secret work of our God in his great purpose whereby he purposed to glorify himself and lift the name of Jesus on high, in the declaration that "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." Therein is involved the fall of Adam, through which the church was to come under the condemnation and death of the law by transgression, and the sending of God's own blessed Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin to condemn sin in the flesh: "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." In that the Word which was in the beginning with God, and was God, was made flesh and dwelt among us, was he not, indeed, "curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth"? Is it any marvel, then, that David should say in the verse just preceding this declaration, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well"? Did this not embrace the new creation, God-Man in union with the members of his body? Then, following, he goes on to say, "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect." Let every inhab-

itant of Zion rejoice and break forth into singing praises to God from whom all blessings flow, though every member of the body of Christ fell in their federal head, Adam, neither are they only black with sin by nature, but by practice as well, nevertheless the eye of their heavenly Father sees them, and he careth for them. This body which was to be sown in weakness and was to fall in the earth and die, was to be ransomed from the burnings of hell and raised in great power and glory, through the complete and finished work of redemption by its glorious head, and though in and of itself it is vile and black, and imperfect, yet it is perfect in Christ Jesus our Lord. The church as it has always stood in Christ, has never been imperfect, but "unperfect:" that is to say, it has not always, neither is it yet fully manifested in the world, but the name of each and every member stands recorded by the eternal pen of Almighty God in the Lamb's book of life, and there is none in heaven, in earth or in hell who will ever be able to eradicate the name, or their right to that inheritance which is above, from the divine record. "In thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them," are the words of none other than Christ as he spoke by the mouth of his servant David. Therefore, they shall withstand all the assaults of men and devils. How good it is to rest upon the solid foundation, that God is the Rock, his work is perfect. Having begun it, he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. We may be assured, then, that every one whose name stands recorded in the Book of Life, according to the electing of love of God, shall sing praises unto him and the Lamb when all things else that are earthly will have decayed. Time is unfolding by degrees that which God had purposed in his own Son before time began, and it will not end until he will have brought the very last one of his precious jewels from the regions of despair. "Which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." Back, before the creation of Adam, the church stood in Christ, when as yet there was none of the members of his body in evidence in the flesh, but in the process of "which in continuance were fashioned," they were brought into manifestation and through the suffering of death as a consequence of sin they are conformed to the image of him who loved them and gave himself for them. How poor, finite mortals of the earth do stagger with wonder and amazement when they are given to comprehend something of the glorious mystery of godliness and God's wonderful works among the children of men, that he loved Jacob and hated Esau, before either were born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth. They are made to know, of a truth, that "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table." When we can, by faith, understand something

of the Trinity, the three-in-one God, of the three separate and distinct offices of each, and at the same time the oneness and unity of all, also the union of Christ with his people, we can but feel that these things are too wonderful for us and that we cannot attain unto them. Should we atempt to inquire into the matter, as to the "when" and the "how," we find it is said of him, "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth; when he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of the deep; when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men" "Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?" We like to meditate upon the union of Christ and the church, and sometimes it seems good to sing,

"In union with the Lamb,
From condemnation free,
The saints from everlasting were,
And shall forever be.

In cov'nant from of old,
The sons of God they were;
The feeblest lamb in Jesus' fold
Was bless'd in Jesus there.

Its bonds shall never break,
Tho' earth's old columns bow;
The strong, the tempted and the weak,
Are one with Jesus now.

With joy lift up your heads,
Ye highly favored few,
When through the earth destruction spreads,
For what shall injure you?

When storms or tempest rise,
Or sins your peace assail,
Your hope in Jesus never dies,
'Tis cast within the veil.

Here let the weary rest,
Who love the Savior's name;
Though with no enjoyment blest,
This covenant stands the same."

We are aware of the fact that some of our good brethren, those whom we love for the truth's sake, who have, possibly, a far deeper and clearer insight into the glorious and blessed truths than we can ever hope to have, do not see eye to eye with us in what we have endeavored to set forth here. We have no way of knowing what understanding our inquirer has of the Scripture in question, or to what intent and purpose the query was made, though we would by no means infer that he had any other motive than to gain some knowledge of a spiritual nature or be confirmed in his own views. We hope we are agreed and that we may be comforted by the mutual faith of each other,but regardless of the views of others, when we are called upon to testify to the things of our God, in faithfulness to him, we feel compelled to set forth the truth according to the light that has been given us, without

making any apologies, at the same time hoping that God may so give us to understand and contend for his truth as to glorify him, and build up and edify, not tear down and confuse, the saints in their most holy faith. Concerning spiritual gifts, Paul says there is a diversity of them, "But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentils, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." The conclusion would appear to be, that there is one body, but many members, and that all are necessary for the good of the whole, so, Let not the hand say to the foot, I have no need of thee; or the eye to the ear, &c., for all have their place and need of each other, forgetting not that Christ is the head over all things to the church, and that he is not divided. Let us, therefore, labor together as much as in us is for the glory of God, showing, if possible, that we have been with and learned of Jesus. Let us not make a brother an offender for a word, nor require of each other to write or speak in our own prescribed stereotyped form, but taking the Scriptures as our pattern and guide, in faith, order and practice, endeavoring to shew forth the praises of him who loved us and gave himself for us.

R. L. D.

NOTICES.

I am alone in a good seven room house, with a nice garden, some small fruit, houses and barns for two or three hundred hens. I have a couple of horses and cows, and would like to have a small family of good Old School Baptists come and live with me.

Address J. B. Durand, R. F. D. 1, Rockville, Missouri.

Your unworthy brother in a precious hope, J. B. DURAND.

State College, New Mexico, Dec. 19, 1929.

Dear Editors:—State College, New Mexico, is located forty miles north of El Paso, Texas, in the Rio Grande Valley three miles south of Las Cruces, N. M., and one mile east of Mesilla Park, N. M. We have no Primitive Baptist Church in this section of the country, and I have met but one brother and sister here. I would be pleased to hear from an Old Baptist who could give me some information through the Signs of the Times, or by private letter, of the location of the nearest church. This valley is fine for farming, and has a wonderful climate.

J. R. HEATH.

A CORRECTION.

On page 20 of the January issue of the Signs of the Times there is a mistake in the signatures at the close of the Corresponding Letter of the Salisbury Association. Instead of George F. Adkins, Clerk, and J. H. Truitt, Assistant Clerk, it should read, J. H. Truitt, Clerk, and George F. Adkins, Assistant Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence, in Delmar, Maryland, October 18th, 1929, Joseph Rounds and Miss Mary Ellen Dykes, both of Salisbury, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

JACOB STELLE LEEDOM, our brother in Christ, departed this earthly life December 14th, 1929. He was born June 4th, 1854. For the past thirty-three years he had been taking care of the meetinghouse and graveyard belonging to the Southampton Old School Baptist Church. He was baptized into the membership of this church the second Sunday of February, 1901, by the late Elder Silas H. Durand, who was then pastor of the church. On the death of Deacon Caswell B. Reeves brother Leedom was appointed deacon and served in this capacity until he, too, passed away. About forty-three years ago he married Miss Mary J. Lefferts. To them were born nine children, five sons and four daughters, one son and two daughters dying in infancy. The surviving children are Oswell Leedon, Jeffersonville, Pa., Miles Leedom, Riverside. N. J., Sara Leedom, Philadelphia, Pa., Maretta, Norristown, Pa., Thaddeus, somewhere in the West, and Marvin, Philadelphia, Pa. There are also nine grandchildren living. He is also survived by three brothers. Owing to the illness of the pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, and to his being unable to attend, I was requested to officiate. Brother Leedom was my uncle by marriage, his wife having been my father's youngest sister. The duty of taking care of the meetinghouse and graveyard of the Southampton Church has therefore been in the Lefferts family for over fifty years, myself having been born in the same house where Uncle Jacob died.

Funeral services were held in the meetinghouse, interment by the side of his wife. Just before going to the meetinghouse to conduct the services, his daughter, Sara, quoted to me the words in the first verse of the fourteenth chapter of John. Therefore I used these words as the basis of my remarks that day. May the Spirit of the Lord comfort the bereaved church and sorrowing children, reconciling us all to his divine will.

ALSO,

LIZZIE SPAGNER, our sister in Christ, and the last surviving colored member of the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, died January 7th, 1930, near Manassas Va. She is survived by no nearer relatives than three nephews and five nieces. Her exact age is not known, but she is said to have been in her eightieth year. She was baptized by the late Elder E. V. White. Her life of faith in God and in his Son is a bright and shining example to all the church. Meekness, gentleness and simplicity marked her deportment. It was her request before she died that I be called to preach at her funeral. I did so, using the words of Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

H. H. L.

BROTHER **V. L. SCOTT** was born March 4th, 1853, and died May 10th, 1929, making his stay on earth 76 years, 2 months and 6 days. He was married to Miss Mary E. Turner March 5th, 1879, and to that union were born two children: Carlon Scott and Oria Scott, both of whom are still with their mother. Brother Scott was given a hope in Christ and united with Dry Creek Church of Old School Baptists April 11th, 1894. He was elected Church Clerk (date not known), which office he held as long as he was able to attend his regular meetings. He was a faithful member and a strong believer in salvation by grace, first, last and all the time, and was loved by all who knew him; even the enemies of the doctrine he believed loved him as a man. His home was open to any who went there, especially the Old Baptists. He leaves to mourn his good wife, two children, many nephews and nieces and a host of friends. While we mourn our loss, we are sure he is sleeping that blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep, and we say, Sleep on and take your rest. We would say to his bereaved wife and children, Weep not for brother Scott, for he is through with the sufferings of this life and is awaiting the resurrection morn, when Christ will come again and call our sleeping dust from the grave and house us in heaven and immortal glory. I will say to all the Baptists that when they are passing that way to stop in and see sister Scott and the children, for they told me they want the Baptists to come just as they always have.

The unworthy writer tried to hold prayer service at his funeral, as he did not want preaching. He said he believed that every man preached his own funeral by his daily walk. Surely he was a child of God.

Written by one who loved him,

J. N. DARNALL.

DANIEL SHIELDS was born February 5th, 1854, and passed from this life October 7th, 1929, being 75 years, 8 months and 2 days of age. He was married to Martha Comstock in 1872 or 1873. She passed away about thirty years ago. To them were born three children, one dying in infancy. Mrs. Ella Shuman, a widow, James A. Shields, one grandson, John Shields, and myself, his widow, are left to mourn our loss. He and I were married December 11th, 1904, and lived near Bethlehem Church, in Edgar County, about twenty-five years, where we were members and where our brethren and ministers were entertained and felt our home was also a home for them, until my husband's health began to fail and he could not take care of our little place, so we, together with his daughter Ella, moved to Dudley, where we bought a General Store. Here we had a pleasant home, his daughter managing the business and attending to most of the other work. His health began to fail rapidly in September, but he was not confined to his bed. He was not reduced in flesh or strength until the last day or two, when he was still able

to get up and walk to his chair, even to within a few minutes of his death. He had the best of medical care, and all was done for him that loving hearts and willing hands could do. His Maker called and he had to go. Our home is sad and lonely and we miss him greatly. I know he has gone to his eternal home, but sometimes I feel I cannot be reconciled to giving him up, yet I know I should not murmur or complain. His physician was his cousin, and is also an Old School Baptist minister of note, and he officiated at his funeral, preaching a very interesting and comforting sermon. We laid his body to rest in the Shields Cemetery, near Kansas, Illinois, among his relatives, old friends and neighbors. There were many floral expressions of sympathy and kindness, for which we are thankful.

Yours in sorrow,

ELLA R. SHIELDS.

NICHOLAS HUNTER, our dear brother, passed away November 26th, 1929, near Clairette, Erath County, Texas. He was married to Miss Damoris Fewel July 22nd, 1886. To this union six children were born, two girls and four boys, one daughter dying in infancy. He leaves to mourn his departure his aged companion, five children, one sister and seven grandchildren. He was baptized in the Predestinarian Baptist faith and order in 1889, and stood firm during the split on conditionalism. He was ordained deacon in 1906, which office he filled faithfully until the end came. Surely a great man in Israel has fallen, and the church at Clairette has sustained a great loss, but we hope our loss is his eternal gain. His remains were laid to rest in the cemetery at Hico, Texas, to await the trump of God to awaken these mortal bodies and fashion them like unto the glorified body of Jesus. Dear ones, sorrow not as others who have no hope. His funeral was conducted by Elder W. R. Herndon, his pastor, in the presence of a large concourse of relatives and friends.

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. W. O. Harris, Okla., $2; Ernest Davis, Del., $1; J. H. Jones, Ga., $1; Mrs. M. E. Drake, N. J., $1; Mrs. Georgia Carruthers, Va., $1; Mrs. Jennie Cole, $1; B. H. Shearon, Tenn., $2; Paul T. Leigh, N. J., $1; Mrs. M. V. Sizemore, Tenn., $1; Albert Casey, Ky., 50 cents; Peter Jones, Wash., $1; Elder J. G. Sawin, Ill., $2.50; J. H. Shambaugh, Ohio, $1; Maud O. Hulbert, N. Y., $1; Allie Gooch Reid, N. C., $2; Mrs. Hayes Mitchell, Nebr., $4; Miss E. G. Merryman, Md., $1; Woburn Church, Mass., $5; Hewitt Osborn, N. Y., $6; "A friend," Ont., $2; Mrs. Val Werner, N. J., $2; E. E. Staggs, Texas, $1; Mrs. T. L. Carey, Ont., $1; Cyrus Cross, N. Y., $1; Sarah J. Dishong, Pa., $3; W. H. Chaney, Texas, $1; W. K. Baird, Ky., $3; Mrs. A. J. Owens, Ky., $3; Mrs. Sydney Duclos, Canada, $1; Mrs. F. G. Hutchens, Ky., $1; Mrs. T. H. Young, Ohio, $3; C. T. Reynolds, W. Va., $1; Mrs. M. A. Somers, Va., $1; Mrs. Julia A. Turner, Ky., $1; Mrs. J. D. Shafer, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Amelia Tomlinson, Pa., $1.

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J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.
O. P. SPEMS, Church Clerk,
143 W. 11th Street, Claremont Cal.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, every Sunday at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. at the home of W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Midweek song service by appointment. Pastors, Elders Jones and Jaynes. Basket lunch.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

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E B AULT, Church Clerk.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

ONTARIO, California, Dec. 12, 1929.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am submitting this good letter for your disposal. For about forty-five years I have been reading the SIGNS and have found practically everything I have read in it uniformly speaking the same thing as was contained in the 1832 volume. It is a great deal to be thankful for in this fast changing age of confusion and construction. May God's grace enable you as of old to maintain the same steadfastness, ascribing all glory, honor and praise to him who works all things after the counsel of his own will, for good to them that love him.

I have brother Bourland's consent, if you feel it well to publish his good letter.

Yours in hope,

G. O. WALKER.

WICHITA FALLS, Texas, Nov. 11, 1929.

DEAR BROTHER WALKER:—Yes, dearly beloved brother and yokefellow in the gospel ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have lived over and over again the pleasant memories of being with you and the dear brethren and sisters at your meeting on the first Sunday in October, 1929, in your home enjoying your hospitality, hearing the dear saints singing spiritual songs and in spirit worshiping and praising God's holy name. A beautiful sight it is to see the Lord's little children gathered together in his name, whose hearts are filled with love for each other, and who manifest by every word and act that they esteem each other better than self. My poor heart was filled with joy inexpressible to see your little flock rooted and grounded in the faith of God's elect and established in the doctrine of God our Savior. I realized forcibly my weakness to try and speak rightly in the dear name of my Master, knowing I am but dust and ashes in his sight. I tried with the ability given not to do violence to truth, but preach an all-wise, eternal, omnipotent God, full of grace, mercy and truth, whose counsel shall stand

forever and ever, executing his sovereign will, and none can say unto him, Jehovah, what doest thou? According to the testimony of the angel, God willed that Mary should bear a son, and that his name should be called Jesus, that he should save his people from their sins, and after he had made his advent into the world he said, This is the will of my Father which hath sent me, That of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. This is the hope of the little, lonely, doubting pilgrim here below, that God, the Father, gave them in covenant to the Son before the world began, and that the Son was duty and covenant bound to do the will of the Father. The Father's will was that his children should be made holy and without blame before him in love, he having predestinated them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself according to the good pleasure of his will. Job says he is in one mind and who can turn him? and whatsoever his soul desireth, even that he doeth. Jesus' testimony is, that he did come down from heaven. On the cross he cried out, and said, It is finished; also, I and the Father are one, and that it is impossible for God to die. We conclude, according to the record, if God is all-wise, and declared the end from the beginnig, and Jesus was faithful with the Father and finished the work he came to do (which he said he did), that his people who were given to him were saved from death, and that God's will was made full and complete in his Son. Now the questions arise, Am I numbered with the Lord's train that filled the temple? Was my name written in the Lamb's book of life? Were my sins by and of the Father lain on Jesus? Was his blood shed for me? Was it my sins that nailed him to the cross? These are questions that vitally interest the poor hungry soul, and the strongest language I dare use is,I hope. I do not know that my Redeemer liveth and that I have an inheritance, but I hope so, and that I heard that small still voice which spoke peace to my troubled soul. Then if indeed we do have hope, why so? We see we are yet sinners, and imperfect, cannot do the things we would, and are made to hate the life we live in the flesh, because of so many follies, sin and corruption in our vile nature plainly manifested. Then in this earthen tabernacle, polluted, filthy house in which we live, how can we dare hope? Only by the Spirit of God bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. How can we know that God's Spirit is bearing testimony with our spirit? By this ye may know ye have passed from death unto life: If ye have love for the brethren. Do I love my brethren as I should? Do I love God with all my mind, soul and strength? If so, why so? David said, Is there not a cause? Yes, there is a cause. We understand God is the first cause of every cause. If we love God it is because God first loved us, sending the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father, regenerating us anew, borning us of an incorruptible seed by the word of God

which liveth and abideth forever, taking our feet out of an horrible pit, establishing our goings, putting a new song in our mouth, even praise unto his holy name. When this song of thanksgiving, praise and adoration emanates from the heart it is the fruit of the Spirit, God working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. We did not volunteer to love and serve God, because we were dead, deaf, dumb and blind; we did not choose him, but he chose us, and ordained that we should go and bring forth fruit, and that our fruit should remain. We esteemed him smitten, stricken of God, and it pleased the Lord to bruise him and lay on him the iniquity of us all. He bore our sins in his own body, and carried them all the days of old, and put them away by the sacrifice of himself. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned. Hence we knew nothing about the love of God until by revelation we saw how vile and corrupt we are and how merciful, kind and loving the Lord has been to us. When by faith we are enabled to see Jesus was made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption rivers of joy spring up within our hearts. The mighty Captain of our salvation, who has conquered death and hell, who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast, who says, Fear not, it is I, he it is whom my soul loveth and panteth for, as an hart after the waterbrook. Then if indeed we have been (by the power of God's Holy Spirit) adopted into that heavenly family, and by imputation Jesus' righteousness has become ours, then by a mighty display of God's lovingkindness and mercy toward us, by revealing himself the chiefest among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely, we may dare to hope that Jesus is our Redeemer, King and High Priest. We feel resigned to God's will in sickness or health, prosperity or adversity, and are made to say in humble resignation to God's providence, Whatsoever God doeth is right, because it is God that doeth it. If prosperity is ours, a blessing has been bestowed; if adversity, the Lord is chastening us for our good. Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and he who is without chastisement, whereof we are all partakers, is not a son, but a bastard. The apostle said, For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Then if we are of that circumcision that worship God in spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh, it is because God first loved us, gave his Son to die for us, regenerated us, wrought all our works in us. Visiting the widows and fatherless in their affliction, keeping ourselves unspotted from the world, esteeming our brethren better than self, letting our light shine, all are the fruits of the Spirit, and the direct result of God working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. So, then, if we love and worship God it is not traceable to the human heart, for that is

deceitful and desperately wicked above all things, and who can know it? but it is because the Father covenanted with the Son that the elect, according to the foreknowledge of God, should be holy and without blame before him in love, being predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. So, then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. Then we hope, because we hope, and believe, we love God and our brethren, desire to worship God in spirit and in truth, and be humbly and reverently at our brethren's feet, and when this lonely and sorrowful pilgrimage here below shall have been finished, and this poor lisping tongue shall lie silent in death, our hope is that we shall be among that great throng of people John saw, who had come up through great tribulation and made their robes white in the blood of the Lamb. They shall hear the voice of the Son of God saying, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. A woman may forget her suckling babe, but I will never leave nor forsake thee. I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children. Heaven and earth may pass away, but my word shall not pass away. Then, dear kindred in Christ, take fresh courage, our King eternal reigns, he has conquered and put all enemies under his feet, and said, I am he that liveth and was dead, and because I live ye shall live also. Blessed thought and hope!

Brother Walker, when you are with the dear brethren and sisters whom I met while in California at your meetings at Ontaio and Riverside please read this letter (though poor it be) to them that they may know how much I love them for the truth's sake, and may it be God's will, my dear brother, to spare your life yet many years, and that you by his grace may be enabled to preach a full gospel: salvation by grace, and grace alone.

I can hardly express my gratitude toward you for your hospitality and kindness to poor me.

In bonds of love and christian felship,

W. S. BOURLAND.

FREEWATER, Ore., Nov. 26, 1929.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have just returned home from a visit with old Mt. Zion Association in Missouri, and by request of many of the dear brethren I will try and give a short account of my visit with them. I left my home Monday before the third Sunday in September, stopped off at Topeka, Kansas, and attended the First Kansas Association, which was held with Big Walnut Creek Church, September 13th, 14th and 15th. Here I met with a very small number of brethren, only two churches represented at the meeting, but the love and sweet fellowship abounding at this meeting filled all vacancy, and my soul was made glad that our God had so graciously led me,

unworthy as I felt to be, in the midst of such a lovely band of pilgrims, who were nearly all strangers to me in the flesh, but I truly felt to be among my friends, and in the midst of such a spirit there is liberty. Here I met with four other Elders, and there was not a discordant note in all the preaching; it was one glorious theme, salvation by grace, which all who heard and understood rejoiced in with joy which cannot be expressed. Here I also met several of the brethren from Mt. Zion Association, with whom I joined at the close of this joyous meeting, feeling in my very soul to say as I bade these dear brethren farewell, Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in love and sweet fellowship. In company with Elder Attebery and brethren P. Taylor and Joel Odell I left the meeting. My son and his wife met me at brother Taylor's, and after a good night's rest and a pleasant visit with this dear brother and his good companion, sister Taylor, whose home has been a pleasant resting-place for me for more than forty years, I went with my son and wife to their good home, which was my stopping-place while on this visit. September 26th we attended the Fishing River Association, which was held with Mt. Vernon Church, in Kansas City, Missouri. There I met many precious brethren with whom I had met in years passed in sweet union. But here I met a sad change: I met with a spirit of division. Oh what a gloom began to gather around my soul and mind that had been so blessed with the sunshine of peace. In place of the dove-like spirit that so cheers and comforts the hearts of God's humble poor, the spirit of the flesh was dominant. My poor soul could only sink under such a cloud of enmity. O my soul, can it be possible that brethren who once walked together in love and sweet fellowship could now so rend and devour one another? This Association had been in correspondence with old Mt. Zion Association ever since I knew Mt. Zion, and that was in 1832, and after all the many years of joys and sorrows, which were mutual, could now be borne and rejoiced in no more. In place of those sweet messages of continued correspondence, they now resolved to withdraw correspondence from Mt. Zion Association because some of her preachers preach the absolute predestination of all things and eternal vital unity of Christ and his church, and those who were working this division were not satisfied with withdrawing correspondence from Mt. Zion Association, but like the leech, which never gets enough, they, through misrepresenting those who believe in the sovereignty of God, say that they who believe in the predestination of all things make God the author of sin. But that is not so, for God, having all power, has determined, or predestinated, that sin shall not hold his dear people under its control, and he (God) lays sin at the door where it belongs, and every one who has felt the righteous displeasure of God because of sin comes humble and penitent to the footstool of mercy and acknowledges himself to be the chief of sinners. But while they

feel to be sinners, they are taught that Jesus came to save sinners, and they are also taught that he is a Sovereign and is able to do whatever is his purpose to do. They believe God has so predestinated the salvation of his people over the head of all opposition that everything to that end is so fixed and set by his eternal purpose that every one who was chosen in him before the foundation of the world was predestinated to that end, and when it comes to eternal vital unity, I do not see how they could be chosen in him if they were not one with him, and I do not see how their names could be in the Lamb's book of life if there were not a unity or oneness. We do not believe we actually existed in our natural flesh and bones, as some accuse us, but we do believe in our eternal life, since we were one with him, for this book of life is Jesus, and while we were dead in sin our life was hid in this book of life, or with Christ in God. Now pardon me for offering my views on this sublime doctrine, but, as David says, if the foundations be destroyed what can the righteous do? and if the sovereignty of God fails all the glorious doctrine on which our hope hangs for life and immortality goes down with it. But, bless God, while heaven and earth, with all they possess, are passing away the word of God endures forever, and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto us.

Now back to my visit. On Friday before the first Sunday we met with old Mt. Zion Association, at Oak Grove, as was previously appointed, at her last session, held with Bethel Church in 1928. Of the nine churches represented in the Association at that meeting at Bethel only five were represented at the Association held at Oak Grove in 1929, the other four churches, through this wave of strife, met at Sardis, Bethlehem, on Friday before the second Sunday in October, organizing themselves into what they called the Mt. Zion Association, in correspondence with those Associations that withdrew from Mt. Zion Association. But notwithstanding all this spirit of strife divides good brethren, the Lord was good in manifesting his gracious Spirit of love and approval on the little few who met at Oak Grove in accord with the voice of the Association, and a greater demonstration of the Spirit I never witnessed than at this meeting, and my short visit with the churches holding to the principles of the doctrine was certainly crowned with the blessed evidence that the dear Lord did approve of faithfulness in his precious cause. Oh how sweet and blessed is the spirit of charity which suffers and bears all things for Jesus' sake. How much better is a little in peace than an abundance in confusion. "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." It is better to have a millstone about our neck and cast into the sea than to offend one of the little ones for whom Christ died. Oh what poor, weak and erring mortals we are! How solemn it is for the poor soul who is forced daily to the throne of God's rich grace to beg for mercy in his wayward life and there

remembers that he holds aught in his heart against his brother, and oh how sad it is when we go to the mercy-seat and cannot pray the Lord to forgive us as we forgive those who trespass against us. Oh that we could live and walk as we did when we first received Christ Jesus our Lord. Now let me say to all who may read this, whether you be of those who remained with old Mt. Zion or those who left it, you are my brethren, and my prayer is that the dear Lord will bring us, as he did Job, to the place where when we feel his rod we can know that it is to try our faith, and may we all come forth as gold. We can but hope that our God will not suffer us to run to final destruction, but will in his own good way and time bring us together in one; that is, in to Jesus, where we can sit down with him in his kingdom, where he can and does sup with us in all our sorrows, and we with him in the glories of victory. O brethren, return to your first love, and cease to be led by designing men, for I, as one who loves you, assure you that a gospel which divides brethren is not the gospel of Jesus. The gospel of Jesus is the power of God, and it is that which unites the children of God in love and sweet fellowship.. I will now say to one and all who wish to know, My visit is wonderfully described by the one who composed that good hymn, "Mixtures of joy and sorrows I daily do pass through."

I arrived home last Friday morning and found all as well as usual, excepting Rebecca, who has been quite sick, but I am glad to say she seems to be improving. May the dear Lord keep and bless us according to his mercy, for Jesus' sake.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. T. BARNES.

RISING SUN, Md., Feb. 4, 1930.

DEAR MR. LEFFERTS:—I have just read your article entitled "Signs of the Times," in the February issue, and must say that it struck a responsive chord and found lodgment in my heart. I feel to exclaim that God is surely using you as his mouthpiece to declare to his people things that must shortly come to pass, though sad to think of. Yet how few there are who will hear, because so many seem so sound asleep that I fear they will not hear. I suppose that what made me more appreciative was that I attempted to set forth the same thought many years ago, but was misunderstood, or, perhaps, not understood at all. For this reason I was declared to be as one with an unbalanced mind and my name was cast out as evil; yet for all this, I have never complained, and am not now complaining, for it seems that all that has ever happened was for my good and only acted as helps to drive me to what I feel God had purposed for me. He has indeed led me in a strange way through dreams and visions. While given only in symbols, yet all have worked out in such a wonderful way that I am made to say, Surely God has been in it all. The first vision I ever had was some twenty years ago when in deep sleep. I saw a golden field in the heavens, and around the border of this

field were golden circles or rings, each one brilliantly studded with all manner of precious stones, while in the center of the field was a word composed of golden letters, each letter richly studded with all kinds of precious stones. The word for some time seemed to be a puzzle, as I could see it only as a word, but soon the meaning came to me: "This is the Word of God." Up to that time the Scriptures had been to me all a mystery and a mass of confusion, and I had not been particularly attracted to them, but after this vision they seemed to unfold to me and I found in them a new meaning altogether. I soon found myself deeply absorbed in them, and soon the thought came to me which you have presented in your article: a thought that became uppermost in my mind as I heard a voice say, The times of the Gentiles are now at hand. Not an audible voice, but a still small voice, and heard and was forced to believe. But I will leave this, as it is too big to dwell upon. I will relate the second vision. It was the coming of the holy city, a vision I shall never forget. My mind was directed toward the western heavens, when I saw the coming of the golden city which filled the whole heavens as it came. I seemed to be suspended between the earth and the heavens and looking down upon the earth. I saw earth's nothingness, but, on the other hand, I beheld the glory and beauty of the new. It came on toward me filling the whole heavens, but just as it was about to touch me I awoke, and was intensely filled for days afterward. Since that time it seems I have been through a course of preparation for this great event, let it mean what it may. Dream after dream has come setting forth symbols which have meant successive steps in the journey that I was to make. Sometimes it has been quite awhile before it worked out, but all cleared up sooner or later and I was made to understand. Recently things seem to be moving at great speed, and now when I have a vision I get the meaning very soon. Probably I will have a mysterious dream during the night which I feel has a meaning for me, so will ask the Father what it means, and will go back to sleep and the meaning will come. Dreams and visions of late show me that I am to journey at great speed, which indicates to my mind that something is very, very near, and that I must make haste in readiness. I would love to tell you more, but it is too much, so will relate just one more, as it seems to be clearly related to your article, or to thoughts expressed in it. A few nights ago I dreamed of being at a world peace conference, when all at once my vision was directed to the northeast heaven, where I beheld a strange sight, which I at first could not understand, and I began to ask, What is it? What is it? All at once I saw it was cannon, the heaven being filled

with the artillery of war, all gray-colored. Then I exclaimed, It is war, it is war, and not peace. So, to my mind, and I am not doubting, two great events are about to transpire. To the world it will be war and confusion such as has never been; but to the church it will be the harvest of the fruit of the age. How strange that any would want to sleep and slumber in such momentous times, times of such great significance: things which have been prophesied of, hoped for, longed for and prayed for above everything else; things which are full of riches and unspeakable glory about to be made manifest, yet one hardly dare mention it before many people. May God continue to bless you with an understanding heart, which I feel sure he will do, is my prayer for you in his name.

ENNIS McGRADY.

[MANY supposed visions are nothing more nor less than vagaries of the imagination. For this reason, and knowing that most of our readers are skeptical of the spiritual value of such things, we rarely allow them to come into the SIGNS. Now and then, but very rarely there are such experiences which impress us, and such has been the case with the above letter from our friend McGrady. The visions he relates seem to have substantial basis of spiritual meaning, and so we share them with our readers. "In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction."—Job xxxiii. 15, 16.—H. H. L.]

DANVILLE, Va., Nov. 29, 1929.

DEAR SON:—Just think, one month until Christmas, and another year will be in history. We hope to believe in a God who rules and does his will in the heavens and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, nor say, What doest thou? I wonder sometimes why we do believe the Old Primitive Baptist doctrine, the most unpopular and hated above all others I know of. Why can we not just turn loose and float with the tide, with the masses? But son, we cannot do it. This doctrine is our meat and drink, without it we would perish spiritually. On account of cold and snowy weather, we had no meeting at Cane Creek this month. How often I think of your flock in the great city of New York. How I do appreciate their love and fellowship for you. I feel to say I know you preach the gospel to them or they would not have it. When I was last with you all and could look in the faces of your little fold, and could hear them talk so lovingly one to another of the love and goodness of our God, it just caused my poor heart to rejoice to feel I was blessed to mingle with the saints of the most high God, so I want to ask you to remember me to them, for I hope I love them for Jesus' sake, because I see his likeness in them. I do hope the Lord will enable them to hold up your hands, that you may go in and out before them in his name and be guided with wisdom and strength to your journey's end, is my prayer, if I am enabled to pray at all. Some nights I cannot sleep and am not sorry when I

can have happy thoughts of heavenly things. The thought of Jonah having to be cast overboard to keep from being drowned sounds strange, but he could not remain in the ship. The sea was rough and the fish, or whale, could not swallow the ship, so Jonah had to go overboard so the whale could take care of him. I believe the Lord has his way in the matter, as in all others.

Your loving father,

R. L. DODSON.

LONDON, Ontario, Nov. 21, 1929.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—Frequently I have thought of writing to you, but have been feeling so sad since my dear brother Gillis passed on. He always greeted me with a kiss since sister died. Oh how lonely I felt as I visited a couple of days with sister Jennie; I felt he should come in and visit as before. Surely the church has lost one of our best deacons, as he was much interested in the good of his brethren. He had a large funeral, and our dear pastor spoke with much feeling regarding our beloved brother. But, dear brother, over against sorrow the dear Lord gave us to rejoice, in giving the church five candidates. They were baptized in the lake, and last Sunday another (Mrs. Sinclair) came before the church in Duart, and will be baptized Saturday, and I understand there is a Mrs. Paterson, of Ekfrid, coming to the church next Sunday. If she comes that will be seven in all. How glad our pastor must be that the Lord, not man, adds such as shall be saved. God does his own work.

Elder Helms was well received again, and was in London, he and our pastor staid at Oliver's home over night, and son invited brother Dan Campbell and wife for the afternoon, and you should have been present to see the lovely afternoon that was spent. Elder Wood and wife, from Virginia, were also present. Dear brother, such visits remain as a sweet remembrance in our minds. Just like your first visit at our home, never to be forgotten by me. You are a splendid fisher; you drew me out unknown to myself. Oh how I wish I could see and visit again with you. You are dearly beloved by me as a sweet brother in Christ; our hearts entwine around one another as brethren in Christ, just like the dear pastor God gave us here in Canada. Although he tarried long, it was for the good of the church I believe, for God makes no mistakes; all things are open to him, and he does his pleasure as seemeth good to him. I am going to the funeral of a dear cousin who died away from home, while visiting with her sister, Mrs. McLean, of Bothwell. She was sick only ten days with pneumonia. The body arrives to-day from Fort Arthur. So there is sorrow and joy mixed together in this world. Mrs. Kennedy, where we visited when you were here in Duart on Saturday, (you remember her) died the morning of brother Duncan's funeral.

We have large numbers coming out at every meeting of our dear pastor's appointments. I am very glad he frequently comes to our home. He took me to Woodstock to see brother

Robert Scates, and a sweet visit we had together. I would be glad if you could come to Canada. I read after you with delight.

Lovingly your sister in hope,

FLORA J. SINCLAIR.

[THE foregoing letters both seem to be good reading for the SIGNS. One is from my earthly father, but however dear he may be and is to me in this sense, yet there is a tie which binds us far closer together than that of nature. The last time he visited us he and I talked for two days about different passages of Scripture, and when he left he remarked that he did not believe he had ever talked with any one with whom he was more in agreement than we two seemed to be. This touched me deeply, and I have been made to rejoice many times when recalling the incident, feeling to thank God that he has so directed my steps as to bring me in such love and fellowship with one whom I believe to be well established in the doctrine of God our Savior. The other letter is from sister Sinclair, giving both bad and good news from Canada. While some are being removed to their eternal homes, we are glad that the Lord is vouchsafing the ministry of his servant, Elder George Ruston, by adding to the church militant such as he will own and have to be saved. There are many who will be glad to learn of this good news.—R. L. D.]

HERNDON, Va., Nov. 25, 1929.

DEAR BRETHREN:—After filling out the subscription blank for another year's subscription to your paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I have a little mind to tell you how long I have been a subscriber to your paper. It will be forty-seven years next spring since I began taking it. It was then printed and published in newspaper form, and I have some of the old copies of it still in my house. I used to write for the dear old paper while in the bloom of life and used to feel when my letters would be published in the good old paper to say, in the language of the little Moabitess woman, Ruth, who said to her intended husband, Boaz, "Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?" Yes, I felt to be a stranger to you then, and I feel to be a stranger yet to all that is good and great.

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

The whole of this hymn describes my feelings at this very moment. I am an old man now, in my eighty-first year. I felt in my younger days that if I lived to be an old man I would live to be better, but, alas, I must use again the words of the poet

"Worse and worse myself I see,
Yet the Lord remembers me."

I am the only one of my natural father's children (of eight) living on the earth. None of my brothers or sisters lived to be my age, although I was considered the most delicate one of the whole family. Why I still live I know not, but God knows why and for what purpose I live and move and have my being. If it is to live and

suffer with him, then I hope to know something of his suffering while here in the likeness of sinful flesh. We are told in holy writ that if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him. I sometimes ask myself the question, In what way do we suffer with him? The most trying way I know of is bearing the cross. We are told to take up the cross and follow him. He said, If any man will come after me, let him take up his cross daily (yes, it must be daily) and follow me. Dear brethren, it is a great cross for me to think about writing a letter on this all-important subject of bearing the cross. It is a cross for God's little children to go home to the church and tell them what great things the Lord has done for them. The older I get the heavier the cross seems to bear me down, still our Savior said, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me. Again we read the words of Jesus, "And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me."—Matt. x. 38. This subject of bearing the cross is a sad but beautiful subject to employ our minds and write upon, and if I could wield the pen of a ready writer I would continue with the subject, but I am too old now to write with pen and ink, and it is quite a task for me to write with pencil.

I close with best wishes for all connected with the SIGNS and all lovers of the truth.

A worm of the dust,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

HIRAM, Ga., November, 1929.

DEAR EDITORS:—My subscription for the year 1929 has expired, so I am sending two dollars, for which please send the SIGNS another year. I love the editors and readers of the paper. I have read many good letters while out at sea in the Navy, trusting in the same Father, God and Ruler of all things. I would read them and reread them until they were nearly torn up.

My mind has been running over the trip I took when I was discharged from the Navy at Brooklyn, N. Y., and stayed nineteen days with my grand uncle, Elder John Eubanks. I can never forget how he looked when I went into his home at Newark, Delaware. He had been sick, but when he began talking to me he said he was well. He recalled many incidents of years past, when he was preaching in Georgia and Kentucky. I shall never forget his wonderful gift and his splendid delivery. I think I can see something in the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES that is far above the trashy things of this world. I wish I could visit your people, but cannot tell when I shall be blessed with the opportunity. If the Lord wills, I hope to meet them some day. I know that God rules all things after the counsel of his own will, and will not fail to carry out his precious promises. I ask the editors and readers of the SIGNS to pray for me, a poor sinner.

In hope of that eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began, I am yours in brotherly love,

JEWELL O. CROKER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1930.

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ISAIAH XXX. 33.

"For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared: he hath made it deep, and large; the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it."

In answer to a request from a friend, we attempt to give our thoughts on the above passage; but in order to do so, must glance at the whole chapter in brief. From the first verse of this thirtieth chapter down to and including the seventh, the Lord declares the utter foolishness of Israel's resorting to an alliance with Egypt against the coming invasion of the Assyrians under Sennacherib. The children of Israel as a nation are here spoken of as "rebellious children" who take counsel of Egypt instead of the Lord, who resort to fleshly dependence instead of trusting Jehovah for deliverance. Note the warning of Rabshakeh in chapter thirty-six: "Lo, thou trusteth in the staff of this broken reed, on Egypt; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all that trust in him." The seeking of help against the enemy, at the hand of Egypt, was in defiance of God's word in Deuteromony xvii. 16: "Ye shall henceforth return no more that way." There could never be any help to God's people come out of Egypt. There in that land had been their bondage and slavery. Any attempt to go back that way could only spell disaster for them. Nevertheless, faced with the invading host of Sennacherib, they resorted for help to their former land of bondage. The Lord would surely punish them for this, but would save a remnant of them according to his grace. Of the nation of Israel at this time the Lord said, "This is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord." These rebellious characters desired no vision from the Lord and begged the prophets not to speak right things, but to speak smooth things and to prophesy deceits. One cannot help but be amazed at the blindness of the people, and yet the professed, not real, children of God are the same to-day. They do not want to hear the truth, they want their vanity gratified and desire to be left alone to sleep on in ease undisturbed by the truth, wedded to their own gods, allured by their own foolish imaginings. The condemnation of the wicked draws every moment

nearer, but they heed not the preceding warnings of disaster and rush headlong to their judgment, to that Tophet ordained for them of old. When king Josiah reigned in Jerusalem he was a God-fearing man and sought to restore the kingdom from the idolatries which it had fallen into under the influence of wicked kings prior to him. This place Tophet had been used before Josiah's time as a place of human sacrifices where mothers and fathers in worshiping the god Molech had caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire. This heathenish practice, Josiah had stopped. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 10.) In this very Tophet where some of Israel had worshipped Molech with fire, right there the Lord had determined to also make a more terrible slaughter of their enemies. And so it proved. For while Israel did seek help at the hand of Egypt, it turned out altogether vain, just as God said it would, and the real help and deliverance came from God himself; and Sennacherib and his army were turned back from Jerusalem without Israel's fighting a single stroke. Read Isaiah xxxvii. 36-38: "Then the angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they [the Israelites] arose early in the morning, behold, they [the enemy] were all dead corpses. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Armenia: and and Esar-haddon his son reigned in his stead." Thus is seen the terrible vengeance visited upon the enemies of Israel in the valley of Tophet, the place of fire before ordained to be used for that same purpose, a place deep and large, with plenty of fire and plenty of wood, needing naught but the breath of the Lord to kindle it that it might be verily as brimstone to the utter consumption of all the enemies of righteousness. Thus, we see the deliverance of Hezekiah and his kingdom from their enemies was glorious, for the Lord did it all and no human help or cooperation was needed. After this, the deliverance of Israel from Babylon was even more glorious than Hezekiah's, yet came about the same great way, by the power of God. And after the deliverance from Babylon, the deliverance of the redeemed from death and condemnation by the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ was more glorious than all. As Tophet was the place of burning prepared for the king of their enemies, Sennacherib, so figuratively it is a type of the lake of fire and brimstone, the second death, prepared for the devil and his angels. "The fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."—Rev. xxi. 8. "The beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived

them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." —Rev. xix. 20. Thus, Tophet is a figure of the final and ultimate destruction of antichrist and of all that loves and makes a lie. Tophet was located in the valley of Hinnom outside the city of Jerusalem, and spiritual Tophet is most certainly outside the new Jerusalem. Note what Jeremiah says about it, "The children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the Lord: they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it. And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall not more be called Tophet, nor, The valley of the son of Hinnom, but, The valley of slaughter: for they shall bury in Tophet, till there be no place. And the carcasses of this people shall be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth; and none shall fray them away." Can any one imagine such dreadful calamity as above foretold? It is horrible above all conception. If we turn to the nineteenth chapter of Jeremiah we see again all this disaster that was to befall Jerusalem, and which did befall her in the year 70 A. D., graphically pictured in all its horror. But now, if our Bible readers will continue on through Jeremiah as well as through Isaiah, in the latter chapters of these prophets, as well as of Ezekiel and Daniel, they shall see foretold the final destruction of Babylon, which means not merely the destruction of Ancient Babylon, but of the Babylon of the present time which holds sway throughout the world. This Babylon of false religion is doomed to destruction and the Lord has prepared a Tophet for her. As the Lord fought against Sennacherib to deliver Israel of old from the Assyrians, so will he at Armageddon deliver his people from all the nations gathered against Jerusalem to battle. "And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbor, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbor. And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance. And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague."—Zech. xiv. 12-15. The horror of this great battle of Armageddon, yet to be fulfilled, is still further portrayed in Ezekiel, thirty-ninth chapter, where we are told that so great will be the slaughter in the

ranks of the armies of the nations that come to battle against the Jews regathered to the holy land that it will take seven years to burn up the wreckage left from the battle and will take over seven months to bury the dead, all the people working at it continually. No such battle as this with such disastrous results has ever yet been fought in the history of the world. It is yet future. Ezekiel thirty-ninth chapter tells of it. The valley of Hinnom where Tophet was located is here called "The valley of Hamon-gog." "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."—Matt. xxiv. 21. In all this wreckage predicted to come upon the nations at the end of the Gentile period, the true children of God will dwell safely under the wings of the Almighty. Like Noah safe in the ark from the destruction which then overwhelmed and destroyed the world, so the church of God shall dwell safe in Christ when worlds are crumbling into ruin and when the beast and the false prophet and all who worship them shall be turned into the final Tophet of destruction from the presence of the Lord and all his holy angels. "And the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall shew the lighting down of his arm." "Through the voice of the Lord shall the Assyrian be beaten down," and not through human means or agencies. "Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept: and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the Lord, to the Mighty One of Israel." "For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." What blessed promises are these to those whose strength is the Lord and who wait patiently for him. These shall renew their strength and shall soar above as on eagles' wings. Blessed be his holy name, he who causeth us to triumph by Christ Jesus.

H. H. L.

PSALMS XXVII. 13.

"I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."

The above Scripture is the testimony of Jesus in the heart and life of David and therefore must be spiritually interpreted. None can understand it but those who are spiritual. David was a highly favored character, yet he lived under the legal law dispensation and was under its curse, and he found, as all have who have ever been under the law of Moses, that it was a minister of death, and death passed upon all who came under its curse. They groaned under its lash, as did the Israelites under the whips of the Egyptian taskmasters. They were weary and heavy laden and, like Martha, "encumbered with much serving." Therefore the land of Caanan, which was a land flowing with milk and honey, was really the land of the dying and dead, and all who lived under that legal covenant were transgressors and disobedient and under the same condemnation, death passed upon all. This was their heritage from their first parent Adam, and

the second Adam, the Lord of life and glory, was the one and only hope of any of them. Now just as Moses is the minister of death, so Jesus is the Minister of life, and just as the Old Testament is the book of the dying and dead, so the New Testament is the book of the living. We find even now, that this world is full of the dying, so it was in David's time, so it will always be. But David spake of the Lord of the living, and the living, the real living, are those who live unto God. It is written, "In that he died he died unto sin, in that he lives he lives unto God," and Jesus died the death of those that died, and he is the life of those that live, so the land of the living is the people of the living God who are bought with a price, even the precious blood of Immanuel, a people who are experimentally made to know him, whom to know is life eternal. It is this blessed people who can say with David, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" He knew if the Lord appear it was life, and heaven; if he depart, one says, ""Tis hell, 'tis more, 'tis endless ruin, deep despair." David's enemies, many of them, they of his own household, were often his fear, and often he cried, Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies, and when he by faith beheld the Lord present in the valley of the shadow of death he could say, I will fear no evil, for thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Perhaps it will not be presumptuous to say that there are some of us who have traveled, and are still traveling the same path with David and can take the language of our text and say truthfuilly, "I had fainted." Yes, we know what it is to be ready to give up, especially when we are given a sight of the vileness of our carnal mind, or when we are found rebelling against our loving and gracious God. We have surely learned that it is hard to kick against the pricks. We have been envious at the workers of iniquity and fretted ourselves because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass, and but for the work of God enabling us to believe, we had fainted. It is believing that distinguishes a subject of grace from a graceless character, and this is a sovereign act of a gracious God to a graceless sinner. We should not feel the baseness of our rebellion nor the vileness of our carnal heart if we had not tasted that the Lord is gracious. A believer must see Jesus made a curse for him, smitten for his transgressions and for his sins afflicted, and when one sees him thus he knows that he is death of deaths and that in his favor is life. What a blessed favor, to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. The Hebrew children in thinking of the fiery furnace would certainly have fainted unless they had believed, and what goodness there was in the Lord's presence. Yes, that is it. It is his blessed presence that makes the land of the living. It is God manifest in the flesh. Oh what a blessed theme enabling poor sinners to rejoice in spirit and to have no confidence in the flesh. Some time ago we

found ourselves greatly distressed as we thought of the many and varied scenes of distress and suffering in this life. Our thoughts went out to a number of dear friends who were sorely afflicted, some with one disease, some with another, and as we thought of them in their helplessness it seemed to us as though they were in the grip of a terrible monster, who pitilessly held them in his grip. We felt as one standing on the shore seeing them gradually sinking and unable to help at all. While in this mind the January SIGNS came. We turned to the first page and read, "For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Those precious words in the hands of the Holy Spirit were enough to break the spell, then we saw the furnace of old (which was a dreadful monster, for what can live in a furnace of fire?), that that furnace was the land of the living while Jesus was there. Then we thought again of our afflicted friends, and we said, What a blessed affliction if Jesus dwells with them there. Yes, though at times it would seem as though they were in the land of the dying, yet they live unto God, and by prayer and supplication they make their request known unto God. Surely it was the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living to us. It is good to see him as the Lord God omnipotent, reigning over all and in all things. We have heard dear friends say, A sparrow cannot fall to the ground without the notice of your heavenly Father. We are glad it does not read that way, but rather, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your heavenly Father." So to us he reigns in the fall of sparrows, and are not ye of more value than many sparrows? Why are we considered of more value than many sparrows? because of our goodness? No, a thousand times no. Because of God's goodness. It was his goodness that sent his own Son to death that we might live, and all the sweet and blessed comfort of the Spirit, with grace sufficient for all our needs, flow from his sovereignty as the pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeded out of the throne of God and the Lamb. All his mercy, compassion and kindness is a flowing out of his own goodness to his blessed and humble poor. It is the goodness of the Lord that makes the captive's portion sweet, and reconciles man to his lot. It makes prisons palaces prove, and through God's goodness to his afflicted children they are made to rejoice in their portion. They at such times thank their God for afflictions, glorying in tribulation also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. Now David saw the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. By faith he beheld Jesus as the life of those that live, and he spake of his goodness and talked of his power. It was God-given faith and enabled him to believe. A belief that can stand the test of the fire and embrace the Lord in the furnace of

affliction, and testify that though they walk through the valley of the shadow of death yet his rod and his staff they comfort him. Such a faith is of God, and it will hold the weak believer up in the distressing hours and days one meets with in this life, for wherever this Christ-life is manifest earth and hell will oppose it. As one has sung,

"Earth, hell and sin, that hateful name,
Together strive to quench the same;
But still it lives, his power to show,
In spite of all that hell can do."

"Though but a spark, 'tis heavenly fire,
'Twill dwindle oft, but ne'er expire,
Till brighter than the solar rays
It shines through everlasting days."

It was not possible for death to hold him, and by the goodness of our God we have seen it was not possible for death to hold us, and we have joined with that blessed throng to praise him, for as Hezekiah said, "The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day," and in this day, the gospel day, we praise the goodness of our God, and sing, "My Jesus hath done all things well," for it is of his goodness that we as brethren dwell together in unity; yea, that we esteem the other better than ourselves and speak the same things.

The Lord bless us to rejoice more and more in the goodness of his house, even of his holy temple. G. R.

NOTICE.

Providence permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in March (30th). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder G. E. Coulbourn.)

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Salisbury Church, to the several churches, meetings and associations with which we correspond, sendeth greetings and love, we hope, in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As is the usual custom in writing Circular Letters, it seems we must have some subject as a basis or foundation of the letter. The Association is drawing near, and the one appointed to write the Letter has put it off for some reason almost as long as possible, not knowing what subject to use, and feeling it seems most of the time void of understanding, so we shall try and use this word "understanding" for consideration.

First, we call your attention to the opposite of this word: misunderstanding, or a lack of understanding, and to consider it first from a literal or natural viewpoint. We all know something about what it means for men not to understand each other, as without understanding there is confusion, difference of opinions, sometimes to the extent of breaking friendships on matters of little import, but this kind of understanding or wisdom is, as James says, "not from above," for where envying and strife are in the heart it is earthly, sensual, even devilish, and as we see it, all such lack of understanding is of the flesh, or carnal mind, for in nature we strive for exaltation. The kind of "understanding" that we have in mind is the kind that Job asked about when he said, Where can wisdom

be found, and what is the price of understanding? Answering his own questions, he tells us that it is without price, all the gold and silver are not equal to it, and it cannot be purchased with any or all the fine jewels of the world, and neither can it be found, much less bought. As the Scripture says further, it is hid from the eyes of all living, even including the eyes of the fowl and the keen eye of the vulture, for, "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen." This, to our understanding, is the hidden path, or way of real wisdom or understanding. Now since it is hidden from the eyes of all living, and cannot be purchased with gold and jewels, being without price, and out of sight, the question again, Where can it be found? We do not believe this path, wisdom, way or understanding, whatever we call it, can be found by searching, for no man by searching with his natural eye or mind can find God, for he is out of sight, hidden from this kind of wisdom, and his spiritual things also hidden from the wise and prudent, as such, and God was thanked that it was even so, that these things were hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. These babes we believe to be the ones in which God works in their hearts this wisdom of his, and to understand something of his secret or hidden way, and this God works by revealing unto them that it is of God himself that they are in Christ Jesus, as Paul explains it. For "of him [God] are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom [understanding], and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." So now in this new condition of heart we begin to realize, to some extent at least, where true understanding begins, where it goes on and that it is in Christ Jesus, the way, the wisdom, the truth, the life and the resurrection itself, for he said he was all this. Unless or until he tells us in our own hearts about this glorious hidden way of wisdom, we will fail to understand it, though it were possible that we could be as wise as Solomon by nature; and indeed this reminds us that Solomon did not get his natural wisdom by studying, but it was the gift of God that he was made so wise in this world, and then the greater gift of God was to follow with this man and show him that all his natural wisdom or understanding was but vanity and vexation of spirit, and so Solomon the wise man, by nature, learned that this wisdom was of no lasting value, and learned that the fear of God was the beginning of real wisdom, and to do as God commands was understanding. His Son, Jesus, had this real understanding, for he kept his commandments, and, if we mistake not, works in us, at times at least, a great desire to follow him, and now if this Letter could only call your attention to the new commandment that this blessed spiritual Man of understanding taught we feel it would suffice. We refer to what he said: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another." This being with us, that is, his love, then, as he said, since he loved us we should love one another; and when we are in this

condition of heart and mind we hope we understand something at least about so great a love as he had for us: a sacrificed life for the people he loved.

We find it very hard at times to understand the Scriptures. If we do understand at all any of the Scriptures, it is because he opens our understanding that we may do so, for this he did with the disciples before his departure from earth, after eating with them in the mysterious manner he did, we read, "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures." So as we see it, to sum up, if we have real wisdom or real "understanding" we have Christ, or the Spirit of Christ, in our hearts, our hope and our only hope of glory. Then if we understand the Scriptures, he gives us the power of understanding, by working in us to see the Scriptures are simply a testimony of Jesus himself. This the disciples did not see, this we cannot see unless and until he opens our understanding, and with an enlightened understanding we then see Jesus the way, the truth, the redemption, the salvation and the resurrection of lost sinners who could not save, redeem or resurrect themselves. What a glorious and powerful Wisdom is this Jesus we hope in, and therefore since all power and glory are his, let him that glorieth glory not in his riches, or the strong man in his strength, or the wise man in his (natural) wisdom, but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, saith the Lord.

May the Lord be to us wisdom and understanding and our Moderator in this meeting, and glorify himself in it, if it please him so to do, by giving us hearts of understanding and directing us to do his will, and may he and his Son, the blessed Jesus, have all the praise we can possibly render unto him.

G. E. COULBOURN, Mod.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
GEORGE F. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ANGUS McCALLUM was born November 18th, 1858, and departed this life October 24th, 1929. He was the son of Zachariah and Jane McCallum, of Iona Station, Ontario, and was one of a family of ten children, five boys and five girls, of whom only one brother and four sisters survive. He was married April 12th, 1905, to Annie Gillus, of West Lorne, Ontario. He leaves besides his widow one daughter, Mrs. Harry Munn, of Neidpath, Sask, to mourn the loss of a loving husband and kind father. His death was particularly sad, as he left home after dinner to go to work, apparently in the best of health, and in trying to fight a fire he was overcome and suffered a heart attack, and was dead when found, with his clothing mostly murned from his body, which goes to show that in the midst of life we are in death. My dear husband never made a public profession to any church on earth, but I have every reason to believe that he had long since experienced a hope in Christ, and was not afraid to die nor was he alone away out there in that field when the call came, as his dear Savior was by his side. His hope was firm, his trust was in Jesus, who doeth all things well. He was a general favorite with both young and old, and his sudden passing has cast a gloom over the entire neighborhood and surrounding district, as he was of a very bright and cheerful disposition, always ready to give a helping hand in time of need. We sometimes wonder why we are called upon to suffer here on earth by parting with our loved ones, but God knows best. He is too wise to err, too good to be unkind, and we trust that he may give us strength from day to day until such time when we, too, shall be called home from this vain world of sin and sorrow to join those who have gone on before, where parting is no more forever and all tears shall be wiped from our eyes. We laid his mortal remains to rest to await the resurrection morn, when all the redeemed of the Lord shall come forth to meet their Redeemer, Savior and Friend.

His wife,

ANNIE GILLIS McCALLUM.

DEACON W. G. TURNER, son of J. P. and Nannie G. Turner, was born August 11th, 1857, was married to Mary L. Eddy June, 1879, and to them were born five children: R. O., of Homestead, Florida; Mrs. E. H. Bernard, of Roanoke, Virginia; G. C. and P. H. of Roanoke, Virginia, and C. W. Turner, of Bristol, Virginia. Brother Turner received a hope in Christ and united with the church in Roanoke, Virginia, May 29th, 1921, and was baptized June 26th, 1921, by Elder G. F. Dyer. Soon after the church asked for him to be ordained to the office of deacon, and April 29th, 1922, a presbytery consisting of Elders Lester, Dyer and Helms set him apart as a deacon, which office he continued to fill until October 30th, 1929, when he was called away in death, leaving his companion and children, together with the following brothers and sisters to grieve for him: C. H. Turner, of Richmond, S. E., of Roanoke, Virginia, J. V., of East Falls Church, Virginia, A. P., of Martinsville, Virginia, Mrs. Bettie Woody, of Richmond, Virginia, and Mrs. T. E. Turner, of Richmond, Virginia. Brother Turner was a strong believer in salvation by grace, and was well established in the faith of God's elect. He filled his seat in the church and acted faithfully according to his understanding, therefore he left evidence sufficient for us to say he has fallen asleep as one of God's children and is resting in his love.

Funeral services were held in the meetinghouse at Roanoke and were conducted by Elder Randolph Perdue in the presence of a host of relatives and friends. His body was laid away in Fairmont Cemetery to await the Lord's coming.

J. P. HELMS.

HILPAH YOUNKER BLOOMFIELD, widow of my older brother, Levi S. Bloomfield, died at her home, near Meeker, Colorado, October 28th, 1929, aged 84 years and 22 days. She possessed many endearing qualities as a wife, a sister, and, most of all, as a humble and devout follower of Christ, her Savior. She and my brother were married in Coshocton County, Ohio, February 11th, 1879. While previously on a visit to a sister in Illinois she related a beautiful experience of grace to the Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, and was baptized the following day by the pastor, whom she had previously known in Ohio. She remained a member of this same church for more than sixty years, there being no local church near her mountain home in Colorado. During those years of pioneer isolation brother and she were visited by Elders Smith Ketchum and John L. Scott, of Illinois, in order that their children might hear the gospel of free grace proclaimed. She was a constant reader of the SIGNS. While on a visit with us last summer, she declared not a page escaped her eyes in all those sixty years. She leaves a daughter and two sons to mourn their loss. May the God of love comfort the mourning ones. A beloved wayfarer has passed on to rest.

ALSO.

PETER CAMPBELL BLOOMFIELD died at his home in Colchester, Illinois, January 22nd, 1930. He was my brother in the flesh, and also in the bonds of the Spirit, I truly hope. He died of heart weakness, after two weeks' illness. He was from childhood devoid of rugged health. He was born on the old Bloomfield homestead, in Fulton County, near Astoria, Illinois, June 1, 1861. Our dear parents gave Elder Peter L. Campbell, many years Moderator of the Spoon River Predestinarian Baptist Association, the privilege of giving my brother his given name. His reply was, "Sister Bloomfield, your baby's name is Peter Campbell Bloomfield henceforth." So it was. Brother was a man of mild and gentle manners. He loved peace, and sought its encouragement throughout his life of nearly sixty-nine years. For thirty years he was Clerk of Union Church, at Fandon, Illinois. He leaves a devoted companion, who vied with her husband in giving their Baptist brethren a welcome to their home. Brother left a request that Elder Clyde E. Webb, of Carthage, Illinois, preach his funeral, using as a text 1 Timothy i. 15: "It is a faithful saying," &c. Surely my brother's walk and conversation proved him a child of God.

ABRAM W. BLOOMFIELD.

JOSEPH BETHEL PALMER, our very dear brother, was born April 1st, 1864, and departed this earthly life November 26th, 1929. He was married to Mary Pauline Honeycutt October 26th, 1887. To this union were born seven children; five survive, three girls and two boys: Mrs. Birdie Clark, N. M., Mrs. Florence Tate and Mrs. Nellie Carver, of Cottontown, Tennessee, Hurmon and Virgil Palmer, also of Cottontown, Tennessee. Brother Palmer had been a member of the Predestinarian Baptist Church for more than thirty years, and was considered a watchman on the walls of Zion. Much of the time we had no pastor, but we never had any splits or divisions in our church, for he was able to detect anything that would mar our peace and would give us warning. I was several years his senior, and had known him from boyhood, and he surely lived a true, virtuous and moral life, a good example for any one to pattern after. His membership was with old Friendship Church, Sumner County, Tennessee. He was at the writer's home just a few days before he was stricken with pneumonia. I could not say too much in praise of brother Palmer, for he was honorable and upright, self-sacrificing, loved his church, was a strong defender of the truth and was always ready to take care of the Old Baptists. Brother Palmer leaves six brothers. Four sisters preceded him to the grave.

Elder R. L. Biggs, his nephew, spoke a few comforting words to the large gathering of relatives, neighbors and friends, after which his body was laid to rest in the family cemetery on the old homestead at Cottontown, Tennessee.

Written by request of his son by one who held him in high esteem as a christian and a brother.

(MRS.) HENRY J. (HARDY) DORRIS.

BROTHER H. C. SLEDGE was born July 5th, 1851, and died December 27th, 1928, making his stay on earth 77 years, 5 months and 22 days. He was married to Elender E. White November 28th, 1872. To this union were born ten children. He leaves to mourn his widow and six children: Mrs. Augusta Hall, Mrs. Ollie Fuller, Mrs. Nile Edwards, Ernest, Lloyd and Bascom Sledge, a host of grandchildren, two sisters: Mrs. Mary Ann Green and Mrs. Susie Beard, besides the church and many friends. His children and grandchildren all live in the neighborhood where he lived and died. He lived where he settled when he married. To know brother Sledge was to love him. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church at New Providence, and was baptized by Elder Green Thomas. He was ordained deacon of that church April 3rd, 1898.

Written by request by one who knew him for many years and loved him as a brother,

M. E. HAMNER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Elder J. C. Chester, Ky., $4; Mrs. Lena E. Wilson, Md., $1; Mrs. L. P. Patterson, W. Va., $1; G. S. Varnes, Mich., $1; Miss C. Lilly Buck, Conn., $2; T. L. Disharoon, Pa., $1; Unetta Hamilton, Mo., $1; J. S. Moore, Ala., $2; H. M. Cox, Ark., $2; H. M. Bowden, Texas, $1; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $2.

NOTICE.

The Primitive Baptist Home in Salisbury, Maryland, opened on May 1st. Those desiring to enter should write to Mr. Cyrus Risler, 904 Ogden Ave., New York, N. Y., for particulars. Members and friends residing within the bounds of the Eastern Associations are eligible.

R. LESTER DODSON.

MEETINGS.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects Elder George Ruston to meet with them the fifth Sunday in March (30th), 1930. Services to be held at the home of brother J. E. Livingston, 64 E. Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. Also on Saturday before at 2 p. m. The Albany and Binghamton D. and H. train arrives at and leaves Cobleskill both ways in convenient time for the meeting. All are welcome.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

Ft. WorthPrimitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sunday at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

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At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Little Flock Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every first and third Sunday at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, at 1 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.
O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk,
143 W. 11th Street, Claremont Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. R. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, every Sunday at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. at the home of W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Midweek song service by appointment. Pastors, Elders Jones and Jaynes. Basket lunch.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

EPHESIANS II. 4, 5.

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved)."

All buildings must have a foundation, and the stronger and better the foundation the more severe storms of wind and rain it will withstand. To all effects there is a cause, and without a cause there is no effect, so the apostle Paul in writing to the saints at Ephesus lays a foundation, builded upon the Rock, which will stand forever, the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. For example I take a natural figure. A large building is contemplated, for a certain and fixed purpose, the architect will measure, estimate, draw and lay out to scale this building. He may make many changes, but he works until he has it all planned to suit the purpose for which it is intended. Then it is ready for the contractor, who takes the blueprints and specifications. The land may not have been bought, the timber yet in the forest, the iron in the ore, the stone in the ground. This is the order of the business world, and a system by which we all work; determine before we act, that is natural, and if we did not plan and look ahead we would not be fit to carry on any business whatsoever..

I have been speaking of natural wisdom, now let us turn the page and try and speak some of things pertaining to the wisdom of God. We dare not even think that the wisdom of the omnipotent God is less than the wisdom of man. He who meeted out the heavens with a span comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance, he said, As I have thought so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed so shall it stand. All things in the creation of God are necessary in order to carry out his will, from the smallest gnat to the largest beast; the sparrow, the king, the beggar, all have their part in this wonderful work of God, and we all know that all things

work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose. This is the one God who is omnipotent, immutable and omnipresent, who has created all things in heaven and in earth, thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, all things were created by him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. I have in a brief way laid the foundation, showing the solidity and sureness of him who created all things. It is he who is rich in mercy for us. Mercy, that essential perfection whereby he pitied his chosen people in their lost condition, caused by their transgressions and the disobedience of the first Adam, whereby all have sinned and by so doing transgressing the law. The law showed no mercy. It had no mercy to give. It was an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. You have sinned, and the soul that sinneth shall die. God is merciful and his love was so great for them that at the appointed time he sent his Son into the world to save his people from their sins; his arrangements must be carried out according to the plans and specifications determined by him before he made the world. The world says we must be good and then God will love us, that we must give our hearts to him, for he will not save us unless we do, giving more power to the creature than to the Creator, they can teach each other these spiritual things, knowing not that they are dead, and teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. This is not the doctrine of the Bible, neither does it correspond with the experience of God's people, whom the Lord has quickened, who were dead in sins. He communicates to them through the Spirit when he leads them beside the still waters and makes them lie down in green pastures, and by the illumination of the Spirit enables them to see their own corruption and sinfulness and ask the Lord for mercy. Why do they ask of God for mercy? Why did the family of Israel go to Joseph for corn? For the reason there was no corn any other place, so his people have no other place to go for this grace, which is free, without any works of the creature. If it were for anything we have done it would not be grace, it would be works. The apostle knew how vain and worthless are the works of man so he added, Not of works, lest any man should boast. It seems the wisdom of the world does not understand the meaning of grace, at least it is seldom spoken of in this day and age. What is grace? The free and eternal love and favor of God, which is the spring and source of all the benefits we receive from him. This free and unmerited love of God is the original mover in our salvation, and has no cause above it to excite or draw it forth, no works of man, or set of men, or nations, or kingdoms below it to command it, but it arises from his own free will that determined the scheme of salvation for his people, the free imputation of Christ's righteousness through the merit whereof true believers became righteous in the sight of God through Jesus Christ. To the Lord's people grace is a charming sound; yes, it is

amazing, for by grace ye are saved, and there are no conditions about it, ye are saved, and as Paul has so aptly said, I am persuaded that there is nothing can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus the Lord. He mentions death, which separates us from all our natural ties, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height, depth, any other creature, for God has said, By grace ye are saved. This saving grace is through faith, and without faith it is impossible to please God. Faith is the gift of God. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. It assures us of the reality and worth of eternal things and produces a satisfaction and assured confidence that God will infallibly perform what he has promised, whereby the one who is given this faith is confident of these things, and even through tears, disappointments and tribulation in this life can say, Thy will, O Lord, be done. There is one faith, even as there is one God, the Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

I have spoken of mercy, grace, faith and love, now a few words on hope and I will be done. Hope, like grace is a back number in this progressive age, but we as a people, who have hope, to us it is precious. Even at times when you complain about your little hope you would not part with it; no, not for the world, for it is the firm expectation of the promise of God to us, the anchor of the soul, Christ in us the hope of glory. This hope is given to his people as an everlasting consolation, reaching farther than this world of sin, for if in this life only we have hope we are of all men most miserable. But this hope is a lively hope, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Hope maketh not ashamed. Why? Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. By grace ye are saved. The almighty One has saved you. He has paid your debt. Yes, paid it all, and has promised that he will never leave nor forsake you. Ye are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. Your worship is a spiritual worship, for he is a Spirit, and seeketh such to worship him, not with our hands, as though he needed anything, seeing that he giveth to all life and breath and all things, but with our spirit, for his Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, and his people are the only ones who in truth can pray to our Father in heaven, for they are joint-heirs with Christ, brethren, yes, born of God our Father, who hath saved us by his grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God.

We thank our God for the privilege of having a paper wherein we may express ourselves, and may he uphold the managers of the SIGNS for years to come, and give them ability to carry on for the truth's sake.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

CLEVELAND, Ohio.

HURRICANE, W. Va., Feb. 3, 1930.

ELDER J. W. MCCLANAHAN—DEAR BROTHER:—I received my current issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to-day, and was very glad indeed to read your comforting letter in it. You, dear brother, have always held a place in the affections of my heart. Well do I remember yours and brother George's visits to my father's, and to dear old grandmother's home when I was only a child, but how I did love, even then, to hear the blessed truths expounded by God's ministers. I hope, if not deceived, that I was, even in my youth, made to understand some of the truths of the word of God.

Dear brother, I am sending you another package of the corrected Minutes of dear old Pocatalico Association. The Association and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES have been with us a long time, and one can hardly think of having to give up either. It seems to me that our associations would always be peaceful and God-honoring, as it was last year, if we could leave at home the perpetual fault-finders and trouble-lovers who go about trying to build up their preeminence, at the cost of their brethren, and getting mad if they cannot. Then it is plain of which spirit they come, it is not the same spirit in which Jesus came. Surely, brother, you have seen this done before by some who were so straight that they leaned away back in their own idolatries of self-conceit. That was totally lacking in our last session, and I pray that God will keep his people from such presumptuous, self-willed trouble brewers in the future. How glorious to sit and listen to sound brethren expound the truths of Jehovah when all is peace, but when the tempest is raging and the clouds are dark then are our hours dark indeed.

Brother Jim, I aimed to pen a few of my thoughts on Genesis ii. 17, or perhaps confine my remarks to the subject of predestination. The subject of predestination has been written on more, perhaps, than any other one subject dear to all Old School Baptists, yet, dear brother, it is a dear one to me. I do not begin writing on it for the purpose of stirring up controversy, neither to promulgate some new ideas on the subject which I might have, for all I have I hope has been given me from above. Do away with predestination and you rob me of my God, for it is surely the mainspring in that gospel preached by Jesus and his apostles. Then if you do away with predestination you leave all things to chance or the human free will. Then, my dear brother, where might the end be? It does my soul good, when I am made to view myself as I really am in this tabernacle, to think and contemplate on the sweet thought that God is God; that he is all-wise, knowing all things, whatsoever they be, from beginning to end; a God that has left nothing to chance; a God who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast from generation to generation; even a God who has said, and that by himself, that the wicked shall do wickedly. Now if the Lord will give me liberty to write I purpose to try and get down into the meaning of the word "predestination."

On looking up the word and its synonyms in the lexicon, we find the following terms given: Predestinate (from Latin *prae,* before, *destinare, to* determine.) Being rendered in English by our lexographers, to determine or foreordain; to appoint or ordain beforehand by an unchangeable purpose or decree; to preelect. Or the purpose of God from eternity respecting all events. Predestinate being a verb and predestination being a noun. Now let us look at the word "foreknowledge." It is rendered thus by our English lexographers: "Knowledge of a thing before it happens, or of whatever is to happen; prescience." And prescience means foreknowledge. Of course some will object to one going to a book of the world to get our definitions, but surely we cannot do otherwise. The Bible is not a book of language definitions. Our lexographers have defined the word "love" to mean love and not to mean hate. If we hear a brother say that he loves so and so we do not interpret him to mean that he hates so and so. We will never do so until the usage of the words by the English speaking race is so altered. So it is with using Mr. Webster's definitions of predestination and foreknowledge, unless explicitly contrary to revealed religion. But I believe his interpretations are congruent with Bible language, and have, in some of my enraptured moments, felt that I experienced some of the same things.

"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."—Gen. ii. 17. God had formed man, the first Adam, of the dust of the ground, and placed him in the garden to dress it and keep it. Here it is that God says, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it." Then it was by God's unfrustrable foreknowledge that he, before the transgression took place, was aware that it was going to take place, for he adds, "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Did not God know that his command would be transgressed? If he did not, is he all-wise? If he did not, why did he say, "In the day that thou eatest thereof," and then go on and relate what the consequence would be, and say, "Thou shalt surely die"? Surely God's foreknowledge could see this as clearly as though it had taken place already. If not, there was some exterior force existing which he did not yet know about. But that could not be, for he created all things, and I take that to mean *all things.* Then it was by his predestinated plan that it did take place, therefore his holy and righteous will. Do you not think that God could have prevented it if it had been against his predetermined will? Surely an all-powerful God, who could create worlds and hang them upon his own power, could have prevented it if so it had been his will. You will hear it said, Oh why all this suffering? But, dear brother, if we would live we must first suffer and die. Then it is all for the lifting of Jesus on high.

Perhaps I have written too much already and said too little for you to enjoy. I am not able to put into words the thoughts I have, but find I have a desire to come face to face with you so that I might talk, and also have the privilege of hearing you once more so beautifully set forth the doctrine I hope I love.

In closing I will quote some language used by Paul the apostle to the Ephesians, which reads thus: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." This is far above my poor weak power to imitate even. Such sweet assurances, but yet, when I am permitted to look upon my Jesus arrayed in spotless clothing and myself in filthy rags, I am made to wonder if I have ever been born again. I sometimes think surely I have not, if so, my heart would be cleaner and my mind would be taken out of the transitory things of this vain world and made to dwell upon the subject of his redeeming love.

When disposed to, write me a few lines.

Your brother in bonds,

OSCAR J. BYRNSIDE.

GRANTVILLE, Kansas, Oct. 24, 1929.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I was privileged to attend the Mt. Zion Association, which convened near Oak Grove, Missouri, October 4th, 5th and 6th, 1929, and was requested to write an account of it for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which would indeed be a pleasure to do. But in making the attempt I find human language too weak to describe such a meeting, for it was only one more of the heavenly places in Christ where all were raised above earthly cares and made to sit together in him, and none but those who have lived through such a season can fully realize the fullness of joy that is found in such a place. The business was transacted with unanimity in an evident desire that nothing be done through strife or for vain glory. The doctrine which these dear people love was freely discoursed from the pulpit, without let or hindrance to a blessed people who know and love the joyful sound. Not a jarring, discordant note was heard from the pulpit, nor in their godly conversation among themselves and with their visiting members who came from different States. As I, in my felt sense of littleness, viewed their solemn assembly, I thought, These are they who have come up through great tribulation, for, having their names cast out as evil, for truth and Jesus' lovely sake, only brought them into closer fellowship with the Man of sorrows who was acquainted with grief, and who was despised and rejected of men, and never have I heard a more touching and vivid portraiture of his

life from the cradle to the grave. Christ, and him crucified, was proclaimed throughout the meeting. How sweet to the saints everywhere is the assurance that

"Though the world, and the devil, and all sin unite,
And bold persecutors may try to affright,
Yet Jesus, our Leader, is stronger than they,
Let this animate you to press on your way."

Many dear old saints were there with temples adorned with hoary hair and whitened locks, once more bearing testimony to the unceasing care and omnipotent love and protection of the Captain of our salvation, our dear Forerunner, who says, Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end. So

"Press on, dear old soldiers, you'll soon be discharged,
The war will be over, your bounty enlarged,
With singing and shouting, though Jordan may roar,
You'll enter the haven and rest evermore."

After the meeting I was again blessed to enjoy some precious visits with several of the members, which will long be remembered as "a green spot in the desert" to me. I was also blessed to attend two of their monthly meetings, and again witnessed their fellowship and forbearing love, which is a token of true discipleship, for by it "shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another." Oh may the dear Father of us all guide and direct us in the way of truth, and ever keep us in his fear and love until it is his will for us to

"Meet and be complete,
And long together dwell,
And serve the Lord with one accord,
And so, dear friends, farewell."

In that hope I beg to remain your little sister,

MARY ELLISON.

LINTHICUM HEIGHTS, Md., Dec. 14, 1929.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—You have been much in my thoughts of late, and, I trust, that it is the love of God. We are told that this love is shed abroad; that is, that space or time cannot diminish it, many waters cannot quench it. If I am correct, Jesus said, I am come that they might have life, that they might have it more abundantly. My understanding of this is that there shall be no lack, no shortage, just enough, nothing over, but one glorious fullness of eternal life. With God it is not new, for it was hid in Christ before the world began. Then it is new to the believer only in the sense that he has been made aware that he is the recipient of it. While this life was in the Godhead before the world was framed, yet it could only shine forth in the suffering of death of the blessed Son. Yes, my dear brother, the cursed death of the cross could not stand between him and his love for his people. He must go forward to meet the dark monster death, and by this suffering he has brought in eternal salvation for all the redeemed, and there is no lack in it. But ye are complete in him, in whom it has pleased the Father that all the fullness should dwell. When we are brought to consider this wonderful suffering of our Elder Brother what manner of men ought we to be? He did not say, It is too cold, I cannot go into the garden and pray for you, though all men had forsaken him in the hour of need. If one ever needed a friend surely it would be in the hour of death, yet none stood by him, or with him.

He tread the winepress alone. Of all the people there was none to help. In this sad hour he was made to wonder that there was none to uphold, and kneeled down and prayed, saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me. Here we see the crying out of the flesh against the will of the Father, but in the next breath what do we hear? Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done. Oh what wondrous love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Not long ago I was present at a meeting, and after the service was over the speaker announced that there would not be any meetings during the winter months. Some one asked the reason, and she was told that the weather would most likely be cold in the next two months and the people would not come out That seemed to bring the sufferings of our blessed Jesus very forcibly to my mind, and his sleeping disciples. How unmindful were they of his suffering, so much so that they could not watch with him one hour, which to my mind means the gospel day. Are we to-day keeping this watch, or are we somewhat inclined to be sleepy? Has he given Zion the eyes of slumber, and will he find her sleeping for sorrow upon his second return, as he did the disciples? I am fearful lest this should be so. Oh that he would grant needed grace, even though it should be for a little space, for revealing to us our duty that we rightly owe to him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. May he give us the spirit of prayer to this end.

With love to you and loved ones, I am, I hope, your brother in the best of all bonds,

D. L. TOPPING.

HAVANA, Kansas, Dec. 4, 1929.

DEAR KINDRED:—The SIGNS is very dear to me. It was the first religious paper I read after it was revealed to me that salvation is of the Lord. I was often lost in wonder when reading the experience of others, for they told my own better than I could have told it myself, and I have never tired of it since. May the dear Lord comfort and sustain you in your labor of love. We have countless blessings, and many precious promises which are sure; they never fail. How sweet to feel that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren and have been drawn by His lovingkindness. Oh the comfort and peace when we are permitted to hear that sweet voice say, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," and such a sweet rest, which the world cannot give. Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto us, but our Father which is in heaven. It is everlasting. It brings comfort and encouragement to the sinner saved by grace. There is a sweet rest to the people of God, for he rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. If I know my heart's desire, it is to praise and honor our dear Redeemer.

I have just returned from Iola,

where I attended preaching over the week end. This is my nearest place now; it is seventy-five miles. They are blessed in having Elder J. M. Preston for pastor. His preaching is precious to his congregation. I attended two associations this fall. One at Crescent, Oklahoma, the other at Oak Grove, Missouri. I enjoyed both very much. At the last named place I met sister Mary Ellison for the first time, also her brother, Elder Schenck, of Topeka, Kansas. My daughter was with me, and we were obliged to leave there on Sunday morning. We regretted we could not stay for Sunday services.

There was a time when I did not care for the SIGNS. If I am not mistaken, our heavenly Father revealed to me the truth as it is in Jesus, unworthy as I feel myself to be of all this blessedness. I believe it. Is this boasting? God forbid. Thy sins are all forgiven, seems to be written indelibly in my heart. "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." All we can do is to be still and know that he is God.

"Have thine own way, Lord,
Have thine own way;
Thou art the potter,
I am the clay."

Brother Lefferts, I received your precious letter, and I thank you; it was very much appreciated. I did what you asked me to, in locating a Primitive Baptist Church in Kansas City for a certain person.

With best wishes for editors, publishers and writers of the SIGNS, your unworthy sister, in hope of a blessed immortality,

(MRS. MARY E. PITTMAN.

GRUNDY CENTER, Iowa, Nov. 6, 1929.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—If indeed I can claim such relationship. Your letter received, and very much appreciated, but I feel very unworthy of such a favor from one whose time is so taken up. I thought of you all at the Association, and imagined I saw many of the familiar faces, although many have passed away. The dear ones I loved in my young days are gone. I was the youngest one when I left there and took my letter. I still have it, for I have never found a place where I felt satisfied to put it. I have met a few who I felt were true believers. How I loved the dear old ones who were there at Ebenezer so long ago and who were so kind to and thoughtful of me. I was baptized by Elder J. L. Purington when he was pastor there. Then came Elder J. N. Badger. I have, since moving west, visited there and attended several associations. I am not able to make the trip again. My husband passed away one year ago to-morrow, just as one falling asleep. I do not feel to wish him back, but desire to go, too, and be at rest. I am lonely. I have good, kind children to comfort me, and desire to be patient and await my allotted time to go home. I remember Elders Ker and Hardy. Elder Durand used always to be at the Corresponding Meeting, too, when I was there. The Beebes, father and son, were usually there. They are all fresh in my memory. The last gospel sermon I heard was by yourself, at Hughesville, from the Psalm beginning, "The Lord is my shepherd." I remember some of

it yet. On fifth Sundays I always think of you as being at Hughesville. I enjoy your writings in our paper, the SIGNS, and hope it may continue to be published. My father took it until his death and I have taken it ever since and would not know how to do without it. May you have many precious seasons at your meetings and with loved ones.

Your sister, I hope, in Christ,

(MRS. LAURA LYNN.

[THE above letter is from one of the members of Ebenezer Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, and is in reply to a letter I wrote her trying to tell her something of our recent session of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting.—H. H. L.]

VAN ZANDT, Wash., Dec. 19, 1929.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will please find a money order for two dollars to pay another year's subscription for the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which is all the preaching I get. In looking back over the few short years of my life I find I have been a member of the Regular Old School Baptist Church nearly fifty years (it will be fifty years next November) and what profit have I been to them? None that I can see. I feel that I have been an incumbrance, but there is no other people on this globe I can fellowship beside the old despised "absoluters," and I wonder if Paul did not have this same feeling when he said, The world is crucified unto me and I am crucified unto the world. The older I get the less I see in the world that is desirable, and the more it goes after the pleasures of the people the more disgusting it becomes, and when we can look into and understand the underlying principles of our officers the more we can see that personal pleasures rule most of them, even the so-called churches no longer hold them. We find them at the dance halls, the shows, or other places of amusement, instead of at some one of the many churches as we used to, and the women, whom we used to look upon as the gentler and more refined sex, leading the men to better morals, have now at this day gone as far into fast and free living as the men. We find them smoking cigarettes, and even smoking cigars, and drinking even to drunkenness, while some have turned highwaymen and some are bank robbers, and it is a very rare thing to find one who has the self-respect of our old mothers, who felt it (as it really was, and is,) the highest office which God gave to woman, to keep the home, raise and govern her children, for of these children are the nations of the world built up, and from them come our statesmen, doctors and lawyers, also our inventors, engineers and craftsmen, as well as ministers of the different churches. Now this is just a sketch of the world, and each one is clamoring for supremecy. But where do the Old School Baptists come in? They are neither reckoned in the world nor among the people, so they must be a separate and distinct people, and all their trust is in the God of the whole earth. They have no other god, nor do they want any other. They feel it is sweet to trust in Jesus, for they do

realize, to some extent, how much Jesus must have loved us to suffer all he did, even the shameful death on the cross, while there was not one who stood by him to soothe his bitter agony, not one who would own him as their friend. Oh how can we ever praise him enough for his wonderful works to the children of men? I sometimes think I will praise him continually, and I will start in, but before I am aware I find my mind has wandered off to some worldly subject, then I find there is no stability in me, and I cry unto the Lord to hold me and keep me from all evil, for unless I am kept by him I know I am lost, for I am so weak that I cannot keep nor control my mind for one moment of time. He alone is my keeper all the time.

I did not call to mind the world and its allurements through idle curiosity, but to show the power and wisdom of God, who is ruling all things by the word of his power, and since he has people here in this world he is protecting them in this way, and the whole world wonders after the beast,and while they are running after the pleasures which the beast supplies they are not paying any attention to these poor and afflicted people who shall trust in the Lord, for they think they are an ignorant, harmless people, and only few in numbers, and so the earth helped the woman, and is still helping her. But it is God who is over all, riding in the heavens in the help of his people, who trust him because he has opened their blind eyes, unstopped their deaf ears and given them a heart that they can understand; and they know it is not because they are better than other people, and this fact makes them humble and of a contrite heart, which in the sight of God is of great price, because they are his, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that they should walk in them. When we sum this all up we are bound to come to the only conclusion: that God is over all, blessed for evermore. Even in our small acts in our everyday life he is ever near us meeting out our changes for us, and oh how thankful we ought to be that he has chosen us out of the world, putting a new song in our mouths, even praises to his holy name, and may he ever be sensibly and feelingly near each one of his little ones, and be their shield and hiding-place from the storms of life.

Written in love.

DAVIS BURCH.

San Antonio, Texas, Jan. 27, 1930.

Dear Editors:—Please say in the next issue of the Signs that I would be pleased to get a Minute of all the associations in the country, and more especially those of the southern and eastern States. As I have to be housed up all winter it would give me great pleasure to know how the dear Old Primitive Baptists are getting along. What few churches there are in this part of Texas that are sound are very scattered. I live fifty miles from the nearest church. Any one sending Minutes will please address them to J. B. Bowden, 1047 Ridgewood Ct., San Antonio, Texas.

As ever, your brother in hope,

J. B. BOWDEN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1930.

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HEBREWS XII. 1, 2.

"WHEREFORE seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith."

Note how carefully the spirit of inspiration surrounds the above exhortations with such qualifying safeguards as to leave no room for the intrusion of human self-sufficiency. All scriptural exhortations in the New Testament of grace are appeals to the believer's better self, to the spiritual nature within him resulting from the work of regeneration. Such exhortations have no attraction for the man of the world nor for that worldly element of human nature and carnal mind remaining in the believer even after regeneration. "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses" introduces the exhortation. "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith" concludes the exhortation. Between this introduction and conclusion, these two qualifying safeguards excluding any intrusion of human self-sufficiency, lies the exhortation set like a jewel. What a gross misapplication of Scripture to tear this jewel from its setting and use the bare "Let us" to apply to all and sundry regardless whether they are fit to hear it or not. It applies only to believers. Except there be an ear to hear what the Spirit says to the churches, one cannot receive it. The exhortations beginning "Let us" fall into three divisions: (1) to lay aside every weight, (2) the sin that doth so easily beset us, (3) the patient running of the race set, or fixed, before us. No one who runs a race can be unduly weighted down if he is to run so as to win. Literally, when athletes are trained for racing, they undergo special preparation: diet is regulated, superfluous flesh is reduced, daily exercise is taken to harden muscles, to strengthen the heart, to increase lung capacity; sacrifices of personal inclination have to be made, inordinate appetites must be denied, dissipation has to be eliminated. Without such rigorous discipline, the athlete cannot hope to win in competition against his fellows. Everything likely to retard his ease of movement is taken away. He strips to the flesh, wearing no more clothes than necessary. The life of faith is likened

to running a race. In this case, however, it is not the competitive winning of a prize in which some win and others lose; for to those of faith, the goal is assured to all who run, by reason of Christ Jesus in whom the promises of God are yea and amen. Yet, in this race of faith there must be much, very much, of self-denial. The athlete strips to the flesh, but the runner in the heavenly race must be stripped even of the flesh insofar as any confidence or dependence in his fleshly nature is concerned; there must be a continual escaping from hindering weights which clog the believer's running. "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain." In this race believers do not outstrip other believers, thus robbing their brethren of the goal, but the believer beats himself, or gains the victory over self. Running in this race with the believer and against him are his new man or spiritual nature, and his old man or carnal nature. While it causes one to fear often that the natural man will defeat him, and, like David, to dread that he shall one day fall by the hand of Saul, or, like Paul, to fear lest after having preached to others he himself may become a castaway; yet really the human nature is already beaten as a foregone conclusion. Jesus has seen to that and has himself gotten the victory for his people. When our faith takes that in, we outdistance the flesh and carnal mind and every other adversary. "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things." Not mastery or leadership over brethren and over the church is here meant by the apostle, but mastery or discipline over self. Temperance means control of self, keeping one's self in subjection, conquering one's body. This necessity of temperance is essential to the successful running of the believer as he presses toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. One cannot see how there could be indulgence and satisfaction of carnal lusts and at the same time a successful life of faith. In the experience of believers there is a gracious self-restraint. Jesus said that if any man has really the will to be his follower he must deny himself and take up his cross. The fact, therefore, whether one has a genuine will to be Christ's disciple is proved by whether one is gifted with the grace of temperance to deny self and to endure cross-bearing. The fruit proves the tree, its kind and excellence. So, if there be no self-mastery, no discipline of one's nature with its sins and lusts, what evidence is there that that one is in the path of faith? Usually the runner in a race sees the goal ahead of him. Not so the believer. The Jesus to whom he looks is hidden within the heavens. The goal of his aspirations is unseen. How, then, does he know there is any such goal, any worthwhile eternity ahead of him? Have not scientific men, philosophers and wise men of all sorts put forth strenuously their utmost powers of research to ascertain the certainty of immortality? And have not all such efforts failed? And have not

these failures caused many to recede more and more into the open and avowed atheism and infidelity? Unless there resides in one's soul a positive conviction of the reality of the goal, unseen though it is, the soul will not press on persistently hopeful against odds. True conviction is rooted in faith, not natural or historic faith, but gracious saving faith, that faith which is the evidence of things not seen and the substance of those things for which the believer hopes.

What are the things which hinder, the weights to be put aside? The epistle to the Hebrews was to those Jews who had formerly been under the law of Moses and who had been accustomed to the customs and ordinances, rites and ceremonies of that legal economy, but who had experienced gracious repentance from all that and who had been translated into gospel standing by the Spirit and power of Christ's resurrection. Now, had these Jew believers been altogether changed, in nature as well as in spirit, by this grace experience, no such exhortation as this, to lay aside weights and the besetting sin, would have been needed; but their human natures had not been changed though they had received the ingrafted word. Therefore there clung to these believing Jews the old grave-clothes of Jewish legal traditions and practices from which shrouds they could not escape except as they looked unto Jesus their Overcomer and as their pure minds were stirred up to remember the trials, conflicts and deliverances which their brethren before them, in the great cloud of witnesses, had been subjected to. The church at Jerusalem, whose membership was converted Jews, could not refrain from enjoining upon Gentile converts the rites of circumcision. Yet this was wrong and a harking back to past and gone legal observances since abolished in Jesus' finished work. The failure of the Jerusalem church to realize this was a hindrance to their gospel purity. The clear, bold preaching of the pure gospel by Paul, which was certainly a genuine looking unto Jesus, soon rid these believing Jews of this hindering weight and brought them to understand that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availed anything, but a new creature in Christ Jesus; that when one is in Christ Jesus he is a new creature, having no further use for the wornout garment of legalism. "Ye did run well; who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the truth?" asks Paul of the Galatian brethren. Evidently the attempt of false teachers to enjoin upon the church observances which had been in effect under the obsolete legal covenant was a hindrance to the full enjoyment of gospel liberty by those brethren who had experienced by grace freedom from the former yoke of bondage. Failure to understand that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to them who believe, was a hindrance to their running well. From the days of the apostles until now the travel of God's people has not been uninterrupted: there have been occasional hindrances, many backslidings and strayings away; yet despite all this

the church has moved ahead in proportion as she has been stirred to an awareness of her failures and as she has been enabled through looking unto her great Head, to lay aside every weight. False doctrines have been weights to be set aside. Whenever false things or principles have threatened the church's integrity she has had provided for her ministry God-fearing and clear-minded gifts looking unto Jesus who have been faithful watchmen to warn and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine, and who have been saviors upon the mount of Zion to judge the mount of Esau. When christianity in the reign of Constantine (306-337 A. D.) realized a respite from persecution through having extended to it the protection of the Roman state, the church became almost at once idolatrous. Then occurred an unholy union of Greek and Roman paganism with the ceremonies of the church. Her services became embellished with all the fascination of painting, sculpture and music, everything to allure and hold entranced the human mind. This weighted the life of sincere believers with heaviness; but even then the true body of Christ triumphed by faith in Christ, a steadfast looking unto him which burst forth some centuries later into the Protestant Reformation. Not for long, though, did the church rest. Following upon the Reformation, whose work was not perfected, there has been through the centuries since, a gradual relapse of Protestantism into those same idolatrous practices against which the Reformation had originally been revolt. In spite of this apostacy of Protestantism, the true church has been graciously able to maintain her identity of simplicity and purity of faith and doctrine because Christ's life within her has kept her looking unto him. In these present days, doubts and discouragements often clog our steps and weigh us down, so do jealousies and bickerings between brethren, so do dissensions within our borders, so also do contention and strife over matters of no moment, so do selfishness, coldness, worldliness and lack of love. These weights must be laid aside. How can it be done? By looking unto Jesus, by having him always before our faces, remembering his humiliation and the suffering he endured for the joy set before him. Considering him and considering also that all things our eyes behold shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? Our affliction, whatever it may be, seems light and but for a moment in proportion as we can, by faith, look away from and beyond things seen which are temporal and behold those which are invisible and eternal. The believer enters upon this race at the start only by reason of an effectual and gracious calling. He perseveres in it by reason of the grace of faith which fixes his soul's eye on Jesus. He successfully wins the goal predestinated for him and all saints, for the reason that Jesus has assured victory. What the struggles of the way, its heartaches, its seeming failures, its dire pitfalls, its painful upclimbs, its slippings down-

wards, no one knows but those who are called unto it and who endure its vicissitudes. All in the cloud of witnesses attest these things and also the overcoming power of triumphant faith. How the soul is lifted up and encouraged when one realizes that nothing comes to us but what has been common to God's children in the ages before us. To run with patience means to endure. The power to endure the discipline and hardness of the way rests in the look of faith unto Jesus. Otherwise, the hardships would be impossible. This is proved by the witnesses enumerated in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. Faith is proof of things belonging to the children of God, but of those things which are invisible. Abraham achieved Mt. Moriah and the revelation of Jehovah-Jireh only because faith within him wrought denial of his natural feelings for the sake of an unseen goal farther on. The secret of Moses' choice to suffer affliction with his bretheren rather than be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter was because faith produced denial of immediate reward for the sake of him who was invisible. This saving faith is ever and always the fruit of the Spirit and is the gift of God. The believer does not control the faith, but faith controls the believer. Thus the race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong, humanly speaking. The reward is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, in a natural sense, but of God who showeth mercy.

What is the sin that does so easily beset us? It is unbelief, faithlessness: a kind of pessimism which hesitates to take God at his word; a fear that the gospel is too gloriously good to be true. So, the soul draws back with hesitation and lack of courage. What is the cure? Naught but a looking unto Jesus. There is no middle ground. Looking unto self, one is in the snare of unbelief. Looking unto Jesus, one triumphs over every obstacle and nothing is too hard to be borne for his sake. Stones of stumbling become transformed by faith into steps of achievement. It was unbelief which beset our first parents in the garden of Eden. In the first chapters of the Bible, no question of doubt was raised until we come to the third chapter of Genesis. There the devil asked, "Hath God said?" Satan was the author of the first doubt ever raised in the mind as to the truth of God's word. This sin has beset the whole family of God ever since. We fail to take God at his word, we fear to accept the Scriptures at their face value, we doubt the reality of religion, we cling to the evidence of our senses rather than to the assurance of faith, all because of our besetting sin of unbelief. It was unbelief which beset the disciples of Christ as stricken in heart, they walked to Emaus gloomily considering the things they had seen at Jerusalem when Jesus was crucified. But Jesus walked with them and chided them for their slowness of heart and for their failure to believe in the Scriptures. As he taught them the meaning of the law and the prophets their fervent heart melted their doubts and fears, the burdening weights fell off them, their

besetting sin was vanquished. It was unbelief which beset the forerunner, John the Baptist, when in prison so that he doubted the divine character of Jesus whom he had baptized. But at the blessed reminders brought him by the messengers from Jesus, assurance awoke again within him. "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief" was the cry of one whose son Jesus had healed. Not a child of God anywhere but who can fellowship that apparent contradiction. That inconsistency of belief against unbelief is a part of every gracious experience. Every subject of divine grace is given to believe on the Son of God, but each one greatly desires to realize that belief more fully and to be less plagued with that unbelief which from time to time rises up within like a disease breeding miasma out of one's fallen nature. So through all the ages, as witnessed by the galaxy of great stars named in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, there has been a continual conflict and triumph of faith. In all this life of faith there is a communion of fellowship existing between God's people in all ages, so that they are an encouragement to us and are helpers of us in the bearing of our burdens because they suffered as we do, yea, more. To know that one is on the side of the angels is an effectual buttressing of the soul against unbelief and heavy weights. If ever there was a time when those who believe in Christ need to have their souls fortified against doubts and unbelief it is now. That there are weights of selfishness, worldliness and coldness that clog the footsteps of the faithful, we know only too well. The remedy is to look unto Jesus knowing that we contend against no more than those in the cloud contended against before us; and as they conquered, so shall we if only we, by faith, look unto Jesus, and only unto him. As the look of faith cured those who beheld the lifted-up brazen serpent in the wilderness, so will it cure our souls if we as faithfully look upon the lifted-up Christ on Calvary who now sits at the right hand of his Father in the heavens. Our need is to rise above material things and to regain the vision of that city whose builder and maker is God. May his grace assist our souls unto it. H. H. L.

PSALMS XXXII. 5.

"I ACKNOWLEDGE my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin."

David, in the above, expressed his realization in an experimental way, and we note his confession unto the Lord and also the manifested forgiveness to him. These words embrace all the realizations of the power of God to his elect while in this time state. The first sentence is declarative in acknowledging his sin unto the Lord. We wish for a few words to emphasize why one thus acknowledges his sin unto the Lord. We know it is not in the flesh to acknowledge the sin that is in the flesh, but rather to seek to justify and continue according to the lusts thereof, and no one will acknowledge his sin until the power of God humiliates the flesh and takes away the power of him that

leads the flesh, and makes the poor sinner feel his utter helplessness before the just and righteous God, then he, having no way of escape, makes full confession before that righteous Judge. In the second clause he confesses inability to hide his iniquity, and we by experience realize why he did not hide his iniquity, and we feel we can answer for every poor sinner who has felt as the psalmist expresses. The flesh becomes transparent before the searching light of God, which discerns to the utmost, in which the very thoughts and intents of every one's heart is revealed. When such wisdom is given and the exceeding sinfulness of sin is felt, then we can speak as did Job, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."—Job xlii. 6. We also call attention to the language of Jesus when he spake in parables unto the scribes and Pharisees, saying, "A certain man had two sons: and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet."—Luke xv. 11-22. This parable is often referred to as "The Prodigal Son." The word "prodigal" means extravagant in expenditure; lavish; wasteful; a spendthrift. A poor sinner is unmindful in nature of his ways because of the captivity of sin, as previously referred to, but when the power of God reveals unto him his condition he is made alive. We often come in contact with those who are enticed by the idol gods of this world and go out of the true house of God and all their substance is consumed by listening to deceivers crying, Lo, here is Christ, and when they come to the end and find no virtue in all they have been holding up as life, and realize there is nothing but death surrounding, then they cry, Lord, save or I perish. All who have life have virtue and are made to crave for such food as will give strength. This was the realization of the prodigal son. Every child of grace

will surely realize the same experience as the young son of this man in the parable. We note another beautiful figure relative to these two sons, the elder and the younger. The elder son is figurative of the first Adam, who is of the earth earthy and of himself can do nothing, and will never come to the knowledge of the lost and ruined condition of himself in nature. We hear Jesus declaring, I will call my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth. This younger son could not have wasted the goods of his father unless the father had delivered them into his hands, and the far country represents, to our mind, the association of those who are given to know the truth and go after the things of this world. They could not go after the things of this world if the Father had decreed otherwise. But in God's own appointed time he sends the famine into the land so no man can give to his hungry son, hence the repentance is wrought and the power of God is manifested and his name glorified. In his riotous way the thoughts of association and fellowship of his father's house were not considered until the famine was so prevalent and no one gave him to eat. We know very well we cannot bestow unless we have treasures to draw from, which calls up the testimony of the word of God that we must have the preparation of the heart as well as the answer of the tongue; it must be of the Lord. Those who keep swine have food supply for swine, and no one in nature would even think of getting food to nourish the human body from the stores of swine food, as swine are classed as unclean. In all these experiences he is realizing the blessings of his father's house, which makes him feel unworthy to be called a son of a righteous father, so he asks to be a servant. The righteous father does not take away that relationship, nor is the son allowed to dispose of it. The son's heart is prepared by his suffering to confess his sin to his father. The father does not require his servant to go and persuade him to return, but he saw his son coming a great way off. His father had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck, and kissed him, which expresses heart's greeting; then the best robe from his father's house by his command to his servant is brought and put on him. This robe, to our understanding, is the fellowship of the house of God. We are persuaded to believe that there has never been one of the children of God who has walked disorderly but received the chastening of the Lord and was made to repent and confess his transgressions before the pilgrimage of this life was ended.

The ring put on his hand expresses oneness, unity, a tie embracing the entire relationship. The bands of sovereign grace embrace the sinner and saves him with an everlasting salvation. In comparing these Scriptures the pronouns "I" and "thee" are the sinner's acknowledgment unto the Lord, and in the parable it is as though a natural son were speaking to his father. The iniquity that he had not hid was the following after the lusts of the flesh. We do not find where the father

forgave the son until he saw him coming back, hungry for the food from his father's table. Blessed are they that hunger after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are they which mourn, for they shall be comforted. We read in the parable that the elder son was angry because of the merriment in his father's house over the return of his brother, or kinsman after the flesh, which is continually being manifested among brethren and sisters striving to be favorite ones and the highest favored. If we could only feel to be as the servant in the house of God there would be more service and less strife. Strife always comes from relations of the flesh, and cannot please God. We find in and of this world malice, hatred, backbiting, evil speaking, corrupt communications and many other things, which are the fields in which swine are kept, and, brethren, sisters and friends, if we find ourselves in these fields we know what our labors are, and surely if we have been washed we do not want to be made filthy by these pollutions. What joy and feasting there is in our Father's house when we acknowledge our sin unto our Father and confess our transgressions unto the Lord. We would not infer that one can accomplish these things in the flesh, and if there is no repentance there is no spiritual relation; but, on the other hand, the Spirit humbleth and bringeth the sinner to repentance. So if one is led by the Spirit and in weakness causes offense he will beg forgiveness and humility will be manifested; otherwise malice, hatred and envy, with every way to bring destruction upon the offended. Oh that we could always cry unto the Lord and beg him to guide our ways that we may keep his statutes still, and that he would grant us grace to know and do his will, and work in us both to will and do of his good pleasure. When trials and afflictions come think it not strange concerning the fiery trials that shall try us, as though some strange thing had happened, but rather rejoice, for your Savior has overcome the world. The son has been shod with the preparation of the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to them that believe, which shields from the thorns and fiery darts of Satan that pierce the tender body, and when the gospel is given out of a pure heart there is no adversary that can prosper against it, as it shields in such a way that no weapon can prosper against it.

C. W. V.

NOTICE.

We request our subscribers when sending in subscriptions or changes of address to be sure and give the *exact name and address* to which the paper is now coming; otherwise we are liable to give the credit to the wrong person, as we may have two subscribers of the same surname at the one post office.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER A. J. LUTHER was born February 28th, 1850, near Dickson, Tennessee, and at the age of four years he removed with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Luther, to the southern part of Graves County, Kentucky, near Cuba. He was married to Miss Rosebille Roberts in November, 1872, and to this union were born three sons: Arthur, Frank and Willard, and two daughters: Bettie and Nettie, twins. The Lord wonderfully blessed brother Luther and his devoted wife with obedient children who helped their parents to build a prosperous and comfortable home in the southern part of Graves County, Kentucky, where they gladly welcomed and entertained their many friends, who were won by their many noble traits of character. The Lord blessed brother Luther with a knowledge of salvation when he was a young man and he was soon shown the church in her beauty, wherein he demanded admittance into her fellowship, and was received into the same at South Mt. Zion in 1886. Soon it was manifested the Lord had laid his hand on him to be a mouthpiece unto his people, so the church liberated him, then ordained him a minister to take the oversight of the flock over the which the Holy Ghost had made him to feed the church of God, to reprove and rebuke with all longsuffering and doctrine. He served churches as moderator for many years, and was also moderator of the Bethel Association for a number of years. Brother Luther was "conscripted," as he would express it, as a soldier of Jesus Christ, and enlisted as a captain of her forces about the time the time salvation heresy sprang into Israel's camp. This valient soldier was ever alert and ready to pour forth the death volley to any such false theory, by declaring that salvation is by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is a gift of God, first, last and all the time. As time went on with brother Luther his ambitious personage called for so much hard labor, both in the natural and spiritual kingdom, his manly form began to decay, and his children having married and left his home, excepting Willard, he and his aged companion thought best to sell the home, which they did, and located in Mayfield, Kentucky, where his companion, sister Luther, was taken from him, after considerable affliction. His daughters Bettie and Nettie having died he was left lonely in the home with Willard and his wife Inez, who did what they could to make him comfortable and happy. He was married a second time, about six years ago, to sister Jennie Gilbert, and all seemed to move on well until the Lord saw fit to remove Willard by death, which was a great shock to all, especially to brother Luther, whose frail body was being ravaged by disease, and he in a measure weakened and died daily until February 6th, when the Lord called and this brave soldier of the cross grounded his arms and departed in peace. Yes, we believe he fell asleep in Jesus, for God has said, By their fruits ye shall know them. No one I have ever associated with was more ready and willing and delighted to talk about God and his goodness.

Elders T. J. Prince, O. W. Perkins, W. J. Shaffer and I were summoned to the home to conduct the funeral, which was held February 8th, at 10:30 a. m. Elder Prince delivered the principal sermon from Revelation xiv. 13, after which Elders Prince and Perkins went with the family and friends to the Dobson Cemetery, in the southern part of Graves County, Kentucky, where they deposited his mortal remains to await the final resurrection, when the Lord himself will bring the sleeping dust forth a spiritual conqueror with the glorified image of our Redeemer. We can but grieve at parting with such a noble, true and lovely yokefellow, brother, companion, father and friend, yet we sorrow not as those who have no hope, being assured that our loss is his eternal gain. After eighty years of labor he rests, while his works do follow him. May the God of all grace comfort the bereaved family and sorrowing churches of his charge, and raise up others to go in and out before his people according to his will, is the desire of one who loved him.

J. C. CHESTER.

CORNELIA ROSALTHA (BORTHWICK) ANGELL, youngest of twelve children of James and Dalinda (Dickerson) Borthwick, was born November 6th, 1839, near Middleburg, Schoharie County, New York, and died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. W. J. Belknap, at Cooperstown, Otsego County, New York, December 25th, 1929, while eating her Christmas dinner, as the result of a heart attack and infirmities of age. She had passed her ninetieth milestone a few weeks before, and was the last of her father's large family. She was married to Elbert Angell January 1st, 1861, and moved to Milford, Otsego County, New York, where they lived on a farm until the death of her husband, November 7th, 1910, after which she went to live with her only child, and her husband, Mr and Mrs. W. J. Belknap, in Cooperstown, New York. Aunt Rosaltha received a hope in Christ and united with the Middleburg Old School Baptist Church, Schoharie County, New York, and was baptized by Elder Moore July 18th, 1869. Distance and other unfavorable circumstances hindered her from meeting with the church and brethren very often, but her faith remained the same. I think in a wonderful manner God was her daily companion, comfort and strength in her lonely declining years. Her eyes had failed so she was unable to read for several years. Besides the daughter and husband, she leaves one grandson and wife, Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Belknap, several nephews and nieces and the church of which she had been a loved member for sixty years, but we mourn not for her, as we feel sure our loss is her great gain.

Written by her loving niece and sister in the church,

ADDIE LIVINGSTON.

JAMES HAGAN WEBB was born in Jackson County, Missouri, November 18th, 1837, and departed into the great beyond from whence none returns March 14th, 1930, aged 92 years, 3 months and 26 days, having lived and died within a few miles of where he was born. He married Mary Elizabeth Owings about the year 1860, and to that union were born eight children. Charles, Lovejoy and Elizabeth died in early childhood. James B., the eldest, died in 1916. Those living are: Lee J., William C. and Mrs. E. E. Perry, of Oak Grove, Missouri, Eugene E., of Grain Valley, Missouri. His wife passed on about the year 1898 or 1899. December 1st, 1900 he was married to Josephine Force. He was made to believe in Jesus as a complete Savior when a young man and was blessed to go to the church about the year 1865, and was soon set apart as Deacon, which office he filled as well as any man could while in this world of sin. He was well established in the doctrine, a good defender, a man who went much to visit nearby churches, a good provider, had the love of young and old and was ever ready to help the poor. We feel the little church has lost much, but that "Uncle Jim" has gained more. I tried to comfort those who mourn by using the words recorded in Romans fourth chapter, beginning at the twentieth verse. He was nearing one hundred years of age, but did not stagger at the promises of God, for he believed that he who promised was also able to perform. May the God of all grace be with us in all our tribulations.

ALSO,

FRANCIS MARION WEBB was born October 17th, 1844, and passed to the great beyond February 3rd, 1930, aged 85 years, 3 months and 16 days. December 21st, 1873, he was married to Miss Jane Phillips, and to this union were born twelve children, three of whom died in early childhood. Those living are: David M., of Kansas City, Missouri, Lewis S., of Buckner, Missouri, Elmer, of Oak Grove, Missouri, Ellis and Stone, of Lone Jack, Missouri, Mrs. C. C. Stayton, of Mississippi, Mrs. R. L. White, of Oak Grove, Missouri, Mrs. G. L. Gosney, of Oak Grove, Missouri, and Mrs. C. E. Mitchel, of Oklahoma. These, with the aged wife and mother, are left in loneliness to mourn for a good husband, father and a safe counselor, who by hard work and carefulness had by him plenty for their declining years. Brother Webb joined the church August 6th, 1887, and was soon ordained Deacon, which office he filled until age hindered him. He was well established in the doctrine and a good defender of the same, often affirming the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as the standard bearer of the truth for the Old Baptists. We feel that our little church at Oak Grove has lost a good member and a strong supporter in every way wherein their natural welfare is concerned. Brother Webb said that he had faults, that he could not live and do as he thought a child of grace should, and I expect he had, for he was good company for me, and I know this condition in myself causes me to mourn often. I shall miss him much, for often in my worrying he has said, God still rules, he will make these things right. Brother Webb was born and spent his life in Jackson County, Missouri.

His funeral was held at Oak Grove Church, where he joined, Elders Hall and Attebery speaking, we hope, to the comfort of those who mourn, trying to set forth Jesus the resurrection and the life. May the Lord keep, guide and deliver us from the power of sin unto his glorious kingdom.

T. E. ATTEBERY.

IVA ANN DUNNICK NEWTON, wife of Edwin Newton, a pioneer farmer near Ashville, Ohio, died March 13th, 1930, at the age of 82 years and 7 months. Death was due to heart failure. She leaves, besides her husband, five step-children: C. E. Newton, of Columbus, Ohio, E. W. Newton, of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, G. M. Newton and Mrs. C. M. May, of Circleville, Ohio, and Urban J. Newton, at home. Also two brothers: H. H. Dunnick, of Lancaster, Ohio, and Benjamin Dunnick, of Grove City, Ohio, one sister: Mrs. Amanda Reber, of East Ringgold, Ohio, and many other relatives to mourn her death. She was married January 1st, 1908, and lived a happy and prosperous life on their farm in Walnut township for over twenty-two years. She received a hope when about eleven years of age, but never felt to join the church here on earth. Her spirit has returned to God above, where some day she will join the church triumphant.

The funeral services, which were very largely attended, were conducted at her late residence by Elder Levi V. Hite, of near Marion, Ohio, who took for his text Romans viii. 28: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Interment was in Reber Hill Cemetery. May God bless brother Newton.

L. V. HITE.

MRS. FANNIE JOHNSON died February 8th, 1930, at her home, Clover Hill Farm, near Manassas, Prince William County, Virginia, after a brief illness of pneumonia. She was born at Union Mills, Fairfax County, Virginia, November 8th, 1852, and was the daughter of James H. and sister Emily Simpson. In the early 60's she moved to Texas with her parents. October 15th, 1883, she was married to the late Joseph B. Johnson, and lived all their married life at the old homestead, right near the Bethlehem Old School Baptist meetinghouse. Her husband died in April, 1921. She leaves five children: Emily J., Joseph H., Wheatley M., Elizabeth F. and J. Benjamin, also five grandchildren and one sister, Mrs. Helen Tomlinson, of Texas. She was a wise, good mother, a kind neighbor, a sweet and lovely woman, one who will be greatly missed. Their home was a pleasant place of entertainment for the Old Baptists. While she never united with the church, both her husband and herself loved the people and the preaching.

H. H. L.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. J. A. Hurley, Mich., $3; Mrs. Grace E. Jones, Iowa, $1; Isaac L. Kipp, N. J., $1; Elizabeth Rittenhouse, N. J., $1; Mrs. Sarah J. Clegg, Pa., $1.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, &c. REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.

Of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, published monthly, at Middletown, N. Y., for April 1st, 1930.

State of New York, County of Orange, ss.:

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Gilbert Beebe, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the owner of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that the following is to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24th, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse side of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publishers, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publishers, J. E. Beebe & Company, Middletown, N. Y.; Editor, H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

2. The owner is, Gilbert Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagers and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent. or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear on the books of the company, but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the corporation for whom such trustee is acting is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stocks, bonds or other securities than as so stated by him.

GILBERT BEEBE,
Owner.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 24th day of March, 1930.

(Seal) FRANK P. COX.
(My commission expires March 31, 1932.)

MEETINGS.

The Lord willing, the next session of the Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association will be held with the Ebenezer Church, of Baltimore city, Maryland, May 14th, 15th and 16th, 1930. All lovers of gospel truth are invited to meet with us. We hope a goodly number will attend.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday
10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects Elder George Ruston to meet with them the fifth Sunday in March (30th), 1930. Services to be held at the home of brother J. E. Livingston, 64 E. Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. Also on Saturday before at 2 p. m. The Albany and Binghamton D. and H. train arrives at and leaves Cobleskill both ways in convenient time for the meeting. All are welcome.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sunday at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

The Cane Run Predestinarian Old School Baptist Church, of Turners Station, Kentucky, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 10:30 a. m., also, the Sulphur Fork Church of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, of the same faith and order, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 2:30 p. m.

GEO. L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Little Flock Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every first and third Sunday at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, at 1 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.
O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk,
143 W. 11th Street, Claremont Cal.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, every Sunday at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. at the home of W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Midweek song service by appointment. Pastors, Elders Jones and Jaynes. Basket lunch.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 98. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1930. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"GET THEE OUT." GEN. XII. 1-5. "COME." ACTS VII. 2, 3.

IT has pleased our God, the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, to give to his people, in the person of Abraham, an example of his eternal, electing, covenant grace. Abraham was called, and led and taught of the Lord, and faith was wrought in him to confide in God; he was taken into such nearness, such amiability with the Lord (though Abraham confessed himself to be but "dust and ashes."—Gen. xviii. 27) he was called the "friend of God."—James ii. 23; Isaiah xli. 8. Our precious Christ declared, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad."—John viii. 56. Thus, by the graciousness of the Lord he lived and walked, and died in this precious faith. (Heb. xi. 13.) Who, and what was Abraham? Before the Lord called him by his grace he was by nature a child of wrath even as others of Adam's race. He did not know God, but was with his fathers, a worshipper of idols in Ur of the Chaldees. (Joshua xxiv. 2.) All the particulars of what he was in his darkness, ignorance and alienation from God need not here be portrayed, but look yourself, child of God, unto the rock whence ye were hewn, and the hole of the pit whence ye were digged, and that will suffice. (Isaiah li. 1, 2. Oh the heights and depths of the sovereign graciousness of God to us vile, wretched transgressors, who walked according to the course of this world. Oh the corruptions in the hearts of Adam's race! The hole of this horrible pit is deep and foul, the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it? Poor sinners quickened by the Holy Ghost are in a measure feelingly made to know how vile they are, and to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" The Lord hewed Abraham from the rock, and digged him out of the hole of the pit, and established his

goings. Others who lived in Ur of the Chaldees were left in their abominable idolatries, dead in their trespasses and sins. "I called him alone, and blessed him."—Isaiah li. 2. "God caused me to wander from my father's house."—Gen. xx. 13. His journeying, then, from his father's house was not of his self-determination, but God moved him to go. The Lord was the gracious cause. So it is with all Zion's pilgrims who are journeying to the better country, that is a heavenly, to the city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God. The very first step in this path, and all the steps of our faith, are wrought and caused by the gracious operations of the Holy Ghost. The Lord called Abraham alone and blessed him, and he obeyed and went out, but he did not go forth alone. For Stephen, just before he was stoned to death, declared, "Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and *come* into the land which I shall shew thee."—Acts vii. 1, 2. What power was in this voice! How kind, how assuring was this voice! Abraham knew this voice was not the voice of any devils, the idol gods, (Lev. xvii. 7) which he had been worshipping, but a voice of gracious, commanding, persuading power. It took hold of his heart, and he obeyed and went forth with the invisible, blessed God of glory. For that word "Come" signified, I will be with thee, I will show thee the way, and show thee the land. "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran, and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came."—Gen. xii. 1-5. God brought him to see the land and was his upholder and defense, his counsellor and friend. The Lord was mindful of his gracious covenant with him, and as he went from one nation to another he suffered no man to do them wrong. Yea, he reproved kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm. (Psalms cv. 13-15.) Abraham walked by faith in fellowship with God. And if we are of faith and walk in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham (Rom. iv. 12) then truly our fellowship will be with God our Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

As we remember all the way wherein thus far we have come surely we must acknowledge that his abounding mercies have been our sufficiency. We have been poor sinful mortals all the way, frail and worthless nothings, often wayward, inconstant, backsliders in heart. I need not attempt to tell the

story of our sinfulness and nothingness. Our father Abraham confessed unto the Lord that he was but "dust and ashes."—Gen. xviii. 27. But, by the gracious operations of the Holy Ghost, we have continued to cleave to the Lord, to yearn for his presence to be with us in our pilgrimage to the heavenly country, the promised inheritance of eternal glory with our dear Savior, our much loved and worshipped Head and Husband, our Lord Jesus Christ. Abraham went forth not knowing whither he went, and we do not see what steps we are to take to-day, or what shall be on the morrow. But to the end of our journey our path will only be as our all-wise God and Father has ordained; this we know that the Lord hath said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." That sweet word "Come" tells us so. The Lord said to Jacob, "Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."—Gen. xxviii. 15. There will doubtless be rough places before us, temptations and afflictions. It is not the purpose of the Lord to carry us to the skies on flowery beds of ease, and it is not for us to determine how it shall befall us. But if to-morrow there are floods for us to pass through, or fiery trials to endure, no strange thing will have happened unto us, for tribulations have ever been the lot of God's elect and redeemd people while in this world. Jesus saith, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world."—John xvi. 33. Our gracious God saith, "I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." Jonah, when in the belly of the whale, exclaimed, "I am cast out of thy sight," but he was mistaken. Ah! how many mistaken thoughts of God have arisen within us. But though the Lord may be often out of our sight, and we may be saying with Job, "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him," yet we are never out of his sight. The Lord sees us in the deepest, darkest dispensations of his providences that we are passing through, for the darkness and the light are both alike to him, and all our portion, our lot, is such as is ours in the counsel of his own will. Truly it is wonderful, the love of God our Savior unto his chosen. They are accepted in the Beloved, and in him have obtained an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away.

And now, believers in Christ Jesus, we are journeying unto the place of which the Lord hath said, I will give it thee. (Num. x. 29.) We can only endure and hold on our way as we are found leaning upon our Beloved. (Solomon's Song viii. 5.) Christ, in his espousal of us unto himself, said, "Come," and we were so drawn to Christ crucified, so leaned upon him, that we went after him in the wilderness. (Jer. ii. 2.) And it is our comfortable hope that he will bring us

home to our Father's house on high, we shall enter into the King's palace in eternal glory. Oh, we shall be like him in immortal beauty, our whole spirit and soul and body glorified, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.
501 Cleveland Street, RALEIGH, North Carolina.

ST. ALBANS, W. Va., Jan. 28, 1930.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—As I have not written for the SIGNS for a long time, I have a little mind to write a few lines on the one hundred and thirtieth Psalm, first verse: "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord." It is plainly taught in the Bible how sorrow and sin came into this world. Romans v. 12: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." In the creation of man he was made upright, so it is written in Ecclesiastes vii. 29, "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." There is not an upright man on the earth to-day, except those whom grace has made upright. The man sinned and brought death on all his unborn posterity. After man had transgressed God said, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life: thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee." Because of his sin. "Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken." In the sweat of his face he should eat bread "till thou return unto the ground." Out, out into darkness, down, down under the inflexible law of God, condemned to die, a prisoner of Satan, to serve him as a slave, and blind, deaf and dumb to all spiritual things and enjoyments. So Paul says, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Clothed in filthy rags. Isaiah lxiv. 6: "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." In love with Satan and a lie. So Paul says, "Ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."—Eph. ii. 2, 3. Again, Paul says in 2 Thessalonians ii. 11, 12, "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." Going further and further away into sin and darkness. So we find in Genesis vi. 11, 12, "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way from the earth." Again, Psalms liii. 2, 3, "God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that understand,

that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." If God had created them filthy they could not have become filthy. It says in Genesis, "All flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth." Then it was not God that corrupted them. 2 Timothy iii. 13: "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." These Scriptures prove positively that man has continued to sink down into sin and degredation ever since the transgression. The whole church in her relation to the earthly Adam was debased and degraded, sinful and as polluted as it was possible to be except as time carries her on to a lower plane. No wonder David said, "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord." Low down in sin and as black as sin could make her is where she was when Jesus came down to redeem and cleanse her. The poet says,

"Naked, come to thee for dress,
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly,
Wash me, Savior, or I die."

I know that I am black, sinful and polluted. It seems to me there is not a sinner on earth blacker than I am, and as far as our flesh is concerned all of Adam's posterity are equally wicked. All are flesh and blood, all alike, and that is the reason when by the light of the Spirit of God the children of God see that "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." They cry out, I saw the Lord high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. "Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of glory."—Isaiah vi. 5. It looked to him like the temple was full and he left out, and no place for him. How often have I said this. There is no place for me, I am too sinful and polluted, God will have no mercy on such a black, hell-deserving creature as I am.

"If my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well."

Sometimes I have seen my flesh so black and so low down in sin that I have seen the hogs sleeping quietly and have thought, I wish I was a hog, made to be killed and cut up for meat. I would gladly have exchanged places with them. Job in his distress when Satan was permitted to torment him, said, "Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews." God has done this. All your sorrows are caused by the flesh. Think of the many awful diseases the flesh is heir to. How terribly the people of God suffer. Can anything good come out of this? Let Paul tell it. He says, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—2 Cor. iv. 17. Again, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."—Rom. viii. 18. It is not only given you to believe on his name, but also to suffer for his sake. Again, That ye may know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his suffering. Again, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with

him." Again, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace. Then if Paul knew, it is certainly true that the suffering, both natural and spiritual, causes the children of God in the end to rejoice. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." "Worketh for us." That is, it produces the glory. How terribly do the people of God suffer in their flesh. Cancer, tuberculosis, neuritis, how awful these are. One suffers terribly and at last is set free to go home shouting. How often do we hear our aged brethren say, I want to go; I am afraid I am getting impatient. The light affliction causes them to want to go. Light affliction only for a moment. A hundred years is only a moment compared with eternal glory. If you were to suffer terribly for a hundred years it would amount to nothing compared to going away into everlasting punishment. All that keeps any one from going away to live in everlasting darkness is the obedience of the dear Savior. So Paul says, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many [not a few] be made righteous." Not by your obedience, nor the obedience of a thousand, nor for anything you have done, but by the obedience of one, and that one is the blessed Jesus. "Clothed me with skin and flesh." The apostle tells how awful this flesh is, and he says, "We are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." I do not wonder he has no confidence in the flesh, when he says, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like."—Gal. v. 19-21. This is you, and all men, and myself. No difference how refined you seem to be. It does not matter how God has watched over you and kept you from putting these awful sins into practice, and when God by his Spirit has given you to see that all of this catalogue of crime is a part of your being no wonder you cry out, Unclean, unclean, for you see this is you, and you are not then hunting for faults in some one else, but you say, There is no one on earth worse than I am, not even the blackest murderer, for one of the awful things he sets forth in what I have written, that is, the works of the flesh, is murder. We are all alike in our flesh. Paul says, speaking of the Jews and Gentiles, "Are we [the Jews] any better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin: as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one."—Rom. iii. 9, 10. Then he goes on and tells how bad all are. Then as this is true it would be very foolish for any one to say God causes any man to commit sin. No sound intelligent absoluter has ever said so. You might just as well say it takes a boy with a paddle to cause the water to run over Niagara Falls as to say God causes

man to sin, but if you will all come up here and stand by me, and look at these great Falls you will see that it is the nature of this water to flow over this precipice, and it would take some wonderful power to cause this river to turn back and run up the other way. If you stood there and looked with amazement at this wonderful sight, and saw this water as it plunges down over the precipice and goes on down over the rocks, foaming, rushing on and on down the river, and then all at once you saw the water coming back up the river, and when it got to the falls it climbed right on up and continued on up the river, you would be much astonished, and would say that some mighty power had taken hold of this water and caused it to do that. So it takes the power of God to cause a man or woman to turn from their sinful ways and keep to the strait and narrow road. So it is written in the thirty-sixth chapter of Ezekiel, "I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Ephriam said, "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned." —Jer. xxxi. 18. Isaiah says in the thirtieth chapter and twenty-first verse, "And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it." When you hear this word you turn right around and walk the other way, for Jesus speaks and it is done. Peter says, You are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. When any one says that after one is born again he is just left to do right or wrong he is mistaken, and surely he has no experience. Peter said, Though all men forsake you, yet will not I. The Savior left him to himself and he lied and cursed and swore. So would you if God ceased to keep you by his power. It is Jesus that delivers you from this present evil world, or Paul was mistaken. Listen: "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world." Then give him the credit and do not be trying to steal his glory. Give him the praise. The poet says,

"Then give all the glory to his holy name,
To him all the glory belongs;
Be yours the high joy to sound forth his fame,
And crown him in each of your songs."

Paul says again, "Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ."—Heb. xiii. 21. Peter says, It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Then with these texts before us how could we say we are passive in regeneration and active in obedience? Yes, I am sure we will obey when God makes us perfect in every good work to do his will. Paul says, "I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."—1 Cor. xv. 10. Again, "Whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily."—Col. i. 29. Now, poor, dear, precious child of God, take a look at these Scriptures and see if you do not think it is God that causes you to obey and to do his will.

"Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord." Yes, sunken down as black and filthy as sin could make us.

But, wonder of wonders, Jesus loved us notwithstanding our awful condition. The prophet Jeremiah says, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Such love! No wonder we sing, What wondrous love is this, that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dreadful curse for my soul. Paul says, For this great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. Yes, no one ever heard of any such love. Quintus slew the fiercest lion the Romans turned in on the slaves, risking his own life for her, his love, but she was very intelligent and uncommonly beautiful. Jesus loved us when we were black, polluted and sinful, serving the devil and delighting in his service. Blind, deaf, hating him and hating holiness, enjoying sin and wickedness. "If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." "If when we were enemies." When we loved and obeyed him? Again, "The carnal mind is enmity against God." Then we were his enemies. Still he loved us, and because of this love he bowed the heavens and came down. Think, oh think, what he has done for you. "Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." —2 Cor. viii. 9. There he was in glory with the glory he had with his Father before the world began. He had never known pain in experience, had never realized in himself sorrow, had never grieved, only as he bore his people before he was manifest. But before the world was there was none of his people for him to suffer with. So there he was in glory, rich, incomprehensibly rich, so wondrously rich we cannot conceive of what it was; and to think of his glory, yet he left all to come to our rescue. He said, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."—John xvii. 5. There he was in incomprehensible glory, so wondrously powerful no mortal man could stand the wonder of it. How do I know? Because once I put my head down to try and pray God to give a preacher light, and the power came with such force I had to take my head up. This is what he left for you. After he came see the difference. Go to the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah and read. Hear the prophet: "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." The poet says,

> "To hear the sorrows thou hast felt,
> O Lord, an adamant would melt;
> But I can read each moving line,
> And nothing moves this heart of mine."

So it is. It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief. Yes, little one, he was bruised for you, and though we hated him, and hid our faces from him, he never wavered, he never turned back, he kept right on, with his

eye fixed on one thing, and that was your deliverance from Satan, and your cleansing, and the joy that would come to you, and the love you would have for him after you learned how mean you had treated him, and how God had bruised him for your sake. So it is written, "Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Despising the shame. Yes, he knew all about your sinfulness, your pollutions, how you were in love with the devil, and how you delighted to serve him, still he loved you. Loved you so much he went down into hell and fought the battle and delivered you from Satan. Listen, precious little one, hear him, "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me."—Psalms cxvi. 3. Paul says, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."—Heb. ii. 14, 15. Then he went down and met Satan face to face and destroyed him and delivered you. It is written, "He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above the heavens; that he might fill all things."—Eph. iv. 10. He did not love you because you were beautiful, for you were as black as sin could make you; nor because you were finely dressed, because "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags;" nor because you loved him, because "the carnal mind is enmity against God;" nor because you were so smart spiritually, for Paul says, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Not because you were rich, for you were ten thousand talents in debt and not a farthing to pay. Then why did he love such hell-deserving creatures as we are? "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Wonder of wonders, he came redeemed, washed, purified, gave an understanding, made you as white and clean as he is, clothed you in royal apparel and made you intelligent and beautiful as he is. So it is written, "The Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding." Then opened he their understanding. "The King's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework." "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."—Psalms xvii. 15. "We shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is," and he is going to change your vile bodies and fashion them like unto his own body. Then you will be wondrously beautiful and gloriously happy. "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?"

The most unworthy of all the people of God, if indeed one at all,

ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

EDITORIAL.

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PSALMS XIX. 13.

"KEEP back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression."

The children of God have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. (1 John ii. 1.) Is He not gloriously sufficient to fully fill this place of advocacy, with no necessity on our part to seek a Daysman elsewhere? To whom else can believers seek without doing despite to his grace? Did not David ask the Lord that he might be kept from presumptuous sin, and is it not presumptuous sinning for those who truly believe, to fall in line with vaunting human vanity when it seeks to present its own case before God, with no use for Christ? Such queries as these have thrust themselves into our mind, especially at this time when apostate christendom here in America is appointing nation-wide days of prayer for the purpose of interceding before the Almighty for the persecuted people in Russia. This human presumption is as evil as the atheism it professes to combat. Think of the irony of the situation, when antichrist, who has itself in centuries past not hesitated to spill the blood of the faithful, now takes to itself the presumptuous right to counsel the Almighty as to how it thinks he ought to manage affairs touching the present persecution in Russia. Has not God covenanted to care for his own? Will he in any wise fail to keep his covenant? Surely, he is not slack concerning his promises. Every hair of their head is numbered, and not a sparrow can fall without him. The foundation of God stands sure, being sealed with his perfect knowledge of all them that are his. Who touches a single one of God's elect, does so to his own condemnation. God will avenge his little ones most terribly upon the heads of those who do them harm. Better for that man had he never been born, than that he should touch the Lord's anointed. Their angels do always behold the face of their Father in heaven. Who touches one of them touches Christ's body. Are not the tears of those who cry unto him, written in God's book? (Psalms lvi. 8.) Those who took part in crucifying the Lord and nailing his body to the cross did not know they were crucifying the Lord of glory, but their ignorant blindness did not exempt them

from the calamity which befell their unhappy nation a few years later. Neither, at this time, will ignorance exempt from punishment those who are now shedding the blood of God's children in Russia or elsewhere. As Abel's blood called unto God from the ground, so does the blood of the martyred dead call out to God; and is far better heard by him than all the concreted prayers of united christendom rendered up in obedience to the summons of man-made prelates and earthly priests who presumingly take to themselves in their pride that right which belongs exclusively to the eternal priesthood of Christ: the right of intercession for God's people. Christ alone is the great High Priest of our profession. He alone knows intimately and thoroughly all his children, who they are and where they are, how they are and why.

> Jesus, the glorious Head of grace,
> Knows every saint's peculiar case.

He is an High Priest who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He has himself been tempted in his own person, in all points like his people, yet without sin, so he is abundantly able to succor them in all their temptings and trials. The great heart of Jesus, as he now sits in the heavens at his Father's right hand, feels with loving sympathy and tender compassion the trials of his suffering saints here below. He knows our frame and remembers that we are dust. "And shall not God avenge his own elect; which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily."--Luke xviii. 7, 8. "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled."—Rev. vi. 9-11.

At the marriage in Cana of Galilee, when even Mary his own mother sought to intercede for the assembled guests, that Jesus might provide wine, did not Jesus say to her: "Woman, what have I to do with thee?"—John ii. 4. Who had appointed Mary to intercede thus? No one. It was presumption on her part, and he rebuked her. Just so always, it is presumptuous sin for human self-sufficiency to try to intrude itself between Christ and his people, to attempt to represent their case to him. Such intercessions are not true prayers, they are not born of the Spirit, they are not heard in heaven, they do not ascend above the heads of those who utter them. Did not this whole country, at those times when some of our former presidents were lying wounded from assassins' bullets, plead with God to spare their lives? Did not God utterly ignore their intercession? Not one prayer of faith in all that multitude; for had there been one true prayer in

all of it the presidents would not have died. The intercession of faith is invariably in harmony with God's will and he heareth it. Hereby know we when we have prayed by faith, because we receive that which we have asked of him. (1 John v. 14, 15.) The answer of prayer is God's certificate to the genuineness of prayer. As the true prophet is known by the fact that his prophecy comes true, so the true priest is proved in that the Spirit grants him what he prays for. If there are any of the real children of God being persecuted anywhere in the world to-day, God is taking care of and providing for them. He needs not puny men to point out his sheep to him, nor to counsel him how to deliver them. To do this, is to sin presumptuously. "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?"—Rom. xi. 34. We hope no genuine Baptists have fallen on their knees at this universal call to prayer in obedience to the summons of antichrist. Dead fish float with the current, live fish stem the tide and struggle against its sweep. Likewise living souls, as Daniel in Babylon, cannot bow the knee at the behest of self-styled priests. They will assert their faith in God by not falling in line with popular religion. As the Jews thrust Jesus aside and would not have his rule over them, so does christendom now ignore his teachings and arrogantly assume to itself the role of priest, savior, king, etc. Can such things go on forever? No. Antichrist will, at the proper time, reap the judgment already in store for it. Who dare say that on such a day, at such a time, we will pray thus and so? The apostle Paul, so spiritually great yet so humble, said, "We know not what we should pray for as we ought." Evidently, these modern priests have no such infirmity. They can arrange their time-table for prayer days ahead, and can arrange the subject-matter, too. We note where one bishop has already written out the prayer he intends to use when the day comes, which he advises others to use also. Surely all such, no matter what their height of intelligence, are blind leaders of the blind headed for a fall. God will have none of such prayers. Such things are under the law of sin and death, and fall to the ground of their own weight. Without faith, nothing can be done unto God acceptably. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Faith is not within the control of the individual. It moves the soul, but the soul cannot exercise the faith. The angel which John saw stood with one foot on the land, one foot on the sea, lifted up his hand to heaven and sware that time should be no longer. (Rev. x. 5, 6.) There is no time in gospel things. Time belonged to legal things, not to gracious things. All the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic covenant were prescribed for certain times and seasons. Metes and bounds cannot be set to the service of grace. Gracious matters are fraught with eternal duration and significance which cannot be limited to or in time. Thus, how foolish to say we will at this or that time, on this or that day, go here or there and do thus and so. "Whereas

ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil."—James iv. 14-16. It altogether depends on the Spirit whether we do ever really pray or not. Prayer is the Spirit's breathings within the child of God. Adam was not a living soul until God breathed in him the breath of life; nor does a persecuting Saul become a praying Paul until the Spirit breathes living intercession within him.

"God judgeth not as we;
The bruised reed will he not break, but heal
With utter gentleness, that it may be
Beautiful in his service. Heavenly Might
Sets on weak, foolish man His royal seal."

All real prayer can be resolved into "Thy will be done." What savors more than this is error. The blessed Savior, in the crucial moment of his life, could ask no more, no less, than "Thy will be done." Certainly, then, no true believer when led by the Spirit can desire other than this. Naturally, our human nature does not want God's will. It wants its own way; but this "own will" of ours must be laid on the altar, must be crucified with Christ. Grace causes the crucifixion of our old man, and that we put on the new man: which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. (Eph. iv. 24.) When thus clothed, we sincerely desire that God's will be done. How many who engage in prayer for Russia will really say and feel, "Thy will be done"? Will they not instead seek to inject into the matter, their own will and judgment as to what they deem the Almighty ought to do? But it shall go for naught. God's own sovereign will which fixes the destinies of nations shall go on to triumphant and complete fulfillment. Vital religion has never yet been damaged by persecution. Persecution does it good. The blood of martyrs has ever furnished the fertilizer for the soil from which has sprung ardent and loyal defenders of the truth. If in the early ages of the church martyrdom could have been stopped because men thought it should be stopped, the whole subsequent history of true religion would never have run the course it has, and would not have achieved the victories which have been its crown. The kingdom of heaven has won its way through great tribulation. Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leads unto life, and few find it. No one of the western nations, not even our own, understands or sympathizes with what is going on in Russia. The news from there is unreliable, censored and distorted. The facts are hard to discover. The Almighty has, however, perfect knowledge of it all. He is controlling the situation there, as he does in all other places of his dominion. Far be it from the pure heart to tell him what to do or how to do it.

History shows that wherever the people are unduly oppressed they will seek to rise up and overthrow their oppressors. Excess in anything always ends in prohibiting that thing. Overindulgence of appetite usually ends in

one's not being able to gratify the appetite at all. The excesses of earthly monarchs in the abuse of their powers have cost them their crowns and kingdoms. The people of Russia have, for centuries, been cruelly oppressed, kept down in abject illiteracy, poverty and wretchedness. Under the tyranny of the Czars the head of the state was also the head of the church. Priests were spies for, and the tools of, the political power. No such thing as religious liberty existed in Russia. Politics and religion were wedded in unholy union. The people, generation after generation, had it ground into them that the Czar ruled by divine right and that God was on the side of their oppressors. This in time bore down upon the people so severely that they rose in their blind might and rebelled. The earth trembled and shook, the throne tottered and fell. The monarch and the nobility, patriarchs and priests, went to prison, to death and into exile. Naturally, religious persecution has followed because the people are resolved to destroy utterly the monster that oppressed them. Religion stinks in their nostrils and they will have none of it. In their fury against religion, the ignorant people cannot be expected to discriminate between the precious and the vile. God, however, does and will discriminate and he will safeguard his elect. No more shall touch his true children than is for their good and for his own glory. Nor does he need us to remind him of this. Conditions in Russia are, perhaps, similiar to those in France more than a hundred years ago. That reign of terror and its horrors arose from oppression. Church and state were together then in France. Liberty was dead. Hunger and disease were rife. In 1685 Louis XIV. had cancelled the edict of Nantes, and from that moment no protestant's life was safe in France. Thousands were put to death, many fled to America if they could get away, many were hacked down as they tried to escape. Many a true believer suffered martyrdom. Just a century later, in 1789, came the judgment and vengeance of God upon France for its persecutions of the century before. The revolution burst forth, with its accompanying reign of terror. The people rose up in their wrath, overthrew their oppressors, put the crowned heads and their aids to the guillotine, the Bourbon monarchy fell. Churches were looted, services forbidden, religion outlawed. The Goddess of Reason was enthroned instead. Then there came upon the scene one of the most remarkable men ever raised up in the providence of God. This was Napoleon, the chastiser of Europe. As in former time, God had raised up and called that "ravenous bird of the east," Cyrus called the Great, whom he had used to overthrow Babylon, that Babylon which had held Israel captive, (Isaiah xlvi. 11), so in the early part of the nineteenth century did God use Napoleon to chastise modern Babylon which had shed the blood of the saints in modern times. Before Napoleon's invincible onslaughts all Europe trembled. Crowned heads and dynasties fell before him like grass before a sythe. He invaded Italy, besieged the

vatican, took the pope prisoner and carried him to France where, at Valence, he died in exile. In 1809 Napoleon declared the temporal power at an end. Thus was the fifth vial, as John saw it, poured out upon the seat of the beast. (Rev. xvi. 10.) All Europe was scorched with the heat of battle as though the sun's heat had been intensified, and men blasphemed because of it. (Rev. xvi. 8, 9.) When, in 1812, Napoleon invaded Russia, his ambition was curbed. Russia's time had not yet come. He could not do to Russia what he had done elsewhere. God, who sets the bounds of tides in their ebb and flow, that they may surge thus far and no farther, now stopped Napoleon. His retreat from Moscow was his undoing. The terrible winter of 1812, the bleak frozen stretches of Russia and its deep snows, were too much for his army. It straggled back broken, ragged, hungry and disspirited. From then Napoleon's power waned and he came at last to his solitary end, an exile on St. Helena island. God was through with him, as God had centuries before accomplished his purpose in Cyrus, and cast him aside as a worn-out tool is cast aside that has served its usefulness. From that day, church and monarchy have never regained their former supremecy in France, nor in the greater part of Europe. But the awakening of Russia, from which Napoleon was stopped, is reserved doubtless for this our day. Who knows but that influences now gathering strength in Russia may become a scourge to whip modern babylon out of its hypocritical self-satisfaction and complacency? One thing is sure: the truth cannot suffer eclipse, but may receive a new baptism in the blood of its martyrs. Shall we then implore the Almighty to withhold himself from his purpose? No, perish the thought.

A poor colored woman, old and infirm, poured out her soul to me some days ago in telling the many sorrows and trials that had recently been hers. In her distress, she had tried by every effort and means to have things come out as she wanted them. Every door of relief and deliverance was shut to her. At last, one night in the depth of her sorrow, she cried out unto God: "O Lord, work it your way." At once her distress was gone. Peace and rest were hers. May all who truly love the Lord be given to truly desire that he will work things his way, not their's. "It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good."—1 Sam. iii. 18.

By the time this appears in the SIGNS the date set for intercession for Russia will have passed, but that will not render out of date anything here written, because the principles involved are continually cropping out in the affairs of modern apostate christianity.

H. H. L.

NOTICE.

ANY one having the First and Second Volumes of Elder Gilbert Beebe's Editorials, who is willing to dispose of them, will please communicate with brother Milton M. Absher, Station B Post Office, Atlanta, Georgia, as he is very anxious to procure a copy of both volumes.

GALATIANS II. 20.

"I AM crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

It is not strange that those who have been called to contend for and maintain the standards of truth should be criticised and persecuted. All manner of ridicule and abuse were heaped upon our Lord and the apostles. Let us remember the words of Jesus when he said, "Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake."—Luke vi. 22. The enemies of the truth are only doing to-day what they have always done, and will continue to do. History is but repeating itself. David was speaking for his Lord when he said, "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me." This reference was to Judas, and there are still, and no doubt always will be, Judas Iscariots in the church. Our worst enemies are not outside of the church, but within the ranks of the Old School Baptists. They pretend to desire peace, but are constantly attacking the SIGNS and the doctrine for which it has contended for almost a century. We are told that the SIGNS' brand of predestination, "absolutism," etc., etc., are of recent origin, "new things" and man-made, and that not more than ten per cent. of the Old School Baptists throughout the country believe the doctrine of the "predestination of all things." Any honest seeker after the facts can with more or less ease discover what has been the position of true Primitive Baptists on this point of doctrine since the very earliest settlers came to America. Perhaps, one of the most authenticated sources of information available on the subject is Hassell's Church History. Elder C. B. Hassell, the senior author, apparently foreseeing what was in store for the church, left on record facts which cannot successfully be gainsaid in his "History of Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association, and of the Primitive Baptists of America." He took great pains to show that this association and all true Primitive Baptists stood with their brethren in England and Wales, by adopting the London Confession of Faith, which was formulated by ministers and messengers representing upwards of one hundred of their churches, as far back as the year 1689, now over two hundred and forty years ago. It was only about fifty years ago that Elder C. B. Hassell declared, "As 'Black-Rockism' in the middle and northern States has become a by-word of reproach in the mouths of religionists, so has Kehukeeism in the southern States been regarded as a synonym of all that is heretical and immoral by many who profess to love God and his people, and especially by those who claim the ancient and honorable name of 'Baptists,' but who are nevertheless endeavoring to substitute human inventions for the church of Christ, and the rudiments of the world for the principles of gospel truth." Continuing,

he said, "To the end that their good name may be vindicated, that a fungus growth may not be substituted for the tree itself, that another gospel (which is not another) may not be substituted for the gospel of Christ, and that the descendants and successors of the present Baptist family may have evidence at hand in all time to come to show conclusively that their fathers were Primitive Baptists in truth, continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, the present history has been undertaken, with the fear of God, we humbly trust, before our eyes, and his love shed abroad in our hearts." The subject of Predestination is dealt with more or less extensively in the London Confession of Faith, published in said Church History, so that there would seem to be no ground for ignorance and but little excuse for any one misrepresenting the facts on this fundamental point of doctrine and the place it has occupied in the true church in all ages of the world. The fact, if such it be, that only about ten per cent. of those professing to be Old School Baptists believe the doctrine, runs parallel with the Biblical history of Israel in departing from the truth. The "majority" doctrine is opposed by the Bible. If we may be pardoned for the use of the word, it is "absolutely" contrary to the record. In the outset, Israel was not chosen because she was more in numbers than any people, for she was the fewest of all people, and even then there were too many to take them all when the Lord was ready to select his army to be led by Gideon, lest they should boast of having won the victory themselves, so the Lord commanded Gideon to take only those who lapped water like a dog as soldiers to fight in the battle of the Lord. One must be brought low and humbled in the dust, and made to know that in his flesh there dwells no good thing, before he is qualified to represent the Lord. When the Master was on earth, on one occasion there were ten lepers cleansed, but only one "turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God." Here we have our ten per cent., that despised number, but God grant that we may be among them. Jesus asked, "Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine?" God forbid that we should presume to sit in judgment. It is enough to know that the Judge of the whole earth will do right, and we pray that he will have mercy upon the nine, whoever they may be. Again, Jesus said, "Many are called, but few are chosen." The "few" were typified by Gideon's small army, and as the Lord fought Israel's battles in that day, so he fights the battles of the church in this age, and only such characters as he is pleased to call and qualify are to be found declaring the generation of Jesus Christ in this, the gospel, dispensation. The Scripture abounds with proof that "a remnant shall be saved." God, who will not leave himself without true witnesses, will see to it that "a remnant shall be saved," to stand upon the house-top, who cry aloud, and spare not, proclaiming the way of the Lord, whether ten per cent. hear or ninety per cent. forbear. He will keep alive an

army sufficient for his glory, to bear true testimony in his name.

As to "absolutism," he stamped this so indelibly upon his work of creation in the beginning that eternity will not be long enough for all who oppose to eradicate it. The record is, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." That this God was "free as to condition; perfect in himself, and unlimited in power," which we understand to mean "absolute," all his creation and works, of whatsoever kind and nature, attest. Man, whom he endowed with reasoning powers of more or less high degree, was the last to be created, so that he of all creatures has the least ground for taking away from the Lord that which rightfully belongs to him. When Moses was called to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt, he inquired to know the name of him by whom he should tell them he was sent, "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you."—Exodus iii. 14. Is this not "absolutism?" The Lord said to Isaiah, "I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me." John says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." Paul says, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Again, Paul says he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." If such Scriptures disturb the peaceful mind of some, we would suggest they skip over and leave them for those who verily do feed upon them and are nourished and built up on their most holy faith by them.

In coming, now, directly to the language heading this article, we find the great apostle declares, "I am crucified with Christ." This precedes and must of necessity go before that which follows. In the church one must die before he lives. When the Lord commanded Jeremiah, the prophet, to "arise, and go down to the potter's house," he showed him that the vessel which he had made of clay was first "marred in the hand of the potter" before he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it, and the summation of the whole matter was, "Cannot I do with you as this potter," O house of Israel, saith the Lord? Therefore, Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ." As an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, he was called to suffer the afflictions of the righteous, and while they might crucify him, head downward, as we are told, which may have been at the request of the apostle, feeling unworthy to be crucified in like manner as his Lord, nevertheless he

lives, and will ever live in the heart of spiritual Israel. They might crush the life out of the literal body, but his undying faith will but shine brighter and brighter, until the perfect day. God has predestinated that his people should be conformed to the image of his Son, therefore, they must be crucified with Christ. "Nevertheless," says Paul, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." It was because he realized that it was not him, but Christ in him, that he was made to declare so emphatically that it is "by the grace of God that I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain." In this connection, he goes on to say, "I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." It was this same apostle who said, "For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Is not this a manifestation of the life of the true vine, Christ, in the branch, which was bearing forth fruit to the honor and glory of God? How careful the apostle was to show that "the branch cannot bear fruit of itself." Jesus said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." If he has chosen his people, and ordained they should bring forth fruit, and that that fruit should remain, as he tells us he has, and, further, if he has all power both in heaven and in earth, as we are told he has, is there any in heaven, earth or hell who will prevent the accomplishing of his pleasure and purpose? We say, No. "And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Paul knew by bitter experience that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," yet, in the fiery furnace we shall walk by faith and bear record to the fact that there is none like unto the God of Jeshurun. He that loved us, and gave himself for us, will preserve and keep us, despite all that men can do. We must handle and taste the Word of Life for ourselves, however, in order to be able to say with Job, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the later day upon the earth: and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." The life that Job lived in the flesh was by the faith of the Son of God. It is recorded, The just shall live by faith. There is but the one way, even Jesus; Christ and him crucified. "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait [difficult] is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it."

We have endeavored to write, not with a view of opening the eyes of any one's understanding, or to convert even one to our way of believing, for this is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent, but the desire of our heart has been, we trust, to honor

and glorify our Father which art in heaven, by setting forth the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord; and, second, we hope that what we have said will cause those who are faint-hearted to take courage; we would strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees, and say to them that are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, fear not; behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you."

R. L. D.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER L. H. HARDY departed this earthly life March 29th, 1930, while attending a union meeting near Mullins, South Carolina. He had just preached a sermon from the texts, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," and "We know that all things work together for good," &c. He had stood one hour, and those who heard him say it was a powerful sermon. Just at the close, he said, "I saw Christ crucified for the whole house of God and FOR ME, FOR ME." As he said, "FOR ME," he laid his hand on his heart. With his hand still on his left side, he said, "I have a pain here." His wife, who was in the congregation, waited a moment, and when she saw him still suffering she hastened to the pulpit and administered a heart stimulant which she had with her for just such emergencies. He became a little easier. The brethren improvised a pallet out of two benches put together, and laid him on it. A doctor was summoned, who administered a hypodermic, but to no avail. In an hour and a half after preaching the above sermon he had passed away. Before falling asleep, he took his wife's hand and said, "My dear, I have preached the truth, I KNOW I have preached the truth." All those present will never forget the scene. He died as he had wished, at his post declaring the truth of God; and with his beloved brethren to minister to him. He and his wife were on a two-weeks trip in South Carolina, a trip he had greatly desired to take, to churches among which he had baptized a great many, and especially to the above union meeting. This place was forty miles from an undertaker and from the railroad, but loving brethren took matters in hand and aided sister Hardy with the body of her dear companion, to the train and on her way home, arriving at Atlantic, North Carolina, on Sunday. Funeral services were held Monday. Elders Cobb, Mewborn and Hutchens officiated.

Elder Hardy was 77 years and 12 days old. He was baptized in July, 1873, into the church at Mewborn's, North Carolina. His father was Lemuel H. Hardy, his mother Themesia Mewborn. His first wife, Bettie J. Hartsfield, died in February, 1925. Two children of this union survive: L. H. Hardy, Jr., of Reidsville, North Carolina, and Mrs. A. M. Fulcher, at the home in Atlantic, North Carolina. He has one brother living: George M. Hardy, 79 years old, of Aurora, North Carolina, and one sister: Mrs. Patsy Adams, of Selma, North Carolina. Another sister, the oldest of all, preceded him to the grave last January. His present wife, who survives him, was formerly sister Anna M. Ison, of Atlanta, Georgia. Since their marriage she has gone to every appointment and on every trip with him. She says, "His memory will always be a sweet spot to me, and oh how I will cherish his many, many words of comfort and edification in the gospel." In his home he was never known to speak a harsh or unkind word, and whenever reviled by an outsider, he reviled not again. During his preaching life he had served six churches as pastor. At the time of his death he was pastor of two churches: one at Hunting Quarters, where he preached twice a month, the other at Kingston, North Carolina. Hunting Quarters was his home church, and he had served that since a month after his ordination. He was ordained to the ministry in July, 1877. The Elders composing the presbytery which ordained him were Bryan Whitefield and Archibald Jones. He was buried by the side of his first wife in Atlantic cemetery. He had requested these words to be placed above his grave: "Go tell my brethren I died at my post." He had so often said that he wanted to die preaching the sovereign electing love of God, and that if he were favored to do so his brethren might know he died satisfied. The world had no charms for him. To do the will of the Father was his life, yet he could see the vile corruption of human nature and longed for that purity which is in Christ Jesus. In his last years his eyes had failed, yet he could read with his left eye a text, if on a bright day. His spiritual understanding was undimmed, indeed it shone clearer and brighter the nearer the end came. All the churches and associations of our northern and eastern correspondence will greatly miss the visits of dear brother Hardy. He cherished deeply the fellowship and love of his northern brethren with whom he was in accord doctrinally. He said he loved to visit up north because the churches there were all of one mind. In 1927, when he suffered a slight rupture on the brain, his wife insisted he was not able to make the trip north that year. He replied, "My dear, I may not be able to talk to my brethren, but I do want to see them once more before I go home, and if I should die while up there, let my brethren bury me and it will be all right." The church, its doctrine and

order, and his brethren, were the supreme things in his life. His work in his Master's vineyard has been done with many hardships and trials, often walking miles to carry the comforting messages to the flock of his keeping. Whenever he felt an impression to go, nothing short of providential hindrances could prevent him. He served his county one term in the State Legislature, but refused to accept reelection, or even to run for the office a second time. With reference to his accepting the care of Hunting Quarters Church, which church he retained to the end of his ministry, I have heard him more than once tell the following: He saw a vision from the Lord, in which he saw a pasturage destitute of both grass and water. In this place there were thirteen old sheep and two lambs. These came bleating after him. When he opened his mouth to talk to them they became satisfied and chewed the cud contentedly. When the church of fifteen afterward called him, he saw the meaning of the vision. Another good and faithful father in Israel has gone from us. He was clear and sound in doctrine, fearless in his declaration of the truth. May the Lord reconcile all sorrowing ones to his will, may he supply the needs of the destitute churches, and grant resignation to the bereaved widow and members of the family.

ALSO,

MRS. JENNIE COLE, our sister in Christ, passed from this earthly life April 13th, 1930, at the home of her sister, Mrs. P. G. Shoemaker, Silcott Springs, Virginia. She was born September 8th, 1847, daughter of John and Maria Lynn Hixon. There are four sisters and one brother living: Mrs. Georgia Carruthers and Mrs. Shoemaker, of Silcott Springs, Virginia, Mrs. Aubrey Swart, near Middleburg, Virginia, Mrs. W. S. Tiffany, of Washington, D. C., and Nelson Hixon, near Washington. Amon these sisters and brother, the going of sister Cole is the first break in seventy-eight years. She is survived by nieces and nephews. Her husband, Mr. K. B. Cole, of North Fork, Virginia, died some years ago. They had two daughters: one died in girlhood, the other lived to womanhood, but died several years ago. Sister Cole was a follower of the church for many years and we feared she might never be brought into its membership, but she came forward in July, 1926, and was baptized by the writer into the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church. She never failed in her gratitude to God for his mercy in granting her this privilege to come within his house. She had been in failing health for a long time, but grew much weaker the past few weeks. Death came gently and she departed as one falling peacefully and restfully asleep. Before her death, she made choice of the hymns to be used at her funeral, and also the text she wished her pastor to use, the fourth verse of the twenty-third Psalm. Services were held in the North Fork meeting-house, burial in the graveyard there. May the blessed Comforter abide with the mourning church and family circle. Her life as a true christian was marked by that meek and quiet spirit, that abiding faithfulness, which is the gracious ornament that becomes the profession of the saints of God.

H. H. L.

ELVESSA CHILTON CLAGGETT was born February 7th, 1846, and died March 14th, 1930, making her stay on earth 84 years. She was married to James Claggett in the year 1861, and to this union were born ten children, two daughters and eight sons. The husband, two sons and one daughter preceded her in death. There are seven children living, all in the vicinity of the home. They are Mrs. Anna Tingle, Robert, Joe, Smith, George, Edward and Noble Claggett. In the summer of 1885 our sister received a hope in her Savior, and upon relation of her experience to the Cane Run Predestinarian Old School Baptist Church, of Turners, Kentecky, was received, and was baptized the second Saturday in August, 1885, and remained a steadfast member, always filling her place in the church, and her home was always open for the entertainment of the brethren. Sister Claggett could truly be called a mother in Israel and an example to the flock, never wavering all through the forty-five years of her membership in one church. She was baptized by the late Elder Humpston, then pastor of the church. After him Elder P. W. Sawin was pastor for several years, and for the last six years the writer of this notice has been pastor. Her faith seemed to grow stronger and her sight keener in spiritual things as she advanced in age, and it may well be said of her, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of the Lord. Our loss is great, but it is her gain, and may the Lord reconcile the family and the church, and enable them to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done. The Lord hath taken, blessed be his name.

The funeral services were held in the meeting-house at Turners, Kentucky, conducted by the writer, and were attended by a large number of relatives and friends, after which the body was laid to rest in the cemetery nearby. May the Lord comfort us in our bereavement, and reconcile us all.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

ZERUAH ANN ZINN, our dear sister in Christ, died in Christ Hospital, Topeka, Kansas, February 20th, 1930. She was born in Iowa, December 20th, 1878, being at the time of her death 51 years and 2 months old. She was the daughter of Jesse L. and Sarah J. Darland, and came with her parents to western Kansas in childhood, and later settled near Lebo, Kansas. February 14th, 1894, she was married to Willis Ivan Zinn, of Meriden, Kansas, and most of her married life was spent in that vicinity. They were the parents of five sons: Jesse F., of Meriden, Charles Wesley, who died

in infancy, Ambrose W., of Chanute, Kansas, Everett I., of Grantville, Kansas, and Arthur D., who was still at home with his parents. Besides these she is survived by her husband, brother Ivan Zinn, one sister, Mrs. John Rodecap, and two brothers, Wm. Darland, of Shearville, Kansas, and Duane Darland, of Buhl, Idaho, and a host of warm friends, the undertaker saying it was one of the largest funerals he ever had. Services were conducted by Elder L. L. Schenck, and her body was laid to rest in Rochester Cemetery to await the trump of God, when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and the dead in Christ shall arise first. Sister Zinn had been a member of the Old School Baptist Church more than forty years, having joined very early in life, and never wavered in her belief of the truth as held by the First Kansas Association, and we feel our loss to be very great. In the church, as in her home, she was, like her blessed Master, among us as one who served with loving heart and willing hands, ready at all times to minister to the comfort of those about her. The meetings of West Union Church had long been held in her home, and the Association was appointed to be held there in September, but how little we know what a day may bring forth. Brother Zinn and son being now left alone, we took our baskets and went the next Sunday as usual. It was a sweetly solemn time, and I thought I never heard a more comforting sermon, and brother Zinn requested the meetings to be continued at his house as long as he remains there. May the God of Israel sanctify this afflicting dispensation of his providence to the good of the bereaved family, and to us all, and to his own glory. Though we walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive us.

MARY ELLISON.

SERENA MONICA MILES, my dear mother, was born in Fayette County, Alabama, September 15th, 1849, and fell asleep March 2nd, 1928, at her home, near Lakeland, Florida, aged 78 years, 5 months and 17 days. She was the daughter of Anthony F. and Elizabeth Bell. She married Robert Miles December 19th, 1866. She was the mother of twelve children, eight of whom are living; they are, Misses Maggie and Carrie Miles, Mrs. J. M. Isom, A. J. and J. H. Miles, of Lakeland, Florida, Mrs. J. B. McClure and Mrs. A. L. Anderson, of Ft. Meade, Florida. She had four sisters and five brothers, of whom only one brother survives, he is H. M. Bell, of Fayette, Alabama. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Hopewell, Fayette County, Alabama, when a young woman, and lived a consistent christian the remainder of her life. She was a devoted wife and mother, and a true friend. A more patient person I never knew. She bore her afflictions and sufferings without a murmur. Elder M. L. Gilbert, of Dade City, Florida, conducted the funeral, after which her body was laid in its last resting-place, to await the glorious resurrection.

ALSO,

ROBERT MILES was born in Tallapoosa County, Alabama, March 1st, 1847, and died February 18th, 1930, at his home, near Lakeland, Florida, aged 82 years, 11 months and 17 days. He was the son of Robert P. and Palmira Miles. In 1863 he joined the Confederate Army and fought as a brave soldier for two years in defense of the South. He never united with the church, but was a strong believer in and advocate of the doctrine contended for by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for nearly ninety-eight years. He used to attend meetings regularly, and seemed to enjoy them as well as most members of the church. He was a man of strong convictions and had the courage to contend for the truth and right at any time, and in the presence of any one. He was the last of a family of nine, and lived to be the oldest of any of them, although his health was poorly for over sixty years of his life. I think he suffered more pain than any person I ever knew.

Elder M. L. Gilbert conducted the funeral, and we laid his body to rest beside that of my mother, to await the summons at the last day.

J. H. MILES.

ESTHER POYLE BRIMSON died January 13th, 1930, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. R. May Jones, in Remsen, N. N. She was the daughter of Henry and Dianna (Kingsworth) Poyle, and was born June 18th, 1845, near Trowbridge, England. At the age of five she came to this country with her parents in a small sailing vessel. They continued their voyage inland by water to Syracuse, where they had relatives. Later her parents moved to Delphi Falls, where her father engaged in farming. April 14th, 1872, she married John Brimson, and after a few years moved to Whitesboro, N. Y., where they lived for many years. Brother and sister Brimson were members of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, at Utica, N. Y., where sister Brimson was baptized September 30th, 1880, by Elder S. H. Durand, and ever remained a faithful member of that church, until Utica and Otego churches consolidated, in 1899, when her membership was moved to Otego Church, which she had visited each year and where she was highly esteemed for the truth's sake. Sister Brimson was one of a family of nine children, of whom only two survive: Fred Poyle, of De Ruyter, and Mrs. Hattie Elmore, of Delphi Falls. She is also survived by her daughter and two granddaughters: Geneveive Brimson and Mariam Esther Jones, all of Remsen, N. Y. Brother and sister Brimson moved to Remsen in 1903, where brother Brimson died September 7th, 1923. Sister Brimson's illness was of several months duration, due to a general breakdown and the infirmities of age.

Her funeral was held January 15th, at Remsen, with burial in the family plot in Grand View Cemetery, Whitesboro, N. Y.

Written by request.

ROSE T. LEONARD.

MARTIN D. FISHER, my father, was born in Accomack County, Virginia, June 22nd, 1849, and died April 11th, 1930, in Gardiner Maine, where he had lived since mother's death, a year ago. He was my care (a pleasant service) and my companion, especially so during the last year of his life. Many good talks have we had of the hope that is set before us. His last expression in words of these things took place one evening one week before he died, and in a few words gave us who are left a reassurance that this faith in the finished work of Jesus is not only fit to live by, but a sure and safe support in the hour of our departure from the transitory scenes of this life into the realities of the great beyond. His last expression was, "There is no rest or peace in this life, or the next, outside of Jesus, only Jesus." He was given a hope in the early part of the year 1870, and was received into the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church in August of this same year, and baptized by Elder Thomas P. Dudley, in the State of Missouri. I shall not attempt to extol his many virtues, if he knew it he would not approve. His life was lived in several different States; it speaks for itself. He was zealous of good works, the kind that God hath wrought in, and manifested it by his godly walk and conversation. His remains lie in Libby Hill cemetery, four and one-half miles from Gardiner, Maine, on the Brunswick road.

HIS SON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Elder W. W. Slaughter, Texas, $1; J. P. McMillian, La., 50 cents; Jonh F. Davis, La., $2; Mrs. Mildred D. Gordy, Mich., $1; Mrs. Serena Bowen, Ill., $1; Mrs. W. G. Thompson, Ontario, $1; Mrs. C. E. Smith, Ore., $3; Miss Sadie T. Nicoll, Md., $3.

MEETINGS.

The Lord willing, the next session of the Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association will be held with the Ebenezer Church, of Baltimore city, Maryland, May 14th, 15th and 16th, 1930. All lovers of gospel truth are invited to meet with us. We hope a goodly number will attend.

Persons coming to the city on Tuesday p. m. go to the meetinghouse, on Madison Street, near Calvert Street, where they will be met from 2:00 to 5:00 p. m. and cared for.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Salem Church, at Philadelphia, Pa., in Park Avenue Hall, 1315 Columbia Avenue, commencing on Wednesday, May 21st, and continuing the following two days. Any one arriving on Tuesday, please call at 2659 North Douglass Street (near 33rd Street and Lehigh Avenue), or telephone Columbia 1514. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us, especially ministers of our faith and order.

T. C. KOCH, Church Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (4th, 5th and 6th), 1930. Those coming from and via New York City will take Erie R. R. Ferry foot of West 23rd Street or Chambers Street for train leaving Jersey City. Get tickets for Howells, N. Y. Those coming from and via Kingston, N. Y., will take Ontario & Western train from Kingston. Get tickets for Winterton, N. Y. Trains will be met and friends cared for. Time of trains will be announced later, when new schedules will be effective. Those coming by automobile will go to the home of Mr. F. P. Engle, one-half mile from the meeting house on the Otisville road. The Old Homestead is not open this year. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, sisters and friends to meet with us.

R. LESTER DODSON, Moderator.

A Union Meeting is to be held at the home of the writer June 13th, 14th and 15th, 1930, and we wish to extend an invitation to all Predestinarian Baptists to meet with us. Should there be any Baptists touring the west we would gladly welcome them. After arriving in Yakima phone 4073-L, and you will be directed how to find us.

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The Cane Run Predestinarian Old School Baptist Church, of Turners Station, Kentucky, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 10:30 a. m., also, the Sulphur Fork Church of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, of the same faith and order, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 2:30 p. m.

GEO. L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, every Sunday at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. at the home of W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Midweek song service by appointment. Pastors, Elders Jones and Jaynes. Basket lunch.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

HARDING, W. Va., Dec. 5, 1929.

DEAR READERS:—As time speeds swiftly on, carrying us nearer each day to the eternal shore, I wish to say a few words of encouragement, if the Lord wills, to all those who uphold our family paper and the cause of Christ in general. I enjoyed Elder Lefferts editorial in the September number very much and am glad he was moved to write as he did. My heart has been stirred to its depths by the cold and sleepy condition of our churches, and I feel it was very appropriate for the present editor of the paper that has upheld the cause of Christ for almost a century to rouse them a little, and I sincerely hope that our ministers all over the land will echo his admonitions and exhortations to their congregations with all love and kindness.

The children of Israel were chosen by God as a type of his spiritual Israel, and his wonderful power was displayed in bringing them out after he showed wonders and signs in Egypt, and at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness forty years. After bringing them into the promised land he fought their battles and drove back their enemies, but when they turned from him to worship idols he left them in the hands of their enemies until they were sorely punished and were glad to return to his protecting care. The way he led, protected and fed them was typical of how he ever has and ever will care for his spiritual Israel. The coming of Christ was foretold by the true prophets of the Lord, showing positively that God had predetermined not only Christ's coming, but also the coming of John the Baptist as his forerunner. Although the people of God according to holy writ were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, John's mission was not to prepare, but to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. While he was preaching repentance and baptizing, Jesus must also be baptized by him to fulfill all righteousness. "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil.

And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered," but was able to overcome the tempter by the power of his eternal Godhead, and thus entered upon his ministry. Though he was Lord of lords and King of kings he became a servant of the people and went about doing good and healing all who came to him, preaching his gospel to the multitudes who followed him, both rich and poor, and taught his disciples to follow in his footsteps. In some instances he restored the dead, alive, to their friends, and publicly forgave the sins of his people. After suffering terrible agony for the sins of his people he told the disciples who were with him the spirit was ready but the flesh was weak. Then he must be nailed to the shameful cross and shed his precious blood to redeem them from death and the grave. With his expiring breath he cried, It is finished, meaning, as I believe, that the law was now fulfilled, his suffering in the flesh was done. Redemption was now completed but he must lie in the tomb three days and nights, then arise for the justification of all those for whom he died, and must ascend to his Father, where he ever liveth to make intercession for them and to be a Prince and a Savior for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. Shortly before his crucifixion, according to St. John, thirteenth chapter, he told his disciples, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." In chapter fourteen he tells them, "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever." After his resurrection, in St. John, chapter twenty-one, he told Peter to feed his lambs and his sheep, those lambs and sheep being scattered through every nation. Therefore he being with the eleven when Christ appeared to them as they sat at meat, as recorded in Mark xvi. 15, 16, "He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." On the day of Pentecost, as recorded in the second chapter of Acts, Peter preached repentance and baptism to his Jewish brethren, who were pricked in their hearts when they realized that they had crucified the Lord of glory. In chapter three, verse nineteen he said to them, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." Thus Peter was feeding the flock of God by preaching repentance, forgiveness of sins and baptism through the name of Christ. Saul was so zealous of the law that he persecuted the follower of Jesus into prison and to death. After the light from heaven shined around him and Jesus spoke to him he was completely turned about, and asked the Lord what he would have him to do. When he received his sight and was told that he was a chosen vessel to preach the gospel

to the Gentile nations he was baptized, and straight way he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. He preached predestination, election, salvation by grace through faith in the blood of Christ, and wrote more about those things, perhaps, than any of the other apostles, but through all his preaching and epistles he exhorted and admonished the people of God to good works and an upright daily walk. The twelfth and thirteenth chapters of Romans are mostly taken up with it. In his epistle to the Ephesians he says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lod Jesurs Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved: in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Verse eleven: "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." After making this broad declarative statement, which includes the whole of the predestination, election, redemption, forgiveness of sins, adopted as children, given an inheritance according to his will. Dear children of God, what more can we ask? This is wonderful beyond description. After giving this description of God's wonderful love and care for his children the apostle goes on and tells them how to live up to this holy calling, that they may be worthy subjects of their heavenly King. In Ephesians v. 14-18, he exhorts, "Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit." In chapter six he exhorts the children, fathers, masters and servants, and says in verses ten to eighteen, inclusive, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: praying always with all prayer

and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." In 2 Peter i. 12, 13, he says, "Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance." In the epistle of James he exhorts the people of God, saying, But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. Also he says to show your faith by your works, as faith without works is dead. In 1 John iii. 18, he tells them, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." One of the apostles said that the gifts and calling of God were without repentance, meaning, as I believe, that the calling was before repentance. Therefore the apostles preached repentance and baptism and those who were called or quickened to life heard them. If the minister of Christ in this day would follow him and the teaching of the apostles he must preach as they did and exhort and admonish with all longsuffering and doctrine, and as Paul wrote in 1 Timothy ii. 1, 2, "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." When the supreme power of God, his sovereign will, grace, love, mercy, forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ and his power to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him are preached, with exhortations and admonishings to them to help support their ministers as the Lord has prospered them, and to an upright and daily walk with good works and deeds of mercy and kindness to all people, especially to those of the household of faith, it make a well balanced food for the hungry lambs and sheep. Their hope is strengthened and they go forth strong in the Lord, with a great desire to serve him more, and to be faithful in all his house. On the morning of the resurrection Christ will acknowledge their labors of love, by saying, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me." When the righteous said, Lord, when saw we thee thus and administered unto thee? "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." I would say to those whom the Holy Spirit has quickened into divine life and made their sins a burden, to them the words of Christ are addressed when he said, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Rest through the forgiveness of their heavy burden of sin. A rest that remains to the people of God. In the next verse he says, Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek

and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. To bear the yoke of Christ you must walk by his side, and learn of him to be meek and lowly enough that you will not be ashamed to confess him before all the world as your Savior, and be buried with him in baptism and be raised to walk with him in newness of life, thereby finding rest to your soul. As he says in the next verse, For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

I would also say to those who have not been awakened to feel the exceeding sinfulness of their sins, that the Lord is longsuffering and merciful, by no means clears the guilty, but he will, through the precious and atoning blood of his own dear Son, forgive and abundantly pardon all who feel their need of him.

Since writing the above I have received the December number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and enjoyed brother J. W. McClanahan's letter to brother Lefferts. The whole paper is filled with things that edify and comfort the children of God. I appreciate the publishers' new arrangement to have two editorials in each number, for when we cannot get out to preaching it is a great comfort for us to read the deep things of God as explained by the editors. May the Lord bless and comfort all those who read the SIGNS or write for its columns, also those who publish it, and the people of God the whole world over.

Humbly submitted.

(MRS.) E. E. WORKMAN.

SPRINGFIELD, Ill., March 6, 1930.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter from Elder C. W. Bond, of La Grande, Oregon. Though not written for publication, I have his consent to send it to you if in my judgment it would be of interest to others of like precious faith who are readers of the SIGNS. There are, at least, some in Kentucky who remember some of the incidents that brought him to Little Flock Church, which I was at that time serving, temporarily, as pastor. I also assisted in his ordination. Since his removal west, many years ago, I have had no direct communication with him until now, and I am living over again those interesting days thirty-six years ago. Brother Bond is now serving the church at Elgin, Oregon, having succeeded the late Elder G. E. Mayfield, who contributed many articles for the SIGNS during his life.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with and bless the publishers and editors in their labors of love for the scattered flock of like precious faith, is my sincere wish and prayer.

J. G. SAWIN.

LA GRANDE, Ore., Jan. 20, 1930.

DEAR BROTHER SAWIN:—I have just read your article in the January SIGNS on the text, "The Lord omnipotent reigneth," and it suits me so well that I want to write to you. It is like good news from a far country, or a letter from home, and you as one of the fathers of Israel speaking assurances and good counsel to the children which will do well to consider in every trial

and exhaltation they may experience in this life. But to me it comes as from a father to a son, since we stand in that relationship in the church. I recall that thirty-six years ago (the fifth Sunday in October, 1893) you baptized me into the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church, at Little Flock, Anderson County, Kentucky. When I now look back to that time and try and see myself as I was then, and to find my reason for leaving the Missionary Baptists, who had respect for me, and taking up my place with a new congregation who were all strangers to me, it surely was not a selfish motive, or for temporal gain, for everything was quite to the contrary. It was simply for the love of the truth, which was so strong that all earthly ties were as nothing when compared with it. This love and the joy it afforded seemed to transform the old brethren into real saints and I beheld them as a special people with a perfection about them far exalted above other professors of religion. To me at that time they were perfect, and their conversations on spiritual things and the simplicity of church worship were food to my hungry soul, and their congregations were resting-places. In my exaltation of joy I have often thought, Who is like unto thee, O people preserved of the Lord? As you know, I soon began telling these things to the satisfaction of the brethren, and later they put me forward by ordination to the full work of the gospel ministry. When I look back to that time and think on the ideas set forth in my efforts to preach it is to me now as the ideas and prattle of a child, and I feel that I was esteemed in the church about the same way that children are esteemed in the homes where the honored positions are not because of the value to the family welfare so much as the relationship which connects them to the family. There must be babes in Christ before there are men strong in the warfare for the truth. As my ideals of the perfection of the saints in this present life must be overthrown and another perfection realized, which is of God and the salvation wrought by his Son, which is the true and only perfection which distinguishes the true saints from the others, so must I be taught the growth in grace which is so plainly set forth by Paul in his declaration, When I was a child I thought as a child, understood as a child, but when I became a man I put away childish things. I know that you realize this to be true, and now you take the strong meat of the doctrine and declare it without any doubts, for you have often found the consolation of the flesh to be but vanity and less than nothing. What could be more consoling to an old soldier of the cross, as you are, having fought the battles of life almost a century, and now standing on the edge of your time pilgrimage, than to be fully assured that "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth"? What sort of conditionalism will answer the needs at this time? or what sort of limitations would you put on the sovereignty of God to be filled in by the acts of man? I have found to my sorrow many times that the perfection I saw in the saints in my early

life is lacking, and even God's people are permitted to go to the very door of destruction, and if Jesus, who has declared that he is alive for evermore and holds the keys of hell and of death, did not stand as their surety and righteousness at all times they would even enter into the dark abyss from which they never could return. We are such strange creatures that we do not know ourselves, or know what we would do when tried, and now I see only one avenue of safety and one sure word of victory, and that is our faith. Paul says that will overcome the world. The faith which overcomes the world is the God-given kind, it is not the sort which men manufacture by the teaching process which underlies all modern religion, but it is the kind that Peter had in recognizing Christ to be the Son of God, even a revelation from God, and so impresses that its power is not lost under any condition, and even in death itself this vital connection between God and his saints exists. When the Master told Peter that "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not," he set forth the firm foundation upon which every saint stands. In Peter's denial he did his utmost to separate himself from every connection with the Master, but the prayer that his faith fail not was heard by the Father, as all his prayers are, and because of this alone Peter was able to confess to the Master afterward that he knew all things, and he knew that he loved him. How can persons stand in their own conceit so much as to require a human condition necessary to make the salvation of God's people sure? All such surely have never realized the deceitfulness of their own hearts. When God's faithful ministers set forth his perfections in every way, and base the final preservation of the saints on this alone, they proclaim his eternal truth, but, alas, some will object to it, for fear man's responsibility may be destroyed. Man's responsibility is a sort of lever by which he may be pried loose from some of his temporal means to provide for the needs of the teachers of those man-serving ideas of religion. It is a common occurrence for such preachers to desert their congregations when the salary gets too small for their needs, and their call to service is always construed by the amount of salary connected with it. I think, or rather I know, there is a people who are not moved by such considerations, and they are not afraid to proclaim God's eternal truth. To them there are assurances of better things than worldly wealth and worldly favors, and they stand boldly and faithfully upon the walls of Zion upholding the majesty and sovereignty of their King. I believe that you are one of them, and I hope I am, and that I shall never see any need for worldly means to strengthen my testimony concerning sovereign decrees. While I feel to be sure of these principles of truth now, and as I get older they are more precious to me and I have fewer doubts as to the perfections of Jehovah and his finished plan of salvation, I can look back to times in my life when I was not so sure of them, and

when I might admit some part of human efficiency. Can you not do the same? Was perfection in the knowledge of doctrine and its application as firmly established in your mind in the days of your youth as it is now? Has there not been a growth in grace and knowledge all these years, line upon line and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, until you have come to know in deed and in truth that "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth"? It seems to me that much confusion in the church is caused by our brethren who forget that the Lord is known only as he reveals himself in all his attributes, and they too often require perfection in knowledge of mere babes in Christ. The strong meat of the doctrine is for those prepared to receive it, while the babes need the sincere milk of the word. Oh that our ministers could discern the needs of the family more, and properly feed both sheep and lambs upon the gospel food suited to their spiritual health and development.

In love and reverence, as of a son to his father, I remain yours in hope,

C. W. BOND.

ROXBURY, N. Y., Nov. 6, 1929.

DEAR EDITORS:—Having meditated somewhat upon the last five verses of the eleventh chapter of Revelation, I am submitting my views with a fearfulness lest I have failed to divide aright the word of God, and yet with a hope that the same may be found of comfort to those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To clarify somewhat the Scripture under consideration, I will first present some preliminary thoughts regarding the book of Revelation, and the tenth chapter of the same, as the last five verses of the eleventh chapter have an important bearing on the preceding chapter. Like the rich coloring necessary to portray in harmonious beauty the important details of a master painting, the various sixty-six books of the Bible each serve a distinctive purpose in the design of the glorious and eternal God for the comfort, edification, instruction in righteousness, and establishment in sound doctrine of the heirs of that incorruptible inheritance of eternal life and fadeless glory for whom only they were written. The great final book of the New Testament is the revelation of Jesus Christ and particularly the presentation of his person: and if the faultless canon of Scripture be likened to a perfect pyramid, Revelation is its necessary completement and climax. The inspired author, John, was in the isle of Patmos on the Lord's day, the gospel day, for Jesus had arisen from the dead and become the first-fruits of them that slept. John being in the spirit saw the events recorded, that belonged to the gospel age as Jesus Christ became from time to time spiritually manifest as the Savior, Redeemer and Preserver to, and of, all those who are in that age the Israel of our God.

In the tenth chapter of Revelation Jesus as messenger or angel of the new covenant descends from heaven in the form of a mighty angel clothed with a cloud of humanity, concealing from natural man his divinity and eternal sonship, and having about his head the

rainbow of promise, and his face shining as the sun, proclaiming him indeed as the very Sun of Righteousness whose radiant beams, illuminating the heart of the poor sinner, give him the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. In the hand of the angel, who swore that the time of the legal dispensation should be no longer, was the open book of the New Testament, proclaiming the breaking down of the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile and also the abolition of the handwriting of ordinances against the children of God, and giving John the assurance that "in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." John, responsive to a voice from heaven, ate the little book in the angel's hand, which represents feeding upon the word of God and assimilating and experimentally applying the promises and prophecies, which are yea and amen in Christ Jesus, thus tasting that the Lord is merciful and also enduring the bitter and ceaseless warfare between flesh and spirit, between the old man and the new creature. John was also bidden again to prophesy before many peoples, nations, tongues and kings, which shows in this gospel dispensation that in the flesh God is no respecter of Jew or Gentile, bond or free, male or female, tribe or nation, but that Jesus is manifested as the end of the law to every one that believeth, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. This takes place at the sounding of the seventh angel spoken of in both the tenth and eleventh chapters of the book of Revelation.

The fifteenth verse of the eleventh chapter of Revelation begins with the announcement of the sounding of the seventh angel and the kingdoms of this world becoming the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ in a reign that has no end. Seven is a perfect number and signifies the perfect work of Christ accomplished by his stainless life, shameful death, glorious resurrection, triumphant ascension and continuing priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. It is interesting to note the many times the word seven is used in Scripture and the completion denoted by it, whether the perfect condemnation signified by the seven thunders uttering their voices when the righteous wrath of an offended God because of man's transgression demanded the death of the Son of God if divine justice was satisfied and fallen man made free from the curse of the law of sin and death, or whether the seventh day, in which God rested from his work of creation, signifies that perfect rest that remains to the people of God who rest their hope in the finished work of Christ.

A beautiful reference is made in the sixteenth verse of the eleventh chapter to the twenty-four elders which sat before God on their seats and fell down upon their faces in worship. These elders represent the saints of the Old Testament and of the New Testament times, there being twelve tribes of

Israel under the law in the old dispensation, while the twelve apostles of the New Testament in each headship of gospel ministry are the counterpart of the heads in figure of the twelve tribes. Thus the number twenty-four shows that the people saved by grace are a complete set number and belong to every age where the application of the shed blood of the crucified Lord of life and glory was made effective. The fact that these elders were clothed in white, as stated elsewhere, proves their character, for white linen is the righteousness of the saints, and grace reigns through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ. It is a significant fact that the twenty-four elders sat before God, for under the legal dispensation the priests always ministered standing, as the eleventh and twelfth verses of the tenth chapter of Hebrews declare in the statement: "And every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." Because of the one offering and finished work of our Redeemer on the cruel cross, the blood-bought saints of God in this gospel day sit down in the kingdom of heaven with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, for no salvation by creature effort or carnal works is necessary, and in humble, soul-felt adoration and thankfulness they bow down and worship God in spirit and in truth, realizing that in their flesh there dwells no good thing. Also in this present dispensation the prince of this world is judged and the nations of the world, comprising the impenitent, are angry in the wrath of God as judgment is meted out to them, as the separation between the righteous and the ungodly continues until the last heir of glory is gathered into the gospel fold by the great Shepherd.

In the nineteenth verse it is stated that the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail. In this striking and beautifully symbolical language is portrayed the spiritual experience of the child of God in regeneration and walk in newness of life. The temple of God is the true church and is seen in the gospel heaven because the veil is taken away from the hearts of God's little ones, just as the parting asunder of the veil in the temple at the death of Christ revealed the ark in the holy of holies in the temple. When Jesus bowed his head in death there was a great earthquake, with the rending of rocks and the opening of graves as the bodies of dead saints arose. So in becoming dead to sin and alive unto God there is in the heart of the quickened sinner a consciousness of having come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, and unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words, so that trembling and sinking deeper and deeper in despair, the guilty, justly condemned individual shakes with fear as though

an earthquake had shattered his earthly being, and then like the lightning out of the east shining unto the west, the east wind of the Spirit of God gives life to his dead soul and he stands upon his feet and rejoices with unspeakable joy in the God of his salvation and finds himself delivered and saved and free from condemnation. He beholds the ark of the testament through Jesus the door of heaven and finds the law kept in Christ and the mercy-seat covering all his transgressions. He has come unto Jesus, the mediator of the New Testament, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel and enters into a kingdom that cannot be shaken or moved and serves God with reverence and godly fear.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

SAN ANTONIO, Texas, Nov. 5, 1929.

DEAR BRETHREN:--I will try to write a few lines in the form of a Circular Letter, or an Associational Letter of the fourth annual meeting of the San Marcos Association, which was held Friday, Saturday and fourth Sunday in October, 1929, with Bethlehem Church, Martindale, Texas. This old Association had not held their associational meetings for several years, until four years ago, but have remained sound in doctrine and order all these years, believing in the grand old doctrine of salvation by sovereign grace for time and eternity, having no patience with any form of conditional, time or any other salvation depending upon the merits of man. They desire to be kept by the power of God faithful to the end, as is spoken of by the apostle Peter, "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."—1 Peter i. 4, 5. It would seem to us that there could be nothing more erroneous than the idea that man, either before or after regeneration, could independent of the leading of the divine Spirit of God, keep himself, for it is elsewhere stated, "The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand." "The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul." All our life, from our first existence to the end of our days, we are kept from evil, preserved, protected, and at the time appointed of the Father are given a hope in his mercy, for all the heirs of promise are set apart, sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called, and Paul said they are called with a holy calling, not according to their own works, but according to God's own purpose and grace. It seems foolish to argue creature merit in either time or eternal salvation, when the Scriptures are so positive in their explanation as to how we are saved and cared for here in time, and how we are delivered into the eternal bliss prepared for us by our Lord and Master.

I will close by asking the brethren to remember us few when it goes well with them.

J. B. BOWDEN, Moderator.
E. B. AULT, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1930.

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HEBREWS X. 23-27.

In the April Signs we endeavored to set forth the superiority of the life of faith over every other way of living, using the first part of the twelfth chapter of Hebrews as a basis. Since then a brother has written, requesting us to present some thoughts on the above portion of the tenth chapter of Hebrews.

Verse twenty-three reads: "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)." "Our faith" means the doctrine. The word "faith" in Scripture sometimes signifies the doctrine or body of truth held by believers, again it signifies the operation of the Spirit in the soul to bring about belief. "Doctrine" means not the arbitrary dogmas taught by men, but the principles of truth set forth in the Scriptures of inspiration and certified by the Holy Spirit in the experience of believers. The profession of the doctrine must be based on one's being in experimental possession of the life of the doctrine. Any profession of faith without one's being a possessor of that faith means being religious in form only. Being a possessor of faith is the fruit of being a subject of grace. Many professors are not in reality possessors, and therefore render only lip service to the truth. If one is through grace a possessor of the life of the doctrine his service is of the heart, his religion is a vital matter with him. Wavering means being unstable. One who wavers bends first this way, then that. He is like a reed bending in obedience to every shifting wind that blows. If one is not experimentally convinced of the truth he professes, he will drift uncertainly, being much like a ship without a pilot, lacking steadiness. Even the best of saints are at times assailed within themselves by doubts concerning the validity of their hope and concerning the truth of the doctrine they profess. But such temptations within the soul do not constitute the wavering meant in the text unless the outward life becomes affected by the inward temptations to uncertainty. There is not one of us but who sins in our thoughts and imaginations, but usually grace restrains these inward errors from affecting the outward life. If grace did not save us in

this way, there would never be one of us able to maintain a godly walk and conversation. So if the doubts and questionings which assail us so terribly at times within us, should be allowed to affect our outward life, the result would be wavering and instability. Grace saves the believer in this as in all other exigencies of the life of faith. Therefore "holding fast" proves whether one is really a possessor or merely a professor. If one is in vital, experimental possession of the truth, his internal soul doubts and fears will not lead to wavering in the outward life and walk. If one is merely a professor rendering lip service to the truth, he will soon or late waver and fall away, because he lacks experimental gracious conviction to hold him. Thus it must follow that any successful holding fast of faith on the part of believers is because grace holds them fast. Just as we love God because he first loved us, so we hold fast the faith because faith holds on to us. Otherwise the saints of God never could, of themselves, hold to the doctrine. That man whose soul is gripped by the power of the truth will of necessity hold fast to the truth. We must not lose sight of this fundamental truth: every spiritual act on the part of believers is the effect of the Spirit. The act does not produce the Spirit, but the Spirit the act. If we choose God, it is because he first chose us. Had God not done great things for his people there would never have been any response from them to him. He says within them, "Seek ye my face." Their hearts reply, "Thy face, Lord, we will seek." If he draws us, we will run after him. Without that divine drawing there can be no running toward him. Saints by the power of God are kept. This keeping of them by the power of God through faith is the ability by which they hold fast the profession of their faith. The "let us" is equal to a prayer on our part that God may see fit to graciously keep us to the faith so that we may hold fast to it. Such prayer he will not ignore, because God, who has promised his people all sustaining and keeping grace, is faithful and will never go back on his word. He has pledged his sovereignty to the keeping of his elect in the way, therefore true soul-breathings to him for his power to keep us will not be in vain. Hence, let us look within ourselves and see if we have a real desire to keep the faith. If we have such desires they are prayers to which the Spirit is not deaf, petitions which he will heed, and he will bless us with grace to keep us so that we may thereby keep the faith.

Verse twenty-four reads: "Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works." Again, it takes love to provoke or incite love. God's people are a household who love one another because the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts, thus showing they have passed from death unto life. Where this love is, they will not stir up one another's jealousy, malice or anger; they will not provoke one another to wrath: they will incite each other to love and to the good works of the Spirit. Works, to be really good, must be the fruit of the Spirit. Other-

wise, however fair works may seem, if they lack the Spirit for a foundation, they are not good. Gentleness, peace, temperance, brotherly love, patience, longsuffering, faith and all such are the fruit of the Spirit, hence are good works. If these things be in us and abound, they will make us fruitful in the work of the Lord. Without them, we are barren and desolate. Love begets love. God loving us causes us to love him. When one loves the brethren, it incites them to love him. When one is a man of peace and gentleness toward the household of faith, it provokes them to show peace and gentleness toward him. On the other hand, if we criticize and find fault with our brethren, they will likely do the same to us. Whatever yardstick we use to measure others, we must not complain if they in turn use our own measure whereby to judge us. We must conclude, therefore, that for one to be possessed of a carping, bitter, jealous tendency toward the brethren argues an absence of love in the soul of that one toward the brotherhood. With what judgment we judge, it shall be meted to us again. Hence, the proper conduct on the part of the saints of God is by love to provoke love, by peace to incite peace, by gentleness to stimulate others to be gentle. Also, it is right that brethren should be reminded to minister to the needy among them in a substantial way; so that if God has blessed some of us with a goodly share of the benefits of this world temporally, we should be encouraged to show our love and fellowship by contributing to the relief of those less fortunate among us. This, and such like, is provoking one another to good works.

Verse twenty-five reads: "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." Even in that day, as now in ours, there was a tendency on the part of some to remain away from the meetings of the church. We every one of us need all the others, no one of us can live a healthy or full spiritual life away from the brethren. If God's people could get along just as well alone to themselves as in the company of their fellows in Christ, He would not have brought into being the visible church and maintained its continuity through the centuries. The meetings of the church occupy a very important and God-designed place in our lives. We suffer loss apart from them. One of the worst tendencies of our people at the present time is to stay away from the meetings of the church when the pastor is not present. We contend that the church should always maintain its regular meetings, pastor or no pastor. The blessing comes in our being in the way, not out of the way. Too much stress to-day is put on the importance of the preaching gifts to the exclusion of all other gifts. The pastor is not the head of the church and the order of the house should not be thought of as depending solely upon him. He is the servant of the church, not the hub about which the church revolves. There are other and valuable gifts in the church aside from

the preaching gifts. It used to be that our churches held at stated times what were called conference or prayer meetings, in which all the brethren, including the sisters, were encouraged to take part according to their several abilities. These of late years have been much neglected and some churches now meet only when the pastor is present. From my own personal experience, I can say that in the days of my youth in the church these conference meetings were blessed to my comfort and peace of mind. Might it not be also in the case of others? Might it not be that some of Zion's little ones are starving to-day for lack of the openings which these conference meetings bring to them? Some of our present gifts that have been ordained to the ministry were first discovered in these conference meetings. Why should the pastor consume the whole time at all the meetings of the church? Should not the other gifts have the privilege to exercise as well as he? We do not mean that some brother should time after time monopolize all the time, thus making himself obnoxious, but each and all of the membership who feel to speak in these meetings should have the privilege of doing so. We are commanded in the above text to "exhort one another" to this effect. If members of the church repeatedly stay away from the meetings they should be visited, not in order to berate or to scold them, but to lovingly exhort them to their privileges in the church. "And so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." As the church in that day recognized from the signs of those times that the end of that former dispensation of the Jewish nationality was fast approaching, so do we to-day from the signs of our times recognize that the times of the Gentiles are drawing to a close, be it in our lifetimes or not, and that it behooves us to cherish the things really worth while and not to hug too closely to ourselves the things that must inevitably perish and be taken from us. The day is coming that will prove every man's work whether it be of wood, hay or stubble, or whether it be gold, silver and precious stones. Only that will stand the judgment of God which is founded on Christ and rooted within him. The assemblings of the saints are on that sure foundation. Let us, then, not forsake them. This life which we live with our brethren in Christ is the only really worth while and abiding life, after all. All other relationships end with time and are dissolved in death.

Verses twenty-six and twenty-seven read: "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." There is, then, such a thing as a believer's transgressing even after he has received the knowledge of the truth. Yes, there is. Now, one cannot transgress a law unless the law is over him. Believers are not, spiritually speaking, under the law of sin and death. Their mortal bodies may still be under the law of sin and death, but the believer is

in soul and spirit passed from under that law by regeneration. Neither are believers under the Mosaic law. Are not they, therefore, under any law at all? Indeed they are. They are under the law of God's grace, under the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. And they do at times sin against grace. There is such a thing as grieving the Holy Spirit of God by which we are sealed unto the day of redemption. We do, at times, grieve the Holy Spirit in the hearts of our brethren. This we do when we offend one another. This we do when we transgress the law of our mother, the church, going against her counsel and setting at defiance her order and rule. The willful sin is the sin of the believer after receiving knowledge of the truth. It is sin full of one's own selfish will. Have you not sometimes seen willful children in families? They are generally children not liking to be controlled, wanting to have their own way. It has occurred at times in the experience of the church that brethren are left to themselves to have their own way, thus furnishing a warning example to others. Such brethren are "willful." They want to be independent, to be a law unto themselves. They are impatient of restraint, even though it be a loving restraint. Now, what is the remedy for this willful sin? Did Jesus die for such sin as that? Indeed, he did. He died for all the sins of all his people, whatsoever those sins have been or may be. He is the complete and perfect atonement for them all. Thus, if one sins willfully, what shall one do? Well, he cannot offer a sacrifice for that sin, because he is no more under the legal covenant under which bloody offerings were made for sin. That age has passed away. Neither will Christ descend to earth to suffer afresh for that sin. That is not necessary, Christ having already once for all made a finished and complete payment to divine justice for all sins of all his people. No, there remaineth no more sacrifice for this willful sin. What then? There remains a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation. It is not the judgment and fiery indignation which remains, but the certain looking for it. This is a "certain" and sure experience following upon the willful sin. There is no uncertainty or maybe so about it. Just so surely as one sins willfully after having been taught the truth, just so certainly will that one look for judgment and for fiery indignation. He will know in his own conscience that he has done wrong. Knowing that, he will be certain to look for some manifestation of the judgment of God and for some appearance of his fiery indignation, knowing full well that his sin merits punishment. Now, what will this certain looking for of judgment accomplish? It will destroy the enemy, that is, the adversary. Oh, what a mercy is this! It is not the believer who is destroyed by the willful sin. No, never. But, thanks be to God, the adversary which caused one to sin, he it is who is destroyed by this sure expectancy of judgment. In other words, all these things work together

for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. A burnt child dreads the fire, is an old saying. Nothing so well drives its lessons home to the soul as does one's own experience. So by experiencing what it means to be full of one's own will and to be led astray thereby one really finds out deliverance from that accursed enemy, one's own fleshly nature. The experience of surely looking for some evil to come because one has done wrong, leads to one's being more and more fearful about doing wrong. Thus, does this sure expectation of judgment deliver the believer from the power of the adversary, the flesh, and makes one more and more aware of the treachery of one's own fallen nature, so causing us to beware of it and correcting us from giving ear to evil counsel. These things we can speak of from our own personal experience, having handled ourselves the testimony of that which we here set forth. If it will help or comfort some other poor stumbling soul by the way, let God be praised.

H. H. L.

WE request our subscribers when sending in subscriptions or changes of address to be sure and give the *exact name and address* to which the paper is now coming; otherwise we are liable to give the credit to the wrong person, as we may have two subscribers of the same surname at the one post office.

ISAIAH XLIII. 10.

"YE are my witnesses, saith the Lord."

The above sentence came to our mind a few days ago when journeying from one of our appointments, and with it we experienced a deep humiliation, while considering what manner of men we ought to be in all holiness of conversation, yet along with that, a holy gladness that the Lord had so bestowed his abundant grace upon us that we should be a living witness of his blessed truth in this dark and cloudy day. A true witness is one who cannot be turned aside either by flattery or the fear of displeasing others, and the witness of God testifies to the truth as much in his life and conversation as in the pulpit. God's witnesses are monuments of grace, living epistles known and read of all men, in them God is glorified, for they show forth the praise of him who has called them out of darkness into his most marvelous light. A doer of the word is a witness of the truth, and we are commanded to do all things without murmurings and disputings, that we may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life. We are his workmanship, and it is written, God's works praise him. Man's words spring from a source that is polluted, and vanity is stamped upon them, God's work is perfect. Thus the dying thief was through sovereign grace a witness, for when all the disciples forsook Jesus and fled the thief cried, "Lord, remember me when thou

comest into thy kingdom." When priest and rabbi were laying snares and traps for Jesus the little children cast palm branches before him, and cried, "Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." They were witnesses, as also was the woman at the well, for she said, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews Paul gives us an account of some of the many witnesses of God: an innumerable cloud, compassing us about as a great army, the army of heaven, for our comfort and instruction, witnesses that loved not their lives unto death, of whom the world was not worthy, and to-day where are we? We are either witnessing to the truth or to a lie, to God or to mammon. Paul was told by Ananias that he was chosen of God to know his will and see that Just One, and hear the voice of his mouth. "For thou shalt be his witness unto all men, of what thou hast seen and heard." John also was a witness and as such he tells what we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled of the word of life. In the courts of this world a witness is one who has seen or heard or handled, and heaven demands these qualifications. When so many ceased to follow after the Lord Jesus because of his hard doctrine Jesus said to Peter, "Will ye also go away?" Peter said, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." No life or comfort but from him, and Peter knew it. As he spake, the blind received their sight, the lepers were cleansed, the dead were raised and to the poor the gospel was preached. The brethren in the primitive church were enabled by grace to preach Jesus and the resurrection before a wicked and gainsaying people. To do so, with many of them, meant prison and death, yet in prison they witnessed, and in Rome, where many of them were slaves, they were cruelly treated, yet in those trials of cruel mockings and scourgings they were witnesses wherever they were, even to the very palace of Cæsar. If they were forsaken and alone, they were not alone, for the Lord stood by them, but while he was witnessed by them to their comfort, their persecutors saw him not. To-day the world sees him not, neither does it know him, but he has not left himself without witnesses. John the Baptist bare witness of Jesus, he who was the faithful and true witness, went to John and was baptized in the river Jordan, and to-day there are witnesses who have received of the word of Life and have been shown by the Spirit's witness within what is the ordinance of God, and though man has sought out many inventions which have no truth in them at all, and sprinkling is one of them, yet they, as witnesses, go down to the watery grave as their Lord did before them. While those who cling to their sprinkling witness that they prefer the invention of Rome, the mother of harlots, to the pattern God's witnesses have seen in the mount. In this blessed ordinance they witness, not only that they are dead to the world by the body of Christ, but they are also

buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. They witness by their walk and conversation that they have been with Jesus and learned of him. Should it be their lot to lie upon a bed of affliction, yet they will be his witnesses there. If it should be the will of their heavenly Father that they shall have reproach heaped upon them, they will witness even there. What a wonderful blessing to be a witness of Israel's God in this dark day. It makes the face to shine, yet the world sees it not. Confess Christ as a present help, and the world says how foolish, and while to us it is just as wonderful that God's people live, swallowed up by this wicked world, as ever it was that Jonah lived in the whale's belly, yet if we declare it as a fact unshaken by science, falsely so called, it is laid to our ignorance. But what does the opinion of man, who has not seen, heard, handled, tasted or felt of the word of life, amount to? It is of no account. While we have for many years enjoyed hearing the witness of men and women who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and have believed that their witness was tone, yet the witness of God is greater, and the Spirit of God is in each and all of his witnesses, and the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. Thus it is a blessed and holy calling to be a witness of God and his truth, for it is the result of the effectual work, wherever seen, produces children that will not lie, of whom God has declared that *no* weapon that is formed against them shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against them in judgment they shall condemn. Paul tells Agrippa, "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come." He witnesses before Agrippa and Festus, and then must witness before Cæsar at Rome, and when he was about to seal his testimony with his blood he wrote, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. The lives of the brethren associated with Paul in Rome must have stood out clearly like stars in a dark night. To-day darkness has covered the earth, and gross darkness the people, and the church of God stands alone, yet the Lord is with her, but she is alone as a witness of the truth, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. She is despised and rejected of men, yet honored of God, she stands now a witness that God does indeed dwell with man. Where is there any other people that love one another as they do? for they witness that they are his disciples, for they love one another. While other organizations progress with the world, they are satisfied and happy to build upon the foundation, Jesus, the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and they will stand secure when this vain world in ruin lies. May God bless us with grace to enable us to witness to what we have handled, tasted and felt of the word of life, and

may he so bless those that see our good works that they may glorify our Father which is in heaven. This work of faith and labor of love is much seen in God's humble poor, who have a thorn in the flesh, yet witness that God's grace is sufficient for them, and who, though sorely afflicted, have the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush. They confess that in them, that is, in their flesh, there dwells no good thing, and they stand not in the wisdom of men, but the power of God. These declare plainly that they seek a city that has foundations whose builder and maker is God, and God is not ashamed to be called their God, though many and many are the times that they are ashamed of their poor returns, and their life is one confession of poverty, sin and shame when speaking of themselves, and of glory, praise and power being unto their God forever, for he has redeemed them, they are his, and they witness to his presence, what it means to them here, and what it will be to them in a world that will never end.

G. R.

NOTICE.

Providence permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in June (29th). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence, in Delmar, Maryland, March 15th, 1930, Russell George Davis and Annie Louise Thom, both of Salisbury, Maryland.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

E. MURRAY BETHARD was born April 19th, 1869, and departed this life October 22nd, 1929, in his sixty-first year. He was the son of Adam P. Bethard and Isabel Burbage Bethard, and at the age of twenty-one years he was married to Miss Rowina B. Brittingham, both of the same neighborhood of Powellville, Maryland, and near the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church, of which church Mr. Bethard was a very good friend, and his wife a member. Mr. Bethard, although a good friend of the church, being much interested in its welfare, always ready to entertain its members and friends in his home, in his very hospitable manner, yet he was not given to ask for a home in the church, although strong in the belief of its doctrine, or teaching. It was the writer's privilege and pleasure to visit his home many times, and always enjoyed the visits, and hearing him talk, and at times talk of the things of the kingdom, or church, in which he was much interested. I recall that a few weeks before his death I visited Mr. Bethard with Elder Vaughn, who he was so glad to see that he pulled him over and gave him a hug. He talked clearly and rationally to us, with sweet expressions, as to his condition, showing his hope, and I am sorry I cannot recall and quote his conversation, as he said much of interest and comfort to us, although we were told by sister Bethard on entering the home that he was very ill, she said he did not have his normal mind and might not recognize us, but to her surprise and joy he knew us instantly and talked freely and rationally, as above stated. That was the last we saw of him living, but Elder Vaughn and the writer were at his funeral a few weeks later, each trying to speak to the comfort of those of his family and friends he left behind to mourn their loss, which we hope is his eternal gain. He left his widow, who had borne him six children, two now dead and four living. Those living are Mrs. Oscar Powell, of Powellville, Maryland, and Mrs. Lawrence Adkins, of Wingo, Maryland, two sons, Lloyd W. Bethard, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Dean Bethard, Wilmington, Delaware, also four grandchildren and one half-brother and two sisters in his immediate family. May the God of all grace be with them, and all of us, to comfort us in tribulation.

ALSO,

MRS. LIZZIE E. WHITE died September 22nd, 1929, at her home, near Salisbury, Maryland, and also near Forest Grove Church, of which church she had been a member for about twenty years. She was born September 23rd, 1857, making her age 71 years, 11 months and 29 days. She was the wife of Edward M. White, who although not a member of the church was, and still is, a faithful attendant, and loves the same truth she so much loved. Mr. White is left alone, so far as the immediate family is concerned, there having no

children been born to them, but while alone in this sense we hope and believe the Lord has and still is sustaining him in his great loss of such a devoted wife as sister White was to him, and such devotion he also had for her, so much so that he gave up his work the last year of her illness that he might be with and help nurse her until the end. She was a great sufferer for several months, but did not murmur under her suffering and bore it patiently, awaiting the time when she should be taken away from the earthly tabernacle to where suffering would be no more. The writer recalls a visit to her when she was in much physical pain, but all was glory within, and she said she wanted to go home, but dreaded to leave "Eddie," her husband. I left with the feeling that if she had gotten as much out of the visit as I did that it was a good visit indeed, as it was for me.

Her body was buried in the Forest Grove Church cemetery, in which church-house the funeral services were held, Elder H. C. Ker and the writer conducting them. We who knew her miss her, but could not wish her back, hoping that our loss is her eternal gain.

G. E. COULBOURN.

MRS. NANCY HUTCHISON, our sister in Christ, passed away from this earthly life May 8th, 1930, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Lena Burton, Herndon, Virginia. She was born in Fairfax County, Virginia, where all her life was spent, October 27th, 1843. She was the daughter of William Ward Cockrill and Julia White and was one of eight children, all of whom have now passed away except one sister, Mrs. William M. Smoot, of Occoquan, Virginia. She was the mother of six children, three of whom are living: Mrs. Effie Averill and Mrs. Sue Heitmuller, near Washington, D. C., and Mrs. Lena Burton, Herndon, Virginia. Two sons died in infancy. The third son, Frank, died in 1927. Her husband was the late Manley A. Hutchison, who died May 2nd, 1911. They have twelve grandchildren and three great-grandchildren living. It was my privilege to baptize sister Hutchison the second Sunday in September, 1913, into membership of the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church. Funeral services were held from Mrs. Burton's home Saturday afternoon, May 10th, by the writer. Elder J. E. Herndon being present offered prayer. Interment in the cemetery at Herndon. The apostle exhorts the saints to adorn their profession with the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. This, by grace, she did. She always preferred her brethren above herself, esteeming her own self least of all in her Father's house. She was gifted with the discernment of the Spirit to discriminate clearly between the true and the false in doctrine, was unwavering in her belief in the sovereignty of God and in salvation for sinners wholly by grace from first to last. As her pastor, I can truly say she was always loyal to my best interest and welfare. In the church, our loss is more than words can express, but we believe for her the change has been a glorious one. In the family, a mother's place never to be filled, leaves its blessed memories in the hearts of the sorrowing ones. May God reconcile us all to his good and wise will, granting us patience to abide yet a little while until the summons comes for us to join the host of the redeemed in glory, through Jesus Christ the Lord and only by him, as we hope.

H. H. L.

JOHN McPHAIL died Tuesday, March 4th, 1930, at his late home, east of Wallacetown, Ontario. He was a son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Hugh McPhail. In the year of 1892 he married Sarah Campbell, daughter of Malcolm Campbell and Janette McColl, and to this union there was born one son, Elmer. Mr. McPhail was 76 years old, and spent many years on the farm where he died. He was a highly respected man in the community where he lived and for many years was a constant attendant and supporter of the Covenanted Baptist Church. He was a man of good judgment and was worthy of the name of brother, although he felt himself unworthy of such a name, and while he was as faithful as a brother could be, yet he was never given strength to unite with the church. His home was always open to the brethren and he delighted to show kindness unto them, and he was loved dearly by all of us. We miss him very much, but have an abiding comfort in our sadness, that he is resting in the Lord. For some time he had not been in the best of health, having bronchial asthma, yet his end seemed to come suddenly. He leaves to mourn their loss, his wife sister McPhail, and son Elmer, who resides at Livingston, New Jersey; also one brother Hugh McPhail and one sister, Miss Minnie McPhail, both of Iona Station, Ontario.

The funeral was held at his late home, where a host of friends and relatives met to show their respects. The interment was in Fairview Cemetery, Dutton, Ontario. The Lord enable those he has left behind to say, "Thy will be done."

ALSO,

EMILY DOYLE died March 30th, 1930, at her late home, in Brantford, Ontario. She was the daughter of Joseph and Rebecca Wells, and was born in Ryarsh, Kent, England, August 24th, 1849. When she was twenty-one years of age she united with the Strict Baptist Church of Ryarsh, Mr. John Jull being then the pastor. Some time after that she came to Canada and in the year 1893 was married to Thomas Doyle, in the city of Montreal, and they for many years made their home in Hamilton, Ontario. About nineteen years ago they came to Brantford to live, and it was there her husband died in 1913. She leaves one daughter, Violet, also one brother, Alfred Wells, of Seattle, Washington, and a sister, Mrs. Bertha Ardies, of London, Ontario, to mourn their loss. Mrs. Doyle was a gracious person, one who had often walked in the furnace of affliction. Her only

darghter, Violet, was an invalid and needed constant and patient care, which she received from a loving and devoted mother. It was hard for her to leave the afflicted one, yet the Lord enabled her to say, Thy will be done. The promise was given to her, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be." Her sister, Bertha Ardies, was with her for a few days before she died, and all that loving hands could do for her comfort was done, but the Lord took her home. The writer was called to the funeral, and the interment was in the Brantford Cemetery.

G. R.

"The Lord gave." On October 12th, 1912, **ELINORE McCONNELL STRYKER,** the youngest of my four children, all girls, was born to me. Her birth, which occurred several months after her father's death, made her coming seem to be the promise of a great consolation in our desolate lives; and so it was. Unconsciously to us, as she grew she came to be to her sisters and to me the joy and pride of our lives. Quiet and gracious in manner, unusually kind and thoughtful, with a keen sense of humor and a conscientious devotion of duty, she won the respect and love of all who knew her. Her short life of seventeen years, though marked by limitations in health, was a joyous and happy one. Last June she was graduated from our local High School, and in the fall entered the Katharine Gibbs' Secretarial School in New York, making her home with her sister Catherine, in East Orange, New Jersey.

"The Lord hath taken away." During a week-end visit at home she suffered an attack of appendicitis, and was taken to the Homeopathic Hospital, in East Orange, where the last eleven days of her life were spent. The first operation was followed by pneumonia, and later by another operation. During these days of such intense suffering that the wonted smile was driven from her face, although her gracious courtesy never failed, we watched and hoped, until Friday, November 29th, 1929, we saw her go smiling and singing out of our presence, back to the One who gave. Not only her family and nearest friends were broken with sorrow, but the whole community seemed to stand still in awe and grief at her unexpected end. Because of the illness of our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, our good friend and brother, Elder R. Lester Dodson, conducted the funeral services in the New School Baptist meetinghouse, in Flemington, speaking comfortingly from the words, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"—Gen. xviii. 25. Her beautiful form was then laid away in the plot with her father in the cemetery at Somerville, New Jersey. Words cannot tell the emptiness that has come into the lives of her sisters Catherine, Ida and Elizabeth, and of her mother. Pray for us that like the one of old we may say from our hearts, "Blessed be the name of the Lord."

(MRS.) WILDA R. STRYKER.

Our dear brother in Christ, **WM. HOBENSACK,** departed this life at his home, in Ivyland, Pennsylvania, April 11th, 1930, after about four months' illness, during which he was a great sufferer, but when the end came he passed peacefully away, surrounded by his family. May 10th, 1885, he was baptized by the late Elder S. H. Durand, in the fellowship of the Southampton Old School Baptist Church, at Southampton, Bucks County, Pa. He was born May 17th, 1862, making his stay on earth sixty-eight years, less a few weeks. March 2nd, 1887, he was united in marriage to Miss Mary A. Stout, who, together with six children, two sons and four daughters, all of Ivyland, Pa., survives him. Ten or twelve years ago a daughter, Mrs. Mary Hobensack Cornele, died, and several years later a son, William Hobensack, Jr., died. I think they lost another in childhood. He was devoted to his family and his family devoted to him. The night before the funeral three hundred and forty passed the casket, and fully as many attended the funeral services. It required three automobiles to convey the flowers to the cemetery. The funeral services were conducted by his pastor, the writer, assisted by Elders H. H. Lefferts and C. W. Vaughn, interment took place in the Southampton Cemetery, adjoining the meetinghouse. Brother Hobensack was faithful and loyal to the church, being clerk and treasurer he had charge of all the business affairs, and managed same with credit to himself as well as for the welfare of the church. He was for many years a prosperous business man. His home was always open to his brethren and friends, where all found a hearty welcome. We shall all miss him, but have the blessed assurance that he has entered into everlasting rest. His family seems lost without him, as his judgment was always relied upon, and having been at home much of the time, he is much missed in the home by his family. May the dear wife, children and grandchildren be blessed with strength and grace as their day.

By request.

H. C. KER.

LOUISE HUNTON COX, our sister, was born June 22nd, 1851, at "Waverly," near New Baltimore, Fauquier County, Virginia. She departed this life at Charlottesville, Virginia, April 29th, 1930. She was the daughter of Thomas E. Hunton and Jane Carrington Hunton. She was baptized into the fellowship of Upper Broad Run Primitive Baptist Church March, 1870, by Elder A. B. Francis. At the time of her departure from this life to be with Christ, which is far better, her membership was with the "Gilliams Church," North Carolina. She is survived by her daughter, Mary J. Cox, and Frederick H. Cox, her son, Laura Hunton and Margaret Coffey, her sisters. For a number of years this dear sister and myself had been in frequent spiritual correspondence, and all her letters were upon the one sacred and all-important subject of Jesus Christ and him cruci-

fied, and how the Lord, as we hope, had called us by his grace, revealing the blessed Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ, in our hearts our hope of eternal life and glory. She frequently referred to her soul's first experience in these things, and how desired, how all-essential it was that he who had begun the good work in our souls should perform it until the day of Christ. It was the one theme of her letters, the preciousness of Christ and his precious blood, and how that the hope of the resurrection of the dead to immortality and incorruption was her soul's expectation.

Elder H. F. Hutchens preached at her funeral the gospel of Christ to the consolation of her sorrowing relatives, followed for a few minutes by myself declaring the consolations of Christ. There was quite a gathering of neighbors and friends assembled at the services to pay their last respects to her.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

ROSE ANN ELEY, daughter of Martin and Sarah Ann Eley, was born in Fulton County, Illinois, December 19th, 1857, and died April 22nd, 1930, at her home, in Astoria, Illinois, aged 72 years, 4 months and 3 days. She and brother Lot were married February 15th, 1857, and to that union were born four daughters and two sons, all of whom were present at their mother's funeral, which was held April 14th, Elder A. J. Coulee, of Roodhouse, Illinois, preaching a very comforting discourse, giving sound proof of the resurrection of the body at God's appointed time. Sister Rose had been a great sufferer many months, but was given a sweet reconciliation to the will of God to bear all to the end. She chose Elder Coulee to conduct her funeral, and requested her nephew, Carl Hughes, to assist in reading and prayer. Brother's home was located between the station and the meetinghouse, and sister could always feed and lodge any belated Baptists reaching their house day or night. She walked and talked the truth, and remained steadfast unto death. She had been a member of Mt. Zion Church since 1895.

ABRAM W. BLOOMFIELD.

MARY LOUISE RINGO was born in Washington County, Arkansas, March 1st, 1843, and died at her daughter's home in Estacada, Oregon, January 17th, 1930, making her stay on earth 95 years, 10 months and 16 days. She moved with her parents to Cassville, Missouri, in 1847, where she was married to William Garrett Horner in 1854. To this union were born three sons and two daughters, all having passed away except Mrs. Martha Tucker, of Estacada, at whose home she spent her last days. Her husband, Mr. Horner, and one son died in Missouri. She, together with the four living children and her parents, came to Oregon by ox team, in 1867, and took up a homestead near High-land, in Clackmas County. In 1875 she was again married, to Judge Joseph Ringo, who passed away a few years later. Sister Rigo and her two sons, Amos and G. W., were members of the Primitive Baptist Church, sister Ringo being in the constitution of Cedar Creek Church, at Oregon City, Oregon. Brother Amos was ordained a minister in this church. Sister Ringo and her brother, G. E. Mayfield, first joined the Missionary Baptists, but becoming dissatisfied came to the Primitive Baptists and were baptized by the late Elder J. P. Allison, and brother Mayfield was ordained to the work of the ministry about the year 1875, being a member of Cedar Creek Church. Sister Ringo was the last of a large family of children, being the daughter of Andrew Jackson Mayfield. Her mother's maiden name was Dicie Roberts. She was laid to rest at Springwater, Oregon, where others of her relatives are buried. The funeral services were held at Estacada, being conducted by Mr. C. C. Cook, a Methodist minister. Her membership was with Liberty Church, in Los Angeles, California, at the time of her death.

S. B. MOFFITT.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT.

WHEREAS, God in his wisdom and mercy has removed from our midst our much beloved brother and pastor, **ELDER L. H. HARDY,** who was born March 17th, 1853, and died March 29th, 1930. He lived as a true and faithful servant of God and died as he wished, at his post of duty, preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ. Therefore be it

RESOLVED, first, that we bow in humble submission to God, who doeth all things well, believing that our loss is his eternal gain.

Second, that the church at Hunting Quarters has lost a loving brother and a most faithful pastor, one who was a true watchman on the walls of Zion, always standing fearlessly for the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. The family a loving father and most faithful husband.

Third, that a copy of these resolutions be sent to our church papers, one to his wife and one spread on our church book.

Done by order of conference assembled this Saturday before the second Sunday in April, 1930.

W. W. STYRON, Moderator.

JOHN D. SMITH, Church Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

"A friend," Ky., $1; Mrs. Frances Hand, Texas, $3; A. B. Bickers, Kans., $2; L. Z. Ross, N. Y., $1; Mrs. W. E. McGregor, Ky., $1; Lucie Holloway, Md., $1; Mrs. I. H. Evans, Md., $1.

MEETINGS.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (4th, 5th and 6th), 1930. Those coming from and via New York City will take Erie R. R. Ferry foot of West 23rd Street at 3:20 p. m., or Erie R. R. Ferry foot of Chambers Street at 3:30 p. m., for train leaving Jersey City, N. J., at 3:45 p. m. on Tuesday, June 3rd, or Erie R. R. Ferry foot of Chambers Street at 6:10 a. m. on Wednesday, June 4th, for train leaving Jersey City at 6:30 a. m. Get tickets for Howells, N. Y. Those coming from and via Kingston, N. Y., will take Ontario & Western R. R. train leaving Kingston at 12:32 p. m. on Tuesday, June 3rd. Get tickets for Winterton, N. Y. All trains mentioned are operated on Eastern Standard Time. Trains will be met and friends cared for. Those coming by automobile will go to the home of Mr. F. P. Engle, one-half mile from the meetinghouse on the Otisville road. The Old Homestead is not open this year. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, sisters and friends to meet with us.

R. LESTER DODSON, Moderator.

A Union Meeting is to be held at the home of the writer June 13th, 14th and 15th, 1930, and we wish to extend an invitation to all Predestinarian Baptists to meet with us. Should there be any Baptists touring the west we would gladly welcome them. After arriving in Yakima phone 4073-L, and you will be directed how to find us.

(MRS.) LILLIE BLYSTONE,
R. F. R. 1, Box 335, YAKIMA, Washington.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects brother Arnold Bellows to be with them the fifth Sunday in June (June 29th, 1930), services to be held at the home of brother James E. Livingston, 64 East Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All welcome.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 98. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1930. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MUIRKIRK, Ontario, Aug. 14, 1929.

DEAR BRETHREN AND FRIENDS:—If you can bear with me for a short time, there are a few things in my mind I desire to tell you. I spoke of some things last Sunday in Dunwich, but forgot to mention many that were sweet to me while visiting our dear brother Young. Last night I was so exercised in spiritual things that I could not sleep, so got up at midnight to write some of the things I am about to tell you. There are a few in the church to whom I have told some of my first exercises and reason of my hope.

About the year 1889 I felt myself to be a great sinner, and tried hard to do something to merit the Lord's favor, but found all my righteousness as filthy rags in his sight, and often went about my work shedding tears of repentance for the wicked thoughts and desires of my mind, but am thankful I was kept from acting them out. I could no longer indulge in the foolish and frivolous things of this life. I felt I deserved all the trouble I was passing through, and if my soul were sent to hell God's righteous law approved it well. I went to my dear mother and tried to tell her some of my troubles, and her answer was, "Go tell it to the church." I did not feel there was any hope for me, until in 1898 I went down to Dunwich, and dear brother Eubanks took for his text, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" and said it was because the Lord's work was going on in our souls. I felt to rejoice for the first time in years and could hardly refrain from crying out aloud. I then felt a desire to come to the church, but was so unworthy. This Scripture came to my mind, "Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." In May, 1899, I went before the church and was received as a candidate for baptism, and was baptized the fourth Sunday by Elder Pollard. I thought my troubles were then at an end. About a year after Elder

Wyman, who was visiting at our place, said to me, How would you feel if the church would appoint you a deacon? I said, They would never do it if they knew me as I know myself; I do not feel worthy of the place I now fill as a member. His words troubled me, and when the business meeting was called Deacon McIntyre said he felt the church should appoint another deacon, and said I was on his mind. I asked them not to go any farther in the matter, as I was not worthy to be a member. Brother Scates said he felt they were not making a mistake, and seconded the motion. After being appointed I suffered for many days, as I felt I had no qualifications. This Scripture came to me with much comfort, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." I said, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." I was made willing to be anything or nothing for the welfare of the church, and I feel to say that the church has borne with me all these years. Elder Ruston is my fifth pastor, and I hope my last. I well remember the first trouble I experienced in the church and how deeply it worried me, and dear old sister Crawford said not to worry, as there had always been trouble in the churches and always would be. I felt my second pastor was an able expounder of the truth and an eloquent speaker. We were proud of his ability, and one good friend said, If we searched the United States we could not find his equal. This Scripture came to me in my own bed, "My house [the church] shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." I felt we were guilty of robbing the Lord of his glory and giving it to puny man. I hope, dear brethren and friends, we will look beyond the watchmen who are placed on the walls of Zion and give God all the glory for all the comfort and edification we receive from our pastors. When the Lord shuts none can open, and when he opens none can shut. May we all be given a desire and prayer that our dear pastor may be enabled to draw from that great storehouse of knowledge and grace to satisfy and comfort his waiting people, and may we all be given ears to hear and hearts to understand what will be for our good and the dear Lord's glory.

During my sickness this spring it seemed the tempter was let loose and told me all I had passed through was a delusion of the mind, and that I had grasped the shadow and missed the substance. I had to go back to my early experience, and reason: Would I have done the things if only the flesh was in it? My hope seemed very small, but I would not part with it for all the gold of this world, and I was made to say with the psalmist David, "Before I was afflicted I went astray." As it drew near the time of our May meeting I felt a desire to be there, as two of our deacons were not able to officiate. Abraham's answer to Isaac, "The Lord will provide," came into my mind and I could see by the eye of faith Abraham journeying with Isaac to offer his only son on the altar, and Isaac asking his father where the sac-

rifice was, and the ram was caught in the thicket: a type of our dear Savior, who shed his precious blood for the sins of his people, and not one of that multitude, which no man can number, can be lost. I was reconciled and the way was opened up for us to be at the meeting on Sunday, and it was surely a feast to us. A way was again provided for us to attend the Ekfrid meeting all through, and I felt to say with David, "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!"—Psalms cvii. 8.

While visiting at brother Young's summer home in the Birkshire Hills, I was thrilled with the scenes of nature, and felt to say, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints," and in the early morning and late evening as I listened to the sweet notes of the birds of that part of the country it seemed they were praising God for their protection, and I thought, Not a sparrow can fall to the ground without the Father, and ye (his people) are of more value than many sparrows. I felt to say, Praise God, from whom all blessings flow, and also felt that his strong arm was underneath and around us and that not a single shaft can hit until the God of love sees fit.

In conclusion I would say,

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name."

"On Christ, the solid rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand."

DUNCAN M. GILLIS.

BENTON, Ky., Dec. 29, 1929.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending to you for publication a sermon that brother J. C. Chester, a servant of the Most High, sent to me the other day. It is such a wonderful letter that I feel sure the readers of our dear old family paper will enjoy it. Such letters, or rather sermons, should never be destroyed, but given to others that they, too, might feast upon the same.

I have asked several during the holidays to subscribe for the paper, but such a few that we meet are interested in the truth that it is discouraging, as their answer is always, We cannot. The truth is, they do not understand the doctrine the paper sets forth and do not want it. But they "can't help it," so "they know not what they do." We who feel like we have been brought out of darkness into the light "can't help it" either, for it was not by works that we had done that caused us, as we hope, to see, but through the mercy of God, wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, he quickened us together with Christ and raised us up and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, for he is our peace, and it is by the effectual working of his power we are saved. So we have nothing wherein to boast or brag about, but all glory belongs to the blessed Trinity. If we could always feel that we were walking worthy of the calling we hope has been ours we, or at least poor sinful me, would not have so many doubts and fears and so many hours to complain. But in me, in this flesh, dwells no good thing, so I am

made to cry unto the Giver of all good and perfect gifts to lead me in paths of righteousness, and to make me to lie down in green pastures. Without him I can do nothing, for I am as a lump of clay in the potter's hand. But the Potter can mould us into the shape that pleases him, and that fits perfectly into the building, the temple, the bride that will be adorned to meet the Bridegroom in that great day of the Lord.

EFFIE BLAGG.

BREWERS, Ky., Dec. 15, 1929.

DEAR SISTER EFFIE:—The text, "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts," is found in Psalms lxv. 4, and it continues to run through my mind. The sweet singer of Israel seems to picture the real life of the child of God. The purpose he would give for this choosing and causing to approach unto God was for the delights the children enjoy while pressing on to God. Two pictures might be drawn from this text that would fit the poor, lost, condemned sinner and the one who is traveling home to God and can sing,

"Salvation! oh the joyful sound!
'Tis pleasure to our ears;
A sovereign balm for every wound,
A cordial for our fears."

Hymn 471 (Beebe's collection). Read it all and you will gather a glimpse of the two pictures I shall try and draw, the Lord being my helper. First the Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any who did understand, that did seek God. Read Psalms liii. 23, and Romans iii. 1--18, and with your own consciousness of sin, and your very depraved nature, you will see the kind of creatures God in his infinite mercy and love did set apart in the annals of eternity to be holy and without blame before him in love. When manifestly taken out of this fallen state, while others are left to perish in their sins, it is an act of mercy bestowed upon a hell-deserving wretch, for no other reason than for his own purpose and grace given in Christ Jesus before the world was. First picture: the poor criminal as he is brought into court to be tried before the great supreme Judge. The Spirit, or Holy Ghost, arrests the fleeing criminal, brings him before the Judge, the witness testifies, the client is found guilty. The Counsellor presents the case. What does his pleading say? Father, forgive; I suffered, groaned, bled and died in his stead. Yes, I met all the demands of a broken law. By this testimony Wisdom is justified of all her children. Here the judgment-seat and the mercy-seat are joined together in the suffering body of Christ as the poor sinner is caused to approach unto God, and Christ is made unto his people all they need in this world and prepares them for heaven and immortal glory. This great work, yes, glorious and wonderful work, is going on, as our Savior said. "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God [not the preacher]; and they that hear shall live." He did not say they may live if they will.

Second picture, or court. This work

is going on here, while we are in this world, and we often wait in the outer court; yes, at the entrance to the temple we must wait our Maker's nod. We cannot approach him at all times, but must wait until we be chosen again and caused to approach him by faith and hope. It is truthfully said, No man can come unto me, except the Father which sent me draw him. Have you not seen others of the dear children feasting upon the drippings from his sanctuary, while you must sit and look on with a heart which seemed to be untouched by his love, or at times just the reverse: the Lord had been pleased to visit us from the galleries of his love and by a look upon us we were made to weep, and in an instant our Advocate was pleading for us and we at once leaped from the dark dungeon, the prison walls fell, the fetters fell off and we were made to appear, as it were, in the court of glory, and with a Thomas cry, My Lord and my God? It is then Christ, who is our life, appears, and we appear with him in glory, raised up and made to sit with him in an heavenly place. Yes, it is here we do get a foretaste of that blessed abode where the trials of this life will be over. As you state, dear sister, the Lord gives grace for each day and trial as we travel as pilgrims in a strange land, in this outer court at times. David would say of this trust and deliverance, I have been young, and now I am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. (Psalms xxxvii. 25.) Just here we see the army of that chosen family safely marching to King Immanuel's land; that is, in to the temple. Is not the earth but a court where the holy nation, the royal priesthood wait, or rather are being taught of the Lord, and all things are working together for good to them that love him, to them who are the called according to his purpose? The almighty Commander rules all things for their good and his glory. The poet has well said, "Not a single shaft shall hit, till the God of love sees fit." Then, precious sister, fight on. Indeed we can say, But now abides faith, hope and charity these three, but the greatest of these is charity. While we dwell in his court, before his temple, faith and hope are jewels of untold value to our tried and afflicted souls. Our God has said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, and our faith revives.

I see I cannot draw pictures of these courts as I desire, or fancy that I see them, but feel sure you know of them and will one day enter into the joys of our Lord, and the King will say, Come, ye blessed of the Lord, enter in to that rest that awaits the children of God, who are chosen and made to approach unto that temple which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Yes, it is a gracious offer your friend extended to you, and I would say, Go and enjoy the Yuletide with them.

Write us when you have a mind, for your letters are a real feast to us all.

I am, I trust, your brother in bonds of love and sweet fellowship of Christ's suffering,

J. C. CHESTER.

LAWN, Texas, March 6, 1930.

DEAR BROTHER ENNIS MCGRADY: —I have read your good letter in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in the March number, and it is very interesting to me, as my mind has for years been exercised on the same subject as you wrote, and I feel a great desire to write to you. I hope the desire is of the Lord, but I do not know. I desire to tell you some of the things which I hope have been revealed to me, so I will try with the prayer in my heart that the Lord may direct my mind to write the truth, and not suffer me to write anything that is not the truth. It makes me fear and tremble to attempt to write on so glorious and wonderful a subject, for I know I am very weak and sinful and ignorant, but the unlimited God, perfect in all his attributes, whom I love because he first loved me, can enable even me to write to his honor and glory if it is his will. About twenty years ago there seemed to be given me a great desire to know where we are on the stream of time. It seemed the fullness of the Gentiles had about come in. I felt that where we are on the stream of time was taught in the seventh chapter of Daniel, if only I could understand it. One night after I had retired, the prayer was in my heart, O Lord, reveal these things to me. I went to sleep and dreamed that I was with a congregation of people, and there was on a bed an infant who seemed to be asleep. The people knew the babe was Christ. I dipped my hand in clear cool water and rubbed the infant's face. It awoke and I took it in my arms. The people were all rejoicing because they knew it was the Christ. A man came and took the babe from me, and another man came and took it from him, but it would not stay with them, and came back to me. The babe's being asleep signified that up until then the time had not come for those things to be understood. My dipping my hand in the water and rubbing its face signified my great desire and prayer to understand these things. The babe's coming back to me signified that my blessed Savior would reveal these things to me by his own Holy Spirit, and that I was not to be taught them by men. Later on there came a great desire and prayer in my heart to know the truth. O Lord, I want the truth. No matter whose creed is overthrown, I want the truth. I dared not look to men for wisdom and truth, because they were crying lo here and lo there. I had nowhere to go but to the great Source of truth, wisdom and understanding, to the great Teacher who always teaches aright. So with many sighs and tears, I begged the Lord for wisdom and understanding; and the assurance came into my heart that it would be given me. Since then, if I am not deceived, many Scriptures have been opened to me, and now, I hope, by the revelation of truth, I firmly believe the fullness of the Gentiles is about come in and the time is very near for the reaping of the harvest. That great day of the Lord is to come on the world as a thief in the night, but he tells some to watch, for they are not of the darkness, but of the light, so that

day shall not come on them as a thief. What are we to watch? The fulfilling of the Scriptures. We read in the second chapter of second Thessalonians, "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed." Read the whole chapter. Well, there is no doubt in my mind but that the falling away has come. Look what a falling away from the truth has come and is coming among the Old Primitive Baptists. The man of sin is being revealed to them that are watching. Oh yes, the wicked spirit, the prince of the power of the air, that now works in the children of disobedience. But now, only he who now letteth will let until he be taken out of the way. Again, we read in first Thessalonians, fifth chapter, "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then suddenly destruction cometh upon them." There comes in your vision of world peace conference and preparation for war. Read all of this chapter. Therefore, let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober. They that sleep, sleep in the night. They are in darkness and cannot see the fulfilling of the Scriptures. And they that are drunken are drunken in the night. They know not the truth and are drunk on the wine of Mystery Babylon. We read in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered the ark, and knew not, until the flood came, and took them away: so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

I will not write more this time. Please pardon my boldness in writing you, a stranger.

An unworthy sister in hope of mercy,
(MRS.) M. N. GRIFFIN.

JOHNSTON CITY, Ill., March 20, 1930.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:--Through the kindness of a sister in one of the churches I try to serve as pastor, I have had the privilege, also the pleasure, of reading your editorial "Signs of the Times," which appears in the February issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I felt that I wanted to write you to express my hearty indorsement of all you have said. I perceive you are keeping yourself informed about the current events taking place among the children of men and are interpreting them in the light of the sovereignty of God and divine prophecy. You mention in your editorial some of the most outstanding and pretentious events of recent years, and I have taken note of the same events and have often wondered if

others of our faith had the same prospective of them that I have. The World War, the revolutions in Russia and Germany, the upheaval in China, labor-saving machinery, unemployment, unrest and discontent of the masses, prohibition and lawlessness, love of money and other factors, seem to be shaping the world for some great catastrophe in the not far future, and pointing to the inevitable ending of the present evil world, or the Gentile reign upon this earth. "For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not, until the flood came, and took them all away: so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." It seems apparent to me that these things we now see coming to pass are fulfilling prophecy and show us that we are living in the "perilous times" that should come. But how few of the teeming millions of the earth are manifesting any real concern about the passing events of to-day, many of which are so vocal in warnings and in prophecy of those perilous times that lie ahead. True, some of our wise men, our statesmen and diplomats, appear to have sensed the danger inhering in the present economic and social status of the world, and are busying themselves with the task of trying to avert what they see is possible of being, but all their efforts, though ever so well meant, will not turn back the hand of God's retributive justice that is stretched out upon the nations, nor disannul what he has purposed. And "the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God;" even into the "hell" where all the lucre of all the multi-millionaires will not suffice to cool their tongues. My dear brother, what a joy and solace of mind to us poor weak worms of the dust to be enabled by grace divine to believe that none of these calamitous things coming to the world disturbs or disappoints our God or defeats his purpose, but all work together in perfect harmony to the fulfilling of his eternal counsel. Surely there could be no greater boon bestowed upon us here in this present state than such faith as that. I cannot see what there would be in life for me if I did not believe in the God that "doeth wonders" and according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. For nearly forty years I have been blessed to so believe in him, and the older I grow in years and in the work of the ministry the more I am made to feel the need of just the God that he is to me. I have learned that the way of man is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. How wonderful the experience (when revealed to us) to have God's almighty hand leading us, his love and his mercy supporting us as we journey through this vale of tears, heartaches and sorrows. Let the adversaries of God and his truth do all they may, they can never transcend the bounds that Wisdom hath set; nor storm, nor flood, nor flame, nor sickness, nor adversaries, can do more than what God has willed, and all things whatsoever that befall

us are ordained for our good and the glory of God. Some time (God's time) wars will cease, the nations will learn war no more, but man shall not receive the glory for bringing peace, and on earth good will to men; Jesus, the Prince of Peace, will be the one who shall receive the praise and the glory for that; and when he stands at the latter time upon the earth and speaks his divine fiat, peace, everlasting sweet peace shall come to the saints of God and they shall be gathered together in the everlasting kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world.

C. M. WEAVER.

NEWARK, Del., June 6, 1930.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:— I am so grateful, yes, thankful, for your presence Saturday that I must acknowledge it to you, in hope it may be encouraging to you in a small way for your journey to us even though for such a short time. On Saturday, and the few days preceding, my little strength seemed sapped, walking by sight entirely, until your mouth was opened and the tree was cast into the waters of Marah (bitterness) in my soul, then it was sweetened, honey and honey comb together brought me sweet relief. Every word that flowed from your mouth and heart went deep into my heart Saturday. When you read the 14th Hosea I wondered what you was going to get out of that chapter, yet only another demonstration of the operation of the Spirit in man, proves conclusively man is utterly helpless, both in giving and receiving, it all must come from Him. That tree is a figure or appelation of the Christ we hope in and live for. His Spirit does sweeten many waters from time to time, and it only can sweeten, and is the healing balm to a tried and tempest-tossed soul. When we are forsaken, made to walk by sight within ourselves, as you said, this is experience and temptation, but it is soon over, when the tree is cast into the waters they are immediately made sweet to the taste. Such a Savior it is a mercy, and only mercy, we are what we are. To think of it, can pass judgment upon the world, but it is only by and through faith we see these things; only to babes in Christ are these things given for comfort and edification while sojourning in this body or tabernacle of sin. I love to entertain the brethren and to feel to wash their feet in spirit. My last friends are my best friends. In my early days, traveling in this sin-cursed body of mine, wandering around among the powers of hell and darkness, fearing neither God, man or the devil, I thought I had good friends, but when my God in hope called me from darkness into his light, the Son, I found my first or early friends were my enemies. But he gave me new fathers and mothers, new brothers and sisters, new lands, &c., thus my last days are better than my first. Why he arrested me in my path to hell I do not know only that I feel he rescued me from the bottomless pit which I saw in a vision when but eight years of age, and saw myself traveling toward it at an inestimable rate of speed, which clung to me until I was safely led in to the haven we call church, his body, then it left me like a vapor, but the sickening feeling clung to me for forty years.

J. B. MILLER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1930.

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ISAIAH XLII. 16.

"I will make darkness light before them."

The above passage is not the entire sixteenth verse of the forty-second chapter of Isaiah, but a part of it only, yet it will suffice at this time. Often a few words of Scripture contain volumes of significance, often far more is seen in them than language can express. The passage does not say that the Lord will take darkness away from before his people and put light in the place of the darkness, but it says he will make the darkness itself light. Herein is something past finding out, so far as natural wisdom is concerned. Revelation makes it plain to God's people. Revelation makes darkness light and revelation is the work of the Holy Ghost. The Spirit takes the things of Jesus and unfolds them to the spiritual understanding of the children of God. These things are all darkness until unfolded by the Revelator. Jesus told the Jews to search the Scriptures. He meant, of course, the Scriptures of the Old Testament. In these Scriptures the Jews thought they had eternal life. Eternal life, however, is not in the Scriptures. Such life is in the Son. Jesus told them that the Scriptures of the Old Testament testified of him. This testimony of Jesus in the law and in the prophets, however, cannot be seen until unfolded by revelation: then those dark sayings are turned into sayings of light and of understanding. "Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old; which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us."—Psalms lxxviii. 1-3. These dark sayings of the fathers, therefore, are the darkness which the Lord promises to make light before his people. The two disciples who were walking to Emmaus after the crucifixion, not having heard yet that Christ was risen, were beset with darkness. They had thought and had believed that Jesus was he who should redeem his people, that he was the Messiah that was to come. They were at a loss how to reconcile this conception of him with the fact of his cruel humiliation and death. This was all dark to them. When, however, Jesus walked along with them, though they knew him not, and opened to them all

the Scriptures beginning at Moses and all the prophets, the darkness was illuminated to their understanding, and the very things which they had seen befall the Lord were revealed to them as the things which had to be just that way in order to fulfill the Scriptures and to accomplish the redemption and preservation of the people of God. Thus, the dark sayings of law and of prophecy became to them light in the Lord. Revelation turned their night to day. What a marvelous display of the power of revelation was that which occurred when the day of Pentecost had fully come, as recorded early in Acts. There the Holy Ghost came down upon the assembled believers and organized them into the church militant. There was given to the disciples of the Lord such open vision and such enlightened understanding as men had never had before. Prophetic sayings which had, up to that time, been dark and mysterious were seen to be radiant with holy light. The prophet Joel had said that the Lord would pour out his Spirit upon all flesh, that sons and daughters would prophesy, old men should dream dreams, young men see visions. This no one understood until it was revealed to Peter who declared at Jerusalem at Pentecost, that those things were then being fulfilled. David in the Psalms had declared, "My flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." The meaning of this was not clear until Peter was endued with ability to expound it. Then he said that David was not speaking of himself, but of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that God would not leave his Son in death, but would raise him therefrom and set him at his right hand, which things had been accomplished at the time Peter preached it. Abraham believed God by faith and his faith was counted unto Abraham as his righteousness. The obedience of Abraham by faith was all of it dark testimony until after Christ had risen, then was revealed to the church the full significance of the covenant which God made with Abraham and the meaning of Abraham's trial of faith. Unto the church of God is given the revealed things of God for his people to enjoy and to take comfort in. These revealed things were kept secret from those living in former ages, but are now made manifest. The church of the gospel age is come unto the spirits of just men made perfect. Thus, those things which were formerly dark and not understood are now made clear in the light of the Sun of revelation. There was given to Paul a special dispensation of the gospel for him to preach. None of the other apostles had this same line of preaching as did Paul. To Paul it was given to preach that God had made and was making of twain, that is, of the Jew and of the Gentile, one new man or one body. Paul showed how Jesus had by his death eliminated the difference between Jew and Gentile and that grace was making both Jew and Gentile fellow-heirs of the truth, bringing both the circumcision and the uncircumcision into one

fellowship and communion, making their circumcision of the heart and not of the flesh. This great truth, that the Gentile was to be brother to the Jew in the gospel, was hidden from former ages. While Isaiah had said such things in his prophecy, even Isaiah himself was mystified by them and did not know the significance of what inspiration moved him to say and write. Not until Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, came was any man found able to loose the seals and to open the book. He makes all things clear. He is the solution of every spiritual problem. Jesus is the key to the universe, he is the hidden meaning of all things. Without Jesus, nothing can be seen in its true light. Without him, all is guesswork and speculation. The knowledge of the Lord given to his children by the revelatory work of the Holy Spirit rounds out all Scripture into its full significance, it gives to our lives and to our experiences spiritual value and dignity. Without Jesus, we are but worms crawling on the earth; with him, our nothingness becomes transformed into something of eternal value. Zero is zero. It has no value at all It is merely nothing. But when the figure "one" is put at the head of the "zero," it gives value and importance to that which was before merely nothing. So Jesus at the head of his people causes them to mean something and to be something. Without this One, we sink into nothingness. Just so, the Bible of itself is a book, and hardly more than a book; but when the light of Jesus shines over its pages, the Bible becomes a very vital volume indeed; not a book simply, but God's own written record of himself written by his own infallible inspiration. "I will make darkness light before them." Cowper said, "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." The footsteps of God are in the sea, where it is impossible to trace him, and where we need faith to trust him. The storms and the tempests are the chariots of the Almighty. How dark and terrible loom the threatening clouds of his providence until the shining of the Sun of righteousness spangles them with silver and gold and turns their darkness into light, dispersing their terror and bringing sweet and precious peace. We are told not to think it strange concerning the fiery trial that is to try us as though some strange thing had happened unto us. There is nothing strange which can come to any child of God. Only that can touch them which the Father has designed shall touch them. Therefore, it cannot be a strange thing. These things as they come to us are often big with sorrow, they humble us in the dust often, blast our gourds and lay us low. Yet afterward they yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness to those who are exercised thereby. Birds fly to cover and trees bow their heads before oncoming storms, afterward the birds sing paeans of joy and the trees lift their heads bespangled with drops, each drop a rainbow in the sunshine. There could not be rainbows if there were no background of darkness for the sun to display its colors upon. We must have

sorrow in order to come into joy. As the Lord makes the darkness light, so does he turn sorrow into joy. Jesus was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Yet if he had not been such, it is hard to see how he could ever have been the triumphant Son at his Father's right hand. The record of Christ's ascension as given in Acts i. 9, is that while the disciples yet beheld him, he was taken up and a cloud received him out of their sight. It has been said by some that Jesus underwent a change when he ascended, but we have never been able to find any Scripture to warrant such assertion. If God makes darkness light before his people, then the same Jesus who walked this earth is the same who died. The same who died is he that arose. He who arose is the same Jesus who went up out of their sight, and is the same Jesus who now sits in the heavens at his Father's right hand. Just as darkness is not taken away and light put in its place, but the darkness itself becomes light; so the humiliated Christ becomes the triumphant Christ, not another Christ, but the same Christ. He, the crucified, becomes the justified. He was not changed into something else, but glorified as he was and is. And we await his coming again. "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." He shall come, not another Jesus, but the same. As we come up to these things, we shall the better understand them. As darkness turns into light at the approaching sun, so do problems and mysteries clear up the nearer we approach their fulfillment. We cannot know now the full meaning of all things, but we are promised we shall know hereafter. It is as through a glass darkly that we now see these profound things, but then when that which is perfect is come, all these partial glimpses shall be swallowed up in inexpressible fullness of joy.

H. H. L.

BISHOP AND DEACON.

THIS subject is one of much importance in the church of God, and we hope the remarks offered to the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be in direct accord with the word of God as recorded in the New Testament. The apostle Paul, in the third chapter of first Timothy, says the one that desires the office of Bishop desireth a good work. He must be blameless. What could Paul have meant, knowing that man in his best estate is altogether vanity, and that in him, that is, in his flesh, dwells no good thing? He was referring to the qualifications: the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach, not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, but patient; not a brawler, not covetous, one who ruleth well in his own house, having his children in subjection, with all gravity. (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. The qualifications are: (a) To be the hus-

band of one wife he must be, in his marriage relations according to the flseh, as though there was no other woman in the world. (b) To be vigilant he must be attentive to discover and avoid danger; alert, cautious. (c) To be sober he must be habitually temperate, especially in the use of intoxicating liquors, self-possessed, calm, steady, sedate. (d) Of good behavior, one must be of good conduct, deportment and manners. (e) Given to hospitality, one must have the faculty of entertaining friends and strangers with kindness and liberality. (f) Apt to teach. To teach, one must be able to give the connection and meaning of the subject matter under consideration. (g) Not given to wine. Which in the relation of quality is embraced in the word sober. (h) No striker. This qualification does not apply to one who has natural strength to perform manual labor of any kind, but has reference to one making attacks on another to carry out a selfish end and take advantage secretly to the hurt of an individual. (i) Not greedy of filthy lucre. This has many different relations in everyday life, but to be brief we would give as the qualification, as being not greedy for the treasures of this world, which have many sources. We do not here infer that these requirements would bar the individual from trying to provide an honest living in the eyes of all men, but it does denounce the one who would take advantage of another to deprive him of possession and then not compensate for the same, by which the individual would be loser. (j) But patient. To be patient is to bear hardships, affliction or insults, enduring with forbearance and waiting with calmness. (k) Not a brawler. A brawler is one who goes about gendering strife and creating greater confusion and trying to add to trouble, instead of being quiet and seeking things that would make for peace. (l) Not covetous. One who is not covetous does not look on the effects of others to deprive and dispossess them of the comforts they are enjoying, but rather rejoices to see their prosperity and in thanksgiving to God implores for the continuance of his blessings. These qualifications Paul emphasizes as being necessary in a moral way for one to be a bishop. Some creeds try to lay out and discern certain gifts to certain work in the church organization, but the Old School Baptist Church has only two offices in church organization: Elders and Deacons. The apostles when they had ordained them Elders in every church and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord on whom they believed. (Acts xiv. 23.) Elders, as they are called, are regularly ordained men under the authority of the church by a presbytery of Elders and the laying on of hands and prayer, which bestows upon the one ordained the full functions of a gospel minister. He is then subject to be called to serve churches as pastor, of which he is to take the oversight thereof, not for filthy lucre's sake, but of a ready mind, which work is of the Lord, as he is not only the overseer, but the one to feed, for the Holy Ghost has made him overseer.

Elders, in the language of Paul, take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. (Acts xx. 28.) After all the qualifications Paul enumerated as to the natural man, they could not make one an overseer of the church of God, as the Holy Ghost must make him overseer. An overseer is one who superintends all matters relative to the peace and prosperity of the church of God. The Spirit, speaking to John on the isle of Patmos, called them angels, and for any pastor to neglect to faithfully warn the church or churches of his pastorate, the welfare of that church is to be required at his hand. Elders are undershepherds, and are sent out by the Shepherd (Jesus Christ) to feed his flock and to care for them, and all responsibility to him rests upon the undershepherd, or pastor, of the church. He is not permitted to turn away from reproving or rebuking with all longsuffering and doctrine because it would not suit certain individuals. If he should do so he would be greedy of filthy lucre. Elders would find it much easier to serve brethren as churches if all could feel the responsiveness of their pastor to God for his stewardship. There would be great changes in the attitude of many toward their pastor. We hear expressions that the minister, Elder or pastor, any of these terms we wish to know him by, should not consider the financial welfare of the church. We have no authority to take such a position or express such views of the overseer of the church of God, any more than we would if we had an overseer of our entire house for him not to consider the preservation or protection in every way. The apostles received offerings from the brethren in a financial way and looked after the application to see that the proper distribution was made. Yes, but we hear one say, We have deacons to do that. Deacons were set apart by the apostles to satisfy the demands of the widows in daily ministrations that were neglected. For the apostles to have to turn and serve in these daily ministrations would require too much of their time from the ministry, and we wish our readers to note the apostles did not give to the deacons any functions in the church relations only to serve the church in these matters relative to daily ministrations and all were supplied from one common store. The deacons could only mete out such as was delivered into their hands.

We now come to the qualifications of the deacons. Paul said that likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre, holding the mysteries of the faith in a pure conscience, and let these also first be proved, then let them use the office of deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderous, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husband of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well, for they who use the office of deacon well purchase to them-

selves a good degree and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. Relative to the office of deacon in the church of God, we consider this office, when filled according to the gospel, of great importance. We feel to give what belongs to the office of deacon. In his office he is set apart to assist the minister in looking after the poor and afflicted. We have no record in the New Testament requiring them to report to the apostles or church, but because of the distribution of the funds of which all the church is the supporter it is necessary to give or render a perfect account of such as they were required to disburse, and if they have not sufficient funds to meet the demands they should report at once to the church, and call attention to what things are necessary to meet the demands, and when these requirements are filled the minister and the deacons are acquitted. The minister, in all his service, is the servant to the church and an ensample, and should have the esteem of every member for the work's sake. The deacons should assist the minister in seeing that every order of the church is carried out. Where there is a working together of pastor and deacons and of the brethren we find a healthy church. When we find deacons who feel that they are over the church and pastor, and that no member has any right to question them about what they do, and who stand out against the church, trying to avoid the execution of the orders of the church, and give no report of their handling of the church's financial matters, trouble is sure to come to them, as that is sowing to the flesh, and the harvest is always corruption. And for a pastor to go away and leave the church that has called him, without first having her consent, is a gross disorder, and he is sowing to his flesh. For a church to be in good order, pastor, deacons and every member are denying themselves, bearing with one another and laboring for things that make for peace, and, if possible, hiding the weakness we see in each other in the flesh, and watching for the good which is manifested by the Spirit. "That by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

C. W. V.

R. 1, Rockville, Missouri.

Dear Editors:—Please state in the next issue of the Signs that I have a farm of seventy acres, well improved for stock, dairy and poultry that I would like to rent to a small Old School Baptist family with whom I could live.

J. B. DURAND.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder D. L. Topping.)

The Baltimore Association, in session with the Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore City, Maryland, May 14th, 15th and 16th, 1930, to the churches composing the same, and those of like precious faith.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD JESUS:—If there is any portion of the word of God in our mind as a foundation for what is known as a Circular Letter, it may be found in the fourth chapter of second Corinthians: "Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not." That the apostle had many discouragements, even in the early days of the church, goes without questioning, yet he counted them lightly in comparison with the glory that should follow, knowing that the rugged way of the cross must end in everlasting bliss. Having experienced something of the glory that should be revealed in him, through and by the Lord Jesus, he found delight in telling others of like precious faith that the prize was well worth running for. "Ye did run well; who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you." By this language it would seem that some had fallen in the race. It may have been that the pace was too strong for them, or too fast, whatever the trouble might be it could not be from the same source from which they had been enabled to enter. There could be many reasons for not continuing the race: lack of endurance, lack of understanding of the valuation of the prize, all these things would cause a lack of interest. Hence why continue the race? What is to be gained in such a race? Unless one is given to see and feel that he is to have an equal share with the stakeholder when the race is finished it is not worth while. But if our gospel is hid, it is hid to them that are lost. What are we to understand by this language of the apostle? If it be hid, where is the hope for them to whom it is hid? How shall we know if we have been made partakers of the glories of that blessed gospel? The apostle John has told us that we know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. What better evidence could one desire than a heartfelt love for his brethren? The gospel is not hid from such an one, but his delight is in the law of God after the inward man, and he with Solomon can say, "She is more precious than rubies: and all the things that thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her." In the dark ages of unbelief and idolatry Solomon was enabled to see by faith the glorious triumph of the bride, through Christ, her blessed Redeemer. She is possessed of his life and adorned in his beauty. He that satisfieth and they that are satisfied are all of one. You will remember that the golden lamp-stand that stood in the tabernacle had six branches, three that sprang out of either side of the shaft. They were not artificially attached to it, but were of the same material as the main stem that stood so prominently in the center. Such is the union of

Christ and the church. All having the same life, and united by a common bond to the living Head. As Eve was taken out of the side of Adam, and possessed his life in every counterpart, so has the church in wondrous grace been formed from and for her glorious Lord. The same life that is in the Head is in the feeblest member of his body, and not one of these shall ever perish. "Because I live, ye shall live also," said Jesus. What beauty is to be seen in this tabernacle as it stood in the wilderness. Nothing about its appearance outwardly to attract a disinterested one; he must enter in order to behold the beauties. Kindly note there was but one entrance, and here on the altar before the door laid the slain. So the poor sinner upon his entrance is given to see him who was slain for his salvation. The King's daughter is all glorious within, &c. In all the history of the church she has stood in the wilderness, as far as the world could see, and she so remains to-day, and ever will as long as time shall endure. I thank thee, said Jesus to the Father, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes, for so it seemed good in thy sight. Now who is he that would care to run in such a race? Whatever he may be able to accomplish the world will not know of it, for our life is hid with Christ in God, "and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." And Jesus said, Marvel not if the world hate you; it hated me before it hated you. All of these deep and precious truths were foreshadowed in this golden lamp-stand that stood in the center of the tabernacle in the midst of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel as they sojourned in the wilderness, upon which our souls may meditate with joy and blessing. Christ personally was and is "the life" and the light. Life and light divine have their source and manifestation in his blessed person. He, and he alone, is the giver of life and light, and he has communicated both unto his saints, and it is alone by his grace that his saints are enabled to run with patience the race set before them, &c. May he strengthen us for the onward march. May the risen One, who drew near to the weary travelers on the Emmaus road, and beginning at Moses expounded to them in all the Scriptures concerning himself, draw near unto us and reveal himself while we meditate on these things, so shall our hearts burn within us, and with these disciples we might well say, "Abide with us," for we feel that the gospel day is far spent. Amen.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.
E. A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

NOTICE.

ANY one having a copy of the large type Hymn Book (Beebe's collection) who is willing to dispose of the same will please communicate with Alice A. Bailey, R. D. 1, Box 272, Saugerties, New York.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MRS. HENRIETTA S. HOYT, our sister in Christ, bid adieu to the scenes of this earthly life on Sunday, May 18th, 1930, and went to her heavenly home above. She was, indeed, a lovely character and her memory will long be cherished by all who knew her. Her's was a long and faithful life in the church. Of late years, she has often been carried bodily into the meetinghouse by loved ones from her car to attend her meetings. Once it was the privilege of the writer to take her in his arms into the house. This she never forgot, and would often speak of it. We have never seen greater devotion than that manifested by her children, and Mrs. John R. Blake, the daughter with whom she made her home, was particularly untiring in her efforts to do all that human hands could do to make her comfortable and happy. Sister Hoyt suffered much during her last days, but she passed through the doorway of death out of it all into that world on high, where there is rest and peace and joy, forever to be with her Lord, which is far better. On the funeral occasion we read the first ten verses of the fifth chapter of second Corinthians, as our mind seemed particularly directed to the words, "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

The following was sent to one of the newspapers by one who knew and highly esteemed her:

"BLOOMINGBURG, N. Y.—Mrs. Henrietta S. Hoyt, widow of Solomon W. Hoyt, oldest and one of the surviving members of the New Vernon Primitive Baptist Church, died Sunday evening at the home of her daughter, Mrs. John R. Blake, near this village, where she had been ill several weeks. Mrs. Hoyt was born January 21st, 1839, near Monticello, N. Y., and was a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Miner Benedict. She married Mr. Hoyt April 14th, 1859. He has been dead forty-one years. Mrs. Hoyt was baptized seventy-two years ago, during the pastorate of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and was always devoted to the Old School Baptist Church. Despite her advanced age she attended all meetings of the New Vernon Church and the three day meeting there last June. At the time of her illness she was looking forward to the annual meeting there next month.

Funeral services will be held at the Blake home at two p. m., Daylight time, Thursday. Elder R. Lester Dodson, of Rutherford, N. J., will officiate and relatives will be pall bearers. Interment will be in the family plot in New Vernon Cemetery. Mrs. Hoyt is survived by the following relatives: three sons, William J. Hoyt, Sr., and Solomon W. Hoyt, of Middletown, and Zelotes G. Hoyt, of Jersey City; four daughters, Mrs. John R. Blake and Mrs. Virgil Godfrey, of Bloomingburg, Mrs. Caroline H. Horton, of Scarsdale, and Mrs. Addie H. Brown, of Middletown, and the following grandchildren: Fernald H. Godfrey, William J. Hoyt, Jr., and Mrs. Ralph Fisher, of Middletown, Kenneth V. Godfrey and Miss Norma J. Blake, of Bloomingburg, Miss M. Gertrude Godfrey, of Poughkeepsie, Mrs. Charles A. Williams, of Scarsdale, Mrs. Haig Dilsizian, of Bronxville, Stanley H. Hoyt, of Orange, N. J., Dudley L. Hoyt, of Rochester, N. Y., Mrs. Charles Moore, of Howells, Bernard J. Blake, of Brooklyn, Mrs. Joseph Hock, of New Hampton, and David Hoyt, of Media, Pa. Seven great-grandchildren also survive Mrs. Hoyt."

We would commend those who mourn unto the Lord, who alone is able to comfort them in their sorrow.

R. L. D.

MRS. MARY FRANCES WHITAKER, our dear sister in Christ, departed this earthly life March 10th, 1930, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Mary Twning, Forbes Hill, Maryland. Sister Whitaker had made her home with Mrs. Twning for many years, which was a home in all that the word implies. She had often remarked to the writer, "Mary and I are very happy in our home," and one visit in the home would bear out the truthfulness of this statement. No mother was ever blessed with more devoted daughters than sister Whitaker. Mrs. Ensor, her other daughter, living but a short distance away, was in daily touch with her mother, and not only in the last hours of her mother's life, but her thoughts were continually of her mother's comfort. Sister Whitaker had been ill but a few days, and her loved ones were hopeful that she would again be spared to them to cherish for some time, so rapidly did she improve, but just as rapidly did she grow worse, and passed away as one falling into a peaceful slumber, from which none ever wake to weep. Sister Whitaker was baptized in the fellowship of the Harford Church, Harford County, Maryland, March 6th, 1881, by the late Elder William Grafton. No church was ever blessed with a more faithful member than our dear sister was, therefore our loss is more than words can express. She was sound in the faith, faithful in the order of her Father's house and her delight was always for the peace and welfare of her beloved Zion, which she showed by her walk and godly conversation, and we have no doubt that she is now in realization of that blessed peace which shall know no end. She was married to Charles Whitaker December 24th, 1873, by Elder F. A. Chick, and to that union were born three children: H. A. Whitaker, of Philadelphia, Pa., Mrs. A. G. Ensor and Mrs. Albert Twning, of Forest Hill, Md.

The funeral service was conducted at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Twning, by Elder Rowe and the writer. The spacious home was filled to overflowing, thus testifying to the love and high esteem in which our dear sister was held; not only in the church, but in the community as well. Her home had long been a home for the Baptists, and

nothing gave her more pleasure than to have her house filled with the dear kindred in Christ. The last session of the Baltimore Association that was held with the Harford Church Mrs. Twning opened her house to the Association and at least seventy-five per cent. of the visitors were delightfully entertained there. Such kindness will long be remembered by those who were blessed to be there at that time. I speak of this that you may know how deep is the sorrow of the Harford Church at the loss of such a dear one. She was buried in the family plot at Harford Church, there to await the summons from on high, when the dead in Christ shall be raised and be ever with the Lord. I feel to be most deeply associated with the sorrowing ones for this mother in Israel, for such she was to the unworthy writer of this notice. Her encouraging words had often dropped as the gentle rain upon the parched plant, and at such times it would sink down deep in the dry ground, thus reviving the drooping plant.

Sister Whitaker was the daughter of the late Humphrey and Sarah Ann Wilson. Besides her three children, she is survived by one granddaughter, Miss Ruth Whitaker, and our dear brother in Christ, William Wilson, also of Forest Hill. Another brother, Abel Wilson, lived only about two weeks after her death. An obituary of this dear good friend will appear later. May the Lord comfort all who mourn, and sanctify his word in the hearts of those who await his coming. Sister Whitaker was seventy-eight years of age, less fifteen days.

ALSO,

MISS ELIZABETH ANN WATERS, our dear sister in Christ, sweetly fell asleep in Jesus March 18th, 1930, aged 81 years, 1 month and 1 day. She was the daughter of William and Carander Waters. Sister Waters was a native of Harford County, Maryland, and was engaged in business in the town of Belair for many years, in company with Miss Weatherall, a very dear friend. After retiring from this business sister Waters took a position with a well-known publishing house, and traveled in many States, establishing agencies in quite a number of cities and towns. She continued in that business for several years, winning the confidence of all her business associates and the public as well. Sister Waters was truly a Baptist of the old school, sound in the faith of her fathers. Faithful to the trust she hoped had been committed to her through the cleansing blood of the Lord Jesus, her delight was in the law of God after the inward man. Of a pleasing personality that one could not well forget, her friends were many, whom she was able to hold until death, that dreaded dark monster, brought about the separation. Sister Waters was baptized into the fellowship of the Harford Church many years ago and remained a faithful and worthy member until the summons came, Come in, thou blessed of the Lord, into the full inheritance that was prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

The funeral was conducted by Elder Rowe and the writer, at her late home, 804 North Fulton Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland, after which all that was mortal was taken to Harford church-yard and placed in the earth, there to await the voice of him who shall awake the sleeping dead that die in the Lord. She leaves to mourn one dear sister, who is indeed very lonely without Annie, one nephew, one niece, one sister-in law and the church, besides a host of friends. No church was ever blessed with more faithful members than Harford has been in these two sisters, Whitaker and Waters. Two dear ones have been taken from us and we are sad and lonely. May the Lord uphold for his name's sake.

D. L. TOPPING.

Our beloved brother in Christ, **CHARLES DALLAS NOWELS,** son of David and Phoebe Nowels, was released from suffering March 2nd, 1930, at his home in Parsons, Kansas. He was sick only a few days. He worked in his office Thursday, apparently in his usual good health, and retired early that night. Soon after retiring he was taken sick and grew gradually worse, until Sunday morning, when he peacefully fell asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep. Everything was done for him that medical science could do, but to no avail, he answered the Master's call. With him all was well. He was born in Jasper County, Indiana, in the year 1847, and was reared at the place of his birth. September 28th, 1870, he was united in marriage to Margaret Jane Burns, of Carroll County, Indiana, who passed away February 1st, 1912. He was a graduate from the Academy Battle Grounds, Indiana. In his younger days he was a successful school-teacher. In early life he received a sweet hope in Jesus and united with the Primitive Baptist Churh at Rensselaer, Indiana, March 19th, 1883. His wife was also a member of that church. In 1905 he moved to Parsons, Kansas, and united by letter with Coal Creek Church, at Iola, Kansas, May 14th 1912, where he was a highly esteemed member until the time of his departure. He was a fluent talker, and when his pastor called on him in Saturday meetings he talked in humility and love of the goodness of God. He was firm in the doctrine of his church, and it was his chief joy to attend whenever possible. He was loved and appreciated by all the members of the four churches that comprise the Turkey Creek Association, of which he was the efficient moderator for the last seven years. His unassuming ways and his exemplary life left a lasting impression on the church and all who knew him. He was formerly engaged in the real estate business, and the last six years of his life he was Justice of the Peace. He was a man of sound judgment and wise counsel. He lived a life of unselfishness, was upright, always devoted to his family, and found his greatest happiness in home associations. Two children survive:

Arthur S., of Columbia City, Indiana, and Miss Floy L., of the home, also two grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, one brother, Elder D. B. Nowels, of Winona, Missouri, and one sister, Mrs. Robert Randle, of Evanston, Illinois. His grief bowed children, who were at his bedside, have sustained an irreparable loss. His lonely daughter, who was his housekeeper, has the sympathy of her many friends. May the Spirit of God reconcile her in her bereavement.

The funeral was conducted at the home March 4th, and the strains of sacred music and the consoling words of his pastor, Elder J. M. Preston, of Iola, Kansas, made the services unusually impressive. His body was tenderly laid to rest by the side of his companion.

(MRS.) MARY E. PITTMAN.

SAVANNA FRANCES LOMAX was born in Haywood County, Tennessee, September 14th, 1867, and died May 17th, 1930, aged 62 years, 6 months and 3 days. She was married to Elder Samuel L. Lomax January 3rd, 1893. Sister Lomax professed a good hope in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and united with the Primitive Church at old Providence, Humphrey County, Tennessee, in September, 1893, and lived a faithful and devoted member until death. She was a kind and loving wife and companion to our beloved brother, Elder S. L. Lomax, and it was a real pleasure to be in their good home in Bells, Tennessee, as sister Lomax possessed so many admiral qualities she soon won her guests to be her friends, and it was delightful, too, to converse with her on spiritual topics, as well as current history or the social circle of the community in which she lived. Dear brother Lomax is heartbroken and lonely and sad and mourns the loss with the relatives and friends of this dear woman, and yet we feel our loss is her eternal gain, and sorrow not as those who have no hope. The church membership with whom sister Lomax lived and helped so much by her many deeds of love and good works, surely believe she has now entered into that rest which awaits the children of God. While our brother is sad and lonely, he is given grace to understand the Lord was good and merciful in delivering his dear companion from her intense suffering and giving her a calm, peaceful transport from this life of corruption and sin into that haven of true happiness and rest, as was evidenced by the smile on her features, to be remembered by all who saw her. Truly we can join inspiration and say, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." May the Lord continue grace to brother Lomax for each day and trial that he may patiently wait until he, too, may fall asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep, but in the resurrection morn arise with the glorified image of our Redeemer and enter into that celestial city, there to dwell with the Lord and his dear family, world without end. Amen.

ALSO,

JOSHUA BOAZ, son of Joshua and Polly Boaz, was born September 22nd, 1845, and died May 11th, 1930, aged 84 years, 7 months and 17 days. He was married to Amanda Gilbert December 7th, 1869. He is survived by one son, Hugh Boaz, six grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, two brothers, Rufus K. and Elihu Boaz, and many other relatives and friends, who deeply feel their loss. I feel safe in saying he lived and died in peace with all mankind, and we have evidence in peace with his God. Although not a member of the visible church, he had a wonderful experience of grace, which assures us he is a member of the church militant, and one whose name was written in the Lamb's book of life. He was a firm believer and well established in the doctrine of salvation by grace and absolute predestination. He loved the church and the association of the Baptists. I have never met a meeker and more orderly walking man. Truly a great man has fallen asleep in Jesus after a long and useful life among his fellow creatures. He was anxious, willing and longed to leave this world of sin and corruption, for he had been sad and lonely since his wife died, eighteen years ago. He was given to view some of the beauties of his heavenly home, and said, "I am going home." The same words the dear wife of his youth uttered as she left this world, and they are both resting in the blessed presence of Christ, sleeping sweetly and safely in the arms of Jesus, waiting for the resurrection morn, when their bodies will be raised and fashioned like unto the glorious body of the risen and glorified Redeemer, when all that the Father gave the Son will join in one song, telling with shouts of praise of the worth and merits of that grace wherein they are made accepted in the Beloved. Until then may all meekly wait until our change shall come.

J. C. CHESTER.

MRS. MARY JANE REED JORDAN, wife of the late Elder F. M. Jordan, was born in Henry County, Illinois, February 26th, 1855, and departed this life May 26th, 1930, at the age of 75 years and 3 months. She was united in marriage to Francis M. Jordan August 29th, 1875, near Cambridge, Illinois, by the late Elder Rolla Simmons. They lived together nearly fifty-two years, and she survived her husband three years and fourteen days. To this union ten children were born, six of whom survive: Mrs. V. D. Crawford, Earlham, Iowa; S. D. Jordan, Grinnell, Iowa; G. I. Jordan, Mason City, Iowa; Mrs. Grace Jones and Dr. F. B. Jordan, of Des Moines, Iowa, and Mrs. J. W. French, Palestine, Texas. She also leaves twelve grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. A son, Perl C., died at the age of nineteen in 1900, three others having died in infancy. She was of pioneer stock, being the oldest child of the first white girl born

in Knox County, Illinois. Although the oldest of five children she is survived by only one brother: G. T. Reed, of Aledo, Illinois. Her early life was spent in Henry County, Illinois. After marriage she and her husband lived in Champaign County, Illinois, for nearly nineteen years. In the spring of 1894, with her husband and family she moved from Illinois to Madison County, Iowa, where they lived until after the death of her husband. The family home was one mile south of Winterset for about twenty-five years. Since her husband's death she has lived with her children. June 3rd, 1871, at the age of sixteen, she was baptized into old Henderson Primitive Baptist Church, then located twelve miles north of Galesburg, Illinois. Later she became a member of Blue Ridge Church, in Champaign County, Illinois. After coming to Iowa she transferred her membership to Middle River Church, in Madison County, Iowa. Her health had been failing for the past year. She was stricken with paralysis on May 20th, 1930, and never regained consciousness. She died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. D. V. Crawford, twelve miles northwest of Winterset. Her funeral was conducted by Elder G. J. Jones, of Knoxville, Iowa, May 28th, and was held in the Middle River church-house, one mile north of Winterset. She was buried in the churchyard beside her husband. All of the children and grandchildren were in attendance at the funeral. She was a noble woman, and may we be given grace to bow in humble submission to God's will.

Her granddadghter,

HELEN JANE JONES.

MRS. MARY LOUISE RINGO, eldest daughter of Andrew J. and Missouri Dicie Mayfield, died January 17th, 1930, aged nearly 93 years. She was born March 1st, 1837, in Washington County, Arkansas, moving with her parents to Missouri in 1847 and settling near Cassville, where she was married to William Garrett Horner in the year 1854. To that union were born three sons and two daughters, one son dying in infancy. During the closing year of the Civil War they moved to near Springfield, Missouri. When peace was declared her husband returned after an absence of three years, but fell a victim to feaver in the year 1865. In the year 1867, with her four small children and her father's family, she undertook the tedious task of crossing the plains to the Pacific coast with an ox team. After six wearisome months of travel, in the month of October they stopped in the vicinity of Highland and took a homestead. In common with immigrants of those pioneer days, they suffered many privations. In the year 1875 she was married to Joseph Ringo, who passed away a few years later. She then lived with her youngest son, Garrett William Horner, until the closing years of her life, which were spent with her daughter, Mrs. Branch Tucker, of Estacada. She passed away in the Primitive Baptist faith, being a member of Cedar Creek Church, and a member of the faith for more than sixty years. Besides her daughter, she leaves many relatives and friends to mourn her departure. One daughter, Mary L. Savage, and two sons, Elder Amos B. Horner and Deacon Garrett W. Horner, predeceased her by some years.

The funeral services were held Sunday, at the Chapman Chapel, in charge of Mr. C. T. Cook, with interment in the Spring Water Cemetery.

Written by her daughter and her daughter-in-law,

(MRS.) B. TUCKER, Daughter.
(MRS.) G. W. HORNER, Daughter-in-law.

ORIS PYLES was born September 4th, 1876, and died April 11th, 1930, at his home in the village of Campbellsburg, Kentucky. November 24th, 1897, he was married to Miss Maud Jefferies, and to that union were born three children: Mary Gladis, Cathalene and June Oris, all at home, who with the lonely widow are left to mourn. Brother Pyles was a very lovable man, well liked by all his neighbors, honest and upright in his dealings. The community has lost a citizen whose memory still lives, the widow a husband who was loving and kind, the children a father whose ambition was to see them happy. Brother Pyles received a hope some years ago, but, like many others, put off from time to time, waiting and praying for a brighter evidence. He felt his unworthiness keenly and lived for years outside the church. October, 1926, at our regular church meeting, he expressed his desire to be baptized. Elder P. W. Sawin acting Moderator he was received, and the following meeting day, in November, he was baptized, and remained a worthy brother until death. During the last months of his life his time was spent in bed, until death relieved him. He bore his sickness with much patience, often saying that it was all right. The name of Jesus was always precious to him. We shall miss him, his place will be vacant and he will mingle no more with his brethren and friends here on earth. We bow in humble submission to the will of God. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

I tried to comfort the friends at the time of the funeral, using the twenty-third Psalm, which was a favorite with our brother. A large and sorrowing congregation of relatives and friends was present, after which we laid his body to rest in the cemetery near by, there to await the call of the Master in the resurrection. May the Lord bless the family and the church and enable us all to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

WILLIAM R. STEPHENS was born in Arkansas January 15th, 1847, and died February 8th, 1930, aged 83 years and 23 days. He crossed the plains with his parents in 1852, and settled near Sheridan, Yamhill County, Oregon. He came to

Goldendale, Washington, in 1890, and to Yakima in 1895, where he had lived most of the time since. I do not know just when he was baptized, but he joined the Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church by letter, at Goldendale, Washington, in 1894, and had since been a member. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone. Brother Stephens was married to Miss Sally G. Thornton in 1868 or 1869, and they had two children, a son, W. C., and a daughter, now dead. His wife died March 6th, 1886. He was married to sister Millie Dodge in 1904. She died in 1919. Since her death he spent most of his time with his son, W. C. Stephens. Every one thought a great deal of "Uncle Bill," as he was known to his friends. His funeral was preached by Elder A. D. Hughett, after which his body was laid to rest in the Tahoma Cemetery, near Yakima, to await the resurrection morn.

MARY L. HUGHETT.

SISTER **ELIZABETH FIKE** died at the home of her daughter, in Blakely, Pennsylvania, March 2nd, 1930, in her 88th year. Sister Fike joined the Old Baptists long before this church kept records, over forty-six years ago. She was found at all meetings possible for her to attend, and was strong in the faith which was a comfort to her to the end. She leaves two daughters and four grandchildren. Elder Vail spoke from Job xiv. 1-7, with much comfort to those who mourn their loss.

C. G. DOLSON, Clerk.

MEMORIALS.

IN MEMORIUM OF ELDER L. H. HARDY ATLANTIC, N. C.

Whereas it has pleased Almighty God to remove by death our beloved brother, and

Whereas he has visited among us and preached acceptably for over thirty years, first be it

Resolved, that we bow in humble submission to the will of our heavenly Father. Second, be it

Resolved, that a copy of this resolution be printed with our Minutes, also that a copy be sent to sister Hardy as a token of our love and esteem for the truth's sake for her beloved husband.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.

FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.

E. A. JOHNSON, Assistant Clerk.

Whereas, it has proved the will of God, our heavenly Father, to remove by death from us our dearly beloved brother, **DEACON DUNCAN GILLIS**, therefore be it

Resolved, that while we, the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, mourn our loss in being no longer blessed with his presence and usefulness, we desire to record our gratitude to the God of all grace for the bestowal upon our departed brother of such a gift that was so profitable to us as a church, and while he has entered into the fullness of joy, we as a church desire submission to our Father's will, and we

Resolve, that this resolution be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as a memorial.

GEORGE RUSTON, Pastor.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Miss Kate Rugg, Ohio, $1; J. Y. Vanhook, N. Y., $1; Franklin S. Terry, N. J., $1; T. J. Bell, Okla., $1; Thos. W. Records, Mo., $3; Mrs. William R. Conklin, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Rosa Stevens, Md., $1; "A friend," N. Y., $2; "A friend," Colo., $1; H. A. Hiltabrand, Ill., $2; D. L. Blackwell, N. J., $3; Mrs. J. B. Hill, N. J., $2; H. F. Cate, Kans., $1; Mrs. W. A. Hightower, N. Y., $1; J. J. Okes, Va., $1; T. O. Turner, Ky., $1; Mrs. M. Smith, B. C., $1; W. E. Beene, Texas, $3; "A friend," Mass., $3; "A friend," Md., $2; Miss Altha Drake, N. J., $2.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sunday at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Cane Run Predestinarian Old School Baptist Church, of Turners Station, Kentucky, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 10:30 a. m., also, the Sulphur Fork Church of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, of the same faith and order, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 2:30 p. m.

GEO. L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, every Sunday at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. at the home of W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Midweek song service by appointment. Pastors, Elders Jones and Jaynes. Basket lunch.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

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(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

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"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 98. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1930. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"GOD IS A SOVEREIGN."

"MINE hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together."—Isaiah xlviii. 13.

The attribute of God's sovereignty, the center point of the christian faith, is, to my mind, sometimes too lightly treated, or considered, by many who appear to be expounders of the deep things of God. However, this vast ocean of mystery, the sovereignty of God, should not be entered into by any without due consideration, and a divine compass. It is an easy matter to casually admit the doctrine of God's sovereignty, but to own the point in doctrine and practice is entirely another thing, for nothing short of the divine leading and teaching of the Holy Spirit will make us truly confess the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty. If, with our easy admitting of the point, we wage war against other parts based thereupon, such a course would testify that our faith is not genuine and that our hearts are deceitful. The many sore complaints against the doctrine of God's absolute predestination and election are all the consequence of our inability to spiritually comprehend the things of God. However, such weakness on our part to understand them does not do away with the truth of them. It is evident from the Scriptures that the great God of the whole earth possesses an absolute power and right of dominion over all things, to dispose of all of his creatures as seemeth good to him, and as all but Jehovah are creatures, it follows that none have the right to say, Jehovah, what doest thou? "Hath not my hand made all these things?"—Acts vii. 50. "He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion."—Jer. x. 12. "The Portion of Jacob is not like them; for he is the former of all things; and Israel is the rod of his inheritance. The Lord of hosts is his name."—Jer. li. 19. To this name every knee shall bow; of

things in earth, and things in heaven, shall confess seeing. "God that made the world, and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."—Acts xvii. 24-26. God decreed to make a world like this, this is first on record, which also testifies of his sovereign right and power. It was with him to make the world or not to make it as it seemed good in his sight, and to love Jacob and to hate Esau, and if he had the power to create the world, with all things in it, then doubtless he had the power to direct and overrule all that should ever be in the world, to the accomplishment of his own purpose and glory, which he had purposed in himself before the world began, and all the present state of unrest that now exists furnishes no one any argument against this view. If it had seemed good in his sight the Lord could have preserved man in the garden, as he has some angels. There was no necessity upon him, only his sovereign will to give Adam a law, and that Adam might be made thereby to see upon what his destiny was hinged, for where no law is, there is no transgression. (Rom. iv. 15.) Therefore, if men must be meddling and complaining, why may they not as well complain of the entrance of the law? Why may they not complain or allege that it was unjust in God to give man a law, knowing as we do that God knew as well before Adam sinned as he did after what the result would be? Then, if we find ourselves inclined to complain, why not go back and ask why God made man at first; or why he made him at all? "For, lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought, that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth, The Lord, The God of hosts, is his name."—Amos iv. 13. God had a sovereign right to make the man as he did, notwithstanding he knew perfectly well what man would do. What he did in eternity to save the man was not based on any before-seen good in the man, but it all rested on His sovereign love, and in his sovereign right to do as he pleased, not only with the man, but with all his creatures. "Will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea, by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it."—Jer. v. 22. All this he did, and it stands good until now. I well remember the first time I stood on the sands of the seashore. I was constrained to say, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." "I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power, and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me."—Jer. xxvii. 5. "Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day,

and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is his name."—Jer. xxxi. 35. Therefore we "preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein."—Acts xiv. 15. Read Acts xvii. 24. Now, according to natural sense of men, if it was just in God to destroy the world by a flood because of the wickedness thereof, then it would be unjust for him to preserve it afterwards when there was the same or greater cause for judgment. Such dispensations speak strongly of the sovereign greatness of God and of his sovereign right to control his own matters. He would, and did once, destroy all flesh but Noah and his family from the face of the earth for their wickedness, and he would and has preserved the world thousands of years after, notwithstanding their wickedness. All this God has reserved unto himself a sovereign right to do. He being Sovereign over all things, both animate and inanimate, visible and invisible, all things are subject to his rule and disposal. He divided the waters of the Red Sea to make a way for his people's escape (Exodus xiv. 21), and then he supplied their every need in the wilderness with bread, meat and water; the sun and moon were commanded and stood still until Israel was avenged upon her enemies. (Josh. x. 12, 13.) The stars in their courses fought Sisera. (Judges v. 20.) The sun went back ten degrees in the sundial of Ahaz. (2 Kings xx. 11.) He also delivered the Hebrew children from the fiery furnace without the smell of fire on their garments. (Dan. iii. 22-27.) His sovereign power has so far superintended, restrained and inverted the course of nature at his will, and if God has always wielded such an absolute and complete sovereignty over things with or without life and reason, then he needs not the sanction or reason of poor puny man to help him regulate his will as to whom or what he will do, or as to whom he will save or whom he will damn. Hence we conclude that when the will of man tends to good it is regulated by the will of God to that end, and that Sovereign who is the author of all good. Satan sways the will of the wicked, who willingly follow his evil devices, yet all is in the wise decree of our God. "The rich and poor meet together: the Lord is the maker of them all."—Prov. xxii. 2. "The great God that formed all things, both rewardeth the fool, and rewardeth transgressors."—Prov. xxvi. 10. "My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth."—Psalms cxxi. 2. So in all things the Lord has the preeminence, and how highly favored we must be when we can see that all things are in the hands of him with whom we have to do, knowing that he who has made the world has the power to uphold it and all things else. "In his hand are the deep places of the earth; the strength of the hills is his also. The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land."—Psalms xcv. 4, 5. To him that by

wisdom made the heavens, to him that stretched out the earth above the waters, to him that made the great lights, the sun to rule by day, the moon and stars to rule by night (Psalms cxxxvi. 5-9), to him we would grant all the praise, and rest from all our sorrows in his blessed embrace, for in him who builded the world, and upholds it by the word of his power, made the sea and gave it its bounds, and governs the stars, moon and sun, and holds the wind in his fist, and fills the immensity of space, and is Lord of lords and King of kings, the Sovereign over all worlds, this is he that we hope to adore and praise while we live in this world, and also in the world to come. "At that day shall a man look to his Maker, and his eyes shall have respect to the Holy One of Israel."—Isaiah xvii. 7. If God has done all the things above mentioned, without any one to help or hinder, to will or to nil, then why not crown him Lord of all?

I have written hurriedly, as things came to my mind. Dear brother Lefferts, look it over and then do as you think best, and all will be right with me. All my desire is to ascribe greatness to the God of the whole earth, therefore I cannot see how he could build all things and uphold all things by the word of his power, and bring an end to all things, and not control all things while they exist in this time state. He has the power, and knows how, and does his will in earth, and in heaven also. Then let me believe that he is God over all, and blest for evermore.

Submitted in love to all the household of faith.

I beg to remain your brother in hope of eternal life,

J. W. WYATT.

SELMA, North Carolina, June 12, 1930.

MONROE, Ga., June 9, 1930.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—Sister Norris has returned home to Georgia from her visit to the northeastern associations and is visiting at our home at this time. She has made good reports of her visit to these associations, of the love and sweet fellowship that I have been united with these last twenty-seven years, and she brought tidings to me, and sweet remembrances of me, from so many of the precious brethren and sisters that it brought cheer and sunshine in my soul, that grows stronger and stronger. I feel that I want to respond and let them know how it fills my heart with joy that there is still love and fellowship among them up there for me in my affliction. It answers for a legacy for me to enjoy in my last days. In my mind I can see their faces and hear their voices. You know the voice goes farther than sight. Like the damsel said of Peter: It is his voice, and I feel that I can say that of them. In the nighttime I know their voices, feel that I can hear and know them. I would like to personally mention each one, but time will not admit of this. As my carnal interest in worldly things is leaving me my spiritual interest (if indeed I have any) is growing stronger and stronger, and my sweet meditations in nighttimes encourage me to live and fight the battle

to the end. I feel to be reconciled to my lot; that God's grace up to this time has been sufficient and will keep me to the end. I am made submissive to his will and await his time. I feel to make no apology to any one at any time for the doctrine that I have contended for the last half century. I have felt to contend that God is a sovereign, has made everything according to his will and decree, purpose and predestination, seeing the end from the beginning, all things fulfilling his purpose, nothing going astray. He created the bee to make honey, and it is still doing it. The horse-fly does not make honey, that is not the purpose for which it was made, and all things else are doing the thing for which they were created, fulfilling all his purpose. So we find he is ruling in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. The Lord's will and purpose is accomplished in all things, even the smallest events, and none can hinder. Little did I think when you married my sister an open door up there was waiting to receive me among them whom I love and esteem so highly for the truth's sake. My visits among you have all been pleasant indeed. No man has or ever will enjoy the entrance into this love and fellowship of this house of God more than I have, and if I know my own heart, I am thankful for every kindness and comfort bestowed upon me. I have a good hope still that I have been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. In this kingdom is boundless grace stored up for his own, enough for them through all time. This hope encourages me to believe that faith given to the saints, which faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, for eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither has the heart perceived the things God hath prepared for them that love him. I feel I have this fervent charity that Paul speaks of for you all.

Also, this sister reports of how all did miss brother William Hobensack at the associations. This brought grief to my heart and tears to my eyes. I feel that he was one of the greatest men in Israel that has fallen in my day. When I think of his visit to see me, even me, traveled eight hundred miles and paid sixty-five dollars railroad fare just to see me in my affliction. When he embraced me in his arms and kissed me it melted my soul. I shall never be able to express in words my feeling of gratitude to the Lord of love and mercy for the visit of that dear man of God. No one can ever know the love that existed between us; even the love of David and Johnathan could not surpass our love. It is a pleasure to think of his dear home and family, and the kindness he bestowed upon me through them when visiting in their home. The sweet memory of him, and all of them in accord with him in the glorious doctrine of God our Savior, gives me great joy. If I am never able to see any of you again, I hope that love, that pure love given the saints, may still abide with you all.

Now, Horace, I feel somewhat relieved by having sister Norris write to

you what I have dictated to her in response to her report of the good meetings and the precious messages of love sent to me, by her, from the many dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, while I lay here helpless on the bed. I cannot walk one step, not even raise my body from this helpless position.

Best wishes to you and all who feel love and fellowship for me. I would much enjoy a letter from any of the loved ones.

Yours in hope,

J. M. ADAMS.

DALLAS, Texas, Nov. 15, 1929.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have known right along that I was indebted to the publishers of the SIGNS, and each time noticed my date had expired, all of which is due to negligence on my part. I appreciate your faith in and patience with me, and owe you an apology, but at the same time realize that apologies will not run the press. Day after day I am more and more conscious of my short comings in this life. While I am eager for the spiritual food I get from the dear old SIGNS, yet I realize and am ashamed of my negligence. I am so unworthy and unfit I often wonder why I do not seem to fit in anywhere. My way seems so dark most of the time I just feel my way through, wondering how it will all end. Sometimes it is so rough I wish I could find the end and cease from this toilsome and burdensome life, then again I am sorely ashamed when it pleases the Lord to give me grace and mercy and enables me to rejoice in his love, wondering, oh so often, if there is any one like me. Somtimes when I read of the trials of others I fill up to overflowing, for they tell of some of my own travels. I hear so little preaching and mingle so little with the dear Old Baptists I get discouraged and downcast. I love that old doctrine of salvation by grace and the foreknowledge of our all-wise God, who saw the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, declaring, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Oh that we could bow our heads in humble submission to these earthly trials and be enabled to see they are all for our good, even the purifying of our souls, for if we suffer not we are bastards and not sons, for the Lord loveth whom he chasteneth. No chastisement seemeth good for the present, but afterwards worketh the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them who are exercised thereby. Again, it says, Great is thy peace. Yes, it seems so great that it will never be otherwise, but we learn again and again that we are not our own keepers. So the warfare continues, and it will do so as long as we are in the flesh. I find a warfare within, when I would do good evil is present with me, and how to perform that which is good I find not. We are all as helpless and dependent as babes. All power is given unto him, and when it pleases him he enables us to worship at his feet, even in the home alone, about our duties or upon our beds spending sleepless nights, wondering, waiting, and deep down in our hearts desiring to know how to plead, and how to approach the throne, where grace

and mercy are stored for all those who are chosen in Christ. I sometimes feel he is clean gone forever and that I am mistaken in the whole thing, a deceiver, then my mind goes away back yonder to thirty years ago, in the old pine field, where the Lord saw fit to reveal himself to me. Who can deny the riches of his grace and mercy when lifted out of the miry clay and placed upon a rock? That song I sang in praise of his holy name is yet clear to my troubled mind at times. I could not hold my tongue, and I am glad I could not. I do not feel that this old tongue will ever sing such praise again in this time world. I thought all my sorrows and sadness were ended. It was one blessed mount in my life, and no time before or since has ever been so abundantly sweet or referred back to as that time. Sometimes it is my greatest joy, and again I cannot get the least encouragement from just remembering it. It seems so little at times I can scarcely believe it sufficient for a poor sinner like me, yet I believe in the finished work of Jesus Christ, and if he begins a work he will finish it; the doubt is all because of this flesh. Ah, this warfare, and the cares of this world are hard to understand. Only when we are enabled to praise him for his great love and mercy to us poor sinners can we forget the world and worldly cares.

I enjoy the SIGNS and look forward to its coming. It maintains the doctrine as I understand it, and I love it. We should all be thankful for and encourage our able writers. It seems to me the paper gets better and better all the time. I do not see how any Old School Baptist could find a fault in brother Lefferts' able writing. I feel that he is a great gift and hope I appreciate him as I should. May the Lord bless you and enable you to continue the SIGNS, and lighten the burden that we should help you bear. It is a great responsibility and you should not be allowed to bear it alone.

Do with this as you wish. I have written it for your disposal.

Thanking you again for your kindness, I will close.

Yours in hope through Jesus our Lord,

(MRS.) H. A. STRUBE.

WESLACO, Texas, Jan. 12, 1930.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find remittance of two dollars to apply on my subscription. I have been reading the SIGNS for over thirty years and do not want to do without it. After the hustle and bustle of this fast age it is a treat to sit down and read some good articles in the SIGNS that really give comfort and feed the inward man and that we cannot find out in the world. I still enjoy the experiences of the little ones scattered over the states the same as I did when a boy trying to find something in their experiences to relieve me of the great load I was trying to get rid of. After brooding over my sins for years my trouble gradually left me like a party carrying a sack of sand and it gradually leaking out through a small hole. I really did not know when it left, but I could not go back to the

old places in the woods and cry and try to read the SIGNS and the Bible like I once did. This brought up other doubts. I began to wonder if I was getting so hard-hearted that the dear Lord had cast me off entirely. I tried to comfort myself with the Scripture that when he began a good work in one he performed it until the day of Jesus Christ. Then I would wonder if I was not mistaken altogether and would be lost at last. But thanks to his blessed name, he began to comfort me with dreams, and trouble me, too, for some of them were not what I wanted. I began to be troubled about preaching, and it just seemed that I was so unfit and ignorant concerning spiritual things that I had rather be dead than do that. Then others began to tell about dreaming of my having to preach, which heaped coals on my head. The church finally liberated me, and oh what a mistake I think they have made. After a few trials at talking I began to think that it might all be a mistake and that I could stop trying at all, but the other day a sister told me she dreamed of seeing me getting my grip ready and starting off to preach. Oh I wonder what will ever become of poor me, to preach the unsearchable riches of his glory and power is too great a task. He showed me in a dream that he was going to take one of my children, which came to pass a few weeks later, then he took about thirty thousand dollars' worth of property away from me, and I am wondering what will come next. My wife and five children are in good health and the future looks good again, as far as worldly goods are concerned, but oh I am so uneasy all the time. I do not fear the devil, for I know, or at least realize, that he is subject to the great God and cannot do a thing that is contrary to his plan. I feel that I very much need the prayers of the little ones. I suppose I should be thankful that we live here in this good country, where we do not have the frozen north, but plenty of oranges, grape fruit and vegetables all winter, and a few Old Baptists scattered about to cheer up our spiritual mind. The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

E. B. AULT.

VAN ZANDT, Wash., Jan. 17, 1930.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I want to, in my weak way, tell you how I love the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It is all the preaching we get out here, and I always look forward with joy each month to its coming, and hope you can keep on with its publication.

I would like to write a little of my experience. I do not know whether it is of grace or not, yet I hope it is. I have often longed to write out my heart as well as others do, but it seems it is not given me to do so, so I must be still, and say, Thy will, O Lord, not mine, be done. I do read with much comfort the experience of others who have traveled this same rugged road, and some seem to tell my experience better than I can, but if I try to write or tell it to others of like precious faith so dear to me I am shut up and find no words to express my inward feelings. I have never had a very clear experience,

which often makes me doubt if I am one of them for whom Christ died. I once joined the Free Methodists, but never was baptized by them. I thought they were all right, and liked to hear them preach, and after preaching I enjoyed hearing them testify of their goodness and holiness, as they claimed to be wholly sanctified. I thought it must be wonderful to feel that way, yet I could not feel that way, I felt so low and full of sin. But it was not long until their preaching did not satisfy me, and I knew they did not preach and teach as Paul did, so I left them to seek comfort elsewhere. I tried different denominations, but they were all the same: that salvation depended upon good works. I knew I had none, and could not see it that way, and if it was that way I knew there was no hope for me. I wished that I could be more humble and resigned to his will, for he knows what is best for me. I said I would never join the Old School Baptists, but it was not for me to decide; I did not know I was fighting against what I would soon have to give way to, and here I am yet seeking a home among them. They speak my own tongue, so they must be my people. I did join an Old School Baptist Church about six years ago, but soon after that they chose a preacher who had a living wife in an asylum and married another, and the church considered him in gospel order and took him in, which I could not see or believe was right, so I withdrew my fellowship from them and had them take my name off their church book. Although I felt below him, I felt they should go according to the Scriptures and not according to man's morality. I would like to join some Predestinarian Old School Baptist Church some time, but do not feel fit to be in the church. I often feel that if I were a child of God I could tell of a better experience, but I do love to sit among his dear people and hear them tell of his goodness and mercy to them, and of salvation by grace and grace alone, and to sing those good old hymns. I love the hymns, "'Tis a point I long to know," and "I am a stranger here below," for they tell my experience better than I can. I have gone through many trials and deep sorrows this last year, having had my home broken up and left with four children, which makes me feel more and more I need his tender mercy. It seems hard to bear, but I know he has a purpose in it all, and if it is only a part of the "all things" that work together for good to those who love the Lord, those who are called according to his purpose, I must be still and know that he is God.

Now I must stop before my letter gets too long. Please cast the mantle of charity over this poorly written letter, which you may publish when you have room, but do not crowd out better matter. You are strangers to me in the flesh, but I hope not in the Spirit, and I hope we will all meet some day to part no more, and ever be with our blessed Savior. Oh that I might be more like him.

Your little sister, I hope, though unworthy I am,

(MRS.) BLANCHE B. BLISS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1930.

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"UNDERSTANDING SCIENCE."

(DANIEL I. 4.)

That which promoted certain of the captives of Israel into favor with the king of Babylon was their skillfulness, their cunning knowledge and their ability to understand science. The ages of the past had their scientific men as well as our age. In our present world, Israelites rank the highest in modern knowledge and scientific achievement. Though having no nation of their own, those of Israel sprinkled among the nations have radically influenced the life and history of those peoples among whom they are dispersed. Science is the sum of man's knowledge relating to the laws which operate in the physical world. We hear it said that we are now living in a world of men of science. This is an era of engineers. Engineers make practical use of science. There is, as Paul says, science falsely so-called; science which is not real knowledge, but merely metaphysical theorizing and speculation. The opposition to faith comes from this so-called science. (1 Tim. vi. 20.) Real science is knowledge based on facts. This knowledge when practically applied brings wonderful results. More and more are we coming to depend on science for the satisfaction of our daily material needs. It is sometimes charged that the facts of science do not agree with the truth of Scripture, but it has occurred to our mind that truth cannot be inconsistent and out of harmony with itself. The truth as to salvation cannot be arrived at by a scientific process. It is a matter of faith. Conclusions of faith regarding spiritual truth in the spiritual realm of being are not to be either proved or disproved by science. Not that faith and science are in conflict with each other, but because they each deal with two separate and distinct spheres of being. Science has to do with knowledge to be derived from the realm of matter and is God's revelation to man of physical truth, faith has to do with the realm of the invisible and is God's revelation to redeemed man of truth in the world to come. Faith never could have given rise to the electric light or automobile simply because it is not intended to function in that way. Science never could have discovered man's need of salvation from sin nor the way of

redemption therefrom, because that is outside of the domain of science, and the sum and substance of human knowledge cannot function in the realm of the invisible. It is not necessary for those who are subjects of faith to belittle the men of science, nor need the scientific men think the faithful are fools. Each are experts in two different and distinct spheres. There is no real conflict or fight between science and faith. The truth of one cannot deny or disprove the truth of the other, for they are not the same kinds of truth. Faith reaches ahead and beyond the ability of science to follow. It asserts what science cannot effectually assert or deny. Let it be remembered that we are not considering here such theories as often pass for science but which are thus miscalled, we are considering the established proven facts of human knowledge. Evolution, for instance, is a theory to account for the existence of life on this planet. It has never been proved and in the very nature of the case, never can be proved; and it may be discarded tomorrow if those who use it can find another theory that works better. When as a boy I went to school, we were taught that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points. It was regarded as a self-evident fact that needed no proof. Nowadays, that is rejected. Einstein's theory of relativity has upset all that. He shows that instead of the three dimensions of length, breadth and height to which we have been used, there is a fourth dimension called "time" which needs to be considered. If you are in an auto and want to reach a certain place five miles distant in a straight line and that five miles is a bad muddy road, and there is another good hard road of fifteen miles going to the same place, then the straight line is not the shortest distance to that point. Then the longest way round is the shortest way there. The element of time upsets our former theory of the three dimensions. So with evolution. It may be upset tomorrow if a better guess can be found. Thus, it does not do to worry about facts unproved. If they are guessed at, the guess of one person is as good as the guess of the next one, and one guess will be thrown away in favor of another guess if the last guess is found to work better than the former one. Wherever in the Bible the Spirit of inspiration has recorded a scientific or historical assertion it has never been proved an error. This is because inspiration does not guess at things, but knows and asserts them to be as they are. The Scriptures declare facts centuries before man finds them out to be so. This is one of the proofs of the infallibility of the scriptural record. Man's knowledge has never yet caught up with the Bible. The written record of inspiration is yet ahead of scientific research. When Copernicus and Galileo asserted the earth revolved on its axis daily and around the sun yearly, thus causing day and night and the succession of the seasons, they were regarded as dangerous men and heretics. In the book of Job, however, long before either Copernicus or Galileo found it out, the pen of inspiration declared

that the earth is turned to the sun as the clay to the seal. (Job xxxviii. 14.) Whenever it was desired to make an imprint in pottery, the vessel of clay was turned on the wheel against a seal on another wheel. Whatever was on the seal became imbedded in the clay as the wheels turned against each other. Thus, as the earth turns toward the sun and also around the sun, the heat, light and energy of the sun make their effectual imprint on the life and well-being of all on the earth. The record further says the sun takes hold of the ends of the earth. The ends of the earth, literally, are the two poles of the earth. If one takes hold of a ball or round object, the fingers of the hand must be bent in order to do so. Just so, science has proved that the rays of light from the sun, which rays may be likened to the fingers of a hand, bend as they reach the two poles. This bending or refraction of light at the poles causes the poles to be entirely illuminated at certain periods of the earth's travel in its orbit. If it were not for this refraction of light certain areas at the poles would be always dark. The point we wish to stress is that the Bible stated these things long before science caught up with it. Enemies of inspiration charge the Bible with declaring the earth to be flat. Not so. The above from Job shows the earth to be round, and to be a turning world, not a stationary one. Isaiah also declares the earth to be circular. (Isaiah xl. 22.) In the book of Job we are told that the morning stars sang together. This used to be thought merely a poetic or figurative saying and not meant to be taken literally. We now know this to be really true and science shows that the stars do literally sing. All the air about us is in vibration, all is full of song could we but hear it. For years we have had no desire to question the spiritual import of the Bible, but the fact of its literal truth grows daily more impressive. We become more and more a literalist as we grow older and as its factual truth becomes more and more substantiated. All sound is vibration. There are waves of sound and waves of light. Light and sound vibrate at different rates of intensity and in different rhythms. The eye of man is so made as to transmute the waves of light into the sensation of sight, the ear of man is so made as to transmute the waves of sound into the sensation of hearing. The vibrations of light cannot be appreciated by the ear, nor the vibrations of sound by the eye. Each organ is made for its own work and responds only to its own set of stimuli. The ear of man is attuned to take in and record on the brain vibrations ranging from 16½ a second to 38,000 a second. Any sound vibrating below 16½ a second or above 38,000 a second cannot be heard by us. This does not mean that there are no vibrations below 16½ or above 38,000, but only that the human ear cannot take it in. So, every star studding the heavens has literally its own vibration, thus striking its own characteristic key-note and singing its own song into the ear of its divine Creator. Our human ears are not able to tune in on this infinite harmony of

the universe, since our dull mortality does too closely hem us in. When the poet said, There's not an orb which we behold but in its motion like an angel sings, he was declaring more fact than imagery, as we are now finding out. In Psalms lxv. 8, "Thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice." Again, not fancy, but fact. The colors of the dawn and of the sunset are due to radiations or waves of light, each color having its own pitch and rhythm. The word "outgoings" means "radiations," or "goings forth." A stove radiates or gives off heat, a lamp radiates or gives off light. So, the beauties of the morning and evening are due to the giving forth of vibrations of such different intensities as causes the eye of the beholder to see the dawn or the sunset in their varying hues. These "outgoings" do really sing. Rejoice means to sing. We cannot hear this music of the morning and evening because in this mortal body we are not in tune with it. But when this vile body shall become changed and fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, when the redeemed shall come into possession of their spiritual bodies, then it is our belief that the capacities or faculties with which the saints shall then be endowed shall enjoy the music the angels now enjoy and shall appreciate that rapture which now fills the Father and the Son. Our soul leaps forward at the thought, somewhat as the unborn John within Elizabeth leaped at the salutation of Mary, who held within herself the unborn Jesus. What a blessed anticipation! We are no scientist, and know very little about science or its laws. But it has deeply impressed us how remarkably the facts of the physical world as they come to light do support the record of inspiration. To the I Am nothing is new. That which is has already been. That the movements of heavenly bodies influence and control events of human history is plainly taught in Scripture. The researches of astronomical science confirm this. Astronomers by mathematical calculation from the position of astral bodies can predict the influence of these conjunctions upon the earth. Thus, it is not fancy but fact, that the stars in their courses did fight against Sisera and bring about his defeat. (Judges v. 20.) The ordinances of heaven do set their dominion in the earth. Pleiades has its sweet influences upon us, Orion's bands are fixed, also the suns of Arcturus. (Job xxxviii.) These are but a few facts showing truth, whether of faith or of science, is not inconsistent with itself. There are different realms of truth, but one truth does not make void another truth. The most that science can do in relation to Scripture is, within certain limits, to afford by its discoveries added confirmation to the literal truth of the Bible; into the exploration of its spiritual meaning science cannot go. That lies outside and beyond its domain.

H. H. L.

2 SAMUEL XVIII. 9.

"AND Absalom met the servants of David. And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heavens and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away."

The Bible contains many strange and mysterious word pictures. They are puzzles to us. We cannot see anything in them until it is revealed and pointed out, and then it is so plain and beautiful that we wonder why we had not seen it before. In the picture before us there is to be seen a very unusual view of the gospel church. David as king of Israel and head over his household represents, though in an imperfect manner, as we shall hope to show, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The household of David is typical of the church. Absalom, his son, is a type of the rebellious ones in the family. The mule which he rode typifies human nature. The great oak signifies righteous judgment in the church; the boughs, the individual members of the body of Christ.

Naturally speaking, Absalom was well favored. It is said, In all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty: from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him. Natural gifts are often a detriment to the cause. They make it easier for their possessors to win the hearts of God's children and lead them astray. Often oratory, excellency of speech, pleasing personalities, and the like, attract the little ones and they follow where they otherwise would not go. They even go so far as to worship the personage of men, forgetting that we are all of the same lump. Absalom made use of his natural gifts to gain his hellish end. He conspired by fair speech and courtesies to steal the hearts of Israel from his father. He was industrious and rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate; and it was so that when any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment, then Absalom would call unto him, and say, "See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee." He said, moreover, "Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice! And it was so, that when any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him. And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel." He also sent out spies throughout all the tribes of Israel and won over Ahithopel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, who later tried to organize an army of twelve thousand men to fight against David. The conspiracy was strong, and the people increased continually with Absalom. Finally, a messenger brings David word, "The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom." Upon hearing this David forsakes his throne and flees in shame and disgrace unto a place that was afar off. As he goes Shimei comes forth cursing and casting stones at him, saying, "Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial." The humiliation was so great that even

one of David's subjects asked, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head." David replied, "So let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so? And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more now may this Benjamite do it? Let him alone, and let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him. It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day." Herein are shadowed forth the suffering and death of our crucified Lord, "For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined to be done." David was a man of blood and deserved to suffer, but our Lord and Savior was without sin, undefiled, pure and holy, and yet he, the Just, must suffer for and at the hands, in nature, of those who came forth from his spiritual loins, or those chosen in him before ever the world was. The inscrutible wisdom of our God had devised the plan of salvation, which embraced the offering of his only begotten Son for the sins of his people, and it was according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God that he was delivered, and taken, and by wicked hands crucified and slain. Would he have had it otherwise? Did he not say, Unto this hour came I into the world? Therefore, let them rail on him, let them persecute and abuse him, let them nail his innocent hands to the rugged cross and suspend him between heaven and earth, for it was our glorious Head that was caught in the thicket, or sins of his people, and it was he who had to die, whose side had to be pierced and his life's blood poured out for the sins of his people. If it had not been for the predestinating purpose of our God that the great and glorious head of the church should be caught as a justification of his wrath against sin and pay the redemption price of the body, not a single member of all the realm of time could have any ground for hoping to sing his praises throughout eternity. The purpose of God did not stop short of complete and perfect victory, for it is declared of him who was crucified, "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."

For a time Absalom's success seemed assured. He took possession of David's household, and even went in unto his concubines, that all Israel might know he was abhorred of his father, but the day of reckoning was sure to come. Be sure your sin will find you out, is the word of gospel truth. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." David's strength was renewed. He numbered the people that were with him, and set captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them. He divided his army into three parts, and commanded the captain over each part

to "Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom." It was these servants of David that Absalom met. "And Absalom rode upon a mule." Webster tells us that a mule is "the offspring of a male ass and a mare." He is neither one nor the other, but a cross breed, and sometimes we find one which seems to possess all of the devil that was in both of his parents, and if there is anything in all the universe which more perfectly personifies "human nature" than such a character, we do not know what it can be, or where it may be found. Those who have had experience with a mean, balky, stubborn and undependable mule, will no doubt bear testimony to the truthfulness of the above statement. Sometimes the description could be made applicable to certain characters in the church, when they are left to themselves to walk after the flesh, for there is absolutely nothing which they will not resort to in order to carry their point. Such would-be leaders, or obstructionists, as the case may be, will not hesitate to wreck the visible organization of believers if thereby they can seemingly add to their strength. Only the Lord can effectively handle such characters. He humbled himself in fulfillment of the prophecy, "Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass." Jesus came and rode into the city of Jerusalem, "And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest!" We see from this that those who went before the coming of Christ were afflicted with the same malady, or rode the same mule, that those who follow after, even in this day and time, have to contend with, but thanks be unto him who giveth us the victory, through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we all have to look to Jesus as the only way by which we can rise above the things of the flesh and walk that high way which was cast up in the wilderness for the redeemed to go up on. The life and Spirit of our exalted Head is in every member of the body, and when the sons of rebellion ride their mules in the church, or under the thick boughs of the great oak, they may be assured that sooner or later they will be caught by the head and suspended between heaven and earth in the righteous judgment of those of whom it has been declared that they shall judge angels. If only each member of the visible church could have the courage to record on all occasions where the welfare of the church is at stake, their true convictions, many an Absalom would be caught by the head long before he does so much damage, whereby the hearts of the inhabitants of our blessed Zion are made to mourn and bleed until there seems nothing left in them to even hope for. In a great many of our churches to-day, how few there are who really vote on matters, in some cases, of far-reaching importance. This ought not to be. Oftentimes if one would raise his or her voice, for or against, it would save the day. It requires the judgment of all to consti-

tute the judgment of the church. There is a time and place, of course, to speak one's mind, and when they refuse to exercise that right properly they should thereafter hold their peace. Let us all remember the end of Absalom and resolve as much as in us is to refrain from indulging in such things as he practiced. "The mule that was under him went away," and we may be sure that if we are actuated by fleshly motives such things will not prosper in the church. We will be left in our doom and finally cast forth as an unfruitful branch into the furnace where the flame is not quenched, and where the worm dieth not. How dreadful to think about! Do not mistake what we mean. It is here in this life that we speak of. We know of no greater torment on this earth than for one of the children of God to be justly excluded from the love and fellowship of the brethren, and sent forth as a vagrant and vagabond in the earth, with the added curse, perhaps, of having brought others into misery and shame. Would it not be better, by far, for such an one to do as Jonah did? When the safety of the crew of the vessel in which he was, was seen to be hazardous, and the lot was cast and fell upon him, he was willing to be cast into the sea alone, that there might be life and peace to the others. This seems to us to be the Spirit of our Lord. Should the time ever come, which we hope God will forbid, that the lot will have to be cast and it shall be seen to fall upon us, that we are the cause of distress and death in our beloved Zion, we pray that God will give us the mind to do as Jonah did, in order that there may be a calm to the vessel, or church, which we are in, and may he have a fish prepared to take us to the desired haven of rest.

When the battle was ended and Absalom had been slain, there was one who wanted to bear tidings, and he said, "Let me now run, and bear the king tidings." But when he arrived, and the king asked, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" all he could answer was, "I saw a great tumult, but know not what it was." He was told to stand aside. Then came one, Cushi, who in the beginning did not choose the task, but who was commanded to "Go tell the king what thou hast seen." When David asked him, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" Cushi answered, "The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is." That was enough. There was no mistaking what he meant. David knew that Absalom was dead. What a difference there is between the man who wants to preach and the one whom God calls to preach. It is said in our earthly affairs that it is much better for the office to seek the man than the man the office. We would a thousand times rather see a brother try to get out of preaching than to try to get into it. In the illustration before us, the first one could move more rapidly than Cushi. He was running light (he had not the burden) but Cushi was weighted down with the terrible truth of the matter, and yet he must tell the truth, the whole truth, and

nothing but the truh. He had seen clearly and was commanded, for he was a servant, to tell what he had actually seen. The ministry to-day would do well to obey the command to tell only what it has seen, and handled, and tasted of the word of life; when the preacher goes beyond this he is treading on dangerous ground. When David hears the message that Absalom is dead he weeps, saying, "O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" Herein the type is imperfect, for he could not have justly died for Absalom; his blood would not have removed the stain of guilt for Absalom. It was different with Jesus. While the sins of his people did dethrone him for a time, and he did leave and forsake the glory that he had with the Father, and did mourn and weep because of them, he could and did verily suffer and die in the stead of the rebellious members of his body, all of whom were enemies to him by nature, and his blood did wash away and forever cleanse in the sight of the just and and holy God those who were given him in the counsels of eternity. They are presented by him to God the Father without spot, wrinkle or any such thing, and every one who by faith is given to realize the efficacy of his blood as it is applied to their sins is made to sing praises to the great triune God, saying, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, both now and for evermore. Amen."

Some months ago we used the above Scripture as a text, since which time we have been urged to write on the subject. It may be that what we have written is so different from what we said that it is unrecognizable, nevertheless we hope our readers will find some of the above thoughts worthy of consideration, and pray that God may deliver us from riding, at least in the church, the mule of our human nature.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder D. L. Topping.)

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, to the churches composing the same, greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We purpose at this time to call your attention to 1 John iv. 11, which reads as follows: "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought to love one another." As yet no living man has ever been able to fully comprehend the love that God has shown for his people. When the heavenly messenger notified Mary that the blessed Son of God should be the son of her womb she at that time could not fully understand this wonderful love of God, shortly to be manifested in the flesh for the salvation of the redeemed for all time. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God. Oh how wonderful this glorious message! Thou hast found favor with the Holy One of Israel. He that dwelleth in the high and holy place has condescended to come down and take upon himself the form of sinful flesh. Why? Because

of the great love wherewith he has loved us. Since when? Before the foundation of the world. Yes, before the morning stars sang together for glory was his delight with the children of men. Can man understand this love? No, only as it pleases the Lord to unfold it unto him, and then it is but a little here and a little there. Just a drop in the mighty ocean of God's unchangeable love. Now John says, If God so loved us, we ought to love one another. The question with us is, Are we showing that we have been led by the Spirit of God? If so, in what way? What have we to offer that others may feel that this is true, that God has loved us? John has told us what we ought to do: To love one another. If we should be blessed to do this there will be no need of us telling any one that we love the brethren. By their fruits ye shall know them, said the blessed Master. But how sad is our case if we love not the brethren. He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love. Now we will ask another question: If we say that we love God, and we must admit that God loves the brethren, then how can we hate that which God loves, and love him? Let not that good in you be evil spoken of. It was Moses' love for his brethren that caused him to slay the Egyptian. He saw him being wrongfully treated, and that was more than he could stand, and it became a pleasant duty for him to slay that which was injurious to his brother, and I doubt that he thought much of it thereafter. Why should he stand by idle and see a stranger slay his brother the Hebrew? But the trying time lay ahead of him. Another day, as he was going by the way, he came upon two of his brethren, and they strove one with the other, now what must he do? Circumstances had entirely changed, quite different from the other case. Ye are brethren. Brethren, let us here take a lesson. Moses showed no disposition to slay either of them. He felt that they were both brethren, and his love for them was only that they should cease the conflict. This love flowed from the same source that John is here telling us of, has not changed from the days of Moses until the present time, and shall endure as long as eternal ages roll. Then, beloved brethren, let us all strive to slay the Egyptian and put away far from us that which comes between our brethren, and the Lord of Moses (who is our God) shall bruise Satan under our feet, and we shall come through more than conquerors through him who loved us and gave himself for us.

CHARLES W. VAUGHN, Mod.
JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk.

(Written by John G. Garrison, M. D.)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, meeting with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, May 28th, 29th and 30th, 1930.

BRETHREN:—According to a long established custom, we attempt to address you by way of a Circular Letter, which duty was imposed upon me by vote of the Association of 1929.

As my mind has dwelt for some time on the subject of obedience, I venture to call your attention to the sacred relation of the child of God in obedi-

ence. Obedience is defined as: "To be willing to do as one is bidden; submissive to authority; dutifulness." Willing submissiveness to God's commands is true obedience. We read from the sacred volume: "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land."—Isaiah i. 19. This word was spoken to the professed worshipers of God by the prophet and was exhorting the Jews to repentance. In the present day the professed worshipers of God are organized into individual, sovereign churches, which adopt rules and creeds as to their identity among the sons of men. The worshipers of God are the church of God, and is builded upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, with Jesus Christ the chief corner-stone. The church of God has the New Testament as the rule of her practice and man of her counsel. All the members have the law of God written in their minds and put in their hearts, which gives them the just mandate of the law and consequently they try to be obedient and faithful to every good work. The Spirit teaches every member that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. The Spirit maketh the commandments of that law sacred, and the sinner feels unworthy to go forth in obedience to his commands. The Spirit humbleth every one who is made to feel to be the least of every one in the house of God. Our own experience tells us that they are made willing in the day of his power. Every ruling of the church is regarded as sacred and the spirit of rebellion is swept entirely away. Brethren, we desire to be obedient and faithful to every good work to the praise and glory of God. We can only be obedient as we feel his power resting with us. We read of the undershepherds of the house of God leaving father, mother, brother, sister, wife and children for Jesus' sake and the gospel, even to the denying of one's self, that obedience should be rendered. Hence we see them coming to the church of God bearing tidings of great joy to his people, in which they are built up and strengthened in the most holy faith. Dear brethren, what wonderful obedience is here manifested to us by the power of the Spirit which rests in the hearts of his servants. They come unto us, not in the excellency of words and of man's wisdom, but in the power of God, that our faith should not rest in the wisdom of men, but in God, whose power is without end. This testifies to us that greater is he who is in heaven than he that is in this world. The Spirit of the Lord leads his people in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. If we sow to the flesh we shall of the flesh reap corruption, and we see the harvest of fleshly relations. The church organization cannot give life to any individual, for he must be born of that incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth forever. So he works in those both the will and to do of his good pleasure. Peace and good order are desired in the church, and so far as we are given the will to be obedient through the power of God peace will

reign; and in no other manner will it come.

Written in the spirit of obedience, and giving all power and glory to God and his Son Jesus Christ.

C. W. VAUGHN, Mod.

DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Salem Church, Philadelphia, Pa., May 21st, 22nd and 23rd, 1930, to the several churches and associations with which we correspond, extends love and fellowship.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more we are blessed in coming together in love and unity to meet the brethren and different messengers from all the churches and correspondence as in the past. We feel the truth in Jesus has been promulgated by all the ministering brethren, and your messengers have brought love and good feeling to us all. We have been especially edified both in doctrine and experince, and we desire a continuance of your correspondence, hoping you will visit us again next year at Welsh Tract, the Lord willing, in May, 1931, at the usual time.

CHARLES W. VAUGHN, Mod.

JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk.

NOTICE.

Providence permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in August (31st). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MRS. SARAH FRANCES CARRUTHERS, our beloved sister in Christ, departed this earthly life June 30th, 1930, at her home, near Aldie, Virginia. On the fourth Sunday in May she contracted a deep cold, which took such a severe hold on her that she was unable to get rid of it. She grew steadily weaker until ten days before her death when she became bedfast. She sustained a stroke of paralysis the Friday before she passed away. She was born near Unison, Loudoun County, Va., November 24th, 1848, the daughter of Griffith Thomas and Rebecca Wright. One brother and sister survive her: Mrs. Claudius Hixon, near Leesburg, Va., and Tarlton B. Thomas, near Aldie, Va. She was married to Joel Carruthers February 29th, 1872. He died November 9th, 1914. To them were born eight children, two of whom died in infancy. One son, Milton, grown to manhood, died in 1912. The surviving children are Mrs. Blanche Beasley, Norfolk, Va., Mrs. Lelia Conner, Cherrydale, Va., Mrs. Pearl George, Winchester, Va., Mrs. May Thomas, at home near Aldie, Va., and Mr. Elmer Carruthers, of Charlottesville, Va. There are also five grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Sister Carruthers was baptized by Elder Joseph L. Purington July 27th, 1873, into fellowship with the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church. The fifty-seven years of her life and walk as a christian were marked by sincerity, humiliation and love. She had that charity which vaunts not itself, is not puffed up, suffers long and is kind. A gentle graciousness salted all her conversation. Not only was she a devoted mother to her family, but she was motherly toward all who lived in her neighborhood, both to colored and white. Many who read these lines will remember being entertained in her home when attending associations and other meetings at Mt. Zion. She was abundantly given to hospitality and loved to have her brethren in her home. In her going the church has sustained a great loss, for she was faithful. As her pastor, I have lost one of the very best friends I ever had. May the Spirit of grace and consolation reconcile us to the will of Him who does all things well. The Lord has taken but his own and it becomes us not to murmur. May the dear children and the lone sister and brother experience within themselves such abiding peace as the world can neither give nor take away.

H. H. L.

WALLER BARTON WITHERS, our beloved brother in Christ, was born in Shelby County, Texas, January 29th, 1855, and moved with his parents to Jasper County when a child, where he spent the remainder of his life on earth. He was united in marriage to Irena Richardson, and to that union were born eight children, all of whom survive him. He was stricken with paralysis while sitting by his fireside, and told his family there was no use calling a doctor, as he felt his time

on earth was short. He was confined to his bed about three weeks, during which time his devoted and loving companion and children, together with their faithful physician, did all for him that mortal hands could do, but on the morning of January 29th, 1930, he fell asleep in Jesus, that blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep. We feel to say as David did on one occasion: Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel? He is greatly missed by all, especially his bereaved family; they seem to be at a loss without his kind advice and counsel. Antioch, his home church, mourns the loss of one of her pillars, for he was so loyal and thoughtful of her welfare. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church in 1880, and was a firm believer in salvation by grace, being well rooted and grounded in the doctrine of God our Savior. He had many friends in all walks of life, and Jasper County deeply feels the loss of one of her noblest citizens. Space forbids telling the half of the honor and respect his friends had for him, but we feel the life he lived here is a living epistle written in the hearts of his brethren and friends. His body was laid to rest in Antioch Cemetery, in the shadow of the old church-house where he had spent many happy hours. Elder J. A. Collins, his pastor, preached Jesus the way, the truth and the life in demonstration of the Spirit and with power in a reconciling manner to our bereaved sister, children and a host of friends. Although we deeply feel our loss, we believe it is his eternal gain, and our humble petition is that the God of all grace will reconcile the sad and lonely ones to his righteous will.

Written by reuest.

LEONARD RICHARDSON.

ROBERT SCATES was born September 17th, 1845, at Dundas, Ontario, and departed this life January 16th, 1930, in his eighty-sixth year, at Woodstock General Hospital, Woodstock, Ontario. He was the last surviving member of a family of six. Three sisters and two brothers preceded him in death. He was a son of the late James and Sarah Scates, who were both members of the Covenanted Church of Canada. In the year 1875 he professed a hope in Christ and was baptized by the late Elder William Pollard, at Ekfrid. He served as clerk of the church for several years. In 1881 he married Miss Elizabeth Freeborn, who predeceased him September 21st, 1921. She also was a member of the Covenanted Church. In October, 1922, he married Mrs. Maggie Freeborn, who survives him. He was in a helpless condition for nearly a year, and much could be said of the untiring efforts of his devoted wife to make and keep him comfortable until he was stricken with an attack of appendicitis last fall and was operated on in Woodstock Hospital. It was then found necessary to remove him to the hospital, where he remained until his death. He was a man who had deep soul exercise and was well versed in the Scriptures. He loved to talk and write on spiritual matters, but of late years complained of much darkness of mind, mourning the coldness and barrenness of his soul, but the promises which came to him in his early experience were, I believe, as an anchor to his tempest-tossed soul. Many times he would refer to passages of Scripture that came sweetly to him. Once he said, "Oh that I could feel the sweetness of that passage that came to me over sixty years ago: 'Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound,' I remember it as if it were but yesterday." Another was, "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions." Another favorite with him was, as he said it came to him one time in perhaps his greatest distress, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." At once, he said, his burden was gone. I visited him a number of times during his illness, but his speech was affected so he did not talk much, but one could easily detect he was alive to spiritual things. We feel he is at rest, in full realization of the sweet hope which was his whole theme: Salvation by grace.

His niece,

(MRS.) ELLA JONES.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Herbert McLeod, Ala., $4; Mrs. Maggie Smith, Ontario, $1; Mrs. Lydia B. Stewart, N. Y., $2; Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Okla., $1.

MEETINGS.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects brother Arnold Bellows to be with them the fifth Sunday in August (31st), 1930. Services to be held at the home of brother J. E. Livingston, 64 East Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All welcome.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

The annual all-day meeting is to be held with the Slate Hill Church, Slate Hill, N. Y., on Friday, August 22nd, 1930, and we cordially invite brethren and friends to be with us on that occasion. Elder C. W. Vaughn and Licentiate Arnold H. Bellows, besides the writer, expect to be present. Meeting to open at 11:00 a. m. (Daylight Saving Time), at the close of which lunch will be served, to be followed by preaching in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Lord willing, we expect preaching by Elder R. Lester Dodson on Saturday, August 23rd at 2:30 p. m., and Sunday at 10:30 a. m. and 2 p. m. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSEPH F. HALL.

The Maine Association will convene, the Lord willing, on Friday before the second Monday in September and continue three days, September 5th, 6th and 7th, 1930. We expect brother R. Lester Dodson to be with us. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.

Providence permitting, the First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists will convene Friday before the second Saturday in September, at 10 a. m., and continue the two following days (12th, 13th and 14th) at the residence of brother W. I. Zinn, six miles southeast of Meridan and four and one-half miles northeast of Grantville, Jefferson County, Kansas. Trains will be met at either place if notified, or call brother Zinn's residence, number 2031 Meridan exchange. Those driving from Kansas City should come on highway north of the river as far as Grantville (Grantville is about one-quarter of a mile south of the highway, on U. P. railroad), then north and east to place of meeting. Arriving at Topeka by rail, take Santa Fe train at 8 a. m. or 5 p. m. to Meridan, or Union Pacific at 6 a. m. or 4:30 p. m. Failing in these connections there are buses to Grantville at 9:30, 1:30 and 5:30. From Topeka phone (dial) 29 and ask for 19 at Grantville, for other information, or write me at Grantville, Kansas. My place of residence is just across the street from the depot. The agent at the depot is also a Baptist, of whom inquiry may be made.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

The Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Antioch Church, nine miles southeast of Camden and eight miles south of Bearden, Arkansas, (near Locust Bayou) Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 19th, 20th and 21st, 1930. All wishing to visit this meeting will come by Cotton Belt railroad to either Camden or Bearden, Arkansas, where conveyance will be Thursday before. Those coming by automobile will take Camden-Hampton Highway to Locust Bayou and Bearden Locust Bauyo to Locust Bayou. All orderly and sound Predestinarian Baptists are invited to meet with us at that time and place.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator.

W. C. HORTON, Clerk.

Ft. Worth Primitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sunday at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

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IN

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Meetings every third Sunday

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(Park Avenue Hall)

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Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every first and third Sunday at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, at 1 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.
O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk,
143 W. 11th Street, Claremont Cal.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Cane Run Predestinarian Old School Baptist Church, of Turners Station, Kentucky, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 10:30 a. m., also, the Sulphur Fork Church of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, of the same faith and order, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 2:30 p. m.

GEO. L. WEAVER, Pastor.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, every Sunday at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. at the home of W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Midweek song service by appointment. Pastors, Elders Jones and Jaynes. Basket lunch.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

POCA, W. Va., July 11, 1930.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—It has been some time since I have written to you. I hope you and your family are all well. My wife is very poorly. The doctors claim high blood presure to be her trouble. I am keeping up about as usual. I go but little, only as I am taken by car conveyance, when they come for me and bring me back home. By reason of age and affliction I am deprived of the liberty I for many years enjoyed: riding horseback or driving in my buggy, traveling over rough mountain roads, visiting the churches that compose the Pocatalico Old School or Primitive Baptist Association. I fully realize I have done and said things I should not, also I have left undone many things I should have done. If I am what I hope I am, and by the grace of God have run the race that was set before me, to say that I could have altered or changed it in the least would be to deny the doctrine I have preached for forty odd years, believing as I do that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. It seems that we are to have the bitter as well as the sweet, that we may more fully appreciate the sweetness of the glorious gospel of the reigning grace of Almighty God. I have had many hard trials to contend against, and sometimes I have spoken with an ambitious spirit, for which I have felt sorry, but I felt at the time that there were some sneaking maneuvering for the purpose of stirring up confusion among the brethren. Such are men who feel to be big preachers, who are trouble makers rather than peace makers. Some of them claim to be evangelists. What a shame that an evangelist would behave as some have. I am now in my eighty-second year. I have been here a long time, but, to be truthful, I cannot say I want to die and leave my dear family and precious brethren, but hope to be submissive to the call of my Father who art in heaven.

"Jesus, thou art the sinner's friend,
As such I look to thee;
So in the bowels of thy love,
Dear Lord, remember me."

My wife joins me in love to you and your dear wife and sweet children. May the God of mercy, peace and lovingkindness be with you all to the end of your sojourn in this wilderness of woe.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

POCA, W. Va., July 9, 1930.

J. B. MILLER—DEAR BROTHER:—For many days I have had you in my mind and on my heart. My feeling was, and is, that I would be greatly pleased and graciously blessed if I could see you once more on this side of eternity, and while thinking decided I would write you a few lines some day, if the good Lord would suffer me to address you under the appellation of brother. Yes, my precious brother in hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ our dear Redeemer, and when I read your short but comforting letter to Elder Lefferts, published in the last number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I said to myself, Procrastination is the thief of time, and as feeble as I feel myself to be in every respect I will write brother Miller a few lines.

I hope you and yours are all well. My wife is very poorly at this time. She is past eighty-one years of age and seems to be gradually failing in health. While we live alone, our daughter lives near and watches over us. I still go out among the brethren and try and preach for them when they come and get me and bring me home by car conveyance, and it is very nice for me to get to see my brethren through the summer and fall seasons. We do not know how soon we shall have to lie down in death, but we have a hope which is as an anchor to our soul that when this earthly house is dissolved we have an house not made with hands, eternally in the heavens.

I have a portion of Scripture that I would be pleased to have your views on, or Elder Lefferts' either. It is in the book of Hosea, tenth chapter and eleventh verse, and reads as follows: "And Ephraim is as an heifer that is taught, and loveth to tread out the corn; but I passed over upon her fair neck: I will make Ephraim to ride; Judah shall plow, and Jacob shall break his clods." After listening to an able discourse delivered by Elder Dell Smith, the first Sunday in May, the latter part of that verse was presented to me with much beauty and sweetness. I arose to my feet at the close of Elder Smith's sermon and quoted these words: "I will make Ephraim to ride; Judah shall plow, and Jacob shall break his clods." Now these names have their signification, which is felt by sinners quickened by the Holy Spirit of God. As the leaven in the three measures of meal, Ephraim representing the flesh, which is so easily joined to idols; Judah representing the Spirit as breaking up fallow ground for the preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue is of the Lord; Jacob representing the love of God as shed abroad in the sinner's heart, which mellows every

hard sentence that may have stood out in his way.

I shall not state my view any further, as I have merely given you the way my mind started out on the subject at that time. I hope you or Elder Lefferts may have a mind to write on the entire verse.

We are having the dryest time I ever remember; have had no rain to wet the ground since the latter part of March. The corn is just standing a little above the clods, the pastures are dried up and water is very scarce. I am eighty-one years of age and know I have never seen such a drought, start in so early in the spring and last so long. The potatoes are a failure, the apple crop is a total failure, the garden produce has dried up, and it is quite a gloomy looking time in these parts. Those who have many heads of cattle will have to dispose of them, as the grass crop is a total failure. I do not feel like grumbling, for there is a purpose in it best known to God. While to us it is very distressing, God has his way in chastising nations as well as individuals.

My wife joins me in love to you and your dear wife. May the God of peace and love be with you to the end.

I remain your brother in hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

MEDFIELD, Mass., July 7, 1930.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I am sending a few lines of the trials, doubts and fears of sister Minerva F. Dunlap, of the church at Bowdoinham, Maine. It is too good an experience to be kept hidden from the people of God any longer, for it shows so plainly that a child of God is in the belly of hell in his travail of soul that I feel the brethren will all be glad to read it. There are some in Hopewell, N. J., and in New York who have met her and love her for the truth's sake, and I hope you will see fit to publish it in the SIGNS.

I also wish to thank all the dear brethren at Hopewell, New York and New Vernon for their kindness to my wife and me on our trip to your associations. I enjoyed every minute of the preaching, and if I am alive another year and not able to be with you I know I shall long to see my brethren. May God bless you all, is the prayer of a poor old sinner saved, if saved by the grace and blood of the risen Savior,

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.

BOWDOINHAM, Maine, Sept. 13, 1916.

DEAR MR. TEDFORD:—Since Thursday night I have felt like writing to you, and I know that if I have nothing to say worthy of writing you will act charitably toward it, yet all the time I feel you will understand. I think I have always thought religion too sacred a thing to discuss at random, and it never has been easy for me to say anything of my beliefs, &c., for fear I was not sure, and perhaps that kept me from answering you when you asked me if I had enjoyed the preaching. I knew then that I had enjoyed it, but had also made up my mind I would not let that feeling be known until I could bring some proof in the way of experi-

ence that I had the right to be discussing such things with any of you. But after the preaching that last afternoon it seemed as though I longed to tell you of all that had happened to me, and when you met me on the stairs and invited me to come and visit you I longed to tell you more than ever, but I did not, and now it seems that I must write, just as a child would write of wonderful thing to its father. I cannot remember the time when I did not think I believed in predestination and salvation by grace. I went to the Old School Baptist meetings whenever I went to any (because I was taken, of course) and it was natural that I should believe in what my mother believed in. I can remember when quite young of lying in bed and praying that I might be given some sign by which I would know that I was one of the elect. I used to look up into the heavens and expect a glorious vision to appear, or I hoped it would. Some of the sermons seemed wonderful to me in a way, but none seemed to awaken any very vital interest until some of the preaching at the Association nine years ago, when I think I felt more interest in the meetings than ever before and seemed to understand something of the truth. For a long time after that I could find joy in reading my Bible and there seemed to be a gladness shed abroad in my heart. The next year I went to college, firmly convinced that the Old School Baptists were the only sect on earth that had the Bible on their side. I used to hate going to the meetings of other denominations. I thought all the ministers were hypocrites, and refused to join in the "Lord's Prayer" with the others at chapel, and was the only girl in my class who did not join the Y. W. C. A. All this with some kind of an idea that I would be doing a great wrong if I did enter into such things. Well, some time during the four years there, studying evolution, hearing the theories of the professors as to why the Old Testament is not to be taken as having been a true account of actual events, getting accustomed to sermons on "works," &c., and seeing that no one there believed as I did, I began to doubt the truth of any of the Bible, or of the existence of any God whatever, substituting for all that the "natural laws," and I think I half believed it, or consoled myself with the thought that I did, as I could not have any proof for my first views. Well, the first year out during the winter term of school I got up in a revival meeting and said I accepted the Lord Jesus Christ for my Savior, and afterwards I knelt while a minister (so called) prayed for me, and I think I was cursing myself and him all through the prayer. After that I felt I had condemned myself forever and my prayer was for forgiveness and that God would show me the true way. Although I attended their meetings the rest of the year, the preaching seemed mostly a mockery to me, as it all had before in college. There for the last three years I had seen nothing better for an explanation than that the Old Testament was a collection of legends and myths handed down to us, that the story of Christ was perhaps written by

some religious fanatic, but that his teachings were worthy of being the foundation of a good religion. I came home summers and sometimes came to your meetings, with respect for your beliefs, but still feeling that your mode of worship was too antiquated for the present day, that your preaching was old-fashioned, and that you were all to be pitied. This last winter, in Conneticut, I was somewhat drawn to a Congregational minister who came out from Hartford, a man well along in years, nearly blind, who seemed to me to know something of the love of Christ. I liked some of his sermons, and one Sunday when he was giving out the hymn to be sung before communion I think I felt some spiritual longing to be allowed to partake some time of that bread and wine which Christ broke for his disciples. I had no wish, however, to partake of it there, and when I was leaving the meeting, and for a week after, my prayer was the words of the hymn I had heard: "Break thou the bread of life to me, O Lord, as thou didst break it there by Galilee." After that my former opinions asserted themselves once more, and with the consciousness still with me that I did not believe my pet theories, I still tried to persuade myself that they were the only plausible ones. How can I tell you how I felt Friday morning when I came to meeting? It seemed as if that spirit of searching, trying to find the true way, was present with me all at once, and I was made to feel somehow that if these were really God's people then he was able to raise up his ministers of the truth who would have power to show me the true way. As Elder McConnell began to preach I almost prayed that he would be gifted from God to make me see His way plainly. I cannot describe the wonder of it all. As Elder McConnell continued it seemed as though I had known all along what he was declaring, only now I could feel the glory and the peace and the comfort. Especially Sunday afternoon I was made to feel that my home was there, that this was the only true religion, so different from the religions of the world, that I loved all the members of the church and felt what a sacred thing fellowship in Christ is. I felt that my sign had been given, that God had revealed himself in love and that no more would the things of the world have any attraction for me. A new song was put into my heart in praise of God and I felt that his ways were unspeakable and full of glory, far from the ways of men, and of infinite mercy. How beautiful it all seemed; how wonderful! My way was made very plain. I seemed to be one of you, and yet I seemed to be the least worthy. I thought I never should doubt again, yet only the next day I rebelled, hated myself for going near the Old School Baptists again, and began to think I had been hypnotized, led astray, &c. But this was followed by joy and peace, by a feeling that Christ would lead me in the days to come, and with a prayer that I might be made willing to do his will. The Scriptures seemed beautiful to me, so plain and full of comfort, and I was

made to ask why such a miserable thing as I should know this wonderful truth. That the Spirit will lead me and teach me and keep me as one of his little ones, is my hope.

This letter is also for Mrs. Tedford, and my heart goes out in love to you both. I am here now with my aunt, Angie Thomas.

With love to both of you,

MINERVA F. DUNLAP.

TRENTON, N. J., July 28, 1929.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER VAUGHN: —It is written, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and thought upon his name." So because they that feared spoke often one to another, before the coming of the living Word the book of remembrance was written for the comfort of those who now fear the Lord and think upon his name. It is from generation to generation that the word of God is for those that are his, those who are counted as jewels in his kingdom. I want you to know, if it is possible for me to find words to express it, that the services yesterday were as a bethel that I can remember always. It is not given to the world to know the blessed joy of speaking one to another of the things of Christ. It is alone for those who go down to the sea in ships, who do business in deep waters, these see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep, and only by what we suffer is it possible for deep to answer to deep. The old prophets dreamed dreams and the men of this gospel day see visions, as Joel tells us and Peter reminds us. "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions." "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call." So it is the few who are called out of the world to give testimony of his glorious love and wisdom, who hear his truth and see his miracles. While his people are as the sands of the sea for number, yet only a handful are chosen to let their "light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven," and none can see that light except those who have the treasure of the knowledge of God in earthen vessels. The prayer that was made yesterday was as though you knew my distress, and before you finished the Lord heard and gave me again evidence of the hope that has been my anchor for forty years. Many times I get so low, so discouraged, that I wonder if I ever knew the difference between serving God and serving mammon. I find as I grow older I need more assurance, more strength, to travel this weary road. I cry more often for his presence and I want the crumbs that fall from the Master's table. I do not ask for the feast, neither do I desire the full store-

house, but just enough to keep me humble and dependent upon him who is the only Savior I know. The Lord knows what is best for me at all times, knows that my flesh becomes a barrier to my desire to serve him if filled with the fatness of the feast. I do not think any one of God's children can suffer more from the evils of the flesh than I do; there is not an instant in my waking hours that I do not feel the exceeding sinfulness of my heart. Even when the Lord is pleased to give me a glimpse of his glory I still see, as a cloud, the unworthiness of all I do or say. Paul said he was the chief of sinners, but sometimes I feel that I am greater in sin than the chief, for surely the sin of all flesh dwells in me. What a mighty God it is that can give his Son as a sacrifice for such sinners as I, and my hope is alone in the efficacy of that blood. He is faithful that promised, and he says, "I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me." "I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry."

This letter is a very poor expression of what I feel. I wanted to tell of the many things that came to me while listening to the sermon, but if I say the Lord has dealt bountifully with me and through your service in the house of God has again given me to rest in his love it will cover all.

My love, to you both, in the bonds of fellowship, and with a desire for remembrance in your prayers, from your sister, alone by the blood of Christ,

E. L. FETTER.

[THE foregoing written expressions are such as are felt by those led by the Spirit, and are very encouraging to poor sinners as they are made to feel his presence. I have spoken to this dear sister and asked her to share with our dear kindred in Christ Jesus this good letter, and hope you will pardon me for giving you this message to me. One request I make, and that is, while you read think as though sister Fetter were addressing you.—C. W. V.]

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Jan 22, 1930.

DEAR EDITORS:—You will find inclosed a letter which is very sweet and precious to me, and, I feel, too good to be "hidden," and I trust you may deem it fit for publication. I love the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, though it seems I cannot get money to send for my subscription, but hope to in the near future. May God be with you in your labor.

An unworthy sister in hope,

(MRS.) GERTRUDE B. CROSS.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., June 4, 1929.

DEAR SISTER GERTRUDE:—This beautiful June morning as I am going about my daily duties I am thinking of you and your dear letter and of the many shifting scenes of life and of the wonderful love and mercy of the heavenly Father toward his heaven-born children, so I stop my work and take up my pen and write to you as I hope the gracious Lord directs.

Oh how he provides for his chosen, both naturally and spiritually, and keeps them as the apple of his eye, even though they are not aware of it at all times. He, and he alone, knows their

needs, and will their needs supply. Although the way seems dark and stormy much of the time, he is there to lead them and strengthen them sufficient for their day, and he teaches them, as the poet expresses it, to

"Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face."

Yes, dear sister, the trials and conflicts through which he allows them to pass, like David, prove a blessing, and the evil that sorely vexes them from day to day in time he overrules with good to them that love him and to the glory and honor of his most high and excellent name. He will give them a song not sung by the ungodly and evil seducers, who seek to satisfy the lusts of the flesh and to set themselves up as having wisdom and strength above the power and majesty of the almighty and all-powerful Creator, who has made heaven his throne and earth his footstool, who declares and it is done, even before the earth was or the foundations of the earth were laid, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Back there in the beginning of eternity he hath written his will, with all the names of his chosen little ones in their order. I hope my name is there, but sometimes doubts and fears arise and cause me to fear that it is not. If it is I cannot erase it, and if it is not in his will I cannot write it there myself. Ah no, nothing we can do or say can change the Father's will. The road he has made for us to travel cannot be changed. It is the correct way, the way that leads to life eternal. Though the way be rough and thorny, though the cup of sorrow runneth over, though afflictions in many ways assail us, it is all according to his will, for he tells us, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." Yes, this old flesh of ours gives us continual trouble. Here we are, on the earth, in this earthly house of clay to dwell. It is so flimpsy and perishable, so corrupt, it will wilt and die if not fed and nourished and clothed with the perishable things of earth to keep it alive, which things are mercifully provided according to his own good pleasure and plan, and in this flesh dwelleth no good thing. Yes, Satan is there. The flesh (or carnal mind) is enmity against God, not subject to his law, neither indeed can be. It will lead us astray if the Lord leaves us alone for awhile to the inclination of our carnal nature. But oh the sadness when the face of our Shepherd is hid, then with sighs and groanings we are made to cry out, Lord, save, or I perish. Then the smile of his countenance revives our drooping hearts and minds and we are made to sit together in heavenly places feeding upon the crumbs that fall from the Master's table, listening to his word, which teaches us to trust in him and have no confidence in the flesh. The things of earth we once loved we now hate, and the very things we once hated we now love, and we pray continually to be kept from being entangled again with the yoke of bondage, to be kept humble at the feet of Jesus, there to learn of him and his love, and to be

kept unspotted from the world, or ungodly men, or evil seducers, who teach for doctrine the commandments of men, and to be given strength to do his bidding:

"Let worldly minds the world pursue,
It has no charms for me;
Once I admired its trifles, too,
But grace has set me free."

"Prisons will palaces prove,
If Jesus will dwell with me there."

We would be found ever looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, feeling to say with Job, Though the Lord slay me, yet will I trust in him. Desiring to sing the praises of him who

"Near our souls has always stood
His lovingkindness, oh how good."

"When trouble, like a gloomy cloud,
Has gathered thick and thundered loud,
He near my soul has always stood,
His lovingkindness, oh how good."

So if it be that the Spirit of Christ dwells with us in this house of clay, or vile body, then we are safe from harm, and will be satisfied when we awake in his likeness. Yes, he will fight all our battles for us, and none can stay his hand. Dear sister, may his blessing rest upon you.

Please pardon these imperfect lines, so like the writer, but written in love.

Unworthily your sister in hope,

IVY WOODFORD COLE.

COLUMBUS, Ga., Feb. 11, 1930.

DEAR ELDER:—I read with much interest your article in the last SIGNS written on "Signs of the Times." Surely it was timely, warning us to meditate and consider. This "remnant of people" of our Lord are commanded everywhere to "watch and pray." Sometimes I long and wish for the simplicity of our forefathers, that our lives and our country were more quiet and simple in their ways. Surely restlessness and confusion are in every place in our broad land. But that is wanting things to come my way. The Lord God omnipotent reigneth. He is ruling all things for good to his people and for glory to himself. Even the wrath of man praiseth him, and that which does not praise him he restraineth. God is ruling all things, watching and preserving his own in "the hollow of his hand." No harm can come to them; they are in the world, but not of the world. Yet this flesh is weak and does shrink from the many things, times and calamities, in our day. Even Moses did fear and tremble. "O ye of little faith." Yet this little spark keeps us trusting and praying unceasingly for more and more faith and trust in his strong arm. We know God in infinite wisdom hath seen the end from the beginning, working all things after the counsel of his own will. Nothing can take place against his will. He will do his pleasure in all things, yet our finite minds will worry and fret over this and that wondering and shrinking from it all, fearing what men may do unto us. But in due time we are drawn unto him, our faith made bold and strong; all worry and fear are taken from us and we are enabled to claim the precious promise, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. He will be with his people to the end of time. How blessed to know that through all this, and beyond, the church of God shall come

forth gloriously triumphant into the radiance of God. So precious and strengthening the assurance that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. The gift to expound so clearly the Scriptures to edification is a comfort to the scattered saints and encourages them on in their way. We do thank our kind and heavenly Father for these, our dear ministers of his truth, who bring us glad tidings of great joy, that publisheth peace, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth. Pray for me, a poor and needy sinner. Saved by grace is my hope. My love to all the dear ones I have visited there.

In bonds of christian love to you and yours,

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

WINNSBORO, Texas.

DEAR READERS:—I have been thinking for some time of writing to express my appreciation and the great enjoyment I receive from reading the good editorials and letters published in the dear old SIGNS. None but God's people write as these do, and how much good it does us to read these letters inspired by the most high God. This work of faith and labor of love is only imparted to the chosen few, and only they know how to express their faith to the all-wise Giver, for in their flesh dwells no good thing, and they look not to the wisdom of men, but to the power of God. I have been a reader of this paper for nearly fifteen years, and hope to continue until my time in this world is no more. I am almost deaf and cannot hear preaching, so am comforted by reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and try and put my trust in him who doeth all things for the best. A friend, of Independence, Missouri, was kind enough to mail me a copy on predestination, of which he was the author, over a year ago, but my house was destroyed by fire and I lost his address. Other books were destroyed also.

The May SIGNS is surely wonderful, all written by God's own chosen saints, who each will shine as a bright star on the glorious resurrection morn, with many jewels in their crowns. Oh how glorious that coming will be to those who watch and wait and have their names written in the Lamb's book of life, but what a terrible fate and destruction to the countless millions who serve mammon and Satan. Years ago, in another State, I became dissatisfied and prayed to the good Lord for deliverance, and in a short time I came west, and have been out here a number of years and have received many blessings and mercies from the great and wonderful Giver, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. All things whatsoever shall come to pass, all glory to him in his majesty on high.

I pray our dear paper will continue to visit all our people and the editors be spared many years yet to carry on their good work. I ask all to pray for me when it is well with you, as I am but a worm of the dust.

A friend,

(MRS.) W. T. PETTY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1930.

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HOSEA X. 11.

"AND Ephraim is as an heifer that is taught, and loveth to tread out the corn; but I passed over upon her fair neck: I will make Ephraim to ride; Judah shall plow, and Jacob shall break his clods."

Elder J. W. McClanahan has asked information on the above text. What we here write is not to take precedence over the views of any one else, and if there are other brethren who can see more in the subject than we can, send on your views and we shall be glad to give them publicity. Our own mind is to present the literal, not the spiritual, meaning of the text. The spiritual meaning of it as it may apply to spiritual Israel to-day in their personal experiences, we do not know. Maybe some one else does. If so, let us have it. There may be a present-day experimental explanation of it, but the same has not been revealed to us, if such there be. Hosea, the prophet who utters the above language, was a prophet to Israel and not to Judah. Hosea and Amos were prophesying in Israel at about the same time as Isaiah and Micah were prophesying in Judah. It will be known by those familiar with Bible history that upon the death of Solomon and upon the accession of his son Rehoboam to the throne of David, the tribes of Israel divided: Judah and Benjamin remained under Rehoboam's rule, the other ten tribes went off under Jeroboam the son of Nebat. From that time, the ten tribes are spoken of as Israel or as Ephraim, the other two are usually spoken of as Judah. Jerusalem was the capital of Judah, Sechem in mount Ephraim became the capital of Israel. Judah commonly became known as the southern kingdom, Israel as the northern kingdom. The last of the kings of Israel was Hoshea, not to be mistaken for the prophet Hosea. Jeroboam, the son of Joash, (not the one who was son of Nebat) was king in Israel when Hosea was prophesying. In the year 721 B. C., the kingdom of Israel came to an end upon the successful defeat and captivity of them by Shalmaneser king of Assyria. The seventeenth chapter of second Kings tells about it. The kingdom of Judah did not end until 586 B. C., nearly a century and a half later, when Judah was overcome by Babylon and led away captive. Judah experienced a restoration from captivity under Cyrus, a

further restoration under Darius and still a third restoration under Artaxerxes: the first expedition out of Babylon being led by Zerubbabel, the second by Ezra, the third by Nehemiah. There has never been historically a restoration of the ten tribes who were carried away by Shalmaneser king of Assyria. For that restoration the world still waits. The time of this restoration cannot now be far off. This has given rise to the popular phrase: "The lost tribes of Israel." But they are not lost, and never have been lost. God is preserving them in distinction from all other nations until the times of restitution come, just as he has been and still is keeping spiritual Israel among the Gentiles separate and distinct from all other Gentiles in their doctrine, faith and practice.

The main theme of Hosea's ministry is one of rebuke and condemnation against the ten tribes for their falling away from the law, for their faithlessness and for their false worship of idol gods. He foretells the anger of the Lord which is to come upon them because of their transgressions, which judgment was visited upon them later when the Assyrians captured them and dispersed them abroad. In the words of our text, Israel or Ephraim had been as a "taught heifer," as a trained or domesticated animal. As such, she had loved to tread out the corn. But what a vast difference there is between doing a thing because one loves to do it, and doing a thing because one is made to do it. Doing a thing freely according to one's own desire is a pleasure, doing a thing because we are compelled to do it is burdensome. Ephraim had followed her own will and had done the things she wanted to do. Those things had been sinful and full of transgression, nevertheless Israel went on in it getting pleasure out of it, rolling sin under her tongue as a sweet morsel. The time of the Lord was coming, as the prophet said, when Israel would reap judgments for those voluntary ways of hers. Then, would the Lord as a hard rider pass over on her fair neck and make Ephraim to ride. Israel would be driven hard by the judgments of Him who would ride her down to exhaustion with his dispensations of woe against her. As a horse-rider passes over on the neck of his fair steed and rides her down and tires her out, so would the Lord as a taskmaster bestride Israel, disobedient Ephraim, and make her to ride until she would be worn down. These calamities came to pass with Israel at the time of the Assyrian captivity in 721 B. C. and in the succeeding dispersion of the ten tribes abroad among the nations. What Israel has suffered all the centuries since that time has been terrible beyond description. Rivers of blood have been shed by them, seas of tears have been wept by them, the depths of humiliation and degradation have been trod by them. Yet, their glorious deliverance and time of blessing is nearer and nearer approaching. Surely they have ridden hard and far and fast. The hand of the Lord has been indeed heavy upon them. "The way of the transgressor is hard." The time of Judah's

calamity was not yet. Nearly a century and a half was to yet pass until captivity should also swallow her up. "Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the saints."—Hosea xi. 12. In time, though, her transgressions would overcome her. Further on our text says, "Judah shall plow, and Jacob shall break his clods." Here is an intimation that not only Ephraim or Israel was to experience calamity, but that also Judah and Jacob (Benjamin) would also go into slavery. Judah would also, with Benjamin, serve taskmasters and be made to plow, not their own lands, but the fields of their masters, and to break up with their hands the clods in the furrows. Hosea, however, was a prophet to the ten tribes and his message was to them; as for Judah and Benjamin he says very little, but just enough to hint that they, too, in due time, would find trouble as did Ephraim. All of them had altogether gone out of the way and all would, without partiality, experience the chastening judgments of the Almighty. Now, as we said, in the beginning of this article, we would try to set forth what we see to be the literal or historical phase of this Scripture, leaving to some one else the work of filling in the experimental or spiritual meaning of it as it refers to spiritual Israel, the church of God to-day. We personally doubt if it has any such application, but if any one is so enlightened as to show it to us, they ought to do it, and we trust they may feel to do so. In the last chapter of Hosea, after all his fierce denunciation of their evil ways, the thunder of wrath like a dark storm-cloud of woe passes away, and on the rear of it we see the glorious promise of Israel's returning unto the Lord. "O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God." For what reason shall they come back? Because "thou hast fallen by thine iniquity." "Take with you words, and turn to the Lord." What plea shall Israel use in that day of their return? Why, the simple confession of the contrite sinner. "Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips." How will the Lord take away their iniquity? He has already done it in the blood of his Son on the cross. This propitiation they are yet in ignorance of. In due time, the Spirit will reveal it to them and they shall receive the circumcision of the faithful in heart. They will be received graciously; that is, by grace and not by the works of the law. Thus shall all Israel, spiritual among the Gentiles and the remnant of literal Israel to be restored, be saved by grace. For it must be by grace and grace alone. In the third verse of the fourteenth chapter of Hosea is Israel's renunciation of all her works and of all false religion. Thereupon, the Lord promises to heal their backsliding, to love them without price, and to turn away his anger from them. "They that dwell under his shadow shall return." Here is a striking reference to the types and shadows of the old covenant and an assurance that those who lived under those things shall return to the Lord. This cannot apply to Gentile believers, but to the remnant of national Israel

to be brought in by grace into the kingdom of the Lord. "From me is thy fruit found." What a blessing when restored and repenting Ephraim shall realize that his acceptable fruit to God is all of the Son whom they despised and crucified.

H. H. L.

1 PETER III. 21.

"THE like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

The apostle Peter has twice in the third chapter of this epistle mentioned a good conscience, and if we take time to see who they are to whom the apostle is speaking, we shall find that they are designated as "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," and it is only such that have a good conscience. All flesh naturally has an evil conscience, and is included in unbelief, so that there is none good, no, not one. Many profess to know God, but, by their works, they deny him, being abominable and disobedient and unto every good work reprobate, thus proving that their minds and consciences are reprobate. Such are they who not having the least evidence of the work of God in their hearts, never having been convinced of sin by the Spirit of truth, walk in a vain show. "Speaking lies in hypocrisy" they feign to have faith and talk much of good works, yet have never had their consciences purged from dead works to serve the living God. This purging can only be affected by an application of the blood of Jesus Christ to their guilty souls, for saith Paul, "Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission." Thus baptism is not an ordinance for unbelievers, but for believers, who have a good conscience. It is true many have stumbled on the dark mountains, when they have attempted to justify a practice received from their fathers and instituted by the apostate church of Rome. We refer to infant sprinkling, which many blindly accept as baptism, thousands calling it baptismal regeneration, stumbling at the Scripture in Ezekiel xxxvi. 25, which reads, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you." The Scripture quoted at the head of this article proves that Ezekiel is not referring to baptism, for Peter is careful to state that baptism is not putting away of the filth of the flesh. Of course Ezekiel's prophecy has not the least reference to water baptism, and it is certainly a blind guide who declares it has. Without a doubt it does refer to regeneration, and the Lord will attend to that, for he declares, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you." Where is there water in this earth but what is polluted, for is it not like the earth, under a curse? This water spoken of by Ezekiel is from the "pure river of water of life, clear as crystal," it is clean, and no man-made priest is to sprinkle that, for the Lord saith, I will sprinkle you.

It sets forth the sanctifying influence and effect of his word which proceeds from his mouth, as Jesus said, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."

Another of the Scriptures that many take to justify an unscriptural practice is found in 1 Corinthians vii. 14: "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean: but now are they holy." This Scripture is quoted to justify those who are called christian parents in sprinkling their children while young to make them christians. Surely all who have ever known the plague of their own hearts know that that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that all the children of Adam's fallen race are conceived in sin, shapen in iniquity and go from the womb speaking lies. Whether their parents be called christian, or not, they need salvation and regeneration. The apostle is speaking of marriage, and showing it to be a remedy against fornication. That the believing wife is not to leave her unbelieving husband, nor a believing husband his unbelieving wife. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by his wife; that is, she, being a believer, will own him as her husband, honoring him as such, keeping herself wholly unto him, and in doing so, their children would be born in holy wedlock and would not be unclean. Therefore believing parents have no scriptural right to make church members of their children other than as God's word allows, and his word places believing before baptism. Philip said to the eunuch, "If thou believest with all thy heart thou mayest." God must work in the heart of a child as well as an adult and enable him to believe the truth, if ever he or she is to be a fit subject for believer's baptism. There is none good naturally, no, not one, and to be a possessor of a good conscience will make that person a stranger in this world. Such a possession is a clear evidence of a work of grace. Paul declares to Timothy, "Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and faith unfeigned." Such pure hearts and good consciences are the results of the work of God's Spirit within, enabling the soul to discern between good and evil, and between that which serves God and serves him not. Paul charges Timothy to war a good warfare, "holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck." Thus faith and a good conscience must go together, and without faith it is impossible to please God. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin," and where is there any evidence of faith in most infants when hurried to the font?

"By faith Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Noah's preparing the ark was an answer of a good conscience towards God. If it had been possible for him to refuse, or if he had made ought different to God's

command, he would have had an evil conscience, making shipwreck of faith. But being a doer of the word he was a preacher of righteousness. In him Jesus preached to the spirits imprisoned, bound in the fetters of sin. The believer, dead to his former life in the flesh, and possessing a living faith in Christ, has a sense of right within him, and faith operating within, prompts the soul to follow none but Jesus, and the conscience being tender towards God, desires to walk according to the truth. Did Jesus die the just for the unjust? The soul by faith saith, Come, see the place where he lay. Did he rise again? Faith says, The present comfort and joy of the soul is by virtue of a risen Savior. This faith worketh by love, and it is God's love in the soul and the revelation of a risen Jesus, that makes the heart burn with love to God and love to man. Such an one walks softly before his God, and knowing what a vile sinner he has been, and is, he hates presumption and every evil way, and by faith he is enabled to witness the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation among whom they shine as lights in the world. Now there are many things come into the affairs of men that separate one from another, but nothing makes so clean a separation as death, king or pauper alike, go down to the lonely grave. It is the dead that men bury out of their sight. When Jesus was pronounced dead they hurried to put him in the grave prepared for him, for the Jews and the world would bury him from their sight. It is written, "He suffered without the gate," and one with a good conscience and faith unfeigned goes forth unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. Yes, as they go, separated from husband or wife, father or mother, brother or sister, separated from their former associates, with their backs upon their former life, leaving it, never more to return, down to the watery grave they go, for faith saith, Come, see where they laid him. They go in the obedience of faith, thinking not of the institutions of men, nor of the snares of an apostate church. Having a good conscience towards God, they regard him who said, "Follow me," and they would go the way he went. It has been preached by some that when our Lord went to John to be baptized of him, and said, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness," that he was baptized for his people there, and fulfilled all righteousness. If that is so, why did Jesus tell his disciples to baptize? and why did the angel of the Lord tell Philip to go to minister and baptize the eunuch? Those who have a tender conscience towards God know that the ordinance of believers' baptism is of God and that it is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh. No, there is not water enough even in the Atlantic Ocean to do that, but it is the answer of a good conscience towards God. It is a witnessing to the world of that change that God only has made, through the death, burial and resurrection of his only begotten Son, our Lord. Such are the only people who

believe in, and witness to, the resurrection of the dead. We have seen them separated from the world by the work of God's Spirit and led down to the watery grave, submitting to these things, as their glorious Lord before them did, while the ungodly world, professor and profane, have shaken their heads and laughed. Yes, the world to-day says how foolish and unnecessary, but the children of God witness to a life beyond this world, a resurrection to come. They by faith have seen Jesus rise from the dead, triumphant, in glory resplendent, and what a joy it is to them to behold him whom they sold, and who was slain, glorified as the friend of sinners. We have seen them rise from the watery grave with a beauty and joy that is heavenly, happy to enter into the fellowship of kindred minds, while brethren crowded around them to take their hands, thankful that God has not left himself without witnesses. Until he cometh and time shall be no more, God grant to his church, which is constituted of baptized believers, the saving grace of faith unfeigned, and may they know and profess that baptism is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, which will not be put away until we fall into our graves, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The resurrection, beautifully set forth in believers' baptism, is what the believer is hoping and longing for, when we shall see him as he is, and be like him. The sweet fellowship and love of the brethren, enjoyed in a gospel church by those who walk in God's command with a good conscience, is beautiful, but faith views the glorious home above as the ultimate goal of its anticipation. Hymenæus and Philetus had denied this resurrection, saying it was past already, thus overflowing the faith of some. The likeness of their Lord is the desire of his saints, for "if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable," and as the person submitting to baptism views beyond the God-given ordinance a home of brethren beloved, so we by faith believe that beyond this life with all its sin and woe there is a day to come when we shall awake with his glorious likeness.

In conclusion, the Lord himself, that great Shepherd of the sheep, has given us an example, and they who are taught of his Spirit do well to walk with a good conscience towards God, and as Noah and they who were with him were saved from the deluge that overcame the world, so they by baptism are saved from the delusions of an untoward generation.

G. R.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

LEXINGTON, Ky., Aug. 8, 1930.

DEAR EDITORS:—Will you kindly publish in the SIGNS that my father, Elder P. W. Sawin, is changing his address from 124 Warren Court to 120 Forest Avenue, Lexington, Kentucky, and will you please also change his address on the SIGNS? He is well and has stood the heat remarkably well for one of his years. He sends his love to all the household of faith, and to the editors in particular.

Sincerely,

GOLDIE S. WHITE.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder R. Lester Dodson.)

To the messengers, ministers and members composing the Warwick Old School Baptist Association, greetings in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—According to the never-failing mercy of the all-wise and eternal God, we are again privileged to assemble in an associate capacity, for the purpose, we trust, of worshipping him in Spirit and in truth. In preparing this letter to circulate among our correspondents, we would desire to write in such a manner that it might be seen we have been with and learned of Jesus and that our fellowship is with the saints, for truly their fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

Having been asked to write on the first portion of the nineteenth Psalm, we will consider the first three verses as a foundation for our message at this time. They read as follows: "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." First, if we consider the literal heavens, it has to be confessed that intelligent beings have ever gazed up into the ethereal blue with wonder and amazement. To have some understanding of the sun, the moon and the stars, and the firmament to divide the waters from the waters, together with their purpose in giving light and heat upon the earth, rotating the seasons of seedtime and harvest, for the benefit of every living thing, fills one with admiration and awe for him by whom they were created. As though it were not enough to gaze upon worlds that are visible to the natural eye, with the genius with which God hath endowed man, he is from time to time, or day unto day, discovering hitherto unknown planets and mysteries which surround them. The telescope makes nothing new, but reaches out into distances and brings things out of their hiding-places. One says, "Farther and farther we reach out into space; more and more minutely we subject particles to the microscope. And find what? That as far as we go, we can reach beyond law, order, balance, harmony." When we realize that infinite wisdom has determined the sphere, fixed the course and prescribed the bounds of all that is in the literal heavens, with law and order in absolute control, we can be still and know that he is God.

It would seem that man has advanced at a remarkably rapid rate, all within a comparatively few short years, when we consider his progress as measured by the telephone, the automobile, aviation and the radio, which almost stagger the imagination, and still it has to be acknowledged that he knows very little about some of the elements which are in us and all about us—electricity, for instance. Indeed, it is a great age in which we live, but in it all we see only the unseen hand at the helm, guiding, directing, teaching, instructing, uncovering and revealing that which he is pleased to make known of his wisdom,

power and love to the children of men. When we pass from a consideration of the literal, with all the glory which it unmistakably portrays, into the spiritual, it is as though we stepped from darkness into light, and when we realize that the patriarchal and the legal heavens, reflecting as they did, in types and shadows, better things to come, yet they could not compare with the dazzling light of the Sun of righteousness which illumines the gospel day. From the time of the transgression of Adam until Moses, the patriarchs had the star of hope to go before them in one fashion or another. At the very outset, God declared that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head, and in the days following the flood he put his bow in the cloud as a token to Noah and his family that he would no more destroy the earth by water. In his dealings with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and his watchcare over and deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage, are clearly seen the evidences of his unchanging love towards those whom he delights to defend. The law served as a mirror, into which Israel should look and see her imperfections; it was a plumb-line to manifest the perverseness and crookedness of human nature, and Adam never had a son but who was weighed in its scales and found to be wanting. How necessary, then, that salvation should be placed upon a higher and more lofty plane than man could devise, and that a better and perfect way should have been provided by and through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, whereby sinners might be saved. As the moon reflected the light of the sun, so did the law act as a schoolmaster to bring Israel to Christ, and as the stars give light in the night, so did the prophets testify under the legal dispensation of the coming of Christ, of the dawning of a better day, of the coming of a new heaven and a new earth, wherein righteousness should dwell and reign. While both the patriarchal and the legal heavens declared the glory of God in a great measure, and fulfilled their purpose, yet it was not until all that they had signified had come to pass by the coming of the Son of man in great glory and power and majesty and the gospel heavens were set up and established that God was fully glorified. The word "heaven" is often used in the Bible to denote the church, and we are persuaded that every true gospel church does show forth the glory of God. If we are to regard the seven churches which were in Asia as examples there is no perfect visible organization of men and women on earth, but there are mountain peaks which tower heavenward, like Mount Zion, which are beautiful for situation and are the joy of the whole earth, out of which God, the perfection of beauty, hath shined, and doth still shine. Notwithstanding, many of the daughters of Zion have defiled themselves and have gone a whoring after idols, saying, by their acts, "We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only

let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach," there is still "the branch of the Lord" which is "beautiful and glorious," whose fruit is "excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel." Having been delivered from the power of darkness, how good to behold them walking in the marvelous light of the blessed gospel of the Son of God. In this walk, if we mistake not, there is "law, order, balance, harmony," all of which make for peace. It is not only by earnestly contending for the faith which was delivered unto the saints by word of mouth that they declare the glory of God, but by walking in the precepts and examples of our Lord, by keeping his commandments to love one another, by showing mercy and forgiveness, by being kind, considerate and gentle, showing charity to all the household of faith and living as unto the Lord. Such churches know no sovereign but the God of Israel, and even though they are led into the stormy deep of affliction and into that darkness which verily can be felt, they know that their God can do no wrong, for he is light and in him is no darkness at all; therefore they can say, All thy works praise thee, O Lord, and thy saints bless thee; they speak of thy glory, and talk of thy power, and there is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. When those who go down to the sea in ships and do business in great waters are delivered from their distresses and brought into the light and liberty of the gospel, they can and do declare the works of God and his wonders in the deep and there is no experience which is vain. They have learned, little by little, line upon line and precept upon precept, of the infinite wisdom, the mighty power and the great love of him who is God over all, and blessed for evermore. He has become the God of their life, and it is in him that they live, and move, and have their continual being. This God is the God they adore, their faithful, unchangeable Friend, whose love is as large as his power, and neither knows measure nor end. The churches composing the Warwick Old School Baptist Association have great reason to acknowledge the goodness and mercy of God to them and they earnestly desire to be kept in the straight and narrow way, walking in the old paths, ever looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of their faith.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
HENRY T. LEFFERTS, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, July 25th, 1930, at his residence, in Delmar, Maryland, Laurence Smith Holloway and Miss Edith Elizabeth Morris, both of Salisbury, Wicomico County, Maryland.

ORDINATIONS.

THE Second Roxbury Church calls for the ordination of brother Arnold Bellows, to be held at the Ashokan Church, the Lord willing, September 19th, 1930, when the Lexington-Roxbury Association convenes.

PRUDENCE O'C. HINKLEY, Church Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Mintie B. Mapes, N. Y., $2; Dr. T. E. Presley, N. M., $3; Curtis Spitler, Ohio, $1; C. A. Turner, Okla., 50 cents; Mrs. F. J. Gray, Tex., $50.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

BROTHER **A. J. MOORE** was born November 23rd, 1856, in Virginia, and died May 18th, 1930, making his stay on earth 73 years 5 months and 25 days. He professed a hope in Christ some forty-three years ago. Because some of the records are lost I cannot give exact dates, but will say he gave ample proof that he had been taught of Jesus the wonderful work of grace in the heart. In his every day life he walked worthy of the vocation wherewith he was called, neither turning to the right nor the left from the doctrine of the regular predestinarian faith and order of the Old Primitive Baptists. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church in the state of Virginia, was baptized by Elder William Moore, and lived some years in Virginia, but becoming dissatisfied he moved to Oklahoma, where he lived some years, then moved to Weslaco, Texas, where he lived until death took him from our midst. He joined Mt. Zion Church, at Weslaco, by letter, and in the year 1927 he was ordained Deacon, and served that church faithfully until the dear Lord called him home. He leaves to mourn his departure his wife, sister Moore, and six children: Hassell, John, Mollie, Cosby, Sophia and Opial. Four children preceded him to the grave. Brother Moore suffered very much in his last illness, but he bore his afflictions with as much calmness as any one I ever visited. He complained very little and desred to depart and be with his Savior. He was sound in the faith of God's elect, having no confidence in the flesh, and was ready at all times to defend the doctrine of grace with great power. Truly it can be said, Another father in Israel has fallen, and the church will greatly miss him. The writer visited him a few days before he was called home, but his suffering was so great he failed to recognize me at times. When the release came he met it with a smile and rejoiced in the presence of Jesus, who stood by him in death. On account of unfavorable weather and the distance, I could not attend the funeral, but Elder Bradford was present and conducted the services.

Dear sister Moore and family, weep not for him as one having no hope, for the precious hope of a better life in the world to come is a lasting comfort to all of us, and we hope to meet him in the paradise of love, in that great congregation which never will break up, in that Sabbath that has no end, in the church triumphant in glory beyond this vale of tears, where trials, disappointments, sorrows and trouble will never come. His presence at the meetings of the church will be greatly missed, as well as at his home, but we feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

Written by request of sister Moore.

J. B. BOWDEN.

ELDER W. C. PERDUE passed to the Great Beyond June 24th, 1930. An obituary may be sent in later. (MRS.) ADDIE PERDUE.

MRS. MARY TURNER LEATHERS departed this life during the early morning hours of June 10th, 1930, having suffered a stroke of paralysis the afternoon of the day before, from which she never regained consciousness. She leaves three sons to mourn her departure: W. F., of Vernon, Tenn., D. H., of Lyles, Tenn., and Frank Leathers, of Clarksville, Tenn., with whom she was living at the time of her death. She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church at Only, Tenn., and lived as a good soldier of the cross until the last, always bearing the marks of christianity in all her deeds of labor and love. In May, 1924, it was the writer's good pleasure to move just across the street from her home, and as she was the only Primitive Baptist on the street, and one of the four who at that time lived in the city, she was seemingly very glad to learn that I, too, hoped to be one of the strangers scattered abroad through the earth, and many pleasant times we had talking along lines of godliness. Her eyesight being poor, I spent many happy moments reading to her. Once when reading the eighth chapter of Romans to her, beginning, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," she very ably set forth the idea that those who were walking in Christ were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and greatly rejoiced in being one of that number, chosen and made accepted in the Beloved for the praise and glory of his grace. Her husband preceded her to the grave only a little over a year, he being a sufferer for many years, and an invalid, caused her to remain at home very closely and to lead a very secluded life after I knew her. Space will not allow me to speak of the many beautiful things in connection with her life, but to me she was a lovely character, whom we might all be pleased to be like unto, and I feel that she is now come into the full realization of that hope she cherished so dearly while here. Many sorrowing relatives and friends followed her to her last resting-place. May they all be made to bow in humble submission to the will of him who gives and who takes away.

EFFIE BLAGG.

MRS. ELIZABETH HASTINGS CULVER, our dear sister, departed this life May 20th, 1929, at her home, in Delmar, Delaware, aged 84 years. She was baptized October 19th, 1889, it is thought by the late Elder A. B. Francis, in the fellowship of the Little Creek Church, near Delmar, Delaware, and lived a godly life. She was a woman of strong character and faithful in all the walks of life. Many years before her death she married brother Handy Culver. No children were born to that union, but she was a faithful step-mother to the three children of brother Culver by a former marriage. Brother Culver preceded her in death a short time, but the three children survive her:

Samuel N. Culver, Miss Polly Culver and Mrs. John W. Culver, all of Delmar. She is also survived by one sister: Mrs. Mary Hastings, and many nieces and nephews. We all miss sister Culver, as she was a true friend.

The funeral services were held at the late home, conducted by the writer, her pastor. Interment took place in the Smith's Cemetery, beside her husband. ALSO,

SAMUEL BARTON HASTINGS, a brother of sister Culver, died September 20th, 1929. He was born February 8th, 1858, making his stay on earth seventy-one years. He was the youngest son of the late Deacon Winder Hastings. He had suffered long with complications, but was very patient. Mr. Hastings never united with the church, but was a lover of gospel truth and faithful in attendance, and often the expression of his face was an inspiration to the speaker. He was of a very quiet disposition, a man of few words, strictly honest and dependable. He is survived by his widow, sister Annie Hastings, together with two daughters and one granddaughter: Mrs. Ernest Francis, Miss Margaret Hastings and Miss Julia E. Francis. Sister Mary Hastings, the last of the large family also survives him. These are all of Delmar, Delaware.

The funeral services were conducted at his late home by the writer, and interment took place in the family plot in the Smith's Mills Cemetery.

Our friend, Mr. Hastings, was highly esteemed by all who knew him and is mourned by a host of friends. His family scarcely knows how to go on without him. How good the promise, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be."

H. C. KER.

MRS. FANNIE JANE BROWN GRAY was born June 22nd, 1859, near Knoxville, Tennessee, and departed this life June 16th, 1930, at the age of 70 years, 11 months and 24 days. When a young girl she moved to Bristol, Ellis County, Texas. She was married to William J. Gray November 18th, 1876, and to that union were born three children: Mrs. Della Krieg, Charles L. and Jesse Gray, all of Dallas, Texas. She also leaves eight grandchildren, all of Dallas, Texas. In 1885 she and her husband moved to Dallas with their three small children. She made Dallas her home until her death. About fifty years ago she united with the Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, in Ellis County, Texas.

Elder John Smith, of Ft. Worth, Texas conducted the funeral services from her late home in Dallas, Texas. She was buried in Oakland Cemetery, Dallas, Texas, beside her husband. All the children and grandchildren were in attendance.

Inclosed you will find a check for fifty dollars, which she wished to contribute to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to mail copies of the paper to elderly people who are not able to subscribe.

Her daughter, (MRS.) DELLA KRIEG.

LUCY ANN HODGES was born September 22nd, 1839, in Franklin County, Virginia, the daughter of William and Lucy Parcell. She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church since childhood. She was married to Abednigo Hodges in June, 1867, and to that union two daughters were born: Anna and Georgia. The father died in 1870, and the mother devotedly performed the duties of both father and mother. Besides the daughters she leaves one brother, William Parcell, five grandchildren and a host of relatives and friends.

Elder W. M. Shoemaker conducted the funeral services at the home of a son-in-law, Mr. Nicolas Hall, Utica, N. Y.

Written by her granddaughter,

ANDRA.

MEETINGS.

The Maine Association will convene, the Lord willing, on Friday before the second Monday in September and continue three days, September 5th, 6th and 7th, 1930. We expect brother R. Lester Dodson to be with us. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.

[Elder D. L. Topping expects to attend the Maine Association with the undersigned on September 5th, 6th and 7th.—R. LESTER DODSON.]

TAKE NOTICE.

Owing to certain conditions it has been decided best to change the place of meeting of the First Kansas Association from brother Zinn's residence, to the schoolhouse near the residence of Elder L. L. Schenck, near Perry, Kansas, where it was held last year. Perry is on the same railroad and highway as Grantville, with facilities of transportation from Topeka and Kansas City the same as to Grantville, in the notice published in the August number of the SIGNS. The date is September 12th, 13th and 14th, 1930.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

GRANTVILLE, Kansas.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will convene with the Olive & Hurley Church, at Shokan, Ulster County, New York, in September, between the second and third Sundays, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday (September 17th, 18th and 19th, 1930). Those coming by auto and bus go to the meetinghouse and you will be directed to places of entertainment. Trains will be met at Ashokan on Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us, especially ministering brethren.

ORVILLE WINCHELL, Deacon.

The Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Antioch Church, nine miles southeast of Camden and eight miles south of Bearden, Arkansas, (near

Locust Bayou) Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 19th, 20th and 21st, 1930. All wishing to visit this meeting will come by Cotton Belt railroad to either Camden or Bearden, Arkansas, where conveyance will be Thursday before. Those coming by automobile will take Camden-Hampton Highway to Locust Bayou and Bearden Locust Bauyo to Locust Bayou. All orderly and sound Predestinarian Baptists are invited to meet with us at that time and place.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator.

W. C. HORTON, Clerk.

Providence permitting, the Mt. Zion Association of Regular Baptists will convene the first Friday after the fourth Saturday in September (October 3rd, 4th and 5th) 1930, with Little Flock Church, in Cass County, Missouri. Those coming in cars can come on Highway No. 71 to Harrisonville, then on No. 7 north four and one-half miles, then west one-quarter of a mile to the Old Rock Road, then north directly to the meetinghouse. Or take Highway No. 50 to No. 7, through Pleasant Hill south two and one-half miles, then west on Old Rock Road directly to the meetinghouse. Those coming by train come on Missouri Pacific Railroad to Pleasant Hill and call 807 F 31, and conveyance will be there. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to be with us.

(MRS.) J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk.

R. R. 4, PLEASANT HILL, Missouri.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at the home of sister E. Brunow, 411 N. Ridgeway Avenue, and on the second, third and fourth Sundays at the home of brother W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. The fifth Sundays are by appointment. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastors, Elders Jones and Janes.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Ft. WorthPrimitive Baptist Church meets every first and third Sunday at 11 a. m., also Saturday before third Sunday at 2 p. m. in each month. Take South Main car, go to end, walk one-half block north to meetinghouse.

E. A. MORELAND, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every first and third Sunday at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, at 1 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.
O. P. SPEIRS, Church Clerk,
143 W. 11th Street, Claremont Cal.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Cane Run Predestinarian Old School Baptist Church, of Turners Station, Kentucky, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 10:30 a. m., also, the Sulphur Fork Church of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, of the same faith and order, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 2:30 p. m.

GEO. L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each mouth, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

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This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 98. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1930. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE ORDER OF GOD'S HOUSE.

THE visible church of God is called in the Bible, "A spiritual house built up;" a house the Lord has builded, and he is the "Son over his own house." Christ said to Peter, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The words, "Shall not prevail against it," carry the promise of a resurrection for the church, the members of his holy body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. In his first epistle to the church at Corinth the apostle Paul admonishes them to let all things be done decently and in order. (1 Cor. xiv. 40.) The same apostle tells us that Christ is head over all things to the church. Being head over all things to the church, it follows that Christ is head over the order of his church, or his own house. He is that, because his church belongs to him, and, therefore, he has the sovereign right to exercise authority over it and to set it in order, such as he is pleased to elect for her good and the glory of his name. Being head over all things to his church, Christ is her Lawgiver, and by the laws he has given her the church is to be governed, and all matters touching fellowship must be dealt with according to such laws or rules of action. The words "all things" are all-embracing, yet limited in their application; that is, they embrace all of certain things that are under consideration, and are limited to and embrace those certain things only. There are ever so many things God's children do that would not be in place in the house of God; they could not be done decently and in order. But there are certain things that can be and should be done in the house of the Lord, that can be and should be done decently and in order; that is, after the order Christ has authorized for the government of his church in her godly deliberations. Such decent, orderly things are those things Christ commands and that the work of grace in his children bring

them under obligation to do. Whenever and wherever the order Christ has authorized is observed and practiced sweet peace, fellowship and unity prevail among the flock of God, but whenever and wherever man-made laws, rules, customs and traditions are set up and enforced as tests of fellowship among God's children confusion, strife and division invariably follow as a grievous result. It is a lamentable fact that something is responsible for the confusion and distress that has grown up and increased among the Old School Baptists for the past thirty years in different parts of the United States. Candor constrains me to insist that the most fruitful source of trouble among us has been conceived and brought forth in associational bodies that have encroached more and more upon the sovereignty of the churches and played the role of dictator, and thus lorded it over God's heritage to the rending asunder of churches and associations, destroying fellowship and putting up bars against ministers of our faith, and all in the name of gospel order, when in truth such proceedure has been diametrically in opposition to the order commanded and demanded of Christ, the great head of the church. It has come to be commonplace with some associations to dictate to others with which they correspond what ministers they shall and shall not receive and preach at their annual meetings; this is the case in face of the fact that the association dictated to has said by the act of the members composing the churches in said association that they fellowship the ministers objected to and would gladly have them come among them and preach, but stand in fear of trouble that the dictating association might make for them should they receive said ministers among them and preach them. Such is the case in face of the fact that the ministers thus debarred by the dictation of said association are acknowledged by her and all other bodies of Predestinarian Baptists as being sound in the distinctive doctrine of the church, and of having reputations as men and ministers that are above reproach. I do not have to guess at it, I know that such an attitude and such a practice is not by the authority of Christ, nor is it in keeping with the order commanded and authorized by him who is head over all things to the church, but, in a majority of instances, I think it may be truthfully said that such deplorable practice is the fruit of preacher jealousy and of the spirit that wants to either rule or ruin. "Let all things be done decently and in order." What is the order of God's house? Is it not the good and pleasant state when brethren dwell together in unity? The primary and absolutely essential qualification for doing things decently and in order in the house of God is to be inspired with the love of God, the love of his cause and his people, a sincere desire for the peace and fellowship of those entered into church covenant and a willingness to be governed by the laws and rules of regulation which Christ has given his church and commanded observance of the same. I say, these qualities must in-

spire us in all things we do in the house of the Lord and in his name for our doing to be decently and the gospel order established by Jesus Christ for his people to walk in. If any would depart from this order and set up a kind of order to serve their own selfish motives and to reach their own selfish ends they are usurpers of authority coming not from Christ, and are fallen into the grossest and most hurtful disorder, and should be marked as those who cause divisions among us. When I see an Old Baptist taking his brother by the throat and demanding him to conform to his whims and caprices, calling them the order of God's house, and going everywhere among the churches and associations seeking to have him denied the privilege of preaching the gospel as God and his church has authorized him to do because he refuses to accept his whims and personal opinions for the order of God's house, I know that man is menacing the peace of Zion and that he is a trouble maker. I believe that, by the grace of God, I can tell what the order of God's house is. It is to love God and keep his commandments; to not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; to do all we do heartily, as unto the Lord and not unto men; to be followers of God as dear children; to be all of one mind, having compassion one of another; to love as brethren; to be pitiful; be courteous; to not render evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrarywise, blessing; to eschew evil and do good; to seek peace and ensue it; to refrain the tongue from evil, and the lips that they speak no guile; to put on as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another; to do whatsoever we do in word or deed all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him; to do nothing through strife and vainglory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem the other better than themselves; to let our moderation be known to all men; to be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let our requests be made known to God; to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints; to strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; to bear one another's burdens; to examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith; prove ourselves; to first remove the beam from our own eye before we undertake to remove motes from our brother's eye; to prove all things and hold fast that which is good; to abstain from all appearance of evil; to be not weary in well doing; to love each other with pure hearts fervently.

Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all. Amen.

C. M. WEAVER.

JOHNSTON CITY, Illinois.

PARSONSBURG, Md., July 19, 1930.

ELDER R. L. DODSON:—I have a little hope that I have a right to address you as dear brother in a good hope, tribulation and revelation. I met you in Salisbury some months ago and told you of two dreams, the first seemed to convince me that the Primitive Baptist was the true church of the first born among many brethren.

To go back to my earliest experience (if I have any), I was born in 1860, to John and Hanna Morris. They were devout Primitive Baptists, having, I believe, been baptized into the fellowship of Nassawango Church by Elder Warner Staton in 1856. They both lived what they professed. Their greatest pleasure seemed to be to entertain the brethren. Their home was truly a Baptist home. Father served the church as Deacon over fifty years, until failing eyesight caused him to resign. They both died in the faith, mother in 1879, at the age of 52 years and 4 months, and father in 1910, at the age of 87 years. In the year, I think, of 1874, my oldest sister and another aged about sixteen years were baptized, making four of my dearest earthly ties members of that church. I sometimes think that I have not the kind of love for the church, that I only love them for the reason that those so dear to me were members of that church, and I was with them more than any others, and that the experience I think I have is from hearing them talk often of their feelings one to another. And now, as you asked me while in Salisbury to write and tell you some of the things I hope I have seen and felt, I will begin by quoting a verse of what to me is a beautiful hymn:

"I'll tell you of my warfare,
My exercise I'll show;
And then you may inform me,
If it be so with you."

At the age of about fourteen years I would have seasons of gloom and weeping and knew not what caused it. One night I dreamed I was told to read a certain chapter and verse in the book of John, and on donig so I found where Nicodemus came to Christ to inquire concerning the second birth. The verse I was told to read was, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." I knew I could feel the trouble but knew not what caused it, and that was the first time I realized it was other than natural trouble, and had supposed it was only natural to many nervous people. A few years later Elder Joseph Staton took those words for a text and he told my feelings much better than I could have done, and that is the first time I heard a gospel sermon.

The first Sunday in December, 1889, I went to Indiantown. For three days and nights before I was in the deepest trouble I had ever known at that time. It seemed my sins and transgressions were beyond pardon. On Friday night before the first Sunday I had gotten where it almost seemed to me that when I got in bed that night I would sink down into the bottomless

pit. I think I could imagine I felt like a criminal who knew he had committed crimes deserving the death sentence when he is brought to Court for trial, knowing the Judge and Jury had seen all the crimes he ever committed. He dare not ask for justice; he could only plead for mercy. On my way home from Indiantown, sudden as a flash of lightning, my burden was removed and I was filled with rejoicing, and in my heart sang, Amazing grace. I thought I must tell my father how great a blessing I had received, but soon my joy was turned into doubting, so I told no one but my oldest sister. September 12th, 1892, I was married to Peter J. Dryden, and went to Baltimore, Maryland, to live. I told him my feelings in regard to sacred things, and he told me his. I had no idea any one thought me interested in sacred things until, to my surprise, I received a letter from Elder Chick, stating that two candidates had come to the church and that he wished I had been there, that he thought I might have gone also. In his letter he quoted the words, If you love me keep my commandments. I looked away to ponder whether or no one so sinful could love with a pure and holy love. His next words were, We know we love him because we hate ourselves, because we are so unlike him, and I knew that fitted me. I was then made willing to tell him my secret, so carefully kept, and wrote him in reply telling my feelings toward the church and of my unworthiness to be with them. He wrote again addressing me "sister," and told of the fellowship he and his wife had for me. This encouraged me, but I felt I had deceived them. I then became interested in baptism, but felt that would be like a separation from my husband. Then these words came as though spoken in command: If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me. I then proposed a plan to my Creator like that fellow on the mount when he asked the Savior to fall down and worship him, and my proposition was almost as successful as his was. Mine was this: If the Lord would give me peace once more I would go to the church and offer myself for baptism, although I knew I could never be worthy to be identified with them. At the next opportunity they sang the hymn,

"What shall I render to my God,
For all his kindness shown?
My feet shall visit his abode,
My songs address the throne."

The last verse is,

"Now with his saints assembled,
Here my offering shall be paid;
Now shall my feet perform the vows
My soul in anguish made."

This verse sank home, but a stone could have been moved as soon as I could have offered myself to the church. As I started home these words came as spoken to me: Be not deceived, God is not mocked; as ye sow, so shall you reap. If you sow to the flesh you shall of the flesh reap corruption. If you sow to the Spirit, you shall of the Spirit reap live everlasting. I was then cast into the worst darkness I had known in it all. The next opportunity I had I went forward, was received, but the darkness

did not leave me until Elder Chick raised me out of the water. That night the twenty-third Psalm came to me in all of its comfort and sweetness. Previous to my baptism the question with me was, If the Primitive Baptist is the true church, why is it that other denominations enroll members by the hundreds, while the Primitive Baptists are few in number and added to by one or two at a time? My father at one time owned four farms, each had on it a house. In my dream I, with all my brothers and sisters, and all in whose veins was any of my father's blood, or in whose body derived their life from my father; the house contained but one room, and against the wall was our large dining table, under it and piled upon it was all manner of food, going out to the back door was a well of water about two inches through, and springing up clear as crystal, the inside of the pipe was white like marble, and once in every few minutes a live fish came up with the water and went leisurely down the stream, never but one at a time; the fish were perfect. I shortly after learned they were Rock Fish. Everything the water touched turned to white marble. It spread as it flowed; it also had a slight taste of salt; it flowed on until the eye could not pierce the distance. The banks were white marble, and in my dream I could see many ships going slowly on, without oars or sails, or any other power I could see. In the other dream I seemed to be in a car, travelling with my father, and was ashamed to introduce him to the other passengers. I was carrying a roll of papers; one was his will, giving me my inheritance, the other seemed to be the papers showing my birthright and instructions for my conduct. I was blind, but knew my father was with me. There were many imps, each trying to snatch my inheritance and other papers from me. I was all the while calling to father to help me, and thus from that time until time on earth will be for me no longer, if it were not for the help of my heavenly Father the world, the flesh and the devil would rob me of my birthright and my inheritance. I seemed to awake at the last station, which I think represented the time I was baptized, as there are no changes any more, for I am still going blindly on, hoping my heavenly Father is with me, although I cannot see him, but some few times I hope he is with me. If he is, he will be with me until my hope is swallowed up in fruition and it can be said of me, I hope, that death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? God is very good to his little children, giving them all their daily needs, and surely I can say,

"Beneath the spreading heavens,
No creature but is fed,
For he who feeds the ravens
Will give his children bread."

Please excuse blunders. I see there are many.

Your sister, I hope, with an inheritance from the Father which will never fade away,

(MRS.) N. A. DRYDEN.

SALEM DEPOT, New Hampshire.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—I have been a reader and a subscriber of and for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES less than a year. The few months it has been coming to the home I have found much in it of "great values," and although many of the writings probably are more profitable to the living family of God than the one I am really writing about, yet your editorial (if that is the proper word) in the August number to my mind is a very seasonable word in this day when modernism is so popular. The way you write about so-called science is unanswerable, and so plain that he who reads must understand. Usually articles written about science are so wrapped up with high sounding words that one gets almost lost in trying to follow. This is not so and is so scriptural, as well as being written to make it interesting to the reader. I have a dear old uncle a few miles from London, England, who regularly has some choice food by way of magazines: *Gospel Standards, Gospel Magazines* and other English monthly free grace magazines, who I felt would enjoy reading the aforementioned article, as well as other matter in the SIGNS, so I sent him the August one. I know the SIGNS is sent over there. Mr. Popham has one any way, and it may be a number of others over there have copies, but I do not think my uncle has had one before. In the village where I am living, of course we have plenty of the "yea and nay" gospel, so that we have to value magazines and letters having a certain sound, perhaps more than some who have gospel privileges regularly, and who hear a complete salvation proclaimed by a servant of the Lord who knows the effects of redeeming love in his own life.

I am a stranger to you, so must not enlarge, but was struck a short time ago by a few remarks made by a minister of the general type, who is however better than many. He was denouncing modernism and instanced a few of their arguments. He claims modernists say that Moses instead of viewing the burning bush as the Bible account gives it, really saw a bush of red berries at night with the moon shinig on it; also Peter when he stepped out of the ship to walk to Jesus really stepped on a sand bar. Oh what sophistry! Anything and everything to belittle the Word which has been the joy and solace of countless numbers all through the ages. May we be delivered from these snares which are laid so plentifully and publicly in these days of great profession.

I inclose a leaflet, "My Company," my uncle sent me. To me it is good. This uncle was a Deacon for over forty years in a Particular Baptist Church in Croydon, near London, England.

May God's richest blessing rest upon your testimony, both in speaking and in the SIGNS, is the prayer of yours sincerely,

JOHN H. DUNKLEY.

[HERE follows a copy of the leaflet sent me by Mr. Dunkley. It emphasizes the salvation of sinners by free grace alone.—H. H. L.]

MY COMPANY.

WE have read of one who dreamed a dream when in great distress of mind about his spiritual state. He thought he stood in the outer court of heaven, and he saw a glorious host marching up, singing sweet hymns, and bearing the banners of victory; and they passed by him through the gate, and when they vanished he heard in the distance sweet strains of music. "Who are they?" he asked. "They are 'the goodly fellowship of the prophets,' who have gone to be with God." He heaved a deep sigh as he said, "Alas I am not one of them, and never shall be, and I cannot enter there."

By-and-by there came another band, equally lovely in appearance, and equally triumphant, and robed in white. They passed within the portals, and again were shouts of welcome heard within. "Who are they?" "They are 'the goodly fellowship of the apostles.'" "Alas!" he said, "I belong not to that fellowship, and I cannot enter there."

He still waited and lingered, in the hope that he might yet go in; but the next multitude did not encourage him, for they were "the noble army of martyrs." He could not go with them, nor wave their palm branches.

He waited still, and saw that the next was a company of godly ministers and officers of christian churches; but he could not go with them.

At last, he walked, he saw a larger host than all the rest put together, marching and singing most melodiously, and in front walked the woman that was a sinner, and the thief that died upon the cross hard by the Savior; and he looked long, and saw there such as Manasseh and the like; and, when they entered, he could see who they were, and he thought, There will be no shouting about them. But, to his astonishment, it seemed as if all heaven was rent with seven-fold shouts as they passed in; and the angels said to him, "These are they that are mighty sinners saved by mighty grace;" and then he said, "Blessed be God! I can go in with *them;*" and so he awoke.

RUTHERFORD, N. J., July 5, 1930.

DEAR SISTER SINCLAIR:—Just why the Lord should have put it into your heart to write to me as you did under date of June 26th, I cannot say, but I do feel to know that I am undeserving of the very least of the mercies which he so bountifully bestows upon me at times. Yesterday and this morning early, I seemed to have a strange feeling overshadowing me. It was as though a deep realization of sin and a fearfulness lest I should fall by the wayside and become a castaway, rested upon me, and it was out of the depths that I was made to cry unto the Lord to save me for his mercy's sake. I was much bowed down with grief and restlessness within, when, lo, and, behold, he came traveling in the greatness of his strength, glorious in his apparel, and my poor soul was so overcome and overjoyed with an onrushing of his Holy Spirit while trying to sing hymn

629 in the Beebe collection that I had to fall on my knees before him with a heart full of thanksgiving and praise for such a visitation to a poor sinner like me. How unspeakably divine his appearings are when we are cast down and feeling forsaken. He is that Good Samaritan who comes to where we are and lifts us out of our distresses. Sometimes we can sing with David, He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the mire and clay; he placed my feet upon a rock; he established my goings; he put a new song in my mouth, and, Oh, how we do delight to praise him for the unspeakable gift of his dear Son, to come down in these low grounds of sorrow and affliction and be made an High Priest whose feelings can be touched with our infirmities. What an intercessor we have. None can ever understand the ecstasy of the soul that is snatched as a brand from the burning and as a beggar from the dung hill to sit with princes, except as it is experienced; then the half cannot be told. I just felt I wanted you to know a little of this precious experience of mine, for it is seldom I can ever soar above the earth as I felt to this morning, and I hope you may be given to witness with me and rejoice in our blessed Lord.

It must seem a sweet privilege to you, as it does to me, to visit in the home of brother and sister Ruston. To me they appear to live very close to the Savior, while I am afar off a great deal of the time. There are times when I can say with Peter, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. How good it is we have One that understands us when we are afar off; one who knows our frame, that we are but dust; one who knows our weakness and inability to perform anything good without him. It is this One who brings us nigh by the blood of his cross, even presenting us to his Father, and may I say our Father, without spot, wrinkle or any such thing. I have nothing but his blood to plead, my dear sister, and, oh, how I do desire to be clothed upon with that righteousness which is from above.

I am glad to hear of the blessings which our heavenly Father is showering down upon his chosen people in Canada, and I pray that you may be a partaker of the joys of his salvation. It is wonderful indeed when his set time to favor Zion is come. Yet there is a mingling of sorrow with joy, for while some are coming into the fold of the visible church it is harvest time with others and they are being gathered to their eternal home above.

"Oh for a stronger faith,
To look within the veil;
To credit what my Savior saith,
Whose words can never fail."

Now, sister Sinclair, I have written as I felt, and if there is any comfort or joy in what I have written for your poor soul, it is all to the praise of his great and glorious grace.

Your brother in Christ, if not deceived,

R. LESTER DODSON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1930.

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THE COVENANTS.

In the ninth chapter of Romans, fourth verse, Paul sets down the seven privileges of Israelites: adoption, glory, covenants, law, service, promises and the fathers. It is only with the covenants that we wish to deal now. A whole volume would be necessary to take up each covenant in detail, so in one short article we can only glance at them. We hear much of two covenants: the first of law, the second of grace. Maybe some think these are all the covenants mentioned in the Bible. There are really several more. The first covenant named in Scripture is in Genesis, first chapter, twenty-eighth to thirtieth verses, and also the second chapter of Genesis, sixteenth and seventeenth verses, and was the covenant under which man lived in the garden of Eden before the fall: "And God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it," &c. All these words set forth man's position in his innocency prior to his transgression whereby he fell under condemnation. How long man lived in Eden before he fell, no one knows. Some think that Adam and Eve transgressed immediately after the law was given them. We can never be sure of this. There may have been quite an interval of time which elapsed between the giving of the commandment and the coming of Satan to tempt them. If so, Adam maintained his integrity only until the temptation came. He stood, therefore, in innocence from the time he was made of the dust of the earth until the tempter's power was exercised against him. How long this interval was is one of God's secrets.

The next covenant is to be found in Genesis, third chapter, from the fourteenth to the nineteenth verses. This sets forth man's condition and environment following upon his transgression. Yet, in the fifteenth verse is held out the promise of deliverance through the seed of the woman, the man Jesus who is the Christ of God to redeem his people from the curse and condemnation ensuing from Adam's sin. Aside from this one ray of light contained in this promise of redemption to come by the woman's Seed, all the rest of this covenant is one of woe and sorrow.

All is the blackness of despair and death save for this hope of victory through the triumph of God manifested in the flesh as the Seed of the woman. Here in this promise of the coming Seed begins the "path of the just" which is to shine more and more unto the perfect day. From this point can be traced through Scripture the footsteps of the Shepherd and his flock.

The third covenant we come to is the covenant God made with Noah, recorded in Genesis, eighth chapter, twenty-first verse. The seal of this was the bow in the cloud in the day of rain. According to this, the Lord will put no more curse upon the ground on account of man than he has already done. The curse put upon the ground under the covenant in Genesis iii. 17, was not here taken away, but the Lord promised to lay no further curse on the earth than he had already done. This curse is not taken away from the ground until we come to the new heavens and new earth, wherein God makes all things new, as is described in the twenty-second chapter of Revelation. "There shall be no more curse." Further, the Lord promised never to smite any more every living thing "as I have done." That is, he will never smite every living thing in the same manner as he did then. He did it then by water, but he will never do that way again. Never again will there be a general destruction of all things by a flood. "I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you, and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh."

The next covenant to which we come is the one made by the Lord with Abram, changing his name to Abraham, and recorded in the last four verses of the fifteenth chapter of Genesis and further ratified in Genesis xvii. 2-8. In Genesis xv. 18-21 is given the boundary lines of the land which God covenanted to give them. In verse eight of the seventeenth chapter of Genesis is God's emphatic word that the chosen people shall occupy, not a part, but ALL the land of Canaan and that it shall be their everlasting possession. So far to date, the Israelites have never possessed it everlastingly. They have had it only for a time, only for a few hundred years. God has given Israel the title-deed to this land in his covenanted word of promise. He will faithfully keep his plighted word and Israel shall yet inherit the desolate heritages. They are cut off from it only for a season until the fullness of the Gentiles be brought in. Again, after the trial of Abraham's faith in the offering up of Isaac, God repeated to Abraham this covenant, thus further ratifying it, as is set down in Genesis xxii. 16-18. After the death of Abraham, the covenant is again confirmed by Jehovah to Isaac, for proof of which see Genesis xxvi. 3, 4, with the repeated assertion that "all these countries" will the Lord give unto Isaac's seed. Yet again, to Jacob at Bethel God gives a further ratification of this covenant. (Gen. xxviii. 13-15.) The fact that the Almighty

gave this covenant to Abraham and then repeated it again and again to him and to his successors is proof enough of the highly important place this covenant holds in the predestination of God. With the exception of the grace covenant which came into force through the blood of Christ, no other, not even the law, occupies the conspicuous place that does this Abrahamic covenant. Even though the law came by Moses afterward, and even though Israel failed utterly to keep the law of Moses, their failure to do so cannot make void the covenant which went before the law. Their disobedience under law resulted in their temporary casting away, but the force and validity of the covenant takes priority over the law and is of sufficient force to graft them in again when the time comes for it to be done. "And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years afterward, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise." This Scripture proves that the transgression of the law by Israel cannot make void their right to the promise made to Abraham. Not all that are Israel after the flesh are the children of Abraham, but so many as are of the faith of Abraham are Israelites indeed, no matter whether they be Jews or Gentiles. If we be Christ's, then are we the seed of Abraham and rightful heirs to the covenant God made with him. The Seed of Isaac is the Christ in whom we believe and hope. It is our relationship with Christ through regeneration that insures our heirship to the promises.

The next covenant, at which we have already hinted, was the law covenant which God made with Israel by the hand of Moses, which law they did break and failed utterly to keep. The whole object of this covenant was to make manifest transgression, to bring about the knowledge of sin and the total depravity of human nature, thus making way for Christ and his redemptive work. This law of Moses consisted of certain commandments which were enjoined upon Israel and certain rites and ceremonies and sacrificial observances which they were to keep. The blessings and punishments that were to come to Israel under this law covenant were conditioned upon their obedience or disobedience. Its provisions were contingent upon the will of the sinner. Of all the covenants named in the Bible, this law covenant is the only one conditioned upon the will of the creature. Its result was absolute failure from the standpoint of the flesh. No righteousness could come by it, nor could justification result from deeds done under it.

We come next to the covenant named in 2 Samuel vii. 16, the promise made to David that his house and his kingdom shall be established forever before God. According to this covenant, God said, "I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a

place of their own, and move no more." God knows they have been moving from place to place for close on two thousand years. "Also the Lord telleth thee, that he will make thee an house." Who will make the house? Why, the Seed of David whom God will raise up, none other than Jesus Christ the Son of God, the Seed of David's royal line. "He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever." This is not to be a temporary kingdom like Israel formerly, but a permanent kingdom that shall have no end. This was seen by the king of Babylon in the dream interpreted for him by Daniel. The stone cut out of the mountain whitout hands would come in the days of those ten kingdoms represented by the ten toes of the image. At its coming, all other kingdoms should pass away and the kingdom of God should fill the whole earth, the throne of David should then be set up for ever, thus would come into fulfillment the promise made to David, the covenant God made with him ordered in all things and sure, the covenant embraced in the successful and universal sovereignty of the kingdom of the Lord. This same thing is announced in Revelation at the blowing of the seventh trumpet, at which time "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."

The seventh and last covenant named in Scripture is set forth in Hebrews viii. 8, and is the "grace" covenant which came into being visibly as the result and effect of the death and resurrection of Christ. This covenant is not of "works," but of "grace." According to it, the "shalls" and "wills" of God make it forceful and its conditions are not hinged upon the will of the sinner. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people," &c. By this new covenant, God made the "first" old. By "first" here is meant the "law" covenant. When we come to examine these seven covenants, we find they resolve themselves into "two." Either they are of "grace" or of "works." These two systems, and only these two, are seen in the seven covenants. The law which came by Moses was a "works" covenant and was the only one of all the seven conditioned upon the voluntary obedience of the sinner. All the other six were what they were because God said so and not because the sinner would or would not do this or that. Thus, with the exception of the Mosaic covenant, all the covenants head up in Christ. Even the law shadowed forth Christ. Away back before time began, God the Father purposed his will in his Son Jesus Christ, choosing his elect in him and predestinating them unto salvation by and through him. According to the good pleasure of his will, he did this. Thus, it is by grace, and not of works. All these covenants declared by the Almighty to his subjects here in the world, make known what is his will

concerning them and what he intends to do for them. All these promises God has made, are executed by the Son and confirmed in fulfillment by the Holy Ghost. Grace is more superabounding than sin and all its works. Grace prevails in all the covenants save one: the law of Moses. It was grace that before the fall placed Adam in supremacy in the garden of Eden, it was grace after the fall that held forth the assurance of redemption through the triumphant Seed of the woman, it was grace that sealed God's faithfulness to Noah in the bow set in the cloud as assurance against further curse. It was grace that gave Abraham favor in God's sight so that He made an everlasting covenant with him, it was grace that gave David the assurance that his kingdom established through Christ should never fail, it is grace that brings the world to the truth of the gospel so that Gentiles through Christ inherit the kingdom, it is grace that will bring Israel dispersed into the position of Israel restored, then shall all Israel, whether Jew or Gentile, be saved with an evrlasting salvation in the Lord our God.

H. H. L.

WE request our subscribers when sending in subscriptions or changes of address to be sure and give the *exact name and address* to which the paper is now coming; otherwise we are liable to give the credit to the wrong person, as we may have two subscribers of the same surname at the one post office.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 22.

"FOR as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

This thought expressed by the apostle Paul has had much meditation by all biblical scholars, and has been our meditation for several days. We will pen for the readers of the SIGNS some of our thoughts, which are submitted in love, and we trust the Spirit of God will guide us and that all will be in accord with holy writ. The apostle Paul, in the Scripture preceding our text, testifies as to the authority by which he preaches the gospel, as well as the other apostles, in which he said, "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures; and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time."—1 Cor. xv. 3-8. This is the authority the apostle gives for his right to testify of the truth as it is in Jesus. The first part of the subject quoted takes us back to the beginning of the world, when Adam was in the garden of Eden, when Eve was beguiled to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which brought Adam into the condemnation which God decreed when he told him, In the day

thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. The word "die," according to Webster, means cease to live; expire; perish; wither; languish; so in whatever state of being Adam was before the beguiling took place he died, which expresses he ceased to live in that state of life in which God created him, and, according to the Scriptures, he became dead in trespasses and sin, which puts him out entirely from the garden of Eden, and has sold himself for naught and not a farthing to pay. Thus death passed upon Adam before multiplication of his seed. All that existed at the time of Adam's transgression were Adam and Eve. Eve was beguiled and deceived, but Adam was not deceived, but took the fruit from his helpmeet. (1 Tim. ii. 14.) So Adam was a willful transgressor of God's holy law and had no life in himself to put off the death in which the sin that was conceived brought forth; so death passed upon all in that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and are just as dead from the first existence of Adam as though he was never in the garden of Eden, but must continue in the state and condition of Adam after the transgression until the end which God has appointed for every one of Adam's fallen race. There is a great cry by the offspring of Adam in this state of death to try and get life, or do and live, or get eternal life. The thought for one moment would teach us that anything which is dead is without life and cannot produce life. We continue in the way of death until the God of all power brings us from the dead, quickens us and makes us alive, and when made alive that individual will manifest death to sin, for he that is dead to sin cannot live any longer therein. The first Adam is quickened by the Spirit which is the life or soul of the second Adam; then the conscience of the first Adam has been purged from dead works to serve the living God. The poor sinner who realizes these things knows the perishing things of the flesh and feels to be continually doing the things he would not, and the things he would do he does not. This proves the virtue of the spirit that teaches that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, and to the apostle Paul it appears as a mighty army warring against the mighty army of the flesh, which made him say, Thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory. This warfare continues as long as that poor sinner sojourns in this life, which makes him a pilgrim and a stranger in the earth, and his only companions are those of like virtue. The exercises of mind and heart of every christian sinner are by faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, hence we have the natural and spiritual in one individual, and he will continue until death, for the natural man perishes to be swallowed up by the spiritual, into eternal life, to ever dwell in the presence of God as the bride of his Son. To be pure, soul, body and spirit, as the Son of God, as one declared, As I awake in thy likeness, I shall be satisfied. There is much

speculation about the manifested life of a child of God in this life's pilgrimage after he is quickened and made alive, which cannot be given out according to the reason of carnality, but must be manifested by the Spirit. We know by our own nature that if there was not power greater than that born in our flesh we would not have forbearance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness or charity, and we hope we have some of these virtues wrought in us by him who worketh and none can hinder. God decreed that Adam was dust and unto dust must return. This returning to dust is the dissolution of the natural body, and when life passes out from the body then the body will decay, so we have the end of natural existence, as we speak of things in a biblical sense, but God's work is eternal and must continue above all principalities and powers, so the princes of this world cannot change the mind and purpose of God in the salvation of his people, for it was all wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places. (Eph. i. 20.) And all the powers of men and devils cannot fathom the depths of his riches and glory, or the glorification of his saints, but they shall be like his Son, as the apostle Paul writes in this same chapter, and declares that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, which testifies that relations of flesh and blood do not give any mortal an inheritance in the kingdom of God, or the corruption of this world inherit the incorruption of heaven and immortal glory. In the relation of our subject we are dead in trespasses and sin and die and return to dust in the first Adam; in the second Adam we are quickened and made alive and kept by his power through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, raised from mortality to immortality, from corruption to incorruption. Paul says the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed, for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. xv. 55-57. The above does not justify or set forth that sinners saved by grace will know one another as it is here in this mortal state, for we note the word of God declaring that we shall be changed and our vile bodies shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. (Phil. iii. 21.) As we die in the first Adam we shall live in Christ in the second Adam. After all of our exercises of thought and realization we are lost in the wonderful workings of God's almighty power, and we can truly say that he works and none can hinder; hinders and none can work. We know we are passing on at a rapid pace and must soon quit the

walks of men, and we know of a certainty of death, the shortness of life and the all-eternity which is for us all; we question the order of our course in this life and we are found wanting, which makes us know that without him we are nothing, and less than nothing and vanity. Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty; it loosens the shackles of death and makes his people free. We would love to manifest life and depart from iniquity. We hate the deception that is in our flesh, and to see it manifested by those who stand upon the watchwalls of Zion gives us an agony of soul through the household of faith, and they question, Do they love Jesus and his bride, and are they friends of the Bridegroom? We cannot manifest life by the flesh, but when life is manifested it is Christ in us working both to will and to do of his good pleasure, so that every one that nameth the name of Christ departeth from iniquity. (2 Tim. ii. 19.)

C. W. V.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. W. Linn.)

The Tygarts Valley River Association of Old School or Primitive Baptists, now in session with the Amnon Church, Marion County, West Virginia, to the several churches of which she is composed, and to all of the faith of God's elect, sendeth christian greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is through the tender mercy of the all-wise God that we are spared to meet one another in an associate capacity of our churches in keeping up a friendly correspondence among us, who meet, as we hope, to worship the God of Israel, and have no confidence in the flesh. Our only hope is in the God of the whole earth, who has all power in heaven and in earth, and when he was here in the flesh he did his Father's will; he finished the work, and died and rose again for the justification of his people, who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Now Jesus came to do his Father's will, and this is my Father's will, that of all that thou giveth me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. Now, then, who were they who were given to his Son in the covenant of grace before the world began? Well, they were the elect, who were chosen in him, the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife, who were bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, so very near akin to him that we cannot be separated from him, for he said, Whosoever doeth the will of my Father, the same is my brother and sister and mother. Then this union is very close. So Jesus died to save the church, his people, and they are his by gift, and by redemption, and his people are chosen out of all nations of the earth, and they were blessed in Abraham, blessed with Abraham, and they were blessed as a seed, a holy seed in all the nations of the earth. Thy seed shall be blessed. Abraham was called out from his kindred, from

his country, led out. So as many as are led of the Spirit are the children of God. Then if led by the Spirit, it is not of works on our part, but it is by promise. God, who promised, cannot lie, and in blessing this people, the seed, which are Christ's and the church, they were blessed before they were born into this world and they receive the blessing while they are here in time, and in eternity, according as the blessing was made in Abraham, and all things are theirs, whether it be life or death it is theirs. They are killed to sin and made alive in righteousness which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. We hear people claiming that it is left with man to choose or reject the Spirit, that the Spirit comes to every man some time in his life and knocks at the door of his heart, wanting him to open the door of his heart and let the Spirit come in and take possession of him. Now let us see: "As the rain cometh down, and the snow, from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." So you see "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," so then the rain just comes down upon the earth and the earth has no power to resist its coming down upon it, and it waters the earth, and the earth cannot turn it away. His word which goeth out of his mouth does not return unto him empty or void, but prospers in the thing whereunto he sends it, so when Jesus comes to the sinner's heart he opens the heart, just as he did Lydia's heart, and makes him attentive to the things which are spoken. I will take away the stony heart and give them a heart of flesh. The law is written in their hearts and imprinted in their minds, and they shall be his people and he will be their God. Peter said, What was I that I could withstand God? And Paul said, I was not disobedient to the heavenly calling. So then man's opinions and ways are not God's ways, for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's ways higher than man's ways. But they still contend that if you hear his voice you are to harden not your heart. Now let us notice the Scriptures and see who it is that hear his voice. Jesus said, My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me, and they that hear shall live. He said again, concerning some who hear not his voice, "Ye have not heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape." No, not at any time. So you see that every one does not hear his voice, nor see his shape. His shape is hid from the vulture's eye and from the lion's whelp. His shape is with all power and all dominion. Having the

keys of life and death, his voice is like the lightning, and the thunder's roar; it kills and it makes alive; it causes us to love that which we once hated, and to hate that which we once loved. So to-day if you hear his voice, harden not your hearts, for to-day is the day of salvation, now is the accepted time. Yes, it is to-day, not yesterday, but to-day, when you hear his voice, for, My sheep shall hear my voice in that day. The gospel day, the day of his mighty power, when it awakens the dead sinner and gives him life. Then this is the accepted time. I will receive you now, for you are made accepted in the Beloved, being reconciled to God by the death of his Son. Yesterday being the day of the law time and place, and you in your sins being enemies to me, I would not accept you, because your hearts were evil and stony, but to-day when you heard my voice I took away that old stony heart and gave you a new heart. It prepared you to be accepted with me, for you were vanished under the law from me, but not expelled from me, so I have devised the means to bring my vanished that they should not be expelled from me. Yes, Jesus is the only means devised, he has done it all, nothing for you to help him in, he finished the work.

May the Lord keep us in peace. Amen.

J. S. MURPHY, Moderator.
J. R. DENNISON, Clerk.
B. D. MURPHY, Ass't Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, in joint session with the several churches composing the same, convening at Baltimore City, Maryland, May 14th, 15th and 16th, 1930, sends greetings to our sister associations and meetings of our correspondence.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been our privilege once again to meet and receive your messengers and correspondence. We feel that we have been wonderfully blessed by our dear Savior to again hear the wonderful gospel of salvation by grace through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ our Lord. We hope that if it be God's will we will be able to be with you again next year.

Our next session will be announced later.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.
E. A. JOHNSON, Ass't Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the First Hopewell Church, Hopewell, Mercer County, New Jersey, to her sister associations with which she corresponds, sends greeting.

DEAR BBETHREN:—We are glad to report that our meeting at this time has been in perfect peace and fellowship and we have heard no discordant note. The preaching has been in the demonstration of the spirit and love of our Lord Jesus Christ. Your messengers coming to us at this time has been as the shadow of a great rock in a weary

land, and as you go from us we feel to bid you Godspeed, hoping we may meet again.

Our next session will be held on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the first Sunday in June, 1931, the place of which will be given due notice in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

C. W. VAUGHN, Mod.
DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in joint session with the several churches composing the same, convening at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, June 4th, 5th and 6th, 1930, sends christian greetings to our sister associations and meetings of our correspondence.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year has passed and we have once more the blessed privilege of receiving your messengers and correspondence in our midst, and we feel that it has been a profitable meeting, where we have heard the truth preached as it is in Jesus, which is for the upbuilding of his people and to the glory of God. May the Lord continue to bless us with his presence and to give us understanding hearts.

Our next session is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1931, the place of meeting to be announced later through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, when we hope to meet your messengers again.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
HENRY T. LEFFERTS, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

CORNELIUS GILBERT MILLER was born in Allen County, Ohio, May 3rd, 1861, and after an eventful life on August 26th, 1930, he departed to be with Christ, which is far better, making his stay on earth 69 years, 3 months and 23 days. Brother Miller was the youngest of nineteen children. His father, John Miller, was married, after the departure of his first wife, to Mrs. Nancy A. Hammond, whose maiden name was Hamilton. She was the widow of Mr. Andrew Hammond. The writer has no way of obtaining the time of the death of Mr. Miller's first wife, neither has he the record giving the date of Mr. Hammond's death, but some time after his (Hammond's) death brother Miller's father was united in marriage to Mr. Hammond's widow. This union was blessed with four children, of whom brother Miller was the youngest, and counting all his brothers in the flesh he was the youngest of nineteen children. Some time in early manhood he felt the plague of his own heart and in due time, the good and proper time, he was given peace in believing, and made to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Brother Miller was received into the fellowship of Sugar Creek Old School or Primitive Baptist Church. He gave a good reason of his hope, and after being baptized, the second Sunday in September, 1884, by Elder J. G. Ford, he was admitted to all the privileges of the church. In December, 1885, he was united in marriage to Miss Alice Blosser, of Kalida, the oldest town in Putnam County, Ohio. This union was blessed with six shildren; two sons and four daughters. The sons are Johnathan G. and Albert G. Three daughters preceded him to the grave, one being removed by death at the tender age of nineteen months. The surviving daughter is Mrs. Annie Jones, of Fair Play, California. The record shows that brother and sister Miller were received (in full fellowship) by letter and numbered with Refuge Old School Baptist Church. Sister Miller was baptized by Elder Ford the second Sunday in October, 1886. In 1906 they moved to Helena, Oklahoma, and Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, yet contending for Old School or Bible faith, received them by relation. In 1908 they moved from Oklahoma to New Mexico, thence to Texas, where he worked with the carpenters building barracks, &c., then they moved to Tucson, Arizona, thence to Riverside, California. Here he filled up his measure of suffering allotted to him, fell asleep and was gathered to his Father. All that was mortal was laid to rest (to await the final triumph) Friday morning, August 29th, 1930. We shall see his face no more in this life, yet we hope through rich and reigning grace to meet him in the life to come.

Written by one who loved him for the truth's sake,

T. D. WALKER.

BURGESS HARRIS SHEARON was born May 20th, 1858, in Cheatham County, Tennessee, and died September 8th, 1930, at his home in Clarksville, Tennessee, aged 72 years, 3 months and 18 days. He was twice married. To the first union seven children were born, five of whom are now living, four boys: William, Charles, Lelard and Hutton Shearon, one daughter: Mrs. James Jenette, all of Tennessee. His second marriage, which occurred December 26th, 1912, was to Nina Wood, who survives him. In early life he became a believer in the doctrine of election, predestination and salvation by grace. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Half Pone, Cheatham County, remaining faithful and walking worthily until the end. The Red River Association met in August of this year, and at that time he was on a bed of affliction, where he had been confined for several months. On awakening early one morning he asked his wife, Why could we not arrange to have our friends here in our home as we have always done during this association, and have preaching also? His wife agreed to if he thought it would not worry him. He replied that the fellowship of God's children was now all he had left. He then asked her to write to me to come and help during the meeting, and it was my pleasure to be in the home for two weeks. Such a spirit of humbleness, love and sweet fellowship for the saints of God had never been my lot to see previous to that occasion. Words cannot express the beauty of it all, the earnestness, heartfelt love and charity with which he planned all arrangements for taking care of his friends. Friday afternoon friends from adjoining States and counties began coming to the home. Monday the association closed and some of the friends departed with sad goodbyes and tears. The dear brother seemed stronger in spirit, but weaker in body. Monday night Elder L. D. Seals, a great friend and favorite of brother Shearon, spoke very beautifully and earnestly of that city not built with hands, and dear brother Shearon said, I wish I was there now. He bore his suffering without complaint or murmuring, and often in the night sang songs of praise to the great King of kings and Lord of lords, asking and begging for mercy for every trial and pain. When the end was near he spoke of finding his home, and sang in his feeble voice, Oh what must it be to be there? Repeating, To be there, to be there. Then he was peacefully carried over the river of death by the great Three-in-One, never to return to this unfriendly world. To those who mourn, especially to his sorrowing companion who is now left alone, I would say, Weep not as those who have no hope.

By his request his funeral was conducted at the home by Elders L. D. Seals and W. T. Clayton, and was attended by a sorrowing gathering of friends; burial was in the cemetery near the old church. The large congregation spoke of the esteem in which he was held among the Baptists and his community. This effort on my part to write a few words seems weak when I think of his patience and endurance. A noble man from us is gone. He was a good soldier of the cross, a faithful husband, a loving father and a friend to mankind. I can truthfully say that I feel the loss deeply and sorrowfully, but we all will rejoice when we are caught up in the Spirit on the Lord's day.

EFFIE BLOGG.

THOMAS DURDLE was born May 11th, 1850, and departed this life September 23rd, 1925, at the home of his sister-in-law, Mrs. George C. Smith. He was married to Anna Elizabeth Bateman April 12th, 1882, and to that union was born one son, Francis B. Durdle, of Walkerville, where they made their home. He and his wife came about a week before Mr. Smith passed away, and were going to stay for a while. We could see him gradually failing untl he was compelled to go to bed for about eleven days, then he rallied and was around for a few days and seemed to be gaining. His wife awakened, and was shocked to find he had passed away. He was a lover of the truth, but felt his unworthiness. He was not able to talk of the things he loved and would sometimes say, Why cannot I speak? but I cannot say a word about the things I love. He loved the church and the people.

His funeral was conducted by Elder J. B. Slauson, and his body was buried in St. Thomas Cemetery.

ALSO,

ANNA ELIZABETH BATEMAN, wife of the late Thomas **DURDLE,** was born February 13th, 1854, and died at the home of her son, in Walkerville, April 14th, 1930. She was married to Thomas Durdle April 12th, 1882, and to that union was born one son, Francis B. Durdle, at whose home she made her home in winter, after her husband's death, and in summer with her sister, Mrs. George C. Smith, of Ekfrid. She was of a cheerful, happy dispositon, never made a profession, but was a lover of the truth and always attended meetings when she could, and loved to mingle with the brethren and sisters. She leaves to mourn their loss five sisters: Mrs. E. S. Crouch, of Bothwell; Mrs. George C. Smith, of Ekfrid; Mrs. Neil G. Blue, of Wallacetown; Mrs. Duncan M. Gillis, of Murkirk; Mrs. J. L. Young, of New York City. One brother and three sisters preceded her to the grave.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder George Ruston at a funeral parlor in St. Thomas, to which city her body was taken for burial.

ALSO,

GEORGE C. SMITH, son of William and Jane Ann Corneil Smith, was born in Caradoc, March 6th, 1850. He was married to Miss Pheme Campbell January 28th, 1886, who died October

12th, 1887. He was of a quiet, retiring disposition, very honorable, and a man of very fine feelings. When in health he was always ready to give a helping hand to the suffering and those in need. He attended the Primitive Baptist meetings from childhood, and loved the doctrine. He never made a public profession, but felt his sinfulness and depravity, and mourned on account of his sin, and knew his only hope of salvation was in the dear Savior, and would say, Without him I am lost forever. December 28th, 1904, he married Margaret Bateman Anderson. He had poor health for several years because of paralysis and high blood preasure, and was confined to his bed for five months and was a great sufferer at times. He passed peacefully away August 1st, 1925. His only brother and sister died many years ago.

Funeral services were conducted at his home by Elder J. B. Slauson, and burial was in Longwood Cemetery.

M. SMITH.

JOHN T. WILSON, eldest son of the late Alexander Wilson and Sarah Jane Clendenin, died at his home, near Newark, Delaware, May 22nd, 1930, in the 77th year of his age, in the same home where he was born and where he had lived all his life. While he had never been strong and rugged in health like some, yet he outlived his brother, William R. Wilson, who died in 1917, and his sister, Mrs. Lidie Barton, who died in 1909. He had not been well for a year prior to his death, in April he became confined to his bed and grew steadily weaker until the end. He was afflicted with an intestinal malady not uncommon among the aged. He leaves a widow and one daughter, Mrs. Sarah Slack, both living at home. One daughter, Anna, died in 1917. He was a faithful attendant of the meetings at Welsh Tract Baptist Church all his life and believed the doctrine held by the Old School Baptists. I am sure he would have liked to unite with the church but his unworthiness kept him from it. Mr. Wilson was esteemed by all who knew him for his honesty and upright moral character. We shall miss him in our meetings. It was my privilege to visit him during his last illness, at which time he confessed to me his faith and trust in the Lord, his hope of salvation in the blood of Jesus Christ, his unfailing belief in the sovereignty of God. At these times, also, he mentioned his unworthiness which had kept him from uniting with the church, and expressed his desire that the Lord might soon take him home, that he had no fear of death and anticipated the end with no anxiety.

The funeral services were held Sunday, May 25th, Elder D. L. Topping officiating. He spoke from the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians. "Asleep in Jesus" was sung at the grave. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. May the Spirit of Jesus comfort those who mourn.

H. H. L.

JASPER MUTCHLAR was born April 18th, 1838, and died July 16th, 1930, near Delaware, Ohio, in his 93rd year. Mr. Mutchlar was drafted into the Union Army, and served in the Heavy Artillery for four year, without receiving a scratch. Later he moved to the State of Kansas, where he resided on a farm. After three failures in crops he came back to Ohio and settled near Delaware, Ohio, where he remained until death. December 24th, 1867, he married Miss Mary Wilson, a sister in the church at Pleasant Hill, near Delaware. Sister Mutchlar died thirty years ago; I officiated at her funeral, the second one I ever preached, and during all these years the Mutchlar home has been one of my stopping-places. His daughter Amy kept the home together, and it was a pleasure to the Baptists, especially those who came by train, to stop and enjoy the hospitality of both sister Mutchlar and her husband and daughter. According to arrangements made some years ago, I spoke at the funeral, and tried to comfort them with the thought that death was not the end. We laid his body to rest beside his wife in the cemetery near by. May the Lord reconcile us all and enable us to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

JOHN SAMUEL MOORE, the subject of this notice, was born December 7th, 1848, and died June 30th, 1930. The writer had known Mr. Moore for about forty-five years, and can truthfully say that during all my acquaintance with him he appeared to me to be as nearly a model man as I almost ever met. He was a Bible reader, and always seemed interested in the Bible and religious conversation. I have seen him many times in my congregation when I was trying to preach, and I was always sure that when I made a point in my talk it met a hearty response from him. Although we lived forty miles apart, yet I have spent many happy hours in his pleasant home with him and his kind-hearted companion, Mrs. Estelle Lathrop, whom he married on the twenty-fourth day of April, 1912, and lived happily with her until God called him hence, and she served him faithfully in his last sickness. He never joined the church, but was a firm believer in, and very much devoted to, the Old School, or faith, and was ever ready to contribute to them and help them in a financial way. He left evidence behind to lead us to believe that he was a child of God and is now enjoying the inheritance of the redeemed family at God's right hand.

G. W. BERRY.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

BROTHER J. B. Bowden, having changed his address to 737 Delmar Street, San Antonio, Texas, requests his correspondents to address him at that place.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Lucy J. Wilson, N. Y., $2.25; Mrs. Florence B. Paxson, Va., $5; Mrs. R. P. Trimble, Mo., $3; Mrs. M. Perry, Ark., $1; Mrs. Mary A. Drew, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Kate Lunsford, Ky., $1.

MEETINGS.

Providence permitting, the Mt. Zion Association of Regular Baptists will convene the first Friday after the fourth Saturday in September (October 3rd, 4th and 5th) 1930, with Little Flock Church, in Cass County, Missouri. Those coming in cars can come on Highway No. 71 to Harrisonville, then on No. 7 north four and one-half miles, then west one-quarter of a mile to the Old Rock Road, then north directly to the meetinghouse. Or take Highway No. 50 to No. 7, through Pleasant Hill south two and one-half miles, then west on Old Rock Road directly to the meetinghouse. Those coming by train come on Missouri Pacific Railroad to Pleasant Hill and call 807 F 31, and conveyance will be there. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to be with us.

(MRS.) J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk.
R. R. 4, PLEASANT HILL, Missouri.

The Fairview Church, at Needmore, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, has agreed to hold a two days meeting Saturday and Sunday, October 11th and 12th, 1930. Trains will be met at Hancock, provided notification is sent beforehand to the writer of this notice, or to brother Jeff Mellott, Needmore, Pennsylvania. Those coming by auto can easily reach the place of meeting over good State Road either from Hancock, Maryland, or from Harrisonville, Pennsylvania. We desire to have all who will, come and meet with us.

ROLLA MELLOTT, Church Clerk
PLUM RUN, Pennsylvania.

There will be an all-day meeting in the New Vernon meetinghouse, New Vernon, N. Y., on October 13th (Columbus Day), 1930. Elder Arnold Bellows expects to be with us. We would be glad to see a goodly number at this meeting.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 15th, 16th and 17th, 1930. Those coming by rail will be met at Leesburg Tuesday afternoon and evening and Wednesday morning. Trains leave Rosslyn, Va. terminal for Leesburg at 2, 5, 5:30 and 6:30 p. m. and 7:30 a. m. From Union Station, in Washington, D. C., take electric cars marked "Rosslyn," and go to end of line and there take trains to Leesburg. All lovers of truth and ministers of our faith and order are invited to meet with us.

R. C. GARRETT, Church Clerk.

The Welsh Tract Church has appointed her yearly meeting to begin on Saturday, October 18th, 1930, at 3 o'clock p. m., and continue two days. Those coming from Philadelphia, please take train leaving at 1:20 p. m., B. & O. station, for Newark, Delaware, where they will be met. We expect Elder Lefferts and another minister to be with us. A cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to hear God's word preached.

P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

The Salisbury Association is appointed to convene with the Forest Grove Church on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1930. Trains will be met Tuesday evening at Salisbury, Maryland, in order that any coming by train may be taken care of and conveyed to places of entertainment. Those coming by bus or automobile will please go to the Primitive Baptist Home, in Salisbury, where a committee will await them during Tuesday before the meeting, to direct them to the Forest Grove members' and friends' homes for entertainment. Those coming Wednesday, or any day of the meeting, will go direct to the meetinghouse, near Parsonsburg, Maryland, by simply inquiring for the Forest Grove Old School Baptist Church, about seven miles from Salisbury. All interested in our meetings are invited, and will be most cordially welcomed. It is hoped that all ministering brethren of our faith and order who can come will do so.

J. R. LAYFIELD, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at the home of sister E. Brunow, 411 N. Ridgeway Avenue, and on the second, third and fourth Sundays at the home of brother W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. The fifth Sundays are by appointment. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastors, Elders Jones and Janes.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

Little Flock Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every first and third Sunday at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, at 1 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Cane Run Predestinarian Old School Baptist Church, of Turners Station, Kentucky, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 10:30 a. m., also, the Sulphur Fork Church of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, of the same faith and order, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 2:30 p. m.

GEO. L. WEAVER, Pastor.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

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These Bibles are printed on a good quality of paper, in large, clear type, and contain Marginal References, a complete system of helps, with a good Concordance, and many other things which space will not permit us to mention. Size of page 8⅝x5½ inches. Bound in French Seal Leather, with extended covers, red under gilt edge. The "Open Flat" Binding on these Bibles is far superior to any method of binding yet devised. Its many advantages over all other Bible bindings will be at once apparent. The Bible will lie open absolutely flat. The back of the Bible will at all times retain its shape. With this perfect binding the Bible will not break in the back. This is a Bible we know will please our people. Price $4.50 each. Postage paid by us. Any person wishing one of these books can secure one by sending us eight new yearly subscriptions.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 98. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1930. NO. 11.

POETRY.

PRAISE YE THE LORD.

(PSALMS CXLVIII.)

Oh my heart is filled with singing,
And my tongue would speak the praise
Of my God, the Lord of glory,
He who rules from age to age.

Praise the Lord, for he has mercy,
Knows each burden that we bear,
And his grace will prove sufficient
For the children of his care.

Praise him when the way is lonely,
He has trod the way before,
And his people following after,
Trial and sorrow must endure.

Praise him, all ye host of angels,
Praise him, all ye sons of men,
Praise him, saints, adore him ever,
He who is the sinner's friend.

Praise him, all ye stars of heaven,
Praise him, sun, and moon, and earth;
Praise the Lord, the God who ruleth,
He who gave creation birth.

Praise him, all ye men and maidens,
Praise him, fire, and hail, and snow,
Praise him, mountains, hills and valleys,
Praise him, all ye winds that blow.

Praise him when he stills the tempest,
And from trouble sets thee free;
May each day of joy or sorrow
Unto him thy praises be.

Praise the Lord in tribulation,
Praise him when the way is peace;
Praise him only, he is holy,
May his praises never cease.

Praise him while on earth we linger,
And when time shall close its door,
May our voices, joined in chorus,
Praise the Lord for evermore.

FLOSSIE I. FAULKNER.

THE LORD A REFUGE.

(PSALMS IX. 9.)

The Lord thus often proves to me
A refuge when his world I flee;
I tell him of my grief and care,
And breathe into his listening ear;
I tell him of my sin and pride;
He knows it all, I could not hide
A thing from him who all things knows,
At whose command creation rose.
I plead for mercy in the name
Of his dear Son, who bore the shame
And died for sinners on the tree;
I hope that suffering was for me.
If I am one for whom he died,
The dear Redeemer crucified,
Why should I grieve at my loss?
His people all must bear the cross.
To walk, and suffer with him, too,
Is given to but a chosen few;
Thus when he bids me seek his face,
He grants access to the throne of grace;
His promises to my soul are sent,
And I go on my way content.
But not always is it so with me,
Though looking to Christ I fain would be;
But sin and Satan prepare a snare,
And I wander far ere I'm aware.
'Tis then I seek, and seek in vain,
My God is gone, my soul complains;
I cry to heaven, I sink to hell,
He answeres not, I cannot tell
Whither to go my Lord to find;
I mourn alone, with a restless mind.

I doubt his love, I fear for care,
And hate the doubts, but still they're there
I'm sick, and poor, and vile, and mean,
And need his mercy to make me clean.
He's my beloved, my highest prize,
'Tis needful that he me chastise.
When he afflicts, 'tis done in love,
That I may his salvation prove.
I beg, and plead, and cry, and trust,
"Dear Lord, have mercy, I'm only dust."
In his own time he smiles again,
My woe is past, I'm healed of pain;
Thus do I often have to prove
The power of redeeming love;
No arm but his could help me so,
No other source to whom to go.
Dear Lord, teach me to thankful be,
And humbly look to only thee;
Thou art a rock, a sure defense,
A tower of omnipotence.

FLOSSIE I. FAULKNER.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GOD'S CARE FOR HIS PEOPLE.

"FOR thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth."—1 Kings xvii. 14.

At the beginning of the chapter Elijah told Ahab that "as the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." The reason for this judgment of the Lord upon Israel is seen at the close of the preceding chapter: "And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him." As soon as the punishment of the disobedient Israelites was commanded the Lord turned to his faithful servant Elijah to provide for him. He was commanded to go eastward and to hide by the brook Cherith that is before Jordan. "And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there." According to all the laws of nature, and to the natural reason and understanding of man, the prospect was anything but cheerful. The brook would dry up, so far as receiving sustenance from the filthy ravens was concerned, it would seem that anything eatable coming in their way would be instantly devoured by them. If Elijah had the least doubt as to his safety (which I doubt) there is no record of it. His faith told him that there was nothing too hard for the Lord. Like Abraham, his faith told him what the Lord promised he was able to perform. (Rom. iv. 21.) And then he abode by the brook Cherith, fed bread and flesh morning and evening by the ravens, and drinking of the water of the brook. The record does not tell how long Elijah lived by the brook, but says that after awhile the brook dried up. Now the water of the brook did not dry up all at once, but little by little, day by day there was less water, until a day came when there was no water. Here was another trial of the faith of Elijah, but that God-given faith did not desert him. "And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarepath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. So he arose, and went to Zarepath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks." There she was, the one who was to feed him, the first person he saw by the gate, and he called to her to bring him water and also a morsel of bread in her hand. The

answer he got was, "As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die." There is her desperate plight: one scant meal and then starvation. But Elijah's faith was unshaken. He told her to "go, and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and thy son." Then came the promise at the head of this article: "For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth." The widow believed in Elijah's God, for, mark you, she said to him, As the Lord thy God liveth. She believed in a living God, and faith was given her to take this stranger in and feed him and believe that it would be as Elijah told her: "The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail." There always has been, there is to-day, and there will be so long as time lasts, a "remnant according to the election of grace" who know that God's tender mercy and loving care for his people will never fail. The barrel of meal represents the material necessities of this life, and the cruse of oil the unfailing grace of the eternal God. All those who believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, have that faith, without which it is impossible to please God.

But to return to Elijah. There was still another sore trial for that poor widow woman. Her child sickened and died in her arms. "And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?" She was perplexed. She could not understand why this great bereavement had come upon her. It is quite probable that in taking Elijah in she felt that she was doing a great service unto the Lord, and that she was looking for an ultimate reward, and when this blow fell her eyes were turned within, and, like all true believers, she saw her nothingness in God's sight. The narrative goes on to relate how Elijah took the child to his room and ultimately returned him to his mother's arms. Then the widow's doubts and unbelief were all swept away, and she was made to declare, "I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." We do not in these "last days" see miracles performed as in the above narrative, or as in the days of Christ on earth, yet the same Spirit of truth works in the hearts of God's people to-day as was manifested then. The God of all grace is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Therefore God's loving-kindness changes not. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth; to the Jew

first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."—Rom. i. 16, 17. That faith tells them that as their days so shall their strength be. "The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail." Oh no, the all-seeing eye is ever upon his people.

"The steps that I take,
And the station I fill,
My Father determined,
And wrote in his will."

David wrote, "For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee."—Psalms lxxxvi. 5. "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them."—Deut. xxxiii. 26, 27.

JAMES E. HUBBARD.

RANDOLPH, Maine.

RIDGETOWN, Ontario, Nov. 12, 1929.

MY DEAR AUNT SARAH:—A heavenly joy is upon my soul! Words cannot describe how gracious the Lord of glory is to my heart, how exceedingly tender in all my weakness. Surely, indeed, he is the lover of my soul, for he has made me to feel the nearness of his blessed Spirit and the strength of his might supporting me. He has crowned my head with joy and filled my mouth with laughter. I felt on reading the first hymn that they were my words there:

"When all thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view, I'm lost
In wonder, love and praise.

Oh how shall words, with equal warmth,
The gratitude declare,
That glows within my ravished heart,
But thou canst read it there."

O, Aunt Sarah, my pen fails to tell you how happy I am. And why? Because I cried unto the Lord and he heard me. I prayed that if it was his will I should ask a name with his people on this earth that he would strengthen me and I should not be afraid, but joyful, as others have described in their experience of joinig the church, and oh, how like his abundant mercy, when I begged a crumb, as it were, he filled me with good things. May I be found praising his holy name from time and to eternity. My Beloved! I hope and pray that I may be spared from bringing shame to that holy name I have been baptized in. That holy ordinance of baptism was most beautiful to me. The water looked lovely, and though under natural conditions my body would have shrunk from being covered in its cold depths, yet that day I could hardly wait; not a shadow of fear crossed my mind, only the sweetest joy I have ever experienced. When the people sang, as Elder Ruston led me into the water:

"I'm not ashamed to own my Lord,
Or to defend his cause,
Maintain the glory of his cross,
And honor all his laws.

Jesus, my Lord, I know his name,
His name is all my boast;
Nor will he put my soul to shame,
Nor let my hope be lost."

I realized how far from a feeling of shame I felt. Oh no, it is the greatest

honor I have ever had conferred on me before the world. I rejoice in the holy name of him in whom I believe it was his holy will I should be baptized. Think of it, baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit! The wonder of it is too high for me, but I know that if some great being had the power to lay at my feet all the honors of the whole world, yes, the world itself, in exchange for this "Name," I could not exchange it. Yet I remember my weakness, and know that if the dear Lord left me for a moment I should fall as poor, loving Peter did when denying the Lord he loved so much. I do not say these things of my own strength, for I cannot; I am all weakness. Aunt Sarah, the thought has been often on my mind this summer and fall about coming to the church, and I felt it was hard to get up and leave the meeting, especially on the morning of the Duart meeting on Saturday, but I was made to feel that the time had not yet come for my liberation. However, it seemed much on Elder Ruston's mind to encourage me at that time, but I felt I would never come in my own strength, and, to the glory of the Lord, I did not. But I felt that when the services were over Sunday afternoon of the Duart meeting that the church would not be meeting again until at the May meeting and I would not have a chance to speak again until then, and I felt really disappointed. But see how loving and kind the Lord is to me: I learned, before I left for home that afternoon, that the church was meeting in the near future, and, if it were the Lord's will, I knew I could speak then. The thought was much on my mind every day from then on. It seemed a very great thing, even to think of it, for one so unworthy. Nevertheless, God seemed to favor me wonderfully with a decision of mind, and it seemed clear to me that I should do what my face had been set to do from the first. So sweet did the baptism of the eunuch seem to me, and I felt the Spirit of the Lord was near in my heart, comforting me in every little fear or dread that arose there. The words, Go, and I shall go with thee, were whispered again and again in my soul. So my spirit was not left in distress and confusion. No, it was very clear to me, and a spirit of joy and lightness was upon me. O my Lord and my God, whose name I am not worthy to speak, may I be continually found at the feet of my dear brethren, with the love of God, which passes describing, in my heart for them, and for our Elder Brother, even the Lord Jesus, who died that his people might have just such fullness of joy as I am experiencing. A little dread was in my heart lest that joy would be taken from me soon after my baptism, but it is not so, for it seems to increase as I meditate upon these things.

I have written all this about myself and have not asked you how you and Cousin Chris are. I was very sorry to get Tom's note and learn of your condition, but I know, dear soul, that even in great trouble you can rejoice with such a beloved Jesus to be near you—your strength and your salvation, yea,

your beloved Savior. I know how happy you will be to hear of the five baptisms on Sunday, and especially to know that your niece, who loves you, was among those favored ones. I know you can rejoice in my joy. I know your heart is satisfied that I am your little sister through baptism in that one Name, though I am unworthy indeed. I regretted that you could not be at church when I spoke, with great difficulty, because my deep feelings almost choked my utterance. But I did speak what came to my mind, and oh how happy I was and how lovely all your brethren and sisters were to me in greeting and welcoming me among them.

God abundantly bless and keep you forever. Pray that my joy may continue.

Your sister, I hope,

EDNA McCOLL.

ATHENS, N. Y., Aug. 5, 1930.

MY DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:--Please credit me with a good bit of self-restraint. When, some months ago, you felt to give up the editorship of the SIGNS, I wanted to send a word of protest, and also of personal appreciation of your service to the "people of God" as you led them to see the riches of grace. However God used other means to cheer your heart and to persuade you to continue to assist in making the paper a real help to the readers. Since then you have written more fully than had been your custom. I have rejoiced at your ability to say timely and helpful words, including cautions to the household of faith. I know how easily a man may be a snare to his brother, but I feel that God has so led and dealt with you that you realize what you are by nature and, if you are like myself, by practice incapable nor even inclined to any good thing. I am confident that these few thoughts of mine will not generate any feelings of self-righteousness, which is a terribly dangerous and catching disease, but rather of thankfulness that God can and does bless your service to those who are in Christ. But the real factor in starting my pen is your article in the August SIGNS, "Understanding Science." It is timely, illuminating, and I feel would be of lasting value if every teacher in our high schools could be led to see and teach the work of God according to his eternal purpose in the immeasurable universe, and in all his dealings with the children of men. As a young man, and before I had hope in Christ, the "contradictions and mistakes in the Bible" used to trouble me. But when I trust grace had won and cheered my heart, I just resolved with myself that I would accept the Bible as God's written word to me and absolutely true. And now, on that score, I am a little troubled. Over and over again I see that it is in perfect harmony with itself and with God; and further, that man cannot have real life unless he, too, is embraced in the divine harmony. And I used to be troubled over the doctrines of predestination and free grace. In-

deed, for a short time I thought I did not believe in the former; but when I realized, to a degree at least, that Christ came as the Savior of sinners, I knew I was sinner enough and helpless enough to need salvation by a power outside of myself. I know that God made me willing, and I trust that in spite of my sinful helplessness he drew me to himself. So while I can hardly tell even to myself why I believe both in predestination and free grace, I have little difficulty in accepting both.

I notice that while I started out to write a word of cheer and of thanks, I have been writing about myself. Oh, how we do cling to self, even when we realize our weakness and the inherent selfishness of our nature. But I feel you have an understanding heart and will bear with the disjointed thoughts of your more than eighty-five years old writer. Alone with God, as I feel each night when I retire to my chamber, you, with others, are often on my mind and heart. I sometimes try to tell it out to God in prayer, asking that you might grow strong and rejoice in his service. Although our strength is in God alone, I feel in his plan we are blessed by the prayers and deeds of our fellow-believers. I rejoice that other pilgrims have me sometimes on their hearts when at the throne of grace. I trust that we may be of that company who shall sing his praises as we more and more appreciate his redeeming grace.

With christian love, your fellow-pilgrim,

P. W. KING.

LUKE X. 29.

"AND who is my neighbor?"

"And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He [Jesus] said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?" --Luke x. 25, 26. He quoted to him the two great commandments on which hang all the law and the prophets. (Matt. xxii. 40.) Then came the question at the head of this article: "And who is my neighbor?" The question asked by the lawyer, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" seems to me a very foolish one for a lawyer to ask. He should have known that we do not inherit anything by doing things either good or bad, but we inherit by being legally born into the family, or legally adopted into it. Paul tells us that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven," or eternal life. This flesh and blood birth is from a corrupt seed, and corruption cannot inherit incorruption, so Jesus tells us that we must be born again if we ever see or enter his kingdom. (John iii. 3.) In this new birth we are born of a seed that is not corrupt, neither can it be corrupted. If we have passed through this ordeal we obtain heaven, not as a reward for what we have done, but as an inheritance, being heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ.

Let us consider for a moment the city that this "certain man" left, and the city to which he was bound. Jerusalem stood in her day as a figure of the church. "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together."—Psalms

cxxii. 3. Read the entire chapter. "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth even for ever." Jerusalem is builded on Mt. Moriah, and is far above the sea level, while Jericho, according to geography, is below sea level, so when this "certain man" left Jerusalem he evidently started down hill. Jerusalem is a figure of the church, while Jericho is a cursed city. (Joshua vi. 26.) and represents, as I think, the very sink of sin. Jerusalem is the safest place in the world for God's children. The man was evidently going the wrong way when he fell among thieves. We always fall among thieves when we leave the church to find something better. The thieves on the road between Jerusalem and Jericho are, as I think, the false teachers who preach salvation by works, and they rob God (or attempt to) of all the honor and glory of our salvation; they try to strip us of our garment of righteousness wrought out by our Savior, and clothe us in the filthy rags of our own self-righteousness, and leave us wounded in our feelings and worked half to death.

Jerusalem is a wonderful place in the sacred history of this world. It is situated on Mt. Moriah, where Abraham offered Isaac. And Abraham was so well pleased with the outcome of that day he called the name of the place Jehova-Jirah, which signifies "The Lord will provide."—Gen. xxii. 14. (Margin.) Isaac here represents every promised child of God, and Paul says, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise."—Gal. iv. 28. God provided a ram to save Isaac, that we in this our day might understand that God has provided a sacrifice for every promised child, for all his children are promised children. A thousand years from that time, when King David committed a great sin by numbering all Israel and Judah, and the Lord sent a three days' pestilence upon the people, and the destroying angel came to Jerusalem, David entreated the Lord for Israel, saying, "I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now I beseech thee, O Lord, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly." The Lord sent the prophet Gad, David's seer, unto him, saying, "I offer thee three things; choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee." So the prophet Gad called on David to choose either seven years of famine, or three months to be put to the worse before his enemies while they persued him, or three days' pestilence. David said, "Let me fall now into the hand of the Lord, for his mercies are great, and let me not fall into the hand of men." And God sent three days' pestilence, and he hearkened to the entreaty of David, and told him to go rear up an altar in the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. So he went and bought the threshing floor, and used the oxen for burnt offering, the wheat for a meat offering and the threshing instruments to make the fire to burn the

offering. This threshing floor is said to be on the same spot where Abraham offered Isaac, so we can see that God did provide again, by having that old Jebusite, a son of one of those seven nations that the Lord told Moses to utterly destroy, but he suffered them to leave a few of them to try Israel, whether they would serve the Lord or not. No doubt it was God's purpose that Araunah the Jebusite should build this threshing floor, and bring the wheat, the oxen and the threshing instruments together at the proper place (where Abraham offered Isaac), and at the proper time to make the sacrifice to save Israel from that awful calamity. In fact, God decreed it all and it could not fail; this holy place must not lose its name as the place where "The Lord will provide," or, "Jehovah-Jirah." Also, this is the place where Solomon built the wonderful temple, and God chose to place his name there, where all the offerings and sacrifices were to be offered, and where the annual atonement was made, where the lambs were offered day by day continually, one in the morning and one in the evening. All of these sacrifices that were offered were necessary to satisfy the great sacrifice, to wit, Jesus Christ in all his characteristics, for it takes the cattle, sheep, goats, doves and pigeons to represent the food, raiment, strength, humbleness, patience, and even the sins, of God's children, for Christ is all this to his people. He was this lamb that was offered at the door of the tabernacle, one in the morning and one in the evening. (Exodus xxix. 38-42.) He (Christ) was offered as a sacrifice for his people in the evening of the law dispensation, and early in the morning of the gospel dispensation he arose from the dead and offered himself as the other lamb, a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God for us. Read the last chapters of Matthew, Mark and Luke and the twentieth chapter of John. He is everything to the poor, "half-dead" sinner that he needs or wants. He is wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. He surely is neighbor, the friend that sticketh closer than a brother, and note the fact that he does not make any changes.

G. W. BERRY.

FAYETTE, Alabama.

SPRINGFIELD, Ill., Aug 12, 1930.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—Your letter of June 14th was duly received, but I find it difficult to keep up with my correspondence now as I go along in my ninety-third year; more especially so as extreme hot weather conditions have prevailed and thus weakened my physical forces and compelled me to be as quiet as possible.

I have thought of the text you refer to, viz., "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."—Rev. ii. 17. What a wonderful revelation this is to the Lord's children scattered as they are throughout this sin-cursed world. It comes to the poor and needy, who seek water and there is

none, and their tongue faileth for thirst. Yet the Lord hears them and opens fountains in the wilderness and springs of water in the desert, in fulfillment of his promise to his disciples: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Thus you have realized this very *present* help in your personal experience. To his helpless children he becomes the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, a covert from the tempest, rivers of water in a dry place. For over seventy-one years I have in much weakness, fear and trembling been trying to tell the cross and now, like Paul, have to exclaim on the eve of my departure: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

My brother, P. W. Sawin, lives at Lexington, Kentucky, and though blind for the past several years, yet goes to his appointments regularly in seasonable weather. I was with him at Sadieville on the first Sunday in May. There was a goodly attendance, and the occasion was an interesting one.

Trusting this may find you both physically and spiritually well and comfortable, I am as ever, your brother in the blessed hope,

J. G. SAWIN.

[THE foregoing is a copy of a letter written by Elder J. G. Sawin to sister Laura Hunton, of Manassas, Virginia, which the editor thinks too good to keep hid.—H. H. L.]

NOTICE.

As many of our subscribers' time expires with the December number, we are inclosing in each copy of this issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a subscription blank, as it is a convenient form in which to send their renewals for next year. Like almost every other line of business in our country, we have been hard pressed during the past year, as many of our subscribers have neglected sending in their subscriptions when due. We have not felt to press them for the amount, knowing that many of them could not spare the money, and we would rather carry them through this financial depression than to have to take their names from our list, but we would much appreciate it if those who are in a position to do so would renew their subscriptions promptly when the time paid for has expired. Brethren and friends, do what you can. See if you can get a new subscriber and send in with your renewal. A little exertion on the part of each one would mean a great deal for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

When you send in your subscription see that the date on the little pink slip bearing your address is changed. If not changed, please let us know immediately (for that signifies that you have not been given credit for the money sent) and we will look into the matter. By consulting that date you can tell at a glance to what time your subscription is paid. Dec. 30 means that your subscription is paid to 1930; June 29 means it is only paid to June, 1929, &c.

J. E. B. & CO.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1930.

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DOES BAPTISM SAVE?

JESUS, addressing his disciples, as recorded in Mark xvi. 16, said, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." The apostle Peter in his first epistle, speaking of the flood in the days of Noah and of how Noah and his family were saved in the ark, uses this as a figure of baptism and of the saving which baptism affects. (1 Peter iii. 20, 21.) In both the above Scriptures, it is our understanding that the baptism spoken of is baptism in water and not the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Jesus alone administers the baptism of the Holy Ghost to his people; one believer cannot baptize another in this way. The apostles baptized believers in water, as do the servants of God in this day. There is accompanying water baptism, a ministry of salvation in the experience of the one baptized. This being so, how does water baptism save? It does not save from sin, for Peter expressly says it does not put away the filth of the flesh. When a true believer is immersed in water in obedience to the commandment of Jesus: "If ye love me, keep my commandments," there is experienced the answer of a good conscience toward God. To have this purging of one's conscience is to experience the salvation that is in baptism. Just the form of baptism, unless one is genuinely a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, avails nothing. There is no virtue simply in the mode itself. However, if one is within one's soul prepared by grace unto this solemn ordinance, it means much in that case to the one baptized. There is an experience of salvation in it. As the waters of the flood upheld the ark to the saving of Noah and his house and brought them away from the unbelieving world in which they formerly lived, so the ordinance of baptism does experimentally save from the world those believers who receive the ordinance. Baptism brings one into the privileges of the church and welcomes him to the embrace of the saints' fellowship. To have around us these arms of the church's love and fellowship, to have the brethren in our hearts and to have us in their hearts, is to experience the salvation that is in water baptism.

Those outside the church cannot know this for themselves in their own experience until they, too, are brought into it, until they are willing to yield themselves in subjection to the household of faith and receive the ordinance of baptism. Believers should not regard this as a duty, it is a blessed privilege to which all who have tasted of the graciousness of the Lord are entitled. The command rests upon all who truly believe in God the Father and in his Son Jesus Christ to be baptized. Not to stay out as long as they can, but to come in as soon as they can, should be the encouragement of the brethren to those little ones bleating about the fold. That there is a time for all things, we verily believe; but the believer is never the judge himself of whether such and such is the Lord's time for this or that. Judgment is in the house of God and it is the holy business of saints to judge angels, it is not the privilege of the individual to sit in judgment on his own case. In Jesus' humiliation, his judgment was taken away; so it is with the follower of Jesus. When one is humbled at the feet of the brethren he sees his own inability to judge his own case and submits himself to the decision of the house of God as to whether he is or is not a fit subject for the ordinance of believers' baptism: thus his own individual judgment of his own fitness or unfitness is taken from him and handed over to the judgment of the saints. What a blessed place to be, down at the feet of the Lord's people! There is no safer place for a believer to be than down there. When there, one cannot fall: when up, one may fall. The only way we can know these things is by experience. Religion is worth nothing if not experimental. Religion is more than notion, more than a set form of doctrines, more than a credal formula. Religion must be known and felt, it must be something seen and heard and touched and tasted by the individual himself. If such is not the case, it is not a living religion, but only a theory or vain speculation. Only as we are led to handle these things in our personal experience can we vitally know anything of them. Salvation is being ministered to us continually and it is all Christ's. Whether it comes through the ministry of the gospel, through the ordinances of the church, through one's association with his brethren, it is all one salvation, all wholly of the grace of God. It pleases God to save believers through the preaching of the gospel. This preaching of the gospel has saved many a poor soul from stumbling at false doctrines, from becoming ensnared in the modern witchery of Babylon and in establishing them more firmly in the truth of God. What comfort sometimes comes to poor, doubting, trembling believers in the preaching of the Word! Believers' baptism also throws around the soul a safeguard against many worldly allurements and temptations. Many things, perhaps, which one might do if one were not a member of the church, one does not do for fear of offending the brethren. Thus is salvation ministered to us through this. Really, we

have never known where to limit God's salvation to his people any more than to limit him in his sovereignty and in his predestination. Salvation by grace is a daily experience of true believers and it is ministered to us in so many various ways. Now, for the past thirty years it has been our blessed privilege to live with and among those whom we esteem as the children of God. It is a mystery and wonderment to us how they have been able to bear with us all that time. Our failures have been many, our weaknesses great, our shortcomings too numerous to list, yet gentleness and forbearance and love have the dear brethren always shown toward us. Surely this is the Lord. It has been he through them that has encouraged our poor soul all the way, none other than he stretched out to us through his body-members that has time and time again upheld our weak hands and banished our discouragements. What would we or could we ever do without him? Bless his holy name! Often when thinking of our hope we look back to that autumn of 1896, when it pleased the Lord to bring us down into the abyss of hell on account of our sins. What terrible condemnation that was! One can never forget it so long as we retain our faculties of mind. There where we felt to be sinking down into despair and into eternal pain, it pleased God to speak peace to our soul. What astonishing and amazing grace that was! Our hope dates from that. We would not barter it for all the world. Soon after that experience we had a desire to unite with the Old Baptist Church, but felt so terribly unworthy that we fought against the impression to be baptized. Not only did we feel unworthy, but there was a terrible fear that we might bring open reproach on the church. We felt unable to live as a child of God ought to live, and what a shame it would be to unite with the church and then have to be excluded from it because of an ungodly walk. Better stay away and never be baptized, than to be baptized and then cause the dear saints shame on our account. Backwards and forwards we fought this battle for four years. However, in the fall of 1900, the struggle was getting too much for our poor strength; the impression to be baptized grew stronger and stronger. Finally, this poor soul could fight no longer, gladly gave in, yielded ourself to the brethren, was received, baptized and taken into their midst to live and to die with them, to rejoice and suffer with them. Now, looking back over these thirty years, how could we ever have come all this way without the dear ones to travel along with us? Surely there is salvation in baptism. We feel that we can attest this because it is something we have lived by, something that has supported us all these years. Only by the Lord's grace have we been able to behave ourself and thus to keep the respect, love and confidence of those who are his. May he keep us one and all to the end, and he will. He will not fail those who trust in him. He has given his word for that. He cannot deny himself. His promise is the joy

and rejoicing of our heart.

We hope our brethren and readers will pardon us for referring to our personal experience in these matters. If these things do not come to us in a way of life, in a truly living way, how else can we know them savingly? How otherwise can we testify of them? Our daily bread is what keeps us alive, and these things are what we live by.

H. H. L.

REVELATION VII. 14.

"AND I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

An Elder in the West has requested that we write on the above verse from Revelation. We recall, during the lifetime of Elder P. D. Gold, of North Carolina, that when his views were asked for he would frequently reply, "That is your text; you preach it." We are made to wonder if the views of those, especially our ministering brethren, whose minds are exercised upon certain portions of the written word, would not be far more profitable to the household of faith than anything we can possibly suggest. Since, however, our views are desired, we will undertake to comply, hoping the Lord will direct our mind into such channels as may prove beneficial to the sheep of his pasture. We will quote the thirteenth verse, also, as that is linked with the fourteenth in the form of two questions: "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" In endeavoring to lay the foundation for what we shall present, we will review a portion of that which is previously set forth in the chapter. After recording in the sixth chapter what appears to have been the destruction of legal Jerusalem, John begins the seventh chapter by saying, "And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads."—Rev. vii. 1-3. The thought is presented here that following the time referred to, there would be a period during which the servants of our God would be sealed in their foreheads, and since the angel who held the seal of the living God was clothed with authority to command the four angels who stood on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, neither on the sea, nor on any tree, till the work of the sealing of the servants of God in their foreheads had been accomplished, the inference is that all earthly powers combined shall utterly fail in their attempts to interfere with the work of our God in the salvation of every one chosen in Christ Jesus. This work of the sealing of God's servants and the gathering of his people from all

parts of the globe, whether on land or sea, is being carried on now in this gospel dispensation, and we may be assured that there are not demons enough, though their name may be legion, to hinder God in his work. John goes on to speak of some who were sealed, and of the effect of that sealing. First, he says, "There were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel." He then sets forth in detail that there were twelve thousand in each of the twelve tribes. "After this," he says, "I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen." Then come the questions in the thirteenth verse: "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" As was the case with Ezekiel when he was carried out in the Spirit of the Lord and set down in the valley of dry bones, and he could only answer the question put to him, "Son of man, can these bones live?" by answering, "O Lord God, thou knowest." So John knows not who they are, nor from whence they came, and, therefore, has to answer, "Sir, thou knowest." Neither does any but God know who his people are, but he knows them: "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." The Lord answers John by telling him who they are: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." The redeemed of the Lord constitutes a number which cannot be enumerated by men. No man can put his finger on either the first or the last one, but all of them, whether Jew or Gentile, must come up through great tribulation, for the Lord has chosen his people in the furnace of affliction; he has predestinated that they shall be conformed to the image of his Son. We do not understand that it can be truthfully said of the people of God that they, of themselves, "have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." In the prophecy of Zechariah we find how Joshua's filthy garments were taken away and how he was clothed with a change of raiment: "And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua

was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment."—Zech. iii. 1-4. We read in Hebrews ix. 13, 14, "For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God." In 1 John i. 7, we find, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." John addressed the seven churches which were in Asia, by saying, "Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."—Rev. i. 4-6. The legal dispensation was one of works, but had it been possible, which was not the case, for Israel to have kept that law in every jot and tittle, it would not have made the comers thereunto perfect before God and entitled them to eternal life. Paul, testifying under the covenant of grace, says, "For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."—Gal. ii. 18-21. When the children of God come to the end of the law and, by faith, are given to behold the perfect way of salvation through Christ Jesus, they can and do sing, "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night," and they shall all know that it is through great tribulation they enter the kingdom of heaven. Those who came out of great tribulation and whose robes were washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb, are said to be "before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe

away all tears from their eyes." If not terribly deceived, we have experienced and can bear witness to these things, and if we have been given a foretaste here below we shall surely enjoy the fullness hereafter in that realm where Father, Son and Blessed Spirit shall have all the praise.

The same Elder has asked us to express ourself with regard to "What some call time salvation." Possibly, our position on this point has already been made clear, but we will add some additional thoughts. If the salvation we enjoy here in time is not of the Lord, Jonah was a false witness, and this we deny. Moses, as the leader of Israel, after having led them out of the land of Egypt, through the Red Sea and in the wilderness for forty years, summed up the whole situation in these words: "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." Innumerable witnesses could be placed upon the stand from the record of Holy Writ to prove beyond the shadow of a doubt this wonderful and glorious truth. The three Hebrew children in the furnace heated seven times hot, Daniel in the den of lions, and a whole host of others would join the endless train, but who or where is the man, woman or child, who by the grace of God has been enabled to rejoice in Christ Jesus and to have no confidence in the flesh, can in the face of their own experiences reach any other conclusion? Certainly, not one of all the heavenly host which John saw as having come out of great tribulation, and had washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, could sing anything but, "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen." However much men and devils may rage and fight against this truth, until the angel which John saw ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God, gives the word, the four angels which stand upon the four corners of the earth will hold the winds that they "hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees," till the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads and his elect are gathered from every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue. A kindred mind has given us these lines:

"On Zion's sacred mount I saw
The Lamb for sinners slain;
His church redeemed from endless woe,
Composed his glorious train.

This virgin throng, beloved of God,
All stood around him there,
With garments washed in his own blood,
Divinely bright and fair.

I strove this blood-bought host to count
Thus to my sight revealed;
And found at last their full amount,
'Twas all that God had sealed.

They sung a song, forever new,
And none could learn the same,
But ransomed slaves, and sinners, who
From tribulation came.

They hymned the great, the dread, I AM,
Whose sacred name they wore,
With endless honors to the Lamb,
'Till time shall be no more.

Blameless before his throne they stand,
They make a joyful noise;
A called, a faithful, chosen band;
And vent their swelling joys."

Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!

R. L. D.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Elders and messengers composing the First Kansas Association, unto those with whom we correspond, and unto those of like precious faith scattered abroad, sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Through the boundless wisdom and mercy of the unchangeable God, one who is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, we are again permitted to assemble together in an associational capacity, and feel to have been edified and built up in that most holy faith, and to feast upon the wonderful beauties of the kingdom of our God, and to rejoice in the glorious gospel of salvation by grace as proclaimed by those who have been called to stand upon the walls of Zion, shunning not to declare all the counsel of God. We have been permitted to drink of that fountain from the pure river of water of life, whereof if a man drink he shall never thirst again, and to look with an eye of faith unto him who is the Rock of our salvation, the one source of all comfort throughout our pilgrimage here, which has been beautifully portrayed to us. Surely his blessings and mercy have followed us all down through our journey of life. As one of old hath said, All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children.

Dear brethren, we desire a continuation of your correspondence, and to our visiting brethren we extend the invitation to come again. If it be the will of him who rules in the highest heavens and in the lowest parts of the earth, we desire to convene again next year at this time.

And now may grace, mercy and peace, and the love of him that filleth all in all, abide with you and us, and ever lead and guide us in the way of all truth, is our prayer for Jesus' sake. Farewell.

L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator.
MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

The Tygarts Valley River Old School, Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Amnon Church, Marion County, West Virginia, August 29th, 30th and 31st, 1930, sendeth christian salutation in the Lord to our sister associations with whom we correspond, and to all of like precious faith.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN in sweet fellowship of the gospel of the grace of God:--Your messengers came to us laden with the precious truths of the gospel, proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation alone through the finished work of the dear Redeemer. Dear brethren, we highly appreciate your correspondence and fellowship, and greatly desire a continuance of the same.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Mount Olive Church, Barbour County, West Virginia, where and when we hope, through the mercy of almighty God, to meet your messengers again in sweet fellowship and love.

J. S. MURPHY, Moderator.
J. R. DENNISON, Clerk.
B. D. MURPHY, Ass't Clerk.

ORDINATIONS.

PURSUANT to a call by the Second Roxbury Church, Roxbury, N. Y., the following brethren met in council at the Olive and Hurley Meeting-house, Shokan, N. Y., to consider the advisability of setting apart to the full work of the gospel ministry brother ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, viz., New York Church, Elder R. Lester Dodson, A. Barnsley, L. Lefferts, N. Rounds. Hopewell Church, Elder C. W. Vaughn and C. G. Vaughn. New Valley Church, Elder H. H. Lefferts and F. B. Paxson. Covenanted Baptist Church, Elder George Ruston. First Roxbury Church, Deacon Amasa J. Slauson, S. Walker, V. Ballard, B. Peet, S. Harrington. Second Roxbury Church, J. Leonard. P. O'C. Hinkley, I. Mayse, A. Bailey. Olive and Hurley Church, Deacons Winchell, Smith and Osborn. Middletown and Andes Church, F. Woodin, C. Huntley, F. Muir. Clovesville Church, E. Stilwell, E. Davis and J. Miller. Middleburg Church, A. Livingston, F. Smith, E. Zeh, L. Golding, L. Stevens, A. Goodrich, A. Alger, O. Whitcomb, I. Bellinger. Lexington Church, M. Faulkner and I. Patterson.

Elders J. E. Herndon, T. W. Walker and J. T. Rowe were invited to seats with us.

The council was organized by choosing Elder George Ruston Moderator and Prudence O'C. Hinkley Clerk.

The Moderator then called upon the candidate to relate his christian experience and call to the work of the gospel ministry, which he did to the satisfaction of the council.

Questions were then asked the candidate, which were satisfactorily answered by him, and it was then moved by Elder J. T. Rowe, seconded by Elder C. W. Vaughn, and carried unanimously, that the presbytery proceed with the ordination.

The ordination sermon was preached by Elder H. H. Lefferts, from 2 Timothy iv. 2.

The ordination prayer was by Elder C. W. Vaughn, with the laying on of hands by the Elders present.

A solemn and impessive charge was given by Elder R. Lester Dodson, followed by the right hand of fellowship being given brother Bellows by the Elders present.

The Minutes were then read and approved, and ordered printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Hymn 534 (Beebe's collection) was then sung, and meeting closed with benediction by Elder Arnold H. Bellows.

GEORGE RUSTON, Moderator.
PRUDENCE O'C. HINKLEY, Clerk.

THE Providence Church called for the ordination of brother H. J. BIRD, and the Elders present who constituted the presbytery were J. W. McClanahan, J. S. Murphy, A. J. Mullins, J. J. Poling and Dell Smith. After being duly organized, and praise, and prayer by Elder Dell Smith, a call was given for the brother to relate his experience and call to the ministry by Elder J. J. Poling. He was presented by Deacon Solone. His experience and call were interesting and comforting. Elder J. S. Murphy questioned the brother on points of doctrine, which questions were satisfactorily answered. Elder A. J. Mullins offered the ordination prayer; followed by the laying on of hands by the presbytery. The charge was given by Elder J. W. McClanahan. Thus was the young brother, Harvey J. Bird, set apart to the full function of the ministry of the gospel on the sixth day of September, 1930.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Moderator.
J. C. HAMMOND, Clerk pro tem.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, the God of all grace has seen fit within the last two years to visit Providence Church, in Appanoose County, Iowa, and remove from our midst our sisters **DEACONESS BELINDA CONNER**, September 21st, 1928, **ELLEN SHARR**, January 10th, 1930, **MARY E. LAMMERS**, March 17th, 1930, and **ELDER J. S. LOCKE**, July 4th, 1930, be it

Resolved, that while we bow in humble submission to Him who does all things well, and feeling that they have passed to the church triumphant, yet we feel their absence, and desire to express our sympathy to the bereaved relatives. Be it also

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be spread upon our church record, and a copy sent to the respective families, and one each to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and "Primitive Monitor."

"I cannot say,
And I will not say,
That they are dead,
They are just away.

With a cherry smile,
And a wave of the hand,
They have wandered into
An unknown land.

So think of them still
As the same, I say,
They are not dead,
But just away."

SYLVINA DAVIS
BERTHA JONES
MARY O. CATE
Committee.

NOTICE.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in November (30th). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MARY J. O'DELL passed away at the home of her daughter, Mrs. H. Leroy Hall, 16526 Fairfield Avenue, Detroit, Michigan, September 11th, and was buried in Bad Axe, Michigan, September 15th, 1930. She was the wife of Thomas H. O'Dell, and lived all of their married life in Bad Axe, until her husband retired, when they went to live in Detroit. She leaves to mourn their loss, her husband, four sons and one daughter, namely, James P. O'Dell, St. Thomas; George Earl, of Detroit; Kenneth C., Delta, Colorado; Carson E., Port Huron; and Mrs. H. Leroy Hall, Detroit, who had the care of her in her last illness, and who cared for her well, so that all that loving hands could do was done for her. She was in her seventy-third year, and the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. James Black, lifelong residents of St. Thomas. Her father and mother, grandfather and grandmother, were all members of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada. Her father for many years started the singing at the meetings. She was a woman of lovely character, always trying to find the good in people, and overlooking the bad she might see. When in St. Thomas she always attended Old School Baptist meeting with her parents. Once after a meeting she said to her aunt, sister Black, of St. Thomas, "O Auntie, I see through election now. Father never could make me see it." Her aunt does not remember who was preaching that night. Those who loved her will long mourn the loss of a true friend and a devoted wife and mother.

ALSO,

MRS. MARTHA McDONALD departed this life February 18th, 1929, at the home of her son, R. E. C. McDonald, Appin, Ontario. She was the daughter of Philip and Letitia Frances Corneil, and was born August 12th, 1843. December 15th, 1870, she married Alex S. McDonald, of Ekfrid, Ontario, to which union there were born five children, one, Eliza F. McDonald, died April 12th, 1915, the other four are, R. E. C. McDonald, Appin, Ontario, D. A. McDonald, Vancouver, B. C., Maggie McRae, Glencoe, Ontario, and Lettie Saxton, Saskatchewan. Her husband died February 12th, 1924, and soon after his death her health failed and she was an invalid for about four years and seven months. Sister McDonald united with the Covenanted Baptist Church in her youth, and was baptized by the late Elder Pollard. She was a highly respected and faithful member for over fifty years. Her home was a home for the Old Baptists, and very few, if any, of the ministers who came to visit the church at Ekfrid, went home without spending a night under her hospitable roof. When we first visited Ekfrid, we remember with what pleasure we were received into her home and how dear sister McDonald's face glowed while listening and participating in spiritual conversation. We were favored to spend several evenings at various times in her home, and she delighted to have those present sing the songs of Zion, which she much enjoyed. Although our dear sister suffered at times, yet she was favored with the constant and faithful service of those near and dear to her and they counted it a blessing to be able to care for her. When she passed away there was no pastor in the Covenanted Church, and her children were unable to procure an Elder from the States, much to their regret, but they are comforted to feel that she is at rest forever with her Lord.

ALSO,

LETITIA LAURA CORNEIL, sister of the above, departed this life April 12th, 1930, at the Victoria Home, London Ontario. She was one of fourteen children born to Philip and Letitia Frances Corneil, of which large family only one, a brother, Philip, is left to mourn his loss. For many years Letitia lived in her own home on the Longwood road, not far from the Ekfrid meeting-house. She united with the Covenanted Baptist Church during the ministry of the late Elder Pollard, and was a faithful member until her end came. In the memory of many to-day, her home was a pleasant place where friends could hold sweet fellowship with friend, and where all who loved the truth were welcome. She was an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile. She loved the brethren with a pure heart fervently, yet it was in God's all-wise purpose that she should be afflicted with cancer, from which she suffered several years, and for nearly the last two years of her life she was cared for in the hospital. Although she was sorely afflicted she was lovely and patient in it all, so that the task of her nurses was made easy and they were very devoted to her. The Lord blessed our departed sister with the ability to make friends and to keep them, so that she had a host of friends and brethren interested in her, and many of them would visit her during her sickness. It was a pleasure for the writer to be privileged to visit her often, and seldom did he leave her without being refreshed by her spiritual conversation. The last time we visited her, at her request, we read the fourteenth chapter of John, which was often enjoyed by her. Many times she said, "O Elder, why does not the Lord take me home to himself? I want to be forever with the Lord." But she knew she must wait her appointed time, and would say, "Ask the Lord to give me patience."

Her funeral was from the home of her remaining brother, Philip Corneil, and service in the Ekfrid meetinghouse. Her niece, Miss Frances Wrinn, who for many years had been as an own daughter to her, requested that we sing, "I walked in the garden alone," at the house, which was done, and we used the first and second verses of the fourteenth chapter of John as a text at the meetinghouse, where a large gathering showed by their presence and sympathy that they had lost a much loved friend. Her mortal remains were laid in the Long-wood Cemetery, and we believe that her spirit is forever with the Lord. We miss her sweet fellowship and love, but for her to die was gain.

G. R.

WILLIAM COLTMAN PERDUE, our beloved brother in Christ, departed this life June 24th, 1930, in his home in Lamar, Colorado. He had been in failing health and in almost continual suffering for many months, and although being tenderly cared for by his faithful wife, family and physician his strength gradually failed until death came to remove him from this life of pain and sorrow. He was born in Franklin County, Virginia, May 29th, 1849, where he grew to manhood, and April 30th, 1870, was married to Louisa P. Law, who was his faithful companion for fifty years before death removed her from her loving companion and family. To this union nine children were born. Two died in infancy, also two grown daughters preceded him in death: Mrs. Dave Gordon and Mrs. C. L. Otton. August 24th, 1921, he was united in marriage to Mrs. Addie Powell, of Rocky Mount, Virginia, who survives him with the following children: George H. and L. S. Perdue, of Powers County, Colorado; Mrs. C. H. Shoemaker, of La Junta, Colorado; Mrs. E. B. Otten, Riverside, California; Mrs. R. C. Long, of Long Beach, California; also seven grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren. June 3rd, 1875, he received a hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, his wife also received a hope about the same time, and they were both baptized in August of the same year by Elder John R. Martin, uniting with Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, of Franklin County, Virginia. Shortly after he united with the church he was chosen Deacon, which office he filled to the best of his ability until 1883, at which time he left Virginia for Missouri. While in Missouri he began to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, being licensed by the church of his membership, and later the church called for his ordination. In the days of his youth necessity seemed to lay upon him the arduous task of supporting their family, which consisted of an invalid father, mother and eight younger brothers and sisters, and in doing so he was almost entirely deprived of opportunities of education, which now brought to him a feeling of unworthiness of being trusted with the full work of the ministry, so he, like one of old, resolved to take shelter in some distant land, and at the time appointed for his ordination the presbytery assembled, but he was in Colorado, where he located his family on a homestead, in November, 1886. There were but few Primitive Baptists among the first settlers of this country, and no church of that faith and order in the State of Colorado, but the command of the Master, "Go thou and preach the kingdom of God" was no doubt extended unto him, for he began to preach the gospel among the early settlers of these western plains, which was gladly received in those days, even by the rude cow boys. Then some came asking for baptism, which he was not legally qualified to administer, so after much deliberation and prayer he returned to Missouri for his ordination, which occurred November 14th, 1897, at New Hope Church, Ray County, Missouri, by Elders Allen Sisk, William T. Brown and W. R. Riggs. Soon after being ordained he organized Bethel Primitive Baptist church, now located in Lamar, Colorado, and remained its pastor until the time of his death, always preaching a finished work by a perfect Savior, and always taking the Bible for his counsel and guide and endeavored at all times to live by that one great commandment: As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. For many years with an unfaltering faith in the guidance of the Holy Spirit he traveled the windswept pararies of Kansas and Colorado to preach the gospel to the poor. Truly he was our father in Israel in this desert land. We have suffered the great loss of pastor of our church, while the grief-stricken family has lost a kind and affectionate husband and father. May the God of all Israel strengthen us as we bow in humble submission before him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

D. L. DAVIS.

SISTER **CYNTHIA DEBORAH SLAUSON,** wife of Deacon Amasa J. Slauson, of Halcottville, N. Y., departed this life May 27th, 1930, at the Roxbury Hospital, after an illness of a month's duration of a disease of the liver and bile duct. She leaves to mourn her departure her husband, three children: Howard and Grace, of Halcottville, and Mrs. Howard Green, of Vega, N. Y., her parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Morse, of Denver, besides several brothers and sisters. Sister Slauson was born September 5th, 1884, and received her education at a district school. She became the wife of Amasa J. Slauson in 1903, and she and her husband subsequently asked for a home with the First Roxbury Church, and were received, the subject of this article being baptized in 1913, by the late Elder John B. Slauson. For several years they resided on a farm in Vega, removing in 1928 to a large dairy farm near Halcottville, which they successfully conducted. Sister Slauson enjoyed good health until about a month before her death, when she was afflicted with a malignant disease of the liver and an affection of the bile duct. As a last resort operative measures were resorted to, but failed to afford relief, as the help of man was vain. Being informed of her serious condition, she calmly awaited the inevitable end with hope undimmed and faith unshaken, saying to her mother as she was being prepared for the operation, "It is all right with me." She was given grace to live by and grace to die by, and never for a moment hesitated in placing implict trust in Him who is too just to err and cannot be unkind. Her home life afforded the best that a person might aspire to in the way of material blessings, but she had set her affections on things above. She possessed a noble, unselfish and beautiful character, exemplifying in her daily walk the precepts of the christian, and by her testimony witnessing that

she had been taught of Jesus. Her devotion to the church and the meetings, her hospitality to the brethren and the sweetness of her home life enshrined her in the hearts of the brethren and friends. As a neighbor and friend she will be greatly missed in the community in which she resided.

The interment was at Margaretville, N. Y. The writer attempted to speak words of comfort to the bereaved at the funeral services. Their loss is sadly realized by the bereaved church and her family.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

MRS. MARTHA ELLIS DAVIS, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life September 21st, 1930, at her late home, near Newark, Delaware. She was born February 16th, 1858. She was married to Charles W. Davis August 7th, 1884, by Elder Joseph L. Staton. They had seven children, three are living: Mrs. Laura Kline, Horace Davis and Ellis Davis. She is survived by one sister: Mrs. Collins, of Wilmington, Delaware. Her husband is eighty-five years old and is left to mourn the loss of sister Davis, his wife. Sister Davis was baptized by the late Elder William Grafton the third Sunday in December, 1878, into membership with the Welsh Tract Old School Baptist Church. Of late years she attended the meetings of the church very seldom. For the last eleven years of her life she was afflicted with blindness and also suffered deafness for a long time. Her favorite hymn was 751 Beebe's collection; it was sung at her funeral. Text used at funeral Isaiah xliii. 1-3. Interment in Salem burying-ground.

ALSO,

MRS. ESTHER ANNIE MILLER passed away from this lower life September 30th, 1930, at her home, Gerrardstown, W. Va. She had been in failing health for a long time, was confined to her bed for three months, until death came to release her. She was born October 21st, 1848. Her parents were Moses Starr and Sarah Swope, of Tough Creek Valley, Huntingdon County, Pa. She was one of three children, and is the last to go. Late in life she married D. Scott Miller, of Gerrardstown, W. Va. Mr. Miller is eighty-four years old and is left very lonely by the going of his wife. She is also survived by two stepbrothers: J. L. and Allison Hauger, of Shepherdstown, W. Va. Mrs. Miller was not given to unite with the church, but she was a faithful attendant of the meetings of the Mill Creek Church, West Virginia, as long as those meetings continued. She loved the place where God's honor dwells, the place of his sanctuary. She was a firm believer in the absolute predestination of all things and salvation by grace first, last and all the way through. It was her desire to have an Old School Baptist minister officiate at her funeral, or else have no services at all. Her wishes were carried out by her husband and the family. The text used was Matthew xi. 20-30. Interment was in the cemetery at Shepherdstown, W. Va., until the last trump shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and the great change shall come.

H. H. L.

SARAH FRANCES WOOD MELTON was born December 16th, 1854, and died August 24th, 1930, aged 75 years, 8 months and 8 days. She was married to Silas N. Melton February 10th, 1876. He preceded her in death two years, eight months and eight days. At the time of his death he was seventy-seven years and eight days old. To their union were born eight children, two girls and six boys: Allie F. Melton and Lillie V. Hauley, of Poca, W. Va.; Walter E., of Dunbar; O. B., of St. Albons; Howard A., of Milwalkee, Wis.; Woodson A., of Chicago, Ill.; Rome A., of Poca, W. Va. All are living except Allie, who preceded her mother in death two years and seven months. Sister Melton was a strong believer in the doctrine advocated by the writers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. She belonged to the Primitive Baptist Church called Hopewell, which she joined when quite young, and was baptized by her father-in-law, Elder W. A. Melton, he being the pastor of the church at that time. Sister Melton lived her profession, being meek and humble, bearing the evidence that she had learned of Jesus the glorious lesson that salvation is of the Lord from start to finish. She was kind to all, especially those of the Primitive fath. She and her husband were ready and willing at all times to take care of the people in times of our associations and monthly meetings. We greatly miss them, but feel our loss is their gain. While her husband never united with the church, yet he was a believer, and strong in the faith of the old order of Baptists. She came to her death by a stroke of paralysis. All that loving children and kind friends could do for her was done, yet the icy hand of death claimed the victory. She was buried beside her husband in the family burying-ground, to await the resurrection of her body on the resurrection morning. The writer was requested to preach her funeral sermon, which in much weakness he did, using as a foundation for his remarks the text found in 1 Thessalonians iv. 14: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." The funeral attendance was large, the many friends and relatives coming together to pay their last tribute of respect to one they loved.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

ABLE DURHAM WILSON, the subject of this notice, was born June 21st, 1846, and departed this earthly life April 8th, 1930. He was married to Hannah Elizabeth Clark February 11th, 1875, and to that union were born four children, the youngest dying in infancy. The surviving children

are Miss Sadie L. Wilson, Forest Hill, Md., Mrs. Elizabeth Wilson Rowe, Baltimore, Md., Charles Wilson, Forest Hill, Md. Our friend, Mr. Wilson, was a regular attendant at the meetings of the Harford Church for many years, until his health got so bad he was unable to get out. Up until the time of his last sickness I can recall but three regular meetings of the church in three years that he was absent. He was a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God. His smiling face always brought cheer to the hearts of the little band, and we sorrow that we shall see him no more in this life, but since he has left such blessed evidence of faith in the Lord Jesus we sorrow not as those without hope, for we are assured that that blessed peace which he loved so well on earth shall know no end for him. No more roads to meet and ponder as to the correct way, but safe in the harbor of everlasting rest. Mr. Wilson's home was long a home for the Baptists, and from many States in the Union Baptists can recall the joyful hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Wilson and their children. There are few such homes open to the Baptists in these days of falling away, and when we are reminded of the removal of such faithful ones we ponder as to what the future holds in store for us. The Lord alone knows what is best for us, and may he grant needed grace to keep us to the end of life's uneven journey.

His funeral was largely attended, and was held from his late home in Forest Hill. No community was ever blessed with a more highly esteemed gentleman than our dear friend, Abel Wilson. He was a faithful, loving husband, equally so as father and grandfather, and a true friend of the friendless. Elder J. T. Rowe and the writer officiated at the funeral. Burial was in the family plot at Rock Springs, Md. Thus amidst sorrowing loved ones and friends we laid to rest the body of one whose life had been an inspiration to many. May the Lord comfort all who mourn, and especially would we implore the blessings of Almighty God upon Miss Sadie, his devoted daughter, who is very lonely without her father.

Written by request by one who loved him,

D. L. TOPPING.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, &c. REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.

Of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, published monthly, at Middletown, N. Y., for October 1st, 1930.

State of New York, County of Orange, ss.:

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Gilbert Beebe, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the owner of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that the following is to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24th, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse side of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publishers, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publishers, J. E. Beebe & Company, Middletown, N. Y.; Editor, H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

2. The owner is, Gilbert Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagers and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent. or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear on the books of the company, but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the corporation for whom such trustee is acting is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stocks, bonds or other securities than as so stated by him.

GILBERT BEEBE,

Owner.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 4th day of October, 1930.

(Seal) FRANK P. COX.

(My commission expires April, 1932.)

MEETINGS.

The First and Second Roxbury Old School Baptist Churches are to unite in a two days' meeting, to be held in the Halcottville Old School Baptist meetinghouse, Providence permitting, the fourth Sunday in November (23rd) and Saturday before. We expect Elder George Ruston to be with us. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

PRUDENCE O'C. HINKLEY, Church Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects Elder Arnold H. Bellows to meet with them the fifth Sunday in November (30th), 1930. Services to be held at the home of brother J. E. Livingston, 64 E. Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m., also at 2 p. m. on Saturday before. All welcome.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

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IN

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 98. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1930. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., June 28, 1930.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—It is alone by the grace of God that I am permitted to address you in the above manner for the purpose of telling you that once again through the goodness and mercy of the all-wise God the members of Mt. Olive and other sister churches met together in a three day meeting for the worship of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in spirit and truth. How sweet, precious and beautiful for brethren to dwell together in love and unity. I feel assured of the fact that each and every child of God went away from that meeting with the feeling that it was good to be there. Many precious words of truth were spoken by our beloved ministers of the gospel, who came bringing us glad tidings of good things. They proclaimed the glorious doctrine of election, predestination and salvation alone by the grace of God, giving God all the praise, honor and glory, ever looking unto Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith. What a wonderful blessing it is to see brethren who stand so firmly on the principles of doctrine established in days gone by, and who ever contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints of old. It gives the soul of a poor sinner many seasons of rejoicing to hear the precious truth proclaimed and to meet with the dear saints of God who look for the old paths and strive to walk therein. Though we be few in number, there are many precious promises left on record for the comfort of God's little ones. He has said, Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in their midst; and it fills our souls with joy when we feel his presence near and know that he is able to speak words of comfort to the poor tempest-tossed soul who feels the need of the never-dying love of Christ, who gave himself a ransom for his people to save them from death, hell and the grave. The beloved ones who gathered at dear old Mt. Olive heard nine messages of gospel

truth and were blessed with the full assurance that it is alone by the grace of God that any one will ever bask on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance. Oh what joy it is to hear the brethren tell of what great things the Lord has done for them, whereof they are glad. He has done it all, all to him I owe, and not one of his little ones will perish, he saved them with an everlasting salvation, and when this earth shall pass away they will all be gathered home to glory, there to be like him, where joy will be complete, sorrow and sighing shall be no more, ever singing praises to his blessed name in that world without end. A glorious meeting of the saints of God makes me stop and marvel at the mysterious works of God. It is all too wonderful for the carnal mind to comprehend; it cannot be understood, only by the revelation of God through his Spirit, shed abroad in the hearts of his children. Thanks be to his holy name for his many promises, and great is the joy when the cup is filled to overflowing and we feel that he has fulfilled the words where he said in his sermon on the mount, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." If it is only the crumbs that fall from the Master's table, they rejoice greatly and are made willing to sit at the feet of their brethren. The love of God draws the poor wandering soul to the meetings, and how thankful we should be that we can meet in praise of his holy name. May God give each and every one grace sufficient to forsake not the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is. Our meetings here are only a foretaste of the joy that awaits us in that heavenly home prepared for those who love him because he first loved them and shed his precious blood in agony on the cross that his people might have life everlasting, with its joys eternal. Being a school teacher in the town of Fairmont, I can see the many worldly pleasures of to-day drawing the carnal mind away from things pertaining to heaven and its joys, and it makes me realize more and more every day that it is alone by the grace of God that any would unite themselves with the Primitive Baptists, despised and rejected by men of the world, yet the dearest people on earth to me. "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in christian love." Love is the golden chain that binds one and all into a common bundle of never-dying love. "My people shall be willing in the day of my power," and when the cords of love are drawn they are made to cry, Lord, save, or I perish; and, like the poor publican, they say, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. Though he slay me, yet will I trust him. He has all power in heaven and earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? He forever put away the sins of his people to be remembered against them no more. What could be safer, sweeter and more secure than the doctrine of election, predestination and salvation alone by the grace of God, through the shed blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to redeem his loved ones and give them a home where none but the saints

of God shall dwell? Oh how sweet it will be when we meet to part no more. May it be our happy lot to meet around the great white throne when our trials and cares are ended, if we never meet again as we did in our lovely meeting this month. Great will be our joy then, when we can sing praises to his holy name forever and ever. There we shall see him and be like him, there will be no more night there, only joy and peace for evermore. I feel that this is all too good for poor sinful me, yet I love to pen a few thoughts as they come to my mind. I know that if I am a child of God it is alone by the grace of God I am what I am. My mind is as prone to sin as the sparks are to fly upward and I feel the need of his sustaining grace more every day of my life to keep me from the errors and delusions of the world.

If there are any words of comfort in this letter give God all the praise, honor and glory, and cast the mantle of charity over my rambling thoughts. I have not written for some time, because I did not feel worthy of asking for space in your valuable paper. I have written this at the request of a dear aged brother to tell you about our wonderful, precious and lovely meeting in honor of His holy name. The brethren and sisters met together, and oh how sweet to see the love extended to each other. Their conversations were all about heaven and its joys. Many of the loved ones there are old and feeble and it makes my heart ache to look in their faces and see the tears roll down their cheeks as they listen to a message of love proclaimed by some dear old soldier of the cross who is endowed with wisdom from on high. Thanks be to our heavenly Father, that he has revealed these things unto babes, who feel to be poor in spirit. I know and realize that it will not be long until many of the aged ones here will be lowered into the grave, and how sad it will be for those left behind, yet we would not mourn as those without hope, for we feel assured of the fact that they will be at rest and their spirit return to God who gave it, and, if it be the Lord's will, some day we shall meet with the loved ones who have gone before.

I must close. Pray for me, a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

ELSIE GALL.

CHICO, California, Sept. 26, 1930.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have just received what to me seems a wonderful letter from Elder G. O. Walker, of Reedsport, Oregon, and am inclosing it for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if it meets with your approval. I have not his consent, but feel I know him well enough to be sure it will be all right.

Love to all the household of faith from an old sinner in hope of salvation,

MARION S. BROOKS.

REEDSPORT, Ore., Sept. 7, 1930.

DEAR SISTER BROOKS:—Paul says, speaking of Christ, "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." The Lord doeth all things well, and it is a blessing to you that you are

reconciled to believe he is just as able to care for your daughter in one way as in another. Our son-in-law at Algeria, Washington, has been going twenty-nine miles to work each day for several years and has never sustained any injury in that way, but he lost an eye while watching a ball game.

I am slowly improving in health, but am not strong yet. The rest are well, as usual. Only as the Giver of every good and perfect gift, in whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning, opens our understanding that we may understand the Scripture can we set forth the true meaning of any of his inspired word, so I want you to try whatever I write by the Scripture and by any light you may have on the subject. What I write I only present as my belief.

In the last letter I wrote you we found, according to the Scripture, that though the children of Israel be in number as the sands of the sea, a remnant should be saved. That the multitude turned their backs on the living God, to the abominable worship of graven images and every kind of idol under every green tree. (See Jeremiah ii. 27, 28, 30.) That is because the carnal mind is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. (Rom. viii. 7, 8.) These Jews are typical people, so of the Gentiles, as Paul says, there was a remnant in Elijah's time, a remnant in Paul's time, so is there a remnant yet to-day according to the salvation of grace. Read carefully Romans xi. 1-8, and if you would know just what makes the difference between a believer and an unbeliever refer to Ephesians, chapters one and two. God says, "I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me."—Isaiah xlvi. 9. The Lord, as recorded in the book of Revelation, showed unto his servant John things that must be hereafter. (Rev. iv. 1.) As Cain made an offering of the works of his own hand: of the things from the cursed ground (Gen. iii. 17) and Abel by faith made a more acceptable offering and was hated and put to death, as it ever has been and is yet. There is the mystery of Godliness and the mystery of iniquity arrayed in terrible battle. So in Revelation Mystery, Babylon the great, is shown under various heads, and each time all the world whose names were not written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world wandered after the beast. In the twelfth chapter of Revelation Roman paganism is shown to John under the name of a great red dragon. That old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, that was the great head of will worship and idolatry supported by the Roman crown, practically ruling the world. In Revelation xiii. 1-11, John sees and records for those who have an ear to hear, a last rising up, and the dragon gives him his seat and his power and great authority. That was about 312 A. D. When Constantine came to the Roman throne, the old seat and power and civil authority of the dragon. History calls Constantine a christian.

That first beast was the mystery of iniquity, false, worldly, idolatrous wor-

ship. The Holy Ghost showed it to Paul during this practically unbroken powerful reign from 312 A. D. to 1572 A. D., when the great civil power was broken at the time of the reformation: Luther, Calvin, etc. There were untold millions (estimated from fifty to one hundred millions) put to death for the testimony of Jesus, because they would not bow themselves to the Catholic idolatry. During this time a few of the remnant, according to the election of grace, were hid away in the wilderness. That is called the bride, the Lord's wife, clothed with the sun and with the moon under her feet. Notice forty-two months, three and one-half years, &c., equal 1260, and the time of this last and the time the church was hid away, from 300 A. D. until the reformation, was 1260 years.

In Revelation xiii. 11-18, a second beast rises up. Notice that the first beast had the power, seat and great authority of the dragon, and the second beast spake as a dragon. (Rev. xiii. 2; xiii. 11.) That is the old serpent called the Devil and Satan. The ruler of the darkness of this world and king of the world, he has always enforced his authority with the weapons of a carnal warfare; that is, they have prosecuted always when they could gain control of the civil and military power. This last time is coming up what is commonly called protestantism, beginning at the time of the reformation, when new churches began to spring up, Lutherns, Calvinists or Presbyterians, daughters of the mother of harlots, springing off from and resembling Catholicism. In the twenty-third chapter of Matthew you may read the Savior's summary of the Jews' depth of idolatry, witchcraft, &c., and to-day you are well aware of the cunning devices of men and women that lie in wait to deceive. They are meddling in the civil powers of the world, electing their members to office and maintaining great lobbies at the capitols to corrupt legislation. Their great lobby now is the World's Church and Civic Confederation. I here heard that there were more than six hundred denominations, fraternities, &c., some eight or ten years ago, and new ones occasionally springing up, like green bay trees, so the full number is probably six hundred and sixty-six. I have lost at least one good position, and failed to get another, because I had not the name of the beast: refused to join the synagogue of Satan. And so men in order to sell or buy goods must needs bow to some of their idols; some call it having a "pull." They are not to the summit of their great power and iniquity yet, but when they do become agreed and give the power to the first beast, as they will (Read Rev. xvii. 17.) then it seems the reign will be short until the just judgment of the unerring Judge will be poured out upon them. (See chapter eighteen.) It may be hard for one who has only lived in this age of religious tolerating to believe the extent of the meaning of Jeremiah xvii. 9, and believe that men of this enlightened (?) age could be whipped into such a frenzy as to butcher wholesale. (Rev. xiii. 15.) Now we find the contention always

comes up about the same way: the question of salvation is the bone of contention. The truth is, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."—Eph. ii. 8, 9. But the carnal religion always popular is just the reverse, contending always that it is by good works, a reward and not a gift, and they are very zealous, as Paul says. (Rom. x. 1.) All our righteousness is as filthy rags, a poor offering to sacrifice for sin. Jesus says, I GIVE unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. (John x. 26, 28.) See also Acts iv. 10, 12. As the unregenerated Jew rejected, persecuted and crucified God's own Son, so the carnal mind of the Gentiles, even so-called christians, is enmity against God, and filled with blind zeal, as their sermons and books witness.

The second, or two-horned beast is also called the false prophet. (Rev. xix. 20.) At the height of his power, when he shall rule the kingdoms, or governments of the world, John sees all the world but the elect wandering after him, as they also did after the dragon and the first beast. At this present time we are seeing what John saw about 1900 years ago, and recorded in Revelation xvi. 13, 14. The saints, overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, are forbidden to use the weapons of carnal warfare. Their complete and only armor is described in Ephesians vi. 6-12. All the religious and civil powers of darkness of this world are not our greatest enemies. Our sins when they are finished bring forth death, but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, he bore the sins of his brethren in his own body on the tree, blotting them out as with a thick cloud. (See Rev. i. 18.) Is it not enough? "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Stephen bore the armor (Acts vii.) and gained the victory even in death. Even so the great Sufferer of Gethsemane and the cruel cross, being obedient even unto death, but could not be holden of the monster. (Zech. iv. 6.) As long as time shall last there will be witnesses to the great mercy, majesty power, honor and glory of Christ, even though they may have to seal it with their blood as did Abel and all the martyrs of Jesus.

I intended to be brief, but it is difficult to be brief and yet clear.

Yours to serve in the bonds of the gospel,

G. O. WALKER.

TRENTON, N. J., May 16, 1930.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Once again my mind is directed to the worship of God, by giving testimony of the power and saving grace of our Lord. By faith we follow the prophets and look ahead to that revealed unity which was completed by the death of Christ, and manifested in the words, "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."—John xiv. 20. There we have the unity of God and his people through the mediation of the Son. Before the world was Christ and the Father were

one and his elect were known in Christ. God foreordained the suffering and death of his only begotten Son, that his chosen should be saved from the condemnation of the law and a remnant manifested in the realms of time for the glory of his holy name, and in all the earth his work should be seen by the sons of men. If God be for us who can be against us? Paul, in his letter to the Romans, felt strong enough in the faith to include himself in the above words, and at times we also feel the same strength. David, the shepherd boy, a type of Christ, saved his father's flock from the lion, the bear and his brethren from Goliath, so also has Christ, the holy Son of God, saved and kept his people from the condemnation of the law, from the evils of false worship and the wicked one, and from death, the greatest of all enemies, and has risen triumphant over all, a King in spiritual Israel. Like David and Joseph, he was scoffed at by his brethren, the Jews, betrayed and delivered to the enemy for destruction, but in God's time and plan made a Savior of his people, delivering them from the law, from Satan and from death. By the holy purpose of God, his people were in him before the world was made. Our lives are hid with Christ in God, and because he is eternal we are eternally his. He is for us at all times. The church, the bride, the elect, was in God before time, but in time a remnant is brought forth to manifest his power in the earth. In Jeremiah we read, "Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it." The new birth is here prophesied. The child of God under the law marred in the hand of the potter for the glory of God, and that vessel was made again another vessel, showing very plainly the regeneration of that same lump of clay. Now this new vessel is the same that Paul speaks of: "We have this treasure [the life of Christ] in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." Because of this life, this treasure, we know that Christ liveth and is the Mediator between God and man, and with Paul we can say, I live; yet not I , but Christ liveth in me. So we can declare, The Lord is for us, fear them not. If we were not eternally chosen by him, and possessors of eternal life, then indeed would we have reason to fear them that kill the body. There can be no life of Christ possible unless it is eternal. If his people possess life, it is eternal life, and was in them in Christ before time. Christ told Nicodemus, Ye must be born again. The quickening comes when the child of God is given to feel that life, by his ability to suffer for sin and from condemnation. He must go his full time in that suffering and growth until the time of delivery, then he is brought forth to the full knowledge of Christ, and so becomes a manifested child of the royal seed, a chosen child just as

much before the spiritual birth as after. If one does not possess eternal life in Christ before creation, then our lives would be part time life and part eternal, and that is not possible, as the life of the seed is eternal and is in Christ, so also is the body. God has been for us eternally. The words, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord," testify to that wonderful love of God for his church, the body of Christ, and the life of that body is hidden and kept in the Root, concealed, and will survive the test of time and will come forth glorified. The perilous times that Paul speaks of are surely with us. As we look over all the branches of this body scattered through the land we see a coldness, a falling away, and we wonder if indeed the end is not near and the time of the Gentiles fulfilled. We do well to follow Paul's admonition: "Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them," and so "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel," proving to our adversaries that if God be for us none can be against us. Christ declares of his bride, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." May we hope that we are of that glorious body of Christ. When the end of time comes we know that the chosen will be as beautiful and perfect as the Head declares, for they are the body of that glorious Head. While enduring this growth toward completeness let us not faint, for if God be for us we will come forth perfect. Not one tiny part of that body will be marred, for as surely as the Lord said, My holy one shall not see corruption, the body will be all complete and perfect before the Father. It is right that we walk fearfully and softly before the Lord, giving our thoughts to the things of God, by the strength of that light that is in the midst of the temple of God. The passtimes and amusements of this world yield unto us the fruits of the flesh and profiteth us nothing. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." As Christ is the light in the earthen vessel, the glory of his name will be manifested and his name wrought in us so that we will work out that which is within, bearing fruits of righteousness according to the will of God. The great questions in my mind most of the time are, Have I been born again? Can I by faith say, If God be for me who can be against me? If I have been called, do I walk worthy of that calling? All I can do is to leave all in the hand of God and hope that he will manifest to me from time to time his love through the fellowship and love of the brethren.

This is left to your judgment, knowing that God will not allow anything that I have written to take one whit from his glory.

Your sister only by the grace of God,
ELIZABETH L. FETTER.

EDITORIAL.

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HEBREWS XIII. 17.

"OBEY them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account; that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."

Our only excuse for attempting to write on the above passage of the word is because we have been asked to do so, and are willing to submit such thoughts as we have upon it. This Scripture does not refer to worldly governmental powers to which the members of the church, as citizens, are subject. But this refers to those gifts and offices in the church unto which the brethren are commanded to yield obedience. There is a Scripture in Romans, thirteenth chapter, which refers to the civil powers which administer the affairs of earthly government and to which the believer is commanded to yield obedience. This is not to be confused with the above Scripture in Hebrews, thirteenth chapter, which refers to the ministers of God within the church. These ministers of God within the church are called and qualified of God through the Spirit to serve the church and it is right and proper that these gospel ministers should be respected, that their admonitions should be heeded, their instructions obeyed. If a church is not willing to follow the advice of the pastor they should not in the first place have called that pastor. The very act of calling a pastor to serve a church carries with it the implication that that church has confidence in that man to adequately serve them; therefore they should not cavil at his advice when such matters arise that require his counsel. Every truly called minister of God is called of God, and is therefore accountable to the God who calls him to the work. Being thus accountable to the Head of the church for the way he conducts himself and for the manner in which he fulfills his ministry, he cannot treat his responsibilities lightly. He will go about his work with much prayer and carefulness, walking humbly with his God and with those about him. He will seek to avoid every appearance of evil, will never seek to please men, not even those of his own congregation, but will seek to be faithful and true in all his deliberations in the house of God, not wresting the Scriptures to bolster up his own preconceived notions, but

endeavoring to rightly divide the word of truth as a good workman unto God, not unto men. It is the spiritual business of pastors of churches to watch for the souls of those placed under their care by the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost alone can make a man the overseer of the church, and when the Holy Ghost does this, that man will not do it for the sake of filthy lucre nor for any selfish or personal motive, but he will do it with a readiness of mind begotten of the love of God within him, for the good of the cause and for the glory of God. He, therefore, has the spiritual oversight of the flock and in that way watches for their souls. When matters of doctrine, faith and practice come up for discussion or decision within the church, the advice and direction of the minister of God should be attended to by the church and they should abide in his teachings. Should his advice and direction to the church be such that the church cannot conscientiously follow him, they should reason with him and he with them, both pastor and people endeavoring to know what is the good and right way. If this matter is gone about in the right way peace and order will attend their efforts and both pastor and people will be more firmly welded together in love. If, however, the pastor is in the right and the church rebellious against his rule, they cause him grief and not joy and such a condition is unprofitable to all concerned, as the writer to the Hebrews here says. On the other hand, if the church finds the rule of the pastor unscriptural and uncharitable, if the pastor assumes an arbitrary attitude for which there is no warrant in Holy Writ, he then brings himself under the deserved censure of his brethren. The absence of the Holy Ghost in his ruling of the church proves that that man is out of his place and should himself be called to order. Lacking the overlordship of the Holy Ghost in one's ministry makes a man's ministry void and of none effect to the people over whom he is supposed to watch. This Scripture in Hebrews has been terribly abused through the ages of church history. Self-seeking men have taken advantage of this text to lord it over the church and no such thought at all is involved in the text. Any man in the Old School Baptist Church who takes this text as an excuse to impose his will upon any church or churches would be committing spiritual suicide. There is no excuse for any one to lord it over God's heritage or to seek to have dominion over the faith of the people of God. Even the apostles themselves disclaim any right to dominate the church of God, yet they are judges in spiritual Israel and their rule must be respected and obeyed if we expect to be recognized as the visible organization of God on this earth. Any disobedience to the apostles' rule or to their judgment at once places us beyond their fellowship. If we are in their fellowship we will gladly walk with them and agree with them. Any disobedience thereunto is an evidence against us, that we do not belong in their company. If a church loves her pastor and has confidence in his judgment her members

will obey his rule; if he is in his right place and in his right mind his rule over the church will be marked with the firmness of love and there will be no arbitrary dictation to the church on his part. Among the various protestant bodies of the modern religious world, there are many regulatory bodies, such as synods, councils, presbyteries, associations, &c., which dominate the faith and actions of their members. Such governing bodies think they have a warrant for their actions in Hebrews xiii. 17. Nothing could be more foreign to the true import of the text. Those bodies of men do not love each other, nor do they love the people over whom they seek to rule; they are in love with their own power and delight to have the whip-hand over their fellows. It was quite otherwise with Paul, who wrote this Scripture under consideration. He felt himself to be the chief of sinners and the least of saints, not fit to be called an apostle because he had persecuted the saints. Humility, love and gentleness marked the ministry of Paul; yet he was unfailing in his faithfulness to his brethren and did not hesitate to reprove and correct when necessary. It was the Holy Ghost in Paul that did the ruling, and not himself. So must it be to-day with those who have the oversight of the flock of God. If the Holy Ghost dwells not in us in our ministry, we cannot rule with discretion; but granted that the Holy Ghost is present in one's pastorate, then the church is bound in love to respect the ruling of that man.

H. H. L.

GENESIS VII. 16.

"And the Lord shut him in."

We have been requested to write upon the above Scripture, and we commence in much fear and weakness, knowing that unless the Lord enable us to write to his honor and glory our effort will be vain. Noah was a servant of God, a preacher of righteousness, and that which he built was built according to the word of God. The size of the ark, the length, breadth and height were given to him, also he was told to make it of gopher wood and pitch it within and without with pitch. The door of the ark was to set in its side, and it was to have but one window, and when completed the Lord did not say, Go into the ark, as if the Lord was not there, but "Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." He then told him what beasts and birds, clean and unclean, he should take into the ark. And it came to pass, after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth, and the same day that they entered the ark the fountains of the great deep were broken up and the windows of heaven were opened. And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh as God had commanded him, and the Lord shut him in. As we have stated briefly the connection of Scripture leading up to our subject, we shall now come to the words, "And the Lord shut him in." This Scripture first presents to our minds the absolute sovereignty of God over all creation. It clearly shows that he can create and can destroy, and as

God, all creatures obey his command. Noah was not told to stand and call on those without, and by threats of destruction, or soft, persuasive words, get them to come into the ark. The Lord said to Noah, Come into the ark, thee and all thy house. Again our subject sets forth very clearly the doctrine of election, as in the instance of Jacob and Esau, God said, Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated, and that before the children were born, or either had done good or evil. It is true that the Lord declared to Noah, "For thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation," but the righteousness of Noah was the righteousness of faith, which faith is the gift of God. Noah himself, with those of his household, were descended from Adam, and were of the same lump by nature as those who perished in the flood. Noah would have been in the same condemnation but for the mercy of God, for it was God who warned him, and Paul tells us, "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." We have often heard those who ought to know better, misquote that Scripture, and say, Noah was moved by fear, instead of as it is written, moved with fear, and such misquotation is very misleading and gives an entirely different meaning to it. He was not moved by fear, but rather by a living faith which enabled him to move with fear. In other words, fear was not the motive that moved him, but faith, and fear, the fear of God, which is a filial fear, manifested in Noah, loving regard to the word of God. Noah's faith came by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, and as the fear above mentioned is the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom, it can be rightly said he moved with heavenly wisdom. How different some men would have it, when they say that Noah was moved by fear, as though fear of a common destruction was the moving cause of Noah building the ark. God had thoughts of good to Noah and his household, and he warned him of things not yet seen. The people in Noah's time were not warned as he was warned, for Jesus tells us they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and he declares they knew not, until the flood came and took them all away. No doubt they said Noah had a devil and was mad, and laughed him to scorn. They were destroyed, but Noah could not be destroyed in the deluge, any more than Lot could be left to perish in Sodom, or Abram remain with his father, Terah. The Lord had a purpose according to election, and he said to Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house. There are volumes in the words of our text. God's purpose to save, and determination to destroy, are both presented to our minds when we consider the election of God. The very water that by God's power stood on heaps to let Israel pass over, came in deluge upon the Egyp-

tians when they would follow. Man may quibble at the word, and say God is an unjust God, but, "O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." "And the Lord shut him in." Man could not open that door when God shut it. He shuts and none can open, he opens and none can shut. Let us first consider what it meant to be shut out, then we will go more fully into the security and happiness of those who were shut in. Those who were shut out were, by a sovereign act, the election of God, left out forever to perish in their own wickedness. A righteous God made short work of them by sending rain from above, and by breaking up the fountains of the great deep. "And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died." Noah alone remained alive and they that were with him in the ark. The gracious were saved, the graceless destroyed, it was a gracious act of God to shut them in and the storm and flood could not reach them when shut in by God. No lock of man's invention can give the security that those had who were shut in by God. "Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." Those who were shut in were certainly monuments of his mercy, for while other buildings were destroyed by the flood, the ark rose with the waters, and went upon the face of the waters, no wonder that when the waters were dried up and the ark had rested upon Mount Ararat, Noah, looking upon the ark that had weathered the storm and flood for him, could offer a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savor unto the Lord his God. The ark was a type of Jesus Christ, the ark of grace, and those creatures that went into the ark were typical of the election of grace, who by a sovereign act or purpose of God are shut in Jesus Christ. It was from the side of Adam that the Lord took a rib, "and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man made he a woman." He took it from his side because it was nearest to his heart, she was nearest to his heart before she partook of the forbidden fruit. The election of grace were in the heart of Jesus Christ, and the door of the ark was in the side, and the Lord shut them in. The electing love of God shut them in the Son of God. Jesus said, "All that the Father hath given me shall come unto me, and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." Thus they are secure by electing love. There were three floors in the ark and

only one window above. The top floor with its light from above typified the gospel dispensation with its direct light from heaven. Jesus, who is a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of his people Israel. The second floor, whose light was not so clear, represents the legal dispensation, with its shadows of better things to come, and the third floor represents the patriarchal dispensation which had but a glimmering light from above. In all three dispensations, or floors, there are those shut in preserved in Jesus.

What saved the three Hebrews in the furnace? Was it not Jesus? And David, Daniel and Paul all had to declare that the Lord was their light and salvation. They were kept by God's power, and not for their goodness, but because of his electing love. To-day there are a people shut in by God, who would be as destructive as the wolf or lion or leopard, who have been gathered into the ark by our God, and are made to dwell with the lamb and lie down with the kid, and a little child leads them. The unclean Gentile and the Jew that was ceremonially clean are made to feed together and the middle wall of partition is removed, and they know that there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, shut in by God, and they need not the light of the sun nor moon nor stars, for the Lord is their light, and their God their glory. Those thus shut in know that their safety is not in themselves, but in Christ. It is true trouble will come upon them as the storms beat upon the ark, but the ark sustained them above all the storm and brought them safe to the top of the mount at last. Whatever the trial or trouble may be, they are sustained, as the deluge of old came, the ark mounted and rode upon the face of the waters, and, bless the Lord, he has said, The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms. Paul tells us, "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." The sorrow of the world worketh death, trouble often has run its victim to despair and death. Reproaches have often sunk the worldling into misery and sometimes self-destruction, but with the elect of God there hath no temptation taken them but what is common unto man, and he will with the temptation make a way of escape that they may be able to bear it. The way of escape is God's electing love, for no matter how bitter the cup, hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

"When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow;
For I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress."

Abraham said, "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen," and in the Mount Ararat, which means holy ground, Noah saw the ark that had stood the tempest for him, and it is there also we see Jesus, smitten and bruised for us, when he carried us in his heart, and our sins in his body on the cruel tree.

As we look with wonder on him whom we have pierced, it is then we can sing, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me." Yes, it is then that the theme of electing love excites our admiration and we can say,

> "E'er since by faith I saw the stream
> Thy flowing wounds supply,
> Redeeming love has been my theme,
> And shall be till I die."

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

G. R.

NOTICE.

We request our subscribers when sending in subscriptions or changes of address to be sure and give the *exact name and address* to which the paper is now coming; otherwise we are liable to give the credit to the wrong person, as we may have two subscribers of the same surname at the one post office.

Also, when remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it.

CLOSE OF VOLUME XCVIII.

As it is customary at the close of each volume to give our readers a short account of the condition of the Signs, we will now endeavor to do so. There is not much new to report. Things have moved along about as in previous years, and we hope there has nothing appeared in our columns to dishonor the cause for which the publication stands. While our subscription list has decreased some during the year, we are hopeful it is because of the depression that has taken place in our country, and not because of lack of interest in the cause or in the Signs, and that when times improve our list will again increase to where it formally was. Under the circumstances, we feel our supporters have done all they could, and we thank them for what they have done. We also wish to thank those who have written for our columns, for without good and sound communications it would be impossible to continue with the publication. To any and all who have contributed financially toward helping send the Signs to the "poor of the flock," and to aid in publishing the paper, we extend our heartfelt thanks and appreciation. Last, but by no means least, we thank our faithful editors for the interest they have manifested and the help they have rendered during the year.

Hoping the dear Lord will guide and sustain us during the coming year of 1931, we now bid you farewell for the year 1930.

J. E. BEEBE & CO.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by sister Della Davis.)

To the Elders and messengers composing the First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists and the churches they represent, now in session with the West Union Church, near Perry, Kansas, September 12th, 13th and 14th, 1930, Greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN CHRIST:—With a prayer to the God of all wisdom and power that he will guide and direct me in all things, I will try to perform the duty assigned me at the last session of this Association, and present a few thoughts for your consideration as a Circular Letter. I would call your attention to the many afflictions of the righteous, whereof every true born child of God is a partaker. In Psalms xxxiv. 19, we find the words, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." These afflictions do not pertain to the common ailments, tragedies and calamities that befall the whole human race, and for which many, if they think of him at all, would curse God and die. But the Lord's people see his hand in all the common afflictions which come upon them, as well as the peculiar afflictions which none others experience. We may feel that he has chastened us sorely, but his word assures us that it is in love. He does it "our souls to refine, and make us at length in his likeness to shine," and our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, and brings us into fellowship with his suffering. When our minds are led to all he endured then our afflictions of doubts and fears, perils and persecutions, tribulations and distresses, are made to seem light, and but for a moment, in comparison to that eternal weight of glory, the contemplation of which is worked in them that are spiritually exercised thereby, so that in patience and comfort of the Scriptures we have hope of sharing in that eternal weight of glory, and when patience has her perfect work then we glory in our afflictions, in tribulation, seeing that patience is enhanced by it, and worketh experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts and "My people shall never be ashamed." But often "in our souls' distress, when all around is wilderness, when herbs and quenching streams there is none," and we see not a step before us, then do we walk by faith and not by sight, trusting in the precious assurance that all is for our good, and the blessed hope which we sometimes esteem as too small to rest upon is renewed and holds us as an anchor, both sure and steadfast, and keeps us from drifting away and sinking in the stormy waves that often seem nigh to overwhelming. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable, but it reaches beyond this vale of tears, and entereth into that within the vail, whither our Forerunner, the lowly Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, is for us

entered. His bleeding footsteps marked the path for us to tread, and as we run with patience the race unalterably set before us our eyes should be on him, the author and finisher of our faith. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Oh let us not only walk in this light, but in the dark and lonely seasons run with patience, for he hath commanded the light to shine out of darkness. The lightning flashes from the clouds we so much dread. Only a flash, but it shows the way a little further along. We have this treasure in earthen vessels, for now abideth faith, hope and charity. So though we are troubled on every hand, yet not distressed; though perplexed, we are not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; for all things work together for good to them that love the Lord. We have never a sorrow nor affliction but what the dear Lord chose. "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body," as toiling, sorrowing, rejoicing onward through life we go, and we do "know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed," not that we would be stripped of mortality and lie down in death, but be clothed upon with the spotless robe of righteousness, that mortality might be swallowed up, brought into subjection, that the life of Jesus might be more in manifestation in us, looking on things not seen by the natural eye, "for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal," which "now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." Think, dear brethren, of standing face to face with that innumerable host which no man can number, knowing every one as saints of the most high God, even as we also are known. Small and great will be as one, and the great multitude which John saw that no man can number shall stand before God clothed in fine linen and pure white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints. And your righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. With psalms in their hands it shall be their joy to ascribe honor and glory unto him that reigneth forever and ever. There will be no night there, for the Lamb, he is the light. No more dark and lonely seasons, but there to be ever

> "Safe from all the stormy winters,
> Free from sorrow, pain and strife;
> From all evils that befall us,
> As we journey through this life."

"It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." What more can we wish to know than that we shall be satisfied when we awake in his likeness? Dear saints, as we hope for that which in our weary warfare we see not, then

do we with patience wait for it. The disciples once said, We have left all and followed thee. What shall we have therefor? Jesus told them they should receive an hundred fold now in this time, with persecutions, but in the end eternal life. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." He never loses sight of the objects of his love. His love is free, not to all of Adam's race to take up or lay down at will, but free because it is freely bestowed without price upon all for whom it was provided. So let us keep in mind the earnest of our inheritance, for if we be without chastisements, without trials and tribulations, without perils and persecutions, whereof all are partakers, then are we bastards and not sons. And when our work on earth is accomplished, when the last battle shall be fought, when the last tear shall be wiped from our eyes and these mortal bodies stilled in death, may we then, clothed in hope of immortality beyond the grave, fall asleep in Jesus, in the arms of our blessed Lord and Master rise to a newness of life, to ascribe all honor and glory and praise to him in a world that shall never end.

L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator.
MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

(Written by Deacon Amasa J. Slauson.)

The Lexington-Roxbury Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, Ashokan, N, Y., September 17th, 18th and 19th, 1930, sendeth christian greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year, which has seemed like a passing moment, has rolled swiftly by and brought with it many sad changes, and has brought about again the time for the writing of a few lines called a Circular Letter, to circulate among the associations and churches with which we correspond, and we do desire that the Lord will direct our thoughts in such a way that we might be able to pen a few lines to the praise and honor and mercy of the God of all grace, who we hope and trust has called us from nature's darkness into the marvelous light of his dear Son with a holy calling, not according to our own works, but according to his own purpose in grace, for by grace are ye saved through faith, not of works, lest any man should boast. It is a gift of God. How can we praise him enough for the love and desire which he has through his blessed Son given us for spiritual things and for the brethren? A desire to worship him in spirit and in truth, and put no confidence in the flesh, for the flesh profiteth nothing. The apostle Paul tells us of those who mind the things of the flesh, filled with all manner of wickedness, and says the carnal mind is not subject to God's law, neither indeed can be, for it is spiritually discerned. In Adam all die, separated from God, for God told Adam, In the day that thou eatest of the fruit of the tree thou shalt surely die. Now God is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, so as Adam did eat of the forbidden fruit so death passed upon Adam,

which is of the earth earthy, which was our forefather, so what are we by nature, and where do we stand, poor puny man, whose breath is in his nostrils, conceived in sin, shapen in iniquity, and who came from the womb speaking lies? Yes, did we not once roll sin as a sweet morsel under our tongue and delight in the pleasures and vain things of this world with much more delight and pleasure than now? Yes, has sin not become exceeding sinful? The Scriptures say that God is not slack concerning his promise as some men count slackness, as we made mention before. Now who knows that? Does the natural man know that he is a castaway? We so know. Does the natural man know that God's promise to Adam stands fast, and that there is no slackness in that promise; when he disobeyed God the penalty was death, and that he is dead in trespasses and sin, and that there is no soundness in him? The letter of the word in the Scriptures declares that, but does the natural man know it, even though the Scripture says so? He may think he believes it, but we will say that it is only imagination, the natural man does not believe it, and does not know anything about it until he is made to feel it and experience it, and when he is made to feel and realize that he is a castaway, that he is nothing but a lump of clay in the hand of the Potter, and that sin is stamped in his very being, and that if he were sent to hell God's righteous law approves it well, and that he cannot think a good thought or do a good deed and there is no soundness in him, then he knows that there is no slackness in God's promise; he knows then that he is nothing but Adam multiplied. But there is something more. When one has experienced that, then there is something more than natural about that one. In order to know a thing we must experience something of it ourselves. Some one may tell us that a headache is a very agonizing pain, we may believe that one, but if we have never had any headache we do not know anything about it for ourselves, only by the testimony of some one else. After we have had headache then we have experienced something of it ourselves, then we can testify of it for ourselves and not for another. Another promise was made: the angel of the Lord said of Mary, And she shall bring forth a Son and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. It does not say that he shall save Adam's people, as all the people, but his people, the Son of God's people. Now who are his people? The Scripture says his people are those chosen in a covenant of love in Christ before time began, those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. This sounds as if there was choice, and there is, according to the Scripture. Even so, what are we going to do about it? it is God that justifieth. God said, Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated. The foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. Now, since man is dead by the disobedience of his forefather, Adam, and held fast under the penalty of that act, which is death, for

God said so, and it is law, for God is the lawgiver, so we are under the law of sin and death in Adam. Now if there be any salvation for poor puny man something must be done, and it must be done by God, for man, being in this helpless and polluted state, is entirely banished from God. So God fulfilled the promise which he had made to many. Through the Holy Ghost God caused the virgin Mary to bring forth a Son, and called his name Jesus, which means Savior, and he came in the form of sinful flesh, yet without sin. He made himself of no reputation. This is according to the reading of the Scripture in Matthew, left on record for those who believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Divine record says that Jesus shall save his people from their sins, and in order for that to be done the blessed Son of God, who is blameless, who is guiltless, and holy as God is holy, in order to bring salvation to wicked, disobedient characters of Adam's fallen race this perfect man must pay our debt, suffer untold agony, be mocked, spit upon, crowned with thorns, put to death for the sins of his people. Think of it, the Just for the unjust died the death of the cross and his body was buried in Joseph's new tomb in the rock, and a great stone was placed at the door of the sepulchre, and all things made as secure as man could make them, for those who disbelieved Jesus said, Make it secure, for remember the deceiver said while yet alive that after three days he would rise again. So they made it secure, fearing the disciples might steal him away. But when the three days came the keepers became as dead men and Jesus rose victorious, conqueror over death, hell and the grave. Now this is according to the record of divine truth, and, as we said before, fulfilling God's promise, so we find again that God is not slack concerning his promise. After all this great miracle is done, who believes it? Does one of Adam's race believe it? We will say, no. We mean that in this way the natural man only believes it by the reading of the word. He who has tasted that the Lord is gracious and has been made to feel his love and mercy wrought in his very being, and who has been made to cling to and love the things he once hated and to hate the things he once loved, been made to realize that Jesus is the rock of their salvation, to those he is precious, and such ones have something more than Adam's nature in them, and can say, I know my Redeemer liveth, and such ones believe that God is not slack concerning his promise, and can believe by something more than the reading about it. The world did not know Jesus when here on earth, neither does it know him now. Dear brethren, when we have been given a hope in the mercy of the blessed Lord we are commanded to show it by our life. Matthew v. 16: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Is it not our duty to live soberly and righteously in this present evil world that our con-

versation and our walk be such as to show to the world that we have been raised to a newness of life and thereby honor the Lord of mercy of whom we profess? When Jesus said this he was speaking to his disciples. When the Lord speaks it is done, as we have been trying to show, when he commands it stands fast. Was it not so in this case with his disciples? Did not their light so shine before men that men of the world could see their good works and see there was something more about them, and in their walk and conversation, and in their lives, than there was in other men? We say, yes. The Lord was speaking to those who believed on him, so we believe those same words speak to those who believe on him now and that that command is as effective now in the life and the light of a child of grace, does shine in this world, does shine before men, their walk, life and conversation are different than the men of the world. A child of grace cannot do the things that the men of the world follow after. He cannot follow after the lusts of the flesh as other men, because he has been given a different mind; his mind has been set upon things above this world. God said, I will put my law in their hearts and write it in their minds. So their light does shine: Christ in them, for he is the light to lighten the Gentiles, so by their fruits ye shall know them.

The churches composing the Lexington-Roxbury Association have certainly experienced sadness by having their dear pastor called to another field of labor, but the trial of our faith is to be reconciled to God's will in affliction and sorrow, but through all of this it seems as though we have a reason to believe that the Lord has not forsaken us; we are made to say that the Lord is able to afflict and bless at the same time, so we have a great deal to be thankful for, and pray that he will give us strength to press on and ever be found walking in the strait and narrow way that leadeth unto life until death shall call us from the shores of time, and then that we shall see him as he is and be like him.

GEORGE RUSTON, Mod.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder C. W. Vaughn, June 5th, 1930, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. F. Disharoon, Philadelphia, Pa., Fredjoy Tobierson, of Detroit, Mich., and Florence N. Disharoon.

By Elder C. W. Vaughn, September 14th, 1930, at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse, Hopewell, N. J., John E. Shelton, of Washington, D. C., and Annie P. Woolverton, of Milford, N. J.

By Elder C. W. Vaughn, October 1st, 1930, at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse, Hopewell, N. J., Milton D. Yerkes, son of brother John and sister Josephine Yerkes, Oreland, Pa., and L. Beatrice Vaughn, daughter of Elder and Mrs. C. W. Vaughn.

By Elder T. D. Walker, October 18th, 1930, at the residence of brother and sister W. J. Berry, 1371 Vienna Way, Venice, California, John A. Pennington, of Yale, Wash., and Mrs. Mamie Comer Tully, of Fayetteville, W. Va.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Charles Glascock, Va., $1; Elder D. L. Topping, Md., $2; Mrs. E. S. Truitt, Md., $2; Lillie M. Jenkins, Pa., $1; Mrs. M. Coons, N. Y., $2; Huldah J. Leonard, N. Y., $1; Mrs. E..e Malcolm, Ontario, $1; Gilbert B. McColl, Manitoba, $1.25; Mrs. Sarah Leedom, Pa., $3; Mrs. S. I. Rittenhouse, N. J., $8; Jesse C. Ellis, Ohio, $3; M. C. Reeves, Ill., $2; Mrs. Mary J. Ege, N. J., $10; Jennie Black, Ontario, $1; Anson Quint, Maine, $3; Attie A. Curtis, Maine, $1; S. W. Shipway, N. Y.,$3; Mrs. David Rogers, Ontario, $3.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEACON JOHN T. KERR, our beloved brother in Christ, died at his home, Iona Station, Ontario, September 4th, 1930, after a few days' illness, in the eightieth year of his age. He was the son of Archibald and Flora Kerr, and a grandson of the late Elder Thomas McColl. He had three brothers: Alex, Archie and Thomas, all of whom preceded him to the grave. In the year 1877 he married Sarah Gillis, daughter of John G. and Jane McCallum Gillis, who was a loving and faithful wife. To this union were born two children, Bessie and Clara, but it pleased the Lord to take Bessie by death in the year 1895, so that brother Kerr leaves to mourn their loss his dear wife, one daughter, Mrs. Clara Elliott, and two grandsons, John and George Elliott, all of Iona Station. Brother Kerr was baptized by the late Elder W. Pollard, at Dunwich, May 11th, 1896, and was to his death devoted to his church, never missing an opportunity to be with his brethren if possible, to entertain them and to show kindness unto them for Jesus' sake. He was a very meek man and loved to hear spiritual conversation. For years he was precentor and led the singing, manifesting a gift rarely seen in the church. June 4th, 1916, he was chosen clerk of the Covenanted Baptist Church, and soon after was appointed a Deacon, which office he very ably filled. He was a pillar in the visible church, and while his dear and faithful family miss him and sorely mourn their loss, we as a church sadly miss his gift and can join in their sorrow.

Elder H. H. Lefferts and the writer officiated at his funeral, which was from his late home and was largely attended by sorrowing brethren, neighbors and friends. Interment was in Cowal Cemetery. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

G. R.

A. LEATHERWOOD was born in east Tennessee June 14th, 1862, and died at his home in Brown County, Texas, October 19th, 1930, making his stay on earth 68 years, 4 months and 5 days. He was married to Miss Mattie Thomas, at Clover Hill, Tenn., November 27th, 1886, and to that union were born five children, one dying in infancy. The four living are all grown and married and have their own homes. All were at their father's bedside to render any aid or comfort that loving hands could do. Brother and sister Leatherwood moved from Tennessee to Hunt County, Texas, in 1889, joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Sabine in 1890, and were baptized by Elder J. C. Sikes (the first ones he ever immersed). They moved to Brown County, Texas, some twenty-five years ago, and owned a good home here, well improved, when the good Lord called him to his heavenly home. The write lived a close neighbor to him ever since he moved to Brown County and we were often together, our memberships were in the same church, and I can truthfully say that his life and walk were in every way above reproach. He was a Deacon of the church from the time I first knew him, filling the office well and to the honor of his Master and the church. His friends were numbered by his acquaintance. All was done for him that his physicians, his loving wife, children, friends and neighbors could do, but none could stay the hand of death, for God had said, Child, your Father calls, come home.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. C. Sikes, who spoke comforting words to the bereaved family, and he was laid to rest in the Blake Cemetery, October 20th, 1930. Weep not, loved ones, as those who have no hope, for we have the blessed assurance that when the Lord shall come again that those who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. If we can see the hand of the Lord in affliction it will strengthen us the better to bear it.

J. W. HAYNES.

MISS ELIZABETH ANN McCLURG was born February 23rd, 1850, and departed this life November 10th, 1930. For the past six or seven years she had resided with Mrs. Anna Ebert, 3 Dolson Avenue, Middletown, N. Y., whose first husband was sister McClurg's brother. One sister, Mrs. Lettie Osborn, of Ridgebury, N. Y., together with several nieces and nephews survive her. She was more or less helpless for the past two years of her life, but was cared for by Mrs. Ebert and her family to the best of their ability. Sister McClurg, we are informed, had been a member of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church for fifty years, or more, though it was only very recently that we had become acquainted with her. We were called to conduct the funeral, on Thursday, November 13th, at the home of Mrs. Ebert, where a number of brethren and friends were gathered to pay their last respects. The Scripture read on the occasion was 2 Timothy i. 8-12, from which we spoke with such ability as the Lord was pleased to give. We would acknowledge the right of our God to do with his own as seemeth good in his sight, and desire to bow in humble submission to his holy will.

R. L. D.

Mr. JOHN T. COCKRILL, a friend of the cause of Jesus Christ, departed this life at his home, near Warrenton, Va., Sunday, October 26th, 1930, aged 73 years. He leaves his wife, sister Ida Cockrill, five sons and three daughters to mourn their loss. One of his daughters, sister Jennie Glascock, is a member of the church. Mr. Cockrill, while he did not unite by baptism with the church here on earth, was, we believe, a subject of saving grace. He loved to attend the meetings of the church and held firmly to the principle of God's illimitable and omnipotent sovereignty, that sal-

vation is of God through Jesus Christ the Son, and not by works of righteousness within the ability of the creature to perform. A few days before he passed away he softly sang to himself the hymn beginning, "Come, thou Fount of every blessing," all the way through. We feel the Fount of all blessing did come to him and took him away from all earthly scenes of trouble and sorrow.

His funeral was largely attended, and his mortal body was laid to rest in the family burial plot near his home. May the Lord manifest his comforting presence unto the bereaved widow and family.

H. H. L.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst by death our dearly beloved brother, **JOHN T. KERR,** who for many years served so faithfully as Deacon, as Church Clerk and as precentor, we, the members of the Covenanted Church of Canada, desire to place on record a memorial of our appreciation of his character, and our grief at our loss. Be it

RESOLVED, that in his death we have lost a valued associate, whose presence we all sadly miss from our meetings, and whose place in our deliberations will not soon be filled. We believe that it is well with our dear brother and sorrow not even as others who have no hope. We bear testimony to the efficiency and fidelity with which our departed brother discharged the various trusts and duties committed to him, ever manifesting a kind and loving spirit towards those with whom he had to do.

RESOLVED, that this resolution be entered in full in the Minutes of this meeting, and be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

COVENANTED BAPTIST CHURCH OF CANADA

ANGUS GILLIS, Church Clerk.

WHEREAS, it has pleased almighty God to remove by death from our midst our much esteemed and dearly beloved brother, **DEACON ALEXANDER LEATHERWOOD,** therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we, the several members composing the Macedonia Church, Rising Star, Texas, do hereby set forth a declaration of our heartfelt sorrow, yet we feel to bow in humble submission to the will of God, knowing that he doeth all things well, and that by means of death he has removed our dear brother from this world of care, pain and all the afflictions that he has seen fit to make him heir to. It is our prayer that if the will of God be so, he will raise up another to fill his vacant seat in this house of God, and continue to do likewise as we one by one follow him, that God's grace and glory may continue here as a light that shineth in this world of spiritual darkness. Also, be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this memorial be given to his dear surviving companion, and sister in Christ, as a memento. That this memorial be written into the Minutes of this church conference and recorded in the church book, and a copy sent for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Done by order of the church, in conference November 8th, 1930.

J. W. HAYNES, Assistant Church Clerk.

CALL FOR HELP.

DEAR BRETHREN AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have been asked as a Deacon to state through the SIGNS that our dear brother and pastor, Elder J. W. McClanahan, and wife, are in great need of help. Sister McClanahan has been sick for several months and the dear old brother is now broken down, and their financial circumstances are bad. If any of the readers of the SIGNS feel able, please send them help. His home church, of which I am a member and Deacon, will do what we are able to do. Brother McClanahan has spent a useful life in the interest of the cause which all Predestinarian Baptists love. He would go through heat and cold, and, if necessity demanded, would freely die for the cause that the world would reject. He has never tried to gather any of this world's goods, and if there is an Elder on earth who is deserving he is one. His home has been open to the Predestinarian Baptists as long as the writer has known him, which is about twenty-four years.

Hoping this makes the situation clear, and that the brethren will not frown upon the request I have made, I am, I hope, your brother in love and fellowship in Christ.

Done by order of the church at Hopewell, W. Va.

J. R. BECKETT, Deacon.

SCOTTS DEPOT, W. Va., Nov. 3, 1930.

Elder J. W. McClanahan's address is Poca, W. Va.

[WE do not usually publish such calls for help as above, lest the SIGNS and its readers be imposed on. As to the above, I personally know all concerned and can vouch for the fact that our dear brother McClanahan and wife need help, but they themselves would rather die than ask for it. I am glad his churches have taken up the matter.—H. H. L.]

ERRATA.

BY an oversight, the name of Elder George L. Weaver, of Cleveland, Ohio, was omitted from the list of ministers composing the presbytery which ordained brother Arnold H. Bellows, of Second Roxbury Church, to the full work of the ministry.

G. R.

WANTED

To hear from some one having a copy of "Hassell's Church History" that they would be willing to dispose of. Write to the undersigned, giving price and condition of book.

OSCAR J. BYRNSIDE,

HURRICANE, West Virginia.

MEETINGS.

We have kept up a monthly meeting for some time in the past, and hope, by the grace of God, to be favored to continue to meet every second Sunday in each month at 3617 Veteran Avenue, Palms Station, near Culver City, California. May this bear a cordial invitation to all who believe in grace and salvation by grace to meet with us on the stated time.

MR. and MRS. W. J. BERRY.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Cane Run Predestinarian Old School Baptist Church, of Turners Station, Kentucky, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 10:30 a. m., also, the Sulphur Fork Church of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, of the same faith and order, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 2:30 p. m.

GEO. L. WEAVER, Pastor.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every third Sunday

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at the home of sister E. Brunow, 411 N. Ridgeway Avenue, and on the second, third and fourth Sundays at the home of brother W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. The fifth Sundays are by appointment. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastors, Elders Jones and Janes.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

Little Flock Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every first and third Sunday at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, at 1 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

PSALMS XXXIV. 19.

"MANY are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."

The Hebrew word here translated "affliction" also means "bad," "evil." The same word from the Greek means, "pressure," "afflictions," "tribulation." Therefore many are the bad things which the righteous have to suffer, the evil things which come to him in his righteous service. The great pressure he has to endure in the service of God. The severe tribulations he has to endure in the service of the Father. Doubtless the Lord Jesus is the righteous One referred to by David. His afflictions in the service of the Father were many, sharp and trying. All he endured he endured for his people. Therefore his obedience became their obedience by imputation. They are the members of his body in particular. (1 Cor. xii. 27.) As he had to endure, so do the members of his body have to endure; as he was afflicted, so do they have to suffer afflictions. If his afflictions were for sins of disobedience to the Father then so are the afflictions of the members of his body; but if his afflictions came to him because of his love to the Father and holy obedience to him, then the afflictions of the members of his body came because of their obedience to the Father. They are joint-heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ as well in his afflictions as in his joys. They are predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son of God (Rom. viii. 29) and his image here in the flesh was an image of suffering, and many afflictions. Therefore the members of his body are predestinated to suffer here. This is the image of the earthy. "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."—1 Cor. xv. 49. What promise have we of life in Christ if we are not made partakers of his sufferings and death? "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—2 Tim. iii. 12. Not all that do evil and sin, but all that will live godly in Christ Jesus. Then if any do

not have tribulations, trials, and persecutions in this world he is a bastard and not a son. "But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." --Heb xii. 8. Chastisement is not necessarily a rebuking as the disobedient have to receive, but an admonition, to show the blind the way, to give hearing to the deaf, seeing to the blind, to teach one that all his dependence and strength is in the Lord Jesus, who received it for him from the Father. "The chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."—Isaiah liii. 5. "These things I have spoken unto you, that ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world."—John xvi. 33. This last reference was spoken by our Lord in the wonderful sermon, at the close of his ministry, in Gethsemane, when no one was present but himself and the eleven faithful disciples. He was chastening them with words of comfort, caution and encouragement. He was not talking to them of disobedience, but encouraging them in righteousness. The Lord had come to send a sword on the earth, ("Think not that I come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword."—Matt. x. 34.) and this sword should pierce them. His word was peace in them, but it made enmity for them with the world, or on the earth. One has but to read in the Bible the persecutions of the saints to know the reality of this truth. Those Old and New Testament saints are our brethren, and we must (shall) have tribulation in our measure as they had it in their measure. Jesus Christ is the only perfect man, the upright One in heart. His end is peace. (Psalms xxxvii. 37.) He is the perfect man and he suffered tribulation as no other man ever did. The world hated him because of his righteousness, and for the same cause it will hate his people. "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you."—John xv. 18. "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you."—1 John iii. 13. It is not with the world that we have tribulation when we walk in disobedience, but the tribulation in that case is in our own hearts. There is where we feel all condemnation. The world may condemn us when we are innocent, but that will not convict us of wrong. We are led to accept such as persecution for righteousness' sake according to the word of the Lord. "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."—Matt. v. 11, 12. These Scriptures show the difference in the tribulations which our Lord said we should have in the world and the sufferings of conscience which one has in disobedience. The righteous, which are the members of the body of Christ, are destined to suffer afflictions in this world. They have the Spirit of Christ in them. That

Spirit is in opposition to the world and the world hates it. When the children of God are faithful to God, living up to the word of his power, the world will hate that living. If we conform to the world by compromising with them, worshiping with them, showing that we believe they may be right, or that they are as likely to be right as we, calling them "brother" and gleaning in their fields and asking them to glean with us, then we will not see nor hear any persecutions. Why? Because we are conforming to the world and have left the way of God. This was the cause of more than half of the condemnation of our God on Israel. They would follow the god-worship of idolators. Their law said, Thou shalt love no other gods before me. One cannot worship God and idols. The its and isms of this day which are claiming to help God in his conversion of sinners are just as much idolatry as was the worship of Bel and the Dragon, Baal, Diana or any other heathen god. The members of the body of our Lord Jesus should stand clear of all these even though they have to suffer persecution therefor. Let us learn to endure hardness as good soldiers, and always have on the whole armor of our Captain, remembering to keep our face to the enemy. There is no armor for the back. He that putteth his hand to the plow and looketh back is not fit for the kingdom of God. Let us remember that God, and not we ourselves by our obedience, is our deliverer.

In hope and the love of the truth, I am your brother,

L. H. HARDY.

MATTOON, Ill., Dec. 3, 1930.

DEAR EDITORS:—The inclosed is the result of several efforts, as, owing to my physical weakness, I can only write a few lines at a time. I am confined to my room and can walk but a few steps at a time along the hallway. Make what use of the manuscript you may deem proper and all will be well with me. I have been a reader of the SIGNS for over three-quarters of a century.

Not having been able to keep up with my personal correspondence for some time, and now being confined to my room, and many of my correspondents being readers of the SIGNS, I am asking the privilege of reaching them through its columns. I can write but little at a time, on account of sheer physical weakness. I suffer no pain or physical discomfort whatever, which gives me much to be thankful for. The Lord has been a very present help in all times of distress and sorrow. He is my shepherd; I shall not want. I feel I can say this with an emphasis. His guiding hand has led me along life's tortuous pathway until the end of a long journey cannot be far away. If he is my shepherd no promise of his will go unfulfilled. Behold the manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God; and if sons, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Here we see in part and know in part,

but when the veil of the flesh is removed, then the unspeakable glory and heavenly effulgence of immortality will be realized, without a cloud or shadow to dim the heavenly scene. Here we shall see Christ, and be like him, for death is swallowed up in victory, and the triumph through our risen Lord enables us to say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." For when he broke the bands asunder and came forth from the tomb the terrors of the grave were forever abolished. I find myself saying, "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who chall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart." God alone knows, and justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne. And I find myself saying, Dear Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in thee. Nearing the end of the ninety-third year of my age, I have only to fear the Lord and trust alone in his never-failing mercy. Should any of the brethren or sisters who may read this, probably my last article for publication, feel inclined to write to one who feels keenly his unworthiness, I would appreciate hearing from them. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

My address is simply Mattoon, Ill.

Your brother in hope,

J. G. SAWIN.

BERLIN, Md., Oct. 26, 1930.

DEAR EDITORS:—It has been upon my mind for some time to try in my week way to write something for our paper, if the good Lord will guide my mind and give me the liberty to set forth what I hope I have been given to see and feel. The Scripture of Matthew xi. 28-30, has been upon my mind for some time, and to-night I will try in my weak way, if it is the will of the Most High, to express a few of my thoughts. It reads as follows: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." This Scripture is as much misapplied, perhaps, as any other in the Bible. It is used many times by men as an invitation to sinners to give their hearts to God, as the world puts it, but as I hope I see it it is a command rather than an invitation. Christ says, My sheep hear my voice and follow me, and when he says, Come unto me, it is a command, and they will surely follow him, for it is a fact that he was speaking to none other than the people of his choice. When he said, Lazarus, come forth, he came, and there was no power

could hinder him, and when you have been called of God to come unto him can you resist that call? When you were in your greatest stress of mind and wondering what it all meant, and at last that still small voice said to you, Stand still, and see the salvation of God, could you turn back and delight in the things you once did? A thousand times no. Then it was he said unto you, "Come unto me," for you had been laboring under your load of sin, trying to find some place of refuge, but when you turned to the north, behold, he was there; if you turned to the south he was there, so there was no other place for you to go but unto him and fall at his feet and beg for mercy. When you have been shown that your salvation depends solely upon the mercy of God, and him alone, and there is nothing you can do to bring you in the mercy of God, and are shown that it is by his love and mercy you are saved, if saved at all, then you have found rest to your soul, and you will find that his yoke is easy and his burden is light.

Now, we notice that the word "souls" is plural, therefore it means more than one person, so he must have been speaking to the whole elect of God. I would say, my brethren, if I may call you brethren, that when you have been taught in the school of Christ and have learned how dependent you are upon him you will be meek and lowly in heart. Why? Because you know full well you have nothing to boast of and are just as poor as the beggar was that lay at the rich man's gate, and you will crave a crumb of mercy from your Master, just as he did from the rich man's table, and when that mercy is shown to you you will say out of the very depths of your heart, It is by the mercy of God I am what I am. Giving God all honor and praise, then it is you are like him, meek and lowly in heart, esteeming your brethren better than self, for you are brought to see yourself a hell-deserving sinner, all undone and naked before God, and hate your own life on account of sin. Is not this learning of Him? I believe it is.

"My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Is it not easy when we are given to know there is no work for us to do, that the debt we owe has been canceled and we are free, and that he has made intercession for us with God? Is not this a light burden compared with what he suffered for us, or for you, my brother, and, I hope, for me?

Dear editors, do with this as you see fit. Do not crowd out other good reading. Submitted in love, I hope.

J. W. S. TIMMONS.

HERNDON, Va., Nov. 28, 1930.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am still here as a living monument of God's great mercy to again renew my subscription to our dear old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, of which I have been a subscriber for about forty-seven years. When my mind carries me back to forty-seven years ago it seems to me as but a dream, but in other times of life it seems as a long time ago. I attended the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, held with the New Valley Church, of Virginia, in October past, and it seemed

like a good meeting to me, still I was made to feel sad when the thought came to me of attending a meeting at the same place (New Valley) forty-five years ago last August, that I did not meet face to face any of the dear saints I met face to face at the time of that meeting. All had passed on to the better land. Yes, I will say again that I felt sad at the thought of not seeing any of the dear ones I saw at the meeting above mentioned. I now recall to mind the names of some of the preachers who were there at that meeting, namely, Elders Wm. L. Beebe, J. G. Eubanks, P. G. Lester, J. N. Badger, E. V. White, S. H. Durand and others I cannot recall their names at this time, but I do fondly remember the sweet season of love I enjoyed at that time, for I felt in my heart that it was the time of the singing of birds and the voice of the turtle was heard in our land. I imagine I felt something like Ruth did when she gleaned in the field of Boaz in the time of the barley harvest. I felt to say, in the language of the bride spoken of in the Song of Solomon, "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." But alas, I feel sad and lonely now, with no sweet spiritual food suited to my taste, and I feel as one of old said, "I am like a pelican of the wilderness; I am like an owl of the desert. I watch, and am as a sparrow upon the housetop."—Psalms cii. 6, 7. The greatest plague I have in this life is sin, for sin is mixed with all I do, and, like the poet, I must say,

"If I pray, or hear, or read,
Sin is mixed with all I do;
You that love the Lord indeed,
Tell me, is it so with you?"

If I pray, or have ever prayed, it is in the language of the publican: "God be merciful to me a sinner." I feel to know that Paul was right when he said, We know not what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Dear children of the holy God, do you ever have that groaning down deep in the recesses of your heart, even in the silent watches of the night, pleading to God for mercy in groanings which cannot be uttered? This way of praying, to my dark mind, is like the way our dear Savior told his disciples to pray, to enter into their closets and shut the door and pray to the Father in secret, and the Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

I must now close, for I fear this letter will weary you to read. But before closing I wish to say to all connected with the dear old SIGNS, I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a prosperous new year.

A beggar at mercy's door,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

MIDDLETON, Tenn., Sept. 20, 1930.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more this old wayfaring traveler from time to eternity somehow feels to have an impression, or desire, to write you, because of the relationship I have with you, and I want to testify to the truth as I believe it is in Christ Jesus our Lord and set forth by the editors and contributors

of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have been a believer in the Primitive Baptist Church being the true church of God as long as I can remember of having had any knowledge of these things. I used to go to the meetings when I was a boy and knew nothing of doctrine, but the sound of truth did me good and I loved to hear it. I used to go to their communion meetings and see the union and fellowship existing among them and I had a longing desire and a little hope even then that some time I would be enabled to see the light and commune with the saints in light. But then I was serving under the law, for I thought I would have to cease from evil and learn to do good, and so I traveled on through many hard trials and tribulations, until the time came (God's time, I hope,) to make known to me that salvation is of the Lord for time and eternity. One day I was sitting down in my field, being burdened, when these words were spoken to me, and seemed to be a little above my head, Thy sins are forgiven, with word "are" emphasized. My burden was gone, and there I hope I did praise God and worship him in spirit and in truth. But ere long the tempter came. I was walking along and began to think that it might be some natural trouble or a depression of my natural feelings. As I walked along I saw a bare place on the ground and I thought to leave it all there and go on about my work. Right then such a feeling came over me that I have not wanted to try that again. The thought came into my mind that the devil must have desired to have me, and that I must have been as a brand plucked from the burning.

Dear brethren, I am so far advanced in years and so feeble that I cannot go far to hear preaching and there are only two I can talk with about the doctrine of Christ, therefore I feel very lonely and would be glad if some of the brethren would visit me. I would also be glad if we could have preaching here once a month. Our church (Enon) has gone down and we have no pastor and no preaching, and I long for the companionship of the saints. That which is flesh is flesh, and that which is Spirit is Spirit, and these are contrary one to the other. All natural things perish with the using; all spiritual things belong to that upper and better kingdom not made with hands, and are eternal, and all the inhabitants of that kingdom live eternal spiritual life by the faith of the Son of God. It is all of God, and for his glory. Let all glory, might and power be ascribed to his name, for by his great power he created all things. By the power of his Spirit he has prepared a people for his name. By his power he upholds the world and all created things. By his power he created a people for the day of evil. By his power he prepared a place for the eternal punishment of the wicked. By his power he prepared a place for the eternal happiness of a people afore prepared unto glory. Praise ye the Lord.

Dear brethren, if you find anything in this that is not according to the truth do not publish it.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

J. S. STANLEY.

COGAR, Okla., Nov. 19, 1929.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have a desire to write you this morning regarding your valuable paper, the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which you have been sending to me so long. I much appreciate your kindness and long forbearance with me, a poor unworthy creature. I do not feel the least worthy of having a name with the dear people that love the doctrine this paper sets forth and comes so sweetly laden with each month, but oh, if my poor heart deceives me not, I do dearly love this doctrine that the world knows not of. It is the doctrine the Lord called his own. "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, as the showers upon the grass." Oh what a precious comparison! How refreshing to the tender plants in a dry land! Just so, how sweet and refreshing is the dear old SIGNS that you have been sending to me these many years free. Brethren and friends, I do not feel worthy of such blessings. If I were able to pay for it I would not think of doing without it. I see each month the contributions to help the poor get less and I do not want to be a burden to you. While I dearly love to read the good letters and editorials, which are of great comfort to me in my lonely condition (they are about all the preaching I get), still I feel it is not right for me to continue a burden to you. I do not get to mingle with my dear brethren and sisters often; about once a year I go to meeting. I get low down in the valley and feel that I am not worthy to have a home with you dear people, but when the dear old SIGNS comes laden with comfort and spiritual fruit that comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning, then my poor soul takes courage and I try to press on toward the mark of the prize of the high calling, ever looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of the true faith. Solomon says, "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." But oh how often I find myself denying him in my actions. I sometimes fear I have had no change at all and am yet ignorant of Christ's righteousness and salvation. But when my mind goes back to that sacred hour when love divine first entered my heart I cannot give up that sweet hope I have cherished all these forty-nine years that I am one of those for whom Christ shed his precious blood that they might have eternal life through him. I pray God that he will lead, for if he leads I shall be led; and if he teaches me I shall be taught. Oh that I may ever be found humble and at the feet of his household, and at the feet of Jesus pleading that his grace and mercy sustain me through the rest of my days in this vile world of sin. I pray that he will ever be my guide and strength to overcome all temptation to do evil, for I know that without him I can do nothing.

My prayer is that God will long spare you all in the good work whereunto he hath called you, and enable you to still publish the dear old SIGNS. Remember this poor old sinner when at

the throne of grace, for I feel I need the prayers of all the dear redeemed children, that I may ever be found at the feet of Jesus, ever looking unto him for all things in time and in eternity.

Do with this as seemeth good to you.

From a poor sinner, saved by grace alone if saved at all,

JANNIE LOYD.

HIRAM, Ga., Oct. 6, 1930.

O. S. CROKER—BELOVED BROTHER: —We are well. Hope you are improving, and your family well.

When I was at your home, last Saturday, I did not tell you about my going to Lawrenceville to the Yellow River Association the fourth Sunday in September past. I never saw more people at an association. Elders J. H. Stewart and R. L. Cook preached in the morning and Thomas Huff and J. C. Hewatt in the afternoon. It was good for me to be there and behold how good and how pleasant it is to see brethren dwell together in the unity of the Spirit and in the bonds of peace. We thank God, who has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, and counted us worthy the fellowship of those who are so earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, not in wisdom of words, but in the power and demonstration of the Holy Spirit. Yet we sometimes fear that the Lord has forgotten to be gracious. But he does not cast off in time of old age, not forsake when our strength faileth. David assures us that when father and mother forsake us, then the Lord will take us up. And, When through fiery trials (though it be in the furnace of affliction) thy pathway shall lie, my grace all-sufficient shall be thy supply. Truly the Lord is good to all men, and his tender mercy is over all his works. I know that goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and I desire to dwell in the house of the Lord forever, dwell in the mountain of the Lord's house that is established in the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills. The King's highway, that the vulture's eye hath not seen, and no ravenous beast has come thereon, leads to that house.

Dear brother, I am thinking just now of the happy seasons of the past, the many times we have walked together in company with others to the house of God, where his banner over us was love. May the Lord give us strength for our daytime and trials, and may we, when done with the trials of the way, enter into eternal life, with all its attendant joys.

Brother Croker said, I want this letter, together with a notice of my passing, published, so we are sending it to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and to the *Lone Pilgrim,* his favorite publications. He was a subscriber to both.

Yours in love,

W. A. HARRIS.

(*See obituary on page 21.*)

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1931.

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NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

A SHORT time before the close of the year 1929, it was proposed that for the year 1930 we have two editorials in the SIGNS each month: one by the senior editor and one from each of the associate editors in turn. When this plan was proposed to the writer, it looked to him like a huge undertaking, and his response at once was, "I cannot do it." However, he agreed that, if it proved to be the Lord's will to so exercise his mind that he could write each month, he would do so. With that as a start, we have succeeded in getting through 1930 and have accomplished the plan of having two editorials in each issue during the year. That which seemed an utter impossibility to the writer has come to pass, not we trust by the putting forth of merely human effort to fill up so much space, but with the help of the Lord to the comfort and instruction of his people to whom we hope our lives have been dedicated by his sanctifying grace. On the whole, our brethren and readers during the past year have been very charitable and encouraging toward us, and have been so good from time to time to write us of their love and fellowship for us in our arduous labors. Whether what we have written during the year has been profitable to those who believe in God and in his Son Jesus Christ, is not for us to say. We are not ourselves the judge of that. You who read must sit in judgment on what we offer you. A few have written to us suggesting that we confine our writings to exposition of Scripture texts, and that we say less about what is happening in the world around us, they have said that they care little what the world does or what is going on in the world, what they want to know is what this or that text means to them experimentally. Now, those honest souls who make this suggestion to us are perfectly sincere no doubt, and we doubt not but that they have our own interest and the interest of the SIGNS very close to their hearts. But we must be honest, too, and we honestly differ with them in this advice to us. The doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things has been from 1832 a principle for which this paper has always stood, and with God's help it shall so continue to stand in the future.

This being so, there is not a thing anywhere too small or too great to be worthy the notice of a child of God, since all things great and small whatsoever come to pass are ordained of God to the good of his believing children and to his own declarative glory. We believe God to be the eternal One and only infinite Person who can and does work all things after the counsel of his own will, whether they be things in heaven or in earth: things directly concerning the individual and personal experiences of the saints themselves, or things transpiring in the world in which we live as human beings. All things are of God. Does he not do his will among the inhabitants of the earth as well as in the army of heaven? Indeed so. Then why should we confine our writing or our speaking simply to experimental matters, and not take note from time to time of history as it is in the making? History is the unfolding of the divine and eternal purpose of God. What is not predestinated to transpire cannot take place. What, therefore, does take place, whether in the church or in the world, must be the outcome of God's predestination. It cannot be wrong then for us to call your attention occasionally to what is going on in the world in which we live. Whether we will or not, each and all of us are bound to be affected in our lives by what is going on around us. Experience cannot be confined wholly to matters of grace, it must and does include all things, externally as well as internally, with which we come in contact or which we undergo, be they gracious matters or providential ones. Whether we look at a sunset, survey a landscape, peruse a book, listen to music; whether we read understandingly our Bibles or are comforted and edified by the preaching of the gospel: all these things register their influence on the soul and all these things go to make up the sum total of one's experience. Yes, but objects one, enjoying the things of nature and enjoying the things of the Spirit are two different phases of being: the one belongs to the earth, the other to the spiritual. We are not so sure of this, not so sure that they are so different. We doubt our ability to divide our lives into separate compartments and to say that this or that belongs wholly to the flesh and this or that wholly to the Spirit. Only the living Word can make that distinction correctly, that Word which is sharper than any two-edged sword. In the case of a child of God, there is nothing that comes to pass with him, whether it be of a spiritual or of an earthly nature, but what may be, through the Spirit's work, made of eternal significance to him. Where the unbeliever can see naught but the working of natural law in the sunset or in the beautiful landscape, or naught but philosophy in the printed page, or naught but art in the music of an orchestra, the believing soul sees the handiwork of the God that made all things and beholds the praise of him who brought order out of chaos by his almighty Word. It all depends from what position these things are viewed. If one is dead in sin, never having been

awakened into spiritual life, then that one's soul is mute and cannot hear or perceive those things around and above and beneath us which bespeak the glory of the Divine Person who brought all things into being; but if one has been raised through the Spirit from death in sin to life in the righteousness of Christ, then all things, created and uncreated, be they visible or invisible, afford some glimpse of the eternal majesty of him who has redeemed our lives from destruction. This being so, we shall not be able to comply with the wishes of those who desire us to confine ourselves to internal experimental things, but shall perforce, when moved to do so, notice the hand of our God as it brings about events that are from day to day transpiring in the history of the world in which we live as men. To be able to view the outside world in the light of the inside Word is a talent we shall not bury in the earth, but shall put it to usury that it may, under God, bring much gain to the warning of his people from danger, thus saving them from error, and glorifying the name of him in whom we have been brought graciously to believe and trust. It is dangerous just to be alive, and more are the perils unseen in the midst of which we continually pass our lives than those dangers of which we are aware. And the times grow every day more perilous. For men of faith, the times are not such as encourage stability and we see a great deal of laxness on every side: looseness in morals, in government and in religion. Within the ranks of Old School Baptists there increasingly grows a disposition to relegate sound doctrine to the background and to indulge in smooth things that lull the conscience into false security and ease. Experimental preaching is all right, and has its proper place in the edification of the saints, but if the doctrine in all its elements be not upheld clearly and boldly, how shall we know where we stand, and how shall the churches of the saints be established and rooted and grounded in the truth? If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? How shall one know what is piped or harped when the tune is not clear and distinct? No wonder the Savior asked the question: When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith in the earth? These are indeed times of deep heart-searching for the servants of the true God, and we should increasingly ask ourselves the question whether we are preaching the truth as we conscientiously believe it to be the truth, or are we seeking to please simply our brethren and our congregations? When setting forth the experimental coming of the Lord in the present-day experience of the saints, we should not give the impression that there is no coming of the Lord except this experimental one. There is to be in the future, and it may be much nearer than we think, a personal coming of the Lord from heaven, when he himself shall descend with a shout to raise first his people who have died in him, following that there shall be the great change from mortality to immortality of those believing ones who are alive here on the

earth at the time of his coming, and these shall be caught up with the risen ones to meet the Lord in the air, and so forever to be with the Lord. After this, whether immediately or after an intervening period of time, God knows, there shall be the resurrection of the wicked dead who shall hear from the great Judge the pronunciation of their just doom, shall acknowledge its justice and shall go away into everlasting punishment. We hear it sometimes said that there is no future judgment day. This is not wholly true and so stated, is confusing. So far as the redeemed of the Lord are concerned, there is certainly no future day of judgment. The judgment day for God's elect was when Jesus died upon the cross, at which time the whole just penalty of their sins was visited upon the Son of God and at which time he finished the work of salvation for his people, wholly completed the work of atonement and of justification. Thus, these saved shall never again come into condemnation. When the future resurrection of these shall take place, it shall not be a resurrection to judgment, but unto eternal glory at the right hand of God. However, for those who are not saved in the blood of the Lamb, not redeemed by the finished and perfect work of Jesus, there shall be a resurrection in the future to judgment and to condemnation, to shame and everlasting contempt. These two resurrections are set forth by Jesus in John v. 28, 29; by Paul in Acts xxiv. 15; and by John in the Revelation xx. 12-15. To present these Scriptures and other kindred texts as having been or as being fulfilled in the gospel experience of the subjects of grace, is to wrest the words from their true significance. The fathers before us would not have agreed to any such experimental interpretation of these passages, and the SIGNS will not agree to any such now. It is not our purpose to quarrel with those who differ with us, nor to seek to convert any one to our views, but we shall contend for the things we believe and shall desire to not fear to do so. As an usual thing, we believe it is the tendency of those young in the ministry to experimentalize the Scriptures and to lose sight of the literal meaning of the Bible. For ourself, we know that when we were young in this work, we were strongly inclined to bring all Scripture into the present gospel experience of the saints. Of late years, we have realized more that this cannot rightfully be done without violating the sense of many Scriptures. There are things ahead for the people of God which we have not yet attained to, such as the resurrection of the body at the future appearing of the Lord himself from heaven, which cannot rightfully be interpreted as pertaining to our experience at the present time. In those days of our early ministry, there were those of our good brethren who understood us to virtually deny the resurrection of the dead. Such was far from our mind, and we have always regretted that any brethren should ever have had such an opinion of us. The Scriptures surely teach that there is to be in the future a changing of our vile body.

We understand the vile body not to be the church, but this vile body in which we now sojourn and which is under sentence of death at the present time but destined to be raised a spiritual body at his coming. Unto this adoption we are hastening, this is what we are waiting for; and the Spirit of this adoption we now have. It is by the Spirit of adoption we claim our divine relationship with God through his Son, but the adoption itself is reserved unto the future when the whole family of God raised from the dead shall dwell with God in his kingdom. Brethren, pray for us that we may be kept in the strait and narrow path, not ashamed of the truth before men or angels. May the blessings of God, temporally and spiritually, in grace and in providence, rest with all who love his appearing, unto whose coming we are hastening, at which time we shall see him as he is and be like him. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. H. H. L.

WE request our subscribers when sending in subscriptions or changes of address to be sure and give the *exact name and address* to which the paper is now coming; otherwise we are liable to give the credit to the wrong person, as we may have two subscribers of the same surname at the one post office.

Also, when remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it.

LUKE X. 19, 20.

"BEHOLD, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven."

This subject contains strong and deep matter, and we hope to be given understanding to write the truth of God as it is implied in the Scripture referred to. Jesus spake this to his disciples, testifying of the power he gave them by which they could tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing could by any means hurt them. We first would note the definition of the words "serpent" and "scorpion." Serpent: A reptile of the order Ophidia, with a very long body without feet, and moving by contractions and undulations of the body; a subtile, treacherous person. Scorpion: An individual of the genus Scorpio; furnished with lobster-like claws and armed with a poisonous sting in the tail; a painful scourge. As we are considering the definition given by Webster, we must consider the power of God in the creation, by which, as reptiles, they are poison to human flesh, and we are given in our personal nature the horror of the venom they contain. We also believe there is nothing impossible with God, but it has not pleased him to create us as creatures to be immune from the poison of serpents and scorpions that we might tread on them and they have no way to protect themselves, but if it was according to his will he could. Webster gives one definition of a serpent, "a subtile, treacherous person;"

and one of scorpion, "a painful scourge." We will now leave the natural side of the subject as God created it both in the serpent and scorpion and also in man. As we are given to behold what is in man, do we not see subtility and treachery in the flesh? And the humility which seems to have laid hold upon us has brought us to a helpless condition and the venom of both serpent and scorpion is grinding out our lives, and we have no way of escape, which brings us to the realization that the painful scourge, by which every one thus afflicted is made to cry out, "I am unclean," or, "Behold, I am vile," and implores the One having all power to have mercy: Save, or I perish. He that is full of tender compassion and love shines forth into the heart of the poor sinner and causes him to see himself, and works in him both to will and to do of his good pleasure. We feel he is far off, but he reveals himself as near, and a present help, a deliverer, then the power to tread on the serpent and scorpion is felt, and the poor afflicted ones are made whole, strength is given that they stand on their feet shod with the truth of the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to them that believe. Then they can tread on serpents and scorpions and realize that nothing shall by any means hurt them because of his presence.

Now we come to the rejoicing. Jesus said, "Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." So the poor sinner is made to rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. If we rejoice because we have seemingly achieved in having our aspirations satisfied, and see ourselves above the obstacles that appeared in our way, we are not rejoicing that our names are written in heaven. When we realize this was given unto us we have nothing whereof to boast, and can say that salvation is of the Lord. We remember all the way which the Lord has led us, and his power manifested in raising us up and establishing our goings, that nothing shall by any means hurt us. Not a weapon that is formed against us shall prosper, and we feel we do not have to call your attention to these things and teach you that you should know them, but they are known and realized, by which we are made to hope in his mercy, and say, Bless the Lord, O my soul, all that is within me bless his holy name. In the conclusion of our text Jesus said, "But rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." Now we take the keynote of all the rejoicing of the child of God, it is because their names are written within the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (Rev. xiii. 8.) This virtue gives understanding in election, predestination and foreordination of God, and this precious doctrine is never too strong, because it is the arm of God that has given us that inheritance and preserved it unto us, and us to it, by which we shall come in as the blessed of God and hear that glorious proclamation of Jesus: Come in, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared

for you from the foundation of the world, and all the virtues and realization that we witness come unto us because our names are written in heaven, and there is no power that can reach forth and partake of the tree of life, for if they could, then men would deal it out to the destruction of some and the fullness of others. Jesus came, as it was written of him in the volume of the book, to do his Father's will, and the apostles give to us as the witnesses of God and Christ Jesus, that Jesus declared the work finished which his Father gave him to do. Jesus testified of his going away and that he would send the Comforter. We trust that we have felt the presence of that Comforter manifest to us, and we behold our Lord high and lifted up, and are drawn unto him. Realizing this drawing, we rehearse the language of the poet,

"The steps that I take, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will."

Which record is in heaven. As we are led through this life's pilgrimage we are made to realize the power and strength of the Lord Jehovah as he keeps us from the evil of this present evil world, and all the poison and destruction of men are swept away and we are carried over them so we can say of a truth, It is in him we live, and move, and have our being. We fear and quake and tremble that perhape we should be mistaken in the whole matter and after we have testified of these things we should become a castaway. We feel assured the child of grace is kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Oh what a glorious change, and what a great salvation, all coming to us because our names are written in heaven. Dear reader, if these things be in us we are neither barren nor unfruitful, but we bear fruit and are made to rejoice because our names are written in heaven. How can we go about trying to walk over his little ones and manifest that subtle, treacherous disposition? If we are given over to that spirit we will be made to realize their triumph over us and ourselves crushed; and if we set up ourselves to be one to inflict the painful scourge we ourselves will receive the scourging, but if we go on without chastisement, then we are assured we are bastards and not sons, and are cast out by the word of truth as the children of wrath. Our heart's desire is that we may be kept as the apple of his eye and from every evil way delivered.

We realize that with this issue begins another new volume of the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES, being volume ninety-nine, and as we reflect upon the historical part of its life, and how it comes to us every month, we have a very beautiful picture. Our dear editor, and his associates, with publishers and subscribers, all in one glorious group, have been kept, directed and filled with praise to God because he has written their names in heaven, and we also realize the wonderful love and power manifested to those who have preceded us and gone to their reward. We are glad in the Lord to think of the sacred truth the SIGNS OF THE TIMES contends

for, and, brethren, our prayer to God is that all those who are in the group above described may feel to greet the great cause which the SIGNS represents. May our lives be spent in such a way that we may be supporting it by our writings and comforting one another, rejoicing with each other in the hope of our names being written in heaven. In these things we greet you, and may the God of all grace be our guide and give us grace to know and do his will.

C. W. V.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder H. C. Ker.)

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Forest Grove Church, to the several churches, meetings and associations with which we correspond, sendeth greetings and love in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—As the time approaches for another Circular Letter we are wondering what subject might be of interest as well as of importance. Usually some point of doctrine is taken up and discussed, showing how we, as an association of churches, stand doctrinally, at other times the subject of exhortation is largely dwelt upon, all of which is good and profitable. There are, however, many other vital matters seldom brought to the attention of the churches, and at this time we shall endeavor to present for the consideration of the churches composing the Salisbury Association, as well as those of our correspondence, some facts concerning church independence or sovereignty. Many things pertaining to church order are embodied in this subject; such things as are seldom treated upon, either from the pulpit or through the press. Many erroneous ideas exist along such lines because these subjects are neglected. Some seem to feel that doctrine is sufficient at all times, while others think exhortation is more needed; still others feel that experience covers the whole ground. Each is good in its place and should not be neglected, but church independence and church order should at least have their respective places, both in preaching and writing, and for this cause we have chosen this subject for discussion by way of a Circular Letter. There is an idea with some of our people that churches organized into an association form such union that the affairs of one church become the affairs of the other churches, hence efforts have been made, at times, to bring the troubles of some church into an association, when convened, that settlement be made. Such procedure is entirely out of order and should not be tolerated at all. Every organized church of Old School Baptists is an independent body, sovereign in all her acts, without suggestion or interference by another church or an individual member of another church. If we recognize a church as in gospel order and fellowship such church, her acts entire must be respected, even though at times there be a feeling of difference in judgment regarding this or that action. In the call of a pastor, reception or exclusion of members, none except the members of such churches can rightfully vote. Visiting members

of other churches are at times invited to vote on such matters, but it is unwise to accept such invitation at any time. Declining to take part in such matters often avoids embarrassment and confusion in days to come. Each church is qualified to attend to her own business, hence should not only be allowed but expected to do so. The administration of the ordinances of each church devolves upon its pastor and it is a mark of disrespect for a visiting minister to administer them, unless present by invitation of the church and pastor at such times. In such case it is perfectly right to do so. No one has right to suggest or request a thing of a church, or any member of a church, of which he is not the pastor or a member, especially so when he knows that what he would have done would not be indorsed by the pastor and deacons. Such course is an insult to the church and pastor. Every church is independent to act as she deems wise and best for her peace and prosperity. On the other hand, no member of an Old School Baptist Church, whether pastor, deacon, clerk or trustee, has right to act in any sense, in the name of the church except such an one be authorized by the action of the church of his membership. Too much is taken for granted at times and we overstep our bounds. One of the wisest things in this life, and especially in the church, is not to be busybodies in other men's matters. It is well for each church to attend to her own business, which is her right, and let the business of other churches of the same association alone. We have often thought that interference, suggestions and requests of churches have come about because of a lack of knowledge of church order and church independence. We therefore think such subjects should from time to time be brought to the attention of each association of churches.

To substantiate our conclusion of church independence we call attention to the seven churches of Asia. Each church was independent of the others and the message sent directly to the angel, or pastor, of the respective churches. Commendation or condemnation, as the case required, was pronounced first upon the pastor of each church, then upon the church. It also seems that each angel, or pastor, was held responsible for the conduct of the church of which he was pastor. No other interfering in any sense, nor was any thing required of another. Our Association is well indoctrinated and nothing but gospel truth would be tolerated in our pulpits, and we hope that some of us may become better acquainted with church independence and order. The independence of each church is no barrier to fellowship, interest and good will, but rather a safeguard against discord and confusion. Once the lack of regard for the sovereignty of a church and trouble begins. No man can rightfully lord it over the church of God, it is a fatal step to any one who undertakes it, and sooner or later will make shipwreck of him. It is much more commendable to provoke one another to love and good works than to anger and dispute. Every man

has right to his own opinion, but no man has right to exercise his opinion to the hurt and insult of a church or brother.

In conclusion, let us who are in the ministry remember the admonition of Paul: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Let us see to it that all things are done decently and in order.

G. E. COULBOURN, Mod.
JOHN H. TRUITT, Clerk.
GEORGE F. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

(Written by Deacon John F. Oliver.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 15th, 16th and 17th, 1930, to the churches composing the same, and to the churches, meetings and associations with which we correspond, sends greetings in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—We want to tell you in the outset of writing such a letter to our brethren of this Corresponding Meeting, that we feel too deficient to write anything that will be edifying to the household of faith. However, if the Lord will give us a pure mind to write of the things of his kingdom we shall be made to rejoice together in the things of his holy kingdom. While we are writing, we have a text of Scripture in our mind to mention, which reads as follows: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John iii. 16. "For God so loved the world." This declaration does not mean that God so loved the world of all mankind; but to the contrary, only his elect chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began. God's love is from everlasting to everlasting, man's love in nature is not such, he may love to-day and hate to-morrow. Jeremiah xxxi. 3, states, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." God loved his people before they could love him. But the question often arises in the trembling child's heart, which makes him feel to say with the dear old poet,

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?

If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse
Who have never heard his name."

We will consider for a moment the words, "Whosoever believeth in him." It is not so that the whole of the people of this world believe in or on the Son of God, for it is stated, "Ye are not of the world, for the world loves its own." The manner of the love of God to his elect is not to the world. One of the inspired writers states, Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God. Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not

is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."—John iii. 18. We might call attention to the case of Philip and the eunuch. It is stated, As they journeyed along the way, Philip opened his mouth and preached unto him Jesus, and as they went on their way they came to a certain water, and the eunuch said to Philip, See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said to him, If thou believeth with all thine heart, thou mayest. And the eunuch answered, and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and Philip baptized him. Thus we see that believers are the only subjects of baptism. Jesus told his disciples, just after his resurrection from the dead, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not, shall be damned. Here we have two characters: he that believeth, and he that believeth not, and we also see these two characters set forth in Jacob and Esau. "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." May we of this Corresponding Meeting, with all the redeemed of the Lord, ever sing that new song of Moses, the servant of God and of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.

The next session of this Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, to begin on Wednesday after the second Sunday in October, 1931, and to continue three days. We are glad to again have the privilege of receiving your messages and messengers and ministers this year, and desire a continuance of your love and fellowship in the truth, and hope that when next year's session comes we may again welcome you in our midst.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Mod.
G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MRS. BERTHA PITTMAN LINDLEY passed away from this earthly life Sunday afternoon, July 13th, 1930, at her home, in Havana, Kansas. We do not call it "dying," just falling "asleep" in Jesus to awake to die no more. She was the wife of P. H. Lindley, who is now left without her to walk by his side. She was the daughter of the late Elder Thomas R. and Mary E. Pittman, and was born February 27th, 1878. She was baptized into the membership of the Old School Baptist Church in 1905, by Elder Nathan Reeder. She united with the church in much fear and trembling, in much meekness and humility, but gave satisfactory proof that she had been at the feet of Jesus and had learned of him. Her health began to fail about the first of February, and she grew gradually weaker until the 7th of June, when she became confined to her bed. She did not have much pain, but was very weak, said she felt tired all the time. Her trouble was called pernicious malaria. All that doctors, nurses and loved ones could do for her was done, but all in vain. The Lord had called her home, and human hands and hearts could not detain her here. She left no children. Besides her husband and her mother, our sister Pittman, she is survived by two sisters and two brothers: Mrs. L. E. Hunt, of Havana, Kansas, Mrs. S. H. Barr, of Kaney, Kansas, F. J. Pittman, of Havana, Kansas, and L. H. Pittman, of Howard, Kansas. Then there are six nephews and five nieces, all of whom dearly loved "Auntie" and all of whom were present at the funeral, except one niece in New Haven, Conn. Sister Pittman, her mother, writes of sister Lindley as follows: "Not only the immediate neighborhood, but for miles around, the whole community was in mourning. She was always doing something kind where she was most needed. By being

always thoughtful of others, she won the respect and love of all who knew her, and was a great consolation to our own family. Our loss is great, but her gain is greater, she is free from all trouble and is resting eternally. May we be still and know that he is God."

Her funeral was conducted in the Methodist house by the Methodist pastor, also by Elder J. M. Preston, of the Old School Baptist Church, Iola, Kansas. She was laid to rest in the cemetery at Havana, Kansas, amid a profusion of flowers and a host of sympathizing friends. Sister Lindley was not known personally to the writer of this notice, but this notice has been prepared by request on information furnished by sister Pittman.

H. H. L.

JOSEPH BUCKWALTER, our brother, was born July 19th, 1841, and died December 4th, 1930, in his 90th year. His early life was spent in West Virginia, where he was born. In his twenty-third year he came to Ohio on a visit, riding the distance on a colt. Returning to West Virginia, he remained there until the year 1872, when he and two other men drove through Ohio in a wagon, and settled near Xenia, Green County, Ohio. May 26th, 1874, he was united in marriage to Esther Jane Keiter, in this neighborhood, where they lived a happy and prosperous life, and where five children were born, namely, James K., Mary J., George W., Franklin M. and Clara Elizabeth. His wife preceded him in death four years, and the eldest daughter three years. None of the children ever married, and all remained at home and worked together and took care of their parents. Now the father is taken and his place is vacant, but they all realize their loss is his gain. It was our brother's one wish to be taken home. He was stricken with paralysis of the heart and only lived two hours, as a sheaf of wheat fully ripened, called to his reward. In the spring of 1887 brother Buckwalter was given a hope in Christ, and upon the relation of his experience to the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church he was received, and baptized in their fellowship by Elder Levi L. Bavis on the fourth Sunday in July, 1887. All his life he lived the profession the Lord had given him. He was well established in the doctrine of the Bible, uncompromising in the wonderful works of God, his absolute decrees and election. Salvation by grace, not of works, was one of his dearest thoughts. He was heard to sing, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound," just two days before he died. Another mark very noticeable in our brother was his love for his brethren, and his home was always open for their accommodation. Every day, all the time, he was always the same, manifesting to us he had been born of that incorruptible seed that liveth and abideth forever, and by revelation he was taught that all flesh is as grass that withereth away, also that the word of God liveth and abideth forever, and this word which by the gospel is preached unto you was always a comfort to him. He was made to partake in the suffering of Christ. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God had shined in his heart, and he was often made to exclaim, Oh wretched man that I am! O God, be merciful to me, a sinner. Our brother had made arrangements for his funeral, and had marked the fourteenth chapter of John for me to use at that time. According to arrangements, I was called, and spoke as the Lord gave me, to a large congregation of relatives and friends. With great sorrow we laid him to rest, with the full assurance that he will hear the Savior's voice and come forth, see him as he is and be like him and be satisfied. May the Lord bless the family and the brethren, reconcile us all, and enable us to say, Thy will be done.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

DEACON O. S. CROKER, of Hiram, Georgia, the subject of this notice, was born in Paulding County, Georgia, February 16th, 1871, where he was reared with no special educational advantages, yet his acquired abilities, combined with sound judgment and practical directness of thought, made him prominent and useful as a neighbor and citizen. He was a man of great candor and a firm friend; was stable and unyielding in his religious persuasions, holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. He was content to believe that God is a sovereign in the fullest sense, and that foreknowledge and predestination are inseparable and extend to all things, but not to the exclusion of man's accountability, and God's hatred of sin and his just punishment of the same. My acquaintance with him from childhood, together with our intimate relation in matters relative to the cause of our Lord and Master, make it eminently befitting that we dedicate space to his memory. As a man he possessed an unblemished character; he was plain and unassuming. As a Baptist his life was very characteristic of a child of God, and as a Deacon he purchased to himself a good degree and great boldness in the faith, and was very noticeable of the duties of that office. He was married to Miss Florida Pool December 24th, 1893, and to them six children were born: Mrs. H. G. Jones, Miss Clara Croker, Mrs. W. A. Wright, Mrs. L. M. McTyre, Mrs. F. H. Bullard and Sam W. Croker. Five brothers, B. E., H. E., W. E., S. H., J. B., and one sister, Mrs. Mary Babb, survive him. He was appointed postmaster at Hiram, Ga., April, 1892, and served sixteen years; then served as rural mail carrier twelve years, retiring September 10th, 1930, on account of ill health. His children removed him to Atlanta, that he might have the best medical attention and the advantage of a trained nurse. Never did children show more affection toward a father, or manifest greater interest for his recovery. September 3rd, 1922, he and his wife were baptized into the fellowship of New Harmony Church by Elder H. G. Nitchell. He was a faith-

ful member, never missing but three meetings in eight years. That was on account of his last sickness. His home was a home for the Baptists, and his many friends were always welcome there, and treated so kindly that his memory will ever be cherished by all who passed his way. He was one whose path grew brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. His last feeble step was taken in the path of the lone Galieon, whose rod and staff comforted him through the dark valley and shadow of death. Several days before his death he sent for Elder J. C. Hewatt, and said to him, I know I have but a few days here. I am not fearing death; I am not excited; I want you to talk at my grave, and not overdraw nor unduly eulogize upon my life. Have the hymns "Mixtures of joy and sorrow," and "I would not live always," sung. I do not want any to grieve at my passing. I know that my Redeemer liveth and has been with me in the furnace of affliction, is with me in the sixth trouble, and will not forsake me in the seventh. Leaning upon those precious promises, I fondly cherish the hope that I shall meet my loved ones beyond these mortal shores, where we shall enter into the fullness of joy, ever to be with the Lord.

May God's royal presence overshadow the home of the bereaved companion; go with her through life; be with her in the supreme hour of death and bear her across the dark stream to the peaceful port where sad partings can never more come; and may the Holy Spirit lead her children to the Rock that is higher than I, and give them grace whereby they can serve God with that reverence and godly fear that was so characteristic in the life of their father. Dear children, I feel that if you emulate his life it will be the highest tribute you can pay to his memory.

He was buried at New Harmony Church, Paulding County, Georgia, October 14th, 1930, where Elders J. C. Hewatt, Gwinett County, H. O. Nash and David Smith, Atlanta, and J. T. Daily, Paulding County, made very appropriate talks to a large and attentive congregation.

I hereby tender my kindest regards to the sorrowing ones.

W. A. HARRIS.

A. H. DYKES was born in Grundy County, Tennessee, March 6th, 1867, and departed this life September 9th, 1930, making his journey here 63 years, 6 months and 3 days. He was the oldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Sarah Gross Dykes, and was at the home of his son Claude, at Lefors, Texas, at the time of his death. He was buried at Clarendon, Texas. He moved with his parents to Dripping Springs, Texas, in the year 1883. In 1891 he was married to Miss Rosie Patton, and to that union were born two girls and three boys, all of whom, with their mother, survive, except the oldest son, who passed away at the age of ten years. Albert and his wife united with Mt. Olive Church the fourth Sunday in July, 1895, under moderatorship of the late R. M. Pate. Here they remained faithful until some years later they moved to Hardeman County. There they put their letters in the church of the same faith and order at Chillicothe, Texas. He was always in his place at meeting and contributed his part at all times, and had been a subscriber to the SIGNS for thirty-five years. One time he finished reading an article written by Elder F. A. Chick, and said, That is worth the price of the paper. Besides his family, Albert leaves a father, ninety-one years of age, six sisters and two brothers. How we miss him; but not as much as his widow and children. Weep not, dear sister and children, he is just gone on before. Just think, he is at rest for evermore. Try and live as he did, and ask the good Lord to guide you to that home above, where all is love. May it please the Lord to guard, guide and direct us all in the right way, is my prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Written by his sister,

(MRS.) W. L. HAWK.

SISTER **SARAH GRACE SQUIRE** departed this life June 6th, 1930, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Abner Leonard, at Otego, N. Y., where she had been cared for in her declining years for over four years, being confined to her bed for three years from the infirmities of age. She was born at Roxbury, N. Y., May 12th, 1842, one of a family of nine children. Her parents were Daniel and Phoebe (Jenkins) Squire. She married Aaron R. Squire in November, 1866; he passed away twenty years ago. To them were born two sons: Fred A. and D. Ward Squire, both of Otego, N. Y. She is also survived by a step-son: William Squire, of Binghamton, N. Y., and a grandson: Maynard, of Otego, N. Y., also three sisters: Mrs. D. S. Dort, of Milford, Conn., Mrs. Frank Childs, of East Windsor, and Mrs. Will Phelps, of Afton, one nephew: Ray Ayres, of Otego, and one niece: Mrs. David Greene, of Milford, Conn. Sister Squire had been a consistent and loved member of the Otego Old School Baptist Church, at Otego, N. Y., for over fifty-eight years, having been baptized by Elder S. H. Durand March 3rd, 1872. Brother and sister Squire's home was a home for Old School Baptists for many years. It was a pleasure for them to entertain the brethren. Sister Squire loved to hear singing, and when any of the friends and brethren came to visit her in the last years of her life she would ask them to sing for her.

Funeral services were held June 9th at the home where she died, conducted by her pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, who spoke words of comfort. He also read hymns 20 and 1294, favorites of sister Squire. Burial was beside her husband, in Evergreen Cemetery, Otego, N. Y.

Written by request.

ROSE T. LEONARD.

JOHN H. HASBROUCK died at the Kingston City Hospital November 1st, 1930, after an illness lasting less than a week. He was born in Jefferson, Michigan, January 4th, 1857, and December 1st, 1885, he was married to Orra A. Swartout. In 1889 they moved to Shokan, N. Y., where they lived until 1913, when they moved to Kingston, N. Y. He is survived by his wife, sister Hasbrouck, whose home is in Kingston, N. Y., also by Miss Sadie Van Tassel and Miss Edna Elmendorf, two relatives who lived in his home and dearly loved him, and to whom he was as a father. He also leaves two brothers and several nephews and nieces who live in Michigan. Our departed friend was not a member of the church, but was a faithful friend, ever delighting to entertain those who love the truth, and in doing whatever he could for the welfare of the church. The church in his death has lost a real friend, and as such he will be greatly missed. He had a low opinion of himself, and did not want to deceive the brethren, but we believe he loved truth in the inward parts. His sorrowing household miss him sorely, especially his wife, whose sole comfort is in her God.

Elder Arnold H. Bellows and the writer both attended the funeral, where we tried to comfort our precious friends in their great loss. Interment was in the Mount Tremper Cemetery.

His wife, sister Hasbrouck, desires to thank all those dear brethren and friends who so kindly remembered her in this sad affliction with letters of sympathy and words of comfort, as it will be impossible for her to reply personally to all of them.

G. R.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from us by death our beloved brother, **ELDER L. H. HARDY**, and

WHEREAS, he was for many years held by us in affection and esteem, and was a regular visitor at our annual sessions, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we do hereby testify of our sorrow at his departure, and are assured he has entered into rest and into the reward of his faithful labors, for he was sound and able in doctrine and fearless in his defense of the truth. Further be it

RESOLVED, that this memorial be spread upon our Minutes, and a copy sent for publication to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.

G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Elder S. L. Moran, Va., $1; Mrs. Maria Rees, Ky., $5; Mrs. Ida L. Reilly, N. Y., $1; John F. Oliver, Va., $1; Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $8; J. H. Jones, Ga., $1; "A friend," Mich., $3; R. R. Peters, Cal., $1; T. L. Disharoon, Pa., $1; Joseph F. Hall, Maine., $8; Miss E. Annie Parker. Md., $3; Mrs. J. S. Moore, Ala., $3; W. E. Bryan, Ky., $1; "A friend," Ore., $5; G. C. Jordan, Mo., $3; "A friend," Canada, $1; Mrs. Mary A. Faulkner, N. Y., 25 cents; Mrs. Bertha C. Richardson, Va., $2; F. H. Richardson, Iowa, $6; Sarah A. McColl, Ontario, $3; Mrs. M. E. Drake, N. J., $1; Mrs. Brittie Caudle, Okla., $1; Mrs. George W. Robinson, Md., $1; W. T. Hughett, Ill., $8; Mrs. S. E. Enoch, Kan., $3; Mrs. J. A. McTaggart, Ontario, $2; J. K. Buckwalter, Ohio, $1; Kate R. Forbes, Kan., $1; Mrs. Mary Duffus, B. C., $3; Hewitt Osborn, N. Y., $6; M. A. Chaney, Tex., $1; Hannah E. Danks, Cal., $1.

MEETINGS.

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IN

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At 10:30 A. M.

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The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Cane Run Predestinarian Old School Baptist Church, of Turners Station, Kentucky, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 10:30 a. m., also, the Sulphur Fork Church of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, of the same faith and order, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 2:30 p. m.

GEO. L. WEAVER, Pastor.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 99. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1931. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PERRY, Kansas, Nov. 28, 1930.

DEAR BRETHREN:—My subscription is past due and I wish to renew, so will write a few lines and submit them to you for you to dispose of as you see fit. I have enjoyed some pleasant reflections upon the following Scripture: "That the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." These words can be found in the eleventh verse of the ninth chapter of Romans, and they are spoken in connection with that which was spoken concerning the birth of Jacob and Esau. It is indeed interesting and encouraging to turn through the pages of Holy Writ and note the determination of God to show his wrath and make his power known, that he endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory. In no case has his purpose according to election ever failed. Although it entails suffering to humanity, bonds and affliction to the righteous and destruction to the wicked, the end of every conquest is triumph for the Lord. "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him. The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his name. Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red sea. * * * * Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation." It is a noteworthy fact that God has many times brought into existence the works of wicked men and devils in the execution of his righteous purposes. The Lord hath made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil. The two classes, the righteous

and the wicked, have always been upon the earth, not by any accident or miscarriage of God's purpose, not merely by man's own prerogative, but because God willed that it should be even so. Thus in the early records of time he begins to manifest his purpose according to election. How could the great lesson derived from the first offering recorded in the Scripture have been learned had not Cain, who was of that wicked one, brought an offering unto the Lord of the fruits of the ground? Cain was a tiller of the ground and Abel was a keeper of sheep, and it came to pass in the process of time that Abel also brought an offering unto the Lord of the firstling of the flock. This was pronounced a more excellent offering than Cain's, and the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering, but unto Cain and his offering God had not respect. The lesson derived is this: Cain's offering represents his own toil (works), while the firstling of the flock must represent Jesus, the first-born from the dead, the first-born among many brethren. Hence our works, no matter how devout or sincere, can never serve as an acceptable offering to God. We can come pleading only the name and the shed blood of Jesus, our sin-bearer. "We'll point to thy redeeming blood, and say, Behold the way to God." Not of works, but of him that calleth. It is evident that the Lord had use for an evil nation in Egypt that his purpose according to election might be verified, that he might show his power in Pharaoh. Otherwise how should those gracious words have been spoken to his people: Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which I will show to you to-day? Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians. But how could this beautiful story have been told had not the Lord hardened the hearts of the Egyptians that they should pursue Israel? All the evil entreaties, all the afflictions which Israel bore, were measured to them generations before they were brought to pass; but it is written, As I have purposed so shall it stand, and as I have thought so shall it come to pass. The wrath of the evil taskmasters was vented upon them, but not one stroke did they receive which would not terminate in the glory of God and the good of his chosen people. What saith the Scripture unto Pharaoh? Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Why should any one close their eyes to the fact that God controls the evil as well as the good? Their goings forth are predicted and restricted so that all things must work together for good to them that love him, to them who are the called according to his purpose. His purpose according to election is preeminent in every transaction. To save his people from their sins was his eternal purpose; to show his power over the wicked and his grace to his elect in his own divine right. To save and to destroy is his own prerogative. How could the beautiful story of Noah have been written had not every imagination

of the thoughts of the hearts of the people become only evil continually? How should the Lord have destroyed the earth with a flood and saved Noah, the eighth person, and his family? Noah found favor with God, unmerited favor, which means grace. It must touch the heart of every child of grace to know this is but a correct figure of the church of God. It is a case where he is making his power known, endued with much longsuffering, and also making known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy. His Spirit shall not always strive with man, and it is good that it is even so. Noah, the eighth person. Besides him there were seven, which means a full number. Every one of his family was there with Noah, the eighth person, the head of the family. The same grace which was so bountifully bestowed upon him extended to every member of his little family. Thus when we look for the antitype we see the church, the whole family of God, with Christ our adorable head; not a single one is left to perish with the wicked. Is it any wonder his saints say,

> "If I must sing, I'll sing of grace,
> Which raised me from the fall,
> And brought me to a hiding place,
> Jesus, my life, my all"?

How quickly God can bring to naught man's evil imaginations and blast his wicked designs and cause every work of his to subserve to the fulfilling of God's righteous purpose according to election. How could the story of David's triumph over Saul have been told had not the evil spirit from the Lord troubled Saul? or his victory over Goliath, had there not been one to defy Israel? David also found favor with God, being a man after God's own heart. The safety of the armies of Israel was at stake. The enemy was set over against them and not a man, not even the whole army of Israel, was able to go out and overcome the dreadful foe which defied them day after day. How well does this apply to the experience of every child of grace. When you saw your enemy sin was so strongly entrenched against you, and your great arch enemy, the devil, tormenting you from day to day, how helpless you were, how powerless you were to overcome this foe, how you longed for deliverance, but found none. This was the case with the armies of Israel, with not a ray of hope. But just at this juncture David appears upon the scene, just a lad, but he went forth alone to meet the foe, armed, not with sword and spear, but with the shepherd's bag, his sling and five smooth stones. These seven emblems again representing a fullness. With these he went forth in the name of the God of Israel. He was fully equipped, he lacked nothing. He slew the enemy, he won the victory and gave it into the hands of his people, Israel. The victory is Israel's by gift. The praise and the glory belong to David alone. Thus, dear saints of God, it was your spiritual David, even Jesus, who went forth in your behalf. He lacked nothing, for he declared, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek: he hath me to bind up the broken-hearted, to

proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." All this he has done for you, dear child of grace. It was a glorious victory and he hath given it into your hands. The victory is yours by gift, but the praise and the glory belong to him alone. Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, he hath saved his people from their sins. But how could Jesus have been glorified in the redemption of his people if man had not fallen in sin? The poet has said,

"When man was created what wisdom we see,
The whole he possessed was the image of thee;
But ah, in his fall we are led to espy
'Twas all for the lifting of Jesus on high."

Designing men and roaring devils may seek to overthrow the kingdom of God and thwart him in his purpose, but God himself holds the keys of death and hell, and as long as his name is God Almighty it must signify that all other powers are subordinate to him. The powers that be are ordained of God. We cannot believe he has ordained a power equal to himself, or one that can work independent of him. To ordain, signifies the one ordained is a servant set forth to do the bidding of him who ordained him and set him forth. These ordained powers therefore can do no more or no less than God's eternal purpose demands of them. How could we rest in the blessed assurance of faith and hope if it were otherwise? How could we read the sweet story of Queen Esther's triumph had not this wicked Haman played his part? A most beautiful type of God and his bride, the church, his elect. Under sentence of death, she comes trembling before the King, begging only that she and her people might live. She knew not how it would go with her, but great was her delight when he held out the golden scepter to her, a token of his love and favor for her. She found grace in his sight, and he gave her his promise that he would grant her desire, even to the half of his kingdom. Thus it is with every poor, guilty and condemned sinner when he comes trembling unto the throne of grace, begging only for life, but owning his condemnation just. He knows not how it will go with him, but every one thus exercised is sure to find grace in his sight, and great is his joy to know the blessed Redeemer has come that he might have life, and that he might have it more abundantly. "Even to the half of my kingdom." Wonder of wonders, that poor beggars should be made partners to the throne of God. But God is not slack concerning his promise. Not that God will divide his power or his honor with man, but that his elect might know that they are made heirs of God and joint-heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ, and to give them also to know that both he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified

are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. He gives us more than we are able to ask or that we are in any wise by nature worthy to receive. "She hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Let not the saints then forget the solemn obligation that is enjoined upon them. Since it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom, he has also committed it into your hands to keep the order of his house. This is your part in the kingdom or church militant. "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind."

Perhaps I have departed somewhat from the subject under consideration, but I trust it will be seen that God's elect and his purpose according to election are the underlying principles of the whole structure of Scripture testimony. Triumph is written in every transaction. The purpose of God according to election is stamped upon every case. It must stand. It will stand.

"Though foes combine and friends collect,
The Lord will save his own elect."

L. L. SCHENCK.

VAN ZANDT, Washington.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—It is with much fear and trembling that I, a poor worm of the dust, write you, but your editorial in the December number was so good, and yet so simple and plain, that I felt I must write my approval and encouragement, for it seems that your writings are so nearly the meditations of my own mind that I must believe we have been taught in the same school and by the same Teacher, who has only one method of teaching, and that is by the Holy Ghost that only teaches truth, and well might Pilate ask, "What is truth?" for he did not know; neither does the world nor the flesh know to-day, for it is only taught by the Holy Ghost. Jesus never promised any but his own to send this great Comforter to them, and he told them that it would lead them into all truth, and it surely does, thus proving that what he has promised he is able to perform; and not only able, but he does perform whatever he has promised, for he is not slack concerning his promises, whether they are blessings or stripes, and even the stripes, or chastisements, are so mercifully given that it fills my poor heart with love and my eyes with tears to think that when I deserved banishment he only chided me lightly. In looking backward over my nearly seventy years of labor and sorrow in this wilderness of woe I can see him ever near me, watching over me and guiding my erring footsteps, without the which I would have been lost entirely. So it is all to him I owe, and I can truly say, I have been kept by the power of God from my earliest childhood to the present time. I have never been afraid to trust him, and I am not afraid to trust him for the rest of the way, be it long or short, and not only for the rest of the way here in this world, but I know I can trust him in the world to come, for his promises are yea and amen.

Now, Elder Lefferts, if you will bear with me a little I feel like telling you some of my past experience in life, but as to my experience of grace, I do not know whether I have ever had one or not, and it makes me fear and tremble at times lest I am a deceiver and an impostor, which I do not want to be, for the children of God are the dearest people on earth to me, and I believe the Old Predestinarian Baptists are his people, but am I really one of them? I must tell you, I have been a member of these despised people for over fifty years and have never been censured for misconduct, because they did not know all that I have done. My first recollection of having a knowledge of God and his wonderful mysterious way was when I was yet wearing dresses. My parents took me to an association held at my grandfather's (old Elder J. B. Burch), near what is now Oelwein, Iowa, near the place of my birth (in an old log house), and His sacred presence seemed to me to be there, which indeed it was. That was about the year 1863, and as grandfather was neutral he was very closely watched, even when holding meetings, everything was guarded, and this is another evidence of God's watchcare over his little ones, for grandfather was very much opposed to the war and did many things that the recruiting officers did not like. He was never openly molested, and held his meetings regularly. At the close of the rebellion work was scarce, or rather money to pay for work was scarce, and my father and grandfather Garret (my mother's father) secured employment in another county running a mill, so they, with their families, moved to the small village of Chickasaw, where the mill was located, on the Little Cedar River, in the center of a forest of hard wood. The mill they ran was a grist-mill run by water power, and the settlers were few in number and far between. They got twenty dollars a month and house rent free, but they built a log house for grandfather, and we moved into an old sheep barn built of lumber sawed from some of the trees close by, and cut by a small upright saw run by the same flume that the grist-mill got its power from. You may think it strange that I have written all this, but it brings me to the one place in life which is very dear to me, for it was while I was standing out in front of this same house which had been fixed up and cleaned for us to live in that I had my first glorious visit from my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and his name is the dearest and sweetest name on earth to me yet. Whether it was an experience of grace or just the imagination of a childish mind I do not know, but I was standing by the old chopping log in front of the house one cold but clear day in the winter of 1866, singing in my childish way, "I will arise and go to Jesus, he will embrace me in his arms," when I became unconscious, as it were, and in a moment I was in his precious arms soaring to heaven, and I was so happy I had no thought but of him and the fact that I was in his loving arms going to heaven. When I came

to myself I was standing alone by the old chopping block looking up into the clear blue sky. This took place when I was around five years of age. I was not quite five years old, for this was in February and I would not be five until March 14th following, but from that time on there was a joyous gladness in my heart that was not there before, and when the birds came back in the spring and warbled their song it seemed that they were praising God, and when the little rivulets came rippling down the hills when the days got warm they seemed to be praising him, and even the trees seemed to be praising him, and my heart sang with praise with them to him. I never told this to any one, not even to the church when I joined, for I was afraid they would not believe me, and my parents, not being members of any denomination, I thought would laugh at me. But this new life grew with me and became so much a part of me that I feared to do anything wrong for fear God would be displeased with me. This went on until I was sixteen years of age, when it came to me like awakening from a sleep that I was different from all other boys; not that I was better, but just different, so I tried to be like them as much as I could, but I could not drink, or gamble, or go in bad company, neither could I use tobacco. I went to dances for two years, and well do I remember the last dance I attended. I did not go inside, but started to walk four miles to my home, and the last part of the way I ran for fear of being caught by the devil. Although I did learn to dance well, I never have wanted to go again. I had never made a profession of religion, for I could not believe as those around me did, so I decided to live by myself, and said I would never join any church that used the pull and haul method (as I then expressed it). But alas, how futile are the resolutions of man, for when I was a little passed sixteen I was sent to stay with Uncle Davis Burch's family while he went to be with Grandfather Burch, during a severe spell of sickness, from which he recovered, and while there I went with my cousins to a protracted meeting of the United Brethren, and before I was aware of it I had joined, but was never baptized, and when I got away from them I was so ashamed that I never went to hear them again. In looking back I can see the never-failing hand of the unchangeable God even in that, for had I not joined them I would have joined a branch of the Old School Baptists who were excluded, although I did not know it then. After Uncle Davis returned home I went to visit my Grandfather Garrett, and while there this branch held a meeting at his house. That was the only Old Baptist sermon I heard from the time I was three years old until then, and I was so impressed by it that when the door was declared open for the reception of members I would have offered myself if I had not just come from the United Brothers. I was then in deep trouble, for I had joined a denomination and did not believe the doctrine they preached, so

could not go with them, and this act put a barrier between me and any other denomination, so I was a castaway, like a ship at sea without a rudder. I feared to ask God to guide me, for I had gone voluntarily into it and feared he would cast me off, so I wrestled hard, as I thought, all by myself, and was very wretched. I would go into gay company and laugh and carry on with them, then weep and mourn as soon as I would get by myself, until I got afraid of myself. I did not dare to pray, for it seemed God would look with scorn upon me because I had disgraced him by my actions. He had been so good and kind to me, how could I ever ask him to forgive me? I was a long time in darkness too black to describe, but finally I made up my mind I would wait until all were in bed then I would go out in the barn lot behind the straw stack and there maybe God would hear me. But it seemed to me that he did not, for I thought I had sinned away my day of grace, and my prayers frightened me; they seemed to go down instead of up. I went on in this way until the October before I was nineteen years old. After I finished our fall work there came such a longing to visit my uncles and families living around Oelwein that I put aside the schooling I had often determined to get and went, and after I got there the horse I rode was taken with pinkeye and I could not go home until after the regular meeting of the Otter Creek Church, which I had no intention of joining, but I went to the meeting through respect, as I thought, for nearly all of my uncles and aunts were members and Grandfather had moved back there and was preaching for them, and when he took his text it seemed that he took up my life and told all about me, so nearly so that I wondered who had told him, for I was sure I had never told any one. It unnerved me completely, for he made it very plain how Jesus had paid it all and to him I owed it all, and how could I ever repay him, seeing I am only dust and ashes? I sat in one of the back seats weeping, even after all but Grandfather had gone. He was gathering up his books preparatory to leaving when he, by chance it seemed, saw me and came and asked me what the matter was, but I could not tell him. He then asked me if I wanted to join the church, and I told him I was not fit to join any church. He did not stop to ask me any more questions, but ran to the door and called the rest of the members back, then told me to relate my experience. I could only tell them what a great sinner I was, but to my surprise they received me, and if any one ever experienced a great calm after a bad storm I did, and so unexpected, too. I was baptized the next April and the beautiful vision of light upon the face of the water I can see yet, even after fifty years of trials and disappointments.

Now, may the grace of God sustain, strengthen and keep you, and all true followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, is my prayer.

DAVIS BURCH.

ST. THOMAS, Ontario, Jan. 14, 1931.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—I want to thank you for those three articles in the SIGNS. I refer to that one on "Signs of the Times" in February number, the one on "Understanding Science" in August, and the "New Year's Greeting" in current number. I had often wished that in some way our editors would write on things that are happening, or ordered, in the world: some terrible things, some wonderful things; and when we are given an understanding heart, we grieve or wonder or praise as the occasion requires. The way we are made we cannot stand spiritual things all the time, yet we love them; and I was glad when you said you would not bury your talent in the earth if you have been given insight into the things in the world to show us that all is of God, and that he still reigns over all, contrary to the declaration of some. It is your duty as well as pleasure to unfold your knowledge to us weak ones. I am sometimes staggered at things and events occurring daily, and do often wonder why it is all allowed by the only wise God, and predestination wavers within me. Even any good things that are done seem to be with a view to publicity, always thereby gaining reward among men; and the evil, so-called, events seem to stun one. One cannot always avoid reading them when looking over the daily paper. Of late, I have skipped over particulars of any terrible headings, but that does not do away with their having occurred. I was talking with a gentleman the other day on these things and he remarked, "Things are going to be worse, and I am glad I will not be here to see them," and he was not a pessimist either. Well, if that should be so, is it not a fulfillment of Scripture?

I hope you will forgive me for bothering you, but I felt I should like you to know your articles did comfort me.

Yours very sincerely,

(MRS.) KATE L. BLACK.

[THE above encouraging letter is typical of many we have received from different parts of the country bidding us godspeed in our work. We would like to print many more of them for our readers to see, but space forbids. When we stated in our "New Year's Greeting" that we would not bury our talent in the earth, we hope none of our brethren understood us to mean that we could refrain from doing so by any human power of our own. No such thing. Our sufficiency, we hope, is all of God and through his grace alone. If our experience thus far along life's way has not taught us this, then indeed we know nothing as we ought. That the Lord is at present scourging the modern world in order to further his cause of truth and for the advancement of the interests of his own kingdom, we verily believe. His chastening of the nations may work death to them, but it means life and glory to his own kingdom. For centuries his kingdom has been gradually coming in the earth all unbeknown to the nations themselves, the time cannot now be far distant when that glorious kingdom in all its beauty will come to its ulti-

mate fulfillment. Things may be going to be worse for the world. Yes. But things are going to be better and better for the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.—H. H. L.]

COMMERCE, Georgia.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—If one so weak and sinful as I feel to be should claim relationship with the dear saints of God. I feel I want to write a few words of thanks to you for sending me the dear old SIGNS, which comes monthly, setting forth the doctrine of God our Savior. I much appreciate your kindness to me, a poor unworthy creature, and I hope I am able by the grace of God to thank the Giver of every good and perfect gift. My wife and I get much comfort in reading the sweet letters, and the editorials are full of wisdom and truth. If I were able I would give ten times the price of the paper rather than do without it, but, dear ones, do not let me burden you. I am down low, as to this world's goods, and "I can't help it;" often desiring to do, but I cannot, and "I can't help it;" and when I would do good evil is present, and "I can't help it." I love the doctrine of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and "I can't help it." So by experience I do know that it is not in me to choose my way or direct my steps. I am nothing; yea, less than nothing, just a poor sinner at mercy's door begging for the mercy of God, which has followed me all the days of my life. Remember me when at the throne of grace.

A sinner saved by grace if saved at all,

T. S. LORD.

WOOSTER, Ohio, Dec. 31, 1930.

DEAR EDITORS:—I renewed my subscription to the SIGNS and asked you to mail the paper to West Mansfield, Ohio, thinking I would be there all winter doing nursing, but the next morning after going to work on a new case I fell down stairs, and was so badly injured that my son, Dr. J. C. Wickham, was sent for, and he brought me to his home here in Wooster, Ohio. His street number is 640 Saybolt, so please send the SIGNS to me at this address. The Xray showed only a minor break in the small pelvis bone, with, of course, very bad bruises and strained and torn ligaments. I am still in bed, but my worst suffering seems to be over. I hope some of the brethren will write to me.

JOIE WOODS PETERS.

ELKINS, W. Va., Dec. 25, 1930.

DEAR EDITORS:—As the year 1930 is drawing to a close we are sending our remittance for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the year 1931, for we feel we would be very lonely without your valuable paper. We are always glad to receive it, for it comes laden with good news from a far country. The editors are ably gifted brethren, and so are many other brethren and sisters. They all testify of the same truth: salvation by the grace of God alone. There is no uncertain sound in the dear old SIGNS, so far as I have ever been able to see. Wife and I have been readers of the paper for many years and hope to be able to take it the rest of our days. My wife is seventy-eight and I am seventy-nine years of age, and we both desire the prosperity of our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

G. B. McCLANAHAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1931.

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JEREMIAH VIII. 22.

"Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?"

Jeremiah was the Lord's mouth to the children of Israel in evil times. He began his ministry, as he himself says, in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah king of Judah. We have but to turn the pages of our Bibles to second Kings, the twenty-second and twenty-third chapters, to find the record of this king Josiah. He began to reign in Judah when but a boy of eight years and the length of his reign was thirty-one years. During this reign of thirty-one years, Josiah did all he could to stem the tide of corruption which had swept in over the affairs of Judah, for he was a good king and desired to do that which was right in the sight of the law of God. He revived the covenant of Moses which the people had forgotten, called the attention of the nation to their departure from the right way, overthrew the temples and altars of false religion which the Jews had set up under former rulers who had taught and encouraged them in the way of evil, and rallied his subjects to the observance of the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic law. Notwithstanding all this good effort on the part of this conscientious king, and notwithstanding the faithful ministry of Jeremiah, the tide of evil which had set in among the Jews was too strong against all these good intentions and neither Josiah nor Jeremiah could successfully ward off the day of Judah's calamity. After the death of Josiah, matters quickly went from bad to worse. Josiah's successor reigned only three months, was then imprisoned by the king of Egypt who swept with his army over the land, and died in Egypt. The next king was but a slavish ruler subject to the will of the king of Egypt, and though he reigned for eleven years, was afraid to call his soul his own. Then came another king who ruled but three months as tributary to the king of Babylon who had, in the meantime, driven the forces of Egypt out of Judah and taken possession of it himself. After this, events incident to Judah's decline followed swiftly until we read of the first carrying away of the people of Judah captive to Babylon. Thus, after Josiah's good reign, Judah never knew any peace

again. The forces of Egypt and the armies of Babylon fought over the land, first one being successful and then the other, until it resulted in the triumph of Babylon and the captivity of Judah. Now, Jeremiah lived all through these stirrings and was himself among those carried away to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. Thus, we see that part of his ministry was fulfilled in Jerusalem before the carrying away into Babylon, and part of his ministry was fulfilled while a captive in Babylon. It is not to be wondered at that his prophecy is so full of lamentation and woe, seeing that he lived in a dark and discouraging period of Judah's history and the only light he had was when he could, by faith, look ahead through future ages to the glory of Christ and the restoration of Israel; not simply to a partial restoration such as when part of Judah came back from Babylon to Jerusalem under Cyrus' favorable decree, but a much fuller and more glorious and more permanent restoration of Israel in future times. "Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there?" Yes, there is; but that was not the time for it to be manifest. There was no such thing as healing Judah's hurt at that time. Jeremiah himself was hurt by the hurt of his people. Their woe was his woe, their troubles were his also. It grieved him terribly to see Judah forsaken, her enemies treading her down, the Lord himself silent and interposing no power in her behalf. More than all this, it grieved the prophet because he knew the sins of the people had brought these calamities upon them. They had not walked in the law of Moses as they had said they would do, therefore these curses had come upon them according to that law which they had not heeded. Jeremiah saw deeper than any of his time into the reason why these evils were upon the people, and knew that their sins were at the bottom and root of it all. All their woes were due to sin. The sins of the people lay like a stone on Jeremiah's heart, yet he could not make the people hear him; they would not heed his advice, they would not, at his cry, turn from their evil ways. Thus, repentance being hid from their eyes, the Lord having included that nation in blindness and in unbelief, Jeremiah saw the dreadful calamity approaching every minute nearer. In his distress he cries, Is there no help for this? must these things be so? "Is there no balm in Gilead?" Is there no healing that can be applied to these sores of infidelity which will heal my people from their backslidings? "Is there no physician there?" Is there no one who understands this deep-seated disease of sin among my people who can properly treat it and cure it, thus turning this people from their evil? To these cries from the prophet's soul, there was no apparent help at the time. The heavens were brass, God's throne was silent, no help from on high came. Events moved on to their inevitable conclusion, sin must get its wages, the law must claim its victim. Yet, down through the ages, dark as they were, his faith saw the light of Jesus, who is himself the great Physician, whose will and

aim it is to redeem his Israel from all her transgressions and to perfectly heal his elect whom he purchased back from death with his own blood. Every nation which had enslaved Judah and Israel was in turn to be themselves judged when the Lord should arise to scatter their enemies and to bring them back into their own land. The children of Abraham are heirs to the promise, the law which came after the promise cannot make void the promise which antedated the law by four hundred and thirty years. Thus, Paul tells us that all who are Christ's are heirs of the promise made to Abraham, that not all are of Israel who are fleshly Israel, but all Christ's elect are spiritual Israel: these are they whose right it is to the promise; the restoration promises throughout the Scriptures belong to these. These restoration promises in Christ are surely Gilead's balm, and the great Physician himself, who knows our frame and remembers that we are dust, he it is who alone can apply these scriptural promises to our souls to heal and comfort those whom sin has slain, but whom his blood has redeemed. Gilead, the land of the sweet-smelling spices and savory things, the place of healing herb and of myrrh and frankincense, is also the hill of witness. When the children of Israel came through Jordan into the promised land, they took twelve stones, one for each of the tribes, and made a heap in the river-bed. When the waters came together after Israel passed safely through, this heap was overwhelmed. But, also they took twelve stones up out of the bed of the river and made them an heap at the place where they lodged that night. Thus, two heaps: one in the bed of the river swept over by its waters, the other in the land of Canaan a silent witness of the fact that the waters of the river had been turned back from before the ark of the covenant as they passed through. These are two heaps of witness. The pile of stones in the bed of the river hidden by its waters witnesses of the judgments of the law overwhelming Christ, the Son of God, in death for his people; the pile of stones in the land of Canaan witnesses of Israel's deliverance from judgment because Christ suffered those judgments for them. Gilead, the word, means heap of witness. From this witness comes healing balm to the soul of God's Israel applied by the Spirit of the great Physician who has been tempted in all points as his Israel, thus knows how to succor them in their trials and temptations. On the other hand, however, at the time Jeremiah asked these questions there was no manifestation of this balm, nor of any application of it to Israel's hurt by the great Physician. The soul of the prophet and the souls of the faithful with him at that time, could be comforted only as faith enabled them to look forward to the day of Christ and the promise of these things. The law could not bring salvation, nor was there in Israel any ability of their own to turn them from their evils unto the living God. The fruitlessness of human endeavor to itself repent of its errors is proven in Israel's history. Nothing short of the supreme

power of God in Christ can give repentance unto Israel. For this purpose Christ died and rose from the dead and afterward ascended on high, to give repentance unto Israel. Without this overcoming power of Christ there can be no repentance. Christ is the repentance of his Israel. Repentance is not lamenting one's sins, but turning from them utterly. No sinner can turn himself from his own way, this is the risen Christ's work. He alone turns his people from sin to holiness, from the thralldom of dead works to the gracious service of the living God. This repentance or turning away from all the works of the law, from all judgment and condemnation, is the "balm of Gilead." It is the remedy that heals our hurts because it goes directly to the root of the trouble, not treating symptoms merely, but eradicating the cause. This balm of the "hill of witness" regenerates, not reforms, the sinner so that he becomes a new man in Christ, old things pass away and all things become new. No one can apply this sovereign remedy but the great Physician. This exalted Redeemer at the right hand of God sent the Holy Ghost, or Comforter. This Comforter takes of the things of Jesus and reveals them unto Israel, and when he does there is a certain and sure cure administered, an effectual turning away from the world, the flesh and the devil, and a turning unto the living God. How glad and thankful we ought to be that we are no more under the law, no more under its threats and thunders, but are under the gracious dispensation of his living Word wherein we have continual access to the efficacy of Gilead's balm and the ministry of the great Physician. We cannot be thankful enough that the dark dispensation of his wrath has passed and that the glad New Year of his grace and mercy envelops us.

This is written at the request of brother C. H. Byrd, of Enterprise, Alabama, who writes me, "A few mornings ago I awakened with the twenty-second verse of the eighth chapter of Jeremiah on my mind. It had been quite a long time since I had read this Scripture before. It continually dwells on my mind. If the Lord would lead you out, I would be glad to have you write on the subject."

H. H. L.

JAMES I. 27.

"PURE religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

While language is incapable of expressing adequately spiritual truths, at the same time we find words useful vehicles for conveying our thoughts. There are several words in our text the meaning of which is deserving of careful consideration. "Pure," for instance, is defined as "being free from moral or physical defilement; chaste; unpolluted; unadulterated; clean; holy," etc. "Undefiled" means "spotless." It might not be hard to find a religion that would measure up to these standards as understood by men, but our text is speaking of that religion which is pure and undefiled before God. When we remember that he is holy, and that his

thoughts are higher than the heavens are above the earth than man's thoughts; that he seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh on the outward, but God looketh on the inward, discerning even the thoughts and intents of the heart, then it is we are made to ask, Who can appear before him? In the verse just preceding our text James says, "If any man among you seemeth religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." Occasionally we hear of a brother or a sister whose tongue seems to run wild, or who writes with a poisoned pen, uncovering the faults of the brethren. How much better it would be if they could take a garment and go backward, covering up the nakedness of their brother.

But, let us proceed. Sometimes we are aided in our comprehension of a subject by being told what it is not. The one under consideration here by the apostle is so highly important that he emphasizes it by giving us not only the affirmative side of the question, but also the negative. He first describes for us that religion which is vain and then proceeds to tell us what "Pure religion and undefiled before God" is. He says it is to *visit* the *fatherless* and *widows* in their affliction. The worldly religionist will tell you this means that we should go about the streets of our great cities and search for the natural orphans and widows who, perhaps, are hungry and cold, and take them food and clothing and fuel. Such is humane, and we have nothing but praise from a human standpoint for the organization or individual who engages in the relief of suffering of this kind, but we are unwilling to admit that this is all that is contained in our text. The one who does this has whereof to glory, but not before God. We are confident that the apostle is addressing those of like precious faith, as is shown by the context of this epistle; therefore something deeper than the *natural* is presented. He is talking about *pure religion,* that which pertains to God, of which he is the author and originator, and he says it is to "visit" certain described characters. When we speak of visiting our friends, it is understood that we go to their homes, where they live, to see them, and so to visit the fatherless and widows, we must go to the place where they dwell; we must know what their manner of life is and how they subsist. We must be able to speak in their tongue the pure language of their hearts. We must be familiar with the scenery through the valley of the shadow of death and acquainted with him who resides in the depth of despond. If this were all, we could not speak comfortingly to them, but we must know in a way of life him that rescues the perishing, that power which delivers from the lowest hell, and be able to speak to them of that God of love and mercy who lifts the beggar from the dung hill and causes him to sit among princes. If we have not experienced these things in our own souls, we cannot visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction. Job's friends could not visit him, for they knew not where he lived; they were all miserable

comforters, and so does the child of God find those who speak to him of salvation by works. Neither can the subject of grace visit in the true sense the unregenerate in heart, however poverty stricken they might be naturally. When he begins to speak to them of the vileness of the human heart, and of the glorious plan of God's salvation, there is a blank stare in their faces which tells him that they know not whereof he speaks. He cannot teach his neighbor or brother, nor even his bosom companion and his own offspring, to know the Lord, even though he might feel he would give ten thousand worlds to do so. But, how different when our heavenly Father's children are brought together to tell of their travel. Tears will be seen to flow freely for the joy that is in the heart as they talk of God's goodness and mercy to poor sinners. Truly, the fatherless and widows are visited in their affliction when pilgrims meet together in the way in which the Lord has led them. The redeemed of the Lord have no earthly father, or husband, in a spiritual sense. They know that cursed is the man that trusteth in man and have been taught specifically by their exalted Head to call no man on earth their father. Notwithstanding this, are there not countless millions in the world to-day who are addressing human beings, animated lumps of clay like themselves, as "father?" Only a short while ago we listened to an address over the radio which seemed so radical that we decided to send for a copy. We were told to address our request to a certain "father," but this we could not do. Such worshipping of sinful flesh is abhorrent to us.

But to come back to our text and the characters therein described, we hope we have a fellow-feeling for those who have experienced that destitution wherein one finds himself when he feels to be cut off, without hope and without God in the world. There, a fit companion only for the owls and bats of the wilderness and desert, he cries, God, be merciful unto me, a sinner. And while he is certain there is no hope of salvation for him, that he is eternally lost and forever banished from the peaceful presence of the just God, nevertheless, he continues to cry for mercy, and ere long to his utter astonishment and amazement God hears his cry and comes down to deliver from the horrible pit the object of his love; he lifts him out of the mire and clay, places his feet upon a rock, establishes his goings and puts a new song in his mouth, even praises to his blessed name. When Jesus talked with the Samaritan woman at the well, though she had had five husbands, yet, he whom she then had was not her husband, for Jesus had told her all things whatsoever she did and she was convinced that he was the Messiah that was to come. The five Books of the Law condemned her and there was no earthly source from which she could receive the comfort and consolation her soul so much craved. Such characters have to be visited in their affliction, and this Jesus did when he told her the secret things of her life and spoke of that living water that should

be in her a well of water springing up into everlasting life. It is not enough to talk to God's people about the Scripture: something must be known and felt, and when Christ and him crucified is preached, in demonstration of the Spirit and with power, to the poor and needy and, by faith, they are given to lay hold upon heavenly bread it is food to their souls and they have meat to eat that the world knows not of.

"And to keep himself unspotted from the world." While we have said that mankind cannot commend itself to God by acts of kindness to their less fortunate fellow-beings, we would not be understood as saying that the people of God should not minister of their temporal things to their brethren who are in need. This would not be keeping themselves unspotted from the world. The world would condemn them, and rightly so, for such neglect. Neither would such conduct be in keeping with the teaching of our Savior: "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" A continuation of this teaching is, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." Men satisfy their consciences to-day by giving of their abundance to what they regard worthy causes. One of old asked, "Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"—Micah vi. 7, 8. Paul said, "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." The genuine love of God in the heart is the vital principle. Whatever is found will be seen the fruit of the Spirit. The matter of keeping one's self "unspotted from the world" leads us into a very broad field. It is not enough to say that we believe in the doctrine of predestination, or any one or all of the points of doctrine believed by the Old School Baptists, but the important question is, Are we really living the life of a true christian? It is well to preach the doctrine of God our Savior, but it is better to live the life of Christ. We cannot emphasize too strongly the importance of practicing what we profess, of striving unceasingly to enter in at the strait gate. We have no patience with the idea that Old Baptists should sit down placidly and be unconcerned as to what takes place. Rather, do we understand that they live by faith, and a living faith exercises one to prove all things and hold fast that which is good. None can attain unto the standard of perfection, but if we are living children we will hate evil and seek after that which is good. The tree must be known by the fruit it bears. "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." We are confident our

readers clearly understand that we do not believe for one moment that we can mortify the deeds of the body except through the work of the Spirit. We are persuaded that no man will forsake the way of sin and follow in the path of righteousness except he be born again, but he that is born of God will desire to glorify him, not only by living a moral, honest, upright and truthful life, which is expected of all men, but by truly serving his Lord and Master with a service that will give evidence to his having been called out and separated from the world to walk in newness of life.

A sister in the Catskill Mountains asked us to write on the above verse. We hope what has been said will at least cause the brethren to want to stand before the mirror of "pure religion and undefiled before God" and see what it reflects. If it makes you ashamed of all your ways and causes you to resolve, by the grace of God, to live more in keeping with the profession you have made, then thank God that he has not left you destitute of his mercy, and praise him for his wonderful works among the children of men.

R. L. D.

NOTICE.

When remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Forest Grove Church, Wicomico County, Maryland, October 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1930, to the several churches and associations with which we correspond, sends christian fellowship.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—We hope we are thankful to the God of all grace for this another privilege of meeting together in an associate capacity. It is said in God's written word, Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst. We feel that we have realized this truth during this meeting, for the preaching has been with demonstration and with power. We have seen the manifestation of his Spirit with us, and not a jarring note has marred our peace. Our meeting has been well attended, and we have enjoyed having your ministers and messengers with us.

The next session of the Association is appointed to be held either with the Rewastico or Nassaongo Church, Wicomico County, Maryland, beginning October 21st, 1931, and continuing three days. Notice will be given in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at which place it will be held, at which time we hope to meet with you again to enjoy another spiritual feast.

G. E. COULBOURN, Mod.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
GEORGE F. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

The Pocatalico Old School, or Predestinarian Baptist Association, in session with the Providence Church, Lincoln County, West Virginia, September 5th, 6th and 7th, 1930, sendeth greetings in the Lord to our sister Associations and meetings with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more we are blessed by the grace of God to meet and greet your messengers and to receive your correspondence, which we greatly appreciate, and of which we desire a continuance in the future. We are endeavoring to contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Your ministers have come to us preaching Christ Jesus the only Savior of sinners, which is food to the hungry soul. May they ever be kept faithful, is our prayer.

Our next session will convene, the Lord willing, on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1931, with the Hopewell Church, Kanawha County, West Virginia, when and where we hope to meet a goodly number of your messengers.

In love and fellowship,

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Mod.

OSCAR J. BYRNSIDE, Clerk.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Shokan, Ulster County, New York, September 17th, 18th and 19th, 1930, to the several churches with which we correspond, sends christian greeting in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Another year is numbered with the past and by the kind providence and tender mercy of the covenant-keeping God we are again permitted to meet in an association and to listen to the truth as it is in Jesus proclaimed by his able servants that he has placed on the walls of Zion to preach the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ, and I trust we all have been edified, strengthened and built up in our most holy faith. There has been no discord, but one continual flow of love and fellowship all through our meeting. Your servants have come to us laden with the gospel of peace and love from the Giver of all good and perfect gifts, and we can truly say it has been good for us to be here.

Our next session is to be held with the Vega and Second Roxbury Churches jointly, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday between the second and third Sundays in September 1931, where we again hope to meet your messengers and hear the gospel preached. Until then, dear brethren, farewell.

GEORGE RUSTON, Mod.

AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

NOTICE.

The Saints' Rest Old School Baptist Church, at Dallas, Texas, appointed Mrs. Beulah Strube, 824 Melba Street, Dallas, Texas, to solicit and receive donations for the erection of a house of meeting place in Dallas. All who wish to help, either Old Baptists or friends of theirs, can send their checks or money orders to her.

Dear editors, this was done in conference and voted unanimously the seventh day of December, 1930. I would like to see this notice published in the old SIGNS if it meets with your approval. A very modern sized, comfortable, plain building is our plan.

Yours in humble hope,

(MRS.) BEULAH STRUBE.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

HIMAN S. COLLARD, Deacon in New Vernon Old School Baptist Church, passed away December 11th, 1930, in Warwick N. Y., at the home of his niece, Mrs. Mina Brown Walcott, with whom he had resided for about four years. Shortly after losing his wife, sister Collard, December 20th, 1926, he wrote out the following information concerning himself and gave it to the writer "to keep:" "Himan S. Collard was born in the town of Wallkill, N. Y., the son of James L. and Emeline Wilkin Collard. January 23rd, 1874, was married to S. Frances Harding, daughter of Deacon Jairus and Analiza Harding. In 1882 I was chosen Church Trustee to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Theo. Uptegrove. I have been Trustee since. We had five children; four died young; the last one was drowned twelve and one-half years old, February 10th, 1896. I went before the church and was received for baptism the next Sunday, March 7th, 1897, by Elder F. A. Chick. At the next church meeting I was chosen Church Clerk. Soon after I was chosen Deacon, after Deacon Beyea's death."

One who was present at the funeral service, held in the New Vernon meetinghouse on December 15th, said to the writer that he had known brother Collard for a period of fifty-five years and that he had lived an exemplary life. There was a good gathering of brethren and friends present to pay tribute to the esteem in which he was held. Burial was in the cemetery adjoining the meetinghouse grounds. The words used as a text are found in the latter portion of the fifty-fourth verse of the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

ALSO,

ISAAC S. BAIRD, member of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in New York City, departed this life December 15th, at the home of his sister, Mrs. Adam Jackowska, 1327 Brooklyn Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y., with whom he had resided since 1924. Brother Baird was born July 14th, 1850, which made his earthly stay 80 years, 5 months and 1 day. Besides the sister with whom he resided he leaves one brother, Mr. John H. Baird, one grandson, William Calhoun, and a number of nieces and nephews. He lost his first wife in 1877 and remarried in 1879, but his second wife died in 1922. About one month later he lost his only daughter, who was a daughter by his first wife. Not long after this he broke up his home in Warwick, N. Y., and moved to Brooklyn, N. Y., to live with his sister. We regret that we cannot furnish detailed information regarding his church affiliations. After coming to Brooklyn, N. Y., to live he brought his letter from the Warwick Old School Baptist Church and united with the Ebenezer Church in New York City. He loved the truth and was always glad to meet with his brethren, though in the last years of his life he was afflicted in the knee joints and had to get about by the use of a wheel chair. He suffered severely, at times, but bore it with fortitude and patience. His body was taken to Warwick, N. Y., and the funeral service was held in the Warwick Old School Baptist meetinghouse, where was gathered a large number of friends and brethren. Interment was in the cemetery in Warwick. We shall greatly miss our departed brethren, but desire to be reconciled to the will of our heavenly Father in all things. May he give us to ever trust in him.

R. L. D.

Mr. DOUGALD C. CAMPBELL died at his home in North Dunwich, September 25th, 1930, after an illness lasting nearly a year. He was one of six sons and two daughters born to Alex Campbell and Janet Carswell and was born March 7th, 1864. December 25th, 1895, he married Christina Cobban, to which union were born three sons: Alex, Robert and James. His wife died February 2nd, 1900, and October 30th, 1902, he married Margaret A. Eaton, to which union was born one son, Philip, who with his brothers Robert and James reside in North Dunwich, while Alex's home is in Saskatchewan; these, with his dear wife, remain to mourn their loss, also one sister, Mrs. Angus Gillis, of Muirkirk. He was a firm believer in the truth, and a faithful attendant and friend of the Covenanted Baptist Church, although not a member. His heart was with the brethren, and often he went to meeting when he hardly had strength to go. He was a good citizen and an excellent father and husband, loved and respected by all who knew him, and he is greatly missed by his family, especially by his lonely companion, who deeply mourns her loss.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer at Mr. Campbell's late home, where a large assembly of relatives and friends silently witnessed their esteem for our departed friend, and sorrow for his grief-stricken family. Interment was in the Cowal Cemetery.

ALSO,

DEACON ARCHIE C. CAMPBELL, brother of the above, died at his home in Dutton, December 8th, 1930, after being confined to his bed for several months. He was the son of Alex Campbell and Janet Carswell. October 24th, 1882, he married Regina Pollard, daughter of the late Elder William Pollard, and to this union were born six children: Robert, Alex, Janet, Mary, Humphrey and William, all residing in North Dunwich except William, who died in 1904. Brother Campbell was for years one of the most successful farmers in North Dunwich, but about three years ago he retired from the farm and came to live in Dutton, where he had almost all that time been in failing health. Brother Campbell united with the Covenanted Baptist Church and was baptized by the late Elder William Pollard May 11th, 1896. He was a man of few words, but had very good judgment in matters belonging to the church, and

September 30th, 1916, he was set aside by the church to the office of deacon, which office he honorably filled, and was ever in his place when possible, and by a humble and sincere deportment he set a lovely example to his brethren who mourn their loss. Brother Campbell leaves to mourn their loss his widow, sister Regina, who greatly misses him, his five remaining children and a number of grandchildren, all of whom, with their dear mother, were very devoted to him. He also leaves one sister, Mrs. Angus Gillis. May the Lord bless them in their loss and reconcile them to his will.

The funeral services were held at his late home, where the writer, who was his pastor, tried to speak to the comfort of the bereaved. Interment was in the Fairview Cemetery. G. R.

MRS. MARY A. MURPHY, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life at the home of her son, near Herndon, Fairfax County, Virginia, December 20th, 1930. She was the widow of our late brother Hiram Murphy, who died in 1903, and who was long a deacon in the Frying Pan Church. She was the daughter of Percy W. and Mildred Morehead, and was one of ten children. Of these ten children but one is left to survive his sister, our good friend Mr. Lewis Morehead, who resides in his nephew's home. Sister Murphy was born in Fauquier County, Virginia, July 3rd, 1844. She was baptized into the Upper Broad Run Church by Elder J. L. Purington many years ago. I have not the date. In April, 1883, she united by letter with Frying Pan Church, having married brother Murphy and moved to within the bounds of the Frying Pan Church. She leaves one son, Mr. Joseph Murphy, two step-daughters, Mrs. Lewis Morehead and Mrs. Elbert Hutchison, also four grandsons and several nieces and nephews. Sister Murphy was blessed with a clear discriminating mind in the things of God, and loved to talk on spiritual things with any interested in those things. She was sound in the faith and could readily detect truth from error. Many have been the comforting visits I have had in her home, many have been the times she has cheered my fainting heart and encouraged me when I have been disspirited. Her home was always open to her brethren and she loved to see their faces and to greet them with tender expressions of her love and fellowship for them in Christ. Her husband was one of the best deacons ever the church has had, and she was a deacon's true wife. One by one these pillars in the house of the Lord seem to be taken from us and carried within the church triumphant there to dwell with Christ, but their going is a sad and irreparable loss to the church militant. She will be greatly missed in both the family and the church, but we are greatly comforted in the assurance that she is at rest and at peace with Jesus her Savior.

At the funeral we tried to speak from portions of the fourteenth chapter of John, and sang one of her favorite hymns, number 367 (Beebe's collection). Burial was in the cemetery at Fairfax, Virginia. May the Lord minister unto all who mourn, the word of reconciliation to his divine will.

ALSO,

MRS. ANNIE PALMER, our sister in Christ, departed this present life at the home of her daughter, Mrs. John Furr, Bloomfield, Virginia, January 7th, 1931. She was born December 9th, 1839, her stay on earth being 91 years, 1 month and 28 days. Her parents were Norval and Margaret Silcott. Her husband was Thomas T. Palmer, to whom she was married March 6th, 1868. She was baptized by Elder J. N. Badger in July, 1877, into the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun County, Virginia. She leaves three children: Mrs. John Furr, at whose home she passed away, Wade H. Palmer, of Upperville, Va., and William C. Palmer, of Ballston, Va. She is survived by one brother and four sisters: T. J. Silcott, Washington, D. C., Mrs. Hume Duvall, Mrs. Emma Humphrey, Miss Jennie Silcott, all of Washington, D. C.; sister Margaret Oliver, wife of brother John F. Oliver, of Herndon, Va. She also leaves eight grandchildren. For several years prior to her death sister Palmer was very feeble in mind, but seemed to be fairly strong in body up to within a few weeks of her death. She had wonderful vitality and such strength of physique that her body outlasted her mind. A few months ago my wife and I called to see her. She did not remember who we were, but while there we sang some old hymns, and as we did so her face lighted up with recognition of them and she urged us to keep on singing them. Thus it did seem that despite her inability to recognize the faces of her friends, and of her own family, there was still lingering in her soul the remembrance of those things pertainig to her faith and hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. The natural mind is bound to fail if we live long enough, but the vigor of the spiritual mind belongs to eternity and knows no weakness. Her daughter, Mrs. John Furr, attended her mother with such patient and unselfish devotion as it has seldom been our privilege to witness. With Mrs. Furr, her dear mother was first in her thoughts always and everything else in the home gave way to the comfort and well-being of her aged and feeble mother. She will sadly miss this mother and it will be very hard indeed to get used to doing without her, great care though she was. The Lord is able to heal with the oil of his heavenly consolations. May he pour his healing balm into the souls of his sorrowing ones and reconcile them to his divine will. It is far better for our dear sister to have been released from the bonds of mortality and to be with Jesus whom she loved. May we truly say and feel, The Lord's will be done.

The funeral was preached at the home where she died, burial in the cemetery at Ebenezer, the place she loved so well for the truth's sake.

H. H. L.

JOHN M. SCARBOUROUGH, our brother in Christ, was born April 7th, 1860, and died November 23rd, 1930, in his seventy-first year. He leaves to mourn his departure his widow, Ella, one sister, Rosa Mulberry, and one brother, William, of Missouri, also a step-son, Buford Norton, and several step-grandchildren, besides a host of brethren and friends. Brother John received a hope in Christ in the spring of 1883, after several years spent like Saul of Tarsus, finding fault and persecuting the church, was made willing in the day of His power and came very humbly to the church called Elk Lick, Scott County, Kentucky, was received, and baptized by Elder J. M. Theobald, then pastor, the second Saturday in May, 1883, and ever after lived according to his profession, and was a sound, orderly and respected brother. It has been my pleasure to have known him and sister Scarbourough for about ten years, and I always found him just the same, ever contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and always attending the meetings. His counsel was wise, and the welfare of the church was his chief aim in life. As a business man, he was respected by all who knew him. He was in poor health for several weeks, but bore his suffering with patience. I called to see him just a few days before he died, and he wished me to stay over and have a meeting at his house, and, lying in his bed, he sang, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound," much to the surprise of the friends present, and after I had spoken he spoke of the wonderful way the Lord had led him in this life, manifesting full assurance that the Lord would not forsake him, and that some time he would hear his voice and see him as he is and be like him and be satisfied. Oh how we will miss him! His place is vacant, never to be filled, but we feel our loss is his gain. May the Lord enable us all to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

Written by request.

ALSO,

ROBERT T. WILSON was born September, 1877, and died December 11th, 1929, aged 52 years. He leaves to mourn his departure his wife, sister Fannie, two daughters, Nora and Norma, his aged father and mother, both members of the Old School Baptist Church at Sadieville, Kentucky. Brother "Bob," as we all called him, received a hope in the Savior, and was received and baptized the second Saturday in September, 1909, by Elder C. C. More, and for twenty years was a very steadfast, reliable and sound Baptist, loved by his brethren for his faith and walk, by all his friends for his honest and upright dealings. He will be sadly missed by all, but he had filled his mission here and the Lord called him home. May the Lord bless all who mourn.

Elder P. W. Sawin, the pastor, spoke to a large congregation of brethren and friends, after which the body was laid to rest in the cemetery near by.

Written by request of the Elk Lick Church.

ALSO,

JOHN L. MULBERRY, our brother in Christ, was born May 8th, 1850, and died November 3rd, 1930, in his eighty-first year. He joined the Old School Baptist Church called Elk Lick the first Saturday in December, 1886, and was baptized by Elder George S. Weaver, then pastor of the church. Brother John was a man quite peculiar in his ways, sound in the faith and very attentive to his meetings as long as he was able. He was in failing health for several years and suffered much. His wife and children were very attentive to him and his every need was attended to, but his allotted time had come and he was gathered home. Their pastor, Elder P. W. Sawin, not being able to attend, no funeral service was held. He was laid to rest in the Porter Cemetery, there to await the call of the Master in the resurrection. May the Lord comfort the widow, the children, the brethren in the church and the many friends.

Written by request.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

JULIA SHARP MYERS, my beloved wife, departed this life Sunday night, October 12th, 1930. She was born October 29th, 1853, in Richmond, Massachusetts, where we were married November 1st, 1871. She joined the Congregationalists, of which denomination her father, John A. Sharp, was deacon for many years, when she was sixteen years of age. She surely lived an exemplary, christian life, was a believer in a supreme God, predestination and all the fundamental points of doctrine of the Primitive Baptists, and stood for what the Bible says. She was a good friend and neighbor, as was attested by the many friends she made wherever she went, who loved and respected her, and now mourn her departure. She often requested the lady who took care of and nursed her during the last year of her sickness to sing the hymn, "God will take care of you," and we feel she is "in the arms of Jesus," "a child of Jehovah, a subject of grace." September 21st, 1927, I went out of the house about nine o'clock in the morning, leaving her at her work, seemingly in her usual health. An hour or so later I came in and not seeing her, I looked around and found her lying on the floor in the bed room, and as I lifted her and placed her on the bed I discovered she was entirely helpless in her right side, was paralyzed, from which she never recovered, but grew gradually worse until the end peacefully came. Wednesday p. m., October 18th, we laid her away in the Riverside Cemetery here in Pierre, South Dakota. The many kind acts and the beautiful flowers attested the esteem and sympathy of the community. Seven children were born to us, all of whom are living and were present at the funeral. The children are Mrs. K. M. DuBois, Trout Creek, Montana; Mrs. E. R. Riggle, Pierre, South Dakota; John T. Myers, Rapid City, South Dakota; Mrs. Luella M. Babbitt, Omaha, Nebraska; James G. Myers, Ft. Pierre, South Dakota; Granville S. Myers, Manchester, Iowa; Mrs. Mar-

garet M. Anderson, Rapid City, South Dakota. We are very lonely and sad, but feel to say, Our Father who art in heaven, thy will be done.

I was born September 19th, 1847, near Locktown, New Jersey. The third Sunday in September, 1866, I was baptized by Elder Gabriel Conklin and given the right hand of fellowship into the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, New Jersey.

ELISHA R. MYERS.

MRS. MATTIE P. JAMES (nee Stovall), our dear sister in Christ, answered the Master's call from earth to her reward October 27th, 1930. She was born in Fayette County, Alabama, July 22nd, 1854. She leaves two daughters, one son, and a brother to mourn the loss of a dear mother and sister, together with the membership of her church, and a host of friends. The daughters are Mrs. A. P. Windom, Oklahoma City, Okla., Mrs. Walter Hooker, Hobart, Okla.; the son, Mr. Stovall, lives near Sayre, Okla., with whom she made her home, and the brother, J. L. McClug, Ventura, California. Sister James united with the Original Predestinarian Baptist Church, in Hardiman County, Tennessee, and was baptized by the late Elder James Day. In the year 1900 she moved to Oklahoma, and later cast her lot with Hopewell Church, near Reed, Okla., and lived a faithful member of that church until separated from us by death, but her godly conversation and faithfulness to her church and love toward the saints of God will long live in the memory of those who worshiped with her. Sister Jones was always ready to give a reason for her hope, not claiming any credit to herself, but always pointing to the imputed righteousness of Christ, he being the author and finisher of her faith. With these evidences we can say, Another mother in Israel has gone to join that blood-washed throng, there to sing praises to Father, Son and ever-blessed Spirit for ever and ever. Amen. I will say to those who mourn after her, Wish her not back on earth again, but rather rejoice in the sweet promises of God that are hers through Christ Jesus our Lord.

Written by her pastor at the request of the family. W. N. GREEN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Durwood H. Bradley, Texas, $1; Mrs. Georgia Carruthers, Va., $2; Mrs. Mary E. Furman, N. Y., $2; J. H. Shambaugh, Ohio, $1; Paul T. Leigh, N. J., $1; Mrs. T. H. Young, Ohio, $3; Woburn Church, Mass., $5; Duncan R. Black, Canada, $3; Ernest Davis, Del., $1; R. T. Turner, Cal., $3; Mrs. M. A. Somers, Va., $1; Sarah J. Dishong, Pa., $3; Mrs. J. D. Shafer, N. Y., $1; J. S. Keller, Kan., $1; Mrs. Ethel M. Werner, N. J., $4; "A friend," N. Y., $1.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

We have kept up a monthly meeting for some time in the past, and hope, by the grace of God, to be favored to continue to meet every second Sunday in each month at 3617 Veteran Avenue, Palms Station, near Culver City, California. May this bear a cordial invitation to all who believe in grace and salvation by grace to meet with us on the stated time.

MR. and MRS. W. J. BERRY.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at the home of sister E. Brunow, 411 N. Ridgeway Avenue, and on the second, third and fourth Sundays at the home of brother W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. The fifth Sundays are by appointment. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastors, Elders Jones and Janes.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Little Flock Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every first and third Sunday at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, at 1 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor

The Cane Run Predestinarian Old School Baptist Church, of Turners Station, Kentucky, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 10:30 a. m., also, the Sulphur Fork Church of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, of the same faith and order, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 2:30 p. m.

GEO. L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 99. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1931. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE PROMISED KINGDOM.

"HEARKEN, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?"—James ii. 5.

I wish to say in the outset, that belief of the truth as it is revealed in the Scriptures does not lay us under the necessity of ignoring common sense reasoning and the facts of history. All history, if only we were able to properly interpret it and understand it, is but Divine prophecy fulfilled. Holy men of God were moved by the Holy Ghost to foretell or prophesy future events as they come to pass in this time world. It was prophesied by Daniel that in the time of the Gentile reign, or at the time of the breaking in pieces of the feet and toes of the image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, which feet and toes symbolized the remaining fragmentary parts of the ten kingdoms into which the Roman empire was divided in the fifth century after Christ, the God of heaven would set up a kingdom that should never be destroyed, but that it should "break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms and stand for ever."—Dan. ii. 44. When Daniel came to speak further of this kingdom, he said, "And the kingdom and dominion, and greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom." I take it as for granted that the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom which God hath promised them; and since the kingdom that is to be given to the people of the saints of the Most High is an everlasting kingdom, I conclude that the kingdom they shall receive is the kingdom God will set up "in the days of these kings" because that kingdom shall never be destroyed and shall stand forever, therefore, an everlasting kingdom.

It should be carefully noted that James does not say the poor of this world rich in faith whom God hath chosen, are heirs of the kingdom which he hath *given* them, but heirs of the kingdom which he hath *promised* them.

Jesus, speaking unto his disciples on one occasion, said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." James tells us that God hath promised to give the kingdom to them that love him, and Jesus tells us that it is God's good pleasure *to give* them the kingdom; and Daniel tells us that the kingdom shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High. Evidently, God had not yet given the kingdom to those disciples of Jesus whom he taught to pray as follows: "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come," &c. If the kingdom God had promised to them that love him had already been given them and was a spiritual kingdom set up in their hearts, as some believe and teach; if the promised kingdom had already come, why should Jesus have instructed them to pray after such manner? Why should he tell them to pray, Thy kingdom come? The inquiry that would naturally arise in our mind is this: When shall the saints of God, those who love him, receive the kingdom of which they are heirs and which God hath promised them? I believe that the time when God's people shall receive the kingdom God hath promised them is made very clear in the language of Jesus recorded in Matthew xxv. 31-34: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, *then* shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." From this language of the dear Savior it appears that the fact is clearly made out and established that the sheep of God, them that love him and who are heirs of the kingdom God has promised them, shall enter into the kingdom to inherit and possess it at one and the same time, and that time will not be until the coming of Christ, when he shall sit as King upon the throne of his glory. Then, and not until then, shall the people of the saints of the Most High be given the kingdom God had promised to them, the kingdom which it is the pleasure of their heavenly Father to give to them. May I not say with charity to all that it only requires common sense to understand that the "little flock" and the "kingdom" that God gives them are two different things? We believe, and so it is conceded by all who believe that Christ established his visible church here on earth while here among the children of men, that the "little flock" was and is his visible church; that God's manifest children united and gathered together in church covenant and christian fellowship are the church of Jesus Christ in its local, militant state here on earth; and that when Jesus said to the little flock that it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom, he did not mean giving the church to

itself or putting the church within itself. It is contended by some that the kingdom Daniel said God would set up in "the days of these kings" and the kingdom promised of God to them that love him, and the kingdom Jesus instructed his disciples to pray for, are a spiritual kingdom which God sets up in the hearts of his people in the work of the new birth. One Scripture they rely upon to sustain this contention is found recorded in Luke xvii. 20, 21: "And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." It should be observed that Jesus was not addressing these words to his disciples, but to the Pharisees who rejected him. It would seem that in the hearts of the Pharisees would be the last place we should expect God to set up a spiritual kingdom. Since it would be obviously absurd to insist that the kingdom of God was within those self-righteous Pharisees, we shall have to depend upon the meaning of language to give us light upon this text of Scripture. The word *basileia,* rendered kingdom, is also rendered king or royal majesty. The Emphatic Diaglot renders the passage thus: "God's royal majesty is among you." This is very plain and must be the obvious meaning of the text, because that is in harmony with every other passage relating to the kingdom of God. Jesus did not mean to answer the Pharisees and tell them when the kingdom of God should come, he only said, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation," and that is even the case. The kingdom of God, called the kingdom of heaven, has been coming in preparation from the foundation of the world and the world observeth it not; nay, but few of God's people have observed its preparation and coming even now. In this the last days of the Gentile order of the world, but few of God's children are given to see the signs of Christ's appearing, and kingdom. We should keep in mind that the kingdom to be given to the people of the saints of the Most High is "*prepared for them from* the foundation of the world." The preposition "from" notes the time when the kingdom began to be prepared for them. If we admit that God is the great first cause, and concede the rule of cause and effect as beginning with him and running through all future ages, we have to admit that God Almighty, the great I AM, had some fixed and predetermined end to reach and purpose to fulfill with and through all things coming to pass from the beginning of time to the end of the Gentile order; and that from the morning of time, all things have moved certainly and unerringly toward and unto the most holy end he had before determined and specially relating to his objective, to finally set up his everlasting kingdom and gather his people into it to possess it as their promised habitation forever and ever. The kingdom of God which he will set up in "the days of these kings," and which shall be given to the

people or saints of the Most High as their inheritance and final habitation, must be a *country* ruled by a king, with God's redeemed and resurrected people as its subjects. With this thought and understanding of the promised kingdom, we may truly believe that the kingdom promised them that love God shall be the very country or land which God promised unto Abraham and his seed and which the law given four hundred and thirty years after, could not disannul that the promise should be of non effect. Let us hear Paul testify concerning the promise God made to Abraham and his seed: "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Let us now learn what the promise was that God made to Abraham and to his seed, which is Christ. In Genesis, twelfth chapter, we read, "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a *land* that I will shew thee. * * * So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him. * * * And they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came. * * * And the Lord appeared unto Abram and said, Unto *thy seed* will I give *this land.*" After Abraham and Lot were separated and occupied different sections of the country, God said unto Abraham again, "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the *land* which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy *seed* for ever." Again, in Genesis, fifteenth chapter, we read, "In the same day, the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this *land.*" Again, in Genesis, seventeenth chapter, the Lord says, "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee. * * * And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the *land* wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." This covenant which God established with Abraham and his seed is the first covenant mentioned in the Scriptures carrying the promise of an inheritance, this is the same covenant of which Paul was speaking when he declared the law could not disannul it that the promise should be made of none effect. So God's promise that Abraham and his seed should possess the *land* which Abraham's eyes beheld, still stands with nothing that can disannul it; and just as sure as it is that God cannot lie, so sure is it that Abraham and Israel and all the joint-heirs with Christ, shall possess that *land.*

Now let us hear the testimony of Stephen relative to this promised possession: "Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto your fatherAbraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the *land* which I shall shew thee. Then came he out of

the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell. And he gave him none inheritance in it, no not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he *would* give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him."—Acts vii. 2-5. The words which God spake to Abraham when making his covenant or promise to give him and his seed a particular land or country for an everlasting possession, and the words of Paul and Stephen relative to that covenant, are all too plain and positive to leave any doubt in our minds as to what shall be the final happy home and habitation of Christ and his people; and it is taught equally plain and positive by the Savior in Matthew xxv. 31-34, that the time when Christ and the joint-heirs with him shall possess that promised land, country or kingdom is when Christ comes back to raise the dead, make up his jewels and possess them with eternal life which God that cannot lie promised before the world began. Then will be the time Jesus spake of when he said, "Many shall come from the east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." Yes, Abraham will be there to live with Jesus and all the redeemed children of the Lord, because God promised it and he will fulfill his promise. When Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and those who shall sit down with them in the kingdom of heaven are given that promised *land* they shall not sit down in the hearts of God's children; but they would have to sit down in the hearts of God's children if so be that the "kingdom" God shall set up and the kingdom he hath promised to them that love him, is a spiritual kingdom set up in the hearts of God's people. Neither will Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the rest of God's chosen and resurrected people be taken away from the earth when Jesus comes, unto a promised land somewhere in infinite space in the heavens above. Abraham was not standing upon the earth in a land somewhere in the heavens above when God said to him, "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the *land* which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy *seed* for ever."

(*Concluded next number.*)

LEXINGTON, Ky., Jan. 4, 1931.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a good letter just received from our precious brother and fellow-laborer, Elder J. W. McClanahan, and I do hope our brethren who are blessed with plenty of this world's goods will minister unto him in his old age and infirmity, remembering the words of Jesus: As oft as ye did it unto one of these little ones ye did it unto me. Read all the connection.

I often think of my visit to the eastern associations, nearly fifty-two years ago. I attended the Delaware, Delaware River and Warwick Associations. That was in 1879. The Warwick was held at Warwick, N. Y., and Elder Pollard, of Canada, was serving the

church that year. There were twenty-three Elders attending the Association, and Elder Smoot, of Virginia, and myself are the only ones living of that number. I visited Canada for the first time in October, 1886, and I think there are but two members living who were members then. It is sad indeed to think of the changes, but the word declares he will not be left without a witness.

I desire to speak of our family, and I want only to speak to the praise and glory of God's grace and mercy. There were ten children, who lived to be grown, six sons and four daughters, and all became members of the church; also those who married into the family, except one, and three were ordained Elders. My father and mother united with the old Lewis Creek Church, in Shelby County, Indiana, I think in 1832. Early in 1850 other members of the family united with the church. In May, 1859, brother John united, he being in his twenty-second year, and began preaching the following December. With an older sister, I united in September. I was in my sixteenth year, and I began preaching in December, 1861, in my eighteenth year. I was called the boy preacher, and I feel I have never grown beyond a boy preacher. My brother and I (in years of preaching) are the oldest that can be found: he seventy-one years and I sixty-nine. Brother Isaac, the other minister in our family, began preaching in 1868,, and finished his labors in 1909. My brother John G. and myself are the only members of our family left. He will be ninety-three March 1st, and on January 2nd I passed my eighty-seventh mile stone. For more than seven years I have been totally blind to natural things, but not to the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. I love to hear it preached in all its fullness, and I yet try in my feeble way to preach, as the door of my utterance is opened to me. I do not attempt to go out in the winter, although my general health is good and I would be as active as ever if I could see. I want to thank all the dear ones who so kindly write me. I appreciate your good letters; they strengthen me and help me bear up under my great affliction, and I want to say to you all, Do not forget those who are shut in; your visits and encouraging words will do them good.

As far back as I can remember, back in 1850, the SIGNS came to my father's home, and I have been a reader more than seventy years.

I have written this at the request of some of the brethren who desired to see a short history of our family published in the SIGNS. May this be a prosperous year for you, and may the grace of our Lord Jesus be with you all. Farewell.

In hope, and longing to lay my armor by, from the least of all,

P. W. SAWIN.

(DICTATED.)

POCA, W. Va., Jan. 1, 1931.

DEAR BROTHER SAWIN:—When I wrote you some time ago I promised to write you again soon, so I am making an effort to comply with my promise. While I do not feel to have the

liberty and freedom of mind I would wish to have, consequently will have to draw the bow of venture, leaving the event with the God of heaven and earth. Last night as I lay on my bed I felt much impressed to write you a few lines, as much Scripture was presented to my mind. I felt to rejoice in the beauty of many quotations as they were presented to my mind. David, the sweet singer in Israel, by the Holy Spirit said, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." To me the beauty of this Scripture is that the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd of his flock, is a whole and complete Savior, and his redeemed family see him the fairest among ten thousand and the One altogether lovely. Out of perfection beauty hath shined. Yes, he hath shined into their hearts, which gives them the knowledge of the truth, as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ. There is nothing lacking on the part of our great and complete Savior, who hath done all things well. Paul says, Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. We believe that the fullness of the Godhead dwelt in Jesus. He was clothed with power and authority to do the will of his Father. Of himself he said, I came not to do mine own will, but the will of my Father who sent me. His mission into this world was unalterably settled in heaven; the time and place of his birth were fixed; also his suffering and death were as certainly fixed. The Father made choice of a portion of the fallen sons and daughters of Adam's posterity and gave them grace in Christ before the world began, and for that reason Paul could say, The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. Now what concerns me most is, Am I one of those embraced in this wonderful plan of salvation? Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven. So there is nothing left undone or wanting by our precious Jesus, and Shepherd of his flock, for he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified and set apart by God the Father to this end, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, having predestinated them unto the adoption of children according to the good pleasure of his will.

Now, my precious brother, we are both getting old; our voices will be heard no more on earth when we have finished the race set before us. We often retrace our steps carefully, hoping it will be ours to hear that blessed voice saying, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world. I am so feeble that I cannot gather my wandering mind together to write you as I had thought. I sit here feeling very lonely at times, and at other times there are many sweet crumbs of comfort drop from my Master's table that revive my weary soul. I would love to

see you again, but am not likely to this side of eternity.

From one who loves you for the truth's sake,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

ZACCHEUS.

(LUKE XIX.)

ZACCHEUS was a Jew, and chief among the publicans. A publican was a tax collector for the Roman government, to which Palestine was tributary. Those publicans often imposed unjust taxes, for which they were hated of the Jews, and therefore called sinners. Hence the frequent phrase in the New Testament, "publicans and sinners." But Zaccheus, although rich, was not an exactor of unjust taxes, as most of them were, and thereby as a class were rich. God had put a desire in Zaccheus' heart, a great desire, to see Jesus. After that happened Jesus was to pass by the home of this little fellow. Never yet was there a desire to see Jesus but Jesus must be seen. God in his providence so ordered that Jesus must pass that way. In John v. 17, Jesus says, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." Agreeable to his Father's order, he passes by that Zaccheus may see him. But to Zaccheus a sight of Jesus seemed, at first, impossible, for he sought to see him, but those big fellows who surrounded Jesus hid him from his view. Oh yes, and he was so small of stature. It was thus with him before Jesus came his way, and in your experience you were made to feel less than the least of all saints before you got a sight of Jesus as your Savior; you were stripped of all your greatness first, so you would be a worthy host to entertain such a guest, the equal for royalty the world never knew. But notwithstanding Zaccheus' known littleness and the big fellows who thronged Jesus he must see him. He now runs and climbs that sycamore tree, so he would be sure and get a view of Jesus. That little fellow may have been laughed at by those big men as they watched him run. Old School Baptists have been laughed at for putting forth extra efforts, as brother Zaccheus did, in running fifty or a hundred miles to a meeting to see Jesus. That sycamore tree was as much in God's providence, on the spot, as was Zaccheus, or Jesus himself. Zaccheus made an extra effort to see Jesus, and he saw him by getting into the top of that predestined tree. God gave him knowledge that it was the right tree, for Jesus was to pass that way. We often run in vain after this ever-successful one has been seen. As it was with brother Zaccheus, we never get too small to lose that desire, and when we get as small as brother Zaccheus we are going to make an extra effort to see him, and then Jesus passes our way. Zaccheus did not climb that tree to be seen of that great company, nor to be seen of Jesus, but only to see Jesus, and what a glorious personage. Joy filled his heart at the sight of him. By faith he knew before he climbed the tree that Jesus' majesty as the blessed Son of God would manifest him in the midst of that marching company. But, wonderful surprise, that Jesus should give

him attention. What unexpected joy was yours when Jesus took favorable notice of you. Still greater grows the glory when Jesus calls him by name, Zaccheus. We are taught in John x. 3, that Jesus calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. Zaccheus, for joy, answers not a word. Rhoda knew Peter's voice, but for gladness opened not the gate to let him in, but left him out in her haste to let the praying saints know of Peter's presence. (Acts xii. 13, 14.) Zaccheus! No answer for joyful surprise. Make haste and come down, for to-day I must abide at thy house. Every child of grace has been up in Zaccheus' tree once in their lives: when Jesus was first seen by them. As with Zaccheus, just that personal did Jesus appear in your individual case, called you by name and led you out of darkness into his marvelous light. He calls Zaccheus down in haste from that eminent point of view. He did not lodge there long, neither did you when you had your first sight of Jesus. Zaccheus could not travel with Jesus while in that sycamore tree; neither could you while you were at the zenith of your glory as it is in Christ. Having received the command to come down he came down in haste, and so did you. Zaccheus never was in that tree again. Neither was you ever ushered into such celestial glory but once. This is the highest heaven in life, and for once only, when for a brief moment joy is not mixed with doubts and fears. Zaccheus being on earth again, can now walk with Jesus, so they walk on together. Zaccheus could not get near Jesus; no, not so much as get a look at him for the press, but now Jesus makes room for him in the throng, the company is not in his way now. So with you, when you came down from your tree your previous hindrances were gone. The first thing Zaccheus did when out of the tree was to receive Jesus joyfully. Zaccheus was not a conditionalist; he did not believe that Jesus was offering him the blessing of his companionship and royal hostage as a reward or pay for Zaccheus' extra effort and great interest in him, for those joyfully received are freely entertained. Jesus did not come to board with his saints, nor to barter or trade grace for obedience and good works. But let us notice how a small beginning of God's grace and favor grew in the case of Zaccheus. At first but a desire to see Jesus. This prompted a seeking, action, running and climbing the tree. Next a command to come down. Then walking and talking with Jesus, followed by entertaining Jesus as a royal guest in his house, and then Jesus' announcement that salvation was come to his house. Perhaps Zaccheus thought that the gift of half of his goods to the poor, and having not taken anything by false accusation would commend him to Jesus in the way of righteousness. Zaccheus in the mention of this did not do it boastfully, but in the gladness of his heart. Here we stop a moment to consider that the act of giving is prompted, first, to receive praise of men. (Matt. vi. 2.) Such is giving selfishly. Then from a moral, unselfish principle, as in the case

of Publius and his islanders. (Acts xxviii.) Again, by the grace and Spirit of God, as when the bounty was raised for the poor saints at Jerusalem. (Rom. xv. 26.) No doubt Zaccheus' liberal and continuous giving was of God, yet Jesus would have him understand that the salvation of his house was not for his unusual liberality, but because he was a son of Abraham, having the faith of Abraham and walking in his steps. (Rom. iv. 12.) Jesus then tells him that the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. Zaccheus seeks Jesus at first, but it so turned out that Jesus was seeking him. Their meeting was not accidental, but a special appointment of God. Zaccheus was one of the "lost." But Jesus abides at Zaccheus' house. In spirit he ever remained there. So Zaccheus had the inexpressible joy of entertaining Jesus at his house ever afterward. You may not have a house literally, as Zaccheus had, in which he entertained Jesus. As Jesus is here no longer as a man, those of Abraham's sons who have houses cannot entertain Jesus literally. So all must entertain Jesus alike. How? By administering the necessities of life to the least of Christ's brethren. (Matt. xxv. 40.) But of all who have not those things to bestow, in whom a willing heart and spirit is found, Christ reckons them his entertainers, as though they possessed and bestowed their goods thus. Here is the way to entertain Jesus, and he taught us to so do in this text. It is hard to realize that a kind feeling and desire to administer to the necessities of the saints by those of us who are destitute of those necessities to give to those in need are the same as the ministration of them by those of us who possess these goods. I say, it being thus done it is hard to realize that it is as if you were doing the same to Jesus were he here as a man. It must be so that our service be as acceptable as that of our happy little brother Zaccheus' was. It is a most happy thought that we bear the same relationship to Jesus as Zaccheus. Christ is not less kind to us than he was to Zaccheus. Then let us look to God in earnest prayer that we receive Jesus joyfully when he comes in to sup with us as he did with Zaccheus. Zaccheus' case is our case, not literally, of course, as his was, but in the spirit. This narrative is not to be read and laid aside as though it did not concern us. It concerns us as often as we have occasion to minister to the needy brethren, actually, or in the spirit of the case if we have not this world's goods. This is service to God and the brethren. O, brother Zaccheus, what a shining example Jesus has made of thee, shining down through the centuries. By thee Jesus has lighted our pathway in a great measure, as the Holy Ghost takes of the truth and essence of thy story and shows it unto us.

As the limited ability of this writer forbids more than just a hint of what this story of Zaccheus contains, I hope some one with more extended views on the subject may write, if the Lord so directs.

J. I. FOSTER.

Rising Star, Texas, Dec. 10, 1930.

EDITORIAL.

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CHASTISEMENT.

In the attempt to comply with the request of a brother living in Indiana, and knowing at the same time that any effort of ours will be useless and to no point except the Lord be in the matter, we take up the above tremendous subject, which would require a volume to do it justice and which can be but barely outlined in the space we have before us. The Lord commanded the prophet Hosea to take unto himself an adulterous woman for a wife, so he married Gomer the daughter of Diblaim. This is one of the bitterest things the Lord ever told a prophet to do, but in so doing the Lord intended to give Israel an object-lesson whereby they should know just in what position they were before the Lord. Of this marriage of Hosea with Gomer, were born three children: the first a son whom he named Jezreel, signifying the Lord will scatter; the second a daughter whom he named Lo-ruhamah, signifying without mercy or unpitied; the third, another son named Lo-ammi, signifying not my people. Thus, the fruit of Hosea's marriage to Gomer meant scattered, unpitied and forsaken. Thus Israel had a picture set before their nation, in this marriage of the prophet, showing clearly that Israel was an adulterous nation and had departed from the Lord who had redeemed them out of Egypt, and had gone whoring after false gods and false ways, attributing to lovers the thanks and praise rightly due unto the true God. The blessings which Israel had received at the hands of the Lord, she thought came to her from her lovers. Therefore, the Lord said he would take these blessings from her, that he would scatter Israel, show her no mercy, and treat her as if she were not his people at all. As the fruit of Hosea's marriage with Gomer was Jezreel, Lo-ruhamah and Lo-ammi, so would the fruit of Israel's strayings from the Lord result in their being scattered mercilessly into forsakenness and desolation. Yet, "the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered: and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God;

Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel." There is, therefore, no escaping the conclusion that the chastisement of Israel is to bear fruit in restoration. Where it was said to them, "Lo-ammi," it shall be said "ammi" and "Loruhamah" is to be changed to "ruhamah." Instead of no mercy, she shall obtain mercy. The object of the Lord in the chastisement of his people is never to cast them utterly away from him, but to discipline them for their safety and instruction. Chastisement has for its object the good of the one chastised. This good effect, it always has in the case of the people of God. When God chastises the nations outside of Israel it is for the casting down of those nations, and is often for their destruction. For instance, time and again throughout the New Testament, the Lord destroys whole peoples in order to do his own Israel good and to deliver them from their troubles and their captivities. The Lord did not hesitate, when it became necessary, to give Egypt for the redemption of Israel out of Egypt. "I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee."—Isaiah xliii. 3, 4. The Lord uses wars, famines, pestilences, deaths, distresses of every sort in order to wear down the nations very much as water continually dropping wears even stones. This he does in order to debase the nations of the earth to bring about the exaltation of his own everlasting kingdom. It is true that the Lord did at one time greatly prosper Babylon and did give Judah into captivity thereunder, but how did it end? It ended by Babylon herself going into captivity, not for a few years only as had Israel, but permantly. The Tigris and Euphrates rivers which once watered Babylon and made it exceedingly fertile, began to steadily dwindle; and as they dwindled, the Babylon they watered also dwindled until Babylon passed into the limbo of dead nations. Just as surely as ancient Babylon died, it is just as true that the Babylon of the modern world will also, and is now, dwindling never to rise again. As the Lord dried up the ancient river Euphrates, so does he now employ the four horsemen to afflict modern Babylon; just so does he dry up the modern Euphrates which waters and nourishes modern Babylon. This river Euphrates represents the resources of the nations' wealth without which they will surely die. When their gold and their silver are gone, their river is dried up and they must perish. As this Euphrates dries up, the nations find themselves unable to resist the coming of the kings out of the east to overwhelm them. Thus, we see distresses, famines, pestilences, wars and all their train wearing down the nations to make way for their overthrow by portentous things out of the east. (Revelation xvi.

12.) My main object in speaking of these things now is to show that while God's chastisement of the nations of the earth means death and destruction to them, his chastisement of his chosen people means life and salvation to them. In the case of God's Israel, his fatherly chastisements bring restoration; in the case of the world, the fierce fire of his anger consumes it. "Behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths." What a blessing it is that we cannot find our own paths. If we could succeed in walking in our paths, those ways of our own devising, we would wander utterly away from the truth and salvation. However, the Lord so hedges us about with his chastisements that we cannot find our false lovers though we seek earnestly for them, and each time we try to force through this hedge of his care we run ourselves through with thorns. Thus, does he prove to us that we are his people and that we cannot direct our own steps, cannot find our own way. Each time we are determined to have our own way we run against his "wall" which shuts us in. Chastisement, therefore, to the children of God is disciplinary and is for their instruction in righteousness and for their growth in grace. Chastisement is one of the inevitable marks of the Lord's people. Could we rid ourselves of it, we would prove ourselves to be bastards and not sons. To successfully avoid chastisement, would be to rob ourselves of our spiritual birthright. In a recent SIGNS we published an article of the late Elder L. H. Hardy on this subject in which he showed so aptly that the righteous (not the wicked) have many afflictions, but the Lord delivers him out of them all. So many people associate affliction with disobedience. Some falsely reason that the way to get rid of affliction is to be obedient unto the Lord. This is spurious teaching and cannot stand against the truth of revelation. The Lord chastens all whom he loves, he scourges each and every son whom he receives. To be without chastening is to be a bastard, an illegitimate child. If the church in the days of the apostles, and if the apostles themselves, could have adapted themselves and their teachings to the world in which they then lived, they would have avoided persecution. To have bought exemption from persecution at such a price would have been to deny the faith and the blood of the Lord Jesus. Such was utterly impossible. The church at Rome, if it could have conformed to the pagan Roman world of its day, would have secured peace from martyrdom. It could not be. The followers of Christ can no more conform to the world, no matter in what age they live, than they can blot the sun from the sky or create another world. This inability to conform to the world is a lively mark of the true church and is proof that she is indeed the body of Christ; that as her Head was hated by the world of his day to which he would not yield allegiance, so his body the church is hated by the world to which it cannot yield obedience. Chastisement, therefore, is a mark of righteousness, not of unright-

cousness; of obedience, not of disobedience. In the church at Laodicea, there were mostly those who thought themselves rich when they were, in the Lord's eyes, wretchedly poor; they were increased with goods, needing nothing. Nevertheless, even in Laodicea were a few the Lord loved. These he rebuked and chastised. He did not rebuke and chasten the self-sufficient, proudful ones, but only those he loved. Was not this rebuking and chastening, then, a sign from the Lord that he loved them? Indeed, yes. This Laodicean church aptly describes modern christendom, both Catholic and Protestant. Never at any time before in the world's history has the so-called church been as fat, as prosperous, as wealthy in lands, houses and church edifices as to-day; never has she been as self-sufficient, self-righteous, wanting nothing, as now. Yet, in the midst of even modern christendom are a few whose names are unsullied with idolatries: these elect names are the Lord's. As proof that they are his, he chastens and rebukes them. (Revelation iii. 19.) To these the Lord says, "Repent," and indeed his elect ones are even now repenting of the modern conditions prevailing all about us, these chosen ones are turning away in horror and disgust from all the pridefulness of the modern world and its religiosity.

In conclusion, it is an awful error to say that chastisement is a mark of the Lord's displeasure. When visited upon the reprobate wicked, it is a mark of his anger; but upon his elect, it proves to them his fatherly watchcare over his people whom he loves. Just suppose that chastisement is a sign of disobedience in the one chastised, then it would follow that the way to avoid chastisement would be to obey and to stop disobeying. If correct, the chastisement would cease the very moment the child obeyed. If the chastisement ceased, then that child would be a bastard and not a son. Do you not see what a terrible conclusion such false reasoning would bring us? It cannot be. If disobedience brings chastisement, then the very worst thing we can do is to obey; since obedience would then bring exemption from chastisement, it would also prove our illegitimacy and not our right to the promise as real sons of God.

H. H. L.

ISAIAH LX. 13.

"And I will make the place of my feet glorious."

Some time ago, having spoken upon the above text, we were asked to write the substance of our discourse as an article for the Signs of the Times, but owng to our pressing duties we were not able to do so at that time, and now feel we have very little of the sweetness left that we then felt, to simulate us in our endeavor. While we shall fail to present the same matter, yet we hope to present some views of the glorious travel of Immanuel, which being interpreted, means God with us.

The work of the eternal Son of God, and the glory of his kingdom, has been testified to by the writers of the Old Testament, and was set forth in types and shadows in the legal covenant.

Moses in blessing the children of Israel, gave glory unto the Son of God, for he saith, "Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words." It was in David's heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and for the footstool of our God, and we find in several of the Psalms reference to the place where the ark rested, as the footstool of God. It was there at set times that the people were gathered, and their sacrifices were offered and the atonement made, and there they learned God was Judge himself. It was there judgment began. Within the temple the woodwork was from the finest trees of Lebanon. These had grown on the mountain of Lebanon for generations, but when converted into timber for the temple their life was gone, and they, like all types and shadows, were doomed, sooner or later, to perish and vanish away, but Isaiah in prophesying of the true temple of God that shall never perish, and true to type, the glory of Lebanon shall come unto it, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary. The trees of Lebanon were of God's planting, man had no hand in placing them there, they dated beyond the memory of living man, and towered above the high places of the earth, and were ever fresh and green. One meaning of the name Lebanon is "incense," and what is more wonderful than trees that have weathered the wind and storms of centuries, towering majestically towards heaven with the roots deeply entwined in the earth and rocks beneath them? Israel was to grow as the lily, and strike forth his roots as Lebanon, and with Lebanon's fresh mountain air filled with fragrance of the budding vine and rich odors from trees and shrubs it wonderfully agrees with the words of Solomon: "The smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon." The glory of Lebanon was to be given unto her, and as the days of a tree so are the days of my people, saith the Lord. The trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, glorify him in the church of our God, the temple of his holiness, their everlasting testimony to the life of God in their souls and the motions of supplication and praise under the moving influences of the Holy Spirit, rise as sweet incense to perfume the place of God's sanctuary. This sanctuary to which we refer is the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man, and here it is well for us to consider the person of Christ, who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who had builded the house hath more honor than the house, and he that buildeth all things is God. Jesus of Nazareth was Lord of all, and was before David, while he was David's son, David in spirit said, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." In the fullness of time the eternal Son of God came, took upon him a body, became the Son of man, made an atonement for the sins of his

people, died the Just for the unjust, was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification. It is this blessed person who declared, "I will make the place of my feet glorious." Malachi declares, "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple. * * * But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth?" His coming meant sweeping away of the types and shadows, the fulfillment of the law and the bringing in of an everlasting righteousness. As the Sun of righteousness his brightness was to eclipse the glory of Moses and the prophets, and, contrary to our natural sun, he, the Sun of Righteousness, would not withdraw his light. He came as a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, he trod the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with him. He gave his back to the smiter and his face to them that plucked off the beard. He prayed his Father and declared that he was glorified in his church, prayed: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world [Jew and Gentile] may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." John tells us, "We beheld his glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." "This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool." None knew him but those to whom he was revealed by the Spirit of God. That which the apostles testified and wrote of him, was all by revelation. It was a revelation of Jesus Christ and his glory, which glory was to fill the temple, and they testify unto us that the church of God is his husbandry, his building. To-day this truth must be revealed to us, it is not a matter of speculation, but of revelation. The Spirit of truth, which proceeds from the Father, testifies of Jesus, and that same Spirit which also convinceth of sin, stops men, women and children in their mad career as he did Saul of Tarsus. It is the Spirit that makes one, even though he be a Pharisee by nature, to pray the publican's prayer, and before ever we aspire to the name of christian we do well to examine ourselves by the Word of God, and not by the standard of morals that other men have set, even though they be called good by the world. Are we convinced of sin? Hath sin become unto us exceeding sinful? Do we still cling to the law of Moses, or have we learned that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified in God's sight? Thousands cling to the law, but if ever the Lord lays judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet, they will, like the king of old, find that they are weighed in the balances and found wanting. Wanting of him who is the Alpha and Omega of true religion, Jesus Christ. Not long ago, one who called himself a minister, invited a child of God to hear him preach; after his

talk he asked how she liked his sermon. She replied, "You built quite a fine house, but you left out the foundation." How many are leaving out this blessed and only foundation to-day? They are innumerable, yet every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up, but those that he planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.

To return, it is a wonderful mercy if we can say that the law has brought us to the footstool of the Judge of all. We believe that all flesh will be brought before him, either now or hereafter. Looking back, some of us remember the distress of soul we were suffering when awakened by Sinai's awful sound, when the commandment came with conviction from the Almighty. "We felt the arrow of distress, and found we had no hiding-place." It was Sanai's awful sound that made the earth to tremble and made sin exceeding sinful. The way many act, even those who talk of sin, show by their fruits that sin to them is not exceeding sinful, for they roll sin under their tongues as a sweet morsel. Dear brethren and friends, if we cannot do that the reason is plain, we have learned the bitterness of sin, and have seen Jesus die. The world cannot come in here, the Egyptians all went out when Joseph made himself known to his brethren. We can never weep for the afflictions of Joseph if we do not learn by his Spirit that we have sold and slain him. This is the place of his feet, at his cross, and they shall look on him whom they have pierced and mourn for him. The wounds of Jesus are very tender to the living in Zion, and we are certain of this: we cannot have sweet fellowship with Mary in washing her Savior's feet with her tears, if we think lightly of sin. Dear Joseph Hart sings:

"Behold that pale, that languid face,
That drooping head, those cold, dead eyes!
Behold in sorrow and disgrace,
Our conquering Hero hangs and dies!
Ye that assume his sacred name,
Now tell me, what can all this mean?
What was it bruised God's harmless Lamb?
What was it pierced his soul, but sin?
Blush, christian, blush, let shame abound;
If sin affects thee not with woe;
Whatever spirit be in thee found,
The Spirit of Christ thou dost not know."

All under the condemnation of sin are bound as in prison, and blind to any way of salvation for them, and it is the Spirit that reveals to them Jesus journeying that way. Mary washed his feet, because she had seen her own vileness, and by that could realize in her measure what his sufferings were and the rough road his feet had traveled to come to where she was. What an awful place for the feet of God's darling Son, yet he traveled in the greatness of his strength glorious in his apparel, "clothed in a body like our own." Think of it, he was marred more than any man, it was there he had to come, the almighty God, in the likeness of sinful flesh. This is where the greatness of redeeming love comes in, and it is here the Father by his eternal Spirit must bring us, the promised seed (just as Abraham brought Isaac up the mount to the place of sacrifice that God showed unto him), before ever we see the cruelty of sin, and the depth of the sufferings of Christ. It is there, and there only, we learn

rightly, that it is through Jesus we have access by faith into the grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Although the halt, the maimed, the lame, the blind and the Gentile outcast, had no way of access to the altar in the temple of old, yet these are the very ones Jesus came to seek and to save. They are enabled by his Spirit to come boldly unto a throne of grace, and through the flesh of our glorious High Priest have entrance into the Holy of holies, which is heaven itself. There is not a place where his people go but he is with them, and the place of his feet is glorious. His presence, a fourth like unto the Son of God, was that which turned the furnace into a glorious place. We find Peter on the sea, sinking, but Jesus walked on the sea, and it was Jesus' hand alone that enabled Peter to walk with him there. He stands in the covenant of grace as our Surety, our Prophet, our Priest and our King. As our Priest, by one offering, even of himself, he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, forever doing away with Jewish offerings, and now there remains no more sacrifice for sin, so this man, because he continueth for ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. As a Prophet, his testimony swallows up all the testimony of the legal covenant, as Aaron's rod swallowed up the rods of Pharaoh's servants, and so wonderful is he that his word is forever settled in the heavens. As a King, he is firmly seated on the right hand of God, and shall reign till all his enemies be made his footstool. Now it is his presence in his people that makes the place of his feet (the church) glorious. Paul says, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Again, he saith, "Christ in us the hope of glory." All his elect are glorified by his presence in them. In the ordinances which he hath commanded them to observe, when they come telling their hopes and fears, what do the brethren look for? They desire to see if Jesus, the Shepherd of Israel, has brought his lambs to the fold. If he has, then the place of his feet will be glorious, the testimony will be of Jesus and his love. Jacob of old and Jacob to-day will both say, The Lord found me in a waste howling wilderness, and they will both bless the Lord because he journeyed that way. His sheep cannot be deceived by the crooked tracks of man, they know not the voice of a stranger, neither is there any track like His track, it is marked with blood, not like that of Abel's, which cried from the ground for vengeance, but his blood speaketh peace with God to all those for whom he died. Are his children thinking of baptism? Why are they troubled about that? Is it not a despised ordinance? Has not the devil introduced a more accommodating substitute? It is because he has walked that way, and many times his saints have felt that place, for it was where his feet went, glorious. In his church there are those who by nature are like wolves, bears, lions or leopards, yet his presence walking their way makes them to be easily managed, so that a little child shall lead them. Yes, it is his presence that makes brethren tender-hearted, forgiving one

another, as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven them. As he trod the wine-press alone, so it is when we are alone that he comes, and what a blessed place that is. If we never go through the deep waters how can we possibly know of his glorious feet coming that way? Mountains are wonderful to behold, but the feet of man may stumble on the dark mountains, but not so with Jesus, for it is written, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings." Doctrine is good, but how beautiful to see the feet of the Lord there and to feel that he trod that way for us. No wonder at times one can sing,

"If on my face, for thy dear name,
Shame and reproaches be;
All hail reproach, and welcome shame,
If thou'lt remember me."

Every time he appears prisons will palaces prove, and poor perishing sinners are lifted up and set among princes. In the den of lions, he stops their mouths, and such a place is glorious.

In conclusion, the church, because of what the Lord Jesus has done, sends forth a sweeter fragrance than Lebanon ever did, in the humility, meekness, gentleness, forbearance, brotherly love, faith, hope and charity, which proclaims, even in this dark day, that Jesus has made the place of his feet glorious.

G. R.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder George Ruston, January 23rd, 1931, at the home of Miss Mabel Stoakley, Toronto, Ontario, Mr. Edwin Henry Genge, of Denver, Colorado, U. S. A., and Miss Nancy Kennedy, of Duart, Ontario.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MRS. MARY ELIZABETH WRIGHT, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life April 16th, 1930, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. George Everett, Hollywood, California. She was born in Fairfax County, Virginia, August 16th, 1847, the daughter of William Thomas and Mariana Summers. Her mother, sister Mariana Summers, was long a member of the Bethlehem Old School Baptist Church and her memory is still revered and loved by all who were blessed to know her. Sister Wright was twice married. Her first husband was Trueman S. Jones, whom she married February 4th, 1867. Of this union there was one child, Estelle, who died a few years ago, before her mother. The shock of this daughter's death and the sadness due thereto were a severe trial to sister Wright from which she never fully recovered. A son, Harry, contracted pneumonia at this sister's funeral, and died. Sister Wright married Jacob L. Wright in 1870. Of this marriage there are two children living: Mrs. George Everett, at whose home sister Wright passed away, and Leslie Wright, of San Jose, California. She is survived also by a sister, Mrs. Wilbur F. Clark, of Merced, California, and by a brother, W. W. Summers, of Chicago, Illinois. Another sister, Mrs. Belle J. Holden, of Herndon, Virginia, was living at the time of sister Wright's death, but died a month and one-half afterward. Sister Wright was buried at Santa Cruz, California, where she resided many years, and where her husband, Jacob L. Wright, had been City Clerk for a long period. She had no grandchildren, although until a few years ago she had four married children. She was baptized by Elder J. N. Badger into the Bethlehem Old School Baptist Church, Prince William County, Virginia, November 3rd, 1901. Her last visit to the church of her eastern membership was in October, 1911, when the Virginia Corresponding Meeting met with the Bethlehem Church. Those who attended that meeting and who were entertained over night at the home of the late Joseph Johnson and family, near the meetinghouse, will never forget sister Wright's conversation on that occasion and the wonderful liberty afforded her at that time to relate her christian experience and the wonderful dealings of the Lord with her. She was blessed with an alert and fruitful mind in the things of God and had the gift to put in expressive language the exercises of her mind and heart in the things of the truth of God. In 1912 she was dismissed by letter from the Bethlehem Church to unite with the church in Los Angeles, California. She was a cousin of sister Mary Murphy, whose obituary appeared in the February SIGNS. The readers of the SIGNS will doubtless remember reading sister Wright's able letters in past issues of the paper. She had a facile pen and was a ready writer on spiritual matters. Her letters were always comforting and edifying, and proved

that she had been taught of Jesus to know the doctrine of God. To her Jesus was all. All to him she owed, and she never seemed to tire of glorifying his great name which had saved her from sin and death. For such a life and godly character we praise and thank the Lord. May we, like her, endure to the end true to the faith which the Lord has revealed in us.

ALSO,

JOSHUA M. HUTCHISON, a friend of the truth of the Lord Jesus Christ, died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Lawrence Michael, Lyon Park, Clarendon, Virginia, January 29th, 1931. He was born September 23rd, 1842. He had been ill about a week. At the beginning of the Civil War he enlisted in the Eighth Virginia Regiment of the Army of the Confedracy, was afterward transferred to Mosby's command. He was wounded at the battle of Balls Bluff, and at the time of his death was a member of Camp Marr, of Fairfax, Virginia. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Martha Mankin Hutchison, and by three daughters and three sons: Mrs. B. G. Benton and Mrs. Frank Hammond, both of Herndon, Virginia, and Mrs. Michael, at whose home he passed away; Paul D. Hutchison, of Charlotte, N. C., George Hutchison, of Clarendon, Virginia, and Silas Hutchison, of Herndon, Virginia. Funeral services were held at his daughter's home in Clarendon, interment in the cemetery at Herndon, Virginia. Previous to his death Mr. Hutchison had made all arrangements for his funeral and gave explicit directions for carrying them out. He selected two hymns to be used at the services: How Firm a Foundation and Jesus Lover of My Soul. He requested the reading of the fourteenth chapter of the gospel of John. Also, he had written out in his own hand a farewell message for his sorrowing family and friends and handed it to me in May, 1930, requesting me to have it read at his funeral. This was done. It reads as follows: "Sometimes God's judgments seem severe. Sometimes his decrees crush our hearts and leave them bleeding when our loved ones are taken away from us, and we ask why these things are so. The answer is, God's ways are past finding out. The Bible says weeping may endure for a season, but joy cometh in the morning. Sometimes we feel like the seasons of darkness and gloom will never end and the brightness of the morning will never come. But when we truly believe in our hearts and souls that he who rules our lives is One that doeth all things well and that he will do the things that are best for us in his own good time and in his own way, we can look forward with gladness to that joy which cometh in the morning, for out of the greatest sorrow and gloom God is able to bring trust and abiding happiness."

Mr. Hutchison shows in the above words what he believed. Any further words of mine are superfluous. He never united with the Old Baptist Church, but that is where his heart was, and he, too, was always at the meeting until of late years, when deafness prevented his hearing the preaching. We have a blessed assurance that he has entered into that rest that remains for the people of God. May the Spirit of the Lord comfort the sorrowing widow and children and make them all resigned to his holy will.

ALSO,

MRS. MARY JANE WRENN, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life January 19th, 1931, at the Primitive Baptist Home, Salisbury, Md., where she had been a resident since April 18th, 1930. She was the daughter of David B. and Cecilia James, also the widow of C. A. Wrenn, of near Chantilly, Fairfax County, Virginia. Sister Wrenn's age was 71 years, 6 months and 6 days. For over nine years she had not been able to walk a single step, owing to her being so terribly crippled with rheumatism of the joints of her body. At times she suffered excruciating pain. Her husband had been the very soul of devotion to her and had waited on her like a baby up to the time of his death a few years ago. He was attacked as he was walking along the road, by a vicious man and killed. No words of mine could possibly describe what sister Wrenn, in her helpless condition, went through at that time. Following his death, she stayed at the old home with attendants to wait on her, until she was removed to the home of her niece, Mrs. Ruby Sloper, near Vienna, Va. In December, 1929, she begged to be brought back to her old home, which was done. Here she was waited on by Mrs. Sloper's niece, of whom she was very fond, until March 19th, 1930, when the home burned down. One by one every earthly prop on which she depended was taken from her. At the time of the fire, she was taken to the home of a kind neighbor, Mr. Oden Hutchison, himself and wife giving her every care and comfort possible. From this home, Mrs. Lefferts and myself took her, at her own request, to the Primitive Baptist Home, Salisbury, Maryland, where she remained until she passed away. At the Home, she found rest from earthly care and anxiety, but not from physical and mental pain and suffering. All that kind hands and loving hearts could do, all that the skill of a physician and nurse could do, was done; but her end drew near, and at last permanent relief came at the Hands of him who heals all his people's diseases and who gives his beloved eternal rest and peace. She was baptized by the writer, assisted by one of our Deacons, into the membership of the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, on the second Sunday in September, 1929. Not being able to walk, or even to stand on her feet, she was carried into and out of the water sitting in a chair. She often afterwards spoke to me of this baptism and of what a heavenly day it had been for her, a day she never once regretted, she said. She leaves one brother, Mr. Charles James, of Washington, D. C., and one sister, Mrs. George

McVeigh, of Charlottesville, Va. For years her hope had been in Jesus Christ and she had long been a lover of the church and a firm believer in the doctrine set forth by the Old School Baptists, but owing to her crippled condition she had given up all thought of being baptized. The day she came to the church she had no thought of being baptized, but it was our communion season and something gripped her soul and made her feel she could not leave the meetinghouse without expressing to the church her desire for baptism. The church had long felt satisfied she was a subject of grace and unanimously received her when they saw that her mind was fixed steadfastly on the ordinance.

The funeral was held in the meetinghouse at Frying Pan, the writer using the words, "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord."—James v. 11. Interment by the side of her husband in the family burying-ground at Mt. Rocky, near the ruins of the old home she loved so well. We loved her, and the proof that we did is that we do rejoice that she has gone to her Father.

ALSO,

WILLIAM A. ADAMS, our brother in Christ, died at his home, Covington, Georgia, after an illness of several weeks. He was the fifth child of Susan Frances Hurst and Elder William Adams, and was one in a family of sixteen children. He was born in Newton County, Georgia, August 6th, 1856. There are three sisters and seven brothers surviving him: Mrs. Betty Lunsford and Mrs. William Davis, of Mansfield, Georgia, and Mrs. H. H. Lefferts, of Leesburg, Virginia; Elder James M. Adams, of Monroe, Georgia, John H. Adams, Social Circle, Georgia, D. J., G. C. and S. H., all of Covington, Georgia, and L. D. and H. B., of Decatur, Georgia. He was married December 16th, 1888, to Miss Elizabeth Almond, daughter of James Almond and Maggie Davis. Of this marriage there were born six children, two daughters and four sons, all living, as follows: Mrs. Dewey Hicks, of Covington, Georgia, Miss Mildred Adams, of Washington, D. C., Alva D. Adams, Washington, D. C., Otis H. and Iverson D. Adams, of Atlanta, Georgia, and Jesse R. Adams, of Dallas, Texas. In his early manhood he united with the Harris Springs Primitive Baptist Church, being baptized by his father, Elder William Adams, who was then pastor of the church. He faithfully attended all the meetings of the church, absenting himself only when ill or away from home. The county paper gave the following tribute to him: "He had a remarkable intellect and was one of the State's most profound thinkers. He was the most learned man in mathematics and the sciences that the county has ever produced. He was always happy in solving the most abstruse problems. It was cause and effect with him in all of God's universe. In a sense he was schoolmaster to the people of Newton County. He was full of humility, frankness and faith."

Funeral services were conducted by Elder R. L. Cook, his pastor. Interment in the family burying-ground, near Dixie, Georgia. Brother Adams was a faithful friend and reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years, and he ardently believed the doctrine set forth in its pages. Many who read these lines will remember having met him when visiting the meeting and associations in the North. He had the spirit of a little child, the mind of a sage and the character of a true follower of Jesus Christ. May the church of which he was a member continue loyal to the faith even as he did, may his children long cherish his memory in their hearts and seek to emulate his fine example, and may all of us, both in the family and in the church, realize with resignation that God has taken but his own.

ALSO,

MRS. MOLLIE WALTZ, our sister in Christ, died suddenly of valvular heart trouble at her home, near Needmore, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, January 23rd, 1931. She was born April 7th, 1870, thus making her stay on earth 60 years, 9 months and 16 days. She was the daughter of Samson and Rebecca Mellott, and leaves behind her three sisters and four brothers: sister Elizabeth Mellott, of Pleasant Ridge, Fulton County, Pa., sister Louise Godfrey, of Niagara Falls, N. Y., Mrs. Sadie Turner, of Vienna, Va., Ephraim Mellott, of Carversville, Bucks Co., Pa., Andrew, living in Ohio, Harvey, in Canada, Gilbert, in Fulton County, Pennsylvania. About thirty-four or thirty-five years ago she was married to Wilson Waltz, who is left to survive her. Of this marriage there are three daughters and two sons living: Mrs. Etta Clark, Mrs. Macie Gordon, Mrs. Bessie Keefer, Earl and Gale Waltz, all living in homes of their own not far from the old home place in Fulton County. Also five grandchildren survive. Over forty years ago she was baptized by Elder E. V. White into the Sideling Hill Baptist Church. All her life in the church her walk has been irreproachable, an example to the rest of us. She was meek and quiet in spirit, never given to say a harsh word against any one; a faithful wife, a devoted, unselfish and loving mother; a good neighbor and a kind friend to everybody. She was always at her place at the meetings of the church unless hindered by sickness or other providential incidents. Loved the place where God's honor dwells, cared nothing for the pleasures of the world. Others of the family might come and go at their pleasure, but mother was always at home, except on her meeting days. Both in the home and in the church sister Mollie will be greatly missed.

Her funeral was held at Antioch, and burial was in the family plot there. May the Lord comfort the sorrowing ones.

H. H. L.

DAVID H. JENKINS, aged 71 years, of Conowingo, Maryland, died March 27th, 1930, at the home of his son, George H. Jenkins, Elkton, Md. He leaves his wife and the following children: Mrs. Orel Crumley, San Francisco, California; Geoger H. and Ralph, Elkton; Rolla, Downingtown; Clare, Baltimore; Royse W. and Ethel, Conowingo.

Funeral services were held at the home of George H. Jenkins, Elkton, Sunday, at 12:30 o'clock, with further services at Rock Springs meetinghouse at 2 o'clock.

Our friend, Mr. Jenkins, was a member of the well-known family of that name of Fulton township. Of a family of thirteen children but three remain upon the shores of time: our dear sister in Christ, Mrs. Sue R. Dance, Miss Lillie Jenkins and our friend, Mrs. Maggie Day. Mr. Jenkins had been a regular attendant at Rock Springs Church for several years, which was evidence to us that he loved the truth, and if this is so, he was free from the law of sin and death. "Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."

His funeral was said to be one of the largest ever held in that community, about five hundred being present, thus showing the high esteem in which he was held in that section. He had been a great sufferer for more than a year. Cancer of the stomach was that which the Lord used in bringing to decay all that was mortal of our friend David. He is sadly missed in his family, especially by his heart-broken widow, also by the Rock Springs Church, and the community as well. The writer tried to speak to the comfort of the sorrowing ones, using as a basis for his remarks the words found in Proverbs iii. 4: "So shalt thou find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man." I feel to be deeply associated with those who mourn.

Written by request.

ALSO,

WILLIAM J. WILSON, aged 72 years, died at his home, near Forest Hill, Maryland, Sunday, September 7th, after an illness of a few weeks. Mr. Wilson was a widower, and was a son of Mr. and Mrs. Humphrey Wilson, whose ancestors had settled in that community one hundred and fifty years ago. His entire life had been engaged in farming in the neighborhood where he died. Mr. Wilson, while a gentleman of retiring disposition, was of kindly and courteous nature, took a deep interest in his family, and his community, and was regarded as one of the county's most highly respected citizens. Engaged in farming nearly all his life, he retired a few years ago to his comfortable home in Forest Hill. He is the third of the family to die within the last six months, his brother, Mr. Abel D. Wilson, and his sister, Mrs. Charles W. Whitaker, having predeceased him in that period. He is survived by one son, Mr. Edgar Wilson, of Forest Hill, and one brother, Mr. J. P. Wilson, of Bel Air.

His funeral took place on Tuesday with services at his home, conducted by Elders D. L. Topping and Joshua Rowe, of Baltimore, Md., with interment at the Old Brick Meetinghouse, near Jarrettsville.

Our dear brother was baptized into the fellowship of the Harford Church many years ago by Elder J. T. Rowe, and lived a faithful, loving brother until death took him from the church, which feels its loss most deeply. Brother Wilson was one who always could be depended upon. A more loveable man I have never met. He was our friend as well as a brother in the church, and we never expect his place to be filled in our hearts again in this life, but we are hopeful of meeting him again where sorrow is unknown. It is a lasting regret with me that I was unable to see him during his last illness, as was his request. I did not know of his sickness until the day before I was leaving to attend the Maine Association, and upon my return a message was awaiting for me to attend his funeral. Only those who have suffered such shocks can appreciate my sadness of heart upon hearing that brother Will is no more. He was ordained Deacon many years ago, into which office he purchased to himself a good degree, and great boldness in Christ, and we feel to thank God for such gifts to the church. The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Just how sadly the church misses him is beyond us to express, yet since we are assured by his manner of life in and out of the church, that which he had so longed for is now a blessed realization, and we desire to say, Lord, thy will be done. His funeral was largely attended, as he was widely known and highly esteemed in the community. May the Lord comfort those who mourn.

Written by request. D. L. TOPPING.

MAY E. CARMICHAEL was born in Lobo Township March 1st, 1868, and died at St. Joseph's Hospital, London, Ontario, December 24th, 1930. She was the youngest daughter of the late Duncan and Catherine Carmichael, of Lobo, both of whom were members of the Covenanted Baptist Church at Poplar Hill, Ontario. May was a resident of London for about sixteen years, and was in failing health for several months; she went to the hospital October 31st. She leaves to mourn their loss two brothers, Archie A., of Strathroy, Ontario, and Eddie D., of Evart, Michigan, also one sister, Elizabeth Moore, of Hersey, Michigan, and twelve nephews and nieces. She was not a member of the church, but she was a believer in Jesus Christ. The writer was favored to have a number of visits with her, when she felt free to talk of her hopes and fears. She is much missed from our assembly, but we feel she has entered into rest. The writer conducted the funeral services at the Logan undertaking parlor, in London, and the interment was at the Ilderton Cemetery. May God reconcile her relatives and friends to his will.

G. R.

Miss C. LILLY BUCK died at Hartford, Conn., October 6th, 1930. She was born in Hartford, Conn., and, as far as I know, always made that city her home. She attended the meetings of the Woburn Church, in Woburn, Mass., seldom missing an appointment. She also attended, now and then, the Ebenezer Church of New York City. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of the Old School Baptists. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was of great comfort to her. She had decided to unite with the Woburn Church this coming spring. We miss her very much in our meetings and deeply regret her passing before uniting with us there, knowing it would have been of great comfort to her and joy to us. She visited our home last August, in company with her brother and wife, Mr. and Mrs. Percy G. Buck, and by her actractive manner made many friends, all of whom were saddened by the news of her passing away. Her illness was severe and of short duration. She is survived by one brother and two sisters: Mr. Percy G. Buck, Miss Edith Buck and Mrs. Henry McLean, all of Hartford, Conn.

The writer was called for the funeral service, which was held in her home, where many friends had gathered to pay their last tribute of respect. The floral offerings were many and beautiful, in keeping with the beautiful character which Miss Buck possessed. The interment was in Hartford's beautiful cemetery. Nothing short of the grace of God can reconcile us to such a loss.

H. C. KER.

JAMES LUTHER POWELL was born in Rusk County, Texas, May 4th, 1858, and died November 9th, 1930, aged 72 years, 6 months and 5 days. He was left an orphan at the age of two years and was raised by his aunt. He was married to Missouri Ann Archer in Henderson County, Texas, March 10th, 1880. To that union fourteen children were born, eight boys and six girls, eight of whom are still living, four boys and four girls. Brother Powell was subdued by the grace of God and given a good hope in Christ as the all-sufficient Savior some years after he was married. He united with the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, Ellis County, Texas, and was baptized by Elder Solon Gipson. Brother Powell was given a zeal for the cause of Christ that is found in but few private members. This interest seemed rather to increase as he neared the end of his journey in this world. He was always mindful of his pastor and ready to bear the burdens of the church and minister to the needs of the poor. His faithful wife always shared with him in these kindly deeds, and they kept an open house to their brethren. Infirmities came with age and the last few years of his life were accompanied with considerable suffering, though he was confined to his bed only short seasons at a time, and was up and able to walk about in the house the day of his death. He died suddenly and without suffering when the end came. He walked into the kitchen and dropped into a chair and was dead before they could get him in his bed. He was a kind husband and father, a zealous, faithful member of his church, and will be greatly missed in the home, in the church and in the community. His faithful wife, eight children and a host of friends are left to mourn his absence.

The funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Elder W. N. Green, of Altus, Oklahoma, from brother Powell's late home, in Wichita Falls, Texas, in the presence of the family and a large concourse of friends. Interment was made in the Rosemont Cemetery. May it be the portion of his bereaved wife and children to find comfort in a firm trust in the God in whose service brother Powell so delighted here, and, we feel confident, will praise eternally.

Written by request.

J. R. HARDY.

ALBERTA A. SMITH, wife of James Smith, was born October 14th, 1896, and departed this life January 16th, 1931, making her stay on earth 34 years, 3 months and 2 days. She was the daughter of W. P. and N. J. Thornton. She was united in marriage to James Smith December 27th, 1914, and to this union were born five children, four boys and one girl: Dennis, Earl, Nile, Donald and Verna. Alberta was a devoted wife, a loving and tender mother, a good friend and neighbor, ever thoughtful of others, and with willing hands ministering to the needs of friends and loved ones. She was of a meek and quiet disposition, treating all with respect, and when friends and loved ones visited in her home her every endeavor was spent for their comfort. She loved the company and conversation of God's humble poor. She evidenced a sweet hope in Christ, and although through a felt sense of unworthiness she never united with the church, yet she had expressed to her mother a desire to do so and be buried with Christ in baptism, and had spoken of her hope and fears. Her walk manifested that she had been with him who is meek and lowly and had learned of him. The ground of her hope was Jesus' blood and righteousness. While she had been in failing health for some time, yet she had been seriously ill but a few days, and the end came as a great shock to her loved ones. The cause of her death was inward cancer and heart failure. All that loving hands could do for her was done, but our God was pleased to call her from the shores of time. Oh may we be given to bow in humble submission to him who doeth all things well. Weep not for her.

The funeral services were conducted at her home, in St. Albans, Kanawha County, West Virginia. Interment in Teays Hill Cemetery, St. Albans, West Virginia. The floral offering was lovely. A large concourse of friends and loved ones gathered to pay their last tribute of respect to one they loved. She leaves to mourn their loss, the heart-broken husband and children, father,

mother, four brothers: Aluin, Millard, Clyde and Roscoe Thornton; five sisters: Mrs. R. L. Meadows, Mrs. Lance Dolin, Mrs. Frank Hill, Alma and Agnes Thornton, with a host of near relatives and friends. Our God, who is rich in mercy, alone is able to heal our bleeding hearts and reconcile us to his holy will. Oh may his gracious presence soothe the sorrows of the sad and bereft husband and family.

Written by request by her uncle,

H. J. BIRD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. H. J. Hasbrouck, N. Y., $1; Mrs. T. L. Carey, Ontario, $1; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $2; Mrs. J. E. Chadwick, Texas, $1; H. M. Bowden, Minn., $1; Alfred E. Titus, N. J., $4; Elder J. C. Chester, Ky., $4; Elder G. E. Coulbourn, Va., $1; Mrs. Unetta Hamilton, Mo., $2; E. G. Morse, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Grace V. Crosier, Mo., $2.

NOTICE.

ANY one having a copy of Elder Wilson Thompson's Autobiography, that is in good condition, and is willing to dispose of the same, will please communicate with H. M. Bowden, 106 Lincoln Avenue, Fergus Falls, Minnesota, stating price wanted.

MEETINGS.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in March (29th). All are welcome. E. M. FORD.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects Elder Arnold H. Bellows to meet with them the fifth Sunday in March (29th), 1931. Services to be held at the home of brother J. E. Livingston, 64 East Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. Also at 2 p. m. on Satudray before. All welcome.

(MRS.) ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at the home of sister E. Brunow, 411 N. Ridgeway Avenue, and on the second, third and fourth Sundays at the home of brother W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. The fifth Sundays are by appointment. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastors, Elders Jones and Janes.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 99. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1931. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE PROMISED KINGDOM.

"HEARKEN, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?"—James ii. 5.

(*Concluded from last number.*)

One of the exceeding great and precious promises made to God's little children is the promise Jesus made just before he ascended to go to his Father, viz.: "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Where will Jesus, the King of his kingdom, be when he comes again and receives his people unto himself? He will be in his kingdom with the children of his kingdom, and that kingdom will God set up in the land which God promised to Abraham and Christ, his seed, for an everlasting possession. So it is written, "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."—Rev. xi. 15. The beloved John upon the isle of Patmos was given to see the redeemed as they shall be after the appearing of Christ, and he heard them singing, "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."—Rev. v. 9, 10. This is in perfect agreement with Matthew v. 5: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." If the meek shall inherit the earth, the "earth" mentioned in the above Scripture was that which God promised to them that love him; the land which God promised to Abraham and his seed (Christ) for an everlasting possession. The heirs of promise shall inherit the earth as joint-heirs with Christ of the same inheritance. The promise made to Abraham and his seed (Christ) was that he (Christ) should be the heir of the world. It is written of Christ that "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof." Peter said, "We, according to his [God's] promise, look

for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."—2 Peter iii. 13. God, speaking by the mouth of his prophet Isaiah, said, "Behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind."—Isaiah lxv. 17. It is written, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."—Matt. v. 8. When shall the pure in heart see God? When God shall dwell with them in the new heavens and the new earth. So it is written, "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."—Rev. xxi. 2, 3. This "holy city" must be the same "city" for which Abraham looked, "whose builder and maker is God." It is written of Abraham and all the patriarchs, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them [by faith] afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out [the land of the Chaldeans], they might have had opportunity to have returned: but now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly [not a country in the heavens, but a country supremely excellent]: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city."—Heb. xi. 13-16. So, when the Lord's children are ransomed from the power of the grave and redeemed from death at the second personal appearing of Christ, instead of their being taken to a land and a city somewhere above this earth in infinite space, they shall live with God and his Christ in the promised land which God promised unto Abraham and Christ and all them who shall inherit that land through Jesus Christ, and in the city which God hath prepared for them. I have not the remotest idea, nor is it any part of my hope, that I shall live after death and the resurrection in a world of disembodied spirits somewhere in the heavens above, but I do entertain the precious hope that through the all-abounding grace, mercy and love of God I shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the redeemed of the Lord in the kingdom of heaven and in the land God promised all them that love him; that I shall see the King in his beauty and be like him; that I shall see God, who will dwell with me and be my God, and who will wipe away all tears from my eyes in the new heaven and new earth which he will create when he has finally set up his kingdom in its full kingdom-power and glory, after that it hath broken in pieces and consumed all these (Gentile) kingdoms and has become a great mountain and fills the whole earth. Evidently poor, old, afflicted Job possessed such faith and entertained such hope, for he said, "I know

that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another."—Job xix. 25-27. Upon reading these words which fell from the lips of Job we cannot be mistaken as to what his faith and hope embraced as coming to him after the resurrection of the dead; he hoped and believed that Jesus, his Redeemer, would come to this earth, and that upon this earth he should see him with his own eyes; not only see Jesus, but that, in his flesh, he should also see God upon the same "earth" where Jesus will stand at the latter day. Oh how wonderful the thought and thrice wonderful the precious hope of the reality of the kingdom of God which he hath promised to them that love him! No wonder that the very fervent prayer of God's little children has been, and is yet, "Thy kingdom come." Thank God, his kingdom is coming even now, and its soul-cheering shafts of light are now, to the eye of faith, piercing the darkness of this hideous Gentile night, so that God's children who are given to see its light can say, The night is far spent, and the day is at hand. Since that God, in his mercy, unfettered my mind from the vain delusions and traditions of men and I ceased to spiritualize away the literal facts concerning the second personal appearing of Christ and kingdom of God, I have experienced a measure of joy when thinking upon these things that I could never feel before, and now, like poor old Job, I can joy in the thought, hope and expectation through grace that I myself shall see Jesus in the kingdom to come, and sit down with God's redeemed people in that kingdom, and that I shall receive the eternal life which is in Jesus when he shall appear and appear with him in the glory of God's kingdom, and that my eternal happy home is going to be in the promised land that God promised unto Abraham and Christ.

If prudence did not forbid it, I would like to go on and express my thoughts relative to the prophecies of the Scriptures now being fulfilled before our very eyes, and how that Christ, as I believe, has already begun fulfilling his promise to make all things new; and how that God, as I am given to see it, has already begun, in some of the phases of the work, to set up his promised kingdom, and how that, as he sets it up, it begins to break in pieces and consume the present Gentile kingdoms and the established order of this present evil world; how that his hand is now stretched out upon all the Gentile nations, and that while all the powers that be, of the Gentile world, are trying to turn back, that every move they make to avert what God hath decreed shall be, they only serve God's purpose to end the Gentile reign and set up and establish the kingdom he has promised to them that love him.

A few more thoughts and I will close this article. "Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him,

saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man: the field is the world: the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one: the enemy that sowed them is the devil: the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."—Matt. xiii. 36-43. When we come to study this parable and the explanation Jesus gave of it, we should keep in mind the fact that the promise made to Abraham and his seed, which is Christ, was that he (Christ) should be the heir of the world; and that the kingdom that shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High is to be "under the whole heaven." According to the parable and its proper interpretation as given by Jesus, both the wheat and the tares are in the same "field," which is the world; that both the elect and the nonelect are, according to Christ's explanation of the parable, now together, in the same world, which world is his; and he calls the world "his kingdom," in that he says, "And they shall gather out of the kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity." The tares of the parable represent the wicked, nonelect, which are to be separated from the righteous, and they are to be gathered out of the "field" where they grow together with the wheat until the time of harvest, which "field" is the world; and inasmuch as Jesus said "they shall be gathered out of his kingdom," it follows that in this world, this present, Gentile world, is where the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be when the "kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ, and he takes unto himself his great power and reigns for ever and ever." That this "kingdom of heaven," which is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field, is not the visible church of Christ here on earth, is very evident from the fact that the righteous and the wicked are not both in the church of Christ as the wheat and tares of the parable were both growing together in the same field. In view of the fact that the kingdom of God is to be set up on this earth, as I believe the Scriptures teach, the words of Solomon make the matter very plain. "The wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it."—Prov. ii. 22. This shall be done when the Son of man shall send his angels, in the end of this present, Gentile world, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity. This shall be necessary in preparing this earth and the land God promised to Abraham and his seed, for the habitation of God's children, and when such preparation is made Christ will have put down all rule and

all authority of the Gentiles; the Gentile kingdoms, all of them, shall be broken in pieces and consumed; the kingdom and dominion and greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be set up and given to the people of the saints of the Most High; "then shall the righteous shine forth in the kingdom of their Father." How comforting is the gospel or good news of the kingdom that Jesus brings to us in the language heading this article: "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" Faith answers, Yes. The Scriptures of eternal truth answer, Yes; and the poor and afflicted people of God who are given to see the signs of the coming of the Son of man as they now bulk large against the beclouded horizon of this present evil world rejoice in the happy thought that their redemption draweth nigh; that the promised kingdom is nigh at hand and that the new heaven and the new earth shall soon be revealed and there shall be no more curse, and the former things be passed away and they shall be at home to die no more. Oh wonderful, wonderful love! The love God hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God, "and because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father," and so unto our Father in heaven we pray still, "Thy kingdom come."

C. M. WEAVER.

JOHNSTON CITY, Illinois.

HOLLYWOOD, California, Feb. 16, 1931.

DEAR EDITORS:—We come now to chronicle the account of the last days of brother W. D. Ball, who stated to the unworthy writer that he had returned from Richmond, California, after an extended visit of over two years, thus demonstrating again the fact that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, for he said he meant to remain about two weeks. After his return he seemed thankful to be thrown in with those of like precious faith, and I must say that I did not feel worthy to come under his roof, and could not feel to deserve his hospitality. I was introduced to him by Elder G. O. Walker, of Oregon, and seemed to lament my want of foresight, for I did not feel the importance of inquiring into the records of the past, and, somewhat like my friend and brother who introduced them, we were given a measure of assurance that not he who commends himself is approved, but him the Lord commendeth, and I hope I can say in sincerity that his conversation was commended to my conscience, and he and sister Ball and brother and sister Miller had the marks of the Lord's peculiar people. On the twenty-eighth day of May, 1928, sister Ball was removed by death. Our days, like the days of the patriarch Job, are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and when the time comes to bear the wrench that sets us free, that God, who seeth under the whole heavens, controls all things and works all things after the counsel of his own will, calls us from the walks of men, and we conclude that things are well or-

dered, even though sometimes we doubt, and find no rest until Jesus breaks through the gloom, saying, "Be not faithless, but believing." "What, if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid." What God hath promised he is able to perform, and I doubt not for a moment that brother Ball had heard and learned and been assured of these things, and had received grace to hold them fast, knowing from whom, or by whom, he had been taught. Sister Miller wrote me in January, I think, that brother Ball was to return soon to Riverside, and I, like the other friends, hoped to meet him, and on the third Sunday, while we were together at sister Miller's, where we had met, thinking mostly of an humble social visit, the Lord seemed to manifest himself as a God at hand and turned our little meeting for our spiritual good and manifested the riches of his goodness and mercy, making our faith strong in the once meek and lowly but now highly exalted Redeemer, and stooping, as it were, to make our hope abound. We were exercised, we trust not for the worse, but for the better, rejoicing with a measure of joy in the fact that hope is not only a good hope given by the grace of God, but that we live by hope, and that it is as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and will firmly abide and all the storms of time outride. Brother Ball stepped in while we were talking and took his place in our little assembly, and the friends arranged to keep up the fourth Sunday meeting. It is evident that actions speak louder than words, for brother Ball was enabled to meet with us, and it proved to be the last time given him to listen to the singing and engage in quiet though interesting conversation on spiritual things. It is plainly evident, and needs no argument to prove, that brother Ball was kept from going with a multitude to do iniquity, and felt thankful that he was kept from places where Satan wages his most successful wars. One thing more may be said, not to exclude the many marks of grace shown in him, which marks he acknowledged he could not show, and that one thing you may know, he did not believe divine grace needed human works to embellish or perfect; to him salvation was of the Lord, and not in part or degree by works of the creature. So he received no comfort from those who by the creeping-in process seem bent on sowing mixed seeds in the gospel field. He was kept from seeking the praise or flattery of men by the covenant-keeping God, who declares, I will put my trust in their hearts, and cause them to approach unto me, who gave him the assurance of faith and enabled him to rest in the One he had learned to trust, feeling that "He is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

I will not write much more, as I fear my letter is already too lengthy. We, if not deceived, desire grace to enable us to rest in the assurance that nothing is too hard for God, so if it be his will he will enable brother Ball's children and friends to hold his memory sacred, and enable them to emulate his life, and

honor Jesus, and for Jesus' sake he will receive them in glory at his right hand, where there are pleasures for evermore, where the chosen, called, predestinated, justified and glorified find an abundant entrance into everlasting joy.

Your brother in the common faith,

T. D. WALKER.

(See obituary of W. D. Ball in this number.)

FORDYCE, Ark., Jan. 11, 1931.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I feel a desire to write you, and, if possible, encourage you in your editorial work on the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I want you to know, dear brother, that I fully indorse your position as expressed in this "New Year's Greeting." I have been a reader of the SIGNS for about thirty-three years and have never missed a copy since subscribing. I have been a close observer of its principles and doctrine and all the editors connected with it from that time until this last issue, and I am glad and I hope thankful to our heavenly Father that he has seen fit in his infinite wisdom to continue such men at the helm as editors who do not fail or refuse to declare the whole counsel of God. I think so much of this article of yours, the humble manner in which you present your feelings, yet the boldness in which you affirm that the SIGNS shall continue setting forth the doctrine as founded upon the absolute predestination of God in all things, that I am sending this copy to my son at De Sota, Missouri. He cannot find any Primitive Baptists in that city, but he is a lover of these grand old truths of God's rich mercy and grace to poor helpless sinners and would like to meet some of these people, but as there are none around there, I feel that your good editorial and the letter of Elder Hardy's will be of great cheer and encouragement to him. Ever since I have had a hope, and especially since I have been trying to preach, it has been my uppermost thought and chief delight to preach a God over all worlds and beings, and that he is an absolute God in every respect; that he saw from the beginning to the very end of all things, and that they (all things) must come to pass just as he saw them, and that we should not refrain or refuse to reprove and rebuke with all long-suffering and doctrine, and this long-suffering and doctrine covers everything, and in refusing to declare them just to keep from hurting some one's feelings we are found lacking in our duty as servants of God and are seeking to please men, which I must confess, or rather declare, that for some reason I cannot do. We must expose spiritual wickedness, we must fight Armenianism and give the alarm when the enemies are approaching, and, God being my helper, brother Lefferts, I am going to do it; ever stand there and give the alarm, reprove them, yes, wrestle with and show their cunning craftiness and their works through legislative movements and religious organizations wherewith they lie in wait to deceive. Yes, expose them and sound the alarm as good and faithful soldiers of the cross.

Yes, dear brother, I approve of your course, and hope God will continue to

put it into your mind to so keep on, and if need be he will, for what his soul desireth that he doeth.

Well, this is all for this time. I just felt that if it could be the Lord's will I would love to be a contributor to your encouragement, which I feel you deserve and need to further promote your grand and good work. May God's rich grace and unerring Spirit be your guide through the new year.

Yours in bonds,

V. R. HARRIS.

BENTON, Ky., Feb. 8, 1931

DEAR EDITORS:—This second Sunday is the Sunday in the month that we, a few of God's humble poor, as we hope, have been meeting together at the Old Soldier Cheek Church, in Marshall County, Kentucky. To-day the God of hosts has seen fit to so arrange it in his divine plan as to cause us to be without our pastor, Elder J. C. Chester. He has been serving the church for a number of years; since he has been enabled to speak in the name of our Lord he has been going in and out before us. This winter, during the Christmas holidays, he was taken sick with bladder trouble, had an operation performed and is still in a very weakened condition, and is still in the hospital at Mayfield, Kentucky. We desire the prayers of God's children everywhere in this his affliction and ours. Knowing that God is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, we desire to be reconciled to his most holy will, and be enabled by his grace to say, God's will be done, not ours. Brother Chester has so many acquaintances and friends scattered abroad throughout this land of ours who perhaps do not know of his affliction, that I felt they would learn of it through the columns of the SIGNS, and some would have a mind possibly to write to him and in that way be a great comfort to him. It has always been his way to speak comforting words to those in trouble and despair. Oftentimes when my hope seemed so little that I was ready of myself to cast it away, his letters would come to me and encourage me to fight on as the battle would not last long and the clouds that had hung so heavy over my head for years would some day burst with brightness and I would be made to rejoice in the Savior's love and in the knowledge that all these things cometh to us while sojourning here in time, for our good and God's glory, if we are his children. I hope all who read of his sickness and affliction will be impressed to send him a word or two, at least, to let him know his labor of love has indeed been remembered.

A sister in hope,

EFFIE BLOGG.

HARDING, W. Va., Feb. 11, 1931.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have a desire to tell you that I have enjoyed your editorials in the SIGNS more than I can express. They have been wonderful, deep and instructive. What seemed impossible to you was possible with God. When you felt your inability to perform your editorial duties the Lord became your strength, removed the barriers and gave you a deeper insight into his word and into

the things transpiring around us in fulfillment of his word as written by the prophets and apostles. You have discerned clearly the hand of the Lord in the temporal blessings which he has through providence provided for all people. As the apostle Paul says, he is the Savior of all men, especially those who believe. I believe God's people desire an expression from some of our ministering brethren on those things which we must pass through, as they transpire around us and which in some measure enter into our daily lives. In all of those things you have given God all the praise, honor and glory.

The writings of the associate editors have also been wonderful. For all those blessings we desire to thank God and take courage, praying that you and all the other ministers of our God may receive strength to stand firmly on the walls of Zion and cry aloud and spare not; warn, admonish, reprove, rebuke and comfort as the Spirit may direct, laboring in your several gifts for the perfecting of the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ, until we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, that we may no more be tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive. That as you see the day approaching you may exhort God's children to watch and be ready, for he will come again without sin unto salvation to raise our sleeping dust in the likeness of his own body to enter into the fullness of eternal bliss. May the Lord continue to strengthen and bless you in all your labors for Jesus' sake.

Yours in fellowship,

(MRS.) E. E. WORKMAN.

MATTOON, Ill., Jan. 22, 1931.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have intended writing you ever since I read your editorial in the January issue of the SIGNS, but my continued physical weakness prevents me from writing much at a time. I wanted to congratulate, in that the Lord enabled you to come out so clearly and interestingly on the subject of predestination. It was almost sixty years ago I wrote quite a long article on the subject and finally concluded to submit it to the founders of the SIGNS. The late Elder Gilbert Beebe accepted it for publication, and gave it notice editorially, and in all the years of my ministry I have contended and preached accordingly, and as you yourself and others are doing.

I am sorry I can write but a few lines at a time. I am still confined to my room, but feel I am a little stronger and that perhaps after a time I may be able to get out in the open once more. However, my days are in the Lord's hand, and when they are numbered the summons will be here for me. May his mercy and grace abound with and enable you to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and thus make your calling and election sure, is my earnest wish and prayer.

In the bonds of christian fellowship and love, your brother,

J. G. SAWIN.

West Frankfort, Ill., Dec. 21, 1930.

Dear Editors:—As this is the close of the year, and I have not lost a paper during the year, I want to thank you for your kindness in sending me the dear Signs of the Times. I wrote about this time last year and told you that my husband was sick and my health was so poorly that I could not pay for the paper, and after you wrote me a card, and said that I would still receive the paper I kept thinking we would get better, or it might be that God would see and call us out of our suffering, but he has blessed us and we are still here. Our city has a population of about twenty thousand, and I am the only Old Primitive Baptist I know of here. My husband is a Northern Baptist. I have been able to go to meeting but once during the past year. We have an Old Baptist Church about six miles north of us, and another about the same distance south of us. I used to attend at both places as long as my health would permit, but now all the church comfort I get is from the dear old paper. I have enjoyed them much, but I can read my old ones and get comfort from them, for I cannot expect you to keep sending the paper to me without my paying for it. I believe that as good a paper as the Signs is should be paid for, and I do not want to burden you and help bring about its downfall. My grandfather was a subscriber years ago. He has been dead sixty-three years. He was an Old Baptist preacher.

Again thanking you for your kindness, and if ever I get the money I surely will send some to help send it to "the poor of the flock," as well as to pay for those sent me during the past year.

I will close by wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

MAGGIE N. ANDERSON.

[The foregoing is a sample of the many letters we receive from those who are reading the Signs through the generosity of those who send donations to help us furnish the paper to "the poor of the flock," and we are herewith printing it so the doners may know how much comfort is derived through their kindress. Were it not for such help we could not send the paper to so many free of charge, and we do indeed sincerely thank them for their generosity and much needed assistance.—J. E. B. & CO.]

Poca, W. Va., Feb. 3, 1931.

Dear Brethren:—I want to thank all who read the Signs of the Times and have learned of the low state of health of my wife, also of my broken down condition in my old age, for the respect that has been shown me by the precious brethren and sisters of the Primitive faith. I want to thank them all as one body of true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. I will say that we are some better in health, and do hope to never be a burden to our dearly beloved brethren and sisters. We are old; this we cannot help. We are fast ripening for the grave; and this we cannot help. Our hope and future prospects for heaven and immortal glory are resting in Jesus and his atoning blood that cleanseth from all sin.

With love to all, I remain your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1931.

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RESTITUTION.

(ACTS III. 21.)

A SISTER whose address is Harding, West Virginia, wrote, asking as follows: "In the restitution of all things, what will be the 'all things' that are to be restored? I have never heard any views on this neither have I been enabled to grasp its full meaning."

We cannot tell why our ministers of late years have been silent on this subject of "restitution," unless it has been simply because their minds have not been exercised to speak and to write of it. In looking back over the writings of Old School Baptists years ago, one occasionally comes across references to this subject, which shows that our people of former generations accepted and believed the doctrine of "restitution." Nowadays, however, when this subject comes up, it seems to strike many as something they never heard of before. Thus, it may be good for us to be reminded of those things which we have let slip through not having been taught them. Restitution simply means restoration, the act of giving back what had at some former time been taken away. In this connection, it means restoring to the Jews what God had deprived them of. It means restoring the Jews to their own land and giving back to them the land taken from them. Not only, however, does restitution apply to giving back to the Jews their former land, but it means restoring the Jewish nation to covenant relationship with the Almighty through his Son Jesus Christ whom they rejected and crucified; but whom at his appearing again they will believe in as their Messiah and Redeemer. This can take place only when the Gentile church has been brought unto completion; and from the signs now among us, we believe this is about at hand. Religious organizations, that is the form of religion, may continue on for some time to come, but the true body of Christ, which is his church, seems to be about finished. Already, and for some years past, the world has been witnessing the steady movement of the Jews toward their own land. The World War of 1914 to 1918 gave this movement a great impetus, and since then it has been growing by leaps and bounds. "He shall send Jesus Christ, which

before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Just exactly as the word here says, God the Father will send to the Jews his Son Jesus Christ. This Jesus was before preached unto them in all the types and shadows of the Mosaic covenant. He was declared by all the prophets unto them. It is perfectly true that the Mosaic covenant was disobeyed by the Jewish nation, wherefore they were cast out; and since their being cast out, God through Christ by his grace has brought the Gentile church in. When this body of Christ is completed from among the Gentiles, then will be brought to light the kingdom of heaven among the restored Jewish remnant in the land of promise. The covenant made by God with Abraham was before the law four hundred and thirty years, and the law which was afterward cannot by any means disannul the promise which preceded the law. But the Jews, as well as the Gentiles, cannot come in by the works of the law; they cannot possibly come into the kingdom by flesh and blood: it must be by promise and wholly by God's grace. It will not and cannot be by their own might and power, but by the Spirit of the Lord. This is why the present world-movement of Zionism has about come to a standstill on account of England's refusal to execute vigorously the mandate over the land of Palestine assigned to England by the League of Nations. England is afraid to antagonize the Arabs which are opposed to the Jews coming back to Palestine. Thus, the movement of Jews in that direction has been slowed down, but it is with almost breathless interest that we look for the next development in world affairs which will speed it up again. Jesus Christ is at the present time in the heaven and has been in the heaven ever since his disciples with their own eyes beheld him ascend up out of their sight; he will appear again at the fullness of the times of restitution, will appear to the Jews, and when they see him next time they will not say, "Away with him, crucify him. We will not have him to rule over us." No, they will say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." They will gladly hail him as their King and Messiah. There is no spirituality in them as yet, and will not be until they are circumcised in heart, and that will not take place until they are back in the land, as Moses says in Deuteronomy xxx. 6. There is not a single one of the prophets but who declares this restoration of the Jews to their own land. As Acts iii. 21, says, "the mouth of all his holy prophets" has spoken it. Moses, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Amos, Jeremiah and Isaiah all say so. Had we space, we would quote them all. "Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel."—Hosea i. 11. "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will

gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms, any more at all."—Ezek. xxxvii. 21, 22. Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones refers entirely to this time of restitution, and not to the Gentile church at all, though it is often made to apply that way. You will note in this vision of the valley of dry bones, that the bones came together while there was still no life in them; flesh and sinews came upon the bones and yet there was no life there. What an amazing picture is this of the coming together of Israel which we are witnessing to-day! In all this world-union of Jews everywhere for the purpose of returning to their own beloved land, there is no spiritual life from God yet. Nevertheless, the bones are coming together and the flesh and sinews are coming upon the bones. Never since the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans under Titus in 70 A. D. has there been such a world movement of Israel toward their own land as in this present time. We are to-day seeing the verification of Ezekiel's vision, and the breath of spiritual life will be breathed into this restored remnant some time following their restoration to the land; just when, God alone knows. They are coming up out of their graves now, and the "graves" in this instance mean the different nations of the earth where the Jews have been scattered during their dispersion from their land. These graves are now opening and the dry bones are coming up out of them and are coming to their fellow-bones and are receiving flesh and sinews, yet are still spiritually dead. The time of their awakening, which will take place when the Lord from heaven appears to them, may be much nearer than we think. Remember, it comes as a thief in the night and none of us will know of it until it is a matter of full realization. Read Amos ix. 14, 15; also Jeremiah xxxi. 10-14. Indeed, search through all the prophets and then stand amazed at the declared wonders of prophecy you see revealed there. The marvelous workings of God's eternal plan and purpose are nothing short of stupendous. The present distresses among the nations of the Gentile world are plainly of the Lord, are plainly the fulfillment of his written word. Economic depressions, droughts, famines, wars, pestilences, earthquakes, floods and all their kindred ills are vials of the seven last plagues being poured out from heaven, all to wear down the political and world supremacy of the Gentiles to prepare the way for the kings of the east, to usher in the kingdom of heaven among the restored Jews, and when that is done the whole world will realize such a blessing flowing to all nations because of the kingdom of heaven, such an age as the world has never yet seen. Then, that which missionaries have been trying to do for one hundred and fifty years by proselyting and money raising will be done instantly, because it is expressly de-

clared in the prophets that even the heathen shall know that God is the Lord and that Israel is his people, when the Lord shall set up his kingdom to reign; in that day when he shall take unto himself his great power and shall reign. Prior to this coming in of the kingdom, there will be some kind of world-federation, a last and most desperate effort on the part of Gentile world-power to retain their hegemony over the world which they already feel slipping from their grasp. When this world-federation is an established fact, we shall expect to see the "man of sin" at the head of it. But it will all go for naught. The final act of this "man of sin" with the world league backing him up, will be to move against the helpless restored Jews in the holy land; and that move will be the last desperate act of the Gentiles to retain their hold on world power. It will be nothing short of suicide for them. In confirmation of this fact revealed in Holy Writ, read Ezekiel thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters. There you will find, just exactly as God has predestinated it, the assault of allied powers against the restored Jews, which will not only be fruitless, but absolutely fatal to Gentile supremacy: they shall die by thousands upon the mountains of Israel and be buried there, not because the Jews will be able to defeat them by themselves but because the Lord will himself appear and fight against them with the fire of his own wrath and indignation. This "day of the Lord" shall not come until the world shall first witness the rise and supremacy of the "man of sin" whose number is 666. So Paul says in 2 Thessalonians ii. 3, 4.

Strange as it may seem, the very day we received the request from this sister in West Virginia for information upon this subject, we received the February number of the *Gospel Standard* from London. To our amazement, we found in that number an article written by Mr. J. C. Philpot in 1854, over three-quarters of a century ago. We cannot forbear letting you have part of it, but wish you could read all of it. It comes from out the past as a startling confirmation of what we believe, but which we find few people at the present time do believe. Here it is:

> "The restoration of the Jews to their own land seems to us as clearly revealed as their dispersion. (Deut. xxx. 1-5.) It seems evident from the words, 'that the way of the kings of the east may be prepared,' that there will be a gradual preparation for their return, and that it will come to pass, not as a sudden miracle or unexpected event, but will take place as a matter long anticipated."

Now, this is amazing when you consider that when Mr. Philpot wrote these lines Zionism was not heard of as yet, and there was not yet any world-organization of the Jews in 1854. Mr. Philpot bases his assertions entirely on the Bible and not on the events of his time: a most wonderful proof of the spiritual insight of Mr. Philpot into these hidden things. Not one single word of what Mr. Philpot has written needs changing in the light of what we know to-day: events as they have come to pass show clearly that Mr. Philpot was entirely

right. Let us quote him a little further:

"Most clear and distinct are the promises that the ten tribes thus carried into captivity, called in the Word of God from their leading tribe, 'Ephraim,' and sometimes termed 'Israel,' as distinct from the tribe called 'Judah,' will be restored to their own land. We will not multiply quotations. It will be sufficient to refer our readers to the following passages: Isaiah xi. 11-14; Ezek. xxxvii. 19-28; and to one which, from its distinct mention of the 'house of Joseph,' that is, the ten tribes (Joseph being the father of Ephraim), we can hardly forbear quoting: 'And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them; for I have mercy upon them; and they shall be as though I had not cast them off; for I am the Lord their God, and will hear them.' 'I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; and the place shall not be found for them.' (Zech. x. 6, 10.) The drying up of the river merely prepares the way for the return; but years may intervene before the event is accomplished, and there appears every reason to believe that Babylon will be destroyed before it takes place. See Isaiah 14th chapter."

So wrote the able Mr. Philpot seventy-seven years ago. All that has transpired in these seventy-seven years does not make necessary the change of a single word of his prediction. "Years may intervene before the event is accomplished," he says. Well, years have intervened and it is being accomplished under our very eyes. As events come to pass day by day, they reveal what has been in the Divine Mind from eternity; history is nothing more or less than the unrolling of predestination. The Bible will interpret these events as they come to pass, if only we are given to understand them in the light of the Spirit. It is good for us to watch, and to pray as we watch. May the Lord give us ever more and more of his light and not leave us to sleep on in darkness; that is, in ignorance of his wonderful purpose.

H. H. L.

ISAIAH IX. 6, 7.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."

We again in addressing you call your attention to the prophecy of Isaiah in the above quotation. In the first of this quotation the prophet speaks as though he was addressing the entire household of faith, which we contend he was, and the expression goes forth as though the manifested event of the birth of Jesus had already taken place. We then must admit that the Spirit of the Trinity was inspiring the prophet when he uttered these sacred declarations. The word "child" applies to either an unborn or recently born human being. As this was the expression of Divinity, the child that was born is of divine or supreme parentage, and the relation of the expression this child is declared to be a son, and in the two phrases unto us he was born and given. This Son was born for a certain fixed end and given to be the executor of his Father's will, for he came not to do his own will, but the will of the Father that sent him, and this is the will of the Father, That of all he has given me I shall lose nothing, but raise it up at the last day. (John vi. 38, 39.) We have the word of this Son recorded by the apostle John that was declared unto us by the prophet, and he speaks in the execution of his Father's will that was spoken by the prophet 740 years previous to the deliverance of this

child from the virgin, and we see in this that the virgin only bore that which was, and she stands in a wonderful sense a type of the manifestation of the power of God in mortal flesh, and we know according to nature the impossibility of a virgin to bear a son of herself, and for her to bear a son it must be by the power of the Most High. So we read she was speaking unto the angel, saying, How shall this be? The angel answered, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."—Luke i. 34, 35. The government shall be upon his shoulder. As we consider the government we must note it was not a mere rule or practice of carnal men, nor such government as the rule of nations of the earth, and in enforcing the law of natural government it is not vested to a child or to one individual. The Son referred to in our text is the alpha and omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, and one that is without beginning of days or end of time. So none could rule in the wisdom of him, nor understand the will of the Father and know all the purposes of the Father in the controlling and working all things after the counsel of his own will. This government rests upon his shoulder. The shoulder is the constructed form of the body bearing the upper limbs called the arms, and the shoulder is so constructed as to give strength and freedom of action to the arms. His government resting upon his shoulder declares his responsibility to the Father for its execution, and according to the position of its resting-place typifies the strength and power to carry forth to its full execution. We also note the position as being between wisdom and the vital organs of the chest, and is a weight and burden upon the whole body of the Son. The head bears the intelligence to discern the goal to be reached and the laying down of this burden, and we hear the Son declaring, How am I to be straitened until this be accomplished? The arm takes the burden from the shoulder and lays it down, so we hear the prophet Isaiah saying, "His arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him."--Isaiah lix. 16. And, "Mine own arm brought salvation unto me."—Isaiah lxiii. 5. This arm under consideration moves objects, places them, carries them to the place where the whole body would have them, and the performance of all workmanship is done by the arm and its terminal members. The power and supremacy of this Son is so wonderful that he works and none can hinder, hinders and none can work. The prophet records that his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, the everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. The Son leadeth his people in paths of righteousness for his name's sake, and his leading is in paths not known and ways past finding out, and at the same time instructs them. Jesus says, As many as hear and learneth of the Father cometh unto me, and he that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. He teaches them by his Spirit,

for we read that when he was up in the mountain his disciples came unto him and he taught them, and in his questioning his disciples said, Will you also go away? Their answer was, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou only hath the word of eternal life. So his teaching is far superior to that of men, for his words are spirit and life and come with demonstration of the Spirit and power, so we can declare of a truth that he is Wonderful, Counsellor, and he is in us; his Spirit teaches us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world.

The mighty God. The word "God" implies supreme deity and self-existing Creator, and it is he that upholds all things by the word of his power, and the powers that be are ordained of God, and it was declared by the Son of God, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. The arm that brought salvation unto him destroyed him that had the power of death, delivered his people from bondage and conquered death, hell and the grave, and gave eternal life to every elect vessel of God's love and mercy, which was the salvation that his arm brought him. When poor sinners behold the Sun of righteousness arising with such healing, love and tender compassion, and driving out strong enemies and all manner of uncleanness, they affirm that he is the mighty God, and when they realize his abundant mercy and grace failing not, and that he is always a present help in time of trouble, they declare his fatherly care, then they can testify that he is the everlasting Father and reigns in peace and righteousness. His peace far surpasses all carnal reasoning. He rules as having authority, working in direct accord with the Father as he affirms, My Father worketh and I work hitherto. He is declared to be the Prince of Peace, and of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end. The prophet prophesied of his coming, and he was looked for with eager expectations, and they waited for him as the promised Messiah that should come and lead God's people, Israel, which was not considered in a spiritual interpretation. He was expected to sit upon the throne of David as king of Israel, to rule in natural government, but God sent him to sit upon the throne of the righteousness that was in David and to deliver his people from the bondage of iniquity. David was not only king of Israel nationally, but a worshiper of God. The child in our text brings us to the time he was named Jesus, who was the end of the law for righteousness to them that believe and is the spirit in which all worship of God is done and not in the oldness of the letter, for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. As the law was weak through the flesh, God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin to condemn sin in the flesh. He performs his work by his Spirit to the fulfilling of his Father's will. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. All according to God's will, and the government of his people shall be manifested by their lives that they are children of his king-

dom. The Son said, Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, but they are they that testify of me. When we look for blessings because of some act performed by this natural creature we are not trusting the living God for our salvation, and also declare against the words of the prophet in our text, and we fully realize we cannot add to nor take from it, for his zeal performs this, working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure, bringing the blind by ways they knew not and in ways past finding out. This Son triumphed in the work his Father gave him to do, and in his divine character declared it finished, then bowed his head and gave up the ghost. He died and rose from the dead, and he declared that he was dead but was alive and alive for evermore, and, as he declared, of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end. The manifestation of the government of God among the sons of men by the manifested spirit of the fruits of their faith, which is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. (Gal. v. 22-24.) All that bear this fruit are called the sheep of his pasture and he is their Shepherd, and he calleth them by name and leadeth them out and they follow him, and he says, I give to them eternal life and they shall never perish. These are members of the church of God and he is the Maker and Builder, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against him, and as one goes in and out of the door they are given to discern between the servants and they which serve him not, and to be cast out from the church they know there would be weeping and gnashing of teeth. This poor creature to be cast out from the church would weep for the inhabitants of Zion and long to be at rest with his flock. The gnashing of teeth is by those who thirst for the blood of the sheep, for naturally speaking, there are many animals by nature thirsting after the blood of its helpless prey. All such referred to in the Scriptures are in the flesh, and when we are led of the flesh we are as raving wolves, and such that are in the church of God we know that they are wolves in sheep's clothing. This Son's kingdom shall know no end, and every subject shall be willing because of the power of the Most High. The Jewish nation was not obedient unto the Son of God, nor could they keep and fulfill a righteous law, so we hear by the mouth of the prophet, "I will utterly pluck up and destroy that nation, saith the Lord."—Jer. xii. 17. What the Lord does is forever, and we have the fulfillment of this prophecy manifested in the Jewish nation as they are scattered throughout the whole world and are no more recognized as a nation, and the Jewish nation, and every other nation, kindred, tongue and people, shall be blessed according to the grace given in Christ Jesus, which shall compose a holy nation, a royal priesthood, zealous of good works, and he is their fullness, for he filleth all in all. This is the fullness of the Gentiles, for they were

without the law until they were given the law of God by his Son, so they are embraced in the law of the Spirit of life that is in Christ Jesus and are not idle worshipers, and neither are the sheep of God that are of the Jewish fold, for Jesus has broken down that middle wall or partition between Jew and Gentile, so making peace, making them inhabitants of his holy nation, and they enter in to the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. May we examine ourselves for the generality of our relationship in this nation, and it only can be done as his Spirit taketh of the things of him and showeth them unto us. When a Jew returns to the land of promise he comes only as he is led by the Spirit, and he comes to Jesus, and he is turned by the Son and drawn by the Father. As God finished his work on the sixth day and rested on the seventh, so Jesus declared his work finished, the redemption price paid and he will gather them and say, Come in, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, then there will be a holy nation. To our understanding, this is the return of the Jews to the land of promise.

C. W. V.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Elizabeth Rittenhouse, N. J., $4; Nellie M. Palmer, Maine, $1; Mrs. J. W. Garrison, N. J., $1; Mrs. Sarah J. Clegg, Pa., $1; Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Okla., $1; Mrs. Louis Koeler, Ontario, $2; Mrs. H. A. Smith, Texas, $2.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

THOMAS W. RECORDS, son of William D. and Eunice J. Records, was born in Sussex County, Delaware, May 13th, 1841, and died at his home, 411 N. Delaware, Independence, Missouri, February 28th, 1931, having attained the age of 89 years, 9 months and 15 days. He received his education in the common schools of the county and at the Academy of Laurel, Delaware. He left home in 1865 and came to Kansas City, where he remained one year, then removed to Old Blue Springs and established the first general store in that locality. He was largely connected in a business way in the life of Blue Springs, serving as postmaster for some time. He helped to form and incorporate the Blue Springs Mercantile Company, with a capital of $15,000. Later he and others incorporated the Bank of Blue Springs for $16,000. He served as president of the bank until March, 1918, when he resigned, having previously sold his interest in the store. He was married April 16th, 1868, to Miss Stella Ellington, of Platt County, Missouri, who died January, 1919. He removed to Independence in August, 1918, and after the death of his wife made his home with his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Bertha Records, a highly cultured and estimable woman, who, with her two children and step-daughter were most kind and considerate of every pleasure and comfort for his happiness. To brother Records and wife were born three children: William P., a daughter who died in infancy, and Thomas H., who died September 10th, 1914. There were five grandchildren: Mrs. Helen Estelle Duff, Chicago, May M. Johnson, who died February 15th, 1930, Lavina, Thomas Herbert and Dorothy, of the home, and one niece, Mrs. D. M. Dillingham, of Blue Springs, Missouri. Brother Records professed a hope in the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ more than fifty years ago, but from a deep feeling sense of his unworthiness did not unite with the church until the third Sunday in June, 1919, when he came before the church at Pleasant Grove, related his experience and was gladly received. He requested to be baptized just as soon as we could get to it, and that afternoon the unworthy writer had the pleasure of burying him in baptism, raising him up to walk in newness of life, so venerable looking and with such a satisfied expression on his face that caused rejoicing in the hearts of all present. Brother Records was a firm believer in the doctrine of predestination and election as taught in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and "Lone Pilgrim," endeavoring wherever he went among the Baptists to secure subscribers to these papers, and some of his writings may be found in their columns. He was well versed in the Scriptures and was the most earnest contender for the faith that I ever have been associated with. He made no compromise with error, and had no sympathy or fellowship for the modern systems of the day, yet he was most considerate of other men's belief, never saying harsh

things of them, saying that none of them could help believing as they did. He contended for peace, saying that the doctrine of predestination never had divided churches, and that an evidence of an experience of salvation by grace should be sufficient for christian fellowship. Brother Records loved to hear sound preaching, and loved to have his brethren about him and in his home. He would go far and near to meetings and associations, and was well known and beloved by many Baptists and preachers in the west. By strict economy and good business management he was able to accumulate considerable wealth, and was liberal in helping preachers on their way, good to the poor, considerate of the needy and left a well balanced estate for his grandchildren. He had made funeral arrangements, suggesting that the hymns, "There is a spot to me more clear" and "How firm a foundation" be sung, and that a comforting Scripture to him, the first clause of Revelation xx. 6, be used. He also requested that as I had baptized him I also preach his funeral, and that no merit of his be preached, as he had none, but that Christ be preached, who was delivered for our offences and raised for our justification. Assisted by Elder T. E. Attebery in the services, I tried to comply with his request, using the above mentioned Scripture as a text, at the M. E. church-house in Blue Springs, Sunday afternoon, March 1st. A large assembly of friends and neighbors were in attendance to pay respect and tribute to a citizen whose memory and life will linger long with those who knew and loved him so well. His body was laid to rest in the beautiful cemetery at Blue Springs, and truly can we say that a great man in Israel has fallen. I wish to commend all of his kindred, the brethren of his church and all who believe in a living God, to him who is able and will raise our sleeping dust in the likeness of our Savior, to see him and praise him forever and forever.

W. L. HALL.

WILL HUBBELL passed away at his late home, at Kelly Corners, N. Y., February 7th, 1931. He was the elder son of the late Elder John D. Hubbell and Eliza (Jaquish) Hubbell, born to them in the home in which he always lived, and where he died after a life full of usefulness. On September 26th, 1888, he married Eva Taylor, to which union were born four children: Fannie, Harry, John and Ralph, all of Kelly Corners. Mr. Hubbell suffered a shock on November 25th, 1929, from which he partly recovered, so that he was able to continue his active interest in the various business enterprises in which he had spent the greater part of his life. On Tuesday before his death he suffered another stroke, from which he never rallied. Surviving him are his wife and their four children before mentioned, also one brother, Burr, of Kelly Corners, also one grandson. Mr. Hubbell will be greatly missed in the community where he always lived. He was a good father, neighbor and friend. In business, he was considered by all who knew him to be strictly honest and upright. He had a host of friends and was widely respected and loved, which was shewn by the large gathering from far and near that attended his funeral. He was a faithful friend to the church of which his father, Elder J. D. Hubbell, was for so long their much esteemed Elder and pastor, and was always ready to aid them with his presence and support. We believe his trust was in God, who he felt had the right to do with him and his as seemed best in his sight. He is greatly missed and mourned by his dear family, to whom he was very devoted, and while it is hard for them to say, "Thy will be done," they know that God only can enable them to be reconciled to him.

The writer was called to the funeral, which was held in Mr. Hubbell's late home, with interment in the Kelly Corners Cemetery.

ALSO,

MRS. CHRISTENA LILLY, our dear sister in Christ, departed this life at her home in Dutton, Ontario, February 23rd, 1931, after an illness of about three weeks. She was the daughter of John McIntyre and Janet (Kerr) McIntyre, and was born at Iona Station February 20th, 1852. Over fifty-two years ago she married Thomas E. Lilly, when they immediately moved to Dutton, where they have since resided. Besides her husband, she leaves one brother, Andrew McIntyre, Wallacetown, and several nephews and nieces to mourn their loss. She united with the Covenanted Baptist Church about forty-three years ago, and was baptized by the late Elder William Pollard. She was a very highly esteemed citizen, having a host of friends, who will greatly mourn their loss. In the church she was a faithful member, humble and kind, and it was her delight to honor her brethren, and the best she had in her home was reserved for them, in which kindness and hospitality her dear and bereaved husband gladly participated. Since it has been our lot to be her pastor it has been our privilege to often call in to see her, and she was always happy when we entered into spiritual conversation. In her last sickness we rejoice to say that her mouth was filled with the praise of the Lord. We miss her much, for she loved the habitation of God's house, and the place where his honor dwelleth. Her companion of over half a century is almost crushed by his loss, yet would calmly say, "Thy will be done."

The writer officiated at the funeral, the service was at her late home, and interment was in Fairview Cemetery. May God, the Holy Spirit, comfort her dear companion, and may our end be like hers.

G. R.

FRANKLIN S. TERRY, son of the late Isaac and Martha Terry, of Southampton, Pennsylvania, was born December 17th, 1846, and died February 14th, 1931, making his stay on earth 84 years, 1 month and 27 days. He was married three times. The first was to Miss Anna Addis, October 14th, 1874, and to this union was born one son, Howard Addis Terry, now of Philadelphia, Pa. She departed this life December 10th, 1880, at the age of twenty-nine years. The second marriage was to Miss Susie E. Francis, of Virginia, a sister of the late Elder A. B. Francis, of Delmar, Delaware. She departed this life February 14th, 1898, at the age of forty-five years. The third marriage was to Miss Mary S. Hill, April 27th, 1899. She departed this life July 7th, 1921, at the age of sixty-six years, leaving her husband and his only son to mourn until death called him. Brother Terry united with the Old School Baptist Church at Southampton, Pa., and was baptized by the late Elder William J. Purington while he was pastor of that church. After several years he united by letter with the Salem Old School Baptist Church in Philadelphia, Pa. Several years later he moved to Hopewell, N. J., and he and his last wife brought letters and united with the First Hopewell Church, where his membership remained to the end of his pilgrimage. He was a kind, faithful and generous member, an ardent supporter of the cause and defender of the gospel. He served the churches of Southampton and Salem as Deacon, and in his faithfulness purchased to himself a good degree and great boldness in the faith. We shall miss brother Terry, but feel our loss is his eternal gain and he now rests from his labors. He was a great reader, having read the Bible through about three times, and he often spoke of the wonderful deep mysteries, and viewed more than he could command language to express, and often wondered if he could realize as it is written in Zechariah fourteenth chapter and seventh verse, "That at evening time it shall be light," which was the text used by the writer at his funeral. We feel to say that truly light was with him, for just previous to his death, in the early hours of the morning, he was heard singing, "There will be no more sorrow there," &c.

ALSO,

Mr. JEREMIAH VAN DYKE was born March 26th, 1844, and departed this life December 5th, 1930, making his stay on this earth 86 years, 8 months and 9 days. He was married to Miss Esther Blackwell December 4th, 1867, by the late Elder Hartwell, and to this union two daughters, Alice and Anna, were born. Alice, deceased, was the wife of Walter Smith; Anna is the wife of Mr. Martin Kintner, of Pennington, N. J. His wife and daughter, Mrs. Smith, died several years ago. Brother Van Dyke joined the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church in the latter part of his life, only about ten years prior to his death. He was baptized by the writer. Brother Van Dyke was a devoted member and traveled quite extensively visiting the brethren from Maine to Virginia. His last illness was of short duration. He was stricken with dizziness, fell and broke his hip. Paralysis resulted and his death occurred shortly afterward. He leaves to mourn his death one daughter, Mrs. Martin Kintner; three grandchildren, Mrs. Marian K. Seidel, Mrs. Stella S. Millard and Edgar Kintner; two great-grandchildren, Walter Millard and Richard H. Kintner. Besides his immediate family and the church, he leaves a great many relatives and friends to mourn, and we feel, as is often rehearsed, we should not mourn for him as though he had no hope. We hope and feel that our loss is his eternal gain. May the God of peace comfort all who mourn.

C. W. V.

MRS. HATTIE KELLEY, our sister in Christ, passed away from this earthly life February 11th, 1931, at the home of her brother-in-law, Mr. C. C. Roller, at Ft. Myer Heights, Virginia. She was the daughter of James B. and Hortensia Havener, of Leesburg, Virginia, and she was one of a family of nine children. Now, two of these are left: the oldest and the youngest, sister Sallie Havener and sister Martha Roller, both of Ft. Myer Heights, Virginia. Sister Kelley was born September 7th, 1860. On the third Sunday of November, 1887, she was baptized by Elder E. V. White into the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia. She was married October 31st, 1889, to Daniel A. Kelley, who died December 17th the same year, living only forty-seven days after their marriage. In July, 1890, her only son, Charles, was born. This boy was a great comfort to his mother and lived to manhood, but died when about twenty-four years of age. Thus it will be noted that our dear sister was called to know a great deal of sorrow and bereavement in her life. Yet, in all her trials, she accepted uncomplainingly whatever came to her as the will of God, who has an unquestioned right to do as he will with all of us. Not only did she firmly believe in the absolute predestination of all things, but she practiced it, and would often say when troubles came, It is God's will to have it so. About two and one-half years ago, she started to meeting one Sunday morning, intending to go to Frying Pan. While getting on the electric car, the car suddenly gave a start and threw her down and broke her hip. She lay helpless with this injury for a long time, but after several months got so she could get around by using one crutch to support her. She was subject to attacks of severe neuritis in her uninjured hip which laid her low for days at a time. The immediate cause of her death was a clot on the brain which produced paralysis. After many years of sorrow and trials, she has at last gone home. We cannot mourn for her, but for ourselves. The three sisters lived together in the same home for many years and were so devoted to each other's interest and welfare that the break

comes very hard on the two who are left, yet they have a blessed assurance that all is well with sister Hattie. The burial took place at Leesburg, services held only at the grave, no funeral was preached, as it had been her wish not to have any funeral sermon. May the Lord comfort the sorrowing family and the bereaved church.

ALSO,

LOU GREEN, our sister in Christ, only colored member of the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, died at the home of Miss R. L. Norman, Clarkes Gap, Virginia, February 12th, 1931, aged 55 years and 28 days. She is survived by one son. Her death was due to paralysis followed by pneumonia. When she was but an infant, she was taken into the home of sister Emma Young and brought up by her. When sister Young died, in 1916, she then went to live with Miss Norman, a niece of sister Young's, and at whose home she died. She was baptized by the writer in April, 1929. She could neither read nor write, but would often ask others to read to her, and desired above all things to have the Scriptures read to her. She faithfully attended the meetings, both at New Valley and Mt. Zion, and loved the truth as it is in Jesus, desiring to do good to all about her. There were more white people at her funeral than colored, and many were the expressions of sorrow and regret at her passing. Burial was at Mt. Zion.

H. H. L.

WILLIAM D. BALL was born in Kentucky, in the year 1857, and departed this life January 27th, 1931. He possessed the marks, or characteristics, of the Lord's peculiar people, and was at one time numbered with the Sugar Creek Old School Baptist Church. I have not access to the church records, so must of necessity be brief. I transcribe the following from the pen of his youngest daughter: "Father leaves behind to mourn their loss (which is his gain) six children: Charles H., of Riverside, Calif., Rolin E., of Moravia, Calif., Alva A., of Bakersfield, Calif., Mrs. Virginia Pouncey, of Crockett, Calif., Mrs. Viola Williams, of Riverside, Calif., and Mrs. Mary Darby, of Oroville, Calif. Three children of Mother Wien Ball: a daughter, Mrs. Bessie Peterson, residing in Talapoosa, Missouri, and two sons, whose whereabouts we do not know at this time. Father also leaves one sister, Mrs. Viola Pugh, of Dupo, Illinois, and one brother, John Ball, of Kentucky."

The third Sunday in last January brother Ball came quietly into our little assembly, and seemed so much better, physically, that we hoped he was to be spared for some time to come. On the fourth Sunday when we met for worship he manifested real interest, and before dismissal, while we were singing a hymn, he gave us the parting hand, which was the last expression, so far as we know, of his love and fellowship for the Old School or Primitive Baptists. I was shocked when I received word that brother Ball had passed away and the family and friends wished me to come to Riverside to attend the funeral. After arriving at his home I learned that his son, who about a week before had kept a horse from hurting or maybe from killing him, had backed a heavy truck over him, not knowing that his father had stepped behind the truck to pick up something that was in the way. I little thought the Sunday before that brother Ball was so soon to be set free from the things of time. After a brief service held in Mr. Preston's funeral parlor we repaired to the Evergreen Cemetery, where all that was mortal of our beloved father, brother and friend was committed to the ground, and in the presence of the sorrowing ones and a goodly number of bereaved friends we consigned him to the tomb, sorrowing not as those who have no hope, but believing that God, who showed his power over death and the grave, and who raised Lazarus after he had been dead four days, will raise us up also, and we shall be made like him and see him as he is and be forever with him. May he comfort all who mourn and give them the spirit of submission and reconciliation.

T. D. WALKER.

SISTER **NANCY ELIZABETH RUDD** was born January 8th, 1854, and departed this life October 15th, 1930, at her home, near Benton, Kentucky, where she had lived all during her lifetime. She was the daughter of George Dowdy, and was one of a large family, having five brothers and two sisters deceased. Their names were, Albert, Willie, Jasper and Richard Dowdy, Mrs. Melvina Jones and Mrs. Sally Martin. She leaves one surviving brother, G. D. Dowdy, whose home is five miles below Paducah, Kentucky. We do not call it dying, but just falling "asleep in Jesus," to awake to die no more. She was the wife of Simon J. Rudd, who is now left without her to walk by his side. Her health began to fail about a year ago last September, and she grew gradually weaker until the end. All that loved ones and doctors could do for her was done, but all was in vain, for the Lord called her home and human hands and hearts could not detain her here. She left no children, but there are many nieces and nephews, all of whom dearly loved "Auntie," and all of whom were present at her funeral, except one niece in Detroit, Michigan. Sister Rudd was always longing for the day for her to attend the meeting of her church to arrive. In the spring of 1889 she was given a hope in Christ, and upon the relation of her experience to the Old School Baptist Church (November 11th, 1922,) she was received, and baptized in their fellowship by Elder Oliver Sunday, November 12th, 1922. She was well established in the doctrine of the Bible, and loved to hear singing, especially her favorite hymn, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound." Every day, all the time, she was always the same, manifesting to us she had been born of that incorruptible seed that liveth forever. She was laid

to rest in the Dowdy Cemetery, near her home, amid a profusion of flowers in the presence of sympathizing relatives and friends, where brother James Chester, of Brewers, Kentucky, spoke words of comfort to a large and attentive audience.

Her niece,

OUIDA MAE RUDD.

MRS. SULA CREECH, wife of Mr. Irvine Creech, and daughter of brother and sister Alice Culpepper, of Falls City, Texas, was born September 29th, 1898, and died January 10th, 1931, making her stay on earth 32 years, 3 months and 11 days. She was married to Mr. Irvnie Creech September 1st, 1915. She leaves to mourn her departure her father, mother, husband, six children, two sisters and one brother, together with many friends and relatives, to mourn her absence. Sula was of a kind and affectionate nature, a loving mother an affectionate companion and a good neighbor. She was honest and sincere in all her dealings, and won the friendship of all who knew her. Sula never made a public profession of hope, but was a firm believer in the doctrine as held by the old order of Primitive Baptists, and had no patience with the so-called religious orders of the day, showing the work of the Spirit in her heart. As the apostle said, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." —Phil. i. 6. The evidence of the work of grace in the heart was manifested by her ever being ready to defend the doctrine so much loved by the dear saints of God, the Primitive Baptists, and her love for the doctrine of grace is very comforting to those who were related to her by the ties of nature, as well as to the Old Baptists, which strengthens our hope that she is at perfect peace in the presence of Jesus, the only Savior of sinners. Although parting with her is hard, and leaves a vacancy that none can fill, we should not weep for her as one who had no hope. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."—1 Thess. iv. 14. As the poet said, "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep." Yes, asleep in undisturbed repose until the voice of Jesus shall awaken the dead. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." Yes, rise nevermore to suffer pain, trials, disappointments, tribulations and death; no more partings, but enter into the immediate presence of the Lord who died on the cross to redeem us from the curse of the law and deliver us into the presence of the Father without spot, wrinkle or any such thing, to dwell with the Father in that blissful paradise of endless bliss. We who are left behind must yet go down through the dark valley of death before we, too, shall enter into the beautiful and shining courts of eternal bliss, into those mansions which Jesus hath gone on before to prepare. We really should rejoice in the fact that Sula has entered that peaceful rest, in company with the redeemed host, singing the song of Moses and the Lamb that John heard them sing, giving God all the glory, power, honor and praise.

Written by one who loved her with that love which cometh down from above.

J. B. BOWDEN.

MRS. SARAH S. TATUM, wife of Elder W. H. Tatum, was born August 22nd, 1858, and departed this life October 4th, 1930, making her stay on earth 72 years, 1 month and 12 days. She was married April 7th, 1880, and was the mother of seven children, four of them living. Her husband, four children, eighteen grandchildren, three great-grandchildren and a host of friends are left to mourn their loss. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church in the year 1880, and was a faithful member until her death. She believed in an all-wise God and salvation by grace alone, and would contend for what she believed at all times and anywhere.

Written by her broken-hearted companion,

W. H. TATUM.

SISTER **ELIZABETH JANE HOLMES** on December 18th, 1930, departed from this changing world of trial and care to be with the Lord. She was born in Iowa December 20th, 1850, and was married to brother J. W. Holmes March 6th, 1873. They lived in the middle west several years, and have since lived in Lane County, Oregon. She is survived by her husband, who lives in Eugene, Ore., four sons, Fred J., Spokane, Wash., J. C., Eugene, Ore., Isaac, Wendling, Ore., Henry, Springfield, Ore., one brother, James R. Harmon, of Nebraska, fourteen grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Her Savior's redeeming love was manifested to her at an early age. She was a faithful member of the Primitive Baptist Church, a splendid singer, singing of Jesus' love much of the time. She sang, and we have no doubt now verifies, "When this poor, lisping, stammering tongue lies silent in the grave, then in a nobler, sweeter song I'll sing thy power to save." The writer preached the Savior she loved, and her body was laid to rest in the Rest Haven Cemetery, at Eugene, Oregon, in full confidence that by the power of Jesus in the resurrection it will come forth immortal, incorruptible, in the likeness of his glorious body.

G. O. WALKER.

NOTICE.

Any one having a copy of Hassell's Church History they are willing to part with will please communicate with W. J. Berry, 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California, as he is anxious to procure one of these books.

MEETINGS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association is expected to meet in May, between the 20th and 24th, 1931. Exact date and place will be published in May issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

A. S. ROWE.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held (the Lord willing) with the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, May 27th, 28th and 29th, 1931. Both railroad trunk lines are available, the Baltimore and Ohio and the Pennsylvania, to those coming by rail. Consult the time tables as changes are due in April. Ministers of our faith and order, and all those who desire to hear the truth as it is in the Lord Jesus Christ, are cordially invited to be present, and all will be welcome in our homes.

JOHN B. MILLER, Church Clerk.

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IN

NEW YORK CITY.

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11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 99. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1931. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD."

To the Readers of the Signs:—In this morning's mail comes a request to me from one of our Elders, saying, "Why can't you give your views on some important subject through the columns of our paper?" My first answer to this would be, Because I have not been impressed to write, although I enjoy reading the articles in the Signs which I seem to understand and fellowship, but soon forget them, as I do something I enjoy eating, easily digested. But the things I do not understand seem to bother me and are hard to forget. Again I compare to things that I eat and cannot digest, and cannot forget the indigestion as soon as I would. Therefore I hesitate to write for publication lest my writing may not be enjoyed or understood by others.

My mind has seemed much exercised as to the kingdom referred to above in John xviii. 36. The words of the Lord Jesus, before the judgment-seat of Pilate, just before his crucifixion. I write this not feeling it necessary on my part to go into detail on the wonderful subject, but with the hope that our minds may at least pause to reflect that these are the words of the Lord shortly before leaving this world, after finishing his work that the Father gave him to do on earth. It was the answer of Jesus to Pilate, saying, "My kingdom is *not* of this *world*: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence [this world]." These being the words of the Lord Jesus, cannot be contradicted, and are not, by himself, or any other Scripture, but all are in harmony with it, that were taught of God, in the Scriptures. Again, he said to the Jews or Pharisees, "Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world." How does one see this kingdom? Not until that one has been "born of the Spirit," for said he, "That

which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Much is said about spiritualizing the Scriptures. I think the Lord did the spiritualizing, for they are indited by him. Paul in his wisdom did not know anything of the Spirit, by carnal wisdom, and did not understand the Scriptures that way, but when the Spirit of God converted Paul, and qickened him, and made him speak as the Spirit gave him understanding, it was then Paul could say in truth, The letter killeth, but the Spirit maketh alive, or giveth life. Paul did not do the spiritualizing, but the Lord did it for him and *in* him.

Now after the work of the Lord in Paul, by the Spirit, he realized that he was under a new power, and under a new King, too. To set straight some in confusion about material meat and drink, in his letter to the Romans he wrote, The kingdom of God is *not* meat and drink, not natural food or things of nature. So here we find what the kingdom of God is *not*. Let Paul's words remind us what it *was* to him, and we hope is to us. In the same verse he wrote *it is* "righteousness, and peace, and joy *in* the Holy Ghost." Neither of these three things are material or natural, for nothing of nature partakes of the Holy Ghost, but righteousness, peace and joy are blessed conditions of and *in* the Holy Ghost. This condition, or peace and joy in the heart, we have even hoped we have felt, and have not words to describe. We do recall that Paul in speaking to the brethren at Corinth, or rather writing to them, said, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price." Here we have the words of the Lord Jesus that his kingdom is not of this world, that he is from above, not below; that he came from God, and was going back to him, the Father. The apostle by the Spirit telling us what the kingdom is *not*, and what it *is*, and we have the word of God in Jeremiah that his new covenant was not like the old one he made with Abraham or the fathers, when he took them by the hand to lead them out of the wilderness, &c., and therein the record that *they*, the *fathers*, broke the covenant, for it reads, Which my covenant *they* did break. But the new was sure, for says the word, I will write it in their *inward* parts, and in their hearts; and when God writes it there it cannot be erased by men or devils.

Now, again about the Spirit of the Lord. Let us see what the Lord Jesus said to the woman at the well in Samaria, who told the Lord the fathers worshipped in this mountain, but ye say in Jerusalem is the place to worship, &c. No record there that the Lord said that to her, but she, seeing he was a Jew, thought that was the place he would worship. We have no record that the Lord was concerned about any territory, or spot of land, at that time, or at any future time on this earth, before or after death, for let us be reminded of his blessed doctrine there and then, which applied then and now, when he said unto her, "Woman, believe me,

the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet in Jerusalem, worship the Father."—John iv. 21. Again, in the twenty-third verse, "But the hour cometh, and *now is*, when the *true* worshippers *shall* worship the Father in spirit and in truth." And further, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him *must* worship him in spirit and in truth." Therefore, there is now no more any special country or nation, as the land of the Jews, or any special place, material, as the temple, but wherever a child of grace, one who is born of the Spirit, may be, if the Spirit of the Lord is there, there is liberty. We feel to thank the Lord that it is even so. Hearing of the Lord is one thing; hearing the Lord or feeling his power is another thing, as his servant Job learned, for while he was yet alive in the flesh, after men failed to comfort or teach him, yet at times he had faith to believe he would see the Lord, and his words were, after the Lord appeared in the great power mentioned as the whirlwind, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the *ear*: but now mine eye *seeth* thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Job had not died a natural death and come back to earth to say this, but before he died the Lord showed him the wonderful sight by faith, that he worked in Job, to hear not now by the natural ear, but by the Spirit opening his understanding.

I will conclude by reminding you that the Lord answered the Pharisees, and said, The kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation (not to be seen by the natural eye). Behold, the kingdom is within you. Within who? Let us read the following verses and remember the disciples, whom the Pharisees beheld outwardly, but the Lord inwardly, "The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it." When they say, Lo here, or lo there, go not after them, &c. Why not go after them? Because the Lord said not, therefore they did not know about the matter. Then how be his coming? Jesus said, As the lightning shineth from one part under heaven unto the other part under heaven, so shall the coming of the Son of man be. Very fast is lightning, from one part to the other part under heaven, cannot be measured by man, so we hope we trust in this God who works his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; who works in his subjects both to will and to do of his good pleasure; a God not confined to boundary limits set by man, but is omnipotent, gave his Son for our sins, bought us with that price, his blood, took him up above again in glory, the only Mediator between God and man, who is our Advocate, Prince of Peace, Lord of lords and King over all, and *in* all his people for whom he died. Blessed be his holy name forever. Whose kingdom is not of this world, for while on earth, when his friends would have made him a king on earth, he would not permit them to do so, knowing that his was a pure kingdom, and he the pure King, and so now Paul writes to the church at Ephesus in ref-

erence to their standing and their foundation, saying to them who were Gentiles by nature or blood and heirs by the spirit of adoption, that they were no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. This building (spiritually) fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord. Now to explain the matter as to where this building was going on, the apostle in the same letter to the Ephesians tells them, and us if we are in it as we hope, by saying to them, In whom ye also are builded together for an *habitation of God,* through the Spirit. Wonder of wonders that God so loves, and it is because of love that he makes his abode in his people through his Spirit, for the question was asked the Lord why he made himself manifest to them (his disciples) and not to others. The answer was, If any man love me and keep my words my Father and I will come and make our abode with him, and also said, My Father will love him. Why do we love the Lord? Because he first loved us.

May the Lord bless us to praise God for his indwelling Spirit of love, and look to our glorious King of his kingdom that the Father *gave* him (not going to), which begins in the hearts of his people, he working in them to "believe," and if they believe they have eternal life, For this is life eternal, that you believe on him whom God hath sent. *Eternal life* does not die, but goes on in the great beyond, about which we can only say, "In the realms of eternal glory." For said the King of glory, "My kingdom is not of this world."

G. E. COULBOURN.

CAPE CHARLES, Virginia.

ATLANTIC, N. C., Sept. 29, 1927.

MY DEAR WIFE:—I will begin to talk to you and finish in the morning. It is now 6:30 and I have nothing to do but write to you, and my mind is not in exercise. Thus, you see I am living by hope. The people who know things live by sight. One thing I do know is, I am a sinner and in constant need of the mercies of God. I believe on his word that he will be merciful to me, for I am full of unrighteousness. Those who know their unrighteousness have his promises and I am one who knows I am a poor, needy sinner. Only in his word do I have any hope. He has said, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Is not that good enough for poor sinners like me? It is true in both the old dispensation (Jer. iii. 12) and in the new in which we now live. (Heb. viii. 12). The promise in the gospel is the fuller, as Christ is more sure than the law. The law of God is often violated in the fulfillment of his promises, his purposes; but in the gospel every word of his is sure and must come to pass. Had not the Lord Jesus fulfilled the law in every jot and tittle, it would remain against his people and they could have no hope, no anchor; but would be like the rough and restless sea on which we are. Having this hope, we are both

sure and steadfast; and as we are assured of the fact that we have this hope and that it is both sure and steadfast, it becomes assurance doubly sure: sure and steadfast. How much more can be said than this? It is sure and steadfast. That is enough for me. Now we have received the grace of God in receiving life from the dead, spiritually, so we are not hoping for that, that we have by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. But there is more to it than that; we have that and therefore we are not hoping for it. To me this came when the Lord manifested the forgiveness of sins to me. There the body and spirit became Jacob and Israel and entered into warfare. That warfare has continued to this day. But the flesh, or old man, is weakening, the new man, or spiritual, is coming more and more prominent. Like the babe learns its dependence on the mother, so this spiritual learns more and more of its dependence on God who has all power; and the more he learns of God's power the more he learns of his own weakness. We see more of God to be loved and the more of ourselves to be hated. But what are we hoping for? We have this teaching, we are but pupils in the school of grace, we are not graduates; there is so much for us to learn that we feel to know nothing. What we have learned only leads us to our hope. There is something we are hoping for, we have this hope, etc. What is it we are hoping for? The hope is both sure and steadfast, what and how can that be for which we are hoping? Must it not be most glorious to receive and to look upon? It is the fact that this body which dies *must rise* from the dead and be like Jesus who rose from the dead, overcame death and the grave and ascended to heaven in the presence of witnesses and is forever set down at the right hand of the Father with satisfied justice looking him in his glorified face. Oh, my dear, this is our hope: we shall be raised as he arose, shall ascend as he ascended, shall see the Father all glorious and satisfied. Where is the carnal mind or old man? He is swallowed up in victory as it is given us in Christ Jesus our Lord and God. Then where is our hope, for we shall have received that for which we have been hoping? Ah, we shall hope no more, for we shall be full as our God is full. We shall be like him. That is that for which I hunger now, but will have received it then and shall be satisfied. There can be nothing more, we can want nothing more, we shall be satisfied. Such has been the musing of my mind to-day and I wanted you, dear, to know it. This, dear one, is my hope, our God will not disappoint me. He gave me this hope and I have it both sure and steadfast. It is as sure and as good as I am a sinner and vile. Then faith is a twin to hope. We are given to believe in Christ as our Savior. We read these things in the Bible, but that is not direct evidence. The children of God want direct evidence and then all other as he may see fit to give to them. I love to think back to June, 1873, when the Lord took away my burden of fear of condemnation. My whole being was filled with praise to God and he gave

me to believe that the Jesus who died to save poor sinners, was MY Savior. This was June 3rd, and I was so full of praise to God that I did not question any of his promises. I felt to know that he would do all things as he would. I was as one asleep, and had no questions about his ability to save. I am satisfied that at that time faith was given me to believe on him as my Savior. Then the 9th of that same month, I saw him on the cross. I was plowing and not asleep. I saw him dying *for me*. I believed on him and was preaching him as the Savior of poor sinners, to all such poor sinners as I saw myself to be. When the vision passed I was a happy poor sinner. I had no doubts in my mind. Faith in him had driven these away so that all the world could not have shaken my faith in God who lived and died and rose again for me. Since then I have believed in this God and his power to cause me to rise from the dead. It is my hope and my faith to this day.

Your brother in this hope, and loving husband,

LEMUEL H. HARDY.

DANVILLE, Va., Feb. 26, 1931.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—MY DEAR SON:—As I am thinking of you will pen you a few thoughts that occurred to me last night when I should have been asleep. "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." We notice in the garden of Eden, it seems the Lord God and Satan were face to face and talked with each other in reference to our parents' transgression and sins that brought death to mankind. Then, again, Satan seemed to meet and tempt Jesus, and we find also in Job, when the sons of God assembled the devil also appeared, and the Lord said, Whence comest thou? Satan seemed to have power to go to and fro. The Lord also said to him, Thou movedst me against him (Job), to destroy him without cause. It seems to me here Job is a type of Jesus. Did not some great power move the Lord God against Jesus the only begotten of God and cause him to die, he the just and holy one, that we poor sinners might live? Last Friday night at the hour of midnight I was enabled to see some of the greatness, goodness and mercy of God, and the exceeding sinfulness of the devil. Language, as I know it, utterly fails to express the greatness and goodness of God, and also the wickedness of Satan. What a brazen image to tempt Jesus, trying to dethrone him, if possible. But, son, I have no fear of this, for I believe, as powerful as the devil is shown to be, yet he is subject to the power of almighty God. The powers that be are ordained of God. Not that I believe God hath pleasure in the death of the wicked, or causes them to so act, but that wicked principle in them is manifested by their delight in doing wickedly shows the power and influence of Satan in them, ruling to their destruction. At the hour of midnight, as I stated, I thought of Paul and Silas in prison, their feet made fast in stocks, with chains and shackles to

hold them safe, but when they were enabled to pray the prison opened, their chains and shackles fell off and they were set free, but said to the jailer, Do thyself no harm, we are here. Did not run away. So we see when the power of Jesus is made manifest prisons open, chains fall off and the Lord is glorified, and the children of the kingdom give God the praise.

Not long ago I wrote some about the children and the children's bread. You know there is the natural loaf and the spiritual, both spoken of; also two kinds of water, natural and the water of life, as Jesus told the woman at Jacob's well. So many good things spoken of in the Scriptures, and all for the children of God, to whom they belong. Now, son, I feel like a fool, not for Christ's sake, but for want of sense to mention all these things, but I simply want to ask you and your able editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to continue to lift up your voices like a trumpet that we poor ones might hear the joyful sound, for I believe you are on the walls to declare glad tidings, which is the glorious gospel which we want undiluted. I often think of a little song I learned in Sunday School, "Revive us again," and wonder if the Lord will truly revive us again. Sometimes I feel there are good people among them who would join us but they fear we will all soon be dead and they would have no home, while some leave us for the same reason and want to be progressive, but our God is not confused.

I must stop, for I cannot tell the half. I feel, son, it will soon be midnight with me and at the right time the Bridegroom cometh, but then, son, if we have the oil of grace in our hearts all will be well. Somehow of late when I read of the trials and troubles of the children of God, oh how I do, above all things, desire to be one of them.

Now, son, what I have touched upon I hope may induce you and others to write about in a way that I may with others really know something about them. Amen.

Your papa,

R. L. DODSON.

[ONLY those who have such earthly fathers can understand the joy that was mine upon receiving the above letter, which I feel to praise God for and to share it with my dear kindred in Christ. —R. LESTER DODSON.]

MOWEAQUA, Ill., March 10, 1931.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have intended for some time to write you a few lines, but have neglected doing it. I was reading last Sunday in the book on predestination, which Elder R. Lester Dodson had printed some time ago, and I felt I would like to address a few lines to you who publish and write for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Not that I am able to write anything which would be of any comfort to God's dear people, but to let you know I am in agreement on the doctrine of predestination as you preach and write it, for if I understand anything in regard to the teaching of God's word it teaches me that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. We, who are only worms of the

dust, should not be found replying against God, for we read in his holy writ, Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? The God I worship does not need any of his weak creatures here below to come along and try to make some excuses for some of his work which does not look just right to them. We have some people who feel they must plead God's cause for him and explain to the people just why it is this way, as though God wanted it different but had not the power to bring it about. These belong to the same class as did King Saul when he was waiting for Samuel the prophet to come and offer an offering unto God for him and his people before they went into battle. Saul grew tired of waiting, or, in other words, he lost faith in God and went ahead and offered an offering himself. Then when Samuel came he said unto Saul, What have you done? Saul answered, I have forced myself therefore and offered a burnt offering. Samuel replied, Thou hast done foolishly. Is it not that way to-day with many people who profess to have faith in God and believe his wonderful works? They profess to believe that God has all power both in heaven and earth, and that whatsoever his soul desireth even that he doeth, yet we find those who cannot leave the destiny of this world and all things therein to the hand of God, but they must force themselves to offer offerings and excuses for God and try to shield him from blame for these things which come about. Well, dear brethren, the God I worship is perfectly able to shoulder all the blame for the conditions of all these pros and cons and to answer a world of fault-finders in this way: I work and who can hinder? and it all shall turn about to the abasement of men and to the glory of God, for the wrath of man shall praise him and the remainder of wrath will he restrain.

Now I must close by informing you that the church where I hold my membership, in Coles County, Illinois, said church being named Zoar, met on Saturday before the second Sunday in December and ordained brother C. A. Hunt to the full work of the gospel ministry. Elder Hunt is now located in Eureka, Kansas. I am sure he would be glad to hear from any of the household of faith.

May the editors and writers and all who are interested in the SIGNS be spared and given the heart to keep the standard of faith in its place. May God give you strength to carry on, and when it is well with you please pray for a poor unworthy sinner who believes in salvation by the grace of God and not by works of man.

If you wish, you may publish this letter, but I do not want it to crowd out better matter.

I remain your brother in hope of eternal life,

HAROLD T. JAYNES.

MATTOON, Ill., March 27, 1931.

DEAR EDITORS:—Kindly allow me space in your columns to acknowledge the receipt of letters and thank the scores of brethren and sisters who so generously responded to my suggestion in the January issue of the SIGNS that I would be glad to hear from them in my close confinement. It is, I trust, with deep heart-felt gratitude to the Lord God omnipotent for putting it in the hearts of these dear friends to send their messages of love to one who feels deeply his unworthiness, coming from many States, I could and did say, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;" and at the same time realize that "Thy mercy, O God, is in the heavens, and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds." And, again, the psalmist would add, "How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings." A most wonderful resting-place indeed! No harm can befall them there. Having fought a good fight and kept the faith, a crown of righteousness is their rightful inheritance. The blessed Lord says, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish."

"There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains."

I now feel that if I am spared until the weather becomes settled I will be able to get out in the open again. I feel myself to be in the Lord's hand and his gracious love and mercy endureth forever.

Your brother in hope of a blessed immortality, J. G. SAWIN.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the churches composing the same, convening at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 5th, 6th and 7th, 1930, sends christian greetings to our sister associations and meetings of our correspondence.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have once more enjoyed the blessed privilege of receiving your messengers and Minutes in our midst, and we feel that God was with us and blessed us with the truth preached as it is in Jesus. Elders R. Lester Dodson and D. L. Topping were with us and declared unto us some of the mercies of grace and wisdom of a risen Savior.

Our next session will be announced later through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, when we hope to meet your messengers again.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

NOTICE.

ANY one possessing a copy of "Hassell's Church History; "An Ex. on the Rev. of St. John," by Jesse Cox; "The Two Witnesses," by T. W. Stewart; "The Primitive Baptist Preacher," by Thompson; "Baptism," by John Gadsby; or any other articles written in defense of the truth, regardless of condition, who is willing to dispose of the same, please communicate with W. J. Berry, 2807 Pearl St., Santa Monica, California.

Brother T. C. Compton, Live Oak, California, would also like to procure a copy of Hassell's Church History.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1931.

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RESURRECTION.

A BROTHER living in Mississippi has asked us to give our views on the resurrection of the dead. We have written on this subject some years ago, but it may be good to consider it again. We are not infallible: as men, we are weak and liable to err and certainly do not set up ourselves as being authorities in spiritual matters. We are willing to submit what we have to the judgment of our brethren, asking them to test our views by the Scriptures. The doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is a most important feature of the whole work of salvation; it cannot be minimized in any of its essentials if one wishes to be considered sound in the faith. If the dead rise not, then our faith is vain and we are still in our sins and redemption has not taken place. Jesus Christ himself is the resurrection and the life; whether, therefore, we consider the subject from its experimental standpoint or with regard to its future aspect in the bringing forth of the bodies of the saints from the dead, Jesus is the resurrection. Resurrection is not restoration nor resuscitation. A person may faint or lose consciousness for a time, afterward come to one's self again; individuals have been known to go into a state of coma and remain so for days, no signs of life being evident except to the expert, afterward have come back to normal again. Plant life becomes dormant in winter and blossoms forth again in spring, some animals sleep through winter and awake in spring, some insects disappear as worms in autumn and come out as moths months later; but none of these things are resurrections. Resurrection means the dead coming forth into life; not simply coming out from the dead, but the dead itself coming to life and being raised alive out of death. Nature knows no such thing as this; it is a supernatural, miraculous transaction, above nature and contrary to natural laws.

The Bible doctrine of resurrection may be treated upon from three standpoints, viz: (1) that which has been done, (2) that which is being done now, (3) that which is yet to be done. It would not do to teach that the resurrection of the dead is a thing of the past, over and done with; such would place us in company with Hymenaeus

and Philetus, who declared the resurrection to be past already and so overthrew the faith of some; it would not do either to teach the resurrection as a matter of present gospel experience ignoring the past or future; or it would not do to teach the doctrine of the resurrection as referring only to the future resurrection of the bodies of the saints from the dead. The subject must be considered in all three of these phases if it is to be done with respect and in reverence to what the Scriptures teach.

(1) That which has been done.

Jesus Christ himself has through death destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and has delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage: the bondage of corruption. The work of Jesus Christ in suffering, dying and in rising from the dead is a complete finished work. He finished once and forever the redemption of his people from under the law and the curse of sin, he perfectly justified them from all blame in the presence of the eternal God his Father, he effectually quickened them together with himself and brought them forth from the dead: for the people of God were themselves all dead and in death on account of sin which ruined them while in their first estate in Adam even before any of them individually had come into conscious being. Even so, in Jesus Christ all his people were in his resurrection quickened together with him from the dead and raised in him: they the body, he their Head, even before any one of them had yet experienced it consciously for themselves or before it yet had been revealed to them individually. Such is the finished work of Christ the Son of God. Words fail to adequately tell it or to do it justice. John said that if all the things which Jesus did should have been written every one, the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Therefore, nothing short of eternity will suffice to make known to the children of God the fullness of the infinite consequences of this finished work of Christ. The work of revelation to the saints begins here on earth to be consummated in the full glory of eternity. This brings us to the second phase of the resurrection.

(2) That which is being done now.

This is the work of the Holy Ghost, not of the Son, who takes the things of Jesus and interprets them to those who believe, whose work it is to lead the church in the way of all truth during this present gospel age, which age is the term of the administration of the Holy Ghost: the third Person in the trinity of the Godhead. This Teacher and Revealer comes not in his own name, but in the name of the Father and of the Son to make known to the heirs of God what the Father and the Son have done for them. Had it not been for the finished and perfect work of the Son, there would be and could be no revealing work by the Holy Ghost. Hence, the work of the Holy Ghost in this present gospel period reaching from Pentecost to the coming again of the Lord himself from heaven is consequent upon Jesus having done all the work

which the Father committed unto him to do: which was to do not his own will but his Father's in losing nothing of all the Father had given him, and to raise it up again at the last day. The gospel church and all who believe are living now in the life of the Spirit. It is this Spirit that quickens the sinner dead in trespasses and in sins and which brings him out of nature's darkness into the glorious light and liberty of the children of God. The same power which brought again Jesus from the dead is that by which the children of God are given to believe on him as well as to suffer for his sake, for the very fact of suffering is proof that one is alive from the dead. The sinner's being born again, or from above, is the Holy Ghost's work and is the work now being done for and in all those who believe, all because of the finished and perfect work of the Son of God who also, after the flesh, is the Son of man. The life and walk of the church and of all who believe, their warfares and victories, their prayers and the answers, are all embraced in this present life which they live, though in the flesh, by the faith of the Son of God who loved them and gave himself for them. It is, therefore, the resurrection life; for the evidence that one is risen with Christ from under the law is that he does seek earnestly those things which are above. The preaching of the gospel, as well as the believing it; all the ordinances of the visible church, its order and its doctrine: these are what are being done for us now by the revealing and the teaching of the Holy Ghost; for while the work of Jesus Christ the Son of God has for nearly two thousand years been done, the work of the Holy Ghost in revealing that work is not done, but is going on and will continue to go on until concluded in the third phase of this subject.

(3) That which is yet to be done.

Man is the sinner, not some part of man. Man is made body, soul and spirit. This man is the subject of the resurrection. The people of God are to be raised in body also. This is guaranteed and assured in that Jesus Christ himself arose from the dead, not part of him, but all of him; the same Jesus who suffered and died for our sins was raised from the dead by the power of God. This same Jesus ascended up unto God, and this same blessed Person is now at the right hand of the Father in heaven, whence he shall come again to raise the dead, both the just and the unjust; the justified unto life eternal, the unjust unto judgment and condemnation. There is nothing new about this declaration of our faith, it has been the faith of God's people in all ages. The bodies of believers, as well as their souls and spirits, are bought with a price, that is, with the blood of Jesus Christ. Being thus bought, nothing of them can be lost; neither their souls, their spirits nor their bodies. "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." Both the body and the spirit of the saint are God's. The

sinner himself, his sins excepted, is saved; and each and every sinner thus redeemed shall be finally housed in eternity, not as a disembodied spirit but clothed in a spiritual body, which spiritual body is the redemption of this mortal body. The whole work of salvation was completed when Jesus died and rose again, but the revelation of the finished work is not ended. The resurrection of the body, when it takes place, will be but a further proof and manifestation of what Christ did for his people when he died for them. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." To sanctify means to set apart unto a holy use. Thus, it is seen in the word that even our bodies have a part in being set apart unto the day of Christ's coming, when they shall be changed and fashioned like unto Christ's own glorious body. "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Further it is written, "Ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Jesus, in discoursing to Nicodemus, plainly told him that except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Man, the whole man, not part of him, is the subject of this "born again." Man is, therefore, the subject of redemption; being reredeemed, the whole man is therefore the subject resurrected. Man is body, soul and spirit: he will therefore be raised from the dead bodily as well as in spirit and soul. If not, why not? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's redeemed? If not, then Christ must have failed in some part of his work. Perish such a thought! The Spirit that raised up Christ from the dead is the very same Spirit that now dwells in them that believe: thus, their mortal bodies are the temples of the living God. This indwelling Spirit in the believer is God's own pledge to his saints that their mortal bodies shall be quickened, and it is further declared that this quickening of these mortal bodies shall be accomplished by this same Spirit which now dwells in them. The mortal body of the saint is not quickened at this present time, it is to be done in the future. If not, the writer would have said, "is quickened;" but he says, "shall also quicken." (Rom. viii. 11.) The verb "shall" refers to that which is to be done in the future. Let us quote here from an article written many years ago on this same subject by Elder Gilbert Beebe, founder of the SIGNS:

"The body in its present state is mortal, or subject to disease and death, but it shall be perfectly freed in the resurrection from mortality; this will be a glorious change, but this is not all: the body in its time state is weak, it is sown in weakness, but it shall be raised in power. Now it is corrupt, but it shall be raised in an incorruptible state, and death shall be swallowed up in victory. It is now in a state or dishonor, but it shall be robed in immortal honor; it is now a natural, earthly, Adamic body, but in the resurrection it shall be a spiritual, heavenly body, standing in the same relation to Christ as it now stands to the old Adam."

In the SIGNS of March 13th, 1889, is an article on this same subject by Elder Wm. J. Purington. We cannot forbear giving you a part of it:

"The glorious doctrine of the resurrection of the dead and from the dead, is just as broad as redemption is; and although to us it is an incomprehensible subject, it is true. When Israel was about to leave Egypt, and no longer serve the tyrant Pharaoh, The declaration was, 'There shall not an hoof be left behind.' So in the resurrection at the last day, the redeemed bodies of the saints will not be left out, for said the apostle, 'Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.' Was not the body in that divine purchase? The apostle says it was. Therefore, is it not very rash talk, to say the least of it, when persons say, 'I don't care anything about this old sinful body?'"

Many more confirmations of this belief could be given from the pens of many writers, but enough for this time.

H. H. L.

HEBREWS IV. 9.

"THERE remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."

A sister, formerly of Virginia and New York, but now residing in Florida, requested several years ago that we write on the above text. In making the request she said, "No need to tell you I have my own opinion, but I would like for you to write if you feel you have any light on it." We cannot lay claim at this time to having any special light on the text. The text itself has come into our mind and we hope to examine and treat upon it in a manner that will harmonize with the teaching of the Scripture and the experience of the Lord's people. We do not know what opinion our sister holds. She and many of our readers may differ with us. We hope all will take the written word of God as the man of their counsel and disregard anything that any man may write that will not stand the acid test of truth. We owe our first allegiance to God, and desire not to indulge in pleasant sayings by way of catering even to our brethren. The important thing is that the truth should be presented in its purity. If to be on the side of truth causes us to stand alone, alone we will have to stand. We are always glad, however, after having presented the truth as we understand it, to find that the brethren are with us.

The apostle Paul in this epistle to the Hebrews is dealing with the two covenants. The first, or law covenant, demanding *work*, contained "ordinances of divine service," but, at best, they were only shadows of better things to come. The second, or grace covenant, supplying *rest*, contained the substance of all that was foreshadowed in the first. He told them in the outset that "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they." In the ninth and tenth chapters more or less of a summing up appears. The description of the rites and sacri-

fices of the law in the ninth chapter are found to be far inferior to the dignity and perfection of the blood and sacrifices of Christ set forth in the tenth chapter. He takes, as it were, the very cream of the legal covenant and shows it to be totally inadequate for the requirement. He speaks of the tabernacle wherein was the candlestick, and the tables, and the shewbread, and the tabernacle which was called the Holiest of all, "which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; and over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy seat," and shows them to be only figurative. He tells us that into the first tabernacle, or outer court, the priests went, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second, or inner court, went the high priest alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people. We see here that even the high priest needed to make an offering of blood in his own behalf, which showed not only his own vileness and corruption, but pointed to the need of a better sacrifice than the law could furnish. The reading is, "The Holy Ghost thus signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with

blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy place made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation." The prophets all down through the ages of the legal dispensation, by faith, foresaw the day of Christ, and that he would in the end of that world put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; they prophesied of the passing of the night and of the dawning of the day, when the Sun of righteousness would arise with healing in his wings. Night preceded day, death precedes life, therefore, it was "appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." There is no judgment until one passes from death unto life. One must first be killed to the law before he is made alive to grace. Such are the characters who are looking for the Savior, "and unto them that look for him shall he appearr the second time without sin unto salvation." Jesus came first, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. His first appearance was as a man, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. But, the apostle Paul plainly declares that "though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." His second appearing, therefore, is not in the form of human flesh, but "without sin" (or without the likeness of sinful flesh) "unto salvation." God was manifest in the flesh, but justified in the Spirit, and he is now every inch a Savior, mighty to save, even unto the uttermost. Having conquered death and the grave, the strongest enemy and last foe, he now appears as a victorious King, "glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength." By faith, he is seen as such by the saints on earth, who speak of the glory of his kingdom, and talk of his power, and to those who thus behold him, old things have passed away and, behold, all things have become new, and all things are of God. Paul writes to the church at Colosse regarding this most wonderful personage, "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us

from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son; in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, * * * and by him all things consist." He also tells them that they were "buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead," and then says, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Paul was addressing his epistle to believers in the Lord Jesus Christ here in this world. The word "church" means "called out," or separated from the world. "Baptism" implies death, burial and resurrection. It is a violation of the law of the land to bury one who is not corporally dead, and it is equally against the law of God to bury in baptism one who is not dead to the law and the love of sin and alive to Christ and the love of righteousness. It is because they are already risen with Christ that they should and do seek those things which are above. The reason they set their affections on things above, and not on things on earth, is that they are dead to the law and to the things of the world, and their life is hid with Christ in God. We are aware of the fact that some very able interpreters construe the words, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory," to apply only to what they term the second bodily coming of our Lord to earth again, but Christ, "who is our life," most certainly does and shall appear to his saints on earth, and when he does they also appear with him in glory. Without this life, they are dead and know not anything, but when he comes, quickening them, raising them up to walk in newness of life, then they behold him, and to be with him is to be in glory. The poet said,

> "'Twas a heaven below the Redeemer to know,
> And the angels could do nothing more
> Than to fall at his feet, and the story repeat,
> And the Savior of sinners adore."

Certainly, they see nothing about him to suggest weakness, but everything that is seen and known of him is indicative of might, dominion, power and glory. Wonder of wonders, then, that the poor and needy should hear the voice of such an one, saying unto them, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Only those who have ceased from their labors enter into that rest which the gospel of the Son of God affords. What a mercy that he should appear without sin unto salvation to them, that they should see him bearing away into the land of forgetfulness the burden of their sins and have the assur-

ance that all their iniquity was laid upon him and that it was by his stripes they are healed. Can eternity be long enough to render adequate praise to him that loved them and gave himself for them? The tenth chapter of Hebrews declares plainly that he took away the first covenant that he might establish the second, and that because it was not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin, "by one offering [even himself, the spotless Lamb of God] he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." To this he calls the Holy Ghost to witness, and then sets forth that under this new covenant he would put his laws into the hearts of his people, and in their minds would he write them; and their sins and iniquities would he remember no more. This, then, is called the "new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh." In the chapter in which our text is found the apostle says, For we which believe *do* enter into rest. Legal worshippers like Martha was, are still cumbered with much serving, but all true gospel believers, like Mary, who chose the good part, have ceased from their labors and entered into the rest that remaineth to the people of God. If not deceived, by faith, we have seen Jesus as the Captain of our salvation. It was he who spake as never man spake, who gave us beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. In the world the Lord's people shall have tribulation and life to most of them is one continual struggle. We doubt not but that many of our readers are looking forward to the time of their release from the turmoil and strife of this life, when they can lay their armor by and go to their home above and enter into that eternal rest, where there will be no interruptions, but one endless day of joy and peace. Glorious faith is that which no longer dreads the monster, death. Such faith penetrates into the unknown and assures us, "It is not death to die." Death will close our eyes upon the shifting scenes of the vanities of this world, but it will also open to us the portals to immortal glory and rest. Here we experience, little by little, something of this glorious rest, but there nothing shall be able to disturb that peace which passeth understanding. When we enter into that which is beyond, we shall enjoy to the full that rest, and Christ will be our song. There comes to our mind as we write these lines the remembrance of dear ones whose faces we shall never look upon again, and there are many others of whom we are now thinking who father time and his sickle will soon reap into the harvest, and the places that know them now shall know them no more forever. While our heart strings are touched and our eyes are filled with tears of sadness at the thought of such parting, yet we are not as those who have no hope, for we believe and are sure that all for whom Christ died and rose again shall be with him where he is and be like him, and be satisfied with his likeness, and that will be enough. None but true believers can understand the ecstacy of the soul

which anticipates the joy of that rest that remaineth to the people of God. And "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

R. L. D.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. E. Coulbourn, January 31st, 1931, at the home of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joshua S. Adkins, Parsonsburg, Maryland, Mr. Cecil F. Tull, Salisbury, Maryland, and Miss Mary Helen Adkins.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER JAMES M. ADAMS, our brother-servant in Christ, departed this earthly life at his home, Monroe, Georgia, March 28th, 1931, after a long disability due to Bright's disease, with which he had been afflicted for over three years, not having been able to walk for over two years; however, his mind and spirit continued awake and alert almost to the end, his interest in and devotion to the cause of Jesus Christ never wavering. He would often say, "I am not sick, just afflicted." He was blessed throughout his illness not to have to suffer much pain. He was the son of Elder William Adams and Susan Frances Hurst, was born in Jasper County, Georgia, December 9th, 1849, being one of sixteen children. He is survived by brothers and sisters as follows: Mrs. Bettie Lunsford, Mansfield, Ga., John H. Adams, Social Circle, Ga., Dillard J., of Covington, Ga., Lee D., of Decatur, Ga., G. Claude, of Social Circle, Homer B., of Decatur, Mrs. Willie Davis, of Mansfield, Mrs. Horace H. Lefferts, of Leesburg, Va., and Sylvester H. Adams, of Covington, Ga. His first wife was Miss Ella Tucker, who lived but a short while after their marriage. His present wife, who survives him, was Miss Nancy Euphrates Malcom, to whom he was wedded January 13th, 1870. To them were born the following children, all of whom are living and all having now families of their own: George Lee and John Quincy Adams, of Atlanta, Ga., William F., of Mansfield, J. Preston and Benjamin G. Adams, of Monroe, Mrs. W. L. Breedlove, Mrs. James H. Peters and Mrs. G. W. Peters, of Monroe, Mrs. J. W. Hicks and Mrs. Mary Brack Chandler, an adopted daughter, of Commerce, Ga. There are also forty-one grandchildren and fifty great-grandchildren, making a total of one hundred living descendants. Brother Adams and his wife were both baptized the same day, April 12th, 1873, by Elder F. M. McElroy, into membership with Jack's Creek Church, Walton County, Georgia. He was ordained to the gospel ministry in 1911, and during his ministry had served four churches as pastor. Owing to his declining health, he relinquished the care of three of these; but his home church at Monroe would not give him up and retained him as pastor until his death. This church at Monroe he had himself helped to organize in 1901 and was one of its constituent members. The Lord had blessed him in temporal things as well as spiritually; and while he was not financially rich by any means, he was able to give himself without reserve to the service of the churches with no thought or care as to whether he was remunerated by them or not. He was firm and uncompromising in his stand on doctrine and order which caused him to be greatly beloved by those believing and loving the truth, but also won him the enmity of those who cannot stand for soundness in faith and practice. Many indeed will mourn his passing because of his unswerving devotion to truth as he saw it; others, we hope not many, will breathe a sigh of relief because they will no longer have to reckon with his opposition when they endeavor to bring in innovations into our ranks. A great and unflinching soul has gone to its reward. The past three years of his life has been most precious to his family, because, while cut off more or less from serving the churches, he ministered continually in the truth of God to his family, thus bringing them all to know his worth as a man of God much more intimately than would have been the case had the Lord taken him away as soon as he became disabled. The impression made upon the minds and hearts of those about him during the time of his indisposition will never be erased. The young who have come under his word and influence during these latter years have a blessed heritage to cherish within them which they shall not ever forget. Few families on this earth have ever had the christian example of true godliness set before them as has been the case here. The best of it all is that it was not of our brother's own self, but altogether of God's grace. The SIGNS and the Old School Baptists in the north have lost, in his passing, a true and faithful brother and supporter. In all, he made seven visits to the meetings and churches within the bounds of the Baltimore, Delaware, Delaware River and Warwick Associations. He believed steadfastly in the absolute predestination of all things and salvation wholly by grace and grace alone. It was estimated that one thousand people attended the funeral services which were held in the church-building of the First Baptists of Monroe, loaned for our use upon this occasion because of its large seating capacity. Besides the writer, remarks were made by Elders Nash, Allen and others. The following hymns were sung:

"Keep silence, all created things," and "Grace, 'tis a charming sound." Interment in the Adams family burying-ground near Dixie, Newton County. May the Lord raise up others to labor in His vineyard as faithfully as he did. May the bereft church, our sister Adams and all the sorrowing ones be comforted by the Holy Spirit of him who has taken away from us that which was his own gift to us.

ALSO,

GEORGE JOHNSON, the last colored member of the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, passed away from earth April 6th, 1931, at the Afro-American Old Folks' Home, Richmond, Va., where he had been a resident for the past few years. He was about 82 years of age. He was baptized in some Old Baptist Church out in Indiana or Illinois many years ago, uniting with Mt. Zion Church here during the pastorate of the late Elder J. N. Badger, upon his moving here from the west and after finding the people of his faith in this section. He is survived by one brother and one sister. Brother George was an humble, God-fearing man, a lover of good men and of the truth of Jesus Christ. He has always borne a good reputation for industry and honesty among the white people in this section. His remains were brought from Richmond and interred in the burying-grounds near Mt. Zion.

H. H. L.

ADDIE E. WOIRHAYE, our sister in Christ, and daughter of Benjamin and Lucy Barnet, was born April 2nd, 1868, and died March 11th, 1931, aged 62 years, 11 months and 9 days. November, 1887, she was married to Mr. John Woirhaye, and to this union were born four children: J. B., Lucy, Mona and Mager. All preceded her in death. Left to mourn are the husband and one granddaughter, Miss Mona Celest Duncan, whose mother, a daughter of the deceased, died when she was three years old, and she knew no mother but "Grandma," who raised her as her own child. Our sister leaves two sisters: Mrs. Berdie Chilton and Mrs. Ethel Owen, and four brothers: John, Frank, Mager and George Barnet. Our sister received a hope in her Savior in the year 1911, and in May of that year was received and baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church called Cane Run, at Turners Station, Kentucky, being baptized by Elder P. W. Sawin, and always lived a life in keeping with the profession she first declared, an honor to the church. Her love for the brethren, her quiet manner and her godly conversation endeared her to all her friends. Her home was a haven for the brethren, and many were the pleasant hours spent in the company of brother and sister Woirhaye. She will be sadly missed by all who knew her. Her voice is stilled in the home, in the church, in the neighborhood. The appointed time had come. God has spoken. He gave, and he hath taken away; blessed be his name, and may he reconcile us all in our bereavement and enable us to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done. Our loss is her gain.

I was called for the funeral, and tried to comfort the friends with the thought that Christ is risen and that all his redeemed will hear his voice and enter in the place which he has prepared for them, in his likeness, and be satisfied. She was laid to rest in the cemetery at New Castle. May the Lord bless the relatives and friends.

ALSO,

MARY J. FIELDS, our sister in Christ, was born October 18th, 1842, and died January 31st, 1931, aged almost 90 years. Her hope was strong and for years she had been looking forward to the time when it would be realized and sin would be no more. One of her expressions was, Why I am left in this world so long none but the Lord knows. She and her husband both were taken in the Old School Baptist Church called Elk Lick the same day, July, 1883, and baptized by Elder J. M. Theobald, then pastor of the church. Sister Mary had been in failing health for some years, but was tenderly cared for in the home of Mrs. Leonard Mulberry, in Sadieville. I called to see her in December, 1930, and found her cheerful, and she expressed a desire to hear me preach once more, so we gathered about a dozen of the brethren and had a pleasant time, and true, it was the last time we saw each other. Our sister was very much impressed with Elder Durand, and would often speak of his visits to Kentucky, and she gave me a photograph of the Elder he had given her forty years ago. Like a sheaf of wheat fully ripe she was gathered home to the place prepared for her. May the Lord bless those who mourn.

Written by request.

ALSO,

JENNIE M. CROSS (Tamsett), beloved wife of brother Cyrus Cross, was born in the town of Kortright, Delaware County, New York, December 22nd, 1871, and died March 19th, 1931, at the home of her sister, Mrs. Emily Solloway, Oneonta, N. Y. Left to mourn are her husband, her aged mother, Mrs. Ann Mills, two sisters, Mrs. Emily Solloway, of Oneonta, N. Y., and Mrs. Rosa B. Leonard, of Otego, N. Y., three brothers, Walter F. and Clifford, of Oneonta, N. Y., and James E., of Hawthorne, Alabama. June 4th, 1899, she was married to Mr. Joseph Gwynn, and to this union one daughter was born, who only lived two years. Her husband died in 1905. After the death of her husband and child she took a nurse's training course and followed that profession for ten years, coming to Cleveland to live. She was married to Mr. Cyrus Cross June 2nd, 1915, and resided in Cleveland until her health failed, when, because of her failing health, brother Cross sold his Cleveland possessions and moved to Oneonta, N. Y., with her sister Emily. That was four years ago. While residing in Cleveland Jennie endeared herself to the brethren of the Old School Baptist Church, and when not able to leave home the meetings were held at her house. While she never

had the courage to unite with the church, it was her chief joy to be with the brethren and sing the songs of Zion.

I was called from Cleveland to attend the funeral, which was held from the home Monday, March 23rd. I tried to comfort the relatives and friends with the thought that Christ is risen, and with much sorrow we laid her to rest in the cemetery in Oneonta. May the blessings of the Lord be with all who mourn, and enable us to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done. Elder Arnold Bellows assisted me with the services.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

CATHERINE A. MILLETT was born July 5th, 1839, and departed this life February 14th, 1929, making her stay on this earth 89 years, 7 months and 9 days. She was married to Stockton H. Millett September, 1864, and to this union two daughters were born: Josie, who died while in her youth, and Emma, who grew to womanhood and was married to Mr. William H. Slugg. Mr. Slugg is indeed a good husband to Emma and was devoted to her parents. Had he been sister Millett's son he could not have been more faithful. Mr. and Mrs. Slugg now reside in Lansdale, Pa. For the comfort and welfare of both his father-in-law and his mother-in-law Mr. Slugg consented that Mrs. Slugg stay and care for her parents. Mr. Slugg made two trips every week for seven years or more from Lansdale to see them and cheer them all he could. Sister Millett spoke of him as one of her children. Sister Millett left her husband, together with Mr. and Mrs. Slugg to realize the desolation that is brought about by death and to mourn for a devoted wife and mother. Sister Millett also leaves a host of relatives and friends to mourn, but we should not mourn for her as though she had no hope, for she professed a hope in Christ and united with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church in June, 1861, and lived in reverence and love of that faith, and the doctrine of salvation by grace was a joyful sound to her. She loved her brethren and pastors, having witnessed the pastorates of Elders Hartwell, Purington, Chick and Vaughn. She expressed her love for the truth, and after she was unable to assemble at the place of meeting she would say, "I know I have missed much." We feel to say that she was a good ensample of true womanhood and has been gathered unto the fathers as the salt of the earth. All we can do now is to bow in humble submission to the God of the whole earth and repeat, Rest on, dear one, from all thy labors.

Written by one who cherishes the memory of such a character.

ALSO,

STOCKTON H. MILLETT, the husband of our dear sister, the late Mrs. Millett, was left to mourn for her only about three months after her death. He was born in 1838, and departed this life in 1929, making his stay on earth a little over 91 years. Since I have mislaid the correct dates of his birth and death, I cannot give his age as to months. However, that does not take from his personality and could not add to him. He was faithful in attendance at our meetings and expressed his appreciation of the doctrine of salvation by grace, having spoken often of his hope in the mercy of God. All that has been written in his wife's obituary might be visualized in his, except that he never united with the church militant.

His funeral, which was conducted by the writer, was largely attended, which attested to the love and esteem in which he was held. He took great pride in his home and its surroundings, his lawn being one of the most attractive in the vicinity of Hopewell, N. J. He was a liberal contributor to the writer, his pastor. We mourn for him, but not as though he had no hope, and we feel our loss is his eternal gain. He now rests from all his labors.

C. W. V.

MRS. REBECCA FANNIE RUSHING CULLIN was born September 23rd, 1856, and died May 4th, 1930, aged 73 years, 7 months and 11 days. Sister Cullen professed a hope in Christ at an early age and united with the Presbyterians. She was married to W. N. Cullen September 26th, 1889, and to this union was born one daughter, Mrs. Velda L. Threlkeld. In the year 1897 sister Cullen and her husband united with the Primitive Baptist Church and she lived a faithful member until her death. Sister Cullen has been in the home of the writer many times and we found her to be a strong believer in election and predestination, also of a sweet, loveable disposition. To know her was to love her. To be in the home of this dear brother and sister was a heaven on earth to the Baptists. She was dearly beloved by her six step-children, all being sorely grieved over the death of this dear christian woman. To the sorrowing husband, children, other relatives and friends I will say, Weep not for this dear sister as for those who have no hope in Christ. Oh how we will miss her in the church; also, her home will seem vacant and desolate without her presence, her love and ever-watchful care, but we feel sure our loss is her gain and all is well with her soul. She is done with the toils and cares of this life and is now enjoying the sweet presence of her dear Savior in ages where there is no end. May the saving grace, mercy and peace of our God ever be with the sorrowing ones, is the sincere wish of the writer, who was her pastor, and who was called upon to conduct her funeral. Her remains were laid to rest in the Dorris burying-ground, near Providence, Kentucky.

Written by request.

ALSO,

W. N. CULLEN was born April 9th, 1853, in Webster County, Kentucky, and died February 18th, 1931. He was the son of James B. Cullen

and Mary Ellen Dorris Cullen. He professed a hope in Christ in the year 1886 and joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Providence, Ky., in 1897. He was appointed Clerk of the Association in 1918. October 7th, 1874, he was married to Jennie Dorris, and to this union were born six children: Nona C., Wm. H., Russell, John W., James E. and Virginia C. Cullen. Virginia died at the age of 4 months and 3 days, July 12th, 1888. The mother of the infant died July 2nd, 1888. September 26th, 1889, he married Rebecca Rushing, who died May 4th, 1930, as stated in the preceding obituary. The writer was called to speak words of comfort to the bereaved children. I have lost a dear friend, as well as a father in Israel. I wish to say that I do sincerely sympathize with these dear children and hope God will be with them and be their everlasting comfort. We feel that this precious brother was blessed in being called to his eternal home so soon after being called upon to say farewell in this world to his loving companion, for now they are both enjoying everlasting peace in that land where parting, sorrow, sickness and death will be felt and feared no more. May God be with us and comfort us all, is the sincere wish of one who loves and believes in the just and all-wise God who rules and reigns and who makes no mistakes and doeth all things for the good of those who love him and are called according to his purpose.

Written by one who loved this dear brother and sister in Christ,

W. T. CLAYTON.

MRS. ANNIE REESE, daughter of M. V. and Sarah Gross Dykes, was born in Grundy County, Tennessee, January 12th, 1869, and answered her Master's call to come home January 27th, 1931. Happy thought, to be like Jesus! She came to Texas with her parents in September, 1883. She was married to Thomas Reese December 21st, 1886, and to that union were born eight children, six girls and two boys. The girls are all married. Her husband and two small children preceded her in death. All her six living children were with her when she passed away. They are Mrs. H. W. Frick, of Sabinal, Texas, Walter Wood, Albany, Texas, Mrs. H. D. Keeling, Beaumont, Texas, and Mrs. Ella Culpepper and Jake Reese, of Stockdale, Texas, with whom she had made her home the last three years of her life. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church called Bethlehem, of Martindale, Texas, the second Sunday in February, 1909, and was baptized by Elder J. B. Buntyn on Saturday before the second Sunday in July, 1909. She ever lived a faithful member and as long as she was able her place was filled at meeting Saturday and Sunday. She always contended for the truth, and nothing short of the truth would satisfy her. She never had trouble with any one. She was in bed four months, but had a smile for every one. She said Job had to suffer, also said she would be better off to go and reign with Jesus. Besides her children, she leaves ten grandchildren, her father, who is ninety-one years of age, two brothers and five sisters, all of whom, except one, were with her as much as they could be during her affliction.

Funeral services were held at her late home, after which her body was conveyed to Stockdale Cemetery, according to her previous request, there to wait until it please the Lord to change this body as seems good to himself. I will say to her children, You all suffered with your mother, now rest with her, and remember her counsel was ever wise and kind. You did everything for her that loving hands could do. Just think of her "In the sweet by and by.

Written by her sister,

(MRS.) M. S. HAWK.

MRS. MARY E. EGGLETON, daughter of Anderson and Polly Lester Stultz, of Dyers Station, Henry County, Virginia, was born December 12th, 1838, and died January 22nd, 1931, making her stay on earth 92 years, 1 month and 10 days. She was buried at Camp Branch Church January 24th, by the side of her son, G. A. Eggleton, who preceded her in death more than seventeen years. Sister Eggleton on her death bed selected hymns to be sung at her burial, and requested that I preach her funeral, which I was blessed to do in the presence of a large gathering of relatives and friends. Sister Eggleton united with the Old School Baptist Church of Leather Wood, Henry County, Virginia, in her twenty-second year, and was baptized by Elder John R. Martin. She remained a faithful member over seventy years, or until death, being strong in the faith of God's elect. She greatly enjoyed assembling with the saints at their respective places of worship as long as health and circumstances permitted. I greatly enjoyed a few hours with her last summer. She married Granville A. Eggleton February 23rd, 1869, and to that union two children were born, who, with her husband, preceded her to the great beyond, her husband dying in the Civil War. She leaves to mourn her death one son-in-law, one daughter-in-law, thirteen grandchildren, fourteen great-grandchildren, two great-great-grandchildren, one half-sister, Mrs. Sallie Martin, of Sandy River, three half-brothers, B. F. Stultz, of Roanoke, Va., J. D. Stultz, of Martinsville, Va., Calvin Stultz, of Draper, N. C., and a host of friends. She was possessed of a cheerful and amiable disposition, ever ready to greet her children, neighbors and friends with a bright winning smile. She was thoughtful, kind and considerate of others, a faithful wife, a tender and loving mother and grandmother. Oh how all will miss her dear presence in the home. We are sure to die to her was gain, but to us a great loss. May it be the pleasure of the God she loved and adored to fill up the vacancy made in this home with his presence.

Written by

J. E. BURGESS.

MRS. AURELIA S. HANCOCK was born October 7th, 1863, and died at the Old School Baptist Home, in Salisbury, Maryland, August 27th, 1930. Before her marriage to Mr. George S. Hancock, in the year 1878, she was Miss Aurelia S. Phippens. She was the mother of six children, three boys and three girls, who are married and have homes of their own. Mrs. Hancock had been an attentive member of the Old School Baptist Church for over thirty years. She is survived by her husband and six children.

The funeral services were held August 29th, 1930, at the Old School Baptist Home, conducted by Elder G. E. Coulbourn. He also read two of her favorite hymns. Burial was at Hastings Cemetery, Delmar, Delaware.

Written by S. E. TIGGS.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, &c. REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.

Of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, published monthly, at Middletown, N. Y., for April, 1931.

State of New York, County of Orange, ss.:

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Gilbert Beebe, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the owner of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that the following is to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24th, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse side of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publishers, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publishers, J. E. Beebe & Company, Middletown, N. Y.; Editor, H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

2. The owner is, Gilbert Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagers and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent. or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear on the books of the company, but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the corporation for whom such trustee is acting is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stocks, bonds or other securities than as so stated by him.

GILBERT BEEBE, Owner.

SWORN to and subscribed before me this 10th day of April, 1931.

(Seal) FRANK P. COX.

My commission expires March, 1932.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

BROTHER J. M. Amsbury wishes his correspondents to know that his present address is Station A, Salem Oregon.

Elder C. M. Weaver's address is changed from 503 Jefferson Street, to 1114 N. Washington Avenue, Johnston City, Illinois.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. H. A. Strube, Texas, $2; Isaac L. Kipp, N. J., $1; Mrs. Allie Gooch Reid, N. C., $1; H. F. Cate, Kan., $1; Mrs. Sirena Bowen, Ill., $1; John W. Rockafellow, N. Y., $3; Miss Sadie T. Nicholl, Md., $3; T. O. Turner, Ky., $1; F. B. Hanover, Ohio, $1.

MEETINGS.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects Elder Arnold H. Bellows (Providence permitting) to meet with them the fifth Sunday in May, 1931. Services to be held at the home of brother J. E. Livingston, 64 E. Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. Also at 2 p. m. on Saturday before. All welcome.

(MRS.) ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in May (31st). All are welcome. E. M. FORD.

The Baltimore Association will be held with the Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore, Md., beginning May 22nd, at 1:30 p. m., and continuing over Saturday and Sunday, May 23rd and 24th, night meetings also. All visitors are requested to come direct to meetinghouse, which is located at 200 East Madison Street, near Calvert Street. A cordial invitation to meet with us is extended to all. We hope that ministers and as many of their congregations as can do so will arrange to come.

ALVIS S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held (the Lord willing) with the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, May 27th, 28th

and 29th, 1931. Both railroad trunk lines are available, the Baltimore and Ohio and the Pennsylvania, to those coming by rail. Consult the time tables as changes are due in April. Ministers of our faith and order, and all those who desire to hear the truth as it is in the Lord Jesus Christ, are cordially invited to be present, and all will be welcome in our homes.

JOHN B. MILLER, Church Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held (the Lord willing) with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Pa., Wednesday and Thursday, June 3rd and 4th, 1931. The train leaving Reading Terminal, Philadelphia, at 9:25 Wednesday morning will be met at Southampton station. Ministers of our faith and order, and all who love the truth as it is in Jesus, are cordially invited to meet with us.

CASPER G. FETTER, Church Clerk,
27 N. Eastfield Ave., TRENTON, N. J.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (10th, 11th and 12th), 1931. Those coming from and via New York City will take Erie R. R. Ferry foot of West 23rd Street or Chambers Street for train leaving Jersey City. Get tickets for Howells, N. Y. Those coming from and via Kingston, N. Y., will take Ontario & Western train from Kingston. Get tickets for Winterton, N. Y. Trains will be met and friends cared for. Time of trains will be announced later, when new schedules will be effective. Those coming by automobile will go directly to the meetinghouse, where they will be directed to places of entertainment. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, sisters and friends to meet with us.

R. LESTER DODSON.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Cane Run Predestinarian Old School Baptist Church, of Turners Station, Kentucky, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 10:30 a. m., also, the Sulphur Fork Church of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, of the same faith and order, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 2:30 p. m.

GEO. L. WEAVER, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

SELF-PRONOUNCING BIBLE

These Bibles are printed on a good quality of paper, in large, clear type, and contain Marginal References, a complete system of helps, with a good Concordance, and many other things which space will not permit us to mention. Size of page 8⅝x5½ inches. Bound in French Seal Leather, with extended covers, red under gilt edge. The "Open Flat" Binding on these Bibles is far superior to any method of binding yet devised. Its many advantages over all other Bible bindings will be at once apparent. The Bible will lie open absolutely flat. The back of the Bible will at all times retain its shape. With this perfect binding the Bible will not break in the back. This is a Bible we know will please our people. Price $4.50 each. Postage paid by us. Any person wishing one of these books can secure one by sending us eight new yearly subscriptions.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 99. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1931. NO. 6.

POETRY.

CHASTISEMENT.

(HEBREWS XII. 7, 8.)

Have pity on me, O my kindred,
For my soul is troubled sore;
God's own hand I feel has touched me,
And I nothing am, I'm sure.

Day and night I wander restless,
Seeking peace and finding none;
God deals to his own a chastening,
And I hope that I am one.

Friends aloof, and brethren also,
God's own hand hath hedged me in,
And I mourn, and cry in trouble,
"Lord, have mercy on my sin."

Loud and fast the sea increases,
Casting up its dirt and mire;
When he's tried me, I'll be purer,
He will guide me through the fire.

Lone I stand and cry to heaven,
Looking for the Prince of Peace,
He whose blood redeemed his people,
Can make the wildest tempest cease.

Satan roars and tempts me also,
Tells of joys I used to share,
But faith answers, There's a promise,
Cast upon him all thy care.

So I walk in death's dark valley,
Feel the smitings of his rod,
Trust and lean upon the promise:
Chastened, ye are sons of God.

FLOSSIE I. FAULKNER.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOLOMON'S SONG VII. 1.

"How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter."

When a person has been in some distressing predicament, I have heard people remark that they would not care to stand in his shoes. Well, by nature all the offspring of Adam stand in the shoes of Adam; and it is a fearful and awful condition to be in before the holy and just God. Many who have no other than their Adamic shoes appear to be content with them on. They strut along proudly, filled with self-admiration, saying, How beautiful are my feet with shoes! Having their feet dressed with their fleshly righteousness, they deem that their goings are pleasing in the sight of their fellows, and of God also. Our feet do some very loud talking. Those who are swallowed up in their self-righteousness will be found making a tinkling with their feet (Isaiah iii. 16) as they are prancing along so nicely in their own eyes. They

want the admiration of men. Ah, sometimes the daughters of Zion become haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks, and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, making a tinkling with their feet. But those who walk in pride, the Lord is able to abase; and if we are of God he will so deal with us that he will hush such musical feet, and in our souls' desolations we shall sit down in the dust before the Lord our God. (Isaiah iii. 16-26.) How are you shod? Are your shoes fleshly or spiritual, earthly or heavenly? Are they old covenant shoes or new covenant shoes that you wear? Before we were born of the Spirit, and brought into the liberty and consolation of Christ, we might dress our feet ever so finely, and at our best we were only shod with defiled, carnal, earthly shoes, and in these shoes we were ever going astray from the paths of righteousness: all our steps were in transgression and sin. Now, when a sinner is called by grace and quickened into divine life he ponders the path of his feet, and it will not be long before all the admiration of his feet will vanish away, for he will see that his shoes, like those of the inhabitants of Gibeon who came unto Joshua, are "old and clouted." (Joshua ix. 5.) Then we are humbled, and feel it cannot be said of us, "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes." Ah! it our woeful experience to find that there is a print upon the heels of our feet, and in all of our footprints is the print of sin. (Job xii. 27.) As the Holy Spirit (who convinces of sin) brings in review before us our past tracks we are made to bow down in shame and grief before God, for all our footprints are iniquity. We see that our feet were never beautiful; that we never took a step that was pure and right before the Lord our God. Our Adamic shoes, old and clouted, have made ugly and wretched tracks, and we are made to scan narrowly our goings, from the infancy of our journey to the present, we are constrained to see and confess with mourning before the Lord that we have been rightly called "a transgressor from the womb." (Isaiah xlviii. 8.) What else but eternal punishment could be the just doom of such a transgressor against God? "These shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." Our dear Savior saith, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."—John v. 28, 29. This solemn doctrine, felt in the heart of a poor sinner, that sees no way of escape, sinks and overwhelms the soul in the gloom of the shadow of death, and as he ponders over his ways apprehensions of the wrath to come may well make his life sad. Oh how blessed through the mercy of the Lord to sing,

"Preserved in Jesus, when my feet made haste to hell;
And there I should have been, but thou dost all things well!
Thy love was great, thy mercy free,
Which from the pit delivered me."

There is, it is to be feared, very much tinsel religion among what is styled

christianity, but the pure gold will be found in those who are taught of the Lord. The true worshippers of the everlasting Jehovah are such as are by the sovereign grace of God brought and taught to worship him in spirit and in truth. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."—Psalms li. 17. So you poor mourning sinner, humbled under your guilt, and grieving over your iniquities, are precious in the eyes of the Holy One of Israel. His graciousness has brought you low, and has drawn a hell-deserving sinner like you to seek the face of the Lord. You shall not seek in vain; mercy and salvation are in store for thee; and though thy ways are crooked, and thy footprints are sin, the time of love shall come, when the voice of the beloved Savior of sinners shall cheer thy heart, saying, "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter." The holy Scriptures testify of the manifold relations subsisting between Christ and the church; among them is this one in our text, declaring the royal lineage of the saints. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." Being born again, poor sinners are thus manifested as the seed of the Prince of Glory. The love of Emmanuel, his labors and willing sufferings in behalf of his people, to redeem them from under the curse of the law, and to present them unblameable in his sight, has raised them up from the depths of depravity and woe, to sit with him in heavenly places, and to reign with him also; for he hath loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood. Glory be to the Lord!

"He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them." All the apparel of the prince's daughter is the gift of the heavenly Bridegroom. Unto her he hath granted that she shall be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, which is her righteousness, presenting her all glorious and beautiful in his sight. The face of the church is comely with the imprinted loveliness of her Husband, Savior and King. Decked with his salvation, robed in his imputed righteousness, the King greatly desires her beauty. (Psalms xlv. 11.) He calls her "Hephzibah," for his delight is in her, and he speaks to her heart, saying, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee."

"How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter." When the prodigal son returned home, "the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet." Surely they were not "old and clouted." Ah no! but beautiful new shoes, fit to wear with the best robe. Look at him stepping out of those old, ragged shoes, into the new ones. There he stands, robed in beautiful garments; and those feet that in times past walked in iniquity, that strayed so far away, in riotous living, now are shod, O how

beautiful are thy feet with shoes! The father said, "Bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry." It is written, The Lord will keep the feet of his saints. (1 Sam. ii. 9.) And the apostle Paul speaking of them, Having your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. (Eph. vi. 15.) Such are the shoes that the Holy Spirit puts on the feet of sinners called by grace. All the footsteps of the elect of God, when shod with these shoes are right and glorious. What say you, dear children of God? Do you not want your feet to be always shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace? Oh beautiful shoes that make beautiful the feet of the blood-washed host! Thus shod even a poor, vile sinner like me can walk in the ways of pleasantness, and in the paths of peace. While we were walking in our own fleshly shoes we were free from righteousness; we could never keep in the right way. Our God, who knoweth, hath said, They are all gone out of the way. "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." The quickened sinner finds it very abasing, and a grief to his heart, that in his old patched up shoes his feet are ever straying from the way of holiness which he now yearns to walk in. He hungers and thirsts after righteousness; but the shoes of fleshly righteousness can never satisfy the longing soul of the sinner born again. While we were experimentally under the old covenant our condition, our health, our apparel, our shoes, everything, was wretched. But when the time to favor Zion, the set time was come, and faith in Christ Jesus was given us, then Jehovah changed our estate. Precious faith in the blood and righteousness of the Son of God healed our diseases and brought health and cure (Jer. xxxiii. 6) to our sin-stricken hearts. We were then arrayed in beautiful apparel, the imputed righteousness of Christ, and with our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace we were ready to walk in peace with God and with men. "I clothed thee also with broidered work, and shod thee with badgers' skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk."—Ezek. xvi. 10. Let us together, dear children of God, examine these shoes that believers in Jesus wear. These shoes have various names in the Scriptures, but they are all embraced in this designation, "The preparation of the gospel of peace." In whatsoever aspect these shoes are viewed our soul's exclamation will be, "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter." When faith, which is the gift of God, comes to, is wrought in, the quickened sinner, he steps out of the old into the new covenant shoes. In the first shoes he stands guilty, a transgressor, condemned. But when by faith in the crucified One, the precious Lord Jesus Christ, he steps in the shoes of the preparation of Christ's gospel of peace, he stands complete before God. "Ye are complete in him, which is the head of all

principality and power."—Col. ii. 10. In the shoes of the first Adam, he is a sinner, wretched, lost, undone. In the shoes of the second Adam, Christ, the Lord from heaven, he stands redeemed from the law and its curse, for "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us."—Gal. iii. 13. In these shoes he stands righteous before the Lord, for Jesus is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. In these new covenant shoes the poor sinner experimentally finds access into the grace of justification, and rejoices in hope of the glory of God. (Rom. v. 1, 2.) Yea, the world, sin and Satan are put under their feet, while the melody of that triumphant song is felt in their hearts, "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Having our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, what though our enemies, our sins and Satan, death and hell array themselves against us? Shall we tremble and flee at the sight of them? Oh no, our feet are prepared (by faith in the blood and obedience of the Captain of our salvation) to run through a troop. God giveth us the necks of our enemies. Shod with such shoes we trample them under our feet. (Psalms xviii. 29-40.) Our enemies are found liars unto us, and we tread upon their high places. (Deut. xxxiii. 29.) O believer in Jesus, shod with gospel shoes, like thy Savior, thou shalt tread upon the lion and the adder, the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet. (Psalms xci. 13.) Look at the sight! There goes forth the stripling against Goliath of Gath. Is he prepared for the encounter? The world would say, No. With his staff and sling and five smooth stones in a script, he draws near the Philistine. "Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands. And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philiistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine and slew him, but there was no sword in the hand of David. Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith."—1 Sam. xvii. 45-51.

In the name of the Lord of hosts he stood upon the prostrate giant. How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O David! Having our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, we are enabled to walk even as Jesus walked. (1 John ii. 6.) For our God in giving us these shoes for our feet, makes his grace to abound toward us, that we always, having all-sufficiency in all things may abound in every good work. "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be."—Deut. xxxiii. 25. When believers in Christ Jesus walk in the ordinance of baptism how beautiful are their feet with shoes. Zacharias and Elizabeth were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. When members of gospel churches are found walking in the truth, walking in love, walking in tender-heartedness, forgiving one another, bearing each other's burdens, walking as children of light, how beautiful are their feet with shoes. What shoes have you on your feet? Are we walking in pride, going on frowardly in the way of our fleshly hearts? Then we have evil shoes on our feet. But are we walking humbly with our God, walking in the truth, as it is in Jesus, walking in the old paths, and the good way? Then the evidence is that our feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. May our feet ever thus be shod; then shall it be said, "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

207 UNDERWOOD STREET, TAKOMA PARK, D. C.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—I had not thought to write you so soon, but perhaps I will have more peace of mind if I write you without delaying.

Though no more than we could expect, yet many of us will regret Elder Adams' passing; for even in his weakness his usefulness, love and sweet fellowship were still much in evidence. I do not think I shall ever forget my visit in his home last year, and shall always esteem it a privilege I was able to go. Since and including the meeting at the Hall in Washington, I have had little enjoyment from your preaching. A peculiar thorn has been hedging my way; but yesterday in a good measure it was taken away, especially in the afternoon, and at the end of the service I felt a quiet joy to think I had once more been able to listen more peacefully. If I have ever known anything of heavenly joy, I think I have experienced what it is to be in an ecstasy of joy, but I really prefer the quiet peace which sometimes possesses me. I feel then more like Mary sitting at the feet of Jesus, while with a more ecstatic joy it seems there is so much fleshly excitement creeps in. I crave a meek and quiet spirit. Last night I read the sixth chapter of Romans right through and the whole of it is in much the same strain as the few verses which were your text. While I believe that most, if not all, Scriptures are exhaustless, yet it is but little that I can see or comprehend. I do trust, though, that sometimes the Lord has been pleased to give me an understanding heart and

that he does sometimes open my eyes that I see wondrous things. You did not appear bound yesterday and I felt the Lord led you out: and I trust it was so. It seemed to me that the morning and afternoon texts had quite a bearing on one another. The one speaking of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus; and the other of the death to sin, of the burial in baptism and of the rising again to newness of life. The following verses in the same chapter I felt last night, and as I now read them again, to be very searching. Paul admonishes such as are dead to sin to let not sin reign in their mortal bodies, nor to yield their members as instruments unto sin. This seems an impossible thing. How often have I thought of the Scripture which is in this chapter: "Sin shall not have dominion over you." Why then, if the life of God is in me, does sin appear to have such complete sway? Yet I hope, oh I do hope, I am dead *to* sin and not dead *in* sin. I think it is Paul who says that sin revived and he died. Can it be then that it is this sight of sin which is proof one is dead to it? I know sin is in me, it rises like the foam of the ocean, as the Scripture says, the wicked is like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. (Isaiah lvii. 20.) The love of sin rises all, or most, of the time, yet, too, I believe I hate it with a perfect hatred. Is not this, as it were, a living death? Is this what Paul means when he says, I die daily? How little we can comprehend what the death of Christ really means; but I think when we have a glimpse of it, a little insight into the terrible suffering he bore, it does indeed make us desire to be dead to sin. A minister I used to enjoy in England would say sometimes that the desire to love is love. So I hope the desire to be dead to sin is proof that we are. I suppose that to be baptized aright, one has already died to sin and that our life is hid with Christ in God. I do not think that when I came to the church I realized very much of the import of water baptism. I did feel that I hoped the Lord had made me desire his love and the company of the saints more than anything the world could hold, and I wanted to be among them. At the service before the baptism the chapel was full, but I felt if the whole world were there I still would want to follow my Lord. Further than this, I do not think I saw, until a few minutes before I went into the water. The congregation was singing the hymn, "Humble souls who seek salvation," &c. When they came to these lines:

> "View the right with understanding,
> Jesus' grave before you lies;
> Be interred at his commanding,
> After his example rise,"

I stood there at the top of the steps looking down into the rectangular pool of water and it seemed a veritable grave, and oh how I wanted to be there, buried away from the world. I did not want it, do not want it now, but I become entangled: yet being entangled is one thing, and being *of it* is another. "I know that my Redeemer liveth" is a Scripture which often brings peace to me. How do we know he lives? I cannot say that

I am entirely without his love, but it appears too great for me, hence the fear that he does not live *for me*. Yet, if he is *my* Redeemer, he does live for me, does plead his sufferings and death in my behalf, and does make my sins his own. The Lord is the only One to whom we can really look, yet I know there is a ministry one to another, else why a church at all? I think, too, the minister must crave the ministry of his flock to him, so we feel the life-stream flowing from one member to another even as the blood in the natural body, imparting life to each member. The subject of the resurrection becomes increasingly dear to me. Oh that we may each know what it is to be dead *to* sin, freed from death *in* sin, and experience the resurrection power again and again.

The Lord be wisdom and utterance unto you, and keep you from evil.

Your sincere friend and little sister,

GRACE ASTON.

LEBANON, Ohio.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed please find money order to pay for the renewal of my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I am sorry I am delinquent again, and thank you for continuing to send it to me, for I would rather lose any other paper than this, for it is blessed news from those who love the doctrine of God our Savior, who have learned to trust alone in his grace and mercy, who have no confidence in the flesh, who are wandering in these low grounds of sorrow, helpless to perform one act to save themselves from eternal destruction without the mercy and grace of the all-wise Father which is vested in the soul-cleansing blood of Jesus Christ, who are hungering for the surety that their names are written in the Lamb's book of life from before the foundation of the world. This is my only hope. Once it seemed sufficient, but now I am full of doubts and fears lest I have grasped the shadow and missed the substance, but God knoweth the way that I take; within all is darkness and vanity. In the language of Paul, When I would do good evil is present with me, and how to perform that which is good I find not, but I do hope (as I continue in the language of Paul) it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. Oh that I could praise the Lord for his mercy and goodness to the children of men. This is my hope and my desire, although he make it not to grow. Am I your sister in this precious hope? I know not.

(MRS.) EVA W. MORRIS.

DRESDEN, Tenn., March 12, 1931.

DEAR EDITORS:—I enjoy reading every word in the SIGNS, especially the editorials, they are so edifying and comforting. I enjoyed the editorial in the March issue on chastisement; also the articles written by Elders J. H. Hardy and L. L. Schenck in January and February numbers. I want to say that I hope and trust I am thankful to God that he has so strengthened and gifted some that they go into deep water and bring ashore the hidden treasures that remain for them that love him. I ask an interest in your prayers, that I may bear my chastisement as one that receiveth instruction from God.

Respectfully,

MINTIE WHEELER.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by brother Geo. R. Tedford.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 5th, 6th and 7th, 1930, to the churches of which she is composed, and to the associations and meetings with which she corresponds, sends greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—As an expression of fellowship, we again address you this our annual Circular Letter, and on this occasion we have selected as our theme the subject Brotherly Love and Unity. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"—Psalms cxxxiii. 1. First, the character and relationship of the brethren, and secondly, the manner of their living together in unity. In the Scriptures the words "brother" and "brethren" are used in a variety of senses. Some are so called in a proper sense, as by immediate descent the children of the same parent or parents according to the flesh, and some affinity, kindred or nation, and also by common participation of our human nature in which all men are brethren. But the saints of God are all brethren in a spiritual sense by the grace of God, they all having God as their Father and Christ as their Elder Brother. In this sense we were brethren in eternity as the members of Christ's body. "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."—Psalms cxxxix. 16. Christ's incarnation is another proof of his brotherhood. "I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee."—Psalms xxii. 22. Again, "Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."—Heb. ii. 12. "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."—Heb. ii. 17. "For whom he [God] did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he [Christ] might be the firstborn among many brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God."—John xx. 17. His death is a strong proof of his love for his brethren. He was delivered for their offences and raised again for their justification. And he received gifts for men, to quicken whom he will. (John v. 21.) He said, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory," &c.—John xvii. 24. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."—Eph. ii. 1. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."—Gal. iv. 6. In this way they are brought to view as brethren. Not like national Israel under a covenant of works, but as the spiritual Israel in the

covenant of grace. National Israel was a separate people, and not reckoned among the nations, and in that sense they dwell alone. For Moses said, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated from the nations round about us. The brethren are separated from the world, for they are not of the world, as Christ was not of the world. Not that they chose Christ. No. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you out of the world; therefore the world knoweth not you, because it knew him (Christ) not. For they neither know me nor my Father. So in dwelling together they are one body. My dove, my undefiled, is but one. Christ is the head, and they, the brethren, are his body and members in particular; members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. Christ is the living stone as the foundation, and the brethren are lively stones to compose the spiritual house, the holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. They, the brethren, dwell together in love. "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love." Beloved, if God so loved us we also ought to love one another. God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him. "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world." "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." Another evidence of thus dwelling together in unity is that we endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."—Eph. iv. 3-6. So the life which the brethren live is a life by the faith of the Son of God, who has loved them and given himself for them. As they are living members of Christ's living body, the church, so they have bowels of sympathy if a brother is in bonds, as being bound with him, and with such as suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body. Bless them which persecute you; bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice and weep with them that weep. Make not a man an offender for a word, nor lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, nor turn aside the just for a thing of nought. (Isaiah xxix. 21.) "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

May grace, mercy and peace be with you all. Amen.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1931.

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CHURCH SOVEREIGNTY.

It has long been an accepted practice among Old School or Primitive Baptists to regard each separate church among us as an independent unit having sole control of its own affairs. This is right. We have nothing to say or to recommend at variance with this. We believe in no man or bodies of men having regulatory or legislative powers over God's house. We believe in no councils, synods, conferences, federations, associations, etc., having power to make laws or rules governing individual churches or seeking to impose their will on such churches, as do most of the protestant and catholic organizations. We do not believe it is right for any church to enter into and concern itself with the internal affairs of a sister church unless the latter church invites its counsel and conference in the matter. The Scriptures of the New Testament, the commandments of Jesus, the inspired directions given to the apostles by the Holy Ghost to be delivered to the churches of the saints: these should be and are the only rule of faith and practice for a body of believers professing to be the true gospel church. It is through the Spirit that we walk in the Spirit; and so walking, we adhere believingly and faithfully to that which has ever been sound doctrine and right practice.

While we certainly have no wish to detract in the slightest degree from the truth of church sovereignty, a cherished and distinguished mark of true Baptists always, yet there is a tendency among us to-day to over-emphasize the independence of churches and to lose sight of the fact that churches, as well as individual members of churches, are all in one great fellowship and in one communion: therefore are members one of another, are helpers of each other's joy, bearers of one another's burdens; and that we should be mutually dwelling together in love and not be hindrances in one another's way. Notwithstanding the churches of the saints are scattered here and there, north, south, east, west, we are in reality all one church. All these separate churches of the saints are based upon the one foundation of the apostles and prophets, having the

one corner-stone: Jesus Christ. Are they not all one church, one body? Yes. Are they not, then, interdependent as well as independent? Disorder or trouble in any one church reacts distressingly on all the churches in love and fellowship with that one. Christ being the Head of all the body and of each individual church or member of it, each and all have the same spiritual life. However, being in the flesh and not having yet been transported to glory, we all also have the nature of Adam. This lower nature conflicts with the believer's higher nature. This conflict is not simply in each believer, but is in the church as a whole while here on earth. Hence, the need for the faithfulness of brethren that when the flesh hinders spiritual decision and blinds better judgment, we may have their counsel and loving watchcare. One church should never set at nought the counsel and judgment of its sister church without due and careful deliberation, any more than one member of a church should ignore the entreaties of his brethren. This no one of us will do if we love one another as children of God do really love each other. It is because we have been brought by revelation to believe the same things that we do love one another. This love the world does not have and knows nothing of it. This love, however, the church does have, and from the beginning it has been the one significant mark of those who truly follow Jesus. For a brother or sister in a church to say, "I shall do as I please and it's nobody's business," is fleshly and contemptible. For a church to say, "We shall decide our own problems as to order and discipline so as to suit ourselves, no matter what other churches think to be right or wrong," is equally to be condemned. We wish not to be misunderstood in this. No church has the power to regulate another church, but a church should not set aside what has always been regarded as proper for churches of the one faith and order, and so to establish new precedents, without very careful and prayerful consideration and without consultation with brethren and churches of the same faith and order. The natural man has always wanted to be a law unto himself and to do as he lists, but grace brings us under allegiance to Jesus Christ and into a bond of unity with one another. Thus, no one of us, either as an individual or as a church, can afford to do as we naturally please without causing distress to other members of this body of which each of us is a part. For example, when a church makes an effort to push forward the ordination of a brother to the work of the ministry, one in whom sister churches see no gift in that direction or in whom sister churches discern some disqualification which rightly bars him from the ministry, such a movement if persisted in can have but one end—disaster for the church and for the brother thus placed in such a false position. The ordination of men to the work of the ministry, of men who have never shown any ability or gift in that direction, has caused much distress among churches. In such cases, if churches had regarded less their own

sovereignty and had more regarded the advice and suggestions of sister churches, much confusion might have been avoided. Because a brother can talk well and has a good flow of words does not mean necessarily that he can preach. There may be far more real preaching called forth by the Spirit out of an illiterate man with a stammering tongue than out of one who is more lettered and more voluble.

Further, as an example, we are living in a time when christianity's moral standards are being steadily lowered in order to accommodate the denominations of the world to these modern times. The sanctity of the home and its intimate relationships are being invaded, marital obligations are being laxly regarded or ignored utterly. Within the past few months, some of our state governments have amended their divorce laws to make divorces ridiculously easy, often on the most trifling pleas. In such a time as this, it becomes increasingly more difficult for the true church to maintain its high moral standards of former times as handed down from the primitive church. Yet it ought to be done. Christ and Paul handled this question of divorce very plainly and both forbade the remarriage of divorced persons in the church, yet we find some of our churches to-day not in agreement on this question of divorce. In some churches, remarried divorced persons are held in fellowship, while other churches exclude them. Thus, a brother or a sister may find themselves in fellowship with a church in one section or neighborhood; but over in another place near another church, they would be regarded as out of fellowship: and this by churches claiming to be one in doctrine and order.

The same thing holds true of membership in lodges or secret organizations. Some churches make no test of fellowship on the ground of membership in secret societies, others do. So one might be regarded as being in good standing if located near one church not discriminating against these organizations; but if living near another church not fellowshiping such things, his standing would be questioned: all because of no change in the individual himself, but only because different churches regard these matters differently. These things are not right, such a situation indicates something wrong somewhere. This condition makes against peace and gives rise to misunderstandings between brethren. Would it not be well, then, for us to bear in mind that although church sovereignty is well and good, our churches are at the same time so bound up in one another's fellowship and interest they cannot afford to ignore the counsel and judgment of each other? It might be well for us to confer together more closely upon these and all matters of variance, for sister churches to counsel together more than they do so as to become familiar with others' viewpoints in these things. Unless done in the right spirit and moved by the pure mind of Christ thereto, it would be worse than useless. Should the fleshly mind motivate such conferences and

counsels, we should have confusion worse confounded. There is surely great need of much walking carefully and prayerfully before the Lord and in the presence of one another. Oh, that the Lord may guide us by his unerring Spirit, show us the right and give us the courage of true faith to do it. May we be moved by his life within us to petition him at the throne of grace for the strength and wisdom we each so much need in this dark and cloudy day. Churches and believers are as independent of one another as branches on a tree are independent of each other: they are as dependent on each other as branches of a tree are dependent on the main stem to bear them. Work this out for yourself and you may see just how far church sovereignty extends, and just to what extent each of us needs all the others of us.

It has been our desire in writing this, not to do so in any carping of fault-finding spirit, but to do so in loving faithfulness and with a desire for the true welfare and prosperity of the Zion of God.

H. H. L.

NOTICE.

BECAUSE of our limited space, we are compelled to request our brethren to be as brief as possible in writing obituary notices for publication, for we feel the majority of our readers would rather we devote more space to letters from the brethren and sisters than to take up so much room with long obituary notices.

ROMANS XIII. 14.

"BUT put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof."

In writing to the Roman believers, Paul not only declares what is the doctrine of God, but its practical application in their everyday life. A true believer is not only a hearer, but a doer of the word, and Paul was directed by the Holy Ghost to write those precepts and admonitions that were suited to the needs of the saints, and that they themselves could not live and practice but by the Spirit's aid and influence. They were in the midst of a wicked world, and they were commanded to "Do all things without murmurings and disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life." They were not to be conformed to their ways and practices, which were, many of them, wicked in the extreme. If persecuted, they were not to avenge themselves, but rather to bless those that persecuted them, and they were commanded to give place unto wrath, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord," and they are told not to be overcome with evil, but to *"overcome evil with good."* They were to be subject to the powers that be, even though those very powers were the Roman rulers, who have gone down in history as the basest and most wicked of men, and who were wont to condemn the innocent, and approve the guilty. They

were to render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear and honor to whom honor. Early history shows how terrible was their lot, they had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonments. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (*of whom the world was not worthy*); they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. What a remarkable record, and facing such things, which were in God's purpose for them, the Holy Ghost saith, Do not resist, for he that taketh up the sword shall perish with the sword, but rather give place to wrath, and be in subjection to the powers that be. If they had resisted and tried to overcome, they would simply have overcome evil with evil, but saith the Spirit, Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. Now as those who profess themselves believers are the ones to whom the Holy Ghost by Paul is writing, we believe that those who are in the Spirit will not fulfill the desires of the flesh, yet there have always been those who professed to be in the Spirit, when they were bent upon satisfying the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof. They have a zeal which they think is of the Spirit, but it proves to be of the flesh, for they that are in the flesh do mind the things of the flesh. Whatever our faith and zeal may be, yet if *God's love* be not there, it is all in vain. Love, which is the fruit of the Spirit of God, makes our cheerful feet in swift obedience move. This is the love that Paul in 1 Corinthians xiii. calls charity, that suffereth long and is kind, that envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own; is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth. It is for the love they bear to the name of their God that they are constrained to walk worthy of the vocation to which they are called. When those who profess this love do contrary to it, their actions not only discredit themselves, but reflect upon *God's name*. It is in the covenant mercy of God that trials and tribulations abound in their path, and Paul beseeches them to present their bodies a *"living sacrifice,"* holy, acceptable unto God, which is their reasonable service. A living sacrifice is a painful sacrifice, and the manner of this sacrifice is set forth in Isaiah liii. 7: "He was oppressed, and was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth," and his dear and precious children are for his sake "killed all the day long," and "are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." It is in this killing and slaughter that God's choice is proven. When the three Hebrews were standing in the multitude of their fellowmen, while they were known and beloved of their God, they were not known to the king as anything more than subjects upon whom he could

vent his rage. He did not know that he that touched them touched the apple of God's eye, but it was in the furnace God's choice was manifested, and his presence felt and seen. It might be reasoned by some that the three Hebrews could have chosen the line of least resistance, conformed to the crowd, go where they went and do what they did, play the hypocrite and escape the cross. They could not do that. No, because they belonged to God, and were led by his Spirit. They that can follow the crowd, that can favor the flesh for the sake of ease and comfort of the flesh, show that they are bastards and not sons, for God's children glorify him in the flame. They must pass under the rod and they prove they are his as they humbly give their back to the smiter and take the spoiling of their goods joyfully. Truly it was a wicked world that the Roman saints lived in, a world that made their hatred felt by cruel persecution, persecution that would cause the hireling to flee and the hypocrite to appear in his true character. It was a wicked world then, it is a wicked world now, a world that is no more a friend of grace to-day than the world was yesterday. To-day if ye will live godly in Christ Jesus ye shall suffer persecution. If brethren escape the cross, if they do not meet persecution in this world, if they think the world is changed and is kinder and more sympathetic to the saints, it is because they themselves are worldly, worldly-minded, and it is just as true, we solemnly believe, that they who are friends of this world are enemies of God. The Spirit by Paul saith, Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, for as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ, they have professed to follow him who was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, who as a sheep before her shearers is dumb so he openeth not his mouth.

"Ye who the name of Jesus bear,
His sacred steps pursue;
And let that mind that was in him
Be also found in you."

The "love of God" which is only found in those who are truly his, is the only principle that will endure trials and persecution, and enable the saints to glory in tribulation, distress, persecution or famine, nakedness, peril or sword, for in all these things they are more than conquerors through him that loved them. Now the spirit of the flesh will want to make provision for the flesh, and will try, by hook or by crook, to escape trouble, but God's children will often loathe the flesh, hate the flesh, crucify the flesh. The gall and bitterness they have because of the flesh will cause their souls often to be humbled within them, while fleshly characters who know not the love of God, nor the power of that love in their hearts, will be turned aside, they will not endure the cross, the cross will drive them from under the cover of their hypocrisy to where they rightly belong. It will prove, no matter what their profession is, or has been, that they are but dross, and the fire will separate them from God's afflicted and poor people, and they, when they turn from the cross of Christ to fulfill the lusts of the flesh, are like the dog that has turned to his own

vomit, and the sow that was washed to wallow in the mire. John said, They went from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out that *they might be made manifest,* that they were *not all* of us. Wickedness will have its reward, for though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished. Many are too proud of heart to submit to the cross that God has sent into their lives, but every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord. While we are commanded to be subject to the powers that be, yet that does not signify that because the law of our land to-day is lax or is not enforced, and allows a debtor to escape his obligation by becoming a bankrupt, that a child of God shall take advantage of that law. Others promise, when they know they have no mind to do what they promise. Paul tells us what love is the fulfillment of, saying, "For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The love of God will enable the debtor to face his debts, and to him no honest debts can be outlawed, it will cause children to have a heart of sympathy to their parents and to obey them. "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, *suffering wrongfully.* * * * But if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." Paul, writing to Titus, says, "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work." Thus if the courts of any country issue a warrant for the arrest of any, it is the duty of law-abiding subjects, especially those who profess the truth, not to escape arrest, but to surrender themselves, for that is praiseworthy in God's sight. To-day the holy estate of matrimony is in many minds an unholy thing and they separate. We were shocked to read recently that one only had to live in a certain place six weeks to establish residence with a view to getting a divorce. Men can leave their wives, and wives can leave their husbands, and get divorces for desertion, lack of maintenance, incompatibility of temperament and a number of other reasons, which are not recognized in God's word, and we would boldly declare that all who do so and marry again are adulterers, and they that marry them that are so divorced are adulterers. Again we repeat, wickedness will have its reward. How can those professing the truth, plan and scheme to escape from a marriage union with one who does not love the truth and who has made his or her life miserable? Is not this a cross of God's making? If that wife or husband is willing to live with such an one, the word of God does not say leave such an one, and if one leaves such a person, and that person gets a

divorce for desertion, surely a child of God who has the love of the truth in his heart will remain faithful to his wife, or she will remain true and faithful to her husband. Before God and God's holy word such are still husband and wife, and all who marry such who are separated, contrary to God's holy word, are adulterers and adulteresses. We never expected we should have to write thus to the Israel of God, we do it, as his servant, with a sincere desire to be free from the blood of all men, and we would here also add that whenever the Old School Baptist Church shall fellowship such things, "Ichabod" can be written there. (1 Sam. iv. 21.) We believe wherever the trial is, whatever it is, that trouble or trial is not to be escaped by crooked means, for that cross is ordained of God. "Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine." God will stand by them and comfort them, like one whom his mother comforteth. Do we not know many who have had cruel trials, and trial of cruel mockings, and while they perhaps could have found a way by law to fulfill the lusts of the flesh and escape the rod, yet they have nobly lived, and bravely faced their trials, though their heart at times was ready to break, as their cup has seemed filled with gall and they have said, This is more than I can bear? One that we know said that, and the Lord said immediately, "Thy Maker is thy husband." Another, when they saw one near and dear to them ruined under the cruel knife of a drunken surgeon and were contemplating taking the course of the law, the Lord said, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay." That was enough. God reigns, let each dear afflicted child of God consider that it is "My Father's hand prepares the cup, and what he wills is best." Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. God can in a moment remove the trial, and many there have been who, witnessing the patience and meekness of God's saints under the rod, have themselves been turnd by the same power from a persecutor to a believer. With the Romans this was very true, their meekness and humility manifested in the face of cruel mockings of those who persecuted them was more convincing than any other course they might have pursued. They knew this world could not deal justly with them any more than it did with their Lord, yet God will see that justice is satisfied on their behalf. "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you," was their rule under most distressing trials. It is trials that make the promise sweet, for in this world ye shall have tribulation, but in me, peace. Jesus often stands by those who bear their trials, and then they can say, It is good for me that I have been afflicted. Paul in 1 Corinthians vii. gives us a rule for husband and wife to follow, and the soul does well to follow it, even though they walk the furnace in doing so. Those who do not, but copy this wicked world in their course, certainly are not guided by God's holy word, and are belittling the holiness and sanctity of

marriage and putting Christ, who they have professed to put on, to open shame. God does not lay any burden or trial on any of his but what he will give strength to bear it. For God is our refuge and strength, he is a present help in trouble, and Jesus is a brother born for adversity. Therefore, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof."

G. R.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Elder George L. Weaver has changed his address from Cleveland, Ohio, to 824 Bland Avenue, Shelbyville, Kentucky, where he requests his correspondents to address him.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

J. SIDNEY TIMMONS was born near Berlin, Maryland, September 15th, 1860, and departed this earthly life April 17th, 1930. He was married to Miss Anna Davis February 3rd, 1908, who preceded him to the grave on May 21st, 1925. No children were born to their union. He was married to Miss Elizabeth Davis July 24th, 1926, who is left to mourn her loss. He never united with the church, but was a firm believer in the predestination of all things, and was a regular attendant at the Old School Baptist meetings when not providentially hindered. The writer had the pleasure of taking him to many meetings, where he seemed to enjoy the preached word, as well as meeting the many friends. We have had many enjoyable talks upon the things of the Spirit, and he related his experience to me many times, and it dated back to when he was a young man and used to carry his mother to Indiantown Church, at Powellville, Md. On some of those trips he first realized he was a sinner, and from then until his death he did not feel himself fit for membership in any church. He always seemed to look to the saints of God as the sheep and himself unfit to be numbered with them, yet he loved them and the doctrine, and ever stood ready to defend the cause of God when approached upon that subject. The writer had a talk with him just a short while before he passed away, when he was so weak he could scarcely talk above a whisper, and he was just as firm in his belief in the power and purpose of God as any man I have ever talked with. He was the youngest of seven brothers, all of whom have preceded him to the grave except two. He was a brother of the late Elder John Timmons and W. L. Timmons, both members of the Old School Baptist Church. He was the son of Elzie and Ann Timmons, both members of the Indiantown Church. He was honest and upright in all his dealings and tried to make his word his bond, and was always ready to help his neighbor whenever he could. He was a loving and kind husband, ever ready to do all he could to make his wife happy.

His funeral sermon was preached by Elder G. E. Coulbourn, of Cape Charles, Va., followed by a few remarks by the Methodist pastor, of which denomination his wife is a member, after which his body was laid to rest in the Pittsville Cemetery to await its Master's call. May the dear Lord comfort his dear wife and friends in their loss, and may we be given the heart to say, like one of old, Thy will, O Lord, be done, not ours.

Written by his nephew,

J. W. S. TIMMONS.

MARY JANE WHITE DUNSON was born in Pike County, Arkansas, May 20th, 1866, and died March 20th 1931, near Chillicothe, Texas, making her stay on earth 64 years and 10 months. She was married to J. A. Dunson November 29th, 1885, and to this union were born twelve children, all of whom are living, excepting one son, Elbert, and one daughter, Gerthia May. Those living are all grown, and were at their mother's bedside when the end came. Sister Dunson was a kind and loving companion and a mother indeed, and her children speak for her wonderful watchcare over them. Brother and sister Dunson joined the Old School Baptist Church in Pike County, Arkansas, in October, 1894, and were baptized by Elder James Williams. Some years later they moved to Texas and cast their lot with the Dawson Valley Church, near Vernon, Texas. Later the church was moved to Davidson, Oklahoma, and they came with it, but continued to reside in Texas. Her membership was still with that church at the time of her death. We all loved this dear saint of God and were grieved to give her up, but hope we are reconciled to the will of him who doeth all things well. We believe it pleased him to call her home, and how comforting it is to confide in the evidence we have that she was reconciled to his will and was ready for the call. Her faith was in the promises of God, in the finished work of Jesus for both time and eternity. Her spirit, that God made perfect through Christ, sweetly left the dust body and returned to God who gave it. We laid the silent dust back in the ground, there to remain until Jesus comes to earth again. Dear mourning ones, weep not, nor wish her back again, for she is at peace with her God. My prayer to God is that some sweet day you will meet her again and she will be so beautiful she will be like Jesus. May all the saints of God be comforted with that thought.

Written by her pastor,

W. N. GREEN.

BENJAMIN V. WHITE, son of the late Elder E. V. White and sister Elizabeth White, died at his home, Leesburg, Virginia, May 16th, 1931. He is survived by one brother, John G. White, and by his wife, one daughter and three sons. His wife was Miss Lillian Brosius. His daughter is Mrs. John A. Tebbs, of Indianapolis, Indiana. Two sons: Heath and Elijah White are living at Buenos Aires, South America. One son, Albert, is at home managing the business in which his father was engaged. Also, there is one grandchild. Mr. White was 65 years of age last October. He had been in declining health for many months. While he did not unite with the Old School Baptists, that was the church and doctrine he believed and loved. He was a strong predestinarian and knew that salvation is wholly of the grace of God through Jesus Christ. He was always ready and willing to contribute of his substance to help the cause along. It was a keen sense of his unfitness that kept him out of the church, not at all any dissatisfaction with the docrine or with the people who stood for it. I shall miss him, because he was a personal friend and helper in every way.

The funeral was largely attended, proving the esteem in which the whole community held him. Burial at Leesburg. May the Lord in his mercy comfort the mourning ones.

ALSO,

CHARLES L. AYRES died April 1st, 1931, at his home, near Hickory, Grove, Virginia. He was born July 8th, 1849. One brother and two sisters survive him: W. S. Ayres, Mrs. Allie F. Caton, of Bethesda, Md., and Mrs. Laura Popkins, of Alexandria, Va. Also has three children living: Gustavus Ayres, El Paso, Texas, Mrs. J. W. Makely and Ben L. Ayres, of Clifton, Va. Seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren survive him. All fear of death was taken from him and he approached his end with calmness and resignation, said he knew he had not long to live and that the will of the Lord must be done at the appointed time. He united with no religious body, but believed the doctrine as witnessed by the Old School Baptists. For many years he attended the meetings at Mt. Zion. Funeral was held at Mt. Zion, burial in the graveyard there.

By request.

ALSO,

LEWIS MOREHEAD, a believer in Jesus Christ and a lover of the truth, departed this life at the home of his nephew, Mr. Joseph Murphy, near Herndon, Virginia, April 27th, 1931. While he had been in failing health for some months, did not take to his bed until Friday before death came. He was born January 1st, 1854, in Fauquier County, Virginia, a son of Percy W. and Mildred Morehead, and is the last of their family of ten children. He was a brother in the flesh of our dear sister Mary Murphy, of the Frying Pan Church, and who died December 20th, 1930, her obituary appearing in the February SIGNS. He is survived by his wife, who was Miss Emma Murphy, daughter of Deacon Hiram Murphy of the Frying Pan Church. Also, is survived by one son, Henry Morehead, who, with his wife and two children, lives at Fort Myer Heights, Virginia. Mr. Morehead has for years been a faithful and regular attendant of the meetings of the Old Baptist Church and it was not possible to preach the doctrine too hard or too strong for him. He was a firm believer in the absolute predestination of all things and in salvation by the grace of God through Jesus Christ, and in that way only.

At the funeral the writer read the fourteenth chapter of Job, commenting especially on the words in the fourteenth verse. His remains were laid to rest in the cemetery at Fairfax, Virginia. May the Lord comfort and sustain the lonely widow, and assuage the grief of all who mourn.

H. H. L.

MRS. ELIZA M. SEALE was born July 6th, 1857, and died January 22nd, 1931, aged 73 years, 6 months and 16 days. She was a daughter of Thomas and Louisa C. Peterson, and was married to Jasper Seale February 10th, 1876. Mr. Seale died December 19th, 1904. Mrs. Seale was almost an invalid since young womanhood, but bore her afflictions with much patience. She professed a hope and joined Chapel Hill Primitive Baptist Church when about twenty years of age, and remained a devoted member until death. Her seat was never vacant when she was able to attend the meetings of the church. In all her afflictions and sore trials her faith in God was strong. She leaves to mourn her death seven children, one son and six daughters, three daughters having preceded her to the grave. Those living are Mrs. W. L. Goza, Mrs. E. L. Knight, Mrs. H. N. Butler and R. G. Earl, of Durham, Okla., Miss Carrie Seale, of Chicago, Ill., and Mrs. O. S. Earle, of Long Beach, California. Those deceased are Mrs. W. W. Everett, Mrs. W. F. Moffett and Annie Melie Seale. She leaves one sister, Mrs. Lucy A. Seale, of Eagle Mill, Ark.

Elders V. R. Harris, of Fordyce, J. R. Harris, of Thornton, and J. T. Everett, her pastor, all spoke words of comfort to the bereaved, after which her body was laid away in Chapel Hill Cemetery. We, her children, will miss her, the church will miss her, but we feel our loss is her gain, and we desire to be submissive.

Her daughter, (MRS.) W. L. GOZA.

ELDER M. L. COMPTON, pastor of the Regular Primitive Baptist Church of Richmond, Virginia, died at his home, in Louisa County, Virginia, Saturday night, March 14th, 1931. The cause of his death was pneumonia.

His remains were laid to rest in the family burying-ground the following Monday at 3 p. m. Services were conducted in his home by brother M. G. Lyons and the humble writer of this notice.

G. S. WEIDER,
Clerk of Richmond Church.

MRS. SUSAN FRANCES THOMAS, the subject of this notice, was born March 22nd, 1860, and died April 4th, 1931, making her stay on earth 71 years and 13 days. She was the mother of six children, three of them preceded her to the great beyond. She leaves to mourn their loss her husband, three sons: R. W. Thomas, I. L. Thomas, C. W. Thomas, seventeen grandchildren, one sister and two brothers. She was a loving companion to her husband and a kind mother to her children, and was a hard working woman, always looking after the care and welfare of her family. She possessed a smooth temper and was kind to all who came near her. She was truly a helpmate to her husband and a loving mother to her children, a kind neighbor to all who lived near her. The writer visited their comfortable home several times and always found her busy about her household affairs. She had complained for a few weeks of not feeling well and their family doctor had told her husband she had a very weak heart, and on the morning of her death she told her husband to prepare a dose of medicine for her. This he did and when he returned he found her dead. In her early life she professed a hope in Christ Jesus, but never united with the church. She was a firm believer in the doctrine advocated by the old order of Baptists.

Elder Dell Smith was called to conduct her funeral. Her body was laid to rest in the Goff Cemetery, where her three little ones are buried. God alone can reconcile and bind up the broken hearts of her husband and three sons.

Written by request of her husband.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

W. T. PETTY, my aged and beloved husband, passed away Sunday afternoon, April 28th, 1929, aged 85 years, 5 months and 14 days. He had been in poor health for several years, but was confined to his bed only three and one-half days before his death. He complained but little, and the end came quietly. He was born in Alabama and was raised in Mississippi, and in after years moved to Texas with his family and lived in different localities. He was a kind father and husband, a good provider, honorable and upright in his dealings with all men, visiting the widows and orphans, the sick and afflicted. He was a firm believer in Christ and his teachings. He was buried in Hopewell Cemetery, of which church he was a devoted member for years, and was also a faithful reader and lifelong subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He united with the Primitive Baptists in early manhood. He was a good singer, and his seat in meetings was never vacant when he could possibly attend. He was married twice and raised two families. He leaves a host of relatives and friends to mourn his absence. Though grief stricken and lonely, I humbly bow in submission, and say, Thy will be done, O Lord, not ours.

His devoted wife, (MRS.) F. S. PETTY.

MRS. JENNIE CROUSE, wife of Alpha Crouse, of General Bridge, N. Y., departed this life Friday, April 24th, 1931, after a brief illness of confinement to her bed by valvular heart trouble, from which she had been a chronic sufferer for some time. Her maiden name was Jennie Zeh, and she was born in the town of Seward, Schoharie County, New York, July 3rd, 1863, making her stay upon the shores of time almost sixty-eight years. She was united in marriage to Alpha Crouse in 1888, proving a loyal, efficient helpmate, and to this union were born two children, Floyd and Luella, who survive; also one sister, Mrs. Mary Bellinger, of Seward, N. Y., and two brothers, Judson Zeh and Philip, of Schnectady, N. Y. Mrs. Crouse had lived all her life in Seward, except for the past two years, during which time she, with her husband, resided in part of the house now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Earl Stevens, where her last days were spent, and where she was ministered to by her daughter, now Mrs. Earl Stevens, with all a daughter's love and all a daughter's care. Deceased was a woman held in high and deserved estimation by all who knew her. She made no outward profession of religion, but was a firm believer in the doctrine of sovereign, effectual, saving grace by the blood of a crucified and risen Redeemer, and had no faith in the works of the flesh.

The funeral services were held at her late home Monday following her death, and the interment was in the Slate Hill Cemetery. The wrriter officiated at the funeral. The community where she lived and those who comprise the Middleburg church have lost a good friend, who will be much missed.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

MRS. ELIZABETH JOHNSON departed this life January 4th, 1931, aged 86 years, 3 months and 16 days. She leaves one son, Andrew Adkins, twelve grandchildren, sixteen great-grandchildren, three sisters and three brothers to mourn their loss. She was the eldest of a family of ten children, three of whom have long ago crossed the death stream, as also have our dear father and mother long since passed away. Sister Lizzie, as she was called, died in the triumph of a living faith. She had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for sixty years and was faithful to her church and her religion as long as she lived. She kept in touch with the people of her faith by letters and papers long after she had to cease going where she could hear one of her faith and order preach, for our dear sister loved the people of God. Often her affliction grew so great she craved to die and go home to rest. She was a great Bible reader, and could go down into the deep mysteries of God's word and explain its contents with the greatest zeal. Her mind was clear until the last, and just before her soul took its flight she called her daughter-in-law to her, and said, Give my little old book to Sarah (that is the

writer, the youngest of six children) and I have clasped it to my heart as the most precious gift on earth. It is tied with a little old faded string, and has many, many marks made in it by the dear fingers that will never write to me again. Her suffering is now over and our loss is her eternal gain. She requested that the hymn, "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep," be sung as her body was lowered into the grave, and it was, so sleep on, dear sister, and take your rest, while angels keep a silent watch.

Her sister,

SARAH DILLON.

C. M. BRUCE, my father, passed from earth life February 1st, 1931. He was over seventy-seven years of age. His father before him was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church in Crawford County, Indiana. He was a student of the Bible, and often have I seen him reading it. My mother preceded him by almost twenty-nine years, and since her going it seemed that father was never satisfied. He spent much of his time with his children, who live in scattered places: Texas, Kansas, Oregon and California. The funeral took place at his home town, Pawnee Rock, Kansas, near which he had been a resident since 1878. We regretted much not to have a minister of the Primitive Baptist faith present, but did not know of one within reach. As a boy I used to attend meetings with my father that were held in Riverside Schoolhouse, in Pawnee County, Kansas. In later years father sometimes drove as much as sixty miles to attend the services that were held near Welsford, Kansas. Elder Hardy, and sometimes his son, would preach at these services. Father was a man of a reserved nature especially on religious subjects, but sometimes a few words he would say gave an index to his sincere interest in christianity. Father said little in his last days to indicate his feelings about the beyond, but he fell asleep after a rather distressing illness that took the form of weakness of the heart, and we could but think that he found rest from the journey in the hope that had been his for so many years. His life was an inspiration for better things in those who knew him, and his memory will linger like a benediction in the hearts of his children.

His son, W. F. BRUCE.

MR. S. E. NEWMAN, aged 62 years, passed to the great beyond November 3rd, 1930, after an illness of several months. With lingering sadness and regret he was followed by his many friends and devoted relatives to his last resting place. He is survived by his wife, three sons and two daughters: Ralph S. Newman, of Monroe, La., Robert P. and Arthur Newman, of Bastrop, La., Mrs. J. P. Tally, of Bastrop, and Mrs. J. A. Naff, of Beekman, La., two sisters, Mrs. S. Hammel, of Bastrop, Mrs. James King, of Ferriday, La.; one brother, Mr. G. Newman, of Bastrop, La. He also is mourned by several nieces and nephews and a host of grandchildren. Although his soul is now at rest and free from the care and pain of this world it would seem like heaven if we had him back again, but still we say, The Lord's will be done. We who grieve for him to-day are the ones who loved him most.

Written by his sorrowing wife,

(MRS.) S. E. NEWMAN.

BROTHER Newman was baptized by me September 8th, 1930, after telling a beautiful experience as the reason of his hope in the Lord Jesus. He was a man who was loved by his brethren and many friends. His body was laid to rest in the Old Home Cemetery after the writer tried to speak words of comfort to his bereaved family and many friends, using as a text, If in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable.

T. J. EVERS.

MRS. T. E. ATTEBERRY, only daughter of David and Amanda Bricker, was born in Cass County, Missouri, December 17th, 1890, and was married to Elmer Miller November 14th, 1907. To this union one son, Howard, was born. Mr. Miller died in December, 1918. December 29th, 1921, she was united in marriage to Elder T. E. Atteberry, and to them were born three boys, Edward, James and Robert. In March, 1922, she united with Good Hope Church of Primitive Baptists, at Kingman, Kansas, and was baptized the following May by her husband, ever after adorned her profession, living in that blessed hope of eternal rest beyond, of which we fully believe she is now in possession. Sister Atteberry was well qualified to be all that a minister's wife and helpmeet should be, patient, meek, humble and prayerful, giving to her husband every encouragement to be faithful in his calling, enduring with patience the lonely hours of his absence, devoting to her children a mother's tender love and care. Her deep interest in her husband's labors and the welfare of the church endeared her to the members, who loved her well. She was stricken with pneumonia April 8th, and passed peacefully away April 18th, at the age of 40 years, 4 months and 1 day. Besides her grief-stricken husband and four sons she is survived by four brothers, James, John, Oscar and Grover Bicker, and many other relatives and friends, who are left to mourn, yet not without hope.

The funeral services were held Sunday, April 19th, at Little Flock church-house, of which church she was a member, conducted by the unworthy writer, using as a text 1 Corinthians xv. 49, after which we laid her body to rest in the cemetery at Greenwood, Missouri, to await the coming of the Lord Jesus in the power of the resurrection, when the bodies of his saints shall be raised in the likeness of their Lord to see him as he is and be satisfied. In this blessed hope may her dear husband be satisfied. Amen.

W. L. HALL.

WILLIAM HENRY FREWELL was born March 30th, 1837, in Tippecanoe County, Indiana, and moved to Bell County, Texas, in 1854. He was married to Miss Betty Ann Cornelison December 10th, 1861, and to that union four children were born, three girls and one boy. The boy preceded him in death several years. His wife died May 30th, 1898. He went to the Civil War in 1862 and served three years. He and his wife united with the Baptists of the Primitive faith and order in 1870, and he lived a faithful member, always filling his seat when not providentially hindered until the end came, January 4th, 1931, making his stay on earth 93 years, 9 months and 4 days. He leaves to mourn his passing three girls, Mrs. Nick Hunter, of Hico, Texas, Mrs. G. H. McCarty, of Lawn, Texas, Mrs. J. A. Willis, of Grier New Mexico, seventeen grandchildren, a host of great-grandchildren and a number of friends and relatives. Surely a great man in Israel has fallen and the church at Clairette has sustained a great loss, but we feel that her loss is his eternal gain. So weep not as those who have no hope, for he is not dead, but asleep in Jesus, from which none ever wake to weep. Friends, may the God of all grace sustain you in this sad hour and enable you to say as did one of old: The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder W. R. Hardin, and his remains were laid to rest in the cemetery at Hico, Texas, to await the second coming of the Lord.

Written by one who loved him,

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

MRS. SIS McINTOSH was born September 3rd, 1866, and died March 17th, 1931, aged 64 years, 6 months and 14 days. She was before her marriage Sis Shaffer, and married Jack McIntosh December 24th, 1891. To this union were born six children, one of whom preceded her to the grave. Surviving are two sons, Orville and Hearl, three daughters, Mrs. Pat Park, Mrs. Wade Perkins and Mrs. Elmer Herndon, seventeen grandchildren, an aged step-mother, three brothers, W. S., J. H. and C. L. Shaffer,, three half-brothers, L. E., A. B. and J. A. Shaffer, three half-sisters, Mrs. Clarence Smith, Mrs. Frank Goad and Miss Emma Shaffer, with a host of other relatives, to mourn her going. All was done for mother that loving hands could do, but God saw fit to call her from the walks of men, and death was certainly a relief to her, for she had long been a sufferer, but bore her afflictions patiently. It is hard to give her up, but God knows best, and our loss is her eternal gain. Mother claimed a hope in early life and united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Mt. Pleasant, and lived a faithful member until death. She was a faithful wife and a loving mother, and was ever ready to help others in time of need. We would do well if we could emulate the life she lived.

Elders C. O. Kerley and N. A. Rodgers conducted the funeral in the presence of a large congregation.

Written by her daughter,

(MRS.) WADE PERKINS.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, it has pleased the Lord to remove from our midst by death our dearly beloved brother, **DEACON ARCHIE CAMPBELL,** we desire to record upon our Minutes and in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES our sorrow as a church in this bereavement and a tribute of love and respect to his memory which is precious to us. He was a man of few words, possessing a quiet spirit, and was found faithful in his office through years of service rendered the church in its trials and vicissitudes.

Done by order of the church.

GEORGE RUSTON, Moderator.

ANGUS GILLIS, Church Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. M. Smith, B. C., $1; Mrs. Frances Hand, Texas, $1; "A friend," Ky., $1; Mrs. H. A. Hiltabrand, Ill., $5; S. W. Peacock, Calif., $1; L. Z. Ross, N. Y., $1; J. P. McMillian, La., $1; Mrs. Ida M. Elmenduf, N. Y., $3; Mrs. Ella K. Rittenhouse, Manitoba, $3.

MEETINGS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held (the Lord willing) with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Pa., Wednesday and Thursday, June 3rd and 4th, 1931. The train leaving Reading Terminal, Philadelphia, at 9:25 Wednesday morning will be met at Southampton station. Ministers of our faith and order, and all who love the truth as it is in Jesus, are cordially invited to meet with us.

CASPER G. FETTER, Church Clerk,
27 N. Eastfield Ave., TRENTON, N. J.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (10th, 11th and 12th), 1931. Those coming from and via New York City will take Erie R. R. Ferry foot of West 23rd Street at 3:20 p. m., or Erie R. R. Ferry foot of Chambers Street at 3:30 p. m., for train leaving Jersey City, N. J., at 3:45 p. m. on Tuesday, June 9th, or Erie R. R. Ferry foot of Chambers Street at 6:10 a. m. on Wednesday, June 10th, for train leaving Jersey City at 6:30 a. m. Get tickets for Howells, N. Y. Those coming from and via Kingston, N. Y., will take O. & W. train leav-

ing Kingston at 1:27 p. m. on Tuesday, June 9th. Get tickets for Winterton, N. Y. All trains mentioned are operated on Eastern Standard Time. Trains will be met and friends cared for. Those coming by automobile will go directly to the meetinghouse where they will be directed to places of entertainment. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, sisters and friends to meet with us.

R. LESTER DODSON, Moderator.

There will be a two days' meeting at the Olive and Hurley Church, Shokan, Ulster County, New York, June 20th and 21st, 1931. Trains will be met at Ashokan Friday p. m. and Saturday a. m. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. Places of entertainment will be provided for all.

ORVILLE WINCHELL, Deacon.

The annual meeting of the Border Union of Old School Baptists is appointed to be held with the Big Spring Church, at Elgin, Oregon, June 19th, 20th and 21st, 1931. We especially invite any ministers or brethren who may be traveling through the country at the time to attend these meetings. Our highways are standard roads, and it is delightful to see our country at this season of the year. Persons desiring to attend these meetings will come to La Grande by the Oregon Trail Highway, and from there proceed to Elgin, where they will receive a welcome. Any requests for information will be answered by me.

C. W. BOND,
LA GRANDE, Oregon.

The Siloam Association of Predestinarian Baptists will meet with the Sulphur Creek Church, at Riffe, Washington, on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1931. All ministers of our faith and order, and all those who desire to hear the truth, are cordially invited to attend. For other information write the clerk of Sulphur Creek Church.

(MRS.) VERNA SCHOONOVER,
NESIKA, Washington.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 99. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1931. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FREEWATER, Oregon.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In my lonely meditations there are so many things which are so grievous and soul-crushing at first appearance that seem unbearable, but when fully matured I find them to be heavenly blessings. Truly did Jacob speak my heart when he said, The Lord was in this place, and I knew it not. Oh how wonderful are the works of God in the experience of his dear people. His works and ways are very different from our ways. God's thoughts and ways are as high above our thoughts and ways as heaven is above the earth. Man by worldly wisdom cannot understand how this can be, yet it remains a fact known only to the heirs of salvation, revealed by the Holy Spirit through faith which is in Jesus. My meditation has been exercised along the line which divides between our (man's) works and God's work. I have ever believed that there is a cause for every effect, and God is the one which brings the cause that produces the effect in the mind and heart of his people. This truth is set forth in all the types and shadows recorded under the old covenant and is fully confirmed in the gospel, or new covenant. Now let our minds investigate Jacob's words at the head of this letter. What caused Jacob to use the expression, The Lord was in this place, and I knew it not? Jacob was forced to leave his home and kindred, just as his grandfather had been, and I believe that Jacob went out not knowing the way he was to go any more than Abraham did, and the dark night which overtook him, and the unrestful place he had to lay, with the hard rocks for his pillow, made his examination of self, with all his surroundings, one of vital interest to him. Dear ones, do you remember the darkness of mind and soul you felt, after the sunshine of that assurance which called you from darkness into the marvelous light of God's dear Son? Remember Jacob had the blessing of the Father bestowed upon him before he left, and so does every child

of God, and when this light which they have in the soul (which is the blessing) begins to sink or hide its face in doubt then fears begin to rise up like mountains and our light becomes so dim we, like poor Jacob, have to stop. We can no more create a light to travel with than Israel could remove the cloud when it was let down. So, dear ones, it is in these dark hours that God is teaching us a glorious lesson, something which astounds all our worldly wisdom. We never dreamed of God being in the darkness. We, like the disciples, could see Jesus as long as he lived, but when death (darkness) settled down on him their light went out. They had hoped this man would redeem Israel, but darkness that could be felt shut out all the blessed expectation which brightened their journey as they witnessed the eyes of the blind being opened, the deaf hearing, the lame walking and the dead raised to life. Dear brethren, after once witnessing all this wonderful power and goodness, would you think the time would come that they could actually doubt all this wonderful evidence? Well, indeed they, like Jacob, could not believe that God was with them in beholding their dying Lord. But, bless God, he was there and they knew it not. O, dear brethren, how it builds up the soul which is crushed under a sense of sin to feel that Jesus was touched with our infirmities, when we are awakened to the truth that he is a Friend which will never leave nor forsake us. When we, like Jacob, find that the dear Lord is with us in all the conditions of this mortal pilgrimage, then we, like Jacob, gather all those hard stones (trials and sufferings) on which we had lain and build an altar to our God on which we can offer up our broken and contrite hearts in praise to his holy name, and now as I write there are many of these gracious places in my past experience where God has gotten within me a name which is above every name. Notwithstanding all these blessed evidences, we have never learned or been able to walk with them. We, like poor John in prison, have to be shown over again. "Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached." The first thing in this long line of glories is, The blind see. That is just the reason John knew the Lord was with him: his understanding was enlightened to see God. When our eyes are opened to the dealings of God with his people, we then see the lame walking, and we can see how a poor leper (sinner) is cleansed by the blood of Jesus, and we can see how the deaf are made to hear the joyful sound of the gospel, and see the dead raised to life, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. Now, dear ones, why is it we do not like to be classed with all these afflicted when they bear all the blessed evidences that the dear Lord pronounces all his goodness on? They are the ones who have the welcome call, Come in, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Let us hear Jacob's experience;

a little further while in this dark but glorious night. He knew God was there before he left for the rest of his journey. The reason he knew God was there was that God made to him a precious promise which he never forgot, although many times afterward the way was so dark and crooked he could not see how God's promise could ever be fulfilled. But he was like God's humble poor, for while so many things come up in our experience it seems to us we must go down, yet the promise of God that he will be with and bring us safely to our Father's home, we remember with deep reverence. For it is in such straits we learn it is the only way. Lord, to whom shall we go? for thou only hath the words of eternal life. God promised Jacob he would be with him whithersoever he went and would bring him again to his Father's home (promised land). See the many deceptions Jacob met in his long and eventful journey, mixed with many disappointments, too numerous to mention on paper, but may God so exercise our minds that we may gather them as we travel along this highway. We see Jacob after being loved by his father-in-law; then not only his father-in-law, but his brothers-in-law, were turned against him. It brought that sweet promise fresh to his mind which God had made: I will bring thee safe in thy Father's land. See Jacob gathering all his belongings together, preparing to start on the long journey back, not thinking for a moment that he had to pass through Esau's land to reach his desired haven. There were too many other crooked and rough places which must be made smooth and straightened before he came to this mountain which to him was impassable. As the night overtook him it made him remember that his father's land was over Jordan (death), and this caused him to exercise all his power and wisdom and try everything he could to meet his brother. Why did Jacob so hate to meet his brother (the flesh)? Because he had not forgotten the wrath and hatred of his brother which caused him to have to leave his father's home. After Jacob had divided his belongings and sent them before to meet Esau, and gave him gifts to, if possible, appease his wrath that he might reach his desired promise which God had made the first night of his journey, the last thing he sent over the brook was Rachel, his first love, and Joseph was a confirmation of that love. Then we see the poor old soul left alone to see the fruitlessness of all his efforts. Here alone in the night God appears in the person of a man (Jesus) and Jacob wrestled with the man. O, dear brethren, what wrestling of soul there is with the child of grace when we, like Paul, find that law in our members warring against the law of our mind. I feel that of all the trials Jacob met this was the most trying one, it seemed to be the one that sealed grace forever to the heart and mind of his dear people. Notwithstanding, we, like Jacob, have the promise of God that he will bring us off more than conquerors through Jesus, we have got to learn that we have to pass through Esau's land (this mortal life) before the vic-

tory is gained, and this we did not realize at first, but, like Jacob, all our efforts were crowned, and we became very wealthy (self-righteous), that was when the afflictions, or distress, came. We could tell God, who made the promise to us, that if he would only withdraw his rebuke from us we would serve him better and not be so rebellious, not knowing that we were not yet perfect and that we were yet poor sinners. Brethren, how often have we tried to appease the wrath of Esau (flesh) by offering all the good things God has blessed us with, but every one who, like poor old Jacob, has passed through that dark night of soul-wrestling has learned it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Such soul-exercise as this will not let go until the assurance comes, although it leaves them crippled the rest of their lives. But as crippled as Jacob was, he met Esau, his brother, with four hundred men, and in place of Esau showing the wrath which so frightened Jacob he fell on his neck and kissed him. Oh how truly has God in the christian experience made the lamb and the wolf to lie down together. Oh how God can temper all our adversaries so we can willingly walk to the house of God and partake af his psalm ordinances just as freely as if we were not in the flesh. Brethren, have you forgotten the long night struggle your poor soul had while impressed with the desire to go home to your friends and tell them what great things the dear Lord had done for your soul, and when the blessing (daybreak) of the Lord came there was nothing in the way? My people shall be willing in the day of my power.

There are many more blessed things I would love to speak of experimentally, of the wonderful works of God in the salvation of his people, but my letter is now too lengthy. May the dear Lord bless and save his dear people from every false way for Jesus' sake.

J. T. BARNES.

RUTHERFORD, N. J., March 13, 1931.

DEAR PAPA AND MAMMA:—Perhaps you feel that I have been unappreciative of your most excellent letters, as I have not responded very promptly. Mamma made some references in the letter before her last to you both finding comfort in your children, and I meant to thank her for what little I may have contributed to such a feeling. It is nice to hear such things about one's self, even though he may not be altogether deserving of it. Papa, you now come along and have simply overwhelmed me with the wonder of the things to which you are giving expression. I can easily adopt one of your phrases, and say, Language, as I know it, is utterly incapable of adequately portraying the true feeling of my inmost soul in reading your last two letters. The one before that which came to-day so filled me with praise to God for giving you to see the glorious things of his kingdom as recorded by you, that I immediately made a copy and sent it to the SIGNS for publication, and then sent the letter itself to some of the New York brethren, and a copy to Elder Coul-

bourn, at Cape Charles, Virginia, to whom I feel very close, and they have all expressed themselves as being well pleased with your writings. Really, papa, you cannot know how I have enjoyed these letters. I wish there was some way in which I could impart unto you the preciousness of such things, but words are empty vessels and the half cannot be told.

Some of the dear old ladies in the Primitive Baptist Home, in Salisbury, Maryland, have been urging me to send them a picture, so I have posed for one of them and am sending one to you and mamma as a slight token of my love and esteem. Also, am inclosing "An Ode" written by one of the sisters in the Home, which you have probably seen before, but Beulah surprised me Christmas by having it printed and presented one to me beautifully framed as a Christmas gift. It is good when we have friends who think such things about us. I assure you I shall be delighted to have all you may be impressed to write. The Lord has wonderfully taught you in the experiences to which you refer of your own failure, but he did not leave you destitute of his mercy, which has followed you all the days of your life. I can see that when you have not known which way to turn, bewildered and at your wit's end, the God of Jacob did lead you about and instructed you in the way of righteousness, for his name's sake, and you found refuge in the Rock of Ages. I can walk with you in much of the way, for I feel this wonderful God of ours has been my support and shield when all other helps have failed me. He has appeared as the God of my life in a most personal manner, and there are times when I do desire that he will choose all of my changes for me, that he will be with me in prosperity and not forsake me in the day of adversity. If we did not use all of our wisdom and effort and prove it to be an utter failure, what occasion would there be for looking away from self unto the everlasting hills, to him who inhabiteth eternity and filleth immensity? Somehow, we do feel to say, Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. I am persuaded that this God who hath so wonderfully manifested his salvation to us in life will not desert us in death, and I pray that whether our days be many or few, they all are his due, and may they be devoted to him. At our best we are all failures, and without him we can do nothing, but, one said, I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me.

"This God is the God we adore,
  Our faithful, unchangeable Friend;
Whose love is as large as his power,
  And neither knows measure nor end.

'Tis Jesus, the first and the last,
  Whose Spirit shall guide us safe home;
We'll praise him for all that is past,
  And trust him for all that's to come."

I am thankful for the desire which you expressed that your unworthy son and the editor of the SIGNS should exalt the great and blessed name of our Savior, and I would sound his praises

forth that heaven and earth might hear, if I could, but I just cannot attain unto the heights to which I would wish to ascend in ascribing greatness to his name. To exalt the name of Jesus is the most wonderful and blessed thing a poor sinner ever attempted to do, and while there are times when our little cup runs over and we feel to be lifted above the earth and are raised up to the third heavens and see and hear things unlawful to be uttered, yet we do but know in part now, we do but look through a glass darkly as compared to what we shall see when we shall see him as he is and be like him. The joy that will be theirs who shall surround the throne, singing, Not unto us, not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy name be glory and honor, will be inexpressible and full of glory. Is it too much for us to hope to be in the innumerable company? When looking at ourselves and seeing that there is no good in the flesh, we may despair, but when, by faith, we can plead before the Father that Jesus died for us, every obstacle is removed and we are assured of our acceptance in the Beloved. May God give us triumphant faith, by which we may mount up as on wings of eagles, and soar aloft with him who loved us and gave himself for us. Then, nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

It is now after ten o'clock p. m., and while I have not reached down into the depth of the mine of the riches of God's grace as it is in Jesus Christ our Lord, I hope your pure mind may have had a stirring up whereby you have been able to glimpse the land that is afar off and that you have had delightful anticipation of entering into that place of bliss, when your earthly journey is ended, forever to be with your Lord. Quench not the Holy Spirit, but write on and on of the things of Jesus and let the glad tidings ring out.

Your son who loves you in a two-fold sense,

R. LESTER DODSON.

CASTLEWOOD, Virginia.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In the March number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is an article from the pen of brother J. I. Foster, of Texas, at the close of which he says, "I hope some one with more extended views on the subject may write, if the Lord so directs." This is a kind and reasonable request and should have a brotherly reply. Not that I claim for myself a better gift than brother Foster, but I feel to be quite subordinate to him, and fear anything I may write upon the subject might cause it to be asked, Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? or whether the impression I have to write upon this subject is truly of the Lord. The brother has given us many good, sound and consoling things in his article, however I failed to fully catch the thought the writer of this article meant to convey in regard to the sycamore tree Zaccheus climbed. It could be my weakness might have prevented me from so doing. I will say here, without keeping the reader in suspense as to

what I see in this matter. This tree doubtless represents the law. I hope anything I am blessed to say may be in line with the thought the brother had in mind to convey. Zaccheus was not only chief among the publicans, but he was rich. A publican is an inn-keeper and a collector of tolls, yet he was a son of Abraham. Zaccheus has the experience of all God's children, they all climb Zaccheus' tree (the law). The very first thought and first step Zaccheus made to climb the tree to see the Savior manifested the work of salvation by grace in the heart of Zaccheus, because the Lord saw him before he saw the Lord, and by this awakening the sinner flies to the law of works for justification, but it thunders its sentence, The soul that sinneth, it shall die. No reprieve or mercy there. Paul said, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." How is that? Only by the purpose and predestination of God in the salvation of his people by grace, to the end that the sinner should scale the law to his very utmost for justification, and thereby wean himself and see he was a poor, condemned sinner and his only hope for salvation was at the feet of Jesus, and seek his all in him. Then Paul again said, But after that faith is come we are no longer under a schoolmaster. My experience and the Scriptures do not teach me that we ever saw Jesus by our own efforts, or deeds of the law, neither does Zaccheus tell us that he ever saw Jesus in a manifested sense before he made haste and came down, then he saw Jesus, because he had the witness in his soul that Jesus was richly abiding at his house and received him joyfully. Therefore, Jesus says, I in you and you in me. Paul once climed Zaccheus' tree. He said he was taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, but when there shown from heaven a great light round about him and he fell unto the ground, as did Zaccheus, then Paul laid down his Pharisee religion and never took it up again, but confessed, and said, It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. Paul says, But even unto this day when Moses (by whom the law came) is read the vail is upon their hearts, nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord the vail shall be taken away. When Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she lighted off the camel (the law). Here was the figure of Jesus, the dear immaculate Lamb of God, and his bride. As Rebekah lighted off the camel, or law, even so did Zaccheus, and Paul, and all the children of this eternal Bridegroom and bride. Paul said, Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. Here the sinner is slain by the law. He had worked himself out of timber and and material, all his own righteousness by the deeds of the law had failed him, his stronghold, as he thought, now gave way and he saw himself a poor, vile, wretched sinner in the sight of the just

and holy Jesus. He is as the old poet said, "When to the law I trembling fled, it poured its curses on my head." Here the sinner finds the doors of justice by the law bolted against him, no way to escape divine justice. He sees nothing but mercy can reach his doleful case, and cries, Lord, have mercy on me, a poor sinner condemned to die. Here the Lord reveales himself, and says, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Then he makes haste and comes down, "for to-day I must abide at thy house." The poet says, "On the wings of his love I was carried above." To a feast of fat things well refined, where all is love. It is a memorable day of lifting up and refreshing with those who are blessed of the Lord to fully realize these things. The dear child of God thus led is no more a conditionalist, he no more cries, Do, do, but it is already done and completed in Jesus, and all his works shall praise him, and he has no confidence in the flesh. The prophet says, We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness is as filthy rags. I often think of what I heard of a poor Indian who wanted to tell his experience to the church but could not speak English very plainly, and to make the church know his feelings the Indian used a metaphor. He got a worm and made a ring of fire all around it. The worm crawled to all parts of the ring for a way of escape, but there was none, so it crawled to the middle of the ring and curled up to die, when the Indian reached over, picked up the worm and set it free. Here was a bright figure of the law and salvation by grace plainly manifested in that poor Indian. The law is holy and the commandment holy but cannot give eternal life or show mercy to its violators, only metes out the just sentence of death upon its violators. No one is able to keep the whole law. It is much like the slick sycamore tree. If he offend in one point he is guilty of all. This tree represents the law, and is a holy tree, and no one has been able, as I have said, to keep the law but Jesus. He kept it in all things and fulfilled it perfectly in the redemption and salvation of his people. "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." "By him, all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Paul said, Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ. The matter of Zaccheus makes a bright picture in the experience of all of God's people who have thus been brought up in grace's school, as was Zaccheus. They all flee to Zaccheus' tree, to get up where they can see Jesus. As I see it, this running to the law, or Zaccheus' tree, is as much a link in God's purpose and predestination in the salvation of his people as the Lord had in Jonah's going to Ninevah, and trying to go to Tarshish. When Jonah went down to the bottom of the mountains he could cry, Salvation is of the Lord. Even so with the children of God, if they had not tried to climb Zaccheus' tree and had not done their

very utmost to be justified by the deeds of the law they might have boasted, and said their own arm had brought salvation down to them. Paul said, What then, shall we sin because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. It is not while on elevation by deeds of the law that Christ manifests his love in the pardon of the sinner, but it is down, down all the time in the valley of humility, where the Lord found Jacob in a desert land, and in waste howling wilderness; he led him about and instructed him; he kept him as the apple of his eye. Mary, the mother of the Savior, said, He hath put down the mighty from their seats and exalted them of low degree. All know these things when they have experienced them, and to experience them is to love and embrace them, and we should give all praise to God in time and eternity for his great unspeakable love and mercy to poor worms of the dust.

Your little brother, if one at all, in gospel bonds,

W. L. EDWARDS.

COLUMBUS, Ga., Dec. 13, 1929.

MY PRECIOUS SISTER:—Your sweet, good letter received, and I need not say, highly appreciated, for I know, judging by myself, how I love to get a hearing from my brethren and sisters in the Lord. It cheers, comforts and encourages me more than words can express. Oh the christian tie that binds our hearts in one; it is love akin to that above, love, pure love, shed abroad in our hearts by our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, who is love. Happy art thou, O Israel, O people saved by the Lord. How we are made to rejoice when he in love and mercy draws us up to him, speaks peace to our troubled souls, bidding us trust in him, the sovereign God who is keeping us (his children) by the power of his great and everlasting love unto salvation, and though darkness, persecutions, troubles, sorrows and afflictions well-nigh overwhelm, yet above all these things he is guiding and leading, bidding us cast all our care on him, for he is caring for us. Oh what rest we find when we are enabled to claim these precious promises as our own. What an exceedingly great number are left on record for our comfort, a promise to reach our every condition in this wilderness world as we journey on in the way, and He that has promised will perform. Then why should we murmur or complain? He who loved, loved his chosen children from before the world was, fixed all things for their good and his glory. He directs our every step. Man may plan, but God does the disposing of all things according to his purpose. He is a God of purpose. He is wisdom and perfection. He commands and it stands fast. As he has thought, so shall it come to pass. "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord."

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread,
Are big with mercy and shall break
In blessings on your head."

We often feel our way is hard, and the poet sings, Dark and thorny is the way

the pilgrim must pass through. But He has promised never to leave nor forsake us. Jesus the Lord hath promised this. He rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. Yes, all power belongs to this almighty God, and the powers that be are ordained of him. I am God, and beside me there is no God; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. Sister, we find rest in these wonderful, strong, sure promises of the sovereign Ruler of the universe, for to him, for him and by him all things were made and by him all things consist. But who am I that one so weak, so little, should dare to try and talk to you about them? My knowledge is so small, my understanding so limited, yet in my soul I feel to hope there is the witness that these things are the truth, and only God is truth. They are my meat and drink. Could they be taken from me, I should have no place to rest my head, nowhere to go, all would be total darkness, no hope nor life, only a shadow and no substance. I feel to be kept by the Lord, who has taught me to place my trust and hope in him, in whom we are given all things.

I promised my daughter, whose husband died in February last, to spend four or five months this winter and spring with her in her loneliness and sorrow in North Carolina. She has a son teaching school in High Point, N. C., and is following him up, keeping a little home for him, and there are many sound Baptist churches near her, and others not far away. I also thought to run up in Virginia to see and visit with you all and hear Elder Lefferts preach. But, as I said back in this letter, we may plan and arrange to suit ourselves, but the wonderful, wise God does the disposing of all things according to his wise decrees. We are creatures of circumstances, but this great and good God governs all our circumstances, and oh how glad we are that it is so, instead of our plans working out. He purposed I should be with and care for a sick son, my oldest, whose health is entirely broken with nervous prostration, and I am glad to be with him and do the best I can for him; he is very anxious, too, that I be with him. Duty calls and we must obey. I hope you and yours are all enjoying health. Love to Mary and her husband and all the dear ones near you.

Elder Adams seems to be growing stronger after so serious illness and so long a time. Even at our last meeting he put on his clothes and was carried down to our little church, went into the stand and talked thirty or forty minutes of his rejoicings in his afflictions. God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform.

Forgive all said amiss. The Lord keep and bless you. Write as often as you can.

Yours in love and hope,

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

[THE foregoing good letter was written by Mrs. F. J. Norris, of Columbus, Georgia, to Mrs. S. F. Carruthers, of Aldie, Virginia.—ED.]

TIPTONVILLE, Tenn., January, 1931.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am again desiring to thank you and the dear ones who are still remembering the poor of the flock, for the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES is a much loved and appreciated paper. I do not feel the least worthy of it, especially in this way, not being able to help financially. I do not feel worthy myself of the least blessing I receive, but God, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, rules all things and by him all things consist. May he allow me to fall at his feet, as the publican, and beg his mercy to me, a sinner. If I can do that in an acceptable manner it is enough for me. If it is your mind to continue sending me the SIGNS, please change my address from Hickman, Kentucky, to Box 344, Tiptonville, Tennessee. Pray for me and mine, if you can, that God will be our strength and our all, and when done with us here take us home with him to dwell, where heartaches and trials never come, and may he bless you all with all you need, both here and in eternity.

(MRS.) LUTHER CAMPBELL.

NESIKA, Wash., Nov. 5, 1930.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription to the dear old SIGNS will soon be out, I am enclosing five dollars, four dollars to apply on my subscription to the SIGNS and one dollar for one of Elder Dodson's book on Predestination. I do love the doctrine that the SIGNS so ably contends for. I have often said that it is the best and soundest paper published in America, so far as I know, although it has many enemies. There are a goodly number of our people who say they believe in the predestination of some things, but they cannot bear the thought of the predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass, which I think is a denial of the foreknowledge of God. If God foresaw the end from the beginning and, as we know, has all power, both in heaven and earth, and none is able to stay his hand, if the predestination of all things is not true, then why not? If this glorious doctrine is not true, then we are living in a chance world, and we know that nothing happens by chance.

May the great God continue to bless you in your noble work, is my prayer.

Your little brother in the bonds of the gospel,

F. L. RIFFE.

STUDLEY, Kansas, Feb. 16, 1931.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As my subscription to the SIGNS is due, I am remitting herewith two dollars for another year. I just want to assure the editors and other writers that I do enjoy their writings, for they express my own feelings so well. The good letters and editorials are the only sermons I get, as I am far from any church of our faith. What a blessing to the church to have such able editors and other writers to proclaim such a rich salvation by grace alone. May they long be spared to preach the unsearchable riches of a risen Christ to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Your brother, I hope,

U. S. LOYD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1931.

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2 PETER III. 10.

"BUT the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up."

A sister living in New York state has asked our views on the above, saying she understands the experimental import of it, but wanting to know what we think the text literally means. Many good brethren regard this text as having been fulfilled at the destruction of the city of Jerusalem by the Roman army under Titus in the year 70 A. D., at which time the Jewish economy came to an end. This second epistle of the apostle Peter is supposed to have been written about 66 A. D., which, if correct, would place it four years before the catastrophe above mentioned. There is no doubt in our mind but that the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A. D. has been one of the most fearful, probably the most so, of any calamity that ever befell the Jews: but terrible as it was, the elements did not catch fire at that time and melt with fervent heat, nor did the earth and all the works in it burn up, nor yet did the heavens pass away with a great tumult at that time. It was at the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus that the legal heavens passed away, for then it was that the vail of the temple was rent in twain from top to bottom, and no such hing took place at the destruction of Jerusalem which postdated the death of Christ by about thirty-six or thirty-seven years. In endeavoring to interpret Scripture, we think that often too much emphasis is placed on the destruction of Jerusalem and more importance given to it than it deserves. All inspired Scripture was finished, that is the writing of it, before Jerusalem was destroyed and all we know about that city's calamity we learn from profane history. It seems to us that if that event had contained such important significance for the people of God, as some have said it does the Scriptures would have been more definite about it and most probably the canon of Scripture would not have been closed before it took place. Therefore, it is our mind that the Scripture at the head of this article has a vastly more far-reaching meaning than was involved at the de-

struction of Jerusalem. That destruction was a fearful thing for the Jews, but the "day of the Lord" spoken of by Peter is to come upon the whole world and will be a far more severe tribulation of the nations than any that has ever taken place or ever will again. "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever will be."—Matt. xxiv. 21. The object of the Almighty in destroying the city of the Jews and thus bringing their regime to an end in their world-wide dispersion is set forth in Matthew xxiii. 32-36. It was the judgment of God upon that nation for "all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar." If the Jews could not, therefore, escape righteous judgment for their martyrdom of the saints and prophets of God, can it be thought for a moment that the whole world will escape God's judgment in due time for the rivers of holy blood that have been shed since that time by the Gentiles? Nay, verily! The "day of the Lord shall come and it will be to the world what the destruction of Jerusalem was to the Jews. That former catastrophe is but a picture in minature of what is yet to be visited upon the Gentiles. Only the elect shall escape. Not a hair of their head shall be hurt in that overwhelming judgment attendant upon the "day of the Lord." That "day" shall come upon the world as a surprise: they will not be looking for it nor in the least expecting it. They shall be eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, going about their everyday affairs just as did the people in the days of Noah before the flood. As the flood took the people of Noah's day totally unawares and they were involved in destruction before they knew it, so shall it be when the "day of the Lord" shall come upon the whole earth. As Peter says, it will come "as a thief in the night." But, mind you, it did not catch Noah unawares. He, typical of the church, was forewarned by faith and the "day of the Lord" found him prepared of God and ready to be caught up in the ark. So will it be with God's people in that day: that day shall not overtake them as a thief, but will find them awake and watching, they being forewarned by faith and kept by its power unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. God's elect are of the day and not of the night, they shall not therefore sleep as do those of the night: but that day shall find them with their loins girded and their lamps burning all ready to meet their Lord when he cometh for them. "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up." It is thought by some that the "heavens" referred to mean the passing away of all false religions and earthly spiritual powers, and that the "earth" refers to the political powers and earthly kingdoms which are to pass away. As to that we shall not say further than to say we cannot see why

it does not mean just what it says: that the heavens and the earth of the old creation which God made in the beginning as recorded in Genesis, shall pass away by fire and be utterly consumed: that then there will be a new genesis, the bringing in of an entirely new heavens and new earth in which God will make all things new, thus a new creation in which shall dwell righteousness forever. In the thirteenth verse of this same chapter, Peter says, "We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Some say Peter here referred to the gospel heavens and the gospel church. But Peter was already in the gospel heavens and in the gospel church when he said this. Why should he be looking for something he already had? For our part, while we surely believe that the present gospel covenant of God's grace which the church now inhabits and enjoys is "new" as compared with the "old" law which has passed forever away, this gospel state of the church is surely not the eternal destination of God's elect, but only the "earnest" of that inheritance which is to come. This new heaven and new earth are to be the new creation of God in which shall dwell righteousness forever: this new creation shall be fully brought in when the old creation shall be utterly consumed at the "day of the Lord." Peter compares the destruction of the world by water in the days of Noah, with its destruction by fire at the coming "day of the Lord," which "day" is to be one of judgment upon the ungodly, not at all upon the elect. It is a day of salvation for the church, but of woe upon the world. As it was literal water which brought the judgment in Noah's day upon the ungodly, so we have every reason to believe it will be literal fire of overwhelming intensity that will bring destruction to the ungodly in the coming "day." Before that great and terrible day of the Lord shall come, we believe God's restraining power over the wickedness of the wicked shall be taken away in order that the "wicked one," the "son of perdition" shall speedily ripen for destruction. Even in Paul's day, the mystery of iniquity was already working and it has been at work until now, but always heretofore under the restraint of God's power. But when that power which now "lets" or hinders the wicked one shall be taken away, he will very speedily show all his iniquity completely, then shall he be destroyed. Listen to it as Paul has it: "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who letteth, will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume [burn up] with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" when he shall come to be glorified in his saints in that day. Inasmuch as the people of God are looking for and hasting unto that

coming day of the Lord, Peter exhorts us as to how careful we should be in our christian walk and conversation, inasmuch as all these things of the old creation are to pass away. We need to have to do with the perishing things of this world just as little as possible. The whole of it is under the curse, the whole world lieth in wickedness: or as it literally reads, the whole world lieth in the lap of the Wicked One. "We know that we [believers] are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness."—1 John v. 19. "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness." The coming of the day of the Lord was a powerful basis for exhortation and warning to the saints in Peter's day, and it ought to be in our day much more so, for we are to-day nearer to it than they were by many centuries. Yet one day with the Lord is a thousand years, and a thousand years are as one day with him, so no mortal knows or can tell how soon or how long it will be. Peter warns us that there will come scoffers who will mock at this truth of the coming day of God, and surely these scoffers are not lacking these days. The fact that the Lord seems to us to delay his coming gives rise in the minds of many to the thought that he never will come. The unbelieving mind says, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." But these forget that the world was once destroyed by water in the days of Noah, and that so surely this present heavens and earth are being reserved unto fire.

In complying with the request for our views on this subject, we have tried to set down here that which is our faith on the subject and to avoid vain speculations: yet we are thoroughly aware that what may be one man's faith on any subject may seem to be speculation to another. Thus, we leave the matter to the judgment of our inquirer and to our readers, seeking nothing better than that they may judge us in the light of the written inspired Scriptures of truth.

H. H. L.

2 TIMOTHY II. 1, 2.

"THOU therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

We again address you editorially in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to call your attention to the words of Paul as recorded above. We do not desire to infer that we are the same as the learned apostle Paul, when we address the readers, but because of the necessity devolving upon us, we realize according to the writings of Paul, that he did not feel he could impart unto faithful men the hidden mysteries of God by the power of natural wisdom, or any act that could be manifest by any mortal creature, but according to the working of the hidden man of the heart, he thus addressed Timothy, and neither do we feel that we can commit to any man the things which pertain to the kingdom of

God and his righteousness, and all we can do is to be faithful to the church of God in the things we hope we have received of him according to the workings of his mighty power, by which he is able to subdue all things unto himself.

We have been favored to attend four associations this spring and summer, the last one closing June 12th, 1931, viz., Baltimore, Delaware, Delaware River and Warwick, which last closed on the date mentioned above, and all the preaching was of one accord, ascribing all the glory and honor to God and crowning Jesus Lord of all. Each minister delivered his message to the brethren according to the grace given unto him, in his own personal way, but we feel assured that this was indited in his heart, and the speaking out was only testifying of the abundance of the heart. We would be mindful to consider this subject of gospel address. Paul was called to be an apostle, and as we have the testimony delivered unto us by the words of his own mouth in whatever strait he was, and the witness of our hearts beareth witness of Paul that that witness was true, so Paul was speaking to Timothy in this epistle in the realization of the testimony of Timothy, which was manifested both in his walk and conversation, so Paul in this relation was charging him to commit the same unto faithful men who shall be able to teach others also. We have no authority to address or take into fellowship only those who bear fruit according as is described by the apostles to the churches, or church, of God, and we feel that Paul was calling special attention to the ministry, and the safeguarding of the same from cunning craftiness and the deceitfulness of the flesh, and every man that feels that he has been called of God is as much addressed in Paul's letter to Timothy as though his name was called, for he stands before God in his lot the same as did Paul, and according to the grace given him these things are required at his hands. Now, calling attention that no minister has right to commit the things that he has heard of Paul and all the other apostles, and Jesus among many witnesses, to any man because of his relations to the first Adam, for it would be like forgery in a literal sense to do so. These faithful men are also described by Paul in his epistles to Timothy, and in the third chapter of first Timothy he gives us the natural qualifications of one who desires the office of bishop, and both church and minister should be very careful to note them when called upon to commit to any man the ordinances and full functions of the gospel ministry. Faithful does not stop with a confession to the church of God, but the life of the individual proves the faith he professes, as is testified by the apostle to us, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him," and the apostle James declares, "Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." For a church as a body to call for the ordination of a man without considering his qualifications according to the Scriptures, it should not be held as an orderly church, and should any pres-

bytery act without taking into account these things, they would not be orderly in their work, even though an organized body of believers had requested them to do so; they are not bound in gospel address to act deceitfully and acknowledge that which the New Testament does not sustain, and where such procedures take place death is written, and all the sweetness of their meetings will pass out. Faithfulness becomes the house of the Lord. Ministers cannot, as the stewards of God and his Son Jesus Christ, be faithful and seek to please men; nor can a church be faithful and turn aside the sacred relation for relations of the flesh. We have heard such expressions as, I could not hold up my hand against this one or that one because of certain fleshly relations. Was the one expressing sentiments such as the above committing these unto the faithful relations of the Spirit or to the flesh? We desire to faithfully consider these things the many rites and privileges we have received of the church of God, to commit to faithful men as much as is within us to discern, and stand aloof from those who handle the word of God deceitfully.

C. W. V.

NOTICE.

When remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder J. T. Rowe.)

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Ebenezer Church, of Baltimore, Maryland, May 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1931, do desire to greet in the Lord the churches composing the same, and all associations and meetings with which we correspond.

DEAR ONES IN THE LORD:—We feel at this time to call your attention to the first five verses of the eleventh chapter of Paul's epistle to the Romans. First of all Paul asks, "Hath God cast away his people?" Then in the second verse he says, "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew." The gospel was being taken from the Jews and given to the Gentiles. But God had foreknown and predestinated unto salvation a people for himself from among the Jews, and although he takes his gospel from them because they put it from them, and judged them unworthy of everlasting life, the number of Jews ordained to eternal life would not be one less in the eternal salvation of Jesus Christ. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." —2 Tim. ii. 19. He tells us that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. God had also from all eternity foreknown for himself a people among the Gentiles, and their salvation is as sure as the throne of the great I AM. He has foretold by his prophet that the Gentiles should trust

in the name of Jesus, as quoted by Christ in Matthew xii. 21. And again, "The Gentiles shall come to thy light." —Isaiah lx. 3. These are promises of that God who made heaven and earth, and therefore cannot fail. Now, dear brethren, we are very few in number in our churches, and for them the outlook to us is very discouraging, and it may be that the fullness of the Gentiles has about come in, and we grieve for the deadness of our churches, and pray for a revival by his grace and power, yet we are not afraid that one Gentile whom the Lord hath chosen will fall short of that glorious salvation that God has appointed him to. God has not cast away his people which he foreknew, and if it is his will to revive his work among us in our day I know that we shall be glad and rejoice in him and praise him for the manifestation of his love. If not, it will be right, for he doeth all things well. But, brethren, let us examine ourselves whether we be in the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. Are we walking in the footsteps of Jesus, our blessed Lord? For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die. Lord, if we are blind to thy truth, either in doctrine or in practice, be pleased to open our eyes that we may see and through the Spirit modify the deeds of the body and thus live unto thee, and let our light so shine that others seeing our works may glorify our Father which is in heaven. The apostle tells us that Christ laid down his life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. Let us love one another. Love is of God. If we love each other we will bear one another's burdens and not fall out by the way. Our differences, if any, are due to our weaknesses, which hinder us from seeing all things clearly.

Now may the God of love keep you by and in his loving power, for your comfort and the glory of his rich and distinguishing grace. Amen.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.
F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.
A. S. ROWE, Ass't Clerk.

(Written by brother J. B. Miller.)

The Delaware Association of Old School Baptists, now in session with the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, May 27th, 28th and 29th, 1931, to the several churches of which she is composed, and to all of the faith of God's elect, sendeth christian greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more, through the mercy of God, we are called upon to address you and promulgate the truth as it is in Jesus, in the form of a Circular Letter. We feel incapable of performing this duty, as we do not feel "called" to do so, but being "called upon" by the brethren at our last Association, it must be executed in some manner, but God knoweth ; if his Spirit doth not indite the matter it will avail nothing spiritually.

Our mind for some days past has been fastened upon the words of John, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." He begins this epistle by addressing the church as "little children:" "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not," and his last

and warning words are, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." His whole theme is "love," and where the Spirit of Christ is, there is love; and every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God. The heart (of man) is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I the Lord, search the heart, I try the reins even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings. He knoweth every pulsation of wickedness in the heart, and we feel his condemnation: inward sin is the cause of the manifestation of it. There are many idols the human heart entertains, and some of the most dangerous are, the love of money, and natural love. Paul's admonition to Timothy was directed against the first herein mentioned, warning him to be careful not to love it for filthy lucre's sake, for we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. "But they that will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness." "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." We all are creatures born subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope (this mercy is bestowed upon the church, his body). Therefore being creatures of vanity, we are tossed about in our earthen vessel, sojourning here for a time, subjected to all the temptations that mortals can be confronted with, and the love of money to all, more or less comes into our lives to bring sorrow many times, especially when we are turned over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. If we are ever tempted, in principle, to withhold or keep back part, as did Ananias and Sapphira, we are made to suffer sometimes for such acts, for when one is in need, especially our ministering brethren who are deprived of temporal necessities, our Father will make our hearts burn within us for such neglect. Another "idol" to which we all are subjected is "natural love." True love is the foundation upon which humanity is builded or established. Were it not for love, in conception, this world could not be ruled or governed. All good emanates from love. The love of a child by its mother supercedes all love in nature, and the same love, if it be true in conception, is reciprocated by the child ever after birth. Thus the foundation of all governments and principalities

is founded upon love. Now comes the "idol" manifested in the subject of grace. "In the world ye shall have tribulation." These words are promised to a child of God by the Savior. Many of us love our own to the point of idolatry, and when disease or sickness, even death tears them from us, we are sometimes cast adrift in the flesh, and not given grace to say, "Thy will be done," for only by the grace of God can one say this by faith. Yes, sometimes we observe our own are more to us than the church, more than the association or fellowship of the saints, but those times are when we are suffered to permit our natural love to engross the spiritual, and nullify it for the time being. When the Spirit of Christ is uppermost in our hearts, and that "still small voice" says, Take up thy cross and follow me, for I am meek and lowly and will give you rest, then we can forsake father and mother, sister and brother, children and lands: we can leave all these behind and sweetly fellowship our *mother*. The fellowship of the saints is more to us then than all else, even our own flesh and blood. If we can be carried above earth and thus view our *mother*, in such a Light, our idols are consumed for the time and we enjoy the fellowship of the saints in the Spirit. There are many antichrists and idols, but we are warned of these things that combat and seduce us, but His grace is sufficient in times of temptation, and how comforting. "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming. If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him." He will in due time, his time, strip us of all idols in whatever form they may appear, and the stripes must come as chastisements and trials. Strange and fiery trials they may be. Yes, they that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, saith the Lord. Each of the little ones has his own peculiar weakness in the flesh, and will be visited by His afflicting rod to purge us of our idols in our own vessels of clay, but when they are cast into the sea the Spirit of life reigns within us for the time. This is the anointing, and it will abide in us. We are admonished to "love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." May we all therefore be blessed to be separated from all idols to which we are subjected, and if we be

given a godly desire to pray for these things, they will be taken from us. "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous." May the Lord preserve us in the love and peace of Christ.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Mod.
JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in joint session with the several churches composing it, convened at Newark, New Castle County, Delaware, May 27th, 28th and 29th, 1931, sends forth christian greetings to our sister churches and associations.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another period of refreshment and spiritual profit and edification is with us, and your messengers and correspondence are once more most welcome. We feel to be inspired with the thought that the doctrine of grace and truth in Jesus has been preached to us by each and all of the ministry, and notwithstanding our small numerical strength is waning, we feel that our number is just as it is ordained to be, no more, no less; and the fact that He is, and has been, in our midst by his holy presence throughout the session, and in our homes, is sufficient evidence that our strength is not in numbers, but in him alone, as was in Gideon's army, reduced to a small minimum, proving the word of the Lord, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

Our next meeting will be held with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, May, 1932, the Lord willing, where your messengers are again welcome in our midst.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Mod.
JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEACON THOMAS B. WALTERS departed this life March 11th, 1931, at his home in Pocomoke City, Md., after a long illness, aged 69 years. In January, 1928, he suffered a stroke of paralysis, his left side being affected. While he recovered sufficiently to be around and, at times, attend to business, there was a steady decline in strength. Two days before the end, he had a dizzy spell and the doctor had him go to bed. On the 11th of March he seemed better and said he would be up the next day. He was cheerful and at bed time asked for something to eat. Soon afterward he was taken with severe pains in the region of his heart, but it was thought to be indigestion. The doctor was called and all done for him that could be done, but at 12:15 he passed to the beyond, for which he had longed. It was the privilege of the writer to baptize him in the fellowship of the Little Creek Church, of Delmar, Delaware, nine years before his death. Soon after, he united with the Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church by letter and was soon chosen Deacon, which office he filled well until disease overtook him. He had a good gift in prayer and a fine voice, hence was a great help to the church. He had a good understanding of the Scriptures and was quite gifted in talking. He loved the church and its doctrine and his interest in all church affairs was very keen. He was a son of the late Elder Thomas Walters, who served churches in the Salisbury Association many years. His grandfather and great-grandfather, both bearing the same name, Thomas Walters, were Old School Baptist ministers. He is survived by his widow, who before marriage was Miss Hariet Hall, three daughters and one son: Mrs. Claude Ker, of Delmar, Md., Misses Bertha and Wihelmina and Fuller Walters, all of Pocomoke City, Maryland.

The funeral service was held at his late home, 400 Market Street, Pocomoke City, Md., conducted by Mr. D. W. Littleton, pastor of the family, with a few brief remarks by the writer, his son-in-law and pastor. Interment was in the family plot in the Baptist Cemetery, in Pocomoke City. He was a christian gentleman, had a host of friends and is much missed by us all. May grace be equal to our day.

ALSO,

JOHN STATON SIRMAN was born March 10th, 1881, died January 12th, 1930, aged 49 years. In early manhood he went to New Jersey and became an employe of the Victor Machine Company and continued with that firm as long as he was able to work. He was a great sufferer from tumors of the glands of the neck and shoulder. He resorted to many operations, but to no avail. In 1915 he married Mrs. Churchin, of New York. In May, 1929, he came back to his native State to be among his relatives and friends. While living in Camden, N. J., he often attended the meetings at 1315 Columbia Avenue, Philadelphia. He and Elder Coulter were friends. He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. John W. Sirman. It was the privilege of the writer to call on Mr. Sirman several times, and found him composed, having a good hope through grace.

The funeral service was held from the home of his sister, Mrs. Riggin, in Salisbury, Md., conducted by the writer, and was largely attended. He is buried by his widow, his mother and, I think, two sisters and one brother.

By request.

H. C. KER.

DEACON EDWARD A. JOHNSON was born September, 1851, and passed from this life April 26th, 1931. He was twice married, first to Miss Ella Brown, who did not live long; second, to Miss Mollie Scott, who was a member of the Black Rock Primitive Baptist Church, and from the time of their marriage their home was a home for Old Baptists. Brother Johnson was baptized by the writer into the fellowship of the Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore city, May 8th, 1904, and chosen and ordained Deacon June 29th, 1905. Brother Johnson was a faithful and useful member, a good and ready talker on Bible subjects. We greatly miss him, yet we know that the Lord he loved always does right and we feel sure he is far better off. He was a great sufferer for several months before the end came. May God bless us as a church to be reconciled to his will and make up for the loss to us in another whom he will.

His funeral was held April 29th, conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder D. L. Topping, who had served as Deacon with brother Johnson for several years. He was laid to rest beside his wife in the cemetery at Black Rock to await the call of his Savior, who himself was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, and hath said concerning this mortal body, that this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality, and death is swallowed up in victory.

Written by his pastor.

ALSO,

MISS ELEANOR G. MERRYMAN was born January, 1855, and departed this life March 5th, 1931, at the Primitive Baptist Home, Salisbury, Maryland. She was of the very highest type of christian womanhood, and was for years a regular attendant upon the services of the Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., and was baptized into her fellowship by the writer June 11th, 1911, and proved a very worthy and faithful member, always filling her seat when able to do so. Such faithful ones are greatly missed, but the Lord knows best, and may he give us all sustaining grace that we may not murmur at the dispensations of his providence.

Her pastor,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

B. FRANKLIN WHITE, our beloved brother in Christ, departed this earthly life May 23rd, 1931, at the Garfield Hospital, Washington, D. C. He was born March 15th, 1851, in Montgomery County, Maryland, and lived all his life in and about that neighborhood. He was a son of brother Joseph and sister Ann White, and a nephew of Elder E. V. White. He is survived by one sister and three brothers: Mrs. Mary L. Pratt, of Morgantown, W. Va., John White, of Terre Haute, Ind., Furr White, of Poolsville, Md., Arthur White, of Adamstown, Md. He was baptized September 4th, 1921, into the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia. He lost his sight many years ago, but his spiritual insight into the truth of God was unimpaired and his understanding of the doctrine was clear and sound. Unable on account of his blindness, to be engaged actively in business of any secular nature, his interest and devotion turned to the business of his heavenly Father, in which he was diligent and faithful to the end. He sincerely loved the church and all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth: the place of the habitation of God's name and where his honor dwells. He became unconscious several hours before passing away, but while still in full possession of his mental faculties he testified to his hope in Jesus and to his confidence in God's omnipotence; giving clear evidence that he was passing out of this world held by the same hope that had been so precious to him for many years. We feel he died triumphantly and passed the river telling the triumphs of his King.

Funeral services were held in the chapel at Monocacy Cemetery, Ballsville, Md., using the words in Psalms xxvii. 4. Interment in the cemetery there to await the resurrection at the descent of the Lord from heaven.

H. H. L.

WILLIAM J. HINSON was born in Hickman County, Tennessee, November 3rd, 1844, and died in Fletcher, Oklahoma, April 30th, 1931, aged 86 years, 5 months and 27 days. He enlisted in Company M. of the First Regiment of Wisconsin Calvary, Volunteers, of the Union Army on December 4th, 1862. After two years and seven months of service he was honorably discharged, July 19th, 1865. He was united in marriage November 8th, 1866, to Miss Mary Jane Montgomery, and to this

union were born nine children, five of whom died in infancy and childhood. He is survived by his wife, Mary Jane Hinson, and five children: James W. Hinson, Mrs. Mary I. Jenkins, John H. Hinson, of Fletcher, Oklahoma, Jasper L. Hinson, of Lubbock, Texas, and William H. Hinson, of Malden, Mass., also eighteen grandchildren, fourteen great-grandchildren, two brothers, B. C. Hinson, of Bristow, Okla., J. L. Hinson, of Newalla, Okla., and one sister, of Franklin Ark. Deceased for many years had been a member in good standing with the Old School Baptist Church known as Shiloh, at Crescent, Oklahoma. To know him was to love him. He was possessed of as many graces as any person I ever knew, sound in the faith, unswerving and unflinching in the doctrine of the eternal sovereignty of God in all things, kind, patient, forbearing and very charitable. His doors were ever open to the Baptists and to the poor, delighting always in the law of God. His life's work is done and he called to his reward, which is eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, but his bereaved aged companion and his children are left behind for a little, to await the summons of their God to come up higher to be with Christ and all the redeemed of the Lord. May God bless and comfort them and guide them into all truth, and give us all the spirit of reconciliation that we may say in all things, God's will be done. The family has lost a kind and noble husband, a lovely father, the church a father in Israel, the community a worthy citizen.

At his funeral the unworthy writer spoke to a large gathering of friends from Job xiv. 14, and Isaiah xxvi. 19, after which the mortal remains of our beloved brother were laid in the tomb, to await the voice of the Son of God calling their sleeping dust to awake in the likeness of our immortal King to praise his blessed and holy name for ever and ever.

W. S. BOURLAND.

MYRTLE PALMER McGLADE, wife of the late Elder Frank McGlade, fell asleep in Jesus May 25th, 1930. One son, Hugh Boyd McGlade, of Columbus, Ohio, two sisters, and three brothers survive. "Myrtha" was a noble wife, mother and sister. The church will miss a faithful member. Her host of friends among the brethren feel the loss of her presence most keenly. For forty years or more she had been entirely deaf. She was a fluent lip-reader, and possessed rare talent in painting, in oil and pastel work. Many pieces of her work are scattered in many States in the homes of her loved ones and friends. Her cheerful disposition made for her many warm and lasting friends. Her deafness was a handicap in some ways, but her life was spent in doing deeds of kindness for her family and others. She often said she was anxious since Elder McGlade's death to go also. Elder Gale Hanover preached a comforting funeral discourse.

J. C. PURDY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

"A friend," Colo., $1; Mrs. W. S. Johnson, N. Y., $2; Mrs. (W. R.) Phœbe Conklin, N. Y., $1; A. B. Corder, W. Va., $3; Ray West, Ind., 50 cents; Mrs. May Derby Hoyt, N. Y., $2; Mrs. Sarah Gandy, N. J., $1; E. H. Winchell, Mich., $3; David L. Blackwell, N. J., $2; Elder Arnold H. Bellows, N. Y., $5; J. Y. Vanhook, N. J., $1.

MEETINGS.

The Primitive Baptist Church of New Hope, of the North Ouachita Association has changed the date of our Association from October to Friday before the first Sunday in September, at old New Hope, nine miles south of Hope, Arkansas, on the Missouri Pacific R. R., and three miles north of Patmos, on the L. & A. R. R.. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend.

J. G. RATLIFF.

The Siloam Association of Predestinarian Baptists will meet with the Sulphur Creek Church, at Riffe, Washington, on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1931. All ministers of our faith and order, and all those who desire to hear the truth, are cordially invited to attend. For other information write the clerk of Sulphur Creek Church.

(MRS.) VERNA SCHOONOVER,
NESIKA, Washington.

The Cane Run Predestinarian Old School Baptist Church, of Turners Station, Kentucky, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 10:30 a. m., also, the Sulphur Fork Church of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, of the same faith and order, meets every third Sunday, and Saturday before, of each month, at 2:30 p. m.

GEO. L. WEAVER, Pastor.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Little Flock Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every first and third Sunday at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, at 1 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave, Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 99. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1931. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

2 TIMOTHY IV. 3, 4.

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

It is evident by reading the connection and the address of this second epistle that Paul is addressing this epistle to Timothy, who he (Paul) had ordained the first bishop, or elder, of the church of the Ephesians, and in the charge tells him many things for the benefit of the church. One charge which seems to stand out more vivid than the rest is to preach the word in and out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. Paul knew that after his departure grievous wolves would enter in. He knew the time would come when they would not endure sound doctrine (the preaching of the word), that the unregenerate would not submit to the preaching of Christ, for it is foolishness unto them. The time had already come at the time of writing this epistle. Paul was himself a prisoner about to be brought before Cæsar the second time for adherring to the doctrine of Christ, and knew what it was to suffer for his name's sake, and there was a woe attached in his experience if he preached not the gospel. The time has come when they will not endure sound doctrine; they walk after their own lusts, their own wisdom, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. This work system is as old as time. We find it in the Garden of Eden making out God a liar. We hear of Cain bringing the fruit of his labor for a sacrifice, in the land of Shinar building a temple to reach to heaven, until becoming confused. It seems to me they are still working on this same building, expecting to reap according to their works, putting action before life, working in order to be born again, according to the Bible one of the impossibilities. It seems all nations of people have a religion, have a god, some of wood or stone, silver or gold. Through fear of punishment they would not worship the

all-wise God, for he is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. They have not the Spirit, they cannot worship him with their hands. They have not the truth, for to know him is life eternal. They have not the way, they are lost; neither have they been partakers of that eternal life, they are dead, and with all their earthly science, their wealth, their positions, even to rulers, kings or priests, they are just as dead as Lazarus was, and until Jesus raises them from this plane and takes up his abode in their hearts and reveals himself to them as the One altogether lovely and the Chiefest among ten thousand they will heap to themselves teachers having itching ears and turn away from the truth and be turned unto fables. What does Paul consider sound doctrine? We will refer to the psalmist: "The doctrine of the Lord is perfect."—Psalms (margin) xix. 7. "The people were astonished at his doctrine."—Matt. vii. 28. "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine."—Acts ii. 42. "But ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."—Rom. vi. 17. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine."—2 Tim. iii. 16. "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God."—2 John 9. I might name many more, but this is sufficient for the present, and we form this conclusion: The law or doctrine of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. It gives perfection to his people that converts the soul, which flesh and blood cannot reveal. It is that attribute of God which cannot be added to nor taken from. The people were astonished at the doctrine of Christ, for with it came the power of God. They, as natural men, could not comprehend it, and they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine. Who? They who were pricked in their hearts and obeyed from the heart. It could not be from the heart until it was written there. In the absence of testimony, we could not believe all Scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine. So it must be a doctrine given by revelation, and whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God. This is the doctrine that the unregenerated world cannot come into, cannot see, cannot comprehend, and look upon it as foolishness. The itching ears of the teachers, the world with all its scientific attainments, must turn away from it, for it cannot be reasoned out, it is not after the flesh, and they that have not this sound doctrine written in their hearts have not God, and their wisdom is earthly, sensual and devilish. The sound doctrine of God our Savior is pure, undefiled, perfect, omnipotent, immutable, merciful, lovely, given to his people, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began, and there is no soundness outside of Christ. He is in his people, he leads them, he keeps them, he hath builded them together for his habitation, and Paul declares to them, I determined not to

know anything among you but Jesus Christ and him crucified. That is sound doctrine to his people. They believe it, because God hath revealed it unto them, and coming from God it is sound. No man is able to walk in this strait and narrow way only as he is led by the power of God. All flesh is alike in this respect, sinful, corrupt, earthly. It is not according to what we are in the flesh, not the good in one and the evil in the other, but that the purpose of God according to election might stand, and here is the difference between his people and the unregenerate world, to one the Savior speaks, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips: but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines, the commandments of men."—Matt. xv. 8, 9. To his people: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."—1 Peter ii. 9. The world cannot endure sound doctrine, which is truth, and turns away from it, but to his chosen people it is their meat and their drink.

Respectfully submitted to your judgment.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

OTTAWA, Kansas, Jan. 7, 1930.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—While attending the fall associations in Kansas and Missouri, some dear brethren and sisters said to me that they had always enjoyed the correspondence between sister Pultz and myself as published in the SIGNS, and expressed regret that her death had ended it all. I thought then I would read her letters and forward one to the SIGNS, and as I was doing so to-day the one I am inclosing seemed the one I should send. I am mailing it to you instead of the publishers, and if after reading you think they will publish it, you may send it on. We corresponded from 1909 until her death. No words of mine could ever express how I miss her and dear Elder Durand. Their words of counsel, consolation and encouragement helped me through many gloomy seasons. The dear Lord has always been very good to me, and I believe I can say he himself hath taught me, and what he reveals it stands for all time.

You wrote me very kindly in answer to the letter I sent you. While I never met you, I feel to know you. I used to read your letters in the SIGNS with much gratification and comfort when you first went to New York, and felt we must have been taught in the same school, for no man ever taught as Jesus did.

I have copied the letter, so if they do not publish it I will still have the original.

I do not believe I ever told you how I prize your book on predestination, and let me say, I believe it with all my heart, if I know my heart at all. May the dear Lord keep you ever contending for the faith as once delivered unto the saints, is my desire for you, and all his ministers. It seems some are de-

parting from the faith and going after idols.

From the very least of all,

ANNA McKINNEY.

WHEELING, W. Va., March 31, 1920.

MY DEAR SISTER ANNA:—I have thought of you much of late, and of your good letter, which I wanted to send to the SIGNS. I have not your consent, but feel you will not object. It seems next to impossible for me to do the things I propose doing. As often as I think of writing, the thought will come, There is that letter of Anna's, I have not sent it yet. I do hope it is not selfishness in me. It seems I have not enough life in me to carry anything through. It is much the same with my daily labor about the house. My impressions are so feeble; I cannot break through into reality. My mind's sky is clouded and hazy. Once in a while I read some portion from "our lovely band" that stirs me into tenderness and tears. But such heart-felt emotion causes much palpitating of the nerve force. Then I see the needs be for this surface work of the mind. I see, too, the Lord's mercy in this, and, dear sister, the music seldom stops in my head, and my heart is in tune with it. All the time I have sat here writing this hymn (very precious to me) has been singing,

"Shepherd divine, our wants to relieve,
In this our evil day,
To all thy tempted followers give
The power to watch and pray.

Long as our fiery trials last,
Long as the cross we bear,
Oh let our souls on thee be cast
In never-ending prayer."

I have to wonder how tenaciously this hymn has clung to me for the past six months. It has seemed to be the very breathing of my heart. But, dear, I think I am being led more out of frames and feelings; that is, feeling any security outside of Christ, our Lord. Sometimes I feel to *know* he is my heaven, my all, and I feel great yearnings to know more about him, as the three in one God. I long to be led into a clearer knowledge of divine life. It seems there is something I yearn after and feel I cannot be satisfied without this unfolding of the beatitudes of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. The three in one. That this embraces all the chosen in Christ, and that they are in this sacredness with the Father and Son, staggers my faith. It seems too much to hope for. When I view ourselves "in union with the Lamb, from condemnation free," I hope I have had a sight of the boundless efficacy of the blood of the sinless God-man. To me it appears that one drop of his blood would have sufficed for the whole world. I could never describe what I have felt, of the preciousness of Jesus' blood and his flesh, as the bread of life. How I have felt to worship at his dear feet, under the power of these words: My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. My dear sister, I have never longed for anything of an earthly nature as I long for the flesh and blood of the dear dying Lamb. By his grace we can never doubt the power of it. It is so much to be taught these things concerning him. As he says,

They all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. I was reading in St. John's epistle last night. I read and reread our Savior's own words, that if they loved him and kept his commandments, or rather, He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him. So we see that this injunction was to them that hath his commandments written in their hearts. It does seem sad and distressing that having this great mark of his grace bestowed upon us we would fail so often to keep his word. I read, too, that the Comforter that he would send was the Spirit of truth. At this I was led to, or am now led to, his answer to Philip: Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? All the time we have loved and gloried in the truth, this truth of salvation alone by grace, and the knowledge that it frees us from the delusions of the doctrine of men and devils and every false way, during all this time the Comforter has been with us, and we feared to claim so much, as we felt so undeserving.

Did you read Elder Lefferts' article on the inner discipline in the April number of the SIGNS? I thought of you as I read, and felt to know how heartily you would sanction every word.

I reread you good letter to-day, and then wanted to sit down and write at once, but felt that I must do some work. I was all through with the dinner work and had two rooms done by three o'clock. I could not help seeing the power of God in this, for I worked without a pain or an ache. Dear sister, I had lately felt wearied, for fear that I had hoped and prayed for too much. I have come to the place (I almost fear to say it) where I always long that the Holy Ghost would manifest himself in his mercies to me. I see them daily and hourly, but oh I want the sweet assurance, It is I. I want to see him in his infinite perfections, so that I can love and adore him. This lifts me over every rough place. Time flies at such times, but, as I said before, such emotion is almost more than this frail body can bear. I think our minds must run together. I, too, had thought of mortal putting on immortality. I could see the great necessity of it. I recall a time when the thought of carnality in heaven put me in such impassioned prayer to God that such a thing might never be. I remember that I wept freely, and if I ever felt a tender assurance in answer to prayer it was then. Never since have I ever felt a hint of such a fatality. He says there will be no marrying or giving in marriage, but we will be as the angels in heaven. There is nothing quite so sweet to me as the thought of a sinless existence that will never end, and being with Him. We shall see him as he is and be like him. We shall not see him by the eye of faith as we see now, but face to face and eye to eye, and it will not be for an hour or a day, but forever and ever. If it could be, how I would love to speak of these things face to face

with you. How well you know of our haltings here. I am trying to settle down and not rebel against my lot. If we had a church here in this city I would not want to go elsewhere. You and I are situated alike in this life: isolated from all we hold dearest on earth, but, dear sister, when we consider the matter, we will have to agree that He has been in our midst. He shows you the wonders of his grace by revealing his sacred word to you. I have never felt greater confidence in his revelation than in what he has revealed to you. He has given us to each other in the cords of his love. We cannot fully understand, but this word comes, What I do you know not now, but ye shall know hereafter.

I feel that I must close, still I cling to you.

Your unworthy sister,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

SMITHFIELD, N. S. W., Australia, April 25, 1931.

DEAR AGED AND AFFLICTED FRIEND: —I trust you will forgive the delay in acknowledging your brief note, inclosed with a copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES (January, 1931, issue), for which I heartily thank you. Owing to pressure of business and a huge pile of local correspondence to deal with, you must not be disappointed with a brief letter in reply. But I shall inclose some scribbled notes on the subject of Job's affliction and trial of faith, in the hope that they may be used of God to your soul, if it be his gracious will. Unless he is pleased to thus accompany it with power to the heart, it will be but a "dead letter" only. "For the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." I am also inclosing copies of the *Gospel Standard, Friendly Companion* and *Little Gleaner,* magazines for your perusal, and can recommend them as sound reading, which have been blessed to many in their wilderness state.

I see by your handwriting that affliction and your four-score years have left their mark, and doubtless you have realized with the poet, Medley, that

"Soon shall I pass the gloomy vale;
Soon shall all my mortal powers fail;
Oh may my last expiring breath
His lovingkindness sing in death!

Then let me mount and soar away
To the bright world of endless day;
And sing with rapture and surprise,
His lovingkindness in the skies."

I trust you are not a stranger to that language, and of the rest of the hymn, which has been the theme of my heart more than once. I will write it:

"Awake, my soul, in joyful lays,
And sing thy great Redeemer's praise;
He justly claims a song from me;
His lovingkindness, oh how free!

He saw me ruined in the fall,
Yet loved me notwithstanding all;
He saved me from my lost estate;
His lovingkindness, oh how great!

Though numerous hosts of mighty foes,
Though earth and hell my way oppose,
He safely leads my soul along;
His lovingkindness, oh how strong!

When trouble, like a gloomy cloud,
Has gathered thick and thundered loud,
He near my soul has always stood;
His lovingkindness, oh how good!

Often I feel my sinful heart,
Prone from my Savior to depart;
But though I have him oft forgot,
His lovingkindness changes not."

I am sorry to read that you have been a cripple for ten years, but I hope the Lord has been your strength and stay and your comfort in your affliction. As the psalmist said, "Remember the word

to thy servant, upon which thou caused me to hope. This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me." "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe." "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." It is bad enough to be a cripple physically, but I confess to having been a cripple spiritually and lame on both feet for twice ten years, so that I could not walk the strait and narrow path which leadeth unto life, until the Lord Jesus was mercifully pleased to undertake my case and make crooked things straight and rough places plain for me and give me to receive strength into my ankle bones and shoe me with the shoes of preparation of the gospel of peace. Then this poor lame man was enabled to leap as an hart and run in the ways of Zion. So, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary, and they shall walk, and not faint." But as Isaac Watts said,

"True, 'tis a strait and thorny road,
And mortal spirits tire and faint;
But they forget the mighty God,
Who feeds the strength of every saint.

From thee, the overflowing spring,
Our souls shall drink a fresh supply;
While such as trust their native strength
Shall faint away and droop and die."

Doubtless, friend, you have not found the christian path strewn with easy carpets. If you have, then you may well question whether you are in the way to heaven. But I sincerely hope you may be one of the "few there be that find it," who have been "chosen in the furnace of affliction" and "called by grace."

The world is in a dreadful state of unrest and wickedness, and God's solemn judgments are abroad in the earth. "For, behold, the Lord cometh forth out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity," and doubtless Australia and America shall not escape. May he say to us, "Come, my people," &c. See Isaiah xxvi. 20.

I shall inclose also a few verses written for the comfort of another poor soul who is also afflicted, and who had written the few lines at the top, which (while in bed, sick) had fallen to the floor, and her daughter picked them up and sent them to me.

Now I must close, wishing you God's rich blessing upon your soul during the remaining years of your wilderness journey, and then may you be seen coming up from the wilderness leaning upon your Beloved. So prays yours to serve,

EDGAR P. COLEMAN.

A SAINT'S DISTRESS.

The sands of life are sinking,
I feel it day by day,
And often think the time is near
When I must pass away.

Touch after touch is given
This earthly house upon,
Touches that say, plain as they may,
This house must fall ere long.

The years it has been standing
Are just three-score and nine,

And 'twas ere half those years had sped
We heard the call divine.

Full long (you say), and so it is,
To prove the calling "good,"
Yet doubt will rise, and fear distress,
Lest 'twas not sealed with blood.

M. E.

A SAINT'S ENCOURAGEMENT.

Poor, doubting, fearful saint,
To prove your calling "good"
May Christ heal your complaint,
And calm your "fears" with "blood."

He says, "My flesh is meat
My blood is drink indeed;
Which bread, I give, to eat,
That souls on me might feed."

"Except ye eat my flesh,
And drink my blood, by faith:
No life you manifest,
Because still wrapt in death."

This truth's hard to believe
By those who have not faith;
They only can receive,
Who that gift of God hath.

That which is "flesh" is flesh;
'Tis of itself quite dead;
And nothing profiteth,
But words by Jesus said.

"Take, eat," says he, "this bread,"
"My body for you slain;
And drink my blood thus shed
To cancel law's just claim."

Spirit and life's with his word,
And you'll believe it, too,
When from his mouth you've heard,
"My blood justifieth you."

Should you then hear this voice,
Loud from the cross proclaim,
"'Tis finished," saint, rejoice,
Then praise his blessed name.

Faith's mixed with that you hear,
When Christ is pleased to speak;
Eternal life's then clear,
The "answer" which you seek.

Thus God predestinated
The people of his choice
To be new-created
By hearing Jesus' voice.

Whom God "calls" he "justifies"
By Jesus' precious blood;
Whom Christ loves he "glorifies,"
And brings them home to God.

His "calling" then is "sure,"
And his "election," too,
May this your heart assure,
To carry it quite through.

Who then a charge shall lay
'Gainst any of God's elect
For whose "sins" Christ did pay,
Their souls to thus protect?

Or, who shall separate
Saints from that "love of God"
Shed abroad in their hearts
And sealed with Jesus' "blood?"

E. P. C.

[Verses are based on the following texts: 1, 1 John i. 7; 2, John vi. 55; 3, John vi. 53; 4, John vi. 60; 5, John iii. 6; 6, 1 Cor. xi. 24; 7, John vi. 63; 8, John xix. 30; 9, John xix. 30; 10, Rom. viii. 29, 1 Peter i. 23; 11, Rom. viii. 30; 12, 2 Peter i. 10; 13, Rom. viii. 33; 14, Rom. viii. 33, John vi. 27.—E. P. C.]

POCA, West Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—As you requested that some one write and give their views on the latter part of the tenth chapter and eleventh verse of the book of Hosea, and as I had claimed to have seen some beauty and comfort in the names of Ephraim, Judah and Jacob, it appears to me that I should be willing to give such views as I have, so I will say that to me Ephraim represents the flesh, natural or fleshly disposition of a peculiar people, who are Adamic after the ordinary generation, and are pharisaical in their religious views. As proof of the waywardness of the flesh the prodigal son is sufficient to show the disposition of all flesh. He went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields, perhaps a curcuit, as he was to feed swine. "O Ephraim, thou commitest whoredom, and Israel is defiled." "Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people; Ephraim is a cake not turned." When we look on the side of nature for evidence of an inward work we look on the wrong side of the line, for the heart is the seat of recep-

tion, and the preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue is of the Lord. There is a time appointed of the Father when every prodigal, or Ephraim, shall by the mighty operation of the Holy Spirit come to himself. It is then that he or she will say, Turn me, O Lord, and I shall be turned. To me Judah represents the power of the Holy Spirit in preparing the heart for the good seed, which is Christ Jesus the Lord. How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and natural, and takes the course of nature. "As for Ephraim, their glory shall fly away like a bird, from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception." "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." There is not a shadow of a doubt about Adam's posterity being Arminians from birth, and take pride in self-righteousness, it being congenial to their nature, or carnal mind. One may be taught that which he had not learned by experience or revelation; thus was Samson's riddle made known. He said unto them, "If ye had not plowed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle." "Ephraim is as an heifer that is taught, and loveth to tread out the corn." I have seen a few people in my time who were able defenders of the true or orthodox doctrine of the Bible, yet made no profession of religion. "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." "Ephraim also is like a silly dove without heart: they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria." The flesh is as prone to evil as the sparks are to fly upward. "I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hid from me." Israel the spiritual, Ephraim the flesh. These are two opposites, the flesh against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; they are contrary the one to the other. To me it seems that Judah would signify the Holy Spirit in breaking a hard and stony heart, preparing it for the sowing of the good seed, which is Christ Jesus the Lord. "Also, O Judah, he [the Holy Spirit] hath set an harvest for thee, when I returned the captivity of my people." So we see "the sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Beyond a shadow of a doubt, when Jesus Christ went on the cross all who will ever lisp the voice of praise around the throne of God were considered as being released from the law, he being the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, for he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, set apart to this end, that they should be holy and without blame before God in love. Ephraim shall ride; that is his nature. Judah shall plow. Seed time is first, then the harvest. "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." Judah shall plow. "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you." "And one of

the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion [an emblem of power] of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof." "Jacob shall break his clods." Jacob representing the love of God. "It was said unto her [Rebecca], The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." The love of God shed abroad in the heart of a vessel of God's mercy is but the kingdom of God in the heart, and it shall break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. The natural disposition of all flesh is to join themselves to idols, and to mix themselves with every faction claiming the name of Primitive Baptist. This mixing is distressing to spiritural Israel in these days, as true watchmen are placed on the walls of Zion to cry aloud and spare not, lifting up their voices against idolatry worship, for Israel is to dwell alone, and is not to be reckoned among the nations. So Hosea was declaring the judgments of God against Israel for her idolatry and her manifold isms. Ephraim shall ride, Judah shall plow and Jacob shall break his clods. God is love, and when one is actuated by the love of God he will acknowledge him to be the Sovereign of the universe. He will not use predestination as a cloak to cover up his wrong doings, but will own himself to be the guilty one. Why? Because the love of God is not shed abroad in the heart in vain, and we love God because he first loved us. The mellow tone of speech spoken in love will cause brethren to clasp each other by the hand and confess their faults.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

PARKERSBURG, W. Va., Feb. 6, 1930.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending in my subscription for the SIGNS, which is long past due. I thank you for sending it to me so long without pay, and I am inclosing one dollar to help send the paper to others who, like myself, have little of this world's goods. What matters a little poverty in this world when our heavenly Father has such an abundance in store for us if we prove worthy of his great love? I feel myself to be the smallest of the flock and the most unworthy. It is through the dear SIGNS that I have the gospel preached. I have been a reader of it for sixty years. I am almost eighty-three years of age. The Lord has been good to me, and many times he has led me through deep waters, yet through it all I have felt his loving hand and could hear him say, I will not leave nor forsake thee. The good old hymn says,

"The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to his foes."

I wish to thank all the writers of the SIGNS. They will never know what joy they furnish to a poor old shut-in. I lend my papers to others who, like myself, are deprived of going to meeting to worship and hear the word of the Lord preached.

Do as you deem best with this poor letter.

I am yours in the Lord, a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

(MRS.) L. P. PATTERSON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1931.

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"THUS SAITH THE LORD."

THE expressions, "Thus saith the Lord," "Saith the Lord," "Saith God," and including the sayings of Jesus, occur at least one thousand times throughout the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Yet, despite this fact, there are to be found those who say the Bible is not the word of God. Indeed, beyond all successful controversy, it is verily the word of God. Jesus Christ himself is the living Word, the Scriptures of inspiration are the written Word. These two, the living and the written Words, do never contradict each other. They are in perfect harmony. The literal meaning of the Scriptures and the spiritual significance thereof, do never conflict. If at any time, any man thinks he sees contradictions and lack of harmony in the Word of God, the opposition is in the man himself. Every one of us by nature are in opposition to God's word. The carnal mind is enmity against God and the natural man knows not the things of God. No wonder, then, that carnal minds and natural men charge the Scriptures with being contradictory. Every man's opinion, every man's views, all preaching, all philosophy, all meditation and all sentiment should be brought to the test of the written Word of God. If not in accord with the Scriptures, they must be cast aside and rejected, howsoever fair and plausible they may seem. Frequently we hear it said that one man says the Scriptures mean thus and so, another man says they mean quite something else: therefore, it is said the Scriptures can mean anything. This is absolutely false. When the Scriptures are taken and handled honestly with no attempt to deceive and with no personal bias which twists them to suit our personal notions, they can mean but one thing, and that one thing is the truth of God as revealed in and through Jesus Christ. God's people should not follow preachers only in so far as the preacher follows the Scriptures. The Scriptures should be the man of our counsel. The brethren at Berea were more noble than the other christians because they searched the Scriptures daily to know whether the things said by Paul were so. (Acts xvii. 11.) The brethren at

Thessalonica were said not to have done as the Berean brethren did. We fear that in this present day there is entirely too little searching of the Scriptures by the brethren themselves and too much reliance placed in what the preacher says. If any man lacks wisdom, we are not told to go to our pastor about it, or to inquire of the preacher, but we are commanded to ask of the Lord and that thus inquiring sincerely of him, we shall receive. To go directly to the fountain-head of all Wisdom is vastly better than to inquire of one of the streams. No Scripture should ever be interpreted at variance with the context in which it occurs. If we pick out a verse here, another verse there, a word here and a word there, the most fantastic and absurd conclusions may be arrived at; but this is not right and certainly is not honest. We fail to see how a man truly called of God to preach can conscientiously thus handle his Master's goods. What kind of an account will such a man give of his stewardship? We are commanded to study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen rightly dividing the word of truth and so needing not to be ashamed. The word of truth needs no addition or substraction, but is to be properly divided. This the servant of God does by that same Spirit which has called and qualified him as a servant of God. If the calling of God be absent, no amount of study will do any good. It is not necessary to study books about the Bible, but it is necessary to study the Scriptures themselves, compare Scripture with Scripture, spiritual things with spiritual. No amount of Bible reading will ever make a man preach the gospel, but one who is truly called to the work of the ministry will feel to make the Scriptures the man of his counsel and will desire to read and search them, asking the Spirit to direct him in his perusal of them. In any walk or profession of life, it is needful to have the tools to work with. Are not the inspired Scriptures the tool of the man of God? Are they not for his furnishing to all good works and for his instruction in doctrine? If we cannot give a "thus saith the Lord" for what we believe and preach, we had better quit. Nothing is worth anything unless founded on divine authority. Divine authority for doctrine is to be found in the inspired Scriptures of truth. True Baptists all down the ages have always required scriptural proof for their doctrine and practice. Anything not sanctioned by "thus saith the Lord," they let alone. It is interesting to know that the word "bigot" arose centuries ago in France. "Bigot" comes from "by God." To-day this word means a narrow-minded person and one who is very decided and uncompromising in his views, particularly on the subject of religion. In olden times, the Huguenots in France were called a "by God" people, because they demanded the word of God as their authority. Whenever approached by their enemies and examined by them to know why they believed as they did, they would refer their enemies to the Bible and declare that their faith was "by God," their doctrine and teaching was "by

God," their practice was "by God," etc. Thus, it came to be that a "by God" person was one who demanded the Bible and the "thus saith the Lord" as his guide. This phrase "by God" has been by much use contracted into the word "bigot." Most people to-day hate to be called "bigots," but we who love the Scriptures should rejoice to have ourselves thus denominated, because when we know the origin of the word, it is complimentary rather than defamatory, since it stamps one as being an upholder of the Word of God. When we come, in our reading, to passages of Scripture which we cannot understand, let us await the Spirit's pleasure to unfold them to us: and as we thus wait, let us not deny them and let us not permit our imaginations to range wildly over them unduly spiritualizing them. Imagination, some one says, is the biggest "nation" in the world. Surely it is, and further the Word says the imaginations of our hearts are nothing but evil continually.

H. H. L.

NOTICE.

We are receiving numerous orders from our subscribers to stop their paper as they do not feel they can afford to pay for it. This we dislike to do, and would much rather continue sending it to them during this depression and they pay us when times are better with them.

Remember, that by discontinuing your subscription you are saving less than one cent a day.

J. E. B. & CO.

GENESIS III. 24; MATTHEW III. 10.

"Dear Brother R. L. D.:—Will you give your views on Genesis iii. 24, and Matthew iii. 10?"

The above request comes from an Elder in the west.

Genesis iii. 24, reads as follows: "So he drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." This chapter records the transgression of Adam and through him the fall of all mankind. At the same time, it contains, prophetically, the doctrine of salvation by grace through the shed blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for after Adam and Eve knew they were naked and were made to realize the failure of their own works in sewing fig leaves together which could not cover their sin, the Lord made coats of skin and clothed them. The Lord also foretold the coming of his blessed Son, who should destroy the works of the devil, in declaring that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. Let it be clearly understood here that Adam had absolutely no foundation upon which to stand before God in his own right. The Lord had even cursed the very ground for Adam's sake, and all hope of creature effort to obtain favor with God was forever barred. Contrary to the doctrine which is being promulgated throughout the so-called religious world to-day, to the effect that God is wooing and beseeching all of mankind to turn unto him and give him their hearts, his word here plainly denies such doctrine and says regard-

ing this man who had partaken of the forbidden fruit that, "lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever; therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken." Adam had wilfully sinned and forfeited all right and title to the blessings which had been bestowed upon him, and from henceforth a new order was to be established and prevail. Only a new birth, or a new creation could avail anything from that time on, and this, from beginning to end, was to be the work of God, that all glory and honor and praise should be rendered unto him that shewed mercy and manifested the great love he had for his people by giving his only begotten Son to suffer, bleed and die, and rise again, that they might be extricated from the regions of woe into which they had been plunged. To this end God "*drove out the man*: and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden, cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." Having driven out the man, God himself placed at the east of the garden of Eden, or the entrance into the place of pleasantness and peace, his own angels, or cherubims, as guards to see that none should enter there in their own right. To make doubly certain, he placed "a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." God's holy, just and righteous law is as a flaming sword, which turns not only in some directions, but every way, against sin and sinners, and since there is none righteous, no, not one, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, there is no man, woman or child, be they old or young, whose heart or hands are sufficiently clean to reach forth and touch the tree of life. Jesus said, No man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him, neither cometh any man unto the Father but by me. The way of life as it is in Christ Jesus, then, is hedged up; it is a strait and narrow way, and few there be who find it. It is not the way which seems right unto the natural man, for the end of that way is death, but the path which leads down into suffering and death, and which no man will choose of himself, is the one and only way that leads to life. God's truly called and qualified ministers are placed in this way and they, and they alone, are declaring the truth as it is in Jesus. The word which they are given to preach is as a flaming sword turning every way to keep the way of the tree of life. They are standing upon the walls of Zion and the password which all must know and confess who enter into the gates of the city is GRACE. This is not learned nor taught in the schools of men.

Matthew iii. 10, reads thus: "And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire." That which was spoken of prophetically in the third chapter of Genesis is spoken of by Matthew as having come to pass. The time is at hand. While all of mankind was made of the same lump of

corruptible clay, God saw fit to call Abraham out of his state of darkness in nature and caused him to walk by faith. He and his family were signally blest, in that it was manifested time and again, in ways mysterious and past finding out, that the God of heaven and of earth was in a peculiar sense the God of Israel. In his providence concerning them it was to be clearly seen that Israel was blest above all people on the face of the earth. This people was a type of those whom God had formed to show forth his praise, and how true a type they are is witnessed to by all who are led of the Spirit to-day. Their failures to keep the law given them and God's mercy in sparing their unprofitable lives and in providing for their needs, notwithstanding they were unworthy of the very least of his favors, is all to be found in the experience of the children of grace. The Jews came to glory in the fact that they were Abraham's seed and felt themselves to be better than the Gentiles, but in the verse preceding our text we see they were rebuked for this: "And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." All were not spiritual Israel who were natural Israel, neither was circumcision of the flesh, but of the Spirit and in the heart, and the time is come *now* for the Lord to make his glory known. Therefore, the axe is laid unto the root of the trees, and every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. There is significance in the fact that the axe was lain unto the root of the trees. It was not that the trees were to be cut off with a possibility or likelihood of sprouting out and putting forth again, but that dispensation and the order which then existed were to be forever destroyed, root and branch, never to be seen again. Neither was this to apply only to the Jews, but *every tree,* both Jew and Gentile, is to be cut down by this axe of God's righteous judgment against sin, which will slay the very last one who comes with only their own righteousness to plead, for every tree which bringeth forth not good fruit, or the fruit of the Spirit, which is faith, the gift of God, and without which it is impossible to please him, will be hewn down and cast into the fire, or destroyed. No flesh shall glory in his presence. Therefore, whatever our race or blood may be, if we have not the Spirit of Christ we are none of his. And when he comes he purges his floor, for his fan is in his hand, and he garners his wheat into his store-house but burns up the chaff with unquenchable fire. He will try every man's work as by fire, and *every tree,* not one shall escape, which bringeth forth not good fruit he will cut down and cast into the fire. How terrible is the day of the Lord to all who are trusting in their own works for salvation. Many of his people glory in what they are doing, but God will lay the axe of his truth unto the root of the trees to cut them as cumberers of the ground and all their righteousness, which is but as filthy rags, shall be cast into the furnace and utterly consumed, for they

shall be made to know and to acknowledge that it is "by grace are ye saved." Moses and Matthew are in perfect harmony with each other, which is excellent proof of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures. These two witnesses, representing both the Old and the New Testaments, are agreed. There is no contradiction in them. They both are full of God's predestination and purpose in grace, but they both also show conclusively the accountability of man, which should forever stop the mouth of man from excusing himself or blaming God for his sin. We love the doctrine of predestination too well to countenance its being dragged into the dust and made to convey any such idea. In the book which we have published under the caption "Predestination," which contains, no doubt, some of the ablest articles ever written on the subject, including some authors very dear to us all, such as Elders Gilbert Beebe, Samuel Trott, William M. Mitchell, F. A. Chick, Silas H. Durand, John McConnell and John G. Eubanks, in no one of them can there be found to be given the right of license or liberty to do wrong. We glory in the belief that God works all things after the counsel of his own will and that nothing can come to pass contrary to his purpose, even to the original fall of man, but we must remember that it was by *man* came sin, and this was as God purposed it should be. This was not all, however, for his purpose embraced the salvation of his people by and through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, all for the glorifying of himself and the lifting of the name of Jesus on high. The doctrine, Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, most certainly does not *cause* the Lord's people to delight in sin. If they are born of God they will love righteousness, and will hate their very lives because of sin. Paul says, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." As much as to say, it appears to us, that there is condemnation, even to the Lord's people, who walk after the flesh. We verily believe that God's people are condemned when they walk after the flesh: "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Where, then, is boasting? It is done away. For if we are given to crucify the old man with his lusts, it is by the inward working of God's holy and blessed Spirit, so that we have to say, It is by the grace of God we are what we are. Paul did not have reference here to his being the chief of sinners, but to his apostleship. Let us, therefore, take heed unto ourselves, and to the doctrine, to continue in them, for in so doing we shall both save ourselves and them that hear us.

Why our brother and yoke-fellow, who we are persuaded is far above and beyond us in knowledge and understanding of spiritual things, should have asked for our views on the above texts, we do not know, but we hope it was of the Lord's doing, and while a chain of circumstances has seemed to work against us to-day in keeping us

at home and from our work, we like to feel and believe that the God which we trust is the God of our very life, is God of and over all the circumstances that surround us, and if he has given us to write to his own honor and glory, and to the comfort and edification of his chosen people, our desire is that he shall be given all the praise. If we have not been given to rightly divide the word of truth, we pray to be forgiven wherever we have erred, and hope it will be the pleasure of the Lord to stir up the pure mind of some one or more of his servants and enable them to present a true interpretation of the texts. It may be that our brother making the request has something better to offer and, if so, we shall most gladly welcome what he has to say.

May God keep and save us by his grace, both in time and in eternity.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder C. W. Vaughn.)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, meeting with the Southampton Old School Baptist Church, at Southampton, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, June 3d and 4th, 1931, sendeth greetings and love in the Lord to the several churches and associations with which she corresponds.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As the time has come for us once more to meet together in an associate capacity that we may renew to each other the assurances of our love and fellowship, which can only be done as the Spirit of God manifests the gift he has given us, and relative to this we are directed to the epistle of Paul to the Romans in which he said, "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."—Romans xii. 3-5. Paul spake through the grace given unto him to the brethren at Rome, and we believe his meditation was taking in the entire exercise of the grace given unto him. The grace of God is the embodiment of life in Christ for every child of God, and in that grace he beholds Jesus, the way, the truth and the life, and is not only in one, but in every one of the household of faith, hence we hear the words of Jesus declaring, As ye have done so unto one of the least of these ye have done so even unto me. And in the realization of this grace we are made to rejoice in spirit and feel the power that humbles the flesh, and we are made to realize the work of God in the heart by which each one is identified as being called from darkness to His marvelous light, and that light shineth unto the perfect day. We wish to think of ourselves, and not more highly than we ought, and in thinking of ourselves we should question what manner of man we are, and why we are what we are. We find in our experiences we are poor, vile, polluted crea-

tures by reason of sin, and in this feeling we cannot raise our heads, but, like the publican, can only smite upon our breasts and say, God be merciful to us poor sinners. So we cannot think we are something when we know we are nothing, less than nothing, and vanity. We could not hold up such corruption to the house of God as worthy of habitation or the fellowship of the saints, but the creature is made a new creature in Christ Jesus and in this virtue we are brought in and seated at the King's table. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."—2 Cor. v. 17. Now we do not behold each other as we are of the first Adam, but as we see each other in the second Adam, and we put away the old man with his enticements and lusts and are renewed in the spirit of our minds, in which we are given great boldness in the faith by which we are made to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and to look not on the things of this world to consume them with our lusts, but on the things by which we may edify one another in the body of Christ, and we realize that each member of the body of Christ must have his individual experience, but all of the same spirit, by which they realize the virtues of life that is in every member. We cannot esteem each other too highly in the virtues of eternal life, and we should think soberly according as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith. The church of God is given to discern the gifts to the church as they are made to render service by the Holy Ghost bestowed upon them, but they are made to feel to be the least and as church's servants for Jesus' sake, and esteem the brethren greater than themselves, and in like manner the lay members are made to have a reverence in their hearts for the ministers of the household of faith, by which they esteem the ministers as highly favored of God and far superior to themselves. If these things are manifested in our associations we can say with David, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garment; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."—Psalm cxxx. Dear brethren, in all these things we embrace each other, and the whole of the Zion of our God as the church of God, the pillar and ground of the truth, in which we count ourselves as nothing, but by the grace given unto us we are what we are, and in this virtue we contend earnestly for the faith of God's elect, and the things which are becoming of us relative to the order of God's house as we are admonished by the apostles and the grace given unto us. We feel assured that we cannot direct our steps, as we are either controlled and led captive by the devil or by the Son of God. If we have been brought from darkness to the marvelous light and liberty of the Son

of God, we are given to know the iniquity there is in our flesh, and we will be shunning evil and all manner of evil speaking one of another, and desiring righteousness. We feel to assure every one that the Spirit of the living God condemns such relations as envyings and strife among brethren and sisters, and how can we expect to have the fellowship of the people of God when such relations exist in our hearts? We believe Paul had the understanding of his own heart, and Job also, by which they expressed the abhorrence they had for the things of the flesh. We feel the realization of their experience as is expressed in the Scriptures in our flesh and we do know if we are left to the flesh we shall die. We should think of ourselves as we hope we are by the grace of God, and as the head of the church has given by words of his own lips, for we either live in them or are condemned by them, for they are spirit and life. Brethren, may we think soberly on these things, and may the blessed presence of Jesus be felt in our midst.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church in Baltimore, Maryland, May 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1931, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once again we have met and received your Minutes and messengers. It has been pleasant to meet each other again face to face. Peace, love and fellowship have abounded in our midst. The preaching has been edifying to the hearers and glorifying to the name of the Lord. The change of time of holding the Association from *midweek* to *week end* has made entertainment less arduous and also more convenient for our people to attend. We hope to meet you all again next year.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.
F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.
A. S. ROWE, Ass't Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Bucks, County, Pennsylvania, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEAR BTETHREN:—It gives us pleasure to report a most pleasant meeting. The messengers and ministers from you have been gladly received. The preaching has been good and comforting.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, N. J., Wednesday and Thursday before the first Sunday in June, 1932, when and where we shall be glad to receive your messengers and Minutes again. Until then farewell.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Clara Parker, Ore., $2; Mrs. J. R. McAfee, Mo., 50 cents; Elder V. R. Harris, Ark., $1.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **MARGARETT HALL (Harbor) CULPEPPER,** wife of brother J. L. Culpepper, was born in Coffeeville, Mississippi, February 14th, 1841, and died April 14th, 1931, making her stay on this earth 90 years and 2 months. She came with her parents to Texas at the age of twelve years, and settled in Lavaca County, near Shiner, where she lived fifty years. She was married January 17th, 1860, to brother J. L. Culpepper, and to that union were born fifteen children. Her husband and five of her dear children preceded her to the great beyond, leaving her to mourn the loss of a good and loving husband and five of her fine, obedient children. The surviving children are: Mrs. J. W. Culpepper, Falls City, Texas; Mrs. W. E. Ellis, Ralls, Texas; Mrs. Robert Little, Sublime, Texas; Mrs. P. J. Grant, Stockdale, Texas; Mrs. Ted Grant, San Antonio, Texas; H. G. Culpepper, Dallas, Texas; C. E. Culpepper, Beeville, Texas; H. J. Culpepper, Stockdale, Texas; J. M. Culpepper, Amarilla, Texas, and J. R. Culpepper, San Antonio, Texas. She also leaves sixty-eight grandchildren, fifty-eight great-grandchildren, a host of other relatives and friends, together with the church, to mourn the loss of one of the most exemplary and kindest wives, mothers and friends. It can be truly said that a mother in Israel has fallen. She professed a hope in Jesus, her adorable Redeemer, and joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Mt. Olive, Lavaca County, Saturday before the fourth Sunday in May, 1885, and was baptized by the late Elder Mason. In all her forty-six years as a member of the grand old church she was ever faithful in attending meetings when able, ever ready to assist in anything necessary to the welfare of Zion. She was sound in the faith, believing in the doctrine of grace, was unyielding and unwavering in the grand old doctrine of the sovereignty of God, who, she said, was without limits or bounds. She was well beloved by all who knew her, both young and old, and it was her delight to render aid to those around her. She possessed a most remarkable mind, and was often consulted as to dates of long standing. By her kindness, never-tiring patience and good judgment she won the confidence and admiration of all and was a monument of divine grace. Her deportment in life manifested the well-keeping monument of divine grace. (Prov. i. 9.) In all of my twenty years' acquaintance with sister Culpepper and her noble family I have never associated with better friends. Her children were greatly devoted to her. She was manifested a christian in all her walks, was devoted to the cause of her Redeemer, faithful in all her house, and none can be missed more than "Grandmother," as she was called by the family and community. A vacancy is left in the church, as well as the home, that can never be filled. Greater love and fellowship could no one have for the brethren and sisters than she had, which gives us great consolation, as it is an indelible mark of spiritual life, for he that loveth is born of God, therefore she is now sweetly resting in the arms of her Redeemer in the presence of God, where sorrow is unknown, where trials, troubles, afflictions and separations are no more. Sleep on, dear sister, the blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep. Our sister was sick but a short time, only complained of being tired on the day of her departure. She filled her days of usefulness on earth and departed in peace, in answer to the call, Child, come home.

Services were conducted at her late home by Elder White and were attended by a lage gathering of her friends, and her body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Stockdale, Texas, there to sleep in undisturbed repose until Jesus shall come again to call his children home.

The writer failed to get to the funeral, but by request I write these few words of comfort to the sorrowing family and friends.

J. B. BOWDEN.

MRS. ERMINA SHEARING was born July 12th, 1856, and died April 14th, 1931, aged 74 years, 9 months and 2 days. She was the daughter of the late Elder William and Mary Jamieson Pollard, born to them while they lived in Dundas, Ontario, and later moved with them to the state of Michigan, coming back to Canada when Elder Pollard was called to be pastor of the Covenanted Baptist Church. When Elder Pollard went to the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., she accompanied him, and after two years there they returned to Dunwich, where she resided until her death. In October, 1890, she married the late John Shearing, with whom she lived for three years, death robbing her of a loving husband and companion with whom she had taken great comfort, and his memory was precious to her through the years of her widowhood. After her husband's death she returned to her parents, and was a great help and comfort to them in their declining years. She lived an unselfish life, was devoted to those near to her, and to several of her brother Levi's children, who lost their mother while very young, she was a mother. Sister Minnie, as she was familiarly called, was enabled by grace to make a good confession before the church in the year 1894, at which time she was baptized by her late father. She was a faithful member, ever in her place, and she honored her profession with her life. The high esteem the brethren and friends had for her did not puff her up, but humbled her, and we can say, It was good to have known and loved her in the Lord. A few months before she died, she began to fail rapidly, and as she weakened her disease was declared to be cancer. She took to her bed a few weeks before she died, yet she was so favored with the Lord's presence that it seemed easy for her to die. Her mind was lifted above her sickness through a dream that she had, in which she was passing through swamps and deep waters, and the Lord sweetly answered her that

he would be with her in the deep waters, and on the day she died she told her niece, Lydia Belle (who was very devoted to her), that the Lord had been with her all the way. She leaves to mourn their loss, two brothers, John and Levi, both of the township of Dunwich, one sister, Regina Campbell, of Dutton, and a goodly number of nephews and nieces, who all miss her greatly. Our loss is her eternal gain, and we can say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

The funeral service, which was largely attended, was held in the Dunwich meetinghouse, and the interment was in the adjoining cemetery, the writer officiating.

G. R.

SISTER **EMILY WEIDMAN** was born at Rensselaerville, New York, August 14th, 1849, and passed from earthly scenes May 31st, 1931. She was the eldest daughter of Nathaniel D. and Roxanna (Crippen) Borthwick. She was married to John Wageonheizer December 24th, 1871, who died June 11th, 1878, leaving her with three little boys. She had an arduous struggle and worked hard to bring up her boys to be useful and respected men, and they were very fond of their mother. October 28th, 1888, she married Peter W. Weidman, a farmer, who by a former marriage had one little girl, which she brought up as her own. In 1916 they retired from their farm near Rensselaerville, and moved to the city of Rensselaerville, N. Y. She was a very patient, loving wife, mother, sister and friend, but her labors are over and we mourn not as for one without hope. We believe for her to die is gain; to depart from earthly friends and be with Christ is far better. She had been afflicted with rheumatism and heart trouble for years, but was confined to her bed only one week at the last with heart trouble. She bore all her trials and afflictions without a murmur. She united with the Middleburg Old School Baptist Church, and was baptized September 14th, 1879, by Elder I. B. Whitcomb, then pastor of the church, and remained a faithful and loved member and attended the meetings when health and circumstances would permit. She had looked forward with great pleasure to the fifth Sunday May meeting at Cobleskill, hoping to be able to attend that meeting and to spend a week at our home, but very early that Sunday morning, May 31st, God called her to a much more glorious meeting. When she found she would not be able to leave home she said to me, "I cannot be with you at the meeting, but remember me to them all, and if I do not get well it is all right." She leaves to mourn their loss her husband, two sons (the youngest son died May 20th, 1922), all of Rensselaer, N. Y., one daughter, who is now Mrs. J. Z. Leggett, of Rensselaerville, N. Y., four granddaughters and one great-grandson, all of Rensselaer, N. Y., one sister, the church and many friends. The funeral services were held at her late home, 1102 Third Street, Rensselaer, N. Y., June 2nd, Elder Arnold H. Bellows officiating and comforting the friends by using as a text John xiv. 1-3. Burial was at Huntersland, in the vicinity of her former home.

Written by her sister, both in the flesh and church, who loved her,

(MRS.) J. E. LIVINGSTON.

MRS. LAURA B. RANSDELL, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Neal, and wife of our brother George T. Ransdell, was born February 22nd, 1890, and died May 9th, 1931, in her forty-second year. December 27th, 1911, she was married to George T. Ransdell, and to this union there were added eight children: John, Jennie, Marguarete, Laura, George, Mary, Neal and Geneva, the youngest being three weeks old at the time of the mother's death. Besides the children, she leaves her parents and eight brothers and sisters. She was not a member of the church, but was a firm believer in the Predestinarian Old School Baptist doctrine. She was a loveable woman, an affectionate wife and mother, and will be sadly missed by all who knew her. Our hearts go out especially to our brother with his motherless family, and our prayer is that the Lord may reconcile us all and enable us to say, Thy will be done. It was her request that I should preach her funeral sermon, but at the time I was away from home and did not receive the word in time to go. Elder P. W. Sawin was called, and spoke briefly to the sorrowing friends, giving them the assurance that Christ is risen and become the first-fruits, and for them that look for him he will appear the second time without sin unto salvation, and they shall see him as he is and be like him and be satisfied. May the Lord comfort them that mourn.

Written by request.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

SISTER **AGNES H. CLARK** died April 9th, 1931. She left a nephew and niece, three step-children and two step-grandchildren. The names of the step-children are: Olan Clark and Mrs. Ori Packard, of Freeport, Maine, and Mrs. Veda Davis, of Malden, Mass. She was baptized September 10th, 1922, by Elder H. H. Lefferts, into the fellowship of the Bowdoinham Church. Elder Z. M. Beal was living at the time, but was feeble. When she asked for a home with the church she said she had nothing to say, but sometimes actions speak louder than words, and it was true in her case, for she was always present at the meetings when health would permit, and was ever ready to assist the church. Her death is a distinct loss to the Bowdoinham Church. We have lost a dear sister. May God reconcile us to his will and help us to say, He doeth all things well. May God comfort his people.

Her funeral service was conducted by Elder R. Lester Dodson, of Rutherford, New Jersey.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.

MRS. MARY A. BEAKES, our dear sister in Christ, departed this life May 12th, 1931, in Salisbury, Maryland, in her ninety-ninth year. A short time before her death she had a fall, breaking her hip, from which shock she never recovered. She was remarkable in mind and body for one of her age and never lost interest in the things going on in the world. Her maiden name was Cottrell. She first married Richard F. Beyea, of Mt. Hope, Orange County, New York. After his death she married Mahlon Stacy Beakes, who preceded her to the beyond many years. She was baptized just after the Civil War in the fellowship of the Middletown and Wallkill Old School Baptist Church and ever lived consistent with her profession. She was the oldest member of the above mentioned church from the standpoint of membership as well as years. She was devoted to the church and faithful to every duty. She was for a long time Treasurer of the church and served well in that office. The writer located in Middletown, as pastor of the above named church, in early life and sister Beakes was almost a second mother to me. Much of her time was spent in my home and perhaps no one loved her more and she loved me almost as a son. Never in all my acquaintance with her did I ever see or hear anything in her life or from her lips to criticise, except in the kindest way. I am sure that the severing of my connection with the Middletown and Wallkill Church was not felt more keenly by any one than it was felt by her. No one ever had a more faithful, dependable friend, and her passing has left a vacancy never to be filled. Her sister, Mrs. Josephine Wilkes, who made her home for more than fifty years in Middletown, N. Y., preceded her several years in death, leaving one daughter, Mrs. Della J. Stratton, and one granddaughter: Grace Stratton, who is now Mrs. Charles C. Durland, of 41 Prospect Street, Middletown, N. Y., at whose home the funeral service was held, conducted by Elder R. Lester Dodson, of Rutherford, New Jersey. The niece and great-niece above mentioned are all the near relatives left by our dear sister, whose body was interred in the family plot at New Vernon, New York. What a blessed rest after so many long years! Her works will surely follow her.

Written by request.

Her pastor for twenty-three years,

H. C. KER.

MARY ELLEN HALL, daughter of S. O. and Lottie Hall, was born in Kansas City, Missouri, April 28th, 1918, and was called to her heavenly home March 23rd, 1931, aged 12 years, 10 months and 25 days. She came to Yakima, Washington, with her parents in the fall of 1926, and attended our church meetings with the family and showed great interest. She expressed a hope to her mother a few weeks before her death, which was caused by the explosion of a coal-oil can. We were all made to love her as though she were a member of the church, as she manifested love for all in that way. We cannot express in words the wonders that dwelt in her heart and mind.

The funeral was conducted here at Yakima by Elder A. D. Hughett, and the body was sent to Oak Grove, Missouri, where it was laid to rest in the family graveyard, and where Elder M. M. Shumate, of Kansas City, Missouri, preached to a large gathering of relatives and friends. She left to mourn their loss her parents, three brothers, Dan, Robert and Norman, three sisters, Mildred, Evelin and Neoma, all of whom reside with their parents, who have returned to Blue Springs, Missouri. She is also survived by her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. John Hall, of Oak Grove, Mo., and Mrs. T. N. Corn, of Blue Springs, Mo. Her grandfather Corn was called to his home above about a month after her death. Our sympathy goes out to the family and other relatives.

(MRS.) LILLIE BLYSTONE.

MRS. SARAH ELIZABETH DAWSON, lovingly known to us as sister "Mittie," departed this earthly life at her home in Leesburg, Virginia, June 14th, 1931. She was born October 5th, 1885, daughter of Fenelon and Catherine Slack. Her brother, Lloyd Slack, passed away some years ago. She was married June 1st, 1916, to James H. Dawson, who survives her. Elder E. V. White baptized her November 15th, 1891, into membership with New Valley Church. Her mother, sister Catherine Slack, passed away in February, 1916. Sister "Mittie" had been ailing for the past few years and her health has been steadily declining, but she was not confined to her bed except now and then for a day or two at a time. Death came suddenly at the end and was due to some heart trouble. She was out to her meeting at New Valley the Sunday before she passed away and seemed to enjoy the meeting very much and to appreciate being with her brethren again at their communion season, not having been at meeting before that since last August. She was firm in her faith in the unlimited omnipotence of Jehovah, in his omniscient wisdom, and she believed that all things come to pass in accord with God's foreordination and that he foreknew all things from before the foundation of the world. Jesus was her hope of salvation and she held to the truth that salvation is wholly of grace and not by works of righteousness of which the creature is incapable. For some time previous to her departure, her mind dwelt much on the subject of the resurrection of the dead upon which she loved to meditate and about which she loved to talk. As her pastor, I shall greatly miss her. She was a great encouragement to me in my ministry. May the Lord comfort the lonely husband and all the sorrowing ones, both in the family and in the church.

H. H. L.

MRS. EMILY WHITE WILSON, daughter of J. W. and Emily Shaw White, and wife and directing star of Elder B. J. Wilson, was called from the side of the man she had honored for over fifty years at an early hour Sunday morning, May 24th, 1931. She had been an invalid for two years, and it had been my privilege to visit her often in the days of her affliction. She had known my mother, whom I lost when eight years of age, and could tell me of her beauty and of her charm. My character was strengthened by my association with her. She had unbounded faith in the promises made to His own, and I have thrilled at the attention and joy manifested in some of the selections I have read for her comfort and entertainment. Her life was spent in service to her family and others whom she could serve. Unassuming, yet frank and courteous, she met all difficulties uncomplainingly, and with a smile that was hers unto death. An evidence of the high esteem and love in which this good woman was held was demonstrated in the large concourse of friends who were company to the family in the short travel to the old church and cemetery, New Providence, near by where she now rests. She was born near Henderson, in Pike County, October 24th, 1862, and became the wife of J. B. Wilson October 26th, 1880. To this union were born eight children, five of whom, three sons and two daughters, are living. Mrs. Wilson was a consistent member of the Old School Baptist Church for thirty-six years, and was baptized by the late Hiram King, who was her pastor for one year. The remaining thirty-five years of her church life were enjoyed under the pastorate care of her husband.

The foregoing is offered, at the request of the family, by A. FRIEND.

MARY BELLE NEWMAN, daughter of Mary Jane and Andrew Jackson Caudell, was born in Hancock County, Indiana, October 7th, 1859. In 1875 she with the family moved to Kansas City, Kansas. In 1878 she was married to Andrew David Newman, and to this union were born two children: Ellen Ora (Mrs. Frank Banks, of Independence, Mo.) and Clarence Earl, northeast of Pleasant Hill, Mo., and in whose home she passed away May 28th, 1931, after a long illness, in which she suffered intensely, but patiently, expressing the desire many times to be at rest. She was one of the nineteen in the constitution of Mt. Vernon Church, in Kansas City. When they moved to their farm, near Peculiar, she placed her church letter with Little Flock Church, and was ever a faithful member. Mr. Newman preceded her in death three years. Besides her children, she leaves one sister, Mrs. Allie Cripe, of Tulsa, Okla., and one brother, N. A. Caudell, of Washington, D. C., also four granddaughters, one grandson, and many other relatives and friends besides the church, in sorrow that they shall see her no more here.

MARGARET S. TAYLOR.

MEETINGS.

The annual all-day meeting is to be held with the Slate Hill Church, Slate Hill, N. Y., on Friday, August 21st, 1931, and we cordially invite brethren and friends to be with us on that occasion. Elders C. W. Vaughn and Arnold H. Bellows, besides the writer, expect to be present. Meeting to open at 11:00 a. m. (Daylight Saving Time), at the close of which lunch will be served, to be followed by preaching in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects Elder Arnold H. Bellows (Providence permitting) to meet with them the fifth Sunday in August (30th), 1931. Services to be held at the home of brother J. E. Livingston, 64 E. Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m., also at 2 p. m. on Saturday before. All welcome.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in August (30th). All are welcome. E. M. FORD.

The Lord willing, Elder R. Lester Dodson is expected to preach in the North Berwick, Maine, meetinghouse morning and afternoon of the fifth Sunday, August 30th, as well as the Saturday preceding. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to be present.

The Primitive Baptist Church of New Hope, of the North Ouachita Association has changed the date of our Association from October to Friday before the first Sunday in September, at old New Hope, nine miles south of Hope, Arkansas, on the Missouri Pacific R. R., and three miles north of Patmos, on the L. & A. R. R.. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend.

J. G. RATLIFF.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, on September 9th, 10th and 11th, 1931, with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine. We expect Elders Topping and Dodson to be with us. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.
MEDFIELD, Mass.

The Siloam Association of Predestinarian Baptists will meet with the Sulphur Creek Church, at Riffe, Washington, on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1931. All ministers of our faith and order, and all those who desire to hear the truth, are cordially invited to attend. For

other information write the clerk of Sulphur Creek Church.

(MRS.) VERNA SCHOONOVER,
NESIKA, Washington.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association is appointed to be held at the Second Roxbury Church, Roxbury, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday between the second and third Sundays in September (16th, 17th and 18th), 1931. Those coming by train stop off at Halcottville, N. Y. Trains will be met and friends cared for. Those coming by automobile on Tuesday also stop at Halcottville, N. Y., where the brethren and friends will be cared for during the meeting. Those who cannot locate the places of entertainment in Halcottville, inquire at the post office and instructions will be given. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, sisters and friends to meet with us.

AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

The Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association will, the Lord willing, convene with Cedar Hill Church, in her ninetieth annual session Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 18th, 19th and 20th, 1931. Cedar Hill Church is Oakland Schoolhouse, four miles north of Amity, Pike County, Arkansas. All trains will be met at Amity Thursday and Friday. Railroad connections are from Smithton, on St. Louis, I. M. & S. Railroad, to Amity, and on Highway No. 8 from Arkadelphia to Amity, and from Texarkana No.67, and connect with No. 55 to Nashville, No. 27 to Kirby, connection with pike to Amity. We invite all Regular Unlimited Predestinarian Baptists to meet with us at this time, where we feel to assure you that you will have a welcome, especially our ministering brethren who believe and preach a sovereign God who knows all things that have been, are now, or ever will be, and that they will be as he saw them.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator.
W. C. HORTON, Clerk.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

NOTICE.

ANY one having a copy of the book entitled "The Two Witnesses" which they are willing to part with will please communicate with brother W. J. Berry, 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 99. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1931. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

INDEPENDENCE, Mo., Feb. 16, 1931

DEAR SISTER:—Having meditated much lately upon Isaiah xxxv. 8-10, I have concluded to pen for your consideration some of my thoughts upon that deep and sublime subject. I fully realize my weakness and dependence for wisdom and words to convey my thoughts in an intelligent way. The prophets lived in a day when God revealed to them and enabled them to prophesy the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ into the world, and what his mission should be; also to see the fulfilling of that mission, even to his being delivered for our offenses, going down in death into the silent tomb, and being raised for our justification. The prophets were often blessed and led out in spirit to view the blessings that should flow out to the church under the gospel dispensation, when the Lord should be pleased to manifest the fullness of life in his Son and the spiritual relation of the church, his bride, and to manifest the pure and undefiled garment of righteousness without which none are able to see or look upon Zion the church, and to see Christ Jesus the husband of his bride the head of his glorious church, his beloved Zion. The Lord was pleased to reveal to the prophet a day in which the church should flourish: "The wilderness, and the solitary place, shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose." I will quote from the vision, or revelation, made to the prophet: "And an highway shall be there." The word "an" would lead us to believe that there is only one way, and that is an highway, the way of salvation, according to the purpose, will, predestination and election by grace. This highway is manifestly the Lord Jesus Christ, embracing the Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. There is no other way of salvation, for says the Lord, I am God, and besides me there is no Savior. This the children have learned in their experience. Not

only have they learned that salvation is of the Lord, but they have been blessed with a holy desire to worship him. God is a Spirit, and seeketh only such to worship him as worship him in spirit and truth. Hence we find the prophet saying in close connection with the above, And a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness. To my mind, here is laid the foundation of, or for, all of the service and worship of his people who have been brought into his kingdom of righteousness, and God fully prepares them for every service and desire to worship his holy name. "The unclean shall not pass over it." Over what? Over this way of holiness. Only those who have been born of the Spirit, quickened into life, cleansed from sin and made holy in the righteousness of the Lord can walk or go on that way of holiness, but it shall be for those, the wayfaring men, men traveling on foot, and, if nothing else, it teaches that these men were here on earth preaching and testifying in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Though fools, they shall not err therein. There can be no separating of the saving power of God's grace in the hearts of his people, and their desire to worship him in spirit and in truth, and here is where I think that Christ is set up, or manifested as the true and living way. "And it shall be called, The way of holiness." No one has ever been able to see Jesus, the Savior of sinners, and the life unity of the Husband and the church, his bride, that John saw, the holy Jerusalem coming as the holy city, the new Jerusalem from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, but those who have been given spiritual vision by the light of his life shining in their very heart and soul. In the person of the Lord Jesus Christ is there the perfection of holiness, so all who see him as the way, the truth and the life must have been made partakers of that life, made pure by the washing of regeneration and cleansing from sin, for no unclean thing shall pass over it. It is a blessed thing for the poor sinner to feel that his filthy rags, his own righteousness, has been taken away, and that he has been enabled to walk in the way of holiness. "But it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." I fully believe that here is meant the apostles who were chosen to testify in the churches and bear witness of the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, though fools, they shall not err therein. The apostle in writing to the Corinthian brethren says, "I know nothing of myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord;" and after counting to them their blessings, says, "We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honorable, but we are despised." Poor wayfaring men who hungered and thirsted, naked and buffeted, and had no dwelling-place. Yet how true was every one of those God-called servants, not erring in anything pertaining to the gospel church discipline or faithful spiritual service and devotion, ever walking in the way, the way of holiness, teaching that he (Jesus) was the Son,

the very Son of God, the only name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved. How commendable in Paul, speaking for the apostles and in their behalf, what an humble spirit to confess in his teachings that though they were apostles, yet of themselves they knew nothing, and he thought it no disgrace, but rejoiced that his ignorance was that Christ might be exalted in every purpose of the Lord, not only in the manifestation of his mercy and saving power, but in working in the apostles, and all of His children, the saints of God, to will and to do of his good pleasure. It is also said that no lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go thereon. It shall not be there, but the redeemed shall walk there. Remember that the prophet is talking about the way, at the time of the flourishing of His kingdom, and that is after the setting up of the church under the gospel dispensation. "The redeemed shall walk there." This evidently means those redeemed from sin. I have heard it said that the redeemed would not walk there until after the resurrection, but this, to my mind, cannot be what is meant in the above quoted Scripture, as I shall try and show as I proceed. Christ hat redeemed us from the curse of the law (Gal. iii. 14), who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and puify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works (Titus ii. 14). Again, in Revelation v. 4-11, where John was made to weep because no one was worthy (note the word "worthy") to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. But the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book and to loose the seven seals thereof. Read on down to the ninth verse: "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof." Then assigns the reason why: "For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Before this, however, John had seen the four beasts and the four and twenty elders fall down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odors which are the prayers of saints. I have heard it preached by some that this is at the winding up of time, when the resurrection shall take place and we apperar before him in the climes of unfading glory. But as it is said that the redeemed shall walk there, it is plain to my mind that it is here on earth that God's redeemed people, as they are led by the Spirit, walk in the way of holiness of the Lord, for in the next, or or tenth, verse he says, "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." Kings are to reign and priests are to offer sacrifices. Please read Malachi iii. 3. I cannot believe that we shall wait until the resurrection to walk on or in the way of holiness. In the resurrection we are raised a spiritual body and are taken home to eternal rest to praise him in glory. Here we praise him by the power of the Spirit as we walk (note the word "walk") in the way of

holiness, and in no other way can we, the redeemed, walk, for they live and have their being in him.

I will especially call your attention to the reading of Isaiah xxxv. 11 in connection with the tenth verse under consideration: "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." I think the ransomed of the Lord means those for whom he died and redeemed from sin and condemnation. God, speaking by the mouth of Isaiah to the church, says, "For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior: I gave Egypt for thy ransom." Matthew and Mark both tell that the Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. Many other Scriptures might be cited in proof of who the ransomed of the Lord are. It has been said that we cannot return to a place to which we had not already, or previously, been. If we apply this as some do to regeneration, and that we had a pre-existence in Christ, I cannot accept it only in a life unity sense. I do believe, however, that in regeneration the ransomed are made alive to, or in, the righteousness of the Lord and return from going thither in their wild career, like sheep that have gone astray. But in our text we are considering those who are walking the way of holiness. The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion. Whether the clouds be dark and gloomy, whether our faith grows weak and the oil of joy ceases to flow in our troubled soul, and whether or no we are shut in darkness so that we are made to inquire in our very soul, "Whither has my Beloved gone?" and the fountain of waters shut up to us, and our tongues cleave to our mouths, we shall return and come to Zion, the city of our God, not in gloom and despair, but with songs and everlasting joy upon our heads. "Songs of praises, songs of praises, I will ever give to thee." My mind not being clear to set forth the full meaning of this returning, I am certain that those who walk in the way of holiness can only see the church, the beloved Zion of our God, and in all the service of God's saints faith revealed in and to them brings them to Zion with songs of gladness. Everlasting joy shall be upon their heads and they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. This, I think, is all in the christian's life and service. In Revelation xxi. 3, John says that the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and be their God and shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. Read the whole verse. Shall I believe that God through the life in his Son manifests his goodness and mercy to his dear people here in this life with the fullness of joy and gladness in their hearts so that sorrows subside and their

sighings cease, where they can lean so strongly upon the good hope and promises of faith, and their tears are wiped from dimmed eyes, so that their joy is to the praise of his saving grace? or shall I believe that we shall be raised up in the resurrection, a spiritual body and come forth with sighing and sorrow to be bid flee away? No, I think that our songs of gladness will all be sung here as we walk in the habitation of Zion. "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come unto thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." The prophet says that he put a new song in his mouth. The psalmist says, Thou hast put gladness in my heart. Oh come and let us sing unto the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation. His statutes will be my song in the house of my pilgrimage.

These are only a few of my thoughts and meditations, my sister, and they are so scattering and disconnected I fear they will be of little interest to you, if you can understand them. Feeling that you can look upon my weakness with as much charity as any one I know of, I submit them for your consideration.

Yours truly,

W. L. HALL.

[THE above good letter from Elder W. L. Hall was written to our sister, Mrs. J. W. Taylor, of Pleasant Hill, Missouri, and by her forwarded to us for publication.—ED.]

HATTIESBURG, MISS., March 9, 1931.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—I am identified with the Primitive Baptists of the Good Hope Association, in Mississippi, and I believe the greatest difference between us and the Predestinarian Baptists of the north and west is misunderstanding each other. We believe in a God that has all power, that he foreknew all things, that he predestinated his work, that he saw the end from the beginning, that he chose his people before the foundation of the world, that he gave them to Christ in the covenant of redemption, that Christ redeemed every one of them with his precious blood when he died on the cross, that their salvation is sure, no conditions in the salvation of souls. We believe the sinner has to be killed to the love of sin and drawn to Christ by the Spirit of God before he can repent. We do not believe that preaching does the sinner any good until the heart is prepared of God to receive it. We believe the church ought to commune and take the bread and wine in remembrance of Jesus' broken body and spilt blood. We also believe it is right to wash each other's feet, and we always wash feet when we commune. We believe it right to observe all things whatsoever Christ commands. But do we do it? I am bound to say with shame and sorrow that we fall far short of coming up to the requirements of Christ. It seems that christian love has grown cold and that we are brushing aside many duties Christ commanded us to do. It seems to me that some are trying to hide behind predestination to

excuse themselves from duty. It seems to me that if a person has been killed to the love of sin he would not have any desire to shun duty that Christ demands of his people. The trouble with me is I cannot live as good a christian life as I desire. If it was God's will to enable me to live free from sin, oh how happy I would be. But that will never be while we live in this world; our body is of the earth earthy. That which is of flesh is flesh and that which is of the Spirit is spirit. The soul that is born of the Spirit doth not commit sin. But our fleshly body is only a temple for the Spirit to dwell in, so the child of God has two natures: one is to do the will of God, and the other to follow the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, so the two natures are continually at war one against the other. It should be remembered, and I think is, the desire of the child of God that has been killed to the love of sin is to do the will of God, but when God withdraws his upholding power from us we are made to cry for mercy. But, thank God, he never lets one of his redeemed children get out of reach of the hand of mercy.

My mind has drifted off from the subject I wanted to write about, but all I know to do is to follow my mind. I have been impressed to write to the SIGNS for a long time, but on account of weakness and my condition financially and physically I have refrained from doing the duty so heavily impressed upon me for fear the brethren would think I was writing in self-interest, but that is not the case at all, though I am an invalid, lying on my back trying to write. I have not sat up to eat a meal in three years, and have not been able to do any work in over eleven years. My home, my dear wife and all my earthly possessions are gone and I am a pauper, getting ten dollars a month for my daughter and self to live on, which is only half of a living these days. I did not intend to write this, but you will see that I have, but what I want to say is that I am interested in the welfare of Zion. I want God's people to get closer together in understanding each other and to get closer to each other in love and fellowship. What is the use of us who believe in salvation by grace, and grace alone, to be disputing over different views on things that are worth nothing, and only mar the peace and fellowship of God's children? We all believe just about the same, if we could understand each other. There are some good brethren who advocate some things that are a stumbling-block to earnest inquirers which cause them to go off into Babylon. I know by experience that it caused me to stay out for seven years, and then I went to the Missionaries. I stayed with them three years, but was not satisfied, and soon got to where I could not commune with them nor fellowship their doctrine of works. I left them and joined the Primitive Baptists, near Louin, thirty-one years ago, where my membership still is.

It seems that I just cannot get to the subject I want to write about, so I suppose I should not write about it, for I

surely do not want to write contrary to the will of God. I am suffering so I can hardly write at all and have to stop and rest often. I have had chronic neuritis so long it is a hard matter for me to keep my mind in condition to write. I am not a subscriber to your paper because of my poverty, but in 1926 my brother sent me three copies of the SIGNS from Milford, Delaware, which I enjoyed very much.

Should you publish this letter, please say that I desire the prayers of all God's dear children. May the Lord bless us all and revive us in spirit and draw us nearer together in understanding and fellowship, if it is his will.

Submitted in love for your consideration and disposal.

C. C. SMITH.

YAWKEY, West Virginia.

ELDER A. J. MULLENS:—I have thought for some time that I would write you my experience.

Like many others, I was raised by parents who did not believe Baptist doctrine. They were Methodists, or were in my childhood days, but I will say that now in their last days their belief is far from that. I was sprinkled in infancy and was sent to Sunday School I never heard an Old School Baptist preach until I was sixteen years of age. I heard of them and heard people make fun of them. At the age of eighteen years I was married into an Old Baptist family. I never in my life heard a gospel sermon preached until the day my husband was baptized. He was baptized by Elder J. H. Terry in July, 1898. Elder Terry's text was, "O generation of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." That sermon seemed to give me some light on the Scriptures, but before that I had been blind to their meaning. I had set times to do better, and thought that if I was taken sick I would start right in and get religion. I truly thought I could get religion any time I wanted to. My people would say to me, Do not let your husband make a "Hard-shell" of you. I would answer, You need not worry, he will never do that. I truly thought I never would be one, but God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. I had several dreams that made me worry. I dreamed of seeing the devil come with his chains to bind me. Before that time I was afraid of the devil, but I never was afraid of him after that. I became greatly troubled about my sins. I had a great desire to read the Bible. My desire to read was so great that I would stop work and read it. I would try to pray, but the thought would come that I was acting the hypocrite. I went on in this way for some time, trying to keep my trouble to myself. I did not want even my husband to know I was in trouble. My desire was to be away off in some lonely spot where I could not see any one, or even hear the birds sing or the insects cry. My trouble was so great I wanted to be alone. One night I had a dream, or a vision rather, I thought I was in torment, where they were doing all kinds of meanness. I

wanted to get away from there, and looked for a door, or a way to get out, but could find no way of escape. I thought I was doomed to stay there. I cannot describe my feelings, and when my hope was just about gone I heard a voice say, Come, follow me. I looked and saw Jesus and followed him. He lead me up the most beautiful staircase I ever saw. When I got to the top I beheld the prettiest place my eyes had ever seen. I saw two women sitting at a table. He asked me if I knew who they were. I said, No. He said one was Christ's mother, but did not say who the other one was. I thought it was the most beautiful place I had ever seen, and I was very happy. I would haved liked to stay that way, but he disappeared from me. I was very happy for a time, but my trouble came back and I thought, That is only a dream, and I know there is nothing in dreams. About that time my husband began preaching, was licensed and there was talk of ordaining him. He said he did not want to be ordained. I told him that if he did not want to preach to just stop preaching. I did not want him to be a preacher and be gone from home so much. It gave me much trouble, and one night I had a dream that stopped my worrying about his ordination. I thought I went to the church-house door, but did not go in, for at that time I had not joined the church, and when I looked in the house and saw the church members all sitting there and my husband was not among them I asked where he was, and a voice answered me, and said, He is numbered with the preachers. I looked in and saw him in the upper end of the building with eleven other preachers, all dressed in white robes. I knew the faces of some and some I did not know, but believe I have seen them since that time. That was in the year 1911. About eight or nine years after that I went to an association held at the Liberty Church. After we got off the street car we had to walk some distance, and we overtook a man none of us knew. I told my husband that he was an Old Baptist preacher, and when he asked me how I knew I said, Because I have seen him before. You, brother Mullens, are that man. You are one of the eleven I saw with my husband in my dream, eight years before that time, and I knew you was one of those preachers I saw at that time. I was so overjoyed during that meeting that I could not talk with any one. I heard you preach three sermons there that I have never forgotten. I have also met some others that I knew were preachers because I knew their faces from my dream.

Brother Mullens, I started this letter seventeen years ago. I found it to-day and thought I would copy it and send it to you, as I have thought much of writing you about my dream. I believe God showed me in that dream that his servants are chosen by him and not by mortal man. I have had many ups and downs since that time, and have heard you preach some sweet sermons, and if I could have the confidence in myself that I have in you being a chosen servant of God I would not go

groping in the dark begging the Lord to have mercy upon me, a poor sinner, saved by grace if saved at all. Pray for me when at the throne of grace.

(MRS.) W. I. WADE.

LADELL, Ark., April, 1931.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—I am a subscriber to the SIGNS and enjoy reading it very much. I have never attempted to write you before, for I felt my barren mind, my weakness and my unworthiness were so great it would only be a waste of your time to read it, unless I could be endowed with power from on high to say something of God's wondrous works and ways. He is before all things and by him all things consist. It is of him we live, move and have our being here in this time world. All is unknown to us what we are here for, only it is of Him that showeth mercy, as he purposed before time was that we should be here for his honor and glory. I feel I am no more than a shadow in a ray of dim moonlight. This was revealed to me one night while I was trying to pray, that if he would give me more knowledge of his blessed word I would be able to praise him more acceptably. I could see the dim shadows of the trees, and oh I felt so little that I was made to say with Paul, I am the least of all, if one at all. At times it is strengthening to feel we are traveling the same road the disciples of the Lord had to travel, for there is but one way, that is Christ. He says, I am the way, the truth and the life. He is the Savior of his Father's chosen ones, who were chosen in the covenant of grace before the world was. He will present them to the Father without spot or wrinkle through his redeeming and cleansing blood, which he shed on the Roman cross for the remission of their sins. He has taken all their spots and wrinkles away. He came to do for them what they could not do for themselves. They are as helpless as a new-born babe, for without him they can do nothing. He is a great refuge, a rock of defense, a shelter in time of storms. Back in the year 1915 I was in a wind storm and thought I would be blown away, when it seemed that these sweet words were spoken to me, Fear not, I am with you. I sat down and sang that good old hymn, "How firm a foundation," and I seemed not to fear the wind any more.

I am sending you a letter from brother D. K. Caldwell, who is a member of the Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church at Ephesus, written to our pastor, which we enjoyed, and thought we would like to see published in the SIGNS, if you deem it worthy.

May the God of all grace still enable you to carry on your work, is the prayer of an unworthy one.

(MRS.) L. M. BAKER.

HAMBURG, Ark., March 15, 1931.

ELDER H. H. PHILLIPS—DEAR BROTHER:—If you will pardon me, I will try to write you a few lines this morning. I wrote you about two weeks ago, but as yet have received no reply, and I am fearful it was such that you do not care to answer, and I do not

blame you. I feel lonely and restless, for it has been such a long time since I have seen any of you that I am very anxious to go to meeting. If the dear Lord will, I am going next meeting day, for I feel that I have stood it about as long as I can. You have no idea how much good it does me to get a letter from some of you. Keeping in touch with you all is worth a great deal to me.

I am not going to write you this morning as I usually do, for I generally let my feelings run away with me. I feel this morning that if I could I would love to say something to his honor and praise for my heart is all swelled up. I have the feeling, but have no words. I am so ignorant of his holy words that I cannot write or talk intelligently of him. I sometimes wonder if that makes much difference after all, so long as I give him all honor and praise. Of course the glory shall be his, and that is what I always have in mind, whether I do it or not. I have never read a great deal and am not familiar with the Scriptures and make many misquotations, but not with the intention of changing his words or taking any honor or praise from him. He is well worthy of all the glory, honor and praise, and my great trouble is that my poor, weak, mortal tongue is not able to proclaim his praise sufficiently. I feel that I have much to be thankful for as I think over my past life and of how I have been brought along, even when I was unmindful of him, scarcely ever thinking of him and never feeling thankful for his many blessings, trusting altogether in myself. I now think of all this in shame, and wonder how it is that he has been so merciful to me, for surely I do not deserve it. I many times feel that if I only could I would sound his praises abroad, but he has set a seal on my tongue, and mind, too, for when I would say many things to his praise about all I can say is that he is a sovereign God and rules all things according to his own will and purpose, and repeat the words of John, where he said, For by him all things were created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, principalities or powers, all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and by him all things consist. But, dear brother, I want to admit to you that sometimes I can say but little, but with great joy and reverence in my heart for him, and feel it a great blessing to be permitted to say even a little with reverence and joy. I want to admit, too, that I have looked to many things for peace and pleasure and enjoyment, but have never been able to find any real joy except in the things pertaining to him. Many times I have gone to picture shows, or some other places of amusement, seeking peace and pleasure, striving to fill the aching void I felt in my heart, but they did not satisfy, and nearly always I went home feeling worse than I did before I went. Just yesterday I stood on the streets here in town and watched the people hurrying by, all rushing, seemingly looking to the natural things

of this world for their pleasure. Of course we cannot tell what is in a man's heart, but I wondered if they had ever considered that the things of this world were soon to pass away, but the things of the Spirit endureth forever. The first part of the eighth chapter of Romans comes to my mind, which reads thus, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace: because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Dear brother, I cannot tell why my mind is so changed from what it once was, when I scarcely ever thought upon his name, but now he is almost continually before me. I am not able to tell whether or not he has looked upon me to bless me with the blessings of the redeemed, but one thing I can say, if not greatly deceived, I can rejoice in the things that they rejoice in, which goes to strengthen my little hope that I sometimes hope I have. My fears are great and many. How can such a pure and holy God look upon such as I and have mercy on them? But the Savior declares that he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, for they that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. I am sick, and very sick, and know well that unless his healing blood is applied to me I am forever gone. Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. The will of the Father was that of all he had given him he should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. Yes, he is perfectly able in the morning of the resurrection to bring forth the dust of their old bodies to life again to live with him in glory throughout eternity. "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Yes, he has the power (key) to unlock the grave and loose the bands of death, that they, too, will live for evermore. The one great bar between his redeemed and eternal glory is the grave and death, but he has power over them. This we know, because he was once dead but now liveth, and will live forever, so all our hope is in him, and we have faith that he is able to accomplish it all.

Dear brother, I must close. I had no idea of writing so much. I have skipped about considerably, but have tried to be as brief as I could. You will have to learn to bear with me, for

I am liable to say or do anything. If you ever have a mind to write me do so, for your letters are a great comfort to me. I have not written as I would have liked to, for it would have made my letter too long. I am afraid I have wearied you as it is.

This leaves us very well, and I hope you and family are well.

Your unworthy brother,

D. K. CALDWELL.

FLORENCE, Ala., Jan. 25, 1931.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find check for two dollars to pay my subscription to the SIGNS for 1931

The past year has brought me many sorrows, much grief and sadness. The sixteenth day of August the Lord saw fit to call home my dear companion. We had lived together almost fifty years. Thirteen children were born to us; twelve lived to be grown, one died in infancy. The Lord blessed us to rear and educate them. The youngest is now past twenty years of age. While I am left alone in our humble home looking back over my past life I am made to rejoice that his mercy has followed me all the days of my life, and in his fear I desire to worship towards his holy temple. I heartily indorse the truth set forth by the editors of the SIGNS. May the Lord enable his poor and afflicted ones to be submissive to his will in this time of great perplexity of nations.

"I know there are no errors
In the great eternal plan,
That all things work together
For the final good of man."

Submitted in love.

LYTLE BURNS.

JERSEY SHORE, Pa., June 8, 1931.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—Just a few lines to relieve my mind, and I realize I cannot say anything to interest you unless the dear Lord guides my pen. I do not expect you to remember me. I met you at Cammal some years ago, next at Philadelphia, in 1920, at an association. I also met your wife. That has always been a bright spot in my life, but many I met there have since passed away. That fall I had the misfortune to fall and break my hip and have been a cripple ever since, and now I am almost helpless. I am wonderfully blessed, for I have all of my six children living near me and they are very kind to me. My dear husband passed away seven years ago. I am in my eighty-second year.

Now a little of our church history. I feel as though it is gradually passing away. All the old saints have passed beyond, and no new members in a long time, and most of the members seem cold and indifferent. I think it is fifty some years ago Elder Durand organized a church at Cammal, called Cammal Church, and it grew in membership. About thirty-eight years ago we had an association, Elder Beebe, Elder Chick and several other ministers were there and it was an enjoyable time. After that we had several visiting ministers, but they have all forsaken us. There are four members here.

I see I have wandered from what I wanted to write and ask you. I want to know what I am, for never have I suffered the dark days that others have. My heavenly Father has always been

kind to me. It seems he has walked with me all through my life, keeping me from all harm. I was blessed with six children, four girls and two boys, and no deaths in my family until my dear husband was called away. Two of my daughters are members of the church and I feel that the others are trusting in God. All are kind to me. With all these blessings I am just nothing. Oh how I wish I would wake up and sound His honors high. I have many friends, who think I am good. I have no temptations, why should I not be good? My suffering is great at times, but did not my Lord and Savior suffer, so why should I complain?

I have tried to tell some of the Lord's dealings with me, but have failed, but my mind will be relieved to know that I have done the best I could.

Dear brother, I started this letter some time ago, then thought I would not send it, but for some reason I cannot refrain from doing so. I write many letters in my mind, just a little of my experience, if I have any. In my childhood I wanted to be good like my mother, she was good to all, but I never attained that place. We seldom heard a sermon preached, and had no meetinghouse. Sometimes a strange preacher would come our way and all would gladly go to hear him, but I never got any comfort there. My case was different. I could see away off what I hungered for, but could not reach it. My mother took the SIGNS and I liked to read it, but do not think I realized what it all meant. When I married and left home my mother gave me some SIGNS, then I realized more what they were. My hearing is very poor, but I have good eyesight, and can read and sew to pass the time away. I cannot walk. I have been a subscriber to the SIGNS about forty-five years. I renew my subscription every six months, thinking each time will be the last. I also enjoy reading the old ones. I hope some one will remember our church.

I know this is a very poor letter, but it is the best I can do. I want to give God all the praise, for he has been very good to me. I ask you to write to me. Give my love to your dear wife.

(MRS.) PHILENA VELEY.

DALLAS, Texas, March 7, 1931.

DEAR EDITORS:—I notice my subscription expires with this month's issue, and for fear I let it slip my mind I stop reading to renew it, for I do not want to miss a single copy.

Elder J. R. Hardy has been in our city and I had the pleasure of hearing him at an appointment. Brother Hardy is a great gift, and if I know anything about the doctrine of God our Savior, enjoys greater light and liberty as he grows older. We have certainly had a feast. Such meetings strengthen our faith and hope and esable us to press on.

I want to thank you for publishing the notice of our effort to build a church-house. We hope it is the will of our Master; if so, it will be done.

The inclosed check is for my subscription, and $2 to use as you see fit.

(MRS. H. A. STRUBE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1931.

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FAITHFULNESS.

It has been requested that we write upon the above subject, and in doing so, we confess ourselves as too much of the earth, earthy, to be able of ourselves to rise to that height from which we could instruct our brethren in faithfulness. To our sorrow, we find that though we are at times able to rejoice in the love and mercy of a faithful God, yet our recollections often reproach us with many instances of our unfaithfulness, from which recollections we ought to learn, yes, and we do learn, that in us, that is, in our flesh, there dwells no good thing. How good it is that "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." Faithfulness is not of man, and never can it proceed from man, it is the direct fruit of God's Holy Spirit, and there is only one way that this faith can be ours. The Scripture saith, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." True faith is only received by divine revelation, it is not the darkened mind of the creature depending upon the veracity of the word of its creator, but it is an illuminated mind confidently depending upon the ability, and walking in the strength, of Him who has promised. Thus faith is not just a blind assenting to the truth, but it is an implicit trust in him who has imparted strength by the word he has spoken to us. Thus David went forth in the strength of the Lord. Not only does faith believe the word spoken, but while it is in lively exercise the recipient feels and knows that all Scripture is given by inspiration, that not one word of our eternal God shall fall to the ground, that his faithfulness is unto all generations, and as he hath established the earth, so it abideth. It is by and in this God-given faith that the soul diligently seeks God, believes his words and walks in his ways, and the more faith is in exercise the more that soul will have confidence in God, and lose confidence in the flesh. For one to walk after the flesh, is to walk after that that pleases not God, for in the flesh we cannot please God. Thus those who are in the flesh, and follow its motions, are without faith, and Paul tells us, "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Now while God in creation pronounced his work good, yet the work of man, that is, the work

of the flesh, never was good and never pleased the Lord, and daily we find the flesh profiteth nothing, it is under the curse of sin. Of the word of God Isaiah saith, "It shall accomplish that which I please," and Jesus, the Word made flesh, said, "I do always those things that please him." It is here, we would say, that true faithfulness is found: in Jesus. Paul tells us that "Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." How necessary to examine ourselves, and that often, whether we be in the faith. It is easy to deceive ourselves, and we may deceive others, but we cannot deceive God. Paul says, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your ownselves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" And if Chist be in you, the body is dead because of sin. How clear and cutting such truth is, and how necessary, we say again, for both hearer and speaker to examine themselves and prove themselves. Faithfulness is the keynote of Jesus as a Son, faithfulness should be the keynote of those who profess to be his.

"Let us ask the important question,
(Brethren, be not too secure.)
What it is to be a christian,
How we may our hearts assure.

Vain is all our best devotion,
If on false foundations built;
True religion's more than notion,
Something must be known and felt."

As we are concerned principally with those who profess Christ, we would direct our remarks first to those who are brethren, partakers of a holy calling. "Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." There is not one spark of faith in the soul but what Jesus is the author and finisher of it, and so, while we are in this life Paul says, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Now to live in Christ and Christ to live in us, is not like one sitting in a bus and that bus taking us to our destination, while we may read a newspaper, chat or sleep, but is a daily self-examination in the sight of truth, and struggling hard against sin and unbelief. A taking joyfully the spoiling of our goods and counting it all joy when we fall into divers temptations, is not according to the flesh. When the Lord gives a grain of faith, he will also see that that faith shall be tried. There will be a wicked heart to contend with, a darkened mind, a stubborn will, a hardened conscience, and all this in the one who has vowed to walk softly before the Lord. We are naturally proud, and the Lord knows how to humble, and he often takes a way we least expect to bring us low. "He that is low need fear no fall." Yet the lower we are brought faith sees the Lord exalted higher, views him as the chiefest among ten

thousand and the altogether lovely. When faith is dormant in the soul we become high-minded, and, as far as spiritual things are concerned, we are asleep. To such Paul says, "Awake to righteousness, and sin not, for some of you have not the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame." At such times our faithlessness will be seen. There will be a winking at sin, an indifference to prayer, to the word of God, to the afflictions of Christ, as manifested in his saints. It is at such times that wars and fightings come, and oh how cruel sometimes brethren can be to brethren. Again this world will not be the enemy it once was to such, and riches will have lost their deceitfulness. However, the Lord will not leave them there if they are his, there is a furnace in Zion, and faith will again enable them, under affliction, to confess his hand and know no will but his. It is then that the fullness of faith excludes unbelief, softens, makes a tender conscience, denies ungodliness and enables one to live a godly, righteous and sober life in the present evil world. Faithfulness demands that all who own a Savior's blood shall lay their tongues in the dust, yea, shall be dumb rather than speak evil against those for whom Christ died.

Now, as it is often the case with those who speak in God's name, as with the people to whom they minister, we would write upon the necessity of faithfulness in those who are upon the walls of Zion. The word saith, "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful," that is, he must be faithful to his God and the word of his grace. He must be faithful in declaring what he has handled, tasted and felt of the word of life, he must not handle the word of God deceitfully. He must study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, doing it as he that shall give account unto God. Paul charged Timothy before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." This charge was also given to us, and therefore how necessary to examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith. There are many who need reproof and rebuke these days, and do we reprove or rebuke them? and is it with all longsuffering and doctrine? All need exhorting, that they shall walk worthy of their high calling, not with eye service as men-pleasers, that they shall not copy their conversation after this vain world. A ministry with no rebuke or reproof in it will be very pleasing and satisfying to the flesh, but dis-

honoring to God. A ministry without exhortation will breed an indifference to the precepts of the gospel. Godly exhortation will not fail to stir up the pure mind of the hearers unless they be reprobate. Where there is a faithful ministry there is generally a faithful people, for it is often "Like priest, like people," and where there is a faithful people, such will pray that their minister shall prove faithful to them. A ministry that denies the doctrine of God in any part is not a faithful ministry. The church of God should always be careful in their judgment of a gift, for the words of an unfaithful elder will eat as doth a canker. A faithful ministry will not overthrow the faith of God's children like Hymenæus and Philetus, who were unfaithful in their teaching concerning the resurrection. And unfaithful ministry is to be blamed for much of the confusion and divisions that have ever crept into the church. Paul tells us, If I seek to please men I should not be the servant of Christ; and Elihu said, "Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person; neither let me give flattering titles unto man. For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my Maker would soon take me away." To follow the high calling of an ambassador of God calls for the speaker to be as God's mouth. His testimony must not be with high sounding words of man's wisdom, and only as he divides the precious from the vile, is he God's mouth. There are many, perhaps, today as the Lord declared to Ezekiel: "They come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not." The Lord said he would lay the land most desolate because of their admonitions. Surely there is a woe upon those who deal treacherously with God's people. Isaiah tells us, "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." If one speak, let him speak as the oracle of God, and if he minister, let him minister with the ability that God giveth. But we lack wisdom! James siath, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." There is nothing that brings a man to his knees in prayer if he be a servant of God more than a realizing sense of his insufficiency for these things, and the one who wrestles and communes with his God most in private, though he may often mourn an absent God, will find that God will give him a mouth and wisdom, which all his adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist. It is only when one goes forth in the strength of the Lord that he can put to flight the armies of the aliens. Surely we need to cry daily, Lord, make and keep me faithful, faithful to thee and thy word, then I shall be faithful to those that are thine.

G. R.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder R. Lester Dodson)

To the churches, messengers and ministers composing the Warwick Old School Baptist Association, convened at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, June 10th, 11th and 12th, 1931, greetings in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As many expect a Circular Letter to deal with some point of doctrine or order, it is our mind at this time to call attention to the latter. Much has been written on the subject, but much remains to be said. While order may be classed as second in importance to the faith held by a body of baptized believers, it most certainly is a very close second. A church, in addition to being sound in the faith, should be diligent in conducting all her business in a decent and orderly manner. Great stress now-a-days is being placed upon the "sovereignty" of a church, by which some would have us to understand that each individual church has a perfect right to do whatsoever it might choose, without any regard at all for the welfare of her sister churches. We seriously question that any church has even the right to show such utter disregard of other churches. We do not believe for one moment that the written word of God will sustain any such position. We disclaim emphatically, however, the right of any association, as such, to attempt to regulate and decide matters of dispute arising within and between churches of its membership. Regardless of whether a church is a member of an association or not, its powers of right are limited. Particularly if it is one of many members in an organized body called an Association should it consider its acts and be careful not to hurt the feelings of or infringe upon the rights of the other members of the same body. The fact that a church is a member of an association is proof that it was in substantial agreement with the other churches composing said association, and the same can be said with more or less of the essence of truth of an association regarding other associations with which she corresponds. How can two walk together, except they be agreed? And if they love one another sufficiently to seek to walk together in such association, how can they be true to that love and at the same time act so as to disturb the peace and wound the feelings of the ones whom they profess to love and esteem? The church of God is one body, composed of many members, with Christ as the head over all. This union is such that no one member can afford to undertake to live unto itself separate and apart from the other members and the Head. If they have the mind of their Head, each member will be considering the welfare of the entire body. Where such is not the case, distress will be experienced by all of the true members of the body throughout, wheresoever the trouble is known. One member cannot do wrong without grieving all of the other members. Each church in its walk of faith and in the observance of its order should keep in mind these

words: "Whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea."

We have not undertaken to specify in detail what the proper order should be. This might prove a herculean task, but we do feel that it would be well for all to carefully consider such things as the "reception and restoration, and the dismissal and exclusion of members," particularly where the one in question is residing within the bounds of churches other than the one taking the action. No nation, however powerful and mighty, can hardly be said to be able to live exclusively unto itself. An individual, while they may live in a supposedly free country and have liberty to go and come at will, can exercise that liberty only to the point where it does not conflict with or infringe upon the liberty and rights of others.

Our purpose in writing as we have on this occasion has not been to fix limits and boundaries, but rather to stir up, if the Lord will, the pure mind of those of like precious faith, in the hope that all will endeavor to be more careful in the future than they have been in the past with regard to the "order of the house." From time to time we have been compelled to "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth," and we would like to see as much of this prevented as possible in the future.

Submitted in love for the good of the cause.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
HENRY T. LEFFERTS, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in joint session with the several churches composing it, convening at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, June 10th, 11th and 12th, 1931, sends christian greetings to our sister associations and meetings of our correspondence.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Again we have been blessed to meet your messengers and receive your correspondence, and we greatly appreciate this privilege and pray for its continuance. That sweet love and fellowship that is so greatly to be desired has prevailed throughout the meeting making it a heavenly place in which to sit. The doctrine of God our Savior has been preached in its purity and our hearts have been made to rejoice. We desire to thank our heavenly Father that he has sent to us such able ministers to proclaim his precious truth. May he guide and direct them through all their journey here below.

Our next session is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1932, the place of meeting to be announced later through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, when we hope to meet your messengers again.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
HENRY T. LEFFERTS, Clerk.

A CORRECTION.

ON page 190 of the August issue of the SIGNS, in the fourth line of the obituary of Mrs. Sarah Elizabeth Dawson, it reads, "She was born October 5th, 1885." It should read, She was born October 5th, 1855.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MRS. EFFIE CAMPBELL FRENCH departed this life July 9th, 1931, after several days of intense suffering from heart trouble. She was born December 7th, 1858, the daughter of John and Janet Campbell, and lived all her life on the old homestead, where she died. From her childhood she showed a self-sacrificing disposition, and her life was one of devotion to her family. She married James French October 30th, 1895, to which union one child was born, which died in infancy. Sister French was a faithful and consistent member of the Covenanted Baptist Church for many years, and her kindness and hospitality is remembered by many. During her last illness her mind was stayed upon her God, and those around her were much impressed by the reality of her religion. From the commencement of her sickness she felt she would not recover, but had no fear of death, her only concern was that she could no longer minister to those who needed her, but for herself she longed to be at rest. She frequently expressed that it would be "Glory beyond the dark stream," and that she desired to "Sleep that sleep from which none ever wake to weep." She is mourned by her heart-broken family, especially by her devoted husband and by her nephew, John Hatton, who she raised as her own son. She also leaves to mourn their loss one brother, John Campbell, who has been an invalid on the old homestead for years. Also four sisters: Mrs. Flora Johnson, Sarnia, Ontario; Mrs. Sarah Holland, Port Talbot, Ontario; Mrs. Catherine Hatton and Miss Annie Campbell, both on the homestead. There are also several nephews and nieces.

The writer, her pastor, conducted the funeral services at her late home, a large gathering of relatives and friends being present. Six of her nephews acted as pall-bearers and the interment was made in the family plot at Black's Cemetery, Wallacetown, Ontario. May God reconcile her dear family and her brethren to their great loss, and prepare us, as we believe she was prepared, for her home on high.

ALSO,

MARTHA SUSANNA OAKLEY was born July 5th, 1895, in Germany. Her father's and mother's names are Mangus and Alma Bauer Leidenfrost. Martha left Germany in her girlhood days for America, residing in New York until she married Willie Oakley, March 28th, 1915. Since then until her death she resided with her husband at Stone Ridge, Ulster County, New York. It was her lot to be greatly afflicted for thirteen years with rheumatoid arthritis, which disease progressed until she was entirely helpless. It pleased the Lord to bring her case to the notice of the brethren and friends of the Olive & Hurley Church and their unworthy pastor, and we found much joy in doing what we could to aid her devoted husband in caring for her. For several years sister Irene Cudney was with Mrs. Oakley, giving her faithful and constant care. It pleased the Lord to take her from her sufferings on March 11th, 1931, and as we had known her for so long, her dear husband sent for us to conduct her funeral. We know she loved the name of Jesus, and whenever the brethren were present she delighted to have them join together in prayer and praise. Much could be said regarding her intense suffering and how her blessed Lord enabled her at times to rise above her pain and sing his praise. She was a meek, humble child of God and her dear Savior has taken her home. Of her husband it can truthfully be said that he gave her constant and loving care; we have never seen a man more devoted to a sick companion than he was to her. Her memory is blessed. May God bless her dear companion and enable him to say, "Thy will be done." May he bless her parents and family in their sorrow.

Elder Arnold Bellows and the writer attended the funeral services, which were held in the Olive & Hurley meetinghouse, and the interment was in the Stone Ridge Cemetery.

G. R.

DEACON A. H. CUMMINS died July 7th, 1931, at his residence, in Touchet, Washington. He was born April 8th, 1863, near Moravia, Iowa. He, with his parents, crossed the plains the following year, living in Utah until 1867, then moving to Los Angeles, California, remaining there until 1867, when he, with his parents, came to Walla Walla County, Washington, settling at Touchet, where he spent the remainder of his life. September 18th, 1900, he was married to Mary Jane Alexander, and to that union six children were born, all living, except the oldest son, who died several years ago. Brother Alford united with the Old School Baptist Church at Touchet twenty-five years ago, and he and his wife were baptized by the writer, who was the pastor of the church then, and has been for thirty years. Brother Alford was ordained Deacon of the church several years ago and filled that office to the satisfaction of the church. He was a man of good judgment and of very few words, but faithful to his church, always filling his place at his meetings unless providentially hindered. He was deeply interested in the welfare of his country, ever ready to assist in any way for its advancement. He served on the Board of his school for many years, and helped in many other ways, which will cause the community to miss him, but none will miss his counsel and watchcare like sister Cummins and children. He will also be missed by the little church which he had so long cheered by his faithful presence, and truly no one will miss his companionship more than the unworthy writer. He leaves to mourn sister Cummins and five children: Ollie Roberta Seachris, Alford Reuben, John V., Mima Ellen, Melvin Wayne; two brothers: Robert, of Coquille, Oregon, Amasa, of Sifton, Washington; four sisters: Ida Parks, of Elgin, Ore., Sarah Marcy,

of Walla Walla, Wash., Vinnie E. Binford, of Umapine, Ore., Mina, of Touchet, Wash. While we will miss our dear brother, we feel that our loss is his gain, and we mourn not as those who have no hope.

I was called to attend the funeral, which was held July 9th in the Baptist meetinghouse, and attended by one of the largest gatherings I have ever seen at that place. My text was the latter part of the fourth chapter of First Thessalonians, where Paul so richly presents the glorious resurrection of the saints.

J. T. BARNES.

SUSANNAH TURMAN MARSHALL, our sister in Christ, departed this life August 11th, 1931, at her home, near Arcola, Loudoun County, Virginia, after an illness which lasted from March 3rd, 1930, until her passing away. She was stricken with paralysis and did not at any time regain full use of herself, though she knew every one who came to see her, and plainly showed her gladness to see them, but could speak only a few words now and then. She was the daughter of James M. and Tabitha Turman, and was born March 12th, 1876, in Carroll County, Virginia. She has one sister living: Miss Alice Turman, of Willis, Floyd County, Virginia. Also has four brothers: Doctors A. E. and J. W. Turman, of Richmond, Va., Dr. C. F. Turman, of Parksley, Va., and our brother C. M. Turman, Deacon of the Mt. Zion Church. She was married June 3rd, 1897, to I. Monroe Marshall, who survives her. Of this marriage there are four children living: E. F. Marshall, Arcola, Va., J. C. Marshall, Miss Virginia Alice, at home, and Mrs. Glennie Fleming, near Leesburg, Va. There are also four of five grandchildren. She was baptized in the summer of 1899 into the membership of the Laurel Fork Church by the late Elder F. P. Branscome. After moving into Loudoun County and within the bounds of Mt. Zion Church, she united by letter with the latter church, of which she was a member at the time of her death. There are times when words are futile to express what we feel, and this is the case now. Her whole personality, both as a mother and wife and as a follower of Christ, was marked by love and gentleness, quietness and peace. She was given much to hospitality and acts of thoughtfulness, delighted in having her brethren and those she loved with her in her home, loved faithfully the meetings of the church and always was in her place unless providentially kept away. The last time the Virginia Corresponding Meeting met with the Mt. Zion Church, I remember she said to me she wished it could have lasted a week instead of three days. And now she has gone to join the beloved of God before the throne in heaven, where congregations ne'r break up and meetings never end. May the dear Lord comfort and strengthen the lonely husband and the sorrowing children and the bereft church.

Funeral services were held at Mt. Zion and burial in the yard there. H. H. L.

KANSAS TABITHA PIERCE (nee Payton) was born December 28th, 1873, and died July 19th, 1931, aged 57 years, 6 months and 21 days. She joined the Primitive Baptists at about the age of twenty years, and when about twenty-one years of age she married David E. Coyle, who died shortly after. To that union was born one son, who was born after his father's death. This son still survives, is married and has three children. He is a preacher of the modern Missionary Baptist faith and order. I met my wife in the year 1903 and we were married in 1904. To our union were born two daughters: Naomi and Ruth, who still survive. Naomi is married and has one son. Ruth is with me. She has been married, but separated from her husband. "Mother" suffered much, being afflicted with cancer. We did all we could to relieve her suffering, but not what we desired to do. She bore her affliction with loving patience, never murmuring at her lot. She often expressed a desire to be at rest, and we have the evidence to believe her desire is granted, and having this assurance we try to be reconciled to our sad and lonely state, having the blessed hope that one day we will enjoy that rest with her. Three brothers and three sisters survive her. Her father died when she was small, her mother died in the year 1903, and two sisters and one brother died prior to 1903. We laid her precious body to rest in Hooks Cemetery, located in Hardin County, Texas. The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh; blessed be the name of the Lord. He does all things well, and is too wise to err and too good and merciful to do wrong. We desire to be submissive to his will and ways and to suffer on until he says, Enough.

I was married in 1900 to Elsie Claudia Lockett, who died in 1902. To us was born one son, Travis Franklin, who survives, is married and has two daughters: Claudia and Barbra. Much I have suffered, but I have no desire to complain at my lot. The Lord knew me before I had a being, and he surely knows what is best for me. All I have he knoweth I long since have committed to him and he is able to keep it against that day, so let me praise his holy name.

Written by a sad and lonely husband,

J. F. PIERCE.

DONALD W. McCORMICK, who was the son of Helen McCormick and the late Angus McCormick, departed this life July 1st, 1931, in the South Side Hospital, Chicago, Illinois, following an attack of pneumonia. He was thirty-eight years of age. He leaves a wife, Mrs. Caroline B. McCormick, and two small children, Jean and Donald, Jr., his mother, Mrs. Helen McCormick, one sister, Mrs. Trevor Hague, of New Wilmington, Pennsylvania, and two brothers, Arch and Russell, to mourn his death. We feel that he is at rest, and our loss is his eternal gain.

Funeral services and interment were held July 3rd, 1931, in Birmingham, Alabama.

DAVID MULBERRY was born July 7th, 1863, and died June 25th, 1931. He united with the Old School Baptist Church called Elk Lick, in Scott County, Kentucky, the first Saturday in October, 1908. Brother David was a faithful member, always attending the meetings, nothing but sickness keeping him away. During the last few years of his life he had been in failing health, and suffered much. I visited him a month before he died and he expressed his willingness to go and be at rest. He leaves his widow, Mrs. Hettie Mulberry, and three children: Richie Mulberry, Mrs. A. Campbell, of Detroit, Michigan, Mrs. Nannie May Bates, of Sadieville, Ky., six grandchildren, one brother, Wm. Vance Mulberry, one sister, Mrs. Lucy Lancaster, both of Sadieville, Ky.

The funeral was largely attended. Services were held in the cemetery. Elder P. W. Sawin spoke in prayer and the writer spoke briefly at the grave, and invited the friends to assemble at the church-house next day, on account of the excessive heat, where I tried to comfort the friends with the promise of God in the world to come. May the blessing of the Lord be with them that mourn.

ALSO,

MRS. EVELYN SMITH, our sister in Christ, passed to the great beyond July 17th, 1931, in her ninety-second year. She and her husband joined the Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church in the year 1881, and were pillars of the church. Her husband, brother Billie Smith, died five years ago. Our sister's delight was to be at her meetings, and to entertain the brethren. Her home was a stopping-place for the brethren. Her faith was strong and her desire and conversation were upon heavenly things. She will be greatly missed by the brethren and neighbors. May the Lord reconcile us all.

Written by request of the Elk Lick Church.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

JOHN B. DURAND, of Prairie City, Missouri, was born September 22nd, 1843, and departed this life July 13th, 1931, aged 87 years, 9 months and 21 days. He was married to Anna Short December 11th, 1877, and to that union were born four children: Walter, of Powell, Wyoming; Oscar, of Sumner, Washington; Jessie, of Boise, Idaho, and Eugenia, deceased. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church in 1909, and was baptized by his uncle, Elder Silas H. Durand, and lived a faithful member until his death, even attending his church meetings when he had to be carried in and out by the brethren. He was a strong believer in predestination and salvation alone by the grace of God. His companion having passed away September 13th, 1928, he advertised in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for a Baptist family to rent his farm and live with him for the remainder of his life, so the writer, then living in Tennessee, answered the advertisement and came to Missouri and rented the farm. Though we had never met him, we soon learned to love him. He was always good and kind, and continually singing the old songs of Zion and talking of the wondrous love of God, saying that God worked all things after the counsel of his own will and that none could stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

Funeral services were held at the home, conducted by our pastor, Elder Shumate, of Kansas City, after which he was laid to rest in the family cemetery.

WILLIAM N. MATHIS.

EMMA B. FETTER, our dear sister in Christ, was born August 16th, 1847, and died November 6th, 1930. She was married in 1868 to William McDowell, and to that union were born three children, two sons and one daughter. One son died in childhood and her only daughter, sister Alma Sholler, died some years ago leaving three daughters. One son, Walter McDowell, with whom sister Fetter made her home, is still living. After the death of Mr. McDowell sister Fetter married Samuel Fetter, in 1891, and by that marriage became our great aunt. She was baptized by Elder S. H. Durand August 11th, 1895, and received in fellowship by the Southampton Church, at Southampton, Pennsylvania. She was a very faithful member to her church and was present at most of the meetings until ill health deprived her of that privilege. Sister Fetter was very dear to me, and it was always a pleasure to talk with her, and to read her letters testifying of the work of grace in her heart and her love for the brethren. The church misses her, and her son and grandson also miss her.

Mrs. Rook, who had her home with sister Fetter many years asked me to write this notice for our family paper.

E. L. FETTER.

MRS. SARAH F. BALLARD, of Fleischmanns, N. Y., died suddenly at her home, of valvular disease of the heart, from which she had suffered for some time. She was eighty-six years old, having been born March 22nd, 1845, in the town of Roxbury, N. Y. She was united by marriage to Orville F. Ballard in 1867, and to this union two children were born, who still survive, residing near Fleischmanns. Mrs. Ballard was a woman of excellent traits and noble qualities, a kind neighbor, and possessing a cheerful disposition, and was a loyal helpmeet to her husband during their long wedded life. He died in 1922, and was for many years a member of the Clovesville Church and one of its most active and generous supporters. Mrs. Ballard was not a member, but believed in the doctrine of severeign grace and had no confidence in the works of the flesh. She was a niece of the late Elder Isaac Hewitt. The interment was in the cemetery at Clovesville, the writer officiating at the funeral services.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

NOTICE.

BROTHER B. F. White, who recently passed away, possessed the Bible written in New York Script for the use of the blind. Being blind himself, he could read the Bible only in this way. Now he is gone, and his family would like some other blind person to have these books if they care to have them. There are several volumes of them: that is, the Bible in separate volumes. If there is any blind person reading or subscribing to the SIGNS who would like to have this Bible written in New York Script, the family will be glad to give them free of charge. If they find no one wanting these books, they will be given to some library or institution for the blind.

H. H. L.

MEETINGS.

We regret that the next session of the First Kansas Association is deferred until next year, when we hope the stress of present conditions will be relieved the world over, and times be better for every one. Our hope and trust is in Israel's God alone, who holds the destiny of all worlds in his hand.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

GRANTVILLE, Kansas.

The Primitive Baptist Church of New Hope, of the North Ouachita Association has changed the date of our Association from October to Friday before the first Sunday in September, at old New Hope, nine miles south of Hope, Arkansas, on the Missouri Pacific R. R., and three miles north of Patmos, on the L. & A. R. R. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend.

J. G. RATLIFF.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, on September 9th, 10th and 11th, 1931, with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine. We expect Elders Topping and Dodson to be with us. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

MEDFIELD, Mass.

The Siloam Association of Predestinarian Baptists will meet with the Sulphur Creek Church, at Riffe, Washington, on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1931. All ministers of our faith and order, and all those who desire to hear the truth, are cordially invited to attend. For other information write the clerk of Sulphur Creek Church.

(MRS.) VERNA SCHOONOVER

NESIKA, Washington.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association is appointed to be held at the Second Roxbury Church, Roxbury, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday between the second and third Sundays in September (16th, 17th and 18th), 1931. Those coming by train stop off at Halcottville, N. Y. Trains will be met and friends cared for. Those coming by automobile on Tuesday also stop at Halcottville, N. Y., where the brethren and friends will be cared for during the meeting. Those who cannot locate the places of entertainment in Halcottville, inquire at the post office and instructions will be given. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, sisters and friends to meet with us.

AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

The Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association will, the Lord willing, convene with Cedar Hill Church, in her ninetieth annual session Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 18th, 19th and 20th, 1931. Cedar Hill Church is Oakland Schoolhouse, four miles north of Amity, Pike County, Arkansas. All trains will be met at Amity Thursday and Friday. Railroad connections are from Smithton, on St. Louis, I. M. & S. Railroad, to Amity, and on Highway No. 8 from Arkadelphia to Amity, and from Texarkana No.67, and connect with No. 55 to Nashville, No. 27 to Kirby, connection with pike to Amity. We invite all Regular Unlimited Predestinarian Baptists to meet with us at this time, where we feel to assure you that you will have a welcome, especially our ministering brethren who believe and preach a sovereign God who knows all things that have been, are now, or ever will be, and that they will be as he saw them.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator.

W. C. HORTON, Clerk.

The ninetieth annual session of The Original Mount Zion Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will be held with the Little Blue and Sni-a-bar Church, at Grain Valley, Missouri, October 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1931, beginning at 10:30 a. m. Grain Valley is situated on the Chicago and Alton Railroad, and on the U. S. Highway, No. 40. We invite all sound orderly Baptists who believe in a Sovereign who rules ALL things.

(MRS.) J. W. TAYLOR.

PLEASANT HILL, Missouri.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 14th, 15th, and 16th, 1931. Those coming by train will be met at Herndon, on the line of the Washington & Old Dominion Railway, Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning. These trains leave Rosslyn, at the Virginia end of the Key Bridge, where connection is made by electric car with Union Station, Washington, D. C. For those coming by auto, come direct to the meetinghouse either on Tuesday or Wednesday and arrangements will be made to care for them. The meetinghouse is located on good road, three miles from Herndon, Va., and

also three miles from the Lee-Jackson Highway eastward from Chantilly. We cordially invite brethren of our faith and order, all lovers of the truth, and especially ministers of our correspondence, to be present with us.

G. C. SPINDLE, Church Clerk.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Nassaongo Church October 21st, 22nd and 23rd, 1931. Trains leaving Philadelphia at 10:05 a. m. and 2:55 p. m., Tuesday before the meeting, will be met at Salisbury, Md., and friends cared for. Train leaving Cape Charles, Va., at 12:10 p. m. will be met also at Salisbury on Tuesday before the meeting. Those coming by way of Caliborn, either by bus or private automobile, will call telephone number 370 M on arrival in Salisbury. A cordial invitation is extended to those of our faith and order, including friends. We hope our ministers will plan to be with us.

EFFIE F. GIVAN, Church Clerk.

Ebenezer Church, 200 E. Madison Street, Baltimore, Maryland, will hold an all day meeting Sunday, September 20th, 1931. All who can are invited to meet with us.

ALVIS S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at the home of sister E. Brunow, 411 N. Ridgeway Avenue, and on the second, third and fourth Sundays at the home of brother W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. The fifth Sundays are by appointment. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastors, Elders Jones and Janes.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor

Little Flock Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every first and third Sunday at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, at 1 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

We have kept up a monthly meeting for some time in the past, and hope, by the grace of God, to be favored to continue to meet every second Sunday in each month at 3617 Veteran Avenue, Palms Station, near Culver City, California. May this bear a cordial invitation to all who believe in grace and salvation by grace to meet with us on the stated time.

MR. and MRS. W. J. BERRY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 99. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1931. NO. 10.

POETRY.

TRUE RICHES.

The gracious Lord in mercy led me
To a small and humble place,
Where adornment of the building
Is the riches of his grace.

There's no organ in the corner,
And no carpet on the stair,
For the beauty of this meeting
Is because, "The Lord is there."

There is worship in the singing,
Understanding in the prayer,
And the sound of gospel trumpet
Tells of Jesus loud and clear.

"There's salvation in no other,"
So the gospel trumpet cries;
And there's none can tell the story,
Only whom the Lord makes wise.

Christ, the Son of God, came hither,
Not to seek, as some would say,
But he saved his elect people,
And their sins he washed away.

See the stream of mercy flowing
Through the channel of God's Son,
Giving grace and truth to sinners,
All whose hopes on him are hung.

Oh! there's sweetness in the story,
Like to honey in the comb;
For to find the Lord our refuge
Is indeed to find a home.

How the faces shine with gladness,
There are teardrops in some eyes,
For to them who hear the message
Worldly wealth is no great prize.

Though each member feels unworthy,
In themselves the least of all;
Still, God's grace is all-sufficient,
It will serve, as it did Paul.

Let the world despise, forsake them,
They are princes in disguise,
For the're heirs of God's dear kingdom,
And their wealth—a secret lies.

FLOSSIE I. FAULKNER.

PRAYER.

PSALMS lxxxviii. 2.

Weary of life, and care, and sin,
Dear Lord, where can I flee?
Thou alone dost a refuge prove,
I long to rest in thee.

The world and all its lauded charms
Can never give me rest;
I long alone to feel thy love,
And then I will be blest.

Give me some token of thy love,
Some word my soul to cheer;
No eye but thine can see my need,
Thou hearest my heart-felt prayer.

I beg for mercy, in the name
Of thy beloved Son;
His righteousness my only plea,
For I myself have none.

When thou dost give a heart to pray,
Wilt thou not heed my moan?
I wait on thee—renew my strength,
The praise shall be thine own.

FLOSSIE I. FAULKNER.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ISAIAH XXVII. 13.

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem."

When God had delivered his people from Egypt, he told them of the glorious land to which he was leading them, and that their continuance therein depended upon their observance of his statutes; otherwise they should be besieged by their enemies, who shall take them away captive, and among those nations they should find no ease. (Deut. xxviii. 65-68.) All of which was fulfilled, and the tribes of Israel were cast out of their land, and the delightsome land was desolate because of them that dwelt therein, for the fruit of their doings. (Micah vii. 13.) The Lord accomplished seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem (Dan. xix. 2), and "in the set time to favor Zion," "the acceptable year of the Lord," the angel of the Lord was answered with good words and comfortable words, Thus saith the Lord, I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it. (Zech. i. 12-17.) The Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia, and he made a proclamation for the return of Israel to their own land, and God raised up the spirit of the people to go. (Ezra i. 1.) Thus the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, and they worshipped the Lord once more in the holy mount at Jerusalem. (Neh. vii.) Such is the account of the way the Lord dealt with national Israel, who were in the wisdom of God the type of the spiritual, true and chosen Israel of God. What a precious word is this at the head of this communication! Let us now try and get a glimpse of its spiritual meaning. Assyria and Egypt are named as lands in which the children of Israel were found. Egypt was unto Israel the house of bondage, and Assyria the land of captivity. How true a description of the land in which we are all found by nature! Sin entered into the world and took us captive, promising us great rewards for our servitude, but we sold ourselves for naught to do iniquity, and became the servants of sin. Sin as a terrible tyrant reigned over us, and we were shut up in this house of bondage, though by nature we knew it not, and would say, We were never in bondage (John viii. 33, 34), and might boast of what we called our "free will." But sin and Satan held us captive. Sin was as a bridle in our mouths, and we walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. (Eph. ii. 2.) We were held captive, shut up in bondage under the law, and under the curse of the law. (Gal. iii. 10, 13, 23.) Such was the land in which ye dwelt, "O ye children of Israel."

Now let us look at the children of Israel, "in that day that the great trumpet shall be blown." What estate are they in? They are "ready to perish in the land of Assyria," and are "out-

casts in the land of Egypt." Such was the experience that was wrought in them under the effectual teaching of the Lord their God, for it is written, They shall all be taught of God, and who teacheth like him? "Ready to perish." The Lord bringeth the poor sinner to see, and causeth his heart to feel what a wretched, ruined state he is in. Sin is his master, and how confounded he is at its reign. All his efforts to affect his deliverance, all his resolutions to throw off the yoke of this tyrant sin, discover to him his impotence, bring low all his boastings of creature strength, and to this one, who is a partaker of the divine nature, what a famine there is in the land, and what hungering and thirsting after righteousness does he experience. He searches throughout all the land of his fleshly nature, but it cannot be found, and though he labors incessantly to produce it, the land will not bring it forth; until at length the Holy Spirit bringeth this one to the humiliating, painful and alarming experience of his utter destitution of righteousness, so that he cries out, In my flesh there dwells no good thing, I can bring forth nothing but sin, and every imagination of the thoughts of my heart are only evil, and that continually. He feels to be in a famished, dying state; yea, he sinks in deep waters, where there is no standing, where the floods of sin and wrath overflow, and ready to perish, he cries unto God, Lord, save me, I perish. "The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail."—Isaiah li. 14. An exile from the Lord, from the land of uprightness, taken captive in a foreign land, and shut up in the pit of his own corruption, he "hasteneth that he may be loosed, and that he should not die." Oh what longings, what sighs, what groanings for deliverance arise from this "ready to perish" one. Though he hasteneth he makes no speed. All his haste brings him no relief, he is "ready to perish in the land of Assyria." The Lord speaks of "the outcasts in the land of Egypt." Wretched, homeless, exiled wanderers, such do the called of God feel themselves to be when the Holy Spirit discovers to them their sinfulness. Like the poor, loathsome leper the law of the Lord cuts him off, and casts him out from the fellowship of the saints and of God. Like the publican, his sins and conscious unworthiness as an impassable gulf forbid his drawing nigh; but standing afar off, he does not so much as lift up his eyes unto heaven, but smites upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me, a sinner. I am so sinful I dare not enter in among the children, they are so pure and good, while I am such a loathsome wretch they could have nothing to do with me. O thou Holy One! if angels veil their faces while they cry, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, woe is me, for I am undone, I am cast out of thy sight. Oh what would not this poor outcast give to find a home among the children, to feel in the presence of Jesus at home? But he feels his state to be as the infant in the sixteenth chapter of Ezekiel, cast out in the open field to the

loathing of his person, polluted in his own blood, no one pittieth, or hath compassion upon him. This poor sinner feels himself as one who because of his leprous, sinful condition, is abandoned to die.

"It shall come to pass in that day." It is no bare possibility; it is the will of the eternal, almighty, unchangeable God, who has said, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. He speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast. Unalterable his will, and who shall frustrate omnipotence? "It shall come to pass in that day." What day? When "the set time it come."—Psalms cii. 13. Typically, when the seventy years are fulfilled. The child is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father (Gal. iv. 2), the acceptable year of the Lord (Luke iv. 19), the accepted time, the day of salvation (2 Cor. vi. 2; Isaiah xlix. 8), the day of atonement (Lev. xxv. 9-13), the day of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is the day in the experience of the children of Israel when the trumpet of the jubilee shall be blown. "It shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown." Who shall blow "the great trumpet"? The great Preacher, the Lord Jesus Christ, for he says, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek: he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." And "the great trumpet," the gospel of the grace of God, gives us no uncertain sound; all its utterances are distinct. The is nothing spoken to no one. But the "distinction of sounds" is to a distinguished people. "He calleth his own sheep by name."—John x. 3. Oh what a joyful sound, what glad tidings of great joy does "the great trumpet" proclaim! Thus saith the Lord, Ye have sold yourselves for naught, and ye shall be redeemed without money. Ye are redeemed not with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me, for I have redeemed thee. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price." The Lord gathereth the outcasts of Israel, I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion. Ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel. Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: thou shalt again be adorned with tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry. O, ye "ready to perish!" The Lord knoweth thee in thy low estate, and has commanded concerning thee, saying, "Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine to those that be of heavy hearts."—Prov. xxxi. 6. My flesh, saith Christ, is meat indeed,

and my blood is drink indeed. This is too strong for some, but it is just that for which all the "ready to perish" hunger and thirst; for the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. Redemption is in his blood and forgiveness of sins according to the riches of Jehovah's grace. (Eph. i. 7.) I am ready to perish, cries the poor guilty sinner. Oh that I could taste thy precious blood, O Jesus, Savior of sinners. "Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples."—Solomon's Song ii. 5. Let me eat and drink of thee, else I die. The blessed gospel proclaims, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." He shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. O ye outcasts, what good news, what glad tidings the gospel of Christ proclaims! "Ye shall be gathered one by one." It shall be a matter of individual experience. "You, that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight." "How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land [or land of desire], a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations?" (an heritage of glory and beauty.) Ah, says the poor sinner, I know not, I cannot see how it can ever be. But the Lord says, "Thou shalt call me, My father; and shalt not turn away from me." "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God." "Thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."

"They shall come." "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." "They shall all be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Thus spake the dear Savior. "They shall come that are ready to perish." Perhaps you are saying, I have no strength to come; I am so faint, and weary, ready to perish, because of my sins. The Lord "giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength." "I drew them [saith the Lord] with the cords of a man, with the bands of love: and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and I laid meat unto them."

"The people of Jehovah's choice
Are registered on high;
And they shall hear his sov-reign voice,
And by his grace draw nigh.

Far off, depraved, and prone to stray,
But they shall surely come;
For cov-nant love marks out the way,
And brings the outcasts home.

Yes, they shall come; 'tis heaven's decree
They shall to Jesus bow;
This precious 'shall come' conquered me,
And gives me comfort now.

I wandered from him while I could,
Till 'shall come' stopt my feet;
And now through Jesus' precious blood,
I shall come to his seat."

Oh what a time it was when the dear Lord wrought and revealed these things in us! Truly it was "the time of love." O precious, precious Jesus! O wonder of unutterable love! To what unfathomable depths of misery and woe would my sins have sunk me,

hadst thou not remembered me in my low estate, and by thy precious blood redeemed a poor sinner like me!

They "shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem." Here are the true worshippers, that worship the Father in spirit and in truth. (John iv. 23.) They alone can and do "worship God in spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."—Phil. iii. 3.

But I will not write any more just now. What I have penned, I trust is in love to all the blood-bought of Jesus Christ.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

BENTON, Ky., May 6, 1930.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—You are a dear, precious servant of the Most High. I have talked with you imaginary numbers of times when I have read the rich truth that God foreknew and ordained you should stand up and contend for (for there is nothing hid, you know, from the Father), and this morning it has seemed impossible to even go ahead with my housework. While naturally I need to be about these things, still it seems other things of a different nature have been calling me, so I sat down and picked up the May number of our paper, the SIGNS, and read it through, thinking each article was too long for me to read and I must hurry on with my work, but I have read them and feasted, as I hope, on them. Elder Frederick Keene is a noble man, and I much enjoy his letters.. Sometimes they are so deep I cannot grasp the ideas he sees, or I do not get the picture in my mind that I feel sure he sees while writing. But we all get just what God sees we need, and if at the first reading we barely get anything, it may be there will come a time when we are fed and made to rejoice over the same letter we could not get comfort from at the first reading. Naturally we cannot see or read or write. A man once beautifully expressed it when he said to me, I cannot sing without Jesus. I cannot read without Jesus. I cannot write without Jesus. Then he broke down and wept, and said, I am nothing without him. This morning, my dear brother, if Jesus has opened by heart to the things of the Spirit and closed it to natural duties then I am truly thankful I hope (oh I want to be one) that I am one of that number that has an eye on Jesus, ever looking forward to the things of God and his kingdom, and one who is included where he says, Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you, and, Knock and it shall be opened unto you. Let your light so shine that others seeing your good works, &c. Now who can seek, knock or let anything happen unto them without they are alive unto these things and thirst after righteousness and want to enter into some place? and if we have light, why have we light? It is all of the Father, who chooses us to approach unto him; and if we work, then it is given unto us to shine, or else we would not. So our works and fruits must come forth rooted and grounded in the truth, and that truth must come

from the Husbandman. My Father, Jesus says, is the Husbandman. Jesus is the way and the truth. Isaiah says, An highway shall be there and a way. This way is traveled by the clean, and they that are redeemed and are holy and without blame before him in love, made acceptable in the Beloved, for praise and glory of his grace, Paul says. So this beautiful way that you spoke of being laid out from eternity is to be traveled by the children (the little flock to whom he says, Fear not, for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom). This way is strait and narrow. Many times we try to row our own little boat, and seem to be rebellious and unwilling that it should hit here and there, but, Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. Elder H. H. Lefferts says that a live fish stems the tide and struggles against its sweep. Oh how true that seems to be. Such struggling as we do. Sometimes when we are in the spirit on the Lord's day we are willing to fight and conquer, then at other times we fight against God's will, or I do, and I am made to say to myself, I am unclean and a rebellious one. If we could always believe, then all would easy be. We cannot always understand why. We chase the rose and receive the thorn instead. My way has been a very peculiar walk with God, if so I have walked. I only hope that I have, for I do not see and know as the Arminians do. My parents were Old School Baptists, as were also my grandparents on both sides. But when I came along I thought them very ignorant, and I gathered unto myself everything beautiful I could afford. We were very poor financially. I even thought my people would have been more prosperous had they not been so narrow in their views. I loved the broad way that I now can see (I hope with an eye of faith) leads to destruction. All the unclean walk there, those who love the world and the pretty painted toys that fade. How they work for them! Just one more nice costly garment of lace and silk to stroll up and down the streets to show. Oh I have done the same thing, yet I believe that God, who was and is rich in mercy, with his great love wherewith he loves us, caused me to come, as brother Keene says, and if Jesus says, Come, can we stay away? If he says, Go, then can we keep back? In my twenty-third year I began to weep and mourn, and to see things in a way I had never seen them before. I loved the long letters I received from an aunt of mine who was a Primitive Baptist, for she always filled them with truths, yet she knew I was a great Sunday School girl. The things the Sunday School taught I soon found out I could not accept, for they seemed to me so different from the things I read in the Bible. After I was turned about I would read the Bible, but I hid myself away when I read it, so no one could see me. It was all right to sit on the front porch or on any high place to study my Sunday School lesson, but it seemed very wrong to read the Bible (or I felt it was), when, I hope, the Lord began the work that I feel he will

carry on unto the end. For a few years I battled on, fighting, and did not join any denomination, although I was persuaded to attend the Missionary meetings, and was asked to become a member, but I, being married, never gave that a thought. When I was finally brought to the end of my own strength, and all the old nest was torn away, I was left to die but for the love of the merciful Father, and I would have sunk down and down, but I believe he placed my feet on that Rock, and that he showed me things that Jesus saw when he would not be tempted by the devil and was without sin. Yet he saw a far more beautiful way, and when our lives are in Christ I believe we view that way. Isaiah says, Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty, and the land that is very far off. So we cease to see the beauties in the broad way and glory in affliction, find joy in tribulation. Why? Because we are the heirs of promise, and are in the way, and are seeking, and knocking, and finding. Is that right? I believe there is a people that is saved from everything that their vile nature could do, and would do if not saved and kept, but I see myself continually going in the wrong way. I cannot pray or read or write without sin is mixed with it. If I am what I hope I am, it seems strange that I would yet be so imperfect and full of ungodliness. I know our nature is prone to sin, and we will be in nature while we are here, and it will only be after this life that we can come into the full realization of our hope.

Excuse this letter. It is far too lengthy, but I wanted you to know there are a few who look for your editorials in the SIGNS and try in our weak way to thank God that he has seen fit in our day to give us such contenders for the truth, able men that the world, with all its looseness and modern ideas of the way, cannot change or overthrow. I hope I am one who is traveling home in that way, yet I feel very little, weak and frail.

I meant to tell you brother J. C. Chester is pastor of our church, Soldier Creek, near Benton, Kentucky, of which church I have been a member for seventeen years.

EFFIE BLOGG.

FORDYCE, Ark., Feb. 11, 1930.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am forwarding you my check for the sum of two dollars, for payment of another year's subscription to your very valuable and interesting paper to the household of faith. Some thirty-two years ago I commenced reading the paper, having had my first copy handed me by my step-grandmother, and at which time she said to me, Here are two Old Baptist papers, but the SIGNS is far the best of any paper you can read. I feel that she was correct at that time, and I have continued to read and enjoy the editorials and the good letters of the correspondents up to this day. I hope I may be so blessed of the Lord as to continue to live in that faith. We have had many trials to undergo, and some who were with us and seemed to be of that faith afterward got "tangled up"

with human instrumentalities and are teaching that God requires obedience of us individuals that he might supply his blessings and that if we refuse he will withhold them and many forfeitures of good and rich blessings are the result and we suffer great loss. My experience during the thirty-two years I have been dragging along is that I have been trying to so order my course that I might feel at ease and to approach his mercy-seat, but for some cause, it seems the harder I try to reach that joyful estate the further I seem to get from it, and the weaker and more helpless I seem to grow, until it has become with me a continuous cry, God, be merciful to me, a poor helpless sinner. If it were so that I could live in his lovely presence and feel the glorious joys in my poor heart that I hope I have a few times been made to feel to say, I know that my Redeemer liveth, I surely would never allow those horrid, cold, doubting feelings to approach me again. But I am a poor helpless beggar, and if conditional salvation is the truth, and it is left to me to work it out, I am sure I am forever lost. But I do hope I have learned what the real meaning of salvation is: that it is to have a Friend deliver a poor helpless one. In Jonah's case we find that it was completely wrought out and Jonah was made to say, I will pay that which I have vowed; salvation is of the Lord. Jonah was no conditionalist. I feel all the true and tried heirs of God have had to be taught of the Lord, and the "whale's school" is where we all learn it (suffering and sorrows), and in no place that man can devise or invent can it be learned. When we read the teachings of Holy Writ we are assured of the fact that there is but one God, who is the creator and upholder of all things; that he was before all things, and that by him they all consist; that it is in him we live, move and have our being. Then why, oh why, should poor man, who is without strength, get up in the face of all these truths (and his experience, if he has one) and undertake to teach such "rot" as human merit, or that God acts because of something that man has done, and that he would not have granted us the refreshing showers of his salvation had we not done certain things? To me this is as rank Arminianism as any one could introduce, and it seems all the more glaring when one claiming to be a Primitive Baptist sets forth such stuff, and stuff it is to a poor, helpless, hobbling child of God who has been taught of God that he is a poor, afflicted and helpless person, without even the ability or power to think a good thought, much less to do a good deed, and who feels that if he is a saint he is the least of all.

I will say no more at this time. I just thought I would send my check, but these few thoughts came to my mind, and here they are. Do as as you wish with them. Remeber me (if you can), a poor worm of the dust, believing in salvation alone by, in and through Jesus Christ, who it was that first manifested it to us here by his appearing and giving us an understand-

ing; that it goes on with us here in time to the end and will finally deliver our mortal bodies from the graves in a new body like unto himself, for they that sleep in Jesus will God also bring with him. The great mystery of the same will be known when he shall come for his bride, his body, the church that he has redeemed by his blood, and when he comes we shall be changed into the incorruptible and shall ever be with the Lord.

Yours in bonds and afflictions,

V. R. HARRIS.

COLUMBUS, Ga., March 8, 1931.

DEAR EDITORS:—Once more it is time to renew my subscription to our dear family paper. I wonder why I love it so and keep taking it, for surely I am as one dead and my bones are dry. Oh what grace the dear writers are filled with, while it seems impossible for me to write one word of comfort to God's dear ones. "Amazing grace." I sometimes doubt and fear that grace has ever been made known to this sinful heart of mine. I often fear I have been deceived and am deceiving the precious saints, yet if I love at all I love the brethren and sisters; their company is delightful. I love to go and hear the preached word. Many times in my life it seemed when under the sweet preaching of God's humble servants that I have been lifted up, as I hope, from the valley and my mind taken away from the perishable things and placed on Jesus. But, dear ones, as fleeting as my little star of hope is it is my all in all. It is my prop and stay while struggling here below, and, as much as I am made to doubt, I would not give this little hope that dwells in my aching heart for all things else here. Precious readers, I know if Jesus ever did manifest himself to me, it was indeed amazing to my burdened soul. If the Lord ever has found me, it is wonderful love and grace indeed, for I was lost in sin, my feet in the mire of pollution, and yet I am the chief of sinners, begging the Lord day and night to have mercy. I truly believe there is nothing takes place in this world by chance, and believe every step I have trod along life's pathway was all planned before I came into this world. Yea, it is a comforting doctrine to know that no matter whatsoever takes place it is because our heavenly Father wills it so; because he doeth all things well. All for our good, though at times we do not understand. I know that all things work together for good to those who love the Lord, to them that are called according to his purpose. No man by searching can find out God, and it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. He brings us by a way we know not; he makes crooked things straight; he makes us willing in the day of his power. No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him. We have not chosen him, but he hath chosen us. What a blessing our Savior knew the frailty of our frame, and that like a father he pittieth us, and that he is at all times making intercession for his children with groanings that cannot be uttered. Our wonderful Intercessor,

He loves and he pleads and he prays.

With this I send greetings to all the household of faith. May God's richest blessings rest on the editors and correspondents of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

I am, I hope, your sister in bonds of fellowship,

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

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CLIFTON SPRINGS, N. Y., Aug. 16, 1931.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—You will note I am here in the Clifton Springs Sanitarium. I came here last Thursday. I have not been well for a long time; almost a year continually going back. However, these people think they can do me some good. I hope they can. They are making a very rigid examination.

I have thought many times about your letter. You said the Lord must have put it in my mind to write you, as my letter came just when you needed it. It has always been hard for me to understand how a good preacher like you, with such a wonderful understanding of the Scriptures, could get so low down that a word from me could help you in any way. I have often felt that if I had the understanding you and others have I would not be down in the valley so much of the time but would be able to see things in the Scriptures that would lift me up, revive my hope, causing me to walk on a higher plane, and yet I know all the distinguished writers of the Bible had their lean times and felt their need of help. They were not always on the mountain praising the Lord, but were often found down in the valley, like Habakkuk when he said, O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years. He had a desire to see again the manifestation of God's power, his love and mercy, and that is the way with you and me, when we are down we want to see again some of the wonderful things we once saw. We want the manifestation of that mighty power that lifts a poor sinner up out of the slums of darkness, causing him to see and understand some of the wonderful works of God. God's people are like a calf in the stall, they must wait for their food. I often think how well the words of Malachi describe the travels of a poor sinner, one who is always destitute of the Spirit except when the Lord feeds him. It drops down as the rain and distils as the dew. No one can hasten it or stop it. It comes at the appointed time, just when it is most needed, and is always a surprise to the one receiving it. This food never comes to one when he is expecting it because of any goodness in himself, for when there is any goodness left in a person he is not entirely destitute. Manna comes to the meek and lowly in heart, to the poor and needy, those who are down and cannot lift themselves up. The whole need not a physician, but they who are sick. Yes, sick of sin, feeling and realizing they are sinners, condemned before a just and holy God. One who has seen the light remembers the wormwood and the gall, therefore he has hope. His travels through the wilderness and desert, the byways and hedges, even in the prison-house down

in the dungeon, and then for the Sun of righteousness to arise with healing in his wings, is as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast. This anchor holds you fast; it will not let you go. At times it seems very weak, only a thread to hold on, but at the most discouraging moment, when all is dark, the light of divine grace shines through the clouds and fresh food right from the throne of glory is given to the poor sinner in the stall. How glorious and refreshing! It builds him up in his most holy faith and he again basks in the sunshine of God's love and mercy, and, like David, is made to exclaim, The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. As he travels on the great highway of life he finds many low places; only now and then he gets on a hill or a high elevation. I always seem to be down in the valley. I have great fellowship for those traveling the same road. They speak the same language. It comes home with power, "for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith." Salvation by grace, and grace alone, is the only theme, the only kind that reaches a poor sinner in the dugeon of hell and leads him out into the light and liberty where the Sun of righteousness shines forth in all his glory. The Son of God has power to make the wilderness a pool of water and the dry land springs of water. His words they are spirit and they are life. He speaks to the dead and they hear his voice. I love to think of that mighty power that said, Let there be light. I love to think of that God who leads the blind by a way they knew not and into paths they have not known.

Your brother in hope,

C. V. HILL.

HOPEWELL, N. J., June 4, 1930.

DEAR EDITORS AND FRIENDS:—Inclosed find check for five dollars, two dollars for one year's subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and three dollars for the poor fund.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear;
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

At the name of Jesus every knee must bow, every tongue confess, no weapon formed against thee shall prosper; every tongue that confesses against thee shall be condemned. The Lord thy God is mighty and will save his people from their sins. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and love, and a sound mind. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.

"Oft it causes anxious thought,
Am I his, or am I not?"

Faith, hope and charity, of these three charity is the greatest. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling

cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." "Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up." Charity is love.

"Love is the golden chain that binds
Our hearts in christian love,
And he's an heir of heaven who finds
His bosom glow with love."

If God be for us who can be against us? Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifested in the flesh, justified of the Spirit, seen of angels, raised from the dead, carried up in glory; he will not give his glory to another. Who knoweth the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counsellor? The wonderful counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Be still, and know that I am God, and that there is no other. In Him we live and move and have our being. We are told to be instant in season and out of season, to be kindly affectionate one to another, live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world, esteeming others better than ourselves. Lo, I will be with you always, even unto the end of the world. We sorrow not as those who have no hope. Sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; having nothing, yet possessing all things; as dying, yet, behold, we live. It has been my greatest blessing to meet with the brethren for nearly sixty years. I am now in the ninety-eighth year of my life. When my time comes to depart can I say with Paul, I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, I am now ready to be offered, for there is a crown of righteousness laid up for me which the righteous Judge will give me at the last day?

My daughter, Mrs. J. B. Hill, incloses a check for two dollars for the benefit of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Your unworthy brother,

D. L. BLACKWELL.

FERNDALE, Wash., June 1, 1931.

DEAR EDITORS AND FRIENDS:—Friends of the Most High God and his Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. You know in one place Jesus says, "I call you friends," and I feel that this friendship is the same with us to-day as it was with Jesus when he spoke those endearing words to those at that time, which reaches even to us, for he and his words are unchangeable and reach to eternity, for he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, knowing the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Having such a God as this to rule us, and the world in general, how can any one claim that some things are brought about by chance or by nature? Perish the thought. There is no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained (or ordered) and immovably fixed so they shall do his will. He formed all things for his glory, and for his glory they were and are created, past, present and future. This being a fact, the time now present is only unfolding his unchangeable decrees which were prophesied by his prophets. He

has said he would never leave himself without a witness, and to that end I am writing this; not to exalt myself (for I am but dust and ashes), but to testify of his majesty and unlimited power. I often wonder why I am spared while others who are better and more needed, people who are doing more good in the world than I am, are taken, but I ascribe it to the wisdom and purpose of God, for I am sure he is too wise to err, and he doeth all things well, because they are according to his purpose, and every one of his purposes shall stand and he will do all his pleasure. This being so, the perilous times that are now upon us are only what was foretold by the prophet, that perilous times would come, when men would be lovers of self, lovers of pleasure, etc., and this is surely that time, for it has all the earmarks. But how long, O Lord, how long will this last? Let us try to wait patiently, knowing that our God never slumbers nor sleeps, but is ever watchful, and his thoughts towards us are for good and not for evil, so wait and hope. I thank God for his raising up and maintaining such able editors for the SIGNS. It is another proof that he will not leave himself without true witnesses. I heartily indorse Elder G. E. Coulbourne's letter in the May number: "My kingdom is not of this world." We are looking for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness and the former things will not be remembered. This being a fact, how can any place on this old earth be His kingdom? I believe this is one of the hidden things which belong to God, and is not one of the revealed things which belong to us. We walk by faith, not by sight, in regard to some things, and I think this is one of the things hidden from us, but wherever Jesus is, or will be, will be heaven for me, and I do care to pry between the folded leaves, but I trust the God we adore for his great love wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sin, for he has raised us up and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ; praise him.

I can speak of many more precious letters that gave me comfort and caused the tears of gladness to flow. The letter from our dear departed brother, Elder Lemuel Hardy, to his wife sets forth the consummation of our hope. When we awake in his likeness and see him as he is, and ourselves without sin, it will be sweet indeed, and our light afflictions while here are not to be compared to that glory that shall be revealed in us, for these trials and afflictions will all be forgotten, never to be remembered any more; all will be joy.

The letter to Elder Dodson from his father was so good, and to know that a father could write to his son those precious truths which give us so much comfort is joy without measure, and the editorials, too, the one by Elder Lefferts on the resurrection is plain and full of the power of God and the love of both Father and Son, and it makes me feel small indeed. Also, the one on the rest that remains to the children of God, which rest I hope I have sometimes felt was mine; it is my hope

and is as an anchor to my soul, both sure and steadfast, and reaches to that within the veil.

Your brother in hope,

DAVIS BURCH.

DUTTON, Ontario, May 24, 1931.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—As I am alone this day, my mind has been filled to overflowing with the presence of God, and as I walked out in the garden I groaned in my weakness, and said, "O Lord, let us pray for mercy," and what is it that makes us to groan within us but the Spirit of God, which goes up as a sweet smelling savor unto the Lord? I was just thinking how I have been led, how I love the doctrine of God our Savior. Having always been with and brought up with the Old School Baptists, and not being able to tell of a time when I did not love the people and the church, at times it gives me some concern for fear I know nothing of these things. Having lost my dear husband, and also my sister, and though it was had to part with them, I was made to say, "He doeth all things well." Oh how he prepares his people for such trials. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power. Yes, in life or in death, when he commands they must and will obey. Oh who can withstand God, who maketh the cloud his chariot? and we poor mortals are made to bow in humble submission and we do rejoice to know he is God and blessed forever, and my desire is to know more and more of him unto the perfect day. The day when he shall come to make up his jewels, and we shall be like him. Oh the glorious doctrine, it is the one prop that keeps us up. Take predestination or election away and all our hopes fall, for it is said, Not one of the stakes shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.

I was thinking the other day about love. You know the Lord's people fear God, but as we lie trembling for fear of him, and the word comes with power and much assurance, "It is I, be not afraid," immediately all fear passes away, and love takes its place. How willingly we can go to the church and tell them what the Lord has done for us, for perfect love casteth out fear, making us to walk in his footsteps. Oh who can fathom his love, which is deeper than earth and higher than heaven?

We have had two more trembling ones come to us, telling the way they had been led; but not one can come before the set time, for it is said, The time to favor Zion, yea, the set time, is come. We aged members do rejoice to see them gathered into the fold, with believers enrolled, with believers to live and to die.

I had not thought of writing so much, but feel to leave it with you. If there is anything worth while use it, if not, all is well. We can deceive the church, but we cannot deceive the Lord.

I will close. May you be sustained and kept by his lovingkindness, is my prayer.

(MRS.) REGINA CAMPBELL.

RANDOLPH, Maine, Nov. 12, 1930.

MY DEAR SISTER EMMA:—We were glad to hear from you and yours. I will say I am much better of my bronchial trouble.

You ask for my views upon John xii. 24, 25. It seems to me that, as you have been thinking of the subject, you are the one to write upon it. However, I hope I am willing to do anything within the bounds of my limited ability for the comfort of the household of faith of our blessed Lord. If, by his grace, I have ever been enabled to say or write anything to that end, all praise is due to him who never leaves nor forsakes his people.

The above mentioned text reads as follows: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal." While the corn of wheat remains in the bin wherein it is stored with thousands of like kernels it is lifeless, although there is a grain of life within, but when the wheat is taken from the storage bin and buried in the ground, then that grain of life is manifested. Little rootlets appear, and later the blade. But in the development of the plant the present kernel or grain has disappeared. And so Jesus has likened the natural life of a subject of God's grace unto the corn of wheat. "But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." As the husbandman has complete control over the wheat he puts into the storage bin, and later takes out and plants in the ground, so the subjects of God's grace have no part in the new birth into Christ's kingdom. They are translated into a spiritual kingdom. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." They are in the world, but not of the world. As Christ and his kingdom increase in their view, so do they and worldly attactions decrease.

"He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal." The "heirs of promise" know by bitter experience that the old Adamic nature in them is not dead, but very much alive. Paul tells us, "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."—Rom. vii. 21-23. So we see that while we have no active part in our transmission from nature to grace, yet God holds us strictly accountable for our acts and deportment here on the shores of time. "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."—Rom. viii. 13. "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteous-

ness unto God."—Rom. vi. 12, 13. Here, then, is the pathway marked out for the followers of Jesus to walk in, and just in proportion as they by the grace of God are enabled to walk therein will the fruit of the Spirit of truth be manifest. It seems to me that verse twenty-five mentions the two classes of people living in the world, viz., believers and unbelievers. The natural man loves the world and all that that implies. He has no love or desire for anything more than the world can offer, and he would be as utterly miserable and alone if he were compelled to remain within the realm of Christ's kingdom as would a follower of Jesus were he compelled to associate altogether with the base and beggarly elements of this world. The natural life and the spiritual life will not mix any more than will oil and water. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Unworthily your brother,

J. E. HUBBARD.

(*See obituary on page 236.*)

EUREKA, Kans., Aug. 19, 1931.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is time for this old sinner to renew his subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for another year. I love to read the SIGNS, for it is almost the same as being at a Predestinarian Baptist meeting and hearing the glorious gospel of the Son of God. I have not been away from home to hear preaching or to try to preach since last March, for there is no church within fifty or sixty miles of here. Tell the dear brethren I appreciate the kind interest they have shown me in the past, and ask to be remembered in their prayers to the eternal God. Just a few more years and we, too, shall be numbered with the dead, and were it not for the hope we have of being like him we would be most miserable because of sin that dwells in the flesh.

I would like to send you more names to help the SIGNS, but cannot. I was very sick last winter and my expenses were quite large, and I am getting old and not as able to work as I used to be. I am not worthy to have the dear old SIGNS sent to me, but how can I do without it? God bless you all and keep you to the end.

Inclosed find four dollars.

Goodbye.

C. A. HUNT.

ELBERT, Texas, Nov. 22, 1929.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending in my renewal for the SIGNS and I wish it were possible for me to send you a number of new subscribers, but the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS is not popular. I think the time is now here when they will not endure sound doctrine, and I think the doctrine the SIGNS advocates is Bible doctrine, and I shall take it as long as I am able.

Your brother, I hope, through grace,

JOHN KIRKPATRICK.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1931.

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JOB XL. 4.

"BEHOLD, I am vile: what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth."

This portion of the sacred volume was uttered as the Spirit gave Job understanding of God and godliness, which caused him to know himself as a man, by which he beheld his vileness. The matter before us we feel to speak experimentally, as we believe Job expressed himself. We behold perfection in God, and corruption in the flesh, by which we can say with Job, "Behold, I am vile." We do not say this according to the teachings and wisdom of men, but by the power and wisdom of almighty God. We believe Job was a servant of God and one that worked righteousness and eschewed evil. The relation that we have with the above text is that we see in ourselves everything that could have been in Job. In considering Job as the Scriptures give it to us, his afflictions were putrefying sores. So he could not even claim to be clean from the dirt of the ground. Much to our discredit for purity we may wash and say we are clean and in a short time our garments begin to be polluted and unclean from the body in the garment. We now come to the vileness in our nature, as we know we were created from the dust of the ground, and according to God's purpose we continued tearing down and building up of our mortal bodies, cast off waste matter through the skin, but we do not think Job was referring to these things. We do not feel he was comparing the Spirit with the flesh, and he saw the same that Paul said: In me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing. "What shall I answer thee?" As we realize the wisdom and power of God and his perfection what could a vile thing answer God in justification of his vileness? We must confess Job expressed our feelings and experience when he said, "I will lay mine hand upon my mouth." We feel to confess that we are vile, polluted creatures by reason of sin, and we know we cannot answer God relative to our justly condemned condition. So we confess our sins to God and plead his mercy. We have no preeminence over any mortal creature by nature, but there is a relation of God that declares the generation of Jesus Christ and of the elect of God in Christ Jesus. All such have spiritual under-

standing which is only by the Spirit of God, so they are given to know of the righteousness of God that is revealed by faith, and they cannot speak the things pertaining to the kingdom of God and his righteousness. The righteousness of the kingdom of God is not manifested by the mere act of the creature, but the creature must be constrained to do these things by the Spirit of God, which makes them righteousness. The righteousness of the saints is represented as clean white linen, and when one thus clothed begins to do work of the flesh for salvation, the whole garment is polluted. Hence they are not fit to associate in the fellowship of the church of God. We do not feel that Job when thus humbled ever claimed to be anything but vile or present acts of the mortal creature to merit esteem and favor with God, but the Spirit of God works in him both to will and to do according to His good pleasure that Job should work out the salvation which God had given him with fear and trembling. The salvation that is worked out by the child of God is but the manifestation of the going forth of the child of God as he works in him by which he believes on him whom God has sent. All Bible characters express themselves in the line of Job's experience and all others of like precious faith. And when we see ourselves as Job saw himself we are brought low and are made to cry unto the Lord, which was expressed by the angel to Ananias relative to Paul, and said, Behold, he prayeth. All such characters confess the wisdom and power of God and are made to contend for the words of truth, that he works his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth and none can stay his hand. Paul said, By the grace of God I am what I am, and he was persuaded that neither height. nor depth, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, should be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. The sunshine of his .presence causes one to behold him in light and sing praises unto him, and the beauty and glory of his kingdom is beyond description. When we have such exercises, and the Scriptures bearing record of the dealings of the people of God, which is manifested by the Spirit, hope springs up, hence the answer of the soul pure and steadfast, and in the midst of all our vileness and pollution by reason of sin, this new creature lives and is led in paths of righteousness for His name's sake. The flesh is brought in subjection and made to serve Him. We hear from the word of God that he heareth the cry of the destitute, and when one is brought into this destitute condition he hears the cry, because his Son has made intercession in his heart with groanings that cannot be uttered and inclines unto them. When we hear expressions among our brethren as to what they did which worked such wonderful results, it sounds as though they had strength and wisdom to design and work righteousness, and also to limit the power and predetermined will of almighty God. His word declares that he declared from ancient times the

things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. (Isaiah xlvi. 10.) The prophet continues to write: "Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it. Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness: I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry; and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory."—Isaiah xlvi. 11-13. We love to hear the lamentations of men and women over their depravity and expressing the same words as the poor publican: God, be merciful to me, a poor sinner. The poet Newton gives us a hymn which we will quote as expressing the experience and relation of the above text:

"Great God, from thee there's naught concealed,
Thou seest my inmost frame;
To thee I always stand revealed,
Exactly as I am.

Since I can hardly therefore bear
What in myself I see,
How vile and black must I appear,
Most holy God, to thee.

But since my Savior stands between,
In garments dyed in blood;
'Tis he, instead of me, is seen
When I approach to God.

Thus, though a sinner, I am safe,
He pleads before the throne,
His life and death in my behalf,
And calls my sins his own.

What wondrous love, what mystery,
In this appointment shine;
My breaches of the law are his,
And his obedience mine."

(Beebe's Collection, hymn 305; Lester & Durand Book, page 43.)

C. W. V.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder R. Lester Dodson, August 2nd, 1931, at the Ebenezer Primitive Baptist meeting-place, in New York city, Mr. Bernhard von Lohmuller and Miss Wilma G. Mills, both of New York city.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

JAMES ELMER HUBBARD, deacon of the Old School Baptist Church at Whitefield, Maine, died at the Gardiner General Hospital February 7th, 1931, of embolus of the coronary artery of the heart, due to hardening of the arteries, and valvular disease of the heart. He was born at East Dixfield, Maine, June 17th, 1861, the son of James and Martha (Townsend) Hubbard. After the death of his father, at the Battle of the Wilderness, May 8th, 1864, mother sold her farm and bought a place at North Jay, Maine, near Wilton village, where brother James grew to manhood, always loved and respected by all who knew him. As a boy he attended the village church, and being socially inclined and a lover of music, he later became one of the choir singers. Though having due respect for his mother's religion (Old School Baptist) he felt he would not care to become one of them, as their doctrine was so unpopular; but our God, who moves in a mysterious way, saw fit to lead his mind into the truth. He did not intend that any one should know of his changed condition, but went with his mother to brother Azel Macumber's, where Elder Hiram Campbell was to hold preaching service, and having seated himself back of the others he listened to a sermon the text being, "Who hath believed our report," &c. After the Elder ceased speaking dear old sister Macumber turned to him and said, "Jimmie, do you believe that report?" He said he had to confess or lie, and that was something our brother could not do. He was received for baptism by the church at Woburn, Mass., November 6th, 1892, and later was baptized by Elder Hiram Campbell at Bowdoinham, Maine, uniting by letter with the Old School Baptist Church at Whitefield, Maine, November 21st, 1896, and was chosen as Deacon May 22nd, 1897. On June 19th, 1888, he married my double cousin, Miss Jennie C. Moody, of East Pittston, Maine. No children were born to this union and they led a life of devotion to each other until death parted them on November 21st, 1928, after which our brother sold his home at Winthrop, Maine, reserving some of his furnishings which he moved here, where we gave him a room, and he was much pleased to have it so, though he spent only a small part of his time with us. My health not being good, he was stopping at the Y. M. C. A., at Auburn, Maine, where he grew so sick he was obliged to go to the hopital on June 13th, making his stay there only twenty-five days until death released him. Brother Hubbard was a generous,

sympathetic man, but never told of his good deeds. As long as his wife lived it was their delight to entertain the brethren, and none loved the cause more deeply than they. A good man has gone. Slow to think evil of any one, but when once convinced of treachery or deceit he at once took his stand for the right, and thus stood, regardless of all scornful accusations. His life was as near perfect as any I have ever known; but he would have none of that. Once when speaking to him about it he said, "You do not know my temptations." If there were any, they were certainly kept well in check, as he not only shunned evil, but the appearance also. He bore his loneliness and all dispensations of Providence in a quiet manner. Being very deaf, he spent much time in reading; was a great Bible reader, as his well-worn Bible bears mute testimony.

In accordance with his request, Elder R. Lester Dodson was called to attend the funeral, and after the reading of a hymn, he spoke from the fifteenth chapter of Revelation. The deceased left many cousins, besides many friends to mourn his passing. His body was entombed, on account of deep snow, at Randolph, Maine, to be taken later to Whitefield, there to rest by the side of her who was so dear to him in life.

One thing I forgot to mention: On my first visit to the hospital to see brother James, though very sick, he said, "I am perfectly reconciled, and I want all my friends to be," and that spirit prevailed throughout his stay there. On one visit I asked in regard to his spiritual comfort, and he said, "I have been thinking about that," and said he had not seemed to have much thought, or words to that effect.

NELLIE M. PALMER.

MRS. NANCY EUPHRATES MALCOM ADAMS, our sister in Christ, widow of Elder James M. Adams, of Monroe, Georgia, departed this life at her home August 20th, 1931. Elder Adams died March 28th of this year, and his wife had been a partial invalid long before that. At the last, she was very ill about a week before death released her at the call of her Lord. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George W. Malcom, both deceased. She is survived by two brothers and three sisters, as follows: G. W. Malcom, of Statcham, Ga., F. M. Malcom, of Good Hope, Ga., Mrs. W. B. Hurst, of Mansfield, Ga., Mrs. G. C. Malcom, of Monroe, Ga., and Mrs. W. H. Almand, of Good Hope, Ga. For the names of the surviving children, I refer our readers to the May number of the SIGNS, in which appears the notice of Elder Adam's death, not necessary to repeat them here at this writing. She was baptized by the late Elder F. M. McElroy, together with her husband, April 12th, 1873, into the Jack's Creek Church, Walton County, Georgia, but at the time of her death her membership was with the Monroe Church, which was organized in 1901, herself being one of the constituent members. She and Elder Adams lived together over sixty-one years and saw all sides of life together. They knew what it had been to have very little of this world's goods to get along with, then latterly they were blessed with sufficient substance not to have to be anxious for each day's welfare. It pleased the Lord for them not to be separated by death but only a few months. This would have been the desire of each of them, and it was so. As to the estimate of her personality by those who knew her I quote the following from the WALTON TRIBUNE: "Despite her advanced age and increasing infirmities, she remained happy and hopeful until the end. Long a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, she was a devout christian, a devoted wife, a loving and affectionate mother and a woman who exemplified the noblest and best traits of her sex." She was 77 years of age.

Funeral services were conducted at the home by Elder Henry Nash, of Atlanta, Ga. Ministers James A. Clark, of the Missionary Baptist Church, and P. E. Lester, of the Presbyterian Church, a grandson-in-law, made fitting and comforting remarks. Interment by the side of her husband in the Adams' burying-ground. May the Lord be praised for having given us such noble examples of his workmanship.

ALSO,

ILEY ROLLA MELLOTT, son of brother Rolla Ellis Mellott and Ruth Frances Hiett Mellott, was born December 23rd, 1929, and died August 13th, 1931, being aged 1 year, 7 months and 20 days. He was sick but four days and suffered great pain in that time. Besides his parents, there survives one brother, Horace Luther, and one step-sister, Mildred Ruth. He was buried in the cemetery at Sidling Hill, Fulton County, Pennsylvania. He was a very affectionate child and like a ray of sunshine. We can say that he has gone from the evil to come. In his brief span of life, he filled out his days as the Lord intended. The purpose for which the Lord gave him was accomplished, so the Lord took him. May the dear parents be given to feel that their child was from the Lord to them, and that the Lord has taken but his own. "Blessed be the name of the Lord."

H. H. L.

CELIA A. REEDER, our beloved sister in the Lord, wife of Elder Nathan Reeder, departed this life July 27th, 1931, at her home, near Caney, Kansas, in which community they had lived the last fifty years. She was the daughter of John and Elizabeth Karnes. She was born December 13th, 1844, and was married to Nathan Reeder in the year 1865. In the same year she and her husband joined the Bethleman Primitive Baptist Church, being baptized by Elder Joel Hume, of Owensville, Indiana. She remained a devoted member until her death and was always interested in the welfare of the church. Her funeral, which was largely attended, was held at the home, with

Elder Moxley in charge, who used as his text Isaiah lxiv. 6. Had she lived until August 22nd they would have been married sixty-six years. Truly a mother in Israel has gone home to eternal rest and peace. Elder Reeder has for many years been a pastor of the church, and both have always given unstintingly of their efforts to help others and have been loved by both old and young for their fine christian qualities. Sister Reeder was in ill health the greater part of her life. The last three years of her life she was unable to walk without assistance. She bore her afflictions with great fortitude, and lived her life uncomplainingly. Only one child lived to womanhood, Mattie, who was married to W. R. Bright. She passed away in 1904. Sister Reeder leaves to mourn, her aged and lonely husband, four grandsons, one granddaughter, several great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild. We have a blessed assurance she has entered into that rest that remains for the people of God. She endured to the end true to the faith which the Lord had revealed to her. Many happy hours did she, Elder Reeder, my late husband (Elder T. R. Pittman) and myself spend together in spiritual conversation. She has left every burden on this side of the grave. She was tenderly laid to rest in the family burying plot.

Written by request.

(MRS.) MARY E. PITTMAN.

A. D. BOURLAND, the subject of this notice, was born in Calhoun County, Alabama, March 11th, 1862, and died April 13, 1931, aged 69 years, 1 month and 2 days. He moved to Texas with his father, Elder A. D. Bourland, Sr., and grew to manhood near Fort Worth, Texas. He was married to Miss Alice Keller December 11th, 1883, and to that union one son was born. His wife dying in December, 1885, in May, 1877, he married Miss Cal Dona Fowler, and to this union were born nine children, seven of whom, with their mother, survive. Brother Bourland offered himself for membership to Dawson Valley Old School Baptist Church, four miles east of Vernon, Texas, on Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1922, after he had related a good experience and hope through grace and was received after baptism by the unworthy writer into full membership of the church. Deceased was especially noted for his steadfastness in the doctrine of God our Savior. He was very hospitable and charitable, and his doors were ever open to his brethren and those in distress. The late Elders Asa Howard and Lee Staggs often resorted thither to enjoy his friendly roof and bountiful table, where they, with many other brethren, have been kindly cared for by him and his worthy companion, who was baptized into the fellowship of Denton Creek Church, in Tarrant County, Texas, in 1893, by the late Elder A. D. Bourland, father of the deceased. His companion and children have sustained an irreparable loss, the community has lost a good citizen, but we mourn not as those who have no hope. As was with Job, so also was his hope: That he should live again, not as natural, but spiritual. Often while suffering from shortness of breath, caused by dropsical condition of the heart, he would say, It will not be long; also would say, If it be God's will, I am ready to go. Brother Bourland never accumulated much of this world's goods, just a good comfortable living, but enjoyed what he worked for with his family and friends. Truly he is missed by his family, the church and community; all have lost a friend and father in Israel. We feel he has been called home to his reward. He has finished his course, fought a good fight, kept the faith, henceforth a crown of righteousness is laid up for him, and not for him only, but for all who love the appearing of our King.

Funeral services were held at the home of his daughter, sister Ruth Smith, conducted by Elders Lee Skinner and J. A. Rutledge, after which his body was laid to rest in Eastview Cemetery, near Vernon, Texas, to await the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we hope he, together with all the redeemed of God, shall be resurrected, changed and be made like unto Christ's glorious body and praise God's holy name for ever and ever.

A brother in the flesh and in hope,

W. S. BOURLAND.

AGAIN it falls to my lot to write of the passing from earthly scenes of another sister of our little band, the Middleburg Church. Sister **ALICE WOOD** was born April 13th, 1853, the eldest daughter of brother Martin Cooper and sister Cooper, his wife. She was married to Orville B. Wood December 28th, 1871, by Elder I. B. Whitcomb, and to their union were born a son, Elmer Wood, of Middleburg, N. Y., and a daughter, Mrs. Helen Rust, of Rensselaer, N. Y. Sister Alice suffered a stroke of paralysis in September, 1928, from which she never recovered and never left her room, but rallied enough to be able to sit in her chair. Her mind was clear and she could converse with her family and friends. Through it all she was faithfully and lovingly cared for by her sister, Helen Zeh (with other helpers), and she (Helen) told me that through all the months and years of her suffering she had never once murmured or complained, but was always cheerful and submissive to the will of God. Her sufferings and trials ended June 6th, 1931, when God called, Child, come home. She united with the Middleburg Old School Baptist Church, and was baptized October 22nd, 1876, by Elder I. B. Whitcomb, then pastor of the church, and remained firm in the doctrine and faith of salvation by grace and grace alone. She leaves to mourn their loss her aged husband, with whom she had lived nearly sixty years, the two children above mentioned, four grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, two sisters, Mrs. Helen Zeh and Mrs. Fannie Smith,

both members with her in the church, the church and many friends, who miss her much, but feel that our loss is great gain to her.

Funeral services were conducted at the late home, in Middleburg, N. Y., June 9th, Elder Arnold H. Bellows officiating, who spoke words of comfort to the bereaved family and friends, after which her body was laid to rest in the Middleburg Cemetery.

Written by request.

(MRS.) ADDIE LIVINGSTON.

Miss JENNIE BLACK died May 14th, 1931, at her late home, in Melbourne, Ontario, after an illness lasting about nine years. She was the daughter of Donald and Mary (Keith) Black, and was born in Ekfrid, where she always resided until nine years ago, when she came to Melbourne to live with her sister Annie, and her brother-in-law, Mr. Mair, in whose home she died. Several of the family passed away before her, and so of what was once a large family there are but two left to mourn their loss: Miss Annie, at Melbourne, and her brother Alec, at Ekfrid. Miss Jennie was not a member of the church, but we believe her name is in the Lamb's book of life. She loved the truth, and had no fellowship with the works of darkness. When well enough she would read a great deal, and the Bible, hymn book and the SIGNS were her best books, and when able, her delight was to be in the assembly of the saints. Her devoted sister, Annie, did all she could to help her to bear her suffering, which she endured with patience. She is greatly missed by her sister and brother, but she is at rest.

The writer was called to officiate at the funeral, which was held at her late home, and the interment was in the Longwood Cemetery.

G. R.

MRS. HENRIETTA VARENA DICKSON, aged 70 years, died at her home, 1000 Summer Street, North Chattanooga, Tennessee, on Thursday, August 27th, 1931, at 5:45 a. m. She became a member of the Primitive Baptist Church in Texas many years ago. Her father, Elder Williams, was a Primitive Baptist preacher. Surviving are her children, three daughters, Mrs. Floyd D. Smith, Miss Grover O. Dickson, Mrs. Nadie D. Napier, one son, C. L. Dickson, and one grandson, C. L. Dickson, Jr.

The funeral was held from the residence, with Elder R. W. Selman, pastor of the Northside Baptist Church officiating, and was attended by a large gathering of relatives and friends, and her body was laid to rest in Chattanooga Memorial Park in a bed of beautiful flowers.

Her daughter,

(MRS.) G. ED. NAPIER.

MEETINGS.

The ninetieth annual session of The Original Mount Zion Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will be held with the Little Blue and Sni-a-bar Church, at Grain Valley, Missouri, October 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1931, beginning at 10:30 a. m. Grain Valley is situated on the Chicago and Alton Railroad, and on the U. S. Highway, No. 40. We invite all sound orderly Baptists who believe in a Sovereign who rules ALL things.

(MRS.) J. W. TAYLOR.

PLEASANT HILL, Missouri.

There will be an all-day meeting in the New Vernon meetinghouse October 12th, 1931, (Columbus Day). We would be glad to see a goodly number at this meeting.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 14th, 15th, and 16th, 1931. Those coming by train will be met at Herndon, on the line of the Washington & Old Dominion Railway, Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning. These trains leave Rosslyn, at the Virginia end of the Key Bridge, where connection is made by electric car with Union Station, Washington, D. C. For those coming by auto, come direct to the meetinghouse either on Tuesday or Wednesday and arrangements will be made to care for them. The meetinghouse is located on good road, three miles from Herndon, Va., and also three miles from the Lee-Jackson Highway eastward from Chantilly. We cordially invite brethren of our faith and order, all lovers of the truth, and especially ministers of our correspondence, to be present with us.

G. C. SPINDLE, Church Clerk.

The regular appointed yearly meeting of Welsh Tract Church will be held in the meetinghouse, near Newark, Delaware, Sunday, October 18th, 1931, (one day only) services beginning at 10 o'clock a. m. Ministering brethren, members and friends attending the Virginia Corresponding Meeting the week preceding are especially invited to be with us. Both large Trunk lines and Bus lines are available from all directions.

JOHN B. MILLER, Church Clerk.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Nassaongo Church October 21st, 22nd and 23rd, 1931. Trains leaving Philadelphia at 10:05 a. m. and 2:55 p. m., Tuesday before the meeting, will be met at Salisbury, Md., and friends cared for. Train leaving Cape Charles, Va., at 12:10 p. m. will be met also at Salisbury on Tuesday before the meeting. Those coming by way of Caliborn, either by bus or private automobile, will call telephone number 370 M on ar-

rival in Salisbury. A cordial invitation is extended to those of our faith and order, including friends. We hope our ministers will plan to be with us.

EFFIE F. GIVAN, Church Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fourth Sunday in October (25th), instead of the fifth Sunday in November. All are welcome. E. M. FORD.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E B. AULT, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every first and third Sunday at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, at 1 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

We have kept up a monthly meeting for some time in the past, and hope, by the grace of God, to be favored to continue to meet every second Sunday in each month at 3617 Veteran Avenue, Palms Station, near Culver City, California. May this bear a cordial invitation to all who believe in grace and salvation by grace to meet with us on the stated time.

MR. and MRS. W. J. BERRY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

INFANT SALVATION.

We have been accused by the enemies of truth of preaching infant damnation, or of preaching infants in hell not a span long. We people, known as the Old School or Primitive Baptists, do believe and preach that both infant and adult are saved by grace, and both infant and adult are sinners. This was the mission of Jesus into this world, to save sinners. His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. Our enemies say that infants are not sinners until they pass a certain age. If they are not sinners they have no Savior until they reach a certain age and cross the line of accountability, as is claimed by them, then what about the thousands of infants that die before reaching the age for crossing the line of accountability? Is it not a fact that they would be without a Savior if such a theory be true as is advocated by the Arminian world? If the infants were not sinners they would never die. It is sin that kills. There is but one way from earth to heaven, and Jesus says, I am the way, the truth and the life. The infant and adult alike will praise Jesus for their redemption alone through his atoning blood that he shed for them on Calvary's rugged cross. The enemies of truth claim that children from their natural birth to a certain age are fit subjects for heaven, as they are innocent and harmless. Now I fully believe after one is born again, has passed from law to gospel, he is accountable to God for his waywardness after the promptings of the flesh. God never fails to correct his children. The rod of chastisement is applied and the child is corrected, and with Paul he san say, No chastisement seemeth good for the present, but afterwards it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby. By experience I have some knowledge of his chastisement. Often I have bowed my head with shame for some vain or idle word spoken in haste.

"And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." Let us take notice of what he says next: "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein." The total depravity of all creatures, both infants and adults, is taught in this lesson to his disciples. The adult is as helpless as the new-born babe, so there is a special interest by father and mother in caring for and looking after the little ones. John says, Ye are of God little children. It is not always infants that are termed as little children, but adult as well, because of their helplessness, being totally depraved. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." The carnal mind cannot comprehend the mystery of the new birth. "The wind bloweth where it listeth [where it pleaseth], and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." These words were spoken by our Savior to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. We hear David saying, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Again, we hear him saying, "The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies." So it is evidently clear that all of Adam's posterinty are born into this world sinners, and both infants and adults are saved by grace.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

KERNEY, Nebraska.

DEAR BRETHREN:—This morning I have been thinking of some of the commandments that God gave to men. Also of some that expect pay or recompense for their work, so will try to write a short article on the above.

I will speak of Adam first. He was commanded not to partake of the forbidden fruit. Some say he could have not partaken of it, but the fact of God foreknowing that he would partake of it causes me to feel sure that it had to be as it was. Another thing: the Scriptures say plainly that Christ stood as a lamb slain from before the foundation of the world. It was to redeem God's people that Adam's transgression brought sin and death upon them. God foresaw that Adam would bring sin and death upon his people. In foreseeing this he saw that it was necessary to provide a Redeemer to redeem his people. If God had not known whether Adam would transgress or not, why would it be that Christ would stand as a lamb slain from before the foundation of the world? If Adam had not transgressed there would have been no need of a Redeemer. In such a case, God had provided something, or a redeemer, that he would have no use for, for there would have been no one to redeem. Hence, no need of a Redeemer, as sin brings

forth death, and there would have been no death, hence no sinners, all would have been righteous, and hence no need of the Scripture where Christ says, I come not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. If God had not given Adam this commandment, or law, Adam would not have transgressed, as the Scripture says, "Where there is no law, there is no transgression," and if there had been no transgression there would have been no sin, for it is said that sin is a transgression of the law. If no sin, there would have been no death, for when sin is finished it brings forth death, and if no sin there would have been no need of Jesus coming into this world, as there would have been no sins for him to suffer for. It was necessary that God gave Adam that law so he would be accountable for his transgression, and by his breaking of the law there was use for all the provisions that were made of God to carry out all his plans and purposes. I cannot think for one moment that God did not know whether Adam would transgress or not, but as he foresaw that he would transgress, it had to be as it came to pass. If it could have been that Adam did not transgress, what use would there have been for heaven or hell? What use would there have been for Jesus being born of the virgin Mary, and calling his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins? If his name was to be Jesus, and he was to save his people from their sins, God knew there would be sinners to save, so it could not have been otherwise.

In regard to Abraham being commanded to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice on the altar. As with Adam, God knew that neither Adam nor Abraham would live up to the commands, as mentioned before. Adam was to transgress to be accountable, and so God would have use for all of his things that he had prepared for the fulfilling of his purposes. Now as to Abraham: God did this to try Abraham's faith. He did not intend that Isaac's life be taken, or why was the ram caught by the horns in the thicket? This shows plainly that although he had commanded Abraham to offer his son he did not intend him to slay his son. He even went so far as to build the altar, lay him thereon and bind him, and raised the knife to slay him. That was as far as God intended for him to go, so God stayed his hand, and Abraham turned and saw the ram caught by the horns, which was to be used for a sacrifice instead of Isaac. I believe this ram a type of Christ being offered for a sacrifice for his people.

I have mentioned these things here, showing that although God commanded, he knew Isaac would not be sacrificed, and I will say further, that I believe it was beyond Abraham's power to slay him. Some Baptists say that God would not command us to do that which we cannot do, but here is a plain case that Abraham could not kill Isaac. Do you not know that if we could live so we would not break any of the commandments we would soon be taking all the power and glory to ourselves and be robbing God of the glory that belongs to him? Like when

"Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. And the people gave a shout, saying, It is a voice of a god, and not of man," and immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and gave up the ghost. Also, "Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that. But now ye rejoice in your boasting: all such rejoicing is evil." "But which of you, having a servant plowing, or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go, and sit down to meat? And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do." "What hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

Saved by grace, if saved at all,

W. T. JUDY.

WOOSTER, Ohio, Feb. 28, 1931.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending a letter from Elder W. W. Slaughter, of Edgewood, Texas. I have not asked his permission, but know it is all right (excepting his high estimate of me). I need not comment upon his ability or humility, the letter speaks for itself, and so does his walk, preaching and conversation; and his dear wife is also worthy of her husband. They are strong friends of the SIGNS, or were when I lived in Texas, believing the same things as do its editors.

If you publish this, please let me thank all who have written to me since my injury, and to thank you for publishing the notice of my fall. I am so far recovered that I can sit up about all day, and can, slowly, go up and down stairs, but am still weak from the shock, and am thinner.

Yes, Brother Jackson, of Georgia, I am the same Joie E. Woods who used to write, and I remember the letter from Diana, Texas.

To sister Norris: Yes, dear sister, I surely do believe in the infinite sovereignty of God; it is meat and drink to me. I do not see how I could endure

all of my many trials believing anything less. That truth is the foundation of my hope and trust. I am too weak to rejoice in anything less than co-equal, perfect, infinite attributes of Jehovah, having all power over men and devils, and especially over me. What a comfort that he knew all my infirmity when he knew me and loved me before time was. Yes, I trust he told me of his love and power when I was but a child, and it seems that I have more need of his tender mercy and grace now than I did then. The passage, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you," was often impressed with great weight upon my mind. Another passage came also: "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not," and if not deceived, though sorely tried and tempted, even with thoughts of infidelity, that still small voice, that is yet so mighty, still speaks to me at times, reminding me of his love and care, and that all power belongeth unto him, and that his grace is sufficient even for me. Some have said that they never knew one with so many varied trials. God knoweth what I need to purge me, that I may be a monument of mercy. The thing to me sometimes seems to be that I have not suffered more than I have, for, if not deceived, I have often found a present help, for which I hope I have been thankful; but, to my shame be it said, sometimes I fear I have been vainglorious, and you who have so suffered know what follows.

Dear Elder Keene, I had my reply to you in my hand when I fell down stairs. Your letter was a great comfort, and I hope you will write again if you feel so inclined.

I need your prayers.

JOIE WOODS PETERS.

EDGEWOOD, Texas, Feb. 13, 1931.

MRS. JOIE WOODS PETERS—My Dear Sister in the patience and tribulations of the kingdom of our God:—After reading your letter in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and seeing your request that some of the brethren write to you, it is with fear and trembling I make the attempt, knowing my weakness to interest one so highly favored of the dear Lord, yet I feel that I would love to express my sympathy for you in your affliction [a broken hip], as I have had similiar afflictions for four years, with cystitis, and the brethren would write me while I was in the hospital, and often I would weep for joy while suffering severely. I have often thought of you and the kindness I received in your home in Upshur County, Texas, and of hearing you speak so ably of the wonderful works of our God in the salvation of poor sinners, of whom I am chief. It seems that your afflictions are many. We read, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous," those who have the imputed righteousness of our blessed Savior. For it is written, His name shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness, and, Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. Yes, he is made unto us wisdom, righteousness and redemption. David said, It was good for me that I was afflicted; before

I was afflicted I went astray. Afflictions give new life to prayer, lay us low at the feet of Jesus, and keep us there. The poet says,

"Afflictions, though they seem severe,
Are oft in mercy sent;
They stop the prodigal's career,
And cause him to repent."

The old servant Job was afflicted, and bereaved of all he possessed [My experience has been very similiar.—J. W. J.], and his bosom companion said, Curse God and die. Ah! his reply was, You talk like one of the foolish women. Though he slay me, yet will I trust him. My dear sister, the apostle said that these light afflictions here endure only for a moment, and are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us. Yes, the same glory that Jesus prayed to the Father to give him, he had with him before the world began. Yes, poor sinners shall ere long receive an equal portion of that glory with the Son of God, for when this vile body is raised from the dead and fashioned like the glorified body of our blessed Savior, then it will be a manifest heir of God and a joint-heir with Christ. Then it will be adopted into the heavenly family and receive just as much of the glory as Christ, when he shall say to the Father, Here am I and the children thou hast given me. Ah! will I be in that number? If so, it is all of grace, which all the work shall crown. "It lays in heaven the topmost stone, and well deserves the praise." I wish I could see my way as clear as I can yours. I have only a little hope that I am among that number embraced in the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure. You remember Isaiah said he should see of the travail of his soul, see his seed, and be satisfied. I am sure that not one shall perish or be lost, for His blood has bought them, dear they cost. They are precious in the sight of the Father, for they were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ. No, I cannot believe that he would pay a price for an article which did not equal the price. Does God love his people as strongly as he does his Son? Surely he does, for he gave him to die for them. Now, who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long. We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Now, dear sister, I am minded not to send this, as it is so much like the writer, imperfect, but it may be that you can get a little comfort from some of these scattering and disconnected remarks. I ask you to cast the mantle of charity over all mistakes, and pray for me and mine when at the throne of grace. I hope the good Lord will restore you to health, confirm your hope and strengthen your faith as the end

nears, and stand by you in death, that you may realize the truth of the sacred writ, Death has lost its sting.

With love and fellowship to all the household of faith, I am your poor little brother in many sorrows, yet in hope of mercy,

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

STEM, N. C., June 22, 1931.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—Inclosed I am sending you a copy of a letter received from a young brother who recently joined the church, and was baptized on Easter Sunday morning. We appreciated and enjoyed the letter and felt that others would, if it meets with your approval to give it space in the SIGNS.

In regard to our Association, we are still hoping a way may be opened for you to attend and bring some of the good friends with you.

With love from my wife and myself, I am, I hope, your brother in Christ,

J. H. GOOCH.

WINSTON-SALEM, N. C., April 10, 1931.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER GOOCH:—After the service Sunday, and every day since, I have had a mind to write and tell you of my joy, I hope in the Lord, for I have had a season of rejoicing and praising his holy name for his wonderful mercies to me never before experienced. Although more than twenty years have passed since I first was made to feel that Jesus is my Savior, I have felt until a few weeks ago that I was shut up as one in the clefts of the rock and could not come forth. I have often felt that I was in prison, as Paul and Silas, and have prayed and sung praises to God, with a longing for the prison doors to open, that I might come forth and tell others of the goodness and mercy of the Lord to me, a poor sinner. It was in Elder Ashburn's time, when he preached from this text that I felt he was directing his sermon to me, and oh the suffering and longing desire within me that the prison doors might be thrown open to me, that I might go forward and tell the church of my feelings. He used to ask me to visit him in his home, but I felt too unworthy, and feared he would talk to me about the Lord's dealings with me, for I felt he knew about them, and I would not go. It was about six weeks ago that I told brother Teague what I felt were some of the dealings of the Lord with me. He asked me if I had a desire to unite with the church. I told him I had seen many times when I felt I must go, or must see him, or some other, and talk about the goodness of the Lord to me, and my total depravity. A few days before the first Sunday in March, which was after my talk with brother Teague, I had a dream, or a vision, that I was traveling in Palestine. I was sitting at a table with several friends, eating, drinking and having a good time. I got up from the table and left them and walked alone into Jerusalem. There I went into a building. I saw no one at first, but after looking around I saw coming up a stairway from below a rough looking individual dressed in a dark uniform.

When he reached the head of the steps on the main floor he suddenly stopped and stared at me, as if to say, What are you doing here? Neither of us spoke. I decided to go back to my friends. After getting out from the city on a hill I stopped, and saw many roads leading from me in several directions. I felt that to take any of them I would not find my friends and they would not find me, and that I would be lost and fall into the hands of the natives. So I decided I would go back to Jerusalem and spend the night. I went into the same building. I was met by a young woman dressed in pure white. Although she was not of my nationality, being from the south of my country, she could speak my language. This made me happy. I first told her I wanted to spend the night, and she was very friendly and showed me a registration book with several names on the page. I then told her I wanted to see the American Legation, then I said, No, Consul. She said his office was down stairs, but as it was five o'clock in the evening he was not in. I then turned and went into the main part of the building (for my conversation with her was in the lobby) and I saw brother Teague coming toward me with outstretched arm to shake hands with me. Here the dream ended. On Sunday following I went to meeting, and when the invitation was given I was cold and hardheaded. When I returned home I remembered my dream ended before brother Teague reached me with his hand extended. I was very anxious to see him and tell him my dream, and did a few days later. He told me it was a good dream, and asked again if I did not want to join the church. My answer was, Yes. After that time I felt I could not live in peace outside. So Saturday evening I left my work and walked to the meeting, not knowing what I would do. My very breathings were a prayer for the Lord to so direct me to offer myself. Brother Teague asked me to select a hymn. I selected "Rock of Ages," because of the stanza

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly,
Wash me, Savior, or I die."

That fit my case, but I could not join in because of tears. After the sermon by Elder Denny, and the conference, the invitation was given, and I went forward with fear and trembling. I felt so unworthy I did not know whether or not I would be accepted. I was received, and on Sunday morning after prayer by Elder Flagg was baptized by Elder Denny. My feelings Sunday were (and I so stated to Elder Denny) that surely it must be of the Lord, for there was no earthly reason for his baptizing me. After the service sister Smith told me that she dreamed a few weeks before that I joined the church. Since then the Bible and "Fragments," by Elder Silas Durand, which you so kindly gave me a few years ago, I have read every day. These books, though read many times before, have been very sweet to me, and new, and with an understanding I never before had I was led to look up

the passage of Scripture, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."—2 Cor. v. 17. Sunday morning I opened my Bible and read the book of James. I have been rejoicing in spirit and praising God and desiring the association of God's people more than ever before.

Your letter, which has been read several times by me, makes me shed tears and offer praise to God. I humbly hope that the Lord will so bless me as to live in sweet fellowship and remain as a little one among you good people, and to ever praise His glorious name for his wonderful mercies to me my remaining days on earth. The blessing I have now received in joining in the bonds of christian fellowship with God's people here on earth, I longed for more than twenty years, and I have been made to feel that it was God's appointed time, not my own, that it was not within me to go to the church earlier, or put it off longer. It was when I received the sweet command that I was so weak and helpless and surrendered all.

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to the cross I cling."

I shall never forget my conversation with brother Gooch on the porch the evening we visited in your home a few years ago: his talking of the doctrine of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I was "shut up" and could not tell him of the Lord's dealings with me. Now I want to in tenderness, and as a little child, tell every one. But I am made to feel that only God's people are interested or can understand.

I would like to accept your invitation to visit your May meeting, but our communion is here at that time, so I will wait until your Association and visit you then, if it is the Lord's will. Come and see me the next time you come to Winston-Salem.

Your brother, I hope,

B. C. CLINARD.

BATH, Maine, June 8, 1930.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—How glad I am the good Lord prompted you to write on the portion of Scripture you did in the June SIGNS. I feel it was written for my benefit alone. How weak the flesh is and there is no good in it. What a continual fight I have. Satan stands ever ready to urge me on. I often stumble and fall, do a thing and then have to repent, and it is with a sorry heart I do so. Our meetings are small and often it seems a cross to get there; and as we have no pastor, I get in the way of saying, "I guess I will stay home to-day," just for this or for that, whatever the excuse may be. The Lord has been good to me, has given me a wonderful experience, has given me that witness within me of things I have not words to express, that I have been taught of the Lord and not of man. I never shall forget that day at Whitefield when I told my troubles to the church. The world was never more beautiful than it was that day, and for days afterward. Every hard trial was taken away, but I came back to earth and found I had not gotten rid of this

carnal nature of mine, and I guess that mind of mine is one thing that made me stay home, not thinking I had need of my brethren. In reading your article, I found myself at fault, and I felt very much so, and that I had better take heed to myself. There is so much around me to take me away from the WAY and from the things I really want to do. I do things to please others when I really want to do otherwise. I find myself very weak and hate myself for it and cry to God to keep me and to give me strength to resist; but I am so black that I cry, Unclean, unclean. May God often direct your mind to write. God willing, I shall be found at the little meetinghouse at Bowdoinham with the brethren the twenty-second of next June, our next meeting day. May God bless you and yours and lead you in pleasant places and give you words of wisdom to speak as I feel you spoke to me.

I hope I am your sister in Christ, but a very unworthy one,

RACHEL BEAL POTTER.

ATLANTA, Ga., May 6, 1931.

DEAR FRIENDS:—Jesus said, "I have called you friends." May I call you friends? My heart is rejoicing tonight because of the article by Elder Dodson on the words, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." His words are beautiful and comforting. I feel that each and every expression he used is sanctified by the word and Spirit of almighty God. It made my poor, tired mind, spirit, soul and body feel a season of rest. I was made to wonder at the peace in the rest given of God. I believe with ever fiber of my being that rest and peace are as much the gift of God as is eternal life. Then how glorious it is to experience that rest, feeling it to be the gift of God. How heavy are the burdens we bear in our pilgrimage along the way. They may be burdens self-imposed because of our ignorance and lack of wisdom and understanding; but they are burdens just the same and are indeed grievous to be borne, and oh how sweet is the God-given rest from them. Paul said, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works." I rejoice that this rest is found in our sojourn here in time. God gives it in his way and place and time. In looking back over the days of my unprofitable life, it seems that they have been filled with the labors of my own choosing, the work of ignorance and lack of understanding. Why did I take up these burdens? Why did I engage in these labors? I know not. I can only confess to my shame and confusion that I have so labored, have borne such burdens. Back into the days long gone by I view the scenes of my convictions of sin and the blessed relief of a God-given promise: Fear not, I am with you always. With what results? With the overwhelming self-righteousness of feeling that God had looked upon me with favor in that he had given me such a promise. For several years I was heavily laden with this burden of self-righteousness, and oh the labors I performed while bearing

that burden. When his merciful rest was given it was a laying down of all that burden, the ceasing from all those labors, in the assurance that Jesus is the atonement. But this joy was only for a season. How soon again did I begin other labors. How soon again take up other burdens. God's love and mercy must be sung. His wisdom and power must be extolled. Praise and thanksgivings and prayers needs must be said. Truth must be declared, must be defended, must be proclaimed. What God had told in secret must be shouted from the house-top. Let those who knew nor loved not God go heedlessly on in pleasures and seeming sins. Let them be merry and greet each other with happy, joyous words. Pharisees and hypocrites might pretend to love His people, but as for me I must shun these things, must love his people with an everlasting love, for by this do we know that we have passed from death unto life. Let those who feel no burdens stay away from the meetings of the church when it pleases them to do so, let them visit the picture shows, operas and various places of amusements. But not so for me. Let others read books written by those who know not God, but for me the Bible, and it alone, must engage my time and thought.

My heart was filled with grief when looking upon Zion, the city of our refuge. All about was strife and confusion. For where envying and strife are, there is confusion and every evil work. What I felt to be traditional teachings of men that were false seemed to me to be burdening God's people. Thousands were going on their weary way laboring under the burden of fear. Fear of death and the after death that they had been taught by the traditions of men. While to me death seemed only the gate to endless joy. Men turned back and limited the Holy One of Israel. They denied his sovereignty and his saving power.

In order to establish this contention for conditional time salvation, or ability in man after regeneration, they carry on after death and endeavor a relationship between the outer man of sin and the "hidden man of the heart" that the Bible in no sense upholds. Paul said one was of the earth earthy, and the other was from heaven. In this contention they bind upon men's shoulders heavy burdens grievous to be borne; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. Thus my own vile sins and the sins of God's people seemed to be upon me as a burden that I knew not how to be rid of and retain an interest in the welfare of the church. How could I love my brother and not feel an interest in his welfare? Because of the weight of this burden I tried to pray God to remove it from me. Finally it was removed, but oh the wretchedness of my condition for days and days. I had prayed God to remove it, even though it removed from my heart all love and care and thought for those I had felt for years to be dearer to me than life. Then for days and weeks and months I knew a death I had not known. I knew a coldness and darkness that

could be seen and felt and heard, but cannot be described. I looked back over my unprofitable life. What did I know of God's love, mercy, wisdom and power? What did I know of prayer and praise and thanksgiving? Oh what did I know of truth? Wherein was I different from those of my brethren and sisters who had not taken life so seriously? Many of them had gone joyfully on their way. They attended church services on Sunday and then returned to their daily work, and returned also to their daily recreations and pleasures. Many attended the picture shows, the theatres, the operas and the various other places of entertainment. Many played cards. Brethren would engage in tricks of business for worldly gain that even many worldlings would blush in shame and condemnation to be found guilty of doing. But the question was, Wherein was it wise to follow not along with them in all of these things? Were not they all more contented and happier than I? The Lord had seemingly removed all love from my heart, then why not follow along? Do as others did? I mean as others in the church. Let me confess it, though it kills me. I followed on. I went where they did. I did what they did. I lived after the flesh. I died. But may I say that God is able to raise the dead? He is able to give peace where there was no peace. He is able to give rest where there was no rest. There is a rest that remains to the people of God. I feel that I know this of a truth, that God is too merciful to be unkind.

May the God of all wisdom and mercy grant unto you all the peace that passes understanding and the rest that remains to the people of God.

ELLA B. JONES.

CADIZ, Ky., Sept. 27, 1931.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed is a letter I just received from Elder J. C. Chester's daughter which caused tears to flow from my eyes, and knowing that the Baptists everywhere who have met him would love to hear from him, I am sending it to you for publication.

I will say to dear brother Chester in the language of the apostle Paul, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Our afflictions may seem severe, yet they are light when compared with the glory of that bright beyond.

J. N. DARNELL.

BREWERS, Kentucky.

DEAR ELDER DARNELL:—Your letter came in due time, and mamma read it to papa. He is too weak to read or write, but said to tell you he was made to rejoice and that tears flowed when your letter was read to him. His mind was with you all at the meetings, though absent in body. He was glad the Lord sent true yoke-fellows to feed the church of God, which was made manifest by the addition of three to their membership. He was glad you could visit the brave soldiers of the West Tennessee Association and associate with those brave defenders of the truth. He hopes you and family are

well and enjoying God's richest blessings for each day and trial, and may it be the Lord's will for you to come to this Association.

Mamma is steadily improving, and is up most of the time now. Papa seems to be growing weaker. He lies on the bed, and only walks a little. We hope he will improve, but it now seems doubtful. He said to tell you his pen was silent and it appeared that his tongue would soon be still. We had Dr. Sights, of Paducah, and Dr. Stevens, of Mayfield, with him yesterday.

Papa says tell you that he has heard much appreciation expressed for your services among the churches.

Come and see us when you can conveniently do so.

Respectfully,

LULA CHESTER.

MATTITUCK, New York.

DEAR SISTER JENNIE:—I am not sure that I answered your last letter; if not, I hope you will forgive me. I often have you in my mind and am with you all at the meetings in New York more often than once a week (but only in the spirit) and these meetings seem very real to me.

I hear you are having trouble with your eyes, and hope it is not likely to be serious, or so as to prevent your attending the meetings. That would indeed be an affliction; but in our deepest trials we know our Lord is close beside us to give us the strength we need, and in his strength we are able to bear all that he sends, and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, so I am sure you can say, Thy will be done. We know his will is best, and his mercy endureth forever. What am I that he should be mindful of me? I do feel myself to be the least of all, and yet with all my shortcomings I have a hope in his great mercy. He knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust. I have found these words a great comfort at times, and he has said to me more than once, Thy sins and thine iniquities will I remember no more. The older I grow the less good I see in myself. I see none, and I know if I am saved it is of his great mercy, and because he first loved me, as I hope, that I love him, and feel with Peter, To whom shall I go, Lord? thou hast the words of eternal life. So it is not of works that we believe in him, but because he has saved us and given us faith to believe this.

I was wondering what I would write when I commenced and this came to me at once, Comfort ye them with the comfort wherewith ye yourselves have been comforted. So I have written some things that I have found much comfort in, and hope you may find a little also. I often think of you.

With love, your sister, I trust,

NELLIE H. ARNOLD.

[THE above good letter was writen to sister Jennie C. Bower, of Brooklyn, N. Y., and forwarded to us for publication.— ED.]

CULLISON, Kansas.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—Grace be unto you. Having need to send for renewal of my paper, and feeling a desire to express a few thoughts to the saints once more, if not out of the faith, or too much trouble to correct, I would speak a few words on James ii. 22, and 1 John ii. 5: "Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?" "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him." How can faith in God, or the love of God to his saints, be made perfect, when nothing is more perfect? Only by manifestation of its power in us. By the working of faith and love in the Lord's people being brought to our view or knowledge. Now, the Lord sees this faith and love as perfect before the works. But man must know the tree by its fruit. God can see the heart and read the mind. By their works ye shall know them. In our view Abel's faith and love were made perfect by his suffering. Enoch perfected his faith and love of God by walking with God and being translated. So Moses, the prophets, the apostles and the early saints have all given us a comparative perfect faith and love and have proven them by works, good works. "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love."—1 John iv. 12, 18. No, we see a lack of faith when fear is felt and we are tormented by our fearfulness. We must show our faith by our works, else our faith will be called a dead faith. A living and acting faith is that which is made perfect by works, yet it is the power of God through faith in him that works. Even as David describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works. So we see God does impute righteousness and faith and love unto men without works. That is, before they do the works. The works are the fruit of the Spirit, so the Spirit, or the power of it, must be given before the work of the Spirit. Yet in our view man is not justified by faith alone. Neither is living faith or the love of God alone. It is always working in us to do his will, and when we do his will by faith our love is made perfect by manifestation.

E. G. WEBB.

DECATUR, Ga., Sept. 22, 1931.

DEAR EDITORS:—I read from time to time of dear Old Baptists who are not able to pay for the SIGNS and that you continue to send the paper to them. My heart goes out to the dear lovers of the truth, also to you for continuing the SIGNS to them, and I desire to put in a little mite to help both, also to have my own subscription marked up another year. If I know anything about the truth of the plan of salvation, I believe it as the SIGNS advocates it.

A little, weak, afflicted worm of the dust,

(MRS.) J. F. GREEN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1931.

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SOLOMON'S SONG VIII. 6.

If language of all time could be searched, a more hateful or dastardly word could hardly be found than "jealousy." It is as a cancer of the heart, eating away the very vitals of the best that is in life. How pitiable the breast that harbors it! Perhaps, no other one thing in all the world has caused so much distress, suffering and agony of soul. The Scripture declares, "Jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame." The devil never had a more effective tool with which to carry on his work, and he has wielded it since the dawn of time in overthrowing kingdoms, crushing empires, destroying nations and working havoc in untold millions of individual lives. By it he has moved human beings to commit all manner of conceivable crime and murder, even to the extinguishing of entire families. Nothing seems to arrest or deter it in its fiendish aims once it is aroused. As horrible as it is among the nations of the earth and in the hearts of natural men and women, to us, it is an hundredfold worse to discover it protuding its serpent-like head into the assembly of the saints. Yet, according to the record, the church all down through the ages has been plagued with it. Cain, who brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord, who respected it not, rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him, but thereafter he went forth a "fugitive and a vagabond" in the earth. When David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, saying, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands," whereupon Saul was very wroth and conspired in his wicked heart to smite David, but God was with him and watched over and kept him, and Saul being brought down in utter disgrace and shame "took a sword, and fell upon it." Haman, willing to pay ten thousand talents of silver into the king's treasuries to accomplish the destruction of the Jews, must himself hang upon the gallows which he had made for Mordecai. If only he who seeks to build up his cause and to save his own life by such methods could but remem-

ber such characters and the end to which they all come, it should, indeed, cause him to ponder his path and turn from his evil way. But, as we have said, there seems to be no turning for those who are thus bent.

Even the prophecy of the coming of our Lord seemed to set Herod's heart on fire to seek the Babe's life before he was born, and Pilate and those who were in authority, as well as the Jews, were not satisfied until the Lord of glory had been crucified and slain, but as was true of Samson, in his death he slew his greatest enemy, neither did he leave his body, or people, in the grave. In considering his work and the church as he has caused it to be set up and established in this, the gospel dispensation, it has seemed to us that there is a place to be filled and a work to be performed by every member of this mystical body of Christ, and especially would we apply this to the various gifts which he has placed in the church. Paul says, "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evalgelists; and some, pastors and teachers; *for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ*: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Certainly, the true church of God needs to be "joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth" in this day of perilous times as never before, and, yet, from our very earliest recollections, we have been hearing of the jealousy which existed especially between the ministering brethren, and particularly the old ministers towards the younger ones. How sad to even think about! There are so few in this day and time who are standing in the way of God and asking for the old paths, and walking therein, that it would seem to behoove them to present a united front and stand together, and if there is a character in all the world who needs more the fatherly sympathy and counsel of his elders than a young minister, we cannot imagine what he looks like. We are glad that there are still some who do understand and seek the welfare of those who are to follow. What a touching example is seen in the case of Paul towards his son in the ministry, Timothy! Having suffered great things for the sake of Christ, and endured hardships almost unknown to any, he comes to Timothy in all the tenderness of a true father and out of the fullness of his experience, advises, instructs, warns and encourages him to stand fast and be faithful in the face

of all adversity and opposition, praying God's blessing upon him. This is *love,* or exactly the opposite of *jealousy,* and we would to God that all might be wholly and entirely taken up by it and with it. Love, or charity, suffereth long, and is kind; it envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up. Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. It never faileth. Without it, though one speak with the tongues of men or of angels, he is become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. "Love is strong as death;" "many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his home for love, it would utterly be contemned." Jesus said the first and great commandment is this: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Where this is done, there is no such thing as envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings and the like. "To me belongeth vengeance and recompence," saith the Lord, and he will try every man's work, of what sort it is, and woe be unto that man who delighteth not in the way of the Lord. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful: but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The *ungodly* are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall *perish.*"

May it please our heavenly Father to deliver us all from jealousy.

R. L. D.

IMPORTANT NOTICE!

INCLOSED in each copy of this issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be found a subscription blank, and we hope our subscribers will find it a convenient form for remitting renewals, new subscriptions, &c.

The SIGNS has had a hard struggle to continue publication through the current year, because so many have neglected paying their subscriptions, and if our subscribers do no better in the future than they have in the past it looks as though it will have to discontinue publication, for we cannot carry it on without the financial support of the brethren.

We very much regret the necessity of mentioning financial matters in our columns, but it takes money to publish a paper like the SIGNS, and if our subscribers fail in their duty it puts a burden on us that we are unable to bear much longer. It has now reached the

point where we will have to receive better financial support or give up publishing the paper.

For nearly a century the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has contended for the doctrine so dear to the saints, and if it is God's will he will open the way for it to continue, but if it is not his will, it must go down and cease to be.

Brethren, examine your dates, and do what you can for us. If you cannot afford to send all your dues at one time, send what you can, as a little from each one would be a great help toward keeping the old SIGNS alive.

J. E. B. & CO.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

Written by brother Oscar J. Byrnside.

The Pocatalico Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Hopewell Church, Kanawha County, West Virginia, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 4th, 5th and 6th, 1931, to the churches and meetings with which we correspond, Greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—It having become my duty by request of the brethren to try to write what is commonly termed a Circular Letter, I do so with the most fear and trembling I have ever experienced in my life. I feel to be as barren as the Sahara Desert and cold as the winds which blow from the polar regions, but yet I feel to have been taught by experience that man is nothing and less than nothing, and that without God's help my efforts will be of no avail.

It seems on observation that the purpose and intent of a Circular Letter is for the express purpose of informing the sister churches and associations as to the doctrinal standing of that particular association. Nothing better could be practiced, and if God's will be that I write at all, I desire to pen a few pertinent thoughts concerning a subject which is so often used in a meaningless manner by so many so-called Baptists, who are not really Baptists, but only bearing the name for reasons better suited to a class of their kind, namely Predestinarian. Some, no doubt, will advise one to keep away from this subject, with the argument that it causes confusion and division, which it does not do any more than any other point of Christ's doctrine, for it is surely a part of the apostolic doctrine, and none could write plainer language concerning it than Paul has left on record. To be sure, if we only believed the doctrine of predestination of all things because it was said to be an Old Baptist doctrine then we would be wrong indeed, but we believe we have "Thus saith the Lord," and continue by giving reasons for thus saying. Some truthfully say that the word "predestinate" is only found a few times in the Scriptures, but the word does not have to be used to give us the understanding hidden underneath the passages. In the Greek of the New Testament the Greek word "*Proorizo*" is translated predestinated. Webster's large dictionary gives it thus: Predestinate: from Latin "*prae,*" before, "*destinare,*" to determine. Being rendered in English by our lexographers,

to determine or foreordain; to appoint or ordain beforehand by an unchangeable purpose or decree; to preelect. God's predestination and foreknowledge are one and the same thing, it being impossible to use one without the other. Without predestination there would be no certainty, and without certainty there would be no salvation, for salvation is sure, and without salvation of his people there in turn would be no God. To predestinate or foreordain all things God was of necessity an all-wise God, and if he was not from eternity an all-wise God then he was not and is not a God at all. But he is all-wise, as the Bible plainly teaches: "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world." God knows nothing now and never will know anything that he did not know from eternity. The least to the blackest crime is naked before him so that he knows all that we do. Not only does he know it now, but from eternity, therefore he sent his only begotten Son that we might without a doubt be cleansed from all our pollutions and be clothed with raiment as white as snow. His foreknowledge and predestination is not uncertain, for how could it be and yet he be all-wise and know all things? Such a god would be foolish and not omniscient. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."—Eph. i. 5. And, "Being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Then if he works all things after the counsel of his own will, predestination is a fact. Surely the above mentioned passages of Scripture plainly indicate this to be a fact. You will hear some say, If God has predestinated that one of my dear children shall go to hell and one to heaven he is not just, and I would not want to own such a God; that he would not be a God of justice, and that he would be a sinner. I feel to say with the poet,

> "If my soul were sent to hell,
> Thy righteous law approves it well."

As to God being a sinner, or the author of sin in the active sense of speaking, no better language can be uttered than that in the London Confession, in which it says, "He hath decreed in himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever come to pass, yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin, nor hath pleasure therein."

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us."—Titus iii. 5. This one passage of divine Scripture once and for all plainly stamps the seal against all arguments for self-works, etc., as preached by the adversary since the days of Eden. Then if it be something else, what is it? Why, one writer says, "Salvation is of the Lord." Then, dear ones, is it a sure salvation, or must we day and night be anxious because of the fear of losing it? We have Christ's own explicit words on this particular subject: "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should

lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."—John vi. 39. Then if it is not by our works of righteousness, but only by his wonderful mercy that we are saved, and as Jesus says that he should lose nothing that the Father had given him, but at the last day raise it up, pray tell me, dear one, what that could be but the foreknowledge and predestination of an omniscient Jehovah? If we believe in any Scripture, surely we can believe this. There is no need of any appendages to the word "predestination," such as "absolute," except for distinction in this day of stealing names, for it is either predestination or free-will, since there is no half-way ground. Surely we have by experience been taught that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps or order his course. Paul says concerning free-will, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."—Eph. ii. 8, 9.

This is not written for the purpose of stirring up strife, but because it is on my mind, and if there be anything not with a "Thus saith the Lord," cast it aside, and be sure it is the fault of the creature and no mistake in the Scripture. In a limited space like I have of course I have only touched a few points. This world would not contain all that could be written on the subject, because it is as large as God, for it is the only doctrine that teaches about the lofty and high God, while the only other doctrine teaches about creature works and does not offer up praises to God. Yet I hope enough has been written to let the sister churches and associations in this day of unsound doctrine know that we not only retain the article in our "articles of faith" stating that we believe in predestination, but that we actually to this present time stand as an association of Old School Baptists which continues to contend for and fellowship what is commonly termed, "Absolute Predestination of ALL Things and Events." May the Lord have mercy on his undeserving children and at last gather us all around his wondrous presence, there to sing praises throughout one blissful eternity.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Mod.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Clerk.

Mount Zion Association, to all of like precious faith.

DEAR SAINTS:—We feel at this time to write a short letter and give to the inquiring ones some little idea of the things we most certainly believe.

This seems to be an age of confusion, and because of such confusion the more need of plain speech; so we feel a desire to give the interested ones our belief in as short a way, and so plainly we cannot be misunderstood. As to God, there is just one. He is a supreme Sovereign, who created all things for a certain purpose, and the things created accomplish that purpose, and pass on, according to his (God's) will. As to power, there is no power but of God. Even the powers that be are ordained of God. That God does not change: He is of one mind, that all the

men and devils on earth or elsewhere cannot influence God to withhold a blessing, or administer one little chastisement, that was not in his mind to do before time began. We believe him to be so great that he knew the end from the beginning, from eternity all the things that are not yet done. We believe his children are given eternal life, and that life is Christ, and Christ and God are one, so closely related in eternal life unity that it is impossible to separate, and that we have in right, already given us in Christ *all* spiritual blessings, and in time we receive them at the gracious hand of our Father, through the Holy Ghost, so that every promise of God is sure to all the seed. We believe salvation is wholly of the Lord. We believe also in the resurrection of the dead. They that have done good, to resurrection of life; they that have done evil, to damnation. These things we affirm and believe. May the God of all grace be with and keep us. Amen.

DANIAL A. J. ADAMS, Mod.
(MRS.) J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

George M. Varnes, Pa., $3.50; Mrs. Mintie B. Mapes, N. Y., $2; Mrs. J. F. Green, Ga., $8; Mrs. Charles H. Glascock, Va., $1; Miss Minnie Hyatt, N. Y., $2.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

PETER MEREDITH SHERWOOD was born June 12th, 1854, died September 28th, 1931, and was interred in Welsh Tract Cemetery October 1st, 1931. He is survived by his widow, Clara Bell Sherwood (nee Anderson), to whom he was married June 29th, 1886. Also, he leaves five sisters and one brother to mourn his death: Mrs. Jennie L. Dance, a member of Welsh Tract Church, Mrs. Moore, Mrs. Merrick, Mrs. Wise, Miss Myra Sherwood, all of Wilmington, Delaware, Mr. Madison Sherwood, of Willow Grove, Delaware. Brother Sherwood came to Newark, Delaware, in 1888, and engaged in the merchantile business until 1921, when he retired. He was received into the membership of the Welsh Tract Church Saturday, March 6th, 1874, and baptized the following day by Elder Silas H. Durand. By order of the church he was made Clerk the first Saturday in March, 1886, and was chosen Deacon September 4th, 1920. Early in years, from his baptism, a religious fervor seemed to be in possession of his very soul or being, and he had a desire or spirit to converse upon the doctrine of salvation by grace, in which he was firmly established by faith, we believe. His actions affirmed it in all church gatherings. His delight was to exhort the brethren at all such times to present their bodies a living sacrifice. The writer cannot recall when even sickness or business prevented his attendance in church meetings. In the interim between the death of Elder J. G. Eubanks and the call of our present pastor, Elder H. H. Lefferts, we discontinued the regular two Sunday meetings and had meeting on one Sunday only, our brother journeyed himself alone several times, in order to keep up the regular worship. He was truly faithful in this respect. His hearing the last few years was defective, and he constructed a high chair in order to be able to hear the preached word, elevating himself to the level of the preacher in the stand and he could read and hear it from the pastor's lips. It seemed to be his blessing to be "on the mount" most of his time, and yet when in the flesh, in his walk in life, he was made to suffer greatly when the warfare of a child of God was exercised in him, the flesh against the Spirit, and, as he often told us, he could not throw it off. He was thus made to live a turbulent life under this condition, but when the Spirit subdued the old man (the flesh) in him he was as one transformed almost into an angel. May his spirit rest until the day when soul, spirit and body (the changed body) be united in the resurrection, which must come to all who are "born again," whether asleep or alive, when we shall be with the Lord in the air. A mystery.

Written by request.

JOHN B. MILLER.

REALLY no words of mine are necessary to be added to what brother Miller has written above, but I do want to concur in all he has set down

about our brother Sherwood. No pastor, I am sure, ever had a more devoted and fruitful supporter than had I in brother Sherwood. He loved the habitation where God's honor dwells, i. e. the church. The kingdom came always first with him, it seemed. We greatly miss him. May the Spirit comfort his sorrowing widow and family, and reconcile us one and all to the Divine Will.

H. H. L.

MRS. SARAH A. DORMAN after a long and painful suffering passed away on August 22nd, 1931. She had been an attendant at the meetings of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church of Baltimore city, Maryland, for about thirty years and was a kind and helpful friend, always willing to help bear the expenses of the church. She never joined the church, but was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. The pastor of the church many times visited in her home, and she has visited in his home, and he can truthfully say that he has at all times found her to be of an humble, christian spirit, firm in the faith, but ready to confess her sins and felt sense of unworthiness. I understand that her fear of not being worthy to take the communion kept her from offering herself to the church. Why she should feel thus I do not know, for her faith and her walk were such as becometh one who loves the Lord and his blessed cause. She was a friend to the church, and to me as the pastor, and I feel a personal loss in her passing. The day before she fell asleep she had been quite restless for some hours, and a part of the time seemed not to have her mind clear, but she asked several times for Elder Rowe. Her daughter called me and I went as quickly as I could, and when I arrived her daughter said, Mother, here is Elder Rowe, do you want to talk to him? She said, I want him to talk to me. I began to talk of the love of God for us poor sinners and of the hope she had had for many years in his mercy. She talked plainly and sweetly of these precious things, quieted down and remained so to the end. Elder D. L. Topping attended her funeral on the 24th. There was a large attendance and many floral designs, testifying to the high esteem in which she was held. Her remains were interred beside her late husband in Baltimore Cemetery, to await the call of her Savior, when the corruptible shall put on incorruption and the mortal shall put on immortality. May God bless the bereaved ones. Her daughter faithfully attended to her in all her sickness.

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

CALVIN CICERO SMALL, son of J. P. and Roxy Small, was born in Pike County, Alabama, September 26th, 1961, and passed to the beyond March 9th, 1931, making his stay on earth 69 years, 5 months and 13 days. He came with his parents to Texas when a small boy, his father settling near Longview, Texas, where he lived until the end came. He was an honorable citizen, upright in all his dealings. He never married or joined the church, but was a firm believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine of salvation by grace and the predestination of all things. He was taken with influenza, and while his suffering was great, yet he did not complain. The evening he passed away his sister Allie came into his room and he told her he was willing to go. All that loving hands and a skillful physician could do was done for him, but the Master called and he had to go. His remains were laid to rest in the Lansing Cemetery to await the trump of God, at the sound of which the dead in Christ rise first. Elder T. M. Walls spoke words of comfort to the sorrowing ones. Sorrow not as others who have no hope, for he is not dead, but sleeping the sleep from which none ever wake to mourn. May the God of all grace comfort those who mourn, that they may say as one of old, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Written by request.

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

JOHN WISE COUNCILE WALKER, my dear husband, departed this earthly life December 2nd, 1930, at his home, near Hiawatha, West Virginia. He lived all his life in that neighborhood, and I feel sure was respected by all who knew him. He was born May 23rd, 1855, was married at the age of nineteen to Miss Nancy E. Bailey, who departed this life April 7th, 1919. To that union were born ten children. Three preceded him in death. He was given a sweet hope in Christ several years before he united with the Primitive Baptist Church in 1897, at Rich Creek, W. Va., where, I have been informed, he remained a faithful member until some time later, when there was a church constituted at Egeria, W. Va., near his home. He helped constitute the Egeria Church, and remained a faithful member, always attending his meetings when able, and was very faithful in attending all the associations he could. He was married the second time to the writer, January 12th, 1921, and I can truthfully say of him that I never have known a better man in all respects. He was honest in all his dealings, and was one of the best husbands and step-fathers that ever lived. He left to mourn his departure besides his lonely widow, seven children, five step-children, one brother, four sisters, many grandchildren, several great-grandchildren and many other relatives and friends, but we mourn not as those who are without hope, for we feel sure he is not dead, but is sleeping in Christ, awaiting the resurrection of his body that had been partly paralyzed the past six years. Oh the sweet thought to me, that his dear body that had been afflicted for so long will some sweet day arise from the sleeping dust and be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ. Just before he passed away he turned his eyes toward heaven and said, A good time.

Funeral services were held at his late home,

conducted by Elder S. J. Priddy, who spoke very comfortingly. About two weeks before he passed away he told me he wanted Elders Gentry, Priddy and Snow to conduct his funeral if they continued to preach the doctrine they were then preaching, but we could not get brethren Gentry and Snow. Dear husband's body was laid to rest beside his first wife in a cemetery near Egeria, W. Va.

Written by his lonely companion,

SAMANTHA J. WALKER.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, &c. REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.

Of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, published monthly, at Middletown, N. Y., for October 1st, 1931.

State of New York, County of Orange, ss.:

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Gilbert Beebe, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the owner of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that the following is to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24th, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse side of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publishers, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publishers, J. E. Beebe & Company, Middletown, N. Y.; Editor, H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

2. The owner is, Gilbert Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagers and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent. or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear on the books of the company, but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the corporation for whom such trustee is acting is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stocks, bonds or other securities than as so stated by him.

GILBERT BEEBE, Owner.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 20th day of October, 1931.

(Seal) FRANK P. COX.

(My commission expires March, 1932.)

MEETINGS.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects Elder Arnold H. Bellows to meet with them the fifth Sunday in November. Services to be held at the home of brother J. E. Livingston, 64 E. Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. Also at 2 p. m. on Saturday before. All are welcome.

Trains on the D. & H. R. R. arrive and leave Cobleskill in convenient time for the meeting.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at the home of sister E. Brunow, 411 N. Ridgeway Avenue, and on the second, third and fourth Sundays at the home of brother W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. The fifth Sundays are by appointment. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastors, Elders Jones and Janes.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

NEW YORK CITY.

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. **2:00 P. M.**

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

We have kept up a monthly meeting for some time in the past, and hope, by the grace of God, to be favored to continue to meet every second Sunday in each month at 3617 Veteran Avenue, Palms Station, near Culver City, California. May this bear a cordial invitation to all who believe in grace and salvation by grace to meet with us on the stated time.

MR. and MRS. W. J. BERRY.

SELF-PRONOUNCING BIBLE

These Bibles are printed on a good quality of paper, in large, clear type, and contain Marginal References, a complete system of helps, with a good Concordance, and many other things which space will not permit us to mention. Size of page 8⅝x5½ inches. Bound in French Seal Leather, with extended covers, red under gilt edge. The "Open Flat" Binding on these Bibles is far superior to any method of binding yet devised. Its many advantages over all other Bible bindings will be at once apparent. The Bible will lie open absolutely flat. The back of the Bible will at all times retain its shape. With this perfect binding the Bible will not break in the back. This is a Bible we know will please our people. Price $4.50 each. Postage paid by us. Any person wishing one of these books can secure one by sending us eight new yearly subscriptions.

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"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 99. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1931. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ISAIAH LV. 1, 2.

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not?"

How wonderfully the prophet sets forth the travels of poor sinners. As they do spend money (their labor and works) for that which is not bread. Neither does it satisfy them. They are not content with the food they produce. Once upon a time they feasted upon the fat things of the land they cultivated and were happy and content, but now the food does not nourish or satisfy them. They are longing for something they have not got. They are craving for food to satisfy the hunger they have for righteousness, but cultivate the same ground (their works) they once did, when all was well. They continue to try and try again, keep on planting, believing they can finally raise a crop that will lift the burden and satisfy their hunger, but every harvest is a failure. The grain will not yield; the famine becomes great in the land. The barns begin to fall down for the want of repairs, the graineries become empty. The land becomes dry, no water to quench thirst or even sprout the grain. Everything seems to be against them. Their burden becomes so great they promise God to be more faithful, and try again for another crop, thinking he will help them gather a harvest, but the land is so very dry the grain never comes up. The green vegetation has about all faded away and the land is nothing more than a desert. Their dwelling commences to lean and needs repairing, as the storms of God's wrath have washed part of the sand from under the foundation, but they still say, We will return and build the desolate places. How courageous to repair their homes, which are all built upon the sand (works—nothing but earth) which will not stand the storms of God's wrath over sin, but they feel they have the ability to fix them up. Finally a

storm tears out the foundation. The house totters and falls. The poor sinner is without shelter, "naked and open before him with whom they have to do." Cast out in the streets and lanes of the city (legal city), sleeping at night under the light of the stars. They are considered "the offscourings of the earth," wandering in the desert of their carnal nature looking for that which will satisfy their hunger and thirst for righteousness. But nothing can be found there that will satisfy the pangs of that hunger and thirst. Try as they may their labors are in vain. They feel and realize they are condemned sinners before the just and holy God, and how to perform that which is good they find not, the terrible burden of sin still resting upon them and bearing them down. They wander in the highways and hedges poverty stricken and very destitute, they become continual beggars, begging for mercy. They wander in the wilderness in a solitary way. They now and then find a little pasture (good works) which seemingly relieves the burden for a short while, but they soon find themselves back in the mire deeper than ever. Their labors are all in vain. Their food is almost nothing. The pasture is very hard to find and almost withered away. Their prayers to God seemingly never rise above themselves. The burden of sin grows greater than ever. They begin to see their labors amount to nothing. The mountains and hills of their self-righteousness have now become as filthy rags. All their herbs and pools are dried up. The rivers where they once drank with much pleasure and satisfaction have been turned into islands. They become very poor and destitute, with nothing to support life. They walk in the valley of the shadow of death; all is darkness and the way seems crooked. The poor souls see no way for God to ever justify such vile, unworthy sinners as they feel to be—nothing in sight to merit salvation. Their living all spent and feeding on husks with the swine; no corn to give strength, they become so poor and needy that they are made to mourn on account of that awful destitution of the spirit. Jesus said, Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. What a wonderful promise to these distinguished characters; but they cannot feel the promise is theirs, as they see themselves condemned sinners. They still wander in the wilderness trying to find the way, but fail at every turn, and realize they are sinking without strength, without hope and without God in the world. They come to the end of the earth, the end of their own strength, and finally look to God and cry out, O Lord, I cry unto thee, for the fire hath destroyed the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field. Nothing but a charred desert left. No hope of getting food now. No one else to look to for help, as their labors have all been in vain. Their tongues become swollen from thirst and cannot make a noise; but the God of Israel hears the desires of their heart, and says, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. The King of glory

speaks from heaven, saying, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money [strength]; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price." His words are spirit and they are life. He speaks to the dead and they hear his voice. Again, he says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." What a great surprise to poor sinners so very destitute and ready to perish; yes, without water and without food, in the dungeon of hell; but the God of Israel at the appointed time hears their cries and leads them out of the house of bondage into the light and liberty of the children of God. The Sun of righteousness arises with healing in his wings and they go forth and grow up as calves of the stall. God found Jacob in the same condition: in the waste howling wilderness. He led him about, instructed him and kept him as the apple of his eye. God finds all of his Jacobs in this condition when they come to the end of their own strength. It is always in the wilderness, as every child of mercy wanders in the wilderness (their carnal nature) looking for some way to justify their guilt and merit salvation. Never yet did a guilty and condemned sinner find satisfaction in himself. After one has passed over the road of affliction and through the valley of the shadow of death, the prison-house of bondage, he is a fit subject to receive and hear that call from the Lord, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." Who can ever realize the sweet sound of those words unless he has been destitute and heard the call? Brought out into the light and liberty of the children of God where the Sun of righteousness shines forth in all his glory. When Jesus speaks peace to the soul the wilderness becomes a pool of water and the dry land springs of water. With tears of joy they drink from the wells of salvation, praising almighty God for his goodness and mercy, giving him all the glory. They feast on the wine and milk (bread from heaven) without money and without price. Yes, salvation is the free gift of God, and all his children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be their peace. God says, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." Again, he says, "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and dry land springs of water." How wonderfully these Scriptures come home with power and sweetness to one who has been led from the world of darkness into light and liberty, receiving that faith which is the gift of God. Again God speaks to these distinguished characters, the poor and needy, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and

are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." That rest which passeth all understanding and only known to the people of God.

C. V. HILL.

CLIFTON SPRINGS, N. Y., Aug. 25, 1931.

SANTA MONICIA, Cal., Feb. 26, 1931.

DEAR EDITORS:—We have just received a good letter from our very dear friend and father in Israel, although we fear greatly to claim such a sacred relationship with him. We have heard him preach many times, and as we read his good and encouraging letter we could just seem to see him standing before us and hear him proclaim the pure gospel of truth. I have copied it and am sending it to you to publish, if you see fit. We feel that it will comfort others as we hope it comforts us.

Many wishes for your success in sending forth to lonely and isolated brethren and sisters the doctrine of God ous Savior.

Unworthily,

(MRS.) MABEL P. BERRY.

COTTAGE GROVE, Ore., Feb. 15, 1931.

DEARLY BELOVED PRISONERS OF HOPE:—We received your good, cheerful letter yesterday and I rejoiced with you as those of the circumcision of the heart in the Spirit, who worship God in the spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh.

Brother Winford, I did not intend to ignore your question, and as I remember I said something to the effect that I believed as you wrote, about Jesus appearing after his resurrection to his disciples and being seen of above five hundred witnesses, and telling them to handle him, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. I believe I said that if I wrote ever so much I could not hope to make it any plainer than the Scriptures you referred to. I believe he intended to make it plain, and did; that the very body he had, flesh and blood of the seed of Adam, had come forth from the tomb glorified and perfect and ascended unto the glory of the eternal Father who alone hath immortality dwelling in the light, so we not only have the words of the prophets, patriarchs and apostles that he shall change our vile body and fashion it like unto his glorious body; that it should be sown a natural body and raised a spiritual body, sown in corruption and raised in incorruption. But as the first fruit of the resurrection which he himself was, we have the actual example, or illustration, so that one who had never seen the harvest of fruit might not only be told in word, but if he witnessed the gathering and harvest of the first ripe grain he knew the whole process (so far as his capacity to comprehend) not only of the harvest but the fact of the mystery of germination, growth, ripening, etc. That was why he was made of a woman and made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, to abolish death and bring life and immortality to light through the gospel. With their natural eyes men do not see his relation to God, nor God in the majesty of his eternal self-existence in which he never changes or grows old, never grows or increases in either stature, age or wis-

dom, being eternally complete and perfect in all things. No man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. (Matt. xi. 27.) This appearing or manifestation of God in the flesh is to them that perish foolishness, but unto them that are called the gospel or truth of these things is the power of God and the wisdom of God, for whom he foreknew (were chosen in him before the foundation of the world) he also predestinated, called, justified and glorified. (Rom. viii. 28-39.) To one it is the savor of death unto death and to the other of life unto life: the glorious life of the resurrection. Unto you, therefore, which believe he is precious, but unto them which are disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed the same is become the head of the corner and a stone of stumbling and rock of offense, being disobedient whereunto they were appointed. Yes, appointed. (1 Cor. ii. 7, 8.) See also chapter one and two. That is because the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him. The blind man Jesus healed said to the very wise and learned scribes and Pharisees, It is indeed a notable thing that you know not from whence he is, yet he hath opened mine eyes. (John ix. 30-41.)

Now as to your request for me to write about the foundation of the churches. This is a world, and we sometimes think especially an age of fiction, fairy tales, fables, make believe, etc., which is nothing new to God. He revealed it to Paul, and he mentioned it in several places, especially in 2 Timothy iv. 1-6. When the sands of time are shifting, everything material is moving, what an unspeakable blessing to find something immovable, unchangeable, a solid rock, an anchorage that cannot be moved, a landmark that cannot be changed to fit the wanderer's eye. It is truth. When there was no man, no world, planets, sun, etc., to hold or light the way, truth and God stood alone with as full and complete knowledge of all things material when there was none of them as well and as much as now, while man is so limited he sees nothing even for the present, not being able to see in the dark, or to furnish the light, unless his eyes are opened and God furnishes or commands the light to shine out of darkness. When the heavens shall be rolled up as a scroll, and the earth shall melt with fervent heat, when there is no more science or world and heavens for them to stand on and dispute about, God and his immovable truth will endure unchanged. Our language and understanding are limited, but truth is not. Because it is God's revealed word we know. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. iii. 11. There is one God and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. As there were in the times of old men who rejected Christ, or put themselves in his place before men, so there are still men who sit in the temple of God showing themselves that they are God

and exalting themselves above all that is called God. (2 Thess. ii. 4-6.) Peter said of Jesus, This is the stone which was disallowed (rejected) of you builders, the same is become the head of the corner. I cannot reveal this to you, you cannot reveal it to me. Paul said, I received it not of man, neither was I taught it but by revelation of Jesus Christ. As for Peter, he said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God, and the Son of God, who said, Love the way, and the truth, and the life, answered, Blessed art thou, Simon, son of Jonas, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. I say unto thee, Thou art Peter, upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The eye of faith sees the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife, leaning on his arm, standing on his everlasting decrees: on what the Father revealed to Peter in the spirit and his flesh did not receive it, as is evidenced by his future conduct, that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God. It was not Peter or Peter's faith that the church was so immovably built on, but the great mystery that was revealed to Peter by the Father, that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God. There is something substantial: I am God and I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. There is no other sure foundation but Christ, and we rejoice to hope and sing, On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand, all other ground is sinking sand. There is no mediator between God and man but the man Christ Jesus. There are many, I believe nearly 666, churches built upon Peter, or man, the faith Satan delivered to Eve. See Revelation xiii. 17. 18, also Genesis iii. 3, 4. And they are just about as shifting and unsubstantial as Peter when he was sifted. The church and faith built immovably upon Christ has loved not its life, even unto death, like the solid Rock that changes not, who was with the three Hebrew children in the burning furnace. They have prayed for a faith that will not shrink though pressed by many foes like Stephen have held steadily to their course and contended for the faith once delivered unto the saints, when they (millions of them) were reviled and they reviled not again, but prayed for their enemies, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. It was the faith of Jesus Christ that Stephen rested on that fixed his eye, and the gates of hell could not move or prevail against it, although they battered, bruised and crumpled his body in unspeakable agony. I rejoice in telling you this to teach you a new thing, not because you do not know it, but because our Father in heaven has revealed it unto you and we can converse intelligently about it, while the wise and prudent of this world, from whom God has hidden it, cannot. I can talk comfortingly with you about the things you and I have both seen, having traveled the same roads in California, but you could tell me of things in Arizona, Kentucky, etc., about which I would have little or no conception, not having seen them. How good and how pleasant it is for

brethren to dwell together in unity. There are a great many things that seem reasonable and good at first sight that have no foundation or root in truth and will not stand on their foundation of sand. An old friend told me last evening of two women preachers whom he thought were good, could explain things so clearly, etc. I told him that just the truth of God's word knocked their whole structure prostrate, like Goliath, and cut off their heads. Let your women keep silence in your churches, and, I suffer not a woman to teach. The whole armor is mentioned in Ephesians sixth chapter. There are five smooth stones, five loaves of heavenly manna, both armor and food for the soldiers of the cross.

May God bless all of you as seemeth good in his unerring council. May he be your guide and your saving fear in your meeting together in his name.

G. O. WALKER.

FREEWATER, Oregon.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have been requested many times to write for the SIGNS, but my weakness and inability to express my thoughts or understanding of the sacred things of God by tongue or pen has ever been so keen to me that I have never felt competent to do so, although I have been trying now for almost fifty years to declare the riches of God's grace to his poor and afflicted people, who are journeying here in this wilderness as lambs among wolves, and have ventured a few times to write for the SIGNS, and now as I am nearing the end of my pilgrimage here in this wilderness I feel a desire to try one more time to be submissive to my brethren who have been so good and forbearing to me in all my weakness, and after you have prayerfully read this you feel it is matter which would be good for the afflicted you may give it to the readers of the dear old SIGNS.

For a foundation of what I may write I will call attention to the words of the prophet Isaiah, ninth chapter and sixth verse: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Now to be as brief as possible, I will say that the burden of my mind is to bring out some of the beauty and greatness of this wonderful gift and find the "us" who are the happy recipients of this glorious gift. A prophet is one who tells of things in the future, but if you notice the prophet here speaks of this gift and the "us" as present now. These old prophets spoke as the Holy Ghost gave them utterance, and I do believe they were so blessed as to see God's purposes embraced in what they taught from the beginning to the end of time. This wonderful gift which was given was Jesus, and the "us" who received it is the church, the wife or bride of Jesus, and the church (the believers in Jesus) rejoices at the voice of the Bridegroom. Abel, with all the ancient saints, rejoiced in this glorious gift just as fully and completely as the saints in the apostles' day, and this precious gift was

theirs as fully and completely as it is ours to-day. Jesus has ever been Jesus from all eternity, he has ever been the Son God gave us (his people), and the "us" here in our text is God's people, and always has been his people. Jesus, the Son of God, which he (God) gives us did not come here on earth to make himself a people, but the angel, the messenger of God, declared he came to save his people from their sins. Neither does the Holy Spirit, or Comforter which Jesus said he would send to quicken and to give us a knowledge of this child's birth make us his children, but it is a witness that we are his children, for his Spirit bears witness with our spirits that we are his children (the us) that God gave his Son to. It is a mistaken idea that some of our good brethren have that a child has to be born to make it a child. Of a truth it must be born to make it a manifest child. This fact was told Nicodemus: Ye must be born before you can see the kingdom of God (the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace). A birth, either natural or spiritual, is only a manifestation of something that does exist but is hid from sight. Now I desire to note the preciousness and glory of this blessed gift. I feel that King Solomon got as great a view and had as great an understanding of this as mortals can this side of the veil we (the us) all hope to see removed, that we may see him face to face without a veil between. Solomon's Song iii. 11: "Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart." I feel that this figure, or type, here brings out the exalted state in the mother (us, the church) in which we look on this Son (Jesus) which the prophet says is ours by gift. That we may get a plainer view of Solomon's mother as a type of the church here, let us hear the testimony of John while in the isle of Patmos. He saw a wonder in heaven (Jewish or law covenant) before this child was born hid back there under the law, not yet born or manifested. In this heaven John saw a woman (us, the church) clothed with the sun (light) and the moon was under her feet (the law or darkness) which hid her from view, only as the Holy Ghost revealed to holy men in those days. This woman certainly represents the (us) church. John farther describes her with a crown of twelve stars on her head. The "us" here described wears the same glorious crown her husband does, the Son Jesus, which was given her, and it is the crown the church crowns Jesus with to-day. This, the gospel day, is the day of his espousal, the day of the gladness of his heart. While she, the mother (church) carried this Son which was given us, the church, John saw her in great pain to be delivered of this Son. John farther describes this travail when he sees the souls of those which had been beheaded for the truth's sake under the altar, and crying, "How long O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood [life] on them that dwell on

the earth?" and there were crowns given unto them, and they were told to wait a little while until their brethren were killed, as they were. And John saw still another wonder in heaven, a great red dragon standing ready to devour the child which was born unto us. In all this wonder the woman gave birth to a man child, and in this birth we see fulfilled in Bethlehem the glorious message to the shepherds that watched over us, the church, through the dark night of bondage. And not only the wonder of the woman giving birth to this man child, but the wise men of the east who saw this glorious star raised the veil and brought to light that great red dragon which stood in the person of King Herod to devour the child. But the everlasting Father, God, who works and none can hinder, caught the child up to heaven. Oh how wonderful! His name shall be called Wonderful. Take the young child and go down into Egypt, for Herod will seek his life. When the dragon saw he was mocked (disappointed) he sent forth a flood to destroy the mother (church), but the wonderful God, the everlasting Father, who so wonderfully gave us the Son, prepared a place in the wilderness for the woman (church) and caused the earth to open up its mouth and drink up the flood of persecution which the old dragon sent forth to destroy her. We are now coming to the great cause of, or for, the mother (us the church) crowning the Son, our King Jesus, with all the glory of this mighty God, the everlasting Father: For he has redeemed us from sin and bondage and made us kings and priests unto God. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" So if all things are ours we are assured that all things are working together for our good, for he (God) who gave us this blessed Son has given us all things in him. Blessed is the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ according to that blessed choice which was made in Christ Jesus before the world was, and that predestinated purpose that we should be made holy in him, for whom he foreknew he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son which was given unto us. Moreover, whom he predestinated he also called, and whom he called he also justified, and whom he justified he also glorified. Who then shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God, the everlasting Father, that justifies, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, but is risen from the dead, and has crowned us with the blessed assurance, I am he that was dead but am now alive for evermore, and as I live you shall live also. O go forth, ye people of Zion, and behold the crown his blessed people crowned him with the day of his espousal (resurrection), the day of the gladness of his heart. All the work his Father gave him to do under the curse of the law is finished, and now his glad heart awaits until all things are put under his feet. We by faith now behold him lifted up high above all prin-

cipalities and powers. But see his bride, to whom he is betrothed, yet in the wilderness, in a place which God has prepared for her until the last enemy, which is death, shall be destroyed. Oh what a sure place God has provided for us here in this wilderness, established his church upon the solid rock of this child that is born (revealed) unto us. The gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Walk about Zion, view her bulwarks. Salvation hath God appointed for walls and bulwarks, and as you view the safety of this glorious city do not fail to consider her palaces, for I hear the inmates of this blessed city crowning their King with perfection, saying, He hath done all things well; and of herself she sings, Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

I humbly hope these scattered thoughts are submitted in love to the saints of like precious faith.

J. T. BARNES.

LA JUNTA, Colo., Nov. 12, 1931.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find check for five dollars, two dollars to renew my subscription and three dollars to use as you see fit.

Oh how it made my heart ache to see by the last dear old SIGNS how negligent some are who profess to be lovers of the truth it so ably sets forth and will not pay up their subscriptions. Oh the leanness, the leanness! Let all who are delinquent stop and think for one little five minutes what it would mean to so many of us if our dear paper were forced to stop, and have to think it is on "my" account. Each of us should take our ownself into consideration and do what we all should do, that is, keep up our subscriptions. I may be making a bold statement, but I will venture to say that I do not believe there is any one who dearly and truly loves the truth the dear old SIGNS sets forth but what the dear Lord will prosper them in a way they can pay for it if they really want to. I write this from experience in my father's family. Elder W. C. Perdue was my father, and he and his family were as David of old left on record: he said he had never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. It is time we were awakening, getting out of that luke-warm state, and thinking of the love of the kind and heavenly Father, so let all the dear lovers of the good old SIGNS awaken, and each and every one put his shoulder to the wheel. Where there is force there is power. We are like many others I know: the SIGNS is all the preaching we get. Since my father's death I have no one close to me I can go to and talk with of His blessed truth, and oh how I miss him.

I did not intend to write all this, but it seemed I had to say a few words. Do as you think best with what I have written.

Love to all the household of faith from a poor sinner saved by grace if saved at all,

(MRS.) C. H. SHOEMAKER.

La Mesa, New Mexico.

Dear Editors:—I have changed my address from 604 Pasadena Street, San Antonio, Texas, to Box 110, Route 1, La Mesa, New Mexico, and would like to know if there any Baptists in this part of the country, within a radius of thirty miles of El Paso, Texas.

Circumstances have changed my course in time and place. I have found nothing but Mexicans and I guess it will go hard with me in my companionship with those who know the truth. I do not know how long I will have to remain here, but I hope not long. The depression and other things have worked a hardship upon me as well as others. My son was operated upon a few days ago, and we were not permanently settled in San Antonio at the time so came here that we might be with him (who is not a man with a family) that we could be with him until his recovery, and will stay until late in the spring of 1932. I earnestly desire the prayers of the dear Lord's people, that the Lord will be merciful. I feel I am in fellowship with old Jacob, when he said, Few and evil have been the days of my life. And again, Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. I have not at any time been able to find anything good in me, that is, in my flesh, for in my flesh dwelleth no good thing, and at any time I would do good evil is present with me, and just how to perform that which is good I find not. Then am I made to cry out, Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? If any of the brethren have ever found how to perform that which is good, will you please write me the prescription so that I may yet perform that which is good, that in the end I might attain unto that which is good, and ever receive the blessing which is in store for the righteous? Prior to the year 1888 I was a pretty good fellow, and thought I knew how to do good, but in the summer of that year it was revealed to me that I was a poor begging sinner, and the very things I thought were good were wrapped up in all kinds of evil. The more I tried to do the right thing the worse I was made to feel, so I was made to see myself a sinner and in need, that instead of being a good fellow I was a wretch. Brethren, did you travel that kind of a road? If so, we are brethren. Now all my days are filled with harrassing and wayward thoughts, which is a thorn in the flesh and a pricking of the heart. I am now located miles from the brethren and am like a dove that has lost its mate, I sit in a solitary place alone and the days seem to grow longer and longer.

Well I will close this letter with love to all the household of faith.

As ever, your brother in bonds,

J. B. BOWDEN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1931.

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OBADIAH 18.

A BROTHER living in Arkansas has asked us to give him our views on the eighteenth verse of the prophecy of Obadiah. This prophecy contains but one chapter, and the verse referred to reads as follows: "And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them, and devour them; and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the Lord hath spoken it."

The fact that the Holy Spirit seals this declaration with the avowal that the Lord hath spoken it is sufficient to satisfy us that it shall be just as the Lord says. Every word of God shall accomplish that which he pleases and prosper in the thing unto which he sends it, at no time shall a single word of his return unto him void. Jacob and Esau were sons of Isaac and Rebekah and unto the mother before they were born God said, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Here is seen God's election of the one and his rejection of the other. His choice of the one and not of the other was not because of the good works of the one nor of the wickedness of the other, for neither of them had yet done anything either good or bad, but that God's purpose might stand as being according to his choice and not according to their works. We feel that we shall not be at all straining the meaning of these two characters if we say that Jacob represents the elect of God and that Esau represents the unregenerate wicked. Sometimes it is said that Jacob represents the new man, Esau the old man; but we rather think not. Jacob and Israel represent the child of God: Jacob being that child before being brought to repentance. Israel signifying that same child of God after repentance. Esau is the man of the earth and so stands for those whose inheritance is the earth and earth alone and are destined to never rise farther than the capacities of the natural man. It is said in the seventeenth verse that deliverance and holiness shall come upon mount Zion. This deliverance and holiness is that of the Lord Jesus Christ and wrought by him for his people, because there is no deliverance and holiness for them except in and through Jesus Christ. There is

salvation in none other. This prophecy, as all other prophecy, finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ and in the revelation of his glory. The house of Jacob, the people of God, is to possess their possessions, that is they shall be brought into the realization of all the Lord has promised them, shall fully realize the inheritance for which he has caused them to hope. This promised inheritance is one that cannot be defiled or corrupted in any way, it is preserved for them and they are being kept for it by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. The circumcised in heart shall all be brought without fail into the glad and everlasting possession of it. The house of Esau, the unregenerate, are all of them to be burned up, nothing of them to be left unconsumed; and the house of Jacob and Joseph, the elect of God, are to be the fire and flame by which the unregenerate and reprobate wicked, as stubble, are to be burnt up. There shall not be any left of the house of Esau, but the house of the Lord shall abide eternally. All of this, from the standpoint of christian experience, is sometimes taught by good brethren to signify the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, between the old man and the new. We doubt not but that very likely this christian warfare has its place in the exposition of this Scripture, but the full unfolding of it cannot be limited to this conflict going on in the present experience. Its import reaches beyond anything any of us have as yet come up to. The word of God plainly teaches that there is a future judgment-day for the reprobate wicked, that while all the elect of God are surely and eternally saved from eternal condemnation through the sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus Christ, there is surely coming a time when the wicked shall be set before God for judgment and shall go away into everlasting punishment. We ourselves can never forget that time when the wickedness of our own heart was discovered unto us and we were brought into judgment therefor. To see one's self as a hell-deserving sinner justly condemned before the just and holy God is to know for one's self that there is such a place as hell. All that saves you and me from staying in that hell forever and ever is the love of God in Christ Jesus which has caused him to be offered on the cross for us to the end that we shall live and reign with him forever instead of suffering the pain of eternal banishment from him. God's electing love and sovereign, free grace are all that make the difference between heaven and hell for you and me. In some wonderful way, as the Scriptures prove, the house of Jacob and Joseph are associated with the great Judge in that judgment-day which is to come upon the wicked. Thus shall they be used by the Almighty as the fire and flame to devour the stubble so that none of the ungodly shall remain. We get an inkling of this in our present gospel experience because it says that saviours, using the plural here, are to come upon mount Zion for the purpose of judging the mount of Esau. It is said that it has

pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. Therefore, ministers of the gospel are saviours in the sense that gospel preaching is salvation to them that believe. The true gospel preacher is as God's mouth to take the precious from the vile, to discriminate between truth and error, thus establishing believers in the faith once delivered unto the saints, saving many a believing soul from becoming entangled in false doctrines and in commandments of men. Of course, no gospel preacher can be or can do this of himself. It is as the Holy Ghost handles the preacher and the preaching that it is made salvation to them who believe. However, the unregenerate human nature and all its fruits are condemned in and by true gospel preaching, so that these saviours do judge the mount of Esau in passing the sentence of divine judgment upon the flesh and all its offshoots. However, do not understand us to mean that the full force of Obadiah's prophecy is to be found in this matter of true gospel preaching and in the salvation which comes in it to those believing ones. Rather, we believe, is this present gospel experience of the saints of God only a foretaste or evidence given them from God of that day which God has set in which he will judge the world by that man Jesus Christ, whom he has ordained to be the Judge of quick and dead at his appearing and his kingdom. In a very wonderful way of which we cannot conceive at this moment, the saints of God shall be associated with their Lord in this judgment: it may not be too much to say that they shall be in that day associate judges with him so that he shall use them as fire and flame to utterly consume the house of Esau. The outcome of it all shall be that the kingdom is the Lord's. No other kingdom but the Lord's shall remain for ever and ever. All the kingdoms of this world shall perish, nothing of man's work shall abide. The stone cut out of the mountains without hands shall dash in pieces all other kingdoms and shall itself grow and fill the whole earth. Even now and for centuries past the kingdoms of this world have been melting away one by one, but the kingdom of our God has not dissolved, it has stood the tests of fire and sword, of death and time, it outlasts them all, triumphs over all its enemies through Christ before whom all things shall bow. It shall ultimately and forever occupy all immensity as God himself does, even the very heights of Esau shall be laid low as the dust beneath God's triumphant ones, all the possessions of Esau, as foretold in the nineteenth and twentieth verses, shall be occupied by the house of Jacob and Joseph. "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them." "They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." Daniel said, "I beheld until the Ancient of days came and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." "The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and

destroy it unto the end." The word "they" means the saints of God to whom it shall be given to sit in judgment on the house of Esau, the entire retinue of the man of sin, and the saints shall take away his dominion, shall consume and destroy it. Thus shall Jacob and Joseph, their houses, God's elect, act as fire and flame to burn up the hosts of all who array themselves against and in opposition to God and godliness. "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."

H. H. L.

CLOSE OF VOLUME XCIX.

WITH this issue the SIGNS OF THE TIMES closes its ninety-ninth year of contending for the doctrine so dear to the hearts of Old School Baptists, and we suppose our readers will be expecting an account from us as to the condition of the publication. We are sorry we have not a more encouraging report to offer, but the truth is, we have had a very discouraging year, and have lost many subscribers through death and because of the financial condition of our country, and a great many of our subscribers have failed to pay their subscriptions, but we have been blessed with plenty of good copy, for which we thank the Giver of every good and perfect gift, and hope it may be according to his plan to prosper our country and make the year 1932 easier for all of us.

Before closing, we wish to thank all who have assisted us in any way, especially our faithful editors, whose writings during the year we feel have been of comfort and edification to our readers.

Hoping it may be according to God's plan that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will continue, and that he will guide and direct us in our work, we now say farewell for the year 1931.

J. E. B. & CO.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder H. H. Lefferts.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 14th, 15th and 16th, 1931, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Let us address you from the words of the apostle Paul in Romans viii. 24, "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" Hope is born of faith and faith is the gift of God. Paul puts faith first when he says, "And now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three." Hence, faith produces hope. Hope looks ahead with expectation and desire to that which is in the future not yet seen or apprehended by us. If we are already in possession, then we cannot be said to hope. It is for that which we do not at present see or apprehend, that we

hope for. This hope whose fruition is in the future, is present salvation in the experience of the one who hopes. Salvation is being ministered to the people of God continually in their daily experience, and hope is one of the fruits of faith which brings salvation here and now to the believer, even though that for which he hopes is not seen by him but lies ahead in the future to be fully realized after awhile. The things we hope for are not the things which result from theorizing or imagining, but those things which are promised those who believe. These promises are contained in the word of God. The written word, the Scriptures, contains these promises; the Living Word, Jesus Christ, fulfills them. Taking our subject in connection with the rest of the eighth chapter of Romans, we see that we are promised the deliverance of the whole creation of God from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. The present creation rests under the curse because of sin, but there are a new heavens and new earth to be brought in as assured by the Holy Spirit to John in the twenty-first and twenty-second chapters of the Revelation wherein there shall be no more curse, wherein God declares he will make all things new, and wherein death, sorrow, crying, pain and all the former things shall have forever passed away. The gospel covenant in which the church now dwells may be said to be an earnest or a foretaste of the glory to come, but it is by no means all of that glory. If the new heavens and new earth promised us are no more than this gospel dispensation in which we now are, then we cannot be said to hope for it, because we are already in possession of it. Peter was already living in the new dispensation when he penned his new testament epistles, but he said, "We look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," hence he nor the brethren with him were in possession of it. Furthermore, every true believer knows that he or she groans within themselves by reason of the conflict between the flesh and the spirit. The outcome of this conflict is not in any doubt: we are promised that we shall be brought off more than conquerors through Jesus Christ, who has loved us and given himself for us. In other words, what we further hope for is the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. As to what body it is which Paul declares here is to be redeemed, we are not left to doubt, for turning back to the eleventh verse of this same chapter we read, "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Hence, these bodies of ours now mortal are the ones which in the future shall be quickened and the process of quickening these bodies is to be by the very same Spirit which now dwells in us, by which Spirit we hope and by which Spirit we now live in this present evil world as children of God. What a mystery it is! The secret is

God's: it is ours to believe it, it is God's to perform it. The resurrection of the dead is assuredly the hope of God's people. Had we already attained to it, we could not be said to hope for it. Hence the resurrection of the dead is not the new birth: for the latter we have already experienced, and the former lies yet ahead in the future. In the third chapter of his letter to the Philippians, Paul affirms that he has not yet attained unto the resurrection of the dead, neither was he already perfected, but that he followed after these things that he might apprehend that for which he had been apprehended by Christ Jesus. Just exactly here is the position of the gospel church: we are not yet perfected and will not be until the resurrection of the body is accomplished. Even now, the conversation or citizenship of the church is in heaven. While we are yet in the mortal body and still on earth, the saints are already belonging to another country which is an heavenly: and out of that heavens to which we are destined and unto which we are being effectually and graciously preserved, we look for the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ who, at his coming, shall change our vile body and fashion it like unto his own glorious body by the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself. In that glorious day of Jesus Christ when he shall consummate our salvation in bringing us into the full realization of it, we shall awake in his likeness and be satisfied fully and completely never to be separated from our Beloved any more. Such is the hope of the church and there is salvation to us in having such a hope, good through grace, even while we await its full consummation in the heavenly heights beyond us.

The next session of this Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, to begin on Wednesday after the second Sunday in October, 1932, and to continue three days. At that time, we shall hope to have another good meeting through the Holy Spirit and to have with us again your messages and messengers. Until then, farewell.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Mod.
G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

(Written by Elder C. W. Vaughn)

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, meeting with the Nassaongo Church, Wicomico County, Maryland, October 21st, 22nd and 23rd, 1931, sendeth greeting and love in the Lord to the several churches and associations with which she corresponds.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In the kind providence of the all-wise God we have met as an association. We feel to be wonderfully blessed as an association, as we are at peace and the pastors of all our churches are of one accord in the doctrine of grace. In our address to you last year, and the year before, we wrote of the things in which we hope God has established us by his Spirit,

and we hope the same hand is guiding us by which we are what we are in the manifestation of eternal life. From the standpoint of considering each one as a member of such an organization, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? (2 Peter iii. 11.) This expression if brought to our minds by the Spirit and the deep things of God revealed every one is weighed and found wanting. As members of the church our unworthiness is presented, and we are mindful of what we do lest we should wound our brethren. There are many things expected of members of church organizations that are not expected of those who have not made such profession, and our acts morally are classed as being of a higher social rank than the world. If the Spirit of Christ Jesus be in us we are mindful of what we do as members of the church of God, and as churches, to stand in direct accord with the word of God, and as associations of churches, to rank with those who worship God in spirit. These relations are manifested as we are kept by the power of God, and not the acts of mortal creatures directed by the carnal mind. It is wonderful to behold the fruit of the Spirit in an individual member, and the same should be in every member of the church of God before they can be born of the same Spirit. Every one that has life in them is watching for that fruit of meekness, gentleness, longsuffering, goodness, faith and temperance, for against such there is no law. (Gal. v. 22, 23.) It testifies of their life in the Spirit, for one must be born again before he can see the kingdom of God and is raised up from death in sin to life in Christ. In the spiritual relation there is no condemnation, because they are not under the law, but under grace, and live by faith and not by works. Paul asserted to the church at Rome, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Rom. viii. 1. The Spirit is an identifying virtue between the flesh and the Spirit, and proves every man's works whether they are spiritual or of the flesh. We are commanded to watch over one another for good. This to our mind does not refer to works of mortal creatures, but to behold the working of God's power, which is good, and every one we see who has this good we call them blessed. When good is not seen we are grieved, because we know of the fruits of darkness, and the love thereof, because their deeds are evil. All that are born of the Spirit mind the things of the Spirit and bear the fruit, and all that are led by the carnal mind work enmity against the church of God and every one that would live godly in this present evil world. We feel our depravity because of the flesh, and have no strength to stand without Christ Jesus our living Head, and in him we desire our conversations and our goings forth that we may prove our sonship. If we could we would attain unto these things, and as natural men we know the impossibility, but by the Spirit we have them

revealed unto us. Our conversations, if directed by the Spirit, are glorifying of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and our acts are as becometh saints. Here we feel often the church of God is abased by men because of acts of individuals walking unbecomingly of the gospel of Christ, and try to shelter behind God's predestination, and sovereignty. Because they were not restrained. We here declare that all works of iniquity are not of God, but of the devil, and our God has his purpose in grace over all works of iniquity. We are trusting in a God that has all power and is infinite in wisdom, and in his wisdom he created all things, elected in Christ the heirs of salvation, predestinated their adoption in grace and wrote their names in the Lamb's book of life from before the foundation of the world, and his Son stood as a lamb slain from before the foundation of the world, knowing all things and declaring from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. For us to be directed by his Spirit our conversations are in heaven, from whence we look for the Lord Jesus. Our conversations in these things are beyond value, and our contending for them is the manifested godliness, which is the manner of persons we ought to be, and all strife and envy is swept away.

C. W. VAUGHN, Mod.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk

G. F. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

The Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, meeting at Lobo, Ontario, September 5th, 6th and 7th, 1931, sends greetings and love in the Lord to the sister churches of our faith and order in the United States, with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once again through the goodness and mercy of an all-wise God, we are privileged to meet according to appointment in our regular quarterly meeting, and it is our desire to address you through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES by this our Circular Letter. First, we will mention the goodness of the Lord our God during the year that is past, his lovingkindness and tender mercy have surrounded us, and his watchful care has ever been over us. He has been better to us than our fears. We feel it has been a sweet privilege to meet, and we have felt the Lord's presence. Our meetings have been well attended by those whom we hope are interested in the truth.

During the past year we have been called upon to pass through the sorrow of losing by death several faithful members, whose presence we greatly miss. They fought a good fight, and have finished their course with rejoicing, and we cannot wish them back, for they are at rest. There have also been times of rejoicing with us, when those who love the Lord Jesus have come telling what great things the Lord hath done for them, and hath had compassion upon them. The church gladly received them, and they were enabled to follow their Master in the ordinance of believer's baptism.

We hold four quarterly meetings each year, in different parts of our land. First meeting in each year begins Saturday before the second Sunday in May, in Dunwich, continuing three days. Our second meeting begins Saturday before the fourth Sunday in June, at Ekfrid, continuing three days. Our third meeting begins on Saturday before the first Sunday in September, at Lobo, continuing three days. The fourth meeting begins Saturday before the third Sunday in October, at Duart, continuing three days. We have been visited in the past year by the following Elders of our correspondence: Elders Helms and Nash at Duart, Elder Dodson at Dunwich, Elder Vaughn at Ekfrid and Elder Nash at Lobo. We are all in peace, and have been highly favored for many years by having ministering brethren of our faith and order visit us and preach for us with our pastors, and aid in the solemn work that is laid out for undershepherds to do that are called to stand upon the walls of Zion, declaring the unsearchable riches of Christ, proclaiming salvation by grace and grace alone. This is the doctrine we have been favored to listen to, both from our pastor and the brethren that have come to us. They have preached the truth with no uncertain sound, giving all praise, honor and glory to God's matchless name.

Our regular meetings are first Sunday at Lobo in the morning and at London in the evening. Second Sunday, Dunwich, morning and afternoon. Third Sunday, Duart, morning and afternoon. Fourth Sunday, Ekfrid, morning and afternoon. Fifth Sunday, London, morning and afternoon. We also have service at St. Thomas the last Thursday evening in each month, and at Toronto Monday evening following each first Sunday. Our pastor labors among us with the ability that God giveth, and both he and this church appreciate your love and fellowship, and desire further visits of your Elders among us, and any friends or brethren who may care to come with them. May peace and unity abound in all the churches, and may those that God has placed on Zion's walls be faithful to the end.

GEORGE RUSTON, Mod.
ANGUS D. GILLIS, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Nassaongo Church, Wicomico County, Maryland, October 21st, 22nd and 23rd, 1931, to the several associations with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEAR BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We feel that we have been greatly blessed of the Lord in being once more permitted to meet in an association. We feel that the Lord of heaven and earth has been manifested in love in that he has seen fit to send to us many ministering brethren laden with the love of God for his people, all expressing the same love and truth, and it does make us feel to say, as one of old, It is good to be here. We have been blessed with a good attendance from other associa-

tions. We value the visits of your messengers and your correspondence and desire a continuance of the same.

Our next Association is appointed to be held with the Indiantown Church, at Powellsville, Wicomico County, Maryland, beginning Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1932, and continuing the two following days, at which place and time we hope to meet you all again. May the Lord guide and direct us all until then.

C. W. VAUGHN, Mod.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

G. F. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

We, the Pocatalico Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association, now in session with Hopewell Church, Kanawha County, West Virginia, September 4th, 5th and 6th, 1931, sendeth greetings to the sister churches and associations with which we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED:—Once more through the mercy of our covenant-keeping and holy God we have been blessed to meet in an associate capacity, and to greet a goodly number of your messengers as they came to us laden with good things, as it were good news from a far country, having their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

Dear brethren, it is our desire as a band of brethren to be found earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, to be rooted and grounded in the apostles' doctrine, faith and practice. We desire that your correspondence be continued in the future as in the past.

Our next session will be held, the Lord willing, with the West Fork Church, Calhoun County, West Virginia, beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1932, and lasting three days, where we again hope to greet you, if it be the Lord's holy will. May we all be kept by the grace of our God.

Submitted in love.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Mod.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Arnold H. Bellows, of Roxbury, N. Y., November 4th, 1931, at the home of the bride, Mr. Amasa J. Slauson, of Roxbury, N. Y., and Miss Elizabeth Secor, of Kingston, N. Y. Mr. and Mrs. Slauson will make their future home in Kingston.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER L. L. KENNEDY, aged 56 years, died at his home, near Hagan, Georgia, June 7th,1931, after an illness of a few weeks. Elder Kennedy leaves a wife, Mrs. Laura Kennedy, one adopted son, James Kennedy, and several brothers and sisters. Elder Kennedy was the son of Elder Luke and Penny Kennedy, whose ancestors had settled in that community many years ago. He was a land owner and spent his entire life in farming and ministry around and in the community in which he died. He was a gentleman and had a very sweet disposition, was of a kindly and courteous nature, took a deep interest in his family, school and his community, and was regarded as one of the county's most highly respected citizens. Our dear brother was baptized into the fellowship of the Zion Hill Primitive Baptist Church many years ago by Elder Abren Jackson and lived a faithful, loving brother. He entered the ministry soon afterwards and proved faithful. He held fast to the faith that was once delivered unto the saints. We feel our loss deeply. Elder Kennedy was one who always could be depended upon. A more lovable man could never be met. He was our friend as well as our pastor, and we never expect his place to be filled in our hearts again in this life, but we are hopeful of meeting him again where sorrows are unknown. Elder Kennedy as a pastor purchased to himself a good degree, and

great boldness in Christ, and we feel to thank God for such gifts to the church. The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Just how sadly the church misses him is beyond me to express, yet since we are assured by his manner of life in and out of the church, that which he had pastored for fifteen years, was a blessed realization, and we desire to say, Lord, thy will be done.

The funeral services, which were largely attended, as he was widely known and highly esteemed in the community, were held at the Zion Hill Primitive Baptist Church, Bellville, Georgia, a church of which he was pastor for fifteen years, on Thursday, morning, conducted by Elder H. A. Smith and others. May God comfort those who mourn.

[THE foregoing obituary notice was sent to us for publication by Elder Kennedy' widow.—Ed]

ANN JARMON, widow of George Warner Jarmon, the subject of this notice, departed this life at her home, near Berlin, Maryland, April 3rd, 1931. She had been very well during the winter, and on the third Sunday in March much desired to attend the yearly meeting at Salisbury, Md., but owing to the inclemency of the weather we persuaded her to remain at home, for fear she might catch cold. The following Friday she was taken with a cold, which quickly developed into pneumonia, from which she suffered intensely. During her suffering she never complained, but manifested the same patience and forbearance which had characterized her through life. She looked to him for strength who was the author and finisher of her faith, in whom she had placed her trust all these years. When her suffering seemed more than she could bear she would murmur the prayer, "If it be thy will, let me go to rest." She was born July 23rd, 1839, making her stay on earth 91 years, 8 months and 10 days. She was united in marriage to G. Warner Jarmon December 7th, 1858, and to that union were born nine children, five sons and four daughters, all of whom were privileged to visit her during her last illness. Four sons reside in New Castle County, Delaware, the other son and three daughters live near her late home. The youngest daughter, Annie, lived at home, and was her constant and faithful companion since father's death, nine years ago, and before that had faithfully cared for them both and ministered to their needs. While we all feel the loss of one of the best of mothers, our hearts go out in sympathy to the youngest sister, as we feel her loss is far greater, no ties having come between her and mother, and we hope the same measure of love and kindness may be meted out to her in the coming years that she gave to her mother. Mother united with the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church at Powelville, Md., July, 1862, being baptized by the late Elder E. E. Rittenhouse, and lived a faithful and consistent member, never being absent from meeting unless providentially hindered, manifesting the fruits of the Spirit by her daily walk and conversation.

Funeral services were conducted at her late home, April 6th, by her pastor, Elder G. E. Coulbourn, who spoke very comfortingly to the bereaved family and large concourse of relatives and friends. Her body was laid to rest in Evergreen Cemetery by the side of her husband.

Written by her daughter,

IDA G. HOLLOWAY.

On the thirteenth day of November death removed from life's activity and usefulness brother **DANIEL MORRISON SECOR,** at his late home, in Kingston, N. Y., at the ripe age of 81 years. For several months brother Secor had been in failing health, due to hardening of the arteries and infirmities of advancing years. All that medical skill and professional nursing could do to assist the failing powers of nature were employed, but were of only temporary benefit. His daughter, Mrs. Amasa Slauson, tenderly cared for him in his declining years, sparing nothing that would add to her father's comfort, and cheering his lonely hours after the death of her mother seven years ago. When brother Secor was confined to his bed, his son, Hewitt Secor, of Lexington, N. Y., rendered valuable aid in caring for him. The interment was in the cemetery at Hurley, N. Y., the writer officiating at the funeral services, held the following Monday afternoon at the late home of the deceased. The subject of this notice was born in Shokan, N. Y., June 30th, 1850, and during most of his life was a farmer by occupation. In 1872 he married Miss Elmira Winn, who proved to be a faithful and helpful companion until her death in 1925. Three children were born of this union, of whom two survive, as stated above. In 1868 brother Secor was received by baptism into the membership of the Olive and Hurley Church, and until the time of his departure, sixty-three years later, was one of the leading and most useful members of that church. He possessed unusual judgment and spiritual discernment in church matters and he used his influence for peace always, and was largely instrumental in the restoration of harmony where there had once been division among the brethren. He was ever ready to sacrifice of his time, substance and energy for the welfare of the church, and his home was a home indeed where the brethren and friends of the church of the Old School Baptist faith and order were made most cordially welcome. For several years he was a licentiate and contended earnestly and effectively for sound doctrine, being a faithful witness unto the truth, of which he had a deep experimental knowledge. Kind as a neighbor and tender and loyal as husband and father, and exemplary as a citizen in all his walks of life, he will be sadly missed by his family and by the brethren and friends to whom he had so justly endeared himself.

ALSO,

With unfeigned sorrow we note the death of **CHARLES FINNEY,** at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Brooks, in Phoenecia, N. Y., November 4th, 1931. He had been ill but a few days, having sustained a severe attack of acute bronchitis, from which he did not rally. He left his home at Boiceville to be nursed at the home of Mr. Brooks, where nothing was spared to make him comfortable and to aid him in his affliction, but the attack was too grave to admit of hopes of recovery or convalescence.

The funeral services were held at the Olive and Hurley meetinghouse, in Shokan, N. Y., November 6th, the interment being at the Wiltrick Cemetery, Kingston, N. Y. Deceased was fifty-eight years old. His parents were Thomas Finney and Sarah Swarthout Finney. He lived nearly all his life at Boiceville and in Kingston. He was married in 1910. One child, Miss Anna Finney, survives. He was an honest, industrious man with many estimable qualities, useful in the community where he resided and will be much missed. Never uniting with the visible church, he evidenced however the work of grace as he neared the end, realizing that salvation is of the Lord.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

MRS. M. M. PRESLEY, the subject of this notice was born in the State of Mississippi February 6th, 1856, her parents being Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Scott, and she died October 1st, 1931. She was married to Dr. W. R. Presley May 11th, 1875, and to that union were born nine children, four dying in infancy, five still survive, with their father, and they deeply mourn the passing of a dear, faithful companion and a kind and patient mother. Sister Presley was baptized into the fellowship of Bethesda Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of east Texas, by Elder S. A. Wills, May 1st, 1880, and lived a devoted christian life until called home to her eternal inheritance by her heavenly Master. Her home was a lodging-place for the saints and the poor. All alike loved her for her kindness and charity. She was never too tired to administer to the needs of the sick and distressed. Her convictions and faith were strong and uncompromising in the doctrine of the eternal sovereignty of God in all things. She and her beloved husband would often at night sit and sing hymns of praise to God for hours, making manifest that they were born of God. Our bereaved brother has lost a precious and faithful companion, the children a loving mother, the community one of its most noble mothers, the church a faithful member, but we feel our loss is her eternal gain, that the Lord has called her home, where there is no more suffering or death, but eternal peace, joy and happiness, praising the adorable name of our heavenly Father.

Funeral services were conducted by the unworthy writer before a throng of sorrowing friends, after which the body was laid to rest at Bovina, Texas, ten miles east of her home, where she will quietly sleep until Jesus shall descend with the voice of the arch angel and call to the sleeping dust to arise into immortality to praise and worship him forever.

W. S. BOURLAND.

WILEY GOSS, the subject of this notice, was born in Ash County, North Carolina, September 13th, 1878, and died June 26th, 1931. He, with his dear wife and one daughter, Mable, moved to White Rock, Pennsylvania, in 1920. The cause of his death was from a fall from the top of a barn, where he had gone to install a new rope that he used for hoisting up hay. It was readily seen that he was badly injured, and with much haste he was taken to the Lancaster hospital, where all that was possible for medical skill to do was done for him, but all to no avail, he lived but a very short time after reaching there. Wiley was highly esteemed by all who had been blessed to make his acquaintance, which was evidenced on the day of his funeral, when several hundred of his friends and acquaintances gathered to pay their last respects to a well spent life. He is greatly missed by his beloved wife and devoted daughter, and also by the Rock Springs Church, to which place he loved to go, and we feel that in his passing the church has lost one of her dearest friends, but we desire to be thankful to the Lord that he has left evidence that for him to depart was far better, and may the Lord grant needed grace to say, Thy will be done. He leaves to mourn his devoted widow and one daughter, Mable, four brothers, and one sister: J. A., J. W., and John Goss, Mrs. Mara Wagoner, and our dear friend, Frank Goss, of near Rock Springs, and many other family connections. The Rock Springs Church feels to be most deeply associated with his dear widow and daughter in their hours of trial and sorrow. May the Lord overshadow them, and all who mourn, and fill the vacancy which he himself has wrought.

Written by one who loved him.

D. L. TOPPING.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Hulda J. Leonard, N. Y., $1; Mrs. C. A. Shryock, Va., $1; "H," Md., $2; Lillie M. Jenkins, Pa., $3; Attie A. Curtis, Me., $1; Anson Quint, Me., $3; John W. Rockafellow, N. Y., $8; Mrs. Virginia W. Dolson, Md., $2; Mrs. Ivy A. Cole, W. Va., $2; Jesse C. Ellis, Ohio, $3; Mrs. Effie J. Nethaway, N. Y., $1; Mrs. J. C. Florence, Ga., $3; Mrs. E. J. Bolton, Mo., $1; G. C. Jordan, Mo., $3; Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Okla., $1; G. G. Turner, Texas, $1; Henry T. Lefferts, N. J., $3; G. S. Varnes, Mich., $1; Sarah A. McColl, Ontario, $3; Mrs. Maria Rees, Ky., $8; Mrs. C. H. Shoemaker, Colo., $3;

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 100. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1932. NO. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HABAKKUK III. 4

"AND his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand: and there was the hiding of his power."

DEAR BRETHREN:—For some cause my meditation has been called to the above words, but feeling my weakness and short-sightedness in these things written by inspiration, it makes me fear to make the attempt to write about them. While this is true, I must be sincere and say I also have some idea of the foregoing Scripture that I am willing to submit to the judgment and inspection of the editors and readers of the SIGNS.

The Lord spoke many things by the mouth of the prophets in the law day, or the old covenant, pertaining to the gospel day, showing up the church and many gifts to her in the gospel day, or new covenant of grace, and these horns here spoken of doubtless represent these gifts in the ministry to the church. The sweet songster says, "Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing; whereof every one bear twins, and none is barren among them." Here we have the horns that were coming out of his hand, the arm and hand representing power, and every one of these horns attended with this brightness and light. And the teeth in the head of the body (the church) who is the brightness and light, all governed by the head in masticating the food for the body (the church) when the masticating is done in love and through and by the power that is thus hidden in these horns, or true called servants. Then the body grows up as calves of the stall in union and love and thrives upon the true faith that once was delivered unto the saints. But when the food is unsound, or not masticated as it should be to compound sound doctrine, then it can be seen the flock commences to dwindle, disease gets in among them and they go to warring with themselves and are scattered and divided. This even shearing is wonderfully good to the called man to make him useful to the

church when he is tried by fire, "shut up in the bone," it takes away and consumes all his fleece, or coat of self-sufficiency, and he is thus whipped out of self, to say with Jonah, Salvation is of the Lord, and he comes down as a poor penitent to seek his all in Jesus. Therefore by this the true called of God bear twins, they bear the mark of a spiritual travel from nature to grace, thus come up from the washing of regeneration in the blood of the dear immaculate Lamb of God. Then they bear the mark and experience of true called children of God, as before stated. Therefore there is not one that is barren among the called of God. Naturally, it would seem very strange to see rough horns coming out of the hand. These horns are of the head, and are used as a defense of the body. It would be equally as astonishing to the learned natural man to see some rough, ignorant, unlearned man so wonderfully feeding the flock while tears of joy coursed down the cheeks of the dear child of God. The natural man cannot tell anything about it, or how these things can be, not seeing the invisible inside work of the Lord, how smooth it is, and the invisible power that is therein hid from the naturally wise of this world; it seems to them that it must take knowledge; but these servants have been with Jesus and learned of him. In speaking of these horns Paul says, "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." This must answer to the reproach that is often cast at Primitive, or Old School Baptist preachers, that they are generally ignorant and unlearned. Not that ignorance in a sense is a thing to be desired. The Lord does not look upon things as man does. The natural man looks on the outside for something great while God looks on the heart. Paul does not say that none of these called servants are "wise men after the flesh," but that not many of them are. I believe there are a few wise and able men, such as Elders Gilbert Beebe, P. D. Gold, Hassell, and W. M. Gadsby, of England, and others, who have been made able by grace to defend the rights, faith and doctrine of the true church against the sharp worldly-wise assaults of the enemy and rout them from their very hiding-places. I often in the sleepless hours of night meditate upon the greatness of the cause and my inability to fill such a holy calling, and think of the humble servant of Abraham who was sworn not to "take a wife [the church] unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell: but thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son." The prophet says, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem." Then it was

and is none but God's people, the kindred in Christ, the servant and the prophet was sent to, and no one to-day has the called man to go to but the kindred in Christ. This eldest servant of Abraham said, I being in the way the Lord led me to the house of my brethren. The command was, "Feed my sheep." When we are asked to put away from us the faith and doctrine of eternal vital unity with Christ and his people chosen in him before the dust of the earth was made, they want us to accept in its place a conditional salvation, with all it embraces, which means the sinner has the right to choose the Lord if he wishes to. They ask us to put away from us the foreknowledge and predestination and power of God over all worlds and dominions and accept instead a limited predestination, but as for me, I am willing on these deep mysteries that every one be fully persuaded in his own mind, without raising bars of fellowship among brethren, and can forgive those who cannot see the matter through my glasses. I have thought the best evidence of a true called man is that he has been given this brightness which was as the light. "For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light." This light is at once made apparent and is felt by the church, and is the evidence of a true call, which is felt in the hearts and minds of his brethren there, for this light, or gift, will make room for him, and also shows he has been brought up in grace's school and taught the truth that salvation is alone of God. It might be that some through eloquence of speech and oratory would attract and entice even some of God's people, yet be far from called men. I am sorry to say that most of the trouble that comes in among us starts from the pulpit, by teaching the smooth things and precepts and commands of man. The prophet says, "Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks?" I see something said about a compromise with the progressives. I infer that sound Old School or Primitive Baptists love peace, but love purity of communion more than numbers. I am pleased that it appears of late that a spirit of unity and love is among sound Primitive or Old School Baptists, and we should be satisfied in well doing. I hope all who have been brought up in grace's school can say there is no salvation or saving from destruction for time and eternity but of God. As I see it, all are as destitute of power after the new birth as they were of a will before they were born of the Spirit to do anything that would bring God under any obligation to them, therefore it is all of grace, and our good works are ordained of the Spirit. Having this in view, may the true servant of God "cry aloud, spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet [the horns], and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." When this is done the walls of Jericho must fall to the ground before God's people, when the "seven priests shall hear before the ark the seven trumpets of rams' horns." It is then as David said, "He also exalteth

the horn of his people, the praise of all his saints, even of the children of Israel, a people near unto him." David also says, "Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed." Here is, as I see it, the appointment to be filled in the gospel day, the new covenant of grace that was "made sure in all things." Isaiah says, "And it shall come to pass in that day [the gospel day], that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt." David said, "Lift not up your horn on high: speak not with a stiff neck." "My horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil." I fear there are some claiming to be blowing these gospel trumpets of rams' horns who have found a wild vine, not our Vine, neither our Rock, for our Rock is not as their rock, and gathered thereof "wild gourds," and the children will cry out, "There is death in the pot." (2 Kings iv. 39, 40.) Therefore by their teaching they show they lack this anointing with this fresh oil. Paul says, "For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" When I hear a little of grace and a little of works I lose confidence in that man and he gets away from me and my experience and I do not believe him. I infer that all who are hearing the true trumpets of God have at times felt the great weight of so sacred a calling and realize the great responsibility that is resting upon them, and can say with Ezekiel the prophet, "If the watchman [the trumpeter] see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people [the church] be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand." So, dear servants of the living God, stand for your lives, and know nothing save Jesus the truth, the way and the life.

I have tried in this article, though in a weak way, to show the difference in the sound of the true gospel trumpet and that of the strange uncertain sound of error and darkness, and had no person in view to criticise, and may we all say with David, "Make a joyful noise before the Lord the King. Let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." Brethren, let us not get discouraged though the world with all its learned theologians combine against the true faith and doctrine. Let them vent their spite and hurl their missels to explode this doctrine, yet through the power of her great and eternal Head the old ship will be safely laden with all of her "train that filled the temple" in spite of all forces of men and devils; the cause is God's and will prevail, without the loss of one.

I have written hastily and only hinted at the words at the head of this article. I feel that much more could have been said and then the half would not have been told. However, if there is any food for the wayfaring children in what I have written, to the Lord alone is due the praise.

W. L. EDWARDS.

CASTLEWOOD, Virginia.

NEWARK, Delaware.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—For the past few weeks my mind has been led into the sovereign equality of God, and compared to man's unequal ways, it leads into deep waters, and if the pen of the ready writer is delivered to the creature, the people of God can be made to turn from the ways of iniquity while in this pilgrimage of clay. "O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal? Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord God. Repent and turn yourselves from all your transgressions: so iniquity will not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions; * * * whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" And his cry of mercy goes out, even to the wicked, "For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth [the nonelect], saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye." The Lord's love for and his mercy to his people Israel, made him speak forth these words in the days of the captivity, and he proves his love and mercy in this appeal to the house of Israel through the mouth of Ezekiel. His discrimination between the wicked and the righteous is so sharp and true one cannot fail to discern "election" strongly emphasized. He places responsibility of his people in themselves so plainly that one cannot fail to see where he stands. The soul that sinneth it shall die; the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither the father of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die: all his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done, he shall live. Surely this does not mean eternal life, only the natural life of the man. He, in his self-righteousness, self-control, oblations to the Lord, and all his goodness within himself, makes his conscience seared, and good in his own estimation. That is God's mercy to this side of humanity, the earth is Esau's portion and the pleasures therein. He allows this man to live in the world without tribulation, happy in his own self-righteousness, "He shall live." But he follows with, Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? No, his love is extended even to the wicked, but the die is cast, his word is given, and we feel the same way toward the blind that never shall see. "But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, *in them* shall he die." Here is the discrimination: dead in trespasses and in sins we once were, now we are dead to sin, but He does not take from

us eternal life in Christ Jesus. Only the plague of sin confronts us in our prison-house of clay; we suffer daily for the sins in us, tribulations and sufferings of the heart and bodily pains accompany the child of hope in this pilgrimage in earth, and there is no discharge in this war. Yet, we say, the way of the Lord is not equal.

The responsibility of the "watchman" (the preacher) is great, equally as great now as in the days of the captivity. "Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them, When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their caosts, and set him for their watchman: if, when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people,; then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning, if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his head. He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning, his blood shall be upon him [himself]: but he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul." The ones that are born in the righteousness of Christ take warning. The sword surely is upon the land in our time, spiritual wickedness in high places, even as Sodom and Gomorrah are upon us now in fury, mockers in the last time, having not the Spirit. Here (may be) the responsibility of the "watchman," if he see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned, if the sword come and take a person from among them, "he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand. So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel." "Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel, Thus ye speak, saying, If our transgressions and sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live?" He places the prayers of repentance in the hearts of men, knowing before what they will say or ask for; he kills them in their own strength and renews his strength in them. "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked," but the language of the Father here, would present even a thought of love for them, pity, "but that they would turn from their way and live." His mercy is even extended to the wicked, but the die is cast, there is no changing his decrees. But to the elect he appeals, "Turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" "The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression: as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sinneth. When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, *he shall die for it.*" Here he turns man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that he may be saved in the day of the Lord. "Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he

turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life [natural life], without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of his sins that he hath committed, shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live." This is the man under the law, self-righteous, his sins forgiven by the law, but this man's life is only natural. The end of that man is death. "Yet the children of thy people say, The way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, I will judge you every one after his ways." Condemnation upon his elect here on this earth is with them all the time, tribulation is their portion, sin is their nemesis, their shadow continually. "Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves," son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. The ones that are after the fleece instead of feeding the flock are the ones this terrible "sword" was pronounced against in the days of the captivity, and if any in our time, this gospel dispensation, are guilty, their hearts will burn within them, and if there be burning there, then it is apparent they are wolves in sheep's clothing, crept in unawares, and have gone out perhaps, were with us but not of us, that eat the fat and feed not the flock. "The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost. * * * And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd." Now there is one, Christ Jesus. "Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand. * * * I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out," and I will make them a covenant of peace. "And ye, my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God." He knoweth them that are his.

Yours in love and fellowship,

J. B. MILLER.

DANVILLE, Va., Nov. 11, 1931.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—DEAR SON:—I feel a desire to write you some thoughts on an important matter with me, and after you see my failure take the subject and give your views on same, if you can spare the time. "The Way." Realizing I am near the end of my road, according to nature, I feel a desire to know, if possible, if I am in the right way. When Jesus was here and spoke of going away the disciples seemed to fear they did not know the way he would go, and seemed confused, but when he told them he was the way, the truth and the life, how comforting it must have been to them, if he truly did at that time reveal the fact to them that he loved them and would not forsake them, that while bodily he would be absent himself from them he would send the Holy Spirit to comfort them, in whom all power in both heaven and earth remains, and he has promised never to forsake us. I fear my name is not written there.

I want to speak now of Paul, our apostle, as he declared himself to be, which I think was affirmed also by our Lord and Master. Now let us examine the way he took after he was quickened, made to see the way he should go. I feel that in Paul's life and walk here there are facts set forth by him that the children of God desire to and should know, as to the knowledge he had of Jesus, and how he came in possession of it. Some time ago I just opened my Bible and began to read the second chapter of Ephesians, and read nearly the entire book of Ephesians, and I never before had such sweet fellowship for the apostle Paul. After reading of the dealings of God with him, and the way God led him, and what he believed and preached, and there is no doubt but what it was direct from heaven and ordered by God himself, and after trying to acquaint myself with the teaching of Paul in regard to doctrine, predestination, election, &c., I then felt a desire to compare it with what you and other Primitive Baptist ministers preach, and what true Primitive Baptists believe this day in which we live, and while I feel not to be at all qualified to judge, but think I can see a striking resemblance, that many of our ministers and members of our faith and order are contending for the same precious things our apostle Paul fought and died for in the precious faith given to the people of God. Then, my dear boy, if we have this God-given faith that we are in the right way, that we are truly following Jesus, then after all our conflicts, distress, disappointments, poverty in the time of so great unrest in financial conditions of the whole world, when it seems all the wise and great men of the world are made to stagger at the present conditions and cannot find relief from the great weight we have to carry, we know God still rules and reigns. Amen.

I have written much and told nothing.

Love to all. We are in usual health.

Your father,

R. L. DODSON.

[THE above from my dear father will, I am sure, find a responsive chord in the hearts of many of our readers. The matter of which he writes is of the greatest importance to every true believer, especially those who feel as he says he does, to the nearing of the end of their earthly journey. It is a most solemn thought, and the fact that one fully realizes it and is constantly examining himself and diligently searching for evidences of his acceptability with God is the best proof that can be found that he is in the "right way." The strait way is a narrow way; it is a difficult way and one that no man will choose except he be called of God to walk in it. I rejoice that my father, by the grace of God, has been enabled to see and walk in this high way. It is wonderful, indeed, that he should be brought into the fellowship of the apostle Paul in the manner he relates, and be given to testify as he does to the source from which such knowledge comes. His experience is a confirmation to me that I am endeavoring to contend for the faith which was deliv-

ered unto the saints. I believe it will also help to encourage others who are fighting the fight of faith. What a comfort to feel, amidst all the turmoil and strife of this life, that we have the eternal God as our refuge and that not only will he *not* forsake us here, but has by his firm decree determined that nothing shall separate us from him throughout all time to come. Let heaven and earth join in endless praise to his great and adorable name. My father says he has "written much and told nothing." I can appreciate how he feels, but if I mistake not he has given us a glimpse of that which this world cannot comprehend nor contain. —R. L. D.]

FERNDALE, Washington.

DEAR EDITORS:—My mind has been in a great conflict since I received the November SIGNS and read the statement that it will have to discontinue publication unless the financial support is better. Oh how can they be so careless, when this publication means so much to us? It is the means whereby we hear from each other, bringing glad tidings of great joy to each of us, and many, many times one letter alone is worth to us more than the small price we pay for the paper, and just think how many there are who get all their preaching from reading it. This alone ought to repay us for the expense. I look at this as I do the church. If the members fail to support it, either financially or otherwise fail to supply it with the right kind of manuscript, it is as a candlestick which shall be removed. And this is only our side of the facts in this case, for when we earnestly and prayerfully think of our dear editors and publishers, who so patiently and earnestly watch over us so that nothing objectionable or contrary to sound doctrine ever enters into its columns, I believe that if we only knew what they have to put up with in this way we would more often think of them when at the throne of grace, and pray the Lord to give them grace and strength to sustain them. We know that both editors and the SIGNS are in the Lord's hand and he will do what is best, both for us and for his cause, for he is ruling all things for good to those who love him and wait for his appearing. I have sometimes wondered if we did not idolize the SIGNS, and was it going to be taken from us for this reason? and it caused me to search my heart deeply and diligently. I do love the dear old SIGNS, because it sets forth and upholds and contends for God's eternal truth; if it did not, it would be of no more comfort to me and I would not esteem it above any other literary magazine. I am with it like I told sister Florence Pultz in reply to a remark she made in one of her letters to me. She said I might not fellowship her because she was a Clark Baptist. I told her I had never seen either Clark's or Beebe's name mentioned in the Scriptures, and I hoped I was a Jesus Christ Baptist. It is the same way with me when talking or writing on God's eternal truth: I do not know what I am, but I hope it is the Spirit of almighty God working in me both to will and to do of his

good pleasure, and that he is both mouth and wisdom for me, and my constant prayer is that I may rightly divide the word of truth, for I am fearful lest I darken counsel by words without knowledge, for I am so weak and ignorant and so apt to err. I often wonder if there is any one else who is so tormented with that old fellow who lives within them. He follows me wherever I go, and wants to be first in all things, especially where there is any honor or praise due, and he is always trying to show off his good points and skill. He is with me whenever I try to pray or hear or read, and tries to discourage me when I sing. He surely is my enemy. I try to keep him under or behind me, but he is ever present with me and I hate him because he is always suggesting to me to do that which I know I ought not, and it is very hard to live with him, for I cannot please him and at the same time take up my cross and follow Jesus, who I love and wish I could follow, even though the way be rough and stony and the cruel thorns pierce my tender heart; made tender I hope by the operation of God's power in it, through his tender mercy towards me, who am less than the least of all saints, but I can say with Paul, It is by the grace of God I am what I am, a poor beggar at the throne of grace. Yes, I am indebted to the Giver of every true and perfect gift for the desire to beg for mercy. He first gave me eyes to see him high and lifted up, full of love and pity, then filled my heart with love for him and all his attributes, and while I saw and loved him thus I was given a thorough view of myself, weak and helpless and justly condemned, without a thing to recommend me to his clemency, and then he spoke these words of relief, Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee; go in peace. And in that most comforting peace I have been traveling for over fifty years, and although I have never deserved it, I have ever felt that peace and rest, which is a perfect rest, and as I grow older that rest and peace grows sweeter to me, and it seems more sure to me because of the continuation of it when the tempest raged and clouds obscured the Sun of Righteousness, and at his appointed time the Sun shone through with healing in his wings and I was lifted up above earth and all my trials and fears vanished, for he had healed them, and my faith was confirmed, my hope was both sure and steadfast and entered into that within the vail, whither the Forerunner hath for us entered, he being the firstfruits, or the first one born from the dead, thereby he has begotten us again unto a lively hope by his resurrection from the dead. Now all these things together confirm my hope, for I have lived in them by the grace of our God, who is from everlasting to everlasting and never changes; he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and can I not say my hope is stronger? No, not stronger nor more sure on God's part, but am I not more sure, more firmly rooted and grounded in the truth by the repeated experiences which have all, without a single exception, gone to prove the faithfulness of the God I love

and in whom I have put my trust? How true the promise was that Jesus made: I will never leave nor forsake thee, but will be with thee always, even unto the end of the world, and that, dear tried and persecuted ones, is as long as we will need his protecting care, for when this life ends all our trials cease; there will be no sorrow there, for we shall see him as he is, and be satisfied, for we shall be changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body. Dear ones, is not this enough? Why should we try to pry between the leaves to find out what kind of a place heaven will be, or where it will be located, when Jesus has told us he has gone to prepare a place for us, that where he is there we may be also? This is enough for me, for where Jesus is will be heaven for me.

In bonds of christian love,

DAVIS BURCH.

PLEASANT HILL, MO., NOV. 11, 1931.

TO THE SAINTS SCATTERED ABROAD: —May love, mercy and peace abound. I have just read a Circular Letter written by Elder Gabriel Conklin for the Warwick Association, at Brookfield Church, June 4th and 5th, 1845, signed Gilbert Beebe Moderator and G. Conklin Clerk, which letter I fully indorse, and as a further testimony shall write a few lines on the same subject, if agreeable with the editors.

"Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?"—Acts xxvi. 8. It would seem by this quotation that there were in the apostolic time those who denied the resurrection of the dead. When we speak of the resurrection of the dead at the last time we mean the created man, the first Adam, for we know of no other man that will be dead at that time. We know of no man the law was given to but the natural man, Adam, who was so ignorant that he was naked and did not know it, and he partook of the forbidden fruit, and he and all that were of him fell under the curse of the law God gave him. He was substance and not spirit, and of these substance beings God chose, elected and wrote their names in a book when as yet there was none of them, and gave them to his Son, who came in the fullness of time and redeemed them unto God out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people under heaven.

Now let us read a little from Paul to the Roman brethren, Romans eight, commencing at the twentieth verse: "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." God was willing to make this creature (man) just this way, a servant of vanity. Man had no will in the matter of how, where or when he was made, and as soon as he was made he was a willing servant of vanity, and he (God) was going to make this same creature a subject of hope. Verse twenty-one: "Because the *creature itself* also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." The creature has not been delivered manifestly out of bondage and corruption,

Verses twenty-two and twenty-three: "For we now that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." The apostle had strong consolation that the creature, the body, was going to be redeemed, and adopted, and these are they whose names were written in a book when as yet there was none of them. Now I think the cavil of words as to whether we are changed to spiritual before we leave the grave, or changed after we leave, is unprofitable, for "we shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed." Please read, at least, the mystery Paul showed the saints, 1 Corinthians, fifteenth chapter, commencing at the fifty-first verse. Notice Paul only told you he would show you a mystery, he did not say he would explain everything.

Brethren, is this your hope? If so, go on rejoicing, trusting in Israel's God, he that has promised to raise your vile body, and fashion it like unto the glorious body of our blessed Savior. Oh why, why should it be thought a thing incredible that God should raise the dead?

T. E. ATTEBERY.

BATH, Maine, June 7, 1931.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have wanted to write you a long time, to tell you how I enjoy your writings in the SIGNS. I like to read of what you think of the happenings around us. I often wonder at them, and ask myself why this and why that, and as far back as February, 1930, I felt I must tell you how I liked the editorial. I wish I might be given words to tell you some of my thoughts of how I think we are affected by things around us. I know it is so, however hard I fight it. When I read what Paul wrote in Romans it is a great comfort to me: "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." There are times when I am very much dissatisfied with the life I live. I would like to be good, but when I look within I find much that is evil and bad. It makes me ashamed, and I know I cannot do one good act. But I have a very bright place to look back to, and I know the sermon Elder Dodson preached was for me. My sins all rolled away and everything was peace and joy; that was a wonderful time. I am a great lover of nature, the outdoors has a great fascination for me. I was reading about the trees of Lebanon, they were of God's planting. I was at Fort Pofham the other day and watched the waves roll in, and thought of how they came just so far, and no farther. What a mighty hand held them, and the other night when I saw the rainbow I thought of God's promise. All those things are wonderful, and when I look into the heavens and see the stars and think how they are held in place, and think of this wonderful world, I have a feeling of awe come over me.

How I would love to be with you all at the Association. It brings sad

thoughts to me, for sister Agnes and I had planned much on this spring, but it was not to be. She was a good sister to me, but my loss is her gain. I hope I can say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord," but it is with a sad heart. We have met at sister Attie's for our meeting as there are so few of us. God's ways are mysterious and past finding out. As long as God keeps my hope and gives me patience to wait all will be well.

May the Lord bless you and keep you, give you food to eat that will enable you to feed his flock, and give you strength to stand by the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

With fellowship and love for the truth you speak and write, I hope I am your sister,

RACHEL BEAL POTTER.

MATTOON, Ill., Nov. 26, 1931.

DEAR EDITORS:—Kindly make use of the inclosed in any way you may deem proper. In all probability it may be my last remittance, as I am now well along in my ninety-fourth year of age. I have been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for eighty-two years, and for sixty odd years it has come into my own home regularly. Since my home was broken up, nearly three years ago, my address continues to be Mattoon, Illinois. I get out in the open but very little in the winter months. I wish to say to the brethren and sisters that my appreciation of their dear messages of love and devotion cannot be expressed in words, but I will try in a very brief way to acknowledge receipt of their comforting letters. I am wonderfully blessed of the Lord in that I have no physical pain or suffering to endure. Aside from my own dear family, who anticipates my every need, many other friends see me, daily, in my room. The Lord has been my very present help in all times of sorrow and need. I truly can say, My soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation.

J. G. SAWIN.

WINNSBORO, Texas Dec. 3, 1931.

DEAR EDITORS:—I read the notice in the November SIGNS, and I surely would hate for the paper to be discontinued. I hope the all-wise Giver will provide a way these hard times to keep it going. Every one ought to realize what a struggle the SIGNS has had, and, if possible, send in their subscription. If it were in my power I would help what I could, but I am a poor widow and have had a hard struggle to keep the wolf from the door this year. This depression is awful and extends all over the world, I suppose, but we have much to be thankful for, we are still living. I pray the good Lord to bless each of us and keep our paper going, also the good editors and publishers, who deserve so much for their lovingkindness and patience, God be with you.

A devoted friend,

(MRS.) F. S. PETTY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1932.

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NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

HERE we are again at the threshold of another year, and this the one hundredth year in the lifetime of the SIGNS. It is something indeed to have been spared to see this good day, to have been blessed all these years with the necessary wherewithal to maintain a medium of communication such as this among the people of God scattered over this country far and near. Those who have in any way throughout this past century contributed to the support of the paper have been used of the Lord to his glory and to the comfort of his sheep and take no credit to themselves. Those of us who love the paper and the truth it stands for, surely feel that the Lord put it into Elder Gilbert Beebe's heart to start it in 1832 and to maintain it so long as he lived. When his race was run, the paper did not fall, but others were raised up to keep it going: and so it has been all through the long years: as one editor or editors were removed by death, the Lord raised up others to go on with the work, and so it has never failed. Nor will it fail so long as the Lord has a purpose for it. The paper and those who have conducted it have had their opposers, the way has seemed very dark and rough at times, many times it has seemed scarcely worth while to go on; but then always there has come encouragement from brethren and faith from God to enable the work to proceed. Nobody, either editors or publishers, has made any money out of it: it has never been regarded as a money-making proposition. It was started for the good of the cause of Jesus in the earth, and no other ambition than the defense of the principles of eternal truth has been the driving power all this past century. The past year of financial stringency has been felt by every one all over our country, and all over the world for that matter, and the SIGNS of course has not escaped conditions which have befallen all business; but to-day there is no thought on the part of the publisher or of the editors of discontinuing the paper so long as there is a need for it and so long as the Lord places it in the hearts of his children to contribute to its support. If you owe the SIGNS anything by your subscriptions being in arrears, try to

pay up at once; if you cannot pay now, let us know about it. It is not our intention to stop sending the paper to any who enjoy it and who get benefit from it, just because they cannot pay: yet on the other hand, we do not want to keep on sending it to those who are sufficiently able to pay for it and who simply carelessly neglect to send in their renewals. If you cannot pay for the paper yourself, try to get some new subscribers for it: in that way you help us and help yourself, too. In getting new subscribers, it is not necessary to go out and solicit people of the world to take it. They have no need for it and no use for it. But, maybe, you know friends or brethren who believe the truth the paper stands for, yet who do not take the paper and are plenty able to take it: speak to them about it and see if you can get their subscriptions added to our list. All this helps. Now that the Lord has enabled us to reach the centenary of this paper, we know of no better way to celebrate his goodness than to endeavor to increase the paper's usefulness by getting as many new subscribers as possible for it.

When Elder Gilbert Beebe began the publication of the SIGNS in 1832, he placed in that first number of the paper a statement of the principles for which the SIGNS should stand. It seems appropriate at this time to place this prospectus before our readers to refresh their minds as well as our own. Here it is:

(1) The co-extensive sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfection of the Great Jehovah—the revelation which God has given of himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one."—1 John v. 8.

(2) The absolute predestination of all things.

(3) Eternal and unconditional election.

(4) The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

(5) The atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

(6) The sovereign, irresistible and (in all cases) effectual work of the Holy Ghost in quickening and regenerating the elect of God.

(7) The final perseverance and eternal happiness of all the sons of God by grace.

(8) The resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.

(9) The church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers —that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament—that the Scriptures are the only rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

(10) There is no connection between church and state, etc.

In addition to the above ten principles for which Elder Gilbert Beebe was moved to contend, he also made the following statement of the SIGNS' aim:

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath School Unions, etc., waging war with the mother Arminianism and her entire brood of institutions.

The paper will be divided into two

parts, viz:

(1) Jesus Christ set forth.

(2) Antichrist exposed.

As to how well the paper has kept the faith committed to it by its able first editor, we shall leave others to be the judge. Suffice it to say, that no man or men should ever accept a place on the staff of the paper, either as editor, associate editor or publisher, whose conscience before God is not in accord with the above principles. A man accepting such a position on the paper and then using the columns of the paper to undermine the principles which it advocates, would be no less than a traitor to the cause. We pray the Lord may keep the publication from any such fate befalling it.

In these New Year salutations from year to year, we have always felt like reviewing passing events in connection with their spiritual import to the people of God, but have left little space for it this time. More and more the nations of the world are preparing for war while all the time they talk and confer as to the limitation of armaments and world peace. As we write these lines, the League of Nations is straining every nerve to rescue the Far East from hostilities between Japan and China, but with little prospect of success. Unto the end, wars and desolations are determined. The Word so says and it connot be otherwise so long as the present organization of the world continues; no human confederation merely can save the world from disaster. More and more as time passes the lineaments of the antichrist, the man of sin, come more plainly into view. It becomes also more and more evident that this man of sin when he finally steps out on the world's stage will not be a pope of Rome, but an out and out infidel who will himself claim to be God and will exalt himself above all that is called God. This infidel antichrist to whom will be joined many other powers will make short work of "the great whore," the "mother of harlots and abominations of the earth," who has drunk the blood of the saints and of the martyrs of Jesus. This "man of sin," though he may use "Mystery Babylon" for a time to accomplish his own ends, when he becomes sufficiently self-confident will, with his confederates, "make her desolate and naked and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire." We have already seen this very thing come to pass in Russia where the infidel power has wrecked the state church in that country and has made it exceedingly difficult for any religion to live. 1931 saw Spain disestablish "Mystery Babylon" and put her under the government's foot. 1931 also saw the dictator of Italy and the dweller in the Vatican at odds. For the time, a peace has been patched up, but eventually variance will come and there can be no doubt as to the outcome: both history and the word of God point the way. The infidel antichrist will triumph, but his victory will be short and he will continue but a short space, for the Lord will come and destroy him with the brightness of his coming. This great eventuality is particularly portrayed

in Ezekiel thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters, Zechariah fourteenth chapter, Revelation seventeenth and eighteenth chapters. The past year also has seen a famine of plenty: large crops of all kinds of farm products bringing such low prices that, in many instances, farmers could not afford to gather them. Also luxuries and non-essentials circulate as freely as before. This makes us think of Revelation vi. 6: "A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine." Luxuries, signified by the wine and oil, circulating unhurt plentifully, while the necessities of life such as agricultural products, signified by wheat and barley, bringing nothing at all hardly. In the midst of plentiful harvests, we see the strange spectacle of thousands all over the world suffering for lack of food and other necessities: surely a famine in the midst of plenty. All this is tending toward the great earthquake in Revelation vi. 12. An earthquake is the upthrust of the lower strata of the earth's crust through the upper strata, and this earthquake that is to come is nothing less than just that: a terrific upthrust of the lower ranks of earth's millions through the upper layers of society and government thrusting them aside and taking the reigns of authority to themselves. This has already come in Russia and the end is not yet. This present disquietude and unrest the world over, fostered by infidel and rebellious principles, may or may not pass for the present; but whether it does or not, ultimately the most terrific earthquake and upheaval that human society and government has ever seen is bound to come. All these signs of the times betoken the approaching end of the gospel dispensation and the end of the Gentile times, the fullness of the Gentiles will have come in and will be gathered home out of all danger before the vials of divine wrath shall be poured out on the reprobate world. This diminishing of the true church is already seen among us, it will be terminated by the coming of the Lord to secretly take away his people from a doomed world. As Lot was taken from Sodom before that wicked city was destroyed, as Enoch was translated before the world was destroyed by the flood, as the Jews were saved out of Egypt before the overwhelming of Pharaoh's host, so the church will be removed from earth before the day of wrath. The word of God promises us that he has saved us from the wrath to come, hence his church will not be on earth when it comes. Jesus says to his church, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

H. H. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

Written by Elder Arnold H. Bellows

The Lexington-Roxbury Association, now in session with the Second Church of Roxbury, at Roxbury, New York, September 16th, 17th and 18th, 1931, sendeth christian greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Pursuant to a commendable and long established custom, this Circular Letter is submitted for the benefit of our inquiring friends and brethren. The first and second verses of the nineteenth Psalm comprises the subject of this article: "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." Since words are the signs of ideas, it must needs be that spiritual realities find expression in figures of speech and in appropriate imagery intellectually comprehensible. The world book of nature is therefore representatively employed to declare the things witnessed by those who have learned from the word book of life. The word "heavens" occurs in this instance in the plural form with its natural meaning as well as with a sublime spiritual application to the lives and experiences of God's children. There are the vapory heavens with their spangling, sunbeam-painted clouds adorning the natural firmament, the aerial heavens with their calms and tempests, the solar heavens with their fadeless blue and sunlit splendor, and the evening heavens jeweled with the radiant moon and the glittering stars. In a spiritual sense, there is more than one heaven recorded in the sacred word, which declare the glory of God in their unfathomable vastness and in the incomparably glorious wonders they contain. The natural heavens were created by God without the knowledge or assistance of man and contain bodies visible and invisible to the unassisted eye. Eloquent with faultless beauty they proclaim the creative, controlling, preserving glory of God, and submissive to unerring law, they testify to the fact that the thing made cannot be greater than its maker, and prefigure the fact that a sinner suffering the penalty of sin and death cannot control nor direct the law of the Spirit of life. The unchangeable law of attraction and gravitation holds with unerring nicety all the heavenly bodies in their orbits and proper places so that collision or confusion is impossible. So in the spiritual heavens there is an added glory in the working together for good of all things for them that are the called of Jesus Christ. The same power that marks the pathway of the planets preserves the saints of God from falling and guarantees their eternal security in Christ. In the creation of the heaven and the earth the evening and the morning are declared to be the first day. The firmament appeared in the natural realm following this first day, typical of the fact that when a poor sinner is born again by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit, he realizes that the night of his deadness and condemnation precedes the day of his life and justification, as he is experi-

mentally led to discern the glory of God in the firmament in the work of his eternal Son. The creation of the natural heaven before the earth was brought into existence signifies the precedence of spiritual things over the temporal world of nature.

In both a natural and a spiritual sense there is a plurality of heavens. Abel, Noah, Melchisedec, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and others of the saints before the time of Moses had their abode in the patriarchial heaven, for the legal heaven with its holy decalogue and ceremonial law with its elaborate ritualism did not appear until God gave the legal covenant through Moses on Sinai. The decalogue manifested the deadly wound of sin and man's inability through the weakness of the flesh to keep that covenant, while the ceremonial law pointed as finger posts of God to Christ Jesus as the only remedy. The law reigned with all its unspent force until Jesus through his death on the cross ended its power over every subject of grace. The prophets were the stars that illumine the old testament night of man's bondage to sin and death, for even righteous Abel's acceptable offering unto God was a prophetic testimony of Jesus of whom all testimony is the spirit of prophecy. The law is represented by the moon, which has no light of its own, but reflects the rays of the sun as the law reflects the power and justice of God. By the law is the knowledge of sin, and without law there is no transgression, and therefore no demonstration of the love and grace of God through the unmerited salvation of the sinner by the sufferings and death of the Son of God. The law condemns, separates from God, ministers death and imposes a curse upon violators. But grace justifies through the blood of Christ, draws the offender nigh to God, gives eternal life and brings a deathless blessing. The law with inexorable wrath condemns all mankind as inexcusable transgressors in the figurative shining of the moon from the legal heaven in the nighttime of the poor groping sinner's woe, for night is the time for sleep, and the dreamless drapery of death in sin enfolds a ruined creation. But as the arrows of the Almighty One pierce the quickened heart the glowing stars of the inspired prophets of the old covenant scintilate in the legal heavens with their rays of hope and cheer as they point to the dawn of the gospel morning and the lifegiving rays of Jesus as the Sun of Righteousness.

The gospel heaven proclaims the glory of God in the finished work of his only begotten Son Jesus Christ in the work of redemption and in the destruction of Satan's power as the prince of this world. When the gospel trumpet note of victory proclaimed the ransomed sinners' jubilee, Satan as lightning fell from the legal heaven, death lost its sting and the grave its victory. When the legal heaven was passing away, a dying Jesus hung on the suspended cross between the living and the dead, between earth and heaven, and for three hours the earth was darkened as the thunderbolts of righteous wrath

fell on the sinless one. The moon of legalism demanded a holy sacrifice for sin, and in this sense the moon, or the law, eclipsed Jesus as the sun, as the Savior died and reposed in the tomb. But death had no power over the spotless Lamb of God, who in his resurrection as the Sun of Righteousness shines forth in immortal glory as the luminary of eternal life and happiness for all the called of God. In speaking prophetically of the end of the legal heaven and the dawn of the gospel day Isaiah wrote: "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven, and the constellations thereof, shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine." In the heaven of the gospel dispensation those who have their life in Christ and are justified by his blood find the law fulfilled in him forever, so the legal moon no longer shines for them with its ministry of despair and death. When Jesus comes experimentally into the lives of his people, the old testament stars of the prophets and ministers of that dispensation no longer point to a Christ who is yet to come in the flesh and die for the salvation of lost sinners, and so in this sense cease to shine, for the Prince of Peace has already come in the flesh and declared by his finished work on the cross that the requirements of the law were fulfilled in him for his people, that the times and seasons of the old covenant with its feasts, sacrifices and offerings should be no longer. Through Mary, his mother in the flesh, the royal blood of David's line coursed through the veins of Jesus, while on his Father's side he was the very Son of God and heir to the throne of heaven. By his death, resurrection and exaltation in heaven Jesus has perfected them that are sanctified and made them kings and priests unto God forever. But in the gospel heaven there are the new testament stars, represented by the twelve apostles portraying the entire gospel ministry shining with glowing brightness in the passing night of doubt and distress as the regenerated sinner discerns his experiences confirmed and set forth in the writings of the New Testament, and rejoices with unspeakable joy in listening to gospel preaching. In Revelation a woman representing the church of God appears clothed with the sun (the glory and the righteousness of Christ) and having the moon (the law) under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars (the twelve apostles) typifying the ministry of the gospel heaven, and so declaring the glory of God.

It is in the time of night and darkness that we learn of Jesus that which we declare in the daytime, and it is through much bitterness of soul and deep tribulation. It is then that the silent voices of the prophets speak to

the lonely soul. There is a Nathan to accuse, a Jonah to warn, an Elijah to threaten, a Daniel to announce the doom of ungodly men, a David to proclaim the deathless song, a Messiah, and an Abraham whose faith is imputed for righteousness to all true believers in the sonship of Jesus Christ. It is in the night of his experience that the mourning child of Jehovah learns that there is within himself a Paul to be buffeted, a Peter to be sifted, a weak earthen vessel to be tried that the sufficiency of God's grace shall be manifested, that in the day of rejoicing he shall find himself like John, leaning on the breast of the Beloved.

No other hope is as lively and as precious as that of the child of God. The good things of earth and the enduring treasures of heaven are his. How dearly should every vessel of mercy prize this heritage and seek prayerfully to discern the Lord's body that the order of God's house and the welfare of the brethren be his constant desire. For the sake of Christ and the heavenly calling of the saints, it behooves each member of the church to present his body a living sacrifice, avoiding the appearance of evil and regarding the peace and welfare of sister churches that patience may have her perfect work. In the fruits of the Spirit God's glory is reflected by an upright walk and a godly conversation to the buffeting of Satan and to the honor of God as the firmament showeth his handywork.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MARTHA BOURLAND HINKSON, the subject of this notice, was born February 19th, 1901, and died June 9th, 1931, aged 30 years, 3 months and 20 days. She was born in Tarrant County Texas, and died at Laredo, Texas. She moved with her parents from Tarrant County to Wilbarger County in 1906, grew to womanhood, secured a good business education and did much work for various companies as bookkeeper and stenographer. She married Jack M. Hinkson June 4th, 1930. Martha was extremely kind, charitable and loveable, often denying herself to contribute to and help others, manifesting the spirit of her Master. She never joined the church, but would often say, Oh if I were only worthy, how I would love to have a home among the Old Baptists. She would listen to Elder W. P. Snider and others preach the unsearchable riches of Christ and rejoice and weep, and say, Oh that I could understand and know more about the goodness and mercy of God. At one time she wrote the unworthy writer (her father) a long letter relating her travel of mind (which was later published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES), asking many questions pertaining to the christian's hope, and the Scriptures. Afterward in conversation she said she hoped the Lord would be pleased to reveal more of his love, goodness and mercy to her, that she might have a brighter hope, which would enable her to be more at the feet of Jesus and to serve and love him, because he first loved her and gave himself for her. A bright and precious hope of immortality, though never publicly made manifest. To know her, and her tender compassion and love for others, was to love her. But she had finished her course, accomplished the will of God with her, and was called home to her eternal inheritance, which is life eternal, to be with all the redeemed of the Lord for ever and ever, and to praise his holy name throughout eternity.

She was laid to rest in the East View Cemetery, near Vernon, Texas, to await the descent of her immortal King, who shall command her sleeping dust to arise, be fashioned again like unto his glorified body, to worship and praise him evermore.

Written by a sad yet comforted father.

ALSO,

B. F. DAVIS, the subject of this notice, was born in Webster County, Georgia, December 19th, 1846, and died at Snyder, Texas, July 8th, 1931. He was married to Miss Mary E. McGrady November 13th, 1866, and to their union nine children were born, seven of whom, with their mother, survive. Brother Davis joined the Old School Baptist Church at County Line, Johnson County, Texas, in 1878, and was baptized by Elder Law. He was ordained Deacon during the year 1889, and at his death was a member in full fellowship with County Line Church, Scurry County, Texas. He was especially able and gifted in reconciling contending

brethren and bringing peace out of cofusion. His unusual ability, fairness and candor strongly established him in the love and admiration of his brethren. Love, peace, forbearance and mercy were his mottoes, yet he was firm and unswerving when truth and justice were at stake. He was sound in the doctrine of salvation by grace, resurrection of the dead and the eternal sovereignty of God in all things. He was very charitable in all things, especially to those of like precious faith. At associations he and his dear worthy companion would often care for and feed as many as one hundred brethren and visitors, it being a great enjoyment to them to serve others. We feel in the purpose of God he has finished his course, fought a good fight, kept the faith, and henceforth there is a crown of righteousness laid up for him, and not for him only, but for all who love the appearing of the Lord. In his passing his community has lost a good and noble citizen, his companion a loving and faithful husband, his children a wise and providential father, yet we mourn our loss not as those having no hope. Our hope is founded upon the eternal Rock of Ages, the precious and tried Stone, the chief Corner and Capstone, who declared, I am he that liveth and was dead, and because I live ye shall live also. Then, dear bereaved ones, it will not be long until we, too, shall be called upon to lay by this old armor, cross the Jordan of death, to meet our blessed Redeemer, with all the redeemed of the Lord, where we shall join in anthems of praise to his blessed and adorable name for ever and ever. May the Spirit of our God lead and guide us in the way of peace and righteousness unto the end of our earthly pilgrimage, is my prayer.

Written by request.

W. S. BOURLAND.

REUBEN HILL COOPER departed this earthly life November 19th, 1931, at his late home near Mansfield, Georgia, in the eighty-fourth year of his age, having been born December 15th, 1847. He had been ill for five weeks with uremic poisoning. Death came to him easily and peacefully, just as it always does to those for whom death is abolished through the great triumph of Christ. He was married January 21st, 1877, by the late Elder Isaac Hamby, to Emma Kate Stanton, who survives him. They have had four children, the eldest son, V. H. Cooper, died twelve years ago. The surviving ones are E. F. and Sim Cooper, and one daughter, Miss Nettie Cooper. He was a veteran of the Confederate Army, having been in the War between the States for a short time. The funeral services were conducted by Elder R. L. Cook, of Social Circle, Ga., at Sewell's Church, interment in Sewell's cemetery. A large gathering attended the funeral, proving the esteem in which he was held. Mr. Cooper is our brother in the Spirit of Christ, for he was a believer in the sovereignty of God and in the salvation from sin through the perfect and finished work of Christ given us by the grace of God; but he never united with the visible church on earth although he loved the preaching of the gospel and highly esteemed the Body of Christ, yet his unworthiness kept him from baptism in water, though embraced in the Holy Ghost's baptism, we feel sure. He had been a reader of the SIGNS for over forty-five years and eagerly looked for the coming of each issue, which he loved to read and read again. He was very firm in his belief in the absolute predestination of all things, so firm that many professional Old School Baptists in his section could not stand him. The last time I saw him was in the early spring of 1930, he told me then he felt he had not long to live, but that he was still firmly convinced that absolutely all things are in God's hands and that they come to pass according to his will. I could not help but tell him I hoped he would stand firm on that foundation to the very end, that he would do vastly better to meet his Maker face to face believing that way than any other. May the Lord comfort the mourning ones.

ALSO,

CHRISTOPHER A. SHRYOCK passed away from the life of earth November 21st, 1931, at his home, Leesburg, Virginia, aged 67 years, 7 months and 14 days. He attended the last session of the Corresponding Meeting, which met with the Frying Pan Church, but was not at all well at the time, yet had such a strong desire to be at the meeting and hear the preaching. His health failed rapidly in the past few months. He was born April 7th, 1864, near Leesburg, Va., so that all his life has been spent in this vicinity. While he never made any public profession of faith in the way of uniting with the church, he was for many year a faithful attendant of the meetings of the Old School Baptists, whose preaching he loved and whose doctrine he believed. He was married October 20th, 1928, to Miss Mabel Thomas, of Leesburg, Va., daughter of the late Phineas and Sallie Thomas. Both her mother and grandmother, as well as other kindred, were members of the Mt. Zion Church. Their married life was brief but very happy. "Three very short but memorable years in my life," she writes me. Mr. Shryock was truly a gentle and kindly man, one who lived peaceably with all men. I never have known him to say a harsh word of any one. I saw him several times as the end drew near and he assured me he had no dread or fear of the end whatever. "Everything is all right with me," he said.

H. H. L.

GRACE VEECH CROSIER passed from this life at Carthage, Missouri, on the morning of November 6th, 1931. She is survived by one sister, Sarah V. Curry, who resides at Canon City, Colorado. Mrs. Crosier was the daughter of John B. and Cynthia Saunders Veech, and was born February 19th, 1856, at Clay Village, Kentucky. In 1857 her

parents moved to Henderson County, Illinois, where she spent most of her life. In 1897 she was married to Addison S. Smith, who died in December, 1906. She united with the Old School Baptist Church at Greenbush, Warren County, Illinois, on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1894. That afternoon she was baptized by Elder I. N. Van Meter. She was the last person he baptized. In 1917 she was married to Henry Norman Crosier, who died October 20th, 1931. This was just seventeen days before Mrs. Crosier was called home. Although living in Carthage, Mo., for the past twelve years, she held her membership in the church at Greenbush and was a regular contributor to it.

Her sorrowing sister,

SARAH VEECH CURRY.

J. PAUL HARVILL, our dear departed brother, was born in Hickman County, Tennessee, December 6th, 1871, and departed this life October 6th, 1930, aged 58 years and 10 months. He united with the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee, and remained a faithful member until the Lord called him home. He was also one of the deacons. He leaves a wife and five children, several brothers and sisters and many friends to mourn their loss. We miss his presence and his faithfulness in the church, but feel sure our great loss is his eternal gain.

J. R. HATCHER.

INFORMATION WANTED.

BROTHER Charles L. Harmon, 1815 Second Avenue, Sacramento, California, is anxious to know if there are any Primitive Baptists living in or near that city. If there are, please communicate with him at the above address.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Elder D. L. Topping, Md., $2; Joseph F. Hall, Maine, $8; Mrs. Henry Hayman, Md., $1; Sarah I. Rittenhouse, N. J., $8; Miss Mary B. Opdyke, Pa., $1; Mrs. Betty Rogers, Texas, $2; Mrs. Kate E. Conner, Va., $1; A. W. Bloomfield, Mo., $2; Mrs. Abner R. Burrows, Md., $2; Miss E. Annie Parker, Md., $3; Elder J. G. Sawin, Ill., $3; "A friend," Ore., $5; Mrs. M. Coons, N. Y., $2; Mrs. M. E. Drake, N. J., $1; Mrs. May J. Ege, N. J., $3; Mrs. J. D. Shafer, N. Y., $1; Cyrus Cross, N. Y., $3; Mrs. Martha E. Holloway, Md., $3; Mrs. Sara W. Slack, Del., $3; Addie P. Jackson, Pa., $1; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $3; Miss Nettie Cooper, Ga., $1; Miss Susie A. Stone, N. J., $2; Mrs. W. O. Harris, Okla., $1; W. H. Chaney, Texas, $1; Wm. D. Chapman, N. Y., $2; Mrs. J. A. McTaggart, Ont., $2; Nellie M. Palmer, Maine, $3; Addie Livingston, N. Y., $2; Elder V. R. Harris, Ark., $1; Mrs. Mary E. Pittman, Kans., $1; Woburn Church, Mass., $5; Semma E. Corder, W. Va., $1; Kate R. Forbes, Kans., $1; Annie E. Putnam, Iowa, 50 cents; W. T. Hughett, Ill., $6; George R. Tedford, Mass., $1; Elizabeth Y. Mace, Pa., $3.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Elder C. W. Anderson having changed his address from Witter, Arkansas, to Saint Paul, Ark., requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

MEETINGS.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects Elder Arnold H. Bellows (the Lord willing) to preach for them the fifth Sunday in January, 1932. Services to be held at the home of brother J. E. Livingston, 64 East Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. Also at 2 p. m. on Saturday before. All are welcome.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER
OLD SCHOOL
BAPTIST CHURCH
IN
NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

We have kept up a monthly meeting for some time in the past, and hope, by the grace of God, to be favored to continue to meet every second Sunday in each month at 3617 Veteran Avenue, Palms Station, near Culver City, California. May this bear a cordial invitation to all who believe in grace and salvation by grace to meet with us on the stated time.

MR. and MRS. W. J. BERRY.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

ROMANS VIII. 31.

"WHAT shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—In response to a number of solicitations from different sections of the country for me to write for publication in the SIGNS, I am sending you the following thoughts for your examination and disposal, which are submitted entirely to your judgment without prejudice on my part; only I would suggest that more suitable matter be not displaced to make room for this.

The quotation from Paul's letter to the church at Rome at the head of this article presents in two questions a wide field for thought. "What shall we then say to these things?" That is, the things which he has just been affirming to the people of God with such comforting assurance. "These things" embrace all of the transactions and relations of the "elect" under the law and the power and dominion of sin, their covenant standing in Christ as portrayed through Abraham, the father of the faithful, their redemption, justification, calling, adoption, sanctification, resurrection and glorification. The apostle took the various transactions up step by step and showed the ruined and needy condition of the subject of all these favors, his utter helplessness, without merit, without strength, without desire for holiness, without God, for he had separated himself from God by his sins, and without hope, for the law which was the creature man's only way of access to God had been closed and the flaming sword of God's vengeance against sin had been planted as an everlasting barrier against man's future attempts to reach God through the law. The apostle then declares how Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of eternal favors, has met all the demands of infinite justice on their behalf, and so completely blotted out every claim that stood in justice against them, that he challenges all worlds to bring a single charge against

God's elect, by asking, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" Affirming, "It is God that justifies." The apostle shows also the nature and strength of the obligation laid upon these justified and called sinners to serve God. It subsists not any longer in the strength of the law's commandments and threatened penalties, but in a relationship established and promoted by love which is infinite in its origin and endless in duration. In making up his case the eminent apostle has raised up the victorious reign of grace in contrast to the conquests of sin, and showed how complete and how decisive is the victory, and admonishes the redeemed and called saints not to yield their members as instruments of unrighteousness, and assigns as the basis of his admonition, "For sin shall not have dominion over you," because you are not any longer under the law from which sin gets its strength, but under grace, which dethrones and abolishes sin and death and gives life to the dead and liberty to the captives under sin.

Now what shall we say to all these things? Are we doctrinally, practically and experimentally in accord with these things, or are we arrayed against them? We would do well as the professed disciples of Christ and faithful adherents to the divine record to follow the sacred injunction to "examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove yourselves," lest we be proven reprobates, having only a form of godliness without the power that establishes its being in God. Then doctrinally do we believe and teach that in our standing in Adam none are righteous and none seek after God? that together all are unprofitable? That while dead we were reconciled to God by Christ? That when we were without strength Christ died for the ungodly? That when Christ died and rose again he freed every heir of promise from all claims of the law? and that the Holy Ghost takes the things of Christ and shows them unto his children and guides them into all truth? Reveals to them and in them first their own utter poverty and worthlessness, and then the treasures of the riches that are in Christ; and takes possession of them and dwells in them and leads them, directs and instructs them, keeps them and trains and disciplines them, that they may show forth the praises of him who has called them out of darkness into the marvelous light of Christ? And does our experience and practice harmonize with these glorious truths?

But to proceed a little further. Are we willing to acknowledge that without Christ we can do nothing? That to will is present with us, but we cannot find how to do the things that we would? That not only is it necessary for us to be made free from the legal claims of sin, but before we can enter the spiritual service of God we must be made free from the power of sin? "What shall we then say to these things?" Is that your experience, or are you a conditionalist and can set sin on the throne or grace just as you will? Can you become the servant of sin or of righteousness at your own behest? What

are Paul's instructions on this point? I have felt that our experiences teach us much the same truth as he asserts. Hear him: "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."—Rom. vi. 18. Now to establish the fact that this freedom from sin was an experimental freedom from the reigning power of sin I will refer you to the sixteenth verse and the nineteenth verse of this same chapter, which show that you are the servant of sin if you yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness, and that at such times you are free from righteousness. The twenty-third verse shows clearly that we cannot serve God under such conditions, but must wait upon the Lord, must be made free from sin before we can have our fruit unto holiness. This I think is much the same as the apostle expressed when he said, "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." It is true this leaves the child of God helpless and dependent and exposed to all the corruptions within and all the temptations without, so far as his own strength of armament is concerned. When the strong man was stripped of all his armor wherein he trusted by the stronger who came upon him he was from that time on defenseless in his own right, and so we hear him crying, O Lord, I am undone. I am a man of unclean lips; I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips. Yes, every trembling prisoner of hope has been brought to this point of desperation where he could have called for the rocks and mountains to fall on him and hide him from the face of him that sat on the throne.

But in the experience of these little ones are distressing scenes, threatening storms, frowning providences, legal doubs, heart conflicts, cruel persecutions, gloomy fears pouring into the soul. Can we do nothing about it? Can we not run away and hide from all this? Where shall I go and whither shall I flee, is the distressed soul's inquiry, but the answer comes back, "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." These heart exercises are designed for the trial of your faith which is more precious than gold, and you cannot run away from them. Then what is the defense of the Lord's children? How may they travel with safety through a world which is infested with bitter foes? The answer to every such inquiry is found in the latter clause of our text: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" I wonder if we comprehend just what it means for God to be for us. It means that all the persons and all the perfections of Deity are engaged in our behalf; that nothing in the whole realm of God's government can operate subversive to our spiritual interests. "We know," says the apostle, "that all things work together for good to them that love God." Even though these searching experiences come which distress you, alarm you, wound you, strip you, humble you

and cast you into midnight darkness, your interests are none the less the object of His constant concern than when you are mounting on eagles' wings to behold his glory. His consoling words are, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee." And again, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This it the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." He has engaged to make darkness light and crooked things straight. Everything can be found in Christ that a poor soul can need and all that a sovereign God can give. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" The greatest, the most precious, the most costly gift that heaven contained was freely bestowed to secure the heirs of promise in their inheritance, and the question now is, "How shall he not with him also give us all things?" Is it any surprise then that the apostle would say, We know that all things work together for good to them that love God? If God is for you, then, dear children of God, you have nothing to fear. He will turn every cross, every doubt, every tribulation, every persecution, every foe, to the promotion of your spiritual good. Your merciful Father has made that his concern, and he has assured us that he will not suffer his faithfulness to fail. It is a comforting truth that our safety or our happiness does not depend upon our faithfulness, but all that concerns our spiritual well-being depends upon his faithfulness to his covenant promises and his immutable oath. It would be as easy for God to cease to be God as for one of his promises to fail. So intent is Jehovah upon safeguarding the interests of his elect that he bestowed upon them in Christ the fullness of God, and turned all that befell him at the hands of his enemies to their everlasting benefit. His flesh is their food, his blood is their drink, his stripes are their medicine, his righteousness is their garment, his salvation is their walls and bulwarks. When his enemies wounded and bruised him, crucified him and pierced his side, the fountain was opened for the sin and uncleanness of his people. He proved in every transaction that he was for them and that the worst that sin and Satan and the world could do did not in the least endanger the interests of the objects of his love and care. No wonder the apostles could say, "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?" when the rulers and the people were gathered against Christ. They raged because they were not reconciled to his authority and preeminence, and they vainly imagined they could destroy his power and set his counsels aside. But how vain were all their efforts; they only succeeded in doing just what God's hand and counsel predestinated; no more and no less; and this is just what he assures works together for good to them that love

him. All of your interests, dear child of God, are intrusted to Christ and he guards them continually. He is that "nail in a sure place" upon which is hung not only "all the glory of his Father's house," but "the offspring and the issue." There is nothing that concerns God's glory or the welfare of his children that was not fully provided for in that fullness that dwells in Christ. This is that fullness that "fllleth all in all." When Christ took that out of the way that was "against us" and "contrary to us" and "nailed it to his cross" he left his children exposed only to such things as he had designed should work for their good, and in it all he has gloriously proven that he is "for them." "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" Let the apostle answer. He says in all our tribulations, distresses, persecutions, famine, nakedness, peril or sword, we are more than conquerors through him that loved us, and then adds, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Then let us say with the psalmist, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance."

Should this find its way into print, and be blessed to the comfort of one of the little ones in Zion, I shall be bountifully rewarded for the effort; and if your thoughts are for a little moment engaged with heavenly things, it will be to the praise of God's glorious grace.

Yours in humble hope,

J. R. HARDY.

DALLAS, Texas.

MERCY.

WHEN a certain lawyer stood up and tempted the Savior, saying, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live." But the lawyer, "willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor? And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took

care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendeth more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then Jesus said unto him, Go, and do thou likewise. Now it came to pass as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman, named Martha, received them into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." This Scripture, according to my understanding, teaches three very important lessons: one is, that it is impossible for man of and through himself, or of his own efforts, to inherit eternal life, as no man can love God except he know God, and has been drawn by the chords of his love, and then, like Paul, he will be brought low and made to know that he is utterly weak and helpless and the chief of sinners, but as there is nothing impossible with God, therefore, through him we can do all things. Without him we can do nothing. If we love him, it is because he first loved us, and gave his only begotten Son that through him as many as the Father hath given him should inherit eternal life. For Jesus said in John i. 1-3, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son may also glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." No man can of himself, or of his own will, love God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his strength, with all his mind, nor his neighbor as himself, as it is only through the divine will of the eternal and unchangeable God that we can do any of these things, and not all the prayers which have been or ever will be uttered can change this one iota, as all these things are decreed in the eternal purpose of Jehovah. It seems to me that of all the words contained in holy writ there is just one word which in its preciousness to me is next to the word love, and that word is "mercy," and it seems almost impossible to separate the two, for where the love of God is, there is mercy. If there is a faint ray of hope in my breast, it is through the love and mercy of God that it is there, and it is through these that I have been kept through this present evil world. In the parable of the good Samaritan contained in this Scripture, which to me is one of the dearest and most precious in holy writ, the word

"mercy" is brought out and shown as the very essence of the parable, ending as it does: "And thy neighbor as thyself." To make it stand out more vividly, the lawyer asks, "Who is my neighbor?" Then the parable about a certain man journeying from Jerusalem to Jericho falling among thieves, and finally the question, Which of these three, the priest, the Levite or the certain Samaritan thinkest thou was the neighbor to the man who fell among thieves? and the lawyer again supplied the answer: "He that shewed mercy." And the Savior said, "Go, and do thou likewise." This simple little vivid lesson, number two, so beautifully tempered with mercy, is very precious to me, and I feel that it is more important to do as the lawyer here was directed to do: "Go, and do thou likewise," than it is to observe all or any one of the articles of faith ever written, now or at any time in all the world. Comfort those that mourn, proclaim liberty to the captive, open the prison to those who are bound. It is written in Galatians vi. 1, 2, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." It is also written in Proverbs xiv. 31, "He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoreth him, hath mercy on the poor." Again, in the sixteenth chapter, sixth verse, "By mercy and truth iniquity is purged; and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil." It is surely divine inspiration which guided the pen of Rowe when he wrote the following beautiful lines:

"'Tis mercy! mercy, the mark of heaven impressed
on human kind,
Mercy that glads the world, deals joy around;
Mercy that smooths the dreadful brow of power,
And makes dominion light. Mercy that saves,
Binds up the broken heart and heals dispair."

Again, the pen of Addison, when out of a thankful and contrite heart he gave us,

"When all thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view I'm lost
In wonder, love and praise."

There is no better rule to try a doctrine by than the question, Is it merciful or is it unmerciful? If its character is that of mercy, it has the image of Jesus, who is the way, the truth and the life. Shakspere has asked the question, How would you be if He who is the top of judgment should judge you as you are? Oh think on that, and mercy then will breathe within your lips like new made man.

Let us hear again the words of Jesus as he speaks to Martha as she was cumbered by much serving and Mary sat at the feet of Jesus and heard his word, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." This third lesson is to sit at the feet of Jesus and hear his word, rather than to be careful and troubled about many things, or to be cumbered by too much serving. Let us, like Mary, sit at the feet of Jesus and hear his word, "Go, and do thou likewise:" show mercy.

ALFRED E. TITUS.

TRENTON, New Jersey.

BLOWICH, Nr. Walsall, England.

ELDER AND MRS. GEORGE RUSTON—DEAR FRIENDS IN THE LORD:—I am sorry to say I have been quite unable to answer your kind and most welcome letter, which came safely to hand last January, and which I now thank you for.

You wished to know if I got the SIGNS OF THE TIMES all right. Yes, and am glad to receive it, as I find a bit of comfort in reading your epistles, and I hope you will be long spared to sound the alarm among the people. Tell them all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, as I hope you do, and that none will ever come to Christ Jesus but those who were given to Christ before the foundation of the world. Exhort them to come out from the world and be separate, and God will be a Father unto them, and they shall be his sons and daughters, so saith the Lord God Almighty. Bless his precious name, that he ever sent these words into my heart and caused me to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and to leave the world's deceitful shore, to leave it to return no more. Many times he has spoken these sweet words into my heart since that time: Behold, I am with you always, even unto the end; and he has given me faith to believe him when he has whispered into my soul, I am thy God from the land of Egypt. In my late and most severe affliction I had the sweet assurance that in all my sufferings the everlasting arms were underneath me. Three times did I lose myself and thought I was going to that bright world above, and seemed to hear that beautiful verse of Toplady's sung:

"Shudder not to pass the stream,
Venture all thy cares on him,
Him whose dying love and power
Stilled its tossing, hushed its roar."

I awoke to find myself in this body of sin and death, tried and tempted by the devil in many ways. He would have me believe that I have never been called by grace at all, and that all the peace and joy I have had is not of God, and that at last I shall be left to sink with the wicked that know not God. But as the Lord has delivered me many times out of these low waters, and doth deliver, I trust he will yet deliver. I am still full of rheumatism, and have lost the sight of one eye, so cannot do much at writing; can just hobble about the house and do a little washing and dusting. My son has been at home now more than two years and he is very good to me, but try where he will he has not been able to find work. But the Lord is still mindful of us. May he grant you grace to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

I thank you for your kindness in sending me the SIGNS.

I thought of sending my letter away last night, but was prevented by a sick turn, so now I will give you a text that has been on my mind much of late. I cannot seem to find the chapter, but you will know where it is: "Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold." I have never heard it preached from, and would much like to have you give your mind upon it in the SIGNS, or

by letter. I see a blessed contrast in it, but cannot define it. In the silent hours of the night with power these precious words were given unto me: But ye are come unto Mount Zion, the city of the living God, etc. Read it through, as I have not time to write it. Again when troubled with doubts and fears these sweet words came to me:

"Look up, look up, your life's in me,
I bought you on Mt. Calvary;
I married you before the fall,
And you shall ever with me dwell."

Another time the hymn, "It is finished, hear the dying Savior cry," was very sweet to me, and oh the peace that then flowed into my soul. The word saith that the Lord will be a refuge for the oppressed, and they that know his name will put their trust in him. Not hear his name spoken well of, or read it in the Book only, but know it for themselves in their very hearts. Christ in you the hope of glory. All other knowledge is not worth a name and will leave us short of heaven. A lady at Wellingsborough recently sent me a book of good Dr. Watts' to read. I have been well acquainted with his hymns from early days and could sing them for an hour without a book, but he wrote some in the book sent me about souls made perfect in heaven and their employment there, which to me was speculation. Getting there is the thing; leave all about what we shall do alone until we are there. The best of men have erred, and so has Dr. Watts in some of his hymns. Where he says, "Whilst grace is offered to the prince the poor may take their share," nothing of the kind, for when a thing is offered you can put your hand out for it or not. Now how can a dead man do that? In another hymn he says, "We humbly trust thy word and take thy offered grace." Grace is not offered at all. I heard your dear father say there were many hymns he would not sing, but I never found them until they were sung at other places, and when I have heard them I have thought it better to stay home and read better things.

May a double portion of God's good Spirit be given you to dig deep into the glorious mine of spiritual truth that is to be found in God's most holy and blessed word, so that you may hear at last the grand welcome, Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. I beg you to pray for me, and I hope that your partner, your family and yourself are in good health.

I remain yours faithfully,

MARY WOODHOUSE.

(*See editorial reply in this number.*)

FAYETTE, Alabama.

DEAR EDITORS:—I read a story in my school book when I was a boy, the subject of which was, "The Bible the best of classics," and after studying it for fifty years I have fully decided that it is far superior to all other books. It is the best history of ancient times the world has ever known. Even the great Jewish historian, to wit Josephus, in all his writings beyond Moses, he just takes up Moses and follows him. In a word, a good portion of his "Antiquities of the Jews," is really the Bible in another man's words. And all the

historians I have ever read after get their ancient history from Moses. The beauty of the Bible consists in its prophecy and promises and their certain fulfillment, regardless of all surrounding circumstances. These promises began to be made at the very beginning. When man transgressed and fell under the curse of the law God promised him a Redeemer, even before he ever sought it or asked for one. The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. (Gen. iii. 15.) God renewed this promise with Noah and brought him over the flood. "And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a son; and he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed."—Gen. v. 28, 29. Again he renewed this promise with Shem after the flood: "Blessed be the Lord God of Shem [the potter of the Jews]; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents [church] of Shem." Japheth is the father of the Gentiles. The Lord renewed the same promise to Abraham, saying, "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed."—Gen. xii. 3. The same promise is made to Isaac, Gen. xxvi. 4. Also to Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 14. Also, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." This "scarlet thread," Josh. ii. 18; this "Daystar," 2 Peter i. 19; this "strait and narrow way," Matt. vii. 14; this "promised Redeemer," have come down to us through the ages in such a way as to bear a blood relationship to all the tribes of earth, and the promise has been renewed from time to time among the judges, kings, prophets and priests, for he must be a prophet, priest and king to all his, who are to be gathered from every nation, kindred, tongue and people under heaven, and in the final windup he will judge the world in righteousness, and inasmuch as he is the head and husband of his redeemed family (Eph. v. 23), do you not think when she (the church) is tried she will come clear? But the judgment was settled nineteen hundred years ago, when mercy and truth met together, and righteousness and peace kissed each other; truth sprang out of the earth, when righteousness looked down from heaven (Psalms lxxxv. 10, 11), when God's holy and righteous Spirit looked down on the low estate of his handmaid, the virgin Mary, and the Holy Ghost overshadowed her, it was then that truth sprang out of the earth, or Jesus (who is the truth) was born, and "He shall save his people from their sins."

The Bible is the most beautiful love story in the world, and it takes it all to complete the story. God himself is the author of this story, and he tells you to resort to him when you fail to understand it. (James i. 5.) So you need not go to the preacher, for he is just a man. Suppose you try it.

G. W. BERRY.

BELINGTON, West Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS:—Find inclosed check to cover two years' subscription to the SIGNS, and with it accept my sincere thanks for the privilege and pleasure of reading its precious pages so long without pay. I am filled with painful remorse as I pen these lines to ask your forgiveness for having neglected this duty so long. To manifest such ingratitude and unconcern was indeed not my intention, but I am so prone to evil, doing the things I would not, and leaving undone the things I would. To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. After making many attempts and failures, I find that I cannot command words sufficient to express the true feelings of my heart. Surely such goodness and mercy is from God's own hand, handed down through his ministering angels to one so vile and corrupt, so unworthy and undeserving as I, fills me with awe; with a humiliating desire to praise him more and more, for it is he, the Fountainhead, from whom all our blessings flow. Truly I am sorry that I have not been able to remit sooner, but hope this little mite may fit in somewhere, to do its part in helping further the cause of our beloved SIGNS. A brother has expressed himself as having wondered if we were making it an idol, and for that reason might have it taken from us. I cannot think of it in that way. We love it for the expression of the name it implies, "Signs of the times;" for the very truth it upholds; as a medium of cummunion and fellowship with each other, bringing sweet messages from far and near; as a revelator or transmitter, giving out gleams of light on many portions of Scripture that would otherwise, to many of us, be dark. In other words, is it not merely an auxiliary to the Bible? helping us to better understand its deep mysteries, reaching down into its depths and handing out food to the hungry. Or, might we not say, an explanatory clause or sequel? giving us an insight to many of the hidden truths contained therein; an unfolding of the Scriptures, imparting new knowledge, teaching us things we already know, but, like a forgetful child, must be taught over and over again; giving honor and glory to whom it is due; revealing our own depraved nature, causing us to search diligently for evidence that we are children of the heavenly King. I have been saddened at the thought of having to give it up personally, because of financial matters, but how much greater that sadness should its publication have to cease. If it is serving the purpose by God intended, as we humbly believe, he will provide for its support as long as it pleaseth him.

Now in conclusion, we have often heard a quotation similar to this: The time will come when we cannot know (or discern) summer from winter (or the changes of seasons), save by the putting forth of the leaves. Will some one please tell me where to find it, if there is such Scripture? I have searched, but so far have been unable to find it.

I feel very much like the dear

brother who said he had written much and said nothing. I have very awkwardly rambled about, failing, I fear, in all points to convey the meaning intended. However, it is at your disposal; if you see fit to publish, correct all errors, striking out anything that does not meet with your approval. If it has a better place in the waste-basket, consign it there, and pardon the transgression.

Soliciting an interest in your prayers, and with an earnest desire for the peace and welfare of Zion, with special blessings on the SIGNS, with all its staff, I am your very unworthy sister in hope,

(MRS.) F. W. GAINER.

LEXINGTON, Kentucky.

DEAR PUBLISHERS AND READERS:—Inclosed please find my check for three subscriptions for the dear old SIGNS.

I note your article in the November number, and I do hope the delinquent ones will make a double effort to meet their obligations. It has indeed been a trying time on many, and two dollars may seem but a small amount to a subscriber, but in the aggregate it means a large amount to the publishers. The SIGNS is entering its one hundredth year, and I do hope and pray it may continue. It has been a family paper in our family for more than eighty years and I feel that I could not do without it, when it is read to me. Scripture comes to me many times and I feel I would like to write a few lines to the dear readers, but cannot do so on account of my blindness, but when the letters and editorials are read I would love to tell you the comfort I receive from them. I feel I can say, like Paul, "I am less than the least of all," and hope I am what I profess to be, because I know and love the truth when I hear it preached. Seventy years ago the second Saturday in December last I spoke for the first time, and I have never shunned to declare the truth as it is in Jesus, in all its fullness, and I can say again with Paul, I am ready to be offered up. I have just passed my eighty-eighth year (January 2nd), and to the many who have written me their greetings in words of love and fellowship and good wishes I want to tell you how greatly your letters have comforted me, and I thank all of you. They came from Canada to Florida and from New York to California. God bless you all. I cannot express the joy and comfort they gave me. My general health is as good as can be, and I would be as active as ever if I could see, so I have much to be thankful for. Wherever I go I find kind and loving attention, but I do not go away from home in winter months. I often feel as David said, Now, Lord, that I am old and gray-headed, forsake me not. In this blessed faith and hope is the anchor of my soul, and I would not exchange it for the riches of the world.

In conclusion, I feel to say with the poet,

"Weak is the effort of my heart,
And cold my warmest thought,
But when I see thee as thou art,
I'll praise thee as I ought.

'Till then I would thy love proclaim
With every fleeting breath,
And may the music of thy name
Refresh my soul in death."

This letter has been extended to a greater length than I had thought, and there is yet much more I would like to say.

With, love, fellowship and best wishes to you and all the dear readers, I am, unworthily your brother, the least of all,

P. W. SAWIN.

FREEWATER, Oregon, Dec. 20, 1931.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am now like the widow to whom the prophet was sent, who was picking up sticks to cook the last cake that she and her son could eat and die. If it is not the will of our God to perform as great a miracle with my eyes as he performed with the meal in the barrel and the oil in the cruse, this will be the last the dear readers of the SIGNS will see from my pen, for it is with great difficulty I am now trying to write to let my correspondents know why I have not answered their last good letters. I have been examined by a specialist, and he pronounced my case a hopeless one. I am not entirely blind, I can yet see to walk around, but cannot read plain print as the SIGNS. My wife loves the precious truth it brings to us each month and enjoys reading your good letters. I truly hope you will continue to write to me, for your good letters cheer my drooping spirit in this dark and gloomy day. While my natural sight is failing, oh how my poor soul does rejoice in the fact that faith in God is one of the abiding principles that cannot fail. Faith, hope and charity, these three abiding principles are like the widow's (church) meal in the barrel and oil in the cruse, will never fail God's humble poor. So this being true, we can sing as we pass through this valley and shadow of death; we will fear no evil, for thy rod and thy staff they comfort us.

If this little note finds room in the dear old SIGNS, I want to say, God bless you all, and if you see my name no more in it, may it be the will of God to enable its subscribers to come to its aid that it may continue to still comfort the poor of the flock.

Thanking the editors and publishers for their kindness in sending me the paper, I am, I humbly hope, yours in gospel bonds,

J. T. BARNES.

SHELBYVILLE, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITORS:—It gives me great pleasure to address you on your one hundredth birthday. For forty years of that time I have perused its pages, and a few times articles from my pen have been published therein. In my travels among the brethren it has always been a delight to me when entering their homes to find copies of the dear old SIGNS, especially new acquaintances. It is one of my best introductions, and at once I feel at home. How times have changed since the first issue in 1832. Many isms and schemes have sprung up. Some have gone out from us who could not endure the sound doctrine of the word, but through it all almighty God has led you, proclaiming, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." It has been a

source of great comfort to many of the Lord's isolated people who have not had the pleasure of meeting with the brethren, and to those who are of the shutins who are not able to attend the meetings, and I am glad to be numbered with that sect we know is everywhere spoken against. What can we expect? as our Lord was in this world, so are ye. He has told us, If they have not heard my sayings, they will not hear yours. I am glad to see the fellowship existing between the present editor and the three associate editors and the present manager of the SIGNS. Nicely have they worked together for the comfort of the Lord's chosen people, and for one hundred years it has come to us laden with messages of love, declaring the same principles adopted in 1832. Dear brethren scattered abroad, let us not be neglectful of our duty toward them, for it costs them money, time and labor. It carries no advertisements to renumerate them. Let us help to keep it clean, reliable, trustworthy, and a paper that is not ashamed to declare unto us the whole counsel of God.

I beg to remain, yours in gospel bonds,

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

JACKSONVILLE, Ill., Dec. 11, 1931.

MY DEAR LOVED ONES:—Once more I will try in my weak way to tell you how I love to read our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. To read it you would think Elder Beebe was with us. I think God in his mercy has blessed us to read the truth from the first page to the last. The dear editors and all who write for our dear paper are blessed to write the truth. Oh how thankful and grateful my heart is to each and every one who writes for its columns. I love every word and read it over and over again, and as I read I long to see each one and tell them how wonderful it is to be so blessed with that precious gift God in his mercy has given each and every one. Often in the still hours of the night I feel cast down and unworthy, not one ray of light, all is dark. Oh could I find words that would make you know the feeling of unworthiness, and I cannot rest when I think how cold our love is for our God, our church and our dear brethren and sisters. Oh tell me, why is it so? No one of the world wants you to talk of God's word, his goodness or his love. They say, Be good, do right, and you will be saved. No comfort! No wonder we treasure every word in our dear paper through darkness and when we feel so unworthy. God knows what is for our good, and will make us be still and know that he is God. December 14th I will be seventy-seven years old, and have read the SIGNS since I was eighteen, and my hope is that you will be spared to us many years. I do hope God will bless you with love and mercy.

Your little sister in hope,

MARY E. PARROTT.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1932.

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PSALMS LXVIII. 13.

"THOUGH ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold."

Some time ago we received a good letter from a sister in England, who is a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, asking that we give our views upon the above Scripture, which we will do if God permit.

The Lord often by the mouth of his prophets reminded Israel of her humble beginning, and when she came before her God she was taught to confess, "A Syrian *ready to perish* was my father; and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few."—Deut. xxvi. 5. The prophet Isaiah saith (chapter fifty-one), "Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." Thus Israel in our text is referred to as having "lien among the pots." Down in Egypt when a Pharaoh arose that knew not Joseph, Israel was forced into servitude and they afflicted them sore, yet the more they afflicted them the more they multiplied and grew. They made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with vigor. (Exodus i. 14.) And the children of Israel sighed by reason of their bondage and they cried and their cry came up unto God. Their taskmasters were so cruel that the spirit of the people was broken and their resistance was gone. What was really a great nation, mightier than the Egyptians, was reduced to a nation of slaves, subject to the Egyptians and ready to perform any menial labor that was required of them. Thus the expression, "Though ye have lien among the pots," means that the Israelites had been common slaves to the Egyptians, living and sleeping among the pots of service. The term "pot" does not signify a vessel of a certain kind, but is applicable to a variety of shapes and kinds, thus jars, pitchers and bowls, cauldrons and kettles were commonly called pots, and Israel in Egypt labored and lay among them, and the Lord tells us in Psalms lxxxi. 6, "I removed his shoulder from the burden: his hands were delivered from the pots." This wonderful deliverance of Israel is set forth in the

Psalms from which our text is taken. It was a triumphant deliverance, as set forth in the seventh and eighth verses: "O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness; Selah: the earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: even Sinai was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel." Thus Israel was brought from among the pots of Egypt to a land promised unto Abraham and his seed, but came not in her own strength, but in the strength of the Lord. When she overcame, she went forth in the strength of the Lord. When she fell she fell because of unbelief: the word did not profit them (that fell), not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. Thus faith was the power that lifted them from among the pots, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God. They could not stir until "the Lord gave the word." (Verse eleven.) The word was the word of faith that freed them from the bondage of Egypt and carried them to their inheritance. Thus Israel of old in all her trials, conflicts and deliverances was borne and carried on the wings of love and mercy, spoken of as the wings of a dove. This dove sets forth the Holy Spirit that was with them in all their travel. It can be said that the Jews in the land of Canaan, with their types and shadows, and their temple with its many and varied vessels, were but servants. For Paul saith, Jerusalem which now is, is in bondage with her children. She lay there among the pots of service and with such light that the law gave, which, like the moon, was but a borrowed light, and is a type of the moon, when it shone in the night of Judaism, it gave its silvery reflections of hope to the patient watchers for the gospel day to appear. Faith also is in evidence in her flight to the perfect day of the gospel, faith as of yellow gold that has been tried in the furnace. Thus the feathers or outstanding details of the journey of Israel are set forth by Paul in Hebrews eleven, all acts of faith, which is the pure gold of the kingdom. All their travel is covered with promises, faithful promises of a better country and a better king, a heavenly land flowing with the milk and honey of the gospel, a heavenly country with a city prepared for them, whose builder and maker was God. We believe Israel then was a type of Israel now, and the land was a type of a better land. The land was promised to Abraham and his seed, yet Abraham never enjoyed any inheritance in it, not so much as to set foot on. He sought a better country, that is, an heavenly. Israel to-day among the Gentiles, has lien among the pots. Mankind are the pots, all made of clay, of the same lump. (Rom. ix. 21.) All by nature children of wrath, and there they all would lie but for the mercy of God. It is God in covenant love that has set a value on some, so that they are called vessels of mercy, distinguishing them from the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction. God's favor, spoken of as grace, is that which distinguishes them from their fellow-men. Until grace

comes they are slaves to sin and Satan, full of all manner of uncleanness, with self-righteousness and every hateful way. Jesus was the light to lighten the Gentiles, and as Gideon's army of three hundred men took lamps in their pitchers, so we have this treasure in earthen vessels. This treasure is Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, who dwells among us, and in us. Before we had a knowledge of this we were as pots full of all manner of sin and iniquity, and we had to be emptied from vessel to vessel and our taste and scent changed. The light of truth planted in the heart is one of the first evidences of covenant mercy. It is spoken of as a call by grace. God called Abram alone, and said, Get thee out from thine own people and thy father's house, and grace says to those to whom it is sent, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, *saith the Lord.*" With this word from God's mouth applied to the heart of a sinner, he sees where he lies, and has lien from his mother's womb. It is the knowledge that this light gives that is called an experience of grace, thus experience is truly said to be the life of knowledge. The three Hebrew children would have lien with the pots forever had not the Lord given them the word, the Word of Faith, it was that that lifted them high above the multitude about them, to shine down through the ages to come with a glorious brightness of silver and gold that the furnace only could give. It is the Word of faith to-day, given from the Lord, that lifts the poor from the dust and the beggar from the dunghill. Yet they are often left to mourn, lying among the pots, and vexed at the scorn and contempt of those who dwell at ease, knowing the truth of what Job said: "He that is ready to slip with his feet is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease."—Job xii. 5. While he may not feel that he differs much from a worldling, yet he does, for the worldling is a sinner and does not know it, but he knows it and feels it, too, and he could cry with Job, "Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?" All this is to hide pride from man and to teach him what is in his heart. To make him sick of the world, himself and sin. Here David cried, Oh that I had wings like a dove, that I might fly away and be at rest. When the Lord speaks the word his soul is lifted on the pinions of love and flies to the clefts of the Rock and there he rests secure, persuaded that nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus the Lord. Thus a living experience, which is the result and effect of the word of faith in the heart, carries the soul from the condition of a slave to sin to the freedom of a son of the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all. This is set forth in type in the purification of the leper. The priest took two birds, one of the birds was slain and its blood put in an earthen vessel, and the live bird was dipped in the blood of the slain and set free, typifying the church rising as a conqueror through the blood of Christ. When Moses counted the number of the chil-

dren of Israel, each had to give a half shekel of silver as a ransom for his soul. The rich could give no more, and the poor could not give less, so God's dear family are numbered, and each must have an experience of grace; the poor can have no less, and the rich can have no more, for it is the evidence of the soul's redemption, for it was for us that Jesus was sold for thirty pieces of silver. In the tabernacle of old the boards were socketed together with silver sockets, in the tabernacle that God has pitched, and not man, brethren are knit together in the experience of God's mercy to love and respect his word, for they know that the words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. (Psalms xii. 6.) Thus Israel to-day, as on the wings of a dove, is raised above the earth, ready to wing her flight to her heavenly home.

"Like Noah's dove, she flits between
Rough seas and stormy skies."

Not finding rest here below for the sole of her foot, she soars above the ruins of this earth, standing out like a city set on a hill which cannot be hid, shining to those whose eyes are opened to see it in the glorious brightness of her Lord. How bright, as polished silver or gold, is an experience of grace, how it raises the person far above the kings and princes of this earth, that come to naught, for such, we know, are left to glory in their shame. But a gracious character has passed through the fire and lives. While this vain world will be burned up, he lives and is sustained by God's holy Spirit. God is his purifier. I will, saith he, refine them as silver is refined and purify them as gold is purified. Through this furnace work they are brought, and their testimony, every one of them, will accord with the sound of the silver trumpet which was to be made of one piece, and when one shall examine those glorious wings the feathers of God's love which warms these cold hearts of ours will stand out as yellow gold. Let us consider what this brightness of silver and gold means. It means trials and afflictions, crosses and losses, partaking of the sufferings of Christ. The Lord grant that we as a people shall be purged from worldliness, pride and idolatry, rising above the world, shining as the brightness of the firmament, only feeling to live when on the wing, and our affections set above, desiring above all things that we, as Peter saith, might be diligent, that we may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless, mindful of the truth that we were once slaves, but are now sons.

In conclusion, 1 John iii. 2: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

G. R.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

Written by brother Geo. R. Tedford.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 9th, 10th and 11th, 1931, to the churches of which she is composed, and to the associations and meetings with which she corresponds, sends greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—At our last meeting our beloved brother, James E. Hubbard, was appointed to prepare the Circular Letter for this year, and I feel that had he been spared to be with us to-day you would have had a very much better Letter than I can give you.

Now to speak of the spiritual family and their birth we must speak of their creation in their Head, for there cannot be a birth in nature or grace without a creation. In Ephesians ii. 10, we read, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." This creation was certainly anterior to the natural creation, for in 2 Timothy i. 9, it reads, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." As the church of God is the body of Christ, flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones, in all who ever have or ever will be born of spiritual birth there has not been any new creation, except as new creatures in Christ, it has only been a development of the body of Christ, and as Christ is eternal life, he being the life of the church, they certainly, as they were created in him, ever had an existence in him as their head or progenitor. It is just as evident in grace as in nature that no one can partake of any of the elements of the kingdom of God, or see any of its inhabitants, or hunger and thirst after spiritual food in that kingdom which is to sustain spiritual life, or have any knowledge of it, until they are born into it, for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but cannot tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit. Therefore man has no agency in this birth, for in John i. 13, it says, "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Now speaking of some of the evidences of the new birth, natural life is manifested by natural hunger and thirst, so spiritual life is manifested by spiritual hunger and thirst, therefore every one that hungers and thirsts after Christ has a sure evidence that he has been born again, and the promise is, Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. So every one that has the warfare in his own breast between the flesh and the Spirit has a sure evidence that he is one of the poor and afflicted people of God, and the

promise is that they shall trust in the name of the Lord, and they that trust in the Lord shall be as Mt. Zion, which cannot be moved, but abideth forever.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church in Bowdoinham, Maine, September 9th, 10th and 11th, 1931, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once again we have met and received your Minutes and messengers. It has been pleasant to meet each other again face to face. Peace, love and fellowship have abounded in our midst. We feel to have been wonderfully blessed in having Elders Topping and Dodson with us. The preaching has been edifying to the hearers and glorifying to the name of the Lord, and his Son Jesus Christ. We hope to meet you all again next year. Due notice of time and place will be given in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Second Roxbury Church, Roxbury, Delaware County, New York, September 16th, 17th and 18th, 1931, sends greeting in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN WITH WHOM WE CORRESPOND:—Another year has passed, and by the goodness and tender mercy of the covenant-keeping God we are spared to meet in an association and listen to the gospel proclaimed in its purity by God's servants, whom he has called and placed on the walls of Zion to preach the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ. There has been one flow of love and fellowship all through our meeting, the truth has been preached and we can truly say it has been good to be here. We crave the continuance of your correspondence as in the past, and hope to meet your messengers another year. Until then, dear brethren, farewell.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Shokan, Ulster County, New York, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, between the second and third Sundays in September, 1932, there we hope to meet your messengers again, the Lord willing.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Mrs. Georgia Carruthers, Va., $2; Mrs. S. E. Enoch, Kans., $1; J. W. Haynes, Cal., $1; F. H. Richardson, Iowa, $3; Dunwood H. Bradley, Texas, $1; Mrs. Lucy J. Wilson, N. Y., $5; "A friend," Mich., $3; J. H. Jones, Ga., $1; W. E. Bryan, Ky., $1; Clara Lamb, Va., $1; Mrs. J. M. Miller, Texas, $1; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $2; Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $8; Mrs. Mary E. Claggett, Md., $2; Mrs. A. M. Hellings, N. J., $1; Paul T. Leigh, N. J., $1; Elder L. J. Chandler, N. C., $1; "A friend," N. Y., $2; T. L. Disharoon, Pa., $1; Mrs. Val Werner, N. J., $2; Mrs. J. S. Moore, Ala., $1; In memory of Mrs. Mary Ann Cudney, Mich., $2; H. M. Cox, Ark., $1; T. F. Daniel, Ala., $2; Mrs. Joab P. Stout, Ill., $3; Mrs. Mary A. Drew, N. Y., $2; D. L. Blackwell, N. J., $2; Mrs. J. B. Hill, N. J., $2; Calvin Cubbage, Pa., $1.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Arnold H. Bellows, of Roxbury, N. Y., at the Olive and Hurley Church, Shokan, N. Y., January 3rd, 1932, Hewitt Osborn and Miss Margaret Van Woert, of Athens, N. Y. Mr. and Mrs. Osborn are occupying their new home at Athens, where they will reside.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **ANN TAMSIT MILLS**, of Otego, N. Y., died suddenly after a brief illness of peritonitis, at the home of brother Abner Leonard, in Otego, early Tuesday morning, January 5th, 1932. She was not yet eighty-seven years old, having been born in Fritteden, Kent, County, England, July 25th, 1845. Her maiden name was Ann Baker, and she spent much of her early life in England, where she was united in marriage to James W. Tamsit, in 1866. Of this union seven children were born, of whom five survive, as follows: Mrs. Emily Solloway, Walter F. Tamsit, Clifford R. Tamsit, Oneonta; Mrs. Rose Leonard, Otego; James E. Tamsit, Leroy, Alabama. In 1870 the subject of this notice came with her husband to America and resided at Bloomville, N. Y., later removing to Oneonta, where she made her home for the most part until the time of her decease, except from 1904 to 1920, when she made her home in Cleveland, Ohio. Her husband died in 1891. After six years of widowhood she married Robert Mills, of Cleveland, Ohio, in 1897, who died in 1916. During recent years sister Mills made her home with her children at Oneonta and Otego. She united with the Otego Church nearly forty years ago. Sister Mills was a woman of strong character and deeply experienced in the things of grace. As wife and mother she lived a most exemplary life, and her many splendid qualities of character, cordial ways, pleasing personality and abounding hospitality endeared her to many. Her home was a resort for the brethren of her faith, and the doctrine of salvation by grace according to the predestinated purpose of a triune Jehovah was her delight. She was loved by the brethren and by those with whom she came in contact, and her friends were legion. She enjoyed excellent health until within a few days of her death. She was taken seriously ill at the home of her daughter, sister Rose Leonard, and her disease was beyond the reach of medicine, notwithstanding that tender, loving hands ministered to her needs, and all possible was done to relieve her.

The funeral was held at the home of sister Leonard, January 7th, the writer officiating at the funeral services. The interment was in Riverside Cemetery, in Oneonta. She will be sadly missed by her surviving relatives and by the brethren of the Otego Church.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

ELDER JAMES CALVIN TURNIDGE was born in Ray County, Missouri, March 20th, 1849, and died at the home of his son, brother A. L. Turnidge, Weiser, Idaho, September 24th, 1931. He was one of thirteen children born to Elder John and Ruth Turnidge. Just one daughter remains: sister Eliza Stakely, of Portland, Ore., who is in her eighty-first year. He was convicted of sin in his seventeenth year, and two years later was enabled by faith to come to Jesus and find a home in the dear old church his father loved. He was soon licensed to preach, and about that time moved to Texas, and was ordained in Orchard Gap Church, in Collins County, by Elders W. N. Prince and Harris. In 1868 he was married to Miss Sarah Pegg, who preceded him in death about three years. Eight children were born to this union, of whom seven survive. One son, Samuel Turnidge, died in 1907, at the age of thirty-three years. Also, twenty-three grandchildren, twenty-two great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild are left to mourn his departure.

His one delight in life was to attend the church meetings, which he was able to do until the last. Ten days before his death he attended meeting and preached an able discourse, to the comfort of God's children. He went home from the meeting and soon began to weaken, and four days before his death he went into a stupor, from which he never rallied. He loved the writings of Paul and usually preached from them. He has gone from among us, but his influence for good will be felt for many days. He died poor in this world's goods, as some would say, but rich in the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ. Henceforth we believe a crown of righteousness is laid up for him, and not for him only, but for all who love the Lord's appearing.

Funeral services were held from the Primitive Baptist meetinghouse, September 26th.

Written by his daughter-in-law,

(MRS.) ARCHIE L. TURNIDGE.

MRS. LYDIA BURT STEWART. We cannot rest contented to allow the passing of this "dear old soul" without paying tribute to her ardent love for the truth and her faithfulness in attending our meetings in Warwick, N. Y., just outside of which, at the Sarah B. Sanford homestead, she spent the last fifteen or sixteen years of her life.

The following account of her life and death was published in the "Warwick Dispatch:" "Mrs. Lydia Burt Stewart—July 30th, 1842—August 11th, 1931. Mrs. Stewart was the youngest daughter of the late James Burt and Mary (Gillette) Harding, and the widow of William L. Stewart, of Arlington, N. J. She was a lifelong adherent of the Old School Baptist faith and a regular attendant at the services of her church. Mrs. Stewart was probably the last survivor in her generation of the descendants of Daniel Burt and Hannah Benedict, who were pioneers into the Warwick Valley from Ridgefield, Conn., in 1760, and soon purchased the

farm now owned by Mrs. Mary M. Whitted, a great-great-granddaughter of the pioneers. Mrs. Stewart was born on the James Burt farm, and remembered her grandfather, Senator James Burt, who was one of the framers of the State Constitution and also a lieutenant in General Hathorn's regiment during the American Revolution. Mrs. Stewart was of a retiring nature, charming in manner, a rare gentlewoman of the old school.

Funeral services will be held at the James Burt homestead Thursday afternoon at 2:30 o'clock, Elder R. Lesterr Dodson officiating. Interment in Warwick Cemetery."

Mrs Stewart was twice married, the first time to James Hoyt Miller, October 5th, 1864, who died March 31st, 1869. By this husband she had a daughter (Mary) who died in infancy. We have not the particulars regarding her second marriage. Her last illness was of about six months' duration, which was considered general debility, due to advanced age. The following nieces and nephew survive her: Mrs. Thomas Whitted, of Chipley, Fla., Mrs. Frank Durland, of Chester, N. Y., Mrs. William R. Welling and Mrs. A. M. Reynolds, and Mr. Charles V. Sanford, all three of the last mentioned being of Warwick, N. Y. Mrs. Stewart never united with the church, but no one could question her interest in the things pertaining to God's kingdom. Her presence at the meetings, which could be depended upon unless providentially hindered, was greatly appreciated by the writer, and she was highly esteemed for the truth's sake by all who knew her. She remarked many times to the writer that she could not hear what her soul craved anywhere but among the Old School Baptists, and that if what they believed and preached was not the truth she did not know what would become of her. We are persuaded that she has entered forever into that rest that remaineth to the people of God.

R. L. D.

MRS. MARY P. BOOR, wife of James T. Boor, departed this life at their home, Riddlesburg, Pennsylvania, November 13th, 1931. She was born September 1st, 1862. Her parents were brother William and sister Rose Etta Mellott, both deceased. Mrs. Boor was a sister of the late Elder J. Corder Mellott, of Salisbury, Maryland. She is survived by four brothers and three sisters, as follows: Mrs. Lou Wills, of Riddlesburg, Pa.; Mrs. Draper Smith, of Longmont, Colo.; sister Lizzie Himes, of Hopewell, Pa.; McClellan Mellott, of California; Abram, of Alequippa, Pa.; Arthur, of Swissvale, Pa.; and Lloyd Mellott, of Riddlesburg, Pa. Besides her husband, there are six children left to mourn their loss: William and Percy Boor, of Pittsburg, Pa.; Mrs. Edward Ross and Mrs. Morris Nye, of Riddlesburg, Pa.; Mrs. Scott Rhindollar, of Everett, Pa. and Mrs. James Ray, of Bethlehem, Pa. Also, there are sixteen grandchildren and one great-granddaughter. Mrs. Boor was not a member of the church on earth, but we feel she had a good hope through the grace of God in Christ and that she is, through the righteousness of Jesus, a member of his body. She realized by experience that if she were one of the Lord's saved ones, it was wholly by his grace and not at all of her own works or merit.

At the request of her husband and family, I attended the funeral and endeavored to speak to their comfort from the words in the first chapter of Peter's first epistle, from the first to the fifth verses inclusive. Interment was in the cemetery at Everett, Pa. We lay away our believing ones in hope of the resurrection from the dead to life and immortality, through the living Christ, in the presence of God. What a blessed expectation! May the power of this truth, and the supporting assurance of it, comfort all who sincerely mourn.

H. H. L.

MARY ANN CUDNEY departed this life at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Everett Winchell, at Hemlock, Michigan, after a long illness. She was born at Olive, N. Y., February 25th, 1845, and passed away at the age of 86 years, 8 months and 13 days. She was married to Cornelius Cudney in 1866, and bore him six children: Benjamin, Ora, Christopher, Florence, Frances and Cornelia, of whom all are living except one. She lost her husband December 17th, 1908, and since that time had made her home with her daughter Florence. In 1917 they moved from Brooklyn, N. Y., to Hemlock, Mich., where they since had lived. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church by Elder John A. Badger, April 28th, 1873. She loved the doctrine preached by the Old Baptists and was a faithful reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. After moving to Michigan she was unable to attend the meetings, but her heart was always with them, and she spent a great deal of her time reading the Bible, the hymn book and the SIGNS.

E. H. WINCHELL.

SISTER **LULU P. DAVIS** was born January 9th, 1867, and died August 25th, 1929, making her stay on earth 62 years, 7 months and 16 days. She joined the Bethel Predestinarian Primitive Church in Union County, Arkansas, thirty years prior to her death. She was the wife of Calvin Davis, who has joined the same church since she passed away. She was faithful in attending her meetings as long as she was able. She was a loving wife and mother and a faithful friend, and is greatly missed by her loved ones and by the church, but the Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort to her loved ones, and to a host of friends who attended her funeral, using as a text the words, For if in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable. I would say to the bereaved ones, Sorrow not as those having no hope,

for she has only answered the call to her reward. Peaceful rest. Blessed are they that die in the Lord. I would say to her dear children, try and emulate her noble example.

Her body was laid to rest in the Bethel Cemetery.

Written by her pastor,

T. J. EVERS.

MRS. GEORGIANA JONES (nee Sanders) was born in Mississippi November 11th, 1856, moved to Louisiana and joined the Oak Grove Predestinarian Baptist Church, in Natchitoches Parish, and was baptized by Elder J. J. White about thirty years ago. She lived a good christian life and was loved by all who knew her. She was a good and kind companion and mother. She was married to Mr. Jones November 3rd, 1875, and nine children were born to their union, seven of whom survive her. She was sound in the faith, believing in salvation by grace alone.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder G. T. R. Baker.

M. E. HAMNER.

RESOLUTION.

WHEREAS, on the nineteenth day of April, 1931, we lost our church-house by fire, and

WHEREAS, since that time we have been enabled to build back a better house than formerly, and by popular subscription we have been able to meet all our obligations, and are out of debt. Therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we extend our sincere thanks and hearty appreciation to all who so liberally contributed to our needs, both in the city of Williamson, West Virginia, and in Pike County, Kentucky, and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of these resolutions be sent to the "Pike County News," "Williamson Daily News" and to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication, and that a copy be recorded in our church record.

By order of the Big Creek Primitive Baptist Church, now in session, this the nineteenth day of December, 1931, at Canada, Pike County, Kentucky.

W. M. STANLEY, Moderator.
H. W. MAY, Moderator protem.
G. B. BIRD, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at the home of sister E. Brunow, 411 N. Ridgeway Avenue, and on the second, third and fourth Sundays at the home of brother W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. The fifth Sundays are by appointment. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastors, Elders Jones and Janes.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

We have kept up a monthly meeting for some time in the past, and hope, by the grace of God, to be favored to continue to meet every second Sunday in each month at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California. May this bear a cordial invitation to all who believe in grace and salvation by grace to meet with us on the stated time.

MR. and MRS. W. J. BERRY.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. F. AULT, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every first and third Sunday at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, at 1 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SELF-PRONOUNCING BIBLE

These Bibles are printed on a good quality of paper, in large, clear type, and contain Marginal References, a complete system of helps, with a good Concordance, and many other things which space will not permit us to mention. Size of page 8⅝x5½ inches. Bound in French Seal Leather, with extended covers, red under gilt edge. The "Open Flat" Binding on these Bibles is far superior to any method of binding yet devised. Its many advantages over all other Bible bindings will be at once apparent. The Bible will lie open absolutely flat. The back of the Bible will at all times retain its shape. With this perfect binding the Bible will not break in the back. This is a Bible we know will please our people. Price $4.50 each. Postage paid by us. Any person wishing one of these books can secure one by sending us eight new yearly subscriptions.

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"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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ELDER C. W. ANDERSON,
ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 100. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1932. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HAINES, Oregon.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—After more than seventeen years of continuous residence and farming at one place, near La Grande, Oregon, I have moved to a new home at this address, where, by the blessing of a kind Providence, I expect to live the remainder of my time on the earth. The place on which I lived so long changed ownership last year and my wife and I felt the time had come for us to provide a home more suited to our needs, with fewer cares and obligations than the large ranch upon which we had managed and raised our family, and have selected a little farm of fifty acres of good land, with natural resources ready to be developed into the making of an ideal home, and already better for convenience than any place we have ever lived. I am now sixty miles from Elgin, where I serve a church regularly, but for this winter we have adjourned our meetings until the first of March. Much snow falls here in winter and the roads are often blocked for cars, but the improved highways serve us nicely except for this. I shall gladly welcome persons of our faith who may be passing through here, and will meet or direct them to my home if they will call me on the phone or write me. There are but few Baptists here, and we are glad to welcome new comers, or even visitors. Our churches here are far apart and have few in membership, and this small number is getting less as time passes, and we look on the continuance of our churches with dwindling hopes. What is the cause of this? We believe the Lord has his witnesses everywhere, then why are so few manifested? Why are so few new members coming in to help in the cause of King Emmanuel? I believe I see the cause in ourselves. We are told to pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers. This prayer, like all real prayers, must be the sincere desire of the heart, or it will be only a formal expression. The saints of God must show by their

actions that they desire this above all things, and their daily living must indicate this to those with whom they associate who have the love of righteousness implanted in them. Righteousness is revealed from faith to faith, and faith thus in exercise in the established believers would win the little ones seeking the bread of life. Instead of this, how often is there manifest selfishness, carelessness for the worship of God and even contentions and accusations toward certain of the brotherhood of those claiming to be God's elect. Little ones desiring a home and resting-place in the home of God would not be drawn by such outward evidences of unrighteousness. Satan is ever ready to magnify such things to the ridicule of the truth of our profession. I have known ministers to go long distances to attend special meetings of churches, who had requested their attendance, and find but few of the membership there; many of the absent ones were detained by trivial matters which should not have been allowed to come in the way of the church assembly. I also know of one occasion of a minister who went a long distance by invitation of a church to attend their three days meeting, when, after the first discourse, the pastor abused the visitor unmercifully before the congregation for some point of doctrine they had discussed some time before in private conversation. Our associations and churches have quarreled and subdivided until they have almost destroyed themselves, and have become a burden to the faithful few who remain to uphold the principles of their faith, when such dissension and destruction come from within. We are about the only people who believe in the election of grace and the righteousness which is of the faith which God gives, with all good works built upon and resulting from this holy calling. But we are letting the fashions of the world and the selfishness of the flesh destroy the beauty and attractiveness of our faith, and often our faith and works are so out of harmony that they become a reproach unto the truth instead of the bright shining light we are admonished to be. What manner of persons should God's elect be? How zealous they should be to maintain the evidences of this high calling, and to crush out all carnal tendencies which war against them. It should be their desire and pride to be at every church assembly of their congregation, and that, too, expecting in meekness and humility to receive the bread of life which is supplied so abundantly by the appearance of the Captain of our salvation, who never fails to be one in the midst of the assembly of his faithful ones. If we sow to the flesh we shall reap corruption, but if we sow to the Spirit we shall reap life everlasting. The crop we are reaping is a sure seal of the kind of seed we are sowing. If at any time we are mistaken in the seed, there will be no doubt when the fruit develops. We see so many thorns, thistles and poisonous plants springing up about the walls of Zion that its beauty is marred almost beyond recognition. Saints of God, elect and precious, these things ought

not to be. We all see the destructiveness and desolation being wrought by the enemy of righteousness within the lives of the saints. Does any one know a protection from this? "Watch, and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." "What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch," are the Master's admonitions. "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it." Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light. He that knoweth his Father's will and doeth it not shall be beaten with many stripes. Our Master spoke these and many other similar directions to his disciples, and they are as much for his people in this day as for them at that time. The two-fold nature of the saints of God in this life, the carnal or fleshly, as opposed to the spiritual, brings on a continual warfare. Every saint of God has the two forces within him, or rather he is the embodiment of such forces, and every decision made in life is a victory for one or the other. The pure in heart do good because they love good, the unregenerate do evil because they love evil and have no discernment of righteousness; but the saints of God are not established in a state of perfection when their calling is manifested, but from that moment the conflict begins. They are soldiers of the cross enlisted in the cause of King Emmanuel, and have his banner of love as a protection and seal in this warfare, and are admonished to be faithful to him at all times; have been given the admonition of the Scriptures to direct and protect them, and the promises to strengthen and encourage in every conflict, and the Master's assurance that he is with his people always and by his grace and strength they shall conquer. The saints grow in strength and perfection as the power of the carnal nature is brought under submission to the spiritual, which is in conformity to the law of life which is the law to Christ. It took many conflicts with unrighteousness, the carnal nature and spiritual wickedness in high places to develop Paul from his first revelation of life on the road to Damascus to his final declaration, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing." Let us be careful in this warfare to be true soldiers, and not traitors, or of those who turn back again to the beggarly things of this world, for the reward is sure, and our King is not deceived. His "Well done, good and faithful servant," will compensate for all the hardships we encounter by the way. We love to point as a reason of our faith and hope that we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that he has loved us with an everlasting love, there-

fore with lovingkindness he has drawn us; that as saints of God our salvation and redemption is sure. With such a foundation upon which to build our hope we should not be enticed by the little things which so easily come in our way, and our zeal should never be weakened in the race as we press forward toward the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. When we walk otherwise we by our acts deny our faith and profession and bring the greatest reproach upon the cause it is possible to bring. When the very heirs of such riches which our heavenly Father has provided for them esteem them so lightly as many professors do, Satan and his deceptive powers on the carnal nature can easily convince that both the faith and profession of all such are vain.

Brethren, let us search ourselves to see if we are coming up to the measure of the saints whose records we have in the Scriptures. They were flesh and blood as we are, and had the same warfare to make. How did they meet it? It was a victory of faith, and their faith was shown by their works. The saints in this age must stand approved in the same way. We may view them in the midst of the conflict with unrighteousness, but strength and deliverance always came when they were actively facing the foe, never while compromising with him. Let us be doers of the word and not hearers only. Let us so live the principles of our faith that there will be no doubt as to what they are, and no accusation of hypocrisy can be rightly charged against us.

With great desire for the manifest blessings of Zion, I am yours in tribulation and hope,

C. W. BOND.

PHILLIPSBURG, Mo., Nov. 8, 1931.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter from Elder W. N. Green, my pastor, and have his consent for it to be published in our paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if it meets with your approval, but if for any reason it should not be published, please find postage to return it, for I prize it (like our paper) most highly for the truth's sake. Through the columns of the SIGNS I get much comfort, and hope its able writers and editors will be spared to continue the life of the paper for the sake of many who, like myself, do not have the opportunity of attending church meetings. The first of last month (October) I realized what a pleasure it is to meet with a lovely band of brethren in an associate capacity. The meeting was held near Independence, Missouri, and words are meaningless to tell the joy of hearing our salvation preached as being solely through the blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I remain as ever, a sinner saved by what Jesus did for us, and not for what we sinners have done for ourselves or him.

MILDRED TURNER.

ALTUS, Okla., May 26, 1931.

DEAR SISTER TURNER:—After some delay I will try and answer your good letter. We all enjoyed it very much,

for it brought with it that spiritual relation that binds us together as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that relation is unknown to the world. In such messages we are drawn so close together by the Spirit of Christ that dwells in his people that we are made to praise him from whom all blessings flow, yet so far apart in person. There are evidences connected with these spiritual relations that we most gloriously feel, but cannot explain, even to ourselves. Oh the depth of both the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out! God's wisdom and knowledge are perfect and his ways and judgments are right. How consoling it sometimes is to us to even hope that we believe in and are possessed with a sufficient amount of faith to say in our poor hearts (forgetting self) that God is right and just in all his ways. But the qusetion might arise, and does, What are his ways? His ways are those that bring to pass the events of time according to the counsel of his own will, and they are just and right because they were all embraced in his will, in counsel, and that before the world was. We must acknowledge this or deny the perfection of God's wisdom and knowledge; in the coming to pass of the events of time, in time, before he made the world. I must accept the testimony of God's inspired prophets and apostles. Their testimony is that he is God and there is none else. He is God and there is none like him, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. God's holy and righteous will is executed in the events of time, all of them, through the channel his perfect wisdom designed. Yes, every channel and avenue by which the events of time, all of them, are made manifest here in this time world was embraced in and according to the counsel of his perfect will. God, being holy and righteous, could not possess an unrighteous or an unholy will. All events of time were embraced in his eternal counsel, in which counsel all the divine attributes of the Deity were present. Oh yes, a God by whom all worlds and things that have ever been, are now, and things that are yet to come, had their existence in that counsel. Nothing was found in them all but the divine perfection of God, which is eternal. The material or timely things all had their existence in that counsel, according to the purpose of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will. Would it be in violation to the teaching of the Scriptures to say that in that counsel which is, only his decrees and purposes in all things whatsoever come to pass, and are according to the foreknowledge of him who is the first great cause of all things? Then let our eyes behold that perfect God in his lofty habitation before there was any world, for he was before the world, for the world was made by him, and without him was nothing made that is made. We see him surrounded with every event of time, all creatures and things, from the

least atom that floats in the air to the greatest monster that inhabits the earth. These things were not only present with him in purpose, but every movement, act, desire, thought and deed was known unto him, as though it had already been done by each creature and thing in all the world that God's foreknowledge embraced, and that before God had made a world, and if the least event of time that God's foreknowledge embraced failed to come to pass it would destroy his perfection in knowledge, and if there has ever been, is now, or ever will be, an event of time that was not embraced in his foreknowledge it would destroy his perfection in wisdom. If there is any power in heaven, earth or hell that can hinder one of God's decrees coming to pass, or bring to pass an event by the act of one of God's creatures that God had decreed should not come to pass, it would destroy his power and set up a greater power than God. But not so, all the "shalls" and all the "nots" are the unchangeable decrees of God, who possesses all power in heaven, in earth and in all deep places. He is head over all worlds, and over everything that in them is; his eternal counsel, wisdom and knowledge embrace them all. Oh how I wish I could find words to express the greatness and perfection of God as I understand the Scriptures teach it. God is eternal, and all that is perfect, holy, righteous and right is connected with his being. He made the heavens and the earth, and all that in them is, made them after the counsel of his holy and righteous will. How can they fail to accomplish the end for which he made them? They will not fail. Let every soul be subject to the higher power, for there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God.

"Keep silent, all created things,
And wait your Maker's nod;
My soul stands trembling while she sings
The honors of her God."

The heavens declare the glory of God, the firmament showeth forth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, night unto night showeth wisdom. There is no language or speech that their voice has not been heard. All his works shall praise him, and his saints shall bless him. Yes, all created things, from the least to the greatest, are praising God. In that they are carrying out perfectly that which God's perfection designed for them. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, honor and power, for thou didst create all things, for thy pleasure they are and were created. Will they fail to accomplish his pleasure? No, a thousand times no. But if any part of God's creation, even the smallest particle of dust, was to fail to glorify God's perfection, then we could not say that God is perfect in all his ways. I will publish the name of the Lord (in perfection), ascribe ye greatness to our God. He is the rock, his work is perfect. All his ways are judgments. A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

"Not Gabriel asks the reason why,
Nor God the reason gives;
Nor dares the favorite angel pry
Between the folded leaves."

The secret things of God are folded up

in his divine perfection, and can be known only as it pleases him to reveal them. Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, Father of heaven and earth, that thou didst see fit to hide these things from the wise and prudent and reveal them unto babes. Even so, Father, for it seemeth good to thee. This saying of Jesus only furnishes us one more link to put in the chain of events that was embraced in God's counsel, and was decreed by him to be, as seemed good to him. God's eternal decree is all that ever did or ever will make any event of time sure to come to pass, hence he could not have foreknown any event of time had he not decreed it to be so. His foreknowledge is an attribute of his perfection, and his decree or purpose in the event foreseen makes it sure to come to pass. Then is it possible for any event that God saw and knew would come to pass in this world, to not carry with it the seal of God's decree? or, in other words, could he foreknow an event if the event was not firmly fixed in his certain decree? Then can an event fail to come to pass that God decreed should come to pass? or can any event not yet come be sure to come without God determining it shall be? To not accept this would destroy God as a sovereign. It would ever destroy the testimony of those inspired men who testified of his perfection. This doctrine neither makes God the author of sin, nor having any fellowship therewith, for God is eternal, immortal, without the beginning of days or the end of time. He is above law, but is the law-giver, through which sin entered the world. Some people would like to believe the doctrine of God's absolute perfection in knowledge, wisdom and power, and that he has been eternally able to execute according to the good pleasure of his own will, but they say that kind of doctrine would get God into trouble, and get him mixed up in sin entering the world. Perish the thought. God in his entirety is divine and eternal and cannot be touched or influenced by the corruptness of sin. All corruption and sin came into the world by and through an act of the creature God made. God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man, but when you are tempted you are drawn away of your own lust and enticed. Lust when it is conceived bringeth forth sin. The law was holy and just, because it came from the eternal God, but the violation of that law came by man. Hence God was just as much separate and apart in his divine perfection from the fruits of that act of man as was the man separate and apart from the divine perfection of God. When he gave the law, by man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death is passed upon all, for all have sinned, and the law entered that the offense might abound, which means sin. But says one, Did God know the fruits of the act of man would be sin? He surely did. Did he decree the act? He surely did, or how could he have known sin would enter the world? He either knew it or he did not know it, which one shall we believe? If we say he did know it, then we must say he had a purpose in it, and

God being eternal, just, holy and righteous, surely the end of all his purposes must be the fruits of his most holy and righteous will. To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven, a time to be born and a time to die. Read the full quotation, beginning with the first verse of the third chapter of Ecclesiastes. Does this embrace everything or just part of the things that are under heaven? Then we find God's inspired witnesses wrong in these statements? No, they are not wrong, but are true witnesses of God. Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Then we must accept what they say as being the truth. It is not given to any one man to understand all of their sayings, but we must accept it as the word of God. The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it; surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of the Lord shall stand forever. Surely the word of God is the truth. In a man's heart there are many devices, nevertheless the counsel of God it shall stand. Yes, God is ever in one mind. Who can turn him? Whatsoever his soul desireth even that he doeth. We know that whatsoever God doeth it shall be forever. There shall be nothing taken from it nor anything added to it, and God doeth it that men should fear before him. What is this that God has done that shall stand forever? It was to drive the Nail in a sure place, upon which safety hang God's eternal purposes and unchangeable decrees in counsel before the world was. Yes, and surely there was not one act of all the creatures in all the world, in all ages, that passed by his divine perfection unnoticed. Do you think there was? How could it, and God be perfect in wisdom and knowledge? Yes, and they shall be forever; nothing taken from them and nothing added. Blessed truth, it is all arranged by him and for him in the accomplishment of one grand, glorious and holy end. Surely there cannot one event of time fail to come to pass, and that at the very time appointed, for there is a season and a time to every thing and purpose under heaven. All devils, and hell itself, cannot hinder one event from coming to pass. Yes, he works all things after the counsel of his own will, and they shall stand forever. Not one act of any creature of God's creation will fail to accomplish the desired end, which will be to his name's honor and glory, and his honor and glory will remain throughout all eternity. The evil acts of men and devils will be placed to the honor and glory of God. We see these things in his will of decrees that was nailed in a sure place. Yes, he created all things for himself, yea, the wicked for the day of evil. All the deeds of the wicked will in the end brightly shine to the glory and honor of God, although they meant them not so. They will not go

unpunished for the wicked deeds done, for the wrath of God, which is an attribute of the Deity, stands out against all unrighteous and ungodly deeds of men, and punishment will be inflicted upon the creature according to the righteous and just judgment of God, yet the effect of the deed done will in the end glorify and honor God. The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder he will restrain. These are hard sayings. Who can hear them? The prophet said, Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? The Lord must reveal his almighty arm to us before we can behold perfect justice in all his ways and judgments, and his arm cannot be revealed to us in nature, because in nature we are dead to the knowledge of spiritual things, for the carnal mind is enmity against God, not subject to his laws, neither indeed can be. The natural man understandeth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Then there must be something done for us before God reveals his bare arm to us. When his arm is revealed, then we believe the report of the prophets and apostles, but there must be life imparted first, and God alone is the source of spiritual life, and it must be a life from him before we discern things of him. Neither did we understand things of nature before we were born of our natural parents, which life comes from a corruptible seed and only has to do with the corruptible things of earth. Let me point you to one event done by man, only in possession of natural life, and let us note God's hand in the matter: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him, in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Was God glorified in that act done by those wicked hands? Most assuredly he was. That was just one link in the chain of events that God in counsel had decreed should come to pass in the accomplishment of one great and glorious end, and every event of time is a link in that chain. Listen, "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are in earth; even in him." That will be the end of all timely things, then God's glory will shine throughout eternity. "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

Written by your pastor,

W. N. GREEN.

ROXBURY, New York.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—I am inclosing a copy of a letter sent to me by my sister, Alice A. Bailey, of the Second Roxbury Church. Her walk in life, faithfulness in attending the meetings, desire for the welfare of the church, and her interest in things that are spiritual, evidence the fruit of the faith she professes. I believe that the brethren and friends would be interested in the experience she sets forth in her letter, if you approve of its publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Your brother in hope of immortality,
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

SAUGERTIES, New York.

MY DEAR BROTHER AND PASTOR:—With the Lord's help I will in my feeble way try to write you some of the dealings of the Lord with me, a poor miserable sinner.

I was born April 28th, 1878, at Binghamton, N. Y. My father died when I was but two years old, and my mother, being unable to provide for me, placed me in a children's home in that city, so I have no recollection of any earthly parents whatever. When I was three years old I was taken to live with Mr. and Mrs. David Elliott, of Conesville, N. Y., who provided for me fully, cared for me tenderly and treated me with appreciated consideration, in all temporal matters of need and comfort. As no earthly parents could have shown greater interest in my welfare, I shall speak of them as my father and mother in all subsequent references in this letter. Father Elliott was a strong Old School Baptist and a member of the church for many years, but mother Elliott never united with the church of that faith. I never was sent to Sunday-school as many of my friends were, but I always attended the meetings of my father's faith, at Gilboa, N. Y., where his membership was. I cannot remember the time when I did not attend Old School Baptist meetings or have thoughts about the future and what my eternal destination would be. I was early impressed, as I went to these meetings with father Elliott, with the terror and awfulness of dying and going to everlasting punishment. I felt that I was not fit to die, and I realized that I was not fit to live. I felt it would not do for me to go to Sunday-school with my schoolmates because I was so very wicked. I thought when I grew older that I would get better, but, to my despair, I found myself getting worse. Following my resolutions to do better, the first thing I knew I would be doing something for which I had to be punished, or for which I deserved correction, and then I would be sorry and make up my mind not to repeat the offense, but the same thing would happen again. Often I would weep when I was alone. I did not want any one to see me read the Bible, and would try to do so when I would not be observed by any one. I did not want my father to know my feelings and exercises of mind, but I did want to have a place among the Old School Baptists and be one of them; they always looked so good to me and gladdened my heart

when they came to my father's home, which was always open to those dear good people. I often wondered if I would be good enough to unite with them. How I loved to hear them talk on the Scriptures! I would often feel like Ruth of old: "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." How often I recall watching the birds and wild animals and thinking that if I were only one of them and had no soul to lose, and that death would end all, it would be better for me. Sometimes I would get comfort in singing hymn 109 with my father, which expressed my feelings better than any words I could use. I would often dream about these things. One night I retired, feeling distressed about my sinful state, being then about twelve years old, and had a dream which has since been impressed upon my mind. It seemed that I was in a pond of the clearest water I ever saw, which came to my waist. I was robed in white garments and was terribly frightened, and wept in my anguish of mind. Suddenly I dreamed another person, a man gowned in white, came to me and asked me why I was crying. I told him I had lost my mother and could not find her. Assuring me that he would care for me, this man took me by the hand and led me out of the water and told me he was Jesus, and that he would not leave me. Just then I awoke and found my pillow wet with tears. I can never forget that dream. When troubles come and trials beset my pathway that dream comes to my mind with these words: I will care for thee; I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. I was very much afraid of thunder storms, and one night during a very severe electrical storm I was in great fear, when the first fifteen verses of the fourth chapter of the gospel of John came to me as clearly as if I had learned them, and never again did I have that fear, regardless of the severity of the storm. One time at an association I heard Elder Meredith preach from Matthew ix. 20, 21, and it seemed that every word was meant for me. Some time after that I heard Elder William L. Beebe speak from the twenty-third Psalm, which went right to my heart and touched me deeply. After the meeting he came to me and asked why I did not tell my troubles to the church. I told him that I was waiting to be better. He replied, "If you wait until you are better you will never come at all." He then quoted these lines:

> "Let not conscience make you linger,
> Nor of fullness fondly dream;
> All the fullness he requireth
> Is to feel your need of him."

I surely did feel mightily my need of Jesus and his salvation, my feelings often being so fittingly expressed by hymn number 1033. However, I went on until after the death of my mother, in the spring of 1907, when I found myself unable any longer to keep from

going to the church and laying my case before the brethren, which I did in October of that year, and the Gilboa Church to my surprise received me into their fellowship. I earnestly prayed that if it was not right for me to be baptized that the Lord would cause something to happen to prevent it. But when the day for my baptism came the weather was beautiful and it seemed that everything was praising God. Since then I have had many doubts and fears that I might be mistaken, but my hope has never left me.

I am writing this to you for you to read, though I do not know why, and I trust you will cast the mantle of charity over it. The Bible says we know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren, and I feel that I certainly do love them dearly. I hope to see you and the other brethren at the coming Saturday meeting. If I am unable to be there, tell them I am with them in spirit.

I received a card to-day from sister Smith and a letter from brother Dolson, and I am very glad that the dear brethren think of me and write, even if it is but a few words. I wish I could hear from them oftener, as I have my heart and hands full, and it seems that all the time there is something to try and vex me sorely.

I must close, or you will never forgive me this long letter.

In love and christian fellowship, I am your sister in Christ, I hope,

ALICE A. BAILEY.

ELKINS, W. Va., Oct. 19, 1931.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I am sending you a letter written by my brother, Elder J. W. McClanahan. It is at your disposal, so you can do with it as you think best.

Dear brother, I would love to see you and yours. I often think of you, your wife and children. We would be glad to have you come to our association next year.

My wife joins me in love to you and yours.

G. B. McCLANAHAN.

POCA, W. Va., September, 1931.

DEAR BROTHER GEORGE AND SISTER JULIA:—To-day finds me thinking of the past and the present, and God only knows what is in the future, but the consoling thought is that all things will work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. I feel I have much to be thankful for. So far I have been blessed with food and raiment while in my body I have suffered much pain, but not without the purpose of God in it. God is a God of means, and his means are effectual, so we learn obedience by the things we suffer. With the psalmist I feel to say, I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me. In our afflictions we often retrace our past life, as we have hoped to be the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, and see much undone that we should have done, and also much done that we ought not to have done, so we are made to cry, Oh

wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? My precious brother, if not a poor deceived mortal, I have been made willing to be God's anything, that my thirsting soul may drink of that fountain of water of life that flows from the throne of God and the Lamb.

I see that I am not writing as I had thought to when I took up my pen. My intention was to tell you of our lovely association. Our corresponding brethren from the Tygarts Valley and the Elk Horn Associations came preaching the pure, unadulterated gospel of reigning grace. Oh how my soul leaped forward at the thought of seeing and hearing our precious brethren declaring that glorious doctrine set forth by Christ and his apostles. I thought, How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in his excellent word, as the blood-stained banner of King Emmanuel floated in the breeze. Now it is clear to my mind that God did elect, love, ordain and predestinate them whom he foreknew in eternity to be conformed to the image of his Son. Thus was his love fixed upon them, which love is everlasting. Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love. Referring to this gospel day: "And in that day shall ye say, Praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, thou inhabitants of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." Yes, my precious brother, he dwells in Zion individually and collectively, the church of the first born, of which he is heard over all things to her, he being the chiefest among ten thousand and the One altogether lovely to her. The apostle declares that God calleth those things which be not as though they were, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. To my mind, if God can call up things which be not as though they were, from the remotest depths of eternity, and declare the end from the beginning, he surely can and does act in relation to them in all other respects. David gives us an example of this, he says, "In thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." In the foreknowledge of God they were all embraced, and in his own time manifestly brought forth.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

PLAINVIEW, Texas, March 1, 1930.

DEAR EDITORS:—I could hardly get along without the SIGNS, for now it is all the preaching I get, as I am so deaf I cannot hear preaching any more. Since my dear husband was called to his eternal home I have been left alone and feel very lonely and sad, for there is no one here who believes as I do, for I believe it is by grace we are saved and not by works, lest any man should boast. Christ said, You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you. I was feeling very lonely when I picked

up the SIGNS and read brother Keene's writing on where Jacob was left alone, and it carried my mind back to my youthful days to where it seemed that I was all alone, and when I would try to pray God to pardon my sins it seemed that my prayers reached no higher than my head. I thought I was such a vile sinner that God would not forgive my sins. Well, I went on mourning for about a year, trying to pray day and night, until the spring of my seventeenth year. As I laid down one night I felt I would not live to see the morning light, and I felt I was doomed to everlasting punishment. I cried out, Lord, save or I perish, and I added, Dear Lord, I give myself away, it is all that I can do. Then, evidently by faith, I had a view of my dear Savior as he hung on the cross. O, my dear friends, I cannot tell you how happy I was, for there is no one on earth who can describe the sweet comfort and peace of a soul in its earliest love. I did not believe then that I would ever grieve or suffer again. Yes, I thought that my troubles all were over and that I would always be happy. But it was not long before I began to doubt and fear, and something seemed to say to me, You have no experience of grace; you are deceived and are trying to deceive God's people. I am now seventy-two years of age and am still wondering if I am deceived. If so, why do I love God's people, the Bible and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES?

"Do not I love thee, O my Lord?
Behold my heart and see;
And turn each cursed idol out
That dares to rival thee."

"Hast thou a lamb in all thy flock
I would disdain to feed?
Hast thou a foe, before whose face
I fear thy cause to plead?"

I, like David, would say, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." But how do we know that we are children of God? In 1 John iii. 13, 14, we read, "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I do not know that I am a child of God, but I have a sweet hope of a home beyond this vale of tears. My dear brethren and sisters, I feel I am near my journey's end and am just waiting for the Lord to call me home, for it seems that I have lost all interest in earthly things and long to go home. I am never well any more, and am weak, both in body and mind, and am nervous and cannot use a pen.

Dear ones, my prayer is that God will bless you in your good work. I pray that you will remember this poor sinner, saved by grace if saved at all.

Do with this poor letter as you think best and all will be right with me, for I cannot see anything good in my writing.

Your sister in hope,

ANNA R. SMITH.

DONIE, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Of the two trees, good and evil, we understand the good tree to be a figure of the Spirit, the evil tree to be a figure of the flesh. That is, the good tree is a figure of the divine law, which is not sin, whereas the evil tree is a figure of all that is not divine, which is sin. Now I have approached a subject I realize is far too deep for me, yet my mind has been dwelling upon it for some time and I cannot meet any one to talk it over with, therefore I have resolved to write it to some one. Cain and Abel, Esau and Jacob are all in their proper places figures of those two trees. We understand that God created all things for a certain and particular purpose and that all things possess a certain and particular nature. We also understand that God is all-powerful and that none of these things created by him possess anything but what was delegated to them by God, and if there is a text that proves God does not control all these things according to his own will and purpose I have failed so far to find it. I believe that God gave unto all things their nature, and that each and every thing must act within the jurisdiction of its own nature, and that its nature is its government, and that no one thing that God created possesses the power to change its nature, or to take on nature or to throw off nature. I believe that all things created by God fell from his hand complete in every sense of its nature and that God is the sole author of nature in its every attribute, therefore with the two trees, the good tree cannot bring forth evil (sinful) fruit, because it would be against the laws of its nature; neither can the evil (sinful) tree bring forth good fruit, because it would be against the laws of its nature, and all these things are made to act within their natures, separate and distinct from all others. Even so it is with the two trees: they are and were forecast to bear fruit according to their nature. So then we find that the good tree is a figure of the Spirit, meaning good, holy, divine, sinless. We also find the evil tree to be a figure of all that is the opposite to good, holy, divine, sinless; the good tree Abel, the evil tree Cain. Cain, Esau, Abel, Jacob. Esau the flesh, Abel the Spirit. Spirit, divine; flesh, sin. We are told that the flesh mindeth the things of the flesh, and the Spirit the things of the Spirit, and that God created the flesh and that he created the Spirit. Even so the two trees, and that those two trees had nothing to do with their creation, neither had they any intentions, will or purpose in their existence in this world, but lived, moved and had their being according to the will (law) of God, who is all-wise, all-powerful and all nature. Now from the foregoing would you not conclude that God just as much predestinated the evil tree and its results, "its acts," as he did the good tree and its results, "its acts?" Did he not also predestinate the difference between the two? If not, why not?

I love the people who contend for the doctrine the SIGNS has always advocated, and I enjoy reading the paper

very much, though it has gone in other hands more than once the doctrine has never changed.

This letter is just a statement of a few of my thoughts; do with it as you think best.

Yours in bonds,

W. A. LITTLE.

RANDOLPH, Maine, June 12, 1931.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—DEAR BROTHER:—I would, if I could, talk with you a bit on the subject of prayer. Did you ever get to feeling your prayers (if they could be called such) were mostly the promptings of a rebellious heart? This going to God for this or that thing which you would have otherwise? I have been sifted, as it were, and I got to feeling there is but one prayer, and that is, "Thy will be done," and I know the natural man cannot utter it in spirit and in truth, and yet I feel there is an inmost desire that God's will may be done in heaven and on earth, and I know it will be, regardless of men or devils. It seems there are times when the devil desires to sift us as wheat, yet there is One who ever maketh intercession for us, so that our faith fails not. Rooted and grounded on the Rock, Christ Jesus, our faith, a gift of himself, cannot fail. This oneness with God the invisible is a great mystery, no man hath yet attained unto it; no man by searching can find out God, and we to whom (as we hope) he has imparted this wonderful knowledge are lost in the immensity of its greatness. Who is like unto our God, traveling in the greatness of his strength, doing wonders? and what is more wonderful than the revelation of himself to poor sinners? How glad I am his mighty power prevails! How I would sing his praises and crown him Lord of all had I the ability to do so! But he knows my heart's desire, and though I often go to him as a child to its natural father, not realizing, in a measure, the gulf between us, he the God of the universe and I the beggar from the dung-hill, yet I feel he pitying forgives my weakness and loves me still. Oh, I hope so! Indeed I do! How could I live on without his love and the presence that fills my being at times? What a dark, dreary world this would be without him to gladden our hearts and give us hope and courage by the way. May he give me strength as my day, subdue this wicked heart and make his will mine. I find very much in my nature that is selfish, and would often bend his will to mine. I was thinking not long since, having the desire that my tongue might be kept from evil and my feet from the paths of the ungodly, and something said, That was a selfish prayer, too. In a way, yes. Thus I stumble on, and I get to feeling that I do not know what I am or where I am. But God knows, and in him I am trusting. If I am his child he will certainly lead me about and instruct me and keep me as the apple of his eye and no ill will befall me. I feel he is very precious to me, my meat and my drink, my sunshine and joy as I journey on. Very few can understand us, but God knows all our

heart-throbbings, all our desires, and he will save us.

If we only had some one to go in and out before us, but our house is left unto us desolate. Dear James, so faithful and unflinching, taken from us, and brother Tedford moved away. A few of us met at sister Attie's the fourth Sunday in May, but the service seemed cold and like mockery. Oh why is it so? we ask, and yet it must be the will of our God. Our loved ones taken by the cruel hand of death, and some of those left untrue to the honor of God's house.

May God give you freedom of speech and great boldness, and strength for all your trials, that you may say with that beloved Paul, that you are glad to be accounted worthy to suffer for His cause.

Remember us in our low estate and loneliness, and if you find it in your heart pray for us.

Yours in tribulation,

NELLIE M. PALMER.

WILSON, N. C., Jan. 15, 1932.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I have carelessly let my SIGNS get in arrears, but I herewith inclose my check for the amount of the same up to August, 1932. I am also adding one dollar for some one who is behind and cannot pay. I have thought of this several times since it was due, but thought I would wait until I could add a few lines extra. I have waited this far and am in no better shape to say anything than when I first thought of it last fall, for I am about as barren right now as I ever get, but I hope that I am not so I cannot remember the blessings of our God to us poor sinners.

Well do I remember the time we were at the Baltimore Association, at Baltimore city, this last May, for I hold that in my memory as one of the most outstanding visits I ever made, and I feel our whole party could join me in saying the same thing; in fact, that was just about their expression when we arrived home. We felt that you and others were blessed with a part in making it so pleasant for us by your preaching, and then Elder and sister Rowe made everything so pleasant for us that we have not forgotten it. Then, too, we remember the brethren and sisters we met from the Catskill Mountains, and would like to meet them again. Brother, we are such poor worms of the dust we do not know how to appreciate our blessings unless our heavenly Father reveals them to us. I would be glad could I be found praising him more every day, but it seems my spirit grows weaker and weaker each day. But the apostle says when we are weak then are we strong, so the best places are not those we would select, for we do not know just what is best for us, neither do we know what we need, but we are continually talking of our wants. Peter, as you remember, told the Lord Jesus that he would not forsake him, but would die for him. That was when the Savior was telling his apostles it were better for them that he should die, but they would rather have had him to live on. Christ said to Peter, Before the cock crows twice thou shalt

deny me thrice, but Peter did not believe it until it was proven to him in actual experience. Oh what a sad time it was to him then! He had to go out and weep bitterly, but that is really a blessing unto a poor sinner, when he can really and truly weep over his sins.

Yours in hope,

E. L. COBB.

AMITY, Arkansas.

DEAR EDITORS:—If any are given light on the Scripture Jonah iii. 10, I would like to hear from them. I am a believer in the Primitive Baptist doctrine, or hope I am, and I believe the Primitive Baptist is the only church of the true and living God, and if we are ever saved it is the gift of God and not by works that we have done or can do. Jesus said that without the Father's help we can do nothing, and he is the only way given under heaven whereby we must be saved, and he is a gift from God. Of himself man can do nothing, but he thinks he can, but is deceiving and being deceived. The heart of man is blinded and cannot understand the truth unless it is given him of God. All things must be given of the Lord, and cannot come from any other source, for God created all things; yea, the people to praise him and the people to praise their own works, the evil things of the world. All things shall honor the Creator, because God said they should, even the beast of the field. "The beast of the field shall honor me, the dragons and the owls: because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen. This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise."—Isaiah xliii. 20, 21. So everything is fulfilling the purpose it was created for, even the beast and the outside world, and the people of whom Jesus said to the Father, They are in the world but not of the world, even as I am not of the world. The great God created all things for his own purpose and glory, and not to please man, and he works all things after the counsel of his own will.

To the only true and living God be praise forever.

MYRTLE WALL.

BASSETT, Virginia.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been in arrears for some time, but am sending four dollars to pay for 1931 and 1932. I am sorry I could not send this before, but this depression seems to have affected me on the farm as much as day laborers. I truly, if I know myself, love the doctrine the SIGNS sets forth, it and the *Lone Pilgrim* are a source of comfort to me. As long as I have my faculties I hope to have the SIGNS continually. I love the writers, some of whom I have met in person, and I felt they were old acquaintances, because I loved their writings so. One I would especially like to see is brother Davis Burch, of Washington State. Not much prospect of that desire being fulfilled in this life, but I hope it will be in eternity. I love the other writers also. Thanks for continuing my paper.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) G. T. FRANKLIN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1932.

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JOB XIX. 25-27.

"For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."

This statement is recorded as Job, the servant of God, expressed his miseries, and we are persuaded that every servant of God has his or her special experience in which the written testimony beareth witness with the realizations of their own heart. We note that Job speaks with much assurance, saying, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Do we not at times in our pilgrimage feel we can speak these words, realizing the truth of them? When we are passed on into the valley of Achor and darkness and have no light, and gloom and shadows are so gross they are felt, which was realized by Job just previous to the expression above referred to. These sayings of Job were previous to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved, yet he realized that his Redeemer liveth, which declares his life in God as the Savior of sinners and the life of the sinner in Christ. Job declares that his Redeemer shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. Brethren often differ in their expressions relative to the latter day, some giving the time since the coming of Christ to be the last day of sabbath. We refer to the first book of Moses, where God completed his work on the sixth day and rested on the seventh, which men call the Sabbath, but scripturally the time in which we are living, the latter or gospel day, and it dawned when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, in the land of Judea, or when John the Baptist came preaching the kingdom of heaven is at hand, and this day will continue unto the closing of the gospel realm. We would like to note how He stands upon the earth. This is the surety of every heir of salvation, for they are given faith which is the gift of God and is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, but they with patience wait for it, and this God-given faith is builded upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and Jesus Christ the chief corner stone. We are minded of many

expressions of holy writ bearing up these thoughts, viz.: wisdom hath digged deep, hewn out her seven pillars, and we are assured that underneath is his everlasting arm bearing them up, and all power is given unto him in heaven and earth, and heaven is his throne and earth his footstool. We truly believe he has all power and will do all his pleasure and none can change him. He redeems from all iniquity and saves with an everlasting salvation, also he says, I am God and I change not. We are made to believe Job realized the truth and salvation of a poor sinner. Jesus stands upon the earth not as a man, but as Christ Jesus the Lord, triumphant over death, hell and the grave. He directs his people as the sheep of his pasture, feeding and giving them drink, as he declares that he that hungers and thirsteth after rightcousness shall be filled, and he feeds his flock like a shepherd. We often recount the record of Job's afflictions and we believe they were felt in his mortal flesh, and through it all he could see the hand of God that resteth with him, which were the virtues of faith that declared, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him," and as our text states, "Though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." Job realized his afflictions were greater than he could endure, and that he would be cut off from the earth, for Satan smote him from the sole of his foot unto his crown with sore boils. (Job ii. 7.) For us to have such afflictions we could not endure, but would have to pass from this time state, if it were not that God had an all-wise purpose in our restoration. These sore boils were destructive, yet he trusted in God. We are passing on beyond the sufferings of this present life unto life eternal, and the expression of truth declares, "Cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins," just as Job was restored and received double at the Lord's hand. As Job beheld the hand of God resting with him we believe every child of God is made to feel the strength of the Almighty resting with him in this life's pilgrimage, and all the tribulations we are made to pass through worketh in us patience unto the Lord. Job said, "I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." All my people shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be their peace. Another expression, We shall no more teach our brother and our neighbor, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know him, from the least to the greatest of them. These expressions prove that Job was uttering words of truth, for he says, I shall see him for myself, and not another. Men might infer that the statement of Job in our text would declare the realization of immortality beyond this world. We are here called to special consideration, for faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, but with patience we wait for them, and all of the virtues of life realized in faith and hope are but a foretaste of the joys that shall be re-

vealed in us. Job's expression in which he states, I shall see for myself, and not another, would lead carnality to believe, or to the conclusion of personal mortal creatures recognition in heaven, but the saved of the Lord are not mortal, for mortality is swallowed up of life and corruption has put on incorruption, and we shall be changed. John says it does not yet appear what we shall be. We shall be like Jesus, for another expression says, When I awake with thy likeness I shall be satisfied. We are not marrying nor giving in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. In the measure of faith given unto Job he is made to declare his redemption from all iniquity and praise God for his salvation, which we believe will be the realized virtues of every sinner saved by grace, and every one who is made a witness of the dealings of the Lord with his people has Job's experience, and rejoices in God his Savior, which is the sweetness of the joys of the foretaste which shall be revealed. According to the Bible, the infallible word of truth, we accept it as the word of God. The Old Testament, being written before this our latter day, was written for our learning, and Jesus said, Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, but they are they which testify of me; and the New Testament declares of his work and bears witness of him and his completed work of redemption, also of his death, resurrection and ascension, and that he is a risen and exalted Savior, at the right hand of the Father and that he will dismount the throne and sware by him that ever liveth that time shall be no more, and those who live and remain shall not hinder those who sleep, but they shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall they ever be with the Lord. According to the revelation of the Spirit to John on the Isle of Patmos, they shall sing the praises of God and the Lamb forever and ever. All our life's pilgrimage is a mystery, and as we pass day by day in our experience we see or feel or behold the hand of the Lord resting with us, directing our steps and hedging us about, which we hope is the experience of the Lord's people. So in my flesh I see God. God's ways are not according to carnal reasoning, for he moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform, planting his footsteps in the sea and riding on the storm.

"Though my reins be consumed within me." When our reins are consumed within us all that self-reliance, strength, and whatever other virtues we may feel we once had, are dissolved and we behold the working of God's power in it all. The immortal state no man knows, but according to the New Testament every sinner that will sing God's praise in glory is saved by grace, and what they realize in the virtues of eternal life in this life's pilgrimage will be according to the measure of the gift of God, and all the virtues realized in heaven will be according to the grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, and as Paul expressed it,

By the grace of God we are what we are. When this house, our tabernacle, be dissolved we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, in which all will be joy and peace forever.

Dear readers, we have passed through another year of the joys and sorrows of this life and we hope we feel some of the virtues we have tried to describe resting with us, and we do rejoice to have your sweet fellowship and to read the good letters you have contributed to the columns of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and the many kind words of cheer to its editors and publishers. We feel to thank you for your kind forbearance, and ask you when moved within your hearts in gratitude and thanksgiving to God and are brought out in praise tell us about it, for we are often hungering to read from your pen, and please remember the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to contribute to it both naturally and spiritually, and through the pilgrimage of our life in 1932 may it be the will of almighty God to give us understanding that we may behold him in all things and realize his predestinated purpose in our salvation.

C. W. V.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Edith M. Frasher, Del., $1; Elder E. L. Cobb, N. C., $1; Ebenezer Church, N. Y., $10; Harold M. Bennett, Md., $2; Mrs. Allie Gooch Reid, N. C., $1; Mrs. B. Ardies, Ontario, $2; A. D. Hewett, Wash., 50 cents; Mrs. Margaret Jamieson, Cal., $1; J. R. Nuckols, Ky., $3; Mrs. Emma L. Ferris, D. C., $5; "A friend," Pa., $5; Mrs. M. A. Tanner, Miss., $1; H. F. Cate, Kan., $1; Mrs. Sarah J. Clegg, Pa., $1; Elizabeth Rittenhouse, N. J., $4.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence, in Delmar, Md., November 5th, 1931, Kenneth S. Adkins, of Parsonsburg, Md., and Miss Vesta Mary Lewis, of Berlin, Md.

By the same, at his residence, in Delmar, Md., December 24th, 1931, Ralph Morris, of Salisbury, Md., and Miss Dorothy Jane Shockley, of Eden, Md.

By Elder George L. Weaver, of Shelbyville, Ky., at the residence of the bride, in Delaware, Ohio, October 15th, 1931, Mr. James Keiter Buckwalter, of Xenia, Ohio, and Miss Amy L. Mutchler, of Delaware, Ohio. Mr. and Mrs. Buckwalter will reside in Delaware, Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER J. R. HATCHER was born February 23rd, 1856, and departed this life in a Nashville hospital January 2nd, 1932. He united with the Old School or Predestinarian Baptists at Richland meetinghouse, Humphreys County, Tennessee, on the fifth Sunday in May, 1881, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry May 19th, 1883, and was an able defender of the doctrine of unlimited predestination. When Elder Hatcher preached he did it with humbleness, yet fearless of man, and with honor to his God. He preached for nearly half a century. He was married to Mary Elizabeth Halbrock January 3rd, 1877, and to their union were born twelve children, one being born dead. Six sons and five daughters survive: Alfred, W. J., L. H. and E. R. Hatcher, of Nashville, J. H. Hatcher, Mrs. Rittie Robertson, Mrs. Isabel Simpson, Mrs. Frances Hunt, and Mrs. Maudie Greenwell, of McEwen, Tennessee. After the death of his first wife he was married to Mrs. Sallie L. Davidson, September 10th, 1923, who still survives. Elder Hatcher was a man of a fatherly affection, kind to those who opposed him in what he believed, but uncompromising when it came to the truth of the Bible as he understood it. He always stood firm on the doctrine of salvation by grace, and on unlimited predestination, as the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and LONE PILGRIM know, for he wrote to them often, and I surely did enjoy his writings, for they were comforting and edifying to the scattered sheep. His Captain, Husband, Priest and King, the Lord Jesus Christ, gave him, as I believe, an honorable discharge from the afflictions of the gospel to lie down and rest until he bids him arise in his likeness, or his image, nevermore to suffer, but to reign with him eternally. Elder Hatcher will be greatly missed, especially by those of the West Tennessee Association, of which he was the Moderator at the time of his death. Elder Hatcher was held in high esteem by all who knew him, a fact made manifest the day he was laid to

rest at his old home place, by the large congregation that attended his funeral. It was said at his funeral that if he had any enemies they were those who opposed what he believed. But it made no difference to Elder Hatcher what men said or thought about what he believed, for he was like Paul, he knew in whom he believed. Oh may God raise up others to go and feed the bleeting sheep of West Tennessee Association. I know Elder Biggs feels as did old Elija: almost forsaken, but may God give him wisdom to cry aloud, and shun not to declare the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. I will say to his bereaved widow and the children who are left behind, May the blessing of God rest upon you all and reconcile you to the end to realize that your loss is his eternal gain.

Elder Biggs, of Nashville, Tenn., and the writer were called to conduct the funeral, which we did in the presence of a large congregation of sorrowing friends. May God bless all who mourn.

O. W. PERKINS.

C. Y. PYLES, better known as "Bee" Pyles, son of Frank and Mary Pyles, was born November 13th, 1886, and died January 30th, 1932, in his forty-sixth year. October 3rd, 1922, he was married to Lucy Dean Lindsey, who is left to mourn. He is also survived by two brothers, Jess Pyles, of Norwich, Kansas, and S. F. Pyles, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, two uncles, both residing in the west, several nephews, nieces and cousins. Our friend "Bee" and his wife resided on a farm near Campbellsburg, Ky., and attended the meetings of the Sulphur Fork Church. While he did not belong to any visible church, it was evident from his walk and conversation he had been born of that incorruptible seed that liveth and abideth forever. Their home was a haven for the Old School Baptists, and many times I have been entertained at his home. He had reached the end of his allotted time, his race was run and he has entered into the joy of the Lord. Our loss is great. We have lost a dear friend, the community a good neighbor, who was ever ready to lend a helping hand in sickness. He was an honest, upright citizen, beloved by all who knew him. May the Lord bless his lonely widow, and reconcile us all and enable us to say, Thy will be done.

I tried to preach the gospel to a large congregation of brethren and friends, singing his favorite hymn, "Amazing grace" (No. 488, Beebe's collection). I spoke briefly from the words, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life," after which we laid all that was mortal to rest in the cemetery near by.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER J. A. Modlin having changed his address from Gillespie, Ill., to R. 1, Virden, Ill., requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

MEETINGS.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects Elder Arnold H. Bellows to meet with them, the Lord willing, the first Sunday in April (April 3rd, 1932). Services to be held at the home of brother J. E. Livingston, 64 East Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. Also at 2 p. m. on Saturday before. All are welcome.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the first Sunday in April (3rd). All are welcome. E. M. FORD.

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ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at the home of sister E. Brunow, 411 N. Ridgeway Avenue, and on the second, third and fourth Sundays at the home of brother W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. The fifth Sundays are by appointment. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastors, Elders Jones and Janes.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Little Flock Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every first and third Sunday at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, at 1 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

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ELDER C. W. ANDERSON,
ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 100. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1932. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PSALMS CXXXVIII. 5.

"YEA, they shall sing in the ways of the Lord: for great is the glory of the Lord."

The chosen of God are described as pilgrims and strangers journeying to the better country, unto the city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God. Sometimes they sigh and weep, their souls are much discouraged because of the way. Then there are times of joy when the statutes of the Lord are their songs in the house of their pilgrimage. They are often weak, compassed with infirmities and journeying with tardy steps, but their strength is renewed, and upheld by the Lord, their Shepherd, they hold on their way. They all shall reach the heavenly country, they shall ultimately sing in the heights of Zion; not one of them shall perish on the road to eternal glory. They are Jehovah's own vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory, on whom he will make known the riches of his glory. I have intimated there are sighs as well as songs that these pilgrims know. They cannot but droop and sigh sometimes, and there are seasons when they may well be glad, and be of good courage, coming unto Zion with singing, sorrow and sighing flee away. Sin and temptations, the buffetings of Satan, the cares and afflictions also, that are measured out unto all the ransomed of the Lord, retard their steps, weary the soul, hands hang down, knees become feeble, and our hearts are fearful that we may never reach the land of pure delight and dwell in bliss forever with the Lord. But the pathway is not all sorrow and sighing, for "they shall sing in the ways of the Lord: for great is the glory of the Lord." Every inch of the way of Zion's pilgrims through this world, whether it be rough or smooth, distressful or joyous, whether it be by day or night that they journey, all is well known, all is embraced in the Lord's eternal, all-wise, immutable decrees. "He performeth the thing that is appointed for me; and many such things

are with him."—Job xxiii. 14. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."—Isaiah xiv. 24. What is there that can arise, that from eternity the counsel of the Lord did not embrace? Oh how afraid I should be to think that there could arise anything that his predestination did not embrace. For that imagined thing might interfere with and defeat the counsel of Jehovah's will, and if any thought or purpose of the Lord should be frustrated why not *all* the counsel of his will brought to nought? "The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations."—Psalms xxxiii. 10, 11. "There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel, against the Lord."—Prov. xxi. 30. And all the times that passed over David, and over Israel, and all the kingdoms of the countries, and over every human being, are only as God hath decreed, who hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation. (1 Chron. xxix. 30; Acts xvii. 26.) "Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Then though dangers assail and dangers affright, though the gates of hell assail, disturb and cause us grief, though adversities waste our lives and bring us low, though internal depravities of the human heart discover themselves to us to our shame and anguish of spirit: Shall any of the sheep of Christ perish? Though the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, though in our flesh there dwells no good thing, though every imagination of the thoughts of the natural heart is only evil continually, can there arise within us anything beyond the eternal, infinite knowledge of God? Is it not all bounded by the counsel of his will? Oh it would be appalling to my spirit to think that Satan or devils, or angels, or any man, or anything that hath being, could do anything beyond the bounds of the Almighty's eternal decrees. Jesus said unto Peter, "Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all."—Mark xiv. 30, 31. Once, twice, thrice, not the fourth time. Oh! I could not wish to think myself to be a self-determined being, that my will is self-determined: this would be to deify myself. What are we? What am I? An insignificant, sinful creature. Oh I verily believe that the Holy Ghost has so wrought in me that I loathe my sins, and delight in righteousness, and I shudder to think that I could be capable of thinking one sinful thought beyond the infinite knowledge of our God His understanding is infinite (Psalms cxlvii. 5), and he saith, "I change not." Therefore he saith, "I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the

things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a revenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."—Isaiah xlvi. 9-11. The Lord has chosen his people unto eternal glory by Christ Jesus, he has predestinated them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, and he has predestinated them to be conformed to the image of his Son. They are predestinated to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, which is reserved in heaven for them, so in the ways of the Lord they shall sing. The wicked desire not the knowledge of God's ways, but God's elect are so instructed by the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, that they are brought to seek, to walk in, and delight themselves in his ways. Before called by grace we are all strangers to his ways, far off, depraved and prone to err; being alienated from the life of God, our poor lives are without God in the world. But when God's good work is begun in us we begin to know that the way of the transgressor is hard. Guilt and condemnation burden us, for the law of God is against transgressors, and we are sometimes dismayed in apprehension of the wrath to come. But, while the work of the Spirit of God in the heart of the quickened sinner discovers to him his lost estate, and that he is far off, far astray from the ways of the Lord, and much trouble of soul is the fruit of such teachings, yet it is very gracious, for there is wrought in the soul a hatred of sin and hungerings after righteousness, there springs up a love of holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. We long to be pure that we might dwell with God, whom we now contemplate with sacred awe. But we see, and feel to our sorrow, that our feet are treading in paths of the iniquity of our Adamic nature. This does not mean that the quickened sinner is going into outward acts of sin. Ah no! He seeks to walk circumspectly, but in his head there it is that he learns he is vile, ever going astray, wandering in his imaginations, deceits and desires in all that is contrary to the holiness of the Lord. My ways are not your ways, saith the Lord. When in our alienation we walked, it was according to the course of this world. Here we could live and find our pleasures in the lusts of our flesh. But God's grace taught us, and still teaches us, to deny ungodliness; yes, God's graciousness suppresses all unholy merriment in what is sinful, we cannot make sin the theme of our singing, such songs are hushed, and the quickened soul can only sigh and weep and tremble in paths of iniquity and is moved to pray to the Lord for mercy. Now the ways of the Lord in which his elect, his redeemed, his called ones sing are those ways which he discovers unto his own in the gospel of his dear Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. All the ways, all the doctrines of men regarding the path of eternal life and salvation are the broad way that leadeth to destruc-

tion. But the ways of the Lord in Christ's gospel, whose goings have been from of old, from everlasting (Micah v. 2), are the new and living way which Christ hath consecrated with his own blood. (Heb. x. 20.) Here we shall find the steps of the path of God's elect, the footsteps of the flock. The ways of the Lord as declared in his works in creation are great and glorious, and his marvelous, wonderful ways in his providential government of the universe, and all things and creatures therein, may well, when we are led by the Holy Spirit to contemplate them, cause us in wonder, adoration and gratitude to sing praises to our Creator. But oh what causes there are for singing when we are led into God's ways in the redemption of poor sinners from under the curse of the law.

"Here the whole Deity is known,
Nor dares a creature guess
Which of the glories brighter shone,
His justice or his grace."

Here is to be seen Jehovah's everlasting love, his mercy, compassion, that he is tender, pitiful, forgiving. "In his love and in his pity he redeemed them."—Isaiah lxiii. 9. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John iii. 16. In the eternal purpose which God purposed in his dear Son his goings forth have been from eternity. In the eternal choice of his people, and giving them unto his Son, and all those covenant provisions for them in him very blessedly declare unto us the eternal thoughts, the eternal wisdom, the eternal kindness of Jehovah, the Almighty, the Lord God Omnipotent, who reigneth. O Lord God! thou art great, for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears. When Christ Jesus was in the world and in very deeds opened up the way into the Holiest for his people this was inscribed upon all that he did, "Holiness to the Lord."—Exod. xxviii. 36. Thus the highway that he established is called "the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there: but the redeemed shall walk there."—Isaiah xxxv. 8, 9. All the steps of Christ on the way to, and in entering within the veil, having obtained eternal redemption for the church, were in infinite majesty and glory, and all declaring his devotion to him that appointed him the Surety, the Ransomer, the Mediator of God's elect. Every step he trod in his obedience, his sufferings, in the shedding of his precious blood, was "Holiness to the Lord," that he should present his church, his bride, holy and without blame, and in everlasting love, in immortal loveliness, before the Majesty in the heavens. Now, when we are led by the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, to walk by faith in the ways of Christ Jesus our Lord how comforting it is. Our health is good then, our knees are no longer feeble; here poor sinners can sing, for the paths are righteousness,

sanctification and redemption, we are made the righteousness of God in him. Oh! we are reconciled unto God our Father by the blood of our Emmanuel, God with us. Let me say again, when this is sealed home to the soul what a sweet, delightful wonder it is, oh how blessed we are! Now we are done with seeking to establish our own righteousness, we are done with our filthy rags, for the best robe has been brought forth, and put upon us, and we begin to sing, for we are happy, and this is our song, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."—Isaiah lxi. 10.

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress,
Midst flaming worlds in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

The glad tidings of Christ's gospel calm the troubled soul, chase away the terror of the law, and saith to the perishing, "I have redeemed thee." Then sorrow and sighing flee away, for our God graciously sets our feet in the way of his steps, his ways in Christ Jesus, the Lamb of God, and we are of good cheer, for who is he that condemneth us? Christ hath died for me, a poor hell-deserving sinner. We are made glad through his works, for Christ hath triumphed gloriously over sin, death and Satan, and we hope through Jesus to triumph, too. O happy, pardoned sinner! "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thine excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places."—Deut. xxxiii. 29. They shall sing in the ways of the Lord, for no lion is there, nor any ravenous beast, it shall not be found there, in the King's highway, our Savior's obedience and blood hide all our transgressions from view. He has made the atonement for our sins, and we fear no evil in the path of life, the living way in which we journey by faith into heaven itself, "whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Oh when the favored sinner walks in the ways of the Lord, when forgiveness, reconciliation, justification, hope of salvation, and eternal glory are feelingly possessed in our hearts well may we sing, we do sing, for love and gratitude move us to honor and glorify his name. Melody is in our hearts to the Lord. His ways are pleasantness and all his paths are peace. All is made pleasant between us poor sinners and our God by precious almighty Friend, Jesus Christ our Lord. Oh to be so kept, looking unto the Lord that he will uphold our goings in his paths. The ways of the Lord also signify paths that the saints are ordained to walk in; in labors of love, in their conversation as becometh saints, in the ordinances of the house of God that they may in all holy conversation and godliness show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous

light. "Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the Lord: for great is the glory of the Lord."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

BENSON, N. C., Feb. 15, 1932.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—I have enjoyed very much the communications of your dear father which appeared in the January and February issues of the *Landmark* and the January issue of the SIGNS. "The way," of which he writes, was deeply interesting to me, and your following remarks were especially sweet. I, too, feel to be nearing the end of my earthly journey, according to my afflictions, and am deeply concerned about "the way." I am often questioning myself as to the welfare of my soul, and at times have great searching of heart along this line.

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

As you say, it is a most solemn thought. You also say the fact that one fully realizes it and is constantly examining himself and diligently searching for evidence of his acceptability with God is the best proof that can be found that he is in the "right way." This gives me encouragement by the way, and I feel that I was made to rejoice while reading it. How beautiful are the feet of them that publish peace and bring glad tidings of good things.

Your father speaks of financial losses due to bank failures. I can witness with him in that, as I lost most of my savings in the First National Bank of Benson when it closed. He further says that none of us have suffered as Job did, a perfect man, one who feared God and eschewed evil. How true this is. As you say, what a comfort to feel amidst all this turmoil and strife of this life that we have the eternal God as our refuge. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth. I am glad that all things are in his hands. How consoling the thought that the Lord reigneth.

There are many things I wish to refer to, but I am very nervous, as you will see by this writing, and I realize that a letter in my weakness will not profit you, but I wanted you to know how very much I have enjoyed reading those excellent articles. They have been a source of much comfort to me in my afflictions. May the Lord continue to bless your father and yourself with a faithful mind to write of the riches of his grace. Please remember me when calling on the name of the Lord.

Your unworthy friend,

ELIZABETH H. BARBOUR.

DUTTON, Ontario, Feb. 12, 1932.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—It has been on my mind for some time to write you a few lines to let you know that I often do meditate upon my sweet visits while in your midst, and how I sat under the sound of the voice of God's servant, and as these words came into my mind while I write I will pen them: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." Truly it was, dear brother, I trust the

sweetest joy in this world of woe for a poor sinner to mingle with God's elect people. One of old said, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way?" It was heavenly to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple. One said, "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his food was sweet to my taste." All these comforting words bespeak my enjoyment in your little company, the flock of his pasture, and you as their shepherd, feeding together, none daring to make you afraid. I will be a wall of fire round about them, and a glory in the midst. I well remember your discourse on Manoah and his wife. Another in Job, I forget where, but I will ever remember the sweetness I enjoyed, and I wish you to give my love to all the dear brethren and sisters I met in your quiet little meeting-place. I remember when saying goodbye to Mr. Short, I called him brother, how he did not answer, and I felt then, The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and as face answereth to face in water so the heart of man to man.

I am living now in Dutton, where I have rented a home. I am favored to be among my dear kindred in Christ. Our dear pastor and family are very kind and thoughtful of me and other dear ones.

A few hours after my dear companion passed away and my very soul seemed ready to sink under its weight these words came to me with power, "Thy maker is thine husband," and I can say that from time to time the power rests with me, and, bless his holy name, I crave for that heavenly promise which is able to keep me from falling.

We are all very sorry to learn that dear brother Lefferts is not in good health, but hope he will fully recover. We feel dissapointed that you will not be able to attend our May meeting, but hope you may be able to attend a meeting later on in the year.

I told my son before I came away I hoped the time would come when he could attend the meetings in New York at least once a month. He seems to have a reverence towards the Old Baptists and I can only hope it may ripen into the true love, be drawn by the strong cords of God's love, not man's.

Dear brother Dodson, as I thought of my sweet privilege of getting to meetings a year ago I thought to write you. Some time in the future I may have such a privilege again. I get lonely at times and long to see my only son and only child. I wish it was my lot to live nearer them, but I desire to be submissive to my heavenly Master's will. He is a dear, good son to me. We must leave all and follow Christ, but we have many idols which must be crushed. Thou shalt have no other god but me.

Kind love to your wife and son. I would be glad of a letter from you when you have time.

Your sister in gospel bonds,

(MRS.) JOHN McPHAIL.

FLEMINGTON, N. J., Feb. 17, 1932.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—It has been

over two years since I last saw you and heard you preach, but I have often thought of you and the little company of true worshippers over whom our great God has made you overseer. What a holy calling! It is a wonderful thing to be drawn to his house and to feel in the presence of Jesus at home. Not a house built with hands, but builded by our Lord and Savior, and a host no man can number are the occupants of it, of every nation, tribe and tongue; not one more than God has called, nor one less. The words of Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," came to me very sweetly last Sunday morning and for a moment I was lost in rapture. I felt the sweet presence of Jesus and the promise to his children: Lo, I am with you always, even to the end. I thought of the words, "Though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." I feel this means the sins that beset us on all sides: lust, greed, envy, pride, jealousy, malice and hatred, warring members that follow us all through our life, and yet when he speaks to our troubled, storm-tossed soul there is peace and we see the angel of mercy again in our flesh, and where it reads, "He shall stand in the latter day upon the earth," I am persuaded it means when we are brought down to the very last straw of hope, ready indeed to give up and cry out, Lord, I am unclean, help thou me.

"Lord, at thy feet I bow,
O pity and forgive;
Here will I lie and wait till thou
Shalt bid me rise and live."

The time came, dear brother, when I could no longer stand outside the door of the church, and the day of my baptism is indeed a sweet remembrance, but there has been more darkness since that time and a feeling of utter unfitness to be there, but with the poet I can say, I love thy kingdom, Lord, the house of thine abode. This is something the world can never take away.

Kindly excuse me for writing so much, but I felt like telling you these things. I often think of the time, a few years ago, in the little church at Kingwood, when it seemed the heavens opened and the place was flooded with heavenly light, a precious pearl to me this "spot."

May the Lord bless and keep you in your labor of love.

Your sister only by the grace of God,

GERTRUDE PYATT.

RUTHERFORD, N. J., Feb. 20, 1932.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS:—During the past week it has been my lot to experience great sorrow of heart. It is not necessary to be specific, nor do I desire to burden others with my more or less private troubles, yet to-night as I sat in my den and read one after another of the three foregoing letters, one from an afflicted friend in North Carolina, another from a dear soul in Canada, and still another from a good sister in New Jersey, I could but weep for joy over this evidence that the great and mighty God, of whom Solomon said, "The heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain," should so mercifully and wonderfully remember

me in mine affliction as to send three of his handmaidens to minister to my necessities and to comfort me in my distress with the same comfort wherewith they themselves are comforted of God. To receive three such letters within a few days of each other under the circumstances which have surrounded me, and to have them come from such widely separated sections, would seem at least to be a coincidence, but to me it is more: it is none other than the hand of my God. To him I would ascribe all majesty and praise.

"How can I sink with such a prop
As my eternal God,
Who bears the earth's huge pillars up,
And spreads the heavens abroad?"

It is out of the fullness of my heart the above is sent as a slight token of my appreciation of such, to me, beautiful letters. It is wonderful, indeed, to behold what God has wrought. Let heaven and earth resound with his praise.

R. LESTER DODSON.

PROVERBS IX. 1-5.

"WISDOM hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table: she hath sent forth her maidens: she crieth upon the highest places of the city, whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: as for him that wanteth understanding, she sayeth to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled."

Any one will know that this is the work of wisdom. That it is a work which is done. Not only in the building, but in all of it. It is all spoken of in the perfect tense. Therefore it is done. That which is has been, is now, and the Lord requireth that which is past. There can be no house in all the world to compare with this one. Houses are builded on their foundations, whether good and sufficient or weak and untrusty. This house is built in its foundation. Every piece of material, speaking after the manner of men, is built in the foundation. The house of Abraham was in him when God made the covenant with him, therefore every member of his unborn family, and yet sure to be born family, received the covenant in him. The whole of his house, or Israel, was in him, and received the promises in him. They were not then in any developed existence, and yet they had a life existence in Abraham, and were in perfect unity, in a covenant sense, with Abraham. In him they received the promises.

In the text we have something more to our interest, more precious to us. It not only embraces all the seed of God who were literal Israelites but it embraces all the chosen of God in every nation on earth. The elect out of every nation, kindred and tongue under heaven. Wisdom has not been enlightened by any new developments since the world began. It was wisdom before the world began and it is wisdom now, and ever will be, and without any change either in addition or subtraction. Paul tells us of Jesus Christ that he is made unto us Wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. (1 Cor. i. 30.) Therefore our Jesus, the Christ, is this wisdom who has built this house. He was in the beginning with the Father, and all things were made by him and for him.

Without him was not anything made that was made. He was in the beginning with God and he was God. Therefore this house, his house, was built by him in his eternal choice before there was one of the members thereof in personal existence. This establishes the fact that there was an eternal life unity between him and the members of his body, the church, before there was a single development of them in the world. David had a very clear view of this fact, and he said, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."—Psalms cxxxix. 14-16. This is clear that every member of his body, or pieces of material of this house were fully and wholly in him before the world began. There he was laid in Zion for a foundation, and all his children were with him then. "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste."—Psalms xxviii. 16. This is the Foundation who was laid in eternity by the hand of the Three-in-One-God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. In this God is their salvation, and there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. (Acts iv. 12.) These children being in him his life is their life, so that they are as secure as he is secure. And he being in the Father he is as secure as the Father is secure. Here we see that the Foundation and the building are both one. Or they are both in one. Hence the words of Jesus, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."—Matt. xvi. 18. He is the tried stone which overcame all the gates of hell, and when he overcame he overcame for all who were in him. Therefore to prevail now would be not only to prevail against the members of his body but against him, the Foundation. That would be to destroy him as the foundation and leave the church of God without hope and without God, without salvation in this world or the world to come. Wisdom hath builded her house. Here is the church of God built in our Lord Jesus Christ. He is ascended up to the Father, and has forever taken his mediatorial throne at the right hand of God where he maketh intercession for us. This intercession is accepted of the Father, and is at all times heard and granted, for it is according to the will of the Father.

The Seven Pillars. The fullness of God in Christ Jesus. The figure seven denotes fullness. There are seven spirits of God gone out into all the earth. He had seven eyes when John saw him on the Isle of Patmos. He is of eternal self-existence, omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience, omnifici-

ence, omnipercipient and immutibility. I do not say that these are the seven divine principles of our God, for there are many other such words which apply to him, and which will apply to no other one in heaven or in the earth. But he has all of these, and they are in and of himself. He did not accumulate them. They were with him in the beginning, and he could not be without them. Anything short of these cannot be the God of our salvation. Upon these principles or pillars which are in and of himself our foundation stands, and the church or house of God stands in him. Therefore she stands on the foundation which he has laid, and "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. iii. 11. The seven pillars are in him, and upon him, and in him is the whole church of God built.

By this same wisdom was our Lord slain. The same wisdom that did the rest also slew her beast. The Jews and wicked men nailed him to the cross, they spoke to the Governor to have him crucified. They were guilty of his death, and yet he laid down his life of himself. He offered himself to God by the eternal Spirit. When he was baptized the Holy Spirit came down on him and abode on him. It was this Spirit that drove or led him into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. Note that this is the very purpose for which the Spirit led him into the wilderness. Here his power to overcome should be made known. It could not be known any other way. He must come in personal contact with the enemy of God and all his poor little ones, the devil. He came out against the Son of God with all his powers, and tried him in every conceivable shape and way, and yet he could not prevail. He was a tried stone, a sure salvation. But he had to die. He first must overcome the devil in every point. Death is the last enemy. He must overcome him. He must not prevail, not even to say, I did not have a trial, give me a chance and I will hold him. No. He must overcome. Therefore wisdom decreed that he must go there. He must go there to overcome. All this was among the "all things" which must work together for the good of them who are the chosen of God and who are the called according to his purpose. Therefore wisdom made the provision. It was not left to the devil to do and then for Him to overcome. No, wisdom made the provision in the beginning, so there is nothing left to fate not to blind chance. It is all of God and of his own eternal purpose. *Wisdom slew him.* In donig this wisdom spilt his blood. It came forth as blood and water. It is mingled as wine. Herein is the refreshing that all the host of God's children have in him. Wisdom prepared the house of wine, the banqueting-house into which he leads us, and gives us such refreshings as we can find in no other name under heaven. With these refreshments has she furnished her table. Then the Holy Ghost and the Father fully agree, so that there is nothing to cause one word of confusion. The table is fully furnished with all the needed

vessels, and with all that the children need to subsist upon. There is not a single condition to be complied with on their parts. It is all of God, of our Lord Jesus, as ministered by the Holy Spirit, and fully accepted by the Father. Her maidens which she has sent forth doubtless refer to the scattering of her branches over all the earth and to her ministers. She was scattered according to the word of: "Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered." The he said to them, As ye go preach. Wisdom sent them forth even though it was done by the severest persecutions. They were not to go until they were rejected or persecuted. They were to abide in the city where they were as long as they were received, but when they were persecuted there they were to go to another city, and preach as they went. Do not stop preaching because you are persecuted therefor. No. This was God's vehicle for the spread of his word. Thus he made his enemies do his will. They took his ministers in chains to keep them securely. There could be no escaping. They carried them to the very spot where they were commanded to go to preach the word of God. Men meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. It is what God meant that should prevail and not what man meant. Thus they sent Paul to Rome, and other places, to preach the word of God. Who sent them forth? Wisdom did it. They did just what they were sent to do. They cried that the table is spread, the beast is slain, the wine is mingled. All this time wisdom is crying in their cries. She is saying the same things; they are saying it as wisdom says it in them. There is perfect agreement in the delivery of this word. There is no uncertain sound in the mountain of our God. All of it is in the holy city where our Lord was crucified.

Now, see to whom this cry is made: "Whoso is simple." Not one wise one is spoken to. The simple only are commanded to turn in hither where this great provision is made, and where this wonderful work has been going on. How strange are the works of God! All this for a few simple ones who want understanding. Foolish, simple, crippled, maimed, sore, stinking, not molified, no ointment poured forth, and none to pour out, destitute. Oh how miserable these who are now commanded to turn in hither. What will wisdom do with such a foolish company as this? She says to them, "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled." Jesus said, Except ye eat of my flesh and drink of my blood ye have no life in you. This is the bread and this is the wine. Wisdom has prepared it all and it is life-giving and life-sustaining. There is no life without it. All outside of this is death. To not be made a partaker of this bread and this wine is to be left in death. When one is given to eat this bread and to drink this wine he has life for evermore, and shall not see death.

I do hope that the Lord has given us to eat and to drink at this, his table,

with all the little ones. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us to the end.

With this love to all the saints, I am your brother in this blessed hope,

L. H. HARDY.

ATLANTIC, North Carolina.

SHACKELFORD, MO., Jan. 25, 1932.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—I am inclosing a letter from brother T. E. Attebery. I have enjoyed it so much myself I wold like to have it published for the benefit of other believers.

Your brother,

J. S. COPELAND.

PLEASANT HILL, MO., Nov. 16, 1931.

DEAR BROTHER COPELAND:—If you remember, you asked me at the association what was meant by the slaying of "the firstborn in Egypt."

To-night I am alone and lonesome. I went to bed, but could not sleep, so got up and dressed, then thought, Why not answer brother Copeland's question? So here I am with such as I have. Exodus xii. 12: "For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord." A wonderful text, a big text, and I am oh so little. But thanks be, the God of the whole earth is just as great, wise and good as ever, and I hope I have learned that I am no more than a servant, so if there is truth and righteousness in my thoughts, and comfort, it is of God, but if it is a tangle of words without knowledge, then it is of me. The dear Lord has been pleased to hide his works and his plan of salvation so the wise and prudent of this world cannot find, or see, or believe them, and it is only by revelation that any one can have them. I have sometimes hoped that even I had been so wonderfully blessed, and yet I might be mistaken. We are going to reckon Egypt as the world, and we are going to still believe God has a people in the world, and that some of his people are here manifest, and that some of them are not yet manifest. Those who are manifest I am going to call Israelites. They have had the blood applied and are in no danger at this time of being slain, for the Lord is continually passing over Egypt slaying the firstborn, but these who have been killed (slain) to the law are in no danger again, for the blood of the Lamb of God has been applied and God passes over them. But those of his who are yet in darkness are just as much the children of wrath (by nature) as the blackest Egyptian that ever lived, and are trusting in themselves (the firstAdam), the firstborn, and are in darkness, trusting in their own (chance) works, good intentions, choice, etc. But the Lord passes through and slays them to that trust, in the night, then the quickened ones turn to the helpers they have heard of (beast means power), and when they undertake to get help from them, let it be law or imaginary gospel, that beast is slain, too, and the poor helpless wretches are without God or help in the world. This happens to the king

on his throne and to the woman behind the mill; there is only one way, Jesus, a high way, and this one is ready to start the way he knew not and in paths he had not trod, for God is leading him and he will sooner or later come to the Red Sea, cross over dry shod and sing a new song. May the dear Lord enable us often as we journey along to at least sing a little of this wonderful song as we continue traveling, for nothing here matters only for the moment. We meet our troubles. They are always bitter. My lonesomeness gets sometimes oh so bitter I can hardly go any farther, and yet if I received according to my works I would have been consumed long ago. How wonderfully good our God is. He will never leave nor forsake us.

Goodnight. Rest in hope. Jesus reigns.

T. E. ATTEBERY.

San Francisco, Cal., Dec. 26, 1931.

Dear Editors:—The Signs of the Times and my precious Bible are all the comfort I get away off here. I feared for awhile I would have to cease taking the Signs, which caused me to weep many tears, though I hoped and prayed the dear Lord would bless me in a way that I could continue taking it, and my prayers I feel have been answered. I am inclosing a money order for two dollars to pay my subscription, which is past due, and my hope is that the next time I can send something for the good of the precious paper. I long to do so now, but I have had so much sickness and doctor bills this past spring and summer that I cannot. I long for and almost count the days until time for the good paper to come. It truly is a feast to me, and I get much from each and every letter published, and the editorials are a blessing indeed. If I know my heart, which is full of doubts and fears, I do love the precious truth of God, and him I hope I adore. I am so weak, so prone to sin, I fear that I am not born again. I feel the dear children of God are much better than I am, but oh how I long to meet and be among them again, but the good Lord will work his own purpose for his own pleasure, and I believe I am placed away off from those I hope I love for his own purpose, and I long to be ever able to say, Wherever falls my distant lot, my heart shall linger round thee. A few words of a good old hymn keep coming to my mind, which hymn declares election and predestination:

"As many as the Lord hath chose,
So many shall believe;
Not all the power or craft of hell
Shall one of them deceive.

Those God has foreordained to love,
They must and shall believe;
But those who say it's man's free will
Their very selves deceive.

God foreordained it should be so,
For 'tis Jehovah's plan
To call his people by his grace,
And bring them to the Lamb.

Before God formed his creature man,
Before the birth of day,
God foreordained redemption's plan,
And Christ the only way.

The man that goes to God in time
Was loved ere time begun,
The Father's own eternal choice,
Redeemed by Christ, the Son."

The words of this hymn I hope I firmly believe. I love to try and sing it, though I have never heard the tune. I

copied it out of an Old Baptist minister's hymn book, who was visiting my parents when I was a child. It appealed to me then, and I love it yet

I did not mean to write so much. May the grace of God be with all the household of faith, and bless the editors and the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

I feel very unworthy and the least of all, if one at all.

(MRS.) MABEL LINDSEY.

MATTITUCK, N. Y., Nov. 5, 1931.

MRS. JENNIE C. BOWERS—DEAR SISTER:—I often think of you in your affliction, and am always glad to hear of you, when brother or sister Lefferts writes. I do not expect you to write me with your eyes in the condition they are at present, but hope they will be better after a time, if the Lord pleases to remove the affliction; if not, he will give you grace sufficient to bear it. We know we can bear all things through him who strengtheneth us, and we know he does not willingly afflict his children only for their good and his glory. I do not know whether or not you can use your eyes to read, but there seems to me much comfort in the forty-third chapter of Isaiah: "Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee." When we think of this we know he only chastens us because he loves us and we are precious in his sight. How wonderful that he should love me, the least one of all; not one thing I have ever done to merit it, and I can see much sin in my life all the way through. It seems he must tire of my continual pleading for forgiveness, but, my dear sister, he is longsuffering to his children and will never leave nor forsake them. In him we are safe. His righteousness is ours. How wonderful! Oh for a heart to praise him, but I have not that unless he gives it to me. I do not know that you are able to go to meeting, but hope so. Give my love to our people when you see them.

With love,

NELLIE F. ARNOLD.

SAUGERTIES, N. Y., March 2, 1932.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I am writing you to have you make two corrections in my experience which was published in the March issue of the SIGNS. Where it says fourth chapter of John, first fifteen verses, it should read fourteenth chapter of John, first fifteen verses. Quite a difference. And the hymn 109 should be 1091. Please make these corrections in your next issue. I hope all will mark their papers.

Your sister in hope,

ALICE A. BAILEY.

[PUBLISHER'S NOTE—The experience of sister Bailey was copied by a brother and forwarded to us for publication, and the mistakes referred to were made in copying and not in the printing.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1932.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES
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ROMANS VIII. 28, 29.

"AND we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."

Unless greatly deceived, we firmly believe and dearly love the doctrine of Predestination and Election, and if there is anything, including the total depravity of man as he stands in nature, that is more clearly and definitely taught in the Scriptures, we do not know what it can be. The unregenerate world has always bitterly opposed these points of doctrine, while all true followers of our Lord, in all ages of the world, have accepted them. Until the year 1832 Baptists (there was but one kind then) were contending for these principles, but there got into their ranks those who did not believe these precious truths. Those who stood firm for the principles upon which the true church was founded, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, were properly called "Old School" Baptists. This very aptly applied and was adopted by them. It distinguished them from all others, because they clung to the original principles of the true church. In that year there was a mighty sifting and many who were not in reality of them went out from among them. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was born at that time and became the mouthpiece and official organ for those who desired to "Stand in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein." From time to time since then, and especially of late years, there have come in those who have had the audacity to appropriate unto themselves the title of "genuine Old School Baptists" and at the same time deny vehemently the doctrine which was the cause of their being thus named. In all honesty, we would ask, What right have they to stand upon the foundation which they verily hate and are doing all in their power to undermine and destroy? It appears to us that the prophet Isaiah has correctly described such characters, when he said, "In that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy

name, to take away our reproach." Apparently, there is not much opposition to the doctrine of Election, which can rest upon nothing less than the sovereignty of an infinite God, who not only had the right, but exercised it in choosing in Christ from before the foundation of the world those whom he ordained to eternal life. The doctrine of God's predestination, they hate and seem to delight in making of it a bone of contention. While it is apparent they do not understand it aright at all, nevertheless they are determined to oppose those who believe it. We have desired to be tolerant in-so-far as it is possible to be without compromising too much the principles of divine truth. Disagreement upon this point alone has never been advocated by us as a test of church fellowship. We are confident some of the Lord's dear children are unable to comprehend clearly the glory which surrounds this point of doctrine, and we are persuaded that they cannot be taught by us. If we have any correct understanding of the deep things of God, it was not received by man, neither were we taught it but by the Holy Ghost. Being convinced of this has caused us to want to exercise charity towards those who differ with us, and we believe we speak the truth when we affirm that, as a rule, most of the trouble which has been brought into the ranks of Old Baptists over this matter has been due to those who oppose the doctrine. Considerable has been written in some quarters during the past year by so-called "advocates of Zion" on the two verses, at different times, at the heading of this article, and even though much emphasis was placed upon the necessity of *rightly dividing the word,* with regard to the first verse the writer declared that what Paul meant by "all things working together for good," was that "all things that worked for good, worked together." This same writer later wrote on the second verse in our text and said that if predestination was as coextensive as forknowledge, then "universalism" was true, since it had to be acknowledged that God foreknew every one of Adam's race, but he affirmed that neither "absolutism" nor "universalism" was true and declared that neither of them was supported by the Bible. We are confident that the writer in question understands the English language as well, if not beter, than the average person, therefore, we must conclude that he has wilfully attempted to twist and distort the Scriptures from their proper meaning. Both profane and sacred history agree that the apostle Paul was a very learned man naturally. He was much better qualified, undoubtedly, to clothe his thought in words that would convey his meaning than some of his modern-day would-be interpreters, but regardless of what his culture as a man may have been, we have the authority from the word of God that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," hence it must not be, yea, it cannot be admitted for one moment that the apostle did not use the proper words, and in their proper order, to express the mind of God. We cannot understand how one

can be honest and sincere in his desire to rightly divide the word who will juggle words and twist them about so as to make them mean something entirely foreign to what the apostle says. We believe that any one who wishes to appear at all fair will have to concede that the word "foreknow" as it is used here applies only to "the called according to his purpose," just referred to in the previous verse. There is an overwhelming amount of evidence to prove that the apostle had under consideration "the election of grace," "the beloved of God," "those called to be saints," "quickened characters," or "new creatures in Christ." The Bible declares emphatically that God chose his people in Christ before the world was, and they are referred to as a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation," etc. Christ speaking through David said, "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."—Psalms cxxxix. 16. Paul speaks of them as being the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God had before ordained that they should walk in them. How absurd and impossible it is for one to try to deceive the elect of God into believing that if predestination is true, universalism also is true. They are no more alike than day is like night. It must apper clear to all who will read our text that what is set forth is this: First, God foreknew his people; he called them according to his own purpose in grace, and *predestinated* them to be conformed to the image of his Son. Second, it must appear equally clear to all that what God actually said by the mouth of his apostle to his chosen ones is that *"all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."* It is nothing short of blasphemy, to us, for one to teach that God Almighty did not succeed in having his servant, Paul, say the right thing in the right way. All down through the ages and under all conditions and circumstances the Lord has spoken comfortingly to his people, and he has given them faith to believe that nothing is impossible with him. In all candor, we would ask, What comfort can there be to an afflicted and poor people to tell them that their God only controls and works together the things that work for their good? In reality, are we not far more deeply concerned over those things which are apparently at least working against us than we are the things which are favorable to us? Suppose further that it should be conceded that the bad things, or those so considered by man, be eliminated from the group of the "all things that work together for good," and we were to appoint some wise and unimpeachable committee to investigate and separate the good from the bad, would they not be honor bound to select and throw out the most henious and wicked crime in which mankind has ever participated, that of crucifying the Lord of Glory? And, if we throw away all the benefits accruing to us by and throngh the suf-

ferings and death of Christ upon the cross of ignomy and shame, what is left of the precious hope which we have that God's holy and divine wrath against us because of sin has been appeased forever through the shed blood of his only begotten Son? Is it not far better to those who have a hope in the mercy of God to believe and be absolutely assured that there is no power in heaven, in earth, under the earth or in hell that will ever be able to separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? What can compare with that God-given faith by which they can entrust their all, both in this life and that which is to come, into the keeping of him who is able to do exceeding and abundantly above all they can ask or think? How true the words, "Not a single shaft shall hit till the God of love sees fit." We need this God in adversity more than at any other time, and how comforting it is to hear Job saying, When he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold; also, Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. There are times when God's children are so hedged about that they just have to stand still and see his salvation. It is in that day that the Lord alone is exalted and all powers, and principalities and dominions, whether visible or invisible, are seen by faith to be in absolute subjection to him who only has to speak and it is done and commands and it stands fast. When the Lord so leads and instructs as to cause us to be rooted and grounded in the fundamentals of his sovereignty we are made to know that he doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. In the felt presence of this one we can face a frowning world and rest in his love. With Daniel, though we are thrown by hellish powers into the den of lions, we can look upon them with their devouring natures and be still, knowing that even they are in the hands of our God and cannot harm a hair of our heads, unless it be his will, and should it be his will for them to destroy our bodies, even this would work for our good, in that it would separate us from this evil world and open to us the portals of immortal glory. Our text declares that "whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." We may be sure, therefore, that God will see to it that in the world we shall have tribulation. It is by and through this that we are to be conformed to the image of his Son. What was true of the Elder Brother must in some measure be common to the whole household of faith. David could say, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies," and if we be of the spiritual David's house we, too, shall have a feast of fat things even while we are surrounded by enemies. What a wonderful God is he that watches over and keeps Israel. Happy art thou, O Israel, who is like unto thee, people saved by the Lord. We should not and do not expect to find this world friendly to us if we espouse the cause of Christ, and God being our helper, we

most certainly do not expect to desert our post because one or a dozen lions come out and roar against us. Every false prophet shall sooner or later go to his own and fall a victim to the sword of truth. God himself will raise up little Davids from the sheepcote to go forth to meet and slay the great Goliaths of error, and it will be seen God has not forgotten his people. Many Israelites may have to be turned back and a selected few chosen to fight the battle, in order that all the glory may be of and to the Lord for his victory over men and devils. His wisdom hath designed the plan from beginning to end and by his great power will he do all his pleasure. It is futile for men to think they can change the "destination" which God has before determined. The prefix "pre" before "destination" shows that it is unalterably fixed, and that *beforehand,* and surely this God who hath decreed from ancient times things not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure," must have taken into account *all things,* whether they in the course of their nature be for or against him, for it was he who gave them their nature. Ordinarily, we do not employ such superfluous terms as *wet* water, *cold* ice, etc. Their very names declare unmistakably to our minds what their nature is, for we know there is no water that is not *wet* and no ice that is not *cold.* The same is true of predestination. The word itself means *absolute,* and there can be no predestination of God which is not *absolute.* The word "absolute" does not add strength to the doctrine of predestination, neither was it ever intended to do so by those who used it. They have, almost without exception, been zealous defenders of the unadulterated truth, and while not desiring to add anything to that which is written, they have been equally zealous that nothing should be taken from the word whereby the whole foundation would be shown to be faulty and they have employed words for the purpose of making this clear. We believe our text embraces the doctrine of predestination, therefore have written upon it. There are some who seem to have to air their pet theories on whatever may be their hobby, regardless of whether they are contained in the text or not. We do not wish to be found guilty of such.

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES is already well on its way to celebrate its one hundredth anniversary, and we most certainly do not desire that it should at this time of its life weaken in the defense of the cause which it has always held sacred. The memory of its founder is not held dear because he enunciated some new doctrine, but because, by the help of God, he stood as the Rock of Gibraltar for the truth as it has always been, and this God who has been Israel's help in ages past is, we trust, our God, and to him and his cause our life is dedicated. Not long ago we sat by the seaside, watching the restless and untiring waves dash themselves against the shore, and as we gazed out upon the wonderful sight we felt assured that the eternal truth of our God, like the waves of the mighty deep, would

continue to roll on and on long after the footprints of poor, puny man have vanished from the sands of time. All nations before him are as nothing; and they are accounted to him less than nothing, and vanity. "Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding." We enter upon this present year with an abiding faith in the absolute reign of Israel's God, being fully persuaded that all our times are in his hands, and all events at his command, and our hope is that when our day ends here we shall triumph over and conquer death through him that loved us and gave himself for us.

R. L. D.

NOTICE.

When remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Unetta K. Hamilton, Mo., $2; "A friend," N. Y., $1; Mrs. Phemia Gray, Ontario, $1; Mrs. James P. Rielly, N. Y., $2; Mrs. Grace E. Jones, Pa., $1.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

JOHN LELAND BOICE, of Hurley, N. Y., departed this life Sunday, February 28th, 1932, at the home of his son Raymond, after a brief illness of uremic poisoning. He had been in poor health for a month, but had been able to be about the house. He was born in June, 1854, and therefore was not yet seventy-eight years old at the time of his demise. He was married in 1888 to Miss Josephine Ennis, of the town of Olive, N. Y. Of this union three children were born: Burton, Harold and Raymond, and for the past seven years the parents resided with the last named son. The subject of this article was a man of splendid personal qualities, possessed a strong character, and was influential as a neighbor, citizen and friend in the support of all worthy causes. Early in life he united with the Reformed Church, but failed to get spiritual comfort from the meetings of that faith, so ceased to attend. Having heard the preaching of Old School Baptists, he felt that the truth was declared by them, the sovereign glory of God exalted and the eternal Son accorded praise for the wondrous works of salvation, in which the creature had no other part than to do all the sinning. But his own unworthiness impressed him so strongly that he never united with the visible church. He often attended the meetings of the Primitive Baptists and will be much missed from their meetings. His aged wife is among the immediate surviving relatives.

The writer officiated at the funeral services at his late home on Thursday following his death. The interment was in the Mt. Tremper Cemetery.

ALSO,

WITH unfeigned sorrow we note the death of sister **CORNELIA SILKWORTH EVERY,** who died Monday, March 7th, 1932, at her home in West Shokan, N. Y., after an illness of many months' duration. The funeral services were conducted the following Friday at the meetinghouse of the Olive and Hurley Church, in Shokan, N. Y., the writer endeavoring to comfort the mourning relatives, brethren and friends. The interment was at Krumville. She is survived by her husband, Freeman Every, one sister, Mrs. Melissa Krum, two brothers, Hiram and Martin Silkworth, also many nephews. Sister Every was born in the town of Olive, N. Y., June 19th, 1862. She was united in marriage to Freeman Every April 29th, 1886. For forty-one years they resided on a farm near Samsonville, and following their retirement from farm life owned and occupied a home at West Shokan, where she spent her remaining days, moving to the latter place in October, 1930. In 1902 sister Every united with the Olive and Hurley Church, Elder John Clark administering the solemn ordinance of water baptism. She and her husband, who is a member of the same church, were faithful in attendance at meetings for many years, being hindered from meeting with their

brethren only by illness or impassable roads. Their home was always open to the brethren of their faith, where for a considerable time meetings were held when it was possible and advisable for a preacher to visit them. Sister Every was one of those ornaments of grace that adorns the true church of the most high God. She had a deep experience of the things of grace, and reflected humility and faithfulness in all her walk and her life was a living example of the upright conduct of a possessor and a professor of the christian's hope, and she will be sadly missed by her bereaved husband, her brethren and the entire community, who were her friends.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

J. C. SWINDLE, the subject of this notice, was born at Oakman, Alabama, February 3rd, 1895, and died at Lubbock, Texas, February 12th, 1932. He was married December 25th, 1919, in Parrish, La., to Miss Blanch Norris. No children were born to this union. Brother and sister Swindle moved to Young County, Texas, in 1921, and lived on a farm near Newcastle. They offered themselves for membership to the True Old School Baptist Church on Saturday before the third Sunday in May, 1926. After relating to the church an experience of grace, and showing that their hope was founded upon the merits of the shed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, both brother and sister Swindle were unanimously received into christian fellowship of True Church, and were baptized the following day by the unworthy writer into full church membership, since which time both have lived quiet and peaceable lives, adorning their profession with meekness and humility. Brother Swindle was drafted into service during the World War and saw much death and destruction in the Aragone, Marne and other battles. He was severely gassed and wounded, from which he never entirely recovered, his lungs being badly crippled, which was the immediate cause of his death. Brother Swindle was a good and kind husband, charitable and peaceable with all men, sound in the doctrine of salvation by grace, the resurrection of the dead, and of the eternal sovereignty of God in all things. He was taken suddenly with an acute attack of double pneumonia and lived only four days, but when conscious would talk with his dear companion and others, and desired to be reconciled to God's will even in death, saying he was ready to go. While we sorrow, yet it is not as those having no hope. Our blessed Master said, I am he that was dead, but, behold, I am alive for evermore. And because I live ye shall live also. Precious, comforting thought! Spoken by him who cannot lie, neither his words fail. While brother Swindle was uncompromising in the doctrine of election and predestination, yet he lived without enemies, commanding the good will and respect of all men. Speaking after the manner of men, we can truly say that the Lord has called a good man from the walks of men to his eternal inheritance, which is life everlasting, where there will be no more sickness nor death, but with the holy angels all will sing anthems of adoration and praise to the worthy name of our blessed Redeemer for ever and ever. May it be God's holy will to comfort our bereaved sister in this dark hour of bereavement with the presence of his holy Spirit, that she may be enabled from the heart to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Knowing this we have no abiding city here, but seek one whose maker and builder is God. While brother Swindle was young in years, yet we feel the Lord had accomplished his will on earth with him and that we can truly say he had finished his course, fought a good fight, kept the faith, henceforth there is a crown of righteousness laid up for him, and not for him only, but for all who love the appearing of the Lord.

His body was laid to rest at Lehman, Texas, to await the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall call our sleeping dust to arise and be fashioned like unto his glorious body to be caught up together to meet him in the air, and so shall we ever be with him.

Written by request.

W. S. BOURLAND.

LIZZIE J. BURBRIDGE was born October 27th, 1844, and died October 10th, 1931, making her stay on earth 86 years, 11 months and 13 days. She was laid to rest beside her husband in Owingsville Cemetery October 12th, there to await the resurrection morn. She was the daughter of Elder Samuel and Nancy Jones, and joined the Bald Eagle Church, Bath County, when quite young and was baptized by Elder Thomas P. Dudley. In the year 1867 she was married to Roland M. Burbridge. She is survived by four children: Mrs. Nancy B. McCoun, Mrs. Lee Orear, Mrs. S. B. Carrington and J. W. Burbridge, all of Mt. Sterling, six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. She was the last of a large family of which she was the youngest. She was a devoted member and a true believer in the Old Baptist doctrine although she was denied the privilege of listening to preaching as there was no church near here. She had been a subscriber to the SIGNS for many years and read it with much interest, so I feel she has gone to that rest that remaineth for the children of God. We all miss her very much, especially her dear children, who cared for and did all they could for her after her husband's death and in her last sickness. May the same God who was her strength and her all be with her children while in this world, is my prayer.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders Olus Hamilton and P. W. Sawin, and were attended by a large gathering of relatives and friends.

Written by request.

T. J. RATLIFF.

JOHN L. THURSTON, son of Isaac and Rebecca Thurston, was born near Elmwood, Illinois, August 2nd, 1859, and died in University Hospital, Iowa City, Iowa, January 24th, 1932. Brother Thurston grew to manhood in the State of his birth, later moving with his parents to near Pickering, Nodaway County, Missouri, in the year 1881. At about the age of twenty-three years he received a hope in Christ and united with the Primitive Baptist Church known as the Three Forks of Nodaway. He was united in marriage to Miss Mary Jane Varnes on Christmas Day, 1884, at Trivoli, Illinois, later making his home for a number of years near Herman, Illinois. In the year 1901 they moved to a farm in the Shell Bark neighborhood, where they made their home until about sixteen years ago, when they moved to Columbus Junction, Iowa. Soon after moving to Iowa brother Thurston took an active part in promoting the organization of a Primitive Baptist Church, being one of the charter members. Brother Thurston was kindly, upright and honest, and was active not only in the work of the church but in other community activities. He enjoyed the confidence and highest esteem of a wide circle of friends. He is survived by his wife, two sons, E. A., of De Kalb, Ill., L. L., at home with his mother, two grandsons, Keneth and Lester, also three brothers, I. P., of Los Angeles, Cal., F. E., of Warrensburg, Mo., and A. R., of Knobnoster, Mo., to mourn their loss.

Funeral services were conducted at the home, in Columbus Junction, by Elder Samp in the presence of a large number of relatives and friends, after which the body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Columbus City, Iowa, there to await the morning of the great resurrection, when we, too, hope to arise like unto Christ's glorious body.

Written by request of the family.

F. E. THURSTON.

MRS. PHILENA VELEY, widow of George O. Veley, of Jersey Shore, Pa., died at the home of her youngest daughter, Mrs. George Marks, January 28th, 1932, of bronchal pneumonia, after a week's illness. Mother was born at Cammal, Lycoming County, Pennsylvania, the youngest of seven daughters and two sons of John and Mary Diggan Campbell, pioneer settlers in Pine Creek Valley. Her mother, Mary Diggan, was one of the first Old School Baptists in this valley. Mother received a hope in Jesus when very young. When the late Elder Silas H. Durand came through there preaching, about sixty years ago, the power of the gospel made her see that blessed light and revealed to her her love for the church. She was baptized in her fortieth year into membership with the Gammal Church. Her funeral was held February 1st, at home. Mother was a saintly woman always, living her life as a child of light, rearing her children to reverence the name of her heavenly Father; teaching those whom she believed had a hope to walk as children of light and be baptized and follow their Savior in newness of life. She had been an invalid all her life. Twelve years ago she fell and broke her hip, from which she suffered day and night. We, her children, realize she has triumphed gloriously, but the loneliness is almost more than we can bear. Her mind was as clear on all things as when she was twenty-five years of age. She leaves six children, all she bore, also grandchildren and great-grandchildren. The church has lost a strong contender for the truth and for the peace of Zion, the family has lost its leader, its sainted counselor and mother. She had been a reader of the SIGNS for more than fifty years.

Written by her daughter,

(MRS.) MABEL VELEY DAVIDSON.

MRS. MARY C. KNIGHT was born in Georgia April 9th, 1840. Her maiden name was Mary Catherine Pool. Her parents died and she moved, with a sister, to Texas, when she was about sixteen years of age. She was first married to Samuel Curry, who died six months later. By this union there was one child, Samuel Wright, who lived to be only fifteen years of age. Later she was married to Enoch Blackstone Knight, to which union five children were born: Sarah Winifred, William Lee, Etheldred Pool (Pete), Mary Frances (Fannie) and Roxie Anna. Mrs. Knight died after being seriously ill for almost two years, at the home of Roxie Anna, now Mrs. W. G. Brunette, with whom she had made her home for a number of years, at Eastland, Texas. She passed away at 9:30 a. m., February 12th, 1932, being 91 years, 10 months and 3 days of age. Her remains were interred in the cemetery at Eastland. She is survived by one daughter, Mrs. W. G. Brunette, one son, W. L. Knight, of Tahoka, Texas, one sister, Mrs. Wincy J. Haynes, of Dallas, Texas (who is the only child left of a group of fifteen), a host of grandchildren and great-grandchildren in Texas, and many relatives in Georgia. Mrs. Knight was a member of Spring Valley Baptist Church, near Omaha, Texas, most of her life, being a member there at the time of her death. Her life was one of love and devotion to her Master, and she lived a most noble and helpful domestic life, rearing orphan grandchildren and caring for the sick. Her christian devotion was an inspiration to all with whom she came in contact.

Her granddaughter,

LILLIE MOON.

BROTHER **BEAVELY L. CLARK** was born September 29th, 1855, and died January 7th, 1932, aged 76 years, 3 months and 8 days. He was married to Miss Cordelia Shelton December 23rd, 1875, and to this union ten children were born. Two preceded him in death, several years ago, leaving eight children, together with his beloved wife, and

many brethren and friends, to mourn their loss. He professed a hope in Christ and joined a church of the Highland Old School Baptist Association, of Kentucky, in the year 1896, and was a firm believer in the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things. He was a good and kind father, a loving companion, a good citizen; in fact, he was loved by all who knew him. The following request of brother Clark was complied with: Loney, one of his boys, was to come for the writer to conduct the funeral services (a distance of about seventy-five miles), and to bring me home afterward. He also requested that two funeral services be held, one at his home in Madisonville, Kentucky, at ten o'clock a. m., and the other at one o'clock p. m. at the burying-ground. At the first service I used as a text the words found in John iii. 16: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believed in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," and I affirmed that brother Clark did believe the same doctrine that Paul believed, according to the eighth chapter of Romans. At the last service I tried to talk on the resurrection of the dead. We feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

Written by one who loved him.

J. N. DARNALL.

MEETINGS.

The Lord willing, the next session of the Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association will be held with the Black Rock Church, Baltimore County, Maryland, beginning Friday, May 20th, 1932, at 11 a. m., and continuing Saturday and Sunday. Those coming by train will reach Baltimore in time for train leaving Pennsylvania Station at 4:34 p. m., Thursday, for Cockeysville, where they will be met and cared for. Those who desire to meet with us are cordially invited.

J. T. ROWE.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects Elder Arnold H. Bellows to meet with them, the Lord willing, the first Sunday in April (April 3rd, 1932). Services to be held at the home of brother J. E. Livingston, 64 East Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. Also at 2 p. m. on Saturday before. All are welcome.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

We have kept up a monthly meeting for some time in the past, and hope, by the grace of God, to be favored to continue to meet every second Sunday in each month at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California. May this bear a cordial invitation to all who believe in grace and salvation by grace to meet with us on the stated time.

MR. and MRS. W. J. BERRY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 100. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1932. NO. 5.

POETRY.

AT MERCY'S GATE.

At mercy's gate I trembling stood,
No merit could I bring;
I asked the Keeper, great and good,
The gates ajar to swing.

But he had drawn me to this place,
The gate had opened wide,
The glory of the Master's face
Had been my shield and guide.

Without his mercy I should sink
In everlasting woe;
'Twas he who snatched me from the brink
And vanquished every foe.

And all I am, or have, or know,
Is by his mercy given;
He knows the way I take or go,
Where he is, there is heaven.

The publican was at this gate
When he in anguish cried,
O God, be merciful to me,
And there was justified.

May I that mercy which I crave
As eagerly bestow;
Some needy one from grief to save,
Or lift from mortal woe.

The dying thief beside the cross,
Was brought unto this gate,
And in his hand had nought but dross,
While mercy rich and great

Was bestowed in boundless store
Upon his lost estate;
None ever needed mercy more
That stood at mercy's gate.

Then why should we be hard and cold,
When others are in need?
Or why that mercy we withhold?
Pray, do the Christ-like deed.

For Christ is love, and mercy, too,
By these we know his face;
Oh may we seek his will to do,
Through mercy, love and grace.

Written by

ALFRED E. TITUS.

TRENTON, New Jersey.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PREDESTINATION.

I HAVE been asked repeatedly to write upon the subject of predestination as I believe it, as set forth in the Scriptures, and after much meditation and trembling I now have a mind to do so, and I hope I shall be led by the Spirit as well.

Text: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."—Rom. xi. 33. The apostle here describes God as being all-wise, possessing an unfathomed depth of knowledge, also having a judicial mind which poor worms like us are unable to find out.

No wonder such a poor creature as I am is made to tremble when called upon to write about so deep a subject as the above. We all agree that the word "predestination" means fate, destiny. Webster defines the word as meaning the decree of God from eternity respecting all events, especially the foreordaining of mankind to everlasting happiness or misery; to foreordain by divine decree or eternal purpose. The definition of Mr. Webster agrees very nearly with what we believe it means. If I were to define the word I would say it means that God from all eternity did by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will freely and unchangeably foreordain whatsoever comes to pass, both good and evil, and all for his own purpose and glory. From cover to cover does God's word teach the above definition.

I shall here, as I am moved to do so, only speak of God's sovereignty respecting his gracious election of some, and his rejection of others. "Salvation is of the Lord."—Jonah ii. 9. But the Lord does not save all mankind. Why not? He does save some; yea, many, "a great multitude, which no man could number." Then if he saves some, why not others? Is it because they are too sinful and depraved? No, for the apostle wrote, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, *of whom I am chief.*" Therefore, if God saves the *chief* of sinners, none are excluded because of their depravity. Then why does not God save all mankind? Is it because some are too stony-hearted to be won? No, God takes away the stony heart and gives them a heart of flesh. Then, is it because some are too stubbon, so defiant that God is unable to woo them to himself? Beloved in hope, you may answer this last question by your own experience. Was there ever a time that you walked in the counsel of the ungodly, stood in the way of sinners, sat in the seat of the scorners, We will not have this man to rule over us? You will answer, There was. But how is it that all is now changed? What brought you from a state of self-sufficiency to to a humble supplicant? from one who was at enmity with God to one who is at peace? from one who has been changed from hate to love? You will answer, "By the grace of God I am what I am." Others not of our faith will say, The time came when I was willing. This we will not dispute. But if you were willing it was God that made you willing. He will make us willing in the day of his power. And who can hinder his will and purpose?

Why are not all men saved who hear the gospel? Some answer, Because the majority refuse to believe. Well, that is true, but it is only a part of the truth. It is the truth from the human side. But there is a divine side, too, and this side of the truth needs to be stressed or God will be robbed of his glory. It is true that those who believe are saved and those who do not believe are not saved. Now, why do some believe and others do not? Is it because some are more intelligent than others?

Are some quicker to discern the need of salvation? I say, No. The apostle Paul asks, "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou didst not receive it?"—1 Cor. iv. 7. The Scripture plainly teaches that it is the elect who believe, and the nonelect who do not believe. For of his own it is written, "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true."—1 John v. 20. Belief is not a prerequisit to salvation, but it is the subsequent. God reveals his Son to his elect, and it is then, and not until then, that they believe. How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? We see that faith is God's gift and "all men have not faith."—2 Thess. iii. 2. Upon whom does God bestow this gift? We must answer, Upon his own elect. Paul said, "As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed."—Acts xiii. 48. Hence it is that we read of "the faith of God's elect." Some will ask, Do you not make God an unjust God? I answer, No. They ask, Why does he save some and leaves others in sin? I answer, I do not know, sir, it is God's sovereignty. Perhaps the ninth chapter of Romans most emphatically asserts the absolute sovereignty of God in connection with his determining the destiny of his creatures. You may read the whole chapter, but I will use here a part of the chapter. "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." Fallen mankind is as inert and impotent as a lump of lifeless clay. Scripiture evidences that by nature there is no difference between the elect and the nonelect. They are clay of the same lump (Eph. ii. 3), all are by nature children of wrath. The ultimate destiny of all is decided by the will of God, and blessed it is that such is the case, for if it were left to our vile wills the ultimate destiny of us all would be the lake of fire. God himself makes the difference with respect to the destiny of his creatures, for one vessel is made "unto honor and another unto dishonor." Some are vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, others are vessels of mercy which he hath afore prepared unto glory. God has not only the right to do as he wills with his creatures, but he exercises that right, and nowhere is this seen more plainly than in his predestinating grace. Before the foundation of the world God made a choice, a selection, an election. Before his omniscient eye stood the whole of Adam's race, and from it he singled out a people and predestinated them "unto the adoption of children," predestinated them "to be conformed to the image of his Son," ordained them unto eternal life. Many are the Scriptures that set forth this

blessed truth. I will refer you to some of them. "As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed."—Acts xiii. 48. The conditionalists are using every means they can to blunt the sharp edge of this Scripture and explain away the meaning of these words, but all in vain. Nothing will ever be able to reconcile this and other Scripture of like meaning to the mind of the natural man. We learn from this Scripture four things: First, that believing is the consequence and not the cause of God's gracious decree. Second, that a limited number only are ordained to eternal life, for if all men were ordained to eternal life, then the words "as many as" would not mean anything. Third, that this "ordination" of God is not to mere privileges, but to "eternal life." Not to service, as the conditionalists would have you believe, but to salvation itself. Fourth, that all who were ordained, i. e. "as many as," not one less, but all who are thus ordained will most certainly believe when it pleases God to reveal Jesus Christ to them. Yes, all of God's elect shall come to him at God's appointed time without the loss of one. "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."—Rom. xi. 5, 6. Here the cause of election is traced back to its source. The basis upon which God elected this "remnant" was not faith seen in them before the foundation of the world, because a choice founded upon the foresight of good works is just as truly made on the ground of *works* as any choice can be, and in such case it would not be of grace, for, says the apostle, "If by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace," as much as to say salvation is not affected conditionally. This election of grace signifies an unconditional choice resulting from the sovereign favor of God; in a word, it is absolutely a gratuitous election. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." So we see from Ephesians i. 3-5, 11, just when it was that God made the ancient choice of his elect. It was before Adam saw light, before the dust of the highest mountain was laid, that God chose his elect, the church, in Christ. "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."—2 Thess. ii. 13. How plainly we are taught from the above Scripture that God's elect are "chosen to salvation." The doctrine of Arminianism teaches that God elected certain ones to some privileges or rank in service instead of

electing them to salvation. We who have an ear to hear and an eye to see believe that it is to "salvation" itself that God hath chosen us. We also learn from the above Scripture that election unto salvation does not disregard the use of appropriate means (provided by God); that salvation is reached through "sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." It is not true that because God has chosen a certain one to salvation he will be saved whether he believes or not; nowhere do the Scriptures so represent it. The same God who predestinated the end also appointed the means; yes, the same God who "chose unto salvation" decreed that his purpose should be realized through the work of the Holy Spirit, and not by human effort. The truth that God has chosen us to salvation is a profound cause of our fervent praise. Paul expressed this when he said, "We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation." Instead of reading the doctrine of absolute predestination with horror and hate, the believer when he sees this blessed truth as is unfolded in God's word, gives thanks and adoration unspeakable. In 2 Timothy i. 9, we read "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." We not only learn from the above that all believers, and all who shall believe in him, were saved before the world began, and that not of works, or anything good the Father saw in us, but we were saved for his own glory and purpose. His choice has been from eternity and will last to eternity. Nothing can last to eternity but that which came from eternity.

Perhaps 1 Timothy ii. 4, furnishes a greater amount of ammunition to the Arminians than any other passage in the Bible to fight the great doctrine of election, and, without exception, if he is one of their preachers he will refer you to this Scripture. The writer has been referred to it many times. The passage reads, "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." Note first that this is no mere offer of salvation, but a statement of the direct will of God. The "all" here is no guesswork, but the operation of the will of God, which *must* always come to pass. If the word "all" means the human race in its entirety, then in that case there is no escape from universal salvation. Then the Russellites are right, all mankind, without exception, will be saved. It is upon this very Scripture that the Russellites (as well as others) build up their whole doctrine. But does this word "all" mean all men, without exception, or is it used here in a limited sense? The answer is found in verse six: "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." And by turning to Matthew xx. 28, we also see the "all" are *all of a selected number*. If we should read freedom of the human will into this passage, then we, in that case, must believe that God wills

something he is unable to accomplish. But if we read the sovereignty of God's will in salvation, then this Scripture harmonizes with all the rest of Scripture.

NOTE:—The word "men" in 1 Timothy ii. 4, is not found in the original Greek version.

Another Scripture to which we are often referred is 2 Peter iii. 9. The "all" in this passage, to my mind evidently means God's elect, who most certainly will come to repentance. God the Father, before the foundation of the world, chose in Christ a people countless beyond the number of stars, who shall, at God's own appointed time, come to him, by regeneration of the Holy Spirit. All these that God chose in Christ he gave to his Son. Jesus Christ in the covenant made himself responsible for the safe delivery of every one that the Father gave him, without the loss of one, to the Father, without spot, wrinkle or any such thing, before the Father's throne. We hear the blessed Master say in John vi. 37, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." So I most profoundly believe that the "all' found in the two passages above means God's elect, and nothing else. The delay, or "longsuffering," mentioned in 2 Peter iii. 9, shall continue until all that the Father gave to him before the foundation of the world are born twice: of the water and of the Spirit.

I want to thank God for his sovereignty in election, also God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Each of the three Persons in the blessed Trinity is concerned in our salvation. With the Father it is predestination. With the Son propitiation. With the Spirit regeneration. The Father chose us, the Son died for us, the Spirit quickens us. The Father was concerned about us, the Son shed his blood for us, the Spirit performs his work within us. What the one did was eternal, what the other did was external, what the Spirit does is internal. The Father purposed the new birth, the Son has made it sure by his blood, it is the Spirit who effects the new birth: "born of the Spirit."—John iii. 6. I believe that everything that has happened, been, or ever will be, whether good or bad, was known and predestinated by God before the world began, and all for his glory. For us to say that we believe this or that is one thing, and to show by Scripture the substantiation of the belief is another. I above expressed my belief on the question of absolute predestination, and I shall, as I am moved to do so, prove this assertion. Few who read the SIGNS are likely to call into question the statement that God knows and foreknows all things, but perhaps many would hesitate to go further than this, yet is it not self-evident that if God foreknows all things he has also foreordained all things? Is it not clear that God foreknows what will be because he has decreed what shall be? God's foreknowledge is not the cause of events, rather are events the effects of his eternal purpose. When God decrees a thing shall be he knows it will be; and there is nothing certain to be unless God has ordained it shall be. For ex-

ample, the crucifixion. On this point the teaching of the Scripture is as clear as the sun. Christ, as the Lamb whose blood was to be shed, was "foreordained" before the foundation of the world. (1 Peter i. 20.) Having then ordained the slaying of the Lamb, God knew he would be "led to the slaughter." The Lord Jesus was not "delivered" by God simply because he foresaw it, but by his fixed counsel and foreordination. (Acts ii. 23.) Now the question before us is, Has God foreordained certain ones to damnation? This we will prove. That many will be eternally damned is clear from Scripture, that each one will be judged according to his work and reap as he has sown, and that in consequence his "damnation is just" (Rom. iii. 8), is equally sure, and that God decreed that the nonelect should choose the course they follow. In Thessalonians the apostle declares, "For God hath not appointed us to wrath." This statement is utterly pointless if God has not "appointed" any to wrath. To say that God hath not appointed us to wrath implied there are some he *has* appointed to wrath. We are agreed that God foreknew and foresaw from the foundation of the world all who would and who would not accept Christ as their Savior, and in giving being and birth to those he knew would reject Christ he necessarily created them unto damnation. God created everything, both good and evil. "I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things."—Isaiah xlv. 7. For his glory. God had a definite reason why he created men, a specific purpose why he created this or that individual, and in view of the eternal destination of his creatures he purposed either that this one should spend eternity in heaven or that one should spend eternity in the lake of fire. Again, faith is God's gift, and all men have not faith, and since this is true, it follows that God purposed to thus favor some and not others; that some are fitted vessels of mercy and some vessels of destruction. Without faith there is no salvation. If he purposed not to give faith to some, then he in that case must have ordained them to damnation. It is clear that God from all eternity did by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will freely and unchangeably foreordain whatsoever comes to pass, and it is perfectly true, and divinely so, that God hath ordained for his glory whatsoever comes to pass. God, speaking to Pharaoh, said, "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee." It is clear that Pharaoh was predestinated to damnation, for the glory of God.

Dear editors, here is a writing on the doctrine of absolute predestination, which my brethren have earnestly and repeatedly requested me to write. There are three divisions in this vicinity who call themselves Primitive Baptists. One division does not believe in absolute predestination as we believe it is unfolded in the Scriptures. Another division is fast becoming conditionalists. It is not my purpose to argue with them, but many of them read the SIGNS, and we would have them know

just where we stand on this most comforting doctrine. I am reminded of the Scripture, "There shall be a falling away," which reminds us of the nearness of his glorious coming. I have not had in mind the conversion of their belief to mine (for God alone can do that), but the comfort which it might bring to God's dear children in hope. May the good God of all mercy enable me to contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

Yours in humble hope,

J. C. WOODRUM.

FARMINGTON, Ky., Dec. 14, 1931.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—The doctrine of election is of much concern to me. I know if I am not one of the elect I am bound to be a vessel of wrath fitted to destruction, but I have some reason to hope I am a vessel of mercy which God has afore prepared unto glory. If I am a vessel of wrath, it is just. If I am a vessel of mercy, it is mercy surely enough. "Hath not the potter power over the clay,of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" And he does. God will have mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth. So I must conclude God's purpose according to eternal unconditional election stands not of works. Even vessels of dishonor, when prepared, have to acknowledge the doctrine of election; but they tell us election is conditional on the part of the creature; not willing to admit it, you see, unless they think they are allowed to get their own dishonored self into the matter. But read Ephesians i. 4. If election took place before there were any creatures to perform conditions, how can it be conditional on the part of creatures? Let the conditional advocates answer. We see the God of election and salvation has forever set aside all filthiness of conditionalism from his work of election and salvation. God's people were elected to something, that something is salvation. Now let us listen a moment while Peter talks: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."—1 Peter i. 2. Elected, then, to salvation; not part of the way, for the blood of Jesus cleanseth the elect only, from all sin. We see here that the salvation of the elect is as clean from the pollution of conditionalism as was their election. Their salvation was included in their election, came wrapped in the same bundle, and so closely wrapped that no conditionalism can ever enter into it. Our God knows how to wrap up his people's goods to keep all filthiness out. It will be well here to listen to Paul a moment: "We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation." —2 Thess. ii. 13. We see here there is no separating salvation from election, for one is unto the other. Not elected or chosen half way to salvation, then go the other half by performing conditions. No. Election goes all the way to salvation. All things done by Jesus and his apostles were for the elect's

sake. Paul said, I suffer all things for the elect's sake. We hear Jesus say, I am come that the sheep may have life. Sheep is only another word for elect. The sheep are the elect. Jesus says, I lay down my life for the sheep, and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish. Jesus is now come to accomplish the salvation which they were elected to. He came to tread the wine-press alone. He knew the work of salvation was all his. He had looked from the beginning and had seen there was none to help, and he said, My own arm brought salvation. So all for whom Christ died are saved; not going to be next fall, or after awhile, when the preacher comes along to teach the creature how his own arm can bring salvation to himself. The work of salvation from sin is over and finished. Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost, and he said, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do. He by his own blood has obtained eternal redemption for his people. He has by himself purged the sins of his people; not going to do it. By the sacrifice of himself he has put away the sins of his people. By one offering he has perfected forever them that are set apart to perfection, and now there remains no more sacrifice for sin. If Jesus has not saved the elect from sin, it never will be done, and there remains no more sacrifice for sin. It is finished. Some will ask, If the work of salvation is done and over, what is the use of preachers? They believe that preachers by their preaching are the only means of the sinner's salvation. The gospel preacher is to go tell it is finished, preach the good news of a finished salvation. In Isaiah xl. 1, 2, God by the mouth of the prophet, and looking down to the gospel day, tells what must be preached: "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Yes, salvation from sin is finished, or else the God of salvation has commanded us to speak, or preach, wrongly to Jerusalem; but conditionalists cannot see this finished work. If one of my neighbors had some work to do and I started to help him with it, and I met him on the way and he told me plainly that he had finished the work, I think I would have to believe him, and I would turn back right there, for I would know I had lost the job, both now and forever, for I would know it would be impossible for me to be of any help in a work that was done and finished. If the conditional world could see and believe Jesus that he by himself, or his own arm, had finished his work, all theological schools for making preachers would cease at once, you never would hear of another protracted meeting for the purpose of saving sinners; the hat would cease to pass down the aisles for mission money. But they cannot see and believe Jesus has finished the work of salvation for his people which they were elected to do. Here is the conclusion of the whole matter. Jesus said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from

the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." Again, Acts xiii. 41: "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." Jesus has declared he has finished the work of salvation, but they believe him not, because they shall not. They see and believe not, but Jesus has finished the work of salvation for his people which they were elected to, because the Father has hid these things from the wise and prudent, for so it seemed good in the sight of the Father to do so. Now as God has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and as what God does shall be forever, it looks as though it will be a long time before those things that are hid from the wise and prudent are revealed to them, so it is reasonable for us to suppose that theological schools will still function, and protracted meetings be multiplied, and appeals be made for filthy lucre to help do that which is already done and finished, and so those things will go on to the end.

Your very little brother, the least of all, if one at all,

J. B. ADAMS.

FREEWATER, Oregon.

DEAR EDITORS:—I find my soul so stirred by the many expressions of love from my dear brethren in Christ that it seems I must give them some token of the gratefulness of my poor cast down soul. Though almost blind, yet with the knowledge I have of my typewriter and with the assistance of a magnifying glass I am able to try to let them know I am still spared as a monument of God's amazing mercy and grace. While I am shut in and deprived of meeting or communicating with my precious brethren, I have not been denied the blessed presence and sweet communion of my dear Savior, for he has blessed me as little Ruth was blessed. The servants or reapers after whom I have been gleaning now for more than fifty years have been dropping handfuls on purpose and in my lonely hours I have been gathering and feasting on the bread which was cast on the waters many years ago. Oh how sweet to my soul are the bitter herbs I had to eat, and the bitter waters I then drank are very sweet to my soul now. Well do I remember leaving my little family and going to attend my churches, it seemed to me, with nothing to give them. How my poor soul would weep and mourn. I could but wonder: Why are you going away off there among those good people when you know you have none of the qualifications to preach the gospel of peace which they so desire to hear? What a wrestling of soul was then going on. Surely none but Jacob knows. How I would love to relate this struggle of soul, but can only say that the reason I continued to go against such opposition was because I could not help it. I tried to quit and promised the dear Lord hundreds of times that if he would only forgive me for this effort I would never disgrace his dear name

any more, not mortify his dear people and the cause. Like poor old Job, I now see I uttered words without knowledge. I could not see nor understand at that time why I continued to go when I could not feel I was of any benefit to my brethren. I feel now I would love to tell the brethren why. Because I loved the brethren, and the reason I loved them is because they first loved me. The love of God is a power above all powers. Well could Paul say he was persuaded that there was nothing able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. That mighty river of God's eternal love from which flow all his precious graces to his poor and afflicted people here in this desert land. My soul has often feasted upon that wonderful display of his love, power and mercy, in feeding that great multitude which followed him (Jesus) out in that desert land, but never before did I gather so much from the fragments as I have this winter. He commanded his disciples who had passed the blessing to the multitude, after all were filled to gather up the fragments that nothing be wasted. How my poor lonely soul has been made to feast upon the heavenly manna on which we feasted in my early ministry, brethren writing to me of our blessed associations forty-five and fifty years ago. Brethren, this to my soul is like manna which was stored in the golden pot and kept in the sanctuary. It never molded nor mildewed, but was as sweet and fresh to my soul as when Jesus was blessing at that time. These blessed evidences are a buckler to my soul. While my eyesight is almost gone, yet that blessed faith which led me to his banqueting-house, if possible, grows brighter and stronger. I have experienced so much of the sweetness of the gospel of Jesus in my declining days. As the outward man (nature) is fading as the flower of the grass, the inward or new man is renewed in strength. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ. Brethren, pray for Zion while she is passing through the fire. I would love to see the set time come for the Father to prosper Zion. I desire to see her lifted from her low and cold state and clothed in the beautiful robe of salvation by grace.

Brother Lefferts, I feel to express to the dear ones my heart-felt thanks for their kind remembrance of me, a poor old sinner saved by grace. This, if you deem it fit matter for the dear old SIGNS, is in answer to all who have remembered me. May the dear Lord bless you all.

Yours in bonds of the gospel,

J. T. BARNES.

DANVILLE, Va., March 25, 1931.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I am not well this morning, therefore I am by the fireside at home. But I am thinking of you and want to impart some thoughts to you of God our Savior, in regard to the death and crucifixion of the only begotten Son of God. Now we believe while God was handling the situation that he allowed mankind to show their extreme hatred

for him by putting him to death in the most shameful, disgraceful and painful manner that could be devised or that they were able to plan. They made a crown of thorns and put it on his head, slapped him with their hands, spit upon him and did many disgraceful things, trying to fully destroy the honor and glory of our King. We believe the power of Satan is also set up here, as in the case of Job, showing that he is absolutely without mercy. We believe in these things God means to teach us not to trust the devil, for his aim and purpose is to destroy us and to dethrone Jesus our Savior. My brother, if God allowed it, and in a way ruling and reigning in the matter, was he in any way guilty of sin? I say, No, no, but that the extreme sinfulness and corruption of their hearts be made manifest. As it was God's purpose it should be done, are they without sin? No indeed. Were they not satisfying their own lust? therefore are accountable to God for their extreme wickedness. We have stated that they with wicked hands have crucified our Savior, the King of the Jews, and yet Jesus says, I lay down my life, no man taketh it from me. I have power to lay down my life and I have power to take it up again. How are we going to reconcile the matter? Crucified, and yet his life not taken. My brother, we simply have to look back and see the great power of God, and also the power of Satan brought to bear in the matter, as God had purposed so must it be. Now, my dear brother, are we interested in the matter? Why give it thought or consideration? Is it not our meat and drink? Oh we wonder if our names are written there in the Lamb's book of life. Oh the depth of both the wisdom and purpose of God, how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out.

My dear brother, I thought to simply write you of how I have enjoyed your gift in both writing through the columns of the SIGNS and in speaking of the wonderful things of God and to bid you Godspeed. I hope I do from the bottom of my heart thank God for such able defenders of his glorious cause. Now to make this plain, Jesus had to suffer and die that we might live; had to satisfy a perfect and holy law that we might live; had to pay the debt we justly owed.

Now, my brother, I do hope the old SIGNS OF THE TIMES will still contend for the old apostolic doctrine taught by Jesus and his followers who loved and stood for it, and may God bless you with the ability to still show Israel her transgressions and the house of Jacob her sins while permitted to sojourn here.

Your brother in hope,

R. L. DODSON.

TIPTONVILLE, Tennessee.

BELOVED EDITORS:—I feel to be drawn by the sweet cords of love to write you a few lines to assure you I appreciate your sending me the SIGNS, and thank you for the same. It is not my desire to remain a burden upon you. I have tried to pray to the dear Lord to enable me and show me wherein I

may be able to help hold up our dear paper, but inasmuch as it is not yet granted I feel very thankful to all connected with the SIGNS, and especially to our God, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift, it is of him we live, move and have our being. I love above all things else to have a mind to run after the things that are not of this world. Yes, look with an eye of faith (if not deceived) and view Jesus a complete Savior, One altogether lovely, and feel him mine. When I can do this the world means but little to me; the storms do not frighten me or depression distress me, for when I can feel in my heart as David did, and say, "I know my Redeemer liveth," all is well, and I cannot praise the Lord enough. But this is not so with me all the time; most of my time is spent in fear, full of doubt and sin, wondering if I am deceived. O if so, dear Lord, undeceive me. May he bless you in every blessing he deems best for you and all his children everywhere. Pray for me and mine.

Yours in hope of salvation,
(MRS.) LUTHER CAMPBELL.

DODSLAND, Saskatchewan, Canada.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am a little late in sending in my subscription renewal, but please find it inclosed herewith. I had hoped to send something extra to help along the heavy task of publishing in these strenuous times, and I feel sure I will do so yet before the year has passed. This is the one hundredth year of the life of the good old SIGNS, and surely we must not see anything happens to it in this year of all years. It would be grand if at the end of the year you could write in your annual little "report" that 1932 had been a better year financially. I promise to help, if I am spared, as I feel sure money will be freer soon now. Your work under such adverse conditions is to be highly commended.

Sincerely, D. R. BLACK.

[SUCH letters as the foregoing are much appreciated, and we thank the writer for his encouraging words. Yes, these are indeed strenuous times, so much so that during the first week of April we were compelled to send notices to subscribers who were more than one year and three months in arrears, with the request that they do what they can toward paying us, as we very much need the money to carry on the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. These notices totaled nearly $2,500, so far we have received less than $200 of this amount.—J. E. B. & CO.]

NOTICE.

I HAVE the First and Second volumes of the Editorials of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, almost as good as new, and any one wishing to buy them can have them for $2.50 by sending me the money and I will mail the books to them. Address, Mrs. C. E. Smith, 350 Sherman Street, Lebanon, Oregon.

WE have just received the sad news that Elder John G. Sawin passed away at Mattoon, Ill., April 1st, 1932, aged 94 years. A suitable obituary notice will be published later.—ED.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1932.

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ECCLESIASTES.

SOLOMON, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, contributed three books to the Old Testament Scriptures: Ecclesiastes, Proverbs and the Song of Songs. The Song of Solomon sings of love, the love of Christ and his bride for each other; Proverbs gives us the sayings of perfect Wisdom whose value surpasses richest gems and Ophir's gold; Ecclesiastes preaches legalism and unfolds the outlook of man under the law. It is of the latter, we wish now to write; hoping to give a sketch of the book's substance. The sayings of Ecclesiastes are frequently quoted as being on a par with the writings of the New Testament, such being not the true purpose for which the Holy Ghost caused the book to be written. Taking the Bible from beginning to end, it stands absolutely alone in all literature; and were all books to be destroyed, leaving only the Bible, we should still have in these holy writings all necessary for the thorough furnishing of true believers to every good work. In the Bible, we have recorded by inspiration things spoken by righteous men, things said by wicked men; we have therein the actions and words of the devil set down, the careers of false teachers, as well as the record of God's dealings with men, the narrative of the complete work of the Lord Jesus Christ and the operation of the Holy Ghost upon and within the elect. The Bible is thus a complete but diversified book, all written by the Spirit, but showing us all sides of life, all kinds and conditions of men, all sorts of teachings, the true and the the false. For instance, in the book of Job, we have set down there for our learning: the doings and sayings of Satan, the words of God, the experience of a man of God under sore affliction, the teachings of false doctrine uttered by professed comforters, and the sayings of Elihu against whom the Lord voiced no reproof. Job's three friends did not preach the truth. As we read the things they told Job, we find in their sayings many expressions which sound good and seem good, but the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right,

as my servant Job hath." If God did not approve their sayings, we certainly must not. However fair and plausible may be the professions of men, if they occasion God's wrath beware. Many preachers say some good things, but if they do not square with God's word, we cannot believe them.

Now coming to Ecclesiastes the Preacher, we find upon careful examination of his preaching that he does not set forth gospel or grace at all, but only law and condemnation. Yet, occasionally one will meet with or hear quotations from the book of Ecclesiastes uttered as though this legal preacher is to be regarded equally with Paul, Peter, James, John and even Jesus Christ. This book of the Preacher is short: twelve brief chapters covering but eight pages in our Bibles. In this small compass, the phrases "under the sun" and "under heaven" are repeated thirty-one times; and therein is the keynote to the theme of this legal Preacher. He is considering things under the sun, earthly things, and not heavenly things at all. He is voicing the viewpoint of man under law who knows that there is one God and who knows that he must some day face that God in judgment. There is not one word in all the book referring to the cross of Christ, the death of Christ for his people; not one single word of the resurrection of the dead nor of justification by faith through the shed blood of the Redeemer. The new creation that is in Christ Jesus is not seen at all in Ecclesiastes, not a hint of the gospel of grace. In short, Ecclesiastes is not a survey of the heavenlies, but wholly of the earthlies. No hope of any future life after death is hinted at until we come to the eleventh chapter; then there is an intimation, and only an intimation, that there may be a future, and we are advised to cast our bread upon the waters in the hope that it shall return to us after many days; but even here not a word of immortality is assured us. The phrases "to the earth," "upon the earth," "of the earth," occur in all ten times. "Vanity of vanities," "all is vanity," "this is vanity," are repeated in all thirty-three times. We are told no less than four times in the book that there is nothing better for a man than that he eat, drink and enjoy his labor. In view of all these expressions, it is clearly evident that this Preacher's view of life is depressing and discouraging; and all because it is inspiration's record of the viewpoint of a man who is under law, who realizes the emptiness of all things earthly, who sees nothing ahead in the future but that he must meet his God in judgment and can see no way of escape from it: hence, resolves that the best thing man can do is to get out of this life all the best there is in it. No one who has a hope of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ and who daily lives upon his sustaining grace, will accept this legal estimate for one moment. We know that we do live our lives under grace in hope of the glorious immortality that is to come, that we cannot be satisfied with the joy of our labor here nor be appeased with things which

satisfy the appetite of the natural man. In contrast to this advice of Ecclesiastes to get all the good we can out of this present earthly life, Jesus said that he who seeks to save his life shall lose it and that our lives do not consist in the abundance of the things which we possess. Also in contrast, the inspired apostle counsels us to make no provision for the flesh to satisfy the lusts thereof. Whom are we to believe: Christ and Paul or the legal preacher? This Preacher says, "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever." And so it does appear to man under the sun who looks at only earthly things; but that the earth abides forever is not true to the man of faith who looks above and beyond the earth to the glorious inheritance being reserved for those being reserved unto it. Christ said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away." Peter said, "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up." Whom shall we believe: Christ and Peter or the legal Preacher?

In chapter three Ecclesiastes sets down what is frequently called by some the doctrine of predestination: but it is such a view of that doctrine as is no comfort to him nor to us. He does not see predestination centered in Christ, he does not see it at all as Paul does, as a golden chain of doctrine reaching from eternity before time, through time, to eternity beyond time. This man under law sees life and death, sorrow and laughter, gain and loss, loving and hating, war and peace, and so forth, as only a weary round of labor and travail from which man cannot escape. See how he sums up this fatalistic view of things in verses nine and ten, "What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboreth? I have seen the travail which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it." He sees the inevitable events of human existence under the sun as a sort of fatalistic treadmill from which there is no hope of escape, but only a succession of ceaseless labor which God has given to his creatures to be exercised with. How opposite is all this to the joyous and triumphant doctrine of predestination believed by Paul wherein he assures us that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose; that the foreknown children of God are the ones to be conformed to the image of his Son, that these thus predestinated are effectually called by saving grace, that they are justified and to be glorified. What an infinite difference between predestination as looked upon by man under the law, and that same doctrine as believed and rejoiced in by the man under grace! Which do you prefer? Ecclesiastes or Paul? Some folks think that when they believe that whatsoever is to be will be, that makes them Old School Baptists. We have had outsiders tell us they were of our faith. When we have asked them for proof, they invariably say because they believe in the sureness of the inevitable. What a sad estimate

of our faith is this! Unless one has been made to see himself a lost sinner justly condemned under God's law, unless one has been brought to repentance and to the belief of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ and has received a hope of eternal life through the merits of God's Son; unless one has been, through the Holy Ghost, baptized into Jesus Christ and has put on Christ by baptism, that one is not a true Old School Baptist, no matter how much he may aver that whatever is to be will be.

We have not the space here to go all through this book and point out the contrasts between man under law and man under grace. It is an interesting study. Just a few more things we will call attention to. In chapter nine, verse eleven, he says that time and chance happeneth to all; and in chapter seven, verse seventeen, he believes a man may die before his time. Thus, like all legal preachers, he is not consistent in his doctrine of predestination or any other doctrine. In verse three of chapter seven we are advised to go to the house of mourning rather than to the house of feasting. That sounds well, but what reason does he give? It is in order that our hearts may be made better by the sadness of our countenances. What sophistry is this! Like all legalists, he emphasizes the outward appearance and that man is made better thereby. This is the same doctrine preached by the Pharisees in the day of our Lord, and Jesus condemned them as hypocrites and told them that while they were outwardly pious, they were inwardly full of uncleanness. Against this Jesus warns his disciples thus, "When ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast." The truth is that no amount of outward piety will have any righteous or purifying effect upon any man's heart. The regenerating work must come from the inside, not from the outside.

In verses sixteen and seventeen of chapter seven, we are counselled not to be too righteous nor too wicked. Evidently we are advised to adopt moderation in both goodness and wickedness. This is dreadful when we consider that the Preacher assures us that judgment in the presence of God lies ahead of us and that God shall bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good, or evil. How does he expect to stand in that judgment when, contrarywise, he tells us to be moderate in both being good and in being bad? Over against this, remember what Christ said: "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." No middle-of-the-road policy will do if we hope to stand justified before God in that day: we shall have to be clothed in an absolutely perfect righteousness, not in any righteousness that is moderately perfect. It must be the righteousness of Christ or nothing.

Going again to the third chapter, verses nineteen and twenty, we have this legalist's estimate of men and

beasts and of the end of them. Death ends all. As dies the beasts, so dies man. How false this is! Yet, let us remember, it is the belief of one who sees only things under the sun, of one who is looking at the earthlies: no view of the hereafter is here, no appreciation whatever of the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. How wonderful the Bible is! Here we find recorded centuries ago things which men to-day are calling "modernism." The boasted modernism of to-day is nothing more or less than ancient philosophy revived. Men and beasts are not alike, they do not have the same breath, they are not the same flesh at all. After God had made all the beasts he made man. Nowhere is it said that God breathed into any beast the breath of life. Man alone was inbreathed by the Deity, man alone was made in God's image. Man has a distinction and dignity that no beast ever had. Science, falsely so-called, tells us men and beasts have derived from the same original one living cell. It is absolutely false. The inspired writer of the letters to the Corinthian brethren tells us, "All is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds." Human flesh is not beasts' flesh, nor birds' flesh, nor fishes' flesh. Whom shall we believe: Paul or the legal preacher? All do not go to the same place when they die. Ecclesiastes sees no further than the return of the body to dust and the return of man's spirit to God. He has no view whatsoever of the resurrection of the dead at this hour nor at any time yet to come. Even David in the Psalms knew better than that, for he says that though the wicked are laid in the grave like sheep and death shall feed on them, yet shall the upright have dominion over them in the morning of the resurrection. Beasts, when they die, go neither to hell nor to heaven: but the word assures us that while the wicked are turned into hell, the souls of the righteous go to be with the Lord to await the resurrection of the body at the last day. None of this does the legalist see.

"That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been: and God requireth that which is past." No, not at all. If God requires the things that are past, then will he require at our hands the satisfaction for our transgressions. This he will never do. As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us through the perfect atonement which Christ made for all his people. Our sins and our iniquities God will remember against his chosen no more forever. He does not require the thing that is past. Again, this Preacher mournfully bewails the fact that there is nothing new under the sun. "Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new?" Yes, there are infinite new things to them that are in Christ Jesus even while they dwell "under the sun." To the man under law's condemnation, to whom the heavens are brass, there is nothing new and only a ceaseless round of weariness and unrequited labor. To the believer under the gospel of grace, old things

have passed away and all things are become new. This new creature, recipient of the birth from above, stands in a wholly new kinship with God. His soul is possessed with a new and lively hope which looks unto and waits for, a new heavens and a new earth in which dwells righteousness. When the virgin Mary conceived by the Holy Ghost and brought forth the Son of the Highest, that was a wholly new thing in the earth "under the sun." When the church at Jerusalem was baptized in the Holy Ghost and three thousand were added to the church, that was a wholly new thing in the earth. There is a world of new things to the man under grace.

The twelfth chapter of Ecclesiates is sometimes construed to apply to a young believer in grace. It has no such application. After looking at all things under the sun and taking his view of things earthly, knowing there is a God and that judgment awaits him in the presence of that God, this Preacher advises the young man to so conduct himself as to be able to meet satisfactorily that judgment when it comes. The twelfth chapter really begins with the ninth verse of the eleventh chapter. His advice to youth is to let his heart cheer him, walk in the ways of thine heart and walk in the sight of thine eyes; only BE CAREFUL, because for all these things God will some day bring this one to judgment. Again, legalism! This is the same kind of religion preached to young people to-day by legalists: go ahead and have a good time, but be careful, because you will have to pay up for all your naughtiness; hence be innocent in your pleasures and not supercilious in your goodness. What folly! "Remember thy Creator." Yes, while you are young. Just what the world preaches to-day. Not a word said about remembering the Redeemer, remembering his mercy and lovingkindness: but only remember the Creator. God's creatorship and judgeship are all this legalist sees.

This Preacher concludes by saying he sought to find out acceptable words, even words of truth. Well, some do make that endeavor and with all their searching never find God, with all their learning never come to the truth. With all this man's own voluntary searching, he got no further than the law. The words that he found were as goads, and gospel words are not such. A goad is a stick or rod used to prod a dumb animal, such as an ox or an ass, and make it go ahead. Just that was the law. Israel was a stiff-necked and rebellious people and needed always to be goaded by the commandments. Moses, their lawgiver, the "one shepherd" of the Jewish nation under law was ever reminding them of their duty. The Levites, after Moses, were the masters of the assemblies who freely used the goads on the people, threatening them with judgments in order to subdue them into obedience. Not so at all are the gracious exhortations of the gospel. These act on our hearts, those goads prodded the flesh. The teachings of grace are inward guides which teach us the denial of our

ungodly lusts and draw us to lives of sobriety and godliness. A man of God, from within himself is graciously able to bridle his whole body, for the reason that his body is indwelt by the Holy Ghost which gives him the enabling power to control his body. This is just the opposite of the way beasts are controlled. "We put bits in horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their body."—James iii. 3. The believer's body is controlled by inward grace, not by outward prods and goads of a law written on tables of stone.

Now, we come to the conclusion of the whole matter and that will settle it. Ecclesiastes sums up his whole sermon in these words, "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." If any of us have so far had any doubt about this being a law-preacher, this ought to settle it. He tells us that we must all face God in judgment and that every work and every secret thing will be called forth to the light. To prepare for this, we are to fear God and keep his commandments. This is the counsel of despair. Any sinner who thinks to be judged in the final judgment according to his works is bound to be cast into the lake of fire. This preacher is advising wrongly. The apostles told their people to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and they should be saved, this preacher says for us to labor to keep the commandments. Which course is the safe one? Shall we seek to be saved by our works or by faith through the Lord Jesus Christ? The fear of God which Ecclesiastes has in mind is not that holy reverential fear which is the hatred of evil and the beginning of wisdom. This fear he talks about is the sort of fear which enslaved the servant who had the one talent, as told in Matthew xxv. 24, 25. "Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: and *I was afraid,* and went and hid thy talent in the earth." This man's end was condemnation. The end of any sinner who thinks he can meet God in judgment upon the basis of having kept God's commandments, is condemnation. "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." "By grace are ye saved."

H. H. L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **VIOLA KULP**, of Southampton, Pennsylvania, died suddenly March 30th, 1931, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Joseph Ennis, of Smyrna, Delaware. She was born October 24th, 1863, making her stay on earth 68 years. On November 26th, 1884, she married Joseph Kulp, to which union were born four children. Bessie, the first born, died several years ago. Mrs. Jane Ennis, of Smyrna, Del., Harry, of California, and Miss Florence, at home, with the father, survive her. She leaves also one grandchild, two sisters and one brother. On August 13th, 1911, she was baptized by the late Elder S. H. Durand in the fellowship of the Southampton Old School Baptist Church, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, and ever lived consistent with the profession she made, a good woman, faithful in all walks of life, a dutiful wife, a devoted mother and loyal friend. She loved the house of God and the doctrine which gives him all the glory in the salvation of sinners. She was ever faithful in attendance and every duty pertaining to the church. She was much beloved by the church and her pastor, the writer, and is sadly missed by us all, but our loss is her gain: eternal rest in the presence of God and the Lamb.

The funeral service was held in the Leedom

funeral parlors at Southampton, where many relatives and friends gathered to pay the last tribute of respect to her who was loved so well. The writer, her pastor, conducted the service, after which the body was laid to rest in the family plot in the Hatboro Cemetery, Hatboro, Pennsylvania.

ALSO,

OUR dear friend, **Mr. LEE DISHAROON,** departed this life November 22nd, 1931, at his home, 1249 South 53rd Street, Philadelphia, Pa., aged 70 years. On December 22nd, 1885, he married Miss Florence H. Laws, who, with the following children, survives him: Mrs. Mark Long, Lee, William and Mrs. Friedtjof Tobiessen, all of Philadelphia, Pa. He is also survived by two sisters: Mrs. Cora Long, of Fruitland, Md., and Mrs. Lillie Taylor, of Oxford, Md. Mr. Disharoon never united with the church, but was sound in the faith, attended meetings whenever and wherever he could. Few, if any, enjoyed gospel preaching more than did he, and very few, if any, are truer, better friends to the cause than was Mr. Disharoon. His home was open and a cordial welcome awaited all who visited there. He was a man of decided convictions and held nothing back in defense of what he believed to be right. The writer has never known a man more devoted to his family, nor more proud of his wife and children. On the other hand, they were devoted to him and feel their loss very greatly. We all miss him and mourn the loss of a loyal friend, but have the blessed assurance that he is at rest.

The funeral service was held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Salisbury, Md., in the presence of a host of friends, conducted by Elder C. W. Vaughn, of Hopewell, N. J., assisted by Elder G. E. Coulbourn, of Cape Charles, Va., and the writer. Interment was in the family plot in Parson's Cemetery, in Salisbury, Md. The widow and children have the prayers and sympathy of all who know them.

By request.

H. C. KER.

CAROLINE E. ADKINS, daughter of the late Joseph J. and Mary C. Adkins, was born April 16th, 1872, near Wango, Maryland. Her parents moved to the farm now owned by her brother and sister when she was an infant, where she lived until (as we believe) she was called to her eternal home, January 9th, 1932, aged 59 years, 8 months and 23 days. Her parents were both members of the Indiantown Church. She was baptized by Elder T. M. Poulson in December, 1893. She leaves to mourn five brothers and two sisters, as folliws: D. W. Adkins and Mrs. John L. Beauchamp, Snow Hill, Md., James W., Joshua S., Edgar L., George F. and Miss Anita E. Adkins, of Parsonsburg, Md. She died from cancer, for which she was operated upon in July, 1930, but it had advanced too far for the operation to have the desired effect. She suffered greatly, and gradually grew weaker and weaker until death. I think she attended meeting the last time in August, 1931. While thinking of her I cannot but think of the wonderful sermon preached by you this morning; it was what she believed. While she was never one for talking very much, after she was compelled to stay away from the meetings she would ask me about the sermon and the attendance. She led a very busy life, but always had time to attend her meetings, and never to my knowledged missed a meeting at Indiantown except in case of sickness. She showed by her actions that she loved the Old Baptists and what they preach. She was the oldest of eight children, and when I think of her and the interest she had in the church my desire is that I, too, might live and set the example set by her.

Yours in hope,

GEORGE F. ADKINS.

HAVING been requested to write the obituary notice of "Sister Carrie," as she was known to her church, I asked her brother in the flesh, and also in the Spirit, as we hope, to send me the record of dates, her family, etc. I refer to brother George F. Adkins, Clerk of the Indiantown Church, in which "Sister Carrie" also had her membership. Brother George wrote such a beautiful letter to me that after reading and reflecting upon it, it occurred to me I could not write anything more interesting and appropriate. I prefer to indorse all he says about "Sister Carrie," rather than copy or change it. I will say on behalf of the church that they greatly loved her therefore greatly miss her. On behalf of myself, as her last pastor, I desire to say that to know her was to love her in the church, and while I miss her much, I hope I was reconciled to God's will in taking her. While I was conducting the funeral service I was given to feel that our loss was, and is, her gain. I spoke from the text, "Death is swallowed up in victory."

G. E. COULBOURN.

ELDER S. E. HURST was born June 9th, 1879, in Claiborne County, Tennessee, and united with the Old School or Predestinarian Baptists at Mountain Creek Church, at Lone Mountain, Tennessee. Date unknown. He was ordained to the full work of the ministry May 18th, 1924, and from the time he was ordained he defended the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things. He moved his membership to Friendship Church, near White Pine, Tenn., where he lived a faithful member until he died. He leaves to mourn a widow and seven children, but we hope our loss is his eternal gain.

His funeral was held at his late home, Newport, Tenn., conducted by Elder T. B. Thomas.

Written by his widow,

(MRS.) BETTIE HURST.

BURLEY L. CLARK, our dear departed brother, was born September 25th, 1855, and departed this life January 7th, 1932, aged 76 years, 3 months and 12 days. He was united in marriage to Miss Cordelia Shelton December 23rd, 1875. Brother Clark joined the Pleasant Run Church of Predestinarian Baptists about thirty-eight years ago, and was baptized by the late Elder Samuel McGregor. Brother Clark was a faithful member as long as he lived and was a strong believer in the predestination of all things, and was a man whose moral life was classed among the best and he was respected by the good people of all denominations. He arranged for his own funeral, requesting that Elder J. N. Darnell make a talk at the home in the morning, and also make a talk at the cemetery, which request was complied with. He leaves a wife and eight children to mourn (two children preceded him to the grave), also a host of friends. We will miss his presence and faithfulness at our meetings, but feel our loss is his eternal gain.

Written at the request of the family.

SAMUEL McGREGOR.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, &c. REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.

Of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, published monthly, at Middletown, N. Y., for April, 1932.

State of New York, County of Orange, ss.:

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Gilbert Beebe, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the owner of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that the following is to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24th, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse side of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publishers, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publishers, J. E. Beebe & Company, Middletown, N. Y.; Editor, H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

2. The owner is, Gilbert Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagers and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent. or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear on the books of the company, but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the corporation for whom such trustee is acting is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stocks, bonds or other securities than as so stated by him.

GILBERT BEEBE, Owner.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 8th day of April, 1932.

(Seal) FRANK P. COX.

(My commission expires March, 1934.)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

R. W. O'Neal, Texas, $1; Mrs. H. A. Strube, Texas, $2; Mrs. J. A. Hurley, Mich., $1; T. O. Turner, Ky., $1; Alfred E. Titus, N. J., $10; Mrs. Sirena Bowen, Ill., $1; Hewitt Osborn, N. Y., $2; Sadie T. Nicoll, Md., $3; Mrs. Kate Lunsford, Ky., $1.

MEETINGS.

The Lord willing, the next session of the Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association will be held with the Black Rock Church, Baltimore County, Maryland, beginning Friday, May 20th, 1932, at 11 a. m., and continuing Saturday and Sunday. Those coming by train will reach Baltimore in time for train leaving Pennsylvania Station at 4:34 p. m., Thursday, for Cockeysville, where they will be met and cared for. Those coming by automobile, take Falls Road out of Baltimore direct to village of Butler, about twenty miles. Those who desire to meet with us are cordially invited. A special invitation is extended to ministering brethren.

J. T. ROWE.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association meets, Providence permitting, with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, May 25th, 26th and 27th, 1932. Those coming from Philadelphia and the north and Baltimore and the south take trains on the Pennsylvania R. R. to connect at Perryville, Md., with the Columbia and Port-de-Posit R. R. at 4:23 p. m. Tuesday. Go to Rock Station, where they will be met and cared for. Wednesday morning take train leaving Broad Street Pennsylvania Station at 7:20 and Union Station, Baltimore, at 7:30, arriving at Perryville, Md., to connect with Columbia and Port-de-Posit R. R. at 8:57. Go to Conowingo Station, Md., where they will be met and conveyed to the place of meeting. Ministers and friends cordially invited.

SUE R. DANCE, Church Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, (the Lord willing) to preach for them the fifth Sunday in May. (May 29th, 1932.) Services to be held at the home of brother J. E. Livingston, 64 East Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. Also at 2 p. m. on Saturday before. All are welcome.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in May (29th). All are welcome. E. M. FORD.

The Delaware River Association will be held with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, New Jersey, Wednesday and Thursday, June 1st and 2nd, 1932. All meetings on Standard Time. Train leaves Philadelphia Pa., around 3 o'clock p. m. (Standard Time) for Frenchtown, N. J., and a connection with this train at Trenton will leave New York at about the same time. Get tickets for Frenchtown, where friends will be met the day before the meeting. The early train Wednesday morning will also be met. Brethren and friends are cordially invited to attend, especially ministers of our faith and order.

O. R. KUGLER, Church Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, before the second Sunday in June (8th, 9th and 10th), 1932. Those coming from and via New York City will take Erie R. R. Ferry foot of West 23rd Street or Chambers Street for train leaving Jersey City. Get tickets for Howells, N. Y. Those coming from and via Kingston, N. Y., will take Ontario & Western train from Kingston. Get tickets for Winterton, N. Y. Trains will be met and friends cared for. Time of trains will be announced later, when new schedules will be effective. Those coming by automobile will go directly to the meetinghouse, where they will be directed to places of entertainment. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, sisters and friends to meet with us.

R. LESTER DODSON.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

We have kept up a monthly meeting for some time in the past, and hope, by the grace of God, to be favored to continue to meet every second Sunday in each month at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California. May this bear a cordial invitation to all who believe in grace and salvation by grace to meet with us on the stated time.

MR. and MRS. W. J. BERRY.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at the home of sister E. Brunow, 411 N. Ridgeway Avenue, and on the second, third and fourth Sundays at the home of brother W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. The fifth Sundays are by appointment. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastors, Elders Jones and Janes.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Little Flock Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every first and third Sunday at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, at 1 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

SELF-PRONOUNCING BIBLE

These Bibles are printed on a good quality of paper, in large, clear type, and contain Marginal References, a complete system of helps, with a good Concordance, and many other things which space will not permit us to mention. Size of page 8⅝x5½ inches. Bound in French Seal Leather, with extended covers, red under gilt edge. The "Open Flat" Binding on these Bibles is far superior to any method of binding yet devised. Its many advantages over all other Bible bindings will be at once apparent. The Bible will lie open absolutely flat. The back of the Bible will at all times retain its shape. With this perfect binding the Bible will not break in the back. This is a Bible we know will please our people. Price $4.50 each. Postage paid by us. Any person wishing one of these books can secure one by sending us eight new yearly subscriptions.

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J. E. BEEBE & CO.
MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

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Purely vegetable, removes from one to two gallons of water a day. Shortness of breath quickly relieved. Cures the worst cases of Dropsy in all its forms, and after being given up by the best doctors to die. Specially efficacious in Dropsy of the Heart. Best and cheapest know remedy, only $1.00 a package, six packages $5.00 by mail postpaid, and free to very poor people who are really unable to pay.

ELDER C. W. ANDERSON,
ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 100. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1932. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

EPHESIANS II. 5.

"By grace ye are saved."

This Scripture seems to be a very common expression in this present age, being used very frequently by the regular Predestinarian Baptists, also by the limited Predestinarians, and by those who do not claim any kin whatsoever to the Baptists. In these days of hurry and flurry the expressions of men who have annexed to themselves flowery titles and use great swelling words seem to be more readily received than the truth of God's inspired word, and no particular consideration at all is given to the real meaning of the words used by the Spirit of God to the holy men of old for the purpose of illustrating fully his revealed will concerning his people and those immediately connected with them in the performance of his will. For instance, let us now compare the true meaning of just one word in the language used above, which was given by the inspiration of God to one of his faithful writers to inform the Ephesian brethren and "the faithful in Christ Jesus" just how their salvation had come about, how it had been wrought by God, and by him alone. Our learned men have found the word "grace" means the "free and unmerited love and favor of God, the spring and source of all the benefits men receive of him." Then this "free and unmerited love and favor" is the first cause or the original mover or "spring or source" of our salvation (if we are any of his), and as a spring of water issues forth from the ground so also this "free and unmerited love and favor of God" springs forth by his own free will and not from any pressure above or from any service whatever performed by the creature beneath, whether great or small, but is a gift according to God's own free will and good pleasure, which he purposed within himself before the world began. Now, that I may bring my thoughts a little more fully before you, let us suppose that for some reason we should find ourselves surrounded by

prison walls and a very heavy penalty assessed against us, which according to the laws of our nation would keep us in bondage until the last particle of it was paid, and while thus held as security for that debt one should come to us with a proposal that we might obtain our freedom upon one condition: that upon our return to home and family we would be permitted to remain just as long as we would return a good substantial payment each week, a portion of our earnings, or whatever service might be agreed upon or assigned us to perform, but in case such payment or service should fail all would be forfeited by us, this would not be grace, nor would any condition be brought forth by which it might bear the resemblance of grace, for the whole arrangement would be brought about by reason of our own labor and faithfulness in carrying out our portion of the contract and by such performance would obtain and retain the freedom so earnestly sought. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt."—Rom. iv. 4. Let us suppose again that another person should come to the warden of that prison and completely satisfy the penalty against us, open the prison doors, loose the chains that bound us and lead us out entirely free, and no other motive prompting such an action than just free and unmerited love and favor, just as that certain Samaritan of whom Jesus spake, having compassion upon that one whom he found "half dead," the wound of whom he bound up, "pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him." How beautifully, to my mind, this parable depicts the scene that comes before the eyes of every heaven-born child (called to be heirs and joint-heirs with Christ) that ever walked upon the footstool of God, that somewhere back in the pathway of time this "certain Samaritan" has come in "unmerited love and favor" and bound up our wounds, taken us to an inn and taken care of us through that entire night of terrible suffering. How greatly this parable differs from the two systems, or rather the two branches of the same system, for they all spring from the same root, that is so extensively preached all over the land, which would direct this dying man to the inn, where he could get lodging for himself, or at the very most would be to accompany him and engage a room for him, but he would have to care for himself, and pay for the room besides. But this one of whom Jesus speaks took care of him and in the morning paid the host for the service he had already performed and assured him that if there was any further expense he would also pay that when he returned. All of this was brought about because he had compassion on him, felt sorry for him in his suffering, had pity, or sympathy, for him in his affliction, which neither the priest nor the Levite possessed, so they passed by on the other side. For the benefit of those who are persistent in the teaching that our sufferings are all brought on us because of our own misconduct or neglect, let us turn for a moment to

John ix. 1, 2: "And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" Now let us pause for just a moment. Does it not seem rather strange that even Jesus' disciples would ask such a question? How could any one after a moment of consideration think of an unborn child performing sinful acts enough that such a penalty would be assessed against it, to be brought forth into this world totally blind, no hope of ever seeing the light of day in this world? We all make similar expressions, do we not? and then repent of them. But nevertheless the question brought forth its precious fruits from the lips of our Master, for Jesus explains, "Neither hath this man sinned, not his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." We notice also that after Jesus had opened his eyes the Jews would not believe him, for said they, "Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out." Is not this just about what comes to every one in this day who has his eyes opened by the Master? But it is needless to say that if at any time in this world's journey these two men above mentioned should have met face to face it would indeed have been a happy meeting and would have afforded them much rejoicing to sit down together and talk of the wonderful "love and favor" that had been bestowed upon them, although entirely unmerited. This is also characteristic of God's people of to -day, is it not? those to whom Jude wrote, "that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." When they come together it is to speak of the wonderful works of God, like those of olden times: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."—Malachi iii. 16, 17.

In the two associations I had the privilege of attending last fall the two characters I have endeavored to outline in this article were clearly manifested in the people: the first in southern Illinois, where all lifted up their voices with one accord, speaking often one to another of the wonderful works of God, the God omnipotent who changes not, and told of the free and unmerited love and favor he bestowed upon the objects of his love through Jesus Christ our Lord. But this is more than I care to say of the other, which was far distant in miles, and apparently in spirit also, so it is hardly necessary to state which one I would like to visit next fall if it is the will of the Lord to so bless me.

With me the conclusion of the whole matter is this: the doctrine of salvation by grace originated in the mind of God before the foundation of the world, the text of which is, Salvation is of the Lord, yesterday, to-day, and forever.

Free will was first preached by the serpent to Mother Eve in the garden of Eden, and in substance, it matters not what others may say, in the tree there is knowledge, wisdom and eternal life in the end. You may help yourself or cast it away. While conditionalism, or limited predestination, seems to have originated centuries later in the wilderness of Paran when those who were "sent to spy out the land" returned and all gave an evil report, but two, fearing the Lord, could not deliver it into their hands. "Yea, they turned back, and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel."—Psalms lxxviii. 41. The teaching in substance is, You must be born of God the Father, but after that you must take care of yourself. But here is the question with me: If a son should be born of the father (predestination), and mother (free will) should say, Do just as you please, if that son (limited predestination) should reach eternal life in the end, to whom would he return thanks?

Last fall I had the privilege of visiting this entire family, but at present I contemplate a visit next fall with the father only, if the Lord is willing.

This article may not be of any value whatever, but it is just as my mind has traveled the past week. While others rejoice in their works, let us sing, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound."

Dear editors, as I look this over just before mailing it seems to me more worthless than ever, but do with it as you think best.

ROBERT L. DAVIS.

DODGE CITY, Kansas.

LONDON, Ontario.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find an excellent letter from Elder R. Lester Dodson, which I eagerly read and reread to my comfort and joy. His poetry is often in my thoughts: Will I be found among the redeemed of God? I want others of the Lord's children to read it, and sent word to brother Dodson to that effect.

Lovingly,

FLORA J. SINCLAIR.

RUTHERFORD, N. J., Dec. 7, 1929.

DEAR SISTER SINCLAIR:—It is very good of you to think of and write to me from time to time. I am made to doubt that there is a more unworthy or undeserving person on the face of the earth of God's goodness and mercy than myself, and why his children should show kindness unto me and write to me of spiritual things is more than I can understand, at times. I do appreciate your letter and the evidence of the christian love and fellowship you manifest for me, and were I able to speak words of comfort to you in this your hour of loss and distress I most certainly would, but, alas, how empty words are to the souls whom God hath touched through affliction. Yet, I am sure you are not mourning the loss of your brother in a two-fold sense as those without hope, but by faith you believe that he has departed to be with Christ, and that so far as he is concerned he is far better off, but how sad for those who are left behind in this unfriendly world to grace who are still waging the warfare between the flesh

and the Spirit. This warfare will never cease in this life, and the battle is often so fierce as to cause us to know that except the Lord be on our side we are doomed to bitter despair. How good it is that we have that hope which is as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, holding us fast amidst the storms of turmoil and strife and will not let us go when we would give up a thousand times if our little strength was all that kept us. The anchor of the vessel is for a purpose, and our hope is given us to the end that we might know that we are not our own keepers, but that we are kept by the power of God, through faith, ready to be revealed in the last time. Brother Duncan will be greatly missed by all who knew him, and especially will the church militant feel its loss. The Lord alone is able to supply her needs and he will raise up from time to time the various gifts needed to serve the body of Christ here in this world. You have a wonderful evidence of this, it seems to me, in Elder Ruston, to whom God is apparently very clearly already vouchsafing his seal, in that so many should thus early in his pastorate there be brought into the visible fold. I have felt for several years that the Lord would direct him to that portion of his vineyard, and I feel to pray God's blessings upon both pastor and flock. The Lord moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform, and he alone is his own interpreter and, at times, makes it most plain, so may we never lose sight of who is at the helm and render praise and glory to him to whom they belong.

I am glad Elder Helms was much enjoyed again, and wish I could have been numbered among the party, including brother Ruston, Dan Campell, Elder Wood and others. Such gatherings are verily heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord, and when we are given to drink so deeply from the wells of living water, Christ in all his people, we are so refreshed and strengthened as to go on our journey many days in meditation of the Lord's goodness to us when it was his set time to favor Zion.

I am glad you hold in sweet remembrance my first visit to your home and that you feel I am a "splendid fisher." I have to confess to not knowing which is the right side of the vessel to cast in my hook, neither can I prepare the bait that will attract the kind of fish I love best, but sometimes I am made to know, or certainly believe with all my heart, that the great Sovereign of the sea knows where all the fish are and just what is necessary, the time and place and all the circumstances incident thereto, for one to be hooked by his grace, and brought up from the depth of the sea, the natural world of people, and separated unto himself as one of the particular and chosen race. All things are possible with God and he only has to speak and it is done, nevertheless he does not work instantly, so to speak, but there may be untold years before his purpose is finally unfolded sufficiently for men and women of Adam's race to be humbled in the dust

and confess before him that great and marvelous are his works. It is said that God prepared the fish that swallowed Jonah, which I believe with all my heart, but this "great fish" may have been in preparation hundreds of years (it is claimed that whales live five hundred years, or longer), and notwithstanding all that men may say or do or think, it does not change the situation at all, but at the hour appointed of God all things are found to be working together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Wisdom is the great architect which has drawn the plan, and the mighty God, who doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, is the one who is executing all things after the counsel of his own will, and this is the reason why "all things" work together for good, etc. Our natural minds would divide up and they cannot grasp the truth of God's word, nevertheless he is forever travelling in the greatness of his strength and his train fills the temple, so that every tongue is silenced before him and none can reply against God. How good to feel that this God makes no mistakes. A few days ago I was called to the funeral of a seventeen year old girl, the baby daughter of a dear friend, there being three other young daughters, and I was made to hope the Lord gave me these words as a text for the occasion: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Who shall dare bring into question the acts of our God? My sister, let us stand still and know that he is God and that beside him there is no Savior. Those words alone seem to speak volumes.

I remember sister Kennedy and our visit at her home during my trip to Duart. This world is not our home and we are being continually reminded of the fact, but how precious is that faith which believes that though this our earthly tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, and some day all of the elect family of God will fly away and be at rest for ever and ever.

"When thou, my righteous Judge, shall come
To fetch thy ransomed people home,
Shall I among them stand?
Shall such a worthless worm as I,
Who sometimes am afraid to die,
Be found at thy right hand?"

This is the all-important and most searching question. If such is ever the lot of this poor mortal he will have to sing, Grace, grace unto it, and all praise will belong to the Father, Son and blessed Spirit, and may it thus be rendered in time and continue on and on through eternity.

Your unworthy brother,

R. LESTER DODSON.

NEWARK, Delaware.

DEAR EDITORS:—When space permits, please publish the inclosed letter from Elder J. W. McClanahan, for it is so well fitting and to the point, and from one who is revered and loved from Canada to the Gulf in the States. He is patiently waiting for the crown of righteousness prepared for him in eternity. He traveled the mountains

of West Virginia all his days on horseback, one of the old giants, compared to Elders Gilbert Beebe, J. G. Eubanks, Wilson Thompson and many others who have passed on to their reward.

J. B. MILLER.

POCA, W. Va., March 11, 1932.

DEAR BROTHER J. B. MILLER:—I have thought for some time I would write you a few lines, but having no learning, and as poor spelling makes bad writing I have hesitated to write. I am feeling very well at this time, but am a total wreck so far as doing any labor, or going out among the churches of our associations, but the brethren have been very kind and have taken me in their cars and returned me home again. I sold my horse and gave my saddle to Elder Dell Smith, as I cannot ride horseback any more; neither can I drive in a buggy, as the traffic on the highways is very great and dangerous. So it appears to me I have given up and am awaiting the summons from my heavenly Father, "Child, thy Father calls, come home." It seems a hard thing for me to say I am a child of God, yet for my life I cannot keep from claiming a glorious hope in the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. I know I am a poor helpless sinner, and if I am a child of God it is not by anything good I have done to become a child of God. I had no more to do with it than I had to do with being born William J. McClanahan's child in the year 1849. There is a time to be born and a time to die, and everything is beautiful in its time. My day of traveling among the dear Baptists is at an end, and all the pleasure I have now is to talk to them with my pen, and in return hear from them in the same way. I sit and watch the mail carrier as he passes my box to see if I get any mail, and if so, I hobble out to get it. If it is a letter from some brother or sister, I open it and read the contents, and in that way I get many comforting messages from the dear saints scattered abroad in these United States and Canada, and it cheers my droping soul and lifts me from the rut of despair and causes my aching heart to rejoice to know that such love and unity exist among the dear Old School Baptists, which the world knows nothing of. The doctrine of sovereign grace separates them from the world. Truly it is said of them, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." "Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill." I am persuaded Isaiah had a clear view of the church in the mountain of God's holiness, high and lifted up, by a supernatural power. "In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple." Evidently Isaiah had a clear view of the prearrangement of that council held in the annals of eternity, in the foreknowledge of God was as complete as it will be when time shall end. It is made sure by his "shalls" and "wills." "And he fenced it, and gathered out

the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine." Jesus Christ is the choicest Vine. He saith, I am the Vine, ye are the branches. The life of the branch must come from the vine. And he "built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein." Jesus tread the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none to help. He He did not, and does not, need the help of mortal man. "His arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him. For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak." "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." "For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts, is the house [church] of Israel." He also pronounces a woe on the spirit of mixing with the world, or other factions: "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!" Israel is to dwell alone, and is not to be reckoned among the nations, that she may show forth her beauty in the earth, as a city set upon a hill which cannot be hid.

Yours in much affliction,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

SALEM DEPOT, N. H., Nov. 22, 1931.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—Your good letter came this morning and was "real good" to get. To-day I have been busy (at least part of the day) in Boston, getting tickets and finding out particulars for my daughter and another lady who contemplate journeying to Saint Petersburg, Florida, next Saturday. This daughter is a graduate nurse and is hoping to get work there this winter. I pray that God in his great mercy will take care of them and open a way for them there, or bring them back safely to us. If left to ourselves it is so easy to ask God to give us something good for ourselves and loved ones that we particularly want, but it would be better to ask first that it be for his own glory. Sometimes it is for his glory to withhold as well as to give. How easy I for one lose sight of this, being so full of self and self interests. How vastly different would I for one be if I could always say, Lord, please glorify thyself. Honor thyself in giving or withholding. Our knowledge is so small of our real needs, but he knows all things as they are.

Your letter opens up a tremendous subject: The great God of power. Sometimes one is amazed. How can such a mighty, marvelous, wonder-working God pay any attention to the small dust of the balance? How can he? But honor crowns his brow. He does, and actually loves many of them, unworthy as they are of the least of his favors. It is profitable to meditate upon this at times, as it gives no quarter to that wretched thing I have in such abundance: pride. O God, deliver me from this. This old hymn comes to my mind just now,

"Hail, mighty Jesus, how divine
Is thy victorious sword;
The stoutest rebel must resign
At thy commanding word."

"And when thy victories are complete,
When all the chosen race
Shall round the throne of glory meet
To sing thy conquering grace;

Oh, may my blood-washed soul be found
Among the favored band;
And I with them thy praise will sound
Throughout Immanuel's land."

What other subject to sing about but grace? Grace, some say it enables people to live as they list, to licentiousness. Why it leads in just the opposite direction. People possessing it would live holy as God is holy if they could. I sincerely pray, Elder, that God will in his wonderful goodness give you sweet encouragement in your ministrations. May you run and not be weary, walk and not faint. The way you are in will never be an easy way. He has never promised it shall be easy, yet I, for one, seem to be always trying to find that easy spot to get into. Foolish, silly me! The older I get the more I seem to do it. If he were quick to mark iniquity, how could I stand? But with him is mercy.

Forgive this hurried note, and when you can again spare a few minutes please favor me with a letter, also when it is good with you at the court of King Immanuel please remember your poor correspondent.

Again thanking you for your kind letter, I am, yours sincerely in hope,

JOHN H. DUNKLEY.

SANFORD, Maine, Feb. 16, 1932.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—We wish to thank you for remembering us at Christmas. We thought at the time we would send you a New Year's card, but when the time came I told my wife I wanted to write you a letter, but I had nothing to say to you at that time, and it has gone on and on, and to-day I feel I cannot let it go any longer.

My mind turns to the fifteenth chapter of St. John, beginning at the twelfth verse, and on to the end of the chapter. This comforts me and gives me a great hope that I may be one of those Jesus is talking about. The sixteenth verse is very precious to me, where he says, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you." Brother, there is much that appeals to a child of God and that is very comforting in those words and gives strength to a poor sinner. Am I a child of God? It does seem the way God has led us we must know something of its truth. When I was led about and down to the bottom of the deep pit my strength gave out, I could go no farther, I had come to the end. There I was a poor sinner forsaken by God, no strength to make even one more effort. I just felt the end had come to me, and prayed that God's mercy might overlook my sins. It was terrible, and seemed that I must die then. Brother, out of that despair in an instant I was taken and my feet placed upon a rock, a new song was placed in my mouth, even praise to God. Knowing it was my Savior that did this wonderful work, can I in my life praise him enough for that deliverance? Not if I could live a thousand

years. Nothing to offer but love to God.

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

Those words in St. John brought to mind that experience. I have written as my mind has been led. I feel you can understand better than I can express it.

We will be pleased to hear from you any time you have the opportunity and feel to write us.

Sister Lydia and family are quite well this winter.

We hope God will be with you in your ministry to his people.

MR. AND MRS. ANSON QUINT.

LINDEN, Texas, Dec. 6, 1931.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed is the experience of a dear sister in the flesh that is a great comfort to me. If you see fit to publish it in the SIGNS do so; if not, please return it to me and all will be well. She has been a great sufferer for years, but is always cheerful.

ELLA E. NELSON.

COMMERCE, Texas.

MY DEAR SISTER ELLA:—When I was sick, in 1916, I had no idea of getting well, so I thought to write my travels from nature to grace, or at least my little hope, and leave it, as it might be the source of a little comfort to you, and, possibly, some time, to others, but I recovered and what I wrote has been in a table drawer all this time, so I may copy it and send it to you.

I would not take anything in the world for the little hope I have, and still most of the time I am in doubt and fear that I am not born again. Our parents, being Primitive Baptists, never sent us children to Sunday School, nor took part in protracted meetings and the big revivals, but as my associates all attended those things it seemed the only thing for me to do. For a long time I took no part and still felt no condemnation. When I was about grown I was made to realize my lost condition in the sight of God. My burden became heavy and I would try to pray, but my prayers availed nothing. When I went anywhere I felt that every one knew what a lost and ruined sinner I was, and that all were watching me as though I had committed some terrible crime. After several months in this state of mind, I decided one night to seek religion at the "mourners' bench." A good friend, who felt it her duty to go out and do personal work in the revival meetings, came to me and asked me to go up to be prayed for. I did not wait for a second bidding, for I had reached the point where I thought that if anything would do any good I needed it. This being quite a surprise to the people who had known me a long time, they began to whisper among themselves, and then flocked around me and began to tell me what to do to be saved. While I believe they were just as conscientious as Saul of Tarsus was when he made havoc of the church, entering into every house and hailing men and women committed them to prison, yet it was not the place for me. Some of them began shouting that I was saved. Of course that made me feel still worse,

to think I was up there in a stir like that, and had deceived the people, too. I told those nearest me that I thought when I had a change of heart I would know it as soon as any one else did, so immediately I went to the back of the house, where I remained until the people were dismissed. I went on in about the same frame of mind, only feeling I had made bad matters worse by making a public example of myself for some time. Then one day I attended the funeral of a lady who had been a schoolmate of mine, and while I do not remember anything that was said, I fully realized that if it had been me laid away instead of her I surely would have been everlastingly lost. But the blessed Lord knows best and works everything after the counsel of his own will. The night after this funeral I went to hear a man preach who had been my teacher during one term of school and had been a member of the Missionary Baptists, and also the Presbyterians, but still was dissatisfied. I firmly believe that he was a chosen vessel and that the Lord directed his steps. But be that as it may, in his discourse that night he compared the christian experience to an old Indian who drove dry shingles down in the ground in a circle, placed a worm inside the circle and set fire to the shingles. When they began burning, causing considerable heat, the worm began hunting a cool place, rushing faster and faster from one side to another, until at last when the heat was so intense it could not find a cool place it settled down in the center in despair and the Indian reached down and lifted it out to a place of safety. Simple as this may appear, it seemed to apply to my case perfectly. I had tried every way to get saved, but found that no human effort would bring about spiritual birth, therefore I was ready to settle down and wait on the Lord. Then it was that my trust was in a power that is higher than human beings. The next day my burden was all gone. Everything seemed to me to be praising God. My heart was light and my work seemed easy, and I felt I had to tell some one of the joy I was experiencing and what great things I felt the Lord had done for me. But there was no one near I thought would understand, and before I had an opportunity to talk with any one I began to doubt, and felt it might be only a delusion of the mind. However, I had a desire to join some denomination, but did not think the Primitive Baptists were up-to-date enough for me. I went to hear all the different denominations it was possible for me to reach. I had always wanted to be a "church worker" and thought the more popular the "church" the better it would suit me. But I soon found there was no food for me among them. Then I wanted to hear a "Hardshell" sermon. I made a few trips of consider distance, seeking food for my hungry soul. I have never felt worthy to be a member of the church, but because of the great comfort the preaching was to me I finally decided to ask for a home among the Old School Baptists. While that is over thirty years ago, the only regret

I have ever had is that if they could see me as I see myself they surely could have no fellowship for me. The poet who wrote the hymn number 380 in Lloyd's hymn book has expressed my feelings better than I can, especially the last two lines, which read,

"Then when I count up all the cost,
If not free grace, then I am lost."

LULA HICKS.

1 JOHN III. 2.

"BELOVED, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

When Jesus came to earth he took upon himself the likeness of man. He said it behooved him to be made like his brethren. When mortality is swallowed up in immortality then we will be made like Jesus. We will not only bear the image of Jesus, but will be like him in knowledge, will have the mind of Christ; will be perfect in everything; will not be ignorant; will know each other as we are known of him, and will be perfectly satisfied with all his (Jesus') wonderful works, and will sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. For now we see as through a glass (the flesh) darkly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as I am known. Now our knowledge is very limited in all things, but thanks be to God, he has all power and all knowledge in heaven and earth, for the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. In the resurrection they shall all be brought home to glory, without the loss of one. He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet and then shall be gathered togather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Those angels shall know every one of his elect children, and all the elect in heaven will be as the angels of God. It will be like the Arminian song that says, We will meet our loved ones over there. All earthly ties will be broken, one will be as much beloved as another. We will be like Jesus: his love is the same toward all his children. There will be no partiality in heaven, and there will be no strangers there. When Jesus was transfigured on the mount, and Moses and Elias appeared, James and John knew they were were Moses and Elias, Jesus blessed them with the power to recognize them. Just think for one moment, if the Lord would bless those mortal, sinful men to recognize his holy angels, what will it be in heaven when this mortal shall have put on immortality and then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory? Victory over death, hell and the grave, victory over everything that pertains to this life of sin, trials, sickness, trouble and sorrow. Then we can thank and praise him in eternity who gave us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Your little sister in hope of this victory,

B. A. CROWLEY.

KENNEDY, Alabama.

BUNA, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find check for two dollars for my subscription to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I knew my subscription had expired, but just could not write and tell you dear, faithful brethren to stop my paper, as I knew I should do, so I just kept on praying and hoping and trusting that the good Master, who works all things after the counsel of his own will, would provide a way some time in the future wherein I would be enabled to pay my dues for the dear old paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and, sure enough, he has made a way and blessed me with the amount I owe you, and I am very thankful. I thank you from my unworthy heart, and hope I do appreciate your kindness in sending the sweet message the SIGNS contains. Oh how I do love the joyful sound; it is my food and drink, and if I should fail to get it any more I surely would be sorry to have to do without it, but I do not see how I can continue to pay for it, as we are so poor and getting old and not able to do much work. I am just a poor old farmer and money is scarce with me. I do not know where the money is coming from to pay my subscription for this year, but God knows, and if you still continue to send me the dear old paper another year without the pay I surely will appreciate your kindness and will send in the money as soon as the Lord enables me to get it, which I believe he will do, but if I fail to pay up when my subscription expires you will know he has not sent me the blessing I am looking for. I hope the editorial staff and all the dear brethren and sisters will continue to go in and out in the good old way, as they have in the past, telling the same old story of Jesus, and him crucified, for it just suits this poor wayfaring stranger. I know I never will see any of you dear editors of the SIGNS (unless the Lord wills that I shall), but I want you to know that unless I am altogether deceived in myself I do truly love you all for the truth's sake. Oh how I hope I do love the doctrine you all love and publish, and I hope to grow in grace and to be an Old Predestinarian Baptist as long as I live. Great is the mystery of godliness.

Your sister in hope of eternal mercy,

(MRS.) ARA COCHRAN.

CHARLESTON, W. Va., Jan. 14, 1931.

DEAR FATHER:—I have been thinking of writing to you for some time, so will make the attempt. I am ashamed of not writing sooner. Oh how I would like to be with you both and hear you talk; it would be of great comfort to me. I did much enjoy mother's talk when she was here. I love her and her sweet words. Now, father, my mind of late has been on the church here in the militant state. It is made up of members every one properly set in his place by the great God of all power, and properly fit together, and each one serves the other, and her food comes from that bountiful storehouse of God. He goes before and leads them about and instructs them. He never withholds anything from his children they

need. Sometimes they need to be led down in the dark valley of despair and learn of him there. Sometimes he leads them out on Mount Calvary to view the promised land. Father, do you not believe his children sometimes get a faint view of it? Yes, and from this bountiful storehouse he has a variety of food. It all comes from him, and all pointing to the same. Sometimes his children need meat and he gives it them, which is the pure, unadulterated word of God. Sometimes they get thirsty, and he gives them drink from that Fountain of life that never runs dry. Sometimes they need sweets. He gives them honey from that Rock, Christ Jesus. Sometimse they get rusty and need oil, and he gives they oil from that hard, flinty Rock. So everything that befalls this people, the church, is for their good. Sometimes he withdraws himself from the church and lets her walk in her own way ere she would vaunt herself, and say, Mine own arm hath brought salvation unto me. I know this people (the church) I am trying to speak of have many hardships to endure, trials, troubles and persecutions await them on their way, which seem almost more than they can bear, but it all is for the lifting of Jesus on high. They that will live godly in this life shall suffer persecution. They are safe and secure in Jesus' arms, no harm can come to them. Oh what a glorious thought to these heaven-born children, may they all march along, the church being the uppermost thought in their mind, so as to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, is the prayer of this poor afflicted one.

I am going to bring this to a close, for fear I weary you. I am coming to see you in the spring, if it is the Lord's will, and I hope you are both spared to visit us again. Give my love to dear old Elder Murphy. I love to hear him preach. I think he is a very humble man in the pulpit, and I have always thought you were, too, father, humble and childlike.

From your daughter,

ERNIE.

[THE above good letter was written to Elder G. B. McClanahan by his daughter, and sent to us for publication.—ED.]

BERLIN, Md., Jan. 30, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find check and blank for renewal of subscription, and interest for same. I regret very much that I have been forced to keep you waiting so long and feel very grateful to you for sending me the old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as you have, for at times I get much comfort from it, at other times it seems to be a sealed message and does not reach my case, and it makes me afraid lest I am one of the seed in stony soil, our Savior spoke of, that came up, but when the sun shone upon it it withered away. I believe, or rather since starting this letter, this Scripture has been revealed to me in a bitter light, for we are told that where he begins a good work he (Christ) will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Not meaning that there has been a good work started

in me, though I sometimes hope so, but at other times doubt it very much.

Now just a few thoughts on the Scripture that I referred to. As it seems to me, the ones referred to are the ones who are working their own good works and are growing very nicely and doing well until the sun (the righteous Sun) rises and shines upon them, revealing to them what black and hell-deserving creatures they are, then it is that they wither and die. Die to what? To self. No longer depending upon their own good works, but hoping and praying the good Lord of heaven and earth would have mercy upon them, for they are made to know that if justice is meted out there is no hope for them.

This is submitted in love, I hope, so do with it as you see fit.

J. W. S. TIMMONS.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER George L. Weaver having changed his address from Shelbyville, Kentucky, to 2216 Fulton Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio, requests the brethren to address him at the latter place.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

WHEN remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it. By referring to these dates you can tell to just what time your subscription is paid. Dec 31 means your subscription expired December, 1931; June 32 means your subscription expires June, 1932; Dec 32 that it expires December, 1932, etc.

NOTICE.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS:—The publishers of our paper have informed us that a large number of subscribers are behind with their subscriptions. It is always unpleasant to speak of money matters to our readers, but there is an irreducible minimum amount of funds required in order for the publishers to pay their bills. They must be honest and keep faith with those from whom they buy materials. We fully appreciate the stringency of the times, but if all who are behind will make a real effort to pay up, either in whole or in part, many of them will succeed, and the sum total will greatly lighten the heavy burden devolving upon the publishers of our paper at the present time. The SIGNS means so much to a great many that we earnestly hope all who can will do their bit towards relieving the present embarrassing situation. It is certainly not desired, however, that any who really enjoy reading the paper shall discontinue it. We need to build up rather than tear down the subscription list. Many of our readers doubtless know of others who would enjoy taking the paper; if so, kindly send in their subscriptions. There are others who are able to more than pay their own way, and if these find it in their hearts to help at this time it will be greatly appreciated. We are sending our own check for five dollors to the publishers towards a relief fund of this kind. If all who can will help even a little it will not be hard on any. We thank you for your consideration and cooperation.

R. LESTER DODSON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1932.

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HEBREWS IV. 14.

"LET us hold fast our profession."

Paul here is addressing Hebrew brethren, who, like himself, were partakers of a heavenly calling, he was not, as some would think, addressing the Jewish people indiscriminately. The meaning of the name Hebrew is a "passer over," and those he was addressing had passed over from the legal order to the gospel dispensation, for they had, like Paul himself, been called by grace. To such, this exhortation is written, that they might be encouraged to walk worthy of a holy vocation to which they were called. They were like their Gentile brethren, an afflicted and persecuted people, for Paul tells them in chapter ten, "Call to remembrance the former days, in which after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock, both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance." Surely these were very precious brethren who had walked in love and sweet fellowship with Paul, to whom he is blessed of God to write of the deep and wonderful truth concerning the person and priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ. He also makes frequent reference to those of the legal covenant, reminding his brethren of the many that fell in the wilderness because of unbelief, and bids them take heed lest there be in any of them an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. The chapter from which our text is taken begins with the exhortation, "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it," and in verse eleven he says, "Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." Such exhortations were necessary then, and we feel they are very necessary now, not for the world who are dead in trespasses and sins, but to the household of faith. Some might say that these brethren addressed by Paul, being partakers of a holy calling, and having been illum-

inated, as Paul himself was, with a light from heaven, would not need such admonitions, seeing that they were gracious persons and according to their profession and the doctrine they had received, they were saved with an everlasting salvation, but we would say here that the admonitions and exhortations are of the Lord and necessary for our instruction in righteousness, neither are these admonitions and exhortations grievous to the new man, for they are his life.

Paul says, "Let us fear," but some might say, What have they to fear? We would answer, They are the very ones that do fear, but theirs is not a slavish fear of wrath to come, nor is it through an underestimating of God's power, but it is a loving regard to God's word possessed by one who has by faith embraced Christ, who is made unto such, wisdom, and this fear is the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom, and where it is the soul will be well schooled in self-examination to see if they be in the faith. It is good for us that this eminent apostle links himself with the brethren, saying, "Let us fear," and again, "Let us hold fast." There is danger, great danger, he could have said, For "let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" He knew of the perilous times that would soon come upon them, when many would deny the faith, being in love with this present world. To the elders at Ephesus he said in his parting address, Acts xx. 28-31, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." He was constantly warning them against false teachers and their heinous doctrines, not because he had a bad spirit, but because he loved them, having the welfare of the brethren at heart, shedding tears of sorrow for them, knowing what mischief would be done and the distress and ruin that would result. It is worthy of our notice that Paul admonishes the elders to take heed unto themselves, and it is evident from what he afterwards says that much if not all their trouble would come from false teachers which he rightly calls wolves. What a solemn responsibility rests upon those in authority in the church. They are spoken of as overseers or stewards who shall give an account unto God, who has also placed them there. Ezekiel was told that if he warned not the people, then their blood should be required at his hand; if he warned them and they regarded not his warning, then he was clear of their blood.

Paul quitted himself as a faithful steward, and could say that he was pure from the blood of all men, and when at his journey's end, said, "I have kept the faith." He had suffered stripes

above measure, in prison more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times he received forty stripes save one. Thrice was he beaten with rods, once he was stoned, thrice he suffered shipwreck, he was a night and a day in the deep. In journeyings often, in perils of water, in perils of robbers, in perils by his own countrymen, in perils of the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren. In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides these things that were without, that which also came upon him daily, the care of all the churches. It is this blessed man who was enabled by God's grace to endure the trials and afflictions enumerated above, that says, "Let us hold fast our profesion." He was hated of the scribes and Pharisees, so were they, and so are we, if we be of the faith, we are told, the world will love its own. From the Scriptures, we know that many who at first heard the word gladly were disposed to cling to the law, to be circumcised or to keep certain days holy, some had professed to have begun in spirit and being bewitched by false teachers they had been moved from their steadfastness in the faith and were now trying to be made perfect in the flesh. Others, taking advantage of what they called their freedom from the requirements of the law (which was fulfilled in Christ), became servants of their own lusts, and by their loose way of living brought much reproach upon the cause they had professed to espouse. Those who sought perfection in the flesh were blind to the grand truth that the flesh was conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity, only made of the dust of the ground and is nothing but sin, that our sins were imputed to Christ, and by God's grace Christ's righteousness is imputed to those who believe on his name. We bear in our body the marks of the dying of our Lord Jesus and with all of our striving and "holding fast" our profession we in ourselves never get above a lump of sin and wretchedness, and while we decrease in our own sight and estimation, our beloved Lord is magnified in our eyes, and we are glad to be nothing that Christ might be all in all. Those who would view liberty in Christ as a license to sin have never rightly seen the "*wounds of Christ,*" surely if they had grief would be theirs. The wormwood and the gall of bitter sorrow for sin has not been tasted sufficiently or they could not look on sin lightly. *God hates sin.* It was sin that crucified Christ, and who that has felt its sting and seen its baneful effect but hates it, too, and who has witnessed Jesus "a spectacle of woe" and then can wink at sin? We do not expect to find steadfastness in Pharisees, nor in antinomians, but we do believe that those who have heard the voice of him who raiseth the dead and possesses the Holy Spirit will show somewhat of the fruit and effect of that Spirit in their lives. One of the fruits of the Spirit is faith, and it is only by faith we can rightly "hold fast." God promised Abraham, and he in turn staggered not at the promise through unbelief, but was

strong in the faith, which just means he was strong *in the strength* that God gave to him. If God gives a grain of faith (and a grain is so strong it will move mountains) that grain of faith will prove itself to be God-given by what it will enable one to endure. Consider the trials of the worthies mentioned in chapter eleven, all that they suffered, and they suffered much, and all that they did, and they did many wonderful things, it was all by faith which was *not of themselves,* it is the gift of God.

We purposely mentioned much of Paul's trials and sufferings, and we would say here that he was no cast-iron man able to be stoned without flinching, when he had just a thorn in the flesh he could not help himself, or he would never have prayed. We say this seriously, for we have had a thorn with which we have struggled, and struggled in vain. Those who think they can move the thorn are like Peter, who said, I will go to prison and to death and not deny thee. Peter learned also what a terrible thorn was the flesh and found with Paul that God's grace, through faith, was his sufficiency. Nothing short of this God-given faith will enable us to "hold fast" our profession, and here we would desire to dwell upon our text a little more, the Lord enabling us. Let us consider Paul and the thorn in the flesh, and God's reply to his thrice repeated prayer, he said, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Paul goes on to declare, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ might rest upon me, * * * for when I am weak, then am I strong." Here, then, is the kernel of the matter, and in this our profession lies: when I am weak (and I am always so, but do not always realize it) Christ is my strength. When to all appearances I am dead Christ is my life, and when I feel to be foolish and vain he is my wisdom. When I feel to be all unrighteousness he is my righteousness, when I am foul with sin he is my sanctification, and when I, who have hoped that I belong to God, find myself in chains of guilt, like a slave sold under sin, then he is my redemption, for is he not of God made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption? The three Hebrews of old held fast their profession, even against all the king could do. In the flesh they were weaker than the most mighty men that were in the king's army, yet those men, mighty as they were, were slain by the flames of the fire, while the Hebrews were preserved. A profession is an open declaration or confession of one's sentiments or belief. The worthies of old confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth, they *declared plainly* that they seek a country, a better country, that is, an heavenly. Thus a christian profession should be a plain declaration of what Christ is to us, his doctrine and the order of his house and the ordinances that he has instituted for us to observe, all of which are inculcated in his written word. The man of God must *by faith* contend earnestly for the *faith* once delivered

(by Christ himself) unto the saints; there must be no slackness, it is his life. One will say, But there is slackness, and much of it, slackness in doctrine, and with many of us our walk and conversation is not always that which becomes saints. What we know to be due unto our God is done grudgingly as though we were prompted with the thought that if God wanted us to do so and so he would make us do it. Such an attitude is not according to faith, for faith worketh by love and it produces a willing service. The writer does not have one stone to throw, it is one of the crosses of his life that he cannot do the things that he would. The good he would he does not and the evil he would not that he does, and if he has any place at all it is expressed by the poet,

"A guilty, weak and helpless worm,
On thy kind arms I fall."

And though the experience that brings one to such a low place is killing to the flesh, yet for us it is safe, the arms of omnipotence are underneath all such, and the power of God rests upon them and it is out of such weakness they are made strong. In that humble mind they gladly take the spoiling of their goods and in the promised grace that is given to such they do hold fast, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against them. To such the gospel is good news, God's servants highly esteemed, and the love and fellowship of saints greatly prized.

Beloved brethren, let us hold fast our profession, for he is faithful that calleth us, who also will do it, and let us run the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, that we might be kept from stumbling upon the dark mountains, but rather finish our course with joy. God grant us faith to trust him in providence and grace, for he is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind.

G. R.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Arnold H. Bellows, of Roxbury, N. Y., at the Primitive Baptist Home, in Salisbury, Md., Wednesday, April 20th, 1932, James B. Adkins, of Salisbury, Md., and Miss Emma M. Jones, of Willards, Md. Mr. and Mrs. Adkins will reside in their new home in Salisbury, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

OUR beloved father, **ELDER JOHN GILBERT SAWIN,** awakened to the "joy that cometh in the morning" in the early dawn of April 1st, 1932, at his home in Mattoon, Illinois. He was born March 1st, 1838, near Edinburg, Indiana, and was one of ten grown children of the late James H. and Caroline Harry Sawin, pioneers of Bartholomew County, Indiana. He united with Lewis Creek Church May, 1859, in his twenty-second year, and began preaching the following December. In 1860 Lewis Creek Church was dissolved and he with his father, mother, several brothers and sisters took their letters to Conn's Creek Church. He was ordained to the work of the ministry at Pleasant Grove Church, Coles County, Illinois, April 2nd, 1864. The original minutes of the presbytery are in possession of the family. Sixty-eight years of preaching the gospel of our Lord and Savior; never failing to feel that Christ and him crucified was what he was called to preach. Our uncle, Elder P. W. Sawin, tells us that the first time he heard father preach at Lewis Creek Church this text was used: "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." The last sermon he preached, publicly, was at Salem Sugar Creek, near Springfield, Ill., June, 1931, a sermon we can always remember for its fullness of faith, and belief in the sovereign power and divine will of God. Feeble though he appeared, his wonderful voice was vibrant with the spirit of truth, which was as strong as in those early years. He came to Coles County, Illinois, in 1862, where he was united in marriage with Lovisa Jones in August of that year. Their years together were almost sixty-five, mother having passed on five years ago. Father's correspondence with his kindred in

Christ, as well as his family, had been a source of much comfort to him all through the years, and he never wearied of writing and talking of the goodness of God to His children with those that he knew understood and thought of it as it was to him. He was pastor of Little Bethel Church, Coles County, Illinois, many years, also served Little Flock Church, in Kentucky, for a while. Though living in Mattoon, he made the trip to Kentucky once a month. From August, 1873, until the following spring he served Welch and London Tract Churches, living with his famliy in Newark, Delaware. He was chosen pastor of Salem Sugar Creek Church, Sangamon County, Illinois, in 1920, though he could not come regularly. He was with us several times a year, until the year just ended, the June meeting was the only one held.

He leaves one son: W. G. Sawin, Mattoon, Ill., three daughters: Mrs. Joab Stout, Springfield, Ill., Mrs. W. M. Ewing, Helena, Montana, Mrs. J. E. Spaulding, Anderson, Ind., eleven grandchildren and thirteen great-grandchildren, with many nephews and nieces. One brother, Elder P. W. Sawin, of Lexington, Kentucky, survives him.

The funeral was held April 2nd, 1932, in Central Church, Mattoon, Illinois, conducted by Elder B. L. Nay, of Cedar Falls, Iowa, who is a great-nephew of our father. Elder Nay spoke comforting and truthful words to the family and friends. He was assisted by Mr. John Codd, pastor of Central Church. Interment was in Dodge Grove Cemetery.

IDA FRANK STOUT.

MRS. LYDIA JANE S. DANCE, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life at her home, 705 Concord Avenue, Wilmington, Delaware, April 16th, 1932. She was born September 7th, 1853, in Kent County, Delaware. Her parents were Jesse Sherwood and Sarah Ann Meredith, daughter of Elder Peter Meredith. She was one of ten children, and is survived by one brother and four sisters: James M. Sherwood, of Willow Grove, Del.; Mrs. Margaret Moore, Mrs. W. A. Wise, Mrs. Sue Merrick and Miss Elmira Sherwood, all living in Wilmington, Del. One brother, Deacon Peter Sherwood, of the Welsh Tract Church, died about six months ago. October 10th, 1894, she was married to Milton Dance, who died March 12th, 1910. They had no children. There is a step-daughter, Mrs. Harry Patterson, living at Glenarm, Md. She was baptized by the late Elder William Grafton in July, 1877, into the membership of the Welsh Tract Baptist Church. She was blessed in the Lord to live a consistent christian life in her walk and conversation, beloved by her brethren in Christ and by all who knew her. She loved her meetings with the church and was always present when able physically to do so. Her going home is a loss to our little spiritual circle at Welsh Tract, and leaves a vacancy in the family never to be refilled. We have a good hope for her through God's grace that she is at rest and at peace in the paradise of God. Our temporary loss is her permanent and eternal gain.

Funeral services were held at the home in Wilmington, burial in the Glebe Cemetery, New Castle, Delaware. May the Holy Spirit abide with the mourning ones.

ALSO,

ROBERT LEE GULICK, after a ten days' illness from influenza, passed away from this earthly life April 17th, at his home, Loudoun County, Virginia. He was born at the Gulick home, near Aldie, December 28th, 1860. He was married to Miss Roberta Purington Lamb, of Prince William County, Virginia, April 18th, 1900. His widow is left surviving him, together with one son, George S. Gulick, of Rochester, N. Y. He is survived also by two sisters and one brother: sister Mollie Gulick and Miss Ella Gulick and J. Sanford Gulick, all living near Lenah, Va. While he was not a member of the visible church, he was a believer and a lover of the truth of God in Jesus Christ. He could not have been more faithful or more devoted to the interest of the church had he been a member, always in his place at all the meetings unless providentially hindered. The door of his home was always open to the entertainment of Old School Baptists and their friends. To his wife's family, her mother, sister and all, he was as loving and kind as to his own sisters and brother. He was a good and kind neighbor, always ready and willing to minister as best he could to those in need. His character as a man was marked by quietness and peace and gentleness. He was not in the least a man of contention and strife, but one who lived peaceably with his fellow-men. We shall miss him both in the family and neighborhood and in the church.

Funeral services were held at the home by the writer, a very large congregation being present, which silently testified to the regard in which he was held. Burial in the cemetery at Manassas, Va. May the Lord comfort all who mourn and grant them reconciliation to his will.

H. H. L.

MRS. FRANCES A. DANIELS WILMOTH, aged 78 years, widow of Blackman Wilmoth, of Belington, W. Va., departed this life at the home of her sister, Mrs. J. B. White, 146 Buffalo Street, Elkins, W. Va., April 20th, 1932, following an illness of complications due to advanced age. She was the daughter of Job and Martha Chenowith Daniels, and was married to Blackman Wilmoth in the year 1901. She joined the Valley Primitive Baptist Church in August, 1907, and remained a faithful and consistent member until her death. She is survived by three step-sons: Charley and Harry Wilmoth, of Belington, and Delbert, of Gassaway, also two sisters and one brother: Mrs. S. W. Knapp and Mrs. J. B. White, and French Daniels, all of Elkins, several nephews and nieces, and

many other relatives and friends. She was a woman of sterling character, upright in her daily walk and conversation. She was well established in the faith of God's elect and was highly esteemed in the church for the sake of the truth as it is in Jesus and will be sadly missed by the few remaining members. During her husband's illness she prayed the Lord to give her strength to care for him while he lived, and that she might then rest awhile before she passed away. For the past six months she realized that she was nearing the end of life's journey and spoke and wrote of her faith in God and her hope of heaven, and made her funeral arrangements before her death, which arrangements were faithfully carried out by her sister. Her pastor, Elder J. S. Murphy, conducted her funeral at the Valley Church where she had been a member for twenty-five years. Her body was then laid to rest in the family cemetery beside her parents, who during their lives were a great mainstay and help to the church, her mother being a member for many years and the father joining in the latter part of his life. The large number attending the funeral bore testimony of the esteem in which she was held in the community in which she lived in her early life. May the Lord in his own time cause the bereaved ones to be glad that she has gone on to her eternal rest.

Her sister in the church,

(MRS.) E. E. WORKMAN.

MRS. MARY JANE ROUTON, the subject of this sketch, was born August 9th, 1859, in Polk County, Texas, and died March 25th, 1932, at New Castle, Texas. She was married to Thomas J. Routon February 4th, 1885, in Trinity County, Texas, and to that union were born six sons and one daughter, all of whom, with their father, survive. Sister Routon was baptized in the fellowship of the True Old School Baptist Church, in Young County, Texas, on Saturday before the third Sunday in August, 1924, by Elder J. H. Fisher, since which time she lived a very humble and devoted life, adorning her profession by her walk, and was universally loved by all. Her house was an Old Baptist home, it being her meat and drink to have the dear saints enjoy her hospitality and visit in her home. Sister Routon and her dear husband (who is a licensed preacher) were sound in faith and in the doctrine of the eternal sovereignty of God in all things, charitably inclined with the church and the poor in the neighborhood, and the unworthy writer, with several of the late Elders who have been called to their inheritance, has been made welcome and to enjoy the kindness and pleasantness of this home while we journey yet a little, and are sad, yet we feel our loss is her eternal gain, and we sorrow not as those having no hope. Our hope, though small, is an anchor to the soul and enters into that within the veil, whither for us the forerunner hath entered. May it be the will of our God that our dear brother and their children have given to them the spirit of reconciliation to God's providence in this sad hour of bereavement, and that they be enabled from the heart to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Oh that we could imitate the life our sister lived in the flesh by bridling our tongue, walking humbly before God and living at our brethren's feet. Our little church and the community have sustained a great loss, but the Lord's will be done in all things.

This was written by her unworthy pastor, by request.

W. S. BOURLAND.

COLEY HORACE WHITENTON, my dear brother in the flesh, pased away from earth life at his home in Madison County, Tennessee, nine miles east of Jackson, Tennessee, April 13th, 1932. He was born April 19th, 1852, making his stay on earth 79 years, 11 months and 24 days. His funeral was conducted by Elder W. A. Bishop April 14th, 1932, and burial was in Rock Springs Cemetery, near his home. He was a believer in the true Primitive Baptist doctrine, salvation by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, but the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast; the predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass; the final preservation of the saints (God's children) in glory by grace through Jesus Christ our Savior and the resurrection of these bodies, changed and fashioned like unto Jesus' glorious body. He never joined the church, for he always felt too unworthy and that he was not fit, but died in a living faith in what Christ had done for him, and felt that he was in God's hands. He had a hope that he would be carried home where his dear Savior is and there praise him for evermore and be with him where there is no more pain, trouble, trial, sin or sorrow. He said he did not want to die (the Savior did not want to die), but was willing that God's will be done and not his. He said, I am not afraid to die; I know I have to die, and feel that Jesus died for me, and I have no one to trust in but my dear Savior. I told him that was enough, that was as much as any of God's children could say.

A large gathering attended his funeral and all seemed sad at his passing away, especially his dear wife, Sarah Jane Parham, who had been his companion for fifty-six years and was a companion in deed and in truth. They had one daughter, Mrs. Sallie B. Harris, who was a most devoted daughter and ministered to her father to the last. There are left to mourn his dear companion, one daughter, two granddaughters, three brothers and one sister. The brothers are J. M. Whitenton, of Memphis, Tenn., L. Ed. Whitenton, of Bolivar, Ohio, and G. O. Whitenton, of Nashville, Tenn. His one sister, Mollie F. Brown, lives in the same neighborhood as he did. I was with him for four weeks and five days, and everything

was done for him that loving hands and his doctors could do, so we feel submissive to God's will. May God bless his dear companion, his daughter and all who mourn and make them bow in submission to his will, is my prayer.

His brother who loved him,

J. M. WHITENTON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Elder R. Lester Dodson, N. J., $5; "A friend," Ky., $1; L. Z. Ross, N.Y., $1; Mrs. Lee Holloway, Md., $1; Mrs. Ida M. Elmendorf, N. Y., $3; Mrs. Mary Duffus, B. C., $3.

MEETINGS.

The Delaware River Association will be held with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, New Jersey, Wednesday and Thursday, June 1st and 2nd, 1932. All meetings on Standard Time. Train leaves Philadelphia Pa., around 3 o'clock p. m. (Standard Time) for Frenchtown, N. J., and a connection with this train at Trenton will leave New York at about the same time. Get tickets for Frenchtown, where friends will be met the day before the meeting. The early train Wednesday morning will also be met. Brethren and friends are cordially invited to attend, especially ministers of our faith and order.

O. R. KUGLER, Church Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (8th, 9th and 10th), 1932. Those coming from and via New York City will take Erie R. R. Ferry foot of West 23rd Street at 3:15 p. m., or Erie R. R. Ferry foot of Chambers Street at 3:30 p. m., for train leaving Jersey City, N. J., at 3:45 p. m. on Tuesday, June 7th, or Erie R. R. Ferry foot of Chambers Street at 6:10 a. m. on Wednesday, June 8th, for train leaving Jersey City at 6:30 a. m. Get tickets for Howells, N. Y. Those coming from and via Kingston, N. Y., will take Ontario & Western R. R. train leaving Kingston at 1:47 p. m. on Tuesday, June 7th. Get tickets for Winterton, N. Y. All trains mentioned are operated on Eastern Standard Time. Trains will be met and friends cared for. Those coming by automobile will stop at Howells station and inquire the way to Mrs. L. W. Blumroeder's house, which is only a short distance from the station. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, sisters and friends.

R. LESTER DODSON.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at the home of Dr. Thomas Stakley, 7029 59th Ave., S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car at First and Alder Streets, get off at Tremont Station and go one block west. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

We have kept up a monthly meeting for some time in the past, and hope, by the grace of God, to be favored to continue to meet every second Sunday in each month at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California. May this bear a cordial invitation to all who believe in grace and salvation by grace to meet with us on the stated time.

MR. and MRS. W. J. BERRY.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at the home of sister E. Brunow, 411 N. Ridgeway Avenue, and on the second, third and fourth Sundays at the home of brother W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. The fifth Sundays are by appointment. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastors, Elders Jones and Janes.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Little Flock Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every first and third Sunday at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, at 1 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

Cloth binding 75c each. Paper covers, single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and all to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
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HYMN BOOKS.

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These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Cloth binding. Price, $1.25 each. One dozen or more, ordered at the same time and all to the same address, one dollar each. Cash must accompany orders. Make checks and money orders payable to

J. E. BEEBE & CO.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

DROPSY REMEDY.

Purely vegetable, removes from one to two gallons of water a day. Shortness of breath quickly relieved. Cures the worst cases of Dropsy in all its forms, and after being given up by the best doctors to die. Specially efficacious in Dropsy of the Heart. Best and cheapest know remedy, only $1.00 a package, six packages $5.00 by mail postpaid, and free to very poor people who are really unable to pay.

ELDER C. W. ANDERSON,
ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 100. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1932. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

1 SAMUEL XXX. 6.

"But David encouraged himself in the Lord his God."

What precious and profitable instruction is treasured up in the Holy Scriptures, and how comforting to our souls when ministered to us by the Comforter, the Holy Ghost. Then by faith we experience that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."—2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. David and the six hundred men that were with him returned from following Achish, king of Gath, to fight against Israel. But what a disheartening scene greeted them on their return! The Amalekites had invaded Ziklag, the city of their abode, had "smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire." Their families, their wives, their sons and daughters, where are they? Both small and great the enemy had taken away captive. No trace of them is to be found. "Then David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep." What a touching sight was this! David and his six hundred mighty, valient men in tears! The army of David which had gathered themselves unto him were such as had been in distress, in debt, or were discontented, and bitter in soul. (1 Sam. xxii. 2.) They were not strangers to the trying scenes of life. But though rugged and perilous their way had been, their lives accounted the prey of Saul and his host, in dens and caves, and mountain wastes, in want, and often distressed, yet such was their attachment to David, their captain, they murmured not, but willingly espoused his cause and shared with him his lot. But now "David was greatly distressed." Who among all his mighty men could minister to his soul? Could he turn to them for consolation? Had no one a word of hope? Was there no voice in all the six hundred, no word of

encouragement? "David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters." Ready to cast all the blame on David, and as a bear robbed of her whelps, to take vengeance on him as though he were the cause of all their bereavement and disconsolation. What painful lessons had David to learn! that confidence in man is vanity, that in the time of sore tribulation every succor fails and all creature confidences utterly decay. "But David encouraged himself in the Lord his God." How came David to do this? Ziklag smitten and burned with fire, all is desolation. Robbed of his possessions and of his two wives by some unknown foe, his companions, fellow-soldiers, so exasperated they are ready to stone him to death; in such distress does his courage revive? Out of weakness does he become strong? (Heb. xi. 34.) How is this? It is the secret unknown by the world, but known and experienced by the people of God. The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David prevailed. Jesus, the Root of David (Rev. v. 5; xxii. 6) bare him up. (Rom. xi. 18.) Jesus, the Root of the matter, was found in him, and from his unfailing fullness, his rich supplies of spiritual sap, a well of living water springing up into everlasting life his fainting heart revived. The God of hope abounded toward him, and "lively hope" sprang up within him, and David could indeed say, "He restoreth my soul."—Psalms xxiii. 3. The Lord his God was his strong refuge, the only place wherein he found the cup of consolation, that wine of the kingdom that maketh glad the heart of man. The Lord in times past had been his help, therefore under the shadow of his wings he would make his refuge. Was it not the Lord who was with him when he kept his father's flock and delivered him out of the paw of the lion and out of the paw of the bear? (1 Sam. xvii. 34-37.) Was it not the Lord who gave Goliath as the dust to his feet? "David inquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them? And he answered him, Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all." Truly the God of Israel hears and answers the supplications of his suppliants, (Zeph. iii. 10). They ascend not in vain, for his ear is open to their cry. At the command and promise of the Lord his God David pursued after the Amalekites and overtook them. Through God he did valiantly. "David recovered all that the Amalekites carried away; and David rescued his two wives. And there was nothing lacking to them, neither small nor great, neither sons nor daughters, neither spoil, nor any thing that they had taken to them: David recovered all." What a gracious fulfillment of the promise which the Lord had made unto David! The six hundred men by this time had ceased to speak of stoning him, but they said of the flocks and the herds that they drave before them, "This is David's spoil." Comfort and gladness now filled David's heart, and honor and

gladness he ascribed to the Lord his God. Have there not, dear children of God, been times in our experience of the lovingkindness of the Lord when, as we journeyed along, our hearts were filled with sacred melody, our meditations of Jesus and his fullness, suitability and preciousness have been most sweet, and our pathway seemed to be in the land of Beulah? (Isaiah lxii. 4.) Every prospect was pleasing, and in the tender love of our Lord Jesus what a glory was spread over all! Our anticipations ran high in felt companionship with our precious Christ. But over against all these things there have been seasons of trial. In our pilgrimage we have encountered so many things that our courage has failed, and in our weakened and sad state of soul we have "been ready to halt," (Psalms xxxviii. 17), and to sink down in despair. We have met with so much sin, such opposition to the mind of Christ in us, and there have been seasons of heaviness through manifold temptations, and it might truly be said of us, as of Israel of old, "The soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way."—Num. xxi. 4, and we have been made to feel how unequal we are for the conflicts of the way. Oh our God in the abounding mercies of the everlasting covenant giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength."—Isaiah xl. 29. When first the Lord was pleased to open our understanding the Scriptures, and here a little and there a little we received, until at last we went forth, as we thought, clothed from head to foot in "the whole armor of God" (well do I remember some little time after I first received a hope in the mercy of the Lord, with what pride I read the last chapter of Ephesians), as we reviewed our standing, did we become elated, and begin inwardly to boast of what we could do, how we should be able to overcome all our sins, to resist the devil, to come forth in every conflict. We thought we could see fight after fight, battle after battle, through which our Captain would lead us. We thought we could see how we should conquer, how all our sins were to be kept in subjection, how all attacks of the enemy were to be withstood, how Satan and every foe were to be repulsed, and ours would be the outward path to victory. (I read the account of all such matters in the Scriptures.) And thus putting on our armor and admiring our weapons, like inexperienced soldiers, we boasted. Our life henceforth, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, seemed to be one of glory. But we have found the engagements with the enemy to be very distressing; we have suffered not a few wounds from the fiery darts of the enemy; we have found conflicts with lusts from within which war against the soul, and the temptations of the devil from without, to be at times so constant and changeable, his mode of attack ever varying, and he has assumed so many shapes, sometimes transformed as an angel of light, there seemed to be no cessation in our conflicts. We have scarcely emerged from one battle in which we have painfully suffered than we have

entered another just as trying, and it does not appear to be all victory. No, we meet with what we feel are humiliating defeats. Sometimes a foe which many would esteem but a trifling thing, a vile thought, a cross word, some small outward circumstance, has well-nigh slain us, has prostrated us in the very dust and laid our boasting low. We have become discouraged and faint, and have thought the life of a soldier to be a hard one, and have not always endured this hardness patiently. Have there not been muttered murmurings, that our lot was too hard? Ah, we looked forward and could see there could be no prospect of taking off our armor and laying aside our weapons while in the body of conflict we stay. The Lord knows how to stain the pride of all our glorying in the flesh, to frustrate all the schemes of our fleshly zeal, and to bring low every creature confidence. But though sorely perplexed and discouraged in soul, have we not, dear child of God, proved the unfailing fullness of our precious Christ? His righteousness and blood are our consolation and healing. "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be." When sunk exceeding low it has been our mercy to prove that we have not sunk beneath the lovingkindness of the Lord, but "underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them."—Deut. xxxiii. 27. Oh it is when we are found by God's gracious teachings to be looking unto Jesus, to have in our hearts, by divine power, the persuasion that Christ Jesus, the crucified Lamb of God, has put away our sins, then we are triumphing over all our foes. In the midst of our trials, temptations, adversities, burdens, our conscious vileness, the precious Savior raises up in us hope and confidence in himself. The fountain that for a time seemed well-nigh spent, and sealed up, at the pleasure of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, has given forth refreshing streams, and we have been made to experience the springing up within of the water of everlasting life, reviving our hope, so that we have lifted up our heads, and have, by his sufficient grace, been enabled to be looking unto our precious Christ from whom cometh our help.

We have inquired of the Lord (Gen. xxv. 22) amidst conflicts and discouragements; we have cried unto the Lord (1 Chron. v. 20) to fight our battles, to teach our hands to war, and our fingers to fight, and in his enduring mercy, his unfailing compassion, he has been entreated of us and there has fallen down many slain, for "the war was of God." The Lord has strengthened our hearts with his exceeding great and precious promises. We have held on our way, and in our hearts, and it may be also upon our tongues, there has been the voice of melody, "Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work; I will triumph in the work of thy hands." Though often, like God, by a troop overcome, we shall overcome at last (Gen. xlxix. 19). Oh what a soul reviving, encouraging word! Often we stagger at the promise; it appears

too great, too glorious; it cannot be for a poor, vile sinner like me. But when our precious Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, increases our faith, then, like Abraham, we are strong, giving glory to God. (Rom. iv. 20.) "David recovered all." Precious type of Jesus, the Root and the Offspring of David. "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." He came to seek and to save that which was lost, and by his precious blood he obtained eternal redemption for them, from sin and the curse, from death and the grave unto God. He gave himself a ransom for all, not one is lacking. Jesus recovered all; and where he is, there they shall be also. Oh how precious to have a good hope through grace in the Lord Jesus Christ!

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

RANGER, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have for many years felt it my duty to write to the SIGNS, but a sense of ignorance and unworthiness has kept me silent.

I was out in the garden one day about eighteen years ago, and as I was gathering peas for dinner it seemed to me that it turned dark and I had much trouble of mind. I wondered if I were more sinful than any one else, when a voice seemed to speak to me, saying, It is because you do not write to the SIGNS. I thought it must have been the devil, because I am no writer and have but little knowledge of the truth. I feared I would only deceive the dear people of God. I cannot get rid of the impression to write, and I hope the Lord will direct me in the effort, and that it will be used for the comfort of some dear little child of God who has been led along similar paths. Forgive me if I speak of self often, for I only use myself often to illustrate the dealings of the Lord with individuals in their travels from nature to grace. When I was a little girl I desired to be a truthful and obedient child, but I found myself often falling short of my intentions. I would go out alone and promise the Lord that I would do better, only to find my promises broken again. I attended Sunday Schools and other religious gatherings, but that did not seem to help me much. I then decided to join some denomination and be a real christian after I grew up, and when I was grown I wondered what one to join. I picked up a tract one day which said one should make a choice and join some "church," and there was a list of names of several "churches" and what they believed. I thought I would join the Methodists, because I could do so without any change, as I was already living the best I knew how. I joined and was satisfied with them for a time, but after I had been married about two years I became dissatisfied with myself. I felt that I was not working enough in the "church" and my conscience troubled me a great deal. The Methodists were holding a protracted meeting near our home in the latter part of August,

1913, and the pastor mentioned that we must be born again. I felt I had not been born again and became very much troubled about it, wondering how I might bring about that change. From that hour I had very little peace of mind. I had not read my Bible for some time and when I took it down I found a daub of dirt on each end of it completely sealing it, and I felt very much ashamed to think I had not read it for so long a time. I then read every spare moment when alone, but could not get relief; always it seemed to condemn me. Once I found that it said there was an elect people and I quickly closed the book, for I did not wish to believe that God made a choice of his people, instead of leaving it entirely up to man, as I had always been taught by man. I went on for about a week in distress, then decided that I did not know the truth and begged God to reveal it to me. I could not take enough interest in my household duties to do them justice. One evening I went out to get some kindling, and while singing "Nearer my God to thee" softly to myself as I stooped down it suddenly turned dark, and a voice said, Liar, liar, liar. I raised up, and looking around saw no one. I felt so badly I did not know what to do. I had always been considered truthful by my parents, so could not understand what the strange occurance meant. I became so troubled I thought I was going to die, but felt I was not fit to die. I tried to think of some one to go to for forgiveness, for I thought that if I did not get forgiveness from man God would not forgive me. I felt I had not a friend on earth, and that I was so sinful man could not forgive me, and that God would not. One night I became so miserable I could not stay in bed and I got out and down on my knees beside the bed and cried to God to have mercy upon me. That was all I could say. I thought I would sing some hymns in the Old Baptist hymn book belonging to my husband. Until then I cared nothing for them. I could not sing, so I said to myself, I know where I can get comfort, and picked up my Bible, feeling for the first time that I would be comforted. I read where the book opened and my eyes seemed to see clearer than ever before, the print seemed magnified to my eyes, and I suddenly felt peaceful and oh so happy, and my awful burden was gone. I got up and walked the floor, saying, God is very good. My poor heart seemed full of love for him, and then I thought of Jesus, and he, too, seemed the same to me. I was then happier than I had been miserable. I turned to my husband, and said, Oh I am so happy! He said, You have had an experience of grace; it has been the sincere desire of my heart for three months that you would see as I do. That was about three a. m. I said I cannot sleep; I want to talk to some one. He said, Who do you wish to see? I mentioned some of the members of the Primitive Baptist Church who lived near, and we started out about four a. m. I could not tell why I saw as I did, but the same doctrine they said they believed came to me faster

than I could tell it. I seemed to see God has all power and that salvation is of the Lord. I went among them feeling they could understand me, and we talked and sang at the homes of several of the members who lived nearest to us. That morning the sunshine was brighter and more beautiful than I had ever seen it, everything seemed to be filled with love and praise, and those people seemed to be as happy as I was. I told them I could see they belonged to the true church and that I wanted to offer myself for membership at their next meeting, which was their three days' meeting to be held at Shiloh, No. 2, Stephens County, Texas, the first Sunday in September, with meeting on Friday and Saturday before. I offered myself on Friday, relating what I hoped were the dealings of the Lord with me. They received me and I was baptized the next day by the pastor, Elder Martin Stone. When I came up out of the water those dear old people were the most beautiful sight I ever saw. (I was only twenty-six years of age.) They looked so happy I felt content and at home. The Lord answered my every prayer, it seemed, when I wanted to know anything concerning the truth as it is in Christ Jseus. He had used the little dirt daubs to show me that the Bible was a sealed book to me, but now I could seem to see and understand. I could see the purpose of God in so many things. One night as I was lying awake, but with my eyes closed, I saw a light brighter than the sunlight; when I opened my eyes it was gone. I told the church when talking to them about seeing this light, and afterwards decided I had been deceived, and had also deceived them. I was in trouble again, for I did not wish to deceive those dear people, so thought I would ask them to turn me out of the church. For some time I was greatly troubled about it, until one night I again saw the light. I said, I am deceived again. It came again, and I said, I am deceived. It came the third time, then I said, Surely it is of the Lord. I cared for nothing except to be with the church and talk and sing and hear preaching. My joy was unspeakable for some time, then again I began to see myself as God sees me, vile and unclean by nature. I am made to see that all my worthiness is in him. I had many visions and comforting dreams, which strengthened my precious little hope. We had meetings for about six years, then the members were removed by death or by going to make their homes elsewhere. When they had about all gone I felt alone and forsaken, just standing alone. A copy of the SIGNS came, and I said, I am not alone, there are many people believing the same doctrine that I do. I had thought I had been left alone because I was too little and unworthy to belong to the church, so I would never again offer myself for membership. I had a long and severe illness and felt it was because of my rebellion, so I said, Lord, if you will restore my health and strength I will again offer myself to the church if you will show me where the true church is now (as there are so many factions here

in Texas). I desire to be a true witness, not a false one, for without Him we are false. My recovery was slow, but to my delight and surprise my general health became better than it had been since I was a child. I then said, I see the footprints, as I was going back over old ground, but where, oh where have they gone? I have no real pleasure outside of the church, but must await with patience for the time to come to be again united with the dear ones. I do not know when that will be, it may be on the other shore, if indeed at all.

Dear editors, I have put off writing you, hoping we would get money to pay up our subscription to the SIGNS, but have failed to be able to pay debts. The two years' drought of 1929 and 1930, followed by the depression, has made it hard for stock farmers to feed and clothe their families and pay even the smallest debts. I find that we must look to the Lord. We work harder than before, but do not get money for what we produce sufficient to carry on business saitsfactorily. We do not desire to be a burden to the SIGNS, and would rather you would discontinue the paper to us than add to your expense so as to help cause the publication to cease, for there are many little ones like ourselves who get no other preaching. One editorial is worth the price of the paper, if it could be valued that way. The paper is priceless. It is a precious gift to the true witnesses of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We wish to thank you for sending the paper to us so long in arrears, and sincerely hope it will be the Lord's will to enable us all to pay up this year.

Please correct all mistakes if you publish this letter. If there is anything good in it, it is of the Lord. All honor, praise and glory to his name.

Yours in Christ, I hope,

(MRS.) ALBA DEAN.

STEM, N. C., April 5, 1932.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—DEAR BROTHER:—I am just in receipt of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for April. I want to say that I have been a reader of the SIGNS for nearly forty years and heartily indorse the doctrine it has contended for, so far as I have been able to understand the same. I heartily indorse your editorial in the April number. If same is not according to the teachings of the Bible and of my experience I am a deceived mortal. I am glad you wrote as you did, and trust that you were directed of the Lord. While not wishing to make such a test of fellowship, I do trust that our brethren will express their views in a brotherly way, and not cause confusion. I find good brethren whom I believe have an experience of grace express themselves differently on this subject, yet I believe they are nearly agreed if they fully understood each other. I really believe the main difference is in the manner of expressing themselves. If I am not mistaken, those of our brethren who see it differently are looking at it from a carnal or natural view, and if we adopt carnal reason as a standard by which we view the deep, hidden things of God who of us would dare stand before the infidels

and contend with them from a natural or carnal reason? We are taught that the world by wisdom knows not God. If we view the hidden things from a carnal view we will deny the divinity of Christ, we will deny the resurrection of the dead, and all other things which are contrary to our carnal nature. We know that God is not the author of sin or confusion, and that whatever he does is just, right and good, and when we are led by the right spirit we will not have any mind to cavil at God's doings. I am confident that it was for Jonah's disobedience that he was overthrown, nevertheless, regardless of his disobedience, I am fully satisfied that he landed in Ninevah on schedule time. and was much more ably prepared to preach the things that God bid him than he would have been had he gone direct. We are told in Holy Writ that God prepared a great fish to swallow him. Is it unreasonable to believe that he placed him at the right place, and at the right time, for the express purpose of preserving Jonah's life and landing him on dry land? which science tells us is impossible. But regardless of science, or the wisdom of the entire world, I shall believe the word of God. I know that the wisdom of the world can never see nor tell how Jonah could be thrown overboard on account of his own disobedience and still God had a purpose in it and in that purpose fully prepared him for the great work he had purposed he should do. "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." If our belief in God is no more nor further than the natural eye or mind can understand our belief in God would be no more than the world has to-day. God had assured Abraham that in Isaac all nations should be blessed, still he by a God-given faith refused not to slay him at God's command. I am fully satisfied that his faith in God was such that he felt, and was assured, that God would raise him from the dead. I am satisfied that through envy, and of a wicked spirit, Joseph's brethren sold him to the Egyptian merchants, thinking and feeling that by such they would do away with this dreamer. But they were just as guilty as if God had no purpose in it. We are assured by the mouth of Joseph himself that they thought evil, but God meant it for good. Old Jacob, his father, did not understand it, and looking at it from a natural view, did as all others would when viewing it from carnal reason, said all this was against him. But let us view Jacob later. Who will dare say that Jacob ever used such an expression after he saw the wagons and other evidences that were shown him? Later, when we hear him saying, "It is enough: Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die," brother Dodson, I believe Jacob's faith at that time was so strong that the entire world could not have made him believe he would not live to see his son Joseph. If I could, I would say to my brethren in the faith, whoever you are and wherever you be, Be careful, and very slow, to limit the Holy One of Israel. While God is not the author of sin, if not deceived, I do believe that all things work together for

good to those who love the Lord, for those who are called according to his (God's) purpose, and that the "all things" mentioned here are not only the good things, but all things, just as the apostle expressed, and if I am not a deceived mortal, I have rejoiced in it. Yet I will acknowledge that when viewing it in a carnal sense I do not understand it. I do not understand how God could make a world out of nothing, yet I believe that he did just as he said he did. Many things he does are hidden from my eyes, but my desire is that he may give me strength to say as did Job: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." This I nor any one else can say of ourselves. On the morning of November 28th, 1908, just after dawn, God in his goodness saw fit to take from me by death my wife, leaving one darling child about three years old, but only a few months prior to that time she was given a sweet hope in Christ, which to me, or to those who knew of her former religious views, was as marvelous as that of Paul. In the month of November, 1915, God suffered the death of my only brother, at the hands of an assassin, while asleep (from the evidence given me by two physicians who saw him immediately after the fatal shot). If I know my heart, I had rather that I had died in his place at my home than for him to have died where he did and in the manner in which he did. This, too, I do not understand, nevertheless I have never had the least idea of questioning God's justice in allowing such. Some time I will understand. So I will say to my brethren, Do not be too harsh with me for believing as I do, and throw the mantle of charity over my many imperfections. That God may some time direct you to come this way and enable you to preach his unsearchable wisdom is my prayer, if not deceived.

Brother Dodson, I am now an old man. I will soon be sixty-six years of age, and for fifty years I have known the Old Baptists and what they stand for, and have had a name among them for thirty-five years. From my earliest recollection of them there has been some difference among them over predestination, some seeing deeper in the subject than others, but none ever made such a test of fellowship, that I know of, until recent years. In the fall of 1900, three years after I united with the church, it was my privilege and pleasure to make my first visit to the Black Creek Association, over which our dearly beloved Elder P. D. Gold had presided as its Moderator, I presume ever since its organization. At brother Gold's special request Elder John C. Hall, of Cogginsville, Virginia, was present and preached twice at the association and once at the home where he was stopping, or spending the night. Elder Hall, as all who knew him know, was a very strong predestinarian, and his preaching at that time was on that subject, and it was the sweetest and most God-honoring and soul-cheering sermon I ever remember hearing. If there was a voice raised by a single member present in disapproval

of his preaching, I never heard it. I know his preaching was approved by the Moderator, Elder Gold, for I have heard him refer to his preaching at different times since that day. He spoke of looking at his wife and how she enjoyed it. He said her face shone as that of an angel. I only mention this to show that there was no confusion over this question when I first joined the Baptists, and to save my life I cannot help believing that Elders Gold, J. T. Coates, and many others who were there, were as zealous of the cause as some of our younger Elders are now.

I find I am writing much more than I intended, as I only wished to assure you I heartily enjoyed and approved your editorial in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for April, 1932. The truths therein expressed will stand for all eternity. While believing in an unlimited predestination, I do not think it profitable for one to make a hobby of this, or any other special thing.

Please pardon such a lengthy letter.

With christian fellowship, I am, I trust, yours in hope of a better world,

J. H. GOOCH.

LA MESA, New Mexico

DEAR EDITORS:—Some few days ago I received a notice from you stating my subscription to the dear old SIGNS was in arrears, and that you desired all in arrears to kindly pay what they could on their account. Well, I am in no condition to settle for anything at present, and have but little idea when I will be, for two reasons, one is I am and have been for several years in very poor health, not able to do any kind of work; the other reason is, those of my children who have been very good to me in looking after my needs are in very close quarters because of the depression which seems to block the world, making it extremely difficult for me to promise anything for some time. The SIGNS has been a source of great comfort to me, more since my affliction than ever before, for a few years ago I could go among my brethren and feast upon the sweetest comfort known to mortal man on earth, for we have been at peace with each other all these years. While writing the above a passage of Scripture came to me, which reads, "This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me." —Psalms cxix. 50. The first sentence seems to suit my case in many ways, so I will relate some of the ways in which my comfort is derived. Often I get letters from my kindred in the Spirit that are very comforting to me, for they tell me, first, what good things the Lord has done for them in their journey in the way; then they tell what sinners they have been, and are, and how the Lord in his mercy hath come to their relief, and how in their distress he delivers them and renews within them a new heart, or renews his love and mercy to them, even in dire need and want. Many brethren and sisters in this our country, as well as in other countries, write me concerning my feeble attempts, indorsing my little writings to the papers, and it seems to me that they see more in them than I do, but because of my having to stay in

as much as I do it gives me great comfort to write. I hope to be corrected by my brethren in any unsound expressions I might make, for we are commanded to watch over each other in kindness and brotherly love, and for good. That is a comfort to me, for when I feel that any of the brethren have fellowship for me enough to watch over me for my good it revives my poor drooping spirit. It is much better for brethren to call attention (in the stand if necessary) to any wrong expression than it is to wait and speak of it to others later on. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments." There is nothing in this world sweeter than to see brethren dwelling together perfectly united in doctrine and fellowship, but when there are isms and cross firing among the children it makes me feel badly and causes me to wonder if I am in any way the cause. When I visit the churches and see the brethren and sisters greet each other with a loving handshake it is as ointment running down to the skirts of the garments, for it serves to prove to me that they have been with Jesus and have been taught of his ways. This then is my comfort in my afflictions, both in body and in spirit, for His word hath quickened me (as I hope) and the love shown among the brethren bespeaks the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. (Eph. ii. 5, 6.)

I would love to write more upon the above text, but do not feel that it is expedient.

I will say, dear brethren, that as much as I would hate to be without the SIGNS, I feel it would be better for the publishers in this present strain to discontinue sending it to me until I get in a better condition to take care of the subscription price. All you who can, pay, even if it is only a part of what you owe on your subscription, and it will help out wonderfully. I know we are now going through one of the worst financial depression the world has known. Often droughts and famines come to different nations of the earth, but this is the most general of any we have account of, and I doubt if the world ever saw just the like before, with plenty of wheat, corn and other provisions in the world, and most nations having food in storage, still thousands are starving. The United States has a surplus stored, yet many people are hungry. In many places there are earthquakes, floods, storms and all kinds of pestilence, and it seems no one can give a correct solution, speaking literally, but I will say God has a glorious purpose in it and he will bring it out just right at the right time, and be glorified in it all, for this is one of the "all things" that work together (not separately) for good to them that love God and who are the called according to his purpose. (Rom. viii. 28.)

Now, brethren editors, I will not be offended if you discontinue sending the paper to me, for I realize it takes money to run the paper. Just as long as God has use for its circulation it will go forward, for it is not alone by the mouth of man he has in all ages made use of witnesses but with pen also, and he directs it to his glory. One of the greatest witnesses we have account of in the person of man is the precious blood of Abel, whom Cain slew, his blood crieth from the ground. (Gen. iv. 10; Heb. xii. 24.)

Your brother in bonds and afflictions,

J. B. BOWDEN.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, in session with the churches of the same Association, being convened in the meetinghouse at Black Rock, Baltimore County, Maryland, May 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1932, doth send greetings in the Lord Jesus Christ to our sister associations and meetings with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Again have we been blessed with the privilege of meeting your messengers and receiving your correspondence, and it has been a great pleasure to us to be able to dwell together in unity of the Spirit of Christ Jesus our Lord with you all, and so many expressions of love have been spoken it makes us feel to look forward to another meeting of the same kind, for where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them. We trust you will all remember and come and meet with us again next year, which meeting is appointed to convene, the Lord willing, the usual time in May, 1933, and continue three days. Place of meeting to be announced later through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.
F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.
J. L. THOMPSON, Ass't Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in joint session with the several churches composing it, convening at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1932, sends christian greetings to our sister associations and meetings of our correspondence.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The Lord has again blessed us to meet in this solemn assembly with your messengers and to receive your correspondence, a privilege to us for which we desire to thank our heavenly Father. That heavenly manna that feeds the hungry soul has been meted out to us by your ministers and we have been strengthened and encouraged. May God bless and protect them as they journey here below. May we all be guided by his unerring hand and realize that without him we can do nothing, that he is our all in all.

Our next session is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1933, the place of meeting to be announced later through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, when we hope to meet your messengers again.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
CYRUS RISLER, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1932.

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NUMBERS VI. 24-26.

"THE Lord bless thee, and keep thee:
The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:
The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."

Thus did the Lord speak unto Moses that he should instruct Aaron and his sons, the high priest and the lesser priests, to bless Israel of old.

"*The Lord bless thee.*" We need the Lord's blessing in all our undertakings. Without his blessing, we cannot go forward. All our works are dead and useless except they proceed from God's blessing. We need him to bless OUR BODIES, we need him in our temporal affairs. We may think boastingly that we are able physically and mentally to perform this or that duty which devolves upon us, but all ability of whatever sort or nature proceeds from the Lord's blessing. In an instant we can be paralyzed and brought low, all our strength reduced to infant helplessness. Bodily health and strength, well-being of mind and senses, freedom from disease and sapping weakness are all the Lord's blessing. We need him to bless OUR SPIRITS. Without such blessing, our spirituality is but sensuality, our understanding darkened: faithlessness reigns. Reviving our spirits is the Lord's blessing. He restoreth our souls again and again, he revives the spirit of the humble: he blesses the meek to walk before him in thanksgiving and in that acceptable standing which we have in Christ Jesus. We need him to bless OUR SOULS. Our very personality as children of God is not seen except he blesses us with that inner light of himself to shine out of us so that men may see the good works which he has wrought in us to his own praise. How good when it can be said of us that we are patient, gentle, forbearing, loving, peaceable, courteous and kind toward one another. What fragrance flows from such a soul, or personality, through the Lord's blessing of our souls.

"*And keep thee.*" We cannot keep ourselves for one little moment. We need constantly the Savior's keeping power. Saints are kept by the keeping power of God-given faith which preserves them unto their reserved inheritance awaiting them in the world to

come. Whether at home or abroad, in the pulpit or in the pew, in our families or among our friends and brethren, we need the keeping power of the Lord. We need to be kept from evil; from the evil of the world that lies under the regimen of the prince of the power of the air, and from the evil resident in our depraved human nature. From the wrong thinking of our natural minds, from the errors and falsities of worldly religious systems, from the temptations that everywhere line our paths, we need his constant keeping care. The Lord has promised those who truly believe in him, the companionship of the Comforter or divine Stand-by. This One is with his people always, even unto the end of the world. God the Father through his Son Jesus Christ has committed those who believe, into the care and the keeping of the Holy Ghost, who will not fail to keep them and who will successfully deliver them at last out of this present life into the life eternal.

"*The Lord make his face shine upon thee.*" The seeing of the glory of God is in the face of Jesus Christ. The face is the index of the person. Character may be read in the face. Jesus Christ reveals the glory of God, no other way can it be known. Whatsoever is known of God is shown us in the character and personality of the Savior. He is the faithful and true Witness. He was in the beginning with God, was equal with the Father. Nevertheless, he divested himself of heaven and of its glory and came down to earth that he might make known the way and truth of God unto his people. Had not his face shined upon sinners, no one of Adam's fallen race could ever have known the power, love and mercy of God. God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face, that is, in the Person, of Jesus Christ.

"*And be gracious unto thee.*" We are saved by his grace, not by our works. The unmerited favor of God is freely bestowed upon sinners because divine justice has met its full and complete satisfaction in Christ's offering himself our ransom. Grace and mercy do not come to sinners at the slightest letting down of the demands of God's justice. In order that grace free and unmerited might come to lost sinners, Christ died. He died to satisfy and to answer every demand of divine justice against his people. The death that we deserved to die, he did die. The price we, in justice should have paid, he paid himself. Because the people were given him before the world began, by his Father, it became him to die for them. He could not have died for them had they not been his to die for. Being his people because God had given them to him, divine justice could charge their sins to his account and could thus credit them with his blood and righteousness. Atonement comes by Jesus Christ. Atonement being made, nothing can hinder the flow of mercy and grace unto them because of his perfect, finished work.

"*The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee.*" Our happiness and com-

fort depend upon this. When he is our Sun to shed his beneficent beams upon us, prisons become palaces, darkness is made light, the crooked is straight, the rough place is plain, the burden is lifted, winter is immediately over and the voice of love is heard in our land. You know how it is with us men sometimes. Because of something we should not have done, we may have to hang our heads in shame and fear to look our brother or our friend in the face. Sometimes the faces of those we love are turned from us because we have displeased them in something. Sometimes it seems our sins separate between us and the face of our beloved Lord. Then is it dark indeed with us, then do we mourn an absent God. The brethren of Joseph feared to look him in the face lest they see their judgment there. How surprised and happy did he make them when he assured them he was not displeased, but loved them as a brother, despite their rejection of him. Our Lord lifted up his countenance upon the weak, denying Peter. It was not a look of anger, or even of reproof, which the Lord turned upon Peter, but a look of tender compassion and of infinite and perfect understanding. It was such a look as melted the weak disciple's heart, such a look as quickly brought him to true repentance and to a right position of contriteness before his Lord. May the Lord indeed lift up his countenance upon us. If so, we shall prosper in his sight, we shall be as trees planted beside living waters which shall not know when heat cometh, our leaves shall not wither. Has the Lord aught against us, that he has hidden his face from us? If so, may he make us to know our faults, may he bring us to the light that our deeds may be reproved and that we may receive forgiveness at his hands. May he cause us to sincerely confess our sins, then will he graciously forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

"And give thee peace." To be at peace with God, what a wonderful standing, what a blessed position for a poor sinner naturally deserving of hell, to be in. The peace of God passes finite comprehension. It is complete reconciliation with him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. "How can a man be just with God?" The answer is: through the atonement made by Jesus Christ. No other way. Jesus promised peace to them he had chosen out of the world. He said he would leave it with them, would never take it from them. He does not give it as the world gives its gifts, expecting to be recompensed for it. The world's gifts are perishing, this gift of the peace of God through Jesus Christ is imperishable, everlasting. No matter what turmoil and strife the world may be in, those who are God's are at peace in the midst of it all. It is not being at peace with the world, but being at peace even while in the world, at peace with God. What a wonderful blessing to have this abiding place for one's self. There is no peace so comforting as peace of conscience. We do not want peace at any price, not peace with error. We want that peace which comes of a good con-

science, resulting from a good standing before God. There can be no peace with God save through the merits of Jesus Christ. Only his people know what true peace is: peace of mind and soul. We will not get it by works, no matter how hard we try. May the Lord be pleased to give us peace in our souls in the house of God, in the church of God, but always on a right basis. We must contend earnestly and faithfully for the right things, nothing else will profit us. We may get a sort of peace by lowering the standard of truth in order to please some one, but that kind of peace will not stand. There may be many things among men in which it is well to give way and not persist in having one's way, but with the things of God, such giving way will not do. May we ever stand firm against innovations both in practice, in order and in doctrine. "The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."

H. H. L.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

When remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it. By referring to these dates you can tell to just what time your subscription is paid. Dec 31 means your subscription expired December, 1931; June 32 means your subscription expires June, 1932; Dec 32 that it expires December, 1932, etc.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder D. L. Topping.)

The Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, in session with Black Rock Church, Butler, Baltimore County, Maryland, May 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1932, greetings in the Lord to all churches composing the same, and to all the associations and meetings with which we correspond.

Dear Brethren:—By the abundance of the mercies of our God we have been permitted to continue as an association, for which we desire to be thankful, and pray that his blessings might ever follow us.

"Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." These words may be found in 1 Corinthians, eleventh chapter and first verse. Few there be in the world to-day who are following in the footsteps of the beloved apostle. This Association has felt it good to have done so for nearly one hundred years. The pathway that the fathers trod is that which is sought by them to-day. In order that one may follow another he must know something of the way, or else he must keep in close touch with the Leader. How useless it would be for one to start out to find a city that no mortal eye had seen, unto whom no instructions had been given. Such an attempt would most likely prove to their own destruction, which many have found in the past. But the apostle is not telling his followers to follow any uncertain leader, but One mightier than he has laid out the highway and has marked every turn in the

road: "This is the way, walk ye in it." But one says, The leader seems far in the distance and the way is so rugged I am fearful lest I be turned aside from the way of the flock. I should like much to overtake them and rest at noon. Yes, dear one, you may find the way quite rugged, but since your Leader has marked it out for you, you can but follow. He will not leave you stranded in an unfriendly world, for he has declared that he will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Then, my beloved brethren, does it not behoove us to follow Him who stands at every turn of the road and directs us in the way of peace for his name's sake? He is the One that changeth not and is able to uphold when all others fail. The world leaders to-day are trying to change our much undesirable conditions over which He alone has control, but they must await his appointed time, for "The earth is mine, and the fullness thereof," etc. The Lord has never removed his protecting care from his people. While they at all times are not able to realize his protecting hand, yet the wall of fire ever remains intact round about them. The servant of Elisha could not see this until his eyes were opened. Elisha's prayer did not make any change in conditions, but it was God's way of opening his eyes. And what a change it seemed to him. Despair had now been changed to great joy, mourning to victory. "The king shall joy in thy strength, O Lord; and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!" Elisha said, "Fear not; for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." So thus was it proven that Elisha and his servant were delivered from the violence of the multitude, and prayer made the way, because it was God's way. And will He not to-day hear the prayer of them that diligently seek him? We have heard it said, I know it was not prayer that I tried to offer, for had it been he would have answered it. This is a mistake. Do you recall that his only begotten Son prayed, If it be possible, let this cup pass? Did it pass? It was not possible; the Father's answer was, No. Others have said, If all things were fixed from eternity, by your frequent attempts at prayer you cannot change God's plan, so what is the use of trying to pray? Did not Jesus know that all things had been declared from the beginning, and that nothing should fail of that which the Father had desired should be accomplished? yet he prayed as never had any man prayed. Did he sweat as it were great drops of blood all for himself? I am persuaded not, but for more, for them who should believe on his name, for he said, I do always those things which please Him. Did not the apostle desire to go into a certain place that he might preach the gospel? and do you not think that he prayed with all the earnestness of his soul? yet what was the answer? No. Did he never pray again? Yes, he tells us later that men should pray always, and again, that we ought to pray and faint not. Then let us not faint if he should say to us, No. At such times we have asked amiss, and it would not have been for his glory and

our good. Under all trials, it matters not of what kind, our first place to take them should be at the throne of grace, for there is but one mediator between God and man, and that man is Christ Jesus. It has seldom been proven that church troubles taken outside of their own immediate circle have been for the betterment of that trouble and it is far better that they be kept at home, and seek Him who alone can heal the members of his own body, for he who gave us his own Son shall he not with him freely forgive us all things?

May the Lord give us all the spirit of prayer, and to wait upon him, for he is not forgetful of our needs.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.
F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.
J. L. THOMPSON, Ass't Clerk.

(Written by Elder R. Lester Dodson.)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, convened at New Vernon, New York, June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1932, sendeth greeting in the Lord to the several associations, meetings and churches with which she corresponds.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have selected for our consideration at this time the word SHIB-BO-LETH. It was used by the men of Gilead as a test word with the Ephraimites when they came to pass over Jordan, apparently over three thousand years ago. It is, therefore, no new thing to require evidence of one's right to enter into the fellowship of the elect family of God. In the days of the apostles the brethren were admonished to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good." In the orders and societies of men in all walks to-day, certain qualifications are necessary and, in many of them, a password is required by those who keep watch at the door of entrance, lest some come in who have no right to the privileges enjoyed. If such practices are followed by men in their relations one with another as pertaining to the things of this sinful world, is it not far more important that extreme care should be exercised by those watchmen who have been called of God to stand upon the sacred walls of Zion to see that none enter there except those whose names are engraved upon the posts of the gates to the Holy City? Our Savior taught the necessity of those in attendance at the wedding supper having on the wedding garment. This garment is not the weaving of the individual, so that he can assume a "holier than thou" attitude. It is exactly the opposite of this. Those who possess it speak not of their own but another's wealth, even the righteousness of Christ, and any and all who are not altogether certain that salvation, in time and eternity, is wholly and altogether of the Lord must be turned away and not admitted into the house. The true inhabitants of the city of Zion speak a pure language, one that is easily understood by genuine lovers of the truth. When an Ashdodite enters the camp of Israel, it is like the hiding of the golden wedge in the tent: trouble is certain to follow. We would invite particular attention to the fact that the Ephraimites of whom it was

required that they should pronounce the word SHIB-BO-LETH, were of an Israelitish tribe. They doubtless professed and did have many things in common with those of Gilead who "took the passages of Jordan" and stood guard at the crossings of this stream, but this only seemed to make them more careful and exacting in their demands that the correct pronunciation of the word should be given. The Ephraimites could say SIB-BO-LETH, which sounded almost all right, and we have no doubt but what there are thousands calling themselves Old School Baptists who would say, That's near enough, let them pass. But not so with the men of Gilead, for we are told they slew forty and two thousand at the passages of Jordan at that time, all because they could not frame to pronounce the word SHIB-BO-LETH right—the "sh" sound was lacking. We do not understand this to mean that we should make a brother an offender for a word. We have the thought in mind that the slaying was not an actual literal death, but a turning back, a refusal to give passage over Jordan. This presents to our mind what the order of the true militant church should be when those about whom there is some question in the minds of the brethren seek admittance. It is perfectly proper in our estimation that test words or questions should be used or asked to fully determine their fitness for baptism. If the answer is not convincing and satisfying, favorable action should not be taken. We are aware that there are many churches who are not as careful as they should be with reference to both order and doctrine. A beloved brother and yokefellow in the ministry wrote us recently, saying, "Many are to-day claiming to be Old School Baptists who have no right to the name." This year marks the one hundredth anniversary of the separation between the genuine Old School Baptists and those who were adopting the inventions of men. The true church has always clung to Bible principles of doctrine and order, and so far as we know there is no reason why those desiring the "church fellowship" of the brethren should not be required to give convincing evidence of their deep-rooted belief in the fundamental doctrine of salvation by grace. Contrary to the command of Jesus, to his disciples, not to take with them two coats, there are those posing as Old Baptist preachers going through the country to-day who can accommodate themselves to almost any crowd: they will preach salvation, in time at least, by works, if they think too much opposition will not be aroused, but if they are among sound brethren they will emphasize that eternal salvation is by grace. Again, they can be either strong or limited predestinarians, as the occasion may require. We have heard such characters in the South likened unto a tree-frog which is capable of changing its color to that of whatever tree it may get on. We are persuaded that God's truly called and qualified servants are so thoroughly saturated and imbued with the principles of divine truth as verily to be a part of them, and all such can readily say SHIB-BO-LETH when

asked to give a reason of the hope that is within them. We once heard it said of an old colored preacher that he could not preach except he had on his long, ministerial coat. A truly gospel preacher, out of the abundance of his heart, proclaims in demonstration of the Spirit and with power sent down from above the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ. Those who are blest to hear and feed upon the preached word have the witness within that all such are called and sent of God.

The churches comprising the Warwick Old School Baptist Association stand where they have always stood and see no reason for changing either their order or their doctrine. We rejoice in bidding Godspeed to those who give evidence of having been taught of the Lord, but we believe God's servants should be faithful and obedient to his command to, "Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people."—Isaiah lxii. 10.

In conclusion, we have many reasons to take courage and believe that the Lord who hath delivered, doth deliver, and we trust will yet deliver us. His lovingkindness he has not taken from us, nor has he left us destitute of his mercy. We would give all praise to him for his manifold blessings and confess that it is by the grace of God that we are what we are, if, indeed, we are children of the heavenly King.

In love and fellowship of the saints, we hope.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
CYRUS RISLER, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER J. E. SMITH was born December 9th, 1864, in Jasper County, Mississippi, and departed this life April 6th, 1932, making his stay on earth 67 years, 3 months and 27 days. He was an invalid for almost two years. He had chronic bronchitis, with many complications, and suffered much, but bore his afflictions with great patience, ever expressing his faith in the Lord. He joined the Old School Baptists in 1896, at old Union Church, in Newton County, Mississippi, and was baptized by Elder William Ferguson the fourth Sunday in May. He was ordained to the full work of the ministry in 1913, and ever after contended for the faith once delivered unto the saints. There was nothing he enjoyed more than to be with the brethren and sisters and talk on Bible subjects. He was the son of W. R. and Sarah Ann Smith, and was united in marriage to Frances Ishee in 1888, and we were blesed with nine children, four girls and five boys. Our five oldest children preceded him to the grave, leaving his lonely companion and four children, three boys and one girl, one sister, two brothers and many other relatives to mourn their dear departed one, though we have a sweet hope that our loss is his eternal gain, but oh it is so sad and lonely here without him to cheer and comfort us, though we have a sweet hope that he is basking in the sunshine of God's eternal love, where sorrow, sickness and pain are known no more. He would get very happy when talking of God's eternal love and long to be there with God, forever blest, safe in the arms of Jesus. Oh may it be God's holy will for us all to meet him in that sweet home above where all is peace and love.

Written by his bereaved companion at his request.

(MRS.) J. E. SMITH.

(Other papers please copy.)

TIMOTHY N. DEAL was born in Harrison County, Iowa, May 27th, 1855, and died at his home, near Deming, Washington, May 8th, 1932, making his stay on earth 76 years, 11 months and 11 days. In February, 1901, he with his family moved to Adams County, Washington, where he took up a homestead, selling out in 1915, and moving to Whatcom County, Washington, where he lived until his death. May 5th, 1876, he was married to Miss Samantha— (I did not get the sister's maiden name), and to this union were born two daughters, Mrs. Hugh House, of St. Paul, Minn., and Mrs. Daisy Olson, of Lind, Wash., one son, Clarence Deal, of near Deming, Wash. Brother Deal experienced a hope in Christ and joined the Primitive Baptist Church February 27th, 1921, and was baptized by the writer the same day. I also baptized his daughter, sister Olson, at the same time. The wife and mother had been a member a goodly number of years before. Brother Deal

had been ailing for some time with leakage of the heart, and on the fatal morning his son's house caught fire and the old brother went to his assistance and the excitement and worry were too much for him. Seeing him fall, his son went to his assistance, and as he raised his head the brother lifted his hand as if in prayer and peacefully fell asleep in Jesus without a struggle. Brother Deal leaves to mourn their loss, besides his wife, son and daughters, twenty-three grandchildren, twenty-one great-grandchildren, two brothers, Jacob Deal, of Council Bluffs, Iowa, and Eli Deal, of Oklahoma, three sisters, Mrs. Theodore Jones, of Oklahoma, Mrs. Hannah Woods, of Nebraska, and Mrs. Jane Jones, of Iowa, besides a host of other relatives and friends. We mourn not as others who have no hope, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, he that raised Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit which dwelleth in us.

Funeral services were held in the Cathedral Chapel of the Hower Mark Mortuary Thursday afternoon, May 12th, conducted by Mr. W. S. Thorndyke, pastor of the Presbyterian denomination at Acme. Interment was in the family plot in the Independent Order of Odd Fellows' Cemetery at Deming, there to await the call of the Master.

Written by request. S. B. MOFFITT.

ELMA M. PIERSON, our sister in Christ, entered into rest May 30th, 1932, after a short illness. She was the daughter of Isaac and Martha Terry, and was born August 26th, 1857. March 21st, 1877, she was married to Edward H. Pierson, by Elder William J. Purrington, and to that union were born six daughters. Elizabeth, Sarah Ellen and Anna preceded their mother in death. Surviving are her husband, three daughters, Martha, Estelle and Ada, and five grandchildren. Sister Pierson was baptized in the fellowship of the Southampton Old School Baptist Church, at Southampton, Pa., June, 1876, together with several others, by Elder William J. Purrington, and lived a consistent life in the church, loved by her brethren. She loved the assembly of the saints and was always present at her meetings unless providentially hindered. Of a quiet and unassuming manner, she filled her place in the church with meekness and humility.

Elder H. C. Ker, her pastor, conducted the funeral, at her home in Huntingdon Valley, Pa., where she had been a lifelong resident, using as a text, Thy will, O Lord, be done. May God give peace to them that mourn.

Written by request.

ELIZABETH L. FETTER.

VIEWS WANTED.

WILL some of our gifted brethren please give their views through the columns of the SIGNS on the first six verses of the sixth chapter of Hebrews? CHARLES R. DARLAND.

AUDUBON, Iowa.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER R. Lester Dodson having changed his place of residence from No. 12 to No. 41 Addison Avenue, Rutherford, N. J., requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

ELDER George L. Weaver having removed from Cincinnati, Ohio, to 824 Bland Avenue, Shelbyville, Kentucky, requests his friends to address him at the latter place.

BROTHER C. C. Smith having changed his address from Petal, Mississippi, to 515 Elizabeth Avenue, Hattiesburg, Mississippi, requests his correspondents to communicate with him at the latter place.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

"A friend," N. Y., $5; "A friend," N. Y., $2; B. F. Hanover, Ohio, $1; "A friend," Colo., $1; Mrs. W. R. Conklin, N. Y., $1; Mrs. May Derby Hoyt, N. Y., $3; "A friend," N. Y., $5; N. Grace Holloway, Md., $3; Mrs. Attie F. Rutledge, Fla., 50 cents; Cal Loyd, Kan., $2; D. L. Blackwell, N. J., $5; Jesse C. Ellis, Ohio, $10; Mrs. Laura R. Elgin, D. C., $1; S. E. Corder. W. Va., $1; R. C. Bumb, Cal., $2; Mrs. Irene Stevens, N. Y., $1; W. K. Baird, Ky., $5; Mrs. Earl D. Stevens, N. Y., $3.

BOOK NOTICES.

ANY one having the First and Second Volumes of the Editorials of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe who wish to sell them will please communicate with Mrs. P. Evans, R. R. 2, Pleasureville, Ky.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have a book, Cruden's Complete Concordance to the Old and New Testaments and the Apocrypha, which is in very good condition that I would like to sell for three dollars as I need the money.

(MRS.) C. E. SMITH

LEBANON, Oregon.

MEETINGS.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, (the Lord willing) to be with and preach for them the fifth Sunday in July, 1932. Services to be held at the home of brother J. E. Livingston, 64 East Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. Also at 2 p. m. on Saturday before. All are welcome.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in July (31st). All are welcome. E. M. FORD.

The New Hope Association is appointed to be held with the Mt. Zion Church, nine miles south of Greenville, Texas, to begin on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1932. All Baptists of our faith and order are invited to meet with us, especially ministers.

S. M. DICKENS, Moderator.
W. W. SIKES, Clerk.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of sister N. J. Preston, 116 Center Street, Oregon City, Oregon, at 10:30 a. m. Those coming by stage, steam train or electric car get off at Seventh Street, take elevator to top of the hill, cross trestle over railway tracks, turn to the right, go two blocks on Sixth Street to Center Street, thence five and one-half blocks south on Center Street to 116, house number, between First and Second Streets. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Moderator.
J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

We have kept up a monthly meeting for some time in the past, and hope, by the grace of God, to be favored to continue to meet every second Sunday in each month at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California. May this bear a cordial invitation to all who believe in grace and salvation by grace to meet with us on the stated time.

MR. and MRS. W. J. BERRY.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at the home of sister E. Brunow, 411 N. Ridgeway Avenue, and on the second, third and fourth Sundays at the home of brother W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. The fifth Sundays are by appointment. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastors, Elders Jones and Janes.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Little Flock Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every first and third Sunday at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, at 1 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

DROPSY REMEDY.

Purely vegetable, removes from one to two gallons of water a day. Shortness of breath quickly relieved. Cures the worst cases of Dropsy in all its forms, and after being given up by the best doctors to die. Specially efficacious in Dropsy of the Heart. Best and cheapest know remedy, only $1.00 a package, six packages $5.00 by mail postpaid, and free to very poor people who are really unable to pay.

ELDER C. W. ANDERSON,
ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

Cloth binding 75c each. Paper covers, single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and all to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

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HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Cloth binding. Price, $1.25 each. One dozen or more, ordered at the same time and all to the same address, one dollar each. Cash must accompany orders. Make checks and money orders payable to

J. E. BEEBE & CO.
MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 100. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1932. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CASTLEWOOD, Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—A dear sister has written and requested my views as to whether I think the Scripture supports the belief that this earth, or world, will come to an end and a termination of all earthly things. Such views as I have upon the sacred written word of God I hold as a sort of common stock to be handed out when called for. I infer what my inquirer wants to know is whether I think this natural earth, or world, will abide for ever and ever, and whether there will be a judgment day and a termination of all things. I feel that some views, if given as the Scriptures teach, might at this time not be out of place, but know that true light and wisdom does not come by the natural man or by the will of man but by and through the Lord alone, and if the Lord does not direct all I or any other man might write is vain. It has been a long accepted belief of Old School or Primitive Baptists that this old earth, or world, would pass away and have a judgment and an end to all earthly things. This faith and doctrine I yet think is true and that which I think the Old and New Testament Scriptures teach. I will first call attention to 2 Peter iii. 10: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up." It seems Peter was speaking of a day that was in the future, which was yet to come. Peter was writing this epistle in the gospel day, and it appears to me from the night here spoken of, the coming of the Lord is to be at a time when great wickedness and spiritual darkness is to be on the earth. As to the duration of this natural earth on which we live, I nor any man living knows anything about this matter only by the fulfilling of the Scripture. Therefore I do not want to use any speculation on these sacred matters, but I think it is safe to say when God made

this earth and the fullness thereof, with all its beautiful benefits for man, and gave the earth its vegetation for all kinds of food and flowers, and cold water, and timber of all kinds, with coal and minerals of all kinds: all these and many more were gifts to man. The Lord had a most great and wise purpose in doing so, and when this design and purpose in this world is completed then it will pass away according to his will and purpose, and not until then. Many worldly-wise men have prophesied the very day this world would come to an end, but their prophecy has proven to be false and at best a deception and speculation. But we are warned by a blessed Savior not to go out after them. We know that men by the wisdom of this world know not God. If it be God's will for this earth not to remain forever what is that to poor puny man? When God takes their breath they die. That is the end of time with that man. Job says, If a man die shall he live again? We understand the Scripture speaks of three earths and three heavens. If we are not careful we might get the one mixed up with the others. We have the natural, created earth; then, as I understand it, we have the legal first earth and heaven. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth [the new covenant of grace]: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."—Rev. xxi. 1. No more old covenant or Jewish ordinances under the law. The first words of the Bible, in Genesis i. 1, say, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Then in the fifth chapter and first verse of Genesis, in speaking of this natural creation it says, "This is the book of the generations of Adam." Therefore must pass away with their natural head, and are quite different from the generation spoken of in Matthew i. 1, where it says, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ." This is not a created generation and had no earthly beginning, therefore the Savior says, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman, seeking goodly pearls; who, when he hath found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it."—Matt. xiii. 44-46. As I see it, when God's people are all manifested in the flesh that the Father gave the Son, which is the purchased treasure that is hid in the field, and the pearl is gathered home, God will have no more use for this old natural world and it will pass away as God has purposed it should. It is in this gospel field "the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." "My dove, my undefiled is but one." Well then might this only dove sing, "For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone." When the law that demanded this dove's, or bride's, life had been fully satisfied by her great eternal Head, and every demand of the law fully satisfied and settled, and the

law turned back to its Giver, then that new heaven and new earth that is prepared for this bride will never pass away. In speaking of the first heaven and the first earth, Paul says, "Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and worldly sanctuary." Again, Paul says, "Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation."—Heb. ix. 1, 9, 10. As I see it, this reformation is the bringing in the grace covenant. Then as much as this old covenant had its heaven for those ordidinances until the reformation, or grace covenant, came in, Paul says, For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. But the new Jerusalem is free, which is the mother of us all. This new heaven and earth is never to pass away and, as Paul says, "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." Again, Paul says, "He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens."—Eph. iv. 10. This is the heaven that is not to pass away and is, as I see it, the third heaven Paul speaks of, and as there is a third there must be a first and second. Paul again says of this heaven that it shall not pass away, that "knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance." These eternal things will never pass away, but all earthly or created things, and all that had an earthly beginning, must pass away. The Savior says, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."—Matt. xxiv. 35. I think this is the same heaven and earth I have here before mentioned that was to pass away. Read the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew from the fourth to the thirty-third verse. Then read the prophet Daniel, the twelfth chapter. Read all the chapter, which speaks of the signs and wonders that were to come before that great day. I am under the impression, from what I can read, that the prophecy is being fulfilled as the Scripture has said, and I believe the fullness of the Gentiles is about completed and it is now getting late in the evening of time, when time shall be no longer, though that day and hour no man is to know, but it is said, When ye see all these things come to pass ye may know the end is near, even at the door. I do not understand though Daniel was a Jewish prophet and speaking of what was to befall the Jews that this prophecy and these signs and wonders as spoken in the Scriptures are only spoken of the carrying away of the Jews to Babylon and abolishing the temple worship and dispersing of the Jews, but to the termination of this time world and all created things. In the Revelation of John the divine in the tenth chapter, fifth and sixth verses, he says, "And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to

heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer." Then, as Daniel says, "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament," then God's people will be gathered home, not one little feeble one will be left behind. Yes, gathered home where Jesus is, he who loved them so well he gave his life for them and died on the rugged cross for them. Then they will sing that song of praise to Jesus that never grows old. I do not understand that these people that were given to Christ before the foundation of the world in a covenant of grace, and their names inscribed in the Lamb's book of life and made alive from the dead, and their sins pardoned, will be judged any more at the judgment day, in the sense or view of ascertaining as to what the destination of his people shall be, because, as I see it, their sins went on to judgment nearly nineteen hundred years ago before an all-wise and just Judge. "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" Yes, he is the sovereign, supreme Ruler of heaven and earth, and the fullness thereof, to whom all praise and adoration is due for his great love and mercy he has so abundantly bestowed upon poor undeserving worms of earth. Oh by what tongue or pen can that great love that has followed his people through all time and eternity be set forth? Multiplied millions of tongues could not more than hint at this love. When Christ cried out on the rugged cross of Calvary the plan of redemption was then complete for all the Father gave him. "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."—Heb. viii. 12. But some men's sins follow after. These I understand are the nonelect who are left to their own just condemnation, who are to be judged at the judgment day. To say there never would be a judgment day I fear would be confusing.

Dear reader, this matter is very deep and more fitted to wiser heads and more gifted pens than I can ever expect to have, therefore I desire that what I have here written be received only so far as there is a thus saith the Lord for it. May he be exalted and praised and poor puny man abased. I hope I am one of that blessed number, and that grace has inscribed my unworthy name in the Lamb's book of life.

Your unworthy brother in gospel bonds,

W. L. EDWARDS.

ATLANTA, Georgia.

ELDER H. H. LEFFERTS—DEAR BROTHER:—Without any excuse for writing other than to pay for my subscription to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which should have been paid before, but which I neglected to do because to pay all I owe and to buy all we want is more than our little business will do, so I put off the least persistent until some more favorable time. Following the course of least resistance is

the way true to nature, I believe, and I am a natural man. Of this truth I have evidence in abundance, but the thing I am chiefly concerned about is this: Am I anything other than a natural man? (I know that in my flesh there dwelleth nothing good.)

I have been trying for a month or more to compose a letter fit for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but it is like writing an essay in the old school days, I never could do it with any degree of success.

Saul of Tarsus was a scholar and in many ways superior to the average man in his day. I think of him as a supernatural man, for he seemed to have control over his body—his human nature. Oh that I might be able to govern my natural inclinations and divert them from the evil of this world and meditate upon the goodness of our God. I hate the life I live. Yes, I hate my best ways, for all the deeds are an abomination to my soul. I find no rest in them, only strife and turmoil and sharp prickings of conscience, for when I would do good I do evil every time, and I suppose it will be the same with me until death. I feel to say with Paul, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Death! What is death? and why death? Because of sin, for by the disobedience of one death was passed upon all. Likewise, by the obedience of One many were made alive. My mind of late has dwelt upon Adam, the first man, whom we must become acquainted with before we can realize what great things have been done for us poor, depraved, fallen mortals. Adam was created a man, fashioned like unto God, his Creator, and an upright man, good, and very good, as everything God created was good. But he was created a man, therein is his greatest trouble. He was created a man and had to fill the office of a man, like a horse, an ox or an ass fulfills the place of its office whereunto it was created. As concerning the uprightness of Adam, he was made so by his Creator, even as everything he created was good, and very good. Why, then, all the unrest? Why, then, is death so terrifying to man? Because he is only man. For when we are in the Spirit of God we have no fear of death, but rather look with pleasure and gladness to the prospect of leaving this world of tears and sorrows, to the passing through this "rent in the veil" to dwell with Him in heaven. His people are (of grace) prepared to live, while the children of nature are preparing to die, knowing not that they abide in death already, for in Adam all die, and that in full accord with the purpose of God, the Creator and Father of us all. God made man to be a man and to fill man's place, which he did—that and nothing more nor less. Now, some will say, That is damnable doctrine and makes God the author of sin. But God forbid that man should be so presumptuous as to bring any charge against him, for it is written that God is neither the author nor approver of sin; nor has he fellowship with any therein. God created Adam an upright man and placed him in the garden of Eden in that condition. Now, old man, you are at home

in this beautiful garden. Oh it must have been beautiful, everything perfect, not a misshaped flower, nor an extra blade of grass out of place! Yes, everything needful, and a purpose for everything; not an extra insect, everything perfect; no troublesome neighbors to borrow from you, nor to talk about you, nor to point the finger of scorn at you. Everything is yours, Adam, even to the beasts in the field, and every other creature subject to you. What more could be asked for? Why could you not be happy and contented, Father Adam? I will say this much for the old gentleman, if he had continued in that condition he could not have been the father of us all (by nature). He could not have been the figure of Him that was to come. So I contend that he did no more, nor less, than was purposed in the beginning that he should do. Now, let us see if we have any Scripture to bear out this contention. Romans viii. 20: "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly [that is, he, man, was not consulted], but by reason of him [for God's own reason or purpose] who hath [in the past tense] subjected [placed him there] the same in hope." All for the lifting of Jesus on high. Now, if Adam had continued in the garden in the first condition, then all the former plans of redemption would have failed. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them."—Gen. i. 27. But he was made subject to vanity, or a desire to become great, as God, or equal with God, so now comes the evil spirit to tempt our mother, Eve, which was not so hard to do, as she already had a desire to be as God, or equal with God. So Eve, being deceived, was in transgression, and Adam partook of the forbidden fruit, also violating the first commandment, breaking the only law until then given, giving up his goodly estate to be with his wife, who prefigures the Lamb's bride. Why could they not behave themselves? Paul says in Romans v. 13, "For until the law, sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law." Also, in Romans v. 20: "Moreover, the law entered that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Oh, there is much Scripture to show that God is a sovereign God and an independent Creator and Ruler. He rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand nor say, Jehovah, what doest thou? It is all in accordance with his will and purpose. Our Savior says, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." So, then, it is evident, if not positively stated, that the earth should be populated with us poor depraved creatures that he might be glorified in us. So, dear Lord, if it can be in full accord with thy will, let us drink of this cup in peace with thee and awake in thy likeness, where we can perfectly praise thee.

This letter is growing too long and will tire some who might read it, because I could not keep my imperfec-

tions out of it, so please deal charitably with it, and when it goes well with you please remember poor me.

Yours in hope of mercy,

RYAN JACKSON.

POCA, West Virginia.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We are creatures of time, passing from time to eternity, destitute of power to halt or hinder; neither have we the power to prepare ourselves for heaven and immortal glory, but the consoling thought is that the preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is of the Lord, so we are made willing to own that salvation is of the Lord. If we have ever loved the Lord Jesus Christ, it is because he first loved us. Many have been the times, if not wholly deceived, that I have felt the love of God in my heart confessing to him that I was poor and helpless and stood in need of his lovingkindness and tender mercy every day of my life. I have felt that I had some evidence of my acceptance in the Beloved by these words: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." There is a peculiar feeling of love for those who stand firm in the doctrine of Christ and his apostles that we do not have for those who can be satisfied with any kind of doctrine, who may claim to be Primitive Baptists, but are not. I believe it is right to treat all people with kindness, but to affiliate with disorderly factions is gross disorder in whosoever may be guilty of such a course and joining with them in worship. We are commanded not to lay field to field, nor to join house to house with disorderly so-called churches, as they are those who eat their own bread and wear their own apparel, but call themselves Primitive Baptists to take away their reproach. They seem to know that they are under reproach. The church militant is composed of a people who have been quickened to life by God's holy Spirit and called with a holy calling to follow their blessed Redeemer, Lord Jesus Christ, in the ordinance of baptism. Truly they are a people called out. Jesus tells them they are not of the world, as he has chosen them out of the world. These are the Lord's portion, for the Lord's portion is his people, and his lovingkindness and tender mercy is continually upon them as the apple of his eye. He is our help in ages past, our hope for years to come, our shelter from the stormy blast and our eternal home. Ofttimes we are low down in feeling, and much shut up in darkness, with heavy clouds of fear and doubts hanging over us, and we are made to bow our heads in sorrow and solemnity of heart and beg our heavenly Father to restore unto us the joy of salvation, which is Jesus, the Savior of sinners and the joy of our poor aching hearts. We are aware of the fact that the Lord knoweth our downsittings and our uprisings. Sorrow lasts but for a night, joy cometh in the morning. There are two kinds of sorrow: one a godly, the other a worldly sorrow. Godly sorrow is that which is wrought in the soul by the Spirit of God, which arises from a sense of sin. The root of it is a love to

God, and the manner of it is such as is agreeable to the will of God. A godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, but the sorrow of the world worketh death. Those of a broken heart and contrite spirit when in trouble call upon the Lord for mercy. Help, Lord, or I perish. "Hannah answered and said, No, my lord; I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit."—1 Sam. i. 15.

It remains in my mind to continue with some remarks in regard to what I think is good order and what I think is disorder. If a member of the Primitive Baptist Church is guilty of leaving a place of worship of the Primitive Baptists and going to any of the conditionalists' meetings he is in disorder and should be dealt with by the church, for if we love the cause for which the primitive church stood, we of the primitive faith are supposed to love her still. Love is a gracious principle wrought in the soul by God, which inclines us to delight in and esteem and earnestly desire to enjoy an interest in God's favor and commune with him as our chief good portion, and happiness, and the fountain of all perfection. I am inclined to think that no true member of the Primitive Baptist Church can afford to sidetrack to that extent, and when one is guilty of such a course as to leave his own place of worship to be found mixing with a people who deny the doctrine of inspiration as set forth by the Lord's prophets, and Jesus Christ and his apostles, which is the absolute sovereignty of God over all worlds, beings and events, such would seem to be wanting to eat their own bread and wear their own apparel, only let us be called by thy name (Primitive Baptists) to take away our reproach. It seems to me that love is the golden chain that binds God's people together in love and fellowship. "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people."—Deut. vii. 7. Those words were spoken by Moses to ancient Israel, who typified spiritual Israel. They were chosen to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

WILLIAMSON, West Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER McCLANAHAN:—In the first place, I want to confess to you my regret and shame that I have been so long away and have not written to you oftener, for unworthy as I feel myself to be I feel that if I am not deceived you are my father in Israel. I cannot help thinking of you in that respect, however you may criticise me for thinking about you in that way. I have thought of writing to you time and time again, but I have been cast down and in darkness, feeling a greater part of my time to be a castaway, so, dear brother, if God gives you a prayer pray for this unworthy sinner. It seems at this writing that my feet have nearly slipped, still I want to plead for mercy from the holy God. The reason I say what I do is because I have suffered in the last six weeks an awful stroke. My dear wife and family did all they could

for me, but it seemed there was nothing left for me but to die in horrible agony, for I could not sit down nor lie down. But one thing, dear brother, I could still see light in my hope, and could say as the man of old, If thou wilt thou canst make me clean, and straighten up my afflicted spine, and, blessed be his holy name, I can stand nearly straight at this time.

I read your good letter and my heart was made glad to read once again your sound and comforting writing. I hope it is God's will that you may continue many more years to cry aloud His glorious doctrine, salvation by grace, and grace alone, for I can truly say, dear brother, if my poor sinful heart is not deceived, that by the power of God you have fed my hungry soul. I would like to praise God if I knew how for the wonderful gift he has given you. Oh how I would like to see you and hear you talk of his mighty works with the children of men. While we grope along here in darkness he is our bright and shining light and is all in all to us unworthy and lonely sinners while traveling this road of grief and sorrow. One great thing that gives us comfort is that he has saved us, and that forever, and in that blessed hope we can abide, and our weary souls can rest in him who causeth us to cease from our labors and lie at his feet for evermore. Oh blessed God! How precious is his name to this fast decaying body. Our destiny is in his hand and all the satanic powers are not able to wrest one of the least of his lambs from his bosom. Being redeemed by his holy Son, he has promised to take care of them unto the end.

Now I want you to forgive me and excuse my rambling remarks. I would like for you to tell me in your next letter what are the meeting days of the Hopewell Church. I hope, if the Lord is willing, to meet with you there before long.

Your brother, I hope,

WILLARD L. PENNINGTON.

FLORENCE, Ala., March 24, 1932.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As my time was up January 1st, I hope you will pardon me for allowing my subscription to remain overdue for three months. I am inclosing post-office order for two dollars to pay to January, 1933. I feel that the genuine Old School Baptists should sing praises to our God for upholding and sustaining by his grace this, the ablest paper of its kind in the United States, and that he has enabled the editors from time to time to contend for the principles upon which it was founded. They have contended earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and I feel that our Joshua (Jesus) has led them and they have turned neither to the right nor to the left, but have walked in the strait and narrow way. "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell."—Col. i. 19. Webster defines the word "fullness:" The state of being full, or filled; entireness; completeness; sufficiency; perfection. There cannot be anything added to that which is full

or that which is perfect. "How shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"—Rom. viii. 32. I will give Dr. John Gill's comments on the above text: "Christ is God's free gift to his elect; he is given to be a covenant to them, a head over them, a Savior of them, and a bread of life for them to live upon. He is freely given; God could never have been compelled to have given him; Christ could never have been merited by them, nothing that they could do or give would have laid him under obligation to have bestowed him on them. Yea, such were the persons, and such their characters for whom he delivered him up, that he might have justly stirred up all his wrath against them, and yet such was his grace that he has given his own Son unto them; and not him alone, but all things with him: all temporal good things, needful and convenient; all spiritual blessings, a justifying righteousness, pardon of sin, sanctifying grace, adoption and eternal life; and all freely in a sovereign way, according to his own good will and pleasure,without any obligation or compulsion; not grudgingly nor niggardly, but cheerfully and bountifully, absolutely, and without any conditions; for he is not moved thereunto by anything in them or performed by them." I believe the above with all my heart, and if I have ever done one thing that was pleasing to the Lord, it was a fruit of the divine nature. May the God of all grace abundantly bless his poor and afflicted.

In love to all the saints,

LYTLE BURNS.

SULPHUR, Ky., Feb. 4, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending two dollars to pay my subscription until May, and two dollars more to pay for the coming year. I am very sorry I had to keep you waiting so long for your pay, but I am glad, and I hope thankful, that I can pay up now. Times have been very hard and trying with us, and I had thought of asking you to stop my paper, for I could not see where the money was coming from, but, bless the Lord, O my soul, he knows all about us, and sometimes gives us things when they are least expected. He is better to me than I deserve, for I am not worthy of the least of his mercies. I have been taking the SIGNS since 1914, I think, and I had read and loved the paper before then, and many times I have been made to rejoice while reading its pages. It has lived to a good age, and the same power that has kept it alive through all these years of strife and hardships will still keep it as long as he has a use for it. When these dear soldiers of the cross have passed on he will raise up others to contend for these same blessed truths as long as there is a needs be. All praise to his dear name.

I have been sick for a few weeks, but for some reason known only to the Lord, he saw fit to leave me here a while longer, and I am up and about the house, but am very nervous, so that I can hardly write. An interest in your prayers I crave, that we may meet beyond the grave.

From a poor needy sinner,

(MRS.) ADDIE CHANDLER.

SAN DIEGO, California.

DEAR EDITORS:—I see that my subscription has expired, so I here inclose three dollars, two for another year's subscription and one to use as you see fit. I just wish I could inclose a check for $100 or more. I would be willing to deny myself any comfort. It makes me feel sad when I hear how many are behind with their subscriptions. I surely pray that the dear Lord will enable you to continue to publish the dear SIGNS. How I look forward each month to the next issue. I have taken it for more than fifty years, and it proclaims to-day the same unadulterated truth as did the first numbers. I believe people who can hear the blessed gospel proclaimed each week do not realize what a blessing the dear SIGNS is to those who are denied that great blessing. I read them over and over, and each time they seem to be more precious. Often I feel that if I could write like the dear brethren and sisters who so willingly write the sweet messages of love I would gladly do so. I have Elder Silas Durand's book on Predestination, and the Life of dear Mary Parker, and my blessed Bible, the Book of all books, and I am blessed with good eyesight, so I can read and meditate on the blessed truths therein contained, and when I think that a poor worm like me is privileged to know the truth when I hear or read it, I long for some one to whom I can talk of spiritual things who knows what I am talking about. I have lived ten years in San Diego and have met but two people who knew anything about spiritual truths, so you can realize what the dear SIGNS means to me.

Well, I fear I have wearied you in reading this missive, but I want to let you know what a noble work you are doing in feeding those who hunger and thirst after righteousness.

With love and best wishes in all your labors, from one of the least, if one at all,

MARGARET JAMIESON.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Rock Springs Church, May 25th, 26th and 27th, 1932, to the several churches and associations, sendeth greeting and love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more we have been blessed to assemble and receive your messages of love and correspondence as in the past, and of a truth we are made to rejoice at the manifested demonstration of the Spirit and power of the most high God in our midst, as the preaching has been as we feel becometh the gospel of Christ. We desire to realize the keeping power of our dear Savior, by which we may continue in the sweet fellowship and correspondence in the truth.

We expect to meet with our sister, Salem Church, in Philadelphia, Pa., at the regular time next year, when we hope to again receive you in our midst.

D. L. TOPPING, Moderator.

F. G. SCOTT, Clerk.

J. L. THOMPSON, Ass't Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1932.

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AN OPEN LETTER.

To the Delaware River Association—Dear Brethren:—In this issue of the Signs of the Times is published your Circular Letter, in which you differ from my article on Ecclesiastes, which appeared in the May number. I was not in a position to attend in person your session this year because the demand of business here at home kept me from it. Had I been there, I might have been able to talk to you face to face about the matter above mentioned and so save this present effort at correspondence. However, let us try to reason this matter over together and maybe we can come to an understanding, whereby we shall not be so different as your letter seems to indicate. The Delaware River Association was my original home association, there I was born and reared both in nature and grace, there I was baptized and there was I ordained to the ministry twenty-nine years ago. I cannot help but have a deep and abiding love for that Association. The first church I ever served, not as pastor but as supply, was in that Association.

Now as to the first part of your Circular I will say nothing, because when it comes to the truth of the sovereignty and omnipotence of God and of the absolute predestination of all things, there can be no argument. Neither is it worth while to take up space relative to the infallible inspiration of the Scriptures, for you understand me perfectly there I am sure. Let us come directly to the book of Ecclesiastes. If ever I myself received a hope of salvation through the blood of Christ and through God's free and unmerited grace, it was in the fall of 1896. Prior to my deliverance from the burden of sin, I had been under deep conviction on account of my sins. They reached to heaven and I thought would sink me down to hell. Not that I had been such a bad person outwardly, though I had not been good by any means; but the view I had of the corruption and depravity of my nature was terrible. While under conviction I knew God to be a just Judge and I knew there could be no escape for me from his righteous judgment. How to meet successfully that judgment I could not tell except that I felt I ought

to try to be good and to obey God's commands. At that time, I was shut up under the law and could not see at all the atonement for my sins wrought by Christ in his death, nor could I see at all that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to them who believe. While I truly believed God to be the Creator of all things, and while I knew him to be a just and righteous Judge to whom I should have to give account, I had no view of the perfect and finished work of Christ. Right here is where I believe the book of Ecclesiastes fits in. It is the Holy Spirit through Solomon depicting the outlook of man under law, it is not a view of things under grace. It is not at all a question of the Holy Spirit being inconsistent with itself, it is not at all that there is the slightest contradiction in the teaching of the Holy Spirit. When the Spirit of God convicts us of sin, he shuts us up under the law until we learn that help and deliverance cannot come from within ourselves or by our own efforts, but must come alone by the power of God and his grace. Ecclesiastes preaches God the Creator and Judge; but God the Savior and Redeemer, the High Priest of our profession, is not revealed in the book of Ecclesiastes. It is not a matter of the Holy Spirit telling what is not so, for that could not be. It is a question of dispensations. The law is one, the gospel is another. Dispensations change, God does not change, neither does the truth change; but the truth revealed under law shows us our sins and just condemnation while the truth under grace shows us our salvation from sin and death through the Lord Jesus Christ. Under law, God requires the thing that is past; because when convicted of sin by the Holy Spirit, all our past sins, whether secret or overt, come up before our tender conscience for judgment in the sight of God. When the sinner is brought to believe for salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ, then all these sins are seen to be put away by the sacrifice of the cross and the burden is lifted from the sinner's conscience and he is made to rejoice in saving grace and justifying faith. Then God does not require the things that are past but the debt is wiped out in Christ's blood, and sin and iniquity are remembered against the believer no more. Ecclesiastes says that which is crooked cannot be made straight; neither can it be made straight by the law. Job asked the question, "How can a man be just with God?" There is no way of justification by the deeds of the law. Job got the answer to his question when he was blessed to believe and to say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Grace answers questions that law asks, but the law itself cannot give the solution. Isaiah says, "The crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain." Here is a seeming contradiction between Isaiah and Solomon, but it is different dispensations that are being regarded and there is no error at all. Solomon by inspiration is not writing down gospel truth, but that which was

shown under the law. The law could not straighten the crooked, the grace of God in Christ can and does do so. Solomon says that which is wanting cannot be numbered. That is true in the sense in which the Spirit intends it in Ecclesiastes. Remember, the Spirit tells us plainly in Ecclesiastes that it is a survey of things under the sun and on the earth and is not intended to be a setting forth of things heavenly in the realm of grace. In Paul's letter to the Corinthians, he tells them to note their calling and to remember that God has not called many noble and great but has called the weak things to confound the mighty, and the base things and the things that are not has God called to set at naught the things that are. In other words, God does in grace make the nothings count something. Law cannot count that which is lacking, but grace can. Grace can take a man who is nothing and make him withstand all the fiery darts of the wicked. Grace took the disciples who naturally were regarded by their world as being no account, and made those same men mighty through faith to the pulling down of the strongholds of unbelief and error. We are mere zeroes in and of ourselves, but with Christ as our Head, these zeroes leap into significance. Nothing by itself is nothing, but put one at the head of the nothing and it amounts to ten. Law cannot make something out of nothing, but the grace of God in Christ can take nonentity and make it turn the world upside down. When the Holy Spirit through Solomon says that, at death, the body returns to the earth as it was and that the spirit returns to God who gave it, again it is not the resurrection that is being set forth. Law knows no resurrection. Moved by the Spirit to look at things as they are under the sun and not being given to look higher than the sun, Solomon sets forth no resurrection of the dead. The resurrection of the dead cannot be seen or believed until the sinner is translated from under the law into the reign of grace. It is perfectly true that the human body, at death, goes back to earth and returns to the dust as it was formerly. No farther than that can man under law see until Christ appears, then comes the revelation of the resurrection of the dead: not only that there is now an experimental resurrection from death in Adam to life in Christ, but that there is ahead of us a resurrection from the dead in the future, a resurrection which concerns our mortal bodies notwithstanding the fact that the bodies of the dead have returned to the earth as it was. To say that there is to be no future resurrection of the dead is to deny the power of God and overlooks the declaration in Holy Writ that there shall be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust. The future resurrection of the saints cannot apply to anything other than the believer's mortal body, from the simple fact that our bodies are the only part of us that shall die. The soul and spirit of the

believer do not die, but go to be with the Lord. Neither does the spirit of the believer when it leaves the body enter at once into the spiritual body. If it were so, then the resurrection would be an exchange and not a change. In the resurrection, one body is not exchanged for another, but the natural body is raised a spiritual body. It is not for me to tell you how it is done. I am blessed to believe it but it is not the part of any man to tell the "how" of it. This mortal shall put on immortality and this corruptible shall put on incorruption. This that is now subject to death (our bodies, not our souls) must put on immortality. Our souls, if so be we are God's children, are not mortal, they cannot die. It is the mortal part of us that must put on immortality, it is this part of us that is capable of being corrupted that must put on incorruption. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, because our bodies must be changed and fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body. This wondrous change will take place when the Lord himself comes from heaven with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God. It will take place in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. The believing church which shall be living on the earth when that time comes shall not die, but will be changed from mortal to immortal without dying and be caught up in the clouds in company with the risen dead to meet the Lord in the air and so forever to be with him.

Now, brethren, I have given you the best I can as to just how I feel about these matters. This is my faith. When the SIGNS was started in 1832, one of the announced principles for which the paper was to contend was the resurrection of the dead and the eternal judgment. As to what Elder Beebe meant by the resurrection of the dead, he plainly wrote in the SIGNS from time to time so that none were left in doubt as to where he stood in that matter. For instance, I refer to his article written in 1846, which can be found on page 695 of the second volume of his editorials. I have no quarrel with his views given therein, but am in accord therewith. If Elder Beebe's views on this subject ever became other than they were at that time, there is not a vestige of his writings left to prove it. Understand, I do not believe the truth of the resurrection because Elder Beebe said so, but I believe what he said because I understand him to have been in accord with the teachings of the Scriptures. I have desired to write this letter to you clearly and plainly so that there might be no misunderstanding of my meaning. I have also sought to pen it in the love and fellowship of the truth. I hope you will receive it in the same spirit and that you will accord me fair and unprejudiced judgment in the light of the written word of God. Nothing from men in the way of truth is any account except it accord with the Scriptures.

H. H. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder H. H. Lefferts.)

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 25th, 26th and 27th, 1932, to the churches composing the same, and to the churches, associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends christian greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We beseech you to suffer the word of exhortation. It is needful for all of us to be drawn out to love and good works, the effectual fruit of saving grace and justifying faith. As the basis of our exhortation, we desire to emulate the example of the apostles who unfailingly held before the churches the expectation of the coming of the Lord as an efficient incentive unto a godly walk and conversation. "For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Therefore, "Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." The nearer we get to the end of this present age and the nearer we come to the glorious appearing of our Lord, the more we have need to assemble ourselves together for worship, prayer and praise; the more necessity there is for us to speak often one to another of our hopes and fears, the more essential to our comfort and edification are the fellowship and love of the brethren, and the communion of saints. We need to have as little to do with the world as possible, we need more the vision of that heaven where now dwells Christ and where our citizenship even now is although we, at present, dwell on the earth. The New Testament fairly teems with assurances of the soon coming of our Lord, the apostles are ever mindful to hold this glorious expection before their brethren. Jesus, after assuring the little flock of his care that it is his Father's pleasure to give them the kingdom, goes on to instruct them to let their loins be girded about, and their lights burning; "And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately." This is the right attitude to be maintained by all true believers and followers of the Lord: it the attitude of constant hope and expectation. If we are graciously enabled to so order our lives, we shall not have to be at all in doubt as to how we ought to live while in this earthly pilgrimage, nor will the churches of the saints need to question what is right for them in doctrine and in practice. Any manner of life, either as individuals or as churches, which should call for reproof from the Head of the church should he suddenly appear, is wrong for any of us at any time anywhere. Before proceeding upon a course which is of the slightest doubtful propriety, one should ask himself before doing so: How should I feel were Christ to come now and look

at me as he did at Simon Peter after the disciple's denial? If only we would apply such a test to ourselves, if only we would judge ourselves in such matters, we should not need to be judged. "Let a man examine himself," then he will not need to be judged by others, nor will he need to be ashamed before Christ's judgment-seat. "Watch ye therefore, * * * * lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch."—Mark xiii. 35-37. "But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; the lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers."—Luke xii. 45, 46. Here is the picture drawn by our Lord of a servant grown weary of waiting for the Lord because he thinks his Lord is indefinitely postponing his coming, and who begins to gratify his flesh and also to beat those other servants who are faithfully watching for the Lord. Jesus promises severe chastisement to such an one. This picture applies to these present days in which we are living. Many of the Lord's servants, instead of faithfully keeping watch as he bids them, are turning aside to worldly pleasures and amusements. Not only so, but they berate and criticise those who are faithfully watching and hoping and praying for the coming of their Lord. Those who, therefore, have cast aside any hope of Christ's future coming and who add to this, criticism and denunciation of those who do believe and hope for it, should heed Christ's warning words. Paul thanked God for the grace given the Corinthian brethren through Jesus Christ by whom they were completely enriched in all utterances, in all knowledge, the testimony of Christ being confirmed in them, and he adds, "So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. i. 7, 8. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy."—1 Thess. ii. 19. "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints."-1 Thess. iii. 12, 13. "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ."—2 Thess. iii. 5. The apostle tells the brethren at Thessalonica that one of the ends for which God has turned them from idols to serve the living and true God, is "to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come."—1 Thess. i. 10. Remeber, too, that the same grace which has appeared unto all men bringing salvation, teaches those who

believe that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ."—Titus ii. 11, 13. "And now, little children," says the apostle John, "abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming."—1 John ii. 28.

We close this Circular with the following from James, "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."—James v. 7, 8.

D. L. TOPPING, Moderator.
FRANK G. SCOTT, Clerk.
J. L. THOMPSON, Ass't Clerk.

(Written by Elder H. C. Ker.)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, New Jersey, June 1st and 2nd, 1932, sendeth greeting to the several associations and meetings with which we correspond.

BELOVED BRETHREN:-Following our usual custom, we shall address you with what is called a Circular Letter, and as a foundation shall direct your attention to the second chapter of 1st Peter, the last two verses: "No prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." We shall divide this text into three headings, viz., Why the Scriptures were written, by whom, and how they are understood.

First, they were written that God should have a record of himself in the earth and that man, to whom this record is given, should have a record of himself. The record of God is that he is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. He is the Creator of all things on earth, in the earth, under the earth and of the sea. He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. He decreed all things before time began, including the choice of his people in his Son, Christ Jesus the Lord. The chain of events, in time, has brought to pass the eternal purpose which he purposed in himself. not one event planned by him has ever miscarried, nor can such a thing be while the world stands. In bringing into manifestation this world he created everything for the well-being of man, as well as of all his creatures. All this fully demonstrates his sovereign power and Godhead. God, having chosen his people unto salvation in Christ before the world began, it was necessary that man be created and formed of the dust of the ground, to the end that the world be peopled. All this shows the glory of the three-one God: Father, Son and Holy Ghost. It is perfectly understood by his saints that all records fail to show clearly the perfection of Deity, but such is all man can have here below; such records,

however, are sufficient to establish the existence of the Supreme Being and that he is able to accomplish his purpose without the aid of men or angels. In his purpose of salvation the serpent was as necessary as the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; each filled its place. There must be of necessity something to be desired by man above all other things, hence the tree. There must of necessity be a tempter, hence the serpent. In order to salvation there must be the fall, for without sin there could have been no such thing as death, therefore no need of salvation--nothing to save.

Now that we have briefly mentioned some of the records of God as God supreme and of his eternal purpose, we take up the second part of the text: viz., By whom were the Scriptures written? Of this we are not left in doubt, for the apostle declares: Holy men of God did the work as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Such men were prepared and called of God to both speak and write of the coming of Christ, his sufferings, death and the glory that should follow. Those men were the sons of Adam, with his nature, propensities and lusts, yet holy in the sense that they were operated upon by the Holy Ghost, their hearts filled with the love of God and their lips touched with a live coal from off the altar of the Most High. Not one of the prophets ran without being sent, nor one delivered or wrote a message according to his own volition, but being moved by the Holy Ghost delivered, whether by word of mouth or pen, the words given him of God. Hence all they said or wrote was as true as the Spirit which moved them. Therefore it is not the right of puny man to select this or that as true and the other as false. If it be of God all is true, if it be of man all is false, absolutely so. The day of Moses and the prophets was a period, or dispensation, of law, God so dealt with his people in that age of the world. It not being a day of grace we need not expect dealings of grace nor the teachings of grace, except in shadows, types, etc. The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, and of his fullness have we all received, and grace for grace. The law was as free of grace as the grace of God is now free of law. For the legal dispensation, law was necessary, and in the law there was neither grace, mercy nor pity. The law and the prophets were until John, since then the kingdom of God is preached. What a wide difference. As God operates upon men in the gospel age to declare his word, so he operated upon the prophets and all they declared was true, hence when Solomon said men and beasts all have the same breath, he must have declared the truth. Man has "the breath of life," the beast also has "the breath of life," no difference in the air breathed. In this sense both men and beasts have natural life, or the same breath, and as the one dies so does the other. In other words, both man and beast die and "both turn to dust again." Further, when he said, God requireth that which is past, it must have been a true statement. We do not

believe God would move a holy man to write a lie, hence we would not dare say these statements are "false." If we cannot harmonize such sayings the fault is with us, not with the word. It really seems, to us, a presumptuous thing to deny a plain statement of God's word. When Solomon said, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it," he must have been moved by the Holy Ghost, hence the statement must be true. The three little words "as it was," are seldom taken into consideration. Let us see what they really mean, and why he used them. In the beginning we find this record, "The earth was without form and void." Who shall say Solomon's statement is false? The Bible does not say the spirit of man that goes to God who gave it, shall remain in heaven in the presence of God until the resurrection, then come back to earth to take up its abode in the body again, but it does say, "That if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Anything that becomes dissolved loses its visibility and its identity and can never again be what it was before. Why should we deny the word of God, then expect people to believe our statements contrary to the written word? It may be said by some one that Solomon was not a prophet. We do not remember that he is so spoken of, neither do we remember that Job is mentioned as a prophet, though some men put special stress upon one saying of his: viz., I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, whom I shall see for myself and not another. We think that careful reading of the Song of Solomon will convince most any one that he was declaring future things regarding Christ and the bride, the Lamb's wife.

We now come to the third and last phase of the text: How the Scriptures are understood. They were written by holy men of God as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The Scriptures do not belong to man in the sense that man is the author of them, but rather they belong to God; they are his records, he is the author of them. No Scripture is, therefore, of any private interpretation. Man must be acted upon by the Holy Ghost to interpret what was intended by the same Spirit. "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Thousands of men, women and children use the Scriptures as they would use an almanac, verily thinking they understand them, whereas they are as blind to the spirit of the word as the man born blind was to the sunlight of this world. It is folly to try to convince them of their blindness, "they say, We see, hence are blind." There were intellectual men in olden times, and during the days of Jesus, but not one of them could enter into the spirit of the hidden word. Saul of Tarsus, the learned man knew nothing save the letter of the Old Testament, neither did he until the Spirit of God operated

upon his head and opened his eyes. It was after the resurrection of Christ that he opened the Scriptures to the understanding of the apostles. The writings of the apostles were by the inspiration of God, hence must be understood by the same Spirit that moved them to write them. Man by nature is dead to the things of God, therefore must be quickened into divine life and have direct revelation from God to enter into the things of God.

The churches of this Association stand firmly upon the principles of this Letter and absolutely refuse to be turned from them, either by men or angels. Amen.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER MARTIN STONE was born in Grimes County, Texas, August 13th, 1888, and soon afterward his parents moved to Stephens County, Texas. At the age of fourteen he became very much concerned about the welfare of his soul in the hereafter. He realized there must be a change that he could never bring about of himself. After a short period of intense spiritual suffering he was shown how the blessed Lord Jesus came down to earth to give himself that poor sinners might have eternal abode in his Father's kingdom. In the time of rejoicing and rest after this suffering he was directed to the Shilogh Church, a faithful band of true Predestinarian Baptists, then meeting at Aker, Stephens County. He at once offered himself for membership and was joyfully received and baptized. The church soon discerned a wonderful gift in him and liberated him to preach. In the year 1911, at the age of twenty-three years, he was ordained to the full work of the ministry. From the beginning he was very active in the service of his beloved brethren, preaching for several churches in the surrounding counties. In the year 1916 he and Miss Odessa Jones, of May, Texas, were united in marriage. For several years he taught school in Brown County, serving churches and preaching every Sunday. In 1929 he removed to Lamb County, Texas, and taught the same school each year until on February 1st, 1932, he was taken with influenza, afterwards contracted pneumonia and lived only three days. He was a man of tireless energy and possessed in a remarkable degree the attributes of the called minister. He was a most devoted husband and father, a man whom to know was to love and respect, who will be mourned and missed in each church and community where he was known. We humbly ask that the divine Father he worshipped be with sister Stone and the daughters in this sore trial.

LIZZIE KILGORE FOSTER.

NANCY JANE JONES, nee Hamilton, was born July 29th, 1851, and died April 4th, 1932, at her home in Sadieville, Kentucky. November, 1887, she was married to Canada Jones, who preceded her in death aboout ten years. She leaves to mourn one brother, Joseph Hamilton, of Sadieville, one sister, Mrs. Fannie Fields, of Portland, Oregon, and one half-brother, John C. Hamilton, of Indiana. September, 1907, she received a hope in her Savior and upon relation of her experience to the Elk Lick Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists was received and baptized by the late Elder More, and all her life was faithful in the church. Her home was always open to the brethren and she attended the meetings as long as her health would permit. Her faith was strong and for several years she expressed a willingness to died and be at rest. As a sister in the church she will be missed, but we believe the Lord has called her home and we bow in humble submission to the will of God who doeth all things well. I was not in reach for the funeral, and all that was mortal was laid to rest in the cemetery nearby, to await the call of the Master in the resurrection. May the Lord bless those who mourn.

Written by request.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

ELDER WILLIAM JASPER CASEY was born August 27th, 1849, and died at his home at Olvey, Arkansas, March 29th, 1932, making his stay on earth 82 years, 7 months and 2 days. He was married September 9th, 1869, to Caroline Beard, who preceded him in death about thirty years. To that union was born one daughter, who, after living to be grown and married, departed this life, leaving two small girls to the care of their grandparents, who reared them as carefully as any parents could have done. After his wife died, brother Casey was married, in 1904, to Rachel Lancaster, who was a faithful companion during his declining years, and who survives him He united with the Enon Old School Baptist Church, in Marion County, Arkansas, and was baptized by his father, the late Elder E. S. Casey, the fourth Sunday in July, 1876, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry July 26th, 1885, and the writer never saw any one more faithful in the

performance of his work. He never allowed worldly affairs to hinder him from attending the churches of which he had the care and very seldom disappointed a congregation. In his younger days he often rode many miles on horseback and made many personal sacrifices to attend churches and associations. He helped to constitute the Little Zion Association of Old School Baptists in 1890, and attended every session until his death. As a citizen and neighbor he was loved and respected by all who knew him, his life being a continuous example of truth, honesty and uprightness. In his death his widow has lost a faithful and devoted husband, the church one of her most loyal and faithful members and the community an honored and upright citizen.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder T. A. Parsley, after which he was laid to rest in the little graveyard near his boyhood home. May the God of love and mercy comfort his bereaved companion, who is left behind, together with all who mourn his death.

W. F. JAMES.

DEACON CHARLES H. CORELL, our very dear brother, was born April 5th, 1866, in Montgomery, Virginia, the son of John B. and Ann Creighton Corell, and departed this life March 13th, 1932, making his stay on earth 65 years, 11 months and 8 days. He leaves to mourn their loss his companion, two daughters, Mrs. Walter Peregory, Pilot, Va., Mrs. Marion Williams, Bluefield, W. Va., and one son, Charles S. Corell, Jr., Pilot, Va. Brother Corell had a hope for more than twenty years, although he did not unite with the church until about seven years ago, when he united with the church at Princeton, W. Va., the fourth Sunday in June, 1925, together with his companion and sister, Miss Virginia Corell. He was baptized the second Sunday in August by the writer. He later moved his membership to Bluefield when the church was organized there, and was ordained to the office of Deacon, the presbytery consisting of Elders P. G. Lester, G. A. Reid and myself. There could not be too much said regarding his deaconship. If I understand the duties of a Deacon, it is my humble opinion that he filled the office well, yet he all the time complained that he did not and could not meet the requirements of a Deacon, when all the time it seemed to us that he was filling the place as near perfect as any one we ever knew. His dear companion labored faithfully with him in all church affairs, and they always seemed to be of one mind, which is indeed pleasant. Brother Corell was in failing health for about a year, but was confined to his home for only a few weeks, and bedfast only two days. He realized for some months that he could not get well and arranged all his financial affairs, also arranged for his funeral and the clothes he should wear. The day before he died he asked for Elder H. V. Snow (associate pastor with me at his church) and said he wanted to hear him sing once more. We were both blessed to be with him when the end came. He had remarked at different times that he was not afraid to die. His funeral was conducted by Elder H. V. Snow and the writer in the meetinghouse of his church, at Bluefield. His body was laid to rest in the family plot at Christiansburg, Va., to await the resurrection morn.

Written by request of his companion.

J. S. PRIDDY.

G. FRANKLIN RUNNER, a friend of the cause of truth and a believer in the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, died March 28th, 1932, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Nesbit, Chester, Pa, after an illness which resulted in pneumonia. He was born October 25th, 1849, son of Alexander and Rebecca Jenkins Runner, of Little Britain, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. He lived all his life in the vicinity of the Rock Springs Old School Baptist meeting-house and was a regular and faithful attendant of the meetings both at Rock Springs and Welsh Tract, Delaware. While he did not unite with the church, his life and walk were characterized by that patience and gentleness which becomes the children of God; and we cannot doubt but that he had an experience of saving grace and that he knew and loved the truth as it is in Jesus. He married Miss Laura Richardson, Liberty Grove, Md., December, 1873. She died November 4th, 1886. There are three daughters surviving their father: the one at whose home he passed away in Chester, Pa., Mrs. Nesbit, who lives near Rock Springs, and Mrs. John McCoy, near Newcastle, Delaware. There survives also one granddaughter and one great-grandson.

The funeral services were held in Rock Springs meetinghouse, conducted by the pastor, Elder D. L Topping, of Baltimore, Md., together with the writer of this notice. The remains were laid to rest in the burying-ground at Little Britain, where his wife was buried forty-five years ago. May we rejoice that he is at rest with the Lord, though sad the parting here. As Elder Grafton wrote in Mrs. Runner's obituary in 1886, "There is a day approaching when they who know in part shall know even as they are known."

H. H. L.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. H. Smith, B. C., $1; Mrs. J. E. Hicks, Texas, $1; Edgar Ray West, N. Y., $1; Miss E. Corwin, N. Y., $1; Herbert McLeod, Ala., $2; Mrs. Maria Rees, Ky., $5; Elder C. W. Anderson, Ark., $3; Mrs. Margaret Jamieson, Cal., $1; Mrs. T. H. Young, Ohio, $1; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $2; "A friend," Md., $5.

MEETINGS.

Elder R. Lester Dodson, of Rutherford, N. J., expects to be with the church at North Berwick, Maine on the second Sunday in August, and Saturday afternoon before.

The New Hope Association is appointed to be held with the Mt. Zion Church, nine miles south of Greenville, Texas, to begin on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1932. All Baptists of our faith and order are invited to meet with us, especially ministers.

S. M. DICKENS, Moderator.
W. W. SIKES, Clerk.

At the annual all-day meeting to be held at Slate Hill, N. Y., on Friday, August 26th, 1932, the following visiting Elders are expected to be present: H. C. Ker, of Delmar, Delaware, C. W. Vaughn, of Hopewell, N. J., and Arnold H. Bellows, of Roxbury, N. Y. A cordial welcome awaits all lovers of the truth.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Maine Association is appointed to be held with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 7th, 8th and 9th, 1932. All who love the truth are welcome.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.
Box 107, MEDFORD, Mass.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association is to convene with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Shokan, Ulster County, New York, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, between the second and third Sundays in September (September 14th, 15th and 16th, 1932). Those coming by automobile Tuesday p. m. come direct to the church and there will be some one there to direct them to places of entertainment, also the trains will be met Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

ORVILLE WINCHELL, Deacon.

Because of the depressed condition of the brethren composing the San Marcos Association, we deem it necessary to discontinue, or call in the associational meeting for the present year, which was to be held with the Providence Church, near Blanco, Texas, September 23rd, 24th and 25th. We feel a delicacy in doing this, but it seems to be unavoidable at the present time, and we think best (if possible) to hold the meeting at Providence in 1933 at the regular time. Our churches being scattered so far apart makes it inconvenient.

J. B. BOWDEN, Moderator.

The Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association will convene in her ninety-first session with Pilgrims' Rest Church, at Fordyce, Dallas County, Arkansas, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 16th, 17th and 18th, 1932. Pilgrims' Rest Church is located one-half mile south of Cotton Belt Railroad station. Cotton Belt and Rock Island Railroads operate trains daily to this point, also Highway buses from all the highways arrive four times each day. This church is easily accessible from every direction, either by train, bus or auto, to all who desire to visit us. We invite all Regular Old School Baptists, especially ministers, to meet with us at this time and place.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator,
FORDYCE, Arkansas.
J. L. WATSON, Association Clerk,
TINSMAN, Arkansas.

EBENEZER

OLD SCHOOL

BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Little Flock Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every first and third Sunday at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, at 1 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

DROPSY REMEDY.

Purely vegetable, removes from one to two gallons of water a day. Shortness of breath quickly relieved. Cures the worst cases of Dropsy in all its forms, and after being given up by the best doctors to die. Specially efficacious in Dropsy of the Heart. Best and cheapest know remedy, only $1.00 a package, six packages $5.00 by mail postpaid, and free to very poor people who are really unable to pay.

ELDER C. W. ANDERSON,
ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

Cloth binding 75c each. Paper covers, single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and all to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

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HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Cloth binding. Price, $1.25 each. One dozen or more, ordered at the same time and all to the same address, one dollar each. Cash must accompany orders. Make checks and money orders payable to

J. E. BEEBE & CO.
MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 100. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1932. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GRAFTED INTO CHRIST.

"THOU wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree."—Rom. xi. 24.

The apostle Paul, speaking to the Gentile believers concerning their salvation in, and union to Jesus Christ, and partaking of his fullness, describes their blessedness by a figure in earthly husbandry. Here is the story of God's goodness toward these chosen Gentiles whom God took out of the nations a people for his name. (Acts xv. 14.) "Thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree." As I contemplated this picture I thought I could see in it the dealings of the Holy Ghost in bringing chosen Gentiles unto the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and the blessedness of our union to him. The whole subject embraced in this chapter I will not touch upon, but rather tell you some things that I see in this one verse.

"A wild olive tree."—Rom. xi. 17. The Gentiles were likened to this. There it grows, uncared for, bearing its wild fruit, undesired, despised, wild. What are we by nature? Sinners of the Gentiles, without God, without Christ, without hope in the world. (Eph. ii. 12.) We were alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in us because of the blindness of our hearts. Vile, base, transgressors, enemies of God by wicked works, by nature the children of wrath even as others, under the curse of the law, such is the Bible description of us, wild by nature, and bearing only wild fruit. Can any branch of this wild olive tree so cultivate itself as to bring forth desirable fruit unto God? If it could what boasting there would be. "For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God."—Rom. ii. 4. The branches of the wild olive tree can only bring forth wild fruit. "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?"—Matt. vii. 16. "A wild olive tree." Sinners! We were the serv-

ants of sin, free from righteousness, we were all unrighteousness. "A wild olive tree." Prune it, dress it, dung it, make it flourish and it is still nothing but a wild olive tree. Oh, it is in gratitude of heart and glorying in the Lord when believers join with the apostle, saying, "By the grace of God I am what I am," and the abounding riches of God's grace are more and more felt as we look unto the rock whence we were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence we were digged. (Isaiah li. 1.) Look into the abyss of sin, of condemnation, of the curse of the law. But the Lord quarried us out, hewed us from the rock, and brought us up out of the hole of the pit. "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." The "lively stones."—1 Peter ii. 5. God hews them, by the prophets, by the words of his mouth, cutting them, putting them in shape, bringing them by his divine teachings, by faith, of the operation of God unto Christ, the Living Foundation. (1 Peter ii. 4, 5.) Yes, child of God, he useth his iron tools upon thee, and all thy soul's affliction, all thy bitter humbling knowledge of thyself as a sinner, all thy sighs, contriteness of heart, thy weeping and supplications are in the pathway unto him who is the Rock of our salvation. The vessels of mercy are afore prepared unto glory, and when in the last day the Lord shall descend from heaven, and raise us up from the dead, immortal, incorruptible, and we shall be in spirit and soul and body blameless, in all things conformed to the image of God's dear Son, it will be in adoring gratitude in our hearts to say, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

"Thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature." God knows where all his elect are in all nations and kindreds, tongues and peoples, and in the fullness of time he takes them unto himself. He calls them by his grace, to bring them into living intimacy with Jesus Christ the Son of his love. God, who cannot lie, promised them in Christ, their covenant Head, and ordained them unto eternal life in him before the foundation of the world. (Titus i. 2; Acts xiii. 48.) So in the set time of his counsel, the Lord, the heavenly husbandman, comes, in everlasting love, and his almighty gracious hand takes hold of a branch of the wild olive tree, and with his sharp knife cuts out that branch he has taken hold of. Men may talk of laying hold of Christ, but what can they tell of being apprehended of Christ Jesus? (Phil. iii. 12.) No one ever was found to lay hold of the hope set before us, unless the Lord first laid hold of them. "I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."—Phil. iii. 12. The Lord takes hold of the branch and cuts it out of the wild olive tree. While thus held in the hand of God, and his sharp knife is cutting us out, we cannot then realize that we are in the gracious hands of our God, and that all the sharp cuttings are in all graciousness, according to his purpose and grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. "Thou wert cut out." Other branches were left. O my soul, what distinguishing

mercy! How sovereign the grace of God! Had not Jehovah's electing love taken hold of thee, poor sinner, and cut thee out, thou hadst still been without God, without Christ and without hope in the world. In contemplation of this my spirit is humbled before the Lord; self-esteem and self-pity and fleshly vanities are suppressed, and my heart in its fervent gratitude is saying, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

"Thou were cut out." That sharp knife is the word of God, which is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword. (Heb. iv. 12.) It is the word that God speaks in the soul that cuts us out, takes us out of the Gentiles, a people for his name. His word, his truth, takes hold of and cuts its way into the heart and conscience of the wild olive sinner. The doctrine of the Lord cuts, sharp convictions of sin are felt, and all the sharp cuttings of God's truth are to put quickened sinners into shape to be grafted into Christ. Watch the husbandman cutting and shaping the wild olive branch that he holds in his hand. I will say, He eyes it tenderly, his thoughts are gracious, for the Lord, the heavenly, all-wise, almighty Husbandman, saith, "I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart, and with my whole soul."—Jer. xxxii. 41. I have known trees to be grafted, but though the scions were well selected, and the wisdom and skill of the husbandman were brought into requisition, yet sometimes some of the grafted scions did not live, the work of man was a failure. But when God, the Holy Ghost, takes hold and cuts out of the wild olive tree a branch, and engrafts it into Christ, the Good Olive Tree, there is no failure. Every one so engrafted into Christ lives to the everlasting praise of the Lord, and not all the powers of earth and hell shall be able to undue the work of our covenant God.

When the wild olive branch has been so shaped to fit the place prepared for it, the gracious wise Husbandman puts it into its place, and the cleft in the Good Olive Tree takes a firm hold of it. The Good Olive Tree was cleft for those who were cut out of the wild olive tree. This cleft good olive tree is our precious, wounded, bleeding, crucified Savior. Moses was put into the cleft of the Rock. (Exod. xxxiii. 32.) and the dove has her sanctuary there. (Solomon's Song ii. 14.)

> "Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
> Let me hide myself in thee."

Look at that cleft in the good olive tree held open to receive the branch of the wild olive tree, or rather Christ crucified, the cleft, smitten, wounded, bleeding, crucified for thee. Crucified for me? Can it be?

Many give their assent unto and profess to have knowledge of points of doctrine, but what intamacy have they with Christ and him crucified? Oh, I have felt for many years that it is all-essential to me, a poor vile sinner, to have experimental intimacy with crucified Jesus Christ. The called of God are made alive to their sinnership, and to their perishing condition as transgressors of the law. In the hand of the

Lord their hearts become wounded, smitten and contrite over their woes, and under the sharp cuttings of the word of God they sigh and cry unto God, and we are brought with weeping and supplications for mercy unto Christ the Redeemer. Oh, when a broken hearted sinner and the crucified Savior come together there is such a uniting as must be experienced to be understood. It is only poor and wounded, sick and perishing sinners who have need of or are ever joined in faith and love to Christ Crucified. Oh, the Cleft Olive Tree, the sufferings and wounds of Emmanuel speak to us the love and mercy, the grace of our God, our hearts are taken hold of by the transactions of the cross of Christ, there only we feel there can be forgiveness, healing, life, salvation for a poor perishing sinner. How precious the truth, "For the transgression of my people was he stricken." Oh, it is in covenant graciousness that the Holy Ghost moves our hearts in faith in the crucified One. He teaches us, takes the things of Jesus and shows them unto us, and we are so wrought of the Comforter that we look up to, flee for refuge to Jesus, the dear Lamb of God. Oh, he poured out his soul unto death, he was numbered with transgressors, and he bare the sins of many, and made intercession for transgressions. O thy heart, O Christ, was rent, and cleft with sufferings for the atonement of our sins, thou was wounded, bruised, smitten and afflicted for our iniquities. Here, at thy cross, are "Mercy's streams in streams of blood." The wild olive branch does not graft itself into the good olive tree, neither does the sinner, of a humble and contrite heart engraft itself into Christ crucified. For those motions of his exercised heart toward the Savior, his sighs and desires for forgiveness, his faith, his believing by which he enters into the things of Christ, are all the fruits of the operations of the Spirit of truth in his heart. The Good Olive Tree takes hold of the wild olive branch. Oh, the smitten, bleeding Savior takes hold unto himself those he suffered and died for upon Calvary's tree.

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee."

We are put into the cleft of the Good Olive Tree, and there held in love and to our comfort, health and salvation, life and growth, "rooted and grounded in him."—Eph. iii. 17.

This is no fiction I am declaring. Though it be but an idle tale to some, it is not so to perishing, humble, contrite sinners who have been brought and joined to Christ crucified. Life is springing up from the cleft good olive tree into the wild olive branch, so forgiveness, healing and salvation flow up into everlasting life from our precious Savior. Thus we experience that Christ crucified is the power and wisdom of God. Oh, sacred, refreshing, saving power. Thou art the fountain of the water of life, precious Jesus. After the tiny wild olive branch is put into the cleft of the good olive tree, what then? The wise and gracious husbandman seals it with a mantle of wax, or some other substance. This kind covering, protecting the graft

from the storms, from the scorching heat of the sun, is all to insure, is all saying that the engrafted branch shall live by the upflowing sap, the life of the good olive tree. Here is something of the signification of this in Christ's gospel. Saith the apostle, "In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."—Eph. i. 13, 14. The exceeding great and precious promises, which are yea and amen in Christ Jesus, are the assurances of life to the believer, they are the words of eternal life, which only the lips of Jesus can speak. (John vi. 68.) This mantle of wax, so kindly wrapping up the little branch and the big good tree, is also significant of the imputed righteousness of Christ, which is unto and upon all that believe. The Hebrew word *Kiphar* translated atonement has the simple, gracious meaning "to cover." So the little, in itself, worthless wild olive branch grafted into the good olive tree is covered with the atonement. "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."—Lev. xvii. 11. So the wrapped up covered wild olive branch can sing,

> "Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
> My beauty are, my glorious dress;
> Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
> With joy shall I lift up my head."

This mantle is taking the wild olive into wedlock with the good olive tree. Oh, how wonderful to be in eternal wedlock with the Lamb of God, Christ crucified. "Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I swear unto thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine."—Ezek. xvi. 8. "He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness."—Isaiah lxi. 10. Ruth said to Boaz, "Spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman."—Ruth iii. 9. This is love's sealing, love's espousal, the time of love. The Holy Ghost, by such wonderful, comforting teachings, wraps up the believer joined to Jesus Christ in the promises of the gospel, by the oath and covenant of God, by the robe of Emmanuel's obedience, by the atonement covering, by the love of his espousal, by Christ's words of eternal life. How assuring and comforting this is to the poor sinner. It is all teaching, convincing, sealing home to our bleeding, wounded, contrite hearts that we are one with Christ, joined, wedded to the Savior. Is Jesus Christ our hope? Are you bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God? (1 Sam. xxv. 29.) The called of God are sealed unto Christ until the day of redemption, and thus joined unto him, our wedded name is, "The Lord our righteousness."—Jer. xxiii. 6; xxxiii. 16. Oh, it is wonderful, so blessed! "Our life is hid with Christ in God."—Col. iii. 2. When the sinner is brought unto and grafted into the crucified Savior the winter is past, the gentle spring is come, the warm geniel sun, and the dews of the night, and the upspringing of the life of Christ, the good olive tree, all say, "Live" (Ezek. xvi. 6), unto the engrafted wild olive branch, and it

bears fruit unto the glory of God. The apostle Paul in using this figure has been careful to tell us that all this spiritual, heavenly husbandry and the fruits thereof are beyond, yea, "contrary to nature." O ye Gentile sinners, one with Christ Jesus, ye are miracles of Jehovah's grace! Thou wert cut out of the wild olive tree, yet viewed in Christ, grafted into him, "The Lord called thy name, A green olive tree, fair, and of goodly fruit."—Jer. xi. 16. Though grafting the wild olive branch into the good olive tree is contrary to the practice of earthly husbandry, yet as a figure of the union of Gentile sinners with Christ it sets forth one of the sacred mysterious miracles of the gospel of the Son of God. Nothing is more dreadfully true in the life of a believer in Christ than that he is still a poor sinful creature. Thou wert cut out of the wild olive tree. Yes, and the believer in Jesus will say, I feel in my flesh, that I am a wild olive branch yet, a wretched, vile sinner, who often sighs, mourns unto the Lord over my wild olive baseness, my Adamic nature. But how can a wild olive branch, even though grafted into the good olive tree, bear goodly fruit? This is so "contrary to nature." Yes, but it is a miricle of grace, wrought of God, verily declared in the life of faith of that sinner born of God who is joined to Christ. Jesus said, "Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me."—Luke viii. 46. So also in all the life and growth of the believer in the Savior it is the virtue of the Spirit of Christ in the soul that animates, and is the fountain of our life unto God. Jesus Christ is our Root that beareth us; from him is derived our sap, our food; he "nourishes and cherishes the church." Saith the apostle Paul, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."—Gal. ii. 20. We thrive upon him, for the Holy Spirit takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto us. We are favored thus to live upon Christ's fullness, Christ is glorified in our hearts. Oh, the immeasurable sweet thoughts, glimpses, refreshings, encouragements that are ours in Jesus Christ by the ministrations of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost. "He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."—John xvi. 14. "Your life is hid with Christ in God." This is more than a theory, it is a vital reality with true believers in the Lamb of God, and the grace of the life of Christ in the soul is love to God and to Christ our dear Redeemer; it is sweet gratitude, trust and prayer and praise; it is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; it is meekness, gentleness, goodness and hope, that maketh not ashamed. Thus we are exercised toward God our Savior, and we are moved in love and graciousness toward the saints in our thoughts and words and deeds. Did not our Savior say, "By their fruits ye shall know them"? And, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be

my disciples." If then by a miracle of sovereign grace we have been cut out of the olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature grafted into the Good Olive Tree, so the working of this same miracle will be life, growth, beauty and goodly fruit put forth in us. That person who is destitute of longings after righteousness and God, that one who has no thirstings after Jesus Christ, no prayer for forgiveness, no trembling at God's word, no adoring gratitude for God's salvation, surely such a professor of Christ's name has no vital union with Christ. Look also at the outward life, and inquire, Who are our bosom friends, our sought for associates? Do we love the world, the things of the world? Have there been any moments in our lives when our hearts in truth were saying, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world"?—Gal. vi. 14. Again the Scriptures speak, "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."—Gal. v. 24. And, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Christ Jesus is in you, except ye be reprobates?"—2 Cor. xiii. 5. How solemn and searching is the word of God. I hope I can say, I live with the dear Savior; oh I cannot live apart from him. Some give their assent to a few points of doctrine, and are contented, but they have no heartfelt knowledge of Jesus. But, I confess I am a poor tried sinner; so often I am so sick, so plagued with my sinfulness, and temptations and the devil that I feel I must have some moments of heartfelt communion with Jesus. I must seek him, I must find him, I must cast myself at his feet, I will tell him how wearied, how grieved I am, that I implore his forgiveness, cleansing, healing, yes, victory and comfort through his precious atoning blood and justifying righteousness. Without Christ I feel I am undone, as a very castaway. The day to day and year to year union of sinners, called by grace, to the Savior is all fruitful in this that we learn that "the root beareth us," (Rom. xi. 18), that if there is anything in us of Christ, any true worship of the Lord, and God glorifying fruits in our conversation, the source of all is in our union with Christ crucified. "Christ liveth in me."—Gal. ii. 20. Truly our hearts are all acquiesence to that voice that saith, "From me is thy fruit found."—Hosea xiv. 8. Severed from him we can bear no fruit, he is our sap, our life, our all. (Col. iii. 11.)

Let me continue to tell the mystery which no figures or types can ever fully tell. While love and adoration are springing up, while prayer and praise exercise the heart unto the Lord, what is this that intrudes, that mars my blessedness in Jesus, that grieves my soul, and makes me sigh and moan and blush and cry. Oh, it is the dreadful consciousness that I am a sinful being. The most sacred moments are not exempt from vain thoughts, vile emotions. Ah! I loathe myself, I am base, a sinner!

"My wild olive nature discloses to view
More vileness than I can endure,
And were not the promises true,
I'm sure I should sink in despair.

Fresh succor from Christ I receive,
Who did all my conflicts foresee,
And through his rich grace I believe
He saved a sinner like me."

Over our wild olive nature we have to bemoan ourselves. Israel knows the plague of the heart (1 Kings viii. 38), and after the inward man the cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" —Rom. vii. 24. This bitter heartfelt cry is known only by believers in Jesus. If we see the beauty of the church of God we must behold them joined to and one with Christ Jesus, the Head of the church.

"Would you the church of God survey—
Its beauty, strength and harmony?
Then Christ Emmanuel see.
Where all perfections in him meet,
There is the church of God complete;
The sum of all is he."

It is not in the first man, Adam, that we are fair and comely, but in Christ Jesus, the second man, the Lord from heaven. Here the Lord commands the blessing, even life for evermore, and joined to Christ, the Lord our God saith, "I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon."—Hosea xiv. 5-7.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.
501 CLEVELAND St., RALEIGH, N. C.

COLUMBUS, Ga., March 12, 1932.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I wish you every mercy that it shall please our heavenly Father to bestow upon you. Paul tells us, "We know not what to pray for as we ought," so imperfect is our understanding, so limited is our knowledge of what is for our good and for the glory of God. It is common for us to seek after that which we feel will yield us happiness. We are waiting to be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease; and if we know in some measure we must suffer tribulations, but we want to make choice of our afflictions and the duration of our troubles. But there are times when the Holy Spirit enables us to cast our burdens on the Lord and to resign ourselves and our all to his keeping and are willing that our God shall dispose of all things pertaining to us according to his sovereign will. Oh, it is only by the abounding grace of God in our hearts that we can say, "Thy will be done." I have to write of infirmities, weaknesses and discouragements felt in myself, yet with sacred pleasure I can tell of the wondrous faithfulness and tender compassion of the Lord. At times I am harrassed with fears that I am an object of Jehovah's displeasure. I seem to be besieged with temptations from every side, and with fiery darts hurled at me from the evil one, and the vileness I feel within causes me to feel faint and disheartened; that all pertaining to me is a failure. Tell me, loved ones, do these sorrowful times come to you? But we have ever found the Lord full of tender compassion, his

mercy endureth forever. He always hears our cries of distress at such wretched times, when we feel so lost and needy, so cast down, on the brink of despair. He sends the Comforter with words of encouragement and cheer, saying, "Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your minds." Then we feel the sweetness and comfort of David's words: "Cast down, but not destroyed." We read on and the many precious promises we find and words of consolation far exceed our power to tell; unspeakable and full of glory. "Ye have forgotten." Yes, I have been very forgetful of the numerous mercies of God. Proof upon proof the Lord our God has given us of his love and grace, and we are unmindful. We feel to chide ourselves for our sinful distrust. Oh, what a plague is an evil heart of unbelief. Oh, that the Lord would increase our faith. "Ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." O Lord, thy wisdom is infinite, and thou performeth the thing that is appointed for me. (Job.) Our smallest circumstance is subject to thy providence. As the sparrow does not fall to the ground without thee, shall not I believe (and believing find rest) that thou regardest and taketh account of a poor sparrow like me? The love of the Son of God to us is unexampled, and more and more I am thinking how wonderful it is God loves poor sinners. We look to the cross of Christ and then oh what love and mercy flows forth while we are enabled to say, He loved us and gave himself for us. Then, dear kindred, we envy no one's estate; none could be more happy, more favored than we. He who sitteth upon the circle of the earth, to whom the inhabitants of the earth are as grasshoppers, has taken account of us. Men, cities and nations pass away, but we receive a kingdom that cannot be moved. Its glory can never be tarnished and shall never end. All its pleasures and provisions are fixed and eternal. Thus while we feel everything belonging to ourselves, and all things here, are unsatisfying, all come short, yet in the Savior, Jesus Christ the Lord, we find rest and comfort, sweet satisfaction for our needy souls. When we by faith explore the unsearchable riches of Christ our souls exclaim, It is enough.

Dear kindred, have charity for these weak reflections of a poor sinner saved by grace if saved. May the Lord abundantly bless you all as it seemeth good in his sight.

Yours in love and hope,

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

NEWTON, Ala., June 24, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—I want to write the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a short account of our annual meeting at Mt. Gilead Church, in the Western Primitive Baptist Association, but first I would like to give a brief sketch of the church. According to the best record available,

it was constituted in 1839, when there were but few settlers indeed in this section of Alabama. Among the early ministers coming here in pioneer times were Elders Jesse Tomblin, E. D. Ivey, J. N. Purvis and J. W. Collins. The last named served as pastor of the church for thirty-five years, until his death, when he was succeeded by his grandnephew, Elder F. A. Collins, who still serves as pastor. During the past winter we had some church trouble, but through the kind forbearance of the all-wise Creator the storm clouds have vanished and all is calm and serene in our God-fearing little band. At our April meeting two members were restored and another was received by letter at our May meeting. The third Sunday in June has been our annual communion day for many years. We had a large correspondence this year from sister churches and all seemed inspired with love divine to render praise unto Him who doeth all things well. The text used by the writer on Saturday was, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." At the conclusion of services it was announced that there would be services at the home of James W. Stewart, an invalid, at 4 p. m. Elder F. A. Collins and the writer spoke there with such light as was given by the Giver of every good and perfect gift. When the services were ended brother Stewart was received into membership by experience, after he had related his travels in tribulation and his hope in Christ. He was baptized by Elder F. A. Collins and the writer June 23rd, while sitting in a chair in the stream near his home. It was a beautiful ceremony indeed to see one taken from an invalid's bed for the purpose of baptism, thereby showing a divine faith in One who rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. He expressed himself as feeling much better after baptism. Elder H. A. Smith, of Slocomb, Ala., delivered an able sermon on Sunday at Mt. Gilead on "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." Well indeed did he show who were meant by the "all" under consideration. He stated at the beginning of his sermon that he had missed only two third Sundays in June since 1889 at Mt. Gilead, while W. J. Watson, who is not a member, and who lives at Jay, Florida, more than one hundred miles away, said he had only missed one in sixty-nine years. Such is the faith of many of the sheep who linger on the outside of the fold. That meeting will be long remembered by many who were present.

The Western Primitive Baptist Association is to be held at our church on the third Sunday in October, Saturday before and Monday after, where we hope to meet many who believe in predestination, stand upon the ancient landmarks and trust the all-wise God for salvation in time and eternity.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

J. J. COLLINS.

CELEBRATES ONE HUNDREDTH BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY.

(Written by request.)

Of noteworthy significance in the history of the Signs of the Times is the fact that thirteen days before the first number of this paper came from the press, over a century ago, there was born in Hopewell, New Jersey, a child named David Lafayette Blackwell, who on the twenty-eighth day of July, 1932, attained the unusual age of one hundred years and greeted over three hundred and fifty people who came to congratulate him at the home of his daughter, Mrs. J. B. Hill, in the village of Hopewell, where he resides. It was an auspicious day in the life of the grand old man of Hopewell, who is widely known and deeply loved. Relatives, friends and members of the Old School Baptist Church, of which Mr. Blackwell is a member, came from different States to pay him a tribute of loving esteem on the occasion of his being a century old. Telegrams and hundreds of congratulatory messages from various parts of the United States made the day a notable one. A letter from Governor A. Harry Moore, of New Jersey, a cablegram from a relative in France, a basket of beautiful roses, one hundred in number, a rose for each birthday, from the village president and council, besides other baskets and boquets of flowers, two church organizations of Hopewell sending baskets of flowers as tokens of their respect for the aged man, besides other gifts too numerous to mention, each had a part in contributing to the happiness and tributes of the day. Mr. Blackwell received each guest who came, personally, and surprised all by his wonderful endurance, his ready wit, his charming conversational powers, and his ability to discuss the topics of the present time in which he is immensely interested. He walked to the lawn and posed for his photograph with an alacrity that was remarkable. Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Hill, with whom he resides, gave a luncheon in his honor to his relatives and friends from out of town, which also included the pastor of the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church and his wife, Elder and Mrs. Charles W. Vaughn, a visiting minister and two deacons from churches of the same faith who came to pay their tribute of respect from another State. David L. Blackwell has been a member of the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church for sixty-five years, and for upwards of half a century, perhaps, one of the deacons of that church, and is a very regular attendant at its meetings. His absence from worship for two Sundays last winter, because of a cold, was the only time he had missed a service for years. When practically one hundred years old during the temporary absence of his pastor he assisted as deacon in conducting religious services in the church of his membership, his spiritual gifts and abilities often contributing to the edification of his brethren. He has been almost all his life a reader of the Signs of the Times, and is its oldest living subscriber. Mr. Blackwell married Miss Helen Stout, one of whose ancestors founded Hope-

well, and since her death, twenty years ago, has resided with one of his children. The changes in history, politics, science and ways of living that Mr. Blackwell has witnessed during the past century of his life are too numerous even for passing mention. When he came upon the stage of life there were several men living who had fought with General Washington in the Revolutionary War for American independence. Less than thirty States comprised the Union, and most of that vast region west of the Mississippi River slumbered in solitude disturbed only by wild beasts and the untutored savages that roamed amid its native wilds. The first railroads for cars propelled by steam had just been begun about two years before, and people lived in the simple ways that were the custom during that period following the birth of the Republic. The use of anesthetics in surgical operations, the telegraph, telephone, radio, automobile, aeroplane, improved farm machinery, the modern printing press, the gasoline engine, the electric light, electrical devices to save labor, State roads to facilitate transportation, are but a few of the wonderful inventions that this remarkable man has seen come into the world during the time that he has lived. The abolition of slavery, the passing away of the doctrine of the divine rights of kings and the almost universal establishment of republics are some of the political changes witnessed in this time, during which period the United States has become a world power of mighty importance as a factor to affect the welfare of mankind. Mr. Blackwell has seen the flint lock gun become the repeating rifle of to-day, the candle developed only to give way to the modern electric light, the old fireplace to be followed by the up-to-date furnace, but with the mutations of things natural he rejoices in a living hope, through the grace of God, of a blessed immortality, knowing that the truth of God is eternal, that justice shall prevail, that the blood of Jesus Christ is efficacious for all the election of grace of whatever time, and that through the merit of the atonement of the Son of God the flower of mercy will shed its perfume forever.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

INDEPENDENCE, Mo, March 14, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have just been reading the SIGNS, which is very comforting to me. I feel sad and lonely this morning, thinking of my dear loved ones that have gone from me to their home beyond this vale of tears, though the good Lord tells us not to let our hearts be troubled, and, If ye believe in God ye also believe in me. The letters appeal to me, and are very comforting. Sister Alice A. Bailey's letter is a dear letter, telling how much she has always loved the Baptists, and about her going with her father to the Baptist meetings. That takes me back to my childhood days. I always loved the Baptists and going with my dear father to their meetings was the joy of my heart.

I was born in Clark County, Kentucky, near Winchester. My father's

and mother's memberships were with the Cain Spring Church, in Madison County, Kentucky. Brother William Rupert was the pastor there in those days. Oh, his voice always sounded sweet to me, though I was just a child. I can look back now and see how the dear members seemed to love each other. I well remember when I was a little girl, not more than nine or ten years old, I was at a Methodist meeting which was called a protracted meeting. The dear old members were shouting. I was sitting back in the congregation and my father was sitting a little ahead of me, and as I looked toward him I wished to myself that I was as good a christian as he was. All at once a bright light shone around me, an oblong bowl came down on my lap and birds sat on the edge with their mouths open singing. I was made happy and felt like shouting, but kept my seat, thinking the dear old people would think I was too young and did not know what I was doing. I told my mother about it when I got home, and she said, Honey, that was God's work. I have had others tell me it was only my imagination. If I can only have that happy feeling when God calls me it will be a peaceful parting from this earth. The love of God shed abroad in our hearts causes love and harmony in the church. Oh, it is humiliating and heart-rending to see our churches out of harmony. The dear sweet songs of Zion do me good. I want to be found trying to do the things that are pleasing in God's sight. I feel that God has wonderfully blessed me all through life. I have received more than I deserve, for God is merciful. It gives me delight to speak of that glorious happiness that I was blessed with when I was a little girl. Hope makes me not ashamed. It does no good to cast our pearls before the swine, for they will turn and rend us, not being enlightened by the Holy Spirit of God. It does me much good to be in company with the dear people of God, but many of our loved ones have gone to their eternal home. May God be with us in meeting them in glory.

I do hope you can find space in the dear SIGNS for these few lines, not that I think they will be of much interest, but I do love the dear ones who write such consoling, precious letters. I have been reading the SIGNS for many years. Brother Thomas Records advised me to take it. The Lord has called him from this world and I hope he will be blessed in singing his praises for evermore.

I will close, hoping this will be in harmony with each and every one. May God bless us all and save us in glory, is the prayer of your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) TEMPIE C. GAINES.

INDIANOLA, MISS., May 6, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find one dollar to pay for the SIGNS up to December. I wish I could send more to help along the cause I hope I love for Christ's sake. I am very poor in this world's goods, but if I ever am able to help you I will do so. This grand and glorious doctrine the SIGNS and *Lone*

Pilgrim advocate has been coming into my unworthy home ever since 1925, when I was picked up and thrown headlong into the church, as it seems to me, for when I left home I had no thought of joining. I had not heard an Old Baptist sermon since I was thirteen years old until I joined them at the age of forty-three years. This proves to me that God works in a mysterious way and that his ways are past finding out. I want to relate a few things I remember since I was a little child that are sweet and sacred to me until this day. I was at a Primitive Baptist meeting, and the pastor, old brother Wilkerson, a one-armed preacher, spoke of some denominations electing delegates to go about over the country collecting for the Lord. Some did not have money to give, so would give meat, corn, molasses or potatoes, and he said he did not know God Almighty ever wanted any of those things. That sank deep into this old benighted sinner's heart, and I hope just such joys will keep on ringing in my soul until time here in this old sin-cursed world will be no more. I used to stay at my grandfather's home when I was a child and go to school. I would get his SIGNS OF THE TIMES and read the experiences, and say to myself, I hope when I get old I will be an Old Baptist. I seemed to think one had to be old before he could join them. While I was burdened and cast down, almost ready to die, a voice kept ringing in my ears to do something to set a good example before my little children. I heard no preaching but Missionary Baptists, so thought that if I joined any denomination I would get relief. I lived with them for twenty-two years, but was not satisfied. I am satisfied with it all now, for I feel God let me live with those dear "live and do good" people until I ran the whole length of the law. As I look back over my past life and see how it takes the law as a school-master to bring us to Christ, it is no wonder we have to bow our heads in shame and smite upon our breasts, and cry, Lord, have mercy upon us sinners. The doctrine of election is sweet and of much concern to me. I know that if I am not one of the elect I am bound to be a vessel of wrath fitted to destruction, but I have a faint little ray of hope that I am a vessel of mercy which God has afore prepared unto glory. If I am not deceived, election goes all the way to salvation. It is meat and drink to this poor sinner, the least in God's kingdom, if one at all.

Your little sister,

OLIVE E. ROBERTS.

GREENVILLE, Ill., July 19, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—My father, Elder John Willeford, passed away April 21st, 1932, and he had numerous Minutes, books and publications of the Primitive Baptists that he had collected during the last seventy years, and I expect some of them would be valuable to some people, if we knew who wanted them. Among them are Hassell's Church History and Dr. Gill's works. Most of them are in good condition.

Sincerely yours,

POLLY W. MOLLET.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1932.

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"PHYSICIAN, HEAL THYSELF."

A DEAR sister in New York State whom we esteem very highly requested quite a long time ago that we give our views on the above words. They are a portion of the twenty-third verse of the fourth chapter of the gospel according to Luke. At the time the request was received we did not see anything at all in these three words. They were just words, and that was all. While we cannot lay claim at this time to having any special light upon them, we have been asked by the Publisher to prepare something for the SIGNS, and having nothing else in mind, we will draw the bow at a venture, hoping that God will direct the arrow and cause it to fall where it will mean something to some one. We are persuaded that only such characters as David and Jonathan will understand the significance of the matter. Reference is made by the Savior in this verse to his fame in Capernaum, where he had wrought many wonderful miracles. He had healed others of the palsy; had cured a poor woman with an issue of blood of twelve years standing, after she had spent all that she had among the physicians of the land, proving them to be utter failures, and she had only grown worse. He had also cured Peter's wife's mother of a fever, restored the withered hand of a man, and had raised Jairus' daughter from the dead. We might add, with John, Many other things did Jesus, the which if they were written in a book the world itself could not contain them. Doubtless there were all manner of sickness and disease prevalent among those of his own country, to say nothing of his personal sufferings as a man, having gone forty days without food and been exceedingly tempted of the devil. Jesus, who was discerning their thoughts and knew what was in their minds as they meditated upon his wonderful works abroad, was aware that they could not reconcile his seeming indifference to his own and their afflictions, and said unto them, "Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself." They had just been held spellbound under the sound of his voice while he expounded that marvelous text: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the

broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." They were so enraptured, we are told, that the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were *fastened* on him as he told them that "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." We have some slight understanding, we hope, of what it means for one to fasten their eyes upon those who preach the gospel in its purity. We have been convinced in our own soul on different occasions that the earthen vessels upon which our natural eyes gazed were chosen of God to bear his name unto the Gentiles. Continuing the testimony, we are told they "all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth." Yet, they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" Truly, they were mystified. Having witnessed that the Spirit of the Lord was upon him, that he had been anointed to preach the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, to the poor; that he had been sent of the Father to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that were bruised; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord, it seemed absolutely a contradiction to all of this to observe that he was yet a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and that as pertaining to the things of the world, even though it was made by him, yet he was less fortunate than either the beasts of the field or the birds of the air, for he had been heard to say, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. The ways of God are entirely too deep for human reasoning to fathom; they are past finding out. The life of every child of God is a paradox. They are continually inquiring with Rebecca, of old, If it be so with me, why am I thus? Earthly wisdom cannot comprehend why Jesus was "*led by the Spirit* into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the devil," as we read in the beginning of this chapter, nevertheless such is the record. Why our Lord should have gone without food and in his extreme hunger have suffered at the hands of Satan such awful temptation is something natural mind will never understand. The devil said to him on the occasion in question, "If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread." Jesus replied, "It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God." We would understand from this that not a single word hath God spoken in vain, but that there is a purpose to everything under the sun—a time to hunger as well as a time to eat, and so on, *ad infinitum*. How all-comprehensive are such words from the mouth of our Lord. On another occasion he asked, The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? Did it not contain all of the gall of bitterness that was heaped upon him as the sinbearer of his people? Again, we hear him asking, Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter

into his glory? The two disciples with whom he talked after he, beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself, began to understand, but as soon as their eyes were opened and they were enabled to know him, he vanished out of their sight. His words had had a telling effect, however, for their heart had been made to burn within them while he talked with them by the way. It was the purpose of God that his Son should suffer ignomy and shame and be tempted in every conceivable way by Satan, but the great red dragon was not to prevail over the Lamb of God; rather was he to destroy him to whom had been given the power of death. How wonderful that he should come forth from the temptations of the devil and "return in the power of the Spirit into Galilee" to his brethren. Without this, how could he have succored his people whom Satan is continually wallowing, as it were, in the mire, and overcoming them with all of his deceivableness of unrighteousness. Is it not by reason of his having been tempted in all points, like unto his brethren, that he is able to appear as their Elder Brother, or their High Priest whose feelings can be touched with their infirmities? Sometimes we are made to hope that the seemingly full measure which is wrung out to us, when we can apparently stand no more, is for the testimony of Jesus and the fellowship of his sufferings. Faith is in exercise when such is the case, and it is declared the just shall live by faith. We can then take courage in the thought that he who has been called to feed the flock of God which he hath purchased with his own blood must himself first be a partaker of the things which he declares to others, whereby they are comforted by the mutual faith of each. Notwithstanding the fame of Jesus in Capernaum, in Nazareth, his own country to which he had returned, he was just the son of the carpenter, Joseph. There was probably some selfish pride in their desiring that he should do similiar works in their midst, but Jesus said, No prophet is accepted in his own country. That was not the time and place for him to make his glory known. He must hang upon Calvary's cross between two thieves, and have those that passed by to rail on him, wagging their heads, and saying, "Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, Save thyself, and come down from the cross." Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves, with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save. These were but some of the jots and tittles of his word which had to be fulfilled, as declared in the Scriptures, and nothing could fail. All that had been written concerning him must come to pass, but the bounds which had been fixed by God's eternal decrees could not be passed, hence not a bone of his body could be broken. As for himself, no trace of a single selfish act can be found. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. His life was spent for others; he laid it down of his own accord, according to the will of God, but when his hour was come to

take it up again, he came forth conqueror over death and hell, as King of kings and Lord of lords, in great power and glory. It is because of this belief and the hope which we have, as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec, that we are persuaded that nothing shall ever be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Oh that the cause of Christ might be dearer to us all, and that we might give ourselves more freely, more unselfishly and more devotedly to his worship and praise! The times and experiences through which we are passing are teaching nations and individuals, we believe, that the greed for gold has been the greatest curse that has ever been visited upon the human race, and we earnestly hope that the lesson shall not be in vain, but that there shall be a turning unto the Lord and a diligent seeking after righteousness. The things of the greatest worth, of priceless value, to the human race and to the people of God, have been born as it were of a woman in great travail, and if it be the will of God to favor Zion and prosper her before him, we are certain that nothing can hinder it. May he give unto us that knowledge of himself which shall cause us to abhor ourselves and repent in dust and ashes, that he may become all and in all to us, and may we seek to emulate him to whom it was said, "Physician, heal thyself."

R. L. D.

THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" ONE HUNDRED YEARS OLD.

With the August issue of the Signs of the Times it rounded out one hundred years of its existence. The first number of this publication made its appearance August 8th, 1832, according to the date line on its first page, and on August 8th, 1932 (one hundred years later), the *Middletown Times Herald,* a daily publication of Middletown, N. Y., contained an article giving the history of the Signs for the one hundred years, and as we feel it will be of interest to our readers we give it space in our columns, omitting only a few facts of purely local interest.

Late in the summer of 1832 Elder Gilbert Beebe of Middletown realized his ambition to set forth in a form more enduring than the spoken word matters which he deemed it proper to bring to the attention of Baptists and sentiments intended to protect the church against modern and liberal encroachments. To him there appeared to be opportunity for another Baptist publication, and apparently there was. His Signs of the Times, first issued August 8th, 1832, is still a sturdy publication changed only in that it is devoted now, according to its cover notation, "to the Old School Baptist cause" rather than "exclusively to the Baptist cause," as was that first issue. The Beebe family has been its publisher throughout its history, and a Beebe has been its editor much of the time. Something of the constant and conservative character of the denomination seems

embodied also in the fact that for nearly three-quarters of its history the freshly printed SIGNS have rolled from the same press, a veteran now with few competitors in the matter of longevity. First published in the interim between that dissention-riven meeting at Baltimore, Md., in May, 1832, and the famous Black Rock, Md., meeting in September of that year, when the Old School Baptists definitely set themselves apart as a distinct group within the Baptist denomination, the SIGNS is in the anomalous position of being both child and foster-parent of the Old School sect. It probably never would have been published had not fiery and determined Elder Beebe felt the need of getting before a larger Baptist public than he could command with his voice the truths and principles which he contended made up the true religion and which the new school of thought seemed to be ignoring and crowding out of the church altogether. And, once started, the SIGNS fostered the conservative cause as no other force outside of the Elder himself fostered it. Never an official publication of the church, it nevertheless has been the printed embodiment of the Old School Baptist cause, the mouthpiece for the writings of its Elders and laymen for a hundred years; and through all those decades of changing manners and morals and styles in religion, as well as in clothes and the printed page, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has changed as little as the denomination itself. Indeed, its greatest change—the announcement that it was devoted to the Old School Baptist cause rather than simply to the Baptist cause—was really more a change in form than fact. In fact, the SIGNS always was devoted to the Old School cause. There undoubtedly would have been no SIGNS had there been no Old School cause to foster. The first number was made up of denunciations of the new doctrines, or lack of doctrine, and of exhortations to the faithful to resist the formation of "Bible, tract and missionary societies, theological seminaries, Sabbath School Unions," and so on, as modern mistakes not approved by the true church. It was militant against those who would tamper with the true religion as Elder Beebe saw it.

The second issue, published nearly four months later, was even more militant. That was after the Black Rock meeting, and Baptists then were either Old School or New. The SIGNS was frankly Old in a thoroughly up-to-date manner. Profusely ridiculed by recognized publications of the church from which it had seceded, the SIGNS became known far beyond the limitations of its original circulation, and Elder Beebe was quick to recognize the value of mention, regardless of its tone, in rival publications. The SIGNS of to-day is less militant, but fully as conservative as that of 1832. The August number, just published, is composed chiefly of correspondence regarding the church and its beliefs between brethren and sisters of the faith, couched in phrases that would seem far more fitting under a 1832 than a 1932 date line. Like the first SIGNS, the newest number is

arranged in two wide columns to the page and entirely unadorned by any of the frills of modern printing, though the size of its type is very much kinder to the eye than that of the first number. It seems that in the opinion of its elder-editor the SIGNS had a second birth. So long a period elapsed from the time of publication of the first issue to the second, and such changes had taken place in the church that he designated the November issue, as he had the August issue, Vol. 1 No. 1. Lineal connection between the two was acknowledged, however, in profuse editorial apology and explanation for the lapse. Founded as a weekly, the SIGNS has gone through various mutations to settle down now as a monthly publication. For exactly a century the Beebes, father, sons and grandson, have assumed or accepted its publication as a trust, and for much more than half its career it has been printed on the same press, though at different Middletown addresses. Elder Gilbert Beebe was the main factor in the publication of the paper until his death. Elder Benton Jenkins took up the editorial responsibility then, but a few years later the Beebe name appeared again at the head of the staff as Elder William L. Beebe followed in his father's footsteps. Since him there have been Elder F. A. Chick, Elder H. C. Ker and Elder H. H. Lefferts of Leesburg, Va., as editors.

Elder Gilbert Beebe came to New Vernon, N. Y., from New England a short time before 1832 at the invitation of the Baptists in this region to take charge of the New Vernon and neighboring churches. According to one historian, the first SIGNS, prepared at New Vernon, was printed at the *Independent-Republican* office, in Goshen, N. Y. That continued for a year, until the Elder managed to assemble a printing plant at New Vernon. In 1836 Elder Beebe changed his place of publication to Alexandria, Va., but stayed there only about four years. He moved back to New Vernon, and then came to Middletown to take over the plant of the *Orange County News,* at 17 Orchard Street, where the present Gilbert Beebe got his first whiff of printers' ink.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Kingwood Church, of Locktown, Hunterdon County, New Jersey, to her sister associations with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once again we have been made glad to receive your messengers and ministering brethren. They have come to us preaching the gospel of peace and love in Christ Jesus our Lord, and harmony and good fellowship have abounded.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the First Hopewell Church, of Hopewell, Mercer County, New Jersey, beginning on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1933, when we hope to again meet and greet your messengers.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at home, Leesburg, Va., August 18th, 1932, William G. Lefferts and Miss Alice Virgin, daughter of F. M. and Alvina Virgin, of West Allis, Wisconsin.

By Elder J. J. Collins, at his residence, R. 2, Newton, Alabama, Mr. James M. Tindell, of Hartford, Alabama, and Miss Hildred Matthews, of Slocomb, Alabama.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence, in Delmar, Md., May 21st, 1932, Ira Lee West and Miss Sarah Elizabeth McGee, both of Laurel, Delaware.

By the same, July 6th, 1932, in the Old Baptist meetinghouse at Locktown, N. J., Samuel Louis Bodine and Miss Ida Rittenhouse Styker, both of Flemington, N. J.

By Elder G. E. Coulbourn, at the home of the bride, June 11th, 1932, Mr. Thomas Scott McElrath and Miss Dorothy Virginia Mellott, both of Salisbury, Md. Miss Dorothy Mellott is the daughter of the late Elder J. C. Mellott. They are making their home with the bride's mother, Mrs. Alice Mellott, Salisbury, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MRS. MARY WALKER OAKLEY was born December 27th, 1840, in the State of Tennessee, moved to Arkansas when a small child, and died at her home, near Fordyce, Ark., September 18th, 1931, being at that time over 91 years of age. Sister Oakley was married to Ruffin Oakley November 4th, 1860, and to that union were born six children, four of whom survive her: Thomas R., George, Sue and Mattie Oakley, the others having preceded her in death. Her husband died August 29th, 1886, leaving her in the home where he brought her as his bride, and there is where she spent the remaining portion of her life with her son George and the two girls. She was the last of a family of six girls and two boys. Besides the four children, there are nineteen grandchildren, twenty-five great-grandchildren and a great number of friends who mourn her death. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Pilgrims' Rest nearly forty years ago and has ever lived true and unwavering to the faith, and a more devoted or better christian I do not suppose has ever been found since the days of the apostles. She was well and fully grounded in the doctrine of predestination of all things, and God's perfection, and during all the confusion among the Baptists nothing ever moved her. Her presence at our meetings was always inspiring as she had such a wonderful and cheering manner to those of like faith. In fact, few were her equal and none her superior in that mother-like spirit by which she was so deeply led. Ever one loved "Aunt Mary," as she was called, and oh how we have missed her since her death, especially the writer, as she was most of the time present at our meetings. The church and the South Arkansas Association have lost a great and faithful friend and member, but we feel assured that our loss is her gain eternally.

The writer was sixty-five miles from home attending our Association at the time of her death, as she died the morning the meeting began, and runners were sent for me to return and conduct her funeral, which I did, leaving my office of Moderator in the hands of our beloved Elder John T. Everitt. The funeral was held at Princeton, Dallas County, Arkansas, Saturday evening, September 19th, 1932, where we laid her dear old body to rest until the time when God shall call all the sleeping dust of those who die in him, whom he will bring with him, and in that morning all who hear his voice shall come forth, and shall be changed in a moment of time, in the twinkling of an eye, and shall be caught up and be like him and be forever with him.

ALSO,

MRS. MARTHA ELLEN (ADAMS) EASTERLING died at the home of her son, James A. Easterling, near Fordyce, Ark., November 1st 1931. She was born near Bolivar, Tenn., November 1st, 1840, moved to Dallas County, Arkansas, December 24th, 1848, was married to Jones Easterling July 16th, 1865, joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Liberty Church November 17th, 1874, and was baptized by Elder T. B. Little. Sister Easterling was one of the mothers in Israel among our people. She was one who loved the cause, and, if possible, was found at her meetings. She knew the truth and from whom she had received it, and nothing gave her greater pleasure than to hear of the wonderful works of God, and the full and complete salvation finished in the death of the Son of God, and she never failed to contend for and defend that doctrine against all encroaching enemies of the truth. We miss her more than I can express, but we have to bow in humble submission to the will of him who doeth all things well, for he it is who giveth and who taketh away. Sister Easterling and sister Oakley came into the South Arkansas Association soon after the Civil War and were among the people who were in the organization of this Association, and when the division came the doctrine of conditional salvation had no charms for either of them, and they stood with the writer and gave him strong courage to battle on for the grand old doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone. As a woman and citizen, sister Easterling was one of the best and all who knew her respected her in the highest degree, and every one had a good word for "Aunt Matt," as she was called, even if they did not like her religious views. She and her husband had two children, who still survive. Her good husband died a few years ago, since which time she made her home with her two boys, Howel and James,

but spent most of her time at James' home, where she passed away in peace and trusting in that faith she had so long lived and trusted in for her hope beyond death.

Her funeral was largely attended and was conducted by Elder John T. Everritt and the writer, at Bethesda Cemetery, at what is called Old Chambersville, Calhoun County, Arkansas. May God's richest blessing rest upon all who mourn.

Written by her pastor,

V. R HARRIS.

OUR dear sister in Christ, **MRS. RACHEL CAROLINE HASTINGS MITCHELL,** departed this life April 3rd, 1932, at her home, near Salisbury, Md., aged 68 years, 6 months and 19 days. She was born September 14th, 1863, the daughter of the late Mr and Mrs. Eli Hastings, of near Delmar, Delaware. She was the oldest granddaughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Winder Hastings, of Delmar, Del., who were standard-bearers of the Old School Baptist denomination in this part of the country. As a child, sister Mitchell spent much of her time with them and was dearly beloved by them. In 1885 she was married to William C. Mitchell, to which union were born the following children, who, with our friend, Mr. Mitchell, survive her: Olive, Thurman, Victor and Horace. Olive is now Mrs. Wilber Carey, of Philadelphia, Thurman and Horace of Salisbury, Md., and Victor, of New York. She is also survived by two sisters: Mrs. G. H. Bradley and Mrs. Laura E. Knowles. The immediate cause of sister Mitchell's death was apoplexy, having suffered two strokes previously: on June 14th, 1931, and December 21st. On July 30th, 1898, she united with the Old School Baptist Church of Salisbury, Md., and was baptized by the late Elder S. H. Durand. Although she made no great display of her devotion to the church, it was deep and abiding. She loved the doctrine of God and all those who love the same truth. Her home was always open to the members and friends of the church. The writer, having known her from her childhood, also her father, mother and grandparents on both sides of the family, was requested to write her obituary. She was a modest, refined girl, possessing noble traits of character, all of which were more and more manifest as years increased.

The funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder G. E. Coulbourn, of Cape Charles, Va., at her late home, assisted by the writer. Interment was in the family plot in Parsons' Cemetery, Salisbury, Md. A very large concourse of people attended the funeral, manifesting their high regard and esteem for her. We shall miss her, but by her household more than words can express. We all love and sympathize with them, but this neither reaches the spot nor fills the vacancy.

Her lifelong friend,

H. C. KER.

THE sad news of the death of **ELDER S. S. PICKETT,** of Armond, Florida, has come to me, and also a letter written by one of Elder Pickett's daughters to a friend, Dr. L. W. Warren, better describing it than could the writer, so I inclose the letter to be published with these remarks. It was the writer's pleasure to meet Elder Pickett on a visit to the Salisbury Association several years ago, and to hear him preach the gospel, as he was gifted in doing. Later it was my pleasure to visit him in his churches and to see how wonderfully they loved and esteemed him, their pastor. Elder Pickett made the second visit to the Salisbury Association and was well received and his preaching was to the edification and comfort of those present, and they will regret to learn of the death of this brother, not that they feel he is not better off, but those left behind, his family, brethren and friends, will miss him. May the Lord reconcile us to his will in this, as in all other things.

G. E COULBOURN.

BARTOW, Florida, June 20, 1932.

Dear Dr. Warren:—I am writing this to you, as I thought it might be best you break the news to Mrs. Warren. My father, Elder S. S. Pickett, died Thursday a. m. at 1 o'clock, June 16th, 1932, was buried at Ormand Church cemetery at 3:30 p. m. of the same day. The doctors say it was complications, but an abscessed kidney breaking was the cause of death. He was sick ten days, and in a coma for the last eight hours. Just before his last breath, though, he smiled as pretty a smile as ever was on his face. After he was dressed and laid out he looked as if he was ready to speak and a smile was on his face. I would appreciate your letting the folks up there know, and write the Baptist papers there that Dad liked so well, and should they put an obituary notice in them I would thank you to have a copy sent to me. Tell the folks not to grieve for him for he wanted to go, and he went smiling, but to remember me in their prayers, for I am so lonely without him.

ELLOUISE PICKETT GEIGER.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

I am expecting to leave New Mexico in a few days, so you may change my address from La Mesa to 604 Pasadena Street, San Antonio, Texas, and insert a notice in the SIGNS so my correspondents may address me there. My health is not improving in New Mexico, but gradually declining, and the letters I receive from the dear brethren are of great comfort to me, even though I cannot answer all personally.

As ever, your brother in bonds,

J. B. BOWDEN.

MEETINGS.

The Maine Association is appointed to be held with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 7th, 8th and 9th, 1932. All who love the truth are welcome.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD.

Box 107, MEDFIELD, Mass.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association is to convene with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Shokan, Ulster County, New York, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, between the second and third Sundays in September (September 14th, 15th and 16th, 1932). Those coming by automobile Tuesday p. m. come direct to the church and there will be some one there to direct them to places of entertainment, also the trains will be met Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

ORVILLE WINCHELL, Deacon.

Because of the depressed condition of the brethren composing the San Marcos Association, we deem it necessary to discontinue, or call in the associational meeting for the present year, which was to be held with the Providence Church, near Blanco, Texas, September 23rd, 24th and 25th. We feel a delicacy in doing this, but it seems to be unavoidable at the present time, and we think best (if possible) to hold the meeting at Providence in 1933 at the regular time. Our churches being scattered so far apart makes it inconvenient.

J. B. BOWDEN, Moderator.

The Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association will convene in her ninety-first session with Pilgrims' Rest Church, at Fordyce, Dallas County, Arkansas, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 16th, 17th and 18th, 1932. Pilgrims' Rest Church is located one-half mile south of Cotton Belt Railroad station. Cotton Belt and Rock Island Railroads operate trains daily to this point, also Highway buses from all the highways arrive four times each day. This church is easily accessible from every direction, either by train, bus or auto, to all who desire to visit us. We invite all Regular Old School Baptists, especially ministers, to meet with us at this time and place.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator,
FORDYCE, Arkansas.

J. L. WATSON, Association Clerk,
TINSMAN, Arkansas.

The Original Mount Zion Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet in its ninety-first annual session at Oak Grove, Jackson County, Missouri, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 30th, October 1st and 2nd, 1932, beginning at 10:30 a. m. The meetinghouse is one mile south of Oak Grove, on Highway 24 E. Oak Grove is on the C. & A. R. R., and on U. S. Highway No. 40. We gladly welcome all lovers of the truth.

DANIEL A. J. ADAMS, Moderator.
(MRS.) J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 12th, 13th and 14th, 1932. We especially invite ministers and brethren of our correspondence to meet with us, but also all others who love the truth and who desire to meet with us. Do not wait for any special personal invitation, but come: all you who can and will. The place of meeting can be reached by bus and by private auto, but not by train. All who come by way of Washington, D C., and wish to be conveyed to the meeting, take Winchester busses, via Lee Highway, and get off at Lenah, Va., if they come Tuesday. Those who come Wednesday morning will get off at the meetinghouse. Those coming in private auto will come out of Washington over Lee Highway to beyond Fairfax Courthouse, where they will take State Route 50 to the meetinghouse. Please watch the October SIGNS for further information as to bus schedule.

C. M. TURMAN, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of sister N. J. Preston, 116 Center Street, Oregon City, Oregon, at 10:30 a. m. Those coming by stage, steam train or electric car get off at Seventh Street, take elevator to top of the hill, cross trestle over railway tracks, turn to the right, go two blocks on Sixth Street to Center Street, thence five and one-half blocks south on Center Street to 116, house number, between First and Second Streets. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Moderator.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at the home of sister E. Brunow, 411 N. Ridgeway Avenue, and on the second, third and fourth Sundays at the home of brother W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. The fifth Sundays are by appointment. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastors, Elders Jones and Janes.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminiar Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

Cloth binding 75c each. Paper covers, single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and all to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 100. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1932. NO. 10.

POETRY.

TRENTON, New Jersey.

DEAR EDITORS:—Not having bothered you with anything from my pen for a long time, I would like to have the following verses reprinted in the SIGNS, as they express my feelings at this time better than anything I now could write. They were printed in the SIGNS in 1869.

CASPER G. FETTER.

IN A TIME OF AFFLICTION.

Dear Lord, in trouble's gloomy day,
I'll humbly seek thy face, and pray.
To all my mournful cry attend,
And help, and peace, and comfort send.

Prostrate before thee in the dust,
I'll own thou'rt holy, wise and just;
Thy strokes I can, with truth, assert
Are lighter far than my desert.

Yet, Lord, permit my soul to plead
For help, in this my time of need;
O make, and O preserve me still
Submissive to thy holy will.

Give me a meek, a lowly mind,
Believing, patient, and resigned;
And make me learn, my gracious God,
Obedience, by thy smarting rod.

Let not my heart with proud disdain
Against thee murmur or complain;
Nor let a hard or stupid frame
Dishonor thy most holy name.

Though the fierce tempest now is strong,
And though 'tis dark, it won't be long;
I humbly hope for better days,
To speak, and sing, and live thy praise.

But oh my brightest times will be
When I thy face in glory see:
Released from every painful care,
Nor sin, nor trouble enter there.

THE MAN OF GALILEE.

It comes to me,
The sweetest story ever told;
'Tis found recorded
In the everlasting Word,
How God in Jesus Christ,
To vanquish every foe,
Went forth from Galilean lands
Of long ago.

The Man of Galilee,
The Man of Galilee,
This man went forth to die,
To die for you and me;
And never was there known,
In all the world above,
Nor yet upon the earth below,
Such love—such love.

He died, and rose again,
This Man of Galilee
Oh glory to his name,
He died for you and me;
He rose a conqueror,
Who died for sinful men;
He lives, this Man of Galilee,
He lives again.

We'll see him by and by,
Some day "in Galilee,"
In that "New Earth," our home,
Our home that is to be.
Our Lord is coming back,
Awake, my soul, and sing,
Watch for the Man of Galilee,
Watch for the King.

The Man of Galilee,
The Man of Galilee
What joy and bliss divine,
Since I have come to be
In touch of heart with God,
The man of Galilee.

Written by

ANDREW SHERWOOD.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PSALMS XLVI. 4.

"THERE is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High."

First in my mind is the river which has its source in eternity, in the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Ghost. It is a pure river, flowing from Alpha, the beginning, to Omega, the end, from eternity to eternity, into that place of broad rivers and streams wherein goes no galley with oars, nor gallant ships pass thereby. It is the river of salvation, and on either side of the river was there the tree of life. This river flowed for the rejoicing of the city of God. It is the Lord's seal that they are his and is for the gladness of the church. The elect while in time must have evidence, assurance of salvation, so the streams are given for gladness and are the testimonies through the inspired men of old written for our comfort. First, we have predestination, the foreordained plan of God, and as "the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein," he has the absolute right to carry out his plan to the uttermost. The first commandment was given to Adam, that he was not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God is the lawgiver, and being holy, without sin, above the law, he can do no evil. He created the wicked for the day of evil, he raised up Pharaoh for the persecution of the Israelites and gave Satan leave to afflict Job, and every act, both good and evil, ever performed on the earth was in the foreordained plan of God, else how could his power be complete? Every heaven-born child of God trusts in an all-powerful Being, and believes in a Lord over all; if they do not, there is no hope for them. He can do no sin, for sin is no part of him. He is not, never was and never shall be a partaker of or the author of sin. Sin came by the fall of man, and God was before man. To use an inadequate expression, I will say that sin in God's hand is the means to manifest his power over sin and proves the sovereignty of the Most High.

Now we come to election, which for the purpose of showing forth the reason of his plan, the fulfillment of which and the application of its power, we find that God over all purposed that out of all creation a people should be called by his name to testify of his omnipotence. After Adam we have Abel, who was the first to manifest that by the shedding of blood there is remission of sin. His sacrifice of the lamb was acceptable to God. Abel himself did not escape death, even though his sacrifice was pleasing to the Lord, for as he was the seed of Adam, the truth of God's words to Adam, "Ye shall surely die," must be fulfilled; but the heritage of the Lord did not die, for with Seth came the assurance: For God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew. So we can trace the elect, called of God, through all the holy Scripture, and the seal is, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." God has given to his elect from among all nations a hope in the eternal habitation of God, a rest from the presence of sin.

Having been shown the plan of salvatino, and the ones for whom it was ordained, we come to the sweet, though bloody, stream of atonement which flows from the wounds of the Redeemer, who was pierced by wicked hands that the elect should have salvation. These wicked were created for that purpose, and yet God cannot be the author of sin. That act was the most cruel of all acts ever committed, for innocent blood was shed for sinners. "We also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." These three, predestination, election, atonement, are the first three streams of the river of salvation, and because of these the called of God may fully enjoy the fourth: the vital unity of Christ and his people. They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts. After tasting of the joys of these streams, can we not come to the wonderful theme of the resurrection? Christ's words are, I am the resurrection and the life. Paul writes, speaking of the body, "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption." Not grows into, or swallowed up into incorruption, but raised, lifted up. There is no obstacle, no hindrance in the way of its being raised. Death is necessary in order that the body should be raised. Some have said flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom. If that means the flesh and blood that we know (and I think it does) which has inherent in it the germs of decay, then those words are true; but in the likeness of Christ's own body, which could in no way become corrupt, could not decay, every heaven-born child of God shall be raised in that likeness. As we have been created in Christ, so also shall we be raised in Christ. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." Not the seed, but the ripened sheaves, the seed of which was planted in this earth, and which shall be raised up in the perfect image of Christ, and they shall be satisfied when they awaken in his likeness. This raising of the body is no new thing in our belief, our fathers for generations past believed it. John says, "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."—John v. 28, 29. If God has so decreed who can set it at naught? "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies."—Rom. viii. 11. Now, if by the power of God our mortal bodies were quickened, and given natural life, as we read that he "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul," then there must follow death. The body is the only part of man that can die and go to corruption, for the spirit is life and goes to him who gave it.

There are many streams which make glad the city of God, but time cannot be long enough to tell about all of them, the half can never be told. Having so much given us for joy, poor creatures we are that we cannot give the glory to

our Creator, Redeemer and Comforter without strife. Sad it is that we so often make our brother an offender for a word.

Many of the above thoughts were impressed upon me while I was listening to the reading of the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians at the funeral of a dear sister in Christ. Unbelief is the thing that muddies the streams: unbelief in our brethren, unbelief in our calling, unbelief in the unlimited power of God. Since God predestinated the salvation of man, called him by grace, gave his Son for atonement, planted love so strongly that there can be no eternal separation between Christ and his bride, sanctified the elect, preserving them through time and calling them unto the power of the resurrection, how then can we doubt that the dead are raised up? The Bible is written for our comfort in the spiritual life, also for instruction and reproof in our natural life. It is not all prophecies or allegories, but plain truth easily read. God made man of the dust, he will also call him from the dust, but no dust will cling to him. As we lay aside our clothes at night to rest, so also shall we lay aside sin, the evils of the flesh, and come forth in the likeness of Him who died to make this certain. This is the truth, for the Scripture teaches it, and each must be shown it for himself, so why set ourselves against each other in these things? God will not be mocked, neither will he allow one iota to be taken from the glory of the Godhead; the plan, the fulfillment and the application are all in his hands. We all are not in need of the same manner of the application of the Spirit, some may have leprosy, some sore boils, some temptations of the flesh, some lameness, but whatever is needful is so applied. How often we forget that Christ died for us, and through that death made us heirs of God. Then we find that pride, conceit, arrogance, uncharitableness, hurt our brother. When flesh is in evidence, then Christ is hidden and it is easy to forget his mercy.

I hope God will correct and chastise me if I have said anything amiss, anything that fails to ascribe power to him. If I have written the truth, may some poor soul have comfort as God sees fit to give it. I want always to feel passive in his hands and know no will but his. If I am one of the sheep of God's fold, he will continue to chastise me, love me and cause me to grow in the knowledge of the truth, and God be praised.

E. L. FETTER.

TRENTON, New Jersey.

KINGSTON, New York.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find a good letter written to my daughter Lillian by Elder Arnold H. Bellows, which was greatly enjoyed by her, also by the rest of us, and I thought we would pass it on to the household of faith that they, too, may enjoy it.

I feel to write a little of God's goodness in restoring our daughter to us when medical skill could do nothing and the doctors said she could not live. She has been in bed twenty weeks and had two operations, but thanks be to

almighty God, she is slowly improving. It has been a wonderful demonstration of God's power and mercy to poor sinners. He has not only restored her, but there is also great evidence of the work of grace in her heart. She has been given wonderful faith in her God.

Yours in hope,

ORVILLE WINCHELL.

ROXBURY, New York.

DEAR LILLIAN:—It has been on my mind for a few days to write you, but I have not found the time before. You do not know how many times thoughts of you come creeping into my heart and I find something flowing out to you in that loving interest and tender regard one feels for one whom the Lord has singularly afflicted and yet so wonderfully blessed. You are a sermon to me, my dear and precious friend, as I realize that the Lord has brought you down into a very low place that his glory might be manifested in his lifting up your very being in both a natural way and also in a spiritual sense. He wounds and he makes glad the heart by his healing. He bruises but he binds up again, always in love and always in mercy. I believe he has heard your prayer and the answer is registered in heaven and confirmed by your recovering so nicely, slowly but surely. In your patience, possess your souls, is a Scripture that may well apply to you, and you are one of those blessed characters that is spoken of in Revelation in these words: These are they which have come through great tribulation and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Those characters have a desire in regard to holy things, they inquire in the Lord's temple, and have faith given them to seek, and that God-given faith is always rewarded. No dead person naturally has any desire of a natural sense, and so if spiritually dead, the one in that condition has no spiritual desire or interest, and the things of the kingdom of heaven are of no concern. Life must precede activity, and so the life which is hid with God in Christ causes you to seek knowledge of God, to desire that the revealed things that belong unto his children shall be yours to enjoy. They already are, as I have witnessed, yours to possess now in an ever increasing measure. Satan had the world under his dominion as the prince of this world because of sin, and the bride, the church, was in bondage, subject to death. Jesus took upon himself the obligation because of his love and electing choice to redeem those that by faith believe, and his death on the cross for those that comprise the church redeemed his people. When he arose from the dead Christ was able to successfully dispute with Satan the posession of those for whom he died, and when Jesus ascended to heaven, before the great Judge of all his title to his bride was confirmed by God, and through the merit of that blood all true believers are presented holy and without blame in love before the Father. Suppose I cannot pay a debt, and my creditor takes a judgment against me and I can own no property until that judgment is satisfied. But if I have

a piece of property, I cannot possess it until that judgment or claim is satisfied. But if that judgment is satisfied, I have a receipt or statement to that effect. Presenting that before the judge or magistrate, I have a title confirmed to any property I may claim by right of possession. So the death of Jesus satisfied the judgment of God against guilty sinners his blood redeemed. The resurrection of Christ was the receipt of that satisfaction, and the presence in heaven of the ascended Jesus was the confirmation of the title of our Lord to his own people. The first man Adam, that is the natural man, has no eternal life in him by virtue of birth naturally and so cannot rise from the dead by and of himself. The first Adam was made from earth only, but Jesus Christ, being born of the Holy Ghost, was God from heaven in the person of the man Jesus, so being God in man, that is, in the flesh, Christ could rise from the dead, for God is a Spirit and cannot die. So you see that when you are born again of the Spirit you have the operation of the power of Christ in your soul, and so you live by faith, because you cannot see his Spirit, and when you pass from this world in death, that same Spirit of God is able, and will raise you from the dead, and as Jesus is with the Father in glory, so will you be. Your trials have been for one reason, that you might be led to think upon his holy name, that when you are restored to health you may testify as a witness unto Jesus of the great things he has done for you, how he has helped you when the power of man failed, how low down you were and yet he gave you faith and the victory; and in these very things you will comfort others who are afflicted. You will minister to them. So be very patient and you will win out.

I hope when I come to Kingston to come in and visit with you. Love to your parents and kindest regards to Verna and Lelah.

Your faithful friend, and your brother in spirit,

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

PRAYER.

WHAT does it consist of, or what does a child of God mean when he tries to pray? We find recorded in Luke xi. 1-4, "And it came to pass, that as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Now any one that can read and talk can repeat the above Scripture, but unless we have been quickened and made alive, and faith given us, it would not be prayer. We find in Luke xi. 9, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Tenth verse: "For every one that asketh receiveth; and he

that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." This all sounds simple and easy enough, but I want to ask the children of God, Can we when in trouble, and feel to be afar off, smite upon our breasts and acknowledge we are vile sinners, always get relief, or what we ask for? Do we not read in the Scriptures, which we are commanded to search, of famines, sore afflictions of the children of men, and do we not believe those who suffered tried to pray for relief? Now what about it? It seems there is friction or something about it we do not understand. Come, let us reason together and see if we have any light on the subject. Let us take the natural kind and intelligent father, will he at all times give to his children all they ask for, especially when they are of a young and tender age, not capable of knowing what is for their good. No, he will in love give what is best for them to have, when able to do so. If a child ask of his parent a fish he will not give a serpent, or if he ask an egg he will not give him a scorpion, looking over the child for good. But the natural father makes mistakes, but our heavenly Father is perfect, does all things right, makes no mistakes in reference to the time to give and what to give. One might say, Will he not do his will without our petitions or prayers? But, my brother, what is your experience? Do you desire to pray to God when in trouble or sore afflicted? I believe you do, and do we not feel, in the language of the poet, What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer? We remember we are commanded always to pray. We notice our Elders in public worship, they will often say, Let us try to pray, and I think well to do so, for at times it is simply a form of words, no praying at all. So, after all, my brethren, I know of no safe way to travel. Abraham did not know his way in a strange land, but if God lead us and guide us we will ere long reach the promised land, and he has promised not to leave nor forsake us. If any lack wisdom let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not. Did not God in his own time heed the cries and prayers of Israel when oppressed in Egypt, although they waited long and suffered much? Now God did great things for them, in and through instructions of Moses and Joshua, but it had to be done according to God's will, and at his appointed time. So, after all, we believe still in the same God that changes not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed, and that he will give grace and glory to them that walk uprightly.

Brethren, I feel to be a great sinner, so I ask you to pray for me when permitted to do so.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

R. L. DODSON.

DANVILLE, Virginia.

BENTON, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—Knowing that God works all things for the good of them that love him and who are the called according to his purpose, I will try to pen a few words, the Lord willing, for the

readers of this paper, and if it is worth anything to any one give me no praise, for if I in any way know the Lord it is all of him who maketh himself known and teacheth his own, even the least unto the greatest, and most surely if I am one at all I am the least, not worthy in my natural first born state to call upon his name. On waking this a. m. at one o'clock this thought came to me: God yet rules, he has ever ruled his people, and his Son yet lives to make intercession for us, who are so poor and needy that we know not how to pray as we ought, but would with our personal selfishness ask, and if it were granted would consume it on our ownselves the pride of life and the lust of the flesh. But we who hope in Jesus, who feel that God's great love has been bestowed upon us and we are called sons of his, want God's will to be done in us and through us, we want to crown him Lord of all for awaking us out of death and causing us to see by faith the promised land, seeing, as we hope, the kingdom, which we could not see had we not been born of the incorruptible seed that lives forever. In Isaac all the seed was blessed, the covenant made, so he (Isaac) was the child of promise, and in God's time he was given to his parents. So in God's time we are regenerated and made to see and live. Abraham had sons after the lust of the flesh, but only one after the promise. I often think of the Arminian churches working so hard to add to their numbers, and I think of Abraham's family, all after the flesh but Isaac. We might add others to our church by working on their sympathy, but would they be children of the promise? It is very sweet and soul-comforting to think that God adds daily such as should be saved. He knows them and he gave them to his Son, and all that he gave him will come to him. Where could we mothers rest, what vine could we rest under if it depended upon our works, and we could not get our sons to listen to us, or the evangelist, or the Sunday School teacher? How we would be tossed about. But when we awake with the thought that God yet rules, and is going to rule on and on through time here and through eternity, and that means for ever and ever, so there is where we can rest, when our hope is in a finished salvation complete in Jesus, who was made everything for us and stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world for the sheep who were to hear his voice and follow him. He says another they will not follow. He calls each one by name and they go after him. They are God's children, his brethren, and he laid down his natural life for them, took up his abode in the flesh for them, suffered and died, arose victorious over death and the grave, that whosoever believeth in him should have everlasting life, and, thanks be to God, we poor weaklings cannot even make believers, but as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed. How can they sink with such a prop as our eternal God? He holds it all up and secures it with his loving-kindness, oh how great! and we who are poor and needy, cast down, often slow of speech, and not eloquent

at all, in our low estate desire to thank him, for if we know anything aright we would yet be down in the Egyptian land serving under the hard task-masters there, and the great king of sin, Pharaoh, over us. But we hope the blood has been applied and we are indeed and in truth of the ones that the Lord said pass over. He caused to die the first born one, and the younger was then brought forth, when the death blow was dealt to the first born one, the Egyptian child. For Esau was first, but he sold out to Jacob. Jacob received the blessing, he was the younger, and the elder should serve the younger. Sometimes it is hard to keep under our bodies. Paul says, I keep under my body and bring it into subjection. Sometimes the flesh is so alive that we doubt over hope even, but he soon begins to entreat Pharaoh to let us go into the wilderness to make a feast unto the Lord our God. Then our fleshly body, wherein dwells the spirit, the new man, goes sometimes a long journey to church to worship, feeling hardly able physically to go, yet it being the elder serves the younger, and the inner man that is renewed day by day brings it into subjection.

I must close, but there is still a great deal to be said about the rulings of God. No mortal tongue can ever tell it all, for the heavens cannot contain him. He is everywhere, ever present. With me it is just one long drawn out affair, asking always for grace and mercy when I hope I am led my the Spirit, and at other times I am afar off, and no thought of God, the Son or the Holy Ghost, a stranger to myself I seem to be. Oh is there any one like me?

I desire to thank the publishers for continuing my paper. It is a very welcome guest in my humble home, but it took financial depression, it seems, to make me know its worth. When we have plenty of the unrighteous mammon we do not praise the "true riches" as we should. But that, too, is in God's hands.

Please do not let this crowd out other things more worthy of note. Perhaps I should not have written this, but my mind seemed burdened with things I wanted to write. If it is not the truth, or is of no consequence, do not publish it, and all will be well with me. I thank you for past favors.

Farewell in the Lord.

EFFIE BLOGG.

GOD IS LOVE.

God is love, and "he hath set his love upon me," (Psalms xci. 14,) so wrote the sweet singer, David, of our beloved Jesus, the Lord, long before "he stood in the latter day upon the earth," and many times has this song resounded in the hearts of those who love God, and they, too, have said, "He hath set his love upon me," even me. The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool. Also, That he shall give his angels charge over thee, to bear thee up in all thy ways. Thus was declared the love of God for his only begotten Son, whose ways and truth and

life the Father said his angels should bear up and support and manifest in this gospel day, the one prophesied of by David and all the other prophets. All the elect children of God are embraced in the love and life of God's dear Son. David also said, Love is strong as death. Christ in his love for the church hath conquered death, hell and the grave. When his work in his flesh was finished our Lord sat down on the right hand of the Father to rule and overrule until all things were put under his feet, or, in other words, under his righteous rule or government, for it was written that the government of this kingdom of righteousness shall be upon his shoulder. It may often seem to us poor finite mortal creatures that God has forsaken the world, of which John said, God so loved that he sent his only begotten Son, that whosoever believed on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Is this not love indeed? There are no conditions in the possession of this life and love, for it is as sure as the truth that Christ is risen. Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. His friends are those who follow after him in whatsoever way he leadeth them. I have loved them as thou hast loved me. Behold, what manner of love is this the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love. Then none followeth him without that love and charity which faileth not. We love God because he first loved us, and taught us to know him, whom to know is life eternal. Beloved, if God so loved us, we should bear toward each other the same love and mercy. God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, goodness, longsuffering, faith, etc., against which there is no law, and therein is no fear. But these things are from God, and no natural flesh or spirit. The love of Christ constraineth us, keeping us from evil. It appears that God at times is pleased to leave his people to themselves, so to speak, and then calamity will assert itself and they will act unseemly in the sight of the brethren, who can then judge their wrong doings or wicked acts, but not themselves unto destruction, for whom Christ died. In God's time there will be a returning into the fold of love, which never faileth. This cord of love drawing us from above makes us to love the Lord our God with all our strength of mind and heart, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. This strength of mind and heart may seem to be very weak and small to us, but it is all-sufficient in the day of God's power, or time in which he requires at our heart and hand. This love, charity, teaches us to deal gently and mercifully with all men. Indeed what a millennium it will be when the enemies of Christ's righteous reign shall be subdued in full and brought under him and his rule of love and righteousness, which shall conquer all things. Every one that loveth is born of God. There is no fear in love, for perfect love

(God) casteth out fear. Love covereth all sins. (Prov. x. 12.) Love your enemies and those who despitefully use you. Now this seems hard and impossible to the mind of man, but all things are possible with God, and such love is of God. If love covereth all sins, the sins of our enemies are covered and forgiven by the love of God in us. Jesus said of those who put him to death, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. We know that he spoke not a word in vain. Then if the Father, for the Son's sake, forgiveth ignorance and weakness, who are we that we should not forgive all? The love of God in us moves us to forgive our enemies, yea, even to seventy times seventy. Such love and forgiveness is altogether beyond the carnal nature of man. We are not to love the sins and wickedness of any. We hate sin and are dead to it. But that love that covereth all sins is that mantle of charity which is cast over them in their ignorance and weakness. Our Beloved is the chiefest among ten thousand, and he said to his beloved, If you love me, keep my commandments. Which are all embodied in the one word love. This is the mesage we heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. And by this we shall know that we are born of God, for God is love. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it. The waters and floods are the trials, troubles and cares of this life, and can never extinguish this love. Nay, but are rather fuel for its growth and enlargement, in that trials and afflictions bring us nearer to Jesus and his sufferings, which were in the love of God for us. If a man should give all the substance of his house for this love, such substance would utterly be contemned, no comparison. The substance of our earthly house is not to be compared to our building not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Pure love and undefiled is that from above, which is of God.

A few thoughts, but far short of the glory of God. I hope all can see more in this wonderful text than I have been able to bring out.

In hope of this love,

(MRS.) C. M. THETFORD.

COLUMBUS, Georgia.

LA MESA, New Mexico, Dec. 18, 1931.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—A dear brother in California asked me to write an article on the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things and send it to the SIGNS. In writing on this most sublime subject I feel I am too unlearned to attempt to write upon this, the most wonderful point of the doctrine of the Bible, and besides the weakness and inability of my mind, it seems that the dear brethren for the last several years have ably written on this point of doctrine, and at this time I do not think it could be more forcibly defined than has been done, but I will try in my weak way to contribute a few words for the consideration of the editors and the many readers.

First, I will say I know nothing about any predestination which is not *absolute*. I have heard by the hearing

of the ear that there is more than one kind of predestination: one is conditional, one is limited to that of man, one is limited to all good things; that is, all good things are and were predestinated, and of course that leaves me to wonder what rules the evil things, and what are the evil things. My mind has for the last twenty-five years been led to speak of the great and wonderful mercy, love and providence of God to his little ones here in time, and the final perseverance of his little ones to glory by his unchangeable and divine grace, and how that God did by his everlasting love, according to his immutable purpose, redeem us by the appearing of the great God in the form of man, the man Christ Jesus, who was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, and condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Rom. viii. 4.) The law was just, holy and good, but the flesh was weak, frail and depraved. He sent his Son into the world to save his people from their sins, and, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, it by wicked hands crucified and slew him. By what? By wicked hands, not by good hands, but by wicked hands, and that according to his determinate counsel. You good fellows, who were afraid to pick up sticks on the Sabbath day, you who would condemn the righteous for plucking the ears of corn on the Sabbath day, yea, you did it, and how? Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, God's eternal purpose must be fulfilled, and they did it in condemning the Just, and it was for benefit, and was one of the "all things" that work together for good to them who are the called according to his purpose. It must needs be some one whom he foreknew, some great multitude embraced in his foreknowledge and counsel prior to the execution, hence the apostle said, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he [his Son] might be the firstborn among many brethren."—Rom viii. 29. The image of the Son of God, which these brethren must be conformed to. Jesus was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, was that the image under consideration? I think not, but the divine image he assumed in his mighty resurrection, that is the blessed image every one embraced in the counsel of God shall awake with, and they are the ones who shall appear with that image spotless, and here is where the poor little trembling child's hope is concerned; this is the predestinated image to which the called according to his purpose attain. They are the ones of whom it is said, "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Paul said again, Called with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace. He adopted us into the perfect image of his Son, which adoption is that one taken from the Adam family and adopted into another family. The adopted heir is by

the law of adoption a legal heir with the family, and has a perfect right to the promise, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." He has predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, and the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace, in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh ALL things after the counsel of his will; that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. (Eph. i. 5, 6; ii. 12.)

The above has been my meat and drink for more than thirty years, and in all that time I have never had time to look for a limited God, never had time to try and see just what a carnal mind could find in the form of a conditional predestination, but all I have in my weak mind ever found was that which pertained to the perfection of God, and in all my poor attempts to speak in his name I have never found anything satisfactory to me but the unlimited sovereignty of God. While I have traveled along the King's highway (1 Sam. vi. 12,) I have feared to turn to the right or to the left, and have been satisfied with the thought that God in his infinite wisdom and purpose would be glorified in all his attributes. Often when I hear brethren or friends arguing on predestination, and seem to want to arrange it to suit the carnal mind, or the general idea of the world, it makes me think that surely they have not been taught of God the truth of his perfect sovereignty, for they seem to want to cull out some of the most sublime things on record, such as the selling of Joseph by his brethren to the Ishmaelites, the raising up of Pharaoh, David's sin in numbering Israel, David having Uriah slain in battle in order to get his wife, Samson killing the thirty Philistines, Gideon in the slaughter of the Midianites, the woman killing the man Sisera with a nail and hammer, Peter's denial of his Lord, when he cursed and swore he did not know the man, the adultery of Lot with his two daughters, the nations which were destroyed by David's army, and the most cruel and heinous crime that we have any account of in history, the slaying of the Just, the man Christ Jesus, a man in whom no guile was found in his mouth. Thousands of things have come to pass which we look at as black sin, which God in his purpose and counsel determined to be done, and all work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. What right have we to set bounds for the Almighty, seeing he is Ruler, and works all things after the counsel of his will? It is sufficient for me, and I feel for all the true Israel of God, to stand still and know that he is God, and that he will do as it is his infinite mind and purpose to do. He in his mercy hath given us a gracious hope in the final resurrection

at the last day that we shall awake with his likeness, and then be satisfied. Oh what a glorious thought! that when the last trumpet shall sound the dead in Christ shall arise in that glorious image of him, and shall see him as he is, and be like him. (1 John iii. 2.) We shall bear his image, for we were chosen to that end. For, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."—Eph. i. 4, 5. Not according to that which we have or can do, not for any foreseen good in us, but according to his own free will and purpose. I cannot for the life of me see why any sensible, unbiased person can have the audacity to stand up in the face of the undeniable record and advocate anything contrary to the doctrine of predestination of all things, for in the the quotations above is pictured our eternal and everlasting salvation prefixed on the certainty of God's design, freely and unchangeably. The certainty of his decree is fixed to the everlasting salvation of his elect who were predestinated to be conformed to the image of Jesus, in which all the imps of hell can never destroy one little one, for they were secured by the promise of God in the beginning, or ever the earth was, because they were chosen in him (Jesus) before the foundation of the world. Dear brethren, this is our hope, this is our refuge, and a present help in time of trouble, for our daily experience is that we can only look to him who is the author of our faith. Yea, when we read of the beauty of him, and the love he manifested for us on the cross, who has said to us, Be of good courage, for I have overcome the world, then when we reflect back to our days of sin we can but wonder how such an one could be so gloriously housed in that paradise, there to forever bear the perfect image of Jesus. If left to ourselves and to the goodness of our hands and to the righteousness of our own we would of all men be most miserable, for Paul said, If in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable. In our experience we have learned that in us (that is, in our flesh,) there dwelleth no good thing, for that which we can produce in life is of short duration and perishable, as the fig-leaf apron Adam made in the Garden. The doctrine of a certainty is prefixed by every attribute of God. When we preach the gospel of God we fail to declare unto you all the counsel of God if we try to cull out some of the things we in our carnal minds think to be evil, and which seem evil to us, for it is taught that God works *all things* after the counsel of his will. The apostles never did such things, but fearlessly stood firmly upon the decrees of God, and on down the line to the present men have been called to defend the doctrine of the sovereignty of God. I can well remember back fifty years and listening

to the old servants of God declaring the predestination of God over all worlds, creatures and things, such men as old Elders W. A. Bowden, J. M. Perkins, R. H. Boaz, and a host of others, who in their last days were put to the test on the doctrine against the introduction of a softening down of the decrees, and how they did preach the certainty of God in the salvation of poor needy creatures, and that by the love, mercy, and according to his everlasting choice in Jesus Christ before the world was, and that the poor little ones would persevere triumphantly to glory, through grace, unto a perfect image of him who died that we might live, for as he was delivered for our offenses, just that surely was he raised again for our justification. Therefore, brethren, our justification, our sanctification, our calling and our final resurrection from the dead will be accomplished in fullness by the same power that raised our Lord Jesus Christ. Then might we exclaim as did the apostle, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."—Rom. xi. 33, 36.

I will leave these scattered thoughts to the better judgment of the editors. I have only hinted at the subject, for the end cannot be reached in this short life on earth.

Pray for me, a poor sinner.

J. B. BOWDEN.

LONDON, Ontario.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—While sitting this lovely morning under the shade of this tree sewing, my mind was taken back to my early girlhood days, when very active and full of life, how in the midst of all this cheer of life I was stricken down and made to cry out feelingly to him whom my soul loveth. O, dear brother, the anguish of my soul was beyond mentioning. I had no desire to see any of my associates, and used to hide from them, for I felt as a stricken deer; their company I did not desire, for I was seeking my dear Savior and there was no room for the giddiness of this world left in my heart. Mine seemed an outside case, the pleasures of the world were a great burden to me, and, dear brother, as I sat here this morning all this came back to me as a book placed before me in memory's garden and I wept much and my heart was made to see the work of the Spirit of God in my young heart, cut down to the pleasures of this world, so that I could not go with my young companions with any joy as I used to do, for I was toiling hard to overcome my bitter complaint that was taking all the life out of me, so to speak. My parents took me to a doctor, but he could find no sickness. O, dear brother, no earthly doctor could cure my malady, the great Physician for sin-sick souls had to come leaping upon the mountains of joy and speak to my troubled soul, and let me feel that this sickness I had no earthly doctor could heal, but that One by the name of Jesus could say, Peace, be still. While sitting under this shade

I believe Jesus drew near and sat with me in spirit and with this wonderful wrought work of his. I laid my work away and you, my dear brother, came to my mind, to pen you these few lines, for of late I seem to be hunting for new evidence that I am a child of God. This week I had a letter from my pastor. He complained of his cast down condition, because he was mourning an absent God, and said, "This is not much of a letter," but the joy of his words "mourning an absent God," was the richest joy I have had for some time, and did me much good. Heart speaks to heart, and I surely know what it is to mourn an absent God. Is it not lovely that the bitter is made sweet along the journey of life when we can see eye to eye?

In the June SIGNS Elder McClanahan had a sweet letter, telling how he watched for the postman to see if he would bring him a letter from some brother or sister, for he does not preach now. He said this was his joy, so I had to write him. I do not know him in this life, but feel I know him spiritually. He wrote me a sweet letter in reply and I now feel I am knit to him as if I had known him for years, even from eternity, from before the world was spoken into existence. I was there, says Jesus, and, dear brother, all his children were with him.

Now, my dear brother, I do not know that this letter will be of any comfort to you, or if I have said things that you can claim me as your sister in Christ. I remember my first visit with you, how I talked very freely with you of some of my travel from darkness to light. That visit will remain in memory as long as life lasts. We sit together in heavenly places in Christ, yet we complain at times. I do, and then am ashamed of myself.

I have written as it came to me, in full fellowship of the gospel of Christ. I am your poor sister, and wondering if I should send this letter.

Lovingly yours,

FLORA J. SINCLAIR.

SALEM DEPOT, N. H., Aug. 17, 1932.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—One of old after being fed is said to have gone in the strength of that meat many days. I venture to hope many who were at North Berwick last Sunday will have that happy privilege. Mrs. Dunkley and myself were indeed glad to be mingling with the Lord's people. Less than the least must ever be my standing, yet to listen to the songs of Zion, and hear what I believe to be the great doctrine of the Bible set forth faithfully, is worth going a long way for. May many who were there, nay, may all of them feel it a privilege to have had such an opportunity of hearing. Really Maine people are royally good to strangers. That was the second time I have been to North Berwick; the kindness of the people is wonderful. I would love to meet with them often if it were only possible. Oh how true a miracle to hear the gospel as well as a miracle to preach it. There was much brought out that seemed to come very close and searching, both morning and afternoon, as you endeavored to set forth these wonderful truths of the

everlasting gospel. May the Holy Spirit bedew your own soul richly, as he only can, and may many Ruths be in the gleaning field.

I am writing this at the mill, late at night. I felt I must let you know how thankful we were to get to North Berwick this year. I was also glad to hear that dear old lady's testimony. Religion wears long and well if it is the right kind. I feel I could write much about the day's services, but must forbear, for you are a busy man and have not much leisure for reading such writing as mine, so I will close for now. May God's rich blessing rest upon your labors both by pen and pulpit, is the prayer of yours in hope,

JOHN H. DUNKLEY.

DODSLAND, Sask, Canada, Sept. 1, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—I now find it possible to send ten dollars to aid the SIGNS, as I promised to do earlier in the year. I hope I may be able to send more later on. Conditions are very poor in a strictly farming community like this, commodity prices being so low, but I feel I have much to be thankful for. While many others have had sickness, loss of position and financial reverses to contend with, my family have all been well and my business has provided us with everything we needed, although of course it is terribly reduced in the turnover. And the good old SIGNS continues to come. I hope you are finding things better with your subscription list. May all who can help be shown that it is their duty to do so. God forbid that it ever may be found necessary to suspend publication.

Please find a bank money order inclosed.

Yours sincerely,

D. R. BLACK.

[WE sincerely thank brother Black for both his liberal contribution and his encouraging words. They came at a time when they were much appreciated, for we had just taken the names of about three hundred of our subscribers from our list because they were so far in arrears with their subscriptions, and most of them had not even taken the trouble to reply to the notices sent them, which was very discouraging to us.—J. E. B. & Co.]

GRAND SALINE, Texas, June 11, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—My time expired with the June number of our dear family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I do not feel that I can do without it, although I began to think I would have to try and do so, but the dear Lord has blessed me with one more dollar to send for it for six months longer. I would be very glad to send the price for a full year, and some extra to aid the SIGNS in its struggle, for it is all the preaching I get. I have little to spare, but I do feel that all who love the doctrine of the absolute predestination of God in all things should do their best to support it. Sometimes I get enough spiritual food from one letter to encourage me to press on a while longer. May the dear Lord ever bless and support the SIGNS, and us all, with spiritual blessings in Christ.

(MRS.) FRANK LODEN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1932.

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Elder George Ruston, Dutton, Ontario.
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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable to,
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JUDE 3.

"BELOVED, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

Dear brethren, we feel it our duty to write you relative to the above expression of divine truth. We often have repeated the latter part, to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," but the diligence relative to the common salvation is very seldom expressed. We desire to trace the relations in the child of God to salvation, which is of one faith, one Lord, one baptism, even as we are called with one hope of our calling. Jude, in the first verse, tells us who it is that has this common salvation, which declares, "To them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." We have the gospel address of those embraced in this common salvation. Jude called them "Beloved," and as we are writing to you, dear reader, we feel you are beloved. We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. If we love the brethren we will have a great desire to edify them in the truth that is so precious to us, and strive to prove our love and fellowship for them, and our conversations, writings and general deportment to bear witness of the things we have professed, as the Spirit teaches us that denying of ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world. So all who are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called, have these virtues in them, and all have the same Father and mother and are one household, and have all things in common spiritually, and when distresses arise the whole household has a feeling of sorrow for the occurrence of such disorder. What we call disorder is that which draws away from the line we have written above, and distress comes. We know, beloved, when we do things that would cause us to feel we had defeated our opponent, all these feelings are in our flesh, and all our doings that are to these relations are sowing to the flesh, and the harvest is corruption. All that is to the honor and praise of God, and to the edification of one another, is of

the Spirit. The harvest is life and peace. All my people shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be their peace. We believe there is but one true and living God, and all that are born of God have one salvatino, one Lord, one faith, one baptism. We must contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. We ask you, What fellowship has light and darkness? One is contrary to the other, and when light shineth darkness is swept away, hence no fellowship. If we should write unto you in such way as to satisfy personal feelings and lust we would disturb you in this common salvation, and would profit nothing, but sow seed of confusion in our Father's house. We do not believe that any mortal creature can work righteousness, but the Spirit that teaches the virtues thereof is God working both to will and do, and that of his good pleasure. That fleshly nature brings so many stumbling-blocks in our way, and when Paul was viewing these things he said, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." So he could not do the things he would, and when he would do good evil was present. We often note that when a brother has prominence among the brethren he often is ready to retaliate and turn to railing for railing, and those admirers of his will come to his refuge, and others to the banner of the other, so comes war in Israel. If we could have that spirit that teaches us all our infirmities we could see those that are our enemies and bear with them for the truth's sake, and at the same time examine ourselves for just reasons to condemn us.

Beloved, we believe in predestination, foreordination, sanctification by God the Father, and preservation in Jesus Christ, and called. These are all of God, and what can mortality add to it or detract from it? If mortality could work to hinder, God would not be sovereign, but He works and none can hinder, hinders and none can work. The salvation of the people of God is everlasting, and all have the same Savior, and all rejoice in his sovereignty over death, hell and the grave.

Resurrection. Jesus declared that he was the resurrection and the life, so all alike, raised from death in sin to life in Christ, and the life in Christ is eternal. Jesus declared those given eternal life should never perish. All the creature that was dead in the first Adam is delivered from death by the second Adam, and all our triumph is in Him. We have not whereof to boast only in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth from all sin, and pays our vows, salvation is of the Lord. The faith we have in the Lord Jesus Christ constraineth us to believe that he is mighty to save and will save to the uttermost all the Father hath given him.

We often hear of differences arising among brethren relative to our common salvation, and try to speak as though they had two salvations, and mix the

things wrought in the child of God by the Spirit as though the ability rested in mortal flesh to perform acceptable righteousness unto God, by which they would not feel condemnation. We do feel it is impossible with men, but with God all things are possible. According to the word of God, every child of God shall have equal inheritance, as there are no small nor great, but all are like Him. That incorruptible seed by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever shall swallow up all that is corruptible. Paul described it in the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians and it is wonderful in its mysteries. All virtues that are pertaining to the ordinances of the church of God are of the Spirit, and when we are drawn of our lust and enticed it is of the flesh. Having realized in our mortal flesh the sting of death to sin, and feeling we are continually being encumbered, we cry to the Lord to be merciful to us, and then we esteem our brethren greater than ourselves, and our walk is so crooked we cry out

> Oh that the Lord would guide our ways
> To keep his statutes still!
> Oh that the Lord would grant us grace
> To know and do his will!

In this life we have the quickening power of the Spirit, by which we live by faith of joys to come, when faith shall be turned into sight and hope into possession, mortality put on immortality, corruption put on incorruption, then death is swallowed up in victory, and all this shall be fully consummated at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed, not exchanged. All who feel they are now enjoying the fullness of the resurrection have no greater joys to hope for than they are passing through in the tribulations in this life, but my hope is in Jesus Christ, or Christ in me, and by it I am saved. I trust that I feel my Savior near and God's presence fills immensity. How brethren can express when the spirit returns to God who gave it, that it would pass into a far distance from the body, I ask, Why do they thus express themselves, when the word declares heaven is his throne and earth his footstool, and he upholds all things by the word of his power? We believe by the power of him that is able to subdue all things he will bring the sinner off more than conqueror, soul, body and spirit, and how we shall appear shall be according to God's purpose in grace.

C. W. V.

NOTICE.

I would like very much to have some copies of the SIGNS for the years from 1860 to 1870. I think that if I could get three or four copies running through each of the years I have indicated it would cover the period in which I am particularly interested.

If and one has any of these copies they are willing to part with, please communicate with

CHARLES G. HARDING,
P. O. Box 1584, Burlington Station, Omaha, Nebr.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

J. C. Purdy, Ohio, $1; Mrs. J. W. Cain, Ark., $2; Elder V. R. Harris, Ark., $1; Mrs. Walter Bogart, N. Y., $1; Melissa C. Sparks, Cal., $3; J. W. Black, Manitoba, $1; "H," Md., $2; D. R. Black, Canada, $10; Mrs. Julia M. Clark, N. Y., 50 cents; Mrs. Mary A. Drew, N. Y., $1; Mrs. George Smith, Ont., $1.50; Cherrie J. Benjamin, La., 50 cents; Mrs. Martha J. Disheroon, Del., $1; "A friend," Ont., $2.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

JOHN T. BARNETT, son of Benjamin A. and Lucy (Ransdell) Barnett, was born March 24th, 1859, and died July 31st, 1932, in his seventy-fourth year. He leaves to mourn his departure one son, Prince Barnett, residing near New Castle, Ky., two sisters, Birdie Chilton, of Turners Station, Ky., and Ethel Owen, of Cincinnati, Ohio, three brothers, J. Franklin, Major A. and George Barnett. About forty-seven years ago he was married to Miss Calcha Singleton, and to this union were born two children, Prince and Ora. The wife and Ora preceded him in death. In the year 1910 he received a hope in the Savior, and upon relation of his experience to the Cane Creek Church he was received, and was baptized by Elder P. W. Sawin, then pastor of the church. Our brother John was one of the faithful ones, a wise counsellor, of a quiet disposition, always at the meetings unless prevented by sickness, and often visited sister churches. He loved the doctrine of the Bible, and required a thus sayeth the Lord for the proof of his argument. We, as a church, will miss him, his seat is vacant, but we feel our loss is his gain; for him to live was Christ and to die was gain. May the Lord reconcile us and enable us to bear our loss with patience, and praise the great Giver of all things, and may he bind us closer together and strengthen us, that we may say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

I tried to comfort the many brethren and friends that assembled at the meetinghouse, using as a text John xiv. 1, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me," and part of the second verse, "If it were not so, I would have told you." After which all that was mortal was laid to rest in the cemetery near by to await the call of the Master in the resurrection.

ALSO,

ERNEST F. RANSDELL, son of William and Sarah Ransdell, was born January 10th, 1854, and died July 14th, 1932, in his seventy-ninth year. He was married to Miss Mary Montgomery, and to this union were added three daughters, Mrs. Esther May Rowland, Mrs. W. O. Tanner and Miss Rosa Ransdell. Miss Rosa preceded the father in death. The mother and two daughters reside in Louisville, Ky., where they have lived for several years. Our brother and sister Ransdell spent most of their lives on a farm near New Castle, Ky., and were very successful. Later in life they gave up the farm and moved to the city of Louisville. In the spring of 1881 he received a hope in the finished work of Christ, and upon a relation of his experience to the Sulphur Fork Predestinarian Baptist Church was received, the fourth Saturday in June, 1881. He was baptized by Elder Humptston, and to that church he remained faithful to the end. Shortly after joining the church he was chosen Clerk, which office he held as long as his health would permit. He was also ordained a Deacon, and in both of these offices he served well, and by his godly walk and conversation he endeared himself to the brethren. He was a good singer and understood the rudiments of music, and outside of the church he was often called upon to lead the singing. How we all will miss him! Especially do our hearts go out to the widow, our sister in the church, and the two daughters. May the Lord enable us all to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

Short services were held at the home in Louisville. The next day the body was brought to the old Sulphur Fork Church, the place he loved so well and where he spent his life under the pastoral care of Elders Humptson, John G. Eubanks, and the writer, where I spoke briefly to the many friends and neighbors from the words of Paul, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," after which he was laid to rest in the New Castle Cemetery. May the Lord bless them that mourn.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

BROTHER **ARCHIE THOMPSON** departed this life January 23rd, 1932. He was the son of Archibald and Mary Thompson, and was born April 12th, 1868. In the year 1899 he married Miss Minnie Rosa Burr, to which union were born three daughters: Mrs. Walter Cadogan, Miss Gladys Irene Thompson and Mrs. Norman Walker, all of West Lorne, Ontario. These, with one brother and one sister, mourn their loss. Brother Archie united with the Covenanted Baptist Church some years ago, and was baptized by the late Elder J. B. Slauson. He was a deeply experienced man, but owing to sickness he was not favored to attend many meetings with his brethren, but he loved them for the truth's sake and retained a lively interest in the affairs of his church until his death. He was a humble, God-fearing brother, a good husband and father, and in his home, where he was for a long time confined, he is greatly missed by his dear wife and daughters, yet their loss is his eternal gain. The night before the end came brother Archie did not seem any worse when he retired, but did not wake as usual in the morning, and his dear companion to her consternation found that he had passed away.

The writer spoke at the funeral from the words, "Unto you that believe he is precious," to a very large company of relatives and friends, after which his remains were laid to rest in the Gillis Cemetery, West Lorne. May God enable this dear family to say, Thy will be done.

ALSO,

MRS. JANE GILLIS, wife of Deacon Angus D. Gillis, departed this life April 9th, 1932, in her seventieth year. She was the youngest daughter of the late Alexander and Janet Campbell, of Dunwich, Ontario. Mrs. Gillis had been in failing health for about seven years, but much of the time able to be around and attend to the cares of

her home. She bore her afflictions with great patience, seldom complaining, and was always anxious to get to the meetings when possible. Though she felt she was unworthy of a name with the church of Christ, yet her love of the brethren, her kind hospitality and her desire to do better things, endeared her to a host of brethren and friends, who feel that she has passed from death unto life. She is greatly missed from the assembly of the brethren, but especially is she missed and mourned by her dear husband and family. She leaves to mourn their loss her husband, Angus D. Gillis, also two daughters: Mrs. Warren Campbell, of Chatham, Ontario, and Miss Margaret Gillis, who is at home with her father in Muirkirk. There was also a little boy, who preceded her to the grave in infancy, and there are four grandchildren. Her remains were laid in the Duart Cemetery, the writer officiating at the funeral, speaking from the Scripture, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."—John ii. 19. The funeral services were largely attended by her many relatives and friends. Her remains were borne to the grave by six of her nephews. She was a kind and affectionate wife and mother and a true friend to the Old School Baptist cause. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

G. R.

DEACON GEORGE WASHING MATHES, son of Thomas and Nancy Mathes, was born November 22nd, 1858, and died May 29th, 1932, aged 73 years, 6 months and 7 days. He professed a hope in Christ and joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Providence, and lived a devoted christian life, and was a Deacon of his church until his death. At the age of twenty-one years he was married to Mrs. Nancy Pogue, and to their union was born one child, a daughter, Mrs. Ella Keys. His dear companion having been called to her eternal home several years ago, in later years he married Mrs. Tibitha Bridges, who also preceded him to the grave. "Uncle George," as he was called, was a devoted husband, a kind and loving father, a faithful brother, a kind and helpful neighbor and a devoted and faithful member of his church, where he will be greatly missed. He leaves one daughter, Mrs. Ella Keys, one sister, Mrs. Etta Cockron, who for the past thirty-two years made her home with him, two grandchildren, three great-grandchildren and a host of other relatives and friends to mourn his going. He often spoke of his willingness to go at his Lord's command. Brother George was a noble man, one whom every one seemed to love, an evidence of which was the large congregation that assembled when he was laid away to rest until the resurrection morn, when our Lord Jesus will come again, without sin unto salvation to receive his bride unto himself, never to die any more, but to be like him and with him in that peaceful world without end. I will say to his daughter and sister, and to his church that he loved so well, Weep not, for your loss is surely his eternal gain.

The writer was called to attend his funeral, and tried in his weakness to speak words of comfort to the large congregation present. May God bless all who mourn, is my prayer.

O. W. PERKINS.

BROTHER **LEVI POLLARD** died May 18th, 1932, at the Memorial Hospital in St. Thomas, Ontario. He was a son of the late Elder William and Mary Pollard, and was born March 18th, 1854, near Dundas, Ontario. When a lad about ten years old he moved with his parents to Michigan, where they lived four years, and then moved back to Canada in 1868. He was married to Miss Margaret Campbell in 1880, and to them were born eight children, three boys and five girls, all living. His wife passed away many years ago. Brother Levi was a faithful member of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, always filling his place in meeting. He never missed a quarterly meeting in May at his home church. He was baptized by Elder H. C. Ker in 1909. He was a patient and loving father. He was a sufferer from diabetes for a number of years. Gangrene set in in both feet, and although everything was done for him that loving hands could do they could not stay the hand of death. Our dear pastor, Elder Ruston, visited him several times and his conversation was always on spiritual things. The last words he was heard to say were, "Oh that I had the wings of a dove, that I might fly away and be at rest," and we have that hope that he is at rest. Besides his children, he leaves a brother, John, and a sister, Regina, to mourn their loss.

A very large company of relatives and friends attended his funeral, which was conducted by his pastor, Elder George Ruston. The mortal remains of the deceased were laid to rest in Fairview Cemetery, Dutton, Ontario.

Written by his sister,

(MRS.) REGINA CAMPBELL.

MEETINGS.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, as announced in the September SIGNS, is to be held with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 12th, 13th and 14th, 1932. We especially invite ministers and brethren of our correspondence to meet with us, also all others who desire to come and be with us will be welcomed. Mt. Zion Church is not reached by train, but can be reached by either bus or private auto. Those who come Tuesday afternoon will come to Lenah, Va., where they will be met and cared for. Those who come Wednesday morning will come direct to the meeting-house. From Union Station, Washington, D. C., take electric car to the Greyhound Bus Terminal, at Second and Pennsylvania Avenue, N. W., where

buses for Lenah or Mt. Zion leave at 8 a. m., 12:45, 5:00 and 10:45 p. m., according to present schedule, which is subject to change. Those coming by private auto will follow the Lee Highway out of Washington to State Route 50 beyond Fairfax, which latter route they will follow to Mt. Zion.

C. M. TURMAN, Church Clerk.

The regularly appointed Yearly Meeting of the Welsh Tract Church will be held in the meetinghouse of Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, Sunday, October 16th, 1932, service beginning at 10 a. m., Standard Time. Ministering brethren, members and friends are cordially invited to be with us. Those attending Virginia Corresponding Meeting Wednesday preceding our Meeting, especially the ministering brethren, are cordially invited to be present, and remain over at Newark, Delaware, for the Salisbury Association, due the following week. The Pennsylvaia and Baltimore and Ohio trunk lines are available for train service, also Interstate Bus lines can be used, changing at Wilmington, Del., for Newark, Del.

JOHN B. MILLER, Church Clerk.

The Salisbury Primitive Baptist Association is to convene with the Indiantown Church, near Pittsville, Wicomico County, Maryland, on October 18th, 19th and 20th, 1932. All lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren, are invited to meet with us. Those coming by automobile will be met at the Primitive Baptist Home, Salisbury, Md. Those coming by train, at the Union Station, Salisbury, Md. Those coming by Red Star or Greyhound buses at the Wicomico Hotel, Salisbury, Md., on Tuesday afternoon and evening.

GEORGE F. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expect their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, (the Lord willing) to be with them the fifth Sunday in October (30th), 1932. Services to be held at the home of brother J. E. Livingston, 64 E. Main St., Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. Also at 2 p. m. on Saturday before. All are welcome.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in October (30th). All are welcome. E. M. FORD.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

We have kept up a monthly meeting for some time in the past, and hope, by the grace of God, to be favored to continue to meet every second Sunday in each month at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California. May this bear a cordial invitation to all who believe in grace and salvation by grace to meet with us on the stated time.

MR. and MRS. W. J. BERRY.

Little Flock Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every first and third Sunday at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, at 1 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,

495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of sister N. J. Preston, 116 Center Street, Oregon City, Oregon, at 10:30 a. m. Those coming by stage, steam train or electric car get off at Seventh Street, take elevator to top of the hill, cross trestle over railway tracks, turn to the right, go two blocks on Sixth Street to Center Street, thence five and one-half blocks south on Center Street to 116, house number, between First and Second Streets. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Moderator.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at the home of sister E. Brunow, 411 N. Ridgeway Avenue, and on the second, third and fourth Sundays at the home of brother W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. The fifth Sundays are by appointment. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastors, Elders Jones and Janes.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 100. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1932. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CASTLEWOOD, Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER J. B. MILLER:—I received your good letter and it was of much comfort to one who feels as I do, weak and sinful. It was timely, and as cold water to the thirsty soul, and be assured I can indorse the sentiments in it, and hope I have the spirit in which it was written.

You requested me to write on the eleventh chapter of Romans, especially the twenty-fifth verse, which reads: "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." Brother Miller, I am not going to tell you that I will give you the meaning of this Scripture, but I will try to tell you what it means to me, and hope you will be made able to try what I may write by the search-light of divine truth.

We know the Scriptures are "thoroughly furnished," if we have light to understand them. Paul here, in this chapter, to my understanding, was speaking of the whole family of God as one body of Christ, both Jews and Gentiles. It seems Paul was not only speaking of the Jews, his own people, but also of the Gentiles, to whom Paul was sent, saying, "Then Paul and Barnabus waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life [in the covenant], lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed."—Acts xiii. 46-48. Paul saith, "Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe

of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew."—Rom. xi. 1, 2. And in the twenty-sixth verse of this chapter Paul says, "And so all Israel shall be saved." This I understand to be in the eternal covenant of grace. Again, Isaiah says, chapter ten, verse twenty-two, "For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return: the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness." It was to the Jews Christ "came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him [the remnant] to them gave he power to become the sons of God."—John i. 11. It must be this little remnant of Israel was the little flock that is saved in a time sense from the power of the bewitching doctrine and crafts of men and devils. Paul says, "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." It is said, "They are not all Israel, which are of Israel." To them Paul says, "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world [both Jew and Gentile], what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off [the blinded Jews who would not receive Christ, and said they would not have this man to rule over them], and thou [the Gentiles], being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree [Christ]." Then Paul says in the nineteenth verse of this eleventh chapter, "Thou wilt say, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief [blindness] they were broken off." Again, in the twenty-fourth verse Paul says, "For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree [the Gentiles which are called unclean] which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree [Christ]; how much more shall these [blinded Jews], which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree [Christ]?" These are the branches that Paul spoke of, saying, "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." Then, as I see it, will be the gathering in, or grafting in, of the whole family of spiritual Israel. It is said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold [the Jewish fold]: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." One complete body in Jesus, not one feeble little one left behind. Isaiah says, "Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us [the Jews], and Israel acknowledge us [the Gentiles] not; thou, O Lord, art our father, our redeemer." Solomon speaks of these Jews and Gentiles thus, "We [the Jews] have a little sister [the Gentiles], and she hath no breasts [no name or part in the old Abraham covenant, therefore could not suck the breasts of consolation of the promises made to the Jews in the old Jewish covenant, as did the Jews]: what shall we do for our sister in the day [gospel

day] when she shall be spoken for?"—Sol. Songs viii. 8. Yes, this little sister found favor, as did the Jews, in the eyes of her great adorable Husband, when she was to be spoken for, and he redeemed her and washed all her guilt away, and was made partaker with the Jews in the covenant of grace, therefore one fold, one Shepherd and one eternal family in Jesus. Paul says, "They which are the children of the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."—Rom. ix. 8. The Savior said to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."—John iii. 6. The children, some of them being in darkness, and blindness, does not prevent them from being children of God, because blindness has happened to them, but all spiritual Israel shall return and shall be saved. I believe that when the fullness of the Gentiles be come in, then these offended or blinded Jews that were cut off because of unbelief will be gathered in. We see in our day many, many of God's children cannot stand strong meat, or understand the great plan of salvation by grace in all its bearings. "All Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." I understand that when the fullness of the Gentiles be come in, then Christ will come to collect his people home, let them be whom they may, from every nation and tongue, because he has redeemed them, and they are the beloved of the Lord, and his bride. She shall be brought before the King in raiment of needlework, where the Lord is both her Husband and King, and this Husband knows her, because all her raiment is of precious gold and the righteousness of Jesus, and he says, I will behold no spot, in that it is not their own righteousness, because they had none. How any one can doubt that Christ will personally come again is more than I can conceive. Do we believe the Savior was born of the virgin Mary, and was both human and divine, only sin excepted, and pure and holy? Do we believe he died for his people, and rose for their justification? And do not Old School Baptists believe that he arose with and in the same body in which he was placed in the tomb? Then, did he not appear to his disciples in eating and breaking bread? Did he not appear to his disciples "and as they thus spake, Jesus himself [not something else] stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and afrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."—Luke xxiv. 36-39. Then this same Jesus when he was taken up "a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they [his disciples] looked steadfastly toward heav-

en, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."—Acts i. 9-11. How could it be made plainer? Do we believe this? I, for one, do. If we believe it, then why doubt the second coming of Christ? And the resurrection of the dead? Paul has well said, "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that *it* may be fashioned like unto his glorious body."—Phil. iii. 20, 21. This should suffice with all believers, and I hope it is the faith of Primitive Baptists, or Old School Baptists, and their hope. Jesus often comes to his children while here in these earthly houses, yes, meets with them in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, descends by his Spirit's power into the hearts of his people, and is much like two good old sisters expressed it while both were in the sunbeams of the blessed Savior: one said, Jesus is so large he fills the whole world; the other one said, Yes, he is so small he can let in this poor heart of mine. Yes, he is with them either in blessing or chastening them for their good. While we look for him again, as the Scriptures so abundantly teach, Isaiah received a revelation of this great King and Captain of the salvation of his people, he says, "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious."—Isaiah xi. 10. The Lord saith by the mouth of Isaiah concerning Israel and the Gentiles, "It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel [that had been cut off but were the beloved of the Father for the elect's sake]; I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." Again, "A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."—Luke ii. 32. Paul says, "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which shew the work of the law written in their hearts."—Rom. ii. 14, 15. The apostle further says "that the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel."—Eph. iii. 6. Paul further says concerning these restored Jews, "As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes [the Gentiles]: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes."—Rom. xi. 28. The Savior says to the self-righteous Jews who sought eternal life by the law, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."—John v. 39. These are the blinded Jews that were cut off, but shall be grafted in their own olive tree, and here we have the modern Pharisee that is strict in the form of religion who is as far from owning Christ in salvation

by grace as their fathers were. These offended Jews were enemies to the gospel of Christ, and said it was a hard saying, who could hear it? They are the elect, and were the beloved of the Father, therefore sanctified by God the Father. Therefore, as I see, it included these blinded Jews, and their unbelief did not make the love and power of God of no effect, as well as the believing Jews, because they were chosen in Christ before the morning of time. As I said, the blinded Jews as to the gospel of Christ and the doctrine they were enemies. When the prodigal son returned to the father, "when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." What was all this love and affection for? Because this disobedient son was as much a child as the obedient one, therefore an heir of promise with the obedient one. Dear brother, our poor finite minds are lost in wonder when we are brought to view the great love of God to his people, the objects of his love, and how he has cared for them and protected them throughout time, and by what tongue or pen this love can be expressed is far beyond our comprehension. Well might the apostle say, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." I do not see any place for the will of man to get in the plan of salvation by grace, it is all of grace, or all of works, and we are fully persuaded by the Scriptures, and our experience, that it is all of grace, through faith, and that a gift of God, and not of ourselves, or by the will of man. I feel to be a poor sinner and need the grace of God every moment of my life, for if left to myself I am sure to go astray. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." When I would do good evil is present with me, and how to perform that which is good I find not. This, my brother, we find in our daily warfare here in the flesh, and these things we can all know when we have been brought up in "grace's school," and brought to experience them.

I do not know that you can get anything of comfort out of this.

Your little brother in hope of that sweet day and place where all is love and peace,

W. L. EDWARDS.

DALLAS, Texas, March 25, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—I desire, if not deceived, to pen a few thoughts to the readers scattered abroad over our land, not unmindful of my weakness, sinfulness and inability to do as I would, for I would, if I could, please my Master, be of comfort to some of the Lord's children, yet I know if one moment's comfort to any should be felt, it must be by the guiding hand of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I am so rebellious, and of late have been so unreconciled to my lot, that I fear if I should confess to you all my weakness and shortcomings you could not believe one could be so sorely tempted, yet after three months in bed, most of the time suffering as I never have before, day

and night seized with pain, seemingly about all I could bear, I was unwilling to live. Every time I awoke from sleep my first thought was, I am still alive. I tried many times to refresh my memory of that glorious night, some thirty-four years ago, when Jesus said to me, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your soul, for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. This was not possible, for I could not keep my mind on it. Finally, when it pleased the Giver of all good gifts, I almost screamed when I felt I could say from the depths of my soul, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? that old tempter was driven out and I wept for joy. I had dreamed some time before that of being on a highway, it was dark and I could not see the rough places. I would make a step and it would be low, the next one high and I would stumble. I saw just ahead of me an obstacle in my path. I could see the edge of this highway on the right and my foot never went off. When I got to this object in my path, or about where it was, it was gone. I began to tire, and was weary, when suddenly a light began to appear dimly, getting brighter. I looked for my shadow, but there was none, for the light seemed to be directly over me and shone all the way down that highway and I could see that it was straight and very narrow. It was so narrow that at a distance from me it looked about as narrow as my finger, but I could see the end; it was just the least bit uphill all the way. I said aloud in my sleep, Well, I am glad I am over that rough road. My husband touched me and I awoke. I tried to believe that the end was very near for me, but when it pleased the Lord to restore (as I hope) unto me the joys of his salvation, uphold me by his free Spirit, it was a different picture. Oh how I hope I was shown it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. All our steps are directed of the Lord. And that takes me back in the Old Testament: "Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?" This to me is of great comfort, that hedge is the bound; God set it there and it cannot be moved. Oh the beauty and glory of the wisdom and power of God, how unsearchable his judgments and his ways past finding out. He speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. Yea, I have spoken, I will also do it.

So finally I awoke one morning and was easy, very comfortable, but oh how weak. I began to wonder about it all. Poor old Job and his suffering and temptation led my mind on and on. I thought of Daniel, the three Hebrew children, then Jonah, and at last I came to the refining pot. Oh how I hope and trust the Lord showed me some of the things that must be. There is no escape from these fiery trials. Oh how they beset me, but I believe as long as this life lasts we will be tried. How we hate to suffer, but this old flesh is ever near, all around me, and the continued warfare. Sometimes I am not even

able to discern the source from which I try to obey. Sin is mixed with all I do. When I was young I hoped that when I got to be this age I would learn to be obedient and grow in the grace and mercy of our Lord, to trust without doubting, but O my soul, I am still in the school of learning. John must surely have had the same experience, for it was shown unto him again, and that would not have been necessary had he still remembered. Oh our poor feeble minds, how we get tangled up in the affairs of this world. I fear often I am like Martha, complaining, cumbered with much serving. Mary had chosen the better part. There she was at the feet of Jesus, anointing his feet and wiping them with her hair. Is she not a beautiful picture? The serving was of no interest to her. Oh how humble! So is every child of grace when we are enabled to see ourselves as we are. How I long to live at the feet of the brethren and sisters and to inquire in that old way which those who have gone on before have walked. This brings to mind my first conversation with my father after I received a hope. I remember how badly I wanted to talk with him and how I feared he was going to tell me I was mistaken in it all. I had to cry before I could ask him why I was doubting and felt like I had been deceived and was trying to deceive. Oh how earnestly he looked at me, and how I trembled. He had a way of answering very slowly. I saw his eyes filling up, finally he said, My child, old Satan will lie in wait for you and tempt you as never before. The Savior says, My grace is sufficient for you, no temptation will overtake you that the Lord will not enable you to bear. Go and read Job, you will find much comfort. All of God's little children have been tempted as you are, all suffer and bear the cross. Many times during those first days of my experience I was greatly comforted in reading the trials, sufferings and temptations of God's chosen people as recorded in the Scriptures. I had not heard an Old Baptist sermon preached at that time, but had heard all the other denominations within my reach, but nothing had been said that gave me any consolation whatever. Finally, one cold, frosty morning in November, 1898, Saturday before the third Sunday, we started for old New Hope Church. I had not been there in over two years. Oh how I enjoyed the singing! I listened to the prayer, then old brother B. L. Landers got up and took this text, Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Any of you who knew him know he was an able gift. His words fell like dew in my hungry soul, but how I wished I had not come. I longed to hide under the back seat, to hear and not be seen. He told the whole story of my life up to that moment. My soul trouble began that night and I could not sleep for a long time. My questioning was, Why is it these Old Baptists are the only ones who tell the story that fits my case? Where, oh where is the church of the true and living God, the one Christ built upon a rock? Surely there are others. When I finally slept the church

was shown me, in Revelation xxii. 17, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come: and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." The Spirit and bride were most beautiful. How she was leaning upon the arm of her Husband in spotless array, and that "whosoever will," how that "will" got there. Who willed that inclination and sealed it in the heart of his little children? They cannot dispose of it, cannot keep it hidden and cannot throw it by. Our God is not a God of want; he consults not with puny man. The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. When he draws them they come. Who can resist the power of God? He leads in paths we know not, his everlasting arm is beneath us and the willingness is there. He gives us the will and do of his own good pleasure. Work when you will and where you will, there is no getting around or putting off God's time and God's ways, for as high as the heavens are above the earth so are his ways higher than our ways. Please tell me, dear people of God, if left to your choosing, would you take the way of afflictions? We are taught that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. I believe this with all my heart. I used to fear old Satan, but not so any more. He has no power above that which is given him. He can go so far, and no farther. The fear of him was so different, but I no longer have that fear. The fear I now have often makes me weep, and oh how I tremble. Sometimes I want to pray, but do not know how, do not even know what to pray for. I am filled with unbelief and sin, beset on all sides, the way is hid, all is dark within, and here is that highway again, steps are uncertain, weary and faint. Ah! but when light appears there is no shadow, for the blessed light of the Son of God shines all around, saying, Peace, be still. Yea, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Oh the calm that soothes the troubled soul, all-sufficient for the time. Have you ever thought on this blessed light, its all-sufficiency? God's way is not in halves, it is a whole portion. My grace is sufficient for you. Treasured up in Christ Jesus before the world was, an inexhaustible supply, and in due time we will receive our portion. Oh that Intercessor, making intercession for the saints with groanings which cannot be uttered. No wonder we do not know how to pray and have to await the Spirit to give us utterance, then, little children, we pray and it is of the will of the Father that every one who utters in Spirit is the recipient of the request. It comes from the Father, and at the time he appointed unto us, one of the unsearchable riches; yes, out of the storehouse of mercy and grace. He that began a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ. All that the Father hath given unto me shall come to me, and I will raise it up at the last day. My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me, and I give unto them

eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. Note, please, he says, My Father which gave them me. He suffered for our transgressions, paid the debt of sin for the whole flock. Not only that, but we received at his hands double for all our sins; too, he was the only Son, and without sin, they found no fault in him. No crime was ever so wicked. How they mocked him and spat upon him. Oh that bitter cup! Do we know anything about the bitter? No, not until we have the sweet. Surely that blessed Son knew the sweet, because he said, Father, glorify thou me with the glory I had with thee before the world was. This takes us back before time, or ever the earth was, that most glorious council when the Book of all books was made, and the names written therein. Have you ever thought how impossible it is to erase your name? If it is there it will ever remain. And here is where I fear, how can one so weak, so unworthy, undone and unfit, sinning every hour of every day of my unprofitable life, have a part in this glorious covenant? All I have is that little hope. Sometimes it is so small I cannot help wishing for more evidence, then again I rejoice in the blessed promises found in God's word, here a little and there a little, and when I am permitted to sit, as it were, in one of those heavenly places and hear our brethren standing on the walls of Zion declaring the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, according to my experience and, I hope, the revelation of the Spirit-work in my poor soul, then I am amazed and rejoice in that I have a witness. These things are too deep for me; I can never tell nor understand the mystery it appears to me. I have felt at times I would not know an uncertain sound, but when trouble creeps in Zion the Lord takes care of his little ones. It hurts us to walk no more with those we learn to love. We are kept by the power of God and must be submissive to his will. Nothing under the sun is new or old to him, and all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Even these hard times are according to his purpose, and none can question him, nor say, Why doest thou? What God does is right; all our times are in his hand, and whatever disposition he makes of us will be to the praise of his glorious name. Oh that we could praise him as becometh little children.

I enjoy the SIGNS very much and have learned to love its many able writers. I hope it is the Lord's will for you to continue its publication. Inclosed find check for one year's subscription, the remainder use as you see fit.

I must close. I have written you many times in my mind and submit this for the relief I hope to obtain, but do not let it crowd out better matter. Love to all the household of faith.

Your little sister in hope through grace,

(MRS.) H. A. STRUBE.

THE PURPOSE OF GOD.

DEAR FRIENDS:—It has been on my mind for some time to write a little on the purpose of God, if it is in keeping with the Lord's will, for without him I can do nothing. I believe in a God of purpose. He had a use for everything he made, and without him was not anything made that was made. Our God says, I make peace and I create evil; I the Lord do all these things. You see he had a use for the evil as well as the good to accomplish his purpose. As I purpose, so shall it stand. My word has gone out of my mouth and will not return unto me void, but will accomplish the thing whereunto I sent it. Sometimes God uses the evil things of this world to accomplish his purposes. He did so in Judas' case. Judas Iscariot was raised up for the purpose of betraying Christ and going to his own place. So you see he had it to do; he could not help doing it, for the Bible decree would not have been fulfilled without it. Every jot and tittle must be fulfilled before the last day, even if it takes wars and rumors of wars, for all these things needs be before the end. I do not hear much said about Jacob and Esau. Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. The children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, it was for the purpose of God, so election might stand. God works all things after the counsel of his own will, the evil as well as the good. There are just two spirits in the world: the Spirit of Christ and the spirit of antichrist. Just the two vessels: the vessel of mercy and the vessel of wrath. The vessel of mercy God afore prepared unto glory; the vessel of wrath he fitted to destruction. God has the right to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. Some claimed Abraham to be their father. Christ told them, If Abraham had been your father you would have done the works of Abraham. The devil is your father, and the lust of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth.

I was talking with one of our brother preachers on the purpose of God, and he said, If you are not careful you are going to have God making the devil. I said, Please tell me where he came from if God did not make him. If you are not careful you are going to have him come by chance. I did not think you believed in the chance system. You either have to believe in the predestination of all things, or in the chance system; you cannot mix predestination with chance. I am afraid God's children, or some of them at least, are failing to declare the whole counsel of God. Declare not a part of it trying to please man, but declare the whole counsel of God, proclaim it from the housetop. Do not fear what man can do unto you, but fear God and keep his commandments, that is the whole duty of man. God has all power in heaven and in earth. There is no power but of God. The powers that be are ordained of God. That is the God I have been trying to serve in my weak and sinful way for forty-five years. He is my fear, my stay and my

staff. He is my all in all. What am I? Nothing, and less than nothing. Nothing but a poor weak worm of the earth, nowhere to lay my head, full of wounds, bruises and putrifying sores from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, no soundness in me; in my flesh dwelleth no good thing. Oh! if it were not for my hope I would be most miserable, that sweet hope which is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. When that sweet love of God is felt in the soul it is enough, but much of the time I am groping in darkness. God forbid that I should bring reproach upon the cause I so dearly love.

If you see fit you may publish this; if not, all will be right.

Your sister in Christ, I hope,

JANE PARKES SIMPSON.

LYNCHBURG, Tennessee.

CULLISON, Kansas.

DEAR EDITORS:—While sending in my dues for the paper, I wish to say that it has been a wonderful help and of spiritual comfort to wife and me, also to some of our children, and as age creeps upon us and church privileges begin to slip it seems still more needful to use the means of correspondence still left us. Those losses and privations do not weaken our faith, but we hope they make it more manifest. In Hebrews x. 38, 39, Paul says, "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them that draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." I understand that the "just" are those who are justified by God himself through the righteousness of Christ in the Spirit, and all of those justified shall live by faith, and none of them ever draw back unto perdition. For perdition means loss, ruin, destruction or condemnation of the soul, and Paul can well say that his soul shall have no pleasure in those eternally lost. And Paul is teaching that some have started out as disciples without faith, and not being just persons, for "the just shall live by faith," and the just who shall live by faith are "of them that believe to the saving of the soul." Yes, they believe all the way through life to the saving of the soul, or until they are saved in heaven, while those without faith turn back unto perdition from whence they came. The next chapter, the eleventh, is all devoted to the subject of faith and what the saints in old time wrought by faith. Each one had a different work to perform, but all worked or lived by faith, and not by sight, and these all died in faith, not having received the promise. They all died as they lived. None of them ever turned back unto perdition, but believed to the saving of their souls, and this eleventh chapter finishes up by saying (thirty-ninth and fortieth verses), "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Yes, all these mentioned here in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews obtained a good report through faith, and this "good

report" is handed on to us by the old prophets, and by Paul. "God having provided some better thing for us." God "provided" that better thing for us, in that Christ should come and fulfill the law and make a sacrifice for sin and beget us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and hath given us a full gospel and a complete salvation, without which the former saints could not have been made perfect. Their faith was only perfected in the coming of their Lord according to their faith, and the perfecting and faith will be manifest in the resurrection of our bodies from the grave.

If this is not out of line or will not crowd out better material I would like you to hand this letter out to the readers, but am willing you pass judgment upon it.

Yours in hope,

E. G. WEBB.

HATTIESBURG, MISS., June 10, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please note the change of my address from Petal, Mississippi, to 515 Elizabeth Avenue, Hattiesburg, Mississippi, and send my SIGNS to the latter place. If not asking too much, please publish a notice of the change so the precious brethren and sisters in the different States who are good enough to write me such good and encouraging letters may know where to address me. It is a great comfort to me to hear from far away brethren and sisters, all telling the same sweet story of salvation by grace. I have quite a number of very good friends, but only a few of them in this part of the country believe the same doctrine that I do, and oh how I long to be with the dear people of God who are trusting in him for all blessings. We know that if we are saved at all it is through the loving mercy of God and not because of anything we have done or can do, it is all of God, because the natural man has not faith, and without faith it is impossible to please God. We had no more to do with being born of the Spirit than we did with being born naturally into the world. Christ says, You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you. All the hope I have of immortal glory is in what I hope Christ has done for me, for of myself I am nothing but vanity, full of faults and failures. I am surrounded with Arminian doctrine of almost every kind and the members all seem to be trusting in self-righteous work. Notice that Christ says, Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees you can in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. Well, the Pharisees have always done more work for righteousness than any other people on earth, how, then, can your righteousness exceed theirs? It is because the righteousness of the Pharisee is self-righteousness, and when the elect sinner is quickened into life, born of the Spirit, before he ever performed an act of righteousness, his righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the Pharisees, because it is the righteousness of God and exceeds all other righteousness. God has ordained good works, that we should walk in them,

but they are not the cause, but fruits of the Spirit. So it is the desire of the humble child of God to be pure as the heavenly Father is pure and perfect, but we cannot reach that perfection while living in this world. When God changes our vile and mortal body to an immortal body then we will be perfect and like our Lord and will be wafted away to that immortal home of glory prepared for us from the foundation of the world.

I am suffering much pain and am very weak, as I am trying to get my teeth all out. I have had fifteen taken out this spring, and have fifteen more to get out as soon as I can stand it. Please pray for my daughter and me. May the Lord bless you and all the household of faith.

I had no idea of writing so much. I just wanted to give notice of the change of address. Do as you please with it, but if you publish please correct all mistakes.

From an unworthy brother, if a brother at all, C. C. SMITH.

LADELL, Ark., Jan. 15, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription has expired, I am sending my remittance for another year. I surely do enjoy reading the SIGNS, and hope I believe the doctrine it sets forth. I am persuaded that it is the dealings of God through Jesus Christ the Lord that enables you to set forth his truth so wonderfully, all to his praise, and for good to his humble poor scattered abroad in this unfriendly world. I think the January number beautifully sets forth a God that rules all events. I deem him an all-wise and sovereign Ruler. He was before time and will rule throughout eternity, which has no end. It makes my heart rejoice to know there are others traveling the same road I am. Jesus said, I am the way, the door of the sheep; they that come in by me shall be saved. He that climbeth up some other way is a thief and a robber. There are many in these times trying to climb up some other way, and it makes me doubt, and fear that I am wrong. But one thing I do know, and that is there is not one good thing I can do. It is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure, so the praise all belongs to him, not to such a worm as I am. It is my desire to do right at all times, but I find myself out of the way, my thoughts are often gone astray.

I did not intend to detain you so long. I thought to pen only a few remarks. May God's richest blessings rest and abide with you all.

Yours in hope beyond the grave,
(MRS.) L. M. BAKER.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

WHEN remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it. By referring to these dates you can tell to just what time your subscription is paid. Dec 31 means your subscription expired December, 1931; June 32 means your subscription expired June, 1932; Dec 32 that it expires December, 1932, etc.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1932.

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EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT.

THE Greek word *"aionios"* is sometimes translated in our New Testaments as "eternal" and sometimes as "everlasting." Hence, the words "eternal" and "everlasting" set forth limitlessness in both the happiness of the redeemed in heaven and of the misery of the wicked in hell. One is not warranted by the Scriptures in saying that the suffering of the finally lost is any less eternal than the happiness of the ultimately saved. In other words, if one believes the blessedness of the Lord's redeemed to be eternal and never-ending, then one must concede, painful though the concession may be, that the misery of the impenitent wicked is equally eternal and never-ending. One of the marked characteristics of the modern world and of our country is the inability of government to cope with lawlessness and to adequately and unfailingly bring the guilty to justice. One cause for this failure on the part of government, though by no means the only cause, is the fact that many people sympathize with the criminally guilty so that, if caught, justice and punishment are not meted out, or else, if punished, the sentence is light and ineffectual. Too much disposition on the part of a great section of the public to condone crime or law-breaking is responsible, in great measure, for the rising tide of lawlessness on every hand. This policy on the part of the public reflects itself in spiritual circles so that, in recent years, there has been an ever increasing disbelief in an eternal hell and in final and never-ending punishment for the wicked. It has come to be thought by some that since God is a God of love and mercy, he would not think of such a thing as cruelly burning forever the impenitent in a literal hell. Such a false sentimentalism ignores or forgets the plain teaching of the word of God. It is not what we think God ought to do, it matters not what may be our personal opinion about these things: it matters much what the Scriptures teach about it. We are sure that neither ourselves nor anybody else enjoy the thought of the wicked suffering in hell forever, but whether there is any personal enjoyment or comfort in it to us alters the facts of the case not at all. We get no comfort or enjoyment out of the fact that want and misery and

distress are everywhere around us in the world to-day, but the facts of poverty and need thus prevalent everywhere are not changed a jot by the fact that we get no comfort out of contemplating them. On this doctrine of the "eternal punishment of the wicked," we want the facts, not guess-work: and for facts one must go to the Scriptures, and particularly to the words of Jesus himself. In the parable of the sheep and goats in Matthew xxv. 31-46, Jesus said concerning those on the left hand, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Those rejected by the Savior-King are declared to be left under the curse of condemnation and are sent away into a prepared place which is that of everlasting fire, the same to which the devil and his angels are foreordained. Here the word "everlasting" is precisely the same as is elsewhere translated "eternal." Hence, the blessedness of the redeemed being eternal, the woes of the lost are equally eternal. Again, in the forty-sixth verse of the same chapter, Jesus said, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." In this passage, the words "eternal" and "everlasting" come from the same Greek word in the original manuscript. To endeavor to discriminate between the meanings of these two words is not warranted here. In John v. 28, 29, Jesus says, "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Thus is taught the truth of the resurrection of the Lord's people to immortality, and also is taught the other side of the truth, which is that the unregenerate wicked are also to be raised from their graves unto judgment and that, as the outcome of God's just judgment made publicly known, they shall go away into the punishment declared in Matthew twenty-fifth chapter. Paul, speaking before Felix, as recorded in Acts xxiv. 15, boldly affirmed that there is to be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust. By the "just" in this passage, he could not have meant Jesus, because the resurrection of Jesus had already become an accomplished fact, and there is not again to be another resurrection of Jesus: but Paul meant by the "just" the people of God, those justified before God by the imputed, perfect righteousness of his Son; and by the "unjust" he meant those not divinely taken care of in the finished work of Christ on Calvary. This two-fold resurrection has not taken place yet, but is to take place in the future. It will take place with the elect of God at the fulfillment of 1 Thessalonians iv. 16, 17. It will take place with the non-elect at the fulfillment of Revelation xx. 12-15. Nor do the Scriptures teach that the eternal punishment of the wicked is merely annihilation. Christ did not die on the cross simply to redeem his people from being annihilated, but to redeem them from endless misery and woe. To say that the wicked shall be simply annihilated or

brought to oblivion and nothingness, is to greatly detract from and minimize the glorious work which Christ came to accomplish for his people. Whatever it is that the wicked shall have to suffer eternally, is exactly what Christ came to save his people from. Therefore, just to that extent to which we sentimentally extenuate the endless misery of the wicked, just by that much do we neglect to exalt Christ and just that much do we cloud the glory of Calvary. The meaning of Calvary is measured by the distance between the bottomless pit and the infinite heaven of glory. Wherever the Scriptures speak of the wicked as being destroyed, they never mean destruction in the sense of annihilation or nothingness. For instance, in Philippians iii. 19, and in 2 Thessalonians i. 9, the word "destruction" far from meaning reduction to oblivion or nothingness, means the eternal ruination of the wicked beyond all possibility or hope of restoration to any vestige of power or influence whatsoever. Punishment is not punishment unless the one punished is conscious of his punishment. Inasmuch as the blessedness of the redeemed shall be a joy eternal of which they shall never cease to be conscious, it must follow that the misery of the wicked shall be such as they shall not cease to be conscious of, since Scripture language used to express the joys of the former is used with equal force to express the woes of the latter; and spiritual honesty would demand of us that we give the language as equal force in the one instance as in the other. It does not follow however that the wicked have to have eternal life in order to suffer forever, in the same sense that the saved are to have eternal life in order to enjoy God forever. What kind of life the wicked are to have in the midst of the fires of hell, we do not know; and may the grace of God through Christ forbid that we ever shall know. All the fires that we know literally about are fires that eventually go out for lack of something to be consumed by their flames: but that fire that burns in the eternal lake of fire is no earthly fire. It is far worse and more terrible than that: a fire whose flame shall never be quenched, and of those who shall eternally dwell with that fire, it is said that their worm never dies. In the ninth chapter of Mark, Jesus three times emphasizes the fact that the fires of hell never go out and that the worm of those in that fire never die. What is the "worm" if it is not the gnawing conscience of that one justly condemned by the holy God? I hope I myself have known what it has meant to be convicted of sin. If so, then at that time I knew the "gnawing worm" of an awakened conscience. In that experience I believe I had a taste of what hell means, I knew its fierce flame and its undying worm. But for the grace of God in the blessed Christ toward such a sinner as I then knew I was, and still by nature am, I should forever have remained in that hell of unquenchable fire and should forever have had that gnawing conscience as my eternal companion in the burning lake. Could anything be more dreadful to think about? The blood of Jesus

Christ is all that saved me from that eternal burning. It is all that saves you. It seems irreverent to deny the fact that a burning hell and an undying worm await the unredeemed: irreverent because if there is no such place, then what did Christ die to redeem us from? By so much as we deny the just judgment of God upon the wicked, by just that much do we deny the glorious work of Christ in dying to redeem us therefrom. What kind of a body the wicked will have to have in order to suffer in hell, I do not, nor does any one know. Since we know of a surety that Christ is able to change the vile bodies of his people into the likeness of his own glorious body so that they shall dwell satisfied with him forever in heaven, is he not just as able to give the wicked the bodily likeness of their master Satan so as to dwell with the latter to suffer forever? We do know that God can do everything, and we do know that God's justice is not as man's perverted sense of justice. Man's laws can be and are evaded and punishment by them is escaped, but there can be no escape from or evasion of the holy and divine justice of the eternal God. God is assuredly a God of love, but to whom is he a God of love? To them only who are in Christ Jesus. To all and sundry outside of Jesus Christ, God is a burning and consuming fire eternally. Let us not forget when setting forth the grace and mercy and love of God in Christ to his people, that God is a Perfect Being of inexorable justice and may our hearts be lifted up unto him in adoration and thanksgiving that he from before the foundation of the world, gave us who do believe in him a hiding-place in his Son from that divine wrath which shall one day disclose itself to the eternal discomfort of all those out of Christ.

H. H. L.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANKS.

As it has been our custom to inclose a subscription blank in each copy of our November issue, you will find one in this number, and we hope you will examine the date on the little pink slip bearing your address, either on your paper or the wrapper in which it comes to you, and do what you can for us. If you are in arrears with your subscription and cannot afford to send all your dues at one time, send what you can, as a little from each one would be a great help toward keeping the old SIGNS going. The past two years have indeed been difficult ones in all lines of business, and the SIGNS has been no exception to the rule, but up to the present time He who rules all things has put it into the hearts of our brethren to support the publication and we can but trust him to care for it in the future, if it be his will that it shall continue.

August 8th, last, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES rounded out one hundred years of its existence; how much longer it is to continue is known only to our God, who is to wise to err and too good to be unkind, and he will do with it as seemeth good in his sight, and may he give us the mind to always say, Thy will, not ours, be done.

J. E. B. & Co.

CHURCH LETTERS.

(Written by sister Nellie Palmer.)

The Whitefield Old School Baptist Church, in session with the Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 7th, 8th and 9th, 1932, sends greetings.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—It is, according to custom, the time to address you by way of a Church Letter. We would that the most holy God would guide our pen that we might write in such a manner that our mutual love might be strengthened and our souls comforted, but unless he fills the vessel it can but cast up mire and dirt, for it is filled, my beloved, with pollution which eateth as doth a canker. We find the way so rough and rugged and our little strength so many, many times almost gone; we look for the appearing of our Beloved, but lo, he hideth himself. To whom shall we go? We have no one on earth or in heaven beside thee, our only Friend and Savior. Oh show thy face in mercy. Dare we ask this? What are we, O God, that thou hast any pleasure in us? And yet the clouds hang so heavy—all is blackness and the tempest within rages to such a degree, we cry out in our distress, Will our souls never find rest, must we be tempted beyond endurance? It seems our frail barque is about to be crushed as the waves and billows go over us. Will the light of dawn never appear? Will the harbor light never again be seen? When lo, he tells us, "He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation."—Psalms cvii. 7. Then have we, too, been traveling the right way Is this the way no vulture's eye hath seen, neither the lion's whelp trodden, and its travellers all homeward bound by the right way? And a gleam of joy and rest enters the soul and we find ourselves resting on the oasis in this desert land. We have come to the river the streams whereof make glad the city of our God. We find the date and the pomegranate flourish only here in the presence of our Beloved, and we find our Beloved is more than any other beloved. We can say we have proven his promises and found him ever true and faithful. "For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness."—Psalms cvii. 9. And we each can say, It is good for me that I was afflicted, if so by suffering I may obtain a glimpse of his mercy and lovingkindness.

The Whitefield Church consists of four members only, two having united (on September 27th, 1931,) with the Gardiner Church, from which we had withdrawn fellowship, on August 31st, 1929. Our hearts are sad, and we weep when we think of past joys and present desolation, but we read in Psalms cxxxvii. 8, "O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us." We are all in the hands of the just God, and he will do what seemeth unto him good. We have no meetings now at Whitefield, but have preaching (at our Association) at Bowdoinham once a year, where love and fellowship abound.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Eld. J. W. McClanahan)

The Pocatalico Old School Baptist Association, in session with the West Fork Church, Calhoun County, West Virginia, commencing on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1932, and continuing three days, 2nd, 3rd and 4th, sends christian love and salutation to the churches composing the same, and to the sister associations with whom we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED:—It being a custom of long standing to prepare a Corresponding Circular to be spread upon our Minutes that our brethren may know of our doctrinal standing, and as the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is an all-important subject to the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, we feel there is no subject more animating, heart-searching and soul-cheering than the belief in the resurrection of the dead. The truth of the resurrection of the dead, both of the unjust and of the just, is clearly taught in the word of truth, which resurrection will be unto eternity, either of happiness or of misery. Job testified unto the resurrection, saying, Though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. Doubtless Job had a clear vision of the resurrection of his body, and he is a type of the church. It is a supernatural power that quickens the dead sinner into life. John v. 25: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." This refers not only to the literal raising of the dead which Jesus did while here in the world, but refers as well to the quickening into life of sinners who were dead in trespasses and sins. In John v. 28, Jesus says, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Hence, it follows that there shall be a resurrection of all the dead. The power to resurrect the dead to life was manifested in the resurrection of Lazarus of Bethany, of the widow's son and of Jairus' daughter. Jesus is the resurrection and the life. He said to Martha, "Thy brother shall rise again." Martha replied, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." As the firstfruits were a pledge and assurance of the ensuing harvest, and as upon the condition of the firstfruits being offered to God the whole harvest was entitled to consecration, so our Savior's resurrection to the life of glory is the earnest and assurance of our resurrection. The firstfruits from the vineyard, orchard or wheat field in the hands of a high priest in Moses' tabernacle or in Solomon's temple having been offered, then the crop was safe and was harvested in

due time in good maturity. In that is seen the doctrine of the resurrection. God having received the body of Jesus and those of a hundred and forty and four thousand of his Israel, as first-fruits of all the dead, this secured and made safe the harvest that is to be truly great: the gathering in of the entire crop remaining in the field, which is the world. Jesus is the One like unto whom all the saved must be fashioned. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we would of all men be most miserable, but the hope of the saints reaches beyond this mortal life to that of immortality, from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his own glorious body. Christ is the all-important theme of the gospel, and he is the demonstration of its life and power; hence Paul says that if Christ be not risen then is our preaching vain, and our faith is also vain and we are yet in our sins. The apostle, being called to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, was bound to preach Christ and the resurrection, and he was to lay this down as the foundation of our faith, that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead in order that all shall yield faith and obedience unto him. God chose and appointed him to be the source and channel from and through whom all divine blessings should flow to the children of God. Accordingly, he told his disciples, "Because I live, ye shall live also." How blessed is that man whose life is hid with Christ in God! When he who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory. The apostle further says, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Yes, we, the redeemed of the Lord. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Evidently the doctrine of the resurrection of these vile bodies of ours is clearly taught in the Scriptures, because "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." So, my dear brethren, according to the teaching of both the Old and New Testaments, there shall be a resurrection of the dead; and what would your hope be worth to you if this precious doctrine could be set aside by the Sadducees' denial of the resurrection? It was the whole sinner that fell in Adam and who remains in that state until quickened and resurrected to life by the Holy Spirit. The law of adoption is an action whereby a man takes a person into his family in order to make him a part of it, acknowledges

him for his son and receives him into his household and gives him the right to the privileges of his children. Thus, it is the sinner who is the subject of adoption. He was banished in Adam, but not expelled from Christ to whom the elect were given before the foundation of the world. The law of adoption gives the redeemed sinner the right to that inheritance reserved in heaven for the children of God. The redeemed sinner is to be raised in the resurrection and to be fashioned like unto the Savior, and by adoption is an heir of God and a joint-heir with Christ.

J. W. McCLANAHAN, Mod.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Clerk.

(ORIGINAL MT. ZION ASSOCIATION)

(Written by Elder W. L. Hall)

DEAR BRETHREN:—In this, a short Circular Letter of this the Mt. Zion Association, we desire to set forth some of the things that are most surely believed among us. We believe in a sovereign God, one who created all things, and by him all things consist. That he declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. The apostle Paul, in writing to the Hebrew brethren, says, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." God inspired the prophets to comfort the fathers with the promise of the coming of the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who shall save his people from their sins. Jesus came into the world, and said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Thus we have the promise of God fulfilled in the coming of Jesus into the world. We have the eternal purpose and sovereign will of God, the electing love and sovereign grace, the gift of eternal love through and by Jesus Christ his Son, salvation for time and eternity, the perseverance of the saints unto glory and the resurrection of our bodies from the grave, fashioned like unto his glorious body, who is our Elder Brother, whom God hath appointed heir of all things, and we as joint-heirs with him wait in patience for the full fruition of hope, when we shall see him as he is.

DANIAL A. J. ADAMS, Mod.
(MRS.) J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

FREEWATER, Ore., Oct. 2, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have changed my address from Freewater, Oregon, to Touchet, Washington. Please send my paper to the latter place, and give notice through the SIGNS that my correspondents may address me at Touchet, Washington. I will say to my correspondents, My eyes are no better, and their letters are a great comfort to me.

In gospel bonds,

J. T. BARNES.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SARAH EVALINE HALE (nee Woods) was born March 29th, 1850, at Iuka, Mississippi, and was married at the age of twenty-three to John Wesley Hale. To this union twelve children were born, five of whom survive, namely, William, Mrs. Mary Burges, Mrs. Martha Hall, Mrs. Phoebe Thornton and Mrs. Pearley Geddie, also twenty grandchildren, ten great-grandchildren, two brothers, William and Sidney, two sisters, Mrs. Clem McCrea and Mrs. Mary Pharr. Her husband preceded her sixteen years. She received a hope in Christ at the age of twnty-two years, joined the Primitive Baptists and lived a devoted member, always filling her seat until the infirmities of age prevented her. She passed away March 6th, 1932, aged 81 years, 11 months and 7 days, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Pearley Geddie. Her children were by her bedside when her spirit took its flight to God who gave it. Her remains were laid to rest beside her husband in Oakland Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord, when the trump of God shall sound and the dead in Christ shall rise first, and this mortal body shall be raised a spiritual body, a manifest heir of God, a joint-heir with Christ, and be adopted into the heavenly family, and so shall we ever be with the Lord, where there will be no more death nor sorrow, no more parting with friends. So, dear children, sorrow not as others who have no hope.

The unworthy writer tried to speak words of comfort to a large concourse of sorrowing relatives and friends.

Written by her pastor,

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

BENJAMIN HANNA CARTER, oldest son of Daniel and Martha Hanna Carter, formerly of Cecil County, Maryland, died near Auburn, Washington, August 30th, 1932, aged 82 years and 7 months. He was a firm believer in the Primitive Baptist faith and a constant reader of the SIGNS, but never felt free to offer himself to the church. He died honored and respected by all who knew him. He leaves a wife, Lorena Clifford Carter, a sister, Mrs. Edith Gekeler, La Grande, Oregon, and two brothers, Robert D., of Boise, Idaho, and Marion L., of La Grande, Oregon.

(MRS.) E. M. GEKELER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Edith M. Gekeler, Ore., $2; "A friend," N. Y., $2; E. G. Morse, N. Y., $1; H. M. Bennett and mother, Md., $5.

NOTICE.

DECEMBER 15th, next, has been designated as DONATION DAY at THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST HOME in Salisbury, Maryland.

Unquestionably, this cause has been greatly blest of the Lord, and it is our earnest hope that he will continue to put it into the hearts of our brethren and friends to support it. Unfavorable financial conditions throughout the country have, of course, prevented many from helping to the extent they would have liked. It will be greatly appreciated if all who desire to, will send their donations in the form of funds either to the Home, or to Henry T. Lefferts, Nutley, N. J., and all other useful gifts can be sent direct to the Home so as to reach their destination on or before the 15th of December. Thank you in advance.

R. LESTER DODSON.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, &c. REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.

Of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, published monthly, at Middletown, N. Y., for October 1st, 1932.

State of New York, County of Orange, ss.:

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Gilbert Beebe, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the owner of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that the following is to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24th, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse side of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publishers, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publishers, J. E. Beebe & Company, Middletown, N. Y.; Editor, H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

2. The owner is, Gilbert Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagers and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent. or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear on the books of the company, but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the corporation for whom such trustee is acting is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity

other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stocks, bonds or other securities than as so stated by him.

GILBERT BEEBE, Owner.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 5th day of October, 1932.

(Seal) FRANK P. COX.

(My commission expires March, 1933.)

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of sister N. J. Preston, 116 Center Street, Oregon City, Oregon, at 10:30 a. m. Those coming by stage, steam train or electric car get off at Seventh Street, take elevator to top of the hill, cross trestle over railway tracks, turn to the right, go two blocks on Sixth Street to Center Street, thence five and one-half blocks south on Center Street to 116, house number, between First and Second Streets. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Moderator.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at the home of sister E. Brunow, 411 N. Ridgeway Avenue, and on the second, third and fourth Sundays at the home of brother W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. The fifth Sundays are by appointment. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastors, Elders Jones and Janes.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every first and third Sunday at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, at 1 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

We have kept up a monthly meeting for some time in the past, and hope, by the grace of God, to be favored to continue to meet every second Sunday in each month at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California. May this bear a cordial invitation to all who believe in grace and salvation by grace to meet with us on the stated time.

MR. and MRS. W. J. BERRY.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

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ELDER C. W. ANDERSON,
ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminiar Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 100. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1932. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WOOSTER, Ohio.

DEAR EDITORS:—Again I am moved (by what spirit I am not sure) to speak of things pertaining to the kingdom of God and his joint-heirs, the spiritual seed of Israel. It is with fear and trembling I express thoughts, which, so far, seem to be entertained by so few. But according to the prophet, Daniel, there were some truths which were to be "sealed until the time of the end." And in the New Testament we read, When ye see these signs fulfilled, ye may know, that it is even at the doors; and this saying is just as true as any other in the Bible. I have been looking for and believing that the time is near, for perhaps thirty-five years or more. First let me say it seems to me that during the time of the Gentiles conditions were to grow worse and worse, deceivers deceiving and being deceived. But the promise of the kingdom, and the selection of those who are to possess it jointly with Christ, is a very ancient and sure promise, and these people are preserved in Jesus Christ, and called, and are so "one with him" that because he lives they shall live also, and because he reigns they shall reign with him; but he shall ever have the preeminence, and his saints, though sharing with him, shall ascribe all power and glory to him. Even so may it be! We love to give glory to him. One reason I desire heaven is that I may praise him better, and ever bask in his love, and also, to be pure as he is pure. He, in Christ, sees us that way now, and, if not deceived, he has given to the writer a few glimpses of that purity. This I believe is heaven, be it where it may, in a space above or in the very land which was promised to Abraham and to his seed forever. Furthermore, from history I am led to hope that the Lord's people in England, Ireland and our own dear country are the natural as well as the spiritual seed of Abraham. Not Jews: they were the seed of Judah. We, perhaps, are the seed of Benjamin or Manasseh. Of course I cannot say

whether or not the time of Gentiles is now fulfilled, but I think it, at least, near the end. In the eleventh chapter of Romans we read that the promise of God is without repentance, and that the Jews will be grafted in again. They were cut off that the Gentiles should be grafted in; then the Jews were to be grafted again into their own olive tree. But in the new order of things Christ is their King and Priest, not David or the sons of Levi, but Christ is the seed of David. The old conditional covenant that vanished away shall never rise; since Jehovah found fault with it it could not take away sin. But the engrafted Jew will serve in the kingdom of Christ and his free grace and be made one with the Gentile, and the enmity between the law and the poor sinner will vanish. The law was just, and even glorious, especially so when Christ honored it, fulfilling its demands and bearing all its penalty, but the law of the Spirit in Christ Jesus is much more glorious, and the Jew shall declare it.

I was much interested in the opening letter in the March number of the SIGNS. Just a few days before the same thoughts, at least in part, were presented to me. When God's kingdom comes and his will is done in earth as it is in heaven, will there be sin there? I believe the time will come when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea;" but not in the time of the Gentiles. I do not know, of course, but I believe that the earth, the land which men cultivate, shall be made new, but whether it shall stand more than one thousand years in that state, with no thorns, or briars, or sin, or anything that offends, is a question not decided by the ignorant writer, who is but a fool who desires wisdom from above that she may be wise. One thing we do know, if it be that we are taught of God: that the earth itself, men and devils, shall all fulfill the purpose for which they were created. Our God counted the cost before he began creating this universe and has not, nor will not be one iota disappointed in his plans, will or pleasure. He is King of kings and Lord of lords. If this present evil world is to be destroyed by literal fire, before restoration (as it once was destroyed by literal water), I believe that the justified just class shall be resurrected from the grave and the justified living be changed, and all meet the Lord in the air, and shall not suffer in the conflagation. If the fire by which the present order be destroyed is figurative I believe it is rapidly taking place right here now. See the crime wave, the worship of pleasure, the disobedience of children, the famine, both of hearing the preached word and famine of natural food, the earthquakes, the upheaval of governments, etc. He shall reign until he has put down all authority. When shall our own government crumble? What a terrible time when all is chaos and confusion! Oh for wings to fly away and be at rest, to sleep in Jesus and be one of those whom he will bring with him to meet the saints left behind. I used to wish to live upon earth to see the day

of the Lord. But the redeemed shall see it whether living or resurrected. When the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it. Unto them that look for him shall he appear.

Only an ignorant sister,

JOIE WOODS PETERS.

LONDON, Ontario, Canada.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I received this excellent letter of brother Dodson's my heart was made glad and I felt to send it on to you to be published so others of the household of faith could read the sweet, cheering sentiments it contains.

Your sister in hope,

FLORA J. SINCLAIR.

RUTHERFORD, N. J., Jan. 23, 1932.

DEAR SISTER SINCLAIR:-The Lord's people like to sing, Blest be the tie that binds, and especially did the last two lines in the first verse of this hymn drop into my mind some time ago. They are

"The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

Last Sunday afternoon, which service was to be followed by observing the ordinance of the Lord's supper, I turned to the first chapter of first John and tried to talk more particularly in connection with the third verse: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." This fellowship is realized only when we meet on a common ground and speak of those things which we have actually handled and tasted of the Word of life. An eyewitness can speak with authority, and it is good to hear God's servants declaring those things which we ourselves are also witnesses to, but however much revelation one may profess to have had if he speak in an unknown tongue to us we do not, yea, cannot, have fellowship for him in those things. When one describes the way of the salvation of a poor sinner as we know it to be, there is an "Amen" in our breasts as he speaks, and in the oneness of the Spirit we come together as two drops of water. Truly, The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above. I am persuaded that you and I have much in common in the Lord Jesus, and I am grateful, I trust, that the warmth of that love in your breast flows out to me in such profusion as is indicated in your letters. I am glad that my writings in the SIGNS are such as to comfort you while you are making the pilgrim journey here below. You know without my telling you that I have nothing which I have not received, therefore, as touching the flesh, I have nothing whereof to boast, but, may I add, a great, great deal to be ashamed of and mortified over. It is certainly by the grace of God that I am what I am, if I am anything in the church of the true and living God. If you have Beebe's Hymnal, look at number 494 and learn more of my travel. It begins with

"If I must sing, I'll sing of grace,
Which raised me from the fall,
And led me to a hiding place,
Jesus, my Lord, my all."

The fifth verse is of special comfort:

"And when I've sank exceeding low,
Just ready to give up,
This grace hath raised my soul unto
A comfortable hope."

If we are ever fruitful in spiritual things it is because of grace, which at times is amazing; at others it is a charming sound, and in the end all the work shall be crowned wth grace. I am sure I can sympathize with you in your inability to take your mind off of trivial things and fix it upon heavenly things. When the Shepherd and Bishop of our soul appears unto us in his great glory and power and bids us come unto him, we can then forget all for a season and be lost to this world in the wonder and amazement of his love.

I am glad you are privileged to travel around with your pastor and witness such scenes as that referred to at Mr. Campbell's. The joys of this world are, indeed, but shadows of the things of that upper and better kingdom. As you say, it is a great question as to whether I shall be among that number to sound forth his praise in eternity, but such is my hope, and sometimes I am reminded that that hope is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. It is that which holds me—I do not hold it. David said, "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." I am glad it does not depend upon our holding on to the Lord.

Your brother in gospel fellowship,

R. LESTER DODSON.

STILLWATER, Okla., June 28, 1932.

DEAR BRETHREN:—"Salvation is of the Lord."—Jonah ii. 9. Then salvation is not of man. If salvation is of works of men it is not of grace, and if by grace then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, it is no more of grace. Let us see which it is. By His grace ye are saved from hell and all the allurements and cunningness of Satan and his messengers while here in this world of sin and sorrow. Then we see we are saved by grace here in time, and all through time. It is not by works of righteousness which we have or can do, but according to God's mercy. He (God) hath saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit (God). Then we see it is not by righteous works of our own that we save ourselves, and it could not be by our wicked works, for they (our wicked works) sent us all to condemnation (hell), and as our righteousness is as filthy rags and cannot save us, it must be by grace if we are saved at all. For by grace (God) are ye saved through faith (the Lord Jesus Christ), and that not of yourselves, it (salvation and everything that appertains thereto) is the gift (not offer) of God. Not of works, lest any man (or woman) should boast. For we are God's workmanship (not man's), created in Christ Jesus unto good works (which are in Christ Jesus) which God hath before ordained that we should (not may or can if you wish to) walk in them (the good works). So we see that it is by grace (God) through faith (Christ),

that we are saved here in time and on into eternity. Not part of the way, but all the way. What is grace? Webster and other lexicographers say grace is unmerited favor (love), which means God, for God is love. Here is a Bible definition, 2 Timothy i. 8, 9: "God; who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace [love], which was given us [God's children] in Christ Jesus before the world began." Then we are right in saying that grace is God.

What is faith? Webster and others say faith is belief, creed, etc. The Bible definition is, Hebrews xi. 1, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." What is the substance of our hope? It is Christ Jesus and what he did for his children that the Father gave him. Then our faith is Christ Jesus, our Savior and Lord. Who was it that lifted us out of the miry clay and sink of sin and put our feet upon a rock (Christ) and put a new song in our mouth, even praises unto his name? It was Christ Jesus our God. Who was it that healed the withered hand? Who was it that healed the woman's bloody issue that the doctors could not heal? Christ Jesus. Who was he who cured the lame and made them walk, and the blind and made them see? Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Jesus was their faith, and as he does not change he is our faith; therefore the biblical definition of faith is Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior. Then we see that salvation is not of ourselves, nor can it be, for we are dead in trespasses and sin and we cannot get ourselves out that dilemma. Then if God is not our Savior, who is? God says, I am God, and beside me there is no Savior. We see the proof is by the two witnesses that we are saved by the God of heaven and earth, through the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Then salvation is (has been, is now and will be as long as time lasts) of the Lord. (God the Father, the Word and Holy Spirit, and they are one true and living God.) Then salvation, and everything that appertains thereto, is the gift (not offer) of God. Who was it that chose the Israelites and gave them a law? It was God. Did they keep that law? No, they did not, and they could not, but Jesus did. Who are the "us"? Those who were chosen in Christ before the foundation, or creation, of the world. Did Christ save any but those the Father gave him? He did not. Jesus said that of all the Father gave him he had lost nothing save the son of perdition (Judas Iscariot) that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. Who makes it manifest to those who were chosen in Christ? Christ does, by begetting his Spirit in them, and they make it manifest by crying, Abba, (my Father and my God). Who teaches them after being born of the Spirit? God in them, teaches them to come to Christ; or he draws them to Christ, and takes the things which Jesus did and reveals them unto them by the Comforter. Who is it in them that causes them to obey and walk in the good works that God before or-

dained that they should walk in them? It is God which worketh in them both to will and to do of his (God's) good pleasure. Then it is not left to us to do as we please about it;that is, to our own option or discretion to do or not to do them. Certainly not. Then salvation is of the Lord, and no part of it of man. Who redeemed us unto God, and how? "And they [the saved children of God] sung a new song, saying, Thou [Jesus] art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." I believe in the resurrection of the dead. Jesus says through the apostle Paul, Sown a natural body and raised a spiritual body, sown a corruptible body and raised an incorruptible body, sown a mortal (dying) body and raised an immortal (never dying) body. Again, Paul says, Christ, who shall change our vile (corruptible) body, that it (corruptible body) may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. The description of Jesus' glorious body is given in the Old and New Testaments. My only hope is in Jesus and what he has done for his people, hoping that I was included in the gift of the Father to the Son. I have never done any good that I can see.

Very dear brethren, pray for me when it goes well with you who may read this. May God bless all who are connected with the SIGNS as editors, publishers, writers and readers. I have passed my eighty-fifth year and still love the Old School Predestinarian Baptists. I am blessed with very good health for one of my age, and feel thankful to God for the same.

If any who read this feel to write to me I will, the Lord willing, answer their letters.

Love to all God's loved ones from your little brother in hope of eternal life in Christ,

J. M. WHITENTON.

WOODWARD, Iowa.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—If you will excuse my negligence, I will try in my feeble and simple way to answer your kind and much appreciated letter I received some time ago.

I have gone to several so-called Primitive Baptist churches, but they were all about the same. They do not see things the way I do and the way the SIGNS OF THE TIMES contends for them. I have had the pleasure of going to hear sound doctrine in southern Illinois, Kentucky and Tennessee, and I believe I know it when I hear it. I have heard what I thought were some of the grandest sermons ever listened to, preached by such men as Elders Richard Fulkerson and John Perkins, both deceased. The latter was editor and publisher of the *Gospel News* as long as it lasted. I have also heard many more down through the ages who have contended for the same principles and doctrine as I see and believe them, and for which the grand and noble old SIGNS contends to the present time, and may God grant you and yours the power and ability to keep on contending for the doctrine that was delivered

unto the saints of old. I can believe nothing but salvation by grace and the predestination of all things, from the beginning to the end of time. It is my meat and drink, and I am not satisfied with anything else.

No, I am not a member of the militant church, for I have always had a feeling of unworthiness and sinfulness, and my soul seems so black that it would besmirch the purity of the church were I even to offer myself for membership, but I love the doctrine as I never loved anything else in my life, and I also love the members of the church. I hope I love my wife and children, but the love of the Old School Baptists and the doctrine for which they contend is a different kind of love, and, I believe, as lasting as eternity itself. Yet with all the sinfulness I see in myself I cannot say I have no hope, for if I did not have hope I know I would develop into a raving maniac, and who of those that have had the goodness of God revealed unto them would not? While Jesus was hanging on the cross in his mortal agony he said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Am I any worse than they? I feel to be equally as bad, for if he died for my sins did I not help crucify him?

Please have charity for these rambling words. I know they are too many and have no meaning or sense in them. I look forward to the first of each month for another feast from the editors and writers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. May the God of all grace spare you to a ripe old age, and when you are gone may there be others to take your places and preach the gospel on down to the coming generations until the second coming of Christ, when he will gather his children home from out this sinful world into his loving arms, never more to part. I know I have not much longer to remain in this time state, but I have been blessed with good health, for which I hope I am thankful. I am nearing my sixtieth year, so you see it cannot be long. God bless and keep you.

W. J. KIMBRO.

PULASKI, MISS., March 10, 1932.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending a check to pay for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which remittance has been unavoidably delayed, and I thank you much for your kindness in sending the paper on, for I would much dislike to miss a single copy. While sending in my remittance I wish to send christian greetings to all the household of faith. Oh that I might speak a word of encouragement to each one who has contributed with their pens to the columns of our loved paper, and I long to say to those aged ones who have gone through heat and cold to feed the flock over which the Lord has made them overseers, and to those who are still wielding their pens in defense of that glorious gospel, to those the words of the poet sound sweet: Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne. Indeed yours will be an honorable discharge. Oh may your last days be continually overshadowed with his divine presence. When I read your sweet letters I long

to see you face to face and tell you how good are the crumbs that fall from the lips and pens of those dear soldiers of the cross. I feel that anything we can do or say is not good enough for the Lord's patriots. Yea, the Lord reproved kings for their sakes. When they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people he suffered no man to do them wrong. So fear not, dear anointed ones, to go where he leads to comfort his little flock. I hope to never forget the comfort received by the coming of the Lord's ministers last year, when brethren Sikes and Rhodes, and later on brethren Hutchins, Wyatt and Slatter came into my humble home. I can never express my feelings that the Lord had directed his servants to the home of a poor widow and little grandson with such messages as he alone could have sent. Oh may he continue to go with them and bless them as manifestly as at those times, Only about once a year do I attend my meetings, as it is so far for me to go, about seventy-five miles. I availed myself of the opportunity last October of attending our Association, where my membership is, at Laurel, Mississippi, (Palestine Church). It was a pleasure indeed to visit my brother in the flesh, and I hope in the Spirit, Elder L. F. Easly, and also Elder Graham, who are our pastors. There were several visiting Elders and it was a happy season indeed to be permitted to sit under the sound of such wonderful preaching. I seem yet to view the happy faces as we listened to those ministers giving God all honor and praise and holding him up, as it were, before the people, he who gave his life a ransom for his chosen. The question with me is, Am I a portion of that treasure that he gave his life for? I can only say, I hope when he comes to make up his jewels that through his own righteousness I may have on that wedding garment that he alone can cause us to appear clothed in, for I have no righteousness of my own in which to approach him, yet in all this seeming uncertainty I often find myself singing, I know that my Redeemer liveth. Indeed I cannot say that he has not blessed me times without number, for since my earliest recollection I have been drawn to him with all my trials, all my cares. He has been my burden-bearer, and the lines, "I cannot live if thou remove, for thou art all in all," express my feelings.

Dear ones, when you can find it in your heart to pray for one of the least of my Father's family pray for me.

Yours in an humble hope,

(MRS.) ANNA WINDHAM.

PORT ROYAL, Pennsylvania.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—For some time I have felt much impressed that I should try to write you a few lines, but feeling my extreme sinfulness and unworthiness I have hesitated to do so. When I look back over some of my past experience, which I long to fully understand, I feel that surely it was the Lord that said in the midst of my troubles, Peace, be still, and when I meditate upon many of the writings of the apostles, and read many articles in

the SIGNS it appears to give me peace in the midst of trouble, and hope and assurance in the midst of doubts, and glympses of light in the midst of darkness.

As touching your editorial in the July number of the SIGNS, if I am not mistaken in my one experience, I have been taught that I of myself can do nothing, not even write this letter. Unless the Holy Spirit directs my mind I cannot write worthy of your consideration. I have often felt that if it was the Lord's will I would like to talk with you face to face about having preaching in the little church-building in Licking Creek Valley, where the Tuseroyal Valley Church used to meet, and when I read of the associations it brings thoughts of my boyhood days, when they used to hold associations there, long before I was baptized. Now the building stands there useless and idle, and only the good Lord knows whether there would be any hearers or not, but I appear to have a pressing desire that some of you able Elders will deliver messages there. May he who has all power give me to truly say, Lord, have mercy on me that I may ever praise thy holy name. I ask to be forgiven forever.

I hope I am your true brother in hope,

GEORGE M. VARNES.

CORVALLIS, Ore., June 2, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—Here I am again with my little mite, still desiring the love and fellowship of the people of God, and still desiring the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to come to me laden with the love of truth, which is of the love of our God and Jesus Christ our Savior, as we humbly hope. Sometimes we have a mind and the desire to write of the things that we as the people of God most surely believe, the things that were set forth by the holy prophets and apostles of old in time past for our learning and instruction, and which the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is made able to contend for, the same truth that by the grace of God was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, and yet being made manifest in these last times to us. May it be pleasing to our God to bless all his little elect children to the end.

Your unworthy brother, a sinner,

JAMES EDWARDS.

FT. WORTH, Texas, Oct. 31, 1932.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please send the SIGNS to me at Ft. Worth, Texas, instead of Hattiesburg, Miss., and, if not too much trouble, put a notice in the SIGNS stating that my address has been changed. I would be glad to hear from the Lord's people, as there are no Old Baptists nearer than thirty-five miles of us that we know of. It seems sad to be where I cannot see any one of the belief that I so dearly love, but I feel the Lord has a purpose in me being placed where I am. I am still a helpless invalid. Pray for me, a poor, dependent, unworthy sinner, trusting in a sovereign and merciful God.

C. C. SMITH.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1932.

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LOVE AND FELLOWSHIP.

WHAT a wonderful love is the LOVE OF GOD, and how blessed is he who in any degree has that love shed abroad in his heart. Such an one is among that wonderful people who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before God in love. One of the evidences of God's love is that they are chastened of him, each of them have a cross and must know something of being crucified with Christ. God does not love everybody, for the Scripture says, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." God loved all whom he hath chosen before the foundation of the world, and while the Baptists of the Old School are, if all were numbered, but a little flock, yet we believe God's people are a number that NO MAN can number, and are as the sand of the sea innumerable. It is their lot in many cases to travel alone, but when they are favored to meet one who loves the truth, no matter by what name he is called, there is a joy and gladness as of fellow-travellers. Some are not ever favored to meet others of like precious faith, thus the travel of brethren as related in the SIGNS, or the experience in many of the hymns and spiritual songs of Zion will be so much in accord with what they feel that love will flow from their heart to the writer and to the writer's God. Many of the hymn writers, in fact, most of them, were not Baptists. Quite a number of them were members and ministers in the Church of England, and many others were independents, but we love their testimony, and could we have met them would have loved them for the truth's sake. There are Newton, Cowper and Toplady, three of a wonderful group of men whose hymns give evidence that they were deeply led into an experimental knowledge of the truth. Such men are greatly blessed of the Lord and are loved by all who love the truth. It is very true they were not clear on the ordinance of believer's baptism, yea, many of them practiced the Romish ordinance of sprinkling, and never seemed to have their eyes opened to its evil. Why the Lord should reveal so much of the truth to them and leave them in what seems to us to be Babylon, is perhaps that they should witness to the truth even there.

In the words of one of them, "God is his own interpreter." We say again, we love them wherever they are found, and can join with Toplady and sing, "Rock of ages cleft for me," and with Cowper while he views the deep purpose of God, and sings, "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform," and our hearts are kindled with a flame of heavenly love by the Holy Spirit so that we have felt there was a sermon to us in the hymn that was sung. God gave us those precious hymns, and they were gracious men who wrote them and they will live in the hearts of good men after the youngest of us now living are silent in death. Thus, though we are Baptists, and true, we hope, to a profession, yet we love many who are not Baptists and yet are God's children, deeply taught of the Lord. We rejoice also that they knew the all-important truth of the gospel of God's grace and expressed it so wonderfully, and for such expressions we love them, yet we could not fellowship them in their church affiliations at all.

To our understanding there is a vast difference between love and fellowship, and it is our object in this article to distinguish, the Lord enabling us, between the two. The things that Jesus Christ, who is head over the body, the church, has commanded, and his apostles and the primitive church practiced, should be and we hope are the order and practice of the gospel church to-day. A gospel church is essentially a church of baptized believers of the truth as it is in Jesus, and any deviation in doctrine and practice would be a departure from the fellowship of the church. The Regular, New School or General Baptists departed from the truth, and became Arminian, many years ago, and in their departure dropped from the fellowship of Baptists of the Old School. John said, "They went out from us, because they were not of us," and what fellowship has light with darkness? For one hundred years they have gone their way, a way of their own choice, loving Esau, and, in many cases, hating Jacob. Their doctrine has no soundness, for it rests on the choice of man, not on the electing love of God. Our love does not go out to such as it does to those we have before mentioned. It is true that these practice a form of baptism similar to our own, while the others were joined to sprinklers, sprinkling their children, which is an unclean thing, instituted by the father of lies, in an institution which is truly called the mother of harlots.

The one denies an ordinance which Jesus commanded believers to obey, taking instead children ignorant of the work of grace in the heart, while the other takes dead men and women who have some righteousness of their own which is after the flesh, and called them followers of Christ, baptizing them, when most of them know not the truth. There cannot be any fellowship between either of the above people and the church of God. We would love them as we see the work of God in them, but we do not know of any such institutions or churches to-day but what are legalists and haters of the

doctrine of God's electing love. A work of grace in the heart would unfit a person for such fellowship, for all they ask is that the world and worldlings accept Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. So while a work of grace is of little value to them, they do expect a candidate to be baptized, and baptism to them is the door to their church. Should there be a gracious person caught in such a plight they would be like a speckled bird, and for such we would write. Leave such a such we would write, Leave such a you entered by their door of baptism come out the same way, renouncing even that, for it is spotted with the flesh. It is an alien baptism and should not be fellowshipped by any gospel church. There must be a renouncing of that legal baptism, being under a do and live system it was not a gospel baptism. Some have thought that seeing that they were believers before their baptism, even though they were baptized by an Arminian, baptizing them into the fellowship of Arminians, that their baptism was all right and that a gospel church ought not to ask that they be baptized again. If that was so, then the church that received them would be, through them and their baptism, fellowshipping the very Arminians they had professed to be leaving. We are commanded to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but reprove them, and whatsoever is not the fruit of God's Holy Spirit and in accord with God's electing love is an unfruitful work of darkness. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."—2 Cor. vi. 14-18. If Paul did not consider John's baptism, which was administered under a legal covenant, and was a baptism of repentance, but baptized them again in the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts xix. 3-5), ought any who feel to renounce an Arminian institution who entered it by a false baptism, to object to being baptized in gospel order if they would join a gospel church? If it could be proven that a certain man and woman who were living together as man and wife were not legally married, that the man that married them had no legal right to do so, even though their own desires and intentions were honorable, would they not hasten to comply with the law and be married lawfully? A minister in disorder will baptize people into the disorder he is in, one is bound to be dirty if he handle soot, and there will be more peace of mind and fellowship with others of like precious faith

when one washes his or her hands clean of it. God said, Take heed that thou makest all things according to the pattern thou sawest in the mount. There were a number of infringements on that pattern in the history of Israel and each one met its just desert. David ordered Joab to take the number of Israel. David and the Israelites did not meet God's requirements, who had said, "When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel, after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the Lord, when thou numberest them; that there be no plague among them when thou numberest them." As a result David lost seventy thousand of his army by the plague. The ark of God was to be carried with staves, but the Philistines put it on a new cart and yoked two milch kine to it; some time later David also takes a new cart and yokes two oxen to it, and Uzza, a man who should have known better, putting his hand to steady the ark, was struck dead by God. Later we find that David had learned a lesson by it, for in 1 Chronicles xv. 2, David said, "None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for them hath the Lord chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him for ever." And in verse thirteen he says, "For because ye did it not at the first, the Lord our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order." Whatever is not after the ordered way in faith and practice will result in trouble. If the people before mentioned are the church of God, why leave them? If they are not, then renounce them and their doings. God grant we may all desire to know and do his will and to be kept unspotted from the world. That we may be kind and courteous, and not make a man an offender for a word, yet be firm in the truth and order of God's house. The more orderly and clean the housekeeping, the more happy and content is the family that lives there. May we also be mindful that to love is one thing, and that we may love many for the truth's sake that, because of our humble desire to walk before God in gospel order, we cannot fellowship. Gospel, or church fellowship is very sweet and heavenly, and we should all endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, for while there are many members there is but one body. The Spirit of God does not lead God's children into error, and it is God that adds daily to the church such as shall be saved. We have no desire to lay too much stress on the despised ordinance of believer's baptism, we require and expect those who wish a home with us to have a work of grace in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, and only such are fit persons for the ordinance of baptism. The Regular, or New School, is of a very popular type of religion to-day, and it is no cross for any, even the biggest worldling, to join them, but whosoever will forsake them and wash their hands altogether from their fellowship and join the Baptists of the Old School will certainly have a cross, and their former associates in religion will make that cross heavy unless God prevents. The Old School Bap-

tists cannot fellowship them nor their baptism, and while there may be those we love among them, we pray that God will open their eyes to see that any man in such a disorderly, God-dishonoring institution is in no wise qualified to baptize while he is there, even if he be an angel of God, an institution that cannot distinguish between works and grace, or, what is the fruit of the Spirit and what is the work of the flesh. They are constantly numbering what they call Israel without each soul paying its half shekel of silver; in other words, they do not know what it is to pass through the furnace, nor have they, many of them, an experience of grace which is set forth by the half shekel. It is that that links them together in the great redemption price and is like the sockets of silver that link together the boards of the tabernacle. God will not give his glory to another, and if the infringement of his word cost David seventy thousand of those that fought for him, and, in another instance, which we have before mentioned, the life of Uzza the priest, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? Such ways are not God's ordered way, that is, they are not according to his word, but such systems, being as they themselves say, progressive, are like the NEW CART, it had its origin among the Philistines and not in the mount of God. May God, we pray, open the eyes of his dear children who are in such a case, whether among those of the New School, whether they are called Regular Baptists (who in practice are very irregular) or General Baptists, or those who are in disorderly churches of the Old School, to see their plight and enable them to renounce the unfruitful works of darkness and confusion and confess him publicly, in the ordinance of his church.

G. R.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, Ashokan, N. Y., September 14th, 15th and 16th, 1932, sends christian greeting to the several churches and associations with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We gladly welcome your messengers. The churches of this Association are in harmony. Had the brethren known my inability as I feel I know it another would have been appointed last year to write this Circular Letter. I can write only of the things of which I hope I know something and have experienced.

God, who is rich in mercy, has all power. A loving Father, who cares for us. It is written, In the beginning. Can we comprehend the beginning, or fathom its depths? or a God who has neither beginning nor end? In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. God said, Let there be light, and there was light. God's Spirit was that light; not a created light. Not until the fourth day was light created. God made the sun, and the moon, and the stars also, and God

set them in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth. God created all things even before man was created. Not until the sixth day was man created. The last of all creation. Then of what has man to boast? Darkness precedes light. The evening and the morning were the first day, and so through the six days, but on the seventh day there was no evening nor morning. God rested the seventh day, full, complete. The work of creation was finished. God's plans and purposes were fulfilled. He pronounced his work good. He rested. So perfect is God's work in creation, the planets and stars made to revolve in their orbits in such order, that astronomers years after creation can for months or years previous predict an eclipse, the time, the place where visible, the planets that intercept each other. This universe is held in space by God's power. Scientists say by attraction. We concede that, but by God's power. Oh the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out. Great and marvelous are thy works.

"Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will."

This omnipotent God calms the troubled sea. The waves obey him. He shuts the lions' mouths. He shuts and none can open. Though the furnace be heated seven times hotter than before, yet the three Hebrew children who were thrown into the furnace were unharmed; not even the smell of fire was upon their garments. Then what have we to fear? Though we are called to pass through the furnace of affliction and trial, God is our refuge and strength, a present help in trouble. I will be their God, they shall be my people. (Not if they will be, or may, but shall.) God declared the end from the beginning: My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. My word shall not return unto me void. I create good, I create evil, I the Lord doeth all things; not a part of them. He foreknew all things, he predestinated all things. God's power is no greater than his love. God is love. Has no beginning nor end. We love him because he first loved us. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Christ, the Son of God, is the Word, he is ever with the Father. We were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. Thine they were and thou gavest them to me. Again, of what has man to boast? In God's time he reveals himself to us. We are of the earth. We are in darkness, we know not our condition. When we are quickened by God's power the light of his Spirit shines in our heart, then we see light in darkness, but the darkness comprehends it not. We are made to cry, Oh wretched man that I am! We feel we are lost. We think there is something within ourselves we can do, must do, to obtain our salvation. We work, yes, work, our six days, go to the end of the earth, but of no avail. God speaks to us; we hear his voice, we know his voice, Come unto

me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. We are made to rest in his promises, in his love. It is our seventh day. We have ceased from our work as God did from his. We are made to hope in his mercy. God knew his people would transgress. In his plan he made provision for their redemption. He sent his only begotten Son into the world. His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. (Not may, but shall.) He was born of a virgin, Mary, in a lowly manger. He was not with the so-called great and popular people of the world. He was smitten, persecuted, tempted, yet without sin. He was meek, humble, submissive, answering his persecutors in words, It is written thus and so, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.

"Oh may his meekness be our guide,
The pattern we pursue;
How can we bear revenge or pride,
With Jesus in our view?"

Jesus, who knew no sin, took upon himself the sins of his people. He died the cruel death of the cross that we might live. Through the shedding of blood is remission of sin. He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called, The Word of God. In his humanity he cried, If it be possible, let this cup pass from me, but prayed unto God, Not my will, but thine, be done. God's will was done. When on the cross Christ cried, It is finished. The work the Father sent his Son to do was finished. He redeemed his people. His plans and purposes were fulfilled. What a blessed thought: a finished salvation! When we are made to know Christ is our personal Savior (not merely a savior) what divine sweetness. We cannot praise his name too much. Though we stray far from him, he cares for us. His love encircles us, his everlasting arms are underneath us. Not one for whom Christ died is lost. We may wander so far as to be lost to the enjoyment and privileges of the church and to the love, fellowship and communion of the dear kindred in Christ here (Oh what a lonely, forsaken feeling that would be), but God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he has loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace are ye saved). What manner of person then ought we to be? Shall we live after the flesh, and of the flesh reap destruction? God forbid. The works of the flesh are strife, turmoil, confusion. The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, submission, esteeming each better than ourselves. It is written, Little children, keep yourselves from idols. We are all little children. We may not bow down to images as idols, but in our hearts may be some preconceived idea that has become an idol to us. From such let us keep ourselves.

"Love is the fountain whence
All true obedience flows;
The christian serves the God he loves,
And loves the God he knows."

Father, we would rest in thy love.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 12th, 13th and 14th, 1932, to the churches composing the same, and to the churches and associations with which we correspond, sends christian greeting.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—In the year 1898, on the 12th, 13th and 14th of October, the Corresponding Meeting was held with this same church of Mt. Zion as on the same days of this present year. At that time, thirty-four years ago, the Circular Letter was prepared by the late Elder E. V. White, and we know of nothing more suitable for this present occasion, and surely nothing more apposite to our present circumstances, as churches of Jesus Christ, than to bring this letter of Elder White's to the light and send it forth as our Circular Letter for this year, hoping it may be blessed by the Holy Spirit to the stirring up of our pure minds unto the remembrance and observance of matters which we so easily let slip. Here follows the letter:

According to custom, we address you this our annual epistle of love and fellowship, calling your attention to the subject of charity, than which there is no other subject of greater importance to the church. We base this assertion upon what the apostle says in 1 Corinthians xiii. 13, "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." We do not think charity is greater than faith or hope, simply because it has a more lasting or eternal abiding, or simply because it continues in the life to come. We do not understand the apostle to use it in this sense, but rather instruction in righteousness to the man of God in this present time state; that the supporting, sustaining power of charity is greater than faith or hope: that it has greater cohesive power than either faith or hope.

The word charity not being found in the Old Testament, we take it for granted it is because there was found no place for it. The end of the commandment being charity (1 Tim. i. 5), so long therefore as the end had not been attained, charity had no place. The law of commandment, embodying separation, servile punishment and death, must be abolished before charity could become operative. We understand the true significance of charity is found in the love of God through the work of Jesus Christ, and that there is no charity except in love manifested in works corresponding in spirit with the works of Jesus. God loved from all eternity, and loved his people from the beginning, but never until that love was manifested in bringing his people together in one, was charity effective. We do not understand that love and charity, as closely allied as they are, have the same significance, but rather that charity is the work of love in righteousness, as the apostle says, "out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." Though love, and faith, and hope, had their existence under the Old Testament, yet there

was not an organized church where the people of God dwelt together in the unity of the Spirit, and bond of peace, on earth. Nor could there be, so long as every man demanded according to the law, which he had a perfect right to do. Herein does the righteousness of the saints under the gospel dispensation exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. Wherein we condone not, but condemn, reprove, rebuke sin, yet we do it with long forbearance and compassion, bearing their sins in our own bodies, thus following in the righteousness of Christ, and in the charity of our blessed Lord, and not in the righteousness of the law. Because of this charity the people of God are brought together, even as the love of Christ manifested in works of charity brought his people together, and made them one in him. So does the love of God in us manifested in works of charity toward our brethren draw them unto each other in love and fellowship, uniting us altogether as members of the one body, so unites us that we are bold to say, If you are a member of the body of Christ, so am I. In a worldly sense it is not the magnificence of the house, nor the richness of it appointments, that makes it worthy of the name of home, but however humble, or however grand, where the sympathizing tear flows for each other's woes, and a happy smile for each other's joys, where charity abounds, where heart in each other's heart delights, *there and there alone,* is a place found worthy of the dignity of a home. And so where love behaveth itself lovely, "seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things," is that place worthy of the name of the church of Jesus Christ, or a home for the people of God. Whatever else we may have, whether prophecies to solve all mysteries, or faith to remove mountains, yet in the absence of this binding principle that gives light and life to the church, all is profitless. We may know some who we cannot doubt have faith and understand mysteries, yet in the absence of charity toward their brethren, death reigneth, their light has gone out in the church, the candlestick has been removed out of its place. That the church may know that he is the God that trieth the heart and reins, and will give unto every one according to his works (Rev. ii. 5, 23). If we do not do the works of love (charity) love like faith is dead, being alone. Being works we are commanded to put it on. Not only so, we are told by both Paul and Peter, above all things to put on charity. That is the bond of perfectness. It is the transcript of Christ's love to us, bringing together all parts of the body of Christ in harmonious agreement. Without it there would be no church. So long as the church exists on earth, so long will faith, hope and charity abide. There is however a material difference between abiding in weakness and abiding in strength: "This is love, that we walk after his commandments," "And whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of

God perfected." So, as we understand, it is works of love that bringeth perfection to the church. It will be understood that this perfection has reference to the organization of the church, to the order of the house of God, of which charity is the sum and substance, greater than faith or prophecy. Of all things, and above all things, see, brethren, that we hurt not the wine found in the cluster. Let us by due diligence to every obligation resting upon us as members of the church, show forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. As we have received the Lord Jesus Christ so let us walk in him. As we are not children of darkness, but of light, let us walk in light. We can only do this by acts of kindness towards our brethren: not to neglect the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, nor of visiting the poor, the sick and the afflicted: of speaking in kindness and love, "forbearing one another."

Oh that we could see the fire of charity burning brighter upon the altar of the church, that we could see at the times of our meetings the laying aside of every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and the presence of our brethren to cheer the hearts and strengthen the faith of the church. These are works of righteousness, which, if a man neglects, he forsakes his own mercy. God will not be mocked. "We beseech you therefore, brethren, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

The time and place for the holding of the next session of this Corresponding Meeting has not been determined upon. Due notice thereof will be given in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We appreciate the coming of your messengers and messages to this present session, and hope to be favored with a continuance of the same at our next coming together.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Mod.
G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

(Written by Elder G. E. Coulbourn.)

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Indiantown Church, Powellville, Wicomico County, Maryland, October 19th, 20th and 21st, 1932, sendeth greetings to the several associations and meetings with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Following the usual custom of writing what is called the Circular Letter for the Association, we make the attempt, realizing at the outset what the apostle Paul said was true: We are not "sufficient of ourselves, to think any thing, as of ourselves," this pertaining to thinking as to spiritual things. The apostle's sufficiency, said he, was "of the Lord." Further in the same connection, he wrote that with the sufficiency of the Lord he and others, using the word "us," saying, God also "made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." This applied to Paul and others in the ministry at his time, and must also apply at this time, for natural man

never has been able to make himself a minister of the Spirit, for this is God's work. We do not understand the apostle to be boasting of his ability in this text, but rather that God made him able, as well as making him a minister. In other words, the minister made by God is supplied by God with ability to minister, and with only such ability as it pleases God to give. The churches in this Association, as in others, are the judges as to their ministers, and during the past year there has been nothing to indicate that they are not agreed with the ministers in the doctrine they have declared, and there has been no evidence of any disagreement among or between the ministers as to the doctrine, as they understand it, taught of the Lord. For this we desire to thank the Lord, as ability to agree in matters of the Spirit is the wisdom (as James said) that cometh down from above, first pure, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, and is without partiality or hypocrisy. Without this wisdom from above, from God, to guide us we are by nature as others in the flesh, full of wrath, strife and confusion, which cometh from below and is devilish and earthly. (James iii.) Then the question, What is the sufficiency the apostle mentioned as coming from the Lord? We read much about revelation, and what Paul said about it and other inspired writers, and we only understand when the Lord gives us understanding. Paul had such an abundance of revelations that in the wisdom of God he was given a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him, and so Paul sought the Lord thrice for relief, and was told by the Lord, "My grace is sufficient for thee." So then we are here informed that it is God's grace that suffices, and by his grace his ministry is enabled to minister of the Spirit, instead of the letter of the law, and so Paul could say, "By the grace of God I am what I am." We believe this doctrine as of Paul, and as having been taught him by the Lord, and although the Lord taught him so much, yet he professed to know only in part, and may the Lord direct and keep this Association, and his people everywhere, steadfast in the knowledge that he is their "Sufficiency," for without him we can do nothing. We believe that in the Spirit there is agreement, but when left to the "letter" there is disagreement. We believe that "without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness." We confess that we cannot solve the great mystery, but that we believe what the inspired Word left on record: that "God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery, * * * which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." What a hope indeed! and is it not enough?

In conclusion, we quote from our letter of last year: "For us to be directed by his Spirit our conversations are in heaven, from whence we look for the Lord Jesus." Our conversations in these things are beyond valuation, and our earnestly contending for them in the mystery of godliness is the manner of persons we ought to be, and all envy and strife is swept away.

May the peace of God, that passeth

understanding, be with us in this Association, and may God make us realize more than ever that we are dead (to the law of sin), and that our lives are hid with Christ in God, and may he strengthen us in the hope that when Christ, our life, shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory.

G. E. COULBOURN, Mod.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
GEORGE F. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Indiantown Church, Wicomico County, Maryland, to the several churches and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting with love in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We deem it a privilege to thus address you and report a pleasant meeting. The preaching has been to the glory of God and to the comfort of his redeemed family. The attendance large and orderly. We are glad to have had your ministers and messengers with us, and also to have copies of your Minutes.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Broad Creek Church, near Laurel, Sussex County, Delaware, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1933, when and where we shall hope to meet and greet you again, and until then farewell.

G. E. COULBOURN, Mod.
JOHN H. TRUITT, Clerk.
GEORGE F. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Shokan, Ulster County, New York, September 14th, 15th and 16th, 1932, sends christian greeting in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Another year with its joys and sorrows is past, and by the goodness and mercy of almighty God we have been permitted to meet in an Association. Your messengers have come to us preaching Jesus the way, the truth and the life, giving God all the glory. There has been one continual flow of love and fellowship all through our meeting, and we can truly say that it has been good for us to have been here. We crave the continuance of your correspondence in the future as in the past.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Second Church of Roxbury, Roxbury, Delaware County, New York, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday between the second and third Sundays in September, 1933, where again we hope to meet your messengers. Until then, dear brethren, farewell.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

WHEN remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it. By referring to these dates you can tell to just what time your subscription is paid.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MRS. ELIZABETH McTAVISH DUNCANSON departed this life at her home, in Dutton, Ontario, May 9th, 1932, aged 82 years. She was born in Argylshire, Scotland, December 22nd, 1850, and emigrated to Canada, with her parents and one brother, when one and one-half years of age. The brother died in his eleventh year. In 1876 she married Peter Duncanson, and to them were born four sons and one daughter: James, who died a number of years ago, Daniel, Peter, Robert and Mary (Mrs. Charles Kendall) living, also a stepdaughter, Mrs. McLellan. Prior to her marriage father secured her as a nurse during our dear mother's last illness, and for some time after she stayed with us, and proved a true guardian and wise counselor to us eight motherless children, and a comfort to dear father, and we all loved her. She was formerly a Presbyterian, but in her few years stay in our home and mingling with the people of God she became deeply interested in their conversation on spiritual things, and it became evident she was concerned about her soul and her hope in Jesus. She dearly loved Elder Durand, who always visited at our home and talked very sweetly and encouragingly to her awakened heart, and ever after she sought the place where His honor dwelleth, where Jesus was preached the way, the truth and the life, and the only Savior of sinners, as she felt to be the chief, and she was enabled to follow her precious Jesus: baptized into his death, raised to walk in newness of life and thus followed on to know the Lord through very many severe and sore trials and conflicts which marked her as a very lovely, humble character. I say few were her equal in the meekness and patience shown in her walk with her Savior, and the Lord's promise was verified in making all her bed in her sickness, and death was fervently longed for to drop and separate this mortal flesh, to fall asleep in the arms of Jesus. Elder Ruston was her pastor, and she loved him and longed for his coming to talk to him and hear him talk to her of Him who came to take her with him to rest in hope of a glorious resurrection, when she shall awake in his likeness, see him as he is and be like him. She was baptized by Elder Pollard in the year 1896.

Written by one who loved her,

(MRS.) SARAH McPHAIL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

"A friend," Ontario, $1; Mrs. W. F. Adams, Ga., $3; Attie A. Curtis, Maine, $1; Mrs. C. A. Shryock, Va., $1; Lillie M. Jenkins, Pa., $3; Mrs. J. H. Hasbrouck, N. Y., $1; Mrs. J. A. Dunlap, Maine, $3; Mrs. Maria Rees, Ky., $8; G. S. Varnes, Mich, $1.15; Huldah J. Leonard, N. Y., $1.

IN MEMORY OF THOMAS CRAIG PARKER.

God, who made heaven and earth, who rules all things, saw fit on the 21st day of December, 1928, to retard the steps of brother **THOMAS CRAIG PARKER**. Paralysis, an electric storm, the roaring waves, came, one at a time, until the home of sister Laura Parker was made sad. With untiring hands she did all in her power for her husband, their children came with anxious hearts to the hospital where he was taken for more thorough treatment, but the physicians were made to see that their arms were too short, that God had ordained it otherwise. The dear wife, daughters, sons, daughters-in-law and doctors had to surrender as did the apostles. So it was all over on the morning of December 10th, 1931, at 12:30 o'clock. God rebuked the wind and there was a calm, he spoke peace to the suffering form and took brother Thomas Craig Parker at the appointed time to the home he had prepared for him years ago. He had suffered greatly, but his faith in God never ceased. About forty years ago he came forward, feeling God had forgiven his sins, and requested a home with the church (Primitive Baptist), was baptized in Christ and lived ever faithful to the all-wise Giver. His friends were too numerous to mention. The community carries drooping heads and aching hearts, but the sad, sad heart is that of the dear wife who stood over and sat by his pitiful form. Her love for her dear companion is as of the ring of gold: it has no end. Oftentimes as I visited his sick chamber I could hear his weak, frail voice saying, Laura, Laura. She stood by until death, as she promised thirty-six years ago. Dear Ruby and Elizabeth, how your father adored you, ever be thankful for such a father as God gave you. You five sons, Buell, Prentice, Clifton Rudy and Robus, have proven your love for your father, you nursed and administered to his necessities, but now the cold dark grave holds closely the dear form you loved so well. Out of sight but not forgotten; no, no, never. Other dear ones are two sisters, Mrs. Frances McChristian and Mrs. Parisabe Grogan. Four brothers, Bruce, Dee, Burgess and Dock, are sad, too, for their father's and mother's old homestead is desolate and sad because of the death of their eldest brother. No doubt, if brother Craig could speak to all his loved ones he would say, Weep not for me, for at the age of sixty-eight I was anxious to go to that haven of rest where tears never flow. I feared not to enter that lonely ward, for soon I shall rise from the old church yard. Yes, soon shall he join that heavenly band of glorified souls at the Savior's right hand.

Funeral services were conducted the following day by Elder T. J. Prince, of Fulton, Kentucky. A gathering that more than filled the churchhouse was present and eyes were flooded with tears as they paid their last respects to the departed. The remains were laid to rest in the Salem Cemetery by the side of their three babies.

(MRS.) FANNIE H. CHESTER.

NOTICE.

December 15th, next, has been designated as DONATION DAY at THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST HOME in Salisbury, Maryland.

Unquestionably, this cause has been greatly blest of the Lord, and it is our earnest hope that he will continue to put it into the hearts of our brethren and friends to support it. Unfavorable financial conditions throughout the country have, of course, prevented many from helping to the extent they would have liked. It will be greatly appreciated if all who desire to, will send their donations in the form of funds either to the Home, or to Henry T. Lefferts, Nutley, N. J., and all other useful gifts can be sent direct to the Home so as to reach their destination on or before the 15th of December. Thank you in advance.

R. LESTER DODSON.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at the home of sister E. Brunow, 411 N. Ridgeway Avenue, and on the second, third and fourth Sundays at the home of brother W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. The fifth Sundays are by appointment. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastors, Elders Jones and Janes.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of sister N. J. Preston, 116 Center Street, Oregon City, Oregon, at 10:30 a. m. Those coming by stage, steam train or electric car get off at Seventh Street, take elevator to top of the hill, cross trestle over railway tracks, turn to the right, go two blocks on Sixth Street to Center Street, thence five and one-half blocks south on Center Street to 116, house number, between First and Second Streets. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Moderator.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Southern California meets every first and third Sunday at the Sweedish Lutheran church-house, on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Orange Streets, at 1 p. m.

J. W. HAYNES, Moderator,
495 East Fifth Street, Riverside, California.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

DROPSY REMEDY.

Purely vegetable, removes from one to two gallons of water a day. Shortness of breath quickly relieved. Cures the worst cases of Dropsy in all its forms, and after being given up by the best doctors to die. Specially efficacious in Dropsy of the Heart. Best and cheapest know remedy, only $1.00 a package, six packages $5.00 by mail postpaid, and free to very poor people who are really unable to pay.

ELDER C. W. ANDERSON,
ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

Cloth binding 75c each. Paper covers, single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and all to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
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HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Cloth binding. Price, $1.25 each. One dozen or more, ordered at the same time and all to the same address, one dozen each. Cash must accompany orders. Make checks and money orders payable to

J. E. BEEBE & CO.
MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 101. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1933. NO. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LUKE II. 14.

"GLORY to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men."

These words are a portion of that heavenly song of "a multitude of the heavenly host" sung at the birth of Jesus Christ.

"Glory to God." These are the first three words in the song. Is it not this very language of all the manifest elect of God? Others may glory in men, in their wisdom, might and riches. (Jer. ix. 23.) They may glory in their own blasphemous doings, in their missionary societies to save souls, theological colleges, Sunday Schools, means and instrumentalities. They compass sea and land to obtain converts to their religion, and never fail to perpetuate the practice of those of whom the prophet Habakkuk writes, "They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag: therefore they rejoice and are glad. Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous." But the taught of the Lord are cut off and saved from such doings. In themselves how can they glory? The Holy Spirit is pleased to discover to them what they are in themselves: poor, loathsome sinners, and under divine tuition they see, and learn that vanity is stamped on all earthly things. They have the same spirit of the psalmist when he cried, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake."—Psalms cxv. 1. Having had revealed to him something of the majesty and excellent glory of the Holy One of Israel in the condemnation of transgression in the law, and justification most sweetly realized in the blood and righteousness of Jesus, the believer is prepared and does in spirit cry, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."—Gal. vi. 14. The heavens,

and the earth, the deep places, all proclaim the glory of God. Oh what wonderful works are to be seen in the creation of God. "The ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious." Therein the holiness, the terrible majesty, and eternal justice of God is made known and felt in the hearts of the Israel of God. But the glory of the ministration of righteousness, the ministration of life doth exceed in glory. (2 Cor. iii. 7-10.) In the gospel of the grace of God is that glory that far outweighs and outshines all other manifestations of the glory of the King of glory, it is "the glory that excelleth."

"Glory to God in the highest." It overtops all others. Oh, the surpassing infinite riches of the glory of the blessed God, which shines forth in the face of our beloved Emmanuel. The sun, the moon, the stars, the sky, the earth, and all that is therein, shall fade, and crumble, and be no more; and all the pomp and glory thereof shall pass away. As it is said of the law, the ministration of condemnation, so of all things else, they have "no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth."—2 Cor. iii. 10. The glory of the Lord in the universe is but transient, but for time, but in the Word, the Son of God made flesh, in Jesus, Emmanuel, is the eternal, immutable, superlative glory of the everlasting God. In this unfathomable mystery is the fulfillment of the eternal, immutable counsel and oath of Jehovah. (Heb. vi. 17, 18) When the Word, the Son of God, came into the world, was made flesh, born of a virgin, made under the law, the covenant head of all the chosen and loved of God, the Mediator of the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, then was fulfilled the word of God by the prophet Micah: "Thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." This had been promised and foretold in the prophets, had been signified in the types and shadows under the law, and now "the due time" is come, and the Son of God in the joy of his heart, in his eternal love to his bride, the church, and in loving covenant obedience to God the Father cries out, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure: then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God."—Heb. x. 5-7.

"Glory to God in the highest." The will of Christ was to do the will of him that sent him, and to finish his work, and in fulfilling the "all things," (oh blessed be the name of the Lord, not in one jot or tittle did Jesus fail) ordered in the everlasting covenant (2 Sam. xxiii. 5), all the attributes of the eternal Godhead in glorious, sweetest harmony were declared, "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."—1 Tim. iii. 16. The Lord Jesus Christ went forth for the

salvation of Zion, and in his obedience, suffering and blood he wrought salvation, brought in everlasting righteousness, redeemed his people from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them, saved them from their sins, justified them in his precious blood, and reconciled them unto God. He traveled in the greatness of his strength, mighty to save. Jesus Christ, our dear Redeemer, "being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."—Phil. ii. 6-8. Thus Jesus went forth for the salvation of his people. "God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand: and there was the hiding of his power."—Hab. iii. 3, 4. It is in salvation that the eternal excellency of Jehovah is revealed. The justice and mercy, grace and love, yea, every perfection of God is declared to the eternal glory of the blessed God of Israel. (Rom. ix. 23; Rev. i. 6.) This song which "a multitude of the heavenly host" sang at the birth of Jesus has never ceased to be sung. Even to-day it is the song of the believer in Jesus. While time shall last, and all eternity, all the loved, chosen and redeemed of the Lord will be praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest." (Rev. iv. 9-11; v. 12-14.)

"On earth peace." Oh what welcome, soul-cheering tidings is this to the distressed and oppressed child of God. What disorder and discord does the enlightened child of God behold among mankind. In that knowledge that flows from the operating of the Holy Spirit what a terrible and sad condition they realize themselves to be in by nature. It is their bitter experience to feel that "the carnal mind is enmity against God," though they labor most diligently to have it otherwise. The enmity still remains without abatement, this desperate and horrible plague rages within. It is their experience, and language, as recorded of the woman in Mark v. 26: "She was nothing better, but rather grew worse."

Those ministers of Satan, transformed as ministers of righteousness "in preaching" another gospel, which is not another (Gal. i. 6, 7), urge poor sinners to make their peace with God. Oh what a task! How utterly impossible for a vile transgressor ever to accomplish! Oh what conflicts with sin and Satan, what tossings to and fro, what unrest, what anxious thoughts possess the poor quickened sinner. His sins are as an army of bitter foes in cruel war against his soul, for the manifest child of God, called by God's grace, being made a partaker of the divine nature, being born of incorruptible seed, cannot be at peace with sin, but possessing spiritual life he hungers and thirsts after righteousness, and the longings of his soul are for entire free-

dom from sin, to see, to feel, to know that all these hateful foes are forever annihilated. No sooner does the poor sinner experience the quickening power of God than the warfare begins between the flesh and the Spirit. (Gal. v. 17.) The new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, and the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; there can be no agreement, no concord between them. Wherever these two are found there must be war. The sinner, therefore, in whom the Lord has begun his work of grace feels and fears there is no peace between his soul and the mighty and holy God. Oh how troubled is the poor soul amidst the aboundings of his iniquities. The adversary, the gates of hell, fight against the loved ones of God, and there can be no peace between the seed of Christ and the seed of the devil.

"On earth peace." Such is the song of the multitude of the heavenly host. Jesus, of whom they sing, is "the Prince of Peace." (Isaiah ix. 6.) He is the Mediator of the covenant of peace. (Isaiah liv. 10.) "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." The dear Lord is our peace. Oh at what a cost he procured it. He made peace through the blood of his cross. (Col. i. 20.) "The chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."—Isaiah liii. 5. God hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, in the body of his flesh through death, to present us holy, unblamable and unreprovable in his sight. Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed. Oh, our precious Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, in his obedience and blood vanquished and made an end of all our foes; and the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, reveals in the heart what Jesus is, and what he has wrought in our behalf, then we joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. All our enemies, all our transgressions are purged in Jesus' blood; death and hell are overcome in the blood of the Lamb. The law, which is holy, just and good, has received at our Surety's hand full payment of all its righteous demands, and the vessels of mercy in whom the Holy Spirit has revealed the wondrous doctrine of peace with God can indeed with the apostle Paul exclaim, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Oh what sweet tranquility flows into the soul when the poor troubled sinner is experimentally put in possession of the atonement of Christ. It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul. (Lev. xvii. 11.) It truly is a peace that passeth all understanding, keeping the heart and mind through Christ Jesus. It is "perfect peace." (Isai xxvi. 3.) It cannot be better There no contingency therein. ordered in all things and sure. covenant of my peace shall not

moved, saith the Lord that hath mercy upon thee. (Isaiah liv. 10.) How comforting, O believer in Jesus, is this enduring, eternal peace, that not all the powers of sin and hell can ever mar. Thy warfare is accomplished, thine iniquity is pardoned. (Isaiah xl. 1.) What! mine? Perpaps some poor soul is saying, So I at one time thought my sins were all gone, every voice of accusation was silenced, the devil and all his hosts fled when Jesus in his power and love and blood was revealed unto me, and in my heart his voice was most sweetly heard, saying, Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee. But oh what trouble, what wars and conflicts have I encountered since then. The evils in my heart; my sweet comfort and peace in Jesus has been most cruelly disturbed, and now there is warfare. I find I still have a carnal mind which is enmity against God. The old man is not gone, but is lively, and is so corrupt I fear that I shall be utterly overcome by indwelling sin, and prove a castaway. Oh what a mystery is the life of a child of God. The apostle Paul exclaims, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."—Gal. ii. 20. It is by faith that we now experience peace with God. And "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." The Lord Jesus has saved his people from their sins in his death. He died unto sins once. We rejoice to know that Jesus rose from the dead, and dieth no more. He rose for our justification, and is now within the vail for us, The Lamb as it had been slain (Rev. v. 6.) in resurrection glory. O, dear people of God, we have hope that we shall be like him, though now sharp conflicts with sin and Satan are our lot. In these things we have a taste of the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ, and if we suffer we shall also reign, when, in the resurrection, we appear with all the ransomed of the Lord. We shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. The Lord Jesus Christ shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. (Phil. iii. 21.) Then no more will the carnal mind, the old man, the lusts of the flesh, plague and distress us. Our conflicts will all be over, for Jesus, in his precious blood, has destroyed all our foes, and this by faith, of the operation of God, we believe. And in the power and goodness of the Lord, even now, by faith, we can sing, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" We shall overcome at last. (Gen. xlix. 19.) "On earth peace." When God giveth us quietness, who then can make trouble? (Job xxxiv. 29.)

"Good will toward men." "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Yea, he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."—

Eph. i. 11. "He will save."—Zeph. iii. 17. Who or what then shall hinder? "Good will toward men." This is "the good will of him that dwelt in the bush."—Deut. xxxiii. 16. Everything provided in the good will of God is precious. There is no lack, nothing faulty. Oh how good! It cannot be frustrated. It contains mercy (Rom. ix. 18), grace (Exod. xxxiii. 19), eternal life (John vi. 40), righteousness (Isaiah lxii. 1.). Yea, all that the elect of God need for time and eternity is found in the good will, the covenant, testimentary will of God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "Glory to God in the highest."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

HIRAM, Georgia.

DEAR BROTHER J. B. MILLER:—Though you are a stranger in the flesh, and many miles lie between us, I feel that you are my brother indeed, and that we have been made nigh by the blood of Christ, and are fellow-comrades in the path of the lone Galilean. I have heard brother Jewell Croker say much about you as a Baptist of the pure type, and I have before me your letter of recent date (an answer to brother Jewell's letter), which contains so many good things that it revives my drooping spirit and turns my eyes to the Hill from whence cometh my help. We rejoice to know there are yet a remnant few, according to the election of grace, who are not carried about by every wind of doctrine, and we further rejoice to know that God holds supreme dominion and directs all things to the consummation of his righteous designs as purposed in himself before the world was. And since he declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure, every event and incident of time comes to pass according to his immutable counsel, at the time and place appointed. As he has thought, so shall it be. He speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. Yet we have the League of Nations, and peace conferences, and a national prohibition law, etc., all to the end that they will evangelize the world and have no more wars, but Ecclesiastes iii. 15, says, "That which has been is now; and that which is to be hath already been: and God requireth that which is past." So I conclude that so long as people are human the world will not be christianized and wars will continue. "The lot is cast into the lap: but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord."

You speak of the many interpretations of the Scriptures by people in the church. In 2 Peter xv. 15, 16 (read both verses), our beloved brother Paul speaks of things that are hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest (twist from their real meaning), as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction. A man's foes are those of his own household. Our troubles spring up among ourselves. The gainsaying world can do us no harm, because the Lord is on our side. "Also of your own

selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." But these things must needs be that the Scriptures be fulfilled. For the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. These are they who have their own private interpretations of the Scriptures, willing to offend a brother for a word, calling all who do not agree with them heretics, old absoluters, fatalists, etc. But God is his own interpreter and he will make it plain to all who wait upon the Lord. The psalmist says, They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. Give them strength to bear the infirmities of the weak, and strive for the things that make for peace.

Dear brother, I am seventy-eight years old, and have been a member of New Harmony Church for nearly forty-six years. In looking back over this eventful life I think of many loved ones in the great beyond whom I fancy I see as through a glass darkly, but some day the mystic veil which separates the present from the hereafter will be swept aside and the redeemed of the Lord will enter that realm where all mysteries are solved and all sorrows are melted into joy as we clasp the hands of long departed ones, where hope is lost in the realization of that eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began. "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

Elder John Eubanks and my mother were first cousins.

Yours in hope,

W. A. HARRIS.

POCA, W. Va., Jan. 24, 1932.

ELDER H. H. LEFFERTS—DEAR BROTHER:—As I am lonely, I thought to relieve my mind I would write a few of my thoughts on the book of Ezekiel, and this is the portion of the Scripture, "When I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live."—Ezek. xvi. 6. This vision given to Ezekiel was for the house of Israel, declaring unto them the things shown him by the Spirit of Jehovah God while Israel was in a state of captivity. In this awful dilemma by the reason of false doctrine as taught by the priests in the law dispensation, Israel in her fallen state was subject to idolatry worship, and the reproof, rebuke and admonitions given to the house of Israel by Ezekiel were for the purpose of stirring up the minds of the true and faithful Israelites, as on the day of Pentecost Peter exhorted the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ to "save yourselves from this untoward generation." "When I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood." This applies to individuals who are trusting in their own righteousness, or in their own strength, the arm of flesh, which is the first conclusion of a child of God when quickened

to life. That which is first is natural, afterward that which is spiritual. Ancient Israel was a type of spiritual Israel, however the law given them was to guide them, as a separate people, from all other people, as the doctrine advocated by spiriitual Israel separates them from the world. It is the grace of God that makes the Lord's people differ from the world with all its institutions. Now, as individual members are prepared by the Holy Spirit to be placed in the body, the church, which is spiritually the house of Israel collectively, it is done by the measuring reed (divine love) in the hand of the Builder of the house, or city, and he is the Keeper of the same. They are loved with an everlasting love; their sins and transgressions have never changed the love of God for them, as he is unchangeable. He passed by them in the oldness of the letter, under the first covenant, which could not make the comers thereunto perfect. It, being faulty, gave place for the second, the grace covenant, ordered in all things and sure, and "when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love," pointing to the great day of the feast, when Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. When poor, hungry and thirsty souls are to rejoice in the Savior's love. "And I spread my skirt over thee [the righteousness of Christ], and covered thy nakedness: yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine." The temple that was built at Jerusalem by Solomon was measured by Ezekiel, and all parts belonging to the temple he measured with the reed of divine love, as is experimentally felt in the bosom of God's little ones when their dear Redeemer looks upon them with love and mercy, and with a voice within saying, Thou art mine. Truly this is a time of love flowing from every avenue of Christ's body, as in him the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily. When Jesus found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting, he drove them all out of the temple and overturned the table, and said, Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise. He said to them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Revelation xi. 1: "And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein." My dear brother, have you not felt the fullness in your bosom when you have had to address the church, which is the house of Israel? In the spiritual import, every true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is measured by the reed of divine love, prepared and made ready for the Master's use, to be placed in the body, to the completion of the body. Now the measurements by the man with the line in his hand (power) from the ancles to a great river that could not be passed over, would represent the Lord our Savior revealing himself to poor sinner as it pleases him, by gradual revelation, here a little a there a little, so to convince the child

God that no effort by a human being could pass over it. What a wonderful view of God's love to the people of his choice. So we stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. I will say there is much gleaning in the book of Ezekiel.

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

GLASGOW, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITORS:—Jesus Christ saves us, not our doings, our character, our works, our obedience, our reputations, our prayers, our tears, our penance nor alms. All these qualities are good and commendable, but none of them separately, nor all of them together, will save a man. It needs to be said over and over again that Jesus Christ saves. Christ in you the hope of glory. When we receive Christ we are justified, are sanctified, are adopted, are born from above, are children of God, have everlasting life. We pass from death unto life when we receive him, and have God with us, have the Holy Spirit with us and are saved and safe forever. He that hath the Son hath life, hath love, hath truth, hath immortality, hath the divine nature and hath light. The nature of that light is to make manifest the things which by the power of darkness had been concealed from us before being quickened by Christ, the second Adam, who is a quickening Spirit. We are made to see and feel our sinfulness and our lost and helpless condition, and the same light which reveals these things also shows us the enormity of our guilt, the justice of our condemnation and the impossibility of salvation by the law. The light of life now begotten in us reveals the holy God, a new relationship, Christ, who is our life, is formed in us, and his sonship, his heirship, his inheritance of glory and immortality are born in us and we are one with him, even as he is one with the Father. From this heaven-born Spirit flow all the fruits of the Spirit, which testify that we are born of God. "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." —John xiii. 1. "His own!" What a blessed expression! We belong to the Lord Jesus in a three-fold way. First, by the Father's eternal election, we are the Father's love gift to the Son, "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world." Second, we are his by his own redemptive rights. He paid the purchase price; he bought us for himself. "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." Third, we are his by the effectual call of the Holy Spirit. If any man be in Christ he is a new creature, and we are created anew by the Holy Spirit, "born of the Spirit." What a precious promise: "I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye."—Psalms xxxii. 8. How thankful we christians should be that the One who guided Israel by day and by night across the tractless desert is the One who is our God and is guiding us, and makes no mistakes. "He led them forth by the right way."—Psalms cvii. 7.

Submitted in love.

C. W. FRODGE.

PETAL, MISS., Feb. 2, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel impressed to write a few lines for the consideration of the Lord's people. It is not for argument, but I hope it is from a principle of love to the saints of God and for the good of the cause of Christ's kingdom. I feel that I know God is all-wise and has all power in heaven and on earth, and there is no power to overthrow his purposes. I feel to know that all the Father gave the Son has been redeemed and sanctified by the atoning blood of Christ, and that all have been regenerated, born of the Spirit, but that there are some sheep who have not been born of the Spirit, but will be at God's own appointed time. I understand that the soul that is born of God is sanctified in regeneration, but the fleshly body is not born of the Spirit until it is changed from a mortal to an immortal body, and that will be done at the resurrection of the body. The Lord has never called a man to help him accomplish his purposes. Man can be of no help in regenerating souls, that is the work of the Lord. All the money, all the works of man, all the preaching and all the Bibles in the world have never helped to regenerate a single soul. According to my understanding, God's elect are saved by the foolishness of preaching, not foolish preaching, for when the heart is prepared of God to receive the gospel it converts them from the error of their way, and saves them from false doctrine when they hear the true gospel of Christ, but they cannot hear it until they are regenerated, born of the Spirit, for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Dear children of the Most High God, the duty I feel heavily impressed upon me is to admonish the dear people of God to let brotherly love continue, and to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called. It seems that instead of being humble at the feet of Jesus, and desiring to live at the feet of one another, there is too much envying and backbiting. It seems to me that some enjoy backbiting and trying to put up bars of fellowship on account of a little difference in views that ought not to confuse the peace of the church. We know there have always been different views among the brethren, but the record of the church has a chain of links that reaches back to the apostles, and the fundamental doctrine that Old Baptists hold has never changed, but, according to a few dates of history of the church, in the seventeenth century there were different rules of decorum among the churches in some places, and it is easy to see that the prospectus has been changed, that is undeniable, but the doctrine has not changed, neither have God's purposes changed, but please let me call attention to one thing: we are all imperfect beings, subject to vanity, subject to mistakes, and I believe I can go a little farther and say we all do sometimes make mistakes. I know I do. I know I do wrong many times. My desire is to do the will of God, but the weakness of the flesh

causes me grief and sorrow. It grieves me to hear brethren of the same faith calling one another absoluters and limited predestinarians, for genuine christian love must be lacking. There is a great deal said about time salvation and works. Now here is what I understand the Primitive Baptists believe: to observe and walk in obedience to Christ's commands. I mean the church, and by so doing Christ has promised his children to be with them always, even unto the end of the world, but if his children disobey him they will be chastised. Where a church does not live up to their faith to the best of their ability the church will grow cold and dwindle away. The great trouble that divides the Lord's children is caused by preaching some carnal things to suit themselves to carry points to fit their erroneous views. I do not believe the true servant of God has any desire to deceive the Lord's people. There have been many gone out to deceive the nation. Wicked men shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. There never has been as much deceiving as at the present time. It seems to me that God's servants should be satisfied to follow the guiding Spirit, and when the Spirit stops leading if the preacher would stop I do not believe there would be so much disputing. Now, as much as possible, let us be honest with ourselves and with God and confess our faults one to another, and forgive one another, and not be striving about things to no profit or comfort. Primitive Baptists believe in a sovereign God, and that salvation is of the Lord, unmerited on the sinner's part, and that no one can be of any help in saving souls. All the good works are to obey the commandments of Jesus and follow his teachings. The apostle says, Show me your faith without works and I will show you my faith by my works. The right kind of works are an evidence of faith, not the cause. The apostle warns the saints to not live after the flesh, and to shun the very appearance of evil, and we are commanded to study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. It is also said that the gospel shall be preached unto all nations. Well, let us see. Has it not already been preached to all nations? On the day of Pentecost the apostles received the Holy Ghost and spoke in tongues that all heard in their own language. We notice in the tenth chapter of Romans that Esaias says the sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world.

Now, dear children of the heavenly Father, should this be published, please read it in the spirit in which I have tried to write it. I hope I dearly love the children of God and feel greatly interested in the welfare, peace and happiness of the saints. I know I am not able to do anything, and I know that the Lord is able to take care of his people, but we have obligations put upon us and it is our privilege to try to do what the Lord commands us to do.

Last year I wrote a letter that was published in the September issue of the SIGNS, and I suppose some remember

that I wrote of my afflictions. I am still a helpless invalid, or almost helpless; I have not sat up to eat a meal in almost four years. I think all the time that I will not live much longer, but the Lord only knows. I see no way for my daughter and me, but the Lord is able to provide a way. He has so far, and I believe that he will continue to do so. Please pray for us. May the Lord bless and comfort his people everywhere and give us all faith and grace to be able to serve him according to his will, and may he draw his people nearer together in love and fellowship and in the understanding of his word and of one another, if it be his will. Please do not forget to pray for us.

Submitted in love.

C. C. SMITH.

BUNA, Texas, October, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my time was up in September, just past, I feel I should write you in regard to my subscription, as I cannot send in my money this time, for I have none now, and do not know when I will have, as times are very bad with us and money very hard to get. I am sorry to have to do without the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for I have been a subscriber for many years, but I do not want to be a burden to you, and would much rather have my paper discontinued than to be a burden to the cause. But I want to tell you all in my weak way that I surely do love the dear old SIGNS. The editorial staff is very dear to me while in this old world of sin and sorrow, and oh the many happy days and hours I have spent reading the pages of the dear old SIGNS. One reason I love the SIGNS so much is because it is so old. It has stood the storms of time so long I know it is God's will for it to be published, for if it had not been it would have gone down years ago, for that which is not of God cannot stand. So my hope and prayer is that God will continue to stand by you editors and writers and bless you in this good work. I know it is not in man to direct his steps, neither is it in his ability to write such letters as the dear SIGNS people do. We know of a truth that they are led by the Spirit to do so. I thank God for the understanding I have, though it be so very little. I think I know the right sound when I hear it preached. There was a time with me when I did not care anything about God, or the Bible, or godliness, but now I love them above all things else and care nothing for the things the world calls great.

I will now close. I hope this will be in harmony with each and every one of God's redeemed children. May God bless us all and save us in glory, is the prayer of this old sinner in hope of mercy,

(MRS.) ORA COCHRAN.

SWANQUARTER, N. C., Nov. 12, 1931.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sorry and deeply grieved, yes, my soul feels the burden of it, for I was hoping and trusting that I would be able to pay you for your kindness in sending me the good old SIGNS, the best paper. It is next to the Bible. I feel that it and the Bible are all a child of God needs,

even were he never to hear another sermon. Oh it is so rich, the truth first, last and all the time, and it is about all the preaching I get. I often read an article worth twice the price of the paper, and I had hoped I could have it in my home as long as I lived. I had planned to pay you for your christian love and godly remembrance and renew my subscription, but oh so sad to tell you, I cannot, because of the depression. We are not getting anything for our produce. Instead of receiving living prices, we have nothing with which to buy the necessities of life. That is the condition I am in. I have no clothes and no money to buy them with, so I see no way out, and cannot send a penny, but I hope the way will be opened some time so I can again take that heavenly inspired and godly revealed paper. Oh I just hate to give it up, and feel I shall be lost and perish by the way, but I shall not ask you to send it any longer, for I know you are not able and that this depression has reached you, so do as you feel about continuing to send it to me. I have hoped and looked forward each and every year to paying you for your kindness, but each year gets worse, until now my hands are tied and I am powerless. I would if I could, but poverty, through the depression, has brought me where I cannot do anything. I just exist—not live. If you feel you must stop the paper, do so, and I am sure I shall not be offended, for I feel you have done too much now, yet I am sure that God will bless you, yes, four-fold. I just cannot find words to thank you for being so kind in sending the SIGNS to me thus far. I hope you know and understand. God bless you. Pray for me.

Your sister, I hope, in tribulation,
(MRS.) EFFIE H. CARAWAN.

[WE publish these two letters, which are a fair sample of the kind we are constantly receiving, in order that those who contribute to help send the SIGNS to "the poor of the flock" may know how much comfort they give to others who have not been blessed with as much of this world's goods as they themselves have. We are now sending the paper to a great many such, who, we know, join us in thanking all who have contributed toward this cause.— J. E. B. & Co.]

INDEPENDENCE, Mo., Jan. 22, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—The SIGNS OF THE TIMES affords me great comfort and pleasure. I enjoyed very much reading the letter written by brother J. T. Barnes, of Freewater Oregon. In fact, I enjoy reading all the letters from the dear ones from all the distant parts of the land. It reminds me of all being taught of the Lord. May the love of God be shed abroad in our hearts so that we may have love for all. Without the help of the Lord we can do nothing. I feel that I have been wonderfully blessed all through life. I never knew a time that I did not love the Old Primitive Baptists. Hope makes us not ashamed to own our Lord.. The Lord blessed me when I was a child, and the light that shone around me has never been forgotten.

It does me good to hear the gospel proclaimed. The beautiful letters I read in the SIGNS tell my feelings and express my thoughts better than I can tell them.

I have not much to write, but I would be pleased if you have space in our paper for this little letter, even though it contains nothing much of interest to any one. I love the people of God and hope when we are done with the trifles of this life the strong arm of our blessed Lord will embrace us and save us in heaven, where we all can sing his praises for evermore in that beautiful city of God.

This is from your sister in Christ, I hope,

TEMPERANCE C. GAINES.

MANSFIELD, Ga., Oct 17, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—My father's time for the SIGNS was out in October. He had taken it for forty-six years. It will soon be a year since he died, so I want you to change the address and send it to me. My mother and I feel we cannot do without it, and want to take it as long as we can. I am sick a great deal and am not able to go to meeting often, so I can read the SIGNS. I get more out of it than I do going to meeting. J. B. Bowden's article on absolute predestination was the best thing I have read in a long time. There are but very few here who believe the way he says. I have read the article three times and it gets better each time. I am like him: so many believe that only the good things are predestinated, I want to know who rules the evil things. I believe all things are predestinated. As far back as I can remember I have liked the Primitive Baptists. I have been to meeting but three times this year.

It was very hard for us to give up our father, but he was here a long time, longer than most of us will be. We all surely do miss him.

I am sending two dollars for the SIGNS for another year. I am sick so much and have to pay such large doctor bills I cannot tell how long I can take it, but will do the best I can. I may have to stop taking it, but I hope you will keep publishing it, for it is the best "Hardshell" paper I have ever read.

You may publish this letter if you think it is worth it; if not, it will be all right.

Your friend,

NETTIE COOPER.

HAMBURG, Ark., July 15, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you one dollar on my subscription, as far as it goes. I knew that my subscription expired in March, but money has been very scarce with me this year, more so than in a long time, and, too, my expenses have been more than double this year, by taking my son-in-law in to make a crop. I am trying my best to get along without going in debt, so for that reason have neglected sending you the money, thinking possibly it would be a little easier to spare a little later. But when I read Elder Dodson's appeal to the readers in the June number I thought then that I

would attend to it at once, but another month has passed and you are still waiting, for which I must acknowledge that I am ashamed. I do enjoy reading your good paper and feel that its worth cannot be valued in dollars and cents, and sometimes I feel and hope that the things it contains and advocates are my meat and drink and without it all else would be lost. When it comes to real enjoyment and pleasure, I get much more for the money I spend in this way than I do in any other. Then the question, Why do I hesitate? and I feel now that as long as the dear Lord blesses me with the subscription price I will pay up promptly.

Yours unworthily,

D. K. CALDWELL.

FORT WORTH, Texas, Nov. 13, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—I get great comfort and enjoyment from the columns of the SIGNS. Many of the contributors I know personally, and many I know just through the many good letters they write for the paper. Oh such wonderful truths are brought forth in this dear God-honoring paper. Many times I have had a desire to write you, but feeling my weakness and sinfulness I have refrained from doing so, thinking I would only darken counsel. So much of my life I am cast down in darkness and gloom, fearing the dear Lord has never known me in the pardon of my sins, but yet my hope is in his abounding mercy. The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy. I know this is true, for had he dealt with me according to justice I would be forever cast off. I know he is just, good and holy. If we are one of those little ones Jesus came to save our sins were laid on him and we are free. As it is written, If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. So I take hope in these blessed truths, and although I feel hell-deserving yet I love to hear the truth proclaimed. May the paper continue on and on, if it be God's will, to be a medium of enjoyment to all who read it. I hope the delinquent subscribers will do all they can toward paying their dues. Times are very hard in this country and it is all most of us can do to pay for actual necessities, but it is working together for good to the elect, to the ones who are called according to his purpose.

Cast the mantle of charity over this, and do with it as it seemeth good. Notice my name was formerly Minnie C. Offill, but please change it to Minnie C. Jameson, 109 North Jones Street, Fort Worth, Texas.

Yours in humble hope,

MINNIE C. JAMESON.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

WHEN remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it. By referring to these dates you can tell to just what time your subscription is paid. Dec 31 means your subscription expired December, 1931; June 32 means your subscription expired June, 1932; Dec 32 that it expires December, 1932, etc.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1933.

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NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

As is the custom with many businesses at this time of year to pause and take stock to see whether they have gained or lost during the past twelve months, so it is good for us individually to take stock of ourselves spiritually to ascertain, if possible, our gains and losses in matters of the soul. The merchant's balance sheet may show results that are purely material and which may be to a great extent, tangible. Not so the believer. His gains or losses are not to be measured in monetary units, possibly not at all in anything that is visible to which he can look with assurance that he has advanced in spiritual things. Whether one has advanced along the path of spiritual integrity depends much on the degree to which one has become interested in unselfish aims so that self is less in importance than the things of Christ. Paul counted as nothing all the things to which he had by himself attained in order that he might know Christ more and more, that he might be made conformable to His death in order to enter into the fellowship of his Lord's death and resurrection. In proportion as we grow out of ourselves, in proportion as we grow in our realization of our dependence upon the grace of God: just to that degree do we grow in grace. To grow in grace is to grow in weakness within one's self. The time of the believer's weakness is the time of God's omnipotence. It was in his infirmity, so Paul said, that the power of Christ rested on him. Out of weakness, he was made strong. To have advanced in one's spiritual life means that the individual believer must become more and more a minus quantity and that Christ must become more and more the positive factor in one's life. We can well believe in the case of Paul, as well as in that of the other apostles, that as they advanced in their ministry, they thought less and less about themselves and became more and more absorbingly engrossed in their brethren, in the churches and in the work of their ministry. They thought little of their own comfort or convenience so that they might add to the comfort and encouragement of those over whom the Holy Ghost had made them overseers. We have often wondered what might be the consequence with us to-day and with the

churches we serve if only our souls could be on fire of the Spirit and we thus be all burned up in the service of our Lord in his vineyard. There is no doubt but that the apostles were on fire with heavenly zeal kindled in them by the love of God so that they were unreservedly willing to spend and be spent in the service of the churches of the saints for the glory of God. Would that it might be God's will to make us fervently on fire that way now. We often wonder if there will come in our own day a real revival of vital religion in our churches, and we are sure that in order for it to come there must be a real prayer in our hearts for it: a genuinely Spirit-breathed petition to the throne of grace for a heavenly season of refreshing. If it does come, you may be sure self will be lost sight of in those to whom it does come and there will be seen much disinterested devotion to the cause of truth. As a candle can give light only when it burns, so the child of God lets his light shine only as he himself is consumed in the process. If working out one's salvation is to be in such a way that God is glorified, then it must be in such a way that the individual himself receives no glory at all in the matter. For instance, it is good to listen to preaching and to enjoy it in such a way that the one preaching is lost sight of and only Christ is seen. If the preaching is in such a way that the speaker himself is in the forefront, then Christ cannot be much in view. The more the Lord's power is felt, and the more fully the servant declares the message of his Lord, the less the servant will be seen in the matter. Fish are not successfully caught unless the fisherman himself is kept in obscurity. The more the fisherman is in evidence, the more wary the fish will be. One cannot catch men unless one's self is hidden and only Christ and his attractions are held forth. So, one's brethren are comforted and fed spiritually in proportion as the Spirit's power and presence are felt to the exclusion of the vessel through whom the message comes. On the other hand, as we write about the need of a real revival of vital religion, let us be on our guard against any false fire. That kind is an abomination in the sight of God and of his people, too. The Lord warned Israel of old by the prophet Isaiah that those who kindled a fire of their own making and walked in the light of their own fires, should lie down in sorrow. We do well to heed this solemn warning. We want no energy of the flesh in this matter. There is plenty of false fire everywhere in the world to-day, there is much that pretends to be revival which is nothing more or less than emotionalism and sensationalism. Such a fire means sorrow to every child of God who thinks to warm himself by it. To stir up the spirit of the flesh is one thing, to be deeply stirred within one's life and soul by the Holy Spirit is a radically different thing. The one is satanic and leads to confusion and condemnation, the other is life and peace from God and lifts one upward from self to God. It was told to Jesus on one occasion by his disciples that there were certain

Greeks who wanted to see him and who wished audience with him. He gave them no opportunity at that time to consult with him, but replied that when he should be lifted up from the earth, that then would he draw all men unto him. The time for the Gentiles to know him was to be after his resurrection and ascension, not before: so he would not show himself to the curious Greeks then. Then he was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, afterward would come the visitation to the Gentiles. He would visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name, then he would return and build again the tabernacle of David which was fallen down, and would build again the ruins thereof and set it up again. (Acts xv. 16, 17.) But the point here is that it is Jesus' resurrection from the dead and his ascension to the throne of his Father which has become the door through which we Gentile sinners have been brought to know him. If we be risen with Christ, the evidence that we are is that we do seek the things of Christ which are above the comprehension and reach of finite minds: those things which are a matter of divine revelation and which cannot be known other than as the Comforter takes them and unfolds them to us. It has been our desire in writing for the SIGNS that Christ might be glorified no matter what might happen to us individually. Let Christ be all in all. With no desire to advance any theories of our own, but with a desire to hold forth the Scriptures and compare Scripture with Scripture in order that God and his grace might be seen, has been our aim, we trust. We have not sought to interpret the Scriptures privately, but to give a "thus saith the Lord" for all that we have advanced in these pages. We do not claim to be always right in our interpretations, but we do claim that the Scriptures are infallibly right and that all weakness and error lies at our own door, not in any wise to the charge of the written word of God. No Scripture is of any private interpretation. (2 Peter i. 20.) The word "private" means "alone" or "by one's self." Thus no passage of Scripture stands alone by itself but is buttressed and upheld by other and all passages of Scripture. To take a verse of Scripture here and there and to tear them away from their connection is to interpret Scripture privately or by itself. This leads to false conclusions and erroneous surmisings. We believe that there is no passage of Scripture in the Bible anywhere but can be explained and opened up by other passages of Scripture if one can but be led by the Holy Spirit to see the proper relationship of Scripture with Scripture. Of course, without the Holy Spirit one can never arrive at the right meaning of any portion of the word. Hence, the Bible cannot be understood by any person not born again. The Scriptures are for the thorough furnishing of the man of God, not for the man of the world as such. "Ye must be born again."

It is to be greatly hoped that the Holy Spirit may use the SIGNS, and

the editors and publisher, for the glory of God and for the comfort and encouragement of the children of God scattered abroad. As Shamgar slew six hundred men with an ox goad, and as Samson later slew a thousand Philistines with an ass's jawbone, may it please God to use this humble paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to offset error and to further establish his people in the truth and to confirm them in the integrity of his word and in the wholesomeness of his gracious promises. We do not desire to be anything in the eyes of men or of our brethren, just so it may please God to be All and in all with us and with his people. Our thanks are to the Lord for his abundant mercy in having maintained the paper thus far and all honor is due him alone for any value whatever that has attached to our feeble efforts in keeping it going. We thank the Lord for the faithfulness of readers and subscribers who have thus far stood with us and hope he may graciously afford them strength to continue with us to the end, whatever the end may be, to the glory of God the Father, of his Son and of the Holy Ghost. The love of God be with you all throughout the new year and forever! Amen.

L.

A CORRECTION.

ON page 273 of our December issue we published a short letter from brother C. C. Smith, in which it was stated that his present address is Fort Worth, Texas, it should have read, Foxworth, Mississippi.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER JACOB B. CROSS was born August 15th, 1842, and died Armistice Day, November 11th, 1932, aged 90 years, 2 months and 27 days. He was the son of John H. and Nancy Cross, and was married to Emily Phillips August 25th, 1870, both of Barbour County, West Virginia. To their union were born five sons and five daughters: L. E. J. Cross, Belington, W. Va., H. H. Cross, Montrose, W. Va., L. D. Cross, Belington, W. Va., John W. Cross, De Land, Florida, W. T. Cross, Philippi, W. Va. Mrs. S. B. Phillips, Belington, W. Va., Mrs. C. C. Moore, Grafton, W. Va., Mrs. Belle Fitzwater, Belington, W. Va., with whom he and his wife were living when the end came. He joined the Little Bethel Primitive Baptist Church April 4th, 1874, upon experience, and was baptized the same day by the late Elder Joshua Simmons Corder. About two years later he was ordained to the ministry, preaching the gospel in different States and in numerous counties of West Virginia for a period of over fifty-six years. At the time of his going he was pastor of Little Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, Glade District, Barbour County, West Virginia. He leaves to mourn his invalid wife, the above named children, his sons-in-law and daughters-in law, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren, his church, and a host of friends. Interment was at Little Bethel Sunday, November 13th, 1932, at 1 p. m. Elder J. J. Poling, of Belington, preached from 2 Timothy iv. 7, 8, and hymns 808 and 700 (Beebe's collection) were used, by request of the deceased made many years ago. Younger in life he joined the Confederate Army, serving in the Sixty-second Virginia Regiment, under General Imboden's command. He served the entire four years, being in many hand-to-hand conflicts. He was wounded at New Market, Virginia, against odds of three to one, and was left dying on the field of battle for about twenty-four hours, with a comrade who was dead lying across his stomach. He was considered one of the ablest ministers of his time and always contended for the faith once delivered unto the saints. He never looked for the new and up-to-date ways of worship, but rather held to the old paths which the saints trod. The Master said while suffering that he trod the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with him. Who can know the way, the living way? Christ said, I am the way; if any man comes by me he can go in and out and find pasture. Elder Cross selected 2 Timothy iv. 7, 8, which reads, "I have fought a good flight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." This particular Scripture fits his case so well that he chose it to be talked from. The example he set before the family, the com-

munity and the church will not soon be forgotten. Let us hope that his life lives on and the teaching which he loved to tell about takes root and brings forth seed in some distant field to the honor and glory of God.

Written by his son,

W. T. CROSS.

FRANK G. SCOTT, Deacon and Clerk of Black Rock Church, was born in Baltimore County, Maryland, November 3rd, 1852, where he lived until his death, August 6th, 1932. He was the son of Abram C. and Philena L. Scott. His paternal grandparents were Elder Eli Scott and Elizabeth Cole Scott. Brother Scott is survived by one sister, Mrs. Dan Pearce, of Sparks, Maryland, and seven children, Miss Philena Scott, Baltimore, Md., Miss Martha Scott, Chevy Chase, Md., Miss Verna E. Scott, Sparks, Md., Mrs. James Gore, Coraopolis, Pa., Mr. F. Bosley Scott, Cincinnati, Ohio, Mr. Joseph H. Scott, Lutherville, Md., and Edwin Scott, Chicago, Ill. He is also survived by seven grandchildren. His wife, Rebecca Bosley Scott, and one son died several years ago. He was highly esteemed by the citizens of his community, having served several years as school commissioner for Baltimore County. For twenty years or more he was clerk of the Baltimore Old School Baptist Association. All these offices he filled with credit. Brother Scott was baptized in Black Rock in 1896 by the late Elder F. A. Chick, and was ever a faithful member in attendance to meetings as well as all other church matters.

A. S. ROWE.

HAVING been brother Scott's pastor for about thirty-four years, I want to say of him that he was of the very highest type of christian manhood. It was his pleasure to do his fellow-man a favor. He was a true professor of the religion of Jesus Christ, ever faithful to his church and pastor. He was a good and ready talker on spiritual subjects. He was that kind whose very presence made his brethren feel good. He was paralyzed, and lived just one week. Funeral services were conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder D. L. Topping, at Black Rock August 9th, 1932. There was a large gathering present and many floral offerings, attesting the very high esteem in which he was held. Oh how we miss him. May God bless us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

ALSO,

MR. **JOHN E. ENSOR,** of Baltimore County, Maryland, was born January 23rd, 1852, the son of John H. and Elizabeth Ensor. He was married at the age of twenty-one to Mary Ellen Gorsuch. He was a prosperous farmer and highly esteemed by all who knew him. He received a hope in early life, and was a strong believer in the doctrine preached by the Primitive Baptists, and was for many years a regular attendant at the meetings of the Black Rock Church and was a true and valued friend to both the church and pastor, and we feel our loss in his passing. He never joined the church, but was almost like a brother Deacon to our late Deacon F. G. Scott. They were close friends, and at the close of each meeting he would go to brother Scott to see that expenses were met. We all loved him as a dear brother in Christ. Mr. Ensor and brother Scott were born the same year and died about ten days of each other. They were both at the meeting the first Sunday in July and the first Sunday in August both were gone. We all greatly miss them and mourn their absence, but we sorrow not as those who have no hope, for believing as we do, that both of them were born of God, we believe that when Jesus shall come again he will call their sleeping dust to arise in his own glorified image. Mr. Ensor's wife passed away in March, 1921. He leaves eight children: Miss Elizabeth Ensor, Messrs Pinkey, Alex, J. Victor, Lawrence and Thomas Ensor, of Baltimore County, John Ensor, of Frederick County, and A. W. Ensor, of Harford County, to whom we would say, May God bless you all. Mr. Ensor died July 27th, 1932, very suddenly, of acute indigestion. The writer attended his funeral, assisted by Elder D. L. Topping, July 29th, at Black Rock. The large attendance and many floral offerings attested the high esteem in which he was held. His remains were laid to rest in the cemetery adjoining the church to await the second coming of Christ.

Your friend and brother in sorrow,

JOSHUA T. ROWE.

ELDER NATHAN REEDER, our dearly beloved pastor, was released from suffering November 10th, 1932. He quietly fell asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep. He was born in Illinois September 2nd, 1845, was married to Celia Karns in 1865. That same year, at the same time, he and his wife joined the Primitive Baptist Church, and they remained faithful members until death. They were baptized by Elder Joel Hume, of Owensville, Indiana. They lived happily together nearly sixty-six years. She departed this life July 29th, 1931. They came to Kansas in 1874 and located on a farm in southeastern Kansas, near the Oklahoma line, in which community they lived nearly fifty years. Brother Reeder was ordained in 1884, and was soon chosen pastor of his home church (Bethlehem), but for several years had not been able to preach for us because of throat trouble. Brother Reeder loved the truth in its simplicity and purity, and while he was a frail man physically he was strong in the faith of Jesus and a strong believer in the extensive sovereignty of God. He lived an honorable, upright and religious life, having the confidence and esteem of those without. He was a good counselor, a kind husband and father, a good

citizen and neighbor, always humble and charitable, ready to help the poor and needy. He died at Hominy, Okla., at the home of his niece, sister Stella Leatherman, who did everything possible for his comfort. During the last few months of his life he suffered untold agony with a cancer on his face, but bore his suffering patiently. He often wished he could go to his eternal home. His prayer has been answered, the Lord has taken him home. The last few years they made their home with their grandson, Albert Bright, whom they reared from babyhood. Their only child, Mattie Bright, passed away in the year 1904. Brother Reeder leaves one sister, two grandchildren, several great-grandchildren and several nieces, who all loved him dearly. His funeral was held in the schoolhouse (in which he and Elder Pittman had preached many sermons) near his home, six miles west of Caney, Kansas. There were two preachers present. They were strangers to me and I did not learn their names, but they talked very comfortingly. His body was tenderly laid to rest in the family plot by the side of his good wife.

(MRS.) T. R. PITTMAN.

Mrs. RACHEL ANN BOWEN departed this life on the afternoon of November 20th, 1932, in the eighty-fifth year of her age. She was the second eldest daughter of Jeremiah and Susan A. Dolson, and was born near Warwick, N. Y. She with my mother were the eldest of fourteen children, of whom one sister and six brothers survive. She fell November 8th and dislocated her hip, and all that could be was done for her, but to no avail, and she gradually sank until the end came, relieving her suffering. She never enjoyed good health, but clung to the precious Scripture, "As thy day, thy strength shall be." She and my mother were Methodists for fourteen years, and that body never had more devoted followers than they were until they both began to feel they were not at home and commenced looking for peace and comfort, and often after their Sabbath School went up to the Old School Baptist service, and soon learned that God is gracious. Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith your God. A short time since, while visiting Auntie and talking of a reason of her hope, she told me that she came to the end of the "Do and live" system, and sat down in a corner, and said, "Here, Lord, I give myself away, 'tis all that I can do." She never expected to rise again, but suddenly she began to sing,

"There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains."

In November, 1871, she and my mother were baptized by Elder J. N. Badger, and on that memorable day Elder Badger used as a text, "Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God." For them it was not death to die. She leaves to mourn her departure her husband, brother Charles Bowen, a daughter, A. Mae Benjamin, and one son, Jesse A. Bowen, of Montreal, Canada. No mother ever had more devoted children.

Her pastor, Elder R. Lester Dodson, was with us and conducted her funeral, using as a text Mark iv. 26-29, also hymns 1052 and 807. Her Bible and SIGNS were her constant companions, and while she lived forty miles from her home church her seat was seldom vacant. Many beautiful floral tributes attested the love of her friends and neighbors, and we laid her away beneath them. She will be sadly missed by the Warwick Church, and none will miss her more than I.

Written by request, by her niece,

MINNIE E. HYATT.

NANCY EMELINE ODELL RUSHER was born near Greenfield, Illinois, April 10th, 1865, and departed this life November 22nd, 1932, making her stay on this earth 67 years, 7 months and 12 days. July 17th, 1901, sister Rusher was united in marriage to brother William Robert Rusher and proved a faithful and devoted wife until God in his love called her home. To this union was born one son: William Rusher, at home. There is also an adopted son: Byron Rusher, of Dorchester, Ill. Sister Rusher was loved by her family and all who knew her, always ready to lend a helping hand to those in need. In her sixteenth year she united with the Primitive Baptist Church in Girard, Illinois, and in the year 1905 she moved her membership to Hopewell Church, where she remained a faithful member until death. She leaves to mourn their loss her husband, two sons, three brothers, Thomas, John and George Odell, and a host of friends.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder J. A. Modlin, and her body was laid to rest in the Hadley Cemetery to await the second coming of her blessed Lord. May God strengthen and comfort the bereaved ones, is our prayer.

JOHN FRANCIS WISDOM was born in Dallas County, Missouri, February 23rd, 1850, the second child of a family of thirteen children, and as his father died a young man, because of ill health contracted in the Civil War, J. F. was obliged to assume family responsibilities early in life. He was married to Priscilla Ellen Hightshoe December 25th, 1870, and to this union were born six children. Five years ago he was stricken with paralysis, from which he never recovered, and the end came September 25th, 1932, in the Deaconness Hospital, Wenatchee, Washington, aged 82 years, 7 months and 2 days. His beloved wife preceded him by only one month and one week. Two daughters, Mrs. W. W. Gill and Mrs. Stella E.

Knowels, and one son, Guy V. Wilson, two sisters, one brother, ten grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren and a host of other relatives survive him. About twenty-five years ago he brought his family to the west and finally settled in Wenatchee, Washington, where he lived until about six years ago. He made his home in Touchet and College Place the last few years. About twelve years ago he joined the Primitive Baptist Church of Touchet, Washington, and was a devoted member until death. He was laid to rest by the side of his wife in Wenatchee, Wash. During his years of invalidism he wore a noble smile and bore his lot with cheerfulness and bravery. Brother and sister Wisdom were very faithful members of Mizpah Church, at Touchet, Washington, and were loved by all, and are greatly missed in our church, but we know that our loss is their eternal gain. We are told not to weep as those who have no hope, for it is written, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

Written by the pastor of Touchet Church,

J. T. BARNES.

PRISCILLA ELLEN HIGHTSHOE WISDOM was born in the State of Indiana July 16th, 1852, and died in College Point, Wash., August 17th, 1932, aged 80 years, 1 month and 1 day. When a very small child she moved with her parents to Wisconsin. Here she spent her childhood days, and in her teens the family moved to Missouri. She was married to John F. Wisdom December 25th, 1870, and to this union were born six children, three of whom preceded her in death. About twenty-five years ago the family came to the west and finally settled in the Wenatchee Valley on a fruit ranch. The last one and one-half years of her life she spent in College Point, Washington. As a younger person, much of her time was spent in the school room: when a child and young woman as a student, and later as a teacher. She had been afflicted with a dreaded disease, which caused her terrible suffering, for some four or five years, but through it all she was a sweet and patient sufferer, always thinking of the comfort of others. Surely her life was an example for those left behind. She was a faithful and devoted wife and and a loving mother. and to know her was to love her. She was a faithful member of the Primitive Baptist Church of Touchet, Wash. She left to mourn her husband, John F. Wisdom, two daughters, Mrs. Stella E. Knowels, of Wenatchee, Mrs. W. W. Gill, of College Place, Wash., and one son, Guy V. Wisdom, also of Wenatchee, ten grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, one sister, three brothers, besides other relatives and a host of friends.

Funeral services were conducted in the Cookerly & Groseclose funeral parlors, in Walla Walla, Wash., by Elder J. T. Barnes, assisted by Elder F. M. Burg, of College Place. The body was sent to Wenatchee for its last resting place.

Written by her daughter,

(MRS.) W. W. GILL.

SISTER **LOUISA SCHIEFER** died August 2nd, 1932, aged 74 years and 2 days. Sister Lizzie, as she was always called by her brethren, was baptized by Elder S. H. Durand and received into the fellowship of the Southampton Church, at Southampton, Pa., August 15th, 1886, where she remained a faithful member to the end, always in her place at meeting time, and by her walk and conversation she gave evidence of her hope and faith in Christ as her Redeemer. The twenty-seventh Psalm was a great favorite of hers and she always spoke of it as her Psalm. It was my blessed privilege to see her several times during her last illness and always she manifested a sweet resignation to God's will and her trust in him. Truly the Lord was her strength and her salvation. Sister Lizzie helped me many times by her steadfastness and her sweet fellowship for me when I have been cast down in the valley of doubt. How I miss her none can know.

Elder H. C. Ker, our pastor, conducted the services at her home, using for a text the twenty-seventh Psalm, by sister Lizzie's request, and read the hymn beginning "One thing with all my soul's desire." She leaves three brothers and one sister. May the God of all the earth help them as it pleases him. Her twin brother and sister, with whom she lived, feel the loss deeply, but God is faithful to help and can give "the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

ELIZABETH L. FETTER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Russell Severance, N. J., $1; M. A. Chaney, Texas, $1; G. C. Jordan, Mo., $3; A. W. Bloomfield, Mo., $2; Sarah I. Rittenhouse, N. J., $3; Mrs. Sara W. Slack, Del., $3; Dr. Thomas H. McColl, Ont., $3; Jesse C. Ellis, Ohio, $3; Mrs. Mary J. Ege, N. J., $3; Mrs. Estelle Moore, Ala., $2; Woburn Church, Mass., $5; "A friend," Pa., $3; Martha E. Holloway, Md., $1; John W. Rockafellow, N. Y., $3; "A friend," Ont., $1; Mrs. Henry Hayman, Md., $2; Kate R. Forbes, Kans., $1; Mrs. Mary E. Pittman, Kans., $1; Joseph F. Hall, Maine, $8; Miss Anne Parker, Va., $3; "A friend," N. Y., $2; Mrs. Joab P. Stout, Ill., $3; Mrs. M. E. Drake, N. J., $1; Mrs. Georgie H. Carruthers, Va., $2; Wm. D. Chapman, N. Y., $3; Mrs. Effie J. Nethaway, N. Y., $1; Ebenezer Church, N. Y., $10; Mrs. J. A. McTaggart, Ontario, $2; Mrs. J. D. Shafer, N. Y., $1.

MEETINGS.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fifth Sunday in January, 1933. Services to be held at the home of brother J. E. Livingston, 64 East Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m., also at 2 p. m. on Saturday before. All are welcome.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 808 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one-half block west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at the home of sister E. Brunow, 411 N. Ridgeway Avenue, and on the second, third and fourth Sundays at the home of brother W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. The fifth Sundays are by appointment. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastors, Elders Jones and Janes.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of sister N. J. Preston, 116 Center Street, Oregon City, Oregon, at 10:30 a. m. Those coming by stage, steam train or electric car get off at Seventh Street, take elevator to top of the hill, cross trestle over railway tracks, turn to the right, go two blocks on Sixth Street to Center Street, thence five and one-half blocks south on Center Street to 116, house number, between First and Second Streets. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Moderator.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Church now meets for worship at our home, 2211 Fifth Street, Riverside, California, the third Sunday of each month, at 10:30 a. m.

J. W. HAYNES.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

DROPSY REMEDY.

Purely vegetable, removes from one to two gallons of water a day. Shortness of breath quickly relieved. Cures the worst cases of Dropsy in all its forms, and after being given up by the best doctors to die. Specially efficacious in Dropsy of the Heart. Best and cheapest know remedy, only $1.00 a package, six packages $5.00 by mail postpaid, and free to very poor people who are really unable to pay.

ELDER C. W. ANDERSON,
ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminiar Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

Cloth binding 75c each. Paper covers, single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and all to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
MIDDLETOWN, Orange Co., N. Y.

HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Cloth binding. Price, $1.25 each. One dozen or more, ordered at the same time and all to the same address, one dozen each. Cash must accompany orders. Make checks and money orders payable to

J. E. BEEBE & CO.
MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 101. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1933. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HEBREWS VI. 1-6.

THE apostle Paul was a Jew by birth, and one whom God had blessed with eloquence and an understanding of the law and the prophets, a pharisee of the Pharisees, but God at his (God's) own appointed time and manner separated him from his own selfish pride and giddiness, changing his once hard and revengeful heart into one of meek, lowly and great humbleness and obedience, filling his heart now with godly sorrow that worketh repentance toward God in a moment of time, and he also changed his name from Saul to Paul (or little), saying of him, He is a chosen vessel unto me, and I will show him what great things he must suffer for my name's sake, sending him then a special messenger to the Gentiles, proving his ministry and calling him by many signs and wonders being performed by his hand, which Paul at all times was free to give due honor and glory to Israel's God for the performance of all these wonderful works, and now Paul is here writing by the revelation of the Holy Spirit to those of his own nation, whom God had blessed in like manner with godly sorrow and true repentance toward God, who had turned them by the operation of the Holy Spirit in their hearts from dead works and the bondage of the law unto a lively hope, an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, to a hope of redemption and eternal salvation through the obedience of his only begotten Son unto death upon the cross, pouring out his own lifeblood as a sacrifice for their sins, according to the divine arrangement in the mind of Jehovah before the world began.

The first three verses of the Scripture under consideration are taken up entirely in recalling the fundamental principles of the gospel of God which Paul had briefly outlined in the foregoing chapters, how that Jesus by his death upon the cross had by one offer-

ing perfected forever them that are sanctified, and there remaineth therefore no more sacrifice for sin; how he had ascended on high and was seated at the right hand of God to make intercession for them who were given him back yonder in eternity in the covenant of grace, who now, having been quickened in the heart by the Holy Spirit, had ceased from their own works and had entered into the rest that now remaineth for the children of God, and he (Jesus) being made perfect through the thing that he suffered became the author of eternal (everlasting, perpetual, endless) salvation unto all them that obey (not disobey) him, and is now a High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.

In the next three verses the writer seems to have brought us up a little nearer and given us a more perfect or individual view of this matter, in order that there can be no doubt remaining as to whom he is referring, or who it is that will eventually receive the great blessing here mentioned, and how closely this blessing is guarded by the all-seeing eye of God, not having as its final destination the entire world, or all national Israel, nor even every single individual now representing themselves to be the blood-washed disciples of Christ, but only those who have the "wedding garments." In support of such a thought it might be well to mention here a few Scriptures which I feel sure illustrate very clearly what I believe the apostle had in mind at the time of this writing, but let us bear in mind the fact that we are now leaving behind the generations of time when the law was written outwardly on tables of stone and the Holy Ghost had not yet come upon the entire assembly of God's chosen people, but on the high priest and prophets only, and we are now moving forward with the lapse of time as the apostle gives us a more perfect view of the generation of Jesus Christ, to the time when the law was written inwardly on the fleshly tables of the heart, as evidence that Jesus had made sacrifice for all the sins of those whom God had given him, that all power was given into his hands, who now makes intercession for them that are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, and those only who have such evidence will be caught up to meet him in the sky and accompany him home to that great city of the new Jerusalem.

Now, whether or not those of whom Paul writes in the three remaining verses were conscientious in their connection with God's people is not for me to say, but I rather believe they were never given the same full measure of faith as those above mentioned, and in reality they are those by whom spiritual Israel must be proved, those by whom offenses must come to the very elect of God, and while he bestows upon the vessels of mercy his great blessing these will be left behind in weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Let me now call attention to the life of Judas, who was chosen as one of the twelve witnesses to the temptations, trials and longsufferings of Jesus, and the perfect precision with which he

(Jesus) went about fulfilling the law and the prophets to every jot and tittle, and for the final fulfillment of the parts of both himself and Jesus he betrayed his Master for thirty pieces of silver (the price of a slave), but not until Jesus had commanded, "That thou doest, do quickly."—John xiii. 27. But listen: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." —Acts ii. 23. This all had to be accomplished before the salvation was wrought that was promised before the world began. This seems strange to feeble man, but to God all things are as an open book. So salvation was prepared in eternity in the mind of God before sin entered into the world by man, and because sin did enter in and is permitted to remain it cannot be said that God is unjust, or the author of sin, for he was the giver of the law and man was the one who disobeyed it. Sin is always the negative of God's law. Paul writes, "The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope."—Rom. viii. 20. The same creature that was made weak was by the same reason or consideration of the same Creator subjected in hope, or according to God's election. "According as he hath chosen us [Paul, the church at Ephesus and the faithful in Christ Jesus] in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."—Eph. i. 4. So God in his wise decree made provision for the good works, and faithful ones to perform them in the face of all their opponents, "for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do." Both the will to do and the how to do it are given to the creature by the same God.

In further consideration of these verses let us now notice the first church assembly, how they had possessions sold them and brought the sum and laid it down at the disciples' feet, but there was one (Ananias) and his wife who sold a possession and kept back part of the price. (Acts fifth chapter.) Now, would it be unreasonable to suppose this couple lacked the same supporting prayer that Jesus offered up for Peter? "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."—Luke xxii. 31, 32. Is not this couple a fair illustration of those who preach to the people of God and keep back a portion for their own glory? Peter writes, I have shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God.

One more Scripture and I am through. One, Simon, who had bewitched the people of Samaria, after that he had heard Philip preach in the name of Jesus Christ: "Then Simon himself believed also," and was baptized. He continued with Philip: "And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money. * * * * But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou has thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. * * * For I perceive that thou art in the

gall of bitterness."—Acts viii. 9-24. Jude writes, "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core."—Jude 11.

The above has been used to illustrate the fact that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, that it matters not what our connection with the brethren may be, how faithful we are in associating with them, how sincere our outward appearance may appear, "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."—Rom. viii. 9. And I believe that is what Paul had in mind at the time of this writing. These all in their beginning apparently had their full measure of faith, and from all outward appearance had the same spiritual blessing as the remainder of the saints, and only the Holy Ghost through temptation could reveal it was only a temporal faith or blessing ready to flee at the sight of riches, and not of that same lasting faith that has upheld to the end martyrs of all ages.

This was written at the dawn of day, in much haste, with a hope of obtaining some relief of mind. It may be all wrong; if so, please pray for me.

Submitted in love and for your most careful consideration.

ROBERT L. DAVIS.

SANTA MONICA, California, Oct. 31, 1932.

MY PRECIOUS FATHER AND MOTHER:—I have for some days suppressed the desire to tell you some of what I trust I have been made to see and feel, by divine love. I do not know that I can lead you into the pastures on which I humbly hope I have feasted, but I know you have traveled the same road before, and by experience will be able to grasp what I fail to tell. Words, used to the very best advantage, are very weak to convey these precious things, and I am very ignorant of language, so I will ask you in the beginning to bear with my weakness. If I had command of the finest language, and did not have the Holy Spirit's guidance, it would be only a mass of confusion; but if he will lend me his sweet presence for a while, what I say may be a little comfort to you.

I hardly know where to begin, for I cannot remember when I did not realize, in a measure, that I was a vile sinner in the sight of the holy God. That, I suppose, was due to your teaching. You taught me the letter (all you could do), but I hope that God has applied it to my heart; and here is the reason of my hope: A little less than four years ago I began to see myself as I really was: a vile sinner. I thought I had always seen myself thus, but it did not bear so heavily upon my heart. Then I realized that I had never really known it. Once in a while I felt that I was the most sinful one of your children, but generally I thought I was quite a good girl, which, as you know, I was speaking after the manner of the world. But when, as I hope, the light shone into my heart I saw it filled with every unclean thing. I thought for a long while that I was getting to be the most sinful being alive. Everything I did seemed awful. I wanted every one

to think I was good, especially the Old Baptists. I wanted them to love me, and I thought that if I was good they would love me, and oh, how I tried to raise myself in their esteem. But far above this, I wanted to appear good before God. I had a longing to be holy, and would say, I will not do such and such a thing again, only to turn right around and do it again. Then I would try to pray to God and beg him to give me strength to do good. I seemed willing, even anxious, to be what is called good, but how to get the ability I knew not. I struggled along this way for months, trying to do good, and always found that when I would do good evil was present, and oh the agony I have endured. Every day my mountain of sin was increasing in size and getting darker. It was as a wilderness dense and deep. Still I labored on, trying to do some good thing to decrease the size of this enormous mountain of sin, and still it continued to grow.

One time, about two years ago, I had several days of bemoaning my condition, and it seemed that I would just give up. I would not try to pray any more, for every time I went to my knees I would think, "The prayer of the righteous availeth much," but I am not righteous; no, no, I am vile, vile and unclean. So I would only say, O God, if thou wilt, have mercy on me. Like the beautiful words of Hart,

> "I could only sigh with sore contrition,
> Begging mercy every hour."

About this time, as you know, my health was very poorly, and I had gone to bed deeply groaning and sighing in weariness of body, mind and soul. Winford said, "Can't you rest, darling?" Then the words seem to come from the very center of my heart, Oh I need rest for my poor weary soul. Then the words came so plainly for me, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I was amazed for a time. I thought, It may be that God will have mercy on me yet. So for a while I seemed to be relieved of that constant burden, though once in a while it would return heavier than ever before, until the past summer. When I had come to the very end of the way, it seemed, I was made to realize that it was the Holy Spirit within showing me the depravity of my heart, and then, I trust, came more hope. I realized that I could do nothing, because I was vainly trying to struggle along and do something that was done and finished when our blessed Savior expired on the rugged cross of Calvary, and said, "It is finished." I found, by the light of his countenance, that I was trying to do the very thing that he had declared finished. I was trying to bring myself into favor with God by poor, puny works of mine, not realizing that I was trying to drag a pile of filthy rags to his righteous throne to make him look upon me in mercy. Poor presumptuous wretch! trying to present One so divinely fair with such a gift. No wonder I was having such a hard time making him accept it. But when I was brought to where I had no works of my own to offer, when I could plead

merit only through what Jesus had done, then, I trust, I received a token of his acceptance, and oh the sweet peace that filled by heart. There was nothing for me to do but lean on him. I had such a sweet period all alone I cried for joy and my heart was filled with love for God and everything. I sang, and these words flowed from my heart,

"Oh to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be;
Let that grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee.

Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it,
Seal it for thy courts above."

A sweet peace has filled my life a part of the time this summer. Oh the indescribable peace when our affections are placed on things above; when we can look up; when we no longer struggle with the vanities of life, but just look to the loving Father, and trust him for his grace, believing that "behind a frowning providence he hides a smiling face." By his grace to say, no matter what may come, what hardships or pain, what trials or persecutions, No matter, all is well. Oh it is a sweet feeling just to know that all is well; to not be wearied by time-things and fretting about frivolous things, but to just trust him, knowing that

"Not a single shaft can hit
Till the God of love sees fit."

Oh that he will go with me all along the way and guide my feet in that strait and narrow way. If his presence is for a moment withdrawn all is dark and I begin to fret about everything, a little pain, or some other little care. If we could but realize at all times that we really deserve nothing, that all we receive is in mercy sent, we would not expect so much of this world. I long to praise him for what he has done for me, the weakest, frailest, most sinful one of the fold, but I am utterly helpless to give the praise that is due. It would seem that after such unmerited blessings my days would be filled with praise, but alas, I find still many things to take up my mind and my time. What manner of life should we live, seeing from what we have been delivered? Let no one say to me, If I believed in predestination I would take my fill of sin. It seems that I have had more than my fill of it already. How can one who is killed to the love of sin roll it under their tongue like a sweet morsel? Every sinful act causes me much grief and lamentation. I long to be what I cannot be, but trust I appear before Him as spotless through Christ's redeeming blood. For, far from rolling sin under my tongue as a sweet morsel, it is most distasteful to me. But I am still in the flesh, and the warfare will continue until we conquer through Jesus' blood. "We shall be conquerors ere long, and more than conquerors, too." Since, I trust the light and love of God have shone into my sinful heart it has shown me many things from which I have been delivered. As dear Elder Durand says in his "Fragments," It seems that a light shines back over my past life revealing many things to me that when they occurred seemed of little consequence. I can see God's hand guiding me all

through my youthful days, and realize now that I was not allowed to go in the paths of sin only because his grace restrained me. You, my dear father and mother, taught me to walk uprightly at all times, but when I was tempted to do wrong it was not this that stopped me. It was the knowledge of the fact that God's all-seeing eye was upon me, and, if I did not love him then, I feared him. I cannot remember when I did not fear him more than you, even as a small child. Sometimes in my latter youth I have gone out to behold some lovely scene of nature, and have looked and listened, and a solemn awe has fallen upon me. I have realized the power and wisdom of God and felt a longing to live a holy life, for I thought then that I must live holy before he would love me. At such times I have felt that I would love to express my feelings to some one, but even as near and dear as you were to me I could not utter a word. It seemed so solemn, so sacred. I could only gaze on the wonderful work of his hand, and many times I have uncontrollably sobbed out my feelings for no other reason than just the greatness of God and his creation. I cannot tell you of these times even yet. I cannot get into the sweetness of it either by tongue or pen; but just the memory of these times now, as I write at my desk, blind my eyes with tears and fill my heart with love and fear of this great Being.

I must stop this part of my letter, and tell you what happened yesterday. Our (oh the sweet realization that now I can say "our") little church met at dear sister Miller's, and when dear brother G. O. Walker said the door of the church stands open, my darling husband stepped out over all opposition of the flesh and related his experience and was accepted. I followed him, trembling with joy and fear, feeling my unfitness very keenly, and tried to tell them some of my experience, but it seemed that I utterly failed. But in their love and forbearance they accepted me. Oh if I could but tell you how utterly unworthy I feel to be among them. Oh that my God will keep me where I belong: at their feet at all times. The Lord willing, we will meet at Ontario next second Sunday and go five miles to Santa Ana River and there follow our dear Lord in baptism. Oh such a feeling of peace rests in my heart this morning! I wish I could describe it. It seems that I am resting from a long and hard day's labor.

I will close, asking you both to pray for your poor little girl, that she may always live to serve the brethren and sisters in meekness and humility. I wish I could go into your loving arms this morning, and there sob out my feelings on your breast, but God has seen fit to place many hills and valleys between us.

Your loving, and only daughter,

MABEL BERRY.

MATTOON, Ill., Aug. 27, 1931.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I am inclosing two letters, which are entirely at your disposal. The one from brother Cox was written a number of years

ago. For two years I served the church in Kentucky, where his membership was, as pastor. Owing to my age (nearing my ninety-fourth year), and attendant physical weakness, I can write but little at a time. I probably will not be away from my home any more this fall. I am always glad to have a few lines from my dear kindred in Christ. I may try to write a few lines for the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES a little later on. I have been a reader for over seventy-five years.

I am, I trust, most sincerely your brother in gospel bonds,

J. G. SAWIN.

RISING STAR, Texas.

ELDER JOHN G. SAWIN—DEAR BROTHER:—I received your city paper and am glad to note mention of yourself in penciled paragraph. I have had a mind to write since I received your good letter. It is a special blessing of God to his people and church, and to you, that he is lengthening your thread of life to so great an age. May he be praised for such an unusual blessing. I am at a loss to know how to address such a venerable servant of the Most High God. You can regard this poor attempt as childish prattle. Among other things I might write of, I would speak of our sovereign God and his wonderful work. Great and marvelous are thy works, etc. Let me freely speak of him as Creator of all things, and working them after the counsel of his own will, declaring the end from the beginning. All this is well understood by the very elect, the militant church of Christ. It is much plainer as we see things left as time leaves them, and so we have this key text to the point, "If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south or toward the north, there it shall be."—Eccl. xi. 3. First, the clouds rain without any will or effort on their part, but we do not know the will of God regarding the rain until the clouds pass. Then the tree falls, for it cannot longer stand because God will have it fall at that instant. He directs its fall toward the south or north, and the world could as well cease to exist, or heaven, or even God himself, as that that treee could fall in the opposite direction. So, as time leaves things, it is certain they are just as God would have them be, or, if you will have it, predestinated them to be, and he has ordained that time shall ultimately disclose all his secret will. It is from this viewpoint we see that God predestinated the Adamic transgression and its consequent train of evil. Also, it is further observed that evil is a necessity and so embraced in God's providence, although forbidden by the law, yet every transgression of the law meets with a just recompense of reward. By the law is the knowledge of sin, for, says Paul, I had not known sin but by the law, for I had not known lust except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. Well, Adam would not have eaten of that tree if the law had not said, Thou shalt not eat of it. And if he had, no sin would have resulted, because the law would not have been violated. But the

final conclusion is, that the law entered that the offense might abound. (Rom. v. 20.) Not only, as above stated, that every transgression meets with a just recompense of reward, but also every transgression only fulfills the purpose of God, else God would not have put Pharaoh under law to let his people depart from his dominion. Here Pharaoh's infractions of God's sovereign edict were predestinated of God, for he tells this proud monarch that for this purpose he raised him up, etc., and for the same reason God has declared that the wicked shall do wickedly, because he has created the wicked for their days of evil, as in the case of Pharaoh. So sin came not into the world by just the permission of God, but of necessity, as it is a component part in his providence. The object and end of the entrance of the law being that sin might abound unto death, spiritual death. First, in order that grace might reign through righteousness by Jesus Christ. (Rom. v. 21.) In order that grace reign two prerequisites are arranged in God's providence, to wit: the entrance of the law, and the infraction thereof. Its infraction brought death, and death must of necessity exist before grace and spiritual life could enter. So the transgression and consequent death were alike predestinated, and as events as certain in God's providence as life, grace and mercy. But the conditionalists insist that God has nothing to do with sin but to punish it. According to their argument, sin, being precarious, the reign of death also was uncertain over our whole race, then it follows that as the reign of death was likely to never have happened, then the reign of grace was equally uncertain, for it must of necessity reign after that death reigns, according to this text. A leading conditionalist preacher once said that God could foreknow all things and yet not have predestinated all things. That is, evil as fully foreknown as righteousness. It follows then, on their hypothesis, that evil, all evil actions of men, individually and collectively, are matters without and beyond the limit of God's providence and control. Let us suppose this to be so, and God, having predestinated righteousness, has done so upon the assumption that sin would enter the world on its own initiative. As righteousness is the direct opposite of evil, so sin, making its self-introduction into the world, made it also possible for God to introduce righteousness into the world right by the side of evil. Had the devil not introduced sin into the world it would have been impossible for God to have brought the reigning grace (through Christ) into the world. So we see how the origin of righteousness as emanating from God through Christ would be conditional on sins' entrance into the world. If that were true, God's providences were shaped, governed and laid out not as he pleased, but to conform to the events of sin and wickedness as he foresaw it would all come to pass.

So much for the theory that God foresaw all things, both the evil and the good, and did not predestinate the evil, but the good only, and, too, just because he foresaw it as future. Let us

note particularly, and forever remember, that according to the conditional theory, that as God is not the first cause of sin he then left sin out of his account, and so all the good he predestinated was but a counteraction against evil, and so of necessity on God's part. We might as well conclude, then, that if sin had not made its self-introduction into the world we would not have been saved from death, since sin came into existence merely on its own initiative, or fortuitously, or in any other way language could express, except that it came not by God's purpose. Plain it is that to limit predestination so as not to be commensurate with God's foreknowledge makes even righteousness as uncertain as evil. But why so? says the conditionalist, are not evil and good both here, and have they not been ever since the beginning of time? Yes, but if you deny that God had a purpose for sin, or that it was not included in his providence, as taught in this text (Romans v. 20), its existence is a mere chance, and so, for the same reason, Christ's righteousness (its opposite) is also a chance, too.

Dear brother Sawin, I believe you are in full accord with me. I hope you are still in good health and will have a mind to write for the SIGNS soon. Your letters are of more than common interest to me, and I feel sure they are to most of its readers.

Your brother, the least, if one at all,

J. I. FOSTER.

GHENT, Ky., Dec. 13, 1895.

DEAR BROTHER J. G. SAWIN:—Your letter of the 1st inst. came duly to hand and I was greatly interested in its perusal, but you use language in that letter I feel sure you would not use if you knew me as I know myself. Instead of being spiritually-minded and given to every good work, as you seem to think, my home daily is amidst clouds and gloom, and they are my constant companions. For more than sixty-four years I have had a name among God's dear people, and as I have journeyed onward along my weary road sin and iniquity have been more and more manifested in my daily walk, until now, standing on the verge of the tomb, I am made to see in sorrow the corruptions of the flesh. While I have for many long and dreary years known, believed, felt and realized that salvation is of free and sovereign grace, yet that great truth has never been made so apparent to me as in these latter years of my earthly pilgrimage. "I am the Lord; and beside me there is no savior," is the language of inspiration. This great and heavenly truth is the foundation of all my hope of a blessed eternity beyond the tomb. My faith anxiously reaches out and tries to take hold of him as my Savior and Redeemer and my all. But alas, how weak my faith (if I have any) often becomes, and how feeble my hope is when I am groping in darkness. But our God has said to us by his prophet, "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I

declare that I will render double unto thee." The waters of salvation do not visibly flow for the comfort and joy of the saints when they are groping in the dark prison-house of the flesh, but then they are made to know that in the flesh there is no good thing. But some rays of joy come flitting through that prison-house and for a moment dispel that darkness. Those rays are graciously sent from their heavenly home, and by their light they are made to trust that they are prisoners of hope. Then their faith and hope go hand in hand, for they then have that faith that works by love and that hope which is the anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and reaches to that within the vail, whither Christ Jesus, the forerunner, hath for us entered. He entered the vail of death that through death he might redeem them who through the fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. They feared death because it was the wages of sin, and being in the prison-house of the flesh they were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Not in the dark prison-house of the law, where hope could not enter, but they were prisoners of hope, and that hope rested in Jesus, who was made the end of the law for righteousness unto them that believe, and being made the end of the law, it had no more claim against them. Then a sweet message comes from the heavenly throne, saying, If the Son make you free ye shall be free indeed. Free from the prison-house of the flesh, free from the prison-house of the law, faith and hope are made their's, and all their joys and rejoicings are in Christ Jesus, to whose great and ever-glorious name it is their chief delight to give all the glory.

When I took up my pen this morning I thought I would write you a very short letter, thanking you for your truly interesting letter to me, which I mailed to the SIGNS for publication, so that others might share the comfort it afforded me, but I have covered much writing paper with my thoughts just as they have occurred to me and I fear you will be wearied before you finish reading it.

My wife and I are both in feeble health. I have been suffering for several months with a swelling above my left eye, but it seems now to be some better. It is a great pleasure to me to have God's dear people talk to me with their pens, and that pleasure would be greatly increased could I repay them for their trouble by anything I might say by way of answers to their letters. But physical inability to write and poverty of thought often deter me from attempting to answer their letters. But knowing your charity and willingness to overlook the shortcomings of your feebler brethren, such as I am, I feel safe in asking you to write as often as your engagements will permit. My most sincere prayer is that you may be strengthened daily by grace divine, and thus be enabled to go forth proclaiming to God's people the unsearchable riches of Christ to their edification and comfort, and that your dear family may ever be surrounded with all needed blessings, both for time and eternity.

H. COX.

HAINES, Ore., Oct. 30, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—The annual three days meeting of the Mizpeh Church, at Touchet, Washington, met on Friday before the fourth Sunday in October. There were present representatives of three of our churches, and their Elders: J. T. Barnes, C. W. Bond and A. D. Hughett. The preaching and fellowship were encouraging and revived our drooping spirits. We were all glad to be there and mingle our voices in praise to the God of our salvation, and to recount the wonders of his grace. Time is leaving vacant seats in our congregations, formerly filled by faithful members, and we missed them in this assembly, but we feel to be reconciled in the belief that they have finished their labors here and have joined the same family in heaven, where there is perfect peace and rest, with no more sorrow or tribulation to be endured. We, too, must soon lay aside our armor and pass on the way the saints of every age have trod. The vacant seats in our assemblies, with no new ones coming in to use them, fill us with concern about the perpetuity of our little churches here. We greatly desire heavenly blessings to strengthen us in the belief that the Lord is still calling witnesses to build of the waste places of Zion, that the true faith shall not perish from the earth.

Elder J. T. Barnes, the pastor of this church, is in his seventy-seventh year and is in good health, except for his failing eyesight. He can see enough to walk about some and recognize his friends two or three feet away. He can neither read nor write, but his preaching showed his spiritual vision to be of the unfailing sort, and all were comforted by the plain and earnest manner in which he sent forth gospel truth. Why could not such a faithful witness be blessed, like Moses, to come to the end of life's journey in the full vigor of his physical strength, with his vision undimmed and his natural force unabated? We are told in the Scriptures, If there are any sick or afflicted among you, call in the elders of the church and ask God to heal such infirmity, for the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Jesus said, Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, that shall ye receive. We believe that all spiritual blessings are beyond the power of man to give, yet we trust in man to keep the physical powers in repair and not the most learned in scientific knowledge can understand the functions of the principle of life on the atoms which compose our bodily form. Our God is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and his promises extend to his called and chosen ones in every age the same. Why do we not come boldly to the throne of grace and claim his promised blessings? I feel that we are not living up to the privileges that God has promised us, and that he is so abundantly able to bring to pass in our mortal pilgrimage here on earth. If any of the readers of the SIGNS feel a desire to give some expression on this subject let us have it, as the Lord reveals his

ministrations to his chosen ones in these latter days. Are the times of God's special visitations and blessings past, and has scientific knowledge taken its place, so that we are to look to men trained in these things to minister to all our needs? We have about conceded the point as it pertains to our physical being, and the learned doctors of divinity claim it is also true as to our spiritual life in this world. It is the generally accepted idea that God's providence and mercy are extended to us after death, and that they are measured out as the reward of the way man lived in this world. My faith as it reveals the perfections of Jehovah refuses to acknowledge any such doctrine. May the light of truth still direct our footsteps in the strait and narrow way until mortality shall be swallowed up of life.

Yours in hope,

C. W. BOND.

BERLIN, Maryland.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel to-night that I would like to pen a few lines for your consideration, if the good Lord will guide me, for I know that except I be guided by him I cannot write to the honor of God nor the comfort of his dear people. I would like to pen a few thoughts upon 2 Corinthians vi. 17: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." The subject of the unclean thing has been upon my mind at intervals for some time, and to-day it was renewed while listening to the preached word at our association. To my mind and understanding, there are two classes of people referred to in the Bible, and only two, a chosen class and a nonchosen class; and only two doctrines, a true and a false, and it is of the false doctrine I want to write, and who was spoken to when the words of this Scripture were spoken. He was speaking to the church of God, telling them to come out from among them, from the nonbelieverrs, those who could not receive the doctrine of our God, those who believed in the works of the ungodly, for he says, "Touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." My brethren, how long could you live in a church that believed and preached the works of puny man? No longer than it would take you to get away, for the Lord has said to you, Come out from among them. This is a command and must be obeyed, and you are made to seek the people who can tell you of the things of the Spirit and not of the things of man, and when you have been taught of God you have no desire or fellowship for such language, therefore will touch not the unclean thing; you have been made to abhor the things of the flesh. When Job was being tormented by Satan and one went to him, could he be comforted by the works of man? I say, No, for he had been shown that it is God alone who can save a sin-sick soul, and he knew by experience that of himself he could do nothing, for if he could would he not have driven the evil one from him and walked on in joy?

We find in Isaiah lii. 11, another command: "Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord." So I believe every one that is born of the Spirit is driven out from his native land and made to seek a new home, a home with the church of the living God. He may never unite with the visible church, but he will never handle that unclean doctrine again. We will notice Sodom and Gomorrah. When Lot and his family were ordered to leave there was no cleanness to be found there, except his own family. Does not this show beyond doubt the power of your and, I hope, my God? For if he is not our God, one who can do all things and no one can hinder, could we have any trust in him? I say, No, for we have already tried the works of man and found them to be a failure, and we have been made to hate the things of this world, which are sin, and cannot for the life of us handle that unclean doctrine.

"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."—Rev. xviii. 4. Then again, "(Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men."—Col. ii. 21, 22.

Now we will take up the clean thing for a short while. When we hear the good news of a free salvation, one we do not have to work out, one we do not have to keep, but rather, one that keeps us, do not our hearts go out in full fellowship to the one who bears that message to us, and are we not made to rejoice in the Lord for that message of free grace? Some little hope has been given to us, but we have not merrited it, and sometimes doubt that we have been shown anything or know anything about the Spirit of God.

I think I had better bring this letter to a close, for I do not feel that I can write to the comfort of any one or to the glory of God. If I know my own heart, it is my desire to give God all the glory and man none.

Dear editors, do with this as you see fit, but do not let it crowd out better matter. Change it any way you wish to best set forth the glory of God and his love for his people, and should any one receive a little comfort from these thoughts, may the God of heaven have all the praise. Love to all the church of God.

Submitted by one who feels himself to be the least of all and unworthy of notice,

J. W. S. TIMMONS.

HOLLYWOOD, California, Nov. 5, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—As a merciful token, our covenant-keeping God has favored us to meet with brother Berry and his wife, sister Mabel, for all day meetings on every second Sunday, in the town of Santa Monica, California, but, for favorable reasons we believe, it has been arranged for the little congregation that we have been favored to

meet with, to meet in Ontario, California, as brother Slusher may arrange, so please leave out the announcement that we meet at brother Berry's. Our congregation is called "Seclusia," and we rather appreciate the name, because the world knoweth us not, and we hope we have the marks of the Ecclesia, or the called out, and our little flock represents those called together to worship toward his holy temple, singing aloud of his power and speaking of his righteousness, and his only, worshiping God in spirit, rejoicing in Christ Jesus and having no confidence in the flesh, for the Father seeketh such to worship him. Oh that I could feel worthy to be numbered with the Lord's chosen people! They are a peculiar people, a chosen nation, a royal priesthood, called out of darkness into his marvelous light, and that, too, with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace given to us in Christ Jesus before the world began. 'Tis enough! enough! But what am I to make such claims? If my claim is vain, and my hope vain, and my preaching vain, I am surely a false witness, and am undone forever, and will be taken by the cord of my own sins. But the unspeakable comfort is the assurance that he hath called us with an holy calling, not according to our works; no, not even for works of righteousness which we have done, but for his Son's sake, he who in pity redeemed us, sent his Spirit to quicken us, and to lead about and instruct us, and enable us to say, I know in whom I have trusted, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day; and I say that with fear and trembling, though, I hope, in a small measure of assurance, and I hope it is the same kind of assurance the apostle had in a great measure.

I am writing this simply to grant brother Berry's request, and not for publication, but since that has been the arrangement, I think his request not out of place, and think you will not overlook his request. Should the brethren see fit to retain me as the clerk of "Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church" I expect to send you shortly an account of brother Slusher's arrangements, perhaps with some data to publish, if you deem it worth anything to the cause. While I seem altogether unprifitable, when weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, and not worthy of the least of his benefits, when I look for commendable principles in myself I find none, yet in hope of life through Christ, and in the best of bonds, the bonds of love, I am, I trust, your brother,

T. D. WALKER.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Brother J. B. Bowden having changed his address from San Antonio, Texas, to Ingram, Texas, requests his correspondents to send his mail to the latter place.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1933.

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THE HAND OF THE LORD.

THE record given us by Moses declares that "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." Coming over to the New Testament, we find John saying, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. * * * All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." Paul testifies, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist."-Col. i. 16, 17. These declarations are all-inclusive and we believe every word of them. Among the creatures and things which God made was man, and we are told that God saw all that he had made, and, "Behold, it was very good." Job says, With his hand formed he the crooked serpent, so the serpent, along with everything else, must have been good for the purpose for which it was made. God was not, then, in any sense of the word disappointed in his crowning creature-work when Adam transgressed his law and became a self-condemned sinner.

"From hence it appears he made nothing in vain,
For Adam thus formed was a link in the chain;
In him 'twas decreed that his members should die,
And all for the lifting of Jesus on high."

Not many, if any, of our readers will deny the hand of God in all of creation. And history is conclusive in showing the rise and fall of nations, the making and unmaking of kings and rulers, whether great or small, and the destinies of all peoples that have ever dwelt upon the face of the earth have been in his omnipotent hand. Our object at this time, however, is to consider more particularly God's dealings with his chosen people and to show how he has and does continue to lead them. When God made promise to Abraham concerning Isaac, embraced in it was that his seed should dwell in a strange land for four hundred years and be in bondage and servitude, but it also carried with it the assurance that he would bring them up out of Egypt with great treasure. Isaac's offspring proved to be twins, or strugglers; Esau, the first, being red and hairy, of the earth, whom God hated, but Jacob, the younger, was the Lord's portion, whom God loved, and that before either of the

children had been born, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth. Jacob tells us that the Lord found him in a waste-howling wilderness and led him about and instructed him. Tracing his offspring we soon run into some of the mysterious deeps of God's providences. Among his twelve sons was to be found a dreamer, and when Joseph had told his dreams he was hated by his brethren. They conspired against him and he was sold, first to the Ishmaelites, then to Potiphar in Egypt, where he was falsely accused and cast into prison. God did not forsake him, however, but with his own hand did keep and lead and prosper him until finally he was placed in charge by Pharaoh "over all the land of Egypt." He who had begun the work was carrying it on and in due time a great and terrible famine was spread out over the face of the whole earth, and when necessity was laid upon Jacob he sent his ten sons to Egypt for corn. Little did Joseph's brethren know of God's way at first, but step by step they were shown the iniquity of their own hearts, until finally they stood dumb with silence before him whom they had so greatly wronged. It was then that Joseph spoke unto them, saying, "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you, to preserve life." How wonderful and sacred is the Savior's love when it is made known TO and experienced IN the sinner's heart. Joseph's brethren meant it for evil, but God ordained it for good. It is a blessed thing when our own evil purposes are overthrown by the hand of God. This, however, does not release us from guilt, but rather demonstrates the greatness of God's matchless love. And be it far from us to say, The hand of the Lord leads one into sin. James said, Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. David rightly assumed the responsibility of having made his bed in hell. He acknowledged his transgression, declared that his sin was ever before him. On another occasion, he was heard to say, "I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the Lord, for his mercies are great, and let me not fall into the hand of man." Only those whose lives have hung in the balance, and who have been deserving of death, can fully appreciate what it means to fall into the hands of the Lord; they know that his mercies are great, that God is merciful, or full of mercy, and their desire is to sing of that mercy as long as they have breath. They are made to realize that where sin did abound, grace did much more abound, and the hand of the Lord is seen in providing a way for their escape.

The hand of the Lord! What do we in reality know about it? Doubtless there are groups of the Lord's people, known as churches, who have prayed

for and verily believed that they were given to see the hand of the Lord in raising up or sending to them gifts and pastors, or truly called and qualified servants of God to preach to them the unsearchable riches of Christ; his hand has been seen in adding to their number such as he would own and have to be saved. Sometimes it has been a gradual work, at others it has been a sudden cutting down of the rebellious, as with the apostle Paul, but always it has been the Lord who gave the true increase. The hand of the Lord has likewise been seen in the midst of great difficulties and trials, when his people have been compelled to wait upon him and he has delivered them out of their distresses. Pastors and ministers have very peculiar experiences, sometimes believing that the Lord has opened their field of labor to them, while at other times his hand has closed the door so that they could not enter therein. They know of a truth that the Lord opens and none can shut, and shuts and none can open. How good it is when their lot is cast in pleasant places and among brethren who dwell together in unity and peace. In all walks of life, those who have been led through deep waters have been made to earnestly desire to see the hand of the Lord directing their steps and guiding them in the way they should take. Many have had their prayers answered and experienced that every good gift, as well as every perfect gift, cometh down from above, from the Father of lights, with whom is neither variableness, nor a shadow of turning. Temporal blessings, such as the gift of a good companion, a child or children, loved ones and friends, as well as the necessities and comforts of this life, have all come from his bountiful hand. Too often we forget it. Many are made to desire wisdom from above that they may choose that which is right and acceptable unto God. When all goes well and we prosper in our undertakings, we may feel that the Lord is with us. His hand can withhold as well as give, but we are not so ready to recognize it in crossing our purposes and laying low all our fancied schemes. When trouble comes, when adversity and poverty stalk arm in arm through the door, and sorrow and sickness, and possibly the grim and cold hand of death enters our homes and takes from our very bosoms those whom we hold most dear on earth, it is not so easy to say, It is the hand of the Lord. Yet, do we not have to exclaim with Naomi, The Lord hath dealt bitterly with us? To-day, distress is rampant throughout practically the entire civilized world, and great suffering and possibly starvation has been experienced in many countries and thousands of homes. There are those who deny the controlling providence of an infinite God. We have no word for them, but to *the living* we would say, Stay upon your God; though the storm in its fury rage and though the very foundation of your hope seems to shake, Be still, for the Captain of your salvation is not only aboard the vessel, but his hand is at the

helm, and only his wisdom and skill can be depended upon to bring you through safely. "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience [endurance] the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." We are aware, as we look about Zion, that there is much to disturb our minds; there is much to mystify and bewilder us, neither can we understand the whys and wherefores of a great deal that is going on about us, but let us not lose faith in the Almighty.

"Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will."

It seems easy to recognize his hand in times of deliverance, when he showers his blessings upon us, but let us not forget that trials are often in mercy sent. Job saw no hand but that of God in all of his afflictions. With him, it was God who gave, and it was that same God who took away, and he could still say, Blessed be the name of the Lord. He verily believed that all things were working to one end and purpose, and that finally he would come forth as gold tried in the fire and purged of its dross. His faith was adequately rewarded in the end, for he answered the Lord, and said, "I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee." Listen to him once more: "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." The widow of Sarepta saw the hand of the Lord each time she went to the barrel and discovered that the meal had not wasted, neither had the oil in the cruse failed. Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego saw the hand of the Lord in the fiery furnace, for instead of being destroyed, they were set at liberty and came forth without even the smell of fire upon their garments. Daniel was a witness to the same thing in the den of lions. Jonah saw the hand of the Lord as he lay at the very foot of the mountains in the depth of the sea, and was made to say, "Salvation is of the Lord." In the days of our Lord upon the earth it was often seen by his disciples: the wind and the sea were made to obey his voice, the grave gave up its dead, the blind saw, the deaf heard, the lame walked and the poor had the gospel preached to them. The woman at the well confessed it, the leper realized its cleansing power; Mary, out of whom seven devils were cast, experienced it; Peter and James and John were all witnesses, and what shall we say more? for time and space forbid to tell of the others.

However much may be in the record and regardless of the innumerable witnesses that might be placed upon the stand, we must have more than these if our own souls are to put in their claim. If we are to build upon the firm and solid foundation as individuals, we must be able to find some

good reason for the hope that is within us. If we have been made to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, we have known what it was to mount up with wings as eagles, to run and not weary, to walk and not faint. Such experiences have convinced us that there is no god like our God, and we have been persuaded that there is absolutely nothing too hard for him. Every day brings forth new struggles, however, and we have to prove again and again that his grace is sufficient for us. We hope to continue fighting the good fight of faith, ever looking unto Jesus to guide us through the wilderness of sin and unbelief. Sometimes the following petition becomes our very own:

"Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty,
Hold me by thy powerful hand:
Bread of heaven,
Feed me till I want no more.

Open thou the crystal fountain,
Whence the healing streams do flow,
Let the fiery, cloudy pillar,
Lead me all my journey through:
Strong Deliverer,
Be thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside;
Death of death, and hell's destruction,
Land me safe on Canaan's side:
Song of praises
I will ever give to thee."

In conclusion, we verily believe the hand of the Lord has been seen preserving the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as a medium of correspondence for the benefit of the saints, and the arm of him who has sustained it thus far is not shortened that it cannot save. Let us, therefore, not only look back upon mercies which are past, but look confidently to the future with hope, in the full assurance of faith, believing that he who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, will do all things well, and when he takes us from this sin-cursed world, forever to be with him, we shall ever say, It was THE HAND OF THE LORD.

R. L. D.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

IT is our sorrowful privilege to note in the columns of the SIGNS the passing away from the sphere of life's usefulness and many activities Sister **IDA A. PATTERSON**, wife of Frank W. Patterson, at their home in Greene County, near the village of Lexington, N. Y., December 18th, 1932. Death was caused by a cancerous growth, for the removal of which an unsuccessful operation had been performed about a year before at the Albany City Hospital. For several weeks before her death she was a terrible sufferer, yet bore her grievous affliction with patient resignation, with hope in God's eternal mercy undimmed, and faith unshaken, longing for the final summons to come, and saying in spirit, "Thy will, O God, be done," desiring to wait the appointed time of the Father, though welcoming the time of her departure. Her daughters ministered to her in her illness with the true spirit of fond devotion, and her daughter-in-law, Mrs. May Courts, of Boston, Mass., gave of her time and labor also for several weeks to render appreciated aid in caring for the afflicted, with all a daughter's true devotion. Nothing was spared that human means could furnish by her husband, who survives her, to aid the sufferer. Sister Patterson was seventy-two years of age, having been born in 1860, at Hardenburg, N. Y. At the age of fifteen she went to Greene County to live, and in 1889 married Frank W. Patterson, of Lexington, where they began their married life, and where they resided at the time of the death of the deceased. Four children were born of this union: James W. and George E., who are deceased; two girls, Mrs. Anna M. Cross, of Lexington, and Mrs. Inez Vermilyea, of Hobart, N. Y., who survive, also two daughters-in-law, Mrs. Helen Patterson, of Yonkers, N. Y., and Mrs. May Courts, of Boston, Mass. The funeral services were conducted at the home of the deceased December 22nd, the writer officiating. The interment was in the Lexington Cemetery.

Sister Patterson's maiden name was Ida A. Kelley, and her people were of Old School Baptist faith, and often drove many miles to attend meet-

ing at what would now be considered a great sacrifice of time and convenience, considering the facilities for traveling in sister Patterson's girlhood days. She was baptized into the fellowship of the brethren of the Lexington Church by Elder George Ruston on August 23rd, 1925. She was devoted to her church and loved the assembly of the saints. Her sweetest theme was salvation by grace, and she gave many evidences of being one of those who are taught of God, and by precept and example her life witnessed to the profession of the christian's hope. As a wife, mother, neighbor and friend her life is a shrine of precious memories, and she will be sadly missed by her aged husband and by the brethren of the church of her faith and order. Uncomplaining in affliction, she evidenced a spirit of meekness and humility that attested the walk of a true believer and witnessed to the presence of her Lord.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

EMMA KATHERINE BIRD, infant daughter of B. B. and Georgia (Sloan) Bird, was born October 1st, 1931, in Putnam County, West Virginia, was taken ill with that dread disease dyphtheria and after the intense suffering common to that disease, and with all that medical skill could do, her condition grew worse, until on the evening of October 8th, 1932, her spirit took its flight. Her sweet little form was made still and cold in death. Oh the dark and sad hour for father and mother as their precious babe was wrenched from their embrace by the icy hand of death. Sad indeed when we who witnessed these things knew that at the time of the passing of this precious babe, the joy and light of the home, that the dear mother was already suffering on her deathbed, and that the throbbing, aching heart of the dear mother was in only a few more days of pain and suffering to be stilled also in death. The mother, we feel, was forewarned, not only of the death of the babe, but also of her own death, in two dreams she had. In one dream two white horses were presented to her view, one of which fell in their well, and the other horse was about to fall in. In the other dream she viewed herself in a very pleasant place beside beautiful clear water, in exceedingly bright sunshine, on lovely green grass, feeding beautiful chickens. "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform," etc., and we realize that death is a conquered enemy, that the blessed King of saints sojourned even there, and that truly he triumphed over all his foes, led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men. Blessed be his holy name. All that was mortal of little Emma was laid away by loving hands in the family burying-ground to await the resurrection of the dead.

ALSO,

GEORGIA LILLIAN (SLOAN) BIRD, our dear sister in Christ, departed this life October 20th, 1932, at her home, in Putnam County, West Virginia. She was born December 15th, 1902, in Lincoln County, West Virginia, and was the daughter of D. O. and Mary D. Sloan. February 14th, 1919, she was united in marriage to B. B. Bird, and to this union were born seven children, of whom three survive, four preceded her in death. Sister Georgia, while on a bed of sore and deep sickness, when loved ones and her physician all felt that death was near, was given a sweet hope in Jesus, and united with the Providence Church (Old School order), Lincoln County, West Virginia, February 27th, 1924, at a meeting which was held at her home, at her request, and while still on her bed, and touching indeed was that little meeting in her sick room. Elder W. I. Wade was blessed to preach Christ crucified, an all-sufficient Savior of poor sinners, and she was given strength by her Lord and King to make known to the church how she had been led, and her desire for a home in the church. Her recovery from that time on was speedy, and soon she was led down into the liquid grave, baptized into His death and raised to walk in newness of life. She was a faithful and consistent member and was satisfied with the goodness of the Lord's house. Her joy was in meeting with the Lord's humble poor in worship in the courts of the house of the Lord. She was humble, quiet, still-tongued, and her walk was truly that of humbleness and meekness. She loved the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and while she seldom gave voice to her feelings, yet she had a deep conception of the truth. Her home was truly a home to the children of God and she would spend any effort to make her brethren comfortable therein. She was a devoted and faithful wife, a sweet singer, and many and pleasant were the hours spent by her and her husband around the family circle, where their voices would be joined together in singing the sweet songs of Zion.

She leaves to mourn their loss besides her heart-broken husband and children, four step-children, father, mother, three brothers, two sisters and a host of near relatives and friends. She will be sadly missed in the church and in the neighborhood, but most deeply in my brother's home. The aching void in his heart, the anguish of soul he is undergoing no word of mine could stay, yet there is One that sticketh closer than a brother, who is a very present help in time of trouble, who in great mercy can heal all our diseases and reconcile us to every loss. He, and he only, can comfort, yet, dear brother, in your bitter grief you grieve not as those who have no hope.

Sister Georgia was stricken with a complication of diseases, dyphtheria and tonsilitis combined, and all that loving hands, the physician and all could do were helpless to stay the hand of death. He had called, she must go. In her last hours, as she neared her journey's end, many times the unworthy writer was called to her bedside at her request, and as the painted toys of this life faded and lost their charms her faith shone brighter and brighter, and her chief desire was to hear the

lasting riches of Christ spoken of. She was indeed made strong in death, conscious to the very last. Many times in her last hours did she repeat the words, How long, dear Lord, how long? and at least one time did she add to the above words, Until the end comes. She was made willing to go, and longed for the end. She said once, "If my soul were sent to hell, thy righteous law approves it well." Then at last she said, I am going, I am going home. Truly Jesus can make a dying bed soft as downy pillows are.

Elders Dell Smith and J. C. Hammond spoke words of comfort to the sorrowing ones, after which her remains were laid to rest in the family burying-ground to await the call of her Lord. May God comfort all who mourn.

Written by request.

HARVEY J. BIRD.

RHODA JANE CRAIG GREEK was born near Versailles, Ohio, April 8th, 1842, and died at the home of her son, Frank Greek, near Celina, Ohio, December 9th, 1932, making her stay on earth 90 years, 8 months and 1 day. She was the daughter of Elder Seymour Craig, who died in 1856. She was the last of sixteen children born to Elder Craig by two marriages. When she was ten years old she came with her parents to Mercer County, where they settled on a farm near Celina, and in and around said village spent all the rest of her days. April 16th, 1868, our sister was united in marriage to Martin Greek, a soldier of the Civil War, and was the mother of four children, three daughters and one son, viz., Mrs. Ida Suts, of Celina, Mrs. Fanny Touvelle, of Youngstown, Ohio, Hazel, who died in infancy, and Frank Greek, near Celina, Ohio, eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, besides many other relatives and friends. Her husband preceded her in death November 22nd,, five years ago, at the age of 89 years. Sister Greek was received into membership of the old Chickasaw Church in 1881, and was baptized by Elder W. O. Wilkin, then pastor of the church. Only one member of the old church survives. Since the death of Elder Henry Hole, in 1900, the church has held no meetings, he being the last male member, at whose home the meetings were held. During the last years of her meetings there met with her many prominent ministers, including Elders Carmel, Bartley, Peters and others. Sister Greek lived an exemplary life; a lover of home and home ties, yet was interested in civic affairs, and was loved by all who knew her. Death came as a repose from the effects of the infirmities of age. She died in the faith in which she walked for more than fifty years. A few days before her demise she called her family to her bedside and told them not to weep for her for she was willing to go and be at rest. She could say with Paul, For me to live is Christ: to die is gain.

Funeral services were conducted at the home of her son by Mr. H. J. Jewett, of the Methodist denomination, an old friend of the family, as no minister of her faith was within reach. Mr. Jewett in his discourse paid a noble tribute to old age, and read from the Bible many passages which she had marked as especially dear to her. After the services her body was borne to its last resting-place, in North Grove Cemetery, by her six grandsons, to be awakened by the trumpet call of the resurrection.

Written by request.

M. V. PURDY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $8; Mrs. M. N. Webb, Idaho, $1; Mrs. Lucy J. Wilson, N. Y., $5; "A friend" Va., (Christmas greetings) $3; Elder V. R. Harris, Ark., $1; W. E. Bryan, Ky., $1; Elder Arnold H. Bellows, N. Y., $1; F. H. Richardson, Iowa, $3; A. D. Hughett, Wash., $1; Sadie Price, Tenn., $1; H. F. Cate, Kan., $1; Carl P. Bennett, Md., $2; Mrs. James E. Livingston, N. Y., $1; T. L. Disharoon, Pa., $1; Mrs. Duncan McCallum, Ontario, $2; Mrs. Lena E. Wilson, Md., $1; Paul T. Leigh, N. J., $1; C. Stevens, Ark., $1; Nellie M. Palmer, Maine, $3.

POETRY.

VANCOUVER, B. C., Canada.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a poem written by dear old sister Gillies, of London, Ontario.

Cordially yours, C. V. M. CUMMINGS.

Be thou my guide in danger's thrall,
And be my help when thee I call;
Prepare my heart to sing thy praise,
And be my strength when songs I raise,
Blest Lord, my life, my all

Dear Friend, be with me when I fear
Dark shadows' pall, forebodings drear;
Hold thou my hand, support my head,
And when in sickness make my bed,
Dear Lord, my life, be near.

Give me not to the tempter's sway,
Though nights be long, bring bright the day;
Remove the morning's hazy gloom,
Speak as to Mary at the tomb,
Blest Friend, my all, my stay.

Blest message on the morning air,
Our Lord is risen, the stone's no snare;
Fit raiment made for His dear bride,
'Tis finished; he was crucified,
Dear Friend, with love so rare.

JESSIE M. GILLIS.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 808 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one-half block west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at the home of sister E. Brunow, 411 N. Ridgeway Avenue, and on the second, third and fourth Sundays at the home of brother W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. The fifth Sundays are by appointment. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastors, Elders Jones and Janes.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of sister N. J. Preston, 116 Center Street, Oregon City, Oregon, at 10:30 a. m. Those coming by stage, steam train or electric car get off at Seventh Street, take elevator to top of the hill, cross trestle over railway tracks, turn to the right, go two blocks on Sixth Street to Center Street, thence five and one-half blocks south on Center Street to 116, house number, between First and Second Streets. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Moderator.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor

Little Flock Church now meets for worship at our home, 2211 Fifth Street, Riverside, California, the third Sunday of each month, at 10:30 a. m.

J. W. HAYNES.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

DROPSY REMEDY.

Purely vegetable, removes from one to two gallons of water a day. Shortness of breath quickly relieved. Cures the worst cases of Dropsy in all its forms, and after being given up by the best doctors to die. Specially efficacious in Dropsy of the Heart. Best and cheapest know remedy, only $1.00 a package, six packages $5.00 by mail postpaid, and free to very poor people who are really unable to pay.

ELDER C. W. ANDERSON,
ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

"FEAST OF FAT THING S

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminiar Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

Cloth binding 75c each. Paper covers, single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and all to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
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HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Cloth binding. Price, $1.25 each. One dozen or more, ordered at the same time and all to the same address, one dollar each. Cash must accompany orders. Make checks and money orders payable to

J. E. BEEBE & CO.
MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 101. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1933. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SALVATION IS BY GRACE.

(EPHESIANS II. 5-8.)

BEFORE God made man he prepared a way to save him. When man sinned, God knew before that he was going to sin, so he had prepared to save him. Christ was as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Isaac represented Christ. Before Abraham went upon the mountain to offer his son for a sacrifice, or to slay him as such, God had prepared a sacrifice in the bushes of the mountain, of which Abraham did not know, to take Isaac's place. With God there is no past or future. He knew the end from the beginning. He knew all that had happened and all that would happen. From the fact that he knew all of this, it had to happen just as it did. Nothing happens by accident. It may be accidental to man, but to God it is not. Christ told Judas that he was going to betray him. He told Peter that he was going to deny him thrice. What if Judas had been such a free agent that he had changed his mind and failed to betray Christ as he said he would? What condition would the world be in to-day? What if Peter had not denied Christ as he said he would, what would that have made Christ? What if he only denied him once, that would have been bad enough; and what if he had been such a free moral agent that he decided not to deny him at all? This would have been awful for Christ. These free moral agents do not know what an awful fix the world would have been in if man had as much power of choice as they say he has. It is not in man to order his steps. His bounds are set and he cannot pass them. He cometh forth as a flower and as the grass he is cut down. The young die as well as the old. His days are numbered. He cannot make one hair white or black. Man is the clay. God is the great potter. He maketh one vessel to honor and one to dishonor. Man is frail, God is all-powerful. God can do with man whatsoever he desires. God

is either stronger than man or weaker than man. The way the free moral agents have man is that God can only do with man what man lets him do with him. This looks as though man is just as strong as God, and stronger.

What is grace? Most all believers, learned and unlearned, say it is the unmerited favor of God bestowed on some one or an object. If it is bestowed on man it is unmerited. If we say it is unmerited, why do we say man has to do something to get God to bestow it upon him? They say if you do not believe, God will not save you. How inconsistent this is with the true teaching of the Bible, which says that by grace are ye saved, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. While we were yet sinners, or even dead in sins, God quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved). Christ's shed blood saved all that are saved and all that ever will be. Visibly this was done nineteen hundred or more years ago, but in the mind of God it was done before the world was made. They say you have to believe to be saved. Christ died before any of the people who are here now could believe. They could not believe in him because they were not here. Furthermore, if the baby had been here he could not believe, because he would not have known enough to do so. Christ did not come to save the righteous people, but sinners. For who would die for a righteous person? It was said, In sin did my mother conceive me, and I was shapen in iniquity. They go forth as soon as they are born speaking lies. When we have done our best as servants of God, our righteousness is as filthy rags. Because we are sons, he has sent forth his Spirit in us crying, "Abba, Father." Because we are sons of his choice he has given us his Spirit. Not because we were so good, but because we were his sons. God is all-wise and independent and happy. He was this before he made man, and if he change not, he is still the same, and ever will be while the years of eternity roll. It is said that in order that the purpose of election might stand, the children had neither done good nor evil, Esau have I hated, Jacob have I loved. Whom he will he hardeneth and on whom he will he will have mercy. Man cannot make God do anything and he cannot keep him from doing anything that he wills to do. God made choice of Abel over Cain, because this was his way and according to his plan. By faith Abel was made to offer a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. How did he get this faith? Faith is the fruit of the Spirit. It is one of God's gifts. The Spirit itself is a gift. Man cannot pay for the Spirit by repentance. The gifts and the calling of God are without repentance. Man cannot repent with godly sorrow without the Spirit. Anything man may do that will be accepted by God as righteousness must be worked in him by the Spirit of Christ.

Before the ascent of Christ to heaven and under the law, God had some mysterious way of making his will known to man. His Spirit will guide us into the ways of all truth that he would have us to know. He knows what we want and what we need before we ask him. Man cannot say that Jesus is the Christ but by the Spirit. Man does not know what to ask for only by the Spirit, or as the Spirit gives him utterance. God made choice of Noah because he wanted to. Not because he was so good, but because he was on the program of his choice. There must have been many more people there in that country besides Noah and his family, but these eight are the only ones that went into the ark. God chose Abraham from among his own people and said he would show him a land that he did not know and he would give it to him, not because he was such a good fellow, but because this was God's way and in his plan of redemption. God made choice of Joseph and let his brothers sell him down into Egypt, that life might be preserved. This looks very bad for Mr. Moral Agent. But Joseph told them they meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. These boys had to do just what they did not seem to have any desire to do. God's people and the devil's people are always willing to do just what they are to do to serve their masters—God or the devil. God's ways are not our ways, neither are his thoughts our thoughts. His thoughts are as high above our thoughts as the heavens are above the earth, and his ways above our ways as the east is from the west. His ways are past finding out, but his secrets are with them that love him and keep his commandments. It was said that Abraham was God's friend. He said, How can I hide this from Abraham? God reveals many things to his faithful servants that he never lets others know. God has two kinds of calls: a general and a special. All men are in the general call. Only a few answer the special call. Many are called, but few are chosen. The gospel is to be preached to all, but only those are going to hear it and answer its call whom the Spirit pricks in the heart and causes to repent. They cannot repent in the spiritual sense of the word until the Spirit quickens them into life. God quickens whom he will and whom he will he hardeneth. God is not like man. Some rich men build large houses with rooms that likely no one ever uses, but God has better judgment than that. He made heaven and hell. He has a use for both. When the last saint gets into heaven, wherever it is, then heaven will have its portion of man's generation of the redeemed whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world, and who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. The same will be true with the devil and his followers who have done evil. When the last one is in this lake of fire, then will the door of hell be closed for evermore, and Christ, who has the keys of death and hell, will need no more to let any into hell or death. The free moral agents say you can go to heaven if you want to, or you can go

to hell. How foolish this sounds to one who has read the Scriptures carefully and prayerfully. If you were working in a bank and no one carried the keys to the vault but the president of the bank, would it be wise to say to the employees that they could get into that vault any time they wanted to, knowing at the same time that the president was the only one who had a key or who could work the combination? The doors of heaven and hell are not to be compared with even the best of vaults in strength and durability, not even a United States Government vault. Christ said he had the keys of death and hell. He further said that he was the door to heaven. In the last case, he not only has the key, but he is the door and the key. In other words, he is the whole thing. Now let us use a little common sense. If what I have said above is true, you cannot get into hell unless Christ lets you in, and you cannot get into death unless he permits you to do so. Ye shall seek death and it will flee from you. Many have wanted to die at times and could not, or did not. Many children are coming into the world without their consent, and many are going out in the same way. Life is no chance work. Life is real and sure. God did not ask Adam to let him make him. Adam had nothing to do with God making him, neither did he have any choice as to staying in the garden when God was ready to drive him out. God does not take a man by the hair of his head and pull him into heaven, nor take a club and drive him into heaven, but when he determines that a sinner is to come into the fold the things that he does are just as strong and forcible as the two things just mentioned, and more so. When a big engine is standing on the track with steam up to the moving or running point, it may have a long string of cars attached to it and when the steam is turned on the driving wheels may turn around several times in one place, the engineer puts a little sand on the track, and although it looks as though it did not want to go, soon it is thundering down the track at high speed. The prodigal son may not have wanted to come home, but when hunger began to pinch him very soon he was found on his homeward march, and he did not stop until he was in his father's arms. The king may not have wanted to serve Daniel's God, but when the Son of God turned the light on him he came down off his royal throne. Abraham might not have wanted to leave his folks, but when God called him he was soon found stepping out upon the plains. Lazarus had been dead four days, and even stinketh, but when Christ called him he came out with his graveclothes on. The people who were in their graves when Christ was hanging on the cross may have been resting easy in their graves, and may have wanted to remain there, but when the Son of God was raised from the dead they came walking forth into the city. God does not have to take a man by the hair or drive him with a club, but only to call him, create a condition or turn on the search-light. Anything that God does to bring a sinner to him is just as forcible as this

club and hair of the head proposition. His arm is not short. He spoke the worlds into existence. He said, Let there be light, and there was light. He has counted the sands of the sea-shore and has weighed the earth in his scales. He can dip the sea dry with a spoon. Before the hills in order stood, or earth received her frame, from everlasting to everlasting thou art God. From eternal years the same. What is man that thou art mindful of him? Man is never willing to come into the fold of God until the Spirit makes him willing. For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. God may save a man without his will, but he does not reveal himself to man against his will, for he says, My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power. My sheep hear my voice and a stranger they will not follow. My word is gone forth out of my mouth and it will not return unto me void, but will accomplish the thing whereunto I have sent it. When Paul was holding the clothes of the men that stoned Stephen to death he was just as much saved, as far as his eternal salvation was concerned, as he was when he stood before King Agrippa. The difference was he had not been converted and the knowledge that Christ had died for him had not been made known to him. He said that God had chosen him from his mother's womb to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. As it was with Paul's conversion, so it is with every sinner that is or ever will be converted. He was saved by Christ's shed blood. All men were benefited by Christ's death, but the Bible says he shed his blood for many. It may have been just as easy for the apostle to have said "all" as it was to say "many," but being guided by the Spirit, he said just what the Spirit wanted him to say. He did not talk as Mr. Free Moral Agent. He said what he meant and meant what he said. He shed his blood for many because many have been saved by his shed blood. All for whom his blood was shed will be saved, for while he was yet dead in sins he quickened us together with Christ, (for by grace are ye saved). Many will go to heaven if only here and there a traveler. Thousands are finding their way to hell and may go in thereat. Heaven is made for all who have gone there and for all who will ever go there. On the other hand, hell is made for all who have gone there and for all who ever will go there. All who were in the house of the Israelites the night the angel passed over were benefited by the blood on the door post, and the death of the lamb, but all of them did not enter the promised land. Christ told Nicodemus he must be born again. He did not understand what Christ meant. Many leaders and lay members of the church do not know any more about the new birth now than they did in the time of Nicodemus. All who are born of the Spirit, or ever will be, are saved. What had John the Baptist's mother done that was so good to cause God to honor her with the birth of John? What had Christ's mother done that was so good to cause God to honor her with the birth of our Savior? This is God's way, and it is

according to his plan. These two women were not even asked to be willing to such an arrangement. They were told what was going to happen and both of them seemed to be willing to the plan. My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power. Every sinner that is truly born of God is born somewhat similar to Christ. The Spirit overshadows him and quickens him into spiritual life and he comes forth a new creature. We had nothing to do with our natural birth, and it is more reasonable to believe we will have less to do with our spiritual birth. We know so little about our natural birth that we did not even know when or how we were born. We could not even choose the family we were born in. When we found ourselves ten or fifteen years after our birth, we had to even be told the name of the family we were born in. How little man knows, even about himself. How can he know the mind of God? Even God's humblest servants are not permited to know the mind of God. Whom he will he quickens, and whom he will he hardens. He told Moses to go and tell Pharaoh to let his people go, but he said he was going to harden Pharaoh's heart so he would let his people go. He said he would send strong delusions on some that they might believe a lie: that they might be damned who believed not the truth. Man is God's creature. He made him and can do with him whatsoever he desires to. He can take him to heaven or send him to hell. God has just as much power over Satan as he has over man. Christ has chained Satan for a thousand years, and it is reasonable to believe that he could have chained him for a thousand years longer had he so desired. Man never was, and never will be while on earth, his own free moral agent. The devil himself is not his own free agent to do just as he pleases respecting right or wrong. No agent is free to do as he pleases with the company's business. The word "agent" itself suggests a person ruled by a higher power than himself. It is supposed that an agent will do whatever his employer or master tells him to do. Jonah did not seem to be his own free agent; the Lord told him to go to Ninevah. He did not go at once, but he went. Paul was on his way to Damascus to arrest God's people, but when the Lord struck him down, and turned him around, he was glad to do what the Lord wanted him to do. God does not have to reveal himself to his people against their will, for they are all willing in the day of his power. They may seem to draw back as did our Savior, but he said, Not my will but thine be done. Every true child of God has this same will in him. If man cannot be saved unless he believes, he is in a bad fix, for Christ has died once for all He has made one offering, and all who were not included in that offering are forever lost. Many were in that sacrifice who have not known it, yet. They will all come in, in the dispensation of time, each one in his own time as God sees fit to reveal himself to them. The free moral agent says that if Christ has saved the sinner there is no use preaching to him. Christ

did not tell Peter to make any sheep, but he said, Feed my sheep. A shepherd is not to make sheep, but to feed them. The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few. He did not tell the preacher, or any one else, to scare the laborers into the field, but, Pray ye to the Lord of the harvest that he may send forth laborers in the field. We get in a hurry for people to come into the church, and they come in without being sent in by the Lord of the harvest, and they do not stay. The preacher is to preach to all, but the Spirit is to do the bringing into the church. We have many in the churches that man has brought in, and they are two-fold worse than the child of hell himself. They are in man's church, not God's church. To get into God's church one has to be born in it, and this birth must be brought about by the Holy Ghost. Not of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of the will of God. These births cannot be hurried. The preacher has much to do if he preach the gospel as it should be preached. He should feed God's lambs and his sheep. If he does this as it should be done he will not have time to make any sheep.

Christ is a great magnet. He said if he be lifted up he would draw all men unto him. This certainly did not mean he would take or draw all men into heaven, or that all would be saved. If a man come to Christ at all he must be drawn. So all who come to Christ at all are drawn to him by himself, through the Holy Spirit. God has elected all who have been saved and all who will be. He is an everlasting Father, so he must always have some children, and these children are everlasting children. Their lives were hid with Christ in God before the world was made. Those he foreknew he also called, and those he called he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. God has always had a people by choice. They have been stepping on the stage of action as we know since the days of Abel. Abel was God's first martyr.

A. E. CLARK.

PARSONS, Kansas.

PLEASANT HILL, MO., Jan. 26, 1932.

DEAR READERS:—Since my note in the SIGNS of January 1st, 1932, my correspondence has increased until it has gotten to be a task, and as I am in harmony with the editorial of said number, written by brother Lefferts, I would just like to write my mind and tell why I believe as I do, then the incident is closed so far as I am concerned.

Elder Gilbert Beebe in his prospectus gave the saints in his day certain statements in which he (as well as the brotherhood) set forth the Baptist belief as they understood the Bible teaches the doctrine of the church, and, so far as I know, the SIGNS has consistently contended for that truth for one hundred years. A departure from any of those declarations would be leaving the doctrine the Baptists declared for in the start, and we do not care to do that. The Old Baptists are good enough for me. As brother Lef-

ferts says, it is good to have our minds refreshed. I have never understood that anything but a sinner needed salvation, nor have I ever thought that any impurity could come from God, Christ, heaven or immortal glory. I always (since I thought) thought the created man was the lawbreaker and he became ruined by transgression, and if there was a sinner he (the created man) was it. While I believe you must look to the Rock from whence ye are hewn, you must also look to the hole of the pit from whence ye are digged. I can but believe what David says in the one hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm, fifteenth and sixteenth verses. Here David is talking of substance, and that they were written when as yet there was none of them. "Them," more than one. Job xiv. 10: "But man dieth * * * * and where is he?" Twelfth verse: "So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens [Jewish and gospel] be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep." A long time; but he that dies shall not be awakened, nor raised until the heavens pass. In the 15th verse Job says, "Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to work thine hands." God created man of the dust, and he (man) is the work of God's hands. Job will wait all the appointed time, but when God calls Job will answer, and so will every redeemed sinner, and these sinners are the ones lost by the effect of sin, they are redeemed; they are cleansed by the blood of Jesus. They needed salvation. No, not from that eternal life the Father gives, or did give them in Christ before the world was; that eternal life never has and never will sin, but in the Adamic life they never do anything but sin. But let us try to stay with the creature man. Do you think Job understood what he said in the nineteenth chapter, twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth verses? "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." This is the hope of those old prophets, and they say they know it. This, too, is my hope. This is a great mystery, but it is no greater than "God made Adam of the dust of the ground." Death is no greater mystery than life. I might ask, What is your hope? I think every one who hopes for heaven would reply, To see Jesus and be like him and to be with him. Psalms xvi. 10: "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell: neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." Of course this is speaking of Christ, but as he is the head it takes the body to complete him. Just preceding this, verse nine: "My flesh also shall rest in hope." Mine, too.

Now with these few witnesses we are going to leave prophecy, and go to where the work was really done. But please do not forget Enoch and Elisha. The prophets spoke of a certain One that should come, and when he cometh they should hear him, for he should speak as never man spoke. The waters and the wind obeyed him. He even had power over leprosy. Yea, when he

said, Lazarus, come forth, the dead obeyed him. And this One came to save sinners. He had all that was necessary to do the work, and with his last speech he said, It is finished. Then sinners are the ones, and the only ones, Christ came to save. God gave the law to Adam; not a spirit, but a man that he (God) had formed of the dust of the ground, a man that ate fruit, the only man in the world. That same man broke the law, violated, transgressed it, thereby becoming a sinner. He and his offspring are the only ones I ever heard of. I do not believe there are others. They incurred by disobedience trouble, disappointment, sickness and death; every ill the flesh is heir to. Sin is a transgression of law. Man transgressed the law God gave him, consequently he (Adam) is the sinner, and he and his children have been given this same heritage even down to now. This Adam and his children God saw when as yet there was none of them, and out of that number before time God chose, or elected, vessels unto mercy and sent his own Son in the fullness of time to redeem them from sin unto salvation. Their eternal life never did need a sacrifice for sin, because it is also their hope, Christ in them the hope of glory. I have found no man yet who needed salvation but the sinner, and no sinner but the Adamic man. There is nothing comes from above but that which is pure. Therefore, there is no need of an offering for anything we receive from above. Jesus came into the world at *the* time, lived, proved himself, that he was verily God and man. He tells what he came to do. He not only tells it, but proves it. He told Mary she should see the glory of God if she but believe, and when he resurrected Lazarus *this was* the glory of God. Then *how* say some there is no resurrection? The third and appointed morning he arose, and many bodies of the saints (not the saint, spirit or life) arose with him, and were the first ripe fruits of the harvest, and when presented to God as such by One that could and did fulfill the law they then insured the full harvest. There were those at that time who did not believe in the resurrection, to wit, Thomas, but he was effectually converted without the demonstration he demanded. Then the teachers that were called and qualified began to teach, and we will notice their teaching just a little. We begin to see some persecution manifest in Acts xvii. 18. Here it is said Paul preached Jesus and the resurrection. In Acts xxiii. 6, 7, Paul preached the resurrection of the dead. Not of Jesus only, but of the dead. There seems abundance to prove the resurrection of the dead, and of course nothing else could be resurrected, so I reckon we better see what we really do hope for. Thus we will now try to connect the resurrection with that which is to be resurrected. There were people who believed the resurrection was past. I think myself many *bodies* of the *saints* arose when Christ arose from the tomb. The apos-

tle Paul when he was old, expecting to pass on, looked on the whole creation of men groaning and in pain together, and not only them, but even the apostles, all waiting for something. So we are in that very condition. We, too, are waiting for something. What is it, brethren? It is the adoption: to wit, the redemption of our *mortal* bodies; not spirits, nor eternal life. The creature (created man) shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption. Adam, the created man that goes to the dead, is the one the grave must deliver. He is the very character that is sown a natural body and is raised spiritual; sown mortal and raised immortal. Then, and not until then, shall we be in full possession of the victory; and any one who does not hope to be resurrected in the likeness of Christ, must be without the Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead. For just as surely as the Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead shall *quicken your mortal body* by his Spirit that dwells in you. Oh, I do so hope that I am of that blessed number. No, I do not know what I shall be, but I have the blessed assurance that I shall see him as he is, and be satisfied.

Now I shall rest in this blessed assurance. May the God of all grace comfort his little tempest-tossed and tried ones with the blessed truth, that when we see him we shall see him as he is, and be satisfied.

Yours in hope of a better resurrection,

T. E. ATTEBERY.

DANVILLE, Virginia.

DEAR SON:—I am sending you some thoughts, and if you have time to look them over and think them worthy you may have them published in the SIGNS; if not, destroy them, and it will be all right with me. When the apostle Paul said he felt to be less than the least, he did not lack much of getting into my class. I much enjoyed your good letter, and want to have it published whenever you say to.

"Who touched my clothes?" These words are found in the fifth chapter of St. Mark, and are the language of Jesus. I wish to say that the entire chapter is a very interesting one to me, and I will note, or mention, some of the things that took place at that time. When they came into the country of the Gadarenes and he was cast out of the ship, immediately there met him (Jesus) out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains, for it had been tried, and he would break them, and no man could tame him. Now we have in this instance a picture of the worst case of insanity, almost, that is on record in all history. No ghost story written by the most expert novel writer will compare with it. Think of a man crying day and night and cutting himself with stones. Now you who have visited an insane asylum have some idea of such human beings and of their sad condition, many of them hopelessly afflicted, but here we see the power of almighty God made manifest in healing and saving such characters,

showing he has the power to heal all manner of diseases and also to forgive sin. Oh what a precious Savior poor sinners find in Jesus. Now when Jesus cast out this evil spirit he asked his name, and he said, My name is Legion, for we are many. Now to notice the miracle of the unclean spirits, how they entered the great herd of swine and crazed them so they ran violently down into the sea and were choked. This gives some idea of the positive destructiveness and hatefulness of sin that is abroad in our land and only bound and limited by the power of our God. But for fear of being extremely tedious to those who may read this, I will ask you to read the whole chapter, and if you love God I am sure you will be comforted by what it contains.

I will now turn to the words at the beginning of this article, with which I was so deeply impressed after reading the SIGNS and *Landmark*. The SIGNS just received, and I read Elders Keene's and Lefferts' articles. I was touched, not in the sense that virtue went out of me to them; no, indeed, but it seemed to awaken and comfort me so much that I was made to rejoice greatly in the goodness and mercy of God for the many able and precious gifts given to us by him, for so they are, here in touch with us, comforting us in both writing and preaching the gospel to poor sinners who feel hungry and poor. Now is not the gift of healing given to them in some degree, that they are at times enabled to feed and comfort our fainting souls when they write of the wonderful works of Jesus and can really preach Jesus to a dying people, and when we know there is none other able to save our souls from an eternal hell? Then it is that we want to honor and glorify his holy name. But what a treasure is found in the gift of these dear ones, that we are able to touch them, touch one another, then virtue comes to each of us in a sense. You know Jesus says that when you do kind things, even give a cup of cold water to one of his children, you shall be rewarded, and that whatsoever we do to them, or for them, he takes it to himself. He is still in touch with them. I feel there are some deep and beautiful thought in these words, and if I had the ability to bring them out I would gladly do so, but, as Peter said to the blind man begging, Such as I have give I thee. Then the power of God was made manifest and he was able to see, or healed. My dear readers, are not the Scriptures yet full of the glorious promises of our heavenly Father? but is it not needful that we come in touch with each other that virtue may flow out, that the love of God may flow from heart to heart? Let us remember that Jesus' command is that ye love one another, so let us touch one another, as Jesus was touched by a feeling of our infirmities. Amen.

R. L. DODSON.

[THE foregoing letter, written by brother R. L. Dodson, to his son, Elder R. Lester Dodson, we feel will be read with interest by the household of faith.—ED.]

CASTLEWOOD, Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have to-day, as in many days past, been reviewing and thinking of the long life of the SIGNS, from the day of its great founder, Elder Gilbert Beebe, and how it has been kept alive and sustained against all the defame and missiles that have been hurled at it to injure it, yet it has outlived all those assaults for these many years, and I often think of its editors and contributors, who have been blessed with fruitful and gifted pens to write words of comfort to the dear people of God, and have been made able by the rich reigning grace of God to stand for the doctrine and faith once delivered unto the saints, and, happy thought, we to-day are yet blessed with such a medium of correspondence with its messages of love and union among God's people. Should we not feel thankful to the great Head of the church for such a paper, that is thus drawing the dear people of God together in one in the pure faith and love of Christ and the apostles? My poor heart is made to rejoice when I see how loyal the good brethren, sisters and friends are in trying to keep the paper alive, by donating to its support and to help send it to those of the flock who are not able to pay for it. I cannot find words to fully express to you how thankful I am to you for being so mindful of poor unworthy me as to continue sending me the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for it is of much comfort to me. I read Elder Gilbert Beebe's book of Editorials when I was a boy, and after I got a home of my own I subscribed for the SIGNS. I am in my seventieth year and very feeble and my memory is not very good, but if I have ever missed an issue I do not remember it.

Now here is what I wish to say: I want the paper to continue to live that it may comfort many of God's little children, and if the funds were so short you saw it was necessary to stop sending it to me I could not blame you. I would rather deny myself this great comfort than see the paper go down, or have the editors and publishers suffer on my account. I truly hope the good old SIGNS may ever remain the care of the Beebe family and live yet many years, and that it may continue to come richly laden with gospel truth to the lovers of Zion scattered abroad over the whole earth. I know it will live just as long as God has any use for it, and no longer.

Your brother in gospel bonds,

W. L. EDWARDS.

CELINA, Ohio, Dec. 10, 1931.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I want to tell you how much I enjoy reading the writings of the different brethren all over the land. The SIGNS is all the preaching I get. I have not heard a sermon in fifteen years, but I hope I am thankful I have the SIGNS to read, and that I am able to see to read them at my age. If I live until April 8th I will be ninety years of age, and on a clear day I can read quite well. The SIGNS has been in our homes ever since the first issue. My father took it at that time, and after his death my

mother took it as long as she lived, but I did not know or care anything about that kind of reading then, but some time after I hope I was made to hunger for the truth as it is in Jesus. I was baptized in the year 1880 by our pastor, Elder Wilkins. We had a small church at that time, named Chickasaw Church. There were many ministers who came and preached for us, but they are all gone from this earth and I am left alone. I never even see a Baptist any more. My father and mother were Predestinarian Baptists, and my father was a minister of that order. I was in the dark for many years and my evil thoughts almost crushed me.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) RHODA GREEK.

WILMINGTON, Delaware.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing two dollars, the amount due you for my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Please credit me with same, and accept my appreciation for your promptness in sending out your good paper. I fully realize how hard it makes it for you when subscribers delay in sending in their renewals. How nice it would be if all the subscribers would put forth equal effort in being prompt to remit as the publishers and editors are in sending out the paper. May God stir up our pure minds by way of remembrance of our duty toward one another in the one great cause of his kingdom, bearing one another's burdens, and thus fulfilling the law of Christ.

Trusting it may be the will of our heavenly Father that the good old SIGNS have a more prosperous season in the near future, so that it may continue to minister unto the poor in spirit words of comfort and edification, to the honor and glory of God. May the Holy Spirit guide, uphold and support the editors and all who may have a mind to contribute to the SIGNS its reading matter, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

Yours in hope,

C. E. BENSON.

SOMERVILLE, Tennessee.

DEAR EDITORS:—My subscription is due, and I am sending it, with one dollar extra to be used as you need it. I wish I had one hundred dollars to send instead. I am shut up in darkness most of the time and without the SIGNS I would not get the few crumbs that sustain me, as the Bible is not opened to me very much. But I feel very thankful for the little, and when it is His time I shall get more. Living and working among those who do not believe in a God who made all things, evil as well as good, for his own glory and praise, is like living in a desert. If I did not sometimes get a few crumbs, glimpse a little greenness, and feel the gentle rain that revives and refreshes me, I would surely perish. I need God's grace every second I live and I pray he will keep me until the end of this life, then I shall see him and all the blood-washed throng, that is my little hope.

SADIE M. PRICE.

LEXINGTON, Ky., Jan. 5, 1933.

DEAR KINDRED:—I am inclosing six dollars for three subscriptions. I wish I could write something that would be of comfort to you all, but in my blind condition I am not able to do so. Much of my time is spent in going back over the years when I was able to meet with you, and I feel grateful for these pleasant memories. I am now in my ninetieth year and my health is very good, and in the warmer weather I am able to go to meeting, but the winter keeps me a shut-in. I want to extend my very best wishes to you all for a year of peace and prosperity, and may God's blessings rest upon each of the dear saints. I would love to hear from any of you at any time.

Yours in hope,

P. W. SAWIN.

ELKINS, W. Va., Dec. 13, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription has expired, I am sending my remittance for another year. We surely feel we would be very lonely without the dear old SIGNS, which is such a great comfort to wife and me. We live in a good neighborhood, our neighbors are kind to us, but they are not our kind. They claim to be helping the Lord, but our desire is for the good Lord to lead us in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. We hope we are in fellowship with Elder H. H. Lefferts, and also with the associate editors, Elders Dodson, Ruston and Vaughn. We highly esteem them for the truth's sake, feeling to thank God for such able gifts to the children of God scattered abroad. May it be God's will to be their strength and support in their every trial. We dearly love the dear brethren and sisters who so ably write such comforting letters to the SIGNS, or to the faithful in Christ Jesus.

In hope of eternal life,

G. B. McCLANAHAN.

FERNDALE, Wash., Dec. 16, 1932.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I want to address you in love, for if we are born of God we are born of love, for God is love. Oh to be more like him is my constant prayer, but I am so weak and full of sin, surely there is no one like me. But they cannot keep me from loving them, nor hoping to meet them in heaven, where we can praise our dear Savior for what he has done for us while we have been so rebellious and stubborn. What a relief it will be when we shall be cleansed from all this heart-rending suffering on account of the sin which we long to get rid of but cannot, but he had told us that his grace is sufficient for us. This is my only hope, for in me there is not a redeeming feature.

Please find two dollars inclosed, for which extend my subscription another year, for it is all the preaching I get.

Your brother in hope,

DAVIS BURCH.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1933.

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GENESIS XII. 1-3.

"Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

The language of the word of the Lord to Abram, as recorded above, we feel to call your attention to its wording and meaning with such ability as the Lord will give us understanding. We must know something of the meaning of words before we can grasp the expressions. The word "Abram" in its original language signifies an high father; the father of elevation. We note Abram was the son of Terah, and only one brother lived and was married, which was Nahor, but Nahor was not in this command of the Lord to Abram. We are not to question why, but note the purpose of his commanding Abram, and in the command of the Lord he separated him from all his country, kindred and father's house, unto a land he had not seen. The outstanding feature was to elect Abram unto the purpose of the Lord, which was in the eternal mind and purpose of God before the world began, for of the seed of Abram, according to the flesh, Jesus was born. We see Abram raised above those of his own flesh to the wonderful purpose of God in salvation to all families of the earth. In his purpose we see he (God) would make of him a great nation, which was manifested as God testified to Abraham, that in Isaac shall thy seed be called. God spoke to Abram, saying, "I am the Almighty God: walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee."—Gen. xvii. 1-5. At the time of Abram's life when this was brought to his realization he was ninety and nine years. We know that according to the flesh of our day Abram was a very old man, and also that God's purposes must be fulfilled, and that his power is over all flesh. Abram was not limited to the meaning of the name, but God added to

that by which he was made the father of many nations. As is recorded in the twenty-fifth chapter of Genesis, all the days of Abraham's life were one hundred and seventy-five years, and his sons buried him in the cave Machpelah. As we pass on, God did not cast off all men except Abraham and Isaac, but in the line of Isaac shall the seed of Abraham be called. And God inspired men to write of his dealings with Isaac and his sons, and here we hear the word of God testifying that Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated, but according to the flesh Isaac loved Esau, but God's purpose was in Jacob, and he changed Jacob's name to Israel, which signifies power. God had prospered Jacob, that he was the possessor of much wealth and was the father of a great multitude. The name Israel signifies that Jacob as a prince had much power with God and men. (Gen. xxxii. 38.) We hope to call special attention to man having power with God and man later on.

We have God's word to Abram that he would bring him into a land that he would show him, which was the land of Canaan, which was to him and his seed. After Abraham passed away there came in the family of Jacob strange dreams, which were given to Joseph, as you are familiar with the reading, and also they caused an uprising in the flesh against God's servant Joseph, which brings us on through the life of Joseph in the house of Israel and the fulfillment of God's word in a natural sense dealing with men. This Israel was brought down to Egypt naturally to manifest that the God of Israel was almighty. The travel of Israel down to Egypt their bondage and deliverance from the Egyptians through the Red Sea, the teaching they received by the triumphant power of almighty God, by which he had destroyed both horse and rider in the sea, and by the Spirit of the living God with them they sang the song of Moses and the Lamb. We do believe that the Spirit of the living God teaches his ways by the demonstration of his power. We read from the Scriptures of God's working among the sons of men bringing them into the fulfillment of his divine purpose. God inspired Moses to write the first five books of the Bible, and then the record of the Kings in Israel, then the prophets that received the word of the Lord and held up to Israel as a nation the Lord Jehovah. All that is testified in the Old Testament shows the triumphant power of God, by which all things were made to bow to him. Jesus said, Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, but they are they that testify of me. So all the dealings of God with the seed of Abraham were, to our mind, to prove his electing love, and his power to separate from the world his elect and appoint their way, that no man, or men, could hinder him. This seed of Abram is one nation, and Isaac is the chosen out of that nation, but to show Isaac was yet fleshly as a man was proven in the case of Esau, and on through we find similar relations proving God's predestinated purpose, and when God purposed Israel as a nation was dis-

solved. For there must be that which is holy set up, and that was the kingdom of God's dear Son, and the peace and increase thereof shall know no end. When the time appointed of God for greater things to be manifested than that of Israel according to the flesh Elizabeth conceived and the power of the Most High God overshadowed Mary, and by the Holy Ghost she conceived and bare a son, and before either of these two sons were born Mary visited Elizabeth, "and it came to pass, that when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: and she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy."—Luke i. 41-44. What glorious things were appearing? It was the dawn of a new day, and the dark shadows of the law and prophets were being ended and entirely new realizations were testified. We do not want you, dear reader, to think that we would infer that it was not the same Spirit that was making manifest these things that rested with Abraham and all his seed, for it was the same God. Abraham and all his seed were the creation of God, and Jesus and his kingdom were not of the seed of Abraham, but He was none other than the Son of God, and all who are born of him are of that incorruptible seed by the word of God, and are not of flesh and blood, for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. In Jesus Christ the one born of the seed of Abraham all families of the earth are blessed. And God gave of the multitude or great nation of Abraham the disciples as well as the prophets, and they each testified according to the measure the gift of God, and Jesus, the Son of God, as the fulfiller of all God's will that all families are blessed, declared, Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold, I shall also bring. We do believe that God chose in Christ Jesus his elect from before the foundation of the world out of every land, kindred and tongue, and all men are born of the first Adam and are by nature the children of wrath, the elect included, but by the imputed righteousness of God the elect of God are justified. John preached the kingdom of heaven is at hand, and was by the Holy Ghost given to discern between flesh and Spirit, and he commanded those to whom he preached to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and those who did not bear that fruit he called a generation of vipers. We do not give any distinction between Jews and Gentiles according to the flesh, as Jesus broke down the legalities of law worship and all that worship God must worship him in spirit and in truth, for he doth seek such to worship him. The Spirit abode upon Jesus that identified Jesus as Son of God, and when John beheld him coming where he was baptizing, he exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the

world." Jesus demanded baptism of John, but John, feeling the weakness and depravity of his flesh, testified that he had needs to be baptized of Jesus, and asked, Why comest thou to me? Jesus commanded and John baptized him, and as he came up straightway out of the water the Spirit abode in a body liken to a dove and said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. After Jesus' baptism by John he called his disciples to be with and bear record of him. So we have the New Testament testifying of the man Christ Jesus and the power of the Father that was with him, and the way by which he offered himself without spot to God for the sins of his elect. The apostles declare that which they tasted and handled of the word of life, and were not commissioned any further, and the power of God that rested with them forbid all fleshly relations of men, and they were led by the Spirit, as Paul declares they should know nothing among them but Jesus Christ and him crucified. The Spirit teaches that denying of ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly and righteously in this world.

There were others born of the first Adam besides those who were of Abraham's seed, and are united in God's salvation of sinners as much as those of the multitude herein mentioned. As is recorded, "The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."—Acts ii. 39. We are minded to call your attention to the power of almighty God that rested with Abraham as he was commanded to take the lad, the one God told him should be called his seed, and go yonder and worship. In which he offered up Isaac for a sacrifice, and God stayed his hand and presented the offering He had prepared, and not as Abraham had thought. The offering herein presented is a type of our blessed Savior that should be offered for sin, and by this offering sin was put away for all that were embraced in the offering, which cannot be changed, for it is God's work.

"In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." The connecting link in this sentence binds Abraham's seed to all families of the earth, and as Jesus was born of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, and was none other than the Son of God that should redeem out of every land, kindred and tongue under heaven, and bring them off more than conquerors, and the called of God contend for the same faith that was the moving power in Abraham, and all the way down the line from a righteous Abel to the present time. Shall men speak that God was not just in not choosing other men as he did Abraham? or that other women were unjustly used because Mary was the chosen virgin that should bear the Son of God? No. The Spirit of God in his people makes them thank and bless his holy name and feel that just and true are all his ways, and to realize that he is the almighty God and Jesus Christ is the Son of God. These virtues of his power separate men and women from the people of the world to

worship God in Spirit, of which Abraham was the type. The service of divine worship is not a mere form, but the manifestation of an endless life, being manifested as God's elect, and who is it that repliest against God? or who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? (Rom. viii. 33) or question, Why doest thou? The way of the righteous is evilly spoken of by those in carnality, and the carnally-minded are those, to my mind, that God said he would curse, and he would bless them that blessed Abraham, and all who are born of that incorruptible seed by the word of God are those who bless Abraham, and God blesses them, and they are the blessed of the Lord. This covenant of God was openly brought out among the sons of men, but God declared that he would make a new covenant with them in those days, saying, I will put my law in their hearts, and write it in their inward parts; I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. These are the blessed of all families of the earth. What a wonderful God is the God of Abraham! All his works shall glorify his Son. The poet Watts, according to hymn number one in Lester and Durand's hymn and tune book, and number one in the Beebe hymn book, expresses reverence, which we feel to record:

"Eternal Power, whose high abode
Becomes the grandeur of a God;
Infinite lenghts, beyond the bounds
Where stars revolve their little rounds.

The lowest step around thy seat,
Rises too high for Gabriel's feet;
In vain the favored angel tries
To reach thine height with wondering eyes.

Lord, what shall earth and ashes do?
We would adore our Maker, too;
From sin and dust to thee we cry,
The Great, the Holy and the High.

Earth from afar has heard thy fame,
And worms have learned to lisp thy name;
But oh the glories of thy mind
Leave all our soaring thoughts behind.

God is in heaven, but man below;
Be short our tunes; our words be few;
A sacred reverence checks our songs,
And praise sits silent on our tongues."

These glorious things are recorded to express some of the glorious things that are spoken of Zion, city of our God. Oh that all men would praise the Lord.

C. W. V.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by brother G. R. Tedford)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 7th, 8th and 9th, 1932, to the churches of which she is composed, and to the associations and meetings with which she corresponds, sends greetings.

Dear Brethren:—In writing you this, our annual Letter, we desire to be led by that Spirit which is the discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, so that our communication shall be of such as shall touch the heart of every one who has been made to know the law of God, and has also been made to know Him who is the end of the law, for only those who have been made to know the truth that shall set us free can rejoice in a complete Savior. The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, so then they that are in

the flesh cannot please God. Now, if we have been made to know Christ, who is the end of the law, we have also been made to know that our carnal mind is enmity against God. If Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin. Once, dear brethren, we rolled sin as a sweet morsel under our tongues, but now sin has become exceeding sinful. Once we only knew of the natural religion which the world is full of. Then we thought we were strong in ourselves and could do something to bring God into subjection to our natural wants and wishes, but now we hope we have been made weak in ourselves and strong in Him who is the end of the law and have been made to mind the things of the Spirit of God, to hunger and thirst after righteousness and to glorify Him who is our all and in all. By the law is the knowledge of sin. We see that we are daily chastened because of sin, this gives us hope, because we are told that if we are without chastisement then are we bastards and not sons. But we find the chastening of the Lord is not joyous, but grievous. Now, the knowledge of this is the teaching of the Spirit of God. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his. We know that, dear brethren, we doubt if ever we have been made to know anything about the Spirit, which is joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, meekness, etc., to know anything about that Spirit that overcame the world. But these anxious thoughts are evidence of life. When we are weak in ourselves we are strong in the Lord. We must become as a little child or we cannot see the kingdom of heaven. It is when we are brought low that he helps us. Our carnal nature is proud, the flesh loves its own. It does not hunger and thirst after righteousness, neither is it in harmony with God's laws or anxious for the rebuilding of God's kingdom or the welfare of God's people. Satan appears as an angel of light and would have us believe that there is no God, and that the religion of Jesus Christ is all a delusion. But His grace is sufficient for us. While we are weak in ourselves we are strong in the Lord and are made to rejoice that there is no power but of God and that all power is ordained of God. We are kept by the power of God unto salvation. He leads us in a way we know not, in paths we had not known, and while we know that his ways are not our ways, shall we not be glad, knowing that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose? Therefore, dear brethren, let us take courage and pray that we may be led by the Spirit of God into all truth, that truth which shall set us free. As many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God. We have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. And if children then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. What a glorious thought when brought home to our hearts, that nothing can separate us from God's love. Do not

we love him because he first loved us? May we be made to so love him that we may keep his commandments and walk in peace. Farewell.

D. L. TOPPING, Moderator.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 7th, 8th and 9th, 1932, sendeth christian greeting and salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Through the goodness and mercy of God we have been blessed to meet again and receive your messengers and correspondence. We feel that God has been gracious to us and blessed us with that peace that passeth all understanding. Brethren D. L. Topping and Arnold H. Bellows were with us and preached Jesus Christ and him crucified, which we all enjoyed.

This Association is composed of the Whitefield and Bowdoinham Churches. There is a church not walking in order, and we had to declare nonfellowship for them. They went out from us, but they were not of us; if they had been of us they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. (John ii. 19.)

Due notice of our next meeting will be given later.

D. L. TOPPING, Moderator.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **SARAH ANN McCOLL** died at the home of her son, Dr. Thomas H. McColl, Tilbury, Ontario, November 12th, 1932. She was born in Lobo Township in the year 1846, and was the daughter of Duncan and Sarah McIntyre. On January 8th, 1874, she was married to Samuel T. McColl, who passed away in April, 1877, leaving the widow and a two year old son, Thomas H. Besides her son, Dr. McColl, and his wife, with their two children, Marion and Duncan, of Tilbury, she leaves a brother, James G. McIntyre, of Clearwater, Manitoba, and many relatives and friends to mourn their loss. She was a worthy member of the Covenanted Baptist Church for sixty-two years, being baptized by the late Elder William Pollard, July, 1870. Her christian experience went back to her childhood days. We have heard her tell that when a child she loved to listen to the aged saints who gathered in the home of her aunt, where she then lived, and when bedtime came, and her aunt would suggest that it was time for her to retire for the night, she would sometimes wish that she could stay and listen, wishing she could hide away like the cricket in the hearth, and listen to such conversation. The Lord spoke peace to her soul while she was still in her youth, and one of the aged brethren, to whom she told her exercise of mind, counselled her to tell it to the church, for, said he, the church, should they receive you, will be a tower of strength to you at times. She often said afterwards that she had proved his counsel true, especially while walking the slippery path of youth. Like many of her brethren, she lived to prove that "Zion is chosen in the furnace of affliction," that trials must and will befall, yet God's grace was sufficient for her. As David, she could say, Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thy honor dwelleth. Her delight to the end of her days was to be with her dear brethren, especially in public worship, even though she had to travel over fifty miles to do so. Not a few looked upon her as a mother in Israel, to whom they could unbosm their spiritual travel, knowing that in her they always had a sympathetic friend. In her last illness she was confined to her bed ten days, growing weaker each day. The writer was favored to be with her the greater part of two days before she died; we found her filled with a calm but holy joy at the prospect of soon departing from this world of sin and gloom. She recounted many of her past trials, which at the time were hard to endure, yet the Lord upheld her, and at the close of her life she could say that the Lord had done all things well. The unity of God and his people in Christ, was in her conversation much of the time, and she repeated part of the seventeenth chapter of John, which was very comforting to her. She was humble minded, and while there was much in her

walk and conversation to be commended, for the Lord had blessed her in spiritual things above many, yet the day before she died she said to me, "My dear brother, in a few days you will preach my funeral. I want no eulogy, except to say that I was a poor sinner, saved by grace. Our sympathy goes out to her dear son and family, who mode her comfortable, and happy to be with them so many years, by their loving, thoughtful consideration. May the Lord reconcile them to their loss. When we left her the afternoon before she died she breathed a prayer that the Lord would bless us, and prosper our ministry, and build up his church in Canada. She left instructions that the twenty-third Psalm should be sung, and the seventeenth chapter of John read at her funeral service, which took place at the Duart meeting-house, the writer speaking from the tenth verse of the seventeenth chapter of John to a large and attentive gathering of relatives, brethren and friends, who loved her in life and mourned her in death. Interment was in the McColl cemetery, at Aldborough, Ontario.

G. R.

I am pained to report the death of **ALVAH CROSS,** at his home, in Lexington, Greene County, New York, after a three days' illness of pneumonia, on January 10th, of the present year. Deceased is survived by his wife and five children, also by three brothers and his father. The funeral services were held at his late home January 13th, 1933, the writer officiating. The interment was in the cemetery at Lexington. Mr. Cross was not yet thirty-nine years old, and was therefore in the prime of manhood, and had, according to view of men in a natural sense, many years of life ahead, but the will of God was otherwise, and he was stricken with a disease that would not yield to treatment when it would seem that he was most needed by his family, and life had so much to offer. But we are comforted by the fact that God is too wise to err and cannot be unkind, and this seemingly untimely death is but a part of the all things that work together for the welfare of true believers and for the glory of God. The deceased was married in 1933 to Miss Anna Patterson. He had lived all his life in Lexington, and was a most exemplary man in all his walk of life. His kindness as a neighbor and friend, his devotedness to his family and his clean life and sterling qualities of character made him a man worthy of the confidence that was his to receive, and of the love of those who knew him most. He was interested in the truth, and believed in salvation by grace, without creature effort, and received comfort from the preaching of ministers of the Old School faith, though he never united with any visible church organization. Much sympathy goes out to the surviving relatives.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

SOLOMON TAYLOR was born in Franklin County, Illinois, October 14th, 1845, moved to Kansas in 1866, where he was married to Mary Jane Sater. He crossed the plains in 1873, and settled at Prairie City, Oregon, until the spring of 1877, when he moved to Boise Idaho, and located on Mann's Creek, near Weiser, Idaho. He was engaged in farming and stock raising. To his first marriage were born six children, two boys and four girls. One son, Frederick I., preceded him in death a few years ago. The remaining children are Carter, of Weiser, Idaho, Mrs. Emma F. Louis, of Oakland, California, Cassal E. Pence, of Fayette, Idaho, Mary O. Hines, of Provo, Utah, and Harriett E. Walker, of Oakland, California. His first wife died several years ago and he married Mary Hogg, to which union three children were born, two boys and one girl. Mrs. Emma Webb is the only one of his brothers or sisters living. He is also servived by several grandchildren, and many friends mourn his departure. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church in the eighties, and was a faithful brother, a man who relied upon the sovereign mercy of God. His word was his bond, and what he said you could rely upon. He died at Weiser, Idaho, December 26th, 1932, at the age of 87 years, 2 months and 12 days.

Written by

D. E. ROBISON.

ELIZABETH FRASURE HALL was born September 24th, 1856, near the present post office of McDowell, Floyd County, Kentucky, and died at her home, in Vernonia, Oregon, February 5th, 1933, at the age of 76 years, 4 months and 12 days. She is survived by her husband, Wilburn Hall, to whom she was married January 27th, 1876, in Floyd County, Kentucky. To this union were born ten children, six sons and four daughters, seven of whom survive. They are: Mrs. Isabel Counts, Vernonia, Oregon, John Hall, Idaho City, Idaho, Evan Hall, Waldport, Oregon, Andy Hall, Vernonia, Oregon, Mrs. Hala Lindquist, Burley, Idaho, Lee Hall, Vernonia, Oregon, and William Hall, Boise, Idaho. Also surviving her are twenty-four grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. She resided in Kentucky until the year 1903, when the family moved to Rainer, Oregon. They located in the Nehalem Valley in the year 1904, and she made this her home, except from 1912 to 1919, when they lived in Idaho. She joined the Antioch Church of the Primitive Baptist faith about the year 1888, in Floyd County, Kentucky. She was baptized by Elder W. D. Martin, and she remained a faithful member of the Primitive Baptist Church until her death. The sister had been in poor health for several years, and about eight days before her death she had a stroke, from which she never rallied. All was done for her that loving hands could do, but the time had come when the Master said, "Child, come home," and she sweetly fell asleep, without a struggle. The writer was

called to conduct the funeral services, using for a text 1 Corinthians xv. 51: "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep." The services were attended by a large gathering of relatives and friends, and were held in the Congregational church-building. The remains were laid to rest in the Vernonia Cemetery, there to await the call of the Master, when this mortal shall put on immortality. May it be our happy lot to be included in that number, is the prayer of the unworthy writer.

S. B. MOFFITT.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Anna S. Voorhees, N. J., $3; Mrs. Mary B. Keogan, N. Y., $2; "A friend," Mich., $3; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $2; "A friend," Ontario, $1; J. S. Adams, Va., $8; Durwood H. Bradley, Texas $1; E. H. Winchell, Mich., $3; Jerome Britton, Pa., $1; George R. Tedford, Mass., $1; Mrs. T. H. Young, Ohio, $1; Mrs. Unetta Hamilton, Mo., $2.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 808 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one-half block west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of sister N. J. Preston, 116 Center Street, Oregon City, Oregon, at 10:30 a. m. Those coming by stage, steam train or electric car get off at Seventh Street, take elevator to top of the hill, cross trestle over railway tracks, turn to the right, go two blocks on Sixth Street to Center Street, thence five and one-half blocks south on Center Street to 116, house number, between First and Second Streets. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Moderator.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Church now meets for worship at our home, 2211 Fifth Street, Riverside, California, the third Sunday of each month, at 10:30 a. m.

J. W. HAYNES.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Washington. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Bethel Church of Chicago meets, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at the home of sister E. Brunow, 411 N. Ridgeway Avenue, and on the second, third and fourth Sundays at the home of brother W. N. Spitler, 11332 South St. Louis Avenue, Chicago. By street car, 111th Street and Sacramento Avenue car to end of line. By auto, from 111th Street Highway south on Kedzie Avenue to 114th Street. The fifth Sundays are by appointment. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastors, Elders Jones and Janes.

(MRS.) EMMA E. BRUNOW, Clerk.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan,

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminiar Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 101. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1933. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CHICAGO, Ill., Dec. 18, 1931.

DEAR EDITORS:—A member recently loaned me some copies of the *Lone Pilgrim,* and in the issue of Januanry, 1930, I rejoiced to see an article by Elder Gilbert Beebe on predestination, and another by Elder F. A. Chick on conditional time salvation, both reprints from old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. In view of the divergent views on those subjects I should like to see the SIGNS reprint those articles. Forty years ago, when I first saw the light, I spent months with an uncle, who possibly had twenty-two years of back numbers of the SIGNS, and I think I read them all. I consider Elder Gilbert Beebe the greatest expounder of doctrine I have ever read after. The older subscribers of the SIGNS will remember the peculiarly lovable Elder Chick. He was clear and kind, yet firm, in his articles. In those days it seemed all saw eye to eye. Now, sad to say, it seems "tooth to tooth" to a great extent, and it seems that the admonition as to biting and devouring one another is at times forgotten. Not that I can add anything to what has been said, but to express myself, I shall discuss these questions.

1. Predestination of all things. Some "limited" predestinarians give God credit for decreeing all "good" things, but dispute his decreeing "bad," as to them it seems the latter would make him the author of sin. Let me say just here, I agree with Elder Lefferts where, in an article replying to a question, he said, "I see no reason to doubt it means exactly what it says." I agree with him. Where the writers spoke in parables it was clear they were parables. Where figurative language is used (as in the Song of Solomon) the expression is such that any one having a clear understanding will know the language is figurative, but in general with the great bulk of the Scriptures the words of the text are to be taken in their ordinary meaning, and as Elder Lefferts justly contends,

"There is too often an attempt to spiritualize words where their meaning is literal." Now we might refer to Joseph (a type of Christ). His brethren sold him into bondage because they envied and hated him without cause. His history is known, so no need to relate it here. But what did he say when his brethren who had sold him at last stood before him? "Ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." If God did not have a purpose in this act of kidnaping and selling Joseph, then Joseph is a liar and the Bible untrue, and if one word of it is untrue none of it is true. It must be accepted as a whole or rejected as a whole, or at least that is the way I feel about it.

Let us look at Moses. God told him in person to go to Pharaoh and "I will harden his heart." O yes, Moses, the preparation of the heart of man and the answer of the tongue are of the Lord. The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, he turneth it whither he will. Thou wilt prepare their heart. Thou wilt cause thine ear to hear. Out of the heart come the issues of life. All these are in the Bible. Why did God harden the Egyptian monarch's heart? "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee." "And I will get me honor upon Pharaoh." Incidently I remark, God is as much honored and glorified by the destruction of the wicked as by the salvation of the righteous. Any heart, even that of the believer, hardens unless softened by grace and the dew of divine mercy, so all that is needed is that God withholdeth the Spirit and the hardening follows naturally, very naturally, for man is as prone to evil as the sparks to fly upward.

Let us take the crucifixion of Christ, a judicial murder, a sacrifice to the blood lust of a wicked mob, as wicked a deed as human accounts record. Even the most limited predestinarians will not dispute God decreed the crucifixion of Christ, that through his shed blood man should find redemption. Could his death in any way have occurred without involving wickedness on the part of some one? I think not. Peter said on the day of Pentecost, Ye have, by the determinate counsel of God, with wicked hands crucified me. In one case a spirit came before the throne and said, I will mislead him. Jehovah asked how, and the reply was, I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of his prophets, and Jehovah said, Go. Does that make God a sinner? That is not possible. It was for a wise purpose: to overthrow an evil king. I might go on citing instances where God's purposes embraced events involving some wicked act, but to my mind one passage alone settles this question: "All things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Without dishonoring God or doing violence to revelation we may conceive of a period when this earth did not exist, and that later God chose to create it. Why? For his own honor and glory, involving the salvation of the elect and the dam-

nation of the wicked. I believe the greater purpose is the salvation of the elect, that this earthly pilgrimage is to prepare them for glory beyond, that when the last subject of grace is prepared for glory then time will cease and the new Jerusalem will appear. If the Bible is true all things work together for good to the elect, then his major purpose must embrace both "good" and "bad" things, whether at the time we understand the reason or not. Here we know in part and see in part, as through a glass darkly, but there we shall know as we are known. Put me down as one of the "absoluters."

"Judge not the Lord with feeble sense,
But trust him in his grace."

One incident was recorded in the SIGNS in which the writer had seemingly gotten into the "valley." He had had a bright experience, but his "light" was dimmed and he awoke (like the prodigal son) to a realization of his condition. He took up the Bible to read for consolation. It opened at the sin of David with Bathsheba. He tried again, and it opened at the story of Solomon (directly taught of the Lord) led away by his heathen wives building altars to heathen gods. That was discouraging. Again he opened the Book, and was confronted with the sin of Judah and Tamor. He closed the Book, and mused, How was it those biblical characters, with all their light and knowledge, fell so far from grace and backslid? and like a flash came the comfort he was seeking, viz. the weakness of the flesh, the power of God to save unto the uttermost and that the blood of Jesus Christ and his grace are sufficient. Not that he was encouraged to follow the example of those Bible characters, not to sin that grace might abound, but that where sin abounded grace did much more abound. How many others, unknown to us, striving within themselves against the bondage of this man of sin have been comforted by Paul's declaration, The good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not that I do. What, Paul with all his light and knowledge confesses to this? Yes, and I know one who, like the prodigal son or the publican, dare not lift up his eyes, and can only smite his bosom and say, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. Yes, we have company and comfort here and dare to renew our hope that we are among that number whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. In general I believe that while God has a choice as between the elect and nonelect he shows no partiality between his children, all have the same inheritance. All have not the same "gifts." Not necessary. We do not need prophets and apostles to-day. They served their time and purpose. All we do need is to carry on from where they left off. We all, past, present and future, are dealt with about the same: high, low, rich or poor, we are joint-heirs. That is enough. I believe when the Bible says "all things" it means *all things,* past, present and future, and that somehow all were embraced in the determinate counsel (as well as the foreknowledge) of God, and that that counsel embraced the

"bad" as well as the "good" things," if we could but understand. I dispute with Paul the title of chief of sinners.

Conditional Time Salvation. It is a curious thing that the article of Elder Chick (herein before referred to) mentions the same thing I thought of, viz. Job.

The conditionalist seems to admit eternal salvation has nothing to do with works either before or after regeneration—no merit in the creature whatever. All our righteousness is as filthy rags, so far as salvation in the next world is concerned. It would then seem strange how our righteousness in any way could change the essential nature and become anything but filthy rags. The "wedding garment" is never of the manufacture of the wearer. Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. It is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his own good pleasure. Now for such passages as "Fear the Lord, and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones." "A sound heart is the life of the flesh." "There is no soundness in my flesh, because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones, because of my sin." "When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth." "No good thing will he [the Lord] withhold from them that walk uprightly." "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap." Godliness is profitable both for the life that now is and for the life that is to come. All these are in the Bible, and I think mean just what they say. Hence, unhesitatingly I should choose the "strait and narrow way" as the safe way, looking at things only from a temporal standpoint. But the question is, Is that the main standpoint? If so, why did Paul say, I count all things (earthly) but as dung? What does it mean where it says, Set your affections on things above? (not worrying about earthly things.) Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and all these other things be added unto you. There is a palpable "divorce" here between a time serving, wage worker spirit (which would serve God only for mammon or material reward in this life) and that spirit which actuated the prophets, apostles and the early children, martyrs, many of whom sealed their faith with their blood. We would have had no Paul, no martyrs to the christian faith had only a spirit of working for natural reward actuated them. Read Fox's Book of Martyrs for some shining examples of believers who were not serving for hire. Job was an eminent biblical character, in one place linked up with the "greatest" in the kingdom of God. But Job was not a "conditionist." Those who read Job will find however he had dealings with conditionalists, first of whom was Satan, when he said to Jehovah, Doth Job fear God for naught? In other words, the devil believed that without "pay" there was no religion. So Satan was allowed to deprive Job of children, and to prove the devil a liar on the first "trial" poor Job said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Again, the

sons presented themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also, and God said to him, You moved me to destroy Job without cause, and Satan (still a conditionalist) replied, Skin for skin, all he hath will a man give for his life, put forth thy hand and touch his flesh and he will curse thee to thy face, and again was Satan permitted to bedevil poor Job with bosts.

Now the second conditionalist appears, to wit, Job's wife. At the last calamity she said, "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die." Job replied, Thou speaketh to me as one of the foolish women speaketh. (Still the righteous held on his way.) When the last three conditionalists came along in the shape of Job's three friends (or supposed friends), and after due period of mourning they proceeded to heckle Job, in substance telling him he must be "bad" or Jehovah would have been "good" to him and not allowed these things to come upon him. After a time we hear Job saying to them, "No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you. But I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you," and at last we find him in desperation exclaiming, Ye are all physicians of no value. Oh that ye would altogether hold your peace. What Job needed just then was comfort. None in their "do and live" doctrine. None then; none now. Comfort ye my people; cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, etc. What does it mean in the latter part of the fourth chapter of Hebrews where it says, "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. * * * Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need"? These two things, grace and mercy, are coupled together in more than one place. Grace, mercy and peace be multiplied unto you. We need them all here and now, but we will not need grace, or mercy, or peace, for all dangers are past there. If we are enabled to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world it is solely by the grace of God. (By the grace of God I am what I am.) Yes, by all means maintain good works because they are good, not in a spirit of I will do good works if you will pay me for them; if you do not, I will not do them. That "wage earning" spirit is at utter variance with the religion of Jesus Christ. The church here seems to be disintegrating, and for reasons sufficient to myself I have never joined it. All those here are poor, sadly afflicted by the present depression, many are out of work (including myself for some five months) and hardly knowing how we are going to get along. To make matters worse, several (active in the formation of the church) appear to have gone gathering "wild gourds," and have taken up with an evangelist whose main idea seems to be healing by faith. He asks those who will to contribute one dollar toward expenses, and advises them to go after being baptized to "any church" they wish. That is "looseness" to me. While God may to-day in answer to prayer effect cures,

yet I believe the days of open miracles ceased with the apostles. I believe in prayer. Elias was a man of like passions as we, but I am reasonably certain that if God gave any such gift today it would be to one of the children, and his children do not tell their brethren and sisters to home themselves in any sort of fold or eat any sort of food. Strange the turn affairs have taken here, but I know that the Lord knoweth them that are his, and if any who have strayed are of the fold in his own time and way he will bring them back where they belong. I have been ill as well as unemployed for some five months, yet the Lord has provided, and will, according to his word. In the busy seasons of our hurried lives we are apt to become engrossed with worldly affairs and forget the Word. During this idle period I have read both the Old and New Testaments, and some seven or eight years of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I am particularly pleased with the editorials of Elder Lefferts. Like him, I am a bookkeeper, and I like his matter-of-fact way of putting things. I think it was he who said, Religion is a positive thing. In one editorial he mentioned his experience in a way he *knew* something, as well as hoped something. Job amid his afflictions exclaimed, I *know* that my Redeemer liveth. I like that word "know" in its proper place and interpretation. As I said before, I accept the whole of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, and I believe in general words are used in the Bible in their commonly accepted meaning. I note a writer or two expressing the opinion we should not claim knowledge, only hope,. Well, "hope" is a good word, too. It is also used in the Bible, and I accept it also, in its proper meaning and interpretation. It may be assumed the inspired writers had a reason for using two words of different meanings. "Know" occurs more frequently than "hope," for in 1st John alone, with its five chapters, "know" occurs possibly a score of times. Let us "rightly divide the word." To know a thing naturally we must have cognizance of it through some one of the natural senses. To know a thing spiritually we must have cognizance of it by the spiritual man. I cannot for a moment consider that the word "know" is a useless piece of verbiage in the Bible. "Hope," in a biblical sense, means expectation with desire, and desire and expectation are not always linked together. A man dying may desire life and health, yet his reason bars him from expecting any such thing. But the christian's hope, both as to desire and expectation, is founded on something he knows, just as Christ (when Peter said, Thou art Jesus the Christ, Son of the living God) said to Peter, Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which art in heaven. If any wish to take the position that such revelation does not bring positive knowledge, they may do so. I have no time to argue with them about it, for Solomon says, When thou perceivest a man hast not wisdom go from him. If any one wishes to claim that Paul received no "knowledge" in his experience on

the road to Damascus, that person may hold to such opinion and I will hold to mine. Paul said, Now we know in part and see in part. Does (or does it not) sight of a natural object carry knowledge of that object? To some extent yes. Like Elder Lefferts, I believe the new birth (calling a dead sinner to life) is just as much a miracle as Christ raising Lazarus from the dead. Will any one try to tell us that Lazarus did not know after that miracle that he had been dead and was raised from the dead? If so, I should suspect such person either of deception or foolishness, and just as certain will the reborn sinner *know* he has passed from death unto life. God makes no mistakes. Paul nor any other noted Bible characters were afflicted with doubts. They had faith as to their call and conversion, though at times they bewailed the vast gulf between what they were by nature and what they should be by grace. Make no mistake, my friends, God never yet "initiated" a sinner but what the "novice" has gone on until he has taken all the "degrees," and there is no turning out of this "lodge" for nonpayment of "dues." Christ was not talking idly when he said, Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness. Only those of the kingdom are concerned about either hope or knowledge in a spiritual sense. The unbelieving (unregenerated) are not concerned in the least about spiritual hope or knowledge, and these dark valleys of unbelief into which at times we enter are merely the clouds later to be dispelled when the Son of Righteousness arises with healing in his wings. Christian hope springs from knowledge based on experience. We have hope and knowledge both here. We shall have knowledge to the fullest extent there, but no hope whatever. Why not? Because hope is expectation with desire, and when that expectation is met, when that desire is filled, there is nothing to hope for, nothing to desire, for, as David says, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."

In hope,

W. C. COX.

YAKIMA, Wash., Dec. 14, 1932.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find bank draft for three dollars to pay my subscription to the SIGNS another year and one dollar to help send it to some of God's afflicted poor who are not able to pay for it. In reading their letters telling of their afflictions, both temporal and spiritual, I am moved with a desire to do more, but am so limited I cannot, and believe God has so willed it. However, I have a desire to share with them some of the thoughts wherewith I also am comforted in my afflictions. In Philippians iv. 6, 7, we read, "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Also cast all your cares upon him, for he cares for you. I am going to take for granted that we know what "all"

means, without mentioning all the multitude of cares that surround us. "Be careful for nothing." What a fullness and completeness when understood just as it reads. A peace that is above all we can understand. Paul says he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we are able to ask, or even to think. Can we grasp the force of those words? In the prophets it is said, I will extend peace to her like a river. To whom? To them that mourn for Jerusalem. But why do they mourn for her? Because as a babe mourns for its mother, they are hungry and thirsty, so they cry for their mother. Rejoice with Jerusalem, all ye that love her; rejoice all that mourn for her, for you shall suck of the breasts of her consolations, you shall milk out and be delighted with the abundance of her glory, for I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream; they shall be borne upon my sides and dandled upon my knees, and I will comfort her as a mother comforts her sobbing child. None can be too far away to experience this peace, because he says, I will extend it, I will extend it to you. But here we may pause and ask, If it be so, why am I thus? Why this dull and lifeless frame? Why do I languish and pine? Why such long winters? Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why is my spirit disquieted within me? One writer says, If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him. Jesus says, He that saves his life shall lose it, and he that loses his life for my sake and the gospel's sake shall find it. So we thank him with the apostles that we are counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake, and sing, Mixtures of joy and sorrow I daily do pass through. So our losses are turned into gain, our darkness into light. John says, He is light and in him is no darkness at all. David says, The darkness and the light are alike to him. Therefore Jesus says, If thine eye be single the whole body is full of light. That is, if we look to him only. The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. All the things that seem to be against us we find work for us a far more and exceeding weight of glory. But says Jesus, If the light that is in thee be darkness how great is that darkness. Woe unto them that put light for darkness and darkness for light. We have all felt that woe in our rebellion to the cross and our labors to find peace in our own works, looking with an evil eye, and not with an eye single to his honor and glory, trusting in him, and him alone. In Isaiah xxx. 7, 15, we read, "Their strength is to sit still." "For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." So we find that when we are weak then are we strong, our darkness is turned into light. What was our loss we now count gain, rejoice in tribulation, enter into the kingdom through great tribulation, death is swallowed up in victory. Thus in Isaiah li. 10, 11, we read that the arm of the Lord has dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep, and has made

the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over. Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come with singing unto Zion and everlasting joy upon their heads, sorrow and mourning shall flee away. Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion, put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city. Shake thyself from the dust. Arise. Sit down. Oh is that all just sit down? Jesus says, Many shall come from the east, and from the west, and sit down in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. "Sit still." Thus strength is to sit still. "Be careful for nothing." But what can one do sitting still? Wonders! wonders! O Jerusalem, loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion. For thus saith the Lord, Ye have sold yourselves for nought, and ye shall be redeemed without money. How wonderful to note what can be done sitting still waiting on the Lord, running and not wearying, walking and not fainting, renewing strength, mounting up on wings as eagles. All through faith in Jesus Christ. Many times we are raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and in part can see what John saw and heard when he heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, their God, and God shall wipe all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying. Neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away. Behold, I make all things new; old things are passed away.

I have tried to show how the old things of our nature have a new meaning in Christ to what they do in nature; that is, what is death in nature is life in Christ. So there is no more death. In the same way our sorrow is turned into joy, our pain into pleasure, and all things become new in Christ, in whom there is no death, or sin, or darkness. These things exist only in nature. Paul says, To the pure all things are pure. And again, All things work together for good to them that love God. Col. i. 20: "And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." So if all things are to be reconciled to him, and we are in him, that reconciliation affects us also, of things in earth as well as heaven.

In hope of eternal life,

A. D. HUGHETT.

CENTRALIA, Wash., Dec. 6, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—As the time to renew my subscription to the paper is at hand, I feel like writing a few lines for your consideration, and if it is the Lord's will I will try to tell some of the things I see in parts of the third chapter of Genesis. I never knew any one to discuss it, either by tongue or pen, in just the way I see it, so I will leave it to you to decide whether I have been taught by the Holy Spirit or the evil

spirit. I refer to the seventh and twenty-first verses of the third chapter of Genesis. They appear to me to be closely connected, and yet very far apart. The seventh verse reads, "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked: and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons." "They" sewed the fig leaves together. It was their own work. With those aprons they endeavored to cover up their nakedness and hide their transgressions from the Lord. An apron is made to cover only the front part of the body and hide it from the one wearing the apron, and not from others having a different viewpoint. And think of an apron made of leaves. I am unable to think of any kind of garment that would be of less use in protecting the body. Yet it appears to be the best they could do. How poor and puny their work appears to us, yet is it not just what all the Lord's people do when their eyes are opened and they are made to see themselves sinners? They fly to the law and begin to do good works to cover up their sins. It appears to be the same kind of offering as the fruit of the ground that Cain offered to the Lord, and was rejected, and after fifty-six years of what I hope is an experience of grace, I, of myself, have nothing better to offer. It is all fig leaves, and only an apron at best. The things I should do are undone, and the things I should not do, I do. I can only hope and plead that Jesus has done the good works for me.

The twenty-first verse reads, "Unto Adam also, and to his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them." This is very plainly the work of the Lord. None of man's good works in it. I know of nothing better, or more durable, to make coats out of than the skin of animals. The procuring of these skins entailed the shedding of the blood of the animals that bore them, typical of the blood of Jesus shed on the cross, to procure the wedding garment, which all guests at the wedding supper must wear. Out of those skins the Lord made coats, not aprons. A coat goes all around the body and hides it from every point of view, and in this case is typical of that robe of righteousness which is purchased with the blood of Jesus, and with which each and every one of the Lord's people must be clothed, thus covering up all their hideous deformities, hiding them from the sight of a just and holy God, who, when he looks on one wearing that robe, sees only the robe washed in the blood of the Lamb, and orders every charge against the wearer expunged from the record, and the page made white as snow.

"And clothed them." I understand that to mean the Lord put the coats on the man and the woman, as one would clothe a little child, an infant, one utterly unable to procure the clothing, or put it on. A coat is made to open in the front, so it is easy for the wearer to open it and take a look inside and see the awful depravity of his own heart. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." The Scriptures mentioned prove very plainly, to

me, that all man's good works are represented by the fig leaf apron, while the Lord's works are represented by a big fur coat, and if it should be a cold and stormy time (and the Lord's people experience many such seasons) and I had nothing but a fig leaf apron to wear, while my brethren were going about with their big fur coats on, I surely should not feel like boasting of my fig leaf apron. I feel like giving the Lord all the glory, for if I am so fortunate as to be one of those chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world I will receive all the benefit. If the Lord should transform this old carcass I call my body into an immortal, spiritual body I am the one who would be benefited, and the Lord certainly should have all the glory.

In reading over the above, it seems to come so far short of setting forth the beauties of the Scriptures used, and so far from expressing the many pleasant seasons I have experienced while meditating on the subject, so dry and so lifeless (and it will remain lifeless unless the Lord should put life into it), I have hesitated to send it to you, but feeling that you will know what to do with it, I will inclose it with a money order to pay for another year's subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It is nearly all the preaching we get, as the nearest church where regular meetings are held is nearly fifty miles away, and the next nearest is one hundred and twenty miles away. In the more than twenty years I have been subscribing to the SIGNS I think I have not missed a single number, neither have I failed to read one. Neither have I found reason to disagree with the contents.

Hoping the coming year will be more pleasant and prosperous to you, and that the Lord will continue to be with and sustain both editors and publishers, I am, yours in hope,

J. D. HARDY.

CUBBAGE, Ky., Jan. 9, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have neglected sending my subscription for your paper for the past year. I acknowledge my fault, and beg forgiveness. I have enjoyed reading the many good letters and have received much comfort therefrom. For some cause I have been impressed to write and tell some of the way our God has led me. When I was a very small boy I slept in a trundle bed, and one day when I was in the room by myself I was in great distress of mind. I thought I was going to die, I said, I am now just large enough to enjoy the pleasures of this world, and now I must die. I did not go to my natural father and mother and tell them of my trouble, but crawled in my little trundle bed, there to die. Why I did not go to my natural father I do not know, but I hope I went to my heavenly Father. I do not know, but I hope that was a spiritual work with me. After that I went on as a natural boy until I was about twenty-one years of age. During that time the Lord took care of me and made a way for my escape through great temptations, but I did not then know he was taking care of me. Later he made known to me that

he had done things for me no one else could do in making a way for my escape, as he did for the Hebrew children. When I was about twenty-one years of age I had a habit of whistling and singing little foolish songs, and it seemed to me the Lord called and told me to stop that and live as my father was living. I promised him I would. My father was an orderly walking man and an Old Primitive Baptist, yet I promised the Lord I would do it, but I could not. I just kept on doing what I was bidden not to do, but every time I commenced singing it seemed to me the Lord said, You promised you would stop doing that. Then I would say, I am going to stop, but instead of getting better I grew worse. Then the question, Why cannot you stop as well as your father? My reply was, I cannot do it. I then was made to feel what an awful sinner I was, and I begged God for mercy, and asked him to keep me from sin. I went on in this way, mourning and begging for mercy until I was about twenty-four years of age, when I was in bed sick, both naturally and spiritually, when I hope the Lord delivered me from my troubles. The first thing I remember saying after my changed condition was telling my wife I wanted my father and mother to come to me. I wanted to shake hands with them in token of that love and fellowship I had for God's people. Then I told my wife I wanted to go home. The church was then presented to me as my home. It was the Old Primitive Baptist Church; no other was on my mind. When, as I hope, the Lord began this work in me I vowed I would never go to the church unless the Lord was leading me there. Could I have then had the opportunity I would have offered myself to the church, but after that doubts and fears came and the burden got so heavy I could not go through with it, until one morning my sister and I started for meeting and this Scripture came in to my mind, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Then the impression came, You will go to-day. But I could not be satisfied that I was fit. When the church door was announced open my sister went and offered herself, and before I knew it I was there with her. Now this fulfilled a dream I had just previous to this. I dreamed I was at a gathering, and a woman went to a well and drew some water, I went to the well and the water was running for me. I was received into the church, and after I was baptized that great burden I had carried so long was removed and never bothered be any more. Later several so-called Baptists tried to get me to have this work done over again, but when I considered it something said to me, If you lay aside this baptism you will be like Esau when he sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. I knew that if I ever was fit to belong to the church the Lord prepared me and put me there. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism.

"Thou needeth the blessed Jesus,
Thou needeth him every day,
Thou needeth him momentarily,
While traveling on the way."

Your little brother in hope of eternal life,

E. L. HOSKINS.

FAYETTE, Alabama.

DEAR EDITORS:—Read and weigh this. "And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and he kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" Jesus cited him to the ten commandments. He replied, "All them have I observed from my youth." Jesus said, "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me." This young man went away grieved, and the thing that grieved him was parting with his goods, thus showing that he loved his wealth better than his God. He had lost out on the first and great commandment. Jesus had proved to him that he was condemned by his own testimony. No one has ever kept the ten commandments except Jesus Christ, and he kept them and all the entire law for his people, and suffered the penalty for all his people's transgressions. (Isaiah li.) Therefore he could say truthfully to Zaccheus, "This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." As much as to say, The Son of man has come to seek and to save the sons and daughters of Abraham. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." So none have right to the promise except Abraham and his spiritual seed, which is Christ, his church and kingdom. He is the only one who has ever done the will of the Father which is in heaven, and he did it perfectly, and he and his church, or bride, being one, his keeping the law and suffering its penalty was for her, and in the great day of accounts it will be found that the holy life he lived here on earth, with all its attendant blessings, will be set to her credit in heaven, while all her sins and transgressions were charged to his account, and he paid it off. If this is not so, there is no one saved, for there is none that doeth good; no, not one. (Rom. iii. 10-18.) I feel sure that all those who have been thus blessed will do all in their power to live a peaceable and quiet life in all godliness and honesty, and to save themselves from this untoward generation. Also, they will strive to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, and they can do this, for it is God that worketh in them to will and to do of his good pleasure. The old Geneva Bible gives it this way: "Make an end of your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both the will and the deed." As much as to say, If you have a plan of salvation of your own, make an end of it, get rid of it, for it is God that works in you the salvation you need to look to for eternal happiness. And I feel sure that those who are looking to Jesus for deliverance from this vain world of sin will

not be disappointed. John says, Rev. xx. 12, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." Mark you, I saw the dead, all of them, but I did not see the living judged, I saw the *dead* judged. I read on down and I saw that they all lost their case, for "death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." Their names were not written in the book of life. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. But there is a people God has blessed with the gift of his Holy Spirit, which enables them, through their Head and Husband, to do his commandments, and the blessing carries with it the right to the tree of life, and an entrance through the gate into the city, where dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie are left out. Remember, I said God's Holy Spirit enables them, through their Head and Husband (Christ) to do his commandments, for he is the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, and when the head keeps the law and suffers the penalty due the body, surely the body is free. When the husband pays the wife's debts she is free, for the law does not punish two people for the same crime when only one is guilty. Jesus Christ was not guilty, but his bride was, and her sins were transferred to her husband, to wit, Christ. The scapegoat was not guilty, but the sins of all Israel were laid on his head, and he bore them to a "land not inhabited," and was turned loose where no one could catch the disease, so when Christ bore our sins and canceled our debt our transgressions were separated as far from us as the east is from the west. (Psalms ciii. 12.) And I am sure the east and west will never come together. You can travel either way all your life and you can never get to the east or the west. "Salvation is of the Lord," and is as firmly fixed as the throne of heaven; in fact, heaven would not be a place of glory for Jesus Christ without his bride, for the woman is the glory of the man.

G. W. BERRY.

WILSON, North Carolina.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I herewith inclose my check for three dollars, which pays my subscription for another year, and the other dollar you can use for those who cannot pay. I am sorry I have neglected it so long, but in some way I forgot it, which shows my imperfections, for I feel to be a mass of imperfection, and nothing. Really I hate to acknowledge this, my flesh hates it, but there is something about me that I am glad I feel it, and then say it, for God is our perfection, our righteousness and Savior, and I would be glad to honor him in my body and spirit, which are his, as such, for there is no other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved. I am glad the writer used the word "must," for that is sure, or-

dered in all things and sure. May the dear Lord keep us in this blessed faith, is my prayer. Please pray for me.

Yours in hope, E. L. COBB.

INGRAM, Texas, Feb. 14, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS:—I wish you would publish a notice in the SIGNS that I would be thankful to the brethren if they would send me a Minute of their different associations. I am situated so I cannot be with my brethren for some time yet, and the Minutes would be of great comfort to me. If I could arrange to get out on the road this spring I would visit the entire year among the churches, as traveling around is better for my health. We lost our home in San Antonio, and as some of the localities do not agree with my nervous system, I would love to travel some, if it were possible.

As ever, your poor and afflicted brother, J. B. BOWDEN.

PALO ALTO, California, Dec. 29, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—The inclosed money order is for the renewal of my subscription to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES for another year. The one thing in my life which is indispensable. Without it I would starve for spiritual food. Fifteen years ago I heard the word of God preached, so you see how dear and precious it is to me. I wish I could help those who love it as I do, but at the present time it is impossible. May the Lord help you and enable you to continue with it as long as it contains the sound doctrine for which it has contended during the last century. I hope this new year will be a prosperous one for you and all who have helped its continuance in the past.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) OTTO SCHRODER.

BATH, Maine.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find post-office order for two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I am a little late, but thank the good Lord I am able to send it. I wish it were more, that I might help out in this time of depression. I should be very sorry to be deprived of the SIGNS, for I get much comfort and good from the letters as I read them over and over again. May it be God's will to send prosperity to those who work so hard to get the paper out and to the editors who labor so hard for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

RACHEL C. POTTER.

GLENSIDE, Pa., Jan. 12, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am reminded that in a few more days my subscription will have expired for the much loved SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so I am inclosing a two dollar money order for the renewal for another year. I have been a subscriber for more than fifty years, and it would be a great cross to have to do without it. It grows dearer as the years pass on. I trust the subscribers will be able at the beginning of this new year to pay their indebtedness and that you will be able to continue publishing the dear old SIGNS. I am sure it is a comfort to many scattered over this earth, many of whom have not the privilege of attending meeting.

(MRS.) HATTIE J. WALTON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1933.

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MATTHEW XV. 22-28.

"LORD, help me."

We hope the above Scripture has been given to us as a subject for our consideration in this issue of the SIGNS. Knowing that we were expected to write, we have been very perturbed, as we feel to be in a very low place. All we could say was, What shall we write? In the world at large is distress, misery and confusion, caused mostly by the utter selfishness of both men and nations, who have sown to the wind and are now reaping the whirlwind.

Looking within ourselves, we are made to ask, What am I and where am I? Our faith seems very small, and we seem often to be walking in darkness which can be felt, yet seeing so much indwelling sin and corruption that we loathe, proceeding from one who has professed to love and follow the Lord, we cannot but cry, "Lord, help me." Turning, as we often do, to look at the low condition of Zion, the lukewarmness in some, and worldliness in others, she seems to be like Hannah of old, mourning, and traveling much of the time in bitterness of soul, in many places subject to the taunts and sneers of Peninnah (the worldly denominations), who has many children. With the poet we would say,

> "To see thy saints in mourning clad,
> And foes by their distress made glad,
> Oft fills my soul with poignant grief,
> Lord, send thy servant quick relief."

This morning, as we said, What shall we write? the words came, "Lord, help me," so we turn to the above Scripture, hoping and praying that the Holy Ghost will bless us to write to the comfort and instruction of God's humble poor. We find this was the prayer of the woman of Canaan. This woman was a Gentile, spoken of in another place as a Syro-phoenician, dwelling along the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. This was a low country along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, and Jesus had not commanded his disciples to go in the way of the Gentiles, yet she came out of that coast and cried unto him; he was preaching unto Israel, yet she cried. In her case she had nothing to encourage her, she was an outcast, a dog, so many things to humble her, and the painful sight of her daughter made her case a pressing one. She knew she was an outcast, that those he and his disciples were ministering to were different to her, so we often say

our case is different, we have no legal right to a blessing, for we are outside of that blessed people. Such a desperate case will bring a cry like unto hers. If she had cried unto any one else it would not have been recorded, neither would it have interested us. She cried, "Have mercy on me, O Lord." Just consider what that means, she believed he had all power and dominion, that devils at his presence would flee, that sickness lost its hold, and nothing could stay his hand. She also shows that she believed him to be the Messiah, the son of David, and she lays her case before him, she told him her trouble. How many to-day there are that are in trouble, some are crushed to the very dust, and they may seek around them in the country in which they are, as she could have looked all over Tyre and Sidon and not have found one to help her. Some will laugh and some will scoff, some will blame, and some will say, I am sorry, but none can help as Jesus can. She turned her back on Tyre and Sidon and came, even with the word against her, crying, "Have mercy on me." She had no legal right to expect his aid, she knew it, she cried only for mercy. We have no right to expect his aid, yet where else can we go? This account is left on record to encourage us, "But he answered her not a word." One might say, How discouraging, this was enough to turn her back. But no, she could not be turned back, for she knew no other cure and she had nowhere else to go. Her cry for mercy is wonderful and should encourage poor sinners who know that they are doomed to hell unless the Lord has mercy on them. He may be silent to them, but this will not satisfy, and we are sure they will not be content to take it for granted that Jesus died for them because they know they are sinners. They will cry for mercy, and because the Lord is silent they will be very troubled and Satan will tempt them to despair, there will be much to try them. This silence was to try her faith, and it also will try yours.

If your religion is a natural one you will get tired, and, like Pliable, you will turn back when you come to the first Slough of Despond. The world does not understand us, how can they? and in this case the disciples, knowing that she was a Gentile, and that the Jews had no dealings with them, besought him to send her away. The poor soul found much to discourage her, yet she cried. How long this lasted we are not told, neither can man tell how long the soul in trouble will suffer under the silence of the Master, but of this we are sure, none but he can help or do poor sinners good.

"Could the creature help or ease us,
  Seldom should we think of prayer;
Few, if any, come to Jesus
  Till reduced to self-despair.

Long we either slight or doubt him,
  But when all our means we try,
Prove we cannot do without him,
  Then at last to him we cry.

Fear thou not, distressed believer,
  Venture on his mighty name,
He is able to deliver,
  And his love is still the same.

Can his pity or his power
  Suffer thee to pray in vain?
Wait but his appointed hour,
  And thy suit thou shalt obtain."

At the disciples' request to send her away, Jesus noticed her, and said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." This also seems to be against her, and here we would say, if we never find the word against us, it will never be for us. Much there is in the word of God to humble and try the children of God, but so urgent is their case they overcome by the strength of faith that God has planted in their souls. She knew he was sent to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," but although his words were against her, yet she came and worshipped him, saying, "Lord, help me." It is good when every rebuke and chastisement of the Lord to his people, instead of driving them away, brings them to his footstool. Few come to him but through much tribulation. Sometimes there are troubles in business, in the family, among supposed friends, which will have to come to bring us to see what a wicked, sinful heart we have, just as the pot must boil before the scum will rise to the top, and at such times how God's word will reprove us, and the heavens will be as brass, yet, if we are the right characters, we shall still cry, still worship, saying, "Lord, help me." Again, he speaks to try her faith, and says, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." How humbled this poor soul was under this trial, when Jesus referred to her as a dog, for we believe Jesus here spoke only just as the Jews in general spoke of the Gentiles, calling them dogs. She had, perhaps, often been called that by the Jews. Far from being hurt, she said it was the truth, owning what He said to be so, that she was just a dog, a poor vile sinner, unworthy of His notice. Thus faith, the gift of God, in this woman so prompts her to confess her low-down condition. While she could not claim the food of the children, yet she begged the crumbs that fell from the Master's table. How low the Lord's people often feel themselves to be, yet there is a great difference between feeling to be like a dog, and in being a dog. Mephibosheth confessed that he was just a dead dog. He said to David, "What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?" Such, we believe, is the low place of many in their feelings today, unto whom the word of the King has come. Thus there is such a thing as being brought down as a dog, and unless we are brought there, we might say we are like a dog, but do we feel it? We know this poor woman was very humbled to admit the truth, and when Job said, "Behold, I am vile," he had been brought low. Thus, dear friends, let us be thankful if we have been brought low; it has not been pleasant, but it is profitable unto godliness. This woman is commended to us for her great faith, and it is a great faith that trusts only in the Lord when everything is against us, when instead, as we once thought, of walking in light, we walk in darkness, when we see sin mixed with all we do, and rebellion rages at every cross-providence that is meted out to us. To persist in the thing that is right when all seems to be wrong, is an act of faith. This woman,

because of a devil in her daughter, was humbled in the dust. She came from a low country, where there were swamps and where reeds grew, and as a bruised reed, she learned to her comfort that Jesus did not break the bruised reed. So this world is a low place for an heir of heaven to dwell in, and there are swamps of sin, and sometimes the enemy comes in like a flood, and every bit of solid ground that we have to stand on is gone; in fact, the soul finds here below no rest for the sole of her foot. Faith brings us from such a coast, and enables us to cry, "Lord, help me," and in the same hour, which means a set time, Jesus hears. This does not mean that there is a time when Jesus does not hear, for he always hears our cry, but often he hides the purpose of his grace, as in the case of this woman. He did not seem to regard her, which resulted in her crying the more. A prayer of faith cannot be put off, it will not give up. Such is the case of many of God's afflicted children, they will endure, looking in, through and over all their woes, which press them sore. Against all reasons and opinions of men, faith, which is God-given, will continue to assert that God is his own interpreter, and he will make it plain. It is here, under the silence of our Lord that He is refining the gold, and showing what a heap of dross there is to every one.

We said at the commencement of this article, that the trouble in this world to-day is the result of man's selfishness; it is so in each of us. We love self, and though we know self must be denied, we cannot do anything of ourselves, and God is merciful to us, and sends trouble, the thing we hate and dislike. It will generally come where least expected, and how galling to our pride. It was this woman's daughter, and what a trial she was. Some would say, Why the Lord was not in that. YES HE WAS. He had a purpose in that, as he had in Job's trials. Earth and hell can do no more that what our Father please. Faith believes this, but when faith is sharply tried the soul will be very faithful. Even then they will find a great desire to read and think of those who overcame, and like James they will say, "Behold, we count them happy which endure." Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord: that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy. We look at our friends in sickness, and by acts of kindness show our sympathy, and it is right we should. We look at our friends in distress and want, and either by word or deed help them to bear their load. We see others mourning an absent God, and would encourage them, but do we realize, do they, that our God, who is Lord of lords and King of kings, has bid the tempest rage, created the waster to destroy, that famine, plagues and deaths do but his bidding, and in all he sends to his own he is very pitiful, and of tender mercy? Wait at his door, or, as David says, As the eye of a maiden is to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes wait upon the Lord, till he have mercy. God grant in this day that his afflicted poor shall tread the furnace where no one else can accompany them but the

Son of God, and find that he is pitiful, more pitiful than disciples, brethren or all flesh put together. "He cheereth souls distressed, and loves to bind up bruised reeds, and heal a bleeding breast." He is pitiful to poor polluted worms, whom he may despise, who feel to be the offscouring of all flesh. He pities them, we are living witnesses, for when we have felt hell-deserving, unable to confess anything but sin, he has been merciful with a tender mercy. When David was in trouble at Ziklag, the brethren would have stoned him, everything seemed to be against him, which only hastened David to a throne of grace, and while the trial may be long drawn out, as in Joseph's case, who was so unjustly accused by Potiphar's wicked wife, yet patience will have her perfect work. God's afflicted will have no prayer more suited to their needs, and each rebluff they have, whether from sinner or saint, will drive them crying, "Lord, help me," to the One who has never sent one away.

We write this in much weakness, may God bless it to many who feel they can look only to him for a crumb of mercy.

G. R.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

T. O. Turner, Ky., $1; Maria French, N. J., $4; Elizabeth H. Rittenhouse, N. J., $4; Elder S. L. Moran, Va., $1; W. D. Fooks, Md., $1; Mr. and Mrs. S. J. Morse, N. Y., $5; G. W. Berry, Ala., $1; Elder E. L. Cobb, N. C., $1; Mrs. M. A. Tanner, Miss., $1; Ira Mullen, Ky., $1; Mrs. Sarah J. Clegg, Pa., $1; Mrs. Grace E. Jones, Pa., $1.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

JOSEPH F. HALL, of North Berwick, Maine, departed this life January 26th, 1933. Having been born February 1848, he lacked only twenty-four days of being eighty-five years of age. He was the youngest of nine children of William and Eunice Hall; was born, lived and died at Beech Ridge, North Berwick, Maine. He leaves a widow, sister Alice M. Hall, who mourns not as those without hope, for she verily believes that her beloved husband has departed to be with Christ, and she desires to be reconciled to the will of her heavenly Father and to trust him for all needed grace. There are also three nieces, one nephew and several grand-nieces and nephews who survive. Brother Hall was twice married, the obituary of his first wife, written by Elder Frederick W. Keene, having appeared in the March 15th, 1908, issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. His second marriage was to sister Alice M. Ford, on March 11th, 1909, who feels deeply her loss. In early life brother Hall was not very strong physically and it was feared he would not live long, but he took his axe and went into the woods to cut his way to health. He was a very hard worker all of his life until just a few days before he passed away. He was an excellent provider, kind hearted and respected by all who knew him. He dearly loved the truth and it was his chief joy to hear it preached in demonstration of the Spirit and with power sent down from on high. He was also a good talker and was bold to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. Well do we remember the time of our first meeting. He stood up to talk about things of Jesus, but his cup was so full that he broke down and wept like a babe; later his tongue was loosed and there was a feast of fat things for our soul. In the obituary of his first wife, referred to above, Elder Keene related how God sent an arrow from his bow which pierced the heart of them both in the form of words used by Elder Joseph L. Purington, from the one hundred and thirtieth Psalm: "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord." It was over twenty years afterward that he felt compelled to ask for a home among the people whom he greatly loved, and in speaking of his intentions to his wife, he was utterly amazed to discover that she, too, had been struck by the same thunderbolt at the same identical time and had been pondering "these things" in her heart all those years. She got her Bible and showed him where she had marked that same passage of Scripture at the time stated. They were both baptized by Elder Frederick W. Keene August 7th, 1892. We have heard him relate this experience on a number of occasions with tears in his eyes. He verily believed that both of his wives were gifts from the Lord to him, and he delighted in telling of God's goodness and mercy to poor sinners. His trust was only in the Lord,

and a few days prior to his departure he was quoting to sister Alice from the hymn, "How firm a foundation," and in commending her to the Lord he stressed the verse,

"'E'en down to old age, all my people shall prove,
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;
And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,
Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne."

On one of the writer's visits to North Berwick, a year or two ago, brother Hall asked if we would come and conduct his funeral when the time came, and when we were called to be there on January 28th, last, we felt we were given some of the words of the great Apostle, uttered just before he took his leave of earth, as a text for the occasion: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." They had been quoted by brother Hall at a gathering of the brethren at his home a short while before, and we felt they could truthfully be applied to his life. We were blest in some small measure, we hope, to declare that truth as it is in Jesus and to exalt the name of our blessed God, to whom be glory now and forever.

R. L. D.

SISTER **MARY MacLEAN** died at the home of her son Neil, in Ekfrid, Ontario, October 3rd, 1932. She was born in Edinburgh, on July 8th, 1846, and came to the United States in 1851 with her adopted parents, John and Mary Rennie Forbes. Her girlhood days were spent in the cities of Washington and Philadelphia. In December, 1860, they came to Canada, settling in Ekfrid, Ontario. She was married December 31st, 1863, to John MacLean, eldest son of Duncan and Martha MacLean, early pioneers of Ekfrid. She resided continuously on the farm on which she died for over sixty-eight years. Her husband died May 7th, 1887, leaving her with a large family, three children of whom predeceased her: James, in July, 1887, Archie, in April, 1913, and Duncan, in December, 1924. Surviving her are Neil, John and Annie, in Ekfrid, Martha and Mary, in Glencoe, and Alec and Dan, in Saskatchewan. There are also seven grandchildren. Sister MacLean was a very respected member of the Covenanted Baptist Church, having been baptized by the late Elder W. Pollard. She was constantly, when able, in her place at public worship, and she loved the brethren. In the community she was ever ready to lend a kind, helping hand in trouble and sickness, endearing herself to many. She was a woman of few words, but she loved her religion, and loved to entertain her brethren and friends in her home, where she loved to hear their spiritual conversation. She had many trials in her early and middle life, but in her declining years she was blessed with the kind care of her dear children, each delighting to minister to her with tender and loving devotion. In many ways it could be said that her last days were her best days. We miss her much, but we believe she is forever with the Lord.

The funeral service was held at her late home, the writer speaking from the words, "Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."—1 Thess. iv. 14. The interment was in the Mayfair Cemetery.

ALSO,

SISTER **BERTHA ARDIES** died December 22nd, 1932, at Victoria Hospital, London, Ontario. About a week before her death she was making her bed in the room where she lived, when she slipped and both her feet went out from under her and she fell very heavily to the floor. She was at once taken to the hospital, where it was found she had fractured the pelvic bones. During the first few days in the hospital she suffered intensely, but her sufferings were much relieved for several days before she died. The doctor and her friends thought she was improving, and even the night before she died, several brethren and friends were with her and they remarked how cheerful and comfortable she was. About fifteen minutes before midnight she had a heart attack and before her dear friends, Mr. and Mrs. Sinclair, could get to her bedside she had passed away. Sister Bertha was the daughter of Joseph and Rebecca Wells, and was born November 24th, 1857, in the village of Ryarsh, Kent, England. She came to Canada in the year 1874, uniting with the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, being baptized by the late Elder William Pollard, October, 1885. Some time afterwards she went to Southampton, Pa., where she resided in the home of the late Elder Silas H. Durand, and while there she joined the Old School Baptist Church there by letter. She later returned to Canada, and on November 13th, 1911, was married to Thomas Alexander Ardies, living very happily with him in Ekfrid until he died, January 31st, 1917. For some years she has lived in London, and since the writer settled here, in 1929, as pastor of the Covenanted Baptist Church, he has found sister Bertha to be deeply spiritual, a lover of the truth, and whenever possible she was present in our meeting as one who highly prized the privileges of the gospel church. Her brethren in Canada have lost a faithful sister and friend, and the Southampton Church, of which she was still a member, can comfort herself that our dear sister lived and died in their sweet fellowship. The writer visited her in the hospital and found her mind stayed upon her God and desiring to know no will but his. She leaves to mourn their loss one brother, Alfred Wells, of Buffalo, N. Y., and four nieces in Canada. There are also two nephews in New York State. The writer officiated at her funeral service

in London, Ontario, speaking from the eighteenth verse of the thirty-fifth Psalm. During the service the twenty-third Psalm was sung. The interment was in the Mayfair Cemetery, by the side of her dear husband, and nearby the Ekfrid meetinghouse. She lived in and enjoyed the love and fellowship of her brethren, and she died mourned by those who knew her and loved her.

G. R.

MRS. ALICE TRUNDLE, widow of Samuel H. Trundle, departed from this earthly life March 2nd, 1933, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. J. Edward Myers, New Cumberland, Pennsylvania. Her age was 90 years, 4 months and 3 days. She was a native of Buckeystown, Maryland. She was baptized by the late Elder E. V. White into the New Valley Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, in April, 1886. She is survived by two daughters: Mrs. Myers, named above, and Mrs. Alice Thackara. of Washington, D. C. There are four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. She also leaves two sisters: Mrs. Anna Allnutt, Dawsonville, Md., and Mrs. Maurice Dade, Jefferson, Md. There is one brother, Frank Chiswell, living at Long Beach, California. Sister Trundle was a daughter of Joseph and Eleanor White Chiswell. I had not seen her for some years prior to her death, inasmuch as she made her home with her daughter at New Cumberland, Pa., a point off the line of my travels, so that I could not conveniently get to her. She had been failing in body and mind for the past two or three years. So far as I know, the hope which she claimed forty-seven years ago was her sustenance in death as well as in life and she passed from us in the same faith in which she had lived.

Funeral services were held in the cemetery chapel at Mt. Olivet Cemetery, Frederick, Md., where the body was interred until the mystery of God in the calling out of his church shall be finished.

H. H. L.

DEACON JOHN H. PRILLIMAN departed this life April 20th, 1932, aged 73 years, 8 months and 3 days. He was born and reared in Floyd County, Virginia, in the Check neighborhood, where he lived all his life. He was married to Matilda Paradine Conner November 10th, 1881. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Salem August 7th, 1897, and was ordained Deacon in that church August 8th, 1902. He set an example for us as citizens, was an industrious progressive farmer and a man of not many words. His strength in the church was because of the faithful, honest life he lived, always in his seat when able to get there. His home was supplied with all the comforts of life, which he delighted in sharing with his brethren. We miss him when we meet at Salem Church, and feel sad when we think of that vacant seat. Sister Prilliman, who was by his side and labored with him, sharing all his joys and sorrows, is now left alone on life's pathway. Dear sister, we all mourn with you, but not as for one for whom we have no hope. That humble, meek and gentle countenance will live with us as long as memory serves us. It will not be long, dear sister, until we, too, will be called by the same Spirit, if we are what we hope we are.

Much more could be said of this dear servant, but words are inadequate to express our true feelings when speaking of one so near and dear to our hearts. It can truly be said that the Salem Church has lost one of her most precious gifts.

H. V. COLE.

DAVID WILLIAMS HARRY was born in Smith County, Texas, February 23rd, 1855, and died in Commerce, Texas, February 25th, 1933, aged 78 years and 2 days. He and his twin sister were next to the youngest of twelve children of Benjamin and Susan Harry. His parents were pioneer settlers of Wood County, having moved near Oak Grove in 1856. D. W. Harry lived near there until the year 1921. He was married to Sarah Jane Caldwell August 23rd, 1887, and to that union seven children were born, all of whom are living, except one son, who was killed in action in France. All are married except his youngest daughter, who kept house for him. His devoted wife died March 3rd, 1920. During his entire career D. W. Harry was a quiet, peaceable and an unassuming citizen, upright in his conduct, faithful and loyal to his wife and family; broad in his views, pleasant in his demeanor and loved by all who knew him. He expressed a hope early in life, and in the year 1904 united with the Primitive Baptists at Oak Grove. When that church disbanded, in 1929, he placed his membership with Little Flock Primitive Baptist Church, in Van Zandt County, where he was a member, also a Deacon, at the time of his death. He had been in failing health for some time, but was confined to his bed for only five days. All his living children were with him during his last sickness. He never tired of singing, "How firm a foundation," and, "I am a stranger here below."

JULIA EMERINE STEVENS BROWN, daughter of William and Elizabeth Stevens, was born August 7th, 1840, at Terre Haute, Indiana, and died December 31st, 1932, at Caney, Kansas, aged 92 years, 4 months and 24 days. She was one of a family of seven children, her mother dying when she was seven years of age. At the age of thirteen she, with her father, brother and two sisters, went to Wisconsin, where on December 13th, 1855, she was married to Charles C. Brown. To this union four children were born, three sons and one daughter, Mrs. Alma A. Hofmaister, with whom she had made her home the past nineteen years. Her husband, a Civil War veteran, passed away

in 1914. The oldest son, John, passed away in 1910, William in 1899, and Fred, the youngest of the family, in 1881. In 1870 the family moved to Iowa, where they resided until 1887, when they moved to Abilene, Kansas. They lived there and in Louisburg, Miami County, Kansas, until 1903, when they came to Caney. In 1892 she joined the Primitive Baptist Church, being baptized by Elder A. J. Norton, of Hampton, Iowa, and remained a faithful member, although her infirmities kept her from attending meeting the last five years. She leaves to mourn her passing one daughter, five grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren. Grandmother Brown, as she was known, was a friend to all who knew her. Nothing pleased her more than to perform some deed of kindness when possible. She loved to visit the sick, giving them a word of cheer and a boquet of flowers. She was loved by little children, and on "May Day" would always receive many May baskets from them. Her mind remained alert until the last few months of her sickness, and she was able to quote many poems and verses of Scripture from memory. Because of her good memory she was a source of historical information, having lived so many years. She is missed. Yes, not only by loving relatives, but by friends.

Funeral services were held at the home of her daughter, January 2nd, 1933, with Mr. H. Ellis Ogden, of the Baptist denomination of Caney, in charge. Three beautiful songs that were of great comfort were sung: "Asleep in Jesus," "Some Time" and "No Setting Sun." She was tenderly laid to rest beside her husband, in Sunnyside Cemetery, Caney, Kansas.

Written by

A GRANDDAUGHTER.

ALETHA LEOLA (WATSON) BERRY was born in the State of Georgia October 1st, 1870, and moved to Texas when three years of age. She received a hope in early life and joined the Primitive Baptist Church at the age of eighteen years, and lived a faithful member until death. She was married to H. A. Berry December 26th, 1886, and to their union were born ten children. All are living with the exception of one son who preceded her in death, and were present when the end came. Besides her children, she leaves quite a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren, five sisters and three brothers to mourn her passing. She departed this life January 27th, 1933, making her stay on earth 62 years, 3 months and 26 days. Brother Berry passed on to his great reward five years ago, and her mortal remains were laid to rest beside those of her husband, in the cemetery near Silver Valley, Texas, to await the second coming of Christ, when he will bid them rise. May God bless all the bereaved, is my prayer. The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the mourning ones.

J. W. WEST.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Elder H. F. Hutchens having changed his address from Selma, North Carolina, to Williamston, North Carolina, requests that his correspondents send all communications to the latter place.

MEETINGS.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fifth Sunday in April, 1933. Services to be held at the home of brother J. E. Livingston, 64 E. Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m., also at 2 p. m. on Saturday before. All are welcome.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in April (30th). All are welcome. E. M. FORD.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of sister N. J. Preston, 116 Center Street, Oregon City, Oregon, at 10:30 a. m. Those coming by stage, steam train or electric car get off at Seventh Street, take elevator to top of the hill, cross trestle over railway tracks, turn to the right, go two blocks on Sixth Street to Center Street, thence five and one-half blocks south on Center Street to 116, house number, between First and Second Streets. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Moderator.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

THE Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 o'clock p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Church now meets for worship at our home, 2211 Fifth Street, Riverside, California, the third Sunday of each month, at 10:30 a. m.

J. W. HAYNES.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminiar Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 101. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1933. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT.

"AND these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."—Matt. xxv. 46.

To those who fear the Lord it is a painful thing that in the churches of God there should arise perverse men speaking perverse things, bringing in damnable heresies. Although we are forewarned in the Scriptures that such characters shall creep in, and plague the saints with their deceivings, yet it abides as a vexation, and bitter matter to the souls of those who are of the truth to have to know of the mischievous work of such ungodly men. The sport delights in his sporting; sporting himself with his own deceiving. (2 Peter ii. 13.) The scorner delights in his scorning, and scoffers find satisfaction in their scoffings; for their ears are turned away from the truth and turned unto fables. (2 Tim. iv. 3.) Lies and fictions soothe their itching ears. "Reprobate concerning the faith."—2 Tim. iii. 8. How dreadful! The shadows of the evening time are stretched out, and the judgment of the great day approaches. The Lord will come; he shall descend from heaven with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God. He shall come to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him. (Jude 15.) The Lord shall come, and those who hated him and despised him, who knew not God and Jesus Christ, shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power. But he will be the delight, the welcomed One, the everlasting admiration of all the loved ones, who love him, who have believed in Christ in that day. (2 Thess. i. 9, 10.) The hypocrite with dissembled love, and feigned faith, and who with lip service professedly worships God, and who with flatteries and much wantonness allure and win disciples to fellowship them. But even though some of

the dear children of God may for a time be deceived by carnal professors of Christ's name, our Lord is not mocked; all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. Our gracious God discerneth all the pretensions of the ungodly, and he knows them that trust him. The true worsippers worship him in spirit and in truth. The Father seeketh such to worship him. Truly it is all of the sovereign grace of God that a sinner receives the love of the truth unto salvation. This is the fruit of the teachings of the Holy Spirit in the soul. He gives us a heart to know the truth. He sends forth in the soul of the quickened sinner light and truth, and brings us into agreement, into acquiescence with the doctrine of God our Savior; we bow to it, love it and delight in it. A minister of Satan once said to me, it did not matter what we believed, we were all aiming for the same place, etc. I told him it was a matter of much importance with me what I believed, and that I would sooner believe the truth than believe a lie. They that are Christ's are sanctified by the truth. (John xvii. 17-19.) It is in God's riches in mercy unto us that we are manifestly of the truth, that we love the truth, walk in the truth, that the truth dwells in us, and shall be with us forever. (2 John i. 2.) Blessed indeed are all such. "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in."—Isaiah xxvi. 2. Men destitute of the truth (1 Tim. vi. 5) have no harmonious views of divine revelation, yet they are wiser in their own conceits than seven men that can render a reason, and their utterances are nothing but a maze of confusion, a wresting of the Scriptures, handling it deceitfully, and corrupting the word of God, in all of which it is manifested that they are unlearned (2 Peter iii. 16), untaught of God, destitute concerning the truth. None of the comfort, that appearance of pleasure which spurious professors of Christ's name find in their errors is of the Holy Ghost, for He, saith our Savior, shall guide you into all truth. (John xvi. 13.) Satan's devices are many, and entangle many, and one of his masterpieces of deception is to get them to believe that he himself, the devil, has no personal being, and that at death mankind are annihilated. This nonentity is a devilish dream in the souls of men who are captives of the delusions of Satan. Sometimes quickened sinners, under the guilt and bondage of their sins, feeling the just and holy wrath of God in His law against them, have meditated terror in their hearts (Isaiah xxxiii. 18), yes, dreadful apprehensions of the wrath to come (1 Thess. i. 10), have overwhelmed them, and in their souls' miseries have envied the beasts of the field, and have wished they were such for they are not sinners, there is no everlasting punishment for them; they die, and that is the end of their being. But this no hell doctrine, no hereafter, no future torment, punishment for those who die in their sins is contrary to the experience of every sinner who is convinced of his sins, and of the wrath to come, by the Holy

Ghost. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."—Psalms ix. 17. The Son of God thus speaks, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." —Matt. x. 28; Luke xii. 4, 5. If in their guilt and desperation wretched sinners have wished there were no God and no hereafter, and thus all would end in annihilation it avails us nothing. But the poor, wretched, law-condemned, self-condemned, afflicted sinner fears to die lest he should be found, justly so, as the rich man who died, and was buried, and in hell lifted up his eyes, being in torment. (Luke x. 22, 23). "And the smoke of their torment ascended up forever and ever."—Rev. xiv. 11. The called of God, the convicted sinner under his soul's heavy load of sin, under the curse of the law, knows that he must be pardoned or damned, and it becomes a matter all-important how he shall escape the damnation of hell. (Matt. xxiii. 33.) How can the Lord pardon, justify and save a sinner like me? "God be merciful to me a sinner."—Luke xviii. 13. Men who teach the nonentity of the personal being of the devil tell us that the devil is man's corrupt nature. But the devil came to Jesus in the wilderness tempting him. (Matt. iv. 1.) This was not His corrupt nature, for Christ Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. (Heb. vii. 26.) "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."—John xiv. 30. We read that Satan entered into Judas Iscariot. (John xiii. 27.) Christ declared the personality of the devil, and he is under law a transgressor, saying, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar and the father of it."—John viii. 44. "The devil sinneth from the beginning."—1 John iii. 8. And as to the denial of the everlasting punishment of the wicked, who die in their sins (Matt. xxv. 46), not only does such denial contradict the explicit teachings of the Holy Scriptures, but it shows how utterly such erroneous men have failed to understand the sufferings of our precious Christ for the sins of his people to bring them to God. What! Was Christ bruised, wounded, put to grief and his soul made an offering for sin, and all the sins of his enemies, of the nonelect for whom Christ did not give himself a sacrifice, winked at by the Lord, and go unpunished? Oh! no creature could suffer as Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God. Oh what a cup he drank! What agony for the church, the elect's sake was his in Gethsemane, and on the cross of Calvary!

"'Twas here the Lord of life appeared,
And sighed, and groaned, and prayed, and feared;
Bore all incarnate God could bear,
With strength enough, and none to spare."

But we, if we are of God, wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come. (1 Thess. i. 10.) But the Sadducees, the annihila-

tionists, deny that there is any wrath to come, after death, and scoff at the doctrine that any beings are tormented for their sins forever and ever, even though the Scriptures say so. (Rev. xiv. 10, 11.) Annihilation! This is a fleshly pleasing morsel. So much so that many millions of the human race have in Buddhism made the ultimate height of desire to be what they designate Nirvana, signifying the cessation of all conscious beings, personal extinction, ceasing to be; annihilation is its equivalent. Thus they wish to be, and they make and love this lie. (Rev. xxii. 15.) Annihilation! But there is no fear of God before the eyes of those who reject the solemn words of Jesus Christ who thus speaks in Matthew xxv. 41, 45, "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." (Rev. xx. 10-15.) Though the ungodly lull their guilty fears, dope themselves, and sear their defiled consciences with the seductive delusions of annihilation at the moment of death, so that they need have no thoughts about a future condition, nevertheless how dreadful it is to go into perdition with a lie in their right hand. How shall such wicked people who hold and teach such wicked conscience-searing doctrines escape the damnation of hell? Annihilation! In the instant of its infliction upon any being would cease to be punishment. "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." —Rev. xxi. 8. But men of corrupt minds, destitute concerning the truth, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God, are ever teaching pernicious errors, they live and thrive and sport themselves with their own deceivings; though they are ever learning they are never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Those who fear the word, and have that anointing which they have received of the Lord, and abideth in them, and which teacheth them of all things, and is the truth, and is no lie, can find no place in their hearts to wish such characters Godspeed. For "whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."—2 John 2. Poor sinner, muse on this:

"Love moved him to die, on this I rely,
My Savior hath loved me, I cannot tell why;
But this I can tell, he loved me so well,
As to lay down his life to redeem me from hell."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

HARLINGER, Texas, Nov. 12, 1932.

DEAR BRETHREN:—For some time I have been thinking of writing a few lines, thanking the editors for sending me the SIGNS so regularly, as I have been in so many different localities.

In reading some of the apostle Peter's writings this evening, I came to this Scripture, and my mind was

centered upon this passage: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."—1 Peter i. 3. This is a wonderful expression of the apostle's. In it we find two words that are worth our attention, as well as several other words in the following portion of his letter. Blessed is the God and Father which according to his merciful providence and abundant mercy *hath* begotten *us* unto a lively hope. Right here I will pause a moment and consider upon what grounds he hath begoten us, and by what power. Peter said by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. First it was (is) according to his (God's) abundant mercy, accomplished by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Now let us see if it is possible to find another witness to help Peter out with his testimony, and if so we will just let those alone who teach creature merits as the cause. Paul told the Ephesians, "According as he [God] hath chosen us in him [Jesus] before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Then he was very plain as to the certainty of the work, when he said, "Having predestinated *us* unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself."—Eph. i. 4, 5. He told us just when this work was designed and just when it was accomplished, and how, so it is very simple to the little ones, and very encouraging, too, as these two witnesses were closely joined together in thought, or in knowledge, and it was plain as to who they were who were thus favored. Paul said it was designed before the foundation of the world, and Peter said it was by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Then Peter said, to further strengthen our hope, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that it fadeth not away, and that it is reserved in heaven for you, (and still leading us into the greatness of it all) who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time for you. As Paul said that all our blessings in heavenly places in Christ were according as he hath chosen us to that end, it surely leaves no room to insert human agency, for all blessings were according to his purpose before the world, and that according to his abundant mercy he hath begotten us again to a lively hope by the bringing again our Lord from the dead. And to this we might add Paul again. He said, He (Jesus) was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification. For by the disobedience of one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men. Then if One died for all, all were dead. This last expression stands out to all, that in Adam all were dead. Thus in Peter's words we find, first, God hath begotten us again unto a lively (a living) hope by bringing again our Lord from the dead, and that in bringing us to that hope he assures us that our inheritance doth not fade away, for it is in a state of preservation, it is pre-

served in heaven for us. Then we will bring another witness on the stand: Jude said, "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." This is a wonderful testimony, for it doubles the testimony we have on record, for it states that we are sanctified (set apart) by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called. In this we find more strength to the text which says, According as he (God) hath chosen us in him (Jesus), and preserved us in him, too. So it is an assured fact that there is no room for creature merit in order for us to be placed among the "us." Now let us try one other expression of Peter's. In the beginning he introduces his letter by saying, "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ [in this he gives his authority], to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Capadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied." In following the testimony of these apostles it is no trouble to establish the doctrine of grace, predicated on the everlasting love and choice of God even before the world was, and that to depend upon our own merits is to deny the strait and undeniable teaching of the apostles, for in these few quotations it is easy to decide by the written word of God just how his dear children are saved, and that they were in the counsel of eternity chosen to this certain end. Peter said in his address to those he embraced in his letter, that they were elected according to the foreknowledge of the Father, and set apart to the redemption in Christ, and were given assurance of the fact by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Thus Jude tells us they were preserved in Christ, and called. Then Paul tells us we are called with an holy calling, not according to our own works, but according to his (God's) own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. In this the apostle informs us that it is not according to our works, then if not according to our works (it matters not what kind) it must be according to God's own purpose and grace. Thus, Peter's language is correct: According to His abundant mercy. So Peter tells us how it is, and Paul tells us how it is not, and at the same time tells us emphatically how it is. It is, says Paul, by grace, and not of works, lest any man should boast. He gives us another reason why it is not of works, neither faith nor works are to be boasted of, for he says, For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves (and tells how faith is ours), for it is the gift of God. Boasting is excluded in every detail of the wonderful plan of redemption. Hence, it is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His abundant mercy we are begotten unto a lively hope of immortal life through the resurrection of the dead. I feel that in the experience of God's

poor and afflicted, tempest-tossed lone pilgrims in the wilderness they realize in their every day stay here that not only is their future state after death, which is blessed with life of joy and peace, according to His abundant mercy, but also their all in all here in time is equally as bountifully displayed in the sovereign mercy shown in Providence and grace as is that to which this lively hope to which they are begotten by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. One other expression of the apostle that sounds pleasant to the "us" who are begotten again to that lively hope is that "glorious inheritance." This inheritance is the fruit of God's divine choice in Jesus Christ, which the apostle says is incorruptible, and undefiled, and fadeth not away. The apostle says it is reserved in heaven for you (the election of God). Another apostle says the children are preserved in Jesus Christ, and called. Sometimes we hear our housewives speak of their preserves spoiling. That is a mistake, for if anything is preserved it will not spoil; the process in which the preserving is accomplished was incomplete, or else they would not spoil. But earthly preservation is different from that of the soul of man, for there is no failure in the ingredient used in the preservation of the saints, which is divine grace. Grace is the free favor of God bestowed upon the unworthy, and Peter says abundantly, a full and sufficient amount to preserve those to whom it was given, and they are those who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. (1 Peter i. 5.) For they are those to whom Jesus gives eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of his hand. (John x. 28.) Now with all the testimony I have just in this short article given, why should any one ever attempt to depend on any merits of his own? For in the first place, we are only creatures, and, Paul said, made subject to hope, and it is recorded that the "us" who are the begotten of God in Christ have an abundance of grace, and are preserved in Christ to all eternity, and who hath begotten us again (from the dead in sin) unto a lively hope by the resurrection from the dead of our Lord and Master. Here in his adorable resurrection from the dead lies all our hope, for in this act of arising from the power of death all who were chosen in him are perfectly justified and their inheritance made sure, and the debt that held us bound was paid, and a clear receipt exchanged. Yes, the prison door was opened and the prisoners were sent out free. Thus Paul could say, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me [us] free from the law of sin and death."—Rom. viii. 1, 2.

As ever, your brother in bonds,

J. B. BOWDEN.

BREWERS, Ky., Nov. 15, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—I find a renewed desire to send you a few lines as a token of appreciation of the many cheering articles I have read in the columns of this medium of correspondence in the hands of God's servants to his humble poor. As the Lord affords strength I will write, and show my faith by my works.

Late yesterday afternoon the Lord gave grace for me to sing hymns, "Oh when shall I see Jesus?" "Amazing grace" and "On Jordan's stormy bank I stand." Then my wife came in to assist me in arising from my bed and prepare for the evening meal, which I ate while sitting before the fire. When I had eaten my lunch I sat with the fire on the hearth warming my body and the fire of God's love filled my body and I began to think and consider John on the lonely isle of banishment, with seemingly no ray of light or life near, when suddenly fear was banished by that still small voice saying, Fear not, trembling one, it is I. As we look around us do we not find many Johns, who are Zion's wayfaring travelers scattered in this unfriendly world, being sorely tried and bleached by the strong winds of adversity? So we pensioners upon the bounty of God's mercy begin to look about to find consolation, and none can be found which is more encouraging than what is found in the written word of God to his dear children. We find by searching the Scriptures a type or picture of the travel all the journey through. Then to the law and the testimony we go. We want to hear the witnesses testify, and we hear, or read, their testimony in both the Old and the New Testament writings. We take courage, as they compare so favorably with our own testimony, and God has said, In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established. We will begin with Moses. Hear him, slow of speech and of a stammering tongue. We did not think or feel he could do the work the Lord had for him at all. Consider his work all through, and especially at the Red Sea. Have not all been there? Consider Gideon's army of so many thousand, all who were faint-hearted and weak turned back. This was not all, for the rest of the army was to be tried at the brook, and just a few could and did lap water as a dog. Those who to-day believe in and do receive grace for each day and trial, these are they who gain the victory and can truly cry, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon. March on and consider Elijah's travels, all surrounded by Baal's many prophets, how they were routed and forever silenced by the consuming power of Israel's God. And again we view Elijah when he had fled from his enemy and sat under the juniper tree, and finally he laid down, and first received bread and water from the hand of the Lord, but still was not able to travel. Then the angel gave meat to strengthen, until he went a long time in the wilderness. Look at Elijah, going alone to worship, as the merry children made sport of him, and he cursed (or rebuked) them in the name of the Lord, and the she bears

came forth and devoured many of them. Even the three tried children who would not turn to the right nor to the left to bow to the music of the world were not harmed by the fiery furnace which was heated so very hot. Neither was Daniel hurt by the vicious lions while in their den a whole night, because he would not bow to the glittering array or gay music of the world.

Now I will mention some travels in the gospel day, or field, after Christ came and fulfilled the demands of a broken law and appeased the wrath of a sin-avenging God. We find a cursing Peter denying the Savior, a doubting Thomas, who could not believe until strengthened by the working of the mighty power of our God, John in prison continuing to forget his rich blessing. Paul and Silas surely felt alone and forsaken to some extent when cast into prison, their feet in the stocks and all fettered with chains, but oh what took place when the Spirit of Almighty God enabled them to sing praises unto God in the dark hours of midnight? Surely I experienced a measure of this last night when the Lord in mercy shook the prison wall of this poor worm and the doors leading into the beauty of his kingdom, or rich storehouse, were thrown open. I could not sleep (did not want to sleep) because of the glorious light which illuminated his wonderful work in and with poor sinners in preparing them to praise the glory of his grace wherein he makes them accepted in the Beloved.

I see I cannot express myself as I desire, so will close by asking you to correct all mistakes, and should you fail to see anything in these scattering lines, cast them aside and all will be right with me. Should any trembling ones read this letter, I ask them to join with me in fighting and conquering our many foes by sovereign grace, desiring and expecting that the God of the whole earth will take us home to rest when he has thoroughly purged the floor.

Submitted in love and sweet fellowship of the gospel.

J. C. CHESTER.

WILMAR, Ark., Dec. 21, 1932.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Forty odd years ago I began reading the SIGNS, and became a lover of Beebe, Chick, Ker, and such other writers as sisters Mary Ellison and Sarah E. Runkle. My subscrition was not kept up regularly and I became perplexed. Some alleged our Old Baptist papers had caused more harm than good, accusing Elders Joshua T. Rowe, Gilbert Beebe and Elder Hassell of error and the cause of much confusion, and I, a poor little outcast, was ostracized, censored and condemned by false brethren. I fought against principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places. Brethren, if I know myself, I am no idolator. I do not and cannot bow to their gods. Of the many Elders and members who railed against me and tried to destroy me nearly all are dead. God works and none can hinder, hinders and none can work, for the night cometh when no man can work. If I was the only man in the world to-day

who believed what I do I would still have to believe it: That there is a God who reveals himself to his people as he does not to the world; that he is omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent eternally; the one true and living God, Creator, Preserver and Benefactor of man, who says, I create and I destroy, I give life and I take it away, I form good and create evil, form light and create darkness. He formed the crooked serpent, and who can make straight what God has made crooked? The creeds are trying to. They are all agreed on one point: man's free agency. I read to-day in our secular paper, the *Little Rock Gazette,* that depression was forecast in the Bible by Isaiah. "They have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant." (Morman statement.) This applied to the old covenant and not to the new. They give as a remedy, Return unto me and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts. Thereby making man his own savior, not only of this depression, but savior of souls. God's word teaches not so. If our God should deal with this old sin-cursed, depressed world according to her sin and reward her according to her iniquity, this world would not see another sunset. The rise and fall of nations is in God's hands. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away until all be fulfilled to a jot and tittle. He viewed the end from the beginning, and declared it, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. In the day of prosperity rejoice and in the day of adversity consider, for God hath set one over against the other, that man shall find nothing after him. The depression is God's work, for a purpose, and shall accomplish that purpose, and no creed can stay his hand, or say, What doest thou? That we are tried as by fire is true, and the dross is consumed and the gold is refined. It is a melting pot, says brother Frederick W. Keene. Shout, brethren, Oh glory to the dying Lamb, and pray, Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Some time ago I awoke preaching. The text given me was, The beast and the false prophet, shall both be turned into hell, and I was made to see the beast, the false prophet and his destiny. It would make my letter too long for me to tell all I saw. First, the beast is the government of the world. The beast and the false prophet shall both be turned into hell. (Rev. xix. 20.) Second, The false prophet is that man that endorses the beast. All the world shall wander after the beast except those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life from before the foundation of the world. Thank God for the exception. Those mentioned in Revelation xiii. 4, and those for whom Christ prayed in the seventeenth chapter of John.

Third, "For God hath put it in their hearts to fulfill his will, to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled."—Rev. xvii. 17. It is all God's work and nothing can be added to or taken from it. "The woman [beast] which thou

sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth," clothed in purple and drunk, not of the fruit of the Vine, but drunk on the wine of the fornication of this idolatrous world. She hath dressed up her daughters (who have communed or imbibed with her) and sent them out to seduce the world. Her idols and her idolatry fill our land like the flood in the days of Noah, and our God has sent them this strong delusion that they might believe a lie and be damned, who have pleasure in unrighteousness.

The depression, as I see it, is cuased by what the world calls good things: man made money, bond religion and education. "And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God."—Luke xvi. 15. And you by your tradition make void the law of Christ. We have been taught an uneducated man is inefficient and that only an expert can succeed. While graduates in all lines present their diplomas demanding employment male and female are rejected regardless of their claims. But the beast says, as he said to Christ, All this will I give thee if thou wilt bow down and worship me. Educated by the beast, who says, Come to us, preach and teach and do all you can and I will give you work; if a preacher or an idolatrous devoter, I will double your salary, and they are falling over one another displaying their greed and eagerness to follow the beast. But good little Jobes cry, Though he slay me yet will I trust in him. Yet in our fallen nature our firmest resolves melt like wax before the fire, in the crucifix of want. The beast cannot change his nature to bathe his fangs in the blood of defenseless lambs. Pharaoh and his host followed to their destruction in the Red Sea.

Dear brethren, I will be eighty years old Christmas day. All my family, father, mother, sisters and brothers, are dead and alone I battle on. I have raised eleven children to be grown, and have quite a family, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, no idiots, cripples or deformed among them. It is written, Children are an heritage of the Lord, happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them. My wife and all my children confess the truth, but all worship the beast and his image. My oldest son, J. McRobt. Baker, was killed at Warren, Arkansas, recently. He was a better man than I ever was, morally. I never heard that boy use a profane or vulgar word, and his mother can say the same. He had a wife and four children. My big boy, Kroger, died at Warren ten years ago. He was a great and noble man. He never joined any creed or society. When talking to him about dying, he looked me straight in the face, saying, I am not afraid to die. I am not trusting in you, papa, I am not trusting in myself, or in any man or set of men, or any human instrumentality,

I am trusting alone in the God that made me, he is able to take care of me, and will do it. Brethren, this is all I have got, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. God only knows them that are his. If ye have borne the image of the earthly (Christ) ye shall also bear the image of the heavenly, awake with his likeness and be satisfied. Dear brethren, the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. I am not a fox or a bird of the air, for I have not where to lay my head, no church, no shepherd (but Christ), cast down, but not destroyed. Rejected of men, I feel alone.

"Is there a lamb in all thy flock
I would disdain to feed?
Is there a foe before whose face
I fear thy cause to plead?"

Our preachers seem to have forgotten their calling, to strengthen the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees and say unto them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong; fear not; behold, your God will come with vengeance, even the God of recompense he will come and he will save you. Shout for joy, dear brethren, the night is far spent, the day is at hand. Let us walk as children of the day, not in riotous living or drunkenness, not in sinfulness or wantonness, but in the fear of the Lord.

In love and fellowship, your little brother, if not deceived, and a poor lost sheep and a lone pilgrim of the house of Israel,

J. P. BAKER.

FIGSBORO, Va., Oct. 10, 1932.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter written by Elder W. L. Hall, of Independence, Missouri, which we have greatly enjoyed, and if it meets with your approval please publish it in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have his consent to publish same.

Yours truly,

JOHN E. BURGESS.

INDEPENDENCE, Missouri.

ELDER J. E. BURGESS AND WIFE—DEAR BROTHER, NEPHEW AND NIECE:—Why I have not answered your good and highly appreciated letters is because of a depressed and barren mind. Your letter, Elder Burgess, expresses much of my own feelings in regard to myself and how little and insignificant a worm I am, sometimes feeling that I am not a fit morsel even for the great enemy of all good who preys upon the weakness of the flesh, yet how I despise and detest the seducing spirit of the evil one that is continually harrassing and leading me to do the things that I would not, having a mind to do the better things, but how to perform them I find not. If I could feel satisfied that it is the Spirit warring against the flesh I might be somewhat strengthened in hope. I sometimes wonder how it is that we feel we may be deceived when we have something that we would not exchange for all the conditional theories in all the world, yet the pharisaical spirit is so strong in our Adamic nature that we would like to stand justified in the sight of God by our own works of righteousness which must and shall fall

in the light of saving grace. I surely believe in a saving God, one that created all things, made all things that are made and rules all things after the counsel of his own will. There was none to counsel with him, for he was before all things and it is by him that all things consist. He said, I form the good and I create evil; I form the light and I create darkness. He raised up Pharaoh for a purpose. He had Joseph's brethren sell him to go down into Egypt for the good of his brethren and for the saving of them from starvation. He raised up a Moses to lead them out at the hand of God, and by his power manifesting such wonderful types and shadows of the church and saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ that we are lost in wonder and astonishment, even when the light of the life of the Lord Jesus Christ shines in our own hearts to give us a knowledge of his wonderful love that he had for us before the world was, and with which he loved us even when we were dead in trespasses and in sins. I search my heart and inquire of myself, Am I one of that number?

I must tell you of the good meetings we have been having for the past month, and hope they will continue through June. Our three days' meetings, or communions of the churches of Mt. Zion Association, have been in session, one each Sunday, and we have had with us Elder L. D. Seals, of Tennessee. He is a great gift and an able defender of the doctrine, as well as a comforting sheep feeder and a good social mixer in our homes, and we feel that he is a God-sent blessing to us at this time, for we are sadly in need of some one to come over into Macedonia and help us. Our churches are small in number since the conditional time salvationalists withdrew fellowship from us and denounced the doctrine of predestination. Elder T. E. Atteberry and myself are the only two ministers in all of Missouri that I know of, and I think I know about all of them, that stand together on the doctrine of the sovereignty of God and the unity of life in Christ Jesus; that is, that our life is, and has ever been, in Christ, given us in him even before the world was. I was and am grateful that you and many others in Virginia stand where my father and Elders Lester, Martin and others of our faithful forefathers stood, still contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

I will now change the subject, and speak of other things concerning us. Surely perilous times are upon us, and, it seems to me, worse to come. Thousands going hungry, some one at the door from morning until night begging for bread.

Well, as much as I would like to be at the Association at Little Creek, I see no possible way open to get there, for God has not willed it so. I am getting along in years now, and we old men here in this time of the world can do but little, are not wanted much, are not respected or reverenced as they were when I was a child. It seems that the people now are only thinking of pleasure and sport. I hope you will

have a good, quiet, peaceful Association, and you will not miss me, for you would not have much if I was there. I wish some of you folks would come and see us and be at our Association the first Sunday in October.

Write and cheer up a poor, old, despondent sinner.

With love and best wishes to you both, yours truly,

WILLIAM L. HALL.

HAINES, Oregon.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter written by sister Beatrice Haan to the church at Touchet, Washington, at the October three days' meeting. I believe it will make good reading for the SIGNS, and if you think so please publish it. It was not written for publication, but I am sure sister Haan will concede to your judgment regarding it. Sister Haan is an exception as to church membership among the Old School Baptists, in that she came to the church when she was a school girl in her teens. Her letter sets forth the sweetness of her childish faith which all must have, although the storms of life are endured longer by most of them before seeking church refuge. How often do those coming to the church in the evening of their lives look back with regrets for not taking up their cross when the blessed hope was first revealed to them. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." Our faithful ones should always be watchful and careful to take care of the little ones that belong to the flock of the Lord. It is true in almost every case that in meeting the wants and cares of life sometimes these earthly cares seem to be uppermost and to hinder in the exercise and enjoyment of church privileges, as this sister has realized, but the foundation stands sure and the sweetness of this precious hope and the joys of those early evidences will never be lost, and the harder the storms of life beat upon the trembling soul the more firmly will its refuge be manifested to be in the clefts of the eternal Rock of Ages. In every age and every clime, and in all the difficult affairs of life, it has been decreed, and shall be brought to pass, that "the righteous shall hold on his way."

C. W. BOND.

TILTON, Wash., Oct. 10, 1932.

ELDER J. T. BARNES—DEAR BROTHER:—I had hoped I would be able to see all of you during the three days' meeting there, but guess it will not be possible. I know I do not deserve so great a pleasure, and if I were allowed to be with you it would be through the Lord's mercy. My husband runs an apple packing shed on a big ranch near Naches every fall, and we have to live at the place in a little shack. It is about the only chance we have left to make a living, so we make the most of it. I have to work, too, but I have been thinking about the meeting at Touchet for a month. When I suggested giving up my work for a few days to come down there he thought it unreasonable. I understand how he feels about it, but

oh I want so much to come. Surely the brethren and sisters at Touchet are the most charitable of people or my name would have been removed from the church book long ago. I have always felt too unworthy to be numbered among them, but surely I have never felt more unworthy than I have this summer. Many times I have resolved to write a letter to the church and have been ashamed of my feeble attempts. This summer when I saw you at brother Hughett's and you took my hand, and with a sweet smile on your face said, "Why, it is sister Haan," just as if you were glad to see me, how down and unworthy, yet how happy I was. This summer while reading over the SIGNS of the past eight years, I was made to feel that I never should have joined the church at all. It seemed it was selfishness on my part, without a thought of the welfare of the church. I just loved them so much and longed to be with them. I wonder if I was too young and hasty then and the brethren are now too kind to tell me about it. Not that I have ever regretted it on my own account. I was so rebellious and undecided, and while I was telling my mother that I was not going some unseen force just pushed me right up to the front and I was telling of my little hope. Afterwards I knew such peace and such rest as I have never since known. I have my periods of rejoicing now, but not such sweet peace. It seemed that day the whole world was rejoicing with me and that the sunshine was pure gold. It was two weeks later that I was baptized, and in the meantime I had to attend school, and many times I would lay my head down on my desk to shut out worldly scenes and meditate on the beautiful new thing that had come into my life. The day I was baptized and all the brethren and sisters called me "Little Sister," it seemed my heart was melted within me. One dear old sister said, "I know just how you feel. You think that nothing can ever trouble you again." I was very much surprised that she knew what my thoughts were.

There are many things I would like to talk with you about, but I am afraid my letter is tiresome. Often I am comforted by reading letters of others who feel their unworthiness, while at other times I feel I am not like them at all. They only see themselves as vile because they are humble, while I not only see myself that way, but I really am.

I hope you and sister Barnes are in good health. Please remember me to all the brethren and sisters, and tell them I will surely be with them at the Union meeting, if God wills.

Unworthily,

BEATRICE HAAN.

CULLISON, Kansas.

DEAR EDITORS AND FRIENDS:—Time to renew my subscription and a desire to be remembered are the reasons I offer for my appearance before you at this time. Several things in the twelfth chapter of Acts have interested my mind. It is now near the time of our rather fleeting and imaginary Easter, and as this twelfth chapter is the only place where we find the word

"Easter," it occurred to me that many people to-day might find themselves in this picture so nicely drawn by the gospel writer so many hundred years ago. Several acting characters play a part in this scene. King Herod and the Lord's called apostles seem to be the contending, or opposite, parties. They each have their friends to aid their cause. Those trying to keep the feast of the passover supper given the sons of Jacob in Egypt. These were pleased with the killing of James, the brother of John. Many in our land will soon be trying to celebrate that feast day. Not because they or their ancestors were ever led out of Egypt, and not that the blood of the paschal lamb was sprinkled on their door posts, but they are denying that Christ is come in the flesh, and are looking to another king and another god. They often deny many things declared by the apostle Luke in this chapter. They would still like to have their sixteen soldiers hold the chains on Peter. But what if this statement of the deliverance of Peter be true, and their king lose his prey and themselves their expectations? Even if they make peace with him to save their own lives, as did those of Tyre and Sidon, if their king is subject to worms they will lose their god. Now, there is another group, the church, whom their Herod stretched forth his hand to vex. This church prayed without ceasing to God for Peter, and when God by his angel had answered their prayers Peter continued knocking at their door until taken in. Where are we in this picture? Oh where am I? After looking somewhat hopefully and also fearfully through this historical chapter for a part and portion in this act, I will ask the reader to allow me a place in the last part of the seventeenth verse as one of the "brethren" to whom these things were shown. If we have a Bible this chapter tells the truth, and of a truth God sent his angel and delivered the preacher of the truth from the hands of those who had him in prison. God has (and will always) so defended his gospel that it will be hid from the wise and prudent and be revealed unto his babes, that "little flock."

I am sending in this letter a three dollar money order, two dollars is for subscription and one dollar to help.

E. G. WEBB.

FLETCHER, Okla., Feb. 8, 1933.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am again reminded that I am behind with my subscription to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I have a desire to address a few lines to you, though it is with pain and sorrow that I make the attempt, as all my fingers on both my hands are frostbitten. Yesterday, the seventh day of February, was my birthday, when I passed the seventy-third milestone in my earthly pilgrimage. I went to feed my team and my pigs, and while I was shocking corn I became suddenly blind and very sick. The ground being covered with snow I

fell twice, and the last time I fell I was so sleepy I could hardly get up, but some mysterious power seemed to urge me to make one more attempt to regain my feet. I tried to call my good life companion to my assistance, but could not speak a word. I was made to know I was freezing to death, and made an effort to get up though I was very sleepy. After getting on my feet I staggered and stumbled along until I got to the house. My good wife came and opened the door and led me to a seat. I was deathly sick and was jerking all over. Wife held me until I quieted enough for her to telephone for help, then she bathed my hands in ice water and made me some strong coffee, which gave me great relief. Then three of my grown sons arrived. Dear brethren, I feel this experience has taught me a good lesson. I am sorrow-stricken because I have been so unmindful of God's love and mercy manifested to me, the chief of sinners. I am also grieved because I know I have not treated the publishers as I would have them treat me, or rather as they have treated me, for I have received my paper regularly; I have not missed even one copy. The editorial in the last issue of the SIGNS, written by Elder Dodson, is worth the price of a year's subscription. Dear editors, I am herewith sending my subscription. If I were able I would send two years' subscription, but I only made one and one-half bales of cotton last year and received but six cents a pound for it. My age forbids my getting employment on the public works in this part of the country, but, the Lord willing, I will plant and cultivate another crop. Israel's God will at the appointed time stop this depression that has caused so many people to suffer.

Dear brother Dodson, please give your views through the SIGNS on the fourteenth verse of the fifth chapter of Ephesians, which reads as follows, "Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Dear brother, I want you to know that your editorial in the last SIGNS was read with comfort and satisfaction by me, a poor old sinner, saved by grace if saved at all.

Dear editors if you publish this poor attempt in the SIGNS please correct all errors. Pray for me, a poor worm of the dust,

L. E. SKINNER.

TOUCHET, Wash., April 11, 1933.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I desire to thank all who so kindly remembered me with their good letters while I was so blind I could not answer, also I desire to thank the editors and publishers of the dear old SIGNS. I have hope of being able to answer some of the good letters, as I am now able to read a few lines at a time, the first in more than a year. I truly hope you will still remember me with your good epistles of love.

Yours in bonds of the gospel,

J. T. BARNES.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1933.

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HEBREWS IV. 4-6.

"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

An inquirer living in Arkansas has been perturbed by this text and has asked us to give our views upon it. It is often the case that Satan takes advantage of the believer's ignorance of the meaning of Scripture in order to torment one with it. The word tells us that Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. (2 Cor. xi. 14.) This is one of the many guises assumed by the adversary of our souls in order to plague us with doubts as to the genuineness of our hope and of the security of our salvation. However, whenever Satan uses Scripture to worry us, he never gives the true interpretation, but always wrests it from its content and context to suit his own ends. At the start, let us be sure that the word of God is never at any time nor in any place inconsistent with itself. The Scriptures are one harmonious whole and are to be so accepted. If it is made to appear that one passage contradicts some other passage, it is because the contradiction is in our own minds. When rightly seen in the light of the Holy Spirit, the word is discovered to be in complete harmony. It is a fundamental point of Bible doctrine that those for whom Jesus died are safe for time and for eternity. Their salvation cannot be affected by anything they do or say. Since salvation from sin and all its consequences is effectively accomplished in the sacrificial atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ entirely independent of the believer's will or efforts, therefore the believer's being effectually kept in the way of salvation to be ultimately housed in glory, is also entirely independent of the believer's will or efforts. Since salvation is wholly by grace, the free and unmerited favor of God whose divine justice has been completely satisfied in the cross of Christ, the preservation of the believer all along the way to future glory is likewise wholly of grace. Therefore, the true child of God cannot fall out of the Savior's atonement, cannot perish from the presence of the Almighty God whose eternal Son paid the precious price for that child's redemption. This

is exactly what the apostle is proving in this sixth chapter of Hebrews. The writer describes those who cannot fall away as follows:

1. Those who were once enlightened.
2. Those who have tasted of the heavenly gift.
3. Those who were made partakers of the Holy Ghost.
4. Those who have tasted the good word of God.
5. Those who have tasted the powers of the world to come.

It is utterly impossible for the above described characters to fall away from the effective work of salvation accomplished for them by the Son of God. To be enlightened is to be lighted up within one's self by the revelation that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life and that only by him must we come to God. To be thus illuminated is to be shown by the teaching, not of men, but of the Holy Spirit, that salvation is wholly by grace through Jesus Christ and entirely without the works of the law on our part. The light, which in the beginning shown out of darkness, shines at God's command in the sinner's heart to illuminate him, thus opening the eyes of his understanding to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent, whom to know is life eternal to the one thus illuminated. It is to know by revelation, as did Simon Peter, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Can such an one ever fall away and perish from that salvation? It is plain to be seen that such falling away is impossible. If such a thing could be, it would require a fresh crucifixion of Christ to renew that one again to repentance: and if the first crucifixion was not effective to secure such a character from falling away, would there be any assurance that a second crucifixion would be any more effective? To say that such an one could fall away would be to put Christ to an open shame. Why? Because, if such could fall away after having been saved by Christ, would it not be an admission that his shed blood was spilt in vain? Therefore, to even think of such a thing, much less to say such a thing, as that one once illuminated or enlightened to know the truth can fall away, is to blaspheme the holy Son of God.

Those who "have tasted of the heavenly gift." Believing is eating. Hence, tasting is believing. Peter tells us that if we have tasted that the Lord is gracious, let us desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby. (1 Peter ii. 2, 3.) Tasting that the Lord is gracious comes by way of our believing that his grace saves us, and believing comes by faith and faith is the gift of God. Where the Spirit quickens the dead sinner into life through Christ, that one believes by the operation of faith within his soul that he is saved by free and sovereign grace. Jesus Christ is God's unspeakable gift to his lost and ruined children in Adam. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John iii. 16. Can it be possible, then, for these who have tasted of God's heavenly gift of his Son to them,

to ever fall away? No. If such could be, it would mean that Christ would have to die again, thus confessing his first work not to have been efficacious, thus putting him to the open shame of having failed in what he came to do.

Those who "were made partakers of the Holy Ghost." After the close of the earthly life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ and after his ascension into heaven the Holy Ghost was sent upon the believing church in such a way that they were baptized in the Holy Ghost. The Spirit was in them and they were in the Spirit, completely immersed in this third Person of the Trinity and completely filled and indwelt by this Holy Person. From the day that this Holy Ghost came from heaven to dwell in the people of God in this grace age and until this day in which we are now living, each and every true believer, as well as the whole invisible church collectively, has been dwelt in by the Holy Ghost so that all who constitute the true body of the Lord Jesus Christ are partakers of the Holy Ghost. Can any such fall away from this security? If such could be the case, there is no such thing as salvation or security anywhere in the universe. Even to think such a thing makes a true believer blush for shame to think of the scandal that would be upon the cross of Christ could he have failed in his perfect work.

Those who "have tasted the good word of God." The word of God is the Scriptures. The believer finds nourishment for his soul in the word of God, the word of God becomes his food. Such an one cannot live by mere earthly bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. The Scriptures are the inspiration of the Holy Ghost and for the thorough furnishing of the child of God unto every good work. The Scriptures through faith make one wise unto salvation. They are for the believer's teaching, for his correction, for his reproof and for his instruction in the way of righteousness. Hence, if one is taught doctrine through the Scriptures, if one is corrected or reproved or instructed by them in a saving and in a living way, then such an one must be a child of God or the Scriptures would not have that salutary effect in his life. To have the Holy Spirit take the biblical record of Jesus and open it out unto our understanding is to taste the good word of God. Can it be thought for one moment that such can fall away from the saving power of God that holds them and be lost from it? No. Again, we repeat that if such could fall away, nothing short of a repetition of Christ's work could save them. Such cannot be, because by the one offering of himself, Jesus has forever perfected them that are sanctified. (Heb. x. 14.) Hence, the impossibility of their ever falling away. There is a world of difference between falling on the deck of a ship and falling off the deck of a ship. If one falls off the deck of a ship, he is drowned; if one falls on the deck of a ship, he may hurt himself, but he cannot be lost from the ship. Just so, in the believer's life and walk there are many stumblings, but he always falls

ON the Rock that saves him, never does he fall OFF it.

Those who have "tasted the powers of the world to come." There is another world coming other that this one we are now in. We are looking for it, longing for it and are hastening on to it: a new creation, a new earth and a new heavens in which shall dwell righteousness forever. Those who are by God ordained unto this glorious new world of glory already have tasted of the powers of it in their soul's experience here. Believers have received the earnest, or foretaste, of that coming world. Peter, James and John in the mount with Jesus saw Christ transfigured before them, saw Moses and Elias appear with him, heard the voice of God acclaim Jesus his only Son whom they were to hear. Thus did these three disciples taste in the transfiguration scene the powers of the world that is coming at some future time when the redeemed shall be gathered from the dead and into it. What a glorious prospect is before them who fear and reverence God Almighty through his Son and by the Holy Spirit! These have a good hope through grace: hope that is both desire and expectation, kindled within them as an earnest, a God-given pledge, of that which shall be fully and forever theirs some day. As surely as God has implanted in our hearts the foretaste of that better world, so surely he will not disappoint the hope which he has wrought. God cannot deny himself, he cannot go back on his own work. It is he, and no one else, who has begun the good work in his people and he will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ, unto that day when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven in person to take his ransomed people home. Can it be thought for one moment that these can fall away, these who have already tasted in their soul's present experience of grace, the powers of the world to come? No, never. Such are kept by the power of God unto the decisive hour when his judgments shall be made known in bringing forth truth unto victory, when it shall be sung by all the angels and by all the redeemed: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

The writer in Hebrews, sixth chapter, instead of teaching that those once saved are in danger of falling away, is proclaiming just the opposite, the utter impossibility of their falling away; because if they could fall away, it would necessitate Christ's dying again and would be an open or public confession that his first work was a failure. There is no failure in him. He is declared to be the Son of God with power by his resurrection from the dead. Nothing can pluck us out of his hands. Doubtless, he went forth weeping, bearing precious seed, in the time of his incarnation in the flesh, but he will without fail come again with rejoicing bringing his sheaves with him. "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Have we not already had a taste of the glorious and wonderful power that is to characterize the world yet to come? Does

not the taste make us yearn longingly for the fullness? "If such the sweetness of the streams, what must the fountain be?"

We hope that if our inquirer who asked us to write upon this subject has had any doubts about the safety and security of God's elect from ever falling away, that such doubts may be banished by a faithful perusal of the word of God. Christ answered the tempter by quoting the word of God, and there is no better way to vanquish the tempter when he comes against our souls than by the sword of God. Satan fears "Thus saith the Lord." May all doubting souls be blest to wield against this adversary the sword of the Lord and of Gideon.

H. H. L.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

WHEN remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it. By referring to these dates you can tell to just what time your subscription is paid. Dec. 31 means your subscription expired December, 1931; June 32 means your subscription expired June, 1932; Dec. 32 that it expired December, 1932, etc.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

E. G. Webb, Kans., $1; Mrs. W. S. Johnson, N. Y., $2; Mrs. H. A. Strube, Texas, $2; H. N. Hoskins, Ky., $1; Dr. J. B. Garrison, N. J., $3; Mrs. E. L. Hulse, N. Y., $1; Mrs. L. N. Henry, Miss., $1; T. J. Ratliff, Ky., $3; R. W. O'Neal, Texas, $1.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

FRANCES HILL GARRISON died February 25th, 1933, after a very short illness. She was a daughter of David Stout and Ann Sutphin Hill, and was born June 6th, 1851, at Marshall's Corner, New Jersey. At the age of twenty years she married W. H. Riley, and for two years lived in Hopewell, N. J., then moved to East Orange, and later to Jersey City, N. J., where her husband engaged in business. Her husband became incapacitated after a few years and she was forced to provide for the family, which she did until he died. She had two daughters, Olive, who married Joseph Neiman, and Edith, who married Augustus Girard, and made her home with the latter, until the sudden death of Olive, who left three small children, whose care and responsibility now came upon her, and leaving her home with her daughter she gave her time to the welfare of the children, although it meant years of hard labor to do so. She united with the New School Baptists, but later found they did not represent her belief and she resigned. November 9th, 1921, she married Dr. John B. Garrison, and they made their home in Hopewell, N. J., where she remained until death. She was a regular attendant at the meetings of the Old School Baptist Church in Hopewell, but could never feel ready to ask for a place with them, although she loved to be with those who believed only in the grace of Jesus Christ as the means by which sinners may be saved. She leaves a sorrowing husband, a daughter, Mrs. Girard, and a granddaughter, Mrs. Marjorie Van Ness.

On Wednesday, March 1st, 1933, her funeral was conducted in the Old School Baptist Church by Elder C. W. Vaughn, who spoke with much power and comfort to the relatives and friends who were present in large numbers, after which the body was deposited in the Old School Baptist Cemetery to await the summons to rise and be with the Redeemer, we hope, for evermore.

Written by her husband,

J. B. GARRISON.

NORA E. HASTINGS was born February 13th, 1869, near Delmar, Delaware, and died at her home, near Gumboro, Sussex County, Delaware, March 16th, 1933, at the age of 64 years, 1 month and 3 days. She is survived by her husband, Ananias Hastings, to whom she was married February 17th, 1892, in Salisbury, Maryland, by the late Elder A. B. Francis. She joined the Little Creek Church, of the Primitive Baptist faith, in the year 1986, and was baptized by Elder A. B. Francis. To this union were born five children, three sons and two daughters, four of whom survive. They are Elijah W. Hastings, Richmond, Va., Lester F. Hastings, Gumboro, Del., Blanche E. Bethards, Philadelphia, Pa., and Howard B.

Hastings, University of Alabama, also five grandchildren.

BROTHER Hastings handed me the above records, asking that I prepare an obituary for sister Hastings. I shall only add to the records, given by him, such as should be said of her. She was a genuine Old School Baptist, loving the truth in its purity. The order of the house meant much to her. She was seldom absent from her home church when able to attend. Her home was open to her friends and the church; it was one of her greatest pleasures to entertain. Her last sickness was of short duration and her death was a great shock to her family and friends, as she was improving and the doctor had said it would not be necessary for him to come again, but a heart attack took her away.

The funeral service was held in the Smith Mills meeting-house, near Delmar, Delaware, conducted by the writer. The house did not begin to hold the relatives and friends who had gathered to pay their last tribute of respect to her. Interment took place in the cemetery adjoining. We shall all miss her and deeply sympathize with brother Hastings and the children.

H. C. KER.

MEETINGS.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

It is with deep regret we are compelled to announce that there will not be any session of the Baltimore Association this year. The financial condition in general, which is so well known that it needs no explanation, is the direct cause for our not holding a session this year. We are hoping for a more favorable condition in the year 1934, at which time we will be able to announce the time and place of the 1934 session.

Done by order of the Baltimore and Harford Churches.

D. L. TOPPING.

I am directed by the Clerk of Salem Church, after a business meeting held by them April 1st, 1933, to say that after due reflection, and having no support from Welsh Tract Church or Rock Springs Church regarding financial support from either, that there will be no session of Delaware Association during the year 1933. The depression has reduced all concerned in their financial condition, and we feel this the best course to pursue, regretting it has to be done.

Done and directed by order of Salem Church, April 1st, 1933.

JOHN B. MILLER,
Clerk Delaware Association.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Church of Hopewell, Mercer County, New Jersey, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 31st and June 1st and 2nd, 1933, commencing at 10:30 a. m. Daylight Saving Time. All lovers of the truth, especially our ministering brethren, are invited to be with us without further notice. Train and bus service from all points.

DAVID M. VOORHEES, Church Clerk,
R. 1, PENNINGTON, New Jersey.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, before the second Sunday in June (7th, 8th and 9th), 1933. Those coming from and via New York City will take Erie R. R. Ferry foot of West 23rd Street or Chambers Street for train leaving Jersey City. Get tickets for Howells, N. Y. Those coming from and via Kingston, N. Y., will get tickets for Winterton, N. Y. Trains will be met and friends cared for. Time of trains will be announced later, when new schedules will be effective. Those coming by automobile will please stop at Howells station and inquire the way to Mrs. L. W. Blumroeder's house, which is only a short distance from the station. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, sisters and friends.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Union Meeting of the Old School Baptist Churches of eastern Washington and Oregon and western Idaho will be held with Mizpah Church, located at Touchet, Washington, commencing on Friday before the fourth Sunday in June, and continuing over Sunday, which will be June 23rd, 24th and 25th.

J. T. BARNES, Moderator.
WOODSON CUMMINS, Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church will meet (D. V.) every second Sunday at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California; every third Sunday at 521 West Nevada Street, Ontario, California; every fourth Sunday at 3516 Franklin Avenue, Riverside, California.

W. L. SLUSHER.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of sister N. J. Preston, 116 Center Street, Oregon City, Oregon, at 10:30 a. m. Those coming by stage, steam train or electric car get off at Seventh Street, take elevator to top of the hill, cross trestle over railway tracks, turn to the right, go two blocks on Sixth Street to Center Street, thence five and one-half blocks south on Center Street to 116, house number, between First and Second Streets. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Moderator.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 808 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one-half block west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Little Flock Church now meets for worship at our home, 2211 Fifth Street, Riverside, California, the third Sunday of each month, at 10:30 a. m.

J. W. HAYNES.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 101. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1933. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MEPHIBOSHETH.

I REMEMBER the oath that David made to my father (1 Sam. xx. 14-17). How that for my father Jonathan's sake he would show him the kindness of the Lord, and would show it to his house forever; and, also, when David was in hiding for his life, from my grandfather King Saul, how my father visited him in his stronghold in the wilderness of Ziph, and there they renewed their covenant. Since then my father was slain with my grandfather in the battle on Mount Gilboa. David escaped the sword of my grandfather, King Saul, and has succeeded him to the throne. Will now David the king remember his oath to my father, that he will show the kindness of the Lord to my father's house? But am I worth remembering? Here I am, lame, cannot walk, a lifetime cripple, an object of charity and a charge on the hands of my friend Machir in Lodebar. My life is but a trial of the patience of my friend; he would be the better were I dead. I know that I can be but a burden. But, notwithstanding all this, oh how I love King David for my dear father's sake, because he loved him as his own soul. Is it not that love that made the oath? Will David keep it? Why should he? I am not worth the keeping of it. Were I one of the valiants in David's kingdom it would make the oath a matter worth keeping. Does David love me for my father Jonathan's sake? I cannot see why he should. It would be a mystery, and yet I know that love is also a mystery, seeking and resting on the most unworthy objects. It is for this reason only that I can be remembered of David for the oath's sake. But now the king is too busy with the great affairs of his newly acquired kingdom to think on the oath, or I on whom the covenant rests; and should he, it would be the least of his kingly interests and undertakings. Although the covenant guarantees David's favorable consideration of myself, yet I would not regard

the king as unfaithful should he annul the oath he made to my father, because I am sole surviver of my father's posterity, and am but a dead dog in the sight of the king. Thus Mephibosheth thinks of himself, debases himself and esteems himself quite upworthy of any favorable consideration that the covenant secures to him from his father's inseparable friend. But, as Mephibosheth thinks so of himself, David, the king, esteems Mephibosheth in a wonderfully different way. The covenant that went out of his mouth straight to Jonathan's heart he resolved to perform. He will make it the weightiest matter in the conduct of the kingdom of Israel. The kingdom would sooner fail than this his oath. So David sends for Mephibosheth. He falls on his face and does reverence. David breaks to him the unexpected and glad tidings that he is now to receive at his hands the kingdoms of the Lord for Jonathan his father's sake. Oh thou faithful friend of my father, does that unbroken friendship rest upon me? It surely does, yet I can be no better than a dead dog, yet thou hast bestowed this honor undeserved, that I shall eat bread continually at thy table the remainder of my unprofitable life. Accept my thanks, King David; it is all I have. My love and my devoted heart are thine; but what is that to thee? in and of myself alone. But as I cannot recompense thee, it affords me the greatest joy that thou art so doing unto me for my dear father's sake, in memory of the covenant between him and thee, and founded upon the love that passes the love of women. I know, therefore, with what cheerfulness and with what freedom I shall be served at thy royal table all my days. No slackening or diminishing of the love that sustains that covenant. Neither shall the dainties of thy kingly board be less bountiful and free, for could this come to pass, the fountains of the oceans and the springs of the seas could more surely cease to flow.

Now, dear readers, do you find yourselves about like Mephibosheth in his relationship to his fast, protecting and sustaining friend, King David? He is your faithful literal type. Your spiritual David took you up when you could not take another step. He brought you to his banqueting-house. His banner over you bore the insignia of love. Although unprofitable and lame, you are the blest offspring of God and the beneficiaries of his covenant of love, grace and mercy. It is good for you, dear readers, that you descended from a covenanted stock. It is serving you better than your feet could do, or you as a sinner deserve, for when you lost your self-supporting, walking ability then, and not until then, you became a real, lowly, mourning Mephibosheth. You can now receive the graces and benefits of your spiritual David's house in real true godly humility. Do you see your likeness in Mephibosheth as if he were a mirror, completely disrobed of all your unrighteousness? That is God's work, that his grace and glory through Christ, your spiritual David, may rest upon you as the meek of the earth.

You must become impotent in the loss of all your fleshly abilities, so that you cannot carry yourselves another step, and then David's house is yours. Now that all the good of Israel's kingdom is secured to Mephibosheth he meditates thus: Not the least of all these royal favors have I merited, none of them do I deserve, yet how greatly I need them all. They are gracious gifts, undeserved and unsought. Incomparably more pleasant and soul-satisfying than was my temporary abode with my kind friend Machir in Lodebar. Here that covenant of love has made me a lifetime resident of the city of David. There, it was at best, but a time of waiting to see what to-morrow might bring to me. Succession of days brought me no assurance of future bliss, the present day was all I could claim as my own. The next, and my stay with Machir, though kind and welcome, might be ended. But here assurance forever. David, kind friend, nourisher and preserver of my soul. Let no grateful anthem ascend with sweeter chords of solemn praise than mine for thee. Readers, Mephibosheth portrays your travel from the wilderness to your exalted abode in the Zion of your God, the militant church of Christ which he set up on earth. Wisdom builded this house (Proverbs, ninth chapter) over nineteen hundred years ago, and her maidens (gospel ministers) have been preaching good tidings to the simple (Verse 4) ones, the little children, since that time. Jesus is bringing the Mephibosheths from the uttermost parts of the Gentile world and adding them to the churches, that they may be saved from this present evil world. You Mephibosheths are the people that God has formed for himself to show forth his praise. (Isaiah xliii. 21.) Mephibosheth was David's special care. The riches of David's kingdom contributed to his support. The riches of God's kingdom supply your every need as you eat the bread of the broken body of Christ and drink his blood, for his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed. He has washed you from all your filthiness and clothed you with his robe of righteousness. Having done all for you, you find yourself asking this question, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?"—Psalms cxvi. 12.

Dear editors, I had to write on this subject to get it off my mind. It may not be worth its room in the SIGNS, if not, consign it to the waste-basket and I shall be satisfied.

Yours very unworthily,

J. I. FOSTER.

RISING STAR, Texas, Jan. 25, 1932.

WALLACETOWN, Ontario, Oct. 27, 1932.

DEAR ELDER AND MRS. RUSTON:—In order that I may deliver this letter into your hands to-night I shall take the opportunity of writing to you now, although I had hoped to have written earlier in the week. Trusting you may not be wearied, I shall begin immediately to relate to you my reason for coming before the church on Sunday. Should I repeat occurrences which I have already made known to you, kindly remember that I do so in order

that this letter may be complete on the subject on which I write.

When I was a child of perhaps eight years of age, there seemed to be upon me a peculiar sense of my sinfulness. What prompted this feeling I cannot say. Perhaps it was not unnatural, but when it took hold of me it seemed very strong, and caused me to pray earnestly that I might be relieved. I can still remember, distinctly, hurrying to the woods for the cows, before any one else might go, and, kneeling down by a large stone in the clearing, begging forgiveness for my many sins. Then, lest my people would begin to think I had been away over-long, I would hastily collect the cows and return home. At other times I would go away to bed, alone, and there beg for mercy, in my childish way, until I would fall asleep. This "sense of sin" which I had when very young, seemed to gradually develop into more than a mere sense as I grew older, for at the age of fifteen or sixteen, while in the garden, such a strong realization of my wickedness before God, yes, and man also, came over me that I can recall praying almost constantly as I worked that I might not be such a wretched person. In the midst of my misery I turned and looked upward and a face full of great tenderness seemed to appear before me for the most fleeting moment. I thought it to be the face of Jesus, and my burden was gone. Regarding that incident, I sometimes wonder if it was not the result of an overwrought mind. It is not impossible that it might have been.

Concerning what I believe, Elder Ruston, was the last visit you made here, at our home, before definitely coming to Canada, I have a particularly happy memory. If you are able to recall that visit you will remember that you were here with Mildred Gordy and Annie McColl over Sunday night of the May meeting. On Monday morning, before going to meeting, you and the others were conversing on religious matters. Just what the main topic of conversation was I cannot recall, but its effects upon me have never been erased from my memory. Before leaving the house I managed to slip away for a few minutes, and during that interval the joy that I had experienced in hearing His name so beautifully spoken about, as it seemed it was, burst from my lips in the words of the hymn, "O thou in whose presence my soul takes delight." Even on my return home from the meeting my enraptured state of mind had not taken flight. So strongly, in fact, did it have me in its power that on going out of doors into the sunshine one of the neighbors called to me by way of greeting and I dared not answer, for by doing so it would have seemed that my peace of mind would have been rudely interrupted. Towards evening, however, I had to part with this comforting attitude, and as I saw it slipping inevitably away I was most sorrowful, but could only stand and gaze on its departure, filled with astonishment, and longing that it should not go. Up until my year in London I cannot remember being distinctly taken in hand

again. During that year, as never before (that is, to the same degree) or since, did I come terrifically under the burden of sin at times. It seemed to be like a haunting ghost, present when I lay down at night, present in the morning and present throughout the day, during the times when it dropped upon me. To find relief in myself was out of the question, for my very being seethed in sin, and was not my heart bare before God, so that he could perceive its thoughts and intents, even when they were afar off? Certainly it was, and that was why I suffered. What a sight he could see! At one time in particular, while very much troubled because of my unsightly condition, I tried to place myself among my fellow-men, and came to the conclusion that I was even worse than one who passionately delights in the things of the world, for (and here is a point that made me shudder) having tasted of God's hand, and having realized whose hand was continually blessing me, I was as one who knew him not, and therein was my sin greater than theirs. Sometimes I would receive a little comfort in seeing the burden being gently removed, but often, as time went on, and I seemed to be floating easily with the world again, would I long for its return, for in its presence I seemed to lean so heavily on him, and in that way, at least, was I made to see the vital necessity of his being close to me, else I perish. Gradually I came to realize the manner in which I spent my days. First, a grieving because of sin, and a longing that God would remove it; secondly, its removal, and sometimes my thanksgiving to God for his having removed it; thirdly, a luke-warm attitude towards religious matters; and fourthly, a cold, unfeeling state of mind, which in time produced terror that I should be in this state, then a rehearsal until I would become almost desperate, and would beg that God would stay close to me, and that my burden, when it came, would not be removed unless his presence would succeed. Through the periods of coldness of heart I could not have been made to believe by any one living that God had not left me forever, and that I had been deceived in thinking that I had ever had any share in his notice, for if I had, why was I thus? Even when I would believe I saw his hand blessing me here, and relieving my distress there, I was absolutely unable to remember his past kindnesses when freshly afflicted, and wait patiently for his return again. I felt that he never would return each time that I felt he had gone. It was this condition I referred to on Sunday when I said that my latest comforts (at that time) were of no consolation in my newest grief. I must constantly see fresh evidences of his interest, and love, if he could have such for me. Now, however, it is different, in a way. I feel to have something to look back upon which, since its occurrence, has never, upon my reflecting upon it, failed to give me comfort, strength and courage, even in the most tempted moments. Perhaps I associate too great a degree of importance to what I am about to acquaint you with. In

any case, I feel that it would have been under a vastly increased distress of mind that I should have appeared before the church if I had not the memory of the following experiences, or their equivalent, so present to buoy me up. Early this spring, when at one time I happened to be reading in the Psalms, I came again upon that chapter, or chapters, where David so frequently repeats the sentence, "For his mercy endureth forever." I wondered for some time just what attitude David must, of necessity, be in to necessitate his constant repetition of this one fact. I could, I thought, understand its being repeated two or three times, but further than that I could not comprehend his reason to its fullness. Not long after these reflections had passed through my mind, I dreamed that I had been reduced to tremendous disgrace before the world, to say nothing of what it would seem before God, who had so constantly blessed me in so many, many ways. Under the burden of my guilt my head and shoulders seemed to be bowing prematurely, and I felt very, very helpless. In the morning the memory of the dream seemed to have been wiped out until an hour or two had passed. But then how it flooded in upon me, and how I grew dizzy with gratitude to God for having so mercifully kept me, that my dream was not true, and for his many infinite blessings. Could I doubt for a moment now why David had seen fit to repeat so often, "For his mercy endureth forever"? No, I could not. The expression went over and over in my mind, until having grown unusually disturbed by my emotions, and imploring that if God was in this matter to make me feel as I did, I prayed that if he was he would return again some time in like manner as a sign of his presence, at this time. In this I prayed as I have never been able to pray before, without the slightest doubt that my prayer would be answered. Nor had I long to wait, for scarcely two weeks having elapsed, on one beautiful spring morning the answer fell upon me. It came at a moment when I was thinking of what I had prayed for some days previously and totally unexpected at that time. It came in the form of sudden, captivating joy. It dropped upon me, permeating my very being like a strong perfume. My heart went out in love and gratitude to God. Had I wings I could have flown away. I could have run and not been weary, could have sung his praises, could have danced through ecstasy, could almost feel his presence near me. Now I no longer wondered at David dancing, for the spirit that possessed him must, I felt, be upon me at this time. He, too, felt greatly rejoiced in God and in his Savior. Did I fail to realize the reason for my attitude? No. It was the answer of my former prayer, and differed in one way from the former experience (if such) only as gratitude differs from joy.

How gladly would I omit some of the following, for it is most grievous even to remember. First, however, I must tell you that the last incident related occurred about a month before

the May meeting. It never, at the time, entered my mind about saying anything to any one there about what I had passed through, until on Monday morning, when I heard you say something to the effect that any one who had ever tasted that the Lord is gracious might remain and relate their experience, did I ever really come to myself concerning the matter. At that time I felt that not to tell the church of the way in which I had thought I was led was simply "acting a lie," and I smarted under the accusation. However, you know the result. I lacked the courage to go before the members and was made to realize, before leaving the building, that my time had not yet come.

Now I come to the painful part to which I referred some time ago. Can you imagine that after passing through all I have related that I should drop into an ugly and indifferent attitude? It is exactly what I did. One day while in the woods gathering berries, the question came to my mind, Since you were not able to speak to the church at the May meeting, why do you not pray to be made able to join with the members again, soon? And my mental answer shocked me, even at that time: Why would I pray for something that I do not wish for? At that time I had a feeling of much guilt, upon the remembrance of the above occurrences in which I felt I saw His hand. After that horrible baring of my wicked heart it pleased God in his infinite and astounding mercy to bless me again. For the past month or so there have been times when a feeling of satisfaction regarding my future life has come over me. It seemed to be a settled matter and the two above and closely related incidents seemed to be such strong evidence of His interest in this miserable soul that I felt a certain calmness in the matter. One day the question dropped rather temptingly into my mind, Of what are you satisfied? To which the answer seemed ready, and came clearly to my mind, I am satisfied that my Redeemer liveth, and a peace came upon me which until almost now has never entirely left me. Upon these last three exercises of being (if I may thus refer to them) I have been made to look as upon an eternal monument, whose inscription might read, "In these places I have seen my deliverance."

At this point there comes to mind an incident that I did not mention heretofore. It is most closely connected with the time when I was burdened by the vileness of my sinful self. One night while sitting beside the fire and thinking of my condition, I seemed to have a momentary vision of myself in heaven. Although I had been granted this supreme privilege of being there I saw myself, quite clearly, down in a corner with bowed head, and I still carried my burden. I felt that my presence was contaminating, and if really there I was all unworthy, and less than the least present. I seemed to lose sight of the fact that God's children will all, undoubtedly, be on one plane in that day, and that through no effort of their own. And now, some-

times, I can scarcely realize it, I am in a new relationship to both of you and the others of the church. This afternoon and to-night I can scarcely believe but what there has been some mistake. I really feel that the members must have agreed to accept me more by outward conduct (which is none too good) than by actual worthiness of experience. Day before yesterday I wakened with the appalling thought that I was not going to consider my present position seriously enough. At this thought I prayed to be kept very low in humility. Through the day the words, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," and later, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," came comfortingly into my mind. Late in the afternoon, however, I was stormed by the thought that I had not done right in coming to the church, and that I had deceived the members. I wondered why my peace of mind should be thus sorely disturbed, but soon remembered that I had prayed to be made humble and my prayer was being answered. The day after the baptism, at one time a terrible loneliness came over me, and I realized what Edna meant a few days ago when she said how alone she felt after her baptism as far as having some one right at hand to unburden her joys and sorrows to. In this attitude home seemed a very, very pleasant place to go to, and I could not help wishing to be there, as the last lines of the hymn "Home, sweet home" dropped soothingly into my mind. Later in the day, however, (I told you before how and why) my attitude in this matter changed. To-night at church, or meeting, I felt at times as though I should be placarded with the words, "There has been a mistake in me, in regard to my baptism," but now, as I end this long, long letter to you (though feeling all unworthy) He has given me a little joy, in that I may have been brought to confess His name openly, and have an increased love for those I believe I loved before. How much I long that my proud, vain spirit, mind and heart may never rise above the dust except to praise him.

You need not answer this letter on Friday, Elder Ruston, unless you are able to. Surely I have occupied enough of your valuable time already. I am sorry I did not have this letter ready for you at the meeting at St. Thomas to-night, but circumstances intervened.

I did not mention in the above that on our way over to Ekfrid last Sunday the Psalm beginning, "I'm not ashamed," came to me with comforting boldness. Such a different feeling from any I had ever had before concerning the words contained in that particular Psalm. Previously I could not sing it, in truth, and hence often did not sing parts of it at all.

I remain with the kindest and best wishes for you both,

MARGARET McCOLL.

St. Albans, W. Va., April 2, 1933.

Elder J. W. McClanahan—Dear Brother:—This is your meeting time at dear old Hopewell Church, and my mind seems to be particularly drawn to you and the little band of spiritual worshipers assembled together there. This morning as I have not the high privilege of meeting and greeting you at your place of worship (a place long endeared to me), I wish that I could be so blessed and directed of the Lord of hosts as to pour out some of the yearnings of my heart.

Your letter came to me as a choice gem, as a cup of cold water to a thirsty soul, and to think such a creature as I should hold a place in your love and fellowship, even that I should be remembered by you at all, fills me with a feeling that words fail to express. Truly the fellowship of the brethren is more to be desired than fine gold, and, personally, I had rather hold the love of the faithful in Christ Jesus than to be all that the world calls good and great. I know, dear brother, that I am not worthy of your love, but knowing this, I presume that your love is not based or governed by worth or merit of the creature, for has not one said of old that love covers a multitude of faults? and again, That many waters cannot quench love, and the floods cannot drown it? And truly Christ, our Elder Brother, that great Shepherd of the sheep, hath said, Greater love hath no man than that he lay down his life for his friends. So, dear brother, this great love of his, which love is everlasting, knows neither beginning nor end, is our covering, and this is what rescued us from danger and removed our guilt and took the stain away. Our sins (if truly we be the recipients of mercy) were borne in his own body on the tree of the cross, and were put away by the sacrifice of himself, to be remembered against us no more forever. What he hath done shall be forever, no undoing or amending his works by bringing in creature effort, conditionalism or any other form of arminianism, regardless of how plausible it may seem to the carnal mind. So to just the measure that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts do we forbear one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. All the love we have or feel in our breasts for each other is the fruit of the Spirit, and instead of us controlling or exercising it, it controls and exercises us, and governs our actions toward each other.

Early this morning, while walking in our garden noting the evidences of life on every hand, as the plants were invigorated by the gentle showers and the bright sunshine of this beautiful spring morning, I was made to drink in some of the beauties of nature, and after my return to the house I said that I had been in the garden, but not in His garden of spices. Somehow I was filled with a yearning after this garden of spices, the garden of the Lord. Oh how I was filled with love and wonder! How amazing are the works of the Lord and how past finding out are his ways! This garden that I was made to think upon Solomon was made to view

her as a garden inclosed (fenced), a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. I was made to view you brethren over there as a portion of his garden, fenced with the wills and shalls of Jehovah, his fixed and unalterable purposes, the immutability of his will, his sure and never-failing promises, and sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, the earnest of your hope. Here, precious brother, it is that you receive the spirit of adoption, whereby you cry, Abba, Father. But now alas you are waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. The One who declared in his word, This people have I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise, also hath said, My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew. We know that the falling of the literal rain is from a cloud that the Lord of hosts has brought upon the horizon, so just as surely does the Lord bring all the clouds from whence his doctrine drops. You know when Elijah prayed for rain there was seen a little cloud, about the size of a man's hand, and from this the famished earth was watered. How beautiful are the types and figures, also the distilling of dew is what keeps alive vegetation during periods of drought, so His speech (the still small voice) distils as the dew, keeps your soul from famishing in the desert.

The above was written this morning, I was here interrupted and now night has once more fallen on the earth by the swift movement of time. Your meeting is now over, and while I feel my leanness much indeed, yet I feel that I would love to say a few words more to ease my mind.

I truly hope your health is better. I regret very much that I was unable to attend your meeting. Since I received your letter I had looked forward to this time, hoping to have the privilege of meeting you, but so many things seemed to be in my way, and I did not feel physically able to stand the long walk. I am very closely tied down any way.

I realize that what I have here written has only hinted at the subjects, also my thoughts seem to have been disconnected. I hope you may bear with me and my many weaknesses. Write me again when you feel like it. I have thought of you often this winter and of your shut-in hours. Several times I have had a desire to write you on the subject of the resurrection of the dead, which is a most vital doctrinal subject, but I am so weak I fear I should not make the attempt. Our health is about as usual. Much love to you and all the faithful in Christ Jesus.

Yours in bonds,

HARVEY BIRD.

FAYETTE, Ala., Feb. 16, 1933.

DEAR BROTHER C. M. RUSHING:—I still remember your request that I give my views on Ezekiel, third chapter, nineteenth to twenty-third verses.

In the first place, I will say the book of Ezekiel, from the first chapter to and including the eleventh chapter, is made up, in the main, of visions, and also the justice of God in the enforcement of his just and holy law, and that

he will certainly mete out the just punishment for every transgression of the same. We should remember his laws were given to Israel, and it was Israel to whom Ezekiel was sent. When he got there he sat among them astonished for seven days, and at the end of that seven days the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me."—Ezek. iii. 17. We should remember that the prophet was sent to God's chosen people, and all the warnings and exhortations were to them and all the chastisements and curses were to be poured out upon them. "When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul."—Ezek. iii. 18-21. If we search the Bible carefully we will find that God's way of chastening nations for their wickedness has ever been wars, famine, pestilence and captivity, and at the time the above quotation refers to the whole world was in captivity under Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and Israel had been there for a number of years, and Judea was probably among the last of the kingdoms to be subjugated to this Babylonish world power, and they were doomed to spend seventy years in captivity. This world dominion of Nebudchadnezzar was phophesied of by Isaiah at least one hundred and forty years before the time spoken of by Ezekiel, as above quoted. (Isaiah x. 5-10; also Jeremiah, twenty-fifth chapter.) We must remember that the chastisement referred to in Ezekiel does not mean a sentence to eternal punishment. If it did we are lost, for he says, "All souls are mine; * * * the soul that sinneth, it shall die." If that means all souls that sin shall go to hell, we are all lost, for all have sinned. But God never pardons sin at the expense of justice. "Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict."—Job xxxvii. 23. In the case of every chosen "vessel of mercy" there was plenty of justice for them when their Redeemer was crucified, for he met all the demands of justice in their stead. But he told us, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world," which is as

much as to say, My victory over sin and the wicked one is your victory, I have paid your debt. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."—Rom. v. 19. The "one man" in this quotation is the first Adam, and the many that were made sinners by his disobedience are all his posterity. Moreover, the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded grace did much more abound. That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ. (Rom. v. 19-21.) All who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. (Rom. v. 17.) We gather from the last quotation that righteousness is a gift. It is what Jesus wrought out here on earth for his people, for all our righteousness is reputed as filthy rags.

The Jews were sent into captivity for seventy years as a punishment for idolatry and various other sins, but the punishment and death here spoken of does not mean eternal punishment, although some of them may have received that. For, They are not all Israel that are of Israel, neither because they are of Abraham's seed are they all children. If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed. So the negative would be, If ye are not Christ's ye are not Abraham's seed, nor heirs, nor have ye any interest in the promise, for God's promise is to Israel, and is, They all shall be saved. For the Deliverer shall come out of Sion, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob. But God says this promise, or covenant, applies only to those whose sins Jesus Christ bore, and he bore the sins of all that are Israelites indeed, or in the Spirit of the case. "For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." (And not before.) Jesus took away the sins of all his people. As quoted above, "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." The "many" that were made sinners by the disobedience of the first Adam are all his posterity, and the "many" that were made righteous by the obedience of the second Adam are all His posterity. "Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified." God is glorified in the person of every righteous person, for it is he that has made them righteous, by the imputation of the righteousness of Jesus Christ in them.

God ordained Ezekiel as a watchman over the house of Judah, to warn them of every approaching danger. The minister of to-day is set as a watchman over the church, and should be very careful to warn them of every approaching danger, and surely there never was a time when it was more important for the watchman to watch and warn God's dear children against the many false doctrines and systems than the present. Many of God's dear children are "falling from grace," and they are the only ones who can fall

from it, for they are the only ones who ever attain to it, and when they fall they begin immediately to preach this "conditional time salvation," or a salvation with a mixture of works with it, and that was just what led Judah into Babylon, and all the suffering they endured there. But all the time they were in Babylon they were God's chosen people as a nation. Certainly to cease preaching salvation by grace and go to preaching a mixture of grace and works for salvation is a great fall, and sometimes it takes a long time to get over it.

Brother Rushing, I hope you may get some good ideas from what I have written.

Dear editors, brother C. M. Rushing, of Sulligent, Alabama, asked me some two or three years ago to write, and I will ask you to publish it if you think proper.

It looks now as if the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is about to be the last sound periodical we have. I earnestly hope it continues. I am inclosing one dollar to use as you see fit.

Your brother, I hope,

G. W. BERRY.

COLUMBUS, Ga., June 10, 1932.

ELDER J. W. McCLANAHAN—DEAR BROTHER:—I received my SIGNS OF THE TIMES a few days ago, and in reading came to a short letter you had written brother Miller, of Newark, Delaware, saying you were feeling well at that time, etc., but felt to be a total wreck so far as doing any labor or going out among the churches of the associations. "Blessed be the tie that binds our christian hearts in one." You are waiting. Waiting until the Father calls, Child, come up higher. I, too, have hope that I am waiting his appointed time, for surely it cannot be much longer at best, as I am nearing seventy-eight years of age, my steps are growing feeble and hoary locks adorn my temples. We can but share each other's joys and sorrows, troubles and afflictions, for these were appointed us here and come much alike to all the Lord's people while passing through this time world. They have no abiding city here, but are seeking a city not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. If we be members of Christ's body we share all these things with one another, for all are members of one (Christ's) body. So all members of this body are in sympathy one with the other because of this pure love Christ Jesus shed abroad in our hearts, saying, Love ye one another as I have loved you. Men, cities and nations pass away, but we receive a kingdom that cannot be moved; its glory can never be tarnished and shall never end. All its pleasures and provisions are fixed and eternal. Thus while we feel everything belonging to ourselves and all things here unsatisfactory, all come short, yet in the blessed Savior, Christ Jesus, we find rest and comfort, sweet satisfaction is found for our needy souls. In him we are given all things.

Where you spoke in your letter to brother Miller you spoke of how for long years you rode on horseback over the mountains to the churches of your

care, preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ, comforting the precious brethren and sisters with the comfort wherewith you were comforted, you carried my memory back nearly seventy years, when but a little girl I went with my dear old mother to all her meetings (Old Baptist), when the dear old ministers would come to their appointed church meetings riding up on horseback, with saddle bags (they were called) containing their few necessary articles of clothing to last them through the time absent from home. Even then, brother, those dear men did look and seem lovely and good to me, though only a little girl, and I thought they sang the sweetest songs, and soon I learned the tunes, many of them and the words by memory, and up to this time (old age) I think them the sweet songs of Zion, and with my feeble voice love to sing them now, and I love to look back to those good old days, when it seemed every thing and all the people were more quiet and peaceful, more primitive in their ways, more easily satisfied, and more contented with the things they had. Now all seem to be in a state of restlessness and confusion, not contented with things as they are given us. Yea, brother, I fear we see some of these ways among our loved people. But God is ruling. All times are in his hand. He is sovereign over all people, all worlds, ruling in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. All things and people are fulfilling his wise purposes and decrees, and we read, All things work together for good to them that love the Lord, and for his glory. All power is the Lord's, so we are not to fret nor worry. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me."

Like yourself, brother, my days of visiting among the Baptists far away are ended. I have in the last twenty years taken many trips among the northeastern Baptists at their associations, and also down south in Alabama, but feel from now on to the end of my days I had better not attempt long trips. I, too, sit and watch for my mail. I try to talk with the loved ones with my pen. I feel my writing is poor and unprofitable, but feel to be given a desire to write many of the dear ones I have met face to face, and soon I receive a sweet message of love, a sweet token from the Lord, sent by a little one to me, and I am comforted. These precious messages cheer my drooping soul and lift me above time and time things.

Brother, as the days come and go, oh may we be made more and more steadfast in Israel's God, feeling him to be our only stay and hope. I have been made to more fully realize that this is God's world, and God's creatures here below, that all is taking place for good to his people and for his own glory. Yea, all things must and shall glorify him. All things were made by him and for him. All the glory is due him.

I pray you will pardon my scattering way. Throw the mantle of charity over all. After reading your good letter I just felt I wanted to write you a little bit. Christian love to you and

your dear companion. Remember me when at the throne of grace.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

HOLLYWOOD, California, Dec. 14, 1932.

DEAR FRIENDS AND BRETHREN (I hope):—And in the beginning I must say I also hope in the near future to write again, setting forth some material points of the doctrine of God our Savior, and our reasons for surely believing this doctrine. As the Scriptures have said, That which, or what, the record sayeth, and why the veil remains where Moses is read, and why it is manifest as taken away, where Christ, our antitypical law-giver, is revealed, since the law was given to Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. So the Law-giver is manifest as the one who fulfilled the law, satisfied its most exacting demands in behalf of those he represents, and he is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, for every one who believeth is (has been) born of God and knoweth God, even that God who is only known by revelation, and of whom the disciple did speak when he declared, He revealeth not himself unto the world. And during his humiliation Jesus himself declares the world cannot receive the Holy Ghost, or the God of all comfort, and surely the comfort is not found in setting at naught the above facts, but rather in a realization experimentally of the fact that he knoweth his own. He knoweth where they are, and he knoweth what they are in need of even before they ask him. And we are cautioned (in spite of a bedarkened and wandering mind, or our weakness and sinfulness) to believe that he is abundantly able to do much above anything we can ask or think. Such is the record, such is in keeping with the spirit and letter of the Scriptures, but for want of time and other reasons I must close, praying, or desiring, that God may be pleased to manifest himself as our keeper, for he is able to keep us from falling and present us faultless, with exceeding joy, before his throne, the throne of his glory.

I am very unworthily, yet (I hope) sincerely yours,

T. D. WALKER.

HAINES, Ore., Feb. 5, 1933.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The speeding wheels of time have already carried me past the date when I should have made my yearly remittance for the SIGNS, but here it is. This is my thirty-ninth year as a subscriber, and I hope to continue as long as I live on this earth. The first issue of the year 1894 contained my experience and reason for leaving the Missionary Baptists. I was but a child then, just learned to prattle in the language of what I hope is the kingdom of grace, and beginning to discern between the things which are of man and those which are of God. Bright hopes were mine then, and I hoped to attain a state of perfection and knowledge where doubts and fears would be remembered only as unpleasant things of the past. But as succeeding years have passed I

find myself still looking forward for the realization of what I hoped then was to be mine through all the years ahead of me. I have learned that all these ideas of perfection are but vanity, but it is necessary ever to be made to realize the vanity of the things of this life. Most of our activities are in pursuit of the vanities of this world, and the disappointments they cause us when we have attained to the fullest extent we may reach and find there is still something to be added to produce the rest and consolation the soul desires. When the peace of mind which passeth understanding comes to us we just stop and rest while it lasts; there is no other place to go and nothing better to be desired. The Lord brings us into these places to teach us the truth and fulfillment of his promise, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me peace. When Paul was blessed to see and know these heavenly things by being exalted to the third heaven and could not tell his brethren of them, for it was not lawful for them to be told, he was taught a precious truth on which rests all the saints' consolation and the very foundation of their faith. It is this: The Lord reveals himself as the only way the glories of heaven may be known, and after such a wonderful revelation has been experienced by any of his saints they have no language that can express it to one who has not been shown the same things. In this way righteousness is revealed from faith to faith, and it is nothing but the righteousness of Jehovah. In this is our fellowship, and brotherly love is based on the strength and knowledge of this heavenly tie which binds the saints together. When the tribulations of this life shall be finished, and all the heavy weights which burden us here shall be removed, then shall appear the full realization of our hope. We shall then realize that these light afflictions which are but for a moment have wrought for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Do not be discouraged in this warfare, we are sure to conquer by the might of him who has called us unto this battle.

Yours in fellowship and hope,

C. W. BOND.

ISAIAH XIV. 24.

"As I have thought, so shall it come to pass."

I wonder if the Lord had the salvation of his people in his thoughts. He surely did. When Christ stood as a lamb slain from before the foundation of the world, had there been no transgression there would have been no need of a Sacrifice. But it was in the mind of the Creator and that is why he made the creature subject to vanity. Not by reason of the will of the creature, but by reason of him who subjected the same in hope. He gave him a law and told him that in the day he transgressed it he should die. When lust is conceived it brings forth sin, and when sin is finished it brings forth death. Was man able to keep the law, independent of the Lord? No. As long as the Lord kept man man stood, but when he was left to fight his own battles alone the devil was too strong for him. Old Leviathan, the king of the proud, was

too powerful. God alone could conquer him. When we come to figure these covenanted heirs who were chosen in Christ and their names written in the Lamb's book of life from before the foundation of the world, we find all their blessings were treasured up for time and eternity. These heavenly blessings which were in Christ were all in the mind of the Lord to be brought to pass. All of our trials and afflictions were in his mind, as was the crucifixion of our blessed Lord. This elect bride is the salt of the earth. For her sake this old world is preserved until this elect bride is all gleaned out, then the salt is taken out. That was all in the mind of the Lord. The end was declared from the beginning. Then all the incidents leading up to the end were in the mind of the Lord.

May the Lord bless his dear children to faithfully contend for his truth.

D. E. ROBISON.

WEISER, Idaho, Jan. 19, 1932.

PITTSVILLE, Md., April 17, 1933.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Find inclosed check for two dollars for which please give me credit for another year. I feel I cannot do without the SIGNS now, as I have been used to it a long time. My father, Benjamin B. Hastings, took it as far back as I can remember, and I used to wonder (when a boy) why my dear mother was so particular to save every copy, and often at the end of the year would collect them together and sew then in book form. I have long since learned why she did it. It was for the great love she had for the paper and its able writers. After I was married my dear companion and I missed the dear old SIGNS so much we subscribed for it, and have never missed a copy that I can remember. Now that my dear wife has been called home to her reward, I feel more than ever the need of it, and expect to take it as long as I live and can pay for it. It is a great comfort to me in my lonely hours. Often while reading one article seems to be worth the price of the paper for a whole year. Right now I have one letter in mind, it was written by A. E. Clark, subject, Salvation is by grace. It is the first article in the March number. I have read it over twice, and, like all other able articles, it makes me wonder how the writers can bring out and explain such Scriptures.

I must close. I did not intend to say so much; just wanted to renew my subscription.

Wishing you Godspeed, I beg to remain your little brother in hope,

ANANIAS HASTINGS.

CHICO, California, Feb. 7, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS:—I find it impossible to renew my subscription and it makes me very sad, for the SIGNS is all the preaching I have ever had, but I just cannot pay for it as times are so hard, so I bid farewell to all the dear children of God. If the Lord is willing, I hope before long to take the dear paper again. May God bless and keep every one connected with the SIGNS, and may it live long to comfort those who are able to take it.

MARION S. BROOKS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1933.

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PSALMS LXXII. 16.

"THERE shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth."

Sister Phoebe Horton, of Warwick, N. Y., has asked that we devote the editorial space of our family paper to an exposition of the above Scripture. It will doubtless appear to all who will read this Psalm that it has to do with Christ and the subjects of his kingdom. He is King of kings, of whom it is said, "He shall judge the people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment." What he would do for his people and to their enemies is further enlarged upon in the Psalm. We quote a portion of what is said, as follows: "He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. * * * He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust." His absolute rule over the whole earth, and the fact that he will be worshipped are further evidenced by the following: "The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him."

In considering the text, we will divide it into three parts: (1) "There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains." Whatever this signified, there is no question about it; it was most certain to be, for the mouth of the Lord had spoken it. Corn is known for its food properties: it is full of strength and substance. The concordance in the Bible which we have before us says there were eleven Hebrew words used for describing it in its different states. The world shall not stand long enough to exhaust the great variety that there is in the Lord Jesus Christ. Eleven of the original apostles testified of the wonderful things of Jesus, but neither they nor all who follow after shall ever be able to tell the half. That he was the bread of life which came down from heaven, we

have his own words to show: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."—John vi. 51. The text says, "There shall be an handful of corn in the earth," etc. An "handful" is not a large quantity, but rather a small portion. At the most, therefore, comparatively speaking, we actually know but little of the Christ in this life, either as to his sufferings or the glory which followed. He reminded one of the beloved disciples who could not watch one hour with him that the spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak. We do but taste the cup which he drank to the dregs. Earthen vessels are not capacitated to contain the fullness of the joy that will some day, we hope, be ours, hence it is said, "Now we see through a glass darkly." This "handful of corn" was to be "in the earth," *and not on the earth.* The seed which is imbedded in the earth can neither be blown away by the winds of doctrines of men nor destroyed by the fowls of the air: it will in due season come forth and bear fruit. Jesus did not come on the earth to offer salvation to all who would accept. The angel of the Lord who appeared unto Joseph said concerning Mary, "She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." We are told concerning him that he "who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in the fashion of a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." He came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. His own words are, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Jesus, the blessed Son of God, was verily that corn of wheat which fell into the ground; it was he who was born of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. The fact that so-called learned men deny this truth only proves that He has hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes. Neither is this handful of corn said to be in the earth universally, as some would have us believe, but is declared to be in that part, or portion, of the earth referred to as "upon the top of the mountain." There is a definite number, known unto the Lord from before the foundation of the world, of the human race spoken of as a "chosen generation," and these are they whom God highly exalts and separates from the rest of the world by making of them a peculiar people, and they shall show forth his praise. Isaiah, by faith, saw the risen Christ coming from Edom, "with dyed garments from Bozrah,"

glorious in his apparel and traveling in the greatness of his strength. Bozrah means "sheepfold," which signifies that Jesus was made like unto his brethren in all things except that he was without sin. The Word verily was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth, is the testimony of the inspired apostle, John. Whatever knowledge we may have of Jesus to-day, regardless of its limitations, is that which has been made known unto us by the workings of God's mighty power. He writes his law in the inward part, even the heart of his people, and, therefore, they cannot be moved.

(2) "The fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon." Lebanon, with its high and lofty snow-capped peaks, and its wonderful cedars, was full of significance. Her cedars were evergreen, implying eternal life, and they received their refreshing from the pure waters on high. True, they were accustomed to the penetrating icy winds from the north country, nevertheless they endured, being sustained and kept by the power of him who held the winds in the hollow of his fists. These were typical of the trees "upon the top of the mountains" among whom the Lord of glory dwells. Ezekiel took up that line of thought, and the Lord spoke by him, saying, "I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent: in the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it; and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell." How remarkably this prefigured the coming of Christ through the house, or lineage, of David; his crucifixion, according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; his resurrection from the dead to the pre-eminent position of being Lord of lords and King of kings. The fruits, or effects, of this have followed all down through the ages by the manifestation of his quickening power in raising sinners from their dead works to serve the true and living God. What a shaking there is when the wind of his Holy Spirit begins to blow upon the valley of dry bones. Truly, the dead are raised up, the blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk and the poor have the gospel preached to them. God's children are well acquainted with the hardships and trials that are the lot of those who follow Jesus. The record is that this world was not a friend to him while here in the flesh, and neither is it to-day friendly towards those who contend for his principles, but they have the assurance that they shall be brought forth more than conquerors through him that loved them and gave himself for them.

(3) "And they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth." Who is it that shall flourish? They of the city. What city? Mount Zion, the city of God. The positive manner of the language employed makes it cer-

tain, both as to the fact and the extent to which they shall flourish. We can well imagine that we hear a great chorus going up all over the country, saying, We are all dried up, and there seems little or no life in us. Notwithstanding this, we are persuaded that our text speaks the truth when it says, "They of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth." Many of us know how perfectly natural it is for the earth to bring forth grass. It seems to be a fixed trait of mother nature to cover her footstool with grass after the passing of winter; it comes forth abundantly almost universally, and not only without the assistance of mankind in great areas, but is spite of all that man can do to prevent it in many places. It is just as natural for the "new creature" to flourish by the rivers of the water of life, for when one is born of the Spirit, that life which is imparted unto him is as certain to hunger and thirst after righteousness as the sparks are to fly upward, or that water is to seek its own level. That which is counterfeit will not satisfy the cravings of such living souls, and they will be found fighting the good fight of faith. Such characters know how the grass flourishes in the earth and that it can bring forth nothing good. They become absolutely convinced that nature's barren soil cannot produce spiritual fruit, therefore, they cry unto the Lord. When the Lord is pleased to answer their prayers they are witnesses to the fact that the desert is made to blossom as the rose. What wonderful music there is when the barren are made to break forth into singing, when their hands are loosed and they are brought on Pisgah's top to view the wonders of God's redeeming love. One of the poets described some of the wonders of this city in the following lines:

"Zion's a city God hath blessed
With peace and everlasting rest;
A glorious city, strong and fair,
And Jesus dwells forever there.

Her ancient walls appear to be
The workmanship of Deity;
Founded in grace, they still appear
Without a flaw or chasm there.

Oft has this city's strength been tried,
By mighty foes on every side;
But all in vain it yet has been,
She baffles Satan, hell and sin.

Count ye her towers, how high they rise,
Her golden spires, they pierce the skies;
Her golden streets are fair to view,
Her palaces and bulwarks, too.

Then round her walk, her turrets tell,
Mark all her brazen bulwarks well;
Spread far and wide her deathless fame,
Her pearly gates and walls of flame.

Her founder's love has ever proved,
Like Salem's mount, which ne'er was moved,
'Tis fixed on this eternal base,
The grace of God, and gift by grace."

This city, then, shall flourish like the grass of the earth, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. If we have been given a good hope, through grace, in the mercy of God and can, by faith, behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world, we are, indeed, the most wonderfully blest of all peoples on the face of the earth. Let us, therefore, lift up our voices, as much as in us is, in songs of sublime adoration and praise and extol the great Ancient of days for his rich and distinguishing grace.

R. L. D.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MRS. SUSAN K. BELLIS, our dear sister in Christ, departed this life January 23rd, 1933, at her home, in Frenchtown, New Jersey, aged 71 years. She had been in failing health several pears, and from time to time during the last year was a great sufferer. Many years ago she married Martin Bellis, who last year was baptized in the fellowship of the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church, which he had attended and loved more than forty years. No children were born to this union. She was the daughter of the late Wilson and Eliza Rittenhouse Kugler, and had spent most all her life either in or near Frenchtown, N. J. August 16th, 1892, she was baptized in the fellowship of the Kingwood Church by the late Elder Balas Bundy. She was firm in the faith and loved the doctrine of God in its purity, and her home was often the place of meetings of the church, and a glad welcome was extended to all who came. We all loved her devotedly and miss her more than words can express, but rejoice in the assurance that for her to die was gain. She is survived by her husband, one brother, Oliver R. Kugler, and one sister, Miss Catherine Bellis, of Frenchtown, N. J. Brother Bellis is at present making his home with his daughter by a former marriage, Mrs. Mrs. Grimes, of Newark, N. J. In the absence of sister Susie's pastor, Elder H. H. Lefferts conducted the funeral service. Interment was in the Frenchtown Cemetery.

Written by her pastor,

H. C. KER.

M. V. DYKES was born May 6th, 1839, and died September 16th, 1932, making his stay here 93 years, 4 months and 10 days. He was married to Sallie Ann Gross in 1860, who preceded him in death forty-three years. To their union were born twelve children, five of whom preceded him in death. The seven living children are, Sanders, John and Mrs. Peter Ault, of Weslaco, Texas; Mrs. Boyd, Mrs. J. L. Culpepper, Mrs. J. R. Culpepper and myself. He made his home with Mrs. J. R. Culpepper. They were very good to him, and all his children did everything they could to make him happy, as did also his grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren. He and mother had an experience of grace about the same time, and when one began to tell his experience the other did also. They went to the church together and were baptized in Collins River, Tennessee, by Elder Gilbert Moffit. They came to Texas in 1883, and put their letter in the Bethlehem Church, at Martindale, Texas, until they passed on to that city not made with hands. Father was chosen Deacon soon after he joined the church, filling his office as well as I ever saw any one. He attended every meeting he could, until just before he died. He passed the bread and wine until he was ninety-one years of age. He never tried to get any of us to join the Old Baptists, but had a good sober life. All but one of his children are members of the Old Baptist Church. He was a lover of the SIGNS. He said it was the cleanest paper he had ever read, that it had stood long and did not publish anything unsound. He was almost blind, but he said the Scriptures would open up to him just as though he were reading them. His favorite hymn was, "How firm a foundation." He could see much good in it. I say to all the children, We have given up a good father and mother, but we are trusting in the good Lord to take us to them and our Blessed to reign for evermore.

His body was laid to rest in the Stockdale Cemetery until God sees fit to raise it and give him a glorious body, there to be with him for evermore.

Written by his daughter,

(MRS.) W. L. HAWK.

ELLA HASTINGS was born May 7th, 1859, and died November 8th, 1932, making her stay on earth somewhat over 73 years. She was the daughter of Billie and Maranda Gravinor, and the widow of J. F. Hastings. She leaves behind in her immediate family five children and nine grandchildren to mourn their loss. The children are Mrs. Virgil Wilkins, Parsonsburg, Md., Mrs. McCay Ennis, Pittsville, Md., Mr. Frank Hastings, Parsonsburg, Md., Mr. Lester Hastings, Salisbury, Md., and Mr. Calvin Hastings, Wilmington, Del. For many years sister Hastings had been a member of Forest Grove Church, near Parsonsburg, Md., having been received in this church by letter from the Little Creek Church, where she was baptized. She was strong in the faith, and manifested her faith and love for her church and the brethren, always in attendance at the meetings when not providentially hindered, fighting the good fight, keeping the faith, and it is our belief she has received the crown of righteousness that was ordained for her. Her church misses her, as does the writer, her pastor, but since our loss is her gain we desire to be reconciled to God's will.

The writer conducted her funeral at the Forest Grove meetinghouse, after which she was buried in the church cemetery, near the meetinghouse.

G. E. COULBOURN.

COLUMBUS B. McADAMS, son of the late Elder W. B. and Pernicia McAdams, was born in Attala County, Mississippi, December 11th, 1863, came to Texas in 1883, and departed this life February 22nd, 1933. He had been in failing health some time before the end came. All that could be done by human efforts could not stay the grim monster, for the Lord had called and he had to go. He was united in marriage to Miss Emma R. Haines, September 21st, 1887, and to this union seven children were born, all of whom were with him when the end came, except one daughter, who

preceded him in death several years. He leaves his devoted wife, six children (two boys and four girls) and several brothers and sisters. He joined the church in 1887 and was baptized by his father. Some years later he was ordained Deacon. He was a firm believer in the doctrine set forth by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and a constant reader of the Scriptures, and delighted in concuring on the mercies of God. He was kind and gentle with every one, and for truth and honesty he could not be excelled, and his friends were numbered by his acquaintances.

All that was mortal was laid to rest in Baggy Cemetery in the presence of a large concourse of relatives and friends, there to await the second coming of our Lord, when he shall gather his servants home, so, dear ones, sorrow not as those who have no hope. May God reconcile you to this dispensation of his divine providence, and may he enable you to say as one of old: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Written by one who loved him,

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Middletown & Wallkill Church, N. Y., $10; Mrs. Sirena Bowen, Ill., $1; L. Z. Ross, N. Y., $1; Estate of J. Adella Hoffman, Pa., $20; Mrs. Clara Parker, Ore., $2; Mrs. Sarah V. Curry, Colo., $1; Mrs. M. Smith, B. C., $1.

MEETINGS.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, before the second Sunday in June (7th, 8th and 9th), 1933. Those coming from and via New York City will take Erie R. R. Ferry foot of West 23rd Street at 3:15 p. m., or Erie R. R. Ferry foot of Chambers Street at 3:30 p. m., for train leaving Jersey City, N. J., at 3:45 p. m. on Tuesday, June 6th, or Erie R. R. Ferry foot of Chambers Street at 6:10 a. m. on Wednesday, June 7th, for train leaving Jersey City at 6:30 a. m. Get tickets for Howells, N. Y. These trains are operated on Eastern Standard Time. The latest timetable on the Ontario & Western R. R. shows there is no connection between Kingston and Winterton in the p. m., so there will be no trains met at Winterton as heretofore. Trains mentioned will be met and friends cared for. Those coming by automobile will stop at Howells station and inquire the way to Mrs. L. W. Blumroeder's house, which is only a short distance from the station. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, sisters and friends.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Union Meeting of the Old School Baptist Churches of eastern Washington and Oregon and western Idaho will be held with Mizpah Church, located at Touchet, Washington, commencing on Friday before the fourth Sunday in June, and continuing over Sunday, which will be June 23rd, 24th and 25th.

J. T. BARNES, Moderator.

WOODSON CUMMINS, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church will meet (D. V.) every second Sunday at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California; every third Sunday at 521 West Nevada Street, Ontario, California; every fourth Sunday at 3516 Franklin Avenue, Riverside, California.

W. L. SLUSHER.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

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All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminiar Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

MALACHI II. 8-10.

"BUT ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law: ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the Lord of hosts. Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law. Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our father?"

While sitting by my fireside in silent meditation of the church and household of faith, and love of Zion, the above Scripture with its bearing arrested my thoughts and I had a travel of mind on the same, of which I will give the readers of the SIGNS as I may have light and understanding.

Here the Lord is speaking to his people, Israel, by the mouth of the prophet, telling them what should befall them for their disobedience and for idolatry and adultery. I do not understand any so-called church ever committed spiritual adultery, but Israel, God's own chosen people (the church), because no one was ever married to Christ but Israel, the true church, therefore none but those who are legally married can commit a violation of the marriage bed. Paul says, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away."—2 Thess. ii. 3. Dear little children of the living God, this is very plain, and any one who cares to read the past history of the Primitive or Old School Baptists can see that there has in the last one hundred years been a falling away from the old faith that was once delivered unto the saints. Not that I am a prophet, or would be a Moses or a model man, or a pattern, but I am getting old and the time of my departure to be no more is, I think, near at hand, and I want my beloved brethren and sisters to know where I stand on what I most surely believe to be the truth. I do not want any one to take my conclusions; accept only what the Scriptures teach. To prove that many of the church have erred and departed from the way we have only to

compare some doctrine now being preached and which they are trying to force upon those who are standing firm, with the doctrine which was many years ago handed down by the true church as their faith, and which was signed by, as I suppose, one hundred Baptist Elders as the standard of their faith. Then later on similar articles of faith were drawn up at the meeting at Black Rock, Maryland, in 1832. Now when those who have stood firm for this faith preach it they are called fatalists and two-seeders, or what they blindly call eternal children. But Jude hits the very key-note by saying of such blindness, "But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts." Again, Jude says, "There are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation." Peter says, "Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: which have forsaken the right way."—2 Peter ii. 14, 15. These are they that spy out and undermine the true church. Such leaders as Elders Gilbert Beebe, Thomas P. Dudley, Samuel Trott, Robert C. Leachman, and others of like faith, also many of our good old poets, such as Watts, Doddridge, Cowper, Hart, Toplady, Gadsby, Newton, and many more, who wrote and sung of this doctrine, would now be called by them two-seeders, eternal children and fatalists, but these old God-called and God-blessed servants stood firm upon the walls of Zion, waiving the blood-stained banner of King Jesus. I do not know what the enemies of this doctrine mean for us to understand by the appellations eternal children and two-seeders, and I do not know that they do, but if they mean more than I have written here and in previous articles, I have no use for the terms. David said, "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation."—Psalms xxii. 30. I do not know of any better way to tell it than in Scripture language. See Acts xxiv. 14. As I conclude, this seed is Christ, and this generation was given in this seed (Christ), therefore had eternal standing in Christ, and a time standing in Adam. But these are some of the clubs they use to make rash assaults upon the true faith. There seems in this age to be three factions, or questions, that are now agitating the world, to wit, Does the sinner choose the Lord and commence the work of salvation with the Lord, or does the Lord choose and commence the work of salvation by grace with the sinner? One says the Lord wants to save the sinner, and is offering him salvation if the sinner will accept it; the other side has always said that the Lord is the beginner and finisher of the christian's faith, that God chooses the sinner, and that it is God that works in the sinner both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. Therefore by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves. Then there is a third faction that says about the same, that salvation in the new birth is all of God,

and by grace, then after this new birth the child enters a conditional time salvation. But I have not so been taught it by the Scriptures and my experience. Now to do away with this God-blessed doctrine of these able defenders of the truth the enemy made a rash drive to drown and kill and plant the black flag of disgrace on their graves, but thanks eternal be to Jesus, he never has left himself without a witness that ever will testify to the truth as it is in Christ. I fear in a few more years, if this declining from the true faith continues, there will be some who wish to be called Old School or Primitive Baptists who will deny that salvation is entirely of grace alone. To be reduced in numbers it may be, but to become extinct it never will be, because the sovereignty and supremacy of God in the salvation of his people for time and eternity will be the theme of Christ's witnesses when he comes again, for he is to find faith on the earth, so this little spark will be here and shine on and on unto the perfect day. But we may expect wars in Israel. These are always between truth and error. I have heard it claimed that there was nothing eternal about the Adam man until after the new birth. We conclude that if there was nothing eteranl about the Adam man until after the new birth in order for heaven, there would not be anything eternal in the nonelect in order to everlasting torment. I believe there is a soul, or principle, in both the elect and nonelect that is made partaker of the resurrected body. See the following Scriptures: Daniel xii. 2, Luke i. 44, Psalms x. 1, Psalms cxxxix. 3, Hebrews ii. 14, Job x. 11, Romans vii. 5, 2 Corinthians v. 1, 4, 2 Peter i. 13, 14, Philippians xxi. 22-24. This may not be the view of all the children of God, but let me humbly say, I hope my experience is in vital union with the foregoing Scripture. Almost at the very dawn of recollection, when I was very young, I had serious thoughts about heaven and everlasting torment, where the wicked must go. I thought I was not ready to die and my heart was not right in the sight of the just and holy God, that if I died in my present condition I never could come where Jesus and his blessed people were. I hope many of God's little children can at a very early age witness some of these things in their experience. The poet has well said,

> "But see how heaven's indulgent care
> Attends their wanderings here and there,
> Still near at hand, where'er they stray,
> With pricking thorns to hedge their way."

Then again this same poet in this song says,

> "The appointed time rolls on apace,
> Not to prepare, but to call by grace,
> To change the heart, renew the will,
> And turn their feet to Zion's hill."

But the enemy is always on the alert, ready to begile and deceive God's people with many pleasing and flattering words. When one commences supping with Mystery, Babylon, there comes a mind to be taught by her, and one of her greatest lessons that she (the mother of harlots) wants to get indelibly written on her servants' hearts is to make war against the faith and doctrine of the sovereign God over all powers, worlds and dominions, the God that

works in his people both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. Mystery, Babylon, tells them while under the influence of her wine, "I have peace offerings with me; this day have I paid my vows [good self works]: therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face; and I have found thee. I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry [self-righteousness], with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt. I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. Come, let us take our fill of love [free will] until the morning [until the light exposes the things done by them in secret]; let us solace ourselves with loves [who 'have erred through wine' —Isaiah xxviii. 7]: for the goodman is not at home, he is gone a long journey: he hath taken a bag of money with him, and he will come home at the day appointed. With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him. He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, as a fool to the correction of the stocks."—Prov. vii. 14-22. Here is the spiritual adultery, here is the departure out of the way, here is the corrupted covenant that has caused many to stumble at the law. Then the law is a rule of action. When did this action take place? It took place in the eternal covenant and counsel drawn by the eternal pen before this old earth was made or the planets had gone their rounds. This is the old doctrine our fathers in Israel stood for, holding it dearer than their lives, choosing death in its most horrible form rather than surrender an inch of the true faith. This faith and doctrine Elder Gilbert Beebe, through the grace of God so abundantly given him, stood so firmly for that the hearts of God's people went out in love to him for the truth's sake, and may we all always keep in sweet remembrance his able writings, and though his dear old God-blessed body is sweetly sleeping in Jesus, may we yet for the truth's sake ever cherish his views, as they were supported by the Scriptures. I would love in this time of need and great error to see one of Elder Beebe's editorials in each number of the SIGNS. I have felt it my duty to write these things by way of stirring up the brethren's pure minds by way of remembrance of what Elder Beebe so long and so faithfully labored for, the good of Zion, and, as I have said, it appears that many of late have become tender on some very important parts of the faith and doctrine of true Old School Baptists. It seems that because this doctrine is abused by the Arminian world, and evilly spoken of, some who love to be popular and well spoken of say it will not do to preach or write of this old "hard shell" doctrine, because if we do it will cause trouble and some one will be offended. They forget that the fear of man bringeth a snare. Error is at peace with itself and truth is at peace with itself. I love peace with all my heart when in unity with the truth, but I despise peace if it means the surrendering of truth to get it.

Dear brethren and sisters, and read-

ers of the SIGNS, many of you have written me, and I hold you in the very highest regard and love. Your kind words of encouragement are very comforting to me. Many of you I never will see in this life, but I have a hope I would not exchange for all this world that I will meet you where pain and sorrow are no more and where all is love and peace. Then let us say with the prophet Malachi, "Have we not one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother?" Let us not make a brother an offender for a word. I have known church members to hold an Elder in full fellowship, and as an ordained Elder, yet on account of some little part of his doctrine and faith they would generally rule this Elder out of appointments to preach. I do not see this is the instructions of the Scriptures, but of the flesh. The church is the proper judge, and if a man is not preaching the orthodox faith of Old School or Primitive Baptists the church should call him to account for it, and not have a wedge and a goodly Babylonish garment in the camp. Let us not try to injure each other without a cause, and not strive about words to no profit but may the household of faith love one another and labor for unity and peace, because of all the relationships the relationship in Christ is the nearest and dearest. We all have one father and one mother, not one born out of true wedlock, so let us never tire of talking of this eternal relationship, for it is older than this earth, and will live as long as heaven itself, or eternity; it is endless, and will deck the shores of eternal bliss and glory.

W. L. EDWARDS.

CASTLEWOOD, Virginia.

NEWTOWN, Pa., August, 1932.

DEAR COUSIN:—Your welcome letter came this morning. I have read and reread it, and the words came to me, If in this world only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable. Why did they come? Only God knows, and he will tell us just what he wants us to know and when. He gives grace to live by and grace to die by, and he alone knew the end from the beginning. He gives strength for one step at a time, and that is enough for me. If God leads, he will also help when help is needed. If one should know, then of what use is faith? Sunshine and shadow, both needed, reminds me of our spiritual life, both necessary for growth in grace.

Yes, I did enjoy the last meeting day and the services, for God was preached and not man. When the text was read I thought of the valley of dry bones and wondered what was in them, but before Elder Ker had finished I found there was a sure enough feast, as I have found many times before. Scientists cannot explain these things, although they are wise in their own conceits. They use many words, but it is but chaff to the poor sinner. It seems that the Lord is filling the earth with the wisdom of man for the glory of God that will come. No one can make the Bible understood; only God

can do that. He gives wisdom and withholds knowledge as seems good to him; all things can go so far, and no farther. His ways are wonderful and just, no matter what he does. His word is powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword made for the need of division of body and spirit. What a God to us, who has promised never to leave nor forsake us. Because I live, ye shall live also. Many have the letter of the word, but surely not the spirit. Are their eyes blinded and their understanding darkened, as in the days of old, that they know not the truth as it is in Jesus? Folks, many of them, were that way when Christ was on earth, so why not now? There is but one God; he knows the end from the beginning, and made all things for his glory. I feel it, I know it, and he alone is to be trusted. I am often puzzled over things I hear and read, things that are not what I have been taught; how the same words one reads and often uses can be twisted to mean something entirely different to what was really meant. I think of when the devil tempted Christ and used various Scriptures to do so; Christ answered, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Christ knew and had an answer for all the devil's talk. I am glad, so glad, that he did. I do not mean to speak in an irreverent way, for these things go too deep with me for that. I have been wondering over many things, and was glad that I heard Elder Ker as I did. One thing he explained that I had not been able to fully understand was, He was tempted in all things like as we are, yet without sin. Surely God put it in Elder Ker's mind to give the explanation. Another verse comes to my mind: He that is without sin, let him cast the first stone. Christ did not condemn the woman, and told her so, but he said, Go, and sin no more. What right have we to judge others? We have enough of our own sins to contend with.

To-day I put some lilies of the valley bulbs in pots and I hope they will grow. I can only give them warmth, light and water, but cannot make them grow, only God can do that. Who would think so much beauty and fragrance could be hidden away inside dried, brown bulbs like these? It is so with God's people. Some are not pretty, some are dull and stupid in the eyes of the world, who do not understand that the life of Christ is hidden in those same dull bodies and will blossom forth in beauty in eternity. I often think how God manifests his power and love to his children. It is not those who can quote Scripture most gibly that are chosen of God. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. I am glad that it is so; it gives me hope. Passage after passage comes to me, and I wonder where the connection is; if it is to show me that God is all-wise and all-powerful and will do exactly as he will, regardless of man or devil. No one can stay his hand, no matter what they say or do. I have never felt just as I did when Elder Ker showed, as I felt he did, how Christ could be our Elder Brother, just how he could be tempted in all

points like as we are, yet without sin. There was Peter, who would follow Jesus even to death, denying him thrice before the cock crew. Ye know not what ye say. No wonder Christ told his disciples that. He told them what was to come to pass, that when it did come they would know he told them the truth in all that he had said to them. This is not exactly the way it is written in the Bible, but it seems to mean that to me. I have been asked a number of times of late if I am not glad I do not know what the future will be. I answer most emphatically, I am glad. Only God knows that, and as I need to know it will be shown me. Grace to live by and grace to die by; just when needed, not one minute before or after, just on the instant. I am glad God knows the future and I do not. I can trust him and leave it there. I think I can truthfully say, Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief. It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. No wonder our belief is not relished by some, for surely if it was in man to direct his steps, why should he ask God's help? The shalls and wills of God are wonderful, and I am very thankful for them. I am made to pray to God to help me do what I should, and I feel that he does answer prayer. I can never forget the words that came to me after my father's death: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," and they were no uncertain words; I felt I knew they were truth. I feel that I am being cared for. If trials come, as they often do, I feel it is all right, even though hard to bear at times; they would not be allowed to touch me if not foreordained for me. I can only ask help to bear them.

I have the last SIGNS beside me and find many things in it that make me forget myself and feel I am reading letters from my true friends, as though I know just what they are saying and feel it true, and I feel to love the writers. The question arises, Have I read and heard so much of Old School Baptist doctrine that I am deceived into thinking I know from experience what I have read? Yet I go back and read with joy and comfort in Hebrews x. 38, "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." I think I understand it. The eleventh chapter of Hebrews is very sweet to me, something I cannot describe by tongue or pen. The earth was made by God; everything proves it. Look where one will, all nature sings his praise, and if this earth shows his handiwork and wonders, what must it be like in the world to come? Truly mortal cannot begin to imagine the glories he has prepared for his chosen. Thank God for his promises. I know all will be fulfilled just as he planned.

I often wonder if I know what prayer is. I mean real true heartfelt prayer, not just words. Selfishness? Oh do not I know what that is? Indeed I do, and I have shed many tears over mine, but I seem to go right on being selfish, until I doubt sometimes if I really know what salvation of the Lord is. I have been told that Christ

cannot save me if I will not let him. I do not want that kind of a God, for I have found out only too well that I can do nothing of myself, only God can help and save me. If I am saved at all, it is for nothing I have done. I wonder why passage after passage of Scripture comes to me when I am alone. It all makes me feel that I cannot quite give up my hope that God knows what is best for me and will let only what he knows I need come. You have comforted me many times, and I could not help feeling while reading your letter that God gave you to write that way to answer some of my questions and teach me a lesson. It did, any way, and I took it as a message from God through you. Is it any wonder I thank him for his mercies?

By this time you will be tired of reading all this and will think what a contradictory being I am, and you will be right. Once more I thank you for the patience you have shown in answering my letters, for you have told me many things I wanted to know. When you have read all of this, please have charity, for it is like the writer, very imperfect.

With love and best wishes, I am your cousin,

AMELIA TOMLINSON.

[THE foregoing letter was written to sister E. P. Fetter, of Trenton, N. J., and was not intended for publication, but we have the permission of the writer to publish it. She is not a member of the Old School Baptist Church, nor of any religious organization, but loves the truth.—ED.]

DELAWARE, Ohio, Jan. 28, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS:—I wish to send a greeting of christian love and gratitude to you all. I was surprised to see my letter in the SIGNS of December. I had forgotten about it. For a time I feared that I would see it in print, even though at the time it was written for that very purpose. I would write oftener, but sometimes I fear that my desire to write is only presumption or speculation. Also, as my mind dwells so much upon doctrine, I fear to disobey Paul, who said to the sisters, What, came the word out from you, or came it unto you only? But I so love the doctrine of grace, and the absolute dominion of Jehovah, and so love you, his chosen, that there are times when the desire to write grows uppermost to tell you of my love for you and of how I enjoy your letters, and I cannot deny that I enjoy writing myself. My prayers, sometimes weak, sometimes with much assurance, go out for you, together with all saints, that God, who only can, will keep, guard and lead every one of us in accordance with his most holy and wise will. Oh, I am so thankful that he has promised to do his will and pleasure, for that is our utmost desire: Not my will, but thine be done. What a mercy from God to be made submissive to his will. What a joy to know that he will preserve us in Jesus Christ, his secret pavilion, and that he is a present help in trouble, and is able and does overrule all to our good and his glory. But often we are brought to say, Oh wretched am I, who shall deliver me?

We seem to grow weak, wayward and fleshly, but I sometimes feel that this, too, is a part of his ways, for if we were never weak how could we appreciate and rejoice in his strength? I sometimes wonder if we do not grow faster when down in the valley of humiliation. I think I have learned that it is the safest place, if one place can be safer than another, since we are kept by the power of God. I have doubts, but not so many as some. Sometimes the way grows very dark, when the tempter says, How do you know that there is a God to help you? Have you been there? Can you fellowship me? I am very glad such dire temptations come no oftener. God knoweth my weakness, but he has promised to carry the little lambs in his bosom. What a privilege, to be a weak lamb, borne in his bosom, even if we do have to mourn our leanness. Yet I desire to grow in the knowledge of the Lord, and desire to walk more in accord with his expressed will, to be enabled to glorify him in my body and spirit, which, I trust, are his. Though the vessel was marred in the hand of the potter (Are you not glad that it was in his hand?), yet he made it again, another vessel as it pleased him. For of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Yea, He who knew no sin was made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. I am very glad that he has caused me to submit to the righteousness of God, not establishing my own righteousness. But I do desire a righteousness of my own. Again his promise, When we hope for that we see not, then do we wait with patience for it. Also, Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Sometimes I hope, and fully believe, that these promises are mine, though I am so very unworthy, for I fall so far short in the full work of charity. Sometimes I can forgive and even love my enemies, but far too often I entertain harsh thoughts concerning them. Though I sometimes try, feebly, to hide their faults, I seem to try so much harder to hide my own. Forgiveness is not mere toleration. We are taught to forgive, even as the Father forgives us. His forgiveness is not merely tolerating us in his house, but he comes into our very hearts and manifests love and forgiveness that is beyond expression. Methinks true forgiveness brings a love even greater than before the offense. I speak of forgiveness among brethren. God's love was, is and ever will be, perfect. Thanks be to God, who knew all my sin and weakness when he set his love upon me and chose me to be a vessel of mercy. O, dear Master, help me to love and pray for those who persecute and despitefully use me. Help me, with all saints, to walk ever according to thy precepts, that perfect love abound, thy name be glorified and thy children edified and comforted in that fellowship that is ever with the Father, and with the Son, in the Holy Spirit. Blessed Trinity, sacred union! Is it mine? I hope so.

The SIGNS for December was full of

comfort. (Of course not speaking of my letter.) Elder Ruston's editorial was a feast of fat things to me. Yes, dear brother, if we love him that begat we will love those begotten of him, though there exists no church fellowship. Some who are dearly beloved by me are outside the church; some of them in Babylon. If there were none there, there would be no command, Come out of her.

I heard a series of lectures by the learned Dr. McKay, in which he maintained the truth that religion gets the man and holds him, that "there is no way from man to God," that without this experience in the heart "preaching is an eternal farce," and "churches of the world are building grand tombs in which to be buried." Much of his lectures was deliver with his eyes fastened upon my face, as if he detected a kindred spirit. I loved him for the truths he proclaimed. He is a leading world figure, friend of other wise men and potentates, one of "the few" to be given glimpses of truth. Not many wise men, not many noble are called. He talked of one who in reading Romans viii. found the righteousness of God. McKay seemed to know that this is our righteousness also. A Methodist minister, who had been preaching some time, told us last night of an experience which came to him only a few weeks ago, which, he said, "I never had before." He spoke of his sinfulness, and that he had not been trusting in the Lord as he should, but, said he, I seemed to hear words, to the end, that it was nothing I had done, or could do, or say, but through the Lord only, and he quoted different passages of Scripture to describe the new joy that was his. He quoted, It is by faith, that it might be by grace; not of works, lest any man should boast. If I could judge the spirit, it was real. He said, I am on the mountain top, but it is up and down, and sometimes we are in the valley and we cannot help ourselves, but Jesus comes and lifts us up higher than before. He said, I am all unrighteousness, but in Him is strength and salvation. I could not keep from tears, and nodded several times as he looked at me, and I even replied, That is the way. The speaking was in the Home here where I live. I would not have spoken elsewhere. The Ministerial Association, of Delaware, Ohio, send one of their number here (The Sarah Moore Home, Delaware, Ohio) each Tuesday evening. I was fed and strengthened last evening. The preacher, a young man, spoke very humbly.

Pray for me, and love me a little if you can.

JOIE E. WOODS PETERS.

AMES, Iowa, May 14, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am writing to tell you of the death of my father (A. J. Smith), who has been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years. He always looked forward to the coming of your paper. I am also sending a letter he wished read at his funeral; thought you might like to publish it.

Very respectfully,

BERTHA GLOER.

THE LETTER.

THE following are the eternal principles of eternal truth that, by the grace of God, with the ability given me of God, I have advocated as the foundation of the hope of every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Salvation by the grace of God. Proof text: "By grace ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." Again, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." God himself is the author of eternal salvation. Jesus Christ is that salvation, and that salvation was fully perfected when he died on the cross of Calvary. He said with his dying breath, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost.

What was true of Paul, the great apostle of the Gentiles, is true of every servant of God. "By the grace of God I am what I am," was his testimony. By the grace of God every believer in God worships God in the Spirit, rejoices in Christ Jesus, and has no confidence in the flesh. We need grace and faith to please God in all our attempts to worship him, without which it is impossible to please him. Both are God's gifts.

2. Predestination. I believe in it as the apostle taught it. It does not need any crutches such as "absolute" or "unlimited" to bolster it up or make it stronger. It is complete in itself. When it is preached as the apostle preached it, it will not confuse nor divide God's people. It never has, and never will. It embraces all created things, from the smallest insect to the creation of the heavens and the earth. It embraces the complete work of Jesus from start to finish, from the purpose of God in eternity to the glorification of every son and daughter of the Lord God Almighty in heaven. Foreknowledge, like the sun, has never created anything. It saw the end from the beginning. Predestination is both active and determining. Foreknowledge is necessary to predestination. "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son;" and "whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Election, or choice of God of his people in eternity, I most surely believe, and have declared it for fifty-two years. Proof text: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." They are also called the elect according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father. Jesus is the elect head of the church, his bride; the church is the election of grace, as they have an eternal life standing in him. Men and women of Adam's race are the chosen people of God, called out of darkness into his

marvelous light, chosen from the beginning unto salvation.

3. The resurrection of the dead. To deny the resurrection of the dead is to deny the resurrection of Christ, for he says, "I am the resurrection and the life." The redeemed sinner is the subject of the resurrection. It would be fully as consistent to deny the redemption of the sinner as to deny his resurrection from the dead. The apostle declares plainly and positively, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious [or glorified] body." This is holding fast the form of sound words. The admonition of the apostle is, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." When this is done God is glorified and the dear people of God are edified, comforted and built up in their most holy faith.

The things set forth in this brief note of my faith are the foundation principles upon which I now stand, and by the help of Almighty God I hope to continue in them until I leave the shores of time, for I truly believe this to be the faith of God's elect. I now confess that I have been a poor, weak, sinful, erring, starving sinner all of my natural life upon earth, with not one grain of merit in myself; but all my life is in Jesus Christ. I love God, his people, his blessed truth, or doctrine, and his order, and no other will stand. God bless you, is my dying prayer.

A. J. SMITH.

(*See obituary on page 167.*)

LADELL, Ark., Jan. 8, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription has expired and I do not feel able to renew it I will ask you to discontinue sending the SIGNS to me. I surely enjoy reading its contents, for it sets forth what I hope I believe. I seem to be acquainted with most of the writers, for I have read of the Lord's dealings with them. As I read such wonderful views of the Scriptures as the writers divide the word of truth as it is in Christ Jesus I sometimes hope I have tasted the goodness of God and desire to be fed of the crumbs that fall from the Master's table. It is consoling to me at times to have such a desire, for the dead do not hunger and thirst after righteousness; it brightens my little hope, which at times seems almost gone, but it is glorious when my hope seems brighter.

This past summer I had to go on the table under the knife and I was given to hope I was in the hands of a higher Power than man. I felt his will would be done and then all would be well. His will is being done in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand in any way. He is before all things and by him all things consist.

I will close by asking you to discontinue sending me the SIGNS for awhile, at least, as I do not want to be a burden to you. If it be the Lord's will, you may hear from me again, for I hate to give it up, but there are others who are destitute of hearing preaching who I would rather have it than me, as I am blessed with the privilege of hearing preaching every first Sunday, for which I hope I am thankful.

May the good Lord ever watch over you and guard, guide and direct you to continue your good paper.

(MRS.) L. M. BAKER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1933.

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HEBREWS X. 7.

"THEN said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God."

Paul, writing to the Hebrews, uttered these words relative to the sacrifices made under the law in remembrance of sin, and teaching the weakness thereof, and setting up the strength and power of the Lord Jesus Christ to make an end of sin, and of his suffering and death, a sacrifice that would make the comers thereunto perfect. The above quotation is followed by Jesus declaring, "Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God."—Heb. x. 8, 9. "To do thy will, O God," embraces all of God's purposes relative to the salvation of sinners. Jesus, the Son of God, was ever with the Father as one brought up with him, and without him nothing was made that was made, and the Father appointed his Son heir of all things, and predestinated that all his work should glorify his Son. All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose. (Rom. viii. 28.) As the power of the Most High upholds all things by the word, the child of God is drawn into it and he ascribes greatness to our God. Jesus told the scribes and Pharisees to search the Scriptures, for in them they thought they had eternal life, but they are they that testify of me. All the searching could not bring Jesus revealed as the Son of God to any poor sinner.

The volume of the book must embrace the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Moses wrote, "I [God] will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."—Gen. iii. 15. David gave the same statement that Paul did in his letter to the Hebrews, saying, "Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, the law is within my heart."—Psalms xl. 7, 8. Paul from the abundance of his heart wrote to the Hebrews, putting them in remembrance of the things written in the Old Testament (called the Scrip-

tures at that time), of the sacrifices and offerings made by the high priests under the law, and of the impossibility of their putting an end to sin, as they were without virtue when it came to satisfying a righteous law, and that He taketh away the first that he might establish the second. We contend the entire Holy Bible is the inspired word of God, and all that is written is to point out the Son of God and his bride, the Lamb's wife, and the perfection of God is portrayed in part, but the fullness will be realized by the bride of Christ when faith is turned into sight and hope into possession and she is like the Son of God. We draw from the inspired word referred to that Jesus should fulfill all that was written in the law and the prophets, and they were until John, then the gospel is preached to those prepared for the Lord, and to make ready a people or set in order the righteousness of God be revealed in the hearts of the sons of men. "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."—Matt. iii. 3; Mark i. 3. Luke, speaking of John, said, "He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."—Luke i. 15-17. These words were given to Zacharias before John was born, which testifies of the will of God, or his predestinated purpose in sending his Son into the world, and also the work of the Holy Ghost in the hearts of those born of God. It appears to our understanding that God only revealed to the sons of men just a very small portion of what the volume of the book of life contained that Jesus should do. For we read that there were "many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."—John xxi. 25. We consider written law to be a volume, or books, and the book of life of the Lamb, the law of the spirit, life, must have been embraced in it. God is infinite and there is nothing old or new with him, and his will is worked in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. The revelation of God to Moses, David and Paul expresses the delight of the Son to do his Father's will, saying, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart. When we are given to meditate upon the wonderful works of God in nature and grace we are made to exclaim, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways. We contend Jusus fulfilled that which was written of him in the law and the prophets, and his acts in the manifestation of his doing his Father's will was written in the New Testament, which proves to the child of God that Jesus was God manifest in the flesh and we realize the working of his almighty power in the heart, and the New Testament bears record of that

power and love, which proves the statement that Jesus quickeneth whomsoever he will, and they are made alive and are to live after the Spirit. The Spirit taketh of the things of him and showeth them unto us, and the New Testament comes unto us as a thorough furnisher unto the good works in the heart, and through the patience wrought by the Spirit in the heart and the comfort of the Scriptures we have hope, and hope is the anchor of the soul sure and steadfast. We do confess we are at a loss for words to express the greatness of our God and the fullness of the salvation of the people of God in Christ Jesus. Jesus could not pass the purposes of God in his will but he had to suffer, for her sins were imputed unto him, which gives the ground for the statement that he was made sin for us that we should be made the righteousness of God in him, and when one of those for whom he suffered is quickened immediately the just mandates of God's law are brought to view and the sinner beholds his vileness because of sin and all the just mandates of a violated law seem to rest upon him as much as if he were the only one in all the world that had ever committed a sin, and Jesus appears to each one according to the measure of the grace of God appointed unto him, and this is given according to the will of God. It was declared, Thou wilt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption, and in the fulfillment of this word God raised him up from the dead and crowned him with glory and honor. Jesus, being infinite wisdom, beheld the travel of his soul and was satisfied. The glory he had with the Father was realized in him when he asked in the agony of death by which he implored the Father, Glorify thou me with thine own self with glory I had with thee before the world began. The Son's delight was in the inhabited parts of the earth among the sons of men, as it was his Father's will that he should suffer death, and by his sufferings his bride should be made whole. It gave him delight as he beheld her all fair and no spot in her, for his blood cleansed her from all sin, and her cleansing was the travel of his soul, and he was satisfied. This life in a man or a woman makes them delight in the law of the Lord, and their meditation is upon him day and night, and all the commandments of the New Testament are to each one as though he were the only one to be obedient or disobedient. It would be their delight to do them, but they find they have no strength, and the depravity of their nature is such that they cannot come forth until Jesus strengthens them, then they come in the beloved embrace of their Savior, and by these virtues they sing praises unto him and declare him to be the way, the truth and the life, and the only name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. All the teaching the whole world can do will never impart eternal life to the sinner dead in trespasses and sin, but a very short sentence from his mouth can give eternal life and assure them of the will of God giving them eternal life through the righteousness of his Son.

All the delight in the heart of a sinner to be obedient to the commandments of the power of God in the heart is but the testimony of the spiritual relation of the poor sinner with Jesus, though the glory and virtue are greater than he can claim for himself. Through the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ grace and truth are multiplied unto us, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue, whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. (2 Peter ii. 3, 4.) All these virtues are revealed in us by Jesus Christ, and are not obtained in any other way. He delighted to do his Father's will, and it was the will of the Father for him to give eternal life to as many as the Father gave him.

We do hope to continue in these things unto the end, and we do feel to admonish those who hope that God for Christ's sake has forgiven their transgressions to come thou with us and we will do thee good. C. W. V.

We request our subscribers when sending in subscriptions or changes of address to be sure and give the *exact name and address* to which the paper is now coming; otherwise we are liable to give the credit to the wrong person, as we may have two subscribers of the same surname at the one post office.

WHO IS SATAN?

What saith the Spirit? The record of inspiration is that Satan is the "prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."—Eph. ii. 2. He is the "god of this world."—2 Cor. iv. 4. As such, he is blinding the minds of them who believe not. He is the "wicked one" in whom this world lies. (1 John v. 19, margin.) He is the roaring lion who walketh about seeking whom he may devour. (1 Peter v. 8.) Jesus called Satan the "prince of this world." "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."—John xiv. 30. He is the accuser of the brethren. (Rev. xii. 10.) Satan is a creature of God, made by him; but is not now as he was in the day when he was created. "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty; thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee; and I will bring thee to ashes upon the

earth, in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more."—Ezek. xxviii. 15-19. Satan in Eden in the garden of God was a being of beauty, hence his deceptive power over Eve, coming as he did to her transformed as an angel of light offering godlikeness for disobedience to God. "Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created."—Ezek. xxviii. 13. The king of Tyre, like Judas Iscariot, was energized by Satan. It was not the king of Tyre who had been in the garden of Eden, but Satan himself. God's hand (power) formed the crooked serpent. Formation is not creation. Creation causes to exist that which had no previous existence. Formation is the shaping of that which was previously created. Satan was created perfect but fell through pride and self-love. Before he fell, his name was Lucifer. After his fall, he is Satan. "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit."—Isaiah xiv. 12-15. A "murderer from the beginning" and "a liar," he "abode not in the truth." Created perfect from the hand of the Creator, he kept not his first estate, so "from the beginning" he has been a sinner. (John viii. 44.) God's sovereignty has directed the course of Satan since his fall into the air and earth where he is now at work, and God's immutable decree points the final end of this arch-enemy. He is to be bound a thousand years in the bottomless pit and so kept from deceiving the nations during that period. Then, he is to be loosed a little season that he may gather Og and Magog together against the camp of the saints and the holy city, finally he is to be hurled into the lake of fire and brimstone. (Rev. xx. 10.) Christ in His death destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and has delivered the elect therefrom. He has bruised Satan under His feet, but we see "not yet all things put under him." The work is completely done but not yet completely realized. He "shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."—Rom. xvi. 20. In all places where the Scriptures refer to Satan, the Holy Ghost invariably uses the personal pronoun "he," or variants thereof, never does He use the impersonal word "it." Satan is a being. The fact that he is a spirit does in no wise deny his personality. All the language employed in Scripture re-

garding this evil personage plainly indicates his personality. Our blessed Lord in his wilderness temptation did not contend against some vague unreal presence, but against the very real, tangible and awful personality of the devil. To believe less than this is to detract from the reality of Christ's temptation and the glorious work of our Redeemer. Few things please Satan more than to get the elect of God to believe he is a nonentity and thus succeed in blinding them to his reality. May the Holy Spirit give us true enlightenment that we may not fall into such a snare in these Laodicean days when so many are apostatizing from the truth.

H. H. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder C. W. Vaughn.)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, meeting with the First Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, Mercer County, New Jersey, May 31st, June 1st and 2nd, 1933, sendeth greetings and love in the Lord to the several churches and associations with which we correspond.

Dear Brethren:—By the power of the all-wise heavenly Father we are blessed to assemble, and according to a custom of long standing we address you in this annual epistle of love and fellowship. We are realizing an almighty Power working and perfecting his purposes. "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness."—1 Tim. iii. 16. Of all the great mysteries of godliness the greatest is that it should please Him to purpose salvation to poor sinners, who were polluted and vile, through the suffering and death of his only Son, and through him the dead be given life. Jesus uses the pronoun "I," saying, I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. This wonderful mystery of godliness stands in the perfection of God as though it had already been perfected, for Jesus was ever with the Father as one brought up with him, and all the works of God as recorded in the Scriptures were but the testimony of Jesus; and not until the virgin brought forth the Son could men see with the natural organs of sight God in the flesh, and only as the Spirit inspired them could they perceive of any of God's mysteries. The children of God were chosen in Christ Jesus and their names were written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. All those whose names were written in the book of life of the Lamb Jesus will quicken and make alive, that they shall by the Spirit worship God and believe on his Son, Jesus Christ, which manifests the work of God in the hearts of poor mortals and proves of their being born of God, which is the incorruptible seed by the word of God. No man can worship because of fleshly relations that are perceived by the carnal mind. Jesus offered himself without spot to God, and in this offering all the names that were written in the book of life of the Lamb, God sanctified them in the offering by which they have an inheritance that is incorruptible, un-

defiled and that fadeth not away, but is reserved in heaven. It shall be manifested in them by the quickening Spirit of Jesus Christ, and faith exercises in the heart as a divine substance and gives the foretaste of the joy that shall be revealed in us. We feel this eternal life was completed in Jesus Christ when he died for us and rose for our justification. In his resurrection he demonstrated that he was God manifested in the flesh and was the fulfillment of his declaration that he had power to lay down his life and power to take it again, and all the time of his pilgrimage with his disciples he was of comfort and rejoicing to his disciples, but when the time of his crucifixion came they were cast out, by which they felt all their hopes in him were cut off, but by his resurrection they were begotten again unto a lively hope; as the apostle declared that He hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. He sends the Spirit into our hearts by which we cry, Abba, Father. His Spirit taketh of the things of him and showeth them unto us, and when we are given to see we exclaim, What wonderful mysteries! This mystery was given to John when he beheld Jesus coming to his baptism in which he exclaimed, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. It is another wonderful mystery to us to think that God in his wisdom beheld all things in time and eternity, and for the fulfillment of his purpose in creation he created of one blood all nations of the earth, set their bounds and habitations that they cannot pass, but according to his purpose in grace the vessels of mercy were chosen in Christ out of every land, kindred, tongue and nation under heaven, and all power is given unto Jesus Christ, and there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby sinners must be saved. The elect of God in Christ Jesus must be saved in fulfillment of God's word to Joseph and Mary when she was with child: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." The word "shall" in God's declaration implies his purpose in grace through Christ Jesus. Every one must be born again before they can see the kingdom of God or know Jesus Christ as the Son of God. It pleased God according to the good pleasure of his will to predestinate the way of his Son as well as the way of salvation of his people, and Jesus exclaimed, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." The word "babes" applied to the children of God implies helplessness, that they cannot put forth strength to sustain life, but must be kept.

We now have the unity of Christ and the elect of God in God's purpose and grace given in Christ Jesus, and all that any poor mortal will be blessed to understand relative to that unity must be revealed by the Spirit, and they can only impart to the brethren as the Spirit gives them understanding, or the measure of the gift of God will enable them to testify of the gospel, which is

the power of God unto salvation to them that believe.

We have referred to election, predestination, foreordination and the unity of Christ and the elect. We have called attention to the connection of life in Jesus Christ, the second Adam, to the first Adam dead in trespasses and sin. Christ Jesus is the embodiment of life of both husband and wife, spiritually, and that unity was in Christ when he was as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and bearing all their names in the book of life of the Lamb, and by that virtue he quickens every member of his bride and she is quickened from death in sin to life in Christ, and it is in him she lives and moves and has her being. God's purpose is that no flesh shall glory in his presence. One asks, Do you mean to cut off the body of the saints? No, but the works of carnality are recorded as the works of the flesh. Paul in writing to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xv. 51) says, "Behold, I shew you a mystery." Then he goes on to express relative to the bodies of the saints and the victory which Jesus has given to poor sinners, "The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." We must declare, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, thou King of saints. "And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." All these were demonstrated in the virtues of life in Christ for the church of God, the pillar and ground of the truth, of which we hope we are, and hope to continue unto the end in the love and fellowship of the saints and contend for the doctrine of salvation by grace.

We esteem our correspondents in their steadfastness in this sacred doctrine, and by Him, the great head of the church, we are bound in the unity of the Spirit, and kept in the bonds of peace.

C. W. VAUGHN, Mod.
DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder T. D. Walker, May 14th, 1933, at the home of brother W. J. Berry, Santa Monica, California, Elder G. O. Walker, of Oregon and California, and Mrs. Clara Harris, daughter of the late Elder C. C. Melton, of Illinois.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

THOMAS LAMBERT, one of the oldest and most highly esteemed residents of the city of Asheboro, North Carolina, was born in Johnson County, North Carolina, December 18th, 1852, and died at his home May 8th, 1933, aged 80 years, 4 months and 20 days. The deceased spent most of his boyhood and early manhood in Stanley County. Our beloved brother was married to Miss Sarah Trogden, of Randolph County, October 24th, 1852. The two met at the home of his parents, where she was boarding while she taught school They were immediately attached to each other, and marriage followed in less than a year. She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, and was desirous to know whether her future husband had a gracious heartfelt knowledge of the same precious Savior in whom she trusted, and she questioned him upon these matters. He told her

that he had been in deep sorrow over his sinful condition, and the lost estate of his soul, but that the Lord had given him a view of the Savior, the crucified One, suspended between the heavens and the earth, and that he had seemed to hear a voice saying that this was for his sins that he suffered and bled and died. Thus began that spiritual and heartfelt oneness and communion in the things of Jesus Christ, which continued all the days of their married life. Our brother was a firm believer in the doctrine of Christ, of Jehovah's eternal election of grace, and of the salvation by grace of his elect in Christ Jesus, and of the all-embracing, immutable predestination of Jehovah of all things; yes, of every atom of the universe. The things declared in the Scriptures of truth were with him matters of vital heartfelt experience, as the very food to the soul of a poor sinner called by the grace of God and taught of the Lord. All of which, by the grace of the Lord his God, was exemplified in his godly life and conversation. He was a great reader of the Bible, and also a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and loved to engege in religious conversation with those of like precious faith. Many such talks I have had with him, to my soul's satisfaction. Several times during his illness of about three weeks, of which he died, he said, "Politicians may suggest remedies for the depression, doctors may prescribe remedies for the ills of mankind, but over all is the omnipotent hand of God, he holds the destiny of the nations in his hand, and the well-being of mankind is in his hand, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Alleluiah!" Our brother has departed this life to be with Christ, which is far better, and his body is laid in the grave to await its resurrection at the last day, when this mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption. God shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, according to the power whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

He has left to mourn their loss two sons, L. B. and M. T. Lambert, and Massa E. Lambert, and our dear sister Lambert, his wife. At his funeral the writer preached from the words found in Psalms lxxiii. 22-25.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

BENJAMIN W. ASHWORTH departed this life Monday morning, February 13th, 1933, after much suffering, leaving myself and six children. The children are: Posie W. Ashworth, Danville, Va., Laura B. Gilbert, Alice A. Davidson and Bessie M. McCrickard, all of Sandy Level, Va. He also leaves thirty-two grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Two infants preceded him to the great beyond. He lived, as he died, peaceful and quiet. He was a great sufferer of chronic appendicitis and a complication of diseases. His death was not unexpected to those around him who had tenderly watched over him for some time. All was done for him that kind neighbors and children could do, but the hand of death could not be stayed; when God called he had to go. We could not say, Why doest thou? As for myself, I tried to do all I could to keep him with me, but when the Lord called I felt to say, Bless the Lord, he has taken him out of his suffering. I felt to say that heaven had come down its jewels to crown, and felt that we all should rejoice more than to weep. A good man has gone. Had he lived until July 9th, 1933, he would have been eighty-two years old, having been born July 9th, 1851. His greatest joy was to meet with the brethren and sisters and talk and sing, but he was never as much a talker as he was singer. He had the preaching brethren come to his house and preach while he was sick, and much enjoyed the preaching and singing even during his suffering. He asked each one of the brethren who preached for him to attend his funeral, which they did. Elder Brooks (his pastor for many years), Elder Dodd and Elder Stigall all were there and preached at his funeral. He was a kind and good husband and a kind father. All of his children are grown, which is a great blessing. He was kind and tender with all, and my neighbors know what it is to be without him. He was an honest man, a faithful friend, prompt to oblige, slow to offend, useful in life. His course he ran and died at peace with God and man. He talked sweetly about departing and told us he was ready to go and wished to be released from his suffering and be at rest. He was conscious until the last, and seemed to have died with a smile on his face and looked to be at peace. We miss him everywhere, but I miss him most, as I am old and feeble We lived together fifty-four years. I am now seventy-four years old. He joined Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church in July, 1894, and was ordained Deacon soon after. He contended strongly for the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone. "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in christian love."

His much grieved widow,

(MRS.) B. W. ASHWORTH.

ROBERT LEE ROUNDS was born December 2nd, 1911, and was killed in an accident near Salisbury, Maryland, April 13th, 1933, at the age of 21 years, 4 months and 11 days. He is survived by his father and mother: E. Henry and Laura D. Rounds, and the following brothers and sisters: Mrs. Emma Benson, Wilmington Del., Harry Rounds, Salisbury, Md., Mrs. Lida Twilley, Quantico, Md., George Rounds, Mardella, Md., Joseph Rounds, Salisbury, Md. He is also survived by his fiance, Miss Margaret Olephant, whom he expected to marry at Easter time. Robert was a dutiful son, his first interest in life being for the happiness and comfort of his father and mother, to whom he was truly devoted. He enjoyed taking us to meeting. The last meeting he took us to was

at Delmar, the first Sunday in April. I never thought of him leaving us so soon. He was a comfort and joy to us. Already he had been recognized widely for his industry, ability, courtesy, thrift and general good citizenship. While a youth in High School he became interested in cattle raising, and with money saved purchased two Ayrshires, later starting a dairy route, and was on his route delivering milk when the end came. I was with him about two hours before he left and he was whistling and singing. Oh such a shock!

His heart-broken mother,

LAURA D. ROUNDS.

THE above obituary was written by the mother of Robert Rounds and gives all the particulars of his life and death, but for the love I had for him and my appreciation of his friendship shall add a few lines. I had known him since he was a mere boy. Few young men of all my acquaintance have been more gentlemanly, kind and frank than was he. Always he would seek me out and greet me with a warm hand shake and pleasant word. His funeral was one of the largest I ever attended. The service was conducted by Elder G. E. Coulbourn, of Cape Charles, Virginia, the pastor of his father and mother, assisted by the writer. Interment was in the family plot in Parsons Cemetery, in Salisbury, Maryland. May grace and comfort be ministered to the family.

H. C. KER.

JAMES LAWSON JONES, son of James and Frances Jones was born in Kentucky in the year 1846, and died April 16th, 1933, being in his seventy-seventh year at the time of his death. Left to mourn his departure are two brothers, three sisters and several nephews and nieces. Brother Jones was twice married. Both of his companions departed this life several years ago. There were no children. Early in life the Lord showed him of his sinfulness and for several years he carried his burden in silence, feeling his unworthiness, and felt it would not be right to ask the church to receive him, as he was not fit. Later his burden became so heavy that he told his feelings to the Elk Lick Church of Old School Baptists and was received by them and baptized by the late Elder C. C. Moore, of Missouri, who at that time was acting pastor of the church. That was in September, 1921. About that time Elder Peter W. Sawin, who was well along in years, and blind, was chosen pastor of the church, and brother Jones was a great help to him, often going with him and assisting him. Although Elder Sawin is in his ninetieth year he was able to preach brother Jones' funeral.

Now a word to the church: We will miss our brother, but we believe it was no mistake, that the Lord who gave is the Lord that has taken away, and we mourn not as those who have no hope. We pray the Lord to reconcile us and enable us to say, Thy will be done. The church (of which I am pastor) passed a resolution that I write the obituary of brother Jones and send it to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication. May the Lord bless them that mourn.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

DEACON V. A. McWHORTER died at his home, near Laurel, Mississippi, September 18th, 1932, after an illness of four months. He was born March 16th, 1856, and was ordained Deacon the third Sunday in August, 1911. At the request of his dear companion, my sister-in-law, I will try in much weakness to write something to let his many friends know of his passing away on the above date. For me to say that we miss him does not seem to begin to express our feelings; only those who have mingled with him and his family at his home, and at the church, can begin to realize the full extent of our loss. He united with the Palistine Primitive Baptist Church, near his home, and later was made Deacon, which office he filled until he passed away, and if he failed in the discharge of his duty I have never known of it. He was of a meek and quiet disposition, and moved about with such a becoming manner we feel sure he was called and qualified by the Lord of grace, whom he delighted to honor. His home was large and roomy and seemed as though built for the purpose of entertaining his brethren and friends, especially his brethren, and sister Lela seemed always to be ready to minister to their comfort. He was once heard to say he hoped to have one hundred Baptists in his home at one time. His children were devoted to him, and all was done for him that doctors, nurses and a loving family could do, but the Lord seemed to say, It is enough; come up higher. During the first part of his sickness he told me that he wished to stay just a little longer, for he was so devoted to his family, and he said to me, Anna, will you pray that I may remain a little longer? Oh! in that trying ordeal my heart almost ceased to beat. I could only whisper to our great High Priest, Thy will, not ours, be done. He did let him stay a little while longer and a little later he was made willing to go to the home he loved to speak and sing of. His one regret was leaving his dear ones. Many happy hours we spent in spiritual conversation, which subject seemed always uppermost in his mind when he visited in my humble home. Even if it were only for a short while, we always sang a few hymns. He was most Christ-like in his daily life. One could go to him out on his farm when he was busy with his tasks and could see at once that his mind was on things unseen. In his eyes would be tears of joy, living with God, in sweet communion with him. He was a great lover of the old songs, and while he was singing them he seemed very near. I cannot touch upon his many lovely virtues, and can only

say that in my weakness I could see no fault in him. I grieve for his dear wife, who was ever ready to do everything possible for him until the last moment. His precious children were very devoted to him, and may the God of heaven give them strength to be reconciled to his divine will, and may he grant that they be an unbroken family among the redeemed. He was the father of four children, two boys and two girls: Welborn and Johnie and Miss Tressie Lee McWhorter and Mrs. D. N. Porter, all of Laurel, Mississippi.

Funeral services were held in Hickory Grove Church. Our pastor being away from home we called Mr. L. G. Gates, who spoke very beautifully of his life. They sang one of his favorite hymns: "Shed not a tear o'er your friend's early bier when I am gone." His body was laid to rest in Hickory Grove Cemetery, amidst a bed of lovely flowers, surrounded by a great concourse of loved ones and friends, to await the One he sang about while sick, the One who burst the bars of death and triumphed over the grave.

Written by his devoted sister,

(MRS.) ANNA WINDHAM.

MRS. SUSIE L. GULLETT, of Athol, Maryland, passed away March 18th, 1933, aged 70 years. As Miss Susie Evans she was married, April 9th, 1890, to James Gullett. To this union one son, Lemuel, and several grandchildren survive, together with the husband. On October 2nd, 1892, she was baptized in the fellowship of the Rewastico Old School Baptist Church, of Wicomico County, Maryland, by the late Elder A. B. Francis, and continued a faithful and devoted member to the end of her life. She loved the house of God, its ordinances and doctrine, and the stronger the doctrine was set forth the better she liked it. Mr. I. H. Evans, a brother, of Athol, and several nephews and nieces also survive her. We all miss her, but know she is better off.

The funeral service, conducted by the writer, was in the Rewastico meetinghouse, and the interment in the family plot on the farm.

H. C. KER.

ALBERT J. SMITH, aged 84 years, for many years proprietor of the Ames Hotel, Ames, Iowa, passed away after a long illness. He is survived by his wife, a daughter, Mrs. Bertha Gloer, of Ames, Iowa, and a son, Dr. E-Kaye Smith, of Chicago, Illinois. Funeral services were held at the Duckworth funeral home. Elder Holmes of Newton conducted the funeral services. Burial was in the Ames Cemetery.

[THE above is a clipping from a local paper, and was sent to us for publication by Mrs. Bertha Gloer, brother Smith's daughter. She also sent an article written by brother Smith which he requested should be read at his funeral, which will be found on page 155 of this issue.—ED.]

IT becomes my sad duty to record the passing of our dear sister and friend, **MRS. MARIA LAYTHAM REES,** who departed this life April 27th, 1933, at her home in Lexington, Kentucky. She was born January 3rd, 1853, in Mason County, Kentucky, and was married April 12th, 1881, to W. J. Rees, who survives her. She was the mother of one son, E. L. Rees, and one daughter, Minnie Rees, and the step-mother of Mrs. Tillie Rees Owings, all of whom live in Lexington. One sister, Mrs. Sallie Laytham Thomas, lives in Mays Lick, Kentucky. Sister Rees was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for more than sixty-five years, and was a reader of the SIGNS for most of that time. Her firm faith in her belief lasted all the days of her life, giving her comfort and strength to meet each new issue. Her devotion to her family was beautiful, no thought of herself entering into her ministrations to her invalid husband or her children, and her kindliness of heart has been of much comfort to those near and dear to her. Owing to the illness of Mr. Rees, a brief service, conducted by Elder P. W. Sawin, was held at the grave in the little cemetery at Shannon, near Mays Lick, Mason County, Kentucky. Truly a beautiful memory of a well spent life is left to those who miss her so much.

GOLDIE S. WHITE.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Carl Loyd, Kans., $1; Elder C. W. Anderson, Ark., $2; D. L. Blackwell, N. J., $3; Alfred E. Titus, N. J., $8; "A friend," N. Y., $3; Mrs. H. D. Hewitt, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Val Werner, N. J., $1; Mrs. Kate Lunsford, Ky., $1; Melissa C. Sparks, Cal., $3.

MEETINGS.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fifth Sunday in July, 1933. Services to be held at the home of the late brother J. E. Livingston, 64 E. Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y. Services to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. Also at 2 p. m. on Saturday before. All are welcome.

I expect this will be the last meeting held at this place, as the property will soon change hands.

ADDIE LIVINGSTON, Church Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in July (30th). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

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Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminiar Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

LUKE XXIV. 26.

"OUGHT not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"

I have for several days been thinking and meditating upon the above Scripture. I realize the subject covers more territory than mortal man can get over and do anything like justice to it, for, as said by one of the apostles, If all Jesus said and did were written, the world itself could not contain the books. He suffered many things at the hands of the chief priests and the elders, of which both Mary Magdalene and Joanna and the other Mary together with other women went to the apostles concerning the unusual occurrences, and all went to behold the grave of the Master, only to find that the mighty power of God had sent his holy angels and rolled the stone away which had the seal of the governor, and brought forth the Lord of life to the surprised multitude, and as they were enroute to Emmaus with the story of resurrection of the Lord, yet not perfectly understanding the resurrection, and in sadness as concerning his whereabouts, when Jesus drew near and listened to their conversation while on their way to Emmaus and questioned them about the great thing which had enveloped them in sorrow. They seemed to think him a rank stranger in that country, but their eyes were holden that they should not know him, just as it is to this present day, the spiritual vision is holden or obstructed by the old carnal nature until Jesus only can open to our understanding and knowledge of himself. Then after quite an interesting conversation had drifted with them enroute to Emmaus we hear the greatest of all acknowledgments, of the glorious purpose and prophecy of God concerning the blessed Son of God, the seed of the woman encouched in the blessed word of Jesus when he said, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?" the things related in the above, which was the sole subject of their conversation. Though he reprimanded them concerning their un-

belief, calling them fools and slow of heart to believe all the prophets had spoken, he then said, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" When man through the deception of Satan violated God's righteous law and brought sin and condemnation and death upon the race we hear God in his reckoning with Satan say, I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed, and it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise her heel. In this we can behold the ancient prophecy of God concerning the same language of Jesus to his beloved saints, when he said, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?" seeing his Father is the first one to mention the act of divine grace in the redemption of his children by supplying the necessary means of their safe delivery through the seed of the woman in bruising the head of Satan, the arch enemy of the dear chosen children of God from the fallen mass of Adam's posterity. There has ever existed an unbroken enmity between Satan and his empire and the church which is on earth, for God told Satan, I will put enmity between thee and the woman (the church), and between thy seed and her seed (which is Christ). In full view of this fact as is mentioned in the beginning, we look at it as Paul said to the church at Rome: Wherefore, as by one man (not all men) sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. (Rom. v. 12.) Thus, we return to the law to Adam: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat; for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. In this we behold the law, and from its source, which is perfect, we behold man placed under solemn restraint: Thou shalt not (really) eat, for in the day thou eatest of this tree thou shalt die. Here we have man before the law was given, placed in the garden of the Lord with all it seemed that could be desired for his happiness. We see him alone as a keeper of the paradise, yet we hear the Lord say, It is not good that a man be alone. Thus the Lord caused a deep sleep to fall on him, in which the Lord took from his side a rib and formed the woman as a helpmeet. In this composition of woman we see the law, the first type of the church. Inasmuch as she received the law in her husband, so the church received the law of life in Jesus, the second Adam, and both borne in their representative heads. Eve first violated the law, in which she was forever separated from her husband, leaving the line (law) strictly between them, and because of the love Adam had for his bride (naturally speaking) he must come down in the transgression, in order to be with her. Thus the second Adam (Jesus) must come down under the law, be made under the law, to redeem them which were under the law; and as death was the penalty for the violation of the law, and the children being flesh and blood, he took part of the same (sin excepted), for as Jesus was begotten of God and not Joseph, which made him of the woman and not

of the man, thus clear from being begotten of Adam a sinner, and as death satisfied the law, and one sinner cannot atone for the sins of another, we thus see in this that Jesus was the seed of the woman, and he bruised the serpent's head, for he plainly said on the cross, "It is finished." And, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do, and he delivered them who all their lifetime were subject to bondage. For when he was delivered his whole body, the church, was delivered, and when he was raised from the dead he was raised complete, his body, his bride, was raised far above the law, that the law hath no more dominion over her, for it is said that in all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them. All the heated arguments, all the desires of his dear followers, did not release him from the infuriated mob, for that must be accomplished which was written of him, for the prophets prophesied of his death, and all the sufferings under which he went. So when he fell in company with those who had visited his grave it sounded perfect in the ears of those to whom he had made himself known, for when he said, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" then we hear him say he began at Moses and the prophets and expounded all the law and the prophets who wrote concerning him. Thus, we have it proclaimed by his truly called apostles, Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain, whom God hath raised up. (Acts ii. 23, 24.) Yet those who betrayed him and witnessed against him were of a very religious type, Pharisees and proselytes, so it can be easily said that it was the strict religious element that crucified the Lord, if we place any weight in the statement of Jesus when he testified to his company enroute to Emmaus, when he said, Ought not Christ to have suffered these things? and then began with Moses and the prophets and expounded to them all the Scriptures concerning himself. I might mention some of them. Read Numbers xxi. 9: And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole: and it came to pass that if any one was bitten of the flying serpents, and looked upon the brazen serpent he lived. This pointed to Jesus being lifted up on the cross, and, mind you, no one was commanded to look except those who were bitten. So after he was crucified no one was was commanded to look on him except those who believed, and absolutely those who are born of God have the evidence internally of the hideous sting of sin, which is an antitype of the sting of the fiery flying serpent. Then we read, Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy of Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old. (Micah vii. 20.) The everlasting covenant contained all the elements of our salvation, made certain and sure, and sealed by the blood of Christ, which was typified many times before his advent into this world, and was spoken of by the prophets all the

way down the line from the beast from which the Lord God took the skins to make the garments for Adam and Eve in the garden, and gloriously symbolical in the blood of Abel, whom Cain slew. We hear Paul speak of it when he says, "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail," which is in Christ Jesus, who is the seed of the woman. Oh that blessed promise which was made in the beginning, which was surely promised when he said, The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. In this we look to the statement of Jesus after he had suffered the allotment which divine justice required in the one person, Jesus Christ, on the Roman cross in fulfillment of the counsel of God from all eternity, for it is stated by the apostle, Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. His promise that he should bruise the serpent's head was in conformity with the counsel from eternity, therefore Jesus could lovingly say to those with whom he came in company, Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into the everlasting glory which he had with the Father before the high dust of the hills was made? For it is said by the wise man, by inspiration, The Lord possessed me in the beginning of the way, before his works of old, for I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was; yea, when he prepared the heavens I was there; when he set a compass upon the face of the deep, yea, when he gave to the sea his decree that the waters should not pass his commandment, then I was there, then I was by him as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him. (Prov. viii. 22-30.) Oh wondrous words, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" which glory all the redeemed family of God shall enter when the day comes, as it did for Jesus, to arise from the dead, for it must needs be that we, too, go down into death as did our Lord, only to rise again in his image, perfectly free from sin and its consequences and sufferings, perfectly free from bondage and corruption. In the above we hear him say, Rejoicing always before him, rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and my (Jesus') delights were in the sons of men. Again we hear him, in his wonderful prayer to his Father, just before his suffering, I pray for them. I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine. Yea, and all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them. We cannot but look away back into eternity and behold the wonderful glory of the Son, our Savior, while he was with the Father as one brought up with him, ever rejoicing before the

Father, and not only his Father, but our Father, as his delights were with the sons of men. Away back before time was brought into being, back before the world was made, we trace his everlasting love for his people even before they had been formed, yet in the counsel of God we see him as slain for the redemption of his beloved people for whom he prayed to his Father, in which prayer he said, I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them thou gavest me, and said, Keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that we may be one, as we are one. Oh the oneness that has ever existed between the Father and Son and his dear election of grace and love. No one who reads the statements of Jesus can ever deny the doctrine of eternal election, for he plainly says in his prayer to the Father, I pray not for the world, but for them thou gavest me out of the world, for thine they were, and thou gavest them me. He then goes on with his prayer, and says, Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me, for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. (John xvii.)

I feel I much rather rely upon the wonderful prayer of our Savior than on all the combined prayers of the world, for it is the prayer of eternal power and comes from the lips of him that God heareth, and he said in his prayer, I pray for them that thou gavest me. In them he gloried, and hence no wonder he said to those of his little children just before his departure to his everlasting Father, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" All suffering is over with him, all glory is his eternal inheritance, and he said, Thine are mine, and mine are thine, thus the glory that shall follow the resurrection from the dead at the last day, for as he arose from the dead by the glory of the Father, so shall all the children of the covenant rise from the dead to enter his glory with him. Oh blessed thought!

J. B. BOWDEN.

INGRAM, Texas, Feb. 14, 1933.

THE POWER AND FAITHFULNESS OF GOD.

CHOSEN in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. (Eph. i. 4.) Now, let us keep this in our heart, for it is one of God's creations and therefore must stand as complete in him. Then we read in Ephesians ii. 10: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." This is God's work, not ours, not the work of the one whom he created and ordained. Now, let us first find out what these good works are that they are ordained to walk in. It is recorded in the Scriptures that it is the work of God that ye believe on Jesus, or him whom he has sent, so the good works are to believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God. How are we to believe? Not by the natural hearing of the ear, for the natural man receiveth not the

things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him. Then it must be a mysterious way. But again the Scripture comes to our relief (as it always will), Acts xiii. 48, tells us that as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. So we find that the believing is God's work also. We are getting the old man pretty low down, not even allowing him the honor of having the power to believe on the Son of man. This does not sound much like free moral agency, since one cannot even believe unless it is ordained of God. This is giving all the honor, all the glory and all the power unto God, who created heaven and earth and all things contained therein, and it is not very pleasing to the world, or to the nominal professor who claims man is a free moral agent and can turn and serve God at his will, or reject him according as he chooses. Now this is the way I see it: In the first place all of his children were chosen in Christ when as yet there was none of them in visible form, yet they were in Christ by the will of the Father, ready to be revealed at his will in these bodies which he has prepared for them to dwell in, just as Jesus said, A body hast thou prepared me. These bodies are only Adam multiplied, or continued, and are of the earth earthy, and man at his best is only vanity and amounts to nothing. He is only an earthly vessel, which holds the treasure in the tabernacle of clay, and is vanity. The ones who were created in Christ before the world was, dwell in these tabernacles of clay. These earthly men are the children of Adam, and these are the ones Christ came to redeem from under the law, and he did redeem them that they might receive the adoption of sons, and because they are sons God hath sent his Son into their hearts, and they are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints of God, having been made nigh by the blood of Christ. These same subjects were predestinated unto this adoption of sons by Jesus Christ at this time, and it was sure to come to pass, because it was according to the good pleasure of his will We see in this, first, election, predestination and foreknowledge, and since they are all kept by the power of God through faith, which is a gift of God, the final perseverance of the saints is just as certain as God himself, for they are regenerated by him, born of him, kept by the power of God, through faith, which is by grace, through his abundant love and mercy, given to hell-deserving sinners, who were dead, for they were killed by the law, for says the law, Every soul that sinneth it shall die. And the law leaves them dead, since it cannot bring to life what it has pronounced dead without making its own statutes null and void, for they have sinned; all have sinned. So we find the law only a minister of justice, and it could go no farther. But Jesus came into the world to save sinners whom the law pronounced dead because they had sinned. Now we

must extend something, something besides justice, to those guilty wretches who acknowledge their guilt, they are lost, without God and without hope in the world, aliens from God and strangers to grace. Oh what a place for poor sin-sick souls to be in, knowing they are justly condemned and without any hope of pardon. Dear brother or sister, have you been there? I know you have. It is a horrible pit with miry clay beneath, and you were sinking deeper with every struggle, not knowing that deliverance was near you. Yet you could not give up, but still begged for mercy, though you did not expect it. But in an unexpected moment the dear Savior appeared to you, telling you he had washed all your sins away in his own blood, and oh how you loved him, for he had redeemed you; and right there he took you up out of that pit, which was your own works which you were trusting in to save you, but you now saw they were as filthy rags in the sight of the just and holy God as a means of your salvation, and he placed your feet upon a rock, even Christ Jesus, in whom there is no failure, for he saves to the uttermost all who come to God by him, and he put a new song in your mouth, and, may I not say, in your heart? for your whole being was praising God, who you had just found, or who had just found you. Even the natural things about you were praising him, or at least they seemed to be, you were so happy. I believe one at such times is so filled with the Holy Ghost, which is the love of God shed abroad in the heart, that there is no room for anything else, and one cannot see nor understand why every one else is not praising him. It is truly a foretaste of heaven, a heavenly place in Christ, for he is so near, and if we could only be so happy in him through life, but alas for us, the old man is still alive and must be fed.

This was written at intervals as I could sit up, for I have been sick with malaria, but it is so disappointing I do not know whether or not you can find any good in it. I do love the SIGNS and the writers who give God all the honor and glory and ascribe all power unto him who is our all and in all. The editorials are good and plain, as well as are all the letters of the other writers. I would like to mention each one, for they are surely all taught of God. But why should I count myself as one of them when I am so disobedient I feel as though I belong on the outside and am not worthy to partake of the wonderful food that the SIGNS dispenses? But God knows why I am thus. I am only trying to follow along in the footsteps of the flock, but that old man gets in my way so much and tries to tell me I am alone and misled, but if I am I must press on towards the mark of our high calling in God, eternal life.

Submitted in love. Farewell.

DAVIS BURCH.

HEBREWS XIII. 17.

"OBEY them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch over your souls, as they that must give account; that they may do it with joy, and not with grief."

Paul was writing to the church, giving a number of exhortations, among them being this one: "Obey them that have the rule over you," etc. Who are they that have the rule over us? According to Hebrews xiii. 7, they are they who have spoken unto us the word of God. These are the ministers of the gospel, and to those who have pastors, their pastors, more especially, have the rule over them. This does not give ministers license to lord it over God's heritage, for 1 Peter v. 2, 3, tells Elders to feed the flock of God, taking the oversight thereof, not being lords over God's heritage, but ensamples to the flock. The word "rule" in Hebrews xiii. 17, is in the margin, "guide," and verse seven, "are the guides." This is Paul speaking, and Peter bears him out in the Scripture just quoted, "as being ensamples to the flock." We are apt to think that the work of a minister is but to preach the gospel, but according to 1 Timothy iii. 2-7, much is required of him besides, and a tremendous responsibility is laid upon him. One part of this responsibility is to rule well, or, as in 1 Timothy iii. 5, "take care of the church of God." A minister who feels his responsibility will desire an orderly church, as well as one at peace. The truly latter is the consequence of the former. Should the pastor see members of his flock going astray, it is not merely his duty to seek to guide, but his heart will be towards the erring ones, and for the love he bears them will desire to guide them into the right path. He will labor in love with them, showing them their wrong, and, if necessary, rebuke, though with all longsuffering. The ones thus rebuked, sorry and repentant, will want to walk in obedience, submitting themselves to the loving counsel and guidance set before them. There are also the hidden evils of the heart, or perhaps some outward act of which the pastor does not know, and many times the Spirit of the Lord is the ruler or guide through the minister in his preaching, bringing home to our conscience our sins; and feeling the rebuke, in godly sorrow we turn to the Lord, pleading his compassion, for he knows our frame and remembers that we are dust. The ruling spirit in the church of God is, or should be, love. There is no malice in love, therefore if the right spirit be in both pastor and people, his people will value his watchful care over them. Pastors are given as shepherds to flocks, to feed and protect them from harm. The flock also looks to the hand of the shepherd for food, they look unto him for guidance, for they hear his voice and follow him. This, primarily, is the Lord Jesus Christ, but ministers are "ambassadors for Christ." The Scriptures tell us, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of *him* that bringeth good tidings." Then later, "How beautiful are the feet of *them* that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings." In Romans x. 15, these two Scriptures are evidently set forth as

one, showing that the Lord speaks through his ministers.

Not only is it the desire, as well as duty, of the pastor to watch over his flock, but it is the privilege of each member of the flock to go to their pastor with their difficulties, joys and sorrows, though we should not make the mistake of looking to the minister instead of to the Lord. Oh for grace to look to the Lord in and for everything, yet to rightly appreciate his gifts: for a real pastor is a gift indeed from God's hand. (The pastor, too, feeling his own insufficiency, will seek his own guidance, in how to "rule," from the Lord.) The very fact that a church calls a minister for their pastor, speaks for itself that the members have confidence in the one they call, and it is but right they should look up to him for the purpose for which God in his lovingkindness has given the pastor: to be an undershepherd. A pastor, one who has his people's good at heart (and all should), watches for our souls, and who can tell the joy of his heart when he sees his flock walking together in love? the same love which influences him in his care for them; but who can tell his grief when even one goes astray; the fears he may have that his ministry, his watchcare, is a failure? The Lord will bring him into account for the way he has handled his talents, or the gifts God has given him. Paul, writing to the Philippians, calls them his joy and crown, and to the Thessalonians, his hope, his joy and crown of rejoicing in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming. For the pastor to see his flock walking together in love, to know he has the loving confidence of his people, these are some of the gains of his original talents, and he is able to give account with joy; and where he has been faithful will undoubtedly hear, Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

GRACE ASTON.

CLARENDON, Virginia.

[THE foregoing was not written for publication, but at our request the writer has consented for us to use it in the columns of the SIGNS.—ED.]

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware River Association, in session with the First Hopewell Church, of Hopewell, New Jersey, to the several churches and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting with love in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—It is a real pleasure to address you in our usual Corresponding Letter, as we can give a good report of our meeting. The preaching has been indeed good and comforting and we feel much encouraged by the coming of your ministers and Minutes. We shall ever be glad to welcome them while they bring glad tidings of great joy.

The name and place of our next meeting will be announced later through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and will be held at the usual time in 1934, when we shall hope to meet and greet you again.

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.
DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1933.

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LUKE X. 25-27.

"AND who is my neighbor?"

This question was asked by a lawyer who desired to justify himself, and who previously, in answer to the interrogation from Jesus, "What is written in the law? how readest thou?" had said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." And Jesus answered him, "Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live." We believe that no man but Jesus ever kept that wonderful commandment, and though Jesus, after showing who was neighbor to the man fallen among thieves, said, "Go, and do thou likewise," yet neither the lawyer nor any other man of himself but Jesus could play the neighbor's part. Only Jesus loved the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his strength, and with all his mind, and his neighbor as himself. He laid down his life for his neighbor. In considering the parable of the man fallen among thieves we believe Jesus is setting forth a great truth for the comfort and edification of his people. The parable begins, "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho." This certain man does not represent Adam before he fell, nor does it represent the natural man after the fall, for he is dead, not half dead, but it represents a child of God, one who is in a covenant, the covenant of grace which is ordered in *all things* and sure. By Jerusalem is meant that Jerusalem above which is the mother of us all. Thus this certain man is of that number that no man can number and we believe that he has tasted that the Lord is gracious, but for some reason not explained in the parable, he went from Jerusalem to Jericho. Before we dwell upon that, we would give our view of what Jericho means. In the early history of Israel, we come across a city named Jericho, it was on its walls that Rahab lived, and it was there that she hid the spies sent out by Joshua and that city fell before Israel at the sound of the trumpet and the shout of the people. It was from that city that the wedge of gold and the Babylonish garment were taken by Achan, which offence brought disaster upon Israel at the first attack upon the town of Ai. Poor Rahab and

her household were saved, but the city and all therein were put to the sword and Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, "Cursed be the man before the Lord, that raiseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it." We find in the dark and cloudy days of Ahab, that wicked king of Israel, that Hiel, a Bethelite, built Jericho. He laid the foundation thereof in Abiram, his first-born and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son, Segub. Abiram means father of height, pride and lordliness, and Segub has a similar meaning. Thus we notice that the man who built Jericho was cursed before the Lord and the city was built upon what proceeded from him, his first-born, the father of height, pride and lordliness, and it sets forth a lordly fleshly religion which glories in self and self-aggrandizement. Thus it is from Jerusalem to Jericho that the certain man *goes down.* The prophet wrote, All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his *own way.* The Galatians began in the Spirit and wanted to be made perfect in the flesh; in other words, they went down to Jericho and fell among thieves. Many of the saints to-day began well, we cannot question that the work of the Spirit has been begun in them, yet we find them lured by the fragrance of Jericho. (Jericho means fragrance, but it is not the fragrance of the garden of God, but of creature excellency, worldliness and vain glory.) They lose their steadfastness and ere long find themselves in the company of thieves. It is a child of God who can be robbed and spoiled. A worldling, whether professor or profane, has nothing, he is already dead, but a child of God who looks to the flesh is leaving, in his mind and thought, the security of the blessed city whose builder and maker is God. The walls of Jerusalem are secure, no power can overthrow them, outside are thieves and robbers. In the shalls and wills of Jehovah the child of God is secure, but men go down, and as surely as they do they fall among thieves. Sometimes the thieves are men who have been esteemed as Elders in the church. It is true they are called servants of God, but every time they speak in the name of the Lord they rob God, they belittle his word and would strip him of his power and glory. They take their knives, like the prophets of Baal, but instead of cutting themselves they cut and hack at the truth of God and would teach a righteousness of the flesh, at the same time stripping God's dear saints of raiment that God his Father has provided for them. Thus such thieves grieve and wound when they are through with their work, the child of God, mangled and mauled by them, is left half dead. Such preachers, though going by the scriptural name of Elders, belong to the den of thieves, and nothing puts such to flight but a "Thus saith the Lord." Many years ago in our native village of Rowley Regis, England, there was an old saint, named Betty Rollinson, who had often been stripped and wounded by such

thieves, and one day when a man of God stood up in that strange place and preached the truth she saw the people begin to get up and walk out, and at last, stamping her crutches on the floor, she said, "Fly, fly, this is the gospel." Many suffer at the hand of false preachers who are thieves, and the thief cometh not but to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. They hate predestination because it puts God above men, devils or sin, and as the word says, they only consult to cast Him down from His excellency, they delight in lies. There are many other ways that this certain man, in his journey, will fall among thieves. For there are those that will be rich, as Paul tells in 1 Timothy vi. 9, 10: "But they that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some covet after, *they have erred* from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." Always, as we follow after the flesh, we find that our joy and peace are gone, for the flesh is under a curse, and when our soul is lifted up in us we are not walking by faith. This certain man was so stripped and so wounded that he was left half dead. How good it is that it does not read he was left quite dead. That would not be true, for though men and devils *aim to kill* they cannot exceed our Father's will. True all his joy was gone, he was stripped, yes, and wounded sore, yet there was still life there. The devil could not touch Job's life; if he could have done so he certainly would, but God's purpose is above, in and through all things that come to pass and it is for the lifting of Jesus on high. "And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side." Thus we see both the priest and the Levite passed by on the other side, giving no word of comfort, binding up none of his wounds. The priest, as a representative of the moral law, and the Levite, of the ceremonial law, neither could nor would minister to such an one. The law shows up an offense and can only be on the side of those who keep it. The law is not merciful, even though one is stripped and wounded. Neither the law nor those who administer it could clothe the naked guilty soul or ease the pain of those wounds that sin had made. "But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was." Jesus was a son of Abraham, but the Jews despised him, and in hating would call him a Samaritan, and we believe Jesus is that certain Samaritan, who, as he journeyed, came that way. By man came disobedience, by man, the man Christ Jesus, came obedience. He came that way, he came in the likeness of sinful flesh. As he journeyed he came where he was. He could not get up and go to Jesus, but Jesus came where he was. Oh, what a blessed Lord Jesus we have, to come when we least deserve him, but just when we need him the most. "And when he saw him." Jesus had seen him

all the time, even when the thieves were stripping him, and such power had he that not one of them could have touched the poor erring man if Jesus had said no, but this poor erring man must know the kindness, love and condescension of Jesus, therefore the thieves are there, all their malice and rage, all their cruelty and crime wreaked upon him, will, in the mercy of God, make the coming of this certain Samaritan the most wonderful event in the erring man's life. He did not pass him by. He never has, he never will. He went to him. The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. He did not journey for those who have never been stripped, never been wounded, never sinned. He did not come for little sinners, but all God's people are big sinners, vile worms they feel themselves to be, and he came for such.

"And he went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine." This is the Lord's work, it has not been given to mortal man of himself to bind up the wounds of his brother, but Jesus does. You may wound your brother, and you should confess your sorrow for it, but it is Jesus only that binds up the wound, pouring in oil and wine, the oil of joy and the wine of the gospel, to stimulate and warm his poor heart and enable him to forget his poverty.

"And set him on his own beast." Such treatment would indeed revive his fainting soul and make him to admire amazing grace for saving a wretch like him He "set him on his own beast." Although this poor man had been very active in sin, he was passive in the hands and mercy of the good Samaritan. This beast then represents just the means or way that Christ has of carrying his poor erring people. It is not man's way. Some may refer to this beast as representing the minister of the gospel; we do not feel that it matters. It was the Samaritan's way and the very beast he himself rode on that this poor wounded man had to ride. In his majesty Jesus rode prosperously, and we believe that it is Jesus that raises us up, enables us to go forward in the strength of the Lord, and in the majesty of our God. He rides a white horse, the white horse of the gospel, and his people are raised, free from condemnation, pure and white, and he has placed them there.

"And brought him to an inn, and took care of him." Churches of Christ here in this world are like inns placed at convenient places along the way for the rest and refreshment of the weary travellers. A person who is at home in the world will not need such a place, but it is to such places Jesus brings his poor afflicted saints. Only Jesus can bring them, if he does not bring them they are in their wrong place and will soon show it. In this inn there is a bed of comfort for such an one, it is the love of God, and such can and do sing, "Father, we rest in thy love."

"And took care of him." Such was his mercy when he brought him there that he did not commit his care to any other while he was with him. With us, when he brought us to his people, it was one of the days of the Son of man, and

perfect love cast out fear. He gave us sips of his love and we partook of the fatted calf. He brought forth the best robe, and took care of all our needs, and he left us in the hands of our brethren, having given the Elder of the church, who is the host of the inn, two pence, currency not of the world but of the Lord's people, each made in the same value for the comfort of the saints and the work of the ministry, that the man of God, the host, might be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. These two pence imply that Jesus has given his servant (and he only has the power to give) a faith in both the New and Old Testaments, that they are the very word of God, each having his likeness, the likeness of Jesus upon them, and both are for the comfort and edification of the saints. Thus the host, or Elder, has nothing from the Master in which to traffic but his word, or the two pence. So Paul told Timothy to study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the *word of truth.* This was a gift, it was not a bargain, neither did the host set the price, and by this gift the host was bound as a steward of the manifold mysteries of God to be faithful to his charge. *Take "care of him."* Feed the flock of God over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers. Take care of them as those who shall give an accounting. Feed them, encourage them, cheer them, wash their feet. Preach the word, and as you spend and are spent be sure of this, that whatever they are indebted to you Jesus will make up when he comes again. This coming again to some may mean when he shall descend from heaven with a shout, but we here are disposed to suggest that he does in Spirit come into our midst from time to time and then the things that are wanting are easily numbered. If we are weary in his service, if we are tired, because of many cares, if we are grieved because of some slight, or because brethren have been unkind (and brethren when in the flesh can be very unkind), whatever it may be, even if we have been fretting under the yoke, or rebellious at the cross, when he comes he makes amends for all. Thus the priest and the Levite, who were teachers of the law, could not be called neighbors to this man, neither is he who teaches morality to-day a comfort to God's erring children, for morality can never take the place of the work of God's Spirit within, nor can the one who seeks to justify himself play the neighbor's part. It is Jesus who is the neighbor and only the Spirit of Jesus Christ in us will enable us to restore an erring brother, the Spirit of Christ will enable us to consider ourselves lest we be tempted. The wicked, tempting, self-justifying spirit that the lawyer possessed, which sometimes may be found in brethren, can no more love his neighbor than he can love the Lord his God with all his heart, soul, strength and mind. Those who profess the name of Jesus Christ also profess that they are led by the Spirit, but one can get very proud, haughty and hardened when in the flesh. How fearful it is when we consider the hard-

ness of the heart of man, who, while forgiven the ten thousand talents he owed, will lay hands on the throat of a fellow-servant who owes him a hundred pence, saying, Pay me that thou owest. Brethren, this ought not so to be, for even if it is the host of the inn, he could not take from the poor, wounded, robbed man, for he had not anything, but, "When I come again, I will repay thee." So whatever care or sorrow the brethren may cause us, when Jesus comes into our midst he will give full recompense. The apostle John says, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us [who are poor, miserable, erring wretches, needing mercy every hour]; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." Brethren can do very wrong. Who has not? Let us examine ourselves. It is only with a spirit that Christ gives that we can be merciful. It is mercy that melts a heart of stone. Mercy was the one thing that the poor publican craved. He smote upon his breast, he did not justify himself, but Jesus lifted him up and took him under his care and keeping; in other words, he justified him. Yes, stripped and spoiled as we often are, wounded, sick and sore, what do we crave but mercy? the mercy of the brethren, the mercy of God, and he who is humbled under the mighty power of God to the lowest of the low, he then can cheer others, and does bind up their wounds, he is enabled by the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, with the word of the Lord to bind up the broken-hearted. After he has done all, so humble is he and lowly in heart that he says, What have I done? *It is the Lord,* for it is in him and through him that his children do any good thing.

G. R.

JUDAS ISCARIOT.

JESUS chose Judas as one of the twelve in full knowledge of the fact that he was a devil. Note: "a," not "the," devil. Judas was not Satan, but was used of Satan; hence was "a" devil under service to "the" devil. As Pharaoh, centuries before, had been raised up by the hand of God as a vessel of wrath fitted to destruction so that God might make known his power by him, so the Scriptures indicate Judas to have been chosen among the twelve for the definite end of bringing about the betrayal of Jesus, hence the crucifixion, and so the redemption of the children of God. But what saith the Word? "He was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry."—Acts i. 17. What part of the ministry did Jesus have? Did he preach any sermons? It is not so stated that he did, even though he was among those whom Jesus sent out two and two to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He carried the bag in which was their money. This was his part. (John xiii. 29.) He, being a money-lover and covetous, complained at the seemnig waste of the precious ointment used by Mary of Bethany in anointing the Lord's body preparatory to his soon-coming burying, and said it should have been sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor. "This he said, not that he

cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein."—John xii. 6. The Holy Spirit by Peter in Acts i. 20, quotes from the sixty-ninth Psalm and interprets that Psalm as prophetically indicating Judas Iscariot. This being so, Judas' name is not in the book of life and is not written with the righteous. (Psalms lxix. 28.) Also, the one hundred and ninth Psalm is just as plainly indicated by the Holy Spirit in Acts i. 20, as belonging to Judas. This being so, there is not the slightest indication in either the sixty-ninth and one hundred and ninth Psalms or in Psalms xli. 9, that Judas was a vessel of mercy. Quite the contrary, the whole of that language indicates him to have been a lost character. That he was at one time Jesus' "own familiar friend" would not necessarily evidence a state of grace in Judas. All of us have known friends who fail us in the time of need and thus prove their friendship to have been false. Jesus ate the Passover with the twelve prior to his taking the bread and the cup and instituting what we now call the "Lord's Supper." Judas was present at the Passover, but not at the communion which followed. "After the sop Satan entered in to him." "He then, having received the sop, went immediately out." —John xiii. 27, 30. "Sop" was used at the Passover, but not at the communion. Judas must have left, therefore, immediately after the Passover and was not present at the communion. We have no proof, either, that Judas was present at the crucifixion when Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." Matthew states that as soon as Judas saw the enemies take Jesus prisoner, he "repented himself" and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders and cast down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself. (Matt. xxvii. 3-5.) Hence, he was not a witness of the crucifixion, because he had hanged himself previously. He was not, therefore, embraced in Jesus' prayer for forgiveness of those who crucified him. The pronoun "himself" following the word "repented" in Matthew xxvii. 3, indicates Judas' repentance to have been of himself and not a godly repentance wrought by the Holy Spirit. There is an infinite difference between being conscience stricken and being convicted of sin by the Holy Ghost. To see one's self before the bar of one's own conscience is one thing, but to see one's self justly condemned before the holy God, is vastly different. Not a word of Scripture shows Judas' repentance to have been other than remorseful, which surely is not true spiritual conviction on account of sin. Judas fell by transgression, that he might go to "his own place." (Acts i. 15.) It is not said of the redeemed that they go to their own place by reason of transgression, but that they go to the place prepared for them from before the foundation of the world, by reason of Christ's having redeemed them from transgression.

We have sought to set in array what the Scriptures say on the subject. And

from such evidence in the case, we fail to see any hope for him. It is now with the church as then: false professors sometimes get in among God's people. They do so not by chance, but by God's purpose; even as Judas chose not himself to be in the disciples' company, but was chosen by the Lord for His definite purpose. Such characters are for the testing of the true church, that those may be manifested who are really approved unto God. Such are betrayers of the cause, "who privily bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction."—2 Peter ii. 1. H. H. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder R. Lester Dodson)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, convened at New Vernon, New York, June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1933, sendeth greetings in the Lord to the several associations and meetings with which she corresponds.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We feel to address you at this time on the subject of TOLERANCE. So far as we are aware the word itself is not to be found in the Bible. It is possible, therefore, that we shall be subjected to severe criticism on this account. We believe, however, that the doctrine of TOLERANCE is taught in the Bible, and that it was practiced by all who loved the Lord, even our Savior himself.

It has seemed to us that the peoples of the earth in their struggles for existence have become very intolerant of one another. We have heard it said that self-preservation is the first law of nature, but we are convinced that in their efforts for self-aggrandizement there is not a nation upon the earth which has not overstepped the bounds of propriety beyond which it was necessary to go for its own protection. In their desire to forge ahead all have wandered from the beaten path which makes for permanent peace and happiness. We believe that a new era is dawning which will bring about a change of attitude, not only among the nations of the earth towards each other, but that there is going to be a lessening of class distinction in our own land and that the spirit of "live and let live" will be more and more in evidence as time passes. The events of recent years have shown conclusively that no nation can live unto itself alone, and, therefore, it cannot stand aloof from the rest of the world; all have their place in the universe and they must find a way to co-operate and work for the common good of all. Among the walks of mankind there are many individuals whose one object in life appears to be to feather his or her own nest. They are out for self first, last and all the time, and so far as they are concerned the only place that "toleration" can be found is in the dictionary. In common parlance, a few may appear to "get away with it," but we are satisfied that ere long the law of life will prevail and that whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.

In what is known as the "religious world," notwithstanding, with but few exceptions, that in the fundamentals

they are essentially the same, nevertheless there is a disposition on the part of a great many to ignore the rights of others and insist upon all being made in the same mold. We are convinced that in the purpose of Almighty God was embraced the creed of every tribe, and while we cannot agree with hardly any of them, our faith is that they occupy the place in the plan designed by infinite wisdom before the world began. We stand firmly upon the principle that the God of heaven and earth works all things after the counsel of his own will, and that there is none that can stay his hand or need ask of him, What doest thou? It goes without saying that our little finite mind cannot grasp or comprehend in any degree whatsoever the infiniteness of him by whom all worlds were made. It is enough for us to be still and know that he is God, and that beside him there is no Savior. It is awe-inspiring to meditate upon the record of creation given us by Moses in the first chapter of Genesis, particularly of those creatures whose very natures are to devour one another and the inoffensive, and yet they have not all killed each other or destroyed the weak and helpless. Is there not unmistakable evidence of an unseen hand watching over the universe and continuing all things as they are this very day?

We would speak especially in regard to TOLERANCE with reference to those who profess to know and love our Lord. While, as we have already said, the word itself may not appear between the lids of the Bible, nevertheless "temperance" and "moderation" are taught. In the fifth chapter of Galatians the great apostle tells us the fruit of the Spirit "is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Peter admonishes the brethren to add to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. Again we quote the apostle Paul: "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is *temperate* in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible." Titus, in speaking of a bishop, or an elder, says that he *must* be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, *temperate;* holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. We see from this that we are not to be tolerate in the sense that we are to condone false doctrine, but rather are we to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Jude in his epistle gave all diligence to write unto them that were sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called, of the common salvation, declar-

ing that it was needful for him to write and to exhort them that they should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. The reason which he gave was that "certain men" had crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. We repeat that tolerance, temperance and moderation does not mean that the faithful people of God are to compromise with evil. Anything but that. They are to stand firm, to put on the whole armor of God, and when they have done all, they are to stand. They must not yield one single solitary inch of ground to the enemy, but in their dealings with the brethren they should be temperate and moderate in all things. The brethren of Philippi were commanded to let their moderation be known unto all men. "The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ."

In our musings of late we have felt that good brethren have not been as considerate of each other as they should. There seems to be a disposition to harbor real or fancied wrongs. That unruly member, the tongue, has also been constantly wagging, spreading things which should have been smothered. Where is that charity which we profess to bear towards our brother? We are aware that none is perfect, and sometimes we are reminded of the words of our blessed Master, when he said, Let him that is without sin cast the first stone. In the church God in his wisdom has placed the different gifts, and there are no two of all the flock who are identically alike, but the different gifts are for the edifying of the body of Christ and are profitable in their place. The most of us are prone to find fault and, to say the least, are inconsiderate of the feelings and welfare of certainly some of our brethren. We would to God that all might realize that they are the members of the body of Christ and strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. We feel to conclude this appeal to our brethren with the words of the apostle as found in the fourth chapter to the Ephesians: "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ."

May these things be pondered in the hearts of our correspondents and considered by the household of faith everywhere, and may God give us

grace to know and do his will, is our prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
CYRUS RISLER, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

THE death of brother **JAMES E. LIVINGSTON**, at his late home, 64 East Main Street, Cobleskill, New York, May 16th, 1933, at the age of eighty-four years, brought unfeigned sorrow to the hearts of the multitude of brethren and friends who knew him, and the sad realization that one of the staunchest, firmest and most loyal of the supporters of the Old School Baptist Church had ceased forever his labors on earth. No other member of the Old School Baptist Church has supported its cause in word and deed, or discharged his duties with truer convictions, with greater firmness and manifest loyalty than the subject of this article. His life is his greatest and most enduring monument, for what he believed as a brother and a man he exemplified in his daily walk. The doctrine of God's electing love, his choice of the redeemed family of his children in Christ Jesus before time began, their eternal salvation through free and unmerited grace, without the co-operation and will of the creature, by the shed blood of Jesus Christ in his finished work on the cross, and the accomplishment of all that relates to the resurrection of the dead who die in the Lord, and their glorification, were the meat and drink of brother Livingston, the subject of his meditations, and the knowledge of more of the mystery of godliness was his desire His fearlessness to stand for the right, his material support of the church of his membership, his regard for the welfare of Zion, his clean and exemplary life as a citizen and neighbor, reflected his love for the brethren and his desire to bring no reproach upon them. For many years he opened his home at Cobleskill for the meetings of his brethren and friends, for their accommodation and convenience, and the hospitality of the Livingston home was known far and near, and in these ministrations to the brethren he had the loving and loyal support of his capable and devoted wife, sister Addie Cook Livingston, who with her husband spared neither time, labor nor expense to provide for the material needs and the comfort of the large number that so often gathered at the Livingston home for worship and for fellowship in a manifest way in the Lord. Not only to his pastor, but to all ministering brethren who labored in the vineyard of the Lord, was his liberality in a material way evidenced to the cause generally. He will be sadly missed in his community and by the church of his membership.

James E. Livingston was born May 15th, 1849, and spent practically all of his life in Schoharie County, receiving his education in the district schools of his neighborhood. In 1877 he was united in marriage to Miss Helen Sidney, of which union two children were born, who survive: Mrs. Lulu Harrington, of Arkville, N. Y., and Mrs. Mamie Michaels, of Cobleskill, N. Y. Mrs. Livingston died in 1911, and in 1912 he remarried, his second wife being Mrs. Addie Cook, who survives him, with his two stepsons, William Cook, of Cobleskill, N. Y., and Omar Cook, of Santa Barbara, California. For the past four or five years brother Livingston had been failing in health, though until recently he was able to attend meetings at distant places. His eyesight becoming impaired during the last few years of his life, he felt keenly his inability to read the Scriptures and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but ceased not his interest in things spiritual. About a week before his death he was confined to his bed. He sought reconcilation to God's will and murmured not at the will of Providence. He was at all times tenderly cared for by his dear wife, who saw that he wanted for nothing that material means could supply. He united with the Old School Baptist Church about forty years ago, and was baptized by the late Elder John Clark. The funeral services were held at the Livingston home, the writer officiating. The interment was in the Schoharie Cemetery, at Schoharie, N. Y.

Brother Livingston was a successful business man and progressive in regard to those things that related to his material success, but he never lost sight of the spiritual during his affiliation with the visible church, and was at all times ready to converse upon the Scriptures and to give a reason for the hope he professed, and could defend with consummate ability the doctrine of salvation by grace and the sovereignty of God, and his testimony before his brethren was always faith-confirming to them in the things that they had experienced.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

ADOLPHUS B. CORDER, our beloved brother in Christ, was born May 6th, 1855, and died March 17th, 1933, aged 77 years, 10 months and 11 days. He was the oldest of a family of five children born unto James W. and Mary (Bond) Corder, on Hacker Creek, Barbour County, in what is now West Virginia. In October, 1882, he was united in marriage to Miss Delia A. Reynolds, a happy union, and they went to housekeeping in Taylor County, West Virginia, the County of the bride's nativity, and lived there until his death. One son, Albert Corder, was born unto them, who, together with the bereaved wife and four grandchildren survive him, also one brother, Deacon W. A. Corder, and one sister, Mrs. W. F. Cole, are left to mourn his departure. Two sisters preceded him to the grave. He was a noble and useful man, and it was remarked by his neighbors on the day of his burial, No better man lived than A. B. Corder.

He was a farmer and livestock dealer, accumulating quite a fortune, and was considered trustworthy and safe in his dealings with his fellowmen. For several years prior to his death he was president of a bank in Grafton, W. Va. Having bronchial trouble, he was spending last winter in Florida, at his winter home, as he had for several years, and it was there he had a nervous breakdown last January, and at his request he and his wife were brought back to their home in West Virginia, by their son, arriving a few days before his death. His pastor, Elder J. R. Dennison, was ill with influenza at the time, but Elders J. S. Murphy, J. J. Poling, J. W. Linn, and all the brethren and sisters who could possibly get there were present at the funeral. Elder Murphy, assisted by Elder Poling, conducted the services. His body was interred in the Harmony Grove Cemetery. It was said of Stephen of old that devout men buried him.

On the fourth Saturday in June, 1895, he and his niece, Ivy Woodford (now Cole), joined the Mount Olive Old School Baptist Church, and were baptized the fourth Sunday in June following, in the Tygart's Valley River, by their uncle, the late Elder J. S. Corder, where he remained a worthy member until the end, loved by all the members at Mount Olive and throughout the Tygart's Valley River Association. We feel that our loss is great indeed, but as we weep and our "countenanances are sad" he is blessedly sleeping in Jesus and not a wave of trouble rolls across his peaceful breast. He certainly was a man clothed in humility. He would often say, Oh I fear I have missed the substance and caught the shadow, and at the same time his countenance was glowing with the secret fellowship of the sufferings of the Son of God. He was a subscriber and reader of the SIGNS for many years, and loved the Bible doctrine to which it is devoted. When in West Virginia he seldom missed a church meeting at Mount Olive, and was generally the first on the ground. Oh how we miss him. We are "sorrowful, yet rejoicing," for his troubles are over.

We want our kindred in Christ abroad to remember us at the throne of grace, for if we are what we profess to be we are all one in Christ Jesus and have fellowship one with another.

SEMMA E. CORDER.

MRS. MARTHA E. FRAZIER, our dear sister in the Lord, was born September 12th, 1858, and departed this life June 8th, 1933, making her stay on earth 74 years, 8 months and 26 days. On October 15th, 1885, she was married to Joseph Frazier, who survives her, together with two sisters and one brother. She was baptized by the late Elder A. B. Francis twenty-five years ago in the fellowship of the Little Creek Church, near Delmar, Delaware, and ever lived consistent with her profession, faithful to the church and in all the walks of life. We all loved her and shall miss her, but in the home our beloved friend, Mr. Frazier, is entirely alone and mourns her absence beyond expression. The circumstances surrounding her death were sad in the extreme. Mr. Frazier and she had been on a little pleasure trip into Virginia in their car, and were returning home in the afternoon of June 8th, and when within three miles of the Maryland line, in some way, not understood by Mr. Frazier, who was driving, he lost control of the car and it dashed across the road into the woods and hit a tree with great force, killing sister Frazier instantly and injuring Mr. Frazier, but not seriously. The sad news shocked the town and neighborhood. Mr. Frazier has the sympathy of all who know him. The funeral service was held at the home, in Delmar, Delaware, conducted by the writer, and was largely attended. The interment took place in the family plot in the Broad Creek Cemetery, Sussex County, Delaware, near the home of her girlhood days. Elder D. L. Topping, of Baltimore, Maryland, assisted at the grave.

Written by her pastor, H. C. KER.

ALSO,

MR. WILLIAM THOMAS TAYLOR, well known citizen of this town, aged 87 years, died at his home here July 7th, after an illness of about four weeks. He spent almost all of his life in or near Stockton, and was very well liked by all who knew him. Until about a month ago he had been very active. Then he was stricken with a complication of diseases. He is survived by six children, three daughters, Mrs. E. J. Reid, of Welbourne; Mrs. J. W. Gootee, of Salisbury; Mrs. J. H. Richardson, of near Stockton; three sons, William J. and G. Walter Taylor, of Stockton, and Frank Taylor, of near Pocomoke, and a very large number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at his late home, conducted by his pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, of Delmar, assisted by Mr. O. T. Baynard, Monday afternoon at 3 o'clock, after which the body was laid to rest in the family burial lot in the Gunby Presbyterian churchyard. The grandsons of the deceased served as pall bearers; the granddaughters as flower girls The floral tributes were numerous and beautiful. His favorite hymn, "How firm a foundation," was sung.

THE above clipping is from one of the Worcester County, Maryland, papers, in which County brother Taylor had spent most, if not all, his life. Brother Taylor was highly respected by all who knew him. He was a member of the Old Baptist Church called Pitt's Creek, located between Pocomoke City and Stockton, Maryland. Several years ago that church disbanded and he with others united with the Snow Hill Church, of Snow Hill, Maryland. We all loved brother Taylor and shall miss him, but know he is better off. To his large and respected family we extend our kindest sympathy.

H. C. KER.

MRS. EMMA V. CRAIG, our beloved sister in the Lord, departed this earthly life at the home of her grandson, Mr. Frank Craig, Rochester, N. Y., July 8th, 1933. She had gone in company with her grandson, three weeks ago, to his home to visit him and his family, and was taken seriously ill there the night of July 4th, and never regained consciousness, death being directly due to an internal hemorrhage. She was eighty-six years of age the twenty-seventh day of June, and had received on that day many cards and letters from her brethren, relatives and friends felicitating her on having reached that good and venerable age. She was born in Loudoun County, Virginia, and lived all her life in this section. She was the daughter of William and Rachel (nee Young) Dodd, and was the last surviving member of her family. Her husband, George W. Craig, died in 1919. Her only son, George, passed away in 1911, leaving his widow, who is now Mrs. E. B. Seaton, of Middleburg, Va., and two sons, Frank and William Craig: Frank who, with his wife and two young sons, lives at Rochester, N. Y., William, unmarried and at home with his mother, near Middleburg, Va. Besides these immediate members of her family, sister Craig is survived by nieces and nephews, to whom she was almost as near and dear as a mother, and who were as loving and devoted to her as they possibly could be. She lacked for no comfort and all was done for her that loving hearts could do. She was baptized into the membership of the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church by the late Elder J. N. Badger the fourth Sunday in August, 1882. She first identified herself with the Missionary or New School Baptists, but her experience of God's grace soon led her away from and out of fellowship with them and into loving union with the dear ones at Mt. Zion. She was faithful and devoted to the cause of Jesus Christ, willing and glad at all times to do all in her power for the welfare and entertainment of her brethren far and near. Many who read this notice will recall pleasant seasons spent with her in her home on occasions when they may have been blessed to visit there, especially at the sessions of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting when held with Mt. Zion Church. She was naturally gifted with such a temperament and personality as readily endeared her to both young and old. Children and young people sought her company and conversation, as well as people of middle age or older. She could adapt herself to any circumstances. Yet with all this native amiability of disposition, she was uncompromising in her faith in the saving grace of God through the Lord Jesus Christ and was steadfast in her belief in the absolute sovereignty of God over all things, and firmly held that he works all things after the counsel of his own will. Words cannot express what a loss her going means to all of us: not only to the church and to the family and her friends, but especially to my wife and family and myself, because she seemed like a mother, as well as a sister, to us. I count it a great and blessed privilege to have been her pastor and to have had her love and fellowship in the truth.

Funeral services were held at the Mt. Zion meetinghouse, the place which had been to her a spiritual home on earth. I tried to speak of some of the comforting assurances held forth for us in the fourteenth chapter of John, especially the blessed promise that just as surely as Christ went away into heaven to prepare a place for his people, so will he as surely come again to receive them unto himself that they may dwell with him forever. Interment in the cemetery at Middleburg, Virginia.

H. H. L.

FRANK YAGER CHANDLER, my dear husband, son of Elisha and Elizabeth Green Chandler, was born April 10th, 1860, and passed away at his home, near Sulphur Springs, Kentucky, May 27th, 1933, following a stroke of paralysis. He was first married to Eva Antil, and to this union there was born one son, wife and son both dying. Later he was married to the writer of this notice, February 25th, 1891, and to our union were born seven children. One daughter died in infancy. Surviving are five sons and one daughter: Ballard, Omer, Robert, George and Warren Chandler and Mrs. Maud Getherman, eight grandchildren, two sisters, several nieces and nephews and a host of friends. The funeral was held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse at Campbellsburg (Sulphur Fork), and was conducted by our pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, who spoke words of truth and comfort to a large congregation that had met to pay their last respects to a neighbor and friend. In young manhood my husband joined the Missionaries, but soon became dissatisfied and left them, and after we were married he never atended any meetings but those of the Old School Baptists. He was of a quiet disposition. Shortly before he passed away he said to me, I am going to die, but I am not fit to die, but I hope when my time comes the Lord will take me at once. A short time after that he was much worse and raised his eyes and reached both hands up twice, and said, Oh if I could only go right now, and I was given the sweet assurance that the Lord had been merciful to him. We sorrow not as those who have no hope, but we grieve because we can see his face no more. I am sad and lonely and miss him much, but for him it is far better. He has gone from the evils of this world, and we hope he has entered into rest. We laid his body to rest in the old church-yard.

His heart-broken wife,

ADA CHANDLER.

THE foregoing obituary was sent to me by sister Chandler, with the request that I send it to the SIGNS, and she said I might add anything I wished

to I will state that while I was trying to comfort the friends at the funeral a feeling of calmness came over me and I was given the assurance that our friend knew Jesus, and that it was well with him. Our hearts go out in sympathy to our broken-hearted sister and her family. May the blessing of the Lord be theirs, and may he, the great Shepherd of the sheep, reconcile them all and enable them to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

D. B. CAIN, our dear brother, was born December 11th, 1874, and died April 8th, 1933, making his stay on earth 58 years, 3 months and 11 days. He leaves his wife, Mrs. Emma Cain, four children, Mrs. Pauline Pool, of Bastrop, La., Victor, Austie and Vergie, two brothers, John and Frank Cain, one sister, Mrs. Will Day, all of Morehouse, La., and a host of other relatives and friends, who mourn his passing away from this time world. Brother Ben joined the Primitive Baptist Church known as Concord Church in the year 1899, and was baptized by Elder J. H. Draper, and was a faithful member until death called him home, which was a very sudden call, for he was only ill about three hours before he passed away. He was faithful at all times to defend that grand old doctrine of salvation by grace, and gave all honor and glory to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He is greatly missed in his home, community and church, but we pray the dear Lord to give His royal presence to fill up the vacancy in his home and to shield his loved ones and to keep them from all harm during their stay on this earth. We would say to his loved ones, Sorrow not for him as one who had no hope, for he often talked with the writer of the sweet and precious hope he had of life beyond the grave. May you say with one of old, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

After an effort by the writer to speak words of comfort to the bereaved ones his body was laid to rest until the resurrection morn.

Written by request of his dear companion, by his pastor.

T. J. EVERS.

It becomes my painful duty to chronicle the death of our beloved sister, **MRS. ELLEN MATILDA SLAUGHTER,** wife of Elder W. W. Slaughter, of Edgewood, Texas. She was born in Smith County, Mississippi, December 21st, 1855, the daughter of Pleasant and Polly Hawkins. She was married to W. W. Slaughter November 1st, 1874, and to them were born twelve children, five boys and seven girls, four of whom, two boys and two girls, preceded her to the grave. Her eight surviving children were all present with her in her last moments. They are Mrs. M. G. Sullivan, Edgewood, Texas, Mrs. C. A. Heard, Canton, Texas, Mrs. D. B. Griffin, Dallas, Texas, Mrs. Josie Beckworth, Terrell, Texas, Mrs. Janie May Crawford, Fruitvale, Texas, A. S. and T. H. Slaughter, Edgewood, Texas, and P. W. Slaughter, Dallas, Texas. Sister Slaughter received a good hope in Christ Jesus in February, 1878. In December, 1883, she came with her husband and family to Texas, and in May, 1885, she offered herself to the Primitive or Old School Baptist Church, in Henderson County, Texas, was received, and baptized by Elder John Owens. She soon moved from there to Vanzandt County, Texas, and placed her membership with Little Flock Church, near Edgewood, Texas, where she remained a faithful, consistent and devoted member until she fell asleep in the arms of Jesus on June 15th, 1933. She was a good wife, a loving mother, a devoted christian, a generous neighbor, and her home was a home for the Old School Baptists at all times. She was laid to rest in the Edgewood Cemetery to await the resurrection of the just. The writer tried to speak words of comfort to a large concourse of sorrowing relatives and friends, using as a text 1 Thessalonians iv. 13-18. May God bless and comfort the sorrowing family, and uphold and strengthen her aged and afflicted husband, our precious yokefellow in the ministry, Elder W. W. Slaughter.

J. C. SIKES.

GEORGE T. JACKSON, eldest child of Thomas and Elizabeth Jackson, was born near Downing, Schuyler County, Missouri, July 27th, 1862, and died at his home in Adrian, Missouri, June 27th, 1933, at the age of 70 years and 11 months. He moved with his parents to Hickory County, Missouri, in 1883, and was married to Miss Martha F. Owens August 16th, 1885. To this union were born three children: Mrs. Bertha Barnes, Virgil B. and Mrs. Dola Jones, all living near Adrian, Missouri. He moved with his family to the State of Washington in 1901, and remained there until the spring of 1910. He came to Bates County and lived on a farm west of Butler until the spring of 1920, when he moved to Adrian, Missouri, where he resided until his death. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Little Flock, Cass County, Missouri, July 14th, 1918, and was baptized by the late Elder J. A. Teague. He was ordained a Deacon in that church at their May meeting, 1919, which office he faithfully filled to the satisfaction of the church until called away from the trials and troubles of this world. Brother Jackson was a very unassuming man, kind and gentle in all his ways, and was loved by the brotherhood, and stood high as a neighbor and as a citizen in his community.

The funeral services were held from the Christian Church, in Adrian, the day following his death, conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder T. E. Atteberry, after which his body was laid to rest in the beautiful cemetery at Butler, Missouri, to await the summons from on high. He leaves, besides his companion, sister Jackson, three children, eight grandchildren, one sister, Mrs. Rosella

Harper, Harper, Missouri, two brothers, Henry Jackson, Camby, Oregon, and Edward Jackson, Harrisonville, Missouri, several nieces and nephews and many friends to mourn their loss. May the God of all grace and mercy comfort all that mourn, is my prayer.

W. L. HALL.

MEETINGS.

The New Hope Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will, if not providentially hindered, meet with Little Flock Church, three and one-half miles east of Edgewood, Texas, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in August. All trains and buses will be met on Thursday before the meeting, at Edgewood. All peace-loving Baptists of our faith and order are invited.

S. M. DICKENS, Moderator.
W. W. SIKES, Clerk.

The annual all-day meeting at Slate Hill, N. Y., will be held, as usual, on Friday, August 25th, 1933. Elders Charles W. Vaughn and Arnold H. Bellows are expected to be there as visiting ministers. Of course, I expect to be there. All are cordially invited to meet with us.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The next session of the Staunton River Association will be held (the Lord willing) with Springfield Church, at Gretna, Virginia, on Friday, Saturday and second Sunday in August, 1933. Due to small church ground, the Association will be held one mile west of Gretna, at a suitable place for the seats and for parking cars. All lovers of the truth, especially ministers, invited.

W. R. DODD, Clerk.
R. L. DODSON, Assistant Clerk.

The Lord willing, we shall have preaching by Elder R. Lester Dodson at Oak Woods, North Berwick, Maine, on the third Sunday in August and Saturday afternoon preceding.

ALICE M. HALL.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in September and continuing three days (September 8th, 9th and 10th, 1933.) To all who are seeking the truth a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk,
MERFIELD, Massachusetts.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will hold its annual session at the Yellow Meeting House, in the town of Roxbury, two miles below the village of Roxbury, N Y., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, September 13th, 14th and 15th, between the second and third Sundays of September, 1933 Trains and buses will be met at Halcottville, N. Y., on Wednesday morning and on Tuesday preceding. Should any strangers come, or any not familiar with the village, inquiry may be made at the post office, where full directions will be given. The same cordial hospitality in the entertainment of all visitors as shown in the past will be continued, and all interested in the meetings are especially invited to be present. The occasion will be also the one hundredth anniversary of the building of the meetinghouse. Several visiting ministers are expected, and we trust that the sessions of this Association will be to the spiritual profit and edification of all concerned. Further detailed information will be gladly given upon request by communicating with the writer.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS,
ROXBURY, N. Y.

The Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to meet with Chappel Hill Church in her ninety-second session September 15th, 16th and 17th (Friday, Saturday and third Sunday), 1933. Chappel Hill Church is two miles east of Ouachita, and three miles southeast of Sparkman, Arkansas, on branch line of Rock Island Rail Road, connecting with Cotton Belt at Camden, and Iron Mountain at Malvern, Arkansas. Highway No. 7 runs to church, and 8 and 9 connect with No. 7 to arrive at this point. Trains at these points will be met Thursday and Friday. All sound and orderly Old School Baptists are invited to meet with us at this time and place.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator,
FORDYCE, Arkansas.
W. C. HORTON, Clerk,
ELLISVILLE, Arkansas.

Providence permitting, the Mount Zion Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene Friday before the fourth Saturday in September (September 22nd, 23rd and 24th), 1933, with Little Flock Church, Cass County, Missouri. Those coming in cars from the south can come on Highway No. 71 to Harrisonville, then on Highway No. 7 four and one-half miles, then north one-quarter mile, then north directly to meetinghouse. Coming from the north, take Highway No. 7 to Pleasant Hill and south two and one-half miles to Old Rock Road, and take it directly to meetinghouse. Those coming by train can come on Missouri Pacific or Rock Island R. R. to Pleasant Hill, where they will be met. We invite all lovers of the truth to be with us.

DANIAL ADAMS, Moderator,
ODESSA, Missouri.
(MRS.) J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk,
R. R., PLEASANT HILL, Missouri.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

CAMBRIA, Ill., May 31, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter written by dear sister Fannie H. Chester for you to publish if you see fit. It is too good to be put away without others enjoying it with me. I have her consent to have it published. I am also sending two dollars to pay for our dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for we get much comfort from the good letters it contains.

Yours truly,

(MRS.) W. M. ODOM.

MURRAY, Ky., May 1, 1933.

MRS. ESTELL ODOM—VERY DEAR SISTER:—Home duties have prevented me from complying with your request, and my promise, in regard to writing what I hope I have been made to see and feel by divine power. I remember when a girl of writing dear Elder J. M. Perkins a letter and telling him some of my sorrows, or a part of my experience and he published it in the paper he edited at that time, the *Gospel News*, Mayfield, Kentucky. Dear sister, I was only a girl of seventeen years when first touched by the divine love (power). At that time I could not understand what that power was. I could not then realize it was divine love, the road was so rough, I was out in the wilderness, deep in the mire. It was so dark I could find no way out. I felt to be without love in every respect. I even felt that my father, mother, sisters and brothers had ceased to love me. I had rather be alone than with any one. Well do I remember one cold December morning in the year 1900. It was the last or closing day of our school, and very early in the morning a sad interrupted feeling came over me, I knew not what, and on my way to school I tried to evade this feeling by thinking of our school program, and repeating my numerous parts, but to no avail. My mind was so confused I hardly would have been responsible for what I might have said. This thought came: One more school term ended; no doubt before another some of our loved

ones may be absent by death, and it may be me. Then I said, No, not me, I am not fit to die. I could hardly take care of my part during the program, for thinking I was not fit to die. After awhile the program was ended, and when the teacher gave her few farewell remarks in a tender and touching way I could then give vent to tears without any special notice of any one. The flowing tears gave a little relief, yet as I walked to my home I was sad, so sad, and had very little to say. I retired very early in the evening and wept until I fell asleep. I arose early in the morning and the gloomy feeling still continued. I said to myself, What is the matter with me? What can be the trouble? Why is the thought of death hovering over me so? I continued in this sorrowful condition for a few days, feeling so badly that I gave up and went to bed. Father and mother came to me and asked if I were sick. I answered by saying, I do not know; I feel badly. I think it was the next day that they found me very restless, and called a physician, but no relief came. At night I thought death surely was near, and thought, If I should die where would I go? Lost. Oh lost forever in the ever-dooming hell. Just then I could see my past life and could view every evil, every sin in my life. Oh the vile sinner I was! I remained so restless that the doctor was called again. Oh sister, I did wish he would not come again, for at that time I truly did realize he could do me no good. Then came the beautiful words of Benjamin Lloyd;

"Pity a helpless sinner, Lord,
Who would believe thy gracious word,
But own my heart, with shame and grief,
A sink of sin and unbelief.

Lord, in thy house I read there's room,
And, venturing hard, behold I come;
But can there, tell me, can there be,
Amongst thy children room for me?

For sinners, Lord, thou camest to bleed,
And I'm a sinner vile indeed;
Lord, I believe thy grace is free;
O magnify that grace in me."

My dear father and mother taught us children to walk uprightly at all times, but in my youthful days it was not altogether their teaching that stopped me: I had a fear of the all-seeing eye that was upon me. One night I was at a Missionary Baptist protracted meeting, when the so-called preacher ended his sermon by trying to get sinners to the altar, or to the mourners' bench, as they called it. He quoted this to them: "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." I said to myself, Is that Bible? After going home I searched and found it. I was bothered about it, so the first time I saw Elder Perkins I asked him, What about such Scripture? He smiled, and said, That is James writing to the church brethren. It proved it to me. So I struggled on in my youthful days, up and down, until the fourth Monday in February, 1901, when a Primitive Baptist minister came and spent the night with us. The evening he came we were sitting around the fire and talking on the Bible (or rather they were, I was only listening), and during the conversation the minister asked my elder sister if she had ever confessed her sins,

No sooner had he asked her and I felt as though my heart was in my mouth, for I was afraid he would question me on the same subject, and I did not want any one to know what was troubling me. I only wanted to hear others talk of how sinners were saved. I was much interested, but hesitated to ask questions. Sure enough, he turned to me and asked if that ever gave me any trouble. I ignored the question and he asked me again. I sat there with my head down and wishing I could sink beneath the floor. The third time he said, Fannie, do your sins ever give you any trouble? I filled with tears and left the room. As I passed out he said, O child, do not leave us. Just then I preferred to be alone, yet at the same time I was hungry for a crumb from the Master's table. At night I would creep to my bedroom and fall on my knees and beg God to forgive my many sins. I have lain on my bed at night when I suppose all the family were asleep but poor me. Oh! the horrid, horrid thought of going down into eternal woe would almost make me scream aloud and tears would flow until I could find no dry place on either side of my pillow to lay my head. By this time all I could say was, Lord, Lord, have mercy on me. But it seemed to me my cries and begging were unheard. I longed to ask some one to pray for me, but was ashamed to do so. I went on in this condition until October, and the association convened with our home church (New Salem). During the meeting we had a great many brethren and sisters in our home, and Saturday night there were eight or nine ministers there and we had quite a meeting. Those who did not preach talked along the line of experience. Oh it was so interesting, the very crumb I was longing for. I shall never forget that precious night. Dear Elder Perkins, who now is sleeping the blessed sleep, preached last, and it seemed to me he must know my feelings better than I did myself. He preached to me. I tried to keep back the tears, but could not. I tried to hide behind others, but he saw the flowing tears and looked me in the face. By this time several were talking, praising God and shaking hands with love. Oh those precious shouts of joy, praising God above everything. Oh listen! to me just now I can hear those sweet voices singing the sweet praises over in my father's and mother's old home. My father was on a sick bed, but he rose up and shook hands with all and was very happy, while my dear mother sat by him. At this time I was sitting on the floor at the foot of the bed, but nevertheless Elder Perkins sought me out and took my hand. I left the room for fear they would hear my cries. The following day (Sunday) when the meeting closed and the people were leaving the church grounds, I was standing aside feeling very sad, crushed down with my sins, when Elder Perkins came to say goodbye, with tears streaming down my cheeks I asked him to pray for poor me, and with tears he said goodbye. Sister, he knew my suffering was great. Then sister Lillian and I hurried to our home, where the

good old black woman had dinner ready. Soon many were leaving to catch the train, but I had an opportunity of asking one of the ministers to pray for me. I must say that at that time I could not understand the blessing, but was much shocked at what he said. He said, I feel too unworthy to pray for any one. Now that made me feel breathless, to think that such a sinner as I had even dared to call the Lord's name. I felt so little, so ashamed, because I had even ventured to speak to him on the subject.

I went on in this condition until the spring of 1902, when one Sunday morning I awoke with my sins crushing me nearly to death. I felt I could not live longer. I tried to appear busy with something, but slow work it was. I was in the dining-room trying to sweep, but the time came when I could not help crying aloud. Mother and father ran to me, shook me several times, and father said, What is the matter with you? What is the trouble? I finally said, O father, the devil has hold on me and I cannot get away from him. They both wept and tried to console me, but I experienced no relief, though I was begging for it constantly. The same day, in the afternoon, as I was sitting on the back porch alone my sins came like mountains before me and I wept bitter tears. I went into the house and got the Bible to see if I could find some passage of Scripture that would give me a little comfort. But oh poor me, everywhere I read it would condemn me, and I said to myself, I cannot bear the suffering any longer. I was afraid some one would see me crying, so I went into another room and closed the door. I had fully decided to end my life. Then I saw myself doomed for hell and could see no escape. I had thought of three ways to end my life, and as I was sitting there all stooped over with my face buried in my hands, thinking which way would be the easiest and quickest, a calmness came over me. I do not know how long I sat there unconscious of the things of this world, but when I came to myself I was sitting perfectly straight with my hands clasped. The sweet peace I had so longed for had come to me, the grief and weeping had been turned into peace, sweet peace, and I was made to smile for a short while. I felt as though I had been in a deep sleep all these days and had awakened to something new. Everything seemed different. I walked out in the yard and the very sight of the grass and trees was beautiful, the sky was clear and the sun appeared to me to shine brighter than ever. It is impossible for me to express the beautiful and lovely scene. That burden of sin was gone and it never has returned. But other sorrows came. This Adam (natural) life came again, doubts and fears came, and I soon began to wonder if I was deceived. Oh the terrible battle I was in. Sister Odom, then I began my work. I thought I would be shown something I had done wrong. I was made to mourn because I was still continuing in my sins, and I made vow after vow to cease sinning. I truly thought I could be good and sin no

more, but before I knew it I would find myself doing the same things over again, or rather, something worse, and I would be much humiliated and would repeat my promise to God that if he would forgive me again I would be good and sin no more. But alas, dear sister, I had to surrender, for there was no good in me. Then I began searching the Scriptures, and I read Luke xviii. 19, where Jesus said, "Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is God." Then while searching I came to the epistle of Paul to the Romans, and in the seventh chapter was much encouraged by dear old Paul, an apostle, saying, "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law, that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not." While reading the fifth chapter of Matthew my heart rejoiced when I read in the sixth verse, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Sister, down deep in my heart I was so hungry I was a beggar, and I am a poor beggar still. I remember one cold February evening, I was alone in my warm room reading in the eighth chapter of Luke about the woman who had an issue of blood for twelve years and the physicians could not help her, but rather she grew worse. But when she heard of Jesus she said, If I may but touch his clothes I shall be whole. I, too, felt that if I could stretch out my arms and hands high enough I would be healed. Oh the great faith has made us whole.

"Lord, in thy house I read there's room,
And venturing hard, behold I come;
But can there, tell me, can there be,
Amongst thy children room for me?"

Those words were my sentiments. Now a battle came. A desire came to follow Jesus into the liquid grave. But I felt so unfit that should I offer myself to the church I would be rejected. So I battled on until August, 1904, when I dreamed I was at a meeting of the church, Elder J. M. Perkins was praying, and such a prayer I had never heard. I arose and was talking and shouting while he continued to pray. Then I awoke, but with a stronger desire than ever to be baptized as Jesus was. The following month, September, 1904, Elder Perkins had an appointment with our church the 7th and 8th, and I attended both days. The first day I was cold and indifferent. Elder Perkins and brother Jim McNeely spent the night in our home, and the next morning these words were flying through my mind: Come ye that love the Lord. I asked brother McNeely if there was a song with such words. He said, Yes. Why? I said, Oh, I do not know, those words are continually in my mind this morning. A little later I heard him tell Elder Perkins about my asking him. It was soon time to be going to meeting again, but for some reason I felt I would

rather not go, but as father had died the 20th of the previous February I felt I must go with mother. We all met and the songs were sweet music to me. Elder Perkins preached, and told how the sinner was saved. He told me all I had been, told me what I was then, told my longing desire; he told his own experience and it linked with mine exactly. After a song was selected it was announced that the door was open for the reception of members. Now, sister Odom, some power, whether it was divine or not I cannot say, made this clay form of mine quiver and shake and I was raised up and went forward and gave my hand. By the time I sat down another lady came forward, the song was ended. Then Elder Perkins spoke to me in regard to the church. He asked me to relate to the church in my own simple way the dealings of the Lord with me. I began at the very first, as I have with you, and when I was telling of the calmness that came over me and that I felt as though I had been asleep all those days, brother Perkins stamped his foot on the floor and clapped his hands, and with tears streaming down his face said, Stop, stop, we are satisfied. But, sister, I could not stop, and continued talking until I was satisfied to stop. While I was talking a young man came forward, his face wet with tears, and offered himself. I was received in full fellowship, and so were the other two, and in the afternoon we three were baptized. Oh the sweet relief experienced in following Jesus and being buried as he was in the liquid grave, but I cannot tell you how utterly unworthy I feel to be among God's people, but I am unable to express my feelings. Oh that God will keep me where I belong: at their feet.

I have not told you all, and feel that I could write on and on yet the half would not be told, but I am afraid you will be weary with me, so will close by asking you to pray for your poor unworthy sister, that I may always live to serve the brethren and sisters in meekness and humility.

Yours with love,

FANNIE H. CHESTER.

FARMINGTON, Ky., Feb. 14, 1933.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As I am sending in my renewal for the SIGNS, I have some Scripture I wish to speak of, yet I know my insufficiency to think anything as of myself, and know I will not be able to write anything truthfully except the Lord be my sufficiency.

Genesis iv. 3-8, tells how in the process of time Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the ground, and Abel brought an offering of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof, and the Lord had respect to Abel and his offering, but unto Cain and his offering he had not respect. Then Cain began looking around to see if he could see why the Lord had respect to Abel and his offering and had not respect to him nor to his offering. He well knew it was not because Abel had been brought up in Sunday School, for it was long before Sunday School days. He knew it was not because

Abel had attended protracted meetings and heard missionaries preach, because it was long before their day. He well knew it was not because Abel had been baptized in water in order to the remission of his sins, for it was long before Campbell's day. He well knew it was not because Abel had done more work than he had, for he knew he had worked hard to have onions, potatoes, and the like, to bring as an offering to the Lord, and he well knew Abel had done nothing more than lie around in the shade and watch his sheep graze in the pretty green meadows. Then Cain, after summing it all up, could see nothing in it but a plain case of election and respect for Abel and rejection and nonrespect for himself. Then seeing God's purpose according to election standing, not of works, he became very wroth, his countenance fell and he rose up and slew Abel. Who art thou, O Cain, that repliest against God in killing the elect Abel? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? Cain thought Abel was the only elect God had, and he would kill him and show God what became of his elect Abel, but, like people of our day, Cain did not know God had an innumerable host of elect chosen in Christ unto salvation before the foundation of the world. So there are two distinct families here in the world: an elect and a nonelect family. As in Genesis iii. 15, the Lord God said to the serpent, I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed. God put it there, and there it will remain. The serpent is not an eternal self-existent being. Where did the serpent come from? From the hand of God. Job xxvi. 13: "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent." As in Isaiah xlv. 7: "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things." As it was in the days of Cain and Abel, so it is now. When the truth is brought to bear that God does have respect to his elect family, and has not respect to others, nor to their work offerings, and that God's purpose according to election still stands, not of works, but of him that calleth them, some men become wroth and their countenances fall, no doubt, some would rise up were it not that God restrains their wrath. The wrath of man shall praise God, and the remainder of wrath God will restrain. God did not restrain Cain's wrath in killing Abel, for Cain's wrath praised God, in that it was good for his people from then on, in letting them know what the enemy would do for them when He restrained them not. If God be for them who can be against them? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Even a dog cannot move his tongue against his people, that ye may know the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel. (Exodus xi. 7.) So we see God has respect of persons. There is a difference between the elect and the nonelect, and God put the difference there. All things work to

gether for good to God's people. Even the tongues and mouths of dogs work for their good. If the tongues of dogs are allowed to move and bark it is for the good of his people, if the dogs' tongues are made to be still that they shall not bark it is for the good of his people and for the destruction of the enemy. Some people do not know the world was framed for the elect's sake, and for their sake the world stands. They do not understand that God rules and controls the tongues of dogs, as all things else, and they will never know and understand this, because the Father has hid such things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes, or elects. "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." —Matt. xi. 26. All things done by Jesus and the apostles were done for the elect's sake. Jesus said, I am come that the sheep might have life. Father, thou hast given me power over all flesh that I should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given me. And, I lay down my life for the sheep (or elect). But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep. Here is a character Jesus did not die for: it was the sheep he died for and not the goats. Paul was beaten with rods and went hungry and thirsty, naked and cold, was imprisoned, and abused in many ways, and all this because he preached election and the resurrection. Paul suffered all those things for the elect's sake. (2 Tim. ii. 10.) The elect and nonelect are called by many different names, such as the generation of Jesus Christ, a chosen generation, generation of vipers, serpents. Ye are of your father the devil. Ye are a chosen generation, that ye should show forth God's praise. The wheat and the tares. God shall send some strong delusion, that they shall believe a lie and be damned. (2 Thess. ii. 11, 12.) But God hath from the beginning chosen others to salvation. (2 Thess. ii. 13.) The sheep and the goats. (Matt. xxv. 33.) That is what the Son of man calls them when he comes to separate them one from the other. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on the right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." This is the final separation of the sheep from the goats, or the elect from the nonelect, and the final sentence passed upon the two by the Lord. Who can change this from the way the Son of man said it shall be? Now I ask, How many protracted meetings will it take to convert those goats into sheep? and how much mission money will it take to

move the goats over to God's right hand? and what conditions can be performed that can keep the goats from going away into everlasting punishment? Let the conditional advocates answer. No, they cannot answer. If they put their salvation machine to work and run it until it melts, still the Lord is saying, Those on my left hand shall go away into everlasting punishment. I ask them again to answer these quotations, or make known this riddle, and I will set them free, but until they do it scripturally I hold them bound.

Do as you think best with this. If you judge it unsound or unprofitable do not let it appear in the SIGNS. It seems to me I have written much and said nothing worth while.

Yours in hope of being set at God's right hand,

J. B. ADAMS.

DALLAS, Texas, March 17, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—Once again I am permitted to address you and inclose my subscription remittance for another year, the remainder is to use as you see fit. The dear old SIGNS and its many able correspondents get nearer and dearer to me as time goes on. Sometimes I can hardly go about my household duties after it reaches me and wait until evening to read it. I look forward to its coming like waiting for meeting-day to come; and while on the subject of meeting I just want to tell the Old Baptists far and near that we are wonderfully blessed of the Lord in having Elder J. R. Hardy with us, and our little band of brethren and sisters all seem to be of one mind, feasting at the table so bountifully spread with the riches of God's kingdom and evidence of his glorious grace. Many are the times I continue to feast for days when I hope it pleases my Master to let me linger in the light of his glorious mysteries. Not long ago it was our privilege to hear a most able discourse on Ruth gleaning in the fields. I was made to hope I may have had some little experience of that gleaning and of the handfuls of grain she gathered. There is a time to every purpose, and it all works just as God saw it from the beginning. "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it. * * * * I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry; and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory." Here we have the whole of it from beginning to end, "for Israel my glory," a perfect work. All God's work is perfect. He consults not with puny creatures, but says, I will, and, You shall. When I look within I fear and tremble. I have no more ability than a new-born babe. I cannot even think a good thought and sin is mixed with all I do and the warfare witnesses. But let me notice for a

moment the desire of that little spark of hope planted in our poor hearts. Sometimes it is so small we almost despair, at other times it is entirely sufficient, yet it is perfect, because it is the work of the Spirit, to redeem us from all iniquity. Therein is the glory of God revealed in us. It liveth and abideth forever; it cannot die. It is evidence that Christ dwells within. No wonder it was said that nothing shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. No, no, not tribulation, nor distress, nor persecution, nor famine, nor nakedness, nor peril, nor sword, they even draw us nearer, for we taste the sorrows borne by our blessed Savior. Oh the sacred nearness such trial bring us to him, and these things must be, but, praise his holy name, they will all be done away when this earthly life is over. Our hope reaches far beyond the end of time. If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. That priceless little hope! Take it from me and all is gone. It is as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast. "Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." Note the word "servant." A servant does what he is commanded to do, or else he is not a servant. "My people shall be willing in the day of my power." Our God has all power in heaven and in earth. He gives the will and the do and his creatures do it. No questioning about it.

I am very sorry I cannot send you more at this time. I am sure you have felt this depression as keenly as any, but I trust the Lord has a purpose in holding up the SIGNS, and if he has it will continue, but I regret that you are not fully paid for all your labor and time put into it. We hope things will soon be better. It looks better financially than for some time.

Love to all the household of faith.

Your little sister,

(MRS.) H. A. STRUBE

DANVILLE, Va., July 8, 1933.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—DEAR SON:—I feel it about time for me to write you, and as it seems true I have nothing in the way of general news that will interest you, will therefore write of some things found in the tenth chapter of the Acts of the apostles. I have read and reread this chapter and yet feel that I know nothing contained therein except the Lord from heaven has taught me. It seems the impression to write holds on, and I have today been pondering of the many excuses that would seem to justify me in leaving it undone. My harp is on the willows on account of many sad things before me. The great depression upon our nation that has brought untold suffering to many, and now a great drought has set in and our much needed crops are simply burning up and will soon be ruined if no rain comes, so what must we do?

It seems in this tenth chapter of Acts many wonderful things are set forth and made known to the children of God, even of different nations, show-

ing the power and work of God in bringing them together. He does not seem to make known to any one man all things concerning the kingdom, but to certain ones a portion of these glorious things, so that it is necessary for us to come together and each tell of what has been taught him by the Spirit of our God, and when the apostles and all who were truly taught of God brought those talks together and found them all in harmony, and showing truly to be the work of God, then it was that they could shout and give glory to the Lord that was working in them to do his will. Notice how perfect the work in giving the information so there would be no mistake about it. A certain man at a certain place was told even by the angels from heaven in a way that when they came together they were sure it was the handiwork of God. My dear son, do we not have sometimes a feast similar to those of the apostles? I believe the true child of God does. For instance, we meet sometimes and hear some talk or preach of the dealings of our heavenly Father with the saints and making known that they have been with Jesus, how soon our cups are filled and running over with the good things from heaven, but, my dear boy, what right have I to claim an interest in these good things? Oh, I feel to be another Mephibosheth. I have never read of but one, but I feel sure there are many. How I do realize my helplessness. At times I feel it wold be better for my friends were I dead, as I feel to be a burden to them; in a sense I am even a dead dog, no good, less than the least, if one at all. Must we not still tell one another what we should do by still meeting together to talk and make known the dealings of our Lord and Master with us?

I much enjoyed the first letter in the June number of the SIGNS, written by brother J. I. Foster, of Texas, and your article was rich also to me. When we can see the hand of the Lord in the matter oh how it sweetens the message, like honey in the comb.

In conclusion, I feel that if we are truly heirs of God's kingdom we should rejoice in tribulation, for so it was ordained we should suffer, but if our names are written in the Lamb's book of life the victory will be ours in the end. Amen.

We want you to come and be with us soon, all of you.

Look this over, and if you wish you may send it to the SIGNS for publication.

Your father,

R. L. DODSON.

FOXWORTH, MISS., Feb. 3, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been requested by some of the Predestinarian Baptists to write for the SIGNS, and after some hesitation on account of my inability and unworthiness, I have decided to offer a few thoughts for your consideration, but I feel there are many writers to fill the columns of the SIGNS who can write more comfortingly and instructively than I can, but I cannot help feeling that I want to write. Hearing from the dear people of God is a great comfort to me. If I know

my heart, I dearly love the people of God who feel the need of the Lord to help them, for our existence and salvation is all of God.

There is a passage of Scripture on my mind, which reads, "Awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand."—Rom. xiii. 11, 12. I do not feel at all able to write on this grand subject. I understand that when Christ came into the world that was the beginning of day to the elect Gentiles. Christ is the way, the truth and the life; he is our only hope of salvation, and redemption, and happiness, and immortal glory. We feel to know that salvation is sure to every one the Father gave Christ in the covenant of redemption before the foundation of the world. Thank God it does not depend upon the works of man. Christ tread the wine-press alone and sat down at the right hand of God, and there he is interceding for the saints. Christ said, No man can come unto me except my Father draws him by his Spirit. The Lord God says, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. We hear some people talk about leading souls to Christ, but if the blind lead the blind both shall fall into the ditch. When Christ was born God showed how people are drawn to Christ. God had warned the wise men and prepared them to know how to get to Christ. God caused the star to appear and shine unto the wise men, and it went before them until it came to where Jesus and his mother were and the star stood over where Jesus was and the wise men went in and worshiped him. So it is with all who are born of the Spirit, they have to be quickened into life by the Holy Spirit and drawn to Christ by the Spirit of God, and no man can come to the Father except by Christ. God the Father, Christ the Son, and the Holy Ghost, these three, yet they are all one. God is eternal. Christ's work on earth was external suffering and death, the Spirit is internal, it goes into the heart. The Day Star shines into the heart and leads the elect sinner to Christ. Oh what a wonderful God is our God, if he really is our God, or if we are his children, which we hope we are. But we have doubts and fears, and the thorn in the flesh causes us to grieve on account of our carnal and sinful nature. Paul said he asked God thrice to remove the thorn, but God answered, My grace is sufficient for you. So Paul could glory in afflictions and persecutions, and we see that the thorn is for our good, to keep us humble. Sometimes it seems that my afflictions and being confined to bed all the time for over thirteen years, and all my earthly possessions taken from me that it is hard, but when I think it over I feel that it is all right and just and for good in some way unknown to me. Christ gave his life for his people. He bore their sins, the Just for the unjust, and if it is his will to let the devil afflict me I only trust God will give me grace to be submis-

sive to his holy will. If I could but know I am suffering for Christ's sake, and for the good of his cause, I could glory in my afflictions and praise his holy name, but I can see nothing in myself but sinfulness, faults and failure; that is all, if I am left to myself, but God is able to accomplish his purposes. If he sees fit to use an idot to a purpose he is able to so do. He can take the weakest person and make him wiser in the kingdom of God than all the wisdom of this world can teach, because the world knoweth not God. We hope we are trying to serve the true God, who has all power and is able and will take care of all his little ones. So, brethren, think it not strange when trials and afflictions come, for they are to try, or, in other words, to prove your faith. I cannot call to mind how the Scripture is worded, but I notice our forefathers had to pass through afflictions, persecutions, griefs and sorrows the same as we do now, but God delivered them out of all their troubles, and he will deliver us out of ours if we are what we hope we are. We live by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for it?

I must close. I fear this is only a failure and of no profit. Please pardon all mistakes, and if it is printed please pray for my daughter and me. May the Lord bless all the redeemed family of God.

Submitted in love, and for your disposal.

C. C. SMITH.

LONDON, Ontario.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Will you kindly publish this excellent letter from dear brother Dodson? I have read and reread it with great comfort, and want my kindred in Christ to share the truth it contains. How excellent is thy dwelling-place, O Lord of hosts, to me.

FLORA J. SINCLAIR.

RUTHERFORD, N. J., July 4, 1933.

DEAR SISTER SINCLAIR:—July 4th is a day of celebration in the States, and I am going to celebrate by thanking you for your thoughtfulness of me in sending the picture of Mr. Sinclair and yourself taken on the occasion of your golden wedding anniversary. I think you are a very fine looking couple and that there is much cause why you should be congratulated. In this modern day there are not a great many who are willing to bear with each other's imperfections for a period of fifty years, even though they may be blest to live that long. You both have much to be thankful for, and I hope you may be able to continue the journey together until death do you part.

It is good to hear you say that you get hungry for a letter from me occasionally, and that the reason is you feel the messages which I am enabled to send forth proceed from God. You certainly speak the truth when you say "it is not in man to convey spiritual tidings unless actuated by the Spirit." One is very highly favored to possess that knowledge. It is sad to realize the countless millions in the world to-day

who are altogether ignorant of this blessed truth. The question can easily, therefore, arise in our minds, "Who hath caused thee to differ?" I am persuaded that there is nothing in either of us according to nature to merit the esteem of our Creator or to give him delight. Truly, we ever must sing, It is all because it seemed good in his sight. There is no other reason that can be put forth, and what a mercy he has not passed us by. Should we not then send forth glad tidings of great joy for the unspeakable gift of his only begotten and dearly beloved Son, whom he hath sent into the world to suffer, bleed and die, that such vile sinners as you and me might go free? I trust it is no offense to you to be classed as a vile sinner, for such you are, whether you own it or not.

In your letter you spoke as though there was good reason why your May meeting should remain in your memories for a long time. Since then you have held your June meeting and I trust the same can be said of it. Elders Vaughn and Hutchens, who I understood were to be with you, attended our Association, and I am of the opinion that they will agree with me in saying that we had a lovely meeting. Such meetings are the kind we so much desire to have. Elder Coulbourn once expressed himself to me as being pleased with the kind of preaching that did not give him indigestion. All will doubtless agree with that. When we hear things which disturb and upset us, pleasant memories do not follow them. The Lord's people enjoy feasting on the fragments which are taken up from the place where our Lord reveals his smiling face and manifests his wonderful presence. I am satisfied that your pastor enjoys having you accompany him to the homes of the sick and joining in singing the songs of our beloved Zion, so you are not the only one that is blest in travelling around with him. You speak of seeing great beauty in others and none in yourself. I would think strange of you if this were reversed. When people are moved to say or write the most bitter things against themselves is the time that we feel more closely drawn toward them, for we are persuaded that in the flesh there dwells no good thing. The man or woman who testifies to being a fit companion for only owls and bats often comes to where we are in our affliction and administers a cup of cold water in the name of Jesus. When Jesus was here in the world, was it not the very ones who had no realization of having visited him or ministered to him in any way whatsoever whom he placed on his right hand? You have long since learned to watch the person who claims to be doing much for the Lord. God has ordained praise out of the mouths of babes and sucklings. It is in weakness that his strength is made perfect. This is the way that no human being will choose.

While reading the July SIGNS to-day and meditating upon some of the blessed things of God's kingdom, my heart has been softened some beneath

the drippings of the sanctuary which have fallen upon me. The Lord is good, inexpressibly good, to remember me in mercy as he does, and I do desire to exalt his name and to praise him, world without end. I hope I can from time to time detect some of the dealings of the Lord with his people in my experience and that I can acknowledge him as the God of my life. For many years I trust it has been the prayer of my heart that the Lord would guide my ways, but I have to confess to the fact that many times my foot has well-nigh slipped. If he did not watch over and keep me I would plunge headlong over into the bottomless pit. I will soon have been a member of the visible church twenty-five years, but I am no more able to-day than when I first began to walk as becometh the profession which I have made. When the light of heaven shines round about me and I can see myself as I really am, I am made to abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes. It is at such times that I am enabled to meet such characters as Job in the way, and how thankful I am that God has left upon the sands of time the footprints of those who have walked by faith and not by sight. It is good to meet and sup with those who have been led and taught by the Lord. Such are the very salt of the earth. There are many such in Canada, and I am glad that the bending of the straws is showing the direction in which the wind is blowing. God's work is effectual, to the pulling down of strongholds, and none is able to resist the working of his mighty power. It is into the hand of such a God that I desire to commit my all and commend my spirit. May he continue to bless you and yours, is my prayer.

Your brother in Christ, if not deceived,

R. LESTER DODSON.

COMMERCE, Texas, July 18, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find two dollars to pay my subscription another year. I would like very much to say a few words of encouragement, for I surely do enjoy the good articles in each number, but I am not gifted to write. I feel and realize that we are entirely dependent upon the Lord, and if he has a message for any one of his little ones he directs it, both from the standpoint of giving and receiving. Each year when it is time to renew my subscription I desire to let you know what the SIGNS OF THE TIMES means to me, but I feel so unworthy and unable to say anything that would be of any comfort to the children of God that I am made to feel that it is better for me to be a silent reader than to undertake to do something that is not of the Lord. However, I do hope it may be the Lord's will to spare you and sustain you for a long time to carry on this work of love, for the SIGNS carries comfort and consolation to many who never have the privilege of hearing a gospel sermon.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) J. E. HICKS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1933.

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MATTHEW XXV. 1-13.

VERY much of the Scripture in the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of Matthew is sometimes applied to the church in this present gospel dispensation, but we beg to present our views on this matter as applying primarily, that is first of all, to the Jews. In this discourse delivered to his disciples upon the mount of Olives prior to his death, Jesus was speaking to the members of the house of Israel and was not talking to his church as at present constituted through the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. Inasmuch as the church of Jesus Christ is his body, as we are plainly told in the New Testament, each and every member of that body is the subject of a new or heavenly birth; hence the whole church collectively and each and every member of it individually is in living union with the Head, who is Christ the Son of God. This being so, and we verily believe it to be so, we fail to comprehend how there can be any foolish virgins in the church which is the true and living body of Christ. Never to any member of his body, never to any sinner purchased by Christ's blood and thereby redeemed once and forever from sin and death and hell, will the coming Christ ever say, "I know you not." Christ plainly knows, and has always known, all them that are his who were given him in the covenant of personal and unconditional election before the foundation of the world. None of these will he ever turn away from, to none of these will the door into his presence ever be shut, to none of these will it ever be said, Too late. The five foolish virgins are plainly to our mind not God's elect in Christ at all, they are not members of the true body at all, do not belong to that regenerated company of sinners saved which makes up the whole of the true church of God. The twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew begins with "Then." Hence "at the time" spoken of in the previous or twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, the nation of Israel (whom Christ was then addressing) will be comparable to ten virgins: five wise and five foolish. Not that the gospel church will be like the ten virgins, but that the nation of Israel will be like them. The "kingdom of heaven" is not a designation here of the gospel church, but of the nation of Israel. In the twenty-fourth chapter,

Christ was answering the questions of his disciples as to when he should come again and what signs would accompany the end of the world. By the "end of the world" here is meant the end of the age. The whole of the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters are answering these questions and do not mean to convey events with reference to the church in its present gospel character. It seems to me that the interpretation becomes very plain when we bear in mind Israel is only cut off temporarily until the fullness of the Gentiles has been completed. The "fullness of the Gentiles" is the gospel church of this present age of grace. This church had its beginning or firstfruits among the Jews at Jerusalem, thereafter it went to the Gentiles. When it is finished among the Gentiles, there will be a restitution of all things to Israel. At that time, God will deal again with Israel who, all these centuries since the apostles, have been submerged among the Gentile nations. Some think the time of this restoration of Israel to their own land is about to begin. Be that as it may, the time is bound to come when God's gracious dealings with them will be resumed, when Christ will appear the second time to them, at which time they shall say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." It is at the second coming of Christ that the kingdom of Israel will be like ten virgins: five wise and five foolish. Paul clearly sets forth that not all the Jews at the time of the restoration will believe in Him, for he says that not all are Israel which are of Israel. Hence, the proper setting for the parable of these virgins will be at Christ's second coming and did not certainly take place at his first coming. There may have been a glimmer of all this at his first coming, but the full development of the parable will not be until that future day of the Lord which was revealed to John on Patmos, and which revelation the Spirit introduced to John as follows: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." This is further developed as the Revelation progresses and we come to the nineteenth chapter, "And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns, and he had a name written, that no man knew but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name was called The Word of God." This glorious Son of God coming in triumph to tread his enemies under his feet and to judge the nations in righteousness is accompanied by the armies in heaven following The Word of God upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. In opposition to this heavenly host, is gathered the forces of the beast, the "man of sin," the antichrist. At this battle of Armageddon, the victory is certain, swift and sure, with the result that the beast and the false prophet are taken and cast alive into

the lake of fire burning with brimstone. At the same time, the remaining followers of the beast are slain and their carcasses given for meat to the fowls of heaven. Following upon this victory of heaven at Armageddon, comes the binding of Satan and the beginning of the thousand years during which those who accompanied the Faithful and True, The Word of God, shall be given thrones and they shall sit upon them and judgment shall be given unto them and they are to live and reign with Christ through the thousand years. Now, it is at that second coming of the Lord that the nation of Israel will be like the ten virgins: five wise and five foolish. At that day, it will be as it was in the days when Noah entered into the ark. "For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left." The generation to which Jesus was then talking was not to pass away until all these things had been fulfilled. It is not meant that the very same persons then living were not to die before Christ should come again the second time but it means that "the nation, that tribe or kind or sort of people" were not to be extinct before Christ should come. One of the wonders of the centuries has been the remarkable preservation of the Jewish people as a nation distinct and separate from all others, notwithstanding the fact that they have been scattered everywhere and among all nations for hundreds of years. Notwithstanding their dispersion, and notwithstanding the bitter persecutions they have endured, they have been kept in the providence of God as a distinct people and have not merged themselves with the nations to the loss of their racial characteristics. Hence, "this generation," this people of Israel, has not passed away. Christ's word that they should not pass away has been verified and will be still further verified as we watch the will of God unfold. At his coming again, those of Israel who shall be born again shall enter in with him unto the marriage, those who are not born again shall be shut out. To have oil in their vessels means that the five wise, in that they were wise unto salvation, had the grace of God in their lamps or vessels. The five foolish, although they are nominally Israel and will be Israel after the flesh, will not be of the circumcision which is in the heart by the Holy Spirit, hence will not be known by the Lord when he comes and will not enter with him into the marriage. It must be remembered that in more than one place in the Old Testament Israel is denominated to be Jehovah's married wife, and although she went astray from God and went after false lovers and played the harlot with the nations, yet God did never divorce her. There is not in existence any bill of divorcement which God gave Israel

which they can bring forth to show that God has finally and forever put her away. God hates putting away, as Malachi tells us in chapter two, verse fourteen: "Yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant." Therefore, while she is put away from him for awhile, and this putting away of Israel is proving to be the salvation of the Gentiles, yet when the "fullness of the Gentiles" has been brought in, then will he gather Israel from all the countries whither he has scattered them in the dark and cloudy day, for indeed dark and cloudy has it been for Israel through all these centuries of their scattering abroad. Following upon the greatest tribulation which the world has ever seen, as prophesied by Jesus in Matthew xxi. 22, there will come the verification of the parable of the virgins. All the ten virgins are Israel: but the five foolish will be Israel in name only and not truly Israel in heart. The five wise will be truly Israel, will have the illumination of their knowledge of the truth shining forth from their vessels or lamps, which illumination unto righteousness will be fed within them by the oil of God's sovereign and saving grace. This oil is such that those who have it cannot give it away, because those who have it need it for themselves and have no more than is sufficient for each individual case, hence cannot part with it even if they would, and, of course, they would not. There is nothing for the five foolish to do but to seek such oil as the market-place affords, but that kind of oil cannot shine in the presence of the Bridegroom. Religion which is in name only, which consists of formalism, is to be found in the market-place, it is a product of commercialism. Money is its life, self-righteonsness its fruit: but it will not avail in the presence of the Bridegroom. Those of restored Israel, in that day, will find that resort to the formalism and ceremonies of a past age will not avail them when the Lord comes. Those who are genuinely Israel will be owned by him at his coming and will go in with him to the feast. During the long term of the Lord's being away from them, while he tarried, they all alike slumbered and slept; but at midnight (that is, at the very darkest moment of their tribulations) they will awake. Not only will true religion among them come to light, but there will also be an awakening of the foolish ones, who will resort to human preparation, lacking the essential oil. Both false and true religion will wake up, the counterfeit alongside the genuine. The coming of the Lord, however, will take the tares from the wheat, and will separate the good fish in the net from the bad thrown back into the sea. "And they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer. Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues."—Psalms lxxviii. 35, 36. Doubtless, as a nation, Israel will have it brought to their remembrance that God had been their Rock in past ages and that he did formerly redeem them from Egypt through the Red Sea, as well as at other times. But what will this avail

them if it be a mere form with them, a mere honoring him with their lips while their hearts are turned from him? It will be in the foolish virgins, flatteries of lying tongues. They will be like an earthen vessel overlaid with silver dross. (Isaiah xlviii. 1.) "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." We are well aware of the fact that all this may be given a practical application to the present prevalence of true and false religion. Everywhere in the world, among all nations, there are true be-believers and there are those who are believers by profession only, strangers in heart to God while confessing him with their lips. We know that in the final consummation of all things there will be a separation made by divine judgment between those that are God's by election, whom he has known from the foundation of the world in Christ, and those whom he has not so known and who are not his by election at all. These latter have their portion with the beast, the false prophet and Satan. The former shall have their blessedness with their Redeemer-God in the eternal new creation and in that holy city which lieth foursquare in that new heavens and new earth. However, while believing all this verily, we are convinced that the true interpretation of the parable of the ten virgins shall meet its full unfoldment with Israel at Christ's second coming. H. H. L.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in joint session with the several churches composing it, convening at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1933, sends christian greetings to our sister associations and meetings of our correspondence.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Again it has been our great privilege to meet in an associational capacity and to welcome your messengers, who have come to us once more preaching the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone, which we have enjoyed for so many years. It has been our pleasure to have them with us and to receive your correspondence. May the blessings of our heavenly Father rest upon them and us as we go forward from this place and if it is his holy will may we have the pleasure of visits from them again.

Our next session is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1934, the place of meeting to be announced later through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.

CYRUS RISLER, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Margaret Jamieson, Cal., $2; "A friend," Ky., $1; Wm. H. Morris, Mo., $1; "A friend," Wash., $2; Mrs. Mary A. Drew, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Edith M. Gekeler, Ore., $3.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER J. W. McCLANAHAN, our beloved brother in the ministry of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, departed this earthly life at his home, near Poca, West Virginia, July 4th, 1933. He was born April 15th, 1849, making his stay on earth 84 years, 2 months and 19 days. He leaves his wife, two daughters and nine grandchildren, also a host of brethren and friends to mourn their loss, but we are confident that our loss is his eternal gain, it being far better for him to depart and be with Christ. Elders A. J. Mullens, Dell Smith, H. J. Bird and the writer of this notice were called to officiate at his funeral, which was held at the meetinghouse of the Hopewell Church, West Virginia, where he was pastor for a number of years, thirty-two, if I mistake not. He was a faithful pastor, always laboring for peace and order, and shunning not to declare all the counsel of God. He will be missed more than can be expressed, but we hope it may be the will of the Lord to give us another pastor who may serve us as well as he has done.

J. C. HAMMOND.

NOTE:—Some years ago, it was my privilege to spend several days in company with the subject of the above notice, Elder J. W. McClanahan, visiting in his home and among the brethren and churches which he served. It was a revelation to me to see the unselfish devotion and self-sacrificing love which he unstintedly manifested toward his people as he went about among them ministering to them of the Word of life. Very few of us who are in the ministry have any conception of the hardships suffered by these faithful soldiers of the cross who are called to labor in the out-of-the-way places among mountains where traveling is difficult and the means of life scanty. Such things as I have had to endure in my own ministry are not worthy to be compared with the hardships undergone by brother McClanahan and those who, like him, have not counted their lives dear unto themselves that they might finish their course with joy.

H. H. L.

IT is with much sadness of heart that I undertake the writing of a suitable obituary notice of our dear departed sister, **GEORGIA WARREN,** as I have been requested to do, for I feel words will not suffice me to write anything "suitable" to the life she lived with and among us. She was born November 17th, 1872, and died July 23rd, 1933, making her stay on earth 60 years, 8 months and 6 days. She was the daughter of Elder Joseph Staton and Louisa Tilghman Staton, who lived near Snow Hill, Maryland, at the time of her birth. Her mother died when she was seven years old, and some time after that Elder Staton was called to the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware. Elder Staton married again, his second wife being Mrs. Martha Rounds, who became as a mother to her from childhood, and until Mrs. Staton's death. Sister Georgia was baptized by the late Elder William L. Beebe about forty-one years ago, in the spring season, and in the fall of the same year she was married to Dr. L. W. Warren by the same Elder, the exact date of their marriage being October 14th, 1892. Doctor Warren, with her, made their home in Fruitland, Md., where he practiced his profession, and sister Georgia moved her membership from Welsh Tract to the Indiantown Church, not far from her new home in Fruitland, where she remained a faithful member until death. As to the life she lived on earth, those who knew her knew her life, for it was an open book; and her light did shine, not being hid under a basket, and as God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shined in her heart this light seemed to radiate from or through her in the church and to the church on earth. Kindly spoken words for her numerous friends at all times, and a smiling countenance as long as health lasted, and even at times in sickness, will be remembered by those who knew her, both as friend and sister in the church. I quote as follows from her bereaved husband: "Her great cross the last few years since she had the stroke was her inability to do things to help every one. The depression bore heavily upon her, not because of her personal sacrifices, but because of her inability to help others."

She left in her immediate family her faithful husband of forty-one years, one daughter, Mrs. Mildred Tilghman, of Palatka, Florida, and four grandchildren. These, with other relatives too numerous to mention, and a host of friends, together with the writer, should mourn not for her, but mourn rather over our loss, which, however, we believe is her eternal gain, through her faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The funeral was held in Berlin, Maryland, conducted by Elder H. C. Ker and the writer. May the Lord bless us and reconcile us to his will.

G. E. COULBOURN.

Mr. JOHN H. RANSDELL, our dear friend, was born December 26th, 1865, and died July 19th, 1933, aged 67 years 6 months and 23 days. He was married to Miss Jennie Morris December 22th, 1891, and to this union was born one daughter, Mrs. Harrison Powell, who, with the widow, one grandchild and the following brothers and sisters, are left to mourn: Frank, of Turners Station, Ky., Jasper and Joe, of Campbellsburg, Ky., and Mrs. L. B. Elston, of Turners Station, Ky., also a step-brother, Wm. F. Ransdell, and a step-sister, Mrs. G. D. Monfort.

Our friend John never united with any church, but was a strong believer in the Old School Baptist faith, and his house was always open for the entertainment of the Baptist brethren, and his faith was shown by his works. He lived close to the Sulphur Fork meetinghouse and he was al-

ways present at the meetings there. Surely we have lost a friend, and the community a neighbor. May the Lord bless the lonely widow and daughter and the many friends, and enable us all to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

The writer was called to attend the funeral and spoke briefly to a large congregation of brethren and friends from the words of Paul, "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept," after which the body was laid to rest in the silent city of the dead, in Newcastle Cemetery, to await the call of the Master in the resurrection. May the Lord bless them that mourn.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

DEACON JOHN M. SCARBROUGH was born March 14th, 1858, near old Diana, Upshur County, Texas, and died at his home in Hot Springs, New Mexico, August 10th, 1932, aged 74 years. For me to say that we miss him does not seem to begin to express our feelings. Only those who have mingled with him and his family in his home and church can begin to realize the full extent of our love. He united with the Bluff Springs Primitive Baptist Church, in Harrison County, Texas, in November, 1883, and was baptized by Elder Frank Loden, and was soon afterwards ordained a Deacon. In 1900 we moved from Harrison County to Upshur County, and united with the Fellowship Church, where he lived a consistent member and Deacon until 1907, when we moved to the plains of New Mexico for our health. After a few years there he was taken down with rheumatism, and in 1921 we moved to Hot Springs, New Mexico, where he was cured. We have lived here since, but nowhere in New Mexico were we within rach of a church. His greatest pleasure when within reach of a church was to attend meeting and to be with his brethren, have them in his home and to work for the welfare of the church. After moving out of the reach of church membership his greatest pleasure seemed to be to read the SIGNS and his Bible. He was a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES most of the years since moving to New Mexico, in 1907. We were married September 13th, 1877, and were the parents of ten children, nine of whom still survive, four boys and five girls. He was a dyspeptic all his life and developed cancer of the stomach about a year before his death, from which he suffered terribly at times. Although he had very bad spells, he never gave up his work more than a few days at a time until five or six weeks before he died.

Funeral services were held at French's Funeral Parlor. Several hymns were sung and Elder J. T. McGuire, of Las Cruces, New Mexico, spoke words of comfort to the bereaved family, and friends who attended, after which his body was laid to rest in the Hot Springs Cemetery, August 13th, 1932. May we all be prepared to meet him where partings are no more.

(MRS.) J. M. SCARBROUGH.

MRS. BETTIE ELLIS died February 27th, 1933, at Camden, Arkansas, aged 63 years, 2 months and 28 days. Sister Ellis was born at Buckmart, Ark., and at about the age of fifteen years moved to Camden, where she lived the remainder of her life. She was baptized at or near the age of twenty years by Elder T. Peterson into the membership of Antioch Primitive Baptist Church, and lived in loving obedience to the commands of her heavenly Father the rest of her life. One of her favorite passages of Scripture was, "Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." Oh how we all did love her, and can never express this love in words. We still love her sweet and noble life, which lives on in cherished memory. At the age of seventeen years sister Ellis was married to W. P. Cauthon, who preceded her in death twenty years or more. She had six children, four boys and two girls. The boys are Aubry Cauthon, Eugene Cauthon Roy Cauthon and Orlander Ellis, all of Camden, except Roy, who lives at Ft. Smith, Ark. The girls are Miss Gertrude Cauthon and Mrs. Bessie Kennedy, both of Camden, Ark. We can truly say that we know not how to express the grief caused by her absence, neither can we describe the joys of the paradise of the Lord, where we feel assured she now is.

Written by her pastor, who tried to comfort the broken-hearted ones when her body was laid in the grave in Lakeside Cemetery, near Antioch Church, eight miles east of Camden. The Methodist minister of Camden offered a prayer at the home of Mrs. Kennedy (sister Ellis' daughter). Elder V. R. Harris, of Fordyce, Ark., assisted the writer of this notice in the services at the cemetery.

In conclusion, I pray that we all may rise on the resurrection morn and join that happy throng in perfect praise for evermore.

JOHN T. EVERITT.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT.

WHEREAS, God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to call from us by death our beloved brother and pastor, **ELDER J. W. McCLANAHAN**, who departed this life July the 4th, 1933, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, first, that we desire to bow in humble submission to Him who doeth all things well, and that we trust God will, in his infinite wisdom and grace, fill the vacant place in our church; second, that a copy of these Resolutions be entered upon our church record, a copy sent to the bereaved widow, a copy be spread upon the Minutes of the Pocatalico Association, and that a copy be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

Done by order of the church.

DELL SMITH, Moderator.

J. C. HAMMOND, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in September and continuing three days (September 8th, 9th and 10th, 1933.) To all who are seeking the truth a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk,
MEDFIELD, Massachusetts.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will hold its annual session at the Yellow Meeting House, in the town of Roxbury, two miles below the village of Roxbury, N Y., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, September 13th, 14th and 15th, between the second and third Sundays of September, 1933 Trains and buses will be met at Halcottville, N. Y., on Wednesday morning and on Tuesday preceding. Should any strangers come, or any not familiar with the village, inquiry may be made at the post office, where full directions will be given. The same cordial hospitality in the entertainment of all visitors as shown in the past will be continued, and all interested in the meetings are especially invited to be present. The occasion will be also the one hundredth anniversary of the building of the meetinghouse. Several visiting ministers are expected, and we trust that the sessions of this Association will be to the spiritual profit and edification of all concerned. Further detailed information will be gladly given upon request by communicating with the writer.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS,
ROXBURY, N. Y.

The Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to meet with Chappel Hill Church in her ninety-second session September 15th, 16th and 17th (Friday, Saturday and third Sunday), 1933. Chappel Hill Church is two miles east of Ouachita, and three miles southeast of Sparkman, Arkansas, on branch line of Rock Island Rail Road, connecting with Cotton Belt at Camden, and Iron Mountain at Malvern, Arkansas. Highway No. 7 runs to church, and 8 and 9 connect with No. 7 to arrive at this point. Trains at these points will be met Thursday and Friday. All sound and orderly Old School Baptists are invited to meet with us at this time and place.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator,
FORDYCE, Arkansas.

W. C. HORTON, Clerk,
ELLISVILLE, Arkansas.

Providence permitting, the Mount Zion Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene Friday before the fourth Saturday in September (September 22nd, 23rd and 24th), 1933, with Little Flock Church, Cass County, Missouri. Those coming in cars from the south can come on Highway No. 71 to Harrisonville, then on Highway No. 7 four and one-half miles, then north one-quarter mile, then north directly to meetinghouse. Coming from the north, take Highway No. 7 to Pleasant Hill and south two and one-half miles to Old Rock Road, and take it directly to meetinghouse. Those coming by train can come on Missouri Pacific or Rock Island R. R. to Pleasant Hill, where they will be met. We invite all lovers of the truth to be with us.

DANIAL ADAMS, Moderator,
ODESSA, Missouri.

(MRS.) J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk,
R. R., PLEASANT HILL, Missouri.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 11th, 12th and 13th, 1933, at the Mt. Zion meetinghouse, Loudoun County, Virginia. This place of meeting is situated on the highway from Washington to Winchester by way of Fairfax and Middleburg. Busses from Washington pass right by the meetinghouse. Those coming by bus Tuesday evening before the meeting, please get off at Lenah, about two miles south of Mt. Zion, where they will be met and cared for. Those coming by bus or by private auto Wednesday morning, come direct to the meetinghouse. Those wishing to meet with us and who may not understand these directions, please write to the address given below. We cordially invite ministers and brethren of our faith and order, especially those who are in direct correspondence with us, to come and participate with us in this meeting.

GROVER C. SPINDLE, Clerk,
914 Ninth Street, northeast,
Washington, D. C.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

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11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

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ALL WELCOME

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ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminiar Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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ELDER C. W. ANDERSON,
ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 101. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1933. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PREDESTINATION.

"For whom he [God] did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."

God knows, and has known, everybody by creation. The word "foreknow" here cannot mean that he knew everybody in the sense mentioned here and that they were to be conformed to the image of his Son. All of those whom God foreknew in the sense spoken of here are predestinated to be in the image and likeness of Christ, or his Son. All of this took place in eternity. God's program was made in eternity and anything that is not included in it will never happen in time. So, according to the definition in the dictionary, the concordance and the Bible, a person is predestinated to everlasting happiness or everlasting misery. What is the meaning of predestination according to Noah Webster and Dr. Alexander Cruden? Webster says it means the purpose of God from eternity respecting all events, especially the preordination of men to everlasting happiness or misery. Dr. Cruden says, "It is the design that God has been pleased to have from all eternity, of bringing by his free grace to faith and eternal salvation some certain persons whom he loved in Christ, while he leaves others to continue in their infidelity, or in their corruptions. Those so left are the reprobate and the others are the elect, or predestinated." I do not see any material difference in the two definitions. Both seem to be strictly in accord with the teachings of the Bible. God has no afterthoughts. The past, the present and the future are all before him. The things that happen in time are the things planned or designed in eternity. Webster says, His purpose respecting all events. When he speaks of man he says, God has chosen some to everlasting happiness and others to everlasting misery. In respect to God's work in predestination as to man, both say that the destinies of men were fixed in eternity. Why God has done this no man has the

right to question. If God let the whole race of man go into everlasting punishment it would be just and right, for Adam threw all of us into condemnation and we were all doomed to eternal punishment. We were all made sinners by Adam, babies and all. I believe in the absolute predestination of all things, both seen and unseen. The hairs of our heads are all numbered. The birds cannot fall without God's notice. The microbe is not unmindful of his all-seeing eye. At a moment's notice he can marshal an army of fleas from the dust. He fights his battles with the hornets. With these he puts to flight the enemies of Israel. He has counted the sands of the seashore and weighs the mountains with his scales. To the true child of God who has his eyes open everything is moving at his command. If God takes note of the sparrow, the hairs of our heads and clothes the lily of the valley with all of its beauty, why would he think less of the destinies of men, who are made a little lower than the angels, and permit them to roam through the earth to go to heaven or hell by mere chance or accident? Man at his best is sometimes less mindful of his Creator than the ox and the ass of their owners. The ox knows his owner and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider, saith the Lord. We are all on our way to eternal happiness or misery, and not by chance or accident, but by the eternal decrees of God. God knew the destiny of every man before his members were formed from the dust of the earth. God is of one mind, he cannot change. If the world stands for a million years longer the destiny of no man will be changed.

To predestinate a person to be saved is for God to make choice of him before the foundation of the world. His name is written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. All who have been saved, and all whose names are in this book will be saved, whether they are yet born or not, they are saved because their names are in the Lamb's book of life. They may commit the crimes of a David in taking Uriah's wife, or they may persecute the church as did Paul, but if their names are in this book they will never be taken out. We are not our own, we are bought with a price. We cannot do the things of the flesh as we did in former times. God does not leave us alone. He worketh in us the things he would have us do. His Spirit works the will in us and we are willing to do the things that he would have us do, though earth and hell oppose. The true saint will even suffer death for the principles of righteousness and true holiness. He will not recant.

Now, since predestination means that God has made a special choice of some and let the others go on to destruction, it might be well to mention a few cases where this has already happened. God is still hardening some and showing mercy to others. He cannot change. This is in keeping with the program laid out in eternity. I do not know what Adam and Eve were doing when Cain and Abel went up to

make their offering and Cain's was rejected and Abel's was accepted. It looks as though Cain brought his best, yet God did not accept it. We are told by faith Abel was able to make a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. This then must have been the faith of God's elect or predestinated. What is this faith, and how is it produced? This kind of faith is the fruit of the Spirit. You must first have the Spirit before you can have the faith. This faith is to the child of God what the fruit is to the tree. Tree fruit is produced by the sap of the tree. If no sap comes there will be no fruit. If we do not have the Spirit we cannot have divine faith. We may have historical faith, but not divine faith. It is not always a matter of us exercising this faith, but it will exercise us if we have it.

So Abel had to die as the first, as we sometimes say, christian martyr. Noah is the man that we may call upon the stage next, a preacher of righteousness, who preached one hundred twenty years and the people would not heed his messages. After so long a time God called him and his family of eight persons into the ark and they were saved from the flood. Why did God make a choice of Noah and let all the other people go? This was solely because it was according to his plan and purpose. God does not predestinate and save people because they are so good, or will be good. He predestinates and saves them and makes them good. This is what he did for swearing Peter and persecuting Paul. Paul said he was the least of the apostles because he persecuted the church of God. God can do this for all sinners whose names are on the Lamb's book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Here was a man selected, or predestinated, to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, before he was born. In other words, God had made a choice of him for a minister before he was born. Here was a man who was just as much God's child by choice when he was holding the clothes of the men who stoned Stephen to death as he was when he stood before King Agrippa. Remember also Jeremiah and John the Baptist.

God next called Abraham on the scene of action. He had to even leave his own people and do as God told him, go to a land that he would show him. Abraham took God at his word. He journeyed through the world seeking a city whose builder and maker was God. There is a long line of these characters in the Old and New Testaments that might be given with these, but these I think will show very plainly that God is choosing some and letting the others continue on to destruction. I must mention the three thousand of whom Joel said that God would pour out his Spirit upon them and that their sons and their daughters should prophesy, and your young men should see visions and your old men should dream dreams. This was spoken about eight hundred years before it came to pass, so it must have been predestinated that

these three thousand souls on this very day would come out and declare themselves for God and Christ. The prophet did not say what they may do when this Spirit was poured out upon them, but he said, Your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams. All the prophecies are about things predestinated, more or less. The doctrine of predestination is the most comforting and consoling doctrine in the Bible. It is sure and steadfast.

After this great demonstration on the day of Pentecost it was said that the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. These were to come in by way of the new birth, and the Lord was to add them. God did not only predestinate his elect and create them in Christ Jesus, but he foreordained a course of good works that they should walk in them. (Eph. ii. 10.) When it comes to this certain class of people, the predestinated, it looks like everything in connection with their lives is laid out, planned and predestinated.

Trusting that these thoughts on the doctrine of predestination may be of some comfort and consolation to those who believe in it, I am writing them by the request of a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. This doctrine for more than thirty years has been my rising and setting sun. I think it is the only doctrine that has and is standing the test of the times. I have been reading the SIGNS for twenty or thirty years. It is sure and steadfast.

A. E. CLARK.

YE MEN OF ISRAEL.

"Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." —Acts i. 11.

From the days of the apostles the true church has believed that the same Jesus who was raised from the dead, ascended up into heaven, and that he shall come in company with ten thousand of his saints. Daniel in his vision "a fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened."—Dan. vii. 10. Jesus said, after he had enumerated the signs which should be manifested before his return the second time, He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. (Matt. xxiv. 31; Mark xiii. 26; Luke xxi. 27.) Jude quoted Enoch, and said, The Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints. And Paul said, And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come. Is it not wonderful, is it not glorious, to be led into the feeling security made unto us by that blessed hope that when Jesus, the same risen Lord which was crucified and buried and rose again and ascended up above this world of sin unto the Father, having obtained eternal redemption for us, whom we are told by the two angels dressed in white, Ye men of Galilee, this same Jesus

whom ye now see shall return in like manner as ye have seen him go up, and shall gather together all the elect from every quarter of the earth, and sever them from the wicked? And Isaiah tells us that the righteous shall be severed from among the wicked, and the wicked shall perceive it not. And all Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. That includes the entire election of grace. The Primitive Baptists as a church, with but very few exceptions, believe the same body of Jesus that was hanged on the cross and was buried in Joseph's new tomb was the same body that was raised and ascended into heaven. The apostle Paul said, And that he was buried, and that he arose again the third day according to the Scriptures: and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, he was seen of above five hundred. Sometimes I meet real good brethren and sisters who strongly believe in the resurrection, but do not believe it is this same body that is raised. Jesus' same flesh body that was buried arose again, for he was seen of men during his forty days on earth after his resurrection. He appeared to Thomas, who doubted the story of others and said he would not believe until he beheld the nail holes in his hands and feet. Jesus told him to behold his hands and feet, and thrust his hand into his side. Thomas exclaimed, My Lord and my God. Jesus' body was raised a glorified body, and was the firstfruits of the entire resurrection at the last day. I say that it is no greater problem for God to raise our bodies which have been buried thousands of years than it was to create and form the first body from the dust and to breathe into his nostrils the breath of life, neither will it be to raise his elect into the glorified state in the same manner that he did the body of Jesus, which is the firstfruits of the resurrected crop at the end. Here is where my hope is centered, here is my comfort in my declining days, knowing that Jesus' body is the firstfruits of all the glorified crop in the last day, and, if I am not mistaken in my hope, and if I surely have a hope in the perfect work of Jesus, when the last trump shall sound this old frail body shall arise in a glorified state in harmony with his.

As ever, your brother in hope,

J. B. BOWDEN.

SPRINGTON, West Virginia.

ELDER H. H. LEFFERTS—DEAR BROTHER:—I have in mind to try to express my sincere thanks to you for continuing to send the dear old SIGNS to me gratuitously. As it is so far to my church and I am not strong enough to walk, and have not one to take me, I do not know how to thank you enough. I do love to read and hear of a God that is able to care for his own, who holds the destiny of his children in the hollow of his hand, who rules all things after the counsel of his own will; yes, one who can work and no one is able to hinded. Oh blessed thought! to feel to know that there is a supreme, a wonderful God, who is able to watch over me, if it is his holy will, even

though I feel cast down so low most of the time I feel like I have not a friend on earth. I hope I have been made to cry from the very depth of my heart, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? and then I feel that though friends forsake and foes arise there is still a God who is just and wise, and if he condescends to love me he will keep me by his mighty power to the end. In this hope may I abide until it is his will to take me through the swelling tide, and after death my song shall be sweet praises through eternity. My mind runs back now to the time when I was made to hope that this wonderful God sent his dear Son to die for my sins. That was in the fall of 1895, when I was seventeen years old, but I hope that nearly three years prior to that time I was made to see myself a sinner, justly condemned in the sight of God, without God and without hope in the world. I went on, sometimes mourning, the love of God to know, and sometimes my heart was as light and free as if I had never seen the corruption therof, until in the spring of 1895 my burden grew so heavy that sleep fled from my eyes and my pharisaical strength failed me. My dear parents became alarmed about me and took me to see the doctor, but I hope I was (on the night I first spoke of in this poor letter) shown that there is only one Physician who can cure a sin-sick soul. I hope I could say with Job, "The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me," and I felt myself sinking down beneath God's righteous power, when all at once, as though it were an electric shock, I felt that my whole being was restored to strength by the mercy and power of the Lord of love, and I felt that I could praise him throughout all ages, and could say, Glory, honor and salvation, reign, sweet Jesus, ever reign. I then wanted to follow my Master in baptism, more than I wanted anything on earth, but doubts and fears were often in my way (and are yet) and the older I grow the more imperfect and weak I see myself. I offered myself to the church at Horse Creek, in Ashe County, North Carolina, on the fourth Saturday in April, 1896. I do not know why, but the dear old brethren and sisters seemed to receive me gladly. I was baptized the fourth Sunday in May of the same year by my dear old father, Elder W. R. Craft.

Dear brethren, it was not my intention to write what I have, I just wanted to state that I have left Mount Calm, W. Va., and my address is now Springton, W. Va., and as I am very lonely I would be glad to hear from any Old School Baptist, or, in other words, any who feel they can witness with me in what I have tried to express.

Do as you please with this poor letter and it will be all right with me.

Your little sister saved by grace, and grace alone, if saved at all,

SAMANTHA J. WALKER.

DELAWARE, Ohio.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is about five o'clock a. m. (we are supposed to arise here about seven). I awoke before three and have lain awake meditating on the beauties of the building of God, and in prayer to him, if I know what prayer is, or sweet communion. My heart goes out in supplication to our great Keeper and Law-giver to so keep me, together with all those who constitute this heavenly building, that his light, love, holiness, power and glory; in short, that all the beautiful and glorious attributes of the God of Israel may be clearly seen in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. We read in his word, "Ye are the light of the world," and, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Zion (the saints) is beautiful, the joy of the earth. I have asked myself what this beauty and glory is, and whence it cometh. The answer came even before the query: God is her light, life, righteousness and everlasting glory. Thou art all glorious within, thy clothing is of wrought gold. There is no spot, wrinkle or any such thing. Oh so many very glorious things are said about Zion! Yes, I hope about you and me, for I do hope that we dwell in this city of God that John saw descending from God, of whom we pray, "For thine is kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." I feel quite sure that if there be any light in me (and just now I hope there is) it comes down from the Father of lights, in whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. Yes, it must be thus in our case, and what joy in the hope that he works in me, at least, some things that are pleasing in his sight, such as prayer, hope, faith, love and praise, in his name. All my righteousness is but filthy rags, but I do hope and trust that I, at least sometimes, appear in his glorious "wedding garment," which is his great love, mercy and grace he has put upon me. Oh that I may ever put it on when I appear before him. Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, for he, only, is the holiness, light, beauty and glory of his house. Oh how beautiful his court is when we can so view it! How we count her towers as we walk about her, and we see in those towers all the perfect attributes of our glorious Redeemer and Father. What strength and safety is there in her foundation, her walls and her topmost stone, all, all is Christ, the Alpha, the Omega, the fullness that filleth all in all. Ye are complete in him. How I despise my failures, weakness, vanity and vileness. What joy to look away from them to the riches in glory prepared for us in Christ. Oh that he might draw me closer, enable me to walk more worthy of bearing the great name of being his bride.

LATER.—As my few morning tasks are done, I read over what I have written and find that I have said but little of what there is to be said concerning the glorious gifts of grace. I am reminded to mention the "nail in a sure place," and of the beam crying out of the wall, and there is an abundance

said concerning the all-sufficiency of Christ, of the building being all cemented together in love, of what Paul said in the closing of the eighth chapter of Romans, confirming our faith that not any being, creature or power shall be able to separate us from the love of Christ, since we are in him and he in God, and our bodies (even) are the temple of the Holy Ghost. No wonder we are commanded to assemble ourselves, having our bodies washed with pure water, which water I understand to be the righteousness of Jesus. Was this righteousness represented by the water which came from the wound in Jesus' side together with the blood? There is no doubt in my mind that the blood and water were separate from each other, and that the blood atoned for our sins, but was it not also necessary that Jesus should keep the law for righteousness for us? I am inclined to think the water was the remembrance of this. Being redeemed by his blood, we shall be saved by his life. No wonder we find it recorded, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." I wish that one or more of our ministers would write upon this point, for I have had a great desire to know what was meant by the issue of water. It was not a "happen so," even if there were any such. I myself am not able to account for it, unless it did represent "the Lord our righteousness." You know that we are said to be born of water and of blood. I hardly think water refers to baptism. Infants are not baptized, neither was the thief upon the cross. Baptists do not believe that baptism is a birth, but a cymbal of the death to sin, to a resurrection unto holiness. A birth is a little different, is it not? But this subject is too deep for me. I trust to hear from others.

Some may be glad to hear that I have completely recovered from my fall, so far as I know. I am living in a Home for the Aged, here in Delaware. I am nearly sixty-five years old, so eligible to enter. I had rather be in the Baptist Home at Salisbury, Md., but I could scarcely see how to bring that about, and feared that it might be too warm there. I often wish to speak of truths and experiences, which I fear to give voice to here. The brethren come and convey me to my home church each third Sunday and Saturday befor, and I am hoping to attend the associations in Ohio. How I wish I could attend your eastern meetings. Though it has been one of the dreams of my life, I fear I shall not have that privilege. But love is not bound by distance or lack of funds, and I hope that in spirit we meet around our "mercy seat," and we cling to the hope of seeing all the redeemed when together we see Jesus as he is, to be like him and ever be praising together.

Please pray for me. I sorely need the prayers of the saints. My health is quite good.

Love to all who love our Lord.

JOIE WOODS PETERS.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., May 26, 1933.

ELDER H. H. LEFFERTS—DEAR BROTHER:—As I am a reader of the dear old SIGNS, having been a subscriber and a believer in the doctrine it advocates, I feel that I am in full accord with the editors and publishers, and consequently I have truly enjoyed the articles published in its columns, and I do most heartily commend the judgment shown in choosing the articles deemed most comforting and edifying to the readers of the dear old SIGNS, which has, according to the will, and, I believe, predestination of God, stood so long as a mark of God's pleasure in feeding the many wayfaring pilgrims scattered not only over the broad expanse of this country, but into other countries, who know the joyful sound of salvation by grace and grace alone. The reason it has stood so long is because God is at the helm leading both publishers and writers and they are looking to him for guidance in all they do or say, as far as the publication of the SIGNS is concerned. But to say, or even think, that they are perfect, having no dark and cloudy days, when they are mourning an absent God, would be saying that they are different from the rest of God's children. If they were perfect they could not comfort us who have been cast down to the very belly of hell to taste the awful bitterness of our depravity, and if they had not been raised up from the very depths of hell by the power of God we would not have been made to sit together in holy communion with Jesus in our midst. Oh how sweet was that communion with Jesus, our Elder Brother, our Redeemer, our King, in our midst! Oh what a contrast from so short a time, when we were groveling in the dust of humiliation! I think in this we are given a comparison between our flesh and the Spirit, our natural man and the spiritual man, who after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

But why should I, who am less than nothing and vanity, write these things to you who are so far above me in point of knowledge and understanding? I hope you will pardon me, but the subject of eternal love and the glory and honor which are God's, and all of God, not any part of it belongs to man, only as it is imparted to him, got the better of me and ran away with my mind. I only wanted to ask you to give me, either direct or through the SIGNS, your views on the admonition Paul gave to Timothy: "Lay hold on eternal life."—1 Tim. vi. 11, 12. To my mind it is the same as Paul told the Philippian brethren when he said, "Beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Be still, and know that he is God.

I surely do enjoy your editorials, for I believe they are indited of God. I hope you and yours are well, and may the grace of that God we love ever abide with you and direct your mind and pen to the comfort of the little ones scattered abroad who are hungering

and thirsting after righteousness, that they may be comforted as I am.

Your brother in hope of life immortal,

DAVIS BURCH.

[BROTHER BURCH has, in the above, given the purport of our views upon "Lay hold on eternal life." It is not necessary to enlarge further.—ED.]

MURRAY, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending a dear and sweet letter from our sister, Stella Odom. I would, as many others, be glad to have it in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have her consent for it to be published. Dear brother West was a man of God and a minister of the gospel for many years. We enjoy the SIGNS OF THE TIMES greatly.

Yours for the truth and sweet gospel message,

FANNIE H. CHESTER.

CAMBRIA, Illinois.

MRS. W. T. CHESTER—DEAR SISTER:—I received your good letter and was sorry to hear you and brother Chester were not well. There is much flu here, but we have escaped so far.

My dear sister, Christmas was sad for us all. Our good pastor, brother West, passed away December 18th. He was at his daughter's home in Memphis, Tennessee. They were on their way home from a visit with their children. Sister West said he suffered greatly. He had a cancer. He wanted to get home and see us all again. Brother Potter Harris and brother Charlie Harris, of Duquoin, Ill., were the only ones who visited him. Brother Kerley visited him just two weeks before he died and brother West enjoyed seeing him. Brother Kerley surely did preach a wonderful sermon on Sunday at your Association, Rough Creek. I am glad brother West could go back to his old home. He went to the Association down there and preached all through the meeting. He wrote us one letter after the Association. He said he met brethren and sisters he had not seen for twenty-five years. It looks as if he went back home to be buried. But everything was fixed and planned before time by our heavenly Father, and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God. We miss our pastor very much, for he was there to preach for us every time. We went to meeting last Sunday, but brother Potter Harris did not come. We sang a dozen or more of those good old hymns. There is a sermon in every hymn.

I am very glad to send you one of our Minutes. We had a very good Association. I hope we hear as much good preaching this coming Association. I would be glad for you to visit our Association if you can. The name of our church is Pleasant Hill.

Dear sister, I will try to tell you some of my travels. Oh I know I love the dear saints, and you can tell them by their talk. I know I love the Old Baptists, and there is nothing I enjoy more than to hear them preach the gospel. I have always loved them. Well do I remember long years ago, the night I felt that I was lost forever,

everything was dark and gloomy, and when I laid down at night I prayed to the Lord to have mercy on me, a vile sinner, and all at once I heard the sweetest music I ever heard, and everything was bright and beautiful. I felt I loved everybody, and that I could shout always and praise his good name. But since then I have been made to doubt many times. But oh I look back to that little hope. This hope is all we have. That was in my seventeenth year. Sister Chester, I did not feel I was fit to ask a home with the dear saints of God, so I thought that if they would grant me the great privilege of just sitting back some place and listening to them preach the gospel I would be satisfied. But time went on, and O, sister, how I would long to be with them when they were singing and shaking hands. In April, 1925, I had a most beautiful dream. I dreamed I was baptized, and when I came up out of the water I was so happy I felt like shouting and praising God always. When I awoke and realized it was a dream I felt very sad. I went on until August, 1925, when I decided to offer myself to the church. I told my good husband that if God did not show me differently before the next meeting I was going to offer myself to the church, so when the invitation was given I started up, but my husband was already there. We were baptized on Sunday morning, and when I came up out of the water that sweet feeling I had experienced in my dream came to me again and I felt like shouting and praising his holy name always. So you see why I to some extent believe in dreams.

"I need thee, precious Jesus,
For I am full of sin;
My soul is dark and guilty,
My heart is dead within.

I need the love of Jesus
To cheer me on the way,
To guide my doubting footsteps,
To be my strength and stay.

Gently, Lord, O gently lead us,
Through this gloomy vale of tears,
And, O Lord, in mercy give us
Thy rich grace in all our fears."

These lines are sweet to me.

I had a letter from sister Miles. She has had her share of trouble since I saw her. She has my deepest sympathy.

Mr. Odom sends regards to Mr. Chester.

Now, sister, I will close before I tire you. Write me a long letter, and I promise to answer. I love to get letters from my friends, especially from my good sisters in Christ.

May God bless and keep you all, is the prayer of your unworthy sister in Christ, if one at all,

STELLA ODOM.

HAINES, Ore., Sept. 9, 1933.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have a desire to visit my kindred and brethren in Kentucky this winter, and also any churches and brethren on the way as I go and return. I think of starting from home some time about November 1st and returning about March 1st, next spring. The trip will be made by bus or automobile, so that any place having good roads could be visited. If

the brethren along the route will write me I shall try to arrange to visit as many as possible. The fourth Sunday of October I shall have been a member of the Old School Baptist Church for forty years, and have been trying to preach almost from that date, but as I look back the time seems short, and little have been the fruits of my ministry. I can truly say that I have been an unprofitable servant; I have done no more than my duty. I am always glad to meet my kindred in the faith, and if the long journey I am planning to the home of my youth shall be blessed to the comfort and encouragement of God's poor and afflicted people it will lighten the darkness of these weary days and restore to me the joys of salvation I so much desire. If it shall be the will of God, who does all things well, for me to carry out these plans, I shall take into consideration any invitation brethren may extend to me and arrange my schedule accordingly.

Yours in hope,

C. W. BOND.

MATNEY, North Carolina.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—A friend of ours in Virginia sent us a bundle of Old Baptist papers, which were a feast to our hungry souls. We do not have any Old Baptists here, no church, but we love the doctrine, and also to read the papers. I suppose there are a great number who read the SIGNS, and I am asking if you can publish this inquiry for me. We are just poor mountain folks, and I am very anxious to find something to do through the winter. I do hope you can publish this, for it would help us very much.

(MRS.) G. W. PRESNELL.

DEAR READERS:—I would like to inquire through the SIGNS if any one knows of any gift shops or places where women's work is sold. I would like to exchange hand-made rugs, chair seats, hand-tied lace with fringe, and other hand-made articles for discarded clothes or merchandise. I also would like to send decorative evergreens to city folks for Christmas for the postage and just anything in return that they wish to send.

Write me what you would like. I would be glad to hear from you.

(MRS.) G. W. PRESNELL.

PERRY, N. Y., July 12, 1933.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I will try and write a few lines to let you know I am still living. I can get around with the help of my cane. I have been confined to the house for six weeks, but can get out now, though I am not able to get to our meetings at Engleside, N. Y. My eyesight is failing, but I can read most of the SIGNS, which is the bread of life to me.

Inclosed please find one dollar to help some. At present it is all I have to send. I feel unworthy of such good reading.

With my best wishes and love I close this.

NORMAN BROWN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1933.

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EPHESIANS V. 14.

"WHEREFORE he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

It will be recalled by our readers that brother L. E. Skinner, of Fletcher, Oklahoma, in the May issue of our paper asked that the undersigned give his views on the above Scripture. Before undertaking to enter the field which lies before us in considering this portion of the written word, we would like to express the hope that our brother has entirely recovered from his affliction and is now enjoying at least some of the blessings of God our Savior.

Having witnessed "the hand of the Lord" in his salvation here in time, he and all the true Israel of God must realize our inability to think even one good thought, much less to interpret correctly the Scriptures, independent of the Lord. All of our heavenly wisdom and understanding must come down from "the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." No man, however earthly wise he may be, can rightly divide the word of truth except by the Spirit's guidance.

The apostle recognized the fact that there were "children of light" and "children of darkness," and he did not fail to urge right living on the part of his brethren. There is no reason in the world to-day why good, sound brethren should hesitate to emphasize the importance of those professing to know Christ manifesting it by their works. Jesus' method of judging the tree by the fruit it bears cannot be improved upon. Titus tells us, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."

In the chapter previous to the one which contains our text, the apostle is found *beseeching* his brethren to "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." He outlines the manner in which this should be done: "With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." He then sets forth the oneness of the body of Christ and declares that God is above all, and through all, and in all, and while making mention of the diversity of gifts, his conclusion is that they

might speak the truth in love, and grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ, "from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."—Eph. iv. 16. Then, beginning at the seventeenth verse and to the end of the chapter he makes what seems to us to be a most earnest and sincere plea for the proper conduct of the "whole body" which he had just said was "fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth." First, he tells them to walk "not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." He would have them turn from their former conversation, putting off the old man, which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts, and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. His very soul seemed to be filled with the heavenly Spirit as he further entreated them in the following words: "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." In the fifth chapter he continues his plea for clean and wholesome living, admonishing them to put away all filthiness, etc. Finally, he reminds them that while they "were sometimes darkness," now they are "light in the Lord," and therefore they should "walk as children of light," proving what is acceptable unto the Lord, and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. Approaching nearer to our text he makes a very important statement in the thirteenth verse, when he says, "But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light." He is here laying down a very fundamental principle. We would understand from this that nothing shall remain hidden. God by his Spirit will search every heart and none will be able to stand in his own right before him. A dart shall go forth from the hand of the Lord which will pierce the heart of every David and he will be made to confess his guilt before God. Further, he shall be made to realize that there is no hiding-place, no fleeing from his holy presence whose wrath against sin is fierce. This God who not

only trieth the hearts and the reins of men, but discerneth their thought afar off, will send forth the light of his Spirit and everything will be revealed and made to appear as it really is. Neither men nor devils will be able to deceive him. It is said that "whatsoever doth make manifest is light." Then, it must follow, that whosoever is made to realize that he has been bitten by the serpent of sin makes this discovery, not by any method of his own, but by reason of the light of God which illumines his soul. The Word, God manifest in the flesh, is that "true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." The light of the literal sun in the zenith of its glory is dim, indeed, compared to the light of God's truth when it shines in a poor sinner's heart. It is in this light that he gets a true prospectus of himself; it is by this light he is made to realize that "no good thing" dwells in his flesh. As a result, he is made to cry, "Unclean, unclean." It is also in this light that he sees light, or knows anything at all with reference to the true holiness of God. The message that this light brings is that "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." This light reveals the perfections of its source and any one possessing it cannot lay any charge at God's door. He is the Rock, and his work is perfect. All his works praise him and his saints bless him. They speak of the glory of his kingdom and talk of his power.

Paul would have the Ephesians understand that because of the fact of their being "children of light," and of the further fact that "all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light." "Wherefore he saith," or for this cause or reason, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." He is not addressing the literally dead, but is addressing characters who have been regenerated but who are spiritually asleep among the dead, or unregenerate, in that they are not performing the works of faith. When a man is asleep, although he may be and is unconscious of that which is transpiring about him, he certainly cannot be said to be dead. He is simply dormant, or inactive so far as indulging in and exercising any of the privileges of life are concerned, but all that is necessary is for him to be aroused or awakened to his surroundings in order that he may take part in what is going on. What John was commanded to write to the Laodicean Church was, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear, and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest

see. This is what we understand to be implied in the figurative language of our text. "Wherefore he saith." Who saith? Paul? No. But God saith. Paul was not saying these things of himself, but as an ambassador, or mouthpiece for God. All the men in the world are utterly powerless to awaken one of God's children from their slumbers only as both speaker and hearer are wrought upon by the Spirit of God. God's word is accompanied with power and nothing short of that power can awaken those who sleep and cause them to arise from the dead, or quit their dead works, and serve the true and living God. Neither does he do only part of the job, but those whom he commands to awake he brings to the end of the nighttime of indifference by giving them light to walk by. "And Christ shall give thee light." His words are definite and positive. It is wonderful, indeed, to us that although we may and do forget him, he never leaves nor forsakes us entirely. We may be left to ourselves for purposes of his own and sink down into spiritual death, so far as any outward evidences of worship are concerned, but when he comes traveling in the greatness of his strength we are again quickened and caused to walk in newness of life. If John had to be shown these things again, is it any wonder that we should be made to witness repeatedly that the dead are raised up, the deaf hear, the blind see, the lame walk, and the poor have the gospel preached to them; and each time are we not made to confess that all the light and liberty we have comes by and through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? The Lord supplies his people light and life by and through his blessed Son. All of this is according as he hath chosen them in Christ before the foundation of the world. That nothing should ever be able to miscarry, but that all should come to pass in the manner and at the proper time and place, he has predestinated his people unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise and glory of his grace, wherein he hath made them accepted in the beloved. All of this and more is most beautifully set forth in detail by the apostle in the first chapter of this epistle to the church at Ephesus. We are aware that there are a great many calling themselves Old School Baptists who credit the creature with far more ability than he possesses, but this is all the more reason why we should not shun to declare the whole truth. We are convinced that none has anything which he did not receive, and if he received it, why should he boast about it as though he did not receive it? The branch most certainly cannot bear fruit of itself and, therefore, we believe in giving credit where credit is due and say once and for all time that whatever life it may have, or whatever fruit it may bear, is but a manifestation of the life of the vine in the branch. If, then, we are given to exhort and admonish our weaker brethren to profit, it is only by the Spirit of the Lord moving both of

us and them and all the glory belongs to him. If we have been blest to live more circumspect lives than some one else, is it not because of the grace of God in us, and not that we by nature are in any sense of the word better than they? What a mercy it is if we are made to long for the welfare of our beloved Zion! Let us live to the praise of him who hath called us out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light of his dear Son, Jesus.

We have written the foregoing thoughts as they came to us, and hope they will be honoring to God and edifying to the household of faith.

R. L. D.

THE BLESSED HOPE.

It is defined by the Holy Spirit for us, through the medium of the pen of the apostle John, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Sons we are by God's election, manifestly made sons by the birth from above which is of the incorruptible seed of the Word of God, having received not the spirit of bondage again to fear, but having received the spirit of the adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father. Mind you, not having yet received the adoption, for that lies ahead of us in the future when shall take place the redemption of our body; but having received the *spirit* of the adoption. And as many as are led by the Spirit, they are the sons of God. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." How glorious then and how wonderful is the blessed hope we have, which is that when Christ who is our life shall appear from heaven, we shall in that glad and glorious moment instantaneously appear with him. In the twinkling of an eye, we shall be changed to be just as he is, our vile body changed like unto his own glorious body. True, to no one yet has it been made known just how this wonderful process is to be accomplished, hence "it doth not yet appear." Sufficient explanation for us now is given in the words, "According to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."—Phil. iii. 21. Yet while the fact of it is not yet ours, the knowledge that it will be so is ours through the revelation from God given us in his word. Faith grasps that revelation and believes it, and though it transcends all our powers to comprehend it understandingly, nevertheless hope builds us upon it and holds us steadfastly to it. Not like the worldling's hope which often ends in bitter disappointment, this blessed hope abides in the certain promise of God which cannot fail. The elements of this hope are (1) that our Redeemer shall personally appear. This is not meant to teach those experimental spiritual appearings which the Holy Ghost brings to believers from time to time as they journey this lower world, but it teaches plainly that God himself will appear. In plain words it means that the hour is coming when the Lord

himself, the same Jesus who died and who arose and who ascended into heaven, will himself come from heaven. And the instant he does, (2) the whole church of God, both those whose bodies through the ages have fallen asleep in Jesus and those who shall be alive upon the earth at the time of his coming, shall be like him. They shall all be like him, because he will in that moment of his descent from heaven, change them to be like him and to be with him forever. This mortal shall then, and not until then, put on immortality; this corruptible shall then, and not until then, put on incorruption; then, and not until then, shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory." One of the great beauties of this truth is that every man who really has this hope within him, purifies himself even as God is pure. No better cure for worldliness exists for the believer than this hope that at any moment the Lord may appear for us. The exact date and hour and minute is secret unto God. With purpose he has hid that fact from all of us, to the end that we shall be always watching. This watching, this expecting our Lord to come at any moment, acts as a purifier to cleanse and to keep the child of God from worldliness in life and conduct. Every transaction in the believer's life should be gone about in the light of Christ's appearing. Were this blessed hope of his soon coming to motivate our lives, it would prevent us from indulging in much that is God-dishonoring.

H. H. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by brother Geo. R. Tedford)

The Maine Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, Bowdoinham, Maine, September 8th, 9th and 10th, 1933, to the churches of which she is composed, and to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In this our annual letter to you it seems fitting that we should declare unto you the reason of the hope that is within us. Our attention is drawn at this time to the words of the apostle Paul to the Ephesians, second chapter, nineteenth to the twenty-second verses, which read as follows: "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye are also builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." While these words were written to the church at Ephesus, they also apply to those who have a good hope through grace in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ, who are called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to His purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good

works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Brethren, we of the Maine Association have a hope that we are of that favored number. That the blessed Lord has seen fit to reveal himself to us as our Savior, our Prophet, Priest and King. What a sure foundation to stand upon. No longer strangers and foreigners, but heirs of God and joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ to all the matchless joys and glories of a boundless eternity. We deeply feel our unworthiness of such mercies. We are poor, weak, erring mortals, prone to sin as sparks to fly upwards, and we have to cry, Unclean, unclean, as we go stumbling along. We know that if we are followers of the meek and lowly Jesus we must be partakers of his sufferings, and we have found out that it is no flower-strewn path, but full of trials, discouragements and disappointments. Ofttimes the Sun of righteousness is hid from our view and dark clouds of unbelief and doubt roll over our heads, and many times the only straw we can grasp are the words, Ye know ye have passed from death unto life because ye love the brethren. Yes, dear kindred in Christ, there is a chord that never snaps asunder. Love! what a wonderful gift it is.

"How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
When those who love the Lord
In one another's peace delight,
And thus fulfill his word.

Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, Bowdoinham, Maine, September 8th, 9th and 10th, 1933, to the several churches and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting with love in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We are one of those weak associations trying not to forget the assembling of ourselves together. Our dear brother, R. Lester Dodson, was with us and gave all the glory to God and Jesus Christ, and him crucified, to the consolation of our hungry souls. We are enjoying that love and peace that cannot be comprehended by the natural mind.

The date and place of our next meeting will be announced later through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, when we shall hope to meet and greet you again.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
GEORGE R. TEDFORD, Clerk.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

WHEN remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it. By referring to these dates you can tell to just what time your subscription is paid. Dec. 32 means your subscription expired December, 1932; June 33 means your subscription expired June, 1933; Dec. 33 that it will expire December, 1933, etc.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder D. L. Topping, July 22nd, 1933, at the home of the bridegroom's parents, Hill Top Road, Cantonsville, Maryland, Harry A. Gladding, of Cantonsville, Maryland, and Kathleen Elizabeth Wagonhafter, of York, Pennsylvania. Mr. and Mrs. Gladding will make their future home in Cantonsville.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

WILLABOUR JANE WOOD HARDY was born November 27th, 1839, in Christian County, Kentucky, and departed this life May 25th, 1933, at the home of her youngest son, in Pratt County, Kansas, aged 93 years and 6 months lacking 2 days. She was married to the late Elder James B. Hardy November 4th, 1858; who passed on to his eternal home about twenty years before her. To this union twelve children were born, seven boys and five girls, all of whom reached maturity. Eleven are still living; one daughter, Mary, died at the age of twenty-six years. The living children are W. L. Hardy, Eldorado, Ill., J. T. Hardy, Greensboro, Kans., J. E. Hardy, Oklahoma City, Okla., Mrs. Sarah Enoch, Hutchinson, Kans., J. B. Hardy, Hohenwald, Tenn., J. R. Hardy, Dallas, Texas, Mrs. Marticia Fox, Hanston, Kans., G. B. Hardy, Hays, Kans., Mrs. Bertha Clark, Wichita, Kans., H. M. Hardy, Haviland, Kans., and Mrs. Verdo Machesney, Haviland, Kans. All of the living descendants of this venerable couple consist of seventy-eight souls: eleven children, thirty-two grandchildren and thirty-five great-grandchildren. No richer blessing has God ever bestowed upon the world than when he blessed it with motherhood. Kind, thoughtful, untiring, devoted, patient and, above all, a living example of the nobler things of life. Mother professed a hope in Christ, and was baptized in the fellowship of Zion Church of Old School Baptists, in Livingston County, Kentucky, in 1871, only a short time after father was ordained to the full work of the ministry. He traveled thousands of miles serving churches and laboring in the Master's cause, and was necessarily absent from home and home duties much of his time. A braver heart and truer devotion to the cause of Christ was never more exemplified than in mother, who not only cheerfully accepted the added responsibility incumbent upon her by reason of father's absence, but saw to it that at each time when he must start to meet his appointments that everything was in readiness. She has been known, when too sick to leave her bed, to call one of her daughters and have her bring father's saddle bags (He rode horseback in those days) and his clothes to her bed, and she placed them in his bag and handed them to him and told him to go on, that the Lord would take care of her. She had a great measure of faith which she proved the unfailing faithfulness of her Savior with for more than sixty-two years. It seemed to grow brighter as she neared the end of her journey.

In 1885 they moved to Kansas with their family and settled near Wellsford, in Kiowa County, near which place they each spent the remainder of a long and useful life. They were pioneers in this new country, but father's labors were soon in demand and churches were organized; one near Kingman, Kansas, where they placed their membership as charter members and where their membership continued until they were called to the heavenly Jerusalem to take their places in the church of the firstborn among the spirits of just men made perfect. The blessings of the Lord attended their labors, and during father's time a sufficient maintenance was provided to make the family comfortable and leave ample to supply mother's needs for the remainder of her life. Her general health was remarkably good for one her age. She withstood several severe attacks of flu and pneumonia in her late years, but was subject to gall stones, which caused her great suffering and finally resulted in her death. In February before she died she was brought very low with flu and pneumonia. All of her children visited her at that time, which seemed to be her great desire. When the last one arrived she expressed herself as satisfied and ready to pass on to be with her Savior. She was a constant student of the Bible and clung to its promises as her own. As she grew in age her faith seemed to grow stronger and her hope brighter and the promises of God grew sweeter. Her mind was absorbed in heavenly thoughts. She did not desire to get well, but wished to be released that she might pass over to meet the redeemed on the other shore. There did not seem to be a cloud in her sky. She talked of passing away with as much composure and expectancy of future bliss as a child would contemplate a pleasant journey upon which it was anxious to start. Her mind was active and clear even when her body was so weak as to render her helpless. She would call for portions of the Scriptures to be read to her and request that I comment on them, and her eyes would brighten and her pale face would glow with heavenly radiance as I would try to point out the comforting assurances and the unfailing certainty in the exceeding great and precious promises of God to his children. It was an inspiration to be in her presence at such times. Heaven could not have been far away. I felt to be in the presence of one who had been admitted to the very fountain of eternal joys enveloped in the light of heaven while her body still tabernacled here. I thought I understood why she begged the Lord to take her home. I could not wish to detain her, I rather felt how blessed it would be to accompany her on her journey. She recovered from that attack of flu and pneumonia and was able to be up and wait on herself, and continued to do so until May 21st, when she was

taken with gall stones and was put under the influence of opiates to relieve her suffering. She soon went into a coma and on the night of May 25th she fell asleep in Jesus, that blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep or suffer pain. Her body was laid to rest near the old homestead beside father's. They died as they had lived: in the full triumph of a living faith. The world is better for their having been in it. Truly their children can rise up and call them blessed.

Written by a son who reverences their memory,

J. R. HARDY.

SISTER **MINNIE PERDUE** departed this life June 12th, 1933, at her home, near Snow Hill, Md., aged 58 years. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Quinton Holloway, of near Parsonsburg, Md. She was married in 1896 to Harry W. Perdue, to which union three children survive: Walter F. Perdue, of Willards, Md., Mrs. Maude Laws and John Quinton Perdue, of Snow Hill. Our dear friend Mr. Perdue also survives her, together with four grandchildren: George Walter and Dale Perdue and Albert and Florence Laws. In 1897 she was baptized by the late Elder T. M. Poulson in the fellowship of the Snow Hill Church and ever lived a faithful, loving and devoted member. She knew well the truth and loved it in its purity. Being of a bright and cheerful disposition she endeared herself to every one with whom she came in contact. Several years ago she was in an auto accident, from which she never really recovered, and at last a stroke took her away. Her place in the church will be hard to fill, as she was an inspiration to us all. We loved her and shall continue to miss her, but those of the home and family miss her beyond expression. May comfort and strength be ministered as their day.

The funeral service was held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse at Snow Hill, conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder G. E. Coulbourn, and was largely attended. Interment took place in the family plot at Forest Grove, Md.

By her pastor,

H. C. KER.

ALSO,

OUR beloved sister in Christ, **MRS. SUSAN A. HALL,** entered into everlasting rest July 26th, 1933, at the home of Deacon John H. Truitt and his wife, near Snow Hill, Maryland, aged 84 years, where she had made her home for some years. On June 22nd, 1864, at the age of fifteen, she was married to William S. Crooper. Some years afterwards Mr. Crooper, who was a sea captain, was drowned, and on February 23rd, 1892, she was married to Major T. Hall, of Pocomoke City, Md., the late Elder S. H. Durand performing the ceremony. After Mr. Hall's death she made her home in Pocomoke City until going to the home of Deacon Truitt. In 1877 she was baptized in the fellowship of the Snow Hill Church by the late Elder T. M. Poulson. She was a woman of strong character and decided convictions, a devoted member of the church. Her home, as long as she had one, was always open to her kindred in Christ and she spared neither labor nor expense to make them comfortable. Six weeks prior to her death she had a fall in her bedroom, and while no bones were broken she suffered intensely until death relieved her. We all loved her for the truth's sake and her kindly spirit and acts of kindness and shall miss her, but know she is much better off than any of us are to-day. She was a genuine Old School Baptist and had no use for any "strange doctrine."

The funeral service was held in the meetinghouse at Snow Hill, where she had attended many years and which she loved so well, conducted by the writer, with Elder Coulbourn assisting. Interment was in the adjoining cemetery.

Written by her pastor,

H. C. KER.

LUCILLE N. GLASER was born near Lacome, Oregon, April 6th, 1894, and died at her home, near Lebanon, Oregon, June 13th, 1933, making her stay on earth 39 years, 2 months and 7 days. She was married to Herman F. Glaser June 4th, 1913. Her parents were Mr. and Mrs. M. L. Tucker. She leaves to mourn her departure her parents, two brothers, Hiram and Thurman Tucker, one sister, Mrs. Laura Rominger, and her beloved husband, besides other relatives and friends, but we mourn not as others who have no hope. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church called Bethel, at Tallman, Oregon, March 16th, 1912, and was baptized by the late Elder Amos Horner. The writer was called by telegram to conduct the funeral services, but for some reason did not receive the message until too late to attend. The funeral was held at the Funeral Parlors of Harry C. Howe, in Lebanon, Oregon, June 17th, conducted by a Mr. Simons, a retired minister of the Christian denomination, an old friend and neighbor of the Glasers. Sister Glaser was a devout christian, believing fully in salvation by grace, without the puny help of man. She and Mr. Simons were often in arguments over the Scriptures, and while differing in doctrine they were great friends. Mr. and Mrs. Simons were constant attendans at her bedside during her sickness, which lasted over a period of three years. She died of that terrible malady, internal cancer. Her suffering was great, but she bore it with fortitude, often expressing her desire to depart and be at rest. All was done for her that loving hands could do, but the time had come and the Master called, Child, come home. Burial was in the Sandridge Cemetery, there to await the call of the Master, when this mortal must put on immortality and this corruptible must put on incorruption. May it be our happy lot to be numbered with that "innumerable host," is my prayer.

Her unworthy pastor,

S. B. MOFFITT.

LEWIS F. BRADSHAW, friend of the Old School Baptist cause, departed this life April 24th, 1933, at his late home, near Herndon, Virginia. He was born April 21st, 1854. The cause of his death was heart trouble. His father was Walter Richard Bradshaw, his mother Rebekah Ayres. He was married to Lizzie Belt September 5th, 1876. She died in Missouri February 15th, 1906. To this union there were born three children: Mary Blanche died while small, Walter Richard died in Oklahoma when grown, one daughter, Mrs. Lydia Bradshaw, of Iowa, survives. Mr. Bradshaw is survived by his second wife, who was Eva A. Gaines, and to whom he was married by the late Elder J. N. Badger March 24th, 1909. They were married just twenty-four years and one month to the day he passed away. He had one brother, who died several years ago. He is survived by one sister, Mrs. Ida Presgraves, of Lenah, Va. He was buried in the cemetery at Middleburg, Va. Mr. Bradshaw had travelled about the country quite a good deal, having lived in different parts of the United States. He had a good knowledge of men and was a good judge of human nature. He loved to attend the meetings of the Old School Baptist Church and I believe he knew the doctrine. He was a good neighbor and a reliable and honest citizen, ready to befriend the needy and to help the neighborhood in which he lived in any way he could. His wife, who is left now to go on without him, bears up under the bereavement wonderfully well and seems to realize that the Lord's way is right and that he knows what is best for us all. May she indeed have the comfort that only the Holy Spirit can give.

H. H. L.

CARRY BELL LYMONS McLARREN was born in Winchester, Illinois, March 30th, 1875, and departed this life August 24th, 1933, making her stay on this earth 58 years, 4 months and 24 days. Sister McLarren was united in marriage to brother Andrew T. McLarren December 17th, 1891, and to this union were born three sons and three daughters: Thomas Charles, Goerge Davis, Jesse Russell, Hattie Ritter, Maude Thomason and Mildred McLarren, all at Springfield, Ill. Sister McLarren professed a hope in Christ and united with the "Christian Church," in Winchester, Ill., in her twentieth year of age, but was not satisfied, and in the year 1923 found a home in the Primitive Baptist Church in Springfield, and lived her profession until death. She was a kind and devoted wife and mother. To know sister McLarren was to love her for Jesus' sake. She leaves three sons, three daughters, her husband, ten grandchildren, two brothers and a host of friends. Her body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Winchester, Ill., to await the second coming of her blessed Redeemer. The funeral service was conducted in the home of her daughter Hattie, in Springfield, Elder J. A. Madlin, of Virden, conducting the service.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Hewitt Osborn, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Mintie B. Mapes, N. Y., $2.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, &c REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.

Of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, published monthly, at Middletown, N. Y., for October 1st, 1933.

State of New York, County of Orange, ss.:

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Gilbert Beebe, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the owner of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that the following is to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24th, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse side of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publishers, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publishers, J. E. Beebe & Company, Middletown, N. Y.; Editor, H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

2. The owner is, Gilbert Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagers and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent. or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear on the books of the company, but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the corporation for whom such trustee is acting is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stocks, bonds or other securities than as so stated by him.

GILBERT BEEBE, Owner.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 21st day of September, 1933.

(Seal) HOWARD M. STARR.
(My commission expires March, 1933.)

MEETINGS.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 11th, 12th and 13th, 1933, at the Mt. Zion meeting-house, Loudoun County, Virginia. The place of meeting is situated on the highway from Washington, D. C., to Winchester, Va., by way of Fairfax and Middleburg. Busses from these points pass right by the meeting-house. Those coming by bus Tuesday evening before the meeting will get off at Lenah, two miles south of Mt. Zion, where they will be met and cared for. Those coming by bus or private auto Wednesday morning will come direct to the meeting-house. The bus station in Washington, D. C., is at 14th and New York Ave., N. W. Those coming by auto via Washington will come out over the Key Bridge to Rosslyn, Va., thence via Lee Highway through Falls Church to Black Lantern Inn where turn to the right on Route 50, which road passes the meeting-house. Those wishing further information, please write to the address given below. We invite ministers and brethren of our faith and order, especially those who are in direct correspondence with us, to meet with us.

GROVER C. SPINDLE, Clerk,
914 Ninth St., N. E.,
Washington, D. C.

The regular appointed Yearly Meeting of Welsh Tract Church will be held in the meetinghouse, near Newark, Delaware, Sunday, October 15th, 1933 (one day only), service beginning at ten a. m. Ministering brethren, and members and friends attending the Virginia Correspondig Meeting, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday preceding this date, are especially invited to be with us, also those who contemplate attending the Salisbury Association the following week, beginning Wednesday, October 18th. Both trunk lines, Baltimore and Ohio and the Pennsylvania Railroad, are available to those who come by railroad lines, and bus lines come direct to Wilmington, Delaware, and connections are made at the Pennsylvania Station, Wilmington, for Newark, Delaware.

JOHN B. MILLER, Church Clerk.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will be entertained by the Little Creek Church, of Delmar, Delaware, October 18th, 19th and 20th, 1933. Trains from both north and south will be met on Tuesday before the meeting. Those coming by auto will go to the meetinghouse, where a committee will see to their comfort for the night. Members and friends of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us, especially ministers of our direct correspondence.

C. C. TOMLINSON, Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fifth Sunday in October, 1933. Services to be held at the home of Earl D. Stevens, Central Bridge, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. Also at 2 p. m. on Saturday before. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in October (29th). All are welcome. E. M. FORD.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of sister N. J. Preston, 116 Center Street, Oregon City, Oregon, at 10:30 a. m. Those coming by stage, steam train or electric car get off at Seventh Street, take elevator to top of the hill, cross trestle over railway tracks, turn to the right, go two blocks on Sixth Street to Center Street, thence five and one-half blocks south on Center Street to 116, house number, between First and Second Streets. Lunch at noon.

S. B. MOFFITT, Moderator.
J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Little Flock Church now meets for worship at our home, 2211 Fifth Street, Riverside, California, the third Sunday of each month, at 10:30 a. m.

J. W. HAYNES.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church will meet (D. V.) every second Sunday at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California; every third Sunday at 521 West Nevada Street, Ontario, California; every fourth Sunday at 3516 Franklin Avenue, Riverside, California.

W. L. SLUSHER.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 808 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one-half block west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Cloth binding. Price, $1.25 each. One dozen or more, ordered at the same time and all to the same address, one dollar each. Cash must accompany orders. Make checks and money orders payable to

J. E. BEEBE & CO.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 101. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1933. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

COTTAGE GROVE, Oregon.

DEARLY BELOVED SAINTS OF GOD:—He who declares by the pen of one of his holy prophets, "I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure,"—Isaiah xlvi. 9, 10, moved one of his holy apostles to write of his Son, who was God manifest in the flesh, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist."—Col. i. 16-18. And the same Spirit moved Isaiah to write some seven hundred years beforehand: "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." Because he is God and there is no power but of him, his revelation of coming events is certain and sure. He works and none can hinder. Because his revealed words of prophecy are all fulfilled, are literally history written hundreds and thousands of years beforehand, and because there is no other that can confidently predict any future event, we cannot deny the existence of a supreme, sovereign, all-seeing and directing mind that speaks, and it is done; commands, and it stands fast. No one who has carefully read the Scriptures and history can deny the accurate fulfilling of the Scripture prophecies. In fact, historians are so undependable and so often contradict each other that when I read history I often consult the prophecies to confirm or disprove, to determine whether the historian is right or not. Then "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." They are accurate and reliable, being the revealed

word of Him who cannot lie, so "let God be true, but every man a liar." David in wonder and amazement sang, "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard."—Psalms xix. 1-3. Indeed every living and every lifeless creature in or out of our vision or comprehension, and their every motion declares in tones of thunder the glory, honor and power of the great pre-determining power which is God's. Oh that men would praise God for his goodness, and his wonderful works to the children of men. Let us declare with the four and twenty elders, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."—Rev. iv. 11. And lest some should limit the language or evade its meaning we find, "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."—Prov. xvi. 4. "Therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets."—1 Kings xxii. 23. The carnal mind is enmity against God. The wisdom of this world immediately demurs and offers many reasons to change or explain away such plain declarations of holy writ. But "the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." Not only so, but "the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."—Rom. viii. 7. If there were independent, self-determining beings in existence, then God's foreknowledge and the prophecies would be dependent upon and subject to the determination and action of such powers, and the confidence-inspiring words, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed," would be of little if any comfort to helpless, dependent creatures whose breath is in his nostrils. But he hath created all things in heaven and in the earth, visible and invisible, including the wicked for the day of evil, and says, "I am the Lord, and there is none else," and, that they may know, "There is none beside me."—Isaiah xliv. 5-7. So we rejoice that his counsel shall stand and he will do all his pleasure, otherwise all would be subject to change and confusion, and we could have no abiding hope, for "verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity." The flesh and the Spirit are contrary the one to the other. All flesh is grass. The Spirit quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing.

The carnal Jews, who had the circumcision of the flesh and not of the heart by the Spirit, expected the Messiah to set up a kingdom at Jerusalem literally and geographically, and he did set up a kingdom in the regeneration, of the church in Zion, or spiritual Jerusalem, in the gospel day, and he told them that his kingdom was not of this world, that except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God, or enter it, and thanked the Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because he had hid these things from the

wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes. (Matt. xi. 25, 26.) You babes in Christ, you, O poor of the flock, have seen the kingdom. You have seen it in the assembly of the saints, where love and fellowship and peace that the world knows not of abides; in triumphant glory there the King reigns in righteousness on the throne of his glory, and of the increase of his government and his peace there shall be no end. Then it cannot be superceded. (Isaiah ix. 6-8.) The Jews thought they were seminally children, or descendents, of God, and told Jesus, "We have one Father, even God," but Jesus told them, "If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God." And we find the ever-boasting spirit of men: very religious men of today with great swelling words of vanity making a point over some delusion or idol, very commonly naming it the universal brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God, but Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, tells us, as well as the Jews, "The children of the flesh, these are not the children of God."—Rom. ix. 8. And God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."—Gen. i. 26. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him."—Gen. i. 27. So man was created in the image but not then in the likeness of God. David, speaking by the spirit of revelation, said, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."—Psalms xvii. 15. John says, When he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Then will the full image and likeness appear. The carnal mind is still enmity against God, and will be until it is finally changed and fashioned like Jesus' glorious body. It is still of the earth earthy, and will be until it is sown in corruption and raised in incorruption. Paul, a holy apostle, found a law in his members warring against the law of his mind and bringing him in captivity to the law of sin and death which was in his members. So do you and I. The belief in a literal reign of King Jesus still is prevalent as it was in the times of Jesus and the apostles in their earthly pilgrimage among the Jews. The apostles who sat on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of spiritual Israel, of which the children of Abraham were a type or shadow, and the great King who reigns in righteousness in the hearts of his subjects explained over and over that Jesus' kingdom is not of this world. There are many prophecies that literally seem to foretell of a reign on earth in which Israel would be gathered at Jerusalem. All these prophecies are of the remnant, and are not of any private interpretation. Amos saw by the spirit of prophecy, and wrote, "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof: and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and all the heathen, which are called by my name." —Amos ix. 11, 12. The Jews, even some of the believing Jews, were insisting on the keeping of the law, circum-

cision, etc., and made much trouble for Paul and Barnabus, and they were sent up to Jerusalem about the matter, and it was deliberated over at length. It was a matter of the kingdom of God's dear Son as it was constituted when the gospel day was ushered in, and James quoted Amos' prophecy and applied it to that day and time. He explained that God did (before then) visit the Gentiles to take out of them apostles, and that Amos and the other prophets telling of the building of the tabernacle of David, etc., referred to that present time and reign when the gospel began to be preached, and as many of both Jews and Gentiles as were born not of blood, nor the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, but of God, received him and believed on his name. See Acts xv. 1-18, and compare Amos ix. 11, 12, and other Scriptures that seem to indicate a literal returning of Israel to Jerusalem with Acts xv. 13-18. This present time, from the days of Pentecost until the fulfilling of the times of the Gentiles, surely is the time when Jesus is called by the saints, "The Lord our righteousness."—Jer. xxiii. 26. In the preceding chapter, verse twenty-seven, Jeremiah tells the Jews they shall not return unto the land whereunto they desire to return. The covenant with Abraham was not with his seed, as though there were many, but "to thy seed, which is Christ," and Christ has already come in the flesh and is now in his Zion, or Jerusalem, reigning, reigning in the hearts of his people. (Genesis xvii.) Surely not only the prophecies, but all the inspired book, is written about this King and his dominion. The first heaven passed away with the doing away of the daily sacrifice. It was the pattern and is no longer needed, for John then sees the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, and a voice from heaven then saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men and he will dwell with them and they shall be his people. We read from the King's words, "The kingdom of God is [now] come unto you."—Matt. xii. 28. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." A literal reign at Jerusalem would be observable.

As a boy, a child of wrath, even as others, the assembly of the saints was obnoxious to me. I felt ashamed of the tears and actions of my own parents, and spurned the doctrine of grace. But at an early age the fear of the Lord was kindled in my vitals and burned up self-esteem and vanity and self-confidence, until I was without hope, and seemingly without God in the world, justly sinking to the lowest hell, tried in the balance and found wanting, I was made to acknowledge the justice of the terrible vengeance of the just and holy God on all unrighteousness, and I was nothing but unrighteousness. What I had offered were filthy putrifying rags. I was sick and helpless and ready to die. Then, to my great astonishment, One who had before been entirely unknown to me appeared as a Friend and a willing Surety to cancel the full ten thousand talents, my entire obligation. He appeared just in the

exact form, power and glory to lift the terrible burden of four or five years' duration. Then the assembly of the saints within the kingdom of God, the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, charity, peace, etc., shown forth in surprising glory. Then I believed I would see and did enter the kingdom: was grafted in where circumcision or uncircumcision of the flesh availeth nothing, where he only is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart by the Spirit. "Tongue cannot express the sweet comfort and peace of a soul in its earliest love." The middle wall of partition was broken down, the natural, carnal Jews were broken off and the believing Gentiles, the Lord's sheep of another fold, even every one that was called by his name, were grafted in, "and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." And the remnant according to the election of grace of the Jews who remained not in unbelief were grafted in. (Rom. xi. 23. The great apostle of Gamaliel, a proselyting Pharisee, Saul of Tarsus, was broken off because of unbelief, scorned Stephen's preaching of the gospel while he looked into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on his right hand, while Stephen's earthly body crumbled under the cruel stones, still the proud Pharisee remained in unbelief and continued his ungodly proselyting, because the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him. No amount of evidence could convince him; though One arose from the dead he would not, could not, believe, until the King, "The Lord our Righteousness," wrote his law in his heart and put it in his inward parts, it was Christ in him the hope of glory. Then he remained no longer in unbelief, and was grafted in. (Rom. xi. 23.) He believed, and was baptized, and was saved, or received in the church, from which he had before been damned, turned back because of unbelief, and yet to-day occasionally there is a Jew who is of the circumcision not made with hands, who worships God in the Spirit and rejoices in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh, and there is no difference between him and the believing Gentile; he is one such as should be saved and the Lord grafts, or adds, him to the vine of his right hand planting, the church of God, which is the pillar and ground of the truth. Jesus is the King now reigning in righteousness, and where two or three are gathered together, really in his name, he is in the midst of them. And the twelve apostles are ruling in judgment. Neither the King nor the apostles have any successors in office. His law and their judgment are final and uncompromising, and there is no appeal or change of venue. If a child of the kingdom, or of the church, think to evade the penalty of his great King by evasion, or otherwise, for convenience or expedience, adding to or taking away in articles of faith, or otherwise serving to the flesh, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversany. The King chas-

tens every son of his in faithfulness, and there is no mistake. We may seem to get on nicely in love and in league with the world and the flesh for a time, but trials will come, sometimes the grim monster death hovers near, then if we have denied Jesus before men, either in word or action, he will also deny us before his Father in heaven, and the poor puny arm of flesh will be a broken reed to lean upon. Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for what a man soweth that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. Love is the supreme law of the land. The King says, If ye love me, keep my commandments. If a man love me he will keep my words. This commandment demands obedience, even to the extent of forsaking father, mother, brother or sister, hating even one's self and loving and praying for our enemies. One of the judges applies it: By this we know that we love him, if we keep his commandments. He that sayest, I know him and keepest not his commandments is a liar and the truth is not in him. Again, He that loveth is born of God. (1 John ii. 3,4; ii. 4-7. Keep yourselves unspotted from the world. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. Know you not that the friendship of the world is enmity against God? You are not under the law (of a carnal commandment), but under grace. But Paul says, "To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ)."—1 Cor. ix. 21. He chastens his subjects in faithfulness. If we sin wilfully there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversary. Dear saint, you know the fire. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall be he thought worthy who hath trampled under foot the Son of God and hath done despite to the Spirit of grace? He sits as a refiner of silver, purging out the dross by the fire of his indignation. Suppose you not that when Peter had wickedly denied his Master, and cursed, he would not have preferred the sentence of death to the reproving glance? Have you, too, not gone out and wept bitterly and cried for the rocks to hide you from the just vengeance of the thrice holy God whose love and pity cannot cease? It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. More precious in the eyes of the Lord is the trial of your faith than of fine gold. Says Paul, Knowing the terror of the Lord we persuade men. The afflictions, lusts and works of the flesh are gradually burned up and the saint suffers loss, but he himself shall be saved yet so as by fire, and "his faithfulness shall not fail." These vile bodies shall finally be changed and fashioned like his glorious body and the veil of our flesh shall be taken away. His judges cannot err, for he told them, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your re-

membrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."—John xiv. 26.

The world could not contain what could be said about the King and his love, pity and mercy, his goodness and wonderful works among the children of men, so I must desist, begging an interest in your prayers for a poor sinner in hope of mercy,

G. O. WALKER.

TOUCHET, Washington.

ELDER H. H. LEFFERTS—DEAR AND PRECIOUS BROTHER:—Will you bear patiently with a poor, old, blind sinner while he tries to express some of the exercises of his poor burdened mind?

I have been a reader of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES for more than fifty years, and have always looked forward to its coming as I looked for my earthly food, but as strange as it may seem, as time rolls on and I grow older my anxiety grows to hail its coming. I have not been able to read its precious contents, but my companion, who enjoys its soul-cheering truths, reads it to me.

Now the text, or thought, which I would love to express to you will be found in the fifth chapter of the Song of Solomon. I want to say that this short book called Solomon's Song has been a source of much joy and comfort to my soul. It brings out that secret of the Lord which is with them that fear him. It is an expression of that love of Jesus, the Husband of the church, and in turn it brings out and manifests that same love to him as her Husband.

"I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey: I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." While this is all full, there is too much in it to be recorded in one letter, even though I were able to write it all. The main thought, if able to express it, is the garden of his (Jesus) which he comes into. I believe this garden is his church, or kingdom, here on earth, and when he left his throne in glory and came into this sinful world and lived, he ate the honeycomb with the honey. He was here in this world, but he was not of the world. I have thought much lately about this eating the comb. The comb is not the honey, neither is it any part of the honey, it is only a substance formed of wax from the bee to make a container to hold the honey, and when the honey is taken from it, it is not fit to eat, but if the honey is left in the comb and eaten as the Beloved says, together, it is very good. Let us divide the word of truth rightly. Let us divide the flesh and the Spirit, for they are no more the same than are the comb and the honey. There is an earthly man and there is the heavenly man, or a fleshly and a spiritual. While Jesus suffered in the flesh (ate the honeycomb) he also rejoiced in spirit and thanked his Father that he had hid these things from the wise and prudent and had revealed them unto babes. While in the garden suffering the agony of death (eating the comb) he says the spirit is truly willing but the flesh is weak. We see

him in all his earthly life in this garden eating and drinking the sorrows of this natural, or mortal, life. While like a cart loaded down with many sheaves, he was gathering his myrrh with his spices. While thus eating he calls unto his beloved to drink with him. Yes, come take my yoke upon you and learn of me. Drink abundantly. O, dear brethren, the comb must be broken before we can eat of the honey in the comb. So Christ must suffer the earthly afflictions of this life before he could enter the joys of heaven. He says to his sister, his spouse, In this life you shall have tribulation (this is the comb that contains the honey), but in me you shall have peace. Oh what a blessed peace! To rest in that blessed hope that after we have suffered with Jesus in this life we will reign with him in that blessed life which we have in him. Oh how comfortingly does Paul come to us while we are eating and drinking the bitter afflictions of this life and assures us that they are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed. Oh how we eat our afflictions with the honey! God's precious promise is sweeter than the honey and the honeycomb. Jesus, just before he left his sister, his spouse, instituted what we call his supper. As he brake and blest the bread he said, This is my body, which is broken for you. The blessing, or honey, was in the body which was made for him. "A body hast thou prepared me." And, "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God."

Dear brethren, I have to stop before I have told you anything. May we be enabled to see how our suffering here is only breaking the comb that we, like Jacob, are made not only to ride upon the high places of this earth, but we suck the honey from the rock (Jesus the comb) which holds the honey.

In the sixth chapter the sister, or spouse, is asked where her beloved is gone. "My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies." Here Solomon explains, or gives the cause, of Jesus coming down to this low ground of suffering. It is to feed among the lilies (his dear people). For, "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters." Now listen to the bride answer this manifestation of her Huband's love: "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons." O, dear ones, eat freely, for the blessing is in the cluster. He is the chief among the sons of men and altogether lovely. He maketh me sit under his shadow and his fruit is pleasant to my taste. O, beloved, drink of the suffering of dear Jesus, for it is the will of the Father that we shall suffer (eat the comb)) while in this mortal body. Dear Jesus said, My meat and my drink is to do the will of my Father. O, beloved, taste the Lord, for he is good. Oh how graciously does gospel come to us to-day. With the glad tidings of the richness of this precious honey while we are suffering in this life. Oh how sweet to my soul it is to suck from this Rock the honey of eternal life, and this life is in his Son Jesus. The apos-

tle tells us we (the sister, spouse) have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be of God and not of us. Then the apostle tells us greater things; that is, he brings this honey more feelingly to our minds. We know that if the house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. O, precious ones who are eating the comb, the yoke, is not this precious knowledge of our home in heaven honey to your waiting soul? Yes, but I fear I am mistaken. This, dear one, is evidence that you are eating the honey with the comb. You can truly say, A mixture of joy and sorrow I daily do pass through. Yes, dear one, you, like your dear Beloved, have to drink the vinegar with the gall. But in this we get the honey, for all doubt has to fade away when Jesus speaks. When he begins a work he will finish it, and the honey is in the power and faithfulness of God. Now let us get the honey which the apostle gives to the bride. There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Oh how sweet is the honey of the perfection of the work of God in Jesus! This is yours and mine to eat with all our sufferings. Paul goes on in his drawing the honey from this Rock, and says, We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, who are called according to his purpose. Now, dear ones, please come with me and eat the comb with the honey in this statement of Paul's. This "all things" is "all" and means that "all things" which we have to meet and endure while here in the garden of the Lord are working for our good. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" and the honey I get from my faith and hope is God that worketh in me to will and do according to his purpose, and the final of it all is that they should be conformed to the image of his Son, and as we travel on we see and realize a more abundant flow of honey comes to us. Moreover, whom he did foreknow, he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. Whom he predestinated, them he also called, and whom he called, he also glorified. What shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can or who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? For it is God that justifies, and it is Christ that died, yea, is risen and has become the firstfruits of them that sleep. This fruit is the honey which my poor soul eats while here in the garden of the Lord. I am so glad that while Jesus had to be taken from us here, he did not leave us comfortless, but said he would send the Holy Spirit and he should abide with us, and he will take the things of Jesus and show them unto us. O, dear ones, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily besets us and run with patience the race set before us, ever looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, for ere long we shall quit eating the comb with the honey and shall eat the pure and refined honey, without any sorrow, any pain, any doubts or any fears, eternal in the heaven above. Amen.

I would love to give my thoughts on gathering myrrh with the spices and

drinking the wine with the milk, but it would make my letter too lengthy, but I will say that it illustrates the same blessed truth. The wine, which is a product of the grape, and was once in the body of the grape, until put in the great press and broken and crushed until it had no form or life in it, representing the suffering of the Beloved and his sister, or spouse. Our trials while going through the great press of God's refining, making us meet for the Master's use. Milk is that substance which comes from the living mother and which gives life and vigor to the soul. While we are here groaning under the preasure of sin which is condemned in the flesh, we through faith and grace drink down the sincere milk of the word of God, which comes to our souls through the blessed and living hope in the resurrection of our Beloved. The Holy Spirit comes laden with that living milk and assures us while we are here crushed under that awful truth we are bearing the image of the earthly. Oh how sweet and comforting to our poor tired souls to have the blessed assurance that we shall bear the image of the heavenly. Dear ones, do you taste the bitterness of sin which has corrupted your very nature? If so, let me hail you happy, for that is evidence you are a plant in this lovely garden of our God, for if you have tasted of his death you have the assurance you shall be a partaker of his glory, for if the Spirit of him that raised Jesus from the dead dwell in us, God will also quicken these mortal bodies of ours, and bless us to see our Beloved as he is, and we shall be like him. When I awake in his likeness I will be satisfied. Bless God, O my soul.

Dear brother Lefferts, these are some scattering thoughts of a poor, old, almost blind sinner, naturally, and I often fear totally so spiritually. If after you have read them you feel they are worthy a place in the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES you can publish them and they will let all the precious ones know I am thankful that they have remembered me with their personal letters.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. T. BARNES.

SAN FRANCISCO, Cal., Sept. 21, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a money order for four dollars to pay the subscription which is past due and up to the time when it will be due again. I do not want to make an apology; I just feel thankful to our dear Lord and Savior that I am able to send some money at this time, also I feel a heart-felt appreciation for the thoughtfulness of me by the editors in continuing to send the precious SIGNS OF THE TIMES to me, for it is precious to me. May the Lord continue to bless the editors and our SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have been looking over and reading some of the old SIGNS. I have some of them dated back in 1913, and to me they are as true to the faith as they are now. If I know my own heart, I have a love for the truth, salvation by grace, and grace alone. If I am a little child of God, it is by his grace and no effort of my own. He

alone is my teacher. If I lisp a song of praise, each note shall echo grace, free grace. I am feeling very blue and cast down deep in the dark valley, and so hungry for the least little crumb that falls from the Master's table.

The Association at Little Falls Church, in Cass County, Missouri, (where my membership is) will convene, the Lord permitting, this Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and oh the longing I have to be there I cannot describe in words. The Association is small now, but it is sweeter to be there when all gathered are in sweet fellowship and of one mind on the true Scriptures of our Lord and Savior. Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in their midst, saith the Lord. It is God's will and for his own glory that I am so far removed from the dear saints of God.

"Day and night I wander, restless,
Seeking peace and finding none;
God deals to his own a chastening,
And I hope that I am one.

Alone I stand and cry to heaven,
Looking for the Prince of Peace,
He whose blood redeemed his people,
Can make the wildest tempest cease."

My afflictions seem more than I can bear at times, and I almost give up hope, but our dear God knows how much we can stand, and it is a comforting thought.

"Afflictions, though they seem severe
In mercy oft are sent;
They stopped the prodigal's career,
And forced him to repent.

What have I gained by sin, he said,
But hunger, shame and fear?
My Father's house abounds with bread,
While I am starving here."

I hope I have experienced the feeling of the prodigal, for I feel I am starving, ever longing for the heavenly manna of God. "Bread of heaven, feed me till I want no more."

I had no idea of writing more than a few lines. I hope the good Lord has been with me in my few thoughts, for without him I can do nothing. May God bless and sustain the household of faith.

Feeling very unworthy, and in hope and trust in God,

(MRS.) MABEL LINDSEY.

CULLISON, Kansas.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—Not content to walk altogether alone in this pilgrim journey, we wish to hail, or salute, some of those on before us, and if any so slow as to be behind us. We would wish to learn how you have been helped on your way. Is the Lord with you? We fear lest you may be hindered by our repeated calling to you, for our language may not be that of Zion and our voice not clear. If we could ever learn the true speech. In the first eight verses of the twenty-eighth chapter of Matthew we seem to have a division of times and people. "In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it." This stone, which represents the law, was taken away and sat upon. This angel came from heaven, not from earth, or from the law. It came in the

light of that eternal day. The earth shook and the keepers of the law did shake for fear of the angel and became as dead men. But the angel said unto the women, "Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified." See the dividing of the law and gospel, the earth and heaven, and those who seek Jesus from those who seek him not. "He is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead." "Lo, I have told you." Yes, the angel told the sorrowing disciples, but not the world. He sent no word by the keepers to inform the lawyers and high priests. "And they departed quickly from the sepulchre, with fear and great joy, and did run to bring his disciples word." Do we not often depart from the sepulchre with fear and great joy? Yes. We do greatly fear death, but when we see Jesus beyond the grave we so greatly rejoice that we forget our fear. The question, the great question, is, Do we seek Jesus which was crucified? The angel was so very kind unto the women as to tell them that he knew they were seeking Jesus. What a comfort and a hope in this life! Now they could labor to enter into that rest that awaits the people of God. They were then under law to Christ. They had fulfilled the six days of labor under the law, in Christ, and had rested while he was in the grave, and had only come to see the sepulchre. That was as near to him as they could expect under the law of works, and, behold, that was all rolled away while a new day was being ushered in. A bright and shining day, a day of rest and hope, a day of godly fear and great joy, a day to blow the great trumpet and to gather in all those who were ready to perish, a day to seek the Lord, a day to call upon him while he is near. The gospel day is the day of good news, of glad tidings of great joy, the day of the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. To the Jews first, and also unto the Greeks.

"And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him." "All hail" must have been a full salute, a whole-hearted reception, a token of full membership. That is what we so much wish for. "And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him." Can we do any better in this life? It was his feet, his walk in the flesh, and his sacrifice which saved us. If we could but hold him by his feet while we worship him! May the Lord bless his people.

E. G. and S. E. WEBB.

FORT WORTH, Texas, Oct. 11, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS:—First, I want to thank you for sending the dear old SIGNS to unworthy me. Just so you may know how it is appreciated I will tell you this: My companion is bitterly opposed to my "Hardshell" belief, forbids me allowing my children to read the SIGNS, and has tried to prevent me receiving your dear paper, and will not allow me to correspond with people of my faith. There is an Old Baptist

Church in Fort Worth, but it does me no good, as I cannot attend. All the consolation I get is from my Bible and the dear old SIGNS. I have never heard more than five or six Old Baptist sermons, but when I read so many articles in the SIGNS that explain my own feelings so much better than I can myself I have a hope that after all I might be one of God's elect. Not for anything I have done, but by grace, a free gift of God. God alone knows how I am persecuted for loving the truth. O, dear friends, how my heart swells with love for God's chosen. When reading the good letters in the SIGNS it seems to me they were all written for my benefit, for my soul is thirsting for righteousness. One day my worldly cares, and grief over my corrupt, sinful ways, seemed more than I could bear, and when I opened the April SIGNS I turned to the editorial, and brother "G. R." had written at the heading of his article, "Lord, help me." Oh that was the cry that was coming up from my soul, and when I read that editorial I felt that God had directed brother "G. R." to write that for my consolation. I have wanted to write and tell him how much I appreciated and enjoyed his article, as well as the letters of all the other writers, for all are food to my starved soul. I do not get an opportunity to write very often. We are in very straitened circumstances, as my husband had a serious sick spell this spring and lost his crops, and as we are just renters we are far behind. He is not well yet. I know you are having a hard time during this depression to keep the dear old SIGNS going and I do not want to be a burden to you. I love the paper next to my Bible, but feel I am doing wrong in allowing you to send it when times are so hard.

I have not written as I should, but trust you will understand any way. I seem to be in darkness this morning.

Here are some reasons why I feel the Old Predestinarian Baptists are my own people: I believe God foreknew all things before the foundation of this world was laid. I believe every child of God had his name written in the Lamb's book of life since before the foundation of the world, and there it will stay and none can erace it. I believe in a revealed religion. I know that God alone can save his people. I know that there is nothing we can do to save ourselves, and I have been down in darkness and despair and been made to cry over and over, God, have mercy on me, a sinner. There was a time when I saw Jesus in a dream (or was it a dream?), when I was a little child, and he told me to take up the cross and follow him. Oh I so long to follow him, but I am constantly stumbling along the way. When I think of that time and I again see him by faith, oh it helps me, it lifts me above those petty worldly cares. I long to ask for a home with God's chosen. I want to follow Jesus and go down in that watery grave. I know I am not good enough to even think of such a thing, but I am not satisfied, and all the time it is bearing on my mind. Pray for me that I may be submissive to His dear

will, for I am a weak, doubting fool, and cannot help myself.

You were sending the SIGNS to me at R. 1, Box 206 B, Fort Worth, Texas, but my address now is, 952 West Morphy Street, care of E. K. Smith, Fort Worth, Texas.

Forgive mistakes, for this is like the writer: no good.

(MRS.) BESSIE WILTON.

DETROIT, Mich., Oct. 2, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a money order for two dollars to pay for another year. You will see the order is over two months old, but my health failed back in the summer and I went to Kentucky and spent seven weeks, and on my return home found the order had not been mailed. I am sorry it was delayed. As we do not have any of our kind of preaching here, the SIGNS is about all the preaching we get. My wife and I have made several trips over in Canada to Elder Ruston's churches, and certainly did enjoy hearing him preach. He is a wonderful man, and I expect to go over again the third Sunday, if it is the Lord's will. We met Elder Helm and Elder Hutchens there this summer, and they came to Detroit and spent the night with us and preached at my home, and they surely did preach the truth, if I know anything about it: salvation by grace, and grace alone, for there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we can be saved. How can men stand up and tell people they can save them if they will let them? They only deny the Savior's word, for he says that no man can come to him except the Father draws him, and he that comes he will in no wise cast out. Paul says, You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sin. Did a preacher have anything to do with the quickening? No, it was done independent of man.

I had the pleasure of hearing some good preaching while I was in Kentucky. I heard Elders J. T. Henson, C. O. Kerley and Elder J. C. Chester, who has been confined in the house for three years, and in bed most of the time. He is a dear friend of mine, and was preaching most of the time I was with him, and I certainly did enjoy hearing him talk about Jesus and his great love for us poor sinners.

Dear editors, if you know of any Baptists coming this way at any time I would be glad to have them stop and see me. My address is 4805 Concord Avenue, Detroit, Michigan.

May the Lord spare you to continue the SIGNS, is my prayer.

Yours in bonds of love,

C. H. LOCK.

SOMERVILLE, Tenn., June 8, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS:—By the mercy of an ever-kind Providence I am enabled to renew another six months for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which is a great comfort to me. I am the third generation of our family to take it. Inclosed find postal money order to pay six months' subscription.

As ever, your sister in hope,

(MRS.) LAURA CLARK.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1933.

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JOHN XIV. 21.

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."

Jesus has testified according to the record of John as above stated, and we have hope that we are the one referred to. We will have to examine ourselves for the evidences by which we can claim the relation as his bride and prove that we love him. We would like to know: Have we his commandments? We have the evidence Paul gave to the church at Rome, in which he states, "I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died."—Rom. vii. 9. Now we must conclude that if we have his commandment we must have his law, for his commandments are in his law. God gave Israel a law for rule and government, and an order of worship, but Paul in his letter to the Hebrews speaks of a higher order than that of Aaron, which is entirely a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. "This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."—Heb. viii. 10, 11. Have we a commandment resting within our hearts? If so we must have the law of God's new covenant Paul wrote about to the Hebrews written in our hearts and put in our minds. We realize a warfare in our members, and also a very strong feeling drawing us to keep the commandments given in the New Testament to the household of faith. We have no rest when we do not those things our heartfelt duty requires. If this is his commandment that brings such feeling we have the evidence that we are one of the household of Israel, according to the new covenant. In that law the Spirit exercises the individual by which the commandments thereof are kept, and they are not grievous, because we love Him that gave the commandments. This new covenant is given unto us by God (the Father) through Christ Jesus the Lord. All the salvation of sinners is in Jesus, which is the work the Father gave him to do. Jesus quickeneth

whomsoever he will, which, according to the Scriptures, are in every land, kindred, tongue and nation under heaven, and that establishes the priesthood of Jesus Christ throughout the whole world, and every one is taught by God the Father, and they hear his teaching and learn of him. They come to Jesus. This unity is beyond expression. We truly realize one must be quickened and made alive before he can have heart and mind for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus to reveal his commandments. Jesus quickeneth whomsoever he will, and the Spirit giveth life. All is of God. (The work of the Trinity.) Jesus speaks and says, "He it is that loveth me." "Every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God."—1 John iv. 7. We have some of the evidences as given to us by the apostles, and we hope the witness within beareth witness, and we are made to hope in God's mercy to poor sinners, of which we must confess we are, and how often we are wanting as to evidences of eternal life. We mourn and go about as though we by searching could find Him whom our soul loveth, and no relief until he (Jesus) sends the Comforter. We are given at times the spirit of praise and thanksgiving, and then we are brought into the wilderness and the valley of Achor and have no light, which makes us question, If I am one, why am I thus? There is a felt sense of love in our hearts for the people of God and their Shepherd (the Lord Jesus Christ), and the manifest love for the truth draweth us to individuals, which is another witness, for we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. These manifestations are but the fulfillment of his word, in which he said, I "will manifest myself unto him." This relation is the bringing of one (for whom Christ Jesus died) from darkness to his marvelous light, or raising one from death in sin to life in Christ and given a hope. In the demonstrations of the working of His mighty power we are given faith to believe on Him and feel that with God all things are possible. This faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, but we with patience wait for it. This is the work of the Spirit that has led us in paths not known and in ways past finding out, and is the directing virtue throughout this life's pilgrimage. All we are made to suffer in this time state is not worthy to be compared with the joy that shall be revealed when faith is turned into sight and hope into possession. The life of the spiritually-minded is directed by the Spirit, and He that knoweth the mind of the Spirit maketh intercession in our hearts, and we ask not amiss. He answereth our prayers, because they were according to the Spirit and purpose of God. When the last enemy is destroyed, which is death, all suffering for the child of God is over, and when Jesus Christ, the Lord himself, shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with

them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. (1 Thess. iv. 16-18.) The fullness of the salvation of a sinner will then be revealed by the swallowing up of life, soul, body and spirit, then the sinner will be like Jesus.

As we go back and read our text we see a great deal more than has been expressed.

In conclusion, we do earnestly implore the God of mercy to keep us and give us understanding, that we may worship him in Spirit and in truth.

C. W. V.

1 CORINTHIANS X. 12.

"WHEREFORE let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

A child of God stands not a whit longer that the Spirit of God holds him up. Left to himself, he falls. Reuben, Jacob's first born, was as unstable as water. So even though we belong to the assembly of the firstborn whose names are written in heaven, beware of putting confidence in the flesh. One of the marks of those who, in every nation, are accepted with God is that they have no confidence in the flesh. "Flesh" is a synonym of "human nature." A popular song is as follows:

"Yield not to temptation,
For yielding is sin;
Each victory will help you
Some other to win."

What a lie! The very thought of the mind is sin, the very imagining of the heart is evil. How false it is to say that sin consists only in the yielding to temptation! Those who believe this surely know not the plague of their own heart. Neither does each victory gained make it easier for the believer to gain the next victory. Strength in the believer is not accumulative. The child of God is just as dependent today on the Holy Spirit to carry him through the temptations of the present, as he was yesterday for the needs of the past. The fact that he has been victorious in some former trial is no guarantee that he will be successful in the present tempting, except the Holy Spirit hold him up. What constant need, therefore, there is for prayer, a continual seeking to the throne of grace that we may find strength to help in every time of need! How very much we need to flee fleshly dependencies and cast care upon Him who alone can carry us through! Although God had covenanted to give Abram and his seed the land of Canaan, yet on account of the famine there at the time, Abram went down into Egypt where he resorted to the half-lie that Sarai was his sister in order to save his own life, and had it not been for the providential interference of God, it might have caused her to commit adultery. (Gen. xii. 12-19.) Isaac suffered the same sort of lapse at Gerar as recorded in Genesis xxvi., but again the intervention of God saved him from the consequences of his lie and preserved the virtue of Rebekah. David with great forbearance resisted the temptation to slay Saul when he had him completely in his power as he lay sleeping in the cave at Engedi (1 Sam. xxiv.), but shortly afterward David was indignant at the refusal of Nabal the farmer to feed his

soldiers and marched with his followers in anger to take dire vengeance upon him, from which course he was providentially hindered by his timely meeting with Abigail, who with her soft and pleading words turned away his wrath. (1 Sam. xxv.) Elijah with great boldness defiled the whole host of the false prophets when he put their idolatry to the test as against his own true faith, and the Lord answered his prayer with holy fire which consumed his offering, yet afterward he suffered a fearful reaction and fled from the wrath of the woman Jezebel who sought his life. (1 Kings xix.) Peter was bold enough when he promised undying allegiance to Jesus, yet he denied him before the next morning, and he was brave enough when the men and officers came to arrest Jesus in the garden, but he quailed with fear when soon afterward accosted by a maid. Paul was strong and clear in the faith when he stood before the Jerusalem church and clearly showed why the Gentile believers should not be required to be circumcised, he fearlessly withstood Peter to his face and reproved him for having dissembled his profession by not eating with Gentiles when those of the circumcision were present. Yet Paul himself, on his last trip up to Jerusalem, in order to avoid, as he thought, opposition from believing Jews who still clung to the law, permitted himself to be persuaded to engage in the taking of a legal vow together with all the purification rites pertaining thereto. Had it not been for the providential interference of the Lord, he would have been compelled on the eighth day to have brought a blood-offering for his cleansing, and this would have been an act of blasphemy for one who occupied so clear a gospel position in the doctrine. But when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews saw him in the temple and stirred up the people and drew him out of the temple. This they did in anger against Paul, not knowing that they were saving Paul from offering that blood sacrifice which would have been to him a trampling under foot the blood of Christ and a counting the blood of the covenant an unholy thing. (Acts xxi.) Again and again, whether we realize it or not, whether we are thankful for it or not, the interposing of God's hand in our lives in the way of his providential and gracious care over us, saves us from our own foolhardiness. We ought not to trust at all in ourselves. One's trust is not even to be put in princes, but in the Lord alone. All the above happened unto the faithful of old times that they might be "ensamples" or "types" unto us upon whom the ends of the world are come. One might here inquire as to why the Lord suffers these breakdowns in his people. The answer is not far to seek. 1. It is that He alone may be glorified in the salvation and preservation of his children. 2. It is to the end that no flesh shall have whereof to glory before Him. 3. It is that the trial of our faith which is more precious than gold which perishes, may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

H. H. L.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANKS.

As this is our November number, it is again time for us to inclose in each copy of this issue a subscription blank, which we hope our subscribers will find a convenience both in renewing their own subscriptions and in sending in new ones.

Look at the date on the little pink slip bearing your address, which you will find either on your paper or the wrapper in which it comes to you, and if your subscription has expired, or is about to expire, send us your renewal, and we would much appreciate it if you sent us one or two new subscribers, for we need your help and support if the old SIGNS is to continue publication. If you are not at the present time in a position to renew your subscription, but hope to be later on, we would much rather continue sending the paper to you until such time as you are able to pay for it than to take your name from our list, for we need all our old subscribers to help us over the rough road we are now traveling. Just a little effort on the part of each of our subscribers would mean a great deal to us.

A little over a month ago we sent out bills totaling nearly two thousand dollars, and to date have received less than twenty dollars of that amount. As we have to pay our bills promptly to the houses we buy our supplies from, it places us in a very trying position when our subscribers do not meet their obligations to us.

Could our subscribers see some of the many letters we receive telling of the comfort derived from the SIGNS, many saying it is all the preaching they have, we feel sure they would wish it to continue for the comfort of those who are deprived of church privileges and have no other means of hearing the gospel.

Brethren, we appeal to you to do your part in helping continue the publication of the old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and if it is God's will that it shall continue, may he add his blessing to our combined efforts.

J. E. B. & Co.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Deacon Isaac T. Long.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, to the churches composing the same, in joint session assembled at the Mt. Zion meetinghouse, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 11th, 12th and 13th, 1933, and to the associations and churches with which we correspond, sends christian salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—According to our past custom, we send you this Letter to assure you of our deep love and affection of the past, for the present and also a continuance of our love for all future time. The Lord has indeed been good to us all, much more than we deserve, and in return to him for his lovingkindness and tender mercies we trust he has the same love and affection from each of us. As the years roll by, we find ourselves in the same type of sin as did our forefathers. When Paul felt himself a sinner, it did not suffice, but he had to be brought to the end of the law and be made to real-

ize himself the chief of sinners. Sinners are classed in two types: one without the knowledge of Christ, the other godly sorrowing sinners bringing forth repentance. If indeed we are in the second class, it is a great blessing to be a sinner and to believe for salvation in Christ who was made sin for us, yet he himself without sin. As the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin, we hereby have faith to believe he ever has, does now and ever will perform his work until the day of his appearing. Through the transgression of one many were made sinners; so through the obedience of One many are made righteous. Christ is made unto us of God our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. What a blessing he is from the Father to his believing people! No flesh can glory in his presence and all boasting is excluded by his cross. There is none good among men, not one; all alike have wandered from the right way. The good assurance is that we are saved by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. Often we pause and meditate upon how good the God of heaven is to us, giving us the fresh air we breathe, the water we drink and all the good things out of the earth to sustain life. How wonderfully well we are provided for in temporal things, and how infinitely more wonderfully we are provided for in spiritual things in those eternal spiritual blessings provided for us in the Son according as we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Having his blessed promise that he will never leave nor forsake us, we ought to be ready and willing to render unto him our lives which he has redeemed from destruction, knowing he is able to save unto the uttermost all those who come unto God by him.

In looking over the congregations and memberships of the churches composing this Meeting, we note the vacant places of those of our number who have departed from us to be with the Lord. Our love and fellowship for them is not interrupted by their going, and we trust we may never lose our knowledge of them either here or in the life to come. Let us not look upon the seen things which are temporal and pass away, but upon the unseen things which are eternal and undying. This we can only do by faith.

The Lord willing, the next session of this Corresponding Meeting will be held with the New Valley Church, to begin on Wednesday after the second Sunday in October, 1934, continuing three days. At that time we hope to be favored with the attendance among us of your ministers and messengers and all others, lovers of the truth, who desire to meet with us.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Mod.

G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

EXPIANATION OF DATES.

THE date opposite your name on the little pink slip on which your address is printed denotes the time your subscription expires. Dec 32 means it expired December, 1932; June 33 that it expired June, 1933; June 34 that it will expire June, 1934, etc.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

It becomes my sad duty to chronicle the death of our dear friend, **MRS. FRANCES MONFORT TURNER,** who died at her home, in Campellsburg, Kentucky, on the night of the ninety-third birthday of her husband, Lieutenant Colonel Wm. J. Turner, to whom she was married in 1865, and who survives her. She was the daughter of the late Wm. and Elizabeth Vories Monfort, whose French Huguenot ancestors in the seventeenth century fled from France to Holland and sailed on the Boytkoe to Plymouth Landing in 1660. The family moved south to Virginia, and then followed Boone's trail to Kentucky. Colonel Turner's family settled in Henry County, and the town of Turners bears his name, as does the local chapter of the Daughters of the Confederacy. The deceased is survived by the husband, four daughters, Mrs. Wm. Vories, of Campbellsburg, Mrs. J. S. Meade, of Smithfield, Mrs. Bettie Lindsey, of Detroit, Mich., and Mrs. Minnie Pyles, of Norwich, Kansas, two sons, William, of Louisville, and Fulton, of Carrolton, several grandchildren and great-grandchildren, besides a host of friends, who will miss her, as her home was a home for all, especially the Old School Baptists. While neither of them were members of the church, it was their delight to attend the meetings at the Sulphur Fork Church, help entertain their company and help bear the expenses. I have often heard them tell about meeting Elders Silas H. Durand, P. G. Lester, William Pollard, Wm. L. Beebe and many others of the old soldiers of the cross who have gone to their reward. It was in this locality that the late Elder J. G. Eubanks lived and was pastor of the church; then Elder P. W. Sawin, and for the last ten years the writer, and their home was always a home for me. May the Lord reconcile us all in our great loss. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

The deceased was born March 15th, 1850, and died August 21st, 1933. I was called to attend the funeral, which was held at the home, and tried with the ability the Lord gave me to comfort the friends with the thought that death is not the end; no, not for the redeemed of the Lord. GEORGE L. WEAVER.

MRS. EULA (CULPEPPER) HOLGUIN, daughter of brother and sister J. W. Culpepper, of Fells City, Texas, was born March 30th, 1896, and died August 10th, 1933, aged 37 years, 4 months and 10 days. October 11th, 1919, she was married to Mr. G. D. Holguin, of San Antonio, Texas. She was the mother of seven children, four boys and three girls. The girls died in infancy, leaving the four boys. Eula never attached herself to any church, but was a strong believer in the faith of the old order of Primitive Baptists. Eula was one of the quietest disposed women of our part of the country, and was well liked by all who knew her. It did her much good to feel that she had been of interest to any one around her. We cannot doubt her relationship to the covenant of divine grace, as she in all her walks portrayed the loving marks of divine grace and love of the Savior. From her girlhood days I had known her, and I feel there is none who can surpass her in virture or kindness, which endeared her in the feelings and friendships of the general community. While Eula never made a public profession of faith, she loved to hear the doctrine of grace preached, and such marks lead us all to feel that the Savior had been her Leader all through life, and at the gates of death was her only support, and I feel free in saying she is now at rest in the arms of her dear Savior, while her body is sleeping in the grave quietly awaiting the sound of the last trumpet, when all the dead in Christ shall arise in the perfect image of the Lord Jesus Christ, then and there to be forever in the presence of God in an endless paradise of bliss. She was operated on and for several days it was thought she would be all right, but it pleased the Lord to take her home, beyond the suffering of this world, to a mansion of love and peace. I would say, dear brother and sister Culpepper and all the family and friends, weep not for her as one without hope, for we feel that she embraced a hope of immortality beyond this life.

Written by one who feels she has passed into the gracious rest in soul, waiting the final resurrection of the body into the blessed image of Jesus. J. B. BOWDEN.

SARAH ANN (LITCHFIELD) PARKER, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Litchfield, was born December 20th, 1856, at Toluca, Illinois, being the third child of a family of eleven children. She grew to young womanhood in this vicinity and on November 20th, 1877, was united in holy wedlock to John W. Parker. To this union three children were born, namely, Lawrence, of Chicago, Ill., at whose home she passed away, and Gladys and Roy S., who preceded her in death. She united with Salem Primitive Baptist Church, of Toluca, June 23rd, 1894, and remained a devout and faithful member until the church ceased to function. She later came to Chicago, and when through failing health she was unable to attend regularly elsewhere the meetings were conducted in her home. She looked forward with joy to these meetings and the few who met were always welcome.

Services were held here for the Chicago friends Monday p. m., September 18th, 1933, conducted by the writer. The body was then taken Monday night to Toluca, Ill., to the home of her sister, Mrs. Jane Stratton, where services were held Tuesday morning. The body was then tenderly laid away in a cemetery near by to await her Savior's call. May He comfort all who mourn for His name's sake. CHARLES A. JONES.

J. M. CRAVER was born in Union County, Arkansas, February 8th, 1845. He enlisted in the Confederate war at the beginning and served the entire four years. He was with Company H, Second Arkansas Calvary. He came to Texas in 1865 and settled in Upshur County, near Gilmer, where he resided until June 28th, 1933. He was married to Miss Ann Capps, who preceded him in death eleven years. To this union five children were born, three girls and two boys. One girl passed away when quite young. The surviving children were all present when the end came. He also leaves to mourn seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. He united with the Primitive Baptists and lived a consistent member for more than fifty years. He was a firm believer in a sovereign God, salvation by grace, both in time and eternity, and was a staunch believer in the doctrine set forth in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Surely a great man in Israel has fallen, and the church at Mt. Zion has sustained a great loss, but we feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort to a large concourse of sorrowing relatives and friends, using as a text 1 Thessalonians iv. 13.

Dear children, sorrow not as others who have no hope, for he is not dead, but is asleep in Jesus, from which sleep none ever wake to mourn.

Written by W. W. SLAUGHTER.

REPORT OF THE UNION ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS, OF ITS NINETY-FOURTH ANNUAL SESSION.

THIS Association convened with Old Salem Church, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 6th, 7th and 8th, 1933, near Teague, Texas. This body, Salem Church, was the second organized church in Texas, coming out of Old Pilgrim Church, which was the first organized church of any kind, except Catholic, in Texas. Salem Church is about eighty-two years old. A large concourse of brethren and friends were present Friday, and on throughout the meeting. There were only a few visiting preachers present, but a sufficient number of home brethren were there to avoid burdening any one. A very sacred nearness seemed manifest among the brethren. On assembling, and continuing through the meeting, the preaching was of one accord, and most all the preachers seemed to enjoy splendid liberty, proclaiming the mighty works of God, bringing forth evidence new and old, showing why His name should be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. The writer was impressed with the splendid services, which all appeared to enjoy, in a great way lending to the spiritual and inspirational servcies which characterized each day of worship. Added to the enjoyment was the coming in of three precious souls asking a home with this people. One by baptism and two by relation.

We find this old Association has gained a little in membership during the past year, evidencing a renewed interest in the churches and in His kingdom. May it be God's will to continue his grace in Zion to the glory of his name and the encouragement of the church. Another feature of this meeting was the marked loyalty of neighbors and friends joining with the church membership in entertaining their guests. It was splendid

The Association was appointed to convene with Holly Springs Church next year, the writer's home church, near Montalba, Highway 19, between Athens and Palestine. We hope another year may bring conditions more favorable for our preachers from a distance. While only a few preachers were present, yet I feel withal that the Union Association has never enjoyed a happier meeting, and indeed feel, His name be praised for it.

Yours unworthily, but in hope,

L. D. ROSE.

NOTICE.

ON Tuesday, November 7th, 1933, at 1 p. m., the Warwick Old School Baptist Church plans to dedicate a marker on the location of the log meetinghouse, at Warwick, New York, also to commemorate the one hundred and sixty-eighth anniversary of the ordination of their first minister, Elder James Benedict

THE PROGRAM.

Hymn.

Prayer by Elder R. Lester Dodson.

Unveiling Tablet by { N. Y. State Historian Presents Tablet

Accepts Tablet
Thanking State for it
Thanks Wm. S. Layton for Granite Marker
Thank committee on Historical Markers
} Elder R. Lester Dodson

Brief History of Church, Elder R. Lester Dodson

Read Letter written by Elder James Benedict to his oldest son, James Benedict.

Benediction

All are invited to inspect the new meetinghouse on High Street, Warwick, N. Y., built in 1810, where a brief history of that building will be given by W. B. Sayer.

Then Elder R. Lester Dodson will preach and conduct a regular service. All are invited, at 2 p. m.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Wm. J. Tindall, N. J., $3; "A friend," N. Y., $2; Mrs. J. B. Mount, Texas, $1; "A friend," Ont., $2; Mrs. E. J. Bolton, Iowa, $1; Mrs. M. E. Furman, N. Y., $1.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Elder P. W. Sawin having changed his residence from 308 West Sixth Street, Lexington, Kentucky, to Apartment 5, 323 South Broadway, Lexington, Kentucky, requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

BROTHER J. B. Bowden wishes to announce that he has changed his address from Ingram, Texas, to Ed Couch, Texas, and requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church will meet (D. V.) every second Sunday at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California; every third Sunday at 521 West Nevada Street, Ontario, California; every fourth Sunday at 3516 Franklin Avenue, Riverside, California.

W. L. SLUSHER.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Church now meets for worship at our home, 2211 Fifth Street, Riverside, California, the third Sunday of each month, at 10:30 a. m.

J. W. HAYNES.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 808 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one-half block west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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ELDER C. W. ANDERSON.

ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 101. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1933. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

STRASBURG, Va., April 2, 1933.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have had a text of Scripture on my mind for a year. The text is: "What is man that thou art mindful of him?" "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." It seems strange to me that any one who has good use of his mind can look at this great creation, beholding the heavens with all of the wonders that pertain to them, and not believe there is a great Creator. Yet there are those who say they do not believe there is a God, and some of these seem to have the strongest mind, naturally, among men. This proves that Paul was right when he wrote, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The heavens declare the glory of God to the living, and not to those dead in sin. The last thing God created was the man. "God said, Let us make man." "In the image of God created he them," and "blessed them, and called their name Adam." The first command God gave them was, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." There is a difference of opinion as to what kind of a man this was. One class says this was a wicked man, like we are now. I humbly beg leave to differ on this point. Solomon says, Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright, and they have sought out many inventions. God never corrupted this man. Never caused or influenced him to sin. The Bible says, And the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence, for that all flesh had corrupted his way on the earth. David says in the fifty-third Psalm, "God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." If they have altogether became filthy, then it is true they were not filthy at

first. They were upright at first, and became filthy afterwards. That is not all: they get worse all the time. 2 Tim. iii. 13: "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." 2 Tim. iv. 3, 4: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." We now living have lived to see this fulfilled. Fewer and fewer are the flock that are reserved a remnant unto God, that have the understanding and strength given them to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints." This man God made had a command given him. God put this man and woman in the garden and said, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Some contend there was no change in this man when he ate the forbidden fruit, he remained just like he was. It seems to me there is a lot of difference between a dead man and one not dead. This man was not deceived. He knew what he was doing, and what would befall him if he ate this fruit. Paul says, 1 Tim. ii. 14, "And Adam was not deceived; but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression." Some say God could not keep or prevent Adam from eating the fruit. This is hardly worth noticing, because it is so far from the truth, and so contrary to the teaching of the Bible, and so God-dishonoring. Why not take the Arminian position at once, and say God made man a free moral agent, and put him in the garden and just left it to him whether he would eat the forbidden fruit or not? God could not? Well, well, does not that sound nice? Devils dance and satyrs shout for joy to hear such stuff, and to know that some good people claiming to be old line Baptists are deceived by such rot. Listen, little one, while I quote: "There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." He speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast; openeth and none shutteth, shutteth and none openeth. It would be a good thing for a great many to pass through the same experience that Nebuchadnezzar had. He first thought he was a great man, and said, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?" Now hear the king after God had shown him his (God's) power. He said, "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" It is a wonder if it is true that God could not prevent Adam from eating the forbidden fruit, that the king did not prevent God from driving him out. David says, Psalms viii. 3, 4, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers; the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that

thou art mindful of him?" Everywhere, every way I look, everything I see, from the least living object to the greatest monster that ever lived, and then when I look up and see the heavens declaring the glory of God, and when I go back over my experience and realize how God has preserved my life and body, and given me such wonderful health and activity at the age of nearly eighty-one years, I am astonished at his power, and the glory of it. His protecting care, and the glory of that, I fall on my face, as it were, and am astonished at what I see and realize is true, and see his wondrous power manifested in all things, and yet we know so little of God and his holiness and greatness. It is written in Hebrews i. 3, "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power." Power to raise the dead, and could not prevent Adam transgressing? God never made a sinner. Paul says, "For by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."—Rom. v. 19. Again, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."—Rom. v. 12. There is not a shadow of a doubt about God having a purpose in Adam's transgression. This is also true, that it was best for us to be sinners. Paul says, "God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."—Rom. vi. 17, 18.

Jesus was foreordained before the foundation of the world. Why would God prepare a Savior before he created the world and man if he did not have a wondrous purpose in the transgression of Adam? If we were not sinners, and deserved to be punished on account of our sinfulness, what would we be praising the Savior for? If you were not a sinner you never would have sung,

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me."

I am sometimes asked what I have done that my life has been so wonderfully preserved. I answer by quoting a part of a hmyn that reads,

"Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song,
The joy of my heart, and the boast of my tongue;
Thy free grace alone, from the first to the last,
Hath won my affections and bound my soul fast.

Without thy sweet mercy I could not live here,
Sin soon would reduce me to utter despair;
But through thy free goodness my spirits revive,
And he that first made me still keeps me alive."

Yes, he that first made me still keeps me alive, and if I were not a sinner and needed mercy every hour, I never would have enjoyed singing this wonderful song, and many others; neither would you have ever enjoyed hearing a gospel discourse. Again, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Again, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Not to us, but "in us." You, little one, will be full of his glory.

"A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon." We have only the slightest conception of the wonders of that glory that shall be revealed in us. I had once a slight view and a little experience of this glory. Three of us were riding along on the way to an association, and as we sang I seemed to be several times as large as I am naturally, and cords in my being trembling with the glory of the song, and it was sweeter than the honey and the honey comb.

This sinful man, this depraved man, this ungodly man, this blood-thirsty, black, sin-defiled man, with his carnal mind, and his corrupt flesh that lusts against the Spirit, that is so prone to sin it takes the power of God manifest in his grace to keep him, and then evil thoughts and wicked desires are bubbling up all the time. Sin thundering against us, like the waves of the ocean that never cease, but come along one right after the other, dashing, thundering against the bank, and if it were not for our Rock, Jesus, who ever liveth to make intercession for us, for in that he hath suffered being tempted, the billows of sin would swallow us up and we would be carried away, but

"Thy free grace from the first to the last,
Hath won my affections and bound my soul fast."

The anchor holds. Let the storms come, let the winds of adversity blow, let the tempest rage, still the anchor holds my soul fast. But it gets so dark, the long weary nights are so cold, the days are so foggy, I sink so low, all hope seems to be gone; not a friend, not one to say a word of cheer to me. For years I have been dead, dead to all joy and gladness of heart, not a sigh, not a view of the terrible surroundings, but not long ago He came once more and made me realize he would take care of me. What more could one want? But soon the darkness begins to gather, the doubts arise in my mind, and I say, "Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat! I would order my case before him," etc. "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him: but he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." He knows where you are, what you do, and all will finally redound to his glory. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose."

This man? Let us see what kind of a man he is without the grace of God to keep him. Paul says, "Their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes." He is of all God's creation the only creature that goes out by the hundreds of thousands, and millions, to kill his own kind. "The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness,

revellings, and such like: of which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Now the question is, How can such a terrible creature be saved? Did I say black? Yes, a thousand times, and more, I have felt I was black, and have seen my own blackness, but I say,

"Black, I to the Fountain fly,
Wash me, Savior, or I die."

I well remember when the time came I realized my sinfulness so keenly I wanted to try to pray, and when I went to get down where no one could see me all at once I saw very clearly that God was right there, pure and holy, and I was not fit to mention his name, and on I went. For a long time I went on and on, seeking a place to hide and call on God for mercy. I was sore afraid, like the men when "the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." That is what the gospel is for. Not to scare, but to relieve the fears of the people of God who have been shown their own filthiness. This is what it did for me: I had never heard an Old School Baptist preach when I was seeking a place to hide so I could beg for mercy. When I heard the first one, he preached Jesus, and told how he had borne our sins in his own body on the tree and put them away by the sacrifice of himself. This man's vile body is to be changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Savior. So Paul says, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." The Savior will do all for his people that is necessary to prepare them for the home in the glorious home he has prepared for them, and he will not be disappointed in one single case. It doth not appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

In hope of mercy,

I. R. GREATHOUSE.

ED COUCH, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed please find an article written by brother W. L. Edwards, of Castlewood, Va., which I feel would be of comfort to the household of faith. I have his consent to its publication, if it meets with your approvval.

J. B. BOWDEN.

CASTLEWOOD, Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER:—I read your good article in the October number of the SIGNS, and it seemed so near in line with my own views I felt I must tell you something of how much I enjoyed your letter, and if you are condemned for the faith and doctrine so well lined out in this article I would not be far behind you in condemnation for believing it. I would love to say a few words

on this line in my awkward way of expression. Not with the least idea of bettering what you have so ably set forth, and feel I could not say much on this line of thought without getting on some ground that has been gone over again and again by much wiser writers than I am. The Savior says, If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness. Whether they ever had the true light I do not feel to say here. However, if they were children of God, they must be in natural darkness. It seems strange that some of our dear brethren appear to be under the impression that the Savior will not appear personally the second time on earth with his saints at the resurrection at the last day. I heard a man who claims to be an Old Primitive Baptist preacher say in the stand that he did not believe Christ was born of a natural woman, or ever walked personally here on earth, or ever would personally appear on earth, and that all punishment for sin was here in this time world, and no punishment after death. (He was not a Primitive Baptist, and was not a real good Arminian.) Therefore by his flat denial of the truth he denied the resurrection of Jesus as the firstfruits of the resurrection, and he might as well deny all of it. Not that I wish to take the liberty of thought and speech from him, or any one, or force him to look through my glasses, but I cannot see how any one believing such heresy could claim any relationship whatsoever to genuine Old Baptists. It is my heart's desire and hope that I never may call evil good and good evil, nor put darkness for light and light for darkness, bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. (Isaiah v. 20.) As you well said, from the days of the apostles the true church has believed that the same Jesus who was raised from the dead and ascended into heaven shall come in company with ten thousands of his saints. This is to my understanding plainly taught or demonstrated by Christ and all his apostles and the prophets and holy writers, both of the Old and New Testaments, and is the same faith that was handed down to the saints, and may we not ignore or depart from it. It was the same Savior who was born of the virgin Mary, therefore was both human and divine, holy and pure and without sin, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, and the same Jesus who was crucified on Calvary, and the same Jesus who appeared to his disciples and said, "Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." This was the same Jesus of whom it was said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus ye see which it taken up into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go up into heaven. Paul says to the Philippians, For our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. The Savior

says, It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you. There is a spiritual Comforter to God's people here, as I have often said, therefore the Savior showed his mission in the world when he died and shed his precious blood and arose again for their justification, the sum and substance and end of their hope of heaven and immortal glory, and appears to them as they journey along through this world of sin and sorrow. The Savior says, "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me."—John xv. 26. But when we speak of the personal appearing of the Savior, it is said, And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth (nonelect) mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Then I believe all will see him as he is, and I do not believe any of the posterity of Adam will fail to see him, or that he will be hidden behind the cloud from either the elect or nonelect, but that the nonelect will see the justice of their condemnation (as a matter of divine justice). John the revelator takes up this matter, and says, Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him. Therefore, I do not see that the Savior will be hidden behind the cloud from the view of any. Yes, they (the nonelect) shall call for the rocks to fall upon them to hide them from the presence of the Lamb. Then shall this mortal put on immortality, and we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. At this time, as I see it, will be the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. (These that go away are the unjust, or nonelect of Adam's race.) The children of the wicked one shall be cast into a lake of fire with all the mourning ones, but the righteous into life eternal. The nonelect, or angels of the devil, shall be cast into everlasting punishment, as it is said unto them, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. Then God's people, or children, will be gathered home. Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to everlasting shame and contempt. And they that be wise (the five virgins) shall shine as the brightness of the firmament. Then shall be no more clouds of darkness and despair that so often hinder us while we journey here in this life of flesh, yea, the mountains of sin which so often stand between Jesus and his people are destroyed, and for their transgressions, his loving smiles are hid behind the cloud. No doubt but what the testimony of Daniel bore reference to the Jews, and the crucifixion and the resurrection of our Savior, also I understand it sets forth the second personal coming of our Lord Jesus to gather his purchased bride home. Then they all shall be like

Jesus, clothed with immortality and glory, and shall ever be with him, then death is swallowed up in victory. Some seem to make it a question, With what body do the children appear when they appear in eternal glory? But let us not worry about that, if we could view the glorious body of Jesus we could come very close to the body of all his people. (Yea, it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we shall see him as he is and be like him.)

I am not going to tell you that I have given you the true meaning of the Scriptures, because it is saying too much for poor puny man, but I do say I have told you what I see and believe the Scriptures mean to me. It is a fearful thing to wrest the Scriptures from their true meaning. I hope you will try what I have written by the searchlight of truth, and that which it condemns throw away to the charge of the imperfection of the writer, where it belongs if it is not right.

My dear old brother, you, as well as myself, are getting old and we soon must pass away and lay our armor by, and if the Lord so directs our mantle may it fall upon some one else, if it be God's will, to carry out what you have been writing and setting forth these many years. It is my desire, if it be God's will, that you may have a glorious sunset, and that your last days may be your best days and be so crowned that when your change comes you can say with Paul, I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, I have finished my course, hence there is a crown, not only for you, but for all the Lord's people in Christ.

When it goes well with you remember me at the throne of grace.

Saved by grace, if saved at all,

W. L. EDWARDS.

LONDON, Ontario.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I saw in the SIGNS a notice of the death of dear Elder McClanahan, whom I loved much, though we were strangers in the flesh. These are letters he sent me, which you can publish in the SIGNS in memory of him if you feel to do so.

Lovingly,

(MRS.) JOHN SINCLAIR.

POCA, W. Va., June, 1932.

MRS. JOHN SINCLAIR—ESTEEMED SISTER IN THE LORD:—I will try to answer your much appreciated letter. I am a poor scribe, and for that reason often dread to write, yet it is my only way of conversing with those beloved ones who live far away from me in distance, but near in the Spirit, and such I feel will cast the mantle of charity over my imperfections. If we be the children of God, we were comprehended in his foreknowledge from all eternity, and the object of his love. Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. God was not frustrated in the fall of his chosen ones of Adam, for he had prepared the remedy before the fall. They were banished in Adam, but not expelled out of Christ. They became sinners by transgression, in Adam, he being their natural repre-

sentative head, and when Adam to eat of the fruit was inclined it answered the end Jehovah designed. No purpose of wisdom was altered thereby, but it was all for the lifting of Jesus on high. So there was not any mischance in Adam's eating the forbidden fruit. While it brought sin and death into the world, and the penalty annexed to this violation of God's law given to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden was death, for the soul that sins shall die. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. To my mind, the living, moving man became a living soul when the breath of life was blown into his nostrils by his Creator, and he was formed from the dust of the ground, for dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return. Adam was a lifeless lump of clay until the breath (natural) of life was breathed into his nostrils, then he became a living soul. No doubt but this was a corporeal death pronounced upon Adam and his posterity. But he was a figure of him that was to come, the second man Adam, the Lord from heaven, a quickening Spirit, the representative head of the elect family. Now I have before me the two representative heads, the first Adam of the earth earthy, and natural, the second Adam the Lord from heaven, a quickening Spirit. The first Adam sank his posterity in sin, death and degredation, without knowledge of being dead in trespasses and in sin, blind to the way, dumb to the sound of the gospel and ignorant of God's righteousness. Oh what a deplorable condition we poor sinners were plunged into by the disobedience of one man, Father Adam, our natural head, but thanks be to our heavenly Father, the remedy lay behind all this trouble, as the ram behind Abraham caught in the thicket was offered in the place of Isaac, and Isaac, a figure of the church, was set free by the ram being offered in his room and stead. So Jesus, the antitype, offered himself without spot to God, and God the Father accepted the offering and proved it to a demonstration by raising him from the dead. With this one offering he (Jesus) hath forever perfected them that were sanctified, set apart, to this end by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ and called in time with an holy calling.

From your old brother in hope of mercy,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

PSALMS CXIX. 23, 24.

"TEACH me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

My sister in a precious hope of life eternal through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, this beautiful day, the 25th of June, 1932, I feel impressed to answer your much appreciated letter, which came to me laden with comforting words that were to me good news from a far country, and as we are strangers in the flesh, while reading your good letter I felt within my heart to say, No, we are not strangers, we are akin, near and dearly related in the Spirit, heirs of God and joint-heirs with his darling Son, to that inheritance re-

served in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Often when we feel lonely and much cast down by the dark clouds of fear, and doubts hanging over us, we are made to cry out in the language of David, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." While we are aware of the fact that God is the heart-searcher and reign-trier of all his subjects, and in these seasons of fear and doubts we carefully retrace what we had really thought and really felt to be an experience of grace, the love of God shed abroad in the heart, but now thou hast hid thy face and I am troubled. We pick up our Bible to hunt for something written for our learning, that our spiritual strength be renewed, and we hear him saying to his disciples on the boistrous sea, Be not afraid, it is I; and again, Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Have we not often felt to fear and tremble at the thought of being poor deluded mortals, that we were deceived, and had deceived those who had the utmost confidence in us as being the Lord's people? My dear sister, I have never had the least shadow of a doubt but what the old order of Baptists were the followers of Jesus Christ and his apostles in the faith, doctrine and practice, but very often the question with me, Am I one of his redeemed, or am I not? often causes me to say, Search me, O God, and know my heart.

Yours in tribulation,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

POCA, West Virginia.

DEAR SISTER:—I see that brother Ruston is your pastor. He is a wonderful, loving brother, and God has blessed him with a gift to edify the church, which is the body of Christ. I have heard him preach several times. I love him for the truth's sake. We have four young preachers in our association who I think are going to be able ministers. Three of them are very able and promising at present. I hope they may continue steadfast in the apostolic doctrine. I often warn them of the many snares and traps set by the enemies of truth to get the young shipwrecked. For twenty years I have been the Moderator of the Pocatalico Association. Twice my face had to be set as a flint against errors brought in to trouble us by false brethren. I am now old and feeble and will soon lay my armor by. God alone is the builder of the city and the keeper of it.

Give my love to brother Ruston and the faithful in Christ Jesus. If you have a mind to write me at any time do so, for I get very lonely at times and love to get a word of comfort from the dear saints scattered abroad.

Yours in fellowship,

J. W. McCLANAHAN.

HERMLEIGH, Texas, Nov. 9, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending three dollars, two dollars to pay for the re-

newal of the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES for another year, and one dollar to use as you think best. I wish I could send more, but, like so many others, I am not able. I would love to give you enough to have you send it to all those who are not able to pay for it, especially those who, like myself, are cut off from the blessed privilege of hearing preaching. The dear old SIGNS is all the preaching I ever get, and I surely look for its coming like I used to look for meeting time at old Pleasant Valley Church, and when it comes I can hardly do any work until I read it through. Only those situated like I am know how much we poor old cast-offs enjoy getting such dear gospel messages as the SIGNS brings to us. I enjoy all the good editorials and all the letters from the dear correspondents. I trust the Lord may see fit to spare all of you editors to continue to write for the SIGNS, and that he may put it into the hearts of all who are able to send what they can to help you bear your expenses, and I hope the SIGNS OF THE TIMES may continue to go out and feed the poor, little, starving ones who never have the privilege of hearing the gospel preached. I soon will be seventy-six years of age, and I hope to be able to see to read and can pay for our dear paper as long as I live. I have been reading it for more than thirty years and it gets dearer to me all the time.

Hoping that God may bless you all in your labors of love and hardships, I will now close.

(MRS.) M. E. WILLIAMS.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with Little Creek Church, in Delmar, Sussex County, Delaware, to the several churches and meetings with which we correspond, sends love in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN IN HOPE:—We feel it a blessed privilege to address you as brethren in the Lord, and we feel to thank God for the blessed privilege of having the evidence of such spiritual emotions as have prevailed throughout this meeting. We are pleased to have your messengers with us and to receive your correspondence. The ministering brethren have come to us laden with the rich things of the kingdom, breaking to us the bread of life that cometh down from heaven. Our meeting was well attended, and peace and harmony prevailed.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Snow Hill Church, Snow Hill, Maryland, beginning on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1934, at which time and place we hope to meet your messengers and receive your correspondence again. Until then farewell.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
GEORGE F. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

THE date opposite your name on the little pink slip on which your address is printed denotes the time your subscription expires. Dec 32 means it expired December, 1932; June 33 that it expired June, 1933; June 34 that it will expire June, 1934, etc.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1933.

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JOB XL. 4.

"Behold, I am vile."

It is a very easy thing to repeat the above sentence, and many do so without the least feeling or understanding of its meaning, or how deeply experienced is the soul who, as Job, is in the presence of his God, and passing under his afflicting hand. Many sing, "Vile and full of sin I am, thou art full of truth and grace," and say, Have mercy upon us miserable sinners. It is easy to say, but saying it with the lip and feeling it in the heart are two very different things. To say it with the lip only, is deceitful, it is like a man who is rich, and in need of nothing, dressing in rags as a beggar, when he is no beggar, but a deceiver, and such a deceiver that any honest citizen would wish to expose and drive from his door. Such in their nicely worded prayers may deceive man, but they cannot deceive God. To such, unless grace prevent, God will say, "I never knew you," but His own afflicted people, who hate sin, yet groan under the body of this death. God will own, as he did his servant Job. God has the right to do as he will with his own. They are spoken of as an afflicted and poor people and there is no way that they can lose their birthright. Esau might, but they cannot, for God has ordained it so, and "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Many of God's dear people, who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, have not been led very deeply into a knowledge of their own depravity, others are led more deeply, and most of those who are so led are apt to write bitter things against themselves. Job had to pass through much trial and affliction before he knew himself to be vile. Years ago we thought none could be so vile as we, our eyes had been turned within and we thought we knew ourselves. Job thought he knew himself, but when he saw God he said, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." The afflicting hand of God had accomplished its purpose when Job was brought to this confession. There are some of us who loathe ourselves, in other words, are sick of self, and while we are kept from acting out our nature, as some others may be left to do, yet while we, as whited sepulchres, look good and beautiful unto men, before

God, before him with whom we have to do, what is our course and conduct? If one might speak for others, when, as Job, we are brought before our God, our only cry is, "Behold, I am vile." One word from him and we know what the woman meant when she said, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did." It was from this spot that Job could pray for the men whom he had been calling miserable comforters, and when we are humbled in the dust, and feel that we are vile before God, we can love our enemies, bless them that curse us, do good to them that hate us and pray for them which despitefully use us and persecute us. It is from this spot the truly humbled soul can have sympathy for the weak, and if a man be overtaken in a fault they can restore such an one, considering themselves lest they also be tempted, and they know with Paul, that if a man think himself to be something when he is nothing he deceiveth himself. Job is a type of the Lord's people, and he had to prove, as they do, and as Habakkuk said, "His soul which is lifted up is not upright in him," and with David he could say, "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." When the ark of God was taken into the temple of Dagon, Dagon had to fall before it, and when God designs to dwell in man, he will bring down every high look and that soul will feel to be empty of good and full of ill, a lifeless lump of loathsome sin, without the power to do or will. When God is in his holy temple, all the earth must keep silence before him. It is here that one knows and feels that he justly deserves wrath, and can cry, "O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy." As we believe many can enter with us into the feeling of humiliation and nothingness that was Job's in the presence of God, we would declare that it was in God's presence, when God spoke to him, that Job said, "Behold, I am vile," and it is in the presence of God, under his all-seeing eye, that you cry that you are vile. Jeremiah tells us in chapter thirty-one, verses eighteen and nineteen, "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke; turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned. I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth." So after he was turned he repented, and after being instructed he smote upon his thigh and was ashamed and confounded. False religion looks for dead sinners to repent, but God turns his children from dumb idols to serve the living God, and Jesus came to give repentance to Israel and the remission of sins. It is because repentance is already given to you that you cry, "Behold, I am vile," and you have no confidence in yourself, but in God who raises the dead. The Holy Spirit will

bring judgment unto victory and the Lord's Christ will become more and more precious to your needy soul. You will count the afflictions of the Lord's people more than all the treasures of Egypt, and will want a "Thus saith the Lord" more than the words of all flesh. This humbling under God's afflicting hand, which God will bring about in his own way, for his own glory, will cause you to desire to walk before men as before God. "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." You will see God in the trial, even though it be brought by a messenger of Satan, for "Whatever cross lies at thy door, it cometh from the Lord." "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." It is under affliction that the hidden evil of the heart is exposed. We rebel, like Ephraim unaccustomed to the yoke, our pride is laid low, our plans are spoiled and we also find it hard to kick against the pricks. Job did not like his friends joining hands with Satan to try and prove that he was a hypocrite, the very thing that Satan declared him to be before God. Job was proven not to be what Satan said he was, for Satan is a liar, and always was, and always will be proven to be. A person that has no trial has no temptation, but those deeply tried are greatly tempted. Peter wrote to such when he said, "Ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." Deliverance is always in proportion to the trial, and Paul tells us, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," and that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Under the trial the soul is humbled, the proud heart laid low, the rebellious spirit made manifest, and all for the lifting of Jesus on high. What would we know of amazing grace unless we were shown the hidden evils of our hearts, and how could grace abound to us unless sin had become exceeding sinful? The wages of sin is death, and the soul cannot serve sin and God too, therefore there must be a dying unto sin if there is a living unto God. "His servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness." One who truly cries, "Behold, I am vile," is at the place where he is killed to sin and alive unto God, alive to his presence, and alive to those exercises and longings for Christ Jesus. His walk is not then after the flesh, but after the Spirit, his affections are set upon things above, and his faith is not what he can do, but in what Christ has done. Thus the obedience mentioned above is the obedience of faith, for no other obedience will be well-pleasing unto God. This vileness will never be done away with while we are in this mortal life. It is there to remind us of the sufferings of Christ, that he suffered in the flesh and that he died on the

cross, further, that he laid in the grave, for "He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death." While here in this life we can say by faith, "Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me." This is the incorruptible seed in us, our bodies are corruptible, but because Jesus rose from the dead and became the firstfruits, so all his followers must, and though our cry is, "Behold, I am vile," yet when the Lord himself shall come from heaven he will change our vile body and fashion it like unto his glorious body. Then we shall be with his likeness satisfied. While we are here his body is broken because of sin, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death TILL HE COME." If our vileness here shall, through the operation of the Spirit, cause sorrow of heart, a godly sorrow, and the triumphant grace of God be reigning over us, we shall show forth the praise of him who has called us out of darkness and we shall put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of our mind, and we shall put on the new man (which Peter calls the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit) which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

In conclusion, they who are brought into God's presence and hear his voice, and through his afflicting hand cry, "Behold, I am vile," will, as a result of God's work, lay their mouth in the dust, and they will be then possessed of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price.

G. R.

EBENEZER.

(1 SAMUEL 4TH AND 7TH CHAPTERS.)

"The stone of help." "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

What a monument of Mercy is this! In the place where Israel had met defeat at the hands of the Philistines more than twenty years before, there the Lord wondrously came to their help and made the enemy flee before them. At Ebenezer previously, the Israelites had trusted in the ark of God instead of in the God of the ark, and they had failed: the ark had been taken from them by the enemy and for seven months the oracle had abode in a strange land. The presence of this ark, however, among a people for whom it was not intended, was a continual plague to them. Hence, they would be rid of it. They sent it home. It came to Kirjath-jearim, "city of woods," and there in obscurity it dwelt until years later when King David had it brought first to the home of Obed-edom and thence to his own city. In the meantime, before David was yet discovered to Israel, and even before Saul had been made king, while Samuel was judge and prophet, all Israel lamented because they were under the fear of the Philistines. Samuel was God's mouth to His people to command them to put away their false religion and turn whole-heartedly to the Lord their God. His words to them searched their

hearts, repentance was wrought in them, they put away from them their idols. Samuel offered a burnt-offering to the Lord, of a sucking lamb and interceded before God for Israel. What a foreview is this of Christ our High Priest, who, upon the basis of his having offered himself as a Lamb without spot to God for his people's reconciliation unto God, makes intercession for his elect before the throne of God! God heard Samuel. Out of His heaven, the Lord thundered upon the Philistines and they fled. Not one blow in their own defense did Israel strike. The Lord fought for them and gave them the victory. Thereupon, Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpeh, meaning "watch-tower," and Shen, which means "cliff." Ebenezer, the spot where previously Israel had been humiliated in defeat, was now become the place of victory by reason of the power of God revealed in their behalf. In the place where it seemed God had cast them off from being his people, there he reclaimed them and owned them his. In the beginning of Hosea's prophecy, he was told to take unto himself a "wife of whoredoms." She bore him a son and a daughter. The name of the son was Lo-ammi, meaning "they are not my people," the name of the daughter was Lo-ruhamah, meaning "without mercy." In these types, it was shown to Israel that because of their transgressions against the law of their God, the nation being corrupted through idolatry, they should later find themselves as a nation without mercy and cast off from their possessions as apparently being no people. Yet, despite all this chastisement of the Lord to be visited upon them, he would not forget the covenant made with their fathers. The last days should hold for them deliverance from their estrangement and dispersion. The children of Judah and of Israel should be gathered together and should appoint themselves one head. In the very same place where they had not found mercy and where it had been said to them, "Ye are not my people," there it shall be said to them, "Ye are the sons of the living God." So their Ebenezer shall be reared, their stone of help set up, at the coming to them of the Messiah-Savior in the place where centuries before they lost their land and were scattered abroad among the nations. On the same Mount of Olives where at his first appearing He spent nights in prayer, there where he agonized burdened with his people's sins, there where at the gate Judas' kiss betrayed him into the hands of men come out with staves and torches as though hunting some ordinary criminal: there will he yet show himself in power and great glory taking vengeance on them that know not God and to deliver his Israel from the power of antichrist. The yet unfulfilled prophecy of Zechariah, fourteenth chapter, guarantees this. There we are told that the time will be when all nations shall be gathered against Jerusalem to battle, that the city shall be taken: half of its people going forth into captivity, the residue remaining in the city. Israel will at that time touch the lowest

depths ever reached in all their centuries of persecution and trial. In their darkest hour, the Lord will appear and fight against those nations embattling Jerusalem. In that day, His feet shall stand upon the earth. Yet how very different from that time of His rejection when He first stood there! The exact place where He shall stand is not left to guessing. There on the Mount of Olives which is before Jerusalem on the east, there where in agony of soul he knelt before, there will he stand to bring deliverance to Israel hard beset by the forces of the "man of sin." At the standing there of their "Stone of Help," the Mount of Olives shall divide: half of the mountain shall remove toward the north and half of it toward the south, a very great valley shall be there into which they of the city shall flee. "The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." Great will be the victory for Israel, dreadful will be the visitation of divine wrath and judgment upon their enemies. Then shall the Lord be King over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and His Name one. (Zech. xiv. 9.)

Now go back and read the fourth and seventh chapters of first Samuel in the light of Israel's dispersion at the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A. D., and in the light of their future victory at Jerusalem when their Ebenezer shall appear, and see how clearly type fits antitype: that where the Savior suffered alone in agony in the days of his rejection, there will he show himself in glory, not alone, but accompanied by all his saints, to take vengeance on them that know not God and who have pleasure in unrighteousness. Where Israel had met defeat at the hands of the Philistines, there they later were given victory when the Lord thundered from heaven upon the enemy. Where Israel in the year 70 A. D. were overcome and scattered everywhere by the army of Rome, there shall they yet have their inheritance restored to go no more out and witness with rejoicing and praise to God the utter overthrow of their enemies.

How often in the experience of the Lord's people it is true, that where we have suffered the most pain and the most grievous humblings on account of the idolatries of our nature, there the Lord, the Spirit, seals to us proof that he is the stone of our help, that he is ours and we are his; that whereas for a moment he hid his face from us so that we had concluded we were not his and that we lacked the mark of his children, there he gathers with lovingkindness and tender mercies, saying to our soul, I am thy salvation. Though he allures his people and brings them into the wilderness, yet gives he them their vineyards from thence and makes unto them the valley of their Achor a door of hope. These things, which seem at the time to be against his chosen, are turned into a testimony for them.

Thus we come to the end of another volume of the SIGNS. The Lord has been our Help. He is our Ebenezer. The year has not been without its mistakes and misgivings, yet has he not been unmindful of us and has supplied

the sinews for our labor, the necessary sustenance for our souls. Of a truth, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." Between this place where now we stand watching and waiting, pictured forth by Mizpeh, and the heights of glory toward which our faith aspires and unto which our hope draws us, foreshadowed by the cliff of Shen, stands our Ebenezer of witness that the Lord is a present help. So for the year 1933, farewell.

H. H. L.

CLOSE OF VOLUME 101.

WITH this issue the SIGNS OF THE TIMES completes one hundred and one years of contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and we hope it may be the Lord's will for it to still go on contending for that same faith in the years to come. The past few years have indeed been trying ones. Many of our best writers have been called from their labors in this life to their heavenly reward, and we have also lost many subscribers either through death or because of the depression, but the Lord has sustained the publication thus far, and if he has future use for it he is able to still sustain it; its future is in his hand, and he will do with it as he sees fit. May his will, not ours, be done.

Many of our subscribers write us to discontinue sending the paper to them because they say they cannot afford to to pay for it, but that they receive much comfort from it and dislike very much to give it up. When one stops to consider that he is only saving a little more than one-half a cent a day by doing without the paper it seems as though he might get better results by economizing on some of his other expenses, but of course that is a matter for each one to decide for himself.

It is customary at this time of the year to give our readers a brief account of the financial condition of the SIGNS, but this year we hardly know what to tell you. While our receipts may have fallen a little short of last year, still we think the outlook for the coming year is a little brighter, especially if our friends will do what they can towards getting new subscribers for us, and will do what they can towards keeping their own subscriptions paid up, and we earnestly request you, one and all, to do what you can, and thus help us keep the old SIGNS going for the comfort of many who have no church privileges and no way of hearing gospel preaching.

In closing, we wish to thank all who have in any way assisted the SIGNS during the past years. We have much appreciated your help, whether it has been financial, your good letters for publication or your kind words of encouragement. We also desire to thank our editors for the interest they have manifested in the paper and for their good editorials during the year, and we hope the Lord may be their help and guide in the years to come.

Again thanking you all, and praying that God's blessing may rest upon all of us, we now say, Farewell for the year 1933.

J. E. B. & Co.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Brother W. J. Holloway)

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Little Creek Old School Baptist Church, at Delmar, Delaware, October 18th, 1933, sendeth greetings and love to the churches of which she is composed, and to the several churches, meetings and associations with which she corresponds.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We address you this annual Circular Letter not only to conform to established custom, but more especially to attempt to convey to you our abiding love and fellowship for all of God's elect. We realize that we are permitted to do this only by the grace of a merciful God. It is a blessed privilege to testify before the Lord's people of the hope that lies within us. If our testimony meets with the sympathy and approval of those who know and love the truth, we believe that His word is in our heart, and that he not only opens our lips so that our mouths show forth his praises, but that he also prepares the heart of the hearer to receive and understand his word. Blessed are they to whom the Father hath revealed his word, for then they have experienced the saving grace of Christ the Savior, the Son and Word of the living God.

The apostles frequently exhorted the elect of God to unity and love. Paul and Timotheus addressed their appeal "to all the saints in Christ Jesus" at a particular place to "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind," (Phil. i. 27), "being of one accord, of one mind."—Phil. ii. 2. Again, in their epistle "unto the church of God" at Corinth "with all the saints which are in all Achaia," they exhort these "brethren" to "be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace."—2 Cor. xiii. 11. Peter writes to "strangers," "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father," and urges them to be "all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren." —1 Peter iii. 8. Likewise, we in this Association appeal to all who read this letter, even though strangers to us in a temporal sense, if ye have a hope of salvation through Christ Jesus, to be of one mind.

How can persons who are not acquainted with one another, dwelling in widely separated regions, living under many different conditions, be of one mind? and what manner of mind is this? Here the power of the living God is manifest. The great unifying force in all creation is the will, the mind of the Creator, by whom all things were made, who doeth all things after the counsel of his own will, and there is none to say unto him nay, or to ask, What doest thou? Christ is head over all things to the church, which is his body; many members, but one body. Just as the mind of the body of man is in the head, so is the mind of the church of God in the Head, which is Christ. We can be of one mind only in Jesus. His Spirit shed abroad in the hearts of his chosen people causes the same mind to be in

them which was also in him. This Spirit is everlasting, the same yesterday, to-day and forever. With God there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. None come to him except he draw them. He draws all in the same manner, all are subjects of the same love, the same grace. All being dead in trespasses and sins, they are all alike, all subject to the same condemnation. When quickened into a new life, they join with one accord in giving praise to that Power which hath redeemed them from the second death. A new song is put into their mouths, a song of praise to the one Redeemer, the only power given in heaven or in earth whereby men must be saved. May you, brethren, saints of God, elect according to His grace, "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel," "for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

H. C. KER, Moderator.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

GEORGE F. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

NOTICE.

As usual, there will be DONATION DAY at THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST HOME in Salisbury, Maryland. This year, December 14th has been decided upon. All gifts other than money should be sent direct to the Home; funds can either be sent there or to Henry T. Lefferts, Treasurer, 151 Coeyman Avenue, Nutley, New Jersey. All are aware of the stringency of the times, and I hope those who are able will support this worthy cause.

R. LESTER DODSON.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. T. Rowe, September 19th, 1933, at his residence, Baltimore, Maryland, J. Willard Toadvine and Irene E. Laws, both of Salisbury, Maryland.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

BROTHER **HENRY ELMENDORF**, for thirty years a member of the Olive and Hurley Church, at Shokan, New York, departed this life October 31st, 1933, at his late residence, in Shokan, N. Y., after being stricken with apoplexy a few days before, and never regaining consciousness. The funeral services were held at his late home on Friday following his demise, the writer officiating. The interment was in the Lenox Cemetery, near Shokan. His immediate surviving relatives are his widow, a daughter, Mrs. Lottie Arnold, of Syracuse, N. Y., two sons, Burr and Earl, of Shokan, N. Y., a daughter having died two years ago. Brother Elmendorf was born November 6th, 1855, and was therefore almost seventy-eight years old at the time of his death. He had spent all his long and useful life in the vicinity of Shokan, attending the district school in his neighborhood and applying himself assidiously to whatever tasks or duties lay before him. He was a successful farmer, and during the latter part of his active career conducted a general store at Shokan, doing a large and thriving business, and winning many friends by his amiable manner and accommodating ways, and his interest in the affairs of his community. In 1878 he married Miss Sarah Coons, who survives, as stated, and she proved a devoted, faithful and efficient helpmeet, and tenderly cared for him when the infirmities of age came upon him, as rheumatism and a weak heart confined him to his home much of the time for a few years previous to his death. He was baptized in the year 1896, by the late Elder John D. Hubbell, and took an active part in church affairs. He lived near the meetinghouse, and his home was always open to the brethren and the friends of the Old School Baptist Church, his unassuming hospitality and cordial greeting impressing all who came in contact with him. His children and his wife did all that could be done, with the aid of medical skill, to minister to his temporal needs, and he will be much missed.

ALSO,

STEPHEN ABRAM MANN, of Sidney, N. Y., died at Binghamton, N. Y., Tuesday, November 14th, 1933, at the age of eighty years, death being largely due to the infirmities of advancing years. He is survived by his wife, sister Eliza Mann, and three children, Mrs. Nellie Young, of Sidney, N. Y., George Mann and Mrs. Emma Milks, of Binghamton, N. Y., also eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Stephen A. Mann was born in the year 1854, in the town of Andes, and much of his life was spent in that vicinity. In 1877 he was married, and for many years resided near Union Grove, N. Y., his wife uniting with the Middletown and Andes Old School Baptist Church at that place. In later life he moved to Rockdale, where he and his faithful and competent helpmeet conducted a farm until his declining health

made it inadvisable to follow that occupation any longer, and they removed to Sidney, N. Y. The subject of this article was an industrious, capable, hard-working man of many estimable qualities and was indeed highly respected. He had those rugged qualities of character which enable one to face the problems of life with hope undaunted and faith unshaken, alike in prosperity and adversity. He was widely known and will be much missed. His widow will be lonely indeed, and to her much sympathy is extended. The writer officiated at the funeral.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

MRS. JOSEPHINE B. WOOD, of Slate Hill, N. Y., departed this life October 21st, 1933, after an illness of many weeks. She was nearly eighty-seven years of age. We have taken the following information from the Brookfield Church records regarding her church affiliations: "Saturday, October 5th, 1878, The church met and found in union. Josephine, wife of Charles D. Wood, came before the church and expressed her desire to be baptized (having related a satisfactory experience at a former meeting). Sunday, 6th, After meeting the church received Josephine Wood as a candidate for baptism, which ordinance was forthwith administered by brother Benedict." This evidently referred to Elder William L. Benedict. We also quote from the MIDDLETOWN TIMES HERALD of October 23rd, 1933, other data concerning sister Wood, as follows: "Mrs. Josephine Brownell Wood, widow of Charles D. Wood, and last member of the once flourishing Slate Hill Old School Baptist Church, died Saturday. Mrs. Wood was not only the last, but probably the most devoted member of the congregation in the last half century. Years ago she assumed the burdens of caretaker and she became gradually a personification of the institution that was quaint in both architectural and its spiritual phases. A daughter of Jacob and Margarette Brownell, she came from Binghamton to be married to Mr. Wood in the church of his faith more than fifty years ago. In that church also her funeral will be held, the first funeral there for many years, and possibly the last. She will be buried beside her husband and children in Pine Hill cemetery. Mr. Wood died in 1904 and devoted neighbors and Old School Baptist friends from near and far supplied the lack of close relatives since her daughter's death several years ago. Mrs. Wood leaves a brother, Delance Brownell, of Binghamton; three nieces, Mrs. Maud Seawson, Mrs. Ella Richardson and Mrs. Lena Batrick, all of Binghamton, and a nephew, Frank Brownell, of Virginia."

The funeral was held in the Brookfield meetinghouse at Slate Hill, N. Y., on Tuesday, October 24th, at 1:00 o'clock in the afternoon, where, notwithstanding the fact that it was a most disagreeably rainy day, more than sixty people (including her brother from Binghamton) were gathered to pay their last respects to the departed. The writer read one of her favorite hymns, "Rock of Ages," in introducing the service, followed by prayer and the reading of the forty-sixth Psalm. In his comments upon this Psalm he endeavored to emphasie the thought that "God is the refuge of his saints." Hymn 1052, Beebe's collection, "Jesus, Lover of my Soul," was used in closing the service in the meetinghouse, following which was the interment. Sister Wood will be well remembered by those who have attended the Annual Meetings held at Slate Hill for many years, as well as older brethren, for she was a member of the church for over fifty-five years and was truly faithful and devoted to the cause of Christ.

In conclusion, we would like to thank the different friends for their many acts of kindness to our sister during the last years of her life.

R. L. D.

ANDREW G. HUTCHISON, a lover of the doctrine of God our Savior and of those who believe and preach it, departed this earthly life at his home at Herndon, Virginia, January 19th, 1933. He was born April 3rd, 1855. His father was George Hutchison. His mother was sister Courtney Hutchison, who was a member of the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, and had been baptized by Elder R. C. Leachman. He married Miss Lucy Presgraves June 7th, 1893, who survives him. Funeral services were held at his home, and he was buried in the cemetery at Herndon, Virginia. One of his favorite chapters in the Bible was the ninth chapter of Romans, which the writer of this notice used at the funeral. The doctrine of God's sovereign choice of his people in Christ before the foundation of the world was a great comfort to him. Election, though repugnant to the carnal mind, is honey and oil out of the rock to those that are saved. While Mr. Hutchison never united with the church, he loved to attend upon the meetings, and rejoiced in the declaration of the gospel by the servants of God. He had been for some years a school-teacher, had been engaged in merchantile business and always took an active part in the affairs of the community where he lived. All who knew him respected him. He was not afraid to affirm what he believed to be the truth, either in politics or in religion, two subjects in which he was more vitally interested than in anything else. We miss him in our meetings, as we do many others whom the Lord has called home in recent years. His wife and companion has our deepest sympathy. May she be comforted of the Lord. As we stand upon the shores of time bidding farewell to those going from us into the better country, we are reminded that time is fleeting and that man here on earth passes his life in the midst of a vain show. May the Lord direct in his unerring wisdom all the steps of his pilgrim children and safely conduct them into their inheritance in glory.

H. H. L.

DEACON OLIVER R. KUGLER, our beloved brother in Christ, died at his home, in Frechtown, N. J., May 24th, 1933, aged sixty-nine years. Brother Kugler had been in failing health several years prior to his death, but confined to his bed about ten days before the end came. He was the son of Wilson and Eliza Kugler, born and reared near Frenchtown, N. J. He united with the Kingwood Church, of Locktown, N. J., in April, 1894, was baptized by the late Balas Bundy. Directly after the death of brother Kugler's father, who was a deacon of the Kingwood Church, he was chosen to that office, which he filled well. In 1886 he was married to Miss Caroline Huff, who, together with two daughters and two grandsons, survives him. He is also survived by one sister, Mrs. Caroline Bellis. Brother Kugler's delight was in the church and its ordinances. Firm in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and in all of my acquaintance I have never known a man better indoctrinated. His spiritual insight was really wonderful and argumentative powers not surpassed, and seldom equaled. The love and confidence between him and the writer was like unto that of David and Jonathan. No one loved him more. Had known him more than thirty-five years and there was never a thought, except of the very best of each other. His home, with all its pleasant surroundings, is desolate without him, his widow and children so express themselves. The place he filled in the church is not likely ever to be filled.

The funeral service was held from his home, conducted by the writer, and was largely attended and the interment took place in the family plot in the Frenchtown cemetery. May the Lord help us to bear our great loss.

His pastor, H. C. KER.

ALSO,

CALDWELL J. MORRIS, our dear brother, died at his home, near Delmar, Delaware, August 7th, 1933, aged eighty-one years. Brother Morris suffered a stroke three years or more prior to his death and was a confirmed invalid afterward until the end came which relieved him of all suffering. In 1880 he was baptized in the fellowship of the Little Creek Church, Delaware, by the late Elder E. Rittenhouse, and ever lived consistent with his profession. He was a firm believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine, and had neither time nor patience for anything else. He once taught singing lessons and was a great help to the church in its singing, as he possessed a good voice. He was Clerk of the church for a number of years, and it was his delight to be present at all services as long as he was able. June 27th, 1901, he married Miss Edith Olephant, and to them seven children were born, five boys and two girls. The widow and the children survive him, together with one daughter by a former marriage. We all miss brother Morris very much, but have the blessed assurance that he is at rest, having received the crown of righteousness which awaits all who love the appearing of our Lord.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer in the Old Baptist meetinghouse in Delmar, Delaware, and was largely attended. The interment took place in the family plot in Smith's Mills graveyard, a few miles from Delmar, and where he was baptized. May the family have strength as their day.

His pastor, H. C. KER.

ALSO,

OUR very dear sister in the Lord, **CORDELIA SIRMAN,** passed from this life into the beyond, at her home in Snow Hill, Maryland, September 18th, 1933, aged 60 years, 2 months and 18 days. On March 27th, 1894, she was married to William Sirman, who, together with two sons and one daughter survives her. She is also survived by her aged mother, one brother and, I think, two sisters. Sister Sirman was baptized in the fellowship of the Messaongo Church by the late Elder T. M. Poulson on July 17th, 1896, and was received by letter into the Snow Hill Church in 1923. Sister Sirman was a noble woman, kind and faithful in all the walks of life and was a general favorite both in and out of the church. Devoted to her family, she often overtaxed her strength in performing her duty to those she so well loved. Her home was a pleasant resting-place, and it was her joy to have her friends visit her. About a year ago she developed heart trouble, which at last took her away. We all loved her and miss her very much, but know it is better for her than for us who are left to mourn. The home is entirely broken up, and our friend, Mr. Sirman, is at present making his home with one of the sons. Our sympathy goes out to Mr. Sirman and the children in their great loss.

The service was conducted in the Snow Hill meetinghouse, conducted by the writer, assisted by the minister of the M. P. denomination of Snow Hill, at the request of the children. The interment took place in the cemetery adjoining. It is often hard for us to say, "Thy will be done."

Her pastor,

H. C. KER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

A. E. Clark, Kans., $1; D. R. Black, Canada, $3; Mrs. Henry Hayman, Md., $2; "H," Md., $2; Mrs. C. A. Shryock, Va., $1; Carl P. Bennett, Md., $1; Huldah J. Leonard, N. Y., $1; G. C. Jordan, Mo., $5; Edgar Ray West, Nebr., $1; Mrs. Laura R. Elgin, D. C., $2; Miss Flora Kerr, Ont., $1; Mrs. Effie J. Nethaway, N. Y., $1; Sarah I. Rittenhouse, N. J., $3; Lillie M. Jenkins, Pa., $3; Mrs. M. E. Williams, Texas, $1; Jesse C. Ellis, Ohio, $3; Attie A. Curtis, Maine, $1; Henry T. Lefferts, N. J., $1.

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IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

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ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church will meet (D. V.) every second Sunday at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California; every third Sunday at 521 West Nevada Street, Ontario, California; every fourth Sunday at 3516 Franklin Avenue, Riverside, California.

W. L. SLUSHER.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 808 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one-half block west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

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"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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ELDER C. W. ANDERSON,

ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 102. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1934. NO. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., Nov. 1, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS:—I want to write a letter of commendation to you and I feel sure you will not take it as flattery from me, but as one of the least of all saints writing of some of the truths that have come from your pens as God led you by his Holy Spirit into his unsearchable truths which you have from time to time sent out to his sheep scattered abroad throughout the United States and Canada, as well as in England, where those articles were read with joy and rejoicing by all of the little ones who read them; I mean all who were called according to His purpose and knew the joyful sound of salvation by grace alone, for you have been kept in that strait and narrow way by the power of God, not because you were by nature any better than other men, but for a purpose known of himself, and, I hope and believe, revealed to all who so joyfully read the dear old SIGNS, for they do believe that it has been upheld by his almighty and all-powerful hand for the purpose of feeding his sheep, which it has so faithfully done, and they have been comforted and built up in their most holy faith by the articles they read in its columns. Many of its readers have been shut in and could not get to meeting to hear the preached word, and they, like me, have looked and longed for the day when the SIGNS would come laden with the good things which our souls long for, the things which God has prepared for those who love him and wait for his appearing, that comfort that men can neither give nor prevent them from enjoying, and I am glad they cannot, for if they could they would, for it robs man of all honor and glory and gives it to God and the Lamb, where it belongs. They are so full of love and mercy, and we who are so comforted by the articles in the SIGNS believe, as do also the editors and publishers, that this matter is indited of God, and we give him all the glory, but it makes our hearts go out to the editors and publishers in love, for we know that they

could not write so comfortingly if they had not first been taught of God and only tell of the comfort whereof they themselves are comforted, and we do rejoice with them that God is so mindful of us who are so situated that we cannot get to meeting.

I have just reread the account of the Black Rock convention, which must have been a sad meeting indeed for those old fathers in Israel, when they had to take a firm stand for the right as it was given them of God to know, but it was up to them to stand firm on that rock which Christ told Peter his church should be built upon, and told him that the gates of hell should not prevail against it, and how true it is that they have not, but sometimes I get fearful that they will when the storm rages and I am so cast down, until the God of Jeshurun comes riding in the heavens in the help of his people and I am lifted up and my doubts and fears vanish like the dew on a June morning when the Sun of righteousness arises with healing in his wings, then I realize there is no God like our God, who declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. How can any one read this statement with an understanding heart and then say God did not predestinate all things? He will do all his pleasure, and created all things for his glory, and all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose, those who are born again, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man. We have nothing to fear, for if God be for us who can be against us, since all power is vested in him and he is ruling, both in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand? Therefore we give him the glory and honor for upholding the SIGNS and its correspondents. Just think, one hundred and one years is a long time for a paper to continue in the face of such opposition. Even when it came into existence, as well as ever since, it has been assailed by the enemies of gospel truth, and even now they cannot find a single flaw in the doctrine it upholds. "The ssword of the Lord, and of Gideon." The sword of the Lord is all-powerful, for it is the Spirit of God, and it is so powerful that it is able to divide even the soul and spirit, and it was this sword that Gideon fought with, not by his own choosing, but it was proven to him that this sword was all he needed to put the armies of Moab to flight, and if it was all-sufficient then it is yet, and will always be enough, and we need not fear to trust him to uphold the SIGNS as long as he has a use for it, and when its usefulness ceases the hand that has upheld it so long will be removed, and while we through our short-sightedness may grieve and lament, but our grief will be turned to joy, for God is ruling all things, and he knows what is best for us and what will be to his honor and glory. Nevertheless, it is our duty as long as the SIGNS is upheld by his word to sustain it with our support, not only by our love and by writing the editors

and telling them how their editorials comfort and build us up when we are cast down on account of our indwelling sin, because we believe their writings are indited of God, but when they give all their time to publishing the SIGNS they must live and must buy all their living, their clothes as well as what they eat. Then they must have a place to live, and even rent costs money, if they do not own the houses they live in, and it costs money to pay taxes and keep up a house. Then there is the plant, or place where the paper is printed, the building, the ground the building stands on, the press, all cost money, also the taxes, the paper, ink and other materials used go towards the cost of publishing the SIGNS. Then there is the work of printing and mailing, not to mention the ones it takes to do all this, which must be a labor of love, for we who have homes of our own know that it takes much to maintain them, and we know that the SIGNS' people do not (as some have said) have an easy time of it, while we are paying such a big price for the paper. Now it may be out of place to speak of this, but I know that when the editors tell us they have a hard time to get enough money to pay their expenses such is the case. I know they would not falsify to us, for I know that the Spirit of God would not flow through them in their communications if they were not children of the heavenly King, for such he chooses to feed his little ones, not the wise and prudent of this world at least. No, for those who are wise in their own minds or conceits God has hidden these things from them. The only time it is recorded that He rejoiced was when he rejoiced in spirit, and said his Father had hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes, even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight that no flesh should glory in thy sight. And how consistent are all his words. They do show forth his excellency and greatness over his little ones, who are only dust and ashes compared to him. My greatest desire is to exalt him and tell of his great love, but I cannot find words to express my thoughts. It is too high for me, I cannot attain unto it. I have tried to fathom his immensity by thinking how can it be possible for him to be present with all his children at the same time, and watching over them, and at the same time ruling all other things in the world, causing them to work together for good to them that love him? but I get lost in wonder and amazement, and exclaim, Wonderful, wonderful! But such is the God we love and worship, and we can only know these things by experience, and that not of ourselves. It is very comforting to know we have such a God, and that he has chosen us. Even though we are called upon to bear the hinder part of the cross of Christ, we know it is light compared with that load which Jesus bore for us, and it is a mark of distinction, for it shows us that the world hates us, and that we are not of the world, for the world will love its own and hate and persecute those who love and hold up Jesus as the standard of all righteousness, and since there are so few who give God all the

glory, I feel that it behooves us to all stick together and fight the good fight of faith, not forgetting the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, and the much more as we see the day approaching, and it seems that day is near at hand, for there is surely a falling away, and the man of sin is revealed. In this city of about 38,000 I know of but one brother and one sister who give God all the glory, while the city is full of churches (so called) who believe in works as a means unto salvation. They all have their place in this world, and all must stand before the God of the whole earth to be judged according to their works, and we are sure no wrong will be done, for the foundation of God standeth sure, for God knoweth them that are his. He is the only Judge that is all-wise, while there are many foolish judges who claim to know who are God's children and who are not. Now Saul was just as much a child of God when he was breathing out threatenings against those who were worshiping indeed and in truth as he was after he was halted by God on the road to Damascus, but oh how humiliating it was to him after his eyes were opened and he could see and know how he had persecuted the church of the true and living God. But was he any worse than we were? No, in no wise. I wish I was one-half as good as Paul, who conferred not with flesh and blood, and was not slack when that heavenly call came, but was bold and counted not his life dear unto him, but in the face of all opposition he was bold to preach Christ, and him crucided, as the only way of salvation, and when we read what he had to suffer it makes us bow our heads in shame, but he tells us that in all these things he was more than a conqueror through Christ that strengthened him. Jesus is just the same to-day, and it does not make any difference how much we are made to suffer we are glad we are accounted worthy to suffer, and it is our friends who cause us to suffer most, those who are nearest and dearest to us, who cause our hearts to ache. We do not expect anything else but hatred from our enemies, but when those who have professed to love God and have labored with us in his vineyard, lifting Jesus on high, declaring he is the only Savior of sinners, and that he did alone bear our sins in his own body, and by the shedding of his own blood redeemed us to God, our hearts were knit together with theirs in love, because they gave him all honor and glory, then to have these same ones turn and limit the Holy One of Israel our hearts are torn and rent asunder and we do mourn as the dove that is bereft of her mate, yet this is our lot. The ties of nature are very strong, yet we should know no man after the flesh. He that loveth father or mother more than God is not worthy of him, or he that loveth husband or wife more than God is not worthy of him, for it is written, Ye shall have no other god before me. He alone is God, and beside him there is no Savior. We shall have no idols. He is before all things.

It has been sixty-eight years since I first knew what it was to love Jesus, and oh how I did love him then, although I was but a child scarcely five years old, for it was in February and I would not be five until March 14th. I was out in the front yard where father chopped wood, and you know how bright the sun shines on a clear day when the ground is covered with snow. I was alone, and singing, "I will arise and go to Jesus, he will embrace me in his arms," when it seemed Jesus took me in his arms and flew away with me and I was very happy, for oh how I loved him and I was in his arms and he loved me. I was very happy to be with him then, and he has come to me many times since, and always when I was cast down, and oh how he has lifted me up, and I love him just as much now when I am old. He is the same to me, and that is why I love you and all who were redeemed by him.

Now may the grace of our God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will comfort, stablish and strengthen you by his might in the inner man, may he enable you by his grace to continue to send forth the SIGNS laden with the precious fruit of the vine to the hungry little ones who are fed by it.

In bonds of love,

DAVIS BURCH.

[WE much appreciate this encouraging letter from brother Burch and thank him for his kind words. Our sincere prayer is that our God will so guide us that nothing dishonoring to his name may ever be published in the columns of the SIGNS.—ED.]

ENDICOTT, VA., NOV. 7, 1933.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—DEAR BROTHER:—I appreciate your kind letter, and wish to say that I am well pleased with the SIGNS. I would be glad if our people would patronize this paper, for it is not only the oldest Old School Baptist paper, but one of the firmest in contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints. It is a great comfort to this poor sinner to read from the pen of the servants of God, from different sections of the country, of the glorious truths of salvation by grace. I have no doubt about the doctrine of grace being true, but I often fear I am not one of the redeemed family embraced in the covenant ordered in all things and sure. I was made to hope in the sure mercies of God when I was a mere boy. After giving up all hope of ever being redeemed from all iniquity, my breath seemed to stop, I could not move, but my inward groanings were to God for mercy, if it were his holy will, Lord, save or I perish; God, be merciful to me, a sinner. If not deceived, when I came to the end of the law and died to the love of sin Christ, as a bright light, appeared in my room in the hours of night and took the burden of guilt, sin and condemnation away, and to my surprise I was made to sing, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me." I united with the Long Branch Church, in Franklin County, Virginia, in 1899, and was baptized by the late Elder W. A. Via. For several years I was enabled by grace to rejoice in the Lord and feast with the dear saints

when we met in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. I began to have many sore trials, with the impression to speak in the name of the Lord, "and tell the sinners round what a dear Savior I had found." This gave me great distress, but I was made willing to be anything the Lord would have me be, and do his bidding, if it was his will for me to speak in his name, and he would go with me and sustain me by his power and grace. I began exercising in public in 1910. In much weakness I have tried to go and tried to quit all these years. I feel at times that had it not been for the sustaining grace of God, who is Sovereign over all worlds, times and events, I would have perished by the way. At times my hope is strengthened, when I am made to hope I have the assurance from heaven, in the still small voice speaking within, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." When this grace with faith, which is the gift of God, is in me I then can "glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." I believe in the doctrine of election or choice of God, in the salvation of every heir of promise, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. "Yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." This salvation was complete in the mind and purpose of God before the world began. It was finished in the birth, life, death, burial, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, who was God manifest in the flesh, to die in our stead, the Just for the unjust. Since his resurrection and ascension he ever lives to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. There will be a final resurrection of the dead, both of the just (made so by the blood of Christ) and the unjust (who were left to perish in their own sins). The redeemed family are the sheep of his pasture. "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." The same voice will say to the wicked on the left hand, Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. This will all be to the praise of his justice, while the redeemed family will enter everlasting rest, to praise his holy name for ever and ever, to the praise of his glorious grace for redeeming them from all sin. Oh that men would praise the Lord, for his mercy endureth forever.

I am, I hope, your little brother in gospel bonds,

J. G. L. HASH.

NEWARK, Delaware.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find check for my renewal for one year. I sincerely regret that I am unable to contribute more in advance, even for some one who cannot afford to keep up their own subscription. But we have no more, no less, that what is provided for us by our God. The earth is mine, and the fullness thereof, and many creatures on earth selfishly feel that the

portion they have in their possession is theirs by right of domain, or man's rights, but it can be taken from them over night. The thought occurs to me, Some person in this world, and perhaps within the circle of the SIGNS among our people, whether member of the militant church or not, could spare at least five hundred dollars towards the support of the SIGNS, immediately, towards the upkeep of it alone, and they would not miss it. The editorials contained in it each month are sufficient for this temporal gift towards its support, let alone the letters from such spiritual writers as Elders Edwards, Barnes, Attebery, Greathouse, Bond, Walker, and many others. As you say in your December number, many of the saints, such as dear old brother J. W. McClanahan and others, have passed on to their reward, but many are living to support and sustain the SIGNS to the end, whenever that time shall be. Just stop and reflect what this small sum above mentioned would do towards giving many the benefit of perhaps a semimonthly copy of the SIGNS. When money is accumulated in a miserly way to the extent that it becomes an idol in the heart and mind of a subject of grace, then it becomes a curse to that especial one, and to him or her who reads this and their hearts burn within them, and this form of idolatry consumes them for the time, like unto the man (and member) in years gone by, and now deceased, who placed a penny in the collection basket from time to time, until he was discovered and it was told of him, then perhaps a change of heart may overcome them. The earth is mine, and the fullness thereof, the cattle on a thousand hills are mine, and the beasts in the forest are mine, saith the Lord of hosts.

Unworthily,

J. B. MILLER.

MARTIN, Tennessee.

DEAR EDITORS:—If one so sinful and unworthy as I am dare attempt to address you. I know I am far behind with my subscription. Never have I been so in arrears since I began taking the SIGNS, in the year 1911. The Book says, A time to all things. It seems like the things I want to do and feel are my duty to do are crowded out by earthly debts. I am so poor now in financial affairs it seems at times I cannot see how I am ever going to pull through to the end of my journey. I know it can only be by the mercy of an all-wise God. O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, then give God all the praise, honor and glory. I know he has led me thus far, and I am made to know that he will lead me on, for of myself I can do nothing. When the world was made I was ordained to be here; if not, I would not be here. I know I am already dead to this natural life. I have become blind to the things of this sinful world. The older I get the smaller I am made to see myself, the more dependent upon my Lord. It does not seem to be that way with the people of this town. I sit here watching them going to their Sunday Schools and meetings and it makes

me feel little, still it gives me a hope to know I believe as the few the Bible speaks of. I would not exchange that hope for ten thousand towns like this, to think I have a blessed God to trust for all things; no confidence in the flesh. I am almost alone in this world as to earthly ties, but I am made to know that the flesh is very weak, and even if I had a world full of my own kin they could not save my soul. God has all power in earth and in all deep places, and I am glad to know it is that way. I take what my Bible says for everything, not what men say. They often ask me to go with them to their meetings here, but I would not know how to act if I did, as I would be entirely out of my place. I told one Missionary preacher who is growing old that I did not believe in their Sunday Schools, for the Bible says to teach not every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least unto the greatest of them. Yes, He teaches them to see their nothingness and unworthiness, and makes them willing to fall at his feet in dirt or ashes, for he says, My people shall be a willing people. I want to be made submissive to his will, no matter what it is, and give him all the praise, for it all belongs to him. What could puny man do if it were left to him?

Please forgive me for writing so much. I only wanted to renew my subscription and say a few words about my feelings, but it seems like when I begin I cannot stop, and there is nothing in what I have written. I want the SIGNS as long as I can pay for it, and I hope the Lord will open the way for me to continue taking it. I do not believe he will let it fail us and go down, for it is a comfort to his little ones. I do not see how I could get along without it, for I read so many good letters that tell my feelings better than I can. I feel I know the writers and wish I could see and talk with every one of them. I want to thank you for sending me the SIGNS so long without my renewing, and I hope I will never get so far behind again.

Please excuse all mistakes, and remember me in your prayers, is the wish of a stranger in the flesh. This is submitted in love and sweet fellowship to every one of God's little ones everywhere. If saved, it is through the grace and mercy of an all-wise God.

(MRS.) J. A. PHILLIPS.

McDOWELL, Ky., Oct. 14, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will attempt to send you a literary contribution that, I trust, will be worthy of publication; yea, and will gladden the spirits of wayworn and footsore pilgrims in their journey to the summerland.

"For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation."—Psalms cxlix. 4. According to the immutable, infinite and eternal King that inhabiteth eternity (and dwells with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones), we, the poor in spirit, are God's covenant people, because he hath wrought in us all our

"works," and revealed himself to us by his good Spirit. We see and feel our poverty and imperfection, because the Light of life hath shone in us and all our righteousness is as filthy rags. We have nothing to trust in of our own; we have nothing to plead but the blood of Jesus. The precious blood of the Lamb of God satisfied the vengeance of heaven against "disobedient" man and brought his pardon. I mean by "disobedient man" God's special people that violated his spiritual law, those who fell in Adam by the certain foreknowledge and purpose of the Father. God and his Son consulted and designed that the sinner should in time be "suffered" to be lost, so as certainly it should be "recorded" again. Recorded, I say, in such a way as that both the King and his Son would get themselves eternal fame and glory thereby. Before the foundation of the world the Son promised his Father to be his servant to recover his Israel again. He made amends for the sins of Israel, those that God gave him out of the world. The Son of the Highest finished the atoning work on the cross ("For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation"), but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior, Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. God uses means to carry on and to carry out his work, therefore he calls, separates and seals his predestinated and sanctified ones to preach Jesus to his people. (See Jer. i. 5.) Preaching is but the way and means of God of stirring up the conscience, understanding, will and affections of his loved ones. God puts life into the child of God to seek his own health, happiness and salvation. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."—John vi. 29. "For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation." God's love is an everlasting love, because God is unchangeable, and to say that God loves now is to say that he always did love and always will. There is no past nor future with God. What we call past, present and future he wraps in one eternal now. In Ephesians ii. 4, 5, he says, "For his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins." The "we" and "us" in the holy document, as I see it, means the people that God taketh "pleasure" in to "beautify" their souls with salvation. God must bless his covenant people because his covenant, not ours, binds him to do so. God hath sworn by himself (he could swear by no greater), saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. God was good and willing to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel by an oath. Children of the elect lady, what more can you ask of him than what he hath done, is doing and promised yet to do for you? Be not afraid, only believe, for all things are possible to him that believeth. Ask and ye shall receive; knock and it shall be opened. "For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation."

If my little say is good, I hope you may find room for it. I send it in the spirit of faith and meekness, through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to my brother sufferers in the faith of the gospel.

Devotedly yours,

MILFORD HALL, SR.

LYNCHBURG, Tennessee.

DEAR CHILDREN OF GOD:—I will in my weak way try and write a part of what I hope the good Lord has done for me. In the year 1886, when I was about the age of thirty, I began to be afflicted. I saw my lost and ruined condition, ten thousand talents in debt and not a farthing with which to pay. I felt as though I were going to die and right to hell I was going. I could not see how God could be just in saving such a wretch as I felt myself to be. Of course I tried the works of the law the first thing. At different times I have gotten down on my knees at home in secret to try to pray, promising the Lord that if he would forgive me I would do better, but instead of doing better I grew worse and worse. My prayers did not seem to rise higher than my head. I was in this awful condition about three days and nights. I did not feel any better as long as I tried to accomplish my own salvation, but, thank the Lord, the time came when I had to stand still and know that he is God and beside him there is no other. I thought, Here, take me, Lord, and do with me as thou seest fit. If I am damned it is just. If I am saved it is just. Thou art a just God, and if I am sent to hell thy righteous law approves it well. Still I would go back to the flesh at different times to try to get something good out of it, but every time I tried it I would fall at his feet as dead. Why, oh why, should we worry so long trying to get something good out of the flesh when there is nothing good in it? That expectation left me all at once, years ago, and has never returned, so you see I have the peace of mind the world knows nothing of. When I get in trouble I go to my heavenly Father for refuge and shelter. He will help in time of need, for he has promised never to leave nor forsake his children. The flesh is a cross, but Christ tells his children to lay aside the weight and the sin that doth so easily beset them and to run with patience the race that is set before them, looking to him as the author and finisher of their faith. The flesh is contrary to the Spirit's teaching, so that brings about the warfare that will last until death. But I am in the hand of a just God. O Lord, teach me never to trust in the arm of flesh, but let me trust in the true and living God, who has all power in heaven and in earth. I want to do thy will, O God. Not my will but thine be done.

I joined the Primitive Baptist Church called Old Bethel, near Lynchburg, Moore County, Tennessee, in the year 1886 or 1887, and was baptized by Elder Johnson. Since then I have never been dissatisfied with the church, for I believe it to be the church Christ set up when he was here on earth. I have been living in that church forty-five years. I am seventy-seven years

old and have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. If I even reach heaven and immortal glory it will not be by any good that I have done, nor any one else, it will be by the grace of God.

This is a part of my experience, if I have any. You can publish it if you see fit; if not, all will be right with me.

JANE PARKES SIMPSON.

DETROIT, Mich., Nov. 24, 1930.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—I am sending you a portion of a letter which I received from my mother, Mrs. Wm. Mathis. If you care to publish it you may; if not, please return it, and it will be all right with me. I enjoy reading the SIGNS very much. My folks have been taking the paper ever since I can remember.

Yours in christian love,

BERTIE MATHIS.

SOMETIMES I believe we magnify our troubles and hard times. We should feel thankful to our blessed Redeemer that life and the things that we experience are as light and easy as they are. If it were not for the blessed hand of God smoothing out the rough places and lifting our feet above destruction's path we would be worse off than we are. Even the nations are preserved from destruction by his almighty power, ruling and superruling everything that comes to pass, and forbidding the evil to come that Satan would bring if left to himself. Oh we should fall before the only true and living God and worship him. I wish I were perfect, so that I could serve and worship him in a pure and perfect way at all times. But it is best as it is, for he does all things well, and he made us. If he had wanted us to be sinless, holy beings, we would have been, for he does his will in heaven and in the earth, and rules all things after the counsel of his own will, and I am very glad he does. Our most holy and righteous Father will do right and I feel safe in his keeping. Even if troubles should come, and it be his will that we should suffer here, I know that he will not let us pass through anything without him, for he has promised never to leave nor forsake his people. I am sure that in all our afflictions he is afflicted, for he is one with us. We are bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, and he is the life, I in you and you in me, showing the oneness. I and my Father are one. So we should be good and kind to all people, especially those of the household of faith, for there is a two-fold union there. One Lord, one faith and one baptism, and the great and eternal God is over all, through all and in us all, for it is by him that we live, move and have our being. There is no life, even natural life, without God. He is the life of the whole creation. All life is of God.

I love to study over the mysteries of everything, knowing that God understands it all, rules it all, preserves it all as it pleases him. The lot is cast into the lap, but God is the disposer of it all, so we need not worry and think we may get more of certain things than we should, for God will not hand us too

much, but will give us as it pleases him. Are you not glad that our God is the God of all things, and that he rules all things and will preserve according to his will, and that all graces are given to us from his own bountiful hand, and that we are saved by grace?

Now listen, the Scriptures do not say we are born again by grace, but saved by grace, so it seems to me that we are saved every moment of our lives by his grace. Salvation is of the Lord. Our Redeemer is our salvation. He is our Savior. This means just what it says. We are kept by the power of God, and we are not our own keepers. Paul says, By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. Was he talking to dead sinners or to the church? Then if he was talking to the church and people who were already alive, and telling them that, why do our people want to say that this is only speaking of the new birth? I do not believe it means the new birth at all. But Paul was teaching the people of God there, showing them that they were saved at all times by the grace of God; which means love of God. Love is the foundation, through faith. Faith is the operator, it operates, therefore we are able to work out our own salvation, for it is God that works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. If we have the love of God in us, and he gives us faith to believe if we do a thing it is right, this doing it is all the fruit of the faith that dwells in us. So it is all of God. We believe, therefore we work. Love is the root, faith the tree, and our work is the fruit of this tree. If the tree is evil so will be the fruit. We are the ground in which it is grown and Christ is the great husbandman.

(MRS.) WILLIAM MATHIS.

CARROLLTON, MO., NOV. 9, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS:—I want to renew the subscription of Miss Mattie Watson, which expires December 15th, 1933. Miss Watson will be ninety years old to-morrow (November 10th, 1933), having been born in Adams County, Ohio, November 10th, 1843. The home of J. M. and Kezzia Watson was always open to their brethren. They helped to organize the Hope Primitive Old School Baptist Church at Wakenda, Missouri, about the year 1874, which church was later moved to Miami, Missouri. Elder R. M. Thomas, of Platt County, Missouri, an able minister of the gospel of Christ, served as pastor. Martha Jane, or "Aunt Matt," as every one calls her, took care of her mother, who was blind, and an invalid sister who never was able to walk and who lived to be about twenty-five years old, from the time her father died, in 1879, until her mother died, in August, 1899. Mattie Watson never united with any church, but she is a strong believer in the predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass, and tells a fine christian experience. She regrets never having been baptized, but we console her by telling her the blood of Christ is sufficient for all her sins. She would not think of doing without

the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, although it has to be read to her.

This letter is written by her nephew my marriage. I am eighty-two years old and very nervous. She is the daughter of Joseph M. and Kezzia Watson, who came to Carroll County, Missouri, in the fall of 1872, and the subject of this article came with them and other members of the family. Her parents were Old School Baptists in their young days. They took the SIGNS OF THE TIMES almost from the time it was first published. Her father passed away in June, 1878, and her mother lived to be ninety-six years old. She had been blind for twenty years. She passed away in August, 1899.

Dear brethren, I say brethren because I feel like saying it, and not because I feel worthy, I joined this Old School Baptist Church in the year 1875 because I loved the church and the brethren, and they were kind and took me in and gave me a home with the Lord's people. My dear companion joined in the year 1878. She passed away August 6th, 1933.

You can throw this letter away if you think best, but please send on the paper, for I think it will please my old blind aunt, who has a very lonely time. Think of me when at the throne of grace, for I am sad and lonely and need your prayers.

J. A. LYNCH.

ELKINS, West Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—As our subscription for the SIGNS expires with the December number, we are sending you a check for two dollars to renew for another year, as my wife and I do not think we could do without the comfort we receive from its precious pages. We look for it each month, anxious to receive it. We think the SIGNS is a clean paper, always bringing good news from a far country, and we believe in what the SIGNS advocates. I have been a reader of it for many years. When we receive a number and do not see my brother's (J. W. McClanahan) articles in the number it causes me to feel that my stay on earth is short. We are, wife and I, in our eighties. Wife is eighty-one and I am eighty-two, so we cannot expect to live many more years. But we are sure when God's time comes we will go, and our only hope is Jesus Christ's blood shed for us on the cross, when he bowed his head and gave up the ghost. So we look to him for all blessings in time and eternity.

G. B. McCLANAHAN.

FORT WORTH, Texas, July 14, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is with a sad heart I am writing you to discontinue sending the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to my mother's address, which was Mrs. Anna Smith, 1029 Broadway Street, Plainview, Texas. Mother passed away July 5th, at her son's home in Fort Worth, Texas. Oh it is so hard to give her up, but God called her and she answered the summons. She wanted to go, and talked much about going, and told me many times not to mourn for her when she was called home, for she would be resting and her sufferings

would be over. She talked with me just before she was taken sick about Job's faith in God. Oh that I might stand firm in the faith as mother did, but I am a weak, doubting, sinful being, and can only stand by the help of my blessed Redeemer, and without him I fall.

I want to thank you editors and all who help send the SIGNS to "the poor of the flock" for sending it to my mother. She derived much comfort from it, as she was so afflicted she could not attend the meetings. Some time in the near future, if it is God's will, I want to subscribe for the SIGNS. I have read it ever since I was large enough to read. When I was a child I turned through them and read every experience of grace in them I could find. May God help you all to continue publishing your good paper, for it has been a great blessing in my mother's home, and this is the first time I will fail to read it.

Thank you again for your kindness to my darling mother.

(MRS.) BESSIE WILTON.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

WHEN remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it. By referring to these dates you can tell to just what time your subscription is paid. Dec. 32 means your subscription expired December, 1932; June 33 means your subscription expired June, 1933; Dec. 33 that it expired December, 1933, etc.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association, now in session with the First and Second Churches of Roxbury, September 13th, 14th and 15th, 1933, to the churches with which we correspond, sends christian greeting in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Another year has passed, and by the kind providence and tender mercy of Almighty God we have been permitted to meet in an association to listen to the word of God preached in its purity. Your messengers have come to us with messages of love and gospel truths, preaching Jesus the way, the truth and the life, giving God all the glory, to whom all the glory belongs. There has been one flow of love and unity manifest among us, reminding us that God still reigns and rules in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? We crave your correspondence in the future as in the past, and we hope if it is God's will that we may meet another year to listen to the same gospel truths that have been set forth at this meeting.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Shokan, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday between the second and third Sundays in September, 1934, when we hope to meet you again. Until then, dear brethren, farewell.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1934.

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NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

CIRCUMSTANCES which tend to hopelessness and despair among men should kindle with hope and expectation those who trust in God. Impossibilities with men are not at all difficulties with God. There is nothing too hard for the Lord. (Gen. xviii. 14; Jer. xxxii 27.) To Abraham one hundred years old, and to Sarah ninety, the fulfillment of God's promise to them seemed impossible. Naturally it was God, the Creator, is himself above creation and is himself not bound by the laws established by him to govern nature. He does that which with men is impossible of accomplishment. At the appointed time, Isaac was born. Natural difficulties were overcome. The supernatural became a fact. Vital revealed religion is essentially supernatural, miraculous. Take the miracle element out of the Scriptures, eliminate the supernatural from the lives of the children of God, and the result is hopelessness and despair.

Elijah on Mt. Carmel in the presence of all Israel, proved the reality of his faith in God to whom nothing is impossible, and so confounded the idol worship of the prophets of Baal. Twelve barrels of water were poured upon Elijah's altar, upon his sacrifices and upon his wood. All was water-soaked and the trench about it filled with water. It would have been miracle enough for the fire to fall from heaven to consume the offering; but God does his work in such a way that credit cannot go to man. The wood was saturated so that there could be no possibility of men having anything to do with it. Wherever there are conditions of impossibilities and it is evident that man is powerless, we may watch to see God's power. He reveals himself at, and unto, the "ends of the earth." The one primary purpose and end of all prophecy is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the "seed of the woman" foretold in early Genesis. No man fathered him. He is not the "seed of man." Yet a woman mothered him. The Lord has done "a new thing in the earth. A woman shall compass a man."—Jer. xxxi. 22. The virgin conceived and bore a son and his name was called Immanuel, "God with us." Man had no part in bringing this to pass. The Holy Ghost accomplished it. That which was contrary to all known natural law, and which was impossible with

men, God did. Jesus told his disciples that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. (Luke xviii. 24.) In their astonishment, they ask, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus answered, "The things which are impossible with men, are possible with God." Salvation of sinners is impossible with men. (Psalms xlix. 7-9.) It is wholly the work of God. "For this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived."—Rom. xiv. 9. The whole plan whereby sinners are saved was thought out and purposed in the Divine Mind. The mind of man could never have conceived such a Way. Higher than the heavens above the earth are the thoughts of God beyond the processes of man's thinking. All the searching of human intellects, all the working of human reason, all of what is commonly called "common sense" can never arrive at the truth of him to whom nothing is impossible. To Peter in prison, awaiting execution, escape was humanly impossible. He was absolutely helpless, so were his friends except for the intercessory power of prayer. His jailers did all possible to make his confinement secure. Four soldiers guarded him during each of the four night watches. Between two of them he lay sleeping, bound to them with chains. Two others kept watch. All these precautions were of no avail. God's angel was sent to deliver His servant Peter. The chains fell off him, the iron gate opened of his own accord. Peter passed out into the city free. (Acts xii. 1-10.) Likewise at a former time had another guard kept watch over the sepulchre where lay the body of the Savior, lest his disciples come and steal him away. Powerless were they to hinder the great actual fact of the resurrection. Puny man can do nothing against God. At the time appointed of the Father, Christ arose. The stone, rolled from the sepulchre by an angel, served to prove that the tomb was empty save for certain grave clothes which still lay there.

The great heart-searching truth in all these instances for us is that we should not be daunted by difficulties. Remember that God delights to do the impossible. That which is dark in the path lying before us can be made light in the Lord by his leading. The same cloud which was dark to Egypt so that Pharaoh could not see Israel whom he was pursuing, was light to God's people as they stood waiting for the salvation of the Lord. The same water which was condemnation to the antediluvians, was deliverance from destruction to those sheltered in the ark. Let us remember that Noah could not have seen the rainbow of God's promise, had there not been the cloud there for God to paint the rainbow upon. God, who forms light, creates darkness too. Difficulties test faith. Hardships enliven prayer.

> "Trials bring me to His feet,
> Lay me low and keep me there."

How wonderful are those words of Jesus to his disciples in Luke xxi. 25-28. Jesus told them that before the Son of Man should come again, certain

things must be accomplished. "Upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." Note he did not tell them to be frightened when they should see these things come to pass. Quite otherwise, he told them, "When these things BEGIN to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Not when these things come to pass, but when they "begin" to come to pass. The beginnings of sorrows which are to ensnare the world, are occasions for encouragement to the children of God. We should not be discomforted by that which alarms the people of the world. Their calamity, when their fear cometh, is proof that He who rides in the heavens shall laugh and have them in derision.

"Look to the Lord, his word, his throne;
Look to his strength, and not thy own;
There wait, and look, and look again;
Thou shalt not wait, nor look in vain."

Worry does no good. Undue anxiety is forbidden by Him who commanded that we take no thought for to-morrow. Our Father knoweth of what we stand in need. Just to the extent that we worry, either about the present or the future, to that degree are we failing to trust him. He will unfailingly supply our needs; but he, not we, is the Judge of what our needs consist.

What a wise provision of God it was that he did not allow but one window in the ark, and that at the top; so Noah could not behold the calamity and woe occurring all around him, but must look up to Him who so graciously had saved him in the vessel ordered and designed by the Author and Finisher of His people's salvation. What would have been Noah's feelings could he have looked about him and have seen his fellow-men going to their doom? Such he was kept from doing by the fact that the window's position was in the top, not in the sides, of the ark. Let us learn from this not to look too much upon the circumstances and conditions that environ our lives. We have nothing to do with circumstances. God orders and controls them all. To them of faith, mountains are removed and cast into the sea. Nothing is too hard for the Lord. Oh, for a living faith to cast all our care upon him! He has told us he cares for us. Blessed it is for us to wholly trust him, to be wholly yielded unto him, to lean not to our own understanding, but to acknowledge him in all our ways. He will direct our paths.

The children of God are first strangers, then pilgrims, on the earth. (Heb. xi. 13.) Distinguishing grace makes the believer a stranger to human-kind. Because a stranger, he is a pilgrim. He is on a journey. He has not arrived. His destiny is not here, but yonder where glory is. All trials, discouragements and difficulties are reminders that this world is not our home, that here we have no abiding place. We are passing onward to that which God has in reserve for his people in the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwell righteousness and peace for ever.

Lift up your heads, rejoice,
  Redemption draweth nigh;
Oh note the varying signs
  Of earth and air and sky;
The God of glory comes
  In gentleness and might,
To comfort and alarm,
  To succor and to smite.

He comes, the wide world's King,
  He comes, the true heart's friend,
New gladness to begin,
  And ancient wrong to end;
He comes, to fill with light
  The weary, waiting eye:
Lift up your heads, rejoice,
  Redemption draweth nigh.

Pray for us, brethren, that we may be enabled of the Lord to minister both through the SIGNS and from the pulpit to the comfort and encouragement of those who are seeking a "better country." As the year 1934 opens, our hope is in God. What lies before us, he knows. We trust him. His grace is the sufficiency of both writers and readers. Let us look up and not down, out and not in, forward and not back, and be helpers of one another's joy in the Lord. The Scriptures declare that in the last days perilous times shall come. They are upon us. The ways of Zion do mourn, the love of many waxes cold and iniquity abounds. We are not destroyed, even though cast down. The Lord God omnipotent reigns. Things declared from ancient times are becoming current history. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah."

H. H. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Prudence O'C. Hinkley.)

The Lexington-Roxbury Association, in session with First and Second Roxbury Churches, at Yellow Meetinghouse, Roxbury, Delaware County, New York, September 13th, 14th and 15th, 1933, to the churches composing the same, and to the churches and associations with which we correspond, sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Following our custom each year, there is a Circular Letter to be written, and had the brethren known our weakness and inability they certainly would not have chosen the writer. We feel like a root out of dry ground, and unless the Lord directs our thoughts and guides our pen it will be a failure. The thought comes to us, What will we write about? A small voice seems to say, Jesus. He is our faith and hope. Romans viii. 24: "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" Is not this some of the experience of a child of God? Jesus says, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Therefore how mysterious God's dealings with man may appear. Those who believe this testimony of his word must acknowledge that his plans have been, and still are, progressing to completion, but while groping in the darkness of ignorance we must await the actual development of God's plans. It is this privilege as a child of God to see by faith, and also to walk by faith. We are saved through a hope. He lifted

us out of the mire and clay and placed our feet upon a rock, Christ Jesus, and made us sing praises to his holy name. Except our feet are upon a solid rock we cannot sing. What is the substance of our hope? It is what Christ Jesus did for his children that his Father gave him to do. He healed the withered hand, cured the lame and halt, made them walk, and gave sight to the blind. Jesus was their faith, and as he does not change, he is our faith. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, shall he not with him also freely give us all things? It is Christ that died, who is he that condemneth? By nature we are condemned sinners in the sight of our God.

"Jesus draws the chosen race
By his sweet, resistless grace;
Causing them to hear his call,
And before his power to fall.

From the blissful realms above,
Swift as lightning flows his love
Draws them to his tender breast,
There they find the gospel rest."

Oh how strong and sweet to rest in that love which knows no change. Happy indeed is that one who has felt that love in his heart, who no longer looks upon God as an angry God. All the wisdom of this world can never fathom the depth of that love which has filled the heart of a poor helpless sinner who has been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, Christ Jesus. The church is his body. One pecularity is, that the chief corner top stone is laid first, called a foundation stone, the fact that the foundation of all hope toward God and righteousness is laid not on the earth, but in the gospel heavens, and our foundation is laid upward, not downward, and that we, as living stones, are built up in him in all things. Jesus Christ was the beginning, the head, the chief corner-stone of this grand structure, which is complete in him, and the under stones must be in harmony with the top stone. No matter how many distinct natures there may be among God's sons, they must be acceptable and holy unto him. All who will be of this building must partake of the spirit of holiness to God and of love toward him and all his creatures. Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart, mind, soul and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself. When we look at our Father's great plans for the exaltation of the church, and the blessings through it of Israel, we can sing, Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, good will toward men. When again we read, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people," this includes all chosen in Christ Jesus. Looking about us, it is only to a little flock which Christ has saved from their sins that it has been good tidings, not to all people of mankind. God has a due time for everything, for those that are of the church, the bride of Christ, and share the kingdom, honor and glory, to hear, and whosoever hath an ear to hear let him hear what the Spirit sayeth unto the churches, and he will bless them accordingly, but when we find the key to all these statements of God's plans, God is love.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

The New Hope Association, in session with her sister church, Little Flock, near Edgewood, Texas, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, August 18th, 19th and 20th, 1933, to the several churches and meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting with love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—It is with pleasure that we desire to tell you in a brief way what kind of a God we hope and trust we believe in and try to serve. This God we believe is unlimited in power, unlimited in wisdom, and he is always present everywhere at the same time. There is no nook or corner that he is not there. We believe that he rules in heaven, in earth, in the seas and in all deep places. We believe that this God consists of a Godhead, three in one, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. We believe that he held, or made, a counsel with his Son in the annals of eternity, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure, and in this council they agreed to make a world and inhabit it with people, and to start it he made a man of the dust of the ground and called his name Adam, and told him that he should multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it. So to this man he gave a law, but he violated it and plunged headlong into sin and brought sin and death upon all his posterity. For by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men. We believe that in this counsel he made a choice and chose a definite number out of the fallen race of Adam, an innumerable number to man, but He knows the number himself, for the Lord knows them that are his to be housed in heaven and immortal glory, to his praise, honor and glory. As Paul says, Having predestinated them to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to his own will (not man's will), to the praise of his glory and grace, and hath made them accepted in the Beloved, in whom they have redemption through his blood, and forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. This people is called elect, or a chosen generation, chosen in his Son, who in covenant were given unto his Son. They died in their federal head and were deprived of any power to extricate themselves from the fallen state in which they were by reason of sin, but his Son agreed to leave the courts of heaven and come down in this low ground to suffer, bleed and die for them, to raise them out of the fallen state they were in. So the Father sent him to do this work, therefore we believe he did it, and completed it to a jot and tittle, as Paul says, redeemed us from all iniquity. Therefore he is our Surety, for he said in his last moments, while dying upon the cross, It is finished. What is finished? The work his Father assigned unto him, that he should die for this people. The angel said to Joseph, "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a

son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." These people he died for, and no others, and these people God set his love upon, not because he saw any good in them, for in his infinite wisdom he saw they were wholly corrupt, from the soul of the foot to the crown of the head and that there was no soundness in them. But it just seemed good in his sight, and this love is as old as God, and he sheds this love in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given to them.

Now, beloved of the Lord, this is only a faint sketch of our belief of the God we try to serve. Trusting in this kind of a God, we will recommend him to you as the Savior of poor sinners. Pray for us, and come and see us.

S. M. DICKENS, Mod.

W. W. SIKES, Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

BROTHER C. C. Smith having changed his address from Foxworth, Mississippi, to R. 1, Box A, Bogalusa, Louisiana, requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

A. W. Bloomfield, Mo., $3; "A friend," Ontario, $1; Mrs. E. D. Gibson, Va., $1; Milford Hall, Sr., Ky., $5; Elder F. A. Riffe, Wash., $1; Nellie M. Palmer, Maine, $3; Woburn Church, Mass., $5; Mrs. Georgia Carruthers, Va., $2; "A friend," Va., $3; W. H. Chaney, Texas, $1; "A friend," Pa., $3; "A friend," N. Y., $1; J. W. Rockafellow, N. Y., $3; Mrs. Sarah W. Slack, Del., $3; Dr. Thomas McColl, Ontario, $3; R. L. Dodson, Va., $1; Mrs Mary Duffus, B. C., $6; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Emma L. Ferris, D. C., $3.50; Gilbert B. McColl, Manitoba, $1; W. E. Bryan, Ky., $1; Mrs. Ida Frank Stout, Ill., $3; E. Annie Parker, Md., $3; Mrs. J. A. MacTaggart, Ontario, $2; Mrs. J. H. Hasbrouck, N. Y., $1; C. Stevens, Ark., $1.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **MARGARET (McIntyre) WILLIAMS** departed this life August 3rd, 1933, at Gregory, Lake Rosseau, Muskoka, where she had gone with her daughter's family for the summer. She was the youngest of nine children born to Duncan and Nancy McIntyre, in Orford Township, near Duart, July 4th, 1850. She was married to Hugh Williams October 11th, 1871, Elder Pollard performing the ceremony, after which they went to reside in Chatham, Ontario for a short time. They soon moved to London, Ontario, where they lived the greater part of seven years, when they moved to St. Thomas, where her husband was train dispatcher on the Michigan Central R. R. It was her delight to entertain the ministers as they passed through to the meetings. Here they lived until the death of her husband, which occurred November 23rd, 1910. From that time sister Williams lived with her two daughters, mostly with her daughter Mary Isabel, with whom she was staying at the time of her death. She leaves to mourn their loss two daughters, Mrs. W. L. McLaws, of Winnipeg, and Mrs. H. R. H. Kenner, of Peterborough, a son, Joseph Alvin, of Spokane, Wash., also three grandchildren. Sister Williams united with the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church, and was baptized at Aldborough by Elder Pollard, July 21st, 1878, and from that time to her death she was a faithful and consistent member of the church. Of late years not being where she could attend the regular meetings of her church, she planned to be at the June and October meetings, where she always received a hearty welcome and was happy to mingle among those she dearly loved. She was blessed with a lovable disposition and almost to the end was well preserved in mind and body, so that while she was advanced in age she seemed very cheerful and interested in her church and family. She will be greatly missed in the home of her daughters, both at Peterborough and Winnipeg, but her children are blessed to feel that their loss is her eternal gain.

The funeral was from the home of her nieces, the Misses Walker, at Chatham, and interment was by the side of her husband in the cemetery there. The writer tried to speak to the honor of God and the comfort of her family and friends present. We believe she is resting in the Lord, where she desired to be.

G. R.

MOLLIE TURNER ELLIOTT, born 1851, died November 23rd, 1933, at Cerulean, Kentucky, on the land granted to her grandfather two years before Kentucky was admitted into the Union. She united with the Muddy Fork Old School Baptist Church, at Cerulean, Ky., in the year 1883. This church was organized in 1795, and the ground for the church was deeded by her grandfather in 1805, to be used for church grounds so long as

they held to the doctrine and faith of the Philadelphia Articles. In the event of a change it was to divert to his heirs. Early preachers of this church were Elders Darris, Brown, Wolfe, Reuben Rowland, Payton Nance, Rueben Ross, Jesse Cox, Samuel Cox, John Gammon, the late Hezekiah Smith and D. R. Turner, now an inactive minister in service. A second building was erected on this ground, which now stands, in 1836. It was repaired and ceiled with long wide yellow poplar, hand dressed. Her grandfather settled on this land in the fall of 1782. Aunt Mollie, as she was affectionately called, was one of twin sisters, the youngest children of R. R. and Leah Goodwin Turner. He was born in 1812 and she in 1809. R. R. Turner was a magistrate for forty years and refused to run again, and he was succeeded by his grandson, T. J. Guthrie. "Aunt Mollie" is survived by Elder D. R. Turner of the same church, who is now eighty-six years old and in very good health for one of his age. "Aunt Mollie" was the mother of five children, all of whom are now living. She was an invalid, not having walked since February, 1915. She took an active interest in public questions and intelligently discussed the national administration and local conditions with me only a few days before she died. Death was caused by a stroke, from which she died in a few hours. Just before her death she talked with me about the Association to be held at the old church in August, 1934. Her going was a loss to some of us who believed as she did and relied upon her as a witness to back our faith.

T. O. TURNER.

DELLA POWELL TRUITT was born April 20th, 1856, and died November 19th, 1932, being 76 years, 6 months and 29 days old. She was the daughter of Lambert and Katheryn Powell, and a native of Wicomico County, being born on the old Powell homestead, near Powellville, Maryland. She married Elisha Sampson Truitt December 24th, 1872, and to this union were born seven children, three of whom died in infancy; George Lloyd died at the age of twenty-six years, in 1902. She is survived by one son, E. W. Truitt, Snowden, N. C., and two daughters, Mrs. Victor Laws, Parsonsburg, Md., and Mrs. Herman Perdue, Snow Hill, Md. She was baptized by the late Elder Silas H. Durand, at Salisbury, Md., on the fifth Sunday in July, 1907. She was a consistent member of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church until her death, and was always present at meetings unless hindered by sickness. About three years before her death she had a very serious illness and we thought she was passing away, but she rallied and seemed to enjoy being with her dear ones and meeting with the brethren. I had a desire that she be made willing to die, and I feel she was prepared and shown the way of life and truth (Jesus Christ). On Thursday night she had a bad spell, the doctor called us to her bedside, thinking she was passing, but she lived through the night, and Friday morning she awoke with the most heavenly smile on her face I have ever witnessed. She said she did not have a pain and did not want anything. "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." I firmly believe she saw her Shepherd, Savior, Friend, Redeemer, and I felt to thank our heavenly Father for his goodness to us all.

Her funeral was held at the home of her son-in-law, Victor Laws, November 21st, at 2:30 o'chock p. m., and was conducted by her pastor, Elder G. E. Coulbourn, assisted by Elder H. C. Ker. They both spoke to the comfort and consolation of the relatives and friends, after which her body was laid to rest in the Parsons' Cemetery, Salisbury, Md. We all miss her loving care and kindness, her sweet smile, but we are sure our loss is her gain.

Her daughter,

MAUD TRUITT LAWS.

MR. **W. T. VORIES**, the subject of this obituary, was born May 29th, 1857, in Carroll County, Kentucky, and died August 6th, 1933, in his seventy-seventh year. Two sisters and one brother survive: Miss Laura Vories, and Mrs. Betta Ransdell, both of Campbellsburg, Ky., and R. M. Vories, of Smithfield, Ky. Mr. Vories spent his entire life in Henry County, Kentucky, the last fourteen years in New Castle, the County Seat, and by his fair dealing and ordinary walk in life made many friends. He never married, and he and his sister Laura had lived together in their home in New Castle for many years. He never united with any church, but it was evident from his walk and talk that he knew something about the wonderful work of grace in the heart. He felt his unworthiness keenly, and while we all miss him, we feel our loss is his gain. He has entered into the joy of the Lord. His natural health failed him and for a year or more he suffered much, but bore his suffering with patience.

I was called for his funeral, and tried to comfort the friends with the ability that the Lord gave me, after which the body was laid to rest in the family burying-plot in the Campbellsburg Cemetery. May the Lord reconcile us all, and enable us to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

RICHARD P. RAMEY, Dick, as he was called by his family and friends, eldest son of Elder S. P. Ramey and wife, and grandson of Elder Elijah Ramey, formerly of Surry Conunty, North Carolina, was born in Surry County, North Carolina, October 8th, 1857, and passed away Sunday morning, November 3rd, 1933, at the home of his daughter and husband, Mr. and Mrs. Beryl Dickey, Kansas City, Kansas. He had been in poor health since September 1st. An operation in October failed to bring relief. He, with his parents, moved to Kansas during the Civil War, and settled on a farm south of Gardner, where he grew to man-

hood. On April 22nd, 1885, he was united in marriage to Miss Martha F. Carnes, and to them were born six children, three of them preceding him in death. The other three are now living in Kansas City. Also one brother, four sisters, six grandchildren, one great-grandchild and other relatives and many friends are left to mourn the passing of this good man and neighbor. While he never united with the church, he was a believer in salvation by grace, and by his every-day life proved the inherent qualities of a good citizen, a beloved husband and father, true to himself, to his wife and to his children.

He requested that the writer preach his funeral, which I tried to do at the home of his daughter, where he died, on Tuesday, following his death, after which his body was laid to rest beside that of his wife, who passed on three years ago, in the cemetery at Gardner, Kansas, there to await the power of the Lord in the resurrection, when we hope that he will be raised in the likeness of Jesus to praise him in eternity.

W. L. HALL.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church will meet (D. V.) every second Sunday with brother and sister Berry, 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California. Every third Sunday with brother and sister Staggs, 506 E. Raulston Street, Ontario, California.

T. D. WALKER.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Flock Church now meets for worship at our home, 2211 Fifth Street, Riverside, California, the third Sunday of each month, at 10:30 a. m.

J. W. HAYNES.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 808 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one-half block west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., Nov. 24, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS of the dear old SIGNS, and all who love the doctrine it upholds:—I want to talk to all of you, for it seems to me that this is the last letter I will be able to write telling you how I love you and how you have cheered and comforted me while in these low grounds of sin and sorrow. It seems to me I could not live without your cheering words. When all the world, the flesh and the devil were arrayed against me I could not understand why they all hated me, when I only wanted to be good to them, but when I got older and read in my Bible where God put enmity between her seed and thy seed, meaning the old serpent, the devil, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, and had put that hatred there long before I ever came into this world, and while it was a grief to me, I loved and trusted God so much I did not beileve he would do anything that was wrong or unnecessary, and then when I got older and it was revealed to me that this world was the kingdom of the devil and he reigns supreme in it, then I felt very lonely indeed. I could not expect any sympathy or comfort from them, for they hated me, and without a cause, only because God had put that enmity there, and they could not help it, neither could I, and the only comfort I could get was from those who were cast off from the world as I was, and the fact that God was love and those who were born of God were born of love, and those who wrote for the SIGNS told my experience, and oh how their letters did comfort me, for I found that the same unity existed between them and the devil and the world as it did with me, and when I found that I had all those evils right in this old man, whom I had hoped would be at least a friend to me, but was not, and was just as deceitful and full of evil, and was even a friend to all my enemies, then I found I was alone in this sinful world. Then I read where Christ said to his

disciples, Will ye also go away? I was a mourner indeed, but there has always been One unto whom I could go for comfort, and I have gone there often and have never been turned away empty. I feel that he has directed me to the SIGNS, which is so dear to me, because I feel that they, the editors and publishers, are directed of God what to write and what to publish for the comfort and edification of his humble poor who read the SIGNS, and for the upholding of his own will and power, and that is just as it should be, for all glory, honor and power belong alone to him, and if we love one another it is not an invitation, but it shows that his power and authority is being exercised upon his children, and we do rejoice and praise him because he has put it into our hearts to love one another, thereby showing that we have been born of him who is love supreme. Oh how can we praise him enough for his wonderful works to the children of men?

This brings me to a subject which has been on my mind for some time, and it is a subject which has not been written on very much in the SIGNS, though it is taught in the Bible and is of much importance to each one of us: the subject of adoption as it is taught and upheld in the Bible. No subject should be written upon unless it has a "thus saith the Lord," for without this proof there is no subject edifying to the children of God. Ephesians i. 5, 6, reads, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." This in the counsel of God in the beginning, before the earth was formed, when he said his counsel should stand and he would do all his pleasure. So God made man of the dust of the earth, and he was good, and very good, and God made a garden of all things good and pleasant for his use and pleasure, and he put the man in it to dress it. Then he gave him a law to keep, saying, Of all the trees of the garden thou mayest freely eat, except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou mayest not eat of it, for in the day thou eatest of it thou shalt surely die. Then God said, It is not good that man should be alone, so he made him a helpmeet, and through his love for this helpmeet, who was tempted of the devil, he ate of the fruit, though he was not deceived, and in consequence the sentence of death was passed upon him and all his posterity. Now this was all in the purpose and plan of God to show forth his love and mercy, but man is helpless in it all and unto God belongs all the praise. Of the seed of Adam God had chosen a people, and he had before prepared a ransom for his people, who were chosen out of the seed of Adam, the elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, predestinated in Jesus Christ and called, not according to their works, for they were all dead. But when the fullness of the time was come he sent forth his Son, made under the law to redeem those who were under the law, dead, because the sentence of death had been passed

upon them, and the law could only justify the the sentence of death, for there was no mercy in it. But love and mercy met together and Jesus came to redeem those who were under the law that they might receive the adoption of sons according to the prearranged plan of God the Father, and now since they were sons by adoption God sends forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts crying, Abba, Father. This Spirit was none other than Christ in us the hope of glory, and they could say that God was their Father, and they also knew that those others whom he had redeemed were children by adoption, although they had only received the Spirit of adoption, for they had not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the Spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father. This creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who had subjected the same in hope. Then we are given a hope which is composed of expectation and desire. What is it we hope for? We know that the Spirit of God was never lost and never needed to be redeemed, for it is pure and holy, then it must be these old bodies of ours which died in Adam and which were made alive in Christ when he redeemed them from their lost and ruined condition, those who are kept by the power of God while in these low grounds of sin and sorrow. We know that these bodies in their present state are not fit to enter the heaven of immortal glory, there to live with Jesus, but he has promised us that these old sinful bodies will be changed and made like unto his glorious body, and this is what we hope for. Our faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, reaches out and grasps these truths, for the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestations of the sons of God, for the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, at death, when this body shall return to dust, from whence it came, and the spirit to God, who gave it. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." That loving apostle John tells us, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were enemies Christ died for us, the elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, predestinated in Christ Jesus and called by a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which he purposed in himself. And God also purposed that our atonement should come by the death of his Son, whom he by his determinate counsel willed should die the awful death on the cross, and we raised not our hand nor our voice against it,

but we esteemed him stricken and smitten, and of the people there was none to help. Oh what a forlorn condition, even the God who had been with him and upheld him in all his trials before forsook him and he was left alone among his enemies. Dear child of God, were you ever in such a place? I have sometimes thought that I was, when it seemed that the very God of heaven had forsaken me, and I cried unto him mightily and he heard me and I was comforted. But it brings to mind the terrible sufferings of our dear Savior. But for this death he was sent here by his Father, and he could not die until the spirit left the body. His body did not see corruption, while ours must, but we have hope that these vile bodies will be changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body, and that will be enough. This is my hope.

I have left much unsaid, but there is no end to the subject. I know there are some Baptists who believe in predestination who do not believe this old body will ever be changed, but will pass away at death and be no more.

I know this is poorly written, but I cannot sit up very well, and some places you will have to correct, but I have done the best I could, and now I want to thank you for your patience and forbearance with me, and may God always sustain and guide you in all you do and bring you off more than conquerors through him that loved you and gave his life for you.

In bonds of affliction, yet in hope,

DAVIS BURCH.

PARSONS, Kansas, Dec. 4, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS:—Since writing my two articles on "Salvation by Grace" and "Predestination" I have been asked to complete the cycle by writing on "Man's accountability to his Creator," or rather to define his accountability to his Creator under law, and the believer's accountability to his Redeemer under grace. In doing this I may be found doing as I have known many ministers to do: taking a text and not sticking to it, and some of them leave the text and never get back to it.

I am requested to consider these two doctrines from a human standpoint of man's accountability to God in this present age of grace. The one making the request advanced the idea, and said, "Predestination and salvation by grace do not reduce men to automatons nor to pieces of mechanism, but man is a responsible creature endowed with faculties which it is in the purpose of God he should use." The one making the request continues by saying, "Therefore, what is the duty of man, looking at the matter from the human standpoint?" As a layman I shall endeavor to answer all of these hard questions by the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Not being a writer of note I may fall completely down.

It is true that man has faculties and that it is in the purpose of God for him to use them. He may not be an automaton or a piece of mechanism, still he is clay. He is not a god. He is not a holy angel. Even the angels have to wait on orders from God. They move as God gives them orders to move.

Man was made a little lower than the angels. Every good and perfect thought comes from above.

For several years I have been trying to make myself believe that man is "his own free moral agent." I am just as far from it now as I was when I first started. If there is any such thing as this I shall try to keep my mind open for conviction. I dislike very much being out of style.

Man has an accountability to God, his Creator. All men seem to believe there is some being greater than themselves and seem to want to worship this being. I like the idea when the Indian came to Ameriia he worshiped the Great Spirit and thought when he died he would go to the happy hunting ground, there he and his dog would live happily.

We find in Deuteronomy vi. 5, "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." We further find in Deuteronomy x. 12, 13, "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes." I believe every word of this. This means just what it says, and maybe more. This was said under the law when they used goats, lambs, doves, scapegoats and pigeons for sacrifices. This was kept up year after year and month after month. There came a time when the Lord refused to recognize these things as an offering for sin. He said that they had become an offense unto him. He declared, Away with them. Still God held Israel to keep the law and the commandments. I fail to find one that kept them. Even Moses himself could not keep them. All of these things failed to completely satisfy God. All of this being true, God still held man accountable for his sins. The prophet predicted that in that day God was going to make a new covenant with his people; that is, with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. "Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them," saith the Lord. "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Under the law there was a remembrance of sin daily. So there was a continued offering for sin. The old covenant could not make the comers thereto perfect as to their conscience. So all through the ages God has been holding man accountable for sin and for service. The law was our schoolmaster

to bring us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. (Gal. iii. 24, 25.) Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. (Rom. x. 4.) Christ has made one offering for sin once and for all times. If we sin wilfully there is no offering for sin. Under grace while Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, he said, I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill. He further said, If ye love me ye will keep my commandments. He also said, Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever things I command you. There was a time under the law where a man had to commit an act of sin, but Christ said that if we looked on a woman to lust after her we had committed adultery in our heart, and if we hated our brother we were guilty of murder. One writer has said, The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. To prove further that the freedom of grace from the law is no license to sin, Paul says, He that stole steal no more, speaking to the church. To my mind, while we as christians saved by grace are to keep the commandments strictly so, not to be saved eternally, but we should strive to keep them because we are saved. Christ's life in us should shine out through us, in our lives. We should let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works that they may glorify our Father which is in heaven. Though Christ is our righteousness and has paid the debt we owed, we are to be working in his vineyard. We are to watch, fight and pray. We are not only to fight the foes without our body, but those within also. We are to press the battle even to the gate. We are to be clothed with the garment of truth and fight with the sword of the Spirit. We are to be soldiers of the cross, fighting principalities and powers that are ruled over by the prince of this world. It is true, may I repeat, that man has faculties and that it is in the providence of God for him to use them. One writer has said, Of myself I can do nothing. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. (Psalms xxxvii. 23.) Job says *his steps* are numbered, and if this is true, this is so with every man. Man is but a worm, and the son of man is a worm. There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding. I must admit that man is of the highest order of vertebrates, still he is an animal according to science.

In the final analysis to the whole matter it is evident that God has through the ages held man to account for service and obedience from the time the first man was made down to the present. Under the law he was still held responsible to God for his sins he had committed, and from year to year and from time to time he offered animals and other things as a sacrifice for sin. This was continued until the Lord refused to accept these burnt offerings. In the end Christ came and made one offering for sin and established the reign of grace under the new covenant.

Though the heirs of salvation are not under the law, yet the Savior said, If you love me you will keep my commandments. Man has faculties and a spirit, but his inspiration comes from God. God puts no trust even in his saints.

Trusting that I have fully, or in part, answered the requests made of me, I am, as ever, a humble reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES,

A. E. CLARK.

BREWERS, KY., NOV. 24, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—I find a desire to submit a few thoughts for your consideration, should they be thought worthy a place in the dear old SIGNS. Being very sensitive of my weakness and dependence upon the Giver of every good and perfect gift, I beg his guidance and your forbearance in considering what I may write.

In 1 John v. 7, 8, we find these words of holy writ, "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear record in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one." By these expressions it appears that the writer was led into the deep things of God known in heaven, as well as to understand some of the working of his mighty power in an outward or visible sense on earth. In the seventh verse he would refer to the mystical work of God in the annals of eternity, and would denote or represent the whole counsel of God ordered in all things and sure and embracing all the events or actions of every creature of his almighty power, in time or in eternity. For he does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. All creatures were made by him and for him, and by him they consist. (Col. i. 16, 17.) The record in heaven is known only to the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, each being God in some particular function, and all bear record, or testimony, of the certainty and fixedness of the purposes, decrees or predestination of God, and is absolute, since God is the only one who can predestinate anything. All the events of his creatures are limited or bounded by the record in heaven and work together for good to them that love God, those who are called according to his purpose. To all this the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost testify, so bear record. The work or function of the Father is eternal. The work of the Word, or Son, external, since he was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Yes, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. Hear him as he bears record in earth, I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me, and this is the Father's will which sent me, that of all which he has given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And again we hear the Son, while in prayer to his Father, who always heard him: I have finished the work thou gavest me to do,

now glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory I had with thee before the world was. The Father in speaking of the Son said, He is the Rock and his work is perfect. Even Solomon pictured His work with much force and beauty when he said, I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, who shall defile them? (Cant. v. 3.) All this bears record in heaven and is in direct accord with the Father's will, so a oneness. Now as the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, promised by the Son, in harmony with the purpose, foreknowledge or decree of God the Father, (I am not able to separate, and will not try), takes of the things of God and shows them unto the heirs chosen of God, and not to all men in this wonderful and glorious work of God our Teacher, who said, All thy children shall be taught of God, and great shall be their peace. They are born again, not of a corrupt seed, but of an incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. For by the one Spirit are we all baptized into the one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and all have been made to drink into the one Spirit. So there is still perfect harmony in the three-one Godhead, as the record in heaven testifies, and belongs to the invisible, eternal, all-wise and unchangeable God, and he to whom the Son will reveal him. So this record is in heaven, belongs there, and will remain there. Now as the pages of his providence unfold the Spirit bears testimony to the heirs of promise here on earth. We are now manifestly children, as the apostle declares, Because ye are sons God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, whereby ye cry, Abba, Father. Hereby the Spirit bears witness of the record in heaven. Oh is my name written there, on the pages bright and fair? See Abel as he offered a sacrifice unto God which was accepted, Abraham when he offered Isaac, and all the old servants, were they not moved by the Spirit of our God even as we of today? There is no peace nor agreement unless in perfect harmony with the record in heaven. For it is of him that we are in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us righteousness, wisdom, sanctification and redemption. Then, dear reader, glory in the Lord, as it is of record in heaven. Now the Captain of our salvation is leading in paths we have not known, made rough places smooth and crooked places straight. The Shepherd of the sheep leads them beside the still waters, even the baptismal water, whereby the witness within makes us desire to be buried with him in baptism to walk in newness of life. Here the water agrees with the Spirit, in that there is an answer to a good conscience. It is the Spirit of God that washed us into a state of regeneration, whereby we have a good conscience, as he is made unto us wisdom, etc. See 1 Peter iii. 21, and kindred texts. This is on earth and is known to all that are in the house, kingdom or church while here on earth, as the testimony agrees with the work of the Spirit. We travel on under the

command of the Head of all things to the church and are brought around the solemn but encouraging sacramental table, where those who have come in by the Door are welcomed to the supper, where the guests eat His flesh and drink His blood, by using emblems blessed of our God to represent His broken body and shed blood. As the Spirit enables the household of faith to examine ourselves whereby we can drink worthily we can reach forth our trembling hand and partake of the fruit of the vine, to typify the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin. Read 1 Corinthians xi. 24-29, and kindred texts, and try the spirits by or with the witness within and see if you do not find an agreeing with things here on earth, and so all grow unto an holy temple in the Lord, according to the record in heaven, knit together in love.

Should any one who may read the foregoing find any comfort, give God the honor and praise, as it is due him. If any are so inclined, a few lines would be appreciated by me in my shut-in condition.

Submitted in love,

J. C. CHESTER.

COMMERCE, Georgia.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I will write just a few lines to let you know how much I enjoy reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, although I do not take it, I borrow from my neighbor, but I hope some time to be able to take it. If I know anything about myself, it is food and drink to me. I will refer to a hymn that tells my experience better than I can:

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

It is my experience, if I have any at all. I do hope and pray you may be able to go on and on publishing the SIGNS, for it is a comfort to my soul, and I feel it is to others. May God's richest blessings rest upon you and all the others who write for the paper. I do not feel worthy to be called your sister.

(MRS.) J. E. SORROW.

CHARLESTON, Mo., Jan. 15, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find check for one year's subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and one dollar to be used as you see fit.

The publication of the SIGNS must go on. There are many people who enjoy its pages that you never hear from, and many others who need the truth it proclaims. It has been a trying time for nearly every one these past few years, but God still reigns and I have complete faith that the time (God's time) will come when the sun of a brighter and happier day will be ushered in. These times are a furnace in which the souls of men are tried, "their dross to consume and their gold to refine."

May the year be a happy and prosperous one for the SIGNS and all God's people everywhere, is my prayer.

Yours truly,

H. M. BOWDEN.

SOLOMON'S SONG II. 9.

"He standeth behind our wall."

Dear Household of Faith:—It is unto you that these glorious promises are left on record. It is for thee that He stands behind our wall. No other can ever realize the sweetness of having the glorious manifestation of his royal presence brought to us. The world, with all its ingenuity, can never pierce the ways of the King Jehovah and find out the dealings that he had with those who are bought with so great a price. From the teaching of God's word there must be more than one sense that God stands behind our wall, because we do not understand that he has left the wicked to their own devices. We believe that he is ever overruling all the schemes of wicked men and devils for the final triumphant deliverance of his chosen people into the glorious city beyond these things of time. Not only is that the belief of the Baptists in this part of Alabama, but we contend, and desire, if the Lord will be our stay and guide, to defend, that the Lord's people have always taught, that God overruled all things for the good of his people. But just now our mind is not concerned so much with the sovereignty of God, but will say that we do not believe that God is in any way the author of sin. We are perfectly willing to take the Bible for our guide. We find that Joseph told his brethren that God sent him to preserve much people alive, and that though they meant it for evil, God meant it for good. (Gen. xlv. 5; l. 20.) God did, in some wonderful way, bring this about without coercion. Men, and good brethren at that, are very much concerned over the way God works all things and still not be the author of sin. I used to spend much time in speculation on the same idea, but long since I have, as I hope, been shown the glorious beauties of his magnificent power, and it does not bother me so much any more. If God is so wonderful in power and wisdom that he can bring a blaspheming Saul to the earth crying, "Who art thou, Lord?? that he is coming again to earth to gather from the graves all his little children, and raise them to immortality without the stains of sin; that, if not deceived, he found the poor unworthy writer among the thorns of infidelity and self-righteousness and planted in his sinful heart a little ray of hope that all is well with my soul, then may he not work all things after the counsel of his own will? But let us not be content there. Paul tells us that God gave them (the wicked) up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts. (Rom. i. 26.) James tells us that God is not tempted, neither tempteth he any man, but man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lusts. (James i. 13, 14.) It is only as the sovereign Ruler of all things that he stands at the wall of the wicked. But, to the poor storm-tossed child of God, there is a more precious way that he stands behind our wall. According to my understanding, the wall is our flesh. Just as long as the poor little pilgrims sojourn in this time state we shall be looking through a glass darkly. Paul tells us that the flesh lusts against

the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things ye would. (Gal. v. 17.) All of God's dear children who have been called out and given to know the truth know that this is true. When the Sun of Righteousness subdues the flesh and melts down the wall, it is then that we are exalted upon the mountains of his love, and are then obeying and keeping his commandments. We hear the Savior say, "Without me ye can do nothing." Oh! to be left down in the land of Lodebar, to our own sinful selves. Indeed, we must wait on the Lord for a visitation of his healing power.

If a man is in the flesh is he partly so, or is he completely under the influence of evil? It is not part Spirit and part flesh that prompts evil, nor is it both that prompts righteousness. It is sin that dwells in us that leads us in forbidden paths. It is the Spirit of Peace that leads us to do righteousness. Now Paul says that they that are in the flesh cannot please God. Peter thought that he never would deny the Lord, but as soon as the Lord withdrew from him he did deny him. He continued to do so until the Lord turned and looked on him. Just so it is with us. When the Savior melts the barrier down, and steps from behind our wall, we are like Peter, we are made to weep bitterly.

I have heard dear old soldiers speak of their ups and downs in this life, and say their downs were many more than their ups. But nay, not so. Our downs are so much longer. We only get a glympse now and then of his beaming countenance. With the poor writer the glass is very, very dark. If I have ever been under the smiling rays of his shining wings it has been very fleeting. He only shows himself at the lattice. It is here a little and there a little. Sometimes it seems that I can never again grope in darkness, and then I am made to again be as "a pelican of the wilderness," as "an owl of the desert." But blessed thought indeed that he knows our way! Even when the influence of his healing wings is not being felt he is watching over and caring for us. He will never leave nor forsake us, and is mindful of us when we are not mindful of ourselves. He will watch over and keep us in this world, and will watch our sleeping dust until he bids it arise. Then we shall be where he is and be like him, and this old wall, the flesh, shall be done away with and all will be heaven and eternal. This will be enough for a poor sinner like me.

I would like to have literature pertaining to the Old Baptists, especially Minutes from all associations, and old copies of the SIGNS, *Lone Pilgrim* and other papers.

May the Lord continue to enable the publishers and editors to print a paper that contends for the doctrine that has identified the church for ages.

Yours in hope of continued mercy,

W. D. GRIFFIN.

FAYETTE, B. 33, Alabama.

PHILADELPHIA, Pennsylvania.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It is time to send in my remittance for the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the paper which is of much pleasure to me. If the good Lord will guide my mind and pen I will with fear and trembling try and tell some of his dealings with poor me. In the year 1875 the thought came to me that God had a people in this world and if he never showed me who they were I would live alone, and would walk all of my days alone. I felt I did not know what to do. I went on in this state of mind until the fall of that year. I felt that if I could only touch the hem of his garment I would be whole. In my weak mind I would reach up and I would reach down, but I could not find my loving Savior. In the latter part of October I felt I must die. I had not slept for three days and nights, then I died to the world and knew nothing for I do not know how long before I came to myself again, but I saw wonderful things. I cannot tell the half, but I saw Jesus Christ, my dear Savior and Redeemer. He forgave my sins, which were many, and oh what joy came to me. I cannot express it. I wanted to tell of it, but something inside me said, You cannot say anything about it here. Then Jesus said to me, He that is ashamed of me or of my name the same will I be ashamed of when he returns unto my Father's kingdom. Then my tongue was loosed and I could tell the whole world what God in Christ had done for poor me. So full of love to Jesus and his church was I that all my troubles seemed to be over and I saw no cause for fear. I saw the church saved in God's love. I cannot express it.

Brethren, please throw the mantle of charity over this, and pray for me when it is well with you. I am in my eighty-first year and still a poor sinner saved by grace if saved at all, for I am weak and most of the time in the dark.

Your unworthy sister, trusting in Christ Jesus alone for all things,

EMMA J. MILBOURNE.

COLUMBUS, Ga., March 14, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find one dollar, for which continue to send me the SIGNS for six months, and if I am still living, the Lord willing, I will renew for another six months. I realize that I am old, soon will be seventy-nine years of age, and shall not need any of these things much longer. How many more years, or months, or days, I know not. Only the Lord knows the number of my days. But I know I want to take this blessed medium of truth so long as I can read it. All my life long the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been within my reach. First in my father's home, and when I married and went away it was in my own home, and a loving companion, always bringing "good tidings of great joy" to a lonely one, separated much of the time from the company of the dear people of the Lord, the blessed company of the saints, so send to my same address, P. O. Box 565, Columbus, Ga.

Yours truly,

(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1934.

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2 SAMUEL XII. 13, 14.

"And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because of this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die."

Once upon a time we visited a section of country where there was a church which had been withdrawn from by other orderly churches because of the doings of certain of her members. There came a lady to our meeting who, while not a member of the visible church, had been a follower of the Old School Baptists for many years. She was more or less conversant with the circumstances surrounding the case and on perhaps a number of occasions had attended the meetings held by said church. We could not question her deep concern for the truth and for the welfare of Zion. We were, however, made to question whether the understanding which she appeared to have regarding the doctrine of predestination was the correct one. While engaged in conversation with her she inquired if she might ask us some very plain and pointed questions, to which we replied she might. Her first question was, "Do you believe in the predestination of all things?" Our answer was, "Yes." Second question: "Was not the doings of the parties in question among the all things predestinated?" and if so, "Why should the church of their membership be withdrawn from on account thereof?" We replied that while their actions were unquestionably embraced in the infinite purpose of Almighty God, nevertheless we could not admit that the fact of this being so exempted them from the responsibility of their deeds, or their accountability to God. We related here the following incident which was told to us several years ago by Elder John G. Eubanks as having taken place in one of the churches of his early pastorate in the State of Georgia: At their Saturday afternoon business and conference meetings, it was the custom for any who had wronged a brother or sister to confess his fault and ask forgiveness. On one occasion a brother arose and said in substance, "Brethren, I reckon you all heard about my getting drunk the other week. I went down to the shucking-bee and they had a lot of corn whiskey and I got good and drunk," and then added, "But according to the doctrine which brother Eubanks

preaches it was predestinated that I should do it, so I could'nt help it, nevertheless I thought I would tell you about it." Whereupon an old Deacon arose and said in so many words, "Brethren, I have listened to what the brother had to say, but I do not believe that predestination stops where he seems to think it does. I believe it was predestinated that we should exclude him, and I so move." This brought the brother to his senses, and he then apologized and begged forgiveness.

We believe all this is apropos to our subject. In taking Bath-sheba while she was yet the wife of Uriah to be his wife and then murdering Uriah, which in effect was what he did, because he would not be used as a tool to cover up his own wickedness, David committed a great and terrible sin, and it displeased the Lord. David thought the secret was locked up in his own bosom, forgetting that there was a God who discerneth the thought and intent of the heart, who declared he would bring "this thing" out in the open before all Israel. This God sent his prophet Nathan unto David, and by use of the unsuspecting parable of the ewe lamb presented the enormity of the crime. "David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die: and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity." The prophet then replied, *"Thou art the man."* What a blow this must have been to David. After this he most certainly could not have found fault with a just and holy God had he condemned him to death. But right here is where *grace* stepped in, and oh! how amazing it was.

Nathan said unto David, "The Lord hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die." Later, we want to say more about this "putting away," but for the time being, let us note that David made no pretensions at all by way of excusing himself, neither did he attempt to hide under the cover of predestination. On the contrary, he confessed to being guilty, and said, "I have sinned against the Lord." He had despised the commandment of the Lord and had done evil in his sight, and for this the Lord said the sword should never depart from his house. It was a great mercy that he was given to confess his sin. We believe that herein is to be found the key which unlocks the Scripture that declares that David was a man after God's own heart. It is good to confess our faults to God and to one another. Where this is done there is hope. We think the words, "Thou shalt not die," as they are used in this connection, are one of the strongest texts to be found anywhere in the Bible for the doctrine of salvation by grace.

Even though the Lord had put away his sin and he should not die, *"Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme."* How true this was. Some seem totally indifferent to the effect their deeds have upon the cause of Christ. Either they do not realize or else do not care. The Lord's

people should endeavor to shun even the appearance of evil. It is further stated that "the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die." We wish that this might sink deep down into the consciences of those who treat such things lightly. *"The child also that is born unto thee shall surely die."* The child that was to be born was the outcome of David's relations with Bethsheba while she was yet the wife of another. This brought shame and disgrace upon Israel and gave the enemies of the Lord great occasion to blaspheme. Such actions spring from the lustful desires of the flesh and the fruit thereof, or that which follows, must surely die. James tells us that sin when it is finished bringeth forth death. That God had an infinite purpose in this we cannot deny, for he had even decreed the number of days the child was to live. The record is that on the seventh day the child died. To our mind, this shadows forth the perfections of God's purposes even in wickedness. David was made to mourn and fast over this child, but afterward God gave him another son, even Solomon, by the same union, but Bath-sheba was then his true and lawful wife, Uriah having been put to death. Here it is seen that God's judgments are unsearchable and his ways past finding out, for had there not been this union between David and Bath-sheba Solomon would not have been born; had there been no Solomon, there would would have been no Jesus, since the absence of this link would have broken the chain of the lineage through which the Son of man came; and had there been no Jesus, there would have been no Savior, and had there been no Savior, no sinners could have been saved. What an awful thing to even contemplate! How glad we are that Nathan said unto David, "The Lord hath put away thy sin." Wonder of wonders it is that God should overrule the wicked acts of men and cause them to work for the good of his people and his own glory. While it was "by wicked hands" that Jesus was taken and crucified and slain, nevertheless he was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Nothing was done to the holy child Jesus but what God's hand and counsel had before determined. The bud often has a bitter taste, but when God's ways are opened up to us we can then see how it is that all things work together for good to them that love God, to those who are the called according to his purpose. Herein lies the strength and comfort of those who wait upon the Lord and trust him for his grace. They are compelled to stand still and see his salvation, and this they do by reason of being so hedged in with circumstances, over which they have no control, that they cannot do otherwise.

We would like to say more with regard to Solomon. The name implies wisdom. Wisdom is the child of experience. Sometimes experience is a very bitter teacher. In order to know anything, first-hand, about God's wondrous love, it is necessary that we have an experience, or knowledge of grace, which means the bestowal upon us by

God of a favor that is unmerited on our part. The lady to whom we have already referred also spoke of the love of God, and then asked if we could cease loving God's children even though they do wrong. We believe it is utterly impossible for one born of the Spirit not to love that which is begotten of God. This does not mean that we are to love the sin which even God's people commit. If the mind of Christ be in us, we will hate sin wherever it is seen. Let us remember that Jesus stood for both order and doctrine in the church which he established. Hear ye him on this point: "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that the whole body should be cast into hell." Is there any one among us who would refuse to have an arm or a leg amputated if it be found that blood-poisoning or gangrene had set in, and we become convinced that the cutting off of such member is essential to the life and well-being of the body? The unity of the body of Christ is such as to cause great distress and suffering to all the members when such action is necessary, but if a member be sick unto death, there is no choice. Every possible effort should be made to save the offending member, but when this is impossible, it should be removed.

True love has a very definite way of manifesting itself. Let us see how Solomon discovered it. It is recorded when he was king that two women stood before him, "And the one woman said, O my lord, I and this woman dwell in one house; and I was delivered of a child with her in the house. And it came to pass, the third day after that I was delivered, that this woman was delivered also: and we were together; there was no stranger with us in the house, save we two in the house. And this woman's child died in the night; because she overlaid it. And she arose at midnight, and took my son from beside me, while thine handmaid slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom. And when I arose in the morning to give my child suck, behold, it was dead: but when I had considered it in the morning, behold, it was not my son which I did bear. And the other woman said, Nay; but the living is my son, and the dead is thy son. And this said, No; but the dead is thy son and the living is my son. Thus they spake before the king. Then said the king, The one saith, This is my son that liveth, and thy son is the dead: and the other saith, Nay; but thy son is the dead, and my son is the living. And the king said, Bring me a sword. And they brought a sword before the king. And the king said, Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other. Then spake the woman whose the living child was unto the king, for her bowels yearned upon her son, and she said, O my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it. Then the king answered and said, Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she is the mother thereof. And all Israel heard of the judgment which the

king had judged; and they feared the king: for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him, to do judgment."—1 Kings iii. 17-28. Here we have unmistakable proof of true love. The woman who was willing to have the living child divided was not the real mother. One who is willing to divide the church to-day in order to gain his own ends is not manifesting the love of the Good Shepherd who gave his life for the sheep.

Jesus said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." When the lot was cast and the blame for the distress to the vessel and crew was seen to lie at Jonah's door, he promptly commanded that they should cast him overboard. Here is another example of genuine, true love. The apostle Paul said, "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

In conclusion, we would restate our unshakable belief in the sovereignty of our God. If we did not feel positively certain that he doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, we would of all creatures be the most miserable. It is this doctrine that keeps us from despair and assures us of our final perseverance over all enemies, including death itself, regardless of how that may come about. We are aware of the fact that what is perhaps the largest so-called church organization in our country denies this by the refusal of their priests to officiate at the funeral of a suicide. We cannot believe it possible that one for whom Christ died shall ever be eternally lost, but this does not license or encourage us to take matters in our own hands. Neither does this doctrine justify erring brethren in pursuing a wrong course. Remember, the "child of the flesh shall surely die." The mouth of Him who cannot lie hath spoken it. We are, therefore, not the least bit sympathetic towards those who deliberately live after the flesh or who persist in following a course which is harmful and disturbing to the peace of Zion, and then run to predestination for cover. Nor have we yet been able to discover a better method of proving one's love either for an individual or a cause than by their actions. These invariably speak louder than words. We would most earnestly commend for the consideration of all who teach, Paul's admonition to Timothy: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

Submitted in love for the careful consideration of all who may read.

R. L. D.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE date opposite your name on the little pink slip on which your address is printed denotes the time your subscription expires. Dec 32 means it expired December, 1932; June 33 that it expired June, 1933; June 34 that it will expire June, 1934, etc.

1 TIMOTHY I. 8.

"BUT we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully."

There are different laws spoken of in the Scriptures. God gave laws to govern inanimate things—the sun, moon, stars, etc.,—which they have never transgressed. He gave laws to govern animate things—birds, beasts, fishes, etc.,—which they have not violated. God gave Adam, the first man, a law, but he disobeyed it. God foreknew that Adam would disobey, and had made provision to overcome it in the second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ. God's purpose is in all things, yet he is not the author of sin. God did not coerce Adam into disobedience: Adam did that which he wanted to do, he followed the desire of his nature. The blessed truth of God's predestination does not allow any man to escape his accountability to his Creator by hiding behind that doctrine, nor do the Scriptures warrant any excuse for sinning upon that ground. Water needs no forcing to run downward, that is its nature. Left to itself, water seeks its own level. God needed not to force Adam to sin. He willed to leave Adam to himself. That he did, and Adam naturally followed the line of the least resistance and sinned. Left to ourselves, we do the same. The enabling power of the Holy Spirit alone can give strength to resist and overcome our nature. The truly convicted sinner blames not his sins on God's predestination, but on the depravity of his own sinful heart. To do otherwise would be to blaspheme against God. The fifty-first Psalm relates David's feelings under conviction, such is the experience of the godly man.

God gave the law to Israel at Sinai, written by his own finger on two stone tables. The law is in two parts: the "moral" embodied in the ten commandments which are the "testimony" to the requirements of God's absolute holiness, and the "ceremonial" which embraces all sacrifices, ordinances and observances prefiguring the work and Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. The "ceremonial" law is done away, it is not over the church in this present grace dispensation. No obligation rests upon believers now to observe the forms and rites of the Mosaic law. The "moral" law, however, is as obligatory and binding as ever upon all the Lord's people. The beauty of it is that the Holy Spirit through love causes the fulfilling of this law in all who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. It is to this feature of the law, its "moral" aspect, that Paul refers in his words at the head of this article. "The law is good, if a man use it lawfully."

First, what would be a wrong use of the law? To think to use it as a means of attempting to gain divine favor by one's own obedience, is an unlawful use of the law. The law was not given for that end. The works of fallen man cannot save him. Yet, this wrongful use of the law is being preached in pulpits all over the land: that men can and must themselves keep the commandments and thus be saved. To think to be saved by moral uprightness without trusting in the finished work of Christ,

would be the same as if an Israelite had thought his keeping the commandments exempted him from any necessity of bringing his offerings to the altar. Such an Israelite would have been separated from the rest of Israel, and such a professed christian to-day is without any saving knowledge of the truth.

Second, what is a lawful use of the law? It is, in the hands of the Holy Spirit, our schoolmaster unto Christ. The Holy Spirit employs the law to convict of sin. Afterward, the love of God being shed abroad in the heart, the moral precepts of the law are fulfilled in the subjects of grace: not in order to save them, but as evidencing their having been saved. The right use of the law is a testimony to the justice and holiness of God. The ceremonial law ended at the cross of Christ. The moral law did not end there. It was fulfilled there, but not repealed there. By the death and resurrection of Christ, the morality of the law was lifted to a heavenly plane and those who are in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus live now by a sublimer morality than the world's morality. The priesthood being changed, there is of necessity a change in the law. Not that one law is taken away and another put in its place, but a change in the law itself. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus under which the believer now is, is the law changed from being a model of outward conduct to being a mould of one's inner life before God. To the child of God, the law is not merely a guide as to his conduct before men, but reaches to his very thoughts. Rightness in outward conduct does not satisfy the quickened soul, even as it does not satisfy God himself. The believer desires to live holily because the law of God is within his heart. He longs to do right because he loves righteousness, and not because he is seeking a reward for right doing. This distinguishes the moral life of Jesus experienced by his people, from all that the world calls morality. Love is the fulfilling of the law, not the setting aside of the law. The righteousness of the law is fulfilled IN, not BY, the children of God. The believer not only desires to live right before men, but most of all he longs to have his heart right before God. He hates his natural inclinations to evil, he prays to walk in God's commands. The law of the Lord is his delight. "The law is good, if a man use it lawfully."

H. H. L.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

"A friend," N. Y., $2; Judson Zeh, N. Y., $3; F. H. Richardson, Iowa, $3; Mrs. J. D. Shafer, N. Y., $1; Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $8; W. K. Baird, $2; Alice M. Hall, in memory of Joseph F. Hall, Maine, $8; Mrs. Mary J. Ege, N. J., $3; Elder R. Lester Dodson, N. J., $5; "A friend from Detroit," Mich., $3; Ebenezer Church, N. Y., $10; Mrs. T. H. Young, Ohio, $1; George R. Tedford, Mass., $1; A. M. Hellings, N. J., $1; Mrs. G. W. Thompson, Ont., $2; "A friend," Ky., $2; Milford Hall, Sr., Ky., $2; Dr. T. E. Presley, New Mex., $1; Mrs. Margaret Jamieson, Calif., $2; H. M. Bowden, Mo., $1.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

WILCE VALENTINE GARTON, eldest son of Mr. Roy and sister Lizzie Garton, was born December 4th, 1888, in Jefferson County, Kansas, and departed this life in the hospital at Perryton, Texas, December 13th, 1933, making his stay on earth 45 years and 9 days. He moved with his parents to Oklahoma when just a lad. Here he grew to manhood, and on February 12th, 1911, was married to Miss Alpha Raymond Yenkins, and to this union were born eight children, seven of whom, together with his stricken widow, his aged parents and two brothers survive him. One child, Betty Jean, having preceded him in death, passed away in the year 1922. The children surviving are Melvin, Nettie, Allie, Agatha, Homer, Verga and Thelma, all of Booker, Texas, where the deceased made his home. Brother Garton united with the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church on the second Sunday in September, 1912, and was baptized by the late Elder A. D. Jones. He was sound in the faith, but lacking in opportunity to mingle with his brethren. Being isolated from any church organization of his faith he stood alone, religiously speaking. He was a man of sterling qualities and of wide influence. It was said of him that his friends were numbered by his acquaintances, of whom there were many. At the time of his last sickness, and for several years previous, he was postmaster at Booker, Texas. He was also engaged in the undertaking business at that place. He was stricken with appendicitis and was removed to the hospital at Perryton, was operated upon, and it was thought he was getting along nicely; in fact, it was arranged to take him home to his family in just a few more days, when a blood clot struck his heart and he succumbed immediately. It was his expressed wish, in case he did not recover that the writer of this notice be called to conduct his funeral. Accordingly I was called over long distance telephone, and went and tried to speak a word of comfort to the sorrowing relatives and friends. It was estimated that over one thousand people were at his funeral. The church-house was filled to capacity, with a large concourse of people standing on the outside, and many were turned away because they could not be admitted to the inside. This fact of itself is an expression of the high esteem in which our brother was held. I used as a text, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" It is due those neighbors and friends to remark they were most generous in their ministrations of help and in their expressions of sympathy. All this is deeply appreciated, but God alone can heal a bleeding heart. He alone can comfort them that mourn. It is part of his divine arrangement that the acuteness of our sorrow cannot always remain with us. The soft hand of his providence will eventually wear away the keen edge of grief and we will be given better courage to endure than at first. We sorrow, that is true, but not as others who have no hope. Our beloved brother was blessed with a good hope through grace. While we mourn his absence here we rejoice in the hope of his happy entrance into that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Then may his sorrowing family and other relatives be inspired by the thought that their loss is his gain, lift up their heads, look upward and press forward, for God the Father is at the helm.

L. L. SCHENCK.

CHARLES HENRY BLYSTONE, for thirty years a resident of La Grande, Oregon, was born near Neoga, Shelby County, Illinois, November 7th, 1860, and after an illness of about two weeks his passport was sealed for him to cross over the river Jordan, November 26th, 1933. He had been in poor health for over a year, but able to be up and around. He was married to Miss Margaret Lockheart, of Neoga, Ill., December 11th, 1889, and to their union were born five children, one son and four daughters. The son and one daughter preceded him in death. He left to mourn their loss his devoted wife, of La Grande, Ore., and three daughters: Mrs. Joe Harrison, of La Grande, Ore., Mrs. Earl J. Wood, of Portland, Ore., Mrs. W. R. Fletcher and a granddaughter, of Portland, Ore., a grandson, of La Grande, Ore., two brothers, Dan Blystone, of Yakima, Wash., Jess Blystone and a sister, Mrs. Emma Lusk, of Eldorado Springs, Mo., and another sister, Mrs. Jasper South, of Neoga, Ill. He received a sweet hope in early life, but never asked for a home in the church, but was a firm believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine. He was a strong believer that God predestinated and foreordained all things. He was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, from which he received much comfort. He would often read different letters and say that was just what he believed. We arranged to take him to the Union meeting, which was held at Weiser, Idaho, in June, 1932, and after each service he was found wiping the tears from his eyes, and several times he remarked that words could not express the joy he was receiving from that meeting. He had a desire to be able to attend the next Union meeting, which was to be held at Touchet, Washington, in June, 1933. He wanted to visit with and hear Elder J. T. Barnes preach once more, but this wish was not granted him. His sweet smiles, kind words and noble life made him a host of friends. His little children friends will miss him, as will others miss him. A few days before he fell asleep in Jesus he called to his companion, and said that his father and mother had come and they were going to take him home. They preceded him in death several years. Dear bereaved ones, is it not a sweet consolation to know he dwells in that home above and will be made like his, and our, blessed Jesus? No more sickness, pain nor death. Weep

not for him who has gone, for our loss is his gain. If we possess a sweet hope, as he did, we should have nothing to weep for, but say, Thy will be done. It is only He who gave the spirit (or life) that can take it away, and when your passport is sealed then will you be carried away in Jesus' arms to dwell with him for ever and ever.

Written for the comfort of his dear companion and children, by a sister-in-law,

(MRS.) LILLIE BLYSTONE.

Miss MARGARET WILLIAMS, our sister in Christ, fell asleep in Jesus January 1st, 1934, at the old home where she had lived many years, near Vienna, Virginia, aged 96 years 10 months and 1 day. Her parents, long deceased, were Augustine Williams and Ann L. ("Nancy") Childs. Sister Margaret was the last surviving one of several children. Her nearest living relatives are three nieces and one nephew. All these four were to her, it seemed, as near and as dear as own children could have been. They are Mrs. Eugenia Buchanan, of Washington, D. C., Mrs. Florence Cline, of Vienna, Va., Mrs. Kate Coleman, of Newport News, Va., and Mr. Charles Moore, of Vienna, Va. These were devoted to their aunt and did all possible for her comfort and ease in her declining years. For several years her mind was very feeble, much of the time not able to recognize those about her. This made her a great care and responsibility, but all possible attention was given her and rendered with the utmost willingness and tenderness. Surely Mr. Moore and his wife, as well as the nieces, have nothing to regret on this score, being assured they were not neglectful of their duty and did not look upon it as such, but as a blessed privilege. Sister Margaret had been unselfishly devoted to their interest and welfare when they were young and needed her, so they lovingly requited her with equal devotion and care when she came in these last several years to need it so much. She was baptized Sunday, July 14th, 1889, by the late Elder E. V. White into the membership of the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church. She never failed in her attendance at the meetings so long as she was able, but for the past several years owing to her infirmity of mind she could not attend. She was the niece of the wife of the late Elder Samuel Trott, and loved to talk of the ministry of "Uncle" Trott, as she called him, whose preaching she somewhat remembered. Sister Williams was stanch and unswerving in her faith. She firmly and uncompromisingly believed in salvation of poor unworthy sinners through the free unmerited sovereign grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, and in absolute predestination of all things, as well as in the resurrection of the dead, and in the unconditional election of the children of God in his Son before the foundation of the world.

Funeral services were held in Vienna at the undertaking rooms of Mr. Money, interment in the cemetery at Oakton, Va. May the Lord grant us the attendance constantly of his Holy Spirit so that we who are left and who believe and love the truth as she did, may be kept by him when we too may be called to suffer the loss of bodily or mental powers; for our final preservation unto glory depends wholly on the Holy Spirit's keeping us and not our keeping hold of him. May the Lord comfort all who truly mourn and sustain them by his saving grace.

H. H. L.

MRS. MARY A. HOBENSACK, daughter of Christian S. and Sarah S. Stout, was born November 21st, 1868, and died June 29th, 1933, aged 64 years. On March 2nd, 1887, she married William Hobensack, who preceded her in death three years. To them the following children were born: Isaac Carnell Hobensack, Sara May Carnell, who died October 27th, 1918, aged 29 years, Bertha Wells Carnell, George Stout Hobensack, Joanna Schoffel, William Parker Hobensack, who died February 19th, 1921, aged 25 years, Clarice Durand Hobensack, Alice Hobensack and Earl Morris Hobensack, who died at the age of 7 months, August 7th, 1901. The surviving children are all of Ivyland, Pennsylvania. She is also survived by thirteen grandchildren, one brother and five sisters. The Hobensack home for more than thirty years was the chief place of entertainment for Old Baptists visiting Southampton Church. Nothing was spared that would make their guests happy and comfortable. Mrs. Hobensack was as fine a hostess I have ever met, and all who ever visited her home remember, I feel sure, her kind, genial and loving spirit. During my service of the Southampton Church, during the last twelve years, her home was my home, and my feeling toward her was more like a brother toward a sister rather than a friend. Now that she and brother Hobensack are gone, the girls, Clarice and Alice, in fact, all the children, are as kind to me as though I were a member of the family. Mrs. Hobensack never united with the church, but was a firm believer and loved the doctrine and songs of the Old Baptist Church and attended meetings as long as she was able. She had been in failing health several years before the end came, when her heart failed, and a lovely, gracious woman was gone.

The funeral service, held in the home, was largely attended, conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder C. W. Vaughn and the Presbyterian minister of Ivyland, whose name I do not recall at this moment. Interment followed in the family plot in the Southampton Cemetery beside her husband, William Hobensack. The children have my love and deepest sympathy in their great loss and loneliness.

H. C. KER.

On the night of December 22nd, 1933, sister **JANE MILLER** was called from the shores of time to eternity, at the home of Edward Miller, near Fleischmanns, N. Y., lacking but a little of being eighty-seven years old, and having been forty-seven years a baptized believer and a member of the Old School Baptist Church, and one of its most faithful and devoted members, her life being a testimony to the reality of her profession, and her walk always an example to her brethren and to the world at large. Her trials were many, but her faith never wavered, and with will resigned to her Maker's decree she awaited the final summons. She is survived by two sisters: Mrs. Helen Whitney, of Allaben, and Mrs. Mary Preston, of Oneonta, and one step-daughter: Mrs. Martha Whitney, of Halcott Center, N. Y. Her maiden name was Miss Jane Hammond, and she was born April 23rd, 1847, in Denver, N. Y. In 1888 she was united in marriage to Elder James Miller, of Fleischmans, N. Y., one of the ablest of the defenders of the tenets of the Old School Baptist faith in this locality, and to whom she proved a loyal and helpful companion, sharing the trials and the problems of a minister's life and work. Her humble walk and spirit of helpfulness endeared her to her friends and brethren, and her memory is enshrined in the hearts of all who knew her. She possessed unusual good health even in advanced years, and attended to her household duties until she was stricken with apoplexy, a few hours before her death.

The funeral services were conducted at the home of Edward Miller, with whom she resided for several years. The writer officiated at the funeral. The interment was in the Halcott Center Cemetery. Sister Miller was a member of the Clovesville Old School Baptist Church at the time of her demise.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS SMITH, my dear father, was born November 8th, 1869, and died December 15th, 1933, making his stay on earth 64 years, 1 month and 7 days. December 20th, 1891, he was married to Miss Margaret A. Wall, who preceded him to the grave, leaving dear father and three children. January 15th, 1899, he was married to Miss Emily B. Williams, who preceded him to the grave several years. He leaves to mourn his passing away three sons two daughters, eight grandchildren, one brother, M. P. Smith, Hattiesburg, Miss., one sister, Mrs. Lou Caldwell, Grayson, La., and a host of other relatives and friends. The children are A. M. and J. C. Smith, of Hattiesburg, Miss., M. C. Smith and Miss Minnie Smith, of Bogalusa, La., and Mrs. C. J. Barnes, Nickbyrd, Miss. We feel our loss is his eternal gain. He saw heaven and Jesus bidding him come, so we weep not as we would did we not know he is at rest, and we hope to soon meet him again, together with all the redeemed family of God and be with dear Jesus. He was a kind and loving father and husband, a good citizen and a christian. He loved his church and always attended the meetings as long as he was able. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Bethel, near Louin, Miss., thirty-three years ago, if I am not mistaken, and was baptized by Elder S. R. Scott. We laid his body in the cemetery at Hattiesburg, Miss., there to await the return of our Savior. We loved father, but God saw fit to call him home to sing praise to his holy name. We hope soon to meet him in glory and be free from all trials and sorrows. We ask all God's children to pray for us in our sad bereavement, that Jesus will still comfort us and be a Father to us.

Written by his lonely daughter,

MINNIE SMITH.

ERNEST G. CARTER was born near Garden, Smith County, Texas, April 16th, 1879, was married to Miss Marna James December 15th, 1915, and to this union one child, Irene, was born. Surviving are his wife and daughter, two brothers, B. J. Carter, of Edgewater, Texas, and R. S. Carter, of Gladewater, Texas, and one sister, Mrs. J. E. Billingsly, of Tylor, Texas, all of whom were present at the funeral. His remains were laid to rest in the Garden Valley Cemetery in the presence of a large concourse of relative and friends, to await the second coming of our Lord. He was a reverent and obedient son and attentive to his mother in her old age and declining days, a kind husband and a loving father. At the time of his death he was in the drug business, and will be greatly missed in the community.

At his funeral the writer tried to speak words of comfort, using as a text the words found in 2 Thessalonians iv. 13. May the Lord comfort the bereaved, that they may say, The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord. Dear ones, do not mourn him as dead, but asleep in Jesus.

Written by one who knew and loved him,

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

MEETINGS.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in January, February and March, 1934. Services to be held at the home of Ralph Maister, Central Bridge, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

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11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

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ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church will meet (D. V.) every second Sunday with brother and sister Berry, 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California. Every third Sunday with brother and sister Staggs, 506 E. Raulston Street, Ontario, California.

T. D. WALKER.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 808 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one-half block west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminiar Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 102. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1934. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WHY I AM A PRIMITIVE BAPTIST.

I WAS born in the mountains of the Big Sandy River section, on August 3rd, 1869. In this birth I was born of natural parentage, born to die. In August, 1914, I was born of a spiritual parentage, born a new birth, and born to live forever. At that time I did not know anything about the Old School or Primitive Baptists. I really thought all denominations that professed to be christians were right. There was an old Methodist preacher, a very pious old man, who lived close to me. I wished to be baptized so this old gentleman baptized me. I began to read the Bible every day, and read it prayerfully. I made a vow to my God that I would take his word for my guide. Soon after I commenced reading the Bible I found that the Methodist brethren and I were far apart, and at this I became troubled. At last I heard a United Baptist preach. I thought he and I agreed, so I joined the United Baptist denomination, was duly baptized and remained with them about ten years. I kept on reading and studying the Bible and contending for the truths I could see that it taught. They soon began to call me a "Hardshell." I dearly loved those people I had lived with so long, but how can two walk together except they be agreed? (Amos iii. 3.) At last I heard a Primitive Baptist preach, and he preached my belief so completely that I was convinced I was one of them, and that they had the true doctrine of the Bible, and that the world cannot overcome, so I am at last firmly settled on the following faith concerning eternal life. It may even be too hard for some of the Primitive Baptists.

The first points we will notice will be regeneration and conversion. A number of our preaching brethren say they both mean the same thing, but I do not understand it that way. The God that I believe in and worship is a God that knew all things; purposed all things in

Christ Jesus before time began; never made a failure; never was defeated; never tries to do anything, but speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast; one who does his will in all things.

The difference, as I understand it, I will endeavor to set forth as follows: First, regeneration, or the new birth, or the new creation, or becoming a new creature, is the work of the Holy Ghost, in which a vital change is wrought in the heart of the individual, is the implantation of eternal life in the soul by the operation of the Holy Spirit, for no man can turn himself to God. Regeneration is a passing from death unto life. It is purely spiritual life implanted in the heart. I think much confusion of mind and the consequent error of statement often result from giving the same meaning to regeneration as to conversion. Regeneration is the creative work, and means to quicken, to be born again, or to give eternal life. Conversion should be used with reference to change of mind, views, intentions or purposes. Men may be converted from one error to another, from error to truth, or from truth to errer, for the process is only mental and is generally accomplished by persuasive arguments or evidence (or what is accepted as evidence, be it either good or bad) which they may receive from others, or from their own meditations or reasoning; but regeneration is accomplished only by the direct work of the Spirit of Almighty God in the soul of man when it is entirely destitute of even a spark of spiritual life. The soul, or spirit, of man is entirely passive in this miraculous work, and no earthly hand or influence can possibly aid or assist in the least. So while there are earthly means used in conversion, nothing but the heavenly means of divine power can regenerate men. In their vanity and blinded zeal, men are compassing land and sea making proselytes, but are entirely powerless to give a single one of their converts a new heart or spiritual life. Exhortations, persuasions and arguments may, and very often do, change the mind, but such feeble means can never change one from nature to grace, for that is a radical change. A change of mind or intention is very far from giving life to the dead. Regeneration makes no vital change in the flesh, but in the spirit. There is nothing in the flesh made holy. Conversion may in some respects be called a moral act, but regeneration never is. Exhortations to morality and right living are certainly commendable, but regeneration is not a duty, for men are not commanded to be born again. Men may justly and sincerely thank others who have converted them from errors of any kind, but they should always be very careful to give all glory and honor to the blessed God for the gift of eternal life. If God has through his mercy and pity made one to be partaker of his grace and called him out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light, that one should give God alone the glory and praise for it, for he alone can do it. Men with all their zeal and monied efforts cannot in the least assist the gracious Lord in the genesis of spiritual life, and they should not un-

dertake that which is positively not within their ability to do, for their labors are only destined to failure. Men may aid others to acquire knowledge of many things that may come within their knowledge and ability, and this certainly in many respects is commendable, but they can in no respect aid in the giving of life, which work is far above all earthly powers. They may teach the head or cultivate the intellect, but they absolutely cannot change the heart. They may even teach the gospel in the letter of it, but they cannot convey the spirit of it. It surely is an awful delusion to think that the training of the natural mind or the giving of intellectual knowledge of Jesus Christ is the means of making people His children. If all of any one's knowledge of the blessed Savior is but historical, intellectual or head information, where has he any more valid claim of a better faith than the devils? (Mark i. 24-34.) So if mere intellectual knowledge alone would make one wise unto salvation the devils should have some claims, for they told Christ that they knew him. But they did not know him as the saints do, for it is most surely through the work of free and sovereign grace in regeneration that any one has a saving knowledge of that glorious and blessed Redeemer. God alone has the power to work such knowledge in the heart. Saving faith that trusts and relies upon him alone is the work of his Spirit. The devils never possessed the least particle of this kind of knowledge, neither was salvation ever designed for them. Head knowledge without heart influence will rather lead from God than to God, and to have the understanding convinced, while the heart remains unregenerated, is among the most awful delusions of the present day. There is no doubt but that in point of mere knowledge the devils themselves know more of Jesus Christ than many of his dear children, for we read that when Christ was upon earth the devils came out of many crying out, and saying, We know thee, who thou art, the Holy One of Israel. But what was their knowledge? They knew him in a way of his own eternal power and Godhead, but not in a way of salvation. They knew him as the Savior of his redeemed, but not as their Savior. Devils they still remained, and devils they must remain forever. The natural birth gives no right to grace. The church of Jesus Christ is composed of real regenerated believers. All who join the church of Jesus Christ without this qualification only constitute what may be called a nominal church. Grace when renewing the soul makes no alteration of the flesh. The body is wholly a mass of flesh and blood and bones, and it remains carnal. All its pursuits, desires, affections and appetites are suited to its nature, and it daily tends to corruption, so grace makes no change in this part of our nature, neither was it ever intended to. The original sentence at the fall of Adam must be executed: Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. (Gen. iii. 19.) Hence, it is to be sown at death a natural body as it was first formed in the Adam nature of our creation, but by

virtue of our redemption by Christ it will be raised at the resurrection a spiritual body. This is to form the triumphs of Christ in raising our vile bodies to be then fashioned like his own glorious body. This is what the apostle calls the redemption of our bodies, and which they who have the firstfruits of the Spirit wait for. (Rom. viii. 23.) But in the meantime a corrupt, sinful body, whose whole tendencies are corrupt, cannot but be in opposition to the renewed part of the child of God, who by regeneration is wholly spiritual, being quickened, which was before dead in trespasses and sins. It is no wonder, therefore, that in a constant warfare between the two opposing natures of the child of God that he should go mourning. How shall it be otherwise, when a man's own nature is everlastingly opposing his own soul? The flesh lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit lusting against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. (Gal. v. 17.) The doctrine of regeneration, namely, that God by an instantaneous act imparts spiritual life to the sinful soul without its cooperation or assistance, so that the new birth is not dependent upon or conditioned upon the act of man, but that he is born, not of the will of the flesh, nor of blood, nor of the will of man, but by the will of God. (John i. 13.) Again I state that regeneration is the solemn, holy and instantaneous work of God by the Holy Ghost in the soul, and our will or inclination has no more to do with it than the creation of a world, or of bringing ourselves into existence. It is the God of heaven that works it by his power. Religion to be worth anything must be a living religion, a religion that proceeds from a work of grace upon the heart. Regeneration, or the new birth, by which we experience a change of heart, is to be distinguished from baptism, which is an external rite, though some have confounded them as the one and inseparable thing. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. (Ezek. xxxiv. 26.) So it is a new creature, not merely a new opinion or a new name. I am sure that if our religion has never humbled us it has done nothing for us, but has left us where it found us: in nature's pride and ignorance. The supposition that the Spirit is begging, beseeching and wooing sinners to become saints, but because of weakness it is dependent upon the sinner for success, as often is pictured out, is certainly dishonoring to God. The powerful hand of God is too often overlooked in this vain and fashionable showing, of too much use for the weak and puny hand of man. While the apostle Paul writes the Thessalonians to quench not the Spirit: but as they were already church members, such exhortation must have been intended along the line of obedience suitable to them in that position. Paul was not addressing alien sinners, or unregenerate characters. While I think it possible for those born again to quench the prompting of the Spirit, at least to some extent, I fail to see how the unregenerate can do so, for they are

sensual, having not the Spirit (Jude 19), and so of course can have none of the Spirit in them to quench. I believe in the doctrine of election by grace, and that God chose a definite number in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world and ordained them to eternal life and glory. This choice being wholly unconditional upon their part. I believe that Jesus Christ was set from everlasting as the Mediator of his elect people, and that in the fullness of time he took upon himself a perfectly sinless body and nature, and in that nature and body he suffered and died in the room and stead of his elect only, and that he thereby obtained eternal redemption for them. I believe that sinners are justified before God only through the gracious imputation of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. I believe that God's elect are born again, or regenerated from a dead state of trespasses and sins (or spiritually lifeless state) by the Holy Ghost, and that all shall persevere through God's grace unto eternal glory. I believe there will be a resurrection of all the dead, and the joys of the righteous and the misery of the wicked will be everlasting. I believe that the gospel is to be preached publicly as a statement of the truth and as a witness of Jesus Christ, for his praise and for the comfort and instruction of unregenerated persons, but I deny that it is an offer of salvation to the unregenerate or that it contains any obligation for them to believe that he is their personal Savior. Many errors arise from wrong application of the Scriptures, because they are, with few exceptions, addressed to and therefore should be applied to the people of God, those quickened, or born again, and who alone are given ears to hear and hearts to understand. The power of preaching can reach no further in a spiritual sense than to instruct, comfort, cheer and encourage the weak, wounded and needy sheep of the Lord. We positively have no command to make sheep, nor to assist the Lord to do so. The church should not be considered some kind of a workshop where children of God are made, for out of such an opinion will grow a false zeal that will lead to many erroneous practices.

In the conclusion of this article I wish to repeat the answer to the statement that heads this letter: Why I am a Primitive Baptist. It is because they are the only ones I ever heard or read after who take all of God's word and explain it in a way that all the wisdom of this world cannot contradict it. My reason for writing the foregoing article is that I might lead one of Christ's little ones from error. Do not for a moment think that I believe it might save one from eternal destruction. Far be it from me, for I believe that the salvation of all who will ever be saved was made secure when Jesus said, "It is finished," and all the gospel preaching, writing, praying and every other effort made by mortal man will not add one to that redeemed number that Christ redeemed from hell on the cross. Christ's precious blood redeemed all his people, and his finished work is being manifested in his dear children,

and will continue to be until he comes to take them home

I do not want any one to think I do not believe in good works, for I believe in them as much as any one can and stay within the Bible, but I do not believe in works in the way of saving the soul. I believe that good works spring from salvation, and not salvation from good works. Good works are only the result of salvation, the fruits. I have not said much in this article about good works, as I have been considering the doctrinal side of the great question. A great number of preachers will tell you that if you will perform certain conditions Jesus will save you. There are absolutely no conditions in eternal salvation, but our present salvation largely depends on how we live in this present life.

I will now bring my remarks to a close, hoping that at least some one who reads this will compare it with the "Thus saith the Lord," and if it is not contradicted by God's word it will stand until judgment day.

Your weak brother in the Lord, I hope,

WILLIAM BRANHAM.

HITCHINS, Kentucky.

TEAGUE, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have had in mind for some years the thought of writing for publication a sketch of my little hope beyond this world of existence to leave with my wife and children, in case it has pleased the Lord to have arranged for my going first.

I was born in Chickasaw County, Mississippi, May 3rd, 1883, and lived there until I was seven years old, after which my father and mother moved to Texas, and as a farmer father resumed the same occupation, and thus I grew up. Like all other boys I enjoyed all the sports relative to my age and custom, and as I grew older I followed and obtained all the pleasure afforded me from a worldly source; in fact, that was all my desire. I would go any place or join any kind of a gathering that was respectable, just so I was in the company of young people. Thus it was with me until after my marriage, which occurred the third Sunday in June, 1910. In August, 1914, I took my wife and two children and moved to west Texas, Jones County. It was in this part of the State that my troubles began. I was raised by Primitive Baptists, my father being the late Elder W. M. Little. As I confessed before the church I could not tell when I first loved this doctrine as contended for by this people, neither can I tell when first I loved this people. Yet notwithstanding this, there was an idea lodged in my mind (being young) that there was some little something I must do that might influence the Lord to save me, and the question with me was, What is it I must or can do, and what is it that I am doing and what is it I am not doing? I thought, I do not steal, I do not play cards, I do not gamble, neither do I drink to excess, nor tell wilful lies, so what is it I must do? The thought came, I must go and hear preaching and do what the preacher says to do. So I went, and

the preacher admonished us all to read our Bibles. So I did. Next I must cease my cursing and telling obscene yarns. This I did also. I must be peaceable and friendly with every one, and this I tried to do. Still there was no relief, my troubles went on and grew into huge mountains that pressed me down beneath their weight. Oh the dark pit I was in! There was no light for me and it seemed that hell was my portion, and how could I ask the just God to save a wretched sinner like me? I would walk away from the house, seeking some place that would raise me above this pit, or this valley of dense darkness, only to be cast further down. The thought came, Who can relieve me or get me out of this black pit before some one finds me out? The thought then came to tell some one. No, no, never mention it, not even to my wife. What must I do? I thought, I will go once again to the woods, out of hearing or sight, and will not answer when I am called. That was in the fall of 1915. Thus my troubles went on. I feared I was going to die, and thought, How can this take place with me in this condition, not saved, so poor in this world's goods, a stranger in the country, and nothing. Surely the good Lord will let me live that I may be able to provide for my wife and children. Oh but could I refuse to die? No. Did I not feel it right? Yes, for how could God be just and let me live, so vile, corrupt, lost and undone? Still I was in this pit of sorrow, trouble and distress, until the fourteenth night of December of the same year. I went to my bed and it seemed that when I went to lie down I fell like a rock and then went to work trying to get out of that horrible pit. It appeared as though I were working and working, only to fall back in a dense fog of the blackest nothing, and where was I? Oh can hell be any worse, or can a man be any deeper in trouble than I was? I felt as the poet when he sang,

> "Lord, I cannot let thee go,
> Till a blessing thou bestow;
> Do not turn away thy face,
> Mine's an urgent, pressing case."

Right at this juncture something seemed to say, My hand is stretched out. Still at the next moment oh what thoughts! I cannot describe them, but I found myself high up out of the pit, sitting up on the bed. Though it was a cold night I was wet with perspiration, and was singing, How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear. My troubles were gone. How happy is every child of God who feels his sins are forgiven. I felt I was free at last, never to have any more pain, trouble, woe, doubt or fear. Though it was dark the world was as bright as at noonday. There was no kind of noise that was not music to my ear. Not another moment did I sleep that night, but I did not get up, due to more than one reason, chief among them because I was afraid my trouble would come back again. This fear finally grew into a very serious doubt. I went on in this condition until the third Sunday in March, 1922, when I went before the church and stated my case, and to my surprise they received me. I lived with those people two years, and finally

found them to be limited in their views regarding predestination, and, being ignorant, I declared nonfellowship for them and left them. My next step was to present my case before old Salem Church, in Freestone County, Texas. Again to my surprise I was received, and I was baptized the first Sunday in August, 1930, by Elder W. O. Beene, and while being led out of the water the brethren said I sang, "Do not I love thee, O my Lord? Behold my heart and see." It again appeared to me that my troubles were gone. But not so, they were just beginning. The text used by our pastor that day was, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God."—Isaiah xl. 1. I thought, Must I do that? My next thought was, No, I will not do it; I will die and go to hell before I will do that. But must I do that to save my life? I could not keep the thought out of my mind. I felt I am not the one to do that, for I am too wicked, vile, sinful, corrupt, and to prove I am not the one to do it I will do everything in the world that is mean, except steal and kill, and in order that my meanness might be kept somewhat closer I began it with my wife. I refused to assist her as I should. I lied to her and raised rows with her. No, I was not mad with her, but she thought I was. I was only trying to erase that MUST *I* DO THAT? from my mind. Thus it went on, pressing me harder and harder, and me putting forth my strongest efforts against it, until the first Saturday in November, 1932, when I was invited into the stand by one of our Deacons and before I realized it I found myself in the stand trying to do that which, as I thought, I had my seal set forever against. Thus it went on until the first Saturday in August, 1933, when the church liberated me to speak in public wherever in the providence of God I might be called upon.

Brethren, this is the evidence of my little hope. Do with it as you think best.

Yours in bonds,

W. A. LITTLE.

BENTLEY, Ill., Nov. 20, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—The ever-welcome SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been coming to my home and the home of my departed wife's grandmother (Mrs. Joseph Winchell) ever since its first publication, never having missed a year that I know of, and not a missing copy since it has been coming to my home, which is about forty years. In all this time I have been generally quite well satisfied with most of the ideas set forth therein, and many times has my poor hungry soul been fed and built up, giving me courage to go on. Many times while my family was growing up have we received the dear paper and wife and I sat down and read it clear through, and then talked often to one another of the comfort we received in pondering over its contents. Many are the articles we have read aloud before our children, but we never pressed our belief upon them, yet they all knew what our belief and wishes were, and have always respected them, to the extent that to this day

every one of the five children give encouragement to just keep on in the good old way as proclaimed and ever upheld by the SIGNS.

I must say here that my dear companion, Mrs. Annie Hopkins, departed this life December 16th, 1920, after a lingering illness of pernicious anemia, which she bore very patiently. Her last words were, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." With abundant testimonies all along her life's journey, we had the evidence that she had been with Jesus and learned of him. When we see from time to time those who have professed a hope in Christ, their walk so orderly and their conversation of a godly sort, depart from this life, we can and do truly say in our hearts, Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord. And, too, we feel not to mourn as those who have no hope.

My present wife was Mrs. Elba Witty, daughter-in-law of Elder Jack Witty, who was an ardent defender of the truth as it is in Jesus. We were married October 26th, 1928. She is a lover of the Primitive Baptists, uniting with them at the Concord Association in 1924. Having received a good hope in Christ, she was received by the Missionary Baptists in 1898, at the age of thirteen years. Now my children, who are all married, and I are happy to make known to all lovers of the truth that you are welcome to the home of my companion and me. We live one block from the church here in Bentley. We have a lovely band of believers here. We also have three other churches, namely, Providence, Middle Creek and Friendship. Elder Claude Webb is our dearly beloved pastor, who shuns not to declare the whole counsel of God. He dearly loves peace, and pursues it, but will make no compromise with any unsound thing connected with the church, and his walk before men generally is such as becometh saints.

I wrote a short article which appeared in the SIGNS about thirty-nine years ago, soon after I was received into the Old Baptist Church. I have never been able, like some, to tell just when I became concerned about spiritual things, but I remember I was not more than seven years of age when I used to wonder if God saw what I was doing, and what God was, and as I grew older of course I dwelt more on thoughts of heaven and of the life to come. At the age of nineteen, at a camp meeting I went forward to be prayed for, but through it all I did not feel that by what others did they were victorious, or had prayed through. They seemed happy, but I felt miserable, and oh so embarrassed. A short time after that I was received into the M. E. Methodist denomination. During that time, and on, I read my Bible with the idea always in mind to live each day better than the day before, all this in the hope of finally gaining heaven. I yet believe I was traveling toward the heavenly country. Christ was a sacred name, I reverenced it, but I utterly lacked the knowledge of it, and the name Jesus did not signify love to me, as I now hope I understand it. Along about that time I read about

Jesus telling his apostles to take neither script nor purse, and on one occasion he sent them out and when they returned he asked them, Lacked ye anything? and they said, Nothing. From these grounds I began asking the preachers, and now and then a preaching Elder, how it came they called for stipulated sums of money, and I guess it was getting too near the marrow, and they would divert the conversation to some other channel, or would cease talking. Perhaps the readers can guess what was their reason for not wanting to converse, better than I can tell it. But, anyway, that was the beginning of the reason why my name is with the Old Baptists now.

I realize this letter is getting quite lengthy, considering how poor it is, but I feel the case of the Gadarene who dwelt among the tombs fits me. I believe the tombs represent the so-called churches, when they undertake to bind poor innocent believers, but the Spirit of the Lord is leading them about and they are learning that what they of the different orders have been teaching, or the chain with which they have been binding them, is not true, and their binding chains, or false doctrines, used in these different tombs are broken when Jesus himself comes to where the helpless Gadarene is, and it is then he walks with joy the heavenly road and enjoys the company of the saints, as I do now.

I saw where you mentioned having sent out notices to delinquents to the amount of two thousand dollars and only receiving about twenty dollars in return. That surely is a sad state. I feel the Lord will sustain the SIGNS if in his wisdom he sees best. I am hoping that by this time many have been stirred up to do their duty by the ones who by the help of God have afforded us all such a stable reliable medium of correspondence.

Now may the blessing of God be with the editors and writers, who are determined to know nothing among you save Christ, and him crucified, the way, the truth and the life. My wife joins in her appreciation of the SIGNS.

I did not start out with any thought of this letter being published, but now as it is so lengthy should you find a few words in it that you feel would be of benefit to any one, if you see fit you may use what you wish of it, but throw it all in the waste-basket rather than crowd out good matter.

Your brother,

LEONARD H. HOPKINS.

ATHENS, N. Y., Feb. 2, 1934.

ELDER H. H. LEFFERTS—MY DEAR FELLOW-PILGRIM:—It is nearly six years since I was introduced to the SIGNS, and ever since I have been a regular subscriber; have all of them bound in a crude way. Many of the articles I have read and reread several times, with much interest, and, I hope, with profit, but in the February number, which I received this morning, I have found special delight in reading your editorial on 1 Timothy i. 8. I think the unfeigned faith of my grandmother Deborah was much like the same faith in Timothy's grandmother

Lois. Looking back over eighty years (I am now about eighty-nine) I feel I was almost brought up as an orthodox Jew. At all events, I was brought up under the law, although I have no doubt my grandmother was a child of God, through grace alone, and rejoiced in it, although burdened with the sense of her unworthiness. The effect of her teaching was that I acknowledged, to myself at least, that I was continually breaking the law I was trying to keep. Oh the long years the law hung over me as the execution-axe ready to take my life! But in early middle life I caught a glympse of what Christ had done for me by paying the penalty of my sins. That in him I had died, and the hope that because he lived I, too, had everlasting life, and not merely existence.

I am much afflicted with insomnia, and often read for hours in bed. Within reach are my Bible and a collection of religious and devotional books. One of this is Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, which I have read many times, but only during the past few years his spiritual autobiography, "Grace Abounding." From it I have learned of the terrible conflicts which for so many years tormented his soul. And I have wondered how he could have been so sorely tempted, so often, so long, so terribly, to "let Christ go." Looking back over my long life, I think I have never had other feelings than those of love and gratitude to Him. My earnest prayer is that he shall more and more win my heart and confidence, that he shall be in every way my hope, my guide, my life.

> "In my hands no price I bring,
> Simply to thy cross I cling."

And still I cannot even cling; I would sink in the sea of sin and unbelief if he did not hold me.

I hardly know why I have written thus, but your words came to me with much comfort, as they stated so fully, and still concisely, what I believe is the real teaching that I cannot easily refrain from telling you so.

A few years ago you wrote me a letter which was much appreciated, although I had not then learned the way Old School Baptists expressed themselves. Since then I have had the pleasure of meeting with them a few times, and have received some beautiful and cheering letters from those I learned to love, but who I cannot expect to see in the flesh, but hope to in glory. My convictions keep me outside any human camp, except as we are gathered to the name of our Lord Jesus. All in him are one body. May we hold all such in loving helpfulness.

Pardon my too long note of thanks, and may I not be one of those who are in your heart when you pray for all saints, i. e. redeemed sinners?

Because I believe you to be one of God's dear children I think of you as a brother beloved, and ask of God that his rich blessing may come to you as you labor to show forth his love and grace.

Sincerely,

P. W. KING.

ELKINS, West Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I am sending you some of my daughter's views on the Scriptures, or rather what she thinks they teach. She sent them to me to send to the publishers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES if I thought it was sound doctrine, so I am sending her letter on to you to examine and do with as you think best. If you do not think it worthy a place in the SIGNS all will be well with me.

You will remember preaching at their home one night after being taken there in a buggy from Hopewell Church by James Null. Well, we are some older now than we were then. I am in good health for one of my age. We are both (wife and I) as well as usual, and we hope you and yours are well. I miss my dear brother, J. W. McClanahan, but we sorrow not as those who have no hope. Our loss is his eternal gain.

Dear brother, we would be glad to have you in our country again, and at our home. We would be pleased to hear you speak the word orally. We heartily indorse your views, and hope you may still continue in the faith of God's elect and remain editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Give my love to all the brethren and sisters. Wife joins me in love to you and yours.

G. B. McCLANAHAN.

CHARLESTON, West Virginia.

TO THE DEAR CHILDREN OF GOD:—I feel it enjoined upon me to write a few lines, and for what purpose the Lord knows.

"My Spirit shall not always strive with man."—Gen. vi. 3. I feel every child of God feels this to be true in his own case. I know what it is to mourn an absent God. I have said and done many things which were very grievous to the Savior, which would cause me to mourn on account of my sins. I would own to my heavenly Father that I was vile, and by my own act I had plunged myself into darkness and despair, and no way of escape. Here is the penitent sinner mourning on account of sin. There in heaven is Christ, our High Priest, saying, I have taken up thy case; I am pleading it now. I will bring you off more than conqueror over all your foes. Then we can look up and say, Thou art mine, and all things are mine. Then we view him our Lawmaker, our Judge, our Mighty Counsellor, The Prince of Peace and our Great Physician. It is then we can see our standing in Christ. Then ascribe goodness, honor and glory where it belongs, to God. Then we can see our standing in Adam: hatred, envy, scorn, pride and every evil and deadly poison in our tongues, and even a seducing spirit there. Yes, it was our crimes that nailed him to the cross. He was taken by wicked hands. Yes, dear little ones, before the just and holy God we stand as criminals and judgment must begin at the house of God and we have to give account of the deeds done in the body, and a child of God is willing to be tried before this High Court, for he knows he will be

rightly judged. I will make thee a willing people in the day of my power. When the Spirit comes and takes up his abode with you this is the day of his power and he is reigning in your behalf, and he reigns to the overthrow of all things that are not pointing to God and godliness. The the beggar is lifted from the dung-hill and set upon the throne. Dear children, we should be glad to be counted worthy to suffer with him, for if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him. Comfort ye one another with these words. The more when you see the time approaching when the Lord shall come in his wrath to judge the earth. Who will be able to stand? All who have had their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb.

ERNIE NULL.

McDowell, Ky., Nov. 19, 1933.

Dear Editors:—I received my copy of the Signs of the Times all right, and we, the church of God, were comforted much by the good word of God. I am very glad I subscribed for it. I feel that God has a poor people (poor in spirit) scattered all over his footstool. I feel that the Signs is a Godsend to the "sought out" of the Lord. Never before have God's people, Israel, stood in greater need of courageous, enlightened, faithful men, who can stand as rocks before the storm of hatred and persecution, who can hold aloft the light of faith and truth in the fog of fear, confusion, ignorance and unbelief. As I understand it, the Signs does more good than many ministers could do. I believe it a profitable instrument of God, spreading the gospel of love, joy and peace. No doubt there are many of God's poor children who are unable to hear the gospel of their salvation save through the Signs of the Times, yet God deviseth means that his banished be not expelled from him. God will not and cannot leave his people; neither suffer his faithfulness to fail. God hath promised, yea, sworn, to bless and save his people. There is nothing too hard for God. It is nothing with him to help, whether with many or with them that have no power. It is God's battle and not ours, said the old servant of God. God turns wise men backward and maketh the counsel of the heathen nought. The wisdom of the world is foolishness with God.

I am sending you five dollars to be used in the way you deem best to promote the cause of Jesus. I esteem his words more than my necessary food. They are sweeter than honey to my soul. God is worthy to be praised, for there is none before him nor like him. Incorruptible God! Corruptible man!! Who can but adore him (God)? God's heart alone deviseth means of salvation for his elect "The Lord taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation."—Psalms cxlix. 4.

I enjoy reading the Signs because of the good doctrine, and also its plain and flat-footed manner of speaking. Truth needs no flowers of speech. I am sure that the Signs is doing a great work in feeding the children of God

with knowledge and understanding, therefore I beg to tender you the small sum inclosed. I want my brethren and sisters in the Lord to know that I am interested in their welfare here and hereafter. I love the ring of the truth, and at this time I am striving to help you hear its ring. I expect to help support the SIGNS from now on if circumstances permit.

Now, dear friends, if you feel to use my letter you are at liberty to do so. I do not ask you to publish it, as there are better ones to me, I feel. If not deceived by my tricky and deceitful heart, love moved me to write this epistle and send this little contribution.

A heaven-afflicted sinner,

MILFORD HALL, SR.

[WE much appreciate the kind and encouraging words of the writer of the foregoing letter, also his generous contribution, and sincerely thank him for both.—ED.]

TAFT, Tenn., Nov. 19, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is through the mercy and kindness of God that I, a poor sinful girl, after a long silence try to pen you a few lines, attempting in my weak and imperfect way to express my thankfulness to you for being so kind as to continue mailing us the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We look forward to its coming, for its pages are full of the truth which we hope we were not taught to love by man's words. We cannot go to meeting now as we used to do, as mother is not able to go about much. Her health is failing as she grows older, and she is so grieved and heart-broken since papa was taken away from us on the second day of last June. We are very lonely now, the days seem so long, but we feel God knows best. When he calls we must all go. We know not when, but it was once appointed unto man to die, and as time passes we realize we are nearing the end of our journey here in this old sinful world, but we hope to be submissive to the One who has all power both in heaven and in earth. He can comfort the broken heart, and we feel sure our loved one is at rest and will never have to suffer any more. He cannot come back to us, but we hope that by the grace of God we will some day go to him, for there is "a land of pure delight, where saints immortal reign." (If indeed we may claim a little part with those who were brought to God by the shed blood of his Son.)

I will ask you to please change my address from Taft, Tennessee, to R. 4, Fayetteville, Tennessee, if you still mail me the paper. I hope not to miss a copy, for it is as good news from a far country. I wish I could pay you something for it, but find it impossible. Much of the time here of late we have not had anything to even buy the necessities of life, but we try not to complain, always hoping for kind Providence to provide. We know that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord. Do we love him in the way this means? is the question I long to know.

May God bless the editors to live many years yet to send out this paper that has stood so many years declaring

the absolute sovereignty of God. Of all the themes we mortals know, election sounds the sweetest.

When you have remembered all others, please pray for us lonely three who are spending the sadest time of our lives, yet hoping some day to be freed from these earthly troubles and be carried on the wings of love to that home not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

"An interest in your prayers I crave,
That we may meet beyond the grave."

A poor girl, unworthy the least of God's blessings,

WILLIE SISCO.

MONROE, Ga., Feb. 5, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending my remittance for the SIGNS. I have now been taking it three years. I read my father's while he lived, and when he left us I felt I wanted to carry on as much as possible the good cause. I have felt many times that one edition pays for the year's subscription. Elder Lefferts' "New Year's Greeting" was good indeed, together with others in that number, and now the February SIGNS brings wonderful articles from Davis Burch, Elders Dodson, Lefferts and others. I would love to write each one my appreciation of their writings.

Perhaps the brethren who remember Elder J. M. Adams would be glad to know his church here in Monroe, where he was pastor, is still having meeting each fourth Sunday. Elder J. C. Hewett is the pastor.

In hope,

SARAH A. PETERS.

ST. LOUIS, MO., Feb. 14, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find money order for two dollars to renew my subscription another year. I am sorry to be late in sending the money, but I lost my dear wife last September and I have had much to look after and I am getting old and cannot get about as fast as I desire. I am nearly seventy-nine years old, but able to work every day.

Dear brethren, I have Elder Gilbert Beebe's Editorials. They are in good condition, and I would like to dispose of them, as I cannot hope to be here much longer and would like some one to have them who would appreciate them. If any one desires to have them they can write to me at 6043 Elizabeth Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri.

Yours in hope of a better world,

GEORGE H. LEE.

CLARKSVILLE, Tennessee.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending two dollars for another year's subscription, for I feel I can hardly get along without the letters and editorials that I so heartily indorse. I am a lone widow in this place, not another Baptist here that I know of, and in winter months the SIGNS is all the preaching I have. I hope I appreciate the paper for its worth. Many times I have received great comfort from the writings of the Baptists from different parts of the world. May it be the will of God to provide a way for the continuance of its publication.

Sincerely,

(MRS.) B. H. SHEARON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1934.

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THE DEVIL.

As it is the time arranged by our publishers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for us to write, we feel our insufficiency of ourselves to write for your edification, and we assure you that we are dependent upon Him from whom all our help must come, for God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. (Psalms xlvi. 1.)

According to the declarations of holy writ, we as a people who profess to worship God in spirit believe him to be Sovereign over all worlds, principalities and powers, possessing supreme dominion. We believe God created all things by the word of his power, and upholds and directs all things. In these expressions there are no exceptions or reservations that the devil should be supreme over. Our God works his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can hinder him. We do crown our God supreme in power, and the powers that be are ordained of him. The devil, with all the power he manifests in leading captive the sons of men, cannot pass beyond the bounds God has set; he must in that wonderful sense acknowledge God's sovereignty. We have been interrogated many times as to the devil: where he came from, and did God make him? We now answer in print, and we hope not to be asked relative to the deep mystery which is not to our mind fully answered that we can answer positively. First, if he is a serpent, God's hand formed him. Second, if he is a thing, God created him. The first Scripture we have of the devil and his subtility is in the Garden of Eden, when Eve was beguiled to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and when these things are mentioned often the questioner will assert that if God created the devil he is the author of sin, without the consideration that God is above all law and all law is subject unto him, and sin is the transgression of the law. When sin was conceived it brought forth death, by the creature that was under the law or subject to its ordinances. God gave the law, man transgressed and became the sinner. Where sin abounded grace did much more abound. Sin reigned in the first Adam unto death, grace reigned in Christ, the second Adam, unto salvation. God is infinite in wisdom, in which all things are with him as one eternal now. Nothing

old or new. A discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart of man, and knoweth our thoughts when they are far off, before they enter our minds.

Men speak of accepting Christ and by certain acts and customs inherit eternal life. In weighing this in eternal truth we are reminded of when Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, there to be tempted of the devil. The devil came tempting him, and said, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."—Matt. iv. 3-10. We receive from this teaching that no man can command the devil nor extricate himself from his captivity and merit peace with God for the transgression of His holy law. Jesus saith, "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," which proves that Jesus is the only One that can cast him out or deliver from his captivity. When Jesus repeated what was written, that thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, he was cut off from any enticement to Jesus to worship him. Often such spirit is manifest in the church, and when the church refuses to hear or consider their allurements they will leave, and as it was with Jesus when the devil was cast off angels came and ministered unto him, so peace reigns in the whole body of the church. We do contend that all power was given unto Jesus in heaven and earth, and he directs his people during this life's pilgrimage that they should be to his honor and glory, and they are made to understand that all their help must come from him, which proves them to be worshippers of the Lord God. We love to see men and women declare the wisdom and power of Jesus in act as well as word. We often come in contact with those who profess belief in salvation by grace, and grace alone, and then in a very short time express words that would limit his power or abridge his wisdom, which to our mind disqualifies the profession they have made before men.

Jesus was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death that he should save his people from their sins, with an everlasting salvation.

As we recall that which was written concerning him previous to his coming, and the elect chosen in him, and he standing as it were a lamb slain from before the foundation of the world, as the sacrifice that should be offered without spot to God, and should make his people perfect to do his will, and how this was all portrayed by the Father in types and shadows under the law, we cannot but declare him to be an absolute Sovereign over all things, and all our times are in his hands. All the expressions of men as to what and how much of this world was predestinated does not weaken our convictions and love for him. We feel that he works in us both to will and do of his good pleasure, and all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are the called according to his purpose. We do believe his people by his Spirit are given to see his directing hand in all their lives, that causes them to believe him to be all-wise, infinite, and as God, speaks, declaring from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. We realize many blessings bestowed upon us that we of ourselves are unworthy to receive, but we are made to feel it was his goodness and mercy bestowed, which comforts us, by which we are made to hope we are numbered with the elect. When we are cast down we question, Oh is there any one like me? Then when we are given to rejoice no tongue can express the fullness of our joy. Then is when we receive the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. (Isaiah lxi. 3.)

We would comfort you, dear reader, in our writings if we could, but we realize we can do nothing, for we are poor, helpless creatures, and have no strength to perform, nor wisdom to direct. We see ourselves as coming short of what we would attain, and from what we hate we cannot refrain, which makes us confess that it is by the grace of God we are what we are. If we declare unto you wisdom and power of God, do not charge that we make God the author of sin, or that he imputes sin, but that venom was in the devil and when it was conceived it brought forth death. We do believe God's wisdom knew the devil and all his work, and God in his power has set bounds that cannot be moved.

Faith imparts to us how we are builded upon that foundation that cannot be moved, and we realize our steadfastness in Him, and through the Spirit we have access unto the Father, which makes us no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. (Eph. ii. 19-21.) When we read in holy writ words of comfort to our hearts do we just see the writer, or the foundation by which the writer was moved to write the inspired word of God? So our faith is built upon the same foundation upon which the apos-

tles and prophets were built, and Jesus Christ the chief corner stone, and according to the testimony of the written word we are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. We behold the same Spirit inspiring them that we hope we have in our hearts. The Jews and Gentiles alike must be partakers of Him, and live and move within him. We cannot set up these wonderful mysteries as we desire, but we hope that you will be given the teaching of the Spirit that will open up to you of the sweetness of the joys of salvation that we have hoped to call your attention to, and hope you will be minded to spread the mantle of charity over us, for our failures are not that we have strength and wisdom to achieve, but because it has not pleased God to open to us more abundantly the stores of his grace. We would attain unto these things if we could, but it is by the grace of God that we are of comfort to his people, and we hope to give him all praise, honor and glory.

C. W. V.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

When remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it. By referring to these dates you can tell to just what time your subscription is paid. Dec. 32 means your subscription expired December, 1932; June 33 means your subscription expired June, 1933; Dec. 33 that it expired December, 1933, etc.

JOHN'S BAPTISM
VERSUS
GOSPEL BAPTISM.

(Matt. iii. 5-17; Acts xviii. 25; Acts xix. 1-7.)

What was there about the baptism of John the Baptist wherewith he baptized those who came unto him truly repenting, that made it incomplete so that Paul had to baptize anew those who came unto the latter having previously been baptized by the former? John's baptism was not recognized by the apostle as having been gospel baptism. Why not?

Those baptized by Paul as cited in Acts xix. 6, and upon whom he afterward laid his hands, received gifts of tongues and of prophecy. No such gifts came upon John's disciples following his baptism of them. When Jesus was baptized by John, the Holy Ghost came manifestly upon Him. The Holy Ghost did not come upon any others whom John baptized. The Holy Ghost did not come upon those whom John baptized as it afterward did upon the apostles at Pentecost and upon those whom the apostles baptized at that later time. The same measure of understanding and of ability for gospel service was not given to John's disciples as was given to those who were baptized after the resurrection and the ascension of Christ. That the disciples of John had the Holy Spirit is evident. They could not have repented otherwise. It is equally evident, however, that they did not have the "gift of the Holy Ghost." Having the Holy Ghost and having the "gift" which the Holy Ghost only can give, is a distinc-

tion though not a difference. The gift which the Holy Ghost gives to those baptized by Him in this age of grace is the ability to minister in the sanctuary of God, the ability to discern spiritual things, which ability carries with it the enabling power to rightly divide the word of truth. Those baptized by John prior to the exit of the Old Testament order of things did not have this ability.

John's baptism was anticipatory: looking toward redemption and the kingdom of heaven. Gospel baptism is retrospective: the result of redemption having been accomplished and of everlasting righteousness brought in. Thus, John's disciples were looking for the Messiah to come to inaugurate the kingdom. Their knowledge was incomplete, owing to the fact that they did not know that the Messiah for whom they were looking was the Jesus who had been crucified. Apollos was an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, which means that he knew and could set forth the Scriptures of the Old Testament. The New Testament had not then been committed to writing. He was fervent in the spirit and taught diligently the things of the Lord, all from the Old Testament standpoint; but he was short on knowledge. His deficiency in this direction was made up to him by Aquila and Priscilla who were graciously enabled to open his eyes to the things he had not before seen. This that he had not before understood was that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ of whom he had been preaching, the Messiah for whom all Israel had been looking but in whom all Israel did not believe. When he understood this, such understanding rounded out Apollos' ministry and made his service to the church more efficient than it had before been. And when others of John's disciples were given similar insight into this great truth: that the expected Messiah was none other than the Christ whom they had crucified, then they, too, received baptism in the name of this crucified and risen One and afterwards received gifts by the laying on of the apostles' hands.

John baptized with water only. Christ baptizes his own with the Holy Ghost, and will eventually baptize the wicked with the fire of everlasting destruction from the presence of God.

John himself alone baptized, his disciples did not baptize.

Christ baptized nobody with water, but his disciples did.

John baptized unto repentance in that those who came to him did thereby separate themselves from the pollutions of that day and time. Gospel baptism is because of the remission of sins by the sacrifice of Christ and is the outward sign of the inward grace of regeneration.

John's baptism was a confession of sin and an acknowledgment of its just penalty, death. Gospel baptism is a confession of salvation from sin and from death, through the resurrection.

John's baptism was legal in its aspect, being under the law dispensation. Gospel baptism is gracious in its character and belongs to the age of grace.

John baptized in Jordan only, no-

where else. Gospel baptism can be administered by a proper administrator to a proper subject in any stream or pool of water anywhere.

Jordan means "descending" and appropriately pictured forth the truth that under God's holy law which in itself knew no mercy and which could not of itself clear the guilty, we are all by nature going down to death and the grave in obedience to the edict that went forth in the beginning upon our first parents because of their disobedience.

John came by water only. Christ came not only by water, but by blood also.

Those who came to John to be baptized, evidencing their true repentance, went down into Jordan not confessing Christ, but confessing their sins and the just penalty which their sins entailed. Thus the waters of the Jordan, not literally but confessionally, ran filthy with the unloaded sins of the people. Jesus came to Jordan not confessing any sin, he had none, but he came to fulfill righteousness. John at first forbade him baptism. John did this because he knew the baptism with which he was baptizing was a confession of sin, and he knew this Lamb of God to be spotless and without sin. Hence it seemed to John utterly inappropriate that Jesus should receive baptism at his hands. John knew further that he had need to be baptized himself and thus confess his own sins. But when Jesus told him it was appropriate that they two should fulfill righteousness, then John demurred no more. This fulfilling righteousness meant that Jesus must go down into the stream and be baptized in the burden of guilt with which the people had confessedly loaded the water. He came up out of the water having manifestly assumed his people's sins, which sins he bore in his body all through his ministry inaugurated at his baptism, and which sins he purged away in his death on the cross by the shedding of his precious blood. Thus when he began to be about thirty years of age, the age at which the Levites began their ministry, Jesus began his public ministry. His first act of that earthly service was to go down in Jordan, assume manifestly the confessed sins of his children, come up out of the water bearing those sins, and make an end of those sins in his cross and end his earthly service by dying; thereafter arising from the dead to begin his heavenly ministry upon which he fully entered at his ascension, and which ministry he is now accomplishing for his people at the right hand of God as their eternal High Priest after the order of Melchisedec, the pattern of Aaron's priesthood having been finished.

H. H. L.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

R. W. O'Neal, Texas, $1; Florence H. Disharoon, Pa., $1; Mrs. M. E. Drake, N. J., $1; H. N. Hoskins, Ky., $1; Mrs. Ida L. Reilly, N. Y., $1; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $2; Durwood H. Bradley, Texas, $2.50; Unetta Hamilton, Mo., $2; E. H. Winchell, Mich., $3; "A friend," $1.25; "Lovers of the Truth," Ont., $2; Mrs. Kate Lunsford, Ky., $1; Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Okla., $2.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

On January 15th, of the present year, at her late home, in the town of Halcott, Greene County, New York, **MRS. BERTHA BELLE SCUDDER,** wife of William Scudder, departed this life, leaving to mourn their loss her aged mother, Mrs. Martha E. Whitney, her husband, and four children: Mrs. Smith Streeter, Mrs. Kenneth Streeter and one son, Wesley, of Halcott, and one daughter, Mrs. Wesley Van Valkenburg, of East Masonville, N. Y. The funeral services were held in the Methodist Episcopal church-house in Halcott, January 18th, the writer officiating, assisted by F. P. Venable, pastor of the Halcott M. E. denomination. The interment was in the Halcott Cemetery. The subject of this article was born November 20th, 1873, and was a granddaughter of the late Elder James Miller. Practically all her life, save for two years, was spent in her native town. In 1896 she was united in marriage to William Scudder, proving to him a most loyal and faithful helpmeet in the voyage of life. Mrs. Scudder had been ill of hardening of the arteries, associated with heart trouble, for two years, and for about a year was rendered blind by her illness. She was a patient sufferer and seemed to be given reconciliation to the will of God in her grievous affliction. She believed in the doctrine of salvation by free and unmerited grace, though she never united with any church organization. She possessed rare qualities as a wife and mother, as a neighbor and friend, and the influence of her exemplary life will be felt in her communityfor a long time to come. The large number of people who gathered at the funeral services to pay their last tribute of respect attested the esteem in which she was justly regarded. Much sympathy is extended to the bereaved family.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

ERNEST G. CARTER was born near Garden Valley, Smith County, Texas, April 16th, 1879, was married to Miss Mama James December 15th, 1915, and to that union one child, Irene, was born. Surviving are his wife, one daughter, two brothers, B. J. Carter, of Edgewood, Texas, and R. S. Carter, of Gladewater, Texas, one sister, Mrs. J. E. Billingsby, of Tyler, Texas, all of whom were present at the funeral. His remains were laid to rest in the Garden Valley Cemetery in the presence of a large concourse of relatives and friends, to await the second coming of our Lord. He never united with any church, but was a believer in the doctrine of the Primitive or Old School Baptists. He was a reverent son and very attentive to his mother in her old age and declining days, a kind husband and loving father. At the time of his death he was in the drug business and will be greatly missed in the community.

At his funeral the writer tried to speak words of comfort, using as a text the words found in 2 Thessalonians iv. 13. May the Lord comfort the bereaved, that they may be made to say as one of old: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Dear ones, do not mourn him as dead, but asleep in Jesus, from which none ever wake to mourn.

Written by one who knew and loved him.

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

[The foregoing obituary is republished by request of Elder W. W. Slaughter, who says there were several mistakes, which he thinks were his, in the former publication of the obituary.—Ed.]

This is to let my brethren, sisters and friends know of my sad bereavement in the loss of my dear companion, **NANCY JANE BERRY.** She was born February 16th, 1852, in Forsyth County, Georgia, and came to Fayette County, Alabama, with her parents, E. B. Newton and wife, E. A. Newton, in early childhood. She was married to G. W. Berry September 11th, 1881, and to this union were born eight children, twenty-four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren, all of whom are still living except one son, Dan. W. Berry, who died in France during the great war. To say that I am sad and lonely is putting it mildly. I feel in my heart to-day that surely no man ever had a truer, better life companion than she was, and no set of children ever had a better mother. We lived together fifty-two years, four months and nineteen days. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Hopewell in November, 1898, and lived a consistent member until death. In her sickness she seemed to think she was away from home and begged me to carry her home. But that was the work of God, and I fully believe he sent his angels and carried her home.

The burial service was conducted by Elder Lytle Burns, after an appropriate introduction by a Methodist minister. Brother Burns made a very nice and comforting talk.

Written by her husband,

G. W. BERRY.

MEMORIALS.

Inasmuch as it has pleased the great Head of the church to call from his labors on earth to his everlasting reward our Moderator and dear brother and father in Israel, **ELDER J. R. HATCHER,** Be it

Resolved, That we, the Western Tennessee Association, bow in humble submission to the will of Him who doeth all things well. May he in tender mercy reconcile us to our great loss. Be it further

Resolved, That this memorial be printed in our Minutes, and also published in the Signs of the Times. We pray God's richest blessings on our dear Sister Hatcher and her family in their sad bereavement.

We shall miss our brother and faithful servant,

but have full assurance of his eternal rest from his labors and his works do follow him.

Done and signed by the order of the Association.

R. L. BIGGS, Moderator.

KATIE RAGAN, Clerk.

ALSO,

WHEREAS, it has pleased Almighty God to take from earth our dearly beloved brother, **L. D. PERRY**, we, the Original West Tennessee Association of Old School or Primitive Baptists, feel that a suitable memorial should be prepared. We know that words can but slightly express what we feel in our hearts, neither can they do justice to so noble a life as was found in brother Perry. He was a man of sterling integrity, upright in heart, kind and generous, and to know him was to love him. He was a firm believer in election and predestination and the absolute sovereignty of God. He served his church as Deacon for several years to the entire satisfaction of all, being found blameless.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to our dear Sister Perry and their children. We feel our loss deeply, but would bow in humble submission to our all-wise King, and desire to say as one of old, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Be it

RESOLVED, That this memorial be printed in our Minutes and a copy be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Done and signed by the order of the Association.

R. L. BIGGS, Moderator.

KATIE RAGAN, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in January, February and March, 1934. Services to be held at the home of Ralph Maister, Central Bridge, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church will meet (D. V.) every second Sunday with brother and sister Berry, 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California. Every third Sunday with brother and sister Staggs, 506 E. Raulston Street, Ontario, California.

T. D. WALKER.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

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11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 808 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one-half block west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminiar Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 102. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1934. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE PARABLE OF THE TEN POUNDS.

(LUKE XIX. 11, 28.)

The parable considered in this article while bearing a resemblance to the parable of the talents differs from it in several essentials. The parable of the talents was spoken by our Lord upon the Mount of Olives, while that of the ten pounds was uttered either in Jericho or while Jesus was enroute from there to Jerusalem. The former was addressed to his disciples only, the latter to a body of Jews who thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear, which was the desire of national Israel in their longing for a literal kingdom on this earth and freedom from bondage to Rome and servitude to a Gentile power.

The Lord mentioned a certain nobleman who went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and return, and before his departure called his ten servants and delivered to them each a pound and bade them to occupy until he came. But his citizens hated him and sent a message after him, saying that they would not have this man to reign over them. Upon the return of the nobleman, who had received his kingdom, the servants were called to him to give an account of the use of their money. The one who had gained ten pounds by the use of the one pound left him was rewarded with ten cities over which authority was given him. The second man had gained five pounds and the government of five cities was given him. The third had hidden his pound in a napkin, fearing his lord, and that was taken from him and given to the one who had gained ten pounds. No mention is made of the other seven who were entrusted with money. The enemies of the nobleman were slain before him. Such in brief is the main substance of the parable.

To my understanding, the certain nobleman who went into a far country is the Lord Jesus, the word "certain" signifying a particular individual apart from all others. By virtue of his divine

essence, his holy humanity, eternal sonship, and the Godhead dwelling in him, Jesus is distinguished from all creatures of earth or heaven. He was a true nobleman of David's royal line after the flesh, also having God for his Father, he was entitled to a heavenly as well as an earthly throne. Having been through the death of the cross, both a holy offerer and a holy offering, by which he effected forever the work of atonement for all the election of grace, Jesus rose from the dead and later ascended to heaven, which is the far country. Compared with the legal heaven the gospel heaven is a far country. Those who are under the condemnation of the law are separated from the gospel blessings by an impassable gulf so far as the effort of the creature is concerned. Heaven is a far country to them. Only the Lord Jesus as God manifested in the flesh is able to take the poor, lost, guilty, helpless, condemned sinner from his lost and ruined state under the curse of a righteous law to that far country of gospel blessings and liberty in Christ, even to the heaven of fadeless glory, which is accomplished through his finished and redemptive work. The work of salvation embraces the work of the Trinity, the Father who predestinated all things and gave to his Son the church as his bride, all true believers being embodied in the gift of the Father; the work of the Son who redeemed this elect family of believers through his incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and priesthood; the work of the Comforter or Holy Ghost who reproves the world of sin, righteousness and judgment, convicts all the children of God of sin, shows unto them their Redeemer, Husband and Lord, gives them peace, and guides them into all truth. This threefold work of the Trinity is found in the creation, in the incarnation of the Son, in the crucifixion and in the resurrection of the dead. The work of Christ as the third person of the Trinity during this grace dispensation manifests in the hearts of all true believers the fact of sin, the fountain of sin, the fault of sin, the filth of sin, the folly of sin and the fruit of sin, and shows the riches of saving grace, and applies, as stated above, the work of redemption in Jesus crucified, risen and exalted at God's right hand. But this glorious truth in all its experimental and doctrinal reality in no sense conflicts with the fact of the actual second coming of Jesus, the same Jesus that was taken up into heaven from the Mount of Olives in a cloud, when the trump of God shall sound and the saints shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, after which shall follow the execution of God's righteous judgments upon Satan and the impenitent wicked.

Before the departure of the nobleman in the parable under consideration, he called his ten servants and delivered to each a pound, saying, "Occupy till I come." Jesus served under the law in his earthly ministry and came to the Jews as his own after the flesh, who were under the law, and this pound which he gave was delivered while the law was still in force. But the Jews as a nation hated him and would not have

him to rule over them. The pound that was given implies and includes that which was embraced in the promises made to Israel and in the law as regards the decalogue, and also the ceremonial law which with its types and shadows pointed to the remedy for sin in the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ. But in its spiritual application to believers, a pound represents faith, which is the gift of God and the evidence of things not seen, and which is imputed to redeemed sinners for righteousness. Faith is legal tender in the kingdom of God, without which it is impossible to please God. There are two kinds of currency, the genuine and the counterfeit, so there is one true faith, also a counterfeit in head knowledge that rests in a purely intellectual comprehension and manifests itself in the emotions and desires of the carnal mind and is evidenced in worship where the heart is not touched or made contrite because of sin. Now each of these ten servants received the same, a pound. May not these ten servants suggest to us the ten commandments given by God through Moses, and written on two tables of stone by the finger of God? Though given primarily to the Jews, however the Gentiles who have not the law, and yet do by the nature the things of the law, having it written in their hearts become a law unto themselves, and so in that secondary sense receive the law, become aware of the wound and death wrought by sin and by faith, see the law kept by Jesus and also the ceremonial law fulfilled and ended in him. But the Jews believed that righteousness came through the works of the law, and so were blinded, and did not discern Jesus as the anointed of God, the true Messiah. The law was primarily the special property of the Jews, and Israel had the tabernacle and later the temple with its worship. Wonderful miracles were wrought for them, and precious were the promises given to them, also the ministration of the prophets, also their deliverances, and the mercies extended to them by Jehovah. In that sense each of that nation received a pound. They were to make use of that which was given for their benefit until the nobleman, Jesus, who went to that far country, heaven, should return.

There is a sense in which the people of God grow in the grace and knowledge of God that is given them and have their faith increased. In this there is a lively exercise of hope as the brethren mingle together in sweet fellowship, talk of the things of Jesus, witness unto him, and testify of his wondrous love and eternal salvation, of their need of him, of their fullness in him. The quickened child of God has all needful faith, a pound, and this is increased as the need arises.

When we look at Israel under the law, we find that its meaning was veiled from them as a nation, that in the blindness of their minds they did not discern their failures under it and their need of grace, and wilfully rejected the teaching of prophets and stoned them that were sent unto them and persecuted them. In the face of visible

manifestations of Jehovah's repeated mercies, they sinned and turned to follow their carnal minds and desires. And when the nobleman returned and required an accounting from them to whom he had entrusted money, we find that the one who came forward first reported that he had gained ten pounds by trading and received as a reward ten cities. The second received authority over five cities, as he had gained five pounds. It was customary to award to faithful servants in olden times the government of cities for service rendered. In the case of the man who received ten pounds, do we not see the Gentile believer represented, as well as the Jew who has been given faith? for the Gentiles by acknowledging the righteousness of the decalogue, or ten commandments, and their condemnation under it, and their hope through the mercy of Christ and his shed blood have it fulfilled by the Holy Spirit in them and kept in Jesus. Each believing Gentile, as well as each believing Jew, has gained ten pounds, in the above reference to the ten commandments as applied in their experience and walk after the Spirit. Here is a perfect salvation and a perfect reward in the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, etc. The one who received five cities as a reward for the five pounds his one pound had gained may represent the Jews who were given faith to embrace Jesus as their hope and their salvation, as considered apart from Gentile believers, for the number five represents law as well as grace, as we note in the case of the five foolish virgins and the five wise virgins. There were five books of Moses, books of the law. There were five porches to the pool of Bethesda, another figure of the books of Moses as regards the law, and the brazen altar of sacrifice was five cubits square, and this altar prefigures the cross. Other illustrations might be given, but are not necessary here. These books of Moses include both the decalogue and the ceremonial law with all its elaborate detail. The Jews had the ceremonial law, and the Gentiles never had it and were not under condemnation for lack of its observance. Therefore the use of five pounds and ten pounds to illustrate and prefigure the import of the parable under consideration.

The third man came forward and reported that he had kept his pound hidden in a napkin and had feared his lord as an austere man. The word "napkin" means sweat cloth, and was used to wipe the perspiration from the forehead, and also to enfold about the head of a corpse. As a result of Adam's transgression, man was told that he must earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. We see in figure here the deadness and the curse of death and separation from God brought by sin. The pound of this man had been hidden in the sweat cloth of the curse of sin. This man, and it applies alike to Jew and Gentile as a sinner blind to the law of sin and its direful consequences, had not felt the arrows of conviction of sin in his soul nor the prickings of conscience as a transgres-

sor in his heart, nor realized his guilt and helplessness before God. As a Jew he had not seen the meaning of the ceremonial law nor felt the deadness wrought by disobedience of the commandments of the decalogue. He had tried to justify himself by the works of the law, and, like people to-day, who know not the truth, considered God austere and unjust because the Bible teaches that God has ordained some to eternal life and happiness and others to eternal condemnation. So this man's pound was taken away from him and given to the one who had ten pounds. How true it is that the gospel blessings and privileges of this present dispensation have been denied the Jews nationally and have been given to the Gentile believers, whom the man who had gained ten pounds may represent. Also that which the Jews had under the law, the temple worship, has been meantime denied to them. We see that the Gentiles who had not the oracles and the prophets as the Jews had are blessed as believers with Christ and and spiritual blessings.

In concluding I would note that seven servants, a perfect number, did not report to their lord as to the use made of the pound given to each of them. Does this suggest that in regard to them there is Scripture unfilled? I cannot explain this mystery. Secret things belong unto God and revealed things unto his children.

The above is submitted with much fearfulness, yet with the hope that those who may read these views will exercise all needful charity.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

DELAWARE, Ohio.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS, WRITERS AND READERS:—For more than a month I have had a desire to write again to you, and to acknowledge my belief and comfort in the pages of this dear paper, which some condemn because of some point of doctrine they think you do not agree with them in. But in conversation with both you and them all agree with me as to how sinners are saved. We all know that sometimes in the dark we imagine we see a fearful shape, which with a little clearer light, when our agitation is over, we see it is but a familiar thing, which we are already acquainted with. When ill feeling arises one is, no doubt, in a fleshly spirit, which never has a clear vision of divine things, and a fleshly belief is not faith, for "faith works by love," and "it [the truth] is revealed from faith to faith," but not in fleshly combat. One hears that "absoluters" believe and advocate that man is excusable, or not to be blamed, for his sins, because when he sins he is doing just what God not only takes pleasure in, but makes him do. I cannot approve of the above expression, neither do I believe that either the editors or good writers of the SIGNS approve of it, but I do believe that God did declare all things, both good and bad from the beginning, and that he has a most wise and holy purpose in all things, because I believe that he is almighty, all-wise and altogether holy, too all-sufficient in all his attributes to suffer terrible things to be if he had no good purpose in their coming to pass. I do not like the word "happen," for I

do not believe there is any "happen-so" with God. I believe his decrees extend to all things, yet in such a way that God is not the author of sin (though he must have determined it and set its bounds), neither is violence done to the will of the creature. Since the fall of Adam fleshly impulses are only evil, and that continually, without the Spirit of God moving upon them and compelling them to sin. No man can go further than the bounds that God has set for him, for God has declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. How can man dare say that God will not, or does not, do it? Satan could not do any more to Job than what God purposed. Pilot could not have power, except from on high, to condemn Christ; neither can any evil come but by the permission of God, who even gives them power to so do. But though God says, Is there evil in the city and the Lord hath not done it? I do not believe that God works sin in the way that he works in us (saints) to will and to do of his good pleasure, because the same fountain cannot send forth both sweet water and bitter. But in some way there was an evil spirit sent by the Lord to go in the mouths of the evil prophets, a lying spirit, to whom God said, Go and do so. Since it is so far beyond the power of man to explain, I think it is not only ungodly, but silly, for saints to quarrel over predestination.

Now I do not know whether or not I have made my belief clear, but, to sum it all up, I believe God intended things to be as they are, yet I do not believe he works sin by his Spirit. God is of one mind, or Spirit, holy and without iniquity, yet in his wisdom "by him all things consist." Why did not God destroy Satan in the beginning instead of in the end of time if he had no use for him? And now do not say, "Hush," when I say, Why did God make him at all? And if Satan is self-existing how could God destroy him at all? This is not frivolous talk. The Bible says he formed the crooked serpent and the wicked for the day of evil. I must contend that God knew just what Satan and the evil should do, and that he had a purpose in the evil as well as the good, for he declared, All things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are the called according to his purpose. And God shall appear in the end, holy, almighty and glorious to all men, and every mouth be stopped. I have fellowship for all who believe that salvation is of the Lord, for God loves all such or they would not believe it. Now if I am in error, please correct me. I am not infallible, but in some way I have held this belief since childhood, even before I heard an Old Baptist sermon or read the London Confession of Faith. I have heard what sounded a little lopsided to me, both from friends and foes of predestination. For we are not to say we are delivered to commit these abominations, or to say we are tempted of God when drawn and enticed by our own lusts, but, Let God be true, and every man a liar. God is never disappointed.

Dear brethren, I had no intention of writing on predestination when I began, but I have just penned thoughts as they came. If what I have written sounds silly just cast it aside. I am ill at present, and nervous, with one of the worst colds I ever had. No doubt the natural mind is rather weak. I meant only to say how much I enjoy the SIGNS, especially the two last numbers, December and January. I cannot mention all, but excuse me if I mention such old friends as Elder Lefferts, brother Davis Burch, Elder Greathouse and others, together with good letters from sisters. I enjoyed the letter to the New Hope Association, held with Little Flock Church, Edgewood, Texas. Brother Greathouse, I met you there, at the home of Elder W. W. Slaughter and his dear wife, who has gone on before us. You and I had quite a talk while standing on the lawn in front of the house, when we found that we both came from Ohio. That was about the year 1916, or possibly a year or two later. My dear father was there, also my sister, Mrs. J. J. Darnell, of Greenville, Texas. My name then was Joie E. Woods. Elder J. C. Sykes was present, also his brother (I think) preached. I remember too many dear ones to mention all, but I wish to offer my love to all who remember me, and to all who love our Lord. I long for that never-ending Association above, where I hope to meet you all, never to say goodby. There all shall see eye to eye, all be charity, which is love. We shall not need faith or hope, but sweet shall be the love which we now enjoy only in part.

I have just reread some in the December number of the SIGNS, and again enjoyed the letters of Elders Greathouse, Ruston and Lefferts. Elder Greathouse seemed more comforting than before, and "G. R." filled me to overflowing with tears of joy and comfort. The thought kept repeating, "My dear brother." Then naturally came the thought, If he is a dear brother in writing so comfortingly, must I not be equally a blest sister when I can so appreciate what is written? For, "Blessed are they who know the joyful sound," of a sinner saved by grace. I had even a greater feast than at the first reading. Oh how good is the Lord, to give us feasts of his love and mercy, and to enable us to comfort others with the same comfort by which we are comforted of God.

JOIE E. WOODS PETERS.

PRIMITIVE BAPTIST HOME, Salisbury, Maryland.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—DEAR BROTHER:—Here I am sitting in my room, but I am traveling along with you, as I was four weeks ago, enjoying the mountains and hills and drinking in the beauty of God's handiwork. Surely the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. There is no speech nor language to express the glory seen with the eye or felt in the heart reviewing the wonders of our God toward us, and we have nothing to offer in return. It is all freely given, and we are ever receiving from a bountiful hand for our

pleasure here, as we pass through this wilderness, and how little do we appreciate it. When I look upon all the wonders and blessings we have here it makes me stop and consider what must be the place which the Lord has prepared for his children when he gathers them home to dwell with him for ever and ever, to be at peace, and rest from all turmoil. So far, he has led me, clothed me, fed me and kept me from harm, and fought all my battles.

I did enjoy the last two Sundays I was with you all, when you spoke of His fighting our battles for us. I realize more and more every day I live that if the Lord did not fight my battles and keep me I would sink never to rise. The troubled waters almost, but not quite, overflow me, but his everlasting arms are underneath to bear me up and on. I can look back from my eighth birthday until the present day and see the hand of Almighty God leading and keeping me as the apple of his eye, but many times I am fearful of many things. Am I a child? Do I have the mark in the forehead I see in the Lord's children? Has he brought me thus far, and will he leave me at last to sink? Will I be a Judas or a Pharaoh? Am I to be used for a purpose? for we are all born for a purpose and have to fill that purpose; whether we like it or not, we cannot help ourselves. I feel perfectly helpless in his hands. There I must rest, in his hands.

I did so enjoy your sermon, especially on David and Jonathan. How they were knit together! How the Lord delivered David out of the hand of Saul! Surely the Lord has fought all my battles and delivered me out of the hands of the Philistines, within and without, many, many times, and if we are true to ourselves, we are not true in all things that pertain to those we love, if we are in that same knitting. The thread being without beginning or ending we cannot be unraveled; all our enemies are removed and taken from us. The Lord is merciful and longsuffering. The psalmist says, In him will I put my trust. I also enjoyed the sermon about the Shunammite. I feel you saw more in it than you spoke of. Can we not sing, when the Lord rules, "It is well?" When we can see that he has removed so many things far from us, especially our sins, which are many. Is it not beautiful where the Lord spoke to Joshua, and said, I will be with you; I will not fail thee nor forsake thee. Is not he with us to-day, as of old, ever leading us, though the way be rough and many times our feet slip? When we are made to see the error of our ways our feet are upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, and we are made to cry, Lord, help me. When we least expect it mountains are removed, rough places are made smooth, and we can then sing with Israel of old, The Lord has triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath he cast into the sea. Oh that we could always be mindful of these deliverances and not grumble and complain; put fear behind us and always trust, but the flesh is so weak, so apt to go astray and try to have our own way, therefore we are brought low and made to cry and not put our help in puny

man. We have to learn as we travel that our God's name is Johavah. He is a mighty ruler, a man of war, peace and love, all in one. None can stay his hand or say, What doest thou?

Christmas morning it would have done your heart good to have seen the family gathered in the living room, like a lot of children, waiting for Santa to distribute their presents. Sister Livingston asked for the festival to open with singing, which we did by singing hymn 160, "Joy to the world."

This is a beautiful morning and we have much to be thankful for.

As I read this over I see many mistakes, so please cast the mantle of charity over it, and if I have said anything that is amiss excuse it. I have not the pen of a ready writer, or the tongue to tell all I feel, but I hope I have been led by Him who doeth all things well, and unto him be glory given now and forever, world without end.

Your sister in hope,

NETTIE DOLSON.

SWANQUARTER, N. C., Feb. 6, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—I come to you again, as I have so often come, saying I am not able to pay you for your, and, I must say, my paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, yet in all of my poverty I have not lost that fervency and zeal for the truth, for it seems the poorer I become in this world's goods the richer I become in faith, and I hope in grace, yet in all this I cannot ask you to continue sending me the paper, for you have already sent it to me lo these several years without compensation, as far as money is concerned, but my prayers have been with you, and praise to God that he should move upon your heart that you should desire to send it to me. It plainly teaches me, my dear brethren, that you have love and fellowship for such an unworthy worm as I am, one who does not feel fit of your notice, yet I am glad, and often while reading I am moved to tears, each and every copy, to think that you should deem me worthy to read such vital truths and send it to me year after year. Oh I am so fed and comforted in that thought, and as I read I can see how God is upholding you by his mighty power and sustaining you so richly by his grace to write and speak such heavenly and divine truths. Yes, declaring his whole counsel, crying aloud and sparing not, letting the chips fall where they may. Oh I rejoice in such godly boldness; it does my soul good, and I praise God in your behalf and pray that you may be spared many years to wield "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon" to the comfort, edification, inspiration and instruction of the bleeding cause of Zion. The SIGNS is all the preaching I have now, for disorder has crept into this church and my failure to go into it has excluded me from it, so there is nothing being preached here but by the disorderly faction, so I am cut off and am one alone, as it were, and would go hungry were it not for the SIGNS, yet, my dear ones, I cannot ask you to send it any longer, yet I feel I cannot do without it in such a famished time as is the present with me. I get to hear preaching only about three or four

times a year, when I can find some way to go to some church that is in order. I cannot go into disorder, and would rather never hear another sermon than go into disorder. I hope there will be a way opened for me to be fed, and I feel sure there will be, if indeed I am a child of God. I am not afraid to trust him, for my trust is in him. I want you to pray for me.

I hope the way may be opened for me to have and enjoy the SIGNS some time, if not now, but I know you are tired of sending it to me so long and no pay in sight, so use your pleasure, and write when you have a mind to do so, for I love to hear from the children of God.

From one who loves you for Christ's and the gospel's sake.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) EFFIE CARAWAN.

PROVINCE OF ONTARIO, Oct. 23, 1870.

DEAR ELDER BEEBE:—I am living in a place where the truth is not preached, and as I cannot countenance error and rejoice in humanly devized schemes of our day, I choose rather to stay at home when those around me go to their places of worship. On this account I am a wonder unto many, and on coming into my room on Sunday morning I found the following lines left, written upon my table. I wrote the reply which follows them and left it where it could be seen. I send them both to you, and if you think them worth publishing, they may be of some use to some one of the "little flock," the good pleasure of whose Father it was to give them the kingdom.

Why make yourself so lonely?
  Why don't you friendly be?
Why don't you go to church, where you
  May other good folks see?

Why are you always by yourself?
  No reason can I tell,
Unless it is because you think
  There's no one like yourself.
    Am I right?

REPLY.

You think I am lonely, but no, not at all,
For Jesus is with me, who saved from the fall;
When walking the broad way, when wandering to hell,
He sought me, he found me, deigned me to dwell.

You think me unfriendly because I don't go
To some place of worship, as other folks do;
Though the charge of unfriendliness thus do you bring,
Yet I must remember the law of my King.

Cease, my son, says that law, the instruction to hear,
From the words of true knowledge that causeth to err. (Prov. xix. 27.)
Come out from among them, and stand not within,
And be not partaker with them of their sin. (2 Cor. vi. 17.)

When to church I go, I hear a great deal
Of poor, lost man's merit, and human free-will;
Both notes are detested by me, who must own,
That saved I am by God's free grace alone.

Why so much by myself you cannot conceive,
If it is not because that I fully believe
No one to be like me, nor no one so good,
That is not the cause why I love solitude.

For in me (in my flesh) no good thing does dwell,
All my good is from Jesus, of him I will tell:
In myself a poor sinner, do the best thing I can,
With Paul I must cry, Oh poor, wretched man. (Rom. vii. 24.)

Perhaps you still wonder, and yet do not know,
Why a pilgrim and stranger through life I should go;
Let me tell you, and oh may I tell you in love,
'Twould all be quite plain were you "born from above." (John iii. 7.)

JOHN A. McKELLAR.

[THE foregoing letter was written years ago by the late John A. McKellar, a very worthy member of the Cov-

enanted Baptist Church, and is again printed at the request of brother John McFarlane, who is now in his ninety-seventh year.—G. R.]

HYMNS.

Around the world among old and young, rich or poor, Eastertime is a joyous time. Joyous not only because of the rising and warming of the natural sun at its awakening from the sleep of winter, but also because of the joyous belief in the rising of the Sun of righteousness—the resurrection of Christ. And because of this it awakens a feeling of thankfulness, of reverence and joy in one's heart. The spring sun after the vernal equinox is glorious to behold at its rising in the east, the while lilies are fragrant and pure, the gayly dressed people, and the lively spirit abounding, are all very splendid. But the beauty of heart-awakening hymns is greater than all else. Uplifting with living words sprung from the very soul, words which only the heart can feel of that hour of transfiguration in which Christ was risen, is beautiful, and one is made to rejoice. Nothing down through the ages has been greater than hymns, greater by far than any of our natural expressions in art and literature. They sustain one through seasons of hope and conflict; they likewise restrain; they set one's mind at rest and peace. "For hymns are the exponents of the inmost piety of the church." To each individual there are hymns to dry tears, and hymns to open the buds of praise and joy. They are blossoms of love which beautify the church, and the soul of mankind. To the one who knows which way the life of hymns flows, and knows of the river of life, how deep and quiet runs the stream of piety.

To write a hymn is a gift. No other masterpiece can compare with the few humble words form the heart which lives in it. One's whole life's experiences may be bound up in a single hymn—beautifully. A hymn is not a thought, not a fancy, or an expressed number of impulses. It is a voice coming from the soul that speaks one's own experiences in words which few are given the gift to write. In it many can feel of the things spoken and be truly thankful in having it so. Hymns live within the heart and are as helpful in times of trouble as in times of victory, in darkness as well as in light,—always there. Yet in a whole lifetime of uprisings and downsittings one little verse can fully express the fruits of hope and faith and worthiness. As the lily does drink of the goodness of nature through a whole season of its life before it sends forth its blooms, pure and sweet, so the noblest blossoms of our soul must be fed and grown before we can give utterance to the beauty they manifest.

A hymn is something of a silent minister which God has given some one the gift to write and send it out that it may reach those who need food for their souls. And as it lives within one's heart it becomes rooted and sends forth its own branches and like blossoms and fruits. So a hymn born of the experiences of one individual may come to

live in the hearts of many. One may not always feel like singing it, but the words live and lead one's life on to more wonderful verses, those many verses which live in one's heart in harmony. Hymns fulfilling the promises of Christ our Savior are like the spreading of an eagle's wings catching up her faltering young and bearing them on to a cleft of safety. Hymns are the lilies of our field, brightening the days wherever they live.

MARY LOUISA HELLINGS.

ONTARIO, California, March 1, 1934.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—In keeping with the expressed wish of brother Staggs and his wife, sister Lilly, you will find a copy of a private letter received recently, and should you deem it worthy a place in the SIGNS we (I must say we) will be glad. However, I think we are prepared to say, not boastingly, but humbly, we submit it to your personal judgment as to whether it is worthy of publication or not.

Brother Osteen has and is suffering deep bodily afflictions, but God has given him the usual exercise of his mind, and while they received and we enjoyed his epistle, we feel that it may be his last letter, and submit it to you, though it was meant by him to be a private communication only.

Unworthy of the least of His benefits I feel to be, yet I beg to remain in the best of bonds, the bonds of love, as your brother,

T. D. WALKER.

PERRIN, Texas, Feb 24, 1934.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER STAGGS:—I am trying to answer your good letter, after so long a time. Owen and Emma have been so poorly we have been going there a great deal of the time, and have neglected to answer your letter, and your card received yesterday, which found us and John's folks as well as usual. Everything is looking good, in the way of small grain, here. I was surely glad to hear of your good meetings, and I do hope the good Lord in his mercy will continue to bless you in that way, and every other way possible, for he is a merciful God, just and right is he. (Deut. xxxii. 4.) We had a good meeting at Rising Star the last time I was there; had meeting Saturday and I was alone, to conduct the service, and we came near having no service at all on Saturday, but brother Varnell came Sunday and certainly was enabled to do some good preaching. I meant to go last second Sunday to Fort Worth, but it rained me in. I surely would enjoy meeting the dear brethren and sisters of southern California, but conclude that will never be in this life, for I am getting too old to go much.

Well, you just ought to hear Elder Seale now! He is enabled to preach the good old doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone, the predestination of all things, and preach it straight. Brother Seale is not satisfied with some things, I conclude, but it seems to me dissatisfied—dissatisfied because he is satisfied some do not want him to preach what he believes the

Bible to teach. If I could not preach what I believe I would as soon be one place as another, for there is no difference. But Paul says, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel [or doctrine] unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel [or doctrine] unto you, than that ye have received, let him be accursed."—Gal. i. 8, 9. For there is a curse for preaching any other doctrine than that of Christ, for neither is there salvation in any other. Paul declares again, "I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."—1 Cor. ii. 2. For he was crucified, or put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the Spirit. Yea, even he who was delivered for our offenses was raised again for our justification. So all Jesus did while on earth was for the salvation, the justification and the resurrection, of final glorification, of his people. For they are sown in corruption and received in incorruption, sown in weakness and raised in power. For if in this life (the mortal life that now is) we only have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable, for now we see only as through a glass darkly, but then we shall see face to face. Now we know in part, but then we shall know even as we are known, for the Lord knoweth them that are his. Oh glad I will be to be counted worthy, for Jesus' sake, to be one with the Father, Son and ever-blessed Spirit; to awake in his likeness, when I awake, to be like him, and satisfied. That is the day I am waiting for.

Oh how I do wish, if it was His will, I could see you now, at this present time. It seems I could talk with you and sister Staggs all night, and enjoy it, for we have been made to hold sweet counsel together, and have had many conversations in the past on the doctrine set forth in the good book called the Bible. But I am so weak and sinful, so unworthy, that I feel like it would be too great a sin for me to come under the hands of the presbytery, submit to the laying on of hands and be ordained, or set apart, to the full work of the gospel ministry. They have not yet set any time, and I sometimes think and feel I just cannot submit. But the good Lord only knows what will be in the future. I sometimes believe as John declares, "Little children, it is the last time." So we are living in the evening of the gospel dispensation, as Paul says, "In the last days." For we have everything fulfilling as Jesus declares, and everything taking place that he enabled Paul to set forth as the signs of the times, these times. But God only knows.

Write me a long letter, and also give those brethren my best fellowship and love. We surely would be glad to see you and yours again, and I am always glad, unworthy though I be, to hear from you.

We beg to remain, in hope of much mercy, your poor brother and sister,

C. Y. and E. L. OSTEEN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1934.

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EPHESIANS IV. 32.

"AND be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

Once more we are favored of the Lord to address our many brethren and friends through the pages of the SIGNS, and may the God of peace and love bless us with such liberty of expression that our testimony shall not only appeal to the heads, but to the hearts, of our readers, for if we have a God-revealed religion, it will be in the heart, and will affect the life. The apostle Paul received his religion from heaven, and in this chapter he says, "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." That was just a word picture of what the world was in Paul's day, and the world has not changed, and while the world is full of "adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditious heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like," I hope we can say of our readers, as Paul did of the Ephesians, "But ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus." To learn Christ is to learn forgiveness, "through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light unto them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." Those who have learned the lovingkindness and tender mercy of God ought to be kind and tender-hearted towards each other, for if we are what we profess to be, we are strangers in this world, and find it to be solitary, as was the wilderness of old. There are but few walking in the narrow way to-day, the religion of Jesus never was popular with the world and should we try to make it so, in being friendly with the world, we should then be enemies to God. But we write to the few who are travelling home to God, in the way the fathers trod: "Be ye kind one to another," for we are brethren, of one common stock by nature, and if we differ from the wicked it is by the grace of God we are what we are. In other words, we have received it, and why glory as though we

had not received it? We have all been forgiven much and ought to be forward to forgive others. Peter said unto Jesus, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven." Then Jesus tells of the man who was forgiven his debt of ten thousand talents by a certain king and this very man, who had been forgiven, and was but a servant to the king, went out and found a fellow-servant who owed him one hundred pence. This man, who had so much forgiven him, took his fellow-servant by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And the fellow-servant fell at his feet and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not; but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. Undoubtedly Jesus gave this illustration to emphasize the declaration he had made to Peter, to impress us with the needs-be that we consider what a debt we owe. If we have not forgiveness towards each other, what reason have we to think that God has forgiven us? If Christ is born in our hearts, we have in him the embodiment of forgiveness, kindness and tender-heartedness, therefore our text can be summed up in this sentence: Live Christ in your dealings one with another, practice Christ as well as preach him, live Christ as well as talk him. Paul says, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Paul preached not himself, but Christ, for he lived Christ. Paul, swallowed up or lost in Christ. Those who had known and seen Christ would recognize Christ in Paul, his doctrine and his life. How few to-day could say in truth, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." "By their fruits ye shall know them." We write this, humbly realizing how impossible it is for one in the flesh, and prompted by the flesh, to do any good thing, but knowing somewhat of the flesh in ourselves and seeing it in others we would put on Christ. David would show kindness for Jonathan's sake, so we should be kind and tender-hearted to one another for Jesus' sake. We are chosen in the furnace of affliction and all must pass under the rod, and for Christ's sake we are killed all the day long, and accounted as sheep for the slaughter, therefore how becoming that we be kind and considerate of one another, forgiving one another. We have heard it said many times, "I can forgive, but I cannot forget," but we question if that is forgiveness. David cried, Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions. How can we ask God not to do against us the thing we are determined to do against others? We find Mary Magdalene, a great sinner, yet through the grace of God a changed person, and from the day she was forgiven she was often found in Jesus' company. He did not look suspiciously on her or treat her distantly or remind her of what her former life had been, neither did our Lord treat Peter coldly, even though Peter denied him with oaths and cursing, but when sending the news of his

resurrection to his disciples he singled out Peter, telling them to tell him. The brethren did not hesitate to show kindness to Paul, for this same apostle said, "But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past, now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. And they glorified God in me." They were kind and tender-hearted towards him and forgave him, even though he had been so cruel to them in the days that were past. They forgot his past, as they forgave him. There is something wrong when brethren cannot forgive brethren. How can they ever think they have forgiveness when they do not exercise the same to their brethren? Jesus says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." God grant us more frequently to see that when we wound God's children we really are hurting Christ, and how can we bear revenge or pride with Jesus in our view? Now we are admonished to be kind one to another even as God for Christ's sake has been kind to us. This seems to suggest a large call for kindness, seeing that we all are fit fuel for hell, not one any better than another, and it is God's kindness to us that we ought to consider as the only example for us to follow one toward another. Again, we must be tender-hearted. Most people are naturally hard-hearted, and it is only the grace of God that can and does soften such hearts, and when we have been forgiven much of God, it is then, while we are under a sense of sins forgiven, that we feel we can forgive our worst enemy. There is then little need or thought of forgiveness towards the brethren beloved, for they are then the perfection of beauty, and we are happy to sit at their feet. Then it would seem impossible for any of them to hurt each other, and we have felt confident at such times that whatever they might say of us, they could not hurt us. When such love and forgiveness has been shown to us, we could say of the brethren, "I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me." Such perfect love casteth out fear, and while in the enjoyment thereof, the earth has swallowed up suspicion and complaint and how awful to even think that they will ever show their slimy heads again. Under this sense of forgiveness and mercy from God, with hearts that are tender and full of kindness towards men, especially the household of faith, we do not perhaps need this admonition of Paul's, rather it is when we have left our first love, and through the love and devotion of brethren to us, we have thought we were somebody in the church or among the saints. Such somebodies will always have their favorites, and high-mindedness, with self-esteem, will prevail. In this mind they have ceased to be little children, and they need their Lord Jesus again to call a little child unto him, and set Him in the midst of them, and say, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Now we do not for a moment consider that any such can

humble themselves except as God, who is gracious, blesses them to do so, for we feel that "whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." It is therefore when our hearts are hard, and our pride has been hurt or our judgment questioned, or our plans frustrated, that this admonition is to us, be ye kind, when we feel so very unkind; tender-hearted, when our hearts are as cold as ice, and as hard as a rock. Paul would say, Forgive, and directs us to what God for Christ's sake has overlooked and forgiven in us. Thus again the rule to measure by, is not, I will forgive him if he will not repeat his offense, or if he will come to my terms, when perhaps my terms are not according to the rule of God's word. We believe God's children are generally sorry when shown by his Spirit that they have erred, and the rule is, Even as God has forgiven you, so you should forgive one another. Peter says, Shall I forgive him seven times? Jesus said, Forgive him four hundred and ninety times. As we have said before, we believe forgiving means forgetting, and it is not forgiving when we from time to time are found mentioning the offenses of others and taking pleasure in repeating those things that we are supposed to have forgiven long ago. This surely is not as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us. We ought to cast such things back of us, to be God-like. Whosoever offend, being left to themselves, and fall into shame and reproach, if they are the Lord's people, they will suffer and grieve and weep bitterly; such need kindness, not once, but always, and kindness to such from brethren will never be bestowed in vain. If it is our lot to judge those that have erred, for judgment is in the church, let us consider the word of God as the only rule to follow. "Berthren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, YE WHICH ARE SPIRITUAL restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted," and "he that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." Mary came and washed Jesus' feet with her tears. Here is feet washing with heart-stirring pathos, yet how beautiful. What an example! In it she confessed that He trod the dusty rough road for her. Confession of sins one to another is a kindness, especially when those sins have been to the hurt of one another, and confession, which carries with it such a spirit of feet washing as mentioned above, is often the only possible way for offenders to make restitution. Such submission one to another is only possible through God's abounding grace, and we are encouraged as grace makes its possessors kind, tender-hearted and forgiving. "His love to men of sinful race glowed in his tender breast," and such love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. If we love him that begat, we also love those that are begotten. We have heard it said, I cannot forgive that person. May God deliver us from such a spirit, we would pray, especially as we consider the

solemn words spoken by our Lord: "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." We do not feel that our forgiveness of God depends upon, or is subject to, our forgiveness of man, but we do believe that God's goodness to usward is through free grace, and grace alone, but in a gracious person there will, in the working of grace, be a forgiving of others, and if we cannot forgive others we have good reason to question God's grace to us, for what evidence of pardoning grace is there in the mind of one who is so obdurate towards others? Surely the above words of Jesus should make brethren sorry and ashamed and cause self-loathing as they realize how cruel, cold and unforgiving they can be to those whom they know are children of God. May he who is the Father of mercy bless his saints with bowels of compassion one toward another, so that we love one another, proving that we are his disciples indeed.

G. R.

BOOKS WANTED.

We are in receipt of a letter in which the writer says he is anxious to purchase reasonably priced Old Baptist books. He is especially anxious to obtain the books of Editorials by Elder Gilbert Beebe. If any have books of this description they wish to dispose of and will write us, stating kind and price of books we will gladly forward their letters. Address your letters to J. E. BEEBE & CO., Middletown, N. Y.

REVELATION XXI. 16, 17.

"And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel."

Our beloved brother, Elder P. W. Sawin, of Lexington, Kentucky, has asked us to give our views on the above Scripture passage. We feel that he himself could have much better done this than can we. For ourselves, we cannot attempt anything like a full exposition of this matter, but shall attempt to put down some scattering thoughts upon it. From a careful reading of this twenty-first chapter, it is apparent that this scene of the descending city of God, the New Jerusalem, belongs to the new heaven and the new earth (verse 1) and not to the present world or age in which the gospel church is dwelling at the present time in this dispensation of grace. We have it on the authority of the Holy Spirit speaking through the apostle Peter that this present world in which we now are is to be followed by a new creation in which shall dwell not any sin or any curse, but righteousness wholly. (See 2 Peter iii. 10-13.) This new heavens and new earth of the world to come are to be the scene into which the New Jerusalem shall come down out of heaven. Verse five of this chapter we are considering, says God will make all things new. Preparatory to this coming down out of heaven, there must of necessity be a taking up into heaven of the church. It cannot come down except it first be taken up.

Hence, we read in 1 Thessalonians iv. 16, 17, that the Lord himself will descend from heaven for the purpose of catching up unto him in the air, the saints both dead and living which comprise the body of Christ. Following this removal from the earth of the church there are to come fearful times of tribulation upon the earth, which is to result in the divine judgment and overthrow of the antichrist and in the binding of Satan for the period of the thousand years. This is set forth in 2 Thessalonians ii. 3-8, also in Revelation nineteenth chapter, nineteenth verse, to the fourth verse of the twentieth chapter. It will be seen from this that I do not agree with that exposition of these Scriptures which places the thousand years of Revelation xx. 2-5, as coincident with this present gospel dispensation. There are some who hold that this thousand-year period is only another way of designating this present age of grace in which we are now living. I cannot agree with that interpretation. To me, the Scripture plainly indicates that this thousand-year period is yet future. It is not until after this thousand-year period, which is yet future, that the new heavens and new earth are mentioned. The new creation, therefore, is not the same thing as the thousand years, but is to come after that. The holy city is to come down into this new creation, which is to come after the final judgment set forth in Revelation xx. 11-15. The old heavens and old earth are here seen to pass away (verse 11) preparatory to bringing in the new creation of verse one of chapter twenty-one. Coming down into this new world is seen the holy city, the New Jerusalem, descending. No death, no sorrow, no crying, no pain shall be there. The former things are altogether and forever gone. This is the glorious inheritance unto which the elect of God are now pilgrims. As to this present world, we are pilgrims; as to that blessed world which is coming, we are citizens. The faithful of old times sought a city whose builder and maker is God. Insofar as they confessed this, they thereby acknowledged themselves not to be at home here, but to be seeking a city that hath foundations. Here in this twenty-first of Revelation is the blessed inheritance declared, unto which God's people are by Christ redeemed and are by the Holy Spirit pressing toward. Our citizenship even now is there, though at present we have our being in this present wilderness world which is to pass away. God himself is the Designer and Creator of this world to come, as well as he is the Builder of the New Jerusalem its heavenly capitol. It is very true that eye hath not seen, the ear has not heard, nor has the heart of man conceived, the things that God has prepared for them that love him; but let us never overlook the great truth that we do have the revelation of these things by his Spirit. This revelation, faith believes; though the eternal blessedness assured the people of God is above and beyond all finite comprehension. The "city lieth foursquare." This conveys the fact that it is solid, real; not fanciful nor illusory.

We sometimes speak of a person being "foursquare" when we mean such an one to be upright, honest, sincere and square-dealing. That the city of the world to come is to be foursquare assuredly means that it is to be alike and equal in all its dimensions, solidly and substantially founded, and built to endure eternally. How can it be otherwise when God is declared to be the Builder? That it is to be equal in all its dimensions is likewise consistent with the Person and Character of its glorious and infinite Maker. God himself is equal in all his attributes, hence he is a God of equity. It is to be expected, then, that the New Jerusalem shall bespeak the infinite equableness of Him who is its life and substance. The wall which surrounds this city speaks forth the salvation of God which is the safety, security and preservation of this heavenly commonwealth for ever and forever. We cannot overlook or ignore the fact that the number twelve is conspicuous throughout all this city. This indicates without a doubt the wholly divine government and organization of this city, and declares beyond all doubt that human systems and governments, which bear the numeral 6, are forever gone; the divine and heavenly order of things being brought to light in this new creation. The gates of the city are twelve, there are twelve angels at the gates, the names of the twelve tribes of Israel are on the gates, the foundations of the city are twelve, and the names of the twelve apostles are in the foundations. Twelve manner of precious stones garnish the foundations. The dimensions of the city and of the wall are divisible by twelve, hence are multiples of twelve. Everywhere, as we read, these twelves are too prominent to be ignored; therefore, have a tremendous significance. The significance is that the government and organization of the new world and its central city, the New Jerusalem, are to be wholly divine and not at all human, nor after the pattern of any earthly system that has gone before in the previous creation which shall, by that time, have passed forever away. Throughout the Scriptures twelve is invariably associated with divine government. When God carved out for himself a nation from among all the nations, he made Israel a nation of twelve tribes headed by twelve patriarchs; thus stamping his own identity upon that nation as being his peculiar treasure above all nations. When God in the beginning of this present gospel dispensation brought to light the church which is the body of Christ, he gave the church twelve apostles. In this one fact alone, to say nothing of others corroborating it, is the stamp of divine government upon the gospel church. It is not any chance, either, that the New Testament contains twenty-seven books, and that twenty-seven is two twelves supplemented by three. Three is the number of Deity. Hence we have the insignia of divine authorship stamped upon the double twelve of the New Testament. The Old Testament has thirty-nine books. Three twelves with an added three. Divine signature on both Testaments,

hence all the Bible. And, by the way, twelve is an expanded seven. Seven is the Bible numeral for spiritual perfection. As four and three make seven, so does four times three make twelve; hence twelve is a seven expanded. On the fourth day of creation in Genesis i. God placed luminaries in the heavens to benefit and bless the earth. Hence, four, which is three plus one, would be Deity blessing the earth. Therefore, how much more will this be true in the world to come wherein we see twelve so conspicuously, this twelve which is four three times. God himself will be manifested in infinite blessing and fullness towards the heavenly creation in which he will display all his Deity to all his infinite and illimitable capacity.

H. H. L.

CORRECTIONS.

In the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, March number, page fifty-two, column one, eighteenth line from the bottom, the word "lusting" following the word "Spirit" should be omitted. The flesh lusts against the Spirit, it is true; but the Spirit is against the flesh, not "lusting" against the flesh. The Spirit does not "lust." See Galatians v. 17.

On page fifty-three, first column, seventh line from the bottom, last word in the line is "unregenerated," it should be "regenerated."

Also, in the same March number of the SIGNS, page fifty-four, first column, midway thereof, the statement, "Our present salvation largely depends on how we live in this present life," is not doctrinally sound nor scripturally true. None of the editors of the SIGNS believes this expression. Salvation, whether for the future, or for the present, is wholly and alone of grace. If salvation is in any sense contingent upon the believer's works, then grace is no more grace. How we live evidences whether our state is gracious or graceless, but how we live cannot possibly be the cause of our salvation now or ever. Read and carefully ponder every word of Ephesians ii. 8-10. These corrections should have been made before the above mentioned article went to press, but the matter escaped our vigilance, proving thereby that we are only weak men after all, and liable to err as are all others. It was brother Branham's desire that nothing of his be printed unless it was backed by the word of God, so we are confident he will not be offended at our making these corrections. We ask all our faithful readers, both brethren and friends, to forgive our oversight.

H. H. L.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

WHEN remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it. By referring to these dates you can tell to just what time your subscription is paid. Dec. 32 means your subscription expired December, 1932; June 33 means your subscription expired June, 1933; Dec. 33 that it expired December, 1933, etc.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

BENJAMIN LLOYD NORRIS departed this life at his home, in Russell County, Alabama, February 3rd, 1934. He was born March 31st, 1874, near Greenville, Alabama, making his age 59 years, 10 months and 3 days at the time of his death. He was ill about three months and confined to his bed about six weeks. His body seemed to have been stricken with some form of paralysis. The several doctors could not seem to find or name the cause of his malady. He suffered intensely with his head and shoulder when first stricken, after which paralysis seemed to creep slowly over his body. His suffering grew less, but he became weaker and weaker towards the end. He showed great patience and fortitude through it all, but felt and said he could not get well. He seemed to linger long and calmly between the shadow of death and that heavely kingdom. Brother Lloyd seemed sweetly reconciled to the will of God as he came to the end of the way, and would often smile without saying anything to those who were doing all in their power to make him as comfortable as possible. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church about the year 1913, at Mt. Pisgah Church, Chambers County, Alabama, but owing to dissension of the brethren over the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty he withdrew from the church of his membership because they did not love and indorse this doctrine which he so much loved. Two cannot walk together except they be agreed. He never again offered to unite with the church militant. About the year 1901 he married Miss Florence Gass, of Webster County, Georgia, with whom he lived only one year, when she died. Several years after he married Miss Hassie Smith, of Chambers County, Alabama. To that union were born two daughters, who survive him. This wife, the mother of his two children, departed this life in the year 1926. He afterwards married Miss Dollie Smith, also of Chambers County, Alabama, who survives him. He is also survived by two daughters, Mrs. Ernest Corley and Mrs. Macie Byrd, his mother, Mrs. F. J. Norris, two brothers, Y. C. and Jack Norris, of Amity, Ark., and seven sisters, as follows: Mrs. C. M. Thetford, Mrs. H. P. Rodgers, Mrs. T. H. Hoey, Mrs. G. W. Smith and Mrs. J. A. Mayberry, of Columbus, Ga., Mrs. N. C. Alston, of Atlanta, Ga., and Mrs. E. C. Dean, of Manchester, Ga.

The funeral services were held at Mt. Pisgah Church, and burial was in the cemetery there. The funeral discourse was preached by Elder W. J. Chancellor, of Columbus, Ga. He took for a text the first three verses of the fourteenth chapter of St. John: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me," etc. By faith he led us to feel the truth of this text, and also another truth: Better is the day of one's death than the day of one's birth. We miss him, but our sorrow is mingled with joy, in that we know our loss is his eternal gain. We believe he is done with all trials and afflictions and is now in that kingdom of glory, singing the eternal praises of our Lord. May the Lord keep and comfort those left behind to the end of their pilgrimage here. For whether we live or die we are the Lord's.

His sister, (MRS.) C. M. THETFORD.

SISTER **OLIVE REBECCA GARNER QUINN** was born April 8th, 1856, and was united in marriage to David S. Quinn April 18th, 1877. To this union were born seven children: Olive and Lizzie died in infancy, Charles, Lee and Hugh lived to be grown and married, dying in early manhood of that dreaded disease tuberculosis. Two children are still living: brother Waddell Quinn and sister Alice Simmons, both members of Newport Primitive Baptist Church. Sister Quinn came before Newport Church September 19th, 1891, related an experience of grace, was received and baptized the next day by the pastor, Elder L. H. Hardy. She died November 18th, 1933, making her stay on earth 77 years, 7 months and 10 days. "Grandma," as she was familiarly called by all who knew her, was a most wonderful character in many respects. It has never been my privilege to meet any one anywhere who manifested more love for their church and its welfare than she did. She loved the preaching and doctrine that exalted God and abased man, believing in the absolute sovereignty of God over all worlds, things, times and events, and in that one salvation from time and eternity, which is from above by the grace of God, through Jesus Christ. She was very spiritually-minded, and in her declining years nothing pleased her more than to sit around the fireside and talk of spiritual things. Several years ago she made the request that her pastor, Elder W. W. Roberts, and myself attend her funeral. This request was complied with. Brother M. L. Simmons made a few very appropriate remarks on the occasion. Her body was carried to the Newport Church for the funeral service, it being the third Sunday regular meeting time. The large house was filled with relatives and friends. After service her body was taken to the family cemetery near by and deposited there to await the resurrection morn. In the language of the apostle Paul I would say to the bereaved ones, "Sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." We feel sure from the evidence shown in her christian life, that while we are mourning our loss here, she is resting that sweet peace from which none ever wake to weep, and her sleeping dust is being watched over by the blessed Son of God, who became poor that she might be made rich in the things that never lose their excellency or grandeur. Your loved one, whom God has been pleased to call from this vain world of sin and sorrow, is at rest

from all her labors, and her works do follow her. May God's richest blessings rest upon all of the bereaved ones, and may he be pleased to give each of them a spirit of reconciliation, that they may be able to endure all their losses and crosses with an eye single to his honor and glory, is my prayer.

Written by request of the family.

H. F. HUTCHENS.

MRS. DOLLIE M. GREGORY STULTZ, daughter of John and Susan Gregory, of Henry County, Virginia, was born March 30th, 1844, and died April 29th, 1933, in her ninetieth year. She had made her home with her daughter, Mrs. Homer C. Bennett, since the death of her husband, June 20th, 1920, and a home indeed it was for her. She was cared for as tenderly as a baby by Mr. and Mrs. Bennett. One of her own sons could not have been more thoughtful of her than was Mr. Bennett. A more devoted daughter never lived than was Mrs. Bennett to her mother.

Sister Stultz and brother T. C. Stultz, the son of John and Lucy Stultz, were married December 9th, 1860, and to their union twelve children were born, only seven of whom are still living. A more devoted family to parents and to each other I never knew. Their kind and hospitable dispositions endeared them to all who knew them. Brother and sister Stultz joined the old Primitive Baptist Church at Camp Branch more than fifty-six years ago, and were baptized together. They were loyal and devoted members until death, and were greatly missed by us all. Brother Stultz served for a number of years as Deacon and Clerk at Camp Branch. I must say for sister Stultz, Truly a mother in Israel has fallen. Children, weep not for them, for we believe they are now resting in the paradise of God. You with loving hands and faithful physicians did all that could be done to stay the icy hand of death. Mrs. Bennett, we feel you will miss her more than all the rest. May the Lord be pleased to fill the vancancy in homes and hearts of loved ones with his presence.

Funeral services were conducted at Camp Branch by the writer and Dr. J. P. McCabe in the presence of a host of sorrowing relatives and friends, after which she was laid to rest by the side of her husband in the cemetery at Camp Branch to await the coming of their Savior.

J. E. BURGESS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Attie T. Rutledge, Fla., $3; Mrs. J. A. Phillips, Tenn., $1; Elizabeth Rittenhouse, N. J., $2; T. F. Daniel, Ala., $2; Mrs. W. L. Timmons, Md., $1; Elder Arnold H. Bellows, N. Y., $1.25; W. D. Fooks, Md., $2; Mrs. Sarah J. Clegg, Pa., $1; R. P. Eaton, Ont., $1; Nettie Dolson, Md., $1; Mrs. F. J. Norris, Ga., $1; Mrs. Elizabeth Y. Mace, Pa., $2.

POETRY.

MY PRAYER.

I try, dear Lord, but words I cannot find
To breathe in prayer the longing of my mind
And tell to thee my soul's sincere desire,
Unless thou dost for me a prayer inspire.
Helpless and lost, before thy throne I kneel
And through the merit of thy Son appeal,
Remembering that the sparrow cannot fall,
Except thou will it so, my God, my All,
Who sent thy Son that sinful man might live,
To give his all, when we had nought to give.

Lord, may within my heart thy peace abide,
Faith's eye undimmed sees Jesus crucified,
Thorn-crowned upon the misty mountain side;
Martyr of Calvary, hear my appeal:
Forgive my sins; let me thy presence feel
Within my heart, the risen Christ reveal,
And by thy blood, thou, my redemption seal
For all eternity; hide not thy face;
My refuge be in every time and place;
Restore my soul and keep me by thy grace.

GEORGE W. SHEEHAN.

MEETINGS.

Providence permitting, the Middletown & Wallkill Old School Baptist Church will resume their monthly meetings the fourth Sunday in April (22nd), at their place of worship, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, Middletown, N. Y. Meetings to be held each fourth Sunday during the summer and fall months, commencing at 2:30 p. m. All are welcome.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in April, 1934. Services to be held at the home of Ralph Moister, Central Bridge, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in April (29th). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First and Third Sundays

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 808 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one-half block west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church will meet (D. V.) every second Sunday with brother and sister Berry, 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California. Every third Sunday with brother and sister Staggs, 506 E. Raulston Street, Ontario, California.

T. D. WALKER.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 102. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1934. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE FAITHFULNESS OF JEHOVAH.

DEAR SISTER IN OUR PRECIOUS LORD JESUS CHRIST:—Your letter was very welcome, for I am pleased to hear tidings of the prosperity of the dear children of God. Some tidings reach us concerning some portions of Zion, of distress and desolations, and even of "wars and fightings," and then our hearts are grieved: we mourn for Jerusalem. While such things prevail, like Nehemiah, our countenance may well "be sad."—Neh. ii. 3. But when under the reign of the Prince of Peace, from Dan even to Beersheba, the tribes of Israel dwell safely every man under his vine and under his fig tree, eating and drinking and making merry. (1 Kings iv. 20-25.) Oh what a glorious and delightful state for the nation to be in! "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." It is therefore a sacred pleasure to my soul to hear you rehearse the lovingkindness of the beloved Redeemer to your soul. As for myself, I have much reason to extoll the grace of Jehovah. His mercifulness to such a poor sinner exceeds my power to tell. His faithfulness as our covenant-keeping God is beyond my highest thoughts. It reacheth unto the clouds, and is established in the very heavens. Each day and every season has its joys and sorrows, its adversities and prosperity, according to the purpose of God. We may say, with David, "My times are in thy hand."—Psalms xxxi. 15. Like Isaac, I have been out to meditate in the field at eventide. (Gen. xiv. 63.) I have found the field of Jehovah's faithfulness a precious field to meditate in. As

one at the closing of the day would contemplate all that has transpired, so, I feel it has been our beloved Emmanuel that has drawn forth my soul into this field, saying, "Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field."—Song vii. 11. As I look over the field I find it very large; indeed, no creature can measure it, for Jehovah's faithfulness is to all generations. It reacheth unto the clouds. As I roamed abroad in this field the *covenant* faithfulness of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost has been very sweet in my meditations. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant."

"'Twas made with Jesus for his bride
Before the sinner fell;
'Twas signed, and sealed, and ratified,
In all things ordered well."

Consider, dear sister, the immutability of this covenant. Its stability rests upon the very character of our God. "He cannot deny himself." The Father sware, and would not repent, saying in this covenant, Thou (the Son of God) art a priest after the order of Melchisedek. (Heb. vi. 17-20.) "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath." The Lord says, "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips." He will ever be mindful of his covenant. Then again, our dear Redeemer, the incarnate Word, says, "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you." Our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, was brought again from the dead through the blood of the everlasting covenant. Then the faithfulness of God the Father is established in the very heavens; for in the fullness of time he sent forth his Son. The faithfulness of the Son of God is established, for he says, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. "A body hast thou prepared me." He, "being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." He was the Surety of the covenant, and was faithful unto death. He died for our sins, and rose again for our justification.

"Amazing deeps! O love beyond degree!
The offended dies to set the offender free!"

"By his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Oh! the mercies of this covenant are sure, called "the sure mercies of David." (Isaiah lv. 3; 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.) The covenant is of force. "This is the new covenant in my blood." This is known in the established faithfulness of the Holy Ghost, called "the communion of the Holy Ghost." He is ever communing with the heirs of this covenant. Jesus says, The Comforter, the Holy Ghost, "will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath

are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shew it unto you."—John xvi. 13-15.

We have tasted the forgiveness of sins, we have rejoiced in Christ's salvation, and by precious faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, all of which declares the faithfulness of the Holy Ghost in the "covenant ordered in all things and sure." The communion of the Holy Ghost is the earnest in our hearts. (2 Cor. i. 22; v. 6.) "Ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."—Eph. i. 13, 14. All the heirs in due time have the earnest, and the inheritance is sure to all the seed. Thy faithfulness, O God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, shalt thou establish in the very heavens. "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." I have been led to review of late some of the dealings of the Lord with me. I remember how in times of need my soul found a stay in the exceeding great and precious promises. I hoped in the word of the Lord and based my expectations thereon. But sometimes, instead of the fulfillment of the promises, disaster and utter shipwreck of all my hope seemed ushered in; yet in my mournful, tired heart I still clung to his promises to my soul, as I sighed, "Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?"—Psalms lxxvii. 8, 9. But in so many ways and such a multitude of providences I have proved

"His promise is yea and amen,
And never was forfeited yet."

All the tribes of Israel gathered into this field of meditation will say amen to King Solomon when he exclaimed, "Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant."—1 Kings viii. 56. Then I have meditated upon the faithfulness of our Father in heaven; hallowed be his name! Yes, I hope I am a child of God, and that he hath dealt with me as he deals with his children. It is written, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that hear him."—Psalms ciii. 13. How gracious he has been to a vile sinner like me. But though he hath given me to enjoy many good gifts, and hath sent forth his Holy Spirit, and has communed with my soul, telling me I am a child, and if a child then an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Christ, yet I have often been ungrateful; I have been wayward, and have transgressed his commandments. Has the Lord cast me off? Has he disowned me as his child? Oh no! Gerat is our heavenly Father's love, great is his faithfulness! What has he done then? Why, he hath chastened me betimes. He has saith, "I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished."—Jer. xxx. 11. "No chastening for the present seemeth

to be joyous, but grievous." So I have found it when it pleased the Lord to lay affliction upon my loins. I have grieved, I have smarted under the strokes of his hand, and I have sometimes rebelled against the rod. My complaints have been bitter, but God our Father did not spare the rod for my crying. He abideth faithful, all his chastenings are for our profit. Yes, I have been made to hear the rod, and our God who appointed it. (Micah vi. 9.) "The Lord hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death." I have mourned over my ways, and have sighed over my heart's abominations: and I have been able to feel, and have acknowledged, "I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me." Look at the scene presented in Jeremiah xxxi. 18-20: "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus: Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth. Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still; therefore my bowels are troubled for him: I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord." All the while the Lord remembered him, that he was his dear son, his pleasant child. Great is our heavenly Father's faithfulness. In the field of the Lord's faithfulness I have meditated upon the faithfulness of Christ our King. He reigns in righteousness, and of his people it is written, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth." Faithfulness is the girdle of his reigns. He is King in Zion. Was there ever any one, the poor and needy, that perished in his sight? Oh no! "He shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy."—Psalms lxxii. 12, 13. "He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." His name is "called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written that no man knew but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called the Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean."—Rev. xix. 11-14. We shall be more than conquerors through our King that loved us.

In the field of the faithfulness of the Lord of Hosts I have often meditated upon the bond of eternal wedlock subsisting between Christ and the church. It is written, "Thy Maker is thine husband; The Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of

Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called."—Isaiah liv. 5. "We are dead to the law by the body of Christ," and raised up with him, we are married unto him that is raised from the dead. "He hateth putting away," (Mal. ii. 16), and you remember that the very language of our Beloved in his betrothal of us was, "I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the Lord."—Hosea ii. 19, 20. When the dear Savior first declared these things in my soul oh how happy was I! Why did the Lord love a poor sinner like me? I could not discover (neither have I yet been able) what was in me that Jesus, the Chiefest among ten thousand, could love. I am nothing but a poor sinner. He drew me and I followed after him in the wilderness, there he discovered himself to my soul, and made known his love to me, and I loved the crucified One, the precious Savior, the altogether lovely One. How blessed! I was given, I was made to know, to believe he gave himself a sacrifice for my sins, put away my sins by the sacrifice of himself. It was the love of my espousals. (Jer. ii. 2.) But since then how fickle has been my love, how shamefully inconstant I have been: unfaithful. But our heavenly Bridegroom, the dear Lamb of God, says, "I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the Lord." O thou precious Redeemer of sinners, truly thou abidest faithful in this covenant of eternal wedlock. But, dear sister, could you see what my condition has been sometimes, you would say his grace is abounding, while the children of Hagar the bond woman would say that the Lord has given that one a bill of divorcement, and had cast me off. Instead of dwelling in the palace with the King, clothed by precious faith in wrought gold, I have been allured from the palace of the King, an evil heart of unbelief has plagued me, and I in my wanderings from the dear Savior have lost sight of the King in his beauty. Then, oh how my vileness has abounded! I have looked at myself and all was deformity, loathsomeness, ugliness. How could the King love me? How could my name be called Hephzibah? (Isaiah lxii. 4.) All that I could see and feel was that I was a loathsome, vile sinner, filled with misgivings, tormented with questionings concerning the love of God to such a sinful wretch. I felt, instead of a sweet smell there was a stink; instead of a girdle, a rent; instead of well set hair, baldness; instead of a stomacher, sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty. (Isaiah iii. 24.) I have said, If I were a subject of the graciousness of God would I be thus, and so often in this dreadful plight? Unbelief has whispered this, Where are your evidences of the love of the King? How can it be possible that Jehovah can delight in such a miserable wretch? "The city shall be low in a low place."—Isaiah xxxii. 19. I have been brought low indeed. I have mourned over my

iniquities, I have lamented the meanness of my love to the Savior; I have truly been in the valley of Achor, and have longed to enter the palace once more, but could not. I had no strength, my faith was weak. Of the King's daughter it was written that she is all glorious within, her clothing is of wrought gold, she shall be brought in unto the King in raiment of needlework. (Psalms xlv. 13.) But oh! when in such places as I have been describing it would appear that God has stripped me of my glorious apparel, and all I could see was my own shame and nakedness, my utter vileness. The beautiful garments I had no power to put on, but oh how my soul yearned to be thus by precious faith arrayed, that my poor sin-stricken, destitute soul might be comforted by renewed evidences from the Lord of my lot and portion in the justifying blood and righteousness of the dear Lamb of God. Well, dear sister, I have had proof upon proof that the betrothal is in faithfulness, for though I have wandered far away the King has sought me in this wilderness and has spoken comfortably to my soul. (Hosea ii. 14.) He has given me again beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. (Isaiah lxi. 3.) My soul has again sweetly realized that my beauty and acceptance in his sight is in the comeliness which he putteth upon me. (Ezek. xvi. 14.) He granted me fine linen white and clean, covered a poor sinner with silk, and has most comfortingly said to my heart, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee."—Solomon's Song iv. 7. My hope, my joy, my beauty and gloriousness in his eyes is this, that he hath given himself a sacrifice and an offering of a sweet-smelling savor for my sins, he hath redeemed me from the curse of the law, being made a curse for me, and that atoning, precious blood of his has erased every spot, healed all my blemishes, yea, he gives me immortal health, immortal youth. Christ "loved the church, and gave himself for it; * * * * that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." He abideth faithful.

"E'en down to old age all my people shall prove
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;
And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,
Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne."

Even in death our souls shall prove his lovingkindness and faithfulness. He will be our guide even unto death. When our souls are departing,

"When death is at hand, and this cottage of clay
Is left with a tremulous sigh,
The gracious Redeemer will light all the way,
Saying, Be not afraid; it is I."

Absent from the body we shall be present with the Lord; as our Redeemer said to the dying thief, "To day shalt thou be with me in paradise." This cottage of clay, our mortal body, shall wait the appointed time, till our change come. "Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands."—Job xiv. 15.

"We shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." "And so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Thus, my sister, I have gleaned in this field, and would still have my eye upon this field of the faithfulness of the Lord. My own faithlessness at times is appalling and brings me into many miseries, and only that our gracious God abideth faithful I should perish by the way. Oh that I could love, and live to the praise of my God, who hath loved a sinner like me. May the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, lead you forth to meditate in this field. Let me hear from you again when you have been gleaning in the field of our spiritual Boaz. (Ruth ii. 2.)

"It will sweeten the hours
When sorrows all round you appear,
Will strew all the way to Mt. Zion with flowers,
And smooth the rough pathway of care."

With love to you, and to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ, I am, I hope, your brother,

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

DANVILLE, Va., March 12, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a good letter written to me by my son, Elder R. Lester Dodson, which you will please publish. He wrote me he was going to have one I wrote him published, so thought they might appear in the same number of the SIGNS, if it is all right with you.

Yours to serve,

R. L. DODSON.

DANVILLE, Va., Jan. 23, 1934.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—DEAR SON:—I feel I should acknowledge the receipt of your precious and comforting letter, but must say my harp is still upon the willows. We read in the Scriptures, Jesus wept, which signifies he suffered himself to be pierced with sorrows on account of the death of Lazarus. Oh how it seems he loved him and Martha and Mary, who, when their brother fell sick sent Jesus word, saying, Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick. But Jesus, with all power, suffered him to die, and oh what great and deep sorrow was at their home on account of this affliction, yet Jesus suffered it to be so, that his power might be manifest there. Now at his own good time he goes to see them in their great distress, and when each of his sisters met Jesus they said, Lord, if thou hadst been here our brother had not died, but now he has been dead four days and by now they say he stinketh. But what took place? Was Jesus too late in coming? No indeed. Jesus tells them only to believe, He is not dead, but sleepeth, in his own manner

of expressing it. Only believe and he shall live, or rise again. They said, We know he will at the last day, or resurrection. Then Jesus said, I am the resurrection and the life, and he that believeth in me shall never die, and though he were dead yet he shall live again. What a complete Savior we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear; what a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer. Oh how often I am made to cry out, Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me, that I might worship thee, the only true and living God of heaven and earth. Dear son, how can we know that he is our God and that we are his loved ones? for I feel to be such a vile sinner I fear I have not been born again. I feel sometimes it is good to feel to be lost, for the reason that Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost, and also to save sinners, and the great apostle Paul said he was chief of sinners.

The words I quoted, "Jesus wept," you will find in the eleventh chapter of St. John, thirty-fifth verse. It seems Jesus had great love for this family, so he visited them and joined them in weeping, but were they reconciled to Lazarus' death until after his wonderful power was shown in raising him from the dead? Oh may we, too, son, be able to see the wisdom and power of Almighty God in our own sad affliction, that we may say, The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be his holy name. Amen.

I have not written as I thought I would be able. We are in usual health.

With love to you from your papa,

R. L. DODSON.

RUTHERFORD, N. J., Feb. 17, 1934.

DEAR PAPA AND MAMMA:—It has been next to impossible for me to write to you as frequently as I would like. Mr. Simon is now in Florida and this, of course, adds to my burdens. Your last letters were so good that I sent your's, papa, to the SIGNS for publication. Whether I ever do anything really worth while in the world or not, I am glad that you all have been able to leave footprints upon the sands of time that will not be rubbed out for many years. I have just heard some good news from Willard, and I know you are more proud of him than ever. I sincerely hope he continues to make progress, and am sure he will. I have many things to be thankful for, and by degrees I want to plan for better things than to struggle for material things all the time. I know that they pertain to this life only, and that the blessings of a man really do not consist of his earthly possessions alone, otherwise he is poor indeed. There are times when I am made to hope that I am wrought upon by the Holy Spirit; then it is I seem to be carried out in the Spirit and I can see and understand things which are not revealed to the world at large. Just a glimpse of the King and his glory makes one realize how vain are all things here below in comparison. Jesus is our great salvation; worthy of our best esteem. He has saved his favorite nation. Join to

sing aloud to him. He who knows this is rich indeed, though he may not have a penny to his name. I write these things to you because I am convinced you know they are absolutely true. There is the witness within which gives us the earnest of his Spirit and we are sealed by the word of his promise. How precious he is to those that believe. They know that they have believed by the working of the mighty power of his love, working in them that which is well-pleasing in his sight. To those whose ears have not been unstopped, our words are as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. Jesus said, rather it was one of the apostles who said it, We preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness, but to them that believe, both Jew and Greek, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. This is he of whom Paul said he determined not to know any other among his brethren. I wish that our preaching brethren could be firmly resolved to follow this example. It makes one sick at heart to realize as we do from time to time the things which are being agitated that rend and tear apart our beloved Zion. Oh, that it might be God's will to direct us in all that we do and say. Without his guidance we will go astray and fall into the ditch. It is because of his mercy that we are not consumed. His lovingkindness, oh how sweet! When his love is shed abroad in our hard hearts it makes us ashamed of ourselves. But

"Though I have him oft forgot,
His lovingkindness changes not."

Then,

"Awake, my soul, in joyful lays,
And sing thy great Redeemer's praise;
He justly claims a song from me,
His lovingkindness, oh how free."

While I think of it, I will appreciate it if you will tell brother Dodd the next time you see him that I enjoyed his prayer on the occasion of Harry's funeral. I felt it came from the heart, and hope there was an answer of heart to heart, mine responding to his. It is this love and fellowship that brings God's children together as drops of water. I told the other minister that he read many beautiful Scriptures. I had no way of knowing, however, that they were precious to his soul, and therefore there was not the "going" in spiritual fellowship. Of course I did not tell him this. There is no occasion of offending unnecessarily, but rather should we desire that God might show pity, quickening, if it is his will and pleasure, the dead and causing them to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord. He alone is able to raise the dead. I rejoice that he only needs to speak and it is done, to command and it stands fast, and there is none able to resist his will. What a comfort to be enabled by faith to trust in the God of Israel, who neither sleeps nor slumbers, nor is limited in power or lacking in wisdom, or any other way whatsoever, but doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

My dear old Dad, at best, you and I will soon bid adieu to earth, and I may go before you, even though such would not be according to nature, but when-

ever the summons comes I am persuaded that all will be well. God makes no mistakes, and if it can only be his pleasure to take us unto himself where there will be endless joy, for at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore, it will be enough.

I have many other letters to write, but feel to hope that I have been moved by the Spirit to write some of the things which I have put on paper for your consideration, and if you find them comforting and consoling to the inner man, give God all the glory and praise.

Write to us whenever you can, and plan, if possible, to visit us in the spring, at the time of our association, and may he who holds the winds in the hollow of his fist watch over and keep you both now and evermore, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

Your fond son,

LESTER.

DANVILLE, Va., March 5, 1934.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—DEAR BROTHER:—Inclosed find a letter from sister Mary Hundley, of Ridgeway, Virginia, who is a member of old Strawberry Church. This letter was a comfort to me, and I feel to ask you to have it published in the SIGNS, hoping your readers will enjoy it also.

I had the pleasure of reading your letter to your father and mother some time ago, and consider it a rich letter, to the praise and honor of our God. I much appreciated the word you had for me. As you know, I felt very much at a loss as how to do, but I have been in such ways before. I was sorry I could not be with you more at that time. Come our way when you can.

Yours in love of the gospel,

W. R. DODD.

RIDGEWAY, Virginia.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I am given the mind to quote the following Scripture, but whether I have any light upon this beautiful passage remains to be seen. Hebrews xi. 13: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." I read this Scripture nearly two weeks ago and it seemed at that time to reveal much beauty. For some reason it has come back to me several times since. I am made to say in the beginning, O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! How marvelous are thy works to make strangers on earth feel that they are closely kin! How rich thy love and mercy which makes this relationship felt by poor sinners!

To go back to the above Scripture. It seems that the key-word in the beginning is FAITH. This faith belonged to God's people back in the days of the prophets, and the same faith belongs to God's people in this day. The apostle says that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Now we hope for that which we have not seen, for we cannot hope for what we already have. This hope comes through faith, and faith is the

gift of God. God's people are given patience through faith to wait for the fulfilling of the promises made unto them by the prophets and apostles through the Scriptures, which are the inspired messages from God. What are the words of the Bible to us without the revelation of God? We may read them without as much understanding as we would have of a daily paper. They are as a sealed book. But when God opens up our hearts and minds and makes us see the beauty, and feeds our hungry souls, we are made to rejoice in Christ Jesus. He feeds us with that heavenly manna which he has prepared for an elect family. God's people throughout all time have been a peculiar people. They are called pilgrims in the above Scripture, and are still called that to-day. They are sojourners in this life, for this world is not their home, they are seeking a city yet to come, whose Builder and Maker is God. There is a light upon the way that is guiding their feet in a strait and narrow path which leads at last to that bright home above. God's people in the days of the prophets saw the light ahead, "not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them." God is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. His love for his people is the same to-day as it was in the days of old. They saw these promises afar off through the eye of faith, the gift of God. They were persuaded of them and embraced them by God the Father. It was God who was working in their hearts and giving them faith to trust in these promises. To-day God's people, this redeemed family, are looking through this same eye of faith, which was not given them because of any merit of their own. They have never merited one favor of the loving and heavenly Father, who knows better what they need than they know to ask for. They cannot live in this world as they desire to live, for when they would do good evil is always present. Like Paul, I believe they are made to say, I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes. I believe that those believers included those who died in faith, as recorded in the above Scripture. The believers shall include every heir of promise for whom the Savior died and who find comfort in the gospel of Christ. They may be and are often ashamed of the way they act and things they say, but never of anything concerning their blessed Lord and Savior. Deep in their hearts they desire to be more like the Master, as the poet said. There is a continual warfare going on, and it will last so long as they remain in this old sinful world. In this life the redeemed of the Lord see as through a glass darkly, but they are living in that faith and hope that some day they shall see their Pilot face to face and rejoice in him evermore, where a thousand years shall be as one day. I believe God's people are given a foretaste of this heavenly bliss while yet in this world. We hear different ones come saying that they had rather suffer the afflictions of (with) the people of God

than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. They esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. As I was reading not long ago, the conversation and countenances of these people will tell who they are if they belong in Israel's camp. A light is made to shine out of darkness, and this light cannot be hidden. We hear these characters in whom this light has been revealed tell the same sweet story of how they travel in this life. They may be miles and miles apart, yet they rejoice in the same teaching, for all have the same precious Teacher. There is one school of grace and one great Teacher, for he hath all knowledge. He imparts this knowledge to whomsoever he will when he knows they need it. There is no end nor vacation time to this school, and God prepares the children to be taught there. They are bound to it by strong cords of love which no man can sever. It may and does please the great Teacher to conduct this school, so to speak, during the dark hours of night, when all is still. All of this teaching shall and does redound to God's praise and glory, for God's word shall not return unto him void. What greater love can we find in this life than the love of Old Baptists? Sometimes we hear those on the outside of this church commenting upon the love of Old Baptists. Somehow they are made to see it. Yet, on the other hand, we hear the Old "Hardshells" criticized harshly by the outside world. However, I am made to ask the question, Where is there an Old Baptist who does not love the name? When they hear the name a love seems to rise in their hearts and I believe God alone knows of this love, for it is his love shed abroad in their hearts. It is his love that makes them realize where they stand. They are made to cry unto him for mercy. We notice the writer saying that these people confessed their being strangers and pilgrims on earth. How did they learn they were strangers and pilgrims but by the teaching of the heavenly Father? We only hear a child of God claiming to know one thing, and that is that he is a sinner, and if he is saved it is by the grace of God, and by grace alone. As the apostle said, I am determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

Dear reader, please bear with me and overlook all my mistakes. If you find any comfort in this letter give God all the praise, and remember me in your prayers.

I have only hinted at this Scripture, and, I feel, in a scattering way. It is all too great for me to put into words. I have written this for relief of mind.

Submitted in love,

MARY C. HUNDLEY.

BENTON, Ky., Oct. 19, 1933.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—Surely we must be akin somehow, some way. The editorial you wrote in October on "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light," seemed to stir up my pure mind, which is the mind of Christ, I hope. The mind that I had in the beginning was a natural one, for that

which is first is natural. But I hope I know that in the flesh dwells no good thing, but from God comes the good gifts. We receive from our parents their fleshly nature, but from our heavenly Father that which is spiritual. Brother Dodson, it made me rejoice to read your editorial wherein you so beautifully described that we must be awakened out of sleep by the great God who speaks and it is done, who declares that he is God and there is none like him, that his counsel shall stand and he will do all his pleasure. He says, Yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it, I will also do it. Now that God will awaken them that sleepest, and they when awakened will have the light of Jesus, and seeing they are walking and having their conversation with the dead, or unregenerated, they will arise from them, if God has an otherwise selected walk for them to walk. The "shalls" and "wills," the "lets" and "seeks," and "awakes" and "arise ye," must all come from that great Power that can move a wretch like me to seek and to knock, and to awake and to arise. If it were left to us we would never get into action, but he who calls us by his love will keep us awakened by his power to move us to do the things that he desires to be performed by us, and everything just in time, and his people will be willing in the day of his power to bear their cross and endure the pain, supported by his arm. Those admonitions of God in Paul's letter to the Ephesians are God's admonitions yet. I recently planned a week end to be spent with my natural kindred, but my plans were not God's plans. Wednesday before the week end some of the dear Old Baptist preachers were touring through our country, and they preached at my home church and my uncle and I drove over to hear them. The preachers and two sisters came home with me and stayed until Thursday afternoon. Then their plan was for me to go on into the State of Tennessee with them to the Obion Association. It was made plain to me that that was what I was to do, and not the other that I had planned, so we all went. One brother in our church took six of us to the meeting, and we had preaching, it seemed all the time, Friday a. m. and again in the evening, then Saturday a. m. and Saturday evening again at the meetinghouse Sunday also, but Sunday afternoon came the parting, which always brings a sadness we cannot describe, only just can feel. So that wonderfully spent week end among the saints, associating with those who have their conversation on things of God, came to an end. After we had finished dinner we sang the good old songs while some discused things of the Bible. What a feast awaited me, and I knew it not, when I was planning to be with others during that week end. So we do not know what God has in store for us, nor when he is to bring us to his banqueting-house, but one thing we do know, and that is when he says, "Eat, O friends," his friends will eat, and when he says, "Awake," they will awake and arise from their present position, whatever

that may be, and if the pure mind is directed into understanding what the will of the Lord is, then the pure mind will not be set on the things of this world, but will be filled with the Spirit, a spirit of longing to know more and more about Jesus, foolish talking, jesting and filthiness in our conversations will be at an end and the conversations will be on godliness, because we "can't help it" after we have been stirred to the point where we are concerned about God and godliness. God stirs us up and gives us the understanding heart and the walk to walk and a willing mind to walk worthy of his calling, and not after the ways of the world. I believe, too, brother Dodson, that the Old School Baptists are of the faith of the apostles. It seems our people, as I can see them, are living separate and apart from the world. Their walk seems clean and sacred to me, but I do not feel to be as I see my brethren and sisters. I cannot see myself as I admire them. I often wish I could, but when I view myself as I really am I feel too insignificant to lisp the name of Jesus. But when we are brought to the place where we feel we must have a friend where else can we go? to whom but Jesus? I often think that is the time God's children ask him in prayer for mercy, it is when they feel without a friend on earth, and none in heaven beside him.

I must now close. Excuse my rambling remarks. May God spare you, if it is his will, to write these able, edifying truths that so lift up his name.

EFFIE BLAGG.

BENSON, N. C., Feb. 9, 1934.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—While I feel very unworthy, yet I am inclined to write you a line and let you know that I have just read with much sweetness your excellent editorial in the last issue of the SIGNS. I have been very cold and lifeless pertaining to spiritual things of late, if indeed I know anything about those things, but while reading your article I felt to rejoice and, I hope, to praise the Lord. I desire to lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. As you say, If we did not feel positively certain that he doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, we would of all creatures be most miserable. Too, you say it is this doctrine that keeps us from despair and assures us of our final perseverance over all enemies, including death itself, regardless of how that may come about. How true are those things. Surely he is a God of purpose, and I am glad that he reigneth. He maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth.

One of my dear nephews was killed in an auto accident in November, while returning home from taking his brother to a hospital. It was a terrible shock to receive the sad message, for he was very dear to me, and was such a good boy. The Lord knew best, and I verily feel that he had a purpose in calling him away from this world of sin and sorrow. I desire to be submissive to his will in all things, for I know he doeth right.

Please pardon me for writing as I

have. I only meant to tell you in few words how much I enjoyed reading your article, and hope to be able to read more from your pen in the future than in the past. I trust it may be given you to remember me when calling on the name of the Lord. May he bless you abundantly throughout this new year.

Unworthily,

ELIZABETH H. BARBOUR.

WINNSBORO, Texas, Dec. 18, 1933.

DEAR EDITORS:—My subscription to the SIGNS expires with the December number, so you will find inclosed the amount for 1934. I surely do enjoy reading the dear paper and look forward to its coming like a dear friend from a far country. I do not get to hear any preaching, and always read it through before I lay it aside. I hope it will be spared to our dear people many years yet to come, and I hope each subscriber will make some sacrifice, as I have done, to keep it going. Write on, O gifted writers, and sing aloud, so every one can read. I am no writer, wish I was, so I could write something worth reading. I hope and pray the good Lord will bless and prosper all our people for the year 1934, that we receive all and do all and know all through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

(MRS.) F. S. PETTY.

MARTIN, Tenn., Feb. 17, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—The 15th of this month reminds me my subscription to the dear old SIGNS is again to be renewed, and I want to thank the God of every good and perfect gift that he has again blessed me in being able to pay. I am sending three dollars; one to use as you see fit. I wish I could send the SIGNS to every one who is not really able to pay for it, if they would enjoy reading it as much as I do. The Lord only knows how I could get along without it, for it seems as though I can hardly wait until it comes. I wish it could be twice a month as it once was, but I want to be content. I do not believe that the Lord wills it to go down entirely, for he said he would leave a witness, and I think that is what the SIGNS stands for. All the writers tell my feelings better than I can May the Lord bless each and every one who is in any way connected with the SIGNS, and may it be his will for it to continue as long as the world stands.

In love and fellowship to each and every one of its writers who contends for a God that doeth all things right and makes no mistakes,

(MRS.) J. A. PHILLIPS.

WALNUT GROVE, Mississippi.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am writing to ask you to change my address from French Camp, Miss., to Walnut Grove, Miss. The dear old SIGNS has been coming to me free for a long time, for which I am surely thankful, for I do love to read it. I hope some day I will be able to contribute something toward its support. How glad I would be if I could. May God bless you and all its supporters with grace to keep it going.

J. M. PALMERTREE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1934.

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TEMPTATION.

THE young believer newly come into the preciousness of the hope of eternal life through the sovereign grace of God, often finds his temptations increase instead of diminish. This fact surprises him, because he expects these to lessen, and not to seemingly increase. He is often disappointed at this and counts it an evidence against the reality of his experience. The reason for this is two-fold: (1) Satan comes more fiercely against the believer than before he obtained hope, because the adversary loves, if he can, to spoil the fresh budding bloom of the new life. He thus thrusts sore at the new-born babe in grace, envious because another prisoner of his has been delivered from under his dominion into the glorious liberty of the children of God. (2) The believer's consciousness of temptation is increased by reason of the fact that, through the new birth, he is now in possession of a new life from Christ that is far more sensitive to temptation than was the old life. Things are now seen and felt to be temptations which under the old regime before regeneration were not recognized as being temptations at all.

It seems difficult to understand that Christ could possibly have been so sorely tried as we, because he had no sin, and that, at first thought, would seem to exempt him from such sharpness of pain as is ours under temptation. Quite the contrary, Christ's sinlessness made the temptation more terrible to him. He, being Deity incarnate, was so infinitely pure that he could not be even in the presence of sin without every principle of his innate holiness revolting against it. The ugliness, deformity and exceeding hatefulness of sin are unendingly repulsive and antagonistic to holiness. For the sake of those given into his care by the Father, that he might deliver them from the power of Satan and that he might succor them in all their temptations, He in his own blessed and holy Person faced the adversary and overcame him, repugnant, ugly and offensive as Satan must have been to One so infinitely pure and holy as He is. The holiness of Jesus made the temptation and closeness of Satan in the wilderness, all the harder to be borne: not that the outcome of such a contest was ever for a moment in

doubt, but the pain and torture of it were all the more enhanced from the very fact of Jesus' infinite purity. With us, temptation never is as keen and sharp as it was with Jesus, because in us there is the fallen nature of our humanity upon which Satan feeds and which, if not restrained, loves to yield to the tempter and have its lust appeased. In us, from the very fact that we are human, there is a certain affinity for sin and a gross inclination to give in to it. Nothing of this kind in Jesus. God incarnate as he was and is, for Jesus to be in the atmosphere of sin, to say nothing of his being face to face with the arch-enemy who has sin for his native element, meant such pain and anguish for our sakes as we ourselves shall never be required of God to experience.

The temptation of Christ in the wilderness following his baptism, had three phases. (1) He was tempted in the domain of the body: physical temptation. (2) He was tempted in the realm of the Spirit: spiritual temptation. (3) He was tempted in the sphere of the work he came to do, the purpose of the Father for which he was destined: temptation in the way of his calling. These three cover the whole range of temptation in the lives of God's children. There are no other avenues through which Satan can get at them. Defeated in the realm of the body, routed out of the world of the spirit vanquished from overcoming us in the discharge of our calling, whether that calling be sacred or secular, Satan is shorn of all his power since Christ our High Priest was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews iv. 15.)

1. Temptation physical.

Jesus, filled with the Holy Ghost, was "led," so say Matthew and Luke, "driven," says Mark, into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. The impelling or driving force was the Holy Ghost because he must necessarily be tempted in the likeness of all his people's temptations in order to his perfecting as the Captain of our salvation, and his being led by the same Spirit into this temptation was because of the boundless love he bore toward us through which he was voluntarily drawn through the trial and on beyond it to the accomplishing of our salvation in the tragedy of Calvary. "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread."—Matt. iv. 3. Why be hungry? The cravings of the body need to be satisfied, why suppress them? The reasoning of Satan is subtile but false. Only part of the truth does he tell; never does he use the whole truth. Were there no trace of truth in his traducings, he would deceive nobody. The nearer a counterfeit copies the genuine, the more difficult it is to detect the lie. True it is that the physical cravings of the body are God-given and to be appeased legitimately. There is nothing wrong in being hungry or thirsty or in any other natural desire with which he has been endowed by his Creator, but man has corrupted his way upon the earth. (Gen. vi. 12.) He has perverted his innate cravings through the Adamic fall. Thus, in

man's present fallen state, his cravings are not to be trusted. The reply of Jesus to this first temptation tells the whole truth: "Man shall not live by bread alone." Man cannot live by confining himself within the sphere of the physical and material. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."—Luke xii. 15. To try to do so is death, as Adam found to his condemnation. "But by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Those for whom Jesus met and conquered temptation must have both their physical and spiritual needs taken care of and supplied. To live after the flesh, to attempt to confine one's life within the limits of one's physical being, thus seeking to save one's own soul materially, is to lose one's self and so die to the things of the Spirit. (Luke ix. 24, 25.)

2. Temptation spiritual.

This, from Satan, was the attempt to assail and overthrow the soul, even as the first assault was against the body. Here Satan took Jesus into Jerusalem and up unto the pinnacle of the temple and said, "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." This from the ninety-first Psalm. Satan can and does quote Scripture, but never can he give the right application; nor does he take the Word in its wholeness, but piecemeal as suits his purpose. Satan comes often in the garb of a saintly appearance professing familiarity with godliness, feigning love of the truth. In this guise, he is the most enticing and most deceptive, alluring the very elect if possible. Cast Thyself down. God will take care of Thee. Trust Him. Jesus replied, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Trust him, yes! But tempt him? No. We never tempt those in whom we have absolute confidence. If we do tempt them, it is because we do not trust them. If we truly and wholly trust and depend on the Lord, it does not occur to us to tempt him. To tempt God is to presume conceitedly upon his goodness and to irreverently dare him to keep his promise. Cast thyself down. That would not be trusting God. That would be suicide. Here is the temptation to make a show of one's trust by an outward heroism in the name of religion. Few things are more repugnant to the Holy Spirit than pride and ambition in the spiritual life. Those who sincerely trust the Lord wait upon him in hopeful and prayerful expectancy and in lowliness, meekness and quietness. They do not dare him to take care of them. They humbly look to him and beseech his guidance as they go along by faith in their divinely appointed way, but they shrink from blatantly professing their confidence by putting him to a public test. Not until Leviticus sixteenth chapter did God give direction about burning the incense, but in Leviticus tenth chapter the two sons of Aaron used their own human wisdom and burnt incense, not

waiting for divine direction, and so they died. The injection of self-will into one's spiritual life, running before one is sent, kindling one's own fire: all bring about lying down in sorrow at the Lord's hands. To the end that we should not be overcome in such a way, Jesus suffered this temptation for us as he did all others. Like all his other use of Scripture, Satan quoted only so much of the ninety-first Psalm as suited him, and stopped short of verse thirteen of that Psalm, the verse that prophetically announced Satan's doom. "The dragon shalt thou trample under feet." Ages before the ninety-first Psalm, it had been announced that the seed of the woman (Christ) should bruise the serpent's head. Of this, Satan says nothing. The archenemy dreaded and abhorred the oncoming of Calvary and sought to dissuade Jesus from the cross. There, on the cross, Jesus was to tread the dragon under his feet. Not only so, but the God of peace shall bruise Satan under our feet shortly. (Romans xvi. 20.) The dragon bound is to be imprisoned in the bottomless pit and afterward to find his miserable end in the lake of fire of the second death. All this is prophetically in the ninety-first Psalm, but to it Satan does not so much as allude.

3. Temptation vocational.

"The devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Again it is only a half-truth which the devil uses. True, Satan dominates the kingdoms of this present evil world. He is the prince of the power of the air and the spirit that works in the children of disobedience. He is the god of this world and has blinded the minds of them that believe not. The whole world lies supinely in the lap of this wicked one, much as a nursing child in the lap of its mother. It is of him Jesus said, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."—John xiv. 30. Jesus' vocation or calling was to do the will of his Father and finish his work, to lose nothing of all that the Father gave him and to raise it up at the last day. The devil, if he could, would turn Jesus from this high calling and tempt him to the easier way. So would he turn us all from our calling, could he have his way about it. Knowing that the cross of Christ would seal his doom forever, Satan would dissuade Jesus from Calvary. Even devils know that they have but a short time and begged Jesus not to torment them before that time. (Matt. viii. 29.) Even they believe and tremble. (James ii. 19.) Satan knows that he has but a short time. (Rev. xii. 12.) Instead of going on the slow, painful, bloody and shameful way of the cross, Satan offered Jesus world-dominion if only he would bow down and worship him. To have yielded would have meant compromise. To have compromised would have been failure. Pharaoh at first proposed to Moses that Israel be content to perform their sacrificial worship in Egypt and not leave the country, secondly Pharaoh pro-

posed they go only a little way out of the land to worship and then come back, thirdly he proposed that Israel go out but leave their little ones behind. All these compromises Moses rejected. Israel's departure must be a whole and clean-cut going out, never to return. There could be no compromise between Israel and Egypt. There can be today no compromise between the believer and the church, and the world. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you."—2 Cor. vi. 17. But the Lord brought Israel out from bondage not by the land of the Philistines, which was the shortest way, but by the long hard way of the desert. The reason why so many difficulties come into our lives may be because God knows the smooth, easy way might tempt us to compromise with Satan. God deals with us in full knowledge of our weaknesses. He knows our frame and remembers we are dust. Bow down and worship me, said Satan. Indeed! He fails to say, however, that one moment's worship of the devil means service and slavery to wickedness. Whatever it is that a man worships, that he serves. Worship is the badge of service. To whomsoever we yield ourselves to obey, his servants we are. (Rom. vi. 16.) This Jesus plainly affirms in his reply to this third and last temptation, "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." To have obtained the kingdoms of this world by worshiping Satan, thus becoming his slave, would have been for the world to forever remain organized as it is today, under the dominion of the evil one, and would have meant for the children of God to have forever remained under the captivity of him that had the power of death. Such could not be. Jesus died and rose again, overcame and destroyed the god of this world and took from him his dominion. By the heavy-weighted way of Gethsemane, Calvary and Olivet Christ vanquished him who would have had Him achieve world-dominion by the easier means of compromise through service to wickedness. By his resurrection from the dead, Christ is declared to be the Son of God with power. After his resurrection, Christ announced that all power in heaven and earth was given into his hands, and bade the disciples for that reason to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. The very kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, at the trumpeting of the seventh angel. (Rev. xi. 15.) He manifestly won world-dominion by his cross, not by service for even one moment to Satan. Thus does he destroy him that had the power of death and deliver all those, His own, held in bondage thereunto. Whatever be the calling, sacred or secular, in which the believer is providentially situated, Satan tempts him to compromise and so to defeat. To the end that we shall not be ultimately overcome, Jesus was tempted in our stead and in our likeness. Whether one be called to preach, and so to serve in the sanctuary, or

whether one's lot lie in some secular path, always Satan presents some easier, more comfortable way than the daily slow, toilsome way of simple honesty and faith. The world is today full of easy religion, religion that knows no searching of heart in the light of the Word. Satan would have us be at ease in an easy religion. Being the children of God, and Christ having suffered for us in the flesh, the sincere among us upheld by grace will shun the way of easiness pleasant to the flesh and will, as did those of old, esteem the reproaches of Christ more worth while than all the enticements and rewards of Egypt.

"More the treacherous calm I dread,
Than tempests bursting o'er my head."

Paradoxical as it may seem, the stronger a man is, the fiercer is he tempted. The weak are not so tempted for the reason that the weak give way and yield, having not the power of resistance. By the strong man is meant the one endowed with life resultant from the new birth. The weak, in this instance, is the one not so endowed. Therefore, the stronger the man is and the freer the Christ-life flows through him, the sharper is that man's temptations and the more terribly does he feel the pull and tug of the enticement. The weak, resistless, give way to the tempting and yield, hence such cannot feel the sharpness of the conflict as does the man strong enough through grace to combat it. The weak does not recognize temptation as such, thus he yields without a struggle and continues in his willing servitude to Satan. The strong man, endowed as he is with sustaining grace, is the shining mark for all Satan's darts and fierce are the onslaughts of the enemy agianst him. The more painful the conflict, the more spiritual one is. Never in our own strength nor by our own doings can we withstand temptation. Could we do so, Christ need not have been tempted in our likeness. Because he withstood and overcame all that ever we can possibly be tempted with, so shall we be able to stand and overcome through him. May we be all the time graciously yielded to him, then shall we realize the victory being won for us and within us, and shall hope through him to sit down with him in his throne as overcomers. (Rev. iii. 21.) Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

H. H. L.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

WHEN remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it. By referring to these dates you can tell to just what time your subscription is paid. Dec. 32 means your subscription expired December, 1932; June 33 means your subscription expired June, 1933; Dec. 33 that it expired December, 1933, etc.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

J. P. Smallbone, Manitoba, $2; Mrs. Ida Cockrell, Va., $1; Dr. W. R. Presley, Texas, $1; Dr. J. B. Garrison, N. J., $2.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

AGAIN it becomes my sad duty to chronicle the death of a precious brother in the church. **JOSEPH W. HAMILTON** was born May 24th, 1861, and departed this life March 24th, 1934, in his seventy-third year. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Miranda Jones Hamilton, three sons, Charlie, Norman and Robert, two daughters, Mrs. Sherman Bassett and Miss Cassie Hamilton, twelve grandchildren, one sister, Mrs. Fannie Fields, of Portland, Oregon, one brother, John C. Hamilton, of Dayton, Ohio, and a number of nieces and nephews. In the year 1908 brother Joe received a hope in the Savior, and a short time afterward told his experience to the brethren, and at the church meeting in October, 1908, he was gladly received for baptism, and on the following day was baptized into the fellowship of the Elk Lick Church by Elder R. M. Thomas, and all his life had been with the same church, near Sadieville, Kentucky, always in attendance at the meetings until the last two years, when his health became so impaired that it was not prudent for him to leave his home. He was a member of the Licking Association, and the Elk Lick Church was the last church in the Association, and it is now known as a yearly meeting, which meets the fourth Saturday in September of each year, and at these meetings we will miss our brother "Joe," as he was good company, and several times I have been entertained at his home, and he and sister Hamilton always had a warm welcome for the brethren. It is with much sorrow that I pen these lines, but we sorrow not as those who have no hope. For him to live was Christ, and to die was gain. May the Lord reconcile us all, and enable us to say with Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." The body was taken to the Porter Christian Church, at Porter, Ky., where I spoke to the bereaved ones, from John xiv. 1-3, and all that was mortal was laid to rest in the village churchyard. The Lord only can comfort the friends.

ALSO,

Miss JOSEPHINE MARTIN, our dear sister in Christ, was born December 9th, 1878, and died April 2nd, 1934, in the fifty-sixth year of her age. Our sister had been in failing health for several years, but was not considered to be in a dangerous condition until the last three weeks. During this time she suffered much, but bore her pain with patience. Death came to her as a relief, but to the remaining ones it was a shock. While it was looked for from day to day, yet it seems we are not ready for the summons, even though looking for it daily. She has left to mourn her aged father and several brothers and sisters. It pleased the Lord in the year 1904 to grant our sister a good hope in Christ, and upon relation of her experience to the Old School Baptist Church called Little Flock, in Anderson County, Kentucky, she was received, and was baptized by the then pastor, Elder P. W. Sawin, who is still living and enjoying reasonably good health, considering his blind and feeble condition.

I was called from Shelbyville and tried with the ability the Lord gave me to preach Christ and him crucified to a large congregation of relatives and friends, after which all that was mortal was laid to rest in the cemetery at Lawrenceburg, Kentucky, to await the call of the Master in the resurrection. May the blessing of the Lord be on the family and members of the church, to enable us all to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

MRS. MARTHA ELIZABETH (BLACKWELL) DRAKE, widow of Elisha H. Drake, departed this life February 20th, 1934, after a short illness of heart trouble, making her stay on earth about eighty-four years. She was the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Woolsey S. Blackwell, of near Pennington, New Jersey. She was married to Deacon Elisha H. Drake, of Woodsville, N. J., April 23rd, 1891, who preceded her March 17th, 1917. She was a kind and loving wife and a kind and loving step-mother to his children, who speak of her in the highest regards as mother. She filled the measure that "a prudent wife is from the Lord."—Prov. xiv 9. She was established in the gospel and loved the doctrine of salvation by grace. After her husband departed she made her home with her step-daughter, Mrs. John Christopher, of Trenton, N. J., who preceded her several years, but she continued her home with Mr. Christopher and daughter Ruth until her departure. Mrs. Mary L. Carter (her step-daughter) says of her, I will miss mother and her weekly letter, but I feel my loss is her eternal gain, and I cannot wish it otherwise.

The writer spoke in tribute to her memory in the Harbourton meetinghouse to her only nephew, Mr. H. B. Pittenger, of Woodsville, N. J., several stepsons and other relatives who survive her, after which her remains were laid to rest in the Harbourton Cemetery to await the making up of the jewels of the Son of God, when she shall come forth with all the redeemed of the earth and be caught up in the cloud to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall she ever be with the Lord. C. W. V.

DEACON J. H. GRIFFIN was born September 7th, 1865, joined the Primitive Baptist Church in the year 1897, in the State of Alabama, Tuscaloosa County. He was married to Martele Papazan February 17th, 1888, and to that union were born ten children: Mrs. Rhoda Kelly, Mrs. Lillie Kelly, Herman Griffin, Lawn, Texas, Mrs. Georgia Skelton, Abilene, Texas, Mrs. Nola Stewart, Tray Griffin, Charlie Griffin, Mrs. Elva Jones, Tommie Griffin, Lawn, Texas. Wilbur Lee Griffin died in infancy. Brother J. H. Griffin departed this life August 31st, 1933, in the full triumph of a living faith. A few hours before his Savior called him

home he turned from his side over on his back, raised up his hands, looked up, and said, Up there. His wife said, Yes, where you are going. He said, Yes. For years brother Griffin was a great sufferer, but never complained. I was well acquainted with him for fifteen or twenty years, and he was faithful to every trust, one of the most faithful members of the church. I do not suppose he ever missed a church meeting in all the time he was a member unless he was too sick to get there. I never knew him to miss a meeting for any cause. When he first married he was very poor financially, but the Lord gave him a good living and some good property. He had the quietest, nicest family of children of any I am acquainted with in all my travels. He was a faithful, loving husband, a patient and affectionate father. He was faithful in all his business relations, faithful as a neighbor, truthful, honest, prompt to comply with his promises. If ever there was a church member that showed his faith by his works brother Griffin was the man. We miss him; yes, we miss him. He was a great loss to his church, family and friends. God's grace taught him to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. We mourn our loss, but our loss is his eternal gain, and we sorrow not as others who have no hope. May we meet and no more part. ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

LUDWELL LEE, our brother in Christ, departed this earthly life March 17th, 1934, after being ill only a short time at the home of his niece, Mrs. William Henry, near Manassas, Virginia. He was seventy-nine years old last November. Was baptized by me August 12th, 1923, into the membership of the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia. He is survived by only one sister, Mrs. Elizabeth Reed, of Round Hill, Virginia, and also by an adopted daughter, whom he and his wife raised from a child, Mrs. Roscoe Huntington, of Fort Humphrey, Va. He was a son of William F. and Caroline Higgs Lee, both deceased.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Episcopal church-house at Chantilly, Va., burial in the burying-ground there. He had for some months felt that his end was near, and only a few weeks before had gone to the burying-ground and staked off a plot where he wanted his body laid away. To him, death held no terrors. This was because his hope rested well-assured in the perfect and finished redemption-work of the blessed Redeemer. Our brother, like Paul of old, knew in Whom he believed and confidently knew that his Savior was abundantly able to keep that which in faith he had committed into his care against that day. Brother Lee was a spiritually-minded man, and one who loved to pore over His Bible and to talk on the things of heaven. He was firm in his belief in the predestination of all things and in salvation by grace and grace alone. We have hope for him that he is at home with the Lord. May all the sorrowing ones find comfort, if it be God's will, in the same blessed truth which our brother held so dear to his own soul.

H. H. L.

MEETINGS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with Welsh Tract Church, May 26th and 27th, 1934, two days only, fourth Saturday and Sunday in May. This change was adopted, being the mind of many in the churches that the attendance would be better, and more acceptable to those coming from a distance, and especially those in business, the week end being open to many, whereas they could not be relieved in the middle of the week.

Those coming by train will find both large trunk lines, the Baltimore and Ohio and the Pennsylvania R. R. available to Newark, Delaware. All, including auto visitors, come to the home of either brother Charles H. Jarmon or J. B. Miller Friday night or Saturday morning. Ministering brethren are especially invited.

JOHN B. MILLER, Church Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in May and June, 1934. Services to be held at the home of Earl D. Stevens, Central Bridge, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, on Wednesday and Thursday, May 30th and 31st, 1934, commencing at 10:30 a. m., Daylight Saving Time. Ministers of our direct correspondence, and brethren, sisters and friends who love the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

CASPER G. FETTER, Church Clerk,
R. D., SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (6th, 7th and 8th), 1934. Those coming from and via New York City will take train leaving foot of Chambers Street. Get tickets for Howells, N. Y. Trains will be met and friends cared for. Time of trains will be announced later when new schedules will be effective. Those coming by automobile will please stop at Howells Station and inquire the way to Mrs. L. W. Blumroeder's house, which is only a short distance from the station. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, sisters and friends. R. LESTER DODSON.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 808 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one-half block west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church will meet (D. V.) every second Sunday with brother and sister Berry, 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California. Every third Sunday with brother and sister Staggs, 506 E. Raulston Street, Ontario, California.

T. D. WALKER.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 102. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1934. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DUTTON, Ontario, April 30, 1933.

DEAR SISTER GILLIS:—It is quite a long time since you first asked me to write some of my experience to you. Each time you have mentioned in your letters that you would like me to write you I have felt ashamed, and the postscript to your last letter seemed to rebuke me for neglecting your request so long, so I will make the attempt, hoping the Lord will guide my pen. I think the real reason I have delayed so long is that I have felt afraid of writing something I should not.

From my earliest childhood I believe I can say I had a love for the people of God, and although I often did and said wrong things, I always felt condemned in them, and would try to do better, only to find that my natural disposition conquered again and again, in spite of all my efforts. I felt so ignorant of the things of God, and would often beg the Lord to show me what I ought to know. My parents were not members of the church, but attendance at the meetings and Bible reading in our homes seemed to have consideration above everything else. My dear grandfather lived with us, and, as I look back, I think he was one of the saintliest men I ever knew. He was a deacon in the church, and when ministers and friends visited him I would linger in the room, that I might have the privilege of listening to their sweet conversation. I felt to be separated from those dear people by a pale, which I feared would never be removed. There were seven children younger than I, so mother and I took turns Sunday nights in going to meeting, although we all went in the morning. After I had put the little ones to bed one Sunday night I was reading in Philippians, when I came to the words, "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." They seemed to stand out and impress me so that for many years after my constant cry to the Lord was that he would make me to believe on him, even if it

had to be through suffering. I remember one day very distinctly that when I was house-cleaning I dropped on my knees by a chair, feeling deeply that I must beg of the Lord to reveal his truth to me. I cannot say that in all this time I was in any trouble of mind. I had a lovely home, the kindest of parents and brothers and sisters, and I believe I had a very happy and sheltered childhood and girlhood. It was simply that the things of God seemed so worthwhile to me and I knew I was so ignorant of them. Especially did I desire to know the meaning of "Jesus" and his part in the redemption of his people. I would listen to the ministers, hoping and hoping I might be able to follow them, but I felt all the while that they were preaching over my head to those who had already experienced what I so earnestly desired. There was much that I enjoyed in the meetings, but felt I was lacking in the one thing needful. At one time while still a girl at home in England I received much encouragement from a sermon preached by an old minister named Mr. Wady, from the words, Wait, I say, on the Lord. It gave me fresh courage to keep hoping and praying that the Lord would show me what I should know in his own time. After I was married, we lived for a short time in Zanesville, Ohio, but we did not find any one there who believed as we did, and we missed the meetings very much. We soon returned to England, and stayed there for awhile, until it seemed advisable to return to the States. We had much enjoyed the meetings again in England, and it was a great trial to leave all our friends. However the Lord was better to us than our fears, for we found a company of our own people in New York City. The members and friends received us most kindly, and we felt the lines had fallen to us in pleasant places. My husband seemed more and more attached to the people, and his mind was frequently exercised about joining the church. He would talk to me about it, but said he wished I could go with him. I felt horrified at the idea of it, for I felt he had so much to tell, and I had nothing. All I felt in my mind was, Lord, thou canst if thou wilt. But that was the great question. Would he ever notice me? I told my husband to go on and not wait for me, and often he would go to the meetings feeling he must speak, but was unable to do so. After our second child was born I became very weak and nervous. I kept getting lower and lower, until for months I thought my mind would snap. I slept very little, and lost all interest in life. I had always had such a happy life, both before and after marriage, had enjoyed nature to a wonderful degree, so much so that the sight of green trees and grass against the blue summer sky would fill me with a pleasure indescribable, but now I was oppressed with a feeling of gloom almost amounting to horror which enveloped me all the time. I did not feel any interest in my husband or children, whom I had loved so dearly. The only thing that aroused me at all was if they were not well, and then I became

frightened, fearing the Lord would take them from me. I went on in this way for many weary months. I did not know what was the matter with me. I had always had a happy, buoyant disposition, but the terrible burden now upon me seemed to crush me to the very earth. The beauties of nature, once so sweet to me, did not appeal to me in the least. I felt my only hope was that God might appear for me. My constant cry day and night was, Lord, help me. O Lord, do help me. I felt the only pleasure I had in life was the Sunday meeting, where I could be with the Lord's people. Dear Elder McConnell was the pastor, and once when we were invited to his home he seemed much concerned at my altered looks and evident distress of mind, for my burden was so crushing I could not conceal the misery in which I lived. He said very gently to me, "Don't you think you would be happier if you were in the church?" Althought I thought so much of him, I felt very annoyed at him for saying such a thing to me. I thought if he were willing to have such a wretched creature as I in the church he was like the ministers of worldly churches, who only think of adding to their numbers, whether the members are wrothy or not, and I could not understand it, as I had never thought he was that kind. I searched the Bible, and the only comfort I could get was from Job or David. I remember saying once to my husband that David must have known what it was to be where I was or he never could have written some of his Psalms, especially the sixth Psalm, but I could not get any further than the sevneth verse, although I did feel a nearness to the Lord in prayer more than I ever had before, but I had no assurance that he would appear for me. Life seemed a fearful dread of everything, and yet I felt I had no hope for the future if I should die. I missed my mother very much, for she had always been able to smooth out all my little troubles when I was with her, but she was three thousand miles away, and with no likelihood of her being any nearer. Then I thought that if only my husband could be with me instead of being away all day I should feel better, but one day when he had a holiday, and was home, I felt worse than I ever had before, and dropped down on my knees by the bed, and all I could do was to groan in the bitterness of my soul, Lord, help me. I felt all my earthly props had been taken from me, and if the Lord did not appear for me I should be lost both mind and body. The very atmosphere seemed gloom, I lived in darkness that could be felt. One day I noticed the room seemed a little brighter, so that I spoke of it to my husband. At the same time I felt a desire to write to my grandfather of the trouble I was in. I knew he was a very good man, and I thought he might understand me. I felt a little lightening of the burden as I wrote, but only a very little. The evening passed on, until I noticed it was nearly eleven o'clock, so I asked my husband to read a chapter before we went to bed. He had been tempted to

think he had talked religion to me until he was driving me crazy and was feeling in a hardened rebellious condition of mind over the wretched state I was in, and did not want to read. He said we should better go to bed, as we had to get up early on Sunday morning, as it was a long journey to the meetinghouse, but I told him I did not want to miss it, and he commenced reading Isaiah lv.: "Ho, every one that thirsteth," etc. While I was listening to it my mind seemed entirely taken from what he was reading, and I saw in my mind Jesus hanging on the cross bowed and crushed by the burden which I had been carrying for so long, and suddenly instead of being crushed to the earth I could stand upright, my burden was gone. In an instant all the prayers and hopes of many years were answered. I knew at the last meeting of "Jesus, the Savior of sinners." I knew what it was to have a hope that he had died for me, for my sins he was afflicted. In my letter to my grandfather I had mentioned the following hymn, and told him that was where I felt myself to be.

"Oh love divine, how sweet thou art!
When shall I find my willing heart
All taken up by thee?
I thirst and faint, and die to prove
The greatness of redeeming love,
The love of Christ to me.

Stronger his love than death or hell;
Its riches are unsearchable;
The first-born sons of light
Desire in vain its depths to see;
They cannot reach the mystery,
The length, the breadth and height.

God only knows the love of God;
Oh that it now were shed abroad
In this poor stony heart!
For this I sigh, for this I pine,
This only portion, Lord, be mine;
Be mine this better part."

Now I felt that prayer had been answered. My very being seemed filled with love to the One who had saved me from the lost condition I was in for so long. I felt like the woman of whom it is said that she was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself, and Jesus laid hands on her, and immediately she was straight, and glorified God. That was just what I wanted to do, to praise God for his wonderful goodness to one so unworthy. I tried to tell my husband, but he had been troubled so long by my depression that he feared my joy was just another phase of it, the change was so great he could not believe it was really so. However, when morning came I was up early, dressing the babies and urging him to get started early, for all I could think of was getting to meeting to tell Elder McConnell and the other dear ones of the Lord's goodness to me. I have often wondered since how I could have forgotten to even think of my unworthiness, all I could think of was the Lord's goodness. My husband spoke to the church at the same time, and Elder McConnell baptized us the following Sunday in the Hudson River. It was one of the happiest days of our lives. When speaking in prayer in our home, my dear husband had often asked the Lord that we might grow up together as "calves of the stall," and it seemed wonderful that he should have brought us to the church together. I knew now what the words meant, "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." The very Scriptures

seemed illuminated when viewed in the face of Jesus Christ. The epistles had always seemed to me deep, and difficult to understand, but now much of them seemed opened to my understanding. The preaching seemed all for me. Like the good Samaritan, it came just where I was. My heart overflowed with gratitude to the God of my salvation. Over nineteen years have passed since that time, but the sweetness of those experiences still remains, and I hope the Lord will never suffer it to be effaced from my memory. My physical weakness still continued for some time, but with such a difference. Before, I had a dread of the future, whether life or death, afterwards, I felt if the Lord saw fit to take me to himself I should be only too glad to go, but my health, relieved of the trouble of mind, gradually improved, so that I again felt fit to carry on the burdens of life and raising a family, and I have always felt since that the Lord "has been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall." Many times I have found that "a man" (the man Christ Jesus) has been "an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

I could write much more of His goodness to me, but have already made this letter too lengthy, so will close for this time. Forgive what you see amiss in it, for I am a poor frail creature, so fearful that pride may creep in and make "even the grace of God a snare." George is in Toronto to-day. I am sure he would join me in love. Write when you feel to. We are glad to know that once again the Lord has given you the oil of joy for mourning.

Your sister in a precious hope,

ESTHER RUSTON.

DUTTON, Ontario, Oct. 29, 1933.

DEAR SISTER GILLIS:—The last time I saw you, you reminded me of my promise to write you again. I do so, hoping that the Lord will guide my pen, so I may not be left to write anything that will not be to his glory. I think in my last letter, in response to your request, I wrote of the way I had been led up to the time of joining the church in New York City. I cannot just remember where I left off, but will go on from that time.

For a time I was very happy, but gradually I slipped back again into the depressed condition I had been in for so long, but oh! with what a difference. Before, I knew that the Lord could help me if only he would, but I feared I was an outcast, now I had the sweet assurance that he had appeared for me, and a hope which was as an anchor of the soul to me. I remember once feeling very oppressed and fearing that the old burden I had carried so long was returning, and feeling so weak and unfit to cope with earthly cares, when suddenly the words dropped into my heart, "Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you," and immediately I felt my heart lightened and

could leave all my cares in his hands. We were living in a most unsuitable apartment, and felt we must move, yet my health being so poor I was not fit for the exertion, but the goodness of the Lord seemed so amazing to such a poor insignificant creature that it filled me with new courage, so that the way was opened for us to move to a much nicer apartment. I went on in this way for some time, sometimes feeling there was little comfort for me in this life on account of the depression under which I lived most of the time, that it was my constant desire that the Lord would take me home to himself. I felt all fear of death had been taken from me, all I desired was to be with Christ, which I felt was far better. The words were often with me

"If such the sweetness of the streams,
What must the fountain be,
Where saints and angels draw their bliss
Immediately from thee?"

I went on in this selfish, self-centered condition for a long time. Although I dearly loved my husband and children, I felt I could gladly lie down and leave them, if only it were the Lord's will, for I felt physically too weak to live and care for them. So I struggled on, never neglecting them, but hoping death might relieve me, when one day I commenced to spit blood. I thought I must be in a decline, and that it was responsible for all the weakness I had suffered, and that I could not live long. Then to my surprise I found that the thought of leaving my husband alone to care for our three babies seemed terrible to me, and I felt I had to beg of the Lord to spare me to them. I have always felt it must have been a slight rupture of a blood vessel, as I never had any more trouble of that kind, but it showed me that we have to take up the burdens the Lord lays on us, and that we cannot lay them down, but have to look to him for strength to bear them. My health gradually improved, but we had trials in other ways. My husband had been set aside to the ministry, and he accepted a call to the churches in the Catskill Mountains, in New York State. It was altogether a new life for us, as it meant giving up his profession and all which that meant, but the Lord blessed us with good health, and many providential blessings, and we had many happy times together, in spite of some trying things we had to pass through. We can look back and see how wonderfully the Lord appeared for us many timse. At one time an epidemic of septic sore throat swept the district where we lived. We all recovered without any ill effects, except our eldest two boys. Soon afterwards our eldest boy had rheumatic fever, and for three weeks the only sleep I could get was two or three minutes at a time. When he was recovering we found that our second boy had a very uneven heart beat, caused by poison from the sore throat. The condition of our two dear boys was a great grief to us. One night a few weeks later, when the one who had been ill with rheumatism was recovered sufficiently for me to go to bed, I lay wide awake. I seemed to have lost the habit of sleep, and to make it worse, my husband was far away preaching. I had

no objection to that, but it increased my feeling of loneliness and anxiety. A feeling of terror took hold of me. I wondered how I could ever face the future. My husband away so much, and the two boys I had learned to depend on so much for help and companionship (at that time one was eleven and the other fourteen), both so afflicted, it seemed doubtful if they would ever be well again. I felt so exhausted, and I felt I could not care for them and manage the farm work as well during the absences of my husband. My sister Grace was with me at that time, but she had plenty to do as well, as we had three other little ones. She was a great comfort to me, but I lost sight that night of all my comforts. As I lay there in the darkness the darkness in my mind was far greater. Suddenly across the corner of the room appeared in illuminated letters the words, "The Lord is my shepherd." The writing was so bright in the darkness it seemed it was the glory of the Lord. As my mind traveled over the rest of the Psalm to the words, "I will fear no evil," the word "no" was underlined three times. My terror was gone, and in its place there was peace and joy unspeakable. I fell into a sweet sleep, and during the trying months that followed, when sometimes our hopes would be raised only to be dashed again, I felt I could leave everything in the hands of the dear Lord who had appeared so wonderfully for my help. Eventually the boys recovered, and we could praise the Lord that apparently they suffered no ill effects. To me it has always seemed that it was as much the hand-writing on the wall by the finger of God as was the writing seen by the wicked King Belshazzar, but how different was the result wrought. To him it was death, to me life. What has never ceased to cause wonderment in my mind is that the Lord condescended to notice such a poor, weak, unworthy creature and relieve my misery in such a way, when so many of the Lord's dear people, so much worthier than I, live year after year desiring a visit from the Lord, and sometimes never experience it in this life. I do believe, though, that when they pass from this scene they prove the truth of the beautiful words of James Durand:

"And morning cometh! soon these watches ended,
Soon all these earthly nights and vigils o'er,
On the freed soul shall break the radiance splendid
Of perfect day upon the sinless shore."

I often think of my own precious mother, who seemed to live for the things of God, and was beloved by all who knew her for her sweetness and loveliness of character. Before I left home she would talk to me of her desires that the Lord would bless her with an assurance of his mercy to her. A few weeks before she died she wrote us how much she desired an assurance from the Lord, but it seemed to be denied her, but she added, I can say, "I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honor dwelleth." I believe she went to her Father's house on high, and realized the fullness of her desires.

Things were now very comfortable and pleasant for us for a time. The

Lord had blessed us with a comfortable home, and our church people were wonderfully kind to us, increasingly so. Our children were all well, and progressing as well as we could desire in school. We loved our people and felt our love was returned, and I really believe we thought we should live and die with them, when our peace of mind was rudely disturbed by a conviction in my husband's mind, which pressed more and more heavily, that he would have to leave our churches where we were so happily settled and serve the Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada. When he first mentioned it to me I was too much taken back to be very much impressed by it. I felt he could not leave our people, but as time passed on and I could see what a weight it was on his spirits I was compelled to consider it, too, and as Scripture after Scripture seemed to show his duty in the matter it became more and more of a burden to us. You will remember that you gave a call to two other ministers during this time. He said each time he wished they would accept and that would settle his mind that he would not have to go, but each time he said he did not believe they would accept, for he felt he was the one who had to go there. After two years of this anxiety he said to me one day that if the Canadian church gave him a call he felt he should have to accept, and very soon the call came. It was an unhappy, trying time for us. To leave our dear people, who had shown us love and consideration beyond measure, besides disposing of our property, tested our endurance very much. Our people could not understand how we could leave them, but we found it impossible to resist what seemed to us a direct command from the Lord. The last Sunday service we attended before leaving was especially trying, but as we sang, "God moves in a mysterious way," I felt every word of it was for me, and I think I was enabled to go on in the strength of that meat many days. I could not understand, and cannot yet, why we should live so happily for twelve years with our people, and then for all our hearts to be so disturbed and rent, but the words calmed me then, and I still have to leave it there:

> "Deep in unfathomable mines
> Of never-failing skill,
> He treasures up his bright designs,
> And works his sovereign will."

Our life in the church since coming to Canada has made us feel we did not do wrong in following the dictates of our conscience, but really, it was taken entirely from us, there seemed no other course open to us but to come here.

I think I have written you enough for this time, or you will be wearied. I feel a pleasure in writing to you, because on account of your deafness you are cut off in a measure from visiting with your brethren and friends, but you seem to enjoy letters very much.

I will close, with much love from your sister, I hope,

ESTHER RUSTON.

LONDON, Ontario, Dec. 4, 1933.

DEAR ELDER AND SISTER RUSTON:—I wish to send my subscription for the SIGNS to you. Sister Cassie said to do so, as she and others are doing so this year. The language of my heart is,

"Show pity, Lord, O Lord, forgive,
Let a repenting rebel live;
Are not thy mercies large and free?
May not a sinner trust in thee?

My crimes are great, but can't surpass
The power and riches of thy grace;
Lord, should thy judgments grow severe,
I am condemned, but thou art clear.

Yet save a trembling sinner, Lord,
Whose hope still hovers round thy word,
Would light on some sweet promise there,
Some sure support against despair."

I can say with Job this last year, "Behold, I am vile." Light has shone in my heart, disclosing to my view my sins and depravity, until I feel to repent, sitting in dust and ashes. The abhorrence of them seems to crush me to the earth, and I cry, God, be merciful to me, the chief of sinners, least of saints, if one at all. Oh wretched one that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

As I read your good letter in December SIGNS I felt to be a castaway, in much weakness. I felt to decrease to helplessness, sin and sorrow. Yet the Lord increases in power and majesty, and my inmost cry is, Lord, be merciful.

"For if my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well."

Yet save a trembling sinner, Lord, whose hope is alone in thy mercy and pardon. To whom can I go but to thee? Thou hast the words of eternal life. I feel to be alone. Jesus was alone when he cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" All my secret faults are set before the brightness of his face. They are exceedingly sinful before me. Years ago I saw myself a sinner, and would groan, being burdened with a weight of sin. My pillow would be wet with tears I shed. I was told I was homesick, but it was for an assurance of a home beyond the skies. Oh that I knew where to find Him whom my soul loveth. I found no resting-place, but heard Elder Pollard speak in prayer, and the words, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," came as an answer to why I enjoyed listening. Also, a sermon he preached from the text, "If the blood of bulls and of goats," etc., made me feel I saw men as trees walking. It gave me a hope the Lord had begun a work, and I would not give up that hope for worlds, did I possess them. I read Isaiah much, but the precious promises were for the Lord's people, and am I his, or am I not? I still must cry and seek peace and pardon from the Lord. At the June meeting Elder Durand spoke from the text, "Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee." I felt the Lord took me into his banqueting-house and his banner over me was love, for I felt to be lifted above earth, and could say, "My Lord and my God." The lines had fallen to me in pleasant places as Elder Durand spoke. For days I was praising the Lord, carried above self, hoping in his mercy. The preaching of the gospel was now the joyful sound to

me, a poor ignorant worm of the dust. When Elder Eubanks spoke from Isaiah xxvii. 13: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem," I felt he told my feelings better than I could, and a desire was given me to obey and follow Jesus in baptism. There was the company of two armies, as it were. One mind was to obey, the other was a feeling of unworthiness. One day I was weeping, my husband came in and I told him I had a desire to be baptized but felt too unworthy. He said, Those are the ones they want. The morning we went to the meeting I questioned, What will the day bring forth? The words came, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound." I will cause you to remember all the way the Lord has led you. I wept and had one mind to obey, and another I would not go to meeting, fearing I might be deceiving, but was given to try and tell how I, a sinner, never did anything good to merit the Lord's favor, but hoped in his mercy. I was very happy in rising from the watery grave, satisfied with favor and full with the blessing of the Lord. It was a very happy time I can never forget. The world was put under my feet. Buried with Him in baptism and raised through the faith of the operation of God, who raised Him from the dead. I felt then I never should grieve, I never should suffer again, but in two weeks the dear Lord had left me in darkness. When I wished to talk to a dear sister about my coming, every word dropped, and I felt I had deceived the dear people of God. I wept and mourned, feeling the light of His countenance had gone, and I could not feel He would come again. Next morning, "Though ye have linen among the pots," came with relief. I enjoyed the next quarterly meeting in Lobo. Dear Elder Sawin spoke, and every word seemed for me, although before that I wished I could pass from time. I enjoyed Elder Pollard's meetings and felt very sad when he was called from time to be forever with the Lord. I traveled in much sorrow after that, often desiring I were dead, but given strength as my day, and, with Job, desiring strength to wait all the days of my appointed time. I could say, "He performeth the thing that is appointed for me." It was dear Elder Chick's text at the Lobo meeting. The sermon was in demonstration and comforting to the weary travelers, but with Job I could say this year, "Behold, I am vile: what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth." He sets our secret thoughts before the brightness of his face. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes. When the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines it discloses a nest of unclean birds, deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, open to the eyes of God. As you wrote, it is from that spot we can pray for those who before were miserable comforters. Truly we

can love our enemies and have sympathy for the weak. David went astray before he was afflicted, afterwards he could keep God's word.

The kindness of the dear brethren, sisters and friends to me in my illness and darkness has been wonderful. If I could I would like to send suitable replies to their good letters, which melted my heart in love to them, and, I trust, to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. My past sins and present iniquities stare at me until I wish I had never been born. The love for the brethren is at times the only hope that we have passed from death unto life. It is a precious gift, but oh my leanness and unworthiness stares at me so I am made to cry, God, be merciful to me, the chief of sinners, least of saints, if one at all. The afflictions which we are helpless to bring about or drop, are truly more precious than all the treasures of this fleeting earth. I have envied those at rest from this vain turmoil, yet with Job would say, Thou performeth the things appointed for me. I have been made to feel God is in each trial, even if Satan buffets, but Satan was a liar from the beginning, and who saith and it cometh to pass when the Lord commanded it not? Oh the heaviness through manifold temptations for the trial of faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, it may be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. I have been brought to a place where sin is exceeding sinful, and my faith is not what I can do, but what Christ, I hope, has done for me, a poor sinner. There is where we are killed to sin, loathing self, with longings for Jesus. Christ manifest in the flesh. Look not upon me because the sun (light) has shone upon me. Suffering in the flesh.

Dear kindred, I felt very much to be a castaway when at first I read your good editorial, but in the tracing of Job's wanderings I felt the writing was a looking-glass for this poor worm, whose hope at times seems buried out of sight, yet I feel to say, I love thy courts, O Lord, and the place where thine honor dwelleth. My desires for the good of Zion are with me, and I trust to be forgiven if through weakness I am not there. No sanctuary, Lord, but thee. May it ever be my desire, given by the Giver of every perfect gift.

Dear friends, I wish to tell you of the peace passing (natural) understanding I had last evening. I was given to feel the Lord's blessings have been manifold to me, a poor worm of the dust. All I needed were from his gracious hand. My uprisings and downsittings are from him. I broke forth into singing, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow." Nothing disturbed my peace of mind. I trust I sang to his praise, though feeling unworthy to take the precious words upon my lips. If saved it was amazing grace that saved a wretch like me. It brought me to the hope as it came, "Your life is hid with Christ in God." Dear Elder McClanahan spoke my mind. We hoped to retrace an experi-

ence of grace, but now thou hast hid thy face and we are troubled. Fearing being deceived, and deceiving others who had confidence in us as being the the Lord's people. "Search me, O God, and know my heart," etc., came to me. I saw, yes, I am a poor sinner. Behold, I am vile.

I fear I have wearied you with this poor letter. May what is amiss be forgiven. I would hope for charity and an interest in your petition at the throne of grace, and write, if the Lord so wills. I love to read of the Lord's favors to you. May they abound more and more.

Lovingly but unworthily yours,

JESSIE GILLIS.

SALISBURY, Md., March 11, 1934.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I realize I have been neglectful in writing you and sending the messages of love and fellowship I feel for the brethren of my home church. Indeed, I wonder how they or any others can bear with me, as it seems to me I am nothing, and less than nothing. At times I have a great longing to put some of my thoughts on paper, but find it so much easier to write every-day things or family letters. As the days come I wonder how each one can be gone through with, and I find myself asking for strength and wisdom to carry on. I hope I am thankful to know the Lord sees fit to give me some messages from time to time, and that he does not cause me to go stumbling along down in the valley all the time, but causes me to look up and see the rift in the cloud and encourages me with his promises to carry on. I cannot expect to float along on flowery beds of ease. His way was hard and rough, and he trod the wine-press alone. To be near and like him, then, a poor child of God must travel the strait and narrow way and carry his share of the burden, but we do know it is easier when we realize that our heavenly Father bears the harder part. As I look back over the years that I spent without having ears to hear or eyes to see the wonders of our God, there is a great feeling of thankfulness that he has opened my eyes and unstopped my ears and my latter days contain something I knew not of when younger. I have often wished you knew just how wonderful your preaching was to me those few months before I came to the church. Never had I heard anything so precious, and never has there been since, although I have enjoyed the preaching. At that time I forgot there was anything in or of the world, and I was sorry when I had to go on with the natural things of this life. When I came to the church there was no condemnation of sin, it seemed all I could see and feel was the love for the church, and her beauty could not be described. Even though I dreaded my baptism, and the first communion was torture, yet there seemed to be no thought of sin. When I was made to realize my awful sinfulness I thought the deep and horrible pit would engulf me forever, and I remember that all I could do was beg for mercy. Many, many times I have wondered how I could go

through the holy ordinance of baptism and partake of the bread and wine without realizing what a terrible and sinful creature I really was, but as a dear sister told me, perhaps I needed the home with the church before realizing my sinful nature. Any way, I do know that it has all been as the heavenly Father wills, and not as I would have it. How good it is when one can say, as did John, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Not long since, I was feeling discouraged and rebellious with my lot. I just could not see why I should be placed down here away from my children and others that were near and dear to me. I was alone in my room, others having gone to bed, so I thought I would do likewise, although I felt restless and much discouraged. During the night I awoke with these words in mind, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love," and I could hardly wait for the morning to come and I could read the connection, and when I did find it, "Therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee," how could I help feeling like a whipped child? It is with such assurances as these that one is made to feel

"All my times are in thy hand,
All events at thy command.'

The whole hymn is a very beautiful one.

One could write on forever, but the story would be the same, although never old, and not enough could be written to tell of the wonderful love and mercy of God for his children. My thoughts have been with all of you to-day and I hope the Lord has seen fit to give you a wonderful message for his children.

I did not intend to write such a lengthy letter. Wanted you to know that all of us would be glad to have you with us next week-end. Should you find it necessary to take a train late Sunday night, do come and spend the evening with us at the Home. It will not make any difference how late the train goes. I hope I have written nothing amiss, and you will feel kindly toward the blundering way it is written, as well as the writer.

My best wishes for Mrs. Dodson. I hope she and Lester, as well as yourself, have kept well during the winter.

Yours in sweet fellowship,

NAOMI L. ROUNDS.

SALISBURY, Md., March 20, 1934.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—What a day this has been. The cares and perplexities of this life were forgotten and a weary, sin-sick soul brought up from the valley to bask in the sun of His righteousness. I feel as though my Savior has put a new song in my mouth and showed me his mercy and lovingkindness once more. He has made me truly feel that "the Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters," etc. He has shown me more of the beauties of his kingdom and I am made to rejoice for the hope that is within me, and that my heavenly Father has made me a partaker of those things the world knows not of. He has brought me into his banqueting-house

and his banner over me is love. What more can a poor child of God want (and oh how I hope that I am one) than to be made to walk with him and to talk with him from time to time? To be taken away from self and given the food that is rolled as a sweet morsel under the tongue. To be brought up out of the horrible pit and know that

"A glimpse, a single glimpse of thee,
Would more delight my soul,
Than this vain world with all it joys,
Could I possess the whole."

Indeed the bud may have a bitter taste, but as it unfolds the fragrance becomes sweeter, the taste less bitter and the full bloom of the flower will have such beauty that the sight will be dazzling, and when the time comes to behold it then God will cause the eyes to become stronger so as to be able to look on that beauty. What must it have been when Christ on the cross said, "It is finished" and gave up the ghost and entered into that glory with the Father? To think that he suffered and bled and died to redeem the children of God from their sins. Who would want to part with the hope that we are one of his? The evening shades appear and the wonderful day is drawing to a close. The sweetness lingers and the soul is at peace. Nothing can take from us the knowledge that the Lord is with us and salvation is of him who says, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me." "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Hymn 759 in Beebe's book is wonderful and full of encouragement to the sin-sick soul. What doubting creatures we become as the Lord withdraws his smiling countenance and once more we go struggling along life's way, groping and longing for more of his presence.

If my dates are correct, it is eight years in April since the Ebenezer Church opened its doors and gave me a home with them. They have always given me such sweet fellowship and God alone knows how badly I have needed it. I have been led in the valley most of those years, and have even been down in the belly of hell. There has been hate in my heart for my very own, and at one time I longed to get away from all the brethren, who I felt knew me entirely too well, and mingle with the world. As you know, I made the trip west, and was not long away from the brethren until I was made to cry out as Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me." After being away four months, and then being allowed to meet with them, their faces were the sweetest I had ever seen. As you know, I was raised by Baptist parents, God fearing and God loving. They were to pass on to their reward and I was to live for over forty years before being brought into the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ. While Old School Baptist preaching always seemed dry and full of husks, yet in my heart I knew they had something I did not. I never could under-

stand why they should feel to be such sinners, as I could not see that they were very bad. As I went on and the sorrows, worries and cares of this life came to me I felt there was a God who directed all things, and I had a feeling it was wrong for me to murmur against my lot, and more than once I know now that I was made to be still and know he was God. He has been with me always, but never have I been brought to the mountain top as I was to-day. All too well I know that this cannot last and I will be brought low, but I trust my heavenly Father will still let me keep the sweetness of it to enjoy from time to time. If traveling through the low ground of sorrow is growing in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, then who would not be willing to travel in the strait and narrow path? Not being able to sleep I have gotten up in the very early morning hours to put my thoughts on paper. Brother Dodson, I am sure you know what it is to lie on your bed at night and not be able to sleep because it seemed you were in the presence of your heavenly Father and it was joy unspeakable to be made to praise and thank him for his mercy. I have longed that you might know of some of my travels, but the time had not come when the Lord gave me strength to put them on paper. I am afraid that very often I have seemed cold and unfeeling, but I did not want to appear that way.

If there is anything amiss in all this please cast it aside. I only want to give honor and praise to our all-wise and heavenly Father and I would not crave the praise of puny man. While I dread to have my name brought before the public, yet I feel it is for you to do with as you see best. May God continue to bless your ministry and give you balm for a weary soul. I trust this will not take up too much of your time. May we all be kept from straying away from the right path, and when our journey here on earth is done may we awake with His likeness and the full realization of the glory of God.

Very unworthily your sister,

NAOMI L. ROUNDS.

[I want to share with the readers of the SIGNS the two foregoing good letters from sister Naomi L. Rounds. For the information of some who may not know, she is a sister in the flesh of our editor-in-chief.—R. L. D.]

OTTAWA, Kansas, Dec. 22, 1933.

DEAR FRIENDS:—Two years ago I had to have you discontinue my subscription to the dear old paper, because of loss of all my money. While it is still in the hands of the investment company, and I have had no income from it for more than two years, nor could I get the principal of one, the other would be so insignificant I thought it better to wait, so have waited too long. Yesterday I received a check from a dear brother in Pennsylvania, and am sending two dollars of it to pay for the SIGNS for the year 1934. It being a Christmas present I can enjoy it all the year, providing I live that long. I have missed the SIGNS very much. A dear friend in Virginia

sent me hers during the past summer, after she had read them. One cannot live to the age of sixty-nine without the knowledge of grief's bitter tears. There is much to suffer, much to endure: disappointments, and so many heavy burdens to bear, many perplexing days, almost without hope. Through all my heartaches and pain the dear Savior has not forsaken me. I wish I had words adequate to tell of all he has done for me. Not in a material way, but he has very often appeared to my soul to strengthen, comfort and reconcile me to his blessed will. He has assured me again and again there is no power outside of him; that he rules and controls all things; all things must come to pass as he has purposed. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.

I wish you, the dear SIGNS readers, editors, and all connected with it, a prosperous and Happy New Year, if the will of the Lord be so.

Please begin with the January number. Address Mrs. Anna McKinney, 303 Maple Street, Ottawa, Kansas.

ANNA McKINNEY.

SELLMAN, Md., April 14, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—My father, W. W. Darby, died Saturday, December 10th, 1932. I regret that I did not at that time ask that you publish a notice of his death in your paper. I think he would have wished it done, and I should have attended to it, but of course I felt upset at the time and he had no one but me to attend to anything. I was his only child, he had no surviving brother or sister, and my mother died nearly ten years before he did. He was a regular attendant of your Broad Run Church (Maryland), also attended many associations in Virginia. For many years he was a reader of the SIGNS. I feel sure he had a great many friends among the Virginia associations he so often attended, and I doubt if they know why he ceased to be present. He was a staunch admirer of the Old School Baptists and numbered many friends among them. He was seventy-nine years of age at the time of his death.

If you think it is too late to publish a notice of his death it will be all right with me, but if you do publish it I will appreciate it.

Sincerely,

ANNA L. PYLES.

PARSONS, Kansas, April 3, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed a draft for two dollars for the SIGNS another year. I am delighted to have such a paper to read at the age that I am. It gives me something to hope for day after day. The articles therein can be read over and over again with added pleasure from having read them. The paper seems like the rock of Gibraltar that has stood the test of the ages. The SIGNS has weathered many storms.

Trusting it may stand many more, I remain yours truly,

A. E. CLARK.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1934.

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IT IS WELL.

(2 KINGS IV. 26.)

From many points of view, we are living in a marvelous age. Mankind has encircled the globe. He has gone both to the top and the bottom of the world. He has ascended high up into the stratosphere and at last looked down upon the lofty peak of Mt. Everett, the highest of mountains; he has also descended into the bowels of the earth and into the depths of the sea. It would seem as though it could almost be truly said he has conquered the universe. Likewise, he has made a lot of wonderful discoveries and wrought out many ingenious inventions. His methods of travel over the world and communicating with its peoples, startle the imagination. He speaks and his voice is heard in the twinkling of an eye from east to west and north and south. With all of his accomplishments, it would seem that the world should become a better place in which to live. But, What are the facts and where do we find ourselves? Perhaps at no time since the human race began has the world at large been more seriously upset or more sorely tried than has been the case during the last half decade. The very foundations of governments have either been completely destroyed or mightily shaken. Kings have been both enthroned and dethroned. Rulers have become bewildered and swept from their moorings. The wisdom of great statesmen has been utterly confounded. So-called peers in all walks of life have stood as wooden men, without the power to think or act. Earthly fortunes, both great and small, have either been swept away entirely or so greatly diminished that the shock and distress which have followed in their wake have made human wrecks by the millions. Suffering has been on such a wide scale throughout the earth that there is probably not a single nation in the whole world of which it can be truthfully said that "all is well." One may well ask, What is wrong and why cannot some golden rule method be worked out whereby all of the brotherhood of mankind can share and enjoy more equitably the blessings of this life? The Master would no doubt answer this by saying, That which is born of the flesh is flesh, meaning, as we would interpret it, that it is altogether corrupt and

there is no soundness in it at all. Greed and selfishness are rampant everywhere. Dishonesty has seemingly worked as leven among those in authority, both in high and low places, in governments of all kinds, Federal, State, County, City and throughout the rural districts, until there is little semblance of honor and uprightness left. That "the love of money is the root of all evil," is as true to-day as in any age of the world, and if one rises up with courage enough to attempt to blaze an "honest trail" he is laughed to scorn by many whose hearts are full of evil. If some measure of success is made by way of advancing decency to the fore and the powers of wickedness are compelled to recede for a short season, like the tide which goes out to sea, they will in due time return with even greater force and determination to gain their selfish ends. In our humble opinion, there is absolutely no hope of the world ever becoming better permanently. There will always be wars and rumors of wars. Nature is essentially corrupt, and though, like the slumbering volcano, it may appear to sleep for awhile, it will be found to be only accumulating its mass of putrefaction until the day of eruption, when it must be thrown off again.

Those who are taught of the Lord know that in the flesh there dwells no good thing. This world is not their home. They are only pilgrims here, journeying to a better country. It is such characters as these whom we would like to have accompany us back to the scene in the narrative from which the words, "It is well," are taken. It may be that a view of the surroundings will enable us to find some nuggets of spiritual gold hidden beneath the surface, or letter of the word, among the things which were written aforetime for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

The fourth chapter of second Kings opens with the account of the creditor of a certain widow woman coming and taking her two sons as bondmen, and her appeal to Elisha, the man of God. He inquired of her what she had in the house, and she said, "Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of oil." He told her to "Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbors, even empty vessels; borrow not a few. And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full. So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured out. And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel: and he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed. Then she came and told the man of God: and he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest." There is something significant and beautiful typified in the pot of oil and the fact that the door was to be shut upon her and upon her sons while it was being poured into the empty vessels. God's

work of grace in the heart of a poor sinner, empty and void of all that is good, is carried on in secret, and the Egyptians or unregenerate who are without the house, cannot look upon what is taking place. When the vessels were all filled, the oil stayed—nothing was wasted or lost, yet there was ample to satisfy the creditor, to pay the debt in full, and still sufficient to live on ever afterward.

We are told that the above incident fell on a day that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a "great woman," and that she constrained him to eat bread. "And so it was, that, as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread." Here is seen the communion and fellowship of saints. She perceived the prophet to be an holy man of God, and proposed to her husband that they make "a little chamber," and put it on the wall; and set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: "and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither." She was only showing her faith by her works. She was manifesting the great love which she had for the servant of God, and he in turn when he came was mindful of her. How could he have been otherwise? He commanded his servant, Gehazi, to "call this Shunammite." And when she stood before him, she was asked what was to be done for her. Should she be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host. She replied, "I dwell among mine own people." She was of that peculiar people referred to as a chosen generation. It was she who had been sent for to comfort king David in his old age, hence Gehazi answered his master, "Verily she hath no child, and her husband is old." According to nature, she could not even hope for a son by her husband, but the prophet said unto her, At this season, when the time cometh round, thou shalt embrace a son. It was even as the man of God told her, but when the child was grown he was taken sick and died. How distressing! Again she desired to be comforted of God by his servant, and she besought her husband to send with her one of the servants that she might go to the man of God. Her husband said to her, "Wherefore wilt thou go to him to day? it is neither new moon nor sabbath." She said, "It is well." What wonderful faith. Of a truth, she was a spiritual worshipper; not a legal one. She had no confidence in new moons nor holy days, but believed that God was a present help in trouble. She could not wait for the time set by men; her's was an urgent case, and she made haste to go, saying to her servant, "Drive, and go forward; slack not thy riding for me, except I bid thee. So she went, and came unto the man of God to mount Carmel." The man of God beheld her afar off. There was no mistaking who she was. He said to Gehazi, his servant, "Behold, yonder is that Shunammite; run now, I pray thee, to meet her; and say unto her, Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with thy child?" How solicitous he was of her welfare. He knew she was a woman of sorrows and acquainted with grief; therefore, he

commanded his servant to "run," or make haste, to help her, and that right early. Even to be inquired of by the man of God was comforting to her. "Behold, yonder is that Shunammite." What did he see in the Shunammite? He saw as it were the company of two armies; he saw the flesh and the Spirit waging their warfare; yea, he saw the struggle of faith in one who was torn apart and helpless. What a great mercy that the God of all grace should call, qualify and send his servants to feed the flock which he hath purchased with his own blood, and that they should be sent into the byways and hedges to hunt and fish them and then speak comfortably unto them. We hope we have some knowledge of what is meant by hunting and fishing the elect of God, and how wonderfully good it is to find even one. It is worth going to the very ends of the earth.

The Shunammite was spoken of in the outset as being a "great woman." She represents none other than the gospel bride, the Lamb's wife. Her first husband was old, typifying the law, and her only son, or all that she possessed under the law, was dead; therefore she could answer the question of faith, "Is IT WELL?"—notwithstanding her great grief—by the same faith and she could and did truthfully say, "IT IS WELL." As we consider this case our mind appears to enlarge itself and go out to the untold millions of God's people, each one having his or her own particular burden to bear, and yet in the realization of the fact that Christ Jesus came into the world to suffer, bleed and die in their stead, they can repeat, "It is well."

What an infinite variety of problems there are confronting the people of God. No doubt, many are deeply concerned to-day, and rightly so, over the condition of the churches throughout the country. In some instances things are creeping in which ought not to be allowed to disturb the peace of Zion. Differences of opinions over points of doctrine are doubtless being agitated and magnified to the detriment of the cause. On the other hand, there is a sad lack of forbearance among good brethren. There should be a provoking of one another unto love. There are also many difficult situations constantly arising in all walks of life which bewilder and bring the people to their wit's end. Some may be without employment and with a scant provision for the necessities of life, possibly at poverty's door; and those who are employed or in business know of the dangers which lurk about them. The housewife and those in the home are by no means exempt from the anxieties and cares of what is going on, and sometimes they may even be bearing the very brunt of the burden. Not all of the Lord's people are blest with believing or sympathetic companions or friends, and some may even be unbearably hostile. There may be parents whose hearts are breaking on account of wayward children. Others may have bodily afflictions from which there is little hope of recovery. The cold and seemingly cruel hand of death has doubtless stalked into the

home of some and taken their dearest earthly prop from beneath them. Old age may have brought you, dear reader, to the place where "father time" stands with his sharpened sythe, ready to reap you into his harvest, but regardless of all these, and more, if we can but have faith to believe that God is still in his holy temple and that the Judge of the whole earth can do no wrong, we shall still be able to say, It is well. This is only saying, in effect, what Jesus said in the garden of Gethsemane: Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done. David was enabled to say, Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies. It matters not, then, what the circumstances of our own individual case may be, if God be for us, who can be against us? and, therefore, It is well.

"It shall be well, let Zion know,
With those who love the Lord;
His saints have always found it so
When resting on his word.

Peace, then, ye chastened sons of God,
Why let your sorrows swell?
Wisdom directs our Father's rod—
His word says, it is well.

Though you may trials sharp endure,
From sin, or death, or hell;
Your heavenly Father's love is sure,
And, therefore, it is well.

Soon will your sorrows all be o'er,
And you shall sweetly tell,
On heaven's calm and pleasant shore,
That all at last is well."

R. L. D.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. M. Smith, B. C., $1; "A friend," Ky., 1; H. F. Cate, Kans., $1.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MRS. PHEBE C. SMITH, oldest of the children of Mordecai Wilson and Meliscent Wheat Hoyt Elston, died Tuesday, February 6th, 1934, at her home 17 Crescent Place, Middletown, New York, after an illness of eighteen months. Mrs. Smith was born near Mt. Salem, New Jersey, May 13th, 1844. She was married to John Jay Smith, of New York, in January, 1871. Although Mr. and Mrs. Smith traveled extensively they made their home at Mt. Salem, and after the death of Mr. Smith the widow moved to Middletown, N. Y., and made her home with her sister, Miss Fannie Elston. Besides her sister Mrs. Smith is survived by the following nieces and nephews: Forbes H. Elston, of Pittsburg, Pa., Sidney B. Elston, of Corry, Pa., Millicent Elston Thrall and Virginia Jordan Elston, of Piedmont, Cal., and John Jay Elston, of Honolulu.

Funeral services for Mrs. Smith were held Friday, February 9th, at her home, 17 Crescent Place, with Mr. Harold Andress, the Episcopal pastor, officiating. Pall-bearers were P. R. Buttenheim, Louis I. Buck, Charles B. Buck, Roy D. Parker and Stephen Lacatena. Interment was in Mount Salem cemetery, New Jersey.

THE above is from a clippig from one of the Middletown, N. Y., papers at the time of Mrs. Smith's death. I shall add a few lines because of my long and very pleasant acquaintance with her. I met her first in the year 1899, and from that time was often in her home, and she in ours. She was a kind friend and a noble woman, often rendering some kindness to those who were in need, manifesting the life of Christ. She was not a member of our church, but a firm believer, and now rests from her labors and her works do follow her. Being absent from home, I could not be present at her funeral, for which I am very sorry. The members of the family have my sincere sympathy. H. C. KER.

It is with great sorrow I record the death of my dear sister Kate. After father and mother were taken she was our counselor and guide, and her words would quiet our fears and give us new hope. The beautiful pieces of hand-work she left—they are treasures—show many diligent hours. I am thankful for the years we had together, especially the last year, when she needed tender and loving care; which care our niece Millicent and I were privileged to give her.

Laid to rest by the side of our loved ones in the little cemetery at Salem, N. J., near our old home, where we were all born and spent so many long, beautiful years together, "I know that the birds and the flowers their sweetest of vigils will keep o'er the spot where loving ones laid her in the beautiful garden of sleep."

Her sister, FANNIE.

MRS. MATILDA BAKER, ninety years old, and a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for nearly seventy years, died at Naches, Washington, March 5th, 1934. Mrs. Baker's health had been very good, despite her age, up until a few months before she died. Her death occurred exactly nineteen years from that of her husband, Wiley P. Baker, who was also a Primitive Baptist. Both Mr. and Mrs. Baker (Matilda Holland) were born in Humphreys County, Tennessee, he on May 8th, 1842, and she on December 8th, 1843. They were married September 18th, 1861. They professed a hope early in life and joined the Primitive Baptist Church together, and were baptized together, May 12th, 1877, by Elder J. J. Fugena. They remained devoted members until death. In 1885 Mr. and Mrs. Baker and their family moved to Graves County, Kentucky, and placed their letters in the church there, at South Mt. Zion. They attended church meetings regularly, and often visited sister churches. They were blessed in being able to attend many associations together, and always contended for the faith once delivered unto the saints. They manifested great love for the church and were never happier than when ministering unto the needs of the brethren. "Grandpa" Baker was a good provider, though never enjoying robust health; he was not content to remain idle. "Grandma" was blessed with a strong constitution, but was always ready to sympathize with the sick and do all in her power to relieve them. She had a happy disposition and enjoyed her household duties. Her children never lacked any comfort her willing hand could supply. There were six children, one dying in infancy. The oldest, Mrs. Rebecca Erranton, died a few years ago, as did a son, Jesse. They were both members of the Primitive Baptist Church. The oldest son, Robert, lives in Lathana, Tennessee. The other children are D. T. Baker, of Baldwin Park, California, and Dennis Baker, of Naches, Washington, where Grandma made her home until she died. She left fourteen grandchildren, ten great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren.

Grandma's body was sent back to Kentucky to be laid beside that of her husband. Elder Elzo Lowry spoke words of comfort to many of her relatives and friends at the funeral home of A. J. Luther, of Wingo, Kentucky. We rest assured that all is well with Grandma and Grandpa, and grieve not as those who have no hope.

MR. and MRS. D. H. BAKER.
HARVEL BAKER.

THOMAS JOSEPH HOWE was born June 7th, 1867, in the State of Alabama, and died January 5th, 1934, in Princeton, W. Va., having moved to this country a few years ago, where he was employed by the Virginia Railway Company. Brother Howe was married twice. Three children were born to his first marriage, two daughters and one son, who live in Alabama, as does his bereaved widow, who is lonely in her sad bereavement. The Lord alone can heal this sorrow. Brother Howe had been a member of the Old School Baptist Church for forty-nine years, having joined at the age of seventeen years. He was a man of few words and noble character.

His body was laid to rest near Guin, Alabama, to await the glorious resurrection, when we feel he will awake in the likeness of Jesus and be satisfied. His funeral service was conducted by Elder P. W. Sawin and the writer.

S. J. PRIDDY.

MEETINGS.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June (6th, 7th and 8th), 1934. Those coming from and via New York City will take Erie R. R. Ferry at foot of Chambers Street at 3:30 p. m., for train leaving Jersey City, N. J., at 3:45 p. m. on Tuesday June 5th, or at the same ferry on Wednesday, June 6th, at 6:10 a. m. for train leaving Jersey City, N. J., at 6:30 a. m. These trains are operated on Eastern Standard Time. Get tickets for Howells, N. Y. Trains will be met and friends cared for. Those coming by automobile will stop at Howells station and inquire the way to Mrs. L. W. Blumroeder's house, which is only a short distance from the station. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, sisters and friends.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Old School or Primitive Baptist Corresponding Meeting of Washington, Oregon and Idaho will be held (if the Lord will) with Pleasant Grove Church, near Yakima, Wash., at the home of Elder A. D. Hughett, on main highway between Yakima and Ellensburg, Wash. The first place north of Pamona Service Station. Stages will stop at place if signaled. The meeting will begin Friday, June 15th, 1934, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue three days. All lovers of the truth are invited.

A. D. HUGHETT, Moderator.
R. 8, YAKIMA, Wash.

MARY HUGHETT, Clerk pro tem.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in June, 1934. Services were to be held at the home of Earl D Stevens, Central Bridge, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m., but have been changed to Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y. All are welcome.

(MRS.) EARL D. STEVENS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

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Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 808 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one-half block west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church will meet (D. V.) every second Sunday with brother and sister Berry, 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California. Every third Sunday with brother and sister Staggs, 506 E. Raulston Street, Ontario, California.

T. D. WALKER.

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ELDER C. W. ANDERSON,
ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminiar Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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J. E. BEEBE & CO.
MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

JOSEPH, A TYPE OF CHRIST.

THERE are many things written of which Joseph can be understood as representing a believer, but it is as a type of Christ that I would desire to have him under consideration at this time. It has been said, and I believe truthfully so, that Joseph, of all the Bible characters, is the clearest type of Christ. Though, no doubt, as a natural man, Joseph had his failings, yet the Holy Spirit, that Christ might the more clearly be portrayed, has seen fit that some of them be recorded. Though in many things Joseph is a type of Christ, it must not be forgotten that a type is but an image of the substance portrayed and not the substance itself, so that often the semblance is incomplete. A shadow may be a very distorted image of the substance which casts the shadow; nevertheless, an outline of the substance is there, and one is always able to see the similarity of shadow and substance. Even so, events in the life of Joseph must necessarily not be Christ, but there is often a close resemblance to things of Christ. One of the first things to be noticed is that Joseph's father loved him more than any other of his children. God spake from heaven on different occasions: at one time he spoke TO Christ: "Thou art my beloved Son," at another OF Christ: "This is my beloved Son," proclaiming him as such to his disciples. It is true all believers are beloved children of God, but not in the sense in which Jesus is his beloved Son. It is only as we are in Christ that God can show us any love or mercy. Jesus is spoken of as the "only begotten of the Father." God is the only Father Jesus ever had; there is none other born into this world but came by an earthly father. As far as our bodies are concerned we are God's creatures, not his children, but those who are born again will receive the adoption of sons. Even now, believers are blessed with the spirit of adoption, so that we can look up in faith and say "Father." Joseph was

hated of his brethren without a true cause. The dreams Joseph told hurt their pride, but Joseph had done nothing against them. After the telling of the dreams his brethren said, "Shalt thou indeed rule over us?" Here, it seems, is a parallel case with the parable which Jesus told where the citizens hated a certain nobleman; and they sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. This parable seems to be setting forth the rejection of the Jews, so that these citizens did not receive any mercy; but thanks be unto God, through Jesus Christ there is a remnant who repent of their wickedness, and earnestly seek him to reign over and in them. This Joseph's brethren were glad to do after a time. After the telling of the dreams it is said that Jacob observed the saying. It would seem that Jacob understood the wisdom that was couched in the dreams, even though he could not fully realize their purport, and so he observed the saying.

Now if we turn to Luke, we there find Jesus astounding those that heard him with his wisdom and understanding. When his mother gently rebuked him, even as Jacob did Joseph, his answer was not understood by them; but Jesus' mother kept all these sayings in her heart. Joseph's brethren were so incensed against him that they envied him, and sought occasion to kill him. Later on they sold him for twenty pieces of silver, dipped his coat into the blood of a goat, showing it to his father, who mourned him as dead. All these things were foreshadowing Christ. It is recorded that Pilate knew that for envy the Jews had delivered Jesus unto him, and see how they all clamored for his death: "Crucify him, crucify him." They would rather have a murderer set loose among them than to have this Man. Jesus, too, was sold for silver, though thirty pieces, by one who had professed to be one of his true brethren, the disciples. Jacob sent Joseph at one time to his brethren, who were out caring for their flocks. They saw him coming and conspired against him to slay him, which, in a figure, they did. This same thing is spoken of Jesus in one of his parables: the certain man who let out his vineyard to husbandmen. After they had killed or shamefully handled many servants sent unto them, having his well beloved son, he sent him: but the husbandmen said, This is the heir; come let us kill him: and they killed him and cast him out. Why did Joseph have to pass through these and subsequent sufferings? It was that he should become the savior of those who once hated him. We do not read that Josph resented this treatment at the hands of his brethren, and he still loved them as they afterwards proved. Oh what love did Jesus display! While he suffered on the cross he prayed for those who were slaying him, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." This prayer was answered, for on the day of Pentecost those whom Peter addressed and accused of crucifying Jesus were pricked in their hearts, and sought forgiveness. We now come to much of Joseph's suffering. He was forsaken

and feelingly alone, and as Jesus in the wilderness after his baptism, was tempted. Joseph's reply and one of Jesus' are very similar. Joseph said, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" while Jesus said, "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Joseph could not yield to this temptation and thus become the servant of sin, but he desired to serve his God, and worship him. He now is falsely accused, a sin imputed to him which he did not commit, and obliged to bear the shame and penalty as though he were guilty. He was cast into prison, but he found favor in the eyes of the keeper of the prison, who committed all the prisoners unto him; the reason being that the Lord was with him, and that which he did the Lord made it to prosper. What a picture of Joseph's antitype! He, too, was falsely accused, bore the sin and shame rightly belonging to his people. Poor Joseph, he in his measure surely knew what it was to be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, as was prophesied of Jesus. What a prison, too, this world must have been to Jesus. He who never knew sin, for the joy that was set before him in the redemption of his people came to earth, lived a life which, because of his purity, must have been in a measure which we cannot comprehend, that of being in a veritable prison, surrounded with those who were justly prisoners. There are those who are brought to the time when they are willing, as the thief on the cross, to confess that they are justly condemned. In a special way these prisoners are all committed into the hand of their Redeemer and everything does prosper, as it is written in one place, Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper; and in another when speaking of Christ's sufferings, The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. Which pleasure is the salvation of these prisoners, and which salvation Jesus securely accomplished. While in prison Joseph is found with two prisoners who came in close contact with him. To one Joseph, as Jesus did to one of the thieves on the cross, spoke words of comfort and life, while the other was left to perish, justly condemned. After so much suffering and humiliation, Joseph was brought out of prison and exalted to great honor, was made ruler over all the land, and it was cried before him, Bow the knee. In Paul's epistle to the Hebrews he writes of Christ that God made him a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, and he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, becoming the Captain of our salvation, made perfect through sufferings. Writing to the Philippians, Paul says that God hath highly exalted him (Christ) and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow. It is significant that it was out of his sufferings, with Joseph, as with Jesus, that he came to all this glory and honor. At this time also Joseph had a Gentile woman for his wife, and two children were born, one of whom he named Manasseh, saying,

God hath made me forget all my toil. The other he named Ephraim, saying, God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction. The rejection of Jesus by the Jews has already been noticed, and when, after his resurrection and ascension Paul and Barnabus preached Jesus, the Jews rejected their preaching of Christ, whereupon they tell the Jews, Seeing ye put it from you, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. So it has been since that time, the church, or bride of Christ, has been manifestly among the Gentiles, and as Joseph spoke of his two children, so we see of Jesus that for the joy that was set before him (his satisfaction from the travail of his soul) he endured the cross, and the preaching of the cross has borne much fruit among the Gentiles. When sinners are quickened by the Holy Spirit they become hungry for the word of life, and the famine, as in Egypt, is very sore, and they see nothing but starvation for them, but in this sad condition they are led to seek Jesus, in whom alone is there any salvation. Joseph had provided against the sore famine that was throughout the land, and when it came upon them he opened all the storehouses, all of which were under Joseph's supervision. Rich provision has been provided for starving souls; churches were formed, where the preaching of the gospel was heard and received with much joy. What storehouses of treasure are the churches where Jesus is faithfully proclaimed, for not only does he by his ministers hand out to us the word, or bread of life, but he himself is this bread of life which came down from heaven. Oh the love and the wisdom which God has provided in Jesus for sinners, in whom we rejoice with joy unspeakable. The believer's experience is very clearly and wonderfully described in the account of the coming to Joseph of his brethren in the time of famine. Joseph's brethren had hated him for his words, and had in effect said they would not have him to reign over them. We are all by nature children of wrath even as others, and the preaching of the gospel is at best irksome, if not offensive, but at the Lord's appointed time he makes us alive to our sinful and starving condition. The one thus alive seeks after a Savior, but knows not that it is the Holy Spirit of God which moves him. We are told that Joseph made himself strange unto his brethren, and spake roughly unto them, or, as the margin renders it, spake hard things. Another thing it says, that Joseph spake unto them by an interpreter. Is not this the Holy Spirit taking of the things of Jesus and showing them unto us? And they are hard things he shows us: shows us that we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God, that the soul that sinneth it shall die. There seems to be no hope, the word of God cuts us off, our own hearts condemn us, even as Joseph's brethren immediately were conscience-stricken, the first and chief thing accusing them being the way they had treated their brother Joseph. Joseph hears and knows, but they know not; nor do we know under the condemnation of the law that we are being led and drawn out to confession and

reasoning in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, and that the One against whom we have so grievously sinned is the One we have despised and rejected in our hearts and who also is our salvation; not only that he shall be revealed as our salvation, but that he was our salvation from the foundation of the world, having foreknown us, and foreseen the distress that would come upon us, and that God in his great love had provided against that time. These hard things which Joseph spake unto them were at their first coming to him, and we are told he turned himself about from them and wept. How he loved them! but he had some things to teach them before he should reveal it to them. Oh! our great Joseph has much to teach us of ourselves, our sinfulness, our helplessness, and even our vain efforts to buy our salvation, our resolvings to obey God's law, to live aright; in short, our self-righteousness, which is set forth by the money which Joseph's brethren brought, but was rejected and turned back upon them. No, our salvation cannot be bought by any efforts of our own, we have to depend solely upon the bounty of our Lord. Joseph sent his brethren away, but he sent them with sustenance, nor is the believer left to starve absolutely. Though not able to claim any of God's word as our own except that which condemns us, yet we do, though perhaps unconsciously, derive sufficient hope from it to keep us from absolute despair, and encouragement to keep looking to the only place where there can be any hope of salvation, impossible as it may seem. Joseph's brethren were thus forced to go again, and in our experiences we are obliged to go again and again, until our eyes fail with looking upward, and yet, like Joseph's brethren who brought double money, we redouble our efforts to live acceptably before God, until finally we see the futility of it all, and are made willing to cast ourselves wholly upon him, in spite of all our unworthiness, guilt and shame. What a wrestling in prayer there is in such a condition, and our prayers seem to be in vain, but yet, like the disciples, we know that there is none else to whom we can go, Jesus alone has the words of eternal life. Again, at the second coming of his brethren Joseph has to turn aside to weep. His love was still the same, strengthened rather than lessened. God's purpose is a purpose of love towards his people in all his dealings with us, his love being manifested in the gift of his dearly beloved Son, nor will he always chide, neither will he keep his anger forever. Much as we fear being cast away from his presence, he does not deal with us after our sins. The heart of our Beloved yearns over us until our pleadings are answered.

> "Without cessation pray,
> Our prayers will not prove vain,
> Our Joseph turns away to weep,
> He cannot long refrain."

Yes, and who can tell the surprise, the gladness, the joy, the peace of the soul to whom the love of Jesus is revealed, and as Joseph caused every man to go out from him while he made himself known to his brethren, so it is when the love of God in Christ Jesus is revealed

to us, there is none with us, not only no one but Jesus, but our sins and iniquities are removed afar off, as far as the east is from the west. Joseph owned his brethren. What! after all their cruel treatment of him? Yes, and is filled with love, as Jesus, who is not ashamed to call us brethren. After revealing himself Joseph told his brethren to go to their father and tell him that Joseph yet lived, of the honor and glory that had come to him, and gave them this exhortation, See that ye fall not out by the way. Ah! Joseph knew his brethren's nature, knew their treacherous hearts, and that in spite of their common joy, that they might be overcome by their human nature and go to quarreling. The New Testament is full of precepts and admonitions for believers, how necessary they are, for the flesh often strives for the mastery among brethren; yes, to our shame and sorrow be it said, among church members. Oh! that we might be so blessed as to take heed to these kind warnings. It is a terrible thing for those who at one time were so filled with the love of our God that they were constrained to say, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what things he hath done for my soul," to fall out and hold bitterness one toward another. So Joseph warned his brethren. But what lovelier sight is there than brethren dwelling together in unity? How can we at such times help but show forth the praises of Him who has loved us and given himself for us? Here are Joseph's brethren going to their father with the joyful news that Joseph is alive, and the formerly poor sin-sick soul is able to proclaim, I know that my Redeemer liveth. Yes, we have the proof that he ever liveth to make intercession for us, for have we not had answers of peace?

"Peace, by his cross, hath Jesus made,
The church's everlasting Head;
O'er hell and sin has victory won,
And with a shout to glory gone."

Another hymn says,

"Blood has a voice to pierce the skies;
'Revenge!' the blood of Abel cries;
But the dear stream, when Christ was slain,
Speaks 'Peace' as loud from every vein."

This is our High Priest, who offered up himself a sacrifice, died and arose from the grave, and then appeared to the eleven disciples and others of his followers, giving them unmistakable proofs that he is the same Jesus with whom they had been so long in company, and yet they did not comprehend him, the purpose of his life and death, until after his resurrection. This same Jesus ascended to the Father, and he is still there, living for us, and we can say, like Jacob, It is enough, Joseph is yet alive. After this, all Joseph's kindred come, and live near Joseph and are nourished and provided for in every way by him. How sweet to remember that though poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon us; not only in our spiritual life, but caring for us in every way, bringing us through providential trials, and not turning a deaf ear to the smallest circumstance which troubles us and we pour out to him. Has he not encouraged us to do so? Look at the parables he spake while on earth, teaching us to seek him for temporal necessities. Did he not

show his disciples that God clothed the grass of the field and he would clothe them? What sweeter word could be spoken than this, Casting ALL your care on him, for he careth for you? Sometimes this seems too great for us, and like Joseph's brethren, after Jacob was dead, we fall into doubting his love, we fear that after all, God will visit our iniquities upon us, and this brings us to more confession, more seeking after forgiveness; but Joseph again promised to take care of them, and he comforted and spake kindly unto them. He also wept when they spake unto him. We have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but in all our afflictions he is afflicted, and the angel of his presence saves us; his Holy Spirit comes again and again taking of the things of Jesus, comforting our hearts, for he is the Comforter whom Jesus said he would send after he should go into heaven. A short while before Jacob died he called his sons to him, that he might tell them that which should befall them in the last days. Of Joseph he spoke some wonderful things, which find their fullness in Jesus. The provisions Joseph made reached out to the Gentiles as well as his natural brethren: "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall." Paul in writing to the Ephesians says of Jews and Gentiles that Jesus "is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition." One of the first signs of the breaking down of this wall was when Jesus talked with the woman of Samaria. He sat down on Jacob's well, which was near some ground which Jacob had given to Joseph. There Jesus talked with her, telling her that the water that he gives is a well of water within springing up into everlasting life. He revealed himself, not only to her, but to others, as the Savior of the world. There he showed himself a fruitful bough by a well. Later, when Jesus cried, "It is finished," he completely broke down this middle wall, the veil of the temple was rent in twain, and the way into the holiest of all was seen by Jews and Gentiles alike. Shortly after the day of Pentecost the gospel was preached to Jews and Gentiles and churches came into being. What blessed fruit has the death of Jesus borne, and his fruit is sweet to our taste. "The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him: but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob." These things have already been noticed. "From thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel." Jesus said, I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. Our life is secure through the giving of his life, and he has assured us that he gives unto us eternal life, neither shall any pluck us out of his hand, and to seal it on our hearts he says his Father gave us to him, and none is able to pluck us out of his Father's hand. How sure is our salvation, and how he shows his loving-kindness again and again. This surely,

is one of those doubles which Jerusalem receives at the Lord's hand for all her sins. "The stone of Israel." Peter and John were imprisoned for preaching Jesus, and when brought to trial, Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said, "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other." This is clearly seen in the life of Joseph, but how much more in the life of Jesus. Jacob proceeds to pour out blessings, saying they shall be on the head of Joseph, of him who was separate from his brethren. Bless the Lord, O my my soul, and all that is within me, bless his hloy name—the name which is above every name.

Now we come to circumstances surrounding Joseph's death. Years before God had told Abraham that his seed should be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and should be afflicted four hundred years, but that their oppressors should be judged, and his seed come out with great substance. All this, we know from the Scriptures, came about. Here was the beginning of Abraham's seed being strangers in a land that was not theirs. When Joseph was dying he reminded his brethren that God would bring them out from thence and he charged them that they should carry his bones up with them; so when he died they embalmed him and he was put in a coffin in Egypt. Later on, when God delivered the Israelites from Egyptian bondage, Moses obeyed the charge, and in all their forty years of wandering in the wilderness Joseph's dead body was with them, until it was finally buried in the land of Canaan "in the inheritance of the children of Joseph. The death of Jesus Christ is the greatest thing in the life of a believer, for without it there would be no salvation. Sin was that which caused the death of Jesus; sins not his own, and he died that the justice of God should be satisfied; and his salvation is sure to every elect sinner. How often it has been said by those who have not received the truth in the love of it, or Satan has tempted believers with it, that with such a belief why not take one's fill of sin? Here is the reason why we should not. It is couched in the one word, "Love." Jesus is of such pure eyes that he cannot behold iniquity; that is, to countenance it, also as the hymn says,

> "Well he remembers Calvary,
> Nor let his saints forget."

When our hearts are exercised by the love of God sin becomes exceeding sinful in our eyes; we hate it, we look on him whom we have pierced, and mourn for him. What love God, Father, Son and Spirit, has for his people that Jesus should suffer thus; and we love him because he first loved us. If we love a person, do we want to do those things which we know displease that one? No, our thoughts are usually to show our love by doing that which pleases; we delight to show our love. If this be so naturally, how much more should our desire be to our Beloved.

The Israelites had Joseph's dead

body ever in sight. They sometimes murmured, thinking their lot was hard, and for all that they had suffered their hearts sometimes looked back at Egypt, but they had come through the Red Sea, right after they had killed the passover lamb, and it had closed behind them, and however much they might want to they could never again go back to Egypt. So believers, however their hearts may look back to the world, never can really turn back there, for they are bought with a price: Jesus, their Passover Lamb, has been slain for them, they have come through, as it were, the Red Sea of his blood, which closes behind them, forever separating them from their former life, and here is the remembrance of what it cost to separate us from the power of Satan, and bring us unto God. Then can we sing lightly, with this remembrance in view? If we do, there is a repetition in our experiences or feeling the condemnation of sin, and God's anger therefor, and a need of another application of washing of water by the Word to cleanse us from all our sin. Then, too, when Jesus had finished eating the passover with his disciples he instituted what we call the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, or Communion, saying, "This do in remembrance of me;" and what does this ordinance mean to us? It is the remembrance of the sufferings of Jesus. "This is my body, which is given [Paul says broken] for you," Jesus said when he blessed and brake the bread; also, "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins," when he gave them the cup. It says that Jesus told them to all drink of it, and it also says that they all drank of it. Yes, we too, his people, must have fellowship with him in his sufferings, feel the bitterness of sin, know in our measure the awful consequences thereof, if we are to reign with him. Paul was obliged to write to the Corinthian Church reproving them for disorders among them, one of which was that when they came together they did not discern the Lord's body, but made a sensual feasting. He showed them the terrible sin they were guilty of in so doing, and showed them again the signification of the Lord's Supper, saying, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew forth the Lord's death till he come." So there is a remembrance of the sufferings and death of Jesus from time to time by the observance of the Lord's Supper. Here is our heavenly Joseph's dead body buried in the church, which is the inheritance of his children. Can we then sin that grace may abound? We are weak, and often fall, so that we can cry, Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift, but may he give us grace to desire to live as in his sight, not for fear of chastisement, but for love to him. What did Paul mean when he said, "Ye do shew forth the Lord's death till he come"? "Till he come." Turning back to Joseph and his brethren we find that at their first meeting his brethren knew him not. They were despising and rejecting him in their hearts, and so were the Jews as a nation (though there was a rem-

nant who received him) in this condition when Jesus was on earth. Joseph's brethren did not go to him again until they were in such straits they could do without him no longer or they must perish. So I believe the Scriptures to show that he shall come again when the natural branches shall be gathered in. Jesus said that Jerusalem should be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled. The Jews have been scattered and downtrodden ever since their rejection of Jesus, and we have but to keep our eyes open to events at the present time to see that the Jews are still persecuted, and so it will be until the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled, then, at the time of their extremity, shall Jesus come again and as a nation they shall receive him; not a few here and there, but at once they shall acclaim him their King and their Redeemer. "Behold, he cometh with clouds." This same Jesus whom ye have seen go away into heaven, shall come again in like manner, said the angel to the disciples. They saw him go up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. So he shall come with clouds, and he shall appear from out of those clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him. In the prophecies it says they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn and be in bitterness for him. Yes, Joseph's brethren remembered their treatment of him, they mourned for it, and were in bitterness of spirit on account of it. The Jews will no doubt remember how they have hated and despised the very mention of the name of Jesus, but they shall know that he is their King and a nation shall be born in a day; "for if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" At the second meeting of Joseph with his brethren, when he revealed himself to them, he said this to them, "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you, to preserve life." Later on he told them, "As for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." The Jews were the betrayers and murderers and sellers of Jesus into the hands of the Romans, and their thoughts were only evil toward him. They cried out for his crucifixion, and when Pilate protested his innocence of the blood of Jesus, they answered, "His blood be on us, and on our children." How solemnly this has been fulfilled, but they shall see how God's providence has been in all things, working together for his glory and the good of his people. In the case of Joseph, not only was he sent into Egypt to preserve the life of his natural brethren, but of the Egyptians, who were Gentiles. Egypt spiritually is called the land of darkness. What a land of darkness did Jesus come into that he might give eternal life to those who were uncircumcised in heart, children of wrath, even as others, both Jews and Gentiles, and God was watching over the evil to the salvation

of his people. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

GRACE ASTON.

GOOD WORKS ALONE BY THE GRACE OF GOD.

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. ii. 10. Our enemies say the Primitive Baptists do not believe in good works. The truth is this, that we are the only people I know of, or ever heard of, who believe in good works which honor God and glorify his great and good name as the Savior of sinners. I will notice the words "good works" from the Scriptures. "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."—Psalms xiv. 2, 3. The good of the land denotes all sorts of temporal blessings. "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land."—Isaiah i. 19. Israel was neither willing nor obedient, yet the Lord blessed them with every blessing; not what they wanted (nor what we want and pray for many times) but what was needful was in store for them as the Lord purposed. In Genesis ii. 3, "And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." Job xxxvii. 14, "Consider the wondrous works of God." And in John vi. 9, when Christ was with his disciples he fed five thousand with five loaves and two small fishes. The same chapter teaches his disciples went into a ship in the wind. They saw Jesus walking on the sea. (Verses 19, 20.) Jesus said, "It is I; be not afraid." Read to verse twenty-eight. "Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." I have quoted the Scripture in which both words were used, which means right and commendable in the sight of God. In speaking of man, I referred to Psalms xiv. 3: "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." All the works of God were good and are good for all time, for the purpose for which they were made. Why God made the innocent dove and the cruel hawk to catch it, the humble sheep and the strong wolf to destroy them, are his ways. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."—Isaiah lv. 9. "O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."—Rom. xi. 33. "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"—Dan. iv. 35. Job xiv. 4, says, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an un-

clean? not one." "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"—Jer. xvii. 9. This is the condition of man, he is unclean. His heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Could such a being do good works? From experience I must say, No. "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."—Jer. x. 23. "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags."—Isaiah lxiv. 6. This is the state man is in by reason of sin and death. Here is the comforting thought to this poor sinner, "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."—Heb. viii. 12. "That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."—1 Cor. i. 29, 30. Paul was right, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. ii. 10. In speaking of the coming of Christ, "He shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness."—Jer. xxiii. 6. "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."—Rom. i. 17; Hab. ii. 4; Gal. iii. 11; Heb. x. 3-8. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."—Eph. ii, 8. It is but reasonable service of every subject of grace, to live sober, truthful, honest, moral, virtuous and law-abiding lives here in this world of sin and death. When we do the best we can, then "say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do."—Luke xvii. 10. "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but how much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."—Phil. ii. 12, 13. Here is obedience which honors God, as it is in the Spirit. Work out your own salvation (Sure this salvation by grace through faith is your own, as a gift from God. Jesus said, "And I give unto them eternal life."—John x. 28.) with fear and trembling. All subjects of grace fear God because of their nothingness. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Notice, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." The will and to do must come from the Lord. Jesus said, "For without me ye can do nothing."—John xv. 5. "For in him we live, and move, and have our being."—Acts xvii. 28. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."—Phil. iv. 13. Our obedience, which is righteousness before God, is good works through Christ. It is a good work when we can meet in heavenly places in Christ Jesus and worship God in spirit and in truth. We have

to be drawn by the power of God to worship his great and good name. This Spirit works by love, "for God is love," which enables his children to have a good thought or do a good deed. This Spirit is pure, holy, separate and apart from sinners. Paul says, "Of whom I am chief."—1 Tim. i. 5. We are enabled by grace to do good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. For the ordained purpose of God is sure. As grace was given us in Christ before the world began, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."—Eph. i 3-6. Oh for grace to praise the Lord, with hearts of thankfulness, for such love in redeeming sinners. In singing the song of redemption the church, complete in Christ, will proclaim praises. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."—Rev. iv. 11.

Your little brother, in hope of eternal life,

J. G. L. HASH.

HOPEWELL, N. J., May 28, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel like expressing a few thoughts in the paper which was established the same year that I was born, 1832. It has been read by members of my family for many years with much interest. Unto us a child was born, unto us a Son was given, his name shall be called, The Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

Through the name of Jesus every knee must bow and every tongue confess. No weapon formed against thee shall prosper. Every tongue that confesses against me will be condemned. He that searcheth the heart knoweth the mind of the Spirit, for he maketh intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered. For we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. We are not our own keepers, we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God, with whom we have access by faith. If God be for us who can be against us? In him we live and move and have our being. Paul said he would endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

If I am spared until July 28th, 1934, I will be one hundred and two years old. Can I say with Paul that I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, I am now ready to be offered, henceforth there is a crown of right-

eousness laid up for me, which the righteous Judge will give me at the last day, and to all those that love his appearing? I have been blessed with good health and have attended meetings every Sunday all winter.

I will inclose five dollars, two for my renewal and three for the use of the SIGNS.

Your brother,

D. L. BLACKWELL.

ROXBURY, N. Y., June 9, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—The readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and their many friends who are interested will learn with pleasure that as one hundred and two years are now drawing to a close since the first number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES was published, that there is living at Hopewell, New Jersey, David L. Blackwell, who is several days older than the first number of this publication. This venerable man is one of the most remarkable in the United States. At a recent meeting of the Delaware River Old School Baptist Association he rode many miles in an automobile one day to attend a meeting of that Association at Southampton, Pennsylvania. In attendance at that same meeting was Miss Mary B. Opdyke, who resides near Southampton, and is in her ninety-seventh year. These aged people enjoy excellent health. At a recent meeting of the Hopewell Church brother David Blackwell took part in the services in the absence of his pastor, Elder Charles W. Vaughn. Surely the evidences of the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living are many indeed, and when he wills, neither the ravages of disease, nor all the means of destruction of human life known to man can avail anything in the termination of human life until the appointed time has come. It is interesting to listen to brother Blackwell's reminiscences of life almost a century ago, and it is more comforting still to hear him state his exercises of mind spiritually and testify of his faith in God and his preserving power over his life, and the manifestation of the saving grace of Jesus Christ that has been made sufficient for him.

I understand that Miss Opdyke has attended the Old School Baptist Church at Southampton for many years, but is not a member there.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

SUNSET, Texas, May 23, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—As another year has come and gone with its sorrows and joys, I find it is time for me to renew my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which is all the enjoyment my father and I get. We are living in a country where there is no sound doctrine preached, therefore the SIGNS is comforting to our hungry souls. Oh if it could be God's will, how we both would love to have some of the Predestinarian preachers visit us and we could hear some good preaching. My father, M. P. Stuard, was ninety-three years old the first day of April, and is hale hearty for a man of his age.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) FRANCES HAND.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1934.

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MATTHEW V. 20.

"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven."

We are brought to the test relative to our worthiness to enter the kingdom of heaven, and in weighing and measuring ourselves we confess we have no righteousness of our own. The scribes were so called because they were writers of the ordinances under the law, and were zealous to live to the letter, and render criticism to those who would fail to live according to what was written, and the Pharisees impersonated acts that were recorded, which they thought would give them an inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, and according to their ability to act out the written word. They felt to be better than other men, and were righteous. Their thoughts and meditations were upon the creature performances that they could manifest before men. We feel there are a great multitude of these characters in the world to-day, and are going forth criticising all who do not agree with their designing, and are thereby professing to save sinners, and the glory, honor and power are ascribed to men and not to the Son of God. The truth according to our text is that all who enter into the kingdom of heaven must have righteousness to exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, then as one anciently said, What shall we do to be saved? There is a time in the life of every one that feels to be a sinner that he is earnestly inquiring, What must I do? and he is easily deceived for a season, but He that began the work will complete it, and all such are led about and instructed until they are brought in paths not known and ways far exceeding any common to men. Their instruction gives them a demonstration of the wisdom and power of the Lord Jehovah, which shows them their weakness, in understanding and strength, and they are made to feel they have no strength, and when in this condition they are learning of Him. Jesus himself is the instructor and in him they see perfection, so they can say, Holy and righteous is he. Pleading for his mercy are their groanings until Jesus manifests their acceptance with him, and by his Spirit they are filled with joy and gladness, and he visits them in manifestation of his lovingkindness, which causes them to

rejoice and wait patiently for the Lord. His Spirit abounding in the heart causes them to hear the joyful sound of the gospel, which so enraptures them that they can exclaim, I know that my Redeemer liveth. Jesus Christ the Righteous is their friend, for he has extended mercy instead of justice, and delivered my soul from the horrors of hell, and filled my heart with joy and gladness. Often as the gospel is being proclaimed the friend of the bridegroom proclaims the joy manifested when the voice of the bridegroom is heard, and all who are given an ear to hear have the understanding heart that has abundance out of which the mouth speaketh.

We note in the pretext of our text Jesus was addressing his disciples, and they have written and testified plainly as to their righteousness, justification and redemption. The righteousness of the disciples was denounced by the scribes and Pharisees, and all the persecution they could inflict upon them was their pleasure, but the righteousness of the disciples of Jesus was revealed by the God of heaven and no powers of earth could erase God's demonstration by which they knew Jesus as the Christ (the Son of God). They were martyrs because of their faith, but they were, as Paul expressed, saying, I count not my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. (Acts xx. 24.) The great mystery between the acts of those who enter into the kingdom and those who do not is only discerned by the Spirit that tries every man's works as to whether they be of God or not.

The righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees is enacted under the wisdom of the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, not subject to his law, neither indeed can be, and as far as the natural mind is concerned the performances are the same, which gives rise to the question, Where is the difference? The scribes and Pharisees are carrying out the teaching Eve received in the garden of Eden, which was to elevate man and give him glory and honor, instead of glorifying God. God made the garden of Eden and all the trees in it, and ordained the fruit thereof and its effects, and he made man and placed him in the garden to dress and keep it, and commanded him what to eat, and the tree in the midst not touch it lest he die, and through the beguiling of the devil she saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat; and gave also to her husband with her, and he did eat. (Gen. iii.) Read the third, four, fifth and sixth verses. To compare this teaching of Eve in the garden of Eden and the principles of pharisaical religion, they are parallel, and instead of bringing life it works death. We have spoken of the teaching the Lord gives, and how its recipients are made to rejoice in Christ Jesus, and the outward manifestations, as far as the flesh is able to see, are the same. The difference comes in the spiritual reverence,

for to be obedient and follow Jesus, which is his lovingkindness drawing one unto him, and the constraining power of his love moves the creature in gospel obedience. The grace of God was what made Paul the obedient servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, and his righteousness was as clean white linen. He was washed from the pollution of this world, and made to be conformable unto Jesus' death and resurrection. Dear reader, what righteousness have we? Did we receive it from man? and are we following for loaves and fishes to satisfy our natural hunger for the things of this world, or are we desiring to worship God in sincerity, and, if we could, to comfort those who mourn, and point to One that is mighty to save and is perfect, holy and undefiled and separate from sinners? We often tremble as we meditate over these glorious truths, and see ourselves so vile, but the hope we have in his mercy is our strength, and we are made to look unto the hills from whence all our help must come. We abhor the very deception of our own hearts and know we cannot stand before the just and holy God in our own works, and as we have Jesus our advocate and head we come in his name, and he is holy and righteous, and this gives every one whose name was remembered in the sacrifice that could make the comers there unto perfect, righteousness far beyond anything the scribes and Pharisess could think or do. Jesus gives peace and rest to his people, and he maketh us to sit together in heavenly places in him, and he is the door, and all that enter the kingdom of heaven must have his righteousness imputed unto them by the Father, and they must bear the mark in their forehead. May we be separated more and more from the world, that we may live unto God and enter into the kingdom of heaven through the Door, and hear the glad message, Come in, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

C. W. V.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Welsh Tract Church, at Newark, Delaware, May 26th and 27th, 1934, sendeth greeting in the Lord to the several Associations and churches with which she corresponds.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more, in fear and trembling, we are called upon to perform the dreaded task of addressing a Letter to the several churches in this Association, and with which we correspond. We hope we have prayed earnestly and fervently for Divine guidance until within a few days of our meeting, and now we feel to indefinitely postpone it and request one of our ministers to write it. Some in the churches must be assigned ahead to perform this duty, and if the Lord is in it his word will be manifested in the hearts of some who are to receive it. We have no text given us to comment or meditate upon, and hope fervently and prayerfully that the Word of the Lord given unto Zerubbabel, governor

of Judah, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit," may result in light for us to consider. "Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof." "The hands of [spiritual] Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, his hands shall also finish it."—Zech. iv. 6, 7, 9. O, great mountain (trouble), to a child of hope when given to wander in the maze of the flesh, without hope, trusting in the flesh, faith apparently lost forever; troubles rise to great heights, infidelity supplants faith in the heart and the child mourns an absent God for a time; but when mercy through grace appears in the heart, sent down through one of the golden pipes, the channel of the Holy Spirit unto the church, then the mountain is made a plain over night. This beautiful prophecy given to Zechariah was but a forerunner of Christ, spiritual Zerubbabel, who in the preceding chapter is called the Branch, also the Stone, and "upon one stone shall be seven eyes," "they are the eyes of the Lord [these seven], which run to and fro through the whole earth." And the candlestick, all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof, to us represent the Christ: the bowl upon the top his church or body fed by the Holy Spirit from above, or from his throne; coming down, not up from the earth, for the seven are on the top, not beneath, proving man or flesh cannot be fed by man or man's doctrines. And these two olive branches or olive trees are, to our mind, the same spoken of in the eleventh chapter of Revelation, "my two witnesses," the Old and the New Testaments. And when they shall have finished their testimony the beast that ascended out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. "And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet." (Read the whole chapter.) It is well God's elect cannot rest "at ease," or in peace continuously, while sojourning in this sin-cursed tabernacle of clay. It is well we are warned against the life of ease, for that life means the pleasures and sins of Egypt. "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." "Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive, and the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed."—Amos vi. 1, 7. This condition in Zion in the captivity obtains to-day in the church visible as well as then. He found the same condition in the earth, as the angels on the red, speckled and white horses made their report to the angel on the red horse, "We have walked to and fro through the earth, and, behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest." "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy. And I am very sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease," proving that, whether a child of God or a heathen, it is a dangerous place to be, resting at peace, at ease, satisfied with the pleasures of the

world, which are sin; luke-warm, "I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."

Our churches are few in number, the membership of each growing less each year, but we hope the purging or sieving by the Lord will keep those of us closely united. Our ministerial gifts are fewer in number, in like proportion to the churches, and our prayer is (we hope) that each may be humbled to see that none have more than what is granted them by the grace of God, according to the measure of the gift of Christ (that unspeakable gift), no more, no less: for, "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."—Eph. iv. 8, 11-16. There is but one more Scripture to add to these beautiful words of Paul's admonition: "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" This order to the ministry, written by Paul, and emphasized in Timothy: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works," should be an incentive for us to be at one another's feet, in love. This beautiful order, in exhortation in love as portrayed by Paul for the sole benefit of the ministry, not only then, but now, is surely sufficient for a spiritually-minded man or minister to faithfully, scripturally and humbly consider. Paul warned that the sound doctrine preached by the fathers in Israel would be rejected, for "the time will come when they will

not endure sound doctrine," but, for those who are at ease in Zion, satisfied to be alone, luke-warm or indifferent in the flesh, to them alone is the responsibility, either a dearth in attendance in the churches or death to spiritual edification. "God is not mocked," and he will continue to purge his little branches of the Vine. When he gathers his jewels from afar, all will be well.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Mod.
JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Virginia, May 30th, 1934, Mr. Reginald P. Ramsey, of Chattanooga, Tennessee, and Miss Frances Lefferts.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

EDWARD WIBLE, son of the late John G. and Evaline (Madden) Wible, was born in Springfield Township, Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania, March 15th, 1865, and died October 24th, 1933, aged 68 years, 7 months and 9 days. The subject of this notice never identified himself with the visible church, but was a believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone. His life was such as any one would do well to emulate. His companion has been an invalid for several years, unable to walk, having to be carried around the house in a wheel chair. The writer was told at the funeral that he was never known to complain, but waited upon his companion tenderly as long as he was able. He was sick only a few days. Death was due to paralysis. He seemed to rally after the first stroke, and there was hope that he woudl get over it, but the second stroke came and he soon passed away. But we sorrow not as for others who have no hope. He spoke of seeing a bright light, and once mentioned Jesus, and then asked to be taken away from earth.

The writer was called for the funeral, and read in Beebe's hymn book number 1290: "There is a land mine eye hath seen," and after prayer hymn number 75: "How firm a foundation," was sung, this being one of his favorites. Then a portion of the fourteenth chapter of John was read, using the first three verses as a basis for the remarks made at the house. On account of the widow being unable to go to the meetinghouse it was necessary to hold two services. At the meetinghouse hymns numbers 522 and 528 were read, these also being favorites of the deceased. Then the seventeenth chapter of John was read by request of a brother of the deceased, and after a few brief remarks upon this latter Scripture, and hymn number 528 in the hymn and tune book, the body was laid away to rest in the cemetery adjoining the church, until the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the archangel. May the God in whom he trusted comfort the hearts of all who are bereaved.

A. T. BENSON.

"THE righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come," is the Scripture I used as a text at the funreal of sister **EVA GLOVER ADAMS**, who was born May 10th, 1861, and passed away at her home in Odessa, Missouri, May 3rd, 1934, aged 72 years, 11 months and 23 days. She was the oldest daughter of Mr. George and sister Ann Glover. She was united in marriage February 24th, 1889, to D. A. J. Adams, and to them were born two daughters, Mrs. J. B. Alumbaugh, of Independence, and Mrs. S. W. Pollard, of Bates City, Missouri. She united with Big Sniabar Predestinarian Baptist Church, near Wellington, Missouri, and was baptized by the late Elder H. W. Newton, November 25th, 1888. Sister Adams adorned her profession by showing her faith by her works, which were by faith in the saving grace of the crucified Savior in whom she had been given a good hope of immortal life beyond this life that is so full of disappointment. She was a strong believer in the doctrine of the sovereignty of the all-wise God, believing that he works all things after the counsel of his own will, and that he determined, and rules all things so they shall bring to him honor and glory in the salvation of his people. She was a very considerate woman in her associations with her neighbors and friends, showing every kindness in both her acts and words, and was especially considerate of her husband, as a wife, and as a mother to her children, being devoted to their every interest in the home and to the school life of her own, and her grandchildren, and no wife, mother or grandmother was ever held in higher esteem. As to her devotion to her God and the church there were but few her equal, for she took delight in going to her meetings, and was truly a Deacon's wife, lending every aid to her husband in discharging his duties in that office. She was indeed pleasant in her conversation among the members of the church with whom she associated, and they were many, for she traveled many miles with her husband to attend Baptist meetings, and both were esteemed highly for their godly conversation. She was mild in expression, never using harsh words to wound the feelings of any, and always had an easy and pleasant way in speaking of the faults of others, and she always spoke as though there was sunshine behind every

cloud. She held her pastors in high esteem, and was an earnest and patient hearer of the preaching of the word, enjoying the truth, and easily detecting that which had an uncertain sound, but was gentle and kind in admonishing the Elders to a steadfastness in the faith. She had been in feeble health for some time, but her last sickness was of short duration, and her death unexpected by many who did not know of her serious sickness. But the Lord's time had come, and she peacefully passed away, and her spirit went to God who gave it. Her body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Odessa, Missouri, to await the coming of the Lord Jesus, when he shall awaken the sleeping dust of his saints and raise them up in the likeness of Jesus, and she will enter into the full fruition of hope, and see him as he is.

The funeral was held from the home, attended by a large concourse of Baptists, neighbors and friends, attesting the high esteem in which she was held.

Besides her sad hearted husband, she is survived by the two daughters, eight grandchildren, one great-grandchild, two brothers, James Glover, of California, and Charles Glover, of Odessa, Mo., other relatives, neighbors and friends, who will sadly miss her in the walks of life, but to those of like precious faith as hers, mourn, but not without hope, believing that as Jesus was raised from the tomb, even so shall his saints be raised from the dead.

W. L. HALL.

MARGARET J. BYRD was born September 15th, 1852, in Accomac County, Virginia, and died at her home in Baltimore City, Maryland, March 3rd, 1934. She was married to Wm. R. Byrd December 15th, 1870, and to this union was born one daughter, who died about the time she was grown. For her the mother grieved as long as she lived. Sister Byrd united with the Primitive Old School Baptist Church more than fifty years ago, at Masongoes Church, in Virginia, and was baptized by the late Elder Thomas M. Poulson. She and her husband came to Baltimore to live and she moved her membership to Ebenezer Church, where she remained a faithful member to the end. The writer has been sister Byrd's pastor for thirty-five years and can testify to her love for her church, which she manifested by her faithful attendance. She knew what she believed, and showed her faith by her works. It is sad indeed to give up such dear ones. We mourn her absence, but not as those who have no hope, for we believe her soul now rests in the arms of her blessed Savior, awaiting his second coming to earth, when her mortal body shall be raised a spiritual body to be forever with her Lord. It was good to hear her talk in her last illness of her hope, and the love of Jesus. All was done for her that loving hands and hearts could do, but the Lord saw fit to take her, and her dear husband, with whom she lived more than sixty-three years, is heart-broken. May the God whom she loved and served comfort his aching heart as no other can do.

The writer (assisted by Elder D. L. Topping) conducted her funeral in her home March 6th, in the presence of many relatives and loving friends, after which her mortal body was laid to rest in Loudoun Park Cemetery to await the coming of the Lord.

By her loving pastor,

J. T. ROWE.

MRS. MORIAH HILL, our dear mother, fell asleep in the early dawn of February 5th, 1934, at her home, near Benton, Marshall County, Kentucky. She was born September 7th, 1842, near the old home place where she spent her entire life of ninety-one years and some months. She was married to Reuben Z. Hill about seventy-six years ago. Father died seventeen years ago, after a happy union of sixty years, leaving mother with a dutiful son and daughter-in-law. Mother fell in 1926 and suffered a broken hip, from which she never recovered, not being able to walk since that time, but she bore her afflictions with much patience. Her death resulted from pneumonia, after several weeks of suffering, but she told her dear children she was ready to surrender to the will of the Lord. Mother and father united with the Old School Baptist Church about forty years ago and were baptized by the late Elder J. M. Perkins. After being so afflicted, and not being able to attend her meetings, it was one of her greatest pleasures to have the Baptists visit her and talk of the riches of God's grace, and she was often made to shout praises to God. She often said to me of late years that she was living in the past most of her time when alone, going over in her mind the good meetings she and father had attended together, and the ministers they had been able to entertain in their home (which were many). Mother leaves to mourn their loss seven children, one having preceded her in death. The children are Mrs. Alice Little, of Sherman, Texas (the only one not present, being ill herself), Mrs. Lola Lindsey, of Owensboro, Ky., Mrs. Madia Flowers, Mrs. Mary Clark, Mrs. Lillie Chester, Henry B. Hill and Boone T. Hill, all of Marshall County, the last named being the one who cared for her in her declining years, and mother never wanted for anything in the way of comfort and care that he and his dear wife could do for her, and it was often said by her friends and other children that it was wonderful the way she was cared for. This dear brother had never in all his life been separated from her for longer than two weeks, and his dear companion had been almost constantly with her since she had been unable to walk and their hearts, with all the children, were made sad at her departure. The dear old arm chair now is vacant in the home of my childhood. We were blessed with a loving mother

so long it was very grievous to see her go, for she was so devoted to her children and grandchildren, and her friends and neighbrs and relatives were a source of pleasure to her, but, dear sisters and brothers, while we mourn her absence we should also rejoice in the hope of her entrance into that home not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Then may we all be inspired by the thought that our loss is her gain, lift up our heads, look upward and press onward, for it is God that reigneth.

Mother's funeral was conducted by her beloved pastor, Elder J. C. Chester, at Bethleham Church, and a large concourse of sorrowing relatives and friends were present, after which all that was mortal was laid to rest by the side of father in the burying-grounds near by, there to await the resurrection of the saints. May we all find comfort, if it be God's will, in the same blessed truth which our mother held so dear.

Written by her daughter,

(MRS.) LILLIE CHESTER.

MRS. SARAH F. GANDY was born July 31st, 1853, and died December 12th, 1933, making her stay on earth 80 years, 4 months and 11 days. She was the widow of Alfred C. Gandy, of Lambertville, New Jersey. He preceded her several years, leaving one daughter, who was the devoted wife of the late J. S. Petrie, D. D. S., of Lambertville, N. J., to mourn their loss. Sister Gandy and Mrs. Petrie were loyal to each other, and Mrs. Petrie gave her mother every needed attention to make her comfortable and to help bear her affliction, which was heart trouble. She united with the Old School Baptist Church at Harbourton, N. J., called Second Hopewell, in which she lived a faithful and devoted member, and was the last member of that church organization. When the time came that she was the only surviving member she merged with First Hopewell Church. She was a sister in the true meaning of the word, and earnestly contended for the faith of the apostles: salvation by grace. In the town of Lambertville she will be greatly missed, as she lived there all her life and was of great comfort to the sick, and often administered to their necessities. The writer was her pastor for nineteen years, and her devotion was that of mother, which appellation was often applied in speaking of her. She leaves her daughter, Mrs. Catherine B. Petrie and her grandson, Alfred G. Petrie, D. D. S., one sister, Mrs. Harriett Scarborough, and a host of other relatives and friends, also the faithful in Christ Jesus, to mourn for her, and we feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted from the home of Mrs. Petrie by the writer, with Mr. George Horner, of Lambertville director, and her remains laid to rest in the family plot in Lambertville, N. J., where rests an honest, devoted christian lady.

C. W. VAUGHN.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

According to previous arrangement, a meeting was called near Garber, Oklahoma, on Saturday before the second Sunday in May, 1934, for the purpose of organizing into a separate church certain members of the First Kansas Association now residing in Oklahoma, to wit: brethren Uriah Garten, Roy Garten, Willard Garten, and sisters Kate Garten, of Big Walnut Creek Church, and sisters Annie Kimmel and Elizabeth Garten, of West Union Church, both of which churches are located in Kansas. Services having been conducted by Elders L. D. Seals and L. L. Schenck, the following proceedings were had, Elder Schenck being Moderator and sister Mary Ellison Clerk:

1st. Inquired of the above named members, whether they were all of the same mind as when they made the request to be constituted into a separate church, to which they responded in unanimous agreement and of the same mind.

2nd. Called the roll of those wishing to be embraced in this organization, viz., brethren Uriah Garten and Roy Garten, and sisters Annie Kimmel and Kate Garten, all of Garber, Oklahoma, sister Elizabeth Garten and brother Willard Garten, of Booker, Texas, and sister Laura Wiss, of Mulhall, Oklahoma, a former member of Little Flock Church, in the Kansas Association, who applied for membership with them, by experience and relating the circumstance of the church of her membership having gone down and their meetings discontinued, so that she could not obtain a letter. All the others presented letters showing they were in full fellowship and in good standing in the churches granting the letters.

3rd. The Articles of Faith, Church Covenant and Rules of Decorum of the aforementioned churches were read, and asked if they wished to be constituted under the same, to which they, by motion and second, unanimously agreed. They were then declared to be a regularly constituted church, choosing the name LITTLE FLOCK to be called by, and designating the second Sunday in each month, and Saturday before, as their regular meeting days.

L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator.

Mary Ellison, Clerk.

The church now being organized and in order for business, the following Minute was made of their transactions:

The Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church of Christ called Little Flock met on Saturday before the second Sunday in May, 1934, and services having been conducted by Elders L. D. Seals and L. L. Schenck the following proceedings were had:

1st. Chose Elder L. L. Schenck Moderator and brother Willard Garten Clerk.

2nd. Invited brethren of our faith and order to seats in counsel with us.

3rd. Inquired for the peace and fellowship of the church.

4th. Inquired for reference.

5th. Business of a general nature or new business.

By motion and second, Elder L. L. Schenck was chosen Pastor, and a request was made that a copy of these proceedings be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication, with an invitation to all lovers of the truth to visit us.

6th. Extended the opportunity for the reception of members, then after a solemn charge and admonition to duty by Elder Seals closed with the hand of fellowship being extended to each other and all members present.

L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator.

WILLARD GARTEN, Clerk.

Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."—Matt. xviii. 19, 20.

M. E.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Mrs. J. J. Bailey having changed her address from Saugerties, N. Y., to R. D. 1, Prattsville, N. Y., requests her correspondents to address her at the latter place.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

"A friend, Colo., $1; I. H. Evans, Md., $1; Miss Sadie T. Nicoll, Md., $3; D. L. Blackwell, N. J., $3; "A friend," N. Y., $2; Mrs. Valentine Werner, N. J., $2; Mrs. Mary B. Keogan, N. Y., $1; "A friend," N. Y., $3; Miss C. A. Black, Ont., $1; Mrs. Clara A. Parker, Ore., $2.

ERRATUM.

In the JUNE issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, on page 133, first column, eleventh line from the top, the word "John" should be "Job."

MEETINGS.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in July and August, 1934. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The New Hope Association of Texas will hold her fifty-second annual session, the Lord willing, with Mount Zion Church, nine miles south of Greenville, Texas, to begin on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1934. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and behold our order and hear the gospel preached. Ministers of our faith and order are especially invited.

S. M. DICKENS, Moderator.

W. M. SIKES, Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in July (29th) All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church will meet (D. V.) every second Sunday with brother and sister Berry, 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California. Every third Sunday with brother and sister Staggs, 506 E. Raulston Street, Ontario, California.

T. D. WALKER.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 808 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one-half block west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Cloth binding. Price, $1.25 each. One dozen or more, ordered at the same time and all to the same address, one dollar each. Cash must accompany orders. Make checks and money orders payable to

J. E. BEEBE & CO.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 102. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1934. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

STRASBURG, Va., Jan. 21, 1934.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have a request for me to write on the text, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?"—John iv. 29. Sister Chester, of Murray, Kentucky, asks, What do the waterpot and the five husbands represent? I seem to understand a little about the twenty-ninth verse, but I do not know about the waterpot and the five husbands. Will some one who knows please write on this?

This article, if I can write at all, will be like all my writings, very poor. She asks if this woman represents the church. I think this woman represents all the children of God. She said that Jesus told her all things ever she did. All the children of God are shown their sinfulness. God gives them grace as it pleases him: some more, some less. Therefore it is written, Ephesians iv. 7, "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." When God gives his people grace it teaches them to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. (Titus ii. 12.) What you formerly thought to be no harm, now appears to be exceeding sinful. Jesus then told you, by his Spirit, all things you ever did. When God in his mercy and goodness to me revealed to me my exceeding sinfulness such was my distress that I looked at some fat lazy hogs and wished that I were one of them. The poet says,

> "'Till late I saw no danger nigh,
> I lived at ease, nor feared to die;
> Wrapped up in self-conceit and pride,
> I shall have peace at last, I cried.
>
> But when, great God, thy light divine
> Had shone in this dark soul of mine,
> Then I beheld with trembling awe,
> The terrors of thy holy law."

Then what?

> With melting heart and weeping eyes,
> My guilty soul for mercy cries,
> What can I do, or whither flee,
> To escape the vengeance due to me?"

I have seen this so vividly. I could find no place dark enough, nor so obscure, where I could hide from God to try to pray. But when I found Jesus was

my hiding-place I then could approach the great Creator, the wondrous One who upholds all things by the word of his power; I could then come to him in Jesus' name and beg for mercy, and try to offer thanks for his goodness to me.

"Should storms of seven-fold thunder roll
And shake the globe from pole to pole,
No thunder-bolt shall daunt my face,
For Jesus is my hiding-place.

A few more rolling suns at most,
Will land me on the heavenly coast,
Where I shall sing the song of grace,
And see my glorious hiding-place."

David says in both the thirty-second and one hundred and nineteenth Psalms, "Thou art my hiding place." In Isaiah xxxii. 2, it is written, "And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." But when you cannot find him you surely are desolate. The poet says,

"Ah, whither then can we flee for aid
When tempted, desolate, dismayed?
Or how the hosts of hell defeat,
Had suffering saints no mercy-seat?
(or hiding-place.)

There, there on eagles' wings we soar,
And sin and sense molest no more;
And heaven comes down our souls to greet,
And glory crowns the mercy-seat."

How wonderful is all this when we can enjoy it, but it has grown so dark and so cold we do not realize much of this living wondrous glory. When I was a young man, many, many years ago, the blessed Savior used to come and manifest his glory to me and it would be so bright; and if I carelessly said or did something I should not, he would have shut the dungeon door in my face and there I would be in the dark. Then I would think, He will never come again, but after so long a time he would be there again; then I would think I would be very careful to watch and not drive him away, but after a time all the glory would fade away like the setting sun and there I would be left to mourn again. Yet it is written, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted."—Matt. v. 4. The poet says,

"A pilgrim stranger here I roam,
From place to place I'm driven;
My friends are gone, and I'm in gloom,
The earth is all a lonely tomb,
I have no home but heaven."

I have lived long and have grown so cold and so awfully dark. Very many of the loved ones have gone home. I hardly ever have a spiritual emotion. I am past eighty-one years of age and still able to work. I went over to Strasburg to work for the government and was very glad, because I had seven to feed and was out of money; but a telegram came from Washington to lay all of us off who had commenced at the time I did, so I lost my job, but God will provide.

"Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" Yes, that was the Christ. Christ in you the hope of glory. Once when I had ceased trying to preach, I felt like something was knocking in my heart, and all at once felt that it was the Savior. I was frightened and wanted to get away. I was so very sinful and I knew the Savior was right there and saw my thoughts and heard every word I said. I saw all my sin-

fulness and wanted to get away and go where he could not see me. We have great consolation in that it is written, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. He knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."—Psalms ciii. 13, 14.

This woman spoken of in the fourth chapter of John was not a moral, virtuous woman. God uses bad people as representatives to show his wondrous mercy. As the harlot Rahab who hung out the "scarlet thread." And as the thief on the cross. I have often thought that if God would show me mercy and give me grace, there certainly is no one else so sinful for whom he cannot do the same. When we consider that there is none good; no, not one, we ought to know that salvation is not because of our goodness, holiness or righteousness. I am often surprised that gray-headed people will contend that we are saved by obedience to the law. Paul says, Galatians ii. 21, "For if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." Again, "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." The Savior said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."

"Come, see a man." It is true that a majority of the people are blind and cannot see, and you cannot show them the truth. All must be born of the Spirit before they can see. So John said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," and the kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. As brother Fred Keene wrote, "I was blind, my father and mother were blind," and I will add that all of Adam's race are born blind. Why was it that this woman thought this was the Savior, when so many others saw the miracles he did, yet still hated him without a cause and wanted him killed? Because it did not please God to cause them to see. Paul says, Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known him, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. The word says, They have eyes and see not. Do you feel so cast down? Is it dark with you? Do you get so cold and desolate? I say, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." You are blessed with the greatest blessing any mortal ever had bestowed on him. If you could not see, it would never be dark to you. If you had no grace, you would not feel that you are the chief of sinners. You would not be cast down and mourn your condition were you not a spiritually quickened soul. I remember that when I first united with the church I got so dark, hard and cold; I did not know what was the matter. I had then never seen an Old Baptist preacher and I asked a Missionary Baptist preacher what was the matter with me. He could not tell me one thing. Then I discovered this hymn:

"Oh for a glance of heavenly day,
To take this stubborn stone away!
And thaw, with beams of love divine,
This heart, this frozen heart of mine.

The rocks can rend, the earth can quake,
The seas can roar, the mountains shake;
Of feeling, all things show some sign,
But this unfeeling heart of mine.

But something yet can do the deed,
And that dear something much I need;
Thy Spirit can from dross refine,
And move and melt this heart of mine."

I knew instantly that was the truth. That was the first song I ever learned by heart.

"Come and see." Some cannot see, and they will say, Oh I have never committed any bad sins. God will not punish me for what I have done. The most profane men I have ever talked with will tell you they are free moral agents and are going to get religion after awhile, but that they must enjoy themselves before they get religion. The prophet Jeremiah says, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." A black man can have his skin painted and the leopard's spots can be painted, but the man is still black and the leopard is still spotted under the paint. Jesus positively said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." What has been accomplished by the Sunday Schools? When I was a boy I went two sessions to public school and saw not one fight. Children then had respect for aged people. We now have from about one to six fights at the school in Strasburg every day, and I am not acquainted with a child that has any respect for an aged person. Foreign missions were one of the main causes which split the Baptist Church, beginning in 1832. The ministry which God calls and qualifies can see. So we have the type, "Issachar is a strong ass, couching down between two burdens: and he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant." This is what he saw, "That rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant." Some have "tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come." This is sweeter than the honey and the honeycomb.

"If heaven be thus, dear glorious Lord,
Why should I stay from thence?
What folly 'tis that makes me dread
To die and go from hence.

And if our happiness below
In Jesus is so sweet,
What heights of rapture shall we know
When round his throne we meet."

Come see what? A man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? God revealed to this woman that the man Jesus was her Savior. Thousands of others saw his miracles and still did not believe he was the Christ. They came out against him with soldiers. He had been a great relief to many in healing diseases of all kinds and never charged a cent for anything he ever did. If a man were to come along now and cure all kinds of diseases the people would adore him and maybe carry him on their shoulders. The reason they hated Jesus without a cause was because God ordained he should die for his people. Jesus said, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." I read where he said, "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came

I unto this hour." He must suffer "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." He is the man Christ Jesus. "By man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." He bore our sins in his own body on the tree, and put them away by the sacrifice of himself. He cried on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He said, "I thirst." One of the soldiers took a sponge and filled it with vinegar mingled with gall and put it to Jesus' lips, but he would not drink. How often when your cry went up to God has some unbeliever, instead of sympathizing with you, given you vinegar, in a spiritual sense, and you were only the more cast down.

"Come, see a man." What caused you to see? Let Paul tell: "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead." How wonderful it is that you see!

In hope of mercy,

I. R. GREATHOUSE.

BENTON, Ky., May 5, 1934.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—The tie that binds, that Paul said would be given us by God our Father, that love that Paul did not need to admonish the Thessalonians to be constant in loving, seems to me leads us out in mind to sympathize and fellowship one another. Your letter about your brother's death, the sadness of it all, and your being able to see the unchangeableness of God, how he moves in his way to bring about his predestination, knits you very closely to me in Spirit and in truth. There are in this world those whom we have never seen, yet we love them for the truth as we hope it works in our inner self, a drawing springs up. I read after your pen and am fed, when all others fail to touch me as you do. I do not know why, unless our lives run more or less in the same mould, and we can select from the mass of people who do believe as we do some more comforting to us, and who feed our hungry souls more than do others, and that because of God's purpose and plan. We cannot and do not have anything to do with it, but it is according to the divine plan of God. Brother Dodson, when I read yours and that dear old dad's letter this month in the SIGNS, and I knew of the funeral by your telling me of that death of your brother, I could see the deep calling unto the deep, the deep things of the Spirit in your "old dad" calling for the deep in his son. Why? Because deep calls unto deep. Natural things would not stop the hurt of that boy's death, but oh let us be reconciled through the Spirit's workings. Tears ran down my cheeks, because I have searched my heart for the deep things that would quiet me, and, too, I believe I find in this inner man something that wants and desires God's

will to be done, and not mine. I desire to be reconciled to the workings of the divine will of God, and I could see the searchings and same feelings in you two, so sweet fellowship springs up anew and fills our hearts to overflowing and our eyes grow dim with tears in unity, in our being tied with the cords of love; that is God, the Son and Spirit in us, as we hope.

I hated to see my letter in the SIGNS, for it perhaps took the space where better things should have been, and it makes me ashamed, knowing my naked condition. As Adam knew he was naked and felt ashamed, I also feel I have no covering, not even as much as an apron of fig leaves (my own works), and unless I have been clothed upon with the righteous robe of Christ I am surely naked and undone. So when I see things I have written come out in the open for all who run to read I get ashamed of my own naked condition in this world. But do we see our nakedness until the light shines in? Do we know that once we were blind and the face of the deep was covered in darkness to us until God said, Let there be light, and there is light? Yes, our old nature (the earth) is without form and void and darkness covers the waters and the deep, in the beginnig of our nature when we sprang forth from our mother's womb, but if God is ours, and we are his, we had in the purpose of him a calling that was sure to come. Hence we had an earthly and heavenly port. No telling in our nature what form of sin we would commit. We were void of all spiritual understanding, but God said, Let there be light, and there was light given us, here a little and there a little, as it pleased him to uncover the deep things of his, to unfold to us the mercy he had for us before we were. All the members were written when there were none of them. How wonderful our God is! Some "big preacher" said he felt sorry for God. I have a neighbor who said she felt sorry for God. Such a god as that, what is he? Cannot do his will. But I see him so wonderful in power that he only speaks and it is done, and it stands forever done. We know he allowed, for a beautiful purpose, man to build, but it was to show to man man's inability. He gave a law and yet it could not bring life, it was not kept, it could not be kept, because man has a nature to desire to keep his own flesh in peace, and he desires his own glory above everything else. No man will ever give God any gory unless God moves in that one, consumes his dross, burns his hay and stubble and makes him eat his morsel dipped in vinegar, then when all the dross is consumed and he is walking naked before God's all-seeing eye, he will begin to praise God that he is able to pick him up, a wretch like him, and do that for him that he is unable to do for himself. So let me praise him for his lovingkindness, oh how strong! and if he justly claims a song from me, let it be his lovingkindness, oh how free! It was free, brother Dodson, if bestowed on me, for I cannot do, nor ever have done, one thing to merit the mercy and kindness that has been mine. Once

when I was reading your article, where you said, "No Solomon no Jesus," I caught a beautiful ray of light, brother, on David and Bathsheba and Solomon, God the church and the blood-bought souls through Jesus' blood. It came to me like this, unfolding just as I read those lines of yours. I was stopped and saw the beauty of God loving Bathsheba when she was washing in her nakedness on the house top, or wherever she was, the type of the bride. God loved the bride when she was married to another and under the law naked, and by living and working the law she would be cleansed. But her cleanliness was never accomplished, so he goes in unto her and she brings forth. But what is it? Oh it must die. It is not under the covenant that gives life. No marriage vow. So after God's time came and the fiercest battle was on the law killed, because the time came for the things to be done that God knew was to come. He would by grace and by his purpose bring her to him, in the rites and ceremony performed. She would bring forth: Jerusalem, the mother of us all, and God the Husbandman and Father will bring forth children. As Solomon was wise in wisdom and knowledge, Jesus the first born among many brethren, they will all be, through his blood, as he is some day. And this inner man is now like him, because begotten of the Father, in us quickened into divine life. So Bathsheba was under the law married to another, yet she was David's choice, and take choice and purpose out and God is gone, to me. I love the Lord, I hope, whose arm brought salvation, who grew tired of sacrifices and offerings, and could see, too, that Lebanon was not sufficient, and all the beasts were not enough to cleanse, nor offer, nor sacrifice, but it would take himself to please himself, and he for his righteousness' sake did what he did, for his name's sake. Then we have no use for "builders," and this and that, for we know that the building was done and the material all made ready by him who could and did reckon it all up and count the cost and pay the debt thereof, and know who did it all, and then we can with Solomon say, Wisdom built her house, hewed out her pillars and sent her maidens (the pastors) to feed the members of that body. With what? Jeremiah says with instruction and understanding. God, after the choice of his own heart, sends pastors to feed. O, brother Dodson, you are one. I can see by reading your letter to your dear father that you felt and realized that material things were vain. We all realize, yet some way we have to still make home for our loved ones. I get so tired of it all, and hate some days my duty to my home. I would rather think and read, and, as brother Frederick Keene said, go out in this field at eventide and see the beauty thereof. I love to think of God going into his garden of grace and smelling his choicest lilies, the sweetest odors (prayers of the saints) ascending to him on high from earth, his footstool, they ascend back to him. When he sends to the lily the odor (or prayer) that odor goes back to God, and it is

acceptable, because it comes from him, so he accomplishes through himself the things he desires.

I must close. I did not know what I wanted to say. I cannot control my thoughts and they lead me on and on. I hope they enter into the beauties that some day we will enjoy, after we have passed from this vain world. I long to go home, yet I dread death.

Give my love, respect and fellowship to your father, if you feel you can stoop down to such a vain worm as I know myself to be. Perhaps I do not deserve and should not put myself in with God's beloved family, but where else can I go, the world hates us? They look on us as poison, it seems, so if I cannot follow after those who give God all praise and honor and glory and know that he is all, then I will be left out entirely. May God teach us to know him more and more and praise him for our kindred in Christ, who are knit together in love.

Unworthily, but in hope,

EFFIE BLOGG.

BASSETT, Virginia.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been requested by my daughter to write my experience, so I shall try in my feeble way to tell some of my trials and troubles in this life.

When I was about eighteen years of age I was walking along a road one day when suddenly everything turned dark and a terrible burden came upon me. I thought I should die and be lost. I went to bed and prayed to dream something that would relieve my mind of its burden, but instead of relief I dreamed of seeing Satan coming after me. I prayed with all my heart to be saved. My trouble would wear off to some extent and I would try to be lively, for I did not want any one to know about my trouble. I would read the Bible and *Zion's Landmark* and go to hear preaching, but I did not get much relief of mind. My prayer was, Lord, have mercy on me. I went on in this condition for about three years, when I awoke one night and it seemed to be the darkest time I had ever seen. It seemed that I could not move or speak. I had become as a little babe. I prayed, as I thought, for the last time. Immediately everything shone as bright as gold and my burden was gone. I thought that if I had ten thousand tongues they would all be praising God. When I got up the next morning everything looked bright and lovely. These words were on my mind,

> If I could tell to sinners around
> What a dear Savior I have found.

I felt that I wanted to tell every one how happy I was. But I soon thought I would not tell any one, for if I was deceived I did not want to deceive any one else. I wanted to be satisfied before I offered myself to the church. I asked the Lord to show me in a dream, and I dreamed that I was just about as low as could be with consumption and all that troubled me was not being baptized. I thought I was being carried to the water on a sheet, singing,

> "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
> That saved a wretch like me;
> I once was lost, but now am found,
> Was blind, but now I see."

I felt so happy that I wanted to join the church. I went to Reed Creek Church the next appointment, and was received into the church on Saturday, and was baptized on Sunday (September, 1880,) by Elder Elcanah Turner. I thought for a time that I would never have any more trouble, but that was not to be. During these fifty-three years I have had a few moments of happiness to enjoy and hours of trouble to endure. At one time I got in so much trouble about things of this world that I asked the Lord what I must do. These words came to me, "I would sing my Jesus' lovely name when all things else decay." This gave me much comfort.

At the age of forty-eight I was very ill and thought I was going to die. Everything looked dark to me, and I prayed for the light to shine around me again that I might die happy. In a short time the road looked straight and bright as gold, and these words came to me, This is the light that will shine upon the road that will lead you to the Lamb. I was happy then, and not afraid to die, but I wondered what would become of my children. For some purpose I am still here at the age of seventy-five. I am unable to walk much, but I try to attend meetings when I am able, for I love the church, and I believe as strongly in the Baptist doctrine as I ever did. Sinners saved by grace if saved at all. Though the world may think it strange, I would not with the world exchange.

Your sister in hope,

MARTHA E. DRAPER.

MURRAY, Ky., April 30, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter written by our dear sister in Christ, Mrs. D. C. Turner, who was painfully injured in an automobile accident, which you may publish if you see fit. It shows and proves the Lord has been very good to her. I cannot see how she could write at all. God surely was with her to write such a precious letter while lying flat on her back with shoulder broken and shoved down, ribs and hip broken, but, as she said, with the Lord's strength she could run. You could only listen with tears of joy to hear her tell of feeling so closely the presence of the Lord with her.

Send the dear old SIGNS on. Oh the sweet and precious messages God sends forth through its pages to the poor hungry souls.

(MRS.) W. T. CHESTER.

FARMINGTON, Ky., July 31, 1933.

DEAR SISTER CHESTER:—I wonder why I have not had a long letter from you, and the only reason that comes to me is, I do not deserve it. I feel to be a dead dog, but I have enough life left to desire the crumbs that fall from the dear Master's table. You have been on my mind daily since I was hurt and I have looked for you, or just hoped you could get away to come. I hope your health is better. I am still in bed in the plaster cast, but am hoping two more weeks will find me able to be out of it, and may it be the Lord's will. My arm has been turned loose from my body, but I cannot use it much yet.

You can see by this writing that I cannot use my hand much; it is so dead and stiff; a part of it has no feeling at all in it. I have been sick since Wednesday, but am feeling better to-day. About a week after I came home from the hospital I was taken with pleurisy in my shoulder and side that was broken and it caused me much pain, but I have recovered from that now. Dear sister, I feel the Lord has been very good to me, better than I deserve.

Did you go to the Union Meeting? My mind and heart were there, but this broken body could not get there, nevertheless I had a sweet message from my Savior, and I shed tears of great joy. I had been feeling cast down and cold for ever so long, but since I was hurt it seems that in a way he has been very near me, and I felt him mine forever. But the last few days I seem to feel myself slipping away from his presence, and my cry is, O Lord, forsake me not; dwell with me, O my Savior. When not expecting it these words entered my heart, I will never forsake nor leave thee. Oh what cheering words! I feel now that I will never doubt and fear again. But alas, I know by sad experience that I will, for if we reign with him we must also suffer with him. There was a time when he felt to be forsaken by his Father, for he cried out and said, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? If we never feel forsaken we will not be following him. We should rejoice when we get in this condition, but we cannot, for we feel so wretched and cast down. Why should we rejoice? Because it is the road our Lord has traveled.

Sister Chester, after the Lord had so wonderfully blessed me, yesterday morning I opened my Bible at the thirteenth chapter of Hebrews and began to read, and in the fifth verse I found these very same words: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," and from this one passage I found it referred to five other passages, the very same words. He spoke this to Jacob when he was on the journey to Laban, after he had received Isaac's blessings and Esau was angry and had threatened his life. So he lighted on a certain place, and tarried there all night, and dreamed a dream, and God was in this place and this dream concerned the ladder that was set up on the earth and reached unto heaven. Dear sister, is not this the true church set upon the earth here? Jacob was on earth, and this special revelation was revealed to him from God, and here he set the stone up and poured oil over it. He said, The Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. How often the Lord is near us and we do not know it, as it was with me yesterday, feeling to be far away from him. O, dear sister, is this not enough to make us take up our bed and walk? I feel this morning that in his strength I can run, but without him I can do nothing. So back to Jacob. The Lord said, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land, for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

No conditions; and is not this the same special revelation that Jesus spoke to Peter when he said, On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it? His church to-day is composed of people on earth with this revealed truth planted in their hearts by the one Mediator between God and man, the only begotten of the Father, his only Son, Jesus. He said, If ye believe in God believe also in me.

Doctor Stokes brought me a bundle of SIGNS OF THE TIMES and the *Gospel News* to read. His mother was an Old Primitive Baptist and took the papers. Oh it is all so good! To-day he brought one paper, the date was 1868, and, sister, it is the same sweet story that is told to-day of Jesus and his love. All of grace, free grace.

Sister Chester, I will bring this to a close, as it is a great task for me to try to write. I hope you can read it. Excuse all mistakes. Pray for me when love fills your heart. I would be glad to see you. If you can have a mind, write to me soon.

Your sister in hope of mercy,

(MRS.) D. C. TURNER.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., April 9, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—Through the tender mercy of the all-wise God I, a poor sinful creature, make the attempt to write you a few lines to let you know how much I appreciate your kindness in sending me the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I look forward to its coming, for its pages are full of what I believe to be the truth, which I hope I was not taught to love by man's words, but by One who has all power in heaven and in earth, who can work and none can hinder. I sincerely wish I could send you the price of the paper, but I just cannot, as I have no money of my own and my children have been hard hit by the depression. Since my dear husband was taken they are far behind, but I do hope they may live to see the time when they can send you something, for it is a great comfort to me to read the good letters written by the editors and other good brethren and sisters. I do not go to hear preaching often, as I have no way of going, and when I do get there I cannot hear all that is said because I am hard of hearing, but I do love to meet with the brethren, sisters and friends, for it is very lonely for me since my dear husband was taken. He has been gone two years, but his memory is still fresh in my mind and I do miss his sweet voice in the song service so much. As long as his health would permit we went to our church meetings every opportunity and did enjoy the song service and yearly meetings very much, but we must try to be submissive to the Lord's will, for we know that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord. But oh do I love him in the way this means? is what I want to know. I do hope I am thankful in the right way for the good paper, and I do pray that the dear editors may be spared many years yet

to send out the paper that has stood so many years declaring the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, we hope.

Dear ones, when you have remembered all others, please pray for me and mine in our lonely and sad hours, that we may some sweet day be freed from these troubles and be carried to that sweet home above where all is peace and love, where there will be no more sorrow.

Please excuse mistakes, for they are plentiful. This letter is imperfect, like the writer. I am a poor unworthy one, not worthy of the least of God's rich blessings. If I am saved it is by grace alone, free grace. I hope I am thankful for God's rich blessings that are bestowed upon us here in this world.

Yours in hope of a better world than this,

(MRS.) J. E. SMITH.

DANVILLE, Va., June 9, 1934.

MRS. ESTHER RUSTON—DEAR SISTER:—After reading your two letters to sister Gillis over and over I feel that it would be unkind and ungrateful in me not to inform you of the pleasure and comfort I received from them. They seemed as treasures of great value brought from their hiding-place to comfort and cheer the saints of the most high God. How grateful I feel to sister Gillis for requesting you to thus perform what I believe was your duty. While I fear I cannot write or say anything that will interest one so highly favored of the Lord, yet I want you to know that you aided, strengthened and encouraged my little hope in the Lord so that I may go forward to meet the trials and afflictions that await me, for such things often seem just ready to crush me, such things as you have handed around to God's dear ones, and I believe many of them were made to rejoice and praise God for it all. Oh how often we are fed from our Master's storehouse, that will never be exhausted, as giving does not impoverish him, nor to withhold enrich him. Truly he is God and there is none like him. I have not been called upon to span the briny deep as you have done, yet I find in your experience much to cause me to think I have traveled a portion of the same road, and how it does fill my poor heart with joy that is unspeakable, just cannot be expressed. Oh how good when the Lord enables us to have sweet fellowship for each other, regardless of distance or whether or not we have ever met, as I do not remember ever having met you, but I have met your husband and have heard him preach. Oh what a gift from heaven when we can hear the joyful sound of the gospel, or when we can read from the pen of those like you and so many others I have been blessed to hear and read after, and can feel to say, Amen, to the glory of God. It does give us strength day by day to go forward. I feel assured we are traveling the same road. Pardon me for thus writing you, for I did not know how to reach you direct.

Your brother in hope,

R. L. DODSON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1934.

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ACTS XX. 27.

"FOR I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."

Paul is here speaking to the elders at Ephesus prior to his departure from that place, where for the space of three years he ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears, serving the Lord with all humility of mind and with many tears, and temptations, which befell him by the laying in wait of the Jews. He had been faithful among them, not withholding anything, for he declared in verse twenty, "I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house." This blessed apostle was called and qualified for that very work. At the time of his conversion the Lord told Ananias when he was telling the evil that Saul had done to God's saints at Jerusalem, "Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." In doing so, in bearing his name, he was in great danger and perils often, yet he himself declared that "none of these things move me." When judged of men, he changed not his course, which he desired to finish with joy, but faithfully declared that it was a light thing to be judged by man. He knew that if one would live godly in Christ Jesus that one would suffer persecution. In one place he said, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." All this from the opposition of men and devils, which did not overcome him, but in the mercy of God, such opposition and persecution made him contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Such opposition was a light matter, which Paul had under consideration when he said, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." Thus Paul was blessed of God, and declares, "His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." As we have

quoted before, Paul was a chosen vessel unto God, and so in 1 Corinthians xv. 3, he says, "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received." Paul received a full gospel, his writings prove that he shunned not to declare the grace of God in man's salvation, His everlasting and electing love, the vital unity of Christ and his church. He had a clear view and expressed it of the redemption, pardon, justification, reconciliation, resurrection and final perseverance of all the saints. He declared all these things, for they were all the counsel of God to Paul. This expression, "*All the counsel of God,*" does not mean all the purposes and decrees of Almighty God. No man can declare these, but like Cowper we can say, "His purposes will ripen fast, unfolding every hour." Paul means God's revealed will in the gospel of Jesus Christ sent down from heaven, called the word of God's grace. Jesus said, "He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." Thus God's counsel was given unto his apostles through Jesus and the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and as they were enabled by the Holy Spirit to abide in that counsel, shunning not to declare it, they were abiding in Christ the vine, and bore fruit, and their fruit remained. Paul received the gospel as the other apostles did, from Jesus, who not only commissioned them, but gave them ability to preach, even though Paul did not stand with the disciples when Jesus said, Matthew xxviii. 19, 20, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Thus in the counsel of God were all things that Jesus had commanded, and whatsoever the Holy Ghost reveals must and will accord with what Jesus declared. Thus while Paul was not in the group of Christ's disciples when that commission was given, yet Jesus spoke also to him, and the Holy Spirit led and instructed him, so that he declared all the counsel of God, not shunning to do so that he might spare himself from the persecution of his former friends and associates. He fully preached the gospel of Christ. As we listed a few of the principal points of doctrine of the christian faith that Paul preached, let us briefly refer to them here, and see if Paul's testimony varies from ours or from the gospel as it came down from heaven. First, man's salvation. Paul taught that it was by grace, through faith, and that not of themselves, it was the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. The angel said, "Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." As touching God's everlasting and electing love, Paul tells us that we were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in

love. Jesus said, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me," and in another place he declares, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Paul preached the vital unity of Christ and his people, a doctrine denied by many calling themselves Primitive Baptists. We well remember a few years ago reading an article opposed to this doctrine, in which the writer said that a child of God was only united vitally to Christ when he was born again, which statement to us seemed equal to saying that a person is only vitally joined to Adam when he is born into this world. If that could be proven, then Paul would be wrong when he said, "As in Adam all die." Man was vitally united to Adam in the transgression, for this is the counsel of God. Though man may shun to declare it, it is the truth, and it is also the truth that just as all of Adam's fallen race, to the last one that shall be born of women, were in Adam's loins and and were made sinners in him, and died in him, and in that condition they received natural life from him, with all the ills that that life is subject to, so all chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world have life in Him that is eternal. They are not children in him, any more than we were children in Adam, but our eternal life is in our eternal head as our natural life was in Adam, our natural head. Paul taught this vital unity, and declared, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," just as Adam lives in every one of Adam's children and they show it. Jesus said, "Ye must be born again." Paul said, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Jesus said, "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Paul had a clear view of redemption, pardon, justification and reconcilation, and taught them, not shunning to declare all and every point thereof clearly, as it had been revealed to him. Paul knew and preached that justification could not come to us unless the one who sinned was vitally united to Christ, so that "our breaches of the law are his, and his obedience ours." Take that relationship away and one might be pardoned, but one could never be justified. Paul declared, He was delivered for our offenses, justice took hold of Jesus, because we belonged to him before we fell in Adam, and Jesus said, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" Jesus suffered these things for our offenses, was raised again for our justification. Through this very offering of himself he had brought us nigh unto God. He is our atonement, AT-ONE-MENT, so that we are reconciled to God. Paul clearly taught this, and it accords with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul also taught the absolute predestination of all things, whatsoever comes to pass, and declared that God worketh *all things* after the counsel of his own will. Read Romans ninth chapter, about the

potter and the clay, and then let us see what Jesus said to Pilate: "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." In the denying of this doctrine of Christ men deny the possibility of God's word being fulfilled, for in its fulfillment Satan, men, sin and death take their place, and play their part. Thus God said, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow." David tells us by inspiration that the wicked are God's sword. Paul also preached love one to another. Much of his epistles are admonitions and precepts to God's dear saints. He also believed and declared the resurrection of the body. If he had not he would have been withholding more than is meet, but he shunned not to declare all the counsel of God. It was the sinner that was saved and it was the sinner that died and was buried. Jesus was buried and Jesus rose and became the first-fruits of them that slept, and as is the first-fruits so the whole harvest must come forth. John saw that same body that Jesus had in the tomb, but glorified, sown in weakness, raised in power. And when he shall appear, that is, Christ, who is our life, Paul says, then shall we appear with him in glory; and John says, When we shall see him we shall be like him. Paul also believed in adoption and shunned not to declare it, not that we are already adopted into God's family. That which is born of God needs no adoption, but that which is born of Adam must be adopted into the family of God or ever we see his face in righteousness. Paul tell us, "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father," and he tells us later that we ourselves groan with ourselves, waiting (and we are still waiting) for the adoption, to wit, *the redemption of our body.*

Thus we have briefly touched upon some of the main points contained in the counsel of God which Paul shunned not to declare. God grant unto his servants to-day that they might stick close to his word, teaching the brethren and those that believe, to observe all things in the ordinance of the house, the precepts of the gospel and the doctrine of God our Savior whatsoever he has commanded; that is, whatsoever is in the word of God. Paul did declare unto them all the counsel of God, as we have tried to show. May God make us faithful and keep us faithful to the end.

G. R.

ERRATA.

In the July issue of the Signs the following mistakes were made: On page 145, column 1, line 13, the word "some" should be "none." On page 146, column 1, line 6, the word "rule" should be "reign." On page 153, column 1, line 22, the word "sing" should be "sin." On page 153, column 1, line 24, the word "or" should be "of." On page 160, column 1, line 8, the word "justice" should be "judgment."

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder R. Lester Dodson)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in joint session with the several churches composing it, convened at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, June 6th, 7th and 8th, 1934, sends christian greetings to those with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Messages which emanate from associational bodies to their correspondents are expected to set forth the doctrine which is believed and held sacred by them. The passage of Scripture to which attention is called at this time is found in the twenty-fourth verse of the fourteenth chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah, and reads as follows: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."

A request from the State of Tennessee has recently been made for our views through the SIGNS on this text and we have chosen this occasion to present them. The one making the request accompanies it with the following questions: (1) Does it mean all events concerning Israel in the past only, or (2) Does it mean just the good he promised, and (3) Does it continue on down through time? We are satisfied that the context will convince the careful reader that this text does not permit of any such limitations as those suggested by the questions asked. By referring to the first five verses of this chapter it will be seen that the Lord is not only speaking to his people among the Jews, but also those among the Gentiles, all of whom he says "Shall cleave to the house of Jacob." Jacob here is a representative character, for every child of God, whether Jew or Gentile, as they stand in nature is in a waste howling wilderness. There is where God finds them, and he leads them about and instructs them in the way they should or must go before they are separated from strange gods. The second verse in this chapter says, "And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place; and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the Lord for servants and handmaids: and they shall take them captives, whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors." Thus is foretold the deliverance of the children of God from the powers of darkness, the binding of the old man with his evil deeds and making him subservient to the will and purpose of Almighty God. The mouth of the Lord had already declared that the elder should serve the younger.

The third verse goes on to tell what takes place when the powers of darkness are broken asunder: "And it shall come to pass in the day that the Lord shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve." We see from this that Israel was "made to serve" under this hard bondage. God's infinite purpose embraced the fall of Adam, through the weakness of the flesh, with all the consequences which followed. There was

no escaping it. He decreed long before Isaac was born that the promised seed of Abraham should dwell in a strange land and be in Egyptian bondage and servitude, but he was determined to glorify himself in delivering his people by a high and mighty hand. When this is experienced in the soul there is that blessed rest from sorrow, from fear and from the hard bondage wherein it was made to serve. Then, "Thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased! The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers." The weight of this evidence should be sufficient to prove that not only was Israel concerned, but also her enemies as typified by her arch enemy, the king of Babylon. Neither was it limited to what men would call "good," but it embraced all that came to pass. Now, it is to spiritual Israel, of whom national Israel was but a shadowy type, that the text is addressed. It is not to him who is a Jew outwardly and whose circumcision is of the flesh, but it is to him who is a Jew inwardly, whose circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not of the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God. To such characters as this God himself is speaking by the mouth of his prophet, saying, *"The Lord of hosts hath sworn,* saying, *Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."* Finite language cannot begin to explore the height, the depth and the breadth of the meaning encouched in these wonderful words. In other connections in the Bible God is said to be the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, the God of Jeshurun, etc., but we would like to observe with special emphasis that in our text he is spoken of as THE LORD OF HOSTS. This reaches out beyond any class, creed or people, and includes all creatures, things, times and events, not only which had taken place up to that time, but that which was then or to be in all future ages. Nothing was so small or so insignificant as to be omitted or left out. He who was sovereign over all worlds, principalities and powers, visible or invisible, was speaking. He tells us that he had even "sworn" concerning that which was to follow, showing the seriousness of his mind, saying, "SURELY [there could be no mistake about it] as *I* have thought, so shall it come to pass." Naturally, a man's wisdom, or lack of it, is usually judged or determined by his ability to think through his plan, whatever it may be, and then control conditions, or cope with them sufficiently to make a success of his venture. Man, regardless of his wisdom, is proven repeatedly and conclusively to be a failure. Not so with God. He declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." When we awake from our slumbers early in the morning, refreshed from the sleep which God giveth in the night, and look out upon nature, beholding the wonders of

his literal creation, the sun to give light and heat, the clouds to cover and water the earth and make it to bring forth, to the end that the needs of every living creature, whether good or bad, shall be supplied, we become lost in wonder and amazement concerning the mind which conceived it and the power which brought it all about. Surely, there is none like him. John says, All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. All that we have any knowledge of then in the universe, whether above or beneath, displays the wonders of his wisdom and power. And lest we forget, we know very little even about the things that we think we know the most. The different and unmeasured periods through which the world has passed, with all the multitudes of its formations and creatures, have been just as God had thought concerning them. Nothing, nor all things combined, will be able to change or prevent everything coming to pass in the future exactly as God has purposed. With him there is neither variableness nor a shadow of a turn, and all must come to pass and end as shall please our heavenly Friend. That which he created by his mighty power he controls and directs as seemeth right unto him. "And as I have purposed, so shall it stand." We understand that the original word for "purpose" means *fore-appointment,* or an appointment in advance of that which is most certainly to take place and come to pass, despite all that may be done by the opposing powers. While, as we have said, God's thought and purpose embraced everything which has or will ever come to pass, there is an especial sense in which this applies to his spiritually-minded children. Paul said, We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. David said, In thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them, and we are convinced that all that concerns them: parents, native place and time, all appointed were by him, and that nothing shall come to pass except that which the Lord hath commanded. Likewise, we are persuaded that all things shall work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. God is either sovereign over all things or he is not. If he is not, then there is not anything safe at any time or place. If a great railroad system is to serve its purpose properly and carry its passengers safely to their destination, a dispatcher must be in charge who knows his business and whose word is law. All of the trains must be run in unison. There cannot be a single exception to this rule. Should even one train be operated independently of the head control, chaos would prevail throughout the entire system. It is utterly inconceivable to us that any such state of affairs should or could be associated with our God. With him all things are definitely fixed and certain. That which follows our text shows conclusively that God would break the Assyrian in his land,

and upon his mountain tread him under foot, and cause his yoke to depart from off his people, and his burden from their shoulders. He says, "This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth; and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?"

We of the Warwick Association feel that we are greatly blest in being able to believe and rejoice in this glorious doctrine.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
CYRUS RISLER, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, Saturday and Sunday, May 26th and 27th, 1934.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Through the kind forbearance of our God we have been permitted to assemble in another session of our Association. It has been with gladness of heart and thanksgiving to him that we have again received your messengers. The preaching has been in the demonstration of the power of the Holy Ghost from heaven. We have been made to rejoice in the continuance of his lovingkindness to us. We are at peace one with another. We desire to render thanks to the Lord for his manifold blessings to us in showing forth his marvelous lovingkindness. Our session has been well attended. Our minds have been made to dwell on the things that make for the welfare of our beloved Zion. We are blessed with kind friends who have willingly helped us entertain you, which we very much appreciate.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, the date to be set later, where we again hope to greet your messengers with the same love and unity that has thus far abounded in our meeting. Until then, farewell.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Mod.
JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in joint session with the several churches composing it, convening at New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, June 6th, 7th and 8th, 1934, sends christian greetings to our sister associations and meetings of our correspondence.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year has passed and through the mercy of Almighty God we have been spared to meet again and receive your messengers and correspondence. Your messengers have come to us preaching Christ and him crucified, the theme we all love to hear.

We trust the Lord may be with us as we journey to our homes, and that all may feel in their hearts the desire to

meet with us again at our next session, which will be held, the Lord willing, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1935. The place of meeting to be announced through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
CYRUS RISLER, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, June 23rd, 1934, at the home of the bride's mother, at Longmoor, near Purcellville, Virginia, John Stearns Bleecker, Jr., of West Chester, Pennsylvania, and Miss Alma Settle Norman.

By Elder R. Lester Dodson, of Rutherford, N. J., July 4th, 1934, at the home of the bride's parents, near Bellvale, N. Y., Harold Arthur Kane, son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Francis Kane, of Glen Rock, N. J., and Miss Mariam Emeline Benedict, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Abner Benedict, R. F. D. 1, Warwick, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. RHODA LOUISE COOPER, the subject of this notice, was born January 31st, 1848, and died at The Primitive Baptist Home, Salisbury, Maryland, August 8th, 1934. She was for many years a member of the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, N. J. Her chief joy was in attending meetings and mingling with her brethren. Often she would go a long distance alone to attend meeting when it did not seem prudent for her to do so. She was truly one of the faithful ones, a character whose walk and conversation we would do well to emulate. She entered The Primitive Baptist Home as a resident September 23rd, 1929, and enjoyed her home there very much. She always had a word of praise and thanksgiving to the Giver of every good and perfect gift for putting it in the hearts of her brethren to establish this home where she could spend her last days. Though relieved as much as it was possible for the doctor and nurses to do, she suffered much during her last illness, but was very patient. She leaves a son, living in Washington, D. C., and a sister in Rutherford, N. J., other relatives and a host of friends. She was buried in the Old School Baptist cemetery at Hopewell, N. J., where Elder C. W. Vaughn conducted a short service at the grave. We believe she has entered into the glorious presence of her Savior.

A FRIEND.

ELDER WILLIAM THOMAS EUBANKS, brother of the late Elder John G. Eubanks, of Newark, Delaware, passed away from this life July 5th, 1934. He was born in the year 1840, making his age ninety-four years at the time of his death, which occurred at the home of his much beloved granddaughter and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Kerr. They resided at 111 Columbia Drive, Decatur, Georgia. He married Miss Ellen Lewis some seventy years ago. They were blessed with three children, one of whom survives him, Mrs. Lena Wrinkle, of Atlanta, Georgia. He is also survived by twelve grandchildren: Mrs. J. C. Allgood, Birmingham, Ala., Mrs. Z. A. Huff, St. Petersburg, Florida, Mrs. Ben Smith, Cedartown, Ga., Mrs. Oliver Storck and Mrs. R. J. Williams, Atlanta, Ga., T. H. Eubanks, B. E. Winkle, Hollywood, California, E. E.., O. L. and C. A. Wrinkle, also eighteen great-grandchildren. He and his brother, John G., were soldiers of the Confederacy and were friends of General Robert E. Lee. "Uncle Tom" said he went into a battle not feeling well and was taken with measles and lay in the the rain all night. They finally put him in a barn. After the war he was a brick mason by trade. He joined the Old Primitive Baptist Church and soon began preaching the gospel of God our Savior. He was a fine singer, and very much loved by the Baptists. He suffered a stroke of apoplexy, brought on by exposure, which blocked the optic nerve and left him totally blind for more than forty years. He then abandoned active ministry. He requested a short, simple funeral, and Elder J. C. Hewitt conducted a brief but very appropriate service. His body was laid to rest in the family plot at New Harmony Primitive Baptist Church, near Hiram, Paulding County, Georgia.

Written by his grand-nephew,

JEWELL O. CROKER.

Mrs. ELIZABETH (COUNTS) PARSONS, wife of D. D. Parsons, and eldest daughter of the late G. B. and Crosby Counts, was born in Dickison County, West Virginia, October 26th, 1873, and on Friday evening, June 22nd, 1934, at 6:30 o'clock, God saw fit to relieve her of her suffering, which she had endured with patience for many weeks. Her stay on earth was 60 years, 7 months and 26 days. She professed a good hope in Christ and joined the Primitive Baptist Church called Elium in May, 1926, and was faithful and steadfast to the end. She was baptized by Elder Dell Smith. She was a noble character and always ready to help any one in distress. At the age of seventeen years she with her parents moved to West Virginia, and on March 26th, 1901, she was united in marriage. The husband and five children survive her. She often told us not to worry about her, for she felt she was going to eternal rest.

Written by her daughter,

(MRS.) FAYE KISER.

SISTER **CASSIE STEVENSON** passed away at her home at Melbourne, Ontario, March 3rd, 1934. She was the widow of James Stevenson, who predeceased her thirteen years ago. She was born March 1st, 1862, and was the fourth of a family of eleven of the late Angus and Margaret McTaggart, of Ekfrid. On confession of her faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and love to his saints, she was baptized by the late Elder Carnell, and was to the time of her death a faithful and consistent member of the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church. She suffered over a year from heart ailment, and was confined to her bed over three months. She was given all the kind and loving care that could be bestowed on her by her sister, Mrs. Bert Willy, and niece Cassie, of whom she was very fond. Throughout her sickness she was most of the time willing to wait all the days of her appointed time till her change should come. Her mind was very often sweetly lifted above her suffering and she was filled with love to the Lord, and even when very weak in body she continued strong in the faith. The resurrection of the body was a subject upon which she loved to dwell, even in her last days. The writer had sweet fellowship with her in heavenly things and joins her many relatives and friends in sincerely mourning their loss. She leaves four brothers, Dan, William and Cyrus McTaggart, of Ekfrid, and Angus McTaggart, of Pittsburg, Pa., also three sisters, Jessie Gillis, of London, Maggie Carswell, of Iona, and Jennie Willy, of Melbourne, besides a number of nephews and nieces. She rests in the Lord, where she desired to be. Interment was in Mayfair Cemetery, by the side of the Ekfrid meetinghouse, where she loved to go.

G. R.

LILLIE S. CAMPBELL, widow of John T. Campbell, was taken from earth to be present with the Lord June 7th, 1934. She was born in Washington, D. C., May 23rd, 1850, so that she was but two weeks past her eighty-fourth birthday. She is survived by three sons, J. Frank Campbell, Charles A. Campbell, John T. Campbell, Jr., and one daughter, Mrs. Nellie M. Slater, and several grandchildren. She united with the Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, Washington, D. C., many years ago, the late Elder F. A. Chick baptizing her in the Potomac River. After her husband's death she resided with her daughter, Mrs. Slater, in Virginia. After moving to Virginia she attended the meetings of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, where she will be much missed, as she was there at every opportunity until failing health for several months prevented her. For the last few weeks of her life it became necessary for her to be in the care of a nurse, and she received every attention for her comfort. Her end came quietly, sleeping herself away until she breathed the last breath, to wake no more to earthly anxieties. She has been a frequent visitor in our home, and her conversation plainly showed she loved to read the Scriptures, and desired that she might understand them. She possessed copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of many years ago, and frequently she would bring one of them with her at her weekly visit that we might share with her some article or other which she esteemed especially good. She was also very fond of hymns, and once particularly received much enjoyment from one we had sung at meeting, the first line of which is: "Jesus, our soul's delightful choice," speaking of it several times. It was very evident her heart was looking at the things which are not seen, things eternal, and we believe she has now entered into rest.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder H. H. Lefferts, with the reading of the hymn, "Give me the wings of faith to rise," etc., and after speaking in prayer he spoke from Psalms cxvi. 15, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Her body was laid to rest in Glenwood Cemetery, Washington, D. C., until the Lord shall come to raise the dead in Christ in incorruption.

Written by request.

G. ASTON.

Miss **NETTIE KATE COOPER** died at her mother's home, in Newton County, Georgia, April 21st, 1934, in her fifty-second year. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Cooper. She had been a patient, humble sufferer most of her life. Some years ago she had a major operation, but it gave her no relief. She was a devout christian, never ashamed at any time or place to own her Lord and Master. She trusted God so passively that her life was an example of beautiful faith and trust. Her delight was in reading the Bible and discussing its teachings in the light of God's sovereignty. She always gave all glory to him who is over all, under all and around all. Her parents have been subscribers to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for more than fifty years, and Nettie was a constant reader of this periodical since she was a young girl. She read it with the keenest interest and profoundest understanding. She was very sensitive of any semblance of man's power to save sinners. She attended regularly the Primitive Baptist Church in reach of her home as long as she was able to go. None in the community contributed more liberally to the temporal support of these churches than the Cooper family. I was her teacher in early life, and among the thousands of pupils I have taught I recall none who was more obedient and gentle, or who was more apt in her studies. She was a model pupil, loved by all her teachers and schoolmates. She was a woman of many lovely traits of character, and was held in the highest esteem by all who knew her. In these times of flippancy and insincerity it is good for all of us to cherish the memory of one who pos-

sessed the three cardinal virtues of christianity, namely, frankness, faith and humility. Nettie will be greatly missed by her host of friends. The brightest light has gone from her home. She is survived by her mother and two brothers, all of Newton County. She was buried near her father, at Sewell Church, in Morgan County. Elder R. L. Cook was in charge of the obsequies, preaching the doctrine she lived and died by to a large concourse of friends and neighbors. A religion that gave such comfort and assurance to Nettie in life and in death is good enough for any of us.

G. C. ADAMS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

"A friend," Wash., $2; T. O. Turner, Ky., $1; Alfred E. Titus, N. J., $10.

MEETINGS.

Denton Creek Old School or Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with Saints Rest Church, Dallas, Texas, beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in August, and continuing three days. The Association will meet in the Avery Building at Fair Park. Those coming by train or bus take street car for Fair Park.

J. R. HARDY.

We expect Elder R. Lester Dodson to be with us at North Berwick, Maine, the second Sunday in August and Saturday afternoon before, the Lord willing. The meeting on Sunday is scheduled for morning and afternoon. All who love the truth are invited to meet with us.

ALICE M. HALL.

The New Hope Association of Texas will hold her fifty-second annual session, the Lord willing, with Mount Zion Church, nine miles south of Greenville, Texas, to begin on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1934. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and behold our order and hear the gospel preached. Ministers of our faith and order are especially invited.

S. M. DICKENS, Moderator.

W. M. SIKES, Clerk.

The rugular annual all-day meeting of the Brookfield Church and congregation will be held as usual on Friday, August 24th, 1934. Elder Charles W. Vaughn, of Hopewell, N. J., and Elder Arnold H. Bellows, of Roxbury, N. Y., expect to be present with the undersigned. All brethren and friends are invited to come and be with us.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in July and August, 1934. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The eighty-fourth annual session of the North Ochata Predestination Baptist Association is appointed to be held with New Hope Church, Hempstead County, Arkansas, nine miles south of Hope, Arkansas, on the Iron Mountain R. R., commencing on Friday before the first Sunday in September and continuing three days. All lovers of the truth are invited to be with us.

J. T. EVERETT, Moderator.

W. S. GORDON, Clerk.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association it to convene with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Shokan, Ulster County, New York, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday between the second and third Sundays in September (September 12th, 13th and 14th), 1934. Those coming by car or bus on Tuesday p. m., September 11th, will come direct to the church, and there will be some one there to direct them to places of entertainment. Also trains will be met at Shokan Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

ORVILLE WINCHELL, Deacon.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 808 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one-half block west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Cloth binding. Price, $1.25 each. One dozen or more, ordered at the same time and all to the same address, one dollar each. Cash must accompany orders. Make checks and money orders payable to

J. E. BEEBE & CO.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 102. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1934. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HAS NOT THE PROTESTANT CHURCH DEPARTED FROM THE DOCTRINAL TEACHING OF THE REFORMATION?

In what is known as the Protestant Reformation there were three prominent reformers: Martin Luther, John Calvin and King Henry the Eighth of England. They were all members of the Roman Catholic Church, which church grew out of the division in the Church of Rome, in the year A. D. 251. Between Novation and Cornelius, two opposing bishops, Cornelius was in favor of admitting great numbers into the church without regard to character. An election was held in the church and Cornelius received a majority of the votes and so was elected pastor of the church. Novation protested this disorder and withdrew, and a large number followed his example. Maintaining the discipline of the church in accordance with the emphatic command of God. (2 Cor. vi. 14, 18; 1 Cor. v. 11; Rev. xviii. 4). Constantine, the Roman Emperor, took the side of the Cornelius party and by imperial decree declared christianity the religion of the Roman State, and proclaimed himself head of the church, with the result that the Pagans rushed pell-mell to unite with the church, without any reference to conversion, bringing their Pagan superstitions, rites and ceremonies with them, and the church sank to the plane of political Paganism. (Scarbow, page 4.) It must be admitted by all who hold to the christian religion that Christ set up or organized a visible church or kingdom when he was upon earth in fulfillment of prophecy. (Dan. ii. 44.) It must be further admitted that he gave this church, or kingdom, all laws and ordinances necessary to be observed unto his second coming, as he is the King, Judge, Head and Law-giver of this kingdom. His church is a theocracy, its government is not left to other people. Moses and Christ were the law-givers in the two dispensations. Moses was told to make all things according to the pattern as shown to him

in the mount. At the transfiguration a voice came out of the clouds, saying, This is my beloved Son, hear ye him. This great Law-giver after his resurrection told his disciples to teach the nations to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them. His followers are forbidden to teach for doctrine the commandments of men. Christ told the Jews, In vain do ye worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. The commandments of men in the affairs of religion have always been a hinderance instead of a help. The Waldenses, who were the successors of the Novation party, called Puritans, Anabaptists and Baptists, in their confession of faith in the eleventh century, said, We esteem all the inventions of men in the affairs of religion as an unspeakable abomination before God. Milton said, They kept God's truth so pure of old when all of our fathers worshipped stock and stones. It hath pleased our divine Father in both the law and gospel dispensations to reserve to himself a remnant of his people, and not suffer them to bow the knee to the image of Baal. We believe that God has a people in all the so-called churches, both Catholic and Protestant, also in the various divisions and subdivisions in the Baptist Church. While there are hundreds of different church organizations, the true church is the only daughter of her mother (Jerusalem), the choice one of her that bore her. When this church is spoken of as a visible organization it is always referred to as a little flock, a remnant, the very elect and the fewest of all people, but when it is spoken of as an organism, or Christ's body, embracing all the redeemed family of God, it is spoken of as many and an innumerable company which no man can number.

We will now examine the doctrinal teachings of the various churches since Christ set up his church. The following principles of doctrine were taught by Christ and his apostles, also by Augustine and the Jansenists in the Catholic Church, the reformers Luther, Calvin and Toplady, the Waldenses and the Old School Baptists. First, the absolute sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for all matters of faith and practice. Second, the triune Jehovah. Third, the sovereignty of God. Fourth, the Deity and perfect humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Fifth, the personality of the Holy Ghost. Sixth, the fall of man. Seventh, unconditional election. Eighth, particular redemption and effectual calling. Ninth, justification by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ. That man in the fall wholly lost all the ability to any spiritual good accompanying salvation. In opposition to the above principles of doctrines the Palagian heresy arose in the fifth century Palagius (370-420) was born in England, went to Rome in 400, to Africa in 409, later Jerusalem, where he was accused of heresy before a synod in 415. He was a monk by profession, but never took orders (Chambers 728) was a legal moralist, and it would seem not having any christian experience. (Hassell 396). Palagius with a lawyer named Coelestius founded

the religious system known as Palagianism, defined as follows: That the sins of our parents are imputed to them only and not to their posterity, and that we derived no corruption from the fall, but are pure and unspotted as Adam came out of the forming hand of his Creator; that therefore mankind is capable of repentance and amendment, and of arriving at the highest degree of piety and virtue by use of his natural faculties and powers, that indeed external grace is necessary to excite his endeavors, but that he has no need of internal succor of the Divine Spirit. Third, that Adam by nature was mortal and whether he sinned or not would certainly have died. Fourth, that the grace of God is given in proportion to our merits. Fifth, that mankind may arise at a state of perfection in this life. Sixth, that the law qualifies men for the kingdom of heaven, and was founded upon equal promises with the gospel.

(Shumaker p. 243) John Cassian, a Greek monk and founder of convents for men and women at Marsaillesk, was the founder of semi-Palagianism. (Hassell p. 396) This system teaches that salvation is partly by works and partly by grace, the same heresy resurrected by James Arminius (1560-1609), defined in five articles as follows: First, conditional election and reprobation in opposition to the absolute predestination taught by Calvin. Second, universal redemption, or that the atonement was made by Christ for all mankind, though none but believers can be partakers of the benefit. Third, that man in order to exercise true faith must be regenerated and renewed by the operation of the Holy Spirit, which is the gift of God. Fourth, that man may resist divine grace. Fifth, that man may relapse from a state of grace, in opposition to Calvin's perseverance of the saints. (Webster.) The two opposing doctrines have been defined as follows: Paulinism and Pharisaism, Augustinism and Palaginism, Calvinism and Arminianism, Monergism and Synergism. Calvin's Institutes, Luther's Bondage of the will and Toplady's observations of the divine attributes all clearly, as does the Bible, teach that salvation is alone based upon the will, purpose and grace of God, and not upon any merits or foreseen obedience in the creature, "which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The heavenly birth is alone the work of the Spirit, without the cooperation or assistance of the flesh. "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing."

The system of doctrine known in history as Paulian, Augustinian or Calvinistic, says Professor Charles Hodge, is taught, we believe, in the Scriptures, was developed by Augustine, formally sanctioned by the Latin Church, adherred to by the witnesses of the truth during the middle ages, repudiated by the church of Rome in the council of Trent, revived in the church by the Jansenists, adopted by all the reformers, incorporated in the creed of the Protestant churches of Switzerland, of the palatinate of France, Holland, England and Scotland, and unfolded in

the standards formed by the Westminister Assembly, which have been doctrinally adopted by the Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Baptists of Europe and America, and unless words are twisted out of their lexical meanings, the Episcopal articles of faith, from the ninth to the eighteenth, and the Methodist articles, from the seventh to the twelfth, establish the same doctrine and are emphatic witnesses against their members who repudiate this doctrine of the Bible and of their fathers.

LYTLE BURNS.

FLORENCE, Alabama.

FAYETTE, Alabama.

DEARLY BELOVED KINDRED:—The time for an extension of my subscription to your valuable paper is at hand. While I am sending that in I feel inclined to try in my poor unworthy manner to say a few words as an encouragement to the owners, editors and God's poor and afflicted people in general. Many and strange to us are the things that are taking place in the world to-day, but, dear, little, wayfaring strangers, the most hurtful things are in the camps of Israel. It is hurtful to God's little children, who know the joyful sound, to see the wicked ways of man, but nothing can so disturb the sheep as to have one of the fold who has long been following (seemingly) in the footsteps of Jesus to join hand in hand with those who would scatter the sheep. However, many of those who have professed a love for the truth, and even proclaimed it, are now becoming so progressive and active that the old ways are by far too strait for them and they are blazing new trails that the Scriptures do not authorize and our forefathers did not follow. I am reminded just now of the words of Christ: "Without me ye can do nothing." O Lord, do teach those poor and afflicted people the vital importance of thy gentle Spirit. Brethren, everywhere, let us remember that in and of ourselves dwelleth no good thing. Water cannot, of its own power, rise higher than its source, neither can the nature of man be raised into something beyond that nature. Righteousness either comes from God or it comes from the nature of man. Our own works have been tried sufficiently and they only serve to sink us deeper in the mire. They are only filthy rags. Oh the filth and sin that is in the hearts of God's most humble children. I know of no record that those best actions, thoughts and words of the natural man should be so covered up in the blood of Christ that that same old man should later (after regeneration) show forth the love of God. Dear sin-tossed pilgrim, do you find yourself getting better? Can you find improvement in your conduct? Ah! never; oh no! But to the contrary. Daily, hourly, I find myself so prone to wander away to the alluring fancies of the world.

> "I am a stranger here below,
> And what I am 'tis hard to know;
> I am so vile, so prone to sin,
> I fear that I'm not born again."

I am very much like one of our precious old brethren in this country: I do hate my sinful ways and mourn and grieve that my hope is not brighter, but I do

love those who are just like me. I humbly hope that in some wonderful way, for some reason beyond my comprehension, God has made me to love these dear old begging saints who confess they are yet passive in God's hands. If obedience is a fruit of the Spirit it is not a fruit of the flesh. If brethren believe the whole man doctrine it would be more consistent for them to say so than to hide behind a smoke screen of two salvations, because to say we merit our blessings in time is to say the old man is improved by regeneration, and of course then the warfare between the Spirit and the flesh is a myth. If obedience comes as a fruit of the Spirit, working in us the things that are well-pleasing in His sight, on what grounds are we to expect blessings for it? Paul tells us that the love of Christ constrains us (2 Cor. v. 14), and Webster tells us that "constrain" means "compel." The love of God does not lead his children against their will, but they are made willing to forsake all and to follow where he leads. I do not feel that God should reward his children for living sober, upright lives, but that he has rewarded them and their walking after him is an evidence of it.

Brethren, this is too deep water for just a boy to wade in. I trust that the Lord, if according to his will, will guide his called out children to continue fighting (and resting) in and for the dear old principles that have identified Zion for lo these many hundreds of years.

Remember this poor sinner when at the throne of grace.

W. D. GRIFFIN.

McDowell, Ky., June 16, 1934.

Dear Brethren Editors:—I received the Signs all right, and found "good news" for the people of God. I especially liked the editorial by brother Ruston on the signs and nature of the times. I can recite with him that, as I see it, the world is in a trouble from which it will never recover permanently. The distress of nations foretold by the old slaves of Jesus is here. The end is nigh, and it seems to me, Except these days should be shortened, no flesh shall be saved; but for the elect's sake these days will be shortened. These are very trying times for the people of God. Many of God's people have departed from the faith. I truly believe I have seen the "falling away" that was foretold and decreed to come upon his people before the end could come. Many have brought in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them. This is shameful, to say the least of it. It is clear to me that the "abomination and desolation," spoken of by Daniel the prophet, is standing in the holy place, and where it ought not. I can see by faith that the earth is corrupt before God and filled with violence. All flesh has corrupted his way. The Scripture says, As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the last days. So we, the people of God, who abide in him, know that we are living in the perilous times designed to come upon all the earth. I rejoice to see these times, when I can remember his oath, promises and blood that made his people secure. God has not lost control of his universe, and all things are under

his direction. He is not disappointed in any of his purposes of love by the outworking of any of the laws he has established, which in any case is but his way of working. Jesus spoke of the terrible cruelty and wrong which culminated in his death on the cross as "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" God cannot break his covenant with his people. He loved them with an everlasting love, and saved them with an everlasting salvation. Though they break his statutes and keep not his commandments he will visit their transgressions with the rod and their iniquity with stripes, nevertheless he will not, yea, cannot, suffer his faithfulness to fail, nor take his lovingkindness utterly away from them. He will not break his covenant nor alter the thing that is gone out of his mouth. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before him. There is no past nor future with God, it is all one eternal now. To say that God loves you now is to say that he always did love you and always will. God changes not. The people of God are always safe in the hands of Jehovah as to the great matter of their standing in Christ, but they are not safe as regards their experience of holiness and communion with Jesus in this life. Many of God's people have brought upon themselves swift destruction by giving heed to the lusts of the flesh, the doctrines of devils and seducing spirits. As I see it, and as God's word speaks it, none of God's predestinated people to life will or can lose their eternal inheritance. The everlasting "works" of Jesus cannot be forgotten by the Father: those for whom his goings forth have been of old, from everlasting. It was from everlasting that he signed the compact with his Father that he would pay death for death, blood for blood, agony for agony, suffering for suffering in behalf of his people. "Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps: fire, and hail; snow, and vapors; stormy wind fulfilling his word."—Psalms cxlviii. 7, 8. "For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation," the children of Israel, a people near unto him. (Psalms cxlix. 4.) "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." God delights in his people, yet will he be inquired of by them to do it for them. Let us draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to us (his people). Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.

I did not intend to write as I have when I began. I cannot refrain from boasting of my God and his everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure. (2 Sam. xxiii. 5.) I should like to see the church of Jesus in the world open its heart to the moving of the Spirit and rise to the full joy of its life and salvation, but it is not the will and purpose of its Creator and Savior at this time. God is in one mind and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. (Job xxiii. 13.) When he giveth greatness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth his face,

who then can behold him? Whether it be done against a nation or a man only. Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance; and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers. There is not a just man on earth, one who liveth and sinneth not. God's grace secured the salvation of his people's "works," brought their fall and damnation from their high destiny. Jesus satisfied divine justice on the cross and obtained eternal redemption for his people, and is now manifesting his everlasting "works" in and to his people by his appearance by faith in their hearts. He dwells in our hearts by faith. We walk by faith and not by sight. Faith connects our souls with God. Faith is a gift of God, for time only, and when time is over with us we will walk by sight, with no need of anything. Recently I heard a man who claims to be an Old School Predestinarian Baptist preach a universal salvation to all men in general. He said the cause of Jesus had been greatly damaged by the disobedience of his people, and then added, Shame on cold hearts. I cannot imagine the spiritual conditions in Zion to be worse. Men of understanding have fallen. (Dan. xi. 35.) "O Lord, righteousness belongeth to thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day" Because we have sinned against thee. Brethren, watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Let us honor and glorify Him with the same glory that He glorified us with. Let us humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God and confess our faults one to the other. He that confesseth his faults and forsaketh them shall have mercy, but he that hideth them shall not prosper; neither will God hear us if we regard iniquity in our hearts. Brethren, let us be gentle unto all men and not strive with any. Do not preach Christ in contention, neither controverted points that gender strife among the saints. All things are lawful unto us, but are not expedient, and do not edify. Let us be wise as serpents but harmless as doves. Be children in malice, but in understanding be men. Is there not a cause for all this abomination and disintegrating among the Lord's people? God's Israel, a great many of them, have done worse than the nations round about her, because the church refused his statutes and judgments to walk in them. (Ezek. vi. 7.) The nations round about us (the false religions) are in unbelief and darkness and know not what they do, but we, the people of God, know to do good, but doeth it not. God forbid that I should ever do anything to hurt his cause. Nothing but sin can hurt us; nothing but sin can grieve him. God's believing people should be careful only to maintain good works, to be not unfruitful. Brethren, let us keep his "works" unto the end. (Rev. ii. 26.) Examine ourselves whether we be in the faith or not; speak sound doctrine which cannot be condemned, for the time has come that some have turned away from the truth unto fables.

I must close. If there is merit in

this letter give God the praise; if there is no merit in it lay it to my limited mind. Do as you feel with it. I do not seek honor from men. Corruptible man, incorruptible God.

A waiting one,

MILFORD HALL, SR.

LA GRANDE, Ore., July 1, 1934.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I feel that I have neglected a duty in not contributing my portion to the support and material for the SIGNS to this time. I spent three months on my visit last winter to Kentucky, and I felt at that time I would give my brethren an account of interesting incidents and impressions when I returned home, but a state of darkness and indifference seemed to come over me to such an extent that I hesitated to make the attempt, and still I feel unsuited to the task, but will inclose my subscription price and you may judge of what I may write.

A few days ago I returned from our annual Unoin Meeting, which was held with the church near Yakima, Washington, where we were blessed with everything needful to reassure us benighted, doubting creatures of the sure mercies of our God and the strength of his sustaining grace. Most of the congregation at that meeting had traveled long distances and were a day ahead of the appointed time, which indicated the anxiety which moved them to attend, and this needy condition of us all was well rewarded by the felt presence of divine power. In the strength of this refreshing season I now attempt to comply with the impressions concerning my visit of last winter.

Without going into details as to names and places, I will say that I visited Baptists in Nebraska, Missouri and Kentucky, and met others living in Colorado and Indiana. Most of these were entire strangers to me in the flesh and were representative of the different divisions which go to make up the Baptist family. I did not know when I was arranging for stops at different places that such conditions existed, but I now feel that it was of Divine arrangement that I might be tried out without preparation, and from a standpoint of good faith for the cause and from a love for the welfare of the membership. It was soon made plain to me that as a stranger I was subject to the most exacting tests, both in the pulpit and in conversation. My pulpit declarations were never criticised, but my identity and relationship as to factions was the measure by which I was judged. Thus we see the same spirit that prevailed in the days of the apostles between the Jews and Gentiles, and nothing but the revelation of the power and glory of God could overcome it. Humanity is the same in every age, and the education and training of our boasted modern civilization has brought us no nearer to the laws of righteousness, but rather has trained the powers of evil to be more effective in their operations. As to points of doctrine, I was with brethren who were afraid of absolute predestination and drew the line of fellowship against those who were in any way identified with believers of that. I was also with those

who believe and preach that as a leading point in their faith, and they also banned from church fellowship those who did not. As to these two factions, both of which believe and preach salvation by grace, and in almost every leading point of doctrine are the same when they understand each other, I could see no need for them to stand divided and fighting each other as they are. On one occasion a minister of limited predestination chose to make war on a brother minister for his strange belief, although it was not a point of controversy at the time. After abusing his brother unmercifully, and also all who believe such doctrine, he qualified his own belief by saying that he believed that God so rules and governs everything in this world that ultimately all will redound to his name's honor and glory. At another time and place a minister of absolute predestination, who has no patience or fellowship for brethren who do not see it as he does, was asked if he always believed predestination just like he did then. He replied he did not always understand it as he then did. These two ministers bar each other from church fellowship, yet there is no difference in the principles of their faith. The limited predestinarian states his faith by another form, just as strong as the absoluter could put it, and the absoluter confesses that his soundness in the doctrine is the result of a better understanding, which the limited predestinarian had not yet received. Why should ministers standing as these two do waste their time and gifts fighting each other? There are various gifts and all for the edification of the church, which is the body of Christ. It is a case of the eye saying to the ear, I have no need of thee; or the foot saying to the hand, I have no need of thee. Each of these is for a special purpose, and the body is not complete without them all. The factions of the church have put it in a shape that each has one foremost point of doctrine, and in its zeal for that has lost sight and exercise of most of the others. It is much like a man would be with one of his senses active and in good condition and all the rest weak and worthless. How could a man progress in the affairs of life with vision only? or with hearing? or with motive power, as of the use of hand or foot? Vision and hearing might in a sense represent foreknowledge and predestination as Jehovah reveals them to his saints, the hand and foot will represent the activity of the body, thus seeing and hearing of the foundation all of life. Thus grace and works develop and the body thrives, but when they are separated, or presented in a confused manner, weakness and division result.

I visited Elder P. W. Sawin twice, and in relating the incidents of my various meetings and the way I had been received, he was made both to rejoice and consider. This faithful minister lives in Lexington, Kentucky, with one of his daughters, and is past ninety years of age. He has been preaching for more than seventy years, and has labored for the peace and fellowship of the church, as it thrives on sound doctrine, and has avoided dangerous extremes. He has been blind for several

years and his hearing is failing, but his mind is as active as in years past. It grieved him to hear of dissension and disorder, and he told me to write an admonition to the brethren, especially to the ministry, and tell them to cease debating their differences in the pulpit. I am giving his fatherly advice, which his years of faithful service confirm, and I fully indorse it, and I hope it may be adopted by our ministering brethren. I was rejoiced to find some divisions which existed years ago had been laid aside and forgotten and a united brotherhood worshiping together in peace and unity. If such a condition could prevail in all the churches the glory of Zion might yet shine out in this benighted world and point the way to peace and happiness; but with the church, which is the pillar and ground of the truth, all split by dissension and disorder what may we expect of the worldly confusion men are using to get on higher and better ways of life? May God lead us in paths of righteousness for his name's sake; if not, we shall continue on in darkness and get worse and worse.

Please change my address from Haines, Ore., to Box 515, La Grande Oregon. C. W. BOND.

RAWLS, Ark., June 20, 1934.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I see the time has arrived for me to renew for the dear paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that I love so well. Many times it cheers my poor drooping mind and makes me shed many, many tears to know there are some in this old sinful world who can tell my feelings better than I can. We read in God's word that he works and none can hinder, and that he hinders and none can work. That is the God I hope I worship, and no man. When we can feel that dear Preacher, Jesus, coming in and going out, and hear that sweet voice saying, It is I, be not afraid, we can rest assured that is our only hope. When the dear Lord leaves us then we fall back in that old rut and stay there until that good Samaritan, Jesus, comes along and lifts us out again, then all is well for a short time. Most of my time I am down in a rut and crippled in both ankles, but I hope I love the habitation of Zion and love to hear His sweet voice saying, I will come to thee.

Please send me the SIGNS to the same address. I wish I could send you a thousand dollars a year, but I cannot. I cannot expect to stay here much longer, but I surely have a sweet hope beyond this world that Jesus paid the debt for me when he bowed that precious head and said, It is finished. If I was not in that crucifixion then I am not now, and never will be, for what he does once stands forever, so there is where it is sealed forever in us the hope of glory.

Please cast this in the waste-basket. I just wanted to renew my subscription for another year, and when I fail to renew please stop my paper, for my health is poor.

Write on, dear precious ones, you do not know how many poor souls you comfort.

Lovingly yours,

(MRS.) J. W. CAIN.

DUTTON, Ontario, June 27, 1934.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—Inclosed find sister Hall's experience. She sent it to me and asked me to send it to the SIGNS.

I would like to get home after the second week in July, if the Lord is willing.

Your brother in hope of mercy and fellowship,

I. R. GREATHOUSE.

MCDOWELL, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITORS:—In my twenty-third year I felt I could no longer live unless something was done for me. I had done everything I knew how to do and all failed. I had tried to pray many times, but with no relief, until I felt every one could be saved but me. I went on in this condition for some time, until one night I was caused to look to heaven for my help. I saw a great light, as it were, a moon, or the sun, but very much larger. It seemed to light everything around me, and I heard the voice of the dear Savior speak these words, The victory is won, the war is over. His voice roared like thunder to me. It seemed there had been a great war going on and had ceased. Oh I felt so thankful and I still thank him for those sweet words to-day, but I went on for seven long years thinking this was not enough. I would get so low down at times I would think God had never begun a good work with me, and then those words would come again. This is one thing I cannot forget. I went on, thinking I would be baptized some time when I got old, but from three years ago last December I began to be weary of life. I knew no reast day or night, until the fourth Sunday in April, which is our meeting time, when I was baptized. Now I feel I will never bear that burden again, but others come as I journey on, and I still must bear them until this earthly tabernacle is dissolved, then at his (Christ's) second coming I will be changed and fashioned like unto his own glorious body. I do believe in the resurrection of these bodies, but everything around us is fighting the Old Primitive faith. There is not another church within fifteen miles of us whose members believe this Old Predestinarian doctrine. Our church is small in number (sixty-one) here at McDowell, contending for the faith, I believe, once delivered unto the saints. We are blessed with five preachers. I was talking with a "free-willer." He said if predestination was right he did not want to know right. He said we were not children until we were born again, but the Scripture says, They do greatly err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. I do not want to hold anything that does not correspond with "Thus saith the Lord." "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." My husband has been a minister of the Old Primitive faith for about thirty years. He is about sixty-two and I am thirty-five years of age, but he being of the called "Hardshell" faith could not make me one until I was shown by a higher power than man.

(MRS.) E. H. HALL.

BRANTFORD, Ontario, June 10, 1934.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—I feel I must thank you for sending me the SIGNS so long, and now I am only sending one year's subscription, but hope to be able to send again soon. I believe ours is the only home in Brantford that it now comes to. Do you remember coming to Brantford twenty-six years ago and speaking of the poor man at the pool? I well remember. We were few enough in number then, but all have passed away. We had only been in this country a few months then, but after that when an Elder came along we would have meeting in our home. Elders Eubanks, Chick, Lester, Fenton, Coulter, Vail, etc., but no more. Oh what a banner time it seems. I wonder why, but I simply cannot attend the other so-called places of worship, so just drift along with the good reading. We have the bound volumes from the year 1891, if any of the readers should like to get any at any time. I saw some time ago that some one was asking for same, but I was sick in bed at the time, or it might have helped to pay for my present SIGNS.

Trusting you and yours are well, I remain yours sincerely,

A. E. GRIDLESTONE.

[YES, I well remember my visit to Brantford of twenty-six years ago. Many dear ones, it is true, have passed on since then, but the dear cause of our Lord lives on and still has its witnesses, bless his holy name.—H. H. L.]

NEW ROCHELLE, N. Y., May 15, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—I sincerely regret causing you to have to wait so long for my remittance, but I assure you it was unavoidable. I have enjoyed reading its pages ever since dear old Elder Beebe baptized me, a girl of fifteen, and enjoy it even more now, in my seventy-ninth year. The article in the March number, "Why I am a Primitive Baptist," I have enjoyed very, very much, and have read it over a number of times. I sincerely hope for you prosperity in the publication of our dear paper, as I do not know what we could do without it. May God bless you.

Sincerely a lover of the SIGNS,

ADELA PRICE JONES.

BLACK SPRINGS, Arkansas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I am eighty-five years of age and failing fast, eyes especially, this may be my last renewal. How I would love to send some help, but we are drouth stricken, the corn is a failure, as is almost everything else. I desire your prayers as I am lonely. I never get to hear our kind of Baptists preach and the SIGNS is the only paper I read that gives God all power to rule the times and seasons. Oh that I could put all my trust in such a merciful Savior. My best love and wishes to your lovely band. I try to hope.

A sister,

H. M. COX.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1934.

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ACTS XX. 27.

"FOR I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."

This was no idle boast on the part of Paul. Well did he know that all his ability was the enduement of the Holy Spirit through the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Whether before Felix or Festus or Agrippa, whether before the unbelievers or before his believing brethren, Paul shunned not to declare unto them *all* the counsel of God. Not only unto all of them did he declare it, but he declared *all* the counsel. The word "all" in the text qualifies "counsel" and not the pronoun "you." It is not to be read as though it means "unto you all," but "all the counsel." The whole doctrine insofar as it had been revealed to him, is what Paul preached. The Scripture says that secret things belong to God, but the revealed things unto us. (Deut. xxix. 29.) Paul could do no more, nor could he conscientiously do less, than declare *all* the doctrine as it had been made known to him. What Paul preached may be known by his writings, for in no other way can we to-day judge of his preaching than by his writings. Briefly then let us glance at his writings and note the principles of the doctrine, or "counsel" of God, as he was enabled to set them forth.

The epistle to the Romans elucidates the principles of the faith of God's people as follows: (1) the utter and total depravity of mankind by nature, being wholly lost in sin, spiritually dead and without strength to save themselves; (2) justification is alone through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, this justification being communicated by faith to the elect of God; (3) God's eternal purpose in the salvation of his people is according to his own election or choice of them, as illustrated by Paul in the instances of Jacob and Esau, not according at all to their works nor to any foreknown merit or demerit in them, but wholly that salvation should be of grace and not of works.

In the ninth, tenth and eleventh of Romans Paul sets forth what so few seem to enter into to-day: the doctrine of the restitution without which so many portions of Scripture remain sealed and impossible of interpretation. That Israel was cut off, but not forever, Paul sets forth. That they have stumbled is true, but that their stumbling should be to their eternal failure, he denies. Only until the fullness of the

Gentiles is come in, are they cut off. "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid!"—Rom. iii. 1-4. Besides this, "to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."—Rom. ix. 4, 5. To be sure, Israel failed miserably under the law which was given to them at Sinai by the hand of Moses. If righteousness could have come either to them or to us by the ability of the flesh to keep the law, then is Christ dead in vain and man would have somewhat to boast before God. To the end that no flesh shall glory in his presence, salvation is not by the deeds of the law. This Paul especially goes into in his letter to the Galatians, and sets forth that the covenant to Abraham was unconditional and was four hundred and thirty years before the law was given at Sinai, and that therefore the law cannot make void the covenant which preceded the law. (Gal. iii. 17.) If Israel's disobedience had voided God's choice of them in the loins of Abraham, then what assurance have we Gentiles that our failures under grace, as well as previously under law, may not void our election in Christ? Since God's covenant with us in Christ must unbreakably stand, then must also his covenant which he made in Abraham and which he afterward unconditionally ratified with Israel by David. The word of God stands sure, knows no change. Heaven and earth shall sooner pass away than that his word shall fail. "For thus saith the Lord, David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually." "Thus saith the Lord, If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers."—Jer. xxxiii. 17, 18, 20, 21. That it is the purpose of God to take out from among the Gentiles, during this present gospel age, a people for his name; and that after that Christ will return and build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down, rebuilding the ruins thereof and setting it up again, is evidently set forth in Acts xv. 13-17. This principle of the counsel of God, that of the restitution of all things to Israel at the return of the Son of man from heaven, Paul did not shun to declare. Why then is so little heard of it to-day? Paul plainly set forth the blessed truth of God's predestination of all things, and that God effectually calls by grace and preserves unto ultimate and final glory all his elect children. No true Old School Baptist

denies this. Let us then pass on to note other principles of the counsel of God which Paul preached.

First, the adoption. This is what we are hoping for and patiently awaiting, hence we do not have it yet. We have received the *Spirit* of the adoption, but not the adoption itself. Adoption has to do with the believer's body, thus the adoption and the resurrection of the body are one and the same thing. Paul is very positive. "The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."—Rom. viii. 21. Man who is himself the creature of God and who is the sinner in Adam's transgression is the same man who in Christ is saved. Nothing of this man thus saved shall be lost except that which is corruption itself. The believer's body, therefore, which in this earthly life stands in relation to the first Adam and has the nature of the earthly Adam, will in the resurrection of the dead be changed and made a spiritual body standing in relation to the second Adam and partaking of His divine nature. (See Elder Gilbert Beebe's second volume of Editorials, page 700.) This is the redemption of our body for which we wait. The resurrection of the body is not at all the same thing as the new birth which the believer experiences by the work of the Holy Spirit here in this present life. To say that the new birth of the believer which comes to pass when he is experimentally delivered out of darkness into light, is the resurrection of the dead is to say that the resurrection is past already. This is what Hymeneus and Philetus taught and Paul denounced it as false, saying it is like a deadly canker. (2 Tim. ii. 17, 18.) Churches of the saints afflicted with the spiritual gangrene of Sadduceeism are the cause of many being sickly among them, and because of which many sleep. Denial of the resurrection of the dead at the future coming of the Lord from heaven overthrows the faith of God's elect, so Paul says. What he said was inspired by the Holy Spirit, and was not of his own surmising.

Secondly, in his two epistles to the Thessalonians especially, Paul states very plainly the fact and truth of the future or second coming of Christ himself from heaven. The resurrection of the bodies of the saints from the dead, and the change from mortal to immortal of the saints then living upon the earth at the time of his coming, shall not take place with Jesus absent, but with Himself being present. Jesus was personally present when he raised Lazarus from the dead, he was himself present when he raised the daughter of Jairus and also when he raised to life the son of the widow of Nain: all of which indicates that the future resurrection of the bodies of those who have fallen asleep in him shall come forth from their graves at the time when the Lord shall himself descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God. This great and climacteric event of our salvation shall be accomplished with Christ himself present, and not in his absence. We must emphatically deny that the second coming of Christ took

place at Pentecost as related in Acts ii. THAT was the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the church assembled in Jerusalem at that time, and was NOT the second coming of Christ. Believers could be spared much confused thinking if only they would discern between the work of the Son or the second Person in the tri-unity of the Godhead, and the work which belongs to the Holy Ghost who is the third Person of the Godhead. A careful reading of Christ's promise in John xvi. will surely show that Acts ii. began the fulfillment of *that,* and has no reference to the two epistles to the Thessalonians which latter were written years after the events of Acts ii.

Much emphasis has been laid by some upon the destruction of the city of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 A. D., as though that event marked the end of the world and the coming of Christ with his saints and all angels. Never do we have to go to history for the ratification of Scripture, for the Bible needs no secular writers to substantiate it. The events of 70 A. D. have been magnified out of all proportion to their importance, and in so doing the Scriptures have been wrested from their true purport in order to satisfy misinterpretations of Scripture gained from reading history rather than from a spiritual comparison of Scripture with Scripture.

To analyze in detail all the priciples of the "counsel" of God set forth in Paul's writings would indeed be an interesting pursuit, but too long for this present article. We have chosen only those points which seem to be more or less controversial among us, about which there seem to be widely divergent views. It is said of the brethren at Berea that they were more noble than the other christians, because they searched the Scriptures daily to see if the things spoken of by Paul were true. We want the brethren who read the SIGNS to do likewise. Take nothing for granted as true simply because some preacher says it. Search the Scriptures. If we speak not according to this word, it is proof there is no light in us. We have thought that the setting forth of these things by us from time to time, even at the risk of being charged with hobby-riding, may cause the pure mind of believers to be stirred to reading and meditating on these things. Oh, may the Lord be pleased to grant us more and more appreciation of his wonderful grace, and a fuller appreciation of the meaning of the written word. If we have ourselves seemed to give more attention to some of these points than to others, is there not a needs-be for it? "Is there not a cause?" as said David to his brethren when they seemed jealous at his having left his sheep in order to appear before Saul for their defense. Now, as never before, there is need that the glorious truth of the resurrection of the dead and of the second coming of Christ be dwelt upon, especially as scepticism on these subjects prevails with some. We desire of the Lord grace and wisdom whereby we may meekly instruct those who oppose themselves in that they deny that which pertains to their own souls' highest good.

H. H. L.

LEESBURG, Va., Aug. 2, 1934.

DEAR GILBERT:—Imagine my surprise when I this morning received the August SIGNS and read therein Elder Ruston's editorial on Acts xx. 27, the same text on which I have written for the September number and which I mailed you this morning. I was, as you know, completely ignorant as to what Elder Ruston was treating on in the August issue, because I had not seen his article previous to publication. It is a singular coincidence, but rather than try to prepare another article for the September number, I have decided to let mine stand as already written. The readers of the SIGNS may rest assured there is no connivance between Elder Ruston and myself in this matter, each of us being entirely unaware of what was passing in the mind of the other. Brother Ruston brings out in his article some points that I do not in mine, and likewise I have mentioned in mine some matters he did not refer to in his; yet there is no clash between the two articles. May we not truly infer from this coincidence that this subject of "all the counsel" of God is highly important at this time else the Holy Spirit would not have directed the minds of the two of us to write upon it?

Yours to serve in the gospel,

H. H. LEFFERTS.

[THE foregoing letter from Elder Lefferts to the publisher of the SIGNS explains how he and Elder Ruston both were impressed to use the same text for their editorials.—PUBLISHER.]

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder C. W. Vaughn.)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Southampton Old School Baptist Church, in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, May 30th and 31st, 1934, sendeth greeting to the several associations and meetings with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As our usual custom we address you in the common salvation of sinners. Giving all diligence in this relation, we bring before you the language recorded by Jude in the third verse: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." The whole matter is the way, the truth and the life of salvation for poor sinners.

In calling attention to the above quotation we do not feel you need exhortation or it is especially necessary to testify of the diligence we have to write you, but there is a very weighty matter contained in the common salvation. First, we would call attention as to why Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, used the term "common salvation." It was because he was addressing those who are sanctified by God the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ and called. To be one of those addressed you must be sanctified by God the Father, and to be sanctified by God the Father your name must be written in the book of

life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, which, according to God's eternal purpose, all the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ was for you, which saves with an everlasting salvation, and gives all for whom Jesus died eternal life. This Association desires with all diligence to contend earnestly for these things as they are revealed to us by the Spirit, both in the Scriptures and in the heart of all the saints who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, and are the same people Paul speaks of, and makes the assertion that "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Rom. viii. 1. They are one in faith, hope and charity throughout all generations, for they are born of that incorruptible seed by the word of God, which liveth forever, and all people of the household of faith are taught of God and great is their peace. This inheritance given to poor sinners it is to every one the same, and is set forth in the hiring of servants and agreeing with every one for a penny, and we feel all are equal and there are no little ones cast out and some of great distinction, as is common to men, but all have one salvation, which is by grace. This salvation is not inferior in quality, but superior to anything that could be referred to in the word salvation, but it is the same to every one for whom Christ died, and cannot be obtained by works of righteousness which man can do, but the working of the righteousness of Jesus Christ purchased it and Jesus Christ gives it to every one chosen in him. Brethren, we are favored above that of men to believe these glorious truths and see them embraced in Christ Jesus, and have him as our Husband, our living Head, our Redeemer and Savior.

With gladness in our hearts we can say we believe all our churches are laboring for the things that make for peace, and the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, but it is the gift of God, as was referred to and described in the organization of this Association (the Delaware River) in 1835.

Here we will give you a bit of history relative to the Delaware River Association. The old Philadelphia Association having become so large the churches in New Jersey were set apart as a separate association and called the Central New Jersey Baptist Association, in 1833, which was one year after the Black Rock Convention, and much of those innovations of men were deeply rooted in many of this Central New Jersey Baptist Association, which gave rise to those churches known as the Delaware River Old School Baptist Association to realize the commandment to go ye out from among them and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you. We feel He has received us as an association of brethren. We have faithful correspondence of those professing this salvation which we are pointing to, and as an association we have been favored to have faithful watchmen to go in and out before us throughout the generations that have passed since our organ-

ization, and to mention those faithful servants of Jesus Christ would not be boasting, but their writings as well as their biographies will give you where we stand, as we hope we stood in their day. Some we will name: Elders John Boggs, Wm. Purrington, Silas H. Durand, Philander Hartwell and F. A. Chick, and we have the labors of Elders H. C. Ker and C. W. Vaughn, who go in and out before us giving all diligence to write, exhort and earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and as an association our churches are mutually comforted in the preached gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to them that believe. These things are precious to us as an association, and we hope to be kept in the way and given to speak the truth to the mutual edification of the household of faith. This Association does not feel to tolerate in any way those who manifest a spirit to creep in and teach perverse things, but we are calling for the ancient landmarks, and we love to have the brethren come to us confessing this same common salvation.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

NOTICE.

I HAVE two volumes of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe's Editorials for sale, the property of the late Peter M. Sherwood, of Welsh Tract Church. His widow desires them to fall into the hands of Baptists if possible. Cloth bound. Books in good order. Also one small copy Pilgrim's Progress. (Bunyan's). J. B. MILLER.

NEWARK, Delaware.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Southampton Old School Baptist Church, at Southampton, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, sends greetings to all of the household of faith with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have been favored to assemble in an associational capacity to hear from you in the regular way, by Minutes and messengers. We are glad to report a good meeting. Your messengers have borne the tidings of your faithfulness and fellowship in the gospel, in which we hope to be kept, and made by the Spirit to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and we hope when the next session of this Association occurrs to have them with us again. Our correspondence was not as great in personal visits as usual, but we hope to have you next year.

The next session of this Association is appointed to meet with our sister church, Kingwood, at Locktown, Hunterdon County, New Jersey, May 29th and 30th, 1935, when we hope to meet you again in sweet fellowship. Until then farewell.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Mintie B. Mapes, N. Y., $3; "A friend," Texas, $8; Mrs. H. A. Strube, Texas, $2; "A friend," Md., $1; George W. Danbury, N. J., $2; A. F. Jones, Ga., $3; Wm. H. Morris, Mo., $1; Elder C. W. Anderson, Ark., $5; Mrs. Mary A. Drew, N. Y., $1.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MENERVIA A. JOHNSON, the subject of this notice, was born September 11th, 1868, in Mercer County, West Virginia. She was the daughter of Samuel and Nancy Jane (Bird) Carpenter. In early life she with her parents moved from Mercer County to Wayne County, West Virginia, and from there to Putnam County, of the same State, where she lived the remainder of her life. She departed this life May 11th, 1934, after a lingering illness. Death came to her as the result of a complication of diseases that had been preying on her for years. She had never been strong since undergoing a critical operation for appendicitis several years ago, recovery from which operation looked like a miracle wrought of God. She suffered much in the declining years of her life, but bore her pain and affliction with much patience, proving that sweet resignation to her Master's will. About the year 1884 she was united in marriage to William F. Johnson, and to this union were born eleven children, seven boys and four girls, two of whom, one boy and one girl, preceded her in death, both dying in infancy. Her husband was taken from her by the cold hand of death December 1st, 1926, leaving her in loneliness. She spent much of her time, after her husband's departure, among her children. Early in life she was given a sweet hope in the finished work of Jesus. The doctrine of grace was her meat and drink, and she was well established in the doctrine of God our Savior. She gave wonderful evidence that she had been with Him who is meek and lowly, and learned of Him. She had a quiet, peaceable life, was a good mother, a kind neighbor, and a staunch friend to the Old School Baptists. Through a felt sense of her unworthiness she never united with the church, yet she loved the cause of Christ most dearly and in humbleness and in meekness she was ready to defend the cause she loved. She was uncompromising with error and had no use for nor confidence in the institutions or traditions of men. The church has lost a warm and devoted friend, the neighborhood has sustained a great loss, the children a loving mother's care, yet we feel to say amidst our sorrow, The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be his holy name. We grieve not as those who have no hope. She leaves to mourn their loss nine children, six boys and three girls, namely, Floyd, James, Moses, Hugh, Forest, Noel, Mrs. J. J. Smith, Mrs. Herman Carpenter and Mrs. B. G. Bird, also twenty-five grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, two brothers, Hugh and Asa Carpenter, one sister, Mrs. G. H. Edwards, together with a host of near relatives and friends.

According to her request, the unworthy writer was called to conduct her funeral, where I tried to speak words of comfort, being assisted by Elders H. W. May, Jefferson Staton and G. B. Bird. A large concourse of friends turned out to pay their tribute of respect to one they loved, thus attesting to the high esteem in which she was held in the community where she had lived so long. Her mortal remains were laid beside her husband in the family burying-ground, there to await the call of the Lord. At the time of her death she was making her home with her son Moses. Death came to relieve her of her suffering, and she quietly fell asleep in Jesus, from which sleep none ever wake to weep. All that kind hands and medical skill could do was done, but to no avail, God had called and she must go, according to his own good will and purpose.

Written by request.

HARVEY J. BIRD.

HENRY PLEASANT YARBROUGH was born June 5th, 1845, and died April 21st, 1934. March 5th, 1868, he was married to Mary Ann Croxton, who was a faithful member of the Primitive Baptist Church. She preceded him to the grave seventeen years. There were born to them thirteen children, six boys and seven girls, of whom nine are living. He also leaves twenty-nine grandchildren and fourteen great-grandchildren. He served the last two years in the war between the States, enlisting at the age of eighteen in Company F, 17th Alabama Infantry, known as Hood's Corp of Sharp Shooters. He was for a time Chief of Staff, under General John R. Kennedy, Commander of Alabama Division, and was later made Brigadier General of that Division. He was a gallant soldier and was buried with military honors. He was a faithful member of the Primitive Baptist Church the last fifty years of his life. In his seventy-sixth year he married Miss Hattie Jones, who survives him, living the last thirteen years of his life in happy companionship with her. Their home was a haven of rest for his children and brethren to meet. His children and grandchildren rise up to call him blessed. The writer often visited their home, and surely it was a place of rest. Brother Yarbrough served as Deacon of the church for many years and was always faithful to every trust committed to him. He was thoughtful of and very liberal to the poor. As long as he lived an active life the Lord blessed the labor of his hands. His brethren, friends and the poor shared equally in his prosperity. A noble man has fallen asleep, waiting in a tomb in Rocky Mount Cemetery (in which community he lived for many years and practically reared his children), waiting for the second coming of our Lord, to be fashioned into a body like unto him, to live in perfection, crowned in everlasting peace and joy in the arms of his Beloved, who conquered death and the grave in his eternal redemption, which was the life, heart and soul of his hope for immortal and eternal glory.

The writer, together with Elders H. M. Curry and J. W. McLeod, officiated at the grave.

Written by the request of his children by the one who was his pastor for ten years.

B. J. WILSON.

IRA IRMIE ANDERSON died at the Homeopathic Hospital, Washington, D. C., July 16th, 1934. His home was at Catharpin, Prince William County, Virginia. He was taken ill Saturday the 14th, was hurried to the hospital, but to no avail. The immediate cause of death was paralysis, having suffered a previous stroke a year ago and had been in failing health since. He was a son of Fenton Anderson and Margaret Rector, was born in Fauquier County April 12th, 1852, making his age 82 years, 3 months and 4 days. He is survived by two brothers and one sister: Charles Anderson, of Washington, D. C., Walter Anderson, of Norfolk, Va., and Mrs. Ed. Furr, of Washington, D. C. He was married January 27th, 1882, to Georgia Matthews, who survives her husband. She was the daughter of George Matthews and Abbie James. Of this union there are living five children, three sons and two daughters, as follows: Linden Anderson, of Washington, D. C., Berkley Anderson, of Washington, D. C., Lester Anderson, of Catharpin, Va., Mrs. James Franklin, of Clifton, Va., and Mrs. B. F. Matthews, of Manassas, Va. There are living eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

The funeral services were held at Mt. Zion Church, near Aldie, Va., burial in the cemetery adjacent, services conducted by Elder H. H. Lefferts, who is the pastor of the church of which the widow, Mrs. Georgia E. Anderson, is a member. Text used, John iii. 36.

Written at the request of the family.

H. H. L.

MARGARET CAMPBELL GRAHAM, wife of Duncan A. P. Graham, was born January 26th, 1848, and died December 15th, 1933. There were five children born to them, three dying while very young, and a son, Carlyle, passed away October 12th, 1922. A daughter, Mrs. Ellis Hodgins, survives, with whom Mrs. Graham made her home for a number of years. She had been blessed with good health up until about two years before she died, when her health began to fail. She was confined to her room and bed the greter part of the last year. She was always patient and lovely through her illness, often expressing a desire to be gone to her heavenly home. She was a member of the Covenanted Baptist Church, coming before the church in Dunwich at the quarterly meeting in May, 1930, and was baptized the first Sunday of June following by her pastor, Elder George Ruston. Writing to a very dear sister in the church afterwards, she said, I feel that you did not hear me when I was telling my experience before the church, and I have often felt like writing you what I said. I must begin when I was very young. I do not remember how old I was. I felt I was not prepared to die. Years passed on in that condition and after fifty years or more these words woke me out of my sleep, As a young man marries a bride, so shall thy Beloved marry thee. I felt it was a promise that the Lord would look upon me in mercy. Then about twenty years later I was in great trouble of mind, when these words came to me, "I go your entrance to secure and your abode prepare; regions unknown are safe to you when I, your friend, am there." I felt it was a promise to me, but I wanted more. Then about four years ago these words awoke me out of my sleep, I will be with thee thy troubles to bless. I felt, What troubles do I need to fear with such a prop? Those words have been of much comfort to me a great deal of the time since. Last fall these words were much on my mind, "Ye who the name of Jesus bear, his sacred steps pursue, and let that mind which was in him be also found in you." The thought came, What do those words mean to me? and then the thought came, Should I tell my case to the church? and such a sweet desire came that stayed with me. Strength was not given me until the May meeting to come and tell that I could read my title clear to mansions in the skies.

Her pastor conducted her funeral services, which were largely attended by sorrowing relatives and friends. Her remains were laid beside those of her husband in Ivan Cemetery.

Her daughter,

FLOSSIE HODGINS.

ELIZA CARLIVE COTTERELL MODLIN was born in Richland County, Illinois, September 19th, 1863, and departed this life July 17th, 1934, making her stay on earth 70 years, 9 months and 28 days. For more than thirty years sister Modlin was a sufferer with the lingering consumption, and the last three years with a cancer of the stomach, but bore her afflictions without a murmur. In 1886 she moved to Moultry County, Illinois, and on December 11th, 1888, was united in marriage to Elder James A. Modlin. To this union five children were born, two daughters and three sons: Mrs. Ethel Modlin, of Craig, Nebr., Mrs. Bessie Weller, of Carlinville, Ill., James W., of Gillespie, Ill., Charles E., of Shipman, Ill., and Otis S., of Palmyra, Ill., all of whom survive her. In 1889 she united with the Old School Baptist Church in Moltry County, Illinois, and remained a devoted and faithful member until her death. She was a kind and loving mother, and was always ready to do for both family and friends all that her loving hands could do, and to know her was to love her. She leaves to mourn her departure a husband, five children, eighteen grandchildren, two great-grandchildren (three grandchildren and one great-grandchild preceded her in death), two brothers, Thomas R. Cotterell, of Palmer, Ill., and Henry A. Cotterell, of Gillespie, Ill., one nephew, Earl Cotterell, of Blue Mound, Ill., one niece, Mrs. Gladys Tehman, of Palmer, Ill., and a host of other relatives and friends.

Written by her granddaughter,

BEULAH WELLER.

HESTER KENOLY was born March 8th, 1853, and died September 3rd, 1933, aged 80 years, 5 months and 25 days. Early in life she was married to Harvey Kenoly, and to their union twelve children were born. All her children but four boys have gone on, they are David Kenoly, of Billings, Mont., Wilson, of Eldridge, Mo., Alonzo, of Neodesha, Kans., and Milton, of Spokane, Wash. She also leaves eighteen grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, one brother residing in Oklahoma, one sister, Mrs. Rachel North, of Hartsville, Mo. Her husband passed away in 1886, leaving her with six small children to care for, and it can truly be said that she did her best. She professed a hope in 1878, and joined the Primitive Baptist Church a few years later. She always lived a consistent christian life and gave testimony on her death bed that all was well with her, so we can say, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.

W. W. KENOLY.

BROTHER **GEORGE R. TEDFORD** passed away at his home in Medfield, Massachusetts, July 26th, 1934. He was born in Topsham, Maine, September 18th, 1853. He was received and baptized many years ago into the Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church. He was firmly established in the truth and was beloved and highly esteemed by us all. He had the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, and esteemed others better than himself. He was ill only a few weeks, but was enabled to say, Thy will be done; it is well with me to-day. The body was brought to Brunswick, and the funeral services were held here. Elder R. Lester Dodson spoke comfortingly to us. Words fail to express our loss, but we are sure it is his gain. He leaves a wife, several nieces and a nephew. His body was buried in the family plot in Topsham, Maine.

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

MEETINGS.

The eighty-fourth annual session of the North Ochata Predestination Baptist Association is appointed to be held with New Hope Church, Hempstead County, Arkansas, nine miles south of Hope, Arkansas, on the Iron Mountain R. R., commencing on Friday before the first Sunday in September and continuing three days. All lovers of the truth are invited to be with us.

J. T. EVERETT, Moderator.
W. S. GORDON, Clerk.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held with Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in September and continuing three days (September 7th, 8th and 9th, 1934). To all who are seeking the truth a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

The last we heard from our Clerk, brother George R. Tedford, he was very sick, expecting to enter a hospital at once, and as we have been unable to get a reply to letters sent to him of late I am taking the liberty of sending this notice,

S. S. BARTLETT.
DAMARISCOTTA MILLS, Maine.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association it to convene with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Shokan, Ulster County, New York, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday between the second and third Sundays in September (September 12th, 13th and 14th), 1934. Those coming by car or bus on Tuesday p. m., September 11th, will come direct to the church, and there will be some one there to direct them to places of entertainment. Also trains will be met at Shokan Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

ORVILLE WINCHELL, Deacon.

The Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to meet in her ninety-third annual session with Whitewater Church, Ellisville, Arkansas, September 14th, 15th and 16th, (which includes Friday, Saturday and third Sunday), 1934. Ellisville is ten miles south of Fordyce, Ark., on Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific R. R., and on Highway from Fordyce to Ellisville. The Association will be held one-quarter of a mile out from station. All genuine, orderly and peace loving Baptists are invited to meet with us at this time and place. If further information is desired write to either Moderator or Clerk of the Association.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator,
Fordyce, Arkansas.
W. C. HORTON, Clerk,
Ellisville, Arkansas.

The Original Mount Zion Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, with Little Blue and Sni-a-bar Church, in Jackson County, Missouri, at the home of brother J. B. Alumbaugh, September 28th, 29th and 30th, 1934. Those coming by train from the east come on the C. & A. R. R. to Independence, Mo. Those coming from the west change at Kansas City and take C. & A. R. R. or bus or street car to Independence, where all will be met by Elder W. L. Hall and brother Alumbaugh. Those in cars come on U. S. Highway No. 40 to Blue Springs, there turn north and follow rock road across Blue Bridge, there take oiled road north to first road west and go one-half mile to brother Alumbaugh's home. Those from west inquire of almost any business man and he can direct you to brother Alumbaugh's home, where a hearty welcome will await all lovers of the truth.

(MRS.) J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in September (30th). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

The Hopewell Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association convenes with Harmony Church, Belk, Fayette County, Alabama, October 19th, 20th and 21st, 1934. All who are in good order and contending for the truth as the SIGNS and **Sovereign Grace** do are invited.

G. W. BERRY, Morderator.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 808 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one-half block west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Cloth binding. Price, $1.25 each. One dozen or more, ordered at the same time and all to the same address, one dollar each. Cash must accompany orders. Make checks and money orders payable to

J. E. BEEBE & CO.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminiar Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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ELDER C. W. ANDERSON,
ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 102. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1934. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FIERY TRIALS.

"BELOVED, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified."

The above Scripture may be found in the fourth chapter of first Peter, verses twelve, thirteen and fourteen. Those whom Peter was here addressing he called the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia, calling them the elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. This peculiar and strange people are still scattered among all nations, tribes and tongues, and are the elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, and none are called in any other way, and are still being addressed through the same kind of message now as then, but in order for them to hear and to understand this message the deaf ear must be unstopped and the blind eye must be opened and they must be given spiritual ears and spiritual eyes, as these things are not taught of men, they are spiritually discerned.

Jesus, speaking through the psalmist David, has said, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." And when John saw a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands, and all the angels stood round about the throne and about the elders, and one of the elders said unto John, What are these which are arrayed in

white robes, and whence came they? John said unto him, Sir, thou knowest, and the elder answered, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. And again, in Isaiah xlviii. 9, 10, God, in speaking to Israel, said, "For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off. Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." He spake to every child of grace which makes up the mystical body of Christ, the church of the living God. This was the multitude which John saw and which no man could number which stood before the throne arrayed in white robes. It is in the furnace of affliction that every member of this body is chosen and refined, consuming the dross of self-righteousness, and purifying their hearts and kindling that love for one another which Jesus mentioned when he said, "A new commandment I give unto thee, That ye love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love, one to another." It was through this love that he died upon the cross, and although he was the only begotten Son of the Father the bitterness of that suffering and death was so great that he felt forsaken of the Father, and cried out in the deepest anguish of soul, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" It is declared in Isaiah liii. 7, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so openeth he not his mouth," and if we would take up our cross and follow him we must pass through these sore trials, and it is through these that we are all refined and brought out of great tribulation. For he saith, "He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me." But if we are born of God we are made willing to endure all these things for his name's sake. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God" And though you are chosen in the furnace of affliction, he has spoken through the poet these comforting words,

"When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace, all-sufficient, shall be thy supply;
The flames will not hurt thee, I only design
Thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine."

After Christ passed through that agonizing death upon the cross and was laid in Joseph's new tomb, and a great stone was rolled to the door of the sepulchre and sealed and a watch was set there lest his disciples come and steal him away by night, there was a great earthquake and an angel of God descended from heaven and rolled away the stone, and the keepers did shake and became as dead men, and Jesus arose and came forth from the tomb and the tomb and the graveclothes alone were left, and the napkin which covered his face was folded and laid in a clean place. He thus triumphed over death, hell and the grave and sits at the right hand of the Majesty on high, where he ever liveth to make intercession for his people, and the glory which is his transcends all and is a recompense for all the reproach, all the anguish in the

garden of Gethsemane, when his sweat, like great drops of blood, was falling down to the ground. All the terrible decree at Pilate's bar, all the burden of the cross and of being denied by Peter and forsaken by his other disciples, all the pain and anguish of the crown of thorns, and the great nails in his hands and feet, and at last the cruel thrust of the spear in his side from which flowed the water and the blood, mentioned by the poet in that immortal hymn,

> "Let the water and the blood,
> From thy wounded side which flowed,
> Be of sin the double cure,
> Cleanse me from its guilt and power."

That crimson flood has been and is the double cure of sin, for it was shed as a ransom to take away forever the sing of death, which is sin, and to redeem his people from its curse. His life on earth was not spent in bearing his own cross alone, but also the cross of others who were drawn unto him in the great service which he rendered. Not unto the rich and the mighty, but unto the lame and the halt and the blind, or we may truthfully say unto the sick, the spiritually sick, for the well need not a physician. Thus we also follow after him when bearing the burden or the cross of others, for in Galatians vi. 1, 2, he says, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." And again, "Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." And though we are called to pass through sore trials for his name's sake let us not fear, for "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." And, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." Therefore, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

Dear editors, I have made a feeble attempt to write the foregoing article at the request of a very dear afflicted friend of our family, and if it has your esteemed approval and you can find space for it in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES without crowding out other writings which might redound more to the glory of God, and more to the comfort of his dear saints, I shall be glad to have you publish it at your convenience.

Very sincerely,

ALFRED E. TITUS.

TRENTON, New Jersey.

TOUCHET, Wash., Aug. 17, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—I desire to express some of the exercises of my heart and mind to my brethren in Christ Jesus, and to my children in the natural ties of nature. It will also be an obituary of my dear companion that the dear Lord blessed me with and has now seen best in his wisdom to call from my earthly companionship to be a companion with his angels, which is a much higher companionship. As there will be no regular obituary, I will try to combine her obituary and my experience both in this article, as I feel my stay on earth with by brethren and children is drawing near an end, and I wish to leave a little souvenir with them in memory of me after my tongue and all that pertains to this natural life are silent in death. And the thought is, There is never a bitter but what it has its sweet. The rock may be very hard, but the honey is in the rock. God has taken Jacob for a type to show the bitter things of this mortal life, which are too numerous to mention. This mortal life is full of disappointments, and deep, and to me at times seemingly unbearable, but as hard as this rock may seem Wisdom has graciously arranged that we, like Jacob, can and do suck honey from the rock. The gospel of Jesus Christ, which is the power of God, is in this rock, that is, in our afflictions. The gospel says we have this treasure in earthen vessels. This treasure we have in these mortal bodies is the hope of immortality, and the gospel of Jesus Christ is the avenue, or way, Wisdom has provided for us to draw the honey from out of our afflictions. The gospel tells us that these earthly bodies shall dissolve and molder back to mother earth. Oh how bitter this is to our very life. When this truth comes into our homes and takes our loved ones from us it is so bitter we feel we cannot bear it. But while the hand of death and separation is putting the bitter vinegar and gall to our lips the Holy Spirit is giving the things of Jesus, and they are the oil which we get from the flinty rock (death). This oil, which is the grace, mercy and love of God, heals all the wounds which sin has made this mortal life to drink of. Oh the things of Jesus! What are they? They are the salvation of poor dying man. They are the life of God in us. He (Jesus) came to save his people from their sins which make our life here so bitter. Oh the hope of immortality! How sweet it is to my taste now while the bitter cup of death is put to my lips.

Now in order for you with me to understand this wonderful secret I will refer to Paul's wonderful admonition to his son: Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of God. We now have in our subject the rock and the honey, and it is the word of God. This rock I am going to apply to our natural fleshly life and the honey to our spiritual life, which is eternal. Jesus says, I give unto you eternal life and you shall never perish. Here is the honey we suck from the hard and fiery trials and afflictions of this mortal life. Now I am going to try, God being my helper,

to show these two by personal experience. In my youth God graciously blessed me with a companion who took the yoke of companionship with me, which the word of God says in doing we became one flesh; that is, my life was her life and her life was my life. We were joint-heirs in all that union, and truly in the fifty-seven years the dear Lord granted us together I found her to be all to me that God said she should be: a helpmeet. When the sorrows and bitterness of life came upon me I found her by my side bearing the yoke, and when the joys and comforts of life came to me she shared them with me. So indeed for fifty-seven years we proved God's word: one flesh. During that long time we had much bitterness to endure in raising a family of seven children, and we, too, had the great pleasure of sucking much honey from our toils and bitter trials, and when the dear Lord called her from me it seemed I could not bear the yoke alone, but, like poor Hannah, in the bitterness of my soul I found I was not alone. I found my Savior under the yoke with me, and oh how sweetly, how tenderly did he let my faltering hand touch the scepter of his suffering, and oh how the hard and stony trial opened up itself and let the oil of grace flow into the wound, and I so submissively could say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." I soon found I had no home, no place to rest. While I had good children, who would and did do all they could for me, and my little ranch home, a place where I could go with all my troubles, still there was no home there, for that dear companion who made it a home was not there. I care not how fine a farm or mansion it is if there is no companion it is no home. But while wandering in this barren desert about two years the dear Lord directed me to another one, and when I found her she, too, was homeless. She was the widow of brother J. H. Sater, who had been dead for several years, and she, too, was drinking the bitter cup of a lonely life. Her name was Emaline M. Sater, well known among the Baptists of this section. We were married October 20th, 1930, and on August 12th, 1934, the dear Lord called her from this earthly life to that better world. Our union as husband and wife was very short, not quite four years, but oh my soul, how sweet and pleasant was that short married life. She was just everything that the word companion means. She truly was a helpmeet. She was the mother of ten children by brother Sater, of whom nine are living. Her death was very sudden and unexpected. About three years ago she had a paralytic stroke which affected her right foot and hand, but she regained the use of them and could get about fairly well. The day she died was our meeting day and she, feeling as well as usual, was able to go and enjoy the meeting. Some brethren came home with us for lunch. She prepared the meal and ate as heartily as usual. After lunch she and I sat in the sitting-room and talked for some time, while the brethren who came home with us were out in the yard under the shade. She

suggested that I go out and visit with the brethren. I stepped outside for a few minutes, not over fifteen, and when I went back into the house she was sitting in the rocker where I had left her, with her head lying on her arm. I spoke to her, but she made no reply. I went and raised her head, but life had fled, and oh what sorrow so suddenly filled my very soul. While the cup to me is bitter, still it is sweet to realize she is so much better off and that the dear Lord dealt kindly with her in taking her so suddenly and she did not have to drink the bitter cup of suffering. Her funeral was held in the Baptist meeting-house in Touchet, Washington, and was conducted by Elder Bond, of La Grande, Ore., Elder Hughett, of Yakima, Wash., and brother Jones of Touchet, Wash. Five of her children were able to attend the services.

I am making this article rather lengthy, but it is that the brotherhood who are interested in me may know the particulars of her death without writing each one personally. When my first wife died I felt it was the bitterest cup that any mortal could endure, but oh how true is Jesus' word: Come, take my yoke upon you and learn of me. I have learned by bearing this yoke that I was mistaken, for my burden is much heavier now than then and it seems I must fall under the yoke. I was six years younger then than I am now, and that six years has developed many infirmities, the bitterest of which is the loss of my sight. My wife was eyes for me. She read all my correspondence and all my business transactions, and, best of all, she would read the blessed Scriptures to me, and when the dear old SIGNS and *Sovereign Grace* came she she would never rest until I had heard them all. Many other things that help life along she took with her when she left, which makes my life more bitter. But Israel was thirsting for water, and when they found it it was so bitter they could not drink it, but Moses was commanded to cut the tree and put it in the water and then it was sweet, just as when Jesus enters our lives he sweetens all the bitter. Yes, the bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower. The road may be very crooked, but the honey I get out of this crooked life is that Jesus will straighten it, and no matter how rough it may seem God will smooth it, for he is head over all things to the church. There is no power but of him, the powers that be are ordained of him. Oh the honey which flows so sweetly sweetens all our sorrows, heals all our wounds and drives away every fear. May the grace of God which brought Jesus from the tomb quicken our vile bodies and bring them to that glorious paradise of God, where death with its sting cannot come. Oh I long to see that blessed day when loved ones will meet to part no more. It is in this blessed hope I bid you farewell.

J. T. BARNES.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., April 26, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—Come with me and take a view of the children of the living God, who were created in Christ Jesus before the world was, and who have been kept by the power of

God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. We are troubled on every side, but not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed, for Jesus is always with us, and having loved us with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness he draws us, for he has put that love into our hearts, and that love is stronger than death. It is as lasting as life, for it is life eternal, and has no end; it is as lasting as Jesus himself. Then we have nothing to fear, although the enemy roars and tries to affright us, and would overcome us if Jesus did not fight our battles for us, we are so weak, so you see all the honor and glory belong to our Prophet, Priest and King. How can we love him enough? The dry bones which Ezekiel described surely fit us, for we have no more power nor strength than they had, but our Savior has just the same power he had then, for it was he that was with Ezekiel and called the dry bones together, every bone to his bone. There was not one mistake in all that valley of dry bones coming together, neither will there be in the calling of his children, for it is with a holy calling they are called. For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren; moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified he also glorified. In the next verse Paul asks, What shall we say to these things? If God be for us who can be against us? It seems that Paul's question here is just what we would ask, for if God be for us it could make no difference who was against us, for God rules all things, and nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Then let us sing,

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word."

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. Now by the faith which he has given us we have a hope in his word that he will do just as he has promised. Then come with me and let us see what he has promised. In 1 Corinthians xv. 51, 52, he says, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of a eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." 1 Thessalonians iv. 15, 16: "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." This is the same incident told by Paul, one of God's called and qualified apostles, to two of the churches. This is what we hope for, and the end of our hope, for it is the realizing of that hope; it is the substance; it is that come to pass that we hoped for and desired, and expected, because we have faith in the promise, for he is faithful who promised, and having all

power, and loving us with an everlasting love, it is not his will that one of these little ones should be lost, and we have strong consolation, Hebrews vi. 17-20, "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." I think Paul was telling of the first resurrection, recorded by John in the twentieth chapter of Revelation, and they ruled and reigned with Christ a thousand years, and so shall they ever be with the Lord. They are the spirits of just men made perfect. They were not perfected so long as they were here bearing about that body of death which Paul despaired of, but being justified we have power with God through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, but when we shall be changed and made like his glorious body we shall be made perfect by him, and, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." These are all of the children of God, without the loss of one, and they shall be with Christ, and have been, and shall ever be, and they are kings and priests of God and they shall reign with him a thousand years, and the reason I think it will be here on this earth is because after the thousand years are finished Satan is to be loosed out of his prison and go out in the four quarters of the earth to deceive the nations, to gather them together to battle Gog and Magog, and they shall go upon the breadth of the earth and compass the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city, and fire shall come down from God out of heaven and devour them, then God having no more use for the devil he shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet already are. Now they, the devil and the false prophet, never were any place but on this earth, neither were those who had his mark in their foreheads or in their hands ever any place only on this earth, until they were cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, but where were the saints? They were camped about Jerusalem, or Mt. Zion the city of our God, for they had at their resurrection been made like Jesus, for they have been changed and made like unto his glorious body, for we shall see him as he is, and be like him. Then, dear children of God, though you are doubting and fearing, you have no good reason to fear, for the God who is ruling all things in your behalf will bring you off more than conquerors through him that loved you and gave his precious life for you. He is still at the helm and will guide your frail bark to victory for you, for his word has gone forth in righteousness and will not return unto him void,

but will accomplish the thing whereunto he has sent it, and this is the thing whereunto he has sent it: the salvation of your soul, body and spirit, and now this is the full consummation of that which we have been hoping for and expecting. Not that we have been in any way worthy to receive it, but this is what we praise Jesus for, he is the one who deserves all the praise, honor and glory, and to us belongs the joy, for then we shall have been made like unto him, when we shall awake in his likeness and find that henceforth he shall be like one of us, for he is our Elder Brother. Oh can it be possible that we who have groveled here in the dust will be like him in all his glory? Yes, we will, for Jesus has told us so. Then lift up the head that hangs down and shout for joy, for Jesus reigns and our salvation draweth nigh. Then Jesus will surrender the reign unto his Father, his Father and our God, and we will then praise him as we ought and see him without this cloud between us. The fifth chapter of Revelation bears us out in this. The book that was held in the right hand of him that sat on the throne was the same book mentioned in Revelation twenty, the book of life, in which the names of the saints are all recorded, and the whole fifth chapter seems to be relating the same events that are recorded in the twentieth, only the twentieth chapter tells of the reign of a thousand years, but the tenth verse of the fifth chapter reads, "And hath made us kings and priests: and we shall reign *on the earth.*" The saints of God have never been popular enough to reign on earth yet, but are counted as the offscourings of the earth, but when they are made kings and priests of God they will reign on the earth, since they will have been changed and made like unto Jesus they shall reign together with Christ. The eleventh verse says, "I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them." This is the end of the world, then comes the judgment day we hear so much about. "And the books were opened: and another book was opened. This is the book of life, which Jesus alone could open, and the dead were judged out of the other book according to their works, and their works are only evil continually. So they were as the goats, and the second was their portion. But, says God, "Behold, I make all things new," and we look for a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, and, dear child of God, you will not look in vain, for this is another of his promises which is just as sure as it is that there is a God, and he has promised us that we should inherit a land where there is no night, and there will be no sun, for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign forever and ever. And he says these things are faithful and true. God told John that he had sent his angel to show to his servants the things which must shortly be done, and these propecies, to me, are the beginning of the end of this world, and the first resurrection is the time we are all longing for, but we are not told how long it will be before the final

judgment. This tells us it will be a thousand years, but what difference does that make to us, since the Lord our God, who is a just God, is ruling and he knows. That is enough for me. I do not want to pry between the folded leaves. My concern is, Will my name be written in the Lamb's book of life?

DAVIS BURCH.

OTTAWA, Kans., Aug. 21, 1934.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—Though I wrote you last week, I am beginning another letter to you, having been encouraged to believe I will not bore you. Last Saturday was a hot day, temperature 108 degrees, one of many such days continuously for the past several weeks. Early in the evening we had a light shower. The report was that not more than a quarter of an inch fell at any place within the State; however, the intense heat was much reduced and the temperature did not go above 70 degrees yesterday. This morning, Tuesday, is very pleasant, though some warmer than yesterday. I am wondering how many are truly thankful to the Lord for his mercy in giving us even temporary relief. I was going over in my mind this morning some things in the Bible which are sometimes startling, yet always comforting and encouraging to me. The wonderful prayer of Habakkuk. He trembleth at God's majesty. The confidence of his faith would be beyond understanding to one who had not experienced it. The sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth verses have been sweet to me since they were first impressed on my heart many years ago. "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." And with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." And then as the poet has so well expressed it,

"Shuld poverty and loss of every kind of good
Conspire to make our weighty cross,
Our Helper still is God."

And with Peter, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." I feel to say with the psalmist right now, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases." The whole psalm is a beautiful exhortation to trust and praise the Lord, and an acknowledgment of our weakness and sinfulness. Then in the thirteenth and fourteenth verses the sweet assurance is given: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." There is so much comfort and consolation in his word when applied to our hearts and experience. Why do we ever doubt him?

"Let me, thou sovereign Lord of all,
Low at thy footstool humbly fall;
And while I feel affliction's rod,
Be still and know that thou art God.

Let me not murmur nor repine
Under these trying strokes of thine;
But while I walk the mournful road,
Be still and know that thou art God.

When and wherever thou shalt smite,
Teach me to own thy sovereign right;
And underneath the heaviest load,
Be still and know that thou art God.

Still let this truth support my mind:
Thou canst not err nor be unkind,
And thus approve thy chastening rod,
And know thou art my Father, God."

The dear Lord has made me to know that he, and he alone, is God, and that there is no help outside him. All that friends and relations do for me, I desire to give him thanks first for putting it in their hearts to be kind to me. How wonderful to have the love of God shed abroad in our hearts! At times I feel my heart will burst with thanksgiving and love. My eyes are so full of tears I can hardly see to write. Oh may I never deny him in word or act! I have been put to some pretty severe tests sometimes when so-called christian friends would be telling or giving me their religious views and their ideas of God and heaven. I would have to tell them that my faith is that the Lord does all for me, I do nothing for him. He does not need my help, but I am hourly in need of him. They soon give me up as no use to them in their work. I was really disgusted to hear one lady say that she was training her little girl for Jesus. I well know that Jesus must and will do his own teaching if ever they are to know him. David said, "God hath spoken once: twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God." The Lord told Jeremiah, "Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?" "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) and let us consider one another, to provoke to love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." The last is something the dear Lord himself has denied me, but I would not complain, because he has been very near to me and has certainly made up to me for the loss of all church privileges. I have faith to believe that he will not take himself away, and more he cannot give.

I have written what is in my mind and heart. If I have said anything that is not according to the truth, be faithful and tell me. Much love in the Lord.

Your sister in hope of eternal life,

ANNA McKINNEY.

LEXINGTON, Ky., Jan 10, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE DEAR OLD SIGNS:—The time has arrived for the renewal of my subscription, and I am glad to send it, together with those of two friends in Shelbyville. I have been a reader of the SIGNS for seventy-five years—since I experienced a hope in the year 1858, when I was fourteen years of age. My father began taking the SIGNS early in 1850. I have been a member of the church seventy-four years last September, and have been trying to preach seventy-two years last December. I passed my ninetieth birthday January 2nd. When I look back and see the changes in nature it seems wonderful, but with God, and the truth which I try to preach, there is no change; it is the same yesterday, to-day and forever.

In my years of blindness the SIGNS

seems, if possible, more dear, as I can seldom get out to meeting. I often feel, after an article has been read to me, that I have been to meeting, for the SIGNS contends for the same faith and doctrine that was once delivered unto the saints, and that is what I love to hear. My mind in my old age is not exercised on the Scriptures as I once thought it would be, but many of the dear old hymns come to my mind and I repeat them in my lonely hours. I go back over many pleasant scenes in my travels about the country, homes I have visited and meetings I have attended, and they are precious memories.

I want to thank you all for the dear, good letters you wrote me last spring, and I would gladly have answered them all if I could see to write. I would be glad to hear from you all again. This will likely be my last letter to you, and I want to extend love and felowship to all the dear saints, and hope I can truly say, On earth peace, and good will to men.

"O Lord, I would delight in thee
And on thy care depend;
To thee in all my troubles flee,
My best, my only Friend.

When all created streams are dried,
Thy fullness is the same;
May I with this be satisfied,
And glory in thy name."

Yours, the very least of all,

P. W. SAWIN.

[WE wish to apologize to Elder Sawin for not publishing the foregoing letter from him earlier in the year, but in some manner it became misplaced and did not come to light until a few days ago.—PUBLISHER.]

DALLAS, Texas, July 19, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—One would think I am not very appreciative of the dear SIGNS, since I waited so long to renew my subscription. This is the first time I have ever been so neglectful. I kept thinking I would feel like writing for publication, so waited, hoping to do so. There may be a time when the Lord will give me a mind to write and a ready pen. I long ago learned that to do or say anything to the comfort of God's humble poor one has to be directed of the Lord. Since I have been so wonderfully blessed in having preaching so near me twice a month and have enjoyed hearing the gospel in all its purity, truth, love and joy it has made me hope from time to time that it will be our Master's will to continue this blessed privilege, and have, no doubt, lost sight of how lonely it is to be situated otherwise.

I enjoyed old brother D. L. Blackwell's article in the July number, also brother Bellows' comment; in fact I get many crumbs of comfort in reading and rereading the SIGNS. I have been a subscriber many years, and hope to continue reading it the rest of my life. I love the old doctrine its writers and publishers set forth and hope it is the Lord's will to enable you to continue and that you may receive ample pay for your time and labor. Inclosed find one year's renewal, the remainder to use as you see fit. I trust the Lord will enable you to remember me when at the throne of grace. I am so weak and full of sin that I find a warfare continually raging within. To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not.

Your little sister in a precious hope through Christ Jesus our Lord,

(MRS.) H. A. STRUBE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1934.

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ROMANS XI. 25-27.

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins."

All true spiritual prophecy concerned Jesus Christ and the work he was to do. Every star that flickered throughout the dark dispensation of legalism was but a dim reflection of the Sun of Righteousness which was to arise with healing in his wings. The blood of every bird and beast sacrificed upon Jewish altars portrayed only faintly the one offering which would perfect forever them that are sanctified. Isaiah, speaking of the child that was to be born and the son that was to be given, said, "The *government* shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." The government being spoken of in the singular showed that there was to be only one, not two or more. Daniel came along later and spoke of him as the stone cut out of the mountains without hands, who would set up a kingdom that would never be destroyed, "and the kingdom [definite and in the singular] shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."—Dan. ii. 44. Earthly kings arose in their turn and order, only to pass away in due season and make way for others who were to follow, but in no part of the record do we find it even inferred that King Jesus would ever be transplanted by another. On the contrary, he is declared to be the "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last." All power, both in heaven and in earth, was given into his hands. Of a truth, he is Lord of lords, and King of kings. John, speaking of this Word which was in the beginning, which was with God and verily was God, said that it was "made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." Fullness, completeness and perfection are invariably implied where Jesus is referred to. There can be no lack in him. He filleth all and in all. It is said in Colossians i. 16-19, "For by him were all things created, that are in

heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body [not two, but one], the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell." In Ephesians ii. 10-18, it is written thus, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: but now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." This appears to us to embrace both Jew and Gentile, and was in fulfillment of what Jesus said in John x. 16, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."

The foregoing preamble has been made in the hope that the mind of the reader will be better prepared to consider the comment we shall undertake on our text and other portions of the chapter in which it is found. Previous to our text the apostle had been relating God's dealings with his people in cutting off *some* of the Jews and grafting in, shall we say *some* of the Gentiles, for surely the Bible does not teach that *all* of the Gentiles were grafted in spiritually. In the verse immediately preceding our text Paul says, "For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be graffed into their own olive tree?" Then follows our text, in which he expresses himself as being desirous that his brethren should not be ignorant of this mystery, lest they should be wise in their own conceits, "that blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." First, let us notice that this blindness which happened to Israel was only in part. It was not wholly and entire so far as Israel, the Jews, was concerned. In other words, there were Jews, doubtless members of the

church at Rome, who had not been cut off from the gospel, and the apostle puts himself among this class in the very first verse of the chapter. He asked, "Has God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin." In the next verse he gives us a key which we believe will lock and unlock many vital truths concerning this mystery. He says, *"God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew."* This people was spiritual Israel, made up of Jews and Gentiles, comprising every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue, and it is a remnant of this group which we understand makes up the visible church in the gospel dispensation. There are those to-day who evidently feel as Elijah of old did, that there is none left in this group or that place, but he was given to understand that he knew very little about the matter. The Lord told him that he had reserved seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. A number of personal experiences come to our mind as we write this which convinced us that the Lord had people where we least expected. It is enough to know that the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. The apostle realized these things, hence he said, "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." He was careful to make clear that it was of grace, and not of works, and said, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." The expression, "The *rest* were blinded," implies that there were some who were not blind. Unquestionably there were those among the Jews who had eyes to see, ears to hear and hearts to understand the things of the gospel. Concerning some he said, "Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway." Does not the foregoing show (1) that there were believers among the Jews and also (2) that there were those who never would know the Lord? How say some, then, that some day the Jewish nation in its entirety shall acclaim Jesus as their King? When Jesus was here in the flesh some of his disciples gave evidence of hoping that he had come to restore the kingdom of David, but he promptly gave them to understand that his kingdom was not of this world. Is not the kernel of the whole matter summed up in the fact that God is a Spirit, and that he seeketh such to worship him as do worship him in spirit and in truth? After the resurrection of Jesus, Paul wrote, saying, "Wherefore henceforth know ye no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." Also, our Lord himself, making as it were his final report to the Father in John seventeen, said, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now am no more in the world." In the face of such testimony we do not see how it can be claimed that he will come again at some future time in a body of flesh and rule over the Jews as a nation. If we understand the Scrip-

tures correctly, they teach that there is one Lord, one faith and one baptism, and that the Lord Jesus Christ is head over all things to the church, which is his body. The types and shadows under the law were not perfect, hence the apostle says that all were not Israel who were of Israel, and he shows the wisdom and purpose of God in cutting off the *natural* branches among the Jews and grafting in the true spiritual branches among the Gentiles. In an eternal life sense there can be no dead branches, for every branch partakes of the life of the true Vine, and this life cannot die. Under the law the shadows of good things to come were all that they had to signify spiritual things, hence are referred to by the apostle as being "the riches of the world," but he continues by saying the "diminishing of them" (the types and shadows) are "the riches of the Gentiles," and adds, "How much more their fullness," the gospel. Did not the fullness of the Gentiles consist of the crucified and risen Christ and the setting up of his kingdom here on earth? One said, I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified. Is it not he who is the way, the truth and the life? There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby sinners, whether Gentile or Jew, must be saved. "If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" Unless we altogether misunderstand the apostle, the burden of his labors among the Jews was to show them *the new and living way*. In the very outset of his epistle to the Hebrews he tells them that "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things," etc. In the ninth chapter of this same epistle, verses twenty-four to twenty-six inclusive, he says, "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world [was he not here referring to the legal world?] hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." In the tenth chapter, verses nineteen to twenty-two inclusive, he wrote, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." These things were addressed especially to the Hebrews. Paul would have them understand that God taketh away the first covenant that he might establish the second. In the first the law was written on tables of

stone, but in the second the gospel was written in the fleshly tables of the heart. Three of the four gospel writers quoted the Savior concerning what he said about the utter destruction of the Jewish temple, so it must have been important, and the substance of it is this: "There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." We do not gather that this was to be accomplished over night, so to speak, but we do most positively affirm that the words of Jesus have been fulfilled. We are convinced that the apostle Peter had reference to this when he said: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens [legal] shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat: the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up." Further proof of this is furnished in the fact that he continued by saying, "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Therefore, in summing up, he could wish for them nothing better than that they should "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." When the legal dispensation had been completely destroyed, and the gospel dispensation thoroughly established, it would seem to us that the fullness of the Gentiles had come in. It is the gospel which proclaims that "all [spiritual] Israel shall be saved." It is the gospel which declares the fulfillment of that which was written, namely: "There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." It is the gospel that tells of his covenant to take away the sins of his people. Let us, therefore, sound it forth and proclaim it from the housetop. Let us quote further from this eleventh chapter of Romans relative to the matter under consideration: "And if *some* [not all] of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert graffed in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not against the branches, but if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be graffed in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off; and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear; for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them in again." In the visible gospel church at Rome, to which the apostle was writing, there were doubtless both Jews and Gentiles, and he needed to admonish the Gentiles as well as instruct the Jews. He sets forth to them all that they have nothing but what they receive from the root and fatness of the olive tree, therefore boasting is done away. He then reminds them of that God who spared not the natural branches, which were broken off because

of unbelief, and tells them to take heed lest they also be not spared. He stresses the goodness and severity of God. How all-important it is that those who profess to love our Lord in sincerity and in truth should walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they have been called. We believe we have experienced something of the severity of God against those who fall away and come short of glorifying him. How true are the words of Moses in Deuteronomy, when he said, "I must die in this land, I must not go over Jordan: but ye shall go over, and possess that good land. Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the Lord your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, which the Lord thy God hath forbidden thee. For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God." How it behooves those who speak and write to take heed unto themselves and set forth only those things which become sound doctrine. As for ourself, we have to confess with shame to coming far short in many things, but in this we have experienced the goodness of the Lord. He has been better to us than all our fears. If not deceived, we do desire to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. We are satisfied if, by grace, we are enabled to do this that we shall have to endure persecution, as this world is not friendly disposed towards the cause of truth. The natural Jew may be persecuted in certain parts of the world, but this is as nothing compared to the persecution of the spiritual Jew. According to a well recognized authority, the latest estimate of the Jewish population throughout the world was less than sixteen million. Of these over four million, or more than twenty-five per cent., are said to be in the United States and its possessions, with less than six hundred thousand in Germany, the main country in which they are said to be persecuted at the present time. This would mean that only three or four per cent. of the Jewish race even live in a country where there is persecution. When we consider the spiritual Jew we get an entirely different picture from this. It matters not where he may roam or upon what sea he may sail, let him begin to open his mouth and sound forth the praises of his Lord, and without a single solitary exception he will soon find himself opposed and ridiculed because of the doctrine of God our Savior. There is no one who understands or loves it except he who has been taught it of the Lord, and it is seldom that we find even whole families where all are believers, much less entire nations. In the days of the prophets the Lord took one of a city and two of a family, and in the days of the apostles it was said that two men would be in one bed, one would be taken and the other left; two women would be grinding together, one would be taken and the other left. How different the Lord's ways are from what we would often have them. Within a radius of perhaps fifty miles from where we hold our meetings in the city

of New York there are possibly ten millions of people, and yet the number which gathers there is so infinitesimally small, comparatively speaking, that a stranger would conclude there must be something radically wrong. The claim that we are the true church of God would seem utterly absurd to him. Sometimes we are made to ask the reason WHY ourself. We are quite certain that a number of our yoke-fellows in the ministry as they go about laboring under their burdens and trying to serve churches to the best of their ability are often made to wonder at the small ingatherings, and the condition of Zion in general. We are given to understand that the Lord has a set time to favor Zion, so all we can do is to watch and try to pray. When we are blest to comprehend something of the Lord's dealings with his people; when we can look unto the hole of the pit from whence, by grace, we were digged; when we can realize that it was all because of his great love and mercy that we were not left to travel the broadway of mankind; when we are made to hope that we have been extricated from nature's dismal darkness and transplanted into the marvelous light and liberty of his blessed Son, and can by faith lay hold upon the wonderful promises contained in his precious word, then can we join with the great apostle in exclaiming, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."

R. L. D.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Arnold H. Bellows, of Roxbury, N. Y., Mr. Leroy Cook, of Cobleskill, N. Y., and Miss Eva May Moister, July 21st, 1934, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Moister, in Central Bridge, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SARAH ELIZABETH WEBB was born March 28th, 1867, near Benton, Illinois, the daughter of Daniel and Eliza Bain. May 18th, 1844, she was married to Erastus G. Webb, and to this union were born fifteen children, five children and two grandchildren preceding her in death. Her husband, seven daughters, three sons and thirty grandchildren survive. The children who are left to mourn the loss of this beloved one, who was both mother and friend, are: Mrs. Will Gillispie, Hooker, Okla.; Mrs. Anna Slief, Wellsford, Kans.; Mrs. George Carlson, Pratt, Kans.; Mrs. Roy Miller, Haviland, Kans.; Mrs. Charles O'rear and Mrs. Herbert Ulrich, Wenatchee, Wash.; Miss Gustava Webb, Cullison, Kans.; Stella and Hardy Webb, Hugoton, Kans., and Barton Webb, Centerville, Calif. Besides her immediate family, she leaves one sister, Mrs. Fannie Davis, of Benton, Ill., and one brother, Millard Bain, of Terra Haute, Ind.; two half-sisters, Mrs. Wilson Warren and Mrs. Ida Webb, both of Benton, Ill.; one half-brother, Edgar Bain, of Benton, Ill.; two step-brothers, Marion Beaty, of Berkley, Calif., and Henry Beaty, of Benton, Ill. Mrs. Webb passed to her reward August 13th, 1934, at the age of 67 years, 4 months and 15 days. She was a resident of the Cullison community, living three and three-quarter miles northwest of Cullison, having moved there in 1916. She, with her husband, suffered all the hardships of the pioneer of the west, having moved from Illinois to Haskell County, Kansas, in 1888. The last nine months of her life were filled with illness, which was borne with great patience and unusual consideration for those ministering to her. At the age of nineteen years she joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Middlefork, Franklin County, Illinois, and lived a beautiful and consistent christian life. Besides the care of her large family and her many home duties, she found time to visit and cheer the sick in her neighborhood. No day was too stormy, no night to dark, for her to go to the bedside of a sick friend when there was need. Her faith and trust in her Lord was beautiful and true, never wavering, though drought and wind destroyed the crops and sickness and death visited her home. Her first thought had even been for the comfort and well-being of her family and for those with whom she came in contact. The entire community feels that the place made vacant by her death can never be filled, but feels itself greatly enriched from having known and cherished such a lovely character. Truly her children will rise up and call her blessed.

The foregoing obituary was published in our local paper. The complimentary part of which was the expression of esteem and gratitude as written in by her kind neighbors. She was a faithful attendant of her church and a studious reader of the Scriptures, also gospel writings in books and periodicals. Near her last on earth she told us she wanted to go, and did not "dread it one bit." May we also finish our course in faith.

In sorrow,

E. G. WEBB.

MRS. SARAH J. DESHONG, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Cora L. Sipes, at McConnellsburg, Pa., September 10th, 1934. She had been in failing health for many months, but had not been really ill except since the Friday before she passed away. Her father and mother were brother Marcus Starr and sister Mary Mellott, both long since deceased. She was born at Sipes' Mill, Fulton County, Pennsylvania. Her husband was our late brother Simon Deshong, who died in 1924. She was baptized by the late Elder E. V. White about forty-six years ago into the membership of the Sideling Hill Old School Baptist Church. She was a woman of love and peace among her brethren and among her neighbors and friends. The words in Psalm twenty-six, verse eight, fitted her, because she surely loved her meetings and never missed if she could help it. Since her husband's death she has been spending her summers with her married children in Fulton County, Pennsylvania, and her winters with her children in Wilmington, Delaware. When at the latter, she faithfully attended the meetings at Welsh Tract whenever she could possibly do so. She is survived by eight children. Besides Mrs. Sipes, at whose home she died, they are: Mrs. Lettie B. Deshong, of Needmore, Pa., Mrs. Viola D. Garland, of Tuxedo Park, Del., Joseph W. Deshong, of Wilmington, Del., Oscar Deshong, of Townsend, Del., Mrs. Jeannette L. Hurd, of Chestertown, Md., and Clarence I. and Norman S. Deshong, both of Wilmington, Del. All of these children were around her bed when she passed away, notwithstanding they were living several miles from her and had but short notice of her approaching end. They have ever showed much care and consideration for the welfare of their mother and did what they could for her comfort and wellbeing. She is also survived by twenty-seven grandchildren and nineteen great-grandchildren. She has three brothers living: brother Starr, of Mercersburg, Pa., brother Thomas Starr, of Chestertown, Md., and Mr. Joseph C. Starr, of Herndon, Va. May the Comforter abide with all who truly mourn.

The funeral services were held in the meeting-house at Sideling Hill, conducted by myself, her pastor. Her body was laid to rest in the cemetery there by the side of her husband.

H. H. L.

JOSEPH FIELDS MULBERRY, the subject of this sketch, was born January 29th, 1862, and died June 6th, 1934, in his seventy-third year. He was the son of the late Lemon and Cassandra Fields Mulberry. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Rosa Scarborough Mulberry, and two children, Mrs. Herman Robinson and Mr. William Smoot Mulberry, both of Shelby County, Kentucky, several grandchildren, two brothers, William, of Sadieville, Ky., and Math J., of Marion, Ind, together with a host of friends and neighbors. Joseph, although never uniting with the church, was a strong predestinarian, and could see the beauty of God's plans and power, also felt keenly his own imperfection and sinfulness, and at times wished he was fit to be a member of Elk Lick, which is the name of the church where his wife, Rosa, and son Smoot were members, and where he attended. For several years he had been troubled with his heart and was not able to perform any very hard work, but he was always busy around his house and garden. While driving the cows home the evening of June 6th he fell to the ground and died without a struggle. The son and grandson found him and carried him to the house and summoned aid, but the spirit had fled, and his wish he so often expressed, that he would "die with his boots on," was granted. Our hearts go out in sympathy to the lonely widow and children. May the Lord bless them, also the members of the church. We have surely lost a friend, but believing that our loss is his gain, we bow in humble submission to the will of God, who doeth all things well.

I tried to comfort the friends at the funeral, which was held in the Christian Church, Porter, Ky., and his body was laid to rest in the cemetery near by.

ALSO,

Miss LAURA VORIES, our sister in Christ, was born in February, 1859, and died August 18th, 1934, making her age nearly seventy-five years. In the summer of 1881 she received a hope in the Savior, and upon relation of her experience to the Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church she was received, and baptized by Elder N. A. Humptson, then pastor of the church, and in their faith she lived and died. For almost twenty years she had been an invalid, and much of the time confined to the house. She lived with a brother in New Castle, Ky., until about a year ago, when he died, and since that time she had resided with a sister, Mrs. William Ransdell, near Campbellsburg, Ky., where she died. Sister Laura suffered much, but bore her suffering with patience, and was always glad to meet her brethren. I called to see her whenever convenient, my last visit being two weeks before she died, when I thought she was much improved, as she was then able to be up and around the house and yard, and I was quite surprised when I was called for her funeral. I spoke briefly to the numerous brethren and friends who had gathered to pay their last respects to one they all

loved. I spoke from the thought that the Lord is righteous, and just in all his ways, that he gave, and hath taken away, blessed be his holy name. May the Lord reconcile us all in our bereavement and enable us to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done. The body was taken to the cemetery near Campbellsburg and all that was mortal was laid to rest, to await the call of the Master in the glorious resurrection.

Written by her pastor,

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

SISTER **SARAH JANE WADDELL,** wife of James Waddell, was born (as was her husband) January 22nd, 1857, and departed this life August 30th, 1934, aged 77 years, 7 months and 8 days. January 11th, 1877, she was united in marriage to James A. Waddell, and to their union were born fourteen children, six of whom died in infancy and one son, Alexander Augustus Waddell, died December 16th, 1915. She is survived by her husband, three sons and four daughters: John Henry Waddell, Millport, Ala., Gilbert Edwin Waddell, Jackson, Miss., Calvin Dennis Waddell, Atlanta, Ga., Mrs. Rosa Bell Hugs, McShan, Ala., Mrs. Margret Louise McDaniel, Millport, Ala., Mrs. Anna Kissiah Garner, Reform, Ala., Mrs. Della Jane Johnson, Fayette, Ala. She joined Mt. Carmel Primitive Baptist Church in 1877 and lived a consistent member for fifty-seven years. She expressed herself as being ready and willing to go home. The writer tried to comfort the bereaved ones by referring to the exceeding great and precious promises of God, that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature. Now, loved ones,sorrow not as others who have no hope, for we are assured that those also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him, so shall we ever be with the Lord.

LYTLE BURNS.

SISTER **ELIZABETH H. VAN CLEVE** passed away at the hme of her son, Norman Van Cleve, Tyrone, Pennsylvania, February 4th, 1934, at the age of eighty-three years. She was married to Charles Van Cleve December 31st, 1872, by Elder William J. Purrington. She is survived by two sons and two daughters, a number of grandchildren and other relatives to mourn their loss, but which to her we are sure was eternal gain. She was a member of the Southampton Church for over forty years and dearly loved the truth and to be with us at our meetings. The husband of one of her granddaughters, Mr. McBride, was very faithful in bringing her to her meetings in her later years. She was buried from Whight's funeral parlors, Tacony, Pa., Elder C. W. Vaughn officiating at the funeral, as Elder H. C. Ker, her pastor, was not able to be present. Hence another dear one has entered into rest with her Lord, whom she faithfully worshiped.

Written by request.

CASPER G. FETTER.

ELDER WILLIAM REUBEN HARDIN was born in Jefferson County, Alabama, January 2nd, 1858, and died at his home in Clairette, Texas, aged 76 years, 3 months and 22 days. His father's name was William Reuben, his mother's maiden name was Sarah Ann Allred. She was born in Mississippi. Of brothers and sisters, if any, the writer is not informed, except one brother, John, of Stamford, Texas, who is a member of Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, in Clairette County, Texas, of which Elder Hardin was pastor at the time of his death. He was first married to Miss Pemecie Warnick, and to that union were born five children, two of whom died in infancy. The three surviving are: James H., of Hico, Texas, Mrs. Sadie Cunningham, of Dallas, Texas, and Henry, of Clairette, Texas. His second wife's name was Mrs. Gracie Salmon McDonald. His third wife was Mrs. Maud May, whom he married about 1904. She died October 4th, 1927. He was married the fourth time August 4th, 1928, to Mrs. Mary C. Brown, who survives him. His first and third wives were members of the Baptist Church of the Predestinarian faith, as is also the surviving widow, who is a member of Hopewell Church, in Clairette. His second wife was a believer. After moving to Texas he was ordained to the work of the ministry, at about the age of twenty-three years, at Bethany Church, in the vicinity of Clairette. Elders C. T. Nance and S. N. Stephens, with Deacons A. A. Smith and J. S. Singleton, composed the ordaining presbytery. The date of the ordination was May 25th, 1906. After he was ordained he served Hopewell Church as pastor continuously, with the exception of about two years, during which time he lived in Knowles, New Mexico, and served Bethel Church, a newly constituted church there. His residence there was many years ago. Elder W. Monroe Brown now succeeds him as pastor of Hopewell Church. Just before he died he said repeatedly, "I will soon go to glory."

Hopewell Church, by conference action, appointed the writer to write this obituary to be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and recorded in her church book.

J. I. FOSTER.

RISING STAR, Texas, Sept. 6, 1934.

MRS. MARY JANE DAY was born May 6th, 1856. She joined Union Primitive Baptist Church, in Union Parish, Louisiana, in the year 1884, and lived a consistent and faithful member of that church until August 4th, 1934, when she was called away by Him who holds the keys of death and hell, and who also has the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Dear old sister Day was a very loving, pleasant and faithful mother in Israel. She was so kind and affectionate that all the brethren and sisters enjoyed having her stay with them in their homes, which she did much of the time after her own home was broken up. She was a sweet singer and loved to sing the good old hymns. She surely was a great comfort to the Lord's people.

I think she enjoyed preaching as much as any one I ever knew, and nearly always gave evidence of great rejoicing by shedding tears of joy during preaching. She could recall almost every text that different ministers had used, even years after the discourses had been preached. Union Church will miss her, as will the entire brotherhood, and I, as her unworthy pastor, will miss her very much. It was a comfort to me just to see her in the congregation, and she often ministered to my financial needs. She loved her family and her church and was a friend to every one. It is sad indeed to give her up, but I feel that our loss is her eternal gain. She has been called from this world of sin and sorrow and we hope and believe she is free from every fear and woe, for she left numerous evidences that identify her as a child of God. She gave great evidence of a work of God's grace in her heart, because that was the trend of her conversation, and the Bible says that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. She believed in and spoke often of the Lord's saving grace, and denounced the works of the creature to obtain salvation, knowing that the Scriptures abundantly prove that salvation is of the Lord. I feel sure God has wiped all tears from her eyes and that she is resting in the peaceful and glorious presence of that great, wonderful and adorable Savior, where sickness, sorrow, pain or death can come no more. May the Lord bless the bereaved family and church and comfort them in the good hope that we may some sweet day enter into that rest we feel is sister Day's blessed portion now. Sister day leaves to mourn her departure one son, J. H. Day, of Tucson, Ariz., one daughter, Mrs. Emma Hill, of West Monroe, La., and a host of relatives and friends.

Elder T. J. Evers conducted the funeral services. Interment was in Liberty Cemetery.

Written by her poor unworthy pastor,

R. W. RHODES.

BROTHER **JESSE K. KENNEDY** was born January 14th, 1867, and died February 9th, 1934. He was baptized by Elder William McDonald into Bethesda Church (Primitive Baptist) in February, 1889. He was united in marriage to sister Emma C. Thompson September 4th, 1889, and to their union were born eight children, five sons and three daughters: Thomas, Mattie, Walter, Lula, Leonard, Stella, John Henry and Homer, also eleven grandchildren. Brother Jesse was a peace loving brother and always at his meetings if possible, and his home was a place of love for his brethren and friends. His home church when he died was New Hope, nine miles south of Hope, Ark. He was laid to rest in the New Hope Cemetery until the Lord raises that body at the great rising day. No one will be missed more than brother Jesse, as his heart was full of love. May the God of love fill the vacancy in his dear companion's bosom with the manifestation of his loving Spirit to cheer her poor drooping heart, together with all of his loved ones. He was a firm believer in election, and that God chose his people in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world and saved them by his grace, and that none of them will ever be finally lost. He also leaves three brothers: John, Jim and Claude, together with a host of friends.

Written by his pastor,

JOHN T. EVERITT.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, &c REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.

Of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, published monthly, at Middletown, N. Y., for October 1st, 1934.

State of New York, County of Orange, ss.:

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Gilbert Beebe, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the owner of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that the following is to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24th, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse side of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publishers, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publishers, J. E. Beebe & Company, Middletown, N. Y.; Editor, H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

2. The owner is, Gilbert Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagers and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent. or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear on the books of the company, but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the corporation for whom such trustee is acting is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stocks, bonds or other securities than as so stated by him.

GILBERT BEEBE, Owner.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 26th day of September, 1934.

(Seal) FRANK P. COX.

(My commission expires March, 1936.)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Hilda J. Leonard, N. Y., $1; "A friend," N. Y., $2; Mrs. Walter Bogart, N. Y., $1; Mrs. F. J. Norris, Ga., $1; John F. Davis, La., $2.

NOTICE.

OWING to the fact that the Delaware Association was entertained at Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, last May, it was the desire of the church not to hold a yearly meeting this year, as it seemed too strenuous a task for the few who are left to entertain.

Done by order of the church assembled.

JOHN B. MILLER, Church Clerk.

MEETINGS.

The Soldier Creek Association of Old School Baptists is to convene, the Lord willing, with Soldier Creek Church, Marshal County, Kentucky, beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1934, and continuing two days followig. The church is located on Highway 68, about seven miles southwest of Benton, Ky. Those coming from the south and west come through Mayfield, Ky., take 68 Highway out of Mayfield, go east about fourteen miles and you will see a sign on your right with a yellow arrow pointing up a hill. All lovers of the truth,, especially sound ministers, are invited to visit our Association. Benton, Ky., is the nearest rail road station. This is Elder J. C. Chester's home church.

N. A. RODGERS, Moderator.

W. W. NEAL, Clerk.

A joint two days meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, of the Sidling Hill and Fairview churches, at Needmore, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, on Saturday and Sunday, October 13th and 14th, 1934. All are welcome to meet with us who have it in their hearts to do so. Those coming by train and wishing to be met will come to Hancock, W. Va., via the Baltimore and Ohio R. R., or to Hancock, Md., via the Western Maryland R. R., but in either case will notify beforehand Deacon J. C. Mellott, Needmore, Pa., or the writer of this notice at the address given below. Needmore is on highway 522 south from the Lincoln Highway at McConnellsburg, Pa., or north on route 522 from the National Highway at Hancock, Maryland.

ROLLA MELLOTT, Church Clerk,

PLUM RUN, Pennsylvania.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to meet this year with the New Valley Church, eight miles north from Leesburg, Loudoun County, Virginia, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 17th, 18th and 19th, 1934. Buses for Leesburg leave 619 12th Street, N. W., Washington, D. C. Trains for Leesburg leave Rosslyn, Va., across the Key Bridge from Washington. Buses and trains will be met at Leesburg Tuesday evening before the meeting and also Wednesday morning, but not otherwise except by special arrangement. Ministers and other brethren of our faith and order are affectionately invited to meet with us without their expecting or awaiting any further invitation than this notice. It is especially desired that those in direct correspondence with us will favor us with their presence.

R. C. GARRETT, Church Clerk,

LEESBURG, Virginia.

The Hopewell Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association convenes with Harmony Church, Belk, Fayette County, Alabama, October 19th, 20th and 21st, 1934. All who are in good order and contending for the truth as the SIGNS and **Sovereign Grace** do are invited.

G. W. BERRY, Morderator.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Clerk.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will be entertained by the Snow Hill Church and friends, at Snow Hill, Maryland, October 24th, 25th and 26th, 1934, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday after the third Sunday. Brethren, sisters and friends are cordially invited to meet with us, especially ministers of our direct correspondence. Those coming by auto on Tuesday afternoon before the meeting will go to the meetinghouse, in Snow Hill, where a committee will be waiting to direct them to places of entertainment for the night.

H. C. KER, Pastor.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 808 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one-half block west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church will meet (D. V.) every second Sunday with brother and sister Berry, 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California. Every third Sunday with brother and sister Staggs, 506 E. Raulston Street, Ontario, California.

T. D. WALKER.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 102. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1934. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

1 JOHN II. 18, 19.

"LITTLE children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."

ELDER H. H. LEFFERTS, dear and tried servant of the cross of Jesus, I received your good letter some months back, in which you said you would be glad to hear from me at any time. I have deferred writing from time to time because of a barren mind and a deep felt sense of my weakness and short sight of the blessed things of Jesus, and the fear that anything I would say might crowd out better matter, and, also, since I have gotten old writing has become quite a task to what it once was.

The apostle John, like all the apostles and holy writers, through the abundance of the revelations and grace given him, could speak in positive terms as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, or as Christ was speaking through him. This makes me fear when trying to speak or write of these things of Jesus. I hope the brethren will be charitable toward me and remember that while these old frail bodies are our home we are liable to mistakes, and we would do well to try what any one may write by the searchlight of divine truth, and charge all imperfections to the flesh and the will of man.

It seems to me clear that the distinction between two kinds and manner of people and their works is as old as creation itself. I would ask, Where was Eve before she was made of the rib of Adam? She was Adam, was she not? Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." Next we find Adam and Eve, after they had transgressed and sunk their unborn race under the sentence of death, sewing fig leaves together. Here are works under the law, and it only needed the sun to parch the fig leaves and they must have coats of skin and clothe them with the imputed righteousness of

Jesus. God did not place Adam in the garden as a free moral agent to do as he pleased, but "the Lord God commanded the man [Adam], saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."—Gen. ii. 16, 17. The Lord said, "I will put enmity between thee [the serpent] and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed [Christ]." Here we have the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. Here is this seed of the serpent, or nonelect, that went out because they were not of the seed of the elect lady and her children.

Next we see the two first-born, Cain and Abel. Cain slew his brother Abel because he was not of the elect Abel, but of that wicked one, the devil. Here we see Cain brought of the fruit of the ground, the works of his hands, an emblem of works of the law, as means of salvation, or as an offering, and because Cain's offering was rejected and the Lord had not respect to him or his offering Cain was very wroth, therefore went out and slew his brother Abel. Just as they would do to-day with the elect if they were not restrained. Ishmael, who was born after the flesh, went out as a mocker, because he was not to be heir with Isaac, the free born seed. Though Ishmael was Abraham's son, Hagar, being a bond woman, could not give birth to a free son. "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." These children of the flesh (or nonelect) went out that they might be made manifest they were not of the elect children of the promise. I do not understand Esau was of these promised heirs of God. ("For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the promise of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."—Rom. ix. 11-13. "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel." When Rebekah conceived "the children struggled together [elect and nonelect] within her: and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the Lord. And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb [elect and nonelect], and two manner of people [one of choice by grace, the other of works of the law] shall be separated from thy bowels."—Gen. xxv. 22, 23. I understand all the spiritual seed of Israel, God's chosen people who were Jacob (as Eve was called Adam), will be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation, even the blinded Jews who were to be graffed into their own olive tree, which is Christ. These with the believing Jews are one in Christ, because they are the beloved of the Father and are given in Christ and heirs in the eternal covenant of grace. These children of this eternal covenant often get mixed up with the ideas of

men and those who are not of us and get away down in Babylon and they cannot sing one of Zion's songs. But they are commanded to come out of her, my people. I have witnessed some of these going out. I am led to believe in the salvation of God's people. They are just what grace has made them. While the Pharisees say they are what they make themselves, Paul says, "By the grace of God I am what I am."—1 Cor. xv. 10. The Savior said to the Pharisees who went out, "Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." These were a sect of the Jews who boasted of being the seed of Abraham, and said they never were in bondage. But they were of that wicked one, as was Cain. When John "saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father."—Matt. iii. 7-9. The Savior said, "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep."—John x. 26. These went out because they were not of Christ's sheep, and went away calling this doctrine a hard saying, who can hear it? We have the modern Pharisees who are yet singing the same old song. They want something smooth prophesied, that Christ is in great need of help to save the sinner, and that he died for the whole race of Adam and just left it up to man, a conditional time and eternal salvation with him if he accepts the Lord on what they call the terms of the gospel, then they go to heaven; if they will not accept the offered salvation and let the Lord save them, then the devil gets them and they go to torment. For one to believe in a universal redemption is just as illogical and unscriptural as it is to believe in a universal salvation for all the progeny of Adam's race, which is the doctrine of the Sadducees, who also were a sect of the Jews. They pretended also that what is said of the existence of angels and of a future resurrection are nothing but illusions, and they denied a punishment of another life. We also have the modern Sadducees who say about the same, that all the punishment for sin is in this natural life, and no future punishment after death for any of the nonelect, or wicked, and they say there is no resurrection of the body that dies. I cannot see any authority in the Scriptures for a universal redemption or a universal salvation, therefore one is as far from having scriptural authority as the other. To teach a universal redemption and a conditional time and eternal salvation is to open the very flood gates to the whole Arminian work-mongrel system of the day. If I know what true Primitive or Old School Baptists do believe, and have always believed and taught, it is a special individual atonement for every one of God's people that were given to the Son in a covenant of grace before the morning of time. Because, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord," and he,

knowing all things and being sovereign in power over all worlds and dominions, is the God true Primitive or Old School Baptists love to serve. This God is in one mind; who can change him? He did not shed one drop of that rich, precious blood in vain for any one for whom he died and the Lord lose him and the devil get him and he go to torment. Let me illustrate: If it were the way those who went out from us say it is, that God has redeemed all of Adam's race, and has done all he can do until the sinner does his part, suppose the whole race of Adam had taken the stand of the rich man, and would not agree to let the Lord save them, and all went to torment and no one to heaven, is it not good logic to say that if one could resist the power and will of God then all could do the same? "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" Isaiah says, "No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there: but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion."—Isaiah xxxv. 9, 10. God bless these wills and shalls. Jesus said, "Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none."—John xviii. 9. Would any one dare say that when the Lord said a thing shall be done there is any power on earth or anywhere else to prevent it? No, for the Lord said by the mouth of Isaiah, "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."—Isaiah xiv. 24. Isaiah says they shall come to Zion, but the conditionalist says all can come to the Lord who want to, and the rest can go to torment if they choose the devil. The natural mind, or conditionalist, who, as John said, went out from us, is as one talking in his sleep, whose words are neither governed nor centered in sense or reason, and in this sleep, or dead condition, he will ask with all impudence, Would God redeem a part of mankind and take them on to heaven and leave the rest to go to torment and give them no chance for repentance? Jude hit the keynote to this by saying, "Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities." Again, Jude says, "These speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts." All the Arminian world lacks to understand and love election and salvation alone by grace for dead sinners is to be quickened and made alive from the dead, then they will never put works before life, but will say with Paul, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." This shows up completely the natural man in his dead, blind state, and his complete impotent condition. Because it is "not by works of righteousness which we have done." It has been said by those who went out from us, If I believed what you old "Hardshells" do about eternal, uncondition election, and that God redeemed just a part and left the rest to go to

torment without any chance, I would take my fill of sin. This is saying more for their theory than they might think. If I have ever known anything about salvation by grace, the true born child has already had his fill of sin (see Rom. vi. 2,) and has died to the love of sin. "We, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."—1 Peter ii. 24. Then we conclude that if one has not yet got his fill of sin, and he has not been killed to the love of sin, and his desire is to take his fill of sin, it does seem he might as well go on until he gets his fill of sin. These say the Primitive Baptists preach a doctrine that licenses people to sin, but their idea of taking their fill of sin looks more like it licenses one to sin than anything I know of. Does it not seem reasonable that such an one's heart is not right in the sight of God? Peter says, "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness; and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee: for I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity."—Acts viii. 21-23. The fact is, the choice and purpose of God in the salvation of his chosen people are strange and unreasonable to the natural mind and will of man, who does not know anything about it, therefore, being ignorant of these things, he turns away from them with disgust and anger as he would from a deadly fiend. Therefore they "went out from us" and went "about to establish their own righteousness." But not so with the little children, the taught of the Lord. It seems the grace of God is shining the brightest in the faces of the little children. It is not these little children John spoke of, who are so humble and have no confidence in the flesh or will of man, but are trusting alone in the precious blood of Jesus and his righteousness for time and eternity who are giving us trouble, but it is these big children who want to be called by our name, yet want to rend and tear then patch it up with the worst of Arminian theory, that is what is giving us trouble.

Let us turn to our line of thought. I hope that river that went out of Eden to water the garden flowed to me. This river "was parted, and became into four heads." Here, to my mind, are the four gospels by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, who were eye witnesses, and testified of this healing fountain, or river, that flowed from Immanuel's veins when the blessed Lamb of God was crucified on Calvary "into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha." The skull is the top of the head, therefore this precious blood of the great Head of the church flowed down to and over every member and part of the body. Jesus said to Pilate, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world."—John xviii. 37. Yes, this river flowed back to Abel and forward to every heir of salvation that will be manifested in the flesh, because "the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone." This is the fountain or river spoken of by Jeremiah when he says, "They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters."—Jer. ii. 13. This is the river

spoken of by the prophet: "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem."—Zech. xiv. 8. The prophet says, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness."—Zech. xiii. 1. Oh such boundless and matchless love, that the Father should send his darling Son into this poor world of sorrow to suffer and die for poor sinful worms. Oh that I could sound his praise to God's little children everywhere! It is these little children I want to live with in sweet union in this world of sorrow and pain, and it is these little children I hope to meet when I fall asleep in Jesus, "who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." Therefore, little children, comfort one another with these words. But oh by what tongue or pen can this great love be expressed? When thinking of this love our poor minds are consumed in wonder.

Your brother in gospel bonds,
W. L. EDWARDS.

JACKSON, MISS., Nov. 5, 1933.

DEAR BROTHER:—It is with much littleness on my part that I undertake to write you on natural subjects, and even more so concerning spiritual things, of which, I confess, my ignorance is made manifest more clearly each day that I live, for even the things that were established and fixed by our God are hard to be understood to the satisfaction of a pure mind, let alone the carnal mind, which was never intended for the worship of God. This brings to mind the vast difference, or contrast, between the carnal and spiritual minds, one (the carnal) having reference to the creature, or the guiding influence of the creature, by that which dominates the creature to the fulfilling of the purpose which God had in him. Signifying by this the overseeing by the foreknowledge of our God "all things," both natural and spiritual, which work for good to them that love him. But of the creature it is evil, for it is his nature to do evil, and that continually, and he can only work by that nature such things as are wrought in nature. Then we in the natural sense cannot please God, for we are "carnal," even though our morals are equivalent to those who are "called," but our deeds are evil, for we have fallen short of the glory of God, and by evil have come into this world by reason of "covetousness," lust; yet Adam was told what to do before he was given the law, and, as I see it, had to transgress to fulfill the purpose of God, which was to "multiply and replenish." But Adam did sin when drawn off in his lust, which was with his makeup by reason of his being "made subject to vanity," that the purposes of God might be fulfilled in all things, both natural and spiritual.

Now we will think for a moment of the things that are allied, and, if the Lord wills, I will make mention of that which is in contrast later. I have never been able to find in the Bible where Satan was of the "begotten." We do find where he was in heaven, so was Judas Iscariot chosen among the

twelve, but was a devil from the beginning, and had to be such for the foreordination of God to stand. Even so will Satan, "the prince of the air," perform on earth that which God saw in him in the beginning, for if by any reason God could not have seen the thoughts and intents of every heart and mind influenced by that of Satan he (God) could not have declared the end from the beginning, neither could he have known the will of man. But my desire is to hold up to you a God who is all-wise and who saw all things from beginning to end, a God of all wisdom, a God of truth, a God that could not be deceived. God, being all truth, could not see that which could not happen. But that which must happen did he see, which are all things from the beginning even unto the end. The Spirit spoke through the prophets hundreds of years beforehand of the crucifixion of Christ, which was by wicked hands, and that which he saw he did predestinate. Predestination is not an origination, but a conformation of that which he saw. This eliminates any idea that might be advanced of God being the author of sin. Neither do I believe that one who has had an experience of grace can say God is the author of sin. (I mention this because of some conditions that exist among the Old Baptists.) Let all men be liars, but God true. When we sum it all up, as I see it, Satan can only work in that which he has been given power to work in (his track), which is the carnal mind, and is bound by the boundries of the predestinated power of God, and no more. You will note he had power to carry the third part of the stars. Stars can only be seen in darkness, so by this we see his power prevails in darkness which is in the flesh, wherein sin abounds. Flesh begets flesh and spirit begets spirit, each tree after its kind. Then all the works of man cannot produce spiritual acceptance, which was shown by the swords in the gates of the garden of Eden, for all efforts of the flesh can only beget of earth, earthy. But vanity did abound that the same might be subjected in hope, which hope is Christ, the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes. Then will we say this hope is made vain to some in unbelief? I say not, but through this hope is our belief established, which comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, which word is as a two-edge sword with power to divide soul and spirit. Not all have believed our report. But as many as were ordained for eternal life did believe on the day appointed. Christ did not die in vain, but to as many as were given him by the Father did he give power to become the sons of God. So then, it is not he that runneth, nor he that willeth, but God that showeth mercy. Then, leaving off all works for justification, we become dependent beings, with our muscles strained. Not able to wrestle any longer we are made willing ("Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.") to fall down and beg the mercy of our God. Not on our merits, but, if it could be possible, for

us not to remember the things which God winked at could be removed, yet we find strength in hope of eternal life by the evidence made manifest in the change in us, from that of love of things which proved to be unto death to a hope in that which is alive, which is a lovely hope in us. Now when we are approached with windy doctrine we can measure with a plumb rule of experience, which things we have suffered in our attaining to obedience of our calling, wrought in us by the power of God, which makes manifest a hope of our surety in Christ, because we love the brethren. And the brethren are visible when our faith represents his faith, which will flow from breast to breast and all will see eye to eye and speak the selfsame thing. This we know, our nature is the same always, prone to do evil, which is revealed to us by the Spirit of God, which shows the fullness of sin in us, and at the same time magnifies the beauties of God before us in a hope which will prepare for us a place not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

I have already written more than I should have, maybe, but the Lord's will be done in all things, and not mine. I believe in the predestination of all things, because I cannot separate God's predestination and his foreknowledge, neither can I separate election and faith nor his glory from the works of his own hand.

May the blessing of our God continue with you in the comforting of the children of God, which comfort comes by preaching the truth as it is in Christ, giving God all power over all things he did create.

With much love and best wishes, I am yours in hope,

S. A. BRADSHAW.

CAMPBELLTON, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am sending a few lines I have written for you to decide as to their fitness as matter to appear in the dear old SIGNS. I am doing only tolerably well, have been on the gain for several weeks. I have been away from home over two months, as the valley is too low for me. I have wanted to make a trip among the dear, beloved brethren for some time, but it seems I cannot get in position to make the trip. In this part of the State we have no church and it is very lonesome for me here. The brethren have no idea how greatly I enjoy getting letters from them from all over the country. I will remain here a few weeks and then return to my home at Edcouch, Texas.

Jesus said, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."—John xvii. 4. And, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."—John iv. 34. Now the question is, Did he finish that work? Man surely could not be so stupid as to contend that Jesus only began the work, and left it to be finished by the sinner. Again, he said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of

him that sent me, and this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."—John vi. 37-39. To-day the religious world has become so Pelagian in creed that it loudly boasts of the ability and goodness of the Adamic nature (which the Bible plainly declares to be very sinful and corrupt), that the more blind people are to their own weakness the less they look up to God for help, strength and protection. But all their prayers are in perfect line with the self-conceited hypocritical prayer of the Pharisee, Luke xviii. 11.

In reading the above quotations how can one get the idea of a conditional time and eternal salvation? Can any one with the least sincerity and honesty believe in personal self-righteousness, creature works, be satisfied with such dependency, when it is plainly written that it is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost"?—Titus iii. 5. The wonderful prayer of Jesus to his Father is the most sublime prayer that was ever prayed, and it does seem to me that it ought to be a bar to all self-righteous and humanly devised prayers which the great majority of professedly religious people recite in this our day. Many thousands of prayer books are sold among the people each year and very few expressions are in line with what Jesus said in any of his prayers. For instance, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."—John vi. 38. He then relates just exactly his Father's will, and in his statement concerniing his Father's will he used this wonderful statement: "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." The word "hath," as it is here used, denotes in the past tense, and refers to the holy work outlined in the ancient covenant, as "all which he hath given me," not upon some conditional plan to be finished by the subjects of the covenant, but of all the Father hath given me I should (positively) lose nothing, but should (without fail) raise it up again at the last day. And again, he said, "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."—John x. 28. The questioning of men is, Did his Father place in his hand all mankind? Men say that if God did not place all humanity in the hand of his Son for deliverance it would show respect of persons, and that it would be unjust of God to make the difference, as all men are related to Adam, the head of the human race. These reasonings must have been put forth in Paul's day, for he seems to have had about the same to contend with, for he said, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" "And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore

prepared unto glory."—Rom. ix. 21. 23. It seems to be natural for men who have spent thousands of dollars to learn how to preach to vilify and ridicule the truth as is recorded in the same Bible they seem to use in proof of universal atonement, which reads so clearly, as Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." And "That of all which he hath given me Ishould lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." In the above quotations it is impossible to establish universal atonement of the race of man, but only those whom the Father hath given him, let that be few or many, it is his holy and personal right to do as it seemeth good in his sight with his own. To let humans judge as to whether this or that is right or wrong, many Scriptures, in fact most all the Bible, would be set at naught (and really is set aside, giving man power to judge and judgment as to which is truth and which is error). Paul reasons, "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, thatI might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."—Rom. ix. 17, 18. Let us use every quotation in the Bible to establish the sovereignty of God, men of corrupt minds would scoff and ridicule, because the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him. Paul in his argument with those self-righteous Pharisees meets them with these words, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"

"Unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his works in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain."

With all the objections and unrighteousness of men, all things are of God and will work out just as he in his eternal counsel determined they should, and he makes no allowance for the ignorance nor excuse for the frailments of man, nor is he accountable to the great courts of man as to what he shall do with his own. I have had men say to me, If what you "Hardshells" teach is the truth, if we are going to be saved any way, whether good or bad, why not just go on in revelry and fun and do anything that comes to notice? for if our salvation is fixed, and we cannot go wrong, we are just as well off in the deep practice of sin as in the practice of morality. Nay but, O man, Jesus told us to judge the tree by its fruit. And Isaiah said, "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever."—Isaiah xxxii. 17. Also, "Wherefore, as by man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."—Rom. v. 12. Paul said some would affirm that we say, Let us do evil, that good may come, whose damnation is just. Then adds, "What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have

before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin." Therefore none is righteous; no, not one. There is none that doeth good; no, not one.

We, as a people, do not feel to hold any prejudice against other people because they differ with us in what we believe the Scriptures teach, but we do feel that if these Scriptures do not teach sovereign election of grace in the eternal mind and purpose of the Creator we are at a loss as to what the Book does teach. Not only do these Scriptures sighted above teach the sovereignty of God, but viewing Jesus as the Redeemer of his chosen people, we can come to no other conclusion than that Jusus must come in the world to redeem his people, let them be all humanity or only a certain and fixed multitude, selected, chosen in Christ as his bride, who in nature are no better than the nonelect, and what they do, or do not, has nothing to do with God's choice of them. For it is said, "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people."—Deut. vii. 7. Again, it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. Neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth. (Rom. ix. 11, 13; Gen. xxv. 23.) Thus establishing the sovereign dominion and eternal purpose of God uninfluenced by either good or evil in the ones chosen, but according to sovereign will embraced in his divine mind before the world began. As it is written, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."—Eph. i. 4, 5. (Rom. viii. 28; John i. 12.)

Hoping these few words will be accepted in the spirit of him who created all things for the glory of his power, I am, as ever, your weak brother,

J. B. BOWDEN.

DELAWARE, Ohio, March 6, 1934.

DEAR ELDER VAUGHN:—What a wonderful privilege to address you as my dear brother, if indeed, it be my privilege. I am very glad that it was your turn to write the editorial. It was sweet to my taste, though it made me feel inferior. (I refer to the March number of the SIGNS.) I had written a letter to the SIGNS about the devil and predestination, why, I do not know, since it was not in my mind to write of those subjects when I took my seat to write, but the thoughts came and I wrote them, and then sent them, feeling sure the letter would find its way to the waste-basket if found unworthy of appearing in the SIGNS, and I do hope it will not appear, since your letter covers the ground so much more ably and humbly, and my letter is superfluous, if not unworthy. While writing it I felt so positive that I fear it was not as humble as it should have been. Like you, when in my right mind I know of myself I am nothing, and know nothing, only as it is revealed to me from on high. But sometimes I have hope that the Holy

Spirit is revealing to me the things of God and leading me to know him, whom to know is life eternal. What a wonderful hope it is! One that, in myself, I am altogether unworthy of.

Please suffer another apology. I have broken the frame of my glasses, and the only way I can keep them on my face is to hold my head up and write on a big book (for a writing table) held up in front of my eyes, which is not an easy way to write. So you will understand how great the urge to write my appreciation of your letter in the SIGNS, and to express my love for, and my enjoyment in, the blessed truths you brethren write about. I probably do not use the same form of language that you use, for I live in a different locality and hear different preachers, but I do believe and rejoice in the absolute power, wisdom and rule of our heavenly Providence, believing that He is too wise, almighty, holy, loving and faithful to be careless and let the devil, or any one else, perform something to the hurt of his people that he (God) has no purpose in, or that was not embraced in his infinite foreknowledge and purpose before time began. I could not be satisfied with any other kind of a heavenly protector and guide, since I am far too weak and fleshly to keep myself. I need a perfect, infinite Savior, who is able to save, at all times, to the uttermost. I dare not trust in conditional salvation even in time; but I do believe that God chastises us in disobedience, not "to pay us up" for our sins (He paid it all), but for our good and learning, that we may learn obedience by the things we suffer. I dare not claim any blessings for any righteousness performed by myself, for all my works are "filthy," except as he works in me to will and to do, for he has foreordained that his people should walk in good works, and while I do feel that this sinful vessel does polute my works, words and songs, yet, some way, if I am his, he does accept my praise, prayers and service, when done in his precious name. Oh what a Savior he is to accept such as I, or any of my worship! Although sincere, it is offered in such a very unworthy vessel. But here appears the thought, If we had no sin how could we appreciate righteousness? Only the hungry appreciate food, or the weary, rest. If we had nothing to be saved from, how could we sing the song of redemption? Let every mouth be stopped and all praise be ascribed to our God for his rule in righteousness, evil, adversities and death, since he hath set the day of adversity as a contrast to prosperity and joy. Surely when we awake in his likeness we shall be satisfied. I am momentarily satisfied, at times, even here, when he bids me, Look and live.

I have just reread your letter. If the devil is one of "the powers that be" he was "ordained of God." Surely the Bible speaks of him as a power, and I have understood that God is able to destroy him. Would this be the case if the devil were self-existing? I have felt that, although law must be necessary in order to there being a transgression, bringing punishment, there is another and better reason why God cannot sin,

and that is because he is altogether pure and holy and clean, and an unclean thing cannot come from a clean source. As we read, it is impossible for God to lie. He is truth incarnate and altogether righteous, so for this reason, also, he cannot sin.

In my christain experience, when so troubled because of my sinful condition, I asked, Oh why am I such a sinner? And the Lord (I trust) answered to to my soul, It is because your heart is all unholy, a sink of sin, and a clean thing cannot come out of an unclean thing. Your motives have been selfish, and your good deeds have been selfishly performed, and not with an eye single to the glory of God. So to me my good (?) deeds were as foul as the worst ones, all fleshly and vile. Then, when the knowledge of forgiveness came I also heard the speech of the Lord: Before you were born I saw you, knew you, loved you, fulfilled the law for you and bore its penalty for you. My righteousness I give to you and your sins are removed forever and there is no more condemnation for you. You are pure as I am pure, and shall abide with me. So that is why I cannot be a conditionalist. The Lord alone was my teacher at that time. I was not acquainted with Primitive Baptists, and really thought that I was the first soul to know that "salvation is of the Lord." What a happy day when, several years later, I heard this truth preached by man. I did not tarry, but at the first opportunity requested baptism and a home in the church. Now, can you tell me why when I came up out of the water it was with a heavy heart and as I walked along the bank of the river I felt like a condemned hypocrite? It is true that the church members had so exalted me as such a wonderful example of the revelation of God that I had had some feeling of pride between the time of my reception by the members and my baptism. Was this the reason? During the ensuing year I think I enjoyed our meetings better than any one else did. My mother told me that my experience was like that of Christ, who, after his baptism was immediately led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. For a short time I felt so grieved that I could scarcely eat or sleep. Then these texts were given me: "He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ," and, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall find peace, etc. Oh how sweet were the promises!

A word more concerning God's inability to sin. Motive has much, if not all, to do to constitute sin. The motive in the stabs of a murderer is a sin, but not so with the wounds of a good surgeon who wounds to heal. God's motive, no doubt, is to bring good out of evil; at least to overrule it for good. God may take life away, but is not guilty of murder. God has the right to bring evil upon people, else it were not said, It there evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it? He creates and he destroys. The monkey has no room to complain that he was not created a human, nor a fool that he was not made wise. Hath not the potter power over

the clay, to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? And do we not read that none can take us out of the Father's hand? So this text, as well as The vessel was marred in the hand of the potter, and He made it again another vessel as it pleased him, I say, do these texts not prove that the marring of the vessel was embraced in the purpose of God? And yet, this being true, the devil, and not God, is the father of lies, neither are we tempted of God. Yet the Spirit of God led Jesus away to be tempted of the devil.

I could write on and on, but I fear you are already tired of reading. I ask you to cover all my weakness with the mantle of charity, and please remember me sometimes when you pray.

While of course I would be delighted to hear from you, please do not feel it to be compulsory to reply.

Christian love to you and yours.

JOIE WODS PETERS.

CULLISON, Kansas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have just read the January number and it seemed to bring more comfort of the Scriptures than usual. Many good articles which were a joy to read. If I could say one word of encouragement for the benefit of the editors, publishers or readers I would gladly do so. I felt in accord with the sentiment of brother Burch while reading his letter. But that has been well said, and perhaps better than anything I could say. The editorial by Elder Lefferts was full of timely things and brought out our own personal experiences, also the sure promises of God to help us in every real trouble and time of need. All the way in reading such letters we feel a throbbing heart desire to say amen, and to rise up and give our hand as a token of fellowship, or union of sentiment. But it is impossible, I cannot express it. I am with brother Burch and many others in my distance of separation from other believers, and have been much of my life of seventy-three years. I know what it is to hunger and what it is to abound. I aim to try to help our papers so long as my ability to read and understand them continues. It is those peculiar blessings that are promised the Lord's people that we so much stand in need of, the impossible things with man. If we trust in man we are cursed. We will surely be disappointed. I sometimes wonder if that is not some reason of my lot in life. If my life had been spent in the midst of many brethren and gospel churches, would I not have looked to numbers and organizations for my strength? Instead, I have been sifted, and they have been sifted and scattered, until the Lord is our only hope. When will we learn to put our trust in God and not in ourselves, or in man? "By man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." But this man Christ Jesus was more than man, he was "God with us." It is said by some that the whole sacred person of Christ died on the cross, and they object to the assertion that when Christ died on the cross his sacred soul and body parted. It is denied that the life, or spirit, is part of the man. Even with children of God, some claim that

Adam when first formed was all there was of man. So the claim is that man is not divided, or in two parts, after death; not even Christ or his believers. I have not so read the Scriptures, but will ask some of the editors to give us their views, either short or long, on the subject.

E. G. WEBB.

HAYMARKET, Virginia.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I thank you for sending me the SIGNS, for it comes to me as a sweet morsel from our Father's table, and it revives me to read the many good letters from the dear brethren and sisters. I sometimes hope we have been taught in the school of Christ. But can I claim so much? I feel to be the least one, for I have so many doubts and fears and so many evil thoughts, but I cannot express to you the witness I have within. Others have written what I experience better than I can. I can only write what the dear Lord gives me to write. The Bible and the SIGNS are about all the preaching and the most comfort I get. We have one of the best of preachers, Elder Lefferts, but I seldom get to hear him, which I desire to do very much. But the Lord knows best, and may I be reconciled to his holy will and not murmur nor complain, which I often do. The Lord is good and blesses me in many ways, and I hope I am thankful to him for so doing.

Please excuse this poor letter, and remember me in your prayers.

Your sister, I hope,

L. S. UTTERBACK.

STOCKDALE, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—After some delay on account of sickness I will send two dollars for my subscription. I cannot tell how much help the SIGNS is to me. My good companion has been gone to rest twenty-two years. We used to hold sweet communion, and felt that Christ was in our midst. Now I feel the presence of the good Lord, and that helps me on the way. I will soon be seventy-two years old, and have been a member of the Old Baptist Church forty years. I prize my church above any and all denominations, and will as long as they stay with the Bible.

I just wanted to tell you how much good I get from your paper and the letters from the dear old saints I have learned to love for the truth's sake. Write on, dear friends, as you are moved by the Holy One, for you know not who you are feeding in boundless love.

I hope I am your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) W. L. HAWK.

BOOKS WANTED.

McDOWELL, Kentucky.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I wish to ask the brethren reading the SIGNS if any of them have any of the writings of Elder James Osbourn, of Baltimore, a Primitive Baptist of the nineteenth century, for sale. If so write me as to condition, title and price. I very much desire to add his writings to by library.

MILFORD HALL, SR.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1934.

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PSALMS XLIV, 1-3.

"WE have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old. How thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedst them; how thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out. For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them; but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favor unto them."

David begins this Psalm by rehearsing the realities of the former favors of God to his people, and also gives evidence that they had heard with their ears, and was told to them by their fathers of the work He did in their days, in the times of old, which refers us to the writings of Moses, in which we hear how God created all things, and they are as Moses declared they were, and we find there was not a man to till the ground, but every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew, which proves God's power, purpose and wisdom, and according to his revealed Spirit they were before he (God) caused it to rain upon the earth or had created a man to till the ground. (Gen. ii. 5.) David had heard of God's dealings with Cain and Abel, also Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and Israel. These manifestations were in the times of old, as mentioned above, and prove God's predestinated purpose according as infinite wisdom embraced their existence and the glorifying and lifting of Jesus on high.

As Moses declared unto Israel that God would go over before thee, when the time God appointed that Moses should be be taken from Israel, and that Moses should not enter into the promised land, so all the church of God is separated from man, and are given to realize that God had gone before, and everything was his work. In all his work his Son is glorified, and according to our experience we behold salvation in Christ Jesus, and no other, which pours forth the river of water of life clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God, and if that life of the incorruptible seed be in us it is because Jesus gave it to us, and he keeps us by his power, and feeds us with pure food and drink, so we shall never perish. We did not attain to it by work of our hand, but the hand of the Lord performed it. This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. (John vi. 29.) The work of God in the heart of a sinner gives demonstration of his power with the individual

and prepares him as fit meat for God's use (or the Master's use), in which all the church militant is nourished and built up. As God dealt with Israel, and went before her, so the church of God, individually as members, or collectively as a body, are instructed. David's instruction was spiritual, in which he heard and holy men of old wrote, and it all came by divine inspiration of God according to his electing love and predestinated counsel.

Israel as a nation is distinguishable among men, so is spiritual Israel from the world of mankind. They have the mark of circumcision in the heart by which expressions of love for all men and fellowship to all who bear his mark is felt, and are continually crying unto the Lord, confessing, "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. * * ** Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy Spirit from me."—Psalms li. 5-11. The fullness of these things will be wrought in the salvation, then we shall be holy even as he is holy. The sword of the Lord is mighty, and cannot be broken. He surrounds and keeps his holy city, and not one shall perish, and no invader can enter its gates and spoil his treasure. His arm cannot be shortened that he cannot save. He declares, "Mine own arm brought salvation unto me."—Isaiah lxiii. 5. "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me: it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."—Psalms cxxxix. 6-10. These wonderful truths of God embraced in holy writ prove to us of the virtues of the Son of God in the writings of the apostles, and all things must come to pass as God has set their bounds and appointed their portion God appointed unto his Son the work he must do and sent him into the world, and, as declared, he shall fulfill all his will. He shall save to the uttermost, and all the Father hath given him shall come to him, and as Paul says in writing to the church at Corinth (1 Cor. xv. 49), as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Though we be vile and corrupt by nature, we shall be like the Son of God, for all that is corrupt in nature shall be incorrupt in the spiritual, which embraces soul, body and spirit of all the redeemed of the earth.

"Because thou hadst a favor unto them," which is God's purpose and grace to all the saints in Christ Jesus

portrayed in national Israel as the favored nation among the sons of men. Israel having these favors manifested to them in their mortal state they became stiff-necked, high-minded and disobedient to the law of Moses, and they felt they were better by nature than other men, but Jesus broke down that middle wall in bringing both Jew and Gentile into the realities of their depravity by nature, and the bringing them together by the Holy Ghost, and Jesus commanded his disciples "to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. To him gave all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost; for they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord."—Acts x. 42-48. This gives the testimony how gospel fellowship is brought about. As we travel along through life's pilgrimage and find out others of like precious faith we would encourage them to come to the church and receive at her hands of the administration of the ordinance of baptism, not to give life, but because of their life, and their tongues pouring forth from the abundance of their hearts. We humbly trust, dear reader, you are made to feel these in your experience, and feel that underneath is the everlasting arm, and the Son of righteousness shining upon you. C. W. V.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANKS.

In each copy of this issue of the Signs of the Times we are inclosing a subscription blank for the convenience of our subscribers in renewing their own subscriptions and in sending the names of new subscribers, and we appeal to each of our friends to do what they can toward helping us build up our subscription list.

The date on the little pink slip bearing your address, which you will find either on your paper or the wrapper in which it comes to you, signifies to what time your subscription is paid. If your subscription has expired, or is about to expire, please send on your renewal if you can spare it, but if you are not at the present time in a position to renew your subscription, but hope to be later on, do not order your paper stopped, for we would much rather continue sending the paper to you until such time as you are able to pay for it than to take your name from our list, for we need all our old subscribers to help us during these hard times.

Brethren, we appeal to you to help us continue the publication of the Signs of the Times, and may God add his blessing to our efforts.

J. E. B. & CO.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by sister Attie A. Curtis.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, September 7th, 8th and 9th 1934, sends greetings to all the churches with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year has passed and we desire to be made thankful that our God has gathered us together to praise, honor and glorify him. Our brethren in the ministry who come to us declare the unsearchable riches of Christ, and we are fed and comforted and our hearts are filled with the love and fellowship which God has given us. "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." It has pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell in Jesus. "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.'" How beautifully this Scripture speaks of the God that changes not. How safe are the people of God, and how sure their dwelling-place is. "We have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Here is the city of the living God. Salvation is the walls and bulwarks of this city. "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion." She cannot be moved, for God is in the midst of her, and she is the perfection of beauty, and God hath shined out of her.

"Oh come, let us worship and kneel,
Before the Creator, our God;
The people who serve him with zeal,
The flock whom he guides with his rod."

He will not give his glory to another, nor his praise to graven images. We cannot find out God by searching. It is only by the Holy Ghost that we can say Jesus is Lord. Nothing can break or shake that bond of grace which exists between Jesus and his chosen people.

"Hail, sacred union, firm and strong,
How great the grace, how sweet the song,
That worms of earth should ever be
One with incarnate Deity;
One in the tomb, one when he rose,
One when he triumphed o'er his foes,
One when in heaven he took his seat,
While seraphs sung all hell's defeat."

"Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us."

May grace, mercy and peace abide with us. Amen.

D. L. TOPPING, Mod.
M. F. DUNLAP, Clerk.

(Written by Elder W. L. Hall.)

DEAR BRETHREN:—As the Association has put it upon me to write a Circular Letter, I will offer a few thoughts upon the subject of a brotherhood unity, using the expression of the

psalmist David, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," as a text. For brethren, not aliens, but those of the commonwealth of Israel, the household of faith, for it is said in the Ephesian letter that there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." It (the dwelling together in unity) is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments. There is only one way that we, as brethren, can live in the unity of the faith, and that is to forbear one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. "One body, one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling." And he that ascended on high, far above the heavens, that he might fill all things, "gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all [the household of faith] come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

Brethren, let us ever be careful to maintain good works and live in peace and the unity of the faith.

DANIAL A. J. ADAMS, Mod.
(MRS.) J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, to the churches and meetings with which we correspond, sends love and greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In reading your Circular and Corresponding Letters we have been heartened and warmed by the messages of love and fellowship contained therein. Most precious to us is the fellowship of our sister churches. We have no pastor, but it has pleased almighty God to send one of your number to us this year bearing food for our hungry souls and stirring up our pure minds to think upon the name of the Lord, the work of whose fingers we cannot comprehend. How then shall we comprehend the work of his mind? But we desire to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, to search the Scriptures to this end, that we may be found in the way, acceptably walking before him, knowing that he alone hath power to keep our feet.

The texts and hymns used in the meetings of our Association are as follows: Friday A. M., hymns 4 and 8. (Hymn and Tune Book). Text, 1 Corinthians ii. 1. Friday P. M., hymns 226, 279 and 180. Text, John iii. 3-15. Saturday A. M., hymns 264, 367 and 45. Text, Isaiah xliv. 1-12. Saturday P. M., hymns 251, 430, 224, 236 and 28. Text, Genesis xxiv. 25 on. Sunday A. M., hymns 91 and 90. Text, John vi. 29-71. At communion service,

which followed hymns 505 and 422 were sung. All those who came from a distance were graciously entertained at the home of a friend, and the conversation and singing of hymns during the evenings were especially sweet. We believe that Elder Topping during his visit with us was obeying that command which Jesus gave to Peter: Feed my sheep.

We sadly miss our brother, George R. Tedford, who was Clerk of this Association for twenty-seven years. He went in and out among us in humble service and we loved him.

Our next Association will be held with the Bowdoinham Church, the Lord willing, on the three days beginning Friday before the second Monday in September, 1935. May love and fellowship continue to abound among us, is our prayer.

D. L. TOPPING, Mod.
MINERVA F. DUNLAP, Clerk.

AN EXPLANATION.

OWING to sickness and other causes beyond our control, the October issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES was late in leaving this office. We hope to soon be able to make up the lost time, and in the meantime we ask the indulgence of our subscribers and hope they will be patient with us.

J. E. B. & CO.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Laura R. Elgin, D. C., $2; Mrs. Charles H. Glasscock, Va., $1; Mrs. Edith M. Gekeler, Ore., $3; William J. Tindall, N. J., $3; Mrs. John T. Cockrill, Va., $1; Mrs. Mabel Lindsey, Cal., 50 cents.

ERRATUM.

IN the September issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, on page 199, eighth and ninth lines from the top, the sentence reading, "God's grace secured the salvation of his people's works," should read, "God's grace secured the salvation of his people." Then should follow the statement, "His people's works brought their fall and damnation from their high destiny."

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **EMMA G. PICKERING** departed this life suddenly, at the home of her sister, Mrs. Henry T. Lefferts, in Nutley, New Jersey, August 20th, 1934. Her health had not been good for several weeks, but she was able to visit her physician, who expressed the belief that she was making satisfactory progress. On her way home she stopped in a hospital in Newark, N. J., to see her daughter, who was laid up with a broken ankle. Hardly had she gotten in the room of her sister's home when she remarked that everything seemed to be in a whirl, and sank down on the bed and expired. Sister Pickering united with the Ebenezer Church, in New York City, November 7th, 1909. For some years prior to her death she was engaged in business and was prevented from attending her meetings as frequently as she desired, but her love for the brethren was much in evidence and she was well grounded in the doctrine of God our Savior. She was the daughter of the late Amos T. and Mary S. Croasdale. Having been born on December 4th, 1875, made her stay on earth a little short of fifty-nine years. She was married in 1896 to William C. Pickering, and leaves one daughter, Mrs. Mabel P. Williams, of Nutley, N. J., a grandson, one sister and one brother.

Two services were conducted by the writer, her unworthy pastor, one in the evening at the home of her brother-in-law, Mr. Henry T. Lefferts, in Nutley, N. J., and the other in the Chapel at William Penn Cemetery, near Philadelphia, Pa., on the day following. In the evening we read the forty-sixth Psalm, dwelling more particularly upon the fourth verse: "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High." We felt some enlargement of heart in trying to comfort those who are left behind, and emphasized the abundance of God's goodness and mercy as indicated by the river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God. The following day the twenty-third Psalm was read and comments were

made upon a suggested text from 1 Timothy iii. 16: "And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." Interment was then made in the William Penn Cemetery. We shall greatly miss our sister, who has gone to her eternal home, but in the midst of sorrow we desire to commend those who mourn to the loving and tender care of our heavenly Father.

R. L. D.

IDA MONDE ROQUEMORE MILLER was born near Clayton, Panola, County, Texas, December 19th, 1853, and died August 26th, 1934, aged 80 years, 8 months and 7 days. She was the daughter of H. A. D. and Adelia Roquemore. She was married March 12th, 1873, to Junius Mortimer Miller, who preceded her in death about seventeen and one-half years. To this union were born eight children, two of whom died in infancy, a son and a daughter. The only other son, Russell, died in 1918, at the age of twenty-three years. The surviving daughters are Mrs. J. Edgar Wright, Brownwood, Texas, Mrs. J. R. Hardy, Dallas, Texas, and Misses Mae, Pearl and Ida Lillian Miller, of Abilene, Texas. Four grandchildren, Roy K. and Edwin R. Hardy, of Kansas City, Mo., Joel R. Hardy, Jr., of Dallas, Texas, and Joe Edgar Wright, Brownwood, Texas, and two sisters, Mrs. W. B. Griggs, Baird, Texas, and Mrs. Crawford S. Jackson, Dallas, Texas, survive her. In early married life she and her husband and two oldest daughters moved to central Texas, then a frontier country, and settled in Comanche County, later they lived in Brown County, and about thirty years ago moved to Abilene, where they resided until called to their eternal home beyond the sorrows and disappointments of this mortal life. In her early life she professed a hope in Christ and with her husband joined the Missionary Baptists, and after eighteen years under this system they renounced the yoke of legal bondage and declared their faith rested alone in the finished righteousness of Christ, and were baptized into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church at Willow Springs, Comanche County, Texas, by the late Elder J. C. Kilgore. They lived in the assurance of that faith and died in its triumphs. They were active and zealous members and delighted to entertain the members in their pleasant home so long as they lived near their place of meeting. After they moved to Abilene, and especially after brother Miller's death, her opportunity of attending her meetings was very poor, but her love for the truth remained unabated. She was left by her husband well provided for, and her three youngest daughters made their home with her, were very kind and attentive to her and brought sunshine into her declining years. The children were all present and ministered to her comfort as much as was possible in her last sickness. She fell asleep peacefully in the bosom of her Savior, and her body was laid to rest beside that of her husband, in the Abilene Cemetery, after rites being said from the home by the First Presbyterian pastor, of that place. She was a loveable and lovely character. All who knew her were her ardent friends. Her life was so influenced and adorned by the graces of the Spirit of Christ that it was a benediction to all who came to know her. She possessed those rare qualifications which put every one at ease who came into her association. She will be missed most by her family and her neighbors. Jesus alone can heal the broken-hearted, and he knows how to temper the wind to the shorn lamb. May he cause you to look up to him and say submissively, "Thy will be done."

Written by request.

J. R. HARDY.

MRS. LAURA P. LYNN passed away from earth to be with the Lord September 27th, 1934, at her home in Grundy Center, Iowa. She was born in Loudoun County, Virginia, January 29th, 1850. She had been a member of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, near Bluemont, Va., many years. I regret that I am unable to give the date of her baptism and by whom baptized, but I have not access to the records of the Ebenezer Church as I write this. She was a daughter of Thomas and Sallie Dowdell, of Loudoun County, and was the last of ten children of that parentage. October 15th, 1872, she married John F. Lynn, also of Loudoun County. He passed away November 7th, 1928. They moved to Iowa in March, 1873, where they have ever since resided. Sister Lynn was a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for over sixty years, and was a faithful adherent of the doctrine of God our Savior as advocted by that periodical. For most of this information I am indebted to her daughter, Miss Ercel Lynn, who is left to mourn her mother's departure. I personally met sister Lynn some years ago, soon after we came to Virginia to live, at one of the sessions of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, then held with the Ebenezer Church. She was on a visit east at the time; and if I mistake not, I think she has not been east since then. We believe she is one of those blessed ones of our Lord's heavenly family who fall sweetly asleep in him, to awake in his likeness when he shall appear for his redeemed ones' glorification at the resurrection of the dead. May the Holy Spirit grant the mourning ones solid consolation in Him who is the way, the truth and the life.

H. H. L.

CAROL LOUISE HAAN was born in Yakima, Washington, May 12th, 1934, and died in a hospital at the same place September 1st, 1934. She leaves her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Haan, a sister, Shirley Ann, three years old, and her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. John Haan, of Yakima, and Mr. and

Mrs. D. H. Baker, of Naches, Wash. The funeral services were conducted by Elders C. W. Bond, of La Grande, Oregon, and A. D. Hughett, of Yakima, Wash., from the texts, The day of a man's death is better than the day of his birth, and, There is a time to be born and a time to die, etc.

Baby Carol was beautiful and good and always healthy until about two weeks before her death, when she was taken with whooping cough. Although her passing leaves an emptiness in my heart and life that cannot be filled, yet I feel reconciled to the act of a merciful God in taking her from a world of trouble.

Her mother,

BEATRICE HAAN.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

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ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 808 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one-half block west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church will meet (D. V.) every second Sunday with brother and sister Berry, 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California. Every third Sunday with brother and sister Staggs, 506 E. Raulston Street, Ontario, California.

T. D. WALKER.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminiar Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 102. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1934. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

STRASBURG, Va., July 8, 1934.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have a request from a brother in Texas to write on Genesis vi. 5, 6: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and grieved him at his heart." The Bible says (Numbers xxiii. 19), "God is not man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent." In Malachi iii. 6, "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." This does not apply to God the Father, but to God the Son. He could and did mourn and beg and repent. In John xii. 27, Jesus said, "Father, save me from this hour." He had just said, "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour."

"Wickedness of man was great in the earth." So very great as Paul sets it forth. He says, "There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. * * * * Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace they have not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes." And it is written, There is not a man that liveth and sinneth not, and there is not a man that sinneth not. There is a great difference of opinion as to how man got to be so wicked. Elder Gilbert Beebe and the SIGNS never taught that man was sinful like we are now, when God created him. Elder Beebe wrote, "If God could not keep sin out of this world, how do we know he can keep it out of the next world?" There is no

worse heresy than to teach God created man a sinner, and caused him to sin. The devil will attend to causing man to sin, and will not let an opportunity slip or escape him where he can cause man to sin.

Paul says the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all, in meekness instructing those who oppose themselves, if peradventure God will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will. Again, Peter says, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." In Ephesians ii. 2, Paul says, "The spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." James says, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." If any man was wicked and filthy when he came from the hands of the Creator, why would David say in the fifty-third Psalm, "Every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." If they were filthy at first, how could they become filthy? They were not filthy at first; had they been David was mistaken. It is positively proven that man was not as bad at first as he is now. Genesis vi. 11, 12: "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth." Man corrupted his way upon the earth. Who did this? Man. The doctrine of predestination of all things is not a new doctrine. Many years ago the Old Baptists taught it in Wales, England and other places. God predestinated the crucifixion of the Savior, the worst crime man has ever committed, but God did not move, cause or influence the men to kill him. Peter says in Acts, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Yes, "by wicked hands." The Bible says, "They hated him without cause." And Jesus said, This is your hour and the power of darkness. They did what they wanted to do. The devil and their bitter hatred caused them to crucify him, and when they did this wicked deed with wicked hands they were carrying out and fulfilling the purpose of God. The devil entered into Judas and caused him to betray and sell the Savior for the very price the prophet had said he would sell him for. Zechariah xi. 12: "If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver." The exact amount Judas sold Jesus for. Judas did what he wanted to do, and at the same time he was fulfilling the prophecy, and carrying out the purpose of God. Everything else comes to pass in the same way. Men in their wickedness by wicked hands commit crime as they

want to, and at the same time are carrying out the purposes of God.

"His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain."

Isaiah xiv. 24: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Hated this blessed one, who only did good, healed all manner of diseases, and never charged for any benefit he ever bestowed upon man. Hear him, you little ones who have nice homes, and plenty, and all you poor, destitute, little suffering ones. What did he say? "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."

"Hail the blest morn, when the great Creator
Down from his throne in the heaven descends;
Shepherds, go worship the babe in the manger,
Lo, for his guard the bright angels attend.

Lo, on his cradle the dew-drops were shining,
Low lies his head with the beasts of the stall;
Angels adore him, in slumbers reclining,
Maker and Monarch and Savior of all."

Let us adore him, brethren, as we have divine power given us from on high, sweeter than the honey and the honeycomb.

The old Confession of Faith says, "Man, by reason of the fall, hath wholly lost all ability to will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation." If this is true, man is different from what he was at first. Man gets worse all the time. 2 Timothy iii. 13: "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." Again, "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." The Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. To prove man was not at first like he is now, I will refer you to the language of Solomon. He says, "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." Then if we go by the Bible, and not our thinksoes, it is a positive, indisputable fact, that man was not a sinner when he was created by the Lord. Paul says, The carnal mind is enmity against God, and not subject to the law of God, and neither indeed can be. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." "Cannot do the things that ye would." You just cannot. Try all you may, determine you will, say, I know I can, Paul says you cannot do the things that you would. For when I would do good, evil is present with me, and the good that I would I do not, but the evil that I would not, that I do. This is Paul's language. Do you believe he spoke the truth? This reads like free will, free moral agency, does it not? Those the Bible says are taken captive by the devil at his will, are they free also? All of you men listen: "Whosoever looketh on

a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her in his heart." Are you guilty? Could you keep those awful wicked thoughts and desires out of your carnal mind? "I am carnal, sold under sin." Sin, evil desires, are a wonderful power. It just takes God's power by his grace to keep you. God's grace teaches "us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."—Titus ii. 12. We have one consolation in the midst of all our sinfulness and weakness, faults and waywardness: the Bible says, "As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." I feel that there is not a more unworthy sinner on earth than I am. If it were not for the comforting language I read in the Bible I would lie down and give up. I go back in my mind over my life and there are so many, many sins charged up to me by my reckoning, and they look so black, so hideous, it seems to me God could not love such a creature, but the Bible says, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." He put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; no other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved.

"Was it for crimes that I have done
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity, grace unknown,
And love beyond degree."

Yes, Jesus saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and it repented him that he had made man, and grieved him at his heart. Jesus said when they crucified him, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Some men know not what they do when they write that God created Adam just as sinful as we are. They injure us. We are sin, and God made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. It is so dark, I am so cold and lifeless, it seems to me such wonderful blessings cannot be for such a sinful creature as I am, but the people of God Jesus died for he saved. They will be brought off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him that loved them. Sometimes David would say, Is his mercy clear gone forever? Will he no more be entreated? Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious? Then again he would say, "Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord," and enumerate and specify and call on a great many animals and objects to praise the Lord. Sun, moon, fire and hail, stormy wind, fulfilling his will. (148th, 149th and 150th Psalms.) Sometimes you are just this way. Soon you will be delivered from the bondage of corruption and will praise your dear Redeemer forever, and go no more out to suffer.

Your poor unworthy brother in hope of mercy,

ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

CAPE CHARLES, Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—A brother has sent me a copy of a letter written in the year 1900 by the late Elder B. F. Coulter, which I believe to be a most interesting letter, and one that will be much enjoyed by others, as it has been by me, if printed in the SIGNS. Elder Coulter baptized me, and was my pastor from that time until his passing, and I am glad to have my memory of him stirred up by this letter written by him, whose theme was "love."

Hoping you will give this letter a place in your paper, I am, yours truly,

G. E. COULBOURN.

WHO ARE OUR ENEMIES?

IT is very important when we enter into a conflict that we know who are our enemies, that we may recognize them in whatever garb or form they may appear, and it is equally important that we may at all times be enabled through continual watchfulness to recognize our friends, or peradventure we might injure the tender branches of the spiritual vine. An avowed and open enemy is one that is arrayed against us by common consent, or by declared enmity. Such an enemy is not to be so greatly feared as the secret, contriving enemy, who with deceit and many wiles steals into our friendship and confidence that he may rob us of all we hold dear and precious. Can it be said we are our own enemies? Yes, no doubt it can. Ignorance of law does not exempt from punishment. By reason of transgression of the laws of our nature we pay the penalty in siscknesss and ill health, therefore we are not only become enemies to our own comfort and usefulness, but also to Him who created us and placed us under law. When we have been delivered from the power of darkness into the light and liberty of God's dear Son, then can we take sweet counsel with the apostle when to us he says, "And you, that were sometimes alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight." Enmity to God and self-righteousness are the ruling principles in the creatures of Adam. The light of immortality hath never shined in their hearts, Wisdom hath not entered the portals of the natural life. The darkness which was upon the face of the deep in the beginning continues to enshroud them. When they seek knowledge, it is of the things which exist in darkness. Their "mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes." There is a peculiar sense in which the world is the enemy of the saints of God. First, an enemy in their mind by wicked works, a natural enmity of the carnal mind against God. Second, a hatred and aversion to holiness. I have often said that they hate the doctrine which we profess, but it is more than that: when they come in contact with the people of God they sniff the air of holiness which is abhorrent to them. In hating God, they also hate

all who love and praise him. In this age of the world's history the saints are not molested in their worship, rather, they are severely let alone. Therefore, the unregenerate of the world are not our open and avowed enemies, even in a worldly sense, we are friendly one with another, and in a still more worldly sense, discovering whom we follow, they simply cast us to one side as a something not worth their consideration as enemies, not worthy their steel. Those of the so-called religious world are our enemies only in a sense that they desire to see us perish from the face of the earth, hoping such a consummation may soon come to pass. An enemy is only so considered when danger is apprehended to our person or our life. Of the religious world we have no such fear, for we know if perchance some of our precious lambs become enticed into their pasture of weeds and husks and dip their tongues into their foul pools of self-righteousness the Lord will deliver them out of all their distresses, as he has promised, so they give us no concern. We must therefore come closer to home in search of whom we fear with perfect fear and hate with perfect hatred. Jesus said, Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. I came not to send peace, but a sword, and a man's foes shall be they of his own household. Brethren, is this a part (or indeed all) of your experience? Each one of you will say, Yea, verily, the words are prophetic, and have come to pass as I bear about in my body the dying of the Lord Jesus. The principle of evil, unbelief and sin was at ease in the world, its seduction and wantonness ran at a rapid pace, without let or hindrance, until Jesus came as the Captain of our salvation, with drawn sword and mighty power arraying himself in his Spirit in the habiliment of the great principle of holiness and godliness against that other principle of sin and ungodliness, two great mysteries at variance one with the other, in that complex being called the saint of God. The world has been at variance with itself in all generations. There have been wars and rumors of wars and nation warring against nation, yet with all of them peace is restored from time to time and war ceases. But from the time wicked Cain slew his righteous brother in enmity and bitter hatred the sword has never been sheathed between sin on the one hand and righteousness on the other, in a literal sense. Away back in the olden time there did come a time when it looked as though a cessation of hostilities would surely come, for "it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose." This certainly looked auspicious. What more could be desired? But alas, the inherent wickedness of man and the depravity of his nature were so full and complete that the wickedness in the earth grew and increased at a more rapid pace than before. "And God saw that the wickedness of men was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart

was only evil continually." In consequence of which God caused the waters of destruction to cover all the earth to destroy the life of every living thing, save the eight souls whom by the same waters he saved in the ark. And even when only these eight souls existed in the earth sin reigned to that extent that continual servitude was imposed upon one of the number for outward acts of shame, and all of this ceaseless antagonism continued from Cain and Abel through every age until the coming of Christ, and he comes announcing words already quoted: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." The literal strife of which we read in all the pages of the Bible was only typical of that ceaseless struggle now going on in the hearts of the saints of God, and in this war the edict has gone forth that there shall be no discharge. Each and every soldier of the cross of Christ must wear the armor of his warfare night and day through all the years of his pilgrimage, and his armor shall not be carnal weapons as in the days of old, "for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." So the armor shall be the girdle of truth about the loins, the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, the feet also shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, and especially, "praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverence and supplication for all saints." Then do we not perceive how important it is that we should know who are our enemies? We profess to be followers of Christ, therefore the enemies of Christ are our enemies, and he brought the sword in the earth not for peace, but for war. Manifold blessings rest upon this precious company, "as it were a company of two armies," and one of the rich blessings is that they know the joyful sound. The truth is their watchword. They have also quick ears to detect error. All that is not truth is error. Truth is light, but "the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." So if we are deceived by carnal reasoning we become involved in darkness and we fall by the way, wounded by the sword of the enemy. What a subtle, treacherous enemy is our carnal reason, and we must indeed be instant in prayer and supplication to withstand such a foe. He lurks in every byway and in every high place, lying in wait to find us off our guard, and woe unto him who watcheth not continually. The slightest deviation from the way of truth is taken up by Satan in the armor of carnal reason, and he presents himself as an angel of light, and so cunningly does he reason that we by his machinations are led imperceptibly further and further from the truth, until ere we are aware we are plunged into the very depths of destruction and despair, and when the sword of the Spirit of Christ has delivered us out of our trouble we feel that a lesson has been severely

learned, and we will so profit by it that we will not fall again; but alas, we neither know our own weakness nor have we measured the resources of our enemy. But we are fast learning who is our enemy, and that he is a formidable one. The selfish ruling spirit of the opposing principle in our flesh is also an arm of strength in his seductions. How easily we become puffed up in our minds by flattery and deception, for that is what our flesh feeds upon. We become heady and high-minded and so destroy the peace of our brethren, and our own usefulness; our assemblies become mockery and so we remain in a troubled sea of unrest and confusion until Jesus undertakes for us and again brings peace to the troubled soul. Every propensity of the flesh is brought in to the service of sin as our enemy to destroy our soul. Sin abounds and is active in every conceivable shape, but always within us. Grace however doth much more abound, and therefore we are secure; the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh. We must discover sooner or later in our journey that our enemy is our own flesh, and when the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, then do we love holiness and rejoice in the righteousness of Christ and hate our own flesh and our life, for they have become our deadliest enemies. What is the ultimate end of all strife and conflict? Is it not peace? With the honorable warrior it must be an honorable peace. With the church of Christ in its eternal conflict the law must be satisfied and made honorable. The demands of justice must be complied with. The judgments of God must be wrought out in every jot and tittle. Jesus is the life of his people. The violated law demands the life of the transgressor. Jesus said, I go to prepare a place for you. What a dreadful condition was this people in, no place for them anywhere, neither hope for God in the world, until Jesus came with his blessed word of truth, full of comfort and hope, "I go to prepare a place for you." Ye poor, lost, wandering sheep, look up, a ransom is found, your Shepherd hath declared, I lay down my life for the sheep. Jesus died, the conflict is ended, peace is restored, and again the longing soul hears the sweet refrain from Jesus' lips, "My peace I give unto you." He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

B. F. COULTER.

DALLAS, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—WHILE on a recent trip in Missouri and Kansas I was requested by several to give through the SIGNS a summary of my trip, hence the following: My wife accompanied me on the trip, designed partly to visit our two sons and their families in Kansas City, and partly to visit our friends and kindred in Christ in portions of the two States. We attended first the Mt. Zion Association, of Missouri, which met in her ninety-third annual session. This is one of the oldest associations in its section, and perhaps the freest from the morern innovations that have, within the last few decades, crept in among

Primitive Baptist churches and torn asunder and disrupted fellowship and severed correspondence. The churches composing this Association are united upon the principles of doctrine and order that have characterized sound and orderly churches of Jesus Christ in the ages past. They met in their association on Friday before the fifth Sunday in September, and were entertained at the home of Deacon and sister J. B. Alumbaugh, assisted by their lovely daughters and son. As my letter would not be complete without a brief description of this place of meeting, I shall ask the indulgence of the readers while I mention a few details. The home is a large farm home, located a few miles out from Independence, Missouri, situated a little more than half way up the side of a small mountain, with a beautiful prospect out over a quiet valley, dotted with fertile farms and peaceful homes. It is built with two stories above the ground and a full basement. The first floor was so constructed that the major portion of it could be thrown together, and this was converted into a chapel for the worship and business of the Association. The upper story was the sleeping apartment for the ladies, while the brethren were comfortably provided for in a separate building a short distance from the house. The basement served commodiously as a kitchen and dining room, where from forty to sixty could be comfortably seated at the tables at one time. Within this home was hospitality and a welcome that must be shared to be duly appreciated. With this background, I am sure all will agree that we had a splendid setting for a pleasant association. I never attended one where more harmony, christian love and fellowship were manifested. Truly the language of the sweet singer in Israel was appropriate: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." At the beginning of the meeting the weather was a little stormy, and the attendance was not large, but still there were six States represented in the audience. Seven Elders were present and the truth was spoken in love to the comfort of the saints and the glory of God. This association of churches has for many years past been blessed in the main with a sound and faithful ministry which has kept them well grounded in the faith. In the recent past they have been sorely tried by outside interference, but by the grace of God they have withstood every trial and have come forth refined as pure gold, and are again enjoying peace and a healthy growth. They have the faithful labors of Elders T. E. Attebery and W. L. Hall, who are humble men of God and able counsellors, and whom the churches highly esteem for the truth's sake.

On the first and second Sundays in October we visited Oak Grove and Little Flock churches, in the bounds of this Association, on their regular meeting days, and met good congregations, and splendid interest was manifested. They had morning and afternoon services each day. On Saturday of the meeting at Little Flock Church, services were held at the home of brother J. P. Taylor, who was not able to

go out to the meetinghouse. Uncle Ples, as he is familiarly called, is past his ninetieth year, has had a light stroke and was confined to his room. He and his estimable wife have entertained hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of their brethren and friends in their hospitable home, and are known and loved throughout the churches and the country in general. Age and affliction have impaired the physical strength of brother Taylor, but his hope is still bright and his faith is unmoved. He told me that he greatly enjoyed the meeting.

On our return trip we had meeting at the home of Elder Schanck, near Williamstown, and in Topeka, Kansas, in the bounds of the First Kansas Association. This is a lovely band of Baptists, but their membership has become scattered, until what were once prosperous churches are now reduced to narrow limits.

Our next stop was at Kingman, Kansas. This church was constituted nearly forty years ago. My father, Elder James B. Hardy, and my mother were charter members, and continued members until their deaths. Father was chosen the first pastor and continued to serve the church as long as he was able to attend the meetings. My brother supplied them then for a few years, and I succeeded him. Since I moved away they have not called a pastor. So the pastoral care of this church has never been outside of the family. Since moving from Kansas, three years ago, I have made three trips back to this church. They are firmly established in the truth, and their love and zeal have not grown cold. We had meeting three days, embracing the third Sunday in October. The attendance was good and the interest was very encouraging. Sound and orderly Primitive Baptist ministers who might be passing through would be welcome and cordially received among these brethren, but it would not be worth while for any who are peddling semi-arminianism to attempt to unload any of their wares on them, for they would certainly be detected. The time we spent with the church at Kingman refreshed our spirits. This church for several years was our home, and it was like a homecoming to again be in their homes and to gather with them to worship at the house of prayer. It was an inspiration to see them sit under the drippings of the sanctuary and drink of the dews from heaven, while tears of joy coursed down their cheeks in silent testimony of the awakened love of truth in their hearts. We witnessed many such scenes among the saints while on this trip, and our hearts were mutually comforted. With all the sweetness which the trip afforded us, there was now and then a dash of bitter in the cup, when we would learn that some of the dear friends whom we had loved for the truth's sake had been called to their eternal reward, and that we could not see their faces any more. But the associations were delightful, the meetings pleasant and the memories of our trip are sweet. We were absent from home four weeks, and the kindness, both in words and deeds, which was shown us filled us with appreciation for our friends and humbled

our hearts in gratitude to that God that he counted us worthy of such kindness at the hands of his children. May his blessings rest upon you and keep you steadfast in this faith, that you may abound in good works.

Yours in humble hope,

J. R. HARDY.

San Francisco, California.

Dear Brethren Editors:—I feel too low and unworthy to address you thus. I am so in arrears with my subscription for the dear Signs of the Times that it causes me to shed tears of shame, but I praise the dear Lord, who is supreme Ruler over all events, that I am at this time enabled to send you two dollars and fifty cents, two dollars to pay my subscription until it is due again, and fifty cents to aid the Signs of the Times. I only wish it could be more. How I do long to receive the paper, it is so much comfort to me, and I look forward to each time of its coming. I love to read the doctrine of God. I do not doubt his word, who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. I once tried to get religion by works, and the more I tried the worse I felt, but when the time came for the dear Lord to reveal himself to me I was made to see that salvation is not of works, and I hope by the grace of God I am what I am, but I feel as nothing in the sight of God. May the Lord bless and guide all the household of faith, and may he bless the dear Signs of the Times and the editors and all who write so ably for the wonderful paper.

The least of all, if one at all,

(MRS.) MABEL LINDSEY.

Sweet Springs, Missouri.

Dear Editors:—The Lord's chosen are a peculiar people, zealous of good works. They should observe the golden rule towards others, but this they cannot do according to the flesh. We are told to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure, so we must have the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which frees us from the law of sin and death. I believe this is also a point of doctrine for which we should contend. We are indeed safe in Christ Jesus our Lord, yet subject to all the wiles of our adversary, the devil. So let us hold fast our profession, ever looking unto him who is the author and finisher of our faith.

I am sending you two dollars for my subscription for 1935. I have been a subscriber for many years, and the Signs has been, and is, a great comfort to me as I journey down through my remaining days of life, having passed my seventieth mile stone. I hope to be able to take the Signs of the Times until I come to the crossing, because it sets forth the truth, which is my meat and drink.

From a poor weak sinner whose hope is in the atoning blood and righteousness of a crucified Redeemer.

J. L. KILLION.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1934.

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2 TIMOTHY I. 13.

"HOLD fast the form of sound words."

Amid the darkness and confusion of this present evil world, God's afflicted and poor people stand out as distinct from the world as an oasis from the desert that surrounds it. To the traveler in the desert the clear, refreshing water and the palm trees are greatly longed for and enjoyed, so the fellowship of the saints and the truth as it is in Jesus is what our souls crave in this wilderness world.

"Behold, how good a thing it is,
And how becoming well,
Together, such as brethren are,
In unity to dwell."

That there are two of us united, is to the praise of the glory of God's grace, for this is not a fleshly unity, a unity of man's devising, but a result of the work of God's Spirit within. If brethren are not dwelling together in unity it is because of the flesh. Not only is it necessary to be brought down and laid low, but we must be kept low in the dust, to dwell together in unity. It is only the mighty power of God that can make the leopard to lie down with the kid. Not only must we be brought low, but the living word must come to us, producing a living faith in us, which faith, being the gift of God, excludes boasting and teaches rather that every man look not upon his own, but upon the things of another. This faith also believes that God's word is true. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." Thus faith receives and gives credence to the things recorded in God's word, believing God, even though in so doing it gives the lie to the opinions and gainsayings of all flesh. Opinions and ideas of men, be they never so wise, have always been proven false when contrary to God's word. Men believe a lie, but it is God who has spoken the truth, so Paul saith to Timothy, "Hold fast the form of sound words." In Paul's day there were some for Paul and some for Apollos and some for Cephas. Thus some would hold fast to what Paul said, while others would regard Apollos as a man who would be safe to follow, while yet there were those who were positive that what Cephas advanced was sure to be sound. They were all, in so judging, prompted by a wrong spirit, and one need to examine himself, and brethren need in this day, as never before, to ex-

amine carefully and prayerfully those whom God has seen fit to raise up among them as elders. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." It is the light that makes manifest, and when they testify contrary to the word, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Now there was a "FORM" of sound words that Timothy had received from Paul. It was the same form of sound words that Paul delivered to the Corinthians. (1 Corinthians xv.). It is the same that Jesus gave to his disciples when he sent them to teach all nations. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."—Matt. xxviii. 20. In this form of sound words there is a simplicity, so that to the wise Greek it was foolishness. It is foolishness to many to-day in this wise world. May we not thank God if it is not foolishness to us? On the simple words of our Lord the church has been fed and sustained, as the Holy Spirit from time to time has blessed them to her, and she has desired no adding to nor taking from. There have been, and will be until the end of the world, those who, though brethren, oppose the form of sound words, and in so doing oppose themselves (2 Tim. ii. 25, 26), for their only hope is in the fulfillment of every word of God. Perhaps it is because of such men that the church has, from time to time, been forced to express herself in what are known to us as confessions of faith. Forced, we say, because of men who would not hold fast to the form of sound words. Such men have generally been self-seekers, having more thought for themselves than for the flock of God, and such are in the snare of the devil, taken captive by him at his will. How necessary to be vigilant, knowing that our adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom, saith Paul, resist in the faith. Eve, our first parent, fell to his snare, and it is easier, while in the flesh, to believe Satan's lie than to cleave close to the word of God. Fleshly men have always erred, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. The disciples, while Jesus was present with them, heard his words, and saw the miracles that he did, yet they did not understand, for they had not yet received the Spirit of truth. They needed their understanding opened, they needed the Spirit that moved holy men of God in old time, and when the Holy Ghost came upon them to dwell with them they understood and remembered the things he had spoken. They immediately began to preach the word, "God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will." Thus they were encouraged to "hold fast," and as time went on and evil men and seducers crept in unawares, mixing law and grace, denying the eternal sonship of Christ (1 John ii. 22), and the resurrection of the body (1 Cor. xv. 12), denying the second coming of Christ,

the end of the world and the eternal judgment (2 Peter iii.), the necessity for holding fast the form of sound words became more apparent. From the days of the apostles until now, there have been men, holy men, led by God's Spirit, who have contended earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, men after God's own heart, who preached his gospel faithfully, the whole and not a part. Such men always carried the sword (Matt. x. 34), and turned the world upside-down, and were called contentious, because they would be faithful to their God.

We mentioned above that churches were forced to declare their belief, in the form of confessions of faith, because of the twisting and denying of the word of God. It was a departure from the form of sound words that led to the Black Rock confession of faith in 1832, for many men and churches were departing from their former confessions of faith, and from the word of God. Of course these designing men thought that the articles of faith of their forefathers were not in accord with the Scriptures, so they were departing from them. The devil, as an angel of light, is very deceptive. If he appeared in his natural form he would deceive no one, but he comes with worldly wisdom and a feigned love, and often his greatest lie is that which has a part of the truth in it. Let us be careful, especially would I address the ministry at this time, let us be careful to hold fast to the doctrine of God our Savior, and remember that nine out of every ten troubles that come in the church come through the pulpit. If you want to poison a people poison their water, and whoever deals out sentiments and expressions contrary to God's word deals out poison. "Preach the word," was Paul's counsel to Timothy, but it must be in love to be preached aright. There is enough in the word of God that the man of God might be thoroughly furnished, and it is expected of a steward that he be found faithful. We would humbly cry, O God, make us and keep us faithful. It is not hard to be faithful in a truth in which the church is well established, as at present, with most of those with whom we correspond, there is no question about the new birth, and that it is the work of God that we believe on him whom he hath sent. There is very little dissent to the doctrine of predestination (and by this we mean the predestination of all things) among those of our fellowship. We rejoice that this is so, and that brethren are glad it is recorded in the word that it is by grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. We love to preach about the grace of God, and the church rests in the security that such doctrine, which is another word for the "sound words" of our text, gives when preached in love, and we sincerely feel that there are many other things in the "sound words" of our text, things we desire to present to our readers for their consideration. We believe in eternal and unconditional election and the final perseverance and eternal happiness of all the sons of God

by grace, and we would hold fast to the form of sound words, sticking to the old landmark that our fathers have set, and here, as our mind is led, we would mention the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment. The Sadducees say that there was no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit. (Acts xxiii. 8.) We do not therefore feel that it is exactly right for any to be called Sadducees who do believe in the resurrection. We question if there are any of our brethren to-day within our fellowship who can be called by that name. Now while there are perhaps none that deny the resurrection, neither angel nor spirit, there are those, like Hymenæus and Philetus, who believe the resurrection is past already, and there are those who believe that when we die we rise in Jesus' image to be forever with the Lord. There are, of course, those who claim they do not know, and so will not touch upon the subject; in other words, they will not hold fast the form of sound words. To believe that the resurrection of the soul from the condemnation of the law to the liberty of the sons of God, which is known and felt experimentally, is the only resurrection we shall experience, is virtually saying that the resurrection is past already, and such a view is wrong, for it denies the resurrection of the body. To believe that when we die, and the spirit returns to God who gave it, is the resurrection, is just as wrong as the former conclusion, for it is contrary to the form of sound words. There is a resurrection of the dead that is a bodily resurrection, or the question would not have been asked, "How are the dead raised up? and with what BODY do they come?" and this resurrection is in the future, and the form of sound words says it will be at the last day. All died in Adam, and all must be quickened by Christ, and these characters who are quickened, who were once dead in trespasses and sins, when they die they die in the Lord. These are the ones who are spoken of by John: "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord." They cannot die in the Lord unless they have lived in the Lord, and if these rise not, then Christ is not risen, but Christ is the firstfruits There would be no need of the body of Christ to rise if the bodies of the saints shall not rise. We have the assurance of this, that Christ is risen because his Spirit is manifested within us, as we confess that the body is dead because of sin, yet his Spirit witnessing within us is not the spirit of bondage, but the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. We are in the likeness of Adam, but have within us the spirit of adoption which calls God our Father, yet groans under the bondage of corruption. "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the ADOPTION, to wit, the redemption of our body." Thus what we have already tasted as the firstfruits in this spirit of adoption we shall enjoy to the full when He shall appear and we shall be like Him. This resurrection of the body is in the future, yet Paul speaks of the dissolving of the

earthly house of this tabernacle, and we would here state that dissolve does not mean annihilate. You may dissolve salt in water and it is still salt in a suspended form. Paul prayed a prayer of faith when he told the Thessalonians, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." In the previous chapter Paul has given us the form of sound words when he says, "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout."—1 Thess. iv. 16. Thus adoption seems to be linked up with the resurrection of the body, and much more truth also is vitally connected with this cardinal doctrine, such as a judgment to come and the punishment of the wicked; that is, those who die impenitent. There is a resurrection to glory and a resurrection to damnation, therefore could we prove the annihilation of the body we could also prove that there is no future punishment of the wicked, whether they be devils or men. It is advanced by some that Christ's body did not see corruption and that the bodies of the saints do, therefore the bodies of the saints do not rise. If that be so, why did Paul assure us with "sound words" that the creature would be delivered from the bondage of corruption? and again, "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality"? Why do men in this late day ignore God's word, or try to twist it? The resurrection of the body cannot be understood by the natural mind. We know in this body we are dissatisfied, and never shall be satisfied until we awake in His likeness. Thus death is spoken of as a sleep, asleep in Jesus, or dying in the Lord, and we believe by the word of the Lord that those who are asleep in Jesus will God bring with him, that the dead in Christ shall rise first. We shall be changed. We are glad it says that. We want to be like him. We are not interested in this opinion or that, we are interested in the word of God and desire to hold fast to it. How much shall we know hereafter of what we have known here? We know in part now, we see as through a glass darkly, but we do learn here, by faith and love, songs of praise to sing above, and we feel that we could not sing the song of the redeemed unless we have some knowledge of what we are redeemed from and are redeemed to, yet the form of sound words says there will be neither male nor female, neither marrying nor giving in marriage.

We have tried to touch upon our subject, but how very much is left unsaid. May God bless all his servants to speak the same things, to be patient, and may the height of their ambition be to rightly divide the word of truth. We are confident that God's word will stand, and our unbelief will not change the purpose of God, but it may cause our brethren distress and bring confusion in the church we love. Let us hold fast the form of sound words in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus, and consider that what was given by Jesus to his disciples and preached down through time until the present day cannot be

changed, but must be our testimony if we are what we profess to be. The church we serve calls for these things, confesses them in her articles of faith, the prospectus of the SIGNS, 1832, calls for these things, and we bless God that he in his mercy hath given us an understanding in these things, and we know by his word that they are true. We do not expect to make brethren believe them, but brethren will believe them, yes, every one who desires to stand or fall by the word of God. We do not know how the three Hebrew children could walk in the midst of the burning fiery furnace, or how Jonah could be in the whale's belly three days and three nights. You say the Lord was there, and that is enough. If our God could and did make the worlds which were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made by things which do appear, can he not at his voice and trump bring at once all his children forth to be forever with him in a world to come, where they shall be like him? Blessed be our God, we know he will, because his word says so. Let us, therefore, not only for our own peace, but for the peace of Zion, "Hold fast the form of sound words." G. R.

NOTICE.

DONATION DAY AT THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST HOME, in Salisbury, Maryland, will be Thursday, December 13th, 1934. Funds may be sent either to Mr. Henry T. Lefferts, Treasurer, 151 Coeyman Avenue, Nutley, N. J., or direct. All food supplies and other articles should be sent to the Home, and will be most gratefully received.

R. LESTER DODSON.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Deacon Harvey J. White)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 17th, 18th and 19th, 1934, to the several associations, meetings and churches with which we correspond, sends greetings of christian love and fellowship.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Through the kind providence and, we trust, divine plan of an all-wise God, we are once again permitted to meet in an associate capacity to praise Him who rules all things after the counsel of His own will. Dear brethren, it has fallen to our lot to write this letter to the sister churches. This we are unable to do of ourselves, and we fear that we may not be given the liberty to write anything that shall be of any comfort to the people of God. However, we will write what little may be given us. We will quote a few words which we have had on our mind, found in 1 Thessalonians v. 9-11: "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do." Dear brethren, when we consider that we were by nature the children of wrath even as others, we shall not be able to thank him enough for the blessings he so abundantly bestows upon us. Our flesh being full of lusts, and the

desires of the mind all containing evil in the worst form—with this condition about us, how can we ask for mercy? As Paul, one of God's appointed apostles says, The things I would do I do not, and the things I would not do I do, for evil is present with me. When we are caused to see the weak, vile sinners we are, then do we beg for His forgiveness and mercy. God, who is rich in mercy and love toward us, never forsakes us nor leaves us to follow in the path he has predestinated us not to do. Our steps are numbered, and all our course is directed in his plan. We pray that we have been quickened by the Spirit in Jesus Christ, and that through his grace we have been given some understanding, so that we may sit together in the heavenly places in Christ. (Eph. ii. 5, 6.) The Lord found us in a waste and howling wilderness of sin and transgressions, and came down from heaven and made himself lower than the angels that he might bear our sins, though he knew no sin. What a wonderful God we have! We can sing praises only to his holy name. He is our salvation, there is none other. Our hope rests in him. The prayer of our hearts is that God hath called us by his grace unto the fellowship of his Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. When the Spirit of truth convicts us of our sins, we then are stricken in our souls by that knowledge of our unrighteousness and see our just condemnation before God. Being thus burdened with sin, how we do mourn over our iniquities! Where is our escape? Jesus is the way, the only way, our hope which brightens the dark clouds with the golden light. In Matthew xix. 14, Jesus said, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Are we his little children? We live by hope, and that hope is an anchor of our souls. Then, too, in God's own time the Holy Spirit sets before us the hope recorded in the gospel. He gives us the eye of understanding and we see Jesus our Savior who died for us that we may be freed from our sins and saved from everlasting punishment. The Scripture says that he that believes on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believes not shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him. (John iii. 36.) God does not appoint his people to wrath, but to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ; for as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God. His mercy endures forever and all things are in his hands. We should thank him it is so. God has chosen you before the beginning unto salvation through the sanctification of the Spirit and belief in the truth. (2 Thess. ii. 13.) God's eternal election of his people before the beginning of time was his greatest blessing to man. "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our

Lord." "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us." The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty, he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy. He will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing. (Zeph. iii. 17.) Wherefore he is able to save unto the uttermost them that come unto him by Jesus Christ. (Heb. vii. 25.) We have these promises, and by the operation of the Spirit the chosen redeemed of the Lord are set apart to the obtaining of the salvation that is in Christ Jesus unto glory, being led by the Holy Ghost. Our Savior prayed, Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth. (John xvii. 17.) Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come he will guide into all truth, for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak, and he will show you things to come; he shall glorify me and shall show it unto you. (John xvi. 13, 14.) These Scriptures are for our enlightenment, and a guide to the things that pertain to the blessing of Christ Jesus toward his people; for all that are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, will go unto him and be with him for ever and ever. Christ did not die in vain. Whether we wake or sleep, we shall live together with him in glory. He brought us up from under the curse of the law of sin and death that we should sit together with him in heavenly places. Christ is the firstfruits of them that slept. He now reigns above, and the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. The dead in Christ shall rise incorruptible, mortality shall be swallowed up of life. God our Savior put away all sin, and by him and through him are all things done. We mourn on account of our sinful nature, but we are encouraged in knowing Christ's promise: Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. When we can see and feel the same things within ourselves that are spoken of by holy men of old, it helps to stir up our minds unto things which are dear to our souls. We are caused to say, and are given light to know, that it is by grace we are saved, and that not of ourselves. Brethren, we must consider that we were by nature the children of wrath even as others, but thanks be to God for the great mercy and wonderful love which he has for his redeemed. Jesus having done this for his little ones, may we live together in everlasting fellowship, and love forever reign among us.

The Lord willing, the next session of our Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, at the regular time next year, unless otherwise arranged and announced in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, at which time we hope to be favored with your messages and messengers again.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Mod.

G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

(Written by Elder C. W. Vaughn.)

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Snow Hill Church, at Snow Hill, Maryland, October 24th, 25th and 26th, 1934, sendeth greeting to the several associations and meetings with which she corresponds.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Following our usual custom, we address you with this letter to testify to you of our fellowship and love for the truth of God. This Association contends for the revealed religion of Jesus Christ. We refer you to the quotation, "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law."—Deut. xxix. 29. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant."—Psalms xxv. 14. We are living by faith that God is a supreme sovereign, and he works his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and none can hinder him, and none can come to Jesus except those drawn by the Father, and no man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him. As it is recorded, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."—Matt. xi. 27. These sacred truths are testified of in the quotations referred to, and we are anchored in them in such a way they are our life. We truly hope the realities of the truth have been revealed to us by the Spirit, and that which we have tasted and handled of the word of life declare we unto you. We do confess we are sinners, and we are conscious of it, but we hope grace was given in Christ Jesus according to his electing love, predestinated purpose, and that inheritance is revealed in heaven, and all the sweetness of fellowship and joy is but a foretaste of the joys that shall be revealed in us as the saved of the Lord. This secret of God's love revealed to poor sinners is but little compared to the fullness of his wisdom and knowledge. God revealed to Israel as a nation a law for rule and government, which identified them as a favored people, and the commandments were received and obeyed from a natural and carnal standpoint, but we feel they were portraying better things that were treasured in the law of the Spirit of life that was in Christ Jesus, and the keeping and obeying is from the heart, which was embraced in the new covenant he (God) declared he would make with his people "after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people."—Heb. viii. 10. These truths are revealed to the quickened sinner by the Spirit in which the kingdom of God is brought to view, and

the way of salvation of sinners through Christ Jesus made clear. The servants of the church of God sent of the Son of God to feed the flock which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers are entirely dependent upon him for their understanding and strength, and look unto the hills from whence cometh their help. We feel these are safe places for poor vile sinners. They are not going forth in their own strength, but in the demonstration of the Spirit and power proclaiming glad tidings unto the sons of men, as the Spirit has taken of the things of God and shewed it unto them. This association of churches is established in this doctrine, and love it, and has strong regard for those who believe and preach the same glorious truth. As an Association, we hope to be kept in this revealed truth, and to those of like precious faith, we greet you in this our annual epistle, and our prayer to God is that we shall be kept, and directed in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and those of our correspondence be thus favored of God. If we have these things it is because they have been revealed unto us, and this is not ours to give to other men, but it is as Jesus asswered the Jews, and said, "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."—John vii. 16, 17. In like manner the true worship of God is manifested among the sons of men.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
GEORGE F. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Snow Hill Church, Snow Hill, Maryland, October 24th, 25th and 26th, 1934, sends greeting to our sister associations of our correspondence.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year has passed and through the wisdom, power and mercy of God we have the privilege of again meeting as an association, meeting your messengers and correspondents in love and fellowship in the Lord. It has indeed been a pleasure to us to meet your messengers, who have declared the unsearchable riches of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and him crucified. We sincerely hope that each and all of us will go to our homes feeling that it was good to have been here.

Our next session of the Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Salisbury Church, Salisbury, Maryland, beginning on Wednesday after the third Sunday of October, 1935, when and where we hope to meet you again.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
GEORGE F. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Henry Hayman, Md., $2; Ray West, Nebr., 50 cents; Mrs. Rosa Stevens, Mich., $1; Attie A. Curtis, Maine, $1; G. C. Jordan, Mo., $3; E. Annie Parker, Md., $3; "A friend," Ont., $1; A. W. Bloomfield, Mo., $3; Z. B. Cullen, Ky., $2.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence, Delmar, Maryland, March 31st, 1934, Dr. Lee W. Warren, of Berlin, Maryland, and Miss Mary E. Hallaway, of Newark, Maryalnd.

By the same, at the bride's home, Fruitland, Md., April 21st, 1934, Daniel E. Matthews, Jr., of Salisbury, Md., and Miss Stella F. Sirman, of Fruitland, Md.

By the same, at his residence, April 21st, 1934, Edward M. White, of Salisbury, Md., and Miss Edna B. Layfield, of Parsonsburg, Md.

By the same, at his residence, June 29th, 1934, John W. Elliott, of Salisbury, Md., and Miss Pearl A. Morris, of Salisbury, Md.

By the same, at the home of Mrs. Ralph Ellis, near Delmar, Del., July 14th, 1934, William L. Ellis, of Elizabeth, N. J., and Miss Evangeline M. Mason, of New York City.

By the same, at his residence, July 21st, 1934, Linwood L. Lowe, of Laurel, Del., and Miss Margaret A. Brillingham, of Laurel, Del.

By the same, at his residence, August 18th, 1934, Hayward L. Adkins, of Salisbury, Md., and Miss Elizabeth Townsend, of Salisbury, Md.

By the same, at his residence, August 25th, 1934, Clyde E. Malone, of Siloam, Md., and Miss Evelyn V. Powell, of Salisbury, Md.

By the same, at his residence, September 22nd, 1934, Clarence A. Houston, of Seaford, Md., and Miss Elsie R. McGee, of Laurel, Del.

By the same, at his residence, October 20th, 1934, James W. Calloway, of Laurel, Del., and Miss Elizabeth Truitt, of Whaleyville, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

CHARLES C. TOMLINSON, our beloved brother in Christ, departed this life June 2nd, 1934, at his home, in Delmar, Delaware, aged 73 years. About a year before his death he suffered a stroke of paralysis, from which he never fully recovered, this, together with other complications, took him away. He united with the Smith Mills, Little Creek Old School Baptist Church in 1894, being baptized by the late Elder A. B. Francis. He was devoted to the church and loved the doctrine of saving grace. He was acting clerk for a number of years. His home was open to the church and friends; nothing pleased him better than to entertain. He was reconciled to his Master's will and endured his sufferings with great fortitude. He leaves a widow, sister Tomlinson, and two children, John and Mrs. Paul Kenney, all of, or near Delmar.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer, his pastor, at the home, and was largely attended. He was a man of many friends. The interment took plce in the Smith's Mills Cemetery, adjoining the meetinghouse where he was received forty years ago. Sister Tomlinson and the children have the sympathy of all their friends.

ALSO,

OUR highly esteemed friend, **FRANKLIN J. STEVENS,** was born August 15th, 1877, near Trappe, Talbert County, Maryland, and died at his home, near Easton, Maryland, August 19th, 1934, making his stay on earth 57 years and 4 days. On September 26th, 1899, he married Mrs. Rosa Hastings Bennett, to which union two children were born: Chaplain J., of Whittensburg, Texas, and Ohle H., of Cordova, Md. These sons, together with his widow, two sisters and three brothers survive him. In faith he was a firm Old School Baptist, in business absolutely dependable. He and sister Stevens lived sixty miles from Delmar, Del., their nearest place of meeting, and never missed an appointment unless providentially hindered. He took great delight in entertaining the church members and friends, and he surely had the way of making us all feel at home.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer at the home, and was largely attended. The interment took place in the Old School Baptist cemetery at Smith's Mills, Del. We all miss him, and our sympathy goes out to sister Stevens and the sons.

H. C. KER.

REBEKAH HAYS, a daughter of Elder J. T. and Sarah J. Barnes, was born in Johnson County, Missouri, April 8th, 1892. She came with her parents to Touchet, Washington in the year 1901, and lived there until her marriage to Henry A. Hays, December 9th, 1908. Since then her home had been in different localities in Walla Walla County, Washington. She had been in failing health for the past four years, having contracted tuberculosis as the result of an attack of the flue, which it was impossible to overcome, and which finally resulted in her death, October 20th, 1934. During most of the last year of her life she suffered greatly, and when she realized there was no chance for her recovery she became wholly reconciled to her lot and patiently awaited death, often expressing a desire to depart and be at rest. She never made a public profession of religion, but left unmistakable evidences of a living faith. When in health and within driving distance with a team she and her little family were generally at the meeting at Touchet. Her husband and four children are left. The children are Harold, Opal and Mary Jane Hays, of Dixie, Wash., and Mrs. Orlena Demory, of Walla Walla. Also surviving are her father, Elder J. T. Barnes, of Touchet, Wash., two sisters, Mrs. Anna Weathers, of Seaside, and Mrs. Edith Showalters, of Freewater, Ore., and three brothers, Ed. Barnes, of Amoret, Mo., Fred, of Touchet, Wash., and Sam Barnes, of Freewater, Ore. It was her desire and standing request for

several months that I should minister at her funeral, which request was carried out at a funeral parlor in Walla Walla, October 22nd, followed by interment in the beautiful Odd Fellows' cemetery at that place. With all her trials of life finished, and a bright assurance of an inheritance of the glory of the redeemed of the Lord in the resurrection, why should we mourn?

C. W. BOND.

GEORGE WILLIAM PETERS was born near Monroe, Georgia, October 11th, 1870, and died June 23rd, 1934, in his sixty-fourth year. He had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church forty years and a deacon about twenty years. His passing was very sudden. He was feeling as usual all morning, and as he finished a tub bath he fell asleep to awake no more in this world. He leaves a wife and six children, all married: Bessie, Macy, Nannelle, John, Carolyn and Edward. He was a son-in-law of the late Elder James M. Adams.

The funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder J. C. Hewitt.

ALSO,

JAMES ALBERT PETERS, son of G. W. Peters, born May 4th, 1893, died October 8th, 1934, aged 41 years. He never joined any church, but enjoyed hearing the gospel as it was preached by the Old School Baptists. He lived only a few hours after being in an automobile wreck. His body was laid by the side of his wife, who preceded him to the grave five years. He leaves four orphan children, who are now making their home with their grandmother.

SARAH ADAMS PETERS.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 808 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one-half block west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church will meet (D. V.) every second Sunday with brother and sister Berry, 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California. Every third Sunday with brother and sister Staggs, 506 E. Raulston Street, Ontario, California.

T. D. WALKER.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

Cloth binding 75c each. Paper covers, single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and all to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

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ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 103. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1935. NO. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

COLOSSIANS III. 2-4.

"SET your affection [or mind] on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

The security of God's people furnishes consolation for the tiding over many rough and stormy scenes this side the blissful state of eternity. If we had to look to anything belonging to the natural man for hope in the beyond I am persuaded that grace-taught children would be carried down so low in despair that they would cease to hope of ever seeing their Elder Brother, Jesus, and of ever being with him and like him. In this time, when even the camps of Israel are being turned from peace and joy, trusting and resting in the wrought out righteousness of Jesus, to a tossed to and fro crowd, hearing the lo here and lo there, do we find many interpretations placed on the word. Some are telling us that we have the destiny of Zion and our own individual welfare in our own hands. We are commanded to place our minds on eternal things, instead of earthly things, because by so doing we may attain to large membership, active churches and all temporal things. But the eminent apostle does not tell us that. He gives a reason for doing this, but it is not for reward.

Let us digress a little, to get before your mind what is necessary for us to understand before we can heed the many scriptural admonitions. No man can of himself obey what is commanded. The word, as it is written by divine inspiration, does not put life or spiritual desires in the reader. Some of my best friends are people who seemingly are as destitute of the Spirit of God as any dead sinner can be, yet they can quote much Scripture. We must conclude that the Spirit alone teaches us to obey, because we would only be as foolish Galatians doing anything without the Lord. "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are you so foolish? having begun in the

Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain. He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"—Gal. iii. 2-5. Here is ample evidence that the Spirit is ministered unto us by the same One that begat us to a lively hope. (1 Peter i. 3.) He that began a good work in us will not desert us to our carnal desires, which are all evil, but we may rest assured that the same God, who cannot lie (Titus i. 2), promised eternal life before the world began, and will, for the perfecting of his glory and the bringing together of many heirs, perform it all to the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil. i. 6.) "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."—Phil. ii. 12, 13. How any man can construe this language to mean time salvation is beyond me. These were little children being addressed and admonished by their undershepherd along duty's ways. They were obeying characters, having always done so. The apostle is being led by the Spirit to admonish them to continue doing so, but, like all God-called ministers, he knows where the life is, so he is leaving the performing of that duty to God, and comfortingly tells them that all their salvation is of the Lord.

But let us desist just now on that, because it would seem that the things Jesus has in store for his elect are the result of his feeling all righteousness, and that their walking in him and his commands are the direct result of his having given them the will and working the do.

When the apostle wrote the Colossian brethren it was revelation from Jesus Christ. Set your mind on things above, and not on things of the earth. There must have been a reason other than a reward. Paul plainly tells that reason: "For ye are dead." How is the quickened child of God dead? Before the life-giving Spirit comes into their heart, teaching them what sinners they are, then they are dead in sin. Let us emphasize the fact that death has no degrees. Anything that is dead is destitute of any of the life under consideration. Any one who agrees with Paul that the natural man is dead in sin must agree that the child born again is also dead and both deaths being complete. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."—Rom. vi. 1-4. Here is good news indeed to the poor sin-burdened souls. They no longer love sin, but they hate it, and the hateful things in their flesh cause them much

sorrow. "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inner man."—Rom. vii. 21, 22. Oh, so many times have worldlings flung in our face, If I believed as you do I would do just anything I wanted to. Yes, and I am persuaded that only the fear of the law keeps them from it any way, because they still have the love of sin in their hearts. But with God's humble poor it is so different. They have their fill of sin and could they do the things that they would sin would be no more in their lives.

"Your life is hid with Christ in God." Lift up your drooping eyes, little way-worn pilgrims, for all is safe and secure. God, in Christ, paid it all, and nothing can take the home away from his chosen people.

"Not all the pains that e'er I bore,
Shall spoil my future peace;
For death and hell can do no more
Than what my Father please."

Our lives (if indeed he ransomed me) are hid in Christ, and for one of the elect to be left must first dethrone God himself. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; [How can some believe that Christ would fail to keep those he gave eternal life, when the gift meant the sacrifice of his own blood?] and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one."—John x. 27-30. "And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone."—John viii. 29. "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?" "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."—John xiv. 10, 20.

"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." What glad tidings of great joy! What wonderful love is this manifested to poor sinners! Nothing about them to merit the notice of the sinless child Jesus, but the fact that they are covenant children, and for that reason he takes them from out the wilderness, wherein there is no water, and makes them to drink of water everlasting. That was all wrought out by him alone, when we were as yet enemies to him, but having loved his bride with an everlasting love, he goes about to pay their debt, and while paying it he is establishing a righteousness that is all complete, leaving them holy and without blame before him in love.

But our Savior is doing more for us than to die for us. By day and by night he keeps us, even when we are not mindful of ourselves. By the still waters he leads us and makes us to lie down in green pastures. The dear old walls and bulwarks of Zion are maintained by him and daily he adds to his church such as should be saved and that he would own at his second coming.

Let us not stop our meditation here, for his watchcare is not going to end at the grave. For countless ages our dust may moulder away, but his all-seeing eye never sleeps. When the Lord descends from heaven to gather his chil-

dren home none will be left. They that are in the graves shall come forth; the sea shall give up its dead and those still living shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and all shall rise to meet him in the air. What more can we desire?

"God, my Redeemer, lives,
And ever from the skies,
Looks down and watches all my dust,
Till he shall bid it rise."

The years of my youth I thought much of the cold and silent tomb, and shuddered with much fear and anxiety at the thought that some time I must leave all the things of nature and lie down in death. But although still young in years, I trust that I have been shown the vain and frivolous ways of this time journey I am on, until I no longer fear to quit the walks of men as I once did. True, the natural man still dreads the sting of death, but the fiery darts that are hurled at poor wayfaring pilgrims, together with the unceasing trials and afflictions, mingled with a stubborn nature and hateful disposition, at times leave me in such a state that it would be peace to depart and be with Jesus.

Just a little more and I am through. As much as is in you, dear reader, take courage and press on a few days longer. Just a little longer on the battle field and the war will be over. Then we that have a good hope in Christ shall die a natural death, trusting sweetly and assuredly in our Assurer that some glad to-morrow he "will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name." Then shall the sheep enter into the Father's house, where there are many mansions, there to be with Jesus, and like him, to know no more the aches and pains and the things of time, but to walk in his light that illumines the city of our God, and to sing redeeming love for ever and ever.

In a little hope,

W. D. GRIFFIN.

FAYETTE, Alabama.

NEWBURY, Ontario, Aug. 4, 1886.

MRS. ELLA MCCONNELL—DEAR SISTER:—I feel with the apostle Paul to say, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." From what you have written in your precious letter of the exercises of your soul, the way you have been led, it was with feelings of sacred pleasure that I read, and felt you were speaking of the things which pertain alone to the children of God. How highly favored of the Lord! How wonderful the grace and tender love of Jehovah manifested in you, in singling you out and teaching you things which none know, or care to know, but "the taught of the Lord." And thus, dear sister, the Lord has declared, and has sealed you as one of his eternally loved, as one of his dear children. It is written in the Scriptures, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." When compared with the vast multitude of those who profess to be christians, those who truly give evidence of being such seem to be very few. The way and the fare of the way-

faring men (Isaiah xxxv. 8) is unknown by the religious world. It is "a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen: the lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it."—Job xxviii. 7. 8. These "wayfaring men" are the redeemed of the Lord, bought with the precious blood of Christ, and in the strength of the Lord of hosts they walk in the "high way" of the King of Zion, "the way of holiness." Jesus Emmanuel is our glorious King, and all his subjects, his ransomed ones, "shall come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." These "wayfaring men" then are the elect of God, and I feel a peculiar delight in the sweet persuasion that I have that you are one as I again contemplate what you have written in your letter of the way wherein you have been led, and how you have fared in the way. You have participated in carnal religion, as you express it, "I thought I could work out just such a righteousness as my soul needed, and could begin the good work at any time I pleased." The time came when you obtained a considerable amount of worldly religion. This carnal religion which assumes to itself the name of christianity is a partnership business, God has done or will do his part if the sinner will do his. It is an enterprise in which each (God and man) has stock, joint stock. You did your part, put stock in the business, and things prospered, and you say, "Then what a prarisaical life I began to lead." O, my dear friend, how many, many in the world have no better religion than all this; they live contented in it, boast of their possessions therein, and die, it may be, and "there are no bands in their death." "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" Is there not a hope in our hearts that the blessed God hath put a difference between us and those who are destitute of his eternal favor? (Exodus xi. 7.) Therefore our song will ever be in notes of sweetest praise to our God, ascribing salvation, and blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Like the four beasts, I feel like saying, Amen. (Rev. v. 13, 14.) Though you were well started, and progressed favorably in pharisaical religion, had been immersed, was a member of a professed church of Christ, you became disquieted in spite of all your resolutions, and workings, and instead of getting better you grew worse; all the fleshly religion you possessed could not heal the unrest, the trouble that encompassed you; it could not satisfy the hungerings and thirstings of your soul. In the midst of all this you found, to your dismay and sorrow of soul, that you were vile, so sinful that you were constrained to pronounce judgment, and confess with shame, I am unclean, unclean. In all this is manifest the goodness of the Almighty God to your soul. It is written concerning the Israel of God that they shall know every man the plague of his own heart. (1 Kings viii. 38.) Yes, it is when a poor

sinner is quickened, has experienced divine life, made a partaker of the divine nature, and is born again, that in the light of life he sees how sinful he is; and that mourning, those sighs over your sad condition, show that the Lord has written his law in your heart, that he has put his fear there, for "the fear of the Lord is to hate evil."—Prov. viii. 13. And it is written, They shall mourn every one for his iniquity, and loathe themselves in their own sight. (Ezek. xx. 43.) These are they whom the Lord hath blessed. "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." They are eternally blessed, and this blessing is according as the Lord their God has chosen them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. (Eph. i. 3.) The Lord has put his law in your inward parts, and has written it in your heart, and from this new heart proceed hungerings and thirstings after righteousness. These hungerings are not the functions of our carnal heart; this you have found out is a corrupt fountain, and cannot send forth pure streams, but your sorrowful experience is that, Every imagination of the thought of man's heart is only evil continually. Righteousness is not found in our fleshly nature. So, hungry and thirsty your soul has fainted in you. (Psalms cvii.) Blessed are you! Righteousness is stored up in Jesus for you. He is our righteousness (1 Cor. i. 30; v. 21.) Thou shalt be filled. (Matt. v. 6.) Thou art blessed already, and this blessing is according (not to your goodness, or vileness, or because you have exercised the will of the flesh, alias "free will," and have done your part, but) to Jehovah's eternal delight in, and election of you in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. (Eph. i. 3.) When the Holy Spirit discovers to us our true condition as poor sinners, then we see how vile we are. All our righteousnesses are then seen as filthy rags. (Isaiah lxiv. 6.) They will not do to wear before the throne of God. They are loathesome and a stench in our nostrils, and, like Paul, we count it all dung and dross that we may win Christ. (Phil. iii. 4-11.) All this in measure you have felt, and thus it is manifest that you are taught of the Lord.

"Those feeble desires, and wishes so weak,
'Tis Jesus inspires and bids you still seek;
The Lord who thou seekest will not tarry long,
And to him the weak is as dear as the strong."

In all that you write, complaining of your sinfulness and corruption, which, like the restless waves of the sea, is ever casting up mire and dirt to your grief, I am the one that sadly knows that man is vile, and from day to day I have to say with you, "There never was a heart so base, so false as mine has been, so faithless to its promises, so prone to every sin." Many, many times in spirit have I cried out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"—Rom. vii. 24. And I have known what it is, and so will you find thanksgiving filling your heart, and in triumphant melody sing, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Your soul's longing is to eat and drink of the precious things of the gospel of Christ. The truth as it is in Jesus is what you feel is good and

blessed to hear preached. There only in Christ's gospel is what your soul hungers and thirsts after. In Jesus alone is your hope. All your expectations are in the gospel of the grace of God, and you find a joy in the doctrine of God our Savior, though fears arise amidst all your longings that the things of Jesus are not for you. Surely this is the way that the wayfaring men are led. And all the bitters in their cup, the darkness they pass through, their grief and burden experienced under the sense of their own vileness, the mourning, hungerings, thirstings, helplessness, bitter fightings and wrestlings with their conscious sinfulness, and the buffeting of Satan, all of this you, in a measure, are being made to know, with all the taught of the Lord. Oh how sacred, how consoling sweet it is to be drawn to Jesus, and to find in our dear Savior all our salvation and all our desire.

How glad I shall be to hear again from you of your welfare, and what things have been done in the way. (Luke xxiv. 35.) The gracious Lord, I am persuaded, will never leave you nor forsake you. Therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious unto you. Every revelation of his mercy, grace and tender love the Lord best knows when and how to bestow upon you. He has his set time to favor Zion, and times and seasons are in his power, and it is very precious to feel, "My times are in thy hand,"—Psalms xxxi. 15, and therefore will the Lord be exalted that he may have mercy upon us, for our God is a God of judgment. "Blessed are all they that wait for him."—Isaiah xxx. 18. May we be found by the graciousness of our God waiting upon him alone, for from him only cometh our expectation.

Earnestly desiring of the Lord that you may know and prove more of his mercy, love and power, I am, I hope, your brother in the pathway of tribulation,

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

DESOTO, Ill., Sept. 24, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a gospel letter, written by our dear sister in Christ, Mrs. Fannie H. Chester. I would be glad to have it published in the SIGNS for other dear saints to read. I have her consent to its publication. Send on the dear old SIGNS, for I do not know what we would do without it. May the Lord spare you to continue the SIGNS, is my prayer.

(MRS.) STELLA ODOM.

MURRAY, Ky., June 22, 1934.

DEAR SISTER ODOM:—Has it been the providence of God that we feel to address each other as sister? Several weeks have elapsed since your dear and encouraging letter came, loaded with God's love, as I deem it. Time after time I have felt I should write, but, dear sister, I am so insignificant that I go on moaning and groaning, and at this very moment I am so inadequate I feel ashamed to make the attempt.. I have not been very well of late and the weather has been very warm, but I do not mean to be a pessimist.

Dear sister, just now John xii. 25, is before me: "He that loveth his life shall

lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto eternal life." Oh this most wonderful expression of the dear Savior is very searching indeed. It is contrary to all nature for a human being to hate his own life, and yet Jesus said in another place, Except a man hate his own life he cannot be my disciple. I feel there is none able to understand this only those who have deeply experienced it. How often do God's children feel that all evidence is against them. They would be free from the very things that make them hate their lives in this world. He that loves his life in this world has not the marks of a child of God, but is at peace with himself, and is under the reign of the strong man of which Jesus spoke: "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace."

Sister, you wrote of your imperfections, and how you hated your sinful life. Now remember, when this peace is broken up by the stronger there is no more peace, for a new life, of a higher grade, a holy nature, is given, and is as much at variance with sin as Jesus Christ himself. It is Jesus Christ in them, and the Scriptures saith, In him was life, and the life was the light of man. It is light that maketh manifest, and when the light enters one's heart that one sees what he never saw before, he is then quickened, or regenerated, or born again. The evidence of the new birth is that one hates sin, and hates it worst of all in himself. He feels that he is the very chief of sinners, and will continue to be so, for the light will continue to shine and all sin and depravity is made manifest in him and he sees and feels it, and now having been blessed with the light of life from above he is made to hate what he sees and feels in himself, so that he at once comes under that description of the Savior, who said, Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. This blessedness he cannot take unto himself, for so great is his own condemnation in his sight and feelings that he feels the gracious promise cannot apply to him, therefore he (we) do mourn, not knowing that it is the blessing of light and life causes his mourning. Sister Odom, this is the very root and foundation of true and real repentance. Oh such a false idea, that men repent in order to a change of heart, for that such repentance prevails to a change of heart can have no foundation at all. Repentance without God is no repentance. True repentance toward God follows only after regeneration, and is an irresistible effect produced by the Spirit working in them. It never fails to bring the sinner into a state of deep sorrow and distress of soul, and he that truly mourns because of sin has been born again. O, sister, is not this the dearest, sweetest thought on earth? for I can truly say, I have wept, shed enough tears mourning over my sins to have washed Jesus' feet. Oh I just want to thank the blessed Jesus, for he died for my sins. The Lord planned that his dear Son must suffer and die on the cross for my sins, but, sister, I feel that if justice had been done I should have been sent to hell. You will find where our blessed Master said, I came not to

call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. He calls them to repentance, not to come to repentance. If we could see the difference between calling upon a man to repent and calling to repentance we could see what he meant when he said, I came to call sinners to repentance. His words are spirit and they are life. He speaks in the heart and to the understanding. He speaks now, he says, The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear my voice, and they that hear shall live. This is speaking the dead to life. It is not his words that are printed in a book, no, no, my dear sister, but it is the still small voice that speaks in thunder tones in the soul and brings the dead to life. He said, Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in the which, all that are in their graves shall hear His voice and come forth.

"He that loveth his life shall lose it." This is evidently one who is at peace with sin, and never has seen its henious nature; who loves the ways of this world, and who is satisfied with it. But he that hateth his life shall keep it unto eternal life. Sister, this is a cheering thought to one who really hates sin, the one who hates the life they live here in this world. If, dear sister, we are made to hate our ways and what we do in this life, then we belong to the latter class described in this text. There is no doubt about the matter. Dear old Paul said the things he did he hated. They were the things of the flesh. He did not mean he hated the things of the Spirit, but he hated the things of the flesh. He said, We are the circumcision that worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. He that hath confidence in the flesh loveth his life and shall lose it, but he that hath no confidence in the flesh hateth his life in this world. Now, my dear sister, if I see correctly circumcision of the heart in the Spirit cuts the child of God off from the flesh, or confidence in the flesh, so that when he resolves and vows within himself that he will do thus and so, he finds he cannot, and ere he is aware of the fact he breaks his solemn promises and is made to know there is no confidence to be placed in the flesh. Many of God's little ones here in time often conclude that because they cannot do as they thought to do they are mistaken and never have been born again, whereas, their failures are the very evidnces that grace is leading them out of self and causing them to look to the Lord for what they need. Then comes another Bible description: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." So, then, the pitiful child does not aim to work himself up to that point, but is all the time endeavoring to avoid it, and would never be there were it in his power to prevent it; but his attempts to escape become the very means of his overthrow, and instead of supplying his needs brings him into a state of poverty. So instead of increasing confidence in the flesh, it lessens it and makes him to look to the Lord and to depend upon him for all righteousness. 1 Corinthians i. 30: "God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sancti-

fication, and redemption." So he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. "It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." Christ prayed, saying, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

Sister Odom, I must close. This may not interest you, but it is sweet to my soul. Look over my weakness, and pray for your poor unworthy sister, if one at all.

With much love,

(MRS.) W. T. CHESTER.

FAYETTE, Ala., Sept. 25, 1934.

ELDER A. K. MYRICK—VERY DEAR BROTHER:—I received your request at the Association, by the hand of your father, and will now try to comply with it although a sense of unworthiness and incompetency causes me to dread the work, yet a sense of responsibility and duty impresses me to answer my part and "shew mine opinion."—Job xxxii. 10.

To begin, I will say that the Scriptures you have quoted and asked me to comment on are of such a nature that I am persuaded that a correct interpretation of one of them would be a fairly good interpretation of all of them, but I shall, God being my helper, take notice of them all.

The first thing I wish to impress on your mind is the fact that there are two kinds of people in the world, that they constitute two worlds, that they have two doctrines and that they sprang from two Adams. The first Adam was of the earth, and earthy; the second Adam was the Lord from heaven, a quickening Spirit. (1 Cor. xv. 45, 47.) Our first birth was a fleshly and blood birth and cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven. (1 Cor. xv. 50.) And remember that heaven is not a reward we receive for our obedience, but it is an inheritance for God's children, who are heirs of the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, who overcame all things and shall inherit all things. (Rev. xxi. 7.) Therefore all his children are rich. As a proof text that there are two worlds spoken of in the Bible, and two manner of people, turn to Genesis twenty-fifth chapter, beginning at the twenty-first verse: "And Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren: and the Lord was entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived. And the children struggled together within her: and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the Lord. And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels, and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger." Remember, these two manner and two nations of people were so different from each other that the Lord hated the elder and loved the younger, and decreed, before they were born, that the elder should serve the younger. The Lord also said, I have loved Jacob and hated Esau, and laid his mountain and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. (Malachi i. 2, 3.) In Psalms cviii. 9, it is said,

"Over Edom will I cast out my shoe," signifying that the Lord will never redeem Edom, which is Esau. Now read the fourth chapter of Ruth, and note carefully the eighth verse: "Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy it for thee. So he drew off his shoe," thus signifying that he never would redeem Ruth or her inheritance, but would forever leave that right to his kinsman, to wit, Boaz. Therefore, when God says, "Over Edom will I cast out my shoe," he means, I will never redeem Edom (Esau). Now, I have tried to make it plain, by the type of Jacob and Esau, that there is one world represented by Jacob and another represented by Esau. "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."—John xv. 18, 19. There is a world that, by wisdom, knew not God. (1 Cor. i. 21.) There is a world, the whole of which wandered after the beast. (Rev. xiii. 3.) There is also a world that God, in Christ, reconciled unto himself, by not imputing their trespasses unto them. (2 Cor. v. 19.) This same world God so loved that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John iii. 16.) This is the world whose inhabitants are born into the family of the second Adam, the Lord from heaven. Being born of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, that liveth and abideth forever. (1 Peter i. 23.) This world is composed of believers in Christ, and shall never perish, but have everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but have passed from death unto life. (John v. 24.) They are heirs of God and equal heirs with Christ (Rom. viii. 17), and constitute the bride, the Lamb's wife (Rev. xxi. 9), and by reason of the near and dear relationship and the oneness between them and their Head and Husband, he had the right of redemption, and the love that he had for them was the incentive that made him to do it. Read the twenty-fifth chapter of Leviticus on redemption.

When Jesus was here on earth he met the children of this wicked world and talked with them. He could trace their geneology, and tell them exactly where they originated from. Read the eighth chapter of John. He tells them in that chapter that they are of their father the devil, etc. In fact, the context is drawn in the first two children that were born. The first born slew the younger, and for no other reason but that "his own works were evil, and his brother's good."

Wherever the true gospel is preached the line of discrimination between these two worlds is so plainly drawn that "some believe, and some believe not." Those who believe are born of God; those who believe not have only a flesh and blood birth.

Now I feel I have answered your citation, John iii. 16, and will try to meet the second.

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not

willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."—2 Peter iii. 9. I will say here that the "all" in the above quotation includes only the "usward," and not the whole of Adam's race, and as to who are the "usward," read the first chapter of this letter and you will find that he addressed "them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ." If they obtained this distinction through the righteousness of God and his Son they evidently were born into the family, and were just as passive in the hands of God in this birth as they were in the first, for the first is a figure of the second.

I have no desire to change any part of the Scripture, but, that you may get a correct idea of my understanding of the text, I will quote it again with some changes. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is long suffering to usward, not willing that any (of usward) should perish, but that all (of usward) should come to repentance.

I now come to your third proposition, 1 John ii. 2. We must notice the first verse of this chapter, in order to understand who is addressed. In fact, we should read carefully the entire first chapter, and learn that this whole epistle is addressed to God's "little children." In fact, the Bible does not tell us very much about his "big children," but it has a great deal to say about his little children and little flock.

"And he [Christ] is the propitiation for our sins" Webster's definition of the word propitiation is in substance satisfaction rendered, and he puts down as synonyms reconciliation, expiation, satisfaction and atonement. As he is the propitiation for "our sins," we are bound to acknowledge that our sins are canceled, taken away and atoned for, and that the "our" is none other than God's little children throughout the whole world, and Peter tells us that his longsuffering will continue, for he is not willing for any of them to perish. He will do his will. Now to apply this Scripture to the whole of Adam's race and make no discrimination, would be equivalent to saying that language does not mean anything.

Fourth quotation: "And the Spirit and the bride [church] say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come [those who have ears to hear]. And let him that is athirst come [those who are born of this incorruptible seed and are hungering and thirsting after righteousness]: and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely," which "will" applies to every heaven-born soul.

I now come to your fifth and last quotation, and I feel it is very probable that if you should agree with me on what I have already written it will be unnecessary to comment on this text. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Before we go further let us notice the verse preceding the one just quoted: "Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and earth." It seems that

he wanted them to know the power and authority that was behind his orders. His eleven apostles had gathered together at an appointed place and Jesus came and met them there. (Matt. xxviii. 16, 20.) Therefore, it seems that he and his apostles were there alone, evidently signifying that his orders at that time were for the benefit of his ministers throughout all time. In Matthew xxiv. 14, he tells his disciples as follows: "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come." At that time he had twelve apostles and seventy elders, which make eighty-two preachers, but he, being an expert manager, they finished the work in thirty-seven years, for the end came in the year 70, when Jerusalem was destroyed and the Jews scattered to the four winds. Jerusalem was a type of the church, and when Christ set up his kingdom the types were all withdrawn.

Verse twenty: "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." There are many things commanded by our Lord and Master, all of which are included in our duty as christians, but our eternal welfare in a world to come is not hinged upon anything we do, or can do, but we are entirely dependent upon the righteousness of Jesus Christ which is imputed to us and is set to our credit.

One more word, and then I am done. This gospel day in which we live is the sabbath day of the christian world. And as the sabbath day, and the keeping of it, was the most emphasized of all the ten commandments, so this gospel sabbath is to be strictly observed. It was a death penalty to work on the sabbath day. (Num. xv. 32.) If one of our preachers begins preaching a work system of salvation we strive to correct him, and if he persists in so doing we put him out of the camp. We believe that Jesus came here and did the "six days'" work for his bride and she is to-day resting in the finished work that he did, and trusting him for all spiritual blessings and a home at God's right hand in heaven. So farewell, my brother, and please let me hear from you.

G. W. BERRY.

NEWARK, Delaware.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find two dollars for renewal of my subscription to the SIGNS for one year. I sincerely regret I have no more for you. I am not behind, but I realize the SIGNS is behind, financially, but I hope it may stand up by the grace of God, which has upheld and strengthened it these one hundred and two years just passed, and I do hope it may resist, through the wonderful, incomprehensible grace of God, all opposition of false doctrine, which it has had to battle for many years, for if that old and revered saint and preacher, Elder Gilbert Beebe, had surrendered to many without, and some within, where would the visible church be to-day? The answer is, With the Arminian world, smothered under the Babylonish doctrines of the world, in captivity, and not alive as is the

church to-day under the preaching and believing of the baptized saints, still promulgating the whole doctrine of God our Savior in its fullness through these sacred columns, and may it stand until the advent of the second coming of our Savior, which is sure to develop and be manifested as Scripture defines it, spiritually and literally. And it is my prayer that it may be strengthened mightily by the support of its editor, Elder H. H. Lefferts, in his prophetic utterances and writings from time to time. The Old School Baptists have heretofore, and are to-day, promulgating the doctrine of God our Savior in its fullness, and I believe are the only organized group of believers who preach and advocate the doctrine of the Bible. They cannot preach or advocate two specific doctrines: it must be the one and only doctrine of God, whether it offends man or not. Yet we hope to labor with him that is weak, to let patience have her perfect work, until the whole truth is revealed unto him (or them) that would not or could not see His doctrine as Scripture portrays it, spiritually, from time to time unto him or her as they are quickened by the revelation of the Spirit, the third Person in the Trinity.

J. B. MILLER.

HOLYWOOD, California.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I must admit I have been slothful and that some time has elapsed since brother and sister Staggs returned to Texas, and especially since brother G. O. Walker settled in Ontario. The suggestion was made by Seclusia Church that we correct the announcement of our meetings, published from time to time in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as the brethren feared some of the friends might be misinformed and go to 506 E. Raulston, in Ontario, instead of gathering with us at 526 West Nevada Street. This changs was arranged by the church and announced in brother Berry's paper. You will see there are only a few changes necessary to correct the notice as printed heretofore. Let this bear my thanks, and should it appear that we do not ask too much, please bear with us in the declaration that we feel thankful that so far we have been favored to meet together, esteeming others better than ourselves, in honor preferring one another and in love serving one another, and that God the Father has brought us together to speak of his power, sing aloud of his mercy and speak of his righteousness, and his only, even the imputed righteousness of God, which is faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference between elect Jews and Gentiles. The everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, embraces all the heirs of promise, and the promise made sure to all the seed, so there is no difference, the whole election of grace being justified FREELY by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (i. e. complete satisfaction) through faith in his blood,

to declare his righteousness, and, I say, his only, for the remission of sins that are passed through the forbearance of God. To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. (Already turned out.) By what law? of works? Nay, but by the law (commanding power) of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law. In this I am given rest, if not deceived, for the law works wrath, for by it is the knowledge of sin.

"Jesus, how glorious is thy grace,
When in thy name we trust,
Our faith receives a righteousness
That makes the sinner just."

You see what kind of a letter I have written. So far as I know, it will be my last; at least for this year. I have been made thankful that so far I have been kept from saying, A confederacy, to those who say, A confederacy. I have no disposition, when my mind is rightly affected, tojudge another man's servant.

I close, declaring that what God has promised he is able to perform, and it must be so, for the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his, and I am persuaded he is able to keep them and make them fit for his heavenly kingdom.

In the best of bonds, the bonds of love, I am, I hope, your brother,

T. D. WALKER.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, Shokan, New York, September 12th, 13th and 14th, 1934.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—

Through the kind love and mercy of the never-changing God we have been permitted to meet in another association. Once more it has been with gladness of heart and thanksgiving to Him that we have again received your messengers. The preaching has been sweet to our ears and, we can truly say, food to our hungry souls, as manna that falls from heaven, and heaven alone, and from no other source can it be found. We feel thankful that your Elders have come to us laden with the fat things that alone come from the Father and his throne.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the First and Second Roxbury churches of Delaware County, New York, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday between the second and third Sundays in September, 1935, at the Yellow Meetinghouse, Roxbury, N. Y., meeting to commence at 10:30 a. m., Standard Time, where we hope to greet your messengers with the same love and unity that has thus far abounded in our meetings. Until then, brethren, farewell.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1935.

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OPENING VOLUME 103.

MAY the Spirit of the Lord help us write these introductory remarks to the new volume with no other motive than to cleave to the truth as his grace may enable us to do so, that the name of the Lord may be glorified and his doctrine adhered to for the comfort and strengthening of his beloved children in the faith once delivered unto the saints. The venerable age of the SIGNS and its consistent loyalty to the original prospectus set forth at the outset of its first publication in 1832 bid us take care lest we, in our day, mar its pages with any real or apparent departure from the standard first set up more than a century ago. If the cardinal points of doctrine for the defense of which the SIGNS first came into being, were worth contending for then, they are even so now. Being the truth then, they are no less the truth to-day. Had we not ourselves been heartily in accord with the doctrine of the SIGNS, we could not have conscientiously served on its editorial staff. Even being in accord therewith, we have felt very sensibly our own personal deficiency in wisdom and knowledge to thus serve. Only through much felt sense of our own weakness and ignorance, have we continued through the almost twenty-one years we have been on the paper. If there has been any real growth in grace and in knowledge, it is not apparent to ourselves. Instead thereof, realization of our own weakness and helplessness persists within us more than ever. For this work we continually need the guidance and teaching of the Holy Spirit in our treatment of the Scriptures, we need to avoid leaning to our own understanding and to the surmisings of our natural reason and imagination. Such views as are ours, we have been willing to share with the household of faith. That we may have been mistaken in our understanding is humanly possible; that the Holy Spirit could ever err in his revelation of the truth is never possible. We do not claim infallible inspiration for all we express either in the pulpit or in these pages, but the Scriptures are infallibly inspired and there is no error in the revelation or unfolding of them which the Holy Spirit gives unto the children of God. That man may be mistaken is certain; that the word of God, either living or written, cannot err we do must surely believe. From time

to time as we have written for these pages, it may have seemed to some of our readers that we were unduly positive in our assertions. In such cases we have ourselves felt that the clear teaching of the Scriptures warranted our being positive. It is not worth while, nor would it be at all edifying for us to say that we "think" this or we "guess" that: our readers do not want our think-sos or guessings. We believe our writings should attempt to set forth what the Scriptures warrant: if the Scriptures do not substantiate us, we had better not write at all. Those of our readers who have access to old numbers of the SIGNS and are familiar with their contents, can judge for themselves whether the paper has departed from the doctrine set forth formerly by its editors and contributors. Truly we of to-day do not feel that we have the Spirit in the measure in which the fathers had it, yet we hope that in our small measure we have set forth what we believe the Scriptures teach and that it in no wise differs in substance from what this periodical has always maintained. It is a well-known fact that when a patch of garden space is left to itself, it soon grows up with weeds. Just so, when a point of doctrine is neglected for a few years, erroneous notions about it are apt to crop up in the minds of some. Predestination, if it is not faithfully preached and as faithfully believed, is apt to be cluttered up with ideas that are erroneous. The preacher himself cannot open the eyes of the understanding, but the Holy Spirit can use the preacher to teach believers the correct interpretation of the word. Without the anointing of the Spirit to give unction, the preaching is without power. Granted, however, that one is called to preach, the Spirit will give power to the word preached to clear up misunderstandings of doctrine in the minds of those who are true hearers. The work of the Spirit to do this is not dependent on the preacher, but it is often the pleasure of the Spirit to honor one's ministry to the edification of the faithful. It has been our prayer that if we are really called to serve the household of faith with any spiritual gift that has been bestowed upon us, that the Lord might be pleased to use us to his glory in contending for the truth to the enlightenment of his people, as well as to their comfort. We need, each of us, not only comfort, but we need a ministry that will search us and show us our faults, we need exposition of the word not only to commend us in that in which we may be doing well, but to reprove us in that in which we may be in error. It is noticeable in the messages to each of the seven churches in Asia, that commendation was always mingled with reproof. Why should it be otherwise than so with us to-day? A careful examination of each of our hearts and lives will disclose much necessity for correction. The well-timed rebuke of the Spirit of Him who knows the needs of each of us, cannot fail to open our eyes to our failures: and such may well come through the preached word. Is it not in this way that believers are often saved from going further into error? Was not Timothy admonished

by his veteran brother Paul to take heed unto himself and to the doctrine, that he should thus save not only himself, but also those to whom he preached? In setting forth plainly our views in the pages of this paper, we have not meant to force our views upon those who have no use for them, but we have aimed to state certainly our own position that it might be known by our readers just what we believe the Scriptures to clearly teach. When we state emphatically that salvation is wholly of grace and not of works, that is exactly what the Scriptures teach. Those who differ, will have to settle it with the word of God, not with us. When we state that God's foreordination embraces all things that ever have or ever will occur, those who differ have no quarrel with us, but with the word of God.

During the past few years our mind has been led to dwell more than formerly upon the resurrection of the dead, the second coming of Christ and the eternal punishment of the wicked. Why we should have written so much upon these points unless there is a needs-be for it, we do not know. In doing this, we have not been blazing any new trail for Old School Baptists to walk in, but simply recalling that which has always been fundamental and vital to the faith of every one who truly believes the Scriptures. The resurrection of the body and the second coming of Christ and the future judgment and punishment of the wicked are no new subjects for the SIGNS. A perusal of its pages for the past century will clearly disclose the fact that these points have been advocated by its editors in the past. Space forbids us to make any extensive quotations from former editorials, but we cannot forbear calling attention to Elder Gilbert Beebe's editorial upon the resurrection contained in the second volume of his editorials on pages 695 to 701. Do not understand us to be making an idol of Elder Beebe or his views. We mean no such thing. We should follow no man any further than he follows Christ. But no one should accuse us of bringing in new things when it is well established that the SIGNS for years has been standing for the resurrection of the body and the blessed events of the Lord's coming associated with that truth. If we remember correctly, the Warwick Association in 1845 met with the Slate Hill Church (not that we of course remember it personally, but from reading of it) and the Circular Letter that year was upon the subject of the resurrection, and a most excellent letter it was. We wish all of our readers might acquaint themselves with it. Able writers in the SIGNS throughout former years have believed this blessed truth and have so expressed themselves in their writings. Elders Samuel Trott, Thomas Barton, W. J. and J. L. Purington, R. C. Leachman, F. A. Chick and many others held this belief. In the past, Elder David Bartley was a frequent contributor to the SIGNS. Let us commend to our readers his book entitled, "Man Redeemed." It is now out of print and hard to obtain, but well worth reading. Likewise, may we also commend to your attention the "Life of

Elder Wilson Thompson," which contains in its latter part his views on this glorious subject? We indeed count ourselves well blest to be in Christ Jesus with such faithful men as these, of whose company we are not worthy.

As to our own views on "restitution," which embrace among other things the future restoration of Israel when the "fullness of the Gentiles" shall have come in, there may be brethren who do not agree with us on this. We would not count it essential whether they do or not. But even so, we are not advocating anything new even in this. While former writers of the SIGNS have had, perhaps, little to say on this subject, there have been those among us who have held to it. For instance, Elder Samuel Jones, who served as pastor the Pennypack Church from 1763 to 1814, who served the Southampton Church also for a time, and who was once called to the pastoral care of the Hopewell Church, but decided to remain at Pennypack. He it was who, in 1807, at the one hundredth anniversary of the organization of the Philadelphia Association, preached the discourse in which he dwelt upon the future restoration of Israel, the latter-day glory of the church, the thousand years of Christ's reign, etc. A copy of this we were some time ago fortunate enough to find in the possession of the Baptist Historical Society of Virginia, Richmond, Va. We see no cause from a scriptural standpoint for us to retreat from our present position upon these points. If there are those who cannot go with us in this, we hope they will at least allow us the privilege of our own convictions even so. We hope that our writing on these subjects from time to time may not annoy, but help, those who read.

"Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified."—2 Thess. iii. 1.

H. H. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by brother Hewitt Osborn.)

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, at Shokan, New York, September 12th, 13th and 14th, 1934, to the churches composing the same, sends greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The Lord has been merciful in sparing as many of us as he has to meet again to worship him, the only true and living God, and may our coming together be in love and fellowship.

Of late our mind has been much exercised on the subject of the resurrection of the dead, and many comforting thoughts have prompted us to express ourselves on the subject of the resurrection of the body, and we hope this comfort has come by the Spirit of Almighty God and will be to the edification of all who look for the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul says, "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." Our quotation being from the forty-fourth verse of the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians, and in the forty-ninth verse of the same

chapter we note the following: "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." The subject of the resurrection has received much deserved attention from preachers of our faith, and reference to it should always be timely and in order. In Paul's time there were some who did not believe in the resurrection of the body. Paul says, "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. And if Christ be not risen, then is your preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Paul tells his convictions of the resurrection: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's, at his coming." Paul therefore connects the resurrection of the dead with the resurrection of Christ, and shows that because Christ is risen, the dead shall also be raised up. It is God our Father's holy will to raise up the dead, for said his blessed Son, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."—John vi. 38-40. We know that Jesus did the will of his Father. This authority and power the Father gave him, so Jesus has power to raise every one of them up again at the last day, for when he had conquered death, Satan and the grave Jesus said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." —Matt. xxviii. 18.

"I will raise him up." This means our body which shall return to the earth, but not our spirit, which shall return to God who gave it, for our mortal bodies shall die because of sin, but our divine spirits shall live because of righteousness, for in the beloved Son of God we have redemption through his blood, and the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace, and God has made us accepted in the Beloved. His blood cleanses from all sin. The atonement for our sins and the redemption from our sins certainly embraced us as we are, as sinners in the flesh of our mortal bodies; and the redemption from all iniquity, the justification unto righteousness and the forgiveness of all our sins include our bodies as the members

of Christ; yea, our whole spirit and soul and body, therefore Paul thus prayed for his brethren in Christ, saying unto them, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."—1 Thess. v. 23, 24.

We will quote some of Job's experience in the resurrection of his body. Having this assurance of sublime faith in his Redeemer, Job when in great affliction could triumph, and say, "Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."—Job xix. 23-27. Job fully admits the worst that death, decay and corruption could do to him, and that his suffering body should be food for worms, yet he trusted in his living Redeemer, who would bring him up again out of corruption and death, and in his quickened and redeemed body he should see God. When the Lord shall himself descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, then up into the clouds all the redeemed in their resurrected bodies shall rise, and with Job see Him for themselves. When Christ shall come for his church, we shall be like him in the resurrection, and be fully satisfied.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence, December 1st, 1934, George Francis Morris, of Delmar, Del., and Miss Nellie Florence Littleton, of Salisbury, Maryland.

By the same, December 1st, 1934, at his residence, Grover Wilson Hastings and Miss Evelyn Jane Dennis, the groom of Laurel, Del., and the bride of Snow Hill, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MARTHA J. TIMMONS was born November 26th, 1844, and died January 6th, 1934, aged 89 years, 1 month and 10 days. She was the daughter of Nathaniel and Mary Laws Brittingham, and the last one of a large family. She had been in poor health for twelve years and for the last six years of her life was not down stairs. She was married to John W. Timmons January 6th, 1869. He died April 24th, 1886. They were married by Elder George Staton. She was baptized into the fellowship of Indiantown Church by Elder T. M. Poulson. After the church was constituted at Forest Grove and her husband was called as pastor there they removed their membership there. She was very seldom absent from her meetings when her health was so that she could attend. One of her pleasures when well was helping the sick among her friends who needed it. She leaves one son, Ernest B. Timmons, one daughter, Mrs. S. H. Farlow, with whom she made her home, both of Pittsville, Md., Lester G. Timmons, a grandson, whom she raised from an infant and loved as her own, eight other grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren and a number of nephews and nieces, of whom she was very fond.

Her funeral was held Monday morning, January 8th, at Forest Grove, conducted by her pastor, Elder G. E. Coulbourn.

THE above was sent to me by Mrs. S. H. Farlow, daughter of sister Timmons, to help me, as she expressed it, in writing her mother's obituary notice for the SIGNS. I do not feel I could improve her beautiful expressions, but do want to indorse them, and to add that while I was sorry I did not meet sister Timmons until she was ill, yet I was glad to meet her and see her so patient, although so ill, never complaining. I also want to add that her daughter, Mrs. Farlow, and Mr. Farlow, her son-in-law, with whom sister Timmons spent

many of her last years, were faithful and constant in attending to their mother during the long period of years, manifesting such devotion that it was indeed good for me to see. May the Lord continue his blessings. G. E. COULBOURN.

ANNA MARY TINDALL YARD, widow of George R. Yard, was born October 31st, 1845, and died June 10th, 1934, in her eighty-ninth year. She was the daughter of the late Deacon William C. and Lydia Ann Tindall. In January, 1869, she married George R. Yard, and to this union five children were born: Hannah, John, William, Elizabeth and Anna Mary. She is survived by Hannah, John, Anna Mary, nine grandchildren, two brothers and two sisters. July 29th, 1876, she was baptized at Hopewell, N. J., by the late Elder Hartwell, and lived a faithful member of the Hopewell Church until her death. With her the things of the Spirit always came first, and we shall sadly miss her counsel and advice.

Her funeral was conducted at her late home, in Hopewell, N. J., June 13th, 1934, conducted by Elder Alexandria, of Wilmington, Delaware, after which her body was laid to rest in the Hopewell Old School Baptist Cemetery.

Written by her daughter,

ANNA MARY ATCHLEY.

MRS. JANE PARKES SIMPSON died November 1st, 1934, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. S. M. Neal. She was the daughter of the late Thomas L. D. Parkes, and wife of the late James W. Simpson. Her age was 78 years, 8 months and 16 days. She leaves four children: W. T. Simpson, Mrs. Joe Rogers, Mrs. L. E. Huffman, Mrs. S. M. Neal and thirteen grandchildren to mourn her death. She professed faith in Christ about the age of thirty, and joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Old Bethel, near Lynchburg, Tennessee, and lived a true christian life until death. She was a loving mother and grandmother, and those who knew her best seemed to love her most. Her admonition to the children of God was, "Dear children of God, let us not fall out, devour and bite because we cannot see alike, but let us go hand in hand, marching on to Canaan's land." During her sickness she spoke often of being ready and willing to go. Among her last words were, "The Lord's will be done." She said she did not want any one to grieve after her, said she was going where there would be no trouble, sickness, pain or death.

She was buried in Ridgeville Cemetery, and brother Towery, a Primitive Baptist minister, of Coffee's Creek, preached the funeral sermon in Ridgeville meetinghouse. We hope to meet our loved one in heaven above, where all is love.

Her granddaughter, ALENE NEAL.

OUR beloved brother, **J. W. TAYLOR,** of Pine, Camp County, Texas, departed this life at his home on August 28th, 1934, at the age of 81 years, 7 months and 15 days. His wife still survives him, together with nine children, to mourn their loss. Three children preceded him in death. Brother Taylor's health had been failing for the past two years, until finally the death angel called him to a better world, where sin, sorrow and suffering will never enter. Brother Taylor's life was an exemplary one, and he was highly respected by all who knew him. His walk was a crowning example for his children and grandchildren to follow, and to cherish his memory. Above everything he placed the church, his relationship of which began with the Missionary Baptists. The writer, who was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, married his oldest daughter. Soon after which brother Taylor began to read this paper and became dissatisfied with the doctrine of the Missionary Baptists and joined, together with his wife, the Primitive Baptist Church, of which he was a member until his death. He was a subscriber to the SIGNS and loved the doctrine for which it contends. Brother J. W. Taylor was born at Simpsonville, Upshur County, Texas, and spent his entire life near his birthplace.

Funeral services were conducted at Willow Oak Cemetery by his highly esteemed pastor, Elder H. B. Jones, of Winnsboro, Texas.

J. E. HARRISS.

NOTICE.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I want some old books, as follows: Jones' History, Orchards' History, Coffee's History, Cox's Writing on Revelation, Wilson Thompson's Life, Leland's Writings, Potter-Throg Morton Debate, Pittman's Biographical History, Primitive Preacher, old SIGNS, "Lone Pilgrims," and other old papers, old books and Minutes that concern the history of the Baptists at the time of the division over Missions. These books are greatly desired, but I am a poor man and they must be reasonable. Please fix this up as seems good to you, asking them to state price, and withhold my name.

ANY one wishing to reply to the above may send their communication to this office and we will forward it to the brother. Address J. E. Beebe & Co., Middletown, N. Y.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

In Memory of Joseph F. Hall, Maine, $8; Mrs. C. A. Shryock, Va., $1; Sarah I. Rittenhouse, N. J., $3; W. D. Griffin, Ala., 75 cents; Dr. Thomas H. McColl, Ont., $3; "A friend," Pa., $3; T. F. Daniel, Ala., $2; "H", Md., $2; Martha E. Holloway, Md., $1; Mrs. Norman Slack, Del., $3; Lillie M. Jenkins, Pa., $3; Mrs. J. D. Shafer, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Joab P. Stout, Ill., $2; Mrs. Mary Duffus, B. C., $3; Jesse C. Ellis, Ohio, $3; Nellie M. Palmer, Maine, $3; W. E. Bryan, Ky., $1; Mrs. J. A. McTaggart, Ont., $2; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Mary E. Claggett, D. C., $1; Judson Zeh, N. Y., $2.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California; every third Sunday at 526 West Nevada Street, Ontario, California; also on forth Sundays as the Lord permits, at 3516 Franklin Avenue, Riverside, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.

T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 808 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one-half block west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 103. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1935. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JOHN XIII. 17.

"If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

Dearly Beloved Ones, who have no abiding city, but are seeking one which cannot be moved:—It is to you my mind is drawn this morning, with a desire to offer some thoughts on the words of our great Shepherd, or Leader, in our effort to find this wonderful abiding city. These words of Jesus are recorded in the thirteenth chapter of John, in his record of the things which Jesus said and did while here in the flesh with his dear people. They are couched among his last words and deeds while here on earth, and they are recorded in connection with that lovely act of washing the disciples' feet, an example of which, for want of a true and full understanding, much confusion arises. Some good brethren think it is an example that should be practiced literally to-day by the church. Other good brethren think not so. Let that be as it may, it is not my mind at present to try to prove it obligatory literally on the church, or not. We want to view it in a deeper sense. We notice this is one of the last acts of Jesus while here on earth doing the will of his Father, and the great obligation he lays on us, his servants, is to do the will of our Father. Here he met his disciples to perform the last of his work while with them, and that was to eat the Passover Supper with them, a notable thing which the Israelites had observed from the night they left Egypt for that long journey to the promised land, which is a type of the slaying of the Lamb of God to redeem his people from the bondage of sin. There were many things done and taught in Egypt leading up to this memorable night. We see many marvelous things in the life of Jesus leading up to this Supper. Supper is the last meal of the day, so this being one of the last acts of the Master, it is very appropriate to call it supper. It was at this Supper that he told his disciples he would not drink of the fruit of the vine any more until I drink it

anew with you in my Father's kingdom. It was after eating the Passover with them that he arose and laid aside his garments, showing how he would put off his suffering body, which was prepared for him to live in while here. He girded himself with a towel, showing he was girded with the power of God to finish the work he was given to do. He then poured water into a basin, showing how he was just entering into the pouring out of his life for them. Then he began to wash their feet, and dry them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Oh how solemn and delightful to the soul is the grand jewel of humility. It is death to proud nature, but life, joy and peace to the soul, not only washed from every stain, but dried with the girdle of power. He comes to Peter (which brings out nature) and Peter refuses to let the Master wash his feet. But when told of the awful condition which was his if his feet were not washed, how willing he then was that Jesus wash not only his feet, but his hands and his head also. In this Jesus brings out some hidden pearls and tells him that he who is clean needeth not save to wash his feet, but ye are not all clean. This he spake, knowing who should betray him, thus showing that there is something lacking. Dear ones, have you not found out that there is something lacking in you to prepare you for the happy reception of Jesus when he comes to take his purchase home? Oh I know that is the burden of your poor souls, to be ready when the call is made. This is what we see figurated, or taught, in this lesson. The wonders which Jesus taught here, the disciples did not understand the deep import of them. Neither do we, but "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." "I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he." While Jesus was telling and setting forth his suffering and death they could not believe. Like Peter, they could not be willing for Jesus to wash their feet, but when Jesus was delivered into the hands of his crucifiers they, like sheep without a shepherd, could not believe nor yet leave off following him. Oh what does it all mean? He who opened the eyes of the blind, cleansed the lepers and even raised the dead to life is now a subject of every cruel treatment. Now, Jesus had said to Peter, You know not what I now do to you, but you shall know hereafter. This is true in the experience of every child of God. We cannot know nor understand the marvelous work of the Spirit of God while being under the influence of its operation. We have to wait on the Lord until we see or receive the fruit of it. We never receive the fruit of our natural crops until harvest. Neither do we receive the fruit of the promise of God until the harvest, and this harvest is like all the works of God: he has a time and season for every purpose. The great lesson taught here was demonstrated at the resurrection. It was here they said one to another, Did he not tell us these things while he was with us in Galilee? What a wonderful effect! What a wonderful change! While the presence

of Jesus caused such burnings of the heart no doubt they felt the evidence was so great all doubt for the time fled. But they soon found that they had to be shown again. Oh the assurance every time he appears is such the poor soul, like Thomas, can only say, My Lord and my God! It is enough. Well do I remember the way the dear Lord led me in the wilderness before he brought me to realize his promise. When I came along the dark and thorny road I, like the disciples, knew not that it was the work of grace leading me to his banqueting-house, but when I did find it so, the world, the flesh and the devil could not make me doubt. I knew it was none other than the house (church) of God, for his banner of love was over me, and all the sorrow which haunted my poor soul day and night had passed away and everlasting joy crowned my Head (Jesus). Yes, while every face in the house was strange to me naturally (never had I met any of them before) I really felt they were my brethren, and that feeling has never left me. While I, like Peter, in my rebellious nature have refused to let the dear Savior wash my feet (my walk or actions), still, like Peter, I have been made anxious, not only to have my feet washed, but I wanted clean hands also, to meet my brethren with.

I wish to relate a little of my personal experience. Well do I remember the joy of my poor heart when I found these dear people. I felt they were the best people on earth, and truly they are, for I have tested their goodness, and oh how often have I found them in my waywardness, like Mary, washing my feet with tears. I felt when I first found them that they could require nothing of me but what I would do. But, like the disciples, I did not know them. One of the first things they required of me created a spirit of rebellion in me, for they said they found a gift in me that belonged to the church, and the church unanimously requested me to exercise that gift in the church. Oh such rebellion! Such as never was manifested in Jonah more than in my poor heart, for after many efforts to rid my conscience of this burden, like Jonah, I purchased a ticket to the State of Nebraska, where there were no Baptists, and thought there I would throw off the burden and live at ease once more. But not knowing what all this meant, nor in what it would result, I learned it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. I found myself over two thousand miles from my then young companion and four small children and in bed with a fever which seemed unto death. But, brethren, the hurt went deeper in my soul than wife and children. I had rebelled against my brethren in Christ, and words too plain to be mistaken said, As oft as you have done it unto one of my brethren you have done it unto me. Oh what an awakening in my very soul! But, like the poor disciples, it was a wonder I could not understand.

Right here I want to notice FAITH. Paul says we walk not by sight, but by faith, because the things which are seen are temporal, but the things not seen are eternal. The quickened souls have

both of these principles in them as long as they are in this life, and each is manifested in our lives here. Faith is something which cannot be seen. We can see the fruits of it, but faith itself is a hidden treasure in the heart and mind of the believer, which cannot be seen, but is clearly manifested as faith is revealed to faith, or from faith to faith. Neither can we see natural sight. It is a part of our makeup which is invisible, yet we know we can see, if we have all our senses. This I know to be true, for I once could see nature in all its beauty, but now there is a veil, or curtain, over my sight which hides all these great beauties from me. There is a great mystery in this change. I can see to get around, but not enough to tell one person from another, and strange as it may seem, I miss my natural sight more when I am in the stand trying to comfort, or wash my brethren's feet, than anywhere else. When my sight was good and I arose before my brethren and looked in their faces I could detect an expression of hunger and thirst, and with this came an inspiration into my very soul, and as Jesus was blessing and breaking the bread of life, and I handing it out, I could see the tears of thankfulness. This gave new life to my feeble efforts. But alas, that sweet and blessed evidence is taken from me. Now when I arise I can see the people as they sit before me, but the sweet sight of the expression on their faces I cannot have. So I have now nothing but to let faith have her perfect work, and leave the result entirely with my brethren.

Now I want to get back to my experience while away from my wife and children and my precious brethren, lying on the bed of affliction with no hope of ever seeing them again. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" My mind, my desire, my prayer, were all changed to what they were when I left home. Like Jacob in the wilderness, oh what leadings about, while I could have no hope of the dear Lord ever blessing me with the fulfillment of the one and only desire to get back and make acknowledgment to my brethren. There was no hope, yet I prayed for it. I was made to remember those dear women who had witnessed the death of Jesus, and had seen him buried in Joseph's new tomb, and the great stone rolled to the door and sealed with the king's seal, which meant death to any one who broke that seal. To make it more sure the Roman guard was placed to watch, but in the face of all these obstacles, look with me and behold the wonders of faith. Amid all this darkness faith is denying its perfect work. See these heart-stricken women preparing spices to anoint the body (the church) of Jesus. Does it not, in a natural sense, look foolish for them to make such preparation when *reason* told them they could not get to his body? But God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. Very early in the morning, before it was light (ye know not what I do), they start to the tomb with their spices, and as they go they wonder, Who will roll the stone away? Here they witnessed

the crooked made straight and the rough places made smooth. Oh how wonderful is our God! While in the very extremity of my trouble, the doctor came and broke the good news to me that I could go home. Oh how sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear! So preparation was made, and I returned home and had the desire of my crushed and broken heart gratified, to face my brethren, and I, like the wayward son, confessed I had sinned against heaven and in the face of my brethren, and here, dear brethren, I experienced the true import of my text: "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." The dear brethren washed my sore and weary feet, with the humbleness that Jesus did. Instead of casting me out where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth, they took me in, they fed me, they clothed me and loosed me from the dreaded prison which held me in its cold vault. They washed my wayward feet with that water which my Master poured into the basin, they dried them with the towel, or girdle, of love and humility, with which the Master was girdled. This was in the year 1887, and in the year 1889 the church called the Elders and they set me apart to serve them in all the ordinances of the church. This act of my brethren has ever been in my memory, though I have ever found the same rebellion in my nature, warring against my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin. Surely Paul never was brought into greater straits while fighting with the beasts of Ephesus than I have been while fighting with this beastly nature of mine. And now, after fifty years in this struggle, I sit here in my humble home, no more able to answer the calls of my brethren, who say, Come over into Macedonia and help us. But while I have ever felt to be more of a burden than a help to them, I know now that my helping them is over. But poor and worthless as I am, the dear ones have not left me comfortless. They, though but a remnant, look after me, they visit me, they write me and they wash my wayward feet by administering to all my necessities. And in all the long years of my travel in this wilderness world, it seems to me it is the most needful time for this example to be practiced, which Jesus gave us while here. It is needful that it be made manifest by the spirit of humbleness and forgiveness, so needed in our beloved Zion to-day. My prayer is, God grant us more love and tenderness to each other for Jesus' sake.

In much affliction, I sign myself, Yours for his dear sake,

J. T. BARNES.

GREENSBORO, North Carolina.

ELDER G. W. HILL sends greetings to the brethren and sisters of Salem Association and to all their correspondents, to all the household of faith.

Through the abounding goodness and mercy of God, we of the Salem Association have again been permitted to meet in an associational capacity, and feel that we have truly been made to sit together in an heavenly place, with one great Moderator and Head of the

church in our midst to own and bless us with all spiritual blessings. Our visiting ministers have come proclaiming, in no uncertain sound, that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, and rules supremely in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. They have in their hands the one great chain which John saw in the hand of the angel, the Scriptures of eternal truth, not one link of which can ever be broken; and by it man has been thoroughly abased and God exalted and crowned Lord of all. Mutual fervent love in one delightful stream has manifestly pervaded every heart, all speaking the same things, not a jar nor a discordant note has been heard.

"There is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him?" "Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor?" "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things." "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." If it were not for these things (for God's unchangeable will and purpose) how could we feel assured of anything? Therefore he says, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Jesus said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." "And I will bring the blind by a way that they know not, I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." Therefore he said, "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Old Baptists believe in a sovereign God; one who has all power; works and none can hinder; hinders and none can work. He does what he pleases, and saves whom he will, and whom he will he hardens.

We have had no desire to try to regulate the manner in which our brethren speak, or to put words in their mouths, for we believe the gospel is preached today as it was on the day of Pentecost, and they preached then as the Spirit gave them utterance.

By referring to the New Testament, you will find that Paul wrote on God's predestination and purposes; John's theme was on love; Peter wrote more on election; James admonished to good works. Were all these apostles "hobby-riders," or did they preach a complete gospel by Jesus Christ? Jesus said unto them, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." His chosen ones being sinners, children of wrath

even as others, lost and helpless. Yet they were the Father's by choice. Jesus said, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." God the Father gave his chosen ones to Jesus that he should die for them, to redeem them from hell, redeem them from death, redeem them from all sin, and by his atonement he satisfied divine justice, fulfilled the law; and, he is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Yes, they are redeemed to God by the blood of Christ out of every kindred, tongue, people and nation under heaven; and through the atonement of Christ and by his grace we are saved in eternity, saved in time, saved in heaven at God's right hand, there to praise him forever. The Lord's chosen people are called with an holy calling to the knowledge of this salvation, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. They are called out of darkness into his marvelous light. They are born of God, born of the Spirit, and thus they see and enter into the kingdom of God. Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords, rules in and over them, working in them both to will and to do according to his good pleasure.

There are three abiding elements in the christian's life: faith, hope and charity. Although charity is conceded to be the greatest of these virtues, yet in the absence of either faith or hope the life and walk of the Lord's people would be incomplete, for we cannot conceive of a christian without faith, nor one without hope, nor one that is devoid of charity. Faith is indeed a heavenly virtue, and is the gift of God. We find that the whole structure of our faith is based on the sovereign mercy of God, it being a free gift he bestows on whomsoever he will. For God is a Sovereign, and he counsels no one as to where or upon whom he will bestow his gift. When we look for a manifestation of this gift we need not turn to men of high degree, but the meek and lowly are the happy recipients of this heavenly favor. "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise: and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence." It is a well defined fact that this faith cannot be picked up nor laid down at the instance of mankind, for it is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. God himself is the dispenser of this. He is the author and finisher of our faith. In this, as in all things, he is our Alpha and Omega, the beginning and end.

What is faith? It is not a mere whim or fancy; it is not a mere notion upon which one may predicate his desires or ambitions. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Time and space would fail us to try to tell all that has been accom-

plished by faith. But so closely interwoven are faith and hope that it is evident the one does not exist where the other is not seen or felt, for the substance as well as the evidence is Christ the Lord. One Lord, one faith, one baptism. We might add there is one hope for lost sinners, and that is Jesus, who was made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. We can never doubt nor dispute the full accomplishment of that which was written of him beforehand. He shall save his people from their sins. This is the end of our faith, and this is the blessed hope by which we live. It was a matter of true love for his bride that led him to suffer, to bleed, to die. He did it that she might live, and it behooved him to suffer these things and enter into his glory. She had nothing with which to buy his favors, but she was ten thousand talents in debt and not a farthing to pay. Indeed, our God has no favors to sell, but he freely gives us all things. "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." Yea, he hath said, All things are yours, and ye are Christ's.

As touching brotherly love they need not that any man teach them, for they are taught of God to love one another, that love being shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost. The prophets have said they shall all be taught of God. If they are not all taught of God, will not prophecy fail? John said, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." The manner of his love is such that it cannot be swayed even by the manner of our lives; but on the contrary our lives are influenced by the measure of the gifts of his love to us. Brethren, Jesus is your whole salvation, your all in all. You have not, you never will, have anything to glory in but the Lord. Whatever good you receive comes from his grace, what evil you escape is from his blessings. Your bodies, also, are dependent on him, as well as your souls. Thus he teaches believers, he humbles them that they may exalt their Savior. He makes them poor in spirit, that they may live upon his riches. He keeps them sensible of their emptiness, that they will trust in his fullness and live in an absolute dependence upon him for everything.

These are the humbling lessons which the Holy Spirit teaches. He convinces the sinner that there is neither help nor hope in himself, and so leaves him nothing to trust in but salvation provided in Jesus Christ by covenant love, and freely by grace. And the manner of receiving this salvation cuts off all occasion of boasting, for faith is the only means appointed of God, and faith is God's gift; not bestowed alone upon the worthy, but upon the unworthy; not for any merit in them or for any terms or conditions which they have performed or will perform, but by an act of sovereignty of will and love for his children, and to the praise and glory of his grace. Yet in the midst of all this heavenly keeping and mercy Jesus said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." Paul says, "The time will come

when they will not endure sound doctrine." Jude says that certain men will creep in unawares, who were before ordained of God to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only God and Lord Jesus Christ. Why God has purposed this I do not know, but I do know men cannot hinder it from coming to pass. God said, "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." I am sure the men Jude spoke of have crept in our midst and are leading disciples after them (and it is with unspeakable solemnity I speak of these things). I do not feel that we have any middle ground on which to meet error for a compromise. All the divisions in the church have been caused by something new being introduced. If the doctrines and commandments of men had never been introduced there would have been but one church, and in reality there is but one, she is the only daughter of her mother. Those who have departed from the doctrine and practice of the church, as given by the Savior, are styled harlots, because they have departed from the laws of their Husband, and are thus walking disorderly, and his people are commanded to withdraw from those who walk disorderly.

Some seem to take great pleasure in boasting of their numbers, and admit they are seeking more territory, and are still to further divide our people. When they are questioned as to why we will not fellowship them they claim they do not know; yet they are the ones who have raised the bars of nonfellowship, and have tried to put words in our mouth when they found we desired not to remove the landmarks of our fathers. They advise some of our churches to withdraw from us and go with them, crying peace and declaring war at the same time. How long the Lord will suffer these things is unknown to us. We feel to advise our people to stand still and wait upon the Lord. He alone can right our wrongs and fight our battles. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, but of God, and we feel sure God cannot fail, since all power in heaven and in earth is given into his hand, and one day he will lead us out more than conquerors. Then we can say with Paul, "Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." And his name shall receive all the honor and the glory, now and for ever.

Yours in tribulation,

G. W. HILL.

[THE foregoing letter from Elder G. W. Hill was written primarily for brethren of the Salem Association, of North Carolina, and was previously published in *Zion's Landmark,* but as we have had several requests to do so, we are republishing it in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.—ED.]

DANVILLE, Va., Sept. 5, 1934.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—DEAR SON:—I feel that I want to talk with you this morning, but we are some distance apart, so will write you. I had to pause here for the reading of your good letter that your mother brought in and read at 9 o'clock a. m., which, you see, was not slow in coming. So glad to hear from you, and Raleigh also. I feel it must have been a real treat to him to be with you, especially under present conditions.

I believe I told you of my resolution to read the Bible through. I have now reached the middle of the Psalms of David, and keep thinking I will learn something, so that I might write to comfort and cheer the family of God, and get them to tell of the deep and wonderful things of the kingdom of our God. When I look at the plumb line, then at self, I see so many crooks and faults I have to cry out "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I simply have to go begging day and night for help and forgiveness for my many sins. The Psalms of David are full of prayer to God to forgive him and to continue to be merciful to him, owning and confessing his sins. O, my son, are we not traveling the same road? Then are we not in sweet fellowship with the saints of God in all our journey of life here in this day and time? I am still hoping I may yet tell of something that will bring sunshine to the door of some poor and afflicted ones and cause them to see that the mercies of God are still laid up for them and sooner or later God will appear unto them and bless them. Sometimes when reading of the riches of his grace my cup gets so full I just have to pause for awhile in order that these sweet things may sink down deep into my heart to tide me over the famine that is sure to follow. We notice the travel of the children of Israel, that they had to contend with all kinds of affliction wars and were often overcome by their enemies, all for sin and disobedience to God's holy law. Now we see they failed to keep the law, and is not the life of each child of God but a repetition of their travel from the land of Egypt down to the present day? They could not keep the law, neither can we, but we hear our apostle say, The things I would not I do, and the things I would I do not, etc.

I feel I must say something of the wisdom and goodness of God in the beginning to bless and qualify men for the different tasks and work given them to do, some skilled in wood, iron and precious metals to prepare them for the temple, and continually teaching them how to live. To be good citizens we must be law-abiding men and women.

Dear son, you know I shall not be able to hint at what is contained in the five books of Moses, and the other Scriptures I have read. Let us pause and consider how David and Solomon were highly favored of God in wisdom and riches of the whole world, yet we see them at times low down. David said when brought to Saul, What, does the king seek a dead dog, a flea? and Solomon, that he was as a child, not knowing how to go in and out before so great a

people when he was made king over them. Now if such men as these chosen and qualified of the most high God felt to be thus humiliated, what seat should we occupy? I feel these things are indeed and in truth too deep for me, yet I desire to know more and more about them. Let us notice the nineteenth verse of the seventy-seventh Psalm: "Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known." So who can know the mind of our God? Yet we glory in his strength and wisdom, and oh may we ever trust in him. Amen.

R. L. DODSON.

SHAW, MISS., Jan. 14, 1935.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have changed my address from Route 2, Indianola, Mississippi, to Route 2, Shaw, Mississippi, and am sending you one dollar to pay for my paper for six months. It may be that a little later I can send the other dollar. Since I last wrote you I have passed through many trials and troubles. I lost my companion last February and was left with a crippled son, who has spent several months in a hospital because of a bad leg, from which the doctors removed some bone, and it has been draining for over a year. Oh the trouble I have because of him! But without trials and tribulation I would not know my blessed Savior, for he that is without chastisement is a bastard and not a son. Oh to be afflicted for Christ's sake is a grand and glorious thing, for at times we can glory in our afflictions.

From a little one, if one at all,

OLIVE E. ROBERTS.

SALEM DEPOT, N. H., Aug. 15, 1934.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—I am reminded that your last kind letter was not replied to. Not that I can write anything of value, but just feel a want to express feelings of gratitude for the opportunity of hearing the gospel's joyful sound once more in the old meetinghouse at North Berwick, Maine. We miss some faces as the years go by, but cannot wish them back, as we believe they see and gaze on that dear face that was spit upon for them that they might go free. I feel each year increasingly a delight to be in the company of those dear people at North Berwick, the savory conversation and the hunger for the truth is so noticeable. Though they confess they are sinners, yet how all their hope centers in the dear Redeemer.

Last Sunday morning I trust I heard comfortingly, but oh how much more satisfied I would be for the sweet assurance that I am one of the characters the apostle Paul was writing about in the epistle from which your subject was taken. One cannot take things for granted the word says, so we are told, Take God at his word. No, nothing but a revelation of his love within will completely satisfy. This I crave. The way to Zion is not an easy road some of us find, that is, if we are really in the way.

"While here I walk on hostile ground;
The few that I can call my friends,
Are like myself with fetters bound,
And weariness our steps attend."

This pathway, Elder, I think you know something about. The word declares, We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.

I do love the people of God and love to be in their company, but sin is so deceptive. We read of many who did unwell and fell away, the root of the matter not being within them. My prayer is, Lord, if I am deceived do undeceive me, make me clear in these solemn matters. How quickly the day slipped away and the farewells for another year had to be said, but already I am looking forward, if spared, to meet again. My dear friends (new friends I call them who came for the first time) were much impressed with the kind hospitality of the friends. One said to me, "It was better than home." I believe they had a good hearing time.

Now, dear Elder, I will stop, for you are a busy man, with little time to read long letters with little in them, but I felt I must again let you know how glad some of us are for such opportunities of hearing the blessed gospel of free grace. You are quite willing, and oh so glad, that He shall have all the glory, and so is

JOHN H. DUNKLEY.

DALLAS, Texas, Jan. 9, 1935.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am asking for space in the SIGNS to say to the brotherhood that on Christmas day lightning struck and burned Elder J. C. Sikes' barn, with all of his hay, grain, cotton seed and meat, entailing an estimated loss of $2,000, which has left brother Sikes in straitened circumstances. Those who are situated to contribute to brother Sikes' relief will in doing so discharge a sacred duty belonging to the children of God which they owe to each other. Elder Sikes is well known, both through his preaching and writings. His labors have been appreciated in many sections of the United States and in Canada. Much of his life and means, like many of our ministers, have been devoted to the cause of truth. In the providence of God it has now become our privilege to show our appreciation of the spiritual things which we have received, by distributing of our carnal things to help in a measure repair his loss. I speak as unto wise men, and I am sure no urging is necessary to call the brethren and friends to a discharge of their duty. Send contributions to Elder J. C. Sikes, Sulphur Bluff, Texas.

J. R. HARDY.

SARANAC LAKE, New York.

DEAR ONES:—I am inclosing one dollar to aid our dear paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that I love so dearly. I have read it since I was fourteen years old, and I am now in my seventy-sixth year. It is all the preaching I have now. It is very welcome each month, and read with sweet comfort.

Goodbye, with a Happy New Year.

EFFIE J. NETHAWAY.

SPRINGFIELD, Ill., Dec. 10, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing two dollars to renew my subscription and two dollars to use as you wish. I would be glad if it were more. Without faith in the absolute power of our all-wise Father, whose counsel will stand to the end, what could we rest upon in these times? This is what the SIGNS brings to us in the comforting letters from those who understand the joyful sound.

With all good wishes for you in the coming year,

(MRS.) JOAB P. STOUT.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1935.

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PSALMS CXXXIII. 1.

"BEHOLD, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

In this complex world of ours there are many kinds of people. Nations vary in their aims and purposes, and their conflicting interests often cause them to cross each other's paths and embroil them in difficulties which result disastrously. Realizing these dangers, they have what is called "The Diplomatic Service" to steer them through troublesome waters. But even experienced Diplomats sometimes find themselves faced with situations which can only be solved by the use of the sword. When this is resorted to, however, both the victor and the victim are usually the losers. The aftermath of the World War has doubtless driven this fact home to every nation on earth. Jesus said, "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword." Brethren would do well to consider this and avoid, if possible, those things which have made for war and divisions among them in the past.

In our own country, with its vast expanse of territory and changing conditions, we often find large groups of people who are conscientiously on the opposite sides of important questions. Perhaps, in the end, this is not as bad as it might appear to some. There are usually at least two sides to most issues, and when their merits are properly presented, some good is accomplished. The wise leaders of the country are beginning, we believe, to realize that it is far better to arbitrate their differences and co-operate for a common good than it is to fight to the bitter end. By degrees their visions may change and experience may teach them that a policy of "live and let live" will be the sound one. The best plan, undoubtedly, will be the one that will benefit the most people. What is true of nations and large groups of people applies in great measure to individuals, who are but single units that go to make up the whole. They differ greatly in their tastes and desires, their likes and dislikes. In fact, there is such a diversity among them that we frequently hear it said, Of all the millions of people there are in the world, no two of them are exactly alike. We would not, for one moment, question the wisdom which designed that thus it should be. Variety is said to be the spice of life; with-

out it "monotony" would reign, but variety has its bounds of propriety. Different ideas and ideals are often great character builders; they furnish the motive power which turns the wheels that make for progress; also they try and test the fundamental principles which go into the foundation upon which the security of a people must rest. But mankind, with all the achievements which it has gained throngh scientific research and experience, yet has a long, long way to go; it is finite at best. Even the most distinguished human geniuses are constantly being reminded of their limitations and lack of ability to correctly diagnose and treat successfully every case.

As we view it, one thing that is very much needed in the ranks of the Old School Baptists throughout our land and country is a proper regard and consideration for each other. Sometimes we find ministers who appear to feel that they have been called to tour the country and regulate Old Baptists according to their own standards. Some would-be peace-makers have proven to be the greatest trouble-makers. Customs and expressions differ with localities, and in our humble opinion the minister who is wise will, as much as in him is, confine himself to the preaching of the gospel of the Son of God, and not be looking for an opportunity to entrap and find fault with some other brother minister for not saying everything just as some one else would. In the days of the apostles there was a great diversity of gifts in the church: some, apostles; some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers, but they were all for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. They had to "all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ," that henceforth they should be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, "whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but, speaking the truth in love," that they might grow up "into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."—Eph. iv. We see from this that the church in that day and time was not perfect in every sense of the word. She needed the various gifts and to "come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God." Nevertheless, the truth was spoken in love and they grew up "into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." How we need to follow in her footsteps to-day! Paul wished to be followed only insofar as he followed Christ. He desired no divisions—no Paulites, Apollosites or Cephasites. At the most, they were but servants of God by whom the gospel was preached, and invariably then, as now, the increase was of God. In this

age of the world there are various gifts, but God has given no one of them in vain. He has a place for each and every one to fill. There is one Spirit, but a diversity of operations. Therefore, let each one stand in his own lot and labor to the best of his ability for the upbuilding of Zion in her most holy faith. While meditating upon these things the language of our text was presented to our mind, hence we have desired to consider and to "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" We are not referring to those who have gone out from us because they were not of us, but we have special reference to our brethren, beloved for the truth's sake.

Unquestionably, different opinions and views were held in the day of the Psalmist, but he came to know that a man's worst enemies were those of his own household, and after having the evils of his heart discovered and brought to light, he could overlook and forgive the faults of his brethren. We need, sometimes, to turn our eyes within, and when we can see the beam that is in our own eye the mote that is in our brother's eye does not appear so bad. David, in experiencing where sin abounded grace did much more abound, was so swallowed up with a sense of God's great love and mercy that he could see, by faith, the church standing complete in the finished work of our Lord and Redeemer, and he beheld how good and how pleasant it was, and is, for brethren to dwell together in unity. The sight appeared so wonderful to him that he had to enlarge upon it, which he did by saying, "It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." It is these kindred feelings and experiences that bring brethren close together in love and fellowship and make them to know that they are brethren, indeed, in the Lord. What a wonderful relationship this is. There is nothing like it in all the world. Experiencing it, the Jew's hatred for the Gentile was buried into oblivion, and he could proclaim in all sincerity and in truth, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." By it Peter was taught, What God had cleansed he was not to call common or unclean. This is that which causes the lion of our nature to lie down with the Lamb; then a little child can lead us, and the Lord alone is exalted in that day. If we could only keep in mind continually the fact that we are *brethren,* and put away from us all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, with all malice, and be kind one to another, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us. We are still in the flesh, however, and unless we are kept by the mighty power of God, we are certain to do that which is wrong. Elder Ruston truthfully said in the December SIGNS, "If brethren are not dwelling together in unity, it is because of the flesh."

We like to think of Old Baptists as one large family. In the circle there may be preachers, teachers, doctors, lawyers, bankers, builders, and many of the lesser callings. No one individual has been endowed with all of the gifts, but each one has received talents, differing in quantity and quality, as seemed good unto the Giver of every good and perfect gift; all are necessary; not even the most lowly ones can be dispensed with. How good to visit in those homes where each one is free to express his own individuality, and yet there is respect unto all the rest of the family. Not being constituted alike they will, of course, differ in their tastes and requirements, but these should tend to develop and bring out their most lovely qualities. When they come to the table, which may be heavy laden with good, wholesome foods, one will be found to choose one thing and another will prefer something entirely different to eat, but where there is enough, and to spare, why should not each one be allowed to make a free choice and partake of that which seems to suit his own needs and taste best, with thanksgiving in his heart to the One who has provided so bountifully for all? Would it not be a mistake for the one serving to insist that all should eat alike of the strong meat? There may be delicate members of the family who require dainty dishes. Even the heads of earthly families do not always know what is best for the individual. As touching the church, however, we are glad it is written, "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table." There is such an infinite variety, such a feast of fat things, provided in the word of truth when it is preached in love that each one receives his own portion with great joy, whether that portion be the sincere milk of the word in experience or the strong meat of doctrine, and no one is forced to partake of that which is not food to his hungry soul. The great Shepherd of the sheep feeds his flock like a shepherd, giving each their portion in due season, and under the influences of his Holy Spirit they grow up as calves in the stall. He who ministers must be called and qualified of God for such service, and this is not done out of his own wisdom or strength. Paul said, "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." Paul was unquestionably the greatest of all the apostles; he wrote more extensively than any of the rest, covering more or less fully all points of

doctrine, and yet he says he was made all things to all men and expressed himself as being "less than the least of all saints" in his preaching among the Gentiles. He was able to maintain the doctrinal fence which incloses the church from the world without apparently giving offense to his brethren. He manifested much of the meekness and lowliness of heart that appeared in the Savior. What a great example we have in the Head of the church to try to follow. The poet well asks, "How can I bear revenge or pride, with Jesus in my view?"

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" On the other hand, how sad, yes, how terribly sad it is when we see good brethren allowing their differences to separate them. Such a sight makes one sick at heart. How well we remember hearing some one tell years ago of the love which existed between Old Baptists during the Civil War. Even though circumstances compelled them to be on opposite sides, yet, it was said that under the cover of darkness they would cross over the lines to talk of "these things," and the expression, "The smoke from the canon had hardly cleared away before they were together again," impressed itself upon our mind as indicating in some measure, at least, the greatness of God's love when it is shed abroad in the hearts of poor sinners. In the Spirit there is no north, no south, no east and no west, no creed or color, but all are one in Christ. Jesus said, By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, that ye have love one for another. As a people, we know that we have not anything of the Spirit that we did not receive, and that by revelation. Also, we know that in and of ourselves we cannot teach even our brethren—it is all of the Lord. The preacher simply casts his bread upon the waters; "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." In other words, The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord. This is to the end and purpose that each and every one of his "little ones" shall render unto him undivided praise, and crown him with glory and honor, which are his due. When this is realized in our hearts we can then sing,

"How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
When those who love the Lord,
In one another's peace delight,
And thus fulfill his word:

When each can feel his brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part;
When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart:

When free from envy, scorn and pride,
Our wishes all above,
Each can his brother's failings hide,
And show a brother's love:

When love in one delightful stream
Through every bosom flows,
And union sweet, and dear esteem,
In every action glows!

Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

R. L. D.

LUKE XIII. 34.

"O JERUSALEM, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not."

A brother in southern Virginia asks our views on the foregoing.

The same language with very little variation is found in Matthew xxiii. 37. This is Jesus speaking. He addresses the scribes and Pharisees, characterizes Herod as a "fox," and so He embraces in this speech the ruling ecclesiastical and civil authorities in Jerusalem who exercised religious and governmental sway over Israel. It was never the will of these ruling powers that the truth of God should be preached in their midst, and persecutions and martyrdoms were the lot of those true servants of God who throughout the generations of Israel's history had faithfully preached the word. Nevertheless, God had in every age his faithful remnant in the midst of Israel despite the fact that those in authority had no use for this believing elect number. If the human will of these authorities could have had their way about it, they would not have allowed a single Israelite at any time to have believed the truth of God. But God's will is never frustrated by the opposition of man's will. It is the will of God to gather his people, and he unfailingly does this gathering by and through Jesus Christ his Son, unto himself. Not a single child of God has ever been prevented from coming to the knowledge of the truth, no matter what the persecution and opposition waged against the child of God might be. While it was never at any time in Israel's history the will of the natural man that God should select his believing remnant from among them, yet he unfailingly did it. A hen gathers her chickens under her wings because they are her chickens, and not to make them hers. The chickens run to cover under the mother's wings at the approach of any danger, not to make the hen their mother, but because she is their mother. Likewise throughout the generations of Israel's national life, those who were Israelites indeed by reason of spiritual circumcision and regeneration ran by faith into His name and were safe, not to make Jehovah their God, but because he was their God; not to make themselves his children, but because they were his children by God's own will. All that the Father has given the Son shall come to him, no matter how much the powers that be try to prevent it. The human will, either of individuals or of nations, can never thwart the purposes of God in the salvation of his people. Any nation to-day which arrays itself against the truth of God, against his revealed word and against his people will unfailingly reap in due time national desolation and disaster, even as did Israel for their opposition to Jehovah and his children. This is the lesson taught in this Scripture. Will the nation heed? If not, they, too, shall be desolate.

H. H. L.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at Leesburg, Virginia, January 24th, 1934, Johnson Furr and Miss Dorothy Hawes, both of Leesburg.

By the same, Leesburg, Va., February 1st, 1934, Edward Kitts and Miss Virgie C. Riley, both of Hamilton, Va.

By the same, at Leesburg, Va., March 31st, 1934, Charles Thrower and Miss Iva Green, both of Leesburg, Va.

By the same, Leesburg, Va., April 3rd, 1934, Charles William Painter and Miss Helen Mae Harrison, both of Lovettsville, Va.

By the same, Leesburg, Va., April 11th, 1934, Harry Richard Thompson and Miss Florence Isabelle Comper, both of Lovettsville, Va.

By the same, at Leesburg, Va., April 21st, 1934, Sylvester S. Snyder and Miss Mary K. Steiner, both of Waynesboro, Pennsylvania.

By the same, Leesburg, Va., May 29th, 1934, Elmer Kitts, of Paeonian Springs, Va., and Miss Ruth Baker, of Waterford, Va.

By the same, Leesburg, Va., June 14th, 1934, George W. Moran and Miss Ruth Green, both of Ryan, Va.

By the same, Leesburg, Va., July 9th, 1934, Robert Lee Anderson and Miss Bessie Elizabeth Kidwell, both of Lovettsville, Va.

By the same, Leesburg, Va., July 12th, 1934, Walter Edwin Jenkins and Mrs. Grace D. Slair, both of Washington, D. C.

By the same, Leesburg, Va., August 21st, 1934, Joseph Crosen, of Fairfax, Va., and Miss Hazel Kidwell, of Sterling, Va.

By the same, Leesburg, Va., December 29th, 1934, Carroll Eugene Russell, of Paeonian Springs, Va., and Miss Mabel S. M. Dutrow, of Lovettsville, Va.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence in Delmar, Maryland, December 22nd, 1934, Adron Waters Knight, of Hallwood, Va., and Miss Estelle Bratten Dickerson, of Snow Hill, Md.

By the same, at his residence in Delmar, Md., December 25th, 1934, Thomas Lee Lankford, of Salisbury, Md., and Miss Rhoda Pearl Ewell, of Salisbury, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE, our brother in the gospel service of our Lord Jesus Christ, departed this earthly life at his home, near Strasburg, Virginia, January 10th, 1935, after an illness of several weeks, due to complications enhanced by his advanced years. He was in the eighty-third year of his age. Brother Greathouse was born at Uniontown, Kentucky, the son of John Ward and Catherine Waring Greathouse, both deceased. He has one brother surviving him, Charles Greathouse, of Rosslyn, Va. His first wife was Sabina Josephine Livers, who died at Selma, N. C., in September, 1929. To them were born eleven children. Of these, the following are living: Charles H. Greathouse, of Elida, New Mexico, Clarence G., also of Elida, N. M., Bryan, of Los Angeles, California, Mrs. Law, of Oak Grove, Ore., William G., of Clarksville, Ohio, Mrs. Neppie Melton, of Chicago, Ill., Mrs. Katherine Whitman, of Clovis, New Mexico. His second wife, who survives him, was Mrs. Bycie Elizabeth Stevenson, a daughter of Elder J. S. Murphy, of Montrose, W. Va. Of this union, there are living two little sons: Lovell R. and John David. There are three step-children. I have not at hand information as to the date and place of his baptism, nor by whom the ordinance was administered to him, but at the time of his passing from us his membership was with an Old School Baptist Church at or near Lawn, Texas. Neither have I the information regarding the date and place of his ordination, nor know I anything of the presbytery that ordained him. It is to be hoped that some of our western brethren who have known brother Greathouse longer and better than I have will supply this information for us in some future communication to the SIGNS. I understand he has been preaching ever since his twenty-fifth year of age. That would make his term of service about fifty-eight years. The last sermon that he preached was at the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, held with New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia. He spoke Friday morning, October 19th, 1934. He was one of that older generation of preachers, few of whom are left among us at the present day. Almost as long as I have known anything about the SIGNS OF THE TIMES I have been familiar with the name "I. R. Greathouse" appended to his communications in our paper. But not until the summer of 1926 did I meet him personally. From his writings and from what I had heard of his ability as a preacher, I was expecting to meet a large man. To my surprise, I found him to be a small, spare man of quick step and nervously alert. At that first meeting he said, "I ought not to have been called 'Greathouse', I should have been named 'Little Cabin'." This was characteristic of him. Ever since my first meeting with him, he has ever been welcome in our home; the more one got to know him, the more he loved and admired him. He was very frank and outspoken. He did not intention-

ally hurt any one's feelings, neither did he compromise his belief of the truth for the sake of friendship or fellowship. He was gifted with a remarkable memory which stood him in good stead in the pulpit; could repeat from memory whole chapters of the Scriptures, and hymn after hymn without needing to refer to the hymn-book. So far as I know, and so far as I have ever heard, he was considered sound in the faith and in the doctrine of God our Savior. He has been one of the best friends the SIGNS has ever had. In his many years of traveling throughout the United States and in his numerous and frequent visits among the churches and brethren of our faith throughout the country, he has always valiantly stood for the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS and has always consistently recommended that our brethren every where subscribe for and support this paper. His efforts on our behalf have been appreciated by the publishers and editors. We have lost a valued friend and brother.

Funeral services were conducted by myself on the afternoon of January 11th, in the funeral parlors of Stover & Stover, at Strasburg, Virginia. Read and commented upon Psalm xlvi At the request of sister Greathouse, we sang hymn 931 and read hymns 485 and 1093 (Beebe's collection). His son Charles came from New Mexico to accompany his father's body to its last resting-place. On arrival at Clovis, New Mexico, services will be held there, followed by interment at Portales, N. M., where his first wife lies buried. I last saw him two weeks ago. He was then confined to his bed and, at times, suffering intensely; but his mind was clear and at ease. Nothing worried him then, he seemed in possession of that peace from God through Christ which passes all finite comprehension. He spoke of his firm faith in the blessed Redeemer, and expressed himself to me very much as did Paul to Timothy: "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." We have a blessed assurance that he fell asleep in Jesus in that same blessed faith which had supported and sustained in life. May the Holy Comforter stand by and indwell all the mourning ones. Give us each day to truly feel, as well as to say, "Thy will be done." The lonely widow and the sorrowing sons and daughters, the lonely brother: all have our deepest sympathy. "I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

ALSO,

MRS. ANNIE LAURIE UNDERWOOD, our sister in Chirst, took leave of this lower life to be with the Lord December 16th, 1934, from her late home, 2008 Jackson Street, northeast, Washington, D. C. She was the daughter of Sarah and Alfred Moore, and was born in the State of North Carolina. She has four brothers and two sisters. The date of her birth is April 22nd, 1866. She was first married to James Page, now deceased. Of that union, there are two daughters living: Mrs. Elizabeth Harrison, of Norfolk, Va., and Mrs. Mabel Sabin, of Forest Hills, Long Island, New York. There are six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. She was married about twelve years ago to George Underwood, who survives her. She was baptized about fifty years ago by the late Elder P. D. Gold into the membership of the Old School Baptist Church at Wilson, N. C. After her removal to Washington, she united by letter from the Wilson Church with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, January 7th, 1928. She came among us a stranger, but became well beloved by us all for the truth's sake. She was a sufferer from high blood presure and other complications, and had sustained a stroke of paralysis; but in spite of all this she was never absent from her meetings whenever able to be present. She went to meeting many, many times when it seemed to others unwise for her to attempt going. She dearly loved the fellowship of her brethren and the preaching of the word of God, was firm in the doctrine of salvation by grace and of God's sovereignty. She believed in the resurrection of the body, and looked for the coming of the Son of God from heaven to change the vile body and to fashion it like his own glorious body, at which time it was her hope to awake in his likeness and be satisfied.

Funeral services were held from Chambers' funeral parlors, 14th and Chapin Streets, N. W., Washington, D. C., interment in Forest Lawn Cemetary, at Norfolk, Va. May the Holy Spirit point the sorrowing ones to the Lord Jesus for comfort and salvation, may the sustenance of grace uphold Mr. Underwood, who so patiently and tenderly ministered to her, and may the bereaved daughters and others be reconciled to the will of God. The church will sadly miss sister Underwood, but we believe her death was a triumphant one, and great indeed is my personal loss, for she was keenly alive to the interests of her unworthy pastor, but we are assured our loss is her eternal gain.

ALSO,

Miss EUGENIA GOTT, our sister in Christ, passed away from earth December 18th, 1934, at her late home, Tuscarora, Frederick County, Maryland. She was born January 13th, 1854, and was one of nine children, the daughter of Thomas Nathan Gott and and Elizabeth White. She is survived by one sister, Mrs. Sarah Davis, 88, of Washington, D. C., and by one brother, William Gott, 86, of Gaithersburg, Md. She was born at Poolesville, Md., and lived all her life in and near that neighborhood. She was baptized, in company with her sister Mollie, by the late Elder E. V. White, November 26th, 1885, into the membership of the New Valley Old School Baptist Church. Elder F. A. Chick was present at her baptism and preached the sermon, from Psalms cxvi. 12-14. She never forgot the fragrance and satisfaction with which that sermon was blessed to her soul by the unction

of the Holy Spirit. At her funeral, I read the same passage of Scripture and tried to comment upon it. Also read hymn 321 (Gadsby's Hymns). The last sad services were held from her home, interment in the cemetery at Beallsville, Md. These last several years of her life were lived in company with her nieces, Mrs. Eleanor Bourke and sister Mary Chiswell, who will sadly miss her. I cannot close this notice without paying tribute to the untiring, faithful and loving devotion with which these two nieces cared for their dear aunt. Everything that loving hearts and willing hands could do for her comfort was done by them. May they have no regrets whatever for anything they may think they left undone in their care for her, for it seems to us all that they omitted nothing. Sister Eugenia will be sadly missed by the church, for she was faithful, and she often attenden the meetings when it was physically difficult for her to do so. She was firmly established in the doctrine of salvation by grace and of the absolute predestination of all things and of the eternal vital unity of Christ and his church. May the Holy Spirit reconcile us all to the divine will in all the Father's dispensations concerning us.

ALSO,

CLAYTON DISHONG, our brother in Christ, Deacon of the Sideling Hill Baptist Church, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, departed this earthly life at his home on Pleasant Ridge December 14th, 1934. He was born December 14th, 1861, lived just 73 years. He had been in failing health for several years. He was baptized March 25th, 1914, by the writer of this notice, served the church as Deacon for about ten years. He was the oldest child of Morgan Dishong and Rebecca Sipes, both deceased. He is survived by his wife, sister Parthenia Dishong, who was baptized at the same time he was, and by one son, Wilbert Dishong, and by one daughter, Lola, Mrs. Lester Mellott. There are three grandchildren. He was married February 17th, 1885, and his wife before marriage was Parthenia Lake, daughter of Samuel P. and Lydia Lake. There are living one brother and five sisters: Reuben Dishong, Deshler, Ohio; Annie, wife of R. P. Deshong, of Saluvia, Pa.; Mrs. Rhoda Otis, of Delaware; Harriet, wife of W. F. T. Mellott, of Saxton, Pa.; Malinda, wife of Riley Deshong, of Needmore, Pa.; Frances, wife of M. D. Mellott, of Needmore, Pa. One sister, Mary, wife of Charles Mellott, is deceased. There are also deceased two brothers, William and Ulysses Dishong. Though not a naturally educated man, since the facilities for schooling in his youth were not available as now, he was well versed in the word of God. He was a tender-hearted man, a good neighbor and a useful man in the community where he lived. The doctrine of election and of predestination and salvation by grace was very precious to him. In my last conversation with him he expressed himself as much impressed with God's discriminating grace in shutting Noah and his family safely in the ark, shutting the others out. This, he said, was his only ground of salvation: the electing love of God in Christ. I used as a text at his funeral, the words, "And the Lord shut him in."—Gen. vii. 16. Hymns 68, 1257 and 820 (Beebe's collection) were sung at the funeral, which was held in Sidling Hill meetinghouse, burial in the cemetery there. May the Lord comfort the bereaved family, especially the widow, sister Dishong, who has been so faithful and devoted to brother Dishong in all these years of his infirmity.

ALSO.

MRS. MARGERY JANE WRIGHT, widow of William L. Wright, departed this earthly life at her home at Colfax, Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania, Thursday, January 10th, 1935, after an illness of two years duration due to a complication of ailments. She was born in Altoona, Pa., March 18th, 1868, a daughter of Barton Greenland and Susan Jane Baird. She was one of nine children, two dying in infancy, and brother Ed. Greenland, who died a few years ago, Harry Greenland some years ago, and Mrs. Letitia Mattingly a few months ago. She is survived by one brother, Curtis Greenland, of Colfax, and two sisters, Mrs. B. W. Kurts, of Huntingdon, Pa., and sister Laura Greenland, of Colfax. Mrs. Wright was the mother of five children: one died in infancy, and one married son, Leroy R. Wright, died in April, 1933, at the age of forty years. She is survived by one daughter and two sons: Mrs. Fred L. Corbin, of Colfax, Walter G. Wright, of Colfax, and Robert M. Wright, of Altoona. There are eight grandchildren. Short services were conducted by the writer at her home Sunday morning, January 13th, and further services were held at the Huntingdon Baptist meetinghouse in Trough Creek Valley, interment in the adjoining burial-ground there. A group of young people sang the sacred song, "Saved by Grace." Text used was John xiv. 1-3. Read hymns 668 and 1256 (Beebe's collection) and hymn 602 (Durand & Lester Hymn and Tune Book). All these by request. It had been her request that, at her death, I should be asked to officiate at her funeral. However, when notice came to me that the services were to be on Sunday, I at first could not see how I could leave my regular appointment to attend the funeral; but by the kind cooperation of Elder D. L. Topping, who offered to fill my appointment with the Frying Pan Church in my absence, I was enabled to attend the funeral. Mrs. Wright had not united with the Old School Baptist Church, but that church stands for the faith and doctrine which she believed and loved. She gave evidence of having an experience of God's grace, therefore we sorrow for her not as those who have no hope. May the Lord comfort the bereaved children, the sisters and brother, and all who truly mourn, and grant within them reconciliation to the will of our heavenly Father.

H. H. L.

W. E. WAGGNER died at the home of his son-in-law and daughter, near Walla Walla, Washington, November 10th, 1934. He was born in Moultry County, Illinois, February 16th, 1845, being the son of William and Nancy Waggner. He grew to manhood in said county, and at the age of seventeen years he enlisted in that bloody strife of the sixties. He served as corporal in Company H of the 123rd Illinois Infantry. For three years he was in Sherman's Army, fought in the battle of Terryville and Chicamauga, spent four months on the Atlantic campain, and saw the inside of Andersonville prison, but not as a prisoner. After returning home, on November 17th, 1870, he was united in marriage to Nancy Jane Kennedy. To this union four children were born, two of whom are now living: Oscar Waggner and Mrs. J. R. Miller, both of Walla Walla County. Brother Waggner moved west in a covered wagon in the year 1879, and located on a homestead in Walla Walla County, where he improved the land from sage brush to a lovely home, where he lived. September 4th, 1900, his companion died, and on November 26th, 1905, he was married to Mrs. Lizzie M. Kistler, who died May 6th, 1920. Since her death he had made his home with his children. I met and became acquainted with him on October 28th, 1906, when he drove in his buggy twenty-five miles to the place where Mizpah Church of Old School Baptists was assembled to worship. He was then a perfect stranger not only to the writer, but to every member of the church, and at the conclusion of the preaching he arose and made his wishes known, by asking for a home with us, and after listening to the testimony he gave as a reason for his action the church unanimously accepted his testimony and received him into their number, with the request that I, as their pastor, baptize him, which I did the same day. I spoke a little of brother Waggner's fighting under the flag of his country, I now want to tell of his great faith fighting under the banner of King Emmanuel, the great Captain of our salvation. Dear brother Waggner was ever faithful to the faith he professed. He was a man of very few words, but a very deep mind, and when he did speak it always meant something. He was ever faithful to everything he felt was to the interest of the church. He drove his car many miles taking me to my appointments, and our relations were as Jonathan and David, and while our little church will miss him, none can feel it more than I, who have been his pastor all these years. Much could be said to the praise of the grace of our God which shone in the life of this noble man, and while we are bereft of his presence, that glorious love which made us one in Jesus he did not take with him, but left that precious fruit to strengthen our poor souls in this great loss.

By his request, the family called me to conduct his funeral, which was held in Cookerly Chapel, December 3rd, with a large gathering of friends and neighbors present, which spoke more to the life of this dear man than tongue or pen could express. While we can truly say that a great man in Israel has fallen, may we all in humble submission bow to the will of him who giveth and to him that taketh away, and say, Thy will be done.

J. T. BARNES.

MRS. CAROLINE KUGLER, our beloved sister in Christ, departed this life August 12th, 1934, at the Emergency Hospital, in Washington, D. C. She was born July 2nd, 1867, in Flemington, N. J., hence her stay on earth was 67 years. On October 6th, 1886, she was married to Oliver R. Kugler, who preceded her in death a little more than one year. To them were born two daughters, who survive: Mrs. Marion H. Reading, of Great Neck, N. Y., and Mrs. Helen Larison, of Washington, D. C., two grandsons: Douglas Reading and Oliver Larison, together with two sisters and one brother also survive her. Many years ago she united with the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church and was baptized by the late Elder Bailas Bundy. Faithful in all the walks of life, a kind and devoted friend, she endeared herself to all who knew her. She believed and enjoyed the doctrine of God in all its power and glory. She is missed by those who loved her more than words can express. She had been in the best of health up to a short time before her passing and her death was a great shock to us all. The Kugler home, in Frenchtown, N. J., had long been a home for all Old Baptists who visited in that section of the country, and many will remember the kind hospitality of brother and sister Kugler. The daughters and grandsons, together with the brother and sisters, have the sincere sympathy of all who know them.

The funeral service was held in the home, conducted by the writer, her pastor, and she was laid to rest beside her husband in the Frenchtown Cemetery. It is hard to say, in truth, "Thy will, O God, be done."

H. C. KER.

THE church at Wichards, in regular conference, appointed the undersigned committee to write a notice of the death of our dear sister, **MRS. OLIVIA JAMES EVERETT,** and ordered a copy of the same sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, "Zion's Landmark" and a copy entered on our church record. She was born April 12th, 1863, married to W. L. Everett December 23rd, 1896, united with the church the first Saturday in April, 1921, and died September 16th, 1934. She leaves to mourn their loss the following children: Robert Everett, Monroe Everett and Mrs. Susie Andrews, also the following step-children: George, Elie and Ruben Everett and sister Carrie Williams. Funeral services were held at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Andrews, in Parmele, N. C., conducted by her pastor, Elder H. F. Hutchens. She lived in the faith once delivered unto the saints, believing that salvation is wholly of the Lord, and that God's predestination extended to all worlds, times and events.

Our church has lost a devoted member and we

sadly miss her presence with us, yet we believe our loss is her eternal gain. May the Lord bless all who were near and dear to her by the ties of nature to walk and live as she did.

Her body was deposited in the earth at Everetts' Cemetery, there to await the resurrection morn, when these vile bodies shall be changed and fashioned like the glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ, and we will know no more sickness, sorrow, pain or death; no more sad farewells, but be with the Lord.

(MRS.) MINNIE ROBERTSON
(MRS.) SALLIE EVERETT
Committee.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

"A friend," Va., $3; Elder V. R. Harris, Ark., $1; Mrs. Georgia Carruthers, Va., $2; F. H. Richardson, Iowa, $3; Duncan R. Black, Canada, $1; Dr. T. E. Presley, N. M., $3; Mrs. Affria Fooks, Md., $2; Mrs. Martha J. Disharoon, Del., $1; Mrs. G. M. Beebe, N. Y., $5; Mrs. Duncan McCallum, Ontario, $2; "A friend," Ontario, $1; Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $8; Mrs. Mary J. Ege, N. J., $3; Mrs. Rosa J. Morris, Md., $2; Mrs. J. H. Hasbrouck, N. Y., $1; Woburn Church, Mass., $5; Mrs. B. H. Shearon, Tenn., $1; Miss Jessie Murray, Ontario, $2; Elder R. Lester Dodson, N. J., $5; Florence H. Disharoon, Pa., $1; Elder C. W. Anderson, Ark., $1; Mrs. Effie J. Nethaway, N. Y., $1.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California; every third Sunday at 526 West Nevada Street, Ontario, California; also on forth Sundays as the Lord permits, at 3516 Franklin Avenue, Riverside, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 808 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one-half block west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division ("or split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminiar Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

Cloth binding 75c each. Paper covers, single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and all to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

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These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Cloth binding. Price, $1.25 each. One dozen or more, ordered at the same time and all to the same address, one dollar each. Cash must accompany orders. Make checks and money orders payable to

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ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 103. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1935. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TOUCHET, Wash., March 7, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS, PUBLISHERS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES: —That dear medium by which saints can communicate their experiences of heart and mind, which has stood the assaults of the enemies of truth now for more than a century. While the dear Lord has long since called its able founder and its able defenders to rest from their labors, their works do follow them, but the dear Lord has raised up other faithful ones to maintain the grand principles on which it was founded. We just received the March number, and as my dear companion was reading its precious contents to me I certainly felt a measure of the spirit which caused David to exclaim, Praise the Lord, O my soul; praise him all that is within me, praise his holy name. I would love to express my mind on every article, but that is impossible, but will say that both editorials were pure and unadulterated; they were full and complete to my poor shut-in soul. And the brother's comments on why he was a Baptist awakened my poor soul and mind to try and express to my brethren why I believe the doctrine of grace, which is God's unmerited gift to poor unworthy sinners. I am a poor beggar and have been drawing on this wonderful storehouse for seventy-eight years, and have had a knowledge of the same for sixty-two years last September, and the wonders in which I have been made to see and experience can never be told in this old world. My mind is not to try to tell it, nor even hint it, in this short letter, but I would love to be able to tell enough that my brethren can see how good the dear Lord has been to this poor rebellious sinner.

I was blessed after about six years of wandering about seeking a home to find my people, and this, if I could reveal it to you as the dear Lord has to me, would be enough to convince a doubting Thomas. But suffice it to say that they took me in. I was not raised by Old Baptists, and knew nothing of

them nor their faith or practice, only what I heard from their enemies, and you know that was nothing to help my weary soul and troubled mind in this great search for the Lord's people. Here let me say that I, like Jacob, built an altar, or monument, to the praise of Him who had led me to my Father's family. I found them where Mary found her kin, Elizabeth, in the hilly country of Galilee. I found them in the bluffs of the Missouri River, in Saline County, Missouri, some eight or ten of them in a schoolhouse. I had never seen their faces before, all were perfect strangers to me in nature, but O my soul, the glory my soul had hungered for filled the whole house. Those gray hairs which showed the frost of many winters hung like silver chains over their wayworn temples, and I sat in wonder and amazement at the glories. I thought, Surely this is the Lord's banqueting-house and I am a guest, for I really felt his banner of love was over me. That was in the winter of 1880, and on the second Sunday in May I was constrained, unworthy as I felt, to ask a home with them. I was received, not only in word, but the tears chasing each other down those wrinkled faces gave the boy an inward home, which I love to this day. My baptism was set for Saturday before the second Sunday in June, and here is a month that if all the exercises of my heart and mind were recorded in a book it would be a large history, for that blessed light and joy which ravished my soul was thoroughly tried.

Not to make my missive too long, we must pass by this great battle and come to the great victory in which it concluded. The day came for me to be baptized and the battle was still raging. Oh was there ever one who had to suffer what my poor soul had to endure? Feeling condemned for ever asking a home with these dear people, I had no thought of the solemnity which now marked the holy place where the Lord of glory was buried. Oh how I wished I never had started, for it seemed that it was hypocrisy on my part to take such a holy step. But I could not ask the brethren to rescind the act of receiving me, as much as I desired it. The Elder took me by the hand and led me down into the liquid grave, and this, dear brethren, is one of the most solemn deaths and burials I have ever witnessed, and I have seen father and wife and children die, and have stood by and seen them hidden from sight by burial, but this death and burial stood above them all. The Elder baptized me with my face toward the little band on the bank who had gathered to witness the chief of sinners put on Jesus in baptism, and a more condemned sinner never was buried than I felt myself to be. But, bless God, while it does not put away the filth of the flesh, it is the answer of a good conscience toward God. As the Elder raised by body the first sight my eyes caught was those old gray heads, which sparkled brighter than silver in the bright sunlight, and here again glory crowned the poor sinner's heart, mind and soul. Dear brethren, I here was as near heaven and all that heaven is to my longing heart as I

ever expect to be in this old world. Now here we pass another monument set up by my soul to the praise and glory of our blessed Redeemer. But as loath as my soul was to leave this heavenly place, I had to move on, as the dear Lord said, in a way I had not known and in a path I had never trodden. Shortly after this the dear Elder, after he had delivered to my soul a bountiful feast, said, Brother Barnes, do you not feel like expressing your mind to the brethren? I arose, for my poor soul was filled to overflowing with God's great love to a poor sinner like me, and this was kept up for a few months. But to my great surprise there was a move made at our conference meeting to grant brother Barnes liberty to exercise his gift where and when God opens the door, and that just about killed me, for they called it preaching, which I had no thought of trying to do; I only desired to tell of the love and mercy of the dear Lord in leading me, a poor sinner, to his banqueting-house. But while my poor soul was so desirous to tell of his love and mercy, I shuddered at the word preach, for in no sense had I any qualifications to preach. I viewed a preacher as being a good person, and I knew I was not that. I felt he must have an education, and I was void of that, and I had never taken part in any public life in the way of speaking. It so affected me I protested against it and pled with the brethren not to think of such a thing, for I was sure they were mistaken. But all this proved to have no effect upon them. When I saw I could not change them, oh what ruthless rebellion came in and took control of that tender heart which had just experienced such joy and gladness. What to do and where to go I knew not. I felt I could not absent myself from meeting and mingling with my brethren who had won my love. They would not let me sit and listen and say nothing, and I felt I could not yield to their wish, and to refuse their desire was equally as hard. The thought suggested itself to me that I move to some place where I was not known, then I could meet with the brethren and enjoy their devotion and not be called on. Oh how nicely old Satan deceived my poor mind, and I soon found myself about two hundred miles from my old home, right in the neighborhood of Baptists. My first meeting was a very pleasant one, as no one knew I had ever attempted to speak in public, and I really felt my trouble was over; but, alas, they found that I had tried, and then my trouble was doubled. This so wrought on my mind that I felt I could not live, and what to do I knew not. But Satan when beaten in his plans is ever ready with a suggestion of a better way, and his next move with me was to so harden my heart that I listened to his suggestion to give up the desire to meet the brethren and go where there were no Baptists, and all these impressions would leave me. He so allured me with his plan that I gladly accepted it, sold what few belongings I had, took train and landed in the state of Nevada, where it seemed to me the country was not only destitute of Baptists, but it had no God to rule or govern it. Now

there I in my rebellious career was made, like poor Jonah, to pay my vows. "Salvation is of the Lord." This was demonstrated to my poor soul about three months after I went out there. I was taken sick on the train the last day of my trip and was helped off by the trainmen. There I was among strangers, over two thousand miles from home, wife and four little children. I had an acquaintance who lived about sixty-five miles from the station where I was put off, a man I worked for before I was married. My only way to get to his home was by stage, which conveyance I took, though very sick. I was cared for with all the tenderness a mother or father could give. He called a doctor, and for three months I grew no better, but weaker all the time. From my bed I could see a great range of mountains, and while looking out of the window I noticed great trains of loaded wagons, some with eight, and as high as sixteen, horses or mules. I asked the lady of the house where all those wagons were going, and she told me there were gold mines far back in those mountains, and there were thousands up there to feed. She said all the food was raised down there in the valley, and that there was nothing raised up there on the mountains. Here I learned, like Jacob, The Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. All the supplies which nourish and sustain life grow in the valley. Brethren, right there the Lord showed me that the six years I labored in soul seeking his house, when it was his will to bless me with the realization of this desire my soul was lifted to Pisgah's top, where it ate and drank the fruit of all its labors while in the valley. We do not bear fruit while on the mountain top, but are banqueting on the fruit which grew in the dark hours. That is where the doctrine of God distils like the dew on the tender grass. We see the dew hanging on the tips of the grass when the sun reflects its light on the grass, but the sun does not make nor give the dew; it only manifests it. So when our poor souls are lifted from under the dark clouds of doubt and fear it is the Holy Spirit which reflects the true light which shines in darkness, but the darkness cannot comprehend it. Like Jacob, we realize the dear Lord was in all our afflictions, though we knew it not.

Now to another monument in my experience. I put in three months of not only bodily suffering, but oh the inward suffering. The doctor told my friend he could do noting for me, said I would have to go back east of the mountains or west to the coast, as the altitude there was too high for me. My friend asked the doctor if he thought I would be able to stand the trip back home. He said that if I would take a berth and be quiet and not exert myself he was sure I could. Oh how my poor tempest-tossed soul rejoiced to hear my friend say, The doctor said you can go home. It was just what I had been praying for, but no one but the blessed Lord knew I was crying to go. My only desire was to meet that little band of brethren and

tell them I deeply repented my wrong. I did not want to die and leave no evidence of the goodness of God that leads to repentance. Here is a place, or refuge, my soul is often called to. I arrived home and at the first opportunity I stood before my dear brethren and in deep humility begged their forgiveness, and again my soul rejoiced in the blessed manifestation that I had not run beyond the love of those dear brethren. That was in June, 1887, and in June, 1889, by the hands of the presbytery which my church had called I was set apart to the full work of the ministry, which place I have tried to fill, but, if left to my judgment, it has been very poorly done. But is was the work of the church, and in my last effort to overrule their judgment I was made willing to leave my case in their hands, and now after many years of labor and toil serving them I still leave it to their judgment. One thing I do know: they have ever been my friends, and now that age and loss of sight have taken from me the sweet privilege of visiting them they still manifest that love which first ravished my soul. I love in my lonely hours to review all the way in which the dear Lord has led me in the wilderness, and oh how I love to feast on the crumbs which fall from the Master's table at these banquets.

I must now close, as time and space will not suffer me longer. I have only noted some of the many wonders in which the dear Lord has exercised my heart and mind, and this I submit to my brethren as to why I am a Baptist.

J. T. BARNES.

DALLAS, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter from sister Bessie Wilton to sister Minnie Jameson, both members of the church at Fort Worth, Texas. Sister Jameson obtained her consent to send it for publication, if your judgment approves, and turned it over to me to prepare for the compositor. In speaking out of her own heart sister Wilton has expressed so much that every little child of grace shares in common with her that I feel her words will find a responsive chord in the hearts of many of your readers. Your decision will be accepted as to its suitableness for publication without prejudice.

Yours in hope,

J. R. HARDY.

FORT WORTH, Texas.

DEAR SISTER MINNIE:—I feel very much hurt because I could not be with you all Sunday; and yet I should not feel this way, for if it had been God's will I would have been there. The car was not so I could drive it. One tire was in bad condition and blew out Saturday afternoon. I feel sure you had a lovely time, and I thought of all you dear people, and could imagine I could see you all. As it is such a trial for me to get to be with the people I love, I am beginning to wonder why I am as I am. I even wonder if I have ever had that heartfelt acquaintance with the blessed Comforter. I have been in darkness so long that surely I am mistaken, and should never have asked for a home with you precious ones, and then I wonder if there ever was one who was not

His little one that was continually begging God for light and understanding. Would a hypocrite feel as I do? Would he feel his weakness and inability to help himself, as I have come to know? Would his every thought be a constant longing for more light, more evidence, and crying to God for protection from sin? Oh that I could once more feel that comforting Spirit around me! God alone knows how my heart is aching. I was thinking of everything yesterday, and the thought came to me: What a little thing the human heart is, and yet it can hold a world full of love and just as many aches at the same time, and still have room for more aches. You know when we get to where we cannot read our Bible or papers, and can hardly keep still to do our work, because of so much distress of mind, we are really sick indeed. Oh if it had only been the Lord's will that I could have been with his people, even in their homes, to talk with them and listen to them talk, I believe I would not feel so forsaken. I know I should not grieve, but could a babe that was snatched from its mother's breast just when it was starving keep from crying when none other could feed it? I know my faith is weak. I wish I could bow my head in meekness, and say, "Thy will be done," and not mine. You have been around the Lord's people all your life, but suppose you had just found them, and realized that you could not be with them, how it would be. They are the dearest people on earth. Their talk is just right; their ways are the ways I love. The Old Baptist doctrine is all the doctrine in the world to me; and to hear Elder Hardy get up and preach as he does is the most marvelous thing in the world. While I am listening to him preach, I cannot seem to realize then that it is true, that there are people who have felt and thought and been made to witness the same things I have (if I am not deceived). Is it any wonder that it is heart-breaking to me that I cannot be with them more? I yet have a hope that the Lord will bless me with the privilege of being with his people, and having them in my home some time. It seems to me that I have been led, or wandered, off into a strange land away from my loved ones, and there are things that frighten me. My friends I used to enjoy being with are just a bore to me now. I do not enjoy their company any more. Their conversation is not interesting to me, for I am longing to be with those who understand my thoughts and feelings. I want to hear more and more of the wonderful things of God. Oh how I would love to listen for hours and hours to the blessed truth being preached. I seem to have lost the strength to try to be with you all any more. If I did not believe that God predestinated all things before the beginnig of this world, if I did not believe that he knew and intended that everything in my life was to be as it is, I would go entirely crazy. Oh what a comfort to know that all things work together for the good of the elect. But am I one, or am I just another that has gone into the precious church only to deceive the Lord's little children? I wonder if I have deceived them, or if

they just took pity on me, and know I am not fit to be with them.

I cannot feel that you have ever known sin, but just think you are sinners. I am a real sinner. Once, years ago, my sister-in-law and I were playing a phonograph and we put a dance piece on, and she said, "Let's dance, Bessie." We had quite a bit of fun trying to dance. That night I dreamed I saw my soul. It was white, excepting where there were black, filthy spots, or, I should say, sores on it. Now I am afraid that if I could see my soul it would not even have a white spot on it. I would even be afraid to look at it. Perhaps I am looking for perfection in the flesh. I am not with the Lord's people enough to know if they are like I am, or if they are good. I could see no evil or sin in my parents. I guess all children feel that way about their parents. I know how the Arminians are, and feel that I am worse than the sorriest of them, and yet oh how I hate their "good works." Sometimes it seems that I cannot bear this any longer, and if I cannot see some of you I will just die; but all my tears do no good. I know the Lord has a purpose in all this, and know there will come a time when it will all come right; but it will not come right until that set time. I am not writing this so you will pity me. I do not need pity, for I deserve more chastisement than I have received at the hand of the Lord. I am just in darkness and want to talk, and as there is no one to talk to I am writing and burdening you with some of my thought. Around me there is not one I can talk to as I can to you. I cannot even go off by myself in prayer without being called. The other day I went down to the little spring branch to be alone and think, and just in a few moments Margaret came looking for me. And that is the way with us all through life; but oh how wonderful to know there is a place in our hearts, a room in our thoughts, where we can enter and talk with our heavenly Father and none can follow. The more we think of that the more wonderful it seems, for we know there are thieves who would follow us even in there and rob us of the sweet Comforter if it were possible; but thank God for that wonderful privilege, and for the sweet moments that we are permitted to draw near to him in this room where none other can follow. The more we think on the marvelous works of God the more astonishing they are to us. That gracious hope he gives his children, even they cannot lay it aside, no matter how weak it becomes.

How I would love to sit and write and write about the things I feel I have been made to witness, but I have written too much already. Come and see me when you can.

Lovingly,

BESSIE WILTON.

HARDING, W. Va., Jan. 8, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—As it is time for my renewal to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I have a desire to write a few words to the household of faith.

The years are passing swiftly, each one carrying us much nearer to the end

of our pilgrimage here, and nearer to the heaven of peace and rest which God hath prepared for those who love him and long for his appearing. According to the Scriptures, those who believe in God should grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth as it is in the Lord Jesus. I cannot hope that I have made this growth, except it be by coming to realize more fully my own weakness, imperfections and inability to do the things that pertain to righteousness without God's help at all times, and have come to see more clearly the power, love, mercy and justice of God, and desire to give all praise and honor to him. I feel the need each day of calling on him more and more for guidance, strength and faith to endure unto the end. I feel assured that nothing is impossible with God, and believe that he will take care of those whom he has brought to believe on him, through the name of the Lord Jesus. When our natural minds try to lead us to trust in our own strength all becomes confusion and weariness, and we are glad to look to the Rock of our salvation. In the present trying times, I feel to know that many others, like myself, are crying, Lord, help us. It is recorded that the woman who came to Christ worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. When we cry from the depths of our hearts to him we are saying, Lord, we cannot help ourselves, undertake thou for us. We thereby acknowledge our weakness and his eternal strength, and find rest in so doing. The Lord is our dwelling-place, the same as he has been to his people through all generations, and is still a strong tower into which his people flee and are safe, and is to them as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. The poet has truthfully said,

"While toiling in life's dusty way,
The Rock's blessed shadow how sweet."

I want to say a few words of commendation to the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, also to the writers. I enjoy your editorials, and am glad that you are still enabled to keep in the strait and narrow path marked out by Christ that leads to truth and righteousness. May the Lord give you grace according to your days to feed, instruct and comfort his hungry and thirsty people, and may you all be comforted with the comfort wherewith you comfort them. I have enjoyed brother Lefferts' New Year's Greeting, and am comforted by the everlasting truths which he upholds in it, and feel to thank and praise the Lord, who has so graciously enabled him to go into the depths of them for our good and for the praise of His eternal glory.

Brother Davis Burch, I fully indorse the things you said in your letter about the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and its editors and publishers. After reading it I felt to say, How true it all is. You have lived a long life in the faith of God's elect and have come to see more clearly the things pertaining to God and his people. Your letter was filled with good things of the gospel which I hope have been settled in our own hearts, through the many years of our experi-

ence, as established truths, which we hope that Satan and all his hosts can never efface. May the Lord bless you all, and when you pray remember me.

Unworthily,

(MRS.) E. E. WORKMAN.

[THE foregoing good letter was written more than one year ago, but was misplaced by us and only came to light a short time ago, but is just as good and comforting now as the day it was written.—ED.]

LEXINGTON, Ky., Jan. 11, 1935.

DEAR EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS:—Inclosed please find check for the three annual subscriptions, also I am submitting a letter from a dear sister in Canada, without her consent, but which will be read with interest by many. I would state also that my first visit to Canada was at the Lobo meeting, in October, 1886, and I do not think there is a member living now who was a member then. I believe sister McColl, of Tilbury, and sister Williams were the last. I think I have made more than forty visits there, and they were always enjoyable to me.

Regarding the SIGNS, I feel as the years go by it becomes dearer to me, as in my blind condition I can seldom go to meeting, and it advocates the truth to-day upon which it was founded. It has been my privilege to meet all the editors and hear them preach, from dear old Elder Beebe down to the present ones, excepting Elder Dodson, but I was quite intimate with him before he began preaching. I think he will remember the trip we made together from New York to the Warwick Assocoition.

The January number of the SIGNS has been read to me and I certainly enjoyed the resurrection doctrine advocated in it. I cannot understand how any one can read the Scriptures and not believe in the resurrection. If there be no resurrection of the dead, what did Jesus, the blessed Son of God, accomplish when he became identified with us in the body of this flesh and suffered the awful death on the cross, and was laid in the tomb, and afterward arose and was identified by his wounds, and was seen to ascend into heaven? The Scripture says, In like manner he shall descend. Paul says, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," and shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. That is, when the end shall come there will be those alive upon the earth, as we are to-day. Then again, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." In looking back over the record, it would seem that true believers and followers of Christ had greater affliction and trials than others. According to revealed truth, they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, afflicted and tormented, yet they all died in the faith, believing in the coming of Jesus. (Read the whole chapter.) Then Paul said, "Seeing we also are compassed about with so great a crowd of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith," etc. Now, brethren, be-

loved in the Lord, let us ever remember the blessed words of Jesus: Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these, my little ones, ye did it unto me. If it be a kind word, or a kind act, or an unkind word, or an unkind act, it applies just the same.

Now I wish to ask my beloved brethren in the ministry everywhere, Do not debate your differences of doctrine in the pulpit, but preach the gospel of peace and feed the church. Paul set the example, when he came to the church at Corinth there were differencs, but he determined not to know anything among them save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

Dear Elder Lefferts, you spoke of Elder Wilson Thompson in the last SIGNS. I was personally acquainted with him, and heard him preach several times, and I must say he was one of the most powerful preachers I ever heard, and was recognized as such. Two of my brothers and myself attended an association some forty miles away. On Sunday morning two Elders who differed with Elder Thompson on the effect of the new birth on the Adam man, preached, and tried in rather a bitter spirit to make him see it as they did. Elder Thompson, who followed, got up as a little child, and, to the surprise of all, read a text and preached the gospel of peace, making no reference to what had been said before. If he had preached in the spirit of the other two Elders he probably would have divided the association. That night he preached at Zionsville, in the Methodist meetinghouse and we heard him again, but he made no reference to what had been said at the association, and that was an example I never forgot. Brethren, talk your differences privately, not in the pulpit. "Come, let us reason together."

The many letters I have received from the dear kindred in Christ have been of much comfort to me, and I would reply to each one if I could see to write. I do hope to hear from you again.

Now may grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, and may he guide us in the pathway of peace and righteousness.

Yours with a blessed hope, though the least of all,

P. W. SAWIN.

DUTTON, Ontario, Dec. 27, 1934.

ELDER P. W. SAWIN—Beloved brother in Jesus Christ, our beloved Elder Brother:—Yes, Jesus Christ is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother or my dearest of all earthly relationship, natural or spiritual. A mother may forget her child, but I will never forget. I have graven thee on the palms of my hands. A beautiful thought presents itself to my mind in being engraven on the palms of his hands, which signifies the close and loving relationship in suffering, as in reigning with him in the eternal love which brought him to the loving obedience of his Father God, to take on himself the body of flesh to save our souls from eternal death. And, dear brother, do we not justly merit his loving and

merciful chastisement? Yes, and eternal banishment from his dear presence, but for his eternal love, which caused him to submit to the shameful cruel torture of being nailed to the cross of Calvary, to present his people holy and spotless before his Father's throne, where he ever liveth to make intercession for them with groanings which cannot be uttered. Just ponder on those words groanings which cannot be uttered. Who could deny the eternal sonship of the Son of God, which J. K. Popham so ably defends? He is a wonderful soul-inspiring writer; I love to read after him. Is it not the sweetest on mortal tongue the conception, birth, life, death and resurrection of the eternal Son of God? Father, Son and Holy Ghost, three in one. I know it is your sweetest theme, dear brother Sawin, but I have not the ability to present the sublime interpretation of the wonders of redeeming grace, yet I hope I have felt its redeeming power in my sinful heart, lifting me above myself. I feel no one knows more than I the reigning power of Satan's devices, and I hope I can say with Job, I know that my Redeemer liveth, and when he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold. The afflictions of Job have raised and comforted me, and once in my extremity the Lord spoke to me the words spoken to Job as out of the whirlwind: "Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me." Then I found those words in the thirty-eighth chapter of Job, and I read the whole chapter, which was wonderful for thought, and as I read on to the end I was made to enter into, in a measure, the wisdom and power of the wonder-working God, and felt as nothing in the light of that great wisdom which spoke to Job out of the whirlwind, and was it for such as I? As I came to the last verse my heart melted with fear and gratitude and I claimed it as a sweet message from his gracious hand, that he who provided food for the ravens would provide my meat in due season (his own time). When we hunger from lack of food (heavenly food) we are promised, Blessed are they that hunger, for they shall be filled. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Dear brother, I am as Job, a mourner, but not in patience. I am impatient at the delay of his coming, as Martha was, but, blessed truth, he comes to release the prisoner who in Satan's bondage is held.

Dear brother, I am traveling down the stream of life alone, for the dear companion he gave me in the days of my youth he has taken to dwell with him, but he is tenderly and lovingly guarding me in my declining days, months, years, or whatever it may be, and I can say with Job, My latter end is more blessed than my beginning. I feel you can say it also, brother Sawin. I can also say that faith abideth in my poor heart. Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. You can also say so, and cannot you say by faith, I am now ready to be offered up. I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, therefore there is laid up for me a crown of life which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.

And not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing? His love is better than life, then leave all in his wise and loving care, dear pilgrim of Zion traveling home to God.

Our dear pastor, Elder Ruston, read from the pulpit your greeting card. In it you said there may not be any living who met you on your first visit to Canada. What year was it? I remember you always came to father's home, as all the ministers did, and his delight was to entertain his brethren, sisters and friends. There are not more than three or four living members (myself included) who sat with you at the Lord's table to commerate his last supper with his disciples. All the other loved ones have been borne to their last resting-place here, to arise in his image to praise him throughout eternity. I can tell you that all the living members and dear friends you have met and visited with, and who have listened to you exalt the precious name of Jesus, I am sure would join me in this message of esteem and love, for in His name you commended yourself to the Canada people, who love to hear God exalted and mortal man abased. Our dear pastor has laid to rest in mother earth many dear ones whose passing must have been a great loss to him, but he is faithful and trustworthy and we hold him in high esteem as he in fear and trembling goes forth, bearing precious seed, and weepeth, shall come again, bringing his sheaves with him. (Is that Christ? Can it pertain to his ministers?)

Dear brother, I would wish to sit beside you and converse in sweet fellowship as we once did, but I do mourn the loss and sad change time has wrought in our midst, and cry for strength and light, and can only say, Thy will, not mine, be done. I would love to hear from you once again. May God bless you and guide you until he takes you to himself. Love to you and family. Pardon all amiss.

Your unworthy sister in bonds of love,

(MRS.) JOHN McPHAIL.

DELAWARE, Ohio.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—If I may presume to thus address you. Yes, I must confess to a hope within, sometimes strong, sometimes more dim, that the people of God are my brethren, all children of the same heavenly, loving Father. If I knew how, and could find language to express my adoration of the blessed oneness of the children of God with him who inhabits eternity, and to describe the glorious, heavenly beauty of this abiding and proven love that binds all together, how gladly and joyfully would I do so. But you know much more than I can tell you concerning it. Sometimes it seems a question to me as to which shines brighter and which gives more comfort to a troubled pilgrim: whether it is the power of God, or his love, that filleth all in all, to bear up all the sacred pillars of the doctrine, and keep blooming the precious fruits of love. It is all of God; all in him is perfection. Yes, in speaking of the salvation of poor sinners we must exclaim, In the perfection of beauty God hath

shined. And here we perhaps should just pause, to leave it there, for I feel sure that your thoughts are better than my expressions, for we are never able to tell the half of the beauty and the glory of God in all of his works, even in nature, and much less in the realm of spiritual things.

Just here I was called to our evening meal, then afterward I helped to entertain company. It is "the morning after" now, but I am glad to say that we did nothing worse than listen to the radio. I had intended to offer an apology for addressing you at all, but it seemed that I could say nothing else before offering the tribute of praise which welled up within. My mind was so full of adoration to our King and Redeemer that there was room for nothing else. I also meant to ask pardon for using a pencil. My pen is not working well, and, also, I am weak and nervous from the flu, from which I am just recovering. It seems that since coming to this establishment I may expect an attack of it each winter. I have not been bedfast, but am quite weak yet.

Just before beginnig this missive I had read the SIGNS for February, and very much enjoyed it, especially your editorial. You were just giving voice to my own feelings in the matter of charity and fellowship. I have also enjoyed from time to time the letters between you and your father. Fellowship is ever sweet, especially is it when between child and parent. I know this from experience. The Lord has greatly blessed the family of my parents in granting a hope to each one, and two of my three sons have expressed themselves as to their hope. One of these has passed on to his reward, and the youngest one (twenty-seven) has shown his regard for the church in his face and attitude.

I do not know that I shall be able to say anything of comfort to you and yours, but I do wish to express my comfort in and appreciation of the things you express in your writings. I have felt an inclination to write to you before, but do recall having done so. I have written to several of the editors and writers of the SIGNS. I had several years of correspondence with Elder Silas H. Durand and Elder David Bartley. Elder Durand said, "I think I would send your letter to the SIGNS, if it were not that you speak so highly of me." Elder Bartley did send some of my writing, but did not disclose my name at the time. We were writing concerning the oneness of Christ and the sons of God. In early life I was given to rejoice in this wonderful truth, and in the sovereign power of our blessed Redeemer. Indeed, I cannot understand how a poor sinner who has been taught his nothingness before God can feel secure without receiving at least some knowledge of the unlimited power of the Keeper of Israel.

I was saddened to read of the death of Elder Greathouse. Yes, he was quite small in stature and weight, but large in intellect and spirit, and very droll at times. One could enjoy his talks in a natural way, even if it were eveningtime in his spirit. Too, I was very sorry to

learn of the loss, by fire, to Elder Jonas Sykes, of Texas, whom I also know personally. I do hope he may receive ample help in his need. He was a very able preacher when I used to hear him. Elder J. R. Hardy is pastor of the church of which my sister in the flesh is a member. She is Mrs. J. J. Darnell, of Campbell, Texas. Campbell is one of the suburbs of Greenville, about sixty miles from Dallas, Texas. Sister thinks that she never heard a better preacher than Elder Hardy. She compares him with Elder Sykes. She tells me that Elder Sykes took exceptions to one of my letters she gave him to read. I had written concerning the new birth, and how it affects the one regenerated. I have no idea what I wrote, as all of my writings are almost altogether impromptu, just jotting down thoughts as they come, and sending them off for better or worse. I try to look for guidance in writing, believing and doing. I do wish I knew just what I had written. As I have understood it, we are born of Adam at the beginning, and are only carnal. Then when regeneration comes, the old man is still carnal, but there is a new eternal life given to us, which I have thought to be the Spirit of Christ, which is as holy as God is holy, and that the warfare comes by the old Adam spirit pulling one way and the Christ Spirit doing just the opposite, but that both spirits are counted as "us." But, of course, our new spirit is "Christ in us the hope of glory." Now as to how the whole man is leavened I cannot understand. If the whole man is leavened before the hour of death, I cannot see where sin could come in, for that which is born of God cannot sin. "He cannot sin, because he is born of God." He "purifieth himself, even as he is pure." Some seem to think that there is an inner man that was sinful before regeneration, but that in regeneration this same inner man, or spirit, is made holy, or righteous. If that be true, what is it that sins after the new birth? I cannot understand how it can be our framework of flesh, blood and bones, because the body without the spirit is dead, and "the dead know not anything." I suppose the old man is made good at death, or in the resurrection, if it be saved at all. Now this is not written in a spirit of controversy, but to learn the truth as it is. I know that I am fallible, and sure to err unless taught and ever led of God, and my greatest desire is to know what is truth and to believe and follow it. Now, if it is not asking too much, I hope you may be led to tell me how you see it, either through the SIGNS or by private letter. If you consider this a vain or foolish question, just ignore it and I shall try not to feel offended. I do not make a brother an offender for a word. None of us understand it unless it is revealed to us. I hope to hear from Elder J. C. Sykes, who I very highly esteem in the Lord. Please pray for me.

JOIE E. WOODS PETERS.

[THE spirit manifested in the foregoing letter is, we think, most excellent. When such is shown, even though our views may differ, love will abound.—R. L. D.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1935.

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ISAIAH XLVIII. 11, 12.

"For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another. Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called: I am he: I am the first, I also am the last."

The inspiration of God to Isaiah expressed the predestination of God in his purpose to do all his pleasure. "For mine own sake," expresses that his doings shall be to his own glory and honor, and he would not give it unto another. This God is infinite, immutable, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, most holy, wise and free, and according to his infinite wisdom he willed and decreed all things for his own glory. As we pass through the events of every-day life we behold the great ruling power that holds all created things in the sphere in which he hath created them, and brings to pass events, and works them together for the good of man, and to the end that it all should be to his praise and glory. In man (which God formed of the dust of the ground) we have the manifestation of God's wisdom in creation, for in the first of man's history God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and he put the man he had formed in it to keep it and dress it, and gave him a law to direct his doings, that he should eat of the fruit thereof, and God, knowing the iniquity that would be conceived in him by the devil, predestinated the deliverance of man from the power of death. The power of death cannot bring to nought the law of God and thereby pollute him. The devil disputed the law of God to Adam, and deceived Eve that she would take the forbidden fruit with the view of becoming wise as gods, knowing good and evil. Which for his own sake will he do it, and he will not give his glory unto another. "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee."—Psalms cxlv. 10. All the powers of death could not thwart one purpose of God. We have the infinite wisdom of God expressed in the word that Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated; Jacob, my called, elected one, to be led about and instructed, and that there should be no strange god with him, and as the Lord led Jacob so he leads his people. "Hearken unto me, O Jacob," (you supplanter), which brings to us the data relative to Jacob fleeing from the face of Esau, and how he was left alone, and there a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day. (Gen. xxxii. 24.)

Jacob, the supplanter in the flesh, was made to realize that God spake not with the voice of man only, but with power, bringing to nought the powers that are and the setting up of an entirely new manifestation, and these were given that he should hearken unto God. We might follow Jacob and hear some of the expressions spoken of him. First, the power that led him about and instructed him, and the wonderful vision given of the ladder that reached from earth to heaven and the angels of God ascending and descending on it, and the Lord stood above it, and said, "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed." This land on which "thou liest" was the place God purposed he should rest, and all his seed, which brings us from Canaan to Egypt, and all the experience of his travel made him hear, or hearken, unto God, and the same faith that directed Abraham directed Jacob and Israel his chosen all their journey until the dawn of day. The dawn of this day, to our mind, is the gospel day, which is illuminated by the sovereign light of the Son of God. Jacob (the supplanter) was afraid in this glorious day, and was made to say, Dreadful is this place. But Israel, the soldier of God, speaks, "This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." "I am he: I am the first, I also am the last." "I am he" was declared by John as the word, in which he said, "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God." All things are as present with God; nothing old or new. The doctrine set forth testifies of God's wisdom, by and in which he would do all his pleasure, and exalt his name far above all principalities and powers.

We do declare that the devil was the conceiver of iniquity, which is the pollution of the creature God formed, and, if possible, would have polluted God. He that was polluted became dead in trespasses and sin and cannot behold righteousness, but for his own sake God predestinated the deliverance of his creature from the power of death, by His own power, that his name should have the glory, and not another. God sent his own Son, his only begotten, full of grace and truth, and with him dwelt the Father, and all the work of redemption was the work of the Father. As far as the carnal mind can attain is the end of this mortal life, and the works (or manifestations of creature acts) are all the life it can have perception of, but Israel, the called of God, believes in God and realizes his power is unbounded, and that the creature he formed is as much in his power after death as he is in this natural life, and the will of God will be done. "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"—Dan. iv. 35. Jesus (I also am the last), the deliverer of his people from the power of death, bore in the body (that thou hast prepared me) the sufferings

of humanity, lived as a man born of woman, and under the law, that men should behold him in the personality of man, and be subjected to vile hands, and become obedient unto death, that the fullness of the lust of iniquity should be poured out upon him. He became obedient unto death that he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver for his own name's sake the bride, the Lamb's wife. After Jesus became obedient unto death the climax of the powers of persecution and death was heaped upon him, and there remained nothing but a dead body for them to behold, but that body was a sacrifice that should be to all eternity, a living sacrifice for every one for which it was made. His glory he will not give unto another. As Jesus had the glory of the Father with him before the world began he would not take it away, but his Son should come forth from the powers of death, hell and the grave and be glorified at the right hand of the Father. O Jacob and Israel, my called, do we only see with this natural organ, or hearken only by natural hearing? No, but as the man that was blind from his birth could not see, so are all of the first Adam until the command of him that must work the works of him that sent him bids us, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent). And he went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing."—John xix. 4-7. This is the day that Jacob beheld the dawn of when he received his vision from God. Jesus is our light, and the eyes of our beholding righteousness must be anointed by the anointing from the Son of God. We know natural spittle is secreted from the saliva glands of the jaw for the dissolving of starch into sugar, so this secretion from the mouth of God, mixed with the clay, is the ointment with which all his people are anointed, and he says, Go, wash in the pool Si-lo-am (or Sent). This pool is described by Paul. "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."—Gal. iv. 4, 5. As we have received the adoption of sons by Jesus Christ, and are made heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, we shall be delivered from the pollutions of sin; soul, body and spirit. This has been the doctrine set forth in the articles of faith of Old School Baptists from the dawn of the gospel day until the present hour, as we might term it, of that day. Should we only contend for such as we can see with mortal eyes, as did the Jews. or should we contend that God raised Jesus from the dead and he became the first-fruits of them that slept? Paul, speaking of the mystery of God, said, "Behold, I shew you a mystery." For the Jews to hear that Jesus had arisen from the dead was extreme, and beyond all toleration. The Jews believe in the immortality of the soul, which is manifested through the generations that are to follow, and not the one individual to be made immortal. Paul said

that when this mortal shall have put on immortality then shall be brought to pass the saying that death is swallowed up in victory. Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. xv. 57.) We thank God that we are blessed to have the testimony of the working of God's power, by which for his own sake he did it not to give praise and glory to any, but to his own glory. As Jesus arose from the dead and became the first-fruits of them that slept we believe all from a righteous Abel down to the present time were chosen in Christ Jesus. From before the foundation of the world, and as Jesus was the first to be manifested that could raise the dead, or arise from the dead of himself, or of the Father, the invisible God, proveth the necessity of our resurrection, not only from death in sin to life in Christ, but all that sinner must be saved from the pollution of sin, and there is no division or particle left out. Jesus has all power in heaven and earth. He has power to preserve us in his righteousness, and call us from the grave and give us the full triumphant deliverance from the powers of death. I must rule until the last enemy is destroyed, and my beloved is crowned at my right hand. "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."—Matt. xxv. 34.

May we ever contend for these glorious truths by the grace of God given unto us, which would be to his glory and honor, is our sincere desire.

C. W. V.

SUNDAY.

A SISTER in Sulphur Springs, Texas, sends us the question: "If Sunday is the first day of the week, why do we keep it?" We are not sure we understand just what is in our inquirer's mind, by this question. Some there are who wonder why Sunday, the first week-day, is observed as a sabbath when in the law given to Israel the seventh week-day, our present Saturday, was commanded to be kept as the sabbath. Sunday, the first week-day, has no scriptural authority for being observed as a sabbath-day. Christ, nor his apostles, did not enjoin upon the gospel church any one week-day to be observed as rest-day more than any other day. This command for the observance of a certain day as a day of rest was given to the nation of Israel, and to them only. There is no Bible sanction for its transference from Israel to the Gentiles, hence we are not to-day under obligation to keep the seventh day. The first day of the week was the day on which Christ arose from the dead, corresponding to our Sunday. In Acts xx. 7, Peter preached on the first day of the week on the occasion when the disciples were gathered together breaking bread. Such meetings, however, were not confined to the first day, or Sunday. In Acts ii. 46, v. 42, xvii. 17, xix. 9, are instances showing praise, preaching and teaching to have been "daily" matters with the apostolic church. What an exhortation is this for us of to-day! Daily we should be serving and praising our blessed Lord, who has so wondrously shown us his marvelous grace in having redeemed our lives

from destruction, in having plucked us as brands from the burning. Christ should have first place in the lives of his people. He being exalted, every day is his. This is no doubt the reason why no specific command is given by Christ or his apostles regarding the setting apart of one day more than any other for his service. We must serve him always. All our time is his, he is the worthy Object of our adoration continually. The ordinance of the seventh-day sabbath was given to Israel from the Lord by the hand of Moses to be kept by them as a day of complete rest in remembrance of God's having delivered them from bondage and from their slavery in Egypt, and of his having made them a separate people unto himself to serve him in the wilderness and in Canaan. It was a fitting type of that complete rest from the slavery of sin and from the dominion of Satan, which the believer now experiences when he enters savingly into the finished redemption work of Christ, thus ceasing from his own fleshly energy and self-righteousness. Having the substance, we need no more the type. The reality has displaced the mere picture. Nevertheless, the present desecration of Sunday and the day's use for sporting the activities of the carnal man, is a sign of the spiritual degeneracy of our age. This is true, not because the Scriptures enjoin the keeping of the first day as a sabbath, but because centuries ago the Gentile nations voluntarily engaged themselves to keep Sunday as their sabbath. It was self-enjoined upon them, and was an acknowledgment by them that even their Gentile consciences somehow felt their indebtedness to God and their dependence upon him. But even this, nowadays, is being cast aside: an evidence of the world's pride in man's own sufficiency, an utter lack of any felt need of divine sovereignty. The earliest recognition of the observance of Sunday as a legal duty is a constitution of Constantine, once Emperor of the now defunct Roman Empire, in 321 A. D., enacting that all courts of justice, inhabitants of towns and workshops were to be at rest on Sunday. The existence of "blue laws" upon the statutes of many of our American States, which old enactments strictly forbade any work or trading on Sunday, prove that in the consciences of our forefathers who made those laws there existed a felt sense of their need for serving the Lord and for worshipping him. Thus did they impose upon themselves and upon their neighbors the observance of Sunday as a day of rest. Call it legalism or what you will, it showed the spiritual calibre of that day from which the modern world has woefully departed. To-day, everything goes on on Sunday much as every other day of the week. Must we not conclude from this that the minds and souls of men to-day, for the most part, chafe greatly against any restraint upon the free and untrammeled satisfaction of their lusts and appetites? Does this not fulfill the Scripture prophecy that, in the last times, men shall be lovers of selves, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof?

(2 Tim. iii.) The call from on high to us who believe in God our Father and his Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, is for us not to be conformed to the ideals or standards of modernism. Not for us is it to advocate Sundayism, nor for us is it to encourage outbreaking irreverence, but let us be transformed by the renewing of our minds to the end that, this day and to-morrow and ever, we may live under Christ's rule, subject to his grace in our hearts, submitting ourselves unto his Lordship who has a perfect and inalienable right to us and ours, because he has redeemed us unto God by his own precious blood. May we behave ourselves as though all our days are his. Having received Christ Jesus our Head, so let us walk in him.

H. H. L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

As we note the death of sister **CARRIE HUNTLEY**, of Union Grove, N. Y., which occurred at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Shaver February 4th, 1935, at Pepacton, N. Y., we are sadly mindful of the loss that the Middletown and Andes Church sustain, of which she had been a member about sixty years or more. The community where she spent all of her long life of almost eighty-eight years is made the poorer by her departure. She was greatly beloved by all, possessing those qualifications that make for firm character, combined with a gentleness and charity towards all, and a willingness to do for others that impressed all who knew her, and endeared her to her brethren. She was devoted to her church with a loving loyalty that evidenced the reality of her hope in the mercy and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and of that doctrine that her Redeemer confirmed and established. She attended the meetings of her church faithfully until a short time before her death, when the infirmities of age prevented. She was obliged to leave her home at Union Grove and live the rest of her life with her daughter, Mrs. Herbert Shaver, as her feeble condition prevented her from caring for herself. She suffered intensely, but uncomplainingly, for several weeks before the end came, but she received tender ministration from Mr. and Mrs. Shaver, who did everything that was possible for human skill to do. She was born March 21st, 1847, near Shavertown, N. Y., and spent almost all her life in that vicinity. When a young woman she was united in marriage to Anthony Huntley, which proved a happy union. Her husband died about 1910. There are five surviving children, four daughters: Mrs. Orrin Mann and Mrs. Cora Teichs, of Towanda, Pa., Mrs. Herbert Shaver, of Pepacton, N. Y., Mrs. Susie Sherman, of Oneonta, N. Y.; one son, Anson Huntley, of South Kortright, N. Y.

The writer officiated at the funeral services, which were held at the home of Herbert Shaver. The interment was at Shavertown. Sister Huntley will be greatly missed, but her beautiful life in her home and community and its influence will be long remembered.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

MRS. VEDA REBECCA SCHOOLEY, formerly Mellott, departed this earthly life at Dr. Sipe's Hospital, Everett, Pennsylvania, January 28th, 1935, due to a fatal form of anemia, from which she had been suffering for some time. She was taken from her home, near Green Hill, Fulton Co., Pa., to the hospital in the hope that some relief could be afforded her, but died soon after being taken there. She was the daughter of sister Elizabeth H. Mellott, who survives her. Her father was brother David R. Mellott, who died about twenty-eight years ago. Sister Veda was born at Pleasant Ridge May 2nd, 1893. She is survived by one sister and two brothers, all members of the Sideling Hill Old School Baptist Church: sister Rosie Mellott, of Pleasant Ridge, Pa., who resides with the mother, brother Orien Mellott, of Andover, Pa., and brother Elmer Mellott, of Three Springs. There are living two half-sisters and four half-brothers, children of the father's former marriage: Mrs. Lydia Pittman, of Altoona, Pa., Mrs. Lizzie Calderwood, of Tyrone, Pa., Nelson and Lawson and Abraham Mellott, of Pittsburgh, Pa., and George Mellott, of Seattle, Wash. It was my blessed privilege to baptize sister Veda into membership with the Sideling Hill Church in March, 1914. On April 15th, 1914, at her mother's home, I united her in marriage with Cadiz W. Schooley, her now lonely and sorrowing companion who survives her. Of this marriage, there are five children living, and all at home: Elmer, aged twenty; Arthur, eighteen; Elizabeth, sixteen; and Etta and Retta, twins, thirteen.

Funeral services were held January 31st at the Siloam meetinghouse, burial in Siloam Cemetery. Hymns 239 and 68 (Beebe's collection), and hymn 602 (Durand & Lester Hymnal), were used at the services. Text used was Revelation xxii. 1-5. Each time that faithful and devoted members to the cause of truth are removed from us, it means a very definite and irreparable loss to both church and pastor, yet we rejoice that such gifts have been afforded us by the Head of the church, and we know that the Lord is taking but his own when he gathers them from us unto himself.

Before being taken to the hospital, sister Veda made certain arrangements known to her family regarding her funeral, hence we feel she was forewarned that her end was near. She was a faithful, helpful and devoted wife; a mother altogether dedicated to the welfare of her children. Our hearts go out in sympathy and love to the bereaved mother, husband, children, sister and brothers. May the Lord manifest his guidance and teaching with them, support them by his grace and comfort them by the never-failing presence of the Holy Spirit who is engeged to be with his people always even unto the world's end.

H. H. L.

ELIZABETH M. BYRD was born May 13th 1854, and died December 7th, 1934, aged 80 years, 6 months and 24 days. She was the daughter of Jacob and Susan Fisher Byrd, of Accomac County, Virginia. She was married to John William Byrd January 9th, 1879. He died March 3rd, 1924. They were married by Elder T. M. Poulson. She was baptized into the fellowship of the Messongo Old School Baptist Church, Accomac County, Virginia, August 4th, 1872, by Elder T. M. Poulson, being a member sixty-two years. She was quite a young woman at that time, but through all those years was always a faithful servant, mother and friend to every one she came to know. Her home was always open to the Baptist friends and she really enjoyed being with them, for she always spoke of her unworthiness and weakness. After her husband's death she spent her time with her two daughters, Mrs. F. M. Knight, of near Hallwood, Virginia, and Mrs. C. W. Baker, Delmar, Delaware, but her health being so poor for the past four years she spent the entire time with the daughter at Delmar, Delaware, and died there, after being confined to her bed a short time by illness. She also leaves two grandchildren, one sister and a host of friends to mourn our loss, but we are not like those without hope, for all during her past years she would say, If it were only the Lord's will my time was near. Only a few hours before her last she raised both hands, and said, "All is well," and asked us not to grieve for her.

The funeral was held Sunday, December 9th, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Baker, Elder G. E. Coulbourn officiating.

THE foregoing obituary was written by Mrs. C. W. Baker, a daughter of sister Byrd, saying it was for my information to help me write the notice. It is so well and fully written, I feel I should not change it, but rather say how glad I am to see how the Lord has reconciled Mrs. Baker and is sustaining her by his grace in the loss of her dear mother, and I simply want to indorse what she says about her mother, and although Mrs. Baker is not a member of the visible church, I am glad she has the hope that her mother had, and may the Lord continue his blessings.

G. E. COULBOURN.

ABNER BEEBE LEONARD, born in Prattsville, Green Co., N. Y., April 27th, 1854, second son of Peter H. and Malinda (Morse) Leonard, died October 25th, 1934, at his home in Otego, N. Y. Burial was in Bundy Cemetery, Otego, October 28th, 1934. He was baptized by Elder D. M. Vail, August 1st, 1915. He moved with his parents from Prattsville, N. Y., to Bainbridge, N. Y., in the year 1875, where he lived until the year 1889, when he moved to Pittsfield, N. Y., coming from there in 1917 to Otego, where he had since resided. Abner was married three times, first to Miss Mary Bennett, of Bainbridge, N. Y., in November, 1878. She died in March, 1883. In June, 1888, he married Miss Hattie White, of North Pharsalia, N. Y. She passed away in September, 1917. He then married Miss Rosabelle Tamsett, of Otego, N. Y., in November, 1918. He had attended Old School Baptist meetings all his life. His parents also were Old School Baptists. He is survived by his wife, one sister, Mary Leonard, one nephew, Appleton Leonard, one niece, Martha Leonard Hawkins, all of Otego, and several cousins. He lived a faithful and lovable brother, always ready to give a reason for the hope that was in him through grace, to associate with those of like precious faith, to tell of God's mercy to a poor, undeserving sinner as he, to esteem others much better than himself, to find in self, that is, in the flesh, there dwells no good thing, giving all praise, honor and glory to God, the Savior of sinners. How sweetly he would declare, The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. Surely, He leadeth me beside the still waters, he maketh me to lie down in green pastures, he restoreth my soul. He has passed out of the Valley of Death, to walk no more therein, but to abide in that glorious immortality in which the sting of death is destroyed and the grave robbed of victory. In the flesh we sorrow, in the Spirit we rejoice with him who has gained the victory through Jesus Christ the Lord.

The funeral was conducted by Elder W. S. Alexander.

ALSO,

GEORGE D. BUNDY, born in the town of Otego, N. Y., December 17th, 1859, died April 13th, 1934, of heart trouble, at his Otego home, where he had resided for the last thirty years. He was a son of Martin F. and Martha A. (Church) Bundy, and married Eva A. Loomis, of Otego, N. Y., May 4th, 1881. Surviving are his widow, one daughter, Mrs. May B. Reymore, two sons, Raymond L. and Ralph C. Bundy, two brothers, Charles H. Bundy, of Ithaca, N. Y., and William J. Bundy, of Otego, two grandchildren, four nephews and one niece. His widow, sister Eva Bundy, was received into the fellowship of the Otego Church on the third Sunday of September, 1934. While Mr. Bundy never came for baptism, all who knew him had the assurance of the hope that was in him, all felt a

sweet fellowship for him because of his keen interest in the church, his desire to associate with those who would tell of their experience of grace. When he would turn to himself, all he could say was that he was unfit, yet he lingered about that he might eat of the crumbs that fell from the Master's table. Surely, we can say of him that he has gone to abide with Him in whom he now is, and that he will partake of that which is perfect, holy and true, which he could not discern in himself. May the bereaved ones be comforted in the memories he has left with them.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder W. S. Alexander.

(MRS.) ABNER B. LEONARD.

SISTER **MARGARET (EVANS) KNAUS** was born February 26th, 1853, in Jasper County, Indiana. She was the daughter of brother Ezra and sister Elizabeth Evans, and was the sixth child of a family of ten children. She had survived all the other children for a period of thirty-five years. When she was seventeen years of age she with her parents moved to southern Kansas, where she in the spring of 1876 united with the Primitive Baptist Church of that section, and was baptized by Elder Hedges, of southern Kansas. In 1877 she was married to Joseph Knaus, and to them were born two children: sister Claudine Knaus and George Knaus, both of Kansas City, Missouri. I know not the year she moved to Kansas City, but soon thereafter she placed her letter in Pleasant Grove Church, and so did her father and mother. Later on, when a number of Baptists began to settle in Kansas City, she was largely instrumental in having a church organized there and having a meetinghouse built, now known as Mt. Vernon Church. She gave liberally of her time and means in support of this church and its first pastor, Elder W. T. Brown, now deceased. She remained a faithful member of that church until a few years ago, when dissensions arose and there was a withdrawal of that church from the doctrine of what is called "absolute predestination," and she, with several others, withdrew from that body and were organized into a church known as Mt. Lebanon Predestinarian Baptist Church. She was a strong believer in the doctrine of predestination, election and salvation by grace. Her home was a home for Baptist people, especially Baptist ministers who stood steadfast in the apostles' doctrine. She had been a sufferer for a number of years because of a broken hip, received in a fall from a vehicle, and could only get around on crutches, but bore her sufferings with christian fortitude. She passed from this world of trouble and sorrow Friday evening, August 17th, 1934, survived by her two children, Claudine and George Knaus, and three grandchildren, Floyd N., Robert J. and George M., all of Kansas City, Mo.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort to an interested congregation at the Lindsey Funeral Home, in Kansas City, on Sunday following her death, after which her body was taken to a cemetery in Kansas and laid in the earth to await, and be awakened in the power of the resurrection, when Jesus comes to take his saints up in the cloud of his Father's glory to ever praise his holy name.

Written by request.

W. L. HALL.

MORGAN V. PURDY died at his home in Spencerville, Ohio, February 9th, 1935, after several months' illness. Brother Purdy was born December 21st, 1865, near Millersburg, Holmes County, Ohio, the son of John C. and Margery Purdy. At the time of his death he was 69 years, 1 month and 19 days old. On April 10th, 1901, he was married to Jennie Hoel, to which union were born five children: Irene and Catherine, of Spencerville, Ohio, Dorothy, of Hammond, Ind., Evelyn, of Downers Grove, Ill., and Carl, of Berkley, Calif. Besides his wife and children, he is survived by four grandchildren, four brothers, three sisters and a host of other relatives and friends. Brother Purdy was always a believer in the faith, but did not become affiliated with the church until 1924, at which time he was baptized by Elder C. C. Bradford, at the Thompson Church, Putnam County, Ohio, and remained a faithful member until his death. He had been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES since the age of seventeen years, and was always a great lover of books.

The funeral services were held in the Salem Presbyterian meetinghouse, near Monticello, Ohio, and he was laid to rest in the Salem Cemetery. Services were conducted by his pastor, Elder Hugh Williams, assisted by Mr. James Sherer, of the Presbyterian denomination.

E. P. V.

SARA JOANNE LEDGRIDGE died at our home in La Grande, Oregon, December 19th, 1934, aged 4 months. She was our youngest granddaughter, and the youngest child of Owen and Princess Bond Ledgridge, of Union, Ore. She was taken with whooping-cough about five weeks before her death. Her parents were much concerned about the effects of this from the beginning, and did everything they could to ward off any serious trouble resulting from it, even bringing her to our home, where the constant care of skillful physicians could be had at any time. With all the care her mother, grandmother and the faithful woman physician could bestow her strength gradually failed under the strain of the hard coughing, and other related complications which from time to time developed, until her little frame gave way to the only relieving agency, which was death. It was distressing to hear her little painful moans which we could not relieve; but when at ease she would look around

with a brightness in her eyes, which would renew our hopefulness for her recovery, but we were disappointed. Her death was like falling asleep, but it is the sleep that will know no awakening to the realization of pain and sorrow such as we must continue in here. Her sorrows are over and her spirit has returned to the God who gave it. Her parents should not grieve because of this and the further thought, that God has taken for his own this babe he gave into their home for so short a time. Let your affections be more pointed toward this eternal home whence we are all hastening, and where this angel babe is crowned with immortality.

I made a short talk and prayer at the grave, after which the little body was laid to rest in the beautiful cemetery at Union, Oregon, December 20th, 1934.

A tribute to her memory from her grandparents,
(ELDER AND MRS.) C. W. BOND.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

"A friend in Detroit," Mich., $3; Mrs. Kate R. Forbes, Kans., $1; Mrs. M. Jamieson, Calif., $1; Durwood H. Bradley, Texas, $2; Mrs. Katie Ragan, Tenn., $1; H. M. Bowden, Mo., $1; Mrs. M. E. Kuns, Calif., $1; J. G. Almond, Ga., $1; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $2; R. W. O'Neal, Texas, $1; Unetta Hamilton, Mo., $2.

MEETINGS.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in March (31st). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

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IN

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ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

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All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California; every third Sunday at 526 West Nevada Street, Ontario, California; also on forth Sundays as the Lord permits, at 3516 Franklin Avenue, Riverside, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.

T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Sulphur Fork Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, meets the first Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m.

The Shelbyville Church meets the second Sunday of each month, at Shelbyville, Ky., 2:30 p. m.

The Cane Run Church, Turner's Station, Ky., meets the third Sunday of each month, 10:30 a. m.

The Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Ky., meets the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. Also Saturday business meetings. Believers in revealed religion, a sovereign God, predestination, unconditional election and salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER, Pastor.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 808 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one-half block west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 103. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1935. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ROMANS VI. 14.

"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."

In examining this very important portion of the word, it shall be our aim to inquire

1. What law is it ye are not under?

2. What advantage, if any, do those not under the law have over those who are under the law?

1. What law is it the children of God are not under? It is strongly indicated in our text that it is the law by which sin entered, that law which the apostle says is the strength of sin. (1 Cor. xv. 56.) It is very evident that whatever dominion sin has over the sinner, it came through the law. It was the design in giving the law that it should be so; for the law entered that the offence might abound, and thus sin was given regal power that it "reigned unto death," (Rom. v. 20, 21.) over every transgression under the law. And the apostle further indicates in our text that the only escape from the dominion of sin, and the fearful consequences which follow, is in being removed from under the law which gives sin its reigning power. Now this law was not only given to Adam, and by which sin entered, but was also promulgated from Sinai by Moses, being written and given on tables of stone with the finger of God. This was called "the covenant" and the "tables of testimony." We are told that all of the law and the prophets hung upon the first two commandments in the decalogue, and the Scriptures declare that the Lord added no more than the ten commandments. All of the obligations and duties of the creature man to his Creator, and to his fellow-man, as set out in the law and in the prophets, are embodied in these commandments. This law was first spoken by the Lord God unto Adam, and afterward unto all Israel out of the burning mountain, and the cloud and the thick darkness, before it was delivered unto them upon the tables of stone. This law was called the letter that killeth, "the ministration of condemnation," "the ministration of

death." (2 Cor. vi.) But the people were not able to endure the voice of the Lord as spoken in the law, and under the display of his terrible majesty they besought him that they not again hear his voice, neither see this great fire any more, that they die not. And the Lord said that they had well spoken, and he would raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, and would put his words in his mouth, "and he shall speak unto them all that I command him." The apostle says Christ is that prophet. The Father spoke from the cloud of his glory, on the mountain of transfiguration, and said, This is my beloved Son, hear ye him. Hence the gospel, which proceeds from Christ, and not the law, is the believer's guide. The original commandment spoken unto Adam is the great fundamental pronouncement of the Creator, which binds man righteously under every obligation that ever will or ever can subsist between the creature and his Creator. This is called "The law of sin and death," because by it sin and death were adjudged upon man when he became a transgressor. The ten commandments given from Sinai embody the same fundamental principles of righteousness and become the great constitution, in harmony with which, all statutes given under the approval of the great Judge of his creatures, must be drawn. It is emphatically declared that the Lord added no more. (Deut v. 22.) This was added because of transgression, until the seed (Christ) should come; and "entered that the offense might abound." Thus the predicate is laid, in the wisdom of God, for the numerous precepts under the law, which makes sin abound, that it might become exceedingly sinful; and for the superabounding of grace to be manifested. When the sinner is quickened by divine grace, every fresh view of the law awakens within him more and more of the sin and corruption of his heart and life, until they become so hateful to him, and so exceeding sinful, that every hope he has so fondly cherished in his self-righteousness utterly perishes; and as sin revives he dies. Thus sin experimentally reigns unto death by the strength of the law. But this is an assumption of power which does not in reality exist, for here grace ascends the throne, challenges both the right and dominion of sin, shows that all claims of the law have been satisfied, and boldly asserts that sin shall not have dominion over the quickened children of God, for they are not under the law, the source from whence sin has its reigning power, but under grace. The law was "holy, just and good," and answered perfectly the design of the great Law-giver. The law could condemn, but could not justify; it could kill, but could not give life; it could make sin abound, but could not produce righteousness; it could shed gloom and despair, but could not inspire hope. In the law Jehovah is revealed in terrible majesty, taking vengeance upon the transgressor; but showing no mercy. But the law was not designed to reign perpetually over those chosen to be heirs of salvation

through Christ. It was only their school-master unto Christ, but after faith is come they are no longer under a school-master; faith becomes their instructor, and henceforth it is by it they walk, live and obey; not the commandments of the law, but the glorious gospel of grace as directed by the Holy Spirit which guides into all truth. (Read Galatians iii. 23-25.) In the order of manifestation, the law was first and the gospel, of which Christ is the substance, is second. The Lord took away the first that he might establish the second. (Heb. x. 9.) It is impossible that we can serve two masters, therefore, "We are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held: that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."—Rom. vii. 6. Now because of terror which the law struck into the hearts of the children of Israel, they desired not to hear its words any more; and because of the unprofitableness of it in his designs of grace and mercy, the Lord not only commended their request by saying, "They have well spoken that which they have spoken," but he promised to raise them up a prophet from among their brethren and put His words in his mouth, and that he should speak unto them all His commands. (Deut. xviii. 17, 18.) Here is where Christ becomes the end of the law for righteousness to every believer, and God ceases to speak through the law, and communicates with them only through Christ. The first has been taken away completely and the second has been established. That which was shaken has been removed, and only that which cannot be shaken (the grace covenant) remains. The handwriting of ordinances which was against us, and contrary to us, has been blotted out, taken out of the way and nailed to his (Christ's) cross. Yes, poor trembling prisoners of hope, this law, this killing letter, this ministration of death and condemnation, shall not have dominion over you: you have been translated out from under its jurisdiction; and being safely intrenched behind the bulwarks of salvation, which the Lord has appointed for your everlasting defense, you may rest secure amid all the thunderings and lightnings and fire and smoke that may issue from Sinai, as the threatenings of the law are thundered forth against the offending creature. No charge can be lodged against your account; you have been elevated to that excellent relationship of sons of God, and are no longer regarded as servants of sin and under the law.

2. What advantage, if any, do those not under the law have over those who are under the law? Those who have been removed from under the law have been raised to a higher and holier relationship to God than that of creature to Creator; they stand in the relationship of children to parents: a relationship most noble indeed, and one which opens the door of access to the inexhaustible treasures of a munificent Father. "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ," is the assuring declaration of the inspired

witness. (Rom. viii. 17.) The children of the bondwoman (Sinai in Arabia, or the law covenant) are not thus favored, for the command is, "Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman."—Gal. iv. 30. Those who are under the law are "strangers and foreigners," are without hope and without God as a loving, tender Father or Covenant God; but when they are made nigh by the blood of Christ, they are no longer "strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God."—Eph. ii. 19. "As many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse."—Gal. iii. 10. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us."—Gal. iii. 13. The children of God are not under the law, neither are they required to obey the law; but "The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith." —Gal. iii. 11, 12. All obedience under the gospel covenant is the obedience of faith (Rom. xvi. 25, 26), and without faith it is impossible to please God. (Heb. xi. 6.) But the lay keeps a veil upon the hearts of all who are under its instructions (2 Cor. iii. 15), and keeps them shut up unto the faith which is revealed through Christ. (Gal. iii. 23.) Hence those who are under the law can neither please God, come to Christ, have access to grace, rejoice in the hope of glory, nor inherit the promises. Now if without faith it is impossible to please God, and they that come unto him must have faith by which they believe, and if only by faith we have access unto grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God (Rom. v. 2), and if it is of faith that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed (Rom. iv. 16), and the law is not of faith, it is certain the believer is not under the law, but under grace. The law is not made void through faith, but is established as having been fulfilled by Christ and taken out of the way, so that none of the rights of justice have been invaded.

Once more: The believer in Christ cannot be condemned: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death," says the apostle. (Rom. viii. 2.) And to the Roman brethren again he says, "Ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." —Rom. vii. 4. The truth established by the apostle in the foregoing argument is that only those who are not under the law can escape condemnation, and only in being dead to the law, and consequently from under its dominion, may they be married to Christ and bring forth fruit unto God. When the priesthood was changed there was made of necessity a change of the law; not a change IN the law, but a change OF the law; not a revision of the old law, but a taking away of the first and establishing the second. The first law and all the service under it was but a carnal commandment and the observance

thereof, which was not revised, but fulfilled and annulled because of the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. (See Hebrews vii. 12, 18.) The essential principles of righteousness upon which all of the law and the prophets hung, but which the law was too weak to enforce, are retained and embodied in the gospel which is here referred to as the "power of an endless life," and by this power the "righteousness of the law is fulfilled IN us," not BY us. as it must have been if fulfilled under the jurisdiction of the law.

"No precept clogs the gospel-call
But therein grace is all in all;
No law is here but that of grace,
Which brings relief in every case."

"Go, you that rest upon the law,
And toil and seek salvation there;
Look to the flame that Moses saw,
And shrink, and tremble, and despair.

But I'll retire beneath the cross—
Savior, at thy dear feet I'll lie;
And the keen sword that justice draws,
Flaming and red, shall pass me by."

Here alone, dear child of God, is security; here alone are the promises sure; here alone are hope, righteousness and peace; here alone are the obedience of faith and labor of love; here alone are power to perform and faithfulness to endure; here are all a poor sinner can need, and all the infinite and holy God can give. Seek no entangling alliances with the law, neither seek its counsels for your guide, but cast thyself at Jesus' feet and learn of him, and the Holy Spirit shall be your guide and lead you into all truth. "Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."

Yours in humble hope,

J. R. HARDY.

LA GRANDE, Ore., Jan. 9, 1935.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—It is my desire to contribute a small portion to the columns of the SIGNS, in token of appeciation and the comfort I get from the writings of others, if the Lord may bless me to do so acceptably.

The Scripture found in the fourteenth chapter and fifteenth verse of Exodus came to my mind as a comfort in my first concern as to what the new year had in store for me. The words are, "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward." This was said to Moses at the Red Sea, the sea in front of them and the Egyptian hosts behind them. On the day before the people had seen the Egyptians coming, and the sea made escape impossible, and death was all they could see, and reproached Moses for bringing them there. In answer to their fears and distress, Moses told them to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. To stand still here could only mean to be patient and wait for God's relief in this trying situation, from which they had no means to help themselves. Next, the command comes from God to go forward while there was still no way opened. In this situation we can see a true picture of helpless humanity in his extremity, and God's wisdom and power exercised in his salvation in a way, leaving nothing for man to boast of, and bringing honor and glory to God. At the time of the command to go forward even the angel of the Lord who had led them to this place had gone to the rear and stood between the Israelites and the Egyptians, so there was

none to lead in this impossible (to man) command. But there was provision for the safety of His people, though they knew it not, by the angel of the Lord standing between them and their enemies. Thus the angel of the Lord encampeth about the pathway of his saints, and the arrows of death may fly about them, but none can strike until it is God's purpose for them to do so. "God works in a mysterious way." Here we see how he led his people in a crooked way and brought them to an entangling situation which encouraged their enemies and destroyed all hope of escape in themselves. God did this that he might deliver them in a way that would bring honor to him from both the delivery of his people and the destruction of their enemies. God's work is a thorough work, leaving nothing incomplete, or with a probability of failure.

I have only briefly touched on the points brought out with such strength in the circumstances of the bringing of his people to, and the delivery across the Red Sea. It will be well for those seeking confirmation as to God's thorough work to read the account of this as given in the fourteenth and fifteenth chapters of Exodus. I shall apply the picture as given to a similar situation existing to-day in both natural and spiritual conditions facing us. We as a people and nation have received our substance from the fleshpots of Egypt; have traversed the various phases of life conditions from that of independence under the administration of our brother, Joseph, to the intolerable burdens of the taskmasters whom we had no means or power to satisfy. Our lives were being crushed out by the weight of bondage we labored under, until, we trust, the time of delivery has come from God, to reveal his glory and fulfill his promises to bring us to a better state of existence. With us, as with national Israel, there are all kinds of people composing our population. The godly and ungodly, the faithful and believing, as typified by Moses, Aaron and many others; the unfaithful unbelieving and wicked, as represented by the thousands destroyed for various offenses in the wilderness, until finally but two persons who left Egypt entered the promised land, and the time of the whole journey was forty years. But in all this time God led them; many times in circuitous, crooked ways, ways of thirst and famine, through conquests of enemies, proving his faithfulness and power, and the sure fulfillment of his promises. Our government has relieved the burden of financial bondage and we have progressed by a crooked route to the Red Sea, which is the confusion of methods, or way of further progress; here we have encamped, and, behold, we see the old taskmaster enemies coming in all their strength and organized power, hopeful to overtake and destroy us in this extremity. We must not lose sight of the vital point that every move taken, and every accomplishment, is a part of the development of the purposes of Jehovah. As the angel of the Lord led his people by a crooked route to this place, so he moved between the people and their enemies for protection until God's com-

mand to go forward. If God has given this command all the physical obstructions, no matter how impossible looking to us, or how strong in nature's laws to obstruct, they shall yield to the voice of the Master-builder, who is their Creator and always holds the purpose of their existence in his hand, subject to his eternal and unseen purpose, which is known to himself alone, and is being unfolded in the developments taking place. We firmly believe that all the confusion among the nations of the earth is because of the Divine mind working among the inhabitants to overthrow false ideas as to their power and the good which may be by the exercise of it. We have seen treaties of peace and commerce fail, the best plans and know remedies for depressions in the past have failed, and the wisdom of the wisest statesmen has but made the complications more difficult of solution, as we see it at this time. Surely we as a nation are encamped on the shore of the Red Sea, and our wants and necessities are crowding us from the rear, until the utmost resources of our government are necessary to stay the dreadful results. As in the case of the tower of Babel, when all their plans to build a way to heaven were overthrown by the wisdom of Jehovah, making it impossible for one to understand the language of another, so it seems to-day that nations cannot understand each other, and every misunderstanding is construed to mean delusion and treachery, so that armies and weapons of destruction such as never were known before are being constructed. But these will not solve the difficult problems. "The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the Lord." Man's extremity is God's opportunity. God begins where man's efforts end, and he does it that way to beget himself praise and honor, and that no flesh may glory in his presence. Man has never learned this yet, and the ministrations of God are mysteries to him in his natural existence and cannot be understood unless God himself opens the way for him to see and understand them. Let us feel hopeful that it has pleased our God to command us to go forward, as regards our temporal difficulties, for in every forward movement thus directed we are advancing on our pilgrimage journey to the land of promise, which we cannot yet contemplate, except to know that it is ahead and God has promised that we shall possess it.

I have here dealt with the mysteries of our temporal conditions, showing that in God's own time and way he will enable us to sing his praises for deliverance on the further side of the sea of difficulties, in which our enemies have been overthrown and destroyed. But when it comes to considering spiritual things we stand fronting a more impassible barrier than the Red Sea, but it is one just as easy for God to open and make a safe and sure way toward the blessings of immortality. This consists in giving life to the dead in trespasses and in sin and creating in them a new heart, new desires, together with a hatred for the former ideals. As we

see the religious ideas of mankind generally manifested in their preaching, their walks and conversations, it seems very few honor God above man and his ability to perform the vital work of advance from the natural to the spiritual mindedness. They cannot understand the Scripture, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." I cannot here go into the vast list of Scripture evidences to establish this truth, for those who are spiritual already are convinced, and are taught it by their great Teacher, the Holy Spirit, and those not thus taught cannot and will not know it until, like Saul of Tarsus, a light above the brightness of the sun shall shine in their darkened hearts. But applying our text to spiritual Israel, have we come in our journey to the Red Sea? and do we ever view with alarm the old taskmasters of Egypt pursuing us, bent on destruction, and no way of escape open to us? We have; and the terror and anxiety which fill us is even greater than those which temporal affairs can produce. God here commands us to go forward. "What doest thou here, Egypt?" was a reproof which called the people back to duty. God's people must go forward in the strength of the word which speaks unto them, and not by any powers they possess independently. Paul tells us to leave certain dead works and continue on until perfection. Peter says, Add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, etc. This is moving forward, and such admonitions are for the family of spiritual Israel. Let us press forward toward the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. We, like national Israel, are pilgrims on a journey. We have been started on this journey by the call of our God, and have left the land of our bondage, brought out by great demonstrations of power. The angel of the Lord is going before us, and the pillar of cloud, which is God's manifested providence, marks the way, and we can go in no other. We shall be led through many dangerous and trying ways, and our fears shall often crush us down, but at such times we shall feel the sustaining hand of our God, which is underneath, and he will never leave nor forsake us. He shall feed us on the manna from heaven, he shall sweeten the bitter waters, he shall fight our battles and overcome all our enemies, the last of which is death, and in the strength of immortality enable us to sing, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Who is like unto thee, O Israel? a people saved of the Lord.

Let us not be fearful and unbelieving because of the hidden purposes of our God not understood by us, but in faith and hope press forward toward the "city which hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God."

In love and fellowship for all the elect of God, I remain your fellow-laborer in tribulation,

C. W. BOND.

HOOKER, Oklahoma.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—The words found in the third chapter and eighth verse of John have been on my mind some to-day and I wonder if there is anything special in them to me. They read as follows: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." This is a passage very commonly quoted, and should be recorded as one most surely believed among us. The Savior was using the operation of the natural wind to teach and to illustrate to us something about the independent operation of the spiritual wind, or the quickening Spirit of God. Man can control neither one, yet he feels, hears and sees the effect of both. The natural wind has no mind of its own to operate "as it listeth," but this natural wind, like the Holy Spirit, is directed by the mind or will of God. We are not sure how or where the wind is first started into motion, neither can we find a place or time for it to stop. "So is every one that is born of the Spirit." The wind is sometimes said to blow toward a vacuum, or a thin, light space in the air. That may be caused by heat, or suction, etc. But what causes all the causes? Well, the Spirit most surely blows, or moves, toward an empty space. It is the hungry and thirsty who are to be filled. We are not told when or how Able was instructed to make a more acceptable offering than that of Cain, except it was done by faith, which is the gift of God. But the Spirit had blown upon Enoch, for he walked with God and God translated him. Yes, this is all done by the Spirit as it listeth. "So is every one that is born of the Spirit." We could go on and mention the visitation of the Spirit unto Noah, Moses, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, the prophets, the apostles and many other saints, and we would find none of them who caused the Spirit to call them or to blow upon them. At times, all through their lives, they heard the sound thereof, but could not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth. They reckoned it as coming from God, still they could not know why nor how it came to them and not to another. Neither did they know afterwards where it had gone nor when it might return. "So is every one that is born of the Spirit." Even Paul's being caught up into the third heaven, and the vision he saw, the wonderful revelation of John, and Peter's vision on the housetop, the same as hundreds of other visitations of the Spirit of God unto his saints, are only "as it listeth." If ever the Spirit of God blew upon this empty vessel it was when and from whence I was not expecting it. If the Scriptures were ever opened to me, or my mind opened so I could understand the Scriptures, it was done at dark and destitute times. The dead must be quickened, the lame made to walk, the blind must be given sight, the deaf made to hear and the lepers cleansed. We cannot ascend up to heaven to bring Christ down, nor descend into the deep to bring Christ up. Even the poor have

the gospel preached unto them. If we could control or dictate to the wind or the Spirit we would not be as one "ready to perish." Some may think that they can procure spiritual or grace blessings by their voluntary obedience unto the law. If so, then I have failed to get the meaning of Christ's illustration, and if the many miraculous healings and natural blessings given by Christ while in the flesh are to be taken as figures or illustrations of spiritual operations upon the souls of men I am ready to say, Lord, save me, or I perish. So is every one that is born of the Spirit. I have never been much interested, like some, as to what is active and what is passive in the obedience of the Lord's people. One thing most surely believed among us is, that if we bestow all our goods to feed the poor, and our bodies to be burned, if we have not charity it profiteth us nothing. And if we give our body a living sacrifice unto God we are only unprofitable servants. So it is the charity in our hearts that enlivens the service of God and makes our bodies active against our natural minds. Surely we are both active and passive in obedience as well as in disobedience, but not in the same way and at the same time. We are said to be both dead and alive at the same time. But not in the same sense of the words. We are weak and strong at the same time. Paul claimed to serve God and the flesh, or the law of sin. To be sure, the difference is between the Spirit of God and the spirit of man, or the fleshly nature of man, and is it not when one is most active the other is most passive? We know that it is the Spirit that quickeneth, or giveth life, and that the flesh profiteth nothing. We hope we are the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit, believe on Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh, yet we want the great gospel trumpet to continue to bloy *where it listeth,* and bear the glad tidings of great joy unto those who love the joyful sound, the pure gospel of the grace of God. So (helpless) is every one that is born of the Spirit.

E. G. WEBB.

OTTAWA, Kans., Dec. 22, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find a money order for two dollars to renew my subscription to the SIGNS another year. As last year, a Christmas present has enabled me to do this. The SIGNS is the only preaching or association with the household of faith I have, and I do appreciate it very much. Some of the writers I love for themselves, having been blessed to have met them in years past. Others I love for the truth they write, and I know they have been taught of the Lord. My heart is often deeply touched, sometimes it seems more than it can bear. The wonderful revelation of Jesus Christ to each one, as they tell it, perhaps in different words, different expressions, but the same Lord, the same faith. All gladly confessing their sins, their weakness, each looking unto Jesus for all their help all the journey through. They have learned vain is the help of man, and to have no confidence in the flesh. Oh the flesh is very weak!

My helplessness is so apparent; but it is our own weakness that brings us to the feet of the Savior and keeps us there.

"All things in earth, and all in heaven,
On thy eternal will depend;
And all for greater good were given,
And all shall in thy glory end.

This be my case, to all beside
Indifferent let my wishes be;
Passion be calm, and dumb be pride,
And fixed, O God, my soul on thee."

The above lines express what I would say better than I can. May the dear Lord keep us all very near to him in these perilous times when men's hearts are surely being tried.

I have serious heart trouble and this may be my last subscription, however, the Lord only knows. I wish to leave all in his hands.

(MRS.) ANNA McKINNEY.

CASEY, Ill., Feb. 17, 1935.

DEAR PUBLISHER:—I received your card, dated February 13th, 1935, in which you said you would continue to send me the SIGNS free of charge, which is kindness, and if ever I get so I can make money I surely will repay you, also you said you would publish my poor letter asking the brethren to help me. I am not worthy their notice, but since I received your card I have almost been stricken off the face of this earth. Last Thursday I had an attack of stomach and bowel trouble, which left me so weak I could hardly stand on my feet. It also affected my voice so for over six hours I could hardly speak above a whisper. My voice is better, but my fingers are drawn up so I can hardly write. But we are all in the hands of the Lord, and he is too good to do wrong, and though he slay me, yet will I trust him. I hope the brethren and sisters will help me. Not that I am worthy, but I want to get away from here, because these folks want a man that can make a hand, which I cannot do since I had anemia in 1930. I never regained my full strength, and then rheumatism set in in my left hip and leg so I can hardly walk. I do not know where this last attack will end, but the Lord's will be done. If the brethren and sisters back in New Jersey or New York will not have me, it may be that they will send me enough money so I can get back to Eureka, Kansas; but I would like it better if I could be among the brethren and sisters back there, if it is the Lord's will, for where they live let me live, and where they are buried there let me be buried.

You ask why the brethren out here whom I knew in my younger days do not help me. They have sealed up their testimony and have been called home, where this poor old sinner will soon be called, I hope. I feel to hope I have kept the faith and finished the course. Finally, brethren and sisters, be of good comfort, for Jesus has overcome the world for you.

MARCH 4th.—I received the March number of the SIGNS to-day and enjoyed its contents more than I can express in words. You do not know how much I appreciate your sending me the SIGNS without receiving any returns. I know I should not insist on your publishing my request for help from the brethren, for you have been doing more

than I deserve or am worthy of, but what else can I do? I am so crippled with this attack of rheumatism I am not able to make a hand on the farm. These people have been very kind to me since I came here last October, and I am staying here now because I have no other place to go. I have tried to get in the Old Baptist Home, but it seems that according to their rules they cannot take me in. I do not know what I am to do, for I have not much money and I will have to leave here by the first of April, that is sure. I have received some help from Elder R. Lester Dodson, and some from Elder G. E. Coulbourn, but not enough to last very long, and I cannot get work, for I am not able to make a hand, so unless the brethren can get me in the Old Baptist Home, or in some way help me so I can live, I will have to report my case to the Supervisor and be sent back to Eureka, Kansas, and when I get there I will have to go to the poorhouse among the unbelievers, because they have no relief committee there that I know of. It is a dark outlook for me. I have enough money in the Eureka bank to keep me for a year or more, but cannot draw it as the bank is closed. I wrote them recently, but they cannot pay it out until the share-holders order them to do so.

Your little brother in hope,

C. A. HUNT.

[If any of our readers wish to communicate with Elder Hunt, his address is Elder C. A. Hunt, care of J. E. Nickell, R. R. 1, Casey, Illinois.—Ed.]

Enloe, Texas.

Dear Brethren Editors:—I feel I want to write a few lines and thank you for sending me the Signs, for I do enjoy reading it. I am eighty-four years of age and not able to work. My health and strength have failed so that my weight is less than one hundred pounds. I have to stay indoors in the winter, but am able to get out some in the summer, and when I am able to go the good brethren carry me around to the meetings. I have been trying in my weak way to preach salvation by grace for fifty-eight years. I feel my time is nearing its end. Since my wife died (October 4th, 1930,) I have been staying with my son-in-law and daughter. They are very, very good to me, for which I feel thankful.

I feel I want to say a few words on the great and wonderful subject of salvation. Perhaps there has been more written and said about it than any other subject in the world, with more differences over it. Oh how wonderful it is to be saved, in that sweet home of glory. Let us see what condition man is in, see what he needs. The Bible says, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."—Rom. v. 12. "For as by one man's [Adam's] disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one [Christ] shall many be made righteous."—Rom. v. 19. "The wages of sin is death."—Rom. vi. 23. If man is dead in sin, how is he saved? "But the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."—

Rom. vi. 23. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."—Matt. i. 21. Yes, all the Father gave him; not the whole world. This Jesus is that Lion of the tribe of Juda that could move the seals and open the book with seven seals that John saw. "No man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon."—Rev. v. 3. Dear brethren, there were none in heavn that could die; it was all life and love in heaven. None in earth that could die and save himself from his own sins, much less save us from our sins. But Mary was found with child of the Holy Ghost. (Matt. i. 18.) Yes, there had to be one born from heaven, a combination one who could live and die at the same time. Our Savior, the only Savior, the Lord, said, "I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no savior."—Isaiah xliii. 11. He "even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)."—Eph. ii. 5. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."—Titus iii. 5. No wonder Paul said, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."—Eph. ii. 8, 9. Again, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9. Yes, it was given to his little children. But the question with me is, Am I one of them? "Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."—2 Tim. ii. 19. He says, "I am the Lord, I change not."—Malachi iii. 6. Dear brethren, if I am saved it is not because of anything I have done, or can do, but it is by the mercy and grace of the all-wise God, he who will dispose of all things according to his own will, for he is the Creator, Upholder and Disposer of all things. Let us give thanks to God for what he has done, is doing and will do for his children.

I must close. Love to all from your old brother, I hope,

W. H. TATUM.

HAW RIVER, N. C., March 11, 1935.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing two dollars for one year's subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. A very dear brother and Elder gave me a copy and I enjoyed it so much I would like to subscribe for it. I love the doctrine it stands for, and I love to see and hear the doctrine declared in its purity. When one comes preaching that God is unlimited in love, power and wisdom he is preaching a doctrine that will stand when the world is on fire. May God bless you in all your work, and keep you by his power.

Yours truly,

A. B. BARHAM.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1935.

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1 CORINTHIANS II. 10.

"For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

Sometimes we are made to bless the Lord for his goodness in that he hath destroyed the wisdom of the wise and brought to nothing the understanding of the prudent, for it is in most of us to seek after the wisdom of this world which cometh to nought. As we attempt to write this article we feel so foolish and ignorant that if we write anything of comfort it will be because "we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." The apostle has declared unto these brethren that their faith stood not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. They had been called into the fellowship of Jesus Christ and by God's power had been raised to newness of life. This newness of life differed very much from their former life in the world, and why? Because the Spirit of God had taken up his abode in them, as he does in all who are born of God, so that Paul could say, "Let no man deceiveth himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise." The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, yet how very often worldly wisdom lifts its head and we follow, and would follow forever, but for the searching of the Spirit. Oh how much we owe the Good Spirit, it is he who seals us to the day of redemption; it is he who takes of the things of Jesus and reveals them unto us. It is he who convinces us of sin. We would not know sin in its hideous loathsomeness but for the Spirit of God bringing our sins to our view. We would still love and practice sin but for the Spirit's teaching and leadings. If we know and feel that in us, that is, in our flesh, there dwells no good thing, it is the Spirit that has searched us out and we are freed only by the Holy Spirit from the reigning power of sin in any form. We say in any form, as there are many forms of sin. There is is fleshly wickedness and spiritual wickedness, both proceeding from the flesh. Paul tells us in Galatians that

the works of the flesh are idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; and he tells us that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Thus in the above list of the works of the flesh there are those things mentioned which prove the total depravity of man, yet man cannot know it, but by the teaching of the Spirit of God. It was the Spirit's work in David that made him to cry in Psalm fifty-one, "Have mercy upon me, O God. * * * * Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." To David, under the Spirit's teaching, sin became exceeding sinful, as it did also with Paul, though with Paul much of his sin was of a different nature, yet just as loathsome and filthy, because it sprang from a fleshly zeal. Paul had a zeal, but not according to knowledge. He wanted to do good, but all effort towards even that which man may deem goodness is vain without the Spirit, and his fancied goodness is the grossest kind of sin. David also was guilty of this kind of sin, for he knew as king that all Israel grieved because of the ark of God not being in its place, and David conceived the idea of fetching back the ark of God, which had been away for over twenty years. Surely it was good of David to do such a thing, but we feel from what took place that it was a fleshly zeal that moved David. He made a new cart, copying after the Philistines, without regard to a "thus saith the Lord." How many have made new carts since then at the dictates of the flesh, and where the flesh comes in at all into things belonging to the Spirit it is filthiness of the spirit, not filthiness of God's Holy Spirit, but filthiness of our spirit. Thus David by leaning to his own understanding was defiled, and though he and all the house of Israel played before the Lord on all manner of instruments, yet when Uzzah put forth his hand to steady the ark God struck him dead. Now, it is declared in God's word that "prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Thus all Scripture is inspired, and for gracious men to do or teach contrary to a "thus saith the Lord" is spiritual wickendness. David and Uzzah knew the letter of the word. In Numbers iv. it was written that the Kohathites were to carry the ark by the staves, and even they were not to touch it lest they die. David, being a subject of grace, was exercised by the Spirit over this matter and learned that God's word was the ordered way. No wonder when David saw God's righteous judgments that he was afraid of the Lord that day. It was such teaching that made Paul say, "Knowing the terror of God, we persuade men." After David had been taught by the Spirit's searching he could say, "None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for them hath the Lord chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him for ever." Let us continue with David a little longer. It is recorded that David

danced before the Lord with all his might, which led Michal to despise him in her heart. Michal, not led of the Spirit, judged according to the flesh and misinterpreted David's joy. If David uncovered himself, it was before the Lord. How good it is when through the searching of the Spirit we can uncover ourselves before the Lord, confessing our manifold sins. In answer David said, "I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight." What a wonderful evidence of the Spirit's work when one is *base in their own sight,* such always will be had in honor of God's dear saints. Thus the Spirit not only searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins of the children of men, but none can see the truth savingly unless it is spiritually discerned; that is, it must be made known to the soul by the direct and unaided teaching of the Spirit. Man teaching his neighbor to know the Lord is a NEW CART, and contrary to the Spirit's teaching, for the Spirit saith, "They shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them."

We have dwelt upon the Spirit's teaching all things, and now we would dwell upon the latter part of our text: "Yea, the deep things of God." Now these deep things of God are what God hath prepared for them that love him, and we attempt to speak of them, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. We have spoken somewhat about the Spirit's searching, but we would not have our readers think for a moment that the Spirit does not know all about us, or about the word and purpose of God. The Spirit knoweth all things. He is omniscient, but in this searching he leads us and opens our understanding, or as in another place God saith, to humble thee and to prove thee, and to know what was in thine heart, and he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know, that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live. There are many deep places in the earth. For instance, Solomon tells us, "The mouth of strange women is a deep pit: he that is abhorred of the Lord shall fall therein." Jonah was cast into the deep and went down to the bottoms of the mountains. The depth can only be fathomed by the Spirit. The depth of the lowest hell can only be known and felt by those to whom the Spirit reveals these things. Although many things relating to man are deep, as the depths of depravity of the human heart, which only the Spirit can and does reveal, yet how deep are God's ways and truth. How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out. Therefore, beloved, let us rejoice in those things that the Spirit makes known to us, remembering always that every word of God is true and that he is his own interpreter, and he will make it plain. The natural

man *knoweth not* the things of the Spirit, so only by and through the Holy Spirit in us can we know, and while the Spirit, being God, knoweth all things, yet in the saints he searches for them, and in them, and brings to their view and comprehension the mysteries of godliness, spoken of as the deep things of God. Thus the word of God is a deep that men cannot sound, yet by the Spirit in the inner man we do comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that we might be filled with the fullness of God. Paul tells us of the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and that he was made a minister by the grace of God, though feelingly less than the least of all saints, that he might by the Spirit make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God. Hid in God's purpose and revealed unto us by his Spirit. We find in "old time" when prophets spake as they were moved by the Spirit that they inquired and searched diligently, searching what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. Evidently such characters who have the Spirit are those of whom it is written "they that seek shall find," for Peter tells us, "Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into." Angels desire to look into, unto us it is revealed, and how truly blessed we are to be such objects of God's love and mercy. What a deep is the love of God. His electing love to choose such as we, and what a deep is the love of Christ, who loved me and gave himself for me, and what a deep is the mercy of God, and poor sinners know only just so much as is revealed to them by the searching Spirit of God. The glorious person of Jesus as God incarnate, can only be seen and felt when we are in the Spirit and he is spiritually discerned. Paul's understanding in the mystery of God came in no other way. Men may go to college, or read the writing of men, yet such things cannot be gotten there. There was a man whose father would make him a minister, and so sent him to college, where after a time his health became impaired, and his physician sent him to the country to get back his health. While walking through the plowed fields with the farmer, the farmer told him he had been meditating on the unsearchable riches of Christ. The would-be preacher said he did not see anything unsearchable in Jesus Christ. He had been to college but could not see what the poor farmer could see, for the Spirit had revealed unto him this deep thing of God. Some time afterwards the young man said, "My father

sent me for three years to college to study to be a minister, but God sent me to a poor farmer, and I learned more in that conversation in a few minutes than I did in the years at college." Yes, dear brethren, it is a deep thing that God would hide these things from the wise and prudent and reveal them unto babes. G. R.

MATTHEW XXIV. 12.

"AND because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."

A brother in Houston, Texas, asks our views on the above. There are different words used in the Scriptures to signify sin, evil, wickedness, etc. Each of them have a special significance, because the Holy Spirit in writing the Scriptures always uses the right word in the right place. No expression anywhere in Scripture is without its pertinent meaning. In the case of the passage above, "iniquity" means "lawlessness." Thus, it signifies rebellion against restraint, lack of respect and of tolerance for law and order. The fact that lawlessness is to be an accompaniment of conditions in the closing days of the age just immediately preceding the return of the Son of Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, it is given as the cause for the love of many growing cold. This love that is to grow cold is certainly not the love of God for his people, for the love of God knows no abatement. Neither does it mean the love of those who are really and vitally God's believing people. Devotion to the truth and to one another in the fellowship of the truth, will without doubt increase in proportion as those who are merely nominal professors of that love fall away from it. The tribulation incident to the times which will characterize the closing days of the present dispensation, will draw together closer those who are in heart the "very elect;" but this same tribulation will be entirely too painful for those who are merely pretenders, and they will part company with those with whom they have been in name only associated. Tribulation and persecution on account of the truth have always separated the wheat from the chaff, and will proceed to do so even more in the closing days of this age in which we now live. Tendencies which have all along been in evidence throughout this dispensation since it first began, will become more and more intensified as the shadows of evening-time become more and more drawn out. Wars there have been, and rumors of wars. Nation rising against nation has been no new thing in all the history of Gentile times. False prophets have been plentiful, and many lo heres and lo theres have always abounded. Yet all these things which have so much characterized our era, will become more and more prominent in the last days. The discourse of Jesus in Matthew twenty-four especially applies to the days of tribulation immediately to precede the return of him who in this discourse calls himself the Son of Man. Even in this our day we can see whole nations given over to lawlessness, a law unto themselves with no regard for the rights of individual man nor for the basic laws upon which their governments were founded. Not only among the criminal classes is seen

this lawlessness, but even among those responsible for the administration of public affairs. Selfishness, covetousness and greed provide the motive power for much that goes on these days, regardless of public welfare or the honest and conscientious performance of public duty. These tendencies are not to grow less as the age ends its history, but will become accentuated and intensified until the coming of the Lord shall bring well-deserved judgment upon them. This must be so or else the prophecy of our blessed Lord in Matthew twenty-four would not be true. Nor can it rightly be said that this discourse of his applied only to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A. D. and to the conditions preceding that event. If Matthew twenty-four has already had its complete fulfillment in the tragedy that overtook Jerusalem and the Jews almost two thousand years ago, then Matthew twenty-four would have no further meaning for either us or for Israel, and would be a dead letter containing no interest to us now except as an outmoded antique. Such a thought is irreverent to the word of God. Such an interpretation belittles the vital importance of holy Scripture. The truth is this: that no matter what previous fulfillment Matthew xxiv. 12, and its context may have had, its full verification will be seen very plainly and vividly by those whose lot it may be to be on this earth in the days immediately preceding the coming of the Lord. This discourse of our blessed Lord is a scathing denunciation of those who today hold the view that the world is to get better and better until the end comes. Our Lord paints here quite a different picture from that. Conditions are to become worse and worse until there shall be the necessity for the visitation of divine judgment to end it all. The kind of love that is to grow cold is described in 2 Timothy iii. "Men shall be lovers of selves." Being so, self will come before all else, even before their wives and children, even before their duty to society and country. "Without natural affection." What can this mean but that home ties will be greatly relaxed, the home neglected, family bonds broken up? The institution of the family has always been one of the main safeguards of decency and of order. With the family gone, children the property and wards of the state, wives and husbands living apart, what can result but confusion more and more confounded? The very fact that lawlessness is to be more and more multiplied, defiance of morality and order more and more tolerated, will cause the love of many, perhaps of the most, to grow cold. The love of home and family, the love of honor and principle, the love of truth and right will wane as lawlessness increases. Then shall plainly be made evident those in whose souls is the love of God which cannot possibly grow cold. It will be a winnowing time, a harvest time, a threshing time; a time when the chaff of false profession will be exposed, when godliness in form but not in power shall ripen to the full for its well-merited judgment.

H. H. L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MRS. JANET C. BEEBE, wife of the publisher of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, departed this life at Horton Memorial Hospital, Middletown, N. Y., March 20th, 1935. A complete obituary notice will be published in our May issue.

NANCY CATHERINE GARTON, daughter of the late Gideon and Arminta Wood, was born December 27th, 1861, in Leavenworth County, Kansas, and departed this life at her home, near Garber, Oklahoma, January 19th, 1935, ged 73 years and 23 days. In the spring of 1875 she, with her parents, moved to Jefferson County and settled near Williamstown, where she grew to womanhood, and where on the 24th day of September, 1882, she was united in marriage to Uriah Garton, of her immediate neighborhood. To this union were born seven children, six boys and one girl, one boy departing this life in infancy. In the fall of 1893 she, with her husband and children (consisting then of two boys and one girl), moved to Oklahoma, where they suffered all the privations incident to a pioneer life, but where through untiring energy and by the blessings of a kind Providence they succeeded in procuring unto themselves a comfortable home. Those surviviing her of her immediate family are her aged husband, Uriah Garton, her five sons, Clarence, of Garber, Earl, of Long View, Texas, Walter, of the home address, Roy, of Covington, Okla., Jube, of Garber, Okla., and the daughter, Mrs. Grace Barkett, of Billings, Okla. There are nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Besides these, she is survived by five brothers and two sisters, two of the brothers, the oldest and youngest, T. G. Wood and O. L. Wood respectively, of Bellingham, Wash., L. A. Wood, of Mulhall, Okla., J. M. Wood, of Greyman, Okla., and W. B. Wood, of Mulhall, Okla. The sisters, Mrs. Laura Wiss, of Mulhall, Okla., and Mrs. L. L. Schenck, of Williamstown, Kans.. Besides these there are many other relatives and friends and neighbors who mourn her passing. In the fall of 1933 she, with her husband and one son, united with the Old School Baptist Church at Topeka, Kansas, and were baptized by Elder L. L. Schenck. Sister Kate, as we knew her, with her husband, had been for many years strong adherents to this faith, dating their experience back forty years, but, like the children of Israel, were led about in the wilderness forty years until it pleased the dear Lord to give them strength to go home to their friends and tell them how great things the Lord had done for them and had compassion upon them. After their uniting with the church there was a call made by the several members of the Kansas Association scattered throughout Oklahoma to constitute them into a separate church. Agreeable to this request, we met at the home of sister Garton on Saturday before the second Sunday in May, 1934, and constituted a church consisting of seven charter members, of which she was one. A short time after this sister Garton was stricken with pneumonia fever, but rallied sufficient to get around some, but never regained her normal strength, and when the chilling blasts of winter came on it found her in a very weakened condition. She contracted the flu, which soon developed another attack of pneumonia, which soon bore her away. She died in glrious triumph of the faith she professed. It is due her to say she was a faithful wife and a devoted mother, and reared a respectable family. She was a loyal neighbor, and was a dear sister in Christ. She has fought a good fight, she has kept the faith, she has finished her course, and there is now laid up a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give her at that day, and not to her only, but unto all those also who love his appearing. Under these conditions we give her up, and with this blessed hope we laid her to rest in the cemetery at Mulhall, Oklahoma. I was called to preach her funeral, which was held from the home in the presence of a large concourse of people, whose presence attested the high esteem in which she was held. We sorrow, but not as others who have no hope. May the dear Lord comfort those who mourn. May he bind up the broken-hearted. May he proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. To this end he was anointed. May he enable one and all to look unto him for strength and comfort, is my prayer.

L. L. SCHENCK.

N. B. BIRD, Sr., was born in Lowndes County, Alabama, and moved to Union Parish Louisiana, with his parents when he was seven years old, and as best I remember his father died on the way to this country, at any rate, he had the early care and responsibility of his mother and family. He grew to manhood in Union Parish, and was united in marriage to Miss Martha Jane Glasco. To their union were born eleven children, six of whom preceded him in death. He joined Liberty Hill Church of the Primitive Baptist faith, in the community where he was raised, and lived a life commendable to all I ever heard speak of him. He was ordained a deacon and was widely known, not only becuse he was a deacon with rare influence and ability and counsel, but he was a great singer and he instructed his children in singing so that they were widely known for their musical talents. He also is well remembered for his musical inclination and a great scriptorian. He was wonderfully blessed with a high degree of intelligence and firmness, and possessed great ability in good, sound counsel.

Among many other of his hardships in life, he was in the great war between the States. He was in the great battle and siege at Vicksburg, and the Yankees, as they were called, finally had to starve them into surrendering. I have heard him tell of those great hardships, which would seem to us impossible. He moved from Union Parish to Union County, Arkansas, and became a member of Bethel Church, where he was loved and esteemed as a faithful member and deacon as long as he lived, or until May 15th, 1914, when he died, and was buried in the Bethel Primitive Baptist Cemetery. His survivors at the time of his death were, Mrs. Alpha Rhodes, Mrs. Roba Amason, Mrs. Effie Telford, Mr. Bob Bird, Mr. Joe Frank Bird, his widow, Mrs. Martha Jane Bird and about thirty grandchildren. It is sad to give up our loved ones, but it is the purpose of almighty God, who holds the keys of death and hell, and who will finally destroy literal death and bring again, at the sound of the last trump, those who sleep in death. His mighty power will shake and crumble the mountains and the earth, together with the heavens, and all those who sleep in the dust shall rise and come forth in the glorious likeness and blessed image of our dear Redeemer, those that have done good unto the resurrection of life and peace, and those who have done evil unto the resurrectin of damnation. We long for that glorious time, when we feel we will be free from sin, sickness, sorrow, pain and death, and, dear, loving kindred, I feel sure it will not be long until it will be over with and all who love the Lord will dwell in his peaceful presence for ever and ever.

Written by his grandson.

ALSO

MRS. MARTHA JANE GLASCO BIRD was born November 13th, 1846, in Union Parish, Louisiana. She was united in marriage to N. B. Bird, and to them were born eleven children, six of whom preceded her in death. She was a loving and faithful wife, mother, grandmother and neighbor. She lived and died a consistent member of the Primitive Baptist Church, her membership being with Bethel Church, Union County, Arkansas, at the time of her death. She endured many hardships in life, as other faithful wives and mothers do, but her greatest grief and strain was while her husband was in the great siege and battle of Vicksburg. Her home was a pleasant place to visit, for she was so loving and cheerful. She was stricken with paralysis about ten or twelve years before she died, and was an invalid for that length of time, but always bore her affliction with great patience and cheerfulness, until on February 3rd, 1930, the blessed Lord saw fit to take her out of her suffering. She was buried in Bethel Cemetery by the side of her husband. She left five children, forty-one grandchildren, fifty great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren. We do not weep for her as those who have no hope, for we feel from the many evidences she left among us that she possessed a sweet hope of eternal peace and rest in the blessed presence of the glorious Redeemer.

Written by her grandson.

ALSO,

JOHN ARCHIE RHODES was born March 7th, 1902, in Union Parish, Louisiana. He joined the New Hope Primitive Baptist Church when he was eighteen years of age. He was known to be an exceptionally good boy, who did not quarrel or grumble with or against any one or anything. He was married when about twenty-two years of age to Miss Kate Mitcham, and to their union were born two children: Mary Catherine, who is six years old, and James, three years. Dear brother John was, at least for quality and disposition, the best one of our family. He had no enemies, and no one ever heard any one say anything against him. He was a consistent member of the church and loved the good old songs. He could tell you almost any song's number that was ever sung in his hearing. Amng many other hardships he suffered while in this low ground of sin and sorrow was being kidnaped by a mob of ruffins and bootleggers, who mistook him to be employed by the law. They carried him away and beat him until he was nearly dead. He was so widely appreciated that the citizens of the county contributed money enough to secure evidence and hire the best legal talent that could be secured to prosecute and convict his assailants. He contracted the dreaded disease typhoid fever, and on July 23rd, 1933, died, leaving his wife, two children, mother, father, twelve brothers and sisters and a host of friends and other relatives to mourn his absence, but we feel and trust he is better off.

His brother,

R. W. RHODES.

MRS. JANET CAMPBELL was born in March, 1848, and died September 17th, 1934. She was the last one of a family of ten children born to Archibald McDonald and Catherine Campbell, who lived near the village of Duart, in Orford township. I have not the date of her marriage to Archibald Campbell. To that union were born four daughters and one son, two daughters and one son living, also five grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Sister Campbell united with the Covenanted Baptist Church, at Duart, the fourth Sunday in June, 1885, and was baptized the same day by her pastor, Elder William Pollord. About the year 1896 they moved to near the Dunwich meetinghouse, where they entertained many brethren and friends at our May meeting for many years. Faithful and untiring was she in ministering of the carnal things to the dear servants of God who ministered to her spiritual needs. She lived to see three pastors laid to rest before her. They lived a short distance from our home and very many profitable visits we had together, and I felt the sweet admo-

nitions of Paul to the Ephesian brethren were ours to heed and enjoy: "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. * * * *Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." And, my dear brethren, could we all heed more and more the precious and solemn warnings and admonitions given out for the Lord's poor and afflicted people. Dear sister Campbell felt to be a slow learner in the school of Christ, and felt the only way she learned obedience was by the things which she suffered, and since her husband's death, about eight years ago, her path led through the deep waters and through fiery trials, which kept her a beggar poor at mercy's door, and it was a mercy to sit and witness to her joy in tribulation when the power of God rested upon her, and to hear the pleadings of her soul to him to come and take her to himself. Truly she was weary of this life. After a week of suffering from a stroke of paralysis she entered into rest, at the home of her son-in-law, Duncan McIntyre. She shall see her dear Redeemer with the raptured eye, for he said we shall see him as he is, and be like him. When this mortal shall put on immortality, these vile bodies shall be raised and fashioned like unto his own glorious body. She was buried in the Duart Cemetery by the side of her husband. Her pastor, Elder George Ruston, whom she loved and who often cheered her lonely way, spoke from the thirty-seventh Psalm, thirty-seventh verse, ably setting forth the only perfect man, Jesus, and we sang her favorite hymn: "God moves in a mysterious way," etc. May God comfort the mourning ones, draw them with the "cords of a man, with bands of love."

Written by request,

(MRS.) JOHN McPHAIL.

THE Middleburg Old School Baptist Church and the community where he lived and was known and loved so well, has lost a valuable friend in the sudden death of **VOORHIS C. BELLINGER,** which occurred in a hospital at Schenectady, New York, following an operation, February 19th, 1935. Mr. Bellinger had been ill of appendicitis and gall bladder trouble, and operative measures seemed the only means of positive relief, after Mr. Bellinger had suffered several days in hope of recovery without resort to surgical aid. The funeral services were held at his late home, in Lawyersville, near Cobleskill, N. Y., February 22nd, the writer officiating, and endeavoring to speak words of comfort from the twenty-third Psalm. The interment was in the Slate Hill Cemetery. Among the immediate survivors are his wife, two children, Woodrow and Margaret; one brother, Cory Bellinger, of Schenectady, N. Y.; three sisters, Miss Bertha, of Scotia, N. Y., Mrs. Edith Kimmey, of Johnstown, N. Y., and Mrs. Flora Hocking, of Scotia, N. Y. The subject of this notice was born December 13th, 1885, at Seward, N. Y., and spent his life in that vicinity. In 1907 he was united in marriage to Miss Lulu M. Putman, of Seward, who proved to be all that could be desired of a noble wife and loyal companion. They made their home on the farm formerly owned and conducted by his father. Mr. Bellinger lived up to the traditions of the honorable Bellinger family, which has left an impress and influence for good in that community. He was a man of many splendid qualities, broad in his viewpoints, widely read, a lover of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus and a constant reader of the Bible. He believed firmly in salvation by grace and in the predestination of all things. He attended the services of the Old School Baptists whenever it was possible for him to do so, and icy or muddy roads, or the inclemency of the weather never prevented him from meeting with the brethren. His home was open to those of the Old School Baptist faith, and it was his delight to converse upon things of a scriptural nature. His humility was as marked as his hospitality, and his generosity in material things, and in time and labor, were equaled only by his zeal for the cause of Christ The integrity of his character was an example and an inspiration. He never felt worthy of asking a home with the church he loved so well, but in his talk and conversation he bore the marks of grace. The large number that gathered at the funeral services bore silent evidence of the place he had in many hearts. Our sympathy is extended to the bereaved relatives.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

POETRY.

"BE THOU MY STRONG HABITATION."

(PSALMS lxxi. 3.)

Sometimes I trust the Lord and feel his presence near me,
I lean on him and do not walk alone;
He leads me then into his fields for gleaning,
And in my heart his precious word is sown.

I feel then, that his promises unfailing
Will keep and guide me all this journey through;
That though my path seems often rough and weary,
Yet God through Christ for me all things can do.

I learned to trust him, led o'er stormy pathways,
But still he kept me as the apple of his eye;
And when my strength was spent, or I was falling,
He flew on wings of love to heed my cry.

The mother eagle when her young she's teaching,
Takes one stick, and then one more away,
Until the birds must fly to keep from falliing,
But she remains nearby to be their stay.

And if they weary grow, or start to weaken,
She soars beneath and bears them for a bit,
Till they are rested, then again she leaves them,
And fly they must, or sink into the pit.

And so the Lord does sometimes lead his people,
As he did Jacob 'mid wilderness;
He leads them round and teaches them to trust him,
And nowhere else they go can they find rest.

But sometimes I forget God is my refuge,
My feet forbidden paths are apt to stray;
His mercy and his grace are all forgotten,
I want some trifle, or to choose my way.

Then all is dark, and I am sad and restless,
I'm full of unbelief, and lame, and blind;
I need again to have the great Physician
Bring peace, and joy, and healing of the mind.

But he is gone, I seek for my Beloved,
And ask in Zion's streets where he can be;
There's no one else can bring to me deliverance,
He's chiefest of ten thousand unto me.

His face is hidden, and I seek him weeping,
That I should often so unfaithful prove;
He changes not, but I need mercy always,
I'm all unworthy of his care and love.

And though the night seems long, the morning cometh,
The Sun of Righteousness he does ariise;
He brings to me sweet peace and joy and healing,
He's like the Rose of Sharon in my eyes.

And thus I know by past experience given,
I'm poor, and blind, and wretched, and unclean;
It's only when Christ's righteousness is o'er me
That I'm fit or worthy to be seen.

He wove a robe of linen, pure and spotless,
To cover all his people here below;
And when they're found beneath his garment walking,
They're poor and needy, sinners all, they know.

O God, be thou my habitation, thou my refuge,
My rock and fortress, into which I run;
When waves and billows threaten to o'erwhelm me,
There's only One can help me, only One.

I'd praise his name, for he alone is worthy,
Unto the ones who trust him he's a tower;
To him belong all honor and dominion,
And glory, majesty, praise and power.

FLOSSIE FAULKNER.

ALLABEN, New York.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

E. H. Winchell, Mich., $3; A. E. Clark, Kans., $2; J. N. Hill, Ill., $3; Elizabeth Y. Mace, Pa., $3; Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Okla., $2; Althia A. Drake, N. J., $1.

MEETINGS.

The First Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, New Jersey, will have an all-day meeting on Sunday, April 28th, 1935, in celebration of the two hundred and twentieth anniversary of the organizing of the church. Services to commence at 10:30 a. m., Daylight Saving Time. We expect Elder Arnold H. Bellows and probably one or two more ministers with us. All lovers of the truth are invited.

DAVID M. VOORHEES, Church Clerk,
R 1, PENNINGTON, New Jersey.

As our pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, expects to be away the fourth Sunday in April, the time and place of the meeting of the Middleburg Old School Baptist Church for that month cannot be announced in the April SIGNS, but the notice will be given at local meetings conducted by Elder Bellows.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California; every third Sunday at 526 West Nevada Street, Ontario, California; also on forth Sundays as the Lord permits, at 3516 Franklin Avenue, Riverside, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.

T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 103. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1935. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ASHEBORO, North Carolina.

DEAR EDITORS:—I was born in Randolph County, North Carolina, on the nineteenth day of September, 1854. Before I was two years old my parents, W. F. and Massah Trogdon, moved to Surrey County, North Carolina. I will state a little occurrence that came to me while living in Surrey. Father and mother carried me to Grassy Knob schoolhouse, where there was preaching. I was not more than two years of age. Since my infant days, I have never remembered anything that occurred that day except what I here relate. I suppose mother was out of the house with me. The first that has ever been in my memory, we were walking up the aisle to our seats, I looked up in mother's face and saw the tears running down her cheeks; I thought she was crying and wondered what was the matter with her. My eyes were at once directed to Austin Cassell, who was preaching. He was standing with one hand raised and his eyes glancing upward. He had a lovely appearance to me. A pleasant solemnity of feeling came over me which I cannot express. I have thought it might be my inquiry of mind about mother was answered in this way, that my heart was pervaded with the pleasant feeling which my mother was enjoying. The above made such an impression on my heart that, as my parents said, soon after this meeting, while suffering from a bad burn, I cried for them to send for Austin Cassell. I have always remembered this little incident related, and leave it for what it is worth.

Before I was five years old father moved his family back to Randolph County, where I have spent the greater part of my life. When I was very young a heavy burden came upon me concerning death. It seemed to me if, up to this time, I had possessed any knowledge of the Supreme Ruler, or his protecting hand that saves us from the many dangers which we daily pass through, that such knowledge was en-

tirely absent at this time. If it had been possible to have been placed in a world where everything was by chance, the reality and horrors of such a world could not have been more vivid to me than in the picture which was before me day and night when awake. All the dangerous diseases, the bites of poisonous living creatures, the many so-called accidents, etc., seemed to be presented to me at once. Such questions as these came into my mind: Why did I, or any one, escape one danger in the midst of so many? Why was there a world with a people liable to be taken by death any moment? Why were the people at ease while I was so miserable? Go where I might, or do what I would, the burden was with me. At morn I wished for the night, at night I wished for the morning, hoping that when I fell asleep all my burden might be lost and I awake without it. But sleepless hours must be passed in the most miserable condition, with the many dangers before me in which life might be suddenly taken, and no way of escape, except as chance might appear favorable. How little did the thread of this dependence appear, for if escape came one moment death might come the next. Instead of losing this burden in sleep, as I often hoped, as soon as I awoke all met me with the same force as before sleep came to my eyes. Deep as was this trouble, I cannot exactly tell just how or when it left me, but it seems to me the power of an unseen hand over all things could not have been more manifest than it was to me after the experience I had just passed through. When I became a sufficient reader to read my father's pocket Testament I read it more than anything else. Much of my learning to read was from reading the Testament, my mother pronouncing words for me when I failed to. I had no deep conviction of sin, yet there were struggles of mind to live a better life, which were met with disappointment in every effort. I remember one evening, while reading the Testament, I arrived at perfection in my imagination. I thought, Yes, I am reading the Bible. I will do nothing wrong; no, not so much as to give mother a cross word. While in this muse, I was suddenly surprised to find myself grumbling and resisting her wishes. What a shock! My vow was broken before my book was laid down. I cannot give dates, but what I am stating are incidents during childhood. Of a truth the time is not in my memory when I did not have serious thoughts. One of the things sacred in my memory of childhood days is of my parents often engaging in reading, singing and prayer before they retired. When it was apparent that father was about to omit the service, I would get his books, without a word, and go softly towards him. He would look up so humbly at me, reaching out his hand for the books. That look I shall never forget. Why it was I cannot tell, but I loved the services and loved to fall on my knees with my parents. During my youthful days I had such knowledge of an all-wise, powerful One that I often stole away to some secret place to ask for deliverance from some sorrow of our family, which

all, as creatures of time, are heir to. Although I often felt that it was in his power to grant or deny, I tremblingly went, fearing he would deny, and if he did I had nowhere else to go. As I grew, with all my anxieties and serious thoughts, I felt that the God that ruled must perform all the work for the sinner; I felt to be helpless and seemed as one waiting. At one time I decided to try praying once a day, thinking that would make a change in my condition. I attempted three evenings in succession. I do not remember the words I uttered, but oh the dry formality seemed unbearable. I hungered for that I did not receive. Thus I left off. I was then twelve or thirteen years old, and can only say my soul was much exercised for years, having experiences too tedious to mention. I well remember hearing my mother telling how precious the Savior was to her and of her love for him. The inquiry arose in my heart, Can you say what your mother says? Do you love him? It seemed there was the greatest darkness in me. I sighed over my wretched condition. I mention this because of the difference between then and now. Although I did not have the deep convictions of sin I afterwards had, yet I was miserable much of the time, but could not tell why. But in my early years it seemed to me there was a lesson in what I passed through, and I was being led by the unseen Hand to realize what a seat of corruption my heart was, and that I was lost without the merey of God. I remember reading the Bible through in my eighteenth year, thinking to do this every year thereafter. I read it through again the next year, but the day I finished it I closed the book with a heavy heart, and thought, If my feelings remain as dark as now I can never read it again. The book seemed perfectly sealed to me. The fourth Sunday in May, 1873, I went to Sandy Creek Church, this being the day for communion. Elder S. J. Lackey was present, but I found nothing in his preaching. As he broke the bread and poured the wine the deep solemnity of his countenance, how can I ever forget it? I was a poor, wretched sinner, without hope or God in the world. I broke down in tears. It seemed I could not leave without speaking to Elder Lackey, but was too miserable to approach him. As we started home father turned aside to bid him farewell. Much as I desired to go to him I could not, and stopped some distance away, when father said, Here is my daughter, she wants to speak to you. How father knew it I could not tell, for I had not uttered a word regarding my wish. When the minister took my hand the tears ran down my cheeks and I turned hastily away, at which he said to me, Choose that good part that Mary chose. Twelve months rolled on without any manifestation of Jesus as my Savior, but oh the searchings as to whether my exercises of soul were those of a poor sinner under the special dealings of God. It seems to me I would have been willing to have suffered the most horrible tortures of grief if I could have believed it to be God's work. With all, it seemed to me my condition was alto-

gether outside of anything else that had ever been. I felt there was more hope for the worst criminal on earth than there was for me. How well do I remember the place I resorted to during the last months of bondage and tried to pour out my soul to God. One evening when I failed to eat supper my mother seemed so worried that I left the house crying, feeling that if mother knew my condition she would not wonder at my failure to eat. Truly I could have said with one of old, There is no sorrow like my sorrow.

On Monday morning, June 6th, 1874, I started to work at some distance from the house, and as I came to a short descent into a narrow valley my burden left me. I saw no wonderful vision, neither were there words sounded to me as many have expressed, but it seemed there was a vivid manifestation of a release from fetters, and I was given hope which has never at any time since been entirely gone, but has been, and is, more precious than anything else besides. When my burden left me I cried out in these words: "Glory to God be given, glory to God in the highest." If I said other than these words it is not in my memory, but I repeated them over and over. Had I been in the presence of many, it seems to me I could not have refrained from speaking aloud, but I was alone. I thought when I went home to dinner to tell mother my joy, but I did not. It was not from any suggestion of fear, but mother's mind was so much on her work that I thought it best to wait until some other time. I returned to my work for the afternoon, and about two o'clock a suggestion of fear that I might be mistaken came to me. It came as a cloud passing over the sun, with the exception that the day was one of joy until about sunset. The sun shone with a mildness I had never seen before, and all things seemed calm and serene. But when the evening came my heart was filled with fear that I was deceived. I sought a place and asked the Lord that if I was deceived he would make it known to me. While on my knees my attention was called to the fact of the difference in my petition now and what it had been before. I knew there had been some kind of a change, but oh was it what I so much desired? I passed some months with this load of fear, but did not feel the binding of such fetters as I had for so long felt previous to the morning of that June day. Oh such a cloud of fear hung over me for months! One day I opened to the hymn beginning, "Now begin the heavenly theme; sing aloud in Jesus' name." When I read the hymn my heart was at once filled with the sweetness of the theme which was with me on that beautiful June day. Oh the words, "Redeeming love, redeeming love!" I read again and again the words. There was a sound in them most precious, and has been lastingly precious, and, if not deceived in the whole matter, it seems to me will ever be. He hath "delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us," for "his mercy endureth for ever." How precious are these words to the poor sinner who hopes that mercy has

been once bestowed and his inward groanings are still for it.

Long before I had a hope I thought that when one was given hope in the mercy of God that one ceased to cry for mercy. How ignorant! For of a truth the saint never ceases to need his mercy, for which there will be the cry. It seems to me that no words are more expressive of inward groanings than Lord, have mercy on a vile sinner, for it is only with the realization of being a hateful sinner that one approaches the throne of holiness for mercy. "In his light," we know that God, in justice, might have banished all forever, but love embraced a remnant when as culprits all were bound in fetters. I love to linger here, but must try to return to my story.

I remained out of the church nearly four years after receiving a hope, but I much desired all the time to be there. The imperfections of the brethren never came before me as a hindrance to asking a home among them, for my own too far outweighed for that.

I must pass on to the nearing of the time of uniting with the church. I became much afflicted in the natural life. Father moved very near Old Mount Tabor Church. Only a few gathered at their meetings. The association of the young and gay rabble had no charms for me; when I went to meeting my mind was with the little band that met. Often have I listened to the pastor, Atlas J. Gilbert, when he was engaged in the most impressive prayer, it seemed to me, and wished his prayers could embrace me among them. But I felt cut off, for I could not come forth. It seemed I must talk to mother and see what she thought of me. One night when we were alone I told her of my desire to go to the church. She said she could give me her hand without hearing me tell anything. That left me in a worse condition than ever, fearing she might be deceived. So my mouth was closed, and remained closed until I went to the church. Just one month before I went and asked a home there I was at their meeting, and as the benediction was pronounced the words "Closed forever," seemed to be spoken to me. Although I did not hear an audible voice, if I had been struck by some one the shock would not have been more clear. Weeping, I immediately left the house. That was not my habit, for I usually remained in the house after service until all went out. I loved to hear the members talk, and to get the hand of each, whether I spoke a word to them or they to me, and so I still remain. As I walked out of the house I thought to go home at once. A second thought came that it would be less noticeable if I took a seat by the side of the house until all came out, and so I did. I pondered these words all the way home, and the month following, having no thought I should ever be present again when the opportunity for membership would be given. The words were too distinctly spoken, it seemed to me. As next conference meeting was nearing my health was better than usual, the weather was fine, and every indication was that I might go. The morning came, and more of

the brethren than usual came on and joined us. All seemed cheerful and happy, but I thought that without doubt something unknown to the church would come in that day and hinder the church from giving the opportunity to join. As I have stated, I could not think I should ever witness this again, but when conference was assembled peace seemed to reign and the opportunity was given for members. I could not stay away. I wondered why it was I could be received on the little I expressed, but all seemed to welcome me. One brother as he gave me his hand said, The Lord has not hidden this thing from me. The pastor was not present at this meeting. The infirmities of age and distance of ten miles hindered him from being with us, but a deacon often went forward in holding conference, which he did at this meeting. I expressed a wish that Elder S. J. Lackey baptize me, and thus my baptism was deferred some months. Circumstances were such it was decided to wait no longer, and this was agreeable to my feelings, for I became so anxious for the day to come that choice was entirely taken away, just so it was one approved of the church. I have wondered if this choice, which is expressed by others, is not of the flesh. One thing, it seems to me, is true, that in the Spirit a perfect oneness exists in all things, and if the Spirit is not present the flesh is in exercise, which is always condemned. But He remembers that we are but dust; He remembers and pities us when we sin. When the morning came for me to be baptized I had a peculiar feeling. It seemed as if there was to be an end in some sense, as I thought I was going to my own burial, yet feeling some kind of pleasantness in the thought I was eager for the hour to come. It was in the year 1878 that my lot was cast with the Lord's people, and though my trials, tremblings and fears have not been few, that home is still dear to me.

SARAH M. LAMBERT.

THIS dear sister was one of the most graciously taught of the Lord that it was my sacred pleasure to be brought into spiritual intimacy with. All my remembrances of her afford me blessedness of heart, and praises to the Lord. She departed this life May 22nd, 1934, aged 79 years, 8 months and 3 days. She was married in June, 1882, to Thomas Lambert, who preceded her to the "better country, that is, an heavenly" (Heb. xi. 16) over a year ago. Six children were born to this union, two of whom died in early childhood. The youngest daughter lost her life more than twelve years ago in Washington, D. C. One daughter, Massa Esther Lambert, and two sons, M. T. and L. B. Lambert, survive their beloved mother.

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., Oct. 16, 1934.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—I hope you will pardon me for intruding so much upon you with my writing, but it seems to me that I must write and express some of the things which seem to be revealed to me, and you are the one that

came into my mind to afflict with my writing, for I believe you will judge rightly whether it is of God or of just me.

The subject which seems to be impressed upon my mind is the similarity of the old prophets and their relation to the children of Israel. Their feeling of nearness to them was the same as the minister who is called of God and qualified to stand before them as the mouthpiece of God, although God was talking to them directly and they were in his stead; and in reading Jeremiah, I tried in my weak way to put myself in his place as one called of God to go in and out before his children. Oh this is a solemn place to be and it causes deep searching of the heart, and it is only because of the fear to cease, or the woe is me if I preach not the gospel that has upheld me so long, and I feel you know all about this. Although I was never ordained I had the care of this church for fifteen years and there was always with me a sacred nearness to this church, or its members whom I loved, also a knowledge that I was accountable to God for my stewardship, and while I feel that my lot has been cast in very hard places in this life, I know it is all according to the will of God, who rules all things by the word of his power, and he knows all about it, for he ordained it so, and I try to be reconciled, but murmur at it still, though I know it is all for the lifting of Jesus on high, and so I bow to his will.

But to return to the subject. Jeremiah sorrowed over the wrongs of Israel, as the minister sorrows over the wrongs in the church over the which the Holy Ghost has made him overseer, and it is the same gody sorrow, for he knows how they must of necessity suffer, because God has told them, I will visit your transgressions with the rod and your iniquities with stripes, and he knows that God's judgments are righteous judgments, and will come true. In reading the Lamentations of Jeremiah one gets the true standing between him and the Israelites, who were the chosen people of God, and were so claimed to be, and they were the only ones he owned and blessed until the end of the law, when Jesus came and fulfilled the law and brought in the Gentiles, as he told the Jews that other sheep have I which are not of this fold, and, as he was talking to the Jews, he meant that he had a people among the Gentiles, them also he must bring, for they were his people and he must bring them into the fold. Nevertheless, he would not cast away the people whom he first knew, i. e. the Jews, but they must be blinded in part until the fullness of the Gentiles was brought in, and they are all brought in in the same way and manner, and Paul tells us there is no difference. No, dear brother, they are all one in Christ. No big ones and no little ones. I am so small that I like to be considered one of the little ones. Dear brother, when we read about how disobedient, stiff-necked and determined the children of Israel were can you see any difference in them and us? I cannot, if I take myself for a sample. I find all the stubbornness and self-will in me that

could be in them, but the wonder is how God could look upon any of us with compassion. But he is God, and does not see as man sees. It seems to me that Jeremiah was given an insight into the union between God and his children, and at the same time he was given an insight into the natures of these bodies of flesh, the old man, and when they transgressed he was so interwoven with them that he felt as though it was him that had committed the wrong. He says, "I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath. He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light. Surely against me is he turned; he turneth his hand against me all the day. My flesh and my skin hath he made old: he hath broken my bones. He hath builded against me, and compassed me with gall and travail. He hath set me in dark places, as they that be dead of old. He hath hedged me about, that I cannot get out: he hath made my chain heavy." These are the first six verses of the third chapter of the Lamentations of Jeremiah over the children of Israel, whom he calls "my people," as though they were his own flesh and blood, for they were very near and dear unto him, because God called him and gave them into his care, and he was unto them as a father, and he felt that their sins were his, and he mourned over them, for he realized that they were all weak through the flesh, just as the true minister realizes that the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made him overseer, and he feels that it may be in some way he is to blame. Thus Jeremiah breaks forth just as we do, for it is the same God that is with him and in whom he is trusting that we are trusting in. He says, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him." —Jer. iii. 22-25. Then we hear him acknowledge very humbly, "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. It is good for a man that he bear the yoke of his youth." Being a farmer, I have broken many horses, and I have always found that the younger one started in to break them the easier they were to break. They were not so stubborn, not so set in their way. But it is not so with the Lord, for he first kills, then he makes alive, and we are made willing, for he conquers by love, and we are made alive to the fact and gladly call him Master. In the thirty-seventh verse Jeremiah says, "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" So you see Jeremiah is ascribing all power to the God whom he is trusting in, and it is the same God we are trusting in, and we can call him brother, for he is admonishing us to hope and quietly wait for his salvation. Whether it be time or eternal it is all of him. This we have learned by experience, for we have each of us tried our wings, and every time we depend upon an arm of flesh we find that the Scripture is true where it says, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm," for it

has failed us every time, and like our Elder Brother, though a son, yet learn we obedience by the things we suffer. Now it occurs to me that we are more to be blamed than were the children of Israel for their unfaithfulness, since God's law has been put into our minds and written in our hearts and he is always with us, the same God yesterday, to-day and forever, while they only had the law, which could never make the comers thereunto perfect, and was only effective in time, for it only had to do with this life, but we have the law of God put in our minds and written in our hearts, and based on better promises. Yes, God says he will be merciful to our unrighteousness and our sins and our iniquities he will remember no more. Oh what a load is taken from our shoulders. Why? Because Jesus has become our High Priest forever; not after the order of Aaron, who could only continue while he lived, but Jesus is our High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec, who was without beginning of days or end of time, took our sins upon himself. He, who knew no sin, became sin for us that we might be holy and without blame before God in love. Therefore our sins are all blotted out before God, for Jesus has by the one offering, when he died on the cross, perfected forever all those who are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ and called; not according to their works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which he purposed in himself before the world began.

Your brother in hope,

DAVIS BURCH.

MATTHEW XXV. 46.

"AND these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

I am aware of the wide variation of thought in connection with this Scripture, especially the first portion of the verse, it is not my intention to attempt to accuse or excuse any, or to use the Scripture wrongfully. I understand the Scripture to teach that all of Adam's posterity (natural man), both the elect and nonelect, must go down alike in death, return to the dust of the earth from whence they were taken, for the satisfaction of the law of sin and death assessed upon them for the transgression of God's holy law, for "death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression."—Rom. v. 14. From my youth, I had always viewed the final destination of man as it is expressed in this Scripture, knowing nothing of such belief as the extinction or annihilation of the wicked being held by any who believe in eternal life for the righteous. To me the words of the Savior had made it very clear: "Everlasting punishment" for the wicked and "life eternal" for the righteous. But not so, says one, the word "punishment" used here by the Savior is from the Greek, the true meaning of which is "cut off." I am wondering how it would sound with this revision. So let us read, And these shall go away into everlasting "cut off." Does that sound just right to you? Now let us compare this with the forty-first verse, which are the words of the same Savior concerning the very same people: "Then shall he say also unto them on

the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." This no doubt is comparatively the same view that was given Daniel by the Spirit, of the future for this people, for he writes, "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."—Dan. xii. 2. John also writes by the spirit of revelation, "And the smoke of their torment ascended up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name."—Rev. xiv. 11. Again, "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."—Rev. xx. 10. Also, "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. xx. 14, 15.)

Now let us see Jesus in speaking of those who were given him: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." (Lose life or vitality.) These were to have the guidance of the Holy Spirit after Jesus' ascension. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth"? Now we are going to suppose the same degree of sin and guilt rested upon these as those who Jesus spoke of in another place: "But whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."—Matt. xii. 32. Again, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation."—Matt. xxiii. 14. Paul also relates, "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"—Heb. x. 29. No, I am not trying to advocate degrees, neither in heaven not hell; may God put such far from me. I am only trying to point out the contrast between the elect and the nonelect. For most assuredly there are such sins which are not obliterated by the first suffering of the nonelect, such as blaspheming of the Holy Ghost, and their failure (those on the left hand) to minister to the elect of God, which is clearly stated in the forty-second and forty-third verses: "I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not." Now as these on the left hand reached the zenith of their own carefully designed ministration, while standing at the very summit of that mountain of self-righteous sand, and they call out to the mighty King, the discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not

minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

As a closing remark, I might state that I am an unlearned man, only understanding one language, and just the easy words in that one, so I am perfectly content to accept the final conclusion of that grand and noble body of scholarly men who translated the words of God as preceptor into the language of our own understanding, as a true and faithful service performed with all candor before God, and in full view of the fact, "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."—Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

Submitted in love and for your most wise disposal.

A brother, I hope, of all who love God and keep his commandments,

ROBERT L. DAVIS.

DODGE CITY, Kansas, March 27, 1934.

GARDINER, Maine, Dec. 11, 1934.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—In looking over some old letters recently, I came across this one written by our late sister Ella L. Pulsifer, and I much desire you give it a place in your much loved paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It was written to be read at our conference meeting of the Whitefield Church. This dear sister was much afflicted by physical pain, but was given at times a spirit that looked beyond the sorrows of time to that sweet rest prepared for all those who love His appearing. It has been upon my mind to write to my brethren through our medium of correspondence on this wonderful theme, the resurrection of the dead, but Elder Ruston's most able editorial in the last SIGNS has told it so plainly. It was just wonderful. I could scarcely read it fast enough. His words, I did eat them; and my soul rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory. It is all so wonderful. "His name shall be called Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."—Isaiah ix. 6. The Scriptures teach such sweet, wonderful themes. Election, that the purpose of God might stand. "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."—Rom. ix. 16. Predestination, how could we live without this blessed assurance when passing through the fiery ordeals of God's providence? We rest in the thought that our God knows best what is good for us and his glory, and one time the thought came to me, Would you have this changed? No, I rather suffer. If *one* thing could be changed all could be. And thus I have been taught when passing through deep waters that his grace is sufficient for my every need, for my strength is made perfect in weakness, and I feel I know what Paul af-

firmed when he said, For when I am weak then am I strong. (2 Cor. xii. 10.) I have been a traveler on this road for many years, and I hope and trust it is the way cast up for the redeemed to walk in. Job tells us, "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen: the lion's whelps have not trodden it, not the fierce lion passed by it." Nothing takes place contrary to the will of God, or without his operative power, whether it be the rise and fall of nations or the mote that floats in the sunbeam. Oh I love to know these things are so! How they support us! It is the staff on which we lean daily. Then in the future is the promise of the glorious resurrection of the dead, never outside of God's promises, and we know that he not only promises, but (not like man) he is able to fulfill his word in every jot and tittle. Oh that we might praise him for his goodness and his wonderful works to the children of men. But I seem so much of the time in a lifeless state, and I cannot rejoice as I would; but eternity will be without end, and I hope I will praise him there.

Inclosed find my remittance for the year 1935, with the small aid I am glad to be able to send.

Your sister in the love that passeth understanding,

NELLIE M. PALMER.

My Dear Brethren and Sisters:—As I cannot meet with you, I cannot rest until I make the attempt to write you of some of the feelings and desires of my poor sinful heart. I feel altogether unworthy to speak of the things of God, and yet that is the theme I love best. I feel that "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: whom I shall see for myself, and not another." Shall see the King in his beauty, and shall praise him, with a loud voice crying, Grace, grace unto it. Oh give thanks unto the Lord, for his goodness and mercy endureth forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, and tell of his wondrous works to the children of men, how he sent his only beloved Son into the world to suffer and die that we, his children, might live. Oh is it possible that the dear Son of God shed his precious blood for me? How dare I, one so vile and altogether unworthy have a hope, or the least shadow of a hope, that he died for me? Yet this is given, a hope which is like an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, that I shall some day outride the storms of this life and enter that haven of rest prepared of the Lord before the foundation of the world, and if my name was written there in the Lord's book of life, it is sealed with seven seals and there is no one but Jesus himself that is able to open the book or loose the seals thereof. All my sins, and Satan with all his hosts combined cannot remove or erase it, for it is sealed with His own precious blood, and, dear brethren and sisters, I feel sure to-day that I have an abiding-place there, for I feel that love flow up in my heart, the love of God, that was given me some twenty-seven years ago. That same love has kept me through dangers seen

and unseen, and I have had a hope all the time notwithstanding all of my imperfections and weaknesses the dear Lord has been with me, both to keep and uphold me, and how often in the dark and trying hours of life I have been made to call upon him, and he has never turned a deaf ear, for he will regard the prayers of the destitute and not despise their prayer. He supplies all our needs. He knoweth what is best for us and will not withhold any good thing, but will freely give us all things that our want and needs require. He is a friend who never leaves nor forsakes us, but he goes into the deep with us, and we, like the children of Israel, go through on dry land. Our times are in his hand and his grace is sufficient. Why should we fear? I often think, Will he still be with me in the hour of death to comfort and strengthen me and give me grace as my day? It makes me almost tremble to think if I should be left alone, but his grace in times past forbids me to think that he will leave me at last in darkness to sink. But I look beyond to the bright and glorious morn of the resurrection when I shall awake in his likeness, when this mortal shall put on immortality, when this ransomed dust shall arise and meet the Lord in the air, then shall I be satisfied. Then we can praise him with no rail between, and be forever with the Lord.

Dear brethren and sisters, I have been writing this (by times) since your January conference. While Emmie (sister Bartlett) was gone to conference I could not rest until I made the attempt, but after reading a sister's letter my writings looked so small I thought I would not send this to you, but to-day I thought I ought to send it. I read it over and felt the spirit of it as when writing, so will send it, knowing you all have love enough to cover all my weakness and inability in writing, and I hope it was of the Lord I was impressed to write. There may be a crumb for some of you. May the Lord be with us all and keep us in his fear and fill our hearts with love, so each may esteem others better than self.

Your unworthy sister in the Lord,

ELLA L. PULSIFER.

KLAMATH FALLS, Oregon.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am very sorry I cannot pay for my subscription this year, but I do hope and pray the dear Lord will still put it in your heart to send me the dear old SIGNS, as it is all the comfort I have. My home church is Little Zion, in California, and I have not been there to hear any preaching for four years, and I do not know when I will ever be able to go again, and at times I can hardly wait for the dear old SIGNS to come, and when it does I read it over and over again. I do feel I could not do without it, for we have had it in our family for over seventy-five years, handed down from generation to generation. I hope this is a prosperous year for our dear old paper and its editors and writers.

We have moved from Bonanza, Oregon, to Route 2, Box 174, Klamath Falls, Oregon. I pray the dear Savior bless you and yours, and do pray for me when it goes well with you, as I am a poor unworthy sister in a precious hope,

(MRS.) CARRIE HORNER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1935.

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LUKE XVI. 19-31.

A SISTER living in Texas and a brother living in Kansas have written asking our views on the narrative of the rich man and Lazarus. Both ask whether this is a parable, and they want to know if the rich man represents the Jewish nation and Lazarus the Gentiles, as they both have heard it so explained. Treating this subject symbolically, we have ourselves presented this history of these two persons as signifying the one the Jewish nation, the other the Gentiles. In this present article, however, we shall not take up the symbolic line of thought. We wish to present some facts of truth that are so plain on the face of the narrative as to be almose self-evident.

(1) The narrative of the rich man and Lazarus is not said to be a parable. Christ does not say it is a parable, the Holy Spirit does not say so. Whatever parabolic significance it may have as differentiating Jew and Gentile, the interpretation of it cannot be confined to such. Nor shall we so limit it to that meaning at this time. Jesus Christ is the one true and faithful witness of all the truth of God. He was from eternity with the Father, and came out from the Father to make known God unto his people. With the one exception of Jesus Christ, no man has seen God at any time. But this Man Jesus has inerrantly declared the Father to us. None of God's people who have gone from this world into the world beyond have returned to tell us about it, but Jesus has told us some things which await us after death, and his testimony is by no means to be ignored or treated lightly. In this narrative, he sets forth for us a glimpse of what awaits the saved and the unsaved after their departure from this present life. THAT is the line of thought we now wish to pursue.

(2) Jesus' narrative of the rich man and Lazarus is outstanding among all his narratives and parables for the reason that this is the only narrative of all of them in which Jesus designates a person by name. In no other of his citations does he ever give the persons therein a definite name. And in this one he gives no name to the rich man, but names the outcast. How opposite are his ways to the ways of man! Men would give a name to the rich man, not to the beggar. That is not God's way.

The things that are despised, the things that are not, are named by him. Those whom the world names are nameless with God. Precious in his sight are the world's nameless ones. They, for the most part, are worn on his heart, their names written in the Lamb's book of life from before the foundation of the world. That which is despised and set at nought by the world, is esteemed by him: not because mere namelessness is any merit in his sight, but for the reason that namelessness from the world's point of view is most often a mark of divine favor and of saving grace. The beggar, Jesus names Lazarus. And what a name! Lazarus is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Eleazar. As most Jewish names have significance, so does this one. It means "God-helped." His very name indicates that, humanly despised as the beggar is, he is marked with the help of God, a subject of God's gracious favor in Christ. Not the mere fact that Lazarus is a beggar and afflicted and hungry, marks him as a child of grace; for not every literal beggar, however sore and hungry, is a child of God. The fact that God has named his own name upon the wretch as being an object of divine help settles his standing as a subject of grace. So while misery and poverty and rags are not in themselves by any means passports into divine favor, the standing of the believer in a gracious state is evidenced by spiritual poverty and by hunger for righteousness and by the filthy rags of his condemned self-righteousness. The name Lazarus here given to the beggar by Jesus further links him with that other Lazarus in John eleven, whom Jesus raised from the dead. Evidently there was significant design in so naming this beggar as to link this poor sinner with the great truth of resurrection.

(3) The primary application of the rich man, clothed in fine linen and purple and faring sumptuously every day, is no doubt to the pharisaical class whom Jesus is addressing. And that spirit of pharisaism is largely in evidence in the world to-day. The picture of the rich man here presents a self-righteous ease and contentment and a satisfaction with this present world. Jesus does not give us here to believe that it was the rich man's duty to feed the beggar, nor was it for lack of compassion for wretchedness and misery that the rich man awoke in torment after death. In verse twenty-five, we are told his punishment resulted alone from his having had his good things in this lifetime, while Lazarus had his evil things. The rich man's "good" was in this present world. He wanted nothing better than this present life could afford him. With that he was content. Self-satisfaction and worldly contentment are ever marks of unregeneracy. The awakened soul cannot possibly rest in self-righteousness or in worldly ease and contentment. The bliss of the rich man realized itself in this present lifetime, and not in any hungering or longing for a better world to come. He had his good things here, even as do all those who remain dead in their sins unregenerated by the Spirit of God. This rich man

reminds us of that other in Luke xii. who, so well pleased with his largess, planned to tear down his barns and build larger, so increased in earthly abundance had he become. No thought of ever having to leave his possessions entered his mind, but he communed with himself regarding "my barns," "my soul." No mind had he at all toward God, no thought whatever that all he had was bestowed upon him and was not his own. How different this from Job, who though one of the richest men of the east, felt that he had nothing at all but what he received, and could call nothing his own of all his riches. He believed he had been given his good things from God, and later cursed not when God deprived him thereof and gave him trouble instead. This rich man further carries us back in thought to that Nabal, the husband of Abigail, who refused sustenance for David's men, saying, "Shall I then take *my* bread, and *my* water, and *my* flesh that I have killed for *my* shearers, and give it unto men, whom I know not whence they be?" And what was his end? Much as the rich man's in Luke xvi. His heart died within him and he became as stone, and the Lord smote him that he died. How dreadful is the end of the impenitent wicked! Mere riches of themselves do not prove demerit in any sinner, but the riches of self-righteousness and ease and satisfaction therewith do evidence an unregenerate state.

(4) Both the rich man and Lazarus die. The same event comes alike to all. Yet with what a difference! The rich man died and was buried. It is not said that the beggar was even buried. No man noted his passing nor cared aught about it. To the rich man was given burial, and we may conclude his funeral to have been in keeping with the flamboyant ostentation and satisfaction in which he had lived all his life. Doubtless men said over his dead body his eulogy and acclaimed him a good man, a worthy member of society. Doubtless they wondered as to his wealth and how much he was worth. "Men will praise thee when thou doest well to thyself."—Psalms xlix. 18. Nevertheless, whatever encomiums may have been heaped upon the rich man, he went to torment. As for Lazarus, he had no funeral, possibly was not even buried. History tells us that poor beggars who died in the streets of Jerusalem were often gathered up by the scavengers and hauled out to the valley of Tophet, their bodies thrown there on the piles of refuse and dumpage from the city, the fires of which were always burning. This may well have been the earthly end of the poor beggar. But what about his state after dying? To him was sent an escort of angels to accompany Lazarus into bliss in fellowship and communion with Abraham, there for him to rest in peace until final resurrection should call him into the fullness of eternal glory in the presence of God. As for the torment of the rich man after his dying, could he have any escape therefrom? No, for him there could await but that other resurrection, the resurrection of the unjust, of the wicked dead, unto the resurrection of damnation and the lake of

fire of the second death. Lazarus stands for all the children of God, for all of whom this world is but a pilgrimage, a temporary abiding-place. He pictures forth true believers who know well the plague of their own heart, the loathsomeness of the leprosy of sin. He represents God's afflicted, tried people for whom the world to come shall amply recompense for all trials of this life, because the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to be revealed in them when Christ shall appear for them. The rich man stands for the impenitent wicked, those who die in their sins: that unregenerate portion of mankind who always dead in sin shall forever remain in eternal punishment from which there can be no escape.

(5) If there is one fact more than any other that plainly stands out in this narrative, it is this: there is no such thing as a place for repentance being given after death for those who die impenitent. This destroys the theory of the "second chance" which some religionists teach. It is a fond and foolish hope that those who pass out of this present life unbelievers, will be given after death an opportunity to savingly repent. No such place for repentance came to the rich man after death, nor will it ever come to any. The theory of the "second chance" is not scriptural. Plenty of remorse indeed the rich man had in his torment, but repentance he had none. Remorse is never repentance. Remorse is merely human, true repentance is the fruit of the Spirit alone. After dying, as while he lived, the rich man calls not on God for help, but on Father Abraham. It does no good to say one has Abraham to his father, that relationship avails nothing in the way of salvation. In reply, Abraham acknowledges the natural relationship, but also makes plain his inability to do anything to change the state of the rich man in his woe. Between the children of God after they leave this world, and the wicked dead after they leave here, there is an impassable gulf fixed. While here on earth, sinners are brought to repentance by the Holy Spirit and are translated, passed over, from the kingdom of darkness and of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son, there can be no such passing across from one state to the other after death. If one is not manifested as a child of God during his or her lifetime here on earth, one will never be manifested as such hereafter. What a solemn thought this is! How heart-searching! No wonder we are admonished to examine ourselves whether we be in the faith! Very apt indeed is the exhortation of the Holy Spirit by Peter to make our calling and election sure. For if heaven be not begun for us while we are here below, assuredly it will never begin for us hereafter. "'Tis a heaven below, the Redeemer to know." Indeed it is. "He is an heir of heaven whose bosom glows with love." The love of God shed abroad in our hearts is the indisputable seal of the Holy Spirit given us in earnest of the fullness reserved for us in the presence of God. If there be needed any further proof of the rich

man's continued impenitence after death, it is his daring to contradict Abraham, as in verse thirty, where he blasphemously gives Abraham the lie. "Nay, father Abraham." Nor would repentance be effected in the impenitent by any visible demonstration God might give them. Nothing short of the new birth, a miracle wrought within, will bring men savingly to repentance. John xi. 53, proves that even though Jesus showed them openly a man raised from the dead, they but went about the more determined to kill Him. The demonstration of his power in resurrection, that resurrection being not effected within them, did the more intensify them in their plans to put him out of the way. Yet that all men must meet him face to face and have meted to them either judgment or forgiveness forever, is a tremendous and awful fact from which there is no escape. Human laws may be evaded or annulled, but God's holiness and justice cannot be escaped.

(6) Another idea prevalent among many these days, and which is exploded by Jesus in his narrative of the rich man and Lazarus, is that, for the wicked, death ends all. Death does not end all for anybody. For the true christian, Christ has made death the gate of endless joy. For those who die out of Christ, death is the dread portal into torment. Thousands have doubtless committed suicide because deluded into believing that death ends misery instead of beginning it. This modern age has heard much teaching to the effect that, for the wicked, there is no consciousness after dying, that death is but a state of oblivion. That the devil has used this terrible error to tempt many to get out of their difficulties in this life by way of suicide, there is no doubt. They fly from ills that beset them here, not to oblivion as they fondly hope and expect, but to ills they know not of. The revealed will of God in his law is, "Thou shalt not kill." And this law has never been revoked from over the wicked. For the redeemed, God did not make void his law, but magnified it and made it honorable in that he himself in the Person of his Son rendered obedience thereto in every jot and tittle. Hence, the law is not made null and void, but perfected in the kingdom of God because through the enablement of the Spirit its righteousness is fulfilled in them who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. Hence, neither for saint nor sinner, is dying an exit or escape from the presence of the inescapable facts of eternity.

(7) Now, in bringing this to a close, may we call attention to that section of the London Confession of Faith adopted in 1689, and later adopted as the Philadelphia Confession of Faith in 1742, dealing with the state of man after death, as founded upon Bible proof and as formerly believed and held and preached by all true Baptists. We well know that articles of faith are not inspired infallibly as we believe the Scriptures to be, yet they constitute a correct valuation of what our spiritual forefathers believed and taught. For ourself, we believe in our heart what we are about to cite from this ancient

document, not because we are unduly overawed by what the fathers believed, but because we believe this to be what the Scriptures do teach upon the subject.

> "The bodies of men after death return to dust, and see corruption; but their souls, which neither die nor sleep, having an immortal subsistence immediately return to God who gave them: the souls of the righteous being then made perfect in holiness, are received into paradise, where they are with Christ, and behold the face of God, in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies; and the souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in torment and utter darkness reserved to the judgment of the great day; besides these two places, for souls separated from their bodies, the Scripture acknowledgeth none."

Is not the truth of this ancient statement given out by the Baptists of over two hundred years ago, substantiated by the narrative of the rich man and Lazarus, as well as supported by many other Scriptures? Whatever parabolically that narrative may mean relative to the Jew and Gentile, it plainly sets forth the state after death of both the elect of God and of the wicked dead. So we leave the matter with you in the measure in which we are blessed to believe it. We pray for more assurance that, by the enduring grace and mercy of God in Christ, we have ourselves been rescued as brands from the eternal burning. May he under the shelter of his shed blood, keep us safe from the coming wrath. H. H. L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MRS. JANET CAROLINE BEEBE, beloved wife of Gilbert Beebe, owner and publisher of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, departed this life in Horton Memorial Hospital, Middletown, N. Y., March 20th, 1935, after a painful illness covering a period of several months. All that a devoted husband and medical science could do for her was done, but to no avail. She was born at Thompsonville, N. Y., of the parentage of Arthur S. and Alpha G. Whitney O'Neill, May 27th, 1875, which made her stay on earth a little less than sixty years. Her marriage to Gilbert Beebe took place April 15th, 1896, and to their union two children were born: Mary Beatrice, who died May 20th, 1904, at the age of seven years, and Gilbert Richard Beebe, of Auburn, N. Y. Besides her husband and son, she is survived my her mother, Mrs. Alpha G. O'Neill, of Middletown, N. Y.; a granddaughter, Joan Elizabeth Beebe, of Auburn, N. Y.; a brother, James D. O'Neill, of Flushing, N. Y.; three sisters, Mrs. Victoria Harris, of Middletown, N. Y.; Mrs. Arthine Feulner, of New York, N. Y., and Mrs. Frances O'Brien, of Flushing, N. Y.

Mrs. Beebe was not a member of the visible church, but all who have attended the Warwick Associations at New Vernon, N. Y., and the Annual Meetings at Slate Hill, N. Y., during recent years can testify to her unfailing interest and the valuable service she rendered in arranging for these meetings. She was both Treasurer and Trustee of the Middletown and Wallkill Church in Middletown, and Trustee of the Brookfield Church at Slate Hill, and gave herself devotedly and freely to the Old School Baptist cause. Last, but not least, she rendered invaluable help to her husband in proofreading and in aiding in numerous other ways in the publication of our family paper. She was in all other respects an helpmate indeed, so her husband sustains a two-fold loss in her passing, and the Old School Baptists throughout the country will share with him, her loved ones and friends their loss, and will deeply sympathize with them. One of her last messages to her husband was, "Give my love to Elder Dodson and the church people." She was faithful in her attendance at our meetings and by the deep interest she manifested endeared herself to us all. Personally, we feel we have lost a true friend, but are persuaded that our loss is her eternal gain.

The writer was called to officiate at the funeral, which was held at Smith's Funeral Home, 20 Grove Street, Middletown, followed by interment in the Hillside Cemetery of that city. We mourn, but not as those without hope. We especially desire our heavenly Father's remembrance of her sorrowing husband, with grace sufficient for whatever burdens he may have to bear, and that we may all be reconciled to God's will. Hymns 751 and 368 were read, and 2 Peter i. 1-4 was the Scripture used.

R. L. D.

NOT often is it our lot to write an obituary notice that causes deeper grief of heart to pen than that of brother **CYRUS CROSS,** who passed from time to eternity March 13th, 1935, at the home of Mrs. Charlotte Moister, in Central Bridge, N. Y., after an illness which confined him one week to his bed. For three or four weeks before that he had been declining in health, the nature of his affliction being hardening of the arteries of the brain. This resulted in a stroke of apoplexy twenty-four hours before the end came. The funeral services were held the following Friday at the Moister residence, the writer officiating and using as a text these words of Jesus on the cross: "It is finished." The interment was in the Cobleskill Cemetery.

Brother Cross was born at Barnerville, near Cobleskill, N. Y., October 27th, 1856, and was therefore considerably past his seventy-eighth birthday. He worked as a farm laborer in his early life, and then learned the trade of carpenter, in which avocation he was an expert workman and which he followed for many years, both in New York and in Ohio. In 1897 he was united in marriage to Miss Jennie Gass, daughter of the late Elder Lambert Gass, who proved a great blessing to him as a loyal helpmeet and companion, until death in 1913. In June, 1915, he remarried, and his second wife, Mrs. Jennie Gwynn, was an evidence of the goodness and mercy of God in giving him another helpmeet fully equal to the first in those splendid qualities that make a true wife. Since her death, in March, 1931, he was very lonely. Much of the time he made his home with his sister-in-law, Mrs. Emily Solloway, until the last months of his life, when he resided with Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Moister, of Central Bridge, N. Y., in the vicinity of his birthplace and the scene of his early life and the brethren of the church of his membership, whose society he greatly loved. He was baptized in the faith and fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church by Elder Frank McGlade, in 1906. From 1898 until 1927 he lived in Cleveland, Ohio. Brother Cross was a man of many virtues, and his splendid life of moral rectitude will be long remembered. He dearly loved the church of his membership and was loyal to it in material things, believing that if he received the ministration of things spiritual he should minister of things material to his pastor and his brethren. His unstinted generosity, his sociability, his unassuming ways, his unpretentious life, his willingness to talk of spiritual things, his industry, his humility, his faithfulness in attendance at his church meetings, his beautiful home life, number among the many outstanding qualities that endeared him to his brethren and to the community where he lived. For several years he officiated in the capacity of deacon. Our loss is keenly felt by all the brethren of his faith and order.

ALSO,

THE swift-winged messenger of death visited the First Church of Roxbury Sunday morning, April 7th, 1935, and removed from the sphere of earthly activities and usefulness sister **BERTHA MORSE,** wife of J. Parker Morse, at their home in Denver, N. Y. She had been ill of pneumonia a week, but had for the last five years been in failing health. During her time of illness she was faithfully ministered to by her daughter, Mrs. Josephine Schmitt. The funeral services were held the Wednesday following her death at her late home, the writer conducting the services. The interment was at Margaretville, N. Y.

The subject of this article bore the maiden name of Bertha Kelly Crosby, and was born in Halcott, N. Y., September 30th, 1861. In December, 1882, she was united in marriage to J. Parker Morse, and proved to him all that a noble wife and helpful companion could mean through their fifty-two years of married life together. Nearly all of this time they resided on a large farm known as "The Grassmere," in the Denver Valley. This became a popular summer resort for boarders for many years, when the city folk came to the Catskill Mountains for rest and recreation. By thrift and hard work Mr. and Mrs. Morse were successful in the material things of life, and to them were born twelve children, two of whom died in early life and two in recent years, one of them being sister Cynthia Slauson. About four years ago sister Morse united by baptism with the First Church of Roxbury. She was a woman of spotless integrity and noble character and was a wife and mother devoted to her family. She will be greatly missed, and much sympathy is extended to the bereaved ones. She is survived by her aged husband.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

JAMES F. CHILTON, our dear brother in Christ, was born October 16th, 1851, in Henry County, Kentucky, and died July 2nd, 1934, at the home of his son, W. S. Chilton, near Campbellsburg, Ky. February 4th, 1870, he was married to Miss Casandrew Sams, and to this union were born several children. The wife preceded her husband several years. They were married by the late Elder N. A. Humpston, then pastor of the several Old School Baptist churches in this locality. In the year 1880 brother Jim, as we all called him, received a hope in the Savior, and upon relation of his experience to the Providence Old School Predestinarian Church was received and baptized, and for over fifty years he remained steadfast in the faith he then professed. His counsel was wise in church matters, and he was also a good singer, and one of his favorite hymns was 751 (Beebe's collection), "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord," also 488, "Amazing grace." During the last few years his hearing was impaired, but he always filled his seat among the brethren. Oh how we miss the dear old brother! His place is vacant: it never can be filled. He is gone from the trials of life. We feel our loss is his gain, and the good Lord can reconcile us. Brother Jim would want us to carry on, sing the good old hymns and

preach Christ, and him crucified, the power and wisdom of God.

Elder N. D. Reed, of Galion, Ohio, was called for the funeral, and spoke with much comfort to the bereaved ones, after which the remains were laid in the churchyard at old Sulphur Fork, beside his wife, to await the call of the Master in the resurrection. I tried to assist the Elder, and spoke in prayer the words of Jesus, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. May the Lord bless and comfort all the friends.

Written by request of Elder N. D. Reed.

ALSO,

AGAIN it becomes my sad duty to chronicle the death of a soldier of the cross for many years. Sister **ELIZA M. REED** (nee Lemon), who died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. N. D. Reed, two miles east of Galion, Ohio, Thursday evening, March 21st, 1935, at 8:30 o'clock, was born January 2nd, 1849, and October 29th, 1869, she was united in marriage to Lemuel Edwin Reed, to which union were added three children, Arinda L. and Ada N., who survive, and Arminda, who preceded her in death, aged six years. The husband, Deacon Lemuel Reed, died seven years ago. She is also survived by three sisters, Mrs. Sarah Harding, Mrs. Naoma McCalla and Mrs. Manervia Jackson, nine grndchildren and fourteen great-grandchildren. Both brother and sister Reed were members of the Old School Baptist Church called Bethel, near Galion, Ohio, and both were baptized by the late Elder John H. Biggs, who was then their pastor, but who is now long deceased. Sister Reed was baptized in June, 1880, and to this church they both remained faithful unto death. I might add that the church is now under the pastoral care of their son-in-law, Elder N. D. Reed, of Galion, Ohio. Brother and sister Reed lived their entire lives in this neighborhood, and their home was known as an Old School Baptist home, where many of the Elders and members have been entertained in times past. We feel she could say with Paul, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, and she will hear the welcome plaudit, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of the Lord. We mourn not as those who have no hope. For her to live was Christ and to die was gain, and may he, the great Shepherd of the sheep, reconcile us all and enable us to say, Thy will be done.

I was called for the funeral, and tried to comfort the bereaved ones, using the words of Jesus, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you." Then the body tenderly borne by six grandsons was laid to rest in the Galion Cemetery.

ALSO,

WILLIAM PRESTON CHILTON, a member of the Old School Baptist Church called Cain Run, Kentucky, for over fifty years, was born September 13th, 1859, and died December 28th, 1934, in his seventy-sixth year. September 17th, 1885, he was married to Miss Mildred Jane Chilton, and to this union were born six children, who, with the widow, all survive. The children aged in the order named are Mrs. Edna Wilson, Mrs. Emma Baxter, Mrs. Vora Leland, Mr. Carlisle Chilton, Mrs. Rosa Tingle and Mrs. Leo Mae Hunt. Also twenty-two grandchildren and one great-grandchild survive. Brother Preston was a man of a quiet and unassuming manner, well liked by all who knew him, and as a neighbor and friend will be missed. He received a hope in the finished work of the Savior in his early manhood and was received in the fellowship of the Cain Run Church, and all his life was a devoted member, always filling his seat in the meetings unless prevented by sickness. For the past two years his hearing was poor, but that did not prevent him from coming to meet his brethren. After one of our meetings last summer he came to me with tears in his eyes, and said, "I could not hear much you said, but I know it was all right by the way you looked," and I thought, What faith is manifested by him. I visited him a week before he died and he felt resigned to his lot, knowing that his time was short and he would soon be free from pain and suffering and he would enter into the joy of the Lord.

I tried with the ability given me by the Lord to comfort the friends, preaching Christ, and him crucified, the way, the truth and the life. May the Lord reconcile us all to his will.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

SISTER **GERTRUDE J. GIBBONS,** of near Salisbury, Maryland, passed from this life February 10th, 1935, rather unexpectedly. Although she had not been in good health for some time, she was not confined to her bed. The doctor said she had gas around her heart. Her maiden name was Rounds. She was born January 1st, 1858. She married Robert N. Gibbons January 15th, 1879. They were received by the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in New York City April 4th, 1897, and was baptized by Elder D. M. Vail April 25th, 1897. She was the mother of three sons: Lloyd F., Charles E. and Robert C. Gibbons. She leaves these three sons, one grandson, one granddaughter, her husband, three brothers and one sister out of a family of fourteen. She was a helpmate indeed. She and her husband were industrious and ambitious, and they accumulated enough of this world's goods that they had no fear of need in old age. Their eldest son, Lloyd, and his wife came to the home farm a few years ago, to lighten their cares and gladden their hearts.

The funeral services were conducted by Elders H. C. Ker and G. E. Coulbourn, and were largely attended. May the outflowing of pure, spiritual love fill the remaining days of our lonely brother Gibbons. It is the love in our hearts that draws it from others. I never heard sister Gertrude criticize other denominations. She believed that every one had the privilege of worshiping God

according to the dictates of their own conscience. She appreciated good wherever she saw it, knowing that all good comes from God. Oh may he mercifully guide us and strengthen our understanding and grant unto us the sweetness of faith while we live in this changing world, and may praise take the place of heaviness in our hearts as one after another are called by our heavenly Father to their eternal home.

Written by request.

LUCY M. ROUNDS.

Miss RHONA ADKINS, daughter of the late William and Betsey Adkins, died at her home, near Salisbury, Wicomico County, Maryland, January 13th, 1935, after a short illness. She is survived by two sisters, Mrs. Elizabeth Perdue and Miss Fannie Adkins. She was born April 20th, 1865. She united with the Forest Grove Old School Baptist Church October 10th, 1897, and until the time of her death was a devoted and loyal attendant at the services. Although quiet and unassuming in manner, she was a steadfast and faithful believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine. By the meekness and humility she displayed in her conversation we can but feel that she walked not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. In the death of sister Adkins the church has met with a great loss.

THE foregoing notice was written by sister Mary Morris, clerk of the Forest Grove Church, and it gives me pleasure to indorse what she has written. Although the death of sister Rhona Adkins left us to grieve because of our loss, yet to joy in the thought that her departing was gain for her. She and her sister Fannie had lived together all their lives, until her death, and it is for sister Fannie, the one left so lonely, that we feel sad, but she has a good hope, as did her sister, that the Lord loves her, and in him she still trusts, and may he reconcile her, the church and all of us to his will.

Elder H. C. Ker was at the funeral and made some comforting remarks, and the writer spoke from the subject "That mortality might be swallowed up of life."

G. E. COULBOURN.

STEPHEN AARON EKELBERRY was born in Delaware County, Ohio, October 2nd, 1864, and died November 3rd, 1934, aged 70 years 1 month and 1 day. He received a love for God and for Primitive Baptists early in life, but did not unite with the church, but lived a pious, upright life of love and kindness to his fellow-men. He attended a boarding school at Gambier, Ohio. His personality, kindness and integrity were highly commended by his associates, receiving from a fellow-worker of many years this endearment: "Steve was the grandest man that ever I knew." Another said, "I so admired his personality. Steve was a personage." He was a kind, loving husband, father and brother, and a most faithful friend. He was married to Katharine S. Jacoby September 5th, 1888, and two children were born to them: Kittie Marie, who died at the age of five months, and Jay Redman, who died at the age of thirty-five. Two sisters survive: Mrs. Bertha Darnell, Campbell, Texas, and the writer, two nephews: Dr. J. C. Wickham, of Cleveland, Ohio, and J. R. Woods, of Belfontaine, Ohio, a niece, Ruth Darnell. He died rejoicing in hope, shouting, "Praise the Lord." His lovely wife survives; may the Lord comfort her. We mourn not as those who have no hope.

Many came from Columbus (his home) to attend his funeral, going on to the place of burial at Marlboro. There was a large concourse of people and lovely flowers. Best of all, to feel that a redeemed soul has gone home, where we hope to meet him.

His sister,

JOIE WOODS PETERS.

NANCY ANN McCONNAUGHHAY, daughter of John L. and Louisa Burton, was born in Bracken County, Kentucky, June 6th, 1850. Her family emigrated to Illinois in July, 1861. She professed a hope in Christ when about sixteen years of age, and kept the faith until the end. She was united in holy matrimony to John Wesley McConnaughhay, of Jefferson County, Illinois, February 18th, 1866, and to this union were born twelve children, three boys and nine girls. Three children and her husband preceded her to her heavenly home. The deceased departed this life September 29th, 1934, her age being 84 years, 3 months and 23 days, twenty years to the month since the death of her husband. They were both strong believers in the Primitive Baptist faith. Father took the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for years before he died and mother continued to subscribe for it until the end. Next to the Bible the reading of this paper afforded them more pleasure than anything in this world, as they lived far from a church of their kind. She leaves to mourn their loss two sons and seven daughters, sixty grandchildren, ninety-eight great-grandchildren, eleven great-great-grandchildren and many other relatives and friends.

(MRS.) RALPH ACKERSON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Elder C. W. Anderson, Ark., $5; Mrs. Grace E. Jones, Pa., $1; H. F. Cate, Kans., $1; Dr. W. R. Presley, Texas, $1; Mrs. Attie Rutledge, Fla., $3; "A friend," Ontario, $1.

MEETINGS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held, Providence permitting, with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, commencing on Friday before the fourth Sunday in May at 10 a. m., Standard Time, and continuing three days (May 24th, 25th and 26th, 1935). To those coming by automobile, the meetinghouse is located on Route 222, north of Conowingo, Maryland, and not over one-half mile north of Maryland-Pennsylvania State line. Those coming by bus over Route No. 1 from either Philadelphia or Baltimore will be met at intersection of Routes Nos. 1 and 222, near Conowingo, Maryland, by special request to Charles B. Osborne, Fulton House, Quarryville, Pennsylvania. All peace-loving Baptists of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us.

CHARLES B. OSBORNE, Deacon.

The Delaware River Association will be held with Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon County, New Jersey, on Wednesday and Thursday, May 29th and 30th, 1935, beginning at 10:30 a. m. Daylight Saving Time. Brethren and friends are invited to attend. Arrangements will be made to meet those coming by rail from southern points at Frenchtown, N. J., and those coming via. New York at Flemington, N. J., on Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning.

ALWILDA R. STRYKER, Church Clerk,
190 Main Street, FLEMINGTON, N. J.

The Warwick Old Schol Baptist Association will not hold a 1935 session.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The churches composing the Border Union of Old School Baptists will meet on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 14th, 15th and 16th, 1935, with with the Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon. Those coming by train or the Highway should come to La Grande and take the branch lines to Elgin, twenty miles out. Information may be obtained from any citizen of La Grande as to the Elgin Highway or the railroad line, and trains will be met at Elgin the day before and during the meeting. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

C. W. BOND.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California; every third Sunday at 526 West Nevada Street, Ontario, California; also on forth Sundays as the Lord permits, at 3516 Franklin Avenue, Riverside, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.

T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. R. SALLEE, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

Cloth binding, 75c each. Paper covers, single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and all to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

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ELDER C. W. ANDERSON,

ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 103. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1935. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HUMILITY.

It seems very strange to me that my mind should be impressed to write upon the subject of "Humility," when I cannot find one particle of it in myself, and when I firmly believe we cannot tell anything to profit except we have learned it by experience, and that the revelation of Jesus Christ as our Savior comes to us through the exercise of divine grace in our hearts, which is christian experience, yet, being impressed, I feel it a solemn duty. If I have an earthly master, and he tells me to do certain things, I have no right to question and ask the reason why, but my duty is to obey, and now as I start out in this task I am already encouraged and comforted, because, as I hope, my Master has at this moment caused me to perceive that he does not require humility at my hands, that he is my humility, and he graciously and in mercy supplies every want and deficiency in me. If I have quit the service of my former master whose reign over me was in darkness unto death, wherein sin prevailed, calling forth every lust of the flesh, and have entered the service of Him who reigneth in righteousness, then would I yield my "members servants to righteousness, unto holiness," for the apostle tells us, "When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness." There is no fruit yielded in our service as servants under sin, the end thereof is death. "But now being made free from sin, and become servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." Humility is not one of the results of any of the works of the flesh. "The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like." Is it any wonder then, when I search my own flesh for humility, that I find it not? Every possible emanation from

the flesh is in direct opposition to an humble and contrite heart. The natural heart is filled with pride and self-esteem. It is continually in conflict and in battle for supremacy. It even presumes to say that the arm of God is shortened that he cannot save unless mighty man humbles himself and accepts the proffered salvation. When I deplore it myself, the absence of humility, and grieve and mourn because of the presence of every opposition to it, I find I am not looking for it in the right direction. I want to do something that will ape humility, and try to deceive myself into thinking it is the real thing. In other words, I am trying all the time to get religion, and am proud (not humble) to find how well I get along. I search out my brother's faults and talk to others about him in an ugly way, saying (if not in words) in my ignorance, If he would do as I do he would be above reproach. Is that humility? When the tree is corrupt the fruit must of necessity be corrupt also. A clean thing cannot come out of an unclean. Of the olden time before the flood, we read this Scripture: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." So also throughout the Scriptures the same truth is set forth, that man is totally depraved and in him is no good thing. Again, it is written, "God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Now when the children of God look to themselves for good deeds, looking away from Christ and depending upon the deeds done in their body, they find the filthy self-righteousness of the proud spirit of the Pharisee. Hide thy drooping head, O humility, thou hast no place there. Yet it is in this very proud pharisaic heart that the sweet spirit of grace takes up its abode and causes the lofty head to bow low, the proud body to fall prostrate in the dust in humble acknowledgment and gratitude to the covenant-keeping God for his gracious and tender mercy. When we discover the superabounding of grace, where sin did abound, what a change has taken place; the poor child has had his fill of sin, that which he once loved he now abhors. He sees himself as he has never seen himself before, a vile and depraved sinner. From the moment this work of grace begins we observe the fruit that is yielded. The growth of the old corrupt tree has ceased, its leaves faded, its beauty gone, its force abated. A corn of wheat has fallen into the ground. An incorruptible seed by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. This seed takes root in the corrupt soil of the heart, the Husbandman careth for it in such a way that soon is manifest the upward growth; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. The foul growths and evil weeds so conspicuous before, are cut down and dug up by the roots by the hand of Him whose Spirit worketh grace in the

heart. How interesting to watch the growth of the tender plants from the time they begin the christian journey, and how anxious we are for them, and how careful of them when they have entered the warfare. The nursing mothers in Israel bathe their scars and pour oil into the bleeding wounds, and then we rejoice as we see tribulation working patience. The frequent conflicts cause them to endure hardness as good soldiers. Now the work of the Spirit in this earthly soil: what does it produce? The apostle tells us: The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. But one might ask, Can a clean thing come out of an unclean? We answer, No; emphatically, No. Well, that one says, you have been comparing this fruit-yielding work to nature's seed sown in the earth. Has the earth been changed that it should bring forth bread to the eater when it before brought forth briers and thorns? No, the earth has not been changed, but the briers and thorns have been plowed under and they die, and the soil is prepared and made ready for the Sower. So this corrupt heart of ours, the plow and harrow of divine grace is set to work by our spiritual Husbandman, causing death to the corrupt works of the flesh. They are trodden under foot, they die. Our old man is crucified (with Christ) that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. Christ died, by his death the law which condemned us was satisfied, the sword of justice was removed from the way of the tree of life, Christ rose from the dead, and all the Father had given him arose with him to newness of life. And this is what the work of the Spirit now makes manifest. The saints of God, as such, are pure and holy as he is pure and holy. The bodies were prepared for the sowing of the seed, the incorruptible seed has been sown, it has taken root downward and bears fruit upward. And now we enter the vineyard of our Lord and eat his pleasant fruits. Again the apostle tells us the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth. Well, what of the production? The first thing we discover in this new conception and birth is that the Lord has fulfilled the promise that he would take the stony heart out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh. They manifest a broken heart, which is an humble and contrite spirit. So the very first result of fruit-yielding in the new-born soul is humility. And what did man do toward bringing about that result? I will tell you what he did: he fought against it with all the power of all the pride of his natural lust. But, glorious news, "where sin abounded grace did much more abound." Ever afterward when you meet and talk with that child you will discover the meek and humble spirit. As the garden needs the hoe to keep down the weeds of evil growth, so also there is a needs be that the Spirit be in continual exercise. The law of God is written in our hearts, and when we violate that law we are chastised, which chastisement in the end "yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness"

unto them which are exercised thereby. Each one of us remembers the humility of soul we have felt after a spiritual whipping, how we were ready to crawl in the very dust to the feet of the brethren, imploring forgiveness. O humility, thou can now raise thy bowed head, for now thy light shineth and the angels of God rejoice. Wisdom tells us, "Before honor is humility." Also, "By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honor, and life," and the apostle warns us to let no man beguile us in a voluntary humility. He also admonishes us to be subject one to another, clothed with humility. How rich the clothing, wrought gold, as the clothing of the daughter of the king. If you should ask me if I ever knew a time when I realized that I was truly humble, I would answer, Now. And I would tell you the time I thought I was humble I found it to be pride of the worst sort. The natural man for his own ends will sometimes ape humility. The truly penitent child of God, never. The power of God which works humility caused the persecuting Saul of Tarsus to become Paul (the little). The same power also filled the mouth of the psalmist with these words: "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Now, O humility!

BENJAMIN F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pennsylvania.

NEWARK, Del., Aug. 12, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—Sister Coulter surrendered the writing left by Elder Coulter, to me, at his death several years ago, 1923, and to-day in rereading them I found the foregoing article, which is too good and rare in these times to cast aside, so for the benefit of the household of faith will you kindly give it space in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES? He was the first earthly preacher that lifted the burden from my sinful heart after my baptism, August 1st, 1914. The burden of sin and death remained with me even two months or more after my baptism by brother Eubanks, until the yearly meeting in October, at Welsh Tract, and brother Coulter's sermon seemed to me like the light that was shown to Paul, brighter than the noonday sun, and for nearly four years I was lifted to the mount. His writings show and prove that he was one of the giants of his day, and if those who did not know him in his lifetime have the opportunity to read his writings, I hope it may result in bearing fruit to the church visible.

J. B. MILLER.

MCDOWELL, Ky., Jan. 10, 1934.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It came into my mind and heart that I would like to tell my brethren and sisters in the Lord, who are scattered abroad, of the great mercies, signs and wonders which He hath shewed toward me. In other words, tell them of His longsuffering toward me, if they, peradventure, will be comforted thereby. I feel at this time to be a pattern (to them that know me, especially,) to them which should hereafter believe on Him

to life everlasting. I was a very great sinner, doing it all in ignorance and unbelief. I was exceeding sinful in swearing, drinking liquor and all manner of vice. But it fell on a day that I, like Paul, saw a great light round about me and "in" me that revealed to me very plainly my miserable and lost condition. I was awakened and greatly alarmed. At first I was very ignorant as to what was going on "in" me. I did not know the Lord. I felt certain I (or some of my family) was doomed shortly to die. These thoughts tormented me day and night. I seemed to be in a very strange and dreadful condition. My neighbors began to think and say that I was going crazy. I learned of this, which greatly added to my pain. I had a store at that time, which I could hardly look after as in former times. I soon disposed of the store. I was interested only in the matter of shunning death and hell. I was justly condemned and could provide neither defense nor excuse for my great sins, which were now so open and glaring before me. It seemed they were greatly revived and strengthened in me. I could not keep my mind off them and dying. I would often reason and try to convince myself that there would be no everlasting punishment for my soul, but all in vain. Then I would think that if I could only be a beast I would gladly make a change of that kind, for, I said, there is no hereafter for them, neither good nor bad; but the good Lord would not let me believe such things. Now I was in great misery. No tongue can describe my feelings. I thought on my ways; I made haste and delayed not to keep the commandments of God as nearly as humanly possible, but I could not do it as I wished to; no matter how hard I tried to be good and obedient I would often break one or the other of the commandments, which would spoil all the good that I had ever done. I wept and tried to atone for my wrongs, which were burdening me to death. My sins pursued, dogged and waylaid my shuffling steps; the sorrows of death compassed me about; the pains of hell gat hold upon me. The more I read my Bible and tried to reform the farther from perfection I seemed to get. I talked and argued on the Scriptures with my neighbors incessantly. I then talked and hoped that I could, somehow, be "saved" and justify myself by the keeping of the commandments, although I would often be breaking them. I did not want to say, or believe, that I would be lost. I went on in this condition, stealing out and praying in the woods and secret places for five or six years, in the meantime getting a little comfort now and then. At last I saw plainly that I could not be justified by the works of the law, no matter how hard I tried to atone for my sins, in keeping the law. By this time the Spirit of God had revealed Jesus Christ to my soul, and that I should look for salvation through him. I had lost all my self-confidence, and was now greatly yearning to know more about Jesus. I had some hope (though very dim at times) that Jesus would eventually pardon my sins. The spiritual

nature and character of the law of God appeared to me and I began to read my Bible with new eyes and understanding.

I will not come to dreams and revelations, as space will not permit it here. Finally, after five or six years, I felt the burden roll off me. I believed the good Lord had set me free. I cannot ever forget that day and place. I had great peace of mind for awhile. I felt certain that God for Christ's sake had forgiven me all sins. I examined myself and saw nothing wrong, but after a time something seemed to say or suggest baptism to me. This I greatly feared, dreaded and resisted. This struggle lasted two or three years. I wanted to be sure about the baptism, so I waited upon the Lord to show me, until I should have no fears or doubts about the matter, and "time" of baptism, which eventually, I feel, he did. On the day of baptism I did not have a single doubt and was eager to get into the water and fulfill all righteousness. I have never regretted being baptized. I feel all true believers in him cannot be content without it. I feel that I on that day did "enter into the kingdom of God," which is happiness. Immediately beforehand I could only "see" the kingdom, but could not enter in to it; I could not have perfect peace of mind and heart, because something seemed lacking (which I felt was baptism). Well, after this for a time I saw and felt myself to be in a blessed condition. I could not see how I could ever be touched by trouble any more. But finally I began to be troubled about my duties. I felt to be shirking my duty because I did not attempt to preach. Oh how these thoughts would harrass my mind and trouble my soul. I objected to this in thought and in deed vehemently. I would not and could not agree to such a thing as that. I protested and ran away from it for three or four years, all the while suffering greatly for my refusal to heed the "pleading call" of my Master. He had made it so clear to me that I could not doubt it, yet I could not summon enough courage to make the attempt. I felt I was a shirker and felt greatly condemned. I seemed to be in a worse condition than in the beginning of my troubles. I could not rest because of this burden. I knew I could not preach; I did not want to be called a preacher. I had many excuses and pleaded them as long as I dared to. I had already learned that I believed a distasteful and unpopular doctrine, and I saw to advocate it would make me unpopular with the best people of the world (moralists and self-righteous). That I abhorred. I wanted to live peaceably at home. But all these excuses did me no good. Eventually, after much suffering and delay, His love grew so strong and conviction so deep and sure, I "offered" my body a living sacrifice, which seemed to be my "reasonable" service. I was relieved beyond expectations, although I did not say much, and that with great abashment of spirit. I have never regretted my acceptance of the "clear call" of Jesus. It was the sixth day of May, 1933. Brethren, pray for me, a sinner saved by grace, for I feel

I now need Jesus more than ever. The work is great, the day is short. The workmen are sluggish; the reward is great. I feel the great hour hand on the dial of time has almost moved around. The Scriptures show this plainly. I am convinced that mankind as a race has almost completed the journey appointed him by the great Builder. I can see Him in the offing. I am eager for the great roundup of his sheep. I feel certain I shall be alive and remain unto his coming. I have seen enough to convince me thoroughly of this. I am forty-three years of age and do not expect to die the common death of all men. I was twenty-eight years old when the stone that was cut out of the mountains without hands smote and afflicted me. It is good for me that I have been afflicted. Praise God. Laud his name forever.

You may publish this if you see fit.

MILFORD HALL, SR.

SAN ANTONIO, Texas, Jan. 24, 1935.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:--Inclosed find a good letter from Elder J. B. Bowden, of Edcouch, Texas. Will you please publish it in the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so the poor and afflicted of Zion may rejoice that God is God? The last day of this month I will be seventy years and five months of age and have taken the SIGNS off and on, as I have been able to pay for it, about thirty-eight years.

Your unworthy brother, if one it is by grace alone,

J. W. STAGGS.

EDCOUCH, Texas.

IT has been my mind for some time to write a few lines in regard as to just what the Lord God has spoken through the prophets regarding evil. Some of the brethren of late years seem to want to cull many things that are evil, and pronounced such by prophecy, from the line of God's predestination of all things whatsoever that come to pass, for fear of making God the author of sin, yet in much of their preaching will affirm that God created all things. I will say that if sin is a thing, God created it. If not, as the old order of Baptists in all ages have preached, man is the first being to violate the law that God gave, and became a sinner by that one violation, which brought sin and condemnation in the world, man is the originator of sin, so death by sin. Those brethren a few years ago began to set aside the doctrine of predestination, especially when used in connection with the word "absolute," claiming that to use the word "absolute" makes God the author of sin, when the oldest written confession of faith, put forth in London in July, 1689, says that God is the first cause of all causes. Hence God created and formed man and gave him the law, and man transgressed it, so man, then, must be the direct author of sin. Then that being the case, as the old London Confession says, God must stand as the first cause of all causes, there being no other creator and builder but God. I have found by reading that God uses the wickedness as his sword, and that he brings about his purposes and deep designs and controls the wick-

edness of man often in showing forth his predestination of events calculated to manifest his glory, as in the case of Joseph's brethren selling him into Egypt, where he was treated as a slave under the wicked hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, until the allotted time for Jacob and family to enter Egypt to serve the four hundred years, as told Abraham. The wicked design of the rulers and soldiers crucified the Lord. All this transpired in fulfillment of God's eternal design, for he was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God and they by wicked hands crucified Jesus. Hence these two great evil and wicked acts were predestinated beforehand to be done. In this we can plainly see that God makes use of the wicked devices of man to accomplish his deep purposes, so why should puny man in this age of the world rise up and say that to preach the predetermined counsel of God makes him responsible for all the sins that have entered the world? I defy any man to disprove the selling of Joseph, and the four hundred years of bondage under the wicked hands of Pharaoh, and the men who led the trial and accomplished the crucifixion of the Lord not to be according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. If it was not in accord with his purpose, please tell whose counsel it was, and who was benefited by the deed.

Now I just want to write a few quotations respecting sin and its consequence: "Then God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech." —Judges ix. 23. "But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him." —1 Sam. xvi. 14. "And it came to pass on the morrow, that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of the house: and David played with his hand, as at other times: and there was a javelin in Saul's hand."—1 Sam. xviii. 10. "Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee."—1 Kings xxii. 23. "The Lord hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof: and they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit."—Isaiah xix. 14. "For the Lord hath appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the Lord might bring evil upon Absalom."—2 Sam. xvii. 14. "Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity, and will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel."—1 Kings xxi. 21, 29. "Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read."—2 Kings xxii. 16. "Set up a standard toward Zion: retire, stay not; for I will bring evil from the north, and a great destruction." And here are other places which record words of the Lord mentioning the evil he would bring upon the peo-

ple: Jeremiah ii. 23; xix. 3; xxiii. 12; xxv. 17; xxxvi. 39; xxxix. 16; xlv. 5. All read nearly the same. I will quote one more: "Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people be not afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" "All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, which say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us."—Amos iii. 6; i. 10. There are several quotations which speak of the evil the Lord will do or hath done, if we take all quotations as they speak in literal tones. The citations as they occur only go to show that the evil devices of men are used against them in their own evil intentions, used as it is said, as a sword in the hand of God to render justice, or to accomplish his deep designs in that which he foresaw.

The Primitive Baptists have been falsely accused (more especially by those who at one time had fellowship among them) of preaching that God is the author of sin, because they cannot with any degree of honesty limit any part of the eternal decree entered into in the ancients of eternity. I will say that God is not, nor will he ever be, disappointed in one movement of any creature, for all things were known to him before time had its beginning. Thus he in some way declared it to be as it is, or else he had no control over the things he created and they do things which were never intended for them to do. The Book says, "The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly [but subject to hope], but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope."—Rom. viii. 20. There is one thing sure, and that is, if God had not made man subject to vanity he would never have become vain, either in actions or thought. The very thinking evil is a sin. Lust, as is spoken of, is a desire to obtain things often hurtful to us, and, as James says, "Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin."—James i. 14, 15. From the day Satan entered the garden with his persuasive arguments to our mother Eve the beauty, and the idea of becoming wise, under the plausible arguments of Satan, together with the creative subjection of vanity, fell into sin and disobedience to the divine law of God, hence became a sinner. She received the law in her husband, and gave unto her husband, who was with her, and he did eat, being of the same nature, subject to vanity. Hence we trace the subject to hope that he was made subject to hope, Rom. viii. 20; Gen iii. 9, 20. Paul says, "We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Our carnal mind is ever ready to question God in this, and say, Why make man subject to evil propensities, subject to vain imaginations, subject to evil thoughts and evil deeds? These are often thoughts, and many times spoken. Many times men will say to us, If God made us to be evil in thought and action, why should he hold us guilty? Men who

make such charges should be able to answer, for those very thoughts and words are evil. Paul said, Some men will say, Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just. Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why, or what doest thou? Shall the clay say unto him that fashioned it, Why didst thou make me thus? Nay, O man, hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and the other unto dishonor?

But back to the first subject. Regarding evil, it is herein traced to the violation of the creature man, and not to the creation of God, for God is not the founder of sin, nor hath he fellowship with any therein. Men who rose up against us accused us of making God the author of sin, by preaching his (God's) unalterable purpose, unchanging designs, his eternal foreknowledge and firm decrees, and that God is before all things, and by him all things consist, and without him there was not anything made that was made. These very men (designing men) place a limit or bounds on things that were made, so as not infringe on the holiness of God, as they say, but leave all conflicting events that transpire in time to open chance, and in doing so they refuse to preach predestination as an attribute of God in its full meaning, and limit his purposes to the frail understanding of man. It is proven by the quotations in the beginning that God made use of evil to his own glory, and the deep manifestation of his divine love to his children. "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Here is where I stand.

As ever, a sinner, saved by grace if saved at all,

J. B. BOWDEN.

GRANTVILLE, Kans., April 24, 1935.

DEAR FRIEND GILBERT BEEBE:—I am inclosing one dollar to advance my subscription a little. It seems that the "depression" does not ease up enough for me to do more than renew by "piece meal," as it were. I am sorry to be late, but thankful I can renew at all. I am also sending a letter I received from Elder J. T. Barnes, which if you find acceptable, and will publish the letter from his daughter first, it will explain why he wished it sent without any comment from me. I fear he will not write many more letters.

I notice the item in the last SIGNS telling of your great bereavement in the loss of your wife. Only a little more than four short years I spent with the love of my young days before he was laid under the sod, and though human sympathy is sweet, I know only too well how feeble and inadequate words are to relieve the heartache such a loss leaves. I felt that part of my very self was gone and I could not possibly live. But, dear friend, "this also can be borne," and here I am, fifty-three years later, not looking back in bitter tears as I did for so long, but pressing forward to the nearing end of

my journey here to a reuniting in a better life with him and our heavenly Husband.

"When all that now seems so mysterious
Will be plain, and as clear as the day,
And the toils of the road will seem nothing,
When we get to the end of the way."

Sister Anna McKinney also passed away, very suddenly, a week ago, with a heart attack. Her recent renewal to the SIGNS was sure enough her last. An obituary notice will be sent before long.

With deep sympathy, I remain your friend,

MARY ELLISON.

[WE much appreciate the words of condolence in the foregoing letter, and thank our dear friend for her kind expressions of sympathy. We, too, feel part (and the best part) of our "very self, is gone. May God grant us strength to continue on to the end of our earthly pilgrimage.—G. B.]

OTHELLO, Wash., April 10, 1935.

DEAR SISTER IN HOPE:—Daddy wishes me to write you to explain that he has had to stop writing your letter before he had finished all that he would have liked to write on the subject. His eyes are failing so that he can only type a few minutes at a time, then it is such a strain on his whole body that it causes him to have pains in his back. He has been failing fast all winter, not only his eyes, but his general health. We are hoping that when the nice weather comes and he can get outside every day he will feel better again, and his eyes always seem better when his health improves.

We all enjoy your letters very much and hope you can send those sweet messages often, for we read and reread them. He says, if you wish, when you read this letter you can send it to the SIGNS, for he gets many good letters, and would like to answer each one, but that will let his correspondents know why he cannot write.

With much love,

EDITH SHOWALTER.

IN HIM ALL FULLNESS DWELLS.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Can you bear with me a little while as I, in my desolate and poverty-stricken condition, attempt to express some of my thoughts on this, to me, most sublime truth? My sight is so weak I cannot turn to this blessed record in my precious Bible, but you who are blessed to retain your God-given blessing of natural sight can turn to it and read it. I may not be able to give quotations word for word as recorded, but I assure you that I will not destroy the spirit of truth encouched in these blessed words.

All fullness dwelleth in him. This brings to our troubled heart and mind that our depraved condition can have no influence on this great storehouse, so full of everything suited to our welfare and our good while in this old world of sin. This HIM which holds all fullness, is none other than Jesus, our all in all. He is full of grace and truth, and we have recorded in the lives of dear pilgrims from righteous Abel down to the present time, that the fullness of God in Jesus enabled them to

meet, endure and overcome all trials and opposition through which they had to pass in their earthly pilgrimage. While many were theirs to endure, too numerous for time to tell, much less for a poor weak worm like me to tell, suffice it to say, it was sufficient to quench the violence of the furnace which was heated seven times hotter than needful to test this fullness. See how complete and full was this shield of our God, and was the fullness which dwelt in our Redeemer. It closed the devouring mouths of the lions. His adversaries could not move while it was Daniel's lot to be a companion with them, and time would fail me to tell the wonders of this fullness of grace which all the ancient travelers have been drawing on from the dawn of time down to the present time, in which we are so much interested. To-day we find this great storehouse as full as it was when our father and mother in the garden found it full enough to clothe them and hide their nakedness which caused them shame. As we have been giving testimonies of the fullness which our fathers have handed down to us, we want to know what we do personally know of this fullness. John says of this fullness, It pleased God that in him should all fullness dwell, and we all have received of this fullness, and grace for grace. John's testimony links into the testimony of Paul like a golden chain, not a missing link. This sublime truth, like all the glorious record, leads our poor hearts and minds into this full storehouse of the doctrine of God our Savior. I realize this brings me to face the great army of opposers of this glorious doctrine which brings to view the sovereign power and absolute rule and control of our God, in whom all fullness dwells. This glorious doctrine has dropped as the gentle rain and distilled as the dew, all down through time, on the tender plants of the garden of our God. Though weak in myself to publish this glorious doctrine, I want to leave this testimony with my brethren, that having been a recipient of this fullness for more than one-half a century, I have found it to be enough to tide me over all opposition. While I am now standing on the bank of Jordan, just waiting for Him in whom dwells all fullness of love, mercy and power to complete the great work which he began in my heart over sixty years ago, it is in him and through him I live and have a being in this poor old world, and having been a pensioner on this fullness so long gives me hope, and with hope courage comes, as the apostle while drawing on this fullness received the very armor which enabled him to press toward the mark, the consummation of the fullness of grace sufficient. No wonder Paul could say, It is by the grace of God I am what I am. It was in the strength of this fullness he could say, I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith. Upon this fullness I am now ready to be offered. Oh what fullness to the soul when brought face to face with the last enemy to be able to exclaim in triumphant language, Oh the fullness of such power! This wonderful fullness has ever run through the hearts of the

members of his body, ever since the dawn of time, and to-day all of them receive of his fullness and grace for grace. Oh he is the Rock, and his work is perfect, and this is his work, that we believe on his Son, in whom all fullness dwells. Yes, poor soul, you who have tasted of this fullness, can say with David, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters."

Dearly beloved, your letter so refreshed my poor mind on the subject of the fullness of God that I started to write the foregoing some time ago, but on account of my eyes I had to stop. The type you wrote upon brings out this fullness so wonderfully I will try briefly to offer my thoughts on the servant of Abraham who was sent to find a wife for Isaac. A type points only to that which it represents; no more, no less. One type does not represent *all* the fullness which is in our text, but we have types that do so, just as Wisdom has arranged. Abraham, Isaac and the servant are types of that which brings into manifestation the bride of Isaac (the church). There are but three engaged in this great work. When we come down to the antitype, the church manifested in the field (the world), just three were engaged in this glorious work: God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three unite in the one God. Abraham is the father of all the promised seed, and he is the chief corner-stone where the compass of wisdom is set, where by faith we start with the field (notice inspired word) to find any and all points in our journey through this desert land, where we, like the type, meet the Husband. Abraham represents God, as I firmly believe, as far as the type leads us, he being the only one who had the promise, and in this promise all fullness dwells, for it embraces the innumerable company that could not be numbered by man, and everything which his son Isaac had he received of his father. When the time came for Isaac's bride to be manifested, Abraham called his faithful servant, into whose hands he entrusted all things. We see by this language that Abraham had other servants, but this is the only one to whom Abraham entrusted all his house. In the setting up, or manifestation, of the church here in the world (the field) where our dear Husband walks and communicates his love to us, is it not the Holy Spirit which leads us to see him, and does not the sight of him dismount us from the law (as Rebecca lighted off of the camel)? Oh there is such fullness in this blessed type. My poor soul is wearied of its confines in this vail of darkened glass I have to look through to meet Him in the heavenly revelations. Dear ones, this figure, or type, has been a wonderful resort to my poor soul for many years. It is one of the first which gave me knowledge of the great fullness in my blessed Redeemer. Notice how wonderfully and lovingly the servant makes his errand known to Rebecca while he is introducing himself to her as the servant of Abraham. He takes the riches which his master

gave him and places them upon Rebeca. How sweet to my soul were the jewels with which the Holy Spirit adorned me when I was laboring under the law to adorn myself to meet, or see, dear Jesus. The dear Spirit opened my blind understanding for the first time to see that it was sinners Jesus came to save, and, dear ones, this precious jewel I have worn now for over sixty years, and its sweetness and beauty are to me more precious than gold. Another beauty in the work of this servant, was that he first revealed the riches of his master before he required her to do anything. After he had imparted a knowledge of his master's riches and shown how wonderfully the Lord had prospered his journey. All this must be demonstrated by your faith. If you will deal kindly with my master, tell me, that I may turn to the right or the left. This was the trying point with the servant as well as with Rebecca. This act of Rebecca was the seal to this wonderful errand. "Wilt thou go with this man?" "I will go." Right here I want to bring out the great bulwark of the soul, the fullness which is in Jesus, both for time and eternity. The enemy of this fullness has ever denied and tried to prove to the soul that has received this testimony of this fullness that if election and predestination be true it makes God the author of sin and takes away all obligation on our part in the matter. Now we are to the point in this type where such accusation is placed on the left hand, where our spiritual Isaac has placed them. No one can deny election in Rebecca being chosen and called to be the bride of Isaac, and this election manifests predestination, for the servant was expressly forbidden to take any of the daughters of the Canaanites in whose land we dwell, but go to the elect and predestinated bride and bring her. So the servant (Holy Spirit) of our spiritual Master brings her. Whom he foreknew he also predestinated, and whom he predestinated he also called, and whom he called he also justified, and whom he justified he also glorified. In him all fullness dwells.

J. T. BARNES.

FAYETTE, Ala., March 22, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—I received the inclosed letter from brother J. L. Sanders yesterday, asking me to read it, and if I thought it worthy of publication to send it to the SIGNS, so I am sending it to you to dispose of as you think proper. Elder Sanders is a young minister and is ordained to the work of the ministry. He has very little education, but is studying the Bible, I believe, all the time he has to spare. I have confidence in him, and believe he will some day be a useful gift.

G. W. BERRY.

SAMANTHA, Ala., March 18, 1934.

THE beloved Son of the Most High dwelling with the little but dear children of the Most High. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"—Psalms cxxxi. 1. Dear brethren in Christ, I believe that God's dear children are led to behold this good and

pleasant unity, in which they are also blessed to dwell together, because of their relation to each other, in a oneness of the Spirit, in the household of faith, and they while living in this present world have two relations. First, in Adam, earthly; second, in Christ the Lord from heaven, a quickening Spirit, and in this manner they bear two relations. In the first relation they have tribulation, with trials and persecutions; in the second, peace and unity. In the first they all died in transgression and sin, under a just and holy law from their blessed Creator, the God of heaven; but in the second they are blessed through abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, to reign in life, by one Man, Jesus Christ, and not in any other way, for in the first they all died in sin, for Adam strictly transgressed the law of his Creator, and by him sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned. In this condition they were all without God and without hope in the world, notwithstanding the Lord had a portion chosen in Jesus Christ, before the world was, out of the first Adam family, and though they were dead in sin, yet God the Father loved them with an everlasting love, as a covenant people chosen in Christ Jesus, which covenant he made known to Abraham by promise, and when the fullness of time had come God, with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning, whose love never waxes cold, sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. Wherefore we read, God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us together (in unity) with Christ (by grace are ye saved) and hath raised us up together in a oneness, and made us sit (in unity) together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus, for we are his (God's) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good (and pleasant unity) works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. The Lord will ordain peace for us, for he has wrought all our works in us. And they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. All his ways are peace and pleasant, for his covenant is an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, and that covenant is, Thy children shall all be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the (unity) peace of thy children, for this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their minds and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people; for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. Now this covenant of promise is to God's dear children in every nation under heaven, ordered in all things and sure. All have one Teacher to instruct them in the way of righteousness, in which way he also leads

them, and in no other way, for he has loved righteousness and hated iniquity, and he has made himself so wonderfully manifested to his children, until he has caused them to fall out with the ways of their first relation and fall in love with him and his ways, for all his ways are peace, unity and pleasant, and when he is pleased to gather them together in his name there is a oneness of spirit, for Christ is in their midst as the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely, and they are all little children, quickened together, gathered together, raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God, and if sons then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. All have been baptized in one Spirit and called with a holy calling, an effectual calling, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner-stone, in whom (Christ) all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord for a habitation of God through the Spirit. Now, according to the Scripture, these are all little children, with their Chief, Elder Brother, Shepherd, Prophet, Priest and King, and those who desire the high seat, to rule over them, are left out, for Jesus said, It shall not be so among you, speaking to his children. Then let those poor in spirit remember his tender and protecting care, for he cares for them, with the lambs in his bosom, for he prayed to his Father and to their Father, to his God and to their God, for them to be with him, for he said, I will that where I am there they be also. They that are his are led by a meek and quiet spirit, and he leads them in paths of righteousness for his name's sake, and he gives unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. David said, O Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill Zion? I will quote from Hebrews ii. 11-13: "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren; saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I [Jesus] and the children which God hath given me." "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

Dear brethren, I realize my imperfect condition, but I desire to thank the good Lord of heaven and earth for his unspeakable gifts.

If one at all, the least of all,

J. L. SANDERS.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

LEXINGTON, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITORS:—Kindly publish in the SIGNS my change of address from 323 South Broadway to 825 Melrose, Lexington, Kentucky. I am reasonably well, and send love and best wishes to you all.

Your brother,

P. W. SAWIN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1935.

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FAITH.

A DEAR sister in the State of New York has recently expressed the wish that some one would write upon this subject. This is one of the most wonderful words to be found in any language. The sad thing about it is that there is so little of it in the world today. Notwithstanding the inexpressible horrors which took place between 1914 and 1918, the nations are again making elaborate preparations for war. Why? Because they lack faith in each other. Experience has proven, in some instances at least, that little regard has been paid to the sacredness of covenants and treaties which had been entered into for the good of all. Suspicion and fear, which are the very opposites of faith and courage, are the backbones of depressions, distress and wars. In our earthly relations with mankind, confidence must have something to build upon as a foundation if we are to get very far in our dealings with one another. Human faith is weak, at best, and at the present time it seems to be at a particularly low ebb. Old Baptists are unfortunately influenced and effected by prevailing conditions. Many of us are finding it difficult to live up to the standards set by our forefathers. Brethren on occasions become very determined and fixed in their purposes and appear to lose all sense of honor, justice and truth in their dealings with their fellow-man and one another, in their efforts to gain their own selfish ends. At such times, our faith in them is terribly shaken, but it only brings home to us the fact that we are all still in the flesh, which is altogether corrupt and there is no soundness in it. Cursed is the man that maketh the arm of flesh his trust. A search of the record reveals that this is no new thing, for that which is hath already been. It is bad enough to have to groan beneath the load of the burden of our own depravity, but when, in addition, we are wounded in the house of our friends, we almost seem to sink in the bottomless pit. Such experiences try our hearts and souls, and were it not for the fact that we can go to the word of God and find a balm for every pain and ache in the fact that it has ever been thus with the elect of God, we would give up in despair. We have to thank God daily for not having left us destitute of his mercy. It is easy to

sail when the sea is calm and the day is clear, but when the waves are high and treacherous and the clouds are thick and hang heavily over us and we are far from shore, with the blackness of night rapidly approaching, then do we petition most earnestly the true and tried mariner to take soundings and tell us that "all is well." If we did not absolutely believe that there is a God of all power, might and dominion, who rules heaven and earth and all deep places in the sea, comfort could nowhere be found, but from time to time He seems to speak to our very soul, and say,

"Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed,
I, I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.

When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow,
For I will be with thee thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress."

We have touched upon human faith, but it is of divine faith which we wish to write more particularly at this time. The subject demands that mention be made of Abraham, who when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out not knowing whither he went. By faith he offered up his son Isaac, in whose seed all the nations of the earth were to be blessed, "accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure." By this same faith Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. By faith the children of Israel passed through the Red Sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned, and by this same faith Rahab, the harlot, perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace. Recalling these and many others to mind, is it any wonder that the great apostle should say, "Wherefore, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God"? He could truthfully thank God, as he did in his epistle to the Romans, that this faith was spoken throughout the whole world. As has just been quoted, there is a race that is set before us which we have to run with patience, or endurance. God's people cannot direct their steps so as to avoid the obstacles and difficulties by which they shall mount up to God by the ladder of faith. The way is definitely marked out and the Lord himself will so lead and direct them that they shall encounter all that he has appointed, and eventually he will bring them into the paths of peace and understanding and rejoicing. The three

Hebrew children, refusing to worship the golden image which king Nebuchadnezzar had set up, had to pass through the fiery furnace, but the God of their faith did not fail them, but set at naught the power of the flames and delivered them in a miraculous way. Daniel, who regarded not the decree of the king that he should not worship his (Daniel's) God, was cast into the den of lions, but the Lord sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths, that they should not hurt him. Job said, "He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Again, he said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Few, if any, have been tried as he was, and few, if any, have triumphed in the faith as he did. At the very midnight hour of his experience we hear him saying, "Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." The life which he lived in the flesh he lived by the faith of the Son of God, and he was not disappointed in that faith, for he saw God in the flesh before leaving this world: "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee."—Job xlii. 5. "And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his asquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold. So the Lord blessed the *latter end* of Job more than his beginning." It was God's manifested favor and goodness which he had reference to and lived to see. We do not believe that Job meant he would see God in the flesh in the next life, for we are told that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Here in this world is where faith is needed: it shall not be required when we reach our heavenly home. "And now abideth faith, hope and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Faith and hope shall only abide with us here, for when we depart and go hence they shall be swallowed up in possession of the fullness of the substance for which we hoped here. Now we see through a glass, darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part, but then shall we know even as we are known.

Let us consult dear old brother Peter regarding the subject under consideration: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with

exceeding joy." Hear ye him once more: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." The learned apostle Paul comes on the stand before the church at Corinth, testifying as follows: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your FAITH *should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.*" And when he was ready to be offered and the time of his departure was at hand, he said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." What wonderful bulwarks there are in the Scriptures for the faith of God's people! We are told that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It is the very opposite of sight, and hope that is seen is no longer hope, for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Faith and hope are twin companions; they are the two wings of a great eagle upon which we are borne aloft, far beyond the reach of that old serpent, the devil. For, "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Without faith it is impossible to please God, and whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

"Oh for a stronger faith,
To look within the veil;
To credit what my Savior saith,
Whose words can never fail."

How terrible, indeed, would be a poor sinner's plight if he were deprived of his faith in God. Faith is truly God's gift to his people here in this sin-cursed world; it is that which enables them to cling to him, though prostrate in the dust, verily believing that He who hath begun the good work in them will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Sometimes we have hoped that we possessed it; at other times we have been left to grope in the dark and question the reality of a God of love, whose power sustains the universe. We have had to stand still and see the salvation of our God. In these perilous times through which we are now passing, with so many things on every hand to try our faith, we desire to watch and pray for him to lead us out of the wilderness. David said, "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." Once upon a time, while regarding David's expression, "patiently," as used in ordinary speech, we were greatly troubled, for we knew that we were not waiting "patiently" in that sense, but Elder Silas H. Durand came along, and said that what David meant was "enduringly," and this appeared to help us a great deal, for we felt that that was what we were having to do.

"Faith! 'tis a precious grace,
Where'er it is bestowed;
It boasts of celestial birth,
And is the gift of God.

Jesus it owns as King,
And all-atoning Priest;
It claims no merit of its own,
But looks for all in Christ.

To him it leads the soul,
When filled with deep distress;
Flies to the fountain of his blood,
And trusts his righteousness.

Since 'tis thy work alone,
And that divinely free,
Come, Holy Spirit, and make known
The power of faith in me."

R. L. D.

ANSWERING INQUIRY.

A BROTHER in McCaskins, Arkansas, requests us to make some comments on 2 Corinthians xi. 13-15: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."

Here is presented the adversary of the saints, Satan himself, masquerading himself and his followers so as to appear as messengers of righteousness instead of deamons of hell which they really are. The most mischievous and deceptive of Satan's arts is when he pretends to be an advocate of truth though venting that which really is a lie. No child of God need be afraid of the devil, because judgment has been pronounced upon him in the cross of Christ which witnessed perfect redemption for all the elect of God. While he is a doomed devil, we are nevertheless admonished in the Word of God to be

equipped with the whole armor of God so as to effectually withstand him. He cannot be withstood by merely human strength. Faith in God is the weapon which overcomes him. Only as we are submitted unto God, can we really resist him. See Ephesians vi. 11-18, and James iv. 7. Transforming himself into an angel of light, does not mean that Satan *actually* becomes an angel of light. This is impossible. Yet he *pretends* to be an angel of light, and so deceives the believer often. This adversary of the saints is familiar with the Scriptures and does not hesitate to use them if thereby he can create doubt, fear and confusion in the souls of those at whom he thrusts. His sphere of activity is mainly spiritual or religious, he being the instigator of all the spiritual wickedness in high places. The first deception of Satan, which is recorded in Genesis iii., shows his onslaught to have been against the word of God. This is characteristic of him. He deceived Eve as to what the command of God to Adam really was. So has it ever been with him. His battlefield is not so much the sins arising from human depravity, not so much the sphere of crime and immorality, but the UNBELIEF of the human heart. We are not to look for Satan's activities to-day in the newspapers or the police courts, but in the pulpit and in professors' chairs. Wherever the Word of God is called in question, there we see the trail of "that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan." Satan and his emissaries assume a garb of piety and of refinement and culture, the better to deceive those who think only of Satan as something hideous and repulsive. Thus does he appear to be often an angel of light. The believer's safeguard is alone in having the promised Holy Spirit as one's Comforter or Stand-by, and in utter dependence upon the moment by moment supply of divine grace through Christ Jesus our Lord.

H. H. L.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, April 30th, 1935, in Washington, D. C., Elder Arnold H. Bellows, of Roxbury, New York, and sister Florence Beebe Paxton, of Leesburg, Virginia.

By the same, April 19th, 1935, at Leesburg, Va., Alton Parker Riddle and Miss Mildred Elizabeth Lago Marsino, both of Washington, D. C.

By the same, April 4th, 1935, at Leesburg, Va., John Thomas Furr and Miss Mabel Ann Carter, both of Middleburg, Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

JENNIE (HALL) PURDY, of Spencerville, Ohio, died at Memorial Hospital, Lima, Ohio, May 3rd, 1935, after several weeks illness. Sister Purdy was born August 22nd, 1869, in Mercer County, Ohio. She was the daughter of Henry and Mary Ellen Hall. At the time of her death she was 65 years, 8 months and 5 days old. April 10th, 1901, she was united in marriage to Morgan V. Purdy, to which union were born five children: Irene and Catherine, of Spencerville, Ohio, Dorothy, of Hammond, Ind., Evelyn, of Downers Grove, Ill., and Carl, of North Fork, California. Besides her children she is survived by four grandchildren, one brother, Ira Hall, of Spencerville, Ohio, one sister, Ada Stalger, of Celina, Ohio, and a host of other relatives and friends. Her husband preceded her in death, February 9th, 1935. Sister Purdy became affiliated with the Thompson Primitive Baptist Church, Putnam County, Ohio, in 1924, at which time both she and brother Purdy were baptized by Elder C. C. Bradford.

The funeral services were held in the Salem Presbyterian meetinghouse, near Monticello, Ohio, and her body was laid to rest in the Salem Cemetery. Services were conducted by Elder Hugh Williams.

Written by her daughter,

(MRS.) DOROTHY E. MAXWELL.

AMELIA E. WEST died at the Primitive Baptist Home, in Salisbury, Maryland, September 29th, 1934, aged 85 years and 14 days. She was the daughter of Samuel and Dernie Kelly. She was not seriously ill until a few days before the end, which was a great shock to her relatives and many friends. In the year 1870 she was married to James K. West, the son of Minus and Elizabeth West. She is survived by six children, two daughters and four sons: Mrs. Edgar S. Cormean, Mrs. Theressa Lake, Dewitte M., James E., William B. and George P. She was a loyal member of the Old School Baptist Church. She was baptized in the fellowship of Nassaongo Church, near Salisbury, Md.

Her funeral which was largely attended was conducted by Elder H. C. Ker, her pastor, assisted by Elder G. E. Coulbourn, of Cape Charles, Va. Her remains were laid to rest in the Old School Baptist cemetery at Snow Hill, Md., six grandchildren acting as pall bearers.

HER LOVIG CHILDREN.

SISTER WEST united with the Snow Hill Church, by letter, many years ago, was faithful to the church and in all the walks of life. We all loved her and miss her in our meetings, but know she is better off than in this world of sin and sorrow. Paul said to depart and be with Christ is far better.

H. C. KER.

MRS. JANE FARRINGTON died, very suddenly, at her home, in Binghamton, N. Y., February 24th, 1935. She is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Ola Appley, with whom she made her home, also a brother, Calvin Jenkins, of Sanitaria Springs, N. Y. She had been an active member of the Otego Old School Baptist Church for over sixty years, and was eighty-one years of age.

Burial was in the family plot at Sanitaria Springs, N. Y.

OLA APPLEY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

L. Z. Ross, N. Y., $1; T. O. Turner, Ky., $1; "A friend," Ky., $1; Mrs. W. S. Johnson, N. Y., $1; Mrs. W. A. Horton, N. Y., $3; E. M. Smith, B. C., $1; Alfred E. Titus, N. J., $8.

MEETINGS.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn Mass., the fifth Sunday in June (30th). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

The Warwick Old Schol Baptist Association will not hold a 1935 session.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The churches composing the Border Union of Old School Baptists will meet on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 14th, 15th and 16th, 1935, with the Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon. Those coming by train or the Highway should come to La Grande and take the branch lines to Elgin, twenty miles out. Information may be obtained from any citizen of La Grande as to the Elgin Highway or the railroad line, and trains will be met at Elgin the day before and during the meeting. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

C. W. BOND.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California; every third Sunday at 526 West Nevada Street, Ontario, California; also on forth Sundays as the Lord permits, at 3516 Franklin Avenue, Riverside, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.

T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Cloth binding. Price, $1.25 each. One dozen or more, ordered at the same time and all to the same address, one dollar each. Cash must accompany orders. Make checks and money orders payable to

J. E. BEEBE & CO.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 103. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1935. NO. 7.

POETRY.

"WITHOUT ME YE CAN DO NOTHING."

Come, children of the heavenly King,
Let's lift his name on high,
That we may ply a throne of grace
To God, through Christ, may fly.

When all this world's an empty show,
And friends prove vain at best,
Teach us, O Lord, to thee to go
And seek a gospel rest.

Temptations, trials, doubts and fears,
There is a need for all,
That we may prove our need of him,
Without his grace we fall.

Oh praise to God who gave his Son
To save his own from hell;
Through tribulation though they walk,
'Tis with the righteous well.

Then let us shout his praise abroad,
Give honor to the Root,
If we are branches of the Vine,
Our walk should prove the fruit.

Humility, mercy and love,
All these in Christ I see;
When these abound, then men may say,
"Lo, here's a goodly tree."

And though the means may prove severe,
Yet he will purge his own,
That they may boast, not in their strength,
But what their Lord has done.

Without him they can nothing do,
They're all, at best, unclean,
Their righteousness is filthy rags,
Not worthy to be seen.

But when his life flows through each branch,
And they in him abide,
They'll praise his name and lift it high,
Count worthy none beside.

FLOSSIE L. FAULKNER.

ALLABEN, New York.

LET FAITH LEAD ON.

The faith I've had I trust may never fail;
Without it, earth would be a dreary place,
For down life's troubled voyage as we sail,
Through faith we see the dear Redeemer's face.

He came to me when clouds were hanging low,
And in compassion bade me look above;
Until I looked I ne'er could know
The height and depth of his unchanging love.

I saw him bear the burdens of the cross,
I saw the prints of nails, the spear's deep thrust—
That all my feeble efforts were as dross,
As in despair I groveled in the dust.

Through faith mine eyes were raised again on high,
And there enthroned in glory saw him reign;
That it was boundless love which made him die,
Through faith I hoped with him to rise again.

I felt the sure support of his strong arm,
And oh the peace it brought my weary breast;
To know that he could keep me from all harm,
And bear me on to everlasting rest.

Dear Lord, I pray thee I may keep this faith,
But oh at times it seems so very frail;
With willing feet pray let me keep the path,
Let faith lead on to things beyond the veil.

ALFRED E. TITUS.

TRENTON, New Jersey.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ENTWISTLE, Alberta, Canada, Feb. 9, 1932.

I WAS born and raised in Jasper County, Illinois. My birth was February 9th, 1859, seventy-three years ago to-day. I am one of a family of eight children living to manhood and womanhood, five girls and three boys. Father, mother, sisters and brothers have all gone to their graves and I am the only one of the family left in this sin-cursed world to suffer the just purpose of the just and all-wise God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will, not man's.

I have often thought I would like to write some of my experience in nature, and from nature to grace. When I was a boy I felt that when I got to be a man I would settle down and join a church and be good and God would bless me in this time world and save me in the world to come. In December before I was twenty-one years old in the February following I was married and felt it was then by duty to join the church and live a christian the rest of my life, so in March following my marriage, one Sunday morning I suggested to my wife that we go to meeting, to which she agreed, so we went, and a cousin of mine and I joined what is called the christian church. The preacher did not ask us to give a reason of our hope, and they received us as full members of the church with a song and hand-shake. The preacher told us to read the Bible and practice it as we understood it. I thought that was good advice, and as we went home I thought the Bible would be my reading and guide the rest of my life, so when I had some spare time I commenced reading it. I thought I would read both the Old and the New Testaments through and I would know just what to do to get God's blessing in time and in eternity. I commenced at the first of the Old Testament, but had not read far when I laid it aside, and said to myself, That Bible is not of God; it is just the work of man. I read things I did not think God would allow man to do, so I had no use for the Bible, nor for meeting, and did not go to meetings of any kind for twelve years, so the seed that was sown was rotten and the ground stony so no fruit grew, and I feel it a great favor that God did not suffer me to go ahead in man's free will, or man-gotten religious works. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned, so I went on with my natural nature, or self-will. working, or seeking to lay up treasures on earth. "When the strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." So the strong man, the natural man, was allowed to keep this sin-cursed earthly tabernacle in his own way, very well satisfied with himself for thirty-two years, when the strong man, the natural man, was awakened at two o'clock in the morning from a good sleep and had to raise up to get his breath. I seemed to be smothering. My wife asked me what

was the matter. I told her I did not know, neither did I know, but all my past and present sins arose before me, and a fear came upon me that if I died in that condition I would be forever lost. My mind was led to ask God for mercy. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. The wind bloweth where it listeth, thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Later on, in reading the Bible, and my experience, has given me a little hope at times that God sent the Holy Spirit into this mortal, sinful body and began the good work, separating the dross from the gold, showing the strong man that his goods were spoiled, that he never could live in that house long at a time in peace. At daybreak my wife went to a near neighbor and asked him to go for a doctor. When the doctor came he told me that I had heart trouble, and surely it was, but not the kind that earthly doctors can cure, so his medicine did me no good. It takes the great Physician with his balm in Gilead to cure the sin-sick soul. I knew nothing of that great Physician at that time, but a great war started and lasted three months, the strong man, the natural man, seeking to get back his former strength, trying different medicines as remedies, but could get no relief, so the Stronger, who had begun the good work, whose promise is that he will continue the good work until the day of Jesus Christ, came and took away all the strong man's armor wherein he trusted. My self-will, which always was my greatest enemy, and is to-day, was overcome at the same hour that the great battle started, three months before. I gave up my life debt, I could live no longer, so I cried out, O God, I am willing to die, I am willing to live, willing to work or willing to preach, if thou only will forgive my sins and deliver me from this awful death. In a moment after those words were spoken I raised up in bed and clapped my hands for joy, for the burden was gone and I was made to feel I was a new man. I had not slept any for three days and nights, so I laid back on my pillow, which was wet with tears, and slept in perfect peace until daylight. My wife was up and had the fires started, so I got up. I was weak, but at perfect peace; I felt there was no more trouble for me in this life. It seemed to me my wife and children were changed. I went to the door and looked out over the field and everything was white with a heavy frost, the birds were singing their morning songs, the whole earth looked to be new and everything seemed to be praising God, and I felt all people were God's. At that time a Methodist preacher was holding a protracted meeting at our school-house, as there was no church house in that neighborhood, our three oldest children attended school there, and the evening before my great burden of sin was taken away they brought home word that there would be meeting the next day at the home of a close neighbor. They held their meeting at the members' homes in the daytime. My experience was very peculiar, in all

my long warfare my mind was never led to any church or to tell any one, not even my wife, about the warfare I had. God and medicine seemed to be all my hope. The meeting my children told us was to be held at a near neighbor's the next day gave me no thought or care about the meeting, and even the next morning after my great load of sin had been taken from me, as I thought forever, I had no thought of the meeting or the Bible or any kind of worship. After breakfast, while I was sitting in my chair and thinking what great things the Lord had done for me, our youngest child was playing around the room and he went to a table and picked up a small book, the New Testament, and came to me and laid it in my lap, and went on with his play, without saying anything to me. I took up the Book with no thought of any Scripture and opened it and my eyes rested upon the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth verses of the fifth chapter of Matthew. I read the three verses and closed the book. My mind was led at once to go to meeting that day. I felt I wanted to tell all the people what great things God had done for me. In a short time my wife came in where I was and I said to her, Let us go to meeting today. She said, All right, if you want to go. It was only a very short distance, so we went. I had not told her anything about what a great peace of mind I had received, but my mind led me to go to meeting and tell them all what the Lord had done for me. The heart trouble was gone with the great load of sin. We started for the meeting, but had not walked far before the devil said to me, You are going to meeting to-day to tell the people what great things God has done for you. They know you once joined a church and then backslid. They will not believe what you say. So the peace of mind I had enjoyed for a few hours was disturbed. Meeting started soon after we got there. They had at their day meeting a testimony period, when all could tell how they felt or what they believed, so after they prayed and sang a song the preacher gave the privilege to any who wished to talk. I felt I wanted to say something, but my tongue was silent. Quite a number talked. I think the preacher saw I was troubled, and he said, If any one wants the prayers of God's people, hold up their hands. I raised up my hand; that was as far as I could go at that meeting. After the meeting closed a "holy sanctified preacher," his wife and four or five of the new members who had joined during the protracted meeting went home with us for dinner. When dinner was over the "holy sanctified preacher" and the other new members of the Methodist denomination talked Bible all the time. I was speechless so far as the Bible or religion were concerned. I was a new-born babe, I knew nothing of a christian life or the teaching of the Bible, or what was before me. The women came in the room after the dishes were washed and the preacher said, We will sing a song and have prayer. He selected a song, they sang it, and he and his wife prayed. She always follows her hus-

band in prayer. He selected another song and they sang it, then he asked one of the men to pray, which he did. Then another song was started, it was one I had helped sing when I was a young boy at Sunday School. They had sung but a part of the song when it seemed to me a mighty rushing wind came from the east and through the front door, which was open, and filled the whole house, and suddenly my tongue was loosed and I commenced singing with the rest. I sang with a strong, loud voice, for it seemed all that was in the house was quickened. The song was finished and the preacher said, Brother Laws, lead us in prayer. We bowed to our knees, my tongue was loosed, and for the first time in my life I prayed in public. After my prayer, a good old hymn was sung, then a hand shake with all and the meeting closed. Some of the new members asked if they could hold meeting there the next day, to which wife and I agreed, and it was given out that night at the school-house that there would be meeting at my home the next day. I united with the Methodists and was soon able to do my work and go to meeting. Sunday School was started at our school-house and I took quite an interest in all the forms of man-got religious works. I felt any kind of work called religion was of God. Two or three nights after I united with the Methodists my wife asked me to pray for her, and a few days later at another meeting held at our house my wife also united with the Methodists. It seemed that the great gift of speech I had, my wife joining the church and the members taking quite an interest in putting me forward had exalting me from the start. I soon felt like Peter and all free-will worshipers get to feeling: Though all men forsake Christ, I will not. I had everything to learn, as a new-born babe knows nothing of what it is, or what is before it. It was so with me, as it was my lot to fall among blind leaders and false teachers. It was very easy for me to be misled and deceived. From the time my little son laid the Testament on my knees my mind was on the Bible. It was open before my eyes day and night every spare moment. I read four chapters to my family and all others who were present every day, followed by prayer before each meal, and I taught my children to pray at bed time. My wife had a good gift to pray, and as I was very zealous, full of self-righteousness, I had the preacher come home with us from Sunday School and that evening we all went to the river, which was but one-half mile from my place, and my wife, four children and I were baptized. The oldest child was twelve years of age, the youngest four years. I grew stronger in free-will, man-got religion, and one day I told a young man I would suffer my right arm to be taken off before I would sin a willful sin. I had spent about two years trying different spirits, the New Testament had been read through many times by me, the "holy sanctified preacher" and his wife lived near us and were frequent visitors and he and I talked Bible all the time and I was led in my blindness to believe much of

his holiness doctrine, but I hope I learned later that neither he nor I knew anything about the word of truth he had preached to me: If we sin after we are enlightened and taught of the great things to come, there is no forgiveness, we are forever lost. I feel the Scripture is plain, that all who are born of God have two lives, a spiritual and a natural life, the spiritual is of God and cannot sin. If there are not two lives in our house, or tabernacle, what causes the warfare to start and to continue? The last enemy that is conquered is death. Sin is condemned in the flesh, and I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh) dwells no good thing.

After I in my exalted state had made the boast to the young man that I would not sin, one of my old lusts of the flesh that had always been one of my weaknesses tempted me and I did sin, and the "sanctified preacher's" interpretation rose up in my mind. That started a great battle once more, which I had thought would never bother me again. Like Peter, I needed converting, and, as Paul, I was given a thorn in the flesh.

I am a pilgrim stranger here and my days are gliding swiftly by. I started this letter three years ago, when I had been a helpless creature for more than a year. God in his great mercy and love has placed me in the care of my two oldest children, and I feel no parent ever had better care than has been given me. The last four years have been very trying to this poor old sinful creature in every way. I have been stripped of both health and wealth, that I might be found in Christ, not having my own righteousness but the righteousness of Christ. I do not feel I would exchange the revelation I hope God has given me for the last four years of the holy Scriptures for all the health and wealth of this sin-cursed world. All shall come to nought, but the word of God liveth forever. I surely have been made to see some of the deep things of God. In the suffering I have endured my mind was led to the life of Job, where the devil was given the authority to strip him of his possessions and afflict him, but could not take his life; also of Daniel in the lions' den, and the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace; Joseph, and his wicked brothers desiring to take his life, but could not, and I was made to see my whole life was corrupt, and I was made to feel I had heard of the Lord by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eyes have seen him. I was made to cry, O God, though I be a devil, or of the wicked ones, thou art my God, thou art my power, I cannot go beyond thy will. O God, have mercy on me. Thy mercy, O God, is the theme of my song, the joy of my heart and the boast of my tongue. Thy free grace alone, from first to last, has won my affection and bound my soul fast.

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES is all the gospel preaching I have had for the last twenty-seven years. In all that time I have not been in any place of religious worship, nor have I talked with one person who was not a free-will worshiper who claimed we had to work to get God to work, and the SIGNS has

been a great comfort to me in my exiled life. I cannot place a value upon it, for it is a great and good gift of God to his children, especially to those who are isolated from their brethren. Though I take the wings of the morning and fly to the ends of the earth, God is there. Though I make my bed in hell, God is there.

I feel I will leave this sin-cursed world in debt to our God and to our children and to our fellow-man, for mercy has been my protection from my birth to the present moment.

JOHN W. LAWS.

FAYETTE, Ala., March 6, 1935.

DEAR SISTER CHESTER:—Your letter received and contents carefully noted. I feel a degree of thankfulness to God that some one of his children has been fed by my writing. If there is any good accomplished by anything I do he is entitled to the glory, for all that I am or ever expect to be, that is noteworthy, I owe to him.

You asked me to write on the first three verses of the seventh chapter of Hebrews. First, I will ask you to notice that all three of these verses constitute only one sentence. Read them with this in your mind, and you probably will see a difference. From the nature of the Scripture you ask me to write on, I gather that you would like to have my views on the priesthood of Melchisedec, and, first, I will say that I am persuaded that it was the Melchisedec priesthood that was without beginning of days or end of life, instead of Melchisedec himself. Read the last verse of the sixth chapter, which tells us that Jesus, our forerunner, was "made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Now, it appears to me that if Jesus was made after the order of Melchisedec, that this same order was as old as Jesus Christ, and he was brought up from everlasting, from the beginnig, or ever the earth was. This Melchisedec was, no doubt, the most perfect type of the everlasting priesthood of Christ, and, in order to more perfectly represent the unchangeable priesthood of Christ, his Melchisedec ancestry and descendants are not recorded in the Bible. Josephus has a little to say about his ancestors, but it all looks like a guess. In fact, all types as laid down in the Bible, are mere patterns and cannot possibly be just like what they represent, no more than the pattern can be just like the garment. If the pattern was just like the garment it would be the garment itself. I think God no doubt raised him up to do just what he did do, and he metAbraham returning from the first battle he (Abraham) fought after he got to Canaan, and blessed him. In fact, God wanted Abraham to know that there was an everlasting priesthood before the Levitical priesthood was set up, or even thought of by any of his people, and that there was only one Priest over this everlasting priesthood, and that he was both the Offering and the Priest. For this Melchisedec both blessed him (Abraham) and entertained him. He (God) wanted him to know that this Priest was King of righteousness and

of peace. And as an acknowledgment of the fact that Abraham got the lesson he paid tithes of all the spoils, or gave Melchisedec one-tenth, and received the blessing. Thus showing that "the less is blessed of the better." He wanted him to know that this Priest Melchisedec represented was Prophet, Priest and King.

I will now say a few words about "tithes," or paying tithes. Jacob is the first one to follow the example of his grandfather, when he made his vow at Bethel, where he slept and saw the vision, the ladder that reached from earth to heaven, and when he awoke from his sleep he said, How dreadful is this place, surely this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will keep me in this way that I go, and clothe me, and feed me, and bring me home to my father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God; and this stone which I have set for my pillar shall be God's house, and of all which thou givest me I will surely give thee the tenth. (Genesis twenty-eighth chapter.)

There are ten commandments, and there is one that Jesus called the first and great commandment: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. * * * * And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."—Rom. xiii. 10. Every child that is born into the family of God, the love of God is shed abroad in his heart, and, just in proportion, as he loves God he is keeping the ten commandments. And we know that none of us are keeping them. But love does not live alone, we love God because he first loved us. Jesus, being our head and husband, is everything to us that a poor sinner needs. Therefore every child of God is, through Jesus Christ, paying tithes, for he is being kept in the love of God. Moses' hands had to be held up in order for Israel to overcome Amalek, and it took a priest to do it. Moses and the law are synonymous terms. Moses' hands were heavy, but Aaron and Hur were equal to the occasion. Aaron, representing the Levitical priesthood, and Hur of the tribe of Judah representing the Melchisedec priesthood, or the priesthood of Christ. All that we have (religiously) now, or hope to have in a world to come, we owe to Jesus, our great Melchisedec, for not a jot or tittle of this law can ever pass away until all is fulfilled. Moses' hands must be held up.

I am inclosing a letter I received from sister W. T. Chester, of Murray, Kentucky, please publish it with mine.

G. W. BERRY.

MURRAY, Ky., Feb. 20, 1935.

ELDER G. W. BERRY—DEAR BROTHER:—Please pardon this, but since reading the January SIGNS OF THE TIMES, where you replied to Elder A. K. Myrick's request on some Scripture, you made it so plain and relieved my mind on the same. I could never get the meaning about Jacob and Esau until I read your article. I have read

it time and again, and continue to read it. May God be praised for such a wonderful letter. How you, through the mighty power of God, have fed the the sheep by writing that article. I am wondering if I would be placing an imposition upon you to request your views on the seventh chapter of Hebrews. Please read the entire chapter, then, please, if it be God's will, take notice of the first, second, third and fourth verses. What is the meaning of the tenth part Abraham gave? The fifth verse also speaks of the commandment of the "tithes." Oh may it be God's will for you to write on these first five verses and make it as plain as you did in the January SIGNS. If you feel to write on this Scripture you may do it through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as there are others anxious to know your views on it. Sister Odom wishes to know the meaning of the third verse, in with the others. If God so wills, we are anxiously waiting for your reply.

With hope,

(MRS.) W. T. CHESTER.

RANGER, Texas, March 11, 1935.

DEAR EDITORS:—We received the postal card, also the March copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES sent by you. I felt so badly I could hardly open and read the paper, for I felt you had failed to understand my letter to you. I only wished to make it plain to you that we really loved and missed the paper, and were not just purposely neglecting our duty. We feel that it is more than kind of you to again send it to us, that it would be a burden to you. However, we feel to thank you in Jesus' name for the paper. It seems that I wished to have the SIGNS more than anything that existing conditions have caused us to give up, still I could see no way to get it, for I wished to send remittance to cover the amount due you, before again taking the paper. Tears of joy and thankfulness fell from my eyes as I read its pages, especially the letters written by Elder J. T. Barnes and Bessie Wilton. My mind and heart have been exercised in much the same way. We are being refined as by fire, we are being humbled, we must bear crosses as we follow Jesus in the narrow way. It is sad to see those we loved for the truth's sake turn and follow after the doctrines of men. That does not change the truth, or cause us to falter, for Jesus says, Follow thou me. My sheep hear my voice, and they know me. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES and the *Sovereign Grace and Pilgrim* are indeed God-given mediums to carry the voice of the good Shepherd to many isolated lovers of the truth.

Yours in Christ,

(MRS.) ALBA DEAN.

NEW YORK, N. Y., April 12, 1935.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—It was good of you, in your busy life, to write to me. My church friends are all very good. I wish I were worthy of their continued kindness. I have not been able to write earlier, and now must be brief.

I am, of course, better, but I continue to have much anginal pain and weakness, with shortness of breath. I am hoping I can go to meeting Sunday. I have not been on duty for ten days, and I do not know when Miss McMillan will allow me to do anything. It is necessary that I return to such duties as I have, and it is possible that I will be asked to work Sunday from twelve to one o'clock, then if I am delayed and have to hurry, and get nervous, thinking I am late, all of which happened fifth Sunday, I cannot go, as my heart goes racing upon the slightest provocation. How often, dear brother pastor, I go home from meeting with the feeling that I want to write to you of the things I am too ignorant and too timid to speak of. But you are so infinitely above me in knowledge of the things of the kingdom that I refrain. But is it too much for me to say that I rarely hear you preach that you do not forcefully and beautifully express something that has been on my mind in some sort of vague, intangible way? I could not put it into words, and I am always surprised when I say to myself, Why, I have known that; I have felt that.

In another year I shall have lived the little span allotted to man. The shadows are lengthening on my pathway and the life that knows no time is getting near. If only the little remaining time would find me more full of love to God, less absorbed in worldly cares, less careful for the things that perish with the using. But I am cumbered with many cares and am slow of heart to believe. I pray for daily bread, and all the time am wanting to see to-morrow's supply before me. Well, my nearly fifty years as a professed christian show only a stunted growth, if any growth at all. When I was young I had hopes that when I had reached old age it would be easy to have faith and hope and trust and all the christian graces, but I am still "afar off."

But I must stop. Thanking you again for your letter, and with love to you and your family, I am, I hope, your sister,

AMY R. BARNSLEY.

LA GRANGE, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find post office order for two dollars for the SIGN OF THE TIMES. I am behind, but do not know how much, but I thank the good Lord I am able to send this much. I wish it were more, that I might help out in this time of depression. I would be very sorry to be deprived of the SIGNS, for I get much comfort and good from the letters, and I read them over and over again. May it be God's will to send prosperity to those who work so hard to get the paper out, and to the editors who labor so hard for the faith once delivered unto the saints. May we all be kept in these perilous times.

Unworthily,

(MRS.) J. J. VORIES.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1935.

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ROMANS IX. 6.

"For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel."

We desire to bring before our readers a true Israelite which will require descriptive portration, and to prove beyond doubt his true relationship with God. From the written testimony of the inspiration of God as recorded in the Old Testament we derive who was called Israel, and all his posterity are Israelites according to the flesh, being the descendants of Jacob. The definition of the name Jacob would be well for us to have in mind as we view this important matter. It means "supplanter," and the name Israel means "soldier." Jacob was an elect vessel of mercy, but he was not Israel when he was born of Sarah his mother, save in the wisdom and purpose of God, and at the appointed time and way Jacob was born of an incorruptible seed by the word of God, and then he was made a servant of God, which made him Israel, or a soldier. As Jacob passed on through life's pilgrimage he had sons born unto him, who were called Israelites, and according to the multiplication became a great multitude and are known as Jews, or Israelites, unto this day. Paul says, "They are not all Israel, which are of Israel." Then taking Jacob as an example, we are made to say an Israelite is one who has been made to suffer for sin, and beheld the Lord standing at the top of the ladder that reached from earth to heaven, and none ascendeth or descendeth only the ministering Spirit of God, from man to the Lord or from the Lord to man. This proves the sinner must have the Spirit in his heart that intercedes for mercy, and the Lord sendeth his messenger to comfort, by which they can say, This is the very gate of heaven, and the Lord was in that place, and it was not as they thought, for they knew it not. This is the way which Jesus declared he was, as well as the life and truth, and every one having such relations are true Israelites. Earthly parentage does not give this sonship. If it could, then flesh and blood could inherit the kingdom of God, and salvation would belong to the Jews only. The promise of God to Abraham, that in Isaac shall thy seed be called, does not give this title to all of Abraham's seed. We get from this that because they are the seed of Jacob they are not soldiers, under the banner

of love, but the promise of God in the covenant with his Son in the election of God's grace embraces every Israelite (or soldier of the cross). Under the reign of grace we are given to realize that those of the seed of Jacob called Israel are not the only ones to whom the Holy Ghost has come, but some of those born of the Gentile blood as well, and when an Israelite and Gentile are brought together by the Spirit they have been brought together as of the same blood and are spiritual Israelites, and the vital life in Christ is the life they live by the faith of the Son of God. It hath pleased God to give eternal life through Jesus Christ to all the elect out of every kindred, tongue and nation, and they are Israelites indeed and followers of Jesus their Shepherd. There is a blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved. We gather here that Israel, having the law and the prophets, with all their precepts and examples, and according to their tradition, could act them out, but they could not give life, hence their blindness in part, as they could not behold salvation in any other way, and the Gentiles had no part, but were cast off. Now for a Gentile to be acceptable he must have a lamb for an offering and the blood and covenant of God. By the power of the Most High the Lamb of God was sent into the world to bear the sins of every Israelite that will sing the praise of God in glory, and in him the Gentiles have a fullness that excels all the law and the prophets, and presents the Gentile with gospel fellowship to the Israelite that is of the same spirit, which breaks down the middle wall or partition between them, and makes them one in Christ: Israelites of the same seed (the incorruptible by the word of God), and so all Israel shall be saved. There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob (which made him Israel). For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. (Rom. xi. 25-27.) "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."—Heb. viii. 10-13. In this new covenant the one that receiveth it truly realizes the impossibility to write in the hearts of men, and give life to those who are dead in trespasses and sin, which bears evidence that they are recipients of the new covenant. They delight in the law of the Lord, that which is of the Spirit in Christ Jesus, and they are not making sacrifices once a year, and looking forward to the time, with strict tradition of formality to be seen of men, but with reverence in their hearts they are followers of Jesus, worshiping God in

Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter. Our hope anchors us in the harbor of the love of God, which is a great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, and, realizing this anchor, we are tossed round and round, but there is a continual pointing to the Lamb of God, and we feel a safety and restful relation the world cannot give.

We have often had exercise of mind and feelings relative to the church whose maker and builder is God, and the way she has, going about doing the things concerning the order of the gospel, and we are minded that the church of God has for over three hundred years had articles written stating what her position relative to points of doctrine set forth in the Scriptures, and they serve as a line and plummet to all its members, and all who desire to walk with the church will conform to them, but those who would draw away and teach perverse things often speak and reflect as though they were poison to the welfare of Zion.

Dear reader, take notice of the different opinions we have relative to the same Scripture, and if there were no articles of faith we would be tossed to and fro, and there would not be any settled order in our organizations. So we feel the truth that is pointed out and contended for by our organizations in their articles of faith we should earnestly contend for, and all Hymenæus and Philetus doctrine be swept away. It is very easy for the spirit of Jacob to be manifest among the brethren, by which one would supplant the other, and be an outstanding figure in the church of God, and be acknowledged by men as the greatest preacher in the doctrine, but when the Spirit humbles him and makes him feel he is nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity, we can say, Behold an Israelite indeed. What a wonderful heavenly host is the Israel of our God, and when we behold the beauty of her we want to confess our vileness and be washed clean, and be pure, even as He is pure. To all who are spiritual we will affirm them to be Israelites indeed, not of the flesh, but of the Spirit, and are circumcised in heart, and having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail (His flesh), and an high priest over the house of God. Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, and let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. (Heb. x. 19-27.)

Our desire and prayer to God is that he will work in us both to will and do

of his good pleasure, that the manifestations in our going forth may prove our sonship, and bear fruit after the incorruptible seed, and not be striving about words to no profit and making our brethren offenders for a word. We realize that our race is well-nigh run, but we desire to continue with patience, looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith.

C. W. V.

THE COMMON SALVATION.

An inquirer living at El Dorado, Arkansas, has asked us to explain the expression "common salvation," in Jude 3. We have seen these words interpreted to indicate a time salvation conditional on the obedience of the believer, but we have failed to see anything in either these words or their connection to warrant such an opinion. The passage reads, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." The meaning is that Jude intended to write to the brethren upon the subject of their common salvation, but that the Holy Spirit ruled otherwise and led him instead to call attention to the faith once delivered to the saints, which was the more needful for them, especially as certain men had crept in unawares among them denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. It frequently occurs with the servants of God that they may have it in mind to preach or to write on a certain subject, and their thoughts will be caught away from that subject and fastened on another subject more needful to the brethren than the premeditated subject would have been. Paul, at a certain time in his ministry, would have gone into Asia, but was forbidden of the Holy Spirit; he then endeavored to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit allowed him not to do so. Instead he was shown in a vision that it was the mind of the Spirit for him to go into Macedonia, and thither he went. (Acts xvi. 6-10.) Paul's mind in the matter was changed, and it is often so in writing, as in this instance of Jude 3. "Common salvation" relates not any more to time salvation than to eternal salvation. Indeed, the terms "time" and "eternal" as divisive of salvation are without basis in Scripture. Salvation is the saving power of God's grace revealed unto and within the children of God by the Holy Spirit on behalf of the perfect satisfaction rendered by the Lord Jesus Christ to divine justice in complete atonement for all the sins of the elect of God. This salvation is made experimentally known to the children of God here in time, and is efficacious throughout the ages of time and unto all eternity. This salvation is without conditions to be performed by man either before or after regeneration. The believer's obedience to the precepts of the gospel is always the effect of grace and salva-

tion, and is not the cause thereof. The working out of our salvation, which is showing it forth to others, is invariably the effect of God's working in us by his Spirit enabling us to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Phil. ii. 12, 13.) The word "common" means that which belongs alike to two or more individuals, and not to one person only. Under the legal covenant pertaining to the old testament sanctuary, the atonement money of the children of Israel was a silver half shekel for each individual, regardless of whether they were poor or rich. The poor could give no less, the rich could give no more. (Exodus xxx. 12-15.) The same amount was common to all. The atonement for the sins of the people of God, which Jesus made in the shedding of his blood, is the one and only sure salvation for all the children of God throughout all ages, regardless of their position or condition in nature. Hence, the salvation secured through Christ for his people is common to all alike. Being God's gift by grace to each and all of them, it is their "common salvation." Paul to Titus says, "Mine own son after the common faith."—Titus i. 4. Here again "common" means the faith which is alike the fruit of the Spirit in each and every subject of grace, not that which is the blessing or privilege of one only. "Common salvation" is from God to his people without respect of persons, except as the salvation itself distinguishes the elect from the rest of mankind.

H. H. L.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder H. H. Lefferts.)

The Delaware Association, in session with the Rock Springs Old School Baptist Church, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, May 24th, 25th and 26th, 1935, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations, churches and meetings with which we correspond, sends christian greetings.

Dear Brethren:—The Holy Spirit is the spring of all true christian life. The worship of God is a vital part of living unto God. Such worship, to be genuine, must be in Spirit and in truth. Merely to observe a form of worship or a formal creed, except the heart be really engaged in it, avails nothing Godward. Those who worship God must have been born of God. The unregenerate cannot worship him because they have not the indwelling Holy Spirit who is the divine Enabler unto real worship. In these present days, those who manifest much zeal for the house of God and for its order and worship, are few and scattered. These few, whoever and wherever they are, and by whatever religious label they may be known, are precious in the sight of the Lord. In any time of falling away from the truth, in any time of Laodicean lukewarmness and laxity in sound doctrine and practice, there are always those who sigh and cry on account of the abominations done in the midst of Jerusalem. (Ezekial ix. 4.) Merely to sigh and shake the head and

lament because the "ways of Zion do mourn" does no good. To list our ills and then to ponder them does not remedy them. Is there a true-hearted confession of our sins before the Lord? Is there an honest, faithful seeking to discover the root of our ills, and a sincere prayer before the Lord that we may be graciously enabled to repent thereof? Have we not the unfailing promise from our Advocate at the right hand of God that "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."—1 John i. 9. Is there among us any disposition to confess our sins, or is there instead a tendency to justify ourselves in an unrighteous course? We are not now thinking of immorality or of fleshly lusts particularly, but of departures from the faith once delivered unto the saints which are sins against the integrity of Christ's cause, and of laxity in maintaining the discipline of the church which is a transgression against the order and decency of the house of God.

The Delaware Association, according to Hassell's history, was constituted in 1795. The articles of constitution upon which the churches composing it were founded, embraced the principles of truth as understood and believed by our spiritual predecessors then, and as believed and held by many of us at this present time. These fundamentals embrace the following points:

1. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, being divinely verbally inspired, are the infallible word of God and are the only rule of faith and practice for the church of God.

2. The absolute sovereignty of God whereby he did freely and unchangeably determine beforehand all things whatsoever come to pass, according to his own eternal will and purpose; yet so as he is not the author of sin nor has he fellowship with any therein.

3. There is but one true and living God, and in this Godhead subsist three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

4. Before the foundation of the world, God did according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will, choose in Christ unto everlasting glory, out from among mankind, those whom he had predestinated to eternal life.

5. All men are sinners, totally depraved by nature, and made so by Adam's transgression, and continually prove themselves to be such by their own actual sinful acts and propensities; neither can they by any act or obedience of their own escape their death in trespasses and sins.

6. Jesus is the incarnate Son of God, verily God and verily man. In fulfillment of the eternal counsel of the Trinity, he died for the redemption of all those chosen in him before the foundation of the world, as their Surety and living Head. He arose from the dead for their justification. He ascended up on high leading captivity captive and giving gifts unto men, and as the eternal High Priest of our profession he ever lives to make intercession for his people. Constituting in his own Person both Priest and Offering, he

has by his one redemptive act perfected forever all those set apart by the Father unto everlasting life.

7. All those persons thus eternally foreknown of God and predestinated by him unto eternal life and glory, and whom he has redeemed and justified by Jesus Christ unto himself according to the good pleasure of his own will, are experimentally brought to the knowledge of the truth by the quickening, regenerating power of the Holy Spirit who indwells all true believers, guiding and teaching and preserving them unto final glory, to be consummated in their resurrection from the dead at the second coming of Christ.

8. The resurrection at some future time, of both the just and the unjust; of the just unto everlasting life, of the unjust unto everlasting condemnation.

Always, heretofore, among sound Baptists it has been understood that the resurrection of the dead primarily means the resurrection of the body, at the future coming of the Lord from heaven, and not to the Spirit's work in regeneration. Likewise, it has been commonly believed among us that the Scriptures which declare the second coming of Christ do not refer to the present experimental revelation of Christ within the believer by the Holy Spirit, but to the Lord's actual coming himself at that time still future when the church shall be caught up to meet him in the air and so to be forever with him, and then afterward the resurrection of the rest of the dead unto final judgment at the day of perdition of ungodly men to be followed by their going away with Satan into the lake of fire of the second death.

For these things to be questioned among us at this late day is to bring in some new thing which savors not of more light which is to shine unto the perfect day, but savors of that apostasy or falling away which we are warned shall come in the last days. As to these things being termed "traditions," let it be remembered that they are godly traditions based on the authority of Holy Writ, and not theoretical suppositions of carnal intelligence. Let us heed the word of the Spirit by the apostle Paul, "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the TRADITIONS which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle."—2 Thess. ii. 15. And again, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God."—Heb. iii. 12. Oh, that we may prayerfully seek unto the Lord to maintain us by his grace in contending, not contentiously but in love, for the faith once delivered unto the saints! These matters of doctrinal belief affect our identity as true apostolic Bible Baptists. "Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."—Rev. iii. 11. At the same time, "Looking diligently * * * * lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled."—Heb. xii. 15. May we be blest to speak the truth in love! "Let brotherly love continue."—Heb. xiii. 1. The continuation of such affection is obstructed where fundamentals are denied. Likewise, true christian

love and fellowship are not promoted where the basic principles of the covenant of our salvation are evaded and compromised. "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine. * * * * In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned."—Titus ii. 1-8. "Take heed unto thyself, and to the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."—1 Tim. iv. 16. "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me," says Paul to Timothy, "in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." "For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." (2 Cor. xiii. 8.) "But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil. And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you. And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ." "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

D. L. TOPPING, Moderator.
JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Rock Springs Church, May 24th, 25th and 26th, 1935, to the several associations with which we correspond, sendeth greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN AND MESSENGERS IN THE LORD:—Once more we can truthfully and sincerely say through the mercy, love and blessings of God our Savior, we have met here with our sister church in another associational gathering. We truly believe your ministers and messengers have brought us gospel tidings of great joy in the midst of these perilous times in the world, and we feel through the preaching and the association of the brethren together, all in all it has been a very profitable meeting to all concerned. We feel there remains nothing to be said, but that the doctrine has been preached in its fullness, the doctrine of salvation by grace, and we truly give praise to the Father and Son and Holy Spirit for this most blessed privilege of assembling ourselves together in his name, who saith, As I live, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

It is not definitely decided just where we shall meet next year, but, in due time, notice will be given through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES where and when it will be appointed to be held. Until then, we hope your messengers and ministers, according to the will of God, will be sent to us, still further to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out."

D. L. TOPPING, Moderator.
JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk

OBITUARY NOTICES.

JOSEPH HENRY GOOCH, second son of Henry Spraggins and Jane R. Holeman Gooch, was born near Stem, Granville County, North Carolina, on September 14th, 1866, and fell asleep in Jesus on the night of April 6th, 1935, at his home in Stem, aged 68 years, 6 months and 22 days. Death resulted from a sudden heart attack. His only brother, Wayne H. Gooch, died in 1915, and an older sister, Mrs. Emma Clayton, passed away in 1925, leaving as the sole survivor of his father's family, one sister, Mrs. Allie Gooch Reid. On October 4th, 1904, he was married to Miss Sudie Hunt, daughter of Mrs. Susan Hunt, who died November 22nd, 1908, leaving one small daughter, Janie Gold. December 8th, 1910, he was married to Miss Laura A. Reed, only daughter of Anslem and Rebecca Watkins Reed, of Winston-Salem, N. C., who, with the daughter, survives to mourn the loss of a devoted husband and father. In early manhood he was led to love the truth, and on Saturday, June 12th, 1897, united with the church at Camp Creek, and was baptized the following day by Elder Albert Blalock. His mother joined at the water and was baptized at the same time. He was elected clerk of the church November 14th, 1903, and filled that office until December 2nd, 1923, when he was granted a letter of dismission to join in the organization of Memorial Primitive Baptist Church, in Stem. Believing he possessed the qualifications of a Deacon, he was ordained to that office in Camp Creek Church August 9th, 1903, by a presbytery composed of Elders Albert Blalock and J. J. Hall, which office he faithfully and prayerfully filled to the close of his life, being chosen Deacon of Memorial Church when it was organized. August 20th, 1906, the County Line Association, in session with Mt. Zion Church, Halifax County, Virginia, decided on account of the large number of churches composing that body, and the large territory covered by it, to divide it into two associations, named the Upper and Lower County Line. Mr. Gooch was elected clerk of the Lower Line Association at that time, and until his death held that office, retaining through all the changes of time and surrounding disturbances the love and fellowship of the brethren. When his health began failing, several times he asked to be relieved of the office, but the Association refused to consider his resignation, saying they would appoint help for the work, but desired that he remain clerk as long as he lived. He was untiring in his efforts for peace, and in striving for the general welfare of the churches. His greatest joy was in listening to the gospel preached, and in serving his brethren. He loved the truth, and was zealous of the doctrine and order of the Lord's house. He was well established in the principles of predestination, foreknowledge and election of God, saying that was the only doctrine of any comfort to him. He was patient and forbearing with those who did not see as clearly or deeply on some points of doctrine as others were favored to see, yet there was no compromise when the truth was assailed. In relating his experience, he said he was shown more plainly the beauty of the true church, while listening to a bitter denunciation of it from the pulpit of another order, and he felt then, if enabled to do so, he wanted to join at the first opportunity this "sect everywhere spoken against," for he loved that people, and wanted to live with them and share the reproach and abuse heaped upon them. At the next meeting day at Camp Creek he offered himself to the church and was received. His life proved his abiding love for this people, and that he "served the Lord with gladness." Some years ago he was deeply impressed with the desire for a meeting-house in Stem, more comfortable and convenient than the hall over a store, which he had years before fitted up and furnished for preaching service. Such an impression meant a striving to bring about its accomplishment, and, together with other willing hearts and hands, he wrought earnestly and well until Memorial Church-house was completed, donating the land upon which it was built, and giving untiringly of his time and strength and means. And how he delighted in its services! Only one day is it recalled that he was absent, and that was a grief to him. As long as he was able it was a joy to him to attend to the house and grounds, keeping them neat, clean and orderly. Like Paul, he felt things should be done decently and in order, and it was his desire to keep them so. As has been said of him, he loved his country, his state, his community, his church and his home, and his efforts were unceasingly directed, both by precept and example, to the betterment of each and all. But his chief joy was in his church and home. In business he was prompt, faithful and diligent. Since 1887 (excepting about seven years) he had charge of the Post Office. First as assistant at Tally Ho, and later as Postmaster when that office was moved to Stem. He held that position until his death, in all, a period of over forty years. When the Bank of Stem was organized in 1908, he was elected President, and filled that office until December, 1927, when, on account of his failing health and changing business conditions, it was decided that the bank be voluntarily liquidated. For a number of years he conducted a general merchandise store in the place. The Lord blessed him with a tender and responsive heart to those in need, even when denying himself to minister to their necessities. While greatly favored of the Lord, it was his lot to endure many deep and bitter sorrows, but an unseen strength supported him, and he manifested the spirit expressed by Job when he said, Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. Patient and submissive through all his sickness and suffering, not a fretful or rebellious murmur escaped his lips. Calmly, and with a thoughtfulness and carefulness that was surprising, he made almost in detail every possible arrangement for the end, and was ready when the summons came.

A short srvice was held in the home Monday afternoon, April 8th, conducted by Elder D. V. Spangler, after which the remains were conveyed to Memorial Church, where they lay in state until the hour for the funeral, at 2:30 o'clock. The funeral service was conducted in accordance with his request, by Elder A. B. Denson, of Rocky Mount, N. C., Elder E. L. Cobb, of Wilson, and Elder D. V. Spangler, of Cascade, Va. When making the request to each one, he stated it was his wish they preach the gospel, with the ability the Lord gives, indulge in no eulogy, but at the close, if they wished, say that was the doctrine he loved and trusted in. We feel his wishes were complied with. The gospel was preached, and the songs of Zion sweetly sung. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord," who "sleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep."

I WISH to write a short tribute in memory of brother J. H. Gooch, who was a very dear brother in Christ to me. I knew him for fifteen years, and during that time I never knew any one who was more spiritually inclined at all times. I loved him because of the wonderful manifestation of the Spirit of God in him. In all my acquaintance, I never saw any one more Christ-like than dear brother Gooch. I feel thankful that I did try in my weak way to let him know that I loved him, and certainly he let me know in many ways that he loved me, and esteemed me very highly for the truth's sake. He was a devoted lover of the gospel, and I feel his steps were ordered of the Lord. His conversation was mostly on heavenly and divine things. Brother Gooch's advice and counsel was sought by both white and colored, on any number of things or subjects which came up among the people of his acquaintance, and no one came to him in vain for aid in any form. He was a pillar in his Association, having been the competent clerk of the Lower Line Association since it was organized in 1906, and a very useful member of his church since he joined, the second Saturday in June, 1897, that being the same day I united with the church. The knowledge of this seemed to draw us nearer together, if possible, notwithstanding the fact that it was several years afterward that we met, and the churches of our membership were seventy-five miles apart. Since I have known him, and we have been drawn together, he has visited my church, and I am very glad that he was able to be with us just two weeks before the Lord saw fit to call him home. That was the last time brother Gooch heard any preaching, and he was blest to greatly enjoy it. While I feel that he has gone to be with his Savior, he has left a vacancy no one can fill. I have every reason to believe that he felt as Paul said, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."—2 Tim. iv. 6-8. I dearly loved brother Gooch, and he always manifested a great love for me.

A. B. DENSON.

I TRUST in our God for guidance to write in memory of our brother, Joseph H. Gooch, who was a member and faithful Deacon of Memorial Primitive Baptist Church, in Stem, N. C., and who passed away April 6th, 1935, after a very useful life to his fellow-man, as well as to his church. Brother Gooch was a man that to know him was to love him. In all my life I have never met one more favored with the grace of our God to mete out fairness to his brethren. Always desiring peace, but not at the cost of principle or point of doctrine. He was very quiet in his speech, and in controlling matters of importance, and was a great help to the Lower Line Association. This Association has lost a faithful clerk, one who will be missed more than can be expressed, but will be felt. I pray his mantle may fall on his successor, brother J. J. Whitley, of the Durham Church. He was a lover of good, sound preaching of the gospel, and he loved the men that God enabled to preach the gospel. It has been an inspiration in my life to press on and on since learning of his love for me, and the preaching given me of the Lord, and I hope I may be favored in his memory to turn neither to the right or left, but grow deeper in the doctrine that men in their natural state do not love. I have heard him say he did not know where to draw the line, but he was sure all things were in the control of God.

By brother Gooch's request, I took part in his funeral service. There was a large congregation of people, and the most beautiful funeral arrangement I ever witnessed. It will be remembered by those present for years to come. May we bow our heads in humble submission to Him who doeth all things well, believing the dear Lord knows best, and in all his arrangements before the world was, it has, in his life and end, been just as He fixed it; feeling he is too good to err, and too kind to do wrong, and that all he does, or has done, is according to his determinate counsel, and that whatever is, is best.

May our God bless you, sister Gooch, and the daughter, Janie Gold, to be strong, and feel that all is well with your husband and father.

Yours in hope,

E. L. COBB.

WORDS fail to express our loss in the death of brother J. H. Gooch, of Memorial Church, in Stem, N. C. I have served his church as pastor for about eighteen months, and have known him for about twelve years. The longer I have known him the better I loved him. Brother Gooch was established in the doctrine and order of the Primitive Baptist Church: salvation by grace. He was a firm believer in the predestination of all things,

believing it to be a part of the doctrine of election, that "all things work together for good to them that love God." Not only did he believe this doctrine, but he walked it and talked it, to the glory of God, by an orderly walk and godly conversation. The love of God prompted him several years ago, with the help of a few other faithful brethren, sisters and friends, to erect a nice church-house near his home, in the town of Stem, giving liberally of his means towards it. He was chosen a Deacon of this church when it was organized, and since the days of the apostles I feel that none has served their church more faithfully than our brother. This service was a privilege and a pleasure, rather than a duty with him. In serving his brethren he served his God.

He requested the writer some time before his death to take part in his funral service, and that we not talk of him, but of the doctrine he loved. The Scripture I felt impressed to use on that occasion was 2 Timothy iv. 6, 7: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 'I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." It is my desire, together with many others, I feel, to follow the example he has left us, looking forward in that blessed hope of meeting him, and all the redeemed, in that better land, where there is no sickness, sorrow, pain or death.

D. V. SPANGLER.

Mrs. ANNA McKINNEY, of 433 South Mulberry Street, Ottawa, Kansas, and a well-known resident of Franklin County for thirty-three years, and our dear sister in Christ, died suddenly on Wednesday, April 17th, 1935. She had been in failing health for several years. She made her home with her son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Beryl Ross. They heard her cough during the night, and rushed to her side and did all they could to assist her, but her trouble proved to be a heart attack, and she passed away in about fifteen minutes from the time she was stricken. Sister McKinney was born August 18th, 1864, and at the time of her death was aged 70 years and 8 months, lacking one day. She was the daughter of Thomas and Sarah (Thompson) Turner, born in Pennsylvania, and in infancy moved to Kerneysville, W. Va., where she spent her girlhood. September 9th, 1896, she was married to Charles M. Folk. This union was severed in about two years by the death of her husband, who died October 15th, 1898. A son was born to them just a few hours after the husband was carried to the grave. The little one lived only a few days and then was also taken from her. December 29th, 1899, she was united in marriage to Charles A. McKinney, who departed this life October 15th, 1923. Two daughters were born to them, and both survive her: Mrs. Guy Briscoe and Mrs. Beryl Ross, both of Ottawa, Kansas. She came to Kansas in 1898, and after her marriage settled on a farm about nine miles east of Ottawa, where she lived for twenty-one years, then moved to Ottawa, where she lived twelve years. Besides her daughters she is survived by three grandchildren: Anna Lucille, Edith Ernestine and Gerald Davis Briscoe, three brothers: David Turner, of Clayville, Pa., James Turner, of Chicago, Ill., and Edward Turner, of Martinsburg, W. Va. Sister McKinney united with the Primitive Baptist Church at the age of sixteen years, and all through the years that followed proved herself most faithful and devoted to the cause she espoused. She was sound in the faith, and was enabled by grace to show her faith by her works. It was our pleasure to receive her into our membership some years ago (I do not remember the date of her uniting with us). To associate with her was pleasant and edifying. She gave every evidence that she was of that number who are risen with Christ, for her affections were most assuredly set on things above, and not on things on the earth. She was a frequent contributor to the columns of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and her name has been circulated far and near through that medium. Her last article appeared in the April number, in which she remarked that it would probably be her last. Her words rang true. Her work is finished and she has now entered into that rest which remains to the people of God.

The writer of this was called to speak on the occasion of her funeral, which was held from Lamb's funeral home, in Ottawa, in the presence of a large gathering of relatives and sympathizing friends. We laid her gently to rest in the beautiful cemetery near Ottawa, confidently believing God in his mercy will watch over her sleeping dust, and in the morning of the resurrection of the dead will call it forth in his own likeness. Then shall we be satisfied. May the dear Lord guide, guard and direct us until then.

L. L. SCHENCK.

OUR sister in Christ, **SYLVIA BURTIE SMITH,** daughter of William and Melvina Stumpf, was born April 9th, 1860, in Cincinnati, Ohio, and died May 17th, 1935, in her seventy-sixth year. In the year 1885 she was united in marriage to Newton J. Smith, of Reily, Ohio, and to that union one son was born: Clarence M. Smith, of Cincinnati, Ohio, who, with the husband and one sister, is left to mourn. Sister Smith in early life was a member of the Missionary Baptists for several years, but became dissatisfied with the work system instead of grace, and do, instead of done, and she, with her husband, was received and baptized into the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Indian Creek, at Reily, Ohio, where she remained until the end of her appointed time on earth. Her home was surely a Baptist home, and her delight was to talk about the beauty of Zion, the perfection of the works of God. Christ, and him crucified, the way, the truth and the life, was her theme in conversation. For several years she suffered much, but bore her suffering patiently.

We believe now her troubles are over and she has entered into the joy of the Lord. For her to live was Christ, but to die is gain. May the good Lord reconcile the lonely husband and son, the sister, friends and neighbors, and enable they to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done. Long before our sister died she had made arrangements for her funeral, and had left a request for me to preach the last rites, so, accordingly, at the Miller undertaking parlors, in Cummingsville, May 20th, I tried with the ability that the Lord gave me to speak of the finished salvation our God hath wrought, after which the body was laid to rest in the Spring Grove Cemetery, Cincinnati, Ohio.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

DEACON G. H. TATUM, our beloved brother in hope of immortality beyond the grave, was born November 26th, 1866, and was taken from earth December 30th, 1934, making his stay here below 68 years, 1 month and 4 days. He was married December 16th, 1886, to Miss Mary E. Money, who preceded him in death just four years and one month. To their union were born eleven children, all of whom survive and were present to witness his passing. They are indeed a noble family of children, all grown, and nine have families of their own. We see in them the fruits of a well balanced adviser. After the departure of sister Tatum brother Tatum broke up housekeeping and made his home with his son-in-law and oldest daughter, brother and sister R. H. Houk, at Duncan, Okla. Brother Tatum was a man of sound judgment in worldly affairs and good counsel for his church, serving as deacon and clerk for many years, and was always ready to carry his part of the burden that fell upon the church. Brother Tatum was not perfect in this life, he had his faults, and with regret was willing to and did acknowledge them, not claiming any worth or merit of his own, but rejoiced in the evidence of a hope of being one of the beneficiaries of the merits and worthiness of the crucified Savior. He was sound in doctrine, not willing to sacrifice truth to gain earthly favors or applause from those who differed with him. He was always faithful to the cause of Christ, and ready to give a reason of his hope. Such faith and steadfastness is encouraging for we poor sinners to reflect upon. Oh how we will miss his presence and sound counsel at our church worship. Brother Tatum was apparently in his usual health until November 22nd, when he had a stroke of paralysis, from which he never recovered. He is gone from earth, but not forgotten. I would say to those who weep after him, Weep not, death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Our dear brother is passed from this unfriendly world to the paradise of God. On December 31st, 1934, the writer of this article tried to speak words of comfort to the mourning relatives and a host of friends, after which we laid his body beside that of his companion, in the Davidson burial-ground, at Davidson, Oklahoma, there to lie until the change comes. Yes, change, precious assurance of the resurrection of our vile bodies. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the anchangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." May God comfort and bless those who mourn.

Written by one who loved him and deeply mourns his passing.

W. N. GREEN.

GEORGE C. TOWNLEY was born in Calloway County, Kentucky, July 16th, 1842, and died January 31st, 1935, aged 92 years, 6 months and 15 days. His parents died when he was a baby, and he was taken to the State of Missouri, and lived there until the war between the States, in the spring of 1861, when he enlisted in the Confederate Army, Company A, Tenth Missouri Regiment, at Salem, Missouri. He was corporal of his company. December 7th, 1862, he was in the battle of Prairie Grove, Arkansas, and went into winter quarters at Little Rock. He was wounded in the battle of Helena, Arkansas, July 4th, 1863, and was taken prisoner. He spent twenty-one months in the prisons at Alton, Ill., and at Fort Delaware Bay, and was parolled at Meridan, Miss., in the spring of 1865. April 27th, 1865, he came to Buchanan, Tenn., and has been living in this community these seventy years. September 13th, 1866, he was married to Mary E. Chilton, who preceded him to the grave November 20th, 1927. Nine children were born to their union. One boy died in infancy and one died at the age of eleven years. Seven children survive, three sons, Billie, George and Gentry Townley, of Buchanan, and four daughters, Emily, Laura and Annie Townley, of Buchanan, and Mrs. Bettie Oliver, of Hazel, Ky., also three grandsons, Hollie and Preston Oliver, of Hazel, Ky., and Merritt Townley, of Buchanan. His children were at his bedside when death came. He was a strong believer in the Primitive Baptist doctrine and his home was a home for the Old Baptists. The writer cannot remember when the Old Baptists did not visit our home. Last October the Obion Association was at Hephzibah Church. The brethren came to our home, and pappa wanted preaching, so we had preaching for two nights, and he said he enjoyed the meeting. The preachers we had with us were Elders Sykes, of Texas, Kerley and Lowery, of Tennessee, Prince, Henson, Whitington and Overly, of Kentucky. We sent for Elder Henson when pappa died, and he came and spoke words of comfort to us.

GENTRY C. TOWNLEY.

RESOLUTION

ADOPTED in conference, on May 11th, 1935, by Memorial Primitive Baptist Church, in Stem, N. C.

WHEREAS, it has been the will of our heavenly Father to take into his glorious presence by death, the soul of our beloved brother and Deacon, JOSEPH H. GOOCH, and

WHEREAS, in the passing of our brother in Christ Memorial Church has lost as faithful a member as ever lived; one who believed in, walked and talked salvation by grace, and

WHEREAS, our brother has by faithful and devoted service for so many years manifested his deep love for the cause of Christ, and through whose efforts this church-house was erected, therefore be it now

RESOLVED, by a vote unanimously agreed and approved, that the name of Memorial Primitive Baptist Church be changed to James H. Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church, in loving memory of our dear brother, who died as he had lived, remembering his church and those he loved, and further be it

RESOLVED, that we return thanks unto our God for the fellowship of our dear brother, and desire to say in his death, "Thy will be done," feeling he has fought a good fight, and has kept the faith; that he has finished his course, and has gone to be with Him whom he loved and served, and, finally, be it

RESOLVED, that we extend to the beloved family our sympathy; and that a copy of these proceedings be spread upon our Minutes, a copy sent to the bereaved, and a copy sent to "Zion's Landmark" and SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

Unanimously approved and adopted, and ordered annexed to the conference Minutes.

D. V. SPANGLER, Moderator.

LAURA R. GOOCH, Church Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Ora Appley, N. Y., $1; Sadie T. Nicoll, Md., $3; Mrs. M. A. Harrit, Okla., $1; David L. Blackwell, N. J., $3; Mrs. H. A. Strube, Texas, $2; Mrs. J. H. Gooch, N. C., $1.50.

MEETINGS.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets on the first Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, Shelbyville, Ky.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California; every third Sunday at 526 West Nevada Street, Ontario, California; also on forth Sundays as the Lord permits, at 3516 Franklin Avenue, Riverside, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.

T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Cloth binding. Price, $1.25 each. One dozen or more, ordered at the same time and all to the same address, one dollar each. Cash must accompany orders. Make checks and money orders payable to

J. E. BEEBE & CO.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

DROPSY REMEDY.

Purely vegetable, removes from one to two gallons of water a day. Shortness of breath quickly relieved. Cures the worst cases of Dropsy in all its forms, and after being given up by the best doctors to die. Specially efficacious in Dropsy of the Heart. Best and cheapest known remedy, only $1.00 a package, six packages $5.00 by mail postpaid, and free to very poor people who are really unable to pay.

ELDER C. W. ANDERSON,

ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

see first of this book for July number

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 103. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1935. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FAYETTE, Alabama.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—I am sending something on my subscription, and thought I would like to say a few things to the dear editors and readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. For these many years it has withstood all the fiery onslaughts of its Babylonish enemies, as well as those coming from the camps of Israel. We do not (as some who were once our brethren do) want to look at that as being the grace of God sustaining all old things or all numerous things, but, taking the holy Scriptures as our guide, when we find the "speckled bird" being hated, boycotted and all the venom of the spirit of darkness hurled at her, then we may rest assured that God is upholding her by his grace, reigning and controlling his subjects.

Brethren, the Baptists (there is but one body of genuine Baptists; the balance are impostors, yet God's visible kingdom is not known in history by name, but by her walk and doctrine) have always contended that God was a sovereign Ruler of not only his children by regeneration, but of all the posterity of Adam. Christ taught this glorious doctrine, and all the apostles taught it after him. From the apostolic church we are able to find a few here and there, down through the ages, who rejoiced in the fact that the God they worshiped was omnipotent and omniscient. But should we lose sight of this visible kingdom we are not to despair, believing that God has failed in any of his glorious promises. He is faithful that promised (Heb. x. 23), and inasmuch as he promised to build the church and preserve her so that the gates of hell shall not prevail against her, we may rest assured that to-day he is keeping her as his chosen church. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."—Psalms cxxvii. 1. Here in language that fell from the lips or pen of the sweet Singer of Israel do we find that

the Lord builds the house. All plants not planted or builded by him shall be rooted up. (Matt. xv. 13.) We find in a perusal of Old Testament characters that by an eye of faith they were looking forward to the day when the promised Messiah should come. The law they were under was, to all outward appearances, a conditional law. If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat of the good of the land. (Isaiah i. 19.) But how did they come out in such a yoke being placed on them? Their nation was trampled under foot and the inhabitants scattered to the four winds of the earth. Now we understand that this law was literal to them, but it had something hidden in it that had a spiritual signification. We are told that the law was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. (Gal. iii. 24.) Dear storm-tossed child, how has it been with you? That law that you thought to be unto life you found to be unto death. Indeed, that law was a gruff schoolmaster. Uncompromising and unmerciful. It demanded all and granted nothing. But, try as you could, you could not get life by it. So when your gods were all used up, it brought you to Christ. But now the Messiah comes! The "in that day" period of time has arrived! Righteousness has looked down from heaven and truth has sprung out of the ground. Fear not, Joseph, to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. (Matt. i. 20, 21.) Take courage and lift up your drooping faces, for Jesus paid the penalty that was justly due as yours. It was his people who were in debt and he came at the appointed time for their redemption. Ten thousand talents in debt and not a farthing to pay. But he canceled the debt and paid with his blood for all your sins. He took the law and it was nailed to the tree of the cross with him. Before going away he established, set up or founded his church as a visible organization. He had, by his own blood, purchased the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife. His salvation was secure, but being timely creatures they were to be left in the world. They were not of the world, as he was not of the world, so their worship, their conversation, was to be as becometh saints. Now, brethren, this church is a divine institution. Christ is the Head of the church that he alone built. He needed not, nor sought the help of man in building this church. Man could not help when he was crucified. He could not help in any of the work he (Christ) did while here in the world, because all that he did was for the salvation of his people, and vain would be any part man would have in it. In this church he alone gave all the laws and ordinances that she would ever need. Before going away he left them a glorious promise, that when he was gone the Comforter would come. What was that for? When the Spirit of truth is come he will guide you into all truth, for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak, and he will show you

things to come. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. (John xvi. 13, 14.) This kingdom is built by sovereign, reigning power, and in the same measure that human merits are used in the commencement of it, just so is it kept that way. Have you heard that the church is about gone? Have you been told that Old Baptists need to get out of the rut? Have you heard it said that those churches that preach predestination and one salvation are not progressive and are in a cold state? These things are but the working of the Sarah-minded children of the kingdom. "Look now [Abram] toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be."—Gen. xv. 5. This promise was from God, and he said it shall be. Yet we find that Sarah doubted at the promise and set up the first "ladies' aid society." But let us remember that God was to set up a kingdom that should not be destroyed. It shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces all these Babylonish kingdoms and shall consume them (I suppose that is why all Arminians call the Old Baptists parasites, living on their converts), and it shall stand forever. (Dan. ii. 44.) By inspiration the curtains of time were raised and Isaiah was given to look down to that distant date and see Jesus. Hear him break forth in singing, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God. The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."—Isaiah ix. 6, 7. O dust of the earth, where do you come in? O man, what a vain creature art thou, to think that by thy flesh you might perpetuate this kingdom. The Lord alone adds to his church daily such as should be saved (Acts ii. 47), and I cannot find a creature salvation in this, although it was in time. But to the Lord belong only eternal things. Time is the alloted days of the world, but it is only part of the eternal things of God, so I am persuaded that the things the Lord saves his people from in time is only that everlasting salvation. We are accused of being the heretics in the new departure, but search history as you may you can find the saints contending that God designs all the afflictions, tribulations and darkness of his people, and that for the trial their faith, which is a time salvation, but wholly of the Lord.

Now let us look at the dear saints of this kingdom. Paul says, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."—Rom. viii. 28. That being true, let us rejoice in a sovereign God, because whom he foreknew them he also did predestinate, etc. Now who is going to distinguish between those things that

are called evil as to what work good? Shall we be guided into all truth by the Spirit of truth, or will designing men make the discrimination? Poor, weak, puny man, by nature, cannot discern the things that are working good for His people. If we are led by the gentle influence of the Spirit it is not ours to say that any one of the many evils in the world works, in itself, good, but that all things work together for good. Does this make or cause God's people to be licentious? God forbid. It does not show the love of Christ for his little children to hide behind the fact that the Bible teaches all events as working to the good of his people. Instead of that, there is much comfort in the thought that in the days of the apostolic church a people accused them of saying, Let us do evil that good may come. The writer calls this a slanderous report, and those with the same spirit are to-day making the same charge. God's people are commanded to do right; nay, it is their duty to do right, and no one can say when he is tempted away that God tempted him. The Spirit alone teaches righteousness. However, let us make it plain that all the wrath of man shall praise him and the remainder he will restrain. This ruling his kingdom belongs to the Lord; if he does not rule it and keep it we are taught that the watchman waketh but in vain. Not only is it necessary that he rule his kingdom, but it is just as necessary that he overrule the other fellow's kingdom. If he did not do that, then we have no assurance that the church will stand any longer. And I firmly believe that could Satan or his hordes thwart God in the carrying on of the work of his kingdom here in the world, that the same power would be able to keep some of the trophies of his everlasting love out of heaven.

In a sweet hope,

W. D. GRIFFIN.

CASTLEWOOD, Virginia.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—I have just read your good editorial in the June SIGNS OF THE TIMES and it so raised my poor drooping mind that I felt I must write and let you know how much I enjoyed it. I was feeling so cast down and lonely I thought of faithful Elijah (not that I am faithful) when he said, "I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel [God's own chosen people] have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword: and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." Then when I read your editorial I felt there was one more at least who saw the faith and doctrine as I hope I see it. Then I felt as I thought how good old Elijah felt when the Lord answered him by saying, "I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him." Especially was I tied close to you when you said in this editorial, "We do not believe that Job meant he would see God in the flesh in the next life, for we are told that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." Here, as you say, is where faith is

needed: it shall not be required when the child of God gets to that glory world. Why my mind should be called so much along the following line of thought I am not able to say, unless there is a need for it. I greatly fear there is a falling away from the faith and doctrine of Christ and the apostles and too much zeal placed on what has and is going to be done with flesh and blood. If God's people did not first have eternal standing in Christ their eternal head, and a time standing in Adam, and manifested and developed in Adam, then I am at a loss to understand the Scripture of eternal truth. If it is the first Adam man that is born of the Spirit, and that is all, and nothing else, then might we conform to the holiness doctrine in the flesh? Then if there is nothing eternal about the Adam man until he is thus born of the Spirit, and the Adam sinner could not go to heaven without this birth, would there be anything eternal about the Adam sinner man to go to torment? or at what time would this nonelect Adam sinner be born a satanic birth? If it is the first Adam man that is born again, where is the origin of sin? Is there some tangible something or body besides the soul and body that thus brings forth sin? It is not that good ground and good tree that brings forth sin, or evil fruit, or that which is born from above and of the Spirit that sins. John says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin." The Savior says, "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." Again, James says, "Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh." So I conclude if it is the first Adam man that is born again he does not sin, and if it be the soul man that is born of the Spirit it does not sin. But here seems to me to be the warfare between the first man Adam, of flesh and blood, which is at enmity against the Spirit and the second man Adam, or soul, that is born from above and of the Spirit. It is claimed by some good brethren that it is the first man Adam that is born again, yet they say he sins after this birth, which the Bible is as silent on as the chambers of death. As I have written in a previous article that is now in the SIGNS' office, which I suppose will come forth soon, how the people of God become sinners and how the dead are raised up in the resurrection at the last day, as I saw it. Paul says, "We ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." As I see it, Paul was not waiting for the atonement of God's people, for he already had that and was not waiting for it, but was waiting for the adoption of our body to be redeemed from the corruption of the grave and raised a spiritual body and fashioned like unto his (Christ's) glorious body.

Brother Dodson, I am getting old and very feeble in body and mind, I cannot get out in rough weather, but I receive good, comforting letters from the brethren and sisters, and love to

hear from them often. I would like to answer them all were I able, but as I am not, I will say to all who have written so consolingly that their letters are held in the highest esteem. I am well along in my seventy-fourth year, and it is nearly thirty-seven years since I first opened my mouth in public address. I know it will not be long before I go hence and try the reality of these things and I want my brethren and sisters all to know where I stand. I hope this is written in love for the truth, and not to be hasty or over zealous in my views. There is a vast difference between rebuke in love for the truth's sake and the good of the cause and the brethren, and quarreling and vain jangling among the brethren. Paul says, "When Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed." These were two eminent apostles. Peter loved Paul, in another place calling him "our beloved brother Paul." These things should be done in love, as with Peter and Paul, and not to destroy the brother. While this is true, a brother in duty will not take shelter under this to name and to unduly and uncalled for criticise his brethren, as is sometimes done. It is as a brother said, This is no time for coldness among the brethren.

I hope, dear brother, you may be blessed to write on and on, comforting the household in the pure faith and doctrine, to the confirming of the strong and reviving the weak.

Your little brother in gospel bonds,

W. L. EDWARDS.

ENDICOTT, Va., April 2, 1935.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find renewal for two years. Please excuse my delay. I hope the Lord of lords and King of kings is in the matter and may bless the SIGNS and its readers to believe the truth and contend for the same glorious truth in the future that it has in the past. I love the doctrine of salvation alone by the grace and power of God. The only way this doctrine is secure is in him who is a sovereign, supreme Ruler over all worlds, all times and all events. God either rules or he does not rule. Then if we say he rules, go on further and say God rules by his firm decrees all things, both in heaven and in earth. We cannot compromise by saying he rules in part and leaves other things to fate. This idea robs God of his omnipotence. God made the sun, moon and stars, and placed them in the heavens. He gave them a law: To give light by day and night, as well as for times and seasons. These great (sun) and lesser lights (moon and stars) have not varied a hair's breadth from the purpose of God in the beginning. If God is supremely great and powerful in ruling the heavenly bodies over the earth, he made and hanged it (earth) on nothing, surely he is able to rule man. God hath set the bounds of our habitation; all our times are in his hand; he doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. How wonderful to this poor sinner is the doctrine of grace when revealed from the great I AM to wretched, fallen man, who is ten thousand talents in

debt and not one farthing to pay with. Jesus paid the purchase price for his bride, the church, and redeemed her from all iniquity and will present the church to his Father in heaven without spot, wrinkle or blemish, in his perfection, which is righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

Overlook all mistakes, and may the Lord, the Giver, bless all to be humble and live at the feet of each other, esteeming each other as better than themselves, ever looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

From one of the least, if one at all, in hope of sovereign mercy, which was treasured up in Christ before the world began.

Your brother, I hope, in the Lord,
J. G. L. HASH.

WOOLWINE, Virginia.

DEAR READERS:—"Now ye are clean through the word that I have spoken to you."—John xv. 3. This quotation sets forth the sanctification of the Spirit. Again, we read that Jesus said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."—John viii. 12. To know Jesus in the glorious display of the riches of his grace is to have the light of life. To love the people of God and the gospel is evidence of eternal life, and is one of the fruits of the Spirit. They shall not walk in darkness, in sin, for they have been delivered therefrom into the kingdom of God's dear Son. I remember several years ago I dreamed I saw a beautiful light shining upon the dark earth, and to the right I saw a great road of light whiter than snow. It led out of sight and divided the darkness, which stood in walls. My father then said to me, "To the right." I saw a great road of light, and the farthest view shone with golden brightness and led out of sight. Tongue would fail to tell, pen would fail to write, for it was indescribable. The light of God shining in our hearts reveals many glorious things. It shows us there is nothing good in us by nature. We must be brought down in the depths to behold our sinful condition by reason of sin before we experience pardon through His blood, before we can enjoy the sweetness and power of the word. If no godly sorrow and trials and tribulations, no heavenly joys and happiness, but eternal woe in the sulphurous flames. If no grief because of sin, no heavenly pleasure to meet. If no love for God and his people, no faith to bear us up in our dying hour. If no grief because of sin, no sweet deliverance, no pordon of sin, no redemption and no salvation. If no soft melting feeling, no broken heart to feel the goodness of God. If no being stripped of the robe of self-righteousness, no wearing the robe of spotless righteousness. It is God that blesses us with spiritual desires, and will fulfill our desires to our greatest enjoyment. The people of God are the only ones who can keep the commandment spiritual, for the commandment is life. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God

with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." It is as impossible for the world to love this way as for them to pull down the natural sun into their possession. Because the commandment is life, Paul said, The commandment I thought to be unto life I found to be unto death, for when the commandment came sin revived, and I died. He died to sin and was made alive to righteousness, for life was communicated to his soul. But the world cannot love the Lord God with all their heart and soul and strength and mind, for Isaiah, the prophet, said, When we see him there is no form nor comeliness that we should desire him; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and we hid, as it were, our faces from him. (Isaiah liii. 2, 3.)

"Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you."—John xv. 3. Sound in doctrine, this word is applicable to the people of God whose souls are created in righteousness and true holiness. They are sanctified in soul and our bodies will be sanctified in the morn of the resurrection. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." This light is the light of grace that enlightens us. "Now ye are clean through the word," which is applicable to every spiritual-born saint. How great the joy in the new birth, for life is communicated to the soul.

Your sister in the living faith, I hope,

MOLLIE SALMONS.

LOUISVILLE, Ky., June 5, 1934.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—I have just received the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES to-day and have read your editorial and it is good. It was so interesting and of so much comfort to me I felt I must write and tell you about it, but words fail to express how much I enjoyed it. Oh is it not wonderful to read of others living, thousands of miles apart, who have never met nor seen each other's faces, writing and telling our views and feelings better than we can tell them ourselves? It makes me feel and believe we have been to the same school and taught the same lesson, and by the same Teacher, which is Christ, our blessed Savior. Dear brother, your editorial was so good and of so much comfort to me I feel I cannot refrain. I think we should try to encourage and comfort each other in this world of so much distress, sin and sorrow. Many times when I get the SIGNS, which I am always very anxious to receive, and read the many good letters and editorials, I feel I would like to write to each one and tell them how much I enjoyed their writings, but I feel so little and unworthy I just put it off. I have had the impression to write for publication, and have several times. I had not heard a Primitive Baptist sermon since last August, until last Sunday, when I went and heard Elder Chastine. He is an able minister. He spoke on the communion Sunday morning, as it was communion day, and in the afternoon he spoke about the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. There is nothing I enjoy more than being with the dear brethren and sisters and hearing

the sweet songs of Zion, and hearing of salvation by grace, giving God all the power, honor and glory, for I know if I am ever saved it will be by the grace of God and not by anything that I have ever done, or I or any one can ever do, for our arms are too short.

"Nothing in my hands I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

I understand our salvation was completed on the cross and every one our Savior atoned, suffered and died for will be safely housed in heaven. I, for one, fully believe not one drop of his precious blood was spilt in vain. The inquiry with me is, Am I included in that number? Sometimes the question arises in my mind, If we were not embraced in that number would we be interested in it? If we were not embraced we cannot change it, and I do not want to try, for I know it is all right, for it was fixed by One too good to err.

Dear brother, before I received a hope, when I felt myself to be such a great sinner, my prayer was, Lord, shelter me. Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner, seemed to be the breathing of my poor heart. I would go to different places and try to pray, then I decided I was going to cease praying, for I was too vile a sinner to try to approach such a holy God. But I could not stop saying, Lord, have mercy on me, poor me, for I felt I was forsaken and friendless. I enjoyed hearing people talk of religion, but did not want them to know I was interested. I remember being at a baptizing and oh how I desired to be baptized, if I were a fit subject. I went on in this way for about two years, and one Saturday night I went to my grandmother's home to spend the night, and oh the burden of sin I was under. She and I went to bed in a room by ourselves and it seemed to be dark in a different way. After a time I went to sleep, but awoke about midnight, I think it must have been, and my great burden was gone. I felt that I loved every one and I was very happy. It seemed so light in the room I believe I could have seen to read, and that good old hymn, "Jesus, lover of my soul, let me to thy bosom fly," came into my mind. I do not know whether I sang aloud or not, but I was so happy I could not lie still. My grandmother awoke, and said, Adah, what is the matter? I told her there was nothing. I felt my troubles were all gone, but oh how badly I was mistaken, for doubts, sorrows and troubles have been with me all along my way. The next Saturday was meeting day at old Tirza Church, where my dear father was a member. I went with him, and after preaching they gave an opportunity for membership, so I (with five others) offered myself and was baptized the next day, which was the first Sunday in November, which was forty-six years ago last November. At that time I was eighteen years of age.

I would be glad to have a letter from you in answer to this.

Dear brother, I have not written as I intended, but have written as my mind led me, so I hope you will cast the mantle of charity over me, a poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

ADAH CHANDLER.

DELAWARE, Ohio, April 10, 1935.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—After so long a time, I am happy to send you money to be applied upon my subscription to the SIGNS. My son came to see me the other day, and asked me if I had paid up for the SIGNS. I had not, and so informed him, also told him I was in arrears. He immediately wrote me a check, saying "You may as well pay it now." Needless to say that both of us were happy. He was happy in love to me and his duty, while I was too happy for expression, to be blessed with so noble a son, and to have the blessed privilege of reading such sweet, strengthening thoughts that come to me from the pens of the dear, blest kindred in Zion. The editorials alone in this April number are worth the price of subscription; also the many letters on the same high plane. I am thinking of each one, also of others who write from time to time. Aside from the appreciation of their excellence, there is the hope springing up that I am one of the family of God, since it is written, Blessed are they who know the joyful sound.

Dear publisher, I feel sure that many other prayers ascend with mine, looking to the holy Comforter to sustain you in the loss of your wife. Many of us know the pain and loss of this experience. God is able to bear you up even in this.

Dear Elder Hunt, while I hope that you will not need to go to a poor house, yet may I tell you that God is able to make even that lonely place into a palace with his presence there. For three and one-half years I have been in, not a county home, but a home for ladies of good character over sixty years of age, and I am the only Old Baptist among them. Often the fire burns within until I can hardly keep silent, and sometimes it just comes out any way, sometimes answered with sneers, but sometimes a kind glance or a tear in reply, and I do feel that the Lord dwells here also, and where he is we may still rejoice in his salvation.

Sister McKinney, may you be spared to send us many more words of cheer. I know you by name, and I trust also in a sure way, since I do seem to understand when you sing the praise of our Redeemeer. [Sister McKinney was called from this earth life to dwell with her Redeemer April 17th, 1935, and her obituary was published in the July issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.—ED.]

I would love to write a long letter to all the other writers in this number of the SIGNS. Sometimes I wonder if I should ever write at all, when something I have written looks to me so like myself. But there are no moments in life sweeter than those spent in hearing or reading the blessed truth of the gospel, and nearly as sweet to me when writing, so if the editors continue publishing what I write I fear that you must put up with me, especially as I cannot often converse with those of like precious faith. But do not waste pity in thinking me friendless here. When I have been away awhile sometimes I am literally covered over with the welcome bestowed upon me when return-

ing home. And they also grow more tolerant when I quote Scripture, but I cannot enjoy it as well as talking or writing to the dear Old Baptists, who seem to understand me better.

Since this has turned into a chatty letter, may I tell of the time when I first heard Elder Tatum preach? for I feel sure that he will not object. It occurred soon after I went to Texas to live. Elders Tatum and Slaughter came together to visit the church very near our home, and Elder Tatum was preaching a very convincing discourse relating to the necessity of the quickening by the Spirit, and as a final "clincher" he enacted what I would call a spiritual "movie." He seemed to be standing just at the edge of a deep pit, dangling a rope down into it. We could almost see both the pit and the rope, and he carried on a two part dialogue, about as follows: "Is the man down there dead?" "Oh yes, he is dead, but I will just throw to him this rope," which he proceeded to do (very realistically), saying, "Hey you down there, just grab hold of this rope and I will pull you to safety." "Now just what would you think of a translation like that? I will say that you would think, There is a dead man at the bottom and a fool at the top." He was very earnest, and so convincing I doubt if any Arminian living would have ventured a reply to him. Elder Slaughter and I exchanged smiles, though it was our first meeting together, and when service was over he came directly to me, and we had a very pleasant visit together, and enjoyed many others afterward. How I would like to take one more trip into Texas, and once more clasp hands with all the dear brethren there but I would not like to again endure such terribly long and exceedingly warm summers. I might need to introduce myself, because I weigh about forty pounds more than I did while living down there, and there are many "silver threads" among the brown, acquired since the death of Mr. Peters, in 1929. I hope that the dust storms and the recent cyclones have passed over or around all the dear brethren down there, and elsewhere. What a cheering thought that the Lord encampeth around about his people, not only in Dixie, but east, west, north and south, so that even if reverses come he overrules it for good.

I am not content to just love those whom I love personally, but love goes out to each one everywhere who loves the Lord, and I long for that day when we all shall gather face to face with each other and with our Lord.

I have thought much of late about forgiveness. Do we really forgive every one his trespasses? Dear Lord, help us so to do. Forgive this poor letter.

JOIE E. WOODS PETERS.

SEASIDE, Ore., July 1, 1935.

DEAR EDITORS:—Father wishes me to write this little note to you, and if you deem it worthy you may publish it, that his dear brethren in Christ who have shown so much love and sympathy for him in his affliction may know of his appreciation of their charity to one so

unworthy. He now is spending the summer with us here at Seaside, Ore., hoping the coast climate may improve his general health. His sight he cannot hope to recover. He has been here five weeks, and says he feels much better than when he came, but being isolated from his brethren makes him appreciate all the more, the good letters from his kindred in Christ.

I am inclosing a letter from brother J. L. Kilgore, of Sweet Springs, Mo., which father would like to share with his brethren, if you deem it worthy of publication in your paper.

Written by Elder J. T. Barnes' daughter,

(MRS.) J. A. WEATHERS.

THE SACRIFICIAL ATONEMENT.

He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearer is dumb, so opened he not his mouth. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away, and who shall declare his generation? Solomon, the wisest of men, declared there is nothing new under the sun, and what is has been. The incarnation of our Savior foretold, declared and witnessed by the prophets and in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word is established as being the present. He was made flesh and dwelt among us. We beheld his glory. The time was come for the offering to put away sin to be made. The prophets saw it many years in advance. The record was witnessed in heaven by three witnesses. It was witnessed on earth by three witnesses. The natural man has no part as a witness. Time is not a part of the plan of salvation. no future nor past, but one eternal now with our God. There were and are some books kept, and another book, which is the book of life, and this book contains the names of all the elect, or saved. The New Testament is the book of the generation of Jesus Christ. The atonement was made in the end of the Mosaic world. It takes in all the years from the creation of the world to the end of time. Here are embraced all the subjects of my Father's kingdom, which has no end. Our God loves them with an everlasting love. The atonement was and is to put away sin. These subjects are the children of God and joint-heirs with Christ, who is the Elder Brother of every one he receiveth. Drawn by the Father, drawn by the Son. (See St. John.) Now it seems that all the children are not shown the deep things of the Spirit. O blessed Holy Ghost, show unto us, as we hunger and thirst after the things of the Father, and thine shall be all the praise and glory. Our Redeemer's generation shall be declared by his ministering spirits. They shall declare the generation of Jesus Christ. How beautiful are their feet, their walks before their Master. When the last saint has lived and passed from time the everlasting kingdom of God's dear Son shall be delivered up to the Father, and the angel shall proclaim that time shall be no more. "Beloved, now are we the sons

of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."— 1 John iii. 2. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

J. L. KILLION.

JUNE 15, 1935.

ELDER J. T. BARNES—MY DEAR BROTHER:—I believe I just feel like sending you this poor letter. I heard from you again through the SIGNS. I cannot expect to hear from you personally as I have in the past. I will say that I am very well in body and in spirit. I am blessed to rejoice at times in God my Savior. I feel like this poor old world has no further charms for me, and that I am waiting for my Father's call, Come home. My treasures and hopes are where my friends are gone, and this labor and sorrow, which are the strength of the years following the three score and ten, shall soon cease with us. So, like the beloved Paul, to live is Christ, to die is gain.

Somehow our meetings are not as well attended nor the brotherly love as cordial as it used to be, yet the fault is mostly in me. I know in the flesh dwells no good thing. These seem to be times of declension, but our Father's will shall be done in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. To his name be honor, power and glory for ever.

In much weakness,

J. L. KILLION.

DODGE CITY, Kansas, April 29, 1935.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—This morning about four o'clock, as I was awakened by the roaring of the wind and the choking of the dust, this Scripture was at once brought to my mind: "Let favor be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord."—Isaiah xxvi. 10. How surely the words of God's inspiration are to be fulfilled. In every age he has raised up witnesses to testify to the truthfulness of his foreknowledge, almighty power and wisdom, and not one jot or tittle can fail. Even the actions of the wicked as they go in the way of Cain, run greedily after the error of Baalim for reward, and perish in the gainsaying of Core, point out the wisdom of God, for he has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, so it is being fulfilled before our eyes as the wheels of time move us slowly but surely onward toward the setting sun. Not only in the hearts of men is his mighty hand revealed, but to one who has viewed these vast plains of perhaps two hundred by eight hundred miles in the days when God smiled upon them and made them blossom as a garden of herbs as they turn to view them a wasted mass at His feet, dust covered and tempest-torn, with their millions of people apparently now ready to perish, comes the solemn confession, He is God of both the hills and the valleys. Still in these distressing times the Scripture quoted above seems

to be, from all scriptural measurements, being fulfilled more and more each day as men who seem to have the mark of the beast in their right hand buy and sell for such awful gain, while bells toll in great expensive buildings for mourners, with false prophets crying lo here and lo there, and many running to and fro in search of the word of God, and cannot find it. Surely now we have builded treasure homes to the Pharaohs of the land and as the nightfall approaches and the time of eating our last supper with bitter herbs, my heart asks the question, Who will be sheltered under the blood of the Lamb, be led forth by the servant of God to yon side of the Red Sea to eat the heavenly bread and sing the song of Moses and the Lamb over there? No matter how much we desire to know these things, they cannot be fully revealed; perhaps a glimpse now and then. They belong to the hidden treasures of God, and you and I have no right to or power to examine them only as he is pleased to present them to us by the Holy Spirit, who is his legally authorized guide and interpreter for us, if indeed we should be one of the "us" mentioned in verse twelve of this same chapter: "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us." Brother Lefferts, in these two Scriptures I believe we are given a brief outline of the entire human race from the days of Adam on down to the final consummation of time. The wicked will not learn righteousness, and will deal unjustly, neither will he behold the majesty of the Lord, although he dwell in a land of uprightness, while the others who are blessed by the hand of God, "who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," goes on praising God and returning thanks continually in his heart to him because he (God) has ordained peace for him and wrought all his works in him. No individual can ever work out more praises to God than God has already worked in him.

A brother, I hope, in Christ Jesus,

ROBERT L. DAVIS.

RAWLS, Ark., July 2, 1935.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am some late in sending in my subscription, but I hope I feel thankful I am able to renew one more time to that dear paper I love so well. I hope I feel thankful I can pay up and send you one extra dollar to use as you see fit. Please forgive me for being late.

I see in our dear paper that sister Anna McKinney has been called home. She could comfort me with her writing. There is no doubt in my mind that she has gone to a better home. We will miss her writings very much, but we, too, will have to pay our debt; when the dear Lord calls we will go, and I hope to a better home.

I will close. Cast this in the waste-basket.

Yours in love, and in a sweet hope of a better world. Amen. Farewell in the Lord.

(MRS.) J. W. COON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1935.

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"THE TREE OF THE CROSS."

WE find in the New Testament the cross of Christ referred to as the TREE at least five times, and one of those references is taken from the Old Testament, which says, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Jesus became a curse for us, hanging upon the tree of the cross. Thus the cross meant suffering "a living sacrifice." "See from his head, his hands, his feet, sorrow and love flow mingled down." Jesus, the Lamb of God, offered himself as an offering acceptable unto God, which was his reasonable service. Throughout all the Scripture, Jesus was set forth as the Lamb slain, yet man understood not. The disciples and apostles of Jesus were no better, they would never have known had it not been revealed to them. After Jesus had suffered on the cross, been buried and rose from the dead, "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to SUFFER, and to rise from the dead the third day." Thus the tree of the cross stands out through all time as the place where Jesus took our curse away, becoming a curse for us, took away the handwriting of ordinances which were against us, nailing them to his cross, meaning thereby, that he himself suffered for all our disobedience. He learned obedience by the things which he suffered. So it is truly said, By his death we live, and through his blood, shed at the cross, we are absolved from sin's tremendous curse and shame. The law accuses and condemns, but the apostle tells us "the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ." Thus the law, by its teaching and its threatenings, drives us to the tree of the cross. How wonderful this is as we consider the word of truth which declares that in the beginning, when man was first created, God said unto man, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Our first parent partook of that tree, and through his disobedience to God's command death passed upon him and his offspring. His offspring all died in him, therefore it is written, "For as by one man's [Adam's] disobedience many were

made sinners, so by the obedience of one [Christ] shall many be made righteous."

Partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil meant death, but partaking of the tree of the cross means life and peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. We speak of looking to the cross, when we mean looking to Him who hung upon it, to his suffering and death. They ate of the first tree and died, we eat of this tree and live. Jesus himself said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." Thus from the cross, or suffering of Christ, springs the life and health of all God's people. It was there that his body was broken for them, and by virtue of his obedience unto death he of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Thus to eat his body and to drink his blood is to be partakers of the fruit of this tree. From the cross springs peace and righteousness, peace through the blood of the everlasting covenant and righteousness that covers us and hides our shame ever from view. Very different is this robe which Christ hath wrought from that which Adam would fain have covered himself with. It is written, "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked: and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons." These did not cover them when God spoke, for Adam said, "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." He could not hide from God, yet God has hid his people in Christ, the cleft of the rock, and it is by the obedience of one (Christ) many are made righteous. It is this righteousness of Christ that exalteth A NATION, so that they are a holy nation, a peculiar people, etc. Now we have been speaking of the cross of Christ, of what he suffered for us, the Just for the unjust, but it was our intention when commencing this article to write of the cross of the Lord's people, for they also are partakers of the sufferings of Christ. Let us first emphasize the fact that though we suffer with him, each bearing a cross, yet our cross is not to expiate sin as his was. He stood alone, trod the wine press alone, and of the people there was none with him, when he made his soul an offering for sin, but there is a fellowship with him in the cross, for only broken-hearted sinners can fellowship a broken-hearted Lord. He learned obedience by the things which he suffered, but we, in the cross laid at our door, learn of Jesus, who is so vitally one with us that he is our obedience. God thus uses afflictions, which are a cross to us, to show us what Christ has wrought on the tree of the cross for us. There is no way we can learn or know of the peaceable fruits of righteousness but by God's way, for such fruits grow on no other tree but

the cross, yet we do well to consider that the cross of itself can do nothing. Many people are hardened when passing through trials and afflictions. Jesus said, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" and God, who gives the cup, must sanctify it to us, or there will be no real gain. Here we would say that the same Spirit that was in Christ, spoken of as the eternal Spirit, must be in every member of Christ's mystical body. Many men have sinned the sin David did, and have never been exercised thereby. David, through the indwelling of God's Spirit, was greatly chastened, in which chastisement he mortified the deeds of the body. While he was passing through the trial it was very grievous, yet afterwards it yielded the fruits, the peaceable fruits of righteousness, as he was exercised thereby. There is no way one can learn in God's school but by the cross, and it is well for us when we know whatever cross lies at our door, cometh from the Lord. We have often asked ourselves when we have been supplicating the eternal God to bless us, that we might be a blessing to his dear people, or as we often feel to call them, his poor and afflicted people, Do you know what you are asking for? You are asking a heavier cross, more and perhaps, more bitter trials, a felt absence of the God you love, so that you also shall cry, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me," to be deserted by your brethren, and God-forsaken too? It is here we fellowship our Lord, as the Spirit of God stirs up our nest, and it was through such a strange and varied course that the Lord led Jacob, and there was no strange god with him. One says,

"Lord, what is this? I trembling cried,
Wilt thou pursue thy worm to death?
'Tis in this way, the Lord replied:
I answer prayer for grace and faith."

The proud, he is able to abase, but he does it often as a friend, as a father doeth to a son or daughter in whom he delighteth. If it be his holy will to send heavy afflictions, hard for the flesh to understand, yet he is guided by tender mercy, and is full of pity, and often he will take away the affliction when we have learned the lesson well. Whatever be his will, it is best for us, for our affections would be set ever on things of the earth, we seldom would even look up unless we had a cross. Lord, reconcile us to the cross. The things which the flesh found pleasure in are now painful, and through the sanctifying work of the Spirit we glory in the cross of Christ, and esteem the reproaches of Israel better than all the treasures of Egypt. How often we live to bless the Lord for afflictions and trials, for in them we experience the sweetness of a Savior's name, the preciousness of his presence, and have our hearts and affections set upon things above. One does pity poor souls whose portion seems to be fully in this present world, who tread under foot that which is priced above rubies, and are content with the husks which the swine do eat,

who mind earthly things. Yes, one feels to pity such, but they are satisfied, so were we until the Lord experimentally chose us in the furnace of affliction, and now we glory in tribulations, "knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed: because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." When Hezekiah had the sentence of death in himself, it was then he turned his face to the wall and wept sore. When deliverance came, he said, "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live."

Thus to-day let us bless the Lord for the tree of the cross, where we learn patience and are made to know a Father's love. A daily cross makes us thankful for small mercies, makes us have more frequent longing for God's "WELL DONE," than for the approval of our fellow-men. A daily cross will cause this world to appear as a bauble when compared with our heavenly home, especially if the Lord has taken our earthly props and comforts away. Trials in body and mind and circumstances, sanctified by the Spirit, will make us long for the consummation of our blessed hope, when we shall see Jesus as he is and be like him for ever and ever.

G. R.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder H. C. Ker.)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church, Locktown, New Jersey, May 29th and 30th, 1935, sendeth greeting to the several associations and meetings with which we correspond.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—As our annual Circular Letter is due, the one word "Grace," and the question, What is it? shall be our subject.

Perhaps there is no subject of the Scriptures more important. Perhaps no subject is so little understood by the masses of men. Surely no subject should be emphasized more. After an acquaintance and experience with and in the ministry for many years we have never heard any man tell his audience what "grace" is. This is our one point in this short letter, and we wish that every statement be tried by the holy Scriptures, which are the infallible record of God, by which every thing pertaining to godliness must be tried to see if it be true, just and right. When the Lord put Adam in the garden of Eden to keep it and dress it, he gave him a law by which his life therein should be governed. The law gave him right to all the trees of the garden except one, which was called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The law said to him, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." That law was the word of God, hence was holy, just and good, and for Adam to transgress it meant death to him and

all his posterity. He did eat of that tree, in violation of the law, and immediately became dead in trespasses and sin, separated from God, driven out of the garden, and the flaming sword was placed at the entrance of the garden to avoid his return. In that sad state and condition the Lord made Adam the promise that the "seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head," or undo Adam's work in bringing sin, and death by sin, into the world. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." So by the obedience of one, Christ, shall many be made righteous. Here is the key to the subject, "grace." If the law of our land holds the transgressor thereof responsible for his disobedience, and the guilty must meet its every demand, how much more so does the law of God hold the guilty accountable. Should man commit wilful murder the law says he shall die. If he were to faithfully promise never to transgress again, and were able to keep that promise, would the law excuse him? Certainly not. If all men have sinned and come short of the glory of God, does God's law excuse the guilty upon the promise to do better? Certainly not. The only hope of a man indicted for crime is to prove that man innocent in the eyes of the law of the crime of which he is charged. This is often done, but every man was guilty in the eyes of God's law, because all had sinned; hence by nature all were under the curse. All being in this condition, "without hope and without God in the world," the Lord manifested his mercy to men in sending his only begotten Son to die that they might live. Christ met every demand of God's law, suffered all its penalty, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. Therefore Paul tells us that we are saved by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. Since the sinner therefore could not merit the favor of God, since he could not undo what he had done, salvation is God's free, unmerited gift, which is "grace."

It seems remarkably strange that while all intelligent persons admit the above facts, many still contend that men are saved by their own works of obedience and self-righteousness. The apostle tells Titus plainly that men are not saved by works of righteousness performed by them, neither are they called with an holy calling according to their works, but according to the purpose and grace given them in Christ before the world began. A man condemned to death by the law and in the death-house awaiting the day of execution is no more helpless to work himself into the favor of the law and be excused for his crime than is the man condemned by the law of God for sin. The apostles conceived the idea that they could do some things themselves, and desired, each, to be the greatest in the kingdom, the Savior said, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter the kingdom of God. Little children are helpless, can do nothing whatever for themselves. This is why, it seems to

us, the Savior said "little children." There must be a realizing sense of this helplessness and a revelation of the power of God before any man can know experimentally that salvation is by grace and in no sense of creature works. If the children of God are the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus, what part of the work did they perform and what part in the creation did they take? Such questions put the wisest men to silence, as was the case with Job when the Lord asked him, saying, Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? That question reminded Job that he was not in existence when the Lord laid the foundations, hence had no part whatever in the work. The word "create" means to bring into existence that which did not before exist. Hence if the children of God were created of the Father in Christ Jesus, what part of the work did they perform? Absolutely none. Therefore salvation is by grace, to the glory of God the Father, and because of this salvation they are called with an holy calling unto holiness and everlasting life. But salvation by grace is not for eternity only, but for this time state, that the children may be saved now from falling away from the doctrine of Christ; that they may be saved from despair when overtaken with the afflictions of this world; that they may be kept from evil in the day of temptation; that the tongue be bridled that it speak no guile; that the hands be governed that they commit no crime. It is also a light to the pathway of the pilgrim, that the feet be kept in the way of peace. When we see the mighty works of God in building his spiritual house, the song is grace, grace unto it. Then of grace let us sing, of grace let us preach, of grace let us write. Amen.

H. C. Ker, Moderator.
DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

(Written by Quincy A. Gladding.)

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, to the churches composing the same, in joint session assembled at Black Rock meetinghouse, Saturday and Sunday, June 1st and 2nd, 1935, and to the associations and churches with which we correspond, sends christian greetings.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—As has been our past custom, we send you this Letter to assure you of our undying love and affection. We do not see each other as often now in these days of trial and tribulation as we would like to, but, blessed be the God and Father of us all, we still cherish you in our memory and give praise to him for the gift of his dear Son Jesus, and the promise that we shall all meet again in his heavenly home which he has prepared for us, where there will be no more parting, no more sorrow, no more trouble, for God says he will wipe away all tears from our eyes. Oh blessed hope! though very small at times in our vision, we would not give it up for anything in this world. Paul says in Romans eighth chapter, twenty-eighth verse, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." The wonderful predestination and calling of God's children is so clearly taught in this chapter that it seems that no one could deny it, yet we are so few in num-

ber that stand for it, and seem to be getting smaller as years go by. In the thirty-first verse he says, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" It is a wonderful God that we trust in, one who is able to do all things after the counsel of his own will. He has given us his blessed promise that he will never leave nor forsake us who put our trust in him and believe in his name.

We are so few in number that we cannot announce our next meeting at this time, but, the Lord willing, if able to have it, notice and date will be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.
QUINCY A. GLADDING, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, assembled with the church at Black Rock, Baltimore County, Maryland, June 1st and 2nd, 1935, sendeth love and fellowship to the associations and meetings of the same faith and order with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST OUR SAVIOR:—You are commanded, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom." Even so we rejoice to record that your messengers have come to us bearing loving messages from the God of love, proclaiming to the chosen of Adam's race the riches of their inheritance, and their indisputable right to the heirship that cannot be taken away from them, because of its being a joint heirship with their living Head, the great Conqueror of sin and death and hell. May we all endeavor as much as in us lies to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, looking unto Him who hath all power in heaven and in earth for strength, exhorting one another, and much the more as we see error, both of the old and the new devices of men, being promulgated by some calling themselves Baptists. While our ministering brethren have been few, we have had very able preaching, and have proclaimed the same glorious doctrine of salvation by grace alone, to the comfort of every saved sinner who has been privileged to be present to hear.

Our next Association we hope to be able to announce in due time, through the providence of our great and loving Father of us all.

J. T. ROWE, Moderator.
QUINCY A. GLADDING, Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church, Locktown, Hunterdon County, New Jersey, sendeth greeting to all the household of faith with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more we have been permitted to meet in an associational capacity. We have been favored with a good attendance and love and peace have been manifested in the meeting and the preaching has been in the demonstration of the Spirit. Our visiting ministers have been few, but the doctrine once delivered unto the saints has been contended for.

The next session of the Association is appointed to meet with the First Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, at Hopewell, Mercer County, New Jersey, beginning Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1936, and continuing three days, when we again hope to meet in sweet fellowship.

H. C. Ker, Moderator.
DAVID M. VOORHEES, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SAMANTHA L. SEAL was born August 23rd, 1856, in Madison County, Iowa, daughter of James and Margaret Bowles Epperson, and died March 24th, 1935, in Whatcom County, Washington, aged 78 years, 7 months and 1 day. She was united in the holy bonds of matrimony in Madison County, Iowa, to Timothy N. Seal May 14th, 1876, by Elder P. Doty. To that union there were born nine children, five boys and four girls: Mrs. Maud House, on the home place, near Dunning, Wash.; Clarence, living on the same place; Daisy, Olson and Yeisley, of Lind, Wash. These are all of the living children. The dead are James McDonald, born June 17th, 1876, died August 22nd, 1876; Eli, born September 23rd, 1883, died March 26th, 1887; James Arthur, born August 26th, 1886, died March 10th, 1887; Bessie Garland, born April 13th, 1890, died October 26th, 1894; Ollie Fredelia, born August 21st, 1894, died December 15th, 1894. She is also survived by two brothers, Allen Epperson, Port Angeles, Wash., and W. J. Epperson, Missouri Valley, Iowa; seventeen grandchildren, twenty-five great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren.

She joined the Old School Baptist Church at Loveland, Iowa, July 10th, 1910, and was baptized September 11th, 1910, by Elder Moss. She, with her husband and family, lived in Iowa until February, 1901, when they came to Adams County, Washington, and settled on a homestead near Lind, where they lived until 1915, when they came to Whatcom County, Washington, and settled near Dunning, where her husband died in 1932. Then she left the old home and went to live with her daughter Maud, who then lived at Minneapolis, Minnesota. But she could not be satisfied long in one place, and finally came back to her home near Dunning, Wash., where Maud and her husband came to live, and where she passed away. After she and her husband came to live in Whatcom County they lost one son by death, who only lacked fourteen days of being twenty-one years old. This was a great shock to both her and her husband. Timothy Jr. was killed while he was east of the mountains. It was reported that it was accidental, but they were not sure of this. It is one of the mysteries that was never solved, and that makes it harder to bear. But now she has the loving Savior to go to with all her trials, and she said, "He knows all about it," and he never failed to comfort her. Just a short time before she passed away, Daisy had been singing to her, and her bed was lit up with a heavenly glow, and she said, Oh that was grand. All of her living children were with her during her last illness.

I was called to conduct her funeral services, using as a text the one word which means so much to us: "Jesus." She never said much about her experience, for she said others had so much more than she had, but it was enough to give her a hope which is both sure and steadfast and reaches to that within the vail, whither the forerunner hath for us entered, even Jesus. Although she had so much sorrow, she was always cheerful. She has gone from us, but we cannot wish her back, for she has had her share of suffering here, and has gone from the evils to come to bask in the smiles of her Savior. Sleep on, dear sister, and take yourself rest, we all must follow you soon.

DAVIS BURCH.

BARTON H. STARR, our brother in Christ, passed away from this earthly life June 26th, 1935, at his home, near Mercersburg, Pennsylvania. He had been afflicted with heart trouble for a long time, and for the past nine months of his life was not able to get any rest except by being propped up in a chair, both day and night. He was born November 18th, 1857, making his stay on earth 77 years, 7 months and 8 days. He was twice married. His second wife, formerly Miss Ella Clevenger, survives him. He has four children living, and there are also twelve grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. He has two brothers living: Joseph C. Starr, near Herndon, Va., and brother Thomas Starr, of Chestertown, Md. Brother Starr was baptized July 29th, 1933, into membership with the Sidling Hill Church, Fulton Co., Pa. He had experienced a precious hope in Christ many years ago, but did not unite with the church until near the end of his pilgrimage. For thirty-two years he had been employed on the campus of the Mercersburg Academy and had been respected and esteemed by all the students and faculty. Doctor Edwards, the Headmaster of the Academy, was present at the funeral and made a few appropriate remarks testifying to the regard in which our brother had been held by all at the school. It is a blessing from the Lord when our people can have a good report of them that are without.

Funeral services were held in the meetinghouse at Sidling Hill, interment in the cemetery there. Our brother was firm in the fundamentals of the christian faith as held by all truth-loving Bible Baptists.

H. H. L.

W. T. BIRDSONG, or "Uncle Bill," as he was familiarly called by his friends, departed this life at the home of his son, Dr. T. C. Birdsong, at Shiloh, Arkansas, June 18th, 1935, after a few hours illness. He was born in Graves County, Kentucky, October 30th, 1850, and came to this, then Vanburen County, with his parents at the age of ten years. In 1873 he was married to Miss Alpha Jackson, a little lass of Kentucky parentage, and out of the wilderness they carved their home. Five children were born to them, four of whom died in early childhood, and his wife preceded him to the "river's other side" by some forty years, since which time he had lived with

his son. He left surviving him one son, three brothers, two sisters and a host of relatives and friends. "Uncle Bill" was a devout christian and a member of the Primitive Baptist Church. His entire life was a literal exemplification of the oft repeated belief, that God was in his heaven, and all would be right with the world. He hated frauds and hypocrites with all his old-fashioned fellow-men, and his existence should only be justified by giving to the world the best he had. He kept his troubles to himself, and "never burdened the world with his woe." He retained his physical and mental faculties to the last. God was kind to him, even in death, as the end came as he would have wished, suffering only a few moments before the end came.

[THE foregoing obituary is a clipping from a Kentucky paper and sent to us by brother Birdsong's son for publication in the SIGNS.—ED.]

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Ananias Hastings, Md., $2; Wm. H. Morris, Mo., $1; Mrs. Clara Parker, Ore., $2; Mrs. Earl D. Stevens, N. Y., $3; Mrs. J. W. Cain, Ark., $1; Mrs. Orien Mellott, Pa., $1.

MEETINGS.

The Lord willing, the writer will be with the church at North Berwick, Maine, the third Sunday, and Saturday afternoon before, in August, 17th and 18th. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to be with us on that occasion.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The annual all-day meeting of the Brookfield Church is scheduled to be held as usual this year at Slate Hill, N. Y., on Friday, August 23rd. It is expected that Elders Charles W. Vaughn and Arnold H. Bellows will be with us. We cordially invite all who desire and can to come and meet with us.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Bowdoinham Church on September 6th, 7th and 8th, 1935. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

MINERVA F. DUNLAP, Clerk.

The annual meeting of the Lexington-Roxbury Association will be held with the First and Second Old School Baptist Churches of Roxbury, New York, at the Yellow Meetinghouse, below Roxbury village, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1935. All brethren, friends and lovers of the truth and ministers of our faith and order are cordially invited to be present with us. Those coming by bus or train on Tuesday before the Association will stop at Halcottville, where buses and trains will be met. Those coming to Halcottville Wednesday morning may go to the post office, where proper directions will be given for their entertainment.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

Through the mercy of an ever-kind Providence, we are once more permitted to announce that the First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists will meet, if the Lord wills, with the Little Flock Church, in Oklahoma, on Friday before the second Saturday in September and continue three days, the 13th, 14th and 15th of September, 1935. The place of meeting to be near Booker, Texas, which is just across the State line from the place of meeting. Those from a distance who wish to attend should come to Shattuck, Oklahoma, if by bus, they will there take the train for Booker, as there is no bus line to Booker. Should any who have not their own conveyances get to Shattuck too late for the train, then call Willard Garton, who will send conveyance to the place of meeting. For any further information write to Willard Garton (the church clerk), Booker, Texas.

L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator.
MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

The Original Mount Zion Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet in her ninety-fourth annual session, the Lord willing, with Mt. Lebanon Church, Kansas City, Missouri, October 4th, 5th and 6th, 1935. The place of meeting is at the end of the Twenty-seventh Street car line, in the eastern part of the city. We welcome all lovers of his doctrine.

DANIAL A. J. ADAMS, Moderator
Odessa, Missouri.
(MRS.) J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk,
Pleasant Hill, Missouri.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets on the first Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, Shelbyville, Ky.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California; every third Sunday at 526 West Nevada Street, Ontario, California; also on forth Sundays as the Lord permits, at 3516 Franklin Avenue, Riverside, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.

T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 103. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1935. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ISAIAH XLV. 15.

"VERILY thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior."

God is beyond the wisdom of man. Christ crucified is unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness. Though men may speak of gods many and lords many, yet the world by wisdom knows not God. When "the God of Israel" was manifest in the flesh, he took upon him the seed of Abraham. "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not." Yet how precious is the testimony of the apostle: "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."—John i. 14. Hidden from the natural sight and wisdom of men, yet by the unspeakable mercy and power of the Holy Ghost revealed to the faith of the elect, so that they endure as seeing him who is invisible. (Heb. xi. 27.) But cannot man, by diligent study, by concentration of the powers of the natural mind upon the Scriptures, find out God? Never! The thoughts of the wise are vain. When every possible investigation has been made, the natural man can conceive of nothing but an idol, which in his vain imagination he thinks is the only true and living God. (Rom. iii. 11.) In types and shadows, in all "the ordinances of divine service" in which typical Israel worshiped God under the first covenant, how hidden was the way of the Lord. The natural Jew might observe all these things in the letter, and yet utterly fail to know the mercy, the grace and the salvation of God, and even the one who was "a Jew inwardly" how were all the things of the Lord, veiled in types and shadows. The things that are made, the marvelous works of God which men behold. Oh what power, what majesty, what handiwork we see! Our thoughts are lost when we try to think of the infinite greatness of the invisible God. Are there not times when, in our medi-

tations in spirit we exclaim, "Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him; but the thunder of his power who can understand." —Job xxvi. 14.

"Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior." The Scriptures peculiarly belong to the Israel of God, and in the manifestation of them as born of the Spirit how true it is in their experience, that their God, their Savior, hideth himself. When first brought under divine teaching, made alive to their sad and awful condition as vile transgressors of of the law, which is holy, just and good, what woe does the poor sinner experience! He feels the holy anger of God revealed in the law to burn against him, condemned and bowed down beneath the burden of his transgressions. From day to day he gropes along with many sighs over his sinful condition. The cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," is in his heart, but he fears there can be no mercy in store for him. How can there be mercy for me? How can the Lord love such a rebel? How can the Lord show kindness to such an ungrateful worm? He feels the holy God dwells in "thick darkness," and from the thick darkness issues forth condemnation and woe to the transgressor. The demands of the Lord in the law wax louder and louder, and the strength of the poor sinner weaker and weaker. Amidst all the condemnation and sorrow which the elect of God experience when they are made to feel their sinnership before the Most High how hidden is the mercy, the grace, the tender love, the marvelous lovingkindness of the Lord their God. The poor, troubled soul little thinks that all the terrible things he is being taught and has to endure is in the everlasting love of Jehovah. At present this is veiled from his sight, though often from his longing soul the inquiry arises, Will the Lord have mercy upon such a poor sinner? Will the Lord in salvation ever break forth from the thick darkness? Will the Sun of Righteousness ever arise and shine upon such a wretched sinner? Taught of God, the sinner finds out, to his sad dismay, that in his flesh there dwells no good thing; that he cannot please God; and by the deeds of the law, all hope in himself of justification in the sight of God perishes. Then how graciously the Holy Ghost works in the heart of the sinner that *feeling after the Lord.* (Acts xvii. 27.) The felt need of the Mediator Jesus Christ is in this inwrought feeling after the Lord, and our soul's desire is, "Oh that I knew where I might find him."—Job xxiii. 3. And when the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, is pleased to testify of Jesus to the soul, that he is the Lord our Righteousness, oh what sacred joy and peace fills the poor sinner's heart while he sings the praises of the Savior.

In matters of divine providence, how often have many of the dear people of God to say, "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior." In meditation upon the life of Joseph, how instructively, beautifully, this is set forth. Even good old Jacob at one time ex-

claimed, "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me."—Gen. xlii. 36. And in the eventful and rugged life of David it is recorded, "David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul."—1 Sam. xxvii. 1. And when we are led to contemplate the many incidents in our own pilgrimage, how dark, shut up and mysterious has our way at times appeared. We have thought, How shall I be able to surmount this trouble? What can be the meaning of all these things? And sometimes it has appeared that our way grew darker and darker.

"We see each day new straits attend,
And wonder how the scenes will end."

"Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself." We are ready to inquire, How can there be mercy and goodness to me in these things? How can it be that all these things shall work together for any good? We fear the dark and threatening clouds, and think that in these trying matters our God is against us. Oh what searchings, what earnest, sorrowful cries are forced forth from our troubled souls to the God of our salvation who hideth himself from us. And in a measure we enter into companionship with Job, to say with him, "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him."—Job xxiii. 8, 9. But in the midst of all that is so difficult to understand, and that we judge to be hard and against us, the invisible hand of the gracious Lord our God is still our support, and a little hope at times is felt that the Lord will, in his time, make all things plain. Then we know a little of what it is to be reconciled to God, and we are enabled to endure and to wait for the salvation of the Lord. "Behind a frowning providence he hides a smiling face." Oh have we not proved this, and found that "the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy"?—James v. 11. And on no account would we have one pathway otherwise than it has been.

"His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain."

"Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior." This is verily experienced by the chosen of God under the chastening hand of their heavenly Father. What can be more painful to the children of God than the hiding of the face of the Lord from them? Have we at any time indulged ourselves in the lusts of the flesh, or has there been any bitterness, wrath, malice and evil speaking in our hearts? It cannot be that we can nurse these things in our bosom, and at the same time delight ourselves in the light of our heavenly Father's face. In the sight of men we may wear a cheerful countenance, but it cannot be so beneath the frown of our God. When we have gone on frowardly in the way of our vile hearts, our God has hidden

himself and was wroth. (Isaiah lvii. 17.) Oh what gloom has overshadowed us, and how depressed and weary we have become. In all our froward ways, desolation, confusion and captivity is our portion from the Lord. That sweet enjoyment of his love, and reviving and consoling tokens of the love and wonderful favor of the Lord all seem to be taken from us.

Ah, when the dear Lord is pleased to open up to us the iniquity of our hearts, to show us our ungrateful wanderings from him, oh what confusion and shame we are in. We then realize we are away off from our God and his delightful land. "The house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies; so fell they by the sword. According to their uncleanness, and according to their transgressions, have I done unto them, and hid my face from them."—Ezek. xxxix. 23, 24. We hear them, therefore, bemoaning themselves, saying, "Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts."—Ezek. xxxvii. 11. The God of Israel, the Savior, has hidden himself behind the thick cloud of our sins. And when he thus hideth himself, who can behold him? (Job xxxiv. 39.) But our Jesus hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Savior for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins, and the language of our chastened souls has been, "I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him."—Isaiah viii. 17. What a precious, holy and soul-melting time we have proved when we have felt with power the gracious word of the Lord in our heart, saying, "In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer."—Isaiah liv. 8. The Lord has healed our backslidings; he has "blotted out as a thick cloud our transgressions, and as a cloud our sins;" and once more in the light of the countenance of our gracious and loving God we have been made to rejoice. There are many lessons to be learned under the hidings of the face of our Savior. Nothing can compare to the blessedness experienced by the poor sinner when he beholds the face of the dear Redeemer shining with tender mercy, pardoning love upon him. And when at any time the beloved Lord Jesus withdraws his shining, and is veiled out of sight, then we are made to know the terrors and sorrows of the night. Many ravenous beasts creep forth, the adversary is lively in his attempts to fill us with doubts and fears and hard thoughts. Wearisome nights are appointed us. How lonely, weak and disquieted are we when Jesus has withdrawn himself, and is gone. When will the night be gone? We are filled with tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day. (Job vii. 4.)

"Flowers need night's cool darkness,
The moonlight and the dew;
So Christ, from one who loved it,
His shining oft withdrew.

And then for cause of absence
My troubled soul I scanned;
But glory, shadeless shineth
In Emmanuel's land."

Yes, we are troubled when our God and Savior hideth himself from us. But in the night seasons the Lord does forsake us, for he says, "I will be as the dew unto Israel."—Hosea xiv. 5. Israel's heavens shall drop down dew. (Deut. xxxiii. 28.) There is given unto us an humble and contrite heart, our couch is moistened with tears, and our souls are filled with desires for our Emmanuel to show his face, to chase away the gloom and sorrows of the night, for we have learned, and now see that our precious Jesus is all our light, all our salvation, all our joy. The Lord hideth himself in his teaching. He is pleased to bring us into experimental knowledge of the Scriptures. Here a little and there a little, we receive instruction. Like the two disciples on their way to Emmaus, we journey along communing with our own hearts. Jesus is near, but unrecognized. Our eyes are holden that we should not know him. (Luke xxiv. 16.) But our hearts burn within us while he talks with us by the way, and while he opens up to us the Scriptures. And when our eyes are opened, we see it is Jesus who has been instructing us. While here in the body, in our brightest "visions of God" by faith it may be said, "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself." "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face." We shall see him as he is."—1 John iii. 2.

"And when on thy bosom reclined,
Thy face I am strengthened to see;
My fullness of bliss I shall find,
My heaven of heavens in thee."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

RIVERSIDE, California, March 17, 1935.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending two dollars to pay our subscription to the dear old SIGNS for another year. We surely feel thankful to be able to spare the price, and do not consider it any sacrifice to do so, even though at the age of seventy-four years I am still dependent upon my daily labor for our living. I have been a reader of its dear pages for fifty-eight years, and would sorely miss its welcome visits. I sometimes read a number through from cover to cover before laying it down. May the Lord prosper you to continue it for years to come. I certainly enjoy all the communications from the dear ones of the Lord everywhere. I have never found anything in the pages of the SIGNS that I could not fully indorse, and I find many experiences of others which coincide with my own, which gives me great comfort and hope and cheers me on my way. I especially enjoyed dear old brother Sawin's letter in the March number, which just came to hand. If all God's ministers would heed his admonition and refrain from all bitterness and controversy, especially in the pulpit, there would be very little dissension among the churches. The pulpit is a most sacred place and should never be used as a place from which to sow the seeds of discord among brethren. We find wonderful advice, admonition and instruction for all professed followers of the meek and lowly Jesus in the Scriptures of divine truth, especially for those who feel called upon to defend the cause from the pulpit and to cheer and comfort

hungry and thirsty souls. I have in mind the words of Ecclesiastes (the preacher), meant to apply, I believe, especially to preachers of the gospel in their ministerial work, rather than to the giving of alms, which, though right and very commendable, is only a small manifestation of true charity, the love of God shed abroad in the heart of every one born of the Spirit. Charity is declared by Paul as the greatest of the three christian graces, so ably and fitly set forth in his epistle to the church at Corinth, first epistle, thirteenth chapter. Let him who enters the pulpit remember charity and be guided by it and there will be far less discord among brethren. Let him then heed the words of "the preacher," Ecclesiastes eleventh chapter, first to seventh verse. "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days." History tells us the ancient Egyptians sowed their seed grain broadcast from boats on the inundated fields along the river Nile, trusting in Providence that the receding waters would leave it to settle into the earth and bring forth bread. In like manner, then, should God's ministers go forth spreading the true gospel of salvation wherever occasions arise, without fear or favor or question as to results, leaving all that to an all-wise Providence, who alone can "give the increase."

Sixth verse: "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knoweth not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." "He that observeth the wind, shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds, shall not reap." I believe this all applies directly to the duties of called ministers of the gospel, to preching of the word. Being right in line of Paul's advice to Timothy to "preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine" (teaching), when duty calls, and the occasion arises. We should not "observeth [consider] the winds," (whims or desires of the flesh), or "regardeth the clouds" (the doubts and fears as to our own ability or worthiness), but follow the example of that pattern for ministers, to wit, Paul, who, when called to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, "immediately conferred not with flesh and blood," but "shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God."

Now to sum up the whole of what is gone before: When one preaches to a mixed congregation, many of whom may be strangers in the flesh, or even unbelievers, he is the sower who goes forth sowing the good seed, the word of truth, broadcast, as set forth in that wonderfully instructive parable of the sower, Luke viii. 5-10. He cannot know, and need not question, where the seed may fall, or "whether shall prosper, either this or that," etc. After the seed falls, whatever the condition of the place or environment, the results depend upon an all-wise Providence to give heat and moisture to nourish and promote growth and bring forth fruit. Many characters unconcerned and only

dimly understanding at the time, but remembering in days to come, draw hope and comfort from it when God opens the eyes of understanding, and then, like a seed that lies dormant in the ground, it springs forth in response to the application of heat and moisture from heaven and bears fruit, "some an hundredfold, and some sixtyfold."

I feel to apologize for writing so much. You may judge this as you see fit, as to its worth of a place in the SIGNS, and it will be satisfactory with one who feels most unworthy of all,

J. W. HAYNES.

RANGER, Texas, Jan. 22, 1935.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In attempting to write on the great and important subject of "discipline," which is to rule and govern this chosen people of the Most High, and realizing as I think I do my ignorance and imperfection, and thinking of this people to whom it is addressed, it certainly makes me fear and tremble, knowing that many of this number are far more able to perform the task than I am, but if it is the Lord's will he can make it serve a good purpose; he can make his power and glory known as well through or by the pen of one of his little ones as by the pen of the ablest writer, for where there is but little, there is but little required. How often we are fed and comforted by the little preacher as much as by the big ones, for it is the Spirit which God puts in the matter that sweetens and makes it palatable, and nourishing to our hungry souls.

I used to think that the gift of discipline was given to the preacher, and now I believe that is giving us much trouble to-day. The members are, to my mind, too ready to give ear to the preacher, or pastor, whether he knows anything about discipline or not. It is a big mistake to have any man's person in admiration. Paul says, Is there not one among you that is able to judge between his brethren? The true answer often is, No. They just wait for the preacher to give vent to his feelings, whether he is in the flesh or in the Spirit, and I believe it is quite generally admitted by our good ministers and brethren that a majority of our troubles are caused, or brought about, by the preachers. Then, brethren, that being the case, should we not give the more earnest heed along this line? Brethren, I would that I could deeply impress that very thing upon your minds, that we may reduce our troubles, which seem to be on the increase. If we know where the line is that needs the closer guarding, why not give heed to these things, instead of letting them creep in and then have to war against them and have our peace broken up? But I say some of our best disciplinarians are found among our ministers. I have not found in all the volume of the Book where there is a general code of rules that will clearly apply to all cases that we are encountered with, and yet the very spirit of the whole matter is written, here a little and there a little. In some cases we can find written in one short sentence that which will furnish the key to a big problem. I could recite a number of cases where breth-

ren or church got mixed up in trouble, individuals, or the collective body, and continued in trouble for a considerable time, and when at last the mystery, or the hidden secret was revealed by some little one, or by some sister who was very timid about calling attention to the key to the whole matter. Another mistake that is, perhaps, too often made, is having too strong a desire for peace. Brethren, we cannot have permanent peace at the expense of of justice and order. While I hope I do have profound respect, love and sympathy for the true order-loving ministers, yet I have a great desire that the members do not esteem any man more than they should. Some ministers need much encouragement from their members, while others need holding back. I think some are spoiled by the church being too hasty in their ordination. Paul rejects a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. I think they should learn thoroughly the difference between dignity and humility, but it seems that it is hard for all our brethren to learn the importance of this short lesson. Oh that there be no hateful, dignified spirit in an Old Baptist stand. Paul is correct, they are hard to teach order. It seems they would rather slay an opposing brother than to have their dignity humiliated. They seem to think that it would forever ruin their standing among the brethren, forgetting that God resisteth the proud and gives grace to the humble. Now this is one of the things I would love to strongly impress upon your minds, for it seems so seriously hurtful, not only to the church, but to the individuals, so let us have no man's person in admiration. When trouble arises among us, let us look for its source, its cause, and fairly remove the cause, regardless of whether it is the right eye, or any other member. Even our own companion should not be spared.

Here is another thing I wish to speak of: If a church is constituted in disorder, it can never be recognized by orderly churches. I suppose that this view is most generally considered among the churches.

Another thing that is found nowhere but in the evil, fleshly nature, is talking among the brethren. Often it happens that one brother will say or write something about another that is rather offensive, then the other makes some unkind remarks in reply to him, even in a private way. Then he tells the brethren how he made his brother retreat. His purpose being to elevate himself in the estimation of his brethren by lowering the other. This trait is also found in preacher jealousy. These things come only of the flesh, and not of the Spirit of Christ. He that exalteth himself shall be abased. So we had better take heed, for the higher one exalts himself the harder he will fall. Let us remember that which was written afore time was written for our learning, so let us turn to the book of Esther and learn the story of Haman and Mordecai, from which we may learn a wonderful lesson.

The next I wish to call attention to is our ministers. While in the stand

it is common with some when they have no food for the sheep to employ their time in slurring false religion, to the embarrassment of their own members. I think this only arises from the carnal mind, and should be reproved. That which is not of faith is sin. Faith works by love and purifies the heart. Sin is prompted by the flesh and Satan and corrupts the mind. Are we not willing to bear hardness and suffer persecution without reviling again and calling men liars? God judgeth them without. The command to Peter was, "Feed my sheep," and you cannot feed them on husks, brethren, so preach the word. Do all things decently and in order. Do good to all men, especially to the household of faith.

Brethren, this is a difficult subject for me to write upon and make myself plain. Perhaps it is because I know so little about it, so I feel to urge good writers to take up the subject of the keeping of the Lord's house, that I may learn much more about it, for it certainly is a subject well worth our consideration.

Before closing my imperfect remarks, I wish to call attention to an article by the beloved Elder H. B. Jones published in *The Lone Pilgrim,* I think in the October, 1930, issue, on the subject. I think it is well worth your attention.

I do not desire to have anything unsound or worthless come out over my name, so I urgently request that the dear editor examine this, and act according to its deserts.

R. P. BYNUM.

LADELLE, Ark., May 12, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending in my subscription, which is past due, and must beg your pardon for my seeming neglect, and hope you will forgive me this once. I thank you for sending on the paper, and feel it is more than I deserve. I cannot tell you how much I enjoy reading the dear old SIGNS; it is a feast to my hungry soul. I surely do enjoy the editorials and all the other letters. I wish I could write as you all write, but it is not the will of the Master or I could. I must say to the dear editors, Write on, cry aloud and spare not, stand for the truth as it is in Christ our Lord, who bids his servants to declare the whole counsel of God, and to shun not to declare the whole truth. I only hope that I am one of God's little children, but my fear is that I may be deceived and am deceiving others, but I know that I love the Old Primitive Baptists better than any people on earth. I have never offered myself to the church, for when I am made to look within I can see my sinfulness and nothingness. As Paul said, there is no good thing in the flesh. If I am saved it by the grace of God and not for anything I have done. No, no, a thousand times no, for I am only a poor sinner in the sight of the merciful Savior. I feel that the grand old doctrine of salvation by grace is the only doctrine that will comfort God's dear children while passing through this unfriendly world, for I realize that this is a day of great sorrow and trouble, and that nothing but the mighty hand of God can keep and sus-

tain us while making our earthly pilgrimage through this world.

We surely do have some good preaching once a month. Brother Henry Phillips is our pastor, and the first Sunday of this month he preached one of the grandest sermons I ever heard. Colossians i. 5: "For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel." Philippians ii. 3: "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves."

"E'er since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die."

May the Lord bless and keep us all from the wiles of this world, and save us in his kingdom, where we will continue to praise him through Christ our great Redeemer in that world without end. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Yours in hope,

ANNIE FOX.

FAYETTE, Ala., July 5, 1935.

ELDER H. H. LEFFERTS—DEAR BROTHER:—What a glorious appellation for me to use in addressing his chosen and afflicted people! Yet my little hope is based on the same wonderful things that you have been telling the SIGNS' readers for these many years, and if each of our experiences, trials and exercises are wrought in us by the working of the Holy Spirit, then indeed are we brethren in a higher sense than any fraternal or modern religious organization can ever comprehend. As you so wonderfully set forth in the current issue of the SIGNS, we are each, together with all the elect body, partakers of the common salvation. While it seems at times that my little hope is so little maybe I do not have any, yet I am very glad that God's dear people are all brought through trials and afflictions, groans, yearnings, doubts and fears, so that a tie exists between them that is so secretive that it cannot be bought nor sold. This tie is so strong that they are brethren, bound together by no human oath, but by the gentle influence of the Spirit, which leads the called out (or as some say, the very elect) to be found esteeming each other better than self. What could be more like the brotherhood of Jesus Christ?

My object in writing you at this particular time is because I recently came across one of your editorials in the SIGNS (May 15th, 1917) while looking through some old copies. I want to tell you that while you thought you were departing from the usual custom in writing on "Reflections," yet I hope I found some comfort and enjoyment from reading it. It is a consolation to this poor worm of the dust to find that even brethren who are held in high esteem by the Baptist family get in the "slough of despond" and must depend wholly on the Spirit for utterance in telling of the riches of his glory.

At one time I was so vain as to think that I would learn better in the future how to address his people, but, behold, man at his best is altogether vanity,

and I have since learned that it is His to deliver in that hour. It has been that when I thought I was destitute of anything to say, that, as I am given to hope, at that time Jesus came to my low estate and talking was easy, because it is then natural man is hid by a more glorious power, that power by which the sheep of the fall are fed.

Let me say to you, that I enjoy your writing, and often have a time of rejoicing in looking through the old SIGNS. Go on writing and preaching as the Spirit may give you speech, for you have no way of knowing how many of his scattered sheep are being comforted by the good things that come from your pen. May the strength of Israel, that cannot lie, be your sole staff to lean upon in all times, whether adversity or prosperity.

I am your poor little brother,

W. D. GRIFFIN.

COOPER, Texas, Dec. 10, 1934.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I will write you a word to let you know how thankful I am to you for sending me the SIGNS. I get much comfort from it when I cannot get out. If it becomes a burden stop it. Please change my address from R. 1, Enloe, Texas, to R. 3, Cooper, Texas, as our delivery from Enloe has been discontinued.

We read in Romans viii. 16, 17, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." Then these children will be at home and share that sweet home equally with Christ, if they be joint-heirs with him. Children? Yes, children. How do they become children? By being born. Who ever heard of a child that was not born a child? What can any one do to be born? He has no life, no power, no will, no thought, no desire to do anything before birth. But Christ said to the ruler of the Jews, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." He said, "How can a man be born when he is old?" Jesus answered, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."—John iii. 3-7. This work was not by man, neither by the works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy he saved us. (Titus iii. 5.) "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."—John i. 13. And again, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."—1 Peter i. 23. Yes, every one that is born of God is born alive. Yes, a live child. What kind of life? Eternal life. Oh how wonderful it is to be born of God a child of God! Man, that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble. Oh what a contrast between the first birth and the second birth! One a short life; the other eternal life.

With great love to you all I will close. I am nearly eighty-five years old, and have been trying to tell of his love for sixty years. The good brethren and sisters carry me around to our meetings when I am able to go, which I enjoy, and feel thankful for.

Your old brother in love,

W. H. TATUM.

EL DORADO, Arkansas.

DEAR EDITORS:—You will find inclosed one dollar, to pay for the dear old SIGNS up to date, I think, and if I should live will try and send another dollar the first of next month. I think the editorial of this month was worth the price of the paper. I wish it were so I could send as much as ten dollars, but oh I am so poor in this world's goods. My dear companion had to leave me and my two little girls to provide for, and oh such a miserable life this is. I believe it is just like Elder Lefferts told it. I feel like we are living in the late eveningtime, but as I look at the world and all around me they seem very happy and care free, while I feel like my burdens are gone over my head. I hope my Lord will keep me. I know he has brought me through many dark places, and his mercy has followed me all the days of my unprofitable life. If he sees fit he will lift my burdens again. I seldom hear any preaching but time salvation. I would give anything in this world to live in the church with my dear husband, but I do not want to deceive any one. I hope it is my longing desire to be buried in baptism. I feel that if I had some more evidence I would be happy. Pray for me that I may have faith and strength to hold out to the end.

Yours truly,

(MRS.) E. M. CAMERON.

EDCOUCH, Texas, July 17, 1935.

DEAR EDITORS:—I wish, if not asking too much, that you would please insert in the next issue of the SIGNS the following: A month ago, while in San Antonio, Texas, I had my car stolen. It had in it all my clothes, my Bible case and books, and a forty thousand word article blocked out for a booklet, a lot of valuable papers and other material, together with seventy-five pounds of honey brother Ault sent me to sell for him. It left me stranded and unable to get any place. The next day the police found the body of the car, stripped of everything worth taking. The brethren of my home church helped me some in procuring another cheap car to use in going to meetings, and enroute home a drunken driver of a large truck sideswiped my new car and nearly ruined it, besides plunging me into a ditch. It seemed to be a providential interference that wife, daughter and I were not killed. Now I am in a great strait, not being able to work, and have to leave this low altitude soon.

In love and fellowship of the saints of the great God,

J. B. BOWDEN.

FAYETTEVILLE, Tenn., June 23, 1935.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is through a well directed chain of God's providence that I, a poor unworthy girl, am spared to enjoy the blessings that come each day. I often find myself complaining about things that seem hard to us, yet I realize that the good Lord has been merciful to me all the days of my life. We still enjoy reading the dear paper which has stood, lo these many years, for the truth that comforts God's humble poor. I still feel thankful to you for sending me the paper. I look forward each month for its coming, as we seldom get to hear preaching. The many good letters it contains are as good news from a far country. It is only a few years since we went to meetings often and heard the truth which is food to poor hungry souls. Sometimes I now think back over those days and it brings the tears to my eyes, for everything is so different. Now our days are lonely and sad. God's will be done. He does not send more on us than we are able to bear, and we have the assurance that his grace is sufficient for us, so why, oh why cannot we be content with whatever our lot may be? My whole heart's desire is to be submissive to his most holy will, for he doeth all things well. His people are poor and afflicted, yet they trust in the Lord, for he watches over the little flock it was the Father's good pleasure to give him, and his banner over them is love, and what wondrous love it is. Oh how I long to hear those sweet songs that give praise to God. It seems a long time since I have heard them.

I must not write much. I only wanted to say a word to tell you I am still enjoying the paper, and I want to thank the dear friend who was so kind as to remember me enough to pay for the paper for me, the poorest of the poor. I feel unworthy of such a blessing, yet no poor girl could have been any more thankful than I hope I have been, and am. It has been on my mind for some time to write, but because of my unworthiness I thought no one would care about my poor writing, for I feel so cast down I think I have deceived the dearest people on earth. I am so filled with doubts I want to know, come tell me, is it thus with you? Sometimes my hope is so little I think I will throw it by; again, it seems sufficient were I called to die. When I am thus blessed I feel that I could write or talk as long as I live.

I must now stop. I ask that when you are at the throne of grace and have remembered all others will you think of us? Mother is now nearly seventy-three, and her health is failing fast. May God bless the editors, together with the writers, that you may at all times declare the whole truth, then when this life ends may you be carried to that home not made with hands. Oh happy place!

Pray for a poor unworthy girl, saved by grace if saved at all,

WILLIE SISCO.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1935.

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LUKE XV.

A BROTHER in Houston, Texas, asks us to give our views on the above Scripture, particularly the seventeenth to the twenty-fourth verses.

It is well for us to note that there are three parables in this fifteenth chapter of Luke, and all three are linked together in a remarkable manner. The first is the parable of the lost sheep, the second is the parable of the lost piece of money, the third is the parable of the lost son, improperly called the "prodigal" son. The word "prodigal" means wasteful. This son was worse than wasteful of the goods divided unto him, he was "lost" and in effect "dead." Verse twenty-four gives the real kernel of the parable: "This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." So let us call it the parable of the "lost" son," not of the "prodigal" son, as it is generally headed in most of our Bibles. What is a parable? It is a placing of natural things alongside of spiritual things to effectively point a truth. Jesus employed this figure of speech many times in addressing the unbelieving multitudes, as for instance see Matthew xiii. in verification of Psalm lxxviii. 2, and Isaiah vi. 9, 10. Verses one and two of Luke fifteen give the situation which gave direct occasion for Jesus to declare these parables. Going back into Luke fourteen, we see from verse three, Jesus had been addressing the lawyers and Pharisees, and also in verse twenty-five he had been addressing the multitudes. The effect of these discourses of Jesus on his hearers is shown in verses one and two of Luke fifteen. The publicans and sinners drew near for to hear him, but the Pharisees and scribes murmured at what he said and found fault because he received sinners and ate with them. Thus, Jesus' preaching was, as ever, discriminating, and separated between those who hungrily hung upon his words because it was just what their souls needed, and those who self-righteous and self-satisfied needed not a savior and knew not that they were sinners. Keeping this fact in mind: the two kinds of people in this congregation confronting Jesus, the one wanting to hear him and the others hating and not believing his sayings, we can easily see the primary application of these three parables. Let us glance at each a moment before taking

up more especially the one of the lost son.

The parable of the lost sheep sets forth the work of God the Son in redemption. The ninety and nine are left in the wilderness, while the sheep that is lost is sought for and found by the Shepherd. The ninety and nine are not left safe in the fold, they are left in the wilderness. These ninety-nine do not represent at all those who are saved. The ninety-nine were in the wilderness and were left there. Hence they signify the Pharisees and scribes who objected to Jesus' teachings. These, satisfied with themselves as they were, were in the wilderness of unbelief and unregeneracy. The lost sheep, when found, was not brought back to the ninety-nine in the wilderness. The parable does not so state. The lost one, found, was carried on the shoulder of the shepherd and brought "home," where friends and neighbors were who could join in the glad rejoicing at the successful issue of the shepherd's search. This "lost" one is, in figure, the needy souls who drew near to Jesus to hear him, as declared in verse one. The Son of God was manifested in the flesh to seek and to save his lost sheep. He labored in this search, he was burdened, he was in agony, he hanged bleeding upon the cross, he laid down his life for the lost sheep. But he arose from the dead bringing up with him from the captivity of sin and from under the power of death, those whom the Father had in eternity committed to his care—the "lost" ones. When he arose triumphant leading captivity captive and ascended into heaven to give gifts unto men, there was indeed more joy, yea vastly more, rejoicing in heaven over the victorious outcome of the Son's journey to earth, than there was over the ninety-nine self-justified persons left in the wilderness not needing any repentance, for there was not at all any rejoicing whatsoever over these latter.

The parable of the lost piece of money. The woman, it seems to us, in her search for the lost piece of money does not go outside her house, but searches diligently everywhere within the house. In her search, she uses a candle. Does she not represent the work of the Holy Spirit? If the first parable sets forth the work of God the Son in redemption, the woman in her search for the lost money shows the work of the Holy Spirit. The lamp used by the woman is significant of the holy Scriptures, because the Spirit uses the word in his work of searching the hearts of those within the house. The house is not merely the visible kingdom, but the whole house of God: those manifested publicly as "found" by the Spirit and also those who may not be visibly connected with the kingdom but those whose souls are searched by the "lamp" of the word made applicable to them by the work of the Holy Spirit. Psalm cxix. 105, would seem to indicate this. The lost piece of money is without value while it is lost. No matter what the monetary value stamped upon it, it cannot be used for any purpose for which money is used, while it is lost. It cannot be used to

pay a debt, nor to purchase anything, nor for any other financial end, while it is lost. It needs to be found and restored to circulation before it is of any value. Yet, all the time it is lost it bears the stamp of the government to which it belongs, even though it is in a useless state. Saul of Tarsus was the property of God even before he was regenerated. All unknown to Saul, he was a chosen vessel of God, and had been so from eternity, but he did not know it until he was "found," nor was he any good to the church until he was "found." Jesus died to save his people from their sins. Having done so, the Holy Spirit sends the word with power experimentally into the hearts of the elect of God to bring them to the knowledge of the truth and to unite them vitally to their divine Head so they can bring forth fruit unto God. But there is no fruit-bearing until vitally united experimentally to Christ, just as the money while lost is without value no matter what may be stamped upon it. Apart from Christ, God's people have no value. Joined with Christ, they are good for something; without him, they are good for nothing. Right here, please note these zeros. 000,000,000. What is their value? Nothing. But, now, let us put 1 in front of them. Thus: 1,000,000,000. The 1 gives value to the zeros, but without the 1 the zeros have no value no matter how many they may be. The 1 is Christ. He, the Head, makes us nothings leap into significance.

And now we come to the parable of the lost son. "A certain man had two sons." Not just any man, but a "certain" man. This man, we think, was Abraham, because Jesus here is addressing none but Jews. The Jews were the descendants of Abraham. Isaac had two sons: Ishmael and Isaac. He had others afterward by Keturah, but we are not thinking of those now. Ishmael, the child of his flesh; Isaac, the child of promise. Two great lines of Jews sprang from Abraham: the natural Jew, the spiritual Jew. These scribes and Pharisees who murmured at Jesus because he received sinners and ate with them, were Jews naturally. As Ishmael mocked Isaac, so did these mock Jesus and those who truly believed him. Those who drew near to Jesus for to hear him because their hearts had been opened to receive him, might well have been Jews in heart, spiritually so because their circumcision may doubtless have been in the heart by the Holy Spirit and not merely outward in the flesh. How else would they have been drawn near to him to hear him, while others drew away from him? These two classes are the two sons of the "certain man." The Pharisees, in their self-righteousness, were the stay-at-home good son, good in their own estimation. These professed to have deserved well of their father because they had not at any time transgressed the commandments. The younger son demanded of his father the portion of goods belonging to him. According to the Jewish custom, the oldest son always had priority over the younger. This was seen in Jacob and Esau. Esau the elder was displaced by

the younger, Jacob found favor while Esau was rejected. The same is the case here in the parable. That which is natural is first in evidence, but afterward comes the spiritual and takes precedence over the natural: thus the elder serves the younger. The father, being asked by the younger for his portion, also gives unto the elder his portion: as it is written, "He divided unto *them* his living." These blessings thus divided between the two, could have been only natural blessings. Because had they been spiritual blessings, the younger could not have wasted them and lost them. The spiritual blessings with which God has blest his people in Christ before the foundation of the world, are such as cannot be wasted nor mortgaged nor sold. Nor equally so, could the portion divided to the elder son have been spiritual blessings because to the self-confident are not given spiritual blessings, but only to the poor in spirit, for it is the meek who shall inherit the earth, not the self-exalted. As to these blessings which did pertain to the Jews, we have not far to seek. In Romans ix. we have the list: "To whom [Israelites] pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." The younger son, receiving his portion, departed "not many days after." How rapidly did Israel decline. This was exhibited at Sinai while Moses was away from them in the mount. They made a golden calf and ascribed to it the deliverance from Egypt, the glory whereof was rightly the Lord's. "Not many days after" coming out of Egypt, we find them idolatrous. "Not many days after" coming into the land of Canaan under Joshua's leadership, we find them defeated at Ai because of the golden wedge hidden among them, obtained in disobedience from the accursed ruins of Jericho. How quickly did the fine gold become dim! Having wasted his substance in riotous living, having spent it all, and the famine coming where he was, the younger son finds himself reduced to beggary, hunger and want. All this was verified in Israel's history. Again and again did the nation go in the way of the Gentiles and heaped to themselves refuges of lies, which availed them not. Yet when they turned unto the Lord, he heard them and sent them deliverance. How very great is his mercy toward those with whom he is in covenant-relation! His compassion is very wonderful. This younger son finally "came to himself." He was awakened to see his true condition. How very well he represents those who, circumcised in heart, are made to rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh! "He came to himself." Who can do this, except they be convicted of sin by the Spirit of Truth? The sinner cannot see himself as he truly is, in the sight of the just and holy God, but by the entering into him of the commandment so that he finds the law to be unto death, killing him to the love of sin and

to any expectation of escape therefrom save by the might of Jesus Christ. "He came to himself" is explained by verse twenty, in which it states he "came to his father." There can be no coming unto salvation save as the sinner is awakened to the true knowledge of himself. Coming to the true knowledge of one's sinful condition by nature is the first step in coming "home." In verses eighteen and nineteen he makes to himself the confession which he expects to make when he shall meet his father. He resolves to ask his father to receive him back on the basis of a hired servant. But this can never be! Never on the basis of "law" can a son be restored to the "home." To be received back as a hireling would be restoration on a legal footing, and not on the ground of grace. Impossible! And the son comes to know later that there can be no such status for him at "home," no matter how unworthy he may feel. While the son was yet a great way off, the father saw him and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him. Before ever he could make his confession, the father gathered him to himself. Thus the covenant of God's mercy in Christ gathers the wanderer in unconditionally, not on the basis of any confession or otherwise. Whatever confession is to fall from the recreant lips must come as the after effect of love and compassion, and is not the cause thereof. Then, after the revelation to him of the love of his father, pours from the heart of the "found" one his confession of unworthiness and the acknowledgment that his sin has been primarily against heaven, that his sin is against God far more than man. But not a word does the son say to his father about being restored on the basis of a hireling. He had thought to do this previously, but such a rush of love as comes from his father quenches all such false fancies as are based on legal expectations. Not one word of blame or condemnation comes from the rejoicing parent's lips. All is love and forgiveness. In answer to the plea of the son that he is no more worthy to be called his son, the father commands the best robe to be brought and put upon the son. This best robe is the imputed righteousness of Christ. This is all the worthiness the sinner needs to fully restore him to his rightful heritage in the covenant of the father, and without this imputed righteousness of Christ nothing else will avail to obtain favor with the father. Christ's righteousness is the answer to our unworthiness. In addition, the ring is put on the son's finger, thus are the saved sinner's works linked up with the covenant of grace. Good works are the fruit of faith, and are not the cause thereof. Acceptable works follow justification, never do they precede the latter. New shoes are put on the feet. Just so, there can be no walking in obedience to the precepts of the covenant of grace except as the effect of justification through the imputed righteousness and obedience of Christ. As the hand represents works, and the feet represent the walk, so do the works and the walk

of the child of God spring from justification by faith in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Rings and shoes were not put on slaves, but on free men. How wonderfully do these ornaments show the son to be, not a slave as he once felt he was willing to be, but a freeborn son! (Rom. viii. 2.) "Bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry." Here is a sacrificial feast. The Jews of old had a custom which they called the "feast of the threshold." Whenever a son would run away from home and come back after an interval of time, one of the first things done by the father on the return of the scapegrace son would be to kill a sacrifice at the door of the house before allowing the "found" to enter. This sacrifice was supposed to atone for any transgressions the boy may have committed away from home. These being "covered" by the blood, the boy was free to enter again the home he had left. You will not find this sacrifice enumerated in the law of Moses among the others there set down. It was simply a custom which grew up out of Jewish tradition, but it is a very comely one. The killing of the fatted calf and then the eating thereof, presents the truth of sacrifice and then of feasting. Only on the ground of the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ can the lost sinner be found and restored wholly reconciled to the Father. And from this sacrifice of the Lamb of God comes not only our peace with God, but the living food which feeds the souls of the lost when found. Except we eat his flesh and drink his blood, there is no life in us. The sacrifice of himself becomes the feast of his church. So beautifully, therefore, does the ordinance of the Lord's supper set forth the food and drink of the Lord's people, at the same time that it memorializes his death until he comes again.

After all this gladsome reception of the younger son, we find in the parable the description of the anger of the elder son because of his jealousy at the rejoicing made over his erring brother's restoration. Verse two of this chapter fifteen shows very plainly who this elder son is. Comparing verse twenty-seven with verse thirty-two, we see a great light. The son had been received "safe and sound," says verse twenty-seven; and in the thirty-second verse, we have it that the dead is alive again and the lost is found. Putting these two verses together, and letting them explain each other, what have we? To be "safe" is to be "alive from the dead," and "soundness" is to be "found" of God's grace and restored to the "home" predestined for us. In the thirtieth verse, the angry elder son refuses to acknowledge the restored one as his brother. He says, "As soon as this thy son was come." "Thy son," not "my brother." How awfully do these words as they fall from the lips of anger and jealousy rightfully judge the one who utters them! In very truth, the lost one found is not the brother really of the self-righteous Pharisee. No, there is a great gulf between them, brothers in the flesh though they be. This elder son chides

his father with never having given him a kid that he might make merry with his friends. Notice this! He wanted to make merry only with his own associates, no desire whatever to rejoice with his father. True it had been, that the errant younger son had wasted his living on harlots, but never did the father give him a feast to make merry with evil associates: yet the elder son wanted a feast only that he might make merry with his friends, not at all that he might rejoice with his father. What a picture is this of false religion, that religion of the natural man which knows no conviction of sin and repentance, but wants the favor of God only that it may continue in the paths of its own choice, to make merry with its own friends. H. H. L.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER WILLIAM M. ROSE was born in the State of Iowa June 8th, 1846, and died in the Lebanon General Hospital, Lebanon, Oregon, April 22nd, 1935, aged 88 years, 10 months and 14 days. He moved, with his family, to the State of Oregon in 1920, settling in Lebanon, where he became a member of Bethel Church, and was elected assistant pastor, serving as such until the death of their pastor, Elder Amos Horner, when he was elected pastor, serving until age and infirmities forbid his acting as such, when he resigned and Elder S. B. Moffitt was elected in his stead. Elder Rose was ordained to the work of the gospel ministry in the State of Iowa (date unknown to the writer) and was chosen pastor of Little Flock Church of Primitive Baptists, in Marion County, and served as such for a number of years. He was married to Mrs. Elizabeth Smith, of Pleasantville, Iowa, July, 1910. He leaves a daughter of a former wife, Mrs. Nellie Hough, of De Sota, Iowa, one granddaughter, an adopted daughter, also two step-children, Guy Smith, of Chicago, Ill., and Miss Zona Smith, of Buenos Ayres, South America. Elder Rose was raised by Methodist parents, but while still a young man he advocated the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists, before he knew there were such people as Primitive Baptists. After the death of his last wife, sister Rose, he made his home with brother and sister J. D Gainer, of Lebanon, Ore., until the day of his death. He was taken to the hospital, where he underwent an operation for rupture and died a few hours later, as above stated, and was buried in the I. O. O. F. Cemetery, there to await the resurrection morning.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral services, but was unable to go, and a minister of another denomination, George Simons by name, was called. May the Lord comfort them that mourn.

Written by request. S. B. MOFFITT.
NEWBERG, Oregon.

WILLIAM THOMAS WEBB, one of the most highly respected and dearly beloved citizens of Oak Grove, Missouri, or in the entire community, has completed his labors here and been gently lowered to rest beneath a bower of flowers in the Oak Grove Cemetery, near his late home, until the Lord shall raise up his body from the dust, in the likeness of his Savior, to be with him in never-ending glory. W. T. Webb, or "Tommy," as he was familiarly called by those who knew him well, was born August 26th, 1852, the son of Curren and Lucinda Webb, who were pioneer settlers of the Webb family in eastern Jackson County. Curren Webb was one to fall in the noted battle between the States at Lone Jack, and left his wife and their six little children. The mother passed away four years later, Tommy being at that time fifteen years old. He prepared himself for teaching school, and taught several terms in the schools of Oak Grove, and other places. In his early life he was active in business relations, in milling, farming, and later in the merchantile business at Grain Valley, and was at the time of his death one of the directors and secretary of the bank of Grain Valley. He was also secretary of the Oak Grove Cemetery Association, and in all of his associations with business men he had their utmost confidence in his honesty and fidelity. In December, 1878, he was married to Miss Georgia Williamson, which union lasted for thirty-two years. She passed away, leaving him a lonely man, without children, but of a kind and loving disposition he made friends with and was a favorite of the children of his neighborhood. He united with the Oak Grove Church of Primitive Baptists March 1st, 1890, and was a highly esteemed member, beloved by the entire brotherhood of his acquaintance. He served the church as clerk from the time of his joining until his death. He also was elected moderator of Mt. Zion Association October, 1916, and served acceptably until 1927, when failing health prevented him from attending the sessions any more. Brother Webb loved his church, was faithful in attending his meetings and was a safe counselor in all matters of church discipline and order. His home was an open door to the Baptists and he delighted to have them with him. He was a good conversationalist and

was well informed in the doctrine of the Bible. December 20th, 1911, he and Miss Alice Hughes were united in marriage, and they were wonderfully companionate, she indeed being a helpmeet for him in every way, and their home was a pleasant one to be in. It has been my blessed privilege to be much in the company of brother Webb the past twenty-five years, and I never saw an intimation of his wavering in his faith of the hope that the good Lord had given him through the saving grace of Jesus Christ our Savior. It was also my privilege to spend a night with him about one week before he passed away, and oh how my heart and very soul was stirred within me when he said, "Brother Hall, I cannot say that I want to die to-night, but I am not afraid to die, when my Master comes for me I am ready to go with him." He had been feeling no worse than usual, and on the morning of June 11th, 1935, he arose and went to the kitchen, his wife told him breakfast would be ready in a few minutes. He returned to his bed and sank down and attracted the attenion of his wife, who was soon at his side, but he passed on before help could be summoned. He leaves, besides his devoted wife, one brother, J. A. Webb, of Oak Grove, and a host of relatives and friends to mourn his departure.

The funeral services were held from the home, conducted by the writer, and attended by a large concourse of relatives, friends and neighbors. His spirit has gone to God who gave it, and we consigned his body to the dust from which it was taken and must return, but his hope was, and ours is, that it shall be raised in the likeness of Jesus, taken where Jesus is, to praise him in that eternal world forever and forever.

W. L. HALL.

WILLIAM S. MARVEL, Sr., died at his home in Delmar, Delaware, May 25th, 1935, after a long decline, aged 90 years, 4 months and 10 days. Until two years before his death he was most remarkable in body and mind for one of his age. No special disease overtook him, but just a wearing out. In early life he was married to Miss Sallie Hearn, of Laurel, Delaware, and to them was born a large family of children, all but one growing to manhood and womanhood. Six daughters and one son survive him, together with a number of grandchildren and several great-grandchildren. He was a member of the Little Creek Old School Baptist Church, of near Delmar, Delaware, more than sixty years. Sound in the doctrine, upright in life, manifested he had learned of Jesus. I have never known any one of better understanding of the Scriptures and who loved sound preaching more. Needless to say, he was respected by all who knew him, regardless of denomination or creed. He was the first father-in-law of the writer, and a very strong tie existed between us. His words of commendation and approval will always live with me.

The funeral service was held in the meeting-house in Delmar, conducted by the writer, and was largely attended. Interment in the family lot in the Delmar Cemetery.

His son-in-law and pastor,

H. C. KER.

ALSO,

MARY E. ROSS, our beloved sister in Christ, departed this life May 10th, 1935, aged 89 years. She was the daughter of Isaiah and Nancy Fall Johnson. In 1867 she was married to Bradley Ross, who died many years ago in Danvers, Mass. She is survived by one son, Leland Ross, at whose home she died, in Danvers, Mass. Two grandchildren also survive her. She united with the North Berwick Old School Baptist Church, of Maine, about the year 1864, being baptized by the late Elder William Quint. She joined the Woburn Church, of Woburn, Mass., by letter, October 4th, 1896, and lived and died a beloved member. In her young days she was a teacher and a musician of note. She had a beautiful alto voice and was a great help in our meetings, which she attended as long as her health permitted. She loved the doctrine of God in its purity.

The funeral was held in the home of her son, Mr. Leland Ross, on Sunday, May 12th, conducted by one of Danvers' ministers, whose name I do not know. I was called by Mr. Ross for the service, but was unable to serve on Sunday, which I regretted much, as she had always been a true and faithful friend. There were fifty floral pieces presented, which showed the high esteem in which she was held.

The interment took place in the family plot in Danvers, Mass., I suppose.

Written by her pastor for almost thirty years.

H. C. KER.

ALSO,

LAURA R. ROUNDS was born January 31st, 1870, and died May 11th, 1935. She was the daughter of Francis A. and Mary Jane Briddell, and she was born in Princess Anne, Maryland. She was married to Mr. Dewitt Rounds July 6th, 1891, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Salisbury Church, by Elder Silas H. Durand, April 30th, 1906. Her greatest pleasure in this life was attending the meetings. She was a devoted mother and a faithful wife. She leaves her husband, one son, Theodore, and two daughters, Mrs. Frank E. White and Mrs. George Shockley.

Funeral services were held Monday afternoon, May 13th, at her late home, conducted by Elder Claude Ker, in the absence of her pastor, Elder G. E. Coulbourn, due to illness.

HER CHILDREN.

IN addition to the above will say, I had known sister Rounds many years as a faithful woman in all the walks of life. She was highly respected and much beloved by all who knew her. Brother Rounds and the children have sustained a great loss and the church one of its most faithful members. "As thy day, so shall thy strength be.

H. C. KER.

GERTRUDE R. WHITMAN, young daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. O. Whitman, passed away from earth July 23rd, 1935, at a hospital in Washington, D. C., after an illness of about two months. She was about fourteen years old, and is survived by four sisters and one brother: Frances, Eleanor, Naomi, W. O., Jr., and Ruth. Funeral services were held at her parents' home, near Airmont, Loudoun County, Virginia, burial in the cemetery at Ebenezer. Some time last year, she said to her mother she hoped somebody would present her with a Bible for Christmas, that she wanted one more than anything else. So at Christmas she got her Bible. She read it every day thereafter. No matter how busy she might be with her school-lessons or other things, that Bible had to be read every night before retiring. And always, no matter what other portion of Scripture she might be reading, she would turn to the twenty-third Psalm before finishing her reading. This was the usual custom with her. More than once she told her mother that she loved this twenty-third Psalm. It seemed to have an especial drawing power for her. It was read at her funeral, also the fourth chapter of 1 John. It seems fitting that this should be left on record concerning her. We feel that she was being drawn very near to the Lord these past few months, and more so through her illness as the end drew near. She never murmured or complained and felt the Lord's way with her was a perfectly right and just way. We thank the Lord for permitting Gertrude to leave behind her a saving testimony which so much comforts her parents and the others of the family. This child was a granddaughter of the late brother Frank Robey, of the Ebenezer Church, a great-niece of sister Sarah Bradshaw, of Salisbury, Maryland. We write this notice at sister Bradshaw's request. The Lord has graciously taken Gertrude away from the evil to come. It is he who gave her, it is he who has taken her: blessed be his holy name.

H. H. L.

WINNEFRED FRANCES BRODIE THOMASON was born February 24th, 1841, in Franklin County, Virginia, and her spirit took its flight October 1st, 1934, at the home of the writer, Bassett, Va., making her stay on earth 93 years, 7 months and 7 days. She lived to see five generations. She was married to Michael Thomason in September, 1859, and to this union nine children were born. Six survive her. Two died in infancy. In 1926 her youngest daughter was called from time. Mother fell, August, 1932, and never regained her activity, and about the middle of September, 1934, she contracted a cold which proved fatal. Her husband preceded her to the grave twenty-five years. She never united with the church, but was a firm believer in salvation by grace. Predestination and election were her delight, and she read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as long as she could see to read; afterwards I would read to her, and she would say, That piece alone is worth the subscription price. He brother-in-law, Greenville P. T. Cooper, af Franklin, Va., took the SIGNS when it was newspaper form, eighty years ago. She remembered once seeing Elder Gilbert Beebe at her nearest church, Snow Creek (Franklin County, Virginia), attending an association there. She was a kind, good mother and neighbor. In all her dealings her word was her bond. She was a woman of fine intellect, and retained her mind to the last. Three Primitive Baptist ministers conducted her burial service. Her remains were laid to rest in Oakwood Cemetery, Martinsville, Va., to await the resurrection, the fulfillment of her hope. I miss her continually, but I trust our loss is her eternal gain.

In loving remembrance, her daughter,

(MRS.) G. T. FRANKLIN.

SARAH VEECH CURRY was born November 12th, 1846, near Shelbyville, Kentucky, and died at Canon City, Colorado, June 19th, 1935. She was married to John W. Curry June 8th, 1886, and to this union one daughter was born: Mrs. Ruth Dilley, in whose home she lived and died. She was the daughter of John B. and Cynthia A. Veech, one of a family of four sisters and one brother, all of whom preceded her in death. She is survived by her daughter, two grandsons and a number of nieces and nephews. Her parents were devoted members of the Primitive Baptist Church, and she united with the Bethel Church, at Lamar, Colo., a number of years ago. Because of her physical condition she was unable to attend services for more than nine years, but during all that time she was in correspondence with her church, and was a faithful member. She died strong in the faith and full of years. Her body rests in Lakeside Cemetery, waiting the resurrection morn.

RUTH C. DILLEY.

ONE year ago to-day, July 16th, the soul of a noble, devoted christian wife and mother took its flight to its heavenly home to be with her Savior and redeemed kindred and friends throughout ceaseless ages of eternity. **MRS. ANN L. TILSON** was born November 25th, 1849, in Washington County, Virginia, the daughter of George W. and Lydia Anderson. She professed a hope and faith in Christ when about fourteen years of age. One Sunday morning while under deep conviction she visited the grave of her devoted mother, and while standing at the foot of her grave found herself rejoicing in a Savior's love. She was baptized by Elder N. C. Baldwin, one of the ablest Baptist preachers of his day. She was a firm believer in the fundamental principles and doctrine of the Old Baptist Church, and had been a subscriber and reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for over forty years. She was married to Thomas J. Tilson December 27th, 1870. She moved with her husband to Hunt County, Texas, in 1873, and in

1902 moved to the Western Plains of Texas, where she lived until July 16th, 1934. It can truthfully be said that she died in the triumph of a living faith. A short while before her demise she called my father to her bedside and asked him if he cared for her going. She said she was tired of this wicked, troublesome world, and said, You do not mind, do you? My father left the room and she turned to me and said, I am already in heaven. About four years ago she was stricken with paralysis, from which she never entirely recovered.

Her daughter,

VIRGINIA M. TERRELL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Ida M. Elmendorf, N. Y., $1; Sarah Leedom, Pa., $2; G. W. Berry, Ala., $1; Milford Hall, Sr., Ky., $3; Ruth C. Dilley, Colo., $2.

MEETINGS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Bowdoinham Church on September 6th, 7th and 8th, 1935. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

MINERVA F. DUNLAP, Clerk.

The annual meeting of the Lexington-Roxbury Association will be held with the First and Second Old School Baptist Churches of Roxbury, New York, at the Yellow Meetinghouse, below Roxbury village, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1935. All brethren, friends and lovers of the truth and ministers of our faith and order are cordially invited to be present with us. Those coming by bus or train on Tuesday before the Association will stop at Halcottville, where buses and trains will be met. Those coming to Halcottville Wednesday morning may go to the post office, where proper directions will be given for their entertainment.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

Through the mercy of an ever-kind Providence, we are once more permitted to announce that the First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists will meet, if the Lord wills, with the Little Flock Church, in Oklahoma, on Friday before the second Saturday in September and continue three days, the 13th, 14th and 15th of September, 1935. The place of meeting to be near Booker, Texas, which is just across the State line from the place of meeting. Those from a distance who wish to attend should come to Shattuck, Oklahoma, if by bus, they will there take the train for Booker, as there is no bus line to Booker. Should any who have not their own conveyances get to Shattuck too late for the train, then call Willard Garton, who will send conveyance to the place of meeting. For any further information write to Willard Garton (the church clerk), Booker, Texas.

L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

The Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to meet in her ninety-fourth session with Chapel Hill Church, three miles east of Ouachita Station, on C. R. I. & P. Ry., on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1935. At our last session this meeting was appointed to be held with Macedonia Church, but for convenience was changed to Chapel Hill, where you are invited to meet. Those coming by automobile will come over Highways Nine and Seven, which are reached from Malvern, Arkansas, from north to Dalville over Sixty-seven; from Camden over Seventy-nine to Eagle Mills to Nine, then Seven over to church.

As there has been some confusion about our Association because of a conditional association of the same name, we wish to make clear that we are those who believe in a sovereign God, one who rules all things, and works all things for good to them who love him; saw the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things not yet done, and that all things come just as he saw it, with no chance in it. You who believe in this kind of a God, and love and fellowship this class of poor pilgrims are invited to meet with us at this time and place.

V. R. HARRIS, Moderator,
FORDYCE, Arkansas.

W. C. HORTON, Clerk,
ELLISVILLE, Arkansas.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in September (29th). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

The Original Mount Zion Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet in her ninety-fourth annual session, the Lord willing, with Mt. Lebanon Church, Kansas City, Missouri, October 4th, 5th and 6th, 1935. The place of meeting is at the end of the Twenty-seventh Street car line, in the eastern part of the city. We welcome all lovers of his doctrine.

DANIAL A. J. ADAMS, Moderator
Odessa, Missouri.

(MRS.) J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk,
Pleasant Hill, Missouri.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets on the first Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, Shelbyville, Ky.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 103. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1935. NO. 10.

POETRY.

ST. JOSEPH, Missouri.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:—I am inclosing two poems for use in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if they meet your approval. While one is rather long, yet, because of its experimental nature, you may be able to use it. It was some years after I wrote the poem "The Awakening" that I actually experienced it as a truth. I was not ordained; in fact I did not even consider preaching the gospel until many years after writing it. Later I was ordained, entered politics and experienced in a way just what I had written. Use your judgment as to the inclosed.

Yours in hope,

MORTE H. CRAIG.

THE AWAKENING.

Two weary peasants met one day
  Beside the dusty road;
The head of one was tinged with gray;
  He stooped beneath his load.

The younger cursed his life of toil,
  And cursed the sun, and swore
He'd till no more the fruitful soil
  Around his humble door.

The older praised the wayside flowers,
  And blessed his life of care;
Thanked God for all the sunny hours
  That came to be his share.

And then he told how in his youth
  Into his soul there flew,
A vision that revealed the truth—
  I'll tell the dream to you.

"Dreamt I saw a beckoning hand,
  And followed where it led;
I reached a barren, desert land,"
  The pesant slowly said,

"The moon rose silent and serene
  Above the waste of sand,
Like some majestic fairy queen,
  With stars at her command.

"No blade of grass did greet my eye,
  No sign of life was there;
That desert stretched to bending sky
  About me everywhere.

"Then unknown voices called to me,
  In accents sweet and clear,
Like sirens of the mighty sea
  That sailors used to hear.

"But soon a terror seized my heart—
  'Twas not exactly fear,
And yet it did to me impart
  A thought of danger near.

"I sought to find the path that led
  Me to that fatal land,
But sought in vain. I found instead,
  Upon the desert sand

"The bones of thousands who before
  Had wandered there in pride,
To find some castle's guilded door
  With fortune just inside.

"They, too, had trod the desert wild,
  Had seen the hand of fate;
They, too, had been like me beguiled,
  Until it was too late.

"The miser in his greed for gold
  Had left his bones to bleach;
The statesman and the warrior bold,
  Were all within my reach,

"The prince and pauper, each consigned
To death, there lowly laid;
While strong and weak, alike resigned,
The awful price had paid.

'Again the voices filled the air,
And streams of rapture rolled;
With wild delight, then mad despair,
My heart beat uncontrolled.

"As from the gaping mouth of hell
I turned and fled in haste,
Far from the siren's deadly spell,
Across the mighty waste.

"I saw no more the fatal hand
That led my soul astray,
But fell exhausted on the sand,
Helpless as potter's clay.

"I cried aloud in my affright,
And then, I know not why,
But suddenly my dream took flight—
Perhaps God heard my cry."

Beneath the heaven's vaulted dome,
Studded with stars so bright,
The weary peasants wandered home,
Guided by God's clear light.

A tear stood in the eye of one,
Now freed from every hate;
He cursed no more the noonday sun,
But blessed his low estate.

MORTE H. CRAIG.

"SUN, STAND THOU STILL."

(JOSHUA x. 12.)

When darkness approaches, O Lord, let thy light
Stand still in our hearts till we finish the fight;
Till Satan is vanquished, no longer to reign,
And all of his legions defeated and slain.

The sword of thy truth will soon conquer the foes
That hold us in bondage and lengthen our woes;
Though weak in the flesh, with thy Spirit our shield,
We'll fight till we master each foe in the field.

The trumpet has sounded! the battle is on!
Inspire us with courage to fight till it's won;
And as night approaches, O Lord, let thy light
Stand still in our hearts till we finish the fight.

MORTE H. CRAIG.

CORRESPONDENCE.

EXCOMMUNICATION.

(EXPULSION FROM COMMUNION.)

THE Jewish custom of excommunication was three-fold for which it was inflicted for various ranges and in heinous form, such as the offense of keeping a fierce dog, to that of taking God's name in vain. The offended was first cited to appear in court, and if he refused to appear and make amends his sentence was pronounced. The term of his punishment was thirty days, and was extended to a second and a third thirty days when necessary. On the second offense severe penalties were attached. The sentence was delivered by a court of ten. The third excommunication was an entire cutting off from the congregation. Under the Jewish custom this gave the church right of self-protection. In the New Testament Jewish excommunication is brought prominently before us in the case of the man that was born blind (John ix.), but we find by careful reading that Christ in all cases justifieth his doctrine. Neither the man sinned, nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Excommunication does not bar one from heaven and eternal glory with the Father. Christian excommunication, as exercised by the true church, was instituted by our Lord. Matthew xviii. 15: "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault, between thee and him alone;

if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." Then in verse 18: "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." Matthew xvi. 18: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Hence Christ is the rock under consideration. Verse 19: "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." The word "keys" in Bible terms is the emblem of authority, and this God-given authority gives the church authority to deal with all ungodly conduct that might exist in the church, such as would bring reproach on the church, but should be dealt with in brotherly love. A church without order, good morals and godly discipline is like a ship at sea without a rudder, it will soon land on the quicksand of destruction, and that light which once shined forth in its beauty will be the den of bats and owls and all unclean birds.

The meaning of the word in question in Jewry, is temporary suspension; further temporary suspension; finally cutting off, for christian practice. Christian excommunication as exercised by the church was instituted by our Lord in Matthew xviii. 15, 16, Matthew xvi. 19, and it was practiced and commanded by St. Paul, 1 Cor. v. 11: "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat." This fifth chapter of first Corinthians should be studied carefully and prayerfully by all God-fearing men and women, and if all christian people would heed its teaching there would be less confusion in the church. Titus iii. 10: "A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition reject."

We find St. Paul frequently claiming the right of the church to exercise discipline over her members, which all true loving followers of Christ should indorse. Then we come on down to Paul's dealing with the church. In 2 Cor. i. 10, 13, 23, we find that it is a spiritual penalty, involving no temporal punishment, and that it consists in separation from the communion of the church, and that its object is the good of the sufferer. 1 Cor. v. 5: "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." All of this is for the protection of the sound members in the church. If such conditions be looked upon as just a small offense, what will be the final end? Decency in the church will be past history. If we ignore the Scriptures which are given by inspiration, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, how then can we profess to be men of God? Shall we close our eyes to the teaching and deny the fact that they are a thorough furnisher

unto all good works? (2 Tim. iii. 17.) Its subjects are those who are guilty of heresy. In 1 Cor. v. 1, we find Paul dealing with gross immorality; that is, inflicted by the authority of the church at large: "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife." Matthew xviii. 18 is wielded by the highest authority. 1 Cor. v. 3: "For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed." All such offenders should be dealt with by the church to which the offender belongs. 1 Cor. v. 4, 5: "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus." Paul stands firm, without fear of any opposition on the part of a minority. Paul says we should confirm our love toward such an one; hatred and envy should not find lodging in the church. All forgiveness should be in the person of Christ, both in spirit and brotherly love, when the offender's penitence is of godly sorrow. Penitence is the only condition on which restoration of communion is granted. The sentence should be publicly reversed, as it was publicly promulgated. 2 Cor. ii. 9: "For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things." Jesus told the woman that was taken in adultery to sin no more; so to say, Cease your ungodly deeds. It might be well for us all to take heed to ourselves. 1 Cor. v. 2: "And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you." We should always be mindful that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. We should at all times be mindful of exhortation to humility, love and unity recommended, which is indeed commendable in God's people. Philippians ii. 1, 2: "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." We should at all times avoid strife and vainglory, for such is deadly poison if permitted among brethren, and means only destruction to brethren, and sometimes to churches. Where God is there is unity and love, for God is love. Ninety per cent. of the trouble among brethren is due to lack of understanding of the inspired word which God has blessed us with, and that for our teaching, and being slack in letting our conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ. We so often make excuses, but if we will just carefully pick our excuses to pieces we will find they are mostly built on falsehoods and will not stand when put to the test of the Scriptures. This I speak from sad experience. I so often make excuses with no foundation. God's people should be found at all times standing

in the way inquiring for the old paths, being mindful that we have an advocate with the Father.

Just a thought in regard to the fierce dog referred to in the beginning of this article. Dogs are animals mentioned in Scripture, which were used as watch dogs for their houses. In Isaiah lvi. 10, they are spoken of as watchmen, blind and ignorant, dumb dogs, they cannot bark, sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber, greedy, never can have enough. They are also likened to shepherds that do not understand, looking only for gain. They are sometimes used to guard flocks. Troups of hungry and semiwild dogs used to wander about the fields and the streets of the cities devouring dead bodies and other offal. 1 Kings xiv. 11; xxi. 19; xxii. 38. In this Scripture we find Jezebel by subtility procured Naboth's death, and Ahab is seduced by false prophets, and the dogs licked up the blood of Naboth, but the same punishment was the sentence of Ahab and Jezebel. The dog under consideration was savage and fierce, and fierce, cruel enemies are poetically styled as dogs. (Psalms xxii. 16-20.) He is again spoken of in Isaiah lxvi. 3, and it is here the severe judgment of God is against the wicked; not the wickedness of the world, it is God's people who are admonished to all good works. Good works are not for the putting away of sin, but for the answer of a good conscience toward God, and the evidence of faith in God. Good works are the evidence of faith, which is the fruit of the Spirit. The tree is known by its fruit.

There is room for repentance. God set before the church at Philadelphia an open door, that no man could shut and no man can open. Except ye repent, "I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick." The church at Thyatira suffered Jezebel, who claimed to be a prophetess, to teach and seduce God's servants, and caused them to commit fornication unto idols. God gave her room to repent of her fornication, and she repented not. (Rev. ii. 20, 21.) All Primitive Baptists might profit by a careful reading of John's message to the seven churches in Asia. But keep in mind this is Christ's message to the churches in question. If we believe the Primitive Baptist Church is the apostolic church, then we should be governed according to Christ's teachings, and let all things be done decently and in order. Rev. i. 3: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand."

Just one more thought that is good for Baptists to keep in mind. Prov. i. 8: "My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother." This language is the exhortation of God to his children to be obedient to the teaching of the Scriptures. God has said they shall be as ornaments of grace unto thy head; turn thou at my reproof.

I wish to say in conclusion, the Scriptures are of divine authority, and should be considered as such. I have

endeavored to use quotations as a foundation of this article, trusting that my brethren will look on my errors with much charity.

Submitted in brotherly love, and for the good of our cause.

J. O. SYMMONDS.

DALLAS CITY, Illinois.

BRUNSWICK, Maine, June 28, 1935.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—DEAR BROTHER:—I have been thinking of writing to you for several days, and this morning your letter came, full of fellowship and love, not only for me, but for all of us in the two churches. I feel the Lord has given you a pastoral care for us, and sent you to us in our time of trouble, and made you faithful in the cause of truth. "Bear one another's burdens," is the Scripture that comes into my mind and expresses what a help you were better than any words I could write. Last Sunday we had a meeting here at my home, and it was good and pleasant to "behold" the unity we were dwelling in. It was the first time for a year (perhaps longer than that) that all had been to a meeting. We were glad to see one another and speak of the things of the kingdom of our God, talk of his power, wisdom, mercy, lovingkindness, and how he had gathered us together. In my other letter to you I tried to tell your how pleasant a time I had during the winter evenings sitting here alone and singing the hymns, and how the Scripture came into my mind with power and I rejoiced. We had a meeting the fourth Sunday in May, the second and fourth Sundays in June, and I have been trying to tell the loved ones of my experiences, and at this last meeting some of the precious truths came into my mind, so I could speak of them easily and with assurance. It came to me after awhile that I was talking and none of the others had a chance to speak, so I stopped, and asked some of the others to tell of the way the Lord had led them. Now you may smile when I say they all said, We are enjoying what you say, and want you to go right on. After the meeting was over sister Palmer said, "I have thought of you often this winter, sitting here alone and singing, but did not know the Lord was preparing you to give us the food we have had to-day." His word shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish that which he please, and shall prosper in the thing whereunto he sent it. Nothing is impossible with our God. His praise cannot be given to graven images, nor his glory to another. "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee." "Lord, thou hast been our dwellingplace in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." There is no way possible for any mistake in God's works. He speaks, and it is done. He commands, and it stands fast. He knows no change, not even a shadow of turning. I do feel to rejoice that he had full control of sin, and had the fountain opened in the house of David for sin and uncleanness so we have sung the song of redeeming love.

The hymn comes into my mind, "There is a fountain filled with blood." I must not stop to write the whole hymn, but must write one verse:

"E'er since, by faith, I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And will be till I die."

Yes, brother, I can never sing any other song than redeeming love. He has put the new song into my mouth, even praise unto God.

Another verse of a hymn has come into my mind, and I am going to write it, for I feel sure no one but you will ever read it and be able to understand how I wander around. "Wait, O my soul, thy Maker's will," is the first line of the hymn that has come into my mind.

"In heaven, and earth, and air, and seas,
He executes his wise decrees;
And by his saints it stands confest,
That what he does is ever best."

I am sorry to hear of Elder Coulbourn's illness. Hope he will not have a long time of suffering.

"Wait then, my soul, submissive wait,
Prostrate before his awful seat;
And, 'midst the terrors of his rod,
Trust in a wise and gracious God."

I hope it will be the Lord's will for you to come to the Association. We have only four members in the Whitefield Church, and six in the Bowdoinham Church, but we surely have found "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." There have been times when it looked dark to us, but "He safely leads my soul along, his lovingkindness oh how strong," and we lacked for nothing,

"He near my soul has always stood,
His lovingkindness, oh how good."

"And though I have him oft forgot,
His lovingkindness changes not."

I do not know how long I would keep on writing if there were no end to this sheet of paper.

I hope to see you at North Berwick.

With love and fellowship, your sister,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

[WORDS cannot express our gratitude to God for such evidences of christian love as are set forth in the foregoing letter. Few, if any there are, at the advanced age of our sister would undertake to live alone in a large house, doing all of her work, including looking after fires, etc., as she does, but after all she is not alone, for the Lord appears to walk and talk with her, and then enables her to tell others of her blessed seasons. Though this little flock is without an undershepherd, yet the Lord gathers them together by his Spirit and they are greatly blest in their faithful walk in not forsaking the assembling of themselves together as is the manner of some. We commend them for their faithfulness and pray God's blessings upon them.—R. L. D.]

COOPERSTOWN, New York.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—I have often thought of you and all the folks at meeting, and I trust you enjoyed your vacation and had a much needed rest. I would have written before, but my mind seems to be a blank and my spirit in a dry and barren place where no water is, and this is how I felt when I lay me down last night, but then the

thought came to me, How do you know it is a dry and barren place? Surely it must be because we thirst and have known in other times of having been made to lie down in green pastures, and, as the Scriptures say, the remembrance of a feast increaseth hunger in a hungry man. It is the mountains round about which make the valleys. I have been in much darkness of late, but then it is said that while the earth stands there shall be day and night and the seasons shall follow each other, but with me it seems the winter is severe and the nights long. Yes, it is a darkness that can be felt; but then I feel to hope that where once the Sun has shone it will shine again and again. We may sit in darkness for a time, but having been delivered from the power of darkness it will not continue. These seasons perhaps work for our good, for we see ourselves as we are by nature, and that in us, that is, in the flesh, there dwells no good thing, and, like Jeremiah of old, we hear the command, "Arise, and go down to the potter's house," and there we see the vessel marred in the hands of the potter and the potter forming another vessel of honor fit for theMaster's use. So many times we must "Arise, and go down to the potter's house." It is comforting to notice, however, that this vessel never left the potter's hands. It was marred *in his hands,* but he did not cast it away, but formed it into another vessel. So we were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world was formed, and having loved us with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness has he called us, but we were never out of his hands, nor can we ever stray beyond the cords of his love. This recalls to my mind a passage you read before I left: "Thus said the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, for I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." So was Jacob created, but Israel formed. Saul of Tarsus was created, but Paul was formed. So were we all marred in the hands of the potter while yet in the loins of the first man Adam, but are made new creatures in the second Adam, even Christ Jesus our Lord.

I did not set out to write this long scrawl, but merely to let you know that physically I am in the land of the living, but where I am spiritually I know not. Remember me to your family and all the folks at meeting.

You will be in Maine next Sunday, so having taking up much of your time in reading this I will not infringe further on your time by expecting a reply. I expect to be home some time the first week in September, but as you will be away the second Sunday, it will be the third Sunday before I see you, if the Lord wills. Remember me when at the throne of grace.

With much love, your friend,

SAMUEL W. SHIPWAY.

[WE deeply appreciate such letters from our friends whom we esteem so highly for the truth's sake as we do Mr. Shipway, who is faithful in attending our meetings in New York City.—R. L. D.]

PATERSON, N. J., May 27, 1935.

DEAR SISTER MINNIE:—I imagine you will be surprised at my writing you so soon, but I just did not have nearly enough visit with you, and I thought you would like to hear about our meeting at Middletown. I wish you all could have been there. Sister Robinson was there and asked where you were, also sister Brink. I told them you sent your love, and would have been there could you have had a way. Elder Dodson read from Philippians fourth chapter, eighth to nineteenth verses, inclusive, and spoke from it, particularly the nineteenth verse. The hymns were 499, 713 and 804. It was our communion time, and Elder spoke beautifully in prayer. Hymn 518 was sung after. I am sure you were with us in thought. What a glorious long-to-be-remembered day! How can I be thankful enough for such blessed privileges? The ride up was lovely. We sang hymns most of the way, and enjoyed the beauties of nature, the marvelous work of our Creator. Elder's sermon was so good to me, and I was made to rejoice at another manifestation of our Father's love and tender watchcare over us, in enabling one of his dear children to come home to his friends and tell of the wonderful things God had done for him. Oh how much can be taught in just a few words! The love for the church, the desire for a home with them, and to follow in the footsteps of our blessed Jesus in the ordinance of baptism, the unworthiness and inability of self all so beautifully expressed. How beautiful the ordinance of baptism; it seems to fill one with sacred reverence. It was on the fourth Sunday in May, 1903, that mother and I were baptized at Middletown. I cannot explain in words the joy and sweet peace that filled my heart. The faces of those dear ones standing by the water were most beautiful to me. I can never forget the tender, loving words of fellowship for one so unworthy, so weak and sinful. Many years have passed since then, and I feel my walk and conversation have fallen far short of what I hoped them to be. I realize that of myself I cannot even think a good thought. My hope at times has seemed but small, yet I would not exchange it for all the world, and the love and fellowship of the brethren are the dearest things on earth to me. At times the words, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," have been of great comfort to me. I hope our dear brother may feel the sweet presence of Jesus very near unto him, comforting and sustaining him as he journeys along the way. What a joy to his brothers and sisters in the flesh to be doubly united. I am sure you all will have a wonderful visit together. You are richly blessed in being where you can associate with those who "speak the same language."

I wish brother Isaac would bring you all down to spend the day with me. He has plenty of time now.

My love to all the dear ones, and a large share for yourself.

Your little sister, in christian love,

FLORA TITUS.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., Aug. 30, 1935.

DEAR EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS:—Will you please correct the name of Samantha L. Deal, which reads Seal, instead of Deal, as it should, and she was married to Timothy N. Deal, instead of Timothy N. Seal. Also, where it reads Daisy, Olson and Yeisley, it should read Daisy Olson Yeisley; and the name of the town Deming reads Dunning wherever it occurs. I know it was not intentional on your part, but as the children and brothers trusted me to write this correctly I am responsible for it.

I am not as well as when I sent the obituary, but am up most of the time and enjoy the SIGNS, which comes regularly to me. I hope you will not be offended with me for writing to you about the mistakes in the obituary.

DAVIS BURCH.

[THE mistakes referred to in the foregoing letter occur in the obituary notice of Samantha L. Deal, on page 190 of our August issue. Of course we are never offended with any one for calling our attention to mistakes in the SIGNS, especially when done in as kind a spirit as the foregoing, but very often the publisher should not be blamed for mistakes, especially in proper names, for it may be the writer has been careless in his writing and the publisher cannot decipher it, and has to guess as to what is meant, and very often his guess is wrong, so we most earnestly request our correspondents when sending us anything for publication to please be sure and write distinctly, especially proper names. A good plan is to print them.—PUBLISHER.]

SAN BENITO, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please mention in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that I have changed my address from Edcouch, Texas, to San Benito, Texas, and wish all my friends to address me at the latter place. I am now so far from my churches that I feel very lonesome, and all who feel to write me of the dealings of the Lord with them will do a kind favor for one very lonely and without the company of Israel. I am so imperfect I feel my writings might not be comforting to others.

As ever, your brother in bonds,

J. B. BOWDEN.

BURDEN, Kansas, Sept. 5, 1935.

DEAR EDITORS:—I see it is time to renew for the dear old SIGNS again. I cannot make up my mind to do without it, for it is full of the precious gospel of the Son of God. Some of the good writers are passing on. One of my favorite writers has gone to his reward, Elder I. R. Greathouse, but God is able to raise another to fill his place, as he did when Elder Chick was called home. I was very anxious about the SIGNS, as Elder Ker wrote the editorials alone, but when Elder Lefferts' article came out one could see where the mantle had fallen. There are many good writers and some are getting feeble, but oh He is abundantly able to raise up more, and He will as long as He has use for the SIGNS. May grace, mercy and peace attend all who are contending for the truth as it is in Jesus.

Unworthily a sister, I hope,

(MRS.) V. A. EDWARDS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1935.

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PARABLE OF THE TALENTS.

It being our turn to furnish an editorial for the Signs of the Times, we have decided to republish two editorials by Elder Gilbert Beebe, the founder of the paper, written now nearly one hundred years ago. Our own views are so thoroughly expressed and we have been so wonderfully refreshed in perusing these articles, that we hope others will be equally comforted and edified.

R. L. D.

Pleasant, Hill, Ga., Nov. 7, 1839

Brother Beebe:—In consequence of attending our associations, etc., this fall, I have not read all of the numbers of the Signs of the Times, and I do not know whether you have yet given your views upon the talents, according to my request. I feel anxious to see them in the Signs of the Times, and hope the Lord will direct your mind, for the satisfaction of his Zion. The Upate Association met on Saturday last, and there were twenty-five churches represented, and several votes taken; but through the transaction of all the business there was not a no, and yes; but union of heart seemed to prevail, brotherly love to fill each heart, and the preaching was all of one kind, viz: Salvation by grace; and I think I can say, the Lord was in the place.

Yours, as ever,

JOHN W. TURNER.

REPLY.

Alexandria, D. C., Dec. 2, 1839.

By the above extract of a letter form brother Turner, our readers will perceive that he has repeated his request that we publish our views on the parable of the talents, Matthew xxv. 14-30. We have thus far delayed a compliance with the request of our brother, not so much for want of views to express, as from the conviction that our views will be considered somewhat novel, and perhaps speculative, by many of our readers whom we love and respect; yet, being a second time called on for them, such as we have are at the service of our brethren, subject to such animadversions as they may feel themselves warranted by the Scriptures of truth, to make through our columns. It is the opinion of many of our readers that, taking into consideration the comparatively destitute condition of our churches of the stated preaching of the word, the devotion of a greater share of our papers to the expounding, illustrating and comparing of views on the Scriptures, might better subserve the cause of truth and righteousness.

In their opinion we fully concur, with the provision, that in all our discussions, a spirit of tenderness towards each other, where difference of opinion may be found, and a singleness of heart for declarative glory of God, and the general edification of the saints, shall govern in those who write, and in those who read.

But to the parable. There is, in our opinion, an evident connection between the twenty-fourth and this twenty-fifth chapter; and the several parables are employed by our Lord to enforce the solemn admonitions given to the disciples in the former chapter, concerning the judgments which were soon to be experienced by the Jews, when God should execute his indignation, in a temporal point of view, on Jerusalem. Hence we believe the whole discourse of our Lord in the two chapters was founded on the text "Tell us, when shall these things be? [to wit, the destruction of Jerusalem] and what shall be the sign of thy coming [to execute these things], and of the end of the world?" That is, the passing away of the old heaven and the old earth, etc. In these two chapters Christ informed his disciples that all these judgments would surely take place; that for the special benefit of his elect they should be preceded by such signs as should be a sufficient warning to his disciples to retire to the mountains; that the precise time of the execution of these things, although they should take place before some among them should see death, was not then a matter of revelation, but was only known to God. The solemn admonitions expressed in this connection, and enforced by these well adapted parables, with sufficient clearness, taught the disciples that there was danger of being involved in the temporal calamities which should at that day burst upon the Jews; and hence the necessity of their watching the accomplishment of those signs, which should signify to them that the time was at hand. There should be false christs, and false prophets, and heresies, wars, earthquakes, etc., but when they should see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel, standing in the holy place, they should then have but barely time to flee to the mountains, for then the coming of the Son of Man, in the revelation of power and great glory, revealed in the flaming fire, and taking vengeance on them that knew him not, should not be as when he came in incarnation to bear the sins of his people; and consequently was not then revealed in that power; but in this revelation, he would come without sin, to receive his kingdom, and destroy those in Israel who would not that he should reign over them. This coming should be with the velocity of lightning; and, therefore, let him that readeth understand. And after making these statements to his disciples our Lord repeated the admonition (xxiv. 42) "Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." That is, watch those signs which should be given to them. From this forty-second verse to the end of the subject the relation of lord and servant takes the place of teacher and disciple, show-

ing that in this visitation on Israel he was to be revealed as the Lord and King; his humiliation would then be past, and he revealed in his reigning power and glory. From verse forty-five to fifty-one inclusive, of chapter twenty-five, is found the key of the parable to the talents. "Who then [at the time of his coming] is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them their meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find him so doing. Verily I say unto you, that he shall make him ruler over all his goods." But we will revert to this again, presently.

Here the connection seems broken, by the division which our translators have made in the chapters, but every one must necessarily see that the same subject is continued in chapter twenty-five. The twenty-fourth chapter closes with a declaration of what the Lord will do with his servants at his coming, as above spoken of, which have, and those which have not obeyed him; the former should be made rulers of all his goods, and the disobedient should be companions with hypocrites, in the temporal judgments which were to be executed on the Jews. The next chapter commences, "Then," which certainly signifies, *at that very time*. But what shall then be developed? Then shall the kingdom of heaven, the nominal church of Christ, be likened unto ten virgins; agreeing with the circumstances connected with the first coming of Christ, for the parable is evidently based upon the event of, and circumstances attending his first appearing in the flesh and among the Jews. In that instance when it was announced by John the Baptist that Christ, as the long waited for Bridegroom, was come, there went out to meet him as such, Jerusalem and Judea, and all the regions round about Jordan; but alas! their lamps were gone out. Their having Abraham to their father could no longer serve them; they were sent away to buy oil, and fruits meet for repentance, and have not yet returned to their place among the virgins, but from late accounts they are still trading in oil; their prospect is as cheerless as is theirs who expect salvation by the deeds of the law, or from the modern anxious-bench system. Now we say, such had been the case of Israel in the days of John the Baptist, and at *that* day when Christ should be revealed in the destruction of Jerusalem, it should be in like manner with the kingdom of heaven; at that time the division of his nominal disciples should as completely answer to the figurative import of the parable, as the parable answered to the former events. As national Israel traveled down through all the generations appointed them, to meet the advent of Christ, and were looking for his coming, were expecting to meet him, and be recognized as his bride, and as very many of them were not able to stand when he appeared (Mal. iii. 2), so the kingdom of Christ, after his ascension to glory, should look for his return. He had frequently taught them that he would in their day return to

them again, that he was only going into a far country to receive a kingdom, and would shortly come to preside over them; also, that at his return all the handwriting of ordinances should be blotted out, Jerusalem that then was, and which was in bondage with her children, should be destroyed, and the elect among the Gentiles be gathered in. At that time his professed disciples should experience such a division and final separation, as should correspond with the type, as set forth in the parable of the virgins.

The two sexes, male and female, implied in these solemn warnings, as men in the field, women grinding at the mill, men servants and maid servants, servants and virgins, appear to have been designed to enforce these words, "What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch." In justification of this application of the parable of the virgins, our Lord introduced the parable of the talents. "For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods." To our mind, nothing can be more clear than that this parable is given as a further illustration of the parable and warnings before expressed in the connection of the subject. *Then* shall the kingdom of heaven be likened; but why shall it be thus compared? *For* the kingdom, etc., is as a man traveling into a far country. Having as briefly as the nature of the case would admit, shown to what particular period this cluster of parables related, we will endeavor to show the analogy this parable bears to the subject to which we believe it was applied by our Master.

By the kingdom of heaven, we understand the church of our Redeemer, in her connection with him, as her Head and King. Our brother will observe that this parable does not commence like the preceding one. *Then shall;* but the present tense is used; and therefore embraces all that period of time from the date of these instructions until the time when this kingdom should be likened to ten virgins, or to what is implied in that of the sheep and the goats. Christ was himself the man traveling into a far country; he was at that very moment making his arrangements to go to the Father, by calling unto him his own servants, these disciples, which he was addressing, some of whom were not to see death until *all* these things were fulfilled. In John xiv. his intention to perform this journey was announced, and the nature and object of it was explained to his disconsolate saints, and the promise of his return, and the final establishment of his kingdom, together with the promise of the Holy Ghost, to preside over them during so much of his absence as extended from the day of pentecost, until his return. Also in John xvi. and xvii. this subject is more fully expounded. His Father had appointed unto him a kingdom, he therefore goes into this *far* country, to receive a kingdom, to prepare a place, etc. And if I go away, he says, I will come again. It is needful for you that I go away. The necessity of his going away is fully set forth in these remarkable words:

"Whom the heavens must receive." And again, that by his own blood he should enter, not into the holy place made with hands, as did the sons of Aaron, but into heaven itself; ceasing from his own works, or legal service under the law; observing its precepts and bearing its penalty, thereby expiating the guilt of his people, as God did the rest from the works of creation, on the seventh day, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

"Who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods." Here we are to inquire, Who were his own servants, and what were the goods delivered unto them? We cannot believe with the Arminians, that these servants included all mankind, for some portion of the human family were at that time suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, and therefore were not at that time called together; nor can we believe with others, that the Jews, as such, were intended, for they were not recognized in any sense as the servants of Christ; nor were the Jewish rituals, formerly delivered to them, any part of the goods of Christ, as the Mediator or the King. But, by his own servants, we understand those very disciples unto whom he was at that time administering these instructions. The Lord, the servants, the journey, the goods, or talents, with the use made of the latter, were all necessary to describe the then present state of the kingdom of heaven.

As we promised to revert to the close of the twenty-fourth chapter, as a key to the parable; a little attention will convince the reader that the service of those persons called "his own servants" was to rule over his household, by giving them meat in due season; and consequently none were in this sense his own servants but such as stood in this connection with his household. The goods which were delivered unto them, we think, had reference to the gifts bestowed for the edification, succor and support of those who are of the household of faith. When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Eph. iv. 8, 11-14.) "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ," etc. Those who are distinguished as Christ's own servants are frequently brought to view, as in the parable of the talents before us, as being stewards of the Lord's goods. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man, evil things, etc., for of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. (Luke vi. 45.) And again, we are taught that the preparation of the heart and the answer of the tongue are of the Lord—they are his goods.

The next expression of the parable claiming our attention is the manner of distributing these gifts. The distribution, we are informed, was made with reference to the several abilities of the

servants left in charge with their Lord's goods. And so it has ever been in the churches; the Lord has not given equal abilities, and therefore has not committed the same amount of his goods to all his servants. There are a diversity of gifts now, and there was then, but all by the same Spirit, and those who have but inferior gifts are as inexcusable for neglecting to improve them as are those who have the five talents. But in the immediate sense of this parable, we understand our Lord had left in charge with his servants those admonitions in regard to the great and terrible day which was then at hand; these signs, admonitions, parables, etc., were his goods, delivered to them according to their several capacity. Some of these servants were apostles, and consequently had a capacity for a greater degree of usefulness than those who could only make advantageous use of two talents; and some of them were ordinary ministers of the word, and hence were in advance of those, for general usefulness, which were not called to stand in that responsible relation to the household; others, again, were disciples of Christ, who, though they were not called publicly to preach, yet having these admonitions, were in possession of at least one talent of their Lord's goods, and such were solemnly obligated to exhort one another, and so much the more as they should see the day approaching.

Now, then, with this distribution of gifts, for stirring up the minds of the saints in regard to the tokens which should indicate the near approach of the promised return of their Lord, and the day of reckoning, which he had informed them of, he straightway took his journey. God went up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet, leaving the impressive charge, "Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh." Who then is that wise servant whom his Lord hath made ruler, or, to whom he hath committed talents, viz: to give meat, or instruction to his household seasonably, in relation to his return, and of those fearful judgments then to be realized? Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But, and if that servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken, the Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Can there be any difficulty in perceiving that the above quotation is in substance the very subject, more fully illustrated in the parable of the talents?

These views are sustained by the faithful record made in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the epistles, particularly in those written by James, Peter, John and Jude, to those Jewish disciples, in stirring up their minds to a remembrance of these things, and in giving us a historical account of these servants or disciples, how they con-

ducted themselves during that space of time from the ascension of Christ until the epistles were written.

The actual event of Christ's coming, in the destruction of Jerusalem, is not, of course, given in the New Testament, for the canon of Scripture was completed before this event occurred; but the certainty that he did come, and that some of his disciples who heard his admonitions, as stated in Matthew xxiv., did live to witness that event, is founded on the infallible truth of Christ himself. The testimony that Christ's words, in regard to his visitation, were literally fulfilled, is first found in detail in the history written by Josephus, and corroborated by the fact that not one stone can be found on the top of another, of all that magnificent temple, or of the buildings therewith connected.

(SECOND INSTALLMENT.)

ALEXANDRIA, D. C., Dec. 16, 1838.

THAT, at the time of his coming, Christ found some of his professed servants to whom talents, according to the view we have taken of them, were committed, answering the description of the *evil servants,* foolish virgins, and the servant with the one talent, we have not the smallest doubt. The consequence to them of their being thus found may with certainty be calculated from the declarations of Christ. They were cut asunder, that is, from those who were mindful of his admonitions, and had their portion literally with the hypocrites, and those unbelieving Jews in the temporal calamities which befell them at that time. We are inclined to the opinion that some of the disciples or servants answering to the character of the servant with one talent, like very many disciples at this day, so construed the Lord's words as to lead them to say in their hearts, "My Lord delayeth his coming," by supposing that all that he had said on that subject had reference to the end of this material world, and the general resurrection of the dead, and under the infatuation of this delusion began to beat the men servants and maid servants, instead of giving them meat in due season, and to eat and drink with the drunken (those who were intoxicated with the strong delusions which prevailed among the carnal Jews). But how were they surprised when, in an hour unthought of, they found themselves cut asunder from the faithful saints, and without the possibility of escaping the dreadful sufferings of the Jews. But how different the case of the *faithful and wise* servant (xxiv. 45), those *wise virgins* (xxv. 4), and those *good* and *faithful* servants in our parable! In the first example it is said, "He shall make him ruler over all his goods;" (We understand the terms "all his goods," and "many things" to have reference to the gospel with all its fullness of doctrine, ordinances and consolations with those who endured unto the end of those days of tribulation, and entered with their Lord into his joys; in the New Jerusalem, which then came down, adorned as a bride for her husband, enjoyed. That is, after the tribulation of those days, when Jewish rites were fully

abolished, and the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles was thrown down, and the Gentile saints brought in, these faithful servants had an enlarged sphere of action, were rulers of all the goods, were to teach with all, or with full authority to both Jew and Greek, the unsearchable riches of the gospel of Christ.) in the second, they were admitted into the marriage, and the door was shut; and in the parable before us, those good and faithful servants were found faithful in a few things, and were made ruler over many things, and entered into the joy of their Lord. The very talent of the slothful servant who perished, is taken from and given to him that had the ten. By which we understand that although such of the disciples as have made an unprofitable use of these solemn admonitions (their Lord's money) now had to share the temporal judgment of hypocrites, and thus be filled with their own ways, yet those very admonitions which they had neglected are added to the instruction of those who profit by the record of the Lord's dealings with his own unfaithful servants; and for the profit of all the saints, in all subsequent ages, these things are left on record. We will, therefore, endeavor to draw from the whole subject such wholesome instruction and admonition as it is calculated to furnish.

IMPROVEMENT. As the talent was taken from the slothful servant and given to the other, we infer that the manner of God's dealings with those who in that instance, having been often reproved, hardened their necks and were destroyed with those in whose company and revelings they had connected themselves, the giving this talent to the others shows that the very example of their chastisements adds one talent to him who had ten.

As in the case above treated on, in regard to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the admonitions, chastisements, etc., of those who were found disobedient to the Savior's special charge, the words of Christ stood more prominently than did the pillars of that heaven and earth mentioned in verse thirty-five, chapter twenty-four, so we should learn that all the admonitions given to the people of God in regard to the development to the man of sin, the son of perdition, are also faithful and true, and none of the righteous judgments of God provided in his word for the chastisement of his disobedient children shall in any wise fail. The same disobedient and uneasy disposition which marked the character of the evil and unfaithful servants in the foregoing subject is also to be found among those of the present day, and the same propensity to treat with indifference the most solemn admonitions of our blessed Lord. Now the Spirit speaketh *expressly* that in the last days shall come perilous times; many shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, etc., and *many* shall follow their pernicious ways. Again, even of your ownselves shall many rise up drawing away disciples after them. Indeed, nearly all the things which were aforetime predicted concerning the destruction of

Jerusalem, and saying to God's children, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation," etc., are now said of the approaching destruction of Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots, and the Abominations of the Earth; and very similiar admonitions are given to the Lord's people. "Come out of her, my people." (But why? Certainly not to secure the eternal salvation of their souls, for this was secure in Christ from everlasting.) "That ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." As the veracity of him that speaketh from heaven was given in regard to the certain destruction of Jerusalem, so is the truth of Jehovah now pledged that Babylon shall sink like a millstone, and be found no more at all; and as many signs were given to the saints by which they could as easily understand the near approach of that divine visitation, so are equally prominent signs given to teach us of the near approach of the downfall of the antichrist beast. How stands the case now? Who are improving the talents or warnings Christ has given us? and who are now answering to the description given of evil servants, of foolish virgins and of wicked and slothful servants? There are at this day some who are watching the signs of the times, and marking with the utmost attention the progress of the man of sin; such are improving the talents given them, by giving seasonable warning to the household of Christ, and such of them as shall endure the scorn, ridicule and reproach of gainsayers unto the end of those things shall be saved from the calamities or plagues which are written against Babylon. But, alas, how many are they who among the nominal people of God are saying, Since the fathers have fallen asleep all things remain as they were, and where is the promise of his coming? or, My Lord delayeth his coming; we must usher in the latter day glory ourselves, and we must hasten the coming of the Lord by our own efforts or he will never come; for he delayeth his coming; henceforth they begin to eat and to drink with the drunken. That very class of Baptists to whom these expressions apply are now mingled with the infatuated, drunken Babylonians, or antichristian denominations around about them, uniting in all their modern systems of what they call effort, etc., and they are at this very moment smiting the menservants (ministers and other servants who are improving their Lord's money by warning the saints), and the maidservants, gospel churches which adhere to the Old School Baptist principles in faith and practice. They also, like the foolish virgins, have their lamps, but nothing in them which can enlighten the people of God, or give seasonable warning to the saints; no oil: they are only Baptists now by name; having submitted to the external ordinance of baptism, but the sound doctrine once held in these professions is now gone out; nothing of it now remains. They think and talk of purchasing some light of those Theological institutions which profess to keep it for sale; but they will be too late, for they

are, and ever will be, ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Again, they answer the description given of the slothful servant. They say in substance, Lord, we know thee, thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed, and we were afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth; or in other words, We knew thee, that thou didst require of thy servants to go out and preach, and warn the people, and that thou didst not allow them to take their purse or script, nor even to make previous arrangements with a Missionary Board, to pay them for their labor; that thou didst require of them to blow the trumpet, and sound the alarm, and give the trumpet a certain sound; and didst not make provision for them to get a classical education, by providing colleges and schools where they might qualify themselves for usefulness; and hence to require usefulness of them and not allow them the means to make themselves useful, is to reap where thou hast not sown. And furthermore, for us to go and preach and beg money to live upon, and for thee to claim the glory of the salvation of all that are saved by our efforts, is to gather where thou hast not strewed. We have, on the whole, thought it best to bury thy talent (doctrine, admonitions and instructions) in the earth (that is, cover it up and conceal it under our own earthly, humanly invented schemes, etc.) and go upon our own footing. We have fallen on plans which in our judgment will make us a better living, entitle us to greater respect and less persecution, and will also, we think, secure the salvation of many more precious souls than such an hard man as thou art had made provision for saving. We have therefore set thee and thy Old School followers down as a set of antibenevolent people, and modestly claim for ourselves the right to monopolize all the benevolence in the world. Here is thy talent, the doctrine which we have suppressed, because we found it unprofitable to preach it, *take that is thine.* But how will the insolence of these characters be surprised when they shall find the Lord has kept a different reckoning from their own, and that out of their own mouths they shall be judged. According to their own showing, they should have put this talent to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. If they had no disposition to profit by the solemn warning of Christ themselves, as honest men they should have confessed the truth, acknowledged that such warnings were given, that others might have profitted by it. Or perhaps this part of the subject may more appropriately describe the men who have stood as thousands do now stand in the relations of pastor to the flock. If they were not satisfied to preach the doctrine of Christ, and trust in him to sustain it and them, they should have withdrawn from the place they occupied and made room for others who, like Paul, would not shun to declare the whole counsel of God. The punishment of such wretches is that they shall

be stripped of the livery of the ministers of Christ, and as they have been partakers of the sins of Babylon, so they shall receive of her plagues. Such, by the declaration of Christ, the righteous Judge, shall be cast into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, September 1st, 1935, at the home of the bride, Leesburg, Va., David Farnie, of East Orange, N. J., and Mabel Thomas Shryock.

By the same, June 8th, 1935, at Leesburg, Va., George Sidney Budd and Lucille Downs, both of Middleburg, Va.

By the same, July 19th, 1935, at Leesburg, Va., Robert H. Jewell and Hallie Stevens, both of Leesburg, Va.

By the same, August 21st, 1935, at Leesburg, Va., Charles Henry Renner, Jr., and Genevieve Sacks, both of Washington, D. C.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

JOHN F. OLIVER, our brother in Christ, departed this earthly life at his home, Herndon, Fairfax County, Virginia, August 24th, 1935. He had been in feeble health for some time due to heart trouble and some other complications. He was born December 28th, 1848, near Kenmore, Fairfax County, Virginia. His parents were James and Nancy Oliver. He was the last surviving member of a large family. His first wife was Mary Thompson, with whom he lived eighteen years, and who died in 1892. To them were born five children, none of whom are now living. The only direct descendants which brother Oliver has are two grandchildren living in Philadelphia, Miss Mildred Kephart and her brother, A. Jerome Kephart. His present wife, who survives him, was Miss Margaret Silcott, to whom brother Oliver was married in 1893. At an early age, his parents emigrated to Missouri when it was a territory, taking young Oliver with them. His mother died in Missouri, and his father and three brothers were in the Northern Army during the Civil War. Some time after the war, he came back into Virginia to his grandfather's. Brother Oliver was baptized by the late Elder E. V. White into the membership of the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church May 11th, 1884. He has been a Trustee of this church for many years, and was made Deacon of the church July 12th, 1924. In every capacity brother Oliver served faithfully and well. Love and humility characterized his walk and conversation. He was a Bible reader and was gifted with a spiritual mind, able to readily quote the Scriptures from memory because the Holy Spirit had wrought in him an experimental knowledge of the truth, causing him to love with all his soul the glorious principles of doctrine taught in Holy Writ. He was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ and was not afraid to contend earnestly for the faith whenever occasion presented itself to do so. The people of the community where he lived respected him for his honesty and sincere stand for what he believed, whether they agreed with him or not. This fact was amply proved by the unusual kindness manifested by his neighbors toward him and sister Oliver during the many weeks of his last feebleness. Sister Oliver, in spite of her advanced years, was able to devotedly wait upon him to the last, for which ability she feels to be very grateful to the Lord. For thirty-one years I have known him personally, and for twenty-five years of that time have tried to serve him as pastor. I cannot command language to express what his love and fellowship in the truth have meant to me. I considered him sound in the doctrine, in every principle of it, and a discerner of true gospel preaching. His judgment on church order and in doctrine have been a great help to me. I shall miss his wise counsel, his encouraging attitude, his loving help and his constant faithfulness to the church and to me personally. Such brehren among us are scarce and becoming scarcer. Only the Lord can supply our need.

The funeral services were held in Herndon, August 27th, burial in the cemetery there.

Brother Oliver believed in the resurrection of the body at the future coming of the Lord from heaven. He often talked about this to me, and wondered how any true Old School Baptist could avoid believing this principle of divine truth. A few days before he died he repeated from memory the ninth chapter of Romans. So I read a part of this chapter at the funeral and commented upon it. While his mind was failing him regarding temporal things, never once did he seem at a loss to quote any passage of Scripture he wanted to. May the Holy Spirit abide within the heart and soul of dear sister Oliver and grant her sustaining grace at this time, and give her feelingly to realize the peace that passes all finite comprehension. And may the Lord continue to uphold in the faith the church at Frying Pan, that we may not deviate from the old paths, and be blessed to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

H. H. L.

ON January 24th, 1934, sister **ELIZA MANN** died suddenly at the Primitive Baptist Home, in Maryland, where she had a few months before become a resident. It is fitting and proper that the passing away of this esteemed siser receive proper menion in the SIGNS, which she loved so well, and whose columns had for many years afforded her much spiritual consolation when she was providentially hindered from meeting for worship with the brethren of Old School Baptist faith. The subject of this article was born July 18th, 1858, at Halcott Center, Greene County, New York, and was the daughter of George and Melvina Streeter Griffin. When she was about fourteen years of age she moved with her parents to Union Grove, N. Y., where many years of her life were spent, and where in 1877 she married Stephen Mann. Here was a happy married life, and in 1927, they celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. Mr. Mann died November 11th, 1933. They had four children, three of whom survive. One son, Charles Mann, was killed about twenty-five years ago, while working on a railroad. The three surviving children are George Mann and Mrs. Dewitt Milks, of Binghamton, and Mrs. Nellie Young, of Sidney. Two brothers survive: John W. and James A., of Roxbury, N. Y., the only survivors of a family of ten children. The funeral services were held at Sidney, N. Y., January 29th, where the interment was made. Sister Mann when quite young united with the Old School Baptist Church at Union Grove and was always one of its faithful and deadly loved members. Her winning personality, her generosity, her willingness to help in any neighborly or sisterly way, were but a few of the reflections of that strong character that she possessed that won her many lasting friends among all with whom she associated. The writer officiated at the funeral services.

ALSO,

THE death of sister **ORPHA R. WHITCOMB,** at the home of her son Theodore, in Newburgh, in August of the present year, is a keen loss to the Middleburg Old School Baptist Church, of which she had been a member for nearly sixty years. She was born in Broome, Schoharie County, New York, August 9th, 1852, and spent much of her early life in that vicinity. She was married when about twenty-six years of age to Chester E. Whitcomb, who died several years ago. For some time previous to her death she had been in poor health, but the infirmities of age or the inroads of physical troubles did not in any way affect her interest in her church, in the welfare of the brethren or in her love of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. All her long and useful life she attended the meetings of the church of her faith and order whenever it was physically possible for her to do so, and in her walk in life she manifested the fruits of the Spirit, the works that proceed from that faith, which is accounted unto the children of God for righteousness, and which cannot in any sense produce that faith. In all those worthy qualities that make for a neighbor, citizen friend and follower of Christ in its best sense she possessed.

Her funeral services were conducted by the writer at Potter Hollow, N. Y., where the interment was made. ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

FANNIE JOE LLOYD NORRIS, daughter of Benjamin Lloyd and Naomi Cox Lloyd, departed this life July 18th, 1935, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. G. W. Smith, at Columbus, Ga. She was born in the year 1854, near Wetumpka, Ala., but was reared at the old Lloyd homestead, near Greenville, Ala. However, for the last thirty years or more she made her home in and near Columbus, Ga. She was at the time of her passing 80 years, 11 months and 4 days of age. She was married to Y. C. Norris in 1871, who preceded her to the grave twenty-one years. To their union were born eleven children. One died in infancy, and one son, Benjamin Lloyd Norris, passed from earth February, 1934. The childre surviving her are Mrs. H. P. Rodgers, Mrs. G. W. Smith, Mrs. J. A. Mayberry and Mrs. C. M. Thetford, of Columbus, Ga., Mrs. N. C. Alston, of Atlanta, Ga., Mrs. T. H. Hoey, of Fort Pierce, Fla., Mrs. Clayton Dean, of Manchester, Ga., and two sons, Y. C. Norris, of Amity, Ark., and Zacheous Norris, of Glenwood, Ark. Mama united with the Old School Baptist Church at Monroe, Ga., about thirteen years ago. I have forgotten the exact date. She was baptized by Elder J. M. Adams, of Monroe Church, who is now deceased also. As long as she was physically able she visited among the Baptists everywhere and enjoyed it very much. For many years there was nothing else that gave her as much joy and pleasure as her annual visits with the associations and other meetings with the Baptists. She had many friends and correspondents among the Primitive Baptists, which was a pleasure to her and a great part of her life. She had been very feeble for several years, but she lived to a ripe old age, as does the full bloom flower of the field. Her children, friends and relatives will surely miss her from our lives as we journey on, yet we are greatly comforted as we know our loss is her eternal gain. Our faith makes us know that she has passed from this world of sorrow, pain and trials into the glory and rest of her Lord. She has gone from us, but not forgotten. We must not weep as those who have no hope, for to her death is swallowed up in victory. We feel sure she has realized the wonderful and glorious testimony of the apostle: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" She has passed from this unfriendly world, leaving all sorrow, sin and corruption behind her, and is now in the paradise of God her Savior.

The funeral services were held at the grave, and were spoken and conducted by Elder H. O. Nash, of Atlanta Ga. after which her earthly remains were laid to rest in the family plot at Chalybeate, Georgia.

Her daughter, (MRS.) C. M. THETFORD.

PHILIP JONES died suddenly, of a heart attack, at his home, in Decatur, Texas, August 8th, 1935, at the age of 58 years, 2 months and 3 days. Surviving are his wife, one son, Austin Jones, Ardmore, Okla.; two daughters, Mrs. Ruby Kennedy, Oklahoma City, Okla.; Mrs. Mabel Ceorley, Decatur, Texas. He was a faithful believer in the Old Primitive Baptist doctrine, the son of M. B. F. Jones, who was also a loyal member of the Old School Baptist Church, who was called home July 7th, 1920. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been in our home ever since I can remember. My grandfather took it, and after his death it was sent to my father, so he wrote and asked me (his daughter Ruby) to have it discontinued when he passed on. He received much comfort in reading the SIGNS, for there were no Primitive Baptists near where he lived.

Written by his daughter,

(MRS.) RUBY KENNEDY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Isaac L. Kipp, N. J., $1; "A friend," N. Y., $1; "H," Md., $2; Mrs. Kate Lunsford, Ky., $1; A. F. Jones, Ga., $1; "A friend," Pa., $1; Joseph A. Johnson, Tenn., $1; Mrs. Mary A. Drew, N. Y., $2.

MEETINGS.

I was at Mt. Lebanon Church, in Kansas City yesterday, and they, having had sickness, decided to let Oak Grove Church, Oak Grove, Mo., thirty miles east of Kansas City, on Highway No. 40, hold the Association this year, and they would help financially all they could. If this reaches you in time will you please publish it, and withdraw the notice that was in the August and September SIGNS? They were oath to do this, but felt it best at this time. The time is October 4th, 5th and 6th, 1935, as published.

(MRS.) J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk.

An all-day meeting is appointed to be held with the New Vernon Church, New Vernon, N. Y., on Saturday, October 12th, 1935. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 16th, 17th and 18th, 1935. We invite to meet with us ministers and brethren of our faith and order, and all lovers of the truth as it is in our Lord Jesus Christ. Those coming by train will be met Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning at Herndon, which point is reached by electric trains from Rosslyn at the Virginia end of Key Bridge. Take cars marked "Rosslyn" on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D. C. Those coming by auto will come out from Washington over Lee Highway to Route 50, thence over Route 50 to Woodruff's Corner, thence right three miles to meetinghouse.

G. C. SPINDLE, Church Clerk,
914 Ninth St., N. E., Washington, D. C.

The Yearly Meeting of the Welsh Tract Church is appointed to be held at the old meetinghouse, near Newark, Delaware (one day), on the third Sunday in October (20th), 1935, commencing at 10 a. m. Ministering brethren and all of our faith and order are cordially invited to attend, especially those coming to and from the Virginia Corresponding Meeting to be held October 16th, 17th and 18th, and who desire to continue south to the Salisbury Association, to be held with Salisbury Church, Salisbury, Md., October 23rd, 24th and 25th, 1935.

JOHN B. MILLER, Church Clerk.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, at Salisbury, Maryland, October 23rd, 24th and 25th, 1935. All brethren, lovers of the truth, friends and ministers of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us.

(MRS.) I. T. LAWS, Assistant Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California; every third Sunday at 526 West Nevada Street, Ontario, California; also on forth Sundays as the Lord permits, at 3516 Franklin Avenue, Riverside, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets on the first Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, Shelbyville, Ky.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

EAST ORANGE, N. J., Sept. 4, 1935.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—DEAR BROTHER:—I cannot express in words my joy in having you call to see me and how happy our talk made me feel. It was very comforting to me, who seem to be in a wilderness, for up to now I have failed to find a neighbor who understands my language, although all are great "church-goers." Neither can I relish their language, so I guess we can quit even.

I wish that I were able to comply with your request to write of my spiritual travels, but I do not feel equal to that task, for I feel to be too much of a naturalist, so that it would overshadow anything I might say, but as the Comforter leads me I will declare. One thing that I rejoice in is that my dear mother, three sisters, four brothers and five sisters-in-law were all Old School Baptists ahead of me, and being the youngest of fourteen children, I consider a dear mother's hope fulfilled, as well as being in very select company, I being the last and the least of them all. I cannot just mention the time of my becoming interested in church as a member, but I always was a lover of the truth, for telling a lie was a horrible thing to do, I thought, but as I look back now I cannot truthfully say that my record is clean. Very early in life I learned to love the Old School Baptists, having listened to many of the old Elders, including Beebe, Jenkins, Purrington, Durand, Vail, Eubanks, and a host of the later ones, I having attended the New York, Middletown, Warwick, Justice and South River churches. At the age of twenty-one I was impressed, and now I claim imposed upon, to join one of those modern churches in Newark, N. J., but I guess it did not take, for I was no sooner in than I was out again, for I found that to be no home for me. They were "gooder" than I found I could ever be. Even then my old Adamic nature troubled me much, and ever since I have been striving and wondering how I could be good and ap-

parently all the while getting worse. I have given up in despair many times, but never could get relief from the desire to be better, and in any escapade I might be I was brought up swiftly, I know not how, and a severe remorse of conscience was my lot, followed by a shame so severe that I hated to appear in public. As I told brother Daniel, I believed brick walls were made for two purposes: one was to hold up a structure, and the other for poor sinners to butt their heads against, and my arrogance in the past has kept my head apparently a tit-a-tat on that wall, which has prevented this old head of mine from enjoying a very soft and downy pillow. Thus it continued for years, but I always felt relieved and comforted after attending an Old School Baptist meeting, whereas if I attended services in these modern churches I would go away mad and disgusted. After becoming incapacitated, or house confined, life took on a different aspect for me. I began to realize how much the grace of God meant to me, but why I could not say, for I felt I merited nothing and deserved less. Why should God bother with me? But my escape from those thoughts was closed and I still remained troubled within, although material blessings never ceased. I talked a great deal to brother Isaac and Daniel, who seemed to sympathize and tolerate me, but the more I talked the greater hypocrite I seemed to be getting, until one day while writing to brother Isaac, sister Blanche and brother Daniel I bared the secret of my heart, that I wanted to follow my Savior in baptism, so on May 26th the church received me, and you baptized me. After I mailed that letter doubts appeared in my mind, for I feared my vanity overcame me, but I prayed to my God not to let such a thing take place if it was not according to his will. Well, it did take place, and now I feel it was by the grace and will of a loving God. I am powerless to thank him enough, or even to be grateful enough. My experience never seemed to be dynamic or romantic, as some that I have read of, but seemed to me to wear on me gradually, nevertheless I hope it is true and sincere, for I wish to offend no one, least of all the brethren. My hope is that God so restrains me that my walk will bring no reproach on any one, or the church that was kind enough to receive my plea. I have experienced a bond of friendship since that I could not believe existed before. It is my hope to merit a little of it, but without the grace of God I am lost.

I do not think, dear Elder, you will consider this much of an experience, but I am at least expressing my feelings, in the hope that I have glorified my Savior and Creator, and not myself. If he has granted unto me salvation there is hope for others, for I feel to be the greatest of sinners.

This letter when it reaches you, Elder, is your property, handle it as you choose, but do not let it crowd out of your mind material much better.

Yours in brotherly love,

IRA T. DOLSON.

[THIS brother is literally lame on

both feet, having had to use crutches for several years. To our knowledge during the past fifteen years he has been attending Old School Baptist meetings when he had opportunity, and recently he was impressed to ask for a home with the Warwick Church. Having learned at the April meeting of some letters which had passed between him and two of his brothers we made it a point to visit him in East Orange, N. J., and upon entering his room and being recognized by him, he almost sprang to his feet and grabbed hold of us with both hands, so delighted was he to see us. In relating the dealings of the Lord with him he stated that he was present at our ordination and realized then and there that there was a relationship existing between Elder John McConnell and ourself that was not of an earthly nature. After that he was led to think more and more upon spiritual things and to search as for hidden treasure for the way of life as it is in Christ Jesus. The Lord granted him the desire of his heart and showed him the true church, and then he was made to feel that he was a hyprocrite in professing to love the Lord Jesus and not following him in baptism. Having had a feast of fat things ourself, we stated that if he could find a way of getting to the meeting in Warwick, N. Y., on the fourth Sunday in May he would have an opportunity of telling the brethren what the Lord had done for him and, if satisfactory, he could be received and baptized that day, in view of the difficulty of his getting to meeting. His brother Isaac went for him on Saturday before the meeting, at which he was gladly received, and the ordinance of baptism was administered. It was a time of rejoicing with those present.—R. L. D.]

CLOVIS, New Mexico, Feb. 12, 1934.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER:—Brother through a precious hope of life eternal, through the love, mercy and grace of Christ Jesus. If you will allow a vile sin-polluted being like me to address you in this manner. I have had a mind for some time to attempt to write some for your consideration, for the dear old SIGNS and household of faith, if the good Lord will direct my thoughts and give me a field of thought to draw on.

Some time ago, after visiting some Baptists who live in the irrigation district of the Peace Valley, and while humming over the old song, "Come, thou Fount of every blessing," my mind seemed to grasp some thoughts in an impressive way that led my mind out to meditate upon God as an eternal fountain, and the lay of this particular section of the country seemed to me somewhat as an example by which I might be able to express some thoughts as to the way God's children receive blessing from this eternal Fountain (God).

I will first give a description of the surroundings of that section, and then attempt to give some of the thoughts which I have dwelt upon for some time. Looking west from the town of Roswell, New Mexico, one can view the Captain Mountains far in the back-

ground, something like sixty miles away. Those mountains are snow-capped the greater portion, if not all the year round, and this melting snow becomes water and winds its way down the mountain slopes, through the canyons and into the the Peacas River, and follows its natural water course on through a high land semiarid section of country, which is little more than a desert, and suited only in its state of nature for grazing land. In the heart of this section and along the water course of this river is found an irrigation district which is bountifully supplied with water from flowing artesian wells, and not drawn from the river channel, as one might suppose. While in conversation with a gentleman there and he was telling me about being one day at a certain place on this river and finding no water at all in the bottom of the river bed, only dry sand was there. The next day he came to the same place in the river and the water had risen above the sand and was flowing in a stream there. First, we understand that no stream can rise higher than its fountainhead, so when we draw a mental picture of the fountain which is formed there in those mountains by the melting of the snow on those mountain-tops and canyons, which is probably hundreds of feet higher than the section of country where the artesian wells are found, it gives the thought of the pressure from this fountain which causes the water to flow upward from those artesian wells with such great force. It is, to my mind, an example of this God, this eternal Fountain, who inhabited eternity before this time world was ever spoken into existence. This God of power, this God of knowledge, or wisdom, who was wise enough and who possessed power enough to declare the end from the beginning, the things of ancient times, and the things on down through all ages of the future which are not yet done, this God from whom all good and perfect gifts come; this God whose thoughts are as much higher than man's thoughts as the heavens are above the earth, and whose ways are as much higher than man's ways as the heavens are above the earth, in my mind (as man views things in weakness) is as the fountain of water which comes from those mountains that supplies those artesian wells to irrigate this garden spot of the plains. This dry, sandy place in the river bed at times, and at other times where an abundance of water flows, does not, to my mind, indicate in those dry days and times a weakness or a running dry of this fountain, but to me it carries a thought of the cold, indifferent stages of life which come in the experience of God's dear ones. When God with his all-seeing eye has seen fit to withdraw his presence from us for a little season. These periods of time when God sees fit to withdraw his sweet communing Spirit from us, and all seems sunken beneath the sand of time, comes to us often after we feel we have felt the almighty hand of God dealing with us, after we feel that we have heard the call from God as it comes to us, as it did to Saul of Tarsus on his way to Damascus, which spake,

Saul, Saul, why persecuteth thou me? and he answered, Lord, who art thou? Showing he felt it was the Lord dealing with him. Yet when he arose he saw no man, for he was without sight three days and nights, a time when the spiritual waters had sunken beneath the sand. Saul felt that the Lord had dealt with him, yet quickly had hidden his presence from him. And the Lord sent a servant (Ananias) that he might lay his hands upon him (Saul) that he might receive his sight. When Ananias had come in unto Saul and put his hands upon him, and said, Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who spake to thee on thy way, hath sent me that thou mayest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost, and immediately there fell from his eyes, as it had been scales, and he received his sight forthwith, arose and was baptized, and when he had received meat he was strengthened. This was the rising of the spiritual water above the sand. Dear brother, I hope by the eye of faith I have a period in my experience (if I have one) that I experienced this time of being without sight, after I had reached the full extent of all my power and been led to the place where I had lost all hope and confidence in my own flesh, and in that of every one else, and had come to the point where I had to say, All I can do is just to wait upon the good Lord, if he sees fit to pardon my sins, but if my soul be sent to hell his righteous law approves it well, and the time came when this burden which had been causing me so much grief and mourning, and causing the tears to roll from my eyes in streams that I could not hold back, was gone, and I knew not where nor why, yet immediately after realizing it was gone I felt I had been dealt with by the hand of the Lord. However, I could not feel that sweet rejoicing I had hoped to when I felt the Lord had dealt with me. I had heard people talk of some one who had striven with the Spirit of God until he had sinned away the day of grace. Had I done that? Why could not I feel happy with the Lord's dealings with me? When I felt sure he was dealing with me, for that burden was gone and I could not bring it back, not a tear could I shed. Had God turned his face forever from me and hardened my heart so I could not any longer mourn about my condition? Saul was blind until his eyes were opened, and when his eyes were opened he realized the deliverance, just as did poor old Jonah when the Lord rescued him from the belly of the whale, and he said, I have vowed salvation is of the Lord. This opening of the spiritual eye and our realizing our deliverance is the rising of the water above the sand, and is an example of the deliverance of Saul, and every child of God when he passes through those cold, indifferent stages of time, when we would so much love to take the Bible and read it with understanding, but all seems shut in to us then. But after it is opened unto us again and we are delivered from this cold state we are allowed to read and meditate, to feast upon spiritual things.

Then when we follow on down to the irrigation district, where I viewed the

flowing well of artesian water as it gushed up from beneath the surface of the earth through its great casing, which was possibly fifteen inches in diameter and stood there continually throwing out a great stream of water day and night, which was carried out over each of the respective farms and watered them with such an abundance of water that all vegetation thereon grew so rapidly that it was called the garden spot of the plains. This conveys the thought to my mind of how this continual stream of God's love, mercy and blessings goes out from this eternal Fountain (God) to the individual heart of each of his little ones, and feeds it, waters it and causes it to grow in grace and thrive just as it so pleases God to have it do, until we feel in our minds to express praise with the poet,

"Streams of mercy, never ending,
Call for songs of loudest praise."

Dear child of God, it is true that when we are allowed to drink of the water of life which Jesus spoke of when talking to the woman of Samaria we experience the truth of Jesus' words, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." We do not feel that with all our songs and words of praise to Christ Jesus we can ever express the praise due him for what he has done for his chosen people.

This highly favored golden spot of the plains is an example of God's highly favored few, as it lies there in the heart of this semiarid desert land receiving daily an abundance of water, until the fields stand thick with tall corn, and great, tall, large-trunked trees stand in their splendor and beauty, the alfalfa fields are beautiful and green, and cotton produces over a bale to the acre. This irrigation district is surrounded by semiarid grazing land, which is very poor even for grazing, as one can tell from the condition of the herds of cattle and horses that feed thereon. This highly favored garden spot is an example of God's chosen people, those who are the called according to his purpose, and we are reminded of the parable of the clay in the potter's hand: "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" "Shall the thing formed say to him who formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Can the desert land say to God who created it, Why did you not make me a fertile valley with artesian wells and abundance of water, that I, too, might be beautiful and produce an abundance of beautiful vegetation?

On the other hand, Adam was the first man, created and formed of the dust of the earth. We people of this day and time are only Adam multiplied, and when God placed Adam in the Garden of Eden he gave him a law to keep, therefore the law entered that the offense might abound. The offense, the breaking of God's law to Adam, brought sin into the world. Where sin abounded grace did much more abound. Not for the entire Adam race, but for those highly favored few only does this

grace abound. Christ says, I pray not for the world, but for those that thou hast given me out of the world, and as many as thou hast given me I will raise them up at the last day, except the son of perdition, who was chosen for a devil. Also we read that Christ has power to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him, and that no man is able to pluck them out of his hand, neither can any man pluck them out of the Father's hand. My sheep hear my voice and they know me, and they follow me, and a stranger they will not follow. For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that faith not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. Here is another stream from that eternal fountain of God. That gift of grace, combined with that faith which is sufficient to save the soul of each and every one of God's chosen ones, is treasured up there in this fountain that has stood ready to be measured out to each one of them at God's appointed time, from the very beginning of time on down through all ages that ever have or ever will come, and that measure which is used by the Lord Jesus Christ is not only sufficient to pay the debt for his people, but it pays it double.

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem [which is the true, invisible church of God], and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." We see by this that he, and he alone, has paid the debt for this highly favored few.

Take up the narrative of Jacob and Esau, we find that the Lord says, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." The children being not yet born, neither having done good nor evil, that the doctrine of election might stand. Therefore we find that this God purposes all things and works all things, both good and evil, after the pleasure of his own will, and none can stay his hand, or question him as to why he does things in this manner. He is the most high Power, and does all things according to his own purpose. Neither does he counsel with or consult any one or any thing as to whether they are willing to do his bidding, but he speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast.

Dear brother, I must bring this to a close, as it is already too long. Do with it as you think best and all will be well with me. If you have a feeling to do so, please pray God that he may pardon my sins and give me strength and understanding, and I hope I may always be found ready to bow at the feet of my dear brethren.

Just a sinner saved by the grace of God, if saved at all,

S. O. TATUM.

REDBUSH, Ky., July 17, 1935.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am trying to feel thankful for the many privileges and opportunities given me, and am asking you in the name of Jesus to pardon my long delay and neglect in writing and thanking you for past favors in sending mother and me the SIGNS.

The Bible and the SIGNS were all mother ever read while she lived here, and I do know that I had a true mother in Israel, striving to live her religion to the end of the race. She was born November 25th, 1865, and quietly passed to her reward February 3rd, 1934, at the age of sixty-five years, while asleep. She was plainly warned in a dream, and told father and all nine of us children (five boys and four girls) all of whom are now living and married. Father passed away March 2nd, 1934, at the age of seventy-two years. Mother never had an opportunity to go to school, and did not even learn to read until she was thirty-two years old. At this age Christ manifested himself to her, giving her, seemingly, a great gift of faith, and a desire to study these things which she ever coveted. In a very short time she was enabled to read and understand these things far better than I could, although I was a rural school teacher for years, with a first class certificate. She, Mandy (Bailey) McKenzie, attended the Old Baptist meetings far and near when health and opportunity would permit, always admitting her own weaknesses and infirmities of the flesh, and exalting the name of Christ and his power to save and keep his chosen ones. She had no desire to criticize any one, yet was very firm and stern in defense of the doctrine. I am sorry to say that I tried, yet I am glad and rejoice in the consolation now, that I myself, her own son, could not even confuse her in the least. She always held to Christ first, last and all the time, and never seemed to get befogged in the least in doctrine. She trusted in Christ under all conditions, regardless of circumstances, seeking the Blesser in preference to the blessing. Many times she told me she could not enjoy hearing people talk "about" Christ, but always feasted on hearing Christ preached to the sinner, not the sinner to Christ. She always cherished the memory of one sermon she heard at an association while in an infant stage of grace. A very old minister came around hobbling on his cane, and said, There are many different denominations, all claiming Christ. I tell you all now in his name, All who have him have a sufficiency, for that is all there ever was or ever will be for us. As I sit here alone with God (which being alone with him seems to be a privilege he himself has ordained and arranged), facing my mother's picture, it seems to me that after so many years of hard work, toil, struggle and sacrifice, which is required of us all, and meted out to us by a kind and loving Father, there never was before such a sacred hallow thrown over me, which no language can express. There does not seem to be a single discord, not even the shadow of a doubt, but the laws of nature and God's divine law are in perfect harmony now, but just how long the veil will stay back and let me view the cross no one but God can tell, for I am sure I never know just how long these seasons of peace and joy will last. In the past the clouds of darkness soon obscured the view and my way was eclipsed, so I am compelled to walk by faith alone with God, without even fel-

lowship, yet I know now that there is much difference between fellowship and sonship, and that the latter is far more important.

I am thinking of how my mother, and many others, could glory in tribulation, endure the cross and bear the shame, ever pressing forward with patience, kindness and christian fortitude, never murmuring nor deviating from the path of daily duty. How she struggled, prayed, moaned and groaned under the cross in the heat of the day in the rearing and training of all nine of us children, without even a whimper, but always kissing the rod of reproof and correction. I tell you all, when I read, hear and know how our mothers and fathers in Israel lived, how they blazed the trail and endured these things, thinking and believing that our pathway would be brighter by their labors and sacrifices, and then just to think how little we show our appreciation in honoring God and the old paths, it makes me feel very little in God's sight. I grow faint at heart, and it sometimes makes my head swim in confusion when I begin to ponder these things, by the Holy Spirit crying, Abba, Father, continually, and realizing that this earth is speedily losing its salt, and soon, very soon, if not already, the days of Noah and Lot will appear and the event, or climax, so often spoken of in God's Book will no more be Bible prophecy, but a complete fulfillment; no more wild speculation of men, but a reality, and new earth. And we do know according to the words of eternal truth that the meek shall inherit the earth, and the pure in heart shall see God.

Since my mother left it has been a great source of pleasure for me to realize just how she was trained up in the "camps of Israel," the broadest university ever instituted on earth, his footstool. Her normal weight was only ninety pounds, but how cheerful she was, with a large family in much need and want, and with a very dilatory and neglectful husband and father. She and her mother, Susie Baily, both of the very same type, suffered mental agony and physical pain, seemingly more than the ordinary mortals, yet held to the faith of Jesus and their profession and sang the songs of Zion and praised God without faltering. We are all fed from the same source, and eat the very same spiritual food, which is Jesus Christ, the only eternal Bread and Water that will comfort and nourish a hungry and thirsty soul. And all these crumbs come from mother's table, the new Jerusalem. Amen.

Again I say, Pray for me, that God in his infinite wisdom will enable me to grow and develop in the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord and Master.

Your brother in hope of better things through Christ,

HARRISON McKENZIE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1935.

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REVELATION XXII. 16, 17.

"I JESUS have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come: and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

All the testimony of Jesus in the churches is under one of the above things, and the gifts in the ministry are exercised by the Spirit according to the measure of the grace of God given to them. The work of God is perfect, and his flock is fed with the sincere milk of the word. The gifts of the ministry are proven to the churches by these things being testified of to them of which the churches are witnesses, which proves the gift.

"Mine angel." Sent unto you to bear tidings relative to the doctrine of salvation by grace, and I am he of whom it is spoken by the prophet, the Messiah that was to come. I am the root from which the life of David sprang, and all the members of the church of God manifest the same life. The experience of David as expressed in the Psalms is the experience of every child of God. They can read the Psalms and find their own hearts bearing the same tidings and speaking the same thing, which binds their hearts in one bundle of love. The bearer of these tidings comes with fear and trembling, realizing his imperfections and unworthiness to claim such riches to be his, which causes him to feel cast down and exclaim, Oh wretched man that I am! The brightness of the glory is Jesus they see, and they feel the ushering in of a new day, which his angel shall testify of unto you, and you shall walk in the light and see and behold wonderful things revealed to you by Him, and when this light is not realized darkness is felt, and blindness covers our sight, that we cannot see afar off, and not even a star to be seen.

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come." The Spirit says, Come. As we take this phrase into the things his angel testifies of the Spirit we like to consider what the Spirit is, which is God. Now as the Spirit says come it is God that is speaking, and how do we come? We sold ourselves for naught, and are held in that bondage until the ransom price is paid and the captive set free from the bondage of sin and death. Jesus is the only price that can make a poor sinner free from that bondage and give the strength to come. God was in

Christ indorsing the work of his Son in the salvation of all the elect, and by this work, or this way, sinners come to God and are saved with an everlasting salvation. This is the calling of the Spirit, and every one that hears the voice of the Spirit saying, Come, are directed in this way. Jesus (the conception of the Holy Ghost) says, "I am the way," and "no man cometh unto the Father but by me."—John xiv. 6. Which is hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes, and no man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Men often point out a way and say, This is the way, walk ye in it, but the way thereof is death, and they know not the way of life.

The bride will testify of how she had been kept, fed, given water and clothed and brought up out of the pit and given a new song to sing, which is the song of the redeemed, and no man can learn that song by the teaching of men.

The church of God with the Spirit of the living God says, Come, and the manifestation of one coming in this relation brings joy to the entire body, so we feel the rejoicing is unity in the Spirit with the bride. The bride receives every one who comes in the name of her Husband and she can see his life manifested in them. They are all clean, having been washed in clean water, and all their garments are clean white linen, which is the righteousness of the saints.

"And let him that heareth say, Come." And him that hath ears to hear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches, and every one that hath ears heareth the things the Spirit proclaims, which gives testimony of the demonstration of the Spirit, and faith comes, and is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, then with patience we wait upon the Lord. There is a two-fold expression in this phrase, for the friend of the Bridegroom sayeth, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly," and the Bridegroom sayeth, Come unto me. But this was given to John after the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, which gives us to conclude the angel testifying these things in the churches is addressing the subjects of grace.

"And let him that is athirst come: and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." The evidence we derive from being thirsty is the heat, and power of evaporation of the water we have in our bodies, and spiritually speaking, the Son of righteousness is risen upon us and we are assimilating the food of the Spirit, which makes us thirst after righteousness, or the water of life, to masticate the bread of life. The thirsty soul cannot draw water from wells in the earth to quench this thirst, for his thirst is for living water, which is in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. (John iv. 14.) The water of life freely taken would be with a realization that there was no weight lodged against the one receiving it by way of debt, and the refreshing virtue was free.

After we have commented on these things as they are set forth in the record of Revelation by the Spirit, and we fully realize the expressions we have

offered to our readers of the SIGNS for their faithful consideration are according to God's word, and belong to the children of God, and we know of a truth we have had realizations as we have described, but to say we know we are what we hope we are is beyond our ability to affirm. We often feel we can say this one or that one is a child of God, but we do not know, only as they bear the fruit, as we are given to understand. All these things are the work of the Spirit, and are manifest by those born of the incorruptible seed by the word of God, and these marks are sure testimony of their sonship. As we compare individuals to distinguish between those who are heirs and those who are not we must know the relationship which proves their worship. Those who worship God worship in Spirit, and those who worship him not worship according to the dictates of the carnal mind, and they cannot behold the things Jesus sent his angel to testify in the churches, and to converse with one who has not heard this testimony delivered by his angel there is no difference to them, which proves the blindness or sense of perception in which there is no understanding in the things of the Spirit.

We feel after expressing our feelings relative to these things we ourselves come short of the standard of truth, and only have hope to point to as our reasons for our salvation by grace. David declared that all who know the joyful sound are blessed, They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. (Psalms lxxxix. 15.)

We are concluding our correspondence with you, dear readers of the SIGNS, with this issue for the year 1935, and we hope we have not given out expressions that are not according to God's word, and also that perhaps some have had exercise of mind and comfort of soul in what we have in our weak way tried to convey, and we hope more of you may be encouraged to write for the SIGNS and give your support to strengthen its publication. We extend to all our best wishes, and may the peace of God, which passeth understanding, rest upon all the household of faith. Amen.

C. W. V.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANKS.

IN each copy of this issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we are inclosing a subscription blank for the convenience of our subscribers in renewing their own subscriptions and in sending the names of new subscribers, and we appeal to each of our friends to do what they can toward helping us build up our subscription list.

The date on the little pink slip bearing your address, which you will find either on your paper or the wrapper in which it comes to you, signifies to what time your subscription is paid. If your subscription has expired, or is about to expire, please send on your renewal if you can spare it, but if you are not at the present time in a position to renew your subscription, but hope to be later on, do not order your paper stopped, for we would much rather continue sending the paper to you until such

time as you are able to pay for it than to take your name from our list, for we need all our old subscribers to help us during these hard times.

Brethren, we appeal to you to help us continue the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and may God add his blessing to our efforts.

J. E. B. & CO.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists, now in session with Little Flock Church of Oklahoma, to the churches composing our body, and to the saints scattered abroad, sendeth greeting and christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—God in his divine providence has seen fit for the lines to fall to us in a way to hinder us from meeting in associational capacity every year, and now once more being granted this happy privilege we desire to show, not that we have discovered new ideas, and have become, as the world would call it, more progressive, as those who set darkness for light and light for darkness have done, but do desire that we may be found standing by the old landmarks on which our hopes were based when we were first organized, namely, Predestination, Regeneration, Election, the Eternal Vital Unity of Christ and the church, and the Resurrection of the dead, which latter is sometimes expressed as the Final Preservation of the Saints unto glory.

Paul in his letter to the Hebrews, sixth chapter, first verse, said, "Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection." To leave the principles of the doctrine of Christ, does not mean to reject, forsake or turn from them, but to leave them just as they are, and have been, ever the same, as unchangeable as He who first taught them. The principles of his doctrine, we believe are encouched in the above specified points, and wish to give valid reasons for our belief in them, which must necessarily be brief to conform with the limits of a Circular Letter. The principles of predestination, we see, in considering it, all other points center, flow into and eminate from it, and are logically embraced in it. The testimony in regard to predestination, from the first of Genesis to the end of Revelation, is like a boundless sea, "void of bottom, brim or shore." A fathomless deep, encompassed on every hand by God's eternal shalls and wills, only a few of which can be mentioned in our limited space, chiefly those which pertain directly to the people of God, while we bear in mind that all things work together for good to them.

In his eloquent, touching prayer to the Father, the sacrificial Lamb of God said, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me."—John xvii. 9. They are the ones addressed and they are the only ones who will receive his testimony, himself having said, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."—Heb. ii. 12. And tells us to not cast our pearls (these precious principles of his doctrine),

before swine. We cannot feed on their husks, nor can they relish our food. "Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations."—Num. xxiii. 9. We realize this, for in the census of churches now and then taken, in which the numbers of the different denominations are enumerated by thousands, and tens of thousands, no mention is made of the little handful of Old School Baptists. Their number is too negligible to notice. This is our encouragement and joy, for the promises are to the little flock afore prepared unto glory. "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you."—Deut. vii. 7, 8. This elect, chosen few, whom God loves and who are so signally blest, compose the church of God and are fitly framed together. Every stone in the building is a hewn stone, already dressed, all self-righteousness hewn off and clothed upon with the righteousness of Christ before it is brought to the building. "Israel then shall dwell in safety alone."—Deut. xxxiii. 28. Dear people of God, do not be discouraged nor dismayed because so few, and surrounded by antichrist, for "The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him." "I will be their God, and they shall be my people."—2 Cor. vi. 16. Declaring the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it, I will also do it. I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory. (Isaiah xlvi. 10, 11, 13.) "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."—Isaiah lv. 11. "He is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." Job said, "He performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him."—Job xxiii. 13, 14. This from the man the most afflicted and tormented of whom we have any record, and who said, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Yet how safe we are in the hands of him who works all things together for good to them that love him and are the called according to his purpose. He sees the end, or purpose he has in view from the beginning, but we poor finite mortals cannot see what his purpose is concerning his called ones, for eye hath not seen, nor ear heard the things he has prepared for them that love him, but he said of Paul, "I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."—Acts ix. 16. We do know our times are all within his hands, and all events at his command, and "Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?"—Amos iii. 6. What a terror it would be in the deplorable conditions which now prevail all over our land, if we did not know the directing and controlling of all things are in the Lord's hands and the wrath of man, working together with all things else, shall praise him.

Here now are some of the most precious "shalls" on record, when the angel of the Lord declared of Mary, "She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."—Matt. i. 21. These two first "shalls" are freely conceded by all, but on the last they begin to hedge, saying, He made the way possible for them to be saved, and so on. But to our joy he said he had finished the work which he came to do, and "he shall not fail, nor be discouraged," but all that the Father gave him he kept, and none of them are lost but the son of perdition. They say they believe on his name, his precious name, Jesus, which means he shall save his people from their sins, but in works deny him, as they compass sea and land to help save souls for him, trying to do the work he declared finished, but vain is the help of man. He said, "It is finished." How little they heed his words: "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; for the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever."—Psalms xlix. 7, 8. It is finished, and "whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it that man should fear before him."—Eccl. iii. 14. Yet with no fear of him before their eyes men still go about in futile efforts to add to what he has done, but all he did was for the precious sons of Zion, and no others; and because of our belief in this precious doctrine, unto us it is given not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. So he tells us to think it not strange, but to rejoice and to be glad "when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." "For if they have done these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?"—Luke xxiii. 31. They *shall* do these things, but their bounds are set, only thus far *shall* they go, and no farther, so let us not be discouraged, for Jesus is our Friend, and if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him. "Behold, I count them happy which endure." He is before all things, and by him all things consist. Not one thing of whatsoever comes to pass, whether human judgment may call it good or evil, is out of line, or inconsistent with his eternal, predestinated plan; all is good in his sight. The ones to whom he will reveal his truth were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, elect according to the foreknowledge of God, and the rest are blinded. There are the elect and the very elect. We know that all whose names were not written in the Lamb's book of life before time began are none of his. But we are not to judge, for we are plainly told that there are those who, concerning the doctrine, are enemies for our sakes, but as touching the election are beloved for the Father's sake. (Rom. xi. 28.) And so it is we see some whose whole deportment manifests a christian disposition, yet they are enemies to the very doctrine of election which we believe saves them. But the Lord has blinded their eyes and we have no power to make them see the

beauty and joy in this lovely doctrine. The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord. And he will guide their ways, and thus we are led to believe there are elect vessels of mercy in all denominations, and many not members of any sect. "If the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that prophet." —Ezek. xiv. 9. But he cannot dwell in the midst of Israel. Another cried, "O Lord, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived."—Jer. xx. 7. So let us not grieve or contend impatiently with those who cannot see as we do, for "blindness in part is happened unto Israel," and they may be of those who, touching the election are beloved of the Lord, but our joy is in this truth and in mingling with those who do believe it fully. There are those who would deceive if possible the very elect. (Matt. xxiv. 24.) Thus we hear of the elect and the very elect, and each is according to the foreknowledge of God. "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."—Acts ii. 47. This is not adding to the body of Christ, each member of which was chosen in him, and their life hidden with him in God, before time began. It is full, complete, nothing can be added to nor taken from it, and their eternal salvation was fully accomplished in the finished work on Calvary. But "should be saved" denotes something in the future, and those members of his body who from time to time, daily, are brought into manifestation and enabled to go home to the church are the ones, the very elect whom he designed should be saved from the delusions of antichrist. The eternal salvation of all the elect family of God which was finished on Calvary is not indicated in the words "should be saved." "Many are called, but few are chosen." The elect are, in the aggregate, an innumerable host which no man can number, yet only a few are chosen to be soldiers. Only a few to fight the battles, to contend earnestly for the faith. It is a sadness to us when some one who manifests love of the truth will show that he or she would love to go with us if we did not have so much trouble. In Gideon's army of thirty and three thousand the faint-hearted ones departed early and went back from Mt. Gilead. Other tests decimated their number until only three hundred were left to fight the battle, yet the others were of Israel, but only three hundred chosen soldiers. We would delight to see those who show love for the truth take up their crosses and enter the church militant. Militant means warlike, ready for battle, and that is why they are necessarily soldiers, and they are a standing army. May not those thus chosen to be soldiers, properly be designated as the very elect, or doubly chosen? Chosen in Christ in eternity, and again chosen to be soldiers. They are the remnant that shall be saved from the snares and delusions of antichrist, though the number of the children of Israel be as the sands of the sea for multitude. Though these very elect are so few in number, it is our joy to know that the Lord does not save by many or by few. Many a hidden one has battles of his

own to fight, and from them we hear of wars and rumors of wars in the heart of every vessel of mercy. All the election of grace are

"In union with the Lamb,
From condemnation free,
The saints from everlasting were,
And shall forever be.

In covenant from of old,
The sons of God they were;
The feeblest lamb in Jesus' fold
Was blessed in Jesus there."

And so it is in an eternal union. It originated in eternity and it will go on through never-ending eternity. This oneness of Christ is made manifest in regeneration, when we are given to see him as the Head of the body, the church. It is a vital unity, for the Head and body can never be in separation for an instant and life remain in either. It is indissoluble, because the new birth, or regeneration, brings into manifestation a relationship that neither death nor life can dissolve. We may be ashamed of a natural relative and deny the relationship, but that does not annul it. Spiritually some of his chosen ones, through fleshly pride, may be ashamed to own their Lord by taking up their cross before the world and vowing allegiance to the Captain of their salvation by entering the ranks of his soldiers, yet he is still their God, and they are his people. Still their Father and they his children, and none shall ever be able to pluck them out of his hand. *Nothing,* Paul says, *nor any other creature,* shall be able to separate them from his love. Gladly we admit that our salvation is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by his mercy he saved us. Our own self-righteousness only sinks us deeper in the mire of fleshly works, where there is no standing. Every effort to extricate ourselves from the miry clay only sinks us the deeper. How soul-cheering then to hear the precious words, "Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom." O dear saints, surely we have found the Ransom who was heralded by the angel of the Lord, saying, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus." That is what we love to call him, because it means he shall save his people from their sins. One of old said, The Lord is our Law-giver, the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our King, he will save us. The angel said he shall save us, and Paul and others declare he hath saved us. Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory, because thou hast redeemed us by thy blood. And he will not have neglect to the work of his hands, but when all our mortal powers shall fail and we are called to pass the gloomy vale, then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit to God who gave it. The dust is the elect, precious vessel of mercy (not the spiritual vessel chosen in Christ in eternity), and while here are the habitable parts of his earth, the temple of God in which he walks and dwells, and are the subjects of adoption, for which we are yet waiting, to wit, the redemption of our body, which shall be consummated in the resurrection, when this mortal shall have put on immortality, and this natural shall be raised a spiritual body, and we shall be changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. Paul said there are some who do err, saying the resurrection is passed already, but he plainly teaches it is yet to come, and this, then, will be the final preservation of the saints unto glory, when,

"Our ransomed dust revived,
Fresh beauty shall put on,
And soar to the blest mansion
Where our Redeemer's gone."

These cherished points of doctrine all flow together, to form the one great truth of salvation by grace. This, dear people of God, though only a feeble portrayal, is what we believe to be the principles of the doctrine of Christ. Zion, the city which he has chosen to put his name there, is the city of our solemnities. We see Jerusalem, a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down. Not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, not one of the cords thereof shall be broken. (Isaiah xxxii. 20.) Love may be wounded and fellowship marred, but they are cords that cannot be broken, for they are God-given, and shall be forever. They are what God hath joined together in sweet union, and man cannot put asunder that which He hath so joined, it shall be forever. Not one of the stakes shall be removed. Gladly we heed the admonition to remove not the ancient landmarks lest we enter into the fields of the fatherless. (Prov. xxiii. 10.) If the old landmarks, the stakes and cords of the gospel, the principles of the doctrine of Christ could be removed, broken, modified or molified, then the field of worldy religion lies invitingly open to those who love to have it so. Easily we would drift into the field and gladly they would swallow us up quickly. May God preserve and strengthen us with grace sufficient for each day's need, that we may stand in the way he has marked for us with his blood, and leave the principles of the doctrine of Christ just as he left them, and go on unto perfection; his gospel is perfection, and walking in its precepts we long to still go on to the blissful place to which it points, where perfection of love, joy, peace, holiness, sanctification and redemption forever reign, unalloyed by the cares and toils of this life. Oh what dross are the fleeting pleasures and fading treasures of this world in comparison to the blissful abode to which we are all hastening. The poor and despised, persecuted and falsely accused,

"By faith let us stand,
Upheld and supported by heaven's kind hand.
By Jesus supported, let us praise his dear name,
Regardless of censure, of praise or of blame."

"May I still have a place
Within his blest abode,
Among the children of his grace,
The servants of our God."

Brethren, pray for us.

L. L. SCHENCK, Mod.
MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

(Written by Elder J. C. Hammond.)

The Pocatalico Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the Hopewell Church, Kanawha County, West Virginia, to the several churches of which she is composed, and to all with whom we correspond, sendeth loving greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN IN SWEET FELLOWSHIP:—It is through the goodness,

mercy and longsuffering of our heavenly Father that we are again permitted to meet together in an associate capacity as messengers and correspondents, brethren and sisters, to hold sweet communion together and with our heavenly Father, as we hope, in order that we may be comforted, edified and established in the word of God. May the dear Lord help us to call your attention to the doctrine of God our Savior, on which our faith is founded. It is an important tenet of our faith to believe God hath decreed in himself from all eternity by the counsel of his own will freely and unchangeably all things whatsoever shall come to pass, yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin nor hath fellowship with any therein. This is set forth in God's word to us by the apostle Paul: "In whom [Christ] also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."—Eph. i. 11. Also the prophet Isaiah says, "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isaiah xlvi. 9, 10. The "shalls" and "wills" of Jehovah in God's word prove this doctrine of predestination, and our eternal destiny is fixed according to the unchangeable purpose of our God. The doctrine of election is also plainly set forth in God's word and is a fundamental principle of our faith. We believe God hath chosen whom he will to serve him. "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." Those to whom the apostle Peter wrote his first epistle he denominates them as elect according to the foreknowledge of God. Paul says, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." He also says, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." We also believe in the total depravity of all mankind since the fall of Adam, all by nature being dead in trespasses and in sins, all come under the sentence of death by the transgression of God's holy law, but God, according to his predeterminate counsel, even before the creation of the world and all things therein, entered into a covenant of grace. His covenant is an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, his chosen ones being sinners in the sight of a just and holy God, children of wrath even as others, lost and helpless, yet they were God's, the Father's, by choice. Jesus said, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." God the Father gave his chosen ones to Jesus that he should die for each and every one of them to redeem them from death, redeem them from sin, redeem them from hell, and by his atonement satisfy divine justice, fulfill the law and be the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth; that is,

all his chosen people. Yes, they are all redeemed to God by the blood of Christ out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation. Yes, through the atonement of Christ and by his grace we are saved in time, saved in eternity, saved in heaven at God's right hand, there to praise him forever. The Lord's chosen redeemed people are called to a knowledge of this salvation, called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. They are called out of darkness into his marvelous light. They are born from above, born of God, born of the Spirit, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and that they see and enter into the kingdom of God, where Christ the King of kings and Lord of lords rules in and over them, working in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Jesus, our Savior, our Lord and our God will never leave nor forsake us, he will keep us by his power. Oh blessed be God, he will be with us through life, be with us in death, hand us to our graves in peace, and in the blessed morning of the resurrection change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. This mortal body is raised a spiritual body; it is raised an incorruptible body, raised in glory, there to be ever present with the Lord. Yes, forever present with the Lord in that heaven of bliss where there is no more sin, no more suffering, no more death, all will be peace, joy and praise to God for evermore in that world which will never end. Amen.

Farewell.

J. C. HAMMOND, Mod.
DEL SMITH, Ass't Mod.
H. J. BIRD, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Elders and messengers composing the First Kansas Association, unto those with whom we correspond, and unto the faithful in Christ Jesus scattered abroad, Greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Through the boundless mercy and wisdom of the God who rules and governs all things after the counsel of his own will, we have once more been permitted to meet together in an associate capacity. We have felt to sit at the table of the King and partake of the good things pertaining to his kingdom. Our feeble steps have been strengthened, our hearts renewed and tuned to hymns of thanksgiving and praise unto him who hath watched over Zion and remembered her in her afflictions, and we desire, anew, to run with patience the race set before us, ever looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, and to press on toward the mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. We have felt disappointed that other ministers were not permitted to meet with us, but the house has been filled with the fullness of Him who filleth all in all, and when we are blest with his presence it supplies our every need. We have been comforted and built up in the precious messages given through our Moderator, Elder L. L.

Schenck, and the godly conversation of our visiting brethren, of the glorious riches of God's mercy and grace to his children, the objects of his love, and to whom he hath said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." So we press on, abiding in the blissful assurance, "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."

Dear brethren, we desire a continuance of your correspondence, and to our visiting brethren we extend an invitation to come again. We desire, if it be in accord with the decrees of an all-wise Providence, to convene again next year, at this time.

And now may the Spirit of him who is the great Shepherd of the sheep abide with you, and us, and lead and guide us in the way of all truth, is our prayer for the dear Redeemer's sake. Farewell.

L. L. SCHENCK, Mod.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

The Pocatalico Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, to the several associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED SAINTS IN THE LORD:—Through the tender mercy of Israel's God, and his abounding goodness to usward, we have been spared and blessed to meet in this our one hundredth yearly meeting. Our hearts have been made to rejoice at the coming of your messengers, as they come to us preaching Christ crucified, an all-sufficient Savior of poor sinners. While our correspondence has been small at this session, the preaching has been harmonious, God-honoring and soul-cheering. May your correspondence be continued in the future, if it be the holy will of God. Farewell.

J. C. HAMMOND, Mod.

DEL SMITH, Ass't Mod.

H. J. BIRD, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Charles W. Vaughn, at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse, Hopewell, N. J., April 21st, 1935, David Spencer Blackwell, of Skillman, N. J., and Elizabeth Ann Voorhees, of Pennington, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MRS. IDA THOMPSON HAGER, our sister in Christ, passed away from this earthly life the morning of September 23rd, 1935, at her home near Reed, Maryland. She was taken acutely ill Sunday morning, and although all was done that medical skill and loving and devoted hearts and hands could do, she passed away about twenty-four hours later. She was born May 10th, 1866, near Martinsburg, W. Va. Her parents were David and Mary E. Thompson. She was one of seven children, all of whom are now gone except sister Emma Jones, of Vienna, Va. She was a sister of the late brother William A. Thompson, our deacon at Frying Pan Church. She was married, about forty years ago, to Mr. J. L. Hager, who now is left to go on his lonely way without her, yet we hope the Lord's presence with him may assure him he is not alone. There is one son, Kenneth T. Hager, who with his wife lovingly and devotedly did all they could for the mother's comfort and welfare. Sister Ida endeared herself with all with whom she associated, because of her charitable, gentle and helpful disposition. She desired to believe well of every one. She was baptized into the membership of the Mill Creek Church, in West Virginia, in May, 1916, afterwards moving her membership to the Frying Pan Church, in Fairfax County, Virginia. It was my privilege to have known her for thirty years, and to have been her pastor most of that time. To say that the church and myself will miss her, does not half express it. We have an assurance for her that she is one of those for whom it is most blessed to die in the Lord. May the Holy Spirit, who knows all our hearts and who knows what is the mind of the Lord for each one of us, be the mainstay and support of the bereaved father and son, and of our beloved sister Emma Jones.

Services were held the 25th of September at the home, and then burial at Green Hill Cemetery, Martinsburg, W. Va.

ALSO,

ROBERT THOMPSON, brother of above sister Ida Hager, passed away June 16th, 1935, at his home, near Herndon, Virginia. He had heart trouble for some months before death came for him. I think he was about seventy-three years old. He also was a child of David and Mary E. Thompson named in the foregoing obituary, and a brother of our late William A. Thompson. His wife, whose family name I do not remember, died in 1918. He is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Gladys Spencer, who with her husband and infant son lived at home with her father. Mr. Thompson never united with the church, but I feel I can truthfully say he knew and loved the truth of salvation by grace alone through Jesus Christ the Son of God, and that the Almighty is Sovereign over all worlds, principalities and powers, over all angels, men and devils. He was a very faithful attendant at the meetings of the Frying Pan Church, and it seems could scarcely have been more helpful had he been a member. For his own comfort and peace of mind, we should have been thankful had it been the will of God for him to come in among us by baptism. He had a very keen sense of his own unworthiness, his life and walk were marked by that humility which is the effect of grace in the heart.

Funeral services were held in Frying Pan meetinghouse, burial in the cemetery at Herndon, Va. May the Lord comfort all who truly mourn.

H. H. L.

JAMES SHARP COPELAND, son of William and Elizabeth Copeland, was born in Franklin County, Pennsylvania, February 5th, 1854, and passed away October 10th, 1935, at the St. Joseph Hospital, Boonville, Missouri, aged 81 years, 8 months and 5 days. At the age of five years he came with his parents to Saline County, Missouri, where he grew to manhood and became a highly respected citizen of the community in which he lived. He was united in marriage to Mrs. Julia A. Walker June 6th, 1884, and to this union were born seven children: Mrs. Lewis Egan, Mrs. Ed. Staub, Mrs. Joe Baker, Robert, Jesse, Herbert and Joe Copeland, all now living in Saline County. He also leaves to mourn their loss three step-children: Mrs. John Chappell, of Kansas City, Mrs. Frank Auer and A. J. Walker, Boonville, Mo., also twenty-one grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Brother Copeland joined the Primitive Baptist Church in the year 1888, but we have not the name of the church, nor the minister that baptized him. He was ordained a Deacon in Zion Church nearly twenty years ago, and filled that office efficiently and satisfactorily until the church ceased to exist, about five years ago. He was a devoted member of the church, and often visited other churches and associations, and had a warm place in the hearts of the brethren and sisters of his acquaintance. He was a strong believer in the doctrine of predestination and salvation by grace, and manifested the fruits of the Spirit by his godly walk and conversation. His friends were numbered by his acquaintances and he will be sadly missed from his home community in which he lived the greater part of his life, living an ideal life of a christian citizen. A high tribute of respect was paid him by the overflowing crowd that attended his funeral services, which were held at the Sweeney Funeral Home, in Marshall, conducted by the writer, on Saturday following his death. His body was laid to rest in Ridge Park Cemetery, in Marshall, to await the coming of Jesus to raise it a spiritual body to praise him in the eternal world forever and forever. Amen.

W. L. HALL.

MRS. LILLIAN HAYES PIERSON, only daughter of the late Benton L. and Josephine E. Beebe, was born in Middletown, N. Y., July 17th, 1864, and departed this life at Horton Memorial Hospital, Middletown, N. Y., October 18th, 1935, aged 71 years, 3 months and 1 day.

Monday morning, October 14th, she was found unconscious at the foot of a stairway in her home, with her right side paralyzed, a broken ankle and a fractured skull, and was rushed to the hospital, where she remained in an unconscious condition until Friday night following, when her soul passed from her body to be forever with her Lord.

In the year 1884 she was united in marriage in New York city to Mr. Harry M. Hayes, and to their union were born three children, two of whom died in infancy. One son, Uzal T. Hayes, of Maplewood, N. J., survives her. Mr. Hayes died in October, 1911. Some years later she was married to Mr. Charles Pierson, who died several years ago. Besides the son mentioned above, she is survived by two adopted children, Richard Pierson and Virginia Colwell, of Middletown, N. Y., whom she loved as her own; three grandchildren: Mrs. Justice Winsowr, of Hackensack, N. J., Harry U. Hayes, of East Orange, N. J., and June Colwell, of Middletown, N. Y., also by one brother, Gilbert Beebe, publisher of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Funeral services were held at the Smith Funeral Home, Middletown, conducted by the Presbyterian minister, Mr. Robert O. Kirkwood, after which her body was laid to rest in Hillside Cemetery, Middletown, there to await the call of her Redeemer.

Her brother,

GILBERT BEEBE.

A. D. ROWLAND departed this life September 12th, 1935, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. M. E. Stephens, Huntington, Texas. He had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church about fifty years. He is survived by seven children and a host of grandchildren and great-grandchildren. His wife preceded him in death nine years. She also was a devoted member of the Primitive Baptist Church. His funeral was held from the Gipson Funeral Home of Lufkins, Texas.

His daughter,

(MRS.) M. E. STEPHENS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Charles H. Glascock, Va., $2; William H. Funk, Ohio, $1; Mrs. Mintie B. Mapes, N. Y., $2; Mrs. Val Werner, N. J., $2; Mrs. Edith M. Gekeler, Ore., $3; W. R. Wallis, Miss., $3.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, &c REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.

Of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, published monthly, at Middletown, N. Y., for October 1st, 1935.

State of New York, County of Orange, ss.:

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Gilbert Beebe, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the owner of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that the following is to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24th, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse side of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publishers, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publishers, J. E. Beebe & Company, Middletown, N. Y.; Editor, H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.

2. The owner is, Gilbert Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagers and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent. or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear on the books of the company, but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the corporation for whom such trustee is acting is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stocks, bonds or other securities than as so stated by him.

GILBERT BEEBE, Owner.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 15th day of October, 1935.

(Seal) E. E. CONKLING.
(My commission expires March, 1937.)

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California; every third Sunday at 526 West Nevada Street, Ontario, California; also on forth Sundays as the Lord permits, at 3516 Franklin Avenue, Riverside, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.

T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets on the first Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, Shelbyville, Ky.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

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ELDER C. W. ANDERSON,

ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 103. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1935. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HOOKER, Oklahoma.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending in this a letter written to me by Elder John Neal, which if you find worthy, and have a mind to do so, you may convey to your readers, otherwise there is no one hurt, but I feel that it speaks much truth.

E. G. WEBB.

EWING, Illinois.

DEAR BROTHER WEBB:—I received your letter and am glad to know you reached home, and well. We regretted seeing you start home in the condition of health you were in, and would have liked to have you stay with us longer. It seems from your letter that you are reading much Baptist literature, and would read more, as you ask my views on the tenth chapter of Romans. As you have requested it, I will give my views as they may appear.

In this Scripture Paul is setting forth two kinds, or classes, of worshippers. One class worships in a righteous faith, a God-given faith. The other class, being ignorant of God's righteousness, are going about to establish their own righteousness, who have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. Then in verse four he says, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." In 2 Peter iii. 16, it says, "In which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." Now this verse four is not understood alike by all people who read it. They differ as to how Christ becomes the end of the law for righteousness to the believer. If we can properly point out this difference we can only do it by explaining what is hard to be understood by those who are unlearned and unstable in the belief of the truth. If we can by the grace and knowledge given us point out Christ as the end of the law for righteousness to the believer in him, then we shall be able to show there is no righteousness

in us, only as our faith in him is counted to us for righteousness. But oh blessed righteous faith in him! How does it come? Does it come, as the condition world teaches, by obedience to his commandments? Is it a wrought out faith by obedience to God? Or is it a God-given faith, given unto his children who stand in his righteousness, not through any merit of their own? As the apostle says, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." This calling is an holy calling, and is not according to our works. And again, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." And Paul says, "The righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) or, who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead)." No, this is not the voice of the faith of God given to his children. But it speaketh differently. Paul says, "What saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." To my understanding, Paul here points out the people of God who firmly believe in the salvation of God. He is not pointing to a salvation which is according to the volition of men. Jesus says, No man can come to me except the Father which sent me draw him. Other sheep I have which are not of this fold (not of the Jews), them also I must bring, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd.

Verse twelve: "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him." Why do God's children call upon him? Because he has been rich unto them in mercy, love and grace, with loving-kindness he hath drawn them. So then it matters not whether Jew or Greek.

Verse thirteen: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." They do not call upon him in order to be saved, but they call upon him because they are saved. God said, I will put my laws in their hearts, and write them in their minds, and I will be to them a God and they shall be to me a people.

In verses fourteen and fifteen: Paul says, "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?" To my mind, here are four questions of great importance. I get a more satisfactory answer in my mind by going back to the days in which those questions were asked, and even long before

those days God had said to Abraham, In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And when the fullness of the times did come God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. Under what law? Under the law of sin and death, in which they were made captives by reason of the transgression of their federal head, Adam. God held a people (the Jews) in covenant relation with him, and four hundred and thirty years after the promise to Abraham was made, that in his seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed, he gave them the law which was a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ. The Gentiles had no law to even point them to Christ, and yet they were in the number to be blessed. Yes, they were strangers to the covenant of promise, and without God and without hope in the world. But since they are brought into the fold, the covenant of grace, it is necessary for them to understand something of the laws of God concerning the covenant. And the Jews themselves, who had worshipped under the righteous law of God, worshipped not through faith. They sought the promise of God given in the law by their obedience to the law. But the promise that he should be heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. Paul says that blindness in part has happened to them, till the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned, and foolishness unto him. The natural Jews could not understand the spiritual things given in the law, and they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, are going about to establish their own righteousness. So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. What is the word of God? It is the truth of God, and when God sends by his Holy Spirit his everlasting truth into the hearts and minds of his elect children, showing to them their guilty state by reason of sin, it is then their just condemnation is seen by them, and never before. They realize that only God's mercy can reach their case. They are made to cry as did the poor publican, Lord, be merciful to me a sinner, and then this same Spirit of truth which gave them this knowledge of their death state in sin gives them the greatest sorrow of their hearts because they have no merit to offer. But when God by the same word of truth raises them from death in sin to a life in God, oh how they rejoice in him. They feel the joys of a better life, and they have faith in their Deliverer as a merciful God unto them. Then the question comes, How can so good a Lord have this mercy to bestow on one so unworthy to receive it? But it is God's will that their faith should stand not only in his power to save, but also in his righteousness to save. So I think here is where Paul found a place for a preacher, but how can he preach except he be sent? Sent by whom? I woul say, By the Lord. What shall he preach? The

gospel of peace. The glad tidings of great joy. Preach Jesus to his people as their righteous Savior who met the demands of justice required in God's divine law. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. The believer in Christ is freed from sin and condemnation, and instead has everlasting life. In Romans viii. 1, 2, we are told that the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the law of sin and death. The same writer, in 2 Timothy ix. 10, tells us that this freedom was given us in Christ before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Paul says, I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. The righteous faith given by God unto his spiritual children in all ages of the world looks to Christ and his gospel, or power, for all their salvation. Isaiah said, seven hundred and forty years before Christ, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

I had thought of stopping here, but I see the last word is "peace." You say I had told you something of the condition of the Baptists in Illinois, and you did not find it much better than I said. Well, I think it is here about as it is everywhere in this country. We have two parties. Both of them are absoluters. To mind they certainly, or absolutely, are the children of God, both parties. One party is standing upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. The other party has left this foundation, which is Christ, and is standing on a foundation made by man, which is the foundation of conditionalism; and one party will absolutely stand for the truth as it is in Christ, and the other party absolutely will not. The prophet says, "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." The greatest invention men have ever sought out in their imagination is the way they can obtain life by their own works. Our conditional brethren tell us that regeneration is without works on our part. But after regeneration they say God's children must obey him in order to receive blessings. Conditionalism has reversed many of God's truths given in the Bible and in the hearts of God's spiritual children. I must confess, if I know anything about God's blessings in obedience, that the blessings come not because of obedience, but that obedience comes because of God's blessing. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."—Psalms cxxvii. 1. Conditionalism always points to a yea and nay gospel.

The Arminians claim salvation by grace, but deny grace when they set up a system of works to obtain salvation. Our conditional brethren claim to believe in an all-wise God, one that viewed all things from all eternity. Yes, they admit the eternal choice of God's people as they stood in Christ before the world began, that according to his foreknowledge and predestination they are given eternal life in Christ, and that eternal spiritual life renders them spiritual children, so they may worship him in Spirit and in truth. But here they stop with predestination. They say it is conditional with God's children whether they obey or not. Ephesians ii. 10, forever settles this question: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." So it must forever remain the truth that the walk of God's people in good works, or their obedience, is just as much ordained, or predestinated, by him as is their eternal life. The truth in the law given by Moses pointing to Christ was a stumbling-block to the Jews. The same Christ preached to them in Paul's day was a stumbling-block to them, and the same in the preaching of Christ as a complete Savior, both in time and eternity, has, and always will be, a stumbling-block to those who claim salvation by their obedience.

When you read this letter I think you will have what you asked for, my views on the tenth chapter of Romans.

JOHN NEAL.

LUKE XIII. 34.

"O JERUSALEM, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!"

A man whom I think is a good christian came to me some time ago almost ready to faint, or so great was his distress that I desire to do what I can to relieve him. He was troubled on this point. He thought that Jesus in the text set up this free will doctrine that sets forth the idea that Jesus wanted to save those people and they would not let him, a doctrine he has been taught all his life, but of late has been shown it is not according to the teachings of the holy Scriptures, and he does not believe it. But when he thought Jesus taught it, Oh, he said to me, quoting the text, can you give me any light on it? When I saw in my friend's face the expression of such great sorrow I was determined, if God would enable me, to comfort him, also thinking there might be some other poor child of God in the same trouble, brought on by the wrong view of the text, which I do not for a moment believe teaches such doctrine, neither do I believe you can find it taught in our Bibles, for I believe such a doctrine to dishonor our God. My view of the text in a short way is this: According to the language used, persecution of the true worshippers of God was going on, for Jesus says to them that kill the prophets and stone them that are sent unto them, How oft would I have gathered thy children together, and ye would not. Hence the rebuke. I be-

lieve the wicked rulers of that great city had children born of God who desired to gather themselves together in that city to worship God and those wicked persecutors would not let them do so. We know the children of God want to get together and sing hymns of praise and have the gospel preached to them, and this was what was under consideration, and not the saving of souls eternally, as many seem to think. I just do not think Jesus had under consideration here eternal life, but you remember we are commanded not to neglect the assembling of ourselves together. All these privileges add much joy and comfort to the saints of the most high God. It is not unreasonable to think these wicked rulers had children who were true worshippers of God, therefore they desired to get together and truly worship God, but were not allowed to do so. If you remember, Jesus often said to the people, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. To say Jesus meant to eternally save those children and could not, would be to deny his power to do his will, and would imply that he does fail to do his will in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and that none can stay his hand nor say unto him, What doest thou? We have to admit the people do many things contrary to the commandments of God, and why he suffers it to be so I do not understand, but these things all go to prove we are great sinners. While this is to our shame, still we would not like to think we are not sinners, for those are the only characters Jesus came to seek, and to save that which was lost.

I could write more, but think it wise to stop here. May the God of all wisdom and power guide you, is my prayer.

R. L. DODSON.

DANVILLE, Virginia.

BENTLEY, Ill., June 23, 1935.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have read and reread the last SIGNS, and somehow its articles appealed to my understanding, affording me great pleasure, in that all the writings were in accord with the true love portrayed to us in the holy Scriptures, and very especially did I notice there was no hobby. I am glad indeed to know the SIGNS has always used the same style of pages dedicated to the use and good of those who by letter desire to write of the dealings of the Lord with them, to their comfort and the comfort of the readers. These letters telling of the travels of God's little ones do many hungry souls much lasting good. I hope the SIGNS keeps to the old plain way, and does not insert in its columns attractive head lines, followed by collections of trite sayings intended to influence for good in a religious way, but which cannot be entirely substantiated in that unerring way one always finds the Scriptures to teach.

Now, dear brethren editors, this is written just as I feel and it is sent by way of encouragement, and in my weak way to show that I surely do appreciate the paper standing for the same style and principles it did one hundred years ago. I am glad we can still rejoice to

know the Lord still reigns, and that he has little bands of his believing children here and there, who are bound by the tender cords of his love to ever adore and praise him, and to love one another. I am glad to say we are, if we know the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, a little band bound together with the cords of God's love, and meet together here at Bentley each third Sunday and Saturday before of each month. Elder Claud E. Webb is our beloved pastor, who has been coming to us from time to time for the past nine years, always laden with the gospel of sweet peace, and never has he shunned to declare the whole counsel of God, but has ever stood in bold defense of the truth of the gospel of Christ, having always a very deep concern for the welfare of the churches, and is ever ready to stand up in the temple and tell all the people all the words of this life, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.

I only intended to write about a letter which brother Ogden Symmonds wrote and asked me to read. He is a dealy beloved brother, and has for some time been standing on the walls of Zion declaring the unsearchable riches of Christ. We are expecting to ordain him to the full work of the ministry at our regular third Saturday meeting in July. He likely will soon have the pastoral care of one or more churches in Missouri. We would welcome any sound and orderly visiting member or preacher to come and be with us at any of our meetings. I have often had a desire to visit among our sister churches in the east, and surely enjoy reading of where peace and order abound, and would rather not hear of disorders, should there be any. The disorders of my own natural family were usually kept within the family and settled there and not left for outsiders to do. So I feel God's family (the church on earth) should be very careful to in like manner conduct and settle their affairs within the bounds of their own church.

Now, dear editors, if you see fit to publish any part of what I have written you may do so. You might say for me that if the writers and editors but knew just how much good their articles do such as I am they would feel encouraged to write on. May the Lord's blessings attend all who love and adore his great and good name. Wife joins in sending good wishes for the SIGNS and appreciation of the tireless efforts of the editors and coworkers.

From a poor unworthy brother in a good hope,

LEONARD H. HOPKINS.

DUTTON, Ontario, Jan. 1, 1935.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—As I am home alone to-day, I got out my box of letters, written by many dear departed kindred, and my dear living kindred in Christ, yours among them, and I felt a desire to send you a few words of remembrance of my enjoyable time spent in your little flock's and your company, when I felt the Lord was in your midst, and I trust my heart was touched with the tenderness which he is the fullness of. Love and pity moved the dear Son of God to obey his Father, for God is

love, the Word made flesh, to partake of our nature, to redeem us from eternal death. I love the term given our Lord: the Redeemer of sinful man. I realize I am a sinful mortal and have been nearly overwhelmed with doubts and fears. My life has at times been portrayed to me in such an altogether different aspect to what a true living child of God is, or should be, not in outbreaking sins, nor in openly reproaching the cause of Christ, for, dear brother, if I ever was taught by that heavenly Teacher, it taught me to abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes, and to love and cling to the precious promises which were given to me in days gone by, as a hope beyond the grave, and are still upholding me and guarding my unprofitable life, and as those words were given me in my early experience, that I was to pass through the fire that was my pathway, but sufficient grace would be given me, the flame would consume the dross and refine the gold. Only, dear brother, are we made meet and fit for the Master's use when the refining process is (as it were) grinding us to powder. My nature must be stripped of pride and vain glory, which I realize is my only and great salvation, Jesus, the Mediator between God and man, the eternal love of God.

Another new year has come. How good to know for ourselves that He knoweth the way that we take. He holds and controls all our past, present and future destiny in his all-wise and all-powerful control. I often am chided and ashamed for my ignorance in being such a murmurer at his gracious hand, when only his eternal love holds me or I would sink where mercy could never reach me. I believe I can say you are my fellow-traveler in this pilgrimage journey.

Sister Ruston's sister Grace is ill in Washington, D. C. Sister Ruston went there two weeks ago, and is still with her. Elder Ruston and family at home are all well, except for colds.

Do you receive any letters from sister Sinclair? She has been very downcast, but I think she is some lifted. He brings or casts down and lifts us up. Brother Dodson, I hope you, Mrs. Dodson and son enjoy good health, which is a great blessing. But we hope we realize his love is better than life. He is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. My son and family are well. I hope to go and see them, or they come and see me, this coming summer.

Pardon my liberty in writing to one of God's anointed, but you have comforted me, and more by your messages of love last May. Come again. Write me some time.

With love from your sister in hope,
(MRS.) JOHN McPHAIL.

SAN BENITO, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I wish to extend through the SIGNS my sincere thanks to those of my brethren who have given me aid in bearing the loss of my car and all my clothing which were stolen. Dear ones, you cannot imagine just how much a little help in time of need can be appreciated, unless something of the same should be your lot. So please

accept my thanks. My health is so low that I am not able to work to obtain that which is necessary in this life. I realize I am not worthy of the kindness which at different times in my unprofitable life has been extended to me. Not only in a financial way do these helps do me good, but they seem to strengthen my love for the brethren because of that love behind it. "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." So in a thorough manifested love, which is often seen to exist among brethren, is the faith of God's love within. Then again it is said, "Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."—1 John iii. 17, 18. In the days of the apostles this was not the only place where mention was made of this, for God's true children have had the above admonition, and Moses in the law made use of the same to the dear ones when he said, "If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within thy gates [churches], in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother."—Deut. xv. 7. We cannot trace true love, which is unending, to the fleshly Adamic man, although there are fleshly ties which often show true love, but yet in many cases it dwindles to nothing, and ends in this world, but that love which is of God, shed abroad in the heart of God's regenerated saints, never dies. The word "love" is found about one hundred and sixty-eight times as a link in the chain uniting the saints of God into one eternal union. For God is love, hence whosoever is born of God is born of love, and such then, when manifested, is an evidence of spiritual life. This truth forever sets aside conditional humanly devised plans of the new birth. Human effort in order to be born again is not love, but is taught through fear, and is the plan of love that is taught by man, is the foundation of monthly collections, not for the poor saints, as Paul admonished (See 1 Cor. xvi. 1; Acts xi. 29.), but for foreign missions. All but a few pennies are used by the agents.

I am now at Campbellton, Texas for a month. I expect to go home to San Benito in December. I cannot stay there long at a time.

I spent a few nights while in San Antonio with brother J. W. Staggs. We had meeting there. The old brother loves the SIGNS.

Well, I see I am taking too much room, so will close. Written in love and much weakness.

As ever, your brother in bonds,

J. B. BOWDEN.

FAYETTE, Alabama.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—I am trying to complete my file of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the last thirty-five years. For 1934 I need the January number; for 1933 I need all except August, December, April, November

and October; for 1932 I need all except July, September, April, November and December; for 1930 I need May, November and December; for 1927 I need October; for 1925 I need January, February, March, May, June and July; for 1924 January 15th, July 1st, August 15th, September 15th; for 1923 I need January 1st and 15th, February 1st and 5th, March 1st and 15th, April 1st and 15th, May 1st and 15th, June 1st; for 1922 I need all except November 15th, July 1st, December 1st; for 1920 I need January 1st, February 1st April 15th, May 1st, June 1st, July 1st and 15th, September 1st, October 15th, November 15th, December 1st and 15th; for 1919 I need January 1st and 15th, February 1st, March 15th, April 15th, May 1st and 15th; for 1918 need May 1st, December 1st and 15th; for 1917 need January 1st, April 15th, December 15th; for 1916 need all except January 1st, August 1st, November 1st; for 1915 need all except May 1st and 15th, July 1st, August 1st and 15th, September 1st and 15th, October 1st and 15th, December 15th; for 1914 need all except April 1st, July 15th, February 1st and 15th, November 15th, December 15th; for 1913 need all except July 1st and 15th, April 1st, December 15th; for 1912 need all except February 1st, June 15th, August 1st, December 1st; for 1911 need all except January 1st, March 1st, April 1st, June 1st, October 1st, December 15th; for 1910 need all except March 15th, April 1st, May 1st and 15th, September 1st and 15th, November 1st and 15th, December 15th; for 1909 need all; for 1908 need all except February 1st, August 1st; for 1907 need all except November 15th; for 1906 need all except August 15th; for 1905 need March 1st and 15th; for 1903 need August 1st; for 1902 need January 1st, February 1st, May 1st, July 1st; for 1901 need June 1st, October 1st, November 1st; for 1900 need March 15th, May 1st, June 1st, September 15th.

Brethren, I would very much like to secure these numbers. I would also especially like to secure any copies of the paper that Elder Beebe published in Georgia. Any of the SIGNS published before 1900 will be appreciated, as well as any of the papers that the other factions of our people have published (before 1900). I will pay all postage, and, if necessary, will pay express. If I have to I can pay a small price for these papers. Please write me what you have.

Yours in sweet hope,

W. D. GRIFFIN.

LEBANON, Ohio, April 17, 1935.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find four dollars to pay my subscription to the SIGNS, and I hope you will pardon my neglect and delay. I have depended on my sisters to post my letters to you for a long time, as I am afflicted with partial paralysis of my lower limbs, and have not been to Lebanon for a long time. I hope you will forgive my negligence and continue to send the paper to me. I love the doctrine set forth in its pages, election, predestination, salvation by grace

alone, vested in Jesus, who is the light of the world, my only hope of salvation, if washed in the blood of the Lamb, shed for poor sinners like me, if I am one of them. When I look within I find nothing to merit it, but if indeed my hope is a good one it is of God, a gift unmerited. "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling." Low at his feet let me lie, begging for mercy and grace from his abundant store to cover all my sins. He has promised his own that his everlasting arms are ever underneath to uphold them. I love the brethren who write to the comfort of the poor and afflicted. I will be eighty-one years old the eighteenth day of next month. I am afflicted with rheumatism also, and it is hard for me to write, but God's mercy still follows me. He knows the way that I take (every step). The doctrine of salvation by grace is my hope, my meat and my drink. Daily my soul rejoices when I am made to trust in the sovereignty of God and his Christ over all his works. I love it, and hope it will be my theme daily, hourly, until he calls me hence to dwell no longer in these low grounds of sin and sorrow. Those nearest and dearest to me in the flesh do not believe this doctrine, and they cannot help it, any more than I cannot help believing it. I must be still and know that God is omnipotent and shall put all things under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. Our blessed Redeemer died the shameful death of the cross, was buried and rose again the third day, triumphed over death, hell and the grave, ascended to the Father, making intercession for his beloved the Father gave him before the foundation of the world.

The Old School Baptist church-house at Lebanon stands alone and silent on the hill top above the town. The church-house at Ridgeville, where my membership is, was torn down and sold for money. Are not these things the signs of the times?

God has taken my sister home to her eternal rest, also my father and mother, who never united with the church, but were believers, and Jesus told his disciples that he that believeth on me hath eternal life and shall not come into condemnation.

I did not think to write so much when I commenced, and it is not worthy to be published in the SIGNS, so cast it in the waste-basket.

(MRS.) EVA W. MORRIS.

DUDLEY, Muskoka, Ontario, July 22, 1935.

DEAR EDITORS:—The inclosed order would have been forwarded months earlier had it been possible. It is for renewal for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which is looked for eagerly in this dry land, for it surely comes laden with the things which are suited to those who are an hungered and athirst, and bring forcibly to our remembrance, In time of famine thou shalt be fed. What a privilege to be allowed to enjoy even an occasional feast of the meat the world knows not of. But I am sure we all learn we must eat (not pass by) the bitter herbs (nothing like bitters to give a keen appetite). Thus the Lord brings us in his own way to enjoy the

Lamb of God and acknowledge all his ways are right, even though they are beyond our comprehension, and he is to weary travelers an anchor, sure and steadfast, amidst the troubled seas of time, and we learn from time to time that he has not forgotten to be gracious. May we always desire to be submissive to his will.

My mother (Mrs. May) has been trying to send this postal order for the past week, but weakness and failing health prevented. She joins me in love to all the household of faith.

Kindly throw the mantle of charity over these hastily written lines. May the Lord continue to shed his light, especially upon those who are his mouthpiece, who forget not the command, Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, and to feed the flock. May the One who neither slumbers nor sleeps be with us always.

Your sister, I hope,

ALMA V. MORTIMER.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the First and Second Churches of Roxbury, at Roxbury, New York, September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1935.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Through the kind providence of an all-wise God we have been once more favored to gather together and have this privelege of hearing God's wonderful truth preached to us. We have faith to believe that the Spirit of God has been in our midst and made us zealous for the truth's sake, that truth which has made us free, and has made us to rejoice in Him who has all power in heaven and in earth. We are glad to report that God in his mercy has sent ministering brethren to meet with us at our Association who have declared to us the good tidings of great joy whereby we have been made to feel that the Lord is good. We desire a continuation of your correspondence and hope it is God's will for all visiting ministers and brethren to meet with us again.

Our next session will be held, the Lord willing, with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Shokan, New York, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday between the second and third Sundays in September, 1936, meeting to commence at 10:30 o'clock a. m., Daylight Saving Time, when we hope to meet you and your messengers again with that same spirit of love, good will and unity in the Spirit that has been shown in our past gatherings. Until then, brethren, farewell.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
ORVILLE WINCHELL, Clerk.

DONATION DAY.

As usual, there will be Donation Day at the Primitive Baptist Home, at Salisbury, Maryland. This year December 18th has been decided upon. All gifts other than money should be sent direct to the Home. Funds can either be sent there or to Henry T. Lefferts, 151 Coeyman Avenue, Nutley, New Jersey. All gifts will be much appreciated.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1935.

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ROMANS XV. 1.

"WE then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."

In coming before our brethren and friends, readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, we are pressed down with a realization of our unfitness for such things as writing for your comfort and edification, so much so, that were it not expected of us and did we not have a deep and, we hope, sincere love to the people of God, we could not possibly attempt to write. We are confident in this experience that we are not alone, for we know that this is the exercise of our fellow-associates, each one of them. "Who is sufficient for these things?" We believe that it is out of our felt need that the Lord at times favors us to speak a word in season to those who are weary, and it is out of weakness we are made strong, we are not therefore ashamed to confess ourselves as weak, especially when, by the good Spirit of God, we are favored with the company of God's dear saints. We remember our brother Paul, according to the grace given unto him, declared, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." Now let us get to our subject. Paul speaks of those that are strong, not strong in themselves, for such are not a help to the weak, but rather a distress, but strong in faith, weak in themselves, but strong in the Lord and the power of his might. Paul links himself up with those of like precious faith and says "WE." What a strength there is in the fellowship of God. You may be alone, separated by thousands of miles from the Lord's people who are contending earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, yet such is the exercise of spiritual life in your soul, teaching you your weakness and poverty, and the Spirit witnessing to your spirit of the strength and riches there is in Christ Jesus, that even you, alone as you seem to be, are not alone, but one of this wonderful fellowship. This "we" is the same people with whom Paul had a mutual faith and to whom his very coming among them would result in their being comforted together. It seemed to be Paul's happiness to link himself with this people by the personal pronoun "we." It is the

same "we" that know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain TOGETHER until now, who know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Thus in our text this same "we" are addressed by Paul. We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Pleasing ourselves and ignoring the needs of our brethren is very unbecoming, such an attitude certainly is not prompted by love, the love of God. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." None liveth unto himself. "And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more, those members of the body, which seem to be MORE FEEBLE, ARE NECESSARY: * * * and whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it." There were then as now those who were weak in the faith, "one believeth that he may eat all things; another, who is weak, eateth herbs."

Let us for a moment consider conditions as they prevailed at the time Paul wrote. The Jewish believers, many of them, had been brought up under the law that forbade them to eat certain meats. Some of them had a clear understanding, and felt that they could eat all things, while there were some who were weak and were still bound by legal traditions. Among the Gentiles there were those who could buy meat that had been offered to idols and knew "that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one."—1 Cor. viii. 4. "Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge," saith Paul, "for some, with conscience of the idol unto this hour, eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled." In ancient Rome there was so much of such meat sold in the public shambles that some fearful ones, lest they eat such meat, refused to eat meat at all and so ate herbs. There must have been quite a feeling over this. Some determining to eat such meat, and those others, weak, refusing, and eating herbs. Undoubtedly some were for cutting off the weak ones, making this and other things, such as holy days, a bar of fellowship. Paul discourages such an attitude, advising them to receive him that is weak in the faith, but not to doubtful disputations. The weak ones were brethren, partakers of the holy calling, like unto the strong, they had faith, but were weak in the faith, they were ignorant, yet perhaps thought they were wise; poor, yet thought they were rich. Perhaps they were in their walk just like the Laodiceans, saying, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knew not that they were wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. Such persons were perhaps hard to endure, and the easiest way would have been to avoid them and have little or nothing to do with them. But that would not do, for, saith the apostle, "We that are strong ought to

bear the infirmities of the weak." Not treat them as wicked men, dropping them from our company, but as weak brethren, bearing with them, *praying for them.* Yes, prayer is one way to bear the infirmities of the weak, not only praying for them, but more often it will become us to pray for ourselves, that the Lord would guide our way to keep his statutes still. Those who may profess themselves strong in the faith, have not a right faith, if it be not a faith that worketh by love. Paul says we ought to bear the infirmities of the weak. Are they given to lightness, and jesting, which is not becoming, it is their infirmity; are there truths which are our comfort, yet they cannot receive them, through lack of knowledge. There are some things which those who are strong cannot renounce or deny, but they ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, although not approving their errors and mistakes. There is much in that word "bear," it takes us to the heart of the whole matter. Charity, which "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." Thus charity, the love of God, the first love, which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us, this love which seeketh not her own, in the words of our text, pleaseth not herself. John wrote to the young men because they had overcome the wicked one, and to the little children because their sins were forgiven them for His name's sake. For Christ's sake then we ought to bear and forbear, for Christ's sake we ought to love one another, for Christ's sake we ought to bear the infirmities of the weak. True faith does consider oneself, not with a self-satisfaction, but with self-loathing, which makes each to esteem other better than themselves. Faith sees each one complete in Jesus,

"Faith says to the mountains, Depart,
That stand betwixt God and the soul;
It binds up the broken in heart,
And makes their sore consciences whole.
Bids sins of a crimson-like dye
Be spotless as snow, and as white,
And proves such a sinner as I
As pure as an angel of light."

When we consider such faith, given to such vile sinners, we ought to bear with one another, encourage and not discourage. "Let each one please his neighbor." Who is my neighbor? The one who has fallen among thieves! In all this there is encouragement for brethren to walk together in the fear of God, helping one another. How few there are among men with whom we can walk or have anything in common in these days. One only has to listen a short time to know that he would be a misfit in this present world. People of worldly institutions are too good for God's poor and afflicted people, who are encompassed with infirmities, groaning and travailing together in pain until now, and how good to have brethren who can bear with our infirmities; yes, even in our being unable to see with them in this or that, yet knowing we may differ from them and they can bear with us. Most of us can think of the patience and love of an earthly mother who bore with us, often not noticing things that others, who could not show us a mother's love, would condemn. How we bless her for her love and forbearance. When we think of

our lovely brotherhood, who have borne with us and put up with our ignorance, errors and hard speeches, shall we be like the man who was forgiven by his king ten thousand talents and who went out and found one of his fellow-servants who owed him an hundred pence, and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, "Pay me that thou owest"? God forbid. Christ pleased not himself, though he was equal with God, yet he made himself of no reputation. He bore our sins in his own body, and it is written, "The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen on me." Wherefore receive ye one another as Christ also received us, to the glory of God. Much of the coldness and barrenness in Zion to-day is a result of not esteeming other better than self, and a strong inclination of many to please themselves. To-day, as of old, some say, "I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided?" Whenever differences come among brethren, and there have always been differences, there is enough flesh about us all to make the ways of Zion mourn. Brethren, at variance, always exaggerate the seriousness of their differences. The subject matter of our text is that brethren shall drop doubtful disputations, and have a sympathy one towards another. When love runs through all our actions, then than which is lame is not turned out of the way, but rather is healed. God give us all to realize that he is strong who, having no confidence in the flesh bears the infirmities of the weak. Realizing how apt he is to speak wrong and to do wrong, he can and does have a fellow-feeling for others. To keep pace with the weak, one must be touched by the angel in the same place as Jacob was. To condescend to men of low estate, can only truly be done when one is made to glory in his infirmities. Jonah could preach to Nineveh when he had felt the WEEDS were wrapped about his head and he had known something of what it meant for the earth with her bars to be about him forever. Peter also had a false strength, a strength that would have laughed at the infirmities of the weak. He would go to prison and to death and not deny Jesus, but Peter was brought down, he was converted, then he could feed the sheep and the lambs and bear the infirmities of the weak. To consider others for their good to edification will often result in the prayer of David being our prayer, when he cried, "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am." Out of such frailty, compassion flows to the ignorant and those who are out of the way. Then thy light breaks forth as the morning and thy bread is dealt out to the hungry and the poor that are cast out thou bringest to thine house. It is in such strength that one visits those who are sick and in prison and is enabled to clothe those who are naked, and one is blessed to draw out his soul to the hungry and satisfy (by preaching Christ) the afflicted soul.

In conclusion, the strong have no

strength in themselves, but in the Lord, and the infirmities of the weak are easily borne under the influence of the love of Christ which constraineth us. G. R.

TO THE READERS AND SUBSCRIBERS OF THE SIGNS.

WITH this issue, I bid forewell to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as senior editor of the paper. To some of you, this may come as a surprise, but I have been considering this matter for a long time and believe it to be my duty to sever my editorial connection with the paper. When I first began my editorial work on the paper with the July issue of 1914, I was then in full accord with the original prospectus of the SIGNS put forth in 1832, and I am to-day in the same accord with those principles that I then was. To my mind, predestination is not the only principle for which the paper was intended to stand, but likewise for the resurrection of the body, the second coming of Christ and the eternal punishment of the wicked. These points are just as vital as any other points in the original prospectus. It has been proposed to me that I continue to write upon these subjects as I understand the Scriptures to teach them and let others occupy space in the paper to present the matter as they see it. This might be all very well if I were not on the editorial staff; but being on the staff, and being the senior member thereon, I cannot allow articles to be published in the paper subverting or denying the principles for which the SIGNS was originally intended to stand. It seems best, therefore, that I withdraw. I have no desire to tell others what they must or must not believe: that is not my province; but it should be my prerogative as senior editor to endeavor to keep the SIGNS true to it first prospectus. This I cannot do unless all matter proposed for publication be submitted to me for my judgment. Not that I think that my own judgment is better than that of any other person, but simply because an editor cannot be an editor unless he has full authority to publish or not to publish whatever may be submitted for publication. Some things have been published in the paper which I do not myself believe to be the truth and which I believe to have been subversive of the original prospectus of the SIGNS. This I cannot submit to and so I withdraw.

Yours in gospel bonds,

H. H. LEFFERTS.

[IT is with sincere regret we publish the foregoing notice from our senior editor, for we feel sure his good editorials will be greatly missed by many of our readers, but we are glad to say he has promised that from time to time he will contribute articles from his pen for publication in the SIGNS. We much appreciate all he has done for the paper during the more than twenty-one years he has been on its editorial staff, and we truly thank him. May God bless him and us, and guide our footsteps in the path he has marked out for us. We hope in our January issue to be able to inform our readers just how our editorial staff will be made up for the coming year.—PUBLISHER.]

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Brother John Secor.)

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the First and Second Old School Baptist Churches, at Roxbury, New York, September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1935, to the churches composing the same, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As it behooves us at this time to write a Circular Letter, we feel to be very weak and unfit for the task assumed by us, except as our mind shall be directed by the Lord. We feel impressed to present some thoughts on the sixth verse of the second chapter of Colossians, which reads as follows: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." This important admonition is not restricted to the saints and faithful brethren at Colosse unto whom it was addressed, but it applies with equal force to all the children of God in all places and throughout all time. The Scriptures are written for the edification and instruction in righteousness of God's children, and letters or portions of epistles addressed to the churches have no more application to those who are not embraced in the covenant of redeeming grace than a letter by the President of the United States to a member of Congress would apply to a member of the British Parliament. The Scriptures are profitable to the church, for whom they are written, for doctrine, reproof, admonition, rebuke and exhortation as the little ones in Zion walk that highway of holiness that the vulture's eye hath not seen nor the lion's whelp hath trod, and where the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err if he walks therein. According to our subject, none can walk in Christ Jesus except they have first received him; and in the preceding chapter we are told that such have been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, in whom they have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the image of the invisible God, the first of every creature; for by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell. Therefore it is apparent that to receive Christ Jesus means that the recipient of divine grace must be redeemed from the curse of a transgressed law, delivered from the power of darkness, be a member of the body of Christ, and have his peace with God made by the blood of the cross, and be reconciled to God and presented in his sight unblameable and unreprovable. Redemption must first precede life in its manifestation just as life in the creature, who is a new man in Christ Jesus, must precede his walk according to the precepts of the gospel. That which pertains to this

redemption is a mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but is now made manifest to the saints of God, which is Christ in them the hope of glory. Having this hope and this life, they are enabled to walk in him who is the author of their spiritual being. In this walk the grace of God and the mercy of God are just as needful as in the redemption of the saints, to which reference has just been made. It is a fact that the writer of the epistle referred to, should be solicitous about the walk of the church. Since Christ is the image of the invisible God, the walk of the people who constitute that holy generation and royal priesthood should reflect the image of Christ. As Jesus died upon the cross as a sacrifice for the sins of his people, and did present his body as a living sacrifice acceptable unto God, all believers in their walk must present their bodies as living sacrifices. This means to them a walk of denial of ungodly lusts and the avoiding of the appearance of evil, and the giving up of many cherished desires of the natural heart. If in the flesh Christ is dishonored by his people when their walk shows the fruits of the flesh in the various abominations of the flesh, when they fall astray, though they can never fall from grace, even if they often fall in grace, is not God glorified by his people when they walk uprightly, taking up their crosses and denying themselves and suffering for his cause and uncomplainingly bearing the reproaches of their enemies, the insults of the world, the misunderstandings of their brethren, and having unjust accusations made against them for his name's sake? If we walk with him we shall reign with him, and if we bear reproach for his sake we shall be glorified in him. Our brethren should tell us, not others, of our faults, and therefore watch over each other in love, in fellowship, in patient forbearance, each esteeming the other better than himself. Those who walk have need of light by day and by night. So those who walk in Christ have need all the time of him who is the light of the world. They have their fullness in Christ because in him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily. The more a person realizes the need of light the more careful will be his walk. The more a child of God is aware of his need of Christ, the more careful will be his walk. All brethren need to know their weakness and frailty in order that they may feel the power and presence of Christ savingly. Daily grace is then necessary for a daily walk in Christ, and a daily dying in one sense in necessary to a daily living. In walking in Christ, when God's children feel poor, then they are rich, and through their dear Redeemer possess all things. Those who have received Christ Jesus can never fail of eternal salvation, for no man is able to pluck them out of the Father's hand; and because of this glorious truth, their walk should be such as becometh the saints, that in it God may be honored and the little ones in Christ encouraged by a worthy example. The time of receiving Christ is experimentally manifested in their new birth of an incor-

ruptible seed by the word of God that liveth and abideth forever, when deliverance came manifestly from the guilt and bondage and condemnation under the fiery wrath of a holy law. Christ endured the guilt and shame of sin for his people and died the cruel death of the cross under its curse, so they walk in newness of life, after the Spirit, and not after the flesh, and can never again come under condemnation under that law which has been fulfilled by Him who is the end of the law for righteousness. None but quickened sinners can walk in Christ, and to so walk means to possess eternal life. Man cannot in and of himself receive Christ or walk in Christ. Those who attempt to do this, walk under the cloud of their own fanciful delusions, and unless they are quickened by God's Spirit, and led by God's Spirit, their walk will be but to their own eternal doom. How careful this truth should make us always that we examine ourselves, that we continue as praying characters desiring the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby, ever remembering that faith produces works of righteousness. As we need Christ to redeem us, we also need him to save us from an ungodly walk and vain conversation in the flesh, and to instruct us as we walk, that we may behold his eternal perfections in such measure as he shall deem good for us, and discern his eternal excellencies, and find him sufficient for all our needs.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
ORVILLE WINCHELL, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

UNETTA IRENE HAMILTON was born June 11th, 1850, in Lincoln County, Missouri, and passed away October 3rd, 1935, aged 85 years, 3 months and 22 days. She was one of nine children, the daughter of Thurston and Martha Knight, who, with other members of his family and friends, drove by wagon from Kentucky in 1849 and settled in Lincoln County, Missouri, later moving to Clay County, and from there to Kansas City, Mo., when it was known as Westport Landing. Her father owned the first stock yards in Kansas City, and their home was at Seventeenth and Walnut Streets. From this home, on May 23rd, 1871, she was married to Rufus E. Hamilton, of Estell County, Kentucky, where six of their seven daughters were born, the seventh being born in Clay County, Missouri. Of her father's family only one is now left, Mrs. Artie E. Elliott, of Louisville, Ky. Her husband preceded her in death August 18th, 1910. Sister Hamilton united with the Old School Baptist Church in Estell County, Kentucky, in the year 1873, and after coming to Missouri several years later placed her membership with a church of the same faith and order near where she lived. In 1923 she, with her three single daughters, moved to the present home, 1190 East 65th Street, Kansas City, Mo., and placed her membership with Mt. Vernon Church, and when they, with many others, withdrew correspondence and fellowship with Mt. Zion Association, because of the doctrine of predestination of all things and the unity of Christ and his bride, the church, she joined by relation with the little band that was organized into Mt. Lebanon Church, and ever remained steadfast, never wavering in her faith and duty, a lovely character. The past year, because of failing health, she was not able to meet with them regularly, much to her and her childrens' regret. On Saturday, September 28th, she fell, in her bedroom, breaking her hip, which, with complications, caused her death, but to her to die was gain, and we grieve not as those who have no hope. The seven daughters, with several grandchildren and one sister, survive. The daughters are Misses Lena, Margaret and Iva Hamilton, of the home, Mrs. Chowning Devers, Chillocothe, Mo., Mrs. G. C. Martin and Mrs. Artie Bailey, of North Kansas City, and Mrs. A. D. Martin, of Kearney, Mo.

The funeral was held at 2 o'clock Sunday afternoon, October 6th, at Morton's Funeral Home, in North Kansas City, and burial was beside her late husband, at Berry, Missouri.

Written by request.

ALSO,

MARY JANE KRIEGER, daughter of Thomas and Lydia O'dell, was born in Ray County, Missouri, June 16th, 1860, and died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Minnie Hawkins, Harrisonville, Mo., September 14th, 1935, making her age 75 years, 2 months and 28 days. In the year 1876 she

moved with her parents to a homestead near Maise, Kansas, and the following year she was married to Samuel Franklin Krieger, who had homesteaded six years before. After the death of her husband, July 6th, 1920, she sold the farm and spent the remaining years with her children in Colorado and Missouri. She was given a precious hope, and united with an Old School Baptist Church at Wichita, Kansas, in the year 1894, and was ever faithful and steadfast in the doctrine. When she came to live with her daughters in and near Harrisonville, and learned of Little Flock Church of her faith and order, she was not long in coming, and joined by relationship, and until her last sickness was always in her place and the tears which often filled her eyes showed forth her faith and her love for the brethren. A lovely woman, a lovely character, and we miss her, but desire to be submissive, for, for her to die was gain, and she went rejoicing in her Savior, telling her daughter, who gave her such constant care and attention, not to grieve, it was all right, and she longed for that rest. The surviving children are Mrs. Bynum Alexander, of Maise, Kans., Arhur L. Krieger, of Kansas City, Mo., Mrs. Elmer Roach and Mrs. Minnie Hawkins, of Harrisonville, Mo., F. O'dell Krieger, of Dallas, Texas, and Mrs. Charles Bixler, of Walch, Colo. She leaves also thirteen grandchildren and six great-grandchildren, and one brother, C. D. O'dell, of Mount Hope, Kansas.

Funeral services were held at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Hawkins, on Monday, at 9:30 a. m., conducted by her pastor, Elder T. E. Attebery, and Mrs. Hawkins' pastor offered prayer, and he and his wife sang. After the service the body was taken by train to Wichita, Kans., and laid to rest beside her late husband in Colwich Cemetery.

(MRS.) J. W. TAYLOR.

ALICE A. JONES, my very dear aunt, departed this life at 6:30 p. m. October 2nd, 1935, at the home of her son, in Detroit, Mich., with whom she had made her home for the past few years. She was born in Logan County, Kentucky, near Russellville, August 17th, 1852, making her age at the time of her death 83 years, 1 month and 15 days. She was the youngest of a family of seven children. Her parents were George and Frances Herndon. Perhaps some of the readers of the SIGNS knew her brother, Thomas C. Herndon, who was an able defender of the doctrine believed and preached by the Old School Predestinarian Baptists. Sister Jones was also a consistent member of the same church in Logan County, where she spent the greater portion of her life. She joined the church in her early womanhood, and never failed to fill her seat when she could be there. She was married to J. B. Jones December 24th, 1877. Her husband preceded her to the better world March 22nd, 1917. To their union five children were born, only two of whom survive, they are Robert B. Jones and Amos H. Jones. Also eleven grandchildren survive. My auntie (as I usually called her) was an invalid for six years prior to her death. None but the Savior and herself knew how much she suffered, for she never complained at her lot. The writer was with her quite a bit during her six years of being helpless. She wrote to me nearly every week when I was not with her. She and I talked and sometimes would sing the old hymns of Zion. Most of her letters would close with a prayer for her "dear little Nina," as she always addressed me. Oh how I miss her, but my loss is her eternal gain. I feel sure all is well with her soul, for she has talked and written to me concerning her "home, sweet home," and how she longed to be carried home, where she had sweet hope of being released from the sad bereavements, suffering, disappointments and heartaches of this life, where the redeemed of God will be gathered together. There we will know as we are known, and be satisfied.

To these two boys who were her constant companions, especially during the last three months of her suffering, I wish to say, Mother, the best friend on earth, is gone, yet we should not weep as for those who have no hope. Although she clung to you two boys to the very last, she was anxious to go home and be free from the suffering of this life, there to dwell with her Savior. You, my dear cousins, have had to say, Farewell, mother, and I have had to say, Farewell, Auntie, but we hope by the will of God to all be united, where we will see Jesus and be like him.

Written in loving remembrance of my precious auntie by her little heartbroken

NINA.

LEROY GARTON was born February 20th, 1863, and departed this life October 14th, 1935, at the age of 72 years, 7 months and 24 days. He was the son of the late Zachariah and Rebecca Garton. September 1st, 1885, he was united in marriage to Miss Lizzie Mayhew, and to this union were born four children: Mrs. Nettie Porter, now deceased, formerly of Garber, Okla, Wilce V. Garton, also deceased, formerly of Booker, Texas. The other two, Willard and Ralph, together with the widow, all of Booker, Texas, still survive him, also seventeen grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. He is also survived by one brother, Uriah Garton, of Garber, Okla., and three sisters, Mrs. Cynthia Allen, of Williamstown, Kans., Mrs. Bettie Wood, of Guymon, Okla., and Mrs. Sally Cockrell, of Durham, Okla., besides many other relatives and a host of friends. September 1st of this year Mr. Garton and his good wife celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary. A great number of their friends and neighbors gathered at his place to join in the celebration and express their good wishes. He was a staunch friend of the Baptists and his house was always open to them. He was sound in the doctrine and quick to detect any flaw in either doctrine or order of the church. He received a hope in Christ at the age of twenty-three

and although he lived past his three score and ten years he never saw his way clear to ask for a home in the visible church, but had the pleasure of seeing his dear wife and three of his children baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church. He and his wife and children entertained the First Kansas Association early in September. It was a pleasant season, and no one enjoyed it more than they, but, alas, just one month later the writer was called back to conduct the funeral of this noble man. His granddaughter showed me where he had marked his Bible the last time he laid it down, and requested that I speak from it: "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee."—John xvii. 1. I began at this same Scripture and tried to preach unto them Jesus. Mr. Garton filed a claim in the fall of 1904, and the following spring he with his family moved onto that claim, where he made his home ever since. He thus suffered many hardships incident to a pioneer life, but by diligence and perseverance he succeeded in carving a comfortable home out of a wilderness. His last illness was due to heart disorder. He was moved to a hospital in Shattuck, Okla., for treatment, but he succumbed in a day or two after arriving at that place. Our heartfelt sympathy is with his family. May the dear Lord strengthen them to endure. L. L. SCHENCK.

JEMIMA JANE CUMMINGS, our dear sister in Christ, departed this earthly life July 29th, 1935. She was born in Sullivan County, Missouri, August 6th, 1863. At an early age her parents, Joel and Phoebe Weaver, emigrated to Union County, Oregon, where she grew to womanhood and was united in marriage to Wodson Cummings, September 12th, 1880. To this happy union were born three boys and three girls, all left to mourn the loss of a mother's love, besides fourteen grandchildren, and the sad and brokenhearted husband. Sweet to his memory will ever be the years they spent together as they journeyed down life's pathway. While his heart is overwhelmed with sorrow and the way seems dark and dreary, what a consolation it is to know that we have a kind and loving Father who knows all our sorrows, and has said that he will be with us, that his grace is sufficient for us. Dear sister loved to attend her meetings, having joined the Mespah Church of Primitive Baptists at Touchet, Wash., August 26th, 1906, where she was always present when her health would permit her to be, to listen to the proclamation of God's precious word by her dear pastor, and her voice was always heard in the singing of the beautiful hymns. She left us the sweet assurance that she was going home to rest, where there is no pain or death, where God shall wipe away all tears. May we all have sustaining grace. The day is not far distant when we shall meet again, we trust, never to know the pain of parting. May the Lord's blessing rest upon the family and friends.

Written by a sister, OLIVE LEE.

MRS. TABITHA (MARTIN) OGBURN, our sister in Christ, was born July 18th, 1854, and fell asleep in Jesus October 18th, 1935, aged 81 years and 3 months. She was the daughter of the late Elder A. and Sallie Martin. Her father was twice married, and from the best information we have at hand sister Ogburn was the youngest of seven children born to the above named union, she having three brothers and three sisters, also two half-brothers and one half-sister. I do not know how many of her brothers and sisters remain, but I think most of them have preceded her in death. She was united in marriage to Charles Ogburn (I have not the date of their marriage), and to this union were born two children, one son, Fred Ogburn, and one daughter, Verta Ogburn. Her daughter is now married and living in some other State. Her son is married, and living near his mother's home place in West Virginia. Her husband preceded her in death many years ago. She united with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Kanawha County, West Virginia, in the year 1908, remaining a consistent member until death. She was blessed by grace divine to adorn her profession with a godly walk and conversation. It was my happy privilege to know her, and I yet hold in remembrance her visits in our home in our early youth, when during times during our Associations she would stay with us. She was endeared to me even then, for to know her was to love her. In more recent years I have many times in weakness visited her home church, where I feel to say as that acquaintance ripened that love, too, became more full, for I did indeed esteem her as a mother in Israel. Her seat was seldom vacant, only when health and strength would not admit of her being present. She will be greatly missed in the church. She was highly favored of her kind, heavenly Father with that deep spiritual understanding and conception of the truth. Of her it can truthfully be said that she was blessed with the hearing ear. Her chief delight seemingly was to meet with her brethren and sisters in the solemn worship of God when he, her God, was pleased to manifest the graciousness of his presence in the power of the Holy Spirit in those heavenly visitations which only the children of Zion know. She was well established in the doctrine of grace, and the sovereignty of Israel's God over all worlds, beings, things and events. She was blessed with a spirit of forbearance, and was humble, meek, and of a sympathetic nature, always speaking in kindness, never infringing upon the feelings of others, yet steadfast in the faith, uncompromising with error. She was one of those rare characters the gospel church is adorned with, which is the planting of the Lord. Her very life bespeaks far more highly of her sterling qualities than ever words can portray. Since her husband's death she had lived a great portion of her time alone, residing in the little town of Poca, W. Va. Death came to her as the result of heart failure, it is supposed, she being alone at the time, so far as creatures are concerned, yet not alone, for the

God of her salvation, who was her only hope in life, we feel was with her even in death. But oh the anguish of soul for her son, who found her dead in bed, where the evidence seemed to prove that she went without a struggle, she having her eyes closed and a placid, peaceful look on her countenance, and the covers of the bed undisturbed. I do not have sufficient data to give anything but a short notice. She is survived by her son and daughter, many near relatives, who I cannot name, with a host of friends to mourn their loss. I feel that we sustain a great loss, but our loss is her eternal gain. May God reconcile us all to his holy will.

Funeral services were conducted October 21st, 1935, at the place of her home, by her pastor, Elder Del Smith, assisted by the unworthy writer of this notice. Burial was in the family burying-ground in the cemetery at Poca, W. Va., where she was quietly laid away to await the call of her Lord.

Written by request.

H. J. BIRD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. B. H. Shearon, Tenn., $1; Attie A. Curtis, Maine, $1; G. C. Jordan, Mo., $4; Mrs. Henry Hayman, Md., $2; Mrs. David Farnie, N. J., $1; Hulda J. Leonard, N. Y., $1; Miss E. Annie Parker, Md., $3; "A friend," Mich., $2; Hewitt Osborn, N. Y., $1; Sarah I. Rittenhouse, N. J., $3; Elder F. L. Riffe, Wash., $1; Middletown and Wallkill Church, N. Y., $10.

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IN

NEW YORK CITY

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11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

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S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California; every third Sunday at 526 West Nevada Street, Ontario, California; also on forth Sundays as the Lord permits, at 3516 Franklin Avenue, Riverside, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.

T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE. Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW. Church Clerk.

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets on the first Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, Shelbyville, Ky.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

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"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 104. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1936. NO. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOLOMON'S SONG VII. 1.

"How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter!"

When a person has been in some distressing predicament, I have heard people remark that they would not care to stand in their shoes. Well, by nature all the offspring of Adam stand in the shoes of Adam, and it is a fearful and awful condition to be in before the holy and just God. Many who have no other than their Adamic shoes appear to be content with them on. They strut along proudly, filled with self-admiration, saying, How beautiful are my feet with shoes! Having their feet dressed with fleshly righteousness they deem that their goings are pleasing in the sight of their fellows, and of God also. Our feet do some very loud talking. Those who are swallowed in self-righteousness will be found making a tinkling with their feet as they are tripping along so nicely in their own eyes. They want the admiration of men. Ah! sometimes the daughters of Zion become haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks, and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, making a tinkling with their feet. But those who walk in pride, the Lord is able to abase; and if we are of God he will so deal with us that he will hush such musical feet and in our soul's desolations we shall sit down in the dust before the Lord our God. (Isaiah iii. 16-26.) How are you shod? Are your shoes fleshly or spiritual, earthly or heavenly? Are they old covenant shoes, or new covenant shoes that you wear? Before we were born of the Spirit and brought into the liberty and consolation of the gospel of Christ, we might dress our feet ever so finely, and, at our best we were only shod with defiled, carnal, earthly shoes, and in these shoes we were ever going astray from the paths of righteousness, all our steps were in transgression and sin. Now, when a sinner is called by grace and quickened into divine life, he ponders the path of his feet, and it will not be long before all the admiration of his

feet will vanish away, for he will see that his shoes, like those of the inhabitants of Gibeon who came unto Joshua, are "old and clouted." (Joshua ix. 5.) They are humbled, and it cannot be said of me, "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter!" Ah! it is our woeful experience to find that there is a print upon the heels of our feet, and in all our footprints the print of sin. (Job xii. 27.) As the Holy Spirit (who convinces of sin) brings in review before us our past tracks, we are made to bow down in shame and grief before our God, for all our footprints are iniquity. We now see that our feet were never beautiful; that we never took a step that was pure and right before the Lord our God. Our Adamic shoes, old and clouted, have made ugly, wretched tracks; yes, and as we are made to scan narrowly our goings, from the infancy of our journey to the present, we are constrained to see, and to confess with mourning before the Lord that we have been rightly called a transgressor from the womb. (Isaiah xlviii. 8.) What else but eternal punishment could be the doom of such a transgressor against God? "These shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." Our dear Savior saith, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."—John v. 28, 29. This solemn doctrine felt in the heart of a poor sinner, who sees no way of escape, sinks, and his soul overwhelmed in the gloom of the shadow of death, and as he ponders over his ways, apprehensions of the wrath to come, may well make his heart sad. Oh how blessed through the mercy of the Lord to sing,

"Preserved in Jesus when my feet made haste to hell,
And there I should have been, but thou dost all things well;
Thy love was great, thy mercy free,
Which from the pit delivered me."

There is, it is to be feared, very much tinsel religion among what is called "christianity;" but the pure gold will be found in those who are taught of the Lord. The true worshippers of the everlasting Jehovah are such as by divine grace worship him in spirit and in truth. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. (Psalms li. 17.) So you, poor mourning sinner, humbled under your guilt, and grieving over your iniquities, are precious in the eyes of the Holy One of Israel. His grace has brought you low, and has drawn a hell-deserving sinner like you to seek the face of the Lord. "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek."—Psalms xxvii. 8. You shall not seek in vain, mercy and salvation are in store for thee; and though thy ways are crooked, and thy footsteps are sin, the time of love will come, when the voice of the beloved Savior shall cheer thy heart, saying, "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter!"

The holy Scriptures testify of the manifold relations subsisting between

Christ and the church; among them is this one in our text declaring the royal lineage of the saints. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is Christ is born of God." Being born again, poor sinners are thus manifested as the seed of the Prince of Glory. The love of the Emmanuel, his labors and willing sufferings in behalf of his people to redeem them from under the curse of the law, and present them unblameable in his sight has raised them up from the depths of depravity and woe to sit with him in heavenly places, and to reign with him also; for he hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. Glory be to the Lord! "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory; for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them." All the apparel of the prince's daughter is the gift of the heavenly Bridegroom. Unto her he hath granted that she shall be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, which is her righteousness, presenting her all glorious and beautiful in his sight. The face of the church is comely with the imprinted loveliness of her Savior and King. Decked with his salvation and robed in his righteousness, the King greatly desires her beauty. He calls her name Hephzibah, for his delight is in her. (Isaiah lxii. 4.) And he speaks to her heart, saying, "Thou art all fair, my love: there is no spot in thee."—Solomon's Song iv. 7. "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter!" When the prodigal son returned home, the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe and put it on him, put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. Surely they were not "old and clouted." Ah, no! Look at him stepping out of those old, ragged shoes into the new ones. There he stands robed in beautiful garments, and those feet that in times past walked in iniquity, that strayed so far away, now shod. Oh how beautiful are thy feet with shoes! The father said, Bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat, and be merry, for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost and is found. And they began to be merry. (Luke xv.) It is written, The Lord will keep the feet of his saints. (1 Sam. ii. 9.) And the apostle speaks of them, "Having your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace."—Eph. vi. 15. Such are the shoes that the Holy Spirit puts on the feet of sinners called by grace. All the footsteps of the elect of God, when shod with these shoes, are right and glorious. What say you, dear children of God? Do you not wish your feet to be always shod with the gospel of peace? Oh beautiful shoes, that make beautious the feet of the blood-bought host. Thus shod, even a poor, vile sinner like me walks in the paths of peace and the ways of pleasantness. While we were walking in our fleshly shoes we were free from righteousness, we could never keep the right way. Our God, who knoweth, hath said, They are all gone out of the way. "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be

justified in the sight of God; for by the law is the knowledge of sin." The quickened sinner finds it very abasing, and a grief to his heart, that in his old patched up shoes his steps are ever straying from the way of holiness, that he yearns to walk in. He hungers and thirsts after righteousness, but the shoes of fleshly righteousness can never satisfy the soul of the sinner born again. While we were experimentally under the old covenant our condition, our health, our apparel, our shoes, everything, was wretched. But when the time to favor Zion was come, the set time was come, and the faith in Christ Jesus was given us, when Jehovah changed our estate. Precious faith in the blood and righteousness of the Son of God healed our diseases and brought cure to our sickened hearts. We were then arrayed in beautiful apparel, the imputed righteousness of Christ, and with our feet shod with the gospel of peace we could then walk in fellowship and reconciliation with our God. Our reconciliation was by the death of his Son, the Lamb of God. Oh sacred, wondrous mystery! Let me, a poor sinner, live therein. "I clothed thee also with broidered work, and shod thee with badgers' skin, I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk."—Ezek. xvi. 10.

In the shoes of the first man Adam he is a sinner, wretched, lost, undone. In the shoes of the last Adam, Christ, the Lord from heaven, we stand complete before God, redeemed from the law and its curse, Christ was made a curse for us. In these shoes we stand righteous before the Lord, for Jesus is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. And in my heart in such moments I have sung,

"The terrors of law and of God, with me have nothing to do,
My Savior's obedience and blood hide all my transgressions from view."

In these new covenant shoes poor sinners taught of the Lord experimentally find access unto the grace, the grace of justification, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. (Rom. v. 1.) Yes, the world, sin and Satan are put under our feet, while the melody of that triumphant song is put in their hearts. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."—Rom. viii. 34. Having our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, though our enemies, our sins, and Satan, death and hell array themselves against us, shall we tremble at the sight of them and flee? Oh no! Our feet are prepared (by faith in the blood and righteousness of the Captain of our salvation) to run through a troop. God giveth us the necks of our enemies. Shod with such shoes we trample them under our feet. (Psalms xviii. 40.) Our enemies are found liars unto us, and we tred upon their high places. (Deut. xxxiii. 29.) O, believer in Jesus, shod with gospel new covenant shoes, like thy Savior, "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and the adder; the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet." —Psalms xci. 13. Look at the sight! There goes forth the stripling against

Goliath of Gath. Is he prepared for the encounter? The world would say, No. With his staff and sling, and five smooth stones in a script, he draws near the Philistine giant. "Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into my hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord's, and he will deliver you into our hands. And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, and the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David. Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith."—1 Sam. xvii. 45-51. In the name of the Lord of hosts he stood upon the prostrate giant. How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O David! Having our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace we are enabled to walk even as Christ Jesus walked. (1 John ii. 6.) For our God giveth us these shoes for our feet, makes his grace so to abound toward us that we always, having all sufficiency in all things, abound in every good work. "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be."

When believers walk in the gospel ordinance of baptism how beautiful are their feet with shoes! Zacharias and Elizabeth were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments of the Lord blameless. How beautiful were their feet with shoes! When members of the church in Christ are found walking in the truth, walking in love, in tender-heartedness, forgiving one another, bearing one another's burdens, walking as children of light, how beautiful are their feet with shoes! What shoes have we on? Are we walking in pride, going on frowardly in the way of our carnal hearts? Then we have evil shoes on our feet. But, are we walking humbly with our God, walking in the old paths; the good way, then the evidence is that our feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. May our feet thus be shod; then it shall be said, "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter!"

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

JEREMIAH XXIII. 6; XXXIII. 16

"THIS is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

"This is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness."

There is a noticeable similiarity in the two Scriptures quoted, yet there is also a marked difference. Both of them are given in a catalogue of promises to the children of Israel to be made over to them after captivity. Though these things are to be understood literally, yet one would understand them to have their spiritual significance, in which light we would now consider them. The first mentioned Scripture is spoken as of a man, the second as of a woman. It is evident that both are speaking of the promise of Jesus Christ. The children of Israel had sadly departed from God, and for their iniquity had gone into captivity, but they were God's people, and though he chastized them, he gave them promise of a Savior, one who is "The Lord our Righteousness." Israel had no righteousness of her own, either nationally or as individuals, as is easily seen by reading her history. What a figure this is of the church as a whole, and as individual children of God. The first Scripture says, "This is HIS name." There is only one name given under heaven whereby we must be saved, and that is the name given by the angel to Mary when he said, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." This name in essence is the same as the one which is under consideration, for only in Christ's righteousness is there salvation for us. It is not merely A name, but HIS name. It belongs wholly and solely to him. No other has any right to it in the sense of it being essentially his. God hath given him a name which is above every name. Many great, blessed and wonderful things are spoken of this name from the first of Genesis to the last of Revelation, too numerous to mention here, but sufficient to give us food for thought were we to devote our whole life here on earth in meditation of it, and eternity will not be too long to spend in its praise. His name is "The Lord our Righteousness." It is said of Christ that in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, so that his name, "The Lord our Righteousness," is the righteousness of God.

In the second Scripture of our subject it says, "This is the name wherewith SHE shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness." Naturally speaking, when a woman becomes a wife, she takes the name of the man to whom she is married. So here the blessed state of the church is seen. It is the joy of a woman to be known by the name of her husband, for the desire of her heart is to be one with her beloved: so the church rejoices in her Beloved, and seeing she has no righteousness of her own wherewith to come acceptably before God, she cannot be satisfied with anything short of the righteousness she sees in him who to her is the Altogether Lovely. This can be said of the church as a whole, the bride of Christ, but each sinner who has been convicted of sin by the Holy Spirit, who feels to have been led captive by the devil at his will, welcomes indeed the promise of

being clothed in the robe of righteousness. Like Joshua, who was clothed in filthy garments (for our own righteousnesses are as filthy rags), with what thankfulness and joy do we hear this wonderful word: Take from him the filthy garments. Unable to extricate ourselves from the snares of Satan, with utmost relief our ears hear the word of our Lord, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee. Yes, the Lord has chosen his bride from among the children of men, and she hears instead of banishment, this comforting sentence, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of rainment. This is one of those "doubles" which she receives of the Lord's hands for all her sins: her own filthy garments taken away, and his robe of righteousness put upon her. Jesus is made unto us righteousness, and we are made the righteousness of God in him. The church as a whole is called "Jerusalem * * * * which is the mother of us all." As individuals, we are children of this union of Christ and his bride, and as such we should show forth whose children we are; for children bear the name and characteristics of their parents. John exhorts us in one of his epistles, calling us "little children," that we abide in him (Christ), that we shall not be ashamed before him at his coming. If we know that he is righteous, we know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him. 1 John iii. is a very searching chapter, and does, when we view ourselves in our state by nature, cut us off; but when we can plead this promise before God, that he shall be the Lord our righteousness, then it is full of comfort. The Lord gives us to live so that man may take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus, for Jesus said, By their fruits ye shall know them. These trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, when led by the Spirit will show forth whose they are and whom they serve, for "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" "Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

GRACE ASTON.

LOUISVILLE, Ky., March 20, 1935.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am alone this morning and feel like writing a few of my thoughts for your consideration, and I want to tell you I certainly do enjoy reading the dear old SIGNS; it is all the preaching I get. I have not heard an Old Baptist sermon since last August, at Antioch Church, at the Association, but I heard some able preaching there by the Elders present. Oh how I long for the company of the dear brethren and sisters, and to hear them talk of the goodness and mercy of our great Redeemer, giving him all the honor and praise, for it is all due him. As the poet says,

"Jesus is all the world to me,
My life, my joy, my all;
When I am sad to him I go,
No other one can cheer me so."

Yes, my beloved friends, he is the only

one we can go to for help, and he has all power, both in heaven and in earth, and none can stay his hand, for we read he has all power and none can change him, for he is of one mind and changes not.

I read of dear old brother I. R. Greathouse's death. He will be sadly missed by the readers of the SIGNS. I remember seeing him once at old Tirza Church, where my dear father was a member. That was when I was a child.

I want to tell you how I enjoy reading in the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES the letters from brethren Barnes and Sawin, sisters Peters, Workman, and many others. I also enjoy reading the editorials. Oh is it not wonderful to have the privilege of reading of others telling our feelings, travels and trials in this life when we are thousands of miles apart and have never seen each other's faces, and saying it is all of grace? Why is this? I feel that we have been to the same school and taught the same lesson, and by the same Teacher, Jesus Christ, our great Redeemer. We learned it was all of grace. I am a beggar at mercy's door. Dear ones, that prayer that once seemed to be the very breathing of my poor troubled heart: Lord, be merciful to me, a poor condemned sinner, has never left me, for I am so prone to sin. Like the poor apostle Paul, when I would do good evil is present with me, and how to perform that which is good I find not. Oh that I could be thankful for all His goodness and mercy to poor unworthy me. I know he is worthy to be praised, but it seems I cannot praise him as I desire, for so many things step in my way. I heard a minister once tell his congregation that we could not go by our feelings. He said some would say, I do not know whether or not I am a christian, for I feel so little, so unworthy. He said if we were christians we would know it. I thought, Well, I cannot agree with you. I cannot say that I know I am a christian, that I am born again. I have a hope which I received forty-six years ago last October, and, dear little ones, sometimes my hope is so little I almost lay it by, and sometimes it seems sufficient if I were called to die. This preacher said we could not go by our feelings, please tell me what to go by if we cannot regard our feelings. We read that we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. So there comes in the feeling, does it not? But here comes the question: I know I love the brethren (church), I love their company, their sweet fellowship, but do I love with the love that is required? And then with the poet I ask,

> "Could I joy his saints to meet,
> Choose the way I once abhorred,
> Find at times the promise sweet,
> If I did not love the Lord?"

I enjoy meeting with the dear church and hearing the doctrine of salvation by grace preached, and hearing the sweet songs of Zion, more than anything in this world, but I do not have the privilege very often. I get very lonely with no one to talk with who sees and understands as I do. I like to talk with those who have had the same experience and have traveled the same dark,

rugged road I have traveled. They are the only ones who understand and can enjoy it.

Now, my dearly beloved, overlook all my imperfections, which are many, and if you think this letter worthy a place in our valuable paper you may publish it; if not, cast it aside, and it will be all right with me.

If any of the readers have a mind to write to me I would appreciate it very much.

Your little sister in Christ, I hope,
ADAH CHANDLER.

East Orange, N. J., Oct. 21, 1935.

Dear Brother Daniel:—Meeting Sunday approaches, and at this writing to my sorrow I see no way open for me to be present. I hope the brethren will not say or think that since I came to the meeting and was received I have no more use for the church or brethren. Such a thought is not in my heart, neither is a thought of resentment in my heart against the great Disposer of all things. He still showers me with his blessings, beyond all that I can hope for. I do not feel at ease because of my absence from services, because I know I am missing a good feast of fat things delivered by our dear humble brother Dodson. Any one who loves the truth as it is in our dear Savior knows that our dear Elder always comes to us with a basketful of goodies, not wishing for himself any earthly praise, but feeling if interest is manifested in his message he is doubly compensated. He mostly brings messages of assurance, seldom any of admonition. As the holy Comforter feeds him, so he feeds us, and we never fail to receive for our needs. We sometimes want more than we get, which seems to apparently disturb us, but that is the work of the devil through our Adamic nature. Our naturalness is never satisfied, but our spiritualness is ever grateful, if it is true. To me, to be even recognized spiritually by our Lord is an event of momentous importance to me, as I feel to be undeserving of all of it. May the good Lord have mercy upon me, is my humble prayer. Jesus said, Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted. As I see it, brother, there are many things we mourn for in this world, but our Savior was not talking of things of this world. That places in our mind but one thing to mourn for, and that is righteousness. Before we were dead to the love of sin, only our losses in this world held any interest for us, and thus our mourning was only for those things, after the work of God's, grace, and only that, were our hearts changed, so that we mourned not for the things of this world, and that left with us but one thing to mourn for, and being shown so vividly our sinful nature there was nothing left to do but mourn for what we so evidently lacked, which was righteousness. What large and bitter tears does our unrighteousness cause us to shed, and our carnal nature laughs over our short comings. But Jesus says mourners shall be comforted, and his authority cannot be disputed by a true believer who knows from what he has been saved: total oblivion, by the blood of this very authoritative

Person. He is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, our Faith. In the hope that we shall be comforted, our faith in our holy Comforter is increased. Thus we live by faith. But our faith is based upon that substance and evidence which is Jesus Christ, by whom our salvation is accomplished, predestinated by our God of love. Wonder of wonders to us.

Give my love to all the brethren, in a hope that I will be privileged to assemble with you all soon. Love to you and yours.

IRA.

[THE foregoing letter was written to Deacon Daniel Dolson, Warwick, N. Y., by his brother, both in the flesh and in the Spirit, Ira T. Dolson, 544 Norwood Street, East Orange, New Jersey.—R. L. D.]

HIRAM, Ga., Sept. 16, 1935.

J. B. MILLER—DEAR BROTHER:—I have had a mind to write you for some time, but I am hardly able to do this writing (I am more than eighty-one years old). As age and afflictions come on I turn my eyes to the hill from which cometh my help, and more fully understand my weakness, and know that whatsoever is, is for the best, and that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, etc.

This Scripture comes to me, "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."—Isaiah xiv. 24. "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations."—Psalms xxxiii. 11. Hence, he declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. Then, since God declared from ancient times things not yet done, he evidently foresaw and decreed that every created object should drop out at such time to serve the purpose for which it was created, and that every event of time come to pass in keeping with that thought; and the sun, moon and stars move on in obedience with that thought that assigned them to their respective paths in the heavens. And since there is a time to every purpose, there is not a thing comes by chance. If so, and the smallest atom that is poised in space were to move without God's immediate notice it might disrupt the universe. So I am satisfied with the thought that foreknowledge and predestination are so inseparably connected as to agree in one and extend to all things from the falling of a sparrow; yea, from the falling of a hair to the dissolution of worlds. We agree that foreknowledge is an attribute. Webster says an attribute is a quality, a trait, a characteristic. Then predestination is an attribute. All that is of God, whether thought or deed, is charicteristic of his divine nature. He thought to love the children of the elect lady with an everlasting love, and predestinated them to be conformed to the image of his Son, and also predestinated them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ

to himself according to the good pleasure of his will, and they have this record, God has given them eternal life, and this life is in his Son, and when the fullness of time comes, because they are sons, God sends his Spirit into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father, and they are made to know him whom to know is life eternal, and after they believe they are sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession. And in death the spirit returns to God and the body to the dust, where

"Corruption, earth and worms
Can but refine this flesh
Till my triumphant spirit comes
To put it on afresh."

Yea, in the morning of joy the soul and body will be immortalized and unite with the Spirit, and all who have done good unto the resurrection of life will hear the Father's call, Child, come home; while those who have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation will hear the awful enunciation, Depart into everlasting shame and contempt. Then will be the final fulfillment of that saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass.

I hope to hear from you soon.

Yours in brotherly love,

W. A. HARRIS.

CANTON, Ky., Feb. 16, 1935.

ELDER H. H. LEFFERTS—DEAR BROTHER:—As I have changed my address from Cadiz, Kentucky, to Canton, Kentucky, I thought I would write a few lines and let my correspondents know my present address.

Will not the Scriptures be fulfilled? The foregoing thought has been on my mind for the last few days, and I find that for the Bible to be fulfilled there must be one sovereign Ruler, who rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and no one have the right to say unto him, What doest thou, Jehovah? or to say, Why hast thou made me thus? We find in Matthew i. 20, 21, "But while he [Joseph] thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS:for he shall save his people from their sins." Now notice what this Son's mission was: to save his people from their sins (and no one else). The people of the world would have us believe that it makes no difference where he was born, just so he was born, but we find that he must be born in a certain place, and he must be for a sign. Isaiah vii. 14: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Matthew i. 22, 23: "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel; which being interpreted is, God with us." Now, dear child of God, let us see about the place where he was to be born, and why he

was to be born in that certain place. Matthew ii. 4, 5: "And when he [Herod] had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judæa: for thus it is written by the prophet." Micah v. 2: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Matthew ii. 1, 2: "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." Verse 11: "When they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him." Now we see that the child was born, and if I know anything about Old Baptist doctrine, they believe that he was born according to the Scriptures, a Ruler and a Savior of Israel. We find in Hosea xi. 1, "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." Then he must go down into Egypt. And when Herod heard of the birth of the child, he commanded the wise men, "Go and seach diligently for the young child; and when you have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also." But we find that God warned them in a dream that they should not return to Herod, and they departed another way to their country, and the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, take the young child and his mother and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word, for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. David hath said, Psalms lxxvi. 10, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." Dear child, can you see anything like that in this case? I think I can. Herod became wroth and seeked to destroy the young child, and for the wrath of Herod, Joseph was commanded to take the young child to Egypt and stay there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son. When Herod saw that he was mocked of the wise men he was exceeding wroth, and sent forth and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, from two years old and under. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, Jeremiah xxxi. 15, "Thus saith the Lord, A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not." Then seeing all this fulfilled that was spoken by the prophets concerning the blessed Son of God, I have got to believe what the angel said: "She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." Jesus said he came to seek and to save that which was

lost. Paul said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." Then, if that was his mission in the world, I ask, Did he fulfill it? If so, how many do you suppose the modern missionaries of to-day are saving? I say, None. Jesus said, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do. Then it is complete.

I will close, as this is like the writer, very imperfect. Dear brother, do not let it crowd out other writing, and if it is dishonoring to the Almighty, throw it in the waste-basket.

As ever yours,

J. N. DARNALL.

SWEET SPRINGS, Mo., March 27,, 1935.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you this letter for your consideration and disposal.

"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another." The subject of debt holds us under the law. There is no law over love. Perfect love casteth out fear. Herein is the great struggle in the christian warfare. The love of money is the root of all evil; so this is the love of the world. He that loveth the world, hath not the love of the Father in him, yet none of us are entirely free from this state in the flesh; we serve the law of sin, and cry out, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" This is the thorn in the flesh; it worketh death, the death of the carnal mind and of the body. In this great struggle abideth faith, hope and love. Here is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith, and it is not of the world. How I rejoice when I meet the dear loved ones housed in this body of death, exhibiting the love of the Father, but unable to tell it in words (like the poor writer), yet carrying about with them the marks of the Lord Jesus. Then it is we cannot even lift up our heads, but our prayer is, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. Dear Elder John Moore once preached at a school-house, and after the sermon a man said to him, I see you have no message for the sinner. Brother Moore's answer was, I have been preaching to sinners during the last forty years, and I have never seen any angels in the room. So here we endure the suffering cross. When we lay it down we shall not exchange it for the crown, but leave it behind. Yet in the wonderful doctrine of grace it is declared, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."—1 John iii. 9. Here is the security of faith and hope through love. Truly the law is fulfilled in the tempest-driven soul. But our great High Priest is now at the right hand of God, there to make intercession for us, while we are partakers of flesh and blood, according to the Father's will. So we are crucified with Christ while we are in the flesh, yet we live; no, not we, but Christ liveth in us; and we live this life by faith in Jesus our Savior, who loved us and gave himself for us. And just as sure as we suffer with him, so shall we reign

with him. Blessing and honor and glory be unto his holy name forever.

"My trials and sorrows, my comforts and cares,
The spirit of prayer, and the answer of prayers,
The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined, and wrote in his will."

Yours in hope of a blessed immortality,

J. L. KILLIAN.

FAYETTE, Ala., June 12, 1934.

DEAR EDITORS:—My subscription is due since April, so I am inclosing two dollars to keep the paper coming another year. I have been reading the SIGNS for about forty years, and during all that time it has contended for salvation by grace. When I pick up a religious periodical and read far enough to find that it teaches that my future welfare in the world to come depends upon my deportment here in this world, I generally lay it down as something that does not reach my case. All the righteousness that will save us in death, and further on, is the righteousness Jesus wrought out here on earth while he was bearing and suffering for our sins. If this righteousness is imputed to us, and becomes ours, and is set to our credit in heaven, and our names written in his Book of life, then we are the people whose sins are open beforehand and gone on to judgment and our Elder Brother assumed the responsibility for all our sins, and the case was tried at Jerusalem, and the verdict rendered, which was the most peculiar verdict ever heard: Take him and crucify him, for I find no fault in him. Had there been a fault in him, he would not have been accepted as a sacrifice for our sins, and consequently no atonement, but he lay in the grave until justice was perfectly satisfied, and arose for our justification. And when he went to the apostles to map out their work for them, he first gave them to understand the power and authority he had, or, the right he had to issue orders to them. So he told them that all power in heaven and earth was given unto him. I am persuaded he wanted them, and us, to understand that there was no power anywhere to interfere with his orders. He was rightly named Jesus, "for he shall save his people from their sins." And now we can say truthfully that he has done everything that was necessary, or essential, to the salvation of all his people. I am very glad that Truth (Jesus) sprang out of the earth nineteen hundred and thirty-four years ago, when righteousness looked down from heaven. (God's holy Spirit overshadowed the virgin Mary, who was of the earth and earthy.) It was then that the Lord gave that which is good, and our spiritual land shall yield her increase. And it is His righteousness that has gone out from him that has set us in the way of his steps, if indeed we have ever been placed there. Please turn to the eighty-fifth Psalm and read the last four verses, that you may the better understand what I mean.

All the foregoing has come to my mind since I sat down to send you my subscription, so do what you please with what I have written. I want the SIGNS and would be pleased to have it filled with better letters than my pen can produce.

G. W. BERRY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1936.

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TIME is fleetng and in its wake are to be found many changes. Doubtless, one of the most surprising and regrettable to many of our readers was the resignation of Elder H. H. Lefferts as editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which appeared in the December number. His name has been a notable service, and his able editorials will long be remembered by those who have followed his pen for nearly a quarter of a century.

The publisher having asked that we accept the editorship, beginning with this issue, we will undertake to assume the responsibilities that go with it.

Having been an associate editor of the SIGNS for over twelve years, and our readers being acquainted with our style of writing and doctrinal views, they are more or less prepared to know what to expect from us. We hope they will remember that it is expected of a man according to that which he hath, and not according to that which he hath not. In our efforts at public speaking, it has not been our custom to make lengthy apologies or to enlarge upon our own weaknesses, but rather to stand in our lot and preach the gospel with such ability as the Lord has been pleased to give. We plan to follow this custom with regard to our new duties. Volumes could be written and the half never be told regarding our lack of qualification for this important work, but we are satisfied that our brethren are fully cognizant of the fact that in our flesh dwells no good thing. For many years we have felt greatly handicapped because of our lack of natural wisdom and education in our dealings with men, and we would, therefore, urge all to avail themselves of every opportunity to gain this kind of knowledge, but the wisest man that ever lived was made to realize that his earthly wisdom did not put him in good stead with God. We are persuaded that only God can supply our need, and we hope we crave that wisdom which makes one wise unto His salvation and that understanding and knowledge of spiritual things which comes only by revelation. We believe absolutely in a revealed religion and are convinced that no man by searching can find out God. He dwelleth in the secret place, which no man can attain unto, except God be with him. Jesus said, "I thank thee, O

Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." He also said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Strange as it may seem to natural reasoning, God has not called many of the wise and prudent of this world, "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish thngs of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the foolish things of world, to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence."—1 Cor. i. 26-29. This truth is clearly demonstrated throughout all of the Scripture. How often do we find those who were called of God to go in and out before his people confessing to their being slow of speech, not eloquent, the least in their father's house, and to being but a child. The Lord spake to one, Jeremiah, saying, "Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak." Even those who have been accounted among the wise of the world have become, as it were, fools for Christ's sake, and have found themselves in full fellowship with the apostle Paul when he said, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." In the language of this great apostle, we would rather speak five words with understanding, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue. Saith he, "Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?" We hope we shall not wander outside of the realm of these in coming before our readers from time to time. Like all human beings, we are sure to err and make mistakes, but we wish to assure our readers that we shall earnestly endeavor to so conduct the SIGNS as to have it continue to be a messenger of glad tidings, of peace and joy to the hearts of God's afflicted and poor people. In facing the future, we realize that we know not what even a day will bring forth, but we have faith to believe that the hand which has sustained the paper for over one hundred years will not be withdrawn at this epoch of its history, and we shall confidently look to Him who hath delivered, and who doth deliver, and trust that He will yet deliver us, or give us grace sufficient for all of our needs. It is good to remember that God is "Omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent." (1) God is omnipotent: That is, he is unlimited in power and is working all things after counsel of his own will, and none can

stay his hand, or need ask, What doest thou? He rules the land, the sea and all deep places, and beside him there is no power, for the powers that be are ordained of him. (2) God is omniscient: That is, he is infinitely wise, and knows all things. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."—Acts xv. 18. In all the ages past and in all the ages that are to come, nothing ever has or ever will occur but what God had full and complete knowledge concerning it, and that before the dawning of the morning of time. Nothing, therefore, can possibly transpire but what he has made adequate provision for all the consequences. (3) God is omnipresent: Who can comprehend what this means? Recently, we heard Abraham Lincoln quoted over the air as having said to his loved ones and friends in taking leave of them to go on his perilous journey to Washington to assume the responsibilities of the great office of President of the United States: "God will not only go with me to Washington, but he will remain here with you, for he is everywhere at one and the same time." Dear child of God, be assured of this: Whoever you are, or wherever you may be, regardless of the station you fill in the universe, you are not alone, for God is with you, and "If God be for us, who can be against us?" "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

"This God is the God we adore,
Our faithful unchangeable Friend;
Whose love is as large as his power,
And neither knows measure nor end.

'Tis Jesus, the first and the last,
Whose Spirit shall guide us safe home;
We'll praise him for all that is past,
And trust him for all that's to come."

As we stand upon the threshold of this new year, we feel we can greet our readers with every confidence and faith in Him who is able to do exceeding and abundantly above all that we may ask or think, and unto his care and keeping we commit our all, believing that whatever he does will be for the best, since the Judge of the whole earth can do no wrong. We hope the brethren will continue to write for and support the paper, and that God will direct the steps of us all in the way that we should go.

R. L. D.

AN EXPLAINATION

We sincerely regret this the first issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the year 1936 is so late in reaching our subscribers, but during the last several months many things have occured to delay us with our work. For the past year or more our eyesight has been failing so we consulted an Eye Specialist who forbade us to use our eyes and ordered an immediate operation for the removal of a cataract.

We make this explaination that our Subscribers and correspondents may know why their paper has been delayed and their communications remain unanswered. We hope that it may be the will of God to soon restore our sight and enable us to continue our work as heretofore.—PUBLISHER.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 16th, 17th and 18th, 1935, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations, meetings and churches with which we correspond, sends greeting in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—We can do no better at this time than to bring to your remembrance some things which were embraced in the Corresponding Circular Letter of the Corresponding Meeting which met in 1841, five years after the Corresponding Meeting was first formed out of churches which withdrew from the old Columbia Association because of high-handed authority which that Association endeavored to unscripturally wield over individual churches. The Circular Letter of that year was based on the Scripture in Isaiah, twenty-first chapter, eleventh and twelfth verses: "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night." And now we quote as follows: "We therefore need a correct knowledge of our way at night as well as in the morning. Hence as we more need a knowledge of our way at night, so we are more disposed to inquire carefully concerning it. In the morning, everything is bright and cheerful, and we are much inclined to rely on our own discernment to find out for us the way; or if we inquire it will be carelessly. But when night overtakes us on our journey, and we know that on either side is the enemy's border, in which snares and traps are laid for our feet, with what care shall we inquire out the way, and seek way marks that may be felt as well as seen; and how cautiously shall we keep in the way; not carelessly verging to the right or to the left. Brethren, is not such the race now set before us? Let us then run it with patience, looking unto Jesus, and constantly bearing in mind the inqunctions, 'Inquire ye, return, come.' May the Lord give us the spirit of inquiry, of watchfulness and obedience; that from our many wanderings, and fallings short, we may return, come."

At this point, let us interrupt the quotation long enough to say that the church of this present dispensation has the more sure word of prophecy, the infallible inspired word of God, the holy Scriptures, unto which we do well to take heed as unto a light which shineth in a dark place until the day dawns and the Day-star arises in our hearts. We ought not to lean to our own understanding, but commit our way unto the Lord and he will direct our path. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."—Psalms cxix. 105.

And now we resume the quotation: "As certainly as that not one stone was left upon another in Jerusalem, so certainly will Babylon sink like as a millstone in the depths of the sea, and that the whole mass of that WICKED, the man of sin, shall be destroyed by the bright-

ness of his (Christ's) coming. Yes, and further, we believe and assure you, brethren, that, as the disciples, after their Lord had showed himself to them by many infallible proofs for forty days, saw him taken up and a cloud received him out of their sight, he shall again come in like manner as they saw him go into heaven. Remember that this was a VISIBLE and PERSONAL being taken up from them into heaven. In like manner must he come again. (See Acts i. 2-11.) When he thus comes, he will come without sin unto salvation, will come to receive his disciples unto himself, yea, they will be caught up to meet him in the air, and so will be forever with the Lord. Then indeed will it be that an eternal morning will have burst upon the church; a morning never to be succeeded by night, nor to be overcast with clouds. Brethren, let us patiently wait the approach of morning, and in the meantime let us watch and be sober, and not sleep as do others. Let us obediently return and come as the pillar of fire leads the way, and thus avoid being scattered. But, brethren, let us beware of turning from the pillar of fire to any ignis-fatuus, any meteor that may arise from the damps of our own brains. Such vain imaginations will only lead us into the swamps of error, and scatter us one from another. Brethren, whilst the letters from the churches generally lament the state of coldness and darkness which generally prevails, yet they seem to be generally awake to the importance of cultivating brotherly love; several of them urged the subject upon the meeting. Not that indiscriminating thing called christian love, or charity which embraces everything going under the name of religion, but that love commended in the New Testament, which centers in God as he is revealed in Christ as the Fountain of all loveliness and of all good, and in Christ Jesus as God's way of salvation, and which readily flows out to the image of Christ in whomsoever seen, and to the cause of the precious Redeemer; but which draws back with pain, sorrow and disgust, form antichrist wherever beheld in any of its features."

Here ends the quotation. All the above is as pertinent and fresh, and as applicable to us now, as the day it was written. Such is the perennial vitality of spiritual truth which never lacks the dew of its youth.

We greatly appreciate having your messengers present with us at this meeting, especially visiting ministers, and have gladly received your messages and welcomed the preached gospel of the grace of God. The next session of this Meeting is appointd to be held, the Lord willing, with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, at the usual time next year, when we shall hope to again have your messengers and messages.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Mod.

G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

(Written by Brother John L. Hastings.)

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Salisbury Church, Salisbury Wicomico County, Maryland, October. 23rd, 24th and 25th, 1935, sends greetings to the several associations and meetings with which she corresponds.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As it is our privilege, as well as our duty, to address you once more in the form of a Circular Letter, we wish to call your attention to a portion of God's written word found in the epistle of James, first chapter, twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh verses: "If a man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." We are told in the beginning of this epistle that James, a servant of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, was writing or addressing the twelve tribes which were scattered abroad throughout the land, and we read in God's word that after God had called Abraham and he by faith had left his own country to seek a land that he knew not of, and according to God's promise had a son born as one out of due time and according to the command of God, had taken him up into the mountain to offer him as a sacrifice, his faith not wavering, believing that God would fulfill his promise that in his (Isaac's) seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed, feeling and believing that if he took his son's life God would raise him up again. But, instead, God prepared as a sacrifice a ram caught in the thicket by the horns. Then we are called to meditate for a few moments on the mysterious way in which Isaac's two sons were born and how Jacob deceived his brother Esau and his blind father and was made to flee from home, and when he was brought where all of God's chosen people are brought, where darkness has overtaken them and they are made to lie down with nothing but thick darkness, the cold ground for a bed and a stone for a pillow, here in a vision the Lord God of heaven reveals himself, and for the first time in his life he is made to know that it is the Lord that has been leading him all the way, and he called this place Bethel, and said, The Lord is in this place and I knew it not. Little did he know of the many trials and disappointments that were to befall him, of how he would have to serve fourteen years for the one he loved before she could be his bride, and how in after years his son Joseph, whom he loved, should be taken away, he thinking that some wild beast had devoured him, but to learn in his old age that he had been deceived, that he had been sold into Egypt that he might save his father and his brother and their posterity from starvation. When they feared his wrath, Joseph said, Fear not, you meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. Now here we have Joseph as a lively type of Christ. Joseph and his brothers represent the twelve tribes of Israel which James refers to here.

Then we have recorded in God's word the wonderful way in which God delivered them out of the hand of Pharaoh. He made them stand still and see the salvation of the Lord leading them across the Red Sea, dry shod, and destroying their enemy that was pursuing them. Then on the banks of deliverance we are told they sang a song of deliverance, saying, We are delivered out of the hand of Pharaoh, but the horse and his rider were drowned in the sea. Then the Lord, we are told, called Moses up into the mount and gave him the law, but how soon was the goodness of the Lord forgotten: when Moses came down they were dancing around and worshiping a golden calf. How soon will man forget God and deceive his own heart. False religion springs up at once. Then the commandments were given to the twelve tribes, and did they keep them? No. Man has never been able of himself to keep one jot or tittle of God's law; no, never will. James said, Brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations; know this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. He is exhorting his brethren to good works, and condemning the works of man, showing how impossible it is for man to do anything of himself, and showing us the difference between fals religion and pure religion. If a man seems to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, his religion is false. If one tells us that he believes in the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ and the doctrine proclaimed by the prophets and apostles, and then goes about cursing, lying, stealing drinking and all manner of evil, we would at once say this man is deceived, and his religion is vain.

A few words about the fatherless and widows. They are representing here the chosen people of God, the little children spoken of in the Scriptures. There is a time when every heaven-born soul is made to feel that they have neither father, mother, husband or friend, shut up in utter darkness, made to lie down with a stone for a pillow, without God and without hope in the world, and when we are given a desire to visit those thus exercised, we speak words of comfort to them, we are then fulfilling God's command, breaking to his little ones the bread of life that comes from God alone.

We, the churches of this Association, believe in a God that has all power, both in heaven and on earth, who controls all things by the word of his power, believing that he predestinated all things as they have come to pass, believing in a God-given faith, believing that Christ is the Son of God, and that he was born of the virgin Mary, and died for our sins and arose for our justification, and is seated at the right hand of God to make intercession for us.

May the God of grace comfort all who mourn, is our sincere prayer.

G. E. COULBOURN, Mod.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

GEORGE F. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

PLEASE announce in the SIGNS that **ELDER P. W. SAWIN**, of Lexington, Kentucky, passed from earth December 1st, 1935. A suitable obituary will appear later.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

MRS. HELEN BADGER WILSON, widow of William R. Wilson, who died in 1917, departed this earthly life at her late home, 256 South College Avenue, Newark, Delaware, September 27th, 1935. She was the daughter of the late Elder J. N. Badger, and her mother before her marriage was Miss Helen Hinkley, of Maine. Mrs. Wilson was born in August, 1874, in the Old School Baptist parsonage at Warwick, N. Y., her father then bbeing pastor of the church there. She was married February 4th, 1915, to William R. Wilson, Elder B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., officiating at the marriage. Mrs. Wilson had three brothers, all of them now dead, her last brother, Gilbert, having died about two years ago. She had been in declining health for many months prior to her death. She loved life and all living things, and clung tenaciously to life. While she never made any public profession of religion in the way of uniting with the church, yet she was a great helper of the Old School Baptist Church at Welsh Tract, was a frequent attendant of the meetings and was always ready to help in entertaining for the meetings and in contributing of her means to the support of them. My wife and I have spent many delightful hours in her home, and we greatly miss her; and she is being missed by all of us at Welsh Tract, for the reason that she was a helper of the cause. Many who read this notice will remember times when they themselves have been the recipients of her kindness and hospitality. She was interested in helping the poor and those in need in the community where she lived. Those who had the management of social service work always sought her cooperation.

The funeral services were held at her home, then she was buried in the graveyary at Welsh Tract by the side of her husband. In the years before her marriage, she had taught school in Virginia and in Massachusetts, and also, I think, in Maine, from whence had come her father and mother. She had endeared herself to a host of friends wherever she went.

H. H. L.

GEORGIANNA EVANS was born July 24th, 1870, and died July 21st, 1935. Her funeral and burial took place on her sixty-fifth birthday. She was one of a family of eleven children, three dying young, eight living to become grown: seven girls and oe boy. The brother and one sister preceded the deceased in death only a short time. She was a daughter of the late John A. and Sally A. Horsman, of Mardela Springs, Maryland, at which place the deceased lived all her life. At the age of seventeen years she was married to Archabod H. Evans, also of Mardela Springs, Md., on February 14th, 1888. To them were born nine children, two dying in infancy, leaving seven to mourn, together with a lonely and sorrowful husband. The children are as follows: Mrs. Robert A. Gambrill, Mrs. Nolan L. Beach, of Mardela Springs, Md., Mrs. Milton J. Parsons, of Salisbury, Md., Victor M., Aquilla H., G. Dewey and W. Elderice, of Mardela Springs, Md., also the following grandchildren: R. Allen Gambrill, Jr., Norma Lee Evans, G. Dewey Evans, Jr., and Betty Anne Evans. I feel to say in behalf of all of us left to mourn, That while we have lost our mother and wife, and a good one, and while we miss her continuously and sorrowfully, that it would be wrong for us to wish her back in this world of si and sorrow, and that God, who gave her to us, has only taken home that which belonged to him, also that our loss is her eternal gain. May God in all our losses and crosses enable us to say, "Thy will be done." Not only a kind and devoted wife and mother wa she, but one always willing and anxious to go to those in distress, that she might if possible relieve suffering or say a cheering word. She was never too tired or busy, day or night, stormy or fair, to go. While she was not a member of the church, she was firm and strong in the belie of salvation by grace, and the absolute predestination of all things.

Funeral services were held in the meetinghouse of the First Baptist Church, of Mardela Springs, Md., conducted by Eldr H. C. Ker, of Delmar, Del., assisted by Mr. L. D. Carmack and Mr. T. S. Dixon, of Mardela Springs, after which her body was laid to rest in the family burying-ground, on the farm of George E. Cox, amidst a host of sorrowing relatives and friends, to await the summons from on high, when all that sleep shall hear, and come forth.

Written by her daughter,

MINNIE E. GAMBRILL.

ON November 23rd, 1935, occurred the death of **JOHN HICKS**, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Isaac McIntyre, near Jefferson, New York, of chronic myocarditis, from which he had suffered for a long time. He was seventy-three years old and unmarried. For a great many years he had been grievously afflicted with a form of rheumatism that crippled him and prevented him from taking part in the more active avenues of work and business, and which grew worse, until he became helpless and bed-ridden, yet he bore his terrible sufferings with sublime patience. The last years of his life were spent with Mr. and Mrs. McIntyre, who cared for him and provided for him a home and all care within their power, ministering faithfully to him with loving patience and unfaltering tenderness and devotion. There was little that medical treatment could do, and he continued to decline until the end came, rather suddenly.

The funeral services were held November 23rd, at hte Wilcox funeral home, in Jefferson, and the interment was in the cemetery at the Old School

Baptist meetinghouse, at East Jefferson. The writer officiated at the funeral. Deceased is survived by several relatives, anmong them being a sister, Mrs. Isaac McIntyre, of Jefferson, N. Y. Mr. Hicks was fond of attending meetings of the Old School Baptists faith, loved the doctrine of salvation by grace, confessed himself a poor needy sinner, and relied upon the precious promises of the new covenant kept by Jesus Christ, and by his people in him. He felt that there was salvation in Him alone, and in his conversations he gave evidence of having been taught by the Lord. He was a man of many excellent qualities and traits of character, and of good reputation among men generally. He will be much missed.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

POETRY.

HEBREWS XII. 29.

(For our God is a consuming fire.")

What is this that man amazes?
Moses sees the bush aflame,
So he turns aside to view it,
Wondering what the fire can mean.

Sometimes people on a journey
Take more baggage than seems good,
So the christian pilgrim often
Carries with him dross and wood.

But the Lord the scene commanding,
Views his people's wood and dross,
So he sends a fire to purge it,
Not their faith will suffer loss.

But the works of flesh and Satan,
Pride, self-righteousness, esteem;
These must perish in the fire,
Ere God's glory can be seen.

Men are only sons of Adam,
All corrupt, vile and base;
Nothing but the Savior's merit
Saves and keeps them by his grace.

If the ones whom he has chosen,
Leave the highway which he trod,
Turn again to human cisterns,
They will learn the wrath of God.

For our God is fire and fury,
Love and mercy, truth and power,
And he chastens whom he chooses.
So they learn to love him more.

Moses saw the bush afire,
But the fire consumed it not;
Though God's children often vex him,
Yet his mercy faileth not.

Let us then, through fire and river,
Trust our God to see us through,
Make him Captain of our journey,
With him we can all things do.

FLOSSIE I. FAULKNER.

ALLABEN, New York.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

"A friend," Wash., $2; Mertie E. Bailey, N. Y., $1; Mrs. J. E. Chadwick, Texas, $3; A. A. Carmichael, Ontario, 50 cents; A. W. Bloomfield, Mo., $3; Mrs. Charles H. Shoemaker, Colo., $3; Gilbert B. McColl, Manitoba, $1; Woburn Church, Mass., $10; J. N. Wageonheizer, N. Y., $1; Jesse C. Ellis, Ohio, $3; Dr. Thomas H. McColl, Ontario, $3; Lillie M. Jenkins, Pa., $3; Anson Quint, Maine, $3; Martha E. Holloway, Md., $1; Mrs. Mary Duffus, British Columbia, $3; Mrs. J. E. Bolton, Mo., $1; Mrs. Joab P. Stout, Ill., $2; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $1; Judson Zeh, N. Y., $2; "A friend," Va., $3; Florence H. Disharoon, Pa., $1.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California; every third Sunday at 526 West Nevada Street, Ontario, California; also on forth Sundays as the Lord permits, at 3516 Franklin Avenue, Riverside, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets on the first Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, Shelbyville, Ky.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Cloth binding. Price, $1.25 each. One dozen or more, ordered at the same time and all to the same address, one dollar each. Cash must accompany orders. Make checks and money orders payable to

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

BENTLEY, Ill., Jan. 5th, 1936.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find money order for $2.00 Dollars to pay for another years subscription for a paper I have been taking since about 1894, and am glad to be able to say that to me it has generally stood for the same principles, few have been the letters and editorials I have not enjoyed in their entirity. The articles I most enjoy are the ones setting forth in unmistakable language how God in his great love sent his only forgotten Son, full of grace and truth, into the world to suffer and die for us that we through him might have everlasting life. I surly, if I know my own mind, feel we should contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, should strive to (as the church) walk in the straight and narrow way, enquire after the old paths, see that not a stake is moved, not a cord broken. This we must contend for if we are to be counted among that number designated a peculiar people. I feel the one who contends the most earnestly for the wellfare of this home for this peculiar people is he who, with heart frought with love gently and firmly councils with those of the household in an orderly way against the errors that may be creeping in and mar the peace and beauty of the church. I sometimes feel that one of the greatest menaces to our church home is the indiference on the part of some to being careful enough in reading the scriptural instruction of how careful we should be to build after the patern, but not more careful in the building, than in keeping the same in proper repair, ever going around about her seeing that none of the stakes of the Doctrine are moved or any of the cords of love are broken. A thought often comes to my mind that there are two important things to know and testify to that are very essential to the maintaining of a good church home here in the world. 1st, the doctrine of salvation of sinners, by grace and grace alone. 2nd, having this grace bestowed

on us we should be charitable towards those who may have different ways of expressing their views on Scriptures, so long as we are agreed on the fundamental principles of the doctrine of God and our Savior. This last, to my mind, covers so much ground, when we view the general widespread disturbance among our members, when we read the so-called defence of the Gospel presented by those who would have all believers in the truth as it is in Christ, believe the nonessentials just as they have them arranged in their minds, which is according as they have light, and all the light any of us have is such as is given us of God, and just because some otherwise good brethren come along arguing some question like, soul sleeping, two seed and different ways of viewing predestination and each call their opponent names or nicknames we do not like to be called. This is all unprofitable. It is the means of making a brother an offendor for a word, and brings disorder in what perhaps otherwise would be a sweet and attractive home.

It ought not to be and would not be if all would bear more with one another's short commings. Let us see what Paul says about charity: "Though I speak with the tongue of men and of Angels, and have not charity I am become as sounding brass and a tingling cymbol."

I would enjoy writing on could I feel my words would be taken in the spirit in which I feel, and that is, that we should all endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Now, as we go into the New Year of 1936, may the SIGNS go on with this thought much in view, that, they the editors and publishers shall see nearly as possible that no matter be allowed to appear in its columns that will cause disturbance among its peace loving readers or to any other true Primitive Baptist paper whose aim is to feed those of the Household of God who read after them.

After closing the foregoing, our very dear sister, Elder Claude E. Webb's wife called on us and told us of the good meetings they had just come from in Rock Island, where help was called to constitute a Church. This is where Elder J. O. Symmonds has been holding monthly meetings for some time. The help called were Elders, Boxter Hole, Claud E. Webb and J. O. Symmonds, Deacons Earl W. Poland and Orville B. Prior. of Senyrna Church.

There were a number of members form these churches here served by Elders, Webb and Symmonds. All report a real warm spiritual meeting. It is about 110 miles from these churches to Rock Island. Brother Oliver Webb is their church clerk. Brother J. O. Symmonds was called as pastor for one year.

May God bless us all with such blessings as he sees we need, while he takes our hand in his and leads us all gently along lifes rugged road in his own unerring way, is the prayer of your unworthy brother.

LEONARD H. HOPKINS

NOANK, Conn., Jan. 8, 1936.

DEAR ELDER DODSONS-

If I could broadcast every time I think of you and the church in New York, you would hear from me more frequently, but the trouble is to get my thoughts on paper. I go on from day to day doing the regular household task as if it were the all important thing in life and it does have its place, but after it is done I seem to have little energy left to try and get my reluctant brain to working, so I neglect writing many times, fearing I cannot express what is in my heart. Then I wonder if there is any thing in my heart to express, for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." It seems from what I have already written that the abundance of my heart is old age, but I feel at times I have that hope which anchors, sure and steadfast. I find nothing but hopelessness, helplessness and unprofitableness in the flesh, so I cannot look to myself for support and surely there is nothing anchored in the so-called churches today. It was brought to my mind forcibly at Christmas time that Christ gave us nothing to remember him by but his humility. "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." "In the world ye shall have tribulation," nothing else for the child of God. Dead with Christ, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; as he was in the world so are we. The flesh does not like this, it wants honor and glory, that is why they celebrate Christmas and Easter. There is nothing in the humility of the gospel to attract the flesh, but the spiritual man is given at times to rejoice, knowing that though the outward man perish the inward is renewed day by day.

When your letter came I felt I must answer it right away for it was the cry of a mourner in zion and while the word tells us it is a blessed state it is also very hard to bear. To be impelled to go forward yet to be uncertain whether to follow the promptings or not feeling uncertain of their source is indeed most trying to the soul. Jeremiah knew all about it for he said, His word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones and I was weary with for bearing, and I could not stay, for I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side, etc. You may not be able to realize it at this time, but the Lord will not forsake you, he is only establishing you in righteousness, and though tossed with the tempest and afflicted, he will yet bring you far from oppression and thou shalt not fear from terror, for it shall not come near thee. There are times when the Lord seems slack concerning his promises, but his ear is ever open to the cries of his children, and I am sure the time will come when you will look over this wilderness and say, the Lord was there. Then shalt thou return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. For behold the day will come that will burn as an oven, but unto you that fear his name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings.

When I took out your letter to answer it I found this unfinished reply

that I had forgotten I had written, so I send it, as it seems more of an answer to your anxietes.

In loving fellowship to you and all the church.

EVA ASHBY

CAPE CHARLES, VA., Jan. 15, 1936

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:-

For quite some time during my convalesence, I thought of Elder Rowe, and his condition, and thought of writing him, and finally did so about the time of the holidays, and just received the very interesting letter dictated by Brother Rowe, which I inclose, and ask that you please put it in the SIGNS, so that his many friends can read it and see just what he says about his condition. It is wonderful to me to see that altho he is sorely tried and affiicted, that he still has the abiding faith to sustain him, and would that I could have it more, as I seem to be so much of the time in the position of the poet when he wrote "Prone to wander Lord I feel it" etc.

I now hope I am being restored to health, and also hope I may be reconclied to the Lord's will in this and other things.

G. E. COULBOURN

DEAR BROTHER COULBOURN:-

Yours received and very highly appreciated. It seemed wonderful to me that one called upon to suffer so much and so long as you have, should think of me, a poor worm of the dust, and spend a few moments in writing to let me know you were thinking of me. I have often thought of you and always wished that the Lord might grant your physician to find a cure for your trouble. Am glad that you are able to be with your Churches again, and altho you said you felt cold and uninteresting, yet I am sure to your hearers it has been sweet and comforting. You asked if I had ever felt as you expressed yourself. I answer yes, dear brother. My efforts have many times seemed to me purely mechanical, but if my experience counts for anything, neither you nor I can judge of the value of our efforts to comfort others at all times, for sometimes when it seemed to me that there was nothing worth while in what I was saying, I have found that it came very sweetly to some of my hearers. And at other times when I felt very much elated and enjoyed what I was saying, I heard nothing from others in regard to their feelings about it.

As to my physical condition, I am still in total darkness and have been for six months, and am in quite a weakened condition, and suffer with rheumatism in my shoulders and arms and hips. I have not been out since the second Sunday in October. Sometimes I am fairly comfortable, and feel like singing; again, my condition so overcomes me it melts me to tears. As to my spiritual condition, if indeed I have a spiritual mind, it is with me as it has been many years passed, sometimes in the dark sometimes in the light. Sometimes as I sit here in natural darkness, some portions of the Word come to my mind and I have sweet thoughts concerning them, and if not deceived I see the beauty of

the Lord's love and tender mercy to the children of men.

May God bless and comfort you my brother and grant us all grace sufficient for our day and trial.

Yours I trust in fellowship of the gospel of Christ.

JOSHUA T. ROWE

[Our readers will all be glad to hear from both Elder G. E. Coulbourn, of Cape Charles, Virginia, and Elder Joshua T. Rowe, of Baltimore, Md. These brethren are highly esteemed by us and we sympathize with them most deeply in their afflictions. We stopped off in Baltimore early in November and had a good visit of several hours with Elder Rowe. For the information of our readers, we would state that Elder Rowe was stricken with total blindness on July 11th. During our visit he reclined on the bed with bright lights shining down in his face, but said he was in total blindness to the things of this world. While he confessed to being cast down, we felt greatly refreshed and built up ourself during an exchange of experiences in the ministry, when we had been made to believe of a truth that God had blest us to preach the gospel of His blessed Son. We pray God's blessings upon both of our beloved brethren.—R. L. D.]

ANABEL, Mo., Jan. 2, 1936

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I never have written any thing worthy of publication in the SIGNS but I would like to see this little article published if you deem it worthy of a place in the SIGNS. It has been in our home ever since I can remember, and my grandparents took it before that. I love the writers for the doctrine they are contending for the same truths our bibles teach not fearing man, but God, who searchest all hearts and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts. Most of the writers are strangers in the flesh to me but I feel a near kinship to them I have meet Elder Mort Craig of St. Joseph and heard him deliver some able sermons not bound in the spirit but as Paul wrote not with enticing words of mans wisdom but in demonstration of the spirit and of power. I have also met Elder J. O. Symonds of Ill., and heard him, he is an humble tho fearless defender of the doctrine of our Savior Jesus Christ. I am sending my subscription to the SIGNS for another year. The Lord has blessed me with enough to pay for another year and I had hoped to have a little extra to help send to some more unfortunate but will have to be contented with this for I am thankful for the many blessings I have, so many more I feel than one so unworthy as I deserve . Hoping the Editors and writers of the SIGNS will be blessed throughout the new year to comfort and edify the saints and you publishers blessed to send forth the pure truth with no uncertain sound.

MRS. J. R. McAFEE

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1936.

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HEB. XII, 12 TO 16 INCLUSIVE.

"Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; lest there be any fornicator or profane person as E'sau, who for one morsal of meat sold his birth-right."

In consideration of the above admonition we feel the Apostle Paul addressing the Hebrew brethren has given words worthy of our faithful consideration at this time. The first of our text mention hands, knees and feet, and we know as well as all other scripture, this is inspired by the spirit to the Church Of God, and we do hope we are members of that body, and as we address you upon this topic we are expressing our feelings, and applying the same to ourselves.

The hands, which hang down are not being used performing work which should be performed or are so full the weight is too great for their physical strength, which we might note the things pertaining to the Church Of God, and those who labor among us, as Paul was writing to the Heb. Brethren. We do feel that often times brethren neglect to consider the welfare of the Church, but rather give way to their own individual feelings, and by so doing they are not taking heed to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers, and to feed the Church Of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood, Acts XX, 28.

In lifting up we give strength or support, which we desire to do in our words to you, and we hope you will consider them spiritually.

In strengthening the feeble knees we take part of the burden, that is upon them that they might stand erect, and feel strength sufficient to bear the burden, which is upon them and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but it rather be healed.

We know the nearest to any object is the strait line to that point, and the

nearest to right is true spiritual righteousness, and when we discover spiritual weakness we should bear with such until forbearance ceases to be of virtue, then according to the gospel evidence given by the apostles we should stand in the strait path, and not turn neither to the right nor the left to please men; if forbearance strengthens our brother our fellowship should be stronger, for him.

Following after peace with all men does not imply that we should fellowship disorder, and ungodliness in the Church Of God, but that we should be kind, and affectionate to men that the truth should not be censored as making men haughty, and high minded but rather humbled, and that we should not think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think.

We feel Paul wrote these quotations to the Heb. admonishing them to live as becometh saints in the love and fellowship of the truth.

We are minded of these Eastern Assns., that have stood together since the Black Rock Convention, and have been recognized as the Signs Of The Times Baptist, and have been quoted as believing different things according to expressions of individuals, but the truth of the matter is stated in the articles of faith as set forth in the Prospectus, and are embraced in the Copy-Right, and we shall give to our readers the wording as they were recorded; SIGNS OF THE TIMES; *by an association of brethren,* devoted exclusively to the Baptist Cause—Maintaining invioably the following scriptural sentiments:

1st. The existance, Sovereignty, Immutibility, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfection of the Great Jehovah. *There are three that bear record in heaven, The Father, The Word, and The Holy Ghost, and these three are one.* 1st John V-7th.

This first article contains the sentiment of the baptist in these Assns. regarding the sovereignty of God, and His perfection in all of His attributes, and also the unity of the God-Head.

2. The eternal absolute predestination of all things.

In this article the assertion bearing God's power to predestinate according to His fore-knowledge the fullness of all things, and bring to pass as He purposed both heaven and earth.

3rd. Eternal and unconditional election.

We are assured, that our brethren who have preceeded us believed as we do, that God elected the vessels of mercy in Christ Jesus before the Foundation of the world, and according to the purpose of God, Jesus stood as a lamb slain for the sins of all the elect.

4th. The total depravity, and just condemnation of fallen man.

We are in accord with this article, and what we mean by the depravity of man, that when Adam partook of the forbidden fruit he was a willfull transgresser of God's Law, and became subject to the penalty God decreed should be when he gave to Adam the law in the garden of Eden, and there being no recompence in Adam for his sin he became dead in trespasses and sin, and led captive by the devil fulfilling the desire of mind,

and the lust of the flesh, and is by nature the child of Wrath.

5th. That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only. This article can be expressed in few words, that Jesus came to save His people from their sins.

6th. The sovereign, irresistable and (In all cases) effectual work of the Holy Ghost, in the quickening and regenerating the elect of God. As has been contended for all these years we believe that the sinner is dead in trespasses and sin until he is quickened by the Son Of God, and by the virtue of the spirit he cries Ab'ba Father, and this is the spirit of adoption by which we are made heirs of God.

7th. The finale perseverance, and eternal happiness of all the Sons of God, by grace.

This article expresses that we believe that Jesus brings His People off more than conqueres, and gives eternal life full of joy and peace. Where they shall ever dwell in His presence, and be triumph in the love of God, which is that great Love where with He loved us before the world began.

8th. The resurrection of the dead and eternal judgement.

This article in short expresses the power, and everlasting sovereignty of of God, which testifies that we believe that God could save His people according to His Purpose, and His righteous judgement against the wicked is eternal. We do not believe there is another point of doctrine set forth in the scripture of the new testament that has exercised the minds of men more, and the conflicting expressions common to men often cause great trouble among brethren.

Paul wrote to the church at Corrinth, and said "Behold I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the vectory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1st. Cor. VX; 51 to 58 inclusive.

But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept. 1st Cor. XX, 20.

These are wonderful truths, and many other quotations that have strengthened the brethren throughout generations past by which they have contended for the resurrection of the dead, and eternal joy and peace for poor sinners, which embraces the entire creature soul; body and spirit. We do confess there is a wonderful mystery in the salvation of a sinner. Without controversy great is the mystery of Godliness.

We fail to see why brethren should wrangle about God's doings.

9th. That the Church of Christ is composed exclusive of baptized believers and to her are given able ministers of the New Testament, and the scriptures are the only rule of faith, and practice of the Saints of God. This article has been the order of the Churches in all these Eastern Assns. for over 100 years, and to digress would mean gross disorder.

10th. That there is no connection between Christ, and the State; and as touching the proposition of marriage between them The Hon. R. M. Johnson in his report on the Sabbath Mail question, has amply revealed our faith. We do not have the writings of The Hon. R. M. Johnson so we will leave that for the reader to ponder according to our faith.

"THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES" will be decidedly opposed to Bible-Tract and Missionary Societies; Theological Seminaries, Sabbath School, Unions, etc., etc. Waging war with mother Armenian, and her entire brood of institutions. This is the copy of the articles of faith published by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe as an assurance to his subscribers of the principles of the doctrine of salvation by grace, which his publication would be published, and we do feel that these things have been as closely adhered to as was possible, and we feel to assure our correspondents, that we shall according to the measure of the Grace of God continue to uphold the doctrine set fourth in these articles, and we do not have any middle grounds but contend earnestly for the truth as it is in Jesus, and we truly hope to have the mantle of charity to cover our imperfections, and we truly hope you will give us your support in subscribing, but secure as many new subscribers as possible and by so doing you will hold up the heavy hands of our Publisher, and give courage and strength to the weak. May we take heed unto ourselves lest we should cause bitterness to arise, and cause our brethren to lose fellowship for us. May the grace of God keep us is our prayer.

C. W. V.

REQUEST ANSWERED.

HOUSTON, TEXAS

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,

DEAR BROTHER:-

You will please give your views on the Scripture herein stated: Luke 11th chapter, commencing at the 21st verse through the 26th verse inclusive, especially verses 24, 25, and 26, and oblige.

B. F. LILES

The Scripture referred to is composed of words accredited to Jesus himself and, therefore, is important and full of significance. In order that we may have it before us, we quote in full the verses referred to herewith:

"When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. And

when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first."

It would seem to us that the "strong man" referred to is none other than the man of sin, or in other words, Saten, that old serpent the Devil; nor do we understand him to be presented as being some tangible or physical crature, but rather "the unclean spirit." The very first command which the Lord gave to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden concerned the "tree of knowledge of good and evil," and ever since Eve yielded to the subtilty of the serpent and they transgressed God's law, the earth has been filled with these two vital principles. God is good and the personification of all that is good, while the Devil has been a liar from the beginning and is the personification of all that is evil. In the first chapter of Job the record is that God inquired particularly of Satan, saying, "Whence cometh thou?" His reply was, "From going to and fro in the earth, (flesh) and from walking up and down in it." There are different places in the Scripture where physical creatures are used to typify Satan. We will refer to but a few. In the seventeeenth chapter of 1st Samuel, we have presented to us the challenge of Goliath, of Gath, of the Philistines, made to the Israelites, and of the acceptance of that challenge by young David, who slew him with one of the five smooth stones which he had in his shepherd's bag. Error, or that which is opposed to God, is here presented as a terrible Giant, but those who have faith in Israel's God know full well that it can utterly be put to nought by the word of God, and when they are strong in the Lord they do not fear what man can do unto them. In the Book of Daniel, there is portrayed the character of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, whose kingdom was likened unto a tree that grew and was strong until "the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth: The leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all: the beast of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it." He felt that he was sovereign and that his power reached out over the whole earth. The Lord, however, had children in that day and time who would not obey his decree to fall down and worship the image which he had set up (witnesseth Shadrach, Neshach and Abednego), and God had a Prophet who did not shun to speak the truth courageously in telling Nebuchadnezzar not only what would happen to him, but also to his kingdom, all of which came true. Then Babylon's king had to acknowledge the supremacy of Israel's God over heaven and earth and all that in them is. Wicked powers rule and reign until the God of heaven sets up His kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, and then all other kingdoms are broken in pieces and consumed.

Jesus referred to Judas Iscariot as a devil: "Have not I chosen you twelve,

and one of you is a devil? John 6:70 He also referred to Peter as Satan: "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Mat. 16:23, but it is quite evident that he had reference to the spirit that was in them: "Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve;" (Luke 22:3) "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? (Acts 5:3) "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." (Eph. 2:2) It would appear quite plain from the language used by Jesus in our text that he was referring to "the unclean spirit" in a man. In the same chapter, just a few verses preceding our text, it is said, "He was casting out a devil." The Scripture abounds with such evidence, but we will quote only one more passage at this time: "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils." Mark 16:9. He also taught that we cannot serve two masters: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." Mat. 6:24. As we stand in nature, we are servants of sin and Satan's biddings we will do. The heart of the natural or unregenerate man is his "palace," and his desires, passions and lusts, which are Satan's goods, are in peace, until the "stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him," then he taketh away or from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

Then there is a separation, the precious from the vile, and the truth of Jesus' words are experienced in the soul: "He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth." "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, now may Israel say: if it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us: Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us: Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul: Then the proud waters had gone over our soul." Psalm 124.

The portion of the text to which our brother has asked particular reference follows: "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. And he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first." How glad we are that God laid help upon one that is mighty; that there is one "stronger" and more mighty than the Devil, who can drive "the unclean spirit out of a man" who sweeps the floor and garnishes the

house wherein he takes up His abode. This indicates to our mind the thoroughness and completeness of his work. If only it were his pleasure to keep out "the unclean spirit," we would never experience trouble any more, but, alas: we shall cry again to him to undertake for us, to come to our rescue and deliver us out of our distresses. So long as we are in the flesh He will suffer this "unclean spirit" to return and often, it seems, he brings with him "seven other spirits more wicked than himself," or a hosts that no man can number, to try and tempt us as never before. Sometimes, for purposes of His own, the Lord seems to turn over some of His anointed ones to the Devil and they sink down deep into the horrible pit of sin.

Perhaps, our thought along this line can be better expressed by our reciting some of the details surrounding a case with which we are somewhat familiar. There was one whom the Lord had blessed with this worlds goods, with a lovely family, friends and good brethren who entrusted to him their funds, etc., and in the course of time it became evident that the Lord had also not only blessed him with a knowledge of the truth, but had bestowed upon him a gift to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ to his people. He was set apart to the work of the gospel ministry and we ourself heard him preach, as we felt, in demonstration of the Spirit and with power, but later this one became a curse to society, deserting his wife and home for that of another, defrauding his brethren and brought, in general, unapproachable shame and disgrace upon the cause of His Lord and Master. Was not such a state far worse, indeed, than his first, or before he pretended to know or serve the Lord? We cannot conceive of a more terrible thing than for one after once having been delivered from the powers of darkness to turn again to his wallowing in the mire and thus drag down the dear name of Jesus into the filth of abomination. Yet, is there one who can in his own strength withstand the wiles of Satan? Not only must our Lord, by His saving grace, gather out of nature's forest the timbers with which to build his house, or church here in the world, but "except the Lord keep the city, the watchmen waketh but in vain."

In conclusion, we wish to state that our understanding of the things referred to in our text are applicable to the Lord's people here in this life, for we would not wish to be understood by our readers as believing that anything can effect the standing of one of God's little ones in eternity. Jesus said, "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

R. L. D.

CORRECTION.

In the January issue on page fifteen, eight line of Editorial first column the word "name" should have been omitted. The sentence should read, "His has been a notable service," etc. On page sixteen, first column twentieth line should read "God was chosen the weak things of."

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

We earnestly beg you to bear with us during our affliction, for we have a cataract on each eye for which we have already submitted to two operations at St. Luke's Hospital, Newburgh, N. Y., and as soon as the condition of the eye will permit we expect to submit to the third, and, we hope final operation which our doctor encourages us to believe will restore the vision to the eye operated upon. The first operation was performed December 26th last, and since that time we have been unable to use our eyes for any kind of work, and were it not for the the kindness of two very good friends would have been unable to have gotten out the January and February Editions of the SIGNS. Having for many years performed all the mechanical work ourself, there was therefore no one acquainted with the work upon whom we could call, so the friends above mentioned volunteered their services in getting out the paper for us, and we feel sure you will all join us in thanking them, and overlooking all that may be amiss, as theirs was purely a work of love. This issue contains but sixteen pages all they could prepare at this time but if the Lord sees fit to restore our sight we hope to be able to make it up to you at some future date.

To you who have sent in remittances wee would say that owing to the rush of work in getting out the January issue we did not take the time to correct our subscription list, therefore the date on the little pink address slip was not changed, but you were given credit on our books. Again asking your indulgence until we are able to return to our duties, and thanking you for your consideration.

We are yours to serve,

(Dictated)

GILBERT BEEBE, PUBLISHER

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER P. W. SAWIN, our beloved uncle, departed this earthly life late in the evening of December 1st, 1935, at his home, 825 Melrose Avenue, Lexington, Kentucky. He had almost reached the age of 92 years, having been born January 2nd, 1944, near Edinburgh, Indiana, the son of James H. and Caroline Harvey Sawin, pioneers of Bartholomew County. He was the last member of the family of thirteen, ten of whom lived to manhood and womanhood, three sons being ordained ministers of the Old School Baptist faith.

In September, 1859, he united with Conn's Creek Church, probably, for Lewis Creek Church was dissolved in 1860, the father, mother, several brothers and sisters taking their letters to Conn's Creek Church. He was ordained to the work of the ministry in December, 1861, when he was not quite eighteen years of age. In this seventy-four years what a number of sermons full of truth and grace and love have been given by him to those who delighted in hearing him declare the doctrine he loved and preached, so full of strength to the needy. His membership at the time of his death was in Elk Lick Church, Sadieville, Kentucky, and he with his grandson, Ira White, attended the service here in September, 1935. He greatly enjoyed this service, but was too feeble to speak but a few moments. He had many friends among the brethren and sisters in Canada and the Eastern states, for he

had made many trips among the churches there in former years, before the failing eyesight kept him closer at home. Even then he went among the home churches. We have heard him speak gratefully of the kindness always shown him by the people he met. Elder Sawin was united in marriage with Cordelia E. Tipton, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Tipton, April 29th, 1865, in Coles County, Illinois, where he lived for a short time after his marriage. She was a true helpmeet in every sense of the word, passing on in 1918 at Shelbyville, Kentucky, where they were living at that time, having moved to Kentucky in 1890. He was pastor of several churchs in Kentucky for a number of years, only resigning the care of the last one at Sadieville about four years ago on account of the advancing years. He grew physically feeble, but the strength of his spiritual faith never grew less. Two daughters died in infancy many years ago. He leaves one son, Ira L. Sawin, Indianapolis, Indiana, two daughters, Mrs. Goldie S. White, 825 Melrose Avenue, Lexington, Kentucky, and Mrs. Vola S. Williamson, Garden City, Missouri, one grandson, Ira H. White, Lexington, Kentucky, and one granddaughter, Jacqueline Williamson, Garden City, Missouri.

Funeral services were conducted in Shelbyville, Kentucky, by Elder George L. Weaver, pastor of Elk Lick Church, who spoke most comfortingly to the family and friends. Interment was in the cemetery at Shelbyville, beside his beloved dead.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." What more of comfort can we say to his dear family!

IDA FRANK STOUT

It becomes my sad duty, once more, to Chonicle the death of our dear sister in Christ, ANNIE BELL LINDSEY, Nee Chilton, daughter of Joseph and Martha Chilton, who was born in Henry County Kentucky, July 25th, 1861, Died November 23rd, 1935. She was the widow of Jesse Abraham Lindsey, who preceeded her in death, August 22nd, 1926, to this union were born Six Children, the two youngest died in infancy. The remaining Children are Mr. Campbell E. Lindsey, Louisville, Ky., Mrs. Lucy Dean Pyles and Oren M. Lindsey, of Campbellsburg, Ky., Mrs. A. M. Sargeant, Lansing, Mich., and one stepson, E. Mat Lindsey, Des Moins, Iowa, Two Grandsons and Two Granddaughters. In the early part of 1900 our Sister received a hope in Christ, and after a hard fight with her self, on account of her own unworthyness, for many months, She told the Cane Run Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church of the Lords dealings with her, and her unfitness to live and asked the Church to receive her, as it was the only place where she could find any comfort, saying Thy people are my people. She was received, and baptized by Elder P. W. Sawin, the Pastor, in June, 1900. The same fall she moved with her Family to Shawnee, Okla., then some time later to Poplar Bluff, Mo., and in December, 1919, back to Kentucky, where she resided until her death.

Sister Annie through all her journey remained faithful to the faith she received over 35 years ago. Her delight was in the meetings with the Church, always filling her seat unless prevented by sickness, always ready to give a reason, to those who asked, for her hope. The last eight months of her life were spent with her Widowed Daughter Lucy and Son Orin, on a farm near Campbellsburg. During this time she suffer-

ed much. Every comfort that was possiable was given her, she bore her suffering with patience, and looked forward to the time, and was ready and willing to go and meet her master.

She entered into her eternal rest, which remains to the chosen people of God. While we, the Brethren of the Cane Run and Sulphur Fork Churches, morn, we do so but not without hope, beleiving that for Her to live was Christ and to die is gain. She trusted in Christ he will not dissapoint her. We do not wish her back, she is now at rest, and may the Lord reconcile us all, and may her Church life be an ensample to all of us, and the thought of her steadfastness and walk and faith in the Lord bind us closer together.

It was requested that the services be held in the Sulphur Fork meetinghouse, and be like our regular meetings which are held each month, so we quietly bore the body into the Church-house. The Brethren sang hymn 275 (Beebe's selection). I tried to comfort the Brethren, using 1 Cor. XV, 19. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." After singing Hymn 807, all that is mortal was laid in rest in the Cemetry nearby. May the blessing of the Lord be with all the mourning friends.

GEORGE L. WEAVER

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. J. A. McTaggart, Ont., $2; Mrs. Georgia Carruthers, Va., $2; W. E. Bryan, Ky., $1; Mrs. M. E. Williams, Tex., $1; Mrs. B. H. Shearon, Ten., $1; F. H. Richardson, Iowa, $3; L. W. Wert, N. J., $1; Mrs. J. D. Shafer, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Mary J. Ege, N. J., $3; H. M. Bowden, Mo., $1.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California; every third Sunday at 526 West Nevada Street, Ontario, California; also on forth Sundays as the Lord permits, at 3516 Franklin Avenue, Riverside, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets on the first Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, Shelbyville, Ky.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Cloth binding. Price, $1.25 each. One dozen or more, ordered at the same time and all to the same address, one dollar each. Cash must accompany orders. Make checks and money orders payable to

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ELDER C. W. ANDERSON,
ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 104. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1936. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Brewers, Ky., Oct. 27, 1935.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you some of my thoughts, and if you consider them worthy of space in the family paper let them go out to the household of faith; if not, throw them in the waste-basket and all will be right with me.

"The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever."—Isaiah xl. 6-8. Wonderful language indeed, and these words are an unknown tongue to the great mass of church going people, who have not learned this glorious mystery, but to a remnant according to the election of grace, who have the sentence of death in ourselves that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver, in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us, it is the power of God unto salvation to us, and no strange language to us, for we believe the very truth of such expressions, since God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. In this mysterious work of our God we receive a treasure in our earthen vessels and we learn from day to day that the excellency of the power is of God and not of us. These are wonderful words, and no one can enter into their meaning save those who, like Paul, can say, I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came sin revived and I died. Surely we withered and all our righteousness and strength faded away when the words which are Spirit and life entered the dark recesses of our corrupt nature. When our nest of nature's night was stirred we could no longer live nor thrive therein with guilt

and condemnation to terrorize us. Here was darkness, and we did not know it until light sprang in, then we would, like Paul, cry out, Who art thou, Lord? The answer comes, I am Jesus, whom thou persecuteth. We begin to learn something of our heinous nature and the deceitfulness of our heart, to revel in vice and drink sin as an ox would drink water. Oh how we did cry for mercy under the sentence of a just law of a holy God. The light continued to shine in and around us, for the commandment was still in effect, even until we were without strength. Suddenly, even as quickly as thought, I felt him mine, and shouted, Glory, glory. The seals had fallen from my eyes. The work which God had begun was complete to the extent that the grass had withered and the goodness thereof withered for a time. It was a heaven below my Redeemer to know, and that I should ever sin again and mourn therefor. There was now a treasure hid in an earthen vessel. We are only enrolled in that school where we must learn the truth of Christ's words, No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him. Again and again we prove ourselves but as grass in the work of salvation, for it is all of grace. The poet learned this and would sing,

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Savior, or I die."

The sentence of death is still in us that we should not trust in ourselves, and we must be begotten again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead before our faith lays hold on the promise of God that we have a rich inheritance willed to us by the Father, who is from everlasting to everlasting, the the sovereign great I AM, who does his will in heaven, in earth and all deep places. We cannot tell who or what God is only as we are made partakers of the life which came down from heaven as the Bread of life. So while we journey to that city which has a sure foundation, whose builder and maker is God, we have this treasure in earthen vessels, and when the commandment comes to break the pitchers the light will shine until we can shout, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon even unto a perfect day, when we can cry, Grace, grace to the Capstone, then we will know God and the glory of his grace. As we pause and think of our being, and many exercises of life, it is a glorious mystery. Read hymn 207 (Goble's book), which tells of the mystery better than I can find words to express. I heard my parents and others sing this hymn when I was young and was somewhat startled at such strange language. Now after more than fifty years as a poor wayfaring stranger in a wilderness land, with "mixture of joy and sorrow I daily do pass through," I learn here a little and there a little, line upon line and precept upon precept. Sometimes I am in the valley and sink with woe as I spend the wearisome nights that are appointed unto me, and very often frightened with dreams, I sometimes think I am no more than a dog. Then

when I awake I find the Lord is still with me, and faith swiftly mounts and soars away to the best habitation, where all the saints will join in the one song, Unto him that loved us and washed us in his own blood from our sins, and hath made us kings and priests unto God the Father, to whom be glory for ever. Amen. It is then the light shines in my heart to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ as our Savior. Yes, a Savior, and not a failure in any sense, though man is but as grass, and a failure in every sense of salvation. Weary of wandering around and around in this vale of sin and ruin, I sigh for heaven, my home, and often ask, Why all these sighs and groans? That the excellency of his might be made known in the children of light. Then being children, we walk in the light, as He is light to us. We had not known light but through the command of God, and as the true Light is made known to us we learn more of the lurking witnesses in, or of, darkness that lie in wait to deceive. That hateful fountain of our corrupt nature is full of deadly poison of deceivers while we are at home in the body, and now I would sing, "I am a stranger here below, and what I am 'tis hard to know," but I have traveled on until I have learned, "There is nothing good that I can do. I cannot satisfy the law, nor hope nor comfort from it draw." This knowledge seems to have become a part of me. No, of myself I am no more able to keep God's law than is a tiny babe, so I am continually learning the truth of Christ's words, Except you be converted and become as little children you can in no case enter the kingdom of God. How true the song, I am a little scholar, I daily go to school to learn of Jesus and his perfect, holy rule. Did not Christ say, It is written in the prophets, and they all shall be taught of God, every man therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me? In going to his school we learn the lesson that all our righteousness is as filthy rags in the sight of God, so we are not only grass, but filthy grass. What a glorious mystery to have this treasure in an earthen vessel! The apostle would say we see through a glass darkly. The Lord's work is so perfectly done that he gives his bread in the way that we know and can prophesy in part while that which is perfect comes to us as he gives us grace, and his mercies are multiplied unto us and we grow in grace and the knowledge of salvation and become less in self. Our faith and hope lay hold on that bread which came down from heaven and fulfill John's words: He must increase, but I must decrease; and the truth of Christ's words when he said, My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world then would my servant fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews. The scholars in the school of Christ learn that while the outer man perisheth the inner man is renewed day by day, and as that which is perfect approaches we accept the promise of his coming again to receive the objects of his love unto himself. Though we often become im-

patient, he who never slumbers nor sleeps commands the light to shine forth and faith does her perfect work and stirs our very soul to say, All the days of my appointed time will I wait until my change comes; or say with the anxious words of the apostle, Who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body according to the working whereby he is able to even subdue all things unto himself. Then when that which is perfect has fully come and we awake with the likeness of our glorified Redeemer we will join in song with that number no man can number singing the glory and praise of God and the Lamb, world without end. Amen.

J. C. CHESTER.

Murray, Ky., Dec. 16, 1935.

DEAR EDITORS:—I see my subscription for our family paper expired with this December issue, so you will find inclosed money for renewal. I wish I could send a donation. As I read and reread the dear SIGNS, how I wish every child of God could have the pleasure of enjoying it with me.

A new year is drawing near, and oh how it causes me grief to look back over the past year and see myself so full of sin, but, dear brethren, I feel so little, so insignificant, I go moaning and groaning begging God to forgive, and let a repenting sinner live. What a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God. Dear old Job says, "Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble." So often do I fear "my breath is corrupt, my days are extinct, the graves are ready for me." "Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me." "Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." As Paul says, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Pray for me and mine.

A little sister in hope of heaven, not made by men,

(MRS.) W. T. CHESTER.

Touchet, Wash., Feb. 4, 1936.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The SIGNS OF THE TIMES is a medium by which the children of God can communicate with each other, though many miles apart, and this blessed medium, through the providence of God, has been blessed to stand and comfort the hearts of the humble followers of the dear Shepherd of souls for more than a century. During that long period many changes have taken place. The able founder has long since been called to lay down his armor and rest from his labors, and, in like manner, many others of its edi-

tors and publishers have been called home. While some of the last changes were taking place we looked deep into the hearts of its faithful readers and wondered what we would do. We who at this present time are made to tread in the footsteps of our fathers, read in the December number that our beloved editor had resigned his editorship, and this filled the hearts and minds of the readers not only with wonder, but much sorrow, for his able pen had drawn him very close to us all. I could but wonder as my daughter read the news to me who would fill this responsible place, but, to my joy, when the January issue came I heard my daughter read that the mantle had fallen upon one in whom our hearts and minds had become established as a safe leader of the readers. My sight is still so poor I cannot write at length, neither can I express myself as I desire, but I hope I am thankful I can yet see well enough to get around the house and wait on myself. The intent of this attempt is prompted by some of the above changes spoken of. Our faithful publisher, like myself, has been called to wade through deep waters in the loss of his companion and other loved ones, and now that his sight is threatened causes much anxiety of soul and mind, for he has faithfully labored in the publication of the dear old SIGNS. I feel I want to express to him my deepest sympathy in his trying hour, and also to express my hearty thanks to my brethren who have been so mindful of me in writing me so many good letters.

Now, dear ones, I have sighted some of the many changes which have taken place with this dear publication, but now comes the honey out of the rock, the grand principle upon which it was founded has never changed. May our God ever bless us with his faithfulness in this dark day of confusion, and may all redound to the glory of our God.

In much love,

J. T. BARNES.

DAMARISCOTTA MILLS, Maine, Jan. 19, 1935.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—Inclosed please find the Circular and Corresponding Letters for the Maine Old School Baptist Association of 1935. I am very sorry not to have sent them to you before, but we have had a lot of sickness in the family, and for a long time I was in a very dark place, from a spiritual point of view.

As Elder Lefferts resigned, I was very glad you were made editor of the SIGNS, for knowing you as I feel I do brings the paper nearer to us. I pray that your efforts may be blessed by Him who is able to do all things The dark place I wrote of above seemed to teach me one thing, and that is to expect no perfection in the flesh, but that in our God all fullness dwells.

In haste. I hope I am your brother in Christ,

SANFORD S. BARTLETT.

[The letters referred to are published in this issue.—R. L. D.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1936.

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ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Elder George Ruston, Dutton, Ontario.
Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable to,
J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
Middletown, N. Y.

REVELATION II. 1-6.

I would love to have one of the editors give his views on Revelation, second chapter, first to sixth verses. I would like to know if the fault was found with the churches, or was it only found with the pastors of the churches? We know that a large percentage of all the serious troubles in the churches can be traced to the ministry. May God enable you to continue the publication of the dear old SIGNS, is my prayer.

F. L. RIFFE.

We have heard before that ministers were the cause of nine-tenths of church troubles. There may be a great deal of justification in this claim, and if we who are in the ministry are wise we will examine ourselves and endeavor to profit by knowing how we appear to others, and what they think of us. While it is a well-known human trait to try to clear one's own skirts and place the blame on some one else, we shall not at this time undertake to defend the ministering brethren, but rather to show from the Scriptures, if the Lord will bless us so to do, the correct answer to our brother's question. It may not be out of place, however, to remind our readers of the position which their pastors occupy as under-shepherds of the flock. As spokesmen for or leaders of the people, of necessity they are in the front ranks and are, therefore, the first to encounter whatever difficulties may arise. We have no doubt but what there are some who crave leadership and who become heady and highminded in their attempts to gain their ends, who want to *rule* over rather than *watch* over the flock. They would do well to read and take heed unto the Scripture which says, "Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow."—Isaiah l. 11. The Good Shepherd gave his life for the sheep, and his servants should be willing to lay down their life for the brethren. Their's is an high and holy calling, and when they follow the example of their Lord they should be greatly esteemed for the truth's sake, but it should always be remembered that in and of themselves they are only men at best. Brethren, therefore, should not idolize or worship their pastors or ministers, who are men of like passions as they themselves. John

fell at the feet of a messenger, on one occasion, to worship him, but the angel said unto him, "See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God." Churches themselves are at fault when they encourage or follow their pastor in a wrong course. They should be faithful with their ministers and let them know of their disapproval when occasion warrants. There is scriptural authority for such proceedure: Apollos, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, was fervent in spirit and taught diligently the things of the Lord, but knew only the baptism of John, "whom when Aquilla and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly." We know of no more wonderful character in all the world than a truly called and qualified preacher of the gospel, who practices what he preaches. The prophet must have had such an one in mind when he wrote, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace: that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"—Isaiah lii. 7. How sad when we see one of God's servants following after the flesh and leading others astray with him. The unity of the body of Christ is such that when trouble comes they must all share the grief. Oh, that God might guide and direct us all, that he might make us meek and humble and willing to occupy the lowest place, if only thereby he might be glorified and the name of Jesus exalted.

We will now quote the Scripture referred to and follow it with some comment: "Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write: These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen; and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate." Some light may be thrown upon the true import of this by referring back to the first chapter of this book of Revelation. We read in the fourth verse of chapter one, "John *to the seven churches* which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come." And in the ninth, tenth and eleventh verses we find this language: "I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony

of Jesus Christ. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, *and send it unto the seven churches* which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea." It would seem quite clear from these references that these things were meant to be for the churches—not exclusive necessarily of the angel, or minister, since they are inseparably bound together, and have all things in common. The angel of God is not only the vessel through which good things are conveyed to the flock, but likewise it is sometimes God's will that those who preach the word should "reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." The word which God sends forth shall not return unto him void, but it shall accomplish that which he pleases, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto he sends it. In verses thirteen to eighteen, inclusive, of chapter one of Revelation, is to be found a most wonderful description of him at whose command these things were to be written, and in the first six verses of chapter two are recorded the things which were meant expressly for the church at Ephesus. John's authority for writing to the angel, or pastor of this church, was from no less a personage than He in whose right hand the seven stars or angels were held. His right hand seems to signify both his favor and his power, and without these, how could poor mortal man stand on such holy ground? Not only does he uphold his ministering servants, but he also walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, or churches, and is most intimately acquainted with each and every member. He knows the works, the labor, the patience, and how each one cannot bear them which are evil, and how "thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience," and for His name's sake have labored, and have not fainted, and yet, notwithstanding all they have come short. It has for years been a great comfort to us that the apostle Peter, even after denying and swearing he never knew his Lord, should, on being asked the third time, "Lovest thou me?" reply by saying, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." Even though we may have by both word of mouth and action shown that we knew him not, we are glad, indeed, to hope that underneath it all, he who discerneth the thought and intent of our heart knows that we love him still. The church at Ephesus had much to commend them in his sight, but they were not perfect, and, therefore, he said unto them, "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." Many of us can well recall the

days of our "first love," when there seemed to be not a single cloud in all of our sky, but joy and peace filled the whole earth, and we could not imagine that our brethren could ever be other than as we then saw them, but those who have passed through serious church trouble will unquestionably agree that there is nothing in all the world so sad as when brethren disagree and resort to the use of carnal weapons. The great Shepherd of the sheep speaks to all such, saying, "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works." When we are made to remember and can realize how far we have fallen, it should cause us to desire to repent and do the first works, or go back to our beloved brethren and assure them of our fervent and unfeigned love. Unless we are brought to do this, it will only be a question of time when the cause of truth will be made to suffer, with the eventual death or removal of the candlestick, or church as a consequence. Would to God that his people might, indeed, become as little children and forget their petty differences, giving themselves and all that in them is to the glorifying of Him who hath loved them and given himself for them. Those who truly repent will turn from the things they have done before, and show they do in earnest grieve by doing so no more. "But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate." These we understand were a sect of ungodly people, whose deeds were filthy and unclean in the extreme and, therefore, could not be tolerated by those with any regard at all for godliness and true holiness. What a mercy it is that we are made to hate evil, that we verily despise our own lives at times because there is so little in them to identify us with our glorious Head. To be able to hate the things which Jesus hates, brings us on common ground with him and into the fellowship of his sufferings. May he keep both pastors and churches in the strait and narrow way of life, that they may glorify him in their bodies and spirits, is our most earnest desire. Amen.

R. L. D.

CARD OF THANKS.

We sincerely thank all who have sent us expressions of sympathy, and assure them their kind words and good wishes are very much appreciated. We have indeed been sorely afflicted during the past two years, and hope our subscribers will bear with us until the Lord sees fit to restore our eyesight and enable us to attend to our duties as formerly. As will be noticed, this issue of the Signs of the Times contains but sixteen pages, but we feel our subscribers would forgive us could they know how difficult it is for us to see to do our work with the sight of but one eye. The eye operated upon is slowly improving, and our physician gives us to hope the sight will eventually be restored, but it will probably be a month or more before we can use it, and in the meantime please be patient with us, and we will do the best we can toward getting the Signs to you.—Publisher.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by sister Attie A. Curtis.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 6th, 7th and 8th, 1935, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Although we are few in number, we desire to continue the custom of over sixty years, and write of the love and fellowship, which can never change, of the truth which has been revealed unto us. There is none other name under heaven, or given among men, whereby we must be saved. The name of Jesus is exalted above every name that is named, and he is precious to those who believe. No man by searching can find out God, for his ways are mysterious and past finding out. No way possible for the flesh to boast, and it is declared, The flesh profiteth nothing. All of His children shall be taught of the Lord, and we find in our experience his work is sure and steadfast. He speaks and it is done. How good it is to have it taught by the Spirit of truth that his ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. The same Spirit enables us to know that the peace of God's children is great. Jesus said, Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. When we have the evidence that Jesus has been wrought in our souls the hope of glory, we do declare his works with rejoicing, and love to meet with the people of God and hear the gospel preached, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Salvation by grace is the joyful sound to his people, and we do walk in the light of his countenance. We are in the way of holiness where the redeemed shall walk, where no lion or ravenous beast shall be found, and the ransomed of God shall return and come unto Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Faith is the gift of God, and it is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. We walk by faith, and not by sight. We have been made to know the Lord is our Shepherd we shall not want. The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

We hope this letter will enable the associations and churches which whom we correspond, to see that we worship God in Spirit and in truth, for he seeketh such to worship him. That we desire to be found established in the truth as it is in Jesus, and render all praise, honor and glory unto the God of our salvation, whom having not seen we love; in whom, though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Now abideth faith, hope and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 6th, 7th and 8th, 1935, to the churches and meetings with which we correspond, sends love and greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year has passed and we are thankful that through the mercy and lovingkindness of our God we have been permitted to meet again as an association. As we read the messages of love and fellowship in your correspondence we were stirred anew and our minds seemed directed, first, to the words of Jesus to his disciples: "Love one another."—John xv. 17. And in John xiv. 27, he also says, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." Second, Paul by divine inspiration tells us the fruit of the Spirit is peace, joy and love. (Gal. v. 22.) Also, John by divine inspiration tells us, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." These are only a few of the many instances where the words "love" and "peace" are mentioned in the Bible with reference to the relationship of brethren. We pray that through His sustaining grace we may be kept in bonds of love and peace with all the churches and associations with whom we correspond, and with all of God's people wherever they are. Our meeting is especially dear to us, as it is the only preaching we have during the year. And it seemed indeed a sitting together in a heavenly place as we heard Elder Dodson with wonderful liberty proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ. Our pure minds were stirred up by way of remembrance and we were fed and comforted. From a natural point of view, our small number of ten seems very discouraging, but God's ways are not our ways, and he has promised that where only a few are gathered in his name he will be in their midst. We feel that we have been blessed in seeing this promise fulfilled. We know God's promise is sure, and if God be for us who can be against us?

God willing, the next meeting of our Association will be the Friday, Saturday and Sunday before the second Monday in September, 1936. The place of meeting to be announced by notice in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MRS. CORNELIA S. PARSLY, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life at the Montgomery County General Hospital, near Sandy Spring, Maryland, January 24th, 1936, where she was taken six days before her death. She had been weak and in poor health a long time, but only since this past New Year's Day had she been unable to be up and about. She was born in Montgomery County, Maryland, February 7th, 1858, thus making her stay on earth 77 years, 11 months and 17 days. She was one of the six daughters of Griffith Miles Search. Her mother was Maria Louisa Fetter, daughter of George Fetter. Her mother and three of the sisters died in 1892, of what was then a mysterious disease, but which to-day would probably be diagnosed as cerebrospinal meningitis. The mother and one

of the sisters died the same day. To-day of this family one survives: sister Ida Search, of Spencerville, Md., and she is a member of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in Baltimore, Md. Sister "Corrie" was baptized by the late Elder F. A. Chick into the membership of the Ebenezer Church December 26th, 1880. It was a very cold day, so cold that ice had to be cut on the stream in order for the ordinance to be administered to her. She became the wife of John H. Parsly in 1884, he being now deceased. Of this union there are living three sons and three daughters, as follows: Elmer Parsly, of Philadelphia, Pa., Mrs. Isabel Warfield, of Laytonsville, Md., Mrs. Alice Clary, of Washington, D. C., and George Parsly, of Philadelphia, Pa. Elder Joshua T. Rowe has been sister Parsly's pastor for thirty-seven years, and would have officiated at the funeral had he been able to do so, which he was not. In the absence of brother Rowe, the family desired me to officiate, which I tried to do. Sister Parsly and sister Ida Search are first cousins of my late father, George W. Lefferts, formerly of Southampton, Pa. Of sister Parsly, Elder Rowe says, "She lived a considerable distance from her church and was seldom present, we were always glad to see her and felt that her presence added to the pleasure of the meeting. She administered to the needs of her church and pastor, was a loving and lovable member."

At her funeral, it was desired that the fourteenth chapter of John and the twenty-third Psalm be read, the same portions of Scripture used at Mr. Parsly's funeral some years ago. The hymn, "Lead Kindly Light" was sung. The last services were held January 26th, from sister Parsly's late home, at Brookeville, Md. Her mortal remains were laid to rest in the Union Cemetery, near Spencerville, Md., until the last trump shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed. May the Holy Spirit abide with the sorrowing family, and with our sister Ida Search, who writes, "I am just resting in the Savior, I am trusting in his love and power to care for me now in my old days. I am just resting, and that is enough."

H. H. LEFFERTS.

JOHN SAMUEL STANLEY, to whom you have so kindly forwarded the SIGNS, was born August 10th, 1849, and died Saturday, November 30th, 1935, aged 86 years, 3 months and 20 days. In the year 1878 he married Elizabeth Thornton, who preceded him in death. There were born to this union three daughters: Beulah Iola and Alma Izora Stanley (both deceased) and Hugh Stanley, who survives him. Funeral services were held at Reaves' Cemetery, where he was laid to rest Sunday, December 1st. My father had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for about thirty-five years. He was baptized by the late Elder R. R. Crawford. By request of Elder Crawford, my father wrote his obituary for the SIGNS, several years ago. He was a firm believer in God's sovereign power, and in the predestination of all things. He steadfastly contended for the Primitive Baptist faith, and loved to repeat over and over a text that was used by one of his brethren at our home during an association: "God reigns." He had a stroke of paralysis Monday, November 25th, and lived until the next Saturday morning. Symbolic of his life here on earth, his words to me just after the stroke came, were quietly, calmly, unflinchingly and unafraid, "There is nothing to do." He never fully aroused, but could talk some, and knew me almost to the end. His going was as

quiet and peaceful as I have ever witnessed. My father longed, oh so many, many times, to hear some of his brethren preach, and the SIGNS was indeed a great comfort to him. He read some in one issue just a very short time before he had the stroke. He retained his faculties in an amazingly clear way, and walked over a part of his farm a few days prior to his last sickness. He and I lived alone after the death of my last sister, Beulah Stanley, in 1931. My other sister, Mrs. Alma King, died in 1926, and her little girl in 1928. They all loved him, and I hope the words that came into my mind after my father's funeral are true: that these afflictions are to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

A daughter, who truly loved him,
HUGH STANLEY.

ELIZA JANE TAYLOR BOGART, widow of William Bogart, was born in the town of Hurley, Ulster Co., N. Y., October 26th, 1851, departed this life at her home, where she had lived for more than sixty-four years, September 25th, 1935, making her stay on this earth 83 years, 10 months and 29 days. Her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Carter, lived with her and gave her the best of care while she lived. She was married to William Bogart May 20th, 1871, and to that union were born two children, one boy, Otis J. Bogart, and one girl, Edith Bogart, now the wife of Arthur Carter. William Bogart, her husband, died September 8th, 1924, and her son, Otis J. Bogart, died October 29th, 1924. She is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Arthur Carter, three grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren and a host of nieces, nephews and friends. She had a very kind disposition and endeared herself to all who knew her, which fact was borne out by the very lage congregation which gathered in the Olive and Hurley meeting-house, where her funeral was held September 28th, 1935, conducted by Elder Arnold H. Bellows, pastor of the church. She attended this church for many years, when health would permit, and loved the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone. She also took and read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for more than fifteen years, and was a firm believer in the doctrine recorded in its pages. Interment was in the Lenox Cemetery, Ashokan, Ulster County, New York, by the side of her husband and son, there to await the final resurrection. To the daughter, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and friends we would extend our heart-felt sympathy, and may the God she loved be their guard and guide, is our prayer.

Written by request.
ORVILLE WINCHELL

DEACON WILLIAM F. RANSDELL was born January 3rd, 1854, and died January 7th, 1936, aged 82 years and 4 days. He was twice married. In March, 1881, he married Cory J. Fallis, and to this union were born seven children. The mother, three daughters and one son are deceased. Robert E. Ransdell, of Norwood, Ohio, Clarence Ransdell, of Campbellsburg, Ky., and George T. Ransdell, of Lagrange, Ky., are left to mourn the departure of their father. He also leaves the following brothers and sisters in the Campbellsburg vicinity: Jasper, Joseph and Frank Ransdell, Mrs. Cory Monfort and Mrs. Mattie Elston. February 2nd, 1913, brother Ransdell was married to Mrs. Betty Vories, who, with two daughters, survive. In the spring of 1896 brother Ransdell was baptized into the membership of the Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church by the late Elder Humptson, which church he served faithfully. A short time after his admit-

tance he was made Deacon. He also served as trustee and assistant clerk, and how we miss the counsel of the dear brother. For the past two years he had been in failing health, both in body and mind, now he has entered into the rest that remaineth to the people of God. We all mourn his passing, for we loved him for the life he lived, for the evidence he showed in things of Christ, in whom he lived and trusted, and we trust he has entered into the joy of the Lord. May the Lord bless the widow, the sons and the brethren, and enable us all to see the beauty in the works of God. He hath given, and he hath taken away; blessed be his name. He only can reconcile us.

The body was taken to the old churchhouse he loved so well in life, and I spoke briefly to a large congregation of relatives and friends of the sure salvation of all the redeemed of the Lord in the resurrection, when this corruptible body shall be raised in incorruption and forever be with the Lord. Then all that was mortal was laid to rest in the Campbellsburg Cemetery.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

Our beloved sister ALICE MILLER, the companion of C. G. Miller, who passed out before her, at their humble home in Riverside, California, was born in Ohio March 25th, 1862, and departed this life to be with Christ, which is far better, December 7th, 1935, making her stay on earth 73 years, 8 months and 10 days. At Kalida, Ohio, in 1885, she and brother Miller were united in marriage. This union was blessed with six children, two sons and four daughters, to wit: J. George and Albert G., who reside at Medford, Oregon, Nancy, Carrie, Bessie and Anna (Mrs. Jones, of Riverside). The writers cannot go into a lengthy detail in writing of the trials and triumphs attending the life and death of the subject of this sketch. Under the mercy of God she and brother Miller were received by experience and baptism into the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church, and shortly afterward were baptized by Elder J. G. Ford and numbered with the church. In the course of time we find them at Spencerville, Ohio, and received by Refuge Church of Old School Baptists, still contending for the Primitive faith and order. From thence they moved to Oklahoma, and from there to New Mexico, and there they settled awhile with Ebenezer Church. After their removal to southern California we find them holding a letter signed by Elder J. F. Beeman, recommending them to the Baptists of Primitive faith and order who are yet satisfied with the goodness of the Lord's house and receive gladly the word as taught in the old school, or school of Christ. This letter was well worded, recommending them to those who hold the faith of God's elect, so on October 9th, 1932, she was received by letter into the fellowship of Seclusia Church, of like precious faith, we hope. She hath done what she could. She has filled up her measure of suffering, she has served her generation, she has fallen asleep. "Blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep."

All that was mortal of this true friend, faithful sister and beloved mother was consigned to the narrow limits of the tomb December 10th, 1935, Elder G. O. Walker officiating in the name of Jesus. We would commit the bereaved family and the sorrowing members of the church who are left behind to mourn, to the fatherly care and keeping of that God who hath done all things well. Now may the love of God, our heavenly Father, the grace of

our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, our Elder Brother, and the communion and fellowship of the Holy Ghost, our Comforter, rest and abide with both the reader and writers, now, henceforth and forever. Amen.

G. O. and T. D. WALKER.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please insert in the March issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if possible, the following notice, taken from the Minutes read and approved at the business meeting of the Salem Old School Baptist Church, of Philadelphia, Pa., February 2nd, 1936, viz:

"Our dear sister, MARGARET CUBBAGE, died January 22nd, 1936, at the age of 83 years. She was the last member of the London Tract Church, one of our sister churches in the Delaware Association. Our dear sister had been living in Philadelphia for a great number of years, attended our church regularly, and was looked upon as one of our own members. Sister Cubbage was a lovely character, greatly devoted to the Baptist faith, and will be missed by all of us."

It was decided at the business meeting of the Salem Church to have the above extract of the Minutes sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to be printed as a resolution from the Salem Church.

T. C. KOCH, Church Clerk.

PHILADELPHIA Pa., Feb. 16, 1936.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

J. J. Okes, Va., 50 cents; Elder V. R. Harris, Ark., $1; J. W. Campbell, Canada, $1; "A friend," Mich., $3; Elder C. W. Anderson, Ark., $1; Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $8; E. H. Winchell, Mich., $3; Durwood H. Bradley, Texas, $4.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in March (29). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday at 2807 Pearl Street, Santa Monica, California; every third Sunday at 526 West Nevada Street, Ontario, California; also on forth Sundays as the Lord permits, at 3516 Franklin Avenue, Riverside, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets on the first Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, Shelbyville, Ky.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Cloth binding. Price, $1.25 each. One dozen or more, ordered at the same time and all to the same address, one dollar each. Cash must accompany orders. Make checks and money orders payable to

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CHURCH OF GOD.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—DEAR SON—I am writing you some thoughts concerning the church of God. Referring to the sixteenth chapter of Matthew, eighteenth verse: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." You may think it strange when I tell you that only a few days ago I sent to Elder O. J. Denny some thoughts on the same subject, but I am anxious to know something of this church, and to know if you and I are members of it. Now, where is this church of God? It is compared to a human body, so let us read what the apostle Paul says about it in the twelfth and thirteenth chapters of first Corinthians: "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant." Desiring to teach them these things which I tried to set up in my article to Elder Denny, but was so troubled on account of my wife's illness I feel I should take it up again and see if, perhaps, the Lord will enable me to write something that will comfort some poor sinner. There were at that time worshippers, Pharisees and Sadducees, who had a doctrine that Jesus told his disciples to beware of, which shows it was false. But let us think of the human body—what skill and wisdom is here shown by the handiwork of God. No machine made by man equals it, though man has sought out many inventions. But now concerning this glorious church made up of these small bodies, each one containing many members and all joined to this great body that forms this church, a wheel within a wheel. As I have stated, I believe you, and all gospel preachers, preach Jesus. How do you know Jesus? I quote some things written in the sixteenth chapter of Matthew. When Jesus asked his disciples, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? men had to guess at it, for they did not know him, but when he asked his dis-

ciples, and Peter answered correctly, Jesus said, "Blessed art thou, Simon-Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven, and I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Jesus also thanked the Father that he had hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes, even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.

But now let us notice some of the gifts spoken of in the twelfth and thirteenth chapters of first Corinthians. Fourth verse of twelfth chapter: "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles, etc. Now many of these things have passed by and we now live in the gospel age, but, my son, I want to find the marks of His church. This body of sinners, coming up out of Egypt, where we all have to go, but when our burden grows too heavy God sends a Moses to lead us out. Now we see Israel and the house of Jacob all had to go down into Egypt. Joseph went there and the famine drove his brethren down after bread. Some wonderful things are set up here. When Joseph's brethren had to go down and meet their brother who knew them before they knew him whom they had sold and treated shamefully, they had to go, and even Jacob their father had to go down. I feel we are all traveling to meet our spiritual Joseph, and some thoughts of David now come before me, another type of Jesus. When King Saul was at his wit's end, when Goliath was challenging all Israel and they feared him, a great giant, but the Lord sent David, who had witnessed the deliverance of the lamb from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear, and he slew this giant. I see much in this that I cannot bring out, but these are all needed gifts, and sent and used as God would have them. This church is going on: are they perfect and sinless? No, no. If God builds this church, why could not God have made it so? Yes, but let us go back to the choosing of the twelve apostles. You twelve have I chosen and one of you is a devil (Judas Iscariot, who sold and betrayed him). So, I believe, there are devils in the church to-day, but it seems that he was to do something that no child of God would or could do, and yet it was to be so. Our enemies will say, If we are compelled to do wickedness, why should we be punished? We are not as God made Adam, and were not born until Adam and Eve had fallen and transgressed God's law, and sold themselves for nought, so now we are condemned sinners and this body that is compared to the church is subject to diseases of all kinds and devils (those who creep in to spy out our liberties and give us trouble), but all for a purpose known only to God. Let us consider the vicious beasts: the lion, the

bear, the wolf, etc., and we wonder why God made them and put them here on earth, but they are here for a purpose. Let us notice some things as we see them. Take chickens, for instance, which all people know about; their enemies, such as the hawk, the owl, the skunk, etc., can we see any reason for them, or how we are benefited by such pests? I have noticed my chickens feeding around on the farm, and sometimes they would go far from the house, and then the hawk would come, and how quickly they would all start for home, a place of safety. So you see that helps keep them home, or from going wild; and so with sheep and other animals. Again, it makes the business man look after what belongs to him, if he is to be successful. It is an old saying, If you have too many irons in the fire at the same time, something will burn. So we see here on account of diseases and other things that seem harmful to us, we are taught that knowledge which business men have in order to succeed. When we think of the enemies of God's church, or the poor sinners of which this church is composed, what does it do for them? It simply drives them to God in prayer, a safe place to be. So when we sum up all our afflictions, trials, chastisements, etc., it is God's way, I believe, to draw us to him. Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. Again, No man cometh unto me except the Father which sent me draw him. And he will not cast him out. My son, we will have persecutions and sore trials, and all these things represent the gates of hell, or the devil with his army, but they shall not prevail. So this body, or church, will finally come to the Red Sea, with our enemies behind us, for the wheat and tares grow together until the harvest. Judas went with the disciples until his death, so it seems in the past God has sent Joseph in time of famine to give us bread and King David to fight our battles—all the work of God. Now God does not talk to us as he did to Moses, Joshua, Job and others, but we believe he reveals things to his children, but the children cannot impart or make known this secret to the world. Often Jesus told the disciples not to tell who he was, for some hated him and desired to kill him, and did so. I would not like to say that Jesus made Judas betray him, or that God made Adam eat the forbidden fruit, after he told him not to do it. God knowing what would be done does not make him the author of sin, when the Bible shows that the devil and his co-workers did these sinful acts. I believe this church holds the keys and has power to receive and exclude, yet we believe God also adds daily such as shall be saved. So many of us are near the Red Sea, which I think represents death; then we will leave all our foes behind and this body, the redeemed family or church of God, will be resurrected and be like Jesus, so let us pray God to give us clean hearts that we may honor and serve him. In the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians Paul states that with all the gifts, and though he give his body to be burned, yet without charity it is all nothing. Amen.

I will close, as I see I have failed to write as I desired.

Your fond father,

R. L. DODSON.

[It is good indeed to receive such communications from an earthly father. The vital question with us all should be, Am I His, or am I not?—R. L. D.]

Kingsville, Ohio, July 24, 1935.

To the Ebenezer Church, New York City—Dear Pastor, Brethren and Sisters in Christ:—I have desired to write you for some time, but a feeling of unworthiness and lack of something worth while to write has prevented. I feel the same now, but know if it is the Lord's will he is able to guide my pen to tell you of some of his dealings with me, for if I am not mistaken, he has led me up to this present time, many times through dark places, and I have felt to be the least one of all who have a name with his dear people, and I have felt at times that if I really am one of them, why do I seem so different and show so little of the Spirit of Christ? I know that unless I have that Spirit I am none of his. Then this comes to me: I know I love his people, and it is my chief joy to meet with them and listen to the preached word, and if I am not mistaken I have many times been fed with the bread from heaven, which he alone can give his ministers to break to us. His people alone can receive it, and it is precious to them. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." "For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." When Christ our Savior is proclaimed, the little ones are fed. The preaching of the world does not feed and satisfy them; it is as "dry husks," only fit for the swine to eat. So we can only look to our Father's house, where there is plenty for all who have need, and have had their eyes opened to see their destitution. So let us have courage to hope on, and trust in Him who doeth all things well. We make mistakes, but our Savior is perfect, and his righteousness is the righteousness of all those who believe in him, which were born, not of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

May God be with you all and keep you in peace and unity, is my prayer for you, and I trust that you will pray that I may be kept in the faith once delivered unto the saints.

With love to all, your sister I trust,

NELLIE H. ARNOLD.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Elder Arnold H. Bellows wishes to announce that he has changed his address from Ashokan, N. Y., to West Hurley, N. Y., where he expects to make his home permanently.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $2; Mrs. A. G. Crenshaw, Okla., $2; Mrs. Warren White, Ky., $1.50.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1936.

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1 JOHN V. 7.

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."

The gospel according to John testifies that, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men."—John i. 1-4. We have a Word here considered that has been written about, and spoken of, and the half has not been told, and neither do we by calling attention to the record containing these positive assertions feel that we can enlarge upon or more fully bring out the truth than has previously been written, but we hope to call attention, and perhaps refresh our memories of the things declared of our God. The first we should note about the Word was in the beginning, which was God. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."—Gen. i. 1 All that was created in the beginning was according to the fullness of the wisdom of the Three that bear record in heaven, and to prove this conclusion, that without him (Jesus, Word) nothing was made that was made. Now we have the source of the council, and the members of the council, and these members are equal and agree in heaven. The Word recorded in our text was the second in the Trinity, that was made flesh and dwelt among us, and preached unto the Gentiles, and was received up into glory. He was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, and was God manifest in the flesh, and when the gospel is preached (which is the power of God unto them that believe) Jesus is portrayed, and as the poor sinner has seen him, they again behold him that bore their sins and put them away, and are built up and strengthened in his most holy faith. When this Word is preached, in a wonderful way the power of God in the Trinity is proclaimed, and the unity of God and his perfection in wisdom is embraced. The apostle Paul's charge to Timothy was, "Preach the word." Paul bore witness of the Word that was spoken to him when on his way to Damascus, and how he questioned the Word, and the answer came, "I am Jesus of Nazareth,

whom thou persecutest."—Acts xxii. 8. The power of the Word to Paul was to take him prisoner, and to make him a servant of God according to the elected purpose of God in the counsel before the foundation of the world. Ananias declared to Paul, "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men, of what thou hast seen and heard."—Acts xxii. 14, 15. Every sinner that has seen the kingdom of God, or enters into the kingdom of heaven, must be born of the incorruptible seed by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. (1 Peter i. 23.) We cannot perceive of the Word unless the Father reveals it unto us, and his revelation gives understanding of both the wisdom and knowledge of God, and the greatness thereof, that we exclaim, "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." Moses wrote according to the word of God to him, and we read of the revelation of God, and his creation, which was for himself, and for his own glory, and find the exercise of the spirit of truth in our hearts, by which we can testify of the truth expressed, and after him many have written of the Word of God to them, and the revelation given, and the commandments that were given were not withheld. We have all the Scriptures that were written by holy men of old as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, pointing to the second in the Trinity, which bear record of Him that was to come. He is called the Son of the Most High, the Prince of Peace, Emmanuel, God with us. (Matt. i. 23.) By the spoken word, and commandment of God to Joseph and Mary, He shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. This is he that the Father decreed from before the foundation of the world should be offered as a lamb, that was perfect, that could put away sin, and make atonement forever for those chosen in the offering. David said, "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee."—Psalms ii. 7. All, from Abel to John the Baptist, spake as the Holy Ghost bore testimony, and we have the three witnesses taught by the Father of the time of the birth of his Son, and they were guided to where he was, wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. (Luke ii. 12.) After John the Baptist, we have the fulfillment of all that was written afore time, and pointing to Jesus. The Word of the Lord is spoken to us by the Son of God, and he calls his sheep by name, and leadeth them out. The Father sendeth his messenger to testify of his Son, and the voice said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."—Matt. iii. 17.

This brings us to the establishing of the church of God among the sons of men, according to the election of grace, in which every kindred, tongue and nation under heaven was embraced, in Christ Jesus. Jesus began testifying of the work his Father gave him to do at the age of twelve years, according to

man's reckoning of time, and from that time, we are persuaded, he was about his Father's business, in a manifest sense. We do not infer that he was not doing the will of the Father from the time he was born of the virgin, but we believe the Father was with him, and working, and Jesus worked hitherto, and what he did it was not of himself, but of his Father. Jesus is the quickening virtue, of the incorruptible seed, by the Word of God, and every one thus quickened is made alive, and their life will continue as long as the virtue of that life exists. Jesus gives eternal life, and they shall never perish, and every one that continueth in his word is his disciple indeed. (John viii. 31.) Jesus (the Word made flesh) lives as a natural man, so natural men could not discern between the first and the second Adam, and only those to whom the Father revealed Jesus knew that he was the Son of God, and "no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him."—Luke x. 22. The elect of God are exercised by the Spirit, that searches the deep things of God, and the God-given faith lays hold of the things of the kingdom of God and would portray to natural wisdom, if it were possible, the beauty beheld therein Often it is repeated that it seems so plain we wonder why they do not comprehend. Only by the revelation of the Spirit can any one know the truth as it is in Jesus, and the reason for their inability to grasp the things of the Spirit of God is, they are carnally minded, which is death. The Son of God hath testified of his kingdom, and the peace and increase thereof shall know no end. We believe as God appointed the time for his Son to be born of the virgin, and also the hour he should suffer, die and arise from the dead, has sanctified in Jesus every one for whom he died, and they are saved with an everlasting salvation. Jesus has triumphed over death, hell and the grave, and all power is given unto him in heaven and in earth. (Matt. xxviii. 18.) Jesus, after declaring his power unto his disciples, commanded them, saying, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."—Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. As we have expressed, in Jesus all nations of the earth are blessed, and his servants are sent unto them to teach them to observe all things whatsoever they have received by his commandments to them. Paul declared that which he had tasted and handled of the word of life, and that is the way God's people are comforted, which is the Holy Ghost sent down into the hearts of his servants, which bears witness with their spirit, in which they are mutually comforted together in Christ. After Jesus had commanded his disciples he ascended up into heaven, and led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men, and the cloud received him out of their sight, but they continued to gaze upward, and while they looked

steadfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. (Acts i. 9-11.) What wonderful manifestations of these truths are in the experience and life of the children of grace, which is only a foretaste of the joys of eternal bliss. The children of grace are worshipers of God in spirit, and desire the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby, and have tasted that the Lord is gracious. (1 Peter ii. 2, 3.) We are made glad as we call attention to these truths, and are hoping they stand as ours in the purpose of God. All to whom he has given an inheritance in Christ Jesus are made heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ Jesus, and shall not come into condemnation. The evidences which are given to the subjects of grace are tribulations, which worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; these are according to the purpose of God, for Jesus said, "Do ye now believe? Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world."—John xvi. 31-33. The Word that was made flesh, the Son of God, Jesus Christ the Righteous, is the One that speaks unto us, and the words spoken that cheer up the poor sinner are, "Be of good cheer: I have overcome the world."

C. W. V.

MICAH V. 5, 8.

Dear Brother Dodson:—Will you kindly give your views of the fifth verse of the fifth chapter of Micah? A sister has asked me to give my views on this wonderful chapter, especially on the fifth verse, which reads thus: "And this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land; and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him seven shepherds, and eight principal men." Also, will you please give your views on the eighth verse of this fifth chapter? Now, I am puzzled over the right interpretation of these, though I know there is much sweet meat in this chapter, and I feel that God will bless you to rightly divide it. I hope you will not think I am trying to impose on you by my request. My harp seems to be hung on the willow, if I ever had one, but I still get much comfort in reading the Signs and my Bible, which are about all I do read besides the dear old songs of Zion, and as I near the shores of time they seem to have a deeper and a sweeter meaning. I can liken it to the old mariner who has sailed the stormy sea for a long while and is on his last voyage, as he nears the shore where his home is he becomes anxious to get home where he can rest and be with his loved ones, where there will be no more storms or bitter strife to overcome. But I am resting in the hope that all our battles have been already fought and won by Jesus, who has gone before and has given us a lively hope by his resurrection from the dead.

I hope you will let me call you brother, although I am only a little one.

DAVIS BURCH.

Bellington, Wash., June 15, 1935.

REPLY.

We have delayed complying with this request from brother Burch for the reason that we have not felt to have any special exercise of mind upon it, and neither can we say now for a certainty that we are prepared for the task. Our preaching brethren know what it is to come to the very hour and stand before the people of God with the hope that he will give the unction of the Holy One and grant them a door of utterance, that they may speak to the honor and glory of his name. In writing, we find ourself just as helpless and dependent upon God to supply our every need and give us light and liberty, in the gospel. It is our desire, as far as possible, to conform to the wishes of our brethren in giving such views as we may have, but we hope they will be both patient and charitable towards us.

Brother Burch says he knows there is much sweet meat in this chapter, and he further states that he feels God will bless us to rightly divide it. Without God's blessings neither we nor any other man can bring forth the preciousness of his truth, for all alike must depend upon the Lord to make known the riches of his grace through Christ Jesus. Our brother has evidently had some meditation upon this portion of the word, and we hope he will not hesitate to come forward with it. If not, perhaps there are others who will favor us with their views.

This chapter appears to deal with three very important things: the birth of Christ, his kingdom, and his conquest. The mind of mortal man has never been able to contemplate subjects which are more wonderful or sublime than these. Any one of them is sufficient to engage our attention separately for hours, but for the present we will have to combine them and only hint at their true significance. Other prophets had prophesied of the coming of our Lord, the Savior, but no predecessor had been quite as specific as to the place and tribe as Micah, who said, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Isaiah had declared to the house of David that the Lord himself would give them a sign, saying, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." These things were fulfilled when the angel of the Lord came upon the shepherds who were keeping watch over their flocks by night, saying unto them, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." And "suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." There are no tidings so wonderful, or joy so inexpressible and full

of glory as when a poor sinner experiences Christ as his Savior, and we feel we can well understand why this multitude of the heavenly host sang, *Glory to God in the highest.* The shepherds in obedience to the unction of the Holy One went unto Bethlehem and there witnessed for themselves what the Lord had made known unto them had verily come to pass. Wise men, so-called, of to-day are constantly denyng the divinity of Jesus Christ, claiming that it was utterly impossible for him to have been conceived without an earthly father. With all of their earthly wisdom and knowledge of science, how little do they know of the things of God. The Lord most graciously promised Adam that salvation should come through the seed of the woman, and in the first chapter of Matthew, eighteenth to twenty-fifth verses inclusive, we find an undeniable record of how this came about, in these words: "*Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise*: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, *before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.*" And it was declared, "She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." We are further told that "All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: and *knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son*: and he called his name JESUS." We have said many times that the reason why men deny the divinity of Christ is that they know absolutely nothing themselves of the work of God in a poor sinner's heart. The conception, or very beginning of this knowledge is according to the workings of God's holy Spirit and, therefore, the Lord's people are taught that, "Salvation is by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." Unless we accept wholly and completely this divine origin of our Lord and Savior, both prophecy and the fulfillment thereof must fall to the ground, and then where will we be? All other ground is but sinking sand at best.

With regard to Christ's kingdom, Micah has this to say in the fourth verse of this chapter: "And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God; and they shall abide: for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth." Isaiah says, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." He further declares, "The government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." In this kingdom which, while in the world, is

not of the world, he is the King indeed, and his subjects are witnesses to the glorious truth of the power and sweetness of his word, to the unchangeableness of his great love, to the endurableness of his mercy and to the unalterableness of his firm decrees. He is, indeed, Head over all things to his church, which is his body, and her desire is unto him, and he rules over her, providing in every sense of the word for all of her needs, and faithfully promising never to leave nor to forsake her. Is it any wonder that she should feel he is the chiefest among ten thousand and the One altogether lovely?

As to his conquest, or victory, we are assured by John in Revelation that "Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not." That he triumphed gloriously over every foe, delivering completely and for all time his chosen people from under the bondage of sin and death, there is abundant proof throughout the inspired record, and God himself gave unmistakable evidence of this by exalting him at his own right hand, and giving him a name that is above every name. To the question, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" came the answer, "It is God that justifieth." Again, the question, "Who is he that condemneth?" and again the answer, "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." The conclusion of the whole matter, then, is that nothing "shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The fifth verse, which is the first one that our brother has inquired about, reads: "And this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land; and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him seven shepherds, and eight principal men." While the word "man" in our text is italicized, showing that it was supplied by the translators, nevertheless it is very evident that the man Christ Jesus is the one under consideration, for only this "Prince of Peace" can be the peace of his people in the time of trouble. The Assyrian is symbolical of the enemy, and when he shall come into our land, and tread in our palaces; in other words, into the assemblies of the saints, or churches, "then shall we raise against him seven shepherds, and eight principal men." Seven being a perfect and complete number, our thought is that the expression, "seven shepherds," indicates the fullness of prophecy, which has to do with the Old Testament Scriptures in their entirety, or all who testified under the law. All of these prophets foretold in one way or another the coming of the Messiah, which would mean the dawning of a new day. The "eight principal men" may well represent the New Testament writers, such as the four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and the apostles, Peter, James, Jude and by no means the least, the great apostle Paul, who in his epistle to the church at Ephesus said, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and

foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." To these were committed the keys of the kingdom of heaven, for it is written that, "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."—Matt. xvi. 19. Thus we have these two witnesses, the Old and the New Testaments, one looking forward to the coming of the Savior, the other looking backward and declaring that he did come and hath fulfilled and accomplished every jot and tittle of that which had been before prophesied. Every word, therefore, has been established, and when opposition to the truth arises all that can be done now is to raise this combined testimony against it. The church to-day has no other weapon with which to defend the principles of eternal truth as recorded both in the written word and in the fleshly tables of the heart; nothing can be added to nor taken from that which God hath spoken. Let us be very careful to make as certain as possible that we are building upon the one and only foundation, and that we have a "Thus saith the Lord" for all that we teach.

The eighth verse reads: "And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people, as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep: who, if he go through, both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver." Shall we say that the Jewish apostles in the setting up and establishing of gospel churches, and particularly the apostle Paul, was this remnant of Jacob? Paul was truly as a lion for strength among the Gentiles, and as a young lion among the flocks of sheep in going through and tearing to pieces the maze of legal ordinances, together with everything else that was contrary to truth, and there was none who could deliver or withstand his attacks, for he gloried only in the cross of Christ and determined to know nothing among them save Jesus Christ and him crucified. There has never been any who could successfully reply against the words of Jesus. He spake as never man spake, and his words to-day will cut the very ground from beneath those who oppose his truth. Perhaps, there was never a time in the history of the world when there were more creeds and isms than there are in this age, for there are lo heres and lo theres on every side. Some are very cunning and crafty and handle the word of God deceitfully, but when they and their doctrines are weighed in the scales of Holy Writ they are found to be wanting. The plumb of God's truth shows that their house, or work, does not rest upon the sure foundation, and therefore it cannot stand. In many respects mankind appears to advance and make progress, while in others it deteriorates and goes backward, so that there is no permanent stability in human affairs. What a contrast between them and the things of our God, which are eternal, immovable and always abiding,

the same yesterday, to-day and for ever. Let us, therefore, try the spirits to see whether they be of God, and every spirit that confesseth not that Christ is come in the flesh, refuse to bid it Godspeed. On the other hand, let us contend earnestly for the things which make for peace, and may grace and mercy ever attend the pathway of those who love our Lord in sincerity and in truth.

R. L. D.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Arnold H. Bellows, at Ashokan, N. Y., February 22nd, 1936, Mr. William Scudder and Mrs. Jessica DeMott, of Halcott, N. Y. Mr. and Mrs. Scudder will reside in Halcott, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER JOSHUA T. ROWE departed this life February 19th, 1936, at his home in Baltimore, Maryland, in his seventy-eighth year. He was born April 12th, 1858, in Beaufort County, North Carolina. His parents were John Tillman Rowe and Penelope Ross, both members of the Primitive Baptist Church. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Sandy Grove, in Beaufort County, and was baptized on the first Sunday in June, 1876, by Elder Bryan Whitford. In September, 1876, he began speaking in public, and the following December was licensed by the church to exercise in the public ministry. February 16th, 1881, Elder Rowe married Miss Ella B. Harrison, of near Plymouth, N. C., where they made their first home, and he joined by letter the Morrattock Church, in Washington County. In January, 1882, the church at Jamesville, in Martin County, asked the Morrattock Church for his ordination, that he might serve them as pastor. They agreed, and in February, the same year, he was ordained by Elders N. H. Harrison and Joseph E. Adams. He served Jamesville Church four years and baptized nine persons. From 1882 to 1890 he assisted the pastor at Morraattock Church and baptized fifteen persons. In January, 1890, he moved to his old home in Beaufort County and was called to the care of Blount's Creek Church, served them six years and baptized eleven persons. He also served the Bethlehem Church, in Tyrrell County, as assistant pastor a few years, and in 1891 was chosen pastor, where he remained until 1898 and baptized eighteen persons. In December, 1898, Elder Rowe moved his family from Elizabeth City, N. C., where he had resided for three years, to Baltimore, Md., and in January, 1899, took the care of Ebenezer Church there, also Black Rock Church, in Baltimore County, and Shiloh Church, in Washington, D. C., and remained their pastor until his death. In Baltimore he baptized thirty-seven persons, at Black Rock eight and at Shiloh five. He also baptized four at Harford Church, and a few for other ministers. He served as pastor for the Alexandria Church, Virginia, for a time. The principal part of Elder Rowe's ministry was spent in North Carolina, Maryland and Virginia, but he had visited churches from South Carolina to Maine and Canada, and frequently visited churches in neighboring States for meetings of different kinds. He, together with Elder Charles Meads and Deacons John T. Walker and C. C. Aydlett, constituted the church at Norfolk, Va., in August, 1908, and served them for a while. For a number of years prior to his death he was associate editor of *Zion's Landmark*. Elder Rowe's first wife died

June 17th, 1914, and in October, 1915, he was married to Mrs. Addie Farmer Massey, of Wilson, N. C., who died in 1919. His third wife was Miss Mamie E. Wiles, of Ringgold, Va., whom he married in 1920, and who survives him. She was a good, faithful, loving wife and ministering angel during his last illness. He is also survived by six children of the first marriage: Alvis, Ada, John, William, Frances and Charles, and two by the third marriage: Mamie Wiles and J. Tillman Rowe. There are also ten grandchildren and one great-grandson. In July, 1935, he was stricken with total blindness caused by a heart ailment, and his physical health gradually failed from that time to the end, but his mind remained clear and active. During the last two weeks he seemed to realize his departure was close at hand and made certain requests concerning same. He asked that he not be eulogized as man, but if there had been seen any marks of the Lord Jesus Christ let them talk of that. Several times he said he feared the monster Death, but believed he had kept the faith, therefore did not fear the result. Once he quoted: "If I must sing, I'll sing of grace," and later the whole last verse:

"Of grace I'll therefore loudly sing,
As long as I have breath,
Nor will I fear the dreadful sting
That arms the monster Death."

He added that he could not go as far as the poet (that he did fear the dreadful sting), but a few hours before the end he was peaceful and quiet and perhaps was not aware of the arrival of the last enemy. Once, after a whole day and night of almost continual suffering, he got more comfortable and had eight or ten hours of sleep and rest, and when he awakened he said, "Lord, I do thank thee for the few hours of ease." At another time, when asked, "Do you not feel that you have fought a good fight?" he replied, "Yes, I have received and seen many blessed evidences in the people served that my preaching has been edifying, comforting and cheering, and notwithstanding the many imperfections of self it has been a good fight." He would not say he was a good fighter, but was glad the Lord had kept him from extremes. During his last illness he quoted much Scripture, but in his weakened condition it was not always possible to understand him. At one time shortly before his death he recited Jeremiah iii. 23, and a few hours before he passed away he prayed aloud for several minutes, thanking the Lord for all his wonderful mercies and blessings, both temporal and spiritual, and asking for a continuance of them for family, friends and churches. Elder Rowe had requested many times that when the end came to send for Elder A. L. Harrison, his brother-in-law, whom he had known from boyhood, had seen come into the church and ministry, and always loved him both as man and sound Primitive Baptist. This request was carried out. There was also present Elder D. L. Topping, of Baltimore, Md., who feels Elder Rowe's passing very keenly, since his entire church life has been under his ministry; he was baptized by him, and they have been very close to each other for thirty-six years. Two other ministers, Elders H. H. Lefferts and R. Lester Dodson, were present and all spoke very feelingly and comfortingly. There were scores of letters and telegrams bearing messages of love and sympathy, for which the members of the family desire to express to each one their appreciation. Many beautiful floral designs from church members, friends and neighbors attest to the high esteem and devotion for their pastor

and friend. Prayer at the house and singing "Rock of Ages" were followed by services at the old Black Rock meetinghouse, including the reading of his favorite hymn, "How tedious and tiresome the hours," etc., after which his remains were laid to rest in the churchyard cemetery, there to await the resurrection morn, when they shall come forth a spiritual body, as he so fully believed and preached. "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into the harvest."

Written by his son,

ALVIS S. ROWE.

ELDER V. R. HARRIS, moderator of the South Arkansas Association, and for thirty-five years the pastor of four churches in the first district of the association, passed away suddenly February 17th, 1936, having preached one of the ablest discourses of his ministerial career on the 16th, at his home church, at Fordyce, Arkansas. Our Association and his many friends the country over join his family in sincere grief in our loss of an able, gifted minister, a valuable and sympathetic friend and a kind father. His death leaves a gap in our lives and association of churches which cannot easily be filled, but his memory will be ever verdant in our hearts. We extend to the lonely and bereaved widow our deepest sympathy, and do sincerely pray that God will be her ever-present spiritual companion during the remainder of her days, and a Father to the children. But our hope and sweet consolation is that our inestimable loss is his eternal gain. He was an eloquent expounder, a powerful reasoner and an earnest contended for the faith of the sovereign grace of God for poor sinners for both time and eternity. As a devoted christian and a successful business man he was respected alike by friend and foe. Brother Harris was a native of Fordyce, Arkansas, where he spent his entire life, and was one of the few citizens who had witnessed its growth from infancy to a beautiful little city of three thousand inhabitants. As an active and courageous citizen he did much to further its growth, having managed several businesses and holding more than one political office during his life. Elder Harris was born in the year 1867, and was married in his early youth to Miss Rena King, who, together with their eight children, survives him. The children are: Mrs. Elizabeth Shell, of Maryland, Mrs. Ruth Lacket, of Louisville, Ark., Mrs. Myrtle Pledger, of Fordyce, Ark., Mrs. Mary Evans, of Arkadelphia, Ark, Linnie, Charles and Eline Harris, of Maryland, and Durand Harris, of Dallas, Texas.

The funeral services were conducted by this writer, who took for his text, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."—1 Cor. xv. 26.

J. T. EVERITT.

January 31st, 1936, the angel of death removed from the scenes of life's activity and usefulness MISS LILLIAN WINCHELL, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Orville Winchell, of 59 South Manor Avenue, Kingston, N. Y., after about four years of illness, during which she was confined to her bed much of the time. A few weeks before the end came she was taken to the Orthmann Sanitarium in Kingston, N. Y., in hope something might be done to afford relief, but human skill and medical science availed nothing, and she declined until the end came in peaceful sleep. Previous to her removal to the sanitarium Miss Winchell had gone to a hospital in New York for observation and treatment, but her affliction had developed such complica-

tions affecting the nerve tissue of the spine that only temporary relief could be afforded. About four years before her death Miss Winchell sustained a broken leg following a fall, and subsequently underwent an operation for appendicitis and gall bladder trouble, and following that, submitted to a mastoid operation, which was considered successful in itself, but previous troubles had made their inroads, undermining Miss Winchell's physical powers and imparing her vitality to such an extent that recovery was impossible in spite of the best medical and surgical skill, professional nursing and the loving ministrations of relatives and friends. Many blossoms of devoted attention were strewn in her pathway by her legion of friends, and truly it may be said, she had her flowers here. She suffered intensely for long periods of time, yet never did she complain, as though her lot was unjust or the Lord unkind to her. She radiated cheer almost to the last, and never gave up hope. She was a beautiful character in all that makes for noble, true, unselfish, spotless womanhood. The purity of her young life and her high ideals cannot be excelled, and hers is indeed a sweet and gentle memory. Though stricken in the morning of life, when the shadows pointed westward, she had not lived in vain, but had radiated deeds of kindness and loving cheer to many. Though death nipped her life in its bud and bloom, she was sustained by an unfaltering trust and lively hope in the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ, and loved to attend the meetings of Old School Baptists and to hear discussions upon subjects of a spiritual nature, and to read the Bible, or have it read to her when she was unable to read it herself. Many are the evidences that she possessed that faith which is accounted for righteousness and had tasted that the Lord is gracious.

The funeral services were conducted at the Olive and Hurley meetinghouse, the writer officiating. The interment was in the family plot at Ashokan. She is survived by her parents, three sisters and one brother, besides other relatives, who are the recipients of much sympathy.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

MEETINGS.

The Baltimore Association will meet with Ebenezer Church in Baltimore, Md., on Friday and Saturday, then transfer on Sunday and consolidate with the all-day meeting at Black Rock, in May. We will publish exact date of this meeting in the May SIGNS. A cordial invitation is extended to all.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk,
St. John's Road, Baltimore, Md.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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POETRY.

SOME TIME.

Some time, when all life's lessons have been learned,
And sun and stars for evermore have set,
The things which our weak judgments here have spurned,
The things o'er which we grieved with lashes wet,
Will flash before us, out of life's dark night,
As stars shine most in deeper tints of blue;
And we shall see how all God's plans are right
And how what seems reproof was love most true.

And we shall see how, while we frown and sigh,
God's plans go on as best for you and me;
How, when we called, he heeded not our cry,
Because his wisdom to the end could see.
And e'en as prudent parents disallow
Too much of sweet to craving babyhood,
So God, perhaps, is keeping from us now
Life's sweetest things, because it seemeth good.

And if sometimes, commingled with life's wine,
We find the wormwood, and rebel and shrink,
Be sure a wiser hand than yours or mine
Pours out this potion for our lips to drink,
And if some friend we love is lying low,
Where human kisses cannot reach his face,
Oh do not blame the loving Father so,
But wear your sorrow with obedient grace.

And you shall shortly know that lengthened breath
Is not the sweetest gift God sends his friend,
And that sometimes the sable pall of death
Conceals the fairest boon his love can send.
If we could push ajar the gates of life,
And stand within, and all God's workings see,
We could interpret all this doubt and strife,
And for each mystery could find a key.

But not to-day. Then be content, poor heart,
God's plans, like lilies pure and white, unfold;
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart,
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold.
And if, when through with toil, we reach the land
Where tired feet, with sandals loosed, may rest,
When we shall clearly know and understand,
I think that we will say, "God knows the best."

MAY RILEY SMITH.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Raleigh, North Carolina.

BELOVED IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD:—You are all pursuing that path that leads to eternal glory. It is a path which none know but the ransomed of the Lord, and they only walk therein by faith, and not by sight. That faith which worketh by love, and which is of the operation of God, clings to, rests upon and walks in the new and living way which Jesus has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. The obedience and atoning blood of the Lamb is the glorious highway through this wilderness to the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. I, saith Jesus, am the way. As I contemplate

the life of the righteous, and muse upon their blissful and eternal inheritance of glory with Christ, the Head of the church, I find longings flowing forth from my soul, and I join with one of old, saying, "Remember me, O Lord, with the favors that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation; that I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance." I gladly admit that our God grants me seasons when I sing with gladness of heart for Jacob. "For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he." But oh, at other times I am so beset with enemies, so tossed with internal conflicts, and my sins as a very plague seem to isolate me from the commonwealth of Israel. I am as one thrust forth from thy tents, O happy Israel! The fretting leprosy of mine iniquities causes me to wander as an outcast from the holy people. Ah! well I know my uncleanness unfits me to associate with the clean. I feel my presence would defile the tents of the beloved nation. Therefore when any of the family of God would draw nigh to recognize and to embrace me as a brother, I inwardly cry out as if to forbid their drawing nigh. I am unclean, unclean; I am not fit to be taken into fellowship and companionship with the ransomed of the Lord. And when, notwithstanding my inward protestations, tokens of fellowship have been bestowed upon me by God's dear children, this so humbles me, I feel so contemptibly mean, so vile, so unworthy of their esteem, that I have gone before now in secret to sigh and to weep. I need thy precious blood, O Lamb of God, to cleanse my guilt away. "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." The blood of thine atonement apply to my diseased soul. Oh give me the evidences that thou didst die for me, and then I shall be clean in thy sight. "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." This shall raise me up from the dust to rejoice in thy salvation. "He sent his word and healed them." This is what I need; not the bare theory of the doctrine, with its proof texts set in array in my natural understanding, but the glorious truth sent by the Lord's gracious power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. When the Lord sends the word it prospers in the thing whereunto he sends it. This I know, for then his speech distils as the dew upon my soul, and I am refreshed. His doctrine sent to my heart calms all the tumults that my sins and the devil create, and I have peace through the blood of Emmanuel's cross. Sometimes I am as one famishing, and I pine away for want of the fruits of the field. My soul craveth Jehovah's sweet mercy, I yearn again to taste his pardoning love, but the Bible cannot afford it, the letter of the Scriptures cannot bestow it. I have no power to suck honey out of them. Those who can go to the Scriptures and always get what they need, and can close the book well satisfied with what they have got, are altogether different from poor, sinful, helpless me. I can

no more help myself to food out of the Holy Scriptures than a very babe could feed itself at a well laden table spread with all manner of sweet tasting and nourishing food. I well know that the concentration of the natural intellect upon the Scriptures cannot gather food therefrom. Mere natural study yields no sustenance to the quickened soul. By our natural powers we may acquire a natural knowledge that the Bible teaches the doctrine of predestination, election, salvation by grace, etc., and by the application of the natural mind to these subjects in the perusal of the Bible a person may be well versed, as the saying is, and be able to prove his points, to preach the doctrine in the letter. He may be quite competent to debate with the opponents of the doctrine, and secretly, if not openly, pride himself in this line. But what of it all? It may all be, and that man's soul be utterly destitute of the grace of God that bringeth salvation. I have been harrassed with thoughts that I was just such an one, that all I know is the result of natural study of the Scriptures, and fears have invaded my heart that after all I know nothing of the anointing of the Holy Spirit. I have been brought low and with great searchings of heart I have fallen at the feet of the Lord so troubled, so weakened, so dismayed at the thought that the secret of the Lord was not with me. Perhaps some one who is fully six feet tall according to his own measurement, may hold one like me in very contempt, and think one like me by this time should be a man, and no more a child. Well, perhaps there are times when I am a man, strong indeed in Christ Jesus. I grow up by faith, by the abundant ministrations of the Spirit of Truth into Jesus Christ in all things. I am strong then in our Redeemer, and the arms of my hands are made strong indeed in Christ by the mighty God of Jacob. Then I can vanquish the foe, and tread down my enemies as the mire of the streets, but my triumphing, and all the exploits are altogether by faith, which is the fruit of the Spirit, in the love, and mercy, and faithfulness of God, in the blood and righteousness of Jesus. These are rare times, when I can in truth experimentally triumph and glory in Christ Jesus. But, I am as a sickly babe sometimes, so weak, defenseless, I feel as it were to be dying for the need of some one to care for me, feed me and clothe me, and that one, that only One that can do these things unto me is the glorious everlasting God. "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." Sickly and faint and ready to die in the filth of my own heart, the Lord in his tender pity has placed me in the arms of Zion, she has borne me upon her sides and carried me in her bosom. I have been dandled upon her knees, and she has drawn out the breasts of her consolations to me, there I have been suckled, and have been satisfied with the abundance of her glory. They have breasts in some places that they call "conditional time salvation," but from the description that some of them give of them I am fully satisfied they are not the breasts

of the free woman, but the breasts of Hagar the bond woman. However the children of the bond woman may thrive upon Hagar's breasts, Isaac will do well by being suckled at the breasts of the everlasting covenant of grace, even the sure mercies of David. Those who want to suck at the breasts of "conditional happiness," of conditional time salvation, can do so, and they are welcome to all the happiness that they derive therefrom. There is a vast amount of fleshly religious happiness in the world that is of no kin to the joy of the Lord. People may perform their supposed duties, and render their supposed obedience unto God, and compass themselves about with their sparks, and walk in the light of their fire, and in the sparks that they have kindled, but I had rather walk in the dark with God than walk in their light. (Isaiah l. 10, 11.) I am pained to think that such teachings are being taught among our people, teachings wherein the precepts of the law of liberty are mingled and confounded with the precepts of the covenant that gendereth to bondage. The obedience of faith, and commandments of Christ's gospel, are handled in such a way that the joyous, captivating sound of them cannot be heard as they come forth from the lips of conditionalists. Their sweetness, freshness and beauty are departed, and grace, the grace of God, cannot be discerned in the obedience required, and the gracious and almighty operations of the Holy Ghost exercising the hearts of the elect to the obedience of faith are altogether in the background, in the doctrines that are being promulgated in this distasteful phraseology, conditional time salvation. True gospel obedience flows from the constraining love of Christ. Apart from the love of God in the soul there is no obedience in the gospel. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." The Lord delights in that which his Spirit inspires. In order to the true worship of God we need the ministrations of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, to revive our faith, and hope, and love, praises and supplications, then obedience to the Lord will be the fruit. "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart."—Psalms cxix. 32. Oh, what are all the best services that we have ever rendered unto the God of our salvation? To this day I have to say to Jehovah's sovereign grace I owe above what the fiends have in hell. I desire from my very soul to walk holily just and unblameably before the Lord and his people, but I have not attained unto this. I see very plainly that vanity is stamped upon all that I engage in, the vileness of my flesh is so manifest to me, it intrudes itself, mixes itself with and defiles all that I put my hands unto. That others may not be so beset with sinfulness so polluted I allow, for I see it is only by a miracle of grace that I can be saved, and grace is the only fountain that yields supplies to one like me. I can with all my heart join with Hart, who sings,

"Jesus gives us pure affections,
Wills to do what he requires,
Makes us follow his directions,
And what he requires, inspires.

All our prayers, and all our praises,
Rightly offered in his name,
He that dictates them is Jesus,
He that answers is the same."

"Love is the fulfilling of the law." Thus that dear child of God, that invalid, that deaf and dumb paralytic, when by the sweet communion of the Holy Ghost is instructed and comforted, and filled with love to the Redeemer, is as much obedient unto Christ as any of the ransomed family. That strength and grace by which the believer walks in the commandments of the Lord our Redeemer, is not an ability that we have inherent in us as subjects of the new birth, which it is in our power according to our will to put into exercise, and thus, apart from walk obediently, it is the obedience of faith, and this comprehends that God's grace is made to abound unto us, and this is our sufficiency. (2 Cor. ix. 8.) I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Thus the apostle, knowing that believers have no stored up, inherent ability, in themselves, to do the will of their God, says, "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."—Heb. xiii. 20, 21. Though I am, I hope, a subject of Jehovah's grace, and born of the Spirit, and if so even such an one, yet with me there are many times when I have no strength, I am as it were dead, I have not the power to put forth a sigh, or groan; to cry, to pray to God seems impossible. I am so hardened, so frozen up, so stiffened and numbed by the deceitfulness of my sins, and an evil heart of unbelief, that I find it beyond my power to think a thought. Ah, I know by humbling experiences that apart from the unremitting ministry of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, I have no might to worship God. Those who can always sigh over their sins, and pray unto the Lord for his pardoning love, those who can praise God any hour of the day they appoint to do so, are not like me. But I have proved that our God is very pitiful, and his longsuffering with such a miserable, unprofitable worm as I am is a wonder of wonders. "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no ~~might~~ strength he increaseth strength." He visits my soul in his love, he chastens me with his rod, he shows me when I am smarting under his reproofs, that mine iniquities have exceeded all his chastenings. (Job xxxvi. 9.) He maketh my heart soft, he gives under this discipline a humble and contrte heart, he smiles with pardoning grace upon me, he speaks kind promises to my soul, he gives me glimpses of the riches of his grace, displayed in the works and merits of Jesus our covenant Head. Oh, then I sigh, then I weep, then I pray, then I praise, then I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

"I can do nothing without thee,
My strength is wholly thine;
Withered and barren should I be
If severed from the vine."

I find, dear children of God, that I have

to be learning over and over again that "Christ is all, and in all."—Col. iii. 11. Oh, that name Jesus, Savior, is so sweet! In him are such transcendent excellencies, and so suitable to a needy sinner like me that at every view that is given me by the Spirit of truth I fall deeper and deeper in love with our altogether lovely Savior. And when his love is shed abroad in my heart I find myself saying within me, He loveth me still, he loveth even me, and what proof of his love I see in his fulfilling all the gracious relations that he sustains unto his people, as the loving Kinsman, our Brother, our tender, faithful Husband, our Almighty Friend and Redeemer. When the Holy Spirit, who takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto the elect, shows them unto me, how can I help loving him and praising and adoring the King in his beauty? Ah, then it is that I would not in word only, but in deed and in truth love him who hath loved me with an everlasting love.

"Love moved him to die, on this I rely;
My Savior hath loved me, I cannot tell why;
But this I can tell, he loved me so well,
As to lay down his life, to redeem me from hell."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

Danville, Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—The Lord willing, I will attempt to write a few thoughts upon a subject which has arrested my mind, but realize I cannot have any true light on the subject unless it pleases our heavenly Father to reveal it to me.

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." Paul wrote to the brethren (the church) at Corinth the following: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."—2 Cor. vi. 14-18. My fellow-travelers in the Lord, this is a strong command regarding the separation and cleansing of God's people. The Lord speaks to his own in mysterious ways, and he alone can make himself known to the poor condemned and wandering sinner. Friends, have you ever felt the call, Come ye out from among them, be ye therefore separate? I feel that I have heard the call of God's Spirit, whispering in that still small voice, Come out from among them, be ye separate. At the time I was being led through this experience of a change, and I felt it to be impossible for me to separate myself from those whom I believed to be my friends, and was trying to lead and teach people to live on a higher plane and God would bless them in the end. I was, and have been, taught by a

higher power, if not deceived, that salvation is of the Lord. Until it pleased God to reveal to me what is meant in the text I was most miserable, because I was being "stirred up," not knowing what to do or which way to go, feeling keenly the call, "Come out from among them," but lacking understanding. I tried hard to understand, continuing the works of the flesh, thinking that if I would live better perhaps I would be shown just what all my trouble was about; maybe I would be better satisfied later on. But what I called self-improvement did not remedy my trouble. It seemed that I continued to get deeper and deeper into trouble. I loved those I was associated with, and tried hard to be satisfied doing the things I had been doing for such a long time. I just could not separate myself from them, and I continued dissatisfied. I lived and worked in this condition for several years. I believed I was among good people, and that they were doing the best they could. I felt they were not deliberately trying to deceive me, and I am sure they were not. I did not wish to be different from my friends, but often I would look over a congregation, trying to see if I could find just one face that would show a sympathetic feeling and understanding of my case, but without avail; every one seemed to have a soul satisfaction but me. The works I was performing sometimes received the praises of men, but I had an inward conviction that my works were not pleasing to God. I remember on one occasion, when on my way home after attending the morning service, feeling fine, when suddenly a voice spoke to me, saying, How long will you continue seeking the praises of men? I was made right there and then to understand that it was the Spirit of the Lord that had spoken to me. I believe from that time it has pleased the Lord to reveal his works to me, leading me on and on, until he brought me to the place where he made me satisfied to follow where he leadeth. I was being taught by the Spirit of the Lord, if not deceived, that salvation is not by works, but is by grace, God's grace, free, and unmerited on the part of the sinner, wholly a work of God on behalf of the sinner. I was shown that I was a sinner and was unable to clothe myself with my own works of righteousness. I felt they were not acceptable to God. Cain was a tiller of the ground (representing human works), expecting God to be pleased with his work. And in process of time it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. So we see that Cain's offering was without faith in God. Perhaps Cain did the best he could, and I believe he did. It may be that Cain was not deliberately trying to deceive God, but one thing is sure, his offering was void of faith. Abel's offering was accepted of God. We read, "And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his offering." The works of the flesh are not pleasing to God, accord-

ing to the Bible, neither are they pleasing to one of God's little ones. God has his own way of stirring up his own, at the appointed time, and then they are sure to become dissatisfied with the work of the flesh, for they will be unable to walk and commune with it in any degree of satisfaction. When a work of God has begun in our hearts we are made to see and know that there is a separation of God's people from the world, even though one may be, from a natural standpoint, affiliated with it. There is a feeling we have, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." When I was brought to this place, realizing that there was nothing I could do, I wanted to talk with some one whom I believed would have an understanding of my condition. If not deceived, the Lord told me to go and talk over and tell my troubles to my dear old father and mother, whom I believed to be saints of God. I left my business during a week day and went to see them, telling them of the experiences I was having, which I thought I had kept hidden from them for many years, but, to my surprise, I found I had not been fooling them, for they told me they had felt for a long time that I was having an experience of grace. Well, that was a happy meeting, different from any we had ever had before. I was happy, and they seemed to be happy, and a great burden left me. I had again been shown what is meant in our text. After I returned home I called on Elder W. R. Dodd and told him about what had happened. I found he was not surprised. I had talked with him on many occasions about the trouble I was having. He was lovely to me, and had the patience to bear with my weakness, and this caused me to have a tender place in my heart for him until this day. Some might say, Why did you go to your father and mother and Elder Dodd? Acts viii. 26-31: "And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, * * * * sitting in his chariot, read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me?" After this experience I was made willing to go to the church and offer myself; that was all I could do. I was accepted by the brethren into full fellowship. I want to say that I have been satistified to be counted among the people who, I believe, have had an experience of grace shed abroad in their hearts. Often I have not felt worthy of their fellowship, but I love them dearly. If I know my heart, I thank the Lord for his goodness toward me.

Yours in hope,

POSIE W. ASHWORTH.

Salisbury, Md., Feb. 20, 1936.

ELDER G. E. COULBOURN—DEAR PASTOR:—Since last Sunday my mind has been on the Scripture you so beautifully set forth. The man that was born blind knew that he could see, but he did not know who gave him his sight until Jesus revealed himself later. So much of the time I have doubted I ever knew anything about Jesus, or ever had any experience, or even a place with the children of God, but it seemed Sunday I was taken back to twenty-one years ago, when I could see, but did not know it was Jesus, until three years later, I felt then he revealed himself to me, and I, like Thomas, could say, My Lord and my God. It was a vision. I was going along the road, walking north, and I heard a noise, and looking up saw a large aeroplane, and in the west, turning south, saw another, and looking east, not an aeroplane, but a city beautiful beyond comparison, with two large gates, and they were open; no other way to enter the city but through the gates. I stood still, wondering, until it faded away as the sky at sunset. I awoke, and it seemed there was a peace I could not understand, and I was lifted up. This lasted a few days, then I seemed to be let down, but things were not with me as before. I was full of unrest, and was not satisfied with life as before, for I wanted to lead a christian life. It looked very easy, but it seemed the harder I tried the more I fell short, and I made this remark: If I live I shall join the church, and I am sure that church will be the Methodist, but not until I felt mine was a christian life. I read, but it seemed to be sealed, for I could not understand the Scriptures. They opened an old meetinghouse down the road from us. Christian Baptists I think they called themselves. At first I said, We have good preaching at home. But as time went on I could not believe this and that, for the preacher would always end by saying, It is up to you. It had to be something else for me. I needed help. I was not able to help myself, let alone helping some one else. I would go to Nassaongo sometimes, but it was all sealed to me. I heard Elder Mellott say, A child of God always feels welcome when he comes to his Father's door. It touched me deeply at that time, and I wondered if there was a door for me. Then I wanted to go back to the denomination where I attended Sunday School as a child, but the sermon was for those who could help themselves, not for me, and I felt I was to the end, sinking in despair. I tried to talk to one very near, but he did not understand me, so I fell asleep in this state of mind, and was walking along the road again, going north, but it was dark and the air was thick with smoke and cinders, and I thought it was the end of time. I walked under a large tree by the roadside, and some one came along, and I said to him, I would not go out from under this tree unless the Lord himself told me. But I did, and was walking south to a house in the distance for protection, but before I reached the house some one said to me, Go and call your husband, we will take him, too. I

heard singing, and in the east a light was coming up out of the darkness, and it looked like great mountains of darkness rolled away, and the singing came from the top, and it was a new song, I had never heard it before, and I stood in awe and wonder until it all rolled away and there was no darkness at all. This was three years after the first vision, about the same time of year, just before the Association, but I still did not understand. I read constantly, but just as the light came up and dispelled all darkness the light of understanding came to me. I was reading and this Scripture came to me, All the Father hath given me shall come to me, and he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. I said, It is finished, it is done, and I could say, My Lord and my God, and I said, No earthly power will ever move or shake what I believe now. I went to the Association at Nassaongo and Elder Ruston took the stand and preached the travel of a child of grace. I felt, This is the people, and this is home, and oh how I tried to keep back the tears, but could not. I still feel it is the true gospel. His word and his promises cannot be shaken, but I have been shaken many, many times, but I know this, The Lord knoweth them that are his, and we will all go where we belong.

Elder Coulbourn, I do not know why I have written so much, I just wanted you to know I got so much out of your sermon Sunday. You said you had been so cast down. I know something about that, and also believe it is a blessed state, for when we are lifted up there is praise and thanksgiving, and it is a blessed thing to hunger, for He said we shall be fed.

Your sister,

CORA POWELL.

Norwood Grove, Manitoba.

DEAR PUBLISHER:—This remittance will be some two weeks later than usual, but knowing of your severe trial, and not getting the SIGNS until last week, made me fear that the end of the dear paper was just about reached, and it would be better to wait and see. However, the goodness of our God continues. Oh what fearful creatures we are, and how soon we are ready to give up. Surely it is of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed. Some of us, in looking back upon our little past history, are made to marvel at such grace bestowed. But where sin abounded grace did much more abound. To be included in that number, and a sweet sense of the joy springing up at times in our very souls, causes us to fall down before Him who hath made this possible, such a sweet persuasion that during your affliction you have been favored to know something of this blessed secret, and that the love of God, which truly passes all understanding, might abound more and more, causes me to write in this way, though not without a fear that it is taking up your time to read, but I would like to say, if only a word, that might be of cheer and encouragement to you in your labor of love. The people of God are few indeed, and scattered to the ends of the earth, yet who, or what, can separate

us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord?

I remain yours sincerely,

J. C. SMALLBONE.

[SUCH letters as the foregoing are indeed encouraging and comforting, and we sincerely thank the writer for his kind words, as well as all others who have sent us letters of encouragement during our season of disability. We are glad to state that the eye operated upon is gradually improving, and our physician assures us that eventually the sight will be entirely restored, for which we are truly thankful to Him who doeth all things well.—PUBLISHER.]

Vienna, Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—Each year when my subscription comes due I feel that I should write you a few lines and let you know how much I enjoy the SIGNS and the letters from our dear ones, but I have never been able to write as some do, especially to the comfort of others. If I could, I would write often. It is a rare thing for me to be on the mountain top; most of the time I am in the valley of doubts and fears. I know if I am saved, it is by the grace of God.

"Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

I hope to take the SIGNS as long as I am spared. Sometimes during the winter months it is all the preaching I get. I hope you may be able in these days of depression to continue to publish it.

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

(MRS.) C. H. GLASCOCK.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Salisbury Church, Salisbury, Maryland, to the several associations and churches with which we correspond, sends love in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—We feel it a wonderful blessing indeed to address you as brethren in the Lord, and we do hope that we thank God in spirit and in truth for the wonderful privilege of having the wonderful evidence manifested of such spiritual emotions as have prevailed throughout this meeting. We are pleased to have your messengers with us and to receive your correspondence The ministering brethren have come to us laden with the rich things of God, declaring to us Jesus Christ and him crucified. Our meeting was well attended and peace and harmony prevailed.

Our next session is appointed to be held (the Lord willing) with Forest Grove Church, Wicomico County, Maryland, beginning on Wednesday after the third Sunday of October, 1936, and continuing two days, at which time and place we hope to meet your messengers again.

G. E. COULBOURN, Mod.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

GEORGE F. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1936.

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ROMANS IX. 21- 23.

"HATH not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory."

It would be difficult indeed to use a figure of speech that would more definitely, clearly and more fully set forth God's sovereign power over and his unquestioned right to do with his own as seemeth good unto him, than that which the apostle, moved by the Holy Ghost, has employed in this instance. It is also worthy of note he did not speak of the soil, but rather of the clay. The soil is that part of the earth which produces a natural growth, such as wood, hay and stubble, all of which is perishable. This may well represent the fruit of the flesh, concerning which this same apostle has emphatically declared that there is no good thing in it, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." In the great city of New York, it is no longer permissible under the law to build wooden structures, experience having taught the wisdom of using nondestructible materials, such as steel, stone, brick, etc. It requires clay to make good brick, which first has to be tempered with water and then subjected to the fiery furnace, and thus it is fitted for the purpose which the architect and builder hath determined it should fill. It appears to us that there are two great workmanships of God: First, there is the natural creation, and concerning this it is written, "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is the Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with man's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of *one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth,* and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." We read in another of the apostle's epistles that "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit," also, "The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven," According to the flesh,

ALL, embracing every race, creed and color, whether bond or free, are vile and corrupt, and there is none good, no, not one, for by nature we are all children of wrath, even as others. We are told in Romans viii. 20, that "The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." We read further that "In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor."

In making the first Adam, or earthen vessel, we have no reason to doubt but that God made him as he would have him to be, and since we are but Adam multiplied, the same must be equally true of us. What shall we say to these things? "Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Is not this natural, or earthen vessel, the one which God hath made unto dishonor? And, "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," will he not be glorified in all of his works? He hath decreed that no flesh shall glory in his presence, and while our beloved apostle who wrote this very epistle was made to wish himself accursed from Christ, for his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh, yet, when he was made to realize the infiniteness of God's plan of salvation and his purpose in cutting off some of the Jews and grafting in the Gentiles, we hear him exclaiming, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." He then saw that God's plan was not confined to one race, the Jews, but that it involved every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue, and thus he was qualified to become the apostle of the Gentiles. He was made to know that Israel, "to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever," availeth nothing save by the grace of God. Notwithstanding his own natural relationship, being an Hebrew of the Hebrews, and as touching the law, blameless, nevertheless he persecuted the church of God, and said that he was "not meet to be called an apostle." He continued, however, by saying, "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Wonderful beyond expression, it seems to us, that "God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Of a glorious truth, he has made "known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy,

which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." How well did the prophet Isaiah express the true condition of affairs concerning the Lord's people when he said, "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities. But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we are all the work of thy hand."—Isaiah lxiv. 6-8. There is no work in all the world that can begin to compare with that which God hath wrought, in taking "of the same lump," from which all humanity sprang, which was marred in the hand of the potter, and making it "again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it." We understand that the word of the Lord "came to Jeremiah" and commanded him to go down to the potter's house, or the Lord's house, to see what we have just referred to, after which he said, "Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel." Only true spiritual Israel see and understand these blessed things. If we are among that highly favored group, it is because "we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." This is that second great workmanship of which we spoke earlier, and these are "the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." They were "afore prepared unto glory," or chosen in him before the foundation of the world. While God is most certainly the Creator of all mankind, he is not the heavenly Father of any but his own spiritual children. The record is, "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." We know this is a hard doctrine and that the world cannot receive it, but the doctrine of God's electing love and of his choice not being dependent in any way whatsoever upon the creature, is definitely and undeniably set forth in the following case: "But when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." The human creature was no different in the apostle's day than he is to-day, and in anticipation of his fault-finding, the apostle continued by asking, "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God?" The answer was, "God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will

have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Not long ago, we were asked if we believed a just God would save some and condemn others? Our reply was, As we stand only in our earthly head, Adam, God could not be just and save a single, solitary soul, and that if any are saved it is because of his mercy manifested through, or in the person of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. When one sees himseif a justly condemned sinner before the holy God, he questions how God can be just and justify the ungodly, and never can he understand how this can be until Jesus is revealed in him the hope of glory. When he is enabled, by faith, to behold the workmanship of God as it was created in Christ Jesus, and to see that he was made sponsor, or head over all things to the church, which is his body, and that he finished in every jot and tittle the work which was given him to do, he then is assured that God cannot, and will not condemn any for whom Christ suffered and died.

Unquestionably, the doctrine of election is the most hated of all of God's blessed truths. At the same time it is practiced constantly, almost every waking hour of the day by the very one who condemns it in God, for the very moment one arises and begins his preparation for the day, he must need make choice, perhaps, of the suit he will wear, where he will go and what he will do, etc., and the housewife must make choice of the food which shall be partaken of, as well as other plans for the day. It is true that these things cannot be exercised in the fullest sense of the word by creatures of time, for they of necessity are subject to environment and circumstances, but such cannot at all be said of God, for he is an *absolute Sovereign,* with all that is implied by it. He doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or need say, What doest thou? Concerning Israel, it was said, "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharoh king of Egypt." We have already seen something of his purpose in raising up Pharaoh, and truly God's name was declared throughout the whole earth because of his victory over all enemies, and his destruction even of him that had the power of death. The history of national Israel will stand as a witness throughout all time as God's choice of them as a people, of his great love for them, separate

and apart from all other peoples, as shown by his watchcare over them while they were in bondage, and at all other times, even though they were undeserving often of the least of his mercies. God had a purpose in their going down into Egypt and, therefore, meant for good all the evil that Joseph's brethren intended against him, and at last he brought them up by a high and mighty hand and they sang the song, saying, "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." The great treasure which they came up out of Egypt with was the experience in their very hearts and souls that God was their God, that he had kept them when their hearts fainted within them, that he had preserved them despite all that had opposed, and at last had led them forth more than victorious conquerors. It was the dealings of the Lord with them which they were to tell their children, and their children's children, generation after generation. It was truly said, "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy before thee; and shall say, Destroy them. Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heaven shall drop down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places."—Deut. xxxiii. 26-29. Israel then was but a type of Israel now, and if we are not greatly deceived, there is still a people in the world today, amidst all the strife and confusion, who are being kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. The Scriptures were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope, and when we are made to realize how great is God's faithfulness towards his people, even though they oft forget his lovingkindnesses, our soul takes courage from the Lord, and we can believe and plead his holy word. Then to him, and him alone, do we complain, being assured that we shall not seek his face in vain. It is comforting to feel that all things are in the hands of our God, that he hath fixed the bounds of the wicked, beyond which they cannot go, and that he works in his people both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. Jesus said to his disciples, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he may give it you." If the branch is ever given to bear fruit to the honor of God, it is because of the life of the vine in the branch, and, therefore, it has not whereof to boast in and of itself. Jesus also said, "A good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bringeth forth good fruit."

Therefore, "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit." As the clay is passive in the potter's hands, so are we without strength or ability to perform one good thing only as God works in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight. If then, he makes of us a vessel that will shew forth his praise, all the glory belongs to him, and to him alone.

We have written the foregoing at the request of brother W. T. Winfrey, of Kingman, Kansas.

R.L.D.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

WITH this issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we are returning it to its regular size of twenty-four pages, and we truly thank our subscribers for the manner in which they have borne with us during our affliction. Our eye is steadily growing stronger, and we are hopeful that in another month our physician will be able to fit the eye with a lens for reading and we will then have the use of both eyes in our work. We sincerely thank all who sent us words of comfort and condolence. Their letters were very helpful to us, made our affliction seem lighter and were much appreciated.—PUBLISHER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

J. R. Nuckols, Ky., $2; Mrs. O. P. Owens, Ky., $2; Mrs. Altha Drake, N. J., $1; Mrs. N. B. Clem, Ala., $2; Mrs. R. S. Craig, Va., $1; I. H. Evans, Md., $1.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Charles W. Vaughn, at the bride's residence, Hopewell, N. J., November 30th, 1935, Miss Mary Emma Titus and Mr. Herbert Barton Butcher, of Trenton, N. J. Miss Titus is a great-granddaughter of the late Elder P. Hartwell, of Hopewell, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER JOHN H. FISHER, my precious father, peacefully fell asleep in Jesus February 13th, 1936, at his home in Newcastle, Texas, aged 75 years, 1 month and 22 days. He was the second son born to W. E. and Sarah Fisher, in Grayson County, Texas. He leaves to mourn his departure his widow, five children, four grandchildren, two brothers and two sisters. His children are: Mrs. J. W. Free, Huntington Park, California, Gus H. Fisher, Oregon City, Ore., Mrs. Minnie Jameson, Mrs. Rhoda Jones and John S. Fisher, of Ft. Worth, Texas. His brothers are: W. W. Fisher, Newcastle, Texas, R. L. Fisher, California. His sisters: Mrs. J. W. Dishman, Collinsville, Texas, and Mrs. C. Lambert, Brownsville, Texas. At the age of twenty-one years he married Miss Mary B. Thompson, and to them were born seven children, two of them preceding father in death. One an infant son, and his second daughter, Laura, dying in 1917, aged thirty-three years. In early youth father was made to see himself a poor, lost, undone sinner, and to beg for mercy. After much travail he was given a sweet hope in Jesus as his Savior. He joined the Missionary Baptists at the age of nineteen. He was ordained to preach among those people, but soon became dissatisfied and gave them up. He soon was led to the Old Baptists, joined Mill Creek Church,

near Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1893, Elder J. G. Eubanks baptizing him. He was ordained to preach the same year, at Campbellsburg, Ky. Soon after, he moved back to Texas, where he lived until his death. In his early ministry he traveled extensively over the south. He wrote a great deal for the papers, and was editor of several papers during his life. He published in pamphlet form his reasons for leaving the Missionary Baptists, and also wrote two other books on Revelation. In his late life, at the age of sixty-nine, he was elected to the Legislature, and served two terms. He was urged by his friends and the Speaker of the House to run again, but declined, as his health had become so poorly. He was highly commended for his work done in the Legislature, and I now have many letters from his colleagues regretting that he was not able to run again, and sorry to know his health had become so poorly. He was in declining health for about three years, and last July was taken seriously ill. We brought him here to Ft. Worth and had him examined by the very best doctors that could be obtained, and each one told us he had an affliction of the liver that could never be cured. He suffered intensely at times, but his mind was clear most of the time. He talked sweetly to us about his going and told us not to mourn, for he felt it would be glorious to be with his dear Savior, as he had suffered so long and desired to be at rest. His mind would go back to his early associations with the dear Old Baptists, more than at the present time, and he would talk at length of the lovely meetings he used to attend, and of the dear old soldiers of the cross he knew in his early ministry. It surely seemed to me that his long confinement only ripened his spirit to take its farewell flight. He talked sweetly and comfortingly to us children, and said he hoped all to whom he had done any wrong would forgive him, as he had nothing against any one. Two days before the end came he seemed better, and sat up in a chair and smoked, but the day following he dropped into a coma, from which he never revived. We would not call him back to suffer, but rejoice that his suffering is ended and he is at rest, sweet rest, and we sorrow not as those who have no hope.

Elders O. Strickland and Virgil Lawrence spoke over his body, then we laid his remains beside those of his daughter Laura, in Graham, Texas, there to await the resurrection morn, when these vile bodies shall be changed and fashioned like unto Christ's body, according to the workings whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself. This is what he believed and preached for fifty years.

Written by his daughter,

MINNIE C. JAMESON.

DR. W. R. PRESLEY departed this life early in the evening of February 23rd, 1936, at his home in Bovina, Texas. Had he lived three days longer he would have been seventy-nine years of age. His health had been failing for a month, but he was really sick for only about ten days. He bore his suffering with patience, and said if it was the Lord's will he was ready to go. Dr. Presley was born in Carthage, Mississippi, February 27th, 1857. He came to Texas, and he first joined Bethesda Church, in 1880. As he moved to different places he lettered his membership with different churches. In 1917 he moved to Farwell, Texas, and his last church membership was at that place. W. R. Presley was married to Miss Mollie Scott May 11th, 1875, and to their union were born nine children, eight boys and one girl. Two boys died in infancy and two died in early manhood. Mrs. Presley, who preceded him

in death four years, was a true helpmeet in every sense of the word. Dr. Presley was a good and devoted husband and father. The survivors are: C. M. Presley, Canyon, Texas, Dr. J. A. Presley, Vernon, Texas, M. E. Presley, Amarillo, Texas, T. I. Presley, Sherman, Texas, and Mrs. A. H. Sumerford, Hamilton, Texas. He is also survived by two brothers and one sister: John Presley, Reed, Okla., Dr. T. E. Presley, Clovis, N. M., Mrs. J. S. Singleton, Roswell, N. M. He was the oldest of the family and his death broke the circle of these brothers and sisters.

Funeral services were conducted in Bovina, Texas, by Elder Turner, of Amarillo, and Elder Holmes, of Bovina, who spoke words of comfort to the family and friends. Interment was in the Bovina Cemetery, by the side of his beloved wife.

Dr. Presley was a devout christian and his spiritual faith grew stronger with the years. His good works as a christian and a practicing physician will long be remembered by his many, many friends.

His daughter,

(MRS.) A. H. SUMERFORD.

THE sudden death of our beloved brother CLARENCE MOE, Tuesday evening, March 31st, 1936, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Burr Elmendorf, of Ashokan, N. Y., leaves the Olive and Hurley Church poorer by the loss of a most worthy member and faithful attendant at meetings, and the community also poorer in the loss of a good citizen, neighbor, friend, and the family circle poorer in the loss of a good father, and one devoted to his family. Brother Moe was born August 10th, 1862, so was not yet seventy-four years old when the summons for his departure came. He was married when compartively a young man to Miss Bertha Lennox, who proved to be all that could be desired of a wife, companion and helpmeet. She died in July, 1926. Since her death the subject of this article made his home with his daughter, Mrs. Burr Elmendorf, much of the time, and she and her husband ministered to his wants with filial care and interest. He was baptized by Elder George Ruston into the fellowship of the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, where his membership has since remained. He loved to meet with his brethren, was generous in his support of his pastor and church, possessed spiritual discernment to a noteworthy degree, loved the peace of Zion, and his advice was sound and his counsel was sought and respected. He will be much missed by those of the Olive and Hurley Church, and by those of other churches where he frequently attended. He was an unassuming man, yet a deep thinker, and was well informed upon the topics of the day. He held the office of church treasurer at the time of his death, and in this capacity he will be especially missed. He is survived by three sisters, Mrs. George Barclay, of Ashokan, N. Y., Miss Minnie Moe, of Kingston, N. Y., and Mrs. Isaac Van Leuven, of Stone Ridge, N. Y.; also three children, Mrs. Burr Elmendorf, of Ashokan, N. Y., Mrs. Milliard Bell, of Brown Station, and a son, Benjamin, of Hamilton, Ohio.

The funeral services were held on Saturday following his death, the writer officiating, and the interment was in the family plot at Ashokan, N. Y.

ALSO,

THE removal by death of MRS. MARTHA KELLY, of Roxbury, N. Y., at her late home, February 28th, 1936, was the occasion for much sorrow in her community, and wherever she was known. She was born in Roxbury in 1862, and had spent her whole life on the farm where she was born. Her par-

ents were Mr. and Mrs. Ephraim Hinckley, and were strong in the faith and doctrine of the Primitive Baptist Church, and Mrs. Kelly often attended meetings of this faith and order, and loyally supported the cause, giving generously in a material way towards the maintenance of the church of her parents' affiliation. Her home was always open for the entertainment of the ministers and brethren, and her hospitality was hearty indeed. The poor and the needy never asked in vain for aid from her, and every worthy local enterprise was sure to have her support. Many years ago she was united in marriage to David Kelly, who died about sixteen years ago. She conducted a large dairy farm for many years, which was one of the best in town in cultivation and productiveness, and her choice dairy was the subject of much favorable comment. She had no living brother or sister at the time of her death, and her parents died many years ago. Honesty, thrift, enterprise and modern business methods were characteristic of Mrs. Kelly. Death was due to a stroke of apoplexy. She had been ill of this affliction for several weeks. Any community is the poorer for the loss of such a citizen.

The funeral services were conducted March 2nd, 1936, by the writer, at the Old School Baptist church-house below Roxbury village. The interment was in the Yellow Church Cemetery.

ALSO,

In the death of brother RANSOM HULL, which occurred at his home, near Margaretville, N. Y., February 29th, 1936, the Old School Baptist Church and the community in general sustain an irreparable loss. Deceased was eighty- two years of age, and for a great many years had been an active member of the Middletown and Andes Old School Baptist Church. He was firm in the faith, deeply experienced in the things of grace and possessed discernment in spiritual things to an unusual degree. He loved to attend the meetings of his brethren, and not often distance or unfavorable weather conditions prevented his being present, when possible, until age and failing health made it impossible for him to attend meetings of the church of his faith. He possessed those qualities of character that make for the best citizenship, and as a neighbor, citizen and friend he was a worthy example. Kind as a father, tender as a husband, loyal as a friend and faithful in all his church relations, he will be long remembered. He was three times married, and after the death of his last wife he made his home with his son Elbert. He is survived by three children. The interment was at Margaretville, N. Y. He will be much missed, not only by his home folk and the community, but by his many brethren, who cherish his memory and his associations with them. The writer conducted the funeral services at Halcottville, N. Y., March 3rd, 1936.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

Mrs. MARY JUSTINA GRUWELL, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life at the Palmer Home, Dover, Delaware, where she had been a resident several years. She passed away March 15th. She was born March 29th, 1842, near Magnolia, Delaware. Her parents were John G. Chambers and Mary Bowman. She was the last of four children. She was married October 10th, 1861, to Peter C. Gruwell, who died in 1911. To them were born four children, one dying in infancy, a son. Those who survive their mother are Lewellyn Gruwell, of Wilmington, Del., Mrs. Bertha Holt, of Wilmington, Del., and Mrs. Ella Meredith, of Drexel Hill, Pa. There are two grandchildren living and one great-grandchild. Sister

Gruwell was baptized by the late Elder E. Rittenhouse into the membership of the Cow Marsh Church August 15th, 1873. In later years she united by letter with the Wilmington Church. At the time of her death she was a member of the Welsh Tract Church. She wrote out a sketch of her christian experience which was published in the SIGNS of November, 1918. She was regarded as a true mother in Israel, a woman of exemplary walk and conversation. She was grounded in the doctrine of God's unlimited sovereignty and of salvation by sovereign free grace. During her last days on earth, she often quoted hymn 1033 (Beebe's collection), which was read at her funeral. The family requested me, her pastor, to attend the funeral. Services were held in the meetinghouse at Cow Marsh. Text 2 Corinthians v. 1-5. Elder B. F. Cubbage offered prayer. Burial in the graveyard adjacent. How blessed it is that we sorrow not as those who have no hope, because believing that Jesus died and rose again we have confidence towards God that them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him in the resurrection unto life at the descent of the Lord himself from heaven at the last day. One by one our loved ones go from us to be with the Lord. Soon the places here that have known us shall know us no more. May the Lord comfort all who truly mourn.

ALSO,

MISS ANNIE THOMPSON, our sister in Christ, fell sweetly asleep in Jesus March 10th, 1936, at the home of Mr. Aubrey Grimes, at Airmont, Loudoun County, Virginia. She had been a member of the Old School Baptist Church at Ebenezer since June, 1885, having been baptized by the late Elder J. N. Badger. She was about seventy years of age, I think. Of her parentage or antecedents I know nothing. In her young girlhood days, she was taken into the family of the late brother J. W. Garrett and his wife, with whom she had a home as long as they lived and in whose family plot at Ebenezer Cemetery her mortal body was laid away to repose until the summons from on high shall call it forth in the resurrection at the last day. When very young, she joined the Methodist persuasion, but found that was no place of rest for her soul. The graciousness of the Lord Jesus gave her a real home among the Old School Baptists where her soul was satisfied with the goodness of the Lord's house. She was a reader of the SIGNS for many years and a lover of the word of God. She loved to read the Scriptures daily. During the past year, when her eyes would not allow her to read it, a younger member of the family was good enough to read it to her.

Funeral services were held at Ebenezer Sunday afternoon, March 12th. Her going leaves but two surviving members of the Ebenezer Church. "The ways of Zion do mourn." Yet He assures us that He will come quickly. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all saints. Amen.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

WILLIAM RANDELL was born near Fayetteville, Tenn., August 10th, 1863, and departed this life February 5th, 1936, in Garden Grove, California, at the age of seventy-two years. When a young man he left Tennessee and went to Texas. There he was married and spent most of his life. However, in later years he lived in southern California. When a young man he experienced a definite change of heart and was born of the Spirit of God. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church, and was a member of that church the remainder of his life. He was true and loyal to his

belief and faith in the church. Mr. Randell was failing in health for the past year. February 5th he went to the table for the noon meal, and after asking God's blessing he went to his reward without speaking another word. He was a loving husband and devoted to his family. All who knew him admired his life for his honesty and uprightness. He was a friend to every one. There is a vacant place in the hearts of his family that can never be filled, only to be comforted by the Lord, for the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away.

Funeral services were held in a funeral parlor in Santa Ana, where I tried to preach the gospel of the Son of God and to "comfort they that mourn." The remains were laid to rest in West Minister Cemetery, Garden Grove, California, to await the hour in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth.

G. O. WALKER.

MARY E. THOMPSON PRINE was born July 10th, 1851, near Carlinville, Ill., and died February 18th, 1936, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Leona Tuttle, Wenatchee, Wash. December 24th, 1865, she was united in marriage to John Thompson, of Unionville, Mo., and to this union eleven children were born, ten of whom, with the husband, preceded her in death. She is survived by twenty-two grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren and one daughter, Mrs. Leona Tuttle. February 27th, 1900, she was married to Daniel Prine, of Adrian, Mo., who died in 1914. In January, 1876, she professed a hope in Christ and united with the Regular Predestinarian Baptists, and remained devout in that faith to the end, believing that God in his own good time and pleasure would make all things right. In 1906 she placed her membership with Little Flock Church, near Harrisonville, Mo., and had been a member there since that time.

Funeral services were held in Wenatchee, Wash., and burial was made in Evergreen Memorial Park. She requested the following be used as a text: "She hath done what she could." The bitter cold weather and deep snow on mountain roads made it well-nigh impossible to get a minister of her own faith, so a minister and old friend from her native town and State was chosen, Mr. Charles Hardman of the "Church of Christ." He knew mother's belief, and had visited with her on different occasions. He preached a very able and comforting discourse. Only a very few knew the bitterness and sorrows which had marked her path. She was ever generous, always willing to help those in need and sacrificed her own comfort for her children and grandchildren. She gave praise to God, and to him alone attributed her strength to meet her great trials. And now she rests.

Her daughter,

LEONA TUTTLE.

JAMES E. HARRIS departed this life January 11th, 1936, at the age of 67 years, 9 months and 6 days. He had been in feeble health for the past ten years, but bore his suffering without complaining. He was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, having joined the church at Good Hope, Franklin County, Texas, and was baptized by Elder H. B. Jones in 1903. He was always ready to defend the doctrine in which he claimed a hope. He was a devoted husband and a kind and loving father. July 11th, 1891, he was married to Minnie Bell Taylor, who survives him, together with eight children, five boys and three girls: Marvin, Curry, Taylor, J. C. and Judge; the girls, Mrs. Ellen Effurd, Pine, Texas, Mineola Steele, Linden, Texas, Pearl Branda-

way, Pittsburg, Texas, also twenty-five grandchildren, one sister, Mrs. Deliah Hicks, and his mother, Mrs. Martha Moss, who is ninety-five years old.

To the foregoing obituary notice, sent to me by mail, here at Winnsboro, Texas, I will add: I have known brother Harris practically all his life. He has been an orderly member of the Old School, or Primitive, Baptist Church about thirty-two years, held in esteem, love and fellowship by the Baptists generally, who knew him. He was a good citizen and neighbor, a kind and indulgent husband and father. He was an unwavering lover of the doctrine he believed the Holy Scriptures taught. He was a farmer and a hard working man as long as he was able to work, and was honest and upright in his dealings with his fellow-men. He has now finished his work and has "fallen asleep." May his good example be one that his children and grandchildren be blessed to emulate, and may the God of all comfort and grace afford comfort and reconciliation to his aged mother (now past ninety-five years of age), to his widow, and all who mourn. Brother Harris raised a large and respectable family of children, and was a long time reader and lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

H. B. JONES.

MEETINGS.

The Baltimore Association will convene on May 28th, 1936, with Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore, Md., and continue over the 29th. Then on the 30th (Sunday) will transfer to Black Rock and consolidate with their all-day meeting. The meeting-house in Baltimore is located at 200 East Madison Street. To reach Black Rock, take Falls Road direct to village of Butler, about twenty miles. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will meet with the Salem Church May 27th and 28th, 1936, for a two days meeting in Park Avenue Hall, 1315 Columbia Avenue, Philadelphia, Pa. All lovers of the truth are invited, especially ministering brethren, and we hope to have a good attendance.

CHARLES W. VAUGHN.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, Mercer County, New Jersey, on Wednesday and Thursday, June 3rd and 4th, 1936, commencing Wednesday morning at 10:30 o'clock. Daylight Saving Time. All lovers of the truth are invited.

DAVID M. VOORHEES, Church Clerk,
R. 1, PENNINGTON, N. J.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in May (31st). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets on the first Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, Shelbyville, Ky.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Cloth binding. Price, $1.25 each. One dozen or more, ordered at the same time and all to the same address, one dollar each. Cash must accompany orders. Make checks and money orders payable to

J. E. BEEBE & CO.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 104. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1936. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LUKE XVI. 16.

"THE law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it."

I understand from this, that as Christ was the end of the law for all his people, so was he the end of all past prophecy. That is, the prophets, with all their prophecy, did not go beyond the law dispensation. In other words, their prophecy did not extend beyond the destruction of Jerusalem. "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come." --Matt. xxiv. 14. Therefore, for all prophecy from that time on we must look to Jesus Christ and his apostles, especially the book of Revelation. I will now give a few quotations as proof of the above. "Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished."—Luke xviii. 31. That is, when we get up to Jerusalem, the law was fulfilled and satisfied, justice was satisfied on the part of all his (Christ's) people, and the old world, the law dispensation, the ministration of condemnation, all came to an end, and since that time the kingdom of heaven is preached.

That I may be better understood, I will say the world has already come to an end twice, and each time God's long-suffering has waited until all his chosen people were safe, as in the days of Noah, while the ark was in process of building. And at the destruction of Jerusalem, Jesus had given his people a sign and warned them to leave the city and flee to the mountains: "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh."—Luke xxi. 20. History says that there came an army to Jerusalem and compassed the city, and seemingly could have taken it, but the army was broken up and left, and the

Jews followed them and captured abundance of their baggage, and all the christian people took this as a sign, or warning, that their Savior had given them, and they all left, and when Titus came with his army and destroyed the city, and scattered the Jews to the four winds of the earth, and killed over a million of them, there was not a single christian in it. (Remember this is history.) We who are now living are living in the third world, and in the former there is not anything said about the end of time, but at the end of this world, and just before the sounding of the seventh, or last trumpet, that angel that shall stand upon the earth and on the sea, shall swear by him that liveth forever, that time shall be no more. We are no doubt living in the last age of the world, and Peter says, "We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."—1 Peter i. 5. The same writer says that Jesus Christ verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you. (1 Peter i. 20.) "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time."—1 John ii. 18. "But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts."—Jude 17, 18. I ask, with much significance, Are those mockers here? If so, we evidently are living in the last time. But the beauty of our day is this, it is the sabbath day of the world. It is the day of which the prophets have spoken in so many ways. It is the day in which the people of God are resting with a degree of satisfaction in the finished work of Jesus Christ. I say the finished work, for he came to do for us what we would not or could not do. But this work had to be done before we could enjoy the sabbath. "Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work," is a very important part of the old sabbath day commandment. We are not entitled to the rest until the work is all done. God made the world and all things therein in six days, and speaketh of the seventh day on this wise: "And God did rest the seventh day from all his works." That is, he saw that it was all very good, and he took pleasure therein. We cannot take pleasure in what we have done, for we have not done it. But we are thankful and take pleasure in the fact that there was one good Boy in the family, and He was also a good worker, and knew how to do the work so as to please the Father, and he did it, and we all rejoice in it, and we surely do enjoy the sabbath. It is the day in which "there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness."—Zech. xiii. 1. It is the day in which we can sing this song in the land of Judah: "We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." The walls of all walled cities, in this world, are built for the salvation of those cities, but the wall of

this "strong city" seems to have been made of "salvation" itself, and appointed by God himself. Surely it is a safe retreat, "a city of refuge."

In closing this (now too lengthy) article, I will say that in this our (gospel) day all that the prophets of old have prophesied and have been fulfilled literally will be repeated spiritually. Theirs was the "type." In our day we have the antitype, or the spirituality of their prophecy. We have our spiritual Babylon here among us to-day, the antichrist world. Also, our spiritual Jerusalem, the church, which seems to be very much worried with Babylonish doctrine, and many of God's dear children now captivated by her.

I hope in the near future to write an article on Revelation, in which I will say more about the spiritual fulfillment of prophecy.

G. W. BERRY.

FAYETTE, Alabama.

Delaware, Ohio, Jan. 30, 1936.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—May I address you as brother in the Lord? I have read your editorial in the January SIGNS several times, and can fellowship with you in all you have written. I do considerable writing, but often feel misgivings about the propriety of my doing so much of it, and it is possible I would refrain more than I do did not those addressed profess joy and comfort in reading my letters. But you and I know that if my letters are according to the will of the Lord they shall be continued. He speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. Like yourself, were I to write an entire sheet, it would come short of telling my unfitness to utter one word or to write one line. Hence your confession is comforting to me. Of late, for some months, I have been in the dark more than is common to me. God knows why, and may his will be done in me, and faith says it shall be, since he doeth his will among the inhabitants of the earth as well as in the army of heaven. I am very glad I still love the brethren and enjoy their writings. There are a number of good letters in the January SIGNS. Elder Frederick Keene's letter is so good. I always find comfort in his letters. He has written several letters to me, but none very recently. I have received a number from sister Adah Chandler, and was comforted as she made mention of my letters. This letter of hers was so very good it meant much to me. I may not always express my views in the best manner, for I received my education in a little red school-house in the country. The house still stands, about four miles east of Delaware, on the Sunbury Pike. Of course I have been a great reader, and have made quite a study of the Bible, which would naturally help my language some, and I had a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother all gifted in language, so I hope that for the most part my meaning may, at least, be understood, if my language be not learned, and, amid all doubts and fears, I am still hoping that I have, at least, learned a little, my portion from him whom to know is life eternal.

"They shall all be taught of the Lord," so if I am his that "all" includes me. From a child I have been hungry for the strong meat which proclaims an all-wise, almighty and unchangeable God, who doeth all his pleasure, and have believed that nothing could occur among men without his foreknowledge, and be for some wise purpose known unto him, else he would not permit it. But, like (I know that) you feel, I have never felt that man is excusable for doing wrong, even if God does overrule it for good. Also, I believe that the "all things" that work together for good to them that love the Lord, who are "called according to his purpose," include all things; not just the good things, such as election, predestination, redemption, effectual calling and regeneration. I believe those holy men of old who wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost would have included the word "good" if that is what was meant by them. I would not presume to say that they meant something which they did not say, because it looked wise in my own eyes, neither do I think this doctrine licenses me to be careless about trying to live in obedience to God's commands, making the excuse that if he wanted me to do it he would make me do it, so I shall hold back until he makes me do it. No, never! For if we are his children we desire to do his will, not to gain a blessing, but it is our pleasure to do the will of him whom our soul loveth. Faith works by love, and after we have done all, we are unprofitable servants. Therefore all blessings in time and in eternity are of grace and all are given of God, according as we were blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, according as we were chosen in him before the world began. I hope I shall never forget the view of that lovely robe of righteousness, which was revealed to me, when I heard the declaration from heaven unto my troubled soul: Let all your anxious thoughts cease. Your many sins are all forgiven. Before you were born I saw you, knew you, loved you, fulfilled the law for you, bore its penalty for you and there is no more condemnation. Oh what joy! I felt as pure as we actually are in him, and for the moment was given rest from the sins of the flesh. My body, so light, seemed to almost leave the ground to float upward to its Redeemer, who I *then* realized would ever be present with me. I mistakenly thought I would never again sin in any way whatever, since I was given to taste of our purity given in him. No wonder it was said unto the bride, Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee. No, I can testify that according to the view and feeling given to me in that hour, There is no spot in thee, or in me, as the Father views me in Christ Jesus. If we could only remember that he looks not on the sins of Jacob nor on the perverseness of Israel, but at the spotless robe of the Lord our Righteousness. Yes, a beautiful robe of rare needle-work, and Jesus wrought every stitch, as he lived his righteous life of suffering obedience, that we might be clothed upon with it, then suffered our penalty upon

Calvary that we could be cleansed and made fit to put it on, or wear it. So, Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ. Wonderful grace for poor vile sinners like you and me!

At the time of my vision I had not heard the truth preached by man. There was no Old Baptist Church nearer than twelve miles, and in horse and buggy days and muddy roads that was a long way. But some two or three years later father took me to the church of my membership, and first myself and mother were received that day for baptism. Father was baptized eleven years later.

Please pardon my presumption.

JOIE E. WOODS PETERS.

San Benito, Texas, Aug. 28, 1935.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have for several days thought much of the deep expressions of David as are recorded in the twenty-third Psalm. There are not only deep doctrinal expressions, but expressions relating to the every day life of the poor little child of God. I wish to quote the chapter first, not because the brethren have not read it (possibly more times than I have), but because it conveys my feelings now in my evening hours of time on earth, and because of the fifteen years of more or less bodily sufferings which I have been called to pass through.

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. [Ezek. xxxiv. 14.] He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. [Psalms v. 8.] Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. [Job x. 21, 22; Psalms iii. 6; Isaiah xliii. 2.] Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. [Psalms xcii. 10.] Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." [Isaiah xl. 2.] Not only with David was the sovereign mercy extended, but I have bracketed some of the expressions from others of the Lord's servants in testimony of the true mercies of the Lord in their daily travel through this wilderness of sorrow and affliction. Never in the life of any of the Lord's chosen are they prepared to say, "The Lord is my shepherd," until the Lord has had some dealings with them, for before he has extended his mercy to them in leading them in the paths of righteousness they cannot say with firmness, "The Lord is my shepherd," for it is impossible for any one to beg for mercy until he becomes aware of his true standing, and aware of his need of mercy. Thus, in regeneration one only learns obedience by the things which he suffers, as is said of our Lord, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered."—Heb. v. 8. It is claimed by the majority of professed christians that they are first to lead a christian, or perfect life, before they can lie down in green pastures of love, and that they, in their professed proc-

lamations, can walk in in the paths of righteousness, thereby severing any relationship with David and his like companions, for David said (experimentally), "He maketh me to lie down in green pastuures." In no case did he say, I can lie down in green pastures if I so desire, for I can do those things or let them alone, and in so doing I will escape the chastening rod. The testimony of David (and all the truly born of the Spirit of God) is, The Lord maketh me to lie down in green pastures, and, He leadeth me beside the still waters. Oh, it is wonderful in the daily experience of the little ones, that the presence of the dear Lord is leading them in the path of righteousness, yet often they find themselves so downhearted and lonely that they are almost ready to despair of life, and often say, Surely the Lord is clean gone forever. Yes, he leadeth me beside the still waters. The "still waters" here refer to quietness, which is the most consoling of all the grand mercies of the Lord. David says, He (the Lord) leadeth me beside the still waters of his redeeming love. He not only leads his little ones, but David says, He restoreth my soul. None of the little ones are ever really aware of the fact that they are by nature the children of wrath, and that the wrath of God rests on the ungodly until the Lord in his divine wisdom and excellent mercy leads them into his adorable light to show them their exact standing in Adam. Then is when they are in a state of unrest and despair, and then it is with them as it was with David: "He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." (Not for what they had done.) Then in another place he says, "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I."—Psalms lxi. 2.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil;" (for thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.) It often occurs to us in our trials here that the rod, after it has been laid on us for our correction, and because of His love, too, that the chastening is not spared, and it often seems to be a death blow, but afterward it worketh peace and calmness in all who are visited thereby. "For thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." The question might arise in our minds, Who are our enemies? Generally speaking, it is the world, those who profess to be children of God, but who in works deny him, but I have always thought our worst enemies were those who left us and turned away from the truth and embraced the erroneous doctrine of antichrist, as in the days of David, for he said, "Yea, they turned back, and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel. They remembered not his hand, nor the day when he delivered them from their enemy."—Psalms lxxviii. 41. We have had some of the most detestable and ungodly accusations made against us by those who once embraced the true doc-

trine of the absolute sovereignty of God, who said harder things about us than the world ever thought of; those constitute our worst enemies. Thus, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies," and "Thou anointest my head [Christ] with oil; my cup runneth over." In the course of time here in the days of our travel we are often made to weep because of afflictions and trials in the way, but in the strait and narrow way we are often greeted with intense darkness, followed with the blessed light of our dear Lord, which usually comes after the darkness, and we almost despair and wonder why these things should come upon us. But the wherefores are left with the wisdom and providence of God. I might go back over a portion of my life and relate some of my downfalls and uprisings, which are similar to those of many others, and then ask, Why these things, and of what glory and benefit could they have been to the great God? I worked hard all my life and made a good living, and every few years I would have a downfall in health and finance, and the question would often arise, Why? for surely it was no accident, but for a well formed purpose. Glory to the Lord in the highest, for his wonderful works to the children of men are manifested in every kind of struggle through this time world of wicked and ungodly men, and his hand of providence is clearly seen and felt in a way that never would have been thought of by men. He tells us by the prophet, "I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord."—Ezek. xxxiv. 14, 15. Oh what a glorious promise we have in Revelation vii. 16, 17: "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." David says, "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light."—Psalms xxxvi. 8, 9. Psalms lxv. 4, reads, "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even thy holy temple."

I have written scatteringly, but hope the mantle of charity will be placed over my imperfections.

As ever, J. B. BOWDEN.

Hooker, Oklahoma.

DEAR EDITORS:—Perhaps I should leave the space in your instructive and much esteemed paper for the use of more gifted writers than I am, but by some cause I have a desire to try to express a few thoughts on the crucifixion of Christ. By whose will, wisdom,

power and choice was the Lord of glory crucified? The first that man knew of the plan of salvation, it was announced in the Garden of Eden. Then it was proclaimed by all the prophets of God and the offerings of his people, and as they were moved by the Holy Ghost to write they are called holy prophets, or prophets of God. So in their predictions as to the coming and suffering of Christ, God and the Holy Spirit were working in them to bring to light the plan of salvation through Christ. Next to be done after the foretelling is the fulfilling. So God sent his only begotten Son, and God prepared him a body, and he was made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. Then we see in Acts ii. 23, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." While this verse says, "Delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," in the third chapter and thirteenth verse we have, "The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go." Here Peter says the "men of Israel" delivered Christ up to Pilate. Again, we go to John xix. 11. Here Christ says to Pilate in reference to the king of the Jews, "Therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." So in this statement of Christ we are informed that Herod was the man directly in power and was more to blame than Pilate, for Herod delivered Christ unto the Roman ruler. To be sure, we are not questioning the truth of any of those Scriptures. But while the prophets, by the Holy Ghost, told how and by whom those things would be done, the holy apostles, by the inspiration of God, and as eye-witnesses, have told how and by whom they have been done, or fulfilled. If we read the eighteenth verse of the third chapter we find how well Christ performed this work: "But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." Now, who have not done their part of this work? Let us turn to Acts iv. 27, 28: "For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." This assures us that the representatives of all people were gathered together to do all of, or whatsoever God had determined before to be done here and now. So Christ was crucified and slain with wicked hands. But the center of it all is Christ, in whom we see a representative of all parties except the antichrist and his angels. Was it all predestinated? God delivered Christ by his determinate counsel and foreknowledge. Christ fulfilled all the suffering predicted by the prophets. The wicked people and

their rulers delivered and crucified him. It is not said that God crucified his Son. So what wicked hands have done is not what God has done. I believe God predestinates what he does. Because he determined and counselled to deliver his Son, and also determined before what should be done by men. It was Peter's and John's "own company" that lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said all those people were "gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done," and was it not a part of that company gathered together in that upper room "when the day of Pentecost was fully come?" also the company who were eye-witnesses to the ascension of Christ? Now, if such a company could and did speak such things in harmony, does it not set a "landmark" for the church of Christ? And not only this little band of believers were made to testify as to God's purpose and work in this wonderful plan of salvation of sinners, but when they had prayed the place was shaken where they were assembled together. So God answered them, and made the very ground give witness. If the truth is so important, what manner of men ought we to be? I want to say that it was the work and the purpose of God, Christ and the Holy Spirit to save the elect, and that it is also God's work and our duty to believe.

This is submitted to the judgment and pleasure of the publisher and editors by

E. G. WEBB.

Ewing, Illinois.

DEAR EDITORS:—I come to you asking space in your paper of a few lines in which to introduce myself among you. Many of you no doubt have no knowledge of me, although I am seventy-four years of age, and have been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church forty-five years. I was ordained to the ministry in 1903. My home is in Franklin County, Illinois. I live on the farm and in the same house I was born and raised in. In the forty-five years since I joined the church there has been a wonderful change. At that time there were eight churches, the furtherest from my home being only twenty-five miles. We could and did easily visit any of these churches. At that time, so far as I knew, they were united in doctrine, believing as I did, that salvation was by grace, and not by works, lest any man should boast. Yes, when I used to go with some of my brethren of our home church and visit some of the sister churches we would sing the dear old church songs and talk about the soul-cheering doctrine we had heard preached, which was always salvation by grace, and many of the brethren living twenty-five or thirty miles away would come and visit our church and our homes, always manifesting the love and sweet fellowship that abounded among us. Yes, that was a period of time through which we were called to pass that is pleasant to think of. But oh how are we standing to-day? It is like the driftwood that has been floating in the troubled waters and has been

gathered in little heaps here and there. If you examine the timber in some of the heaps you will readily see they bear the marks of the original stock, which is salvation by grace, and grace alone, but perhaps in another drift near by you will find timber of a different nature, bearing marks of two salvations. One they call eternal salvation, and claim it by grace; the other a time salvation, obtained by obedience. But the peace that once existed in these churches is gone, the prosperity is also gone. Even those who thought they could prosper only by their obedience are in a sad condition; they have not proven their faith by their works. Dear brethren, it has been my purpose and desire in writing these lines to give you something by which you will remember me as one of the poor and afflicted people of God. To be poor, to be made to realize and see ourselves in poverty, is sad indeed, yet I hope you may remember me as one of God's humble poor. I can truly say, with thanks to God, I have never been brought to tears and distress in natural or temporal poverty, having most of the necessary things of life so far in this temporal journey, but when I speak of a spiritual life, how different it is. How often I have been brought to tears and sadness because I am so poor. Yes, in spiritual life we are made to shed tears both of sadness and of joy. Tears of sadness flow because of our poor, weak, sinful lives. When we would do good evil is present with us. Tears of joy flow from the eyes of God's humble poor because they are made rich. Rich from the stores of of the mercy of God, who hath saved them and called them with an holy calling, and that not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which he purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began.

I have been comforted by reading the SIGNS since I subscribed for it, and if this letter is thought worthy of a place in its columns I think some time this year I will write another, giving a little of my life's history, and what I have hoped to be an experience of God's grace given to a poor sinner.

JOHN NEAL.

Winnsboro, Texas, Dec. 16, 1935.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find two dollars for my 1936 subscription. I do not see how I could live without the dear SIGNS to bring its soul-cheering comfort and love from our heavenly Father's family. It is near and dear to me, and I love the faith its doctrine sets forth. I regret much that Elder H. H. Lefferts has withdrawn as senior editor. He is one of God's anointed and I did much enjoy his editorials. If it is the Lord's will, I hope the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES continues for years to come and that I will be enabled to read its pages the rest of my life. May the coming year bring much success and prosperity to the publication.

Very truly,

(MRS.) F. S. PETTY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1936.

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GALATIANS VI. 12-18.

"For as many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. From henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit."

Paul, writing from Rome to the Galatians, penned these words, pointing to the marks of the Lord Jesus in those who profess to worship God, and these pointers are with us to-day, and will ever be the dividing line between those who worship God and those who worship him not. We, as men, know our desires to appear in a becoming manner before those with whom we come in contact, that we may have their respect and esteem, that we should not be cast out, which is natural and pertain to the things of this life. We commend these things among the brethren, that the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ be not blasphemed by us. We do believe when those who profess to worship God neglect their personal appearance they are dishonoring to themselves and the cause they have espoused. If one should appear droll to try to express that they were contending for the ancient landmarks, they are trying to make a show, by which they would have applause of men, and often criticise those who adorn themselves for the reception of their loved ones and their friends. There are extremes in dress, and drollness, which if applied to worshipping God are nothing but seeking to be circumcised in the flesh. We truly hope our desire is to worship God in spirit, and get away from the flesh. Those who would have you circumcised that they might glory in your flesh, would have you unite in their ways and belief, according to the teachings of men, and would point you out and make show of you to the glory of their idol god. We have some brethren who would have you believe that by performing certain natural acts you would

receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. We do not believe these things bring about these relations to poor sinners, but there are relations that the gift of the Holy Ghost follows. Repentance for sin and baptism in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. (Acts ii. 38.) The apostle Peter has spoken plainly to the circumcised or uncircumcised, just the way the Holy Ghost is received, and those who receive testify that salvation is of the Lord. When any have repentance they bear fruit, and their fruit remains and the church is a partaker thereof and receives them into His banqueting-house and the banner over them is love. Well the question, Has not any one the right to demand baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, if they profess to have a hope? We would ask, Who demands baptism in the name of Jesus Christ? The poor sinner who has heavy burdens, and the feeling of unworthiness because of sin, and just condemnation, bears fruit to the bride of Christ, and his cry gives evidence of life. The church receives these evidences and grants to the individual the relations these evidences demand, but not merely by the request of an individual. We see a great difference between the two characters, and yet they perhaps are equally moral and upright, and for the church of God to so judge according to the personality of men she dishonors her Husband, and is turned to circumcision according to the moral law, and the new creature in Christ Jesus is no longer pointed out by the Spirit of God. The church that receives her members because of the marks, and not according to circumcision, has peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, and those who do not watch for these marks will suffer with all manner of circumcised relations, and there will not be peace in that church as long as that element remains unpurged. But we have the assurance that God will thoroughly purge his floor and gather his wheat into his garner. When he purges his house the things that are unclean are gathered and burned. Sometimes good wheat is rooted up through unbelief, with those who have not the marks of the Lord Jesus Christ, but those who are born of God will continue to bear the marks of the Lord Jesus Christ, and their identity will be proven to the church of God. Paul, our eminent apostle, declared, "Let no man trouble me; for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." Paul bore in himself the marks of the circumcision according to the law, and also the marks of the circumcision of the Spirit. The circumcision under the law was an outward demonstration, and the Spirit was within the heart. There we get evidences which make us believe unto righteousness, and confess salvation is of the Lord. Every one thus circumcised is a true Israelite under the law of the Spirit of life, which is in Christ Jesus. When Paul was circumcised in spirit the things he thought to be unto life he found to be unto death, and he tells how it was done: "For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our

members, to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held: that we should serve in the newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me."—Rom. viii. 5-11. We might add more of Paul's testimony, but the truth abiding in the heart bears record, and there is no need for more evidence. The spirit in Paul bears witness with our spirit, that we are of such precious faith, and we rejoice in Paul's sufferings for sin, because we have been taught by the same Instructor, and those lessons are not to be forgotten. Let us hear the words of our Instructor: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."—Jer. xxxi. 33. By the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah these words were spoken to him by the Lord, and this is the covenant He hath made with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, and Jesus said, He that hath heard, and learned of the Father, cometh unto me. (John vi. 45.) The child of grace does not receive the lo heres and lo theres given by men, but is kept by the Spirit of the inward man, and the outward man perisheth day by day, but the inner man is renewed and built up and his life is strong in the Lord. Jesus said, "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."—John xiv. 20. We often feel to have assurances of these precious evidences, but after all we question ourselves, and are looking for the marks of the Lord Jesus Christ, and instead of finding ourselves perfect we are found wanting, and, like Job, exclaiming the vileness in our mortal flesh.

Dear readers of the SIGNS, from your hearts do you not feel glad you love the truth, and when you read or hear you can receive it as though the one who expressed the thought told your feelings instead of his own? It is then we are made to rejoice, and thank God from our hearts. We have great pleasure when we are made to witness the marks of the Lord Jesus in mortal creatures, and see how they are directed in paths they had not known, and realizing the drawing to them in the way we call them our best friends, our kindred. They draw like cords around our hearts, and their conversation is sweet and their associations dear, that we would entreat them to allow us to rest with them, for they feed in pleasant places; the waters are still, and the pastures are fresh and sweet, but we realize our leanness so much we fear that we have not received

such bounties, for they are for the upright. We do feel that the foundation of God standeth sure, the Lord knoweth them that are his, and they have the marks Paul speaks about, and they bear fruit for repentance, and they live under the banner of the love of God. The suffering and death of our Lord Jesus Christ was for his people, and they are delivered from their sins thereby. The cruelty and sufferings were great, but his infinite mind knew before how he would suffer for them, but he could not be straitened until he had paid the last farthing, and he could not return to his Father until he had accomplished the thing God sent him to finish, and through his sufferings we are made whole. He hath made the Captain of our salvation perfect through suffering (Heb. ii. 10), and he hath entered into glory at the right hand of the Father, and he sends forth his Spirit into our hearts, which makes intercession in our hearts with groanings that cannot be uttered.

We rejoice to receive from the writings of the prophets the portraying of the beauty of holiness, which speaks to us the same things we have received by the demonstrations we have in our hearts. God, who spake to our fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son. (Heb. i. 1, 2.) These marks are beheld in the people of God from a righteous Abel to the present times, which gives to us to see the oneness of those who worship God in the Spirit, and all who bear these marks sing praises to God, and ascribe greatness to him. Every one who is born of God has the virtue of eternal life and shall never perish. We are pressing towards the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, looking unto him who is the author and finisher of our faith.

There is another that we are commanded to mark, which is the one that causes division in the church of God, which we will leave for you to point out, for you have had some experience with that relation. May we be given renewed evidences of his power surrounding and keeping us, that we fall not out by the way.

C. W. V.

IN CONFIDENCE.

We have long regarded our readers as one family and have felt that they were very close to us, and we hope this feeling is reciprocated by them. It is because of this relationship that we have decided to tell them in all frankness some of the inside facts about our family paper and of our plans for the future. During the past few years the subscription list of the Signs has reached the lowest point in fifty years. There are possibly several reasons for this. First of all, many of our readers are old and as they pass away, unless new ones come in to take their place, the number naturally grows smaller. Doubtless one of the main reasons has been the depression, and the stringent financial conditions which followed, but now that business conditions have greatly improved, we propose to take steps to secure some new subscribers. We are firmly convinced that there are

literally hundreds scattered over the country who would be glad to take the paper if they knew about it. If our present subscribers will each secure just one new subscriber the list will be automatically doubled immediately. Some of them can have the paper sent to those who cannot afford to pay for it, and if all who can will pay up promptly, this will also be of material assistance to the publisher. Many years ago Elder Gilbert Beebe had authorized agents throughout the country. The present publisher has agreed to revive this practice and to allow such agents a fee of fifty cents for each NEW annual subscription they send in, with the distinct understanding, however, that the agent is to actually receive and retain the amount for his own personal benefit, and under no circumstances accept less than two dollars for a year's subscription to the paper. This principle must be strictly adhered to in order to prevent any possible injustice being done to any other subscriber. We would like especially to have our ministering brethren act as agents and receive whatever financial benefit they can in this way. There are other brethren, of course, and among them clerks of associations and churches, whom we would be glad to have act in this capacity. A list of those authorized will be published from time to time. We will also welcome the names and lists, with addresses, to whom sample copies may be sent for the purpose of interesting them in becoming subscribers. We are glad to report that some who had stopped the paper are again subscribers, and that others are paying to have it sent to those who cannot afford to subscribe themselves. All of our readers undoubtedly appreciate the improvement made by using a larger type for publishing obituaries, and since this requires more space, we hope the brethren will not make them unnecessarily long. Our publisher has been terribly handicapped of late, but we hope from now on the paper will be the regular size and come out promptly. We hope the brethren will write along both experimental and doctrinal lines, and thus aid us in keeping the paper up to the high standard which it has enjoyed for so many years. Will those who are willing to cooperate and help enlarge our circle of readers to a point to justify the publisher some day increasing the size of the paper, kindly communicate with us?

R. L. D.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

WHEN remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it. By referring to these dates you can tell to just what time your subscription is paid. Dec. 34 means your subscription expired December, 1934; June 35 means your subscription expired June, 1935; Dec. 35 that it expired December, 1935, etc.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER J. P. JENKINS was born February 8th, 1843, and died January 2nd, 1936. Had he lived until February 8th his stay on earth would have been ninety-three years. Elder Jenkins professed a hope in Christ in the spring of 1864, and joined the Old Baptist Church at Middle Fork, Henry County, Kentucky, in the year 1870, and was baptized by Elder R. W. Fain, who lived in Nashville, Tenn., at that time. He made his first effort to preach the first Sunday in November, 1878, and the church felt that his gift was profitable, so a presbytery was called to ordain him to the full work of the ministry, in the year 1879. The following Elders composed the presbytery: T. S. Dalton, J. J. Webb, Tommie Daniel and Joe McGuire. Elder T. S. Dalton was the Moderator of the presbytery and J. J. Webb Clerk. I am sorry that I cannot give the year Elder Jenkins was married. His wife's given name was Susie, but I cannot give her maiden name. To that union was born one son, who preceded him in death several years, as did also sister Jenkins. Elder Jenkins was a very able minister. All who knew him can and will, no doubt, verify my assertion. He was known in west Tennessee, west Kentucky and several adjoining States. He was Moderator of the Soldier Creek Church, in Marshall County, Kentucky, for thirty or more years. He was an able preacher, and Soldier Creek will sadly miss his preaching and sound advice. It can be truthfully said that a great man in Israel has fallen asleep in the arms of his Master. Sister Luther Ridgeway, with whom he was living at the time of his departure, said that the dear old soldier preached all night long before he died the following night, thus verifying Paul's conviction: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." This shows there is no such thing as God's little children retiring from serving the Lord. Elder Jenkins was a Rebel soldier of the Civil War, for which he drew a pension that helped to care for him in his declining days. I can truthfully say of this very dear old brother that he was a father in the ministry to me. When I would get confused over what this or that Scripture meant, I would ask Elder Jenkins about it and in a mild and quiet way he would tell me his opinion of what such Scripture meant. For fifty-eight years brother Jenkins preached the gospel.

To my beloved brethren and sisters of Soldier Creek Association, let us bow our heads in humble submission to the will of our God, who does all things well, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, and say, Lord, not our will, but thine, be done.

I was called to conduct the funeral services, and when I looked upon the face of that dear old soldier of the cross I thought, The voice we loved is stilled in death, the tongue that has praised his God before both friend and foe for fifty-eight years we will hear no more on earth, but sleep on and take thy rest until Jesus bids you awake in his image, to live beyond this vale of tears. We laid his mortal body in the cemetery at Beaver Dam Church, in Henry County, Tennessee, beside his wife, to await the redemption of this body from the grave, to ascend on high to praise him to whom all praise is due, in a world without end. May God bless all who mourn.

O. W. PERKINS.

DAVID M. VOORHEES, son of the late Levi and Elizabeth Voorhees, was born April 7th, 1865, and departed this life April 11th, 1936, making his stay on earth 71 years and 4 days. He was the last of his father's family. His father lived about four miles from Hopewell, N. J., on a farm, where David grew to manhood, where the developing of his talents and the foundations for the life he was to live in the community were laid. God gave him the talents that were to be of much benefit to the community and to all those who were connected to the relations of life with him. He was united in holy bonds of wedlock to Miss Anna Fetter, daughter of the late Christopher S. and Mary C. Vandyke Fetter, of Southampton, Pa., in the year 1890. He then moved to the old home of his wife's grandfather, where he lived until God called him away. To this union were born three children. The first, a daughter, Lillie V. Drake, preceded him April 6th, 1919, leaving three little girls, who found a present help in their grandfather. The second, Eugene D. Voorhees, of Lawrenceville, N. J., and the third, Mrs. Elizabeth V. Blackwell, of Skillman, N. J., and one great-grandchild, William Kintner, Jr., are left to mourn, with his dear wife, sister Voorhees, together with many friends and relatives, who realize their loss. Brother Voorhees took training in civil engineering, and was very successful in that work for thirty-seven years, and was often called to establish disputed lines and write deeds to properties, and other work that came under his line of capability. He was civil engineer for the borough of Hopewell, N. J., and served the Hopewell Township as clerk of the committee for thirty years, which office he held at the time of his death. He united with the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, Mercer County, New Jersey, September 24th, 1904, and was baptized by the late Elder F. A. Chick. The manifested love and kindly forbearance in the fellowship of the truth drew the church to elect him to serve as her clerk, which act was made September 25th, 1914, and in this work he continued until his death, and he served the Delaware River Association as clerk for over twenty years. He was elected to the office of trustee May 25th, 1929, which office he filled in the board to the satisfaction of the church and to the board, as chairman, treasurer and secretary, and at the end of the year he was ready to give account to the church for the trust she had committed to him, and the auditing committee always found everything all right. He loved the doctrine of salvation by grace, and the final preservation of the saints to glory, and the resurrection of the dead.

The foregoing is the narrative of a useful life, and a good citizen. He worshiped God in spirit and had no confidence in the flesh. The family has the sympathy of both church and state, but we should not weep for him as though he had no hope, but bow in humble submission to Him whose ways are right.

His funeral services were conducted from the late home on the Mount Rose—Pennington Road, and in the Old Baptist meetinghouse at Hopewell, N. J., the writer officiating, and using as a text 2 Timothy ii. 19: "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his," after which his remains were laid to rest in the Old School Baptist cemetery. Thus passed another from the earthly tie of mortality relation to be at rest in the eternal embrace of his Redeemer.

ALSO,

CHARLES HOWARD SKED, son of the late John and Ruth Sked, of Pennington, New Jersey, was born December 26th, 1862, and died July 1st, 1935, making his stay on earth 72 years, 6 months and 5 days. When he grew to manhood his affections were centered in the personality of Miss Laura Vandyke, and they were united in the holy bonds of matrimony December 2nd, 1885, and to their union were born two sons and four daughters. The sons are William and Walter Sked, of Pennington, N. J. The daughters are Mrs. Ruth Blackwell, Mrs. Ethel Ashton and Mrs. Eva Ewing, all of Hopewell, N. J., and Mrs. Bessie Harris, of Pittsburgh, Pa. They, together with their mother, survive to mourn the loss of a kind and devoted husband and father. He was a man of ambition to achieve and accomplish the aims and purposes of true husbandry, and by the blessing of God he and his devoted wife provided well for their family. He was blessed to enjoy reasonably good health until about two years before his death, when Mr. Sked was afflicted with creeping paralysis, which deprived him of his speech, and rendered him unable to take food or care for himself. He enjoyed the proclamations of the gospel and the associations of those who contended for the doctrine of salvation by grace, and often would express words of joy to his soul of the sweetness he had received in hearing the preached word. He was not a member of the church militant, but the fruit he bore was the same as Ruth of old, who said, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God," which gives us to feel he was a member of the bride of Christ. Mr. Sked was a companion to me, and was as close as if he had been a brother in the flesh, and we can greatly sympathize with his widow and family in their sadness.

His funeral services were conducted by the writer in the presence of a large congregation of relatives and friends, who were in attendance to pay tribute to his memory. We were blessed to have expressions from his own lips which gave us strength to speak of his love for the truth, and his evidences of a good hope through grace. These services were couducted in the Hopewell Old School Baptist meetinghouse, in Hopewell, N. J., after which his body was laid to rest in the Old School Baptist cemetery to await the final resurrection of the dead, when the Son of God himself shall call them from the dead, to be caught up in the cloud to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall they ever be with the Lord. May it be the will of God to comfort all that mourn, is our prayer.

ALSO,

JAMES TINDALL was the son of the late C. and Lydia Ann Tindall, born January 30th, 1847, in Ewing Township, Mercer County, New Jersey, and died October 19th, 1935, making his stay on earth 88 years, 8 months and 19 days. He was united in marriage to the lady of his choice in the year 1875, who preceded him eleven years. The time of his married life was about fifty years, and to this union were born five children, two daughters, Mrs. Harvey Grover and Mrs. Ada Dye, and three sons, Elmer, Clifford and Russell, who survive him, together with sixteen grandchildren and one great-grandchild, to mourn for a devoted and faithful father and grandfather. Two

sisters, Mrs. William Sharp, of Bethlehem, Pa., and Mrs. Augustus Hellings, of Ewing, N. J., both members of the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, also survive to realize the realities of the purposes of God, that all who live must die, and generations must pass and others must come. Mr. Tindall filled his day and generation as one of the faithful of mankind. He was a farmer, and by his faithful devotions to his good wife and family he provided them a good living, and gave them the advantages in the community of being the family of one of the best citizens in his locality. In the latter part of his life his heart was given to realize his standing before God, as a poor sinner, which gave him great concern and caused him to implore God to be merciful to him, and when God had brought him to repentance he revealed to him the rich treasures of his grace given to poor sinners through his tender mercy, and spoke peace to his soul, and by this revelation he was an ardent contender for the faith, and doctrine of salvation by grace. He was assured of the mercies of God three different times, and when the end of his mortal life drew near he made full arrangements for his funeral and burial service, and requested me to conduct them and tell his people what he believed, which I did. A large audience of friends and relatives assembled to pay tribute to the memory of their devoted friend and relative, after which his remains were laid to rest in the family plot in Greenwood Cemetery, Trenton, N. J., to await the time when the graves shall give up the dead and the saints are caught up in the cloud to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall they ever be with the Lord. Our loss is his eternal gain, but we cherish his memory and the kind words of his love for the preached word.

C. W. V.

On Christmas day, 1935, occurred the death of sister EFFIE NETHAWAY, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Walter Sagendorf, at Saranac Lake, after a long illness. She had been in poor health several years before the end came. Sister Effie Nethaway was born in 1859, and at the tender age of fourteen united with the Schoharie Church, having been deeply taught and led of the Lord, and during the sixty-four years of her relation with the church of her membership evidenced by precept and example, by a spiritual talk and a worthy walk the reality of the doctrine she believed and the rich experience that was hers. Her association with the brethren and friends are precious memories to many. Her hospitality and her zeal will be long remembered. She was united to Spencer Nethaway in marriage in 1895. Their home was open for entertainment of brethren and friends of the church at all times, and the Signs of the Times was taken by the subject of this article almost all of her long life. Her husband died in 1924, after which she made her home with her daughter, Mrs. Sagendorf. She was confined to her bed ten days before being called from time to eternity.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Farquher funeral parlors, in Schoharie, N. Y., and the interment was in the cemetery in that village. In her passing a noble christian woman, a true ornament of grace, will be much missed. She was a wife and a mother in the best sense in which these terms are used, and sweet memories of her will linger long in many hearts.

ALSO,

In the death of MRS. MARY DEMAR, at her home in Halcott, Greene County, New York, May 5th, 1936, the community sustains the loss of one of its most worthy citizens. She was born March 29th, 1862, in the town where she

spent all of her long and useful life. Her parents were Mr. and Mrs. Thomas J. Streeter, people strong in the principles of the Old School Baptist Church, who believed in rearing their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Mrs. Demar never made a profession of religion, but the tenets of the faith of her parents were her only comfort as she contemplated the solemn things of eternity. In 1882 she married Angelo Gordon, who died a few years later. In 1896 she became the wife of Leo Demar, who survives her, also four children: Mrs. Orpha Slauson, of Fleischmanns, Arthur Gordon, of Halcott, and Mrs. Milo Mestyanek and Mrs. Hilda Clement, of Margaretville, N. Y.

The funeral services were conducted at the Halcott meetinghouse, and the interment was in the cemetery near that place. Mrs. Demar possessed many noble qualities of character, was quiet and unassuming in her ways. It may be truly said of her that she had no enemies. The writer officiated at the funeral services.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

WILLIAM K. BAIRD, son of Gershom and Laura (Davidson) Baird, was born seventy-nine years ago in Barren County, Kentucky, the youngest member of a family of eight children, and the last of the family, died in Madison, Indiana, April 22nd, 1936, and his body was brought to Turners Station, Ky., April 24th, and services were held in the Cane Run Old School Baptist meetinghouse, burial was in the Turner Cemetery. Brother Baird was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Oak Grove, in Barren County Kentucky, by the late Elder P. W. Sawin, as near as I can ascertain, about forty years ago. In the fall of 1920 he moved to Henry County and joined the Cane Run Church by letter, where he remained until death. I believe this brother was the best educated in the Scriptures of any man I ever met. Possessed with a good memory, in his early life he read the Scriptures much, also the writings of Elders Beebe, Chick, Osborn, Ker, Lefferts, Durand, and many others that I cannot now recall, and it seemed to be no trouble for him to repeat different subjects, and the way certain of the preachers wrote on them. I used to call him my concordance. Several times I asked him where to find a certain text and he told me. While he possessed this wisdom and knowledge, yet he was one of the humblest men I ever met. In our church meetings he was quiet, never feeling worthy to open his mouth in public, but woe to the Arminian who crossed his path with their free agency doctrine. He could not sing, but enjoyed hearing the brethren sing, and often would request some hymn. "'Tis a point I long to know," was a favorite with him. At our April meeting this year he was in the neighborhood, and I drove to where he was purposely to bring him to the meeting. He said, Elder, I am not able to go. You go on, and bid the brethren goodbye for me, and read hymn 820 (Beebe's collection), which was done. That evening I saw him again, and he bade us goodbye, saying, You will never see Billie again in the flesh, and his prediction was true. Often have I heard the brethren say of brother Baird, How can one who is so well versed in the Scriptures be brought so low, see himself so vile and prone to sin? I would answer, It is light that makes manifest. Like Paul, in the abundance of revelation given him there was given a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to buffet him, lest he be exalted above measure. He was born of poor parentage, but was industrious and accumulated quite some of this world's goods,

and was always mindful of his pastor and several of the brethren, presenting them with worth-while gifts. Words fail me to express my appreciation of brother Baird. With many of the brethren far and near, I mourn his departure. He has passed on, we are left a little longer. The Lord only can reconcile us. Several years ago he made a request regarding his burial, which was carried out to the letter, and quietly we laid to rest in the cemetery all that was mortal, to await the call of the Master in the resurrection. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

ALSO,

WILLIAM JONES TURNER, the subject of this obituary, was born in Henry County, Kentucky, August 21st, 1840, and died March 23rd, 1936, in his ninety-sixth year. In the late war between the States he enlisted, and was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel under General Morgan. Colonel Turner's family settled in Henry County, Kentucky, and the village of Turners Station bears his name, as does also the chapter of the Daughters of the Confederacy. Returning home from the war in 1865, he was married to Miss Frances Monfort, and their lives were spent on a farm on the edge of Henry, Carroll and Trimble Counties, three miles from Campbellsburg, Ky. Mrs. Frances Turner departed this life August 21st, 1935, on his ninety-first birthday, aged eighty-two years. To their union several sons and daughters were born, several preceding him in death. The following children survive: Mrs. William L. Vories, Campbellsburg, Mrs. J. S. Mead, Smithfield, Ky., Mrs. Betty Lindsey, Detroit, Mich., Mrs. Minnie Pyles, Norwich, Kansas, two sons, William, of Louisville, and Fulton, on the home farm. He is also survived by two brothers, George R. and John Turner, of Turners Station, Ky., and two sisters, Mrs. T. E. Neblett, Shelbyville, Ky., and Mrs. John Duncan, of Cleveland, Ohio. Several grandchildren also survive. In the spring of 1933 Mr. Turner had a fall, which left him in a helpless condition for the balance of his life. During that time he suffered much, but bore his affliction with patience and seemed to be reconciled to his lot, but was willing and anxious to go. Mr. Turner came from Old School Baptist parentage, but neither he nor his wife ever joined the church, but his home was truly a Baptist home. One time he remarked to me that he had entertained and taken around more Old School Baptist preachers than any man in Henry County. They both, when their health permitted, attended the Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church, in the neighborhood, and were always willing to contribute towards the expenses of the church, entertaining the preachers, which was his delight, and many times I have been made to feel welcome at the home. I dearly loved to visit him, and many were the times we spent in conversation together. As a neighbor he stood high in the community. Much more could be said of the sterling qualities of our deceased friend. I visited him often in his last illness and always I was greeted with a pleasant smile, in spite of his suffering. All that was possible for humans to do to comfort him in his last hours was done. We are reminded of the words of Job in his sore afflictions: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

The funeral services were conducted by the writer in the cemetery at Campbellsburg, under a large tent erected for that purpose, in the presence of a large congregation of friends and neighbors, who were present to pay their last re-

spect to one they loved. May the blessing of the Lord be to all that mourn, and enable us all to say, "Thy will be done."

ALSO,

MR. LON YOUNG, husband of our sister in Christ, and member of the Little Flock Old School Baptist Church, in Anderson County, Kentucky, passed away at his home, in Lawrenceburg, Ky., March 21st, 1936, aged 74 years. He was one of a large family of children. All but one brother preceded him in death. Ezra Young, of Shelby County, survives. Mr. Young was a friend to the Old Baptists, and was interested in their meetings, although he never united with the church. He had no patience with the do systems of the day, salvation by works. He believed in God, and shortly before he died he told his wife that God brought him here in March and would take him away in March. He said, God is my keeper and will do all things right. He also said to his wife, Ella, pray for me, I hope it is God's will that I may not suffer long, and after giving some instructions concerning his departure he fell in that last long sleep, we believe to be awakened by the trump of God, when the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised in incorruption.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral, which was held in the home in Lawrenceburg, Ky., where I tried to speak to the brethren and neighbors who had gathered to pay their last respects to one they loved, with the thought that Jesus had fulfilled his mission and had saved his people from their sins, had finished the work the Father gave him to do, then was the body laid to rest in the cemetery near by. May the Lord bless the mourning friends, and may he, the great Shepherd of the sheep, reconcile us to his will.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

MONROE JACKSON BONDS was born in the year 1866, and departed this life April 5th, 1936, making his stay on earth 70 years. He leaves to mourn one daughter, two sons, nine grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, one step-son, one step-daughter and a host of friends. The writer was called to conduct the funeral services. He was a member of Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Kanawha County, West Virginia, and was a faithful attendant at meetings, although he lived in Fayette County, W. Va. We feel our loss is his eternal gain.

ALSO,

SARAH BONDS, wife of Monroe Bonds, was born in 1865, and departed this life in 1931, aged 65 years. She preceded her husband in death five years. She was a member of the Old School Baptist Church, and was baptized by Elder J. W. McClanahan about twenty years ago. He also conducted her funeral services.

This sketch of Sarah Bonds was written by request of her children.

ALSO,

MRS. SIDNEY A. MELTON was born December 20th, 1859, and departed this life April 1st, 1936, making her stay on earth 76 years, 4 months and 11 days. She leaves to mourn her husband, three sons, five daughters, twenty-five grandchildren, seventeen great-grandchildren, and a host of friends. The writer was called to conduct the funeral services. She was a firm believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine, although she never united with the church. She received a hope in Christ Jesus several years ago. She bore her affliction with patience, and said she spent many happy moments on her bed while waiting for the summons from on high to call her home. We feel our loss is her eternal gain.

J. C. HAMMOND.

MRS. MARY ELLA PARROTT passed peacefully away at 12:30 o'clock Friday morning, March 20th, 1936, at her home, near Prentice, Illinois, aged 81 years. Mary Ella Hill was born in Connorsville, Indiana, December 14th 1854. She was married to John Parrott October 22nd, 1883. Mr. Parrott died March 2nd, 1892. On August 22nd, 1901, she was united in marriage to Elias Parrott, brother of her first husband. He preceded her in death February 1st, 1930. She was one of a family of ten children, of whom only one now survives. She leaves one daughter, Mrs. Ray Shortridge, one granddaughter, Lee Ella Shortridge, one sister, Mrs. Sadie R. Thompson, of Cherryvale, Kansas. Mrs. Parrott was a devoted member of the Primitive Baptist Church for more than fifty years. She leaves a wide circle of friends in and out of the church who will long cherish her memory.

Funeral services were held at the late home Sunday, March 22nd, at 2:30 p. m., conducted by brother W. T. Hughett, who spoke from the words, "Let not your heart be troubled." A large gathering of friends and neighbors attended the services. One favorite hymn of the deceased sister, "Asleep in Jesus," was sung by Mrs. R. V. McClure, Mrs. Eugene Scott and Miss Frankie McDaniel. She was laid to rest in Yatesville Cemetery. In our memory she still lives.

FRANKIE McDANIEL.

FLOYD C. LINN was born October 23rd, 1895, and died January 16th, 1936, aged 40 years, 2 months and 24 days. He was united in marriage to Della Linn December 26th, 1926, and to their union were born three children, one dying in infancy. Two children, Charles and Rosemary, with his dear wife, survive him. Floyd never united with the church, but he was a strong believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine, and he professed a hope in Christ about one year before his death, when he told me of things which occurred in his life that I was glad to hear. Just before he died he said he wanted the members of the Mount Zion Church to be with him, for the Baptists were his company. He selected the hymn, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear," and requested that Elder J. J. Poling use it at his funeral as the opening hymn. While suffering greatly he said, Oh how can I stand it? what will I do? Then added, The Lord will not put upon me more than I am able to bear. He asked for his mother, and when she reached his bedside he took her hand, bade us all goodbye, said a few words in prayer, closed his eyes and quietly and peacefully, and with a smile on his face, feel asleep in Jesus, as we hope. Oh how we miss him, but he is gone from the evil to come and we are left in sorrow, but I hope we do not mourn as those who have no hope. I do not wish him back, but there is a lonely spot in my heart because I will see him here no more.

His father,

JAMES W. LINN.

MEETINGS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the First Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, Mercer County, New Jersey, on Wednesday and Thursday, June 3rd and 4th, 1936, commencing Wednesday morning at 10:30 o'clock. Daylight Saving Time. All lovers of the truth are invited.

DAVID M. VOORHEES, Church Clerk,
R. 1, PENNINGTON, N. J.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets on the first Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, Shelbyville, Ky.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 104. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1936. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

THIS fundamental truth is such an important part of the grand scheme of salvation by grace, that without it the whole would be abortive. It is the crowning work in the redemption of sinners, and the superlative revelation of God's glory unto man. It is the realization of the promised victory over death and the grave through our Lord Jesus Christ. The subjects to whom this revelation is to be made are Adam sinners, composed of spirit, soul and body. The transactions of grace, in bringing these Adam sinners out of bondage under sin, into the liberty of the sons of God is called in the Scriptures, "Bringing many sons unto glory."—Heb. ii. 10. To accomplish this noble design of Jehovah, Christ was ordained, anointed and consecrated in numerous offices, in an indissoluble relationship both to the Father and the children given to him. These offices he honored and dignified by consecrating himself by his oath to their imposing responsibilities. Not only is Christ one with the Father, but one with his people also. "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one."—Heb. ii. 11. Aside from the eternal life unity of Christ and his people, he assumed their nature and became one with them in flesh and blood. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."—Heb. ii. 14, 15. This relationship, which Christ sustained to the sons whom he purposed to bring unto glory, constitutes the foundation of their hope, and the assurance of their receiving the reward of the inheritance. They were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and blessed in him with all spiritual blessings, that they should be holy and without blame before God in love,

Predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ, called into the fellowship of God's Son, justified from all sin, and glorified eternally. By Christ being made to be sin for them and they being made the righteousness of God in him. They received full credit in the covenant of grace for all that Christ's righteous life in their flesh, death and resurrection entitled him to. Their strong consolation, in the hope of realizing the fulfillment of these covenant provisions rests firmly upon the immutable oath of Jehovah. One covenant and one oath declared and sealed every step and every transaction and every benefit affecting the sons to be brought to glory, from its inception to its consummation. Nothing is done in vain and no losses are sustained on the way. "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose *nothing,* but should raise it up again at the last day."—John vi. 39. It is certain from the teaching of the Scriptures that it was men, composed of spirit and soul and body, which were given to Christ by the Father; and it is further evident, as previously shown, their bodies were flesh and blood bodies. Jesus said to the Father, "I have manifested thy name unto the *men* which thou gavest me out of the world."—John xvii. 6. Paul said in his benediction upon the Thessalonian Church, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."—1 Thess. v. 23, 24. Notice these saints whose spirit and soul and body are to be presented blameless until Christ comes are called; therefore they were foreknown and predestinated to be conformed to the image of God's Son, and are certain to be justified and glorified. (Rom. viii. 28, 29.) The faithfulness of God will not let him fail in his preservation of them to glory. Christ and the Father both have declared their wills in regard to those the Father gave to Christ: Jesus said, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me."—John xvii. 24. "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."—John vi. 39. In the light of the foregoing Scriptures, can the will of the Father or Son be done, if those given to Christ by the Father are not raised up in the same bodies they live and die in here, and which were the men given to him out of the world? It might be proposed that their individualities will be preserved, and they will be given another more glorious body, a spiritual body. But I reply, That will not meet the exigencies of this case. The Father's will is specific that nothing which he has given be lost; and if anything included in this gift to the Son be lost by substitution or otherwise, the will is broken and all its provisions and bequests are nullified. To fulfill the Father's will, not only individuality but the identity of those

given to Christ must be preserved. (I use the word "identity" as meaning the same.) This allows for all the change necessary to elevate from mortal to immortal, from natural to spiritual, from dishonor to glory, from weakness to power, from corruption to incorruption, but permits of no discards or exchanges. Paul affirms that God who calls them is faithful and will preserve them in their entirety until their Chief Shepherd shall appear, when they shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. (1 Peter v. 4.) Christ's will is that these men whom the Father gave him out of the world be with him where they can behold his glory. The ultimate resurrection of the characters above defined, and their triumphant entry into glory, must be achieved if the will of the Father and of the Son be not broken.

Christ is head over all things to the church which is his body and fullness. (Eph. i. 22, 23.) By virtue of the union of Christ and his people, all that he did in his mediatorial office was done for them, and is productive of results as definite and certain in and for them as in himself. Representatively he carried them with him through all his obedience, sufferings, his death and resurrection, and was their exemplar through it all. Personally Christ's resurrection was complete when his human body arose from Joseph's new tomb and ascended into the heavens; and representatively the bodies of his saints rose when his body rose. "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise."—Isaiah xxvi. 19. "After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in hs sight."—Hosea vi. 2. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."—Eph. ii. 4-6. These Scriptures present the resurrection of the saints as complete in Christ as their head and representative. God views them only as they stand perfect and complete in Christ's righteousness, sanctification, redemption, death, resurrection and glorification. Because Christ lives they shall live also, and in the Father's sight they can never die. Jesus confirmed this truth when he declared the resurrection of the dead unto the Sadducees, saying, "Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he called the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto God."—Luke xx. 37, 38. This does not argue that the resurrection is already past, and therefore the bodies of the saints will not be brought forth from their graves; no more than it would be proper and scriptural to argue that no more of the graces of justification, adoption, regeneration and sanctification would be experienced, because it is said, "By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." (Set apart in God's electing love.) It is one thing

to have our salvation completed in Christ, and quite another to experience the application of it in ourselves as the members of Christ. But its completion in Christ, the head, as surely secures its experimental realization in every member of his body as it is that their relation cannot be dissolved. The sins which the members of Christ must have borne in their bodies were imputed to Christ, and he bore them upon the cross in his own body, as their head and representative. This frees them from the law and its curse, which is death. Christ was delivered to death for our offenses, and was raised for our justification. (Rom. iv. 25.) If the body of Christ, as the representative of his church, sufficiently satisfied for their offenses in his death that they were justified, and because of their justification his body rose from the dead; by what rule of justice may we conclude that the bodies of those justified can be held under death, since he partook of flesh and blood for the express purpose of delivering them from death? (Heb. ii. 15.)

Christ's resurrection in relation to his mystical body is not complete actually, but his resurrection was only the beginning; the completed resurrection will only be realized and actually accomplished when every member of Christ experiences just what Christ as the head has experienced. "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."—Col. i. 18. Here it sets Christ forth in the resurrection as only the beginning, as the firstborn from the dead, and his body, the church, as following, which will be the completion. The identical body of Christ arose and appeared unto his brethren and gave them undisputable evidence that it was the same body that was buried which rose. He said to John, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore."—Rev. i. 18. If Christ is the beginning of the resurrection of the dead, of which he is so important a part, and if many of the bodies of the saints which slept at the time of Christ's resurrection arose and came out of their graves after Christ's resurrection, and went into the holy city and appeared unto many (Matt. xxvii. 52, 53), may we not accept this as strong evidence, if not positive proof, that the remaining portion shall be raised as the beginning; since they are to be like him when they awake? Will not the rest of the children of this family be brought forth in their birth from the dead in their bodies as the firstborn was? It seems to me this conclusion would only be the results of applying common sense to the interpretation of the metaphor.

The bodies of the saints are the members of Christ. (1 Cor. vi. 15.) Again, the apostle says, "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."—1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. The bodies of the

saints are the members of Christ and temples of the Holy Ghost; in them and in their spirits God is to be glorified. They are bought with a price, but not with corruptible things as silver and gold, neither with the blood of goats and calves, "but with the precious blood of Christ," foreordained of God before the world as the ransom price. (1 Peter i. 19, 20.) Shall we conclude that the possession of this purchase, for which such a stupendous and so precious a price has been paid, is to be only temporary? That death and the grave will dissolve the Purchaser's title, and hold in forgotten silence the possession of the Son of God? Never! Never!! He shall continue to reign until he has put all enemies under his feet, the last of which is death. No such tragedy shall ever overtake any of the sons who are being brought unto glory.

Again, it is said, The body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. (1 Cor. vi. 13.) If they are for each other, who is going to separate them? Death nor life cannot do it; angels, principalities nor powers cannot do it; things present, things to come, height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to do it; and all because they are embraced in the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. viii. 38, 39.) The resurrection of the bodies of the saints is so connected with the resurrection of Christ that his resurrection could not have been possible without securing theirs. The same cause, or causes, which would have prevented the resurrection of their bodies would likewise have prevented the resurrection of Christ's body. It would also prove the preaching of the apostles vain, and the faith of the saints vain, and they yet in their sins; that the apostles had witnessed falsely under the inspiration of the Spirit, for they have testified of God that he raised up Christ from the dead, whom he raised not up, if so be the dead rise not; and those who are fallen asleep in Jesus are perished. (1 Cor. xv.) These awful consequences would inevitably follow if the dead do not rise, is the argument of the apostle Paul. And it is evident that nothing in this connection can be meant by the dead except the bodies of the saints, as a careful study of the chapter will show, and as it is a well established scriptural truth that only the body dies in mortal death.

In the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians the apostle proceeds to prove the resurrection of the bodies of the saints, by proving the resurrection of Christ. First, by eye-witnesses: the apostles, including Paul himself, and above five hundred brethren, all of whom viewed his body, some of them handled it, and all were competent and qualified witnesses to testify to his identity. Second, by the absurdities that would follow if the dead rise not, which are noted above. Third, by deducing results from the relation Christ sustains to his saints, which I have given some consideration to, but shall enlarge upon briefly at this point.

(*Concluded next number.*)

CLARKSVILLE, Tennessee.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As it is nearly time to renew my subscription, I am inclosing three dollars, two dollars for renewal and one dollar to use to aid the SIGNS in any way you see fit. I am also inclosing a letter written to me by a young man in Detroit, who is not a member, but a very strong believer in the doctrine believed and preached by the Old School Predestinarian Baptists. I would like to see it published in the SIGNS, if it meets with your approval. This young man is a grandson of the late Elder J. N. Perkins, of Mayfield, Kentucky. I am sure a number of the readers of the SIGNS remember and loved him.

I would like to write more, but feel too unworthy to even be numbered with the Baptists. I have been numbered with them over forty years. I have been asked why I joined the church. My answer was, I do not know. It must have been because I could not help it. But to me they are the dearest people on earth. In fact, all I have left, being a lone widow, no fleshly tie this side of the grave. But my hope is that the Master when suffering on the cross remembered a poor mortal like me and my sins were redeemed and remembered against me no more. If this be not the case, I am lost eternally.

A poor old sinner, nothing and less than nothing,

(MRS.) B. H. SHEARON.

DETROIT, Mich., Sept. 19, 1935.

DEAR SISTER SHEARON:—If indeed I am permitted to call you a sister in Christ. I have thought of writing you for some time, but as my mind has been barren on the things that would interest you I have not made the attempt. Lettie is sick at the present time, and my boy is in the hospital with a bad leg. He almost had blood poison. It seems that we all have our little share of trouble, but if we could all realize the true import of the text that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them that are the called according to his purpose, we might be more patient, but because of the lack of faith we cannot understand it, but as faith is the gift of God, we must wait upon the Lord. It is argued by most of the "religious" world that faith and repentance precede regeneration, and are conditions to be performed by the alien sinner in order to become a child of God, but, dear sister, our experience does not teach us that, but that the sinner must be quickened and made alive by the Spirit of God before he can repent or have faith. So we will try it by the searchlight of divine truth, if we are so led. Now if the theory is right there are some things that no man can evade. Repentance and faith must be begun and carried on and finished before any sinner can be born of God. If so, then the sinner must do these things while he is dead in sins, without any holy principle dwelling in him and while he is wholly under the influence of Satan. The sinner cannot repent of his sins and turn to God, because he is dead in sin. Paul said, You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sin. Paul affirms that they were dead in sin up to

the quickening, which is another word for regeneration. There is not a spark of spiritual life in the natural man to prompt him to seek repentance. It is said in the Scripture, There is none that doeth good; no, not one. They are all gone out of the way. They are together become unprofitable. The life that is in them is natural and pertains to this world only, and from it can spring no fruit for the next world. Christ says, The strong man armed keeps his palace and his goods in peace. There is nothing in man in this state to make war with sin, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their hearts. (Eph. iv. 18.) To require men to truly and savingly repent in order to get a change of heart is to require an impossibility. Repentance is an effect of regeneration, and a fruit springing therefrom. To regenerate, to quicken, to be born again, are evidently all the same thing, and exclusively the work of God by the Holy Spirit. To be born again is to be made partaker of the divine nature, divine life, the life of God. This divine nature is that which brings about true repentance towards God, which is the evidence of divine life, that life which was hid with Christ in God, for he said, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. (Jer. xxxi. 3.) Divine life when given, and a new nature imparted, which is opposed to sin, causes the sinner to hate sin, then true repentance begins and is the real evidence of regeneration. This is when a sinner comes to Jesus, because he now begins to seek Jesus earnestly by prayer and supplication, and to this agrees the prophet's language: I will bring the blind by a way they knew not. Crooked ways I will make straight, and rough places smooth. This will I do for them, and forsake them not. Then this is being drawn to Christ. For no man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him. Then again he says, Therefore the ransomed of the Lord shall return (from natural life to spiritual life) and come to Zion with singing, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away. It is said again, All thy people shall be taught of the Lord and great shall be their peace. Dear sister, sometimes when I try to meditate upon the wonderful works of our Creator I am lost in utter amazement to think he could remember a poor worm of the dust with an everlasting love, and at that great day to be made in the image of his dear Son, it is almost too much for me to hope for, but is not that the experience of us all? I think it was the experience of the apostle when he said, Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God. And the prophet when he said, The redeemed of the Lord shall return and come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads. They shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away. But, dear sister, we are only pilgrims in this life, walking to and fro seeking a city

not made with hands, whose builder and maker is God, and when we come into possession of that city, and are made like unto the Son of God, then we will be satisfied.

Well, dear sister, I will close lest I weary you. I hope all is well with you. Love to the household of faith.

ELMER LOCK.

BALTIMORE, Md., March 3, 1936.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—If the Lord wills, I will write a few lines to let you know I appreciate your many expressions of love and sympathy. I have had so many cards, letters and telegrams it will be a long time before I can reply to each one personally, but this I hope to do ere long. I am now taking advantage of thanking you through the SIGNS. I feel unworthy of the kind consideration shown me, but my dear departed one was worthy of all that was ever done for him. There is such a vacancy in my poor heart and home. Every morning when the mail comes, after my children are off to school, I sit by the vacant chair and read through tears the many sweet words of sympathy and condolence. For nearly sixteen years we were constant companions, loving the same things, reading and talking together. When he was physically able, neither of us mailed a letter unless the other had read and indorsed it. He died in full triumph of the faith. Although he said he dreaded the monster death, when it came we had sufficient evidence to believe it held no terrors for him. He seemingly entered into glory, and went very gently into a sweet, peaceful sleep. As long as he had strength to talk his theme was Jesus and his love for his people. He prayed a beautiful prayer on the night of the seventeenth. I tried to write it, but he talked too fast, and some words were not plain. Here is what I have: The wondrous works of Jesus in the hearts of his people! O Lord, hear these pleadings, and bless these feeble efforts. * * * and the personal appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. I do thank and bless thy dear name. (Then something about his wife.) I have suffered the loss of two who served in capacity as laborers of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Mindful of others, but all is well. How excellent is thy name in all the earth.

We had left him with the nurse, she wanted him to be quiet, and when we heard him we hurried back. I did not have a pencil in hand, so missed the first part, then could not write as fast as he was talking, so could not get all that I could understand. It was a great cross to me to have a nurse, as he wanted me by him all the time. However, I was with him most of the time. He was so appreciative of everything that was done for him, and so good to me. I never received anything but praise from his precious lips. We just had a nurse at night for ten or twelve hours, and during those hours when I would go lay my hand on his head he would say, That feels so good. It just calms me all over. Your touch is so different from any one's else. Is it any wonder I was given superhuman strength? Neither of us had much sleep after he was confined to his bed, the last day of

January. He was quite a care after he was stricken with blindness. Not having a barber close by, I cut his hair and shaved him, prepared all his food, and often fed him like an infant. I called him my big baby. He would say he was more trouble than an infant. I treated his eyes twice daily with a hot application, and never left him only when I had to, and then would hurry back as quickly as possible. I did go to meeting a few times when he wanted me to. He went to meeting four or five times and spoke half an hour each time, and dictated many letters at home. I feel that now, as one dear minister said to me, I must turn from the dead to the living. God gave me this dear companion, now he has taken him away from me, and for him it is far better to depart and be with Jesus, and when I know my loss is his gain I shall try to go on, trusting that I am secure in the secret place of the Most High, and may be enabled by his grace to abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Sweet to me is the Scripture, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." How I prize the prayers of my dear kindred in Christ. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Thus far the Lord has led me. My trust is alone in him now.

Brother Rowe quoted in his last hours Jeremiah iii. 23: "Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains; truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel." Such a consecrated life! And he died as he had lived.

Brother Rowe said he wanted no one to eulogize him, he would take no honor to himself. To me he was truly a great man, and in one thing I could obey the Scripture. I could and did reverence my husband.

My dear ones, continue to pray for me, and cast the mantle of charity over my weaknesses and many imperfections as my dear departed one did.

Your little sister, I hope, lonely and sorrowing,

MINNIE W. ROWE.

WOOLWINE, Va., Aug. 5, 1935.

DEAR EDITORS:—In Him all fullness dwells, is one of the sweetest thoughts that ever entered our minds, and perhaps the most powerful. In Him all fullness dwells. This includes every heavenly blessing, which is Christ Jesus in the glorious display of the riches of his grace, for he is our glorious inheritance, which fills heaven. The fullness of heavenly blessings that fills all in all. Our Savior is our salvation, for he has saved us. He is the joy of our salvation, our deliverance, for he has delivered us from sin, from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light, the kingdom of righteousness and peace. He is our everlasting portion for ever and ever. If we are blessed with the covenant blessings we are the heirs of promise. The angel of the covenant appeared to Moses in a flame of fire out of the midst of the burning bush, and the bush was not consumed, because it was the everlasting love of God. I dreamed I saw the burning bush, the prettiest bush I ever

saw; there was not a decayed leaf on it. It looked like the glory of the Lord was shining upon it. I hope I am in the presence of the angel of the covenant of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ this morning, which I believe to be the flying angel from the midst of heaven (John's vision, Revelation xiv.) having the everlasting gospel to preach to every nation, which I look at as being the overpowering gift in the gospel, for in Him all fullness dwells. I do not think I can agree with some concerning the blood of Christ, and in an humble spirit will ask them to bear with me. Elder J. C. Philpott, of London, in his lifetime said that Christ took his flesh and living blood into heaven. He was an able gift, and I have his letter in a book. Was the flesh and blood of Christ spiritual? Yes. Can our flesh and blood enter heaven? No, not in its carnal state, for it is polluted with the sin of Adam, from which our Lord's body was free. In the Bible we read of the wicked that their blood shall be upon them. That is, their sin shall be upon them, and not forgiven. We read that we are made nigh by the blood of Christ. Here is the love that flowed from the virtue of our Savior's blood. After his resurrection it was proven that he had living flesh and blood, without which there could be no justification and no sanctification, and I fully believe that the virtue of our Savior's blood fills heaven with the richest blessings. From his pierced, wounded side flowed forth the virtue of our Savior's blood back to the Adamic fall, and from his wounded side the virtue flowed forth to the morn of the resurrection to all of the chosen race, for he is as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and now he dwells in the brightest glory. The apostle said he dwells in unapproachable light, which no man hath seen, nor can see, so then it is his Spirit that we have dreams and visions of.

Your sister in hope,

MOLLIE SALMONS.

BATH, Maine, March 8, 1936.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I have been a long time trying to make up my mind I had something of interest to write to you, one whom God has blessed with the spiritual understanding that has been given you, and what I may write may not be of interest to you. But as I read from your pen I find that you are my brother in tribulation and we both travel the same way, but I feel you are not the sinner I am. I see no one in all my brethren who is so vile, and often say, I wish I was like this one or that one. It seems I would not have any of that awful fear, and wonder why God does not chasten me more than he does, and still I do not want him to take the chasten away, for it says that whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. The enemies I have within myself are many and give me much trouble. I am not fit to live and I surely am not fit to die. I think of the good sermons I heard at the association and often get hungry to hear more. God knows and will supply all our needs as he sees fit. I have so much of the world around me I used to wonder

if I might fall back. I believe I hate it more than ever, and I am afraid there are times I show it, and that is not nice. It says, Resist the devil and he will flee from you. There are times when I think he sticks closer than a brother to me. I know I should not doubt, for without faith we cannot please God. He so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but should have everlasting life, and he has given me the witness within my heart that I have learned of him, but how I would love to live such a life that I might see something in it that would be Christlike, but that is not to be. If it were not for Paul's writings I would give up and fall by the wayside, for the good that I would I do not, and the evil I would not, that I do. Unclean! Unclean! Oh how I realize the uncleanness within me, and I feel to cry to God for mercy. Then comes the thought, Why would God listen to one so vile as I am? But I know he is a just God. He has promised, and his promises stand fast, Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. As I grow older I crawl more within myself, for people think me peculiar to advance such strange ideas, and so I go on, sometimes tossed by angry waves and deep waters going over me, and then sometimes in green pastures by still waters, and so it will be until life is done.

You will see a month has passed since I began to write, and much has happened in that time. We have moved from Bath again to Topsham, and are here with my sister, Mrs. Estes, and my cousin, Mrs. Whitman. You saw her at the Association a year ago last September, and she often spoke of you. My sister at Bath, Mrs. Hoyel, died last December, and I felt there was no one to keep me there, so we came up here Saturday, March 14th, and were held up two hours because of high water. It did much damage here, but not as much as it did in other places.

Elder Dodson, I hope you will cast the mantle of charity over this letter. I have not written as I would like, but when I get a chance to write is when the others are ready to play cards or do cross word puzzles, so there is much talking going on and I get confused. Perhaps I could do no better were I alone. I hope you and your family are well and that you have not suffered by the flood conditions. May God bless and protect you and yours and lead you in sweet paths of love and fellowship.

Your sister,

RACHEL B. POTTER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

L. B. Parker, Ky., $1; Mrs. Duncan McCallum, Ontario, $2; Jessie Murray, Ontario, $2; "A friend," Ky., $1; Mrs. T. H. Young, Ohio, $1; G. W. Berry, Ala., 50 cents; Mrs. G. W. McDaniel, N. C., $1; Mrs. Kate Lunsford, Ky., $1; Mrs. J. H. Hasbrouck, N. Y., $1; D. L. Blackwell, N. J., $3; Melissa C. Sparks, California, $1; Mrs. Clara Parker, Ore., $2.

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Middletown, N. Y.

MATTHEW I. 18-25.

"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel; which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: and knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS."

A brother has requested views on the foregoing. At this time we may not be able to go into the subject to the extent we would like, but we will express some of our thoughts for the consideration of those who may read. This Scripture involves one of the most fundamental phases of eternal truth to be found anywhere in the Bible. If it is untrue then the entire weave and fabric of the Scriptures must fall to the ground as the greatest myth of the ages. The Lord himself, however, promised before even the human race began to multiply upon the earth that *the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head,* which was prophetic of the fact that Jesus in the fullness of time would come in the flesh and through his sufferings, death and resurrection destroy him that had the power of death, "and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." In addition to the record of Matthew as to how the birth of Jesus came about, we also have the record of Luke, whose profession we understand was that of a physician, and who was especially taught and learned in such matters as those pertaining to births, etc. It was no mere accident that he, as one having authority, should "have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us." He continued with

the further statement that "Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed."—Luke i. 1-4. He then tells us Herod was king of Judæa in those days, and gives us the details of the birth of John the Baptist, following which he relates the circumstances surrounding the miraculous conception and birth of our Lord. We will quote his exact words as recorded in verses twenty-six to thirty-five, inclusive: "And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God, unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." If this evidence is not acceptable and conclusive it is useless to attempt to adduce further proof from the Bible. This is not the first time or the only thing that has utterly confounded men, scientific and otherwise. They cannot tell us how God by the power of his word was able, in the beginning, to create the heaven and the earth; they cannot explain why the Red Sea should have divided to let Israel pass over dryshod, and then the same mighty waters closed in upon Pharaoh and his hosts, destroying them to a man; they cannot unravel the mystery of the fiery furnace, the heat from which destroyed those who cast in the three Hebrew children and yet all that the fires could do to them was to loose their bands. The world still awaits an explanation from the wise men as to why it was not until the seventh day and the seventh time that Joshua's men encompassed the city of Jericho, that it came to pass, at the blast of the ram's horn, when the sound of the trumpet was heard, that the walls of the city should fall down flat, and the people should ascend up every man straight before him. Many have contended that the narrative of the whale swallowing Jonah is absolutely incredible, but we would rather

agree with the old colored brother who said that he not only believed what the Bible said about it, but that if the Bible had said that Jonah had swallowed the whale, he would have believed that, as well. The wise men, magicians, soothsayers, and the like, of Egypt were utterly dumbfounded and bewildered at many things which were made perfectly clear to God's servants by revelation. The same is true to-day. Science has for its foundation literally known FACTS. True religion has for its foundation FAITH. This is the gift of God, and without it no man can please God. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is [that he is verily God], and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." To all such, nothing is impossible with God; their faith staggers not at anything that pertains to him. By the mighty workings of his Holy Spirit in them they are enabled to believe, and they accept without one scintilla of reservation the inspired record as to the manner and purpose of the birth of Jesus as given not only by Matthew and Luke, but which was also prophesied beforehand all down through the ages by God's holy prophets. That a virgin should bring forth a son, and that his name should be called JESUS, which being interpreted is God with us, whose purpose in coming into the world was to save his people from their sins, and that he finished his work in every sense of the word, is the foundation of the christian's hope. The truth of this is well attested to by all of the holy Scriptures. We are well aware of the fact that the multitudes do not and cannot accept such doctrine, nor can they believe it until it is wrought in them by God's power, but this shall not in any way deter or prevent our proclaiming it from the house-top. Many times we are made to ask, if it be God's will, that he pity the unregenerate and have mercy upon them. At the same time we are made to thank him from the very depth of our poor, sinful heart for revealing unto us a knowledge of his truth, for according to nature we are no better than the vilest of the vile, and would most certainly have never desired to know him whom to know is life eternal had we been left to ourself.

Since our last editorial, which appeared in the May issue of our paper, in which we spoke of the clay and the potter, and tried to set forth God's sovereignty in making one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor, and his electing love in choosing Jacob and rejecting Esau, even before either were born, or had done good or evil, "that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth," we have received three pages of scriptural references, unidentifiable as to date, address and signature, with remarks purporting to refute the doctrine of election. We stated in said editorial that "Unquestionably, the doctrine of election is the most hated of all of God's blessed truths," so we are not surprised that we drew the blood of one who evidently does not know the truth. One of the first Scriptures to which our unknown friend refers as supporting his theory

of God's inability and the creature's ability is 1 Timothy ii. 4, as follows: "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." Evidently he construed this to mean that God will have every individual of mankind to be saved, but because the creature is more mighty than his Creator, God will have to content himself with saving only such as will let him. If such doctrine is not blasphemy, we do not know what would be. As the last reference on his third page has to do with "rightly dividing the word of truth," we would recommend that he take the trouble to ponder the first part of this verse, which says, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed," and take himself into hiding until he has some true understanding of what the Scriptures really teach. The twenty-first verse of Matthew one, which reads: "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins," is sufficient answer for us to make at this time to his three pages of unsigned material, mailed at Winnipeg, Canada. Strange as it may seem, this same person also inclosed a leaflet entitled "A Religion of Four Letters," in which a "Christian Lady" said to one, "There is a wide difference between your religion and mine." The one to whom she was addressing said, "Indeed, how is that?" "Your religion," she replied, "has only *two* letters in it, and mine has *four*." "What do you mean," said he, "by two letters and four?" "Why, your religion," said the lady, "is D-O, DO; whereas mine is D-O-N-E, DONE." Our friend apparently is of the former class, while we profess to believe that when Jesus said, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost, he had fully accomplished what our text declares—saved his people from their sins. We would suggest that in the future he at least be consistent, and not send opposing kinds of literature in the same envelope.

Since our Lord and his disciples set up and established the true church on earth, Satan and his legion of hosts have done all within their power to destroy it, but Jesus told Peter that the gates of hell should not prevail against it, so it is safe and secure for all time. It has been attacked in every age, but by God's grace it has survived. The Lord has not left himself without witnesses, for there has always been some who would defend to the death his precious truth. They have not always maintained the same name as a body, but they have held unswervingly throughout to the same fundamental principles. During the more recent periods of time, they have been known as Baptists, and more recently still as Primitive or Old School Baptists, to distinguish them from those who were really not of them and went out from them. Four years ago, in 1932, we were at the Black Rock meetinghouse in Maryland, and took part in a service commemorating the one hundredth anniversary of the separation in 1832 between the Old School and the New School. At that meeting there was much read and spoken which savored

of a historical nature, and well do we remember stating from the pulpit that we hoped there were none present who, because of the historical references, would conclude for one moment that the Old School Baptists, or their doctrine, were only one hundred years old, or that Elder Gilbert Beebe was the founder of the church. If this were true, it would mean that we are still only as old as one living man, since we have a dear brother in Hopewell, N. J., David Blackwell by name, who was born in the year 1832, and will be one hundred and four years of age if he lives until the latter part of this month. We would be in a very sad state, indeed, if we could not trace our spiritual lineage back farther than that, for there are many religious orders which antedate that period of time, but the doctrine which we believe and contend for goes back to the days of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. Some years ago, at a funeral in the State of Maine, a young man asked us who was the head of our church, and where were the headquarters. We replied that evidently he knew nothing at all about Old Baptists, and then we stated to him that the Lord Jesus Christ was the head over all things to the church, and that our headquarters were in heaven. Such, indeed, is the case if we are what we profess to be.

Having already made reference to the meeting at Black Rock, Md., in 1832, when there was a parting of the ways between the Old and New orders, let us emphasize here that the ten Elders and the ten laymen who were present and affixed their signatures to the proceedings which went forth from that place at that time, did not distinguish themselves by advocating and promulgating some NEW doctrine, to be adhered to by their own followers, but their memories are greatly esteemed because they stood immovably for the things which had been most surely believed by the followers of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ since the first true gospel church was established. These beloved and faithful brethren, like the apostle Paul, would not have any man follow them beyond what they followed Christ, and if we know our own heart we can truthfully say the same to-day. Our earnest prayer is that God will cause us all to ask for the old paths where is the good way, and walk therein. We should stand firmly upon the foundation of which our text is a part, for other foundation can no man lay than that that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

R. L. D.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS."

WE will furnish extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder C. W. Vaughn.)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, New Jersey, June 3rd and 4th, 1936, sendeth greeting to the several churches and associations with which she corresponds.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As we are favored to assemble as an association and receive your correspondence, we feel to address you in this our annual epistle, giving you the assurance of our love and fellowship, and to direct you to the convictions of our hearts, we call attention to the words of Jesus: "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." —John i. 47. This word "Israelite" applies to every poor sinner that worships God in the spirit. We have the narrative of God's dealings with Jacob, when he was called Israel, which expresses the change that had taken place in him. Jacob was a supplanter according to the flesh, and in that relation he was made to flee from the face of Esau, but the power of the Most High touched him, and opened to him, by which he saw the ladder that reached from earth to heaven, and the angels ascending and descending upon it, then he could express, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not." "And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."—Gen. xxviii. 16, 17. Which gives us the difference between the flesh and the Spirit. In the word "Israel" (meaning soldier of God) we get the difference between those who worship God and those who do not. Jacob was called Israel from the time he had this experience, and all of his offspring according to the flesh were called Israelites, and referred to as the people of God, and the people to whom the kingdom of God belonged. But Paul said, Not all Israel are of Israel (Rom. ix. 6), and we Gentiles who are given to discern between flesh and Spirit know that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, and neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. The Israelite Jesus points out was coming to him, and the evidence proved that Nathaniel had heard and learned of the Father, for he that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me, and no man can come to me except my Father, which hath sent me, draw him. (John vi. 44, 45.) These are the ones who come to be baptized, who fill a righteous act, and bear the fruit for repentance that John asked for of those who came to him to be baptized. We, as an Association, believe that we are what we are by the grace of God, and have fellowship for all who come bearing precious fruit. We do not believe in works of righteousness which men can do for salvation, or by the work of men's hands receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Israel as a people received the teaching of Moses and Aaron, and followed by observation, and verily thought they could obtain salvation thereby, but the Spirit teaches the words of eternal life, and the deep things of God are searched, and the one that is taught

thereby is made to exclaim, Oh the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out, and when the riches of the kingdom of God are revealed to the poor sinner he is given to behold the purity thereof, and to behold the vileness of his mortal state, which causes him to exclaim, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"—Rom. vii. 24. In this Israelite there is no guile. We contend that Jesus purifies the sinner before God, that in Jesus he stands redeemed from all iniquity and is as pure as the Son of God himself; yet he is a sinner still, and has the same sinful nature, and is a partaker of this world in the first Adam, and as far as his profile is concerned he is the same, but the life of that sinner has a warfare that was not before realized, and he bears in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you. (2 Cor. iv. 10-12.) As death is realized in the individual the multitude of the saints see the image of Jesus shining in his walk and conversation, which unites them in one bundle of love and makes them sit together in one bundle of love, and the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.

Dear kindred in Christ Jesus, it is sweet to have your fellowship, and to hear from you and know of your welfare, and we hope to have you come to us each year bearing the glad tidings of Jesus and his love for poor sinners. We are glad in our hearts to realize the enmity there is in our mortal lives is destroyed and we know not each other after the flesh, because God hath given us the spirit of reconciliation, in which we behold each other as Israelites indeed, in whom there is no guile.

We witness the passing of our companions in tribulation from our militant relations, but we feel our loss is their eternal gain, and when one has filled up the measure God has appointed, we should say, Thy will be done, not ours.

Israel was under the law of Moses, and all the commandments were for them to obey in their daily life as a people God had blessed above all others, and they bear a relation in that old covenant that identifies them among the sons of men. In the new covenant there is entirely a new and living way given to every Israelite, and the law in which it is written is put in their inward parts and written in their hearts. As is declared by the prophet, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."—Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. The Lord Jesus beheld them from the ancients of eternity, as the chosen of God, the elect, the Israel or soldiers of God, that worship him in spirit. May the Spirit

abound in our hearts and direct our steps, that we may go by the way of the footsteps of his flock, that we may be Israelites indeed, in whom is no guile.

C. W. VAUGHN, Mod.
ELVIRA H. CONNER, Clerk.

(Written by Elder D. L. Topping.)

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Salem Church, in Philadelphia, Pa., greetings in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED:—As is our custom, we address you with what is called a Circular Letter. We have no new subject to write about, but the same blessed truth that never grows old. We are living in the time of new things. Not in the world's history have the inventions of men equaled those of our present age. It would seem that man has reached the height of his glory, yet He who giveth man his knowledge is without honor among them. They look upon him as sitting upon some distant throne viewing the events of world affairs in sad disappointment, but God's dear children know him to be the same almighty God who held the proud waves at bay, and turns the heart of the king wheresoever he will. Dear ones, how highly favored are we, having been called out of nature's darkness to the lofty position of being living witnesses to the blessed truth that salvation is alone of the Lord, and vain is the help of man. We hear much said to-day about our being so few in number. On the surface this would seem to be true, but there never can be other than the right number of the body of Christ. It could not be a perfect body if even one less than he has ordained to everlasting life should fail to acknowledge him as their Savior. So never let us get the idea in our mind that we have any less associated with us to-day in our worship than just the correct number. All things are just as the God of our salvation ordained them to be, and we, as his dear children of his choice, have nothing to fear. Cast all your care upon him, for he careth for you. God led Israel by the hand. Spiritual Israel he leads by faith, and Paul tells us that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. The moment the Holy Spirit begins his work in the heart of the sinner faith is given which points to Christ, the unseen. The evidence in unmistakable, and thus begins the journey by faith. Onward over the rugged pathway marches the stranger upon the earth; faith will not let its subject turn back, for the anchor is cast within the vail, and the greater the raging storm the more direct will the ship point to the unseen anchor. Fear not, weary ones, the harbor is just beyond. And unto our God be everlasting praise, now and for evermore.

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.
JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER G. B. McClanahan has changed his address from Route 3, Elkins, W. Va., to 1518 Lavolette Avenue, Elkins, W. Va.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J., sendeth greeting to all the household of faith with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is through the kind providence of the all-wise God that we have again been permitted to meet in our annual Association. We are indeed blessed that so many of our brethren, sisters and friends could meet with us, and our meeting has been a sweet season, as peace and unity have abounded all the way. The visiting ministers, of whom there are five, have come laden with rich messages of Jesus, our Savior, the One altogether lovely, the Chief among ten thousand.

The next session of the Association is appointed to meet with the Southampton Old School Baptist Church, at Southampton, Pa., beginning on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1937, when we again hope to meet together in love and fellowship.

C. W. VAUGHN, Mod.
ELVIRA H. CONNER, Clerk.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Salem Church, Philadelphia, Pa., May 27th and 28th, 1936, to the several associations with which we correspond, sendeth greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another blessing has been extended us through the mercy of the sovereign God and Father, in and by the Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, in the assembling of ourselves together in his name. The presence of his servants and messengers, sent to us, invigorates and strengthens the several churches mightily in these trying and perilous times. Where the Spirit of the almighty God prevails these things can be, we can be drawn together if led by his Spirit, and we truly thank him for this Spirit to prevail in the hearts of such a few in Salem Church, and hope their efforts and many kind acts in entertainment of the brethren have been rewarded and returned to them (spiritually) by the preaching of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the ministering brethren, and the visiting messengers from other associations of our correspondence. As our fathers and mothers in Israel are passing on to their reward, we should be more anxious to forsake not the assembling of ourselves together, for we believe the last days are almost upon us, no ingatherings anywhere, a spirit of unrest, yea, even among our own people in the several churches everywhere, a desire to rather follow after the pleasures and sins of Egypt than to be together in Spirit and in love, the same mind in Christ. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another.

We feel this meeting has been the fruit of the Spirit to us all, and we thank him, glorify him, for these manifold blessings. Associational gatherings of the elect are precious indeed, when drawn together in love. Our

prayer is that the brethren in the ministry may be cemented in love, the love of God, in revelation spiritually, to declare the "whole counsel of God." May they all see it alike, in every part and point as Scripture portrays it and God reveals it, according to measure of the gift of Christ. May each one of us be humbled to receive and accept what he hath given unto us, and may the "stronger man" crush the "strong man" in his efforts to separate God's little flock in divers places. Where evil reigns death will prevail in the heart or in the churches. It must be spewed out or spiritual death will obtain.

Hoping to meet again next year at Welsh Tract Church, we say farewell, if it be the mercy of God.

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.
JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER JOHN H. BEAMAN was born at Sandyville, Iowa, September 18th, 1859. He moved with his parents to Missouri, where his father died February 5th, 1875. His mother then moved her family back to Iowa, and about the year 1880 they moved to Kansas. Here he was married, on October 10th, 1886, to Miss Jemima Ann Aydelott, who survives him. To this union were born eight children: Harrison and Elijah Beaman and Mrs. Clara Stark, of Forest Grove, Ore., Charles Beaman. of Cornelius, Ore., and Mrs. Mary Herbert, of Cheshire, Ore. Two sons and one daughter preceded him in death. Three brothers and one sister are still living, also ten grandchildren and three step-grandchildren. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church in 1894. He, with his family, moved to Oregon in 1909 and settled on a place northwest of Forest Grove, where he resided until his death. He transferred his membership to the Mt. Zion Church of Old School Baptists of this place, and was licensed to speak in public, and August 8th, 1925, was ordained to the full work of the ministry. Elder William Reeves was a brother-in-law to Elder Beaman, and both ministered to the church until the death of Elder Reeves, in 1930, since that time Elder Beaman had served. The last meeting was the first Sunday in May, and an appointment was made for the first Sunday in June. On May 24th, 1936, Elder Beaman was called from his labors here, the result of weakened condition caused by influenza, followed by pneumonia. The writer, who assisted in his ordination, was, by request of brother Beaman, called to officiate at the funeral, which was held at Forest Grove, Ore., May 28th, followed by interment in the community cemetery near the home. We feel the home has lost a faithful husband and father, the church a worthy pastor and the community an honored citizen. May his worthy example be an inspiration and comfort to those who mourn his departure.

C. W. BOND.

DENNIS WATKINS was born in the State of Georgia April 20th, 1845, and died at his home, near Jefferson, Oregon, May 1st, 1936, aged 91 years and 11 days. He lived in Georgia until 1849, then moved with his parents to Marion County, Iowa, where he grew to manhood, and April 4th, 1869, he married Jemima E. Burch, who preceded him to the glory world June 14th, 1925. To their union were born five children, one dying in infancy, and another, Mark M., pased away December 28th, 1918. Those

living are Mrs. Minnie Banks, Mrs. Astoria Weddle and Walter D., all of Jefferson, Ore., and one granddaughter, Mrs. Vera Arnold, of Scio, Oregon. Brother Watkins united with the Primitive Baptist Church when eighty years of age, but had been a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace for many years. Our pastor, Elder S. B. Moffitt, not being able to attend, the services were conducted by one, George W. Simons, of the "Christian" denomination. Brother Watkins suffered a great deal, but bore it with patience, saying he desired to go and be at rest. He was laid to rest by the side of his wife in the family lot at Jefferson, Ore., there to await the resurrection morning, when all the redeemed host shall be gathered from all the four corners of the earth to sing songs of redeeming love unto Him who was slain but liveth again for evermore.

Written by request.

S. B. MOFFITT.

THE death occurred at Cass City on January 26th, 1936, of MRS. JACOB A. HURLEY, youngest daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. James Murray, of Ekfrid township. Mrs. Hurley was born May 29th, 1865, and was married December 29th, 1887. She lived in Mosa township until February 19th, 1901, when they moved to Cass City, Mich. She experienced a good hope in Christ, and was received in the Covenanted Baptist Church, in Ekfrid, at the June meeting, and was baptized by Elder J. B. Slauson July 25th, 1925. Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder George Ruston, and he sang the hymn which she requested: "Oh for a closer walk with God." She loved the assembly of the saints, but very seldom could come, because of the distance. She leaves to mourn, besides her husband, two sons and two daughters: Dr. James R. Hurley, of Alamosa, Colo., and William G. Hurley, bank manager, of Fairgrove, Mich., Esther Carolyn, a supervisor in Ford Hospital, Detroit, Mich., and Margaret (Mrs. Cameron Wallace), of Cass City, Mich. She also leaves six grandchildren, all boys, and two sisters, Miss Jessie Murray and Mrs. Duncan McCallum, of Ekfrid, Ont. She was a wonderful mother, but none knew it as completely as the children she raised and worked for. Her trust was in her Savior. Among her things was found a paper on which was written, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

Trusting that our loss is her eternal gain, her sister,

JESSIE MURRAY.

MRS. MARY E. BRADLEY, nee Burns, was a native of Van Zandt County, Texas, where she was born May 25th, 1855. She was married to J. F. T. Bradley, who preceded her to the grave June 3rd, 1910. Surviving are seven children: S. F. and A. M. Bradley, of Mabank, Texas, Mrs. J. C. Beard and Mrs. A. M. Lindsey, of Terrell, Texas, A. E. Bradley, of Milwaukee, Wis., D. Bradley, of Kaufman, Texas, and Mrs. A. F. Stegall, of Mabank, Texas; two brothers, J. H. Burns, of Canton, Texas, and J. N. Burns, of Terrell, Texas; two sisters, Mrs. Bledsue and Mrs. H. A. Anderson, of Sipe Springs, Texas. Sister Bradley united with the church of the Primitive Baptist faith and order at Cold Spring on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in November, 1877, and was baptized by Elder John R. Martin. She always filled her seat when not providentially hindered, was sound in the faith, believing in a sovereign God, and salvation by grace, both in time and eternity. The church has sustained a great loss, but we hope our loss is her

eternal gain. She was a true wife and a devoted mother, gentle, whose kindness to every one and whose high standard of morals throughout her life should ever remain an inspiration and guide to her children. Weep not, dear children, as those who have no hope, for your mother is gone from the evil to come.

Written by her pastor,
W. W. SLAUGHTER.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS: According to the appointed time of almighty God, our beloved brother DEACON DAVID M. VOORHEES, was removed from us by death, and

WHEREAS: The Hopewell Old School Baptist Church has sustained a grievous loss and great sorrow, and

WHEREAS: Brother Voorhees had been a member of this church for thirty-two years, and had served the church in many ways, Church Clerk, Deacon, Trustee, President of the Board of Trustees, with the most faithfulness, be it therefore

RESOLVED: That we do hereby testify our sorrow at our loss, but we feel that we have reason for an assurance that our loss is his eternal gain. He was firm in the faith once delivered unto the saints, and be it also

RESOLVED: That these resolutions be spread upon the Minutes of the church, a copy be transmitted to the family of the deceased and a copy be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

ANNIE E. VAUGHN
OLIVIA N. HELLINGS
JOHN B. GARRISON
Committee

ELVIRA CONNER, Church Clerk.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

JOSHUA T. ROWE, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets on the first Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, Shelbyville, Ky.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 104. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1936. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

(*Concluded from last number.*)

After arguing the first and second proof of Christ's resurrection, the apostle affirms, "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept."—1 Cor. xv. 20. This affirmation is in reference to the firstfruits of the earth which was offered by the high priest under the ceremonial law to the Lord as a waive offering. It consisted of the first sheaf of the harvest. No other grain might be harvested until this offering was made, and it was called the firstfruits. When the first sheaf was harvested and brought into the most holy place by the high priest and waived before the Lord, it not only served as a guarantee to Israel of the harvest of the whole crop, of which this sheaf was a part, but it also removed all restraints and opened the way for the harvest to proceed. It is needless to say that the firstfruits and the subsequent harvest were alike as to the substance. As further proof that the resurrection of Christ and his people were shadowed forth in the waive offering and the harvest that followed, note the fact that Christ's body was raised from the grave early on the morning of the exact day in which the waive offering was offered by the high priest each year, as commanded by the Lord. This did not happen by accident; a definite, prearranged manifestation of the glorious mystery of the resurrection of the dead was being declared. "Let him that hath an ear hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."—Rom. viii. 11. The design of the apostle's argument referred to, is to prove the resurrection of the whole by proving the resurrection of the parts. As the whole is made up of its parts, whatever is true of its parts must also be true of the whole.

After proving by irrefutable testimony that Christ did rise in the identical body in which he suffered, died and was buried, the apostle asserts what the Scriptures plainly teach, and had been ceremonially declared by the people of God for more than a thousand years: that Christ by his resurrection became the firstfruits of them that slept. Thus the apostle joins Christ's resurrection and the resurrection of his saints together as one. If the apostle succeeded in establishing his point, there is surely no further reason to doubt the resurrection of the bodies of the saints. I am willing to accept without reservations his proof, and acknowledge he has made out a perfect case. There is this difference in the condition of Christ's body and the bodies of his saints: theirs were corrupt and his was not suffered to see corruption; but this difference is removed by the change which takes place at the last day, when Christ comes to raise them up according to the Father's will. "For," says the apostle, "our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."—Phil. iii. 20, 21.

Next the apostle compares the two headships, Adam and Christ, and shows that the saints share alike in the consequences of the acts of each. "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's, at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father."—1 Cor. xv. 21-24. Because they were represented by Adam in transgression, and his act was their act, they die in him; and the results of that one act will, if not removed, land them soul and body in everlasting death. Because they were represented by Christ in all he did in overcoming sin and all its effects, as man, and his victory became their victory, they live and come forth from their graves in their resurrection, and are as completely freed from death in their bodies as Christ was in his resurrection in his body; according to the rule, Like causes produce like effects on like subjects under like conditions. The bodies of the saints did not enter mortal death at the time they transgressed in Adam, but they have the sentence of death in themselves and die a mortal death in consequence of the transgression in Adam; neither are the bodies of the saints raised from death at the time Christ in his body overcame transgression and triumphed over death and the grave and came forth in his resurrected body, but as a direct result of Christ's glorious victory they receive the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of their inheritance until the redemption (resurrection) of the purchased possession, which Paul says is their body and spirit. "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ

from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."—Rom. viii. 11.

In answer to two questions, "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come forth?" the apostle introduces three known facts in nature to emphasize his answers: The sowing and development of grain, the different kinds of flesh, and the difference in the glory of created bodies. (Verses 34-41.) First he shows that only that which dies is quickened, which is anticedent to being raised up. Thou sowest not that body that shall be, or rather as it shall be, but naked grain. I shall only give my understanding of this Scripture, which may be the apostle's meaning, or it may not; but I will say that the true meaning of it seems so vague that it would not be wise to select it for a basis to solve the mysteries of the resurrection of the dead. To me it sets forth the wonderful power of God and the mysterious workings of his laws in the process of natural reproduction; which is quite beyond man's power of understanding. None but a fool would ask such questions and expect the answer to be accommodated to finite understanding. So in his answer the apostle takes up a lesson in the reproduction of nature, which in many respects stands out in contrast to the known truths concerning the resurrection. But what are the facts regarding the sowing of grain? The naked grain is sown, it dies and is quickened, it springs forth and produces stalk, foliage, and last an ear containing a multitude of grains like the one sown, without a single change perceptible, only in the number and position of the grains. In this I do not see the pattern of the resurrection. Bear in mind the perfection of this process is in the matured grain, not in the stock nor the foliage. The apostle concludes this illustration by saying, "God hath given to every seed his [its] own body." But the bodies of the saints will be different in that perfect resurrection state from what they were when sown in death. They will be changed and cannot die any more. In the second he says, "All flesh is not the same flesh." One flesh of men, another of beasts, another of fishes and another of birds. Four kinds mentioned, yet Christ only partook of one, and thereby honored and exalted it in union with his body, to sonship in the family of God, and through the reign of distinguishing grace, will live forever in joint heirship with the Son of God. A truth astonishing beyond the powers of mortals to think or express.

The apostle next draws a lesson from the glory of created bodies, both terrestrial and celestial, and declares they differ in glory and, "So also is the resurrection of the dead;" and then proceeds to make difinite and pointed answers as to how the dead are raised up, and especially with what body do they come forth: "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual

body."—Verses 42-44. The questions which the apostle is answering furnish the key to the antecedent of the pronoun "it" in each of his sentences. The body is sown and it is raised, but in each expression a change is recorded which definitely marks the difference in the glory of the sown body and the raised body; but the language will not permit a plurality of bodies, for the same "it" that is sown is raised. The truth of every fundamental principle of divine revelation is conveyed in the Scriptures by language which, taken in its clear and obvious meaning, will fully set those truths forth. We do not have to rob our language of its proper and simple interpretations to discover some hidden meaning, that the ordinary mind would never think of. God's children are all little children, and divine revelation is designed for their benefit. There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body, but the one is after the other; they are not at the same time.

"Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."—Verses 51-53. It seems to me the above quotation, and on to the end of the chapter, surely presents a meaning which should not be difficult of understanding. The apostle described this same event to the Thessalonian Church in his first letter, chapter four, which will help us to understand this. The time of this event was at the last trump and when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven. At this time some of the sons the Lord purchased to bring to glory will be dead and some of them shall be yet alive. In this respect it will be then just as it is, if the Lord should descend to-day. Then what will occur? The dead shall be raised. The only limitation that may be put here is, they must be in Christ. All of the dead who have fallen asleep in Christ shall be raised incorruptible; and what about the children of God who are alive? They shall be changed, for they, too, must be made incorruptible. "When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."—Verse 54. The change here is described as if incorruption and immortality were garments put on the dead and living saints preparatory to taking a journey. And indeed great haste is required, for in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, they must rise to meet their Lord in the air, who is descending from heaven. Death is at this moment swallowed up in victory; its power to detain the bodies of the saints from rising into the air to meet their Lord has been destroyed. Pray tell me what force could operate to prevent the bodies of the saints from coming forth? The claims of the law are satisfied, and it holds no dominion over them; death has been destroyed; mortality has been swallowed up of life and victory has

been won over the grave. Add to this that the body is a member of Christ, and all relationship to Adam has been dissolved and it is no longer a member of Adam. Think, if you can, what can detain the bodies of the redeemed or challenge their right to come forth, robed in immortal splendor, to celebrate the glorious victory given to them through their Lord Jesus Christ. The swiftness with which the Lord shall consummate his work of "bringing many sons unto glory" will be the everlasting delight of his saints and the complete defeat and confusion of his foes. Jesus said, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." The giving of life to those dead in sin, and causing them to live that life now in the flesh by the faith of the Son of God, though beyond the capacity of the natural man to understand, is not to be marveled at by the faithful in Christ, for he has appointed an hour in which he will call their bodies from their slumbering in their graves, and they shall come forth. What more convincing words could he have employed to assure our faith and hope in the resurrection of the dead? What God has promised he is also able to perform, was the faith of Abraham.

"Oh for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by every foe;
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe.

A faith that shines more bright and clear
When tempests rage without;
That when in danger knows no fear,
In darkness feels no doubt.

Lord, give us each such faith as this,
And then, what'er may come,
We'll taste, e'en here, the hallowed bliss
Of our eternal home."

SUMMARY.

WE have shown by the Scriptures that the Lord Jesus Christ had a human body like unto those he came to "bring unto glory," in which he lived, suffered, died, was buried, rose from the dead and ascended to glory. That those he came to "bring unto glory" were partakers of flesh and blood, and consisted of spirit and soul and body. That in this relationship they are members of Christ's body, of his flesh and of his bone. That the bodies of the saints are the members of Christ. That they are men, having descended by natural generation from Adam. That as such they were given to Christ by the Father, who willed that of all he gave him he should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. That this will of the Father bound Christ under an immutable oath to resurrect all the Father gave him. That the unity and union between Christ, as head, and his church, as his body, were such that it was not possible for Christ to rise from the dead and live and his saints not be raised. The head and body cannot live separated. That Christ was the firstborn from the dead in his relation to his people, proving himself, thereby, to be the Son of God with power, established his preeminence and secured the resurrection, like unto his own, of all who were in union with him. That when the identical body of Christ arose from the grave he became the firstfruits of them

that slept; and thus, when he, as High Priest, offered himself without spot unto God in the most holy sanctuary he opened the way for and insured the complete harvest of all his people, spirit, soul and body. That the Father loved them as he loved Christ. That the apostle, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, prayed that God would sanctify the saints wholly, and preserve their whole spirit and soul and body blameless until the coming of Christ, and confessed that He that called them was faithful and would do it. That when Christ descends from heaven, where he is to reign until he puts all enemies under his feet, the last of which is death, he will raise up the dead, the vile bodies of both the saints which are alive and which are asleep when he comes, and will change and fashion them like unto his glorious body. That all will be clothed in immortality, and be caught up to meet the Lord in the air as he descends from heaven to take them to glory. That the bodies as well as the spirits of the saints are Christ's. That they were bought with the invaluable price of his precious blood. That he will not abdicate his title thereto, nor surrender his rightful possession. That the final victory will reveal the destruction of the devil, death completely swallowed up and the grave robbed of its every victim; while the ransomed saints shall pour forth their eternal thanks unto God for giving them the victory through Christ. That many of the bodies of the saints, which died before Christ, arose and came out of their graves and went into the holy city and appeared unto many after Christ's resurrection.

If these are truths, clearly taught in the Scriptures, they are not contradicted by any portion of the word; and certainly no faithful believer in the inspiration of the Scriptures would seek to array one portion of it against any other.

I am not so vain as to presume that my knowledge and understanding of this profoundly deep and mysterious subject is superior to that of my brethren; neither do I claim perfection for the foregoing treatise on the subject. It is presented as my understanding of the teachings of the Scriptures, as I trust, under the enlightenment of the Spirit of Truth and my knowledge of the meaning of the language in which it is written.

In hope of this glorious resurrection,

J. R. HARDY.

2822 Seever Avenue, DALLAS, Texas.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars to renew my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Also, I am sending you a letter from Mrs. R. G. Brown for publication, should you see fit. I think it would be interesting to the many readers of the SIGNS. I have been a reader of and writer for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES since 1881.

I am, in all sincerity,

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

CUSTER, Wash., May 29, 1936.

ELDER F. W. KEENE—DEAR BROTHER:—Brother in a precious hope of life beyond this vale of tears, sorrows and

disappointments, for such is my life filled with. But I do not feel worthy to call you brother, for I feel and know that I am one of the least (if one at all) of the chosen few who Christ died for. I have enjoyed your good letters from time to time published in the SIGNS, and since reading your article in the September number, on Isaiah xlv. 15, I have felt that I wanted to write to you, for that just fitted my case, and what I have gone through in the last five years, for He surely did hide himself from me and let me go down deep in the blackness of the earth and I was powerless to pull myself out. One night I dreamed of walking along a plank about four or five feet from the ground, and all was dark and black about me, but the plank was white and a tall man was walking along on the ground holding my hand. Then in a short time I dreamed of walking along a path from the house and all was dark, but this path was a straight and narrow path, the same as all God's children must walk, and though these dreams seemed dark they gave me a little hope that I was not lost eternally, even though I was down deep in a valley of darkness. It was this way for a long time, then I seemed to be lifted up, but I often doubt that such a sinner as I am could ever be one of the redeemed.

"Mixtures of joy and sorrow
I daily do pass through;
Sometimes I'm in the valley,
Then sinking down with woe.

Sometimes I am exalted,
On eagles' wings I fly;
Rising above Mount Pisgah,
I almost reach the sky."

Oh how I love those old hymns; they surely speak out my feelings. I have never had as clear an experience as some others. It just seemed to come gradually and I did not care for the pleasures of this world as I did before, but I loved to mingle with the Old Baptists and longed for a home with them, for I felt they were my people. They had the same experiences I felt, so surely they must be my people. On the first day of June, 1924, I was at meeting in Seattle, Wash., and heard Elder Moffitt preach a good sermon, then the doors of the church were opened and I entered, was received and was baptized that day; but oh the trials and tribulations and rough roads I have traveled over since then. No one knows only those who have traveled the same rough road. But I would rather travel a road of rocks and thorns to a home in heaven with my blessed Redeemer and all the chosen ones, than a smooth road of roses to a land of destruction. He says that if we would reign with him we must suffer with him.

Well, earthly duties call me, so I will finish this later.

You may be interested to know that Davis Burch, whose letters have appeared in the SIGNS, is my father. Your letter in the May SIGNS was very good. I like to read such letters; they are very dear to me, for they are all the preaching I get. My father visits us once in awhile, which is very comforting to me, but when he is here I seem to be shut up and can only sing with him, and I love to hear him sing those sweet songs of Zion. The Scriptures

are hidden from me, like a sealed book I have no power to open, but I hope some day they will be revealed to me, that I might have the evidence that Christ died for me. The eighty-sixth Psalm speaks my feelings better than I can; I feel it was meant for me. When I read your letter in the September SIGNS it seemed that you knew just what I had been through and wrote it for my benefit. "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." I can see no other way than that he directs all our paths and we can go no other way. He lets us down, way down, in the mire, but "So far shalt thou go, and no farther." Praise his holy name. If I had to help myself, as I once thought I did, I would be eternally lost, and if it is not free grace, then I am lost. I cannot praise God as I often wish I could, for the tempter is always there and tries to tell me it is all mockery.

Well, I will not take up any more of your time with these rambling thoughts. For a long time I have felt I wanted to write and tell you how comforting your letters are to one so low as I am, and how it seemed you were preaching that sermon to me. I hope you will cast the mantle of charity over this poorly written letter, for it is like the writer, full of imperfections.

I say to you, Write on, for you are feeding the sheep, and if you have time and feel inclined I would be glad to receive a letter from you.

Yours in bonds of love and fellowship, a little sister in hope,

(MRS.) R. G. BROWN.

LOUISVILLE, Kentucky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I just read your editorial in the May number of the dear SIGNS, and it is so soul-cheering and comforting I felt I must write and tell you how I enjoyed it. When I read Elder Lefferts was going to resign as editor I was sorry, for I enjoyed his writings very much, and not knowing who would take his place I worried about it, but when I saw you were going to take his place my worrying was over, for I have always enjoyed your writings, for you advocate the doctrine I dearly love, giving God all power, honor and praise for all things. How can people claim to be helping save poor lost sinners? I feel so little I could not save myself or do one good act of myself, it is all of the Lord. Every breath we breathe comes from him. Every good thought comes from the Giver of every good gift. He has all power and can do, and has a perfect right to do as he chooses or pleases. I have always felt he was just and holy in all things.

Dear brother, when I was made to feel myself to be such a lost and condemned sinner (I say made to feel, for I believe we are made, for I cannot believe any of us would feel so miserable within ourselves) I tried to get rid of this distress, and would say, I am going to stop trying to pray, for I am too vile to attempt to approach such a just and holy God as I feel him to be. But let me say right here, I could not help crying for mercy, for the very breathing of my poor heart seemed to say, Lord, be merciful to me, a poor lost and con-

demned sinner. Oh take this great burden of sin off that is crushing me down. There was nothing I could do. I was helpless. But when I felt the Lord had taken that great burden off oh how happy I felt. I wanted to praise his great and holy name, for I felt he had taken my feet out of the mire and clay and placed them upon the Rock of eternal ages, and that sweet hymn, "Jesus, lover of my soul," came into my mind and oh how good I felt. It was forty-seven years ago last October, but it is still fresh in my mind. I can never forget that night. But I feel to exclaim with the poet,

"Sometimes my hope is little,
I almost lay it by;
Sometimes it seems sufficient
If I were called to die."

Dear brother, I feel it is good for us to have those dark seasons, for then we know how to appreciate the light. How sweet to feel that the good Lord is with us and leading us about in the wilderness as he did Jacob. Oh I feel I want to honor and adore his great and good name. Oh that I could live as I desire, but we find there is a warfare going on, when we would do good evil is present with us. I feel that the Lord is all in all. We cannot pray aright unless indited by him. Prayer is the sincere desire of the heart, and he puts the desire in the heart, so he is all in all.

Brother Dodson, please pardon me for bothering you, but your editorial was so wonderful I felt I had to write. I am a widow. My daughter and I live by ourselves and she is not strong. This morning I could hardly wait until I got my housework done to get to writing to you.

I am glad to know the publisher of the SIGNS is improving. I know how to sympathize with him, for I lost the sight of one of my eyes twelve years ago and had to have the ball removed. I would like to have written him, and many of those who write for the SIGNS, but am poor in this world's goods and have not the money to pay postage.

We have meeting here the first Sunday in each month. Our pastor failed to get there the two last meetings, but we had good preaching by Elder George L. Weaver, of Shelbyville, Ky.

Dear brother, if you feel this poor letter is worth an answer, I would be very glad to have you write me. If I have written anything wrong it is all of the head and not of the heart.

Your unworthy sister, I hope, in Christ,

ADAH CHANDLER.

SWEET SPRINGS, Mo., May 5, 1936.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE SIGNS and the dear ones, scattered, rejoicing and suffering, but bearing about in the body the marks of the Lord Jesus:—I feel like joining you in praise and thanksgiving, for "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together."—Eph. ii. 4-6. Every one who is a partaker of this quickening together with Christ is a member of our Lord's kingdom. Now, by virtue of this quickening life

enters in the soul when the Holy Spirit comes to execute his office. It is the Spirit's work in the soul, accompanied with living sensations, joy, peace, the fear of God, the spirit of prayer, a work of grace, quickened and then raised up. The body of Christ had vital movements before his body left the tomb. So it is with the quickened child of grace; afterwards he sees, feels and experiences this power of the Spirit. The believer is being raised up with Christ, which is his life, in Christ, and with him raised up, resurrected and made an heir of heaven and a joint-heir with Christ. Raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. The soul is enabled to believe, hope and love. In this our dear Lord is declared to be the Son of God with power. All power is given into his hands. Yes, it is everlasting love, power and blood that secured the eternal life and salvation of every heir of heaven and immortal glory. They rejoice, they sing and pray, and at last are gathered home to be with their Savior and Friend for evermore for Jesus' sake. And further, during this mortal state it is the great desire of every true believer, and longing in prayer, that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death. (Phil. iii. 10.) The suffering saint is made conformable to the death of the Testator. We are in union with Christ in being crucified with him, knowing that the same Spirit being in us, even shall also quicken our mortal bodies. It is the power of the resurrection which shall be felt and seen, when it shall be declared that time shall be no more. Then shall we know as also we are known.

"With Jesus we ever shall reign,
And all his bright glories shall see;
Singing Hallelulah, Amen;
Amen, even so let it be."

In bonds of sweet fellowship,

J. L. KILLION.

BENTON, Kentucky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—It has pleased God, I hope, to give me a bit of experience that I would like to tell you, if you will bear with my errors and frailty. I know my inefficiency in worldly wisdom, as well as in God-given wisdom.

In the year 1932 our association of the Soldier Creek churches met at a nearby church, and among our visiting ministers was one, J. M. Whitenton, of the Mississippi Association. It was the first time I had ever met this elderly man, a father in Israel, and the first day's preaching left him in the house to preach while others retreated to the grove for business of the Association, and in his sermon he brought out a little on tithing I had never heard discussed before. So when the meeting ended on Sunday I asked him to some time, when he had time, write me all his thoughts and Bible truths on tithing, and he promised to do so. In a short time he did comply with my request, so every few weeks I would ask him a question and he would answer me in a short while. He lived in Oklahoma with a son, and had nothing to do but write,

He was a beautiful writer and I much enjoyed the sermons that he wrote me; they were feasts of fat things to me. So in the beginning of the winter of 1933 he asked me to write him every week, stating he was a shut-in through the winter and that my letters were food to him, so I wrote him. In April, 1934, he was taken with the "flu," was sick for several weeks and could not write me the usual sermons I had learned to wait for and loved to get. In May he was able to be up, though feeble and nervous, but began again our writing. We took up certain chapters of Revelation, and were discussing them when we came to the twentieth chapter. We had a very heated discussion, and in it I resolved to drop our sermons, or writing, for we were very much disagreed, seemingly, when a letter came from him telling me he did not know what he would do without my letters. He said, "I feast on the thoughts they contain, and there is yet no difference in us about this. It is no use to quit our correspondence, for I do not see how I can live without your mail. From week to week for the last two years I have been living and looking forward to them." So from then on for a few weeks we told each other our thoughts. Naturally the kind feelings we had for each other had grown to be akin to love, if not love, so in September of that year it pleased the Master to allow us to marry. He was eighty-seven years of age and I was forty-seven at that time. But, brother Dodson, he was the dearest, the cleverest and one of the most wonderful characters I have ever known. We lived every day happily, and inasmuch as in us was to the Lord. We knew our being together could not be for long, because of brother Whitenton's age, but of course we did not know but what I would go first. But it pleased God to remove him first. He was taken sick April 23rd, of this year, and was up and down until June 7th. That Sunday he felt very badly all day, and that afternoon he told me he was about through, and that he was ready to go. We had received the day before a very sweet sermon from the pastor of our church, Elder J. C. Chester, and in the night he asked me if I was going to answer it. I told him I hoped to do so if I found time, so he told me what to write for him, that he was reconciled to go. Then it was about one o'clock in the morning. I arose, dressed and read to him the fifth chapter of second Corinthians, and from that chapter he preached for an hour and one-half, afterward prayed for the poor and afflicted ones whom it pleased God to leave in this world and whose trust should be in the Lord. After that he fell asleep. He slept a short time, then awoke groaning. When I asked him what hurt him, he said, "I am just groaning, not complaining. I do not want to complain at the Lord's dealings with me, for he has set my feet in the way, on that Rock, which is Christ Jesus, and has established my goings, instructed and led me about. I have been a cripple, like Jacob, and have to lean on this Jesus as a staff, so I do not want to complain, for when I

was in the miry clay and sink of sin he lifted me out. I would rejoice and sing songs of praise unto him if I could, but I know not how to praise him in this world as I ought to so do, but when I enter that place that awaits the redeemed I will praise him as I ought." After that night he grew weaker day by day, and day by day he talked with that God who was his hope. Night after night he awoke to praise him, to call on him to keep him, to guide him, to not leave nor forsake him, finally asking him to stand near him and let him pass away. O Lord, let me pass, he groaned unto him. I was given strength to stay up and with him until the end, which came at sundown June 15th. All suffering seemed to cease, brother Dodson, a few minutes before he closed his eyes in death, and he opened his eyes and breathed naturally for a little while. I slipped my arm under his dear head and lifted him to an easy breathing position. He smiled when he saw me. I put my face down to him and talked to him and he closed his eyes and went to sleep, like a tired child calmed and soothed by a mother's love. So ended our brother's life, my dearly beloved companion, J. M. Whitenton, aged eighty-nine years. He had been a minister since 1874, and had fought a good fight, I believe we who knew him can truthfully say. He married in early life and reared a large family. His first wife died in 1918. His children had homes of their own, and they took care of him. Even after he and I were married, in 1934, they still took care of him by supplying him with his necessities, as well as even helping me, because they said I was so thoughtful of their father. I know there is no good in me, and if I helped him it was because God had chosen me, the least of all saints, if one at all, to walk in this acceptable way, if indeed it was an acceptable walk. Willingly, gladly and lovingly did I administer to his needs and wants. I was never too tired to read to him, to talk with him. If he appeared restless in the night I always arose and read to him something that would get his mind off of himself, and in that way it eased him and after a little while he would feel sleepy and could rest.

I wanted to write an obituary for the paper, but some way I could not, then I felt a desire to write this for you to read. I am not sending it for publication, it is not suitable, but for you to see. How I hope I have been led by that Power that governs and controls all other powers that be. I will never understand why God deals in such a mysterious way with me. He leads me (if it is him) by ways that I never thought of. I often feel like he binds me and carries me. Then would I cry, O Lord, be my guide, my help, my strength, my hiding-place, make me to lie down in green pasturs, lead me by still waters, teach me with the anointing wherewith it pleases thee to anoint thy children everywhere. Let me hope, Lord, in thee, and not in the arm of flesh. Cause me to stand through adversities and faint not. Thou knowest my weaknesses, my vain and puffed up feelings, thou canst see and behold I am

altogether vanity, and nothing, and less than nothing. Then, too, Lord, thou knowest I do not desire a path of roses, but that thy will should be my will. Take away my natural will and make me submissive to thy will, and to stand still and see thy works that none can hinder thee from doing.

I am lonesome for my companion, but I am very glad I was enabled to stay by him, watch and wait upon him until God saw fit to take him. Sometimes the very room seemed so sacred that I feared to tread lest I disturb that peace that God sends, a peace that the world cannot know.

Brother Dodson, I am still a poor, needy creature, hungering and thirsting, I hope, after righteousness; if so, the promise is, "They shall be filled." May God bless you, is my prayer, if I pray at all.

This is very feeble, but I wanted to tell you this my experience of the last two years. Write me if you have time to do so. Love to your father also.

I am unworthily, and the least,

EFFIE BLAGG WHITENTON.

ROCKY MOUNT, Va., June 4, 1936.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I received the copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES you sent me, and find they are fully in accord with the doctrine we hold in Pig River Association. I am inclosing you my personal check for two dollars to pay for the paper for one year. I am also inclosing you a Minute of our Association, which will put you in touch with the ministers and clerks of our churches. Our Association this year will convene with the Gills Creek Church on Friday before the first Sunday in August and two days following. Hope you can come and be with us. The church is located about twelve miles east of Rocky Mount, Virginia, my home town. Come and see us some time.

Wishing you success with the task you have undertaken, and hoping the Lord will sustain you for the good of his cause and the comfort of his little ones, I am yours, I hope, in gospel bonds,

RANDOLPH PERDUE.

[WE greatly appreciate the foregoing letter from Elder Perdue, who is Moderator of the Pig River Association, comprising upwards of one thousand members.—R. L. D.]

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

WHEN remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it. By referring to these dates you can tell to just what time your subscription is paid. Dec. 34 means your subscription expired December, 1934; June 35 means your subscription expired June, 1935; Dec. 35 that it expired December, 1935, etc.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. W. A. Horton, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Ananias Hastings, Md., $2; A. F. Jones, Ga., $1.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1936.

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2 CORINTHIANS V. 14.

"For the love of Christ constraineth us."

In the several months that have passed, during which time we have not subscribed our usual editorial to our famiy paper, we have had an opportunity, we trust, to carefully and prayerfully consider our future course. We were very sorry when our highy esteemed brother and fellow-laborer, Elder H. H. Lefferts, resigned as editor, feeling that we could ill afford to lose such an able gift from such an important place. We, at the time, were so distressed and discouraged that it was a very easy matter for us to cease to write our customary contribution. It has been at times a relief not to have to worry about writing, and when brethren have asked when our next article would be seen in the SIGNS, we have even said we had no exercise about writing, which was partly true, but we have had much exercise about our beloved brethren and the CAUSE OF CHRIST. Were we doing right to please ourself? Many times the hymn sung at out ordination has come to our mind:

"Do not I love thee, O my Lord?
Behold my heart and see;
And turn each cursed idol out
That dares to rival thee.

Do not I love thee from my soul?
Then let me nothing love;
Dead be my heart to every joy,
When Jesus cannot move."

We have thought of the love and kindness of our brethren, of their tenderness and forbearance, and we have desired to do that which is well-pleasing in God's sight. We have at times realized that we were a member of the church of Christ, and a very unworthy one, and we have seen all our brethren more worthy than we, for we have felt to enter some into that expression, "Less than the least." In such a place, and in such a mind, we have thought that others were far more able to write than we, and have wished they would, but our brethren did not want to give us up, and we have felt that we could not give them up, but we are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything, as of ourselves, and we would say with Paul, "Our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." Our humble hope is that we shall not come before our brethren and friends of the SIGNS bound in

spirit through the fear of man, or with a disposition to whittle down those things which are most surely believed among us, and which are the heritage of the saints while in this earthly pilgrimage, just to please men, and to obtain their approval. As we have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so we would walk in him, desiring of the Lord that he shall enable us to minister of the Spirit and by the Spirit, knowing that "the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Our service in the past was many times appreciated far above what we felt to expect, for we had many expressions from those far and near, of their pleasure and profit, which humbled us and gave us reason to glorify God on their behalf. Again, in coming before our brethren we realize that we cannot comfort them only as we are enabled to travel in the footsteps of the flock, and this flock, we would remember, is the flock of slaughter. "For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you. We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written. I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak."—2 Cor. iv. 11-13. The many and varied trials through which we must pass are of God's appointment, and so we may be troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair. Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. But what are all these things in comparison to the joy of our Lord? Our trials do have the effect of drawing us closer and closer to God's afflicted and poor people, and our knowledge of the love of Christ makes us to desire to be of service to all his dear children. Ruth said, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go," etc. Ruth was steadfastly-minded. She and Naomi were knit together in heart, and they could not be separated, so we believe the rank and file of Old School Baptists of our faith and order are united in love and fellowship, dear to one another for Christ's sake. There is a needs be that offenses come, but let us be mindful of the woe that hangs over those by whom they come. God's children are predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, and when we consider his image, while suffering under the weight of sin, when he was reviled and he reviled not again, when he gave his back to the smiter, and his face to them that plucked off the beard, the only way we can be conformed is by the trials and tribulations that are the heritage here of God's dear children. If we are conformed to his suffering image here, we shall doubtless bear his glorified image hereafter. As servants of Christ, let us look to his word, and above all to his Holy Spirit who takes of the things of Jesus and reveals them unto us. By his word, we particularly mean the gospel, which is like a glass in which we see the image of Christ as he appeared in the flesh. It portrays his meekness, compassion, lowliness and love, his tenderness, and

yet his ardent zeal for the glory of God. In its pages we see his faithfulness without anger, and love even in his rebuke. None but the Holy Spirit can impress this image upon the heart, so that his image shall be seen in our words and actions. In this Jesus has left us an example, that we should follow his steps. (1 Peter ii. 21.) Thus to us who profess to be his ambassadors, the Lord Jesus is set forth in the word as our pattern, and "he that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked."—1 John ii. 6. John also in another place saith, "This is love, that we walk after his commandments." "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."—2 John 6, 9. In the future we hope to look only to the Lord for strength and guidance, as we have desired so to do in the past, and our endeavor shall be to present those views that shall be for the comfort and edification of the saints, believing that the word of God cannot be broken, or one thing that he has spoken fall to the ground. We expect, God helping us, to adhere to those principles of truth which were dear to the founder of the SIGNS and which have been a comfort to its many readers through its century of helpful service. The love of Christ then is our only excuse for again taking up our pen, and we would assure our readers that while we have no intention of dwelling too much on any one point of doctrine, we hope to present Jesus Christ as the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last. We would, bearing this in mind, "renounce [and denounce] the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."—2 Cor. iv. 2. "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain."—James i. 22-26. We have before referred to the gospel of the Son of God as a glass, showing us his likeness in every part, and in the above Scripture James speaks of the same gospel as a perfect law of liberty. We know that the angels desired to look into these things, and now, by the Holy Ghost, we are blessed to look and see him whom our soul loveth, and may such sights be often, and may they result, as they should, in our being changed to the same image. We know that there has never been one who has been favored in this life with a full likeness of Christ, but whosoever is a servant of Christ will, in some measure,

according to the Spirit's work, preach Jesus. He will put on the Lord Jesus, which will be manifested in compassion to others, in meekness and gentleness in forgiving, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven us. Let us come often to the word, and may God bring the word often to us, and search us, and try us, and show us how far short we come of that blessed image portrayed there. May such views and sights of the dear Redeemer kill us to self and this present evil world, and fill us with holy boldness in his cause and for his truth. There is not one phase of the truth as it is in Jesus that we can slight or ignore, whether it be relative to the past, present or future, let us ever remember that past, present and the future are ever present to his view.

"Nature and time quite naked lie
To thine immense survey,
From the formation of the sky
To the great burning day.

Eternity, with all its years,
Stands present in thy view;
To thee there's nothing old appears,
Great God, there's nothing new.

Our lives through various scenes are drawn,
And vexed with trifling cares;
While thine eternal thoughts move on
Thine undisturbed affairs."

Such is our God, and we are monuments of his sparing mercy, unworthy to name his name. Let us not lose sight of the hole of the pit from whence we are digged, and in this day of declension from the truth let us not play the hypocrite. Let us love, not only in word, but in deed and in truth, for what we are, is by the mercy of God. Let us humbly seek him who can enable us to be merciful to others, and to live unto him who died for us. There are times when we see what the grace of God has done for us, and we realize that it is in and by this grace we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. As we realize these things we are constrained to that walk and deportment that become those who fear God, and we are more grieved over what we ourselves have said about others than we are over what they might have said about us. In this place we loathe ourselves, and denying ourselves we take up our cross and follow Jesus. What is it that enables each one of us so to do? Is it not the love of Christ? An absence of this love is shown by confusion and strife, hatred and variance. The presence of this love in the heart causes the wolf to dwell with the lamb, and the leopard to lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together and a little child can lead them. Such is the power of love divine, that men, women and children of this twentieth century are raised over self to reign as kings, and made to esteem others better than themselves, are made, if needs be, to give their back to the smiter and take joyfully the spoiling of their goods. It is only this constraining and sustaining love that will enable us to pray for those that despitefully use us, and stop our mouth, when we are reviled, from reviling again, and it enables one to bless and curse not. It is this love, we trust, that has brought our pen into action again, and to our heart loving thoughts towards all who name the name of Christ in sincerity. We hope to write on the many subjects that the Scriptures afford and we want to write in love. We

shall at all times appreciate the interest and approval of our readers, and shall try, as in the past, to give our views on portions of the word which may have exercised them. Might we in conclusion appeal to our readers to try their utmost to enlarge the field of usefulness of our paper by getting new subscribers where possible. Written in love.

G. R.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, in session with the churches at Ebenezer meetinghouse, Baltimore City, May 29th and 30th, 1936, sendeth greetings in the Lord to our sister associations with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We are glad our blessed Lord and Savior has been so good to us, notwithstanding our unworthiness, to bring us together once more to worship in his dear name. Our hearts are sad and we mourn for our dear faithful pastor, Elder Joshua T. Rowe, whom God has called from the shores of time, but we thank him who doeth all things well that he has given us another whom we esteem very highly: Elder D. L. Topping. Our desire is that churches and pastor may be a unit in our belief of the blessed doctrine of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We are very glad to have you with us and enjoy your many expressions of love and fellowship. May we all meet again. The time and place of our next Association will be announced later. We have enjoyed our visiting ministers who have preached their trust is alone in Jesus. Truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel. (Jer. iii. 23.)

D. L. TOPPING, Mod.
QUINCY A. GLADDING, Clerk.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

To the Baltimore Association, now in session with the Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore City, greetings in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED:—Since our last communication to you in the way of a Circular Letter the churches composing the Baltimore Association have been sorely afflicted, in that it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from us our dearly beloved pastor, he who labored so arduously upon the walls of Zion, bearing the heat and burdens of the day for nearly sixty years has been called to fill a far more lofty office than that which any mortal could fill upon the earth. That is, a continued praise unto his God, without one thing to mar such blissful service. So we think about our dear brother to-day as being in the paradise of God, on a much higher plane, where the meeting will know no closing, there living in expectancy until his body shall awake at the sound of the voice of his blessed Redeemer, when it shall be fashioned like unto the glorified body of Christ. Then, and not until then, will the saints of God come into the full purchase price of their redemption. When given to view these blessed truths in the light of the teaching of the word of God, who dare say that it is not far better for our dear, dear brother to depart and be

with Christ, where the wicked cease from troubling, there the weary are at rest. We are thankful to say in the midst of our affliction that the mercies of our God have not been removed from us, peace abounds in our midst and we feel that we are blessed with the ministration of the Holy Spirit in our churches. Though few in number, we hope we are strong in the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. We are reminded that the race is not to the swift, nor the spoils to the strong, for a "remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people, as dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men," so the Lord our God shall keep his beloved Zion as the apple of his eye, and no harm can come upon her that he willeth not. "I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world," etc. And unto him be all the glory, now and for evermore.

D. L. TOPPING, Mod.

QUINCY A. GLADDING, Clerk.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS."

WE will furnish extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, Edward Allen Mariner and Miss Gertrude Wilson Truitt, February 5th, 1935, at the home of the bride's parents in Snow Hill, Md.

By the same, at his residence in Delmar, Maryland, April 20th, 1935, Alfred John Bailey and Miss Grace Anna Dickerson, both of Laurel, Delaware.

By the same, at his residence, May 25th, 1935, Norman S. Culver and Kathleen Jane Massey. The groom of Laurel, Delaware, the bride of Sharptown, Maryland.

By the same, in the M. E. meetinghouse of Delmar, Delaware, June 10th, 1935, Oswald K. Sagen, of La Crosse, Wisconsin, and Miss Mary Louise Marvel, of Delmar, Delaware.

By the same, at the residence of the bride's parents, at Powellville; Md., July 17th, 1935, Vernon Roy Eaton, of Akron, Ohio, and Miss Gladys Blanche Adkins, of Akron, Ohio.

By the same, July 21st, 1935, at his residence, John Charles Wharton and Miss Ruth Townsend Calloway, both of Salisbury, Maryland.

By the same, in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse at Locktown, N. J., July 27th, 1935, Thomas Leslie Darby, of East Orange, N. J., and Miss Catherine Rittenhouse Stryker, of Flemington, N. J.

By the same, at his residence, September 5th, 1935, George W. McNelia and Miss Laura A. Elliott, both of Delmar, Delaware.

By the same, in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse at Southampton, Pa., September 11th, 1935, George Elmer Hoffman, of Doylestown, Pa., and Miss Mary Clarissa Hobensack, of Ivyland, Pennsylvania.

By the same, at his residence, November 16th, 1935, George W. Lowe, of Delmar, Del., and Miss Beulah M. Furbush, of Mardella Springs, Md.

By the same, at his residence, December 25th, 1935, Marshall E. Perdue and Miss Mary C. Adkins, both of Pittsville, Maryland.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DUNCAN McCALLUM, of Ekfrid, Ontario, died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. W. G. Thompson, Blenheim, Ontario, April 9th, 1936. He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Donald McCallum, and was born eighty years ago on the McCallum homestead, Ekfrid township. He was a very highly respected farmer, and was always very active until about two years before he died, when he was taken ill with heart trouble, from which he never recovered. He leaves to mourn their loss, his wife, sister Sarah McCallum, one daughter, Mrs. W. G. Thompson, both of Blenheim, and a son, Murray McCallum, on the homestead at Ekfrid; three sisters, Mrs. Isaac Walker, of Alsask, Sask., Mrs. Charles Needham, of Ilderton, Ontario, and Mrs. Flemming Kerr, of Iona Station, Ont.; five brothers, George, of Newbury, Ont., Donald, of Empress, Alberta, John, of Toronto, Ont., Archie, of London, Ont., and W. G. McCallum, of Ekfrid, Ont. While our departed friend was not a member of the Covenanted Baptist Church, he was for years a staunch friend of the cause and was ever ready to give a helping hand or receive and entertain the many friends and brethren who were favored to visit in his home. For some years past he was drawn very close to the church and its members by a very sweet and precious experience through which he passed, in which he saw the power and mercy of almighty God. From then to the day of his departure, he could speak of God's love and mercy, which was very comforting and confirming to many who heard him. He is missed very much by those who dearly loved him, but the blessed thought that he is resting in the Lord is a comfort to them.

The funeral was held from the residence of his son Murray, in Ekfrid, and was conducted by the writer, where a large assembly of relatives and friends gave silent testimony of the high esteem they had for the departed. Interment was in Oakland Cemetery, Mosa.

G. R.

On May 13th, 1936, the death angel visited the home of ELDER SAMUEL J. NORRIS, relieving him from all future troubles and trials of this life. Brother Norris had been in very feeble health for several years. He was eighty-five years of age. He united with the Nazareth Church in early life, and had served his people as a minister for about forty years, and was always considered sound in faith and doctrine. Elder Norris was one of the youngest ministers in the Hopewell Association when I was ordained, nearly forty years ago, and he was the last one to die, so there is not a minister living in our association who was alive when I was ordained.

ALSO,

CHRISTIANE NORRIS, his wife, followed him in death on June 7th, 1936. She was truly a companion and a preacher's helpmeet, bearing the burden and care of the family affairs in her husband's absence. She was also a member of Nazareth Church. She was eighty-three years of age.

I will close by saying that Tuscaloosa County has lost two good citizens, the family a good father and mother, and

Nazareth Church has lost a good sound preacher and a mother in Israel.

The writer conducted the funerals and tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved ones. We mourn not as those who have no hope.

G. W. BERRY.

MARGARET ESTHER CAMPBELL GRAHAM, wife of Malcolm Graham, and our dear sister in the flesh, passed to her reward April 3rd, 1936, in her seventy-eighth year. She left a lonely companion of forty-five years spent happily together. They had no family. She was the eldest of eight children born to the late Malcolm Campbell and Janet McColl, granddaughter of the late Elder Thomas McColl. Margaret was always gentle and kind, and a God-fearing person from her youth, but never united with the church until four years ago, when she felt drawn by the cords of divine love to obey the heavenly voice to come home to her friends and tell how great things the Lord had done for her. She was gladly received, and baptized by her pastor, whom she devotedly loved. She could say with David, Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honor dwelleth. After speaking to the church, on her way home she felt lifted above all her former fears and temptations of her unfitness to join the church, when the words sweetly flowed into her happy heart, "Oh how happy are they who their Savior obey," etc. Thus God was glorified in her, and she realized all was for the lifting of Jesus on high. In her last sickness, of three weeks duration, of a collapse of the arteries, she realized her earthly career was soon to end. At times, as if looking beyond this world, she would say, Oh how wonderful, how wonderful! A few hours later she passed away from earth. When Jesus shall call forth her sleeping dust, she shall arise in his image to shine in a body like his own, see him as he is and praise him eternally, without the veil of mortality between. Blessed thought, while we linger here we rest in hope of a glorious resurrection. She leaves to mourn, her aged companion, three sisters and one brother: Mrs. Tena McTaggart, London; Mrs. Mary J. Small, Dunwich; and the writer, Mrs. Sarah B. McPhail, Dutton; and Sam D. Campbell, London.

Her funeral was herd in the Covenanted Baptist Church, when Elder Ruston used as a subject, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." A very large gathering of brethren, sisters and friends were present. Her mortal body then was laid in the lovely cemetery adjoining the meetinghouse.

(MRS.) SARAH B. McPHAIL.

THUS one of the noblest and most faithful of our sisters has gone home to be forever with the Lord. She was ever forward to encourage me in my ministry, upholding my hands in the cause of Christ. We miss her here, so much, but we are assured in God's holy word that them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. There will not be one for whom Christ died missing in that day.

G. R.

ADALINE PHOEBE JACKSON, our dear sister in Christ, passed away from all mortal strife March 11th, 1936, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Clarence Y. Zearfoss, West Chester Gardens, Pennsylvania. Sister Jackson was born July 30th, 1853, in Drumore township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and was the youngest daughter of the late Joseph Phillips and Eliza Ewing Hutton. Her early life was spent in southern Lancaster County, where her father was an educator and a mer-

chant. In early life she married Morris Jackson, of Pleasant Grove, Pa. To this union were born four children, one dying in infancy. Her married life was a happy one, but not for very long, as it pleased the Lord to take away her husband in the year 1894. Ever thereafter, as long as there was any need for it, sister Jackson gave her life unreservedly to the raising of her children, for which she was well repaid, for no mother ever had a more loving and faithful set of children than did sister Jackson. They never forgot the loving mother, who had also filled the place of a father to them before the burdens of life should be felt by them. Sister Jackson was baptized into the fellowship of the Rock Springs Church many years ago, where she remained a faithful and loving member until it pleased her heavenly Father to call her from a world of sorrow to a life of heavenly bliss, the fullness of which will be hers to realize on the resurrection morn. I have never met any one who seemed to enjoy the preaching of the whole truth more than did sister Jackson. It was her meat and drink to meet with her church and those of like precious faith. She was well established in the truth and firm in voicing her approval of the doctrine of the resurrection of the bodies of the saints. She is survived by three children: Lida J., wife of Clarence Y. Zearfoss, of West Chester, Pa., Mary E., wife of Dave Parmanduke, of Summit, N. J., and J. Morris Jackson, of Kennett Square, Pa.; three grandchildren: J. Morris Maloney, G. Joseph Maloney and Jane Slack Jackson.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer, in the Rock Springs meeting-house, where her sorrowing children, many friends and her brethren in Christ bid farewell to all that was mortal of sister Attie. So while upon the earth we shall not again hear the sweet, gentle voice and see the lovely smiling face, yet we are confident that to-day she is in the paradise of God, waiting in expectancy. May God's richest blessings be upon her dear children. Thy mother shall rise again.

Written by her loving pastor,

D. L. TOPPING.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, it is the evident good pleasure of the all-wise, loving, covenant-keeping God, our heavenly Father, to have removed from his labors among us our dearly beloved brother and fellow-servant, **ELDER JOSHUA T. ROWE**, who for thirty-seven years served the Baltimore Association as Moderator, and the churches composing the same as their Pastor, and

WHEREAS, his life and ministry among us proved his love for the truth as it is in Jesus and his devotion to the cause of Christ, showing him to have been a man of peace and an able minister of the gospel of the grace of God, and

WHEREAS, Christ Jesus is the alone supreme Head of the church and the one Source of all our supply, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that we sincerely and humbly thank the Lord for having given us such a gifted man in our day among our people, and that we do sorrowfully but submissively resign our brother to him who has taken his servant to be with him in the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, awaiting the resurrection of the just, and

BE IT RESOLVED further, that we do solemnly pray God to send forth more such laborers into his vineyard, for the harvest is plenteous and the laborers are few, and further

BE IT RESOLVED, that this resolution in memory of **Elder J. T. Rowe** be embodied in the Minutes of this Association, that a copy hereof be sent for publication to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and to "Zion's Landmark," and that a copy of the same be sent to our beloved sister Mamie Rowe, wife of our deceased brother, whose loss is our loss and whose sorrow we share.

D. L. TOPPING, Moderator.

QUINCY A. GLADDING, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, in Balou Park, Danville, Virginia, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, August 7th, 8th and 9th, 1936. Visiting brethren of like faith and order will be welcome.

W. R. DODD, Clerk.

The Lord willing, an all-day meeting will be held with the North Berwick Church in Maine, on the third Sunday in August, preceded by meeting in the afternoon on Saturday, the dates being August 15th and 16th, 1936. All lovers of the truth will receive a cordial welcome. Further information can be obtained by writing to Mrs. Alice Hall, North Berwick, Maine.

ALSO,

The regular annual all-day meeting is scheduled to be held with the Brookfield Church, at Slate Hill, New York, on Friday, August 21st, 1936, and we shall, as usual, be glad to meet our many friends whose custom it is to gather with us on that occasion. Elders Arnold H. Bellows and Charles W. Vaughn are expected to be present as visiting ministers.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, commencing on Friday, September 11th, 1936, and continuing three days. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will meet Wednesday and Thursday, September 16th and 17th, 1936, with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Shokan, New York. Those coming from a distance on Wednesday or Thursday will go to the meetinghouse at Shokan. Those coming on Tuesday night will be met by train or bus at Ashokan. Ministers of our faith and order are welcomed, and a cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends. Those coming by bus Tuesday should stop at Ashokan post office.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Moderator.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in August (30th). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets on the first Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, Shelbyville, Ky.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

Cloth binding, 75c each. Paper covers, single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and all to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

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J. E. BEEBE & CO.
MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 104. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1936. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

1 PETER I. 2.

"ELECT according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Christ; Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."

I have for the last few days been studying about the doctrine of election, knowing that there are but very few who believe in the doctrine of election, and most people say harsh things about it, and ridicule those who do believe it as set forth by the apostles. I have noticed that the last several years our brethren do not write exclusively on that one point of the old original point as they do predestination. To me it is hard to write on any one point of the old doctrine without uniting other points of the whole of the original doctrine. Paul in writing to the church at Ephesus gave thanks to God, as is said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." And gives a wonderful reason why: that it was "according as he hath chosen us in him [Christ] before the foundation of the word, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Then links the point of God's certainty to it, and says, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Then tells us why: "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." There is not one place in the foregoing where human efforts can play any part, for as said, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." Not after man had violated his law and become a sinner, for if the choice had been made after the fall of man, then man could have gone to the polls and cast his vote. And to prove that man had nothing to say about his election: "Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God

before ordained that we should walk in them." Then further we see, "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses." Thus, naturally speaking, a dead man cannot perform works of any kind; it takes live people to act. So we just go further and see: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." —Eph. ii. 1. Thus showing that the chosen children of God are in nature dead in sin and have to be quickened into life before they can act spiritually. The richness of God's mercy and love, wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace are ye saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us (not invited us) sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. (Eph. ii. 5, 6.) It is often said that if God chose one and left the others out he would be unjust, but Paul tells us, "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth."—Rom. ix. 11. Men in Paul's day made complaints concerning the election of God, and found fault, but Paul told them, Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Then says, Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? Yea, but, says the objector, such doctrine as that dishonors God and sets aside the chances offered to men. There is but one chance mentioned in the Bible, and that was a failure. It was the case of the man who left Jerusalem to go to Jericho and fell among thieves and was left half dead, when two "great" men passed on each side of this poor man by chance, and did him no good, but the great Samaritan came straight to him and took care of him. The good Samaritan (Jesus) never passes one of his little ones, for we hear this good Samaritan say, in speaking of the nonelect, But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. (John x. 26-28.) This chapter teaches in full the oneness which has ever existed in the covenant relationship with the Son and those chosen of God from all eternity. For, says David in speaking in the Spirit in regard to the ancient covenant, Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow. (2 Sam. xxiii. 5.) The doctrine of election was not only taught by Paul as some have said when they could find no other complaint to make, but let us see what Isaiah says: And I will bring a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell

there. (Isaiah lxv. 9.) Oh the blessed election of grace! How they stand in direct relation to the seed of Jacob (chosen), for "They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands."—Isaiah lxv. 22. Any form of conditionalism if true would set aside the whole plan of redemption by the Lamb of God, and make void the promises of God, and deny the statement of Jesus in his wonderful doctrine he preached to his disciples, which reads: Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain. In this, all who ever did preach the gospel must be and are ordained and sent by Jesus himself. Jesus said in his wonderful prayer to his Father, As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. (John xvii. 2.) Then said, For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of the Father that sent me. And this is the will of the Father which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And to prove that it is not now, nor has ever been, left to any man to come unto the Father of his own will, we read, No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. (John vi. 38, 44; Cant. i. 4.) The Lord's chosen people among all nations were not chosen either because they who compose his church are greater in numbers, but as the apostle said, The Lord is not slack concerning his promises as some count slackness, but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any (the usward) should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Moses said, The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people. For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. (Deut. vii. 6, 7; Amos iii. 9.) All the objections that humanity can raise does not change the attitude of the great God in his divine and ancient chosen heirs of promise, for his purposes are prior to the foundation of the world. They undoubtedly were the stipulations of the eternal covenant of grace between the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. For "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God [not to the sinner], purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"—Heb. ix. 14. This brings our minds to the most glorious thoughts, and leads us to reflect, to the prophetic conclusion that "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."—Isaiah xxxv. 10; li. 11. And Jesus said, And

I lay down my life for the sheep. (John x. 15.) The dear Lord's people often in their wanderings through this wilderness feel that the Lord has failed to be gracious, and have so many trials and tribulations that they mourn sore like doves, and, like David, are ready to say, Will the Lord cast off forever? Will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for evermore? (Psalms lxxvii. 8, 9.) O, dear ones, listen: An highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called, The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. All we like sheep have gone astray, yet the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. In this life we often meet with strong powers in our way, and our way seems gloomy, and very often we find ourselves mourning and complaining of the complications we encounter in our daily experiences, but listen, No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon (it shall be for the redeemed), it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there. (Isaiah xxxv. 8, 9.) But when the greatness of God's eternal love is revealed to us little lone pilgrims we are brought to the overflowing of love for our Lord and it seems to bring each of the little bleating lambs into sweet fellowship one with the other. Our travel in time is so often a mixture of joy and sorrow that we are made glad when we hear the voice of our beloved Lord saying to us, Come, let us go up into the house of the Lord, where his love flows everlastingly, and we are made to feel as did the prophet when he said, The Lord hath appeared of old unto us, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. (Jer. xxxi. 3; Mal. i. 2.)

Dear brethren, it has been my desire to write a few lines to the dear ones who are the beloved of Zion, those who are in sweet fellowship with the old order of the doctrine which has been my desire to mention on every occasion. I will now close by quoting a passage from Revelation, which to me seems to make a beautiful finish: "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."—Rev. xxi. 27.

I will leave this to the judgment of the editors.

As ever, a poor sinner, saved by grace if saved at all,

J. B. BOWDEN.

SAN BENITO, Texas.

FAYETTE, Ala., Nov. 28, 1935.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing copies of two letters which to me are very precious. One is from a dear sister in my home church (Harmony). After trying to use the little hymn 188 (Loyd's selection) in my feeble remarks at our last meeting, she wrote this letter in the darkness of that night, and handed it to me the next day. If there ever was a mother in Israel surely it is she.

The other letter was written to me when I was yet a boy hardly out of

school. I was in Missouri at that time, and it was about the time that the Lord gave me, if not deceived, a good hope in his Son. However, I was a youth, and as youth beckons to youth, I wanted to follow where my friends were going. Then, too, they dressed up things in such a way that I was much mystified about what was truth. It was in desperation that I wrote the dear old brother, as I had known him from infancy. This letter is one of my treasured possessions, and while rummaging through a mass of letters I ran across it. After reading it again, I thought I would send you a copy for use in the SIGNS, if you saw fit to publish it; if you do not, all is well with me.

Your little brother,

W. D. GRIFFIN.

FAYETTE, Ala., Feb. 26, 1924.

MR. W. D. GRIFFIN—DEAR FRIEND: —Your letter received and contents noted, and in reply will say that if I could give a full and correct answer to all of your questions you would be very well supplied with an encyclopedia of Bible knowledge. But as I am not able to give a detailed answer to all of them, I will, in a brief way, try to answer some of them.

Taking them up in order, I will say, first, that I cannot see any reason why any one who believes the Bible, and looks at it as the Primitive Baptists do, should worry for a moment about the heathen. If you will read the second Psalm you will find that the Lord God has already made just such disposition of them as he saw fit, and he did it at least one thousand years before Christ made his advent into the world; in fact, he decreed to do it before the world began. You ask, How are the Primitive Baptists going to get around sending missionaries? I do not know that I understand what you want by the question. The words "mission" or "missionary" are not in the Bible. There is no such thing as "sending the gospel" or "spreading the gospel." Such things would be equivalent to sending the power of God or spreading the power of God, for that is what the gospel is. It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes.

There are only two doctrines taught in this country. One is salvation by grace, and the other is salvation by works. One of them is true and the other is not. Those who believe in salvation by grace teach that in order to be manifestly a child of God "ye must be born again," and they realize the fact that in order to be instrumental in bringing about a birth you must be the father or mother of that which is born. So preaching will not bring about an increase in God's family, any more than a little courtship or talk between man and woman. There is no birth without a travail. Read Isaiah lxvi. 6-8, and see that when Zion travailed she brought forth her children. The gospel, or rather the preaching of it, is to feed God's children. Read the following: John xxi. 15, "Feed my lambs;" 16, "Feed my sheep;" 1 Peter v. 2, "Feed the flock of God which is among you." I do not remember of any place that the preaching of the gospel is to

make an increase in the family of God. Wherever the Lord has a people he is always able, in some way, to get a preacher there to feed and care for them, because God rules all things. I do not call to mind a single instance where there was ever a collection of money taken up to send a preacher anywhere. I can find where the apostle Paul was in prison and above forty men had bound themselves with an oath that they would not eat nor sleep until they killed him. Notwithstanding all this, the Lord appeared to him, and said, Fear not, Paul, for as thou hast testified (preached) of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness of me in Rome. Paul was never a free man any more until he was carried to Rome as a prisoner and called his brethren together and preached to them. I do not read that it cost him or his brethren anything. Persecution drove God's ministers out from Jerusalem, and history shows that it has been a means in God's hands to send his ministers wherever he would have them go.

Now the other set of preachers, who preach salvation by works, claim to be sending the gospel to the heathen. They are spending, and have spent, millions of dollars, begged from the poor people, on the plea that they can keep these heathens from going to hell. Every child of God knows very well that this is not so, and if they do not preach the gospel or truth here, why send them over there? God is an omnipotent God. He is present everywhere, and if he makes our bed in hell he is there; if we take the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost parts of the earth he is there. In fact, he is always ahead of the preacher. Christ sent his preachers into every city whither he would come. (Luke x. 1.) The called minister knows nothing of a call, more than an impression. He feels to go forward and preach wherever God in his providence has desired him, and wherever he feels impressed to go, he feels assured that God has some one there for him to feed. God is never disappointed. He always has a way by which he can get his ministers to the place.

Now, my friend, I have written about all that a stamp will carry. Read it carefully, and consider the fact that it is extremely hard to put all our thoughts on paper. If I could see you I would enjoy talking with you, and more especially would I enjoy giving you what I consider the spiritual import of what I have written.

It is a little strange that, as we have been together so much, you have not asked me these things personally. The next time we are together I want you to feel free to ask any question you want to know about. Please let me hear from you about what I have written.

Your friend,

G. W. BERRY.

KENNEDY, Alabama.

"In all my Lord's appointed ways
My journey I'll pursue;
Hinder me not, ye much loved saints,
For I must go with you."

These sweet words have run through my mind hundred of times of late.

They are continually going over and over, and the more they go through my mind the more beauty and comfort I see in them. This will come into my mind: "In all my Lord's appointed ways." Then I am made to say, Yes, Lord, for all of my ways are appointed of thee. There will not be one trial or trouble too many, for all are appointed by thy hand, and all thou doest is right, even though it seems hard to the flesh. We know that thou hast a purpose in it all. This Scripture comes with sweetness: "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."—1 Peter i. 7. This fiery furnace is appointed and will purge the dross, that we may be able to give Him all the glory, honor and praise.

"My journey I'll pursue." With what sweetness this runs through my mind. O, dear Lord, go with me all the way, for it is so dark to me I cannot see which way to go. I am trusting alone in thee to guide me all the way, for without thy help I can do nothing. I am helpless , and do not know but one thing: I know that I must die. When the time comes I hope I will have the Holy Spirit to carry me over the valley of the shadow of death. I hope I will be like David, and say, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

From one who is trusting alone in the blessed Lord,

(MRS.) B. A. CRAWLEY.

STAR CITY, Ark., Nov. 30, 1935.

DEAR EDITOR:—I am sending you a good letter, written by one of our sisters in the church, telling her experience, which we think is surely good and would be of comfort to others. She has consented to have it published.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

W. A. WOMACK.

MONTICELLO, Arkansas.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN A PRECIOUS HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE:—I will try in my weak way to relate what I humbly hope has been the Lord's dealings with me.

I was raised in a Missionary Baptist home, and united with them at the age of fifteen. I was a Sunday School teacher and leader of the B. Y. P. U. Then I met and married a man whose folks were Primitive Baptists. I would go with my husband to his meetings and he would go with me to mine. I was very well satisfied with my life, as I had nothing to worry about. I could not say I knew I was saved, but thought I had plenty of time to become saved. I visited my husband's parents' home with him, and they would sing hymns, and my sister-in-law and I would go out behind the house to try and get out of hearing of them. We said they sounded like funeral songs to us. (Which they were, singing of the death and burial of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.) I often remarked to my sister-in-law that I would rather be dead than to believe such doctrine as they did. I was dead, and did not know it; dead in trespasses

and sin. I went this way for a year, and did not even care for my own meetings. Then I became worried. I was not satisfied with the Missionaries, and would go with my husband but could not believe what they preached, so I decided to stop going altogether, that there was nothing to any of it but just a form to go through. But I could not be satisfied at home when my husband was at meeting. I would walk and wonder why. I could not go back to the Missionaries and like the meetings, and not be worried all the time. Then one day my father-in-law and family and some of the brethren and sisters passed by our house on their way to meeting, and when I saw them the thought occurred to me that I would like to go with them. I remarked to my mother-in-law that if I had shoes fit to wear I would go with them. She said, Your shoes are good enough, go if you feel like it. So I went with them. That night there was a preacher from another county, brother John Everett. He came forward to preach, and it seemed that he was talking directly to me, condemning me with every word. Suddenly I felt as though something had hold of me, and was tearing my heart out of me, and if I did not get relief I would surely die. I could see hell waiting for me as soon as the breath left my body. I was shaking like a leaf in the wind. One of the sisters saw me and told my husband there was something wrong with me. He started to come toward me, and I thought, When I get in his arms I will die. When he reached me I fell in his arms, but do not remember much of what happened, only that I could not breathe. They put me to bed and called a doctor. I could not tell what was the matter, because I did not know. I was still trembling, and the doctor said I was nervous, and gave me some medicine to quiet me. But he could not quiet my heart. I felt so full of sin I thought all my friends could see it and would turn against me, and I tried to pray the good Lord that I might die, even if hell was my doom, rather than turn all the dear friends against my husband because of me. Well, I went back home, and thought I was just sick and being punished for not going to my meetings, so I decided that I would go back to the Missionaries. I went to my mother's home and went with them to meeting, and as soon as the preacher began to preach it did not sound right to me, and I wished I had not come. I could not believe what he said, so I went back home more worried than ever. I went on in this way for five years, worried and burdened with a load of sin, trying not to let my husband, his folks or my parents know that I was troubled. I thought that if they knew it I would not have a friend. I went for days and nights trying to pray the good Lord to show me the right way. I tried to read the Bible and it seemed to condemn me and show me that I was lost, condemned to hell and no way of helping myself, and I am still in that condition to-day: no way of helping myself. If my name was not in that number that Christ died for I am lost, without hope

in this world. If I am saved, it is by the grace of God.

But to get back to what I was telling about. In the fall of 1933 my husband's father and mother and their pastor, brother Henry Phillips, were going to a district meeting down in Ruston, Louisiana. The day before they left I felt that I wanted to go with them, so much so that I could hardly stand it for them to go without me, so I said to my husband, Go over and ask if we can go with them. He said, Do you really mean it? Do you want to go? I told him I did. He said, All right, he would go, too. He started over to ask them, and it seemed as though I could not wait for him to get back. I was so afraid they would have too large a load and we could not go. But he came back and said they would be glad to have us, so we all left early the next morning, which was Saturday, and got there in time for meeting that night. They were strangers in the flesh to all of us, but received us with a warm welcome into their homes. But I was worried, and felt that I was an intruder. I felt that I did not have any part with them. The dear people seemed to be enjoying themselves exchanging experiences with each other, drawn together by love. We went to meeting next morning and brother Baker, of that association came forward, followed by brother Phillips. I felt as though brother Phillips was talking directly to me, condemning me for coming down there and trying to have a part with God's children, but before he finished I was shown a little light, as it were through a darkened glass, and when he finished I gave him my hand and asked him to pray for me, if he could pray for such as I was. When we started for home I was riding in the cab of the truck, because I had a little baby. I was silent, troubled, trying to pray that I would be shown the right way, that that little glimpse of light might be opened up for me, and this Scripture was continually going through my mind, If God be for you, who can be against you? I thought, If I knew God was for me I would not worry. My father-in-law asked me what was the matter with me, if I did not enjoy myself. I told him I did, for they were all lovely to me, but I was troubled about myself. He said, Dear girl, God will bring you out in his own good time. I wanted to tell him my trouble, but I could not, for I felt I would be troubling him. We stopped for water as the sun was going down, and I asked if I might ride in the back of the truck so my husband could hold the baby and let me rest awhile. As we got in the truck brother Phillips sat down by me and asked me why I went way down in Louisiana to tell him what I did. I asked him why he went way down there to preach what he did. I found myself talking to him, telling him my troubles. He said, I have known for a long time that you were troubled, and we have all suffered for you, because I believe we have every one of us gone through what you are now passing through. While we were talking it seemed as though a bright light, brighter than the sun, came down over me and I could see Jesus before

me. Oh so lovely, and it seemed that everything was praising God, and I just had to tell the dear folks who were in our party exactly how I felt. I told them that a great change had come over me and I had to tell them about it. I felt that I wanted to shout the praise of God for every one to hear. They told me to talk all I wanted to, and the tears were streaming down the cheeks of all of them. As I talked some hymns came into my mind and I asked them to sing them, and how sweet those hymns did sound to me; I could not sing enough of them. I could see that light of love, which is Jesus, shining in the faces of those present, and felt that I could say with them, My Redeemer liveth. Brother Phillips said that if I wanted a home with those people they would stop the truck and baptize me at the next water deep enough, that there were plenty of witnesses present, but I did not answer, it did not please the God of mercy for me to come in at that time. I was very happy the rest of the way home, talking and singing with the dear brethren and sisters. I thought my troubles were over, that the dear God of mercy had smiled on such a wretched sinner as I felt myself to be. I went home with my mother-in-law that night, and went to bed feeling that Jesus was still with me overwhelming me with that unspeakable love, but the next morning when I arose I was burdened with a load of sin and grief. I felt that what I had experienced the night before was only a delusion of the mind, that I had deceived those dear people, and it came to my mind that the wages of sin is death. I felt that death was my portion. Oh how could I face my dear mother-in-law after deceiving her so? I got up to help her with the breakfast, fearing and trembling, afraid she would bring up the day before, but, bless her dear soul, she saw as soon as I appeared that I was troubled and commenced talking about the day's work. I could hardly wait until breakfast was over, for I wanted to get away by myself and cry, for I felt that if I could cry I would get relief. When we called the others to breakfast I thought I would slip out, but my mother-in-law saw me and asked me if I was not going to eat breakfast. I told her I could not eat. They did not insist; I believe they all knew what was the trouble. I went in the back room and fell across the bed and tried to cry, and pray that my great burden of sin be removed. I could see myself the blackest sinner on earth, not worthy to take God's holy name on my sin-polluted lips. I could not shed one tear, and could only moan, Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner. I staid in there for a time and knew I had to go home. I thought I would go home and work and forget my sinful self. But when I was at home at work I was so burdened with grief that I felt that if I should die and go to hell it would be a just God that sent me there. How I longed at times for the peace I had when I was a girl, when I thought I was living right. But all the air castles that I was going to heaven on had been knocked from under me and I felt that I was a naked, wounded soul, that

nothing but the mercy of God could reach me.

The last of that week the district meeting was at Antioch Church, over in Bradley County, and my husband asked me if I was going. I told him no, and was preparing to go all the time I was saying I was not going. The nearer the time came for the meeting the more I wanted to go, but not feeling fit to be with God's people. I had become perfectly satisfied that the Old School Baptist was the church of God, but I was not fit to be with them. My husband asked me the day before we left if I was going to the district meeting to join the church. I told him I might go, but I was not going to join the church, that I did not have any place with those dear people. We went and at the meeting I could look at the faces of those dear people and see the light of love, which is Jesus Christ, shining upon them. I was made to cry, O God, why did I come over here, a black sheep among God's people? I slipped off by myself every chance I got and tried to pray to God to have mercy on my poor soul, for I was a condemned sinner. I went to meeting Saturday morning desiring a home with those dear people, yet feeling too unworthy to be in their midst. I felt that if I should offer myself I would be rejected, and justly so. As I sat there listening to the preachers so ably setting forth what I believed to be the doctrine of Jesus Christ, this thought went through my mind, If I should join all my people would turn against me, because they were bitterly opposed to this doctrine. By this time they were offering an opportunity to any one desiring a home with them. This Scripture came to me, Forsake father, mother and friends and follow after me. I found myself giving my hand to the preacher, feeling that I was perfectly willing to forsake husband, father and mother if I could only follow after Jesus. I felt that I would be rejected when it was brought before the church, but I was determined to offer myself. When the preacher asked me to talk to the church, it came to my mind, Lord, I commit myself into thine hand. I tried in my weak way to tell what a burden I had been laboring under, and that I felt that when Jesus cried on the cross, It is finished, it was finished, a full and complete redemption for sinners. I do not remember all I did say, but was surprised when I was joyfully received and the dear brethren and sisters came forward, with tears streaming down their cheeks, to clasp my hand. I felt that my joy knew no bounds. If it could only please the God of love to bring in my dear husband with me. But God has a time for all things, and he was not brought in until one year after I was. As I went down into the liquid grave I felt a great peace descend upon my soul. Oh the blessed peace and calm, not a worry, not a trouble, all love and peace, just as though a great storm had come and torn my soul asunder, and Jesus spake peace to my troubled soul and all was calm. I find to-day, after two years, that we need the Holy Spirit to calm the troubled waters. When the

mighty hand of God is withdrawn and I am left to myself all is trouble, strife, fear and doubts.

Your unworthy sister, saved by the grace of God, if saved at all,

(MRS.) VELMA LAWSON.

[VERY good. Let us have more of such letters.—ED.]

DALLAS, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—The following letter, written by Mrs. Hughes to her father and mother, Elder and Mrs. S. C. Davenport, was found by her mother among some papers of hers after her death. It is not known just when it was written, as it was not dated nor posted. She was a lovely character and her friends were numbered by her acquaintances. This letter to her parents is a comforting testimony which in the providence of God has been put into the hands of the sorrowing parents to gladden their hearts in the knowledge of the precious hope which was hers. How good that our heavenly Father tempers the wind to the shorn lambs. The supplies of his grace are unfailing, and always sufficient. He proves in so many ways that the needs of his little ones are made his constant care, so we can ask with the apostle, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" May the comforts of the Holy Spirit be the portion of them that mourn.

In humble hope,

J. R. HARDY.

DEAR PAPA AND MAMMA:—I just feel like I want to write you and mamma a letter this morning. I do not know what to say. It seems I just cannot put in words what is on my mind. I do know God has been good to me. He gave you all to me and kept you here for me to go to in my troubles. Papa, I have always been weak in my nature, so easily led, so easy for me to go to some one else to try to help me out of trouble. I have been through the most trying time in my life. Papa, there cannot be a place any worse than where I went. I was so afraid God could not be found. Pit wanted to take me to you, but I was afraid to go. He persuaded me, any way. I knew you and mamma would see me as I was. I could not bear to hurt you. You talked to me, papa. It seemed while you talked to me I felt worse; but now my nerves are quieter. The world seems brighter. Everything seems good in my sight this morning but me. I am stripped of everything that is good, but I feel that God will cover me with his love and tender mercies. That seems to be all I want. The harder I try to please him the worse I feel. There just is not any good in me. This does seem like a different world to me this morning. I cannot describe it. I want to sing or something. It seems to me there is nothing I could not do this morning for my Savior. I want to always mix and mingle with his precious people. I have always loved those dear "hard shell" people. They just seemed sacred to me, but I knew there was something they had I did not have. I would go to meeting and knew there was a difference. How I wished to be like them. Papa, you said something

last Sunday that was very true to my nature, when you said, There would be more Baptists in the church if they could just give up the pleasures of the world. So many times I have said I would join the "Hard Shell" Baptist Church, but I could not go to the dances and do other things I love to. Oh vain world this is! The pleasures I thought I was having are nothing. I would not exchange one little thought of my Savior for all the so-called pleasures of the world. There cannot be anything so sweet to me as to be able to sing his praises. Oh I hope I am not deceived in my feelings this morning. If I am it is the will of God. He does not err. I just want to say, God, there is nothing I can do. I can only trust in you. Whatever I do, whatever I think, it is your will.

I must rest. I feel I have not said anything I wanted to say. May God bless you and mamma.

Your sinful daughter,

RUBYE HUGHES.

(*See obituary on page* 191.)

East Orange, N. J., Jan. 30, 1936.

Dear Elder Dodson:—Santa Claus was very good to me financially, so I subscribed to our great and good paper, the Signs of the Times. I was pleasantly surprised to see you had been elevated to editor-in-chief. Although it entails plenty of work, and adds greatly to your already burdened shoulders, I am positively sure that the New York, Warwick and Middletown congregations you have been so ably serving have a just pride in your elevation, and our prayer for grace to sustain you will always be to our God in your behalf. We all found out a long time ago that greed and vanity are not in your makeup, but humbleness and self-effacement is in your daily walk and practice, and that is why we all so dearly love you. We also know this is not the work of the flesh, but of the Spirit; that is our evidence that God not only predestinated, but adapted and ordained you to minister unto us, your brethren. We take pride in your clear, truthful thinking, your true christian walk, your humbleness of expression and your ever willing readiness to serve us. Your welfare is our welfare, and our hope and prayer will ever be that our God will bless you and yours, and will lead you in all righteousness and truth, so that you may be able to minister according to the burden placed upon you. We are but humans, but as humans may God keep us in unity according to his will and to his own honor and glory, not man's.

Your brother in love and fellowship and abounding hope,

IRA T. DOLSON.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Elder George L. Weaver having changed his address from Shelbyville, Ky., to 421 Steele Street, Frankfort, Ky., requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1936.

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1 PETER V. 1-3.

"THE elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."

We at this time feel it timely to call attention to the apostle Peter's exhortation, and especially address the Elders among the church of God today. We do have hope that we have been called by the God of all grace unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, and a dispensation of the gospel committed unto us, that we should preach the gospel, and as such we desire to address you, and call your attention to the feeding, and also our deportment as men, and the ethics we should maintain toward each other, and all the brethren, "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."—1 Peter v. 4. These things do not come to us by works of righteousness we can do, but the Spirit putteth them in our minds, and directs us according to God's will. We are searching for the proof of our calling to be a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, that we should write you of our experience, and assurances in the gospel. We do feel that the church of God was our judge, and according to her understanding she was moved to call a presbytery to ordain to the full functions of the gospel ministry, having found the qualifications to justify their act. We have ever felt and reverenced the faithful considerations of the brethren, and have desired that we would be kept to His glory and honor. We have desired to feed the flock of God, and we know they do not grow on stubble and tainted food, but the sincere milk of the word, and that is from the fountain of life, given by him who has all power in heaven and earth. "The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron."—1 Tim. iv. 1, 2. We do know when we speak before the church and do not have any realization

of our words, it seems to be mechanical, and for us to listen to a man who is talking from his head, and not his heart, there is no comfort to us, and we do not believe the flock of God is nourished by it, but will weaken, sicken and die in such false, or substitute for the sincere milk of the word, and in these days of apparent slumber we would awaken the brethren to a felt sense of the faithfulness that becomes the church of God, but how to perform we know not, and with a felt sense of our helplessness we stand with outstretched arms and implore the Lord to direct. We as undershepherds were set apart to the full functions of the gospel ministry, having the esteem and confidence of the church of God, and upon the examination of the presbytery we were ordained to administer in all the ordinances, as is set forth in the Scriptures of the New Testament, and to the faithful consideration of the brethren everywhere. As that trust is broken by our going forth, how can we hold the confidence and esteem of our brethren, and be regarded as orderly? The churches of the Old School Baptists have had the fundamental principles of the doctrine set forth in what is commonly known as articles of faith, and for a brother minister to disregard those principles what reflection does he cast on his ministry. When reflections are cast, what should be the attitude of the brethren toward the one casting the disregard? and for others to join this disorder, does it make it right? or should we call their attention to their mistake? We should call his attention to these things, and if he deny himself, and turn from his going forth, we should esteem him highly in the truth. It is very grievous to deal with these things among the brethren and to realize the slurring and criticism that, perhaps, will come from the disorderly party, and we know our own infirmities, and they have plenty to hold out to us, which does not excuse the watchman upon the watch walls of Zion. In a natural sense, we know when the plain written word contradicts our position, and we should not require greater evidence than that, but be faithful to ourselves, and to all the brethren. Paul said, "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work."—1 Tim. iii. 1. Then gives the qualifications, which we will leave to you to read, and study the meaning, and measure yourselves accordingly. We are minded the greatest of all these qualifications is, not to be a novice, and become lifted up with pride, that we can teach elderly brethren and we should be heard preferably to our brethren. We should not forget that we are fallible creatures and not make our brother an offender for a word and strive about words to no profit, but be kind and affectionate one to another, and not give any brother an occasion to think he is disregarded. These are common ethics of everyday life that we feel should be manifest to each other as ministers, and by these things we teach all the brethren, and are ensamples in the household of faith. The eighteenth chapter of Matthew, verses fifteen, sixteen and seventeen, gives us the words of Jesus

as to how we should deal with each other, and when we have dealt accordingly then we are at liberty to take it before the brethren and seek their guidance in the case. If our brother accept our restitution and we fail to keep our vows we have committed another trespass, and have subjected ourselves to the discipline of the church, and proved ourselves as hypocrites, and as vessels without water. We may by our personality win the affection of brethren and sisters, and have much strength among the brethren thereby, but should we use that strength, and control the course of the church, we would be lording it over God's heritage, and drawing away disciples after us. There is not one of us who would like to have these things said of us, and have the guilt hanging over us, but to be accused, and be blameless, we have an acquitted conscience before God, and all the brethren know, and we stand in their esteem and fellowship, and are stronger than when we were assailed, and more established than our enemies like. Paul's charge to Timothy was, "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine."—2 Tim. iv. 1, 2. His reasons for thus charging him are recorded in the following third and fourth verses: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." "But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."—5th verse of the same chapter. Having all these admonitions, should we be offended when we err from them and our brethren call our attention, and remind us? We answer, No. The one who shows offense is not directed by the Spirit of God, for the Spirit manifests meekness, gentleness and kindness. "A man's pride shall bring him low: but honor shall uphold the humble in spirit. Whoso is partner with a thief hateth his own soul: he heareth cursing, and bewrayeth it not. The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe. Many seek the ruler's favor: but every man's judgment cometh from the Lord. An unjust man is an abomination to the just; and he that is upright in the way is an abomination to the wicked."—Prov. xxix. 23-27. These words of Solomon are true, and we have witnessed the fruits of his expressions, and have witnessed the attitude of brethren working as he declares, and now in conclusion, brethren, let us consider ourselves, and make full proof of our ministry, and do the work of an evangelist, and provoke unto love and good works, putting off the old man with his deeds, laying aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us, ever looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith.

We hope the expression given to our readers will answer the many requests for us to write of these things, and we exhort you to the ancient landmarks our fathers have set, and the word of God.

C. W. V.

SALVATION BY GRACE.

In writing upon this theme, it occurs to us in the outset to define briefly what is implied in the words "salvation" and "grace." The authority which we have at hand says that *salvation* is "the act of saving; spiritual deliverance from sin and death." The late Elder John McConnell, former pastor of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in New York City, used to illustrate it by picturing a drowning man off shore, without any ability to help himself, when some strong hand is stretched forth and lifts him bodily out of the water, placing him safely on the shore. To such an one, nothing short of "the act of saving" itself would avail anything for him. As to *grace,* the same authority quoted above, says that it is "the unmerited favor and love of God towards man in Christ; divine sanctifying, regenerating and preserving influence." We would like for our readers to keep in mind the fact that it is the *unmerited, divine regenerating* and *preserving influence* of Almighty God, and not any merit of the creature of any kind whatsoever. Sometimes we read after those who claim to be Old School Baptists, who stress the point that *eternal* salvation is by grace, but infer, even if they do not actually say so, that salvation in time is largely the result of the creature's efforts. This is a mistake, and causes much confusion and distress among the Lord's people. If grace is a "divine regenerating and preserving influence," then if one in this life is blessed to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he is called, it is because of the effects of that influence in him. The branch cannot bear fruit of itself. Therefore, whatever spiritual fruit we may bear, even though it be only the thinking of a good thought, much less the doing of good deeds, it is by virtue of the life of the Vine which is manifested in the branch. Jesus said, "Without me ye can do nothing;" hence all boasting is done away and Jesus is crowned Lord of all. Again, our Lord said, "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do." Paul, in writing to the Corinthian brethren, said, It is "by the grace of God I am what I am." We understand he had reference not only to the miraculous change which had been wrought in him, but to all that pertained to his apostleship, and to make certain that there could be no misunderstanding as regards the effectualness of it, or as to any of the credit being due him, he continued by saying, "And his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Whatever place we, to-day, may occupy in the church of God, is because of this same grace having been be-

stowed upon us, and we can truthfully say that we hope, at least, that it has not been in vain so far as we are concerned.

Jonah did not divide "salvation" into parts and say some of it was of the Lord and the balance of man, but plainly declared, "Salvation is of the Lord." He was most deeply impressed with the fact that all of "the act of saving" was of the Lord, for he said, "I will pay that I have vowed, Salvation is of the Lord." This was deliverance in time, and we can but believe that if every child of God will let his own experience speak for him, he will invariably testify as did David when he said, "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." The word "patiently" here signifies endurance, which shows that the Psalmist could do nothing but wait for the Lord, and because he did come and deliver him, his mouth was full of praise to our God.

There are some among the so-called religious world who will agree with Old School Baptists on such subjects as God's sovereignty, predestination, and possibly other doctrinal points, but we have yet to meet with any who are satisfied to remain where they are, who in the final analysis, really and truly believe that "salvation is by grace," and that the creature has no part in the matter except to lie passive in God's hands and praise him for his wonderful works among the children of men. Let us say here that this doctrine does not encourage one to indifference or licentiousness, for this grace, or divine influence in the soul, causes one to love righteousness and to hate evil. The record of inspiration is, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." We were once asked by the editor of a daily newspaper to tell him just what the difference was between Old School Baptists and other denominations. We stated in reply that we could talk to him by the hour on the subject, but that we felt the whole of it could be summed up in two simple words, and those two words were, *Grace* and *works*. Old School Baptists really believe that salvation is by grace, and grace alone, first, last and all the time, while according to the best of our knowledge, at least, all other professors of religion, when pinned down to the fine point, will contend there still remains something for the creature to do, even though it may only be, as they say, to *accept* God's salvation, without which they tell us, God is unable to save the sinner. It is unnecessary to remind believers that

such is absolutely contrary to all Bible truth. We have many times since thought of the answer made to the editor in question and wondered if we could have improved upon it, regardless of how long we might have taken in an attempt to explain more fully. Unquestionably, the one thing, more than all else, which separates and distinguishes Old School Baptists from all other religious organizations on the face of the whole earth, is their firm and unyielding belief that salvation is wholly and solely by grace, both for time and eternity. The apostle Paul was a very learned man naturally, but besides this we have every reason to believe that he was moved by the Holy Ghost to write what he left on record, and we are satisfied that he laid down this fundamental principle in perfectly clear language when he declared in his epistle to the Ephesians, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. ii. 8-10. From all that we have been able to learn, both by word of mouth from those whose privilege it was to have known him personally, and from reading his wonderful writings, it was this doctrine of "salvation by grace," more than anything else, which moved that great and noble warrior, Elder Gilbert Beebe, the founder of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, more than a century ago to unsheathe his sword and go forth to battle the enemies of truth. That he fought valiantly with "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon" as his weapon, for fifty years, less one, as the editor of the paper which he founded, against all the innovations of his time, no one who is familiar with his record can deny. And although it is now over fifty-five years since he laid aside his pen in death, his example is not forgotten, and by the help of Almighty God we shall carry on and wage this same warfare until we, too, shall be called upon to quit the walks of men and bid adieu to all that is vain and earthly. We wish to state in this connection, however, that we have never felt that bars of nonfellowship should be set up against any brother, who is a member in good standing of a sound and orderly Old School Baptist Church, because of his views on such subjects as predestination, the resurrection, the second bodily coming of Christ, eternal vital union, etc., so long as he does not manifest a fighting spirit, but we do here and now most solemnly declare that it is our firm conviction that the acid test for all who make claim to being Old School Baptists should be a deep-rooted belief in salvation by grace. Without this there is not sufficient agreement for two to walk together, but where brethren can come together on this common ground, we honestly believe that they should bear and forbear with one another in love over differences of opinion about other things. We most certainly would not fix any limitations or bounds upon Bible subjects, nor any restrictions of any kind

whatsoever so long as such a brother manifests the Spirit of Christ. There is a diversity of gifts in the church, and an infinite variety of gospel food in the Scriptures, and we maintain that it is both healthful and wholesome to have different views presented to our readers. That is one of the main reasons for the existence of the SIGNS, as we understand it, to have a free exchange of ideas. Personally, we do not expect every one to accept our own views on every thing, nor is it to be understood, necessarily, that we indorse all that is published in our family paper. We can but feel, however, that where grace abounds in the heart, brotherly love, good will and good order will be found and will continue. We are often reminded of that very excellent hymn, in which is to be found the following verse:

"Oh to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be;
Let that grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it,
Seal it for thy courts above."

May the God of all grace comfort our hearts with the assurance of his love, through Christ Jesus, our Lord, to whom be glory now and forever. Amen. R. L. D.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Middletown & Wallkill Church, N. Y., $50; "A friend, Ontario, $2; Joseph A. Johnson, Tenn., $1; Mrs. Maggie Smith, Ontario, $1; George W. Danbury, N. J., $2; Mrs. Martha J. Disharoon, Del., $1.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

HENRY HAYMAN, my beloved husband, was born in Worcester County, Maryland, November 3rd, 1876, and died April 13th, 1936, making his stay on earth 59 years, 5 months and 10 days. October 4th, 1899, he was married to Effie A. Dennis, and to this union were born three sons, one dying at the age of two years, another at the age of twenty years and one still living. Henry was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Salisbury, Md., by our pastor, Elder G. E. Coulbourn. He really loved his church, and was never happier than when trying to do something for her, and I do believe he was well loved both by his pastor and the church. We were always delighted to have any of the Baptists visit us, and during his last illness he said it did him good when any of the brethren came to see him. Henry suffered much. He was under the doctor's care for the last eight years, and had had pneumonia twice before that. He kept at his work most of the time, though when he had his toe removed he had to give up work for twenty weeks, and again he was in the hospital four weeks and it was some four or five weeks before he could get back to his work. He seemed to improve, and the doctor said he was better, but for some reason I could not feel encouraged much. Since Christmas, when he commenced to get worse, he failed rapidly and suffered greatly, but never murmured nor complained. I shall always miss him, and his memory will ever be very dear to me.

Written by his widow,

EFFIE HAYMAN.

THE above obituary was written by our dear sister, Effie Hayman, who was the much loved wife of brother Henry Hayman. I desire to indorse all that

sister Hayman has said about the love brother Henry had for the church, which love he manifested in truth and in deed. I also desire to say that his church also loved him, and his pastor loved him much, and I hope duly appreciated brother Henry's kindly words and deeds to and for his pastor and church. I was at his funeral, with Elder H. C. Ker, after which I felt very sorry that I seemed unable to speak words of comfort on the sad occasion, but although it was so sad for his family and others of us, yet I have not felt sorry for brother Henry, as he suffered much pain in this tabernacle on earth, and it is our hope that his mortality is swallowed up of life (eternal). May the Lord help and sustain his widow, our dear sister, and family, and reconcile all of us to his will.

His pastor,

G. E. COULBOURN.

ALSO,

MARY I. TIMMONS, my mother, was born February 13th, 1863, and died January 26th, 1936. She was the daughter of John and Martha E. Wilkins Timmons. She was married to W. L. Timmons January 7th, 1880. He passed away December 16th, 1927. She was a member of Indiantown Church for a number of years. I do not remember how many, nor do I think either of my brothers know or remember when she was baptized. Elder T. M. Poulson performed her marriage ceremony, and also baptized her, and during his life I have heard her say that he seemed like a father to her. She was always present at her meetings if it was possible for her to be there. She was a splendid mother; there was none better. Two sons, Orrie D. and E. Heartwill, and one daughter, Miss Ida Timmons, all of Berlin, Md., survive her. Her youngest son, John W. S., died January 6th, 1936. She also leaves eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

The funeral was conducted by Elder H. C. Ker at the home of her son, E. H. Timmons, where she had made her home. The hymn "It is not death to die," was used by her request.

Her daughter,

IDA TIMMONS.

I indorse all the daughter says about sister Mary Timmons. It was a privilege indeed to know her and be in her company, as she was happy with members and friends of her church and loved to talk about spiritual things, in her quiet, humble way. I was her pastor, but sometimes I think I am just pastor in name more than otherwise, for I am so far from our members that I do not get to do much visiting, and did not see as much of sister Timmons as I would or should, as she always seemed glad to see me, and I was glad to see her, and to see the faith and love she manifested. I was asked to be at her funeral, but owing to illness was confined to the house the week of her death and could not be with Elder Ker at the time. Jesus said, I am the resurrection and the life; whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Sister Timmons believed in him, and therefore must now be still alive with him. May her relatives and friends be reconciled to God's will, and be drawn to Jesus, who said, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

G. E. COULBOURN.

JENNY MORRISON KIRK, our dear sister in Christ, wife of Joseph P. Kirk, passed from all earthly strife at the Lancaster Hospital March 29th, 1936, where she had undergone an operation, which was advised by her physician as the only means of prolonging her life. She came through the opera-

tion in a very encouraging manner, but the shock was too great for her already weakened body, from intense suffering, and she sweetly fell asleep in Jesus, the name that had for so many years filled her soul with joy unspeakable. February 18th, 1894, sister Jenny was married to Joseph P. Kirk, and to this union were born seven children, all of whom survive her. They are Edna R. Gilbert, of Washington, D. C., Esther R. Scull, of Wrightstown, Pa., J. Stanley Kirk, of Avondale, Pa., S. Rebecca Kirk, of Rock Springs, Pa., James H., of Chicago, Ill., Walter C., of Owensboro,Ky., and W. Grafton Kirk, of Cleveland, Ohio. Also five grandchildren: W. Lloyd Brabxon, J. Pemunell Kirk, Margaret Scull, Edward S. Kirk, Joseph W. Kirk. Also, her heart broken companion, Joseph P. Kirk. In 1903 Mr. Kirk moved his family from Philadelphia to a farm near the Rock Springs meetinghouse. Shortly thereafter sister Jenny began attending the meetings at that place, and she soon found that their God was her God, and, like Ruth of old, she could truthfully say, Entreat me not to leave thee, etc. August 27th, 1911, she was baptized into the fellowship of the Rock Springs Church by the late Elder John Eubanks, to whom she was most devoted as long as he was spared to the church. Sister Kirk was a dear, godly person, and no church was ever more blessed in having one who was more faithful in her devotion to her brethren and sisters than was sister Kirk, and her passing from us is a most severe blow to our little flock. We much miss her dear smiling face from our midst, yet we know that she belonged to the Lord, and he has the right to take that which is his own, and we desire that he grant us needed grace to praise him in that he spared one of his most lovely children to the Rock Springs Church for so many years. Sister Kirk died in full triumph of the faith that was once delivered unto the saints. A few days before her passing, she assured her family that she was perfectly willing to leave her case in the hands of the Lord, and for them not to worry, as things were well with her, and requested Edna, her daughter, on her next visit to bring her hymn book. Among her last words were, Jesus, I my cross have taken, all to leave and follow thee. Sister Kirk was one of the faithful, seldom being absent from her meetings . Faithful to her Lord, faithful to her church and to her family, pastor and friends. Words fail us to express how much we miss her in her accustomed place, yet we are assured that for her to depart is far better, to be with Jesus, where the wicked cease from troubling, there the weary are at rest. Having been acquainted with her dear family for years, I feel to be most deply associated with them in their sorrow. May it please the Lord to point them to the way of the footsteps of the flock. What a delightful road when all is light. Your mother has left you beautiful examples, may the Lord enable each of you to profit by them. Especially does my heart go out to her dear husband, who is so lonely without his dear Jenny. Joe, in the dark hours of the night you often come into my thoughts. May the Lord cause his face to shine upon you and give you peace.

Her funeral was largely attended, where her sorrowing family and her brethren and sisters in Christ bade farewell to all that was mortal of our dear sister. Her body was laid to rest in the Rock Springs Cemetery adjoining the meetinghouse, there to await the summons from on high, when death shall have lost its sting and the grave its victory.

Her loving pastor,

D. L. TOPPING.

MRS. EMMA C. HULSE, widow of Thomas Brewster Hulse, died suddenly at Newark, N. J., June 22nd, 1936. She was born May 27th, 1852, making her stay here eighty-four years. Her son and family celebrated her birthday just twenty-six days before her demise, and her death was a great shock to them. Mrs. Hulse was a niece of Elder Gabriel Conklin, and a cousin to the late George D. Conklin, so well known among the Old Baptists. She was first married by Elder Gilbert Beebe to George W. Carey, who died several years ago, and later married Mr. Hulse, who passed on soon after. She leaves a son, Charles H. Carey, and a granddaughter, Emma D. Carey, and a niece, Mrs. Fred Clark, of Jersey City, N. J. Her life was spent in and around Middletown, N. Y., where she had a host of friends, especially in Middletown and New Vernon churches. While she never united with the church, she was strong in the faith and loved to sing the songs of Zion. Her life was thrown much among the "do and live" professors, yet she always proved to be as "wise as serpents and harmless as doves." Not long since, one of her friends said to her, Do you go there to church? Why, I thought they were all dying out. She replied, Why, don't you know the word says, Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there will I be in the midst? I feel very sad over the passing of the dear friend, as she was preparing, and I was expecting, a visit from her the next week here at Warwick, N. Y., and I can but feel our Lord has come into the garden and plucked another lily, and shall not the Judge of the whole earth do right?

Her funeral was held at Smith's Funeral Home, Middletown, N. Y., Elder R. Lester Dodson officiating, reading the seventh chapter of Matthew, beginning at the fifteenth verse, to the close, using as a text, Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them. Also reading the hymn, "Jesus lover of my soul." Interment was at Pine Hill Cemetery, near Middletown, N. Y.

One who loved her,

MINNIE HYATT.

MRS. RUBYE HUGHES, daughter of Elder and Mrs. S. C. Davenport, was born February 14th, 1904, in Wood County, Texas, where she grew to womanhood and was married July 24th, 1922, to David B. Hughes. To this union was born one daughter, Lena Frances, now ten years of age. Owing to a constant mental strain for a long period of time caring for a sister to whom she was devotedly attached, who had been seriously injured in a car wreck,her mind at times refused to function normally, but had shown marked improvement before the end came. She was at home alone when she came across a pistol in the bottom of a trunk, and no doubt in a moment of irresponsibility snuffed out her life. The shock to her husband, child, parents and the immediate family was very great. But she did not leave them wholly comfortless. She left the assurance of having been given a sweet hope in Jesus, that even though the body dies the anchor of hope has been cast within the veil, is sure and steadfast, and will hold the vessel until every storm is over and it is landed safely beyond the surging billows of time. Her death occurred March 19th, 1936. Funeral services were conducted by the writer, in the presence of a large concourse of relatives and friends, at Mt. Pisgah meetinghouse, in the community where she was raised. Her body rests in the cemetery at that place, awaiting the great and notable day of the Lord, when mortality shall be swallowed up of life and rise to meet the Lord in the air.

J. R. HARDY.

MEETINGS.

The Mates Creek Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association will meet in its eighty-fourth session, with the Williamson Church, in the city of Williamson, Mingo County, West Virginia, near the end of the free bridge, on Route 119, September 4th, 5th and 6th, 1936. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

G. B. BIRD, Clerk.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, commencing on Friday, September 11th, 1936, and continuing three days. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

If the will of God be so, the First Kansas Association will convene the 11th, 12th and 13th of September, 1936, at the residence of Elder L. L. Schenck, two miles north and one-half mile east of Williamstown, Jefferson, County, Kansas, about half way between Topeka and Kansas City. Friends and lovers of the truth will be gladly welcomed.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk,
Grantville, Kansas.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will meet Wednesday and Thursday, September 16th and 17th, 1936, with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Shokan, New York. Those coming from a distance on Wednesday or Thursday will go to the meetinghouse at Shokan. Those coming on Tuesday night will be met by train or bus at Ashokan. Ministers of our faith and order are welcomed, and a cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends. Those coming by bus Tuesday should stop at Ashokan post office.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Moderator.

Providence permitting, the Original Mount Zion Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will convene with Little Flock Church, Cass County, Missouri, October 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1936. This is located on the Old No. 7 Highway, six miles southwest of Pleasant Hill. Those coming by train or bus will be met at Pleasant Hill. We invite all sound orderly Baptists to meet with us.

DANIEL A. J. ADAMS, Moderator
Odessa, Missouri.
MRS. J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk,
Pleasant Hill, Missouri.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets the third Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, at 10:30 a. m. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, 421 Steele, Street, Frankfort, Ky.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 104. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1936. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ROMANS IX. 21.

"HATH not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?"

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—Some time back you requested me to write along the line of the above Scripture. I believe I promised to do so if my mind should be led out in that way, but I have put it off chiefly because of two reasons; one is, you are so far my superior in these things that anything I can write about would be of no comfort to you or the dear readers of the SIGNS. I see your call to the work in the ministry very plainly verified by the Scripture, A man's gift maketh room for him and bringeth him before great men. These great men are God's people, whose hearts seem much drawn out after you. But I infer that you have also been on the rough billows and tried in the furnace of affliction.

I fear to make the attempt to write, lest it might only be of the flesh and will of man. But I will draw the bow at venture, hoping the Lord will direct the arrow. I hope you are able to try the spirits whether they are of God. I cannot tell you whether or not I will give you any part of the true import or meaning of the Scripture; I can only promise I will tell you what it means to me. I want to say in the beginning, I have but the two families, or generations, to write of. One is of the earth earthy, and its generation is of Adam, and the second man is the Lord from heaven, and his generation is the generation of Jesus Christ. If I can be made able to trace by the firstfruits of the flock and show the eternal relationship and unity between Christ, the eternal head of this generation, and the church, his body, then I will feel I am well paid for writing this letter. I feel I am writing "to wise men; judge ye what I say." We see the old Scriptures stand in figures, types and shadows, and by following the shadows we can come to the substance. The trouble

is that sometimes we take the shadows and figures for the substance. In the first place, we find the clay of the same lump, all in the hands of the potter. This potter must be the Lord. No doubt but that Adam was a figure of Christ, and Eve, his bride, the church, and was called Adam until she was taken from man. Now let us take a glimpse at the first man, Adam, who was of the earth earthy, of which the whole earth is populated. Was he not a lifeless lump of his mother earth, altogether destitute of any of the faculties that go to make up the natural man, and lifeless, not able to transgress nor to be susceptible to either joy or grief or pain? This is the whole make-up of the created Adam man, and at that time was just as good and sinless as the dust, or earth, from whence he was taken. He was not eligible to anything until God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul." Was he a living soul before? He surely was not. But when the eyes of both of them were opened this living soul was able to realize and experience joy and sorrow and pain. Here we find the created earthly generation of Adam and the generation of Jesus Christ, which is not an earthly creation. Solomon tells us about the developing of the generation of Jesus Christ, saying, Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, was I brought forth. Here is the bringing forth of the church, or generation of Jesus Christ, as spoken of in Matthew i. 1, and that "while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world." —Prov. viii. 26. Before the dust was made that the Adam man was formed of. This should suffice as to the origin of God's people. All in the lump of clay in the hands of the Potter. A vessel is that which is to hold what is put in it. It is no wonder that one vessel is made unto honor when it has the promised resurrection to these vessels of honor that Paul prayed that "your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Then in Romans ix. 22, Paul says, "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." In the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth verses it is said, "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth. It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." If the doctrine of eternal personal election and unconditional salvation by grace is not a Bible doctrine, then the whole Arminian world has got us fooled, because it is not part of one and part of the other. But I do not hesitate to affirm it is all of grace, first and last, with all of its bearings. We hear some weak-kneed fellows saying God would be unjust if he saved a part and sent the rest down to hell. We refer such ones to the twentieth verse, which says by inspiration, "Nay but, O man, who art thou

that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus??" The Savior says, "But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elias the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman, the Syrian."—Luke iv. 25-27. Here the carnal mind would ask, Why was not Elias sent to all the widows of Sarepta to save them all alive, and why was Elias the prophet only sent to cleanse Naaman, while there were many lepers in Israel? All one needs to know the justice of all God's works is to be brought up in grace's school. Then he will not think foolishly and wickedly, charging God with being unjust. In Romans ix. 18, Paul says, "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." This shows God is a sovereign God over all worlds, powers and dominions, and does not give any reason or account to any one for what he does. The Lord says by the mouth of Jeremiah, "O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel."—Jer. xviii. 6. Paul says, "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."—Rom. ix. 8. These are the promised children Paul spoke of: "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God."—Rom. viii. 19. It is a well known fact that the manifestation of a thing is not its beginning, but clearly reveals its identity. Not that they are eternal children, as we are so slanderously reported saying. We preach eternal children. But we say and believe biblically the eternal life substance that is in Christ, the eternal seed and head of the body, or church, and in the manifestation in the Adam man, in whom they had a time standing, they become children in the new birth. David said by prophecy in Psalms cxxxix. 15, 16, "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect [not as yet manifested in Adam as children]; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance [not to remain so] were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." The definition of the word "fashion" is to shape or form, especially in dress. It seems the Lord was speaking by the mouth of David of the developing of God's people to a higher order, and as yet there was none of them as children manifested in the flesh. This Scripture spoken of by David is often used by good brethren to prove the nonentity, or nonexistence, of God's people prior to the Adam man of flesh and blood, but falls very far short of doing so. If such was biblical,

and the truth, would not the Scripture have said something like this: that Christ was the head, but as yet no body, but would some time in the future have a head of the Adam man of flesh and blood? But thanks eternal be to God, no such Scripture as this is found on the pages of eternal truth. Paul says, "And he [Christ] is the head of the body, the church."—Col. i. 18. Not going to be the head, but was then, in the present tense. And these members David spoke of, their names and life substance were there in this eternal Head, awaiting their manifestation as the sons of God, and in eternal vital unity with Christ their head. Jude says they were "sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ," therefore in this sense are as old as Christ, because Wisdom saw their fall in Adam, and knowing these heirs would need a Savior, and he said, To this end was I born. So the remedy was prepared for them in the annals of eternity, and God's chosen ones are safe, no harm can befall them. David again speaks of these members, or life substance, saying, "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation."—Psalms xxii. 30. This is the generation spoken of in Matthew i. 1. Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature. As I see it, this does not mean a new life substance, but new in the birth and manifestation of the sons of God. We have heard it claimed that there was nothing eternal about the Adam man of flesh and blood until the second, or new birth, that if there had been he could not be a new creature in Christ. This is denying the most positive covenant Scriptures, and denying God's people being given in Christ in the eternal covenant of grace, and also denying Christ's own words in his prayer to the Father, saying, "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me." "Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition."—John xvii. 6, 12. Let us note the fact that the birth does not make the child, and is not its origin or beginning, but only a change of element and manifestation of the child in the flesh. So, brethren, let us never faulter nor fear. Some also ignore in the same way the sixteenth chapter and seventh verse of Romans, where Paul says, "Who are of note among the apostles; who also were in Christ before me," when it is very plain that Paul is here speaking of the new birth or manifestation in the flesh of the sons of God, but not of the eternal life substance that was given in Christ in the eternal covenant of grace. Then it is claimed by some brethren that these were new creatures in Christ before Paul. But this could not be if they had existed in God in eternity, thus by their own words denying that Paul ever was embraced in Christ in the eternal covenant of grace before the new birth. But when Paul comes to speak of his, and all the family's, eternal standing in Christ, he says, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world."—Eph. i. 4. What can be any more positive? It cannot fail. We see by reason of the standing of

God's people in Adam, their earthly representative head, they fell in him and became sinners, therefore needed a Savior, as I have here before mentioned. Paul says, "For the creature [God's people] was made subject to vanity [in the transgression of Adam], not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope; because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."—Rom. viii. 20, 21. And in the nineteenth verse, as I have here quoted, Paul says, "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." As I see it, by the transgression of Adam, this earthly representative head, this creature, or life substance, died a spiritual death and was made alive in Christ, as I have before stated, and was made the recipient of a manifestation in the new birth. Those thus born of the Spirit do not sin, because they are born of God. The sin is all in the Adam man of flesh and blood, who is not of the children of God, while in the transgression of Adam, the "formed man," a corporeal or natural death was passed on his whole progeny, therefore two deaths in Adam's transgression, one a spiritual death to God's people, the other a corporeal or natural death to the progeny of Adam. I am sure we have not a few good brethren whom I love who think they believe that the whole make-up of the children of God is of the Adam man of flesh and blood and bones, when really they do not believe it, therefore I do not wish to use unkind words and harsh criticism, because if such be the truth, it follows as a fact that the kingdom of God after death will be populated with men and women of flesh and blood, male and female, which the Bible positively denies. Let us see what Job says about what becomes of the flesh and blood man: "As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away; so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more."—Job vii. 9. Here is the end of all flesh and blood; it comes up no more. To this Paul witnesses, and says, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."—1 Cor. xv. 50. Job again says, "So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep."—Job xiv. 12. Here the body goes down in the grave a weak, mortal body, "it is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: * * * * it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." Not a body of flesh, blood and bone. As I see it, this spiritual body is the body Paul prayed for to be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, when this spiritual resurrected body will be reunited with both soul and body in the resurrection at the last day.

I feel sure the faith and doctrine I have here written of, though in a very

weak way, it the faith of Primitive or Old School Baptists in all ages of the world. The enemy of this faith and doctrine has made many rash dives to drown it out and kill it, but thanks eternal be to God, he never has left himself without a witness that will ever stand on the walls of Zion and proclaim this glorious faith and doctrine as long as God has any purpose in the gospel being preached anywhere in this old world. It is a well known fact that all the factions that have gone out from the true Primitive Baptist Church have gone out objecting to the doctrine of election and predestination, calling us hard names, such as "eternal children," "two seeders," and "fatalists," the same as their forefathers have always done. But one thing is strange: that those brethren will borrow the Arminians' weapon to use as a battle-axe on their brethren. We should beware of borrowing, for we know what it has cost our people in all ages. Oh how our poor hearts are made to rejoice and glow with love when we think how God has ever loved and preserved his people through the many changes of this old world, from the very earliest dawn of time down to the present day, and will as long as he has any use for this old world, then he will call his people, the object of his love, home, there to ever be with the Lord. So, dear brethren and sisters, comfort each other with these words.

Brother Dodson, when at the throne of grace remember me, a poor sinner, pray that I may ever be found earnestly contending for the faith as it is in Christ, and that I may never be left to my ignorance and the will of the natural man in these sacred things of God. This is the desire of one of the least of God's people, if one at all.

W. L. EDWARDS.

CASTLEWOOD, Virginia.

DELAWARE, Ohio.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I do not know just what I can say to you, but I wish to at least express again my love and fellowship for all who believe in the truth that salvation is of the Lord, for herein is all that I can claim as hope, and sometimes I fear to claim that for myself. I have been passing through a dark season, my works so foul, and faith so weak, at least small as to exercise, evil thoughts to annoy my rest, surmises that are more terrible than all, when something presents the questions, How do you know that God is not just a myth, an imagination of the brain? How can you know that there is help for you in him? How do you know that the Bible is true, when men rejected some scrolls that were written? How do you know but that some were accepted that should have been discarded? etc. I have heard brethren say, I sometimes doubt my own experience and share in the doctrine of grace, but never doubt the truths of the doctrine of the Old Baptists. I believe that I have fewer doubts than do most of the brethren, but oh how serious it becomes when I do descend down into the terrible valley where evil spirits whisper such terrifying questionings into my ear, and when it seems to be my own

thoughts! I fight them as valiently as I know how, crying and begging for an increase of faith. If I could feel worthy of the blessing I might at times be more comfortable, but just now I feel sure that unworthiness is one very great reason for hoping that the blessing of grace is mine, since He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, and it is His promise that if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. I very often think of the command to forgive those who trespass against us, to love our enemies and to pray for those who persecute us and despitefully use us and say all manner of evil against us falsely. I do not find it as hard as some do to forgive the brethren, but it is hard to feel forgiveness toward hardened sinners who misrepresent me. Are we expected to forgive the latter? Sometimes I pity them, but I feel that I should also forgive. Is my human nature better than theirs? What have I of myself but sin? Oh how we need to pray for each other! and I believe that if our love and confidence were as they should be we would not so fear to exhort one another to love and to good works. Oh that I could live more like the pattern! But it is a comfort to know that Paul also groaned within himself, being burdened from the thorn in the flesh, and we read that it "was given" to him. Did we never feel the burden of sin could we enjoy righteousness? If we never were sinners could we sing, Glory and power and majesty be unto him who hath redeemed us to God? Surely holy, wise and almighty is our God. Too almighty to fail, too wise to err, too good to be unkind. Altogether righteous and holy, and, after all, do we not have that sure word of prophecy spoken within our very souls, unto which we do well to take heed as unto a light shining in a dark place? How dark do we find it when he withdraws as it were his face from us, and if we knew not the light would we realize the darkness?

Yesterday I found in a drawer a box of old letters which were written to me by different brethren and sisters, some of whom I had never met. One was written to Mr. Peters and myself, before Mr. Peter's death. This was from Elder George Weaver, who has also written to me since Mr. Peter's death. And also such a good letter from Elder W. W. Slaughter, of Edgewood, Texas. Will you both please write again? And how I would enjoy another letter from the editors of the SIGNS, all of whom I believe have written to me, as I have to them. And since I heard you preach, brother Hardy, of Dallas, I would be very glad to hear from you. Also Elder H. B. Jones, or any others who have or have not written. Brother Webb, you who wrote to me from Hooker, Oklahoma, I replied to the letter from you, but my letter was returned unopened, marked "unclaimed." I also replied to Elder Hunt's letter. And you brethren of Kentucky named Mulberry and Jones, who called to see me, but did not find me at home, will not you write to me also? I do not know why I forgot to

ask you to call again, when you stopped at brother Cole's home. I was very tired and also worried at the time. I thought of you almost constantly for a week, hoping that you would call again before returning to Kentucky. I received a short letter or two from Elder J. C. Sykes. One from him never reached me. I feel it is asking too much to ask any of you to write, but I do not have the privilege often of a Baptist visit. I also would be glad to hear from sisters.

This morning I found a paper on which I had written some quotations from The Song of Solomon. Some of it was the language of the bride, is not this? "I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon. Look not upon me, because I am black." "Mine own vineyard have I not kept." Surely, too, have I felt that I have not kept my vineyard. Also have I said, Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest. Then how sweet is this: If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents, etc. Then doth not the flock experience this: While the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof? How true that when our Lord feasts with us the graces of the Spirit are manifest. He tells her that she is as the lily among thorns, etc. Also he says to the bride, How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse, how much better is thy love than wine. Please read the second chapter.

"A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse." Does not this mean a people set apart and protected upon every side by the faithful, unfailing love and power of Jehovah? "A spring shut up." A picture of all spiritual blessings shut up for her in Christ Jesus from before the foundation of the world. "A fountain sealed." Surely what God has sealed shall be given to those for whom it is sealed, and it would be equally impossible for any to obtain, except those for whom it is sealed. I am asking, not telling you. I would be glad if one or more would give their views through the SIGNS concerning all the foregoing.

My son (by my first husband), Dr. J. C. Wickham, of Cleveland, Ohio, stopped for me very early in the morning of October 16th, and took me with them as far as St. Louis, Missouri, where he attended a milk convention. (He, being a bacteriologist, is a milk inspector for numerous dairies, and sometimes delivers lectures before dairymen, also before medical students who study bacteria.) At St. Louis he put me on the train for Campbell, Texas, for a visit with my sister. Campbell is a suburb of Greenville. After the convention he drove down to Campbell. On Saturday before the fourth Sunday in October we attended meeting of the church at Cash, where Elder Hardy, of Dallas, is pastor. He preached very ably from the text, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord." Of course he spoke of the spiritual nation of Israel. I was sorry I could not visit with more of the breth-

ren, but my son was compelled to make our visit short. I rode home in his auto and enjoyed the trip very much, and hope to go again some time.

Brother Lefferts, please continue writing for the SIGNS.

Forgive me for bothering you, and pardon errors, and please pray for me.

JOIE E. WOODS PETERS.

BREWERS, Ky., Aug. 5, 1936.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I received and read the August number of the SIGNS with interest, love and fellowship in its contents, and as I lay on my bed this afternoon it seemed that the Spirit of the Lord overshadowed me, until I remembered many of his blessings. These words were given, "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad."—Psalms cxxvi. 3. Then the thought, Write something for the family paper. So I draw the bow of venture and proceed as the Lord wills, from the above text.

I was born in Calloway County, Kentucky, February 24th, 1870, of very chaste, moral and religious parents, with seven sisters and four brothers, who were reared to maturity and had homes of their own. The home government was very strict. While our parents lived their religion, they did not try to teach us to know God. In the latter part of August, 1881 or 1882, the Lord showed me that I was a sinner justly condemned for torment. The same afternoon he showed me that my sins were put away by the offering of Christ, once and for all. In a few weeks the gentle Shepherd led me to read in the Bible of the crucifixion of the Savior and there feel that it was my sins that helped put him to death. Soon the Lord sent dear old brother Wily Samons to my father's home, and the old servant was blessed to preach from these words: "I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me."—Psalms xxii. 17. This was the first gospel sound that was music to my soul, wherein the Savior of life was unto life as I was made to feel that I was one of the bones that did look and stare upon him that was pierced when there flowed from his dying body blood and water. As I sat on the lower step of the stairs in the corner, tears of joy flowed freely down my youthful cheeks as the righteousness of God was revealed from faith to faith. I was a light-hearted youth and the years passed pleasantly by with my schoolmates, though I had some sickness, and the misfortune of getting my leg broken and badly crushed by a fallen log I was helping to hoist in building a tobacco barn. The Lord blessed me all through my affliction, and I would say with David, Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth out of them all. I taught in the rural schools seven years, where I was given much pleasure in helping the boys and girls prepare for true citizenship. On June 18th, 1894, the Lord gave me a dear wife and true companion, who bore us a son and two daughters. Her maiden name was Miss Olive H. Thomas, and she has ever been faithful, true and near to look after me in my days of much need. I was received in the

church on Saturday before the second Sunday in August, 1893, and was baptized, with my brother, Tommy, the following Sunday by the late Elder J. P. Jenkins, who was our pastor for more than forty years. The church has been very lenient toward me these many years, where seven of us children and father and mother had membership, but mother died before all had joined. The Lord prospered me in blessing my fields to yield good crops. In 1901 I engaged in merchandising, because of my physical strength, and was favored with prosperity from the start. All these were great things wherein I rejoiced naturally and spiritually. But alas, the Lord saw fit to bring me low; yes, very small, and I thought I was going to die, and told my family so, at which they were grieved. Then I told them I would not be taken from them. I did die to so much interest in my store, and little by little the Lord poured testimony in my soul that for a few years I must labor in his vineyard, until Saturday before the second Sunday in July, 1917, I was cutting some grass in my garden, when all the testimony was in and the Judge must pass sentence. I laid my blade down and that day went before the church and told them I had confessed to the Lord by saying, Here am I, send me. (See Isaiah vi. 6-8.) The church liberated me to speak in the Master's name, and in August, 1918, I was ordained a minister, and soon was called to the care of four churches. I was elected clerk of the Soldier Creek Association in 1912 and served until 1930. I labored mostly in western Kentucky and Tennessee, but traveled some in other States. December 25th, 1930, the Lord saw fit to cut me down, and I had to be carried to the hospital and underwent a serious operation, from which I have not yet recovered. The last thing I remember before the gas was administered was, "The angel of his presence saved them [me]."—Isaiah lxiii. 9. After several weeks they brought my wife and I home (for she staid with me all the time), and I have not been favored to stir out among the brethren but a few times, but the Lord has sent many of them to our home, where we have enjoyed sweet fellowship with God. Many times he has led me beside the still waters, into green pastures and thereby restored my soul. So his rod and his staff do comfort me until I lay awake for hours some nights while he leads me in the path of righteousness for his name's sake. As I am nearing the end of my journey I can say that my God has never failed to supply all my need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus the Lord, and it has been, and is still, a healing balm for the Lord to say, I will be merciful to your unrighteousness, and your sins and iniquities I will remember no more, or, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. The Lord has given strength as the days have been, and now my faith and hope is that when I shall lay my armor by all will be swallowed up in victory through the Lord Jesus Christ, and not for what I have done, and that when I

awake I will be satisfied. Are not these great things?

Sept. 1st.—I am at home again from the hospital, somewhat relieved, but not cured, and can only hope to be an invalid the balance of my stay on earth. The other members of my family are well. I hope you and yours are well and that you may be blessed of the Lord to be active in the kingdom of our God to be about the Master's business. I need your love, fellowship, sympathy and prayers.

J. C. CHESTER.

[WE know it will be with deep regret that our readers learn of the condition of Elder Chester, and we sincerely hope there will be an improvement. In the meantime, it will be nice of those who have a mind to do so to write to him from time to time. We are grateful for his remembrance of us, and pray that the God whom he loves and serves will be very near him in his affliction and finally grant him that peace and rest that remaineth to the people of God.—R. L. D.]

FIGSBORO, Va., Aug. 11, 1936.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I have enjoyed your writings since you have been connected with the SIGNS, and most assuredly I enjoyed your preaching at our Association. The doctrine you set forth of the sovereignty of our God over all worlds, principalities and powers, purposing or decreeing all events, I do not see how mortal man could be blessed to make it any plainer than you were blessed to do. Not that my views being in accord with yours means so much to you, but your views and convictions being mine means a great deal to me. Your views, to me, are in perfect harmony with Elder Gilbert Beebe's and all the former editors who have laid their armor by. I feel assured of the fact that the SIGNS will be kept up to the standard, by the sovereign grace of God. This doctrine is my prop. May the Lord send you our way again.

I am sending another subscriber, and hope to send two more soon.

Your brother in gospel bonds, I hope,

J. E. BURGESS.

[WE greatly appreciate the foregoing letter from Elder Burgess, and wish to thank him for his interest in the SIGNS. He has sent in quite a number of new subscriptions during the past month or so, and in a previous communication he wishes "every Primitive Baptist in the world could have it (the SIGNS) to read." We wish to take this occasion to thank other brethren for what they are doing for our family paper. Its usefulness can be materially enlarged if each reader will do his bit. In this connection, we are glad to say that we thoroughly enjoyed our recent visit to Virginia, where we attended both the Pig River and Staunton River Associations. Much of the preaching which we heard we felt was attended with power from on high, for which we desire to praise God.—R. L. D.]

JOHN III. 6.

"THAT which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

The above Scripture is perhaps as commonly used as any passage in the Bible, and is perhaps as much controverted as any one. I have been a Bible reader for three score years, but whether or not I know anything about its teachings I am not sure, for I have changed my mind several times in life. I first was a rabid Arminian in belief, then was made to accept the Old Baptist doctrine as I understood it, but when the conditional theory was presented I decided it was the real truth, although I thought the absolute doctrine was the old time faith, but that a clearer view had been discovered and was more reasonable, as I could not just get it into my mind that we could do nothing. But I finally was shown, in a moment of time, that God was in all things, so from that on I have been an avowed absoluter. I had been under the impression that the whole man was born again, that the whole body and all was born again, and this I believed for many years, up to not more than three years ago. Yes, I argued it was the man that ate the bacon and beans who was the recipient of the grace of God, but now I see that that man still lives on bacon and beans, for he is still the same man he was. Brethren, I know there are widely different views among our people on this matter, but after searching the subject as I have it now seems to me nonsense to see such caviling over a point that seems so clear to me. But knowing I was so long deceived, I can have forbearance with my brethren on this subject. Some whole churches seem to believe one side and some the other, and some are very much mixed on the subject, but it seems to me that if brethren could lay aside all prejudice and look at the matter fairly it might be an easy matter to come to one common conclusion. I have recently, after seriously meditating on the reason why all cannot see it alike, come to the conclusion that they are color blind, for when they preach on the resurrection they admit this is a natural, corruptible, mortal body, but when they preach on the new birth they deny it, and some apply the adoption to the new birth, but the adoption is away down the line. Now the truth is told right in the text at the head of this article, for if that which is born of the flesh is flesh, then what else are they going to add to it? Shall we call it even a spiritual body? No, no. Herein are the two characters set forth in as plain language as can be used. Dear brethren, I have no desire to start a controversy, but it has come to me so clearly and convincingly that I just hope to drop a thought that might strike some minds and cause them to think in the right direction, as a wrong idea leads from the truth rather than to it. Some argue that we are not as bad sinners as we were before the new birth. Perhaps not, and perhaps so. I will say that I never was considered a law breaker, but have always had the name of being a moral citizen, and that is all I can claim for myself now, but oh my knowledge of

that indwelling sin, even my daily and hourly thoughts that creep into this old carnal nature make me want to hide from myself in shame. Dear brethren, do you not feel that daily rage of war within? The flesh against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that you cannot do the things you would? Where is the warfare if the whole man is in any way changed? To bring the body under subjection does not mean a change. If you remove the thorns and thistles from a piece of ground and break it up and prepare it to bring forth fruit, you have not changed the ground in its nature, only brought it under subjection, and as long as you keep it under subjection it will bring forth fruit, but when you turn it loose it will go back to thorns and thistles again, perhaps with a larger crop than before. And so it is when we live after the flesh we die, but "if ye through the Spirit [not the whole man] do mortify the deeds of the body [old man], ye shall live."—Rom. viii. 13. Is not this proof enough, brethren? Now I am not dealing with the new man that is created (a new creature) after God in true holiness, but am trying to show without doubt that this body, this clay, is not changed yet from a natural to a spiritual body, nor from a corruptible to an incorruptible body, nor from a mortal to an immortal body. Then if that only takes place at the resurrection, why talk about it being done at the time of the new birth? I kindly ask, Are you not color blind? Or where is the trouble? Paul, in Romans viii. 11, tells us that it is a mortal body, then, my opposing brother, will you, or can you dare say otherwise? Surely not.

Now I will venture to try and tell you about the other man, but will have to be brief. "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Born, I think, is brought about. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." It seems to me, brethren, here is the starting point. (This is my view.) Here is the begetting. A thing that is begotten is not a dead thing, but here is it transmitted (life) and now here sets up a travail. Let us see if this fits our experience. Yes, the travail is before the birth. Then it seems to drop right in harmony with David. The poor travailing soul sets out he knows not where, but soon finds he is lost. So it is always when one gets lost, he invariably takes the wrong direction. Yes, in the desert and in the wilderness he flees to the law, which gets him in, but never gets him out, for it is a condemner and not a justifier. God shines in (not into) the heart and the poor trembling wanderer sees by the light that shines in. It not only reveals to him his sin, but he also sees that God sees and knows just how great a sinner he is, and in his blind and frightened ramble he seeks a hiding-place, until he finds he has fallen into an horrible pit. Even then he has a faint hope that help may come, yet he has neither faith nor light until he is delivered (born). "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a

rock." Yes, the dear sinner is delivered from his agony, for he learns at that moment that a man child is born (Christ the Lord), who he finds is his wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. No matter that the dear sinner has suffered, he at once forgets it all and thinks he will have no more trials here. But oh how mistaken he is, for he will have afflictions and trials, and many conflicts with this old carnal nature, the old, outer, corrupt man.

I must make a long stride here, but perhaps it will not be worth the space it will occupy. It seems that as old age and long experience teach him some things, at least he learns patience, and learns obedience by the things he suffers, and, too, he learns more and more that he has no certain dwelling-place here, but seeks one to come, and is made to hope that when this earthly tabernacle is dissolved he has a house not made with hands. Yes, this tabernacle, for in the new birth this body becomes a tabernacle, or a temple of the Holy Ghost. Yes, brethren, this old fleshly body is sanctified, holy. That means set apart for God, even as the vessels of the temple were only earthly vessels, yet they are said to be holy, for they were set apart for God, and that is what I mean of these natural bodies, they are set apart for the service of God; not that they serve God, but serve his purpose. Paul said we have these treasures in earthen vessels. But, after all, these mortal, earthen vessels must die and go to dust, until that glorious resurrection morn, then Christ will come with his holy angels to gather his elect, who are these same spirits that now dwell in his people here, and each one shall gather up his own body. So now, brethren, here comes the time and the only time, for these vile bodies to be changed; not born, but adopted into the inheritance by adoption, then they become perfect spiritual bodies (not spirit bodies) and are like Jesus, and are equal heirs, joint-heirs, and shall ever be with him, perfect and satisfied.

I have not taken time nor space to bring up all the proof texts, but hope this will suffice. If what I have said can be condemned by the word of truth, I ask that it be not allowed space in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I submit it in love, feeling that if it is the truth it will reach lovers of the truth.

Yours in hope of the resurrection of these mortal bodies,

R. P. BYNUM.

HOUSTON, Texas.

SWEET SPRINGS, MO., Dec. 12, 1935.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you some thoughts which you may use if you think them worthy, otherwise cast them aside.

"What think ye of Christ?" This is a question of deep interest to the storm-tossed pilgrim. Christ, our Redeemer, asked his disciples directly, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" How direct and searching to his followers. They journeyed with him in the flesh. Sometimes we feel we should

like to have been with him then. Often their strength was small, but they saw some of the works that he did. Doubts and fears were removed and they could exclaim as Peter did, Thou art Christ, the Son of God. Oh the joy brought to the heirs of promise, when they are enabled to exclaim with doubting Thomas, My Lord and my God. Here is the work of Immanuel. He returned to his Father, and so his followers did greater works than they had seen, because Jesus returned to his Father. My Father worketh hitherto, and I work, and this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. The truth was swetly brought home to those disciples that flesh and blood had not revealed this knowledge to them, but my Father which is in heaven. Oh my soul, adore and wonder at the glorious mystery of everlasting love given in Christ before the world began. It comes with power. We may, like one of old, be led to exclaim, Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief. Did you receive this evidence and love like Thomas, or Paul, or Mary? Some can use fitting words in talking about it. I often wish I could tell it. I believe I will in the glory world. So we shall conquer, though we die. By this we are enabled to lay hold on eternal life, and run with patience the race set before us, with hope as the anchor of the soul, which hope is both sure and steadfast and entereth into that within the veil, where Christ hath for us entered. This is the Son of God, all power in heaven and in earth is given into his hands. He is our High Priest and Mediator until time shall be no more. Then

"From sorrow, toil and pain,
And sin, we shall be free;
And perfect love and friendship reign
Through blest eternity."

Yours in bonds of love,

J. L. KILLION.

NORFOLK, Va., May 28, 1936.

DEAR PUBLISHER:—Please receive my subscription, which I should have sent before. I was very glad of the restoration of your sight. We have God to thank for every gift. I wish to express the joy the SIGNS has been to me. I am now passing through deep waters. My son is slipping day by day, with no hope. Pray for me. I feel I am a great sinner. May God in his mercy have pity. I have never made an outward profession of my risen Savior. I have many passages of Scripture come to me with force. I pray there may be some hope for me. If I am saved it must be by His loving arms which uphold me. Very often this passage comes to me: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I am such a sinner I am afraid there is no hope for me.

I could write on and on, but I must not take you valuable time, but I know you will feel for a poor sinner.

(MRS.) C. W. NORTHERN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

William H. Morris, Mo., $1; Mrs. Edith M. Gekeler, Ore., $3.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1936.

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INTRODUCTORY.

We are confident that all who know Elder David V. Spangler, of Cascade, Virginia, will be very glad to learn that, beginning with this issue of our paper, he is to be an Associate Editor of the Signs of the Times. If he is blest to write as he preaches, he will soon occupy a place in the hearts of all our readers who love our Lord in sincerity and in truth. In order that those who are not acquainted with him may have some idea of the type of man he is, we will give the following pen picture: He is thirty-four years of age, united with the Danville (Va.) Primitive Baptist Church in the year 1918, at the age of sixteen, and began preaching when eighteen. At present, his membership is with the Spray (N. C.) Primitive Baptist Church, and he is serving as pastor, Gooch Memorial, Malmaison, Dan River, Macedonia and Cascade Primitive Baptist Churches, and in addition is Moderator of the Lower Mayo Association. We would also state that his father, Elder J. F. Spangler, is highly esteemed by those whom he serves. We have known Elder David Spangler for a number of years, and regard him as a meek and humble brother and an able preacher of the gospel of the Son of God. We pray that God's blessings may rest upon both him and all who read after his pen. R. L. D.

SALUTATORY.

At the invitation of the editor of the Signs of the Times, Elder R. Lester Dodson, I have agreed to join the Signs as associate editor. Feeling my inability to write in a way that would comfort the Lord's children, together with the fact that those who write as editor and associate editors are speaking to many whom they probably will never see face to face, and who probably would not feel to bear with my imperfections as those who know me more intimately, this caused me to hesitate to join the editorial staff. I realize that those who represent a Primitive Baptist periodical as editor or associate editor hold a sacred place, and are supposed to represent our people in the fundamental principles of the doctrine of election and the order of the house of God. Having been a reader of the Signs for several years, and having in

my possession some old copies dating back even to the first issue in 1832, and after reading the editorials covering a number of years, I have felt to say "amen" to them. The fact that God has sustained this publication for over one hundred years, when many other periodicals have fallen by the way, is evidence that it has faithfully adhered to the apostolic doctrine of salvation by grace. I hope that I can have your fellowship in the gospel of our Lord Jesus and be found contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints. May each of us help to circulate the SIGNS among God's humble poor, that it may continue to be a source of comfort to them.

D. V. SPANGLER.

GENESIS VI. 6.

"AND it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth."

We have been asked to comment upon this quotation. First, we want to say that this is not to be understood naturally. The idea held by many that God tried and failed to make the kind of man he required and then regretted his failure, or that he was disappointed because the man which he made turned out to be different from what he expected, is utterly preposterous and abhorrent to those who believe in his infinite wisdom, foreknowledge and power. Those who have a right conception of the true God cannot bear to have his honor impugned in any such manner. Job's testimony is that "he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth."—Job xxiii. 13. The prophet Isaiah declared, "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."—Isaiah xiv. 24. Instead of intimating that anything can take place unbeknowing to God, or differently from what he intended, how much better it is to undertake to show that there is absolutely nothing in heaven, earth or hell but what works according to his unchangeable will. Surely he who created the earth out of nothing and causes it to rotate on its axis, and hath placed the sun in the heavens to supply light and heat upon it; who hath made a path for the changing moon, and the tide to flow and ebb, that there should be due seasons for seed time and harvest, and hath set the stars in their courses, as well as having fixed the habitation and bounds of every living thing, whether upon land or in the sea, he who hath done all of these things cannot be questioned in any way whatsoever. Earthly kingdoms rise and fall, nations spring up and pass away, governments thrive and then disintegrate and perish, but God's eternal throne stands and his affairs undisturbedly move on. The wheel which Ezekiel saw, when it moved, went in but one direction—forward; showing that there was no lost motion, but that every turn was for the accomplishing of God's holy purposes. We believe that all things can be reconciled with his divine will and found to be in perfect harmony and accord with his superior laws. The trouble with us so much of the time is that we are out

of step with the divine order of things. Our eyes are dim and we cannot see afar off; what we need most is to be caught up by the Spirit and when it is the Lord's day with us then we can see and declare that God is light and in him is no darkness at all. We are told when God made the sea, which we understand is a type of wickedness, that he said, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and there shall thy proud waves be stayed."—Job xxxviii. 11. We read again that "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."—Psalms lxxvi. 10. God is holy and man is wicked; he is longsuffering and merciful, but his righteous judgment can be and sometimes is provoked. Therefore, in the days of Noah, when "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually," having reached the bounds of wickedness all were destroyed, save those whom the Lord had made righteous and provided for their salvation.

Once more, we hear God saying to Jonah, "Go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me." Bible readers are familiar with God's dealings with Jonah in preparing him to go to Nineveh and preach unto it the preaching which he bid him. The record is that Jonah went unto Nineveh and cried, saying, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be *overthrown.*" There is a similarity between these two Scriptures, nevertheless there is a difference. In Genesis, the Lord said, "I will *destroy* man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them," and the flood was upon the earth forty days, and we understand that every living thing upon the earth was destroyed. But to Nineveh, Jonah cried, "Yet forty days [the same length of time that the flood was upon the earth], and Nineveh shall be *overthrown.*" When this word came unto the king of Nineveh, we are told that he arose from his throne, and laid aside his robe from him, and covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. "And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh, by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing; let them not feed, nor drink water: but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?" We are further told that "the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them." It was through the workings of God's mighty power that they believed, and inasmuch as wickedness was dethroned and righteousness was set up and established, the city was truly overthrown. "And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way;

and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not." In both instances God's will was fulfilled and his purposes were accomplished, though in a different way. In each case, however, the change was wrought through or in the creature, and not the Creator. How often do we find our plans frustrated, or destroyed, when God intervenes and turns our feet from sin's destructive road and causes them to tread his high and blest abode. The change is invariably with us, for we are creatures of time and are subject to change, but God is eternally the same, yesterday, to-day and forever. He said, "I am the Lord, and change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."—Malachi iii. 6.

Not long ago a highly esteemed brother for the truth's sake, wrote us his views on this Scripture, and as we find ourself in thorough accord with what he says, we will conclude by passing it on, in substance, to our readers, as follows: "You will find that it repented God, not only that he had made man, but all living creatures. It repented him in the sense that he turned from the whole creation of living creatures and destroyed them by a flood. This was because of the wickedness of man. It all shows the displeasure of God in the wickedness of the world, not that he was disappointed in man, but he had no pleasure in unrighteousness, hence showed his displeasure in the destruction of all living creatures, except Noah, a righteous man, and other living creatures chosen of God to replenish the earth. In the destruction of man and the salvation of Noah and his family, together with the living creatures in the ark, he was preaching his doctrine of election. The righteousness of Noah saved his family, so the righteousnes of Christ saved his family from everlasting destruction and death."

R. L. D.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder R. Lester Dodson, Richard Keuhne and Miss Viola Hauser, September 5th, 1936, at the Carteret Club, in Jersey City, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MARGARET SILCOTT OLIVER, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life at the home of her niece, Mrs. John A. Furr, at Bloomfield Lounoun County, Virginia, August 20th, 1936. Her death was due to heart trouble, but she had been in bed only two days, although not having been at all well since some time in June last. She was eighty-eight years of age. She survived her husband, our late brother John F. Oliver, exactly a year lacking four days. She is survived by three sisters and one brother: Mrs. Emma Humphrey, Mrs. Duvall, Miss Jennie Silcott and Mr. Thomas Silcott, all of Washington, D. C. I have not the date of her baptism into the membership of the Old School Baptist Church, but am sure she has been a member fifty years or more. She was baptized by the late Elder J. N. Badger, and became thereby a member of the Ebenezer Church, in the upper part of Loudoun County, but after her marriage to brother Oliver she transferred her membership by let-

ter to the Frying Pan Church, in Fairfax County. My wife and I were blessed to be with her not many minutes before she passed away, and it was indeed a comfort to all of us to witness her sweet composure and quiet resignation. She was anxious to depart and be with the Lord. From her lips fell precious testimony to the goodness and mercy of God which had been with her these many years. She testified to the saving grace of her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to her thankfulness to him for all his benefits toward her. The same faith and hope in God which had been the support of her soul for so long as she journeyed here below, was steadying her and holding her to the very last. She had firm confidence that her Lord would crown with victory the work he began in her long ago.

Funeral services were held at Frying Pan meetinghouse Sunday morning, August 23rd, interment in the Herndon Cemetery. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." The fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians furnished rich substance for the funeral discourse. May the Lord comfort all those who truly mourn and satisfy their hungry souls with his marvelous righteousness and truth.

ALSO,

CHARLES H. GLASCOCK died August 20th, 1936, at 1027 G. Street, N. E., Washington, D. C. His home was at Vienna, Fairfax County, Virginia. He was born in Fauquier County, Virginia, March 11th, 1862, but moved to Vienna in 1908. He married Fannie Ann Triplett December 18th, 1889. To them were born nine children, seven of whom are living. They are Mrs. S. J. Fillingame, of Fairfax Va., Bailey B. Glascock, of Chicago, Ill., Miss Julia Glascock, of California, Miss Janie Glascock, of Vienna, Va., W. Clay and Charles M. Glascock, both of Vienna, Va., and Mrs. Russell Craig, of Vienna, Va. His widow, sister Fannie Glascock, survives him. Mr. Glascock had been failing in health for several months. I called to see him some weeks before he passed away and found him wonderfully resigned and submissive to the Divine Will. He said he felt to be entirely in the hands of the Lord and that whatever disposition he made of him was entirely right with him. He felt strongly the truth that the will of God is ever best, no matter what suffering or loss the carrying out of the supreme will may cost us. Mr. Glascock did not unite with the visible church, but he was a predestinarian and believed that salvation is not of works, but wholly of the grace of God in and through Jesus Christ. One who knew him well writes to me of him as follows: "He was never known as a popular man, nor was he an aggressive man, but I do not know of any person who disliked so few people as he, and while he did not have a great many friends, his enemies, if any, were likewise limited. He was always as kind toward his fellow-man as circumstances permitted." This estimate of him I believe to be conservative and correct. In his going, I have lost a friend. He was always good and kind to me.

Funeral services were held Sunday, August 23rd, in the Episcopal churchbuilding at Vienna, conducted by the writer. Text, Jeremiah ix. 23, 24. Burial in the cemetery at Oakton. May the holy Comforter abide with and in all who truly mourn and sustain our dear sister Glascock and all the family.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

DEACON DAVID L. BLACKWELL, of Hopewell, N. J., passed from this life to be with his Lord Wednesday morning, September 9th, 1936. A suitable obituary notice will be published later.

C. W. V.

We are again called upon to mourn the passing of a good friend to the cause of truth in the death of MRS. HEWITT SECOR, which occurred August 9th, 1936, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Amasa J. Slauson, 46 Cedar Street, Kingston, N. Y., following a long illness of an incurable nature, in the form of a tumor at the base of the brain, which rendered the sufferer a helpless invalid for many years before the end came. The funeral services were held at Mr. Slauson's home August 11th, the writer officiating. The interment was in the Hurley Cemetery. Mrs. Secor was born June 1st, 1872, and was therefore past sixty-four years of age. Her parents were Mr. and Mrs. William Barber. When a young woman she was united in marriage to Henry Demar, of Arkville, N. Y., and to this union four children were born, of whom three survive, as follows: Lawrence Demar, of West Stephentown, N. Y.; Mrs. George Stringer, of Susquehanna, Pa.; James L., of Hunter, N. Y. Left fatherless when but a child, James L. was adopted by Hewitt Secor after his marriage to Mrs. Demar in 1904. Mrs. Secor's maiden name was Marion L. Barber, and her early life was spent near Margaretville, N. Y. After her second marriage Mr. and Mrs. Secor resided at times in Poughkeepsie, Kingston and Lexington, New York, and in 1933 moved to Susquehanna, Pa., where they resided about three years. While living there Mrs. Secor suffered from a disease diagnosed as tumor at the base of the brain. She came to Kingston for treatment, and upon the advice of physicians went to a hospital in Philadelphia, Pa., in May of the present year for operative treatment. The surgeons found that the diseased tissue had so involved the brain that all of the tumor could not be removed, therefore the operation would fail to achieve the desired result and complete paralysis and certain death would be the inevitable outcome. In June Mrs. Secor and her husband came to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Amasa J. Slauson, in Kingston, where she was tenderly cared for until death mercifully ended her terrible suffering. All that faithful, loving, tender care could do for her was done by Mr. Secor and Mr. and Mrs. Slauson, but medical skill was powerless to aid the stricken patient. She bore her affliction uncomplainingly and calmly awaited the end. She believed in the tenets of the Old School Baptist faith with increasing faith as the years glided by, and during her last sickness as afflictions pressed heavily upon her longed to hear the Bible read and the hymns that are used by Old School Baptists read or sung in her presence, and delighted in spiritual conversations, as she longed for the presence of Jesus and desired to be submissive to his will. She was a woman of many splendid qualities. Besides her children and other relatives, she is survived by her husband.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

Brother J. E. EDENS was born May 16th, 1848, and died May 5th, 1936, making his stay on earth 87 years, 11 months and 19 days. He leaves to mourn eight children, seven daughters and one son, forty-four grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren, one sister, two brothers and a host of friends. He was a member of the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church for fifty-two years. The writer of this sketch was called to conduct the funeral. Our loss is his eternal gain. He was a sound Baptist and a beloved brother, attentive to his meetings as long as he was able to attend, always contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints. A father in Israel has fallen. May we be

submissive to God's will, for his will will be done in heaven and on earth.

ALSO,

SISTER SARAH A. BIRD, widow of C. M. Bird, was born April 27th, 1855, and died July 5th, 1936, making her stay on earth 81 years, 2 months and 8 days. Her husband preceded her in death about twenty-three years. Born to this union were fourteen children. Six preceded her in death. Surviving are eight children, forty-nine grandchildren, sixty-nine great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild. She united with the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church at an early age. She lived the life of her profession and died in the full triumph of a loving faith. The writer visited her while on her bed of affliction and she praised God while in great pain. I was called, with Elder Dell Smith to attend the funeral A mother in Israel has fallen, but our loss is her great gain.

J. C. HAMMOND.

MRS. ANNETTA BEAL ESTEY passed away at the home of her cousin, Mrs. Lurretia Whitman, in Topsham, Maine, July 7th, 1936. She was born in Bowdoin, Maine, the daughter of Elder Zacheous and Phebe Ann Beal, and was educated in the schools of Bowdoin, and taught several years in that town. In 1888 she married Daniel H. Higgins, of the same town, and to that union were born four children: Mrs. Ina B. Goud (now deceased), Mrs. Bernice C. Willis, of Topsham, Maine, Forest D. Higgins, of Quincy, Mass., and Mrs. Dora C. Sylvester, of Portland, Maine. Mr. Higgins passed away in 1917, and in 1920 she was married to Mr. Osborn Estey, of Lisbon Falls, Maine, where she resided until Mr. Estey's death, in October, 1935, when she came with her cousin in Topsham. Two sisters survive her: Mrs. Rachel Beal Potter, of Topsham, Maine, and Mrs. Mary Beal Minott, of Portland, Maine. Sister Estey was received into the church and baptized by Elder R. Lester Dodson at the time of our Association in Bowdoinham, Maine, September 12th, 1926. She was firmly established in the truth, and was present at the meetings until her health failed. She loved the people of God, and her walk and conversation showed that she had been taught of the Lord, and given a good hope through grace. May God comfort those who mourn, and reconcile us to his will.

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS it has pleased Almighty God, our gracious heavenly Father, to remove from our midst by the hand of death our esteemed sister and mother in Israel, SARAH A. BIRD, be it

RESOLVED that we desire to bow in humble submission to the will of him who doeth all things well. We, the church, have sustained a great loss, but we feel that our loss is her great gain Be it further

RESOLVED that we wish to extend our sympathy to the bereaved and heartbroken family, and further, that a copy of these resolutions be spread upon our Minutes, a copy be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication and a copy be given to the bereaved children.

Done by order of the Providence Church (old Pocatalico Association), now in session this day, July 25th, 1936.

H. J. BIRD, Moderator.

J. J. SMITH, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

The usual all-day meeting will be held with the New Vernon Church, New Vernon, N. Y., on Monday, October 12th, 1936, to which all lovers of the truth are invited.

R. LESTER DODSON.

Providence permitting, the Original Mount Zion Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will convene with Little Flock Church, Cass County, Missouri, October 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1936. This is located on the Old No. 7 Highway, six miles southwest of Pleasant Hill. Those coming by train or bus will be met at Pleasant Hill. We invite all sound orderly Baptists to meet with us.

DANIEL A. J. ADAMS, Moderator
Odessa, Missouri.

MRS. J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk,
Pleasant Hill, Missouri.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, Octobe 14th, 15th and 16th, 1936. All lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, including brethren and ministers of our faith and order, are cordially invited to meet with us. Those having it in their hearts to come and be with us are urged not to wait or hold back for any special invitation. The place of meeting is located on State Route No. 50, called Lee-Jackson Memorial Highway, midway between the villages of Lenah and Aldie. Those coming either by bus or by auto Tuesday before the meeting will stop at Lenah, where they will be met and cared for. Those coming Wednesday will come direct to the meetinghouse. The bus station in Washington, D. C., is at Fourteenth and New York Avenue. For any further information, if desired, write to

C. M. TURMAN, Church Clerk,
ARCOLA, Loudoun County, Virginia.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Forest Grove Church, near Parsonsburg, Maryland, and about seven miles from Salisbury, Maryland, on Wednesday and Thursday, October 21st and 22nd. 1936, these dates coming after the third Sunday in October. Those visitors coming on Tuesday before the meeting will please call at the Primitive Baptist Home, in Salisbury, where the entertainment committee will assign them homes for the night. Those coming Wednesday morning will go direct to the meetinghouse at Forest Grove, and will have places assigned them there for Wednesday night. An invitation is extended to all who enjoy our meetings to visit with us and attend the services, and especially do we invite ministering brethren of our faith and order to be with us and preach for us.

(MRS.) MAY MORRIS, Church Clerk.
G. E. COULBOURN, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets the third Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, at 10:30 a. m. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, 421 Steele, Street, Frankfort, Ky.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.

T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 104. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1936. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PREDESTINATION.

MANY years ago my father told me what a wonderful preacher Elder John C. Hall, of Virginia, had been. While attending the Pig River Association last August, and visiting with Elder B. V. Jesse, of Salem, Virginia, he told me he had in his possession a most excellent article on the subject of predestination, written by Elder Hall. He has very kindly complied with my request to send it to me for publication in the SIGNS, and it is given to our readers in the belief that it will prove to be good, strong meat for their hungry souls.

R. L. D.

FROM some cause my mind has been much exercised upon the purposes of God. I do not know why I should be so constantly meditating upon this, yet it is so. A kind of irresistible impression seems to impel me to write, notwithstanding my great weakness. I am fully aware of the fact that I am not able of myself to grapple with so deep and sublime a subject, therefore it is with much fear and trembling that I approach it. I think it is with a heartfelt desire that the Lord may direct my mind so that I may write so as to glorify his name, and thereby edify his saints, believing that when God is honored through our Lord Jesus Christ that the saints rejoice and are edified.

It was the purpose of God to speak the earth into existence. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."—Gen. i. 1. This proves a purpose to create. In fulfillment of his purpose he made the firmament that his handiwork might be shown. For "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork" That the dry land might appear, it is written, "And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good."—Gen. i. 9, 10. This

was his purpose carried out. Take into consideration the fowls, the beasts, the fishes, the herbs, etc., then come to man, and in his creation we see the plural used: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him."—Gen. i. 26, 27. In their creation they were made male and female. It is said that while they were in this state they were immortal. But God did not say so, and I shall not. It is also said that he was made able to stand, but liable to fall. But God did not say so, and I shall not, for I do not know. That he did transgress and did fall is certain. If he had never transgressed and fallen, I own that I cannot trace the purpose of God in the perfect work of salvation; for if the man had not fallen, I own that I cannot see for the life of me why God should, from before the foundation of the world, have given any of the fallen race grace in Christ. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."— 2 Tim. i. 9. This is an affirmation of the apostle, as the preceding verse shows. This grace which was given in Christ Jesus before the world began consequently was before the creation of man. If this was according to God's own purpose before the world began, it seems to me there must of necessity have been a purpose in the fall or transgression of the man, without which he never could have been the recipient of this grace. I do not think that it is blasphemy to assert that as God purposed grace in Christ Jesus before the world began, he also purposed that the sinner should stand in need of it. I am not able to see how the Lord could declare the end from the beginning and not see and know every event from the beginning. And he by the prophet declares, or commands, thus: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isaiah xlvi. 9, 10. I am not able to see how he could declare things that are not yet done unless he purposed or predestinated that they should be done. To say that he permitted things to take place that he did not purpose, seems to me to contradict itself, and makes the Creator no higher than the creature. Man purposes and plans, but his purposes fail, his plans are frustrated. Not so with God, he purposes and it comes to pass. "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven."—Eccl. iii. 1. Is this not according to God's predestination? The Lord's will cannot be frustrated in the least by any event that takes place under the sun, because every event is according to his purpose and predestination, hence it cometh to pass. "A time to be born,

and a time to die: a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted."—Eccl. iii. 2. Who can put off his birth? Not one. If there is a time for man to die, and he by some chance is cut off before his time, who is to die at his time? Can he fill the time if he is cut off before the time? If he passes over his time, then what? Who is to take him away after his time has passed, seeing that he has passed his time? Yes, says the objector, but Hezekiah had fifteen years added to his days. Yes, and if you admit that, then you can never object to God's predestination, and are compelled to honor his purpose and will be compelled to acknowledge the chance system false. For saith the preacher, "I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it that men should fear before him."—Eccl. iii. 14. We have seen that he declares he will do all his pleasure, then nothing can be put to it, and nothing taken from it, and it is clearly proven by this that all the idle cant about God being desirous to save all, and some will not let him save them, must be of the devil, and they that preach it must be the devil's tools, for the foregoing is sufficient to show His sovereignty. "Every purpose of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon."—Jer. li. 29. If against Babylon, why not in all things? It is certainly taught in the Scriptures that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and then we clearly see that nothing in the heights or depths comes to pass without his purpose. No, not the falling of a sparrow or the rustle of a leaf. The saints are saved according to his will and purpose and grace. The apostle says, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."—Rom. viii. 28-30. But, says the objector, all good things work together, and not evil things. I answer, He that purposed the good also purposed the bad, and he controls both alike. But, says the objector, this predestination, calling, justifying and glorifying refers to the apostles only, and not to the saints generally. I answer, If so, then the apostles are all that are saved, because without these callings, justifying and glorifying it certainly must follow that none could be saved, or are saved. Besides, there were only twelve of the apostles, and the number saved (and consequently were predestinated, called, justified and glorified) is a great number, or multitude, that no man could number. So the idea that it was only the apostles must be of the wicked one, and not of God.

In the purpose of God, we are taught the principles of election very plainly in the following: "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any

good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."—Rom. ix. 11-13. Are we to believe these verses, and yet condemn God's purpose, election and predestination? Surely not. Then we certainly are bold to not reverence God's way of saving his people, or to contradict his word. Are we to suppose that his purpose of election in the case of Jacob and Esau differs from his purpose with the rest of the children of men? It cannot be so, without denying his right to govern and dispose of his own as seemeth good to him. Again, read Ephesians i. 11: "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." I would ask, Who worketh things that are not after the counsel of His will? Since God worketh all things, from whence cometh other things? I must confess that if there be things either in providence or grace that are outside of God's purpose, then I am a deceived mortal. I do rejoice that the saints have a hope "according to the eternal purpose which he [God] purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Eph. iii. 11. For it does seem to me that if we ignore his eternal purpose we are without hope. I think there could be no quarreling and wrangling among the Baptists if all would be strictly attentive to the Scriptures, for they certainly do teach the sovereignty of God clearly. His eternal purpose, election and predestination are stamped upon every page. Our exalted Creator certainly purposed all events, or else he purposed a part and left some to chance; and we know that if it is based upon chance, it may or it may not be. Far be this from God. There is no chance work in grace, or in providence. All things have fixed laws, and one law does not annul another, so far as it relates to the works of the eternal God. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."—1 John iii. 8. He did destroy the work of the devil, and thereby proved himself the Son of God. If not, then he has failed to prove his Sonship. Then predict the events of time upon chance, and to my mind we dishonor God, and make his Son out to be an impostor. I know carnal reason revolts at the idea of God's complete sovereignty. But we are to understand that carnality never believes in anything above itself. It is the Spirit that reveals Christ as a complete Savior, and that clearly proves the purpose of God. Every purpose of God is for some wise end. When he said to Pharaoh, "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee,"—Rom. ix. 17, evidently the purpose of God according to what he in his foreknowledge intended, or purposed, was fulfilled in him. Certainly he would not purpose the course of Pharaoh and leave the rest of men to work by chance. No, no, he declared the end from the beginning. Was not this the end of all things, acts

or events? To deny it, it seems to me, would be blasphemy. Then if many cannot fathom the deep things of God, none should ask why or, What doest thou? The Lord saith of the church, or at least to the Ephesians by Paul, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." Then the saints have the eyes of their understanding enlightened, therefore they alone can see a beauty in the purposes of God, and look for the fulfillment of them all, and God will not disappoint them; if so, then some things will work together for their ill, and not for their good. It is a comforting truth that God purposes, and none can frustrate him. Let us keep silent and hear the Lord speak of his purposes by the prophet: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand: that I will break the Assyrian in my hand, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth; and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all nations. For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back? In the year that king Ahaz died was this burden." —Isaiah xiv. 24-28. Looking at this wonderful prophecy, who can doubt the fulfillment of all the wonderful purposes of God, or question his sovereignty, or deny his predestination? To my mind, if in the wisdom of God anything visible to mortals, or invisible to them, were to work contrary to the purpose of God, then all that was purposed in Christ would be likely to turn out to be a failure in what Christ purposed to accomplish. And should his purposes fail in one instance, it follows, of course, that all might fail, and that Christ hath died in vain. Oh how discouraging, how horrible, to think of even a remote possibility of a failure in the complete and perfect salvation wrought out by Christ at such an awful and wonderful cost! What a howl of triumph would arise from the dark dungeon of hell if one purpose of God were to fail. All the demons of that awful abode would arise and with demoniac yells make universal space resound with their shouts of triumph over the conquered Son of God; and we think Christ and all the angels of glory would stand trembling for the safety of the throne of God. If one link in the chain of God's purposes—election, predestination, or of the reign through Christ—could be broken, then farewell to the whole race of man, for all would be forever gone, eternally gone. But, to my mind, all things were purposed by the eternal I Am, and his purpose is as sure to accomplish as it is sure that his throne stands. I cannot see, for the life of me, how his honor can be maintained if we teach a probability of the failure of his grace. Never, to my mind, has one single sinner been quickened to life only by the Spirit of God;

and this, it seems to me, is because of the reign of grace, and this grace was given in Christ before the world began, and consequently was bound, in the very nature of things, to have been before there was a man made; and that must of necessity prove that God purposed to make man, and that man would need a Savior, because of his death in sin. "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."—Rom. xi. 33-36. Now if in the wisdom of God all things are for him, it does seem that it is reasonable to conclude that all and every event which taketh place in the heights above, or the depths beneath, or in the lengths, or breadths, either in earth or hell, are under his control, and that he purposed and foresaw them, and overrules them to his own glory; or else events are not things. Then taking this view of the wisdom, power, mercy and love of God, I feel safe in believing and teaching that the God of salvation is a complete Sovereign, and therefore live in hope of his mercy, and that through efficacy of the blood and righteousness of his adorable Son I shall yet praise him who is my wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. (1 Cor. i. 30.) Then God forbid that we should glory save in the Lord.

Dear brethren, I have thrown these thoughts together under the most trying circumstances, with much fear and trembling, knowing that I am imperfect, ignorant and short-sighted, often wondering, Can it be that such a creature as I am can be a child of God, saved by grace?

I have written my own imperfect views, without consulting any man for his views. I alone am responsible for what is here presented. I desire that if this is published none will take offense because of it. I hope I have had the honor of God in view, and trust that I have had the mind of Christ. My race is nearly run. I shall soon go hence, and shall soon know the reality of these things. I am looking forward to the time of my departure. When I go I expect and believe I shall meet a satisfied Savior. My hope is to see the King in his beauty, and the whole of the purchases of Christ's blood, which will be a train that shall fill the temple—not one left out for whom he atoned. Then I shall be as the glorified saints, and methinks that all the hosts of heaven will be shouting, "Crown him Lord of all." Then I shall be completely happy, as I stand with the sanctified family of God. To his name be all the praise, now and in a world which shall never end.

J. C. HALL.

GOGGINSVILLE, Virginia.

FAYETTE, Alabama.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you this letter from brother Myers, thinking it will be comfortinng to some of God's little ones. It coincides with my own experience so perfectly that I have enjoyed reading it. I intended sending it sooner, but it got misplaced and I have just found it. He has not joined the Pratt City Church yet, but we hope he will soon.

G. W. BERRY.

EAST LAKE, Ala., July 6, 1934.

MR. G. W. BERRY—DEAR FRIEND:—For two or three months I have been impressed to write you a bit of my seemingly worthless life, as regards my experience. Three or four times, perhaps, I have heard you speak, and twice while listening to you I was strangely impressed. Three months ago, at Pratt City, I told you my name, though I suppose it has passed from your mind by now. I feel that I am obliged to tell you some of the things which have influenced my life seriously. It appears to me that you as a friend, I trust, will be enabled to understand if God has moved me and directed me to write you.

Until about fourteen years of age I must have been the meanest boy that ever trod the earth. There was nothing of evil I dared not do if my mind so directed to do it. I have often thought since one eventful day in about my fourteenth year, had not God's mercy stopped me prison or death could only insure the public peace from my depredations. One evening of this year I picked up my father's old Bible, and was reading in the twenty-first chapter of Revelation. The eighth verse stopped me, or I mean to say I was stopped, for I was thrust through and through. Instantly I saw my life condemned eternally, with no possible way of escape. I laid the Bible down and fled from my home in despair. But what could I do? I was, without a doubt, all that this verse said, and it said that without concessions we shall have our part in that lake of fire and brimstone. I sought a private place in the woods and tried to pray, for the first time in my life. Who drove me to prayer? and who had taught me so soon that there was a refuge, or a hope, in prayer? But no hope or peace came after this struggle at prayer, and did not until many days after. Why the use of prayer? There could be no forgiveness for a sinner as great as I. For days almost every waking moment of my life was filled with despair. I cried frequently, and tried to shield my sorrow from every one. My sins were too many and too great, and eternal damnation surely. Whenever I saw a person I knew to be above reproach I would have given worlds (if I had possessed them) to be as good as they. My father, whose sincerity I trusted, I could not tell him. He must not know his boy to be so mean and so unfortunate as to never enjoy heaven with him, and not until four or five years later did I tell my father of this experience. My mind at times seemed to be fading, and it seemed that my fight was lost forever. One day I was

plowing and I felt I must go again and try to pray. I went and knelt by a little spring where I often went for water. After awhile I arose, with no relief yet. I started back to where I had been plowing, still feeling I was eternally lost, with nevermore a chance of deliverance, when suddenly my burden rolled away, as suddenly as it had come. No greater feeling of relief had I ever felt before, and I am not sure that I can say I have ever felt any greater relief since. A thing which has made me doubt my experience is that I heard no still small voice, and did not vision God, my Savior. It has often made me feel that mine is no experience at all. But my burden was gone, and I rejoiced. I began to try to obey the law, but was to learn that I could not. I drifted along for three or four years, always conscious of being very imperfect, but nevermore doing wrong without later feeling sorry for it. At the age of eighteen I became minded to improve my education and leave the farm, and at the end of my twenty-first year I found myself in the postal service. I had read the Bible through by that time, and was most of the time interested in writers of depth. At the age of twenty-three I married. I became so interested in my postal work that I left off reading the Bible, and seemed to forget everything but my work. Since the time I had confided my experience to my father, he at every opportunity wished to talk with me about the Bible, but I got so I felt mean and dark when he approached spiritual things, and often wished he would leave me alone. At times I felt lost to all hope.

I suppose I should have said before that from my early years I felt that my life would be one of great service, and that this service would be to my country, temporally speaking. I dreamed of fame, but the last two or three years have disrobed me of all worldly ambitions. I have often thought that my life would pass suddenly, possibly as a martyr. I thought as I worked to perfect myself in my work that I was heading to this end. But like the man in Pilgrim's Progress, I must have been asleep, if ever awake. But I was always conscious of being a sinner, and one morning about two and one-half years ago I came across a copy of the *Lone Pilgrim*. I there found an article which seemed to awaken me, or, as I should say, the power which attended it did. Then, for the first time in my life, I began to search after spiritual things, I hope. I began to read my Bible again, and now practically all my reading is the Bible and things relative thereto. But as my knowledge of these things broadens I am made to feel more and more my vileness. I do not know that I can say I any more feel that eternal condemnation is my lot, but I feel so mean and vile at times that divine justice could do no wrong in banishing me there forever. The last few months I have had a longing at times to follow Christ, but how may I? I have been vile so long.

About two months ago I dreamed I was climbing a long, steep mountain highway, and at last it became so steep

that it inclined the other way, and going further was impossible. The next thing I remembered, my body rested at the top of the incline on a large flat rock. As I rested there I remembered the Scripture: He is the Rock; his work is perfect. After that, I dreamed I was on a narrow, rounded pinnacle, wind-swept and stormy, and far above the world, and so alone. About eight months after that, I dreamed I arose to speak to an audience of God's people and it vanished. And that time I dreamed I was far above the world and everything. What could it mean, if anything? and why am I so impressed?

All through those years of my consciousness of my sins I had never looked at Christ as my real friend, but in my ignorance had looked away from him. Very often in the last two or three years I have sought him and found him not. I mourn as never before for his divine presence, and it comes not. Sometimes I feel that all the many sins I have ever committed are revisited upon me. Only yesterday, I almost broke down, and as I felt so vile and shut up I just longed that I might follow Him just one step. But no, not for me. I have been unruly so long.

My occupation calls for more Sunday work than Monday. Last first Sunday I desired very much to be at Pratt City and see and hear you there, but there was I on a fast mail train at my work. My present environment and work is not my choice any more. It seems that if I could hear the doctrine regularly it would be of much consolation now. I am surrounded by every temptation. My companions are of a sort that make my life unpleasant daily. I hear every kind of an opinion, and hear much vile language. I see so much sin, and am so prone to it myself, that I feel very morbid about everything, and the failure of myself to do anything, that I sometimes wish my life would cease. I have been taught that I of myself can do nothing good, and that Christ performs my righteousness. But he is so much of the time gone from me, and of late it gives me much concern that he leaves me alone so often.

If what I have said does not appeal to you, or does not impress you as the truth, just overlook the writer as another blunder, for in myself I am nothing else. If God has not directed my mind this letter is as so much vapor, but the impression that I must write to you will have gone as soon as it passes from my hands. If what I have said is not the truth, I have been horribly deceived

Yours, I trust, in love,

EARL MYERS.

HEMLOCK, Mich., Jan. 10, 1934.

DEAR BROTHER RUSTON:—If I may thus claim to be your brother, I feel the least, if one at all, but I feel I must answer your good letter to me, to let you know, at least, how my general health is. I am recovering from my operation as well as can be expected. I feel good as long as I keep quiet. I am not able to do any work that causes much exertion, but seem to gain slowly, for which I feel very thankful to God

that giveth liberally and upbraideth not. God is, and has been, good to me far beyond what I deserve. My family, and my daughter, Mrs. Hodgins, and family, are well.

Brother Ruston, I am doing something I have never done before. Last night while sitting here thinking of you, and that I should answer your letter, I picked up a pad and pencil and my thoughts went back over my past life from nature to grace, and I commenced to write; now I am going to send it to you, knowing that, God being with you, you will detect whether it be of God or not. The thought came to me the large majority of the people of to-day think the way to be saved is to do some works or acts as service to God. They forget that there is none good; no, not one. The way of truth they have not known; they have all gone astray. They do not know the condemnation of their hearts. The very best that I can do, is only filthy rags. If I have ever done one good act, may God have all the praise, for I know that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. I find that when the eye of God is turned from me I go down even to the depth of hell. By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. I think I have learned by sad experience that there is nothing I can do to merit the favor of God. He is of one mind, and what his soul desireth that he doeth, and none can stay his hand. I am God, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. If I have ever tasted any of the good things of God, it is because he willed it so, and caused me to stand still and see the salvation of God. One thing that has caused me very much trouble in the last thirty-five years is, I cannot place any special time that I can surely say that God has forgiven my sins. God says, Ye must be born again. If I have ever been born of the Spirit it has come so gradually that I do not know it. I must say that I have peace of mind, from time to time, hearing the gospel preached, and I hope it may be that God has forgiven my sins.

I would like to go back to a time, about sixty or more years ago, when I was just a small child. There is one instance in my life I can never forget; it was back in Old Olive, N. Y. They held an Old Baptist meeting one night at brother Alvah Bogart's, up on the mountain. I was taken there by my father and mother. I do not remember how I got there or how I got home, but I remember being there and seeing the people sitting in the rooms. I can see them as plainly to-day as at that time, with Elder J. D. Hubbell preaching. He took his text from John xiv. 1-3: "Let not you heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." After that I went on just the same as other boys through life, until I was about thirty years of age, with

the exception that I always held to Old School Baptist doctrine. I used to like to sit and hear the Old Baptists talk about Jesus and his love to poor lost sinners, when they came to our house at Association times, or any other time that it happened that way. I always liked Old Baptist preaching, but I did not understand it. I can remember a great many times we boys would get to arguing about religion, and I would always hold to the point that what is to be will be, and I have never gotten over it.

Now we will go back to when I was thirty years old, or thereabouts. It was then my trouble began. From the age of eighteen to twenty-six I led a wild life, drank considerably until I was twenty-six, and then I got married, and thought it was time to stop. I do believe that God caused me to do it, for it did not seem any trouble to give it up; still I had a bad habit of using profane language. After I had been married a few years, I was coming from the field to the house one noon, and I was thinking about it, and I thought, What good does it do me to keep swearing whenever anything goes wrong?. Now, right here, I think that God caused me to stop that very bad habit. Up to that time I do not think I was getting any better, as far as my religious life was concerned, for I was not much worried about that, any more than that the thought would sometimes come to me, What is to be will be. That if God wants me to be better he will make it known to me. Some time after that it was made known to me that I was a condemned sinner before the just and holy God. I could see him just in all his ways, and me a condemned sinner, with no way of escape. Then I cried to God to be merciful to me, a poor, lost sinner. I can see myself now, walking through the field plowing, with the tears running down my cheeks and I, a poor lost sinner, pleading with God to forgive my sins. And such has been my walk all through the remainder of my life. Gradually my load of guilt wore away to some extent. As I have said, I have had many times when I hope God for Christ's sake has forgiven my sins, and made me to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord. I hope that there have been such times, sitting and hearing you proclaim the truth of the gospel, the unsearchable riches of Christ, to poor sinners. In such seasons of rest and peace, listening to the different preachers and reading the Bible and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I hope that it may be God has forgiven my sins. Oh the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out.

Now, brother Ruston, I think I have said enough to give you an outline of my experience. After reading it over I see it is very imperfect, like the writer. My wife and I send our love to you and yours, and do not forget to give our love to the brethren and sisters. We often think of them.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

EVERETT H. WINCHELL.

DUQUOIN, Ill., July 2, 1936.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—It has been many long and dreary years since I have written anything for publication, and when I think of trying to write upon the all-important subject of the sovereignty of our God the magnitude of the subject causes me to shudder at the attempt. However, I always love to read the lovely articles from the pens of those whose hearts have been renewed and regenerated by the Spirit of God's divine grace, and published in the SIGNS, and some time soon I wish to write a few thoughts touching upon the doctrine of God's eternal election. For some reason best known to God that subject has rested upon my mind for the past several weeks with more force than ever before, and the only way I know to get it off my mind is to write it, or sing it, or preach it off; and since I cannot do the latter I may try the former.

Brethren, if it is not asking too much of you, will you kindly advise all peace-loving Old School Baptists everywhere within the range of your subscription list that the next regular session of Bethel Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists will be held at Nine Mile Church, about four and one-half miles northeast of Duquoin, Illinois, instead of at Old Royal Church, in Saline County, Illinois, and we very earnestly invite all sound Old Baptists everywhere to attend this session, which will be on the third Sunday in September, and Friday and Saturday before. We expect many visiting preaching brethren, who will shun not to declare the whole counsel of God in the salvation of sinners, who believe and teach that the purpose and predestination of God is just as eternal and unconditional as God is; and who believe that God's predestination and election are just as inseparable as God and his Christ. Space forbids that we enlarge on this subject at this time, but again permit us to ask that all who love the doctrine of God's absolute, unlimited predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass, grace this Association with your presence, and may God enable you all to remember this Association when at the throne of divine grace.

Your humble servant,

L. P. HARRIS, Modtrator.

[WE sincerely regret that this letter, with its invitation to visit the Bethel Association, was not published before the meeting was held, but it was overlooked by us, and we humbly ask the pardon of the writer and all the members of the Bethel Association for the oversight. We would suggest that in sending notices for publication that the notices be sent separate and not be included in a letter, for if so sent they are liable to be overlooked until after the date of holding the meetings, as was the case with the foregoing one.—PUBLISHER.]

SIERRA CITY, California, June 18, 1936.

EBENEZER CHURCH, NEW YORK CITY—DEARLY BELOVED IN CHRIST OUR LORD:—You have been much in my mind of late, and I have been thinking of writing you, but feel my short-

comings when I think of doing so, so have put it off. Now these words have come to me: Comfort ye them with the comfort wherewith ye have been comforted. These words in Zechariah have been with me much of late. Yes, for the past two or three months, and have been very sweet and precious to me, and are first in my mind now. "And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off, and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them; and I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God." These words seemed so inexpressibly precious to me I could say, and did say, Bless the Lord, O my soul. Life seems hard to us many times, but we must be brought through the fire. Could anything hurt the flesh more than fire? But God is bringing us to him in this way, and these are his people who are brought through the fire. He is our only help in time of need, and we call upon him at such times, and feel truly that we are his people, and he is (bless his holy name) the Lord our God. When these seasons of the felt presence of our Lord are with us we feel as those felt who were journeying to Emmaus, that we need him to abide with us. How can we let him go?

I am here at Packer Lake for the summer. This is my son's mountain camp, or summer resort. The guests are very modern people, so you may imagine I am not at home among them, but I have my log cabin, where I can be alone with my reading and my thoughts, then I take two long walks each day, and the scenery here is wonderful. God made the country, and man's works are nothing in comparison.

My best love to you all, but I feel I am unworthy of yours.

NELLIE H. ARNOLD.

NASHVILLE, Tennessee.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a money order for two dollars, for which please send my brother, Luther P. Cole, Route 2, Box 137, Hahira, Georgia, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He is my oldest brother, and has not been able to walk for some two years. I only hope the paper will afford him as much spiritual food as it does me. I feel I could hardly do without it, for it is about all the Old Baptist doctrine I ever have. Each month I wait for it as patiently as I can. I do not belong to the Old Baptist Church, but love the doctrine of salvation by grace, and when I feel low, as I often do, it comforts me to remember the Scripture, By grace are ye saved through faith (and I hope I have a little faith), and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.

A sinner,

W. H. COLE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1936.

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JONAH THE PROPHET.

We feel ourself, at this time, when we should present our views to the readers of the Signs in the form of an editorial, thinking upon the prophet Jonah and his wonderful testimony to the truth of our God. From reading his testimony, we conclude that Jonah was a man of like passions as we are, changeable, and easily depressed. His name signifies a dove, a lover of quiet rural scenes rather than the clamorous resorts of the populous cities, but the command of God came even to him, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city." What consternation and distress such a command must have brought to quiet, peace-loving Jonah. His testimony among his own people was that God was a gracious God, merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth thee of the evil. (Jonah iv. 2.) Thus Jonah had a sweet testimony of the love and mercy of a gracious God in his own country, when God gave him his commission to arise and go to Nineveh. Jonah shrank from such a commission, he was a Jew, and Nineveh was a Gentile city. It was the last place that he, a Jew, would want to go. He knew Nineveh was a very wicked city, yet the thought of God sending a prophet to the Gentiles was very distasteful to him, a Jew, therefore he fled to Tarshish. It is written, "Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish, from the presence of the Lord." David in Psalms cxxxix. says, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" But Jonah here would flee from the presence of the Lord, which implies that Jonah's mind was opposed to God's command, yet such is God's purpose toward Jonah that though he would flee from God's command, God's kindness follows him, and his power overshadows him, and he could say, as David, "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." Thus God's power was manifest, for "The Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken." This disturbed the ship's crew, and they cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea to lighten it of them, yet while they were filled with fear, Jonah lay in the sides of the ship

fast asleep. Thus far Jonah must have been self-satisfied, he had chosen an easier way. Before he took ship at Joppa he had perhaps spent sleepless nights fighting against God's command, but now he could sleep soundly while all the others were alarmed. At last, the shipmaster, in his extremity, seeing their prayers of no avail, finds Jonah, that strange man, fast asleep. As strange to himself as to others, he could sleep soundly while others trod the deck full of fear and consternation. "So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not." They cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah, and Jonah tells them who he is, and that he fears the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land. "And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea: so shall the sea be calm unto you." The men dreaded to do this, for it seemed to them like murder, and so they rowed hard to bring the ship to land, but they could not; then instead of calling on their gods, they cried to the Lord for mercy, confessing that the Lord had done as it pleased him. So they cast Jonah into the deep, and the sea was calm unto them. God's sovereign power had not taken second place in anything that had transpired. It is true he had permitted Jonah to resist his command, proving to Jonah, and even to us, how longsuffering our God is. God's providence was all the time over Jonah, over him in the ship, and over him when cast overboard. "Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights," and Jonah was carried to the bottom of the mountains, with the weeds wrapped about his head. Here Jonah cried to the Lord and prayed out of the fish's belly, and here Jonah became a "sign." Had he not been brought there by God, then our Lord would never have referred to him as he did, on at least three occasions, in the gospels. This timid man was being taught in God's school, and was made willing in the day of God's power to go and preach the preaching that God had bidden him. What a blessed prayer this dear man uttered, a prayer full of deep experience. True, the men cast him overboard, but he, in God's school, knew God had done it, and he could cry with David, "All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." In his prayer he made confessions; he said also, "They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy." To our mind this does not refer to the world, or worldly religion, which is a religion of self-righteousness, they do not follow lying vanities, for at their best state they are altogether vanity, but it refers to God's children, who, like Jonah, turn away from the truth to vain things. Thus Samuel warned Israel, 1 Samuel xii. 21, "And turn ye not aside: for then should ye go after vain things, which cannot profit nor deliver: for they are vain." Israel of old often followed after lying vanities, as in another place it is recorded, "Notwithstanding, they would not hear, but hardened

their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God. And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed vanity, and became vain." To-day, as of old, many turn aside from a "thus saith the Lord" and lean to their own understanding, and, in doing so, forsake, or turn from, their own mercy, mercy which stands not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Here let us say to the praise of our God, that while they forsake, or turn from, their own mercy, that mercy does not forsake them, which truth Jonah lived to prove. Again the command came, "Arise, go unto Nineveh," with this remarkable injunction, "and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee," and Jonah went with a clear testimony, for it was God's word sent to that city, and the city believed from the greatest to the least. In this astounding result of his preaching, Jonah stands alone in the Old Testament, and in this he stands as a "Sign" of a greater than Jonah, all to whom he was sent, repented and obtained mercy from God. In the heart of all to whom he was SENT there was a "who can tell," and in the heart of all to whom Jesus is SENT there is a "who can tell," and God does spare them, from the least to the greatest, for Jesus' sake. Thus Jonah passed through trying scenes to bring him where he was "made willing" to walk alone through that great city, preaching its destruction, preaching that which God bid him. Some have said Jonah preached destruction unless they repented, just as the self-styled Jonahs do now, but that is not so. Jonah was told to preach, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." This was not a conditional matter, there was no mention of repentance in his testimony. Jonah said it would be destroyed, and he felt its destruction would be good proof that he was a prophet of God. One can therefore imagine his consternation and anger when God saw fit to spare the city. He was angry, for his testimony was made to look like foolishness itself. Many of those whose lot it is to preach know how foolish they have at times felt, and how, to human reason, their testimony has been foolishness. This experience was very mortifying to poor Jonah, whose reputation would be gone if that great city were spared, and he would rather die than suffer such humiliation. Jonah could not understand why God had mercy upon Nineveh, neither could the Jews understand why Jesus had mercy on Gentiles, publicans and sinners, and as the Jews of Christ's day, Jonah felt he did well to be angry. What a wonderful example of God's mercy for the Jews to think of in Christ's day, he spoke to them of it, but to no avail, and they hated him for his kindness to poor sinners. Again the Lord does not leave Jonah to himself, but says, "Doest thou well to be angry?" This time Jonah did not reply to the Lord, but sat down on the east side of the city, until he might see what would become of the city, and there he made him a booth. Jonah undoubtedly

had a self-righteous spirit, and might have said to poor Nineveh, Stand by thyself, for I am holier than thou. While poor Nineveh was humbled in the dust, Jonah sat under a booth of his own making, findinng shelter there from the heat of the sun. "And the Lord God prepared a gourd." God has before prepared a fish, now he also prepares a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad for the gourd. "But God prepared a worm when the morning rose next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered." And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon Jonah's head and he fainted, and again he wished to die. Again God said, "Doest thou well to be angry?" "And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death." Then the Lord brought home that lesson, that Jonah had been sorry for the gourd, which came in a night, and perished in a night, and said he, "Should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand, and their left hand; and also much cattle?" Thus this strange man Jonah was taught in God's school and found through all his anger and rebellion that God cannot be changed by the anger of man, and that he is more merciful than man knows how to be. We love to speak of God preparing a fish to swallow Jonah, but he also prepared a gourd, and he prepared a worm to smite it, and we are sure that there are no sent servants of God but have to be taught in the same school as Jonah. It is not pleasant to have the weeds wrapped about our head, to have the earth with her bars about us forever, but that is the way, if we must preach "Salvation is of the Lord." Whatever be the great fish that God has prepared, whether it be religious bodies, secret societies or modern society, it will vomit all such up when they have learned the truth from God, their only teacher, that salvation is of the Lord. Many will be the lessons afterwards that God will give them, and many will be the gourds that he will blast, sometimes as they separate themselves in a self-righteous zeal which comes in a night and will go in a night, when God prepares the worm of mortification to strike their gourd. The number of gourds that God's children would shelter in is legion, sometimes being very angry against brethren, forgetting that such anger is against God. Following after lying vanities, they forsake their own mercy, yet we repeat again, their mercy does not forsake them, all through their course God's sovereign hand will maintain his work, so that from the greatest to the least they will be spared. The Jews who were angry, like the elder son, who was angry, and would not come in to partake of the feast which was given to his younger brother, as recorded in the parable of the prodigal son, found shelter under a righteousness of the flesh given to them by Abraham, in the ordinance of circumcision, in which the

Jews gloried and found comfort, rejoicing that they had Abraham to their father. It came in a night, during the patriarchal dispensation, and it was smitten in a night when that worm, that dieth not, struck their gourd, destroying all in which they had gloried, leaving unto them their house desolate, for one had said, My God shall cast them off, and they shall be wanderers among the nations. When that came upon them, the legal ordinances, that sheltered them, were dissolved, and they were subjected to the vehement east wind of desolation and woe, exposed before all people to the judgments of an angry God. Many are the thoughts that present themselves as we meditate upon this wonderful subject, and we shall have attained what we desire if we stir up the minds of our readers to think on these things, but let us not lose sight of the place that Jonah occupies, for the resurrection of our Lord was foreshadowed in the experience of the prophet. The fish could not assimilate the body of Jonah, neither could this earth hold Jesus, for he arose and became the firstfruits of them that slept. Thus in preaching Jesus and the resurrection they gave to that wicked generation of the Jews the "sign of the prophet Jonas," and they declared that he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Each time a believer was baptized he gave the "sign" to that generation wherever he was. He is buried in the water, so that he disappears from all who behold him and he rises again a miracle of the grace of God. Thus baptism is a sign of the church of God, "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace," and presents a sign before men of the burial and resurrection of our Lord and all those that are his. As Nineveh, that great city, repented and was spared, the Lord Jesus came to give repentance unto Israel and the remission of sins, and all the true Israel from the greatest to the least shall be saved.

G. R.

A SPECIAL OFFER.

TEN years ago, I compiled and published a 140 page book entitled PREDESTINATION. It contains some of the ablest articles ever written on this subject. Three English writers—August M. Toplady, Elisha Coles, William Gadsby—and Elders Samuel Trott and Gilbert Beebe are among the outstanding contributors. Between eight and nine hundred of these books have been distributed throughout the country, which indicates their popularity. They sold originally for $1.00 each. I still have on hand about one hundred copies, and during the months of November, December and January, unless the supply is exhausted in the meantime, as a special inducement to new subscribers, I will send one of these books free to each NEW two dollar cash subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which will cover one year's subscription. Any old subscriber can have a book free by sending the name of a NEW yearly subscriber, with the money, to the publisher, J. E. Beebe & Co., Box 243, Middletown, N. Y. Some of our readers may also wish to remember

those less fortunate than themselves at this season of the year by having the SIGNS visit them throughout the year. Every such subscription will be entitled to a book, as long as they last. I would much prefer to present the book as a gift for the purpose of building up the subscription list to the SIGNS than to sell it direct, so please bear this in mind, and order the paper through the publisher, who will in turn notify me, when the book will be sent.

R. LESTER DODSON.

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IN each copy of this issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we are inclosing a subscription blank for the convenience of our subscribers in renewing their own subscriptions and in sending the names of new subscribers, and we appeal to each of our friends to do what they can toward helping us build up our subscription list.

The date on the little pink slip bearing your address, which you will find either on your paper or the wrapper in which it comes to you, signifies to what time your subscription is paid. If your subscription has expired, or is about to expire, please send on your renewal if you can spare it, but if you are not at the present time in a position to renew your subscription, but hope to be later on, do not order your paper stopped, for we would much rather continue sending the paper to you until such time as you are able to pay for it than to take your name from our list.

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J. E. B. & CO.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder H. J. Bird.)

The Pocatalico Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the Providence Church, Putnam County, West Virginia, to the several churches of which she is composed, and to all with whom we correspond, sendeth loving greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN AND KINDRED IN THE LORD:—It has fallen to our unworthy lot to address you in this our epistle of love, commonly known as a Circular Letter. We wish to state in the outset that we possess no merit of our own, no creature goodness, and therefore know of no other obedience, no other righteousness than the obedience and righteousness of Christ. We feel that it is through the goodness and mercy of Israel's God that we are yet spared and blessed with this, another privilege of coming together in an association, where we hope that love may reign, and where we humbly hope that each may esteem others better than themselves, and that as children who have hope in the heavenly calling might be found at each other's feet, and at the feet of King Emmanuel, desiring to know no will but his, as thus it becometh our profession. In this dark and cloudy day, when great and threaten-

ing clouds seem to overhang the spiritual horizon, in this day of great falling away, this time of backbiting and devouring, of wars and fightings, we feel there are a few names reserved, a portion of the seven thousand (the reserved of the Lord) who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal (idolatrous worship), and that this reserve is the remnant according to the election of grace, who are rooted and grounded in the doctrine of Christ and the apostles, and who are not carried about by every wind of doctrine. It is such as we have herein mentioned that we desire to address in this epistle, if it be the will of the Lord to direct our pen to the honor of his blessed and holy name. We wish to call your attention at this time to the second chapter of Ephesians, especially the first, eighth, ninth and thirteenth verses. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." So here in this one blessed declaration of holy writ we have the doctrine of the total depravity of man set forth, although would-be teachers have risen up advocating perverse things, teaching that there is a spark of life left and by sufficient fanning, or effort, on the part of the creature this spark may be fanned into a flame. But this theory is nothing short of teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, and bears much likeness to the declaration of the serpent in the very morning of time, to our mother Eve in the Garden of Eden: "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die," etc.—Gen. iii. 4. So these are not new sayings, but since they are contrary to the clear teachings of the word we wish to reject all such theories, and have no fellowship for such as have pleasure in such unfruitful works of darkness. Our text embraces *surely dead,* with no quickening powers vested in the creature who is thus held in the reign of death. Beloved brethren, listen what sayeth the word: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." What, then, is our condition and standing in this sense before God? Lost, ruined, undone, debauched with sin, as black, as vile, as sin can make us, possessing nothing of our own to cover our shame, lost, irretrievably lost, so far as our ability is concerned. Where then is the remedy? Let us explore the ground. Pause, my soul, adore and wonder. Was ever love so great? Was ever grace so free? "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Here is the person of the man Mediator brought to view, hence the Man by whom came the resurrection from the dead.

"You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Quicken means to make alive. It is all of him who had life, to whom be glory and honor forever. Amen. It is all of him who died that we might live; who had power to lay down his life and who had power to take it again.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."—Eph. ii. 8, 9. There can be no mixing of works and grace. Where, then, are works? Where is boasting? Excluded altogether. "As it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." "For in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ."—Eph ii. 13. What glad tidings to us poor Gentile

pilgrim strangers, who were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God." But the excellency of the power is of God, to the praise of his grace.

Finally, brethren, be of good cheer, the righteous shall hold on his way. The promise is sure to all the seed. All the seed royal shall persevere through grace to glory, and shall ultimately all be housed on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance, clothed with that blessed immortality, when the dead in Christ shall awake at the voice of the archangel and the trump of God and arise in his blessed likeness, shall see him as he is and be like him, and they that remain shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall they ever be with the Lord.

"Oh glorious day! Oh blessed hope!
My soul leaps forward at the thought;
When in that happy, happy land
We'll no more take the parting hand."

Farewell.

J. C. HAMMOND, Moderator.
H. J. BIRD, Clerk.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

WHEN remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it. By referring to these dates you can tell to just what time your subscription is paid. Dec. 34 means your subscription expired December, 1934; June 35 means your subscription expired June, 1935; Dec. 35 that it expired December, 1935, etc.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

OUR much esteemed sister in Christ, JENNIE BAILEY, departed this life July 26th, 1935, aged eighty- two years. She entered the Primitive Baptist Home, Salisbury, Maryland, May 1st, 1929. She felt much at home and received every attention during her stay there. She united, by baptism, with the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church, and, I think, was baptized by the late Elder T. M. Poulson. Later she united, by letter, with the Snow Hill Church, and was a faithful member. She was the daughter of brother Albert M. and Elizabeth Gault Bailey, both long gone to rest. She is survived, I think, by one sister and a nephew. There may be other relatives.

The funeral service was held in the Snow Hill meetinghouse, conducted by the writer, her pastor. Interment was in the family lot in the cemetery adjoining.

ALSO,

SISTER DORA E. BROWN died at her home, near Bridgeville, Delaware, August 30th, 1936. She was born September 10th, 1873, making her stay on earth sixty-three years, less eleven days. She was a daughter of the late Deacon and Mrs. Harrison Messick, of Broad Creek, Delaware. She united with the Broad Creek Church, Delaware, July 9th, 1892, and was baptized by the late Elder A. B. Francis, he being pastor at that time. She was highly esteemed by the church and by all who knew her well. She was married twenty-five years before her death to J. Fred Brown, who preceded her in death some years. To them were born three children, one dying in infancy. The daughter, Mary Ellen Brown Roland, died in December, 1934, at her home in North Carolina. The son, Robert F. Brown, together with his wife and two children, survive

sister Brown, and reside on the homestead. She is also survived by two sisters: Mrs. Andrew Dolby, of near Seaford, Del., and Mrs. John Phillips, of Bethel, Del., members of the Broad Creek Church, and several nephews and nieces.

The funeral service was conducted at the home by the writer, her pastor, and Elder C. W. Vaughn, a former pastor. Interment took place in the family lot in the Seaford Cemetery. She will be much missed by us all.

H. C. KER.

MRS. HARRIETT FRANCES WHITE was born November 28th, 1864, and departed this life September 10th, 1936. She was married to Mr. C. M. White November 25th, 1883, and to their union eight children were born, six of whom are still living. They are Mrs. Josie Blevins, John T. and Clarence C. White, Mrs. Audrey Johnson, Dawson White and Mrs. Bessie Blivans. These with their father and a host of friends are left to mourn their great loss, but we believe our loss is her eternal gain, for we believe heaven is her home for ever and ever. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church the first Sunday in October, 1891, and lived up to her profession with the greatest of godly zeal She was much devoted to her husband and children, was a loving neighbor, and all who knew her loved her. She was kind in her christian life, always earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and always filled her place in the old Denton Creek Church, at Keller, Texas, her father, Elder A. D. Bourland, being her pastor. She was not sick long. She ate a hearty dinner and then laid down to rest awhile. When they called her she gave no answer. She was dead. That was sad indeed for those loved ones.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer and Elder J. R. Hardy in the presence of a large concourse of relatives and friends who had met to bid her the last farewell, after which her body was consigned to the dust, for dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return. May God in his great mercy deal out his goodness to those who mourn.

C. Y. OSTEEN.

E. R. WOODARD, our brother in Christ, departed this life September 12th, 1936, at his home, in Anderson County, near Lawrenceburg, Kentucky. He was born February 8th, 1848. August 17th, 1876, he was married to Miss Ella Cook, who survives him. To their union were born eight children, five of whom are still living. They are Mrs. J. L. Shouse, of Taylorsville, Ky., Mrs. Roy Bowen and Mrs. James Kays, of Anderson County, Neil, of near Lawrenceburg, and Lester, of Louisville, Ky. He also leaves fourteen grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. Quite a number of years ago brother Woodard received a hope and was received into the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Salt River, near Lawrenceburg, Ky., where he remained all the rest of his years, and died in the triumph of a living faith, loved by all who knew him. May the Lord reconcile us to his departure and give us grace and faith to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

I tried with the ability that the Lord gave me to preach Christ, and him crucified, to a large congregation of brethren, neighbors and friends, after which all that was mortal was laid to rest in the cemetery near by, to await the call of the Master in the resurrection.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, &c REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.

Of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, published monthly, at Middletown, N. Y., for October 1st, 1936.

State of New York, County of Orange, ss.:

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Gilbert Beebe, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the owner of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that the following is to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24th, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse side of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publishers, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publishers, J. E. Beebe & Company, Middletown, N. Y.; Editor: Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.

2. The owner is, Gilbert Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagers and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent. or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear on the books of the company, but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the corporation for whom such trustee is acting is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stocks, bonds or other securities than as so stated by him.

GILBERT BEEBE, Owner.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 16th day of October, 1936.

(Seal) E. E. CONKLING.

(My commission expires March, 1938.)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. A. H. Drew, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Mintie B. Mapes, N. Y., $2; Mrs. Martha J. Disharoon, Del., $1; Dr. T. E. Presley, N. M., $1; G. S. Varnes, Mich., $1; Mrs. J. E. Chadwick, Texas, $5; Milford Hall, Jr., $2; "A friend," N. Y., $2; J. L. Killion, Mo., 50 cents.

MEETINGS.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets the third Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, at 10:30 a. m. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, 421 Steele, Street, Frankfort, Ky.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.

T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

Cloth binding, 75c each. Paper covers, single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and all to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

December 1936

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 104. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1936. NO. 12.

POETRY.

THE WAY EVERLASTING.

(PSALMS CXXX. 9.)

O Lord, thou knowest all my ways,
My secret thought, my hidden deed;
Close watching o'er these passing days,
Thou carest for my every need;
Thy mercies compass me around,
And all my ponderings confound.

Where from thy presence shall I go?
If I ascend to heaven on high,
Or make my bed in hell below,
From thee, O God, I cannot fly;
Though on the wings of dawn I flee,
Thou'rt there beyond the farthest sea.

If in the darkness of the night
Some shameful deed I seek to hide,
Lo, all the starry hosts of light
Reveal thee standing by my side;
Yet, though I shun the gentle moon,
The midnight shineth as the noon.

In fearful fashion hast thou made
This being, beautiful and strange;
Deep in the earth thy plans were laid,
Through cycles of celestial change;
Thine eyes, in many a lonely form,
Foresaw the angel in the worm.

O God, how wonderful, sublime,
The works that issue from thy hand;
Thy thoughts are fathomless as time,
And countless as the ocean sand;
And yet thou watchest over me,
For when I wake I'm still with thee.

Search me, O God, and know my thought,
And draw me closer still to thee;
Nor let me rest while there is aught
Of secret wickedness in me;
Lead me, O Lord, from day to day,
Along the Everlasting Way.

LEWIS MILLIGAN.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CHURCH.

My mind is still on the church of God. While I have written two articles on the subject, I still feel the half has not been told, and for a month, or longer, my mind has often been deeply interested upon these things. Often I have shed tears while trying to ask God in prayer to show me where to find this church, and last night at the hour of midnight I feel I was given a message, or a vision, on this subject, that I will now try to tell, and leave it to you as to whether it is of the Lord or not. While I heard no voice, as did Paul, but I thought of the apostle Peter, who was in prison and God sent an angel to set him free. He thought it was a vision, but it was true, and when they

came to the gate that shut him into the city it opened of its own accord and let him out. Now we might say this was one of the gates of hell spoken of by Jesus that should not prevail against this church. Now Peter goes to where his brethren were in prayer for him, and with the good news which made them rejoice, feeling that God had heard and answered their prayers for him. My dear brethren and sisters, if what I tell here now will cause you to believe the Lord is in the matter and was and is still teaching me something, then we will rejoice together.

I was shown as I saw it, or as it came into my mind, the names of certain ones, as follows: Isaac, Rebecca, his wife, and their two children, Esau and Jacob, each one representing certain things, to wit: Rebecca, the church; Isaac, the law. Esau, a doer of the law, was born first, then Jacob, who was a member of this church, for God loved him and hated Esau, and Jacob was to receive the blessing from his father, who meant to give it to Esau, whom his father, representing the law, was trying to protect, and the story shows the law was satisfied. Now in the case of Jesus and Satan, Satan was here upon earth before Jesus was born of the virgin Mary. Now the same thing happened with Adam's and Eve's (our parents) two first children, Cain and Abel. You remember Cain slew Abel, who, I believe, was a type of Jesus, who was put to death by the doers of the law. Pilate, the judge, found no fault in him, but Jesus must die for the sins of his chosen elect. Many of the things pointing to this are set forth in types and shadows. But now we go back to Rebecca as the church that was the wife of the chosen seed, Isaac, so is Jesus the husband of this church he has built here. Notice the evidence. Abraham's servant said that Rebecca was chosen of God to be Isaac's wife, and while Isaac loved Esau, who was a cunning hunter that brought him good things to eat, and therefore desired to bless him before he died, Rebecca, the church, must look after Jacob, and God, the head of the church, did guide and direct her to care for Jacob and see that he received the blessing in store for him, which shows God will provide for his children.

If I have so written as to cause this church to love and fellowship me and pray for me, then I feel my reward is in heaven.

I am reminded that Elder J. T. Rowe, our precious brother, is laid to rest, and we, too, soon must go, so let us look for the paths of righteousness and walk in them, is my prayer.

I have not written all as I see it in this matter, but will close, hoping the readers may see what I have hinted at and take up the matter and write something to really comfort the saints, but let us remain humble at the feet of our brethren.

D. L. DODSON.

DANVILLE, Virginia.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., July 14, 1936.

ELDER FREDERICK W. KEENE—DEAR BROTHER:—If I may address you thus. I have many times thought I would write to you, but I have always felt that you were so far above me that anything I could say would be of no comfort to you, but after reading your views on predestination I feel that we are brothers, and I want to write annd tell you so. This principle was instilled in me years before I joined the church, which was in November, 1881, and it was in February, 1866, that the Lord first appeared to me. I hope you will not feel imposed upon if I tell you, as nearly as I can, how it came about. This is one of the greatest things that ever occurred in my life, and that is the reason I never get tired of telling it, though it is a mystery to me why God should ever choose such a rebel as I have always been to bestow such redeeming love upon, and all I can say is, Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. There is no good in me; that is, in my flesh, and all I can say is that it is all of grace, without any works of man.

I will now tell you of my first experience with my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is Jesus of whom I wish to write. One morning in February, in the State of Iowa, after a big snow storm, when all the landscape was covered with a mantle of white, I went out in the yard, and was standing beside father's chopping-block, and was singing in my childish way, and all unconcerned,

"I will arise and go to Jesus,
He will embrace me in his arms;
In the arms of my dear Savior,
Oh there are ten thousand charms,"

when, to my surprise, Jesus gathered me in his arms and flew away with me, and I was very happy. The change came so quickly I forgot home, father, mother, brother and sister, I was so happy, Jesus was taking me home, and all I thought of was Jesus. Oh I cannot tell you the joy, but I can tell you of it. My clothes were left behind and Jesus was cuddling me to his side, and it was so pleasant. I then realized in a small sense the way he embraced me in his arms. Oh there are ten thousand charms. This does not tell the half of it, neither can I find words to tell it. I hope you will not say it was only an imagination, for it was and is very real to me. Although at that time I was not quite five years of age and am now past seventy-five, still it is ever fresh in my memory. I do not know how long I was with Jesus, but when I came back to earth and to a realization of the surroundings I was at the old chopping-block, looking up into the sky, which was clear, without a cloud in sight. This did not trouble me, but I did not tell any one, as neither of my parents were church members, and I had never heard an experience of grace told, but as young as I was there was a love instilled in my heart, and there was a knowledge that God was ever present, and I would go out in the grove near our house and stand and admire the beauties that God had made. The

trees, the birds and the flowers all seemed to be praising him, and I could see a beauty in it all that I had never thought of before, and I knew that God had made it all. Time went on and I grew to manhood, but there never was a time when I was without a protector. I could feel God was ever near. I was different from all my playmates, but I could not tell why. When I got old enough I went to Sunday School, but it always seemed wrong, but I could not see why, for all my schoolmates said it was right. Although my grandfather Burch was an Old School Baptist minister I had never heard an Old Baptist sermon. My mother's father and mother were members of the "Hardshells," as they were called by the other denominations, but when they had preaching near enough for my mother and father to attend I was always left with some neighbor. We lived some fifty-five miles from an Old Baptist church, but not that far from the God of the whole earth, for he is everywhere present. Some time in the summer, when I was eighteen years of age, and before I united with the Otter Creek Church of Regular Predestinarians, in November, 1881, I dreamed that my sister and I were going south to the war, and as we walked along I saw a large key lying in the road and I picked it up. I thought it was for me and would admit me any place, so I put it in my pocket. We went a little farther and there was a white stone lying in the road. I thought it was also for me, and would cure all diseases, so I picked it up and put it in my pocket. My sister did not see either one until I showed them to her and told her what they would do, then she rejoiced with me. We had gone about one-half mile when we saw two young men in a fist fight, and a sister of each stood close by with their arms around each other, looking very sad, and when we came to the men I first showed them the key and they stopped fighting, then I showed them the white stone and they embraced each other. As our work was done there, we went on toward the war, and we came to a gathering at a schoolhouse, and they stopped us and I showed them the key and they let us go on. We finally got to the war, where the dead and wounded were lying thick over the ground. The muskets were popping and the cannons were roaring, and then I awoke. The next October I had a great desire to go to Oelwein, a distance of fifty-five miles. Usually I wanted to go to school, for I was anxious to get an education, and I could only go two or three months after the work on the farm was done, so it left me but a short time to go to school, but it seemed I must go to Oelwein, but I did not know why. When I asked my father if I could have a horse to ride he did not object, which was a surprise to me. Although I was nineteen years of age I never thought of going any place without his consent. I was three days on the road, and when I got to my cousin's in Oelwein he had some work for me, but the boys I was working with in the fields would swear and it almost broke my heart to hear them, so I asked them not to swear, and they

stopped it, at least when I was around. The meeting day of the Otter Creek Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists came, and I attended the meeting, just to be with my relatives, as I supposed, for I had no thought of joining the church that day. My grandfather preached, and while I do not remember any of his sermon, yet I do remember he took my life for a text and told how I had been guarded from evil, and how I had been so disobedient, and I knew that he had told the truth. But how he knew all this was a mystery to me, for I was a stranger to him. Then he told how God loved us and sent his Son to redeem just such sinners as I from death and bring them to the light and liberty of the children of God. This was too much for me, and I could not help weeping. After the rest had left, excepting my grandfather and I, I sat in the seat with my head bowed down, weeping. When my grandfather saw me he came back to where I was and asked me what the matter was. I could not tell him. Then he asked me if I wanted to join the church, and that started a fresh flow of tears. I told him, No, I was not fit to be with such good people. Although he was nearly eighty years of age, he ran to the door and called the members back, and had me tell them how great a sinner I was, and that was all I did tell them, for I could tell them nothing else, and to my surprise they received me, and for a short time I was very happy. I thought my troubles were over, but alas the tempter soon found me and I thought I had deceived those good people. And so I go, sometimes on the mountain top, but most of the time I am in the valley sinking down with woe. But I have a hope, which I would not exchange for all the world, if I could, that when this warfare is over, which will not be long, I will be gathered with the redeemed, to praise him as I ought, when I shall see him as he is, and be like him, then I will be satisfied. Oh what must it be to be there? I sometimes try to contemplate the joy that we will enjoy, where all but love is left behind, with Jesus, our Elder Brother, our Prophet, Priest and King there always and forever, never more to be disappointed, never to awake and find we are still in this world of sin.

DAVIS BURCH.

DELAWARE, Ohio.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—If I may so address you. Will you suffer me to tell you of my appreciation of your comforting editorial in the SIGNS for September? Also of the editorial of C. W. V. I also indorse the entire contents of the magazine. I do not know how many of my letters you have read, nor how you have understood them. While I believe in exhorting one another to a godly walk and conversation, I most heartily believe in salvation by grace, both for time and eternity. I do believe that we grieve when we realize we have disobeyed the Lord, but if we have obeyed him I do most heartily believe it is of his grace that we have done so, and the Elder who baptized me so believed, and recommended the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as the best paper

published, and I have subscribed for it when able to do so, and hope that I may have the privilege of reading it so long as I shall live. A few years back, I was nearly driven out of the church, when so many visiting brethren uttered things that I could not indorse, as they seemed to accord to man the ability to save himself in time. But I do not hear so much of it now. Grace is preached in our churches almost always for time and eternity. Eight years of my church life was spent in Texas, where I heard grace preached ever and alway. We once had a member who sent for a number of visiting preachers to visit us who did not seem sound to me, nor to the other members as a whole. Before the split in our church we had some very weak members, who called me a "Beebe Baptist." My reply was, "If I am to be named after any man, I would as lief bear his name as that of any other." I do not feel that I earn any blessings, though I do hope that some of my thoughts, acts and words are of God; yet in passing through such an unworthy vessel sin seems mixed with all I do, for in me (that is, in my flesh) there dwells no good thing. I speak from sad experience. Sometimes I forget my sin, when I talk or sing of the abounding grace and love of God, but am oft reminded that I still dwell in sinful flesh, and cannot do the good that I would. I am so glad I can hope and trust that Jesus in his life of thirty-three years did the good (in my name) that was required of me, and that he bore me and my sin all the days of old, and that he still is mindful of me and intercedes for me, and that the Father always hears him. I was shown in my early experience that he took upon him my sins and that all his righteousness is mine, and it is because of this righteousness that I am blest with all spiritual blessings, according as I was chosen in him before the foundation of the world. I have since believed in salvation by grace, first, last and all the time, so

"Give all the glory to his blessed name,
To him all the glory belongs;
Be ours the high pleasure to sound forth his praise,
And crown him in each of our songs."

Unto him be all glory, power and might ascribed, both now and for evermore. Amen.

Brother Dodson, I hardly know whether or not to send this letter. As I read it over it sounds so positive, and takes for granted that I am one of the elect, and I am sure that I am unworthy of that claim, yet I do hope I am one of that blest and loved number. The chief reason for my hope being that I know I am a sinner, and during my life of sixty-nine years I have been thoroughly convinced that I cannot live free from its taint. Yet, if I am one of his, as I hope, I know that my sins were all laid upon the blessed Lamb of God before I came into this sinful world. I have never heard any one say what I am about to write, but I believe the only way that any could be counted among the righteous was for our dear Sin-bearer to take all of our sins upon himself before he had committed any, so that we could be counted clean through him, since he has said that he would not clear the guilty. A guilty one might be forgiven and still

be guilty, but if I understand the plan of salvation, God in his infinite wisdom became, or ever was, our surety, our sin-bearer, our righteousness, our all. Oh the infinite wisdom of our heavenly Father is beyond all or any human comprehending. This, too, is one reason for my hope, since I trust that I know this truth solely by the revelation from on high. Pray for a weak one, if I am one at all.

Dear brother, please pardon me for bothering you with all this. After I begin writing it is hard to come to an ending, for it is sweet to write concerning the love and grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and as I am the only Primitive Baptist in this home, which contains twenty-five women, beside the matron and other employees, and none of the others ascribe all salvation to the Lord, it is a joy and relief to talk or write to those who know and rejoice that indeed and in truth salvation is of the Lord.

Since writing the foregoing I have again read the SIGNS for August, and it was sweet to my taste. It was my high privilege to hear Elder Hardy preach one day last fall in my sister's home church in Texas, and I was much comforted when he remarked upon meeting me, "I have known you for years through your writings." What is any sweeter than this fellowship of saints? When I lived in Texas I met Elder Bowden, heard him preach several sermons and received several letters from him; also have received quite a number from sister Chandler, whose letter appeared in that number of the SIGNS. The communion and love of the saints, when we can praise the God of love and grace together, is the sweetest thing that I know here in time. Our church here is quite small, only twelve of us, and not convenient for members to visit me very often. This is my apology for writing.

Your little sister, I hope,

JOIE E. WOODS PETERS.

FAYETTEVILLE, Tenn., Aug. 23, 1936.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my mind seems to be directed toward spiritual things this morning, I feel that I cannot resist writing you any longer, yet at the same time I feel my innability to write anything that will be interesting to any one to read. I do not have a name among the Baptists, but if I know my own heart they preach the doctrine I love and cherish above all other doctrines in the world, because it is a doctrine that exalts the great Creator of the universe, and abases the creature that he made and placed in it, and called this creature man. This man that God formed out of the dust of the earth became a living soul. But how did he became a living soul? By his Maker breathing into his nostrils the breath of life. And as God gave life to the natural body, so he also gives life to the spiritual body. Paul says in 1 Corinthians xv. 45: "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." The first Adam carried all the children of God down into sin, and the last Adam lifted them back up. Paul says in Romans v. 19: "For as by one man's disobedi-

ence many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." How were they made righteous? By the Son's obedience to his Father's will, for Christ says in John vi. 38, 39, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Whom did he give to the Son? He gave him the elect, the church, and he shed his blood for them upon the cross, and this blood that was poured out upon Calvary's hill bought this elect and washed them clean of all the sin that the first man Adam placed upon them in his disobedience. Christ says that the will of the Father which sent him was that he should lose nothing, but he should raise it up again at the last day. Will the Father's will be done? Yes, to be sure it will be done, for Paul says, in Ephesians i. 11, "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." So if God works all things after the counsel of his own will, who, then, can doubt his will being done? But what concerns me most, is whether he saw fit to include a vile, contemptible creature like me in his will. Will any of this elect ever perish? No, a thousand times no. Just listen to what Jesus says in John x. 27-29: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Here in the twenty-seventh verse Jesus refers to the elect as his sheep: "My sheep hear my voice." This is a positive statement, which means they will all hear his voice when he calls them. "And I know them." Another positive statement, giving us to understand that he knows them all. When did he know them? He knew them all from the beginning of the world. "And they follow me." This is the third positive statement in this verse, and every one of his sheep will obey it, just like they do the first statement. Paul says in Romans x. 17, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.." The word of God is Jesus himself, so, therefore, they receive all their hearing through him. Not one of them will fail to obey their Master's voice, because he crushes their old rebellious will and sets up a new will in their hearts, which will is in perfect harmony with its Creator's will. Paul told the Philippians that it was God who worked both the WILL and the DO in them, which means decree and action. What more could any one want?

Dispose of this poor attempt as you see fit.

I am an unworthy sinner,

ALTON W. SISCO.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1936.

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CHRISTIANS.

THE disciples were called christians first in Antioch. (Acts xi. 26.). The word "Antioch" means for or instead of a chariot; or equal in speed with a chariot, and is the name given the royal city of the Grecians, where many of the Jews who were made ready to receive the preaching of the gospel were assembled, and were the church of God, with whom the disciples assembled, and taught much people. We know what a chariot is to an individual, and the city of Antioch was to the church of God at that time a place of rest and comfort to the soul. The disciples of Jesus had comfort in the assembly, and they taught much people in the gospel by which they could see the image of their Savior, and called them christians, which means Christlike. We conclude from the word of divine truth that the disciples were exercised by the Spirit in their teaching, and the church, being of the same relation, rejoiced with them. The people of God cannot rejoice in the preached word unless they are exercised by the same Spirit at the time it is proclaimed, but they can say that is the truth, and perhaps after many days the bread of life, that was cast forth upon the waters, is taken up, and the taste of it is good, and we have a feast that was far beyond our expectation. It is wonderful indeed to be Christlike, or christian.

Our meditation often questions the spirit of our relations among the sons of men, and we know if it is of the flesh it availeth nothing, and will be to our hurt, instead of comfort. We are glad to say that the Spirit of truth contended for by the church of God is held and proclaimed from the OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, and the true followers of the LORD JESUS CHRIST are associated with her, and they are like Jesus in service and reverence of ALMIGHTY God.

As we are coming to the close of volume one hundred and four of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES WE realize the imperfections realized in our feelings, and also the motive of the services we rendered in the writing and exhortation to the brethren, and we can truly say that our service has been out of a pure heart, whether many of our readers have been edified or not, though we have received many good letters ad-

dressed personal, which have borne tidings of comfort received, and we hope they gave God all the praise. We do thank all the brethren and sisters for their kind forbearance during this year, as our trials have been many, but we trust we are given to see the hand of the Lord that has guided his people and kept them from the pernicious ways of the flesh, and the doctrine set forth during the time of the disciples is the doctrine of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, whether we are always in line or not, and we should stand firmly by her in our communications and support. The sole owner and publisher of the SIGNS, Mr. Gilbert Beebe, has had many afflictions during the past year, both in body and spirit, but the Divine Hand has directed, by which he has been restored to reasonably good health again, that he might continue to take care of the publication of the SIGNS, and all of us are given to discern what a blessing God has bestowed upon us by having his direction in the publication of our SIGNS. Dear reader, we hope you can say, "My SIGNS OF THE TIMES," and faithfully contribute to its support, and in doing so feel as you read how the disciples assembled with the church, that the same Spirit is resting with you, and you be made to feel you are received into the sweet fellowship of the church of God. The sweet hymn, "Father, we'll rest in thy love," belongs to all christians, and sometimes a light surprises them while they sing. It is the Lord, who reveals himself, and it seems as though He came up, and also from above at the same time, and he so enraptures the poor sinner that he feels he will never doubt again, and in holy contemplation he sweetly then pursues the theme of God's salvation, and finds it ever new.

Jesus commanded his disciples to teach "them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."—Matt. xxviii. 20. The disciple of Jesus Christ does not teach anything but what He has commanded. Though this disciple might teach things that would be savory to the flesh, yet he will be brought to repentance for it, and made to strengthen the brethren. That you may get the true meaning of this thought, we will call your attention to the words of Jesus. He said unto Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."—Matt. xvi. 23. He is a chosen disciple, but when he is not directed by the Spirit he is not the disciple of Jesus. We could not be called christian when we are manifested in a wicked spirit, and we could not be the disciple of Jesus, nor be teaching the things Jesus commanded. Then said Jesus, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Also, "Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom."—Matt. xvi. 24, 28. These are some of the commands of Jesus, and the apostles have seen him come forth from the dead and ascend to his Father, far above all prin-

cipality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. (Eph. i. 21). Those disciples seeing this could see all things pointing to him, and the kingdom of God was given unto him, and he was the giver of eternal life to all that the Father had given him, and the faith that should exercise their hearts and give them the substance of things hoped for, and the full consummation of the work of Jesus in the salvation of poor sinners, and bringing them off more than conquerors over death, hell and the grave, which will make all that is mortal immortal, and all that is corrupt incorruptible, and mortality be swallowed up of life, then the harvest will be purged, and gathered into his garner. This is a wonderful heritage through Jesus Christ to all his chosen, and to them he will say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."—Matt. xxv. 34.

We esteem all of our readers as christians, and leave you to examine yourselves for the qualifications, but we feel you will find yourselves as we find ourselves, as clouds that have no water, which will prove that you are given to discern between the flesh and the Spirit, by which you see perfection in God and corruption in man. If we are led by the Spirit we bear fruit, and others see of our good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven. The christian in this relation bears the image of the heavenly, and a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. How can one who has a hope refrain from attending the assemblage of the church? It seems to us that the Spirit draws us to follow after the things that pertain to the kingdom of God and his righteousness. We believe the disciples were made glad when the church gave them the approval of their acceptance with her, and we are glad when we receive the message from some of our kindred in Christ of their joys, and comfort received, either spoken or written.

We again call your attention to write for our paper, and do not wait until you think there is nothing in the hands of the publisher, or fear that you might crowd out better matter, for those who feel others more competent than themselves are the ones the brethren want to hear from.

May we realize more of the realities of our faith during the coming year than we have witnessed, and witness the coming to the assemblage of the church many of like precious faith, which gives to the church the bounties of harvest time and the refreshing strength we feel we need.

With this issue we are to have a message to our readers from the pen of Elder David V. Spangler, who has been recorded as one of the associate editors of the SIGNS, and we welcome him to our association, and feel to bid him Godspeed, and trust that his writings will be of much comfort and edification to the household of faith, and we shall expect him to be faithful to the cause he has espoused, and we hope to be faithful to him, and may the same

relations that were manifested in the lives of the apostles be manifested in us to the glory of God, seeing eye to eye and speaking the same thing.

As we have before stated relative to our relations among the brethren being of a pure motive, we hope we have been directed by the Spirit in the way of truth, and you, having the eye of your understanding enlightened, therefore can see the beauty of the Lord our God pointed to, and glorify God, realizing all things are as he has purposed. We have peculiar experiences, and are a peculiar people, zealous of good works, and all the way the Lord leadeth his people, that his power is manifest in their mortal lives as well as in grace, and with the poet can say, "If my soul is sent to hell, his righteous law approves it well."

We now conclude our writing to you for the year 1936, and may the presence of Jesus be with you, by which you can say with the writer of the hymn on page 222 of the Lester and Durand selection, and hymn 1296 in the Beebe hymn book, which is as follows:

"A child of Jehovah, a subject of grace,
I'm of the seed royal—a dignified race;
An heir of salvation, redeemed with blood,
I'll own my relation, my Father is God.

He loved me of old, and he loveth me still,
Before the creation he gave me by will
A portion worth more than the Indies of gold,
Which cannot be wasted, nor mortgaged, nor sold.

He gave me a Surety, a covenant Head,
To live in my name, and to die in my stead;
He gave me a righteousness wholly divine,
And viewed all the merits of Jesus as mine.

He gave a Preceptor infallibly wise,
And treasures of grace to be sent in supplies;
Yea, all that I ask for, my Father hath given
To help me on earth, and to crown me in heaven.

He gave me a will to accept what he gave,
Though I was averse to his purpose to save;
He wrote in his will my repentance and faith,
And all my enjoyments for life and for death.

My trials and sorrows, my conflicts and cares,
The spirit of prayer and the answer of prayers,
The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will.

My cross and my crown are both willed by my God,
He swore to his will, and then sealed it with blood;
'Tis proved by the Spirit, the witness within,
'Tis mine to inherit, I'll glory begin."

C. W. V.

SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE.

For some time our mind has been exercised as to what God's children know spiritually, and the reason of this knowledge. Sometimes the writer says, "I know;" sometimes "We know," and in other places, "Ye know." We will quote here the language of David in Psalms lxxxix. 15: "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." No one has this knowledge until he is born again. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." This same would apply to hearing. To see the kingdom of God is evidence that one is embraced in it. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." David tells us that those who know the joyful sound are blessed of God. To our mind, the joyful sound is the word of God, the written word and the quickening word. This knowledge is brought in regeneration. The knowledge of how sinners are saved is what brings joy in the gospel. When one is passing Mount Sinai there is no

joy in the sounds that issue forth from it, only terror, trembling and a fearful looking for of judgment. But when Mount Sion is reached we can rejoice in the promises of God; we can here receive the word with joy. A knowledge of Christ as the Savior of his people brings with it a joy in the Scripture, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." The knowledge of what is the joyful sound also brings with it the knowledge of what is not the joyful sound. The same Teacher who teaches that salvation is by grace also teaches that salvation is not by works. We remember meeting a brother in Charlotte County, Virginia, some years ago, who up to a short time before had never heard of or heard a Bapaist minister. This man received an experience of grace many years before this, and united with an Arminian denomination near him, but never felt at home with them. This brother often felt that there were no people in the world who believed as he did. One day he helped move an old lady in his community, and he told her his experience and convictions. She told him he was a Primitive Baptist, and gave him a copy of one of our Old Baptists papers to read, telling him it would explain the Primitive Baptist doctrine better than she could. In reading it he found it to contain the doctrine and experience he believed and felt. He began to inquire for the nearest Primitive Baptist Church to him, and found it to be over one hundred miles away, so he made a special trip to Roanoke, Virginia, to join the church, and was baptized by Elder P. G. Lester. He was blessed to know the joyful sound. We remember our own experience the first time we heard the gospel preached after receiving, as we trust, the pardon of our sins. There was something within responded to it, and we felt to know it was the truth. The joyful sound was that it suited a poor sinner's case like ours. We could truly say, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." This knowledge is the knowledge of faith, which the apostle says is the gift of God. This faith is the evidence of things unseen. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. Through faith we know we love the brethren, that our Redeemer is living, that we are not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ.

Some one asked the late Elder P. D. Gold once after he had been highly favored in preaching, if he did not know that he had preached the gospel. His answer was, "Not like I know natural things." We do not know we are saved. We hope for that we see not, and with patience wait for it, yet this hope is the anchor of our souls, sure and steadfast. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. "But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away."

A few more words about this knowledge, and we will close. Proverbs i. 7: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." Those who worship under a law covenant often have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. These are the ones the Scripture speaks of as "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."—2 Tim. iii. 7. But Paul could say, "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ." In the night often this knowledge comes. In the day when his hand is taken away we can say, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

D. V. S.

DONATION DAY

The next Donation Day at the Primitive Baptist Home, in Salisbury, Maryland, will be Thursday, December 10th, next.

It is earnestly hoped that the friends of the Home will remember it liberally and donate either funds or useful articles, particularly in the food line.

Funds can either be sent to H. T. Lefferts, Treasurer, 151 Coeyman Avenue, Nutley, New Jersey, or to Mrs. Naomi L. Rounds, who is in charge of the Home. All other articles should be sent direct to the Home.

R. LESTER DODSON.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

Written by Elder Arnold H. Bellows.

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, at Shokan, New York, September 16th and 17th, 1936, to the churches composing the same, sends greeting.

Dear Brethren:—Pursuant to a commendable custom, we are assuming the task of writing a Circular Letter, not so much to conform to precedent, but more to edify the brethren, confirm them in their holy faith, present experimental truth encompassed by sound and enduring doctrine. In this age, when darkness has covered the land and gross darkness the people, when there have been many divisions among brethren and many perversions of the faith delivered unto the saints as men have followed human reason or blind tradition a Circular Letter is of greater relevant worth. Feeling our dependence upon God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not, who is the fountain head of all wisdom, power, understanding and grace, we would present a few thoughts from the sixth verse of the twenty-fifth chapter of Isaiah, which reads as follows: "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." The prophet Isaiah in preceding verses had referred to the glorious majesty of the kingdom of God. Whatever literal meaning these verses

may have to the destruction of Babylon and the overthrow of the enemies of Israel and the deliverance of the Jews from their long captivity, they are pregnant with an experimental application to the children of God in this present church dispensation, and in this light we choose to present our views, being fully aware that many Scriptures have a literal historical significance, a future prophetic fulfillment, and an experimental realization by those that constitute the bride of Jesus Christ. The words chosen for our subject follow expressions of praise rendered unto God for the performance of wonderful things, assuring those to whom they were written that in a certain mountain the Lord would make unto all people a feast of fat things and a feast of wines on the lees well refined. The word "shall" denotes power, certainty, purpose, predestination, foreknowledge and unconditionalism, all centering around the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ which saves for time and eternity. The word "mountain" doubtless refers to Mount Zion in figure, which was the stronghold of the ancient city of Jerusalem, and has been often used to symbolize the church of God. Mount Zion is spoken of as the perfection of beauty out of which God hath shined, and the church is truly beautiful and glorious in the matchless comeliness of her Redeemer. Sometimes the church is spoken of as the mountain of God's holiness, for those that comprise the church have the imputed righteousness of Christ and are unto him a holy nation and a peculiar people. The expression "this mountain" denotes a special mountain, singled out from all others, hence implying choice, electing love, reigning grace, continued mercies and divine favor, since it is the Lord who makes this feast in this mountain. Man has no part in that which the Lord does, for He will not divide his honor with sinful, fallen, helpless man. Therefore an unconditional salvation is encompassed in the expression "unto all people," Jew and Gentile believers taught of God constituting the spiritual seed of Abraham.

Because of the Adam transgression death has entered the world, and sin reigned unto death with all its pitiless penalty until Jesus Christ by his stainless birth, his sinless life, his holy offering of his prepared body on the cross, his ignominious death, glorious resurrection, triumphant ascension and Melchisedec priesthood brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Even the decalogue delivered unto Moses, and all the legal ceremonies, which were just and good, could give no life, nor make the comer thereunto perfect, for man is by nature a sinner, beinng united to his fleshly head Adam, and having the nature of sin will act out his nature, being of the earth earthy, filled with foolish thoughts, and in and of himself cannot rise higher than his source in being born of sinful parents with the curse of God upon him and the sentence of death in him. Even the thought of foolishness is declared to be sin. Before the bar of divine justice transgressing man is indicted under a holy law. Justice and judgment are

ever executed by a changeless God before his throne before mercy and truth can be realized comfortingly by the guilty sinner. The demands of the inflexible righteousness of God require a holy offering, and a holy offerer. The earth and its fruits being under the curse with fallen man, and sin separating the sinner from a thrice holy God, man could not offer himself as an acceptable sacrifice nor anything acceptable unto Deity from a sin-cursed earth. But in the councils of eternal wisdom before man was formed of the dust of the earth God found a way and ordained it whereby his inexorable justice would be satisfied, judgment executed, sin expiated, an intercessor provided in the person of his only beloved Son, who in the fullness of time was to be born of a woman and made under the law, with a holy human nature because God was his Father, and therefore he would have the life, power, holiness and wisdom of God. Under the law mercy could not be shown else God's justice would be set at naught, and God would thereby cease to be God. The law must be enforced, satisfied, fulfilled. This was done by Jesus Christ, who is the end of the law unto all believers. The law given by God through Moses embraced Israel primarily as a nation, yet when the Gentiles, who have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves, showing forth the works of the law written in their hearts as God judges the secrets of men by the gospel. The decalogue manifests the wound of sin and the ceremonial law with its numerous ordinances points to Christ, the law being a schoolmaster unto Christ. The Israelites had the covenants and the oracles of God directly and were of the circumcision in the flesh as a nation and unto them as a nation Christ came after the flesh, was rejected by them, condemned and crucified on false charges. The believing Gentiles were embraced spiritually in the promises of God as well as the believing Jews, but the handwriting of ordinances which was against the believing Gentiles had to be removed and nailed to the cross, as the crucifixion of Christ abolished all that was written against believing Jew and believing Gentile, making of the twain one new man in Christ. In this sense all people, that is, all believers, being chosen in Christ are justified by his blood, receive pardon, which is release from punishment, and also justification, which is release from guilt, and stand in Christ before God as a holy nation and a peculiar people. Therefore in the expression "unto all people" in the subject taken for this article all the members of the family of God are included, whether Jew or Gentile, as the veil of darkness and legalism that has been spread over all nations is taken away as God shines in the heart and gives the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

The poor guilty sinner who has felt within his soul the fiery wrath of God because of his sins, which reach up to heaven and cast him down to hell, leaving him in himself justly without hope of eternal life and consigned by the

righteous judgment of God to endless woe, finds a feast of fat things for him when Jesus is revealed to him by the Holy Ghost. He has felt the sighs and groans of the cross, realized the exceeding sinfulness of sin, hated it, loathed himself as the one in whom sin dwells, and tried in vain all human means to relieve his distressed condition. But when in his experience ready to perish, and already perishing, he was raised unto a comfortable Hope, as he discerned with the anointed eye of faith Jesus Christ on the cross between him and his sins, between him and the judgment of an offended God. A new life, a new love, and the spirit of prayer and supplication have been given unto him with the revelation of the Christ of God. No longer does he trust his own filthy fleshly righteousness as before. No longer does he depend as before upon creature effort and the wisdom of man, but feeds upon the precious promises of the gospel, fellowships the saints of old testament times and new testament times in his experience. He realizes, as never before, warfare between flesh and Spirit, finds himself unable to do the good that he would, and so leans upon Jesus. He finds himself crucified with Christ, yet living, and as he mortifies the deeds of the flesh as he daily sins, he finds a daily Savior as he washes his hands and feet in the laver of the word of God. He feels with unspeakable joy the cleansing power and merit of atoning blood. In all this there is a feast of fat things. It is also a feast of fat things full of marrow. In the natural human body the bone marrow plays an important part in making blood that provides tissue for the body. Spiritually speaking, in the Old Testament it was said that in the blood is the life of the soul. So in new testament times there is marrow spiritually in this feast of fat things, providing nourishment for the saved sinner who is renewed day by day. What a feast of fat things in redeeming love, in pardoning love, in justifying love as the streams of that river which makes glad the city of our God flow into the soul! The partaker of this feast realizes new beauties in the types and shadows setting forth Jesus in suffering as well as in his dispensation of glory.

There were three great feasts that the Jews held among others, known as the feast of the Passover, the feast of Pentecost and the feast of Tabernacles. All of these three feasts set forth in type the work of the Trinity, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost and God the Father. The feast of Passover particularly emblemizes the death of Jesus Christ as the believer's passover, for God, witnessing the efficacy of the blood of the Lamb of God, passes over the sins of the redeemed sinner and abolishes them forever in the realm of eternal forgetfulness. The feast of Pentecost refers to the descent of the Holy Ghost and the establishment of the church of God, as the saved sinner realizes his joint heirshiip with Christ. The feast of Tabernacles typifies God tabernacling with man as the Holy Spirit makes him alive from the dead. The last mentioned feast was the last one of the three great feasts of the Is-

raelites, and so God tabernacles in man as a result of the work of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

It is also a feast of wines on the lees when the believer discerns no life in the old testament wine and that it has been eshausted, and that the water of the word fills the empty vessel to the brim, is made into gospel wine, and is kept until now, refreshing and supplying and satisfying the new born child of God who thirsts after righteousness, is often made to feel sad and heavy-hearted because of the adversary Satan. Jesus turned water into wine at the wedding feast at Cana, the first of his many miracles. This occurred on the third day, signifying the gospel day, as well as life from the dead, for Jesus rose from the dead the third day. The church is espoused as a chaste virgin unto Christ, and it is approprite that this wedding was graced by Christ's presence. It is the church that tastes of the wine that Wisdom (Jesus the wisdom of God in a mystery) has mingled, and it is good wine, kept until now. It is never exhausted. The subject of grace has felt the lifelessness of the old testament wine with its condemnation, and has longed for that sparkling, invigorating, soul-cheering wine of the gospel dispensation. One must feel lost before realizing salvation, must feel the need of Christ before comprehending his mercy, so there is in the mingling of the wine in the mountain of God's holiness a sense of need supplied and grace provided. The first miracle that a child of God knows anything about is when he is made to sip gospel wine and finds his heavy-heartedness gone and hope renewed and faith strengthened. This wine is well refined, being on the lees, with strength and virtue in it. As the poor sinner experiences many trials and is refined by them and conformed to the image of God, he is made often to partake of this wine, of wines well refined. As the wine made from the water at Cana's wedding feast filled the vessels to the brim, so there is fullness of joy and glory for the believer as he feasts in the fellowship of the saints in this mountain upon the precious things prepared by the Lord of hosts.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
ORVILLE WINCHELL, Clerk.

(Written by Deacon C. M. Turman.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 14th, 15th and 16th, 1936, to the churches composing the same and to. the associations, meetings. and churches with which we correspond, sends greetings in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—We do not feel competent to write this Letter, yet at the same time we feel to comply with the wishes of our brethren who saw fit to appoint us to this duty. Praying the good Lord to be our helper we will make the attempt. We feel that none knows our vileness and smallness as do we ourselves. There are such a few things we know, if any, as we ought; and so many things which we desire to know, that it is with fear

and trembling we attempt this Letter. However, we hope there is a something about us that is more than sinful flesh at times, which causes us to meditate on the goodness and mercy of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. At this time, the thought occurs to us that it may be that we have a faint knowledge of the living Word of God. This brings to our remembrance the language of St. John, the first chapter, which reads: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." And in the fourteenth verse it says: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." So we are constrained to believe that the reason we are concerned about these things is because of a faint understanding of the presence of the living Word who dwells among us, which is Jesus Christ the Hope of Glory. There is a cause for such belief, and we are constrained to believe that all who believe that he is an all-wise and gracious God, and that they are in his hands, to some extent at least, are possessors of this living Word, Jesus Christ, the Hope of Glory. Surely it must be that the knowledge of this Word in us is that which causes us to loathe ourselves and to see him as One high and lifted up and altogether lovely, although at times it scarcely seems possible that these vile bodies of ours could be possessed of the presence of the living Word of God who dwells among us, as the inspired writer says. If we are not mistaken in this matter, such is the warfare of all God's elect that they live in doubt and fear each day. From our earliest knowledge of Old School Baptists, we have heard them say that they hoped they had a hope in Jesus. Often have we heard our ablest ministers say that they had been trying to preach the gospel for many years and yet were not sure that they had ever really accomplished it in all those years. They were constrained to believe they were required to testify of him as the Savior of sinners, and as Paul said, of whom they were chief. We would not have confidence in any who asked for a home among us who were oversure of their hope of glory. If not mistaken, the little ones who are his jewels have traveled a different road than that which produces a false fleshly assurance so many boast of. Those who are the Lord's fear often that they may be mistaken, hence are not sure in themselves, but live by faith and by hope and by love, which are the gifts of God, the fruits of his Spirit. In such dwells the living Word, who is their hope of glory. In the book of Malachi, it is written that the Lord's jewels are tried as by fire, all dross and chaff are consumed and they are made as pure as Christ is pure. Such is the final culmination of all who are possessors of his living Word, they shall be gathered unto him in glory.

At this session of our Meeting, we have appreciated the coming among us of your ministers and messengers bringing us your correspondence and your messages of love and fellowship. Our next session is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the New Valley Church, in 1937, at the usual

time in October. We hope to welcome all of you again then.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Mod.
G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

(Written by brother Wm. H. Morris.)

The original Mt. Zion Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, in session with Little Flock Church, near Pleasant Hill, Missouri, October 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1936, sends christian greetings to the churches with which we correspond, and to all who are in fellowship with us.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the mercy and will of the just and loving God, we are permitted to meet in an associate capacity in this another year. We are disappointed in the number present, and especially in the absence, because of illness, of Elder Schenck, of Kansas. While the attendance seems to grow less each year, the spiritual blessings seem to have lost none of their richness, and the spiritual feasts seem to be as nourishing to our hungry souls as if our meetings were attended by thousands. We may reconcile ourselves to the fact that it is God's will, and if God has a message to convey to his children he can convey that message through the lips of one minister as well as through a dozen. While our number seems to be dwindling, the saints of old were concerned about the same things. When Elias made intercession to God against Israel, because they had killed his prophets and digged down his altars, and gone after false gods, as they do at this present day, God's answer was that he had reserved seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal, and Paul says, Even so, at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. In this, as in everything, God had a purpose. He declared the end from the beginning, and who shall ask him why? How mysterious are the ways of God with men, and how wonderful they are to the child of God. His ways are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are peace. We have been made to rejoice in the continuance of his lovingkindness to us. We cannot begin to tell of the wonderful things of our Lord and Savior, for the wisest things we could say would be foolishness, but we cannot help but testify of the wonderful things he has done for us.

To the visiting brethren who are in attendance, we bid you welcome, and extend an invitation to come again, for we love the association of the brethren. May the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ abide with his kindred through another year, is our prayer.

DANIAL A. J. ADAMS, Mod.
(MRS.) J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk.

A SPECIAL OFFER.

TEN years ago, I compiled and published a 140 page book entitled PREDESTINATION. It contains some of the ablest articles ever written on this subject. Three English writers—August M. Toplady, Elisha Coles, William Gadsby—and Elders Samuel Trott and Gilbert Beebe are among the outstanding contributors. Between eight and nine hundred of these books have been distributed throughout the country, which indicates their popularity. They sold originally for $1.00 each. I still have on hand about one hundred copies, and during the months of November, December and January, unless the supply is exhausted in the meantime, as a special inducement to new subscribers, I will send one of

these books free to each NEW two dollar cash subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which will cover one year's subscription. Any old subscriber can have a book free by sending the name of a NEW yearly subscriber, with the money, to the publisher, J. E. Beebe & Co., Box 243, Middletown, N. Y. Some of our readers may also wish to remember those less fortunate than themselves at this season of the year by having the SIGNS visit them throughout the year. Every such subscription will be entitled to a book, as long as they last. I would much prefer to present the book as a gift for the purpose of building up the subscription list to the SIGNS than to sell it direct, so please bear this in mind, and order the paper through the publisher, who will in turn notify me, when the book will be sent.

R. LESTER DODSON.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER J. R. Hardy having changed his address from 2822 Seever Street, Dallas, Texas, to 1134 Melbourne Avenue, Dallas, Texas, requests that his correspondents address him at the latter place.

ELDER W. L. Edwards has changed his address from Castlewood, Virginia, to Star Route, Box 2, Dante, Virginia.

NOTICE.

I would like to get some of the writings of C. H. Spurgeon. Any one having such writings please let me know what they have, also prices for same.

MILFORD HALL,
Box 39,
Mc DOWELL, Kentucky.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, it has pleased almighty God, the controller of all things in heaven and earth, to remove from our midst by death our beloved brother, DEACON DAVID L. BLACKWELL, we bow in humble submission to his divine will, and

WHEREAS, the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church has enjoyed the long life of her faithful member and Deacon, she is now brought to realize her loss, but we do feel that our loss is his eternal gain, so be it

RESOLVED, that as a token of our love and esteem for our departed brother, who for over sixty years was a member in regular attendance, and during that time served as deacon and trustee, and as a record of our love to his memory, be it further

RESOLVED, that these resolutions be spread upon our minutes, a copy be sent to the family of the deceased and a copy sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

Adopted by order of the church.

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.
ELVIRA CONNER, Clerk.

COMMITTEE:
J. B. GARRISON,
G. W. DANBERRY,
C. W. VAUGHN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

"H," Md., $2; W. H. Cole, Tenn., 25 cents; Elder John Neal, Ill., $2; Attie A. Curtis, Me., $2; "A friend," Ontario, $1; John F. Davis, La., $2; Mrs. David Farnie, N. Y., $1; In memory of Joseph F. Hall, Me., $6; Mrs. John F. Cockrill, Va., $1; G. C. Jordan, Mo., $4; E. R. Myers, S. Dak., $2; Jesse C. Ellis, Ohio, $ 3.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

LOUISA EMMA TINDALL SHARP, wife of William M. Sharp, departed this life May 31st, 1936, aged 80 years, 1 month and 4 days. She was the daughter of the late William C. and Lydia Ann Tindall. She is survived by her husband, five daughters and one son, viz., Mrs. Elizabeth Barrell, Mrs. William Morgan, Mrs. William Vanella, Mrs. Samuel Rich, Mrs. William Woodring and William M. Sharp, Jr; also eighteen grandchildren, several great-grandchildren, one sister, Mrs. Olive Hellings, of Ewing, N. J., together with nephews and nieces, many friends and the church at Hopewell, N. J., to mourn for her. The Hopewell Church has lost another of her members, one who was exercised in heart by the Spirit, which proved she was of that precious faith of God's elect. She was baptized by the late Elder F. A. Chick, June 2nd, 1895, into the fellowship of the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, which fellowship was not severed, and though she has been taken from this earthly relation, that faith never dies, but she proved to be one of the household of faith. Sister Sharp was afflicted with rheumatism for several years and could not attend the church services, but she reminded her pastor of the continuation of her love, and devotion for the cause, and the esteem she had for those who labored, by sending a contribution to add to his comfort and protection.

Her funeral services were conducted by her pastor at her home, in Bethlehem, Pa., June 3rd, 1936, after which her body was laid to rest in the family plot in Easton, Pa., to await the call of her Savior, when she shall be caught up in the cloud to meet the Lord in the air, to ever be with the Lord. We should not weep for her as though she had no hope, but rather comfort ourselves with the thought that our loss is her eternal gain. May the comfort of God's loving-kindness rest with her bereaved husband and children, and all who mourn.

C. W. V.

MRS. NANCY J. LOYD, wife of Mr. G. W. Loyd, was born April 12th, 1864, and passed from this earthly life February 14th, 1936. She is survived by her husband, one daughter, Mrs. Burness Teal, of Fort Worth, Texas, and one son, G. B. Loyd, of Cogar, Oklahoma. My wife and I were with her when the end came, and though she suffered greatly at times during her illness, when the end came she went without a struggle, like a child going to sleep. Shortly before her death she raised her arms above her head, as though praying to her dear Savior Jesus Christ, whom she had worshiped for thirty years or more. I do not know what year Jesus was revealed to her as her Savior, but I do know that ever since I can remember she had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, and was an "absoluter" indeed, unless I am mistaken in the meaning of that word. She believed God's people were a chosen people, chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and that they were saved by grace, and grace alone, and not by any works or acts of the creature . I found in mother a great comforter. She was firmly established in her faith, and when I would be worrying about my unworthiness and filled with doubts and fears, she would comfort me by telling me there was nothing I could do of myself, which fact I fully realize now, after try-to live better, only to find I was getting worse. I am not a member of the church, and do not feel worthy of being numbered with you good people, but I do believe the doctrine preached by the

Old School Baptists, and know that if I am saved it will be by grace, and grace alone. Mother was a reader and a great lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Green, of Altus, Oklahoma.

Her son, G. B. LOYD.

OUR dear brother in Christ, JOHN W. S. TIMMONS, of Berlin, Maryland, departed this life January 6th, 1936, aged 51 years and six months. He was well and strong until shortly before his death, which came as a great shock to his family and many friends. He was baptized by the late Elder B. F. Coulter in the fellowship of the Snow Hill Church eighteen or twenty years ago. He was appointed Deacon by the church some seven or eight years before his death. He was faithful in all his duties, never absent if possible to be present. He knew and loved the truth, and often wrote for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Always decidedly serious, his mind being upon weighty matters. He is missed very much by the church, where he was held in high esteem. He married Mary Henmon February 14th, 1906. His widow and five children survive him: William L., Russel, Mary, Doris and John, also two grandchildren. He also leaves two brothers and one sister. His mother, whose obituary appeared in the SIGNS not long ago, was very ill at the time of his death and passed away three weeks later. Brother Timmons was very thoughtful of his mother, always made a way for her to get to meeting.

His funeral service was held from his home and was largely attended. The writer, his pastor, conducted the service, and interment took place in Ever Green Cemetery, in Berlin, Maryland. His family misses him beyond words.

Written by request.

H. C. KER.

MRS. Z. I. JONES, whose maiden name was Anna Bridges, was born April 6th, 1869, at Attica, Iowa, and died at her home in North Battle Creek, Nebraska, aged 67 years, 6 months and 16 days. She was married September 30th, 1887, to Mr. Z. I. Jones, of Knoxville, Iowa, who survives her. To this union were born two daughters, Mrs. Etta Donlavy and Mrs. Myrtle Black, both of Meadow Grove, Nebr. She also raised two boys, Marion Jones, a stepson, and Floyd Bridges, who now lives at Lincilm, Nebr. After their marriage Mr. and Mrs. Jones remained in Iowa a few years, and then came to Madison County, Nebraska, residing on their farm south of Meadow Grove until seventeen years ago, when they retired from the farm to occupy a Battle Creek home. Mrs. Jones united with the Primitive Baptist Church before her marriage, and for more than fifty years the church and its services were her greatest enjoyment. Besides her husband and daughters mentioned, she leaves two brothers, Thompson and J. I. Bridges, of Long Beach, California, eight grandchildren and numerous nephews and nieces. Funeral services were conducted by Elder John I. Jones, of Council Bluffs, Iowa, and burial was made at Union Cemetery.

THE foregoing obituary notice is given from a clippling from a Nebraska newspaper sent to us by Mrs. Jones' daughter, Mrs. Etta Donlavy, with the request that it be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.—ED.

SISTER BERTHA BOES (relic of brother John Boes, born in the year 1835, and who preceded her to the grave some years ago) filled up the measure of suffering left behind for her to fill, and sweetly fell asleep in Jesus Thursday, October 15th, 1936. Nothing pre-

venting, a suitable obituary notice will be prepared and appear in the SIGNS in the near future.

Your brother in Jesus, our only hope for life beyond the grave,

T. D. WALKER.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets the third Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, at 10:30 a. m. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, 421 Steele, Street, Frankfort, Ky.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 105. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1937. NO. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DALLAS, Texas.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—The inclosed article from brother H. B. Jones, who needs no introduction to the old readers of the SIGNS, as his excellent articles appeared often in the SIGNS until the past ten or fifteen years, has been prepared for the compositor by myself, because brother Jones' nerves have become so unsteady that it is with difficulty that he writes legibly. I feel that his writings are too valuable to deprive the cause and our paper of their wholesome influence. He had in mind the SIGNS when he wrote the inclosed article. It is submitted to your judgment. It passes my inspection without modification. How wholesome it would be if we all could enter actively into the spirit of the judgments and counsels pointed out by him.

J. R. HARDY.

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1 CORINTHIANS XIV. 26.

"Let all things be done unto edifying."

No doubt this command and instruction was given by the apostle Paul to the church, and the various gifts in the church, "which is his [Christ's] body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all," and was intended to apply as the right and true rule of action for those gifts in the church down to the end of its militant state. Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant,, says this apostle in 1 Corinthians xii. 1. It seems to be an established fact that everything in "the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth," (1 Tim. iii. 15) that is edifying, comforting or instructive to the saints is a spiritual gift; and while it is lawful to covet earnestly the best gifts (1 Cor. xii. 31), yet it is not possible for us to create them or to attain unto them by education, dint of study or by training, else they would be natural and not spiritual gifts. The apostle James tells us, "Every good gift and every

perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

In the twelfth chapter of 1st Corinthians the apostle tells us the source, nature and object of all those spiritual gifts. First, he reminds these Corinthian brethren of what by nature they had been, and from which they by grace had been called away, saying, "Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led. Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." Then the apostle proceeds to say to the church: "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations; but it is the same God which worketh all in all." How solemn, how plain and clear the judgment rendered by the inspired apostles, who are the judges in this highest of all courts: seated upon twelve thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel by the authority of their divine Head and Law-giver, who called and appointed them to this end. The apostles have rendered their judgment upon the intent and spirit of the teachings of their divine Master, who is the great and only Head of the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who filleth all in all. Hence there is left to the church an inspired and infallible record of the doctrine and order by which the true church it to be governed down to the end of time. Any departure from this always has and always will bring it trouble. It is highly essential for each member, as well as the whole body, for their peace and comfort, that they ever keep in mind the source of their salvation, and of every gift that is bestowed upon them. To "look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged."—Isaiah li. 1. The interest and desire of all possessing these gifts, in their use, should ever be "unto edifying." This done, every gift exercising in its proper place, there could be but little if any cause for confusion.

The church had misused her gifts, or had given place to supposed gifts even while the apostles were still living, as is witnessed by Paul's first letter to the church at Corinth, and the church at Galatia, and others. The church is supposed to be the judge of her gifts, and to understand what is spiritual and what is done unto edifying, and what is not. (See 1 Cor. v. 12; vi. 3.) But the church has not always proved itself infallible in its judgments, for she many times puts gifts in the wrong place, and many times has judged men to possess gifts which proved to have no spiritual gift. And many who had a spiritual gift have used their gifts for contention and strife instead of "unto edifying;" and perhaps this has proved the source of more contention, confusion and division than all things else. Often it seems the church lacks the gift of discernment, or faithfulness to be governed by it, and so recognizes and puts

men in positions as ministers of the gospel who have not the requisite qualifications, but have been prompted by some fleshly aspiration or ambition to seek such a position. And even some who have a spiritual gift unto edification, following a fleshly ambition to be leaders or regulators have left the sphere of usefulness unto edification and wasted their time in fleshly gratification, seeking to obtain or sustain a reputation for ability. The church has often failed to recognize her authority, or at least to exercise it, to call to order her servants who depart from the spirit of scriptural doctrine and order. As a result Babylonish confusion abounds. If the servant of God, or a gift in his house, could always remember the design of his gift, whatever that gift may be, is unto edification, and would always endeavor to use it so, how much better it would be for all concerned. It is true that all truly called and qualified ministers of the gospel are under the solemn charge of Paul to Timothy: "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom: Preach the word; be instant in season, and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine."—2 Tim. iv. 1, 2. In another place Paul instructs Timothy thus: "And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth."—2 Tim. ii. 24, 25.

We have witnessed personal contention between brethren on points of doctrine and order in which very harsh things were said one of another, and sometimes motives questioned, all of which is as contrary to the spirit and the letter of our Savior's and the apostles' teachings as can be. No amount of charges, accusations, browbeating or bulldozing will ever set a wrong thing right. Such a course is not unto edification, but unto confusion. When the children of Judah (the church of God under the legal covenant) had rejected and trampled under foot the laws and statutes that the Lord had given them, until they had become worse than the nations that had been driven out before them, the Lord delivered them into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and they were carried away captive unto Assyria for seventy years, as Jeremiah had foretold, and thus was a way provided for the land of Judah to observe her sabbath as the Lord had commanded. All the time of this captivity there was a people ("a remnant according to the election of grace"), as the Lord had before said to the prophet Elijah, who worshiped the Lord according to the laws and statutes he had given them by Moses, as Daniel the prophet, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego and others as Mordecai and Esther. Thus the church was in Babylon and her prophets prophesied there. Jeremiah the prophet, who foretold all this, and also how they should be delivered from their captivity and restored to their own land, announcing the gracious promises of the Lord to them,

saying, "For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and I will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him: but they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them. Therefore fear them not, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid. For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished."—Jer. xxx. 8-11. While these Scriptures applied literally to national Israel, evidently they also shadowed forth prophetically that full and complete redemption of spiritual Israel from under the curse of the law, and the spiritual blessings that should come to them as a result. Also we have in Israel in her national organization under the legal covenant a figure of the church in its visible organization under the new covenant, at least to an extent. Christ was in the church in the wilderness. (Acts vii. 38.) The Lord's dealings with Israel of old were written for "our example," says Paul, who says, "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted."—1 Cor. x. 1-6. The church may lust after many members and the applause of the world, and avoid the plain testimony of the word through fear of offense, and thus lust after evil things; but the end of such a course, if persisted in, is to land in gross disorder; or at least to learn that if they seek to please men they cannot be the servants of Christ. (Gal. i. 10.) As national Israel in its visible organization was very imperfect, and fell far short of living up to the laws and statutes given for its government, so has the visible church as an organization under the new covenant dispensation. He who looks for perfection in man or woman, or any collective organization of them, is doomed to disappointment. It is only in their standing in the Lord Jesus Christ, as he of God is made unto them wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, that we find perfection. The visible church and the kingdom of God, or heaven, are not the same thing. A man may go in a place as a member in the visible church, but not so with the kingdom of God: he must be born into that, if he enters it at all. Many have

been born into the kingdom who lived and died there who never had a place in the visible church. And, no doubt, many men and women have been members of the visible church who had never entered the kingdom of God, nor had been born again. But it remains true that the "election of grace," the "heirs of promise," must come by faith "unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."—Heb. xii. 22-24.

H. B. JONES.

WINNSBORO, Texas.

[WE are indebted to Elder J. R. Hardy, of Dallas, Texas, for his letter and the part he had in preparing and sending to us for publication in the SIGNS the foregoing excellent article by Elder H. B. Jones, of Winnsboro, Texas. We welcome most heartily, especially from the old and such able contributors to the paper as Elder Jones, articles such as his. What he says is deserving of serious consideration by our readers. We join Elder Hardy in saying of it, "How wholesome it would be if we all could enter actively in the spirit of the judgments and counsels pointed out by him."—R. L. D.]

CAPE CHARLES, Va., Nov. 3, 1936.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—This will likely be only an acknowledgment of your very kind and good letter of the 30th, which I found on our return from Baltimore Sunday night, and appreciate, since of course you are, like myself, a busy man much of the time. But when I am able to I like to be busy, if I could only be in the right way all the time.

Yes, I had heard, and of course favorably, of your being at the Association, which I missed, and I am very glad for the sake of the folks that you could be there, and for your own sake, too, since by your letter I understand that you as well as they were all comforted together. Yes, it is truly wonderful when one is enabled to tell what great things the Lord has done for him, and I want you to know that although I do at times get depressed and likely complain too much, yet through all my afflictions I hope I can still think and tell of some of the things the Lord has done for me, and I hope, or try to, that I may be able to better tell of these things, to his praise and to his glory.

Yes, I know much about visiting with sister Fannie Adkins, and how pleasant and good it is to be in her home, having been entertained there many times.

Well, the doctors treated me just two weeks ago with X-rays, and let me leave Sunday morning after my treatment, and we got down to Nassaongo in time to receive a most hearty reception, and although nervous and a bit tired, I was given strength to talk for

nearly an hour from the text, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." The first time to my knowledge I had used that text, and for the time being I think, or hope, my own sufferings were in the background, and I thought of the great suffering on the cross, and think I said that He was the greatest sufferer and greatest lover that ever lived, although I never read of his being sick, or having any physical pain, before the pain on the cross, yet the mental agony approaching it made him cry out, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me," and it seemed to me that this was, for just a moment, the natural part of him, and then in the same moment it seemed his spiritual nature cried, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

It was wonderful to be with the folks again, and then down home, and now getting rested a little. My ear is still sore, but the doctors say they think it is better.

I will be glad to hear from you any time you feel like writing.

Yours with love, I hope, in the Lord,
G. E. COULBOURN.

McDowell, Ky., Oct. 9, 1936.

Dear Editors:—The time has come for me to renew my subscription to the Signs, so I am sending two dollars for the renewal and two dollors for "the poor of the flock" unable to pay for the paper. I would love to see the little hungry children of God all reading the Signs, as I feel it is a real comfort for us to hear from each other and exchange views on the good word of God. I feel that I have been benefited somewhat by reading the Signs. Often some brother or sister will write their views on some particular Scripture upon which my mind is not clear, which, I feel, under God's hand, helps me to understand much better. I am glad that the Old School Baptists still have such a paper among them, despite the tyrannical rulings of men of faith and hope. Yes, I say men of faith and hope, because I am sure I have lived to see the "falling away" from their steadfastness in the faith of many of the Lord's people, predicted to come upon them in these last days. It is sickening to see such a condition among the people of God, but the Scriptures must be fulfilled that thus it must be.

There is a passage of Scripture on my mind which, if I mistake not, I would love to write upon. It is Ephesians i. 4-6: "According as he hath chosen us [the spiritual seed] in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us acceptable in the beloved." Now, if I say anything at all upon this great matter it will be confined chiefly to the first few lines concerning the choice, or choosing, of his people in Christ before the foundation of the world. There are (I am aware,

thoroughly,) two schools of thought along this very profound subject. I will only give mine, as I see it in the Scriptures. This is not for the purpose of starting a controversy, I am sure. I believe the love for eternal spiritual truth actuates me to thus write. I have read the Scriptures much, also much Baptist literature, but always constrained to decide that there was an actual choice and actual gift of his Son made to his people before the foundation of the world. Since, I believe there was an actual spiritual creation, "in the beginning," of the whole race of man that ever appeared on the stage of time, or ever will appear, to choose from. I believe when God said, "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them," it included the whole race of man in his spiritual existence, or element. Now there was no original difference among them. See Psalms xxxiii. 14, 15: "From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth. He fashioned their hearts alike; he considereth all their works." "God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." This cannot be successfully denied by any, as I see it. But the God of all grace and wisdom foresaw their awful fall from their high destiny through the subtility and success of Satan, and chose a definite number of his fallen creation to show forth his praise here in time, and left the nonelect, or the serpent's seed, figuratively, to suffer the consequences of the fall. Some good brethren object to an actual choice at this ancient date, saying we were only in his mind and purpose representatively. But if this line of thought be true, we had not an actual "beginning" in any state until we were manifested in these Adamic vessels of mercy. This seems too weak and recent a beginning for me. Some seem to quibble and shuffle when we speak of the existence of a spiritual seed in the spiritual Head, and the offspring, like its progenitor, "is spirit," just as the offspring of the fleshly head, like its progenitor, "is flesh." The two Adams spoken of in Scripture are essentially and radically different; one earthly, the other heavenly; the first natural, the second spiritual; and there is precisely the same difference in their respective offspring, each producing "after his kind," like every other thing, whether in the vegetable or animal creation. I love to think of this chosen seed, or spiritual house, as not natural and having its beginning here in time, but spiritual and before time, "when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."—Job xxxviii. 7. No, this is not claiming eternal spiritual children. Notice I said they were "created" in him. Neither am I claiming that the devil is the real spiritual father of any of the sons of men. By "the seed of the serpent" (Gen. iii. 15) is plainly meant, as shown by other Scriptures (Matt. iii. 7; xiii. 38-42; xxiii. 33; John viii. 44; 1 John iii. 8-

19), those descendants of Adam and Eve, those human beings, who are the servants of the devil, and who are influenced by his spirit, who hate God, his holy law and his people, and who shall finally be overwhelmed with the same everlasting condemnation and curse as the devil. The devil and his seed are nowhere in the Scriptures contrasted with Christ (called the woman's seed) and his people. All human beings are of the same blood. (Acts xvii. 26), and were represented in Adam, and made sinners by his disobedience, just as Christ's are all represented in him, and made righteous by his obedience. (Rom. v. 12-21.) Adam being the head of all the natural seed, and Christ the head of all his spiritual seed.

Now, before this letter gets too long, and, perhaps, tedious, I will try to bring it to a close. If it is worthless, or not expedient to publish, do not hesitate to throw it away. I know this subject is very deep and mysterious, and I have merely hinted at what could be said. I am very sure that I do not wish to start an argument among the Israel of God. If any brother or sister sees wherein I have erred, I would appreciate a private letter asking me any question they may wish light upon. Not that I feel able to unfurl the great mysteries of God, but I shall be glad to tell them what the Scriptures mean to me. I believe it is good for the Lord's people to reason together for good. Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.

Devoutly yours,

MILFORD HALL.

HOOKER, Oklahoma.

DEAR EDITORS:—This word of God will be found in Psalms cxix. 105: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." So far as I know, they were rather fixed upon my mind for the first time nearly thirty-six years ago, when I was about forty years of age. While day visions and open eye views go much further with me, yet this occurred unto me in my sleep, and has in some way caused me to keep it pondered in my heart and mind. I did not know how to quote the passage, and did not know it was Scripture until I hunted it out. My dear brother, M. N. Webb, now deceased, was at that time interested in Bible study, and we wrote many letters for an exchange of our thoughts. I thought brother sent a large sheet of paper to me as a letter, with the foregoing passage written across the whole sheet, and also at each principal word there was a picture to represent the word or its meaning. For instance, from "My word" there was a stream of light, as it were, shining across the paper, which followed the path, or road, as was meant by the word "path" in this passage, and in, or near, the center was my own picture, standing near the half-way mark. At my feet, and by the word "lamp," was a lantern lit up and ready, with an extra light then shining around my feet, although it was all in the stream of light cast along the path by "my word." I noticed that the road was not smooth, but that part of it which was yet to be

traveled was perhaps some easier than the part passed over. The light followed the path all the way, yet the end was not plain to my view. When first reading the letter one of the great wonders in my mind was as to how my brother had learned to write in such a strange hand. I knew he had not done so before, and I felt sure in my dream that if this letter and strange use of Scripture meant anything to me it also embraced my brother in the same peculiar blessings, and so I have ever held him in my christian embrace. The harder question still remains: Is that promise really applied to me and my life?

I have told this to a few, and have never entirely thrown it away, have not desired to cast away my confidence in God, and, to my surprise, the hope has been given me at times that this sure promise of David has been literally and spiritually fulfilled in my favor. Also, as I call to mind, my brother was not then a church member, but took up the cross soon after, and was a faithful believer and a strong writer of Baptist creed. Then again, I question if the light and lamp will continue to light my path and guide my feet in the future as in the past. If so, I will still be as a lone pilgrim in that narrow way, and the only way that this poor sinner can ever walk. There was only one path in the picture, and but one in it. The light is what we need in this walk.

Only "a dream."

E. G. WEBB.

LEESBURG, Va., Nov. 16, 1936.

DEAR BRETHREN:—With this note, I send you an article written by sister Helen J. Jones, of Philadelphia, Pa., for publication in the SIGNS, if you see fit to use it. Her letter, telling something of the gracious dealings of the Lord with her, belongs not to me privately, I feel, but to the spiritual family among whom the SIGNS circulates. Being, as it is, a setting forth of vital religion in an experimental manner, it is far too good to keep hidden, and must be shared with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. I have her permission to send it to you for publication.

Faithfully yours,

H. H. LEFFERTS.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 8, 1936.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—For some time I have been impressed to write to you of my feelings and thoughts, and it is with an inward trembling that I start this letter to you. The spoken and written words coming from my lips and pen regarding the wonderful things of God and his mercies seem to my poor mind so inadequate and fall so far short of expressing my real feelings that they choke me and die away unuttered and unspoken, for the most beautiful words in man's vocabulary fail to even touch the glory of His immensities. When I feel deeply about something I cannot express it, for it becomes too big for me. I am afraid God's people think me cold spiritually. I am afraid I am deceiving the dear saints, and sometimes when I am sitting in meeting

drinking in the glorious gospel (for which God has seen fit to send his Spirit to my soul) a feeling comes over me and I wonder what I, of all people, am doing in the midst of such a heaven-bound band. If they knew me as I know myself—sinful, cold and a vessel of warfare, flesh against the Spirit, and the former the victor the greater part of the time— they could not treat me with such gracious kindness. My only consolation is that I feel I love the people of God, and my constant prayer is that, God willing, I may always be privileged to be with them and that I may always have a spirit of humility in my association with them. I have not a vital experience of grace that some have. Sometimes I fear that I may have imagined what little I have had, and that is when I feel that I am deceiving God's elect. If I have ever had any evidence of my right to an inheritance in that glorious company, it began when I was eleven years of age. I had always gone to the Old Baptist meetings, even before I could remember, for my parents were members and they always took me. I had always believed in God, but never in the saving sense I hope I did when I was eleven. I cannot name any special time when the weight of my sins began to bear down upon me, but I do remember that I cried myself to sleep many nights because of my lost and ruined condition. However, I recall most distinctly one night when I felt as if I could bear no more, that I would surely die if God did not soon have mercy on me. I always slept upstairs by myself, on the farm, and this night, after much weeping and mourning I arose from my bed and dropped to my knees beside it. I can still remember my feeling of wonderment when I realized I was on my knees. If any poor soul was ever given the spirit of prayer, I had it that night. When I arose from my knees the burden seemed to have disappeared, and oh the blessed peace and joy of that night. The next morning when I awakened I was fearful, and have often been since then, that perhaps I imagined it. Yet, at rare intervals when I have been "high and lifted up" I have felt I would not trade that little bit for all the gold and silver in the world.

I loved to read the experiences in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of the people who wrote telling of His dealings with them. I did all this reading when my parents were not around. I shall never forget one experience related in the SIGNS, where the narrator told of seeing the head of Christ appearing at the foot of his bed. I prayed many times for such evidence, but my prayers were never answered, because, I know now, God only metes out to us what is good for us to have, and my prayer was selfish. Too, I realize now that no two experiences of grace are ever exactly alike, though the outline is always the same, but the Holy Spirit weaves a different design for each of us.

I went to meeting with my parents whenever they could go. We lived about seventy-five miles from the nearest church, and it was over dirt roads. I enjoyed the meetings, and the preaching was meat and drink to me. I had

a great desire for six long years to unite with the church, but the brighter evidence for which I had prayed was not revealed, and my deep sense of unworthiness did not diminish, but rather increased. One time during that six years we attended an Association held under trees in a grove. Cars had been driven near the congregation so that the people in them might hear. I was in one of the cars, with some young people, and was listening closely as the meeting was almost ready to be dismissed. Suddenly the whole congregation and minister seemed to be covered with the most marvelous light, and their singing sounded to me like heavenly bells. Before the invitation to join the church was given, in some way I was out of the car and almost ran from the meeting. When I came to myself I was trembling as though I had an attack of ague. I must have looked strange, because my cousin asked what was troubling me. If I ever doubt the predestination of God, I recall the incidents leading up to that happy day when the dear members of Sharon Church voted to receive me. I had always built up an idea in my mind that I could never be baptized because I could not go in the water without shoes. The week preceding my uniting with the church my parents had taken me (I was then seventeen years of age) to an Orthopedic hospital in Iowa City, Iowa. We had gotten new shoes and braces for me, and then had gone back half-way across the State to attend this Association. The meeting began on Friday, and every one was much disappointed because only two ministers were able to attend. That meeting was ample proof that his Spirit is all-sufficient. At the close of the afternoon session on Saturday two people came to the church. A night meeting was held, and at its close from various parts of the church-house came six dear souls. That scene, amidst much rejoicing, is forever stamped upon my mind. When we had separated, and had gone to the various places of entertainment, a terrific rain storm, with heavy thunder and sharp lightning, came up. Oh the glory of that night! I had no fear of that storm—God was in it. Even the lightning bolts striking near by and the crashing thunder were a glorious symphony. Praise God. When I went to bed I did not sleep, heavenly choruses were singing, and I rejoiced with them. I seemed to be suspended above my bed, and I sang all night in my heart. It seemed my soul would burst with the beauty of his loving mercy to such a wretch as I. The next morning I had to drive several miles through mud to the church, and God was with us and provided help when the car stalled. Services were held in the morning, and a cousin of mine, a young girl of seventeen, joined at that time. While lunch was being served the mother of this girl asked me why I did not go before the church. I laughed, and said I could never be baptized, because I could not go into the water without shoes. My mother, who had come up to the car, and had heard the last remark, said these words, which I firmly believe were given her to say:

"Why, dear, don't you remember? your old shoes are in the car." She said no more. I was completely silenced, but, even so, I was determined in my own mind not to join. When the church convened for the afternoon services I found a seat in the middle of the back row, as far as possible from the front of the church. At the close of the service, when the last hymn was being sung, I only remember taking the first step, and it was the easiest one I have ever taken, because I hope it was God's time for me to go. I stepped in front of several people and was in the aisle and up to the pulpit before I realized what I was doing. When I arrived there I was surprised to see another young girl there. I told my experience, little as it was, and, to my amazement and joy, I was received. After the services were over the members went to the river for the baptism of nine new members. What a blessed place that river bank is to me, for in that river the burden rolled away. I thought then it had gone forever, but it was only temporary, I found to my sorrow later. One kind of burden was gone, but another had taken its place. The water of the river was cold and very muddy, but after I was buried it seemed warm and my shoulders felt free of their burden. When I walked from the water how dear those saints in the Lord looked to me! I loved them all, and felt I wanted to tell them so. Would that I might have been allowed to keep the spiritual exaltation of that baptismal day, but it could not be. It seems that the older I get the less I know about spiritual things, that the years are full of dark unprofitableness. Oh that his Holy Spirit might show me things of the Spirit. It seems that instead, I am shut up in a dark cell, and I often doubt if I have ever been touched by a single ray of his love. As the first soft wind of spring breaks up the winter, I pray he may see fit to blow the warm breath of his love again on my poor heart and melt the ice and snow lodged around it. He has led me, protected me and guided me with a loving mercy, of which I am very unworthy. How wonderful are his ways, which man has no right to question. The good old hymn expresses much in the two lines:

"The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined, and wrote in his will."

God sends afflictions and sorrows for our good and his glory. Has not the Potter the power to do his will with the product of his hands? He designs the vessel he creates and he has the right to reshape it, take off here, and add there, where he feels it is necessary. Rather, it is for me to pray that God may give me strength to bear life's burdens, and that he may give me grace to say, "Thy will be done." When the sorrows and cares of life press heavy may he give me the spirit to say, Do with me what you will, Lord, for with your sustaining grace I can bear all things. I cannot even pray for these things unless God gives the spirit of prayer. I pray to God that his Holy Spirit has been the motivating force of this letter, but I am not worthy of his notice, and am afraid this letter has too much of self in it. Please overlook its many faults,

and cast the mantle of charity over them, as well as over the writer, who is the tiniest in the household of faith, if one at all.

My love and best wishes to Mrs. Lefferts and yourself. Mother and Irene also send the same to both of you.

Your unworthy little sister,

HELEN J. JONES.

[We thank brother Lefferts for sharing the foregoing excellent letter with the readers of the Signs. In view of the physical handicap caused by the affliction referred to by our young sister and the fact that she does not hesitate to drive her car from coast to coast, we have felt that she must possess an unconquerable spirit naturally, but when she feels, as she so beautifully expresses herself, that "God sends afflictions and sorrows for our good and his glory," and then desires to be reconciled to his will, it seems to us that few among our acquaintance have been so signally blessed as she. We feel deeply drawn to her in love and fellowship of the Spirit. May God make us thankful for such gifts of grace in our midst.—R. L. D.]

Fayette, Alabama.

Dearly Beloved Brethren:—On Wednesday night, September 16th, Elder T. W. Brock and I started for the South Arkansas Association that was held near Fordyce on Friday, Saturday and third Sunday in September, with Mt. Pisgah Church. This Association was divided a few years ago over conditionalism and limited predestination, and, as usual in divisions, the numerical strength went to those in error. It looked at the time that they were forsaken, but the God of Israel never slumbers nor sleeps, so from a few they have grown to quite a number of Old Baptists. It was a great pleasure to meet these dear brethren and sisters and hear them talk of the wonders of grace. From this little Association we went on to the South Ouachita Association, held near Delhi, Louisiana, on Friday, Saturday and fourth Sunday in September. Elder V. R. Harris was the esteemed Moderator of the South Arkansas Association until last year, but God saw fit to call him home last February. In his place Elder John R. Everett was elected, and we esteem him highly for the truth's sake. In this Association we met Elders G. R. Hathcock, J. R. Everett, E. R. Lambert and A. D. Wall. We had never met any of them except Elder Hathcock, as he had been at our Association (Hopewell) twice. He has been preaching over fifty years, and is a wonderful gift. In the South Ouachita Association they have three ministers, but Elder Nash is feeble in health and no longer active. Elder E. K. Evers is the Moderator succeeding him, and he is a lovely brother. Elder R. W. Rhodes is an able minister, and has the care of five churches. They, too, have had their trouble with the conditionalists. At this Association we also met Elders R. P. Hendrix and W. J. Singleton, from the Mt. Zion Association, in southern Alabama.

Brethren, let me give you a word of encouragement. Our conditional breth-

ren tell that we are few in numbers and that we are killing our churches with doctrinal preaching. It is true that we are few in numbers, but God will never leave himself without witnesses. In these two associations we found all the able preachers that they need, and, although their churches are small, they are active, and plenty of believers on the outside. In the Hopewell Association we are not fearful of the church dying. If we bring in a large number of people by persuasion we will have trouble, but when they come by the power that added them in the apostles time they are genuine, and will not give the church trouble. Brethren, salvation belongs to the Lord's people, and is bestowed upon them because of the efficacious work of the Lamb, both for time and eternity. So he keeps the church adorned for the Husband.

With much love to the editors, contributors and readers, I ask an interest in your prayers.

Your little brother,

W. D. GRIFFIN.

TRENTON, N. J., Sept. 6, 1936

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—Your good letter of June, 1934, is before me, unanswered all this time. I am ashamed of my neglect, but it seemed to me there was so little I could say that would be of any benefit to you, but now I have just read your editorial in the September SIGNS, and thought it so good that I am prompted to write at last. My own failings almost overwhelm me at times, but I read with much satisfaction your words about grace, and grace alone, as a "means" of salvation. As you say, nothing whatever on our part can appeal in any way. As Elder Durand said, it is impossible to get sweet apples from a sour apple tree. As I understand, we cannot even lift a finger to gain what grace gives, totally unmerited. Your two words, "grace" and "works," show the difference, as you say, between the belief of the Old School Baptists and *all of the others.* The Old School Baptists are accused of not doing anything; if so, it is because they know they cannot do anything toward getting salvation. At least that is the way it seems to me. Of late I have enjoyed reading some of the hymns. I seem to understand them better than the Bible, but of course I know of some wonderful passages of Scripture—such promises given, if one can only lay hold of them. My life seems so empty and barren, so lacking in anything good or useful, that I feel a bit discouraged. I have kept quite well and active for one of my years (eighty-one), but I live easily.

You must not think I lack in thinking of you, but that does not do you much good unless I write it. Well, you have my best wishes, and I firmly believe that the Lord will support and strengthen you in the time of need.

Very truly,

WILFORD R. LAWSHE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1937.

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NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

We greet our readers at the beginning of this new year with a deep sense of gratitude to God for all the benefits which we have received at his hand. He has been good, immeasurably good, to us all the days of our life, but at no time have we realized more fully his infinite love and sustaining grace than during the past year. Many of our readers will recall the very trying circumstances under which we assumed the responsibilities of editorship one year ago. Our publisher at that time was almost totally incapacitated, and remained so for two or three months. The subscription list had reached about the lowest point in many years, and, besides, there were other reasons which made the future look anything but bright. We are very glad, indeed, to report at this time, however, that our publisher's condition of health has greatly improved, that our subscription list is now recapturing some of its lost ground and that we have many reasons for feeling confident regarding the future of our family paper. One of the most gratifying events of the year was that Elder David V. Spangler joined our editorial staff.

During the year just passed, we received a great deal of encouragement and assistance from our readers, for which we desire to thank them most sincerely. Undoubtedly, we made some mistakes, for we are still human and liable to err, but charity toward us has been much in evidence. For fear some one may have misunderstood the latter part of our editorial in the September issue, however, we wish to call attention to it here. After stating that we had never felt to raise bars of nonfellowship *"against any brother, who is a member in good standing of a sound and orderly Old School Baptist church,"* because of his views on certain subjects, we continued by saying, "We most certainly would not fix any limitations or bounds upon Bible subjects, nor any restrictions of any kind whatsoever so long as *such a brother,* (a member in good standing of a sound and orderly Old School Baptist church) manifests the Spirit of Christ." Perhaps we could have made ourself more clear by adding, in effect, *so long as he writes in love on doctrine or experience, which doctrine shall be in accord with that*

professed by his church. What we desired to convey to our readers was that we did not wish to appear in the guise of a dictator, or as a lord over God's heritage, and we wanted our good brethren who are sound in the faith to know that we do not intend to sit as a critical judge over them as long as they adhere to the fundamental principles of "salvation by grace." If a single one of our readers got the impression that we intended, for one moment, to let down the bars and open the columns of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to conditionalists, progressives, and the like, we want to disabuse their minds in the most emphatic terms of any such thought. We mention it for the purpose of emphasizing that we most certainly do not intend doing any such thing. We fear that the cause of truth in some instances has been injured by those, though sound in the faith, yet indiscrete in their remarks, or by carrying some point of doctrine as a chip on their shoulder, so to speak, and insisting upon every one accepting their version of whatever subject might be under consideration. We have actually known excellent brethren, even those who have been yoked together in the gospel ministry for many years, to come to the parting of the ways because of too much pressure being put upon one or more points of doctrine. In one section of the country, it may be one thing and in another something else, but it is sometimes very far reaching in its effect and greatly disturbs the peace and fellowship of the whole body of brethren. Such things are sad, to say the least. If we know our own heart, we earnestly desire to labor to the end that Zion may be unified and built up in her most holy faith. Our associate editors will undoubtedly bear witness to the fact that at no time or place have we shown any disposition to even suggest what subjects they shall write about, and we want our good brethren who contribute to our columns to know that so long as they manifest the Spirit of Christ we shall welcome their articles. Right here, we would also like to ask the co-operation of our readers in helping us to keep our paper free from articles written by excluded members, or any who are not sound and orderly Old School Baptists. There are those who will take advantage of us unless we are informed. We cannot possibly be personally familiar with the situation surrounding every one throughout the entire country, but we shall strive most earnestly to give our readers a clean paper and to keep the SIGNS up to its usual standard. Realizing that we have a large circle of readers, we shall endeavor to supply them with a variety of gospel truths, and not publish one line of thought to the exclusion of everything else. Some will like one thing, while others will prefer something else, but our chief aim will be to present the truth in love. The proof of the pudding will be in the eating, and we will have to leave it to the individual to judge for himself the quality of the food which will be placed upon the table of the SIGNS. We have been associated with the editorial staff of the paper for over thirteen years, and the most of our

readers have had ample opportunity to judge us both as to our spirit and soundness of doctrine. During that time our views have been given upon many different subjects, but we are aware that we have not covered all of the items in the original prospectus as outlined by the founder in 1832. We have had in mind of late, the Lord enabling us so to do, taking up the various items of the prospectus, in their respective order, and presenting as best we can our views upon them, in order that our brethren may better determine where we stand upon the fundamental principles which go to make up the very foundation of what we believe, and our reason for believing it. This will require quite a space of time to complete, since there are ten such items, and there will necessarily be other things coming up to require our attention. It is very difficult, as many of our readers well realize, to always express one's self correctly, or so as not to be misunderstood or misconstrued, but we shall do our best and shall ask that our writings be carefully examined and judged according to the Scriptures of eternal truth. Anything that is contrary thereto, regardless of by whom submitted, should promptly be discarded. In no way do we wish to shirk the responsibility which rests upon us as editor, at the same time we earnestly seek the cooperation of our readers in improving in every way possible our family paper. (They can help us greatly by both writing themselves and sending in for publication the good letters which they receive.) We are grateful to our associate editors for their wonderful assistance, and we face the future with an abiding faith and confidence in God to sustain the SIGNS and supply our needs, whatever they may be.

How often in recent months has the Scripture, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" been brought to our mind. It has proven a veritable prop, indeed. Many has been the time when we stood upon the very brink of despair, bewildered and at our wit's end, and not knowing which way to turn or what to do, with our innermost being verily beseeching the true and living God to undertake for us. Only those who are acquainted with the trials of Job can appreciate what has been the anxiety of our soul, as we have pleaded with God most earnestly, feeling that though he slay us, yet would we trust in him. Again, we felt to join with Job in saying, "He knoweth the way that I take; when he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold." On the other hand, we have been greatly comforted by such Scriptures as (1) "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary, and they shall walk, and not faint." (2) "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." What

a refuge and hidingplace the Great Rock in a weary land has been to us! Surely, we had fainted except we had believed to see the hand of the Lord in the land of the living. We cannot adequately express the joy which has come to us, often during the night, through being assured that God was on our side, and that he who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, would also freely give us all things. The apostle said for our comfort in connection with these things, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." We can but believe that all that has transpired in connection with the SIGNS, however adverse it may have appeared to us, is embraced in the "all things" that shall work together for the good of God's people. We say this, notwithstanding the many strange and mysterious things which have overtaken it. We are not at all disposed to place any limitations upon our God, but rather would we desire to wait upon him, remembering that he is his own interpreter, "And he will make it plain." If we take a look about us to-day, how many hard things to be understood do we see? At least the Spanish nation seems to be bent on exterminating itself from the earth; other kindred nations, geographically speaking, appear to be sitting on a powder keg and almost momentarily waiting their doom, while our own country is passing through a difficult period. Besides all this, there are many more or less minor perils and individual troubles, including those among the churches of our beloved Zion, but amidst it all, we take courage in the assurance that "the Lord is in his holy temple," and therefore we would say, "Let all the earth keep silence before him." What indescribable comfort there is in trusting in him of whom it was said of old, "Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters. Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Thou stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them. Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation."—Exodus xv. 10-13. We believe firmly in the final preservation of the saints. Therefore, when life's battles are o'er, and the appointed time for our change has come, we confidently expect to glide safely into our haven of rest, where we shall see him as he is and be satisfied with his likeness. This is our faith and our hope.

R. L. D.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS."

WE will furnish extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

A SPECIAL OFFER.

TEN years ago, I compiled and published a 140 page book entitled PREDESTINATION. It contains some of the ablest articles ever written on this subject. Three English writers—August M. Toplady, Elisha Coles, William Gadsby—and Elders Samuel Trott and Gilbert Beebe are among the outstanding contributors. Between eight and nine hundred of these books have been distributed throughout the country, which indicates their popularity. They sold originally for $1.00 each. I still have on hand about one hundred copies, and during the months of November, December and January, unless the supply is exhausted in the meantime, as a special inducement to new subscribers, I will send one of these books free to each NEW two dollar cash subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which will cover one year's subscription. Any old subscriber can have a book free by sending the name of a NEW yearly subscriber, with the money, to the publisher, J. E. Beebe & Co., Box 243, Middletown, N. Y. Some of our readers may also wish to remember those less fortunate than themselves at this season of the year by having the SIGNS visit them throughout the year. Every such subscription will be entitled to a book, as long as they last. I would much prefer to present the book as a gift for the purpose of building up the subscription list to the SIGNS than to sell it direct, so please bear this in mind, and order the paper through the publisher, who will in turn notify me, when the book will be sent.

R. LESTER DODSON.

ORDINATIONS.

THE Mizpeh Church of Old School Baptists, at Touchet, Washington, met October 24th, 1936, pursuant to a call made at its regular meeting in September, to consider the ordination of PETER JONES to the full work of the gospel ministry. The Big Spring Church, at Elgin, Oregon, and the Pleasant Grove Church, at Yakima, Washington, had been requested to send their ordained help, to which both responded in the persons of Elder C. W. Bond and Deacon Dennis McCullough, of Big Spring Church, and Elder A. D. Hughet, of Pleasant Grove Church.

The Presbytery organized by choosing Elder J. T. Barnes, Mizpeh Church, Moderator, and Elder C. W. Bond Clerk.

After the regular preaching services of the church, conducted by Elder A. D. Hughet, the church went into conference to consider the business matters before it. The minutes of the previous meeting showed that the church had voted unanimously for the ordination of brother Jones, and, by motion and second, this question was submitted to the Presbytery for its judgment. After testimony given by brother Jones, and his answers to questions of the Presbytery, it was agreed to proceed with the ordination.

Elder A. D. Hughet made the ordination prayer, with the laying on of hands by the Presbytery, composed (in addition to the Elders and Deacons named) of Deacons Marion Colwell and Charles Showalter, of the Mypeh Church. The charge was delivered by Elder C. W. Bond. The candidate was delivered back to the church and the right hand of fellowship given him. The church then called him as assistant pastor, because of the feeble health of Elder Barnes.

J. T. BARNES, Moderator.
C. W. BOND, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MRS. A. D. BOURLAND, widow of Elder A. D. Bourland, was born in Fannin County, Texas, December 27th, 1848, where she spent her girlhood. Her maiden name was White. She was married to Elder A. D. Bourland in 1872. They moved to Tarrant County and located near Keller, where she made her home for sixty-five years. Her husband, who was a gifted minister of the Primitive or Old School Baptist Church, preceded her in death thirty-two years. She gently fell asleep in Jesus November 7th, 1936, at the home of her son, John A. Bourland, in Ft. Worth, Texas. While she never united with the organic church, she gave abundant evidence of one who had been drawn by the cords of love to the Master, and taught deeply in her experience in the school of grace. The lessons she learned reflected the fruits of the Spirit in a beautiful and useful life, which was adorned with a firm belief and trust in God, love for the church, kindness, hospitality, patience and an unselfish service to the hundreds who were entertained in her home. All of this was done cheerfully. Her home continued to be a place of welcome for the Baptists long after her husband died. She fed the hungry, gave drink to the thirsty, lent a helping hand to the poor and needy and ministered to the sick. Surely the welcome words of Jesus, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," belong to her. She was a true and faithful companion to her husband while he lived, and proved that she loved the cause he so faithfully served, after he laid his armor down. None makes more sacrifices for the cause of Christ than does the faithful wife of a faithful minister of the gospel. I fear they are appreciated too little, or at least the appreciation of their unselfish sacrifices is too little manifested by the churches. This ought not to be.

She is survived by five sons: A. M., Elijah and Green Bourland, of Vernon, Texas, Edd and John H. Bourland, of Ft. Worth, Texas, twelve grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren, also two sisters: Mrs. Lou Brigance and Miss Mary White, of Commerce, Texas, and one brother, C. M. White, of Keller, Texas.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Missionary Baptist meetinghouse, in Keller, Texas, in the presence of the family and a large concourse of relatives and friends, after which her body was laid to rest in the family cemetery near the home where she had lived for sixty-five years, there to await the promised coming of the Lord to raise and change it from mortal to immortal, from corruptible to incorruptible and from natural to spiritual. She will be greatly missed, but had lived a long and useful life and was ready for the Master's call. May the God in whom she trusted give comfort and divine guidance to those who mourn.

J. R. HARDY.

GEORGE GRIGG passed away at his late home, in Caradoc, Ontario, May 31st, 1936, in his sixty-sixth year. He had been in failing health for some time, and death came as the result of a stroke. He leaves to mourn their loss, his wife, three brothers, William Grigg, of Mt. Bridges, Ontario, Dr. Arthur Grigg, of Saginaw, Michigan, and James Grigg, of London, Ontario; also two sisters, Miss Ellen Grigg, who made her home with him, and Mrs. Thomas Mellow, of Bath, Ontario. The funeral service was held at his late home on Tuesday, June 2nd, where a very large company of friends and relatives met to show their high esteem of the departed. He was

well known and highly respected as a man of sterling qualities. In belief he was an Old School Baptist, and loved to meet with them whenever possible, although he was not a member, expressing himself as unworthy of such a fellowship. He was well grounded in the doctrine. He had marked 2 Timothy i. 9, in his Bible, and his dear wife asked the writer to speak from that verse at his funeral: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." We know that this was what the departed believed, and our hope is that he is resting in the Lord. May God reconcile his wife and sister with whom he had lived so long, and the rest of his family, to their loss, believing that their loss is his eternal gain.

ALSO,

PETER ALLISON departed this life November 1st, 1936, at his home, near Muirkirk, Ontario, aged seventy-six years. His father was Walter Allison and his mother Catherine McDonald. He was married March 25th, 1891, to Mary McKenzie, with whom he lived very happily for nearly eighteen years. To his great sorrow, she died February 15th, 1909, leaving him with four children to mourn his loss. Brother Peter, to the day of his death, treasured the precious memory of his dear wife, who had been a very worthy member of The Covenanted Baptist Church, and we believe she had been not only a natural comfort, but a spiritual comfort to him also, so that since her death he was of a sorrowful spirit. The Lord blessed him to raise his family and to live an honorable life, so that he was highly esteemed by all who knew him. He united with the church over two years ago, and was a worthy and consistent member. He leaves to mourn their loss, three daughters, a son and several grandchildren. Interment was in the Duart cemetery, the writer speaking at the meetinghouse from Psalms cxxvi. 6. May God reconcile the bereaved family.

G. R.

MRS. MARY (WITTE) ABBOTT died at her home, in Elgin, Oregon, October 28th, 1936, aged 83 years and 28 days. She was born September 30th, 1853, near New Concord, Kentucky. She came to the Grande Ronde valley of Oregon in 1892. August 26th, 1900, she was married to William Abbott, who died December 18th, 1911. She professed faith in Christ at the age of fifteen years, and joined the United Baptist Church, at Blood River, Kentucky. In later years she united with the Big Spring Church of Old School Baptists, at Elgin, Oregon, where she remained a faithful member until her death. She leaves of her kindred here one sister, Mrs. Quintella Morris, of Imbler, Ore., and two brothers, Joshua Witte, of King Hill, Idaho, and Quintur Witte, of Elgin, Oregon. Also thirty-two nieces and nephews, besides a host of friends, to whom she was familiarly known by the name of "Aunt Peggy." She was raised in the old school of home industry, where many of the luxuries of life were made by hand. She took great pride in showing the younger generation many relic products of her youthful days, both of needlework and of the loom. Some had been produced entirely by herself and family, from the growing of the natural to the finished product, and of a display of skill equal to the factory work of to-day. Many of the homes of her neighbors and friends are adorned with carpets, rugs or pillows she made, continuing her weaving of such things up to two years ago, when her strength began to fail. Her zeal in

industry did not exceed her zeal for her church and the faith she loved so well. She never missed a meeting of her church unless she was sick, and often when we did not think she should risk going to the church, because of her weakness or bad weather, the church services would be held in her home. She would often say, I know that I am the meanest person living, and if I am saved it must be by grace. She had been a constant reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for a long time, and often said that it furnished her more comfort than anything else.

I, as her pastor, was called to officiate at her funeral, and took as a subject, "The widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them." —Acts ix. 39. Interment was made in the Elgin Cemetery by the side of her husband, both to await the call of their Master in the resurrection, in the hope of which both had lived and finished their days on earth. She left us a worthy example of industry and faith.

C. W. BOND.

PAUL LEFFERTS ROUNDS, my nephew, son of sister Naomi L. Rounds, of Salisbury, Maryland, came to his death in a mine accident in Honduras, Central America, where he was employed as a Mining Engineer by a New York firm operating silver mines there. He died November 11th, 1936, and was buried November 12th, at San Juan. He was married May 19th, 1933, to Miss Lela Ford, of Missouri, who survives him, and who was in Honduras at the time of his death, expecting to soon return to the States. He is further survived by one brother, E. Stuart Rounds, of Pittsburgh, Pa., and by his mother. His father, who died September 12th, 1907, was our brother Edward F. Rounds. Paul was born in Philadelphia, Pa., November 26th, 1903. Both the father and the son passed away at about the same age, that of thirty-three years. The dreadful news came as a great shock to us all, but we know there are no accidents with God; what may seem accidental from the human side is but the fulfillment of the divine will. Psalms one hundred and three, verses thirteen and fourteen, and the nineteenth verse of the second chapter of second Timothy have applied with comfort to the hearts of the bereaved ones. In it all, consolation and strength have been administered by the Holy Spirit so that no one has felt to question the wisdom and justice of the Lord, for his mercy endures forever. Brethren, may you feel to pray for the dear mother and wife and brother so suddenly and sadly bereaved; and may they be blest with resignation and reconciliation such as only true faith in God can give.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

MAY SHOCKLEY MORRIS, wife of John W. Morris, of Salisbury, Maryland, passed from this earthly life September 20th, 1936, a few months after her fiftieth birthday. Sister Morris was born in Wicomico County, Maryland, May 14th, 1886, and was the daughter of John H. and Elizabeth Shockley. She was married to John W. Morris in the year 1910, to which union were born three daughters, as follows: Mrs. Lawrence Holloway, Fruitland, Md., Mrs. John Elliott and Miss Edna Morris, of Salisbury, Md. Sister Morris was baptized on the second Sunday of June, 1918, by the late Elder A. B. Francis, under which she was admitted to membership in the Forest Grove Church, where she remained a faithful member until her death. She was clerk of this church some years before and at the time of her departure. The writer knew "Sister May" (as she was so well

known by this name) for the last eleven years of her life, and was her pastor most of that time, and it seemed at times most wonderful to be in her presence, as she was so much exercised in heart and mind in spiritual things, and did so love to talk on these things, and things pertaining to the church, which she loved dearly and served faithfully. Her church and pastor miss her, and will continue to miss her. Her husband and three daughters, who loved her so much, have our sympathy in their great loss, which we share, and bear with them as best we can. It seemed in her last illness she knew she could not get well from the first of the attack, and so told the writer, and not only did she seem reconciled, but anxious to be free from the body of pain, in which she suffered much, and to be with her Savior, and, like David of old, felt that when she should awake in His likeness she would be satisfied. Is not this enough? I read the twenty-third Psalm at her funeral.

Her pastor,

G. E. COULBOURN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Sarah I. Rittenhouse, N. J., $3; Mrs. Mary J. Ege, N. J., $3; Mrs. Brittie Caudle, Okla., $1; Mrs. Dosia Deal, Mo., $1; Mrs. T. L. Carey, Ontario, $1; Mrs. Mary Duffus, B. C., $3; Woburn Church, Mass., $10; Mrs. R. B. Shortridge, Ill., $3; Dr. Thomas McColl, Ont., $3; J. N. Wageonheizer, N. Y., $1; "A friend," Del., $1; Huldah J. Leonard, N. Y., $1; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $1; "A friend," Va., $1; Mrs. Emma Ball, Va., $1; Mrs. J. A. MacTaggart, Ont., $2; Anson Quint, Maine, $3; William D. Chapman, N. Y., $10.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Cedar Creek Church meets every fourth Sunday at the home of Dr. Stanley, 7029 Knight Street, S. E., Portland, Oregon. Take Mt. Scott car, get off at Tremont Station, go one block west. Meeting commences at 10:30 a. m. Lunch at noon. All are invited. On account of sickness we make this change from our old meeting-place.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

J. B. SALLEE, Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets the third Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, at 10:30 a. m. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, 421 Steele, Street, Frankfort, Ky.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Old Baptist Church of Chicago meets at the home of Mrs. Sarah Parker, 4514 N. California Avenue, the first Sunday of the month. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Pastor C. A. Jones.

(MRS.) E. BRUNOW, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.

T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 105. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1937. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FAITH.

THE true nature of the faith of a christian, according to the inspired word, consists in this: that it is an emotional receiving, in unwavering assent, unto the credibility of the word being the testimony of God, by the Holy Spirit, delivered unto us in the writings of the apostles and prophets, meeting the inspiration in the bonds thus given to us; whereby we assent to the whole and every part of the word, as to a certain and infallible truth revealed by God to us, and therefore of itself invisible; a spiritual act, imminent and internal. Christ is its author, through the revelation of the Spirit made known to the recipient that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, for "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." The belief of the heart is thus formed by the internal WITNESS coming into the soul, and the act of faith proceeding from it, but terminating in the same. Thus the Lord teaches all his children, makes them acquainted with their fallen state, and sensible of their guilt and of their misery. He brings them to a right knowledge of the corruption of every faculty of the soul and body, which, in an unregenerate state, are always inclined to evil, and incapable of doing anything truly good as acceptable to the holy God. The judgment is enlightened to see this, and conscience is awakened to feel this, and thereby the convinced sinner is made willing to be taught the way of salvation, and the Holy Spirit fills His office by teaching him the knowledge of God his Savior. The christian's course is directed by believing and not by seeing. "We walk," says Paul, "by faith, and not by sight." Faith is to us the evidence of things not seen. The glory that awaits us is yet to be revealed. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be," but faith lays hold of this glory and enables the believer to greatly rejoice in it. "We see our triumph from afar with faith's exalted eye." But our rejoicing is one of the fruits of faith, and not faith

itself. Every promise given us in the word, faith depends upon the arm (power) of God to make it good, and does not stagger at any seeming difficulties that might appear to the natural mind as impossibilities, but rests fully persuaded that what God hath promised he is also able to perform, for, says faith, He speaks, and it is done; commands, and it stands secure. In the heart faith is thus seated, but with the tongue confession is made. The great promises of the gospel are made upon faith, and glorious things are spoken of it, even an understanding belief in the creation of all things; that is, "the faith which is by Him." By the power of it the dead were raised to life, the sick were healed, deaf ears were unstopped, the lame were made to walk, the blind to see, and the whole work of salvation from first to last is ascribed to it as operating through grace: "For by grace are ye saved through *faith;* and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." The Holy Spirit purifying the heart by faith, sanctifying by faith (Acts xxvi. 18), justified by faith (Gal. ii. 16). The believer's walk heavenward in the commands of the blessed Master is wholly a walk of faith, until in heaven he shall have reached the "end of faith" and live and walk by sense. All purity of doctrine, holiness of life, the infinitely glorious majesty of God, the transcendently gracious love manifested in the gift of his Son is all of faith, and for all of which faith is ever giving to God that glory which is due unto him who is the author of it. It is seated upon the foundation upon which the church is builded: i. e., the revelation of Jesus Christ as was spoken to Peter upon his confession, I believe (in faith) that thou art the Christ, the Son of God. And the answer was, Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. Upon this rock I will build my church. What rock? The rock of the revelation of Jesus Christ. This has been the ground of faith in all ages, and will continue to be until time shall be no more. Moses was a propounder of it, and gave glory to God as the Revealer, and taught the same to the Israelites, so that the faith of both Moses and the Israelites was grounded upon the same testimony, or revelation of God, and differed only in the strength of its application. The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, saith David, and his word was in my tongue. And this is sweetly agreeable to the words of Paul in Romans x. 8, where he calls it "the word of faith, which we preach." And in Philippians i. 27, it is called "the faith of the gospel." Thus "God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son," and by so speaking hath enlarged the object of faith to us by him, by which means it comes to be the *faith of Jesus,* and to whom it ever looks and receives as the only begotten Son, who was in the bosom of the Father, the express image of his person, and in whom it pleased the Father dwelleth ALL fullness of the Godhead bodily. No man shall ever set out in the "narrow way that leads to

life" until he has been made acquainted with the knowledge of these truths. The judgment must be enlightened with the knowledge of them ere he can change his course heavenward; and when this is brought home to his conscience he finds he hath nothing in himself left to trust in, but that his salvation is all of grace through faith from first to last, and every self-righteous principle in which he formally trusted has been laid low in the dust, and faith accepts for its crown the righteousness of the Lord Jesus that he may have all the glory. In this new sight and sense he searches the word and finds the credibility of all which he has learned to believe in faith is founded upon the testimony of God revealed in his word; and we can never be sufficiently instructed, or enter into the full enjoyment of the Father's love, through faith in the finished salvation of the Son, until we are enabled thus to understand how this testimony is given to those truths we now believe by way of revelation, by which we can accept them, not as the testimony of man, although given to us by men, but received in and as the testimony of God. If we receive the witness of man, the witness of God is greater. "Let God be true," the witness or ground of divine faith, "and every man a liar," the witness or ground of human faith. Human faith is called in the Scriptures a "dead faith," because it is not a fruit of the Holy Spirit, a gift bestowed by his operation, continued by his power and enriched and increased by his blessing, but is the opposite, a fancy of the natural mind, formed in the head, guided by a darkened heart, and without warrant from God. There is no divine life in it, and no loving effects of the grace of God as revealed in the gospel from it. Such have a "form of godliness, but deny the power thereof," because they have no vital union with him in his covenant mercies, and therefore cannot have any soul-comforting communion with Christ in his finished salvation. The natural man, let him be ever so wise, knoweth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. The ground of human faith is an assent unto anything credible merely upon the testimony of man; and upon this kind of faith the free will of man is ever prone to build a temple of salvation. Things in the natural realm, and society in general, are regulated in the ordinary affairs of life according to man's ability to so regulate and govern in business, social and political relations. Thus all secular affairs are transacted, achievements attempted, human hopes, desires and inclinations, are preserved by this human faith, grounded upon the testimony of man. Our blessed Savior declares, No man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. This he does by the Holy Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation, who is thereby given to the children of God, and by faith dwells in them, that they may know him as their reconciled Father in Jesus. This no man can acquire by human knowledge.

It is said to be hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes, those whom the Holy Ghost makes teachable to receive Christ as the object of God's infinite grace as their Surety for atonement and justification unto eternal life. Jesus the Mediator is the way to the Father, the consecrated and the only way, for there is no other name given whereby we must be saved, everything neded for a holy walk being provided in him. All who are alive to God live by the faith of the Son of God, and are reconciled by having the "heart sprinkled from an evil conscience," maintain peace with God through the continual application of the blood of Jesus, thus cleansed from the guilt of and filth of sin by "the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Hear Paul in Romans v. 1: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." This peace, saith Paul, is not brought about by any worthiness or works of our own, but by the imparting of faith in the finished work of Jesus, through the unspeakable riches of God's grace; for by Jesus we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, the same glory with which our blessed Immanuel is crowned. In further confirmation of which Paul testifies again, I speak the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that being justified by faith I have peace with and free access to a reconciled Father, and now I desire to walk with him; and for him I have suffered the loss of all things (all earthly pleasures and comforts, such as the world can give), and I count them but dross that I might be found walking in sweet union with him. He further testifies, that a deep sense of God's love has been shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Spirit, who, he says, has made him of one mind, of one heart and of one way with himself. Together with all his redeemed, I can see that he hath chosen me in him before the foundation of the world, that he in time would make me holy and without blame before him in love, having predestinated me to the adoption of his children by Jesus Christ unto himself according to the good pleasure of his will. I seem to hear the voice of every consecrated believer in Christ exclaiming, Oh what exceeding riches of love is this! When I would declare and speak of it I can but exclaim, Oh the depth of covenant love, abounding grace; God manifest in the flesh, partaking of our human nature that we might thereby be made partakers of his nature. By faith I see all the blessings of salvation for time and eternity to be mine, freely given as the fruits of the Father's covenant grace and everlasting love. Thy Father, O blessed Jesus, art also mine. He sees me, loves me and blesses me in thee. My title is clear to all spiritual blessings, because God, being my God in Jesus, all things are mine. He will make them all work together for my good; for he who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things. It is entirely through the grace of the eternal Spirit that I have

been enabled to believe in the finished work of Jesus, and to experience the Father's eternal love for me by the sacrifice of his Son, and through faith in him I have peace of conscience, and by the assurance of his word I am satisfied of the love of the ever-blessed Trinity to my soul. I find that Father, Son and Spirit have covenanted to make me an heir of God and a joint-heir with Christ, which by faith I am assured of my eternal salvation in him, and now I desire to so walk with him as to maintain in my conscience the sweet peace of God in my heart, and to love him supremely. Thou, O Father, art the God of my peace, my Father in Jesus, and hast brought me into a sweet relationship with thee in the dearest and most indissoluble bonds of thy covenant love. Keep a believing sense of this eternal tie always fresh upon my mind, and order my steps aright. Father, thou hast promised to so lead thy believing children, and to never leave nor forsake thine own, and what thou hast promised thou art able to perform. I am not worthy of the least of thy mercies, but in humbleness of heart I give glory to thee for thine unspeakable blessings, for thou hast given me faith in the atonement of Jesus, by whom I have peace with thee. I never could have loved thee if thou hadst not first loved me, and by the grace of the Holy Spirit revealed thy love for me in Jesus, thereby giving me a sweet foretaste of the crowning grace of thine unspeakable glory. Thou hast brought pardon to me through the blood shedding of thy Son, and I ascribe it all to thy sovereign grace that I have been enabled to look upon thee as reconciled to me in his righteousness, and a sweet experience of it by and through the power of the Holy Spirit. Raise and exalt my affections, and let the sanctifying power of thy wonderful love increase mine to thee. I never can compute the value of thy love; on earth it surpasseth knowledge, in heaven it surpasseth all returns of praise. O, thou eternal Spirit, help me to so walk with my loving Father that I may maintain peace with him in my conscience and a growing love to him in my heart, until thou bring me to the enjoyment of eternal peace and love in glory. Amen.

JOHN GIBSON.

HAVRE, Montana.

NEWARK, New Jersey.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—The thought entered my mind this morning that our good Lord has blessed us with very many privileges, both natural and spiritual, and one of which is not the least to me is that I am privileged to write to you. It would be hard for the natural mind to estimate between the great and small privileges. Of course anything the natural mind would deem great the spiritual mind would cast aside, and would say that one's greatest privilege would be to stand still and know that "I am God." And if your mind and mine are in unison this glorious morning we would say those words are of a surety the truth, for one cannot know of God except by the grace of God, given only to the few, and if we can say from the bottom of our hearts that that is a truth, then we can be numbered

among the few, than which a greater privilege no man hath, or can have. A transcending privilege is to know God, to love thy neighbor as thyself, and to walk humbly with thy God. The motive of all is love. Love is an attribute of God, given only to a few to be exercised thereby. To even exercise love is a gift, and should be exercised very carefully, so that it may be distinguished from mere fancy. Natural man fancies many things, and mistakes that fancy for love. Natural man is not capable of love, but is capable of fancy, and a very deep fancy, as it were, so much so that it ofttimes leads him into a great wilderness of various kinds. Love is of God, therefore pure love is not known by the natural man, for a natural man knows not the things of God. That statement to the unknown would start a controversal argument, but it would not change the fundamental truth. You hear one say, Why, your Elders are natural men and they preach of God. There it is again. To the unknown it is true, but to the known we say, Yes, if he preaches he is a natural man, but if he talks of God it is the Spirit of God speaking through him. He must speak the words our God puts in his mouth, to the edification of the saints of God. And he asks, Who are the saints of God? and the known ones will reply, Those who are of God, and those who are taught of God. And that still remains a mystery to the unknown, for the unknown is the natural man. These are some of the numerous privileges given unto us in this world, and I think it is a fitting climax for me to say it surely is a merry Christmas for us. I do not know that it is so, but I have been told that, chronologically speaking, we in these modern times celebrate the wrong date for our merry Christmas, but I do know that to us sin-ridden sinners every day is a merry Christmas day for us when we are privileged to feel, see and know the many and numerous blessings our Lord bestows upon us daily. We need no especial date to be merry when we are given such realizations, and all by that love God bestows upon us. To-day in this apparently strife-torn world we realize as never before our utter dependence upon that God's love for our safety, redemption and salvation, so dearly bought for us by Jesus. There was a purpose in Jesus' death, and there is also a purpose in the strife going on in this world to-day. We few peculiar people do not question the what nor the why of it, but the great modernistics of this day in yesterday's pulpits in many sections of this country outdid themselves in trying to tell our Lord just how this world should be run. It is all on a par with some of the public press that seems to stoop to the gutter for ammunition to feed its readers upon. It is not all the works of natural man, as we few peculiar people see it, and also for a purpose, for our God has promised to confound the wise of this world, lest they hear his voice and become converted. That statement seems to me to say that our God has an especial few and is very jealous of them lest they become contaminated with the world, and if that is not some-

thing we poor sinners can be merry over, then I, for one, do not know what we need to make us merry. As I sit here from day to day I sometimes do wonder what I have to be thankful for, being so sore in the flesh that I am hardly able to move at times, but I can sincerely thank God that I am not left long in that state of mind. From every corner thoughts of blessings seem to flow in upon me and I am made to sing, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow," and am made merry. To the world it seems appropriate that some day be set aside for seasonable merriment, but to me every day is a day of rejoicing and merriment when our God endows me with a vision of his many blessings upon me. If I know this sin-tossed heart of mine correctly, then I want to rejoice every day, in unison with the brethren, that our God furnished us a Savior in the person of his Son Jesus Christ, for as natural men we cannot save ourselves, nor partake of the love and truth. Such wonderful blessings to be privileged to partake of! Another great privilege I have had bestowed upon me, is to be able to converse with my relatives and some of the brethren by letter. It seems to me more than a compensation for my inability to be able to get out to meetings. I miss all their hearty handshakes and smiling faces, but am with them in heart and spirit. That leaves no cause for complaint on my part, but a cause for rejoicing and merriment, and I feel it to be a very great gift to be able to enter into that spirit of joy and merriment, for without it a heart is barren of love and fellowship. Our hearts were barren of that joy and merriment once, and what did we have then but trouble? and now we mourn over that barrenness. But was it not purposeful? Do we not now know just how sweet, sweet is, and just how pure purity is, and just what a joyful sound the truth holds for us? Truth is not commonplace, it is exceptionable. We are the exceptionable, peculiar few who know the joyful sound of truth, because we have been taught of God. Oh what boundless blessings for merriment! I just cannot confine my merriment for a set day, and in that belief I think I am in unison with the brethren. I am sure I am in unity with you, dear Elder, when I say I believe all of this to be predestinated for the good of them that have been taught of God and love God.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

IRA T. DOLSON.

CAMPBELLTON, Texas, Oct. 31, 1936.

DEAR BRETHREN:—To-night, as usual, finds me very low and sad, so decided, if the Lord wills, to write a few lines to the readers of the SIGNS. My health is too poor to stay in the Rio Grande valley, as it does not agree with me there. I wish to get able to build me a house on wheels (house trailer) and do as my doctor says is best for me. I would like to have one built on the running gear of my old car, and go among my brethren. It would not cost very much to build it, but it all depends upon the Lord. In him is all my trust. I wish to state that in reading the Scripture recorded in the thirty-sev-

enth Psalm I have been made to realize the truth of this quotation: "For the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever; but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off."—Psalms xxxvii. 28. My greatest anxiety is, Am I a poor worm of the dust, a saint? Dark and thorny is the desert that I am so much of my time traveling through, yet when I look back and view my past life I can see a great many places where the Lord's hand has been great. He has several times put it into some of the dear saints' hearts to see my need and caused them to look after me, a poor needy creature. In looking over the above quotation I behold many deep thoughts, and I feel that often most of the subject matter is wrongly interpreted, or misapplied. The world is full of judgment among men, and mostly vile and sinful, but the judgment mentioned here is the fruit of justice and mercy, for it is said, Judgment and mercy is the habitation of his throne. Hence, he in line with his foreknowledge and eternal purpose loved judgment, as the rule of his sanctuary. The election of all his saints to everlasting glory from the ancients of eternity was by and through his own judgment, mercy and love, for it is said, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee."—Jer. xxxi. 3. And Paul said, as touching election, They (the saints) are beloved for the Father's sake. Thus the Lord said, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and for this reason have I drawn thee. Not by the hair of the head (as we are often accused), but by the reign of divine grace, love and mercy. Hence, in all the trials and troubles of this life (which is but a shadow) our God has said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, and asked this question, Can a woman forsake her suckling child, the son of her womb? Yea, she might forget, yet I will not forsake thee nor forget thee. (Isaiah xlix. 15.) In the next verse he says, "Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands: thy walls are continually before me." In the second clause of Psalms xxxvii. 28, we find more evidence of the final gathering into the seats around the throne in the presence of the Lamb, that inasmuch as his judgment, inclosed with mercy, these words are comforting, "And forsaketh not his saints." And tells why: *"They are preserved for ever."* Sometimes we hear the housewife say, My preserves are soured, or spoiled. Not so, for were they preserved they could not spoil. I feel to reverence the word "preserved," for when the Lord God in his rich blessings and divine mercy has graven them upon the palms of his hands, and their walls are continually before him as a reminder of his choice of election, and placed their names in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world, and gave them to his Son in the everlasting covenant of redemption which was entered into between the Father and Son and Holy Ghost, there to be forever in peace in the triumphant reign of all the redeemed hosts through Jesus the heir of

the covenant, they are preserved forever. Preserved in the precious blood of Jesus where the wicked shall never triumph over them, yet in this world the wicked are ever ready to assail and vilify and falsely accuse them until the day when they shall be cut off. O, dear ones, it makes no difference how much the wicked may scoff and make light of the little ones who have been led in the path of righteousness by that unerring Spirit, that hand wherein the names of the redeemed are written will stand throughout all time and eternity, preserved unto everlasting peace and happiness, beyond the onslaught of all the wicked of the earth, because of the grand and noble purpose of God, who works all things after the counsel of his will. Though the wicked may roar, the billows of their wicked designs shall never cause one of the redeemed to be left out of the glorious reign of eternal bliss, and in their travels here in time his protection is meted out to their enjoyment while here, and as one of old said, "My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel [the church on earth] shall neither slumber nor sleep." Therefore "the Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth, and even for evermore."—Psalms cxxi. 2-4, 7, 8. Then again more evidence is recorded as to the perfect keeping of his children while here: He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness (of soul); for by strength shall no man prevail. No wonder David said, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." In this we find no ground to establish any conditions in order to obtain a blessing, for it is plainly established here that it is the Lord that makes us to lie down in green pastures of his redeeming love, and he leadeth us beside the still waters of love and sweet fellowship, and causeth us to rejoice in his abounding love as we are brought to his table, there to eat the crumbs which fall from the Master's table all the days of our earthly existence. Yes, they are few in number, as regards the multitudes of the earth. Our dear Lord said, "For wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."—Matt. vii. 13, 14. It does seem strange that well developed natural minds would teach the doctrine that is so prevalent in the world, that God is trying to get men to be saved, and putting forth so much time and other means to drive the whole world into the church and be saved, when it is so plainly stated that the broad way and wide gate leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat, because narrow is the way, and strait is the gate, that leadeth unto life, and *few there be that find it*, and say hurtful things about the little few who put

all their trust in the doctrine of election of grace, through the mercy of the Lord, from all eternity, embracing the few who have been born again and made manifest heirs of the kingdom, whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life from before the foundation of the world. But, says Jesus, no man can come unto the Father but by me, and I will raise him up at the last day, and shall lose nothing.

Well, I have scattered over quite some territory, and if the editors think it worthy of publication in the dear old SIGNS, all right. If any of the household of faith feel to write me a few lines I surely would appreciate it, for I am lonely, as I am far from any of the churches of the old faith and order. I am staying here with a daughter until I can find a place to live, away from the Rio Grande valley, for it is so low in altitude I cannot stay there, which makes it very lonely for me, for I am away from my dear wife, and the churches, too. At present I am located at Campbellton, Texas. I will insert a notice in the SIGNS when we get more permanently located.

As ever, your brother in bonds,

J. B. BOWDEN.

SALISBURY, Md., Jan. 17, 1937.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—Your good letter of sympathy, as well as the Christmas message, have gone too long unanswered, but I have no excuse to offer, only not having the mind to write as I would like. All of us certainly did appreciate your remembering us at the holiday season, and I am sure you will be glad to know the family seems to look forward to hearing from you, especially at that time.

Yes, indeed there is much to be thankful for in my great sorrow, and I hope it has been given me to feel so. At first I could hardly grasp the thought that my boy Paul had been taken from us, but as the days go by it comes to me more forcibly, and I wonder if I am as reconciled as I at first thought. My thoughts seem to be so mixed at times, and the future seems so dark. I still have Stuart, his wife and Lela, but not one of them can take the place of the one that has gone on to that heavenly place all of us are hoping to enter when our time here on earth is ended. I can look back the past few months and see the hand of the Lord in so much. I hope I am truly thankful for the many expressions of love and sympathy from the brethren and friends. I find all I can do is to keep praying for strength and courage to go on and on. Sometimes I wonder if my grief is not more for the cutting off of such a young and promising life and the grief of the young wife. She surely is a very brave and cheerful girl, but she feels as though her happiness is over.

I hope your rest during the holidays did help some, even though it was not a long one. Of course you all spent a lovely Christmas together. Lela and I were very glad to be able to go to Stuart and family at that time. O, brother Dodson, I do try to remember that there are many, many other mothers who have been called upon to give

up their dear children, but no one can quite realize what it really means until it comes right home. We are told that our sufferings cannot be compared with Christ's, and I dare not ask the reason why this sorrow has come to us.

Elder Coulbourn was able to come and preach for us to-day, and it does seem as though he grows stronger and stronger in the faith. The family here are getting quite themselves again, after a series of colds. There were eight of us able to go down to meeting this morning. We quite enjoy having sister Drake with us, and I hope to be able to say the same of Miss Wathington after she gets here and gets settled.

I was very sorry to hear of you losing a niece. I certainly can sympathize with the mother.

May this new year be kind to you and yours and give a good measure of peace and happiness. My very best wishes to Mrs. Dodson.

Sincerely,

NAOMI L. ROUNDS.

[THE obituary of sister Rounds' son, Paul, written by Elder H. H. Lefferts, his uncle, appeared in the January number of our paper.—R. L. D.]

CLARKSVILLE, Tenn., Jan. 12, 1937.

DEAR EDITORS:—My subscription expires January 15th, 1937, and on renewing I want to express my appreciation for the many, many good letters and editorials, most especially through the year 1936. I am sure it has been through great difficulties that the paper has been gotten out. I feel we all as readers should express our appreciation to our dear Elders. To our dear publisher, in his great affliction we would extend our sympathy and appreciation. The Lord in his wisdom has seen fit to send sore afflictions, and I am sure great suffering, but through it all each number has come laden with good sound reading. If one so unworthy, so wretched, so ignorant as the writer feels to be, may in my weakness be permitted to judge, God has been merciful to us all, even though it has been a year full of trouble to many of us. But sometimes we get comfort from the Scripture, Whom he loveth he chasteneth, etc. Also from David's writings in Psalms cxxxix., "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me," etc.

I have just read the New Year's Greeting, by Elder R. Lester Dodson, and I heartily indorse the same. Many of the readers of the SIGNS I have had the sweet privilege of meeting and of mingling our voices together in praise to our great and heavenly Father. Many are strangers to me in the flesh, but may I hope their God is my God? In my unworthiness and loneliness, I beg an interest in the prayers of any who feel to remember such a sinner as I feel to be.

I will close by trying to ask God to extend his mercy to the dear editors and

publisher of the SIGNS, and to all the household of faith, according to his will.

A poor old sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all,

(MRS.) B. H. SHEARON.

[WE truly appreciate the kind words of the writer in the foregoing letter and sincerely thank her for them. Through all our sorrow and affliction we feel that God has been good to us, and from our heart we feel to say, Thy will, not mine, be done.—PUBLISHER.]

SULPHUR, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITORS:—If it is the will of the Lord, I would like to write you. One reason is, to send three dollars to pay for the SIGNS, which is long overdue; and another reason is, I want to thank you for sending me the paper so long without any pay. I feel I should have had it stopped, but I did not like to give it up, as it is very dear to me, and I can say I am truly thankful I am able to pay for it now. By the time this money runs out, if I am still here, I hope the Lord will provide the way, as he has in the past, for me to pay on time.

I have been sick since last January with heart trouble, and it was thought I could not live, but for some cause the Lord has kept me here until this day. (Thy will, O God, be done.)

I have just read the last SIGNS, and found much comfort all through its pages. The poetry was good. Then one tells of his mind being on the church of God. What a blessing for the one so led. How good it is for us to be led to think of the church, and to feel the Lord alone is leading us. May he lead and keep us all in the strait and narrow way that leads to the way everlasting. The next one tells of his wonderful experience. I enjoyed reading that. Sister Joie E. Woods Peters can write such good letters. They give evidence of her being led by the Lord. Reading the letter written by Elder Arnold H. Bellows was like listening to a good sermon. I almost envy these good writers, but have not time nor space to mention every one. I hope I love them all for the truth's sake. I was very sorry that Elder Lefferts left the SIGNS, for I much loved to read his writings. It just seemed to leave an ache in my heart. May the Lord bless and prosper the SIGNS as long as there is a needs be for it. May he lead and guide his people everywhere in the years to come. An interest in your prayers I crave.

Very unworthily,

(MRS.) ADDIE CHANDLER.

MCDOWELL, Ky., Jan. 7, 1937.

DEAR EDITORS:—Here is a little correction in my article in the January issue. On page 8, beginning in the middle of line 8, first column, it should read, The devil and his seed are nowhere in the Scriptures contrasted with Adam and his seed, but are always contrasted with Christ (called the woman's seed in Genesis iii. 15) and his people.

Devotedly,

MILFORD HALL, SR.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1937.

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EPHESIANS IV. 1.

"THE prisoner of the Lord."

The above Scripture seems to be on our mind at this time and we would, the Lord enabling us, try and consider it in its relation to the judgments and purpose of God, which are unsearchable and his ways past finding out. He had seen fit for Paul to come to Ephesus when as yet there was no church. A few were there who had been baptized to John's baptism, but had not as much as heard of the Holy Ghost. These Paul took and baptized them in the name of the Lord Jesus. Here he met much opposition and persecution, particularly from the Jews and those Gentiles who were worshipers of Diana of the Ephesians. He remained here for over two years, and many were added to the church, and on his departure from them he warned them of the grievous wolves that would enter in among them, not sparing the flock. He had withheld nothing from them, and declared that he had not shunned to declare unto them all the counsel of God. His address to the elders of the church at Ephesus is found in Acts xx. 17-38. After his departure recorded there, we find Paul set in his intention to go to Jerusalem, even though all indications were that he would be persecuted by the Jews, and soon after his arrival he was seen with an Ephesian, by name Trophimus, and immediately Paul was taken and put in chains. He told the Ephesian, in Acts xx., that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, "saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me." In Acts xix. it is recorded that Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, "After I have been there, I *must also see Rome.*" He was soon to go to Rome by God's way. God, who has declared that the wickedness of men shall praise him. The Lord Jesus had ascended upon high, and led captivity captive, and God had said, "Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." This was the doctrine that Paul preached, and the doctrine is proved in his life. Such was the tumult of the people, crying, Away with him, that the chief captain thought that he had a terrible criminal on his hands, but when Paul told him that he was a Jew

of Tarsus, the captain allowed him to address the people, in which address he told his experience and what had occurred since his return to Jerusalem, how he had seen Jesus in a trance telling him to get quickly out of Jerusalem, "for they will not receive thy testimony." When Paul told them that the Lord had said, "Depart, for I will send thee far hence, unto the Gentiles," they cried, "Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live." Paul is again taken into custody, and on the morrow had to face his accusers, who were of the chief priests and council, and while his testimony was received by some who were Pharisees, yet there was such dissension among them, that the captain ordered the soldiers to take Paul from among them by force and bring him to the castle. On the following night the Lord stood by him, and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul, for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome." Immediately on the morrow more than forty Jews conspired to take his life, swearing that they would neither eat nor drink until they had slain Paul. The chief captain, hearing of this, arranged to send him away. Thus began a journey in which troops and ships were used by men who unconsciously were fulfilling the purpose of God. We find soldiers doing their duty at the command of their captain, and Paul's sister's son, fearing for Paul's life, revealing the conspiracy of the Jews to the captain, all unconsciously doing the will of the God of heaven. Our mind goes back to the Old Testament to another Saul, whose father was named Kish. "And the asses of Kish, Saul's father, were lost. And Kish said to Saul his son, Take now one of the servants with thee, and arise, go seek the asses." They went from place to place, but found them not. Saul, discouraged, was for returning home, but the servant said, "Behold now, there is in this city a man of God, and he is an honorable man, all that he saith cometh surely to pass: now let us go thither; peradventure he can show us our way that we should go." Israel had cried out for a king, Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he rehearsed them in the ears of the Lord. Now while Saul and his servant were searching for the asses, God has already told Samuel in his ear a day before Saul came, saying, "To-morrow, about this time, I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin: and thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel." Thus as the young man came to Samuel, the Lord said to him, "Behold the man whom I spake to thee of! this same shall reign over my people." God had timed their wanderings after the asses, letting them wander, even though the objects of their search were found and safe. When Saul would return home, he had him to do as the servant suggested and go to the prophet. In the apostle's case, we find that the Lord had said he should witness at Rome, and to accomplish this God does not need missionary societies, nor the plans or schemes of men. He has his own plan, ordered in all things

and sure. The powers of the Roman empire are subject to him, and it is God's purpose that Paul should go to Rome in stages. First, the captain, fearing trouble, orders four hundred and seventy soldiers to accompany him to Caesarea. Here he was to stay a prisoner for over two years, yet witnessing to the truth before princes, so that it is recorded that as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance and judgment to come, Felix (the governor) trembled, and answered, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." Again, he was to appear before Festus (who had replaced Felix in Caesarea) and Agrippa, to witness to the truth, and such was his testimony and defense of himself that Agrippa said to Festus, "This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Ceasar." This reminds one of Pilate, who said of Jesus, "I find no fault in this man," yet Pilate, like these men of a later date, could do nothing except it be given him from above. Paul is then turned over to a centurion named Julius, and they took ship, sailing to Sidon. Here Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself. Surely the Lord showed that He had the hearts of all men in his hands. "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turneth it whithersoever he will." Again it is declared, "He suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, he reproved kings for their sakes; saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." Coming to Myra, they were transferred to a ship that was going to Italy. After many days of sailing against contrary winds, Paul admonished them that the voyage would be with hurt and much damage to the ship, but his words were not believed, for the ship had to be wrecked. After many days, when neither sun nor stars appeared, they lost all hope of being saved. Paul stood forth in the midst of them and told them that they should have hearkened unto him, and not have loosed from Crete and to have this harm and loss. Again, he testifies of the angel of God standing by him that night, "whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer; for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me." Captive as he was, his testimony remained true when all in the ship escaped safe to land. The land was the island of Melita, there Paul must preach the truth and heal the sick that were there, and though a captive in chains, be honored with many honors. After staying there three months, they sailed in another ship, and besides landing at Syracuse, they stopped at Puteoli, where they found brethren and were desired to tarry with them seven days, and so they went towards Rome. As they were nearing Rome, the brethren came to meet them, and when Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage. Here the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard, but Paul was allowed to dwell

by himself with a soldier that kept him. For two years he dwelt in his own hired house, and received all that came unto him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no man forbidding him. The apostle could therefore look above and beyond the power of Nero and feel that the Lord Jesus, who had ascended on high and led captivity captive, was holding him and that he was in truth a prisoner of Jesus Christ for the Gentiles. He was there to preach and to teach and to write his epistles, for at least six were written from Rome. Cast as a sheep among wolves, yet having brethren even in Cæsar's household. He had been persecuted for the Gentiles' sake, yet blessed, and kept, from his keepers, by Him that keepeth Israel. Surely such truth magnifies our God and his Christ, and while we have written much of the narrative in this article, we have had a purpose in it. Many, like the writer, can look back to days when they had plans for their future, a career perhaps, yet in some way, GOD'S WAY, they are preachers of Jesus Christ, or members of his church and people. They look back and know they are not fit for the kingdom. Why do not they go back? Why not give up? Because they are held there. As Paul was held in Rome for Christ's sake, and the sake of his brethren, so we are held where we are, and such knowledge humbles us and puts Jesus on the throne. How good it is to see Jesus above men, devils and sin. Surely it is heavenly and divine when we can sing, "And he shall reign till all his enemies are made his footstool." Let such truth reconcile us unto our God.

In quoting our text we will close this article. "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

G. R.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by brother G. F. Adkins.)

The Salisbury Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Forest Grove Church, Wicomico County, Maryland, October 21st and 22nd, 1936, to the several associations with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—According to custom for the last several years, a Circular Letter should be written. From the name Circular Letter we would suppose that it is for the purpose of circulating among the brethren a message, telling of our general condition, beliefs, and so on.

While we are few in number, we feel that we have been blessed, in that the Lord has been merciful to us. He has sent his messengers of love to us, declaring the gospel as the power of God unto salvation; Jesus Christ, and him crucified, as our Redeemer. That Jesus Christ did come into the world, born of a woman, under the law, for the very

purpose of redeeming his people from under the law. That he paid the price by the shedding of his own blood, thereby freeing his people from all debt. Having finished the work the Father sent him to do, he returned to the Father, and is now sitting at the right hand of the Father making intercession for his people.

We are glad to be able to report that the churches of this Association are in accord and harmony, in fellowship. Peace reigns in our midst.

H. C. Ker, Moderator.
JOHN H. TRUITT, Clerk.
GEORGE F. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, at Shokan, New York, September 16th and 17th, 1936, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Through the will and pleasure of the covenant-keeping God we have been privileged to meet together as an association and to hear and feed upon the precious food dealt out to the sheep through the undershepherds called and qualified to stand upon the walls of Zion to proclaim the riches of the grace of God. We can say that to our understanding, we have heard wonderfully set forth the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, abasing man and giving all the glory to God for salvation by grace, and grace alone. We certainly feel to praise his holy name for his goodness to the children of men. We desire a continuance of your correspondence in the future as in the past.

Our next session, the Lord willing, will be held with the First and Second Churches of Roxbury, at the Yellow Meetinghouse, below Roxbury village, in the town of Roxbury, New York, on the Wednesday and Thursday between the second and third Sundays of September, 1937.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
ORVILLE WINCHELL, Clerk.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Forest Grove Church, Wicomico County, Maryland, to the several associations and churches with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—It is a blessed privilege to address you as brethren in the Lord. The apostle said we know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. We are made to rejoice because of having your messengers with us at this meeting. We are walking in fellowship, all believing in the doctrine of salvation. Your ministers came to us laden with the rich things of the kingdom.

Our next session will be held with the Nassaongo Church, Wicomico County, Maryland, beginning on Wednesday after the third Sunday of October, 1937, at which time and place we hope to meet your messengers and receive your correspondence.

H. C. Ker, Moderator.
JOHN H. TRUITT, Clerk.
GEORGE F. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence, in Delmar, Maryland, June 18th, 1936, Granville W. Baker and Miss Margaret F. Hitchens, both of Laurel, Delaware.

By the same, at his residence, July 3rd, 1936, Henry L. Carter and Miss Rema F. Foskey, both of Salisbury, Md.

By the same, at his residence, July 7th, 1936, Paul L. Layfield, of Salisbury, Md., and Miss Viola N. Austin, of Pittsville, Md.

By the same, at his residence, August 2nd, 1936, Edmund B. Humphreys and Miss Dorothy E. Dryden, both of Salisbury, Md.

By the same, at his residence, September 5th, 1936, William T. Morris, of Delmar, Md., and Miss Lois M. Sullivan, of Philadelphia, Pa.

By the same, at his residence, Septemtember 29th, 1936, Ray S. Parks, of Accomac, Va., and Miss Myra Janes, of Delmar, Del.

By the same, at his residence, October 3rd, 1936, Earl Alexander and Mrs. Radie Campbell, both of Salisbury, Md.

By the same, at his residence, October 4th, 1936, Levin M. White, of Georgetown, Del., and Miss Doris B. Warrington, of Herbeson, Del.

By the same, at his residence, December 3rd, 1936, Frank P. Pecht, of Vienna, Md., and Miss Ruth L. Furbush, of Mardela, Md.

By the same, at his residence, December 10th, 1936, Elihu T. Carey and Mrs. Eva J. Carey, both of Salisbury, Md.

By the same, at his residence, Decem-23rd, 1936, William S. Adkins, of Pittsville, Md., and Miss Mildred E. Morris, of Parsonsburg, Md.

By the same, at his residence, January 2nd, 1937, James R. Adkins, of Salisbury, Md., and Miss Esther M. Willey, of Eden, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER J. C. CHESTER, son of William A. and Martha Jones Chester, was born February 24th, 1870, and died October 29th, 1936, aged 66 years, 8 months and 5 days. He was married to Ophee H. Thomas, daughter of S. D. and S. F. Thomas, January 18th, 1894, and to this union were born three children: Lulu, Guy and Mamie. He leaves five grandchildren: Estelle, Martha Brooks and Marilyn, children of Guy and Pauline Chester, and Mary Katherine and Elmo, children of Loyd and Mamie Lawrence, all of Brewers, Ky. He was one of twelve children. Seven brothers and sisters survive him. He was a dutiful child, often going to stay with and care for his grandmother and aunt, who lived near his father's home. It was one evening while on this errand that the Lord spake peace to his soul. He often spoke of this, and said he was just a mere boy of about eleven years of age. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Soldier Creek on the second Saturday in August, 1893, and was baptized the day following by Elder J. P. Jenkins. Several years later he said that he felt that the Lord said there was something for him to do. He was ordained to the work of the ministry Saturday before the second Sunday in August, 1918, just twenty-five years from the day he united with the church. He was assistant Moderator of his home church for seventeen or eighteen years. Serving as Moderator of Shiloh and Providence churches, in Calloway County, and Pilgrim's Rest, in Graves County, filled his entire time. He seldom missed an appointment, always going when health and weather

would permit. He was a good counselor, as was evidenced by many brethren who came to him for advice, which he gave willingly, ever referring to the Book of books, and advising accordingly. He was an unwavering lover of the doctrine he believed the Holy Scriptures taught. He served as Clerk of Soldier Creek Church for some time, and for several years was Clerk of the Soldier Creek Association. For two years prior to his illness he attended every one of his union meetings and associations, also many meetings of the corresponding associations. He was a loving husband and father, a friend to every one with whom he came in contact, and was admired by all who knew him for his honesty and uprightness, held in esteem, love and fellowship by the Baptists generally who knew him. He will be much missed, not only in the home and community, but by his many brethren, who cherish his memory and his associations with them. There is a vacant place in the hearts of the family that can never be filled, only to be comforted by the Lord, for the Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away. My dear husband was afflicted for six years. He underwent an operation, from which he never recovered. Many of his friends, especially the Baptist brethren and sisters, visited him during his illness, and his greatest delight was to talk about godliness during their stay. His going was the first of his immediate family.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders N. A. Rogers, T. J. Prince and J. N. Darnall, at Soldier Creek, Friday afternoon, October 30th, who spoke words of comfort to the bereaved. A large gathering of brethren, sisters and friends were present to pay their last respect to one they loved. All that was mortal was laid to rest in the cemetery near by. We weep not as those who have no hope, for we believe he is at rest for ever. Sleep on, dear one.

His lonely companion,

OPHEE CHESTER.

ELDER SAMUEL MARSHALL DICKENS was born February 20th, 1857, and died December 13th, 1936, aged 79 years, 9 months and 23 days. He was united in marriage to Miss Virginia Wilcox February 3rd, 1881, and to this union were born five children, two of whom died in infancy. Surviving members of his family are his wife and three sons: A. A. Dickens, of Waurika, Okla., Dr. W. M. Dickens, of Greenville, Texas, and Dr. Homer Dickens, of Dewitt, Ark., six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Elder Dickens was baptized into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church about fifty years ago, and had been a faithful servant in the cause of his Master ever since. The church, soon after he united with it, thought they saw a public gift in him and called upon him to exercise it, which call he had been responding to for about forty-five years. Brother Dickens not only bore testimony to the principles of truth which his faith embraced by his words, but his walk was a living testimony to the sacredness in which he held his high calling. He was devoted to the cause of Christ, and faithful to every trust confided to him by the church. He was blessed temporally in his early life and his home was always open to his brethren and sisters, where he and his hospitable wife entertained many of them. His sons were with him in his last sickness of nearly two weeks, during which time his sufferings were great; but he had every care and attention that could be administered to make him as comfortable as was possible. He died as he had lived, in the triumph of a living faith.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer, at a funeral home in Greenville, where he had made his home for a number of years. He will be greatly missed by the churches; but most of all do we sympathize with his companion, and pray the Lord will be her comfort and strength in her sore trial, and in her weakened physical condition; that she may be led to lean upon him and find indeed that he is a present help in time of trouble. May the Lord comfort all who mourn.

J. R. HARDY.

THE subject of this notice our very dear friend, MARGARET BARTON JENKINS DAY, passed from all earthly strife January 7th, 1936, at the age of 72 years and 11 months. She was the daughter of the late George and Susan Jenkins. Mrs. Day grew to womanhood in the vicinity of Rock Springs township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. She was a graduate of Millersville Normal School, and taught in Lancaster County for several years. August 28th, 1884, she was married to Hugh T. Day, of Delta, Pa., to whom she was happily married, but the blessings that attend the joys of wedlock were of short duration, for Mr. Day was taken by the dark monster death on May 8th, 1905, leaving his dearly beloved and devoted wife with six children, the oldest of whom was Paul, aged nineteen years, who at the time was working in New York City. The youngest being Ruth, aged one year. Thus began the struggle to overcome the many obstacles which always obstruct the pathway of the widowed mother. One of the chief aims in Mrs. Day's life was to educate her children in order to prepare them for life's vicissitudes. In a most remarkable way she was enabled to accomplish her desired end in this respect. I am sure later in life she must have felt well repaid for the hours of ceaseless labor she endured in order to make them independent. It truly could be said of her children that they were raised up to be a blessing to her around the hearthstone. In the year 1907 Mrs. Day moved from York, Pa., to Philadelphia. She lived there nearly thirty years, and passed away in that city. Mrs. Day retired from active business several years ago, and lived happily with her daughter Rachel until the end came. Rachel has not only lost a loving mother, but a dear companion and a real chum. It was their custom to share in the joys and sorrows of life as much as possible for mother and daughter to do. For the last few years, during the summer months it was their custom to tour the different States in the Union. Though her health had broken many years ago, she derived much pleasure from these trips with her devoted daughter. Mrs. Day was not a member of any church, but was deeply interested in the Rock Springs Church, and loved the doctrine she heard preached there. She was especially interested in preserving the old landmarks connected with the Rock Springs Church and things akin to it. The church has lost one of her dearest friends in the passing away of Mrs. Day, but we are thankful for the blessed evidence that the Lord enabled her to leave with us, that our loss is her eternal gain. Many have been the pleasant hours I have spent in the company of Mrs. Day in the home of our dear sister in Christ, Lillie M. Jenkins, together with our sister Sue R. Dance, and others whose companionship I have felt unworthy to share in. Surviving Mrs. Day are her children, Paul, William and Ralph, all of New Jersey, and their wives and children, Hugh, of Farransville, Pa., and Mrs. Rachel Day Jenkins,

of Philadelphia, Pa. A daughter, Annie, died when quite young. Margaret, a very attractive daughter, died at the age of fourteen years. Mrs. Day is also survived by the two remaining children of the family of thirteen: our dear sisters in Christ, Mrs. Susan R. Dance, of Towson, Md., and Miss Lillie M. Jenkins, of Rock Springs, Pa.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer from the Rock Springs meetinghouse, where her sorrowing children, sisters and many friends gathered to pay their last tribute of respect to one they much loved and esteemed because of her many outstanding qualities. Her remains were laid to rest in the Rock Springs Cemetery adjoining the meetinghouse, there to await the summons from on high, when death shall have lost its sting and the grave its victory.

Written by request.

D. L. TOPPING.

WITH unfeigned sorrow we are called upon to note the passing from time to eternity of another dear one among the saints of God in the death of sister EUNICE A. STILLWELL, who died at her home, in Oneonta, N. Y., December 1st, 1936, after a prolonged illness of a cancerous nature, which confined her at times to her home. The funeral services were held at her late home December 4th. The interment was in the Plains Cemetery, in Oneonta. The writer conducted the funeral services, using for a text the thirteenth verse of the fourteenth chapter of Revelation, which had been previously selected by the deceased, and which had come to her mind with much comfort during her illness.

Sister Stillwell bore the maiden name of Eunice A. Morse, and was born at Hubbell Hill, near Halcottville, N. Y., July 16th, 1855. She was therefore past eighty-one years of age at the time of her death. She spent her early life near the place of her birth, then moved to Conesville, N. Y., where she resided at the time of her marriage to Edgar Stillwell, in 1875. Much of their married life was spent in Conesville and in Roxbury, N. Y. In 1903 sister Stillwell and husband moved to Oneonta, N. Y., where he died the following year. After her husband's death she made her home most of the time with her daughter, Mrs. Alba P. Redmond, who tenderly cared for her during her illness and saw that she lacked for nothing that material means could provide. Sister Stillwell saw many sorrows, but never complained because of her lot. The death of her only son, Joseph, in 1926, was a severe blow to her. She is survived by three daughters, Mrs. Alba P. Redmond and Mrs. Rosina Lewis, of Oneonta, N. Y., and Mrs. Cora Fowler, of Johnson City, N. Y. Early in life, at the tender age of fourteen years, sister Stillwell united with the Old School Baptist Church, and for sixty-seven years was a faithful and devoted member, and for many years she served as clerk of the Clovesville Old School Baptist Church, of which she was a member at the time of her death. She was baptized into the fellowship of the Gilboa Old School Baptist Church. She was faithful to attend the meetings of the church, delighted in giving her substance to support the financial needs of it, and her hospitality was one of her traits of character that appealed to all. She was blameless in her walk and was highly esteemed by all, and has a deep and abiding place in the hearts of the brethren. She was the last survivor of a large family of children. The large and many floral tributes at her funeral services evidenced the esteem in which she was held. She will be greatly missed;

not only among her church friends, but by the community at large. As mother, wife, friend and citizen she possessed those virtues that cannot fail to leave an impression for good upon any community.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

MRS. MOLLIE CHESTER, second daughter of Thomas and Jane Patten, was born August 2nd, 1864. She became the bride of O. M. Chester December 11th, 1879. At the age of sixteen years she united with the Old School Primitive Baptists, at Soldier Creek Church, Marshall County, Kentucky, and was baptized by Elder J. M. Perkins, in April, 1880. She loved the church, and her home was wide open to the brethren and sisters. She enjoyed having the ministers in her home, and felt to do more for them than her physical strength would permit. Both she and her husband were members of the church, and seldom missed a meeting if able to attend. To their union God gave five children. Fleda, aged three years, and Mrs. Maggie (Chester) Riley, aged thirty-three years, preceded mother in death. Those who remain are, their eldest son, William T. Chester, of Murray, Ky., H. Coy Chester, of Brewers, Ky., and Mrs. Lola Smith, of Paducah, Ky. She also leaves nine grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, two sisters, Mrs. Nan Hausen and Mrs. Dolie Jones, of Kirksey, Ky., and a number of nieces and nephews. But the sad and pitiful one is the sad dear old feeble husband, with no companion to cheer him on. The past few months mother's health had failed considerably, but death was not expected until a few moments before the end came on December 23rd, 1936. Her age was 72 years, 5 months and 21 days. Funeral services were conducted on Christmas eve by Elder J. T. Henson, at Soldier Creek meetinghouse. Interment was in the church cemetery with a large gathering of sorrowing relatives and friends present. She will be greatly missed, but the old home will be the chief sorrowing place. They had resided in the same old home since their marriage, which was fifty-seven years. Dear father, it will not be long until you, too, will be going, then you will be laid by her side to await the resurrection morning. To the three children who loved mother, Your hearts are sad and lonely, but if you are of the number who were chosen by the heavenly Father you surely will meet her again. We two daughters-in-law loved mother Chester, too.

Written by a daughter-in-law,
(MRS.) WILLIAM T. CHESTER.

WINFIELD SCOTT AYDELOTT was born near Newton, Iowa, January 24th, 1850, and departed this life December 9th, 1936. He was married to Isabelle Jane Foster July 2nd, 1872. and to this union were born eleven children, only five of whom survive him. His wife died April 29th, 1887, leaving him to be both father and mother to the five remaining small children. October 17th, 1897, he was married to Sarah M. Shrader, who passed to the Great Beyond in 1905. He leaves to mourn his departure his five children: Mrs. S. H. Odle, of Moreland, Kans., Mrs. Amanda Bradley, of Yuma, Colo., Mrs. Elmer Hommon, of Smith Center, Kans., Wm. B. Aydelott, of Stratton, Colo., Andrew J. Aydelott, of Yuma, Colo., also one half-sister, May Aydelott, of Newton, Iowa, many grandchildren, several great-grandchildren and a host of friends. Brother Aydelott received a precious hope in Christ many years ago and united with the Primitive Baptist Church at an early age. He loved to

attend his church meetings and associations, but of late years was so far removed that he could not often be present. He acted in the capacity of church clerk for many years. He was an exceptionably good singer, and dearly loved to sing the songs of Zion. We believe our loss is his eternal gain, and that he has gone to join that innumerable throng to sing the glad new song of redeeming grace forever.

Services were held in the Methodist meetinghouse, in Smith Center, Kansas, after which the body was taken to Gaylord, Kansas, and laid to rest by the side of his first wife, to await the resurrection morn, when he shall awake in the likeness of the dear Redeemer whom he loved. May the God of love comfort his relatives and many friends with the comfort which he alone can give.

A brother in hope,

U. S. LOYD.

MILTON L. SMITH passed away at his home, in Newcastle, Oklahoma, December 9th, 1936, in his eighty-second year. He was born in Alabama, and went to Tennessee at the age of fourteen years, and at the age of twenty-two years he went to Arkansas. August 1st, 1878, he was united in marriage to Mary Crow, and to their union were born seven children: Rhoda Bean, of Newcastle, Okla., C. T. Smith, of Wolf, Okla., J. H. Smith, of Newcastle, Okla., Nancy Miller, of Newcastle Okla., M. M. Smith, of Newcastle, Okla., Brittie Caudle, of Orlando, Okla., and Grace Thomas, who preceded him in death, March 10th, 1933.

The funeral services were held on Thursday, December 10th, 1936, conducted by W. P. Snyder, of Okemah, Okla., and Elder Green, of Altus, Okla. A very large company of relatives and friends met to show their high esteem of the departed. He was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for fifty-three years, and loved to meet with them whenever possible. He was a kind husband and a loving father. May God reconcile his wife and children with the thought that their loss is his eternal gain. Our hope is that he is resting in the Lord.

His bereaved companion,

MARY SMITH.

MRS. R. T. WILLIAMS, aged seventy years, died at the Walker County Hospital, Jasper, Alabama, December 8th, 1936. She leaves to mourn their loss, her husband, R. T. Williams, Nauvoo, Ala., five daughters and two sons: Mrs. S. A. Allen and Mrs. W. K. McDowell, Russellville, Ala., Mrs. S. M. Chafin and Mrs. Ed. Crockett, Sheffield, Ala., Mrs. J. E. Kimbrough, Huntsville, Ala., Claud and Carrol Williams, of Nauvoo, Ala. She was a devoted wife and mother, a true mother in Israel, a member of Flatwoods Church, in the Lost Creek Association.

Elder A. T. Randolph and the writer tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved ones. Elder Randolph offered prayer, and the writer used as a text the language of David, Psalms lxvi. 16: "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." May the Lord of all grace keep and comfort the bereaved ones in their great sorrow.

LYTLE BURNS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Ardah McCallum, Ontario, $1; Mrs. Georgia Carruthers, Va., $3; Hannah E. Danks, Cal., $1; Mrs. G. M. Beebe, N. Y., $5; Miss Jessie Murray

Ontario, $2; "A friend," Detroit, Mich., $3; Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $8; Mrs. J. D. Shafer, N. Y., $1; Mrs. H. A. Strube, Texas, $2; Duncan R. Black, Canada $1; Mrs. Kate Lunsford, Ky., $1; Miss Sara Leedom, Pa., $2.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets the third Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, at 10:30 a. m. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, 421 Steele, Street, Frankfort, Ky.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor,

T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

GRACE.

THE MEANS AND PLAN BY WHICH MAN IS SAVED.

Grace is that free and eternal love and favor of God, which is the spring and source of all the benefits we receive from him. "And if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."—Rom. xi. 6. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." —2 Tim. i. 9. This free and unmerited love of God is the original mover in our salvation, and hath no cause above it to excite or draw it forth, but merely arises from his own will. It was this mercy or love of God that found out redemption for mankind. (John iii. 16.) "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."—John xiv. 6. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." —John vi. 44. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."—John vi. 37. Jesus Christ here tells us in plain words that salvation is by grace, and grace alone, and to be saved is to be admitted into the true church. He does not say that he is a plan by which men may, if they choose, come to the true church. All through Scripture we read about this, or A particular people, about A special people. Sometimes they are called" a seed," at other times "a garden," at other times "a treasure," and sometimes "a flock." The common name in the New Testament for them is "the church," the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." He not only says that he is the way, but asserts that no man can come to him except the Father who sent him draw

him. He also states that all the Father gave him *shall* come to him. Which in itself should obliterate any and all other precepts or conceptions that an intelligent and intrusive mind might be guilty of having been influenced to conjure into a pseudo-reality. There may also be a tendency for some impetuous, irascible thinker to place faith, repentance, belief and remission of sins in that place which may seem fit and proper to him, so as to be adventageous to him in saying that for man to be saved he need only to do those things, as above named. There was a covenant entered into by God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost before the dust of the hills was laid, but "they" claim it was only a plan or scheme of redemption, which is entirely left to the freedom of the will of the people to choose and accept and thereby become members of his church, and in such capacity, if they hold out faithful, they will be saved; that it depends upon their own power, or human will, to hear, believe and accept. But we, the church of Jesus Christ, do not only believe that such a covenant was held, but it was a covenant of grace whereby the Triune God elected, chose, ordained, set apart and called out of the great mass of men a people dear to God's heart, whom he gave to his beloved Son. In God's election he did not choose any of the elect because he foresaw any good or merit in them, but it was for Christ's sake, and that alone. God foresaw that all mankind would fall short of his righteousness; that all alike would be sinners, and for his name's sake he chose and purposed in his own mind the salvation of a people who shall, after the fall, come to his beloved Son, because he gave them to his Son by being born again. This coming to Christ, as has been stated above, was divinely fixed before the world was spoken into existence. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9. There are those who might say, Is there not something on our part which we can do to bring about salvation? The answer to this is, Absolutely nothing. They say, We can believe if we choose to do so, and Christ says we, in that case, shall be saved. They ask, Did not Paul command the jailer to believe, and assured him if he would do this thing he would be saved? Still the answer is, Absolutely nothing done on our part. How could we, who are dead, believe anything? How could one believe on one whom he had not heard nor seen? I could not believe that which had not been revealed to me in some way. So comes the conclusion to this query: That belief is not a means of salvation, but it is a result of salvation. Therefore, we believe because we are saved. Belief is the evidence of salvation, and never a means. When it pleases the God of heaven to reveal his Son to one of his elect, it is then the individual believes, and not before. Salvation is of the Lord, and he does not ask us to take any part whatever in the matter. Salvation comes by a new

birth. We did not take any part in our natural birth, did we? Then, it is only logical, as well as sensible, that we are just as helpless in the second birth, which is brought about by the will of the Father through the Spirit. "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."—John iii. 5. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."—John iii. 8. Christ uses a birth as a parable to show our inability to save ourselves by means of our own device. A child must be naturally born into this world before it can believe, see or know anything about its parents or kin, so one must be born of the Spirit before we can believe, see, hear or know anything of Christ or the kingdom. How is this new birth brought about? The office work of the Holy Spirit is to quicken the dead sinner and lead him to see the need of redemption; to bring him to the blood of sprinklng; give him faith; give him every grace; cause him to listen to God's word, in which he sees His holiness and his own sin; ["Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved.")—Eph. ii. 5] and the saved one is caused to see the suitability of the gospel to his case, and then he is made to see Jesus Christ as set forth in the gospel; then the soul believes in Jesus as the Son of God, at which time he is born of the Spirit. Eventually the prime question which is of major interest: Who has everlasting life? "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."—John iii. 36. Or maybe back to John iii. 16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Consequently, a possibility of leading one to inquire, Who is he that is not condemned, and who is he that is condemned? Which Christ answers in John iii. 18: "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." So we see that belief is an evidence of salvation, and not a means. Which completely disrupts the idea that some people hold: that we in some way hold the key in our own hands, which they claim is the matter of belief; that it is imperative on our part to believe. Should that be the case, salvation would cease to be a grace; it would be a reward of merit. Yes, we must believe; but what causes us to believe? Is it not because we have come to know something to believe, and that is a true knowledge of Jesus as the Son of God, and that it is revealed to us by the Father? We have no way to know but by him.

I will close by saying that it is not anything that we do on our part that causes us to be saved, we obtain salvation through grace, and through grace from above, which comes simultane-

ously with it the regeneration, or new birth, and from them we believe, repent, are baptized, and do a host of new things, for now are we living a new life.

A. ROSS.

PARSONS, Kansas.

DEAR EDITORS:—The foregoing article was written by a young man who belongs to the same church that I do, and he reads the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. In other wodds, he has been reading my SIGNS. There is no Old School Baptist Church in or near our city, so we attend New School Baptist meetings, and they are very new, indeed, too much so for me. If this article is consistent with the doctrine taught by the SIGNS and the Bible please publish it, or as much thereof as does conform to its doctrine, or discard the whole of it if it is too far from the line of truth. I have his permission to publish it.

Thanking you in advance for this expected favor, I am, yours in pursuit of the truth,

A. E CLARK.

ATLANTA, Georgia.

DEAR BROTHER RUSTON:—Feeling to comply with your request that I write on the subject, "Ye are the salt of the earth," I shall use as a foundation the thirteenth verse of the fifth chapter of the gospel according to Matthew, which reads, "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? for it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men."

This chapter starts out by saying Jesus, seeing the multitudes, went up into a mountain, and there he taught his apostles, and it is necessary to-day for his ministers, if they are to have any seasoning or savory effect on the church, that they be taught and instructed in the doctrine which is not received of the wisdom of the world, but of him who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. When Jesus ascended on high he gave gifts unto men. The purpose of these gifts is to keep and to preserve the militant body from being carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men. Paul said, Be ye followers of me, even also as I am of Christ. That is as far as we should follow men.

The salt mentioned in the text represents the seasoning, or influence, of the gifts. Salt may be mixed with so much foreign matter that it would fail to accomplish that for which it is intended. Paul said to Timothy, Speak thou the things that become sound doctrine. That which has no cracks nor defects in it; that which brethren know something about and can understand. Occasionally we hear men preach and when they are finished everything is so cloudy that we almost failed to understand just what they were trying to convey. The subject must have been somewhat cloudy for themselves. It certainly had no enlightenment or savory effect. We all like oratory and nice language when seasoned with the Spirit, but preaching without the Spirit is nothing more than a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. I like to see that the man

preaching feels what he says. I like to see his mind being led into the rich and fertile fields of the gospel. When this is true, you will see the brethren eating and digesting the food; when this is true, it will not be just an outward sound, but an inmost feeling, because it penetrates the heart and soul, and strengthens the weak hands and confirms the feeble knees. Like salt, it goes in as well as covers the outside, but the whole lump must be preserved. When Ezekiel was carried in the Spirit of the Lord and set down in the valley which was full of bones, the Lord said unto him, Son of man, can these bones live? Ezekiel said, O Lord God, thou knowest. I have heard it said that these bones in the valley represented our bodies, and their rising and coming together represented the resurrection of our bodies, but, of course, that is not true. Their rising does represent a resurrection, but not that of our bodies at the last day, as some say. The Jewish church will be resurrected from the dead and lifeless state, in which they are at present. The Jews have not the doctrine of the Son of God preached to them now, but the time will come when the doctrine of Christ will be preached and will be believed by the Jews, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. It shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people from the dead state which they are now in. The Lord said to Ezekiel, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. So when he commands his ministers to preach the doctrine of the Son of God to the Jews it will penetrate and have a savory effect. When this is done we will realize more fully the language of the Savior to the apostles, "Ye are the salt of the earth." Both Jew and Gentile. As it regards the Gentile church, these gifts are salt in preserving the doctrine of Christ and the ordinances of the church; not making hobbies and riding them, but declaring the whole counsel of God. Hobbies usually lead to the death of both the hobby and the rider. The preaching of the apostles on the day of Pentecost went in and many were pricked in the heart. They that were pricked continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, but notice they continued first in the doctrine. We cannot continue in the fellowship of the brethren after we have departed from the doctrine.

How necessary it is for the ministers to regard the admonition of Paul to Timothy, when he said, Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to these that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine; continue in them, for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee. How good it is then for those of us who carry the name of preacher that we take heed unto ourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made us overseers, to feed the church of God,

which he hath purchased with his own blood. These gifts which God has given to the church have indeed their attendant perils, for we find the apostles warning them against being puffed up thereby, and assuring them that they might speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have the gift of prophecy, and understanding all mysteries and all knowledge, and yet be nothing. That is no good to the church, for when a man begins to think he is something, he is beginning to lose his saltiness, or influence in the church. Oh that the Lord would raise up men after his own heart upon whom some measure of the Spirit, that we see in Paul, might rest; men blessed with his simplicity and godly sincerity, favored with his singleness of eye to the glory of God and the exaltation of the Lord Jesus, and whose speech and preaching, like his, might be not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. When ministers, like Paul, are determined not to know anything among the people save Jesus Christ and him crucified, their words may not be with excellency of speech, but they will find a lodging-place in the hearts of God's people. These gifts are savory when they are earnestly contending and setting forth the doctrine; they are savory when they separate the law from the gospel; they are savory when they divide the letter from the Spirit; they are savory when they instruct those who oppose themselves. For many of the children of God fail to understand their own experiences. When these present, and every-day experiences of the children of God are taken up and interpreted for them, then many of the things they thought to be bitter have been made sweet by a better understanding of them.

I firmly believe that the hands of the pastor should be freed, so that he may visit among his people, and, as the Lord may enable him, comfort and instruct them in their homes. In this way many are saved from false ideas, for often a private conversation is more effective than a public discourse. Phillip was commanded by the angel to go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem, and he arose and went, and there came along a man in his chariot who had been up to Jerusalem for to worship. Philip ran to him, and heard him read. Philip said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And the eunuch said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The eunuch felt his inability to understand who the prophet had reference to, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or some other man? I am satisfied that this conversation resulted in great good to the eunuch, for Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. There must have been some salt in his preaching, for the eunuch said to Philip, See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest. The eunuch did not say that he believed with all his heart, but

said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. The world may say to us, Why have preaching if you cannot save any one? Preaching does save, but it saves from the false notions of the religion of the world.

You may ask how the salt can lose its saltiness and be fit for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men. This part of the subject I may try to deal with in the near future. May God enable each of us to speak the things that make for peace in the happy little family, and keep us from false ideas and from striving about words of profit, and may we earnestly contend for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints.

H. O. NASH.

DUTTON, Ontario, Nov. 30, 1936.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I truly appreciated your remembrance of me in penning me a few lines. Wish you had written on and on, as I well know you could unfold more of the deep, sweet mysteries of godliness, which by understanding of such reveals to us the bitter (will I say?) mystery of iniquity, which by nature ever lurks in the corruptible heart of man, bringing us low in the dust of humiliation as we truly witness the majestic greatness and mercy of the just and holy God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, but through his eternal Son has blotted out the sins of all his chosen—chosen of God and afflicted. His word says he has chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, to be heirs of the kingdom. Dear brother, how we often fret and repine at our lot, and, as you said, need to be told often, "Thy God reigneth," and when comes the softening light of the dew of heaven into our poor despondent souls how we feel lifted above earth and all earthly environments; they fade as the leaves in autumn; they shall mount up with wings; they shall run and not be weary. Yes, we have to come to the place where, as you quoted, I had fainted unless I had believed to see the hand of the Lord in the land of the living. I love the words which have often been my strength: "Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established."—Prov. xvi. 3. We, dear brother, as David, know full well, by happy experience, that safety is of the Lord. He is our refuge and strength. So I found him, and so of him I have been lifted above my despondency and made to abide in safety, and with David I could say, Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler. The snare is broken and we are escaped. Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. The dear Savior said when crying out under the load of our sins, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? when men gave him a sponge dipped in vinegar. How great the light! How awful the suffering! And to think my sins helped add to the suffering truly melts down this proud heart of mine, and daily do I have to cry for strength and light. I know, to my sorrow, my sins procure this darkness, and we do well to remember and to beg for grace to bear this indignation of the Lord until he pleads our cause at God's right hand, omnipo-

tent to save. Oh may we be brought into a deeper acquaintance with these blessed truths, and live upon them as the only ground of our salvation. What a mercy that the Lord knows all our sorrows, temptations and trials, and all our vileness and unfaithfulness to him, and to him only can we go for protection and comfort in an evil hour. I love the words,

"Sweet in the confidence of faith,
To trust his firm decrees;
Sweet to lie passive in his hands
And know no will but his."

Dear brother, I know by the grace of God I am what I am. I trust I have had glimpses of his blessed love and mercy extended to me, a very mysterious one, a wonder unto many, a mystery unto myself. An aching void abides with me that this world cannot fill. I continually wonder if this unrest is the bearing about in my body the dying of the Lord Jesus. I hang on the sweet, inspiring hope felt within, that I shall be satisfied when I awake with his likeness, see him as he is, and be like him.

I appreciate your fellowship, brother Dodson, and hope this imperfect letter may bring an answer some time. I do love to get letters from the Lord's poor and afflicted people, rich in faith.

Yes, dear brother, I do feel his supporting hand guiding me as I sojourn along alone in my dwelling; yet not alone, for sometimes his presence fills my room.

Your ministry in Canada filled many hearts with comfort, and we hope the Lord may direct your steps among us again. I hope, if I am well and it is the will of the Lord, I may go down next summer and attend some of the associations.

My son's family are all well. They bought a lot with a small house on it, and as he can he is adding rooms to it, and hopes in a year to have a comfortable home. He is on my mind, with a degree of assurance that he may be brought to a knowledge of the truth, although there are no outward signs, other than a good, honorable living boy, and that means a great satisfaction to his family and to me, yet is no assurance of saving grace by all our good works. We have good meetings. Elder Ruston is faithful in upholding the cause of which we feel the Lord has made him overseer. May he be given strength and wisdom to labor in his vineyard. I hope your little gathering and yourself are blessed with the outpouring of the Spirit, which was manifest when I was favored to be a witness of and heard a sweet message from your lips. Extend my love to them.

Pardon all amiss.

Your sister in bonds of fellowship,

(MRS.) JOHN McPHAIL.

DANVILLE, Va., Sept. 17, 1936.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—BELOVED SON:—We have your card dated the 13th, stating you are homeward bound and are tired. When I think of the life you are now living, that you have to make long trips and speak often, I sometimes fear your health may fail, knowing while you are trying to serve your Lord and Master you are trying also to work with your hands,

that you be no burden to any one. But, my son, when I take the view that you are a servant of the most high God, the One who made all things and doth rule and control all things, and does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay his hand, and I believe he has both called and qualified you to go and preach the gospel to the dear children of God, oh how could I want it different? So may I say, God's will be done. I feel I know something of the needs of God's humble poor, and I know he is able to uphold and sustain you. So I bid you Godspeed, and hope he will go with you, and I believe he will. Samson could not of his own strength have done the great things he did, neither could David have conquered the lion and the bear except by the power of our God. So, my son, if God has called and sent you to feed and comfort the scattered saints he will make you able to do his will. Oh what a blessing from heaven the gospel ministers are, and to think that God has blessed you to be in line with such dear ones as Elder Silas H. Durand, and many others who did and still are preaching the wonderful things of Jesus. Oh, I just feel to say as did old Jacob when he knew that Joseph was still alive: It is enough, and I will go and see him before I die. It is enough, and sometimes my cup is made to run over when I can see what good things our heavenly Father has in store for us. My son, I often wish I could join in the praise of God with you, and at times I can see no reason for a hope that I am a child of God, but I hope I love these things. Amen.

Your father,

R. L. DODSON.

BENTLEY, ILL., NOV. 10, 1936.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed please find subscription payment for our good paper for one more year. I hope all who are in arrears may by some means be enabled to pay up, as I feel there is much need for the good of our people that a paper like the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and other staunch Baptist papers be supported by good letters and able editorials, and an especial effort on the part of every reader to be careful to keep paid up. I know these are perilously hard times for almost all the Baptist family, but have we considered our publisher, who has year after year carried some subscribers who by a little more careful spending could help very materially in lightening the very heavy load he is uncomplainingly carrying? Could we but see ourselves as others see us. Let us all read Proverbs xiv. 10, and think, and see if it does not come to us more clearly how our publisher may feel. This Scripture reads, "The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy." How staggering is the weight we sometimes carry, wondering if we will be enabled to complete the duty we feel is ours, when in some mysterious way the hand of Providence has intervened, the dark clouds are pushed back, the seeming impossibilities are somehow removed and we are again given a gladness of heart and feel

we are helped to resume our journey, and gladly we go another mile on our way.

I had thought when I began only to send in my renewal price for the SIGNS, but I really do not feel like just reading the good articles it contains, and feasting on them, but would gladly write if I could really feel that what I would write would warrant taking up space in a worthwhile way. It does not seem there are as many experiences published in any of our Baptists papers as there were when I first began reading the SIGNS, forty-three years ago. I enjoy reading the experiences of brethren and sisters. The editorials and letters are indeed food to our souls. When we hear the word proclaimed from the pulpit in its purity how it does our souls good and we are made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, our cups are made to run over, and we are made to say together, It is good to be here. We no more say, Let us go up to the house of the Lord, but, Come, let us go up into the house of the Lord together.

I wish I could tell my good people many of the good likenesses I have heard of our Old Baptist people. An old brother failed to attend church services until a brother went to his house. There was a glowing fire of burning red coals, and these brethren visited on for a time, and finally the visiting brother took the tongs and pulled out a red hot coal and put it by itself on the hearth, and they sat there silently watching it grow dark. The old brother said, I will be there in time for meeting. "They spake often one to another." Elder George Murry, a venerable old warrior of the cross, now gone to his reward, used to liken our people to olive trees, saying, Olive will bear fruit when in a cluster, or planted together, but plant one out among other trees and it will not bear fruit. We are told to forsake not the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is. Elder Spence, from Virginia, said we were like doves, for if any other than the parent bird made a noise, or shook the limb, the little doves dropped their heads, but when the parent birds made a noise or shook the limb it was in a way that the little doves understood, their heads were up, their mouths open eager to receive the proper thing from the proper source. So with our Baptist people, they know when the limb (the Bible) is shaken right, or there is the right sound, their heads are up and they, too, eagerly devour what is fed to them. Hence this Scripture, When we hear the tinkling of bells and smell the smell of the pomegranate we know that our great High Priest has entered into the holy of holies once for us.

I must bring this to a close, and will, by adding that any sound Primitive Baptist preachers, who are in order and at peace at home, and come with no hobbies to ride, are invited to stop off here with us, should they be going this way, but disturbers of Zion we are better off without. Our dearly loved pastor, Elder Claude E. Webb, still comes to us laden with much rich food from the Master's table. He has just

come from a few appointments, filled in and around Kansas City, where he, as is usual, was well received. His only theme is to preach Christ, and him crucified. Also our much loved assistant pastor, Elder Augden Symmonds, comes to us laden with the good things of the kingdom, preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ. Elder Webb has three churches here, and his fourth and fifth Sundays are taken up in building up the waste places in Zion wherever time permits him to go. Brother Symmonds organized a church in Rock Island, of which he is pastor. He also has the care of two other churches.

Dear editors, you may use any of this letter in the SIGNS as you see fit, but do not crowd out better matter by doing so. It may be that some time I can write a little to comfort. I would like to, but can I ever do it?

A poor faltering sinner, but your brother in Christ, I hope,

LEONARD H. HOPKINS.

INDEPENDENCE, MO., NOV. 28, 1936.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—DEAR BROTHER:—I have had it in mind to write you ever since I heard you were over in Virginia at the Pig River Association for I feel as though you met with a people prepared and ready to accept the truth as it is taught in the Bible, and has been set forth in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES ever since it was established by Elder Gilbert Beebe, and I want you to know that I have been almost a constant reader of it for nearly forty years, and have been led, I hope, by the Holy Spirit to embrace, believe and rejoice in the doctrine that magnifies the name of the sovereign God. Also, I thought that you might have met some of my kinspeople: Mrs. J. W. Jamison, Miss Lucy Hall, my sisters, and Elder J. E. Burgess, who married my niece. I also want to let you know how I appreciated the republishing of the article written by my father, Elder J. C. Hall, which was written many years ago. My heart goes out to Elder B. V. Jessee and all who hold his memory so sacred. Several here after reading the article came to me and told me how they enjoyed it, and one deacon said it was the best article he had ever read on the subject of the purpose of God in all things. My very soul yearns for these precious truths that are my hope of immortality after I shall have passed into the reality of the joys that await the redeemed of the Lord. I rejoice to reflect on the days of my childhood and early life, when I could go with my father to his meetings and associations, where he and other able ministers proclaimed the Way of life, and yet how blind I was to spiritual things, not knowing that I was born in sin, and under condemnation of a broken law. But the time came when I was made to see I was a sinner, and without Christ, a stranger from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. Now, if not deceived, I take great hope that I have been awakened to some of the glorious things taught by the apostle Paul to the Ephesian brethren, for says the apostle, "But God, who is rich

in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." It is here that heavenly blessings flow out to them that have been enabled to put their trust in him. Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. These blessings are not for or because of any good that is in ourselves, or that we have done, but according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Then the apostle goes on to explain the predestinated purpose and will of God in choosing his people, and making known to them the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself. Wonderful mystery! that the eyes of God's people have been enlightened, that they may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe according to his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places. Thus we see that God has set Christ Jesus in heavenly places, he hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places with him, and he hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. Then we find that Jesus is the fullness of him that filleth all and in all. Then what a glorious hope and consolation, that we, the people of God, are in Christ Jesus, and our fullness is in him. Then blessed are they who are in Christ Jesus, for against such there is no more condemnation. No man, no power; no, not even things present, or things to come, or even death, shall be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Brother Dodson, I have written more than I thought of writing, but my mind kept running on, and all I can do is to ask your pardon if I have wearied you. Dispose of this as pleases you, and may the God of power be with you and sustain you in keeping the SIGNS in harmony with the truth, and may he be with you in your ministerial labors.

In hope of eternal life,

W. L. HALL.

BALTIMORE, Md., Jan. 12, 1937.

MY DEAR LESTER:—I have just finished reading the SIGNS, and to me this January number is unusually interesting. Your editorial, New Year's Greeting, is rich. I read it twice. No, my dear brother in the Lord, God will never leave nor forsake you, though at times he places you as he did Moses, in the cleft of the rock, and puts his hand over you. Then you cannot see, for to you all is darkness, but how safe you are. The storms beat against the rock, but even the sea billows and the wind obey his voice when he speaks. Peace, be still. And have you not sometimes

realized you comfort more saints when you are not comforted yourself?

I also greatly enjoyed sister Helen Jones' most excellent letter; also some others. It is true, as David says, It is good to be afflicted. Before I was afflicted I went astray. Most of last year I was so busy I could not read my good paper and the Scriptures as I wanted to. I did go to meeting three Sundays each month, but I felt that I must do all I possibly could, until a week before Christmas, when I had to give up and stay in bed, then I began to read and write. I am much better now, but have to go very slowly. God has been very good to me all of my days, and I am so unprofitable, so unworthy. Sometimes I feel too embarrassed to try to approach the throne of grace, even at my creature distance. Oh my leanness! But there is nowhere else to go, and no people but the Lord's people can understand our language. After all our sighs and cries, moans and groans, we break forth as one of old, and say, Happy art thou, O Israel. Who is like unto thee? O people saved by the Lord. God bless you and all the household of faith.

A sister, I hope, and cousin,

MAMIE W. ROWE.

MILLRY, Ala., Jan. 5, 1937.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am writing to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, so please find money order inclosed. I would gladly send in some new subscribers, but I live far from any church, and there are not any people living near me who believe in the doctrine the SIGNS advocates. So much of my time I feel to be alone, in a spiritual way, and, like many others, the SIGNS is a great comfort to me. It is about all the preaching I have. If I could write like some I would tell the brethren and sisters how much I enjoy reading after their pens; also the dear editors. The writers can tell my mind better than I can, so please write on as the Lord provides you with spiritual food to feed his lambs. Many are the hours, if not deceived, that I enjoy this spiritual food.

In hope,

L. E. ROGERS.

HOUSTON, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing a postal money order in the amount of two dollars to pay my subscription from last May. I thank you for sending the dear old SIGNS on to me, as it is all the preaching I get. I thoroughly indorse what it advocates and enjoy all the letters the dear brethren and sisters write. Please remember me as a sister weak in the faith, but in bonds, I hope.

With love to all,

(MRS.) IRENE WISENBAKER.

BREWERS, Ky., Feb. 8, 1937.

DEAR EDITORS:—Here is a little correction in the obituary of Elder J. C. Chester in the February issue. Beginning in the last of the eleventh line, first column, page 43, it should read, For twenty-one years prior to his illness he attended every one of his union meetings and associations; also many meetings of the corresponding associations.

Yours truly,

OPHEE CHESTER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1937.

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ACTS XVII. 23.

"As I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you."

Paul expressed these words to the men of Athens as he stood in Mars' Hill, and pointed out to them the blindness of their understanding: "I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious," which testifies to us that they were trying to circumcise the flesh and make the man perfect by acts of the creature, yet at the same time they manifested to Paul a sincerity, by which Paul said, "Ye do ignorantly worship." We feel that we can see in the various creeds, or forms of worship, that they have a certain sincerity, which is of the carnal mind, and they verily believe they are worshiping God, but we feel, as Paul declared, "God that made the world, and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on the face of the earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter." This includes the entire sermon Paul delivered to those men of Athens, from the twenty-third to the thirty-second verse of this chapter. Dear brethren, and all the faithful in Christ Jesus, do

we in reality feel the truth of Paul's declaration as we have recorded, and do we not feel to turn our eyes on the thoughts and intents of our own hearts, and find we are wanting in the sincerity of the worship of God? We see so much of our desires are to be honored by men, and have their applause and esteem, instead of knowing nothing among men but Jesus Christ and him crucified. This formality worship is the worship of the god of the dead, and not of the living. This One whom Paul declared unto the men of Athens is the God of the living, and not the god of the dead, though he is God over all. Men proclaim that we are creatures of God, and have within us a spark of grace, which we can kindle to a great flame of righteousness if we will do certain acts that can be enacted by men. As we have the two standing before us we see a vast difference between them, one is looking to a god that cannot save unless we accept his conditions, and the other to a God who has all power in heaven and earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of the habitation of men, and he upholdeth all things by the word of his power, and underneath is his everlasting arm, and he weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance. (Isaiah xl. 12.) The One who can speak and it is done, and none can hinder him. He is our God, the true and living God; the One who appointed salvation for poor sinners, and at his appointed time sent his only begotten Son to make sure, and save them with an everlasting salvation. At that time he sent his angel to testify to those he had chosen, by which his Son should enter into the world, and assure them of his work, and the power of the Most High, and his servants are made to wait patiently for the Lord, for they are taught by his almighty power that without him they can do nothing, and he sendeth them out without money or script for their journey, but he goeth before them and prepareth the way, and provideth for all their wants. His ways are not our ways, but he leadeth us in paths of righteousness for his own name's sake. When we are led in paths of righteousness for his own name's sake, we cannot discern at the time that the Lord is leading us, and perhaps we feel rebellious, and would turn out from the way we are in if we could, but we are kept by his power and directed on our way. We do feel that every one of his humble poor is made to feel that his is an outside case, but when he comes in contact with another one, they both testify of the same way, and each one is directed to his Father's house. There they find refuge, and are made to feel they have a safe resting-place, and as they look back over the way by which they have been brought, and the perils, and the afflictions they have suffered, they seem to be but light compared with the joys revealed to them. And the way being consecrated to them, they call it the good old way, and it is set forth very beautifully by the poet Kent. (Hymn 357, Beebe's collection.)

"The good old way that leads to God,
Which saints in every age have trod,
Was Christ alone, they saw his day,
And him pursued, the good old way.

When Adam sunk his unborn race
In ruin, guilt, and deep disgrace,
The promise, with celestial ray,
To Jesus points, the good old way.

The apostles all proclaimed him thus,
Jesus the Lord, or God with us,
Who did by death our ransom pay,
The truth, the life, the good old way."

These words are very strengthening to those who feel poor and unworthy of the blessings of God, and with every blessing they receive they magnify his hand that has rested with them, and say of a truth, Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

We have pointed out to you as best we can at this time the exercise of those who worship God in Spirit and have no confidence in the flesh. They feel the love Jesus had for them, that constrained him to come into the world to suffer, bleed and die for them, and in that reality they can sing,

"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly;
While the raging billows roll,
While the tempest still is nigh,
Hide me, O my Savior, hide,
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide;
Oh receive my soul at last."

As we pass from 1936 to 1937 we hear the proclamations of those who worship the God that is unknown to men who are carnally-minded, but known by those to whom the Son hath revealed him, which is proven by the many good letters and the excellent editorial in the February SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We cannot express our gratitude for such comfort given by the revelation of God to poor sinners, and we see an inscription written in their hearts that expresses the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, and the covenant of God, that is ordered in all things and sure; sure unto all the subjects who are born of that incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. These prove that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is their God, and he is not the God of the dead, but of the living. (Matt. xxii. 32.) They are not seeking to pervert various words and phrases to carry certain ideas, but are reconciled to God's purposes, and wait the times before appointed, and do not ask, Why doest thou? If we be the servants of God, are we going about among the brethren trying to teach our brother and manifesting a superior ability in the gospel? We would answer, No; but we are going among the brethren without money or script, and having one coat. If we have money in our minds as the purpose of our going forth, or script to give us standing among the people of God, we are not trusting him who sent us out to preach the gospel, and when we wear two coats we try to serve both God and mammon, and all such are serving the god of the dead, and not the true and living God.

Dear readers, we do feel our insufficiency for these things, but we trust that God has given us a heart of sincerity, and reverence for his works among the sons of men, and we do love to see those professing to be followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, striving to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace and laboring for those things that make for peace; not that we think men can keep the peace of God in the church,

but the manifestation of such a spirit is evidence of their sonship, and they speak with the tongue of the learned.

C. W. V.

A WORD OF THANKS.

We know our readers will be pleased to learn that we have received a most gratifying number of new subscriptions during the past few months. Now that our brethren and friends have discovered how to get new subscribers, we hope they will keep the good work up throughout the year. Just think what it would mean if every one of our old subscribers would get only one NEW one during the entire year. One good brother from Virginia sent us a money order for six dollars for a full year's subscription for three Elders. If your pastor or minister is not reading the SIGNS, please see that he does. In this connection, if there is any one who requested a copy of our book on Predestination, in accordance with our special offer during November, December and January, and has not received it, please write us direct and we will see that it is sent promptly.

We would also ask that our subscribers who are not receiving their paper promptly at their correct address, kindly notify the publisher, giving both the old and the new address. Many addresses are incorrect, and the post office department should not be called upon to look up our subscribers and forward their papers

One more thing: Frequently it happens that when a subscriber dies the publisher is not notified to stop sending the paper, and as a consequence he continues to send it, sometimes for several years, before he knows it is not desired. In such cases, where there is no member of the family who desires to continue taking the paper, if some one would be good enough to notify the publisher, same will be much appreciated.

We feel our readers, on the whole, are our best friends, and we bespeak their continued kind co-operation and enthusiastic support of our family paper.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by sister Attie A. Curtis.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1936, sends greetings to the churches and associations with which she corresponds.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year has passed and we have been gathered together to hear the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Jesus is precious to those who believe, and we desire to exalt that name above every name that is named. It pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell in Jesus. It is the work of God that we believe on Jesus. It is the Lord who has said, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." It

is wonderful how each one is led about and instructed in being brought from nature's darkness into his marvelous light. Not one can tell how they were led day by day; it is a little here and a little there, and words fail to express it clearly. When Jesus is revealed to us as the Savior of sinners we are made to rejoice and are glad; One mighty to save has appeared, and how precious he is. "Whom to know is life eternal." The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. Salvation by grace is our theme, and the new song is put in our mouth, "Even praise unto our God." No boasting of our works can be found. It is good to be led to the assemblies of the children of God, their hearts full of love for the people, and they long to be one with them, but feel their unworthiness, and say they are less than the least, if one at all. What a sweet fellowship is felt for them, and they know this fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. Then we come into the joy of these words: Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious. Old things have passed away, and all is new. Paul says, This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. Here is the fountain that was opened for sin and uncleanness in the house of David. No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost. We find the thief on the cross saying, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. We know our own experience, when we cried, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. Lord, save or I perish.

It seems fitting in these days of confusion, and so much pleasure in the world, that this Letter should speak plainly that the Maine Old School Baptist Association remains firmly established in the truth and in the wonderful works of the Lord, who made all things for his own pleasure. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out. All the glory must be given him, and we walk by faith, not by sight. We are kept by the power of God, and are made to know his will is done in heaven and in earth, and he gives us our daily bread and delivers us from evil, and his is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

"A friend," Ontario, $1; E. G. Webb, Okla., $3; J. J. Okes, Va., $1; H. M. Bowden, Mo., $1; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $2; Florence L. Disharoon, Pa., $1; E. H. Winchell, Mich., $1; Mrs. J. H. Hasbrouck, N. Y., $1.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1936, to her sister associations with which she corresponds, sends greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We feel that we have been greatly blessed with the privilege of meeting again at Whitefield in an association, receiving your messengers and correspondence, bringing gladness to our hearts and renewed strength to our faith. We are a small Association, but God in his loving-kindness sent us a minister filled with that heavenly manna, to a state of overflowing. As he proclaimed the gospel's joyful tidings with Jesus as our salvation we were fed and comforted. A token of God's care for us, and worthy of mention at this time, is the generosity of Mrs. Annie Potter, a daughter of the now deceased brother and sister Cunningham, of Whitefield, who very kindly opened her house to us and entertained the entire Association. Here the mornings before services and the evenings after were much enjoyed as social meetings. Here hymns were sung, and God's love and kindness to poor sinners was the subject of conversation. The members of the Maine Association are united by strong ties of christian love and fellowship, each esteeming others better than themselves. We pray that whatever the future may hold for us, we may have faith to realize that the eternal God is our refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms.

The Lord willing, the next session of our Association will be held with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, the Friday, Saturday and Sunday before the second Monday in September, 1937.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.
SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

The Pocatalico Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, to the several associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEAR SAINTS IN THE LIVING GOD:—Another year, with all of its joys and sorrows, has rolled around. The past year has held for us many sorrows, yet we feel in our hearts to say that our God is gracious. Through the love and mercy of our covenant-keeping God we have been once more blessed to meet in an association, and to greet your messengers as they come to us laden with the good things of the kingdom, having their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. We desire that your correspondence be continued, if it be the will of our God. Farewell.

J. C. HAMMOND, Moderator.
H. J. BIRD, Clerk.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS."

WE will furnish extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MARION FLORENCE FERGUSON, better known to her family and close friends as Dolly, departed this earthly life at the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Ferguson, near Danville, Virginia, January 8th, 1937. Having been born July 29th, 1918, she was not quite eighteen and one-half years of age. She was the youngest of three daughters, and besides her two older sisters Louise and Lois, she is survived by three older brothers, Leonard, Hughes and Herman, and three younger brothers, Billy, Edwin and Ryland. None but the hearts of bereaved parents can taste the bitterness of that sorrow which is occasioned by the loss of their dear children, but we hope our dear sister Laila, who is not only our only sister in the flesh, but thankful to say is one with us in church fellowship, will with her husband, find a calm, a sure retreat beneath the mercy-seat of our God, and that he will grant strength and grace sufficient for the needs of all of her immediate family, relatives and friends. We do not feel that we can improve upon what her mother has written concerning her, which we quote herewith: "We feel Dolly budded on earth and hope she will bloom in heaven; that is my most comforting and consoling thought. A few nights after her death, I went to bed heart-broken and just could not go to sleep. Something seemed to say to me, and his angels are watching over her. Immediately I could see the cemetery, and her grave seemed to be right by me; a great light shone over and around her grave. We miss her much; she was so young, but was in bad health for about eighteen months. She bore her sufferings with great patience; was a great sufferer at times, and when not suffering would lie in bed and sing. The balance of the family would say, How can she sing in her condition? She had a very serious operation, hoping it would cure her, but the doctors found her case hopeless from the first. But I could not give her up; just kept hoping she would be enabled to live. She was the most anxious to get well of any one I ever saw; was so outdone because the doctors did not help her. After going to bed her last time, on December 15th, she was so pitiful, begging, Mamma, can't you do something for me? I want so much to get well. She fully realized her condition, and was very weak, gasping for breath. It was so hard to see her young life slowly ebbing away, and nothing we could do but try to make her comfortable; it was heart-rending. I could not help feeling she was paying the debt we will all have to pay sooner or later. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord. We had her taken to hospitals many times, but brought her back, and she never complained, but when the hearse took her remains to the cemetery it just seemed unbearable, for I knew it would be the last time she would ever leave home. Funeral services were conducted at home by Elder J. E. Herndon. It was all that I could ask. He spoke very sweetly and comfortingly to us. She was a beautiful corpse. She grew up as a normal healthy child, well grown and well developed body. She had cancer of the spine, which affected her whole system. Darling Dolly, we miss you, but our loss is your eternal gain. Your place is vacant, your voice is still, but you are not forgotten, and your troubles are over. You are in heaven, where I hope we will all meet some day. God reconcile us to his will, watch over your grave, as well as over us. (Signed) Your Loving Mother."

We have sometimes felt that God's ways, which are often mysterious and

difficult of understanding, are for the purpose of softening our hard hearts, to the end that we should fear and reverence his holy name.

R. L. D.

CHARLES M. WHITE, born in Fannin County, Texas, seventy-eight years ago, died at his home, near Keller, Texas, of heart trouble, January 7th, 1937. He was stricken only a few hours before his death, up to which time he apparently enjoyed his usual health and composure. His suffering was severe, but brief. He mentioned frequently to his children, after his wife's death August 9th, 1936, and that of his oldest sister, Mrs. A. D. Bourland, November 7th, 1936, how sweet it would be if the Lord would call him home. He seemed to be ready and only waiting the time appointed of the Lord to arrive. Mr. White was not a member of the church, but had been settled in his belief of the doctrine of the Old School Baptists for many years; loved their company and to attend their meetings. Many times the writer has seen the tears of joy and praise course down his cheeks and his countenance beam with happiness when listening to the preaching of the gospel of grace and its sufficiency for poor sinners. The Lord blessed him with a good hope, and with many likeable qualities; prospered him financially and made him a useful man in his community. He is survived by three sons, John T. White, former county school superintendent, and Clarence, both of Ft. Worth, and Dawson, of Mosheim; three daughters, Mrs. Barney Johnson and Mrs. Clint Blevins, of Ft. Worth, and Mrs. H. A. Blevins, of Chillicothe; two sisters, Miss Mary White and Mrs. Lucinda Brigance, of Commerce, Texas; five nephews, John H. Bourland, county tax collector, and J. E. Bourland, of Ft. Worth, A. M., Elijah and G. C. Bourland, of Vernon, Texas; seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild. An intellectual and highly refined contribution to their respective communities. His children were very kind to their father, and saw to it that he had a convenient way to get to his meetings. In fact, a number of them seemed to enjoy the services as much as he.

The writer was called to conduct services at the funeral, which was done at the Missionary Baptist meetinghouse in Keller in the presence of the family and a goodly number of friends, who gathered under very unfavorable weather conditions. This being the third funeral we had conducted at this place of members of the immediate family within four months: his wife, his sister and himself. The family feel deeply their loss, but are being sustained by the Lord to meet it bravely. Interment was in the Bourland family cemetery, a beautiful location near the Bourland home, a short distance out from Keller. May it please the Lord to give comfort to the bereaved and lead them to trust in the God of their father and mother.

Written by request.

J. R. HARDY.

MRS. ELIZA ANN TRIMBLE (nee Eliza Ann Jeffries), my mother, passed away January 15th, 1937, in Kansas City, Missouri. She was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and in her lifetime she requested that a notice of her death be sent you for publication, with a brief statement of her life. She was born July 23rd, 1841, in Warrenton, Virginia, and came west with her parents when a small child. They located in Clay County, Missouri, where she grew to womanhood. In her twenty-third year she united with the Primitive Baptist Church, and was baptized by Elder Joseph Warder, pastor of the Mt. Zion Church. October 14th, 1868, she was

united in marriage to Robert P. Trimble, of Jackson County, Missouri. Of this union four children were born, two sons and two daughters, all living. Mr. Trimble died February 9th, 1917, in his seventy-seventh year. Since that time Mrs. Trimble made her home with her children.

CHARLES O. TRIMBLE.

THERE was sorrow in many homes when the news of the death of sister JESSIE EDWARDS, at the Kingston City Hospital, at Kingston, N. Y., February 2nd, 1937, reached the communities where she was known. She had been ill less than a week of pneumonia, and all that medical skill could provide had been done for her relief. The funeral services were held the following Thursday at Carr's funeral home, in Kingston, the writer conducting the services. The interment was in Wiltwyck Cemetery, in Kingston. The deceased was past seventy-seven years of age at the time of her death.

Sister Jessie Edwards bore the maiden name of Bowman, and was born November 25th, 1859, and lived many years in Kingston or nearby towns. She was twice married. Her first husband being William DeGraff, to whom she was united in marriage in 1880. Of this union two sons were born, who survive: Harold and Arthur, of Bristol, Conn. After several years of widowhood, she married Dr. Charles Edwards, in 1933, who died in 1935. In 1933 sister Edwards was baptized into the fellowship of the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, and was one of its most faithful and devout members. She loved to meet with the brethren and was ever ready to witness to the cause of Christ. She was generous in her material support of the financial needs of the church of her membership, and by her walk in life evidenced the reality of the hope that sustained her as an anchor of the soul. Her blameless life, her lovable ways, her genial disposition, the noble qualities of mother, wife and friend that were hers, and the uplifting influence of her life have left their impress on all who knew her. In recent years she lived at Kingston, having formerly lived for some years at Bristol, Conn. She will be much missed. One sister, Mrs. Mary E. Keogan, survives.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

DEACON ISAAC W. COX was born July 15th, 1871, and died February 21st, 1936. He was married to Miss Siddie Hicks August 9th, 1896, and to this union were born six children, the oldest dying in infancy. He leaves his wife and five children: Mrs. Clark Haskins, of Detroit, Mich., Mrs. Clarence Scott, of Paris, Tenn., Lawrence and Clarence Cox, of Detroit, Mich., and Keith Lee Cox, of Cottage Grove, Tenn. Brother Cox became a member of the Primitive Baptist Church about twenty-five years ago. As Deacon he performed his duties in a quiet and God-fearing manner, and was strong in the faith that salvation is by grace in time and eternity, and that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord. Brother Cox was a quiet man, and was highly respected in his community, being a good neighbor and an honest man.

The funeral was held in the Walnut Fork Primitive Baptist meetinghouse and was largely attended, which was a witness to his fine qualities as a man and a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus. His wife is also a member at Walnut Fork. The church has lost a good member, but our loss is his gain. The writer conducted the funeral services and tried to comfort those who mourn by preaching Christ and him crucified.

R. L. BIGGS.

MRS. HARRIETT E. AYDELOTT, whose maiden name was Harriett Emily Finkforck,was born in Sack County, Ohio, October 7th, 1848, and died January 31st, 1937. She was married to Jesse Paramore Aydelott November 7th, 1863, in Mahaska County, Iowa, and to this union eleven children were born, three sons and two daughters preceding her in death. The surviving children are Mrs. Jemima Beaman, Mrs. Clara Reeves and John C. Aydelott, of Forest Grove, George B. Aydelott, of Garibaldi, Charles S. Aydelott, of Eugene, and Mrs. Permelia M. Moore, of Nampa, Idaho. She and her husband moved from Mahaska County, Iowa, to Jasper County, and lived there a number of years. In 1876 they moved to Kansas by way of covered wagon,and remained there until 1904, when they came to Oregon, settling on a farm near Forest Grove. Later in 1907 they moved to the farm where she lived until her death. In 1913 they celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary. All of their children and their families were with them, except one daughter, Rosa Morris, of Benge, Wash. Her husband was taken from her on February 3rd, 1916, lacking just three days of being twenty-one years before her death. Since that time she lived with her son John. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church in early life, and continued in that faith. She was taken with influenza, which was the cause of her death. Everything was done for her that could be done, but her Savior had called and human hands were helpless. She leaves, besides her six children, many grandchildren and great-grandchildren, who dearly loved her. Her useful and kind life will always be remembered by all her loved ones.

J. N. BERRY.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets the third Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, at 10:30 a. m. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, 421 Steele, Street, Frankfort, Ky.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

Cloth binding, 75c each. Paper covers, single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and all to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

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HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Cloth binding. Price, $1.25 each. One dozen or more, ordered at the same time and all to the same address, one dollar each. Cash must accompany orders. Make checks and money orders payable to

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 105. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1937. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

EXPERIENCE.

"I was a stricken deer that left the herd
Long since. With many an arrow deep infixed
My panting side was charged, when I withdrew
To seek a tranquil death in distant shades.
There I was found by One who had himself
Been hurt by archers. In his side he bore
And in his hands and feet the cruel scars,
With gentle force soliciting the darts,
He drew them forth, and healed, and bade me live.
Since then, with few associates, in remote
And silent woods I wander, far from those
My former partners of the peopled scene;
With few associates and not wishing more."
Cowper, "The Task," Book III.

How blessedly is the story told of the work of the Spirit; of the favored sinner's experience who is called by grace; of the comforting revelation of salvation and the heavenly effects and fruits felt and brought forth in God's elect who know the grace of God in truth. (Col. i. 6.)

"I was a stricken deer that left the herd long since." "Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee."—Psalms xlv. 5. When God sendeth forth his arrows he does not draw "a bow at a venture."—2 Chron. xviii. 33. Such a thought has no place in the doctrine of God our Savior, but has its place in the "another gospel which is not another," (Gal. i. 6, 7.) proclaimed by men who know not the truth as it is in our precious Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

"But thus the eternal counsel ran,
Almighty grace, arrest that man;
I felt the arrows of distress,
And found I had no hiding place."

When the set time is come that it pleaseth God, not to propose, but call by grace, Jehovah the Spirit sendeth forth his arrows like lightning. (Zech. ix. 14.) Not an arrow misseth its mark, for the Almighty is the archer. (Job vi. 4.) No armor that the sinner has arrayed himself in is of any avail. No matter how much he may have hardened himself in sin and have flattered himself he was proof against the lightnings of the thunder of God in the law, (Exod. xix. 16.) "Thine arrows are sharp in the heart." "They were pricked in their heart."—Acts.

"Deep are the wounds thine arrows give,
They pierce the hardest heart;
Thy smiles of grace the slain revive,
And joy succeeds the smart."

Who was more sinful, more hardened than I ? With the herd I ran in pursuit of fleshly lusts, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, a child of wrath even as others. But the Holy Ghost sent forth an arrow that hit me, even me, the chief of sinners. Oh what amazing grace! What divine love and tender mercy was this the proof of! Was the whole herd of mankind shot at? Was it a random shot that by chance struck me, and brought me down? Oh no! The work of the Lord is perfect. I was the one aimed at, and with no uncertainty does the Lord send forth the arrows from the quiver.

"I was a stricken deer." As I review all the dealings of the Lord of Hosts with my soul how sovereign are all his acts of grace, how distinguishing his love and mercy to such a vile sinner like me. Oh that I could love and praise the precious and glorious name of God, my Redeemer, for his marvelous lovingkindness to my soul. The Lord wounded me. His sovereign grace singled me out, and I truly found his "arrows sharp in my heart," and I felt in my soul, Oh what a sinner I am. A rebel, an enemy of God, a hell-deserving wretch, God is against me. "The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me."—Job vi. 4. As Job thus expresses himself, thus I found it. That Scripture, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth," Prov. xxvii. 1, dashed me to the earth. My contemplated life in the pleasures of sin was blighted. My sins so many and so great as sharp arrows of the law wounded me; I was stricken through and through by my sins. The law of God I found to be unto death. It was the ministration of condemnation and death to me, a vile transgressor. (2 Cor. iii. 7-9.) My sin taking occasion by the commandment deceived me, and by it slew me. (Rom. vii. 11.) Sin revived and I died; the commandment which was ordained unto life I found to be unto death. "I was a stricken deer." Stricken by the Lord. I felt I must perish, for the arrows of eternal justice pierced me and the poison thereof drank up my spirit. They were indeed deadly arrows. Jehovah's holy and just condemnation convicted my soul of guilt. His terrors made me sore afraid. Yes, I feared there was no escape for such a sinner. I said in my soul, Hell, the damnation of hell, is surely my destination and justly my portion. Oh what pain and grief possessed my soul. I remember one day, when in the midst of my distress, I sat in anguish of soul pondering over my awful condition, oh so vile and abominable did I feel I was, such a mass of sin, I was well-nigh plunged into utter despair, and I felt there could be no mercy for such a vile transgressor. On every hand I could see that which brought my sins to view and the law that I had transgressed poured forth its curses on my sinful head. What was I to do to assuage my wounded heart? Filled with anguish

because of my sin my soul fainted within me, realizing by the wonderful teaching of the Holy Spirit my lost and undone condition. While in this state, little did I know the mercy, the rich mercy, in store for my soul. The wounds which God's truth made in my heart I could not heal, and I thought they were forerunners of my eternal destruction, and now the Lord was about to destroy me utterly. "I was a stricken deer that left the herd long since." Yes, some sixty-five years now past the Lord separated me from the herd. The work of Jehovah the Holy Ghost in my soul was such that I could not run to the same excess of riot with my companions in sin. The time past of my life sufficed me. (1 Peter iv. 3.) I now loathed the paths of sin, and sought to find the way of holiness. Before I was a stricken deer I could run as eagerly as any of the herd in transgressions, in vile practices and filthy conversation. In all ungodliness I reveled and banqueted, taking my fill of sin. But when Jehovah's arrow wounded me "I was a stricken deer." My heart was faint, the pleasures in the pursuit of sin languished and died. I had no heart to keep up with the herd. God's voice in the law gave me (so I felt) my death wound, and his gracious and divine work in my soul had implanted and begotten hatred of evil, and hungerings and thirstings after righteousness. (Matt. v. 6; Prov. viii. 13.) I "turned from transgression." —Isaiah lxix. 20. I wanted the companionship of the herd no longer. God's arrows within me distressed me and drank up my spirit. (Job vi. 4.) My sinful and perishing condition occupied all my thought, cut me off from the pursuit of the pleasures of sin. Others might run after vain and vile delights, but as for me "I was a stricken deer." Jehovah's arrow had arrested me; forbade my continuance with the herd in their vile and wicked ways. I left the herd long since; yes, I shunned my former associates, their very presence and sinful conversation aggravated my painful wounds. As I evaded them and secluded myself some of them sought me, and inquired what was the matter with me, was I sick? What made me so sad looking and lonely? After persistent inquiries I told them what was the matter with me, and how I could not any longer run with them in sin. At this they laughed and jeered, and I became the laughing stock and the butt of many of their sinful jokes. But "with many an arrow deep infixed my panting side was charged." They were no skin deep wounds God's arrows made in me, but "deep infixed" his arrows were lodged by his almighty power and love, and thus I entered into the experience of one who cried out, "Thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore."—Psalms xxxviii. 2. No creature power can extract the arrows of the Almighty. It is the Lord who saith, "I wound, and I heal."—Deut. xxxii. 29; Job v. 18. His own gracious hand removes the arrows and binds up the wounds. Truly thou art glorious and wonderful in thy works, O Lord. How surprisingly gracious, teeming with

lovingkindness and infinite tender mercy have all thy dealings been with a poor sinner like me. Oh that I could love thee and praise thy glorious matchless name. "With many an arrow deep infixed my panting side was charged." All my attempts to draw forth these arrows lacerated my soul the more. God's barbed arrows pierced my heart, not one of which could I remove. Each day fresh arrows from Jehovah's bow were "deep infixed" in me, and oh what pangs and sorrows my soul underwent. I mourned and wept in solitude, distressed by my hateful, cruel sins, harrassed by the devil, and the curses and arrows of the law drank up my spirit. "I was a stricken deer that left the herd long since, with many an arrow deep infixed my panting side was charged," and in the depths of my troubled soul my agonized soul for mercy cried unto the Lord. Yet did I fear and feel myself too vile for God's mercy to reach me. "I withdrew to seek a tranquil death in distant shades." The stricken deer, with its life blood ebbing away, faint and exhausted, retires to die. "I was a stricken deer" in whom God's arrows were "deep infixed." The sorrows of death encompassed me and the pains of hell gat hold of me, I found trouble and sorrow. "Ready to perish," was I to die in my sins. (Deut. xxvi. 5; Isaiah xxvii. 13.) None but those who have been stricken by the arrows of the Lord know what are the sorrows of this death. Sin is the poison of the Almighty's arrow in the law. Sin drank up my spirit. (Job vi. 4.) Sin is the sting of death. (1 Cor. xv. 46.) And when the Holy Ghost convinced my soul of sin by the arrows of the law I felt there was no hope for me, I was ready to die. How could I survive the sting of death? What could save me from my sin? Sin taking occasion by the commandment deceived me, and by it slew me. (Rom. vii. 11.) Thus I was taught and thus prepared to know and confess to the praise of the Lord of hosts that "salvation is of the Lord."—Jonah ii. 9. "There I was found by One who had himself been hurt by the archers." It was the Lord who found me. As it is written, "The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye."—Deut. xxxii. 9, 10. Oh can I ever forget, ever unmindful be, of the wondrous acts of tender mercy to my soul? Oh what proofs of thy eternal love hast thou revealed to my soul's everlasting consolation. It passeth knowledge, passeth all telling, that dear love of thine, O my God. A poor, vile, sinful worm am I, and yet thou lovest me, and hast redeemed me from all my sins, from all my woes. Thou hast put gladness in my heart, and in the earnest of thy Spirit in my heart I rejoice in hope of the glory of God, that I, a poor vile transgressor, with all the elect and blood-bought flock, shall be glorified together with thy dear Son, our Jesus, Emmanuel.

"Immortal honors be unto thy glorious name,
I would thy praises evermore proclaim,
My soul all grace and power ascribe to thee,
For thou, O Lord, hast saved a wretch like me."

When in a solitary way (Psalms cvii. 4), sick and wounded and ready to die, "There I was found by One who had himself been hurt by the archers." Jesus sought me and found me. He is the great Shepherd of the sheep (Luke xv. 4-6; Ezek. xxxiv.) Well do I remember the time when in my soul's distress I first saw Jesus with an eye of faith. When he was thus revealed to my soul I saw he "had himself been hurt by the archers." Never shall I forget the sight that the Holy Ghost gave to me, a poor, wounded, sin-stricken, ready to perish sinner, of Christ crucified. I beheld him the antitypical Joseph. "The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him: but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob."—Gen. xlxix. 23, 24. In grateful remembrance I now remember that night when "I was found by One who had himself been hurt by the archers." For some time before this I had gone sighing in the anguish of my soul because of the arrows of the Almighty within me. At first I thought it was useless to cry for mercy, for I felt I was altogether too vile a transgressor; that there could be no hope for a wretch like me. The terrors of Jehovah's justice made me afraid, and I could see nothing before me but to perish in my sins, but at length the Holy Spirit spoke these words in my heart, "God is love." A little hope sprang up in my distressed heart, and in bitter anguish over my sins I cried, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. It was the dear Lord who taught me thus to pray, and thus I became one of those whom he calls "My suppliants." (Zeph. iii. 10.) Years have passed since first I cried unto the Lord in my distress, and to this day I am often found a suppliant at the feet of the Lord. Oh what marvelous grace to me is shown! Yes, by the loving-kindness of the Lord I can sing, "I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live."—Psalms cxvi. 1, 2. When first my soul was exercised to cry to God for mercy I felt indeed my need, but I did not know, I did not see how mercy could reach me. How could the holy and just God pardon my sins? But when Jesus found me oh what a revelation of mercy and salvation I beheld in him. There in my grief and wounds, a stricken deer with many arrows deep infixed, I was found by One who had himself been hurt by the archers. It was nighttime, in the darkness of the night, in my bedroom, imploring the Lord to have mercy upon my soul and to pardon all my sins, that Jesus the dear Savior was discovered to me. There was presented to my mind a vision of Christ crucified. Not with my natural eyes. There was nothing before my mortal sight in the midnight darkness in my bedroom. I saw Jesus, the dear Redeemer, on the cross, and while thus I gazed upon him a voice in my soul said, Salvation is in my dear Son. Then for the first time it was revealed to my soul Jehovah's way of salvation.

As one perishing my heart went forth in cries and sighs and bitter weeping unto Jesus to save me. I saw indeed that he was the "One who had himself been hurt by the archers. In his side he bore, and in his hands and feet the cruel scars." Never shall I forget the sight that the Holy Spirit gave me of the crucifixion of the Son of God. Oh how hideous and hateful did sin appear, that Christ should so suffer. He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. For some time on bended knee that night, with cries importunate I besought the Almighty to show me mercy, and all the while I saw the dear Savior extended on the cross in agony and blood. "In his side he bore, and in his hands and feet the cruel scars." Yes, Emmanuel, our Lord Jesus Christ was the One hurt by the archers. (Gen. xliii. 23, 24.) To save his people from their sins he came into the world. He, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but he took upon himself the form of a servant. He came to do the will of the Father. He was made flesh, and made sin, and made a curse for the sins of his people, his elect, his bride. He bore our sins in his own body on the tree. Yes, when the "due time" was come. (Rom. v. 6.) He was smitten by the arrow of the Almighty. He was smitten of God and afflicted. For the transgression of my people was he stricken. (Isaiah liii. 8.) Oh what a sacred, awful sight, to view Christ crucified while the Holy Ghost opens up to the soul the unfathomable depths of Jehovah's justice and grace declared in the atonement made by the sacrifice and precious blood of Christ, the dear Lamb of God. While thus at the feet of the crucified One, longing for some word, some glance to heal my painful wounds and save me from my sin and misery, I thought the dear Redeemer looked down upon me from the cross with such compassion and tender love in his countenance that it seemed to my soul that "he with gentle force was soliciting the darts" that lacerated my soul. I felt to cast my all on him, to repose my soul alone in his sufferings and blood to save me from my perishing condition, to heal all my wounds. And this he did, for at length he looked with surpassing love upon me. He smiled upon me, and said in my heart, I suffered for thee, I did this for thee. The arrows that stuck fast in me, his own hand, his salvation, "drew them forth, and healed, and bade me live." Oh what mercy to a vile sinner like me! What comfort and rejoicing filled my heart! My wounds were healed, my pain and anguish were gone. I believed in him by the mighty power of God, believed he had suffered and died and was crucified for me, and had purged away my sins in his precious blood. The remainder of that (to me) memorable night I spent in sacred, joyful meditation upon the wonders of mercy, love and grace revealed to me, a poor sinner. My ransomed, healed soul was filled with love and adoration, and I walked up and down that dark room in joyful praises. A brother of mine, who had been sleeping in the next room, cried

out, I wish you would hold your tongue and let me go to sleep. I did not wish to hinder him getting his sleep, so I tried to be quiet, but my heart was rejoicing in God's salvation.

"Since then, with few associates, in remote
And silent woods I wander, far from those
My former partners of the peopled scene;
With few associates, and not wishing more."

Jehovah's discriminating grace so wrought in my heart that I could no more associate "with my former partners of the peopled scene." Poor sinners saved by grace are those whom I now love to meet, and in sweet fellowship hold sweet converse upon the matchless, glorious and gracious works of the Lord our God in the salvation of sinners. Those who, like myself, can say, "I was a stricken deer," Who have known the wounds that God inflicts (Jer. xxx. 14-17; Hosea vi. 1), and who by the power and grace of Jehovah can say, With his stripes we are healed. (Isaiah liii. 5.) Such associates as these I crave. These in the gospel of Christ are my bosom companions. (Psalms cxix. 63.) So precious is their companionship that I feel I owe a debt of gratitude to the blessed Jehovah Father, Son and Holy Ghost, that he has cast my lot where I am favored with a few such companions, some of the blood-bought flock of Emmanuel. It is written that Lot was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked; for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds. (2 Peter ii. 7, 8.) So in some measure it is with all of "the taught of the Lord." The child of God soon learns that he is a pilgrim and a stranger in the world, and he need not marvel if the world hate him. But with those of like precious faith (2 Peter i. 1) they desire to walk and sojourn while in this present evil world

"Midst scenes of confusion and creature complaints,
How sweet to my soul is communion with saints,
To find at the banquet of mercy there's room,
And feel in the presence of Jesus at home."

Your brother and companion in the gospel of Christ,

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

RALEIGH, North Carolina.

"BRETHREN, FAREWELL."

(2 CORINTHIANS xiii. 2.)

WHENEVER we use such words in addressing our friends and brethren in the Spirit they should mean that we desire their welfare. That we wish them good things in this world and in the world to come. To fare well, in a spiritual sense, is to have all the blessings given us in Christ before the world was. To have all things work together for good to those we so address, and Paul is here addressing the church at Corinth, and all the saints in Achaia, and to be sure that he is speaking all spiritual good unto them we read in the last of his letter, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." Any one, great or small, who may now, or ever, have these blessings from the Lord Jesus Christ, and God, and the Holy Ghost, do, and surely will, fare well in this world, and in eternal glory. Even if we do feel unworthy to claim such favors for ourselves, if we say,

"Brethren, farewell," we have declared kinship and fellowship unto all saints, and have spoken these blessings upon our heads, also their sorrows and tribulations, and while feeling so base and sinful, with all our natural corruption, and our spiritual weakness and emptiness, we still desire above every earthly joy, to be reckoned as one of "little faith." Surely those feeling to have much faith could have no patience with me, but would well be able to go on without me. We do not always know when we fare well, or when we fare ill. A very sore trial in body or mind may be meant for our good. We may only see the dark side for a time, but if we pass through the storm and look up at the bow in the cloud we remember the promise of God, that he will be with us even unto the end of the world. And if we fare well all things are ours in heaven and in earth, and God will not withhold any good thing from them that walk uprightly. All who walk in Christ Jesus will walk as he walked, in his righteousness. And only as we are saved and helped by the grace of God in Christ can we do anything good in his sight. God gives grace and faith to sinners to be tried and tested with temptations, sorrows and tribulations, that we will enter the kingdom. When we go with a high head and above other men we are entering into the earthly kingdom. We may be at ease in Zion, but we are not at rest in Christ. We may be on the mountain top, but not hid in the cleft of the rock, as sheltered from the face and judgment of God. We may be walking upon the waves, but we do not see ourselves helplessly sinking, and crying to Jesus to save or we perish. There are no words more complete and fitting at times when parting, or at a distance from the saints, if we can properly speak them, than, "Brethren, farewell." The apostle spoke them by inspiration. The end of these words, the end of their meaning, will not be seen until all the saints are saved in glory and have received the fullness of their salvation in Christ. Here in the flesh I cannot do or say anything as I should, for sin is mixed with all I do. Still, at times, when absent from the saints, and no way of meeting with them, it would be a great blessing to be able spiritually to say to them, Fare well. Christ always has the welfare of his people at heart and mind, and if we wish ill to them we wish no good to ourselves, so far as we are of the little flock. We will find the better part at Jesus' feet, and that is the place to fare well. After forty years of effort in trying to learn the road of Zion's wayfarers, and traveling thousands of miles to meet with them, and spending hundreds of dollars to aid the cause, I cannot claim one cent or one day's work in my favor. Boasting is all excluded. There is one thought that gives real pleasure: There are no regrets for time and money spent, and God loves a cheerful giver. This may be only a servant and not a son. The servant abideth not ever, but the Son abideth ever. The servant may help naturally, but the Son lives because the Father lives. Nevertheless, at the end of the race, when I need not run or serve longer,

may it be given me to more freely say, "Brethren, farewell."

An unprofitable servant,

E. G. WEBB.

HOOKER, Oklahoma.

TIPTONVILLE, Tenn., Oct. 15, 1936.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will again try to write a few lines of thanks to you and all concerned in sending the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES to "the poor of the flock." I humbly hope I am one of the flock indeed. I am unworthy of your kindness, but I am very thankful our dear Lord promised to be merciful to our unrighteousness. If he were not, I would be ruined. I cannot live as I desire to. I desire to live soberly and righteously in this present world, but I come so far short of it that it grieves me very much, but as I read I find where Paul was troubled over his weakness. The will to do was present with him, but how to perform that which was good he found not. People who know not the trials of our lives think the Old Baptists run to Paul's writings for a coat to hide under and rest easy there, but little do they know in what way we go there. When we cannot see or feel the loving hand of our Savior protecting and teaching us all seems dark and lonely, and even becomes so severe we wonder if we are deceived and there is nothing in what we have enjoyed before. Could we have seasons of rejoicing in the hope of salvation if we did not love the Lord? Surely not.

I seldom get to the meetings of the church and mingle with those I love, and hear the unsearchable riches of God preached. It was nearly six years this fall since I had been to one of our meetings, when I was permitted to meet with them at Boaz Chapel, near Fulton, Kentucky, then again two weeks later at Concord Church. I am so glad our God has promised to never leave nor forsake us. I feel to be very weak and little, and almost starved, and wonder if I ever had an ear to hear and a heart to understand. But I do believe it pleased the dear Lord to open my understanding and let me hear and understand his word one more time. Dear Elders T. J. Prince, O. W. Perkins a brother Lowens and brother Milton BEAN all preached Jesus the way, the truth and the life, and my poor old heart was again filled with that love that comes from God and flows from breast to breast in the hearts of his children. I felt to say, I know my Redeemer liveth. It was food to my soul, and I am still feasting upon the crumbs gathered here and there, and bless his holy name, from whom all blessings flow. We may have many hard things to bear here, but his grace is sufficient for us in the day of trial, and our suffering here, be it ever so great, is not to be compared with the glory that awaits us if we are one for whom Christ died.

We were sorry to learn brother J. C. Chester was in such poor health. I have heard of his failing health all along and I would love to write him if God would guide my pen. I heard him preach in my early days of understanding (if I truly understand) and I would love to see him and sister Chester once more. [Since this letter was

written Elder J. C. Chester has been called to his eternal reward. His obituary was published in the February, 1937, issue of the SIGNS.—ED.]

Pray for me and mine when it goes well with you, for I need the prayers of those I love. Oh that God would be pleased to give us a mind and heart to pray, give us a heart to read and understand his written word, a heart to sing praises to his name, give us faith to trust in him and fear no evil.

My husband, Luther Campbell, and his father, G. M. Campbell, join me in love and thanks to you all.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

CARRIE CAMPBELL.

ST. ALBANS, W. Va., Nov. 16, 1936.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending herewith the names of two new subscribers, as you will note on the inclosed subscription blank. I hope Elder Dodson still has on hand some of his books on Predestination, that he may send them each a copy. Ever since I can remember, the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been coming to our home, bearing glad tidings to the poor, hungry, thirsty souls. My father, Deacon C. M. Bird, was a long time subscriber to your paper. He began taking it in the lifetime of Elder Gilbert Beebe, and since father's death, in July, 1913, my mother, Sarah A. Bird, continued the subscription, and during all those years practically every issue of the SIGNS has been filed away and preserved by my parents for reference, and to reread as their minds might have been led. In July of this year my aged and precious mother was called by her gracious Master in death, and was sweetly given of him who was her strength to pause, as it were, on the very threshold of death to praise his blessed and holy name for his goodness and mercy. Now that both of my beloved earthly parents are gone and I am left a poor heart-broken orphan in the world, to mourn and suffer on while I remain in this sin-cursed world, with only my sacred memories of them, I feel that I wish to continue the subscription to the SIGNS, so long as the good Lord is pleased to prosper my way and bless me with the price of the paper. I hope to be able to send the names of some more new subscribers soon.

May the good Lord spare and bless both publishers and editors to long continue the SIGNS in defence of gospel truth, so long as it be the good pleasure of his will.

Yours in bonds,

H. J. BIRD.

DEAR READERS:—We read of books, magazines, pamphlets, etc., being dedicated to certain people. In like manner, if such it may be, may this writing be dedicated to the cause of our God and to his people. May it be to those who praise his precious name wholeheartedly because he has indited this praise in their hearts. They are the only ones who can honor him in truth. Their way has been set in him and he is guiding their footsteps. Their way is not through the miry clay, for their feet have been placed upon a rock, and this

rock is Jesus Christ, their Savior. No more shall they wander from place to place, knowing not wherein lies their strength. There are many who have cried, Lord, Lord, who have never known him. The Scriptures tell us that not every one who cries, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven. They are a chosen nation, a royal priesthood. They are precious in his sight, and he is to them. We read in Job xli. 33, "Upon earth there is not his like." There may be some among us who claim to live above sin, but if we hear the teachings of our God we know this to be false. There is none equal with or to our God. He that sayeth he liveth and sinneth not is a liar and the truth is not in him. Our God is a complete Sovereign, and there is none like him. O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! How glorious are thy works with the children of men! Thy name shall be called Chief Counselor and Prince of Peace. He is not beholden unto man for anything, nor does he have to wait upon him. All of our power is invested in him to do as he will. We are poor worms of the dust, on the one hand, and on the other, his redeemed people are the richest people upon the earth.

I have used the pronoun "we," but I question if I am right. I hope I love these truths above everything on this earth. They are my meat and my drink when I am blessed to realize and enjoy them. Yet there are times when they are foreign to me. I cannot grasp one ray of light. I hope I have been made to feel my insufficiency in these things, yet I hope they are mine to claim because he made it so. Without him I can do nothing, but of him I can do all things whatsoever he commands me.

May those who read this remember me when it goes well with them. I have written this for relief of mind.

A sister, I hope,

MARY H. STRATTON.

ANABEL, MO., Jan. 13, 1937.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending my subscription to the SIGNS for another year. I wanted much to get a new subscriber in order to get the book on Predestination, but I have been unable to do so, and have not the money to send the SIGNS to some one who cannot take it, but would be glad if I could. I do not feel that I can do without the paper, for I enjoy the articles of all the writers. Sister Helen Jones' experience was especially good. I have met her. I think we should write and tell our experience, for it is said, "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." We should not neglect to talk of the goodness and mercy of our God, the blessings we receive, as all good comes from God, and he gives us the spirit, so when we have a desire to talk on spiritual things we should not quench the spirit.

In christian love,

(MRS.) J. R. McAFEE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1937.

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ACTS XIII. 23, 26.

"OF this man's seed hath God, according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Savior, Jesus." "Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent."

People are continually making promises, one to another. Sometimes promises are renewed, and when the appointed time for fulfillment of them arrives the one who made the promise is not able to fulfill it; things unforeseen have entered to thwart his plans. To be able to fulfill a promise one must have control of all things that would affect this promise. Men have never had this control, hence the Scripture says, If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that. This is an expression we feel has been used more by those who believe in salvation by grace than by others, and may God give us grace to continue the same in the spirit of the matter. The promises of God are not as the promises of men. In Romans iv. 21, Paul says, "And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform." Again, Hebrews x. 23: "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)." And in 2 Peter iii. 9, he declares, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness." Hence his faithfulness (and ability) to perform his promises at times causes our hearts to rejoice as we are given to hope that we are included among those spoken of in Acts xiii. 26, that feareth God. The promises of God are received by faith, which the apostle says is the gift of God. God renewed his promise that he would send his Son, the Savior of his people, from time to time. We find Abel offering a lamb as a sacrifice. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he, being dead, yet speaketh." This lamb Abel offered was a type of Christ. The promise of his coming was in his heart. When Abraham was called to offer Isaac, he said, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering. At that time there was no visibble offering but Isaac, but he had the spirit of promise. In the shedding of blood, the burnt offerings, the lifting of the brazen serpent, the serving of the high priest, and many other ways too numerous to men-

tion here, the Lord was renewing his promise unto Israel that he would send his Son, who would fulfill all his will, and would save with an everlasting salvation. This thought was kept before true Israel, and their rejoicing was in it. As the true believers received this promise, by faith, they looked beyond the literal sacrifices and saw the day of Jesus, and believed in his coming as much as if he had already come. When Solomon had completed the temple which the Lord had put in the heart of David to build, and the glory of the Lord had filled it, he could look back and see where the Lord had promised those things by Moses. He could truly say in blessing Israel, "Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant."—1 Kings viii. 56. The giving of this promise to the prophets caused them to speak of the coming of Christ as if he was already here. Isaiah says, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Another prophet could say, I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. When Joseph hesitated to take the virgin Mary as his wife, a renewal of the promise was made: "She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." When the angel brought this word his fears were dispelled and he did as he was bidden. The Lord promised Simeon, by the Holy Ghost, he should not see death until he had seen the Savior. When he saw the promise fulfilled he could say, Now lettest thy servant depart in peace, mine eyes have seen thy salvation. Peter tells us that the promise is unto you and your children, to them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. The gospel proclaims that the promise of his coming has been fulfilled, that salvation has been accomplished, by one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified; that he has obtained eternal redemption for his people, and is made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Surely this is a finished salvation.

When the angel appeared unto the shepherds with the news, Unto you is born in the city of David a Savior, there was no questioning the matter. A star shall guide you (the spirit of promise). Herod could not locate Jesus, because all are not Israel that are of Israel. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

Now we have the promise of the second coming of the Lord. His second coming is just as sure as his first coming was. We have his promise, I will come again, and receive you unto myself. These are precious promises. The fulfillment of our hope is the coming of the Lord, who shall change our vile

body, and fashion it like unto his own glorious body. Then death will be swallowed up in victory. With the promise of God in his heart Stephen could recount how that God had fulfilled his promise to each generation, even to the sending of his Son. With these things in his heart he could say, I see the heavens opened, and I see the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. He prayed for his enemies, and his face looked like an angel. Paul said, I have finished my course, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.

Oh may we have these things in our heart, life, talk and walk, that we may feel as we pass the door of death his precious promise in our heart.

"His promise is my only plea,
With this I venture nigh;
Thou callest burdened souls to thee,
And such, O Lord, am I.

If he is mine, I'll boldly pass
Through death's tremendous vale;
He is a solid comfort
When all other comforts fail.

O tell me, Lord, that thou art mine,
What can I want beside?
My soul shall at the fountain live
When all the streams are dried."

"God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail." Only those who have fled for refuge, who have toiled all night, who have felt the sinking beneath the righteous frown of God, are given to lay hold upon the hope set before us, and this after they have tried their own strength and failed. To them the promise of his enduring mercy, his inseparable love and his tender watchcare, is their only hope. D. V. S.

BARRENNESS OF THE SPIRIT.

Some time ago a brother requested that we write on the above subject when we felt inspired to do so, adding that he felt the truth could only come from an inspired mind. This almost precludes our attempting to comply with his wishes, since we cannot presume to say of a truth that we are inspired to take up our pen. There have been times in our life, both in speaking and in writing, when we felt that we were wrought upon by the Holy Spirit, which seemed to carry us out into a place of broad rivers and streams, and we were given to behold, and we trust to testify of the things of Jesus. Much of the time, however, we are buffeted about by many doubts, fears and questionings, and if we did not verily believe that God can cause a dumb ass to speak to-day as he did in the days of old, we would seldom feel to present our body as a living sacrifice upon the altar of his service. We have long since believed that with God nothing is impossible; therefore, we take courage and try to trust in the Lord, realizing, we hope, as did the old prophet, that in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. Some of our darkest seasons in the past have been followed by an almost unbelievable witnessing of God's mighty power in lifting his servant from the dung

hill, and giving him a place among princes; he has taken our feet from the horrible pit of mire and clay and placed them upon a rock. Then it was we were enabled to sing a new song and we praised God from whom all blessings flow.

The subject referred to has occurred to our mind several times since receiving our brother's letter, and we have decided at this time to make some observations upon it for the consideration of our readers. We are glad, indeed, that we have the Scriptures for our guide and consultation. The apostle Paul said, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." —Rom. xv. 4. Let us, therefore, take the word of God as the man of our counsel and search as for hidden treasure for the priceless gems of divine truth which are to be found therein. Abraham was regarded as the father of the faithful, as he was the first to be called out and commanded by the Lord to "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house. unto a land that I will shew thee." He was seventy-five years old when he took Sarah, his wife, and departed out of Haran to go into the land of Canaan. God had said he would make of him a great nation, and that in him all the families of the earth would be blessed. Time passed but Sarah was barren; she was childless. Finally, she seemed to despair of hope and decided to undertake to aid the Lord in his work by giving her maid Hagar, the Egyptian woman, to Abraham to be his wife, and she bare him Ishmael, but the Lord said, "This shall not be thine heir," for, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." Isaac was the promised son, and was to be born of Sarah, the true wife, or free woman, but he was not to be conceived until they were both old and after it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. In other words, his conception, birth and goings forth must be altogether of the Lord, who will not divide his honor with another. In the course of time, when Isaac took Rebekah to be his wife, we find that she, too, was barren and had to be intreated of the Lord before she could become fruitful. When she had conceived, we are told that "the children struggled together within her: and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the Lord. And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger."—Gen. xxv. 22, 23. At last, when Jacob, after serving for fourteen years for Rachel, took her to be his wife, she also was barren, and it was a most grievous matter with her: "When Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister, and said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die." The record is that "God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb. And she conceived, and bare a son; and said, God hath taken away my reproach; and she

called his name Joseph."—Gen. xxx. 22-24. It seems to us that these three representative characters: namely, Sarah, Rebekah and Rachel, are wonderful types of the true church of God in all three dispensations, or ages, of the world. There has never been a time, neither will it ever come to pass, that the people of God, of themselves, will be able to bear fruit that will be acceptable to God. The Lord will ever have to be intreated or appealed to in their behalf, else they will remain as barren as the fig tree which Jesus cursed, however the outward show may appear to the flesh. If we have been made to witness with the apostle, that in our flesh there dwells no good thing, we are greatly blessed characters. We cannot know in reality how vile and depraved our nature is until we are regenerated by the Spirit and born again. Then it is we begin to understand something of the struggle which is carried on between the flesh and the Spirit; the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; then it is we learn that we cannot do the thing we would, for the good that we would we do not: but the evil which we would not, that we do. At such time we are driven to seek the Lord and to inquire of him,"If it be so, why am I thus?" Or, as Paul continued by saying, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" If God did not remember us in great mercy and hearken unto our cries, we would know nothing of the finished work of redemption which was wrought out for us by our Spiritual Joseph, or Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. But because of his "great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved); and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."—Eph. ii. 4-7. Surely, it is by grace we are saved, through faith, and that not of ourselves, for it is the gift of God: "not of works, lest any man should boast." Therefore, if we bear fruit to the honor of his great name, it is because the true vine, even Jesus, has run over the wall and supplied us with that life that lighteth every man that cometh into the—a definite and even spiritual—world. When such things are experienced in the soul, the understanding of our mind is enlightened and we can comprehend, as never before, what the prophet meant when he said, "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord."

How well do we know what it means to dwell in a desert land; to have our harp upon the weeping willow, and unable to even sing one of the songs of Zion. As Job said, "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on

the right hand, that I cannot see him." And as the one in the Song of Solomon, who said, "By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not. I will now rise, and go about the city; in the streets, I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not. The watchmen that go about the city found me; to whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth? It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me." Beloved brethren, if we did not experience the hardships and privations of the bleak winter, with all the suffering that goes with it to the poor and needy, we could know nothing of what it means to have every fiber of our being tingle with joy at the sound of that voice which speaks, and says, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." It is not difficult for her that didst not bear to break forth into songs of joy at such a time as this; on the contrary, the very stones would cry out about her if she held her peace, for her rejoicing is great when she beholds her beloved, like a roe or a young hart, leaping upon the mountains and skipping upon the hills. He has become the chiefest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely, and there is none in heaven or in earth that she desires beside him. The Lord is ever true to his word and brings the blind by a way that they know not. He says, "I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." We verily believe that the way in which we are being led is not one of our own choosing, and sometimes we hope we can see the hand of the Lord leading us, and crooked things are made straight, rough places are made smooth, and the desert is made to blossom as the rose. It is because of these experiences that we have hope.

We are aware that the Old School Baptists are regarded by the religious world (so called) as being utterly devoid of all good (religious) works, because they have no confidence in creature efforts to obtain salvation. Because the true church has no nursery of any kind to bring in the young or the old, it has long since been prophesied that her membership would become extinct, but she still continues on, as great a mystery as the bush which Moses saw in the flames and yet it was not consumed. The word of God declares, "More are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife," so let us not despair utterly of the condition of the church as a whole or for ourselves as individuals. We often write bitter things against ourselves and feel that there are none so barren as we, but at just such times as these, deep may be calling unto deep, and with a sense of our poverty we may be

giving, as the poor widow did, more than all who know not that they are wretched, and naked, and miserable, and poor, and blind. It is when we come with nothing in our hands that we cling to the cross of Christ.

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

R. L. D.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER J. T. NASH was born in Union County, North Carolina, November 12th, 1870, and died January 12th, 1937, aged 66 years and 2 months. He married Miss Lillie Chaney November 8th, 1896, and to their union were born five children, three sons and two daughters: Emmit, Henry, and Luther, Mrs. Bessie Britt and Miss Esther Nash. Little Henry died several years ago. Elder Nash was one of our able ministers of the South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association, in which he held membership and in which he served several churches as long as his health permitted. Our Association and his many friends the country over join his family in sincere grief in our loss of an able, gifted minister, a valuable and sympathetic friend and a kind father. His death leaves a gap in our lives and association of churches which cannot easily be filled, but his memory will be ever verdant in our hearts. We extend to the lonely and bereaved widow our deepest sympathy, and do sincerely pray that God will be her ever present spiritual companion during the remainder of her days, and a Father to the children, but our hope and sweet consolation is, that our inestimable loss is his eternal gain. He was an eloquent expounder of the Scriptures, a powerful reasoner and an earnest contender for the sovereign grace of God for poor sinners, for both time and eternity. As a devoted christian and a successful business man he was respected alike by both friend and foe. Brother Nash and the writer spent most of our ministerial work together. We miss him very much.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer, who took for his text the fourteenth chapter of Job, and used hymn 639 of Lloyd's collection.

T. J. EVERS.

EPPA NORMAN, our beloved brother in Christ, departed this earthly life at his home, East Lynn Farm, near Airmont, Loudoun County, Virginia, March 2nd, 1937. He had been in feeble health for the past few years. The end came peacefully. Those at his bedside said he fell calmly asleep, and at the last moment a glorious change came over his countenance, betokening to those who witnessed it that he had truly passed into eternal rest and peace. His daughter said that the words, "He giveth his beloved sleep" came so forcibly to her that she felt entirely reconciled and resigned to his departure. Brother Norman was born February 17th, 1852, at Occoquan, Virginia, the son of Edward and Mary Lynn Norman. He is survived by one brother, Charles E. Norman, living near Airmont. Brother Norman was married in the year 1875 to Miss Rebecca Williams, of Alexandria, Virginia. She died in June, 1924. Brother Norman and his mother were baptized together, in 1872, by Elder

Joseph L. Purrington, into the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church. Several years ago, when he moved to his present home, he united by letter with the Ebenezer Church, which church he served for several years as Deacon. He is survived by five children: one daughter, Miss Bessie Norman, at home; four sons: J. E. Norman and A. C. Norman, both of Purcellville, Va., L. B. Norman, of near Middleburg, and C. W. Norman, of near Winchester, Va. He is also survived by twenty grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Rarely have we seen such tender love and devotion as was shown by Miss Bessie Norman in her faithful and self-sacrificing attention to brother Norman in these declining years. Her's was a labor of love, given unselfishly and without stint. Many who read this notice will doubtless recall pleasant seasons in past years when they have enjoyed being entertained in the hospitable and loving manner peculiar to both brother and sister Norman, especially at those times when the Ebenezer Church entertained our Associational meetings. The death of brother Norman leaves but one member living of the Ebenezer Church: sister R. E. Robey, of Baltimore, Maryland. It is hard to see the churches of our faith dwindling in numbers, but there is nothing that we humanly can do about it. Brother Norman was faithful in the discharge of all duties depending upon him, both in the church and in the family, so long as he was able to do so, and we shall greatly miss him. We feel assured that our loss here is his eternal gain in the church triumphant. May the Spirit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ dwell in the hearts of the members of the family and comfort them as only he can.

The text used at the funeral services were the first three verses of the one hundred and twenty-seventh Psalm.

ALSO,

MRS. ORRA SPINDLE, widow of brother King C. Spindle, passed away February 18th, 1937, at her home, near Centerville, Fairfax County, Virginia, aged 51 years. Brother Spindle, who served as Clerk for several years, both at the Frying Pan Church and of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, died in March, 1928, also aged 51 years. Mrs. Spindle's death was due to pneumonia. She was fully conscious of her approaching end and said she had no fear of death and that for herself she had no regrets at not being able to live longer, save for the fact that she had desired to outlive her helpless son, aged nineteen years, who ever since his birth had been the object of her unfailing care and devotion. Mrs. Spindle never united with the church, but she believed the doctrine preached by the Old School Baptists. She was a devoted mother and a very useful person in her neighborhood, always willing to minister in any way she possibly could to the needs of others. She is survived by one daughter, Evelyn, and by three sons, Roger and King, Jr., and C. K. Spindle. May our heavenly Father, who marks the sparrow's fall, open the way in his merciful providence for the care and keeping of the helpless one, and may he grant to the bereaved ones the strength and courage to bear the duties and responsibilities now devolving upon them.

ALSO,

LUTHER D. HUTCHISON departed this life January 31st, 1937, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Esther Hutchison, at 1609 G Street, S. E., Washington, D. C. He was 86 years of age. Besides his daughter, he is survived by one son, Douglas L. Hutchison, of Sterling, Va. There are six grandchildren. While Mr. Hutchison did not unite with the Old School Baptist Church, that was the church of his faith and belief, and he al-

ways attended the meetings of the Frying Pan Church whenever he could. His wife, our late sister Hannah Hutchison, died in December, 1925. Their son, Raymond, died in 1927. Mr. Hutchison was until recently a reader and a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. That paper advocated what he believed.

Funeral services were held in the Frying Pan meetinghouse, burial in the cemetery at Herndon, Va. May the Lord comfort all who truly mourn.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

MRS. CATHERINE KUGLER BELLIS passed away at her home, in Frenchtown, N. J., December 18th, 1935, aged 70 years, was born near Frenchtown, N. J., October 26th, 1865. She was a daughter of the late Wilson and Eliza Kugler, and was the last of her immediate family. She was a sister of the late Deacon O. R. Kugler. For twenty-nine years she served in the school system of Frenchtown, first as grade teacher, and later, for sixteen years, as principal of a two grade High School. Then retired. She was also a member of the Board of education. Was highly esteemed by all who knew her. She never made a public profession of religion, but attended the meetings of the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church, and was deeply interested in its welfare. She and Mrs. Hough, whose obituary follows, were the closest of friends, and lived only a few doors apart. Mrs. Bellis attended the meeting on Sunday before her death and appeared in perfect health. How little we know of to-morrow.

The writer conducted the funeral service, which was largely attended, at her home. Interment was in the Frenchtown Cemetery. We miss her very much, and realize that one of our best friends is gone.

ALSO,

MRS. ANNA M. HOUGH, widow of Joseph C. Hough, passed away at her home in Frenchtown, New Jersey, September 14th, 1936, aged 74 years. She was born near Frenchtown November 3rd, 1862, a daughter of the late Cornelius S. and Sarah Jane Seals Hoff. She leaves one sister, Mrs. Oscar Rittenhouse, of Clinton, N. J., and one brother, Cornelius S. Hoff, of Frenchtown, N. J. Mrs. Hough was much afflicted for years before the end came, but seldom complained. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of God our Savior, and until stricken with disease never missed a meeting. She was one of the finest women I have ever known. Not a member of the church, but her life told the story of hope and faith in the blood of Christ our Lord.

The funeral service was held in her home, conducted by the writer, and was largely attended by sorrowing friends and neighbors. The interment was in the Frenchtown Cemetery. Her sister and brother have the sympathy of all who know them.

ALSO,

MRS. MARY E. SIRMAN, our dear sister in Christ, was born October 27th, 1859, and departed this life September 11th, 1936, aged 77 years. She was the widow of Spier Sirman. She is survived by one son, Harry Sirman, three grandchildren and several step-children, also one brother, together with several nieces and nephews. Sister Sirman had been a faithful member of Broad Creek Old Baptist Church, of Delaware, for many years. Well versed in the Scriptures and loved the doctrine of grace. She had lived alone in her home in Laurel, Delaware, for some years, had grown feeble and for several months before her death had lived with her son, but a few days prior to her death she desired to get back home, and died suddenly soon after arriving. The

funeral service was held from the home of her son, conducted by the writer. Many gathered to pay the last tribute of respect to the dear old body so once loved. The interment was in the family plot in the graveyard of the Broad Creek Church. It was my privilege to visit her often in her home, and always found her entertaining, her Bible always at hand. We miss her, but know she is better off, for we have every evidence that for her to die was gain.

Her pastor,

H. C. KER.

MISS IDA CLARK departed this life at her home, in Howells, N. Y., after a long illness, on February 5th, 1937. She was born in Winterton, N. Y., January 27th, 1863, a daughter of Daniel C. and Marey E. Palmer Clark. We quote from one who had known her for many years, as follows: "She had a noble character, always doing kindness for some one, and never thinking of herself. While she was not a member of the church, she was a believer, always attending the meetings, unless something out of the ordinary prevented her, and giving liberally for the Association, or whatever was needed." At the time of her death she was Treasurer of the Board of Trustees of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church, near Howells, N. Y. We had known her for many years, and felt she was blest with an understanding of the truth as it is in Jesus, and it was with sincere regret that we were unable to conduct the funeral services. In our absence, Mr. Richard T. Billingsley, a minister of another denomination, officiated. Interment was in the New Vernon Cemetery. A nephew, Mr. D. Herbert Clark, of Middletown, N. Y., and several cousins survive. Miss Clark will be greatly missed in the community and by those who esteemed her friendship, particularly our sister Minta Mapes, who has made her home with her for several years. We desire to be submissive to the will of the Lord in our loss, feeling assured that she has departed to be with Christ, which is far better for her.

R. L. D.

SISTER ESLY JONES passed away at her home in Topeka, Kansas, December 30th, 1936, after a long seige of suffering with that dread malady, cancer of the stomach,, and was laid to rest in Mt. Hope Cemetery, near Topeka, on New Year's Day. Her going was a blessed release to her and a mournful relief to those who had witnessed her long weeks of suffering, which she endured with great fortitude, and such patience and quiet I have never witnessed in any one, and her kindest consideration for those who cared for her, with never a murmuring word of complaint. Knowing she could not get well, she avoided any mention of it that would agitate the grief of her devoted children. She said to me, "I talked it over with the children, then I told them we would just not talk about it, and I am not worrying about anything." And they nobly did their part by keeping their tears concealed from her. She was not only our sister in the flesh, but was mother to us all when bereft of our own mother sixty-seven years ago. She, then at the age of sixteen, took charge of a house full of little ones, Elder L. L. Schenck, of Williamstown, and his little twin brother being only a few hours old. Her going is a triple loss to him, as she had been not only mother and sister to him, but also a sister in the same church and he had long been her pastor. I never knew a more humble, unassuming christian character. I never heard her speak a hateful, ill-natured word to or of any one in my life. "Her children arise up, and call her blessed" also, and can say

they never saw their mother angry. She had her trials, but could always bridle her tongue. She enjoyed the company of the people of God, and she loved the doctrine, but being of a very quiet disposition she was not given to talk much, but would say, "I know so little." She was born July 26th, 1853, near Whitestone, Indiana, the second of eleven children of John and Mary Schenck. She came with her father and family to Kansas in 1870, and settled in Leavenworth County, where she was married to William H. Jones, of Nemeha County, April 14th, 1873. They were the parents of nine children, three of whom, with her husband, preceded her in death. She had been a member of the church about twenty years. She and her husband were both baptized by the late Elder T. J. Brown, of Missouri. She is survived by six children: C. F. Jones, of Cheyenne Wells, Colo., Mrs. George Myers, of Concordia, Kans., Mrs. E. J. Wells, of Oskaloosa, Kans., Mrs. Charles Templeton, Mrs. Mabel Snell and W. L. Jones, of Topeka, Kans, sixteen grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren, four brothers and four sisters. Her funeral was conducted by Elder W. L. Hall, of Independence, Mo., to the satisfaction of all.

ALSO,

JUST twelve days later we were again called to the funeral pyre of a dear niece, MARY R. BARTLETT, who had been afflicted and a constant care to her mother for thirty-five years, and death was indeed an angel of mercy to her, but oh such a mournful gladness when such a lifetime of suffering is ended. Her mother is a sister of sister Esly Jones.

ALSO,

THE funeral knell had not ceased ringing in our sorrowing hearts until the wires carried the sad tidings of the sudden death of our dear, oldest brother, ISAAC D. SCHENCK, of Greybull, Wyoming. He was 85 years old, and his death should not have been surprising, but was a shock nevertheless. He was sick only three days with extremely difficult breathing. The doctor said he had just a tired, wornout, old heart, and he passed away sitting up on the side of his bed. In early life he was married to Elizabeth J. Peters, daughter of Elder J. A. Peters, of Tonganoxie, Kansas. Three daughters and one son were born to them, the son dying at the age of fourteen months. His wife also died, in May, 1889, leaving the three little daughters to care for, which care he lovingly bestowed upon them to the best of his ability, often carrying the youngest one on his shoulder when he went to his work in a wagon shop, after sending the older ones to school. Four years later he married Flora Seward, of Oskaloosa, Kansas. Because of her hay fever, he was compelled to seek a change of climate, and eventually settled in Wyoming, thirty-six years ago, a pioneer in that State. While on a visit to Kansas, fifteen years ago, he lost his second wife. I can truly say that in his earlier years he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, but was not given to talk much of his own woes, but was the most optomistic man I ever knew. Though he never united with the church, he was a firm believer in the true doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone, having been convinced of sin and received a hope when he was a young man, and was faithful to his convictions to the end of his life. Tears would stream down his face under the sound of preaching. In that respect his life was very lonely, for he did not know of another person in the State who believed as he did. In his last letter to me, just a few days before his death, he said, "Don't worry about me. I am still here for some purpose, and whatever happens all will be well." I may say that

was his dying message to me; and sister also, as I sat beside her bed for days repeatedly said, "Don't worry about me, I am not worrying about anything." I do not worry nor sorrow without hope, but through the weakness of the flesh the double loss has been almost prostrating to me. But the appointed time had come and sister, like a grain of wheat fully ripe, must fall to the ground and die. Brother was permitted to come to his grave in a full age, like a shock of corn is gathered in, in its season.

Written by request, by their sister,
MARY ELLISON.

ANDREW JOHNSON WORKMAN, eldest son of Andrew J. and Harriet (Staluaker) Workman, was born at Harding, W. Va., December 25th, 1865, and departed this life at the Davis Memorial Hospital, December 31st, 1936, aged 71 years and 6 days. November 7th, 1888, he was married to Emeline E. Findley, daughter of Levi and Emeline (Kittle) Findley. To this union two children were born: Thaddeus Reamy Workman, of Cincinnati, Ohio, and Mrs. Ray Gallaher, of Huntington, W. Va. He is survived by his wife, two children, one granddaughter, Natalie June Gallaher, of Huntington, W. Va., two sisters, Mrs. J. L. Foy, of Harding, W. Va., Mrs. Annie Morris, of Elkins, W. Va., and two brothers, Alba A. and Oliver H. Workman, both of Elkins, W. Va., together with many nephews and nieces. His parents and one sister, Mrs. J. J. Long, preceded him in death. He was one of the oldest citizens in his community, was well known far and near and was highly respected. He was a good husband and father, a kind friend and neighbor, was honorable and upright in all his dealings and would rather give to than take from those he dealt with, and was ever ready to do a favor for those who needed it. He had been an employe of the West Virginia Coal and Coak Corporation for twenty years, and always endeavored to give them honest service. He received a hope in Christ about fifteen years ago and held to the doctrine of our Lord and Savior as taught by the Old School Baptists, and was comforted by their preaching and conversations, and by the many good articles written by them and published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He told us several times during his last illness that he would not be here much longer, but was ready to go. He was then able to be up and walk around the house. His doctor advised him to go to the hospital for an examination, and he only lived two days after going in. When he grew much worse we were summoned hastily to his bedside. He was able to talk, and told us he was going, and said he was not afraid, said that while he had not joined the church or been baptized he was a believer, and said many precious things to us, which we felt was a blessing to us from God to comfort us in our parting. He said he would soon be resting. Said he wanted to tell us those things while he could talk. He said goodbye to us all, then turned to me and said, Now I feel cheered up, then slept awhile. He was able to talk to us until ten minutes before the end came. He told me not to forget that good old hymn, "How firm a foundation." We had it sung at his funeral. We believe that our loss is his eternal gain, and desire to be submissive to God's will, and sorrow most because we shall see his face no more. May God in his mercy remove from our hearts the unspeakable sorrow and loneliness and help us to be glad that he is forever at rest with his Redeemer.

Funeral services were conducted at his late home by Elder J. J. Poling, of

Belington, W. Va., and were largely attended, after which his body was laid to rest in Maplewood Cemetery.

His wife,

(MRS.) E. E. WORKMAN.

MRS. NANCY ELIZABETH MYERS, the subject of this notice, fell asleep in Jesus, passing into her everlasting rest, January 1st, 1937. She was born near Little Rock, Arkansas, May 16th, 1853. Her parents were Mr. and Mrs. Danial and Elizabeth Cook. She was the fourth child of a family of eight children. She and W. T. Myers were married January 18th, 1872, and to their union were born twelve children, of whom only four are living. They are O. L. Myers, D. R. Myers and Mrs. Dovie Burnett, of Anson, Texas, and E. M. Myers, of California. She and her husband united with Bethel Church, of the Regular Predestinarian Primitive Baptist faith and order, in Anderson County, Texas, on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1875, and were baptized by Elder Benjamin Parker. Her husband died December 11th, 1911, in Taylor County, Texas. She united with Pilgrims' Rest Church, near Lawn, Texas, in October, 1931. She was laid to rest in the beautiful cemetery at Merkel, Texas, by the side of her husband. Her pastor, Elder C. D. Varnell, conducted the funeral services. She had been a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for twenty-five years. She was a true and faithful wife and mother and a true and faithful member of her church, and was dearly loved by all the Old Baptists who knew her. We feel confident that she died in the full triumph of a living faith in Jesus, her gracious Savior. Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord. That great blessing is hers. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. As the death of our dear sister is precious in his sight, she has gone from the evil to come.

(MRS.) M. N. GRIFFIN.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 105. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1937. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GENESIS IX. 20-23.

"And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: and he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness."

Dear Kindred in the Lord:—My mind for some cause has been arrested by this portion of holy writ, and I humbly hope I have been given of the graciousness of my God to glimpse some of the sublime spiritual import, or essence, that it contains.

From scriptural authority I wish to say that this Scripture, nor any other portion, is spoken or used just merely to fill up space, neither does it cease to have its vital essence of meaning. For it is not declared that no Scripture is of any private interpretation, hence this Scripture did not have its meaning once, and then lose its essence, but what was true anciently is just as true today. What is once truth never ceases to be truth. All Scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, reproof and correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God (not the man of the world) might be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work. Therefore I feel that the Scripture I have called your attention to yet holds its weight of meaning to the household of faith, to such as have had the eyes of their understanding enlightened.

If it be the will of the Lord to guide my pen and to create within me a clean heart and renew within me a right mind, I desire to notice a few things with reference to my subject, or text. "And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard." We gather from this that Noah had not always been an husbandman. In Genesis vi. 8, we find this language: "But

Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Notwithstanding that the earth was corrupt and filled with violence. Yet God in his mercy was pleased to elect, choose and give grace unto, and miraculously preserve in the ark, which was builded according to the pattern which the Lord did give, Noah and his wife, his three sons and their wives, and every beast, fowl and creeping thing after their kind, the clean and the unclean, in definite number, from the deluge which the Lord, in his righteous wrath, was pleased to bring upon every living thing wherein was the breath of life, with the exception of this choice, and the Lord shut him in. Did he not as freely, as righteously, shut all else out? Was it not as surely destruction to all that were shut out, as it was salvation to such as were shut in? Is there ground here for the doctrine of free will? Nay, nay, a thousand times nay. Did not the Lord command and bring it all to pass? And was he not glorified, or honored, in both the destruction and the salvation? Of the union that prevailed in the ark, of the holding in check, or restraint, of the various natures of the creatures that were housed in the ark, the clean and the unclean, I do not feel that I have the time or space to take up this phase, or portion, at this time, further than to say that God was there. While I do most earnestly believe the ark to be a type, or figure, of the church, I feel also that a careful examination of the types and figures as recorded here in Genesis proves positively the effects that discriminating grace has in the taming of the wild, yea, even the fierce and ferocious, to the extent that the lion did not prey upon the lamb, the elephant did not tramp out the lesser beasts or creeping things. This is what their nature would suggest. I refer you to the sheet that was let down to Peter. Also, the pen of inspiration did record that in a great house are vessels of honor and vessels of dishonor; vessels of wood and vessels of stone, etc. The unclean were just as surely preserved in the ark as were the clean, and while I have just briefly hinted along this line, I would love to come more directly to the subject matter to which I have called your attention. During all the time while the deluge of waters was on, while Noah was safely housed and shut in the ark by the hand of the Lord, I fail to observe the slightest reference that Noah began to be a husbandman there, or that he planted any vineyard at that time. But rather we find proof abundant that the Lord alone was husbandman, and that his vineyard (the inmates of the ark) he did well keep, preserved them, shut them in. Not until the waters had abated, and Noah and all that were with him in the ark had gone forth from the ark, had got back on the ground once more, the very element from which he was formed, do we find that he began to be a husbandman, and since it is said that he planted a vineyard we must of necessity conclude that he was in a place, or position, exactly suited to the planting he made. And as it is declared that Noah planted this vineyard I am of the opinion that this is

a clear representation of the effort and works of the creature, and no doubt there were plantings of various kinds, such as creature efforts, duty religion, acting faith, trusting in the arm of flesh, and such like, all such as man can plant and such as thrive in such ideal ground, and such as yield and bear heavy crops of fruit in the eyes and estimation of men. But, dearly beloved, note the dire effects to Noah (the preacher of righteousness). After a harvest of the fruit of this vineyard had ripened, and been pressed and undergone the necessary stages of fermentation he became drunken from this very wine. A very similar likeness to that poor man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho who fell among thieves, etc. A man's enemies are they of his own house (bosom). But thanks be unto God, Noah was uncovered within his tent, which implies that he, like Jacob, like Abraham, had no lasting abiding place of habitation. A tent, naturally, literally, being only a temporary place of habitation, bespeaking that he, like Abraham, was a pilgrim and a stranger in the earth, and here he had no continuing city. Oh, dear tried pilgrims, how many times have we, like Noah, planted our vineyard and become drunken from the vine of our planting. But oh how different the effects of the wine of His vineward, God's vineyard, the wine of the kingdom. This wine never makes one drunken, but revives the weak, renews the faint, rescues him that is ready to perish, quenches the thirst of him who is delivered from the pit wherein is no water. But here we come to a different phase of the subject, and oh for grace to rightly divide the word. I wish to state right here that Ham was as much the son of Noah, was as much a vessel of mercy as Shem and Japheth were, but most certainly was actuated by a different spirit. Ham, as I feel, being imbued with that holier than thou spirit, which is fleshly and degrading, was just in a right condition to not only see his father's nakedness, but also to tell it to his two brethren without, no doubt so blinded by this vain fleshly zeal until he felt quite certain that this was the right and proper procedure. At least this is what the flesh suggests, to tell it to the brethren without, without gospel procedure in an earnest endeavor to cover up the nakedness of the offending one with that mantle of love or that covering of esteeming others better than self. But Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward and covered the nakedness of their father, and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness. Those two brethren were actuated by the law of love, brotherly kindness, bound together in it, thus producing unison of action, moving them backward with that garment of love (charity) which forgiveth all, went backward in their experience to the time and place where they were weighed in the balance and found wanting, made to see the beam in their own eye, made to review where grace divine revealed to them that they were helpless, undone sinners in the most holy

sight of God, therefore their faces were backward and they saw not their father's nakedness.

In conclusion, let me say that the curse was placed on Ham's son, Canaan, which represents that fleshly begetting, or offspring of the flesh.

Much more could be said, but I leave the subject to those who are able to wield the pen. Brother Dodson, will you please take up this subject and deal it out?

Dear brethren, the foregoing, a few of my broken thoughts, were penned down under most trying circumstances, and were written only for relief of mind. If you feel to cast them in the waste-basket all will be well, but if you feel to publish them please make proper corrections, for I know that, like myself, they bear many visible marks of imperfection, but they were written in love and sweet fellowship.

A poor sinner, saved by grace if saved at all,

H. J. BIRD.

St. Albans, W. Va., Jan. 30, 1937.

[There is not much that we feel to add at this time to brother Bird's exposition of this Scripture, which we have very much enjoyed. For several years it has seemed to us that some of our good brethren have been too much inclined to be critical of others. They have appeared to be bent on uncovering and exposing the faults of their brethren rather than going backward with the garment of charity to hide their shortcomings. We are strongly in favor of earnestly contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, and for keeping a well-ordered house, but love should be the motivating principle back of all that we do. The apostle said, Let love be without dissimulation.—R. L. D.]

Bellingham, Wash., Jan. 9, 1937.

Dear Brethren:—I want to speak a word to the dear editors and the readers of the dear old Signs, which has comforted the children of God for over one hundred years. Although I am so weak I feel that you are my people, my brethren and sisters in a precious hope, by God's grace given unto us. I feel very small, not worthy to be counted as one of you. I am sure that God, our heavenly Father, knows just how weak we are, and therefore how apt we are to go wrong, when at the same time we know a better way, but being so weak we cannot do the things that we would. I wonder if there is any one like me. I am just the same in strength as I was when Jesus first found me in a waste howling wilderness. I have not gotten stronger, as I thought I would. I thought when I first joined the church that when I got to be as old as some of the dear old soldiers were when I joined I would be as near perfect as they were (and maybe I am), but instead of getting better I have grown worse, until I wonder at their long-suffering in counting me among their number. But if they put me out I will still love them and try in my weak way to follow after them, for they are the only people on earth I can love and call my people, and this I am sure the God of the whole earth knows, for he is all-

wise; and what is more, he predestinated all things in such a way that they all work together for good, including what we call bad, and they all work together for good to them that love God, to those who are the called according to his purpose; not according to their own purpose, but his own, and as he has purposed so he will do, and this proclaims him the God of power. There is no power but of God, and he does what he pleases both in heaven and on earth, and none can stay his hand. A seed shall serve him, and it shall be accounted to him for a generation. This was spoken by the old prophet concerning our precious Savior. His life was taken from him and his body was laid in the tomb, and he had no generation, naturally, to follow him, but the prophet by the Spirit could truthfully say that a seed should serve him, and it shall be accounted unto him for a generation, and in Isaac shall all his seed be called. We see Jacob, of whom God had already chosen, as he told Rebekah, before the children were born, that the elder shall serve the younger, which was contrary to the Jewish law then in force, so God told Rebekah, The elder shall serve the younger, for Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. The children having neither done anything good or bad, neither had they yet been born, this that the purpose of God according to election might stand; not of works, but of him that calleth. Now let us go back and see what manner of child Isaac was. God said he gave him by promise, and Abram had waited a long time for him. He had waited so long that he was on the verge of doubt, yet the Lord's time was not ready. We hear Abram saying to God, "What wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless." "And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels, shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness." "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God: walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly." Then the covenant of circumcision was made and Abraham, whose name was Abram, was changed, and Abraham became the father of the faithful, and Sarai was called Sarah. "And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her; yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her. Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!" for Abraham did not yet fully believe it possible for Sarah, his wife, to bear him

a son. Then God said unto Abraham, "Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac." I have written all this to show what kind of a child Isaac was. God gave him by promise and made his covenant with him an everlasting covenant. The seventh verse of the ninth chapter of Romans reads: "Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called." That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise, these are counted for the seed. "For this is the word of promise, At this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son." And this is the son, and God has chosen him to be the first of the seed that should serve Jesus, and he has told us that the promise is sure to all the seed. This includes both Jew and Gentile, and the promise is eternal life. This seed shall serve him, and when I think of my life I have been so amiss that I am like the poor publican, and all I can say is, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. But I have one who comforts me, and I am sure God did give him the words to comfort us. Paul says, "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" This I can truly say, but "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."

From an old sinner, saved by grace if saved at all,

DAVIS BURCH.

LA GRANDE, Ore., Feb. 14, 1937.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel a desire to contribute my mite to the readers of our paper, if what I write shall not crowd out better matter. I have delayed writing for some time, hoping to have a mind exercised suitably for such a solemn undertaking, but day after day I plod along in darkness and burdened with worldly cares, so that I know nothing except my emptiness and lack of spiritual understanding. When I take a view of my ministerial labors for the past forty years and try to find some place of usefulness I have filled, or some evidence of the Lord being in the matter, it is all a blank to me, and I see so many mistakes along the way, many of which I now see so different from what I aimed at the time, that I am mortified with the immensity of the failures I see all along the way. When I consider the dear ones of former days who have crossed over the dark river, and remember many of the affairs of life we together met and solved as seemed right then, I view them so differently now that in reflecting on many such events, that I felt to acknowledge to a brother recently that if it were possible for me to enter the portals of glory, I felt that the first thing I wanted to do would be to apologize to those dear ones for the many mistakes and

deceptions I had so ignorantly made to them while on earth. That would be my full and complete repentance, and it would include everything which is not of the grace of God, and I feel that with all that removed there would be fit preparation for the glorious crown of life to shine out in all its brilliance to the honor and glory of our Redeemer. When we can see our inheritance all sealed and reserved in heaven for us in contrast to our own unfitness, we can truly sing, "Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown him Lord of all." He has declared that no flesh shall glory in his presence, and these dark and lonely seasons are of his making, in order to bring his people fully to know and rejoice in his salvation and to have no confidence in the flesh.

Our little churches here are dwindling down to a very few members, all of them old, and no young ones coming in. It is discouraging to us, as we see it, that in a short time there will be none of them left, but when we are reminded by faith that God is the builder of his house, and without him it cannot be built, or even preserved, it looks differently. I was reminded once after traveling four hundred and fifty miles to an association and finding only four or five brethren there, of the discouragement of Elijah when he thought he was the only worshiper of the true God, and wanted to die because of that. God assured him of a people he had reserved unto himself. We need this assurance to-day. He has always had a people, and always will have to the end of time, and they are his because he has reserved them unto himself, and not one of them will ever bow the knee to Baal or be lost in the final consummation of all things. We, his ministers, like his prophet, may not find them, or even know who they are, but the Lord knows them and keeps them. This is of more consolation to me in the ministry than anything else, and makes me look upon my fellow-man with a hopeful reverence as a recipient of the sovereign grace of God, which God alone can give, and he gives it to whom it is prepared for, be it the Saul of Tarsus while on the murderous mission to destroy his saints, or the dying thief on the cross, the stricken jailer or the devout Cornelius. All the same with God, and none of them are too wicked or too hard-hearted to hear and not obey his call. The dead shall hear his voice, and they that hear shall live. Some one recently referred to God's people as being comparatively few in number. As we see them manifested there are but few, but John saw them numberless as the sands of the seashore. Let us not try to count them or judge who they are, but rather consider the number of them as the apostles: "Even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Elder Chick advised two young ministers as to their manner of preaching, saying, "Do not view your congregation as enemies to the truth and preach with a fighting spirit, but rather view them as seeking the words of life, and be careful to minister the word of truth which they need. True you may have known some of

them previously as enemies, but who knows but the Lord has met them on the way and now they hunger for the bread of life?" If all the apostles could have witnessed the stoning of Stephen to death, how many of them would have felt drawn toward Saul of Tarsus as one of the elect of God, and one whose later life in defense of the very doctrine Stephen died for should be an example and wonder of the saints in all ages? The wonders of grace manifested are such as to close every mouth of wicked men, and to demonstrate the truth that The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath shall he restrain. Brethren, we may get to the depths of our depravity, and bemoan our nothingness and be smothered with darkness and doubts, but in all this God is there, and at an unexpected time and in a surprising way he can let his glory shine in and bring heaven to his needy saints.

"Deep in unfathomable mines
His never-failing skill
Worketh his wise designs,
And doeth his sovereign will."

Let us take courage, for we are not following cunningly devised fables, but have for our Father the King of kings and Lord of lords, who doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the children of men, and no one can say unto him, What doest thou? This is the doctrine which sustains me, but if I lose sight of it I am nothing. May the grace of our God be our supply and consolation in every tribulation and time of need. His saints shall never fail.

Yours in tribulation and hope,

C. W. BOND.

SIERRA CITY, California, Jan. 28, 1937.

TO THE EBENEZER CHURCH, NEW YORK CITY—DEARLY BELOVED IN CHRIST JESUS:—I cannot meet with you (much as I would like to), but I feel it is a precious privilege to have a name with you, to be numbered with those who love the truth as I believe it is taught in the holy word of God. I do feel to be greatly favored, unworthy as I am, and truly feel myself to be, the least one of all, as Paul says, the chief of sinners. But our Lord died to save sinners, and sinners only, so I hope on, with the faith which I know, if not mistaken, he has given me, to see and believe these things with

"Though but a spark, 'tis heavenly fire,
May dwindle oft, yet not expire."

I fully believe that if it had been of the flesh, a natural faith, it must have died long ago, but the faith which our God gives is of himself and can never die, but abides forever with his church.

"'Till brighter than the solar rays,
It shines to everlasting praise.

Hymn 261 has been very sweet to me of late. Many times I have awakened in the night and repeated it. It is so full of comfort and hope to one who feels to be a sinner, and looks only to Christ for salvation, for *there* is our salvation; not in our flesh, for in our flesh is no good thing. There is none good, no, not one. But He hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. Yes, all is paid, and "he that believeth on me hath everlasting life." A precious hope, an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. Have you ever noticed a small boat at anchor? how the wind and waves toss it about, much as

the christian's life is tossed about and tried in this world, yet the anchor holds.

We are having heavy snows here in the mountains. The snow is six feet on the level, and piled up all about us much higher, but the sun is shining to-day.

With love to all, from your sister, I hope,

NELLIE H. ARNOLD.

THE HYMN.

"By covenant—transaction, and blood,
Saith Jesus, my people are mine;
Their sin-bearing victim I stood,
Yea, for them, my life did resign;
The curse of the law I sustained,
Did them from all cursings set free,
That when by stern justice arraigned,
The sinner should look unto me.

When darkness envelops the mind,
And troubles rush in as a flood,
Protection in me they shall find,
And peace, in my peace-making blood.
For wisdom their course to direct,
As well as their danger to see,
My sheep by my Father elect,
I'll teach them to look unto me.

When thirsty, or faint, in the way,
Or groping 'twixt hope and despair,
To faith I'll my fullness display,
And bid the poor sinners look there;
When lost in themselves, and undone,
Like doves to my wounds they shall flee
For all that the gospel makes known,
The sinner shall look unto me.

By crosses I'll scourge them for sin,
Not flowing from wrath, but in love;
Yet while they the furnace are in,
The strength of my grace they shall prove;
And when at my footstool at last,
They come with suppliant knee,
Their sorrowful eyes they shall cast,
And look for salvation in me."

GRANTVILLE, Kansas.

DEAR BROTHER LYNCH:—In answer to your kind letter, gladly I would write something that would be pleasing to the believer's ear, but when death claimed three of my near relatives in such a short time, a sister, a niece and a brother in six weeks, and I not well myself, I have not felt competent to do much writing. It has been an afflicting dispensation of Providence to me, and has shown me that I have not the strength to endure as I have endured many trying things, yet I do not feel rebellious, for I sorrow not without hope, but physical weakness hinders the sense of resignation I desire to have. But time is the God-given way to soothe our sorrows, soften our griefs and give strength to bear. The sorrows of the world that work death to spiritual joys are the hardest to bear, but when they work for our good, and the comforts of the Scripture give renewed hope, the joys of salvation are restored, and I have many times learned that whether weal or woe may befall, the truth we love forever stands the same, still stands on the same firm foundation, as unchangeable as when the Highest himself established it. We find nothing truer than that when we are shut up we cannot of our own will come forth, not until our dear Lord opens for us, for the key of the house of David is laid upon his shoulder, and he shall shut and none shall open, and he shall open and none shall shut. (Isaiah xxii. 22.) I never was more dependent upon the will of God than at this time, feeling so shut up, knowing that if he does not give me a crumb from his bounteous table and open a door of utterance for me I never can have anything to pass on to you, nor to the neighbors I love as I love myself, who have so kindly strengthened and encouraged me through trials and persecutions almost beyond belief, and com-

forted me with the same comfort they themselves have been comforted of God, the Father of mercies. Sometimes when I think of my hateful life, full of indwelling sins, how can I love myself and love my neighbors the same way? I do not believe that command has ever been, literally, perfectly obeyed by any mortal in a natural way. But our Lord and Master never tells us we shall do this or that, and fail to make it possible for us to do so. Who is my neighbor? is an old query. Our neighbors are supposed to be those living nearest around us, ever ready to lend a helping hand in any time of need, and we duly appreciate them, but to love them as ourselves, we do not even love their children as we love our own. Sometimes in dire need our neighbors will fail us and some one farther away comes to our help, so who is our neighbor? In the narrative of the man going down from Jerusalem to Jericho (as we all go down when we turn our backs to Zion) it was shown that the people of his own nationality did not manifest any neighborly kindness to him, but as thieves they robbed him and beat him, and as he lay wounded and helpless they went by on the other side. How can I love myself with the love and kindness that poor man then needed—my sinful self that makes me abhor myself? But we are saved by hope. But if we should tell those nearest about us how weak and wounded, sick and sore we often feel, and that hope is our only anchor, they will pass by on the other side, as far away from such "hardshell" doctrine as they can get. But hope points us to another life, a new, indwelling spiritual life, that is hid with Christ in God, where no thief can ever break through and steal. It is the life we live by the faith of the Son of God, and that life and that faith is "Christ in you the hope of glory," and the hope of glory is Christ in you. It is his Spirit that beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. As he hath said, I will walk in them and dwell in them. I in them and thou in me. It is this new inward spiritual life of Christ the hope of glory in us that we love with a love that passes understanding. Dear brother, does not every one who has this life, this hope of glory, love and cherish it above rubies? We love the Christ in us, and the same Christ in every vessel of mercy is the neighbor we do love with a pure heart fervently, even better than we love ourselves, for we can see so much more of the fruits of the Spirit in them, and so much more reason of hope. Surely we have found the neighbor that we love as we love ourselves. It is Christ the hope of glory in every one born of the Spirit. Christ alone is the good Samaritan. Love worketh no ill to such near and dear neighbors. Though we may never see each others' faces, yet love spans all intervening distance, and when led by the little child born to each one of us, the Christ in us, they are the ones who live nearer to us than any others in the world. We understand why we love our own, the partners of our blood, with a natural love. It is the tie of blood that makes them near and dear to us, but here is a love that passes under-

standing which we have for strangers in the flesh, and that same love goes out to them when we see Christ the hope of glory manifest in them, and we quickly recognize the tie of blood, for in Christ Jesus, though far off, they are made nigh by the blood of Christ. That is the tie that binds our hearts in christian love, and they are the neighbors we love with christian love. Always near, always ready with words of comfort in times of any trouble. Christ in you the hope of glory. How sweet the sound. How can one who professes love to such a neighbor at the same time hate and persecute others in whom the same Christ dwells? Yet we are sometimes made to deprecate and deplore the leadings of the flesh in some, of whom we thought we had the right to expect better things; in whom we thought dwelt the same Christ, the same hope of glory which we love and cherish in ourselves. Oh sad is every one in the courts of Zion when the spirit of flesh obscures the evidence of Christ the hope of glory within us. But God has a purpose, and there is a time, a set time, to every purpose under heaven. So he said of his church, I will allure her and bring her into the wilderenss. The voice of her complaint is but the voice of every saint. When persecution rages and flames and storms of sorrow bring us into wilderness places, still we trust in him, for we know it is his hand, working for our good. Though the enemy means it for evil, God means it for good to them whom he has called according to his purpose. He does nothing without a purpose. In such dark wilderness places, we bow in sadness before him with our faces to the ground, knowing the vultures are lying in wait to destroy us. Yet though he slay us we will trust in him, while in our sore and aching hearts we cry, Why, oh why must these things be? He gives the reason, and it is to our great joy. It may be that when in quiet peace and contentment we forget that all our springs are in him. Forget our need of mercy every hour. "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope; and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth." Dear brother, is there one of God's people who has not experienced this? I feel that I have lived through every word of it. But out of them all the Lord delivereth. In deep dark places he has spoken comfortably unto me, verily making the valley of Achor a door of hope, and with the joys of salvation restored, gave me to sing as in the days of my youth, in the days of my earliest love, when I could not believe that I ever should grieve or suffer the pangs of sin any more. Oh, I know that my Redeemer lives, and I dare not deny him. The memory of blackest days comes as sweet vineyards as I remember the soul-cheering presence I was given to feel was with me and never failed to speak comfortingly unto me, often through the good neighbors who have stood by in fellowship of suffering. But oh the bitter herbs! The tender grapes of our vine do not give

forth their sweet nourishing juice until they are crushed, and every sip of it is partaken of with the bitter herbs of conscious unworthiness of the least of his favors, and the sad times, when my whole life seems to have been one long chapter of sinful mistakes, and all within is dark and vain and wild, and all things are against me; and yet the fellowship of suffering with him and his dear saints comes only through the crushing, for they that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. Oh let me endure the hardness, nor expect to escape the needed chastening when I so often stray from the path marked by his blood through wilderness places and the low valley of Achor. Oh I have been there, and

"My heart shrinks back from the trials
Which the future may disclose;
Yet I've never had a sorrow
But what the dear Lord chose."

I feel sure you would appreciate a better message than this. I seem so wrapped up in self, and a blank in the hands of a higher power than my own.

One more precious text, which is a great comfort and stay to me in my many mistakes and waywardness is this: Brethren, we know that, if any man sin , we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. The Father heareth him always. He knoweth my frame, how frail I am. He remembereth I am but dust, and will be merciful to my unrighteousness.

Pardon all you see amiss in this and in me if you can, for I am the least one in our Father's household, and let me remain your sister in hope,

MARY ELLISON.

WILMAR, Ark., May 23, 1936.

DEAR EDITORS:—Bowed down with sorrow and crushing years, cast down, but not destroyed, I beg, dear ones, to be allowed, though unworthy I am, to speak a word. I feel the Elder Gilbert Beebe's editorials, written in days gone by, still live to feed and cheer the little flock. No book, except the inspired word of God is dearer to me, and I sometimes feel that surely Elder Beebe was an inspired man of God, and I wish to say to one and all of the ransomed of the Lord, I am thankful to our God for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and his protecting care. Recently the editors and writers seem to be blessed with the same Spirit that filled Elder Beebe, and let us, the household of faith, cling closer and strive harder to sustain the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

I never pick up one of the books of editorials but what I am fed with spiritual meat, the flesh and the blood of Jesus, and we are told, Except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood ye cannot be my disciple. Brethren and sisters in Israel, please read Elder Beebe on page 651, volume one. I beg you to read this editorial, and as far as possible heed this editorial, which was written to the little flock. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." I am hardly able to write for cramps. I feel the shades of night gathering, and I will soon (as one of old) gather my feet up into my bed and take my departure. We walk in darkness, as in the light, trusting. He directs all my steps.

I also ask all lovers of the truth to

read "Fallen Angels," page 571, volume one, and pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into the field. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Farewell, until we meet again.

With much love, and in hope of life in Christ, J. P. BAKER.

FAYETTE, Alabama.

BELOVED EDITORS AND READERS:— I want to renew my subscription, and to express my appreciation to you for the able selection you made in chief editor, and the new associate. I am glad to know that the SIGNS is getting some new subscribers.

Brethren, I want to again ask the readers to assist me in getting together Old Baptist literature. I am much interested in the history of the church in America, and am trying to get that history together, and, God willing, to put it in book form some time, as he provides for it. In order to have complete information, I am making a special effort to get a complete file of our church papers, and of all associational Minutes where they are available. In case associational histories have been written, I would like to get in touch with parties having them. Now, will you please assist me in getting these things together? Any church clerk, or any one else, is invited to send me a write-up of their church.

Kind readers, the conditional brethren will not lend me any aid, or allow me to advertize in their papers, so I am appealing to you to give me any assistance you can. Parties having books for sale are invited to write.

I am a member of Harmony Church, Hopewell Association, having correspondence with four associations, and we do not have any connection with the conditional brethren who have gone out from us. The Baptists everywhere are invited to visit us in Alabama, if they are in order and are in line with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Your little brother,

W. D. GRIFFIN.

CUSTER, Wash., July 17, 1936.

ELDER F. W. KEENE—DEAR BROTHER:—As my father has written to you, I will just send a few lines. Received your good letter, also the book on predestination, which was also very good. Surely the Old Baptists must be my people, for they speak the same as I feel. Many times I feel that it cannot be that I am one of His elect, then the thought comes to me that there must be others with me or they could not write the letters and hymns that fit my case as they do, which at times is my only hope, and I often long for a closer walk with God.

Father wrote such a good letter, I was wondering if you would send it to the SIGNS, as it might be enjoyed by others. I know he is willing. His letter proves that God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. Our ways are not his ways, and we have to go in the path he has laid out for us, and we can go no other way. These conflicts are only to show us how we need the ever-guiding arm of our blessed Savior to shield us and keep us to the end.

A little sister, saved by grace if saved at all,

(MRS.) R. G. BROWN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1937.

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ARTICLE I.

"THE Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfections of the Great Jehovah—the Revelation which God has given of himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. These Three are One. 1 John v. 8."

In our New Year's Greeting our readers were given to expect something from our pen on each of the Articles of the original prospectus of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, by Elder Gilbert Beebe. We shall now attempt to deal with the first one,and in the outset we wish it understood (1) That we hold in very high regard certain human documents. To be perfectly truthful, however, we do not consider even the best of them as being perfect. Possibly, one of the most outstanding documents devised by mankind is the Constitution of the United States. It wisely guards against being too easily modified or tampered with, but undoubtedly one of its best features is that it does provide for an appeal to the highest court in the land, that of public opinion, when, as and if a sufficient majority of the people, in the proper way, decree that it shall be made to conform to their will. This, of course, is a document dealing with human needs, which change from time to time. Elder Gilbert Beebe's document, on the other hand, has to do with divine and eternal things, which do not change with the passing of time, but he was sufficiently wise to the frailty of human nature as not to regard his Prospectus as being PERFECT, and therefore incorporated in the Prospectus itself, which is to be found in Article ix., the one and only perfect and infallible rule, when he said, "The Scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God." We feel certain of his desire that all which he himself wrote should be judged according to Holy Writ, and we earnestly hope that our readers will believe us when we assure them that we wish to be judged by no less a standard. (2) We wish to have it clearly understood in the beginning that what we will have to say in connection with the various articles of the Prospectus will be only our own views, and that in no way shall we undertake to make them binding either upon our associate editors or our readers. We hope, in the main, however, it will be seen that we are all substantially in accord regarding fundamentals, but if

there should be differences of opinion among us, let there be no strife, but rather, "Let brotherly love continue."

With the foregoing understood, we will now enter upon our task by asking the question, DOES GOD REALLY EXIST? In reply thereto, we would say that the sky, the land and the sea all join in proclaiming most emphatically that he does. When we go out and gaze up into the literal heavens, day or night, with some true conception of the magnitude and purpose of the sun, the moon and the stars, we can but be deeply impressed with the fact that infinite wisdom and Almighty power have conspired together in their plan and creation. Well might the Psalmist exclaim, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." When we consider the visible portion of the earth, with its snow-capped mountains, its hills, and plains, and valleys, and the springs, and streams, and rivers, which together with the rain that cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, thus supplying the earthly needs of every living creature, who can question but what some utterly incomprehensible being stands back of it all and is in full charge of directing and controlling all things, both great and small? When we come to the sea, which we are reliably informed covers three times the circumference of the dry land, and realize how little we know about it, or the creatures which inhabit its vast depths and breadths, and at the same time be told by inspired writers that God hath fixed its bounds, and that all things in it are subject to the word of his power, do we wonder that the question should be asked, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visiteth him? Naturally, no man by searching can find out God, and "without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is [verily God], and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." This discovery is not made by man's wisdom, but by God's revelation, for the record is that "no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." It is only such characters as the Lord is pleased to walk and talk with in the way, and assure that they are his very own, who can testify of a truth that God really exists. Then it is they can join Job in saying, "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee," and "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

Our next question: Is God sovereign? Before answering that, we might first inquire as to what we mean by SOVEREIGN. One of the latest authorities available to us defines it as follows:

"Supreme in power; independent of and unlimited by any other; royal; princely. Efficacious in the highest degree; effectual; potent." Surely, this does not in any way exaggerate or over emphasize what we wish to convey when we speak of the sovereignty of our God, of whom the apostle declared, "For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist."—Col. i. 16, 17. If there is anything omitted or left out of this category, we do not know what it can be.

The next thing to consider is, The immutability of God. Do we mean by this that God is unchangeable, invariable, unalterable; not capable or susceptible of change? This is exactly what we do mean. The testimony of the apostle is, "For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things [God's counsel and his oath] in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."—Heb. vi. 16-20. The apostle James tells us, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." The Lord himself spake by the prophet, saying, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."—Mal. iii. 6. What untold comfort and consolation there is in the immutability and unchangeableness of our God! Moses said, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." This is as true to-day as it was when he said it.

Next in order to consider is the "omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah." Volumes could be written here and the half not be told, but we will have to be brief; at the same time we want to leave no doubt as to where we stand. Such terms as "Omnipotence and Eternal Perfections" can only be applied to Deity or the Great Jehovah. Omnipotence means, "Almighty; possessing unlimited power; all-powerful, resistless," etc. Nebuchadnezzar was made to acknowledge this when he said, "I lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blest the Most High, and I praised and honored him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of

the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"—Dan. iv. 34, 35. The perfections of the Great Jehovah are referred to here as *eternal*, which means that they have ever been thus and will ever continue to be so. God is without beginning of days or end of years, and his way is perfect. JEHOVAH means "the eternal one" (ELOHIM, I AM THAT I AM). In the beginning of creation he was known as God, and then as the Lord God, and he said to Moses, "I am the Lord: And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them." But to Moses and the children of Israel he was known as the I AM THAT I AM, and it was by this authority that Moses was commanded to say to Israel that he was sent unto them. The wonder of this God and his dealings with his people, Moses endeavored to sum up and describe when he said, "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass. Because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."—Deut. xxxii. 1-4.

The final part of this Article is one of which we would again say if volume upon volume were written, the most that could be accomplished would be to drop a few hints to the wise regarding the height, the depth and the breadth of the glory of it. In our opinion, Elder Beebe has well spoken of it as "The *Revelation* which God has given of himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost," for it is only in the revealed sense that we have the relationship of God as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. These Three have ever been ONE in the Trinity, but in the creation God was only manifested in great power, in might and in dominion, for it is written, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," but John tells us in his writings concerning the Son of God, which he refers to as the Word that was made flesh and dwelt among us, that in the beginning was this Word, "and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." He further assures us that "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men." We are reminded it was God in the beginning who said, "Let *us* make man in our image." God was speaking to his Son, who was co-equal and co-eternal with him, and it was the work of the Holy Ghost that moved holy men of old to write the wonderful record which we have of these things. If we need any further proof of the oneness and unity of the Father and the Son, working together in the beginning, let us turn to the eighth chapter of Proverbs and read this testimony: "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way,

before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: when he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth. Then I was with him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him: rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." During the patriarchal and legal dispensations God was known as the Creator and preserver of mankind, especially his people, and his wrath against sin was often manifested by the thunderings and fire of Mount Sinai; this was kept in remembrance down through the centuries by sacrifices and offerings under the law yearly, but it was not until the Gospel Dispensation that his great love and mercy were revealed in their fullness in the person of his Son. Herein was the wisdom of his plan, the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ before the world was and the exceeding greatness of his love for his people, revealed or made known through the riches of his grace in Christ Jesus, "who was made to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."—2 Cor. v. 2. In this gospel age, which is the third and last dispensation, we see and understand, we hope, how God chose his people in Christ in the counsels of eternity, and how he purposed in the fullness of time to send his Son to suffer, bleed and die for the sins of his people, that they might be delivered from the bondage of sin and death. We see him suffering as never man suffered, and going down into death, even the shameful death of the cross for us, dying in our stead, to meet the demands of the just and holy law, but thanks be unto God, he could not be holden of death, and not only did he conquer death, but destroyed him that had the power of death, so that death is now swallowed up in victory; thereby he hath taken the sting out of death for his people and there is absolutely nothing that shall ever be able to separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Not only has he done all things for them, but by his Holy Spirit it is made known unto them what he hath accomplished. How beautifully did Jesus himself describe to his disciples on the eve of his earthly departure these blessed things, as set forth in the fourteenth chapter of John's record of the gospel. He began by saying unto them, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house [the gospel church] are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I

am, there ye may be also." He was referring to going down into death, but declaring in advance that he would not be holden of it, but would come again and receive them unto himself, that where he would be, there they would be also. Only those who are actually witnesses, by faith, of his sufferings, death and resurrection, are fit subjects for the gospel church, where Jesus dwells. John, in the first chapter in Revelation, says he saw seven golden candlesticks (which are described as signifying the seven churches in Asia). And in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks one like unto the Son of man. By Matthew is also recorded the promise that "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." He went on to show by John what wonderful things would be accomplished by the Holy Ghost after his crucifixion and resurrection, and said, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth in you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."—John xiv. 16-20. He also declared, "These things I have spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."—John xiv. 25, 26. To our mind, all of this concerns the risen Christ and the church here in this time state. It is here that Christ is known as the way, the truth and the life, and that no man can approach unto the Father but by him. His disciples did not fully understand his sayings until he arose from the dead and the Holy Spirit was poured out upon them. It was not until Jesus in his resurrected body appeared unto Thomas, and said, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing," that Thomas could answer, and say unto him, "My Lord and my God." It was under the influence of the Holy Spirit that Philip went to Gaza and joined himself to the Ethiopian eunuch's chariot, and preached unto him JESUS from the Scripture, "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like as a lamb dumb before his shearer, so he opened not his mouth." It is by this same Spirit that the gospel is preached in power and is heard with comfort and edification by the saints to-day. It was the workings of this blessed Spirit which wrought so wondrous a change in Saul of Tarsus, even changing his name to Paul and

enabling him to speak so profoundly of this joint work of the "Three-in-one-God," as he did in Romans v. 1-5: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." We repeat, it is here in this gospel age that God is revealed in the triune, or three-in-one sense; it is here that the effectual workings of the Holy Spirit are manifested in regenerating sinners and making them alive both to the needs and benefits of God's saving grace which he has stored up for his people in Christ Jesus, his only begotten Son. The glorious mysteries of these precious things are too wonderful for us; we cannot fully attain unto them. The most that the great apostle Paul could say was, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

We trust we have not wearied our readers with this our first effort to treat upon the original Prospectus, but we have had to be lengthy in order to even attempt to cover the subject properly. The Lord willing, we hope to take up Article II. a little later on in the year.

R. L. D.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon DAVID L. BLACKWELL, son of the late Stephen and Pamelia Blackwell, was born July 28th, 1832, and departed this life September 10th, 1936, making his stay on earth 104 years, 1 month and 13 days. The end of a long and cheerful life. He was referred to as the grand old man of Hopewell, N. J. He was born and raised in the community of Hopewell, and was loved and appreciated by the people of every walk of life, as his disposition was to manifest a feeling for all men. In conversation he was entertaining, and well versed in the various topics of interest and current events. At the age of twenty-four he was married to Miss Helen B. Stout, and to this union were born six children, two dying in infancy. His son William and daughter, Annie Blackwell Moore, after passing their middle age preceded him, together with his devoted wife, who departed this life January 14th, 1915, leaving two daughters, Mrs. Joseph Hill and Mrs. Harvey Boice, of Hopewell, N. J.; a brother, Willis Burroughs Blackwell, of Spring Lake, N. J.; seven grandchildren, David B. Hill, M. D., of New York City, Harvey S. and Edward U. Hill, of Hopewell, N. J.; William H. Hill, of Trenton, N. J.; Mrs. George T. Wells, Miss Ethel Boyce and Dan Boice, all of Hopewell, N. J.; five great-grandchildren, Miss Ann L. Wells, Miss Janet Hill, Joseph B. Hill, 2nd., Edward U. Hill and Francina Hill, of Hopewell, N. J., annd Barbara Thropp Hill, of Trenton, N. J. All the above named family bear the mark of distinction among the people of Hopewell, and they and all the community, with the Old School Baptist Church of Hopewell, N. J., are made to mourn the loss of dear brother Blackwell. He united with the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, N. J., August 27th, and was baptized August

28th, 1869, by the late Elder Philander Hartwell, with several others, and one sister Miss Julia Leigh, is yet living in Hopewell who was baptized at the same time. His membership was sixty-seven years. He served as trustee sixty-five years, and as deacon thirty-nine years, and we can truly say of him, that he was able in counsel, firm in conviction and a faithful deacon, and loyal to his pastor and church. In the absence of a minister, he would speak with much feeling and edification to those gathered, and for over four years he was not absent from meeting on Sunday, until September 6th, 1936, after he was stricken with paralysis. His last words to the writer were, "Tell the brethren I love them," which fact was proven by his works.

His funeral service was conducted by his pastor, and his favorite Scriptures were read: the twenty-third Psalm, and "I have fought a good fight," etc., after which his remains were interred in the family plot in the Old School Baptist Cemetery. His grave was surrounded by a large gathering of relatives and friends, paying tribute to the memory of their loved one, and we should not weep for him as though he had no hope.

C. W. V.

ADELA JONES, beloved wife of William Jones, departed this life at her late home, in New Rochelle, N. Y., on February 21st, 1937, from chronic myocardis. She had been a member of the Middletown and Wallkill Church in Middletown, N. Y., for nearly sixty-eight years. She and brother Jones celebrated their sixty-third wedding anniversary last October 29th. Brother Jones is now in his ninetieth year. They have been a very unusual couple and have set an excellent example for others to follow. Sister Jones was deeply taught by her Lord, whom she loved and served faithfully. We regard it a privilege, indeed, to have known and walked with her in christian love and fellowship. We were called to officiate at the funeral, which was held February 23rd. On that occasion we read and commented upon the following Scripture: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."— 2 Cor. v. 1-8.

We asked one of her surviving daughters for some information about her mother, and append portions of her letter to what we have here written.

R. L. D.

WE are indeed sad and lonely, but God has been so good and kind to us in letting us have dear mother with us for so many years, and then taking her so tenderly, so gently and sweetly to his own dear arms, I do not want to murmur or complain, but oh, I miss her so. It had been my prayer that I might be allowed to be with her and do for her until the time came for her to be called home, and that prayer dear God granted me. What more can I ask?

Mother was born in Washington, D.

C., November 5th, 1854, the only daughter of Caroline Wilson Kendall and Stephen W. Price. She was left an orphan at the age of three years. Mother was baptized by Elder Gilbert Beebe June 12th, 1869. Owing to her uniting with the Old School Baptist Church she was entirely cast off by all her relatives, who had hoped and expected that she would in time carry on her mother's work as a missionary. Mother was then taken by a great-aunt, who tried to take the place of a real mother. She was married October 29th, 1873, to Mr. William Jones, who, with two daughters, Zillah A. Jones and myself (Vesta M. Jones) survive her. In 1882 father and mother moved to Kansas City, Missouri, where they remained for a number of years. About the year 1897 we all went to South Africa, where my father held an important position. We returned in about two years, and since then have lived mostly in New York State. Mother loved her home in New Rochelle, only grieving that "the little church" was too far away for her to get to often. For the last few years mother had trouble with her feet and was not able to go out. Although she had not been feeling really well for some time, her last real illness was only for four days. She said she felt so tired. She was very fond of the song, "Only waiting till the shadows are a little longer grown," etc. Wednesday night mother was taken with slight vomiting and Thursday we had the doctor. Friday and Saturday she seemed much better; was laughing and joking, and complained only of being sleepy, and a slight headache. Saturday she was up and dressed and wanted to come down stairs, but we coaxed her not to. That night when I tucked her in bed and kissed her goodnight she said, "I will be lazy one more day, but Monday I will be down stairs as usual." She slept quietly all night, and Sunday morning, February 21st, she was sleeping sweetly and we went down stairs to prepare her breakfast. We were not away long, but when we returned we found that she had forgotten to wake up. She had not moved, but laid just as we had left her. Her Father had called, and dear mother was ready and glad to go. I know it is selfish to want her back, God's way is always the best way, but we miss her so. Mother loved the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and often said it was all the preaching she had. It was through no fault of her own that she did not meet with the church each Sunday. She longed to, but owing to her condition she was not able to do so. Mother's experience, which led her to the church she loved so dearly, to me was very sweet and wonderful. This experience she wrote down and it was published in the SIGNS under date of June, 1929. It had been written by her some years before.

Your little friend in sadness,

VESTA M. JONES.

TABITHA E. LINN, our dear wife and mother, passed away from the evil to come, March 10th, 1937, at the age of 64 years and 7 months. She was married to the writer forty-five years ago. She was a devoted member of the Old School Baptist Church for about thirty-five years, and attended her meetings faithfully until death released her from this duty. Our son Floyd preceded her to the grave about one year. He said he would not for all this world exchange the hope he had of a future world. My dear companion told me she dreamed of viewing heaven, and oh how white it was, with shining gold. Oh glorious sight! The night before she died she asked me to read to her. I read three chapters from the Bible, and she went to sleep and slept for about thirty minutes, when I heard her praying. She told Mary (our daughter) and me that

she hated to leave us here. She asked me to sing, but was not able to tell me what she wanted sung. About seven hours after that she opened her eyes, loked up into my face and said, James, what I tried to ask you to sing was this, "When sorrows encompass me round," etc. (Hymn 1251, Beebe's collection). She then closed her eyes, held my hand and with a beautiful smile on her face quietly passed away. She had spoken also of Floyd, her son, being gone from the evil to come, and said to me that two of us would pass away, and it is true, she and Floyd are gone and two of us are left in sorrow and distress. Only those who are left in my condition can know how lonely and sad I am. Oh may I kiss the rod in submission, and say, The Lord's will be done. He gave me a good companion, and he took her away, for he has the right to do as he pleases, but the flesh is weak. Our loss is her eternal gain. Oh how we will miss her in the church and in the Tygarts Valley River Association. She was a sweet singer and our leader in singing.

Elder J. J. Poling conducted the funeral services at the home of my daughter-in-law, and at the grave he used the Scripture where Lazarus had died, and Mary and Martha had sent for Christ and he said, I am the resurrection and the life. Believeth thou this? Oh I just thought, Yes, I do believe that. Then the thought came into my mind, Yes, Tabitha believed that also. Oh precious hope, to believe that Jesus is the resurrection and the life. We mourn, but not as those who have no hope.

JAMES W. LINN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

A. E. Clark, Kans., $2; F. H. Richardson, Iowa, $3; Fannie Muir, N. Y., $5; I. H. Evans, Md., $1.

MEETINGS.

The Little Flock Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will meet on the second Sunday in May, 1937, at Garber, Oklahoma, if it is the Lord's will. All who are seeking the truth are invited to meet with us.

WILLARD GARTON, Church Clerk.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Black Rock Church on Saturday and Sunday, May 29th and 30th (5th Sunday), 1937. To reach Black Rock from Baltimore, take Falls Road direct to village of Butler, about twenty miles. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

ALVIS S. ROWE.

There will be no session of the Delaware Association held at Welsh Tract this year, as so few are left in our vicinity to entertain as we would like, but, instead, the church voted at our business meeting, Saturday, March 20th, to hold an ALL-DAY meeting on the third Sunday in May, the 16th, and all the ministering brethren are invited to attend, together wih all who are of our faih and order, and we shall take care of those who come Saturday before (or whenever it suits them) to be with us on that day. Any who come from a distance, come to my home and we will provide as usual.

JOHN B. MILLER, Church Clerk.
NEWARK, Delaware.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Southampton Old School Baptist Church, Southampton, Pa., on Wednesday and Thursday, June 2nd and 3rd, 1937, commencing Wednesday morning at 10:30 o'clock. Daylight Saving Time. All lovers of the truth are invited.

CASPER G. FETTER, Church Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in May (30th). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.

T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets the third Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, at 10:30 a. m. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, 421 Steele, Street, Frankfort, Ky.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 105. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1937. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DALLAS, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It shall be my aim in this article to search out the scriptural testimony of the origin and development of the children of God. I hope no other motive prompts me in this effort than that truth may prevail, that God may be honored and glorified and the saints established and edified. These noble ends cannot be attained except the Holy Spirit guide me, and open to my understanding the sacred oracles. For this guidance I humbly pray.

The eternal God (the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost—1 John v. 7) is the only eternal being. "He is before all things, and by him all things consist."—Col. i. 17. He is the first and the last. (Rev. i. 11.) Nothing is as old as that which is before it. Therefore all things besides him who is first, who is eternal, began to be. That which began to be cannot be eternal. God is perfect, therefore is immutable. "I am the Lord, I change not."—Mal. iii. 6. That which cannot change can neither increase nor decrease, as to quantity, quality, degree or duration. Perfection admits of no variation. The same yesterday, to-day and forever, (Heb. xiii. 8), is the affirmation of the apostle Paul. This high and lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy, is infinite. The passing centuries of time add nothing to the age of Jehovah; neither do they bring into his view one new scene, nor increase his knowledge by a single thought. He is omniscient: all-seeing and all-knowing. All that is past, or ever shall be with time beings; all that is future or ever has been with them, is eternally present with God. That which hath been is new, and that which is to be hath already been (Eccl. iii. 15), is language applicable to Jehovah, but not to his creatures. He calleth those things which be not as though they were (Rom. iv. 17), but we are not at liberty to say, because everything that ever has been, or can be, does now exist in God's view, and is present before him, therefore all has been eternally created, and had

actual being. Such philosophy would not only deny every principle of truth revealed in the gospel, but would rob our language of its elementary meaning, and deprive us of all means of intelligent conversation. We must not overlook the fact that the infinite God sees the things that are not as distinctly as the things that are. The living Word, or Logos, is so powerful that he discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart. "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." —Heb. iv. 13, To show the perfect order in which all things stood before him it is written, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done." —Isaiah xlvi. 10. And his word is forever settled in heaven. (Psalms cxix. 89.) The end, and all between the beginning and the end, is clearly evident: it all stood in perfect order before him. But when he would accommodate this incomprehensible truth to our finite understanding he says, "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."—Isaiah xiv. 24. With God all is a declared fact; but with the creature all must come to pass. God spoke in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, but in these last days has spoken unto us by his Son. All he has been pleased to speak has been in human language, to be understood in its meaning and significance. There is no necessity to explore the expanse of imagination nor speculation to find a footing for truth as declared in the Scriptures. If we could but be content with what the Scriptures say, and accept them in their obvious meaning, in their proper connection, it would avoid much confusion, and promote that harmony which is becoming in the household of faith. Surely this noble end is worth striving to attain; but if we were ingenious enough to convert the world to an error, it would be but an error still.

With the foregoing distinctions clearly before our minds, let us now try to pursue the subject of our inquiry. This God, who only is eternal, is the Creator of all things. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."—Gen. i. 1. "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them."—Gen. ii. 1. Creation consists of two classes of operations. 1. Bringing into existence that which had no previous existence. 2. Forming or altering that which has been brought into existence that it may fulfill the purpose of the Creator. The above quotations from Genesis i. 1, and Genesis ii. 1, are examples of the first; and Paul's language in Ephesians ii. 10: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them," is an example of the second class of operations. Creation, as applied to the first class of operations (bringing into existence that which had no previous existence), was finished in six days, consisting of one evening and one morning each. Creation as applied to the second class of operations will not

be completed until reigning grace has transformed every vessel of mercy from the image of the earthy to the heavenly, at which time the vicissitudes which time imposes will cease; the curtain on the stage of time will fall and close the scene forever.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and finished them and all their host. It is certain that nothing that was created existed before the beginning; to argue that it did is an absurdity; it is equal to affirming that a thing exists before it begins to exist. That it is before it is. But to close the investigation as to the origin of God's chosen people, we will note that God is before all things, and all things were made by him (John i. 3), all of which was finished within six days of the beginning, and before which nothing but God, who is eternal, existed. But the children of God are called men in the Scriptures. There was but one man created, and all men have sprung from him. So we will now turn our attention to him. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."—Gen. ii. 7. There are two suppositions in regard to the teaching of this Scripture that I desire to notice. One is that when God breathed the breath of life into Adam's nostrils the generation of Jesus Christ was breathed into Adam and he thereby became a living soul, and the earthly representative head of this generation of Jesus Christ, which is also called a "creature" and a living substance, and is said to have existed in God in eternity. It seems to me this supposition arises from a wrong conception of the meaning of a "living soul," and a failure to accept the Bible analysis of the first man Adam. The word "soul" in Genesis ii. 7, is translated from *nehfesh*, which means "a breathing creature." The breathing into Adam's nostrils was as much a part of his creation as was the forming of his lungs and his other respiratory organs, which indeed could not have served the purpose of the Creator had not breath been put into them. God designed to create a breathing creature and chose his own way to accomplish it. He was only man complete when he received the breath of life. But we would further observe, if we allow the supposition that the generation of Jesus Christ was breathed into Adam's nostrils, then it follows that all who breathe the breath of life likewise have the generation of Jesus Christ in their nostrils. Thus the generation of Jesus Christ would be in all of the offspring of Adam. And furthermore, we are told by God's servant, Solomon, that both man and beast have one breath. (Eccl. iii. 19.) If the generation of Jesus Christ is communicated through the breath, then the beasts likewise would have the generation of Jesus Christ in them. But there is no scriptural ground to support the supposition; and a correct understanding of the language does not justify, but condemns it. The generation of Jesus Christ as referred to in Matthew i. 1, cannot possibly have reference to anything other than the

geneaology of Christ as it is traced by the writer from Abraham on down through David to Christ. It surely could not be contended that either Matthew or Luke was describing a succession from these forebears. Paul says expressly, Christ was made of the seed of David after the flesh. Evidently the generation above referred to was his ancestors after the flesh back to Abraham; and Luke traces them back to Adam. It is further supposed that in the creation referred to in Genesis ii. 1, that the whole race of man in his spiritual existence was included; that man in his spiritual existence was created in Christ before time, and was not natural, but spiritual. Let us apply the Scriptures to see whether the supposition will stand. There was no beginning before time. Only time things can have a beginning. All created things have a beginning; therefore could not have existed before time. That which is before time is eternal. Paul says, "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."—1 Cor. xv. 45-49. In this quotation we are told definitely that the Adam which was created in the beginning was first, and was not spiritual, but natural; that he was of the earth, and earthy; that he was made a living soul, which is a living creature; that all that are earthy are such as Adam was; and "as *we* have borne the image of the earthy, *we shall also* bear the image of the heavenly." Christ the Lord from heaven is the last Adam, a quickening Spirit. This language of the apostle is included in an argument on the resurrection of the bodies of the children of God. He first sets forth the order of their existence as not spiritual first, but natural; and to prove that point he calls attention to the fact that Adam from whom all men sprang was of the earth and earthy; then draws the conclusion that as he was, such also are they who are earthy. Then the apostle turns directly in his address to the Corinthian saints and concludes: "And as *we* [including himself with them] have borne the image of the earthy, *we shall also* bear the image of the heavenly." Adam is the earthy, Christ is the heavenly; and Paul, together with the Corinthian saints, was to bear the image of both. In other words, they were first as Adam was, earthy and natural; then in the work of grace, which includes redemption, justification, calling, pardon, the spiritual birth, adoption, sanctification and glorification, these earthy, natural creatures are made to bear the image of the heavenly, or Christ in his glorified body. The words, "We shall also bear the image of the heavenly," will not admit of any other interpretation. That the people of God are first natural and bear

the image of Adam, and afterward, not before, shall be spiritual and bear the image of the Lord from heaven, is clearly proven. Then we must affirm that there was no spiritual creation before time, nor before nor at the time of the creation of Adam; neither was there any spiritual death when the transgression brought sin into the world, for the very definite reason that a natural man cannot die a spiritual death.

(*Concluded next number.*)

APPIN, Ontario, July 30, 1935.

DEAR ELDER AND SISTER VAUGHN: —I have thought of you much since you were here at the June meeting, and of how you were enabled to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ with power and much assurance. It left a sweet fragrance in my memory, but I cannot recall the words you spoke. It was a very pleasant meeting to me all through, although I was not feeling well. I received nice cards from Mrs. Hasbrouck and Mrs. Osborn after they returned home. I had a very sick spell a couple of weeks ago, but am better now, able to sit up most of the time.

It seems I have to tell you some of the things I have passed through during the last fifty years, the dear Lord enabling me. When quite young I used to think seriously of those things, but in the early eighties I began to feel my sinfulness and depravity, which lasted, off and on, for several years. I felt myself to be a lost and helpless sinner before the holy and righteous God, and cried myself to sleep many nights over my lost condition. I would try to pray for mercy, but did not know how. One night while in this condition these words came to me: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven. I seemed to get some rest, but was not satisfied. I feared I was mistaken, and was looking for more. Several passages of Scripture came to me from time to time, and to my surprise in searching the Scriptures I found every passage that had ever come to me. The first sermon I remember having any impression on me was one time when Elder Lester was at the June meeting. He spoke from Ephesians ii. 8, 9: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." That seemed to make a great impression on me, which lasted for several years, and I longed to know more of Him and his salvation. At times I would think that if the dear Lord would only show me something before it ocurred, that was coming in my life, I could believe there was a God. I thought of the prophets prophesying of things to come, and the coming of the dear Savior (which I will mention later). The summer before I was taken into the church these words were with me much of the time: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is

light."—Matt. xi. 28-30. I did not seem to understand it, and could not claim it. In the meantime a minister traveling through, visited at my mother's home. He seemed to know that I was in trouble and was trying to hide it. I raised courage enough to ask him if he would speak from those words on Sunday. He spoke from the second chapter of Ephesians. He spoke of the travel of the sinner right up to baptism. I could not go that far. In the afternoon he took for his text Ruth i. 16, 17: "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried." The next Sunday we went to Ekfrid to hear Elder Ballard. He spoke from the twelfth chapter of Isaiah: "And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me." His sermon was wonderful to me. I thought some one had told him about me and he was preaching to me alone. And to think you came to Ekfrid meeting and spoke from that same chapter forty years after. It seemed to me my whole experience was summed up in that chapter. I felt I could not go to the Lobo meeting, for fear I might say something to the church, and I felt I was too great a sinner to ever ask a home in the church, which I longed for. When the meeting was dismissed on Monday I could not move. The words came to me very forcibly, Come, my child, this is your dwelling-place, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord. A dear sister slipped up and told Elder Pollard. He came and asked me if I would like to say something to the church. I said I would. I went forward, but could not stand up. He asked me a few questions about my convictions and deliverance, which I tried to answer, and to my surprise I was received, and was to be baptized in Dunwich on October 19th, 1900. There was a very peaceful feeling came over me. When Elder Eubanks bid me goodbye, he said, Do not be discouraged, sister Maggie, you will have many dark hours between now and the day of your baptism. He said, The tempter is always ready; but I did not understand. I felt very peaceful for a few days, then I began to fear I was mistaken, was deceived and had deceived the church. I felt I must write to Elder Pollard and tell him I could not go. He had blood poisoning in his hand, and I feared that if he went into the water he might take cold. I was tempted in many ways until the day before my baptism. I was so weak I could scarcely walk about the house. Suddenly the words came to me with much force and sweetness, Be not afraid; it is I, and my strength was given back to me immediately. Oh the mighty power of God! The next day was Sunday, and we went and heard Elder Pollard preach. I had great peace of mind, but I do not remember much of what he said. Mr. John Graham took us to the water, and on

the way these words came sweetly to me, Be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world. Then in a little while, My grace is sufficient for thee. I never saw water look as beautiful as it did that day, and they sang that lovely hymn, "I'm not ashamed to own my Lord, or to defend his cause." I was given a very peaceful mind for more than a year; then I began to fear. About four or five years before this I met the man I was to marry. Sister Bessie and I were at their home making dresses for his sisters. I was alone in the room at the time, and a voice from behind me said that I was to marry this man. It startled me so I got up to leave the room, but sat down again. I thought I had something to say about that myself. I could not think of such a thing. It would not be for six years. It was six and one-half years. Time rolled on and we became better acquainted. He wanted me to marry him, but did not like my religion, and tried to change me, but he could not. I told him to go and get some one of his own belief, but he would not do that. He asked me to commune with him in his church, but I could not do that. I told him I would rather not commune in my own church than to commune with him in his church. So with that we arranged to get married. It was before me all the time that I must marry him, but oh the sorrow of my heart tongue cannot tell. I felt I was a guilty sinner before a just and holy God. I had denied him. I was worse than Peter ever could be. I felt I must tell the church what I had done, that I could not take my place in the church. He would do anything for me, or give me anything, if I would only commune with him, but I could not. Oh the distress and sorrow I was in! One morning as I awoke dear Jesus appeared to me in the form of the flesh, so loving and kind, and said to me, Your husband does not like your belief. I said, No. He said, Which would he rather, take you to your own church, not have you able to go, or lose you altogether? I said I did not know. He said, It may be *vice versa*. I said, Are you going to take him? He gave me to understand he was, and then vanished. Three weeks after that he was taken very sick with congestion of the lungs and lived but fifteen months. During his sickness I was taken down with fever and was in bed very sick for five weeks, then went on crutches for three months. The fever settled in one limb. Sister Bessie taking care of both of us with help. I felt the trouble was more than I could stand. I was made to say, like Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Why was I not crushed out of existence? Oh the anguish of my heart for a time! Then one day these words came with power: You shall come off more than conqueror through him who loved you and gave himself for you. Read Romans viii. 37-39. The storm was sweeping over me like a deluge. My husband passed away November 5th, 1895. But when it had passed, I felt surely I had been hidden in the cleft of the Rock, and covered with his hand. Surely the dear Lord was in the midst and I knew it

not, and when he removed his hand I could look back and see his hinder parts. Then the light appeared, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and his love was manifested. I could say, Great and wonderful are thy ways, Lord God Almighty. I was set free, and got well enough to attend the quarterly meeting at Duart in February. Oh the joy of my heart, to be able to go to my own church and mingle with my brethren and sisters. It was a glory to behold. I was made to taste of the goodness and mercy of the Lord. It seemed every text, sermon and prayer was for me. I cannot tell of the joy, for it was unspeakable and full of glory.

I went away to Detroit to my sister's for several years, but the sting of that awful night was weighing me down for about a year. One day these words came to me with much power: "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith."—Heb. xii. 1, 2. And that weight never returned. But I kept thinking back over the way the dear Lord had led me through all those years; and he will lead me to the end.

December 28th, 1905, I married George C. Smith, a very honorable and upright man, who feared God, and I believe he was a subject of grace. We attended church and quarterly meetings together for a number of years, which we both enjoyed, and were happy together. I felt the dear Lord had surely blessed me, to give me such a dear husband. At times he would cry out, and say he was lost forever, that there was no redemption for him in this world nor in the world to come. I told him that was a good sign. He said it was a good sign for others, but not for him. He used to tell me about hearing such beautiful singing: some one singing hymns. He was sure that if I would listen I could hear it, too. One night as we were retiring he said, Listen to the boys singing. I said, What boys? He said, Uncles John and Robert, who had passed away years before. He said he had never heard them sing so beautifully before. I asked him what they were singing. He said, The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He said he did not see why the Lord allowed him to have such a comfortable bed. I said, The Lord is ever gracious. Yes, he said, his grace is sufficient. He felt he would not sleep at all that night, but in a very few minutes he was sleeping peacefully. I was lying there hoping the dear Lord would give him some comfort, or promise, when the dear Savior appeared in a small cloud, over the head of the bed, at his side. His presence covered half of the room, and lasted for one-half hour or more, and the beautiful words came to me, His presence disperses my gloom and makes all within me rejoice. I was rejoicing, and felt his kind watchcare was hovering over him. The next day I told my husband about it, and asked him if he felt anything. He

cried, and said, No; that he was such a poor miserable wretch. I did feel it was a promise for him. He passed away the first day of August, 1925, ten years ago. I miss him; his memory is very dear. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. He was in bed for five months during his last sickness, and I only left him for two nights; he wanted me there all the time. Uncle Phil Corneil came every day for two weeks and sat beside him until the end. Sister Ria said to me, I do not see how you stand it, Maggie. I told her I was not living in my own strength. I felt the dear Lord to be with me for weeks, and the words were with me, I will be your God and guide, your shield and portion, I will stay your hand. I have had many ups and down since then, many bright hopes and precious promises, and made to feel that underneath are the everlasting arms. Without him we can do nothing. There is something sacred sweetens all. It seems I have traveled a rugged road, on the edge of a steep precipice, and would have fallen many times into the deepest pit of sin had not the dear Lord in his loving-kindness borne me up thus far. Oh to be clasped in his loving embrace, resting in his love, hoping in his mercy, trusting in his grace.

Elder Ruston and his wife and sister have visited me during my sickness. He is a wonderful pastor and his wife a great helpmate. They are both very kind and attentive to the flock, and they have a wonderful family.

I have written a long letter, too long, and have it seems only hinted at some of the things. May I ask your prayers? Much love to you and sister Vaughn.

Yours very unworthily,

MAGGIE BATEMAN SMITH.

[SISTER SMITH was a devoted sister in the Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada, and we feel her pastor has lost a very loyal and ardent supporter of the truth, and we shall all miss her in our associations.—C. W. V.]

PARSONS, Kans., Jan. 23, 1937.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—Your letter of January 19th at hand and contents carefully noted. I do not know of any group of people I would rather get a letter from than some member or editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Though, as I have written in some of the letters I have written to editors of the SIGNS, I am a member of the New School denomination, I think I have been reading the SIGNS for thirty or more years, and am a strong believer in the doctrine it teaches; it is my rising and setting sun.

About the article sent in to be published. Mr. Arthur Ross wrote it and I asked the editors of the SIGNS to publish it for me. You may publish my letter also, if you think there is anything in it worth while. The cause of Mr. Ross writing was because the superintendent of the Sunday School asked, "What do we have to do to be saved?" Out of the many, Mr. Ross was the only one to answer as he did, which was, "Nothing." This answer was like a bombshell in this New School Sunday School. So Mr. Ross took the liberty to prove his answer by his article, which I thought was very ably done for a young college student.

I have had three articles published in the SIGNS, and have been trying to make up my mind to write one more as a final, but there are so many phases of salvation come in my mind different from what I have seen in print, I am afraid to begin it, because I may be wrong in giving my views as a deacon and layman in a New School denomination. I think I shall some day get up courage enough to write it and send it to the SIGNS to be published. I am an absolute warp and filler, both from a theological standpoint and from all events. I believe all things are predestinated from all eternity, and that everything that is happening to-day, yesterday, and that will happen in the future, is coming and has come to pass just as God ordained from all eternity. I believe from an eternal standpoint that Christ's blood only saved the elect, or the chosen, and that the others were left as they were after Adam's transgression. I believe that when the last elect is received in the spiritual house, or church, that this church shall have been built. I do not believe in a conditional salvation or a conditional predestination. I believe that the devil was a devil from the beginning, and that God made him and he is good for the purpose for which God made him, as are all the other things he made, even the crooked snake. I think God has found (there may be a better word than "found") a use for everything he made, even the devil

My father and mother were both members of this New School denomination when I was born, and I have been a member of it since the year 1886.

Trusting that I may be able to see Mr. Ross' letter in the SIGNS soon, and that I myself may be able to write one also, by the divine help and inspiration from God, I am your brother in quest of the truth of the Bible,

A. E. CLARK.

COMMENTS.

WHEN the article which occupied first place in the March SIGNS came to our desk for approval, it was not perfectly clear who the author was. We, therefore, wrote to Mr. Clark for confirmation, which called forth the foregoing letter, giving us as it does the background of a very unusual situation. If our reader has not read the first article in the March SIGNS, we would suggest that you do so, or if you have read it it is well worth rereading, keeping in mind the fact that it was written by a young college student as his reply to the question asked by a Sunday School teacher: What do we have to do to be saved? It would be very difficult for any one to improve upon the answer given. The foregoing letter of Mr. A. E. Clark, whose letterhead shows him to be the Principal of a school in Parsons, Kansas, in which he states he has been a member of the New School Baptist denomination for over fifty years, is also full of good strong meat. The communications which these two gentlemen have between themselves, as evidenced by their letters, must, indeed, be as an oasis to them in a dry and thirsty land. We do not believe they can be satisfied to remain

where they are, and we predict they will be thrown out bodily by those among whom they dwell if they continue to contend outwardly for the truth as ably as they do in their writings. If we are any judge of the doctrine of God our Savior, it has been clearly set forth by both of them, and we can but fellowship them in the Spirit.

These communications carry us back in our own experience almost thirty years, when we were living where there was no Old School Baptist Church and were persuaded to cast our lot with the New School people. No sooner had we joined them than they began to find work for us to do. Our first task was to take a census in nearby streets to ascertain the church affiliations of the residents, and to influence, if possible, particularly those who were unattached, to attend services at the place of our membership. It soon began to dawn upon us where we were and what we were trying to do, and from that time on our trouble became more and more aggravated, until finally we were compelled to withdraw from them. They appeared loath to have us leave, and one of the old deacons—a very lovely character as a man— and the pastor tried to get us to remain. The pastor came from Texas and had known some Old School Baptists, and when he understood what we believed and that our sympathies were with them, he endeavored to discourage us by saying there were but few of them and they would soon die out. We replied that as to number and how long they would live was a matter for the Almighty to decide, and that if we had to stand alone we would stand alone, since there was no other foundation that would support us. No mortal tongue will ever be able to describe the misery that was our's while we agonized in that condition. We were associated in business with an older brother, who was very prominent among the New School, and who is still a member to-day of what is regarded by many to be one of the most famous churches in New York City (The Riverside, or Rockefeller) and it was a very difficult matter for us to sever our church relations with our own brother, under whom we worked, but our burden became so crushing that there was nothing else we could do. We then vowed determinedly that we would never unite with the Old School Baptist Church, feeling that we had made a terrible mistake in the first instance. We were shown, however, that the song which says, "I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul," is absolutely false, for we have been made to know that we are not our own keeper, and that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. The way in which we have been led has been very mysterious, indeed, but it has been a living way to us. The old prophet said, "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit." Like Jacob, we are made to hope that the Lord found us in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led us about, he instructed us, he kept us as the apple of his eye. As we retrospect the way over which we have come, it sometimes seems as clear

as the noonday sun to us, that as the Lord purposed that Moses should be brought up in Pharaoh's house and be taught in the ways of the Egyptians, so has our path been marked out for us, and by faith we hope we can say we have chosen to suffer afflictions with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, "esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." We can offer no better evidence of having passed from death unto life than that "we love the brethren." In view of our experience we feel most tenderly and sympathetically towards those like our friends Ross and Clark, and we hope that God will show them what he would have them to do. We have sometimes felt the "many" of the "many are called, and few are chosen," are those of the Lord's people who are still out in the wilds, few of whom will be brought out and separated and caused to fight for militant Zion. The Lord doubtless has a people among all the tribes of the earth; he can, and we believe does, make use of the ravens (so-called ministers of worldly orders) in carrying his people food to eat, and he can bring his people together as in this instance and make them a comfort to each other. Surely, these are only parts of his ways, which are unsearchable and past finding out. In our friend Ross, we would not be greatly surprised if there is in the making a future leader in true Israel. God is able to send him to the school where he will be qualified to preach the everlasting gospel of his blessed Son. Men often gladly contribute of their earthly substance to obtain that knowledge which man's wisdom teacheth, while on the other hand, like Jonah, they will pay their own fare to run away from the work which God ordained they should do. In God's own time, however, they will go where he sends them and will arrive at their destination by means of the transportation which God, and not man, has prepared, then will they preach, Salvation is of the Lord. We are in thorough accord with the declarations of our friend Clark that God has a purpose in all things that he has made, and he made all things, and without him was not anything made that was made, and in the final analysis we are certain that all things will serve the purpose for which they were made, and in so doing they will glorify their Maker. We shall most certainly welcome communications such as the ones in question and will hope to hear from our friends from time to time of the precious things which God may be pleased to make known unto them.

R. L. D.

PENSACOLA, Florida.

DEAR EDITORS:—I leave it to you to say if the following is an experience of grace. If so, and you feel it is worthy of space in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, you may publish it; if not, throw it in the waste-basket.

My father was Primitive in belief, but never joined any church. My mother was a Missionary Baptist. My father would tell me his belief, and seemed to want me to believe as he did,

I would tell him that if I was ever changed God would have to change me. I was called a "Hardshell" all my life, but I did not understand the doctrine they preached. The year I was sixteen years of age I became troubled. I saw myself a condemned sinner in the sight of God. We had a small shed-room on the back of our house, and I would go in there and fall on my knees and say, Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner. This lasted for some time, but one morning when I awoke it seemed that everything had changed. I felt very happy and it seemed that everything around me was happy. The birds sang very sweetly. I thought my troubles were over. I never thought of joining any church. The year I was twenty-one I became the wife of R. S. Caraway, a man brought up by Methodist parents. He was taught that the "Hardshells" were selfish, and to hate them. One night just after I was married it seemed that a tall figure stood by my bed, dressed in a white robe. It said to me, Why don't you join the church? I replied that I was not fit to join any church. It said to me, You are as good as you ever will be. Then disappeared. When my husband awoke I told him that I wanted him to take me to Antioch Church so I could join. He asked me not to, and said that if I would join the Missionary Baptists he would get good and come to me. He kept begging me to go to the revival metings. I finally went and joined on a Saturday night and was immersed on Sunday. My father was angry, so the family did not go to the water. That was the darkest day of my life. It seemed that the whole world had forsaken me. It did not seem as if there were a God in heaven. So with those people I was dissatisfied. I did not love them and they did not love me. I gave up all hope of immortal glory. I obtained employment and went to work. My husband suggested that we save our money, so I got a large tin can, put it in my trunk and put all our savings there. I did not go to the Missionary meetings, but left my name on the book for six years. One day a friend came to me and told me a woman was coming to Union Springs who could heal all manner of diseases, open the blind eyes and make the lame walk. I then got my Bible and started to read, and the more I read the more I wanted to read. My husband tried to stop me from reading. He said that it would drive me crazy. I told him if I went crazy it would be from not reading. The year I was twenty-eight I was struck speechless. My eyes were closed, my tongue swollen out of my mouth. Some asked me if I wanted them to pray for me. I shook my head. I saw some praying had to be done, but I was the one who had to do it. They took my children out and left me alone. When I could resist no longer I turned on my face and if ever I prayed a prayer in my life it was then and there. I said, Lord, I have sinned against heaven and earth. I could see every sin I had ever committed. I said, Lord, what wilst thou have me do? Tell me, and I will serve thee forever. A voice spoke to me and told me to join the

Primitive Baptist Church. A portion of Scripture my father used to quote loosed my tongue. It was this: I once was lost, but now am found; was blind, but now I see. I have never been able to tell the happy hours I then enjoyed. When my husband came home from work I told him what the Lord had done for me. He did not believe it, for he said I had never done anything wrong, and that I had only had a chill. He said if he had been there he would have called the doctor. I fell at his feet and prayed that some day I might see him have such a chill. I did not know of a church near me, so I wrote to my mother in Clay County, Georgia, and asked her when there would be preaching at Antioch. That was in May, and she wrote me there would be no preaching until the fourth Sunday in August. I did not tell my husband this, but I went to my mother's on Friday, and Saturday I offered myself to the church, and was received. I looked at the preacher when I was telling what great things the Lord had done for me, and when I looked around the whole congregation was in tears. I will tell every one that it was a feast to me. The old grey-headed sisters came up and put their arms around me, and one said, Carrie, I have always loved you, but I love you more now. I was baptized Sunday, and that was the brightest day of my life. I came near clapping my hands and praising the Lord. I wanted every one to know that was the true church. I would stand before ten thousand people in my sleep, and would awaken myself telling the good news from a foreign country. When I got home my husband asked me to tell him about my trip. I said, What do you want me to tell you? that I joined the "Hardshells"? He said, No. I said no more. The next morning he asked me if it was true that I had joined the church. Then he said he would live and die out of the church. I told him if he was satisfied, that was the place for him. However, in a short time he asked me to tell him again about my experience. I told him I was afraid he would say I had another chill. He said, No, I believe it now. I do not like to hear these people called "Hardshells." This is the church that Christ established here on earth, and said, On this rock I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Your unworthy sister,

(MRS.) R. S. CARAWAY.

LA JUNTA, Colo., Nov. 16, 1936.

DEAR EDITORS:—I surely would love to be able to send you some new subscribers for the dear old SIGNS, but we seem to be living in a desert, so far as the Primitive Baptists are concerned; just my husband and I here alone. There are some so-called Old Baptists fifty or more miles from us, but they are those who believe a paper like the SIGNS should not be allowed to be published. The SIGNS and one or two other Old Baptist publications are all the preaching we get away out here, but I know my Redeemer liveth. May our dear heavenly Father endue you with power from on high to enable you and the dear old SIGNS to continue on in the

same precious doctrine our dear Savior taught when he was here, and may his blessed will guide us through these low grounds of sin and sorrow. May he keep, guide and guard his little ones in these trying times wherever they may be, and give us, each and every one, faith to put our whole trust in him. We know he is One we can put our trust in, and he will never leave nor forsake them that are his. Oh for a faith that will not shrink.

Yours in hope of being one of his redeemed,

(MRS.) C. H. SHOEMAKER.

ATHENS, Texas, Jan. 6, 1937.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have just received the January issue of the SIGNS, and feel after reading brother H. B. Jones' letter, who is one of our very highly esteemed Elder of Texas, well know by most all Baptists of Texas, and by many outside the State, by his gifted writing, if not otherwise; and sister Helen Jones, of Philadelphia, Pa., her beautiful and I feel divinely wrought experience of grace, that these two pieces of literature are many times worth the annual price of the paper. Indeed, such cannot be measured by nor compared to natural or perishing things. It is with much regret we learn of brother Jones' feeble condition, and trust it may be our Father's will to yet restore him to health, and spare him for his able preaching and writing, for he is much appreciated by the church. If not intruding on your valuable space, may I say also of sister Jones, as I indeed feel that all God's humble poor feel, that the very divine pulsation of the Spirit and grace which prompted her in proclaiming these beautiful yet sacred dealings through which she has been led, likely all express the feeling of every one who has the fortune of reading the precious sister's experience, that she has told the story of the travel of the children of God, but much better than most of us can, yet we feel it, and breathe the very moaning of sin when the light of divine revelation makes known our condition. Likewise, in revealing his divine love to us, so unworthy, so unfit, so unprepared in our own mind to comprehend, the joy and gladness so overwhelm us that all earthly things and cares appear to fade away. It has been my happy privilege to know, and have in our home just for a few brief moments, sister Jones, and I want to encourage her, and admonish her to write more, and visit her people, for she will find a glorified fellowship with them in an earthly association. Truly, if not deceived, I rejoice with her in what I believe to be a finished redemption, a glorified and risen Redeemer, whose arm is not shortenad, and who alone did bring salvation.

Yours in a precious hope,

L. D. ROSE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1937.

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PHILIPPIANS III. 8.

"THE excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord."

We have known men in this life with a thirst for earthly knowledge to turn their back on their former life and associates, so as to more fully pursue their course, but there never was a man who could turn from his earthly course to pursue a heavenly, of himself. He must be turned, and it is God alone who can turn him. The apostle Paul was very ambitious, had a wonderful educatino, was a Pharisee of the Pharisees, and very well schooled in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. At that time the New Testament had not been written. He planned his course according to the wisdom of men, and persecuted the saints. He had a wonderful knowledge of the literal word of God, but he was blind to the truth of the word. Being an object of God's eternal love, the time came when the eyes of his understanding were enlightened, as he himself declared in 2 Corinthians iv. 6: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." This knowledge imparted unto him was of such quality it excelled all other things besides. Before he was illuminated he considered Jesus an impostor of the basest sort, who had met his just deserts at Calvary's cross, and those who believed on him, Saul persecuted, carrying them to prison and to death. The light from heaven came, Jesus spake, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" How strange, yet how true. Jesus had ascended into heaven more than two years before, and several of the saints had sealed their testimony with their blood. Saul had witnessed Stephen's death himself, holding the clothes of them that stoned him, but the voice said, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest," and such light accompanied the words, shining round about him and in his heart that it changed Saul from one who hated to a praying man, and Jesus was no more a base impostor, but the Lord from heaven. From that time it was proved that his heart was changed, and his eyes and heart were towards Jesus, his glorious Lord. God had taken an enemy to the cause and enlightened him from on high, blessing him with such unction from the Holy

One that he began immediately to preach him whom he once destroyed. Before this was given to Paul, he, just as most Jews and Gentiles to-day, read his Bible but did not see Jesus in it, but after this illumination of mind he saw Jesus as the One of whom Moses and the prophets wrote. We have often thought that Saul was under exercise before the remarkable circumstance that seemed the turning-point in his career on his way to Damascus, for the Lord said, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." Perhaps at the very time he witnessed Stephen's death he was fighting hard against the pricks of truth in his own conscience. The poet describes it as "pricking thorns to hedge their way." The voice from heaven brought him down and raised him up again; it made his friends his enemies, and his enemies his friends. From henceforth he receives not his commission from the chief priest, no matter how powerful, but from the eternal God. What horror Saul passed through when struck down, only those who have traveled that way know, for we believe Saul felt to be guilty before his God. John Newton must have felt so when he experienced what he afterwards wrote:

"In evil long I took delight,
  Unawed by shame or fear,
Till a new object struck my sight,
  And stopped my wild career.

I saw One hanging on a tree,
  In agonies and blood,
Who fixed his languid eyes on me,
  As near his cross I stood.

Sure never till my latest breath
  Can I forget that look;
It seemed to charge me with his death,
  Though not a word he spoke.

My conscience felt and owned the guilt,
  And plunged me in despair;
I saw my sins his blood had spilt,
  And helped to nail him there.

A second look he gave, which said,
  I freely all forgive,
This blood is for thy ransom paid,
  I die that thou mayest live."

Paul could see it was that same Christ who spoke from heaven to him that loved him and gave himself for him. That it was sparing mercy that God had shown to him who justly merited wrath, and from that day he could say, "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ." His former friends, now his bitterest enemies, determined, if possible, to slay him, and he knew the depth of their hatred, for he was once like them. Nothing could have given this man such resolution and determination but the excellent knowledge of Christ, to him now the Old Testament took on a beauty and sweetness that he had never seen or felt before. He had often read, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly," etc., but now he knew that man, and He none other than the true Almighty God. Paul knew what David meant when he said, in Psalm one hundred and thirty-nine: "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too won-

derful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." Such knowledge excels anything that this world can boast of. Its colleges and universities know nothing of it, and most of their learned men call it foolishness. Jesus himself said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast HID these things from the wise and prudent, and hast REVEALED them unto babes." "These things" are the things that faith embraces and at which it staggers not through unbelief, but gives glory unto God, and believes that he is a performing God.

A few Sundays ago, it was our lot to speak from Psalm forty, the first three verses. A young child who was present, on returning home, was asked by an aged sister what the text was. The child said she could not just remember the text, but it was about a man who was in the miry clay, and as he tried to pull one foot out, the other sank further in, and then the Lord lifted him out and put his feet on a rock, and then he did not sink any more. That is just it, and to know these things as David knew them is excellent knowledge, it distinguishes the people of God in all ages as the blessed people who know the joyful sound. They can often say,

> "What sinners value I resign,
> Lord, 'tis enough that thou art mine."

It was through this excellent knowledge that Paul could write such wonderful and comforting doctrine and admonitions to the church of God. This knowledge of God's will and his purpose of salvation which is manifested through Christ in its highest perfection, and which by him is revealed to his children, written in their mind and heart by his Holy Spirit, so that they are able to bear spiritual fruit, is abundantly set forth in Paul's teaching, and these things were not just theories he advanced, nor empty speculations, but they were what Paul had handled, tasted and felt of the word of life. Paul was blessed to see that the law was a ministration of death, so he could say, "I through the law am dead to the law, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." This is the more excellent way, and we know that though we speak with tongues of men and of angels and Christ be not in our testimony, we are become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. The Jew and Gentile to-day read God's word and talk about it and say what man should do, but miss out what Christ has done. The reason is clear, they do not know, they may call it gospel, but at most it is a yea and nay gospel, but the gospel that Paul preached, and is now preached by those who have this excellent knowledge, was Yea and Amen to the glory of God the Father. In this knowledge Paul knew that there was no place of refuge but in Christ, and that if we are found in Christ Jesus when this world has passed away, it will be because we were chosen in him before this world was made. Paul knew that we were not only chosen in Christ, but were predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, and that only in Christ we have redemption through his blood.

We do not therefore wonder why Paul could say at the commencement of this chapter, "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord." He knew, though he had suffered the loss of all things, that having Christ he had all things. That Christ sweetens the lot of those that are his. It is this excellent knowledge that makes his dear children content and pleased to live here unknown until Christ their Lord appears. It makes pain bearable, and how often we are pained by what we see in ourselves; we could not, we would not dare to lift our heads among his dear saints if it were not for Jesus, what Jesus is to us and for us. We would be like the woman who was caught in adultery, in the very act, surrounded by accusers, and none to speak for her but Jesus. He it was who sent every accuser away in shame. He it is who was condemned for us, so Paul could say, "Who is he that condemeth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather is risen again." Paul prayed that his Philippian brethren might approve things that are excellent. He knew Christ was a friend that sticketh closer than any brother; he had proved him so on occasions when he seemed to be alone. The excellent knowledge of Christ's presence has made many to feelingly sing with David,

"Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
Yet will I fear none ill;
For thou art with me, and thy rod
And staff me comfort still."

It made Paul and Silas not to fear what man could do unto them, for although man had cast them into prison, yet it is written, "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed." This blessed man had a reason for saying to his brethren, "Rejoice in the Lord." And we believe we have to-day also, for when all around our souls gives way He then is all our help and stay. Let us never weary in thinking upon and declaring what Jesus has done for them that are his. He is our only hope, both for this world, and that which is to come.

G. R.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

When remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it. By referring to these dates you can tell to just what time your subscription is paid. Dec 35 means your subscription expired December, 1935; June 36 means your subscription expired June, 1936; Dec 37 that it will expire December, 1937, etc.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

R. M. Britt, Ark., $5; Mrs. Warren White, Ky., $1; S. E. Brown, Texas, $5; Durwood H. Bradley, Texas, $2; Mrs. J. B. Hill, N. J., $3.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER B. SAWYER passed away at his home, in Frisco City, Monroe County, Alabama, February 16th, 1937. He was born August 5th, 1846, in Pike County, but his father moved to Monroe County, Alabama, when he was one year old and settled three miles from Monroeville, Alabama. He joined the Salem Church, near Mexia, July 17th, 1875, and was baptized by Elder D. S. Nall, pastor. He was liberated to preach November 20th, 1875, and was ordained August 18th, 1877. The presbytery consisted of Elders G. W. Lee, Joe Daily and D. S. Nall, Moderator. He was married the first time to Miss Sarah Ann Holt, October 27th, 1867, Elder Malcombe Graham performing the ceremony. From this union there are eight living children. May 16th, 1886, he was married to Miss Annie Floyd, Elder Jim Eddino performing this ceremony. To their union nine children were born. One son paid the supreme price in France for world democracy.

His funeral was conducted by Elder S. H. Bradshaw, of Jackson, Miss., assisted by Elder W. J. Singleton, of Jay, Florida, and Elder R. P. Hendrix, of Frisco City, Alabama. He was strong in the faith, always standing for the old landmarks of the Primitive faith and order. Through all the divisions he still stood for the old London Confession of Faith. He was one of the principal organizers of Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church, of Frisco City, Ala., and served this church for more than fifty years, being the pastor at the time the Lord saw fit to take him to that eternal home where there is no more trouble, sorrow or sickness. He was one who helped constitute Shiloh Church, in 1884. His body was laid to rest in Shiloh Cemetery, amidst a bed of lovely flowers, surrounded by a great concourse of loved ones and friends. His wife and children were very devoted to him. The family and church have sustained a great loss here in this timely world. We miss him everywhere we go, but may the God of heaven give us strength to be reconciled to his divine will, and may he grant that they be an unbroken family among the redeemed. Truly a beautiful memory of a well spent life is left to us who miss him so much. We pray the Lord to redoncile us and enable us to say, Thy will be done, not ours. For us to say we miss him does not seem to express our feelings. Only those who have mingled with him and his family at his home and at the church can begin to realize the full extent of our loss. May grace and comfort be ministered to the family and to Shiloh Church, where he has spent many rejoicing hours in the Spirit of the Lord. May God bless us all.

Written by his devoted daughter,
(MRS.) L. A. GREENE.

MRS. EMMA LOUISE JONES, our sister in Christ,wife of Sydney N. Jones, fell asleep in Jesus April 23rd, 1937, at her home, Vienna, Fairfax County, Virginia. She had not been well for the past few years, and was afflicted with heart trouble and high blood presure. However, not until about two days before the end was she seriously ill. She suffered much pain, death came as a sweet release. It is indeed blessed for such as she, whose faith and hope are wholly in Jesus Christ, to die in the Lord. She rests from her labors. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." She is the last of a family of seven children whose parents were David and Mary E. Thompson, of Martinsburg, W. Va. Her brother, our late Deacon W. A. Thompson, of the Frying Pan Church, died October 8th, 1929. Another brother, Robert Thompson, died June 16th, 1935. Her sister, our

sister Ida Hager, died September 23rd, 1935. A godly line among us has ceased, and in their going there are left vacancies in our midst not to be filled again. It is sad indeed for the families and for the church, but we have a blessed assurance they are infinitely better off than when here on earth, our loss being their gain. Sister Emma was baptized July 25th, 1886, into the membership of the Mill Creek Church, near Kearneysville, West Virginia. Elder F. A. Chick was present at that meeting, with Elder E. V. White, the pastor. I conclude from the church record of that meeting that the baptism was by Elder White. At the time of her death, sister Jones was a member of the Frying Pan Church, she having moved her membership there a few years ago. Much might be said of our dear sister in the way of love and faithfulness to the church, and to me, her pastor, but I must not say too much, because she was one who did not care for eulogy, and greatly desired that the Lord might be honored and glorified in and through her life and walk. Her departure means a deep personal loss to me and to the church, more than words can express. Her bereft husband is inexpressibly lonely, but was lovely to her and did all for her comfort and well-being that he possibly could. There are no children. We hope that Mr. Jones may be truly sustained by the God of all grace. I shall miss her interest at our meetings and her words of help and encouragement. She was a firm believer in the absolute sovereignty of God, in salvation wholly by grace through Jesus Christ, in the second coming of Christ and the resurrection of the body. She more than once assured me of her confidence in the scriptural teaching of these fundamental principles of Old School Baptist faith. Not only doctrinally, but in discipline she loved and desired to see all things done by the church in a decent and orderly way. Emma Louise Jones and Sydney N. Jones were married at Turtle Creek, Pa., December 12th, 1901. Mr. Jones suggested that I use the twenty-third Psalm at the funeral. This I tried to do, also to read the hymn, "Rock of ages," etc. Burial was in Green Hill Cemetery, at Martinsburg, W. Va. May the Lord continue us in his divine favor for the sake of his great and wondrous mercy until we all come to the maturity of a perfect man in him. To that end may he conduct us by his Holy Spirit that there may be no slackening of the church's growth in grace and in the knowledge of the truth.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

Our dear sister in Christ, MRS. MARY RANSDELL, nee Montgomery, was born January 28th, 1861, and died March 29th, 1937, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Ruth Tanner, in the city of Louisville, Kentucky. She was united in marriage to Deacon E. F. Ransdell March 7th, 1878, and to this union were born three daughters. Her husband died July 16th, 1932, and one daughter, Rosa, preceded her mother in death some years ago. Left to mourn her departure are Mrs. Esica Rowland and Mrs. Ruth Tanner, both of Louisville, together with a host of friends and neighbors, and brethren of the Old School Baptist Church, not only of the church called Sulphur Fork, but wheresoever she was known. Our sister received a hope in Christ in the year 1900, and in October of the next year was received and baptized into the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Sulphur Fork, near Campbellsburg, Ky. She was baptized by Elder John G. Eubanks, then pastor of that church, and for more than thirty-five years sister Mary and her husband remained

faithful to the church. Her counsel in matters of the church was wise. She possessed a most pleasing disposition, and was always ready to lend a hand to those in need. Their house was truly a Baptist home, and many times have I been entertained there. Our hearts go out in sympathy to the lonely daughters, whose every aim was to make their mother comfortable, as she had made her home with them since the passing of the father, four years ago. Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of the Lord. We miss her. Her place is vacant in the home and in the church, but we realize our loss is her gain. Only the Lord can reconcile us in our great bereavement.

I spoke briefly at the grave and all that was mortal was laid to rest, to await the call of the Master in the resurrection.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

JOHN NEWTON JONES was born in Pontotoc County, Mississippi, January 28th, 1854, and died April 20th, 1937, at the ripe age of 83 years, 2 months and 23 days. He was left an orphan before he was grown, with two younger brothers to father and provide for. He bravely assumed the responsibility, and with the assistance and counsel of his grandfather succeeded commendably and maintained the home until both of his younger brothers were grown and married. He was married to Tabitha Purdon December 2nd, 1883, who preceded him in death twenty-five years. To this union were born three daughters: Mrs. Louise Matthews, Mrs. Myrtle Wilkinson, Mrs. Kathleen Harper, and one son, Glen H. Jones, all of Dallas, Texas. He moved with his family to Jack County, Texas, in 1891. After the death of his wife he made his home with his brother, W. F. Jones, at Fort Worth, Texas, until sixteen years ago, when he came to Dallas to live with his children; the last six years of which he made his home with Mrs. Harper. He joined Hopewell Church, in Mississippi, forty-nine years ago, and was a firm believer in the distinguishing doctrine of the Primitive Baptists of the sovereign purposes of God and salvation by reigning grace. When the disruption came over these points he went along with his church, a majority of which took an opposite view to his; but he never surrendered his belief, which was no secret to his brethren. He became a regular attendant at the meetings of my home church shortly after I came to Dallas, and last fall he went before his church and withdrew from them, telling them he had again found the people who believed what the Baptists did when he joined them forty-nine years ago, and what he had believed all these years, and that he was going home to die among his people. He was loved by all who knew him; even those who differed with him could but admire his firmness, admirable qualities and godly sincerity in spiritual things. He is greatly missed and deeply mourned by the church. Beside his children mentioned above, he leaves a niece, Miss Bertha Jones, and a nephew, Jesse Hellums, of Fort Worth, Texas, and five grandchildren, to mourn their great loss. He had a heart attack, but his suffering was not long nor severe. He had every care which medical care and loving hands could minister, but he gently fell asleep in the triumphs of a living faith. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord." The writer was called to his bedside and found him rejoicing in the confidence of his hope and waiting to welcome the final call of his Master and Lord. We enjoyed several happy hours together, which I still cherish in memory. At his and the family's request I conducted

services at a funeral home in Dallas in the presence of many of his friends and the loved ones, and accompanied the remains to Bowie, Texas, for interment. May the Lord comfort all who mourn.

J. R. HARDY.

BOOK NOTICE.

DURAND & LESTER HYMN AND TUNE BOOK

I wish to announce that the order has been placed and the publishers are now working on an edition of books, which I expect to be ready for delivery to us early in June. The price will be $1.00 each, or $10.00 per dozen delivered. Same quality book as the last edition. I will ship the books as fast as I can in the same order as orders with remittance are received. Please help me by sending your order in as soon as you can.

P. G. LESTER, JR.,
846 Va. Ave., Va. Hgts., Roanoke, Va.

MEETINGS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Southampton Old School Baptist Church, Southampton, Pa., on Wednesday and Thursday, June 2nd and 3rd, 1937, commencing Wednesday morning at 10:30 o'clock. Daylight Saving Time. All lovers of the truth are invited.

CASPER G. FETTER, Church Clerk.

An all-day meeting has been planned for June 11th, next, in the New Vernon meetinghouse, near Howells, N. Y., to convene as near ten o'clock, Daylight Saving Time, as possible. A hot dinner will be served at Mrs. L. W. Blumroder's during the mid-day intermission. Elders H. C. Ker, Chas. W. Vaughn and Arnold H. Bellows are expected as visiting ministers. We cordially invite all lovers of the truth, who can, to be present.

R. LESTER DODSON.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets the third Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, at 10:30 a. m. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, 421 Steele, Street, Frankfort, Ky.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

Cloth binding, 75c each. Paper covers, single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and all to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

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HYMN BOOKS.

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 105. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1937. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

(*Continued from last number.*)

We will next notice the supposition that this "creature," or "life substance," had its existence in God in eternity. It has been proven that God is the only eternal being. He is first, and before all things. All that dwells in God is essentially God, and without which he could not be God. To suppose otherwise is to deny two of his divine attributes: immutability and perfection. If after he is God, embracing all within himself necessary to make him infinitely wise, powerful, holy, perfect and happy, some additional existence should be created or formed in him, the change would prove he was not immortal. Any change must be for the better or for the worse. If for the better, he was not perfect before the change; if for the worse, he is not perfect after the change. But the supposition cannot be true, for he says, "I am the Lord, I change not."—Mal. iii. 6. It is further asserted that this life substance, or spiritual creature, which eternally dwelt in God is the offspring of God, and is like its progenitor; as the offspring of Adam is like its progenitor. Further, it is supposed that the transgression of the law given to Adam brought a spiritual death to this life substance and a natural death to Adam and his offspring. If this life substance existed in God and is the offspring of God, then it is God and was necessary to his existence; otherwise something existed in eternity besides God, and therefore must be independent of him; all of which contradicts the record which declares he is before all things. But if this etrnal life substance was put into Adam, and he afterward sinned and thereby caused two deaths: one a natural death to his progeny and another a spiritual death to this eternal life substance, which is now called God's people, does it not logically follow that Adam's sin was visited not only upon Adam's progeny but upon the eternal God, so that his life substance was executed under the sentence

of spiritual death? Truly the conquest of the old serpent was great, when he captivated and led all of the posterity of Adam away in captivity under sin and death, but we had never conceived the thought that the poison of his fangs had reached to the regions of eternal delights, and infected the one whose name is Holy. But such must be if the "eternal life substance" which had existed in God in eternity was so affected by his incursion into the garden as that a spiritual death ensued. If this supposition could be correct, where could a ransom be found? All would be lost, because no holy sacrifice could be found: God could not then provide himself with a burnt offering that Isaac might go free. To say that a created something dwelt eternally in God is a meaningless phraseology, a contradiction of thought. The first act in creation is bringing into existence that which did not previously exist. That which is eternally in God is self-existing, and therefore could not be created or brought into existence. The expression involves an absurdity, and therefore disproves itself. If the children of God are the offspring of God as the children of Adam are the offspring of Adam, and each like their respective progenitor, then the children of God are immortal, cannot die; immutable, cannot change; incorruptible, cannot sin, nor be corrupted by sin; perfect, cannot err; holy, cannot be cleansed; infinite, unbounded save by the essential qualities of goodness in themselves. How could such beings be the subjects of salvation by grace? How blighting is such a théory to the hope of a poor sinner who must continually cry, Unclean! unclean!

Our right to any supposition is only in proportion to its harmony with divine truth. The inspired record reads: "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."—Gen. ii. 16, 17. Adam did not obey the command, but ate of the tree of which he was forbidden to eat, and died a natural death (not corporeal), a death in sin, the day of transgression. Only sinners can die this death, and all sinners do die this death; and must continue in this state of death, which leads to corporeal death, and finally to everlasting death, if sin is not atoned for and the sinner released from both the law and its curse by reigning grace.

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."—Rom. v. 12. All men sinned in Adam, and the consequences of his act, in transgressing the law, were visited upon them, because, and only because, they were one with Adam in life and nature. Therefore he, being first, and because all sprang from him, when the law was given to him, he being their natural head, and their future existence having a necessary connection with him and dependence upon him, because likewise their

judicial head, and thus his act was truly their act, and is justly imputed to them and the consequences of it visited upon them. If this necessary connection with Adam and dependence upon him for existence is wanting, then Adam's sin cannot by any principle of justice or equity be imputed, because the connection which makes them one, and his act their act, does not exist. This principle is the one bulwark of salvation by grace, before which every false doctrine must fall. The doctrine of the imputation of sin and of the imputation of righteousness, as revealed in the Scriptures, uproots completely every theory of the preexistence of the objects of God's covenant mercies before Adam's creation, and lays the only foundation for the success of salvation by grace, as I shall now proceed to show. None could become involved in sin by Adam's transgression except those who were connected with Adam necessarily by being dependent upon Adam for their life, nature, existence and action; in no other way could his act become their act. If there was a creature separate and distinct from Adam in its creation and existence, whose being is not from Adam, but existed before Adam and independently of Adam, and will again exist independently of and without him, but was only dwelling in Adam at the time of his transgression, as a substance in a vessel, which substance in no way partook of the nature of the vessel which contained it, then it necessarily follows that if this creature becomes involved in transgression it can only be on account of its own act of sinning, and not because of Adam's disobedience. This denies the plain word of inspiration which says, "By the offering of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation."—Rom. v. 18. I shall affirm, upon the authority of inspiration, that no man has ever been judged a sinner in the court of Jehovah, except upon the ground that the one act of Adam by which sin entered into the world was his act. Therefore none but those who necessarily proceeded from Adam, and whose existence necessarily depended upon him, can be saved by grace, because grace only abounds where sin abounded. (Rom. v. 20.) It is evident then to contend that salvation is designed for any besides those who are of the earthy Adam is to deny that salvation is by grace. In further proof of the fact that only sinners who are of the earthy created Adam are the subjects of salvation by grace, note the following: Christ Jesus who, as the eternal Word, was ever with the Father, was "appointed heir of all things" by the Father (Heb. i. 2), which office imposed the obligation of the salvation of sinners. In order to fulfill this sacred obligation in accordance with infinite judgment, every demand of the law under which sin entered must be met. Jesus said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."—Matt. v. 17, 18. The demands of the

law were specific and personal. It was the rule fixed by the Creator to measure the conduct of the man he created and formed of the dust of the ground. The penalty it carried was the proper punishment to be inflicted upon the transgressor. That none but those under this law can obey or violate its precepts, or share its penalty, not only is apparent from reason and common sense, but may be shown by abundant Scripture testimony. In order that Christ might redeem and justify sinners, it became necessary that he be under the law in exactly the same relation to its precepts and penalty as the actual transgressor. But because it is impossible that the Giver of the law can be judged by the law, Christ was made of a woman, made under the law, (Gal. iv. 4,) made like unto his brethren, (Heb. ii. 17,) expressly for the purpose of rendering obedience to the law and receiving its penalty. But this could have been of no benefit to his people in procuring their release from sin and death if he had obeyed and died as an independent person, and not in union with them in life and nature, so Christ not only must partake of flesh and blood to redeem and justify sinners, but he must partake of the same flesh and blood which they had (Heb. ii. 14), and which identified them with the earthy Adam. Thus he became us (Heb. vii. 26) by assuming our life and nature; and in view of this union the sins of his chosen people, the church, over which he is given to be head, as the husband is head of the wife (Eph. v. 23), were imputed to him, and he suffered and died as the sinner. But he was not a sinner by the act of sinning, but was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners (Heb. vii. 26), all of which holiness and righteous obedience was imputed to his people, in which they stand justified and acquitted of all guilt. "For he [God] hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."—2 Cor. v. 21. Then it is certain "the children being partakers of flesh and blood," is why Christ partook of the same flesh and blood to effect their deliverance from the bondage of sin and from death. (Heb. ii. 14, 15.) This is called salvation by grace, and the subjects of this salvation are the offspring of the earthy Adam, as I think has been clearly proven. The Scriptures teach that God, before the world was made, chose a definite number of these Adam sinners, and blessed them with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, having predestinated to adopt them as his children by Jesus Christ to the praise of the glory of his grace. (Eph. i. 3-6.) Notice every step in the unfolding of these covenant mercies is to the praise of the glorious grace, of which Christ, the Savior of sinners, is full. The first two, redemption and justification, which I have previously shown identify the subjects of salvation by grace as the offspring of Adam, have been briefly treated. The administration of all covenant graces to Adam sinners by the operation of the Holy Spirit constitutes the

"creation in Christ Jesus" of which Paul spoke in Ephesians ii. 10, and makes the subjects of these graces the children of God.

One of the graces in this covenant was eternal life, which was given to the chosen vessels of mercy in Christ, and which he gives to them in the spiritual birth. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men."—John i. 4. "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."—John x. 28. "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."—1 John v. 11. This creation in Christ Jesus of which the apostle speaks in Ephesians ii. 10, is not bringing into being that which did not previously exist, but the altering of that which does exist to make it answer the purpose of the Creator. As the children of Adam they bear the image of the earthy; the work of grace so changes the children of Adam that they *also* bear the image of the heavenly, which is Christ. Three distinct transactions are declared in the Scriptures to set forth that filial relation which is established between God as the Father of believers in Christ and those Adam sinners who are given to believe on him. All these are designed to accomplish one purpose, namely: to bring the elect out of the family of Adam and into spiritual union with himself, thereby making them his children. This is said to be accomplished as they are begotten and born from above, as they are brought into a marriage relation to Christ, and as they are adopted into the heavenly family. To impart unto us spiritual life and make us partakers of the divine nature and assure us of bearing the image of the heavenly we are said to be born of God. "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."—John iii. 7. To set forth, in the liveliest manner, our most intimate and delightful union with the Son of God, we are said to be married to Christ. "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lord is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."—Rev. xix. 7, 8. That we may be generously reminded of the misery of our natural condition, as we stood alienated from God and without hope, and in contrast to this forlorn state to point us to our title to the heavenly patrimony, we are said to be adopted by him. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace."—Eph. i. 5, 6. How sublime the thought! The word adoption signifies "that act by which a person takes the child of another, not related to him, into the place, and entitles him to the privileges of his own son." Spiritual and divine adoption then is the gracious act of God in choosing and taking indigent

sinners out of the family of Adam, into the state, relation and enjoyment of all privileges of children, and conferring upon them the honor to be called the sons of God through Jesus Christ, according to the new covenant promise, I "will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."—2 Cor. vi. 18. While we are dead in sin and aliens from God and strangers to grace, we are the people of God, if we have been, by the purpose of God according to election, appointed to obtain salvation through Christ, but are not yet the children of God. We are only the children of the flesh, and these are not the children of God, because that union has not yet been established by which they are made sons of God. They have not been born of God, nor married to the Son of God, nor adopted into the heavenly family. But when reigning grace does call them out of the darkness of death into the light of life eternal, when Christ dwells in them by faith, when they are led by the Spirit of God, when they are espoused unto Christ in an indissoluble bond of heavenly love, when they have received the spirit of adoption whereby they cry, Abba, Father, they are children of God, in joint heirship with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."—1 John iii. 1.

In humble hope through grace,

J. R. HARDY.

WEISER, Idaho.

DEAR BROTHER JONES:—According to your request, I will try to give some of my ideas on the creation of man, his fall and the consequence afterwards. Now let us consider his state and condition before he fell. God created man in his own image, male and female created he them. When he had formed man he breathed the breath of life into him and man became a living soul. In this state he was without sin, but was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who subjects the same in hope. So we see that he was subjugated to vanity and also subjugated to hope. In this state of purity he was not a subject of grace, neither was he a subject of the plan of salvation. Seeing that the covenant of grace and the plan of salvation were arranged before the foundation of the world, and were arranged for sinners, so Adam could not be a recipient of them until he became a sinner. In order that he should be a subject of hope and a partaker of the sacrifices of Christ it was necessary that he become a sinner. So the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden and there he put the man whom he had formed, and it was after God had put him in the garden that he gave him the law. This law was a schoolmaster to bring him to Christ, who stood as a Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world. Now let us consider that the way Adam was exercised in the garden was just the way that all are exercised who ever

come to Christ. The Garden of Eden is that place of schooling under the law that teaches them the need of a Redeemer. Paul says, I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came sin revived and I died. Adam was also alive without the law, and when he came to the realization of what God had commanded them he died. The law the Lord God gave them was an administration of death, and it was for this purpose that God gave them the law, that they might transgress the law and become dead to the law and be made alive in Christ. Now out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. Do you not recall a time in your life when you felt that the whole creation was praising God, that the grass was greener, the trees shone forth more beautifully and everything you could see was pleasant to the sight and was good food, and that they showed forth the power and knowledge of the invisible God? Could you not feast upon this great sight of God's creation? The Master said, Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not and they spin not. But I say unto you, That Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. When the beauties of God's creation are unfolded to a penitent sinner it by far exceeds Solomon's array.

Now the tree of life in the midst of the garden. I know of no other tree of life except Christ. He was there in the midst. He was in the whole matter, and all things in the garden were being wrought according to God's purpose and foreknowledge. Yes, Jesus Christ was there in the midst of the garden for the appointed time for the law to bring Adam to him. Also there was a tree of knowledge of good and evil. This tree was there for the purpose of giving them, or teaching them, the difference between good and evil, because in their state of purity they had no knowledge of eveil, therefore they had no knowledge of good. So when one is taught to know evil he will know good and then can discern good from evil. Now what is it that the Scriptures say that causes us to know evil? Paul says, I would not have known lust except the law had not said, Thou shalt not covet. So this tree of the knowledge of good and evil was the law. And, The tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it. For in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. Here is a death that they died, and what is it that brings forth death? The law is an administrator of death. The law gives knowledge of sin, so the law was the tree. But they did not eat the tree; they ate of the fruit of the tree. The fruit of the tree is a false doctrine. "And the serpent said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden." This is the fruit I have already described. But the

fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden God has said, Ye shall not eat of it lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die, etc. Right here is where they partook of the fruits of the law. The devil told them a lie and the woman believed it, because when she saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eye, and a tree to be desired, and to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat. We have the same false doctrine in the world to-day that preys on the carnal mind, that is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. This is the doctrine of the law that brings forth fruits unto death. Now we see that Adam, being her husband, and they two became one flesh, that the woman's transgression involved Adam, so he had to eat it whether he liked it or not. At this point their eyes were opened and they knew that they were naked. They were brought to the realization that all of their actions were open and naked to that all-seeing Eye, and they sewed fig-leaves together and made themselves aprons. The fig tree is a figure of the law. They must have been trying to justify themselves by the law. But there was a manifestation of sin and condemnation, because their guilty consciences caused them to try to hide themselves from the presence of the Lord God. Who told them they were naked? It was a guilty conscience which caused them to realize that they had hearkened to the serpent and not to God's command, and they are now ready to confess their sin and beg God for mercy. So they are brought to judgment and confess to God that they have done wickedly, and they are pardoned of their sins and receive a robe of righteousness to cover their nakedness. There is God at the end of the law to forgive them and to receive them and to clothe them. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness. So God drove them out of the garden, or out of this school where the law was their schoolmaster to bring them to God. Now they are no longer under the law, but under grace. The law has no more dominion over them, because they have been brought to judgment according to the law, and confessed their guilt. When God drove out the man he placed at the east of the garden cherubims and a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life. They were then strangers and pilgrims in a strange land, seeking a city whose builder and maker is God, and found themselves in want of something to keep the way of the tree of life. So faith, hope and charity are given. Faith is the flaming sword that has always kept the way of the tree of life. Whether it be temptation, persecution, in the fiery furnace or in the lions' den, it is faith that holds the righteous on their way.

Submitted with the understanding I have of this subject.

E. N. FIELDS.

WOODWARD, Iowa, October, 1936.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find a money order for two dollars, to pay my subscription for the year 1935, and I thank you for sending the paper to me, for it is all the preaching I get. There is no use telling you what I mean, for you know. There is plenty, such as it is, but it does not suit me. I wish I could write something that every one would be glad to read, something that would make them thrill while reading it, the same as I have been made to feel from time to time as I have perused the pages of the dear old SIGNS and realized the joy and gladness that springs from the Fountain of all truth. As my mind travels back for more than half a century, it seems that my lot has been a strange one. I was born and raised by very strict and pious parents. I remember very well of their riding mule-back some twenty miles to their meetings. I was too young to realize where we were going, and what for, but I can remember sitting on the ground at my mother's knee and listening to the preacher. That sound stayed with me as I grew to manhood. After I became quite a large boy they would leave me at home to look after things while they were gone. They would start early Saturday morning and ride more than twenty miles to their meeting, and return Sunday afternoon or evening, so I did not go with them after I was old enough to leave at home.

But going back a little. I do not remember the time when (from some cause I cannot explain) I did not have a strange feeling that there was a hereafter. Even when very young I would go to church services and Sunday School, and my parents never objected, for which I am very thankful, but I never did hear anything that made much of an impression on me; only the all-consuming desire to be saved, which desire ever has been and is still with me. I married at the age of twenty-two, and began to go from place to place, from State to State. I always attended church wherever I was, but never heard that sound, that something that I heard in my babyhood. I looked for it everywhere I went, but it was not there. Of course I knew about the "Old Hard-shells," as they were called, and went to hear some of them preach, but it was the same. That was in my younger days, and now in my declining years I have roamed this State from east to west, and north to south, and they are still the same. After I had been married about twenty-five years I returned to my old home in southern Illinois. My children were all grown. I decided I would go to the old church were my father and mother used to go, which was a distance of about twenty miles, as I before stated. I think I went part of the way by rail and walked the rest, and when I arrived no one was there. I was very much disappointed, and sat down to rest awhile before returning. While I was sitting there a man rode up on a horse and we began talking. I asked him if there was a church there any more. He said there was not, but they met the first Sunday and Saturday before of each month and sang and talked a little. Very soon more people

arrived and we went inside. We sang some songs, then, to my amazement, the man who rode up on his horse, who was dressed in overalls, and who looked as if he had just come out of a corn field, got up in the pulpit. I thought, What an excuse for a preacher! I had always been accustomed to seing well dressed men in the pulpit. After reading a passage from the Bible, and prayer, he took his text. I do not know where it can be found, but it went something like this: What am I more than a dog, that the Lord should be mindful of me? On and on he went, and in the beauties he revealed, in the rise and fall of his voice, I found that sound once more, and I knew I had found my people; yet not my people, for I have never offered myself for membership, but I love them and the doctrine they contend for with all my heart. Salvation by grace, and grace alone. I have been blessed to go back there several times since. I have been so far away from them, but they are very near and dear to me. I love them with a love that cannot be comprehended. Some of the sweetest moments of my life have been spent under the roof of Rock Springs church-house, in southern Illinois, listening to messages God has seen fit to send in the person of such men as Elders N. A Rogers, C. O. Kerley, O. W. Perkins, A. M. Henson, Jenkins, J. C. Chester, and others. It is heaven on earth to be there and associate with them, but I have never felt worthy of offering myself for membership.

Many times I have wanted to write and tell you how much the SIGNS means to me, but could not bring myself to do it. May God give you grace to keep up the task before you. You may not know the many glad hearts who wish you well; even little me, I am sending a few words to cheer you on your journey. I know there are many glad hearts because of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for it wends its way into the depths of the wilderness of those situated as I am, with no one for hundreds of miles to talk with about the beauties of worlds unknown. God bless and keep you.

W. J. KIMBRO.

DALLAS, Texas, June 8, 1937.

DEAR PUBLISHER:—Will you please make the following correction in my article published in the June number of the SIGNS, as it makes a contradiction in the point being argued? On page 124, the sentence beginning third line from top of column one should read: "It surely could not be contended that either Matthew or Luke was describing other than a succession from these forebears." Two other mistakes occur in the article, one of which is immaterial, and the other the word "new" for "now," in the quotation, Ecclesiastes iii. 15, on first page, second column, will be readily detected by the readers, perhaps, as it is a quotation.

Yours in humble hope,

J. R. HARDY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1937.

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JOHN XX. 21.

"As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you."

We trust it has been the work, and manifested purpose of God, that we are addressing our dear kindred in Christ Jesus, and we are but measuring up to those, that Jesus hath sent us to be his messenger to his people. We often refer to the Father sending his Son into the world, and the work that he did, which accomplished the purpose of God in the salvation of poor sinners. Before the Father sent his Son into the world the holy men of old wrote things concerning him that were not manifested until after he came, but were in the purpose of God before the world began. God's counsel before the world began embraced his will, that "he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on the earth; even in him."—Eph. i. 10. Jesus, while in the body that God prepared him for the suffering of death, declared that the work he did it was not of himself, but his Father, and all that he did was the work that his Father gave him to do. The work his Father gave him to do was to save his people from their sins. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."--John v. 17. These declarations prove that all things come to pass as his will determined before to be done. (Acts iv. 28.) The counsel of kings, Jews and Gentiles were all bound together to thwart the purpose of God relative to his Son, and put him away, and destroy his work, and stop his sayings among the people, but their works all combined could not change one expression of the will of God. Jesus bore the sins of his people, according to the embraced counsel in God's will, and saved them with an everlasting salvation. Jesus, standing as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and the names of his people were chosen in him, and their names were written in the book of life of the Lamb, embraces infinite wisdom, and makes known God's wisdom in all his work, and the blood of the Lamb of God was the only virtue that could wash a poor sinner from his sins and make him pure and just before God. This cup could not pass from him, but he must drink it, for he could not be straightened until these things were accomplished, and he must pay the utmost farthing before his

bride could be free. The Father that sent his Son into the world to take to himself a bride knew of the royal beauty with which she should appear, and be equal with his only Son in his kingdom, and there was no virtue in all the earth that could give her that beauty but the virtue of his Son, which required the rich blood of Jesus to cleanse and adorn her as the bride, the Lamb's wife. For men to consider the sacrifice of the only son of a man would be regarded as terrible, which is true, but when we consider the Lord, there is nothing too hard for him. We now come to the evidence to prove that the Lord hath sent us, and the greatest evidence is that we are Christ-like and bear fruit.

The disciples were the people addressed in our text, which was when he appeared to them after his resurrection from the dead. "And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."—John xx. 22, 23. "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye are endued with power from on high. And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God."—Luke xxiv. 45-53. The word of truth recorded by Luke and John gives evidence which proves how we get understanding of the Scriptures and know of the calling and election of God, that standeth sure. "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fail."—2 Peter i. 10. We are sure that every one called of God is sent forth in righteousness, and the works they do are acceptable unto God, for the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are born of God, and that we are kept by the power of God, and are directed by the Holy Spirit, and every one can truly say, It is not I, but the grace of God, that was given unto me. According to the measure of the grace of God given unto us we are manifested in the church militant to the comfort of the household of faith, and there is no malice, envy, strife, backbiting or evil speaking one of another, but gentleness, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, knowing that we are not our own keeper, and we cannot stand unless God giveth us strength. When we are given to reflect on our brethren, and say hard things about them, we know the Spirit of God

does not exercise in his people and direct them in that way, and we are being led by the flesh, and are made to feel condemnation resting in our hearts, and to continue in them we have a fearful looking for of judgment to devour the adversary. Dear brethren, and all the household of faith, if we have been called and sent forth as sheep of his pasture, and are trying to feed where there is nothing to comfort or give strength, we realize a weakened condition and a falling away from the things we love, and when we forsake the assembling of the saints we grow weak, and sick at heart, but how to get out of that condition we cannot seem to be able to attain, but he who sent us will not forsake nor leave us, and when we are brought out again we feel like praising the Lord for his abundant mercies, and the brethren and sisters are all so kind, and such love had not been realized before. All that our dear Savior suffered for our sins while in this low ground of sin and sorrow cannot be estimated by the human mind nor felt in this mortal flesh, for eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love him, but God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. (1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.) The disciples have borne testimony of Jesus and his work, and the manifestation of the Spirit, and the fruits thereof, that we have comfort therein, and through patience and comfort of the Scriptures we have hope. The proclamation of the gospel comforts the people of God, and the power of God unto salvation is the tidings embraced, which describes the way they are brought, and they are fully aware all such comes from the fountain of life, and they can say, Amen. After receiving the evidence of such precious promises, and feel like they are our's, we question ourselves and wonder if they can be applied to one so vile as we feel ourselves to be, and then we are wanting to know if this is the way, or are we deceived? We are like John, when he sent his disciples to Jesus, questioning him, "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?"—Luke vii. 20, and we note that "In that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight. Then Jesus answering, said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."—Luke vii. 21-23. When we are shut up we are glad to receive the messenger Jesus has sent bearing good tidings, and his mouth is filled with special messages to comfort those bowed down. It is a wonderful blessing to have ears to hear the message sent unto us by our dear Savior, and to hunger and thirst after the things pertaining to the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and they are so precious that we cannot stay away from the assemblage of the saints. The

sufferings of Jesus were with such agony that sweat as great drops of blood poured forth from him, and Paul said, "It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he will also deny us: if we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself. Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."—2 Tim. ii. 11-15.

Brethren, think on these things, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things, is our prayer.

C. W. V.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder H. C. Ker.)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Southampton Church, of Southampton, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, June 2nd and 3rd, 1937, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting with love in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—In addressing you with our annual Circular Letter we shall call your attention to the word "communion." In the years gone by we were perhaps exercised more upon this important subject than of later years; not that it has become of less magnitude, but because we have become more settled upon the matter. In our first life in the church, the matter of communion was mentioned three or four times a year, a certain Sunday appointed for the purpose. Often, before the time, some brother or sister would say, "Next Sunday is our communion season." At first we thought nothing special about it, further than to desire to be present at that time, but later the subject occupied much of our thought, until, we hope, the Lord gave us to understand the matter. We used to wonder why Baptists did not admit other denominations to their table, and among those with whom we associated there was a bitter feeling against Old School Baptists because of their "close communion." This feeling has grown no less bitter toward them as the years have gone on, nor will it ever be less among those who oppose us. When Jesus instituted what is called the "Lord's Supper, " "He sat down with the twelve," and to them only gave he the bread and wine, which he called his body and blood. There were many at that time who claimed to be his disciples, yet not one other than the twelve ate and drank of the bread and wine. Was Jesus guilty of "close communion" in this particular sense? If so, why censure Old School Baptists for not admitting any except their own to their Lord's table? Communion, however, means more than to sit at the same table and eat and drink of the bread and wine. It is right to have times set apart for this holy ordinance, and right for every member to be

present, and no one identified with the church has the privilege of refusing to partake of the supper; in so doing that one manifests direct contempt for the commandment of the Judge of the whole earth.

Yet, there is such a thing as communion regardless of the above course. Again we say, communion means more than to eat and drink of the bread and wine. Some years ago we were present at a communion season of an Old School Baptist Church, and when the members took their seats to be served, a lady of another denomination, being present, took a seat with the church, and when the bread and wine were passed, the deacon, an old man whose sight was somewhat dim, did not notice that she was a stranger, and passed the emblems to her, and, of course, she partook. After meeting was over some one mentioned the fact to him and he was very much wrought upon, and suggested that he go to her home and tell her his mistake. Several thought his idea good, and doubtless it would have been carried out had not some one said, "Deacon, no harm has been done; that woman did not commune with the church to-day." "What?" he replied, "why not? She surely partook of the bread and wine, for I passed them to her." "Yes, we know you did, and while we all would oppose such a thing in a general way, communion is impossible in the absence of union." Oneness, agreement, "union", must exist before there can be communion. Therefore, instead of partaking of the bread and wine in order to commune with each other, we partake of them as evidence of communion one with another. Had Christ sat down at the table with the multitude of five thousand who claimed to be his disciples, there would have been no communion except between him and the apostles, because of lack of "union." Union means "united," hence being united in one body to one Head, there is communion with the children of God, though the emblems were never seen or tasted. As said above, to absent one's self from the table does not affect the union and communion of saints. When we sit down in the kingdom of God with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, it is in union and communion with them. Though they be dead according to men, yet they live unto God, and the saints of to-day are brought unto the spirits of these and other just men made perfect. Paul presents the union of the church of God in the figure of a body having many members: "One body, but many members," "so also is Christ." Being members, one of another, there is perfect union, though the members be located some distance apart. It requires all members to compose a perfect body, and the very fact that no one member is independent of the others, proves conclusively the union, hence communion. If this be so with the natural body, how much more so with the body of Christ, having members in particular, God having placed them in the body as it hath pleased him. The vital unity of Christ and the church is one of the most

sublime subjects of the doctrine of God. Unity that eternally unites Head and body; unity from which communion of members, the church, springs and abides forever. Again, communion means more than to simply partake of the bread and wine, that those redeemed who might refuse to eat the bread and drink the wine do still commune one with another. On the other hand, those who are not members of the body of Christ do not, cannot, commune with the church of God, though they were to sit at the table and partake of the bread and wine every day of the year. We should be glad that we are given to see, and feel, communion in this blessed light, and we hope what we have written may be of interest and comfort to us all. It is good when questioning in our minds as to whether or not we keep the commandments of God to be led by the Spirit into the deep mysteries and purposes of our God, there to behold that the arrangement of him is such that with all our powers we could not transgress his law governing us as members of his spiritual body. The Israelites could break the Sabbath day by gathering sticks, kindling fires, leading their beasts to water, etc., but the spiritual Israel of God can do nothing but keep the Sabbath, gospel day, because there is absolutely no work to be done; all was finished by Christ Jesus our Lord. Rest, therefore, as well as communion, is sure to all who believe in him.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
G. W. DANBURY, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Southampton Old School Baptist Church, of Southampton, Pennsylvania, sendeth greeting in the Lord to all the household of faith with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is through the kind providence of God that we have been permitted to meet again in another session as an association. We have been blessed in meeting again with the many brethren, sisters and friends who have been present, for which we are indeed thankful. Our meeting together we hope has been blessed of the Lord, as peace and unity have prevailed through the meeting. Our ministering brethren have come to us laden with rich messages from the Lord, whereby we have been fed and greatly comforted and strengthened.

The next session of the Association is appointed to meet with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, New Jersey, beginning Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1938, when we hope to meet together in love and fellowship.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
G. W. DANBURY, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Sadie T. Nicoll, Del., $1; Mrs. T. H. Young, Ohio, $1; Wm. J. Shaffer, Ky., $1; Mrs. Val Werner, N. J., $1; C. M. Fisher, Wash., $2; Mrs. Clara Parker, Ore., $2; "A friend,' N. Y., $1; Melissa C. Sparks, Cal., $3.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

HOWARD MIDDLETON, a friend of the cause of Jesus Christ, departed from this earthly life May 26th, 1937, at the home of his daughter, Miss Elizabeth Middleton, Cherrydale, Pa. Funeral services were held in Mt. Zion meetinghouse May 29th, 1937, interment in the burial-ground there. He was born April 20th, 1858, near Sterling, Va., and lived there all his life, with the exception of a few years of late, when he had been at Cherrydale. His father was Lovell H. Middleton, his mother Susan Ann Robey. He was one of eight children: four brothers and four sisters. He is survived by one sister, our sister Gertrude Wall, of Rochester, N. Y., a member of the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia. He was married in 1886 to our late sister Mary F. Templemen, who died in 1915. They had ten children, two boys dying in infancy. The surviving children are: George Middleton, of Falls Church, Va., Floyd, of Glendale, California, Thomas, of Vienna, Va., Mrs. Susan Ann Vaughn and Miss Elizabeth Middleton, of Cherrydale, Va., and Edward Middleton. Two daughters are dead: our late sister Matilda Starr, who died in 1929, and Mrs. Delia Downs, whose date of death I do not remember. One of Mr. Middleton's sisters was first wife to the late Elder A. B. Francis. I have personally known the subject of this notice for thirty-three years, and have always considered him to be a firm believer in the doctrine of God as revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord, though he never united with the church visibly. He had been a faithful attendant of the meetings both at Frying Pan and at Mt. Zion for fully sixty-five years, never missing a meeting unless providentially hindered. He was one of the most gentle, peaceable and patient of men. During the past several months, when at times he suffered great pain, not a word of complaint escaped him. He felt himself to be in the hands of the all-wise, just and merciful God, and that whatever disposal God made of him would be absolutely all right. We feel he had a good hope through grace, that his soul now rests in the paradise of God. May the Lord bless the bereaved children, their families and our sister Wall.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

ONCE more it becomes my sad duty to chronicle the death and burial of a fellow-laborer in the gospel. ELDER NATHAN D. REED, of Galion, Ohio, was born November 1st, 1879, son of John J. and Julia Reed. Both of his parents were members of the Old School Baptist denomination. His mother passed to the great beyond when Nathan was but three years of age, and his father died when he was about fifteen. December 7th, 1905, he was married to Ada N. Reed, and to this union were born three children, one dying in infancy. Two sons, Chester and Russell, with the widow, are left to mourn, also one half-brother, Clarence Reed, of Ohio, and several nephews and nieces. Our brother received a hope in the Savior in the year 1897, and on relation of his experience to the Old School Baptist Church called Bethel, near his home, was received, and baptized by the pastor, Elder Benjamin Martin. Not long after his admission into the church the brethren recognized a gift in the then young brother and licensed him to exercise his gift wherever God in his providence cast his lot. His preaching proved edifying, and called for his ordination, and accordingly he was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, September 15th, 1906, and ever after remained a sound and orderly minister,

serving his home church all these years, as well as the Providence Church, in Tremble County, Kentucky, where he would visit two or three times a year. This church was in fellowship with the churches it has been my pleasure to serve for many years, and often Elder Reed and myself would have a union meeting of the three churches, with great rejoicing in the Lord. Just a week before he died he was with us here in Kentucky. He was complaining some at the time, and told me when we first met that I would have to do the preaching and take charge of the singing, but when the time came, after singing and prayer, the Lord gave him strength to preach to us for a short time. The next day we all met with the Sulphur Fork Church, and there he preached his last sermon. Little did we realize that the end was so near. Monday he returned home, a distance of about three hundred miles,, wrote me a card he arrived safely and was glad he had been able to make the visit. The following Saturday he died. Our hearts go out in sympathy to the family and to the brethren, wherever they reside. No more will we hear him tell of that salvation which is wholly by grace, God's unlimited power and absolute control of all things, his everlasting love, redemption through the blood of Jesus, and no other way. We feel our loss is great, and we mourn his passing, yet it is his gain. May the good Lord reconcile us all. He gave, and he hath taken away, and blessed be his name.

I tried to comfort the friends at the funeral, trying to tell the same old story our brother had so often told us, and in the silent city of the dead all that was mortal was laid to rest, with the sure and certain hope of rising at the call of the Master, in the resurrection. O Lord, teach us to pray, lead us beside the still waters, make us to lie down in green pastures, reconcile us to our lot, and to thee, and thee only, be praise and glory. Amen.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

WILLIS IVAN ZINN was born in Bates County, Missouri, May 2nd, 1874, the son of Merritt and Mary Ann Zinn, and departed this life at the home of his half-sister, Eliza Cox, in Carnegie, Okla., March 21st, 1937, aged 62 years, 10 months and 19 days. He had long been in failing health, but death came suddenly and unexpectedly at last, and was a great shock to his aged sister, who was alone with him and had talked with him only about fifteen minutes before she noticed that he had ceased breathing. He came to Kansas with his parents when a child, and the greater part of his life was spent in Topeka and surrounding country, where he was highly esteemed as an honest, upright man. Three years ago the death of his brother-in-law occurred, and he then went to live with his sister, where he died. In early life he united with the West Union Church, in Topeka, and remained firm and unwavering in the tenets of the church to the end of his days, tolerating no compromise with the unfruitful works of darkness, as was evidenced when he gave his sons full intructions, a few years ago, as to how he wished to be put away, requesting them to have Elder L. L. Schenck conduct his funeral services, but if he, nor any other minister of the truth was available, then to put him away quietly and in utmost simplicity, would even prefer no flowers, but would not bar any who wished to show regard for him or the family in that way. February 14th, 1893, he was united in marriage to Zeruah Ann Darland, of the same church membership with him, and was truly a helpmeet for

him until her death seven years ago. Five sons were born to them, two of whom preceded him in death. He is survived by three sons and one sister, our sister Eliza Cox. She is the last surviving member of their mother's family, and brother Zinn the last of his father's family. We feel deep sympathy for sister Cox, for beyond the dark river her loved ones outnumber the ones who yet linger this side of the tomb. Thus our already decimated membership is further reduced, and we feel our great loss, but not without hope of meeting in a better land. "For so he giveth his beloved sleep," as death came so gently to him and his released spirit took its flight to that bright realm to which we all are swiftly hastening, when God himself shall have wiped the tears from off all faces, and the inhabitants there shall no more say, "I am sick," for the people that dwell therein are forgiven their iniquities, and in that hope, so shall we ever be with the Lord.

MARY ELLISON.

HENRY OLIVER HALL was born near Guilford, Va., April 12th, 1868, and departed this life May 16th, 1937, at the Peninsula General Hospital, Salisbury, Md. He was married to Elizabeth E. Stevenson November 18th, 1896, and to this union were born four children. He leaves to mourn their loss, his wife and four children: Mrs. LeRoy Morgan, Seaford, Del., Miss Grace, Harold B. and Thomas J., all of Salisbury, Md. He also leaves six grandchildren, five sisters: Mrs. James H. Stevens, Pocomoke City, Md., Mrs. Arthur Byrd, Temperanceville, Va., Mrs. Charles Parks, Parksley, Va., Mrs. Emanuel Taylor, Horsey, Va., Mrs. William Fox, Oak Hall, Va., and two brothers: John Hall, Bloxom, Va., and Revel C. Hall, Pocomoke City, Md. He was baptized and united with the Old School Baptist Church October 21st, 1900, at Messongoes Church, Hallwood, Va., baptism by Elder T. M. Poulson, New Church, Va. He was faithful in attending the meetings of his church. His membership was moved from Messongoes to Salisbury, Md., in 1910. He will be greatly missed not only by his family but by his church friends as well.

His funeral was held at the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church, and was conducted by Elder C. W. Vaughn, and interment made in the Greenwood Cemetery, Temperanceville, Va. His pastor, Elder G. E. Coulbourn, of Cape Charles, Va., was very ill in a hospital at that time, therefore Elder C. W. Vaughn, of Hopewell, N. J., officiated at the funeral, which was very much appreciated by the family and friends.

Written by his

WIFE and CHILDREN.

ON my return from the hospital, and hearing that brother Hall had passed away, I was of course sad and shocked. Brother Hall manifested his love for his church and pastor, who will miss him much, and to me to know him was to love him. I do feel though that the Lord who gave hath taken away, and that our loss is his gain. I am sorry that I was not able to be with the family, but glad Elder Vaughn could be there for the funeral.

ALSO,

MISS JANE JOHNSON, aged 82 years, died April 28th, 1937, after an illness of a few weeks, during which illness she was not known to complain, which was characteristic of her life, not to complain at her lot. She was the daughter of the late Benjamin and Catherine Johnson, and left behind to mourn their loss many relatives and friends, too numerous to mention all by name. Two of these relatives, a nephew, Judge Benjamin Johnson, and a

niece, Mrs. Susie Gale, whose mother died when they were infants, she took and reared as a mother, and the writer has heard her tell how she slept with one of them on one side and the other on the other side of her, and how she did love them until the end of her days with them. She was a devoted friend to the Old School Baptist Church, a regular attendant at the meetings until shortly before her passing, and she loved the doctrine and the members, and was also loved by them, who will greatly miss her. To the writer she was not only "Cousin Jane," but he hopes he had, and has, another relationship with her in the church, there being no doubt in his mind as to *her* standing, although she was not led to ask for membership in the church visible, she did love the brethren.

Her funeral was held at the home of her niece, Mrs. Gale, Elder H. C. Ker and the writer being present. May the Lord reconcile us to our loss of this dear one.

ALSO,

SISTER ALICE BELL SHOCKLEY was born December 28th, 1874, and died October 23rd, 1936. She was the daughter of Joshua and Mary Ellen Davis, and married Arthur Shockley December 24th, 1901, who died about ten years ago. She left three devoted daughters, and many other relatives, who mourn their loss. Sister Alice was ill for many years, and suffered much and long, and although the parting is sad for those left behind, in her case of long suffering we think of what Solomon said about the day of one's death being better than the day of one's birth, etc., and so we feel it must be with her, out of the body of suffering to realize her hope in and for a better dwelling-place, with the Lord. She was baptized in the winter of 1914, and in the year 1924 moved to Salisbury and joined the church there by letter, where she was a faithful and devoted member and regular at her meetings as long as her health permitted.

Elder H. C. Ker conducted her funeral service, and the writer was unable to be with him, being away for treatment himself at the time, and was glad to know Elder Ker could get there and be of so much comfort to those in grief. Sister Alice will continue to be missed by her church and pastor, and may the Lord help her relatives, church and friends to realize that our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by her pastor,

G. E. COULBOURN.

MRS. RUTH COLE CLEVENGER, daughter of Delbert and Ivy (Woodford) Cole, was born January 20th, 1903, and died, at Philippi, W. Va., April 12th, 1937, aged 34 years, 2 months and 22 days. She was married to Audra M. Clevenger June 24th, 1935. She leaves one son, Dever Cole Clevenger, nearly two years of age, her husband, father, mother, three brothers and one nephew, besides many other relatives and friends to mourn their loss, which we hope is her eternal gain. Her brothers are: Donold Obed and Rupert A., of Philippi, Truman J. Cole, of Berea, Ky., and her nephew Donold Wallace Cole, of Berea, Ky. She desired to be brought from the Grafton Hospital to her old home on Hackers Creek to be cared for and nursed by her mother, and her wish was granted. She remained here for two months, until the attending physician decided to take her to the Myres Hospital, Philippi, W. Va., for examination and treatment, as she had taken a sudden turn for the worse; but nothing could be done for her, as the Master's summons had come. During her illness she talked with her mother and eldest brother about death and eter-

nity, and the doctrine of grace, and grace alone to save sinners. When the March number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES came her brother began to read aloud an article on the first page, written by A. Ross, on grace. After reading awhile he said, Now, Ruth, if you become weary hearing me read, just say so and I will stop. She answered something like this: No, No, go on; I like to hear that piece; it sounds good. That is the way I believe it. About two weeks previous to her death she called me to her and said she knew something terrible was going to happen to her, and asked me to send for some one to help her. I told her there was One who could help her, to ask Him. I left the room for a short time, and when I returned she was praying to the Lord to help her. After that all was calm, and I heard no more about it, except that if she died she wanted to be laid in the old Mt. Olive Old School Baptist Cemetery, where many of her relatives were buried. I had begged the gracious Lord to give me some evidence before she died that she was at peace with him; if she was in that everlasting covenant, and I believe my desire was granted in her dying hours. She was not able to talk to us during her last three days, but could make signs with her head, hands and voice. She seemed to be drowsy until the last hour, when breathing became slower and harder, and without a move of hands breathing stopped, and she looked up and her eyes lighted with an expression of admiration and delight, as if beholding something that far surpassed in beauty and loveliness anything she had ever beheld on earth. That expression remained for several minutes, then slowly settled down, her eyes closed, and the shadow of a sweet smile remained on her lips, as if to say, All is well and I am resting in peace; my suffering is over and I am done with this present evil world, as she had so much desired of late. It looked as if her Lord and Savior had come and bore her spirit away with him. Her body was taken back to her former home, and on April 14th before leaving the home Elder James W. Linn spoke in prayer, and at two o'clock p. m. Elder J. J. Poling preached to a large gathering of relatives and friends at Mt. Olive Old School Baptist meetinghouse, after which the body was laid to rest in the old Mt. Olive Cemetery to await the resurrection morn, when these vile bodies will be raised and fashioned like unto His own glorious body. We are left here to mourn, yet we weep not as though we have no hope, and we look to Him who doeth all things well. The bitter cup is measured out to us and we must drink it, on the cross, for his glory and the good of his own people.

Her mother,

IVY A. COLE.

THOMAS G. WOOD was born November 1st, 1850, and died in Bellingham, Wash., July 19th, 1936, making his stay on earth 85 years, 8 months and 18 days. He was married to Elizabeth Langley March 25th, 1875, by Elder William F. Jones. To their union were born two sons, William, of Bellingham, and Charles, living at home, and two daughters, Mary Eva Royalty, of Bellingham, and Laura Bell Waner, of California. He leaves to mourn his departure his wife Betty, four children, nine grandchildren and sixteen great-grandchildren. He joined Walnut Creek Church of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptist faith, by experience and baptism, soon after his marriage. He, with his family, came to Dallas, Ore., some time in the eighties, then to Bellingham, Wash., six years later,

where he bought the home where he died. He also leaves three brothers: Ote, of Bellingham, and William and Alex, of Oklahoma; two sisters: Laura Wiss, of Oklahoma, and Nora Schenck, wife of Elder L. L. Schenck, of Kansas.

His funeral services were conducted by a Mr. Wolf, of the M. E. denomination. Burial was made in the Bay View Cemetery, there to await the call of his Master, when Jesus shall descend with a shout and the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, then the dead in Christ shall arise first.

DAVIS BURCH.

D. C. TURNER, son of Richard D. and Jane Turner, was born March 28th, 1862, and died April 23rd, 1937, aged 75 years and 25 days. Brother Turner was led to know Christ at the age of twenty-one years. He confessed his faith in Christ and joined Harmony Church, Graves County, Kentucky, in the year 1891, and lived a true and faithful member of the same, ever contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Brother Turner was first married to Miss Annie Cherry, July, 1886. Following her death he lived alone for a time, then he was married to Mrs. Esther Turner, December 27th, 1925. He is survived by his dear wife, a foster son, Kenneth Kitchen, two brothers: Tobe and Frank Turner, and a host of other relatives. Brother Turner served as Magistrate for the Fourth District of Graves County, Kentucky, for eight years. I can truthfully say brother Turner was a firm Baptist. He indorsed the SIGNS OF THE TIMES doctrine, and was a firm believer in the doctrine of God's unlimited predestination and the final preservation of the saints through grace which was given them in Christ before the world began. He was held in high esteem by his brethren, and all who knew him, as was evidenced by the large attendance at his funeral, which was held in the High School Auditorium, at Farmington, Ky. I do not think I would be wrong in saying one thousand, or more, attended the funeral, for it took almost one hour for the large congregation to pass by the casket. I visited brother Turner before he passed to that sweet beyond, and oh how beautifully he did talk. He said the only thing he dreaded was to leave his loving family here in this old wicked world. He said he would close his eyes on earth to open them in heaven. While I was at his bedside he asked me to conduct his funeral. He said he did not want me to preach what he had done, but to preach Christ. Elder R. E. Poyner and the writer conducted the funeral, and I used as a text, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." We tried in our weakness to speak words of comfort to the bereaved family and friends. We shall miss our dear brother very much, but may God reconcile us all, especially sister Turner, to the end that our loss is his eternal gain. We laid his body to rest in the Farmington Cemetery to await the summons from on high to arise and reign with Christ forever in that world that hath no end. May God bless all who mourn, is the prayer of the writer.

O. W. PERKINS.

H. W. BIRD was born January 1st, 1873, and departed this life May 25th, 1937, making his stay on earth 64 years, 4 mounths and 24 days. He leaves to mourn three sons, one daughter, sixteen grandchildren, three brothers, four sisters and a host of friends. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace, not

trusting in any creature help. He never united with the church, always feeling his unworthiness and expressing his fear of bringing reproach upon the cause. We feel he was a worthy brother, and that our loss is his eternal gain, for he was a child of God. He was a brother in the flesh to Elder H. J. Bird, and also a brother in Christ to all of God's chosen ones.

The writer was called to attend the funeral, which was held at the home of his sister, Mrs. A. O. Edwards, after which he was laid to rest in the family cemetery.

J. C. HAMMOND.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

BROTHER J. W. Staggs has changed his address from Perrin, Texas, to Terrell Wells, Texas, and requests that his correspondents address him at the latter place.

MEETINGS.

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER

OLD SCHOOL

BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets the third Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, at 10:30 a. m. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, 421 Steele, Street, Frankfort, Ky.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 105. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1937. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

2 KINGS V. 1-14.

WHEN we are reading, commenting or meditating upon any portion of Old Testament Scripture, we should not lose sight of the fact that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is for the children of God and for their instruction in righteousness, and that the Old Testament has the New concealed in it. As all the lines of the prophecy and type and shadow of the Old Testament converge upon the Son of God, so in the New Testament we see all lines radiating from him in wonderful beauty and glory. The things that were written aforetime were penned for our learning, that through patience and comfort in reading the Bible we might have hope. As a diamond radiates light in various directions, the literal truth of the Old Testament often has more than one spiritual application, all in perfect harmony with the word of God. One historical incident of the old covenant history conceals some striking truth of new testament application, so that it requires all the Old Testament to declare all that the New Testament demonstrates. A type cannot be as perfect as the antitype, else it would cease to be a type, and no one incident or figure can set forth all that pertains to Christ in his dispensation of suffering or of glory.

The miraculous cleansing of Naaman the Syrian, captain of the hosts of Benhadad king of Syria, is rich in its typical signification of the eternal truth of God. Naaman was a man of blameless reputation, faultless in his moral life, honorable in all his dealings, loved by his soldiers, respected and trusted by the king, and doubtlessly envied by many in Syria because of his station in life. He was a mighty man in valor, and by him the Lord had given deliverance to Syria, but he was a leper. After attaining high and deserved rank, with so much naturally to live for, to hope for and expect in life, he was smitten with a foul disease, the

dreaded and incurable leprosy, which seemed destined in due course to terminate his life in hopeless despair. As leprosy is so often used in the Bible to represent sin, it naturally follows that the leper represents the sinner. In connection with the foregoing thoughts, we are reminded of Moses when God commissioned him by the burning bush that was not consumed to deliver the Hebrews in Egypt from slavery under Pharaoh. Moses questioned his ability even with God's promise to perform this mission, and was commanded to cast his rod upon the ground. He promptly obeyed, and beheld a serpent before him from which he fled in fright. In obedience to the command of God, Moses seized the serpent by the tail and it became a rod in his hand. This was a sign from God. Then Moses was told to put his hand into his bosom. He complied, and when he withdrew it his hand was leprous, white as snow. Upon the command of God, Moses again put his hand into his bosom, and withdrew it to find with astonishment that it was turned again healthy like his other flesh. In these two signs we see the serpent representing Satan and the leprous hand representing sin. As the leprosy in this case followed the miracle of the rod becoming a serpent, so sin followed the entrance of Satan into the garden of Eden. God was in the midst of the burning bush which is a beautiful type of spiritual Israel, and by his power Satan was ordained to tempt our first parents that sin might come into the world, and through the wondrous working of that almighty power Satan's head was bruised by the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, who finished transgression and put an end to sin, as regards the election of grace. Leprosy was considered an unclean disease and resulted in the banishment of the leper from the camp, and the Israelite who was smitten with that disease was not permitted to partake of the holy things until he was cleansed, under the legal dispensation. Leprosy is an intrinsically loathsome disease and all who are aware of its nature shun the afflicted one. So one (and such must be a child of God to apprehend the exceeding sinfulness of sin) shuns sin and flees from it in feelings and effort, even if contaminated with it. When God shines in the heart of a poor sinner and shows him his wretchedness, he loathes himself. In this we see a similitude of leprosy to sin. Apparently it would seem to the natural mind that sin in Eden had a very insignificant beginning in the violation of one commandment. So leprosy is almost unnoticed in its origin. Sin gradually involved all mankind under the curse of a transgressed law, and so leprosy in its inevitable progress involves in time the person of the one afflicted with it. In the human being leprosy tends to make its victim to a large extent insensible of distress as it continues to spread, and so sin continues to make the sinner insensible of his real condition as viewed by God's holy law. Both sin and leprosy can be transmitted to offspring, and both are alike incurable by human means. Under the law given by Moses provision was made for the restoration

of a leper to the camp of Israel, consisting of ceremonies in which sacrifices were offered, typifying the life, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, as given in detail in the book of Leviticus. As Israel's high priest had an important part in the ritualistic restoration of the leper, so we have indisputable proof of leprosy representing sin, the leper the sinner, and the high priest setting forth in type the work of Jesus in saving the poor sinner. In the case of Naaman, we find that he was incurably afflicted with the terrible leprosy, and that his morality, station in life, reputation, honor and wealth sufficed in no sense to alleviate his condition. And just as fruitless were the best efforts of the most skillful physicians in all the realm of Syria. All the resources that King Benhadad could command were alike of no avail. Hopelessness and despair had seized him. So it is with a poor sinner condemned by the law of sin and death and guilty in all points as regards keeping the commandments of the decalogue. He finds when he becomes aware of his condition that human efforts will not mitigate the severity of the sentence he is under, deliver him from bondage or afford any relief. He feels that he is daily getting worse. As the doctors of medicine failed to help Naaman, so the doctors of divinity (so called) are powerless to aid the sinking, helpless sinner, who cries in vain and seeks in vain for help by human means. When at last ready to give up, a ray of hope came into Naaman's life from a source that had its origin outside of Syria, just as when the quickened sinner feels the grasp of spiritual death. Hope shines in his soul with a ray of mercy, and this comes from a source outside of and apart from himself. During a war between Syria and Israel, the Syrians had gone out in companies and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little Jewish maid, and she waited on Naaman's wife. Kindly treated by her master and mistress, and loyal in her captivity, this maid of Israel had an affectionate regard for her master, and said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy. And one went in and told his lord the words of the little maid. However, the king of Syria, when informed of the message of the servant in Naaman's household, manifested no direct interest in the prophet Elisha in Samaria, and did not even send a message to him, but instead wrote a letter to the king of Israel, to be delivered by Naaman himself, who took with him ten talents of silver and six thousand pieces of gold and ten changes of raiment. "And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy. And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? Wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against

me."—2 Kings v. 6, 7. In connection with Naaman's visit to the king of Israel, it should be remembered that the laws given by Moses were given unto the Israelites, and not to the Gentiles, that Naaman was a Gentile living in a Gentile country that had been at war with Israel, a foreign country, for the Gentiles were considered by the Israelites as strangers and foreigners, and that the Israelites did not send the maid who waited on Naaman's wife, and that no Syrian Gentile could have borne the message delivered by the little maid of Israel. Naaman must leave his native land, Syria, and go to another country if he would get physical relief. In all this do we not see that Syria represents the flesh, the state in which we are by nature? Naaman worshipped idols. We have our idols when we are in the flesh, even if they are not idols of wood or stone, they are idols nevertheless. Money or its love is so often an idol. Human ambitions and the vain desires of the mind and the lusts of the flesh are idols in their nature. So in the flesh by nature we are no better than Naaman, which means "pleasantness." We are delighted with this world according to the flesh. But when the arrows from the quiver of the Lord of hosts pierce our hearts and trouble comes and we feel the wrath of God abiding in us and ourselves as fit food for hell, and our natural hopes blasted and sorrows encompassing us round about, we can say with Naomi, as recorded in the book of Ruth, "Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me." There is an evident relation in the meaning of the names Naomi and Naaman, both meaning "pleasant," and both characters experiencing pleasant things of this world to be later brought down and humbled in the sight of God. It is also true that when we first feel our sinfulness in a work of grace wrought by the Holy Spirit in our souls that we are at first legalistic and resort to attain unto salvation and resort to the works of the law. As Naaman found that his morality and honor and riches were of no avail to relieve him of his dread disease, we find that our morality, standing among men, works of righteousness under the law are worthless to save us. We have in spirit to leave the state we are in by nature, the flesh, and go to another realm to find deliverance from the leprosy of sin. Morality denotes man's relation to man and his duty towards his fellow-man and himself. Piety denotes man's relation to God. One may educate the flesh and refine it and cultivate it as much as possible, it will be flesh still with all its inherited and committed sin. We have to get outside of natural self to get rid of the leprosy of sin. We seek therefore a better and a heavenly country. Like Naaman, we must leave this Syria of the flesh. But how do we learn of that other country, of that place or person to which or to whom we may go for relief? We remember that word came to Naaman through a captive maid of Israel. It was through a Jewish maid in the person of the virgin Mary that the Word of God came into the world by the

miraculous birth of Jesus Christ announced by the angel voices. The land of Judea at that time was under the domination of imperial Rome, and the Jews were therefore in captivity, and Mary was among those who were subjects to Rome, she who was the mother of Jesus. We read in John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." And in the same chapter of John we are told that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." God as the Word was manifest in the flesh in Christ Jesus, for it is written, "A woman shall encompass a man." Then through a Jewish maid by means of the Word assurance has come to us of our Prophet, Priest and King, our spiritual Elisha, who can heal the leprosy of sin and deliver them who all their lifetime are subject to bondage, and destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil. But we have noted that Naaman went first, not to Elisha, but to the king of Israel. It was Israel that received the law and was its custodian, and to my mind this represents the sinner at first resorting to the law as a means of salvation. We also note that the king of Syria sent him there. So our fleshly spirit, that which rules our carnal mind, sends us to the law for comfort and solace. But Jehoram, king of Israel, rent his clothes and confessed his inability to do Naaman any good or help him in any way whatsoever, notwithstanding all the wealth that Naaman had. So, regardless of our moral or other wealth, the law cannot save us. It can only condemn with unabated strength and power. I believe that Benhadad, the king of Syria, may represent the prince of this world, as Syria typifies the natural darkness of the flesh, from which the convicted sinner flees as he is apprehended of the Lord, but from which he can never escape as long as he dwells in a mortal body.

In considering the prophet Elisha, who succeeded Elijah after the latter's translation, we find a type of Christ suggested by the name Elisha, "My God is salvation." There is a sense in which the work of Elijah typified the ministry of Jesus Christ on earth under the law in the miracles wrought by Elijah. When Elijah's work was done on earth, he was translated to heaven and immediately Elisha succeeded him, receiving a double portion of Elijah's spirit. The word "Elijah" means, "My God is Jehovah." This was exemplified in the honor that Jesus gave the Father in all his earthly ministry under the law. After Jesus finished his work on earth, he ascended to heaven, and in heaven at God's right hand he is our Mediator, Counsellor and Advocate in his Melchisedec priesthood, as he presents his church faultless before the Father in love, and gives salvation unto all believers. He is our antitypical Elisha, our salvation. "Jesus is our great salvation, worthy of our best esteem." The Melchisedec ministry of Christ in heaven follows his finished work on earth. The work of Elisha followed that of Elijah. So we

see that when Elisha heard of the king's distress and his inability to help Naaman, he sent word for Naaman to come "now to me." Christ sends the Holy Spirit into our hearts, and we are directed to Jesus, and not to the law as our refuge from the leprosy of sin. Having broken down the middle wall of partition that separates Jew from Gentile by his death on the cross, abolishing the handwriting of ordinances and nailing them to the cross, the Lord Jesus saves both Jew and Gentile alike and they are one in him. Naaman was a Gentile, and in his cure of leprosy we see a type of salvation extended to the Gentile. Naaman came and stood at the door of of the house of Elisha, but the prophet did not come personally and minister unto him, but sent a messenger instead. May not this messenger represent the Holy Spirit? In the miracles of mercy which Jesus performed in healing the Gentiles while he was in the flesh under the law, he always healed at a distance. He was not in person present when the servant of the centurion was healed, nor when the daughter of the Syrophonecian woman was delivered from the torments of a devil, so in this healing of leprous Naaman, Elisha did not appear in person. So Jesus does not appear to us in this gospel dispensation in the flesh as he ministered to Jews in healing miracles before he went to the cross as the Lamb that taketh away the sins of all believers (the world in the sense of Jew and Gentile believers). Naaman stood at the door of the house of Elisha, and so every child of Jehovah stands at the door of the church, in which dwells Jesus, before he enters into a fuller knowledge of salvation in the revelation of Jesus Christ. Naaman was bidden to go and wash in Jordan seven times and be clean. But Naaman, like all sinners saved by grace, looked for salvation to come in a way of his or her own choosing. The Lord's ways are not our ways, and the more a subject of divine mercy leans upon self or the imaginations of the heart or the works of the law, the more he will be humbled. The carnal mind is ever at enmity with the law of God. So Naaman went away in wrath, in enmity. But this was only temporary. Persuaded by his servants, Naaman came to himself, and in obedience went to the river Jordan and bathed seven times, as the prophet had commanded, and found that his flesh came again, like the flesh of a child, clean and free of disease. The river Jordan has a significance in sacred history. It means judgment or descender. Jesus was baptized in Jordan. He met the judgment of God for the sins of his bride, for the whole family of God, and we who believe in him are baptized unto his death, and buried with him in baptism, and live in him in newness of life. But Naaman dipped himself seven times, and Jesus was only once baptized in Jordan. In considering the number seven, we must not forget that in Scripture it is often used to denote completeness, or perfection. God rested the seventh day from all his work of creation, and blessed that day. The Old Testament sabbath, or seventh day, was a rest for the flesh, and

typified the New Testament sabbath of rest for the soul, ushered in by the Lord Jesus through his death and resurrection. On the day of atonement blood was sprinkled once upon the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant in the holy of holies, but seven times before the veil. There are many applications of the number seven to denote completeness in the Scriptures, especially in reference to the sabbatic seasons under the law. So the fact that Naaman bathed, or dipped, seven times in Jordan may denote the perfection, or completeness, of his healing. The fact that his flesh came again as a little child is mentioned in the scriptural account of the miracle. It may signify that when we are born into the kingdom of God we must be as little children, for of such is the kingdom of heaven, humble, weak, willing to learn, desiring the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby. And the children of God do grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is here a little and there a little, line upon line and precept upon precept. Naaman seemed a new creature in his physical being, and so being born again of an incorruptible seed by the word of God, redeemed sinners are new creatures in Christ Jesus.

The foregoing article has been submitted in much fear and trembling, with the earnest desire that the reader cast over it the needful mantle of charity.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

WEST HURLEY, N. Y., June 8, 1937.

BRUNSWICK, Maine.

"When God revealed his gracious name,
And changed my mournful state,
My rapture seemed a pleasant dream,
The grace appeared so great.

The world beheld the glorious change,
And did thy hand confess;
My tongue broke out in unknown strains,
And sung surprising grace.

Great is the work, my neighbors cried,
And owned thy power divine;
Great is the work, my heart replied,
And be the glory thine."

I was in much distress of mind and in great darkness when this Scripture came to me: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." My heart was filled with the love of God and I rejoiced to declare the works of the Lord, for he had done great things for me, whereof I am glad. All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord, and thy saints shall bless thee. I was prevented from going to a conference meeting for some time. I felt too unworthy, and thought they could not receive one like me. When I was speaking of my unworthiness to Elder Campbell he asked me if I could not leave it with the church to decide. I had seen a beauty in baptism when I went past the water. It was a beautiful day, and I can never forget the joy that was in my heart. This Scripture came into my mind as I was being led out of the water: In thy presence is fullness of joy. I surely went on my way rejoicing and was made to walk in newness of life. Old things had passed away, and I had seen salvation by grace as the work of God. It has been so good to hear the name of Jesus exalted above every name that is named. It has been good news every time I have heard the

gospel preached. It is the power of God unto every one that believeth. This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. I have not been able to boast of anything good I have done, and have found that no good thing dwells in the flesh. It is not by works of righteousness we have done, but according to his mercy he has saved us. What simple words Paul used when he wrote, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." I have had the privilege of meeting often with the brethren, and can only remember one association I could not attend. "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." I have wished many times I could write clearly how the Lord has brought me up, but it is, and always will be, a vain wish. His ways are mysterious and past finding out. He has declared, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." It is all the work of God.

"Firm on a rock he made me stand,
And taught my cheerful tongue
To praise the wonders of his hand,
In an ever thankful song.
I'll spread his works of grace abroad,
The saints with joy shall hear,
How I was brought to trust in God,
My only hope and fear."

Jesus has been wrought in my soul the hope of glory. Where once the Lord his love bestows, he loves unto the end. I feel and know the saints have heard with joy when I have been with them, and he taught my cheerful tongue to praise the works of grace, and how I "was brought to trust in God, my only hope and fear." The hope is sure and steadfast. "The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever."

Dear brother Dodson, I have felt for some time that I would like to write something of the joy that has been given me while I have been in the church, and send it to the SIGNS for publication. But I have found that I could not, and have had to write as if talking with you. Now read it carefully, and if it is not as it should be, destroy it. I have intended to write to you for some time, but could not seem to leave what I was writing for others to read, and at the same time was really writing to you. I hope you will come to North Berwick in August, and that it will be the Lord's will for me to meet you there with the other loved ones who accompany me. Our Association comes in September, and I hope to see you then. Sister Annie Raymond will have her home to entertain us, and we are all very glad. My health is good, and I enjoy singing the hymns that express the truth so clearly.

Have begun my writing:

"When God revealed his gracious name,
And changed my mournful state."

Am ending with

"Firm on a rock he made me stand,
And taught my cheerful tongue
To praise the wonders of his hand
In a new thankful tongue."

Perhaps these lines will be all you will want to send to the SIGNS. It will be all right if you throw it all in the waste-basket. It cannot hurt the love and fellowship that has been given us, the love shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, nor the fellowship that is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. I hope you are well, and I know you are busy, and shall be glad when I can see you face to face. I do not want you to feel that you must make any reply to what I am writing to you, unless I have written falsely, which I cannot think I have done. I am always glad to hear from you, but not when you are busy. I have no fear any of the loved ones will forget me. I write too many letters and cards and give them no chance to wonder why they do not hear from me. I let myself wonder what makes them have love and fellowship for me, but soon know how highly I esteem them for the truth's sake.

With love and sweet fellowship, your little sister,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

MORELAND, Kansas, April 25, 1937.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—My subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES expired March 1st, and I am herewith inclosing check for two dollars for renewal. The good letters, editorials and other good writings in the SIGNS make up all the preaching I get, so I do not want to miss a single copy, although I feel unworthy even to be a reader of the SIGNS and the Bible. I live out here in western Kansas, in what has come to be known as the "dust bowl," and that is about true. We have not raised a crop for five years, and prospects are very poor just now for a crop this year. I am glad that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth," for we are about stripped of all worldly possessions. I have one possession that wind and dust and crop failures can never take, and that is a little ray of hope that when the trials, troubles and tribulations of this life are over I shall be one of that throng to surround the great white throne of God to sing the glad new song of redeeming grace forever and forever. Brethren, what a wonderful anticipation! Homesick for heaven and immortal glory! At times I feel so sinful and find myself complaining, that I wonder if such can be a child of the most high God, and then I wonder if one who is not one of his can feel this longing for heaven and immortal glory that I sometimes (often) feel to have. This afternoon I got out my old hymn book and sang some of the dear old songs, and then read from my Bible, and oh how I wanted to shout his praises, even from the housetop, when I read, I came down from heaven not to do my own will, but to do the will of him that sent me; and this is the will of him that sent me, that of all he gave me I should lose

nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me. It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God; he therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me. How can words express it plainer that salvation is of God? If God be for us, who can be against us? Why should I be discouraged over a few crop failures? for "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose." Do I love God? Am I called? I would not take the world for the little hope I have that I do love God, and I am sure that if I do then it is because I am one of the called, and not by works of righteousness that I have done, but according to the grace given me in Christ Jesus before the world began.

I surely enjoyed Elder Keene's article in the April number, and every other communication, so I say to all, Keep on writing your good letters and editorials, because they are making many hearts lighter and their burdens seem less.

I did not think of writing so much when I began, but I felt it my duty to tell you how much I appreciate the SIGNS, and I pray God's blessing upon it publishers, editors and all contributors.

In hope of eternal life, I am your brother in Christ,

U. S. LOYD.

TOWSON, Md., May 14, 1937.

DEAR BROTHER ALVIS ROWE:—When we came home Tuesday morning my daughter told us you had called up to say you would take us to Black Rock on Sunday. I do truly appreciate your kindness. I would have loved to have been there, but the family wanted to go to Cumberland to see their grandfather, who is old (ninety-three or ninety-four) and in bed all the time, and our son took us home with him Friday evening and brought us home Tuesday morning. I am much better than I have been for all the winter, and this week feel to have more strength and energy than I have had yet. I do miss the company of my church people, and if I could write a letter like sister Greist's last one, would be so glad to do it. She had been in the dark for a long time, until lately, and her last letter told of her comfort and joy in spiritual things in a way to make my heart glad, and brought the hope that I, too, might be given to rejoice. But

"Where is the joy that once I knew,
When first I loved the Lord?
Where is the soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus and his word?"

There is a feeling that the everlasting arm is underneath, and that "wher'er I go, wher'er I be, it is God's hand that leadeth me," so I go on, trusting in strength and wisdom that is not my own. We each walk in a solitary way. Our help cannot come from those near and dear to us in a material way. When I count my blessings I am astonished at the many I have to give thanks for, and am ashamed of my little faith. It seems dishonoring to the Giver of all

good to be continually complaining of leanness and darkness, and the thought comes, Though he slay me, yet will I trust him.

I am hoping to get to Black Rock to the association, and to Rock Springs. I have been shut in so long there seems great need to get out of the narrow rut I have been in. I do hope you had a good meeting on Sunday, that both speaker and hearers were made to feel that where a few are gathered together the Holy Spirit is in the midst of them. Our lives here are very unsettled. We are well cared for and comfortable, but flit from one house to another so we seldom know just where we will be. I hope this finds you and family well. My best wishes to them all. I would be glad if it was as in times past, that we could meet and enjoy each other's company, but am glad for the pleasant memories. I have thought much lately of the command to seek ye first the things of the kingdom of heaven, and all else will be added unto you. But, like Philip, How can I, unless some one teach me?

Thank you again for your thoughtfulness for us; it does my heart good. I would ask that the Comforter abide with you and with us.

In christian love, your unworthy sister,

SUE R. DANCE.

FAYETTE, Alabama.

DEAR PUBLISHER:—I have been neglecting you. Please excuse me. Inclosed you will find a check for two dollars to pay my subscription for another year for the best Old Baptist paper in this country. I have been reading it for about forty years, but do not think I will need it much longer, as I am now in my eightieth year. It has been a source of pleasure to me. I was sorry brother Lefferts left the editorial staff, but we still have some able writers. I wish Elder J. R. Hardy would write more. I am glad brother Dodson and the other editors are still holding on.

Your brother,

G. W. BERRY.

CINCINNATI, Ohio, March 1, 1937.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing two dollars for renewal subscription to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which is about all the preaching I get during the winter months, as I live so far from the church. Please pardon my delay in sending my remittance. I am very sorry not to be prompt, for I know you have had some very hard trials. I would be glad to send you several new subscriptions, but so far have not been able to do so, but hope to later. May the dear Lord bless you and give you strength to carry on for many years to come.

A poor sinner, hoping in the grace of the dear Lord,

ANNIE LAWHEAD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. W. A. Horton, N. Y., $3; Mrs. Mary E. Pittman, Kansas, $1; A. F. Jones, Ga., $1; Mrs Ananias Hastings, Md., $2.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1937.

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OUR VISIT TO CANADA.

RECEIVING an invitation during the winter months to visit the Baptists of Canada at their yearly meeting, held on the second Saturday, Sunday and Monday in May, and after pondering over the matter for some time in our heart we decided to go. Sister Alcorn, her son David, our wife, son and self left our home Wednesday before the second Sunday and drove to Winchester, Virginia, the first day, and on to Niagara Falls the second day, thence to Elder George Ruston's home on Friday. On our way we saw some of the wonders of creation: the caverns of Luray, Niagara Falls, and many other things that bore the evidence of the wisdom of God in his creation of all things. As we looked at the oil wells, coal mines and other products that were being brought forth by man from mother earth, each was an evidence of God's wisdom in providing for each generation, by storing in the earth their needs, and giving each generation knowledge to find these things as the need for them arises. As we look at the spiritual side of the question, we find all the spiritual needs of a chosen people were treasured in Christ before the world began. The apostle declares this when he says, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Hence we see that as each chosen vessel of mercy is brought by the quickening of the Holy Ghost to feel the need of salvation, in God's own way and time by faith this one is given to see that his spiritual needs were treasured up in Christ before the world began.

Arriving at Elder Ruston's home on Friday afternoon, we enjoyed a night in their home. The people of Canada are highly favored of the Lord in having Elder Ruston and his wife with them, and we are sure they feel that way about it. To know him and his family is to love them. We were with sister Grace Ashton, Elder Ruston's wife's sister, and Dr. McColl's wife, who were visiting them. We also had the privilege of meeting Dr. McColl at the meeting on Sunday, and as we separated from them Sunday afternoon we felt we were saying good-

bye to those who loved associating with the Lord's people.

On Saturday we met at meeting, where Elder Ruston and the writer spoke to the people morning and evening. At noon hour the congregation gathered in the basement, where lunch was served to all, and at the close of the afternoon meeting supper was served before returning home. These people leave nothing undone in providing for these meetings. Especially were we glad to see the young people taking an interest in the serving of the people, and in the meeting generally. The attendance at the meeting was large, on Sunday especially, and the congregation the most attentive of any we have ever spoken to, considering the number of people present. Most of the congregation joined in the singing, even to the children, and how good this looked to us. The only thing we saw we would like to have seen different was the members sitting near the back of the building, and not at the front of the house.

Saturday night we stayed with Deacon Leitch and wife, at Dutton, where we felt to be in good hands, and to enjoy their company. Sunday night we stayed with sister Regina Campbell, and we enjoyed a spiritual conversation with her Sunday evening.

We might mention here that there was one brother there who traveled fourteen hundred miles to be at the meeting.

Space forbids that we write more about the meeting. We will write of some of the practices which differ from ours here. Only church members remain during a church conference, and if some desire to join the church, these are invited to remain also. Only the members remain in the house during communion. Hymn books are not used in song service, but the Psalms are sung, and sometimes a familiar hymn is sung from memory by the congregation. There is only one church, with several meetinghouses. Elder George Ruston is the only orderly Baptist minister we know of in Canada. These people do not use the name "Primitive, or Old School Baptist" as we do, but they are called "Covenanted, or Particular Baptist Church." The doctrine is the same as preached by our people. This body, according to Hassell's Church History, was organized about the year 1818, and for a long time they did not know there were any others in America who believed as they did. Finally, through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES they were brought together.

Monday, after the close of the meeting, Elder Ruston came with us to a home where there was a sick friend; we do not remember the name, but remember the afflicted one.

As this is our regular time for writing an editorial for the SIGNS, we felt that instead of writing the usual editorial we would write this account of our visit, feeling the people of the United States might learn more about brethren in Canada; also Elder Ruston asked us to write of our trip.

D. V. S.

THREE QUESTIONS.

ONE of our subscribers in San Augustine, Texas, has asked us the following three questions:

1. Who does Matthew v. 23, 24, apply to? and should it be carried out?

2. When God said, Let us make man, does it mean the man that he formed of the dust of the ground?

3. Was Eve formed? If so when?

Matthew v. 23, 24, reads as follows: "Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Judging from the context, Jesus had gone apart from the multitudes up into a mountain, "and when he was set his disciples came unto him," which leads us to believe that he was addressing only his disciples. He referred to them as "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world," and declared, "If the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." He also said, "Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." He then told them, "That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Evidently, more is to be expected of the Lord's people than of those who know not the truth. In his teaching farther on in this chapter, he said, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?"—Matt. v. 43-47. Immediately preceding our text, he was reminding them of that which was said by them of old time: "Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: but I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire." He is here showing, to our mind, that brethren should deal with each other in a different manner than that practiced by men of the world. Paul wrote to the Corinthian brethren as follows: "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye

not that ye shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?"—1 Cor. vi. 1-3. We have felt that the gift referred to in our text has to do more particularly with that high and holy calling of a gospel minister. He is supposed to be an ensample to the flock, and should, therefore, follow the rule laid down in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, by first going to his brother alone, then taking one or two others, but if reconciliation cannot then be had, he should tell the matter to the church, and there leave his gift until the matter has been adjusted. This, if done in the right spirit, will test out the brother who has ought against him, and the church will then be the judge as to whether he is exercised by the spirit of the flesh, and should deal with him accordingly, unless he shows true repentance. Elder John McConnell, the late pastor of the Ebenezer Church, at New York City, advocated a church taking no action at all on an important matter upon which the membership could not agree. By standing still and refraining from offending a brother or sister, as the case may be, when they realize that they are responsible for the church taking no action, it should cause them to ponder seriously their position and ask themselves the question, whether their individual judgment is better than that of the whole church. It is, of course, possible that one member may be right and the entire church wrong, and mature consideration of a matter may save the church from error. If all possess the mind of Christ they will be agreed, since Christ is not divided. We feel that a minister should make haste slowly in matters of this kind, manifesting longsuffering and forbearance, and the same is true of every other member, but there are no doubt cases where one should leave his gift at the altar until he becomes reconciled to his brother. This can only be done in the proper way provided one is moved by the Holy Ghost.

In our opinion, the answer to question number two is, YES. The first chapter of Genesis records that the Lord created the heaven and the earth, and all things therein, including the fowls of the air and the beasts of the forest, and then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," etc. This must have been the natural creature which he formed of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

With reference to the third question, we see no good reason for deviating from what the Bible says about it. The twenty-seventh verse of the first chapter of Genesis reads, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." And in the second chapter of Genesis, verses twenty-one and twenty-two we read, "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man." Adam (the federal head) was manifested first, and then Eve. She had her standing in him, and God held

him accountable for her actions, which is evidenced by the fact that after the transgression, "the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?" Christ is declared to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, and the Lord held him accountable for all the sins of his people, having laid on him the iniquity of us all, and it is by his stripes we are healed. Jesus said, "Before Abraham was, I am." Therefore, all that the church has, and is, or can ever hope to be, is by reason of her relationship to Christ. God was evidently speaking concerning his church when he said unto the woman, in the sixteenth verse of the third chapter of Genesis, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."

We hope the answers which we have here given will be of interest to our readers and satisfying to our inquirer.

R. L. D.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

WHEN remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it. By referring to these dates you can tell to just what time your subscription is paid. Dec 35 means your subscription expired December, 1935; June 36 means your subscription expired June, 1936; Dec 37 that it will expire December, 1937, etc.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder D. L. Topping.)

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Black Rock Church, at Butler, Baltimore County, Maryland, Saturday and Sunday, May 29th and 30th, 1937, to the churches, associations and meetings with which we correspond, greetings in the Lord.

"And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thy altars, and have slain thy prophets with the sword: and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." The foregoing Scripture may be found in the first book of Kings, nineteenth chapter, tenth verse. What trying days were these for the prophet. Seemingly to him his whole life's work had been a complete failure; not only had they discredited his prophecy, but they had slain his fellow-prophets, and to intensify his suffering, these dreadful crimes were charged against his own people, the children of Israel. Where he had every right to look for encouragement, to the contrary he found them to be his most dreaded enemies. What was now left for him? They had slain his fellow-prophets, and what would prevent them from administering the same fate to him? "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts,"etc. To him the cause he had championed had met with defeat. In the face of such bitter opposition he could no longer continue the fight. So to the cave, a most desirable place to

forget the past. A remembrance of his life's work could only add misery to the bitterness of the past. Thus was Elijah brought to the end of his way. The place where the Lord brings every child of God, in order to show them His glorious deliverance. Elijah knew nothing of the seven thousand that the Lord had reserved in Israel which followed not after Baal. Elijah had become deeply concerned over that which the Lord alone can accomplish. Namely, electing grace. How quick mortals are to forget the power of God when things go contrary to their desires. What a great contrast is to be found in the manner of Elijah now and when he called for God's devouring fire from heaven. Could it be possible that mortal man could so soon forget such a wonderful display of God's almighty power? Yes, Satan has come between, and now he is overcome with fear that the work of the Lord has failed. We are not told of the joy that filled the soul of Elijah when the Lord revealed to him the perfect number that he had kept from false worship, but it is enough that the Lord has spoken, and the bitterness of death is past altogether. Not unlike Elijah, many of God's servants to-day often feel deeply concerned over the condition of our beloved Zion. They long for a more abiding evidence that their ministry stands approved of God. How often do they ask themselves, Why do those who know the truth tarry so long? surely my preaching does not reach them. And thus we become very anxious to hasten the work of the Lord. "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts," etc. All that the Father hath given me shall come unto me, said Jesus. It does not say they will come to the visible church, but come unto me. None shall ever fail in finding a Savior good and great who has heard the joyful sound, Come unto me. While the servant knows no joy exceeding that of having the lambs gathered into the fold, yet the Lord is not depending upon his ministers to bring sinners to a knowledge of the truth, or to bring the redeemed into His church. They are to take heed to themselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers; to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood. The Lord's servants have nothing to do with the planting, their duty is in nourishing that which the Holy Spirit has rooted, not being concerned about giving life, but rather giving instructions as to the manner of life which should be found in the walk of the child of God. Being reminded of the words of Paul, then let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. If there is anything in the gospel that the servant of the Lord desires to shun any more than he does the reproach of Christ, we are not aware of it. All of us like to be popular with all of the Lord's people, at the same time we like to find some excuse for telling his people their duty, and if we can only find some way whereby we will not suffer reproach our mind is at ease for a time, but sooner or later there will be a burning within, a fearful looking for of fiery indignation that shall devour the adversary. As the lamp is of use only

when the oil is being consumed, so the child of God is made fit for the Master's use by the mortifying of the deeds of the flesh.

Now we do not wish to be understood as to what we feel to be the duty of every child of God who may be on the outside of the church. Jesus said to one of old, Go home to thy friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for thee, and how he has had compassion upon thee. Shall we dare tell them to disobey their Lord and Master? God forbid. We had much rather be in agreement with Moses, and say unto them, Come, and go with us, we will do thee good. We are not told that we will ever feel worthy to be numbered with the Lord's people, but we are to view our blessed Head, whose worthiness has been accepted in our stead. "And to you who are troubled, rest with us; when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." We are few in number, but we know that the same God who led Israel through the Red Sea, was her guide and protector in the wilderness, to him she must look for bread, and it is from him to-day that we look for the bread of life, and to his dear name be our everlasting praise.

Many dear ones have been called to their reward since the Association last met with this church, among them being our dear brother, Elder J. T. Rowe, who was Moderator of this Association for over thirty-five years. While we miss him dreadfully, we know for him to depart is far better. May the Lord enable us to stand faithfully in our lot, as did our dear departed brother, and unto our God be all the honor, glory and praise now and for evermore. Amen.

D. L. TOPPING, Moderator.
QUINCY A. GLADDING, Clerk.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

A LITTLE band of believers in salvation by grace, who had been holding regular monthly services for nearly three years, decided at their regular preaching time, in April, that they would constitute a church near Steens, Mississippi (but in Alabama). Accordingly they called for ordained help for that purpose, and the following brethren responded: Elder G. W. Berry, pastor and member of Hopewell Church, and Moderator of Hopewell Association. Elder J. R. Pennington, member of New Prospect Church, and Moderator of Buttahatchie Association. Elder J. W. McCool, pastor and member of Zion Church, Hopewell Association. Elder E. Z. McCool, pastor and member of Mt. Carmel Church, Buttahatchie Association. Elder W. D. Griffin, member of Harmony Church, Hopewell Association.

After services by Elders W. D. Griffin, J. R. Pennington and G. W. Berry, we formed ourselves into a presbytery, by choosing Elder G. W. Berry Moderator and Elder W. D. Griffin Clerk.

1. Called for letters of those wishing to go into constitution, and read and approved them of the following brethren and sisters: Deacon William Baines, Licentiate J. C. Dorris, G. L. Blalock, Ruth Blalock, Ida Ray, Leona Zemoh, Minnie Sealy and Balma Callahan.

2. Called for, read and approved their Articles of Faith.

3. Called for, read and approved their Church Covenant.

4. Called for, read and approved their Rules of Decorum.

5. Prayer by Elder J. W. Cool.

6. Charge to the new church by Elder G. W. Berry.

7. The Moderator then pronounced them to be constituted into an orderly Old School Baptist Church, after which the right hand of fellowship was given to the new church and to each other.

The following Elders signed the proceedings: G. W. Berry, W. D. Griffin, Clerk, J. W. McCool, E. Z. McCool, J. R. Pennington.

The new church immediately went into conference, and decided to call the new church New Home, and chose as their pastor Elder W. D. Griffin and brother William Baines Clerk.

Brethren, let me say that this new church will probably join the Buttahatchie Association in her next session. We know it is encouraging to them, because what was once a flourishing association of several churches has dwindled down to four. Let me further say that each member of this church, together with each minister that was in the presbytery, stands on the principles that were laid down in the prospectus of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. They are worthy your visits.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, convening with the church at Black Rock, Baltimore County, Maryland, May 29th and 30th, 1937, sendeth greeting to the associations and meetings with whom we correspond, and to all lovers of the gospel.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have received your Minutes and messengers as being in accord with the principles and practice of this Association. In this day of seeming unconcern and falling away, we are glad that there is still a remnant of like precious faith, with whom we can meet and hear the unsearchable riches of Christ proclaimed. Oh that the Lord would awaken and enable us, both as a church and as a nation, to give thanks for his merciful care and protection. Our membership is small, and without the kindness and hospitality of our friends we could not hold these meetings, therefore we desire to express our gratitude to the friends of the Black Rock Church for their kind assistance. The time and place for holding the next session of the Association will be published later.

Submitted in love.

D. L. TOPPING, Moderator.

QUINCY A. GLADDING, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. J. Collins, June 8th, 1937, Leroy Morris and Annie Elizabeth Bolin, Slocomb, Alabama.

By the same, June 16th, 1937, E. C. Campbell and Leona Blount, of Graceville, Florida.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DR. JOHN BOGGS GARRISON was born at Blawnburg, New Jersey, January 8th, 1849, and departed this life May 19th, 1937, making his stay on earth 88 years, 4 months and 11 days. He was the son of the late Peter Sutphin and Hannah Boggs Garrison, and the gandson of the late Elder John Boggs, who served the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church for over fifty years as pastor. He received his first elementary education at Blawnburg public school, and then took an academic course under his uncle (William Deweese Boggs), who was an instructor in English and Latin in the Hopewell Seminary, which was conducted by Misses Elizabeth H. and Mary J. Boggs. After completing his degree required in that school, he returned to the farm, on which he grew to manhood. After ten years of farming, he began the study of medicine at the Homeopathic Medical College and Flower Hospital, in New York City, from which he graduated, with an M. D. degree in 1882. He then began the practice of medicine in New York City, on East Seventy-second Street, and where he practiced his profession for fifty years. He moved to Hopewell, N. J., about thirty years ago, but commuted daily to his office, and practiced for several years. After his returning to Hopewell he was a regular attendant at the meetings of the Old School Baptist Church, in which he manifested a great interest, and in June, 1920, he came before the church, and through his relation of faith was received into the fellowship of the church, and was baptized by Elder C. W. Vaughn, June 20th, 1920. In this relation he proved the sincerity of his profession by his walk and conversation. He was chosen by the church to serve her as Deacon, in which service he manifested the qualifications required in Paul's epistle to Timothy, much to the satisfaction of the church. It has been the pleasure of the writer to know the man as a gentleman, doctor and member of the church of God, and we can truly say of him, that he was one of rare quality in every way you met him. He was twice married. His first marriage was to Miss Emma J. Hill, of Kingston, N. Y., and to that union were born three children: Hannah Isabel, Hilda J. and John Boggs Garrison, Jr. The eldest and youngest died in childhood, but Hilda lived to maturity and was of much comfort to her father and mother. Her mother preceded her to the grave, leaving her to mourn with her father, and after two or three years cancer took her away, leaving her father to mourn alone for all the family God had given him. In the realities of his loneliness his affections were drawn to Mrs. Frances Hill Riley, a widow, a schoolmate and friend in youth, to whom he was married in the year 1922. She preceded him in the year 1933. The proof of the man he was is that in all his different relations with men he was sought out as one of honor and high esteem. He did not leave any close relatives to mourn for him, but he did leave the church and the entire community to realize a great loss, and no one will miss him more than his pastor. Much more could be said that would be of interest to our readers, but it would be quite lengthy, so we will close, with sadness in our heart for the loss we have sustained by his being taken from us, but we feel that our loss

is his eternal gain, and we should not weep for him as though he had no hope. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

C. W. V.

ELDER T. J. BELL was born near Holly Springs, Miss., December 8th, 1871. In the year 1884 he, together with his widowed mother, moved to Johnson County, Texas, being at that time thirteen yars of age. At the age of fifteen he received a hope in Christ and became a member of the Methodist denomination, remaining with them seven years. Becoming dissatisfied with them, he stayed out of the church for three years. At the age of twenty-five years he became a member of the Primitive Baptist Church. In the year 1890 he moved with his mother into the Indian Territory, which is now the State of Oklahoma. There he married Mrs. Cornelia Spurlock, and to their union were born four children, all of whom remain to mourn the loss of their father. His wife preceded him in death. Elder Bell enjoyed one great comfort seldom enjoyed by one of his faith: that of living in the church with three of his children. He received a call to the ministry and began to preach the gospel at the age of thirty-three. He departed this life April 3rd, 1937, at his home in Dustin, Okla., having been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church forty-one years. Thus we witness the passing of another one of the redeemed of the Lord, a true and tried servant of the most high God, a good husband, father, and a friend to man. Chosen of God to suffer many sore trials, persecutions and afflictions, and ordained of God to bear them with all humility, and in the midst of it all called and qualified to preach the unsearchable riches of a crucified Christ to the comfort and edification of God's humble poor. Having known the deceased for many years, and having been with him much and traveling many miles with him as a yoke-fellow in the bonds of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and hearing him talk of the glorious hope he had carried since he was fifteen years old, and hearing him proclaim in the power and demonstration of the Spirit of God the glorious gospel that comforts the dear children of God, I feel that if one so unworthy as I know myself to be can bear witness I can truly say, Surely this man was a man of God. Many times when it seemed that his mind was in deepest sorrow his mind would be led out upon the glorious things contained in the Scriptures and he would be carried away to those lofty heights far above all things that are timely, and as his voice would ring out, tuned by the sweet spirit of love and truth, in his radiant face, and in the very depth of his sparkling eyes one seemed to behold the face of the Son of God. Oh how I have seen the dear Old Baptists rejoice as he stood before them, upheld by His omnipotent arm, led by His unerring Spirit to proclaim to them salvation by grace, election, the final perseverance of the saints, the resurrection of the dead and the predestination of all things. The last discourse he preached was at our Association, of which he was a member, near Dustin, Okla., in August, 1936. I call to witness all those present of our faith who have been taught of God to know the truth, if they ever witnessed a more heavenly sight? Sick and afflicted in body, so much so that he was unable to stand, seated on the side of his cot, utterly dependent upon the mercy of God, he was given strength of body and mind, and a tongue of utterance that faltered not, and for a long period of time we dined with him at the Master's table. Surely the Lord was his Shepherd. Surely he was given his rod

and his staff upon which to lean, for by God's all-abounding grace he was enabled to fill our cups to overflowing and our hearts were made to sing with one of old, Surely thy goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our lives. It was indeed a great comfort to be with him. I believe I can bear witness with all present that this was a scene and a message that will live in their memories forever. One of his favorite texts was, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" and his favorite hymn, "Oh for a closer walk with God." It was indeed a great comfort to me to be with him near the end of his journey here. His faith never faltered. He stood firm and steadfast to the end, trusting in the sovereignty of his God, believing to the end that God works all things after the counsel of his own will, and that all things work together for good to them that love God. His vision of that crown that awaited him in the resurrection seemed to be clear to the last. Many times he said to me that this thought was the crowning glory of his hope, when he could lay his armor by and lie down in the arms of his Savior and be at rest. Dear old faithful soldier of the cross, there is no doubt in the minds of those who knew him as to his enjoying the fulfillment of that blessed hope. Though he has gone to that blessed rest, and we shall behold him here no more, yet with us he lives and journeys on. He will ever live in our memories as an example to all who know him in his daily walk and conversation. As I stood before his brethren and sisters in the faith I could think of no better text to use in reference to him than these passages of Scripture: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."—2 Tim. iv. 6, 7.

In order that all who read these lines may better know who brother Bell was: He was a nephew of sister Lydia C. Ray, of Silverton, Texas, whose obituary appeared in the September, 1923, issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Submitted in loving remembrance of a dear yoke-fellow who I hope to meet beyond the Jordan of death.

W. P. SNIDER.

SISTER NANCY (Kennedy) GENGE died at her late home in Denver, Colorado, March 21st, 1937. She was the only daughter of William and Catherine Kennedy, and was born in Duart, Ontario, where she spent her childhood years. For years she was engaged in business activities, principally in Toronto and Montreal, yet she always, until she married, made Duart her home. She joined the Covenanted Baptist Church, and was baptized by Elder A. B. Francis, May 1st, 1908, and was always a very worthy member, happy to meet with her brethren, and all who loved the truth. On January 21st, 1931, she became the wife of Edwin H. Genge, and from that time her home was with her husband and his family in Denver, Colorado. For over six years she was a loving wife and companion, devoted to him and his family, and loved by them all. She leaves to mourn their loss, a husband and five step-children, also a sister-in-law in Duart, who was very devoted to her, and Eldon W. Kennedy, her only nephew. Her only brother, John W. Kennedy, died December 17th, 1918. Her sorrowing husband and his daughter Christine brought the remains to Duart for interment. The funeral services were held March 25th, and were attended by a large gathering of those who had known and loved her. The day before she died she tried to repeat Psalm 103, and a minister of the family coming in at that time, read the whole

Psalm, she repeating it after him. To those who loved her it was a great comfort to know that in death her voice was heard to praise the Lord. We spoke from a few verses of the above Psalm, with the desire to comfort her loved ones in their loss. May the Lord comfort and reconcile them to his own sovereign will.

G. R.

MRS. SARAH E. (Clements) BARNETTE was born January 24th, 1866, was married to W. W. Barnette, Sr., August 12th, 1883, and departed this life January 31st, 1937. She was the proud mother of five girls and six boys, of whom all but one boy survive. She was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We feel you will be willing to publish this notice for us.

W. W. BARNETTE, SR.

MEETINGS.

The Lord willing, there will be meeting at North Berwick, Maine, on Sunday, August 15th, 1937, at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m., and Saturday afternoon before.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The regular all-day annual meeting is planned to be held as usual at Slate Hill, N. Y., on Friday, August 20th, 1937. Elders Arnold H. Bellows and Charles W. Vaughn have promised to be with us. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to be present.

R. LESTER DODSON.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in August (29th). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held at the Garten schoolhouse, five miles east of Garber, Oklahoma, beginning on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1937, the 10th, 11th and 12th. Those coming by railroad should come on the Rock Island to Enid, Oklahoma, or on the Santa Fe to Perry, Oklahoma. Those desiring to be met with conveyance should write to Uriah Garten, Garber, Oklahoma. Bus service to Garber, but only mixed train service. At Garber inquire for Mrs. Annie Kimmel, or write to brother Garten. Lovers of the truth and ministers of our faith and order are invited to meet with us.

(MRS.) MARY ELLISON, Clerk,
GRANTVILLE, Kansas.

The Lord willing, the Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 10th, 11th and 12th, 1937. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will meet on Wednesday and Thursday, September 15th and 16th, 1937, with the First and Second Churches of Roxbury, at the Yellow Meetinghouse, two miles below Roxbury village, in Roxbury, N. Y. We invite ministers of our faith and order, in fellowship with us, to meet with us, also all brethren and friends will be accorded a hearty welcome. Those who may come on Tuesday before the meeting of the Association may stop at Halcottville, N. Y., and inquire either at the post office or the residence of Scott Clark, where information will be given regarding places of entertainment. Trains and buses stop at Halcottville, which make connection with Kingston, N. Y. Trains and buses will be met at Halcottville on Tuesday. The Association will open on Wednesday morning at 10:30 o'clock. Standard Time.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Moderator.

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets the third Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, at 10:30 a. m. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, 421 Steele, Street, Frankfort, Ky.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Shiloh Old School Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., holds her meetings on the third Sunday in each month, in Pithian Temple, 1012 Ninth St. N. W., at 3 p. m. Take elevator to fourth floor. All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 105. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1937. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WINNSBORO, Texas, January, 1937.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Having been requested to write something for the SIGNS now and then, and feeling some inclination of mind to do so at this time, I will submit a few thoughts for your consideration on the all-important subject of salvation.

What we need most to consider is what the word of inspiration teaches on the subject. Who saved? and what is it that is said to be saved? From what are the subjects of salvation saved? and how? and what is it that does the saving? The apostle Paul said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."—1 Tim. i. 15. We have set forth in this short text both what is saved and the Savior, and there is no other text in the Bible that contradicts it. As to who or what those sinners are we have no reason to guess or speculate. Evidently they are the offspring of the first (in the order of manifestation) man "Adam, who is of the earth earthy."—1 Cor. xv. 47. These are sinners, LOST sinners. How did they become so? "Wherefore, as by one man [not by one spirit or one devil] sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Again, "For as by one *man's* disobedience many were made sinners,' etc.—Rom. v. 12, 19. Do we read anywhere in the Bible about any other set of beings called sinners, outside of Adam's family? Does the Bible tell us anywhere about any sinners before Adam's creation and transgression? Not knowing of any Scripture testimony to the contrary, I am going to assert that Adam's progeny are the only beings made sinners by his transgression. If there were any sinners before the creation of Adam we have no record of it. If there are any classes of beings in the world, or ever have been, outside of Adam's posterity, that are called sinners, subjects of salvation, I have not found it on

record in the Scriptures. The subjects then of that salvation found in the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ were sons and daughters of the first man Adam, and not all of his posterity, but such as were elected, chosen in Christ Jesus and predestinated (unto this salvation) unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself according to the good pleasure of his own will. (Eph. i. 1-4.) Evidently it was men and women of Adam's race that were saved by him "who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were."—Rom. iv. 17, given to his Son in covenant "when as yet there was none of them."—Psalms cxxxix. 16. For Jesus said in prayer unto the Father, As thou hast given me power over all FLESH, that I should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given me. "I have manifested thy name unto the MEN which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word."—John xvii. 2, 6. Among many places in Scripture we might cite to prove personal, particular, unconditional election of men and women unto salvation I would call attention to Romans ix. 10-13: "When Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." A little further down in the same chapter we read, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles."—Rom. ix. 21-24. In another place it is said, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels," but here the vessel itself is called, A vessel of mercy, afore prepared unto glory. These are the subjects embraced in that "everlasting covenant" spoken of by our typical high priest and shepherd, David. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5: "Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." A covenant is a testament, a will, and necessarily includes heirs, and an inheritance. It also expresses the purpose of the testator, as is set forth in Psalms xxxiii. 11, 12: "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." This, then, is a "people" chosen of God in Christ ere time began, and blessed here in time, with "all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ," according to his

choice. (Eph. i. 3-5.) Jesus Christ himself is the central figure; in fact, the sum and substance of all the spiritual blessings of this "everlasting covenant" that was in time to be manifested in and to the heirs of promise. In Isaiah xlii. 6, we read, "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles." In him was life, spiritual life, given to them "when as yet there was none of them," in a manifest sense. With him who is omnipresent and omniscient all things are, and ever have been, present, and as actual with him as they are to finite beings when actually manifested. Hence he "calleth those things which be not as though they were." Jesus said to the unbelieving Jews, "Before Abraham was, I am," yet they could think of him only as less than fifty years old. In God's account this life in Jesus, which is eternal life, as much united them to the head (Christ) as it did after it was manifested in them here in time. It is by the power and law (nature) of this life, and its operation in the heart, that each heir of promise is experimentally brought into union with the Head, and by which he is predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he (God's Son) might be the firstborn among many brethren. (Rom. viii. 29.) In this covenant, or purpose, of God his people were seen as sheep having gone astray, so it is said in the prophecy of Isaiah, "All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."—Isaiah liii. 6. Jesus, having in this covenant relationship accepted this people as his bride, became their surety, and so was justly due to meet her obligations and suffer the penalty of her transgressions, and so Isaiah says, "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." As I see it, omniscience saw this people, both in their fallen, depraved and utterly lost state, by virtue of their transgression in their common head, Adam, and in their relationship to and standing in him, and also their relationship to and standing in Jesus Christ, and looking at them all down the annals of time, unto the end, in their holy standing it could be truly said, "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath seen perverseness in Israel."—Num. xxiii. 21. It is by the virtue of the righteousness of Jesus Christ imputed to them (their sins having been imputed to him), and he having satisfied every demand of justice against them, that they stand acquited and justified in the sight of his holy Father. The life, or Spirit, that manifests, quickens and calls, and characterizes the heirs of promise as such, never was sinful and never sinned, and hence are not, cannot be, the subjects of salvation from sin. But sinners, the recipients of this life, and who are quickened from the dead, and called by it, are sinners, and do need salvation from their sins, and they have it, by the grace of God, in the person, blood and righteousness of him

whom the Father hath appointed both their High Priest and Sacrifice. In this natural life, even with Christ, who is their life, dwelling by faith in them, they are still sinners by Adamic nature and practice. In them the Scripture is fulfilled, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."—Gal. v. 17. As Jesus came under the law that held his people in bondage, and took not on himself the nature of angels, but took on himself the seed of Abraham and identified himself as one with his children, in their humanity, yet without sin, "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."—Heb. ii. 15, 16. So his children are made partakers of the divine nature and become manifestly one with him. By virtue of this relationship, they stand holy and without blame before him in love. To the Thessalonians we hear Paul saying, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."—1 Thess. v. 23, 24. So we see that the *saints,* people composed of spirit, soul and body, are spoken of as blameless, and Paul assures us that God, who is faithful, will preserve them so. Still, this blessed people in this world are appointed to temptations, trials, persecutions and tribulation. "As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter," yet nothing shall be able to separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. See Romans viii. Even death hath no victory over this people, for the Lord hath said, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death; O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes."—Hosea xiii. 14. The final act in the full manifestation, or consummation of this wonderful salvation of sinners, will be the resurrection of the dead at the last day. Paul the apostle tells us, Romans viii. 29, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn [from the dead] among many brethren." See also Colossians i. 18; 1 Corinthians xv. 20, and Revelation i. 5. As by the power and law of a natural life a natural man is originated and developed in the image of the *first* (in the order of manifestation in time) man Adam, so by the power and law of a spiritual life the subject of salvation is conformed to the image of Jesus, which conformation begins with the implantation of spiritual life, and is consummated in the resurrection of the dead. When Jesus shall come the second time, without sin unto salvation. "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things

unto himself." See Hebrews ix. 28, and Philippians iii. 21. And again, the apostle Paul said, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be *changed,* in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality, so when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory"—1 Cor. xv. 51-55. See also 1 Thessalonians iv. 13-18.

I will now close, by saying that to my mind without the resurrection of the dead, and a change from corruptible to incorruptible, and from mortal to immortal, the idea of a full salvation of sinners is lost.

In the hope of such salvation, I am, I trust, your brother,

H. B. JONES.

FIGSBORO, Va., May 10, 1937.

DEAR EDITORS:—If in your judgment the two inclosed letters are suitable matter for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, please publish them. I have brother Via's consent.

Yours in hope,

J. E. BURGESS.

BASSETTS, Va., April 3, 1937.

ELDER J. E. BURGESS--DEAR BROTHER:—I received your letter some eight or ten days ago, and it was a great comfort to me to know that you could fellowship such an one as I am. I thought to write you before this, but did not have much chance, as the doctor said he would check me over and see if I could come home. He decided to let me come when the weather was fit, and two of my brothers came down in the rain to get me, but the Lord gave us a fine day to come home, where I now am once more, and I truly hope to stay, but we never know what the Lord has in store for us. But according to the Bible, we know we must have sorrow, trials and afflictions as long as we dwell in this house of clay, yet we cannot tell in just what form or way it is coming. I stood the trip better than I expected, and am about the same since I came home as I was before; can sit up and stir around a little.

You spoke of having my letters published. I did not write them for publication, and I feel there are plenty better letters to fill the space, but you are at liberty to use them as you see fit. I would like to have yours published also, but for some of the things you say about and in connection with me might be misleading to those who do not know me personally, and cause them to think that I feel to be something, when I know of a truth that I, of my own self, am nothing, and less than nothing, and altogether vanity, and my righteousness is as filthy rags. I am unable to have a good thought or do a good deed except my mind be directed to that end.

I am glad you are still able to serve the brethren most of the time, and may

you long be blest to that end. I feel sure you had rather be a servant of the most high King than to be a ruler of provinces, for there is a big difference between the office of a servant and a hireling. One is working according to agreement, and the arrangement and covenant he helped to make. The other is directed by the orders of his Master, Captain and King, according to the faith he has in him, which was given him without any agreement of the servant. I feel you understand what I mean, so I must close, for there is hardly an end to the foregoing subject.

I hope to meet you ere long, and may the Lord continue to keep us all, is the desire of your brother in hope,

HOMER O. VIA.

ASHVILLE, N. C., April 7, 1937.

ELDER J. E. BURGESS—BELOVED BROTHER IN ISRAEL:—It is with a degree of fear and reluctance I address you thus, but I have a little hope (that I would not exchange for this world and the fullness thereof) that by the grace and mercy of God I sometimes feel it may be I am one of that number, and, if not deceived, I have tasted both of the gall and vinegar and of the manna from heaven. The manna is sweet and good to eat, to those who know what it is, but I believe of a necessity the bitter precedes the sweet, and by many sips of this gall, together with many sorrows, trials and afflictions, we learn its worth, and it becomes sweeter, more valuable and precious to the pilgrim with every trial and conflict.

Dear brother, with this last operation, and since I last wrote you, I have been very sick, and somehow I feel sure by and through the mercy, love and grace of the all-wise, all-powerful, omnipotent, eternal, self-existing, immutable and ever-to-be-adored God that I, the chief of sinners, am again so highly favored as to be able to write you, for which I hope I am thankful. It was as death's shadows were hanging low over me, and my eyes were dimming fast to the light of this world, when my surgeon succeeded in finding a person whose blood matched mine, and he hurried and gave me a transfusion, which revived me in a short while. But for about three weeks most things are as a vague dream, and of part the time I remember but very little. A greater part of the time I was begging that if it could be his will to let me live. Not that I deserved to live, but if he would raise me and give me strength I would answer the call and impression, if not deceived, that has been on me all these years. Yes, I am now ready to take back all the vows I ever made that I would not go. If you will raise me, Lord, I will go where thou direct, as long as orderly and doctrinal brethren call on me, and I will serve thy little ones with the ability that you will give me. Oh that I might be enabled to ascribe some praise and honor to thy holy name each day thou keepest me here. Thy mercy and love endureth forever. "Thou art the sinner's friend, as such I look to thee." The poet well said,

"Oh love divine, that stooped to share
Our sharpest pang, our bitterest tear,

On thee we cast each earth-born care,
We smile at pain while thou art near."

I am still quite weak, and suffer much, but seem to be improving slowly. I want to say that my suffering has been great, but all these years I have never suffered one pain too many, nor a groan in vain, but in some inexplainable way it has been for my good and God's glory. As Paul said, In afflictions we remember the Lord. And we are taught that we learn obedience by the things which we suffer. It makes me wonder often if I could be one of that number, for it seems I have been a stubborn and rebellious boy all the days of my life, and though right now, amid all my agony and pain, I feel to be willing to answer any impression or call, I somehow know by past experience that if God gave me health and prosperity I would rebel again. So it is that the carnal mind is enmity to God, not subject to his laws, neither indeed can be.

In reference to the letter you spoke of on your card, I have been so sick I do not remember just when I wrote you, nor what I wrote, but if I said anything that in your judgment gives God all praise, honor and glory, and you think it might give one of his little ones just a little comfort, it is yours to use as you see fit, though I do not feel, and never have felt, able to comfort one of God's little ones, for I feel so destitute of the power it takes to do that. But I often feel that my time here is no more mine, and that God for some purpose known only to himself has lifted me from beneath the shadows of death these several times in the past eighteen years, and that he knows what it is for, but to me it remains a mystery, even though, if not deceived, he has shown me a part of my journey, including the years of sickness and sorrow that I am passing through. But I will not attempt to tell any of that now, for my letter has already become lengthy, and I fear wearisome, for in my weakness I have written it lying in bed and at different times and I realize it is very rambling, but for the past four years I have had to do my writing in bed. So I trust you may be enabled to cast the mantle of charity over my errors and imperfections, and may the Lord enable you to remember me and mine in prayer, for the fervent prayers of the righteous availeth much. I am indeed glad your health is good enough for you to serve the brethren regularly in the different churches, and may the Lord continue blessing you to proclaim that God-honoring doctrine, and to keep you and yours, together with all true Israel, through the future scenes of this pilgrimage, is the desire of your brother in tribulation.

I am inclosing a little poem I wrote one night when I was very sick, which was a part of my mind and feelings.

Now that thou art with me,
And have been day-by day,
Let thy Spirit be upon me
While I try to pray.

Lord, let me live, I beg,
To serve the redeemed few;
Keep me humble at their feet,
And give me faith anew.

Make my work to praise thee, Lord,
Each day that I may stay,
And comfort all of one accord,
Until I'm taken away.

HOMER O. VIA.

SAUGERTIES, N. Y., Dec. 23, 1936.

DEAR ELDER AND MRS. BELLOWS:—I received your letter and derived much comfort from it. My desire is to be found walking and living in the fear of the Lord. One thing I feel the full assurance of is that I am a sinner.

I was disappointed that I was not able to attend meeting last Sunday at Shokan. Even though I am deaf, I feel better to be among the children of God. I dearly love them all. I cannot call them brethren in church relationship, but I have a spiritual love for them, also for you and Mrs. Bellows. We are not strangers. It was God's will that I had to meet Mrs. Bellows, for I dearly loved her father and her grandfather, who always seemed very near and dear to me.

When I was a girl, an aunt of mine lived with my grandmother and was taken very sick while I was out in the field in my playhouse. It was then God spoke to me. I was too young to read or understand God's word, and I ran to the house and told my grandmother that my aunt was going to die, and I told her what I had heard spoken to me. She said it was a passage of Scripture from the Bible, that some day I would understand it was God speaking to me. I told her I wanted to understand "Brother Bender," as I used to call him. It used to delight him to hear me call him that, because I was so young, though I did not know the meaning of that expression. Many things happened in those intervening years. My grandmother died. I could not get to meeting, so I went to the Methodist meetings near by to play the organ for the choir, and even joined their church, but all the time my mind went back to the wonderful sermons of Elder Gilbert Beebe and Elder William Beebe, which were like bread for a hungry soul. I did not believe the doctrine the Methodists preached and I began to feel it wrong to go to their meetings any more. After I learned that you were preaching, I began cutting clippings from the paper of the Sundays that you preached at Shokan, and it seemed to me that God kept telling me to go, but I felt too unworthy. I could not rest until I went there, and I found you to be a messenger of God, firm in the doctrine once delivered unto the saints. I cannot hear my voice when I talk, as I have lost my hearing entirely, and I feel that my words are loud and indistinct, so do not speak in the meetings, but my heart is touched. It is God's will for me to be deaf. He is the one that afflicted me, so I am content to submit to his will. He suffered for us. "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." God does not chastise us in anger, but in love. When my husband died it seemed to me the bottom had fallen out of the world and I could no longer take an interest in anything. But God spoke to me and comforted me and has been my sole Comforter since. I live alone in my little bungalow in Saugerties, and it is my house of prayer and worship with the invisible God. The Bible is the only book I care to read. It is a perfect guide and full of precious

promises and commandments. Why drift to other books?

I did not expect to write as much as I have, but my mind wandered.

Wishing you both a very pleasant Christmas and a prosperous new year, I am sincerely your friend in the Lord,

(MRS.) ALICE BEESMER.

CORVALLIS, Ore., July 28, 1936.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am slow in sending in to renew my subscription, as you will see, and this may be the last time I will be able to renew. I love the contents of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and want to take it as long as I live. The time of my departure is near at hand, but to depart and be with Christ is far better than to stay in this world. Jesus is our stay, our staff, our High Priest, our life, our resurrection and our Redeemer. Of all his children that his Father gave him he lost none. The elect are all saved, both Jew and Gentile; no difference in them, for they are both made one in him. We are free from sin, yet we have our troubles, trials and tribulations while we are here in this body; our flesh is not made free from sin while we live here on earth. Our sins were laid on Jesus and he put them away by the sacrifice of himself. He washed them away with his own blood, yet we need his guiding hand every day and hour to keep us in the strait and narrow path. Yes, we must be kept there by the power of our God or we will go astray. He is a loving and merciful God. He is Father over us all, so let us all hold up our heads a few more days, or months, or years, as the case may be with us. The Lord has said he would never leave nor forsake us, and his words are truth and they are life. I love to read the travels and experiences of the many good writers, and witness with them in many things in traveling from nature to grace, from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light. The command is to walk in the light and to love one another. The whole duty of man is to fear God and keep his commandments. I suppose all the writers know the Scriptures of eternal truth and understand them better than I do.

May peace, love and union abide with all the household of faith, is the desire of a poor pilgrim sinner,

JAMES EDWARDS.

BLACK SPRINGS, Arkansas.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—I wish I could tell you how much I enjoy reading your truthful paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but I cannot. I beg an interest in your prayers, if you can stoop so low as to notice one so low as I feel myself to be. May God bless and comfort you all, is my wish.

Your lonely sister and friend, I hope,

H. M. COX.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

W. R. Wallis, Miss., $6; Mrs. M. J. Goodwin, Ark., $1; Mrs. Ida M. Elmendorf, N. Y., $1; William H. Morris, Mo., $1; Mrs. Mary A. Drew, N. Y., $2; Hewitt Osborn, N. Y., $2.

EDITORIAL.

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ARTICLE II.

THE ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS.

OF all that Elder Gilbert Beebe wrote during the nearly fifty years that he edited and published the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, it was this article more than any other, no doubt, which brought down upon his head the greatest condemnation and made for him some of the bitterest religious enemies that any man ever had. At the same time, we are confident, it was this as much as any other which revealed him to be the valiant champion that he was for the truth and won for him some of the staunchest friends and most loyal brethren that mortal man ever possessed. His day saw the birth of many new and strange things and it was his lot to advocate and defend the doctrine of God our Savior as few men have since the days of the apostles. It was very evident that the Lord raised him up and gave him wisdom, courage and strength to wield "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon," to the glory of God and the comfort of spiritual Israel. Unquestionably what Elder Beebe meant by this article was that predestination is "absolute" and that it means exactly what the word signifies.

As for ourself, we wrote in some detail upon this subject in December, 1923, and again in December, 1926, as those who keep their SIGNS will see by reference to those issues, and we have probably dealt upon this phase of truth as much, if not more than any other in our writings in general during the past fourteen years, so that there can hardly be any question in the minds of our readers as to what our position is relative to this article. Since we promised, however, to write, in their consecutive order, upon all the articles in the Prospectus, we will once more attempt to set forth what we firmly believe to be the truth with regard to the predestination and purposes of our God. On this occasion, we will quote for a topic, or text, the Scripture found in Genesis l. 20: "BUT AS FOR YOU, YE THOUGHT EVIL AGAINST ME: BUT GOD MEANT IT UNTO GOOD, TO BRING TO PASS, AS IT IS THIS DAY, TO SAVE MUCH PEOPLE ALIVE." Most of the readers of the

SIGNS are familiar with the case of Joseph and his brethren, but the importance of the subject is such that we shall feel at liberty to resort to a free and frequent use of the Scriptures, in order to show the actual record as it is in Holy Writ. If we have a "thus saith the Lord" for what we write, no one will be able to gainsay it, and if what we present is not supported by the written word of God, it will be undeserving of the serious consideration of all who love the Lord in sincerity and in truth. We are going to ask that our readers observe carefully each incident in the life of Joseph, every one of which will be found to be significant and full of meaning. It should be noted that he was the *first-born* of Jacob by the wife whom he really loved. Rachel, his mother, regarded him as a gift from God, for she said at his birth, "God hath taken away my reproach." Jacob "loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colors." God began his work in Joseph at a very early age by giving him two dreams, which signified that he would rule over all of his brethren, and when he told them his dreams "they hated him yet the more." And when his father had sent him unto them, "They said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh. Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams."—Gen. xxxvii. 19, 20. How true concerning Joseph were the words of Paul, where he said, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ," for God's hand surely watched over every step that he took, and preserved him unto the end; therefore, they could not kill him. "And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it." We need not ask why it was that there was no water in the pit. "And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmeelites came from Gilead, with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt. And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him: for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content. Then there passed by Midianites, merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to he Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt."—Gen. xxxvii. 24-28. This was the very place where the Lord was going to make use of him, but he had much to endure before the hand of the Lord was to be clearly revealed. His brethren had stripped him of his coat of many colors, and they killed a kid of the goats and dipped the coat in the blood, taking it to their father that he might believe that Joseph had been devoured by some evil beast, and this caused Jacob to mourn many days for

his son. Joseph was then sold to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officers, whose wife took a fancy to him, and after failing in her repeated attempts to ensnare him, by falsely accusing him she had him cast into prison. There he appears to have remained quite some time, at least long enough for Pharaoh's butler, whose dream he had correctly interpreted, to forget all about him, but it is very evident that the Lord was still mindful of him. In fact, it is plainly declared that "The Lord was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison," who committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; "and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the Lord was with him, and that which he did, the Lord made it to prosper."—Gen. xxxix. 21-23. It was only after the Lord had caused king Pharaoh himself to dream two dreams, which greatly troubled him, that the butler was reminded of his fault. But, first, Pharaoh must prove that the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof, could not interpret his dreams, nor tell the meaning of them. Then the butler recited to his lord the incident involving himself and the chief baker, who were put in prison by the king, and who had dreams which were correctly interpreted by Joseph. "Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon; and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, that thou canst understand a dream to interpret it." But Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, "It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace." Thereupon he proceeded to tell him that "the dream is one," and that the reason it was doubled, or repeated, was *"Because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass."* The significance of the dream was that there was to be seven years of plenty, to be followed by seven years of famine, and Joseph said, "Let Pharaoh look out a man discrete and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt," to gather and store up food and corn during the good years, for the lean years which were certain to follow. Pharaoh's answer to his servants was, "Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?" Pharaoh put Joseph in authority and made him ruler over all Egypt, and suffice it to say that he measured up to that which was required of him, for he stored up a sufficiency for the needs of all, against the day of adversity. In due time, the famine came upon them, and by and by it began to be sorely felt by Jacob and Joseph's brethren. Jacob, of necessity, was compelled to send to Egypt for corn, and the manner in which Joseph dealt with his brethren was really intriguing. He knew them, but they knew him not, and he inquired all about them and made as though he thought they were spies, requiring that they

prove themselves to be true men, demanding that they bring their younger brother, Benjamin, with them, for said he, "Bring your youngest brother unto me; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die." This made them very sensible of their own guilt, in dealing with Joseph, and they confessed one to another that "we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us." Joseph so divined in his dealings with them, in having the money with which they had bought corn put back in their sacks and the cup which was found in Benjamin's sack, as to cause them to rend their clothes and make supplications to him. How true it is that the Lord searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins of men, and will prove every man's work, of what sort it is. What a solemn and sacred scene when Joseph made himself known unto his brethren! The Egyptians could not witness such a sight, for Joseph had commanded that none but his brethren be allowed to remain. The unregenerate to-day cannot look upon the work which God carries on in the hearts of his people. "Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said unto them, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt." They were evidently pricked in their hearts. But then he begins to show compassion, by saying, "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: *for God did send me before you to preserve life.* For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing or harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt. Haste ye, and go to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me: tarry not: and thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast: and there will I nourish thee; for yet there are five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty."—Gen xlv. 4-11. When they returned to their father and told him all the words of Joseph, "the spirit of Jacob their father revived: and Israel said, It is enough. Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die."—Gen. xlv. 27, 28. Is it any wonder that Jacob in preparing to go hence, and in pronouncing his last words upon his sons, should have said, "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall: the archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him: but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob: (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Is-

rael:) even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee: and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with the blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb: the blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren."—Gen. xlix. 22-26. After Jacob's death, Joseph's brethren were fearful that he would turn against them, and they went and fell down before his face, and said, "Behold, we be thy servants." But Joseph said unto them, "Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me: but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." They *thought,* or studied, and planned evil against him, but God *meant,* or purposed, that good should come of it. How glad we are that there is an overruling Providence, who controls all things, including the acts of wicked men and devils, that they should go no farther than the length of their chain, in accomplishing the end of his glorious purpose.

Our readers were asked to observe carefully the incidents in Joseph's life. The reason for this was, we consider Joseph a type of Christ. As a type is not perfect, but comes short of the substance which it represents, we believe it will be seen from the record of divine truth that the links in the chain of God's eternal purpose concerning his Son were even more definitely welded together than in the case of Joseph, and since some good brethren have spoken rather freely, from time to time, about "God's permissive decrees," what he allows, etc., we now desire to examine into the Bible record on these points. According to Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, the word "permit" is only to be found twice in the whole Bible: 1st Corinthians xvi. 7, and Hebrews vi. 3, and in order that our readers may see that the apostle only used it in connection with himself, we here quote both verses: (1) "For I will not see you now by the way; but I trust to tarry a while with you, if the Lord will permit." (2) "And this will we do, if God permit." It is perfectly proper, in speaking of our own plans, to follow Paul's example, and say, "This will we do, if God permit." The word "allow" does not appear to be used at all in connection with God. There are instances in the Scriptures, however, where the substance of the meaning may be that God permitted, gave leave, or restrained and forbid, etc. It might be said that Pharaoh was permitted to harrass and afflict Israel, but God said he raised him up for the purpose of magnifying his power and that his name should be known throughout the whole earth, which was done in the destruction of the Egyptians and the deliverance of Israel. It might also be claimed that God permitted Satan to afflict Job, but Job did not talk that way. He saw only the hand of God dealing with him, for he said, "The

Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away." He also said unto his wife, "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips."—Job ii. 10. He even declared, "His hand hath formed the crooked serpent."—Job xxvi. 13. David was not permitted to build an house for God, this being reserved unto his son, Solomon. Balaam was one of the most notorious of Old Testament characters, and while the angel of the Lord said unto him, "Go with the men," and he went with the princes of Balak, yet he himself had said, "If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more." The devils besought Jesus to suffer them to go away into the herd of swine, and he gave them leave, but whether it was a case of restraint or freedom, we feel certain that at no time, or place, was anything done, or left undone, which did not fit in with the plans and purpose of God. It is written, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."—Psalms lxxvi. 10. The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. (Prov. xvi. 4.) Let it be remembered at all times that God is under no law and that it is his prerogative to do whatsoever he will with his own. Not long ago, a subscriber in the West asked to have his subscription canceled, giving as his reason he "could not understand our absolute predestination." He said he was willing to leave with God "why he permits, suffers or allows sin." We also quote from a recent edition of an Old School Baptist paper, as follows: "He loved me so much that he climbed to the top of Mt. Calvary, where he *allowed* wicked men, with deadly hatred in their hearts, to nail his precious hands and feet to the cross," etc. These cases are not cited for the purpose of criticising, but rather for the purpose of contrasting them with the Scriptures of divine truth. What is written therein? *"The cup which my Father hath given me,* shall I not drink it?"—John xviii. 11. Did not this comprise everything, from the manger to the cross? In the garden of Gethsemane, after saying to his disciples, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," Jesus prayed, saying, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."—Matt. xxvi. 39. The same in substance is attested to by both Mark and Luke. The cup did not pass, but he drank it to the dregs, therefore it must have been according to God's will. In Hebrews x. 4-7, we read, "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, *but a body hast thou prepared me*: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God." Again, we would say that, "in the volume of the book" all was written, with

nothing left out, and it was certain to come to pass. "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: *but for this cause came I unto this hour.*"—John xii. 27. When Pilate said unto Jesus, "Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, *Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above.*"—John xix. 10, 11. When the day of Pentecost was fully come, Peter declared by the power of the Holy Ghost, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: *him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain*: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."—Acts ii. 22-24. In the fourth chapter of the Acts, verses twenty-seven and twenty-eight, it is written, "*For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.*" This does not sound to us like Jesus only allowed them to crucify him, nor do we understand that God merely permitted, or suffered, it to be done. A sacrifice had to be offered which would "perfect for ever them that are sanctified," and while it was with wicked hands that they crucified him, their eyes being holden that they should not know it was the Lord of glory, nevertheless it was according to the will and purpose of Almighty God, for it was through this channel that mercy was to flow to all the elect family of God, and it was all for the lifting of the name of JESUS on high.

It would seem to us that the words of Jesus should be final and sufficient to settle for all time to come the question of God's predestination. After his resurrection, he joined Cleopas and one other on their way to Emmaus, and inquired of them what manner of communications they were having, as they walked and were sad. They asked if he were a stranger and knew not what had taken place, and then told him how Jesus of Nazareth, "which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people," had been condemned by the chief priests and rulers, and put to death. "But," they said, "we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." Jesus said unto them, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."—Luke xxiv. 25-27. Here, at one single sweep, it seems to us, he showed that all that had taken place concerning him had been foretold by the prophets, which

they had not understood nor believed, declaring that the only way by which he could enter into his glory was through the door of suffering, and with regard to this Moses and all the prophets had testified before hand. And when he had expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself, their eyes were opened and they knew him. They then saw clearly and understood the Scriptures as never before: they saw that prophecy was fulfilled in him, and that the culmination of all his sufferings, death and resurrection was to the end that he should redeem Israel and save his people, from their sins, with an everlasting salvation. They could and did then say one to another, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened up to us the scriptures?" They then realized something of the mysterious depths of God's providence, and were in accord with the poet when he wrote,

"Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will."

We do not doubt but that there were good brethren in Elder Beebe's time who could not receive these things. Some there are to-day who will shy away when strong meat is served on the table, and while we do not wish to offend them, we hope they will remember that our first accountability is to God, and not to man. While Jesus was here in the flesh, they complained at his hard sayings, and "many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." He then, turning to the twelve, asked, "Will ye also go away?" Peter answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." Even so to-day, there are those who have nowhere else to go. Paul said, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." We desire to be found earnestly contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, and comforting them with the same comfort wherewith we, ourself, are comforted of God. We are confident there are many scattered throughout the earth who believe the doctrine of the predestination of all things; if all things are not predestinated and made to work according to God's will, then some things must work independently of and contrary to it, and this we cannot accept. But, let no man say when he is tempted that he is tempted of God, or use the cloak of predestination to excuse himself or cover up his sins. When man sins he is justly condemned before God.

Let us conclude by recalling to mind the day we were received into the fellowship of Cane Creek Church, in Virginia, now almost thirty years ago. Elders P. D. Gold and Isaac Jones, two of as able men as ever lived in the State of North Carolina, had preached. Both of these wonderful gifts of God believed and preached the doctrine of God's predestination. Elder Jones, particularly in his last days, stressed his belief in the "absolute predestination of all things," and Elder Gold left on record for those who were to come after him the following: "Predestination directly and expressly concerns

salvation of the elect of God, though it so embraces all events that all things are made subservient to the great end of the salvation of all whom God foreknew, and nothing can defeat that purpose; for we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose."

We have not written for the purpose of provoking controversy on this subject, but rather in defense of the truth as we understand it. We hope our readers will consider what we have said, with charity, and that the Lord will give us understanding in those things which are needful for us to know.

Articles three and four will be considered some time next year, the Lord willing.

R. L. D.

ORDINATIONS.

PURSUANT to a call made by Little Blue and Sniabar Church of Regular Old School Baptists, the following Elders and Deacons met with that church on Sunday, July 25th, to ordain W. T. Hughett to the full work of the gospel ministry: Elder L. L. Schenck, of the First Kansas Association, Elder W. L. Hall and Deacons D. A. J. Adams and J. B. Alumbaugh, of Little Blue and Sniabar Church, and Deacon C. C. Odell, of Little Flock Church.

The Presbytery was organized by choosing Elder W. L. Hall Moderator and D. A. J. Adams Clerk. Elder W. L. Hall was chosen to offer the ordination prayer, and Elder L. L. Schenck to give the charge to the Elder after the laying on of hands by the Presbytery. Brother Adams spoke for the church in presenting brother Hughett to the Presbytery. Brother Hughett related why he felt the Lord had called him to preach, which was entirely satisfactory to the Presbytery, and they proceeded with the ordination, after which the hand of fellowship was extended to Elder Hughett by the Presbytery and the body of Baptists present.

We commend Elder Hughett to the Baptists as being sound in the doctrine, humble and meek and worthy of their love and fellowship.

The Clerk was ordered to send a notice of the ordination to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and to the *Old Faith Contender* for publication.

W. L. HALL, Moderator.
D. A. J. ADAMS, Clerk.
July 25th, 1937.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Arnold H. Bellows, July 31st, 1937, at West Hurley, N. Y., Theron Du Bois and Bessie Kellerhouse, of West Hurley, N. Y.

By Elder C. W. Vaughn, April 12th, 1936, Peter W. Shepherd and Beatrice Ellen Phillips, both of Gladstone, N. J.

By the same, at his residence, October 14th, 1936, William Frederick Lear, of Goldendale, Wash., and Janet Vaughn, of Hopewell, N. J.

By the same, at his residence, December 19th, 1936, Russell R. Wells, of Hopewell, N. J., and Helen G. Livingston, of Skillman, N. J.

By the same, at his residence, July 26th, 1936, Robert T. Hall and Katherine A. Stryker, both of Hopewell, N. J.

By the same, at his residence, September 22nd, 1936, William E. Lloyd, of Trenton, N. J., and Grace H. Shelar, of Roanoke, Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MISS CLARA M. LAMB, beloved sister in christian bonds, departed this earthly life Aug. 4th, 1937, at the home of her only sister, our sister Roberta Gulick, Lenah, Va. She was born January 5th, 1874, near Manassas, Va., not far from where the former meeting-house of Bethel Old School Baptist Church used to stand. Her father was George F. Lamb, her mother was, before marriage, Eliza Ann Corbette, both of them now deceased. Beside the sister at whose home she died, sister Clara is survived by one brother, J. T. Lamb, of Union City, N. J. It was my blessed privilege as her pastor to baptize her Sunday morning, July 26th, 1936, into the membership of the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun County, Virginia. Her sister Roberta was baptized the same day. A wonderful day for both of them, and for the little flock at Mt. Zion, and for me, their servant. "This is my Beloved, his form is divine." I think we felt that day that surely the form of believer's baptism, our Beloved's form, is truly divine. When sister Clara talked with the church at our Saturday meeting preceding her baptism, she dated her experience back nearly forty years. She had been under gracious exercise of mind and heart a long time. It was no sudden thing with her, no momentary emotion, no merely human impulse; but the well-ripened fruitage of many years tuition under the direction of the Holy Spirit. She was a sufferer from diabetes for some years, but was never heard to murmur or complain. She manifested gentleness and charity toward all, was not given to speaking ill of any one. Her walk and conversation were an example to us all. She was blessed of the Lord to walk softly before him, and in the presence of her brethren to manifest meekness and humility, a childlike simple faith in her God and Savior. The end came suddenly, being due (the doctor said) to thrombosis. It was a blessed way for her to be taken, but so hard for her dear sister, and for all of us, to whom her passing is a great shock for which none of us were prepared. We desire to cheerfully resign the dear sister into the keeping of him who by his blood purchased her for his own. It is he who gave her to her family and church here below, it is he who has taken her to be with the family above and with the church triumphant. Blessed be his holy name! Funeral services were conducted by Deacon C. M. Turman and myself at the home, interment in the cemetery at Manassas, Va. I tried to speak from the words in the one hundred and twenty-seventh Psalm: "He giveth his beloved sleep." None but true believers know the marvelous peace in being given to rest from their own labors in the perfect, finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a beloved sleep given only to the beloved of the Lord. May the Holy Spirit afford true solace to our dear lonely sister Gulick and to all the sorrowing kindred, especially the spiritual kindred of the church of Christ.

ALSO,

MISS LAURA HUNTON, our beloved sister in Christ, departed this earthly life the night of Sunday, August 1st, 1937, at the Western State Hospital, Staunton, Virginia. She was born June 22nd, 1851, near New Baltimore, Virginia. Her father was Thomas Edward Hunton, her mother Jane Carrington; both of them long since deceased. She is survived by one sister: our sister Margaret Coffey. A niece, Miss Mary Cox, and a nephew, F. H. Cox, of Washington, D. C., likewise are surviving. Sister Laura was baptized by Elder R. C. Leachman, in 1866, into member-

ship with the Upper Broad Run Church in Fauquier County. She is the last member of that church to pass away, leaving that visible branch of the church now extinct. It was at one time the church of the largest membership within the bounds of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting. The last services ever held in the old Broad Run meeting-house were by Elder C. W. Vaughn before he removed to Hopewell, N. J., some years ago. Before his death, the late Elder J. N. Badger had been pastor there. While in frail health mentally for several years, sister Hunton's mind spiritually was clear and sound. The word of the Lord was her meat and drink. She was exceptionally well versed in the Scriptures, not only in the letter of them, but in their experimental and doctrinal import. The one great pleasure and privilege of her life was to attend the meetings of the church, to sit under the sound of the preached gospel which her soul thrived upon, and to be in the companionship and fellowship of her brethren in Christ. Personally, her presence always meant much to me in my ministry. She was ever ready with cheer and encouragement when often I would feel helpless and undone before the Lord. It always did my soul good to call to see her these last days when she was unable to get to meeting, and to witness her unwavering faith in her Redeemer, her patience in suffering, her glorying in the Lord.

Funeral services by the writer, prayer by Deacon C. M. Turman, were held at the family burying-ground adjacent to the old homestead near New Baltimore, Tuesday afternoon, August 3rd. The change she so much longed and prayed for has at last come to her, releasing her soul into the paradise of God. Her mortal body sleeps awaiting the coming of the Lord from heaven, when the corruptible shall put on incorruption and when this mortal shall put on immortality. It is a time for rejoicing, not for sorrow, when one of the Lord's tried ones receives his or her dismissal from the field of conflict, thus to lay their armor by and dwell with Christ at home. The Lord be praised for his abundant mercy and infinite lovingkindness to us weary wandering pilgrims as we seek by his faith that far and better country where naught but health and peace and joy and the abundant life shall prevail for evermore.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

BROTHER NEWTON J. SMITH, son of John and Sarah Smith, was born March 12th, 1849, at Riley, Butler County, Ohio, and died July 25th, 1937, at the home of his son Clarence, in Cincinnati, Ohio. October 14th, 1885, he was married to Miss Sylvia Strump, who preceded him in death about three years. To their union was added one son, Clarence, who, with two grandchildren and one sister, are left to mourn. About the year 1900 brother Smith received an evidence of his most sinful self; the light of the knowledge of the glory of God had shined in his heart and he was made to cry, Undone. Upon the relation of his experience to the Old School Baptist Church called Riley, in Butler County, he was received and baptized, and all his life remained a firm believer in the doctrine and order of the church. He was an honest, upright and loving brother. We will miss him. His wife, Sylvia, also became a member of the same church and their home was truly a Baptist home. I have been acquainted with them for a number of years, and lived close to them for a time. We have gone to the house of God in company and spent many happy hours together talking about that great salvation that God hath wrought, free

grace, without works, was often our subject. Often he and his wife had requested that I officiate at their funerals, and I did, with the ability that the Lord gave me. It was a task indeed for me, but the Lord strengthened me with the thought that death was not the end, merely the gate that swung open for him. The appoined time was come, and he was gathered into the joy of the Lord. I spoke from Isaiah xl. 1, 2. The warfare is over, the debt is paid; not partly, but completely. Jesus has paid it all. May the God of all grace reconcile us all, and to him, the great Shepherd of the sheep, be the glory for ever. We laid the body of our brother in Spring Grove Cemetery to await the call of the Master in the resurrection.

ALSO,

GERSOM WILSON, better known among the brethren as "Gish," was born October 2nd, 1849, and died July 10th, 1937. He was married to Miss Mollie Maloy January 12th, 1871, and to their union were added five children: Lee, John, Robert, Mary D. and Sam. Mary D. and Robert are deceased. Brother Gish leaves to mourn his departure his aged widow, sister Mollie, three children, four grandchildren, besides a host of friends and brethren. About eighteen years ago brother Gish became troubled on account of his unworthiness, and asked a home with the Elk Lick Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, then under the pastoral care of Elder C. C. Moore. He was received, and remained faithful to the church for several years. He served the church as janitor, and until the last year served well. Toward the last his health became impaired so he was not able to perform the duties of taking care of the house, which seemed to worry the old brother, but others helped him with his duties. Brother Wilson never accumulated much of this world's goods, but was an honest and loving brother, and we all will miss him. His earthly trials are over and he has entered into rest. May the good Lord reconcile us to his will, and may his richest blessing be on the lonely widow and children.

I tried to comfort the friends at the funeral, which was held in Sadieville, Ky., then all that was mortal was laid to rest, awaiting the call of the Master in the resurrection.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

MRS. MARTHA McCOLL YOUNG, widow of Edwin Young, departed this life December 7th, 1936. The date of her birth was July 8th, 1861, making her life here nearly seventy-six years. She was the eldest daughter of the late Deacon Duncan McColl, and granddaughter of the late Elder Thomas McColl. After her marriage to Edwin Young, May 22nd, 1883, they lived near the Dunwich meetinghouse, and she united with the church, and was baptized June 3rd, 1894. After some years she, with her family, moved out to De Winton, Alberta, which to her was a dreadful death, in the separation from the preached word, from her kindred in Christ, and kin in the flesh, and though her destined path led her as a stranger to a strange land, she realized the leading was the omnipotent arm of the merciful God, who sustained and upheld her, and she was deeply taught in the school of Christ, to the tearing down of earthly idols, to the praise of the glory of his grace. From time to time she was privileged to come down to visit her kin and attend the meetings, and she felt her famished soul was nourished and she praised the Giver of every good and perfect gift. She was of the strict and particular type of true worshippers, zealous for the order and discipline which her forefathers were

schooled in and she with undaunted faith followed after. Her example is worthy to follow in that respect. In the early part of November she fell on the floor of her home and fractured her hip. She was removed to a Canadian hospital, but because of her age the doctors did not set it. After a couple of weeks there she begged her two sons to take her home with them, which they did, and gave her the best of nursing, but after a few weeks of suffering she passed into the embrace of the last enemy, death, but to her a conquered foe, and she fell asleep in Jesus, to awake in his likeness in the morning of the resurrection. She calmly bade her two sons a farewell on earth, with the hope that they would meet again where no parting comes and no night is there. She leaves to mourn two sons, one brother and many relatives in Dunwich and in Ekfrid. Burial was beside her husband in a cemetery near their home. May God reconcile the two sons to their loss. She was a cousin to the writer. She was baptized by Elder William L. Pollard.

Written by request.

(MRS.) JOHN McPHAIL.

J. D. CADE was born August 25th, 1861, in Pike County, Alabama. He moved to Texas and located in Wood County the latter part of 1875. He was married to Miss Alice Henderson November 13th, 1884. To this union were born eleven children, six boys and five girls. One son preceded him in death, September 8th, 1895, age four years. Brother Cade, with his wife, united with the church at Hopewell, in Wood County, in July, 1896, and were baptized into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church on the fourth Sunday in that month, by the late Elder J. E. Carter. He was a most faithful and devoted member to his church, and was in his seat at the church meetings when he was not prevented by Providence from doing so. He was not only loved by his family and the church, but every one who knew him had the highest respect for him, and admired his excellent qualities, which were outstanding in his bearing and deportment toward all with whom he came in contact, in a marked degree. Everywhere he will be missed. He had a light stroke of paralysis in March, 1836, from which he never fully recovered, and after which he was able to attend his church meetings but few times. He lingered in almost a helpless condition until he passed away, June 27th, 1937. His end was peaceful and his faith sustained him in perfect submission to the call of his Lord, and as the end approached he gently fell asleep and his breathing grew shorter until without a struggle he passed beyond the place where death can use its sting. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord." He leaves to mourn his passing the following of his immediate family: his wife, our dear sister Cade, and a mother in Israel; his sons, Lonnie, Roy, Hubbard, Travis and Noble; his daughters, Mrs. Addie Kennemer, Mrs. Winnie Ingram, Mrs. Lizzie Ingram, Mrs. Willie Rushing, all of whom live in Wood County, and not far removed from the old homestead; and Mrs. Johnnie Lloyd, of Marshall, Texas.

Funeral services were conducted at Hopewell meetinghouse in the presence of the family and a large concourse of friends, by Elder H. B. Jones, deceased's pastor, assisted by the writer, and the body was laid to rest in the cemetery by the church-house. May the goodness of God extend comfort and resignation unto those who mourn.

J. R. HARDY.

MEETINGS.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held at the Garten schoolhouse, five miles east of Garber, Oklahoma, beginning on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1937, the 10th, 11th and 12th. Those coming by railroad should come on the Rock Island to Enid, Oklahoma, or on the Santa Fe to Perry, Oklahoma. Those desiring to be met with conveyance should write to Uriah Garten, Garber, Oklahoma. Bus service to Garber, but only mixed train service. At Garber inquire for Mrs. Annie Kimmel, or write to brother Garten. Lovers of the truth and ministers of our faith and order are invited to meet with us.

(MRS.) MARY ELLISON, Clerk,
GRANTVILLE, Kansas.

The Lord willing, the Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 10th, 11th and 12th, 1937. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will meet on Wednesday and Thursday, September 15th and 16th, 1937, with the First and Second Churches of Roxbury, at the Yellow Meetinghouse, two miles below Roxbury village, in Roxbury, N. Y. We invite ministers of our faith and order, in fellowship with us, to meet with us, also all brethren and friends will be accorded a hearty welcome. Those who may come on Tuesday before the meeting of the Association may stop at Halcottville, N. Y., and inquire either at the post office or the residence of Scott Clark, where information will be given regarding places of entertainment. Trains and buses stop at Halcottville, which make connection with Kingston, N. Y. Trains and buses will be met at Halcottville on Tuesday. The Association will open on Wednesday morning at 10:30 o'clock. Standard Time.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Moderator.

The Original Mt. Zion Association of Predestinarian Baptists will, the Lord willing, hold her ninety-sixth session with Little Blue and Sniabar Church, in Grain Valley, Missouri, to commence on the first Friday after the fourth Sunday in September, 1937, (which will be October 1st) and the two following days. Grain Valley is on the C. & A. R. R., and on Highway No. 40. We will be pleased to have all sound Baptists who can come, to meet with us at that time.

D. A. J. ADAMS, Moderator.
MARGARET TAYLOR, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets the third Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, at 10:30 a. m. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, 421 Steele, Street, Frankfort, Ky.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.

T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

DURAND & LESTER HYMN AND TUNE BOOK

HAVE received the books from the printers and are shipping them out as fast as we can. If you need any books please send your orders at once, as this edition of 1000 books is almost sold out. Have a few round notes to fill single book orders, and about 150 shape notes. Prices-$1.00 each, or $10.00 per dozen delivered. Good quality paper and binding, the same as they have been in the past. We wish to thank all who have cooperated with us in having this edition printed, and hope we may be enabled to continue to serve you.

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"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

Cloth binding, 75c each. Paper covers, single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and all to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 105. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1937. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE WHEAT AND THE TARES.

My mind has been exercised considerably on the parable of the wheat and the tares, and if it will not tax the patience of the readers too much I would like to offer a few thoughts.

It is said that Jesus spake many things unto the multitudes in parables, and without a parable spake he not unto them. These parables of our Lord have served their original purpose admirably well; to wit, that is seeing they should not perceive, and in hearing they should not understand, lest at any time they become "converted, and I should heal them." It is therefore quite clear that these parables were not employed to convert the unbelievers, and neither shall we employ them. To the contrary, they have resulted in a great confusion of understanding with those who are without, and have also served to illustrate many things spiritually to those who are within; that is, the children of grace. In this particular parable the interpretation which appears to be most common and most popular is, that it sets forth the elect and the nonelect of God, the wheat and the tares, respectively. A careful reading of the subject, however, should serve to dissuade one from that idea. In speaking of a mixed multitude, those that are in the majority are given preeminence. It is taught in the Scriptures, and generally accepted, that the nonelect are largely in the majority. Hence it would not be proper to refer to them as "among the wheat" (the elect). To assume that these, the wheat and the tares, represent the human race, the elect and the nonelect, would almost inevitably lead us into a two seed doctrine, which in turn would lead us to recognize Satan as an independent being, self-existent, co-equal and co-eternal with God, yet possessing great advantage over God, from the fact that he has a much larger following than God. Thus it would bring us into a very awkward position, from the fact it would necessarily mean

an eternal rival of God Almighty, with the balance decidedly in Satan's favor. In the light of divine testimony this will not do. God has declared himself to be the only one who inhabiteth eternity. As declared by the mouth of the prophet, I am God, and there is none else. Hence Satan himself is a created being, and is just as much subject to the decrees of God as the weakest saint. He has no power but such as God endows him with, and that is just to the extent of fulfilling God's eternal purposes in him. "It was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations." Read the thirteenth chapter of Revelation. It was this same Satan that approached our foreparents in the garden of Eden. The same who tempted our Lord in the wilderness, but was defeated by the lowly Lamb of God. Jesus would not and did not yield to his temptations, because "It is written." The very power of the written word is enough to defeat the powers of darkness and put to flight the entire host of antichrist, for God alone must (and does) reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet. It was this same Satan who appeared in the person of Judas Iscariot and betrayed our blessed Master into the hands of sinful men to be crucified and slain; and this was by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. And this was no more nor no less true in this case than in any other case where Satan shows his hand. His wickedness and unrighteous deeds were all according to God's determinate counsel and foreknowledge, and they can never be prosecuted beyond the point where they cease to work for the good of God's people and God's eternal glory.

But to return to the wheat and the tares. The parable is clearly defined in these words, "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way." It will be observed here that the tares are among the wheat, and not the wheat among the tares. Let us keep in mind that the kingdom of heaven is like unto this, and we shall not object to this kingdom representing the elect of God, that is, his people in church capacity. There is the good seed sown there, and he that sowed the good seed is the Son of man. Every principle of the doctrine and order of the house of God emanates from him, therefore I should love to present the church, a body of baptized believers, standing firm in all the holy oracles which the Son of man, even Christ, her head, has committed unto her, practicing nothing, tolerating nothing, approving nothing but that which the Son of man has sown there. Woe the day when anything else springs up in the church of God which the Son of man has not sown there. He has sown good seed and it will ever yield the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, meekness, goodness, faith, temperance. Against such is no law. But while men slept his enemy came and sewed tares among the wheat. Sad

indeed are the conditions when Zion sleeps. The repeated and divinely expressed admonitions were timely and well directed. "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem." Again, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Where is the church today that has not some time been caught napping? Where is the church which has not some time experienced the encroachment of some unscrupulous person who has crept in unawares to spy out our liberties? And strange as it may seem, these spies have sometimes succeeded admirably well in concealing their identity. Often, not until the fruit begins to appear can they be discriminated from the true plants, the wheat. But upon our awakening, or ever we are aware these unscrupulous ones are advocating a strange doctrine, sowing seeds of discord among brethren, or otherwise sewing seeds that will yield exactly the opposite to that which the Son of man hath sown. The fruit of such is adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, hatred, witchcraft, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, murder, drunkenness, revelry, and such like. Enough of such like is usually in evidence in these characters that they cannot conceal their identity. Whence cometh these tares? The answer, An enemy hath done this. The Lord's apostle Jude has pointed these out to us as "Certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." Also he says, "These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever." Whence cometh these tares? They were before of old ordained to this condemnation, and their appearing confirms the sacred word of prophecy as spoken by Enoch the seventh from Adam. Their elimination, if done according to the order which our Lord has given us, would seem to emphasize the tender mercies of our God and his faithful watchcare over his blessed people. He has said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Where is the church to-day which has not suffered the imposition of such characters? And where is the faithful and humble child of grace who will not fervently pray for instruction and guidance as to how these tares shall be disposed of? "Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?" "Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn." Here indeed is a wonderful example of church discipline. Every

member of the church militant would do well to give ear. If you have never faced a problem of this kind happy are ye. Nevertheless, you may yet see the day when such will be thrust upon you, and it may fall to your lot to dispose of a case of this nature: to gather out the tares. It is not uncommon for these impostors to have their followers. Indeed, it seems that their unholy mission is not complete until they have spoken perverse things and have drawn away disciples after them. Keeping this in mind, it is needful that we proceed with the utmost caution. If these impostors are expelled forthwith, and without due deliberation, it is likely some of his deluded followers, the true disciples, will go out with them, and thereby result in the undue expulsion of some innocent children of grace. Let both grow together until the time of the harvest. The harvest is just as sure to come in its season as is the seed time. God did not speak in vain when he said, While the earth remaineth seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter and day and night shall not cease. The preacher also informs us that there is a time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted. So in the matter of gathering out these tares it is all-important that we be governed by the instructions of our blessed Lord: Not to act with undue haste, nor yet be slothful in business. It is better to suffer a little wrong than to be guilty of the tragic expulsion of some innocent child of grace. If a church is governed by the laws of Zion, I feel sure the King of Zion will uphold their cause. God has ordered the time of the harvest and it will come, and I confidently believe if God is in the matter he will have fixed every thing else against that day. Then, agreeable to his gracious promise, he will gather his wheat into his garner, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire. Thus he will thoroughly purge his floor. The same divine process shall cause the righteous to shine forth, while, on the other hand, Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. We cannot stress too strongly the importance of observing Zion's laws in every case. Neither shall we flatter ourselves with the thought that there can be no reoccurrence of the springing up of these tares, for the enemy who sowed them is the devil. He is still extant and he desires to have thee that he might sift thee as wheat, but the prayer of your Redeemer is in your behalf, dear child, that your faith fail not. Men will continue to sleep, and thus the drama will be repeated over and over again. Men will sleep when it is dark, and the scene is well depicted in the opening of the third seal of that book sealed with seven seals: "And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and, lo, a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil

and the wine." I am persuaded this black horse will continue to appear from time to time, and always representing, not the light and righteousness of God, but to the contrary, he must represent darkness and dissipation. Nevertheless, the righteous Judge is seated there, holding the balances in his hand, and, alas, how many of us are weighed in the balances and found wanting. It is a time of great indifference in the church of God, the sound of the grinding is low, and a voice will be heard decrying the value of the wheat and the barley, which most surely answers to the doctrine and the order of the house of God. "A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny," about as low a value as could be placed upon them, and yet it is about the way we are sometimes wont to value our exalted privilege in the house of God when we are visited by these dark seasons. The doctrine and order of the church, and her sacred ordinances, cease to hold the charm for us they once did. We are apt to relax our vigilance. We fall into a state of lethargy and indifference from which it is hard to recover ourselves again, becoming a fruitful field for the tares, and thus again inviting the tragic visitation of him who sowed the tares. "While men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way."

May the dear Lord guide, guard and direct our steps in wisdom's path. May he deliver us from every evil and hateful way. May he enable us to triumph in his name over every one who may dare to oppose or defy the laws of our beloved Zion, is my prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen.

L. L. SCHENCK.

WILLIAMSTOWN, Kansas.

STAR CITY, Ark., Sept 17, 1936.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing one dollar to help pay for the dear old SIGNS you are sending me. My time has been out for quite awhile, but you have been good to me and continued to send it. I get great comfort at times reading the letters from the dear brethren and sisters. I got some copies of the paper down this morning to read a letter or two, and the first one was the letter written by brother Bowden, and it surely was a feast to this poor old sinner. If I know anything about the truth he told it. He told my feelings. I get so low spiritually at times it seems to me the good Lord will never return. Then I get to wondering if I have ever known anything about the goodness and mercy of the all-wise God who knows no failure. I have thought a great many times about writing a little of my experience. If I have any at all, it seems to me to be very small compared to some, and hardly worth writing about. I have very little education, and am a very poor speller, and am ashamed to try to write. My understanding is very weak, but if you will bear with me, in my blundering way I will try to write a little of what I hope the Lord has done for me.

When I was quite a small boy, about six or eight years of ags, I remember telling my mother a falsehood, and it

worried me. It bore so heavily on my mind that I was not satisfied until I told her the truth, and then I was at rest, as far as that was concerned. I do not mean to say I never did tell her another falsehood, but that time has long been remembered, and why was it, brethren? I have often been made to think of the Scripture where it says concerning His children that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. It gives me a little hope at times that it might be possible there was a keeping going on with me. But that was a long time before I ever knew anything about God, if I ever have. I traveled on down through life, and when I went to school it seemed I did not have many friends; it seemed I was a person to be made fun of. Later on I began to study about death, and when I would go to bed at night I would shudder at times just to think about dying and not being here any more. I thought there was something I could do to be saved, and I was going to do it, but the time was always just ahead when I was going to do better. My cousin would talk to me and tell me there was nothing I could do, that if I was ever saved I was saved in Christ before the foundation of the world. Oh what damnable doctrine that seemed to me, not to give a person a chance. Away with such doctrine! I went on until I was about fifteen or sixteen years of age, and then I joined the Missionary Baptists, and thought I would be a good boy, but as I traveled on I would look back over my life and could not see where I had done any better than before; if I had done differently it was a little worse. But I thought, I can and I will do better from now on. That was the kind of vows I would make, and I would break every one of them. I well remember one night when one of my cousins and myself were going home from preaching. We had gone but a short distance when my heart was touched in some way. I could not help myself, I had to cry, but what it was all about I did not know. I went on until I was married. My wife had been raised among the Primitive Baptists. Her grandfather was a Primitive Baptist preacher. I would go with her to meetings, but much of the time I would stay outside. I told her I would not believe such doctrine. I came to the point where I thought, Well, I am here in this world and I cannot do anything, so I will just live on and do the best I can. I do not know how long I lived in that condition, but finally one summer my wife, children and I were living with my mother-in-law, and I had a little spell of sickness. I was lying on the bed, and there were some young folks out on the porch singing. The songs sounded different to me than they ever did before and I could not keep from crying. I broke down in tears, and my wife came in the room and asked me what was the matter. I did not answer her, for I did not know what to tell her, because I did not know myself what was the matter. She asked me the third time, and the only thing I could say was that I did not know whether I was saved or not. Before that I

thought I knew I could do something to inherit eternal life, but it seemed as though there was a different spirit within me than had ever been before. My mind was different, and I could see, as through a glass darkly, that there was something within me I had never witnessed before; my eyes were turned within. All the time before I could only see the outside, and where there is but one in the house there is not any trouble; it takes two to make trouble, and there I was, I said I would not believe such doctrine. I was like Joseph's brothers. Joseph told them their sheaves would bow to his, but they said they would not. They did not know what the good Lord had in store for them. That is the way of every child of grace, he will do the things he says he will not do.

But to get back to my little experience, if it will do to call it one. The following winter, or spring, the Methodists had meeting at a schoolhouse near our home, and we went. I listened to the preaching, but do not remember much about it. The preacher had some Testaments to sell, so I bought one and began to read it, but it did not sound like it did before. The more I read the more I became convinced that the Old Baptists were right, and after a time I became thoroughly satisfied that they were right, but I felt I was not fit to belong with them. Brethren, I became so interested that when I would start for meeting if I thought I would be a little late I would run in order to get there as quickly as I could. Oh it seemed like there was something holding me. I had a different feeling from what I once had. The things I once loved I then hated, and the things I once hated I hope now I love. I used to wonder why the Old Baptists all wanted to go together. I hope I now know what it is: that love they have for one another. After I became thoroughly satisfied that the Old Baptists were right, I felt that I would like to live with them, but oh how unfit I felt I was. I thought that if I remained as I was I never would offer myself to the church. Later on my mind led me to realize that if I waited until I felt I was worthy I never would offer myself, but I wanted to live with those people. One summer I went to a district meeting, about thirty-five or forty miles from my home, and after services one evening I had started home with one of the brethren, and when we were about a mile from his home it came to me very plainly that the next opportunity I got I would offer myself to the church. That meeting was over then, so I did not offer myself, but I had a sad feeling. About a month from that time they held a district meeting near my home and I offered myself. They received me, and I was baptized by our dear old pastor, Elder J. H. Blythe. Brethren, there was something left me when I was baptized; I cannot tell what it was, but it seemed that a burden was gone, which from that day until the present has never bothered me in the least; but this old burden of sin that is in this body keeps me low down in the valley most of time. I am so vile, so

prone to sin, I fear that I am not born again.

Brethren, I want to show you how weak I was, and did not know it. When I first came to the church I thought that the older I grew the more I would know of God and godliness. But I was like the wasp: I was larger in my younger days than I am now. I am also like the crawfish, instead of going forward I am going backward. The older I get the less I know, it seems. I am perfectly satisfied with the doctrine the Primitive Baptists preach, but I am not satisfied with myself.

Brethren, I have written a part of my little experience, if it will do to call it an experience, please examine it closely, and if it is not in accordance with Old Baptist experience throw it one side, for I do not want to do or write anything that is not right and sound. It has troubled my mind for a long time as to whether I did have a true experience or just a delusion of the mind. I get so low in spirit at times that it seems to me it would be unjust for the God I hope I esteem very highly to save such a sinner as I am. I get so low I am almost ready to give up, but when He returns it is with love, kindness and tender mercy, and then I think it will be that way all the time, but in the twinkling of an eye he is gone. This poor sinner's life is like a man traveling through a hilly country, first he is in the valley, and then he is up on the hill, but the most of the time with me I am in the valley. I have often viewed the Man out in front of me, and would like to be like him, but to take one step toward him I cannot; if anything I am backing up.

Brethren, if any of you are traveling through this country we would be glad to have you visit us. We have but one minister in our Association, and it would be strengthening to him. His name is Elder H. H. Phillips, and we think he is a fine preacher.

Well, I guess I had better stop writing. When it goes well with you, if you can stoop so low as to think of such a poor sinner as I am, pray for me, for I need the prayers of all the Lord's people.

From a poor sinner, saved by the grace of God, if saved at all,

W. A. WOMACK.

"IT IS FINISHED."

LET us examine the circumstances around this solemn picture when these words were uttered, and in order for us to fully enter into the spirit and understanding of this text, or any other of the deep things of God, we must be in tune, in the spirit, it must be a part of us, we must feel it, it must be real in our experience, for it concerns each and every one of the Lord's chosen people. Paul has so aptly spoken by inspiration to the church at Corinth, 1 Corinthians ii. 2-4: "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of

power." Paul was in tune when he wrote these words, and we must be in tune to receive them. Now we view the picture. There upon the cross hangs Jesus, and on either side a thief. He was numbered with the transgressors, he poured out his soul unto death, he bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. (Isaiah liii. 12.) There upon the cross Jesus, the Son of God, the Lamb without spot or blemish, high and holy, separate from sinners, treading the wine-press alone, bearing all his people's sin. For a moment our minds ramble, and we see Abel bringing the first of the flock, Abraham binding his son Isaac on the altar, Moses raising up the brazen serpent in the wilderness, Sampson standing beside the main pillars of the house, praying, Once more, O God, give me strength, and many other types being fulfilled. A fountain is about to be opened, for sin, they give him vinegar to drink, he cried, IT IS FINISHED, and bowed his head in death. The sun hid its face from the dreadful picture, the earth quaked to its very center, the temple burst in twain, many saints who slept in their graves arose when he, the mighty Savior, died for man, the creature of sin. He whose name is Jesus has saved his people from their sins. All that the Father gave him to do is finished. He said, This is the Father's will that sent me, That of all that he has given me I should lose none. Let us now note briefly some of the things that are finished. His suffering in the flesh for sin is ended. No more will his back be turned to the smiters; no more to hunger and thirst; no more to suffer pain; no more death. He has tasted death for every one of his chosen ones. Also, he has finished redemption for his people. He gave himself for his church, that he might redeem it from all iniquity and purify to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works. (Titus ii. 14.) "But now thus saith the Lord, that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine."—Isaiah xliii. 1. "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people."—Luke i. 68. "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou was slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."—Rev. v. 9. According to these witnesses, he hath redeemed his people, so we say their redemption is finished.

Next, he hath finished death, having destroyed death and him that hath the power of death, which is the devil. (Heb. ii. 14.) "He will swallow up death in victory."—Isaiah xxv. 8. The sting of death he hath taken away, and thanks be to Him that giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath finished it.

Next, the law, with all of its Thou shalt nots. In every jot and tittle he hath fulfilled it for his chosen people. He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth; the mortgage on the soul he hath paid in full; it is signed and sealed with his blood. Yes, Jesus paid it all.

Next, he hath finished the offerings for sin. All the types and offerings under the prophetic day, from Abel to the gospel day, all the bulls and goats, sprinkling with blood, never took away sin, but over and over again each year sin was brought to remembrance, then the high priest would go alone into the holy of holies and offer up for the sins of the people, but Jesus, who is the end of the law, by one offering hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Remission has taken place, and there is no more offering for sin. (Heb. x. 18.) All that was written in the law and in the Psalms concerning me, all that was necessary for the complete salvation of all the heirs of promise, Jesus has finished, without conditions of any kind left for man to comply with. No, if there was anything for man to do, be it every so little, then the work would not be finished, and we cannot entertain that thought; no, not for one moment. What could be added to a perfect work? Satan told our mother Eve in the garden, You will not surely die, and we find the same kind of people in the world to-day. They were here in the apostles' day, They did not believe then, what can we expect now? Christ was to them a stumbling-block and foolishness, but why let that wory us, for Jesus is to us the way, the truth and the life, and he says it is finished. As for me, I would not want to change the pattern, for I consider the word of God to be priceless, and believe all the dear ones who have been called by the power of God and led about here in the wilderness, those who have been saved by the grace of God, through faith, delight to hear the gospel, the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes. These are all those who have Christ in them the hope of glory, and have been born of that incorruptible seed, by the word of God, that liveth and abideth forever. Paul was persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus the Lord, for the sacrifice on the cross included me. He died for me. He finished it all. Moreover, says Paul, Whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

What I have written belongs to the children of God. I do not expect the unregenerate to get any comfort out of it. They who still believe in a works system, void of grace, can have it, but for me and my house we will serve the Lord. Let the Jews seek for a sign, and the Greeks seek their wisdom, but let us preach Christ, and him crucified, the power and wisdom of God, and may faith, hope and charity abide with you all.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

COME AND DINE.

THESE words, spoken by Jesus to his disciples after he arose from the tomb, you will find in the twenty-first chapter of St. John, a portion of the twelfth verse. A few days ago I sent some thoughts I had on the same Scripture to another brother, but feeling I left out many things I decided to continue the subject, knowing that there are so many good things set up in this last chapter of St. John that I might try time and again and yet there would be many good things left out. Indeed we can tell but little, not half, as the queen said, for they are glorious to behold when we can see them. We are so dependent upon the Lord for light, knowledge and wisdom, to know them. What precious words: "Come and dine," spoken at that time by Jesus to those who had toiled all night and had caught nothing. Now when the light of another day had come, and Jesus stood on the shore, and had bread and fish on the coals of fire ready to eat, at the time when his loved ones were almost ready to faint, hungry and tired from their night's work, we know in some degree how they must have felt. To think of it in a deep sense, does not the Lord always feed us? What have we that we did not receive? Not only the kindness of the Lord is shown here, but the wisdom also. He could tell what to do to catch fish, why had they failed? They were fishermen by trade, but Jesus can look into the deep and tell them how and where to fish. When we think of poor helpless man, how ignorant he is, to be so close to the fish and yet not know how to catch them until told by Jesus. Can man take up fishing or hunting and by studying it learn to be successful every time he goes out for game? We know none would fail to catch them if they knew how to succeed, so we see that we need the Lord's help, and we see here that he is able and does help in time of need. What great power, wisdom and mercy are shown here! Brethren and sisters, de we worship the God set up here? If we do, then I believe we shall be fed, that seed time and harvest will continue to come, for we have this promise by the Lord.

Now, after Jesus had fed them he told Peter three times to feed his lambs and his sheep, but I do not understand that he meant here to feed them with natural food, such as bread and fishes, but to feed God's children with spiritual food, and we know that must come down from heaven, so I believe we are taught here that we are fed by our Lord and Master, both with spiritual and natural food. Knowing that all things were created by God and that all things belong to him, how safe are the children of God. What comfort a good hope in Christ brings to his loved ones. Oh may we thank God for the light to see the need of these things, and may they some day be ours to enjoy, is my prayer. Amen.

R. L. DODSON.

DANVILLE, Virginia.

WARREN, Arkansas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing a good letter, written by brother David Caldwell. I have not asked the permission of the writer to have it published, but cannot believe he would object. Brother Caldwell strongly advocates the doctrine of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, never keeping back a part of the price. Dear friends, if I know this poor heart of mine, I believe in the one true and living God, who by his great wisdom and foreknowledge knew and foreknew all things that would ever be or take place here in time, and all will be to his honor and glory, for I do not believe he ever purposed any thing to be that was not for his honor. In the mind of Jehovah all things are already done, and there will be no changes made, for he says, I am God, and change not. So then, according to his infinite word, we believe that he is unchangeable. So then, dear friends, if I, a poor unworthy mortal, was chosen in his covenant of grace all the combined powers of hell could not reach me, nor any other one of his chosen race. I am a sinner saved by his grace, if saved, and I beg the prayers of all who are blessed to bow at his throne.

Yours in affliction,

(MRS.) J. H. BLYTHE.

HAMBURG, Arkansas.

DEAR SISTER BLYTHE:—After so long a time I will attempt to answer your good and much appreciated letter, which came to hand several weeks ago. I was greatly surprised to get a letter from you, and I assure you that it was read with much interest and pleasure. I thought at the time that I would reply at once, and did make two attempts to write you, but soon found I had no reply for such a good letter, so have waited for a reply to come, but none has come yet, and I feel that I should at least acknowledge the receipt of your good letter. I feel that is all I am able to do. I would love to write you with the same evidence of a fruitful mind as that in which you wrote. O, dear sister, I wish I could explain to you, could make the people understand how little I know, how ignorant I am of spiritual things. I have no knowledge laid up for future use. As the saying goes, am just as empty as an old basket. One thing in your letter attracted my attention, and that was that you at times had a deep sense of unworthiness, and that you often walked in the valley of darkness. In that you told my experience.

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know."

This whole hymn suits my feelings all the way through.

The second chapter, thirty-fourth verse, of Luke comes to my mind. Simeon, speaking of the holy child Jesus, "said unto Mary, his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against." We notice that the fall is before the rising. Generally speaking, the rising is first, and then the fall. But this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel. When we hear one

speak of their unworthiness, and acknowledge that there is nothing good they can do, it is evidence of the fall; and then when they can sing with delight and joy, Jerusalem, my happy home, O how I long for thee, it is evidence of the rising again.

March 13th.—I wrote down to here and had to stop. The subject was the fall and rising again of many in Israel. I think I can see a big sermon in this text, if only I were enabled to get it out; but I am not able, and if I were space would not permit, so I am just merely mentioning it. Jesus himself taught that except one becomes as a little child he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven, which indicates a coming down, or a fall from that high esteem we all by nature had for ourselves, and the fall never comes without the rising again. Paul, speaking of this, said, And hath raised us up and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. They are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which he (God) before ordained that they should walk in them. In this case it makes good works the effect and not the cause, as the world preaches it. In fact, according to my understanding, all the teaching of the world is right contrary to the teaching of the Scriptures. Paul, when he was explaining to them some of the mysteries of the kingdom, knew they would not like it, so he said unto them, Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will? Paul goes on and shows their helpless condition, and the sovereignty of God, and says, Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Now the Arminian world claims Paul as their apostle, says that Paul was a missionary. But just listen for a moment and see if what Paul says here sounds anything like their preaching: "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." We see one fitted to destruction and another prepared unto glory. "Afore," some time before Paul was preaching this, and surely they must be the ones whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world and did actually have an identity existence with him before any of them were formed, and must have been the ones Paul alluded to when he said, Whom God did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, etc.

Well, I see I am running off, and writing more than I intended to.

I do not see where any one finds the Scripture to support their argument that Christ will reign here on earth with his elect a thousand years. I understand that his second coming will be very quickly, as the lightning shineth

out of the east even unto the west, and he will come in clouds, with power and great glory, to gather his elect from the four winds of the earth, from one end of heaven to the other, and in making up his jewels one will be taken and another will be left. Read the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew. Paul, speaking along this line, says we shall not all sleep. He says, Behold, I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead be raised incorruptible, and we sall be changed. Then in 1 Thessalonians, fourth chapter, For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, That we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. This does not sound like the Lord will reign here on earth with them a thousand years. We notice in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew that Christ came only to get his elect, and Paul was speaking only of the elect. He says "we" and "us," denoting all of the same family. The dead in Christ shall rise first, and we that remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Now, in order to shorten my letter, I will tell you that I believe this is the first resurrection spoken of in Revelation, and they shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years, but not here on earth. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection, on such the second death hath no power. The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. Now to be as brief as possible, I believe that as Noah was taken out of the destruction of the old world and Lot out of the doomed city, so shall his people be taken out of the destruction of this present world, and when Christ shall come to gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other, and one shall be taken and the other one left, will be the gathering of them up, that they will not be here on this earth in the last days when his wrath shall be poured out on this wicked world.

I will have to just sketch along. Revelation xx. 11-15: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell

were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." In my weak way of thinking, this must be the finishing up of the things of this old world. Then John saw a new heaven and a new earth, and the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Somehow it weighs on my mind that this new Jerusalem that John saw coming down from God out of heaven are the ones taken up when Christ came to gather his elect.

I wish I could write you my views in full, but it would be almost impossible. Weigh this by the Scriptures, and write me what you think about it. I have had to write so scatteringly that it will be hard to tell what I do believe about it.

We are up at present, but not well. We both had influenza, and are not entirely over it yet. My stomach has been worse this fall and winter than in a long time. I have not been to meeting since the first Sunday in August. I hope you will soon forget about this poor letter and feel to write me again. Hope this will find you and family all well.

Yours most unworthily,

D. K. CALDWELL.

BRUNSWICK, Maine, March 12, 1937.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I did enjoy the Association, and the last meeting Sunday afternoon you were given many words of comfort, and you surely did declare the truth, and the gospel which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. I wish I could remember the sermon and write it all down, but that is impossible.

March 22nd.—I have been prevented from writing this letter, but will try and finish it before the month is out. I have been well all winter, but there has been much sickness all around. I feel and know I am wonderfully blessed with health and strength to do my work each day, and care for myself. The days pass quickly, and the truth as it is expressed in the hymns is brought sweetly into my mind and I sing them over and over. Surely his goodness has followed me all the days of my life. The last verse of the hymn "Jesus is our great salvation," comes with such sweetness and assurance that I am made to say, I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Our God knows no change. It is the Spirit of truth that teaches his people. The natural man has no part nor lot in it, for he cannot know it, as it is spiritually discerned.

I hope you and family have been quite well, and that the brethren you see and meet manifest the love and sweet fellowship which is so precious to those who have been taught of the Lord. "Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord?"

I have heard from the loved ones during the winter, and some have been ill with bad colds, but at this time they are all as well as usual, and we are hoping to have a meeting here the second Sunday in May. I hope we shall speak of the goodness, mercy and power of

God. How he has made us to know Jesus, whom to know is life eternal.

But I must finish this letter now. I hope you will still have love and fellowship for me. The Lord's will is done in heaven and in earth. May our minds be led into the truth as it is in Jesus, is the desire of your sister in hope of eternal life,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

NEWTON, Ala., July 6, 1937.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find a check, for which please enter my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I was a subscriber for several years, but for financial reasons I found it necessary to discontinue taking the paper. I dearly love the doctrine the SIGNS contends for, but I feel its readers should support it better. Of all people Primitive Baptists should pay their debts and help support their papers. Our Baptist papers are our principal means of communication, therefore every Baptist home should have at least one sound Predestinarian paper. I long to see the time when we will have an active chain of correspondents from Maine to California and peace and unity prevail everywhere in Zion. Our meetings in this section have been good this year, although the attendance has not been as large as we desire. Our home church, at Mt. Gilead, held her regular communion services on the third Sunday in June. There was a large congregation present and much interest was manifested. The writer was assisted by brethren J. A. Lew and J. M. Ganons in the services. This has become a real home coming for many people in Alabama, Georgia and Florida. Regular communion services have been held here for about seventy-five years on the third Sunday in June, and it is planned to hold the Centennial Anniversary here on the third Sunday in June, 1938, when, according to the best records we have, the church will be one hundred years of age. A new church building has been recently erected here. The fourth since the constitution of the church. Elder W. D. Griffin, of Fayette, Alabama, has already promised to be with us next year in the anniversary services, and we are looking forward to one of the best meetings in the history of the church.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

J. J. COLLINS.

PINEVILLE, Ky., Feb. 8, 1937.

DEAR EDITORS:—I like the SIGNS, because I believe it set forth sound doctrine. Just what I believe. I believe in a God that has all power, made everything that was made, and uses what he created according to his will and purpose. All things were just as present with him before time as they are now. He created and made everything for himself; yes, even the wicked for the day of evil, and he used them to carry out his will and purpose in the crucifixion of Christ. Every thing moves at his command. He is God and his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure.

I will not write any more now.

Your brother,

H. N. HOSKINS.

EDITORIAL.

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HOSEA X. 11.

"AND Ephraim is as an heifer that is taught, and loveth to tread out the corn; but I passed over upon her fair neck: I will make Ephraim to ride; Judah shall plow, and Jacob shall break his clods."

We have been asked to give our views upon the above Scripture, and the Lord enabling us to do so, we will comply. The prophet Hosea often mentions Ephraim in his prophecy, so that one concludes that the tribe of Ephraim was looked upon as one of the leading tribes of Israel. No doubt she was outstanding in sin and backsliding, a tribe that was proud and self-opinionated, and expected to be respected and heard in the council of Israel. Thus we find her protest to Gideon, Judges viii. 1, "Why hast thou served us thus, that thou calledst us not, when thou wentest to fight with the Midianites? and they did chide with him sharply." Again we see her in Judges xii. 1, chiding with Jephthah. She sprang from the younger son of Joseph, who was blessed by Jacob above his brother Manasseh, contrary to the natural wish of Joseph. Jacob gave Ephraim the preeminence over his brother, declaring that his seed should become a multitude of nations. It was from Ephraim that Joshua came, who was one of Israel's greatest leaders, second only to Moses. Manasseh was to have her thousands, but Ephraim her ten thousands. We have no record that this tribe ever attained much strength numerically, but her position geographically, having a central situation, was in the highway of communication from one part of the country to another. Thus it was to a proud Ephraim that the prophet spake, to an Ephraim that feedeth on wind, and followeth after the east wind, daily increasing lies and desolation, etc. Now while the prophets seemed to be exercised by the Spirit of God over the judgments and mercies of an offended God towards a then offending Israel, these prophecies were to find their ultimate fulfillment in a later day. It is of the later day that we propose to talk. Hosea, in chapter nine, mentions the days of visitation, as do also several other prophets, pointing to the time when God would visit his people. Of such a time Malachi speaks when he

saith in chapter three, verse two, "But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' sope." In that day Ephraim was as an heifer that was taught. She was regular in performing her legal worship, walking along in her daily ritual like an heifer that was taught. She had much religion of a kind when Jesus came. She loved her ordinances like a heifer loving to tread out the corn. In her zeal she persecuted Christ, and threw out of the synagogue those who confessed their belief in him. In her hatred she was fulfilling the Scripture, which was like treading out the corn. He shone bright in the midst of a wicked and adulterous generation. It was the chief priest and scribes of this people who uncovered the corn when Herod inquired where Christ was to be born by quoting the prophet Micah: "And thōu, Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Jūda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel." It was remarkable how this proud and haughty people played her part like a heifer that is taught, in fulfilling all Scripture concerning Christ's suffering, and in the very height of his suffering wagging their heads and laughing him to scorn. Thus like an animal that treads out the corn, that takes her usual and ordered course, not distinguishing between corn and husk, so this people continued her course, fulfilling the word that was written concerning Him. "But who may abide the day of his coming?" They knew not the day of their visitation. "I passed over upon her fair neck." We cannot write the words, "I passed over," without our mind going back to the time when our God passed over Israel to spare, but passed through stiff-necked Egypt to destroy. This time he passed over Israel in judgment, for Jesus said, "For judgment am I come into this world, that they which see not [the Gentiles] might see; and that they which see [the Jews] might be made blind." He made an open show of sin in the flesh, and the way he came, a Nazarene, despised, eating with publicans and sinners, brought forth their derision and contempt. He pronounced a woe upon them, and left their house unto them desolate. The Romans captured Jerusalem and destroyed the temple, but it was God that passed over her fair neck, enchaining her in outer darkness, a wanderer among the nations. Guilty, with God's word pronounced against her, a living testimony of every word of God being true. Now the latter part of our text has reference to a better day, a day when both Jew and Gentile are brought together, and the sword of the legal covenant is beaten into the plowshare of the gospel testimony, and the spear of accusation is beaten into the pruning-hook of gospel admonition and exhortation, and under such teaching nation does not rise against nation, neither do they learn war any more. Now we have often felt that Ephraim stood as a typical character. He, like Jacob, is the younger who was to be served by the elder, his name means

double-fruitfulness. Spiritual Ephraim came into being through Jesus passing through affliction. Ephraim was brought forth in Egypt, and Joseph said, "For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction." We believe every subject of grace who receives of the Lord's hand double for all her sins is an Ephraimite indeed. It is of such who are blessed of the Lord that Isaiah also saith, "For your shame ye shall have double, and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double; everlasting joy shall be unto them." Now it is this Ephraim that shall ride. This sets forth, to our mind, God's saints, whether Jew or Gentile, going in the strength of the Lord. Thus Ephraim's seed is set forth as a multitude of many nations, we believe a number that no man can number, who shall ride, for the text, "I will make Ephraim to ride," signifies what the Lord has done that Ephraim is to enjoy. "Judah shall plow." Judah was the fourth son of Jacob by Leah, and stands out among his brethren as the tribe from which David sprang, who was the slayer of Goliath, and later king and sweet Psalmist of Israel. Our beloved Lord also came of the tribe of Judah. Jesus is the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Leah, the mother of Judah, was tender-eyed, and, as a type of Israel under the legal covenant, could not see clearly into the things pertaining to her legal worship. Judah had to be brought forth before Leah ceased to bear, so Jesus had to come of the tribe of Judah, before the legal worship should end. Judah's humble supplication before Joseph is a wonderful example of true humility, only surpassed by those who fall at the feet of Jesus, our spiritual Joseph. We here mention Joseph as a type of Jesus, but we feel that Judah also stands in many ways as a type of our Lord. Jesus is the lion of the tribe, and it is he whom his brethren shall praise. (Gen. xlix. 8.) Moses also in blessing Judah said, "Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah, and bring him unto his people: let his hands be sufficient for him," etc. All this is fulfilled in Christ. The Lord heard his cry and his hands being clean waxed stronger and stronger, and God the Spirit does bring him to His people. Thus, to our understanding, Jesus and the little flock who believed on him of his nation, were what Israel under the legal covenant brought forth when she ceased to bear. All the apostles were Jews, as were also all the writers of the New Testament. Above all this, they were Jews inwardly, and it is their testimony, which is the law fulfilled, that becomes the plow. Blessed by God, the Spirit, their testimony plows the barren soil among the Gentiles, and will, in God's time, among the Jews, and what a change this will bring to them in that day. "I will make Ephraim to ride and Judah to plow." How very different this unity of purpose that Hosea told would come, must have seemed to what that prophet knew to exist at that time. Being a patriot, how saddening to him was the enmity, variance and hatred that prevailed among them. This variance seemed to begin as soon

as they entered into the promised land (Joshua xxii. 10), and in the time of King David we see it showing itself when one cried, "We have no part in David, every man to his tents, O Israel." In Rehoboam's day the division came, often bringing with it war with its desolating hand. No wonder then that the prophets, having by faith a sight of a better day, could lift up their voice as a trumpet, a day when this variance, enmity and hatred would cease, when they would seek each other's good; so the prophet takes words that picture a peaceful, rural scene, when tribe co-operates with tribe for the common good. Thus in our text after Ephraim is humbled she could be trusted, and Judah could give her the preference. "And Jacob shall break his clods." Perhaps the most unskilled and common labor in agriculture is here referred to, a task that slaves and peasants would have to do, but here again MUTUAL SERVICE is brought to our sight, a willingness on the part of Jacob to be of service in the most humble occupation for the good of all. How different is this to what we see when Jesus came. When the unjust steward was to give up his stewardship he said, "I cannot dig [he was too proud], and to beg I am ashamed," but after he is humbled he will dig deep into the mysteries of God, as Paul did, and be glad to be of service, even if it be in breaking clods. In this better day of the gospel we find Him that was greatest become servant of all, setting an example in all things, for he is our spiritual Jacob, and it is in the spirit of this New Man that every humble follower of Jesus will have a willing mind to serve.

"His wrath let us fear to provoke,
To dwell in his favor unite;
His service is freedom, his yoke
Is easy, his burden is light."

Clods are a hindrance to a proper growth of plants, and must be broken up. Paul said, "Set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church." Yes, in Paul's day there were clods to be broken, they plowed with care, they planted and watered, but some of the ground had not enough moisture, or had not had a winter's frost come over it, but it was a new man, Jacob only, that could break the clod. Paul said, "Ye that are spiritual restore such an one." Many are the services that brethren perform one for another, which are set forth in breaking the clods. Making the way a little easier, the burden a little lighter, hearing the sigh of every Jew that is a Jew inwardly, being helpers of one another's joys and bearers of one another's burdens, these are things set forth in our text. This rural picture is given to show how completely the envy of Ephraim was to depart, and the adversaries of Judah were to be cut off, so that Ephraim should not envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim. (Isaiah xi. 13.) In that very chapter you will notice that this was to take place in the day when the wolf (the unclean Gentile) should dwell with the lamb (the Jew clean through legal ceremonies), and it is in that same day that the Lord will set his hand the second time to recover the remnant of his people, etc. A rem-

nant will be saved, and the testimony of the spiritual Judah, in the power and guidance of the Spirit of God, before referred to, will plow up that barren soil, as it has plowed among the Gentiles. In the parable, the rich man (the Jew) saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom, and we feel that it will need a deal of humbling for the proud Jew to see the Gentile believer so close to Abraham, but God can do it in his time. When he does they will CO-OPERATE as Peter did in the house of Cornelius. The multitude of nations that Ephraim was to be, calls for this, and an Ephraimite is one, in this gospel day, who is able to pronounce the Shibbolath of the gospel, whereas in the evil day in which Hosea lived, she was still saying Sibboleth to her confusion, but Isaiah said, "For your shame ye shall have double, and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion." Spiritual Judah are a people (Jew or Gentile) who are circumcised in heart, having had all the superfluous things of the flesh cut away in Christ. Wherever and whenever these things are manifest the spiritual Jew can, and does, say with John, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." G. R.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE date opposite your name on the little pink slip on which your address is printed denotes the time your subscription expires. Dec 35 means it expired December, 1935; June 36 that it expired June, 1936; Dec 37 that it will expire December, 1937, etc.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DAVID W. TURNER passed away from this present time state August 16th, 1937, at his home, Claysville, Pa. He was born July 21st, 1867, at Kearneysville, W. Va., being one of the eleven children of brother Thomas and sister Ann Turner, long since deceased. Of this immediate family, but two now survive: James F. Turner, of Chicago, Ill., and E. D. Turner, of Kearneysville, W. Va. There are several nieces and nephews. Mr. Turner had been ill for several months of an insidious desease that ultimately terminated his natural life. Burial was in Elmwood Cemetery, Shepherdstown, W. Va., the writer of this article officiating at the interment. As well as it is possible to judge of one's spiritual status by the manifested evidences in the outward life, we believe Mr. Turner to have been a subject of divine grace. While he never made a public profession of his faith and hope in Christ by way of the ordinance of believer's baptism, he averred his belief in the absolute sovereignty of Almighty God, and that salvation of sinners is by the grace of God in Christ Jesus, experimentally realized by the operation of the Holy Spirit internally in the soul. We have hope for him that he was founded in Christ, the solid Rock, against whom the gates of hell cannot prevail. If so, he is a member of Christ's mystical body, consequently he is bound in the bundle of life with the Lord God. What a wonderful and marvelous glory to be ultimately realized by redeemed sinners, despite all the demerits in them, because of the infinite merits of Christ Jesus, God's eternal Son.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

BOOKS WANTED.

DEAR EDITORS:—I would like to buy some of the Editorials of Elder Gilbert Beebe that were published in book form. If you know where I can secure same I would appreciate your letting me know, or if you would insert a notice in the SIGNS perhaps some of the brethren have copies they would sell.

Yours truly,

E. P. McNEILL,
MULLEN, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I want a good Baptist History. One that traces the history of the Baptists from the days of John the Baptist to the present time. A second hand book would do, as I want to get it as cheaply as possible. I would also be glad to receive a list of any other Baptist books for sale.

Yours sincerely,

J. J. COLLINS,
NEWTON, Alabama.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, &c. REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.

Of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, published monthly, at Middletown, N. Y., for October 1st, 1937.

State of New York, County of Orange, ss.:

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Gilbert Beebe, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the owner of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that the following is to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24th, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse side of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publishers, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publishers, J. E. Beebe & Company, Middletown, N. Y.; Editor: Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.

2. The owner is, Gilbert Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagers and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent. or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear on the books of the company, but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the corporation for whom such trustee is acting is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stocks, bonds or other securities than as so stated by him.

GILBERT BEEBE, Owner.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 20th day of September, 1937.

(Seal) E. E. CONKLING.
(My commission expires March, 1939.)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Dr. T. E. Presley, New Mexico, $3; Joseph A. Johnson, Tenn., $1; Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Okla., $1; "A friend," Ontario, $3; Mrs. Charles H. Glascock, Va., $1; Mrs. May Derby Hoyt, N. Y., $2; Mrs. J. E. Chadwick, Texas, $3.

MEETINGS.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, eight miles north of Leesburg, Va., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 13th, 14th and 15th of October, 1937. Those coming by train or bus Tuesday evening the 12th will come to Leesburg to be met there. Those coming Wednesday morning will come by early train, as there is no morning bus from Washington. Trains leave Rosslyn for Leesburg at the Virginia end of the Key Bridge, reached by trolleys via. Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington. Buses leave for Leesburg from the Greyhound Terminal at 14th and New York Avenue, N. W. Those coming by private conveyance Tuesday evening will come to Leesburg and inquire for Elder Lefferts, but those coming in own conveyance Wednesday morning will go direct to meetinghouse. All lovers of the truth, especially ministers of our faith and order, are invited to meet with us.

R. C. GARRETT, Church Clerk,
LEESBURG, Virginia.

The usual all-day meeting will be held with the New Vernon Church, New Vernon, N. Y., on Tuesday, October 12th, 1937, to which all lovers of the truth are invited.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Hopewell Association convenes with Nazereth Church, near Samantha, Alabama, (Fayette and Tuscaloosa Highway) on Friday before the third Sunday in October, 1937, and continues three days. All lovers of the truth as advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES are welcome. For more information write the following:

G. W. BERRY, Moderator,
W. D. GRIFFIN, Clerk,
FAYETTE, Alabama.

The Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore, Maryland, will hold all-day meeting on October 17th, 1937, (Third Sunday). A cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by Elder Charles W. Vaughn, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in October (31st). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets the third Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, at 10:30 a. m. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, 421 Steele, Street, Frankfort, Ky.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

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1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

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EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

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11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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MIDDLETOWN, N Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 105. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1937. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MATTHEW XVIII. 9.

"And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than, having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire."

It is with a deep sense of my need of spiritual understanding that I attempt an explanation of this Scripture, but if it is God's will for me to do so, I believe he will guide me. In its consideration we should constantly bear in mind it is the inner man that in substance Jesus is addressing. The old man, or flesh, under the old or law covenant, could not render a satisfactory obedience to the law, much less to the precepts of the gospel under the new covenant. There is no promise, either under the law or the gospel, that our flesh would be changed in this present life, but there is a promise contained in the new covenant that God would put his law in the inward parts and write it in the mind. If he had put his law in our outward parts (or flesh) we would be holy, like Jesus, and our eyes, hands or feet would not offend. There would be no warfare, such as Paul describes in Romans vii. 21-23: "I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." And in verse twenty-five: "So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." In the absence of this warfare, there would be no need to mortify our members on the earth as Paul describes them in Colossians iii. 5, as follows: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry." It would seem from this description of the old man, that it is the deeds of the body that are under consideration, and in Romans vii. 15-20,

Paul tells us how to put the old man off: "For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that I would not, I consent unto the law, that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me."

The Savior here in our text is instructing his disciples in dealing with offenses. Not only those offenses that come to us through the acts of the unruly members of our own body, but also those offenses that come through the trespasses of an offending brother in the church. The instructions here in dealing with an offending brother are not spoken symbolically, but clearly and to the point, and I fail to see wherein they need any explanation. But the instructions seem to be different concerning the offenses of the outward members of our own body. They are not to be labored with, but cut off and cast from us, mortified, denied: "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." As I see it, the two eyes spoken of here do not mean our two natural eyes, and the plucking out is not to be taken literally, because it is evident that with whichever one of our two natural eyes might be left we could do a lot of unsavory gazing, at least enough to commit adultery in the heart, and that would disturb the peace of one who has an awakened conscience, and the offense would still remain. The two eyes here spoken of by the Savior seem to be different in their nature: one seems to be conductive to life, and the other to hell fire. In Luke xi. 34, 35, Jesus says to these same disciples, and in the same discourse, (Compare Matthew v. 29, and vi. 22.) "The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness. Take heed, therefore, that the light which is in thee be not darkness." It would seem, therefore, that it is the evil eye which causes the offense, which Jesus would have plucked out and cast from us.

In the conclusion of the parable, where the king is taking an account of his servants (Matt. xviii. 32-35), Jesus says, "Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: shouldest not thou also had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." It would be a wicked, or evil eye indeed, that would look on his brother's trespass in the eye of the law, and demand perfection, and expect for himself forgiveness for his own sins in the light of the gospel. Deliver him to the tormentors; hold back forgiveness for his own sins. Is there worse torment, or hell fire, here on this earth for one of God's little ones than the torment we suffer under the weight of our own sins? Is it true our heavely Father becomes our adversary, whiles we are in

the way with him? Jesus says, "Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. [Pluck out that evil eye.] Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing."—Matt. v. 25, 26. That is what Jesus said the king did to his servant, and he says we will suffer the same things if we forgive not every one his brother their trespasses . There is no other one thing in the Bible that is urged more than the necessity of love for one another, and there is nothing that will bring us to the feet of our brethren any quicker than to be humbled under the weight of our own sins. An unforgiving spirit is not all we are judged for. Peter was judged for trusting in his own strength. In Deuteronomy xxxii. 36, we read, "For the Lord shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up or left." We are judged for our pride, for, "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."—Prov. xvi. 18. We are judged for trusting in our own counterfeit righteousness, which is declared to be as "filthy rags." (Isaiah lxiv. 6.) I believe these are the things John the Baptist refers to as chaff in Luke iii. 17. We read, "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable." (Hell fire.) Paul refers to them as wood, hay, stubble. In 1 Corinthians iii. 10-15, we read, "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon.. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." The gold, silver and precious stones are the precious things of Christ which remain after we have passed through fiery trials, and which we see by faith, and it is by faith, or an act of the mind, that we build these things on the foundation, and the reward we receive if our work abides is the peace of mind and conscience we have when we enter into life with one Jesus speaks of.

In the first chapter of 2nd Peter we have a more complete description of this eye, and the process of building, and the reward. In verses ten and eleven he says, "If ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Who would ask for any greater reward? "If

ye do these things." What things? In verses five, six and seven he mentions seven graces of the Spirit, that we are to, by giving diligence, add to our faith. Then in verse eight, "For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall never be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." "If these things be in you." But how did they get there? Why, in verse three he says, "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." When did he give us these seven things, or all things, for seven is a complete number? Paul tells us in Ephesians i. 3, 4, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Peter seems to regard faith as a part of the foundation, for he would have us build these things, or add them to faith. And Paul says, Hebrews xi. 1, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Now, "Add to your faith virtue." I believe virtue here means power, and as all power is of God, it is only through faith that we have any power at all. Peter thought he had virtue in himself to not deny his Lord, but found his virtue was all in Jesus. Through his blindness this virtue was hid from Peter before his trial, but now it abounds, he has a knowledge of it. I do not believe there was any other way he could attain to this knowledge other than through this manifestation of his weakness, and the power of Jesus to hold him from falling. So now Peter could begin to "do these things;" that is, he could add virtue to faith, "and to virtue knowledge." But he could not do it before, because he did not have them to add. They did not abound. Peter was willing to add a wooden virtue to a God-given faith, and the world is full of people to-day just as willing, but it will not stand fire, and there is no one knows it better than Peter did. "It is better to enter into life with one eye."

"And to knowledge temperance." No more boasting now; we begin to walk more softly, having such knowledge we become temperate in our walk and conversation.

"And to temperance patience." Notice how neatly Peter fits each one of these stones on the preceding one. What did we know of patience when we were boasting of our own power? But now we must wait upon the Lord for all spiritual blessings. James saw perfection in patience. "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations. Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."—James i. 2-4.

So we add "to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness," which could hardly abound until after godliness. "And to brotherly kindness charity." These seven things are outward evidences, or manifestations, of a

work of grace in the heart by the Spirit, and they all spring from love, or charity, and it is only by these evidences that we know love exists. But love existed before even faith existed, and having brought forth this great chain of evidence, or works, as James calls them, they give life to faith also, for "faith without works is dead." And love abounds also, which is the greatest of all, for it crowns all the rest, for God is love, and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."—1 John iii. 14. Take away all these evidences and we are left blind and cannot see to "enter into life." For in verse nine Peter says, "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." All our sins were made old when "once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."—Heb. ix. 26. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." We are all forgetful, otherwise we would have no hours of darkness. Here in this language we see a putting off of the old man with all of his deeds. They are all unprofitable, for if they were not we would not become blind, and halt, and have to wait to be renewed by the Spirit. "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."—2 Cor. iv. 16. "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."—John vi. 63. And do we hear the word in those seven saying, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."—Zech. iv. 6. Seven is a perfect number and means completeness, so I do not understand that we have only seven evidences numerally, but in a complete sense. Peter was a prophet of the Lord, and also a steward in the house of God, and it was said to him, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven."—Matt. xvi. 19. Here we see the old man bound hand and foot, but the inward man is loosed. And shall we say here that Peter has unlocked, as it were, the doors to the kingdom of heaven when he says, If ye do these things ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ? "If ye do these things," and in a way we do, yet it is the work of the Spirit, even when we add these things, through faith, to that sure foundation, that tried stone, which is Jesus Christ. "For, behold, the stone that I have laid before Joshua: upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day."—Zech. iii. 9. These eyes, lights, lamps or good works, they all mean the same thing, are set upon a candlestick, that they may give light to all that are in the house (the church), and they are to so

shine that God is glorified. In the fourth chapter of Zechariah we have a more complete description of these lamps, the golden candlestick, and the golden tubes that empty the golden oil out of themselves. And the seven lamps on the golden candlestick. Notice these figures are all of gold, just as love is the foundation and crown of all our spiritual exercises. This description is mysterious, but well do we all know that we must have oil in our lamps, for we know that without a continuous supply of grace we would cease to bear fruit and our lamps would go out and we would be in utter darkness, without any evidence of life within. The oil may sometimes seem to get low, our light may shine but dim, we may often bowed down in infirmity be forced to halt, and until the gracious Savior extends his arm we cannot move, but we are never left without some little evidence of life. Those exceeding great and precious promises of God reach down to our lowest stages of existence, and whatever our state those promises light up something within our reach that we can lay hold upon, for, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." —Deut. xxxiii. 27. Are you wretched? Paul was wretched. Are you vile? So was Job. Could you ever say, "Behold, for peace I had great bitterness [that is what Hezekiah said], but thou hast in love delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind my back"? Could you ever say with Peter, Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man? Do we ever go down to the bottom of the mountains, the weeds wrapped about our heads, have all the billows pass over us, the depths close in round about us, and the earth with her bars about us forever? Jonah did. But the arms are yet underneath. "Out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice." Have we ever been in such agony that we sweat as it were great drops of blood? Have we ever in pain cried out until the rocks rent, the earth quaked and darkness covered the face of the whole earth? Jesus did. But the arms are still underneath. Hell could not hold that incarnate body, the grave must give it up, and in triumphant victory we, too, all rise with him, for we all died with him. Listen, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."—Isaiah xxvi. 19. In the arms of our blessed Jesus we can ascend into the heavens, but no mortals of themselves can, as we shall ever be weighted down with sin or pain enough to fall below his arms, or, too, the bounds of his love. If we cannot now, can we when it comes time for our departure, look back over this life and say, It is good to be afflicted; it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, halt or maimed, rather than having two eyes, or hands, or feet, to be cast into hell fire? But best, may we have an unshaken faith to believe that this same body that has been racked with pain, endured trials of afflictions and floods of persecution, shall halt no

more, but in Christ Jesus shall triumph in victory, when that great Steward shall roll up the curtain of time, open the doors of the eternal heavens, it shall enter there and shall shine forth in the presence of its Creator in all the resplendent beauty, perfection and transcendent power and glory of the Son of God.

A. D. HUGHETT.

YAKIMA, Wash., Jan. 15, 1937.

NORTHPORT, Ala., Dec. 31, 1936.

DEAR EDITORS:—I hope I have been an honest inquirer for the truth for some time, and very sincere in the same. I feel sure that Jesus Christ is the way, the truth and the life of all his people, and has always been, and ever will be. He told his disciples before he left them here in the world that it was needful for him to go away, for if he did not go the Comforter would not come. But to this end was he born, and for this cause came he into this world, that all that was written of him should be fulfilled, to suffer, bleed and die for the sins of his people, and to rise the third day and ascend unto the Father, for his people's justification and redemption. He told his disciples that he would not leave them comfortless, but would send them another Comforter, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. But ye know him, for he dwelleth with you and shall be in you. Again, he said the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father shall send in my name (in Jesus' name) he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you. I feel sure this is the way the Lord teaches his people in the measure he is pleased to do, and that he is pleased in the same for them to commune with each other and to be edified and comforted with the comfort wherein they are comforted of God The apostle said there are differences of gifts, but of the same Spirit, all for the edifying of the body of Christ. These blessings the world cannot receive, but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit, for the Spirit of God searches all things, even the deep things of God. When the world comes preaching their doctrine they come in their own name, with the weapons and will of the flesh, but God humbles poor beings moved by the Holy Ghost to come in the name of Jesus, speaking the wisdom of God, even the hidden wisdom (which the world cannot receive) which God ordained before the world unto our glory. This Wisdom (Christ) is made unto us of God, therefore the weapon of our warfare is not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds and every high thing that exhausts itself against the knowledge of Christ, and bringing into captivity every thought unto the obedience of Christ. The apostles preached Christ, and him crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness, but unto them which are called, both Jew and Greek, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us who are

saved it is the power of God. Then the news of the Comforter to Israel is that her warfare is accomplished, that her sins are forgiven and her iniquity pardoned, and that she has received at the Lord's hand double for all her sins. Then what has she received? All the spiritual blessings given her in Christ before the world was: mercy instead of justice; grace for the grace that was given her in Christ; justification instead of condemnation, free from the law and all its curses, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who hath called us to glory and virtue. Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be partakers of his divine nature. Therefore all who are made partakers of this heavenly calling wherein they are called of God have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and have felt the power of the world to come, as a foretaste of their inheritance, and are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance. The redemption of our body from the grave is from corruption to incorruption, then we will receive the fullness of our inheritance, of which the earnest part here gives rise to hope for the fullness beyond the grave; otherwise we would have no hope here. We are given by the Holy Ghost to believe Jesus is the Christ, wherein we rejoice with joy unspeakable. Beyond this veil we shall see him as he is, and be like him, and surely God's humble poor who desire a crumb from the Master's table will be satisfied when they awake with his likeness. Thus we are saved by hope. Not without evidence, but with a strong consolation through faith we lay hold upon the hope that is set before us. If there was nothing set before us there would be no running with patience, for we would faint, and could not endure the trying of our faith, but as we receive mercy we faint not, and are blessed to look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith and know he is all of our salvation, our shield and hiding-place, our Shepherd, we shall not want. He leads us in the path of righteousness for his name's sake. What a wonderful Shepherd! He cares for his flock, and leads and teaches them in the path of righteousness for his name's sake, for he has made with them an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure. Yes, it is sure, it cannot fail, for the covenant is his faithfulness, his mercy, his grace, his pity, all from the fountain of his everlasting love. This is the new covenant, and his children cannot break it and lose their inheritance, for he says, I will put it in their minds and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God and they shall be my people. This new covenant is not written in their hearts with pen and ink, but by the Spirit of the living God; not on tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of their hearts, therefore it is an inward work of God's sovereign grace, wrought by the Spirit of God, wherein we delight in the law of God after the inward man and have no confidence in the flesh, for the outward man perisheth, but the inward man is

renewed day by day. Man is cursed that trusteth in man, or that maketh flesh his arm. We hope that we trust in God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth things which be not as though they were. He kills, and he makes alive; he wounds, and he heals; the words he speaks they are Spirit and they are life. Wherein the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.

I am, I hope, your brother in Christ,

J. L. SANDERS.

SAN ANGELO, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending a letter I received from sister Alba Dean, giving her interpretation of a dream one of her daughters had. In this dream the girl saw a very dark cloud, so dark it almost obscured the sky, yet a few bright stars were shining, even seeming more brilliant for the contrast. She had told me of the dream, and we had wondered, hoping some time to be shown the true meaning. Her view of the true and false doctrine seems so consistent to me I gladly share it with the readers of the SIGNS, if you see fit to publish; if not, we know all things work together for good to them that love God, etc. We once had a strong church at Ranger, but now all but her have either moved away, died or joined the Peace people, so it is lonely indeed; yet I hope the Lord will give us grace to trust him, and not man, however dark things seem.

Your little sister, I hope,

LENA LANGFORD.

RANGER, Texas.

DEAR SISTER LENA:—I was very glad to hear from you, for I did not know whether you had gotten off or not.

I read "Fragments." It is indeed a wonderful book. What a comfort it is to read true testimony. We find so few now whom we believe are sound in doctrine, but rejoice to know that God has kept at least a few in the hollow of his hand. Not all are "captured," nor will they ever be, for the church will never lose its identity. God will never be left without a witness.

I had thought that some time we would see the meaning of the dark cloud and the few bright shining stars, and when I read your letter, and your questions as to the meaning, it came to my mind that it was a picture of true and false witnesses to-day. We can see a great dark cloud of false witnesses, indeed they almost obscure the sky. That only makes the sky more blue where it can be seen, and the few stars seem to shine brighter. Jesus is the bright and Morning Star; then his little ones are the lesser stars. I believe the time is near, even at the door, when the stars shall sing together. You see those stars hidden behind the clouds are not lost, no, not one, but are only hidden, not to be seen as true witnesses here; they do not shine with true testimony, but rather use the doctrine of men. In God's sight it is vile and dark; no light in it. Most of the time I feel that I would fit in that dark cloud, when I view myself as God sees me, then at times I have a precious little hope that

God for some reason chose me to remain with the few who will give him all the glory, as only the old "Absoluters" do. I believe that all things, both good and evil, are used to fulfill his purposes. Just as in the death of Christ it was a wicked act on the part of man, and those men sinned willingly, yet God used their wicked act for good, without being the author of sin. Satan is the author of sin, and when man follows Satan he ever sins. We do good only when we follow Christ, and that only when the Father draws us. We cannot follow him of our own accord or will. If we live in obedience to his commands we are only doing our duty. When we fail we merit punishment, so it is by the grace of God we are what we are when obedient. There is joy and blessing in obedience, because he surely leads us. Our reward is a clear conscience. Because we love him, it is so sweet for him to make our will his will. If it could be that it is his will, I would be very glad if we could have meeting here again, and you and I be blessed with the privilege of hearing true preaching as we once did. How sad to be so scattered, one here and one there, lonely, hungry and cold. I enjoy reading the "S. G. & P.," also the SIGNS. We get sound preaching there. I am keeping every copy of the SIGNS, with the hope that some time at least some of our children may read them with an understanding. I gladly loan them, but always have them returned. I believe the SIGNS is the place where we can find most comfort outside the Bible. One can get much comfort reading the letters telling of having been led in the same way as one's self, then turning to the Bible and finding it is according to Scripture. We tell the same old story over and over. It is new every time. I have said nothing you did not already know, and much better than I do.

We feel we would like to go elsewhere and find a better home, feeling that most any place would be better; then our friends and loved ones inquire about places here, so we are left in confusion, not knowing what to do. We will just leave it to the Lord, hoping he will direct us all in doing what is best for us.

Love to all.

Yours in Christ,

ALBA DEAN.

WESLACO, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find a letter I received from Elder J. B. Bowden. Some of the brethren requested me to send a copy of it to you for publication, if you have room and it meets with your approval. He has been a father in Israel to this poor unworthy sinner. He is in poor health, and some seem to think his labor among the churches is about over. In looking back over the twenty some odd years we have been together with not a thing ever coming up between us to mar our peace is indeed marvelous, and makes me want to praise my blessed Savior for it all, for we know that within ourselves we can do nothing; this blessed peace must come down from above. He knows our every need before we ask him. That all-seeing eye saw the end

from the beginning, so that is why everything comes to pass in its own time, just as was in his mind years and years ago. Nothing new or old with God; the same one eternal God.

E. B. AULT.

SAN ANTONIO, Texas.

ELDER E. B. AULT, AND ALL THE DEAR ONES IN THE VALLEY:—How are you all by now? We are as usual. This is a restless time with me. I was so cast down (but hope not forsaken) I was not able to go to my meeting at Stockdale Saturday. I had some pretty bad coughing spells Thursday and Friday and was too weak to make the trip. Pray for me, dear brother. I have not had a letter from any one for the last two weeks, and that makes it more lonesome for me. Brother and sister Staggs come over occasionally, which helps me much. I awoke Monday morning before daylight in a dream. It just seemed as if I had been talking, and there were nearly two chapters that I was quoting when I awoke. My memory has been so poor ever since last fall I could hardly quote anything. But this grand sermon that Paul preached to the Ephesians was before me, and I was given to see a deep and large field in the two chapters, greater than ever before. I will try to tell you something about it by quoting a portion of the two chapters, together with the connecting verse, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Connected with Psalms: "His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed."—Psalms lxxii. 17. Ephesians i. 3, was Paul's introductory verse, and laid the foundation forever as a doctrinal line. Thus proving this far with the words of David. Then he goes farther, and says, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Then proves it by Peter: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; Grace be unto you, and peace be multiplied." "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."—1 Peter i. 2, 20. Paul did not close there, but went farther, and said, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."—Eph. i. 5. He preached the same doctrine at Rome, and said, For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he (his Son) might be the firstborn among you (or many brethren). Then called on John to verify his statement, who said, Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the flesh, but of God. (John i. 13; Luke xii. 32.) Paul never said that any part of this was done for the sinner because

of what he had or could do, but "To the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."—Eph. i. 6. And said, That in the dispensation of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth; even in him. In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will, that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. (Eph. i. 9-12.) Then adds, In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth. Verse eleven is proven by Isaiah xlvi. 10, which says, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall be done (or stand), and I will do all my pleasure. And 2 Thess. ii. 13. This is the doctrine that Paul preached at Ephesus, one of the most idolatrous cities in Asia, and also at Rome, which was a wicked, idolatrous city, and the seat of the Roman Empire, the seat of the beast. Then he goes on, and in his second chapter tells exactly the inward condition and rudeness of their craftiness. Here he tells them their condition, and says, You hath he quickened, who were dead in sins; wherein in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. (Eph. ii. 2, 3.) Then he refers to the letter he wrote to Titus, showing that he preached the very same doctrine there, and said, For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, deceived, serving divers lust and pleasure, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which were shed in us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior. That being justified by grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (Titus ii. 3-7.) Then puts a perfect cap on the whole sermon to his church in Ephesus by the final closing of the sermon, in which he says that in the ages to come (from then) he might show the exceeding riches of his grace and his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. (Eph. ii. 7-9.) Then Romans iv. 16; Phillipians i. 29. Then quotes John as saying (and that against the works system), No man can come unto me, except the Father which sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day. (John vi. 44.) Now it does seem that any reasonable person would be ashamed to

cry so loud in the ears of the people that salvation is dependent upon what we can or must do, when it is clearly stated that man in nature is dead in sin and has no desire of heart to have anything to do with religious feeling. This whole thing came to me after the two days of being downcast because I had to miss being with the brethren at Stockdale, after being absent so long. Pray for me. I hope to be with you in the Valley at your regular communion meeting the fourth Sunday, and Friday and Saturday, in July.

J. B. BOWDEN.

LA GRANDE, Oregon.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The readers of the SIGNS in our midst would be pleased to have the following account of our Union Meeting published at some convenient time. I am sending it by request.

The Border Union of Old School Baptists met on Friday before the fourth Sunday in June with the Mizpeh Church, at Touchet, Washington. The four churches composing this Union were all represented by letter and messengers. Besides, there were several visitors from other churches from farther away communities. Three days of pleasant meetings were enjoyed, where the gospel was preached in its fullness, without any discordant notes. We should be pleased if our brethren traveling through this part of the country in June of each year would take note of our meeting time and place and visit us. Our membership is not large, but we are of one faith, with no divisions to mar our assemblies when we come together each year for our Union meeting. The Salem Church, at Weiser, Idaho, the Big Spring Church, at Elgin, Oregon, the Mizpeh Church, at Touchet, Washington, and the Pleasant Grove Church, at Yakima, Washington, comprise our Border Union, which was organized about twenty years ago, and has met with one of the churches on the regular meeting day of that church each year since. There are seven ordained Elders now in the membership of these churches, but most of them, like Paul to Timothy, feel that they have about finished their course, and are earnestly waiting the Lord's time for the bestowal of the crown of righteousness which they hope is laid up for them.

The next Union meeting is appointed to meet with the Pleasant Grove Church, at Yakima, Washington, on Friday before the third Sunday in June, 1938, where all lovers of the truth as believed by Old School Baptists will be welcome.

This is written at the request of the churches in counsel, that our brethren in other places may know of us, and, if possible, meet with us.

C. W. BOND.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE date opposite your name on the little pink slip on which your address is printed denotes the time your subscription expires. Dec 35 means it expired December, 1935; June 36 that it expired June, 1936; Dec 37 that it will expire December, 1937, etc.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1937.

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ROMANS XIII. 10.

"LOVE worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."

This is the one and all-important subject of the Bible, as it will cover all acts that we do or feel to do to manifest praise to our dear Savior, and to manifest our appreciation one for another. Jesus said, If ye love me, keep my commandments (John xiv. 15), and according to carnal commandment the restricting of our acts from committing adultery, stealing, killing, bearing false witness, not covetous, and administering of our natural blessings to our neighbors, we have filled all requirements, and by so doing we stand before God blameless in love. These things to be manifested in the personality of individuals are to be admired, and we like them, but they do not give eternal life, nor give an inheritance in the kingdom of God. If these things could give eternal life, then some would have whereof to boast, and ill feelings to some, and others would be favored. The love of God loveth all that are begotten of the Spirit, and the lowest peasant is just as precious as though he was the more favored. When we would avenge ourselves upon those who cast us out and speak evil against us, we are not prompted by the spirit of love. Paul wrote unto the church at Rome, and said, "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another; not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men."—Rom. xii. 9-17. Paul, writing to the church at Rome, having the realizations of the grace of God be-

stowed upon him, could admonish the brethren, and his admonitions are for us if we feel them in our hearts, and the witness of Paul's writings are comforting to us, and we are encouraged and built up in the most holy faith. There is no ill to any man in the writings of the apostle Paul but to the contrary, he prays for his enemies, and the word recorded testifies that he was born of God, and was prompted by the spirit that worketh by love. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup, for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep, for if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged, but when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. (1 Cor. xi. 28-32.) If these evidences are realized in our hearts they give us the assurance that we are born of the same Spirit and are followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the relationship that should exist among brethren of like precious faith, and goodness of the dwelling together in unity is felt, with all the pleasantness that is given for poor sinners to enjoy in this life. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death, and the covenant of God that he declared he would make with them in those days: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their minds, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people," and all the keeping of that law is done in love, as Paul declared in our text: "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Jesus, through love, came into the world to save sinners, for he declared, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John iii. 16. This calls for the language of the prophet, which confirms the love of God for poor sinners, in which he said, "For unto us a child is born, unto a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor."—Isaiah ix. 6. Our experiences have brought to us the evidences that we cannot love our neighbor as ourselves, and not being able to do that we fail in keeping the law. For us to fail in one disqualifies us for the second, so the whole theme of salvation by the deeds of the law has failed, and none can realize that fact but those who are born of an incorruptible seed by the word of God, and we realize the depravity of nature, so with Paul we declare ourselves to be unprofitable servants. All the years that we have felt to be obedient to the commandments resting in our heart, follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, if it had not been for the love that has rested in our heart for the association and fellowship for the

church of our God we could not have continued; there has been a drawing, and we seem to be in it, and it is a part of us. Paul said, "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God."—Gal. ii. 20.

We are now closing our writing for the year 1937, and as we reflect upon our motives, and expressions submitted to the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, we can truly say it has been done in love for the doctrine of salvation by grace, and all who contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and in no way for vain glory. We do not feel all we have written was received and enjoyed by all, but we are truly glad you have held to the truth, and did not turn away because you did not see all points just as we did, and there is one request we would make to all our readers: Do not make mountains out of mole hills, strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel, but strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace, and forsake not the assemblage of the saints. The SIGNS' family are the people who worship God in the Spirit and have no confidence in the flesh, and it seems to us that many are standing out from the church who love the doctrine proclaimed in the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation.

May it please God to keep us in the love of the truth, that all we do will be directed by his Spirit, and may we be given understanding, that we may worship him, is our prayer.

C. W. V.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANKS.

IN each copy of this issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we are inclosing a subscription blank for the convenience of our subscribers in renewing their own subscriptions and in sending the names of new subscribers, and we appeal to each of our friends to do what they can toward helping us build up our subscription list.

The date on the little pink slip bearing you address, which you will find either on your paper or the wrapper in which it comes to you, signifies to what time your subscription is paid. If your subscription has expired, or is about to expire, please send on your renewal if you can spare it, but if you are not at the present time in a position to renew your subscription, but hope to be later on, do not order your paper stopped, for we would much rather continue sending the paper to you until such time as you are able to pay for it than to take your name from our list.

When sending in renewals be sure and give us the exact name and address of the person to whom the paper is now coming, so we will not give the credit to the wrong person.

We sincerely thank all who in the past have in any way aided us in continuing the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and hope they will continue such aid in the future, and do what they can in the way of sending us new subscriptions and renewing their own.

J. E. B. & CO.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder L. L. Schenck.)

To the Elders and messengers composing the First Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association called Kansas, when convened with our sister church called Little Flock, near Garber, Oklahoma, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 10th, 11th and 12th, 1937, greeting and christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Through the kindness and tender mercies of our covenant-keeping God, we have been preserved through the shifting scenes of another year and are blest with the privilege of meeting together once more in an associational capacity. Through the same kindness and grace of God, we desire to engage in fervent, mutual worship, as we have in days gone by, and with one accord we hope to be enabled to mutually contend for the same doctrine and order, the same Articles of Faith, upon which the Association was organized many years ago. If the doctrine our fathers preached at that time was the truth then, it is the truth now. As we have had no misgivings or doubt concerning this doctrine, we take pleasure in once more calling your attention to some of the precious promises contained therein. The absolute sovereignty of God is of super importance. A departure from this doctrine is equal to saying there is another power somewhere of some kind that stands, and has always stood, as a rival of God Almighty, engaging him in a continual battle, with the outcome decidedly in doubt. This theory is common, but not among Old School Baptists. We know of no such power. But we have read in the holy Scriptures, "There is no power but of God." Of no less importance is the doctrine of God's determinate counsel and foreknowledge. This embraces every circumstance, without exception. There is no creature nor circumstance that was unknown to God, even before time began, and every circumstance is timed to take place according to the pleasure of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and his determinate counsel has fixed the motions of every creature, animate or inanimate, so that nothing can supercede the power and wisdom of God. There is no creature nor circumstance that was unforeknown to God even before time began. We glean comfort from the fact that God holds the reins of the universe, so that not even Satan, our arch enemy himself, can besiege or molest God's anointed without his permission. There is nothing comes by chance, else we must admit of another power somewhere, forcing circumstances into shape or being which might chance to baffle the wisdom of the eternal God and defeat him in his purposes. If one thing should come by chance, why not every thing? To admit such, would be to admit a disordered, chaotic universe, with nothing made sure to us. It was written of Jesus, "He shall save his people from their sins." But chance would render that precious truth uncertain. If there was a mere chance for him to accomplish this gracious work,

there was also a chance for him to fail, and if he has merely given every one a chance to be saved, there are also many chances to be lost, for human tendencies are toward sin and not righteousness. If by chance, then that covenant "ordered in all things and sure," means nothing to us. Even "the sure mercies of David" could not be counted sure, if all things or any thing moves at random. The failure of one of God's purposes to materialize would necessarily subject him to shameful disappointment, and in such a case he would be no longer God, but merely a god. A god not superior to other gods of which there are many. His purpose underlying the whole structure of the universe was that he might be glorified in his creation, hence it is written of him, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law." We reassert our unwavering devotion to the doctrine of the eternal unity, or unity of Christ and the church. This has ever been, and is now, a fundamental point of doctrine of this Association. Let the world scoff if it will, but we are unfaltering in our faith that Christ and his people have never been separated, and they never can be separate, hence the term, "Eternal unity." Christ is eternal and his people are eternal, otherwise there could be no eternal unity. As a spiritual seed they are as old as Christ himself, and of them it is written, "A seed shall serve him, and it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." It is part of God's divine arrangement that a certain number of Adam's race were chosen to bear this precious seed, from the beginning chosen unto salvation through sanctification (or setting apart) of the Spirit and belief of the truth. These, the children of the promise, are accounted for the seed, but are not the children of God, for nothing but the Spirit can be born from the Spirit, and, likewise, nothing but flesh can be born of the flesh. Hence, the divine expression of our Master that "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and that which is born of the flesh is flesh." For the spiritually born there is no change in anticipation, save to be relieved from the warfare here below, and to be inducted into the immediate presence of our spiritual Head and Father, even God. For the fleshly born there is a glorious change in anticipation, for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Every child of promise must be stripped of mortality and corruption and clothed with immortality and incorruption ere they can enter those realms of eteranl bliss. This change is not yet, but we are hoping for it, and therefore with patience wait for it, when the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. Our spirit rebels against the theory of a changed natural man here in time. If he be changed now, of what does the change consist? Every atom of evidence is to the effect that he is still a natural man. He still requires food and clothing as much so as ever he did, which the spirit does not. He commits sin, which the

spiritually born does not. He is still subject to death, which the spirit is not. He is predestinated to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ unto himself, which the Spirit, being born of God, needs not to be adopted, for he is an heir by birth. The fleshly born is sown in corruption, and the declaration is clear that " That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." It is not made alive to spiritual things until it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. Thus we cannot too strongly emphasize the fact that there are two men in the picture, the one born of the flesh and is flesh, and the other born of the Spirit and is spirit. Again we revolt at the thought that there are no eternal children. If there be no eternal children, how can we cherish the blessed principle of eternal unity of Christ and his people, the church? If there be no eternal children, to whom, or to what does this eternal life pertain? Must we surrender our God-given hope of eternal life, and the sacred principle of eternal oneness with Christ our spiritual Head, to the theory that this eternal life is only imaginary, a myth? We wish to keep in view the distinction which divine inspiration has drawn between the flesh and the Spirit, for they are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. The spiritual child bearing the image of the eternal Father, God, because it is born of God, which is ample evidence that it existed in seed form as long as God himself has existed. The birth only makes manifest that which existed before it was born. Likewise, the natural child bears the image of its father, Adam. It existed in Adam in seed form when Adam was created, and its birth is but a manifestation of that which existed before it was born. In the christian, therefore, we behold as mysterious complexity. Shall we say a dual personality? As it were a company of two armies, a perfect Shulamite. So closely allied are these two, dwelling in the same house, as it were, yet inspiration separates distinctly between them, saying, "I, yet not I." "I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Again, "If I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Briefly, then, these natural bodies of the saints are the vessels of mercy which he hath afore prepared unto glory. Earthen vessels in which we have the treasure, which treasure is the eternal seed. The children of the promise are they which are accounted for the seed. Just the right number are sanctified to this end, to contain every subject of that spiritual birth. Christ has said, A body thou hast prepared me. Thus "As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also, himself, likewise, took part of the same." This likeness, then we cannot ignore. He came down from heaven, and likewise he sends them into the world, even as he was sent into the world. He took the body that was prepared for him, and likewise this spirit-

ual seed, God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. Let us not confuse the vessel with the treasure it contains. Neither shall we overlook the blessed truth that these are vessels of mercy. They are preserved and sanctified on account of the treasure in them. In death this body must return to dust, as it was, and the spirit to God who gave it. At the resurrection of the dead, we confidently believe that the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. Then shall be the consummation of that for which we are waiting, the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. Then will each disembodied saint receive again to himself his own body. Not to renew the old warfare, but to experience a sweet and mysterious blending of spirit with spirit. Mortality will be swallowed up of life. Thus we conclude with the words of the apostle, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

L. L. SCHENCK, Mod.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

(Written by Elder J. C. Hammond.)

The Pocatalico Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Association, in session with the West Fork Church, Calhoun County, West Virginia, September 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1937, sendeth loving greetings to the like of precious faith with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has fallen to my lot to address you in the way of a Circular Letter, so with the ability God gives me I will try. I call your attention to the first epistle of Peter, second chapter, ninth verse: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." The Lord's chosen people are one family, chosen out of every nation, kindred and tongue, redeemed and called in the Lord's time to know, love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ. They differ in their nationality and color as the sons and daughters of the first Adam, but as children of the second Adam they are one family, or generation. A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted unto the Lord for a generation. (Psalms xxii.

30.) These are all begotten of God and therefore are one generation, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, and are vitally related to him and to each other. The beloved of Jesus Christ are but one, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood. Not that they merely have priests among them, but they are all priests, and are a royal priesthood, being such by the authority of their King, and he directs them in their priestly offerings. The apostle Paul says, I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. (Rom. xii. 1.) No man can make sacrifice for you, but many times you offer the sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart, which is in the sight of God of greater price. Sacrifice your bodies, put off the old man with his affections and lusts, mortify your members which are upon the earth (Col. iii. 5). and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. (Eph. iv. 24.) An holy nation. Holy in the holiness of Jesus, who hath said, Be ye holy, for I am holy, and without holiness no man can see the Lord. The perfect righteousness of Jesus is imputed to each individual of his generation, and in this holiness they stand before God acquitted of all their sins. A peculiar people. Not unlike others as the sons and daughters of Adam, but the grace of God has made them to differ from all others both in their faith and practice. Their faith is in Jesus Christ for the comforts of salvation in this life and the joys of the life to come. They have no faith in works as a means of salvation, and yet they are careful to maintain them. "That ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." Brethren, are we doing this? Or are we giving heed to the institutions of men, instead of following the instructions given us in the word of God? Paul says, "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works."—Titus iii. 8. These things are good and profitable unto men. Dear ones, there are no works so good as obedience to Jesus, our spiritual lawgiver, therefore let us turn from every false way and be true to the cause which we have professed to love, forsaking all others, cleave unto our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who is the author and finisher of our faith, who hath said, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."—John xv. 10. Surely he who hath chosen us in Christ and redeemed us by his blood, and called us by his grace from death in sin, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever (Rev. i. 6), is worthy of all the praise his loved and saved people can render unto him. Without him they can do nothing, but through Christ they can do all things. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."—Phil. ii. 5. Which mind was to do the

will of the Father. May it be our mind, dear ones. The truth is all that can do us good, and to walk in truth is the only way of comfort and rest. May the Spirit of truth stir up our pure minds to a strict following of Jesus, our blessed Lord, to whom be glory, now and forever. Farewell.

J. C. HAMMOND, Mod.
H. J. BIRD, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Elders and messengers composing the First Kansas Association, unto those with whom we correspond, and unto the faithful in Christ Jesus scattered abroad, greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—With boundless gratitude unto Him who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, we have once more been permitted to meet together in an associate capacity, and to partake of the joy that was David's when he said, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem." And to join in one accord in the song which John heard the redeemed of the Lord sing, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." We have tasted of the sweetness of how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. May our hearts ever be kept in tune with the gentle admonition, "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond ofpeace." We have been made to rejoice in the glorious messages of truth proclaimed by the ministering brethren, who stood before us fearlessly declaring the omnipotent power of God, who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast, who is of one mind and none can turn him; an unchanging God, the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake."

Brethren, we desire a continuance of your correspondence, and to both you and the visiting brethren now with us we extend the invitation to come again. We desire, if Providence permits, to convene again next year at this time, with Big Walnut Church, near Williamstown, Kansas.

And now may the peace which the blessed Master bestowed upon his disciples with the words, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you," abide with you, and us, and lead and guide us in the way of all truth. Let us press forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus throughout our pilgrimage here.

"And count our present trials small,
For heaven will make amends for all."

L. L. SCHENCK, Mod.
MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

The Pocatalico Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, to the several associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE BONDS OF THE GOSPEL OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR

JESUS CHRIST:—Through the many changing vicissitudes of this life, a little remnant of us have been preserved, as we humbly hope by grace divine, and once more, through the mercy of Israel's God, we have been blessed in this another yearly meeting to greet your messengers as they come to us preaching Christ crucified, an all-sufficient Savior of poor, lost, ruined sinners. May it be the holy will of our God to continue to favor us with your visitation in the future. May it be his gracious will to prosper his Zion, and that love and union might prevail for Christ's sake. Amen.

J. C. HAMMOND, Mod.
H. J. BIRD, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at G. Leonard's, South Grand Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets the third Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, at 10:30 a. m. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, 421 Steele, Street, Frankfort, Ky.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

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(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

TIME SALVATION.

WHO does time belong to? Does it belong to God or man? If it belongs to God, in the sense that he is only of time and ends when time ends, then all the salvation that we as creatures have is a time salvation, and ends when time ends. If it belongs to us as creatures of time, who are here as human beings for a time, then any kind of a salvation for us is a time salvation. Salvation is never spoken of in the Scriptures as being two or more. It is always spoken of in the singular. Salvation is nothing more nor less than deliverance. I want to investigate the matter from a scriptural standpoint and see if we can arrive at any conclusion as to where this salvation, or deliverance, comes from. If it is of God alone we could do no better than to contend for it as being of him, according as he blesses us to do so. If it is alone of man, then the Old Absolute Predestinarian Baptists need to be warned, so that they might cease giving all the praise, honor and glory to God and entreat the Lord to forgive us for our blindness, and promise to spend the balance of our few days in telling to dead alien sinners that the Lord may be found at any time. If it is of God and man, that is, if God does all of the regeneration or bringing through the powers known as the new birth and then turns the affair over to us to run or leave undone, then we need to beg the forgiveness of our conditional brethren, and go to work to get destroyed every copy of the London Confession of Faith, Philadelphia Confession of Faith, Black Rock Proceedings, SIGNS OF THE TIMES. *Lone Pilgrim* and every other paper or Minute that says God alone saves the sinner. He is the God of salvation. (Psalms lxviii. 19, 20.) His salvation is nigh them that fear him. (Psalms lxxxv. 9.) The Lord hath made known his salvation. (Psalms xlviii. 2, 3.) We will be glad, and rejoice in his salvation. (Isaiah xxv. 9.) I will place salvation in Zion

for Israel my glory. (Isaiah xlvi. 13.) Salvation is of the Lord. (Jonah ii. 9.) Neither is there salvation in any other. (Acts iv. 12.) The grace of God brings salvation. (Titus ii. 11.) Here I give a few of the many quotations of salvation being alone in the singular, and alone of the Lord. Now as we undertake to go out in this great subject let it be understood that we are fallible beings. As far as I am concerned, I know that conditional time salvation is not the truth. If my blessings came as a result of my deportment since I have had a hope in the blood of the everlasting covenant, I am sure that I never would have received any. How is it with you, my dear reader? Have you any merit to plead before the Lord that would bring him under any obligation to bless you with spiritual or temporal blessings since he first spoke release to your poor soul? Do you hunger and thirst after righteousness? Oh yes! What poor wayfaring stranger does not? From where did you get the thirst? Did you manufacture it? Is your hungering and thirsting of your own creation? Ah, my precious one, you cannot answer in the affirmative. You must ascribe it all to Him. If you do ascribe it all to Him, then you cannot claim any credit for it. Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. (Matt. vi. 6.) How wonderful is this language. How full and complete it is to poor sinners. So different from the way it is taught by people who have not been completely weaned from the law. It would bring amusement to us to see a normal, intelligent man put the cart before the horse, but how different if we see a poor, blind, lame man doing it. If we have been taught by that love of God being shed abroad in our hearts, then it arouses pity and compassion. We do not wonder at a man who has not been touched in the hollow of his thigh (Gen. xxxii. 25) putting the hungering and thirsting before the blessing, but oh how sad to think of God's dear children, who tell a beautiful experience of grace, telling us that if we will hunger and thirst we will be blessed.

Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. (Rom. vi. 4.) Now how was Christ raised from the dead? None of his people helped to do it. Christ, as man, did not raise himself. He was raised from that tomb by the glory of the Father. We are buried by baptism into his death and likeness in the same manner, in the same process. As Christ was raised from the dead so we are raised to walk in newness of life. Is this conditional?

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."—Phil. ii. 12, 13. Do you fear and tremble, dear reader? Can you help it? If you are afraid of something can you keep from

being afraid of it? If you are not afraid, do you think you could will to be afraid? If so, you would have to will to do that which you did not will to do. A dear, young brother recently said to me that the more he had to go to preach to God's dear people the more afraid he was. Why? Answer it yourself, dear reader. If not deceived, his expression brought instant approval from my own poor heart. God's dear children are a fearing people. See yonder dear man that arises before a congregation fearing and trembling. Why? Because God is applying Paul's admonition to him. He is before those people because God is at work. He cannot help it. He must preach, because God is working in him to will and to do. See that dear child of God coming before the church. How he quakes and trembles. How fearful he is. God is at work. He is adding to his church daily such as he would have saved. To these characters it is a time salvation. To be saved from earthquakes, famines, storms, or from errors of the world, is all done in time, but not by timely creatures. Let me say that if we get any more blessings in time than what God knew we would get, then he has certainly changed. His foreknowledge was an imperfect foreknowlege, to say the least of it, and of course makes him an imperfect god. If we are saved in an earthquake or a flood contrary to what his wisdom saw, then we get something that he did not see us get. Now that is only foreknowledge. Our conditional brethren say (or some do, although a few years ago all would say) that God foreknows all things. But I cannot see the difference between God's foreknowledge and his predestination. A thing that is foreknown is certain to come to pass. But I have been ridiculed for declaring to God's dear children that all of them are blessed in time by the same source and manner as they are for their hope of heaven. Let us examine it for a little while and see. I believe that all of the elect are as destitute of anything good as the nonelect. That, in themselves considered, they are nothing but a mass of sin and corruption. So Christ comes into the world to save his people, and takes all of their sins upon himself. But that would not benefit them as to their eternal destiny unless he gave them his righteousness. That is exactly what he did. For Christ to redeem us from all our sins he must bear them all, and I do not see how he could do that unless their sins were sure. And if he gave us (I hope I can include myself) his righteousness will we have any more righteous thoughts or deeds than he gives us? Are there two sources of righteousness? one in the creature and one from him? And if he gives us his righteousness and makes us willing (or works the will) and causes us to do (or work the do) will he be under any obligation to bless us for it? Furthermore, if he works in us the things that are well-pleasing to him,

upon what score are we entitled to pay? Must we be meek in order to be in a blessed state? If so, the Savior used the wrong language. Must we mourn in order to be blessed? Must we hunger and thirst after righteousness in order to be blessed?

Dear editors and brethren, I have tried to show that our time salvation is of Christ. I know it is like I am, imperfect, but it is my response to the dear ones who have asked me to write again. I have written under a great strain, as I am very busy and have but little time left for writing after my daily work is done and my little goings among the Lord's people are over, but I hope it will not harm any one, and, as usual with my little efforts, you are to use your judgment as to publishing the same.

Recently I was fortunate enough to come into possession of some old SIGNS, and I see in them that the doctrine of conditional time salvation was almost unknown seventy-five years ago. In fact, it is wonderful to see that the strongholds of conditionalism to-day were one time dear lovers of the SIGNS. I would like to hear from those in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Kentucky, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska and Florida who read (and believe) the SIGNS.

Hoping that God will bless editors, publishers and readers with every needed blessing, and asking an interest in your prayers, I am your poor little brother,

W. D. GRIFFIN.

FAYETTE, Alabama.

RIDGEWAY, Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I am inclosing two letters from Elder W. R. Dodd, which I feel others should read besides me. He says that if you do not feel they are worthy the space, just cast them aside and all will be well. It has been my privilege to read a number of good God-honoring letters from him. It does me much good to be remembered by God's dear saints, yet I never feel worthy of their notice.

May God prosper you in your work.

Your sister, I hope,

MARY H. STRATTON.

DRY FORK, Virginia.

DEAR SISTER MARY:—When I left Danville and came home I thought I would have time and opportunity to write a great deal, but I find spare time is not all that is needful to write of the things pertaining to God and his kingdom, as I believe you and I have often been given to do. But it seems the gift to write is gone, and, strange to say, the impression and mind to write is with me most of the time, but how to perform I find not. I thought when I received your last good and comforting letter that I would answer at once. How bright is the memory of, and how wonderful was the praise of the wonderful works of him who works all things according to his own will. We so often feel that we do not know anything as we ought, and the writer tells us that we know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He does not tell us that

we will love all the ways of nature that we possess, but when we see that true and humble devotion for the cause of Jesus manifesting that we have been killed to the love of the things of the world, then we love all of them with the same love, for we have been taught of Him, even from the least to the greatest. Dear sister, we also know that when our Lord, seeing and knowing what is best for us, seemingly leaves us to doubts, and puts us in the wilderness for a season, that he is just in all his ways, and has made no mistake. Yes, that love for the brethren and for the cause of Israel's God makes us feel that if he sends our soul to hell God's righteous law approves it well. You, perhaps, have heard me relate the experience I once had when I was cast away from realizing that I had a friend on earth or in heaven, and felt surely I must go down where I could have no part with the saints of the most high God. I could only ask my God that if I must go where mercy could never reach me, to let me go praising his great and wonderful name for the precious hope given my mother, father, brothers and sisters, and the whole household of faith. I could, though dead to spiritual things as I was, see and know that the work of salvation, redemption and perfection was of God and Jesus our Savior. We hear people (and perhaps all of us at times) speak of good luck and bad luck, as the term is with men. You know in part how it has been with me along this line. First I would take up the transient or natural side of the matter. Some years ago I lost most of this world's goods that I possessed, by fire at the hands of a man who at that time belonged to the State of Virginia. Being advised by many of my friends, I asked the State for some relief. I did so feeling all through the course that it would avail nothing to me, for I was made to feel it was needful for me, and justly sent. I well know you will not object, and perhaps Old Baptists will not object, to me saying that I was made satisfied that God had allowed, or permitted (as you will have it) that convict to pass two other stores and burn me out. I know this is a hard saying, and no one saying it but me, and no one affected but me. About the same time I lost three horses in less than two years. I was made to see and understand that was all right, too. At one time I looked at that large store full of goods and those nice horses as being mine and would mean much to me. At that time Job had not told me that the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. But with all this that I have only hinted at I could say, Blessed be the name of the Lord. Sister Mary, these are some of the things with me called bad luck, and I hope to mention some others that I will not call good luck, as they far surpass the term to me. I fear to date the beginning of the work of grace with my poor soul to my childhood days, for fear I am mistaken. However, I had strange thoughts of my life and of my being in the world, and what would become of me should I die, when I was only a

child. This I did not then consider strange, but have many times since. Time passed on until I was going and mixing with the affairs of the world, and going among all denominations, and the most of it was anything but Old Baptist, yet I had no confidence in what I heard from them, as it had that uncertain sound. Mother and father, who were Primitive Baptists, never at any time attempted to tell me what Old Baptists believed, neither told me that I ought to be one, or how I could learn what they knew, but seemed to be willing to cast their lot with us children with the Lord, who had taught them that he would also teach us. Not to be called good luck, but what a God-sent blessing to have such a father and mother as I had. My father has been dead since the year 1903, and sometimes when I feel that I am blessed to meet with you dear people and preach the doctrine he so much loved I can but wish him to be with us. Again, when I feel to be altogether a failure, and fear I have only deceived all of you, then I am glad he is taking his rest. Yes, we know nothing short of the grace of God could have given you dear people at Strawberry Church fellowship for one like me, and dear old brother Blair told his wife the day I was received that I would preach. There is much along here that I would like to state, but must pass on. The brethren have been so good to me, surely it is by the grace of God I am what I am. None of the brethren at any time since I have been serving our churches has come to me and told me that I had glorified man instead of God, neither have they wanted to kill me for my way of preaching. My sister, I maintain a hope that God has ordained and called me, unworthy as I am, to preach Jesus to you dear people, and may I declare him from first to last as being the giver of liberty to the ones he has sent to preach, and the giver of an understanding heart to those to whom we are sent. I can never forget dear old sister Hundley, of Danville, and how good and kind she was to me for so long. It seemed that I was given liberty most of the time when sent for to preach for her. Then Mrs. Terrell, who was a believer in and a lover of Primitive Baptist doctrine, and a regular attendant of Danville Church, wrote all of the plans for her funeral in the year 1933, and requested in this writing that I attend her funeral, which was held in March, 1937. Why did one like her even think on one like me? Now, sister Mary, I do not mention these things with any thought of boasting, or to attempt to prove any worth of my own, but had a mind to set at variance the two subjects of so called luck. I have attempted to make it all, both natural and spiritual, nothing short of the purpose and grace of your God and my God. Perhaps I have written too much, but put off writing as long as I could. Please cast the mantle of charity over all my mistakes and short comings.

I had a good letter from sisterRuth a few days ago.

I was glad to see your article in the SIGNS. Write when you have a mind to do so.

May I remain, by the grace of God, your brother,

W. R. DODD.

DRY FORK, Virginia.

DEAR SISTER MARY:—How inexpressible my experience is, and has been of late, more than I ever dreamed could be when I first joined the Old Baptist Church (which church I have seen to be the church which Christ said the gates of hell shall not prevail against), or since I made my first attempt to preach, in August, 1912. My life, my travel and my experience become more of a mystery as I am permitted to live with you dear people of God. Yes, my sister, our Savior said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."—John vi. 37. While so many things have been in my life since I have claimed a hope, many of which have been very discouraging, and have put me very low, into doubts and fears, yet I have been given to love the cause of my Savior God, and it seems the more of the things of this life which I cannot understand happen to me the more I would preach the sovereign will and purpose of God, if I could. I have never felt to be blessed more in speaking than I have since my last experience. This was an awful wreck with my car and two men on a motorcycle, in which God took the life of the two men and for some reason (Can it be other than the mercy of Him to poor me?) he saved me from death and from any violation of the law of the land. I hope I did not transgress the righteous law of my God, either by thought or action.

This takes me back to the subject of the letter written to you some time the first of this year. While this last experience takes in some of the things that would be called luck (I hear it said since I was last hurt, Wasn't he lucky not to have been killed?), but, as I tried to set forth in the other letter, it was to me altogether mercy, and not luck. I wish I could tell the household of faith everywhere just how I feel in regard to this, but words and writing cannot express it.

I would love to hear from some of the brethren from any part of the country.

Yours in hope,

W. R. DODD.

WESLACO, Texas, Dec. 10, 1936.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed please find money to cover my back subscription and a year in advance for the SIGNS. There was a long time in my life when I was able to keep my subscription paid up, and very frequently would send some extra to help send the SIGNS to others. The Lord seemed to prosper me above my average fellowman, then he saw fit to take it away and teach me that he is God, who rules in the army of heaven and on the earth, and none can stay his hand. Many hardships and ups and downs I have had here in this life, and have been very

rebellious, and said, O Lord, I cannot go before thy little ones and declare thy name. But, dear brethren and sisters, the Lord has blessed me with a home here among these Old Baptists in this wonderful southern country, where we can wear white all the year round if we desire to, with an abundance of oranges and other fruits, which are so heavy that to-day I saw many of the limbs broken down. There are also all kinds of vegetables, so why should I complain from a financial side of life, when I have more than I deserve?

We are looking forward to a three days' meeting here next fourth Sunday and Friday and Saturday before. Friday being Christmas day. We are expecting five or six preachers to be with us then. Oh the wonderful love that he gives to his little ones that makes them travel hundreds of miles to get together, and when they do, they declare the wonderful works of the Lord. When they are blessed with that heavenly Spirit they do not care what others call them, such as hard-shells, can't-help-its, absoluters, etc.

Sometimes I get in the dark so that it seems like it can be felt, and it is then I wish I could help it, for if I had my way I would always be on the house top praising my Lord. But during these dark periods I begin to wonder if there is a God, or did these things just come to pass, or into being, in some way, of their own accord? Then in this state of mind I find myself planning on what I am going to do, and make myself believe I have power to do it without God's help, but when my plans begin to tumble and I am made to realize that my ways are not God's ways, it is then I begin to see how little and insignificant I really am, just a worm of the dust, and then I wonder how such a great and holy God can take notice of poor me. He says, I am God, I change not; the same yesterday, to-day and forever. Yes, he saw the end from the beginning; all was as clearly seen by him before time as if it had already been. The natural mind cannot begin to grasp this wonderful plan of before time. Not only the bringing into existence of this world on which we dwell, but all the host of the other planets. When I look at the moon, it being the nearest to the earth, I feel like saying, Hello, old moon, what power is holding you out there in space? Yes, and all the planets, some of them many, many times larger than this earth we are on, our great God made them all and fixed them all just where he wanted them, and for a purpose known unto him. He made all things, even the devil, if he is a thing. He made him, too, and pronounced him good. Yes, a good devil, and he had a work to do; the Lord had a purpose for him, too. Man was the last thing made on earth. The Lord did not need the help of man to do all this great work. Neither does he need the help of man to-day to save any of his little ones. I was talking with a man a few nights ago about some of the Scriptures, and he said man had to do his part first, that man had to have faith when he prayed or the Lord would not

help him. He argued that man could be in earnest in his prayer and exercise that faith. Yes, in some way work it up himself. I told him of the eight men I knew of who staid in a building near my home town, when I was a boy, and prayed to the Lord to save them from the flood and storm that was out on the gulf. All the other people were going to higher ground where it was safe from high water, but as these people had been holding a revival there they were going to show what a wonderful God they had, and how they could pray with that faith that would save them. They prayed there until they were all drowned. I asked that man if he did not think those eight men were in earnest and doing all that humans could do to exercise that faith when death was staring them in the face. Why, any sane man would know they would not weaken in a condition like that, but it just goes to show that it is not in the natural man of himself to exercise that faith. Yes, the old prophet once told them in his day to cry louder, for it might be their god was asleep, or had gone on a journey. So they cried loudly, and even slashed themselves until they were all bleeding, to try and have some influence on their god, but it all failed. Now when this man of God prayed fire came down from heaven, and even licked up the water in the trenches that were around the altar. Yes, when the faith is there as a mustard seed then things are accomplished, but the Lord has to give this faith. We are just as dependent upon God for this faith as a young child is upon its mother for nourishment. He works and none can hinder, and hinders and none can work. He reveals things to his little ones here and there over the land. He revealed to Elder J. B. Bowden, about ten years ago, what was to be in the next few years, and he told me about it, and wrote it to some of the brethren, and now nearly all of it has already been fulfilled. I would like to hear from some other brethren, if the Lord has revealed to them what is in the next ten years for us poor worms of the dust. The Lord is surely with his little ones to-day, as he was in the days gone by.

Remember this poor worm of the dust in your prayers. May the SIGNS continue many more years to the comfort of its readers. I have been reading it off and on for nearly forty years.

E. B. AULT.

WALDEN, N. Y., Jan. 17, 1937.

DEAR SISTER MINNIE:—This is Sunday evening. It has been a most unpleasant day, dark and stormy, but as for me it does not matter much, as I have to stay in the house because of an attack of the grippe. I have it yet, but am better, but still cough hard and am weak. There is much of it around and I hope you have not had it or get it. I often wish we lived nearer each other, so I could talk with you, for you have a much better understanding of the Scriptures than I have. Sometimes thoughts come to me, and I am very thankful for them. These words have been with me: Created in Christ Jesus. All those who are embraced in his cove-

nant of grace are those who are created in him. Jesus says, All that the Father hath given me are mine. When I look back to where I once stood, in the same place with many others, I can see how blind I was, and I thank my heavenly Father that he has opened my blind eyes to see salvation is of the Lord. On the cross Jesus said, It is finished. If a thing is finished there is nothing more to do to it. A finished, a perfect salvation. How can poor weak mortals think they can do anything? They feel there is something they must do, and try to save others, making themselves a little more than the Creator, saying He is willing to save them if they will let him, that it rests with themselves. Well, we are not to judge, but should be thankful that we have been given to see and know it is all of the Lord; nothing of man. There is a natural birth and a spiritual birth, and we have nothing to do, for God gives us the life in both births. The life is there and in God's own good time it is made manifest. Oh how helpless we are. There is a time to be born and a time to die, all in his plan. God knew all things and made all his plans before the world was. Jesus says, My grace is sufficient for you. So there is nothing for us to do; there is nothing lacking. This, like the finished work of Christ, is perfect. There are many things in life to try us, as it was with Job, but nothing could touch his life. The lives of all Christ's little ones are in him. He paid the redemption price, and what a great price it was. Jesus, our good Shepherd, gave his life for his sheep. He says, My sheep hear my voice and they know me and follow me, but a stranger they will not follow. Jesus always goes ahead and leads, he never drives. No matter what we are called to go through our Lord is with us and leading us. He says he will never leave nor forsake us. We may feel it is dark and we cannot see, but he is there; even though he hides his face he is there. Oh how much we have to be thankful for. Give all praise to him, our God, our Redeemer.

Now, dear, these are some of my thoughts, but I do not know that you can read this letter, for it is like the writer, very imperfect, but I hope you will see what I have been trying to tell you. I am glad for you that you can get out to the preaching.

Love from your little sister,

(MRS.) W. B. ROBINSON.

[THE foregoing letter was written by sister Robinson, of Walden, N. Y., to sister Minnie Hyatt, of Warwick, N. Y., and forwarded to us for publication.—ED.]

FAIRFIELD, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—For some time it has been in my mind to write down a few thoughts I have had concerning a certain point, if the Lord has willed it so, realizing that without him I can do nothing, for there is no power but of God. (Rom. xiii. 1.) I know this is too much for me, but, and if this is so, does it not appear that every part of his handiwork is a dependent creature, insofar as power is concerned? We read that God created all things for a certain purpose, and we learn from the

preacher that there is a purpose for every work. So, according to this, as I am a part of his work, and created to perform a certain work, and as yet possess no power, I ask, How can I do it? Must not I have the power? and where am I to obtain this power? There is no power but of God, then surely it must come from this source in order that I might perform the work set apart for me, for be it understood that this world is like a machine, we being one of its parts, and as God has said his work is perfect, it follows that I must do my work perfectly. Let it be good, bad or indifferent, it is a perfect work. It is said somewhere, Known unto God are all of his works. Then he knows just how I am going to work, for my power to work must come direct from him, and is it probable that he will grant me power to do other than a perfect work? For him to do otherwise, would not he himself destroy his own majesty? The whole machine would be set at naught and his name be put to an open shame. Such cannot be. He is of one mind and none can turn him. What his soul desireth, even that he doeth. (Job xxiii. 13.) For one to want is evidence of the fact that he stands in need, and wherein one needs it follows that he is helpless to that extent. But not so with our God, for he is a God of all power, all means, required to set his seal to the statement that I am all-powerful, and besides me there is none other; all-wise, and there is none like me. Then who can doubt his wisdom, or who can question his justice regarding his eternal decrees or his sovereignty over all worlds, beings and things? He says unto the mighty deep, Thus far shalt thou come, and there shall thy proud waves be stayed. Oh how wonderful! What can poor mortal man do, or not do, but look upon him with awe and say, Lord, help me? Show me the way, O Lord, wherein I should walk. Teach me to do thy will. (Psalms cxliii. 8-10.) And why so plead? Because you are made to realize there is no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God. Hence, every part of his handiwork is void of either power or knowledge, except what may be delegated to them of God, for to do whatsoever he in his eternal counsel fixed for them to do. Could it be otherwise, if he be of one mind? Let me repeat. Can it be otherwise and he be the same yesterday, to-day and forever? He says, I am God; I change not. Then it follows that every part of the machine must work as he has ordained, else it is not a perfect work. He says, I wrought a perfect work. The Lord is a Rock; his work is perfect. God is the engine of the machine, governing it according to his own will, and every part of his work is so arranged that when the great drive wheel turns every part bows in perfect obedience thereto, resulting always in the rendition of glory, praise and honor to his great and adorable name, who doeth his will in heaven and on earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? And why? Because there is no power but of God, and by it he created the worlds, thrones, dominions, principalities and powers (Col. i. 16.), and stretched out

the heavens by his understanding. Yea, having created all things, the things that be in thrones, in dominions, in principalities, in powers, in heaven, in earth, visible and invisible, he created them, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist (fixed). This is sufficient. Surely he is a God of all power, God of all knowledge, Lord of lords and King of kings, the Creator of all things, the beginning and the end, the disposer, the first cause of all causes. Mighty indeed! Wonderful in counsel, yet righteous in all his works, and all of his works praise him, and his saints bless him, for he is to be praised, and he will be glorified in all of his work in that last day, when the trumpet of God shall sound and time is no more. Then who can this God be likened unto? God of the hills, God of the valleys, who makes the sword of the devil approach unto him.

I have made many mistakes, and missed my text in many places, but just what came into my mind I wrote down. I trust I have done no hurt.

Yours in bonds,

W. A. LITTLE.

SULPHUR, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITORS:—Once more, if the Lord will guide my pen and give me just a few words to say to you dear people, I will try to express my appreciation of your continued kindness in sending the SIGNS to me, so long overdue. I feel I should have had it stopped, but I hope I do feel very thankful to be able to pay up now. I think the SIGNS is the best Old Baptist paper I know of. The November number came to-day, and I have just read the first article, and must pronounce it good. I believe the Lord's hand must have guided his pen to write as he did. Where he speaks of the oil running low and the light shining dim, I think I know something of what he means. There was much solid comfort in the whole article. I very much enjoyed the letter in the March SIGNS, written by the young student, A. Ross, and Elder Dodson's comments on the same. How wonderfully the Lord leads his people. I would say to them, Write on, it is the Lord, and he will direct the message to the people he has prepared to receive it. He will uphold you, for the everlasting arms are underneath. May he guide, direct and keep us all in the strait and narrow way that leads to life, and all praise, glory and honor be to him, now and for evermore.

I would like to get subscribers for the SIGNS, but find it rather hard to do, as not very many seem to believe what the SIGNS stands for.

Thanking you again for past favors, I am very unworthily yours,

(MRS.) ADDIE CHANDLER.

HAILE, Louisiana.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars, for which please give me credit on my subscription to the dear old SIGNS, and I will try to send some more, if it is the Lord's will, just as soon as I can. I hope you will forgive me, and I want to thank you for sending the paper to us, for wife and I surely do enjoy the good letters and editorials. I hope the Lord will spare

you to write as you have, for we hope we all have been taught in the same school. If I could write as some do I would like to tell you of some of the things I hope the good Lord has done for me. I hope the dear children of God will pray for me, that some day I may be led so that I can write my experience. I soon will be sixty-five years old, and my dear wife is fifty-seven years of age. All our children are gone from home and my dear wife I are left alone, which makes it hard for us.

Brother Dodson, I would like to have you give your views on Revelation xvi. 13, 14, as that Scripture has been on from home and my dear wife and I are left alone, which makes it hard for us.

Your little brother, saved by grace if saved at all, in hope of immortal glory,

S. L. ROBERSON.

STOCKDALE, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing two dollars for the SIGNS another year. Wish I could send some new subscribers, but they think they connot spare the two dollars. I have been taking the SIGNS for about thirty-five years, and hope to be able to pay for it as long as I live. I am seventy-four years of age now. I think the good Lord led me through the fire and gave me gall to drink, until I could say, Salvation is of the Lord. I am helpless to save myself or my children. I can look back on my past life and see the hand of the Lord has led me since I was a child. He is ever watching over us, day and night. I love all you writers. You surely have been with Jesus, the great Shepherd of his sheep. The older I get the brighter appears my home above, where I can rest with the Father, Son and all the loved ones. The home above gets brighter and myself less.

I will stop, as I cannot put my feelings on paper, but I do love the brethren and sisters.

(MRS.) W. L. HAWK.

WEINERT, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—Find inclosed a Postal Order for two dollars for my renewal of subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, also one dollar to use as you see fit. I would love to send you a list of subscribers, but most of the Baptists here are the Peace or Limited Baptists, and have no love for the doctrine the SIGNS stands for. I have been a reader of the SIGNS for nearly fifty years, and fully believe what it stands for, if I understand it, and hope to be able to take it as long as I live.

Your brother, I hope, saved by grace if saved at all,

JOHN KIRKPATRICK.

ROCHESTER, New York.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a check of three dollars, two dollars for my subscription and one dollar to go towards the fund for those who cannot pay. I value the SIGNS OF THE TIMES very highly, as the good letters and articles in it are about all the preaching I get here, and I would not feel at home without it.

My best wishes to you all for your valuable efforts in the past and future publications of this wonderful paper.

Most sincerely,

(MRS.) DAVID FARNIE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1937.

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A FEW THOUGHTS.

THE year 1937 is drawing to a close, and as each year closes we naturally pause and look back over the natural accomplishments of the year. But tonight we are thinking of the condition of the church of God, the pillar and ground of the truth. Probably some of the SIGNS' readers at a distance would be interested in knowing the general condition of our people in Virginia and North Carolina. We are glad to say the Primitive Baptists of our section appear to be in the best condition we have seen them in the nineteen years we have been numbered with them. A few years ago our people passed through trying times in different places. The churches were divided over the doctrine of the predestination of all things. There were those who declared nonfellowship against this doctrine. No doubt many of the Lord's people were led away. The doctrine of the predestination of all things should never divide those who believe in salvation by grace. To our understanding, this doctrine is the only doctrine consistent with election, the underlying doctrine of all doctrines in the church. We can make a hobby of any point of doctrine, by preaching it continually, to the exclusion of other matter. Of course all our preaching must be in accord with the doctrine of election, predestination, the effectual call by grace of every elect, justification by faith, and the glorification of them all.

The doctrine of predestination does not conflict with exhortation, reproof, etc., and the church needs them all. We, as those who speak in His name, are expressly forbidden to strive over words to no profit. The New Testament is full of these things. May God give us grace to consider them. When we search the Scriptures to find some passage to suit some idea of ours, or to prove some pet theory, we are wrong. Before any principle of doctrine is attacked we should first search out the Scriptures that appear to teach the doctrine we are attacking, and seek the interpretation of them.

Our people are at present bound together in the doctrine of grace. Our ministers are charitable toward one an-

other, preaching the wholesome doctrine of grace, and our churches are having a number of ingatherings.

To those who have written for the SIGNS during the year we will say that we have enjoyed many of your articles. Many times while reading your letters we felt, we trust, our heart glow with love for you, for Jesus' sake, we hope. To you who feel to write your experience, do so, for oftentimes such writings are enjoyed more than our expounding some text.

The SIGNS has weathered the storms for more than one hundred years, and to-day the same doctrine as set forth by Elder Gilbert Beebe in its beginning is precious to God's elect. May we all put our shoulder to the wheel and try to increase its circulation among God's humble poor.

To the editor and associate editors let me say that serving with you has been a pleasure. We have enjoyed your writings, and have felt bound to you in gospel bonds. We feel that all our readers appreciate the promptness of our publisher in getting out our paper. Let us show our appreciation by renewing promptly.

Best wishes to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

D. V. S.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE date opposite your name on the little pink slip on which your address is printed denotes the time your subscription expires. Dec 35 means it expired December, 1935; June 36 that it expired June, 1936; Dec 37 that it expires December, 1937, etc.

TO OUR READERS.

THIS issue closes Volume 105 of our paper. One hundred and five years is a long time for anything to be run by one family. Our present publisher, who is a grandson of the founder, is celebrating the fiftieth year of his connection with the paper. So far as our knowledge goes, he has been a conscientious and faithful worker lo these many years. We believe our readers will all agree that the paper is being turned out in good shape. In recent years Mr. Gilbert Beebe has been doing all of the work in connection with publishing the SIGNS himself, and he deserves whatever credit is due. It is a great hardship for him to do tnis work now, due to the condition of his eyes. He has had a cateract removed from one, with questionable permanent results. Under present conditions, it is very difficult for him to do much of the work which is required, and it may become necessary for him to hire some one else to assist him. This will entail additional expense, which the present income to the paper will not warrant. After inquiring into the financial end of it, we have discovered that a very substantial number of our subscribers are considerably behind with their subscriptions. In some cases this may be unavoidable, but in the vast majority we are inclined to believe that it is purely an oversight or neglect. We are satisfied that every real Old School Baptist is honest at heart and intends to pay his just debts. We dare say that he makes no investment of two dollars throughout the year that yields a more

satisfactory return than the SIGNS. We are going to ask that each subscriber examine the date opposite his name on the little pink slip pasted either on his paper or the wrapper in which it comes to him, and if he finds that he is behind with his subscription, please send a part, if not all, of what is due to the publisher as early as possible. We would remind our subscribers once more of the fact that no paid advertising appears in our paper. We want to keep it free from that, but it takes money to publish the paper, which can only come (under present conditions) from our readers. Once again, Will those who are behind, please do what they can to get paid up to date? Clean your slate of this past due obligation and start the new year right.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The original Mt. Zion Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, in session with Little Blue and Sni-a-bar Church, in Grain Valley, Missouri, October 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1937, sends christian greetings to the churches with which we correspond, and to all who are in fellowship with us.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Christ said, Fear not, little flock. it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. We stand upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. Through the tender mercy of our God we still continue to meet. While not many of us, we still contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. The brethren still preach salvation by grace, and grace alone, for the salvation of his people. The foundation is predestination, election and effectual calling of his people from darkness to light. He has appointed them unto salvation through his birth, death and resurrection from the dead. In me ye shall have peace, but in the world ye shall have tribulation. We do not seem to gain in members, but we still press on. On the day of Pentecost there were added to them about three thousand souls, and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. We are thankful for the presence of our brother, Elder L. L. Schenck, of Kansas, to meet with us and bring the message of salvation by grace. Great is the mystery of godliness. God manifest in the flesh, seen of angels, believed on in the world, received up into glory. Jesus said, A body hast thou prepared me. As it is written of me in the volume of the book, I came to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first and bringeth in the second. After those days I will take away the covenant I made with their fathers when I took them by the hand and led them out of the wilderness. But this is the covenant I will make with them, I will put my Spirit within them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. They shall not teach every man his brother, and every man his neighbor, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all be taught of me. Christ took away the old law of works and brought in the new

covenant of grace. The Lord had a purpose in our coming together. So we try to be reconciled to the will of God, and say, We know all things work together for good to them that love the Lord.

To the visiting brethren who are in attendance, We bid you welcome, and extend an invitation to come again, for we love the association of the brethren. May the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ abide with his people through another year, is our prayer.

DANIEL A. J. ADAMS, Mod.
(MRS.) J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk.

(Written by Deacon H. J. White.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 13th, 14th and 15th, 1937, to the churches and associations with wich we correspond, sends greetings in the Lord.

DEAR BELOVED IN THE LORD:—It is with fear and trembling that we attempt to write this letter. We trust the Lord will guide and give us understanding to write of those things that will be pleasing in his sight and edifying to the dear children of God. We shall wait upon the Lord for all of those things that are so much needed by us. The subject we have taken to write upon is found in John xiv. 27: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." We know all words spoken by Jesus have a signification not to be understood by human reason, nor can natural man search out the truth therein. Paul says that gospel peace passes all understanding. Then it must be that this peace that John writes about is for the children of the most high God. Jesus does not use the word as men may use it, for following the paths of man's understanding of peace has been the blind leading the blind, and crying, "Peace, peace," when there is no peace, and many of God's little ones have fallen into the ditch because of these false leaders. This subject covers a wide field. We see even life and death hang upon it, though we despair. This understanding would overcome us were it not written, "Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days." —1 Chron. xxii. 9. As Jesus was about to pass through an ordeal which he knew they would not understand, he said, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." "Peace I leave with you." What a rich and inestimable blessing that although the fig tree shall not bear, and the flock shall be cut off from the field, and there shall be no herd in the stall, still the peace of God is established in the heavens, where failure and distraction are none. Therefore will we rejoice in the Lord, who is our salvation, and the Savior of his dear children. "My peace I leave with you" is an eternal truth, and can never, will never, be taken

away. We hope we have the correct understanding of this verse. We do know that each sentence has its proper application, otherwise we fail to divide the word of truth. When Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you," he referred to the fact he had told them beforehand, that in him was fulfilled all righteousness by which the redeemed were ever reconciled to God. Christ was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Paul besought the brethren to be reconciled to God. Had the world been reconciled to God in Christ unto himself, then there would have been no grounds to plead with sinners to be reconciled; but now having abolished enmity in his flesh by shedding his blood, he becomes our peace. These are the words God said unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ Lord of all. (Acts x. 36.) Now having made peace through the shedding of his blood, thereby reconciling all things unto himself, he presents us holy and unblameable in God's sight. This is the peace he leaves with us, a peace of truth and faithful obedience. A perfect fulfillment of the law, which was satisfied by his death. So it can be said we are unblameable. Therefore we shall never have to be ransomed again. Being unblameable, why then should we not be reconciled to our God, Lord of all? In the verse preceding the one we used, knowing his work here in the flesh would soon be accomplished and he be taken to his Father, who would send the Holy Ghost, which is sent in his name, thereby teaching you all things, and bringing all things to your remembrance whatsoever he had said unto you. This peace Jesus gave is made known to us, for it comes to us through his personal work, and of his fullness we receive grace for grace. This is what we understand of his peace. The same work that was wrought by Jesus is also wrought in us by the Holy Ghost, thereby we receive peace personal and experimentally. These things seemed to be in the mind of the apostle Paul, who said, "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Jesus said, "Peace I give unto you." A peace that is greatest of all peace, for it is none other than Jesus himself, the Savior of us all. Thanks be to God, this peace is not given as the world gives. As the verse says, "Not as the world giveth, give I unto you."

What we have written we hope is founded upon the work of our Redeemer. Having made peace by his death upon the cross, thereby reconciling all things unto himself, whether they be things of this earth or heavenly things. Then who should be of doubtful faith? Does he not say that by him all things are reconciled, things in heaven and things in earth, even justice and judgment are includede, and by it mercy and truth do meet? Then peace on earth, good will to men. Why say the enemy of peace who still dwells in the Adamic man has power to do anything, or cause the dear children of God to be unsettled or disturbed, when we know that the enemy can go so far, and

no farther, as in Job's trials it was so proved? God is our salvation, therefore let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." I and my Father are one, all power is given into my hands. Why should you be troubled or afraid? Has he not spoken, and will he not do it? Live by the faith of the Son of God, waiting for the Lord. Peace be unto all of God's dear children.

The next session of this Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, at our usual time in 1938, when and where we hope to again receive your ministers and messengers.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Mod.
G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

DONATION DAY.

THURSDAY, December 9th, next, has been decided upon as Donation Day at The Primitive Baptist Home, Inc., Salisbury, Maryland. The matron, Mrs. Dora Thompson, will be glad to receive articles of food, and contributions may be made either to her or to Mr. H. T. Lefferts, Treasurer, 151 Coeyman Avenue, Nutley, N. J. We trust our friends will not forget this worthy cause.

R. LESTER DODSON.

NOTICE.

WE are anxious to obtain one or more copies of the latest Minutes of every sound Old School Baptist Association throughout the United States. If our readers will send them to us at 41 Addison Avenue, Rutherford, New Jersey, same will be very much appreciated.

R. LESTER DODSON.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER FREDERICK W. KEENE fell asleep in Jesus, October 12th, 1937, at his home in Raleigh, North Carolina, aged eighty-one years. He had been in failing health for some time, but tried faithfully to go among the churches as usual, even going to visit his former pastorate, North Berwick, Maine, only a year ago. He was born in London, England, March 28th, 1856, the son of Frederick B. Keene and Hephzibah Hewitt. In 1870 his parents came to America, locating at London, Ontario. He entered Woodstock College, but owing to ill health, left before he completed his course. In 1876 he married Ellen J. Wright, a teacher of music and fine arts in London, and five children were born to them. When a young boy he was deeply exercised regarding his salvation. He attended the Zion Strict Baptist Church with his parents in England, but after reaching America joined the Regular Baptist Church, and preached in Lobo. Later, when the division came in the Baptist churches, he and Mrs. Keene united with the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada. They were baptized in the river Sydenham, a hole being cut in the ice for the ordinance. For many years he preached in the Covenanted Baptist churches, and the Beulah Baptist Church, in Brook, Ontario. In January, 1892, he moved to Kelly Corners, N. Y., and was ordained in the Second Roxbury meeting-house early that year. He served as associate pastor with Elder Hubbell until October, 1893, when he moved to Maine to become the pastor of the Oak Woods Church, at North Berwick. He also preached regularly at Gardiner, Maine, and Woburn Mass., for a time. However, it was here in Maine that he spent the greater part of his life, and often remarked that these days were the

dearest, happiest and most peaceful of his life. In December, 1919, he took up his residence in Raleigh, N. C., and placed his letter at Gilliams, in the Upper Line Association. At all times he was devoted to his labors in the ministry and firm in his declarations of the gospel.

He is survived by three daughters, all of whom were present at the funeral: Mrs. Lydia Nason, of Sanford, Maine, Mrs. Wesley Spitler, of Chicago, Ill., and Mrs. Montague Houlder, of Raleigh, N. C. Also by thirteen grandchildren and three great-grandchildren

Funeral services were held in Raleigh, with Elders Gilliam, Pierce and Stansfield officiating. "Rock of Ages" and "Precious Hiding Place" were sung, and portions of Scripture of which Elder Keene was especially fond were read, the following being those he often repeated, as he felt he was soon to leave this world: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."—2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."—Psalms xvii. 15. Interment was in the Oak Woods Cemetery, at Raleigh, where Mrs. Keene was buried nine years ago.

(MRS.) LYDIA KEENE NASON.

DEAR BRETHREN:—This will inform you of the death of our beloved brother, ELDER S. B. MOFFIT, who died at his home in Newburg, Oregon, about the 16th of August, last.

(MRS.) N. J. PRESTON.

[A suitable obituary notice will probably be published later.—ED.]

MRS. ALICE WILLIAMS DYER-DODSON, one of the lovliest characters we have ever known, departed this life in Memorial Hospital, Danville, Virginia, October 14th, 1937. She was born July 4th, 1866, making her stay on earth 71 years, 3 months and 10 days. Her parents were Cephys Watt Williams and Lavania Frances Robinson. She was first married to Douglas N. Dyer, November 24th, 1881. This union was blessed with five children: two sons and three daughters, four of whom survive, as follows: Mrs. Eula Dyer Brown, Danville, Va., Leslie Raymond Dyer, Mrs. Gracie Dyer Wilson and Mrs. Mary Dyer Clark, all residing near Danville. One son, Willie H. Dyer, preceded her in death by a few years. There are also twenty grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Her first husband died August 31st, 1893. She remained a widow until October 7th, 1912, when she married Henry J. Dodson, oldest brother of the father of the undersigned. There were no children by this marriage. Uncle Henry is now in his eighty-eighth year of age, and is in feeble health. Our heart goes out to him in this deep sorrow of his old age. May it please Almighty God to comfort and keep him until his appointed hour cometh, and then take him home, to be forever with his Lord. There are also three sisters and two brothers surviving: Mrs. Nannie Dodson, Mrs. Laila Elwinger, Mrs. Mittie Carter, Robert S. and Bernard Williams, together with a host of other relatives and friends to mourn their loss, which is his eternal gain. Aunt Alice united with Cane Creek Old School Baptist Church in October, 1893, under the pastorate of Elder Dameron. She lived her forty-four years in the church as near blameless as any one could. Our esteem and love for her for the truth's sake cannot find expression in words. It was our

privilege to visit her while in Virginia last August. At that time she was confined to her bed upstairs and Uncle Henry was confined to his bed downstairs. We are confident that human hands never administered more lovingly to any one than those of her daughters and others who waited upon her. She was much loved by all who knew her, and her passing is a genuine loss to both the community and the church. We desire to bow in humble submission to the will of God, and to thank him for such a wonderful gift. We would commend those who are left behind to the same God she trusted in, who is able to keep them from falling, and to present them faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, to whom be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen.

R. L. D.

MARGARET ANN McLACHLIN, daughter of the late Archie and Flora Graham, of Lobo, Ontario, and wife of the late Isaac McLachlin, departed this life very peacefully at her home, in London, Ontario, June 15th, 1937, in her eighty-third year. Funeral services were held from the residence of her son, Frank McLachlin, June 17th, 1937, burial at Ivan Cemetery, Lobo. her pastor, Elder George Ruston, speaking to the comfort of her family and friends. She is survived by two sons, Archibald and Frank; a daughter, Miss Beckie; five grandchildren, and one brother, Douglas Graham, of London, Ontario. She was a member of the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada. Was received by the church May 31st, 1908, and baptized at Lobo by Elder P. W. Sawin. For a short time before coming to the church she was deeply exercised, during which time words of comfort were given to her. The words, For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure, came to her. And again, These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In this world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. Then these words came to her: Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your soul. She then felt she must go to the church, but she suddenly thought, What shall I say to the church? Then the words came, Take no thought what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate, but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye, for it is not ye that speaketh, but the Holy Ghost. The late Deacon Duncan Gillis often spoke of her coming to the church, and how wonderful she was. Not having a pastor at the time of her baptism, Elder Peter Sawin was sent for. A few days before Elder Sawin received the message he was made to feel that he was to come to Canada to baptize a child of God, and that was the first thing he told my mother when he met her. It was a comfort to her, and he seemed comforted, too. Whenever he visited in Canada after that, he always came to our home, and would, upon meeting my mother, address her as "Dear child of God." Mother's church and the Old Baptist doctrine came first, always, and it was her joy and pleasure to attend the quarterly meetings, and our own meetings in London, and in all those years it was a rare time she ever missed. She was out to meeting just a week before she passed away, her last illness being of very short duration, and, to our great joy, she was conscious to the very end. She was naturally a lovely personality; a cheerful, friendly nature, and loved by both young and old. It was my pleasure and privilege to have lived with her all my life and have her for my chief friend

and companion. She never seemed to grow old, and was always very patient and understanding. Seldom have I met one stronger in the faith of the Old Baptist doctrine. She not only believed it, but lived it, and the memories of our association together, both naturally and spiritually, are precious to me. As a family, we feel our loss very keenly, but are glad we have been given the assurance that she has gone to be forever with the Lord; has entered into that joy about which she talked so much, and hoped for.

BECKIE McLACHIN.

EMILY C. ELMENDORF JOHNSON, wife of Winfield S. Johnson, was born in Olive, New York, February 15th, 1852, daughter of the late Cornelius and Charlotte Bogart Elmendorf, and departed this life June 15th, 1937, at her home, 127 Downs Street, Kingston, N. Y., making her stay on earth 85 years and 4 months. She was married to Winfield S. Johnson December 16th, 1876, and to their union was born one daughter, Miss Lottie Johnson, who lives at home. Her husband, daughter and one sister, Mrs. Elizabeth Bishop survive. She was not a member of the visible church, but attended the Old School Baptist meetings whenever she could get there, and was a firm believer in the doctrine they set forth: salvation by grace, and grace alone. She took and read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for a great many years, and received much comfort from its pages.

Her funeral, as she requested, was private, just relatives present, and was conducted at her late home by Elder Arnold H. Bellows, postor of the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, of Shokan, N. Y., where she loved to attend. Interment was in the family plot in Wiltwyck Cemetery, there to await the resurrection morn, when the dead in Christ shall rise first to meet the Lord in the air, so shall they ever be with the Lord. May the God of all grace comfort and sustain the remaining loved ones, is our prayer for Jesus' sake.

Written by request.

ORVILLE WINCHELL.

BARBARA RUTH NEILSON was born August 11th, 1937, and died November 7th, 1937, making her age three months, lacking four days. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Reual Ellison, of Campbellton, Texas. She was taken sick on Saturday evening and died Sunday evening. The child had been in excellent health, as far as we knew. Little Barbara was a beautiful child. She was our first great-grandchild. She seemed to just go to sleep, as we would express it in nature, but we feel she went to sleep in the arms of her Master and is now sweetly resting in the glorious realms of eternity. While we hated to give her up, yet we, by our own experience, know she is better off than we who are left here. There being no minister there at the time, I said a few words over its little body, and it was one of the most trying things I have ever gone through, yet I felt some relief of mind after I read a portion of 1 Corinthians xv., and spoke of the sweet sleep which cannot be disturbed, and spoke of the second coming of Jesus, when he shall descend with the voice of the trumpet and shall call the sleeping from the dust, and shall fashion them like unto his own glorious body, and they shall reign with him in that glorious home, where sin, sorrow and turmoil will never disturb.

Written by her great-grandfather,

J. B. BOWDEN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Ella E. Nelson, Texas, $1; Milford Hall, Ky., $3; Mrs. L. T. Genung, N. Y., $1; "A friend," N. Y., $1; Mrs. J. E. Bolton, Iowa, $1; Mrs. Joe Wright, Ky., $1; Lillie M. Jenkins, Pa., $1; Mrs. David Farnie, N. Y., $1; John Kirkpatrick, Texas, $1; Attie A. Curtis, Maine, $2; Martha E. Holloway, Md., $1.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, it has pleased Almighty God, our gracious heavenly Father, to remove from our midst by the hand of death, on June 25th, 1937, our beloved brother, JOHN H. ADAMS, who was in his eighty-fifth year, and a member of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Harris Spring for fifty-six years June 16th, 1937, coming to this church by letter from Jack's Creek Church, Walton County, Georgia, then of the same order. He was ordained a deacon of this church August 18th, 1893, and always regarded his church first, setting a record in attendance, he missesd only two conference meetings during his deaconship. Therefore, be it

RESOLVED, first, that we desire to bow in humble submission to our God, who doeth all things well. We, the church, have sustained a great loss, but we feel that our loss is his eternal gain. Second, that we feel our Association also has lost one of its most ardent supporters, one who was ever contending for the same doctrine as our forefathers were in the years gone by. He was always an humble and devout supporter of the truth. Third, that we wish to extend our sympathy to the bereaved and heartbroken family, and especially to his dear companion, who survives him, and who ever stood by his side contending for his strength to hold fast to that which is good. Be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of these resolutions be spread upon our Minutes, and that a copy be given to the beloved wife, and, also, that a copy of the same be sent to the publishers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Done by the order of the Harris Spring Church while in Conference this eleventh day of September, 1937.

B. A. MALCOLM
T. R. BREEDLOVE
H. P. MALCOLM
H. O. NASH, Moderator
D. J. ADAMS, Clerk

MEETINGS.

The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church holds meetings the fourth Sunday of each month at 1026 East Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Meeting begins at 10:30 a. m., dismisses for lunch and reconvenes at 2 o'clock p. m. Meeting days have been changed from the first to the fourth Sunday of each month. No Saturday or night meetings.

BURLIE HALL, Pastor
W. H. CAVE, Ass't Pastor.
(MRS.) H. B. CURLIE, Church Clerk

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at Earl D. Stevens', Central Bridge, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday each month, at High School Building.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Sulphur Fork Old School Baptist Church meets the third Sunday of each month, at 2 p. m. S. F. Pyles, Clerk, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Cane Run Old School Baptist Church meets on the third Sunday, at 10:30 a. m. George R. Turner, Clerk, George Barnett, Assistant Clerk, Turners Station, Ky.

Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church meets the fourth Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 a. m., both days. J. William Mulberry, Clerk, Sadieville, Ky.

Any one interested in the above named meetings can address the clerk of the church, or write the pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, 421 Steele, Street, Frankfort, Ky.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.

MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.

T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

FAYETTE, Alabama.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I am inclosing letters from two brethren for your consideration. I feel the experience of Elder Lambert is too good to lay away in my file of letters, so I want to share it with all the readers of the SIGNS. The letter from brother Crowley has much food for thought in it, and I feel to say I am in full accord with his views. Elder Greathouse, one time while on a tour through Alabama, predicted that the Baptists here would divide over the "Sacred Harp Singing." While I do not see so much evidence of that yet, I do think our people are following it entirely too much. In filling my appointments I have missed some brother who was sound in the doctrine, and a regular attendant, and on making inquiry as to why he was not at service, have been told that he went to the singing. I wonder what he would think if I went to one the next meeting. Brethren, I may be mistaken, but I believe I have as much scriptural right to attend the preachers' factory, located near me, as the laity has to attend the singing school in the summer. Men go to seminaries to learn how to preach. Men go to singing schools to learn how to sing. Some of our brethren patronize the latter and condemn the former. Brethren, as brother Crowley points out, is preaching of the Spirit, and singing of the flesh? If so, Old Baptists need leave off the latter. Brethren, think on these things.

These brethren gave me their consent to have these letters published.

Your little brother,

W. D. GRIFFIN.

DALARK, Arkansas.

DEAR BROTHER IN BONDS:—I received your very comforting letter about a month ago, and was certainly elated over the contents, but wonder why any one would stoop so low as to even notice such a wretched character as I am.

Brother Griffin, I feel to hope that

we have a few things in common. Your age exceeds mine only about four years. In relating your experience you gave the "waymarks" so plainly that I believe we were brought over the same road. We are both members of the same faith and order. We have both been placed under the same yoke of the ministry. Having so many things in common, I am impressed to relate to you by pen some things of my experience along life's way, if it be God's will. I have never attempted to write it before, but have been blessed to tell it in public a few times. It seems so different from the experience of most people that I very often doubt it being an experience of grace. I was raised by very religious parents, my father being an ordained minister of the Missionary Baptist people. Very few Sundays did I miss Sunday School and church services. I was reared in an Arminian atmosphere. I do not remember ever hearing the term "Primitive Baptist," or ever meeting a "Hard Shell," until I was grown. I was taught that there were a very few ignorant, devilish people, who lived in the backwoods, who were called "Hard Shells," who I was to shun as a wild beast. Of course I did not want to even meet one. At a very early age I, too, joined the organization with my parents. Being termed as one of the best "kid speakers" in our community, I was solicited to take part in the testimony meetings. When I was sixteen years of age I obtained a teacher's license, and began to teach both literary and Sunday School. This, of course, helped me "practice up" on public speaking. Being first in the school-room, first in the Sunday School class, and first in the other community socials, gave me a good case of "Big I," and the foremost symptom was self-righteousness. Then I was solicited to preach, and having such a good opinion of myself, and seeing so many of my fellow-men falling so far short of me, I also thought it prudent that I should be clothed with the authority to tell them of their wicked ways, and admonish them to "get right." Therefore, I was ordained, and zealously pursued my task, and went along smoothly for awhile.

Now, dear brother, the saddest, most heartrending and serious part of my experience I am about to tell. The thoughts of it even now make me shudder. One certain night, during a protracted meeting in our community, I was called by the "big preacher" from the city, to take full charge of the service. He called me the night before, and spoke thus: "Brother Lambert, I have been preaching here every night for almost a week with no results. No mourners have come forward. Tomorrow night I want you to make the altar call after you have preached." Of course I was elated over the opportunity to try my luck. The next day I studied the proposition seriously. I decided on the theme, "Sinners in the hands of an angry God," using "Thou shalt be cut off, and that without remedy," as a text. That particular night I must have been blessed with rhetorical eloquence, for when I made the altar call old men, old women, boys and

girls began at once to flock to the altar. Dear brother, I suppose you think I should have been somewhat overjoyed. Naturally I would have been, but alas! there seemed to be an audible voice which spoke, "Who are you, that you should invite?" This would not have been so bad if the answer had not come immediately by the same voice, "You are a sinner vile and needy." I wanted to run out at the door and hide from every one. As soon as I could I did get away from there. Oh how miserable I was! On that night I saw myself as a sinner for the first time, and I went about to right myself. The more I tried to do the deeper in sin I sank. I tried until I could try no more, and gave it up as a hopeless task. Of course I gave up trying to preach, but I was still in possession of my credentials.

Some little time after that, I drove into a little town quite some distance from home, about sundown. Some of the people there knew I was coming, but did not know I had given up trying to preach, and had given out an appointment for me that night. As I drove in town the church bell began to ring, and I asked the one that I was stopping with what it meant, and he informed me that I was to preach that night. I told him I could not do it, but he informed me that it was too late to back out then. I saw the trap I was in. I was in a strange community, so decided to act the hypocrite and get up one of my old themes and texts and raise a reputation for myself in that community. But alas! I could not think of a thing. I tried to think of some Scripture and to take some of my Sunday School knowledge, but that had all sunk into oblivion. I know I tried to think soberly on the Scriptures, but I could not. I could think of nothing except how sinful I was, and I knew it would not do to tell them that, for instead of giving me a reputation I would lose it. A great audience was in front of me when I went behind the pulpit and I was as blank of thoughts of the Bible as any one could be. If I ever prayed I did then. I groaned, "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner." I became unconscious of action or thought, and when I became conscious I was exhausted and was standing there feasting upon the power, holiness and wisdom of God. I left that place thrilled to the highest, still feasting upon several of the attributes of God. I was driving home in my car that night by myself, still feasting, when the train of thoughts was turned. I saw myself the blackest of black sinners, and then glimpsed God as the holiest of holies. I saw myself as most foolish and God as all-wise. I saw myself unable to perform anything, and God as having all power. What a great gulf there was to be spanned between my condition and the requirements of the law. I went along groping in this predicament for quite some time. Finally the sweetest of my experience came. I was teaching school in the community where I had witnessed that glimpse of God, when one day a neighbor came to the place where wife and I resided. He suggested that we go to a home that

night to preaching. He said Elder A. D. Wall, of Amity, Arkansas, would preach. I asked him if they were "Hard Shells," and told him if they were I did not care to hear them, because they believed that a man was justified in killing another because God predestinated it. He answered thus: "I just supposed you would be interested, for if I ever heard a Primitive Baptist sermon you preached it here last year." I answered, For curiosity's sake I will go. I have never been able to recall anything that I said that night, as I seemed to be in a subconscious state, and have often wondered what I did say. Therefore, I consented to go for the first time to hear a "Hard Shell" preach, and I was glad I did go. I accused Elder Wall of being a mind reader that night. He was blessed to take up each question that came to my mind and to thresh it out to my satisfaction. That night I was blessed to see another attribute of God: that of mercy. I saw the character who was able to span the gulf between my sinfulness and God's holiness; my inability and God's power; my foolishness and God's wisdom I saw Jesus, who was verily God and man, with one foot on God's side of the gulf and the other on puny man's side. I saw him, as it were, pick up sinful men, whom God had chosen, and cleanse them with his blood and place them safely on the other side, without spot or blemish, to bask in the sunlight of God's eternal love and power forever on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance. Jesus died in my low room and stead, tread the wine-press alone. In my stead (as I hope) he kept the law to a jot and tittle. The keeping of this law by Jesus was charged to my account, my sins were laid on his shoulders and he bore the penalty. His life's blood was shed while hanging on the cross of Calvary for the remission of my sins, as I hope.

This experience was so consoling to me that I thought my troubles were over. But my lot seems to be akin to Job's. The last of my experience told was at the dawn of the year 1930. I will tell briefly some of the things that took place with me that year. Three cars were wrecked for me, a son was born to us and in about a month my wife died with pneumonia. I lost my position and health. I had to give up teaching because I was not able to meet the requirements for a license of course. With all this, and doctor bills, funeral expenses and other things, I suffered a nervous breakdown. In that year I was received in Cedar Hill Church. In September I was visiting the South Ouachita Association, among strangers in the flesh. I was so nervous and burdened down with something that I could not face any one. One night, at the home of Elder J. R. Evers, a sister (who was a total stranger to me) requested that I be called on to say a few words. I was on the outside of the house, but was called in, and God blessed me with the light and liberty of unloading that burden. In the course of time I was licensed to preach. Then, against my protests of not being qualified, called for my ordination, which was carried out while the South

Arkansas Association was in session, in September, 1934. I met and married my second wife in that year, and God blessed me with the privilege of baptizing her last year.

Brother Griffin, I have tried to give you some of the marks of the road I was forced to travel. I am glad that God blessed you to come to Arkansas, and hope that we may meet again. If you receive any comfort from this give God all the praise. Pray for me at the throne of grace.

Hoping in Christ for my soul sufficiency, I am your brother,

E. J. LAMBERT.

GORDO, Alabama.

DEAR BROTHER:—I am herewith giving a few thoughts which have been on my mind for some time.

There are many schools in the world, and for various purposes, but there is but one school that God set up, and that is the school of Christ. It is diverse from all other schools, in that its founding, keeping, selection of pupils and teachers, where and what they shall teach, is of God alone. All other schools are founded by man, supported by man, the qualifications of their teachers from man and the support of the teachers by hire. Since the school of Christ has been set up, men at various times and in divers ways have tried to "improve" this school so that its doctrine, order, discipline, etc., could be understood and relished by the natural man. All of these efforts have resulted in the casting out of the would-be reformers and their followers and their establishing of the various Arminian denominations of the day. The doctrine of Christ has been the main battleground down through the ages, but it is not the only ground that Satan and his angels have attacked and tried to improve, for they try each unguarded part. Let us examine one of these parts that he is now assailing in the South. It is our song service. There is an institution of man known as "Sacred Harp Singing," having its officers, days of meeting, etc. No mention is made of it in the Scriptures. Christ saw no need of it in connection with his church. His disciples sang with the ability that God gave them, which of course was well-pleasing in his sight. But what about the ability man gets in the schools of man to better qualify him for his song service? It is an abomination in His sight. John says, Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world the love of God is not in him. We have above proved that the schools and conventions of music are of the world, and they are highly esteemed among men. The Scripture says that which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God. Some of our people take part with them in a way they would not with any other institution of man. Why do they do this? Because some of the songs they use are good, having been given by inspiration, and have been used by the church of Christ since days of old. They seem to think that because some of the songs used are good the institution that uses them has a

blessing given of God to carry forward and keep alive the good old songs. Satan's ability to quote Scripture and tell part truths does not make him good, or harmless, but therein lies his power of deception. Those who take part with them do not seem to realize that there are traps set in every institution of man to catch and pull away the children of God. What are some of the traps? Let us examine and see. First, they will open with prayer, to give it a religious atmosphere and to "take away their reproach," asking the Lord to bless that which he has not established. In other words, to bless the work of man's hands, which he has never done, for the works of the flesh are under his curse. They will usually call on a Primitive Baptist minister to open with the prayer, or to close, if one is present. Is this keeping unspotted from the world? Next, to show how religious and harmless the institution is, they will sing a few good songs. Later, when confidence is established, they will switch off to something else more suitable to their taste, songs with Arminian sentiment, and tunes to match. Do they make melody in the heart? Are they sung with the Spirit and with the understanding? No, just head and throat work. Too fast for the understanding to function. Is it to please and worship God? or for the pride and vanity of man? Now what are some of the after effects on those of our people who are entrapped by them? First, you will see them go far and near to attend the singings. I have known some to attend singings on their regular meetings days, having to travel a much greater distance to the singing than it would have been to go to their church. Second, in some churches the book falsely called "Sacred Harp" (not sacred, because of the many uninspired songs in it) has about rooted out our primitive hymns, and the hour usually allotted to this type of singing sometimes overlaps the hour, or time, for the service of God.

I have given some of my objections to the schools of singing. It is easy to talk about things we do not like, but if we do not have something better in the place of the things we try to destroy we had better not say anything. This more excellent way I will now give, if the Lord wills. In our public worship of God he has provided three parts, or steps, in this service, namely: singing, prayer and preaching. If either is worth anything to our souls the ability must come from God alone. We all will readily agree that the ability to preach or pray must come from God, but the singing ability some think has to be taught of man. Is not God just as able to give the ability to sing as the ability to preach? Or is he weak on that point? I think the weakness is in the faith of the member who thinks that singing schools will better prepare him for this service. God alone can make melody in the heart to his praise in song. He alone causes one to sing with the Spirit and with the understanding. All other forms of singing in efforts to worship him are an abomination in his

sight, for if one worships him he must worship him in Spirit Some have said, "Don't you believe in predestination? Then why worry about this matter? God will take care of his church." Paul was one of the ablest predestinarians that ever lived, yet he ceased not to warn every one day and night with tears, that they walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called. Was not this warning ordered of God as much as any other part of his labors? If so, it accomplished that which he pleased, and prospered in the thing whereunto he sent it, and did not return to him void.

W. L. CROWLEY.

LEESBURG, Virginia.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed I send you for publication, two unsigned letters written by our late sister, Clara M. Lamb, who died August 4th, 1937, whose obituary appeared in the September, 1937, SIGNS. These were found in her Bible after her death. Just how long she was in writing them we do not know, but her sister saw her working on them the day before she died. She could not keep silent on what the Lord had done for her soul. Hence, I feel such living testimony of our Lord's marvelous grace ought not be kept hid, but be shared with the household of faith. This is the reason I am sending them to you, that our family paper may be the means of making her testimony known to the living in Jerusalem.

Yours for the spread of the truth,
H. H. LEFFERTS.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—If it is the Lord's will, I would love to tell you some things which have been on my mind since coming into the church. I was in my early teens when I hope I saw myself a condemned sinner without hope. These words condemned me for years, "Many be called, but few chosen."—Matt. xx. 16. They cut sharper than a two-edged sword, until the fall of 1899, when I hope the dear Lord showed me where my salvation is. In the midst of a busy school hour this Scripture came to me: "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."—Matt. ix. 13. I cannot find words to tell of my feelings. I hope the Lord revealed to me his love, mercy and grace; his sufferings, Gethsemane, the cross—all for me! I cannot tell about it. How he suffered for poor me! I felt so undone, crushed, beyond words to tell it. Then these precious words came forcibly to me: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."—Matt. xi. 28. Now I was rejoicing, everything so lovely, praising God for all his mercies. The Scriptures which had condemned me, I found full of precious promises from cover to cover for poor unworthy me. I wandered from year to year, hoping and longing for a home with God's people. Ten years ago these words came to me: "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee."—Mark v. 19. And it was during all those ten years that I was always shut up whenever an opportunity was given for a confession, I felt

nailed to the seat, could not move or speak. How wonderful when the Spirit moves to obedience! Then I found myself talking to the church (July 25th, 1936), not knowing what I was saying. It has been a sweet comfort to me. I felt it was the Lord leading me. He gave me the words to say. It was all of the Lord. I could not see how I was given a home among the people I loved, one so vile and disobedient as I, but it was ALL of the Lord. There was such a sweet resignation as I came to the water's edge. What joy, peace and comfort I felt for days and weeks! A burden was gone, and what was such a wonder to me was the loving welcome given me by the precious ones in the Lord. I went on rejoicing until I felt condemned that I did not praise the Lord enough, then this Scripture came to me, but I could not find it, and I felt I was deceived, and deceiving others: "Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn."—Isaiah li. 1. I was much comforted when my pastor told me where it was, and quoted for me the rest of it: "And to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." The second clause showed me how utterly vile I am. "Oh how happy are they who their Savior obey," and, "Rejoice, believer, in the Lord," have been very precious hymns, as well as many others. There have been peace, comfort and rejoicing formerly unknown to me, that I feel the Lord has been gracious to me. As I look back over my past years, all are full of God's mercies to poor rebellious me. As I languish under disease of the body (if I do groan my groanings are of the flesh), not one pain do I suffer but that I feel it is only just and right that I should suffer. During the months of December, 1936, and January, 1937, there was winter in my soul. I was cast down. I felt I had deceived the church, that it would be just and right had the church taken my name off their book. There was only this one thought with me: the church would have to do it, I could not ask them to, even as low down as I was and as unworthy of His goodness. Then I hope I was lifted up. "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." —Deut. xxxiii. 27. What a precious promise! I thought then I should never suffer pain, doubt or fear again. It was surely a foretaste of the life beyond. Then there were more dark days, and I felt his mercies were clean gone, when these words came to me, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation."—Psalms li. 12. I feel the Lord is gracious to poor me. I am given strength physical to go to meeting, and then am given strength spiritual to hear the blessed truth when I get there. My soul is fed indeed, and I rejoice that the Lord has sent his precious message to poor unworthy me through our beloved pastor. There have been many precious seasons too wonderful for me to tell about, that one so unworthy as I should be given a home with God's people.

DEAR SISTER:—I hope the good Lord may give you grace for all your

trials. I feel very weak, but underneath are the everlasting arms of the precious Savior. I know I groan and mourn much of the time, the flesh is weak and my sufferings are needful for me, but I feel I am complaining against the Lord, who has given me to hope in his rich mercy. He knows my weaknesses and gives me strength for them. Then I can rejoice, my doubts and fears are gone and I think I shall never suffer again. The dear Lord came very near me and I verily thought I should never suffer pain, doubts or fears again. The love, the preciousness of the dear Lord, I cannot express it in words, that filled my soul that morning (of my baptism). That experience has been a comfort to me in these days of affliction of body. I then could hope that I might praise God for all his mercies, in a measure. In Mt. Zion I was given a home with that beloved church by the Lord, and the joy and peace which followed my baptism I cannot express. "Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." "The eternal God is thy refuge." All show me clearly where my strength is. It is of the Lord, not of myself. I am always prone to look at self, and can look away from self only when the Lord gives me strength, then I can, I hope, give praise to him, my Lord.

Remember our pastor after I am gone. He has fed my soul from on high all these years. I hope it is of the Lord I have been enabled to feed at the Lord's table. This is poorly written; I cannot express myself.

PERRIN, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have just read the December number of the SIGNS, and find it still sets forth the true doctrine it ever has contended for: salvation by grace, and grace alone, for time and eternity. Paul knew nothing among his people save Jesus Christ and him crucified for the salvation of poor lost sinners, and that is what I try to contend for, I hope to the comfort and consolation of the Lord's poor and afflicted people, for he says, I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. The poor have the gospel preached unto them. These are poor in Spirit, helpless, not able to buy blessing with their obedience. Their blessing comes through the mercy of their God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So we are under the same influence the apostle Paul was when preaching or worshiping God, for he came in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that their faith should not stand in wisdom of men, but in power of God.

May you, dear editors and publishers of the SIGNS, be spared many years to still contend for the truth as you have in the past, is my sincere desire.

C. Y. OSTEEN.

WE are anxious to obtain one or more copies of the latest Minutes of every sound Old School Baptist Association throughout the United States. If our readers will send them to us at 41 Addison Avenue, Rutherford, New Jersey, same will be very much appreciated.

R. LESTER DODSON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1938.

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NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

THE passing out of the old and the coming in of the new year, impresses upon us the fact that time is marching on. With it, we are all hastening along life's highway, having no knowledge at all of when, where or how our journey shall end. During the past year many of our friends, and perhaps some of our loved ones, have been called to their eternal home. In some instances, the young, or those whom we regarded as being in the very prime of life, whose lives seemed most useful and necessary, were the ones to go, while others who may have appeared to us to be of little use, either to society or to themselves, have been permitted to remain. We may have felt to ask the reason, Why? But our God is not accountable to his creatures, neither does he the reason give,

> "Nor dares the favorite angel pry
> Between the folded leaves."

It is enough when we are enabled to believe that whatever he does is right, and to trust him for all things. Since we have no say as to when our names shall be called, it behooves us to ponder our way and to desire to make the most of each day. While in each life some rain must fall, and we may have had to experience much sorrow and affliction since our greeting a year ago, we hope faith has been given to wait upon the Lord and to find comfort in his most gracious word. Certain it is, he has not been slack concerning his promises, but has verified them unto us in manifold ways. His blessings have been beyond recounting, and when the benefits which we have received at his hands have been recalled to our minds, we have been made to inquire what could or should we render unto him. We have to confess continually, with Toplady, that there is

> "Nothing in my hand I bring;
> Simply to thy cross I cling;
> Naked, come to thee for dress;
> Helpless, look to thee for grace;
> Black, I to the fountain fly;
> Wash me, Savior, or I die."

Perhaps, there is none who has received more bountifully of his abundant mercy and lovingkindness than ourself, and we are confident that none has been less deserving of his notice than we. He has blessed us with health, with suffi-

cient of this world's goods to more than meet the demands of our earthly needs; with loved ones, both in the flesh and in the Spirit, and especially have we felt to acknowledge his goodness in our efforts to continue the SIGNS. Judging from the many expressions of appreciation from those who are more or less isolated, and who are privileged to hear but little, if any, preaching, the need for this medium of correspondence and communication cannot be questioned, and it must be very apparent that the Lord is sustaining this publication. We do not believe that any will deny that the work of the Holy Spirit has been clearly evident in many of the excellent articles and letters which were published during 1937, and we ardently hope that God will continue his work of grace in the hearts of his people and exercise their minds to tell of what great things he has done for them, whereof they are glad. Our lay brethren and sisters are urged to write of their travel from nature to grace, as well as their experiences since being received into the fellowship of the militant church. If our ministering brethren will also not only write of their early experiences, but of their call to the ministry, and of God's great love and mercy to them in all of their goings forth, same will be much appreciated. We would be glad to have some of our good, sound brethren become regular contributors to our columns upon subjects pertaining to both doctrine and order. In this connection, we would like to ask that wherever possible for those who write to use pen and ink on one side of white paper, or better still, have your copy typed, as it will make it much easier for our publisher, whose eyesight is still materially impaired. At this point, we wish to publicly acknowledge our debt of gratitude to our publisher, our associate editors and to all others who have in any way whatsoever contributed to the success of our family paper, and in bringing this part of our greeting to a conclusion, we wish to quote the last paragraph of a New Year's Greeting written ninety-five years ago by Elder Gilbert Beebe, as follows: "Those who have formerly written for our columns are requested to continue to write, and some of our brethren in distant States who have seldom or never written are requested to unite in this general correspondence. If there has or if there should hereafter appear to be any discrepance in the views of the brethren on some particular points, we cannot see that that should arrest our work or make us weary in well-doing. Let the strong bear with the infirmities of the weak, and labor to convince those who err, and strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace, and at the same time suffer not sin to rest unreproved on any."

We want our readers to know we are doing our best to give them a sound and clean paper, one that well deserves the reputation which it has gained as being "the best Old School Baptist periodical in the United States." In this undertaking it has seemed prudent to decline to publish quite a number of articles, for various reasons. Some have savored

of local difficulties, which we did not wish to broadcast; others have appeared to us as likely to provoke strife, which we studiously want to avoid. We have also been unable to comply with requests of some of our readers to republish certain old articles. Fortunately, we have been supplied with sufficient current material to fill our columns, and have felt that this should be given preference. In a few instances we have published some good letters without first obtaining permission from the author, and in one case at least we were informed that the writer would have preferred that the letter had been withheld. We hope all will realize that we are constantly on the watch for good material for our paper, and that they will not only not think hard of us for publishing good letters without permission, but that they will likewise be on the watch and send us anything good to spread before our readers. We have to confess our shortcoming in not being able to acknowledge individually all of the many encouraging letters which come to us from time to time, and in not writing upon all of the requests for views which have been made of us. We trust our readers will appreciate that with our various and sundry duties it is simply physically impossible to do all that we would like. Please, therefore, do not think us unappreciative or indifferent, for such is not the case.

Since we assumed the editorship two years ago, very little relative to the things of this world has appeared in these columns. Much could be written concerning the affairs of this world, past, present and future, and if the truth were told a very dark picture would have to be painted, especially with reference to present day scenes among the European and Asiatic nations, but we have felt (1) that there are others who are much better qualified than ourself to give the facts; (2) that our people, if we have been able to judge them aright, must be overwhelmed almost daily by the headlines in our newspapers and magazines, and (3) because we honestly feel they expect to find better things in the SIGNS. It is our earnest desire that our family paper shall continue to be devoted to the cause of Christ, and that poor fainting souls shall ever find recorded on its pages that which will, with the blessing of God, revive and refresh them while making their pilgrimage journey through this unfriendly world. As far as possible, we want to publish good news and glad tidings to those who feel to be afar off from God. In this connection, we do not feel it will be out of place to mention here some of the things which caused our heart to rejoice as we travelled among the Lord's people during the past year. While attending the Staunton River Association in Virginia last August, we were given to understand that possibly fifty or sixty had recently united with the church in Southern Virginia and North Carolina. The night before leaving for home we filled a joint appointment with our associate editor, Elder David Spangler, in Danville, Virginia, and were informed by him that four had united that morning with a church he serves as

pastor. Other groups of four, five and six were reported as either having just been baptized or awaiting baptism. We were also informed that the ministering brethren in those sections are more united in earnestly contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints than they have been for many years. Judging by the twenty-odd ministers we were privileged to meet and hear, we can truthfully say that peace and harmony seemed to prevail. The psalmist said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." We later attended the September Quarterly Meeting of the Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada, and spent a delightful season with our esteemed brother and associate editor, Elder George Ruston, and his family. There is a large following in that section, and a deep interest is manifested by both old and young. We met one at that meeting who had traveled 2,100 miles in his car in order to be present, making the distance of the round trip over 4,000 miles. When automobiles are used for such purposes they are most certainly not a curse to the people. Some years ago we made a trip with Elder Lefferts to a meeting in Pennsylvania, where we met a man, who, with his wife and nine year old daughter, had walked twelve miles to get there, which made us feel that there was something very vital and real about the religion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. At the Canada meeting, referred to, we felt impressed to speak on one occasion in connection with the fourth verse of the sixty-fifth Psalm, reading as follows: "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causeth to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple." We could but feel that our friend who had come so far to the meeting was surely one whom the Lord had chosen and caused to approach unto him. For one to be assured that the Lord has made choice of them and causes them to seek after him, bringing them into his banqueting-house with his banner of love over them, fills them with joy inexpressible and full of glory and often makes their cup to overflow. We also made two trips to the State of Maine, North Berwick and the Maine Association, at Bowdoinham, at the latter place meeting again our brother Ruston and his family. His preaching was greatly enjoyed and his visit deeply appreciated. We verily believe that the felt presence of the Lord was experienced in the hearts of his people at all of those gatherings. In Maine, while there are but few in number, nevertheless they are excellent in quality and faithful in assembling themselves together, to speak of the glory of God's kingdom and to talk of his power. They sing many of the songs of Zion, much to the comfort of each other. There were other meetings which we would have liked very much to have attended, but for one reason or another were prevented.

We close this greeting by beseeching the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ to remember each and every one of our readers in much mercy, not only

throughout this year of his grace, but as long as it is his pleasure for them to remain here below.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Deacon A. J. Slauson.)

The Lexington-Roxbury Association, now in session with the First and Second Roxbury Churches, at the Second Roxbury Church, at Roxbury, New York, September 15th and 16th, 1937, to the churches and associations in fellowship with us with which we correspond, as is our custom, we will attempt to address you by a Circular Letter.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year is numbered with the past, carrying with it the joys and sorrows of this earthly travel of tribulations and trials. Once more a few names, according to the will and pleasure of the all-wise God, have been blest from the substance of his great mercy to place in our minds and give strength to these poor bodies of clay, which are of the earth earthy, to assemble to the place where we desire, we hope with all sincerity, to worship the true and living God. Jesus said, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. For this reason we are brought together, because we believe on him whom he hath sent. The One whom God hath sent, yes, the very Son of God. Jesus said he came not to do his own will, but the will of the Father. Where did the Father send this blessed Son? The Bible tells us he sent him into this world of sorrow and sin. Yes, to suffer, the just for the unjust, the innocent for the guilty. The Scripture says he was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Yes, came to seek and to save them that were lost. O, brethren, how do we know he was sent? and how do we know him which to know is life eternal? To be sure, we can only testify according as we have tasted and handled of the word of life. Jesus said, I will write my law in their hearts and put it in their minds; I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people. Notice the language: "And they shall be unto me a people," the word "shall" coming from the mouth of the King of kings and Lord of lords. Yes, found among the wills and shalls of Jehovah, bringing with it authority and power which none can change. When Jesus places his law, his control or his power in the heart and mind of a poor sinner dead in trespasses and in sin, and he is brought to a true knowledge of his nakedness and poor, helpless, lost and ruined condition before the just and holy God, then he is made, like Saul, to call upon the Lord; but not until then does he know there is any need of God; not until then does he know there is any need of help. No, like the disciples aboard the ship, not until the storm came did they feel any need of help, then they went to their God. Oh yes, and that was Jesus. Oh yes, did he do anything for them? Sure, he caused the storm to cease. He rebuked the wind and there was a great calm. Yes, it was Jesus. He can calm the roughest sea of trouble. He can subdue the hardest storm in the soul. Oh, do we

know anything about this, when Jesus arises with healing in his wings to a poor tempest-tossed soul, when he writes his law in our hearts and puts it in our minds, and he has become the chief among ten thousand and the One altogether lovely to us? What do we say then, dear brethren? We say Jesus has come to the root and offspring of David, the bright and morning star. Yes, then we say it is the work of God that we believe on him whom he hath sent. Yes, we say it is according to the working of his mighty power that he has wrought in us that Jesus has applied grace to a heart so wretched and undeserving as ours, that we are brought into the banqueting-house, where the banner over us is love. Jesus said if we love him it is because he first loved us and gave himself for us. John said he knew he had passed from death unto life, because he loved the brethren. Peter told Jesus, Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest I love thee. Love is the golden chain that binds our hearts in christian love. We all know what natural love is. We know that natural love is a tie that holds a family together, holds kindred in the flesh to walk together and be as one. The word says they shall be no more twain, but one flesh, meaning husband and wife. The people of the world know something about natural love. People or brethren who have been born again know what natural love is, but, brethren, let us examine ourselves, do we know anything about any other love? As we understand, our natural love was born with us because of our natural parents, and this love, then, is fleshly, that which is born of the flesh is flesh, coming from fleshly parents, the flesh mind, the things of the flesh. The word says the flesh is sensual, devilish. The flesh loves its own. But we feel we have been given a love that man did not give us. Paul said, I did not receive it from man, neither was I taught of man. This great love, which we received not of man, but by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, teaching us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, that we should live soberly and righteously in this present evil world. We have become dead to one and are married to another. Dead to sin, and the love of it, we can no more roll sin as a sweet morsel under our tongue as once we did. The things we once loved we now hate, and the things we once hated we now love. The word says, By their fruits ye shall know them. "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light; (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." For God is rich in mercy for his great love wherewith he loved us. Yes, the banner over us is love when the love of God is shed abroad in a poor sinner's heart. Then he is not his own keeper, but Jesus, who is the banner of love over his sheep, is ever going before them directing them into all truth, teaching them the way, which is Jesus, the way, the truth and the life. He shows us the error of our own ways,

being as a light to our path, so we know the way to take to be safe and secure from the enemy (Satan) who is going up and down through the earth like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. So He brings us together in one bundle of love, and is far greater than anything this world can afford. When we are made to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, we have our hearts filled with this great love, speaking the truth in love, and may grow up into him in all things which is the head, even Christ. Then there is that great oneness. All traveling together in the same direction, all loving the same doctrine; all loving the same food, that precious manna Jesus deals out to us from time to time, so that we are established in that faith and grow in grace and knowledge of the truth, and our hearts run together like two drops of water.

"Each can feel a brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part;
When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart."

Then the love of worldly things, which are fleshly and devilish, if we are clothed and in our right mind, are not in our midst, for the flesh profiteth nothing, for we must always remember that where Jesus is there is no sin. So, dear brethren, we should always watch our step, we should always be careful with our tongue; we cannot have our life too clean, we cannot walk too straight. We should remember that Jesus was and is a righteous man, and if we are his he is our Captain, he is our Leader. The word says, Come out from among them, be ye separate; touch not the unclean thing. If we have not the Spirit of Christ we are none of his, , for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Yes, God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus. This brings to our mind the words that we quoted at the beginning of our letter, which say, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. Yes, through the workmanship of God, operated by Christ the Son, and the Holy Ghost, poor sinners are raised to a newness of life, raised from a dead state in sin to the glorious light and liberty of God's dear Son. Yes, as David said, he was raised up out of an horrible pit of miry clay, his feet set upon a rock, his goings established, a new song put in his mouth, even praise to His name. What a great comfort from time to time the testimony of David is. Yes, he says he was brought up out of an horrible pit. Not only a pit, but out of miry clay, something that one sinks deeper and deeper into. How did David get out? He says the Lord brought him out. Have not we been in such a place? We all are Adam's children from our natural birth, who was a transgressor, then we all at our natural birth are nothing but filthy flesh. We are of the earth earthy, in an horrible pit of sin, fastened there by this fleshly tabernacle of clay, and know it not and see it not until our eyes are opened. Then what sufferng! When we see where we are, when we try to raise ourselves from this place, we find to our sorrow that instead of rais-

ing ourselves we are going the other way. Yes, going down deeper and deeper, the pit is worse and worse. What do we do? What can we do? We are helpless in that pit, but finally we are made to know that there is a God in heaven, and oh how we need him, but we did not know it until we saw where we were, and now we can say, like David, that he brought us up out of that horrible pit of sin and made us to turn away from this filthy, miry clay (flesh), and set our feet upon a rock which none can move. Oh yes, something more, he established our goings. Yes, more than this, he put a song in our mouth. Yes, a new song. Oh something new, a song we did not have before, even praise to his name. Praise to his name, what for? Something we helped him to do? Oh, a thousand times no; not so, just like David, we surely say, The Lord brought us up. Yes, he did it all. Then, and not until then, do we have that new song of Jesus and his love. Let us always pray without ceasing, that we might ever have that blessed love of God in our midst and in our hearts, that we might be able, as Paul said, to stand therefore, having our loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith we shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked; and take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying always with all prayers and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints, until we all meet again.

Farewell.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
ORVILLE WINCHELL, Clerk.

(Written by Harold M. Bennett.)

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Nassaongo Church, near Salisbury, Maryland, October, 1937, sends greetings to the different associations with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We, in our weakness, again greet you in the form of a Circular Letter, which is the usual custom. We have no desire of teaching you anything new by writing this Letter, but to state the things you already know, if we are not deceived in ourselves.

There are times when the Lord's people are made to feel as the apostle Peter did when he heard the crowing of the cock. They are the times when God's children realize the Almighty's judgments, and yet just such experiences are strengthening to our souls, as they cause us to realize God's power and our weakness, and in that we are made to go on through this life trusting in him more, and , therefore, on this our hope of eternal life is built up.

Dnring the past season our different churches have been meeting together and enjoying the worship of the all-powerful God. In this Letter to you we claim to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified,

for our salvation, we hope. The power of Jesus is so beautifully set forth through all the Scriptures, if we are only given to see it. This power was manifested in Job during his trials and afflictions, when the Lord allowed the devil to go so far with him, and no farther. Now we are all made to rejoice in this same power at times when we are made to see our own weakness, it is then his power is manifested in us, and these are the times we are fed from his table and rejoice in the fellowship we have for one another. It is then also we feel that his grace is sufficient to save poor sinners with an everlasting salvation. The apostle Paul, when Saul of Tarsus, experienced this great power on his way down to Damascus to persecute the followers of Christ and was made to see the power of God, and later was made to preach the gospel which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. We are hoping and praying for a continuation of this power unto the end.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
GEORGE F. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS."

WE will furnish extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

CHRISTINA McGUGAN departed this life in Victoria Hospital, London, Ontario, August 7th, 1937, in her eighty-fourth year. She was the wife of the late Deacon Archie McGugan, marrying him in the year 1875, to which union were born six children, four sons and two daughters, all of whom survive. She also has two remaining brothers, her youngest brother, Colin, of Vancouver, and her oldest, Donald, of Bellingham, Washington, who is ninety years of age. It was early in life that our dear sister became exercised about spiritual things, and for years such was her condition that she felt too vile a sinner to try to speak in prayer to a holy God with her sinful lips. At that time the late Elder Pollard was a great comfort to her in preaching, when he said that those who wanted to pray and could not pray were the ones Jesus came to save. It was at this time that a faint hope sprang up in her soul, and with it a drawing to the church, with a desire to hear the preaching, and when Elder Pollard would quote, "A bruised reed shall he not break, and a smoking flax shall he not quench," she felt it was soothing to her troubled soul, yet there were times when such words did not affect her. Another time, she said he took his text from John iii. 8: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." It was then she was taught that man could not do anything for himself. In this sermon he told of the man with the withered hand, how impossible it was for him to stretch forth his hand until God healed it. When she was eight years of age she heard Deacon Lamont speak from the fortieth Psalm, where it reads, "He brought me up also out of an horrible

pit, out of the miry clay." As he spoke he was weeping, and she wondered what miry clay he was in, but later she learned it was the works of the flesh in trying to make ourselves fit for the kingdom of God. Anything that is of the flesh, is flesh. She had to come to the end of the earth, and when it seemed she could go no farther the words (not exactly as in the Scripture) came to her, "Though a man give the whole substance of his house for love, it shall not be accepted," and the next morning a voice came to her," The Sun of righteousness, he arose with healing in his wings." She believed this was from the Lord, and a little later the words came to her, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, for thou shalt bring forth fruits meet for repentance. And again, Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away. Soon after this she asked a name with the Covenanted Baptist Church, and was received in May, 1881, and baptized the following July by Elder Pollard. Sister McGugan was a faithful wife and mother, and she also was a worthy member for more than fifty-six years. Her home was a home for Old School Baptists, and it was her delight for many years to minister to her brethren. She was esteemed as a mother in Israel. Her mind was often on good things, and she loved to hear Jesus' name exalted, which was food to her soul. Her husband, Deacon McGugan, died September 22nd, 1914, after which she gave up her home and lived the rest of her days between her two daughters, Lillie and Flo. She was with Lillie, in London, when she was taken with a stroke last March, and kept having strokes, until the final one, which ended her sufferings by death. After her first stroke the words "He to my tardy feet shall lend the swiftness of the roe; till raised on high, I safely dwell beyond the reach of woe," were much on her mind, and we felt she would soon be taken from us. She was very patient in her sufferings, and in the end she loved to have the twenty-third Psalm sung for her.

Her funeral service was held at her daughter Lillie's home, in London, conducted by the writer, and her mortal remains were laid to rest beside her late husband in Campbell Cemetery, Caradoc, Ontario. The Lord reconcile us all, especially her family, to his sovereign will. "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep."

G. R.

MRS. EMMA JANE ADDIS, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life at her home, 313 Harrison Avenue, Glenside, Pennsylvania, November 17th, 1937, the immediate cause of her death being congestive heart failure. She was one of the eight children of the late Edwin M. and Martha Williams Duffield, and was born in the vicinity of Frankford, Philadelphia, Pa., September 15th, 1862, making her stay on earth 75 years, 2 months and 2 days. One sister and two brothers, all of whom reached the age of seventy years, preceded her in death: Mrs. Laura Jenks and Messrs. George and Newton Duffield. She is survived by three sisters and one brother: Milton Duffield, of Jarrettstown, Pa., Mrs. Annie M. Bond, of Glenside, Pa., Mrs. Josephine Yerkes, of Oreland, Pa., and Miss Martha Duffield, of Philadelphia, Pa. She was united in marriage with Howard Addis by the late Elder William J. Purrington, December 28th, 1881. Her husband died in 1922. Of this union, four children are living: Miss Martha Addis, of Glenside, Pa., Lester Addis, of Glenside, Pa., Clarkson Addis, of Collegeville, Pa., and Walter Addis, of Mt. Vernon, N. Y. There are seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Sister Addis was baptized

by the late Elder S. H. Durand, October 11th, 1891, into the membership of the Southampton Baptist Church. Later, she was dismissed, at her request, by letter from the Southampton Church to become a member with the Salem Church in Philadelphia. This she did December 11th, 1909. Owing to her pastor, Elder C. W. Vaughn, not being able to officiate at her funeral, the family requested me to do so. The services were held in the Southampton meeting-house, after which her mortal body was laid to rest in the burial ground there. Sister Addis was well established in the principles of the doctrine of God as revealed through Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior, and was strong in her faith to the last. She was faithful and devoted to the church, patient in suffering, kind and gentle, quietly submissive to her Lord's will. It would indeed be a fitting tribute to her life if any, or all, of her children could, through the grace of God, be brought to walk in the ordinances of the Lord's house as living witnesses of the sovereignty of God and of his saving grace. This must be as the Lord wills, but we confidently believe that where he begins a good work he will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ. This whole family of the sisters and brothers and parents of the deceased, as well as the children, have been God-fearing, reverent, truth lovers. Rather remarkable! Such a family is not often met with in this respect. It is very wonderful when such is the case. Let the Lord be praised for it. "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man."

Written by request.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

VIRGINIA C. GRAHAM, widow of Benjamin H. Graham, was born February 5th, 1854, and passed away at her home in Mardela Springs, Maryland, Saturday morning, August 21st, 1937. She was the mother of four children, three of whom, Mrs. Samuel Wilson, Mrs. Lewis Wilson, both of Mardela Springs, and Benjamin H. Graham, of Delmar, Delaware, survive. One son, William Harden, died in infancy. She is also survived by nine grandchildren, twelve great-grandchildren and one brother, John S. Murphy. She was left a widow at the age of twenty-eight years, but was blessed with health and good friends and by the providence of the Lord provided for her family until they were married then provided a home for her oldest daughter and staid with her and family until she died. She deprived herself for her children, and we have lost a faithful mother, but hope our loss was her gain. She worked very hard to keep us together. She was a woman of sorrow and acquainted with grief, but was always ready to help in time of trouble. She attended the Old Baptist meeting since she was a child, and was baptized by the late Elder A. B. Francis into the membership of Rewastico Church, but even though she could not hear well she was always at her meetings if she could get there, and enjoyed mingling with them. She was in good health until about four years ago, when she began to fail, but managed to keep around nearly all the time. Her mind had been somewhat distressed, but during the last two weeks of her life she seemed very quiet, and told her children and grandchildren that she had to leave them. She believed in the predestination of all things, and loved every one who had the name of Old School Baptist. She did not seem to have any pain during her last few days, and

passed away without saying a word to us, but we could hear her calling to the Lord to have mercy on her. She will be sadly missed by her children and grandchildren, whom she dearly loved. May we all be reconciled to the will of God, knowing that all things work together for good to them that love him. We did all we could to make her comfortable, but fear we did not do enough to repay for what she did for us.

Her funeral was conducted from her home by her pastor, Elder H. C. Ker. Interment was in the M. P. church-yard beside her husband, who died fifty-five years ago. The pall-bearers were six nephews: Walter, Maurice, Hilary Harold and Raymond Taylor, of Salisbury, Md. Mother and I had always lived together, were baptized together, and I hope were one in Christ together, and in the end will be face to face with him forever.

Written by her oldest daughter,
IDA E. WILSON.

MRS. MARGARET MATILDA WELCH BOND was born March 30th, 1862, and died October 6th, 1937, making her sojourn in this time world 75 years, 6 months and 6 days. She was born and reared in Freestone County, Texas, and was married to Mr. W. B. Bond November 6th, 1879, and to this union were born seven children, four boys and three girls:Henry, Jim, Ben and Butlar, Mrs. J. S. Stephenson, Mrs. C. A. Newsome and Mrs. M. B. Wren. These together with twenty-two grandchildren, fifteen great-grandchildren, a bereaved husband, a host of friends and other relatives does she leave to mourn her demise. As touching the life lived by "Aunt Marg," as better known to us of the younger generation, it stands out as an open book, and was never called upon for investigation. As a mother she was as a dove in the government of her home, longsuffering, patient in her forbearance and gentle in the execution of her duty. As a wife, she fulfilled its every qualification, and as a neighbor she could not be surpassed. As to her faith, though never professing her hope unto the church, it lined with the Old Baptists who believe in salvation by grace and the absolute certainty of all things fixed in council before the world began, and nothing was of more comfort to her than to engage in conversation pertaining to the most high God and his wonderful works. Her home was a place of rest for the brethren, and she did all she could to make them feel at ease there. Her death was indeed a shock, it was so sudden, and truly we miss her, but do we wish her back again in this sin-cursed world, in this low ground of sorrow, trials, troubles and tribulation? Why all these things she is forever done with; and last of all, but by no means the least, thanks be unto God, she is done with death. Nothing was more pleasing to the departed than to converse upon the hereafter. In the resurrection was her hope of being raised from her bed of clay and fashioned like unto her blessed Redeemer, and being presented to the Father, holy and without blame before him in love. Though she be gone from us, yet in memory we see her still, and mourn not as those having no hope, but remember that our loss is her eternal gain. The Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Though these things be hard for us to bear, yet the God of high heaven hath promised that he will not lay more upon us than we are able to bear. So let us bow in humble submission to the will of the Lord, realizing that he doeth all things well.

The body was removed to its last resting-place, and there, after a few

very well chosen remarks by Elder Joe Muce, was left to await the coming of our Lord and Savior. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

W. A. LITTLE.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, We the several churches composing the Soldier Creek Association, now in session at Zion Church, Mayfield, Kentucky, and

WHEREAS, the Association appointed a committee to draft a Resolution of Respect in memory of our highly esteemed brother, ELDER J. C. CHESTER, who departed this life October 29th, 1936, his age being 66 years, 8 months and 5 days. He joined the Soldier Creek Church the second Saturday in August 1893, and was baptized the following day by Elder J. P. Jenkins, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry the second Saturday in August, 1918, and was a worthy and faithful minister of the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, contending for the faith fearlessly before his foes. Elder Chester served the Soldier Creek Association as Clerk for a term of seventeen years. Be it

RESOLVED, that we bow our heads in humble submission to the will of our God, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind; and

WHEREAS, we, the churches, realizing they will miss Elder Chester's advice in transaction of business and along the line of doctrine and discipline, which he was well grounded in, it could be well said that he fought a good fight, kept the faith, and was ready to be offered up, and as Paul said, Being confident of this very thing, that he who began the good work in him did perform the same until the last. Be it further

RESOLVED, that inasmuch as we, the churches, held him in the highest esteem we desire to have this Resolution of Respect printed in our Minutes, and also a copy of the same sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

Done and signed this fifth day of October, A. D. 1937.

O. W. PERKINS,
J. T. COUNTS,
W. W. NEAL,
Committee.

WHEREAS, We, the several churches composing the Soldier Creek Association, now in session at Rock Springs Church, Johnson County, Illinois, and

WHEREAS, the association appointed a committee to draw up a Resolution of Respect in memory of ELDER J. P. JENKINS, who departed this life January 2nd, 1936, being 92 years, 10 months and 2 days on this earth. He was ordained a minister in the Primitive Baptist Church in the year 1879, having served as minister for fifty-seven years. He was regarded as one of the ablest and most fearless defenders of the truth as it is in Jesus. Be it

RESOLVED, that we bow our heads in submission to the will of our God, who doeth all things right; and

WHEREAS, the churches, realizing they will miss brother Jenkins, his advice in transactions of business, and along the line of doctrine, and otherwise, and realizing his soundness in doctrine, be it further

RESOLVED, that inasmuch as we, the churches, held him in high esteem we desire to have this Resolution printed in our Minutes, also a copy of same sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

Done and signed this 9th day of October, A. D. 1936.

Read, and received by the Association.

J. T. HENSON,
J. T. COUNTS,
W. A. BOWDEN,
Committee.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Belle Neal, Va., $1; Mrs. Emma Ball, Va., $1; H. L. Gloer, Ga., $1; Miss Sarah E. Rittenhouse, N. J., $3; Ebenezer Church, N. Y., $10; Miss Annie Black, Ontario, $2; Warwick Church, N. Y., $10; Hannah E. Danks, Cal., $1; Woburn Church, Mass., $10; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Mary Duffus, B. C., $3; Anson Quint, Maine, $1; Huldah J. Leonard, N. Y., $1; Dr. Thomas H. McColl, Ontario, $3; Mrs. Joab P. Stout, Ill., $2; F. H. Richardson, Iowa, $1; Middletown and Wallkill Church, N. Y., $50; A. W. Bloomfield, Mo., $2; J. N. Wageonheizer, N. Y., $1; Mrs. J. A. Mac Taggart, Ontario, $2; Elisha R. Myers, S. Dak., $1; Mrs. Mary Smith, Okla., $1; "A friend," N. Y., $1.

MEETINGS.

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at Earl D. Stevens', Central Bridge, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church holds meetings the fourth Sunday of each month at 1026 East Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Meeting begins at 10:30 a. m., dismisses for lunch and reconvenes at 2 o'clock p. m. Meeting days have been changed from the first to the fourth Sunday of each month. No Saturday or night meetings.

BURLIE HALL, Pastor
W. H. CAVE, Ass't Pastor.
(MRS.) H. B. CURLIE, Church Clerk

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

HYMN BOOKS.

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These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Cloth binding. Price, $1.25 each. One dozen or more, ordered at the same time and all to the same address, one dollar each. Cash must accompany orders. Make checks and money orders payable to

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"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

Cloth binding, 75c each. Paper covers, single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and all to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
MIDDLETOWN, N Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 106. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1938. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ROMANS VIII. 31.

"WHAT shall we then say to these things?"

For several days this Scripture has been of much comfort to me. Paul was not asking that question of the unbelieving world, nor was he soliciting the opinions of the "beloved of God" who were in Rome as to what they might say to these things. What shall we say to these things? was his direct and pointed question. People, even God's people, have different things to say about many things, but there shall be a certain definite response to these things Paul has under consideration. These things that God has appointed to be said, and that only a certain kind of character has ever, or will ever, be inspired by the grace of God to say. What things are under consideration? The things which pertain to the kingdom of God. The foreknowledge, predestination, calling, qualifying and glorifying of the chosen and peculiar people of God. Paul was inspired to say to these things what every one of God's children has said in their hearts since he began to reveal himself to them in the work of his grace and to implant his truth in their hearts. If God be for us who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? In this response to the work of grace, God's children acknowledge and confess his supremacy and sovereign rule in the earth. This is what he has ordained they shall do, for he has chosen them and called them out of darkness into his marvelous light, that they should show forth his praise. What greater glory could a mortal man render to the name of God than to acknowledge him in his supremacy and absolute sovereignty over all things? Carnal reason has ever flounted its accusation of injustice, partiality, no chance; and many other vain and unscriptural accusations against the sovereignty of God and the doctrine of grace or unconditional salvation. But

there are those who shall say, If God be for us who can be against us? Grace teaches and inspires us to make such answer, and only when God abundantly fills the heart with his sublime truth will the lips of poor, dependent and finite mortals speak the truth. Of God's people it is declared, Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. We need not expect those who have not the truth in their hearts to speak it with their mouths. If the heart believeth not unto righteousness the mouth cannot and will not make confession of the righteousness of God. When we are given faith to say of a truth, If God be for us not anything can be against us. The same faith reveals him to us in his divine and sovereign greatness, and knowing him as he is, our hope of ultimate salvation and glory is found to be rooted and grounded in that fact, and so we joyfully receive his word that says, I, even I, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Savior. Belief in the fact of salvation by grace alone is builded upon the fact that God is our absolute Sovereign, who doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and none can stay his hand. The belief in conditional salvation is builded upon a conditional god that cannot and does not do according to his will either in heaven or in earth, but must have the cooperation and assistance of men to do his work. Such a god is not a sure foundation. Such a god cannot inspire the hearts of his children to say, If God be for us who can be against us? Yet, dear brethren, when troubles and afflictions come upon us as stormy clouds, and we are enveloped in the darkness, there are times when our spirits are overwhelmed within us, and in the gloom of such dispensation we become fretful and cannot feel that God is for us. But when God's strong arm delivers us, and he shows us again that afflictions and trouble are in his hand, and not of Satan, except so far as God puts them into his hands. The first chapter of Job proves this. Who that knows and trusts God would have it different? Job rejoiced that it was so. Never once did he credit the devil with his affliction. It was the testimony of his lips that the Lord gave and the Lord took away; that the God who gave good to man also gave evil to him; that these were a part of his ways, and the Lord was but performing the thing which he had appointed for him. Job's friends said these things were the product of his sins, but Job with clear faith said, It is the Lord. It is sure that our God bestows nothing upon us that shall work us harm. If God is for us who can be against us? He is for us in tribulations and gives us faith and hope. He is for us in our distresses and gives us the grace of patience that we patiently wait for the salvation that is in Jesus. Having this blessed assurance that God is for me all the time, I can say with Paul, For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor heights, nor depths, nor any other creature, shall be

able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Yours in hope,

G. W. HILL.

GREENSBORO, North Carolina.

BENTON, Kentucky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I read your request for Minutes from all sound Old Baptist associations throughout the United States. Feeling as I do about our own association, to wit, Soldier Creek Association, I am sending you a copy of our last Minutes. We are rejoicing in the hope that we know the joyful sound of the truth, and that we (our several churches) are at peace and in sweet fellowship. Our own little church (Soldier Creek) has lost several members within a year. Four of our dearly loved ones have been put away since October of last year, when it pleased God to take our dear pastor, Elder J. C. Chester, from us. At Christmas of the same year sister Mollie Chester was called home, and November 13th, 1937, sister Lillie Chester was buried, and to-day I am just home from the funeral of a very dear old brother, who on the tenth of this month (December) was called home. Often I look around us and think we are all about gone who believe in predestination and foreknowledge of God and the calling and election of all who will ever be members of the bride, the Lamb's wife. To-day I noticed at the funeral of this dear brother that there were only four of us present, besides the dear servant of God, brother John Henson. The songs were sung by a young Methodist choir, and accompanied with a piano, which is all very sweet, but it lacks the power to thrill or soothe our tired feelings. Singing, like all other worship, is done through and in the Spirit. The redeemed singers sing songs. They do not fail to sing them, because God's Spirit dwells in them and they see the beauty and truth of words that often sink deep into their experiences, and in that way the singing is brought to bear on their mind as they sing of beauty and truth, and they forget the adversities and failures of life, and their own weaknesses, and are wafted away on wings of God's love. But the songs we often hear from the choirs do not make us feel that way. Do not think, dear brother Dodson, that I was numbering God's children when I said there were four of us present. No. I have no way of knowing how many of God's little ones were in that gathering to-day, neither do I know that I was one, but there were four of us who had our names recorded on the church book where the old brother had his membership, and the others were members of other so-called churches. But you know they cannot be numbered. They are as the sand of the sea and the stars of heaven, and even though we may think they are all dead, but a few, and it may be they seek to kill us, yet we know not how many God has reserved who have never bowed their knee to the image of Baal, and it does not matter where they are, and in what way and manner they have built their mode of worship, when God calls them to come

out from among them they will come, and a new song will be in their mouth, and they will sing it, praising, yea, praising the Lord and what he has done for them. Then, and not before, in God's time, will they cease from their labors of trying to build them a way to heaven and a way to worship God, and they will rest from their labors as God rested on the seventh day, and that will be their sabbath of rest. Oh what a rest it is to know nothing else but His power, no other god, but the true and living God; to know no salvation but that which the grace of God brings, for it is the grace of God that bringeth salvation, and to lean on him when we know there is no other hiding-place for us, and to search for witnesses when we are in large gatherings, they who testify to the things of which we have a witness within, seemingly, making us speak of the same things.

Brother Dodson, do you ever search for just a word in people's conversation to see if they are witnessing and making known in their conversation that they have been with Jesus and are taught of God to know the truth as you hope you have been taught through the abundance of revelations that have been given to you? I find myself so alone, and so thrown with the unbelievers of our doctrine that I listen for just a word sometimes that would make me believe that these nonbelievers are acquainted and know just a little something, and sometimes I decide that they know there is a power over all powers, but they have not been called to stand up for the truth as we see it in Jesus, for he is the truth. Then I come to this conclusion: They know the power, God, and that is all, and to know God is life eternal, and they cannot return. Just like the nine who did not return to tell who cleansed them, only one returned. Many are called, but few are chosen to stand and defend the truth. Is that right? This doctrine of ours is the biggest thing in my life. Sometimes if I could not talk about it I feel like I would scream out until people would call me mad. But we cannot talk about Jesus and his love in the same tone in which we would discuss the war between Japan and China. It is a different thing. So, I know my arm is too short to save. Even if I am saved, I cannot save others. I hope it will always be God's will while I live to let me think of the beauties of holiness, and the Son of righteousness, and the God of our salvation, and give me eyes to see and ears to hear, and a heart to understand what the Spirit saith to the churches, for I believe I have seen and heard and understand a few things, although my lips are too vile to speak the beautiful name of Savior. Savior of sinners is Jesus, and surely with Paul I can say I am the chief of sinners. Just the other day I was reading an obituary you had written of a sister, and you spoke of the God that kept her from falling, and when I came to the word "falling" I stopped reading and a nice long sermon was presented to my mind, or could I say with the psalmist that my feet were set in a

large room and I viewed many things, just by your quoting the text, or after reading that far. I found myself seeing things, viewing the work of God, his power to save, his power as the Husbandman and his power to keep all the redeemed from falling, for he holds them in his arms and they lean on him, rest on his bosom, for he is their Husband and he makes it known to them that they are married to him, treasured in Spirit and in hope through faith, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God.

I do not see any place to stop. Everything in God's word fits in, and is like apples of gold in pictures of silver when it is spoken fitly, and that is when God is in it and working it all for a purpose known only to himself.

I am still, brother Dodson, the poorest, weakest and most sinful of all who hope in the Lord and who feel that their feet have been set in a large room, and on the Rock, and that there is for them being made at the right hand of God intercession by the one Mediator, Christ Jesus the Lord. My prayer is, Jesus, intercede for me, and all for whom thy blood was spilt to save, if indeed it was spilt for me. Keep us and make us praise thy holy name. Lead us and guide us into the coming year that we may walk uprightly, soberly and worthy of the calling with which we hope to have been called out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of our God.

I have no way of expressing what your writings mean to me. Often it is not the whole article, but a few words in it that lift me up, as I hope, to view the promised land. So God will use you to his glory while he needs you as a voice, and when he is through with you there will be rest and peace and knowledge, and not living by hope.

Yours unworthily, but in hope of life beyond this vale of tears and gloom,

EFFIE BLOGG WHITENTON.

DALLAS, Texas.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I do not feel worthy to address you or the readers of the dear old SIGNS, and I am fearful in the attempt, knowing my weakness, sinfulness and unworthiness, together with my inability to express my feelings and desires, and knowing at the same time that the Lord must direct our minds if we think or pen one good thought.

The sweet and comforting letter of sister Helen Jones has stirred me deeply, and I hope through the same grace and revelation has enabled me to glorify our God in heaven. The beauty and sweetness so deeply expressed finds a most devoted and responsive chord in my poor heart.

Paul said it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, and until we do we do not fear God, but all our fears are of the evil one. I sometimes find great comfort in the fact that Satan's power is limited and the bounds are set and he can go so far, but no farther. But of him we can surely say that the only tempter we know is this flesh, contrary to the Spirit of Christ, therein is that continual warfare, it be-

sets me so I am lost in wonder oftentimes unable to judge the source. Not long ago my mind was deeply exercised for days, and that Scripture, "Try the spirits whether they are of God," was a question of most vital importance to me, and yet all that I have learned has been taught in the school of grace, beginning, as I hope, nearly thirty-nine years ago, and as a scholar I have not advanced very far. But I am sure there is a purpose to everything under the sun. God rules and governs all things, and everything was made for a purpose, and is fulfilling that purpose for which it was made, and to the glorious praise of his grace. Even our sorrows, afflictions, disappointments, long drawn out dark shut up seasons, rambling, wondering if our God is clean gone forever, trying and desiring to pray, but cannot so much as control our thoughts as to prayer, find again and again that his grace is our only guide and is ever sufficient to drive away the darkness, and when light shines we burst forth in praise and thanks to his holy name. All are in the plan of Jehovah. Nothing new nor old, surprising or disappointing to our God, for he knew all things from the beginning, and from ancient times things not yet done, declaring, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. I will bring them in a way they knew not. And this is the experience of all God's little children, predestinated in Christ Jesus before the world was, that they should show forth his praise and rejoice in his love, mercy and grace. Each visitation so full and complete, ever sufficient for the time being to drive away the clouds that appear and darken the pathway that we tread. Many times I have been called to pass through seasons that were so grievous and distressing that the nights were long and sleepless. My very soul was shut up for want of understanding and for a little ray of hope that the hand of the Lord was leading me and would guide me safely through, to look back when the time of deliverance came, and he enable me to rejoice in his mercy and sing praises to his name, for he is our rock and refuge in the time of storm. It is then that I am also thankful that such a season is in the past and one less for the future. I do believe with all my heart that our seasons of doubt, fear, distress, sorrow and persecutions are numbered, as well as our joy, rejoicing, worship and praise to our God are numbered. As I wrote a few years ago about that highway I saw. Few, perhaps, remember it, but oh what consolation it has been to me. In the dark it was uneven. I would make a step and it would be high or low. I was weary traveling it, almost exhausted, and a light appeared. I looked for my shadow first, but there was no shadow. Then I looked ahead of me, and it was smooth and straight, but very narrow. Then I wondered why my feet did not miss the hard road when it was so dark and I grew so tired. In my meditations, which have been not a few times, I have hoped the hand of the Lord led me on. He never leaves nor forsakes the objects of his love. He

brings us through dangers sometimes that we are not aware of. At other times we are aware, and realize his power alone can calm our fears and make us to know he never slumbers nor sleeps. He knoweth my thoughts and my frame afar off. He is everywhere present, and when danger approaches he turns his hand upon the little ones. Oh what a God! Even the wind and the waters of the sea obey him. He speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. In his love to the church, as I understand, to Israel, his chosen people, they shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor the sun smite them, for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them. I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted. Sometimes he leads us on that exalted highway, and we fairly glide along and bathe our souls in the sunshine of his love, in his abounding grace, and drink in, as it were, of the sweetness and fragrance of his breath until our hearts are full of his praise, and we amazed at the wonders of our God. A mother may forget her suckling babe, yet will I not forget thee. He never changes. He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. It is we who wander off and are so helpless we cannot find the way back. But oh how we love to linger, and are loathe to return to earth. At times when I am shut in, especially in cold weather, like now, with snow covering everything, my mind is so barren and unfruitful, and I seem to be in the valley of dry bones, I get my hymn book and sing just as loud as I care to, and a few times the echo of these walls seems to praise that God whom I desire so much to worship, mindful of the Spirit present and directing the composer's pen to speak the sentiment of our heart far better than we can express it, is bread cast upon the waters, to be gathered many days hence, and yet we cannot of ourselves gather one crumb. Here a little and there a little. I am glad he said his people shall be a willing people in the day of his power. This old flesh is robbed of all its boasting. It will no more mix with the things of the Spirit than grease will mix with water. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. They are foolishness unto him. Mixed quotations. My mind is faster than my pen. I often wonder if I am not yet on the milk diet, unable to eat meat. My leanness, my leanness! How often would I cry unto my God to drive away the cold midst and clouds of darkness and restore unto me the light of his presence and the glorious healing of his power brighten that little hope and increase my faith and patience and bid me run and not faint. All my desire is known to him, and the thoughts of my heart are not in secret. There is not a word in my tongue but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. It is high. I cannot attain unto it. The

psalmist David said, Whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven thou art there. If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. Oh the wonders of our God! Everywhere present and nowhere absent. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul. He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Praise ye the Lord. Let all that is within me praise his holy name.

I fear I am making this letter too lengthy, so will close, hoping I may now proceed with my duties without writing a letter in my mind. No doubt though that it was far better, and more connected, than this one with the pen. Please note carefully what I have written, and if not in faith and practice of the Old Predestinarian Primitive Baptists, assign it to the waste-basket. Any sentiment that does not honor God and give him all praise is not worthy of space in the dear old SIGNS. I humbly ask all who find it in their heart to pray for me, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord forever, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple.

Wishing the SIGNS and the household of faith well, I am, I hope, your little sister, through much tribulation,

(MRS.) H. A. STRUBE.

RIDGEWAY, Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—May I be permitted to address one like you in the above name while I attempt to write? The mind to write has been present with me since our Association, but why, I cannot say. At present it seems an empty blank concerning spiritual things. I had wondered before the Association if you would be there. On Friday night of the meeting I dreamed of attending, and it seemed that there were a large number of visiting preachers. Many seemed to be strangers, but all the time I was looking for you. On Saturday morning when I walked in the church I looked over the preachers for you, and how glad I was to see you. When you spoke in your sermon of being, possibly, the only gospel preacher in the great city of New York it seemed to fulfill my dream. I felt I would be satisfied if I could hear you preach. I believe the full meaning of your visit is told in Romans i. 10-12. I was glad when you read your text in this chapter, for I hope I love the book of Romans. It is a hard book, but a precious one to the child of God, if I have ever been blessed to realize any of its truths. I have often thought that it belonged to those who believe and preach salvation by grace, and grace alone. How else can any poor sinner reach heaven and immortal glory than by the grace of our Lord? Like you, I live in a place where few believe such a doctrine. It is too narrow, and belongs to a curious and peculiar set of people. The Scriptures describe such a people as being the chosen race of our God.

They are spoken of as a peculiar people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, They are the richest and safest people upon earth, because God is their security. However low they may get in their feelings God alone can raise them, for he has promised never to leave nor forsake one of his. Just the other night I heard a sermon which was for the most part directed against this hope religion. It was said that a person should know whether or not he was a christian. It was also said that if one confessed Him with his mouth, that was sufficient. God intended that all should be saved through confession and acceptance, and if they were lost it was their fault. Will one who has truly been born again accept such a doctrine? Is there any comfort there for him? If such a doctrine were true, then the God of heaven would be limited in power. In this life can we know what the morrow shall bring forth? We can only hope for the best and trust to the all-wise God to bring us safely through. The Scriptures teach that we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. Can we feel this at all times? I believe that every child of God can at times say, I know that my Redeemer liveth. So often we hear them say, I know it was my sins that nailed him to the cross. Yes, but these sins have all been atoned for, and their robes have been washed in the blood of the Lamb. He has paid the debt in full, and every name has been written in the Lamb's book of life. Not one shall be erased, or one added to that number. But can we know that our name is written there? As a small child I used to love the hymn, "Is my name written there?" That was back in the days before I was made to love the Old Baptist doctrine. Brother Dodson, I hope I love the blessed doctrine set forth in the SIGNS. I love to read it, for it and the paper from California are about all the preaching I am blessed to get at the present, as I live in a town of other denominations. Please remember me and family in your prayers. I feel to need the prayers of God's saints. I love to read your writings, and those of your father.

A little sister, I hope,

MARY H. STRATTON.

WESLACO, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing a letter written by Elder T. D. Walker to brother and sister J. W. Staggs. You may print it if you see fit.

E. B. AULT.

CALIFORNIA, July 6, 1936.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER STAGGS:—Your letter of June 25th reached me a few days ago. So glad you both hold me in remembrance, especially when I think it is a token from the God of Israel, and he not only put it into your heart and mind to write me again, but he stoops to look on me for his Son's sake, and a book of remembrance was written for them who think upon his name. So I hope I have been made to think upon his name and find it excellent, and what comfort the sweet promise gives. They shall be mine in that

day when I come, saith the Lord, to make up my jewels. All the Father gave him by a covenant relation, those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life, are those, methinks, whose sins are gone before to judgment, and to them there is no culmination of all things by the working of that power by the which he is able to subdue all things unto himself. Every man shall be raised up in his own order (the righteous were chosen in Christ before the world began), shall be counted worthy for his mercy's sake. They shall be caught up together, conformed to his image and be forever with him. Therefore he saith, Comfort one another with these words. But what sayeth the Scriptures? Declare the whole counsel of God, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life. So we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block and unto the Greeks foolishness, but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and Christ the wisdom of God. So, then, what sayeth ye? He is the Savior of life unto life and of death unto death, so we declare that every man shall be raised from the dead in his own order. The wicked man, whose sins follow after, shall be judged out of the book and in the order of his own sins which have never been repented of by him nor atoned for by the Lord Jesus, he shall be placed on the left, and hear that awful, that just denunciation, Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. I am aware this is not a very popular doctrine with the Arminians and those who try to teach that Christ died for every one in general and no one in particular. I do not attempt to say just why I should write thus to you, but I feel sure you dispute none of these declarations of solemn thruth. And believe me when I declare that Old School Primitive Baptists set forth under the ministration of the Spirit a system of teaching attested to and plainly established by the Scriptures, that we preach a system of doctrine that every "coming" man shall hear His voice, saying, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world, and at the same time we believe and teach that not a single "going" man shall inherit that kingdom but they that hear this call. His word shall not pass away even though heaven and earth be removed. If we are what we hope we are we have a Mediator and a Savior on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, One who was tempted during the days of his humiliation in all points as his people are tempted, yet without sin, and when he comes again will come in power and great glory, without sin unto salvation, and shall change our vile bodies like unto his glorious body and we shall be forever with him.

T. D. WALKER.

NASHVILLE, Tennessee.

DEAR EDITORS:—Judging by my feelings this morning, I can imagine how Job felt when he said, "Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat! I would order my case before him, and fill my mouth with arguments."—Job xxiii. 3, 4. That is the way I feel this morning: "Oh that I knew where I might find him!" There are some who would say, Read your Bible, that is God talking to you; obey his commands and you will have nothing to worry about. Away with your doubts and fears. I have read the Bible since I was thirteen years old, and still I have my doubts and fears, to the extent that I almost despair of ever having that sweet peace. I cannot express in words what a vile sinner I feel I am, but they will say, You have no right to feel; you have no feeling in the matter at all; you can be a christian if you want to be; all you have to do is obey his commands, be baptized, attend all services regularly, partake of the emblems, go to Sunday School; in fact, do everything that you possibly can; do your part and He will save you if you have been faithful. I believe in being faithful in everything, and I believe all do who love the Lord, but I also believe that if I depend upon my feeble faithfulness and puny works I will fall far short of that goal we all hope to attain. All I feel I can depend upon is God's mercy, and if I ever have salvation it will be by grace and not of myself. I remember that when I was a small boy there was a dear old lady living in the country near my home who used to visit my mother quite often, and many times I have heard her say, Well, sister Cole, I get so hungry for the gospel I juust have to talk with some one. I did not realize then what it was to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and to long for some one to talk with who understands, but it seems now there are only a few people who understand, or will take the time to listen; they are too full of the world, or what they have been taught by man, or have been brought up from childhood to believe as they do, and they cannot listen to this old fogy doctrine of salvation by grace. I but seldom get to hear this loved doctrine preached, but often when reading the experience of some dear Old Baptist in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES I am carried back to my childhood days, when I used to go to old Station Camps and Friendship churches with my father and mother. I have sat between them and seen the tears roll down my father's cheeks, and I know now that it was the love of God in his heart that caused them. Although he was not a member of the church, I believe he called upon the name of the Lord, and it says in Acts ii. 21, "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved." I do not feel that I have ever done anything good, or anything that I could claim any honor for. As for helping God do his part, I believe he has everything fixed and his plan already made, and nothing can change this plan in any way.

I could keep on writing, but I do not want to take up space that some others could fill far better that I can. If you see fit you can publish this; if not, cast it away.

A sinner,

W. H. COLE.

WALNUT CREEK, California.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been silent for some time, which makes me feel ashamed. It has often been my heart's desire to pay up back subscriptions, but poor health, medicine and doctor bills have amounted to so much for the past two years or more that I have not been able to do so, but I feel thankful that I can at this time send a little, and hope to be able, the Lord willing, to send more soon. At times I thought of having the good paper stopped, for a number of times I was so low I felt my time had come; but it was not the Lord's time for me to go. My heart would sink at the thought of having the paper stop coming, for I love it very much, if indeed I love the word of God. I hope I do; it is my song and comfort. The Lord knows my heart's desire. I feel so lonely and so far away from the dear Old Predestinarian Baptist people, for all I hear around here is that to believe in predestination is fatalism. That is no food for me. If I know anything about it, I believe that the covenant made with David's Lord was in all things ordered well, and that includes all things that have been and will be to the end. All things for his sake did Jehovah prepare, for of him and to him and through him they are.

I have had the book "Predestination" a long while, have read it a number of times and it is just as sweet and good as it was the first time I read it; it never grows old.

This beautiful hymn of Toplady's has been much in my mind and heart, especially when I have been in much misery and pain:

"When languor and disease invade
This trembling house of clay,
'Tis sweet to look beyond my pain,
And long to fly away."

The whole hymn is beautiful. The Lord willing, you will be hearing from me soon. My best wishes, with the help of the Lord, be with you in the new year.

From a little one in hope, if one at all,

(MRS.) MABEL LINDSEY.

ST. PAUL, Arkansas.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find check for four dollars, in payment of my arrears and for the current year. I have been taking the SIGNS for two-thirds of a century, and may be your oldest subscriber; that is, as a subscriber. You may have subscribers older in years, as I am only in my eighty-fifth year. The SIGNS is exactly the same now as when I first subscribed.

Respectfully,

C. W. ANDERSON.

WE are anxious to obtain one or more copies of the latest Minutes of every sound Old School Baptist Association throughout the United States. If our readers will send them to us at 41 Addison Avenue, Rutherford, New Jersey, same will be very much appreciated.

R. LESTER DODSON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1938.

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ISAIAH IX. 6.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

How wonderful are the words of prophecy, wonderful because they are the words of God, God before whom past, present and the future are one eternal now. Isaiah rejoiced to see Christ's day, he saw it and was glad, so could say, "For unto us a child is born." This child was the holy child Jesus, born of the virgin Mary, for this same prophet declared, Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel, which being interpreted is God with us, and wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east and are come to worship him. He was born not only a child, but a king.

"Unto us a son is given." And here we have to note a distinction which is of great value. The child is born, but the son is GIVEN. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth *in him* should not perish, but have everlasting life. This son is the eternal Son who comes from the bosom of the Father, of whom the poet sings,

> "Without beginning or decline,
> Object of faith, and not of sense;
> Eternal ages saw him shine,
> He shines eternal ages hence."

This Son is coequal and coeternal with the Father. In the creation of the worlds, this Son was there, and the worlds were made by him, and he was also appointed heir of all things. He was there when God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," and though the child had no preexistence before the virgin's womb, the Son was with the Father down through the ages, and his delights were with the sons of men. Often in holy writ he is referred to as the Lord of Hosts, and we believe it was he who appeared to Joshua and announced himself as captain of the host of the Lord, and Joshua worshipped him, calling him Lord. It

was he who also appeared to Moses in the burning bush, and he is spoken of as the Angel of the Lord. It was he who walked in the furnace, "a fourth like unto the Son of God." It was he who bore Israel, and carried her all the days of old. He brought Israel up out of Egypt. He had, as it were, the strength of an unicorn, concerning which Balaam declares, "The Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them." David spoke of him when he said in Psalms cx. 1, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thine footstool." This Son was given, and he abhorred not the Virgin's womb, but came in the likeness of sinful flesh, yet even then he was worshipped by angels, for Paul saith, Hebrews i. 6, "When he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." Thus our Lord in the nativity is very God and very man, as man to suffer, as the Son of God to save. As man he must suffer on the cross, as the Son of God he is our great Melchisedec, without beginning of days or end of life. At the birth of this child, Herod, the chief priests and scribes were troubled, and searching the Scriptures they found in Micah v. 2, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler of Israel; *whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*" "And the government shall be upon his shoulder." We have said he bore Israel and carried her all the days of old. They could therefore sing, Psalms lxxxix. 18, 19, "For the Lord is our defence; and the *Holy One of Israel* is our King. Then thou spakest in vision to thy Holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty," and that mighty One always upheld all things by the word of his power. "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice." Thus it is our Lord Jesus Christ who holds up and sustains all things. Not only has he given the word of the gospel, even as it is written, "The Lord gave the word," but it is also his power that sustains it, as the great company publishes it. The satisfaction of divine justice and the complete redemption of the body, the church, rested upon him, upon his shoulder. Of the people there was none with him, and to destroy him would mean the destruction forever of those that were his.

It seems to us, in this subject we have undertaken to write upon, that we have a consideration of the tabernacle that God pitched, and not man, and it shall be our endeavor to set Jesus Christ forth as he is revealed in the word. The tabernacle of old (Exodus xxvii.) had an entrance to those things which are spoken of as shadows of better things to come, and Jesus said of himself, I am the way, the truth and the life. It was through this gate the offerer and the offering must go. The offerer, or priest,

must be thirty years of age. At thirty Jesus began his ministry. He must be perfect, having no blemish, so Jesus was; and if it be a lamb to be offered, it must be the firstling of the flock, without spot or blemish. Jesus also was the Lamb, and without spot or blemish. He had clean hands and a pure heart, and had not lifted up his soul unto vanity. In this gate of the outer court we find four posts, upon which the priests hung a curtain, or vail, made of four materials: blue, purple, scarlet and fine twined linen. Thus he who is our High Priest has made himself known in the testimony of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, as it were, four posts set there to display himself. First, we will mention the *blue* as setting forth heaven, unveiling itself in this who is almighty God. The scarlet of dignity was manifest in him, who, though equal with God, made himself of no reputation; he became a worm, so humble and lowly, yet with what grace and meekness he walked as he stooped so low. Then there is the purple of the King, who is also the King of grace and glory, of whom it is written, His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. Wise men said, Where is he that was born king of the Jews? "King of the Jews" was fastened over his cross, and, as he gave his commission to his disciples (Matt. xxviii.), he declared, All power is given unto me in heaven and earth.

Fine twined linen sets forth Christ's righteousness, woven by him to cover his body, the church. Those four materials were in the vail, and these glorious things which they set forth shone in Christ, and those four writers, like the four posts, declared what they had witnessed of him. Not only did the four posts support the vail, but the four posts were set in brass sockets, brass which sets forth the power to endure the suffering of God's wrath because of sin, manifest by Christ in his life and death. Thus the posts stood upon the merit of his suffering as they proclaim Christ, the gate.

"And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." We have above spoken of the outer court having a gate with four posts. The preaching of Jesus went out through all the world, as in the parables of the sower and the tares and wheat. The son of man sowing the seed, did not make the ground stony or good, but it made manifest in the results what the ground was. The ground did not change itself, but it was proven to be, after the seed was sown, just what it was before it was sown, and the good ground brought forth fruit. The field was the world, the wheat was the children of the kingdom, and the tares the children of the evil one. In the *world* these were to grow together until the harvest. Jesus did not look for grace in any one, but where he had placed it and where his Holy Spirit had prepared the heart, there would be found results. The Spirit must take of the things of Jesus and reveal them unto us. Thus through the Gate not

only the priest and the various offerings, but the people, came. It was within they witnessed the slaying of the victim, the priest washing himself and parts of the victim in the laver. It was before the people that Jesus lived, and he died in their sight. So that, whether it be the gate, or the altar, or the laver in the outer court, Jesus is set forth in his sufferings. The outer court had a gate which signified judgment, and Jesus said, For judgment am I come into the world, etc. Jesus in Mark had said, "Go ye into all the world," and Paul tells us in Colossians, the gospel was preached to every creature which is under heaven. Now while all the people had access to the outer court, but few understood, only those who had faith given them; so it is to-day. Let us consider the inner court, or tabernacle. This had a door, but it had five posts, and through this door only the priest could enter. Within was the table of shewbread, the golden candlestick and the golden altar of incense, and these set forth those things that we, who are made kings and priests of God, see in the church of God. Now just as there were five posts to this door, so there were five writers of the epistles to the church of God: James, Jude, John, Paul and Peter, and their testimony is a testimony of separation; it is not to the world, but to the church, the household of faith. They preached not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and while the four gospels tell most of what Jesus did while on earth, these five writers, while upholding that testimony, present Jesus risen and enthroned, not only in grace, but glory. In their testimony of him we have five unshakable pillars of truth, clearly outlined in Romans viii. Foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification and glorification, all in and through our Lord Jesus Christ. While we mention the five writers of the epistles and the five pillars of truth they declare, yet we do not feel to present any of these writers as posts of the inner door. In the outer gate the four writers of the gospels stand with their living testimony, in this inner door, Jesus, our great High Priest, must be considered. This tabernacle had a covering of rams' skins, the one constantly seen by those in the tabernacle, representing Christ's sorrow and suffering unto death, and the other representing the concealment and denial of his divine glory while he suffered the offense of the cross. Thus there was need of a center post to support the ridge of that covering. The center post we will therefore mention as the third name of our Lord given in our text: "The Mighty God." Our Savior is truly Almighty God, which truth gives strength to the church of God. Again it is socketed in brass, setting forth the endurance of suffering in Jesus, so that Paul could say to the elders of the church, Feed the flock of God which he hath purchased with his own blood. After his sufferings were over, it is spoken of him, in another place, that his feet were as polished brass. Jesus Christ, as the Savior of sinners, was not just a creature. The

work of a creature can never save a soul from hell. "It is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." We find the five names, or posts, in this one door, and if we truly believe in Jesus his name to us is Wonderful, because he endured the cross and despised the shame, and this for traitors and foes. His name is wonderful, for it takes away our reproach, and has ever filled with wonder those who have seen what he has done. In the next, Counsellor, again is displayed what Jesus alone is to his people. He is God, the only wise, who, knowing our case, puts words into our mouths that stop Satan's assaults and forever silences the enemies of our souls. To the seven churches in Revelation, it is he, whose eyes are as a flame of fire, that reproves and counsels them aright, and he, to all who enter heaven, is the counsellor. We have mentioned the third post, but we must linger here a little longer, for it makes the heart burn to even think of him, who loved us and gave himself for us, being none other than the mighty God, who, made perfect through suffering, carries the whole structure, sustaining the church against every blast and every wind of doctrine. It is he who folds them in his arms and carries them in his bosom.

The fourth, "The everlasting Father." Here we have a relation that is not natural, yet it must exist between Christ and those that are his. By nature we are sons and daughters of Adam's fallen race, none good; no, not one, and just as the Spirit reveals him as Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, so it must witness with our spirits that we are the sons of God, who has predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself. The life of a child of God is not from Adam, but Christ, in a union as between father and children. Adam had us all in his loins in the transgression, and in Adam we died, for we were all transgressors in Adam. The life of all of God's chosen is in Christ, their eternal Head, and they are perfected forever in and through him, and they shall live forever.

The fifth post is the Prince of Peace. The peace of God's children is as strong and lasting as the glorious One who sustains it, and under his sway nations learn war no more. It is he who is our peace that makes the lion to lie down with the kid. When he says peace, none can make trouble, and his peace is not for a day, or a year, but for ever and ever. All this is set forth concerning him in the epistles as in the gospels. In the outer gate we find the vail was twenty cubits wide by five cubits high, showing that the requirements of the five books of the law were met by Jesus. As God he was above all law, and over all things, yet he humbled himself, stooped low as a servant, met the requirements of the law in every part, so that IT IS FINISHED could be written in all four of the gospels, or posts, thus covering the twenty cubits. Thus we find an hundred square cubits in the outer vail, the same as there were in the inner vail, for that was ten wide and ten

high; so it is the same Jesus set forth in the gospels as in the epistles, not, as some say, Paul pressed down on predestination, and James on works. It is not Paul or James, it is Jesus only. Thus the outer gate shows Jesus, the vail humbled under the law with a width of redemption that embraces every one that is his to the four quarters of the globe, while in the vail of the tabernacle we see the same Jesus made perfect through suffering, exalted as a Prince and a Savior, no more pressed down under the law, but one who is almighty. Within this vail of the tabernacle, there was the golden candlestick, and John saw one like the son of man in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. There was also the golden altar of incense, and it is this incense that sweetens the service of the church before heaven's high throne. There was also the table, and the bread is there prepared for the Israel of God. Then there was the vail that separated between the holy place and holy of holies. It is the same Jesus set forth, but now to the church. We find cherubims upon it, setting forth the angels of God ascending and descending on the son of man. It is this vail that was rent in twain when Jesus died upon the cross, for it set forth his body rent from head to foot for us, that we through the rent vail might enter heaven itself. "By a new and living way, consecrated unto us through the vail, that is to say, his faith." It was within that vail the ark was kept, and in heaven itself Jesus is, and because he lives we live also. We at times hear the bells of his gospel and smell the fragrance of the pomegranate. It is the same Jesus, whom the four gospels declare, that has entered heaven for us, and there he stands made of God unto us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, four posts again, socketed this time in silver, meaning complete redemption, that if any man glory, let him glory in the Lord.

These things that we have presented have set forth but a part of what there is hidden away in that wonderful tabernacle. The half has never been told.

G. R.

DEAR READERS:—First, I want to thank those of you who responded to my appeal in the December SIGNS by sending the publisher all, or even a part of what was due him. He is deeply appreciative of your efforts in this respect.

Second, I bespeak your further consideration in helping the subscription list of our paper. Many of our subscribers are getting old and are constantly dropping out, and unless some one is kind enough to notify the publisher of their passing he is liable to continue sending the paper almost indefinitely. A number of cases have been discovered where the subscriber had been dead for years, but the publisher had no knowledge of it. In order to bring the records more up-to-date, it has been decided to publish this notice in three consecutive issues of the paper, and then discontinue as of May 1st all

subscriptions which are two years or more past due, *unless in the meantime the publisher is notified that the subscriber is still living and desires the paper continued.* Any one receiving the paper, who really appreciates it, even though unable to pay for it, should be willing to at least write the publisher explaining the circumstances. It is also very important that the publisher have your correct address, as this class of mail is often held by the postmaster for a reasonable time and then thrown away. Please examine your papers carefully, both as to the date your subscription is paid to and the address, and if you are behind more than two years, or your address is not correct, write the publisher promptly. It is not desired to cut off any one who is receiving and enjoying the paper, even though they cannot pay for it at this time, but something must be done to eliminate the sending out of papers which are not being received and read.

Third, if those who really like the paper, will speak of it to others, they will undoubtedly secure some *new* subscribers. Any assistance you can render will be greatly appreciated.

R. LESTER DODSON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

J. S. Adams, Va., $2; Mrs. Mary J. Ege, N. J., $3; Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $8; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $2; Mrs. Dosia Deal, Md., $1; "H," Md., $2; E. H. Winchell, Mich., $1; Mrs. J. D. Shafer, N. Y., $1; A. E. Clark, Kans., $2; Nellie M. Palmer, Maine, $2.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MRS. LYDIA ANN GOLT, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life at the home of her granddaughter, Mrs. Marian Morris, Wilmington, Delaware, December 11th, 1937. She was born May 8th, 1848, near Smyrna, Del., and grew up in that neighborhood. Her father was Tilghman Foxwell, her mother Ann Jemima Griffin. In 1873, she became the wife of John Golt, who died May 4th, 1891. They had one daughter, Mrs. Ella Truax, who died in 1928. Sister Golt is survived by her granddaughter, Mrs. Marian Morris and by her grandson, Earl Truax, of New York City. Both sister Golt, and her mother before her, were members of the Bryn Zion Old School Baptist Church, in Delaware. Sister Golt was baptized by Elder E. Rittenhouse June 4th, 1876. Her mother had been a member since 1865. In March, 1919, sister Golt's membership was transferred by letter from Bryn Zion to the church in Wilmington, Delaware. For the last few years of her life her membership was with the Welsh Tract Church.

The funeral services were held at Faries' Funeral Parlor, Smyrna, Del., burial was in the ground adjacent to Bryn Zion meetinghouse. Hers was a gentle, patient, loving spirit, exemplifying humility and meekness, that refinement which is the outward manifestation of the grace of God in the inner life. She had been by no means exempt from her share of trials and sorrow during her life, but all had served to more firmly settle and establish her in the doctrine of God her Savior and Lord. She loved his truth, it fed her soul, it comforted her in her afflictions. She had sustained a stroke of paralysis a few days before her passing. As the end grew steadily near, her grand-

daughter repeated to her the twenty-third Psalm. Nothing could have been more fitting. Everything was done for her comfort that loving hands and hearts could possibly do. Those who in any wise minister to the saints of God, minister as well to Jesus Christ their Lord. Jesus counts all such service as done unto himself. Let us, therefore, count it a most sacred and blessed thing to be able to do anything in his name for the good of any of his flock. Both in the home of her granddaughter and her family, and in the church at Welsh Tract, there is a vacancy not to be filled; but it means to sister Golt herself a distinct gain, because she has gone to be with the Lord. We sorrow, therefore, certainly not as those who have no hope. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

H. H. LEFFERTS.

DENNIS McCULLOUGH was born near Brazil, Indiana, December 23rd, 1864, and died December 7th, 1937, at the age of almost 73 years. December 2nd, 1888, he was married to Nancy E. Parks, and in 1893 they came to Oregon and settled on a homestead nine miles north of Elgin, where they experienced many of the hardships of pioneer life, but with courage equal to their undertaking they succeeded in establishing their home. In 1907 they moved to a farm in the valley, five miles west of Walla Walla, Washington, which they purchased and managed successfully until his wife was called by death in 1910. In 1913 he was married to Mrs. Mary Howell, of Imbler, Ore., and had lived most of the time since in the vicinity of Elgin. His wife survives him, also one half-brother and sister, who live near Portland, Oregon. Many nephews and nieces, some here and some in the east, and a host of friends bear tribute to his worthy character. He united with the Old School Baptist Church at Elgin about the year 1914, and was ordained a deacon soon after, and lived a worthy and consistent Baptist until his death. He was strictly honest in all his dealings, so much so that he many times misjudged his fellow-man in business propositions where they lightly regarded their obligations to him, causing him financial losses which brought him to hardships in his latter years. He was called to pass through many trying tribulations in the last fifteen years of his life, regarding his health. The first of these was several months in one of our best sanitariums for anemia, from which he was dismissed as a hopeless case, and told to arrange his business affairs, for he could live but a few weeks. He told his friends that he did not feel he was going to die, and put himself in charge of a very humble physician of his town, and within a few months was in good health again. He then resumed his occupation as a farmer, doing whatever was required in this business. One day, while unloading hay with a large hay fork, the rope broke and he fell to the ground, striking on his head and breaking his neck. His brother picked him up unconscious, and in moving him around found a position in which consciousness returned. Brother Dennis told him how to hold his head, for his neck was broken. He was then placed in an automobile, with his head harnessed to the top, and his body supported in the best position possible, and a trip of twenty-five miles over a rough country road was hurriedly made to the nearest hospital. None of the attendants thought he would survive the trip, but he did, and was placed in a cast until his neck was healed. The effect of that accident was never overcome, although he led a

fairly active life for several years afterward. At other times he experienced strange deliverances from what might have proven fatal, but of more common occurrences than the two cases afore related. He bore all these in meekness, and apparently without any thought of special favors of the Divinity who was controlling it all. I mention these by way of encouragement to those who are called to walk through the valley of the shadow of death, and also as a testimony to the praise of our God, whose hand is always underneath to sustain and support his helpless and needy children.

The writer conducted the funeral services at our little church at Elgin, December 9th, and the next day the body was taken to Walla Walla, Wash., and placed beside that of his first wife, to await the glorious resurrection. It was a rainy, sleety day and but few of his old friends were able to attend. A short service was held at the grave, conducted by Elder Peter Jones, who was one of his most intimate friends and a brother in the church.

C. W. BOND.

MRS. AMERICA (HARRIS) CHENOWITH, aged 86 years, died November 22nd, 1937, at the home of her son, T. J. Chenowith, in Elkins, W. Va., with whom she had lived a number of years She had been ill for three weeks, but prior to that time had been in her usual health. She was a native of Barbour County, where she was born July 10th, 1857, a daughter of Job and Martha (Morrison) Harris. She married William Chenowith, and to this union three children were born: Mrs. Mattie Moore and T. J. Chenowith, of Elkins, and Perry Chenowith, whose death occurred about thirty years ago. Besides the two children, she is survived by two sisters and one brother: Mrs. R. B. Vanscoy, of Montrose, Mrs. William Rennix, of Elkins, and Col. Floyd Harris, "Stoke," Aldie, Va., six grandchildren: Mrs. Fred Vanscoy, Mrs. Albert Chenowith, Mrs. Bryan Hamilton, Miss Mary Virginia Moore, Miss Frankie Chenowith, all of Elkins, and Ernest Denton, of Grafton, W. Va. A short service was conducted at the home of her son by Elder J. J. Poling, of Belington, W. Va., after which her body was taken to the Israel Church, near Kerns, where funeral services were conducted by Elder J. S. Murphy (by request of the deceased), assisted by Elder J. J. Poling. Her body was then laid to rest in the Israel Cemetery, beside her husband. During those eighty-six years she lived a quiet, peaceable life, and was highly esteemed by all who knew her. She had a fine character, was orderly in her walk at all times, showing to those who understood her that she had been taught of the Lord and loved to be with those who were of like precious faith, and never tired of talking on spiritual subjects. During the Baptist Association at the Valley Church, last August, she attended each service and enjoyed the meetings very much, but said it might be the last association she would be able to attend. At the closing of the services she asked us to sing, "Farewell, my dear brethren, the time is at hand," which was her last farewell to that congregation. I visited her during her last illness, and she told me she would not get well, and said she longed to go on to her heavenly home. She talked to her son and his family, telling them many things about her near departure, saying she longed to go and be at rest, which will many times comfort and console them in their lonely hours without her. She made all her funeral arrangements, telling them how she wanted to be put away, and who she

wanted to preach at her funeral, selected two hymns she wanted sung, as follows: "Shed not a tear o'er your friends' early bier," and "Farewell, my dear brethren, the time is at hand." Her son and family showed their true devotion and respect for her by complying with her every request. She was not a member of the visible church, but attended the Old School Baptist meetings when she could, and was a firm believer in the doctrine they set forth, and was esteemed by them as a true christian. She had been a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years and greatly enjoyed their teachings, reading them over and over. She was a kind friend and neighbor, and a good mother. There is now a vacant place in their home, filling their hearts with sadness. May the Lord in his own time help them to be glad that she, after her long and useful life, has reached the home she longed for.

Written by one who loved her as a dear friend and a spiritual sister.

(MRS.) E. E. WORKMAN.

MR. CHARLES B. TIMMONS, our beloved friend, departed this life at his home, in Snow Hill, Maryland, May 4th, 1937, aged 71 years. Mr. Timmons for many years had been an active business man in various branches, and was very successful. In the year 1896 he married Miss Rosa M. Truitt, of Snow Hill, Md., and to that union were born three children: Mrs. Margaret Timmons Bunkley, of Chicago, Ill., John I. Timmons, of Snow Hill, and Charles L. Timmons, of Daytona Beach, Florida. The widow and the children, togeter with one grandchild, Jackie Timmons, survive him. Mr. Timmons was a genial gentleman and had a host of friends. He never united with the church, but attended the meetings regularly, and contributed in every way to the support of the church. He is much missed by the church and by the community, but deeply and sadly by his family, to whom he was devoted, never sparing time nor means for their comfort and welfare.

The funeral service was held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Snow Hill, conducted by the writer, assisted by Rector Matthews, of the P. E. church, due to the friendship between Mr. Timmons and the Rector. Interment was in the cemetery adjoining the meeting house. In the death of Mr. Timmons the writer lost one of his kind and thoughtful friends. May the Lord reconcile us all to his will.

H. C. KER.

MRS. IDA E. BEYEA, widow of Winfield S. Beyea, died April 22nd, 1937, at the home of Mrs. Minta Mapes, Howells, N. Y. She was born at Chesterfield, Indiana, November 18th, 1857, a daughter of James K. and Amanda Dushane Trumble. She was of the Old School Baptist faith. Surviving relatives are two sons, George H. C. Beyea, of Howells, N. Y., and Frederick J. Beyea, of Brooklyn, N. Y., three grandsons, two granddaughters, one brother, Robert J. Trimble, of Chesterfield, Ind., and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held at the home of her son George, at Howells, Sunday, April 25th, with Elder R. Lester Dodson officiating. Interment was in the New Vernon Cemetery. She had been a resident of New Vernon for the past fifty years.

THE foregoing, written by her son George, has been sent to us for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We cannot let pass the opportunity without saying a few words in commendation of Mrs. Beyea. She will long be remem-

bered by many Old School Baptists for her extreme kindness, particularly when she presided over "The Old Homestead," just above the New Vernon meetinghouse, where the Warwick Association was entertained for many years. She bore evidence of having been a lover of the truth, and we can but mourn our loss at the passing of such a friend. We desire the blessings of our heavenly Father upon those whose hearts are saddened by her passing.

R. L. D.

IN COMMERATION OF ELDER FREDERICK W. KEENE.

EARLY in November we had in preparation for publication something regarding the passing of Elder Keene. On being informed by the publisher at that time that an obituary, written by his daughter, would appear in the December SIGNS, we deferred sending in what we had in mind. In view, however, of the very able contributions which he made for so many years to our columns, we feel it is only fitting that some expression from our pen should appear regarding the loss our readers have sustained in being deprived of further articles from his pen. We were privileged to have known him, personally, for many years, and regarded him as one of the ablest gifts of his time. We are confident we voice the sentiment of all of our readers in expressing deep regret at his passing, and in extending our heartfelt sympathy to the members of his family who are left behind.

R. L. D.

MEETINGS.

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held at Earl D. Stevens', Central Bridge, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church holds meetings the fourth Sunday of each month at 1026 East Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Meeting begins at 10:30 a. m., dismisses for lunch and reconvenes at 2 o'clock p. m. Meeting days have been changed from the first to the fourth Sunday of each month. No Saturday or night meetings.

BURLIE HALL, Pastor
W. H. CAVE, Ass't Pastor.
(MRS.) H. B. CURLIE, Church Clerk

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 106. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1938. NO. 3.

POETRY.

"OUR ROCK."

(DEUTERONOMY XXXII. 4.)

Oh come, let us worship in the Lord's temple,
Oh let us exalt him, his name is most high,
For he is a rock, his work is perfect,
And there is none other to whom we can fly.

I have gone down into deep trouble,
The waves and billows have passed over my head;
I cried unto him whose arm I hope brought me
From Egypt to Zion, by mercy he led.

He lifted me up from the deep waters
And planted my feet where I hoped they would stay;
He gave me a heart to sing praises and praises
For the joys of salvation day after day.

But alas, I grew weary and started to wander,
I went in the desert without any bread;
I never had asked him to guide my feet thither,
Thinking my own strength enough help instead.

There I found enemies powerful and lively,
Greater in number than the hairs of my head,
Who, seeing my youth guideless and lonely,
Besieged every step of the way I must tread.

They planned and they plotted deep traps and thick quagmires,
The way grew more rough, and more weary my feet;
I stumbled and fell, and they laughed and derided:
My strength was all gone—I admitted defeat.

The devil then thinking that I was forsaken,
He added temptation and woe to my pain;
He said, "The Lord's helpless and you are mistaken,
You'll never rejoice in a good hope again."

But God, who is merciful, knows I am ashes,
He looks on the needy, afflicted and poor;
He'll let Satan sift us, but never destroy us,
His pity and love are as large as his power.

And when we are fallen, tormented and helpless,
We come to the end of all strength of our own,
We cry unto God, the help of the helpless,
He answers in love by a word from the throne.

The devil is gone, of grace he is fearful,
The foes and the fears and all clouds pass away;
The rock has been struck and the waters are flowing
To the poor and the needy who seek by the way.

Oh why do I languish so long in the desert?
Why hunger for bread when Christ is my head?
His fullness is there, but I am a sinner,
I work to be rich in my own right instead.

How blind, how wretched and how foolish his people
Who seek to their own strength or on idols rely;
It's only the weak and the poor ones he died for,
And grace, when they need it, all their wants will supply.

Then teach me, O Lord, to be weak in my own strength,
To be helpless, yet strong, in relying on thee,
To look to the Fountain and cease from all others;
I'm safe in the desert, if upheld by thee.

My God (if I dare claim with those who are holy
Relation through Christ is my only plea),
Keep me humble and poor all along this life's journey,
For such, the word says, are accepted by thee.

FLOSSIE I. FAULKNER.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MATTHEW XIII. 33.

"THE kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."

According to Matthew, thirteenth chapter, this parable, and many others, spake Jesus to a great multitude at the seaside, and his disciples asked him why he spoke to them in parables. He answered, and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. I will say at the very beginning that if I have in any measure been instructed unto the kingdom of heaven it seems a very small quantity, so little that I just hope I have a part in his kingdom. Now Jesus did not tell his disciples that it was given unto them to explain the mystery of the kingdom of heaven, but to know it, and I believe that God's children, from their earliest recollection, experience things they will never in this life be able to explain to their own satisfaction. For instance, when they come to the church and ask for a home, they cannot tell what they have seen, heard and felt, as they desire, though it is sufficient to the church, being accompanied by the Spirit, for the church is composed of the likeness, as the one offered, and as Elder S. J. Norris said in his lifetime, he hated his own ways, but he loved those who had ways just like his. The apostle said we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away, though now we see as through a glass darkly, but then face to face. So it is, I think, with God's children who are given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. It is in part, or a foretaste, while they live in this tabernacle, but in the world to come they will see Jesus and be like him, which will be the fullness of that which they have here recived an earnest of, and the earnest is just like the fullness will be, only it is in a small part here, wherein we hope that we are his and heaven is our home, when we leave this world. I said we, for Paul said there is a crown laid up for me, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me in that day, and not to me only, but to all those who love his appearing.

The parable Jesus spake that "the kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened," I think the leaven figures the grace of God, or kingdom, and the woman that hid it in three measures of meal is wisdom. The three measures of meal are a man, composed of three component parts, body, soul and spirit, as Jesus said, Behold, the kingdom of God is within you, and, again, as God has said, I will dwell in them and walk in them, I will be their God and they shall be my people. The effects of the grace of God in the heart, or inward parts, of his people, crucify the old man with his deeds, daily, and usually keep God's children repenting with godly sorrow, weeping and mourning and in grief because of their sins, which dwell in the mortal flesh. They cannot attain

the measure they desire to; though the will be present the ability, or power, is absent. The nature of divine grace is to, and does, humble God's children, and to bring us down and show us what we are by nature and what we must be by grace. It teaches us that in the flesh dwells no good thing, neither can it produce any good thing, nor can it glory in the Lord. Paul said, I delight in the law of God after the inner man, and have no confidence in the flesh. The same as to say, I joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. The law he delighted in after the inner man was the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus that made him free from the law of sin and death. For sin reigned by the law of commandments, which Paul found to be unto death, but much more does grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ. God's children are not under the law of the old covenant, but the new covenant, the law of grace and love, and it constrains them as a compelling power, though many times they kick against the power with a haughty spirit, in their nature, as the children of Israel did in the days of old, and when they do they will certainly smart under the chastisement of the rod of God's everlasting love, that they may say it is all of grace from first to last, for the grace of God that bringeth salvation (It does not try to bring it.) hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Then can we do one thing without grace? No, a thousand times no. The grace of God teaches us that we cannot, and it also teaches us that we are poor, weak, sinful mortal beings, that it is the Spirit that quickens, the flesh profiteth nothing, that without Christ we are nothing. But by the grace of God we can say with Paul, I am what I am, and that is a sufficient and wonderful supply in all needs, times and places.

We will now consider the hidden leaven. First, Jesus said, My kingdom is not of this world (natural, visible). Again, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, neither shall they say, Lo here, or lo there, for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you. Then his kingdom is invisible, and cannot be seen nor heard with the natural eye or ear of man, for except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. It is the work of Sovereignty, by the invisible Spirit of God Almighty; the manifestation thereof is only by divine revelation, and he gives it to whom he will. As Jesus said when he rejoiced in the Spirit, I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight. Again, the

apostle said, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit, for the Spirit of God searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. Let me ask the question right here, Who knows the things of the covenant of God's grace, the finished work of salvation by grace, finished, perfect and complete, of God in Christ Jesus our Lord? Let such ones rest, with perfect complacency that they hath been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. A candle is not lit to be put under a bushel, but to put in a candle-stick to give light to all who are in the house, and Jesus is that true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, the spiritual world, or kingdom. The true Light reveals the corruption and weakness that is in this earthly house, or tabernacle of clay. It reveals to the believer that God only can redeem, purchase, call, sanctify, justify and glorify by the blood of Jesus Christ, a perfect sacrifice, acceptable and holy, without spot or blemish, whom God has set forth, to be the propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins, that hath passed through the forbearance of God, that he might be just and the justifier of them that believe that he hath imputed their sins to Christ Jesus, and Christ's righteousness to them. The true light gives light to all who are of the household of faith, and it is not hid from them, but from the wise and prudent, or the wisdom of this world, for it is as a garden inclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed to all the earthly wisdom of this world; they are totally blind to the life and godliness that is in Christ.

Jesus said this leaven was hid in the three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened. If this leaven be the grace of God begun in the heart by the eternal Spirit it is a good work. Paul said, Being confident of this very thing, that he who hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ. Wherein this leavening process will gather our sleeping dust, or quicken our mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in us, by which our body, soul and spirit will reunite and be changed from natural to spiritual, and the whole will be leavened. It is a work begun, that will crown God's children in heaven and immortal glory, free from pain and sorrow, ransomed from the grave, its power and sting, to the inheritance reserved for them, incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. No, it fadeth not away. Whereunto they are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, and are preserved in Christ and called, and are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise unto the day of the redemption of our vile bodies, when corruptible will put on incorruption, and mortality will put on immortality, and we shall be

changed, all being the perfect work of the sovereign, eternal, irresistible, unalterable, unchangeable, all-powerful, all-wise God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our faith, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, who liveth and was dead, and is now alive for evermore. Surely he is our faith and hope, our salvation, and salvation means everything pertaining thereto. As David said, The Lord is all my salvation. He is our peace, our faith, our wisdom, our hope, our righteousness, our justification, our sanctification and redemption, and I believe he gives to his people in this life the measure that seemeth him good and as he wills to, and that is the measure that was given them in Christ before the world was. As before stated in this letter, it is in part, but it is sufficient for them in this life, for God is able to keep them from falling. Yes, to give them far above all they can ask or think, and present them before his throne with exceeding glory.

If any poor mortal ever desired to know the truth in Christ, whom to know is life eternal, I am that one, if not deceived. But alas, if I know anything about it it comes in a different way than I would have chosen. First, it comes in a way to abase me in my pride, with all my pets that I may nurse and not know it, but am bound to suffer in the same before the Lord delivers, then I can say with David, I will praise the Lord, for he is great in mercy, for he delivered my soul from the lowest pits of hell. O Lord, thou knowest what I need, make me not too poor lest I steal, nor too rich lest I forget thee. Surely Jesus is meek and lowly, and rest to those who labor and are heavy laden. (The ones who are weary are the ones who appreciate rest.) It is by grace, from first to last, the greatest unmerited favor ever bestowed upon poor unworthy sinners.

The Jews under the old covenant were commanded to eat unleavened bread, which must be a figure of the sacrifice body of Christ, and no doubt but that God's children eat of this sacrifice when they are partaking of the suffering of Christ. Although unleavened bread is not good while eating it, but no doubt it strengthens them and causes them to be bold in the warfare (or in the grace of God at least). If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him. Jesus commanded his disciples to beware of the leaven of the scribes and Pharisees, speaking of the doctrine and commandments of men. The doctrine that is not all of grace is of men. The doctrine that is of grace is of God. So is the kingdom of heaven that is likened unto leaven. It is not something to puff up nature, but it subdues it. for Paul said the kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, and though our outward man perish, yet the inner man is renewed day by day. The apostle said, Great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

God's children only know of the mysteries in the measure that Christ is made unto them. When I awake in his likeness I shall be satisfied.

J. L. SANDERS.

NORTHPORT, Alabama.

SALEM DEPOT, New Hampshire.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—I am just penning a short note, inclosing a letter from an Elder in Georgia who occasionally favors me with a letter. You may know him, or know of him. He is an afflicted man, often loaded down with trouble, and his letters are very welcome to me.

I was unable to get down to Bowdoinham in September, but it was a delight to my dear wife and myself to have Elder and Mrs. Ruston, their dear son and daughter and another Canadian friend visit us and preach to us in our room. We had several others come in to the service, and we felt it was a privilege. Oh what a favored people are they who can hear the blessed gospel regularly proclaimed near where they dwell. We feel glad to be favored to listen, if only four or five times a year. What is there comparable to the gospel of free and sovereign grace? Only to think of it, a rebel deep in sin and guilt saved by grace divine! But that is not all. He is justified. One cannot by any means understand that naturally. Justification of sinners is beyond human knowledge. Oh to have a deeper insight of these precious matters.

We are hoping to hear Elder Vaughn at Woburn next Sunday. My friends speak of him as a man of God, so we are eagerly looking forward. God be with him, and enable us to listen understandingly.

I trust you and your dear ones are well, and that your soul prospereth, is the praper of yours in hope,

JOHN H. DUNKLEY.

MACON, Georgia.

MR. JOHN H. DUNKLEY—HIGHLY ESTEEMED FRIEND:—Your good, yet brief, letter came several days past. While I wrote a brief reply at the time, unfortunately I did not post it, so I must venture to respond. I have no excuse to render for delinquency, except that my time has been taken up with temporal, trivial, and considerably with gospel engagements, and also visiting the sick in the hospital. One precious sister passed away last week. Physically and mentally I have been in no condition to write when I did have a few moments to spare. Have opened my Bible but once in a long time. Regarding the magazines, I must say that I am pleased in your sending them to the good lady in Chicago. Not that I would not have enjoyed reading them. It must have been purposely arranged that you send them to her, as I have not as yet had opportunity to read those you last forwarded me. I am badly behind with my correspondence also. While I have long since learned that to get along well with a divided time and treasure it is either God or mammon, yet because of apparent necessity, and a desire to provide things honest in the

sight of all men, and also I must confess a greedy lust to accumulate more of this world's goods, I desert my appointed watch tower.

I am glad to learn that you are much improved, and have lost only your allotted time from your labor. May the Lord continue such favors to you for a great while yet. I have often thought of that great man of God, Moses, and other Biblical characters, who were so favored with health and years that their eyes were not dim nor their natural force abated. Often while considering the blessings upon others I have been much discouraged and fearful, yet, on the other hand, in reading of their sad complaints, trials, etc., I have been helped greatly in entering into their experiences. Only to-day I received a most spiritual letter from a tried saint in Chicago (Mrs. L. De Vries), which I read with tears, mingled with sympathy and joy over God's sustaining grace toward her in her sore trial of losing her companion. She is indeed one of the remnant of grace who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. She informed me in a previous letter that she was an Old Baptist, and that her husband was also.

I am perfectly agreed with you in the matter of baptism. While literal baptism is not essential to eternal life, it is absolutely necessary to membership in the organic church on earth. It is not a formality with believers, but a holy rite enjoined upon them by their Lord and Master, who is Head over all things to the church (visible and invisible). It is a gospel commandment, and cannot be abrogated, nor can it be neglected by gospel subjects without loss to them in this life. However, to observe it without the Spirit would be mockery, and an abomination in God's sight. And if men and women are indisposed to comply with the ordinance of baptism I feel no urge to prevail upon them. Though it seems strange that some gracious souls who are well informed in the mysteries of the truth never feel the import of water baptism, it must be true, and the only reason I can conceive is that it is not given them from heaven. For if the Spirit lays the matter of baptism upon one, such will have no rest until there is a performance of the rite. Again, many heaven-born souls may never understand the import of baptism, because of the lack of gospel teaching on the subject. The ministry is commanded to preach and baptize and teach God's children to observe all things which He hath commanded them, yet the all-important matter is to be born again. All that are born from above are one in Christ Jesus. The elect, called and redeemed of the Lord, heaven-born and heaven-bound, and as certain of eternal glory as if they were already landed there, for neither height nor depth, principalities or powers, angels, things present, past or future, tribulations, life or death, shall be able to separate them from their ever living Head. Not present things,

nor things to come, shall quench the spark divine. We can but see this in bedimmed vision while we sojourn here. As these lines have been passing through my mind this p. m., I can go no farther than they carry me at present.

"Could I but read my worthless name
In life's fair book set down,
Recorded in some humble place
Beneath the Lord, the Lamb."

And,

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

O brother, I cannot rest on imagination, or doctrinal knowledge, I must have the truth and promises of God sealed home to my very soul by the Spirit of love and faith. Hitherto have I come, but what about the future? How will it be when I stand on the threshold of eternity? I cannot live upon past manifestations. My needs are so urgent I must have fresh tokens of his love whispered gently and lovingly to me. As the hart panteth for the waterbrooks, so thirsteth my soul for the Wellspring of Life. Nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness can wash away my sin and admit me into his divine presence and glory.

But I must close. This is a poor response, but it is such as I have to give at this time.

Wishing you every covenant blessing, and begging an interest in your petitions, I am sincerely yours in the hope of the gospel,

LEO V. BAGLEY.

DELAWARE, Ohio.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Do you ever come to a dead end street in your experience? Where it just seems all darkness as to which way to turn, what to say or do? We know that God is, but does he lead, teach and guard me? If so, what fruit appears to prove it? I come so far short in so many ways. We read, As a man thinks so is he. Well, what have I been thinking? Have I thought of love and compassion, forbearance and forgiveness for those who seem to neglect me? Are my thoughts pure, kind, peaceable and longsuffering? Blessed are the meek. Am I meek? I feel sure there are times when I must say, No. I must own that sometimes I receive love, praise and commendation that is not earned by me. So why be so touchy when I seem to be neglected? Do I neglect others? No doubt they sometimes feel that I do. Can we pray, Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors? Is that the way we wish to be forgiven? Toleration is not forgiveness, and sometimes we can scarcely boast of even toleration, when we feel, I would rather brother or sister So and So would just leave me alone. Surely the flesh is weak, and if any who read this always feel loving and forgiving, you are stronger than I. I know that some have thought me forgiving, and I must confess that I have felt that I was more forgiving than some others were, but it is not in exercise all the time, and seldom is as pure and longsuffering as a child of God should feel. I often won-

der when persons pray so gibly, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors," if they really forgive their debtors. If they do not, they are not asking much, are they? Here where I live the "Lord's Prayer" is recited together every morning at the breakfast table, but not by me. I bow my heard, cover my face, and a part of the time I really try to feel it within, but, needless to say, not always is my attitude as I would wish it to be, but I think I feel better to "pray in secret." I sometimes tell them that I can come nearer to real heartfelt prayer to just be still and try to feel the blessing, just between the Lord and my soul. While there are christians here I believe, some of whom live nearer the pattern no doubt than I do, but I am the only one allied with the Primitive Baptists. The orders that are represented here have been Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Catholic, Church of Christ, Reformed, Universalist, Christian Science (One of the latter faith died last week, aged eighty-five years), and Episcopalian. There may be other faiths here. The Methodists are the most numerous. A lady who died here last week (a Christian Scientist) was one of my best friends.

I have just been reading the August number of the SIGNS, and, as usual, found food for my soul therein. I had no fear of finding Arminianism in it. Its contents took me back to the time when, after a season of unrest and grief over my short comings, One like the Lord of hosts, yes, I really believe it was the Son of God himself, spoke peace to my soul. Though he said the Comforter would come, it was also said, "These three are one." And I believe the Son himself said to me, Let all your anxious thoughts cease. Your many sins are all forgiven. Way back there before you were born I saw you, knew you and loved you, fulfilled the law for you, bore its penalty for you, and there is no more condemnation. Can you imagine the glorious fullness of joy and the glory to my soul given me as I really heard this glorious proclamation, after a moment before seeing a bright, broad path of light extending from earth heavenward, with the lifeless body of Jesus hanging on the cross? Which appeared for a moment, then vanished as I listened to the glorious proclamation of the finished work of Jesus for my salvation. I felt, Oh if I had only known it before, how much worry and grieving I could have escaped. Yes, it appeared a finished work, assuring my salvation back in eternity. Yes, personally mine, even back there. I could but wonder, Why such grace to me? Why did God reveal this to a little girl like me, when no one else knows of this finished salvation? We were far from an orthodox church, so I could not recall ever hearing it proclaimed, so did not know that these glorious tidings of great joy had ever been preached by men. I determined to tell it to as many as possible, and still like to tell of it. When feeling cast down, full of darkness and sin, I appreciate the text, "In returning and rest shall ye be saved." I find rest when my thoughts are again

brought back, returning back to Calvary, back to the obedient life of Jesus in my behalf, back to the hour when it was so sweetly revealed to my weary, burdened soul by the voice of our Savior himself. How could I doubt it? I do doubt, or at least forget it at times. When I recall it sometimes I am glad that I first heard it in the voice from heaven. But is not that the way any one hears it, even when spoken by men? It is only heard when God opens the heart and unstops the deaf ear, by the quickening of the dead by the Holy Spirit. Surely the praise is the Lord's.

JOIE E. WOODS PETERS.

HERMLEIGH, Texas, Dec. 15, 1937.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending two dollars to pay for the SIGNS another year. I will be eighty years old January 7th, if I live that long, and I have been reading the SIGNS about forty years. I have read several of Elder Gilbert Beebe's editorials, during Elder Chick's lifetime, and I am thankful to say that as far as I can understand our dear editors are still contending for the same faith and doctrine that Elder Beebe contended for, which is God's foreknowledge, predestination, and grace alone through Jesus Christ, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. We were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and we are kept by his power, ready to be revealed in the last times. This is all my hope beyond the grave. I have nothing to claim for my salvation but Jesus Christ and his righteousness.

I just wanted to let you dear editors and publishers know that I am glad and thankful to the Lord for such good, firm editors and publishers, and I hope you all may live long to write for and publish the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I hope you will overlook my mistakes, and remember me when it goes well with you.

A poor old sinner, saved by grace if saved at all,

(MRS.) M. E. WILLIAMS.

CLARKSVILLE, Tennessee.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am sending two dollars to renew my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as I do not want to miss a copy. The Lord so far has blessed me to have the price when it came due. Sometimes the way financially, as well as spiritually, looks very, very gloomy. I would love to send more than my subscription to help the paper, but it seems that I cannot, but my sympathy goes out to the editors and publishers, for I know it has been a great strain financially and physically to get the paper out, and I wish you to know I enjoy and appreciate the many letters and editorials.

Love and sweet fellowship to all who contribute to the paper in any way.

(MRS.) B. H. SHEARON.

BOOK NOTICE.

I would like to hear from any one having a book on Revelation, written by Jesse Cox, that they are willing to part with. Write me here at Rush Springs, Oklahoma, General Delivery.

S. S. COX.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1938.

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ROMANS XV. 21.

"To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see; and they that have not heard shall understand,"

To write to the household of faith when one feels to be barren and unfruitful and there is a loaded burden any other individual is more competent than ourself, but there does not seem to be any other way that would be prudent but to make the effort, and in this way we are put to the test, and also the effort to write something that we have the assurance of truth and salvation in our own heart gives us a hypocritical feeling.

The apostle Paul, writing to the churches at various places, gives the reason for his boldness in the truth, and the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, because it was sanctified by the Holy Ghost. (Rom. xv. 16.) If we had the assurance our writings were sanctified by the Holy Ghost our worries would be over, but the lack of that assurance makes us careful of our expressions, lest we should offend instead of edify you in the truth.

According to the quotation we have called your attention to, Paul's mind was embracing those who were not of the lost sheep of the house of Israel, to whom the disciples of Jesus went, but were referred to when Jesus said, Other sheep I have I shall also bring, and Paul says they shall see. We do not feel Paul was asserting that they should see and behold with natural organs of sight, but by faith, as they were sanctified by the Holy Ghost, having the same relation and evidence as the house of Cornelius, when Peter asked who should forbid water that these should be baptized, seeing they have received the gift of the Holy Ghost as well as we. When they saw Peter no doubt Cornelius realized an assurance of the answer of his prayer. While we are calling attention to these things we also would have our readers to note that the Lord was working, making ready his servant, and also the ones to be saved, which makes a perfect work, and these evidences prove the doctrine of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to be the true faith, and all of like precious faith are the church of God.

They see and understand all things, that are sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and when matter, either written or spoken, comes to their attention they detect the source, and discern whether it is of the flesh or the Spirit. By experience they see the garment, and when it is woven by the mind of man they will not receive it, for they know the pollution there is in it, but when it is woven by the demonstration of the Spirit and of power they receive it, and desire to be clothed with it, for they love the Weaver, and they know his work is perfect and on it they can rely and not be ashamed. As we think upon these things, of how wonderfully Jesus demonstrated in the presence of men the power of God and none could receive it but those who were given eyes to see and ears to hear, which came by the revelation of God to them individually, and when the time of his departure came he comforted his disciples, and told them many things that were to come to pass, and in those words he said, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you."—John xvi. 12-16. According to our seeing the things of the Spirit, all ministers of the gospel are in the hand of the Lord, and they are directed by the Spirit of truth to the place he hath purposed they should serve his bride as her servant for his sake. We have witnessed the unfolding of wonderful mysteries to our comfort, and also many others have expressed themselves as they have witnessed the same testimonies given from our heart as we spoke them with our mouths, and after all these have come to us we want greater assurances that our faith is not in vain in the Lord. We cannot see unless the Spirit taketh of the things of his and showeth them unto us. John on the isle of Patmos saw many wonders, which he was commanded to write to the several churches, and the angel thereof, that they should have reproof, and know how far short they come of perfection. This is one of the true marks of a minister of the gospel, that he sees himself as unprofitable, and after he has done all that he could to be faithful the Spirit of truth shows to him the imperfection in what he did, and he can truthfully say, I am an unprofitable servant.

We have pointed out to you the ones to whom he was not spoken of, and the proof of their seeing, and they that have not heard do hear, and also understand, and why they understand. The riches of God's grace bestowed upon any poor mortal will heal, clothe and feed him, which will make him strong in the Lord. When he calleth his sheep they hear his voice, and they are turned about to see him that spake, who is not

seen with natural eyes, but they feel his power, for he is within them, and will direct their steps and bring them to his banqueting-house, where his banner over them is love. To feel you are in the house of the Lord, and see his banner over you, and realize it is his love, it brings rejoicing and praise from the heart of poor sinners, and they declare that it is by the grace of God they are what they are, then they sing with the heart, and with understanding also. By the power that has directed us we hope we have been given to see the divine hand directing all things, and making all things work together to the glory and honor of the eternal God, and that all things were made by him and for the only begotten Son, that he should have the preeminence over all things, and that he predestinated all things after the counsel of his own will, and his power is seen in every thing, and he has created of one blood all nations of the earth, and hath set their bounds and habitations that they cannot pass. As one of old declared, He knoweth me altogether, and the way I take. Known unto him was all his work from the beginning, and he declared from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handywork."—Psalms xix. 1. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple: the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes: the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."—Psalms xix. 7-9. As our eyes are enlightened we behold the travel of the Lord's people in the wilderness, and in the promised land, and the passing from this world into their eternal rest. We that remain mourn for the pleasantness of their companionship, with whom we have had many refreshing seasons, but, according to our understanding, we feel our loss is their eternal gain, and for all such it is not death to die and leave this weary road and with the brotherhood on high be at home with God. The call of death has not come to us, but we know by our natural seeing and understanding that we must soon pass from this world, and we truly believe that God by his holy Spirit weans his people from the world, by which they sigh for home.

We submit these meditations to the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and we truly desire that the Spirit of truth will guide you, that all the good that is embraced in them will comfort you and build you up in the faith of God's elect, and that you will cast the vile away. May we go on in the fellowship of truth peaceably with all men, if it is God's will, for it is sweet to have the communion with saints, and

"Mid scenes of confusion and creature complaints,
How sweet to my soul is communion with saints;
To find at the banquet of mercy there's room,
And feel in the presence of Jesus at home.

Sweet bonds that unite all the children of peace
And thrice blessed Jesus, whose love cannot cease;
Though oft from thy presence in sadness I roam,
I long to behold thee in glory at home.

I sigh from this body of sin to be free,
Which hinders my joy and communion with thee;
Though now my temptations like billows may foam,
All, all will be peace when I'm with thee at home.

While here in this valley of conflict I stay,
O give me submission and strength as my day;
In all my afflictions to thee I would come,
Rejoicing in hope of my glorious home.

What'er thou deniest, O give me thy grace,
The Spirit's sure witness, and smiles of thy face,
Indulge me with patience to wait at thy throne,
And find even now a foretaste of my home.

I long, dearest Lord, in thy beauties to shine,
No more as an exile in sorrow to pine;
And in thy dear image arise from the tomb,
With glorified millions to praise thee at home.

Home, home, sweet, sweet home,
Receive me, dear Savior, in glory, my home."

We truly hope we see and understand, in the vital virtue, of a foretaste of eternal life.

C. W. V.

ROMANS VIII. 20.

"For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope."

Our views have been requested on the above, and especially have we been asked to state "what creature is under consideration." Is it Adam? We think not. This brief statement, however, will hardly satisfy those of inquiring mind. They will want a "thus saith the Lord," and we desire to give them nothing less. We are, therefore, going to ask our readers to carefully examine with us other portions of this chapter and the written word. In the very beginning of the chapter the apostle says, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to *them which are in Christ Jesus,* who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." He goes on to show that "what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh," the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus did accomplish—set him free from the law of sin and death. The apostle then begins to contrast two creatures, or two creations. First, he takes up the Adamic, or natural, and says, "They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh." He follows this up by saying, "To be carnally minded is death." "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." We would like for our readers to pause here and weigh well what is said about the man of flesh. From this point on, we believe the apostle is dealing with the *new creature,* or new creation. Jesus Christ was the beginning of that new creation. He was verily man and verily God. This is what we understand the words "Jesus Christ" to signify. He was, therefore, both flesh and Spirit. Let it be remembered that the apostle is addressing his epistle to the church of the first born, who were new creatures in Christ Jesus. With this in mind, he said to them, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." That is to say, they were not living in or delighting in the things of the flesh, but were delighting in God, after the inward man, for he declares, "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." The body was dead, or under the sentence of death, because of sin, but the Spirit

was life, because of the righteousness of Christ. Then follows what to our mind is a very important and often misunderstood passage of Scripture: "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." It requires nothing short of the Spirit that wrought in Christ in raising him from the dead to quicken our mortal bodies, which are under sentence of and subject to death, in order that they may be brought in subjection to him whose Spirit dwells in us. "Therefore, brethren," says Paul, "we are debtors, not to the flesh to live after the flesh." He was writing to those whose mortal bodies had been quickened and who had been purchased with a great price, even the precious blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Being children of the day, and not of the night, they should let their light so shine that others seeing their good works, would glorify their Father which is in heaven. He declares that such children as live after the flesh shall die. He evidently means by this that those who hide their light under a bushel and continue to live after the flesh, shall be deprived of the joy, the love and fellowship of the church, which cannot countenance licentious living. On the other hand, if we mortify the deeds of the body, we shall not be able to boast about it, as though we are better than any one else, but it will be through the workings of the Spirit, and the glory will all belong to the Lord. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." All of this is dealing with the spiritually born. We ask that our readers note particularly the nineteenth and twenty-first verses, both of which deal with the same creature that is under consideration in our text. The nineteenth verse says, "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." No creature but one that is born of God can have an "earnest expectation" and wait for the manifestation of the sons of God. This is the creature that "was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." Please note that the creature that was made subject to vanity is the same that is subjected in hope. We read in 1st Corinthians xv. 22, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." We do not understand the apostle to be teaching here that the same ALL who die in Adam shall be made alive in Christ. If we believed that we would be a disciple of Universalism, but we cannot accept such a conclusion. What

we do believe is that there are two separate and distinct generations presented, with their respective federal heads. Adam is the head of the natural, or earthly family. Jesus Christ is the head of the spiritual, or heavenly family. All of the Adamic family must die, while all of the family of Christ shall live. Our text, therefore, does not refer to Adam, nor to the Adamic creature as such. The earthly creature is willingly subject to vanity, and as such is not "subjected in hope," for he has no hope of immortality. On the other hand, the new creature is not willingly subjected to vanity. He is continually waging the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, and he cannot do the thing he would. While entangled with the things of this world, he is ever struggling, fighting the good fight of faith, and wishing that he might be holy, even as his heavenly Father is holy. It is this living creature who is "subjected in hope," or lives by hope. He is verily a prisoner of hope. The twenty-first verse is, therefore, most reassuring and consoling to such an one. It says, "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Surely, there can be no question as to what creature is under consideration here.

While we have heard others speak of this text, and have often quoted it ourself, we cannot say that we have ever given any considerable thought to it until receiving the request to write upon it. We, therefore, ask our readers to compare what is here presented with that which is written and cannot be changed. Anything that is found to be wanting when weighed in the scales of Holy Writ should be promptly discarded, regardless of who presents it.

R. L. D.

DEAR READERS:—First, I want to thank those of you who responded to my appeal in the December SIGNS by sending the publisher all, or even a part of what was due him. He is deeply appreciative of your efforts in this respect.

Second, I bespeak your further consideration in helping the subscription list of our paper. Many of our subscribers are getting old and are constantly dropping out, and unless some one is kind enough to notify the publisher of their passing he is liable to continue sending the paper almost indefinitely. A number of cases have been discovered where the subscriber had been dead for years, but the publisher had no knowledge of it. In order to bring the records more up-to-date, it has been decided to publish this notice in three consecutive issues of the paper, and then discontinue as of May 1st all subscriptions which are two years or more past due, *unless in the meantime the publisher is notified that the subscriber is still living and desires the paper continued.* Any one receiving the paper, who really appreciates it, even though unable to pay for it, should be willing to at least write the publisher explaining the circumstances. It is also very important that the publisher have your correct address, as this class

of mail is often held by the postmaster for a reasonable time and then thrown away. Please examine your papers carefully, both as to the date your subscription is paid to and the address, and if you are behind more than two years, or your address is not correct, write the publisher promptly. It is not desired to cut off any one who is receiving and enjoying the paper, even though they cannot pay for it at this time, but something must be done to eliminate the sending out of papers which are not being received and read.

Third, if those who really like the paper, will speak of it to others, they will undoubtedly secure some *new* subscribers. Any assistance you can render will be greatly appreciated.

R. LESTER DODSON.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by sister Attie Curtis.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Bowdoinham Church, in Bowdoinham, Maine, September 10th, 11th and 12th, 1937, sends greetings to the churches and associations with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year, with all its changes, has passed, and we have been gathered together again, having the love and fellowship which is with the Father and with the Son, causing us to esteem others better than self. "Union sweet, and dear esteem, in every action glows." Elders Ruston and Dodson have declared the unsearchable riches of Christ, have exalted the name of Jesus and proclaimed redemption by his blood. In our experience we are taught it is the work of God to believe in Jesus. It is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." We shall surely walk in them, and it is by faith, not by sight, for the flesh profiteth nothing. Faith is the gift of God, and it can never be found in the flesh. Our God knows all things, made all things for his own pleasure. He declared the end from the beginning. He also made the way that he called "The way of holiness," that the unclean cannot pass over, but it is for them, because the Lamb of God hath taken away the sin of the world. He has blotted out their sins and transgressions and will remember them no more. So far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. The fountain was opened in the house of David for sin and uncleanness. We love to sing the hymn,

"There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath the flood,
Lose all their guilty stains."

The dying thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day.

"And since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And will be till I die."

It surely is good to hear the news of pardoning grace, and that Jesus, our great High Priest, has full atonement made and the Lord's people are surely

in that Way. No one can err in it. The redeemed shall walk there. No lion nor ravenous beast shall go thereon, they shall not be found there. The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. We believe that all of God's children shall be taught of the Lord and their peace shall be great. Jesus says, My sheep hear my voice. I know them and they follow me. I give unto them eternal life. No man is able to pluck them out of my hand, nor out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one. This is life eternal, that we might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. Our Jesus is the christian's hope, wrought in us by God's power. They shall never perish. Because I live ye shall live also. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you. My peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. Not as the world giveth. Be not afraid, I have overcome the world. Here we have one of the names of our loving and merciful God: "The Prince of Peace." It surely passeth all natural understanding. It is also declared, The world, or natural man, cannot receive the things of the Spirit of thuth. He cannot know them, for they are spiritually discerned. But ye know him, for he dwelleth with you and shall be in you. We believe that when we are made to be looking unto Jesus every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us will fall away from us as the chains fell from those disciples, and we shall run with patience the race set before us. He is the author and finisher of our faith. In 1st Peter we read this revelation, Whom having not seen ye love, in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

We are few in number, but love and peace abide with us. The truth is declared in our experience and in our assemblies we speak of the wisdom and power of our God. Jesus, he of God, is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. All praise and glory belong to our God, who never changes, knows all things, does all things well.

GEORGE RUSTON, Mod.
S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Nassaongo Church, Wicomico County, Maryland, October 20th and 21st, 1937.

DEAR BRETHREN:—According to custom, for the last several years we have had the privilege of sending you messages of our joys and sorrows, and yet we feel as the years go by to be more deeply rooted in the election and the predestination of God. We suppose it is for the purpose of circulating among the churches of our faith, telling our brethren what we believe. We have been blessed of the Lord, and he has

been merciful to us. He has sent his messengers in love to us declaring the gospel as the power of God unto salvation, and Jesus Christ the crucified and risen Redeemer. Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle. We are glad to report that the churches of this Association are in harmony and in fellowship. Peace reigns in our midst.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.
GEORGE F. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the First and Second Churches of Roxbury, New York, at the Yellow Meetinghouse, Wednesday and Thursday, September 15th and 16th, 1937, sends greetings in the Lord.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—Another year with its joys and sorrows has passed, and we have been permitted to assemble in an association through the kind providence of a just and merciful God to listen to the truth as it is in Jesus. Your servants have not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God, and we have been strengthened and edified and built up in our most holy faith thereby. We can truly say it has been good to be here. Our meeting has been peaceful, and there has been but one theme: Jesus the way, the truth and the life.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Shokan, N. Y., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday between the second and third Sundays in September, 1938. Meeting is to begin at 10:30 o'clock, Daylight Saving Time, when we hope to meet your messengers in love and fellowship. Until then, dear brethren, farewell.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
ORVILLE WINCHELL, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Lena Langford, Texas, $1; Florence H. Disharoon, Pa., $1; Mrs. J. H. Hasbrouck, N. Y., $1; H. M. Bowden, Mo., $1; Mrs. Emma Mathis, Ky., $1; "A friend," Ontario, $1; Mrs. Alice M. Hall, Maine, in memory of Joseph F. Hall, $8; G. M. Money, Ky., $1; "A friend," Mich., $3.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

WHEN remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it. By referring to these dates you can tell to just what time your subscription is paid. Dec 36 means your subscription expired December 1936; June 37 means your subscription expired June, 1937; Dec. 38 that it will expire December, 1938, etc.

WE are anxious to obtain one or more copies of the latest Minutes of every sound Old School Baptist Association throughout the United States. If our readers will send them to us at 41 Addison Avenue, Rutherford, New Jersey, same will be very much appreciated.

R. LESTER DODSON.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ONCE more it becomes my sad duty to write an obituary notice of a pillar of the chprch, DEACON GEORGE RINGO TURNER, oldest son of Joseph B. and Caroline Ringo Turner, who was born January 9th, 1853, in the village named after his father, Turners Station, Kentucky. He died January 15th, 1938, at the ripe old age of eighty-five years. Uncle George, as we all called him, was married three times, first to Miss Sallie Ransdell, January, 1876, who died in 1890. His second marriage was to Miss Virginia Ransdell, a sister to his first wife. To this union a son was born, Joseph, who died at the age of eight years. The mother also died in 1899. His third marriage was to Miss Sadie Brown Turner, who survives him. This wedding was consummated in September, 1900. There are two sisters living, Mrs. Janey Duncan, of Cleveland, Ohio, and Mrs. Anna Neblett, of Shelbyville, Kentucky, also one brother, John C. Turner, of Turners Station, Kentucky. Early in life brother Turner entered the mercantile business, and with the exception of a few years all his life was spent in and near the place he was born. He was much interested in the home town affairs, was one of the founders of the Turner Bank, and served that institution as president and director, resigning in 1935 because of failing health. About ten years ago brother Turner lost his home and store by fire, he and his wife barely escaping, with only their night clothes. That was quite a shock to them both, but the Lord helped them, and once more they built a home and rented a store and resumed business. The shock at his age (then in the seventies), and during the depression at the time, were too much of a strain and he was obliged to sell out his business about five years ago. Since that time he had been on the decline, but was only bedfast five days. He said on going to bed, which was his eighty-fifth birthday, that he would never get out again, and he hoped the time would not be long. This last request the Lord granted, and he quietly fell asleep in Jesus, to sin no more. Brother Turner joined the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church called Cane Run in the spring of 1898. He was baptized by the late Elder Peter W. Sawin, the pastor, and never moved his membership nor deviated from the doctrine or order of the church. He was ordained as one of her deacons, and served for many years as church clerk, also as a trustee. Sister Turner was also a member of the same church and their home was always an open house for the brethren. During the fifteen years of my pastorate of Cane Run Church I have never met a sounder or more lovable brother than he, always the same quiet disposition, a good singer and fireside preacher and the latch string was always out. How we will miss him! Our loss is great, but the Lord can reconcile us to it. It is his eternal gain.

We had a quiet funeral, as had been requested by him. Our friends sang very nicely hymn 368, "Rock of ages," I spoke briefly from the words of Paul, "Now is Christ risen from the dead," to a large congregation of friends and neighbors, hymn 1257, "Asleep in Jesus," was sung, and in the quiet city of the dead we laid to rest all that was mortal, to await the call of the Master in the resurrection. May the good Lord bless and reconcile us all to his will. Thou hast given, and thou hast taken away; blessed be thy name.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

MISS LILLIE M. JENKINS, our dear sister in Christ, departed the scenes of all earthly strife January 13th, 1938, at her home, Jenkins' Corner, near the Rock Springs meetinghouse, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Sister Jenkins was the youngest of thirteen children of George and Susan Jenkins. Of this large family only one remains upon the shores of time, our dear sister in Christ, Mrs. Sue R. Dance, who is also a member of Rock Springs Church. Sister Lillie had been in failing health for several years, and it was evident to her many friends that her remarkable will power could not much longer stand the strain that it was daily subjected to. During the week of December 25th, 1937, she fell in her yard and broke a small bone in her hip. This necessitated her being confined to her bed and pnemonia soon developed. With excellent attention this was cleared up, which gave hope that she might again recover, as had been the case at other times during the past years of her weakened condition, but on the morning of the above mentioned date she passed away in sleep, without a struggle. The trained nurse had been discharged, as her services seemed to be no longer necessary, and her faithful niece by marriage, Mrs. Royce Jenkins, was the only one with her at the time of her death. Sister Jenkins was baptized into the fellowship of the Rock Springs Church by the late Elder William Grafton, June 14th, 1891. Soon after which she went to Philadelphia, where she taught school until 1920, when she resigned and returned to the old home to take care of her sister Annie, where she made her home until the time of her death. No mortal could have been more faithful to her church, to her pastor, relatives and friends than was sister Lillie. Many times when she should have been in bed she would be at her meetings. Her presence at her meetings under such trying circumstances would often inspire a feeling in the heart of her pastor, the thought that his coming among them was not entirely in vain. As late as the fourth Sunday in November, which was a very disagreeable day, she insisted on going to her meeting, when she could hardly walk without support. I said to her, Sister Lillie, it is a very bad day for you to go out. Her answer was, It is not any harder for me to go such a short distance than it is for you to drive sixty miles to come to us. Her home had been the home of the unworthy writer of this notice for nearly twelve years whenever he tried to serve the church on each fourth Sunday, unless providentially hindered. Her delightful home had been a home for Old School Baptists since 1912, and her nephew and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Royce Jenkins, have told me that it will continue to be whenever the Baptists feel to make it so. The church and their pastor appreciate most deeply such lovely expressions of thoughtful kindness, thus showing that they are not unmindful of what Aunt Lillie had done for them in making them the sole beneficiaries under her will. Thus Jenkins' Corner will continue in the same name which it has been known by since 1776. May God bless the legatees in all things needful in time and eternity. Her devoted sister Dance is being most graciously sustained by the power of the God who has been her stay for so many years. The writer called to see her a few days ago, and found her resting peacefully in the promises of the Lord, bright and cheerful, looking twenty years younger than the ninety-one years, which will be her age on her next birthday, which is also true of her devoted husband, who will soon be ninety-six years old. Wonderfully in-

deed has the Lord blessed this dear husband and wife in mind and body. May such blessings continue as long as life shall endure. In the past few years Rock Springs Church has lost quite a number of faithful members, the memory of whom will linger with us as long as this life shall last, yet we sorrow not as those who have no hope, for we know it is far better for them to depart and be with Christ. The Lord knows what we need, and we are told in his blessed word that he will supply all needful things, and his word cannot fail. In the midst of our sorrow we have great cause to praise the Lord for his continued mercies to us, for in the ten members who have been added to the church in the past few years, no church could be blessed with more faithful members than these dear ones have proven to be. It can be truly said of them, that they are diligently seeking to make their calling and election sure. (Sure to their brethren.) Sister Lillie left to mourn their loss, one sister, several loving nephews and nieces, the church and her pastor.

Her funeral was held in the Rock Springs meetinghouse, which was filled almost to overflowing, the writer using as a text, Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord. Burial was in the lovely cemetery adjoining the meetinghouse. May the Lord's richest blessings rest and abide with our dear lonely sister, and fill the vacancy which he himself has wrought.

Her unworthy pastor,

D. L. TOPPING.

MRS. PEARL ETHELYN JONES CROFT, beloved wife of Oswald C. Croft, passed away Wednesday, January 19th, 1938. Sister Croft was born March 31st, 1879, near Mount Mariah Church, in which community she lived the greater part of an active life. Her life was made more full when she was united in marriage, April 22nd, 1897, to Oswald C. Croft, who survives her. To this union five children were born, all of whom survive: three sons, William Dudley, Hugh and Ralph; two daughters, Betty Croft and Mrs. Cromwell Hommack, also two grandchildren, W. D., Jr., and Martha Elizabeth Croft. Had sister Croft lived until March 31st next her stay on earth would have been fifty-nine years. She was a very devoted wife and mother. Sister Croft's greatest delight was to entertain their friends, and their home was a welcome place for the Old Baptists. She never did unite with the visible church, but she gave great evidence that she was one of the Lord's children. Her walk and conversation were great evidence to me that she was one of the Lord's chosen. Sister Croft dropped dead in the yard. Her beloved husband had gone to Fulton, Ky., to make arrangements for them to start for Texas the next day, and when he returned and found her dead oh how it shocked him and all the neighbors. I have known brother and sister Croft for several years and surely loved them and their children. They just seem like kinsfolk to me. She was held in high esteem by the neighbors and friends who knew her, as was shown by flowers, and large congregation that assembled at the funeral to pay that great tribute of respect to her. Pearl, as I always called her, closed her eyes on earth to open them in heaven, beyond this vale of tears, where there will be no sorrow, sickness nor death, but all will be peace and happiness forever, in a world that will never end. May God reconcile brother Croft and the children. Their loss is her eternal gain.

Sister Croft had requested that the writer conduct her funeral, which I did

at her late home in the presence of a large gathering of sorrowing friends, after which her mortal body was buried in Mount Mariah Cemetery to await that summons from on high, when Jesus comes to gather his elect from the four winds to be with him in his image forever. May God bless all who mourn, is my desire.

O. W. PERKINS.

MISS KATE VIRGINIA LEE, our sister in Christ, died at St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Washington, D. C., January 26th, 1938. She was born in Prince William County, Virginia, February 7th, 1850, making her earthly span of life a few days less than eighty-eight years. Her father was Matthew Lee, her mother Mary Ellen Clark, and she is the last of a family of eleven children. She is survived by nine nieces and nine nephews. Sister Lee was baptized by the late Elder A. B. Francis into the membership of the Bethlehem Old School Baptist Church, in Prince William County, Virginia. She was the last surviving member of that church, that body of brethren having now all passed away.

Funeral services were held from Chambers' funeral parlors, in Washington, D. C., burial at Centerville, Fairfax Co., Va. Our sister had been in infirm health for several years before her death, not being able therefore to attend any of our meetings. Until she became too feeble, she was always faithful in getting to the meetings of the church at Frying Pan and Mt. Zion whenever she possibly could. We have a blessed hope for her that she is now in her right mind in the presence of her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, clothed in his righteousness. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

H. H. LEFFERTS.

JAMES Y. SLOAN, the subject of this notice, was born in Franklin County, Virginia, May 27th, 1848, and departed this life January 14th, 1938, aged 89 years, 7 months and 18 days. He was united in marriage to Sarah Hale in October, 1866. She departed this life in the year 1872. January 2nd, 1873, he was united in marriage to Eliza Hale. He was the father of eleven children, eight of whom are still living. Besides his children, he leaves thirty-eight grandchildren, seventy-eight great-grandchildren and nine great-great-grandchildren, together with his aged widow, a host of near relatives and friends, and the church, to mourn their loss. In the year 1919 he left his home in Franklin County, Virginia, and since that time he and his wife had made their home with their son, brother D. O. Sloan, in Putnam County, West Virginia. In early life he united with the Old School, or Primitive Baptists. He was strongly entrenched in the doctrine of salvation by grace, through and alone by the merit of the crucified One. A father in Israel is fallen. May God reconcile all who mourn. We feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

Written by a friend.

VIRGIL L. BYRNSIDE.

MEETINGS.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, (third floor) over Newberry's store, Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church holds meetings the fourth Sunday of each month at 1026 East Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Meeting begins at 10:30 a. m., dismisses for lunch and reconvenes at 2 o'clock p. m. Meeting days have been changed from the first to the fourth Sunday of each month. No Saturday or night meetings.

BURLIE HALL, Pastor
W. H. CAVE, Ass't Pastor.
(MRS.) H. B. CURLIE, Church Clerk

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 106. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1938. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

1 TIMOTHY III. 16.

"WITHOUT controversy, great is the mystery of godliness."

I feel a desire this day to write on the above Scripture, if the Lord is willing. Come, and let us reason together. Paul is describing this mystery by inspiration. He does so without fear of controversy. It is without debate or dispute, the truth, and that which he is talking about is a profound secret, something beyond human conception, mysterious, and with much fear and trembling I attempt to speak about it. We know God's ways are perfect, and that all we know about them is what he has been pleased to reveal to us. Let us notice first natural life. What a mystery it is. Most of us know something about it, but to explain it, what it is, is beyond our limited knowledge. We know that the giver of life is God, and the life we all have to-day is the very same that God breathed into our first parent and he became a living soul. To us the period of time is from our quickening, or birth, to death. This life which we have experienced, and the apostles have written about, our Savior has told us about, the poets have sung about, still is a mystery to us. Life precedes all action. Life is the cause of movement. Action is the effect, life the cause. Without this life we are dead. Jesus uses this natural life, with its quickening, birth and travel, to illustrate in type another life, which is eternal. The first Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam a quickening Spirit. The gift of the first Adam is our natural life, and the gift of the second Adam is eternal life. The Savior told it very plainly to Nicodemus: Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus could not understand, it was not as yet revealed unto him. He knew something about his first birth, and, no doubt, had considerable knowledge of this life, for he was a ruler of the Jews, but here was a question that he

was not able to understand, as we hear him say, How can these things be? Stop a moment, and ask yourself, Who am I? What am I? Can you explain yourself? or are you a mystery? How utterly impossible it is for one who has not been born of the Spirit to understand the things of God; they are foolishness unto him. How great are the mysteries of God in all the things we see around us. The stars that twinkle in the heavens above us are the same today as they were in David's time. How we wonder what you are. The moon, with its mellow light, with its monthly changes, declaring the glory of God. The sun, which sheds its rays upon the earth, giving us warmth and light, all nature is dependent upon it for life, causing us to think of the Sun of righteousness, that the members of his body are dependent upon the Son of God. How mysterious are the movements of all these heavenly bodies. How exact this ball of earth upon which we live, that the astronomers can figure out the exact time of an eclipse years ahead. This shows the perfection of him who created all things that are in heaven and in earth, and his foreknowledge and immutability are so great we are lost for a comparison, so we repeat again, Great is the mystery of godliness. Those of us who are called preachers, who are called of God in the ministry, preach the wisdom of God is a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory. Paul so aptly says, Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ. I myself am a mysterious person to myself, and, no doubt, to my brethren. The Bible is a mysterious book. A poet has written about it thus,

"Within this awful volume lies
The mystery of mysteries;
Oh happiest they of human race,
To whom our God hath given grace,
To hear, to read, to fear, to pray,
To lift the latch and feel the way;
But better had they ne'er been born
Who read to doubt, or read to scorn."

I have spoken of the mysteries of life, now let us talk a little about some things we have not as yet experienced. No one has ever come back from the grave to report upon it. The Bible has told us the truth about the things we have experienced and we have confidence and faith in it of telling us the truth in the mysteries that we have not experienced. Jesus tells us of two resurrections. His people have experienced the first one. They have heard the voice of the Son of God, and have lived. The dead in sin have been born of an incorruptible seed by the word of God that liveth and abideth forever, have been called from darkness to light, and from the power and servitude of Satan unto God. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God hath shined in their hearts and they are now working out their own salvation with fear and trembling. God is working in them to will and to do of his own good pleasure. They are the sons of God in

the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, without rebuke, shining as lights in the world (not to the world). Christ is in them the hope of glory. Chosen of God, and precious, and kept by his power through faith unto salvation, given eternal life, and they shall never perish. This is a very fact, and you have experienced it, although it may have been to you in a mysterious way, if you have heard the voice of the Son of God, and blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection. They marveled at this when Jesus told them about it. And he told them not to marvel at it, for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth. The eighth article of Elder Gilbert Beebe's prospectus of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES reads, "The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment." This is surely and without controversy the doctrine of the Bible, the truth, and while we have not experienced it, by faith we believe it and with patience look forward to the consummation of it, the only hope of the christian. My experience teaches me that I am a sinner, and that it was me, a sinner, that Jesus came to save. It was I that was given a hope, and it is I that will die and be laid in the grave, and it is I, I hope, will hear his voice saying unto me, Come unto me, come, thou blessed of my Father, enter thou in the place prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Surely, if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. (Now I speak prophetically.) Mysterious: The trumpet has sounded, I who have been sleeping in the grave, I who was dead, am now alive. But what a change is wrought in me. I have been raised in incorruption. Death has been swallowed up in victory, and thanks be to God, who giveth me the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, now I am just like Jesus, and I rejoice with great joy. Never more will we part, and I am satisfied. No more to mourn, no more to sin, but in eternity to dwell with him who saved me by his grace. All the members of his body are there, and all join in praises to God, a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle. "And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." The resurrection of the dead is consummated.

Now, brethren, read, reflect and consider, and may the blessing of the Lord be to all the church of God.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

PECULIARITY.

I AWOKE this morning thinking of the peculiarity of the children of God. They are a peculiarity to the world, to themselves and to the Lord. We might take for a text, in consideration of this subject, Paul's language to Titus: "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."—Titus ii. 14. In nature they are not peculiar from other people, but are subject to the same things that other men are. They have contageous diseases and get hurt in accidents, are careless, and are subject to other things that befall the human race, the same as other men are. Too, they are like other men in their nature. They get mad, are subject to flattery run after vain and glittering things the same as those who have not heard of better things. Paul tells the Ephesian brethren that they were by nature the children of wrath even as others. (Eph. ii. 3.) So we can safely conclude that their peculiarity is not in nature. It is not the saving of his people on the cross that makes them peculiar, because up to a certain period in the life of Paul he was not different or peculiar from any other man in nature, even though there is not any doubt but that when Jesus cried out on the cross that it was finished, he had completely done all for Paul that was done for any child of God. Paul was under the law, and believed that all that he had, or ever would have, was to be had by keeping that law. In this he was not any different from any one else who has not been brought to a peculiar stage in life. All the sects in the time of Christ, as they are now, were alike and had much in common as to coming into eternal life. Ask any man now who has not had a work done for him and it made manifest, and he will tell you he must do something in order to inherit eternal life. There is not any peculiarity in this at all. But let us notice those who have been quickened. It is far different with them. Up until this imparting of life into them they did not bear a single characteristic of a child of God, they did not appear peculiar to themselves nor to the world, but now things are very different. One time, my dear reader, we all thought we were doing fairly well. We thought we could measure arms (works) with the best church member, and that the most of them were our inferior. This is a common feeling among the world. But how is it with you now? Do you feel that you are as good as any of them? No, no, you feel different now. You look upon each dear child of God as being far your superior. Can the world understand this? No. Can you even understand it yourself? No, you do not see why it is. But the answer is simple to those who are simple and are made wise by the testimony of the Lord. (Psalms xix. 7.) The natural man can never understand the salvation of the Lord. An intelligent man who is a grammarian can do wonders with language until it comes to the Bible. He can read anything forward until he comes to the Scriptures. Then language fails him there and he shows that

he has the same thing in common with the most illiterate man who has not been taught in the school of grace. On the other hand, you watch the man that the Lord deals with. See how much deeper grace can go than grammar. Grace can and does take a drunkard out of the gutter and make a peculiar man out of him. It can and does go into the college president's office and make him acknowledge that salvation is of the Lord, and makes a marked, or peculiar, man out of him. It was a special people that the Lord chose unto himself. They were not chosen because they were special, but were chosen to be a special people. (Deut. vi. 7.) They were very common in the nations around about them, because they were not the most popular nor the best, but to the contrary. But his choosing and causing them to come unto him made quite a bit of difference in the children of Israel. They were his special or peculiar people, and the world recognized that they were special. and they hated them for it. This brings this peculiar people under the hatred of the world. The Lord chose the type to be a peculiar people unto himsef, above all the nations of the world (Deut. xiv. 2) and they were hated at every turn and everything done to molest them. So it is at this day. The hatred of the world for this peculiar people has not diminished. It cannot comprehend them. It cannot understand how men can go to the stake, praising God above the roar of the flames. It cannot understand a motive (love is the motive; the world has not that love) so strong as to cause men to leave all that this life offers and spend and be spent in feeding the sheep (a service in the Lord) and the only compensation to be that "I am with you alway," and to have afflictions, trials and disappointments.

Another peculiar trial of this people is their faith. Poor and cast down they may often be, but the Lord holds them up. Daniel could not be turned from worshipping God, even though it meant being cast into a den of lions. The Hebrew children went into the fiery furnace. The children of God several centuries ago went to the stake, were pierced through with hot weapons, pushed from cliffs, and yet their last cries were to God. This is a peculiarity that cannot be fathomed by the world, because this faith is of God. It is not in any way the work of the creature, because the creature cannot manufacture a faith that would stand. If it could, then it would cease to be peculiar.

What a peculiar people! "Who hath made thee to differ?" cries the apostle. It is the Lord that has done the work. The Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure (Psalms cxxxv. 4), and as long as this work is made manifest you will find this peculiar people, this holy nation, this royal priesthood, this chosen generation. (1 Peter ii. 9.) May the Lord keep his peculiar people.

A poor sinner,

W. D. GRIFFIN.

FAYETTE, Alabama.

SIERRA CITY, California.

DEAR BRETHREN:—When I look back over my life, I believe I was being drawn when very young, but was then a believer in my own good works, and trying always to be saved by doing the things I thought would please God. I was fond of going to Sunday School. I went to the Presbyterian meetings, but the sermons were long and tedious, and I have no idea what they were, but I remember watching the minister turn page after page of his sermon, and hoping each one would be the last. I believe that minister was a very godly man and doing his best, but I remember hearing my grandfather (who was an Old School Baptist) say he had mistaken his calling. I liked to hear my grandfather talk. It seemed to me he knew the Bible from beginning to end. There were a few Baptists who sometimes called to see him in those days, and I always sat by and listened to them talk, and enjoyed hearing them. I believe I was about sixteen years old when I commenced to see myself a sinner and feared eternal punishment. I knew I was deserving of it and could not be saved from it without believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. I believed that he was the Son of God, but could not believe on him as my Savior. When I was seventeen years old I commenced going to dancing school. I was fond of dancing. I had been a few times when there was a revival meeting at the Methodist meetinghouse. I attended one evening. During the meeting they called on those who wished to be saved to go to the altar. I wished to be saved, so went with others. They prayed for us, but I felt no different. They said to come to the inquiry meeting next day, so I went, and I believe they prayed for me again. I know they told me I must believe, and that it was easy. I think no one ever tried harder to believe their sins were forgiven than I did, but without success. I left the meeting feeling very unhappy. Not long after that, I awoke one morning and everything about me seemed changed. I was perfectly happy. I believed, and with the faith which was not of myself, and I believe will remain with me until time shall be no more. When the night came for dancing school I remember saying to my mother, "Do you think I ought to go?" She replied, "I would not think you would want to go." And then the thought of being with that company was repulsive to me; I had lost all desire for it. Awhile after that, I united with the Presbyterians, and enjoyed attending their prayer meetings more, I believe, than their church services; but I wished to be with the Lord's people, and at that time saw no difference in doctrine. After I was married, I went to live in Essex, Conneticut, where there was no Presbyterian church. I took my letter to the Methodists, still seeing no difference in doctrine. Later we moved to Chester, Conneticut, where there was neither a Presbyterian nor a Methodist church, but a Baptist church. I went there one Sunday; it was their communion day, and they being close communionists, I could not commune with them, so came away feeling very sad indeed. I then

wrote my grandfather, asking him why his church was close communion. (You see, I supposed this was the Old School Baptist Church, the same as my grandfather belonged to.) He wrote me that all other denominations were antichrist, and had no place in the church of Christ. I could then understand why the true church should observe close communion, and from reading the Bible I believed in immersion, so I went to this church. This was the third one, and I had never been asked for an experience. I wrote my grandfather that I was now a member of his church. He then commenced sending me the SIGNS, and wrote me that if I was an Old School Baptist I would always have to be alone, which I had to learn later. After a short time, I began to see that I was in the wrong place. I was reading the SIGNS and comparing it with the Bible, beginning to learn what doctrine meant: the difference between truth and error. I was with the New School Baptists only about a year. I was really ashamed to leave them so soon. Some of them tried to persuade me that we believed alike, only, they said, the believing came before the election, which I could not understand in that way, but staid with them, and kept hearing these words, "Come out from among them," until they had a revival meeting, and were calling upon those who wished to be saved to stand up and be prayed for. The minister said, When we are willing, God is strong; when we are indifferent, he is weak; when we are hostile, then he is powerless to save us. I could hardly sit still on the seat; that decided me, and I left them. Then I was *alone*; no one understood me: I was too narrow in my religious views. Later, I read an article in the SIGNS, giving the address of the New York church. It was an editorial signed "J." My husband and I were going to New York soon, and he said if I would go to New York with him in the morning he would take me to meeting in the afternoon. I will never forget how good the members all looked to me; they seemed to have glorified faces. There I heard my first Old Baptist sermon, preached by Elder Meredith. I felt very happy to be there, and sad to leave them, not knowing when I would be in New York again. I seldom went so far from home in those days. The remembrance of that Sunday afternoon remains with me. Many times I felt sad because I could not meet with the people I loved. Once I wrote my experience and sent it to the SIGNS. A few years after (my youngest child was three years old, and I felt he was old enough to leave), I wrote the SIGNS office for the address of one of the New York members. They sent me that of sister Hobbs, so I wrote her, and the day was set for me to be baptized in case the church received me. They had read my experience in the SIGNS, and very little I said to them, which seemed to me was really nothing at all. I remember but one thing, Elder Jenkins said, If any one would like to ask the candidate questions they can do so. Elder McConnell, who was not an Elder at that time, said, Had you reason to believe the

church would receive you? I said, Yes, I had one: If God is for me, no one can be against me. I can see Elder Jenkins now as he nodded his head, and I felt he was satisfied. I was received and baptized that day, and have felt many times how unworthy I have always been of a name among the dear people of God.

This letter is long, but I must tell you a little more of the Lord's dealings with me. I staid with sister Hobbs that night and a part of the next day. Elder Jenkins was there. He asked me how I found the church. I told him about the editorial in the SIGNS signed "J." He said, "I wrote that article, and it must have been for you, because the one I wrote it for, I hear, has gone to the bad." It was in answer to this question, "What must I do to be saved?" I still believe God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform.

NELLIE H. ARNOLD.

WYOMING, West Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—Your letter of November 6th has been received and read with interest and candor. I am not a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, consequently I cannot comment on your views on the subject of predestination, as offered in your editorial in the September issue of the old and esteemed paper. I did not make it clear in my letter to you that I was not taking the SIGNS. As I stated in my letter that my purpose was not to provoke controversy, I shall in my reply confirm the same. My inquiry was solely for the purpose of information, for I am neither disposed nor competent to debate a subject of such magnitude. I wish to state that I did receive not a little information from your letter. Your explanation was clear, concise and to the point. Although I have never been able to comprehend this mysterious doctrine as I very much desire to, I do believe that the advocates of each view (limited and unlimited views) have often reached the extreme in their position. I have heard some who believe in limited predestination go so far as to state, in effect, that the crucifixion of the Redeemer was a mere "mishap." Of course I cannot entertain this for an instant. In refutation of this extremity, we need only to mention the words of Christ on the eve of his death, that he could summon heaven for twelve legions of angels, and they would be granted for his release; but in this case all things that were written of him could not be fulfilled. On the other hand, I have heard some unlimited predestinarians say they could not help the things they did, since God had decreed that they should, not appearing to feel any depression because of their sin. But I am happy to agree with you, that sin is an act of man, and is not approved of nor fellowshipped by the Most High; and one in whom dwells faith and love is sensitive that the sin is his own, and makes confession for it. God is no more the cause of sin and disobedience by the withholding or the withdrawal of his providence and grace, than the sun by its withdrawal is the cause of darkness and cold; but as the sun by its withdrawal is proved to be the

source of all heat and light, God is thus proved to be the cause, or author, of all holiness. As you explained, God could have made a man who would have been incapable of sinning, but for a righteous and wise reason it did not seem good to him. If there had been no sin in the world the power of God's grace in its cure would never have been known.

In concluding my remarks on your position on predestination, I shall state that I am unable to refute it, and I hope that ere long I will be granted more of the wisdom from above that I may thereby understand this doctrine better. I am convinced, however, that there is enough predestination about all things to shut my mouth, and therefore it hardly behooves me to contend with my older and far superior brethren on the subject.

Yes, brother Dodson, I am a member of the church militant. I received a hope and interest in heavenly things in the summer of 1933, and was baptized into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptists the following spring. When I was first made to taste of His goodness and mercy to sinful man I thought that my troubles were over, but I soon found they had only begun. Since that time I have had many doubts and fears, but he who is ever mindful of his covenant has in due time fed me on the heavenly manna and quenched my thirsty soul with the water of life. Sometimes, brother Dodson, we are carried away in the Spirit, and are enabled to ask the question, Of whom shall I be afraid? At other times we sink into the mire of despond, and cry out, Save, Lord, or I perish.

Although, dear brother, we are strangers in the flesh, I am more than sure that the cord of christian love binds us together. If we are born of God, certainly we love all who bare his image. God is love, and all who are born of him are born of love. Some people cannot understand why the Baptists love one another as they do. They cannot understand why our conversation, when we converse by tongue or pen, is dominated by things of the Spirit. But when I am with a Baptist that is all I want to talk about. When I write, that is all I want to write about.

You did not ask me for the latter part of this letter, but for some reason I could not refrain.

In closing, I wish to ask you to remember a poor sinner when you offer your petition at the throne of grace, and if we never meet in this time world, may we all come to Mount Zion, unto the city of the living God, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Christ, the Mediator of the new covenant, whose blood speaketh better things than that of Abel.

Yours for the truth as it is in Jesus,

J. M. THORNBURY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1938.

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ISAIAH XL. 1, 2.

"COMFORT ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

Several things are noticeable in the foregoing Scripture. First, the command of God is to comfort ye my people. Second, that which his people are to be comforted with is the knowledge that their warfare is accomplished. Third, their iniquity pardoned, they have received of the Lord's hand double for all their sins. The prophets of God spoke of coming events at times as though they were actually then existing. By faith the coming of Christ was foretold, the place and manner of his birth, and the things he would accomplish. What a wonderful thing God-given faith is.

"Faith is the brightest evidence
Of things beyond our sight;
Breaks through the clouds of flesh and sense,
And dwells in heavenly light.

It sets time past in present view,
Brings distant prospects home,
Of things a thousand years ago,
Or thousand years to come."

So the same salvation we rejoice in today as a finished work was rejoiced in by holy men of old before Christ was born, and before salvation was actually accomplished, with the same assurance we have. Abraham saw the day of Jesus and was glad. There is comfort in the previous promises of God to those who are given to believe in him, to see in him a finished salvation, to witness with Isaiah, "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Only one doctrine that comforts those who mourn in Zion, those who have been brought to the end of the law: Salvation by grace, through faith. At times we feel every believer is given to see Jesus as the one who has fought the battle and gained the victory over sin. Many wars have been fought by man here in the world, and when peace was declared the hearts of many were made glad. As a boy, we saw our father, a man who seldom showed emotion, cry as a child when the news came in 1918 that the armistice was signed. Yet this is a small matter compared to the joy that comes to a

poor sinner when he is given to see that by the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus his warfare has been accomplished, that his sins have been imputed to him, that he has been made sin for us who knew no sin. "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." This was the way God revealed to the prophets a finished salvation, a warfare accomplished, iniquity pardoned. The Spirit of Christ in them signifying his suffering and the glory that should follow. To-day it is the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, that takes the things of God and shows them unto us. Satan challenged the Savior while Jesus was here, seeking to thwart the word of God. But he must reign until he put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. To accomplish this warfare Jesus must take the sins of his bride upon himself, conquer Satan, magnify God's holy law by perfect obedience to it, and by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus make us free from the law of sin and death, being the Mediator between God and man, reconciling a sin-defiled people unto the holy God by his death on the cross. This he brought in everlastingly. His righteousness is imputed unto his people. Not only do we need a finished warfare, our iniquity pardoned, but we must receive of the Lord's hand double for all our sins. Not only must peace be made with God, but this peace must be brought to the sinner through God-given faith. Being justified by faith we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus says, My peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you. This peace spoken of is not just a quiet feeling, it is receiving of the Lord's hand double for all our sins. Guilt has been put away, and we can come boldly to the throne of grace. Not as pardoned sinners only, but as the sons of God, heirs, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. So we joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. No doubt many of our readers remember when this peace was first felt, when Jesus appeared upon the bloody tree of the cross, when you heard his groans in the garden. Something said, Your sins, which are many, are all forgiven. Your soul could say, Jesus died for me. I well remember that day, I could well say,

"Now, my remnant of days
Would I spend to his praise,
Who hath died my poor soul to redeem;
Whether many or few,
All my days are his due,
May they all be devoted to him."

Was ever love like this? To-day we see him, not as the humbled one, but as the exalted Savior, ever living at the right hand of God, to grant repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sin, making intercession according to the will of God. We trust we wait his coming with assurance, and to those who look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation. D. V. S.

SOLOMON'S SONG VIII. 8.

"WE have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for?"

Quite a long time ago we were asked to give our understanding of this Scripture, but we have delayed until now.

From the time the Lord said to Abraham, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee," until the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the flesh, the Jews, as a nation, were a most highly favored people. All down through the centuries, the discriminating grace of God to them can be traced. God was faithful in keeping the promise which he made to Abraham when he said, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."—Gen. xxii. 18. He renewed his covenant with Isaac and Jacob. Neither was he unmindful of the sufferings of Israel in Egypt, but he heard their cry and came down and with a high and mighty hand delivered them out of their distresses. The outward manifestation of God's lovingkindness to the Jews was in such marked contrast with his dealings with other people, that Paul was moved to ask in his epistle to the Romans, "What advantage then hath the Jews? or what profit is there in circumcision?" He answered his own question by saying, "Much in every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God."—Rom. iii. 1, 2. God gave them prophets to prophesy unto them and to comfort them with the assurance that while weeping might endure for a night, "joy cometh in the morning."—Psalms xxx. 5. All during the night of legalism these prophetic stars reflected the light of the knowledge of God's glorious truth. By various types they foreshadowed better things to come, and while God's great love and mercy for the Jews were openly made known in numerous and sundry ways, at the same time he had a people among the Gentiles. If we will examine the generation of Jesus Christ, according to the flesh, as recorded in the first chapter of Matthew, we will find a mixture of Jewish and Gentile blood flowed through his veins. Jesus himself said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this [Jewish] fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."—John x. 16. It was also written of him, that "he must needs go through Samaria." Not only was he to come in contact with a poor Samaritan woman, who came to Jacob's well to draw water, and tell her all things that ever she did, thus causing her to desire that living water, of which if one drink he "shall never thirst," but Luke tells us that he had other business there. There were ten lepers, who in obedience to his command, were healed of their leprosy. Only one of them, however, we are told, "when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan." Jesus went on to say, "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?

There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger." —Luke xvii. 17, 18. In every age, it seems, many have been called, but few have been chosen. Only a remnant of Israel are visibly saved in a gospel way to-day, but not a single solitary one shall be missing in the final windup, for "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."

Solomon, the king of Israel, spake words of wisdom when he said, "We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts." He evidently had reference to the Lord's people among the Gentiles, which church at that time was still in the embryonic state, so to speak. She was, indeed, small, insignificant, immature, and not only undeveloped, but hated and despised wherever any signs of her were seen. She had no breasts, or visible ministry, from which to draw the consolation of God's love, and it was to be a long, long time before she was to be sufficiently developed to be presented to her beloved in holy wedlock. This could not be during that dispensation. Jesus, as a priest under that ceremonial law, signified how terribly the Gentiles were regarded by the Jews when he said to the woman of Canaan, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." They were, indeed, regarded as unclean and outcasts. The sixth verse in the same chapter as our text indicates how the Jews felt towards their "little sister." They were jealous, and it says, "Jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are as coals of fire, which have a most vehement flame." Could *hatred* be more picturesquely described than it is here set forth? And notwithstanding all this, God had set his seal upon her heart and in due time would bring to pass all of that which he had purposed and planned, even before the worlds were made.

The second part of our text is in the form of a question: "What shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for?" Let us look for the answer in the New Testament. We are told that Peter, on one occasion, fell into a trance, "and saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice: and the vessel was received again into heaven." The repetition of this sight impressed upon Peter's mind the importance of this matter, and he opened his mouth, and said, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." Being prepared by God, he went to the home of Cornelius and preached unto the people. "And they of the circumcision which believed were

astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then asswered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord."—Acts x. 45-48. The Bridegroom having come to claim his bride, and having made of twain, or two, one new fold, thus breaking down the middle wall of partition and removing all barriers between them and making peace, they were made to see that they were all one in Christ, and when they saw this new creation, the gospel church, with Christ head over all things to the body, the apostles, all of whom were Jews, like Paul, were ready to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, and to say in substance, We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. This is the same love that Solomon spoke of in connection with our text, which he said was "strong as death." He also said, "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it; if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.—Solomon's Song viii. 7. This love is not bound by race, creed or color, neither is there anything in this world like it. The poet expresses it in this manner,

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

We have been asking ourself the question of late, Who are we that God's children should inquire of us the meaning of the Scriptures? It often seems that we know nothing as we ought to know, and it is a wonder to ourself, at times, that we have the courage to speak or write. Peter said to a certain lame man, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God." To be given to speak in the name of Jesus so as to cause such rejoicing of heart, is more precious than rubies; it is more wonderful than all the gold and silver of Ophir. Sometimes, we hope we are made to feel that it is the love of God, which is shed abroad in our heart, that causes us to try to serve him by serving his people.

May God bless what has been said, if consistent with his holy will, and his name shall have all the praise.

R. L. D.

As we have to submit to another operation on our eye, which will keep us from our duties for about two weeks, this issue of the SIGNS may be late in reaching our subscribers. We hope to get the number printed before leaving for the operation, and finish the work of mailing it when sufficiently recovered to do so.—PUBLISHER.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

WITH unfeigned sorrow the brethren and friends learned of the death of sister IDA BELLINGER, which occurred February 20th, 1938, at the Schenectady Hospital of pneumonia, after an illness of a week's duration. For some years she had made her home with relatives in Schenectady, and had generally been in good health, until stricken with pneumonia. It was decided that she could receive the best of professional care by nurses and skilled physicians at the hospital to which she was removed from her home. But all that science could do was of no avail, and she passed peacefully to her last rest. The funeral services were held at Schoharie, N. Y., February 23rd, and the interment was in the cemetery at that place, the writer officiating at the funeral services. Sister Bellinger was born near Schoharie January 26th, 1859, and was therefore past seventy-nine years of age. She resided most of her life in or near Schoharie, and was well known, highly esteemed, kind, gentle and sympathetic in her manner, and faithful to every trust. For many years she had been a member of the Middleburg Old School Baptist Church, and whenever possible attended the meetings, and her delight was to listen to spiritual discussions and be in the company of her brethren. She is survived by a brother, Jefferson Bellinger, of Schenectady, and also a sister, Miss Bessie, of the same place, besides several nieces and nephews. She will be much missed in the church of her membership, and in the communities where she had resided and was so well known.

ALSO,

IN the death of brother JOHN SECOR, for twenty-four years clerk of the Olive and Hurley Church, at his home, in Ashokan, N. Y., February 8th, 1938, his home, the church of his membership and the community sustained an irreparable loss. Not yet quite fifty-four years old, and but little past the noonday of life's journey, measured by the allotted three score years and ten, brother Secor suffered a stroke that was quickly fatal, before medical help could alleviate his condition. He had not been in good health for many years, suffering from an ailment that affected his liver. He had been about doing his chores most of the time and superintending farm work and doing as much as he was physically able until stricken. Coming into the house and complaining of not feeling as well as usual, he lay down upon the sofa. His family, noting something was wrong, summoned a physician, but life was extinct before the doctor arrived. The funeral services, conducted by the writer, were held at the Olive and Hurley church-house the following Saturday. The body was laid to rest in the cemetery on the hillside above Ashokan.

The subject of this article was born at Ashokan April 6th, 1884. His early life was spent upon the home farm, where he grew to manhood. For some years, more or less regularly, he followed the trade of carpenter, and found ready employment, but this he relinquished to manage and conduct the farm where he resided at the time of his death. He is survived by an aged mother, his wife, five children and one brother. He united with the Olive and Hurley Church in the year 1914, and was baptized by the late Elder J. B. Slauson. He was soon elected clerk of that church and served in that capacity until his death. Brother Secor was a man of many excellent qualities, firm in his convictions, strong in the faith and doctrine of the saints of God, and willing to spend and be spent in the cause so dear to his heart. He was devoted to his family in all that son, husband and

father imply, and attended church services when circumstances permitted. He never spoke ill of any one, and possessed that charity that becomes the followers of Jesus in his attitude towards others, and had the welfare of the church at heart. He will be much missed in the community where he lived, and especially by his family and the brethren of his faith and church relationship.

ALSO,

MRS. MARY BOWMAN KEOGAN, our dear sister in Christ, was called to her eternal home Saturday, March 5th, 1938, after an illness of two days of pneumonia, at the home of her grandson, Leon VanKleek, at Spillway, near West Hurley, New York. She was born August 17th, 1849, and was therefore over eighty-eight years of age. The funeral services were held the following Tuesday, at Lasher's funeral home, at Woodstock, N. Y. The interment was in Wiltwyck Cemetery, in Kingston, N. Y. The writer officiated at the funeral services. Sister Keogan's maiden name was Mary Bowman, and she was born in the vicinity of West Hurley, where she spent the most of her long and useful life. When a young woman she was united in marriage to Sylvester Keogan, a veteran of the Civil War, to whom she proved a loyal, loving helpmate and wife. Two daughters were born to this union, who have since passed away. The more immediate surviving relatives include six grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren. Her husband died in 1891. She united with the Olive and Hurley Church in 1868, and was therefore an active member for seventy years until the time of her death. She was baptized by the late Elder Isaac Hewitt, and was gifted in spiritual discernment and expression, being deeply led experimentally, and rooted and grounded deeply in sound doctrine. She never failed to attend the meetings of her church unless hindered by circumstances she could not control, and was present at meeting only a few weeks before her death. She loved to testify of Jesus and salvation by grace, and her talks in conference meetings were like sermons, so full of comfort and edification to the dear children of God, and rich in understanding of the revealed things that belong to God's people. Possessing the faith of God's elect, she manifested its fruitfulness in good works. Generous financially as regards the material needs of the church of her membership, and liberal to those of her kindred after the flesh, her life was well worthy of emulation. She read widely, thought deeply and was an interesting conversationalist. For a great many years she followed the profession of teaching and numbered her pupils by hundreds in her long teaching career, and her influence in the school room retained a lasting impression on her pupils. She was one of those strong, true characters that make life better for her having lived. Her life of usefulness and uprightness is her richest legacy and her most enduring monument. The Olive and Hurley Church is poorer by her death, and she will be much mised by her relatives and by the community where she lived.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

SARAH E. McCALLUM, of Ekfrid, Ontario, died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. W. G. Thompson, Blenheim, Ontario, December 9th, 1937. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Murray, of Ekfrid township. She was the wife of the late Duncan McCallum, who departed this life April 9th, 1936. She left to mourn their loss a son, Murray, and a daughter, Anna, also one sister, Miss Jessie Murray, and six grand-

children. Sister McCallum united with the Covenanted Baptist Church June 27th, 1897, and was baptized by the late Elder William Pollard. She always filled her seat in meeting unless providentially hindered, and was a very humble-minded, God fearing sister. It was the delight of both sister McCallum and her husband to entertain those they loved, and many have been the times the writer felt at home with them. They rejoiced in the truth, and until failing health prevented they were ever showing by word and life where their best friends, their kindred dwelt, where God their Savior reigned. For several years, owing to poor health, sister McCallum spent most of her time with her daughter, at whose home she died, and there all the attention that loving and devoted children could show was freely bestowed upon her, so that to the day of her death she lacked nothing that willing hands could do. While through failing health often her mind was not clear on everyday affairs, yet she was always clear on spiritual things, and when it seemed that her voice was soon to be silenced in death, she joined the writer and his wife in singing the twenty-third Psalm all through with as clear and sweet a voice as we ever heard her sing. Those were sweet, solemn moments which we will never forget, for soon the cold arms of death took that which was mortal and her immortal spirit ascended on high, where she with all the redeemed throng shall "unite in one full chorus there." We mourn our loss, which is her eternal gain. "Why do we mourn departed friends, and shake at death's alarms? 'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends to call them to his arms." May Jesus, himself, reconcile us all, and give us a calm and thankful heart, from every murmur free.

The funeral was held from the residence of her son, Murray, in Ekfrid, conducted by the writer. Many, by their silent tears, showed the love they had for the memory of the departed. Interment was in the Oakland Cemetery, Mosa township.

ALSO,

DEACON ANGUS D. GILLIS, departed this life September 2nd, 1937, at his late home, in Muirkirk, Ontario, being the last member of a family of eleven children. He was a son of the late Duncan and Margaret (Thompson) Gillis, and was born in Muirkirk February 25th, 1863, where he resided all his life. Brother Gillis was a lover of the truth for many years, and united with the Covenanted Baptist Church, and was baptized by the late Elder John B. Slauson, at Clearville, Ontario, May 15th, 1921. He was a very dear brother, of a genial disposition, and for years before and after he was a member he and his dear family delighted to entertain Baptist brethren and friends in their home, always happy to minister unto them of their substance. On May 9th, 1927, the church unanimously elected him to the office of church clerk, which he efficiently filled until failing health forced him to relinquish his duties. The church recognized the gift of a deacon in him and set him aside to the office on May 12th, 1930, which office he filled to the satisfaction of the church. After the death of his wife, Jane Campbell Gillis, April 9th, 1932, he and his daughter, Margaret, still lived on the homestead where he had successfully farmed all his life, but owing to poor health he had gradually to give up farming, but died on the place where he was born. He leaves to mourn their loss two daughters, Mrs. Warren Campbell, of Chatham, Ontario, and Miss Margaret Gillis, of Muirkirk, Ontario, also four grandchildren.

The writer conducted the funeral service, assisted by Elder R. Lester Dodson, at his late home, and the body was interred in the Duart Cemetery. The church has lost a faithful deacon and clerk, and the children a tender and loving father. May God bless all of us to say, "Thy will be done."

G. R.

SISTER MARY WILSON (nee Malloy) was born December 17th, 1851, and died February 22nd, 1938, in her eighty-seventh year. January 12th, 1871, she was married to brother Gershom Wilson, who preceded her in death, the date being July 10th, 1937. To the above union were born five children: Lee, John, Robert, Mary and Sam. Mary and Robert are deceased. Left to mourn our sister's departure are three sons, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, brethren of the church, many neighbors and friends, as her entire life was spent in and around Sadieville, Kentucky. About fifty years ago she united with the Elk Lick Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, in Scott County, Kentucky, and was baptized by Elder J. M. Theobold, then the pastor. "Aunt Molly," as we all called her, was an example to the church. Her quiet disposition and love for the church was real, and she was always in her seat unless prevented by sickness. Her favorite hymns, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound," and "Rock of ages," were sung at the funeral, also a solo by a neighbor lady, which was very appropriate. I spoke briefly to the congregation, of the surety of the entrance in Christ's Father's house, and of obtaining the incorruptible and undefiled inheritance reserved in heaven for her, and for all the elect of God. I could not go to the grave, so the commital was spoken at the house, and they bore the body to its last resting-place in a distant cemetery, there to await the call of Jesus in the resurrection, when they that are in their graves shall come forth. May the Lord bless the mourning friends, and enable us to say, Thy will be done. Thou hast given, and thou hast taken away; blessed be thy name.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

MRS. MALISA SCARBOROUGH was born in Alabama in the year 1844. She married George Scarborough, and to their union five children were born, four of whom, together with her dear husband, preceded her in death. Sister Scarborough joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Liberty Hill, near Farmerville, Louisiana, in 1883, and lived a very consistent and devoted life to her church as long as she was able to do so, but like many others who get old, her health failed and she could not attend her meetings. The writer had the privilege of being in their home many times during the lifetime of her husband, and enjoyed the genuine hospitality and spiritual atmosphere that is so becoming to the dear children of God. Scriptural and spiritual conversation and singing of the good sacred songs which express blessed praise to God and the dear Savior were their chief concern. They were dearly loved, and even in their old and tottering age the brethren seemed to like to be in their home, as there was an atmosphere there which all the dear children of God love and seek here in this dark and thorny desert as they journey along, because it proves that they are traveling the same road. In 1914 I visited them, and the first time I ever attempted to speak in a public way was either at their home or at their daughter's home near by. They were so good and kind to me while on that trip that I will never forget it, although I have often felt unworthy of their kindness, I still have a fond remembrance of

them, and since that time have looked upon them as what I consider good old fathers and mothers in Israel. Sister Scarborough lived to a very ripe old age, her stay on earth being more than ninety-three years. The end came December 12th, 1937, after a long illness. She leaves to mourn their loss one son Mr. Elliot Scarborough, of Farmerville, Louisiana, a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren and one daughter-in-law, Mrs. Elliot Scarborough, who, together with her husband, took care of her in her old age.

Funeral services were conducted by the unworthy writer, in the presence of a large gathering of relatives and friends, after which the body was laid to rest in the Liberty Hill or Taylor Cemetery, and I fully believe that she is at rest in the blessed presence of her dear Savior, where there is no more trouble, sickness, pain nor death. I hope that when I quit this stage of action I, too, may awake on that peaceful shore, with the redeemed of the Lord to sing the sweet, eternal and glorious song of his praise for evermore.

ALSO,

JAMES NAFF, the subject of this sketch, was born in Morehouse Parish, Louisiana, September 1st, 1872, and died December 29th, 1937, making his stay on earth 65 years, 3 months and 28 days. His parents were Jonathan N. Naff and Martha Ann Day. Brother Naff leaves to mourn their loss two sons, Harry Naff, of Ruston, La., J. B. Naff, of Basthrop, La., three daughters, Mrs. Lucile Westbrook, of Basthrop, La., Mrs. R. W. Wallace and Mrs. W. B. Larsen, fourteen grandchildren and many other relatives and friends. Brother Naff joined the Concord Primitive Baptist Church, Morehouse Parish, about the year 1922 or 1923, and was loved for his great zeal in visiting and in caring for the brethren passing through that section of the country. He always took the lead in helping with anything pertaining to Old Baptist meetings. He traveled far and near in visiting associations and meetings and the brethren and sisters. He was very liberal, and the hospitality of the home of him and his dear family was a treat to our people from far and near, and will never be forgotten by those entertained in their home. Brother Naff was a very prominent and useful farmer and citizen of his Parish, and will be greatly missed, because he was very public-spirited and was a great leader in his community. He was a very thrifty provider for his family, but during the last two or three years his health failed until he became an invalid. It was the sad privilege of the writer to visit him during his sickness several times. He was always glad to see his friends, especially the brethren and sisters. His health continued to fail until December 29th, when he suddenly died. Elder S. A. Bradshaw, of Jackson, Miss., conducted the funeral services, with a large gathering of his relatives and friends present. I would admonish this bereaved family to weep not as those who have no hope. I believe your dear father and husband will peacefully sleep and his disembodied soul will rest until that glorious and blessed resurrection morn, when the dear Savior will raise and change these vile bodies and fashion them like unto his glorious body, and will receive all his redeemed children to himself and there will be no more death, sorrow nor sighing. Read the last part of the seventh chapter of Revelation. Dear ones, this it a wonderful consolation, that the dear Savior will bring his people from the dust of the earth and make them alive for evermore to sing his worthy praise in that beautiful land of eternal bliss. Oh may it be our happy lot through grace and

mercy to be there and join in that eternal and glorious song. May the dear Lord comfort you with the fellowship and light of his holy and blessed Spirit, is the prayer of your little, unworthy brother in hope of mercy,

R. W. RHODES.

ELDER SAMUEL BRYANT MOFFITT was born in Randolph County, North Carolina, October 28th, 1857, and departed this life August 15th, 1937. His parents were Middleton J. and Mildred C. Moffitt. He moved with his parents to Nodaway County, Missouri, in 1858, and there grew to manhood. He was married, December 22nd, 1878, to Miss Mary E. Hill, in Guthrie County, Iowa. In the fall of 1881 he moved to Jewell County, Kansas, near Bun Oak. Removing to the State of Oregon in the fall of 1890, he located near Newburg, where he lived at the time of his death. Six children were born to them, five girls and one boy, the boy dying at the age of nine months. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church called New Hope in the spring of 1896, and was baptized by Elder David Lilly. He was licensed to speak in public in the fall of 1897, and ordained to the work of the gospel ministry on Saturday preceding the second Sunday in October, 1898, by the following presbytery: Elders David Lilly and W. S. Matthews, and Deacon E. Loat. He was soon chosen assistant pastor of his home church, and at the death of Elder Lilly was chosen pastor. He has served as pastor of from one to four churches since his ordination, and traveled much throughout the States of Oregon, Washington and California. The following paragraph I give from his own pen: "I made one trip to North Carolina, going as far north as Danville, Virginia, trying in my weakness to proclaim Christ and him crucified as being the only name given under heaven whereby we must be saved." He baptized many, assisted in the organization of churches, helped ordain several deacons and preachers and preached many funerals. He was the last of a family of nine children to pass to the great beyond.

His nephew, L. B. MOFFITT.

MRS. J. B. BAXLEY, of Graceville, Florida, died November 3rd, 1937, after a short illness. She was eighty-one years of age, and a native citizen of Barbour County, Alabama, and became a member of the Primitive Baptist Church at Bethel, in that County, about fifty-four years ago, and remained a consistent member until her death. She was a true minister's companion, having been married to Elder J. B. Baxley, one of our leading ministers, about sixty-five years ago. She was ever ready to aid her husband and children, and sincerely loved the principles so ably set forth by Elder Baxley and others of the Primitive Baptist faith.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer, November 4th, with interment in the cemetery at Wright's Creek Primitive Baptist Church.

ALSO,

R. A. MATTHEWS died at his home at Wichsburg, Alabama, December 12, 1937. He was seventy-nine years of age. He united with Canaan Primitive Baptist Church, in Pike County, Alabama, about fifty years ago, and was as firm a believer in eternal and particular election and predestination as the writer ever knew. He moved his letter to Mt. Gilead Church about thirty-five years ago and was a leading Primitive Baptist of this section. He is survived by one son, W. C. Matthews, of Wichsburg, and two daughters, Mrs. J. R. Saunders, of Malvern, and Mrs. Beatrice Benton, of Newton.

Funeral services were conducted at

Goodwater Church by his pastor, Elder J. J. Collins, assisted by Mr. A. D. Zbinden, pastor of Headland Avenue Church, Dothan, Alabama, December 13th, with interment in the cemetery at Goodwater.

ALSO,

MRS. MARY J. KINSAUL died at Columbia, Alabama, December 20th, 1937. She was seventy-five years of age, and a consistent believer in salvation by grace. She united with Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church about forty-five years ago, and remained true to her faith. She is survived by her husband, A. R. Kinsaul, and four daughters, Mrs. R. L. Sorrels, of Hartford, Mrs. Lionel Parker, of Columbia, Mrs. Oyd Creel, of Headland, and Mrs. Fielder Waits, of Dothan, Alabama.

Funeral services were in charge of her pastor, J. J. Collins, at Mt. Gilead Church, and a large number of relatives and friends were in attendance.

ALSO,

C. J. SIMPLER died early in September, 1937, at the home of a daughter, where he was on a visit, at Samson, Ala., and funeral services were conducted by Elder J. A. J. Mitchell, of the Claybauh Baptist Association of the Primitive faith and order. Brother Simpler was a deacon of Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church, and had belonged to the church for perhaps half a century. He was one of the finest characters that I ever knew, and served ably as a deacon of his beloved church. He believed in upholding the principles of order and discipline and lived a life of devoted service to his church. He is survived by several children, who sadly miss their beloved father. His wife preceded him in death several years. Brother Simpler we feel is gone on to that clime where not one trouble shall ever mar the joy and all is ethereal pleasure and happiness in the presence of the immaculate Lamb of God. He was about eighty years of age, and lived an exemplary life.

Written by request of his son at Wichsburg, Ala., by his pastor,

J. J. COLLINS.

MRS. DORCAS MURPHY, aged sixty-seven years, wife of Elder J. S. Murphy, of Montrose, West Virginia, departed this life February 15th, 1938, after a ten days' illness of high blood pressure and heart trouble, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Bernice Lynn, Elkins, W. Va., where her physician advised them to bring her that she might have his daily attention. She joined the Leading Creek Old School Baptist Church, at Montrose, October 20th, 1912 (having received a hope twenty years previous to that time), and remained a faithful member until her death. She is survived by her husband and seven children: Mrs. Bessie Weese, Mrs. Bonnie Johnson, Burr and Benton Murphy, all of Montrose, Mrs. Bernice Lynn, Mrs. Bicie Greathouse and Mrs. Beulah Weese, of Elkins. Three children preceded her in death: Beeman, Burlan and Buna. Also surviving are several grandchildren, one sister, Mrs. Ingaby Furgeson, of Montrose, other relatives and a host of friends. She was a loving and devoted wife and mother, never too tired or weary to answer every call when she was needed. The loss of her to them seems irreparable. May the Lord give them strength and courage to take up the work that she laid down and carry it unto the end. She had a gentle, kind and unassuming disposition, and the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which the apostle Paul wrote was "in the sight of God of great price." She was a true servant of the church, always helping every way she could, and will be sadly missed by them, and

throughout the whole association. She has helped at her home to entertain many prominent Baptist ministers from the eastern States and from the southern part of this State when they visited the associations here, and was highly esteemed by all. She will be missed more than we can express by the Valley Church, where she visited frequently with her husband, who has been pastor of that church for almost twenty years. They and her home church cannot now see how they can get along without her, but hope the Lord will prepare a way for us. She was a good friend and neighbor, and highly respected by the community in which she lived. Her daily walk through life was above reproach. During her illness she suffered intensely at intervals and often prayed the Lord to take her. She was ready and willing to go. As the end drew near she bade her friends all good-bye and seemed happy in the thought of laying down her weary body to go and be at rest with Jesus. On the 17th, about 12:30 p. m., there was a short service at the daughter's home, conducted by Elder J. C. Hammond, after which her body was moved to the Leading Creek Church at Montrose, where two hymns selected by her family were sung and services were conducted by Elder Del Smith, assisted by Elder J. J. Poling. Her body was then laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the glorious resurrection. May the Lord comfort the mourning husband and children, five of whom were members of the church with her. May all who mourn be brought to realize that her call to go was one of the "all things" that work together for good to those who love the Lord, to those who are the called according to his purpose.

Written by request of the family.

(MRS.) E. E. WORKMAN.

IN MEMORIAM.

The East Atlanta Primitive Baptist Church, in memoriam:

Witnesseth, that Jehovah, the Omnipotent, the God of all grace, the one and only true and living God, has in his divine wisdom seen fit, on June 21st, 1937, to remove by death our beloved brother JOHN F. GREEN, who for so many years had been our Deacon and Clerk, and who we loved so dearly that words fail to give expression to our feelings, though we mourn not as though we had no hope, and we are not resentful, for we do know that what the Lord doeth is right. The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord forever.

Brother Green was born in Tilton, Murray County, Georgia, December 21st, 1859. He died in Decatur, DeKalb County, Georgia, June 21st, 1937. He joined the East Atlanta Primitive Baptist Church August 16th, 1890, was elected Clerk October 18th, 1902, and ordained Deacon November 14th, 1913, and it must be said of him that he served faithfully in that capacity until the end. The gift in brother Green was rare indeed, and it can be truthfully said of him, that he respected that gift above all else in the world, and we feel that he fought the good fight, kept the faith, and a true soldier has fallen in Israel.

He's gone, but not forgotten,
Cast down, but not destroyed.

Therefore be it resolved by us in solemn assembly:

First, That we believe our earthly loss is his eternal and heavenly gain.

Second, Though in time his presence is known to us no more, his work shall long live to guide us in keeping our house in order and in following the meek and lowly Lamb, to cherish his memory, and to do honor to our Master's great name.

Third, That we shall strive to profit by his wise counsel and to follow in the brave example set in him, and with greater zeal try to press forward for the mark of the prize of the high calling as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Fourth, That we will, the Lord being our helper, pray the Lord of the Harvest to supply our every need and keep us in the way that will be for our good and the upholding of Zion.

Fifth, That the within Memorial be spread upon the pages of our church book, a copy be sent to his dear companion and beloved family and also a copy sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference September 18th, 1937.

H. O. NASH, Moderator.
RYAN JACKSON, Clerk.

H. O. NASH
JAMES T. GARNER
RYAN JACKSON
Committee.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Miss Sarah Leedom, Pa., $1; Mrs. W. G. Thompson, Ontario, $1; Jessie Murray, Ontario, $1; Mrs. Mildred D. Gordy, Mich., $1; Mrs. Kate Lunsford, Ky., $1; Mrs. Eunice G. Craig, Va., $2; Mrs. M. E. Kuns, Calif., $1.

MEETINGS.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Mount Vernon Church meets the first Sunday in each month in Robertson's Hall, 4th and Broadway Ave., Arlington, Wash. All day service with lunch at noon. Morning service begins at 10:30. All are invited.

S. B. MOFFITT, Pastor.
MRS. CLARA E. GENTRY, Clerk, Marysville, Wash.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church holds meetings the fourth Sunday of each month at 1026 East Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Meeting begins at 10:30 a. m., dismisses for lunch and reconvenes at 2 o'clock p. m. Meeting days have been changed from the first to the fourth Sunday of each month. No Saturday or night meetings.

BURLIE HALL, Pastor
W. H. CAVE, Ass't Pastor.
(MRS.) H. B. CURLIE, Church Clerk

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, (third floor) over Newberry's store, Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

Cloth binding, 75c each. Paper covers, single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and all to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
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HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Cloth binding. Price, $1.25 each. One dozen or more, ordered at the same time and all to the same address, one dollar each. Cash must accompany orders. Make checks and money orders payable to

J. E. BEEBE & CO.
MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 106. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1938. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DALLAS, Texas.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I am sending you a copy of a letter I wrote to brother Winfrey while he was sick in the hospital at Salina, Kansas. He was a member of a church which I am serving at Kingman, Kansas. The family desire that it be published in the issue of the SIGNS in which his obituary appears. It is submitted to your judgment and disposal. You will note it was written to brother Winfrey personally, without any thought of it being submitted for publication.

DALLAS, Texas, Feb. 22, 1938.

DEAR BROTHER WINFREY:—I am writing you to-day, as I am shut in, waiting for a nice white snow to melt off, which the bright sunshine is changing to water very rapidly. Thus it is with all time things, regardless of how beautiful or otherwise desirable, they belong to the order of things which are ever changing; nothing within the reach or power of man to possess here below of which he can say, Now I have a permanent possession; this is my very own. Before he is hardly aware, it waxes old and is ready to decay and must pass out from before him. Our fondest ties of friendship and the most cherished objects of our affections last, as it were, but for a day, until we come to the parting of the ways; and if we possessed it all, with no more power than we have to establish its permanency, we would still be poor indeed, and with the wise man could say, All is vanity and vexation of spirit. But when we find within us a longing for something that is permanent, something that is fixed and can never be moved; something that will never disappoint our hopes nor make shipwreck of our faith, we must look not at the things that are seen, "for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." In this experience we find ourselves in company with that great cloud of witnesses of whom the apostle said, They looked for a city which hath foundations, whose maker and builder

is God. They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth, and that they desired a better country, that is, an heavely; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city. How delightful it is to be in the company of such people, and to have the mind absorbed in the contemplation of that inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away. The passing and changing events of time can effect no change in this glorious inheritance; and to know that it is not provided nor secured to us by the patience of our toil, nor by the skill of our labor; neither is it bestowed on the grounds of service, nor as a reward for merit, but by an immutable will Jehovah bequeathed it and reserved it in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. If we hope for this enduring inheritance, though we do not see it, yet do we with patience wait for it, knowing that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Brother Winfrey, I find myself sometimes actually longing for that house and that inheritance. We are given a foretaste of our inheritance, called "The earnest of our inheritance," which is intended to in some measure satisfy our desires until the redemption of the purchased possession; that is, until He takes his purchased possession home to glory. With some of us it will not be long now to wait, but our consolation and assurance is that God changes not: whether in youth or in old age the same unchanging God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. David said, Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me. The shadows of death have many times fallen across our pathway, as we came this far on our journey toward the country we seek; in fact, our path was routed through a land of death and decay. The great wonder often is how we have reached the place on our journey that we have without being utterly destroyed; but after all of our wondering we must come to the solution which David gave for his safety: "Thou art with me." If he is with us, then we, too, can brave every danger without fear, and can say with the poet,

> "'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
> And grace will lead me home."

This is our hope and consolation, that our God changes not, and irrespective of our diversity of thoughts and unstableness of purpose, he is the same unchanging God and his years fail not. How glad we should be, and I hope are, that our safety here and hereafter does not depend in any measure upon our faithfulness. But hear the assuring promise: "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my

faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips." Our waywardness does not in the least affect his faithfulness, for he has sworn unto our Spiritual David, saying, Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations. How wonderful to have these precious truths brought understandingly to our hearts, so we can grasp the significance of the meaning of these precious assurances, for it is written, Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted. It is only in His light that we see light, and when the light of life is revealed in us, when God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; by that divine light the veil of the law is taken away from our face and our heart is turned to the Lord and we, by faith, see the new covenant glories, which is the glory of the Lord, and the apostle says, Are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord. How wonderful is all of this mysterious yet overwhelmingly fascinating working of Israel's God. It binds our every thought in such admiration that, like Mary, we desire only to sit at the feet of our Lord and hear his gracious words. And how our ears catch and our souls absorb every word of promise that describes the case of a poor trembling sinner, the poor insolvent who has a load of debts but nothing with which he can pay; only can come as a beggar at mercy's door, and if he should be turned away from here, like the disciples of Christ, he must stand in blank ignorance as to his next move, and ask, To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. But thanks to our gracious High Priest, for none who come inquiring have ever been sent empty away; for it is he who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies, who satisfieth thy mouth with good things, so that thy youth is renewed like the eagles. The mighty works of God in saving and leading his children out of the dungeon of sin and crowning them who are only worthy of death with immortal glory, swell our hearts with wonder and admiration to look upon them, and to get a glimpse here and there of his transcendent beauty and glory as revealed in them. But with what subduing humility, and astonishment indescribable are we filled when we are given to hope that we are a part of this wonderful plan. If it is so, all things, whether life or death, whether visible or invisible, are engaged to work for our good; even the moments of time are hastenings us on to the possession of our eternal home, where in the full blaze of the glory of our God and Savior we shall swim in the ocean of his love, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. I know, dear brother Winfrey, your af-

fections are there, because your treasure is there. And I pray that God may sustain you with an unfaltering trust in his unchanging faithfulness, and support you by his all-sufficient grace until he chooses to call you hence, and that he may make you as faithful in your devotions to him in death as you have been in your life. This I feel he will do, for his promise is, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Again, Blessed are they that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. Blessed is the man that trusts in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. And whom the Lord has blessed they shall be blessed.

I shall hope soon to hear that you are very much improved. Sister Winfrey, if you can find time, let us hear often, if no more than a card just to say how he is getting along, for we are anxious to know of his progress.

With fervent christian love and fellowship in the gospel of Christ, in which Mrs. Hardy joins me, I am, I hope, your humble servant for Jesus' sake,

J. R. HARDY.

(See brother Winfrey's obituary on page 107.)

SHACKELFORD, Mo., Jan. 11, 1938.

DEAR PUBLISHER:—Find inclosed a postal money order for three dollars, for which please give me credit on my subscription to the SIGNS for the present year, and use the remainder as you see fit. I desire at this time to express my appreciations to Elder R. Lester Dodson, yourself and all those who have contributed to keep the SIGNS the dignified, high standing Primitive Baptist paper that it has always been. May you be enabled and sustained to continue long in your arduous labors.

Yours in interest of the truth,

DOSIA DEAL.

BOOK NOTICE.

WE plan to have another edition of the Durand and Lester Hymn and Tune Book printed this spring to supply those wanting books. If you want books, please write me at once, stating about how many, and what kind of notes you want. This will help us determine how many to have printed. We thought we were having more than enough printed last spring to supply the demand, but the demand was greater than the supply and many of you were disappointed.

After the order is placed and we have some idea as to when to expect the books I will notify you and you can send your order with remittance. All orders will be booked as received, and books will be shipped in the same order. Through your cooperation we hope to supply you with the books you want and to have some left on hand to supply your needs as they arise, which is our desire to do. The books will be the same good quality as in the past and we hope to be able to sell them at the same price: $1.00 each, or $10.00 per dozen, delivered.

P. G. LESTER, JR.,
846 Va. Ave., Va. Hgts.,
Roanoke, Virginia.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Okla., $1; Mrs. H. A. Strube, Texas, $2; L. B. Parker, Ky., $1: Mrs. L. H. Young, Ohio, $1; W. J. Shaffer, Ky., $1; "A friend," Md., 50 cents.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1938.

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ARTICLE III.

ETERNAL, UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION.

The doctrine of election is undoubtedly one of the bitterest pills the Arminian world has ever had to swallow. It is, however, one of the most important and fundamental points of doctrine believed and contended for by those who are designated as Old School Baptists. It shall, therefore, be our purpose to maintain not only that it is true, but also to show that it is both eternal and unconditional. In presenting our case, we will have to insist upon divinely inspired testimony being admitted as conclusive evidence. Our first witness will be Moses: "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all the people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt."—Deut. vii. 6-8. "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun [Israel], who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy before thee; and shall say, Destroy them. Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heaven shall drop down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord."—Deut. xxxiii. 26-29. Solomon said, "And now, O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or to come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people." It may be objected that the foregoing quotations refer

more particularly to God's choice of the Jews as a nation. We will assent to that, but as the law foreshadowed in types better things to come, God's chosen people, the Jews, under the law were a type of spiritual Israel, as the election of grace, under the gospel. Paul said, "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."—Rom. ii. 28, 29.

We will now bring forth some Scriptures which we are persuaded (it will have to be admitted) have to do with spiritual Israel. The psalmist said, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance."—Psalms xxxii. 12. As God is eternal, his "own inheritance" must be an eternal inheritance. "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, *Thy seed will I establish for ever*, and build up thy throne to all generations."—Psalms lxxxix. 3, 4. "For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provisions: I will satisfy her poor with bread. I will clothe her priests with salvation: and her saints shall shout aloud for joy."—Psalms cxxxii. 13-16. As the mouthpiece for the Lord, the prophet Isaiah said, "Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen. This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise."—Isaiah xliii. 19-21. The language used in these Scriptures can hardly be said to permit of only a time application. We will now turn to the New Testament, and what do we find? Mark says, "Except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days."—Mark xiii. 20. John quotes our Savior as having said, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."—John xv. 19. Paul comes along and tells us more about this choice, by describing some of the characteristics of those chosen, and to what end and purpose they were chosen. "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: *that no flesh should glory in his presence.*"—1 Cor. i. 27-29. Peter added his testimony when he said, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye

should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." It is written, "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established." Let the foregoing, therefore, suffice for our first premise.

The second point which we shall undertake to prove is that this choice was in the eternal mind and purpose of God. David, testifying beforehand in behalf of Christ and his church, said, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."—Psalms cxxxix. 14-16. Solomon said, "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table. She hath sent forth her maidens: she crieth upon the high places of the city."—Prov. ix. 1-3. Paul in his epistle to the Ephesians wrote, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: *according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world,* that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. To the praise and glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he *hath purposed in himself*: that in the dispensation of the *fullness of times* he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."—Eph. i. 3-11. In the second chapter he calls attention to the fact that they are quickened characters, saved by grace; not of works, lest any man should boast, and then says, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which *God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*" In his second letter to Timothy, Paul says, "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, *but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.*"—2 Tim. i. 8, 9.

In writing to the Thessalonians,

Paul said, "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, *because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth*: whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, *elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father,* through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."—1 Peter i. 1, 2. If such Scriptures as those quoted above will not convince and satisfy, it is useless to cite others.

Our third task is to show that election is "unconditional." If the following quotation was the only Scripture in the whole of the Bible that bore on this point, it would seem to us that it should suffice for the most skeptical: "And not only this; but when Rebecca had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (*For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;*) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."—Rom. ix. 10-13. The apostle seemingly anticipating that objections would be raised to this doctrine, immediately asked, What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Continuing this line of reasoning, he shows further the absolute futility of even presuming any possibility of conditionalism on the part of the creature, by asking, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles."—Rom. ix. 21-24. In the previous chapter it is shown conclusively that "whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." He follows this up by saying, "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."—Rom. viii. 28, 29. What can be said about these things? "If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is

Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." And who or what shall separate us from the love of Christ? "Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." There are not only no conditions for getting into the love of God, but, thanks be to his dear name, once in there is no possibility of getting out.

"Deep in the everlasting mind
The great mysterious purpose lay,
Of choosing some from lost mankind,
Whose sins the Lamb should bear away.

Them, loved with an eternal love,
To grace and glory he ordained;
Gave them a throne which cannot move,
And chose them both to ways and end.

In them he was resolved to make
The riches of his goodness known;
Them he accepts for Jesus' sake,
And views them righteous in his Son.

No goodness God foresaw in his,
But what his grace decreed to give;
No comeliness in them there is
Which they did not from him receive.

Faith and repentance he bestows
On such as he designs to save;
From him their souls' obedience flows,
And he shall all the glory have."

R. L. D.

A WORD OF APOLOGY.

WE hope our subscribers will be patient with us during our affliction, for we will do the best we are able to in getting the SIGNS to them on time. We were kept from our labors longer than we thought we would be by our operation, as the eye did not recover as rapidly as hoped for, and even now we are not able to work it full time, and for that reason this issue of the SIGNS has not the usual number of pages but we feel our readers will bear with us and overlook our leaving out some pages this number.

PUBLISHER.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. C. Ker, at his residence, in Delmar, Maryland, March 27th, 1937, Wilfred W. Scarborough, of Georgetown, Del., and Miss Lelah Frances Mitchell, of Delmar, Delaware.

By the same, at his residence, April 3rd, 1937, Phillip J. Elliott, of Laurel, Del., and Miss Grace Whaley, of Laurel, Del.

By the same, at his residence, June 18th, 1937, Carl A. Metz, of Vienna, Md., and Miss Adabelle Bounds, of Mardela Springs, Md.

By the same, at his residence, July 3rd, 1937, William E. Lloyd, of Seaford, Del., and Miss Grace E. Elliott, of Seaford, Del.

By the same, at his residence, November 11th, 1937, Laurence G. Hilton and Miss Gertrude L. Farlow, both of Salisbury, Md.

By the same, at the bride's home, in Salisbury, Md., December 25th, 1937, Ellwood J. Anderson and Miss Edna M. Morris, both of Salisbury, Md.

By the same, December 26th, 1937, in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Snow Hill, Md., Herbert D. Lilliston, of Accomac, Va., and Miss Madeline G. Ayres, of Parksley, Va.

By the same, at his residence, January 29th, 1938, James L. Wimbrow, of Parsonsburg, Md., and Miss Katheryn H. Heath, of Mardela Springs, Md.

By the same, at his residence, February 26th, 1938, Handy B. Truitt and Mrs. Maude H. Laws, both of Snow Hill, Md.

By the same, at his residence, March 2nd, 1938, Walter G. Cugler and Miss May A. Hutchinson, both of Delmar, Del.

By the same, at his residence, March 5th, 1938, Ralph Wheatley and Miss Evelyn Willey, both of Laurel, Del.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MARIA (BATEMAN) CROUCH, second daughter of the late John C. and Ann Frances Bateman, died December 10th, 1935, after being confined to her bed for about five and one-half years. She married Edward L. Crouch of Bothwell, Ontario, August 12th, 1895, and he passed away June 6th, 1932, during the time that Mrs. Crouch was confined to her bed. Throughout her long sickness she found much comfort in reading and sometimes hearing the beautiful hymns in her Beebe hymn book. Often she longed to depart, which to her was far better than to remain, but she would refer to "Oh land of rest, for thee I sigh," saying, "But ah! my passport was not sealed, I could not yet go home." She was a lovely character; though so sick, she seemed to cheer even those who were well, with the joyful face she so often showed to those who visited her. The writer had many visits in which he was refreshed himself while trying to minister to her. Her sweet and heavenly character still ilves in our memory, and in her case, while we mourn the departure of those we have loved, yet it sweetens the cup to feel that they have fallen asleep in Jesus.

Th writer spoke at her funeral with a desire to comfort her loved ones, and the interment was in the Longwood Cemetery.

ALSO,

MAGGIE (BATEMAN) SMITH died in Victoria Hospital, London, Ontario, after a brief illness resulting from a severe stroke which she suffered while away from home visiting friends in Michigan. She was the fourth daughter of John C. and Ann Frances Bateman, and was born May 31st, 1858. She united with the Covenanted Baptist Church, and was baptized by the late Elder William Pollard, October 19th, 1890. February 21st, 1894, she was married to the late Neil Anderson, of Middlemarch, Ontario, who only lived a short time. This was a period in the life of our dear sister in which she had much soul trouble, yet she also felt the Lord's presence more than once. Her husband passed away November 5th, 1895, after being sick fifteen months. For some time after this occurred she was blessed with much enjoyment of spiritual things, especially in mingling with the brethren and hearing the word preached. About this time she went to live with her sister in Detroit for several years, returning to Ontario December 28th, 1904, to marry George C. Smith, of Ekfrid, a God-fearing man who loved the same truth that she enjoyed, and they took much comfort in the things of God, and were happy together. She often expressed herself as greatly blessed of the Lord in having a good husband, who, she believed, also

loved the Lord Jesus Christ. For twenty years they were spared to each other, but it pleased the Lord to take her companion to himself on August 1st, 1925, and she had to travel alone; yet many times she knew she was not alone, for the Lord was very gracious to her, and she delighted in the fellowship and communion of her brethren. Her home was always open to them and her love was unfeigned. She was ever forward in doing whatever she could for the cause of truth. She leaves to mourn their loss three sisters: Mrs. Neil Blue, Wallacetown, Ont., Mrs. D. M. Gillis, London, Ont., and Mrs. J. Lowe Young, New York, N. Y. Death was no more a frightful foe to the dear one; for her to die was gain. May God comfort those who mourn.

G. R.

WILLIAM FELIX WINFREY, son of William and Elizabeth Winfrey, was born in Camden County, Missouri, January 20th, 1867, and departed this life at the Devine Brothers Clinic, at Salina, Kansas, March 14th, 1938, aged 71 years, 1 month and 22 days. He was married to Miss Eliza Combs March 31st, 1889. To this union five children were born: two sons, Fred C., of Wichita, Kansas, and William A., of Hugoton, Kansas; three daughters, Mrs. Gertrude Hardy, of Perryton, Texas, Mrs. Alma Hardy, of Gray, Oklahoma, and Mrs. Inez Robison, of Liberal, Kansas. He also raised and educated his sister's son, Ted Brown, whose mother died when he was but four years old. He is living at Kingman, Kansas.

He moved to Kansas in 1865, and located near Varner, in Kingman County. A few years later he bought a farm in this community where he made his home since, with the exception of ten years he lived in the city of Kingman during the time his children were in High School. He was baptized into the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church by the late Elder James B. Hardy, in November, 1895. The folloying June Pleasant Valley Church was constituted near his home, and he and his wife, who was baptized at the same time he was, went into the constitution as charter members. He continued a consistent and faithful member of this church until his death. His wife, I think, is the only surviving charter member. Brother Winfrey was blessed with a deep conviction and clear understanding of scriptural truth, was gifted as a "fireside preacher," and was happy when surrounded by his brethren and engaged in conversation on scriptural things. He was one of those eloquent listeners whose quick perception enabled him to follow the speaker with wrapped interest, and the response reflected in his countenance was an inspiration to any one who preached the things he loved; and his disapproval was equally outstanding when truth was sacrificed. The interest of his church was always given first consideration; and he never wavered from this course through his whole life. What is generally termed making a sacrifice for the cause and his brethren, he regarded as a pleasure. He left an outstanding record for faithfulness and devotion to his church meetings; one which I doubt has ever been excelled, nor many times equalled. He served his church as clerk for thirty-six consecutive years, during which time he wrote and read the minutes of every conference. He held membership in this church from the time of its constitution until his death, a period of nearly forty-two years, and was never absent from a single meeting of the church held during that time. He was kind and gentle to all, yet bold in defense of his doctrinal belief. His

sterling qualities gained for him the respect and confidence, and his genial disposition the friendship of all with whom he formed an acquaintance. This was attested by the large concourse of people who paid tribute to his memory by their presence at his funeral. He is survived by his wife, five children, nineteen grandchildren, three brothers: Marshall C., of Tyler, Texas, Charles F., of Wichita, Kansas, J. L., of Plains, Kansas, and one sister, Mrs. Mary Hughes, of Wichita, Kansas, together with many more relatives and friends who mourn his passing. His church feels deeply their loss, because a great man in Israel has fallen. He retained the active use of his mental powers unto the last few moments, and they were constantly engaged in praising his Savior as he approached the time when his spirit should return to God who gave it.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Livingston Funeral Home in Kingman, and his body was laid to rest in the Walnut Hill Cemetery to await that great day when mortality shall be swallowed up of life.

J. R. HARDY.

(*See letter on page* 97.)

MRS. SARAH ELIZABETH COLE, our sister in Christ, passed away from this time state April 6th, 1938, at midnight, at the home of her sister, Mrs. Jane Harding, Washington, D. C., in the eighty-second year of her age. She had gone to Mrs. Harding's on account of the latter's illness to help care for her sister as best she could, and was taken ill there of pneumonia. For the past twenty-one years sister Cole made her home with her only son, Howard E. Cole, and his family, in Leesburg, Va. Funeral services were held from her son's home, conducted by myself, and burial was in Union Cemetery, Leesburg. She was a daughter of the late John T. and Malinda Y. Griffith, and was a lifelong resident of this county. Besides the sister, Mrs. Harding, named above, she is survived by another sister, Mrs. Eugene Hawling, of Bluemont, Va., and by two brothers, Benjamin F. Griffith, of Philadelphia, Pa., and J. T. Griffith, Philomont, Va. Her husband preceded her in death by twenty-three years. Her daughter Emma died several years ago, and her daughter Jane in the flu epidemic of 1918. Besides her only son, with whom she made her home, she has one grandson, C. A. English Cole, of Leesburg, Va. Sister Cole was baptized by me into the New Valley Old School Baptist Church in June, 1919. About a year before she passed away, she said to me she hoped that when I should preach her funeral, that I would have a mind to talk on the subject of "Election." She said that the doctrine of election was a most precious and comforting principle of eternal truth to her soul. I tried, with the help of the Lord, to follow her request and used this as my subject at her funeral. Truth which is so hated by the natural man, was honey and oil to her heart and conscience. Truly the Scripture is applicable to her: "I have loved the habitation of thy house, the place where thine honor dwelleth." She was faithful and devoted to the church and all its interests. She accompanied my wife and me on many of our trips to meetings and associations in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia, traveling with us, altogether, hundreds of miles during the past twenty-one years. She lived close to us in Leesburg, was like a member of our own family, being in and out of our home very frequently and as she pleased. We shall miss her in many ways more than can be expressed. Her son was indeed true and kind to her. In her last illness he was at her side day

and night, granting her every wish, unstintedly doing for her all that was humanly possible, and cherishing the gracious and loving words that fell from her lips. He keenly feels his loss in the departure of his mother, but is resigned and, I believe, is reconciled to the will of the Lord. The Lord has taken to himself in the paradise of God another of his redeemed ones, it behooves us to say, "Thy will be done." Blessed be his holy name.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

DEACON MINAS F. HASTINGS, our beloved brother in Christ, departed this life March 17th, 1938, at his home, in Delmar, Delaware, after some months decline in health. He was born August 17th, 1862, his age being 75 years and 7 months. December 26th, 1888, he married Miss Stella Hallancy, ceremony performed by the late Elder T. M. Poulson. To this union were born three sons, one dying in infancy; the other two, with their mother, survive: Francis F., Ferndale, Wash., and James L., of Boston, Mass. He is also survived by one brother, Ananias Hastings, of Salisbury, Md., and two sisters: Mrs. A. C. Holloway, of Newark, Md., and Mrs. Benjamin McGee, of Bethel, Del. He was baptized by the late Elder A. B. Francis in the fellowship of the Little Creek Church, Delaware, the third Sunday in November, 1896. Later he was appointed Deacon, and served faithfully and well to the end of his life. For many years brother Hastings was a prosperous farmer. He was highly esteemed by all the churches of the Salisbury Association, and also by the community in which he lived, faithful to every duty in the church, and out of it, and is much missed by us all, especially by his widow and dear, beloved sister, who is now living entirely alone, yet not alone, for the presence of Him who is the husband of the widow is with her.

The funeral service was held from the home and was one of the largest ever held in this section, attesting the esteem in which he was held. The two sons, though living far away, were present. The service was conducted by the writer, his pastor. Interment was in the family plot in the Smith's Mills Cemetery. God bless and comfort the family.

H. C. KER.

WILLIAM JONES, beloved father of Misses Vesta and Zilla Jones, passed away in his late home, 1 Edgewood Park, New Rochelle, N. Y., February 6th, 1938. The obituary of his late wife, sister Adela Jones, appeared in these columns in the May, 1937, issue. Brother Jones was born in London, England, October 20th, 1847, and was therefore in his ninety-first year of age. He came to this country at about the age of sixteen, and located in Middletown, N. Y. It was there he met Mary Adela Price, to whom he made his first proposal of marriage when she was but twelve years of age. They were married October 29th, 1873, and lived happily together for over sixty-three years. Brother Jones united with the church and was baptized by Elder Gilbert Beebe on February 24th, 1871. He remained a faithful member of the church for nearly sixty-seven years. He was a staunch believer in and contender for the doctrine of God our Savior. The Scriptures were precious to him and he delighted in expressing his views upon them to those who were manifestly interested. For many years his hearing was greatly impaired and he could not hear preaching, but his interest in spiritual things did not wane. He was a lover of both the Bible and the SIGNS and talked to his daughters freely concerning the truth until the end came. He felt keenly the loss of his

dear wife, but although he was desperately lonely, never complained. These afflictions, accompanied by failing sight, caused him to say to one of his daughters, "Life doesn't seem worth living—this way." "But," he continued, "it is all, all right, because God wills it so." He was the last of a family of ten children, seven sons and three daughters. Besides his two daughters, he leaves a nephew, many friends and his brethren to mourn their loss. Our heart goes out to the daughters especially, who in less than one short year have lost mother, father, uncle, cousin and six friends. They are therefore bowed down with grief, but with our heavenly Father's aid they will continue life's journey until the fullness of its measure is meted out to them, and then may each in their own time hear the call of their heavenly Father, saying, "Child, come home." May the blessings of God our Savior rest upon and abide with all who feel their need of his saving grace and the comforting influence of his Holy Spirit, is our prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen.

R. L. D.

MR. J. E. HOLEMAN was born in Avon, Illinois, January 6th, 1861, and died at Ferndale, Washington, March 23rd, 1938. In early manhood he united with the Old School Baptist Church at Bronson, Kansas, and was a devoted member through life. Throughout life three things took preeminence with him: his God, his family and his neighbors. He was married in 1881 to Rosa Belle Pennington. He leaves the following children: Mrs. Mabel Shields, Stephen, Weaver, Charles and George Holeman, Mrs. Grace Roberson, and Mrs. Ruth Bridge, Sr.; seventeen grandchildren, ten great-grandchildren, numerous other relatives and a host of friends.

Funeral services were conducted at the Monroe Chapel, Ferndale, Washington, conducted by Elder Leslie Kagey, using James iv. 14, as a text. Interment in Mt. View Cemetery.

Written by his son,

STEPHEN HOLEMAN.

MRS. EMILY PROVART HARRISS, our dear mother, passed away from all mortal strife February 24th, 1938, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Spiva Webb, of Duquoin, Illinois. Mother was born in Paradise Prairie, five miles northeast of Duquoin, August 2nd, 1853, and was the sixth child of a family of fifteen children, and was the daughter of the late Phillip C. C. Provart, who emigrated to America from England when only sixteen years of age. Her entire life was spent in the neighborhood in which she was born. She was married September 6th, 1871, to John Pierce Harriss, who died December 7th, 1917. After father died mother lived with her children, but mainly made her home with her youngest daughter. She leaves to mourn one sister eighty-seven years of age, two half-brothers and two half-sisters, also four sons and two daughters: C. M. L. P. and J. C. Harriss, and Mrs. Maude Webb, all of Duquoin, Ill., C. T. Harriss, of Rock Island, Ill., E. J. Harriss, ofElkville, Ill., and Mrs. Lulu M. Foster, of Georgetown, Ill. Mother joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Nine Mile the third Sunday in June, 1877, where she remained a faithful and loving member until her heavenly Father called her from a world of sorrow to a better world on high, the fullness of which will be hers to realize on the morning of the resurrection. She always enjoyed attending Old Baptist meetings. Thepreaching was her meat and drink, and the older she grew the more she hated to miss going, for she always attended when health would permit. She will be sadly missed by all who

knew her, for to know her was to love her. Until father died the weather never was too bad, the mud or snow too deep for them to go and sit up with the sick. Her children, all but one, were at her bedside when she passed away, and six of her grandsons acted as pall-bearers. She had twenty-four grandchildren and six great-great-grandchildren. She was laid to rest by the side of her husband, who preceded her in death twenty years. Funeral services were conducted by Elders John Neal, of Ewing, Ill., and W. T. Clayton, of Providence, Ky. There were many beautiful flowers, and the largest congregation at the funeral that had been at that place in forty years. While we live upon this earth we will no more hear her sweet, gentle voice and see her lovely, smiling face, yet we know that she is in the hands of the all-wise God, who doeth all things well, and we hope to some day meet her around the great white throne, where sorrows are unknown and parting is no more.

Written by her son,

CHARLES M. HARRISS.

ELDER BENJAMIN V. JESSE was born at Crab Orchard, Floyd County, Virginia, March 21st, 1854, and died at the home of his adopted son, at Salem, Va., November 18th, 1937, being nearly eighty-four years of age. Elder Jesse was married to Nancy Catherine Fuller, of Giles County, Virginia, who died about seven years ago. Soon after his marriage Elder Jesse moved to Summers County, West Virginia, and after receiving a hope in Christ joined the Knob Church, in the Indian Creek Association. Soon afterward he was liberated to preach, and was ordained about the year 1885, and served as pastor of several churches in West Virginia. In 1909 Elder Jesse moved to Salem, Va., and brought his letter to the Roanoke City Church, where his membership remained until Little Hope Church was constituted in Roanoke County. Elder Jesse was chosen pastor of this church and served them faithfully as long as he was physically able to attend the meetings. Elder Jesse was a fearless and able defender of the truth. He made no compromise in the doctrine, but preached his convictions, regardless of what men said or thought of him. Few are blessed to declare the sovereignty of God and salvation by grace more ably than he was.

The funeral was held at Little Hope Church and was conducted by Elders J. P. Helms and John D. Wood.

Written by

FRANK H. BOGGS.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, It has pleased our heavenly Father to call from his earthly labors our beloved pastor, ELDER B. V. JESSE, who for about twenty-six years served us faithfully at Little Hope Primitive Baptist Church, therefore be it

RESOLVED, First, that we bow in humble submission to the will of our God, who has given and who has taken away.

Second, That we extend our deep sympathy to the bereaved family, and

Third, That a copy of this Memoir be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication, and that a copy be spread upon our minutes.

Unanimously adopted this 27th day of November, 1937.

JOHN D. WOOD, Moderator.

JOHN CONNER, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

The Baltimore Association will be held with the church in Baltimore city, 210 East Madison Street, on May 28th and 29th (Fifth Sunday). Also on June 5th (First Sunday). All day meeting at Balck Rock. You are cordially invited to attend both meetings.

ALVIS S. ROWE, Church Clerk,
628 St. John's Road, BALTIMORE, Md.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held, Providence permitting, with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, commencing on Friday before the fourth Sunday in May, at 10 a. m., Standard Time, and continuing three days (May 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1938). To those coming by automobile, the meetinghouse is located on Route 222, north of Conowingo, Maryland, and slightly north of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line. If there are any coming by bus over Route No. 1 from either Philadelphia or Baltimore, they will be met at intersection of Routes Nos. 1 and 222, Conowingo, Maryland, by special request to the undersigned. All peace loving Baptists of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us.

CHARLES B. OSBORNE,
Route 2, QUARRYVILLE, PA.

Ministers of our faith and order, and all others interested in the truth, are cordially invited to attend the annual meeting of the Delaware River Association, to be held with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, New Jersey, on Wednesday and Thursday, June 1st and 2nd, 1938. Those coming from points south on the Pennsylvania Railroad will be met at Frenchtown Tuesday evening or Wednesday morning. Those arriving from New York on the L. V. R. R. will be met at Flemington, N. J.

(MRS.) ALWILDA STRYKER, Church Clerk,
190 MAIN STREET, FLEMINGTON, N. J.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in May (29th). All are welcome. E. M. FORD.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

THE TRANSFIGURATION ON THE MOUNTAIN.

(MATT. XVII. 1-8; MARK IX. 2-8; LUKE IX. 28-36.)

In my mind the Transfiguration on the Mountain was the most beautiful scene to be witnessed by man on this earth. If it pleases God to enable me, I desire to write of some of the beauties I see in meditation upon the grand story. Jesus took Peter and John and James and went up into a mountain to pray. He chose the ones to go with him. He did not give a broad opportunity to the multitudes, disciples or apostles, with the invitation "whosoever will," but "took" a special three of his special twelve of the disciples. These three that he took with him up into the mountain were the same three that he took with him down into the garden of Gethsemane. Peter, John and James not only witnessed the most agonizing scene, when Jesus was agonizing in prayer and sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, but also witnessed the most beautiful scene of his transfiguration. The thought we get from this fact is that those who are destined to suffer the greatest afflictions and tribulations in the valley of distress are also blessed to experience the greatest joys and brilliancy in the mountain of gladness. Peter, John and James must have not been of the progressive type of christians we have to-day, who seem to think Jesus needs help. Instead of helping Jesus pray they were "heavy with sleep,"both in the garden of Gethsemane and also on the mountain of transfiguration. "As he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias." The questions that come to mind are, Who was Moses? and who was Elias? We find that the law was given to Moses by Jehovah. The law is referred to in the Bible as "the law of Moses."—Ezra vii. 6; Neh. viii. 1; Ezra vi. 18. The ten commandments on tables of stone, together with ordinances, were given to Moses, who

taught the law to the people. We find Moses connected with the law all along, therefore we conclude that Moses represented the law in that trio of talkers on the mountain.

Who was Elias? Elias was that great prophet who predicted the drouth to king Ahab. (1 Kings xvii. 1.) Elias hid at the brook Cherith and was miraculously fed by the ravens. He raised a widow's son and contested with Baal's prophets, by whom God manifested himself as God. He later slayed these prophets at Kishon. (1 Kings xviii.) God so blessed him and honored him that Elias ascended into heaven. (2 Kings ii. 11.) He was the most honored of the prophets, therefore we conclude that Elias represented prophecy in that trio of talkers on the mountain.

The third in that trio was Jesus Christ. They spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. (Luke ix. 31.) In meditation we hear Moses, representative of the law, giving the requirements of the law, that the law must be kept, and punishment for disobedience of the law must be meted out and justice satisfied. We hear Elias, representing prophecy, saying that these requirements of the law, and penalty for disobedience, will be completed and justice satisfied. Then we hear Jesus saying, Think not that I am come to destroy the law (Moses), or the prophets (Elias); I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. Then Moses and Elias departed and Jesus was left alone. Peter said, Let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, one for Moses and one for Elias. Not knowing what he said. In my experience I have wanted to make three tabernacles. I have desired to live up to the law requirements of duty as we read in Ecclesiastes xii. 13: "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Thus erect a tabernacle to Moses. I have desired to fulfill prophecy, in accomplishing the warfare and obtaining pardon for my iniquities. (Isaiah xl. 2.) Thus erect a tabernacle to Elias. And at the same time I have desired to pay homage to that Scripture which reads, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: *not of works,* lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. ii. 8-10. Thus erect a tabernacle to Jesus. In my experience there was a time when I verily thought the law doctrine and grace doctrine were contrary. As Peter, I could not see how the three tabernacles could be constructed in one. While Peter was in a confused state of mind the God of heaven spoke thus from the cloud, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him. It was needless to build three tabernacles. The law of Moses and the prophecy of Elias were being fulfilled by Jesus Christ. This command from the clouds (I verily believe) removes the seeming contradiction of the Scriptures. The requirements of the law must be met, and Jesus was the only one who did it. Prophecy must be fulfilled, and Jesus was the only one who

did it. Therefore, pay no more heed to the law and the prophets, for they were fulfilled by Jesus.

"Jesus was left alone." Yes, he was sufficient to tread the winepress alone. He did not need Moses and Elias any longer. His services pleased the God of heaven. It so pleased the Father that this command from the clouds means (to me), Pay no more attention to the law and the prophets, for they were fulfilled in Jesus Christ, therefore "Hear ye him." What do we hear him saying? We hear him saying, I am the way, the truth and the life. I am the door, by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture. (John x. 9.) No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day. (John vi. 44.) We are made to realize we are not saved according to our power or works, but according to the power of God, who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. (2 Tim. i. 9.) Therefore the law system has disappeared as Moses disappeared. This law system was not destroyed, but fulfilled by Jesus Christ. If I am one who was chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the law for me, and my account is so accredited. All the sins that I have committed, or will commit, were laid upon Jesus' shoulder and he bore them on the cross and paid the penalty by shedding his precious blood for me.

Brethren, my mind has traveled faster than I could write, and I know this is very imperfect and scattering, but may God be pleased to enable us by his grace to feast upon some of the beauties contained in the record of the transfiguration on the mountain.

E. J. LAMBERT.

CULLENDALE, Arkansas.

CHICAGO, Ill., Dec. 9, 1937.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is some five years since I wrote for the SIGNS, and I do not know that anything I can now say will edify its readers. I have been reading old SIGNS lately, and in the experience of the late Elder F. W. Keene there is much that is similar to my own experience. My mind traveled back to that October day forty-six years ago, when I was enlightened and Jesus appeared to me as the One altogether lovely and my Savior. At my age (71) at most it can be but

> "A few more days on earth to spend,
> And all my cares and toils shall end,
> And I shall meet my God and friend,
> And dwell with him above."

I do not know, I cannot imagine the despair of one dying without hope. In the twenty-third Psalm David said, Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Some six years ago I made a visit to an association in another section of the country. I did not see a single copy of the SIGNS in the various homes I visited, and they were very bitter against the doctrine of the predestination of all

things, and, so far as I was able to judge, were believers in what we term "conditional time salvation." No doubt they were sincere in their views. Such Scriptures as "Fear the Lord, and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones," and "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and her paths are peace," seem to prove godliness is profitable both for time and eternity. If our well-being in time is dependent upon our good works, how and where do we get the strength to do and maintain good works? The answer is plain: "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." In Hebrews iv. 16, we are told, "Come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." What grace do we need? We are told in another place. Grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. In the fifty-first Psalm David prayed, Create in me a clean heart, O God, and uphold me with thy free Spirit. In the seventeenth Psalm we hear him saying, Hold up my goings in thy paths. And in another place, Send out thy light and thy truth, let them lead me unto thy holy hill. In the twenty-third Psalm, He leadeth me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. In another place David says, Thou hast taken my feet out of the mire and clay and established my goings. Here is salvation, both for time and eternity. Every writer of both Old and New Testaments ascribes to God the glory of salvation, both for time and eternity, and all writers consistently preach good works. I do not think that any Old School Baptist objects to teaching good works, or that disobedience brings wrath upon the believer, but what I do not believe in is the idea of making religion a "wage earning proposition." Satan was a very marked example of the conditional time salvation idea, for when Jehovah cited Job to him he replied, Doth Job fear God for naught? Also we find Job's friends preaching conditional time salvation to him and at the end Jehovah reproving them, and Job's prayer in their behalf finding acceptance. We know the Scriptures teach we should be careful to maintain good works, and we know by sad experience the plague of our own hearts. Paul, with all his light and knowledge, exclaimed, Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Are we any better than he when he says, The good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not that I do? It is when we realize these things (our own weakness) that we turn to the throne of grace asking for help in time of need. Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I. Uphold me with thy free Spirit. Give me both mercy and grace to help in time of need, for in and of myself I have no strength. This God will be our guide even unto death. To me earth is fading, youthful hopes have been blasted, kindred and friends have gone on before. Had I been dealt with according to my iniquities, long ago I should have been cut off and my soul sent to hell. But through the mercy of God I have a hope that when

this life of sorrow is over I shall meet with the redeemed and blood-washed throng to sing praises unto him who washed me in his own blood. Outside him I know no salvation either for time or eternity, for grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Almost all the epistles of the New Testament begin and end with, "Grace and peace be unto you." Why? Is that an idle expression? No indeed. By grace are ye saved through faith, *and that not of yourself, it is the gift of God.* In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews is a long recital of the triumphs of faith from Abraham down. We are told to take unto ourselves the whole armor of God, above all taking the shield of faith, whereby we may quench the darts of the wicked one. The just shall live by faith, and to me to-day the bringing of a soul from darkness to light and giving faith in Christ is just as miraculous as any miracle of the Bible. I am but a little child wandering in this wilderness of sin and sorrow, and without grace from on high I am lost. Like Job, I can say, I know that my Redeemer liveth, but there the resemblance between us ceases. He was an example to cite to others, but I am not. What little good I may have done in life is so far overweighed by the evil that I can only bow my head and say, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. I sometimes ask myself, Why was I chosen? Such a thing as I am, so vile I hate my own life, and the answer is, Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. Like one writer in the SIGNS, I cannot divide salvation into parts, one part for time and one part for eternity. It is all embraced in one, foreordained, as was our eternal salvation. Most assuredly God will not give wisdom and guidance to the children of the devil. Let us ascribe all glory to our Maker.

The subject of predestination has been so ably discussed by many witers I can add nothing to it.

I remain in hope,

W. C. COX.

BENTLEY, Ill., Dec. 18, 1937.

DEAR EDITORS:—The time has come for me to send money for another year's subscription, so inclosed please find postal order for same. It surely is hard for the dear, faithful publisher to be so handicapped with the afflicted eye; may he feel the sustaining hand of our God, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. His ways and his thoughts are as far above ours as the heavens are above the earth. There is nothing too hard for him. When the way looks dark and gloomy by his own hand he will lead us safely on. He will direct his dear children in the path he intends they shall go, and as they go along life's pathway he will be by their side, though maybe unseen, but when we cannot see him is when we are in spiritual darkness. In the Lord's judgment he saw fit for this darkness to surround us, and then do we feel to say, Is he clean gone forever? Will he never return? Now while we cannot see him, yet we hear him say, I will never leave nor forsake you. Our hopes revive, a sense of the nearness of the Lord comes over us and for awhile we feel our hand is in his and

he is surely leading us. How mysterious! How came I to be in this light, any way? I well remember only a short time ago, I was in that mysterious dense darkness, and I felt I would never be in such light as I am enjoying now. Now I am again made to say, How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out. When Jesus shows his smiling face we feel encouraged, because by his light we are enabled to press on in our journey across life's desert way, through which all God's children pass. Therefore each knows of the warfare, and for that reason we are told to comfort one another with the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted, and in doing this as we walk along together we talk of God's goodness and mercies to us, and our hearts are warmed, when some one says, Come, let us go into the house of the Lord. Here we find a company assembled and heaven comes down our souls to greet, and glory crowns the mercy-seat. This is an oasis in this desert life we are crossing. Here are springs of pure water of life flowing, which water the garden of the Lord. In this garden (the church) are all manner of sweet smelling spices. A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Is not this very descriptive of the Lord's church? In its purity it is sealed. There can be no corruption from the outside and it be a wholesome place for pilgrims of Zion to live. Let us remember the sweet smelling spices in this garden, the fragrance emitting, which we feel to be the effect of the orderly walk and godly conversation of the children of God as members of this visible church, or garden, of which the Lord says, Awake, O north wind; and come thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. I feel this describes the sweet influence of an orderly walking church on those on the outside who have experienced like awakening in the heart but have not yet come into this garden inclosed. There is much more enjoyment in seeing a flower with the fragrance than in just smelling its fragrance. How long would our bodies be thrifty could we have an abundance of the smell of the most savory food and not be where it was to eat of it? To obtain the best food for our natural body's good, it must come from the right source and be used temperately, or with the best of judgment we have. So with the spiritual fragrance that the Lord causes to be wafted over the wall of his garden to those on the outside that they may be reminded that much good is in this garden, and an abundance for all who are weary, hungry and faint. They find here a sweet resting place. This is really a place of true worship. This is under their own vine and fig tree, where none shall molest nor make afraid. Having been here awhile they begin to learn the ways of Zion. Here a little and there a little, line upon line, how the house of the Lord is, or should be, conducted, and what peace of mind is enjoyed is according as they walk circumspectly. Now there is joy in their soul while they listen to the watchman on the wall cry aloud, and they have a

feeling of safety so long as the watchman does as Jeremiah did, even though some of the leaders threatened and tried to kill him. He spoke to them any way, thus, "Thus saith the Lord, Stand in the court of the Lord's house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the Lord's house, all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; diminish not a word: if so be they will hearken and turn every man from his evil way, that I may repent me of the evil, which I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of their doings."—Jer. xxvi. 2, 3. Again in the thirteenth verse he gives warning, though they had said he should die. And in the fourteenth verse: "As for me, behold, I am in your hand; do with me as seemeth good and meet unto you." Indeed do the children of God feel secure when they have such an undershepherd to watch over and care for the whole flock like Jeremiah did here, and as did others of the prophets and apostles and many of our forefathers in these latter days. Even right now I am glad to say that some of our preachers are not afraid to declare the whole gospel, gently but in plain unmistakable scriptural terms. Although I feel myself to be very small, not much use to the church, I want to say this much, that such preaching as the above, and every man standing in his own place and heeding these gospel commands, is all that is going to save the church here in the world from having the candle-stick removed from it. The Lord has said plainly, and in direct connection with the above, that he will do it. He is not slack concerning his promises. The wills and shalls of Jehovah have, do and always will stand.

This letter is getting lengthy, but I have one thing more I would like for us all to notice very carefully. When we are falsely accused, resist the temptation to retaliate, for we read in the Scriptures that we have not right to go in any way but in the highway of holiness. Our true ministers and writers, with all lay members, should by their lives, and by word and pen, proclaim the gospel in its purity. Let men say what they will, but let us not answer in kind, but follow the lowly Nazarene, who when he was reviled reviled not again. When he suffered he threatened not, but committed himself to Him who judgeth righteously. Let us all go on and do as much good as we can, and as little harm.

Still a little more I want to say. It did me good to see Elder Lefferts' name signed to an article in the SIGNS. I have always enjoyed his writings, and hope we may see more of them, for they were so clear and plain, and very encouraging to his fellow-travelers..

Dear editors, it has been a pleasure to me to write the foregoing letter, as my mind runs on these subjects sometimes. I do not want my letter published in the SIGNS as long as there are enough good and able writings as have adorned its pages in times past. You may see good reasons to put this in the waste-basket, which will be all right. May the present editors and publishers be spared and encouraged to publish the SIGNS as it is now, and may the

good Lord go with us all and bless and keep us all the way, is my prayer.

Unworthily yours,

LEONARD H. HOPKINS.

THOUGHTS.

On the fourth Sunday in December, 1936, while at Cane Creek Church and listening to Elder J. E. Herndon preach, I heard him tell in a good sermon some very interesting things concerning the birth of Jesus Christ. What a great event to think about! Nothing on record greater to my mind. In connection with this subject, he spoke of his birthday, during Christmas time. Then this thought came to me, According to our way of counting time, there was a great difference between Jesus' birth and his, but not so with Jesus, for we remember it is written he said a thousand years are as one day, so we see there is not much difference with Jesus in regard to time. While listening to the gospel from the mouth of our dear brother the thought came to me, If it be true that our brother does preach the gospel, then Jesus is his Elder Brother, and if we, the few members of Cane Creek Church, love and believe it, then we also are members of that royal family. So I want to say to this church, Let us take courage and press on toward the mark of the high calling of God, not looking to the things that are behind, for great is your reward in heaven. According to nature, some of us must soon leave this world. I think I have been a member of this church longer than any other member now living. I will be eighty years old next September, 1937, if I should live that long. Brother Henry Dodson is older than I am, but he joined the church after I did. While we have been praying and hoping some would be added to our now little band, yet we must wait upon our Lord and Master, who doeth his will in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, nor say unto him, What doest thou? I wish to say to our few members, two of them being my brothers in the flesh, and, I hope, also in the Spirit, Now that the year 1936 is about ended, let us resolve to do better in the year 1937. While we look around us and listen to some of the great scholars of this day talk, and call it sometimes the gospel, we have to admit many of them are great scholars, and are familiar with the Bible as a history, but according to Paul's experience they cannot know God in that way, for while Paul could speak different languages he knew not God. So we see the wheat and the tares must grow together here but there must be a harvest. Jesus is coming again and will gather his wheat into his garner, and O, my brethren, do we know the truth concerning these things? Nothing else will do us any good. The wise men of the east were shown the star that led them to see the young child Jesus. King Herod had no love for him, but sought to destroy him. Brethren, if we believe Jesus has come, and are looking for him to come again, and are guided by his star, we are sure to be taken home to a place prepared for God's loved ones, so let us strive to enter in at

the strait gate. I feel to say I have no quarrel with the wise and prudent, for I have loved ones among them that I expect to continue to pray for. As we know, except the Lord give light, as he did Paul, we will forever remain in darkness. Amen.

Dear son, look over what I have written, and do as you like with it. I love these things, but think sometimes they are too grand and glorious for me to claim an interest in them. O, my son, pray for me when you feel the Lord is near. Many thanks for your token of love and fellowship. May God be with you until we meet again. Love to all.

Your father,

R. L. DODSON.

PETER.

THERE is no chapter in the Bible that gives me more pleasure than the first chapter of Peter. In it the first chosen disciple of our Lord, the man who defended his Master, who also cursed and swore that he did not know him, and was rebuked by Jesus and on the pentecostal day was one of the first to arise in defense of his Lord. Peter sent his letter to the elect and the strangers scattered throughout the different places where Saul had scattered them a short while before. Note Acts viii. 3, 4: "As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and hailing men and women, committing them to prison. Therefore they that were scattered abroad, went every where preaching the word." To these believers that were scattered and were preaching the word Peter is writing. No wonder he calls them strangers. Not in a sense strangers to God, but strangers to the different countries where they were scattered by persecution, and, I have often said, Strangers to themselves, are thy not of a strange tongue and a strange doctrine? The Jews stumbled at it, and to the Greeks it was foolishness. The elect of God were always a persecuted people, just like the pattern, Jesus. Peter gives some strong meat. In fact he mentions almost all of the doctrines that the Old School Baptists hold dear and defend. Verse 1, Peter tells of his authority, as an apostle of Jesus Christ, writing to the elect of God, calling them strangers. Verse 2, How the election is brought about, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, all through the setting apart of the Spirit, through obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, and grace in store, all according to God's foreknowledge. Verse 3, Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Praise him, for his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Verse 4, To an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you. Who? You who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, says verse 5. Peter has thus far presented to us the following doctrines: The election, of his people, to glory, and the election is according to God's foreknowledge. Foreknowledge and predestination are kin, for if God

foreknew these things, he foreknew how and when and where they would be, and to say he did not know would be blasphemy; it would underestimate his power. The resurrection of the dead is plainly stated, as Jesus, the pattern, by the omnipotent power of God is risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept, the final preservation of the saints, their eternal happiness through grace to glory, for they are elected, foreknown, washed from their sins by the blood of the Redeemer, and kept by his power through faith to the inheritance that cannot fade away, reserved in heaven for them.

Verse 18, Peter refutes the idea that men have in regard to their redemption, that gain is godliness. Silver and gold and such corruptible things are of no value to you. Jesus tells Nicodemus, You must be born again. Something more than the corrupt things of this life must take place with you: you must be made alive to spiritual things before you can enjoy the fullness of the gospel of peace, before you feel the need of redemption. You must be shown that by nature you are as the grass that withereth, a lost and ruined sinner, ten thousands talents in debt and not a cent with which to pay. Redeem, is to buy back, to pay the transgression fee. Jesus was the rightfu owner, and no one could redeem but him. As a lamb without blemish and without spot, he shed his precious blood, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you. According to the covenant, when his laws are put into your heart and he writes them into your mind, then by faith you see your Redeemer, see that great love wherewith he loved you.

All of these mysterious things Peter has brought forth in the first chapter, and as I read it over I see many things I have not mentioned. One thought especially, "But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." What a comfort it is to hear the word when we have ears to hear and hearts to understand, when we can meet together and greet each other, and we can say, I know there is something that we know, he has revealed it to me, that is the love we have for the brethren. It is a mark, or sign, that we have passed from death unto life.

One reason I have such a love for Peter is that I am so much like him. His love for the Master was so great that he did not hesitate to use force in his defence, and was so positive that he said to Jesus, If all the world forsake thee, I will not. Jesus said to him, Before the cock crows thou shalt deny me thrice. At that time Peter did not believe him, he was so sure of himself. Peter was up in a mountain, or high place, when he made the declaration. He was not aware that he stood in a dangerous place, where Satan shoots his most deadly arrows, boasting, and he must be brought down in the valley and humiliated. A lesson to us all.

How grand it is when we can read our Bible with understanding and feel an interest in it, when it seems as though it is talking to us, and we seem

to be a part of it, when Jesus interprets, and reveals the mysteries hidden between the lines how comforting. Peter was know as an unlearned and ignorant man. He had not the earthly acquirements of Saul. There was one thing they noted in him: he had been with Jesus, and the common people heard him gladly. He, like the prophets, was moved by the Holy Ghost, and to-day, as then, no sermon or writing does the elect of God any good unless it is sent in the same manner.

May the Lord comfort all his people, give them grace to live by, also grace to die by, all to the glory of him that loved us and gave himself for us.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

GAINESVILLE, Ala., Jan. 22, 1938.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have a few thoughts wihich I wish to submit to you in word, to dispose of as you see fit. If what I write should be of comfort to some poor child of grace, if only a cup of cold water in His name, it will be of comfort to me.

"A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed."—Solomon's Song iv. 12. If I am right in my views, the church is meant here. As we would select the best ground and especially prepare it for some choice plants, and inclose it for their protection, even so has God made every preparation necessary for the well-being of the plants of grace. First, we notice that the prophet likens the church to a garden inclosed. That is, we understand it is cut off to itself. There are many things shut out of God's church. Some things have been declared. Sometimes we hear some complaint of liars. If you will show me a church that has no liars I will show you a church that has not the mark of the true church, for the church is like an inclosed garden. No man or woman who has not been born of God's Spirit has any right to a place in the church of God, and even if they have been born of him, if they do not obey the law given by the great Head of the church they are cast out. There are liars of false doctrines. God has so commanded. If any bring not this doctrine, receive him not in your house. No adulterer, nor liar, etc., has an inheritance in the church of God. Anything and everything in the way of practice is shut out except just what Jesus commanded his church to practice. If this garden was not thus inclosed it would soon be overrun, for the little plants of grace are tender, they need cultivating, so they may grow and become fruitful. Some obnoxious weeds will grow in the forest without cultivation, without protection, but not so with the tender plants of grace. How well this agrees with God's little children. They are at first babes in Christ, little, tender plants. How tenderly they should be cared for. They must have the best of soil. They need gentle showers of rain and the heavenly dews to refresh them. They need pruning and to be digged about in order that they grow and develop. All obnoxious growth must be kept down in order that they do not become choked. As it requires one who is skilled and

possesses great patience to work in a natural garden, so it requires a skilled workman in the garden of the Lord, one who loves the little plants and delights in laboring among them.

Again I might speak of the figure. As there are a variety of flowers as well as fruit in the garden, even so it is in the church of God. Every little plant of grace has a gift, and when it is in the garden of the Lord and properly taken care of it will grow, bloom and bear fruit. Some may have the gift of prayer, and this is indeed a precious gift, to approach God in a public way for all the church. Some may be sweet singers in Israel, may have a gift in singing. This is very edifying to the church. Some may have the gift of making peace among God's people. They are called peacemakers, and, lo, how much this is worth to the church. Some have the gift of teaching and of exhortation. All gifts are found in the garden of the Lord, and as we love the sweet smelling flowers of a garden, much more so is the garden of the Lord delightful. How delightful it is to feel the influence of the love of God, and we all have a better opportunity to manifest our love in his garden than anywhere else. How beautiful does she appear when all are meek and lowly, like Jesus. No sweeter flower ever grew. No wonder Solomon said, "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey," etc. Here he compares the fruits of the plants of grace in the church to honey, spice and myrrh, sweet and delightful things to our taste. He then calls her sister, spouse. How comforting the thought that we are so closely related to him, bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh.

"A spring shut up, a fountain sealed," I understand to mean that in the garden there is a spring of peace, rest, joy, delight and comfort, which continues to flow into the garden to sustain the plants, for notice it is a spring shut up; that is, shut up from the world. And Christ is ever in the midst of his garden (church). She never gets anything from the world, for he (Christ) is her head, and is within her and sustains her, and if the Old Baptist Church is not here described I am mistaken, for she is looking to him, and him alone for her support, and has no confidence in the flesh. She never looks for a nursery for her plants, only the Creator of all things. She has never believed in a preparatory school for her ministry, and if one of those pupils were to step inside with his manner of dress and worldly smile I am sure he would soon find he was out of his place. He would scare the sheep and they would flee, for they know not the voice of strangers.

Submitted (I hope) in much love, subject to your approval, by a poor unworthy brother (if one) chosen from or in the furnace of affliction, in hope of the resurrection of the dead,

J. E. NORRIS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1938.

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PSALMS XCII. 12.

"THE righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon."

It is declared in God's word concerning man by nature that none is righteous, no, not one, yet the Lord is graciously pleased to speak of his people, as they stand in our Lord Jesus Christ, as THE RIGHTEOUS. Not because of any righteousness in them, but because the righteousness of Christ is imputed unto them, just as their sins were imputed unto him. He is the one of whom Job says, "The righteous shall hold on his way," and of whom David (Psalm i.) says, He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water whose leaf also shall not wither. Therefore it is declared (Isaiah lxv. 22), "As the days of a tree are the days of my people," and they are also spoken of as "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified."—Isaiah lxi. 3. Man by nature is like his first parent, Adam, disobedient, conceived in sin. Springing from Adam, he is just Adam multiplied, which is a multiplication of death and desolation. But we would speak of Christ, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, for from him comes life and vigor, even as from the first Adam springs death and desolation. Thus he is truly the righteous that shall flourish as the palm tree. The Jews looked on him as a root out of a dry ground, for he was not of the tribe of Levi, from whom sprang the priesthood. It is true the palm tree seems to grow in a dry ground, for it is often found in a desert land, but there must be water to sustain it. It will not grow there unless there are springs of water, and the water has to be of a certain kind. For instance, when Israel came up out of Egypt, they came to Marah, where the waters were bitter. They found no palm trees there, yet they had to travel that way and know what bitterness was. It is written that they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. The bitterness of this life, which is a living death because of sin to those by whom it is felt, is such that but for Jesus they could not endure it. But let us remember that Jesus was given vinegar mingled with gall, and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink. He tasted death for every man, for Moses (the law) cut

down a tree (meaning Christ) and cast it into the waters. Thus bitterness and death were ours until Christ was slain for us. The troubled and polluted springs of this life could be changed only by the death of our Lord and Savior, and when he appears prisons palaces prove, the bitter is sweet, the medicine is food. Jesus cut down by the law sweetens the cup of the Lord's people. The traveler may go for days and not see a palm tree, neither will he find water fit to drink; so we may go days and travel many miles and there may be those (natives of the place who do not taste aright) who will cry, Lo here is water, but how often we prove it is bitter, for it is all what man can or should do and there is no Jesus preached or set forth crucified, so we do not find palm trees there. In the providence of God there are sweet springs, clear as crystal, from the rivers the streams whereof make glad the city of God, and there are the palm trees, for there the Lord has planted grace in the hearts of his people, and here he sends the streams whithersoever he will to water the plants of his grace. Thus we would say to the wayfaring man, the palm trees are found in the desert, perhaps miles apart, but at certain places, where the traveler finds sustenance, fruit, shelter and rest. We are in a wilderness world, and there are spots to-day far apart, but receiving sustenance from the same source: plants of God's planting sustained by the pure unadulterated gospel of the Son of God, which is indeed sweet to the taste of God's tried and afflicted people. Thus the palm tree is found by the sweet springs, not by the cisterns, broken cisterns that man may dig, which set forth creature works and man's power. There is nothing in all such doings to comfort or sustain one poor soul. What do poor souls need? They need Jesus set before them as the way, the truth and the life of all that live. Jesus is the alpha and omega, the beginning and the end, the root and the tree and the fruit. There must be a root before there can be the tree or the fruit, and as is the root so is the fruit. Now all the flourishing of the palm tree is in the head, so Jesus also is the head, so when brethren are confessing their unworthiness they are speaking the truth in love, and, as Paul says, They grow up into him, in all things, which is the head, even Christ. (Eph. iv. 15.) Take the head, or top, away from the palm tree and it would leave nothing but a dead stump; take away Jesus from the saints and what is there? One sings,

> "Depart from thee, 'tis death, 'tis more;
> 'Tis endless ruin, deep despair."

So the wayfaring man does not expect to see anything in the stem, but his eyes go up, up unto the head, or top, of the palm tree. To carry the figure further, one has never heard of the desert traveler carrying a ladder with him, for this tree itself is a ladder, "a ladder from earth to heaven," (Gen. i. 51); for the stem, or trunk, of the palm tree is where the tree has been stripped of its glory, or branches, by man, leaving rough places, setting forth Jesus stripped of his glory, wounded and

bruised for our transgressions, and it is with his stripes we are healed. If ever we are to have palms of victory, or have our mouth sweetened by the date which the palm yields, the only way is in and through the wounds of Christ. Our fruit and shelter is in Christ and through him. The church flourishes in Christ, and in him the one becomes a thousand. The temple of Solomon had its doors and walls covered with palm trees within and without (2 Chron. iii. 5; 1 Kings vi. 29). "Palm trees with open flowers," for under the legal covenant "the time of fruit was not yet come," but the open flowers carry a wonderful truth which we will mention. The palm trees have male and female flowers, and, when fully open, the wind carries the pollen from one flower to another; so the church waited for the descent of the Spirit, as a rushing mighty wind that filled all the house, and the results were soon manifest. Those fearful apostles went forth fearless, preaching a risen Savior, mighty to save. The Spirit of God, the wind that bloweth where it listeth, must take of the things of Jesus and reveal them unto us.

We have been speaking of Jesus as the righteous, but to us our text is setting forth his people, his church, his house where he dwells, and she shows forth the praise of him who has called her out of darkness into his most marvelous light. The fruitful tree was the female, so the Jews looked upon some women as upright and beautiful as the palm tree, and they called them "Tamar." In this spirit the Lord speaks of his bride, the church, in Canticles vii. 7, 8: "This thy stature is like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters of grapes. I said, I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof." In the temples of old the palm trees with open flowers were carved on the doors and walls, but in God's spiritual temple, whose temple ye are, his people are living trees, ever green, showing evidence of life at all times, even though it be by a groan or a sigh; trees that cannot bear fruit of themselves, for the Lord saith, "From me is thy fruit found." They grow in the wilderness of this world, subject to wind and storm, growing from within as the palm tree grows from within. That which is nearest the earth looks rough and dark; there is nothing in the stem to desire, so the Lord's people in relation to this world are often avoided, misjudged as unsociable and narrow-minded. Yet far above this earth they tower, rightly seen and known by heaven, though misunderstood by earth. They stretch forth their branches toward heaven, showing forth the praises of him who has redeemed them, for is it not in his love that they rejoice? His mercy and grace cheer and animate them, and when the wind, the Spirit, moves them how gracefully they respond. Let us here remember that the palm branch denotes victory. In Revelation the saints are clothed with white robes, and have palms in their hands, and cry with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." After Israel had gathered the fruit of the land

she was to take the boughs of godly trees, branches of palm trees, to make booths for shelter where they rested and rejoiced in the fullness of the harvest. It is as the things of Jesus are blessed to us, and we handle and taste of the word of life, that we find rest for our souls and we rejoice in Christ, our head. Palm branches are from ten to fourteen feet long, and are different from the branches of any other tree. They only move when blown by the wind; and does not the church rejoice and sing the song of victory as she is moved by the Spirit of God? When Jesus rode triumphantly into Jerusalem, did not the multitude take branches of palm trees and cry, "Hosanna! Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord."—John xii. 13. The palm tree often reached a hundred feet high, towering above man, yet if man would sweeten his mouth with luscious dates he must LOOK UP for them. Does not this bring to our minds the sweetness we have at times enjoyed when resting under the shadow of the Lord Jesus, hearing the saints of God tell of their hopes and fears? How different to the world and worldly things, which often leave an unpleasant taste in the mouth. When we have heard Jesus exalted above puny man our hearts have rejoiced and we have tasted of the heavenly gifts and the good word of God and the powers of the world to come. It is then the palms wave before the Lord as the Holy Spirit warms our hearts and unlooses our tongues. It is then there is a flourishing as the palm tree, a rejoicing in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh. On one occasion, years ago, when we resided in New York City and were kept busy with our daily labor, we left home one Sunday morning for meeting feeling very downcast, unfit to meet with the brethren, realizing in our soul that we were nothing but a lump of sin. We arrived at the meeting just in time to hear Elder McConnell give out hymn 977 in Beebe's collection:

"I thirst, but not as once I did,
The vain delighs of earth to share;
Thy wounds, Emmanuel, all forbid
That I should seek my pleasures there."

And as he outlined the third verse:

"I want that grace that springs from thee,
That quickens all things where it flows,
And makes a WRETCHED THORN LIKE ME
Bloom as the myrtle or the rose."

We were moved beyond words to express, and it was, we hope, what Jesus meant to us that moved us. It is this something secret that sweetens our cup even if it is filled with gall. The righteous shall flourish, not in self-righteousness, not in self-praise, not in the world, for in the world ye shall have tribulation. The water of the word shall spring up in them, for Jesus said, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst" (it being from an eternal source); "but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Such will be rooted and grounded in love, in the love of him of whom Paul said, "Who loved me and gave himself for me," and being rooted in his love they will grow up in Christ Jesus in all things; that is, in his teachings and in his doctrine, believing that every word he spoke will stand

when this vain world shall pass away. We have said before that all glory and beauty and fruit are in the head, Christ Jesus, and when all around will be dry and burnt up, the palm tree will be fresh and green; and if there be the least shelter from the storm, or shadow from the heat, it will be from Him.

Now let us look at the latter part of our text: "He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon." Cedar, because of its durability, was used in the building of the temple, and the cedars of Lebanon were the pride of Israel in its most flourishing times. They stood upon the mountain side, deeply rooted in the rocks and receiving continuous watering from the melting snow which capped the mountain all the year round. Thus while the earth beneath them was often dry and parched, they were ever sustained from above. Here again we have a tree that is ever green, but differing in some respects from the palm, in that it lasts much longer. Its wood is used for building and will last for hundreds of years. It also has branches which hide the trunk that sustains them, yet such is its wonderful growth, that, from the distance, it stands like a monument towering into the heavens. Like a pinnacle of the temple, pointing to heaven, the faith of a child of God as he walks in Christ points away from this world to that which is to come. Its growth is not with haste, but it is a steady growth, and, though it is ever green, it has its seasons. Sometimes there is a fragrance which is spoken of as the smell of Lebanon; at other times, when winter is over, the winds shake it to its very roots, so that, the earth being soft, the roots spread and push deeper, taking hold of the rock to sustain the new growth of the tree which follows. So the righteous shall take root downward and they shall bear fruit upward. We would mention that these cedars are not planted by man, but by God, and, living for hundreds of years, they set forth the trees of righteousness to the glory of God. There is one thing we have noticed with regard to the cedar: as it grows it gets smaller and smaller, and so we have seen in the testimony of Zion, there is a feeling that He shall increase but I shall decrease. Wherever we see such an one he towers away above a worldling, he is watered from above and is rooted in the rock. The cedar of Lebanon was ultimately to come into the house of the Lord "to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious."—Isaiah lx. 13. Thus his children grow in grace and in the knowledge of God, to fit them for his temple, where they shall live forever. The palm tree may go down into dust, yet it is said another will grow up out of its root. Job xiv. 7-9, says, "For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. [Jesus is that one that grows up as a tender branch and he will not cease.] Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant." How few such places there are

to-day, where the word of the Lord has free course, without the works of man being mixed in to embitter them, to the sorrow of those who look for better things. Yet to-day there are a few spots where the people of God are found watered by the unadulterated word of God. Dr. Watts, writing on the latter part of our text, sings,

"Lord, 'tis a pleasant thing to stand
In gardens planted by thy hand;
Let me within thy courts be seen,
Like a young cedar fresh and green.

There grow thy saints in faith and love,
Blessed with thine influence from above;
Not Lebanon with all its trees
Yields such a comely sight as these.

The plants of grace shall ever live;
Nature decays, but grace must thrive;
Time, that doth all things impair,
Still makes them flourish strong and fair.

Laden with fruits of age, they shew
The Lord is holy, just and true;
None that attend his gates shall find
A God unfaithful or unkind."

G. R.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS."

We will furnish extra copies of the Signs of the Times at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

INFORMATION WANTED.

If any of the brethren know of a church, or any brother, close enough for me to visit, I would much appreciate hearing from them.

Written in love by a poor sinner,
HARDY B. WEBB,
R. 1, Bentonville, Arkansas.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Arnold H. Bellows, at Kingston, N. Y., May 1st, 1938, Elvin S. Benson and Miss Dorothy M. Barton, of Kingston. Mr. and Mrs. Benson will reside in Kingston.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Once more the death angel visited the Middleburg Old School Baptist Church and made that church poorer by the removal of sister FANNIE SMITH, who passed away April 12th, 1938, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Leonard Alverson, in Albany, where she had been spending the winter. Death was due to an ailment of the heart, from which the deceased had suffered for some time. The funeral services were held the following Saturday at her late home in Middleburg, N. Y., conducted by the writer, a large number of friends and brethren attending the services. Burial was in the Middleburg Cemetery. Sister Smith bore the maiden name of Fannie Cooper, and was born near Middleburg September 12th, 1857. Her parents were staunch members of the Old School Baptist Church and were renowned for those sturdy qualities of character that make for noble citizenship and true manhood and womanhood, and our departed sister inherited their virtues to a marked degree. Before reaching middle life she evidenced a hope in the saving grace and eternal mercy of Jesus Christ and was baptized into the fellowship of the Middleburg Church, to which she continued faithful in an exemplary degree until her death, over forty years later. Her home was an abiding place for those of the faith of the church of her membership, and her hospitality was as noted as the strength of her character. Her neighborly kindness, pure and noble character, devotedness to the

meetings of the church, sunny disposition and charitable attitude towards all endeared her greatly to a very large circle of friends and brethren. In 1875 she was united in marriage to James Kenyon Smith, who died in 1915. There were three children of this union: Rockwell M. Smith, of Schenectady, N. Y., Gorden R. Smith, of Middleburg, N. Y., and Mrs. Leonard Alverson, of Albany, N. Y. There is also one surviving sister: Mrs. Helen Zeh, of Middleburg, who is temporarily residing in Albany. In the death of sister Smith a great loss has been sustained by the church, and the community where she spent her long and useful life. Surely she is at rest in the paradise of God. She was past eighty years of age.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

SISTER ATTIE A. CURTIS passed away at her home, in Brunswick, Maine, February 26th, 1938, at the age of eighty-six years. She failed gradually in health during the winter, but was sick in bed only a week before her death. She was born in Bath, Maine, October 21st, 1852, the daughter of Isaac and Hannah Curtis, who were both members of the Old School Baptist Church at Bowdoinham, Maine. She joined the Bowdoinham Church August 11th, 1872, when she was twenty years old, and was baptized by Elder Hiram Campbell. For sixty-six years after that first relation of her experience her life was one of devotion to her church. Her conversation was of spiritual things and her walk befitted one who knew and loved her Savior. She was always ready and eager to testify of the great things the Lord had done for her, of the peace and comfort she had found in the church. She often said she felt it was her duty and privilege to tell the members of the work of God in her heart, of his redeeming grace and of a salvation not of works. She was blessed with a remarkable memory and could quote Scripture and repeat hymns without end. The latter she loved to sing, and it was a great comfort to her during the years she lived alone to sing over and over the hymns she loved so well. As it became increasingly difficult for her and other aged members to come to Bowdoinham for the meetings, the members had met for a number of years at her home in Brunswick, and there she was always ready to read the Scriptures and talk of the things she loved. She was given a keen insight and unusual ability to explain the Scriptures in the light of the truth as it had been revealed to her. The church will miss her sadly, but feels that she is at peace with her Savior, whose love was her joy and comfort through a long life, and this love shone in her countenance and in her walk. It was her meat and her drink. Her testimony was in accordance with the words of the well known hymn, "There is a fountain filled with blood," which she loved to sing.

THE foregoing has been sent us by one who loved our sister for the truth's sake. In the passing of "Sister Attie," as she was generally called by her kindred in Christ, the Lord has removed a very unusual character. She not only had good discernment as to sound and wholesome doctrine, but she also loved and firmly contended for good church order. Her presence will be sadly missed by those who will assemble at their places in Maine for true worship, and not the least by the writer, who has received great encouragement from her during his visits among them for the past fifteen years. May the Lord bless those who mourn their loss with a realization of the fact that with her, "It is well."

R. L. D.

SISTER JESSIE GILLIS departed this life December 28th, 1937, after having been in poor health for several years. She was the third child of Angus and Margaret McTaggart, of Ekfrid, Ont., in which township she was born February 7th, 1860. On December 24th, 1885, she married Daniel T. Gillis, of Muirkirk, and they were blessed to live together in a happy home until death took her husband in 1914, leaving our dear sister with her two children to mourn their loss. Sister Gillis was under exercise of mind when quite young, at times fearful that there was no hope for her in the mercy of God. But, true to God's purpose, who never begins a work without performing it, he gave her sweet deliverance and she was able to tell it to the church, and the late Elder Pollard baptized her in the year 1887. She carried her religion with her, which stood not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. She and her husband loved to entertain the brethren, and spiritual conversation was her meat and drink. It pleased the Lord to afflict her with deafness for years, yet she never allowed this to keep her from her place in meeting, and often we have seen her face shine and beam with joy as she, following the lips of the speaker, was able to understand and enjoy what was spoken. She was strong in the faith, giving glory to God, often esteeming herself the least, if one at all. Sickness and infirmity came upon her so that often she longed to go home. On one occasion as we visited her she said, "Oh land of rest, for thee I sigh; when will that moment come, when I shall lay my armor by, and dwell with Christ at home?" On another occasion, she was sweetly enjoying the precious promises contained in the hymn, "How firm a foundation." (Hymn 751.) She died as she lived, beloved by all those she loved for the truth's sake, leaving her two devoted children, Marvin and Mina to mourn their loss. She is where she longed to be, and may her God be the God of her children and a comfort unto them. Her remains were taken from her late home in London, Ontario, and funeral services were held in the Duart meetinghouse, the writer conducting the service and speaking in the name of the Lord to the comfort of her loved ones. The remains were laid beside those of her dear husband, in the Duart Cemetery.

G. R.

MRS. MERTIE BELL BARNES was born April 17th, 1892, and died March 13th, 1938, aged 45 years, 10 months and 26 days. She was married to Dr. R. H. Barnes April 21st, 1909. She received a hope in Christ in early womanhood, but never united with any church, but was a strong believer in the Primitive Baptist doctrine. She leaves to mourn their loss besides her husband, Dr. R. H. Barnes, three sons: Hubert, Rhett and John J. Barnes, and a host of other relatives and friends. The writer was called to Winfield, Alabama, to conduct the funeral of this dear sister, which was a very sad occasion, as she met a very tragic death. She was shot to death by a discharged servant. I tried to comfort the bereaved ones with the thought that the Lord doeth all things well. The death sentence is passed upon all of Adam's race, and God, as the supreme Judge, has the right to say when, how and in what manner all men shall die. It is a great consolation to know that the word of God contains many parallel cases. Why God allowed Cain to kill his brother we do not know. The Scripture informs us that we must die in order to live, and better is the day of death than the day of birth. Your loved one has only put off this earthly taber-

nacle and now has a building in heaven not made with hands. She is now asleep in Jesus, and you should sorrow not as those who have no hope, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even those also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. Then, dear ones, comfort yourselves with the thought that it is through the exceeding great and precious promise of God that we are made partakers of the divine nature, that his divine power has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness. May the comforting influence of the Holy Spirit abide with the bereaved family.

LYTLE BURNS.

MRS. VIOLA WOODFORK, colored, departed this life in New York City on April 2nd, 1938. Her date of birth is unknown to us, but she recently told some of the brethren that she was seventy-eight years old. We understand that she was born near Warrenton, Va. Our information is also meager regarding her marriage, family, etc. We can speak very definitely, however, with regard to her church relationship. She was received by experience into the fellowship of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, New York City, November, 1896, and was baptized by the late Elder Balas Bundy in January, 1897. The writer has known her since he came to New York to live, in 1911, and has tried to serve as her pastor since January, 1922. She was deeply taught the truth as it is in Jesus and was blest with the gift of speaking so as to give a reason of the hope that was within her. In the last few months of her life, especially, she seemed to feast upon the preached word. Almost without exception, she would speak to us after each meeting and make mention of something in particular which she said was precious to her soul. The church has sustained a loss in her passing, and the writer particularly will miss her and her encouraging words.

The following verses of Scripture were read and commented upon on the occasion of her funeral: "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy; and gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south. They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty, their souls fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses. And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation. Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men."—Psalms cvii. 1-8.

R. L. D.

MRS. ELIZABETH A. WOOD, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Langley, was born in Arkansas, March 2nd, 1857, and died April 1st, 1938, at Bellingham, Wash., making her stay here in this world 81 years and 30 days. She leaves to mourn her departure four children, nine grandchildren and twenty great-grandchildren. The children are, Charles Wood, John William Wood, Eva M. Royalty and Laura B. Warner, all of Bellingham; also four sisters and one brother: Mrs. Ella Plummur, of Dallas, Oregon, Mrs. Lucy Smith, of Helena, Montana, Mrs. Nora Marshal and Mrs. Susie Cole, both of Kansas City, and Edward Langley, of Bellingham. Her funeral was conducted by Mr. Frederick W. Carstens, a Missionary Baptist, at the funeral parlors of Homer

Mark, in Bellingham, and her body was laid to rest beside her husband, Thomas G. Wood, who passed away July 19th, 1936. She was married to Thomas G. Wood, of Leavenworth, Kansas, March 25th, 1875, at the home of the bride's parents at Leo, Kansas. I have not the date of her conversion, nor the name of the Elder who baptized her, nor where her first membership was, for she was a member in good standing in the year 1909, when the church was constituted here at Bellingham, and has always lived a consistent christian life. She believed in the predestination of all things, was always in her seat when not hindered by sickness and was never happier than when doing something for the members of the church. She was a good cook, and we only had one thing to complain of, and that was that she was too liberal, but she was always happy when we were satisfied. It is lonely indeed without her sweet smile of welcome for every one who entered her door, and she was never too tired to welcome us. She was surely a mother in Israel, but has gone and her place will be hard to fill, but we mourn not as those who have no hope. The Lord gave, and we know he has only taken his own, and we can only say, Blessed be his holy name. May he keep all those who mourn and prepare all to meet her where no farewells are ever said.

DAVIS BURCH.

MRS. ELIZA JANE CAVENDER COLE was born October 17th, 1852, and departed this natural life December 9th, 1937, making her stay through many trials and afflictions in this old sin-cursed world a little over eighty-five years. She was married to Sye Starks in 1885, and to this union was born one son, who died in infancy. In the year 1891 she was married to Marion Cole, and to their union were born two daughters. She united with the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church at Bethel, Graves County, Kentucky, some fifty years ago, and lived a faithful member of the church, always filling her seat if not providentially hindered. We miss her when we meet at Bethel to worship God.

Funeral services were held at Bethel, conducted by the writer, her pastor, after which her body was laid to rest in the near-by cemetery, to await the resurrection.

T. J. PRINCE.

LEAMMIE T. BOWDEN, daughter of Mr. Billie Ridgeway, was born December 30th, 1850, near Cottage Grove, Henry County, Tennessee. She was married to William M. Bowden May 5th, 1870. She and her husband united with the Old School Baptist Church at Shady Grove and were baptized by Elder N. W. Little the third Sunday in July, 1875. She departed this life March 11th, 1938, making her sojourn on earth 87 years, 2 months and 11 days. There were born to this union nine children, the two oldest dying in infancy. Left to mourn are five sons: Ed., Gus., Vinus, Homer and Bonnie, and one daughter, Mrs. Dollie Godwin. One daughter, Mrs. Hattie Hudson, died nine years ago. She also leaves seventeen grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. She was a devoted mother and a loyal member of the church, her greatest enjoyment being in having here family and friends around her, and to attend her church. Her home was always open to her brethren, sisters and friends. The family has suffered a great loss, which can never be repaired this side of eternity, but we believe our loss to be her eternal gain. We are exceedingly thankful to God for the

sweet privilege of having mother with us so long, and while it is hard to give her up we believe she is infinitely better off and satisfied, for she is happy with her Savior. Mother was in comparatively good health until August, 1937, when she was stricken with cancer of the mouth. The agony she suffered caused her to pray incessantly for the Lord to take her. I shall never forget a prayer she uttered while I was at her bedside about one month before she died. She prayed, Dear Lord, if it is thy will to take me, I pray that I may be prepared to go to thee and to be with thee evermore. A week before she died I asked her if in this trying hour her faith was exercised as strongly as ever. She replied in an almost inaudible whisper, and with great difficulty, Yes, it is just the same. At last, when the time had fully come, she passed away peacefully, and went to her home in glory, prepared for her before the foundation of the world.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder T. J. Prince, assisted by Elder O. W. Perkins. Interment was in the family burying-ground in Pinegar Cemetery. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

Written by her son,

H. M. BOWDEN.

BOOKS WANTED.

I WOULD like to know where I can obtain some Thomas Hymnals. Elder E. D. Thomas, of Danville, Indiana, is author.

Hoping you will insert this in your paper, and some good friend will give me the address, I am devotedly yours,

MILFORD HALL, SR.,
P. O. Box 42, McDOWELL, Kentucky.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

A. J. Doggett, Ala., 50 cents; Mrs. S. E. Brown, Texas, $5; Mrs. Warren White, Ky., $1; P. A. Horton, N. Y., $1; Miss Sadie T. Nicoll, Del., $1; Mrs. E. M. Smith, B. C., $1; Mrs. Clara A. Parker, Ore., $2.

MEETINGS.

Ministers of our faith and order, and all others interested in the truth, are cordially invited to attend the annual meeting of the Delaware River Association, to be held with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, New Jersey, on Wednesday and Thursday, June 1st and 2nd, 1938. Those coming from points south on the Pennsylvania Railroad will be met at Frenchtown Tuesday evening or Wednesday morning. Those arriving from New York on the L. V. R. R. will be met at Flemington, N. J.

(MRS.) ALWILDA STRYKER, Church Clerk,
190 MAIN STREET, FLEMINGTON, N. J.

An all-day meeting is scheduled to be held in the New Vernon meetinghouse, near Howells, N. Y., on Friday, June 10th, 1938, to begin at 10 a. m. Daylight Saving Time. Several visiting ministers are expected to be present. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend.

R. LESTER DODSON.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, (third floor) over Newberry's store, Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church holds meetings the fourth Sunday of each month at 1026 East Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Meeting begins at 10:30 a. m., dismisses for lunch and reconvenes at 2 o'clock p. m. Meeting days have been changed from the first to the fourth Sunday of each month. No Saturday or night meetings.

BURLIE HALL, Pastor
W. H. CAVE, Ass't Pastor.
(MRS.) H. B. CURLIE, Church Clerk

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 106. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1938. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

EXPERIENCE AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY.

For some two or three years I have had a mind to try to write a portion of what I feel the Lord has done for me. I realize that if the Lord does not bless me with a fruitful mind I will be unable to pen down the many sad thoughts and feelings I have had, together with a few moments of rejoicing I have been blessed to enjoy. But I trust it is the Lord's will to direct my mind that I may sketch the path through which I feel I have been driven and led along for the last twenty-two or three years. Going back to childhood, I feel the Lord commenced a great work with me, teaching me I was a sinner and that I had a soul, and it was lost, and I must die for my sins. When those thoughts began to come into my mind the matter became very serious with me at times. At those times I wanted to steal away and try to pray to the Lord and tell him that I would do better, but instead of doing better I seemed to do worse. But when the thought of dying would come I would find myself again begging God to take care of me. I felt that he was able to if he would. I went along with a continuation of like experience for a number of years, with a great fear of judgment; that is, the last day, when God shall pour out his great wrath upon them that dwell upon the face of the earth. Seemingly I felt deep down in my very being that I would have to suffer the great torment of those irresistible flames, and those thoughts and feelings were almost more than I could bear. They were so great with me that I could hardly keep from screaming. When I would see the smoke rising from the nearby farms, when the neighbors were burning brush, in my thoughts and imagination I could see the great agonizing flames coming in streaks, consuming everything, and I could not see any way for hell-deserving me to escape from those torments. Oh! those miserable feelings are yet untold. I was carried along in

that way for several years, but part of the time it did not bother me. I kept all of this from my people, and when I reached the age of sixteen to twenty I was not bothered very much about the matter, so I set out to enjoy as much of this life as I could. At the age of nineteen I left my father, with the thought that I would see what was in this old world. I got as far as Florida and my journey was ended, there something got hold of me again that changed my mind to some extent. I met my wife on my journey to Florida, and after staying there four months my mind was to go back home, so I did, and three or four months later my wife and I were married. I settled down then to try and make a living for us. Soon after I came back from Florida I went to Hillsdale to preaching, and there I met a great many of my schoolmates and friends. We were sitting in the rear of the congregation together and Elder Purdyle preached into my feelings that day and I shed tears while listening to him. After preaching had closed one of my boy friends said to me that I had left home and gone off and got good. That came near ruining me, for I could not stand his talking to me that way. I thought the best way to convince him was to curse and deny it, which I did. I cursed bitterly and denied it, and that gave me much trouble, but I got some consolation from the thought that even the apostle Peter cursed and denied the blessed Savior, and said he never knew the man. I felt to be the most wretched and undone sinner that ever lived. I could not feel that there was any mercy for me, so I went on in this condition for six or eight months, begging God for mercy. Easter Sunday night, in the year 1931, if not deceived, the blessed Savior came to me and blessed me to see him as he arose from the dead. I will try to write the dream, or the vision. It seemed to me that I was away from home, and was traveling with two of my brothers, and I was cursing and swearing and acting very badly, when I heard a voice call me. That voice sounded like no other voice I had ever heard. I was condemned in my feelings and a fear came over me such as I had never before experienced. It seemed to me I had to go to some very sacred place, and it made me tremble, but I went on, as I was seemingly led, until I reached the place. When I arrived there and stepped inside the door I saw a room in which were a number of folks standing, all were clothed in white robes, and there was a corpse in the room, and it was on a table. The lid of the coffin was off and the body was in it. The coffin was filled with the whitest biscuits I ever saw, and those people went to the coffin and took the bread and ate it, and then the coffin disappeared and the body was on the floor in front of me. It began to move, and I told those people, This man is not dead, but is alive. So I would like to say right here that this Man is not dead, but is alive, and is seated at the right hand of God, making intercession for his children. He arose and came to me, and as he started to his feet his face began to shine, and the nearer he came the brighter it shined. When he got

within hands-reach of me I thanked the Lord and began to sing, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me." I then awoke with a confused mind, and with no understanding of what I had seen. I then undertook trying to reason it out in my own way. The more I reasoned the further away I got and the more trouble I got in. So in my trouble I found out that God's way is past reasoning and his thoughts past the understanding of man. So I went on in great trouble, until I reached the place where I could neither eat nor sleep as much as I needed in order to be able to do my work. I continued to go on in this way until it seemed I could live no longer. One day I sat down at the table, but could eat but little and soon left and went and laid down on my bed, with my face down to keep my wife from seeing me in tears. At that time this thought came into my mind, Go and see Elder Trent and tell him the dream and he will interpret it to the extent that you can rest. I went the next day to see him, and told him the dream, and this man of God began to tell me some of the things I hope the Lord has done for me, and advised me to go to the church and be baptized. I did not feel that part was right, but was relieved to the extent that I could eat and sleep normally again, and seemed to be reconciled to my condition, yet was expecting some great calamity, but was reconciled to it. One night, about a month later, I came in from my work and ate my supper, then sat down to rest a few minutes before lying down, and the thought came to my mind that something was going to take place with me that night. It seemed to me it might be I was going to die, and I thought that if I did it would be all right, for there was nothing I could do about it. I had been brought to the place to know my weakness, and to know God was all-powerful and did his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand nor say, Jehovah, why or what doest thou? Some time during the night I got into some kind of a condition that I will never be able to explain. It seemed that I was vanishing from the presence of everything, and I could not move any member of my body, neither could I speak. When I got to where I could speak I said, Lord, have mercy on me, and it seemed to me that I could see and feel an arm like unto a strong man's arm reach down under me and raise me, and I was delivered from that condition. Then my tongue was loosened, and it seemed to the praise of my God. I had a mind to join the church then, and began to wonder if they would have me. I felt that if they refused me it would be all right, for I was not fit to be numbered with them, yet I had a longing desire to have a home with these folks. I did not feel that I would add anything to them, but felt they would mean very much to me. Several times I went to the church to join with them, but had to wait for God's time. He adds to the church such as he would have to be saved. The day I joined I could not talk to the brethren. They received me on very

few words. I went home and began to worry about not telling the brethren much of anything and got in trouble about that, and thought that I would yet tell them. It went on for some time and I began to have some kind of an impression to preach, with the feeling that I would have to tell the brethren what God had done for me, and what he had done of his people. Now this impression seemed to me to be out of all reason. It seemed to me it was an impossibility for me to undertake to preach to people I looked upon as being much wiser than I was. I thought that would never do. But with all my thoughts and with all the experiences I trust God has been pleased to bring me through there is but one reason that I have been going to and fro for the last ten or twelve years endeavoring to preach Christ to his humble people as the way, the truth and the life, and that is that it was his divine will and purpose, and was from all eternity. If I am not a deceived mortal, time after time God has shown me my depravity and my utter dependence upon him for everything I have or do. For it is in him we live and move and have our continual being. So it is in the great providence of God that things are as they are. The great and eternal wisdom of the great and eternal God embraced and comprehended everything that has ever existed or ever will exist in time or eternity, both visible and invisible, and in that eternal thought and with his unlimited power he declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient time saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. I believe that he is unalterable, and I trust that he has given me a sweet hope in his Son and I, together with the whole household of faith, will ultimately inhabit the glory world and sing the glorious doctrine that I have endeavored to preach here to poor sinners who have been taught of God and have been made to realize that there is salvation in no other save Christ, and that is the doctrine of God's sovereign and electing grace, which is so sweet to me. We, as the children of God, have meat to eat that the world knows not of. God in his grace was pleased in eternity to preserve this food in his Son for his children, and the storehouse was so secure that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love him. The reason that we love him is that he first loved us and gave himself for us. I am not uneasy that there is anything coming up at any time that will hinder the children from eating every meal God has stored away in that great storehouse, and that Christ will prepare for them, or has prepared. They are fed as they get hungry and weak enough. God keeps them just strong enough to walk in his ways, and to know his judgments and to do them. God has made the difference. He forms the light and creates darkness. He makes good and he creates evil. Esau was blessed, too, but in no sense as Jacob. God made the difference. He hated Esau, yet he had just as much purpose in Esau as he had in Jacob. Although he hated Esau, yet

he must be blessed. God's purpose must be fulfilled in the wicked as much as in the righteous. He must be glorified. His work must praise him, and he shall be glorified in the damnation of these reprobates. In his eternal thought he embraced them, and he had a purpose in them. He will continue the rain on them as well as on the elect. They must go along together. It takes both of them for him to carry out and fulfill his eternal purpose in perfection, and it must be perfected, because he is the God of perfection, having even that he desireth. He is God and there is none else. He is God and there is none like him, inhabiting eternity, standing upon the circle of the earth, speaking to the mighty wind and it ceases to manifest its strength, causing the troubled waters to become calm. Who can be likened unto him? I am that I am, I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

In contending for these principles I meet much opposition, but, by the grace of God, I hope I have contended for them, and I trust that by his grace I will continue to preach nothing among the children of God but the doctrine of his electing grace. I do not think there is anything else that will satisfy the longing soul of a poor wayworn traveler who is seeking rest from a worn-out life of sin. The thought of the immutability of God fills my very soul, sometimes to the very brim. It is wonderful to have a hope in a God that is unchangeable. When we have the evidence that he loves us and gave himself for us we hear him saying that he died that we might live. Behold what manner of love is this, that we should be called the sons of God. Brethren, it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when we shall see him we shall be like him and be satisfied, and that will be enough.

I have just sketched a portion of what I trust this wonderful God has done for me, and a few thoughts concerning these great principles I feel he has shown me and which are more to me than life. My hope is that God will keep me by his grace to the end, that I will never depart from these principles, and that I may hold out faithful unto the end.

An unworthy brother, saved by the grace of God, if saved at all,

D. A. O'BRYANT.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., May 14, 1936.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—There is a subject which has been on my mind for years and I am not certain whether it is of God, given by his Holy Spirit, or whether it is of my own surmisings, and the only way I can prove the certainty of this is to share it with you, and let you who are the called of God be the judges in this matter. Now, when Christ was taken from the earth he had no generation (visibly speaking), but the old prophet said a seed should serve him, and it should be accounted to him for a generation. Now this seed comprises both Jew and Gentile, all who serve him, all who are called according to his purpose, and his purpose was to furnish a bride for Jesus. Isaac was chosen to pro-

duce the first of that seed. and Isaac was a Jew, as was Jesus, and a direct descendant of Abraham, and the covenant which God made with Abraham was an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, because God made it, and God said in him (that is, in Abraham) all the families of the earth should be blessed. We know God never changes, and what he told Abraham stands good to-day. A seed shall serve him, and all who are serving him to-day, although they are Gentiles, are of his generation, through the gift of God by grace. Paul tells us there is no difference. It is all of grace that any are called, and since they are all kept by the power of God, through grace, ready to be revealed in the last time, and they are each of them bought with a price, they are not their own. They were bought with the precious blood of Jesus when he was crucified. Oh such love! It is past and above our comprehension. How we should love and honor him with our lives. Yes, a living sacrifice unto our brethren, because they have all passed from death unto life by the same process, and it is all of grace, not one of them ever deserved one blessing from God. How it does humiliate me to think that God sent his darling Son into these low grounds of sin and sorrow to redeem such a rebel as I. Christ's bride is one with him, and how could she be part Jew and part Gentile? In this world it could not be so. It is so, but not in a spiritual sense, else they would not be one in glory. And when Paul tells us that the fullness of the Gentiles is brought in, this, as it occurs to me, is the last of the seed that should serve him, for soon Paul tells us that he will show us a mystery, and he tells us that we shall not all sleep, and he means by this that we shall not all die. Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none shall ever wake to weep. This is the faith which Jesus shall find upon earth when he comes to make up his jewels, and Paul tells us that they shall not prevent them that have fallen asleep, for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the anchangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. In another place Paul tells us we shall be changed, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds (and so shall we ever be with the Lord) to meet the Lord in the air.

I sometimes think I will never write any more, but little do we know what the Lord has determined we shall do. We are in his hands and he can give us strength to do all he has determined we shall do, and unless he both gives us the strength and the will to do we will not do. For some time I have not had the strength to write, neither have I had a mind to write to any one. I have just been in a dormant state, but I have enjoyed reading the dear old SIGNS and the Bible. They go together. One confirms the other, unless I am mistaken in it all, and they both get dearer to me as I grow older. I have lost all love for the world and its allurements (almost). Sometimes I feel that anything that is not praising God is not worth thinking about, then I grow cold

and lifeless and think I have no grace. Oh is there any one like me? I cumber the ground, but no fruit is found. Oh this flesh! If I did not believe that God has known just how weak I have been all through my life I would give up in despair. But God is all-wise, therefore he has known me always, and loved me even when I was rebelling against him. He is so longsuffering that he will be merciful even to our unrighteousness and our sins he will remember against us no more, for Jesus paid all our debt when he suffered for us on the cruel cross. He redeemed us to himself, a glorious church, not having spot, wrinkle or any such thing. There is no spot in thee. He has paid it all. All to him we owe. Oh can it be that when he looks upon us he can see nothing amiss? Can it be we are just as pure and spotless as Jesus is? It does not seem possible, but it mut be so, since Jesus is a complete Savior and paid all our debt of sin, past, present and future. Oh how we should love and adore him. He is so pure, while we are so vile and full of sin.

From the least one in his kingdom, saved by grace, if saved at all,

DAVIS BURCH.

FARMINGTON, Ky., Sept. 4, 1937.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I will say a few words for your consideration. Being a stranger here below, I am apt to say some very strange things. I am apt to say things that will sound very strange to the conditional workmongers of our day. But I hope what I may say will not sound strange to the saved people of God. I wish to say a few words about the doctrine of election, the sure salvation of the elect, the respect God has for his elect here in the world. I have already said something that would sound strange to some people, but I have not started out to please the ungodly, but I want to please God and his people, by setting forth his eternal truth as it is in him, and this will be done if he will enable me; if not, I will say things that will seem strange even to the people of God.

Election.—I want first to prove there is such a thing as election, or that God has an elect people here in the world. Peter, to strangers scattered throughout five different localities, says they are elect according to God's foreknowledge, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus. (1 Peter i. 1, 2.) So God has an elect people here in the world. In 1 Thessalonians i. 4, Paul says to this church, Brethren beloved, knowing your election of God. There in the mouth of two witnesses the fact is established that God has an elect family here in the world. Next to know is, is election conditional on the part of the creature? To know when election takes place shuts the mouths of all conditionalists concerning the matter. God, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ, according as he has chosen (or elected) us in him before the foundation of the world. (Eph. i. 4.) Here is some strange language to some people, but it shuts the mouths of gainsayers. If the election (or choice) took place before the

foundation of the world, how could it have been conditional on the part of the creature, when as yet there was no creature to perform conditions? Let the objectors answer. Is it, or is it not, a settled fact that God has an elect people here in the world? Is it, or is it not, a settled fact that the doctrine of eternal unconditional election is the truth? I cannot think these are strange sayings to God's people. So God has an elect people here in the world, and he elected them unto something, and that something is salvation. Peter says they were elected unto the sprinkling of Christ's blood. If that be true, they were elected unto salvation, for the blood of Jesus cleanses the elect only from all sin. Then Paul, in harmony with Peter, says to the church, But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God has from the beginning chosen you to salvation. (2 Thess. ii. 13.) So, we find here, there is no parting salvation from election, for one is unto the other. We were not chosen or elected half way to salvation and then left to go the other half by performing conditions. No, we are chosen all the way. So the Scriptures of eternal truth have settled it, that the salvation of the elect is as secure and unconditional as their election was sure and unconditional. So no conditional hand or arm was allowed to be thrust into the work of election and salvation. Jesus said, I looked, and there was none to help, and my own arm brought salvation. When he had by himself purged us from sin he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. (Heb. i. 3.) Why did he sit down on high? Because he had by himself finished the work of salvation for the elect here below. Not by blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he obtained eternal redemption for the elect (Heb. ix. 12), and so their redemption, or salvation, is finished, obtained, and this is the result of God's choice of them before the foundation of the world. Could anything make their salvation more sure than to have it done and finished? But some one says, You are making God a respector of persons. No, I am not making God a respector of persons, for he has been that ever since he has been God. If he had not been a respector of persons he never would have made choice of some people before the foundation of the world. It is my desire, if God will, to show that he still has respect to the people here in the world, that he made choice of before the world was. Let it be understood, that for the elect's sake the world was framed, and for their sake it stands, and he will keep them as the apple of his eye, and will supply all their needs. It is impossible for an Arminian to understand there are two distinct and separate families of people here in the world, or two generations, a generation of Jesus Christ and a generation of serpents, or vipers. (Matt. i. 1; xxiii. 33.) If they could understand these things then God would be defeated in hiding these things from the wise and prudent. (Matt. xii. 25.) If God had had no respect of persons he would have hid these things from all men, or he would

have revealed them to all people, but thanks be to him, he had respect to his own babes, but had no respect for the babes of the other family. Cain brought an offering unto the Lord of the fruit of the ground. Abel brought an offering unto the Lord of the firstlings of the flock, and of the fat thereof, and God had respect unto Abel and to his offering, but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. (Gen. iv. 4, 5.) Here it is in plain Bible words that God is a respector of persons. With Cain and Abel the two different generations, or families, or, in other words, the elect and nonelect began to be made manifest, and God's respect between the two shines brightly from the days of Cain and Abel to the judgment day, when the Lord shall come to earth with ten thousand of the heavenly host, and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from the other, and shall set his sheep on his right hand and the goats on his left. (Matt. xxv. 33.) Here the generation of Jesus are called sheep and the generation of vipers are called goats. Sheep means elect, but goats mean the reverse. Can the objector, or our conditional friends, tell what means or what conditions can be used to convert these goats into sheep, and how much money and how many protracted meetings it will take to keep these goats from going away into everlasting punishment? But they are still saying, Give us men and money and we will save the world for Christ. But Christ is still saying, They shall go away into everlasting torment. Let God be true and every man a liar.

Brethren, are my sayings strange to you? If so, cast them away. Here I close, begging to be counted worthy a seat at God's right hand.

Your little unworthy brother, I hope,

J. B. ADAMS.

SAN ANTONIO, Texas

DEAR EDITORS:—By request of dear brother and sister Staggs, I am sending you a letter written by dear Elder W. L. Slusher, which we all have enjoyed very much, and hope will be approved by you editors.

As ever, your brother in hope,

J. B. BOWDEN.

ONTARIO, California.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER STAGGS:—Yes, I hope in Christ Jesus our Lord, though I do feel too unworthy to address you dear ones thus. No, I do not feel worthy of the least of God's blessings, though I do hunger and thirst for his sweet blessings, if I am not altogether deceived. Dear ones, I am always saying or doing something wrong, and then, like old Peter, have to repent. Yes, I do weep over my misdoings, and it seems the only prayer I can pray (if any at all) is, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner.

Yes, we did receive your precious message to us two old sinners, and it surely brought joy to our poor souls, if not badly deceived. Dear ones, it found me very low down in the valley of darkness, where I seem to spend most of my time. But your sweet message

seemed to raise me up, and I hope I was enabled by the Spirit of the all-wise and all-powerful God to ascribe all the glory and honor to him, to whom all the praise, honor and glory belongeth; not to us poor finite creatures.

Now I want to write on the necessity of regeneration. Yes, that which Christ taught Nicodemus. You will find this language in John iii. 2, and if the Lord will be pleased to lead my little, weak mind I will try to write a few lines on this subjest; but if it is not his will to lead me then I will not be able to write to the comfort of God's dear children. Or unless there be a revelation to me, then what I say will be as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. "The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." We see this man was a man of the Pharisees, a ruler of the Jews. Now the answer of Jesus to this man: "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Then Nicodemus said unto him, "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?" He was looking at it from a natural standpoint. You see this man came to Jesus by night. Yes, he came looking to the law, which to my mind is the night spoken of here. In other words, he was in nature's darkness. Yet there had been something taking place with this man that caused him to come to Jesus, yet Jesus had not revealed himself to this ruler of the Jews, the chiefest among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely, so Jesus answered, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Now we hear Jesus telling this man, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Then he says to this man, "Marvel not that I say unto thee, Ye must be born again." We see in John i. 13, where Jesus says, "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." We now see, or hope we do, the necessity of regeneration, being born again. We also see what part of man is born again. It is not this flesh and blood; no, for flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom of God. Dear old Paul says that though the outward man perish, the inward man is renewed day by day. So then it must be an inner principle that is born of God. Not the whole man; no, I do not see it that way, if I see it at all. No, I do not see this old sinful body changed in the new birth, but I do believe this new man, which is Christ in you, yes, in this old tabernacle of clay, yes, the hope of glory, I say this new man does hold in subjection this old body. John says that he that is born of God doth not and cannot sin, because his seed remaineth in him. So we see that it cannot be this old fleshly man that is born again, for we see it doth sin. We see that Paul prayed thrice that the thorn be removed out of his flesh (which is sin), but the

answer to him was, Not so. My grace is sufficient for thee. It is needful that these things be, lest we be exalted above measure. Now we see these bodies of ours do have to go back to dust from whence they came, then when sin is finished it bring forth death. Yes, but if it were this old Adam that is born again, then there would be no death. But we hear one of the dear old servants saying, It is appointed unto man once to die. And Job hath said, Man that is born of woman is of but a few days and full of trouble. Now let us go to 2 Corinthians v. 17, and see what Paul is telling those Corinthian brethren: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Let me say here that I believe this dear old servant was looking forward to the resurrection when he said, "All things are become new." Yes, that is when these, our old bodies, shall be changed and fashioned like the glorious body of the Son of God. But if it is a fact that this old flesh of ours is born again, there would be nothing to resurrect. But we see Christ did not take sin out of the flesh, but he did condemn it in the flesh. We see in Galatians vi. 15, where Paul is speaking to the Galatians, he says, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." No, it is not by the law of works, but it is by grace ye are saved. Let us go to the second chapter of Ephesians, and see what Paul had to say to those brethren: "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Now we will go to Titus iii. 5. Here the apostle says, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." So it is not on conditions of the creature, but it is a free gift from God. I will now go to James i. 18. Here we hear the dear old servant saying, "Of his own will [meaning God's will] begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." Yes, God worketh in them both the will and the do of his good pleasure. Yes, it is Christ in them (that is, all his chosen, elect ones) the hope of glory. Now let us go to 1 Peter i. 23. It says, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." He says in the twenty-fourth verse, "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away." So that is the condition of man that is in this flesh.

Paul hath said, In this flesh dwelleth no good thing. To will is present, but how to perform that which is good I find not. He is here speaking of his flesh. He teaches that it is not this flesh and blood man that is born again, and speaks of the inward man being renewed day by day. 1 John iii. 9, says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." Then we cannot for a moment conclude that it is this old flesh of ours that is born again. No, for it is prone to sin. Yes, "The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." In Romans vii. 25, we hear Paul saying, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."

Dear brother and sister, I have written this as it came to my little, weak mind. I know I have only hinted at the many great and sublime things that are contained herein, and, too, I know it is awkwardly expressed, but knowing a hint to the wise (which I believe you dear ones to be) is sufficient, I rest assured that you can understand what I have been trying to say, and, too, you can understand my position on these sacred Scriptures. I believe, or hope I do, that all these Scriptures I have referred to set at naught the idea of this Adam man being born again. If he were born again there would be no resurrection, for there would be nothing to resurrect if this Adam man is born again. No, I do not believe these old bodies of ours are born of the Spirit of God. No, no, but I do believe the inward man does hold in subjection the old body. Now if I understand anything at all, I understand that these old bodies of ours will not be changed until the morning of the resurrection, then is when they will be raised out of the graves. And Paul says, This, my vile body, shall be changed. Yes, made a spiritual body. Then we (or his chosen ones) will be caught up "to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Here is a great deal opened up to me.

But I must close. I beg you dear ones to forgive me for writing such a letter. Pray for us, especially me, an old sinner.

Your unworthy servant and brother, the least of all, if one at all,

W. L. SLUSHER.

AUBURN, Washington.

DEAR EDITORS:—I wonder if you will please tell me if there are any ministers or meetings anywhere near me. I have been a believer of th dear Old Baptist faith for many years, but have never been baptized. I thought if there were any near me I would like to go and be baptized, buried with my dear Savior in that blessed hope of eternal life beyond this sinful world. I love to read my Bible. My mother and daughter were both members. I never thought I was fit to join the church, but I feel I would like to be baptized. I am past sixty-five years of age. My mother and daughter have both passed

on and I am alone and get very lonely at times. My Bible is all the comfort I have in this sinful world. Sometimes I go to the meetings near me, but they are not like the Old Baptist meetings; they have too much of the world mixed in with their preaching. I like to hear the Scriptures quoted, and not worldly things. I do not want to be led away from the old paths. When I was a young girl they had meetings at my grandfather's house, so I heard a great deal of Old Baptist preaching in my younger days, but I have lived in the State of Washington for thirty-two years this coming September 25th. They did have meetings in Seattle for a time, and that was where my daughter was baptized. I am from New York State. I know I am a sinner and if I am saved it will be by the grace of God. Nothing I can do will save me. "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."—1 Cor. ii. 9, 10. "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven."—2 Cor. v. 1, 2.

I will thank you very kindly for what information you can give me.

In christian love, I am sincerely,

(MRS.) JENNIE CLIFFORD.

[WE publish the foregoing letter hoping that some brother or sister may be able to furnish the writer with the information she is seeking. Her address is Mrs. Jennie Clifford, 25 First Street, N. E., Auburn, Wash.—ED.]

GRIFFITHSVILLE, West Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—As my subscription is a little past due, I am sending two dollars to pay for another year. I have been taking the SIGNS, off and on, for forty years or more. I am thankful to the Lord for such good, firm editors and publishers, and hope you may live long to write for and publish the SIGNS. I am nearly sixty-six years old, and hope I can take it the rest of my days, for I surely love to read the good letters and editorials.

From one of the least, if one at all,

JAMES W. WADE.

UTOPIA, Texas.

DEAR PUBLISHERS:—Find inclosed a check for one year's subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. My parents took this paper for, I guess, fifty years or more. They are gone now. I have been trying to satisfy myself with a limited paper for several years, because it was near home. While there are some good articles in this paper, they fail to satisfy.

Respectfully yours,

DAN BARTLETT.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1938.

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DEUTERONOMY XXXIII. 11-15

"BLESS, Lord, his substance, and accept the work of his hands: smite through the loins of them that rise against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise not again. And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders. And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, and for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon, and for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills."

These words as recorded in Holy Writ were expressed by Moses as he blessed the children of Israel before his death, and as we read them there is a beauty and glory, which we hope to point out, that our readers may share with us.

The first of our text, "Bless, Lord, his substance," are words expressed by those who have the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, but with patience wait for it (faith). They wait patiently for the manifestations of His power and all works of carnal reasoning are rejected, which rise against the teachings wrought by the working of the power and demonstration which has worked in them, and by that spirit they smite through the loins of them that rise against Him. We feel that every sinner who has been taught by the Lord has cried, "Bless, Lord, his substance," realizing at the same time an unworthiness to look up to Him. Ofentimes we hear individuals say, "Bless the Lord," which was for things they had to consume with their lust, but the child of grace is made glad in (His substance) the relation of faith, that rests in his heart. We truly hope the gladness felt in our hearts for the manifestations of the works of God are wrought by the Spirit, and are to the praise of God. We often rejoice when he are viewing the wonderful works of God in all created things, and every thing standing out distinctly, as though it had a kingdom all to itself, but the beauty of the kingdom which is not of this world is hidden from the natural eye, and does not come by observation, nor of things that appear, but is given to those to

whom the arm of the Lord is revealed, and this revelation comes by being born again, of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God. God upholds all things by the word of his power.

We have two individuals mentioned in our text (Benjamin and Joseph) whose names are often mentioned, and perhaps we shall bring out things which, to our mind, they represent in this text, that we have never heard uttered before, and we hope will be of comfort to our readers, and also instructive. They are brothers, having the same father and mother, and were raised in the same environment, but we note their lives are entirely different, and we feel each one was fitted for the work God had purposed to be done, and Benjamin, the beloved of the Lord, shall dwell in safety by him, and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders. As we read of Benjamin, he was kept closely by his father, lest he should be taken and the ties of love for him that were in Rachael be grieved, but we note he must also come down to Egypt and receive from the lord of the land the blessings God had stored for him, and he was a son of Israel, the soldier of God, which Jacob was. We note in Joseph a type of both servant and lord. First, when he was a lad God taught him by exercising his mind in deep sleep and causing him to dream mysterious things, which gave him meditation during his wake hours, and to the extent that he told them to his brothers, and the vividness with them caused them to envy Joseph, because of the subjection they would be brought into under their brother. They referred to him as the dreamer, which is applied to all of like precious faith and all who are taught by the Spirit and given a foretaste of things that are to come to them in the future, and demonstrates the power that brings to pass things that were revealed. In these things Joseph is a representative of the taught of the Lord.

"Blessed of the Lord be his land." By reading the record of the life of Joseph while in Egypt we gather the manifested blessings of God upon him, and not only Joseph, but all Israel shared the blessings of God in Egypt, and were made to reside there until God purposed for them to come out and go into the wilderness, where he had purposed they should journey until the time appointed they should enter the promised land, or rather, go from Goshen into the wilderness, and when the time was fully come Pharaoh was made willing for all the host of Israel to go from Goshen and be deprived of all the servitude rendered to his kingdom by the Israelites, to be relieved of the sufferings (of the Egyptians) in the flesh, and the sufferings of the Egyptians were according to God's purpose, to subdue the flesh and make them willing by his own power that he should have the glory in the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage, and at the proper time Israel saw the power of God manifested in them, by which they could sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, and exclaim, The Lord has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his

rider hath he thrown into the sea. (Exodus xv. 1.) Many things are spoken about the travels of the children of Israel, which come experimentally to spiritual Israel, and they see the travel of the way the Lord has led them all the days of their lives, and the afflictions suffered, and how wonderfully he has delivered them, and all through this life's pilgrimage the child of God does not tire from following the Lord, and, like Israel all the forty years in the wilderness, "Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell." —Deut. viii. 4.

Benjamin, "the beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him." The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by the power of God, in his kingdom, and God sends his servants to feed them, and God's servant shall ask after them, and shall ask God to send them to his servant that he might receive a brother indeed, the son of his mother, the church, and no half-brother can take the place of that brother (Joseph's brother Benjamin). All the sons of Jacob could not bring to Joseph what Benjamin did, and Joseph fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept upon his neck. (Gen. xlv. 14.) These demonstrations are a true type of the love of God in the hearts of the people of God, for his Spirit subdues the flesh, and gives a feeling of forgiveness to those who trespass, and when they are brought to the storehouse of God they cannot buy that corn, for God has stored it up for them, because of his abundant mercies, and we do not find where there was any enmity in the heart of Joseph for the cruelty he suffered from the hands of his half-brothers, but they were given of all the abundance God had stored for Israel. God sent Joseph down to Egypt, and he brought all the household of Israel at the time he had purposed, but they were made hungry before they were humbled to go down, and how Joseph's half-brothers writhed in their feelings at the thought of impressing their father to send Benjamin down to Egypt with them, and the suffering they felt because of the lie which they told their father, and the deception in keeping all that evil of selling Joseph from him, no wonder they felt willing to remain down in Egypt. We note how easy it was for Israel, even after they were delivered from bondage, and had all the manifestations of God's power surrounding them, they would faint at the thought of the Amorites (their giants and high walled cities) after God had told them that he would go before them, but Moses had appointed their chief men of each tribe to hear the causes between their brethren and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that was with him. "Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man: for the judgment is God's: and the cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me, and I will hear it."—Deut. i. 17. We receive this instruction as the type of the church of God, and his servants he has made overseers, and the unction of the Spirit bids them to

judge righteously, and fear not the face of man.

We have not written all we see related to our text, nor do we feel able to, but we can say that the half has not been told, and we commend our thoughts to you, dear kindred in Christ Jesus, and ask you to faithfully weigh them in righteousness, and all that does not coincide with your experience, and travel as a pilgrim and stranger in this world, cast it from you, and to any one who has been deprived of the rites and privileges of the church relations, do you not feel like Joseph, that you could fall upon the neck of all Israel? If you do, the ones who did you wrong will feel more hurt than you, and you will feel an acquitted conscience by not holding malice against a brother; but as long as you can hold malice, and have no love for that brother you feel did you wrong you are not as a little child, and could not affiliate with little children. Take Joseph as a pattern.

May God bless his Zion everywhere.

C. W. V.

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CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder H. H. Lefferts.)

The Delaware Association, in session with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, May 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1938, to the sister churches composing the same, and to the churches, associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greetings in christian love and fellowship.

Dear Brethren:—Directly on the threshold of Holy Writ, immediately on the opening of Genesis i., we are greeted with the wondrous, profound doctrine of the Trinity. The whole of the Godhead was concerned in the stupendous work of creation. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." And then spake the Word: "God said, Let there be light." Thus, God the Father, God the Word (or Son), and God the Spirit conjoined in projecting forth the grand work of creation. Farther on in Genesis i., in verse twenty-six, the Trinity meets us again. "And God said, Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness." Thus, the fullness of the Godhead covenanted with the three divine Persons thereof to bring about the formation of man out of the dust of the ground. Passing on to Genesis iii. 22, the doctrine of the Three-One God is seen here: "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of *us*, to know good and evil." Such pronouns as used in above

passages, "us" and "our," do not occur except where more than one person is concerned, thus going far to establish conclusively and scripturally the reality of the uncontrovertible truth that the Godhead subsists in more than one Person. Now, as to how many, the truth is decidedly more unveiled when we come to the New Testament. "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word [or Son], and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."—1 John v. 7. In Matthew iii. 16, 17, we have it attested by divine authority that both the Father and the Holy Spirit were present at the baptism of the Son. Again, the Three-One God is declared to be the divine Initiator of the gospel commission, Matthew xxviii. 19: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Again, this doctrine comes into prominence in the concluding benediction of the second epistle to the Corinthians. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." Consistently with this doctrine of the trinity of Persons in the Godhead, the testimony of inspiration is emphatic and conclusive that there are not three gods, but *one* and *one* only. "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me."—Isaiah xlv. 5. "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord."—Deut. vi. 4. Space will not admit of our citing all the passages which bear upon this teaching of the Trinity, of the Three in Unity and of the One in Three. Over and over, the Scriptures reiterate that there are three distinct Persons in the Godhead, yet at the same time the Godhead is *one* God only. Nor is it wrong to speak of God as being a Person, for so does the inspired word itself in Hebrews i. 3, where it is declared that Jesus Christ is the "express image of his person," that is, of the Person of God. Nor are we to understand from this that God is possessed of body, parts or passions such as characterize the finite creature man, yet is God immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, every way infinite, most holy, most wise, most free, most absolute in his divine and glorious Person. We do not understand that the Trinity is merely designating the office-work of the Godhead, as some teach. For instance, it is sometimes said that the title "Father" applies to God in his office-work of creation, that the title "Son" applies to God in the office-work of redemption, that the "Holy Spirit" is God in the office-work of sanctification. We refuse to limit the Trinity of the Godhead to this realm of mere officialdom. Aside from all the various offices which the Godhead administers, there were three distinct Persons in the Godhead from eternity irrespective of any office-work which God has accomplished, is accomplishing, or will yet accomplish. These are not three different Persons, but distinct Persons. There is a distinction which Holy Writ reveals as subsisting between the Persons in the Godhead, but no difference between

them. On this subject, we cannot forbear from quoting from that eminently spiritual servant of God, John Bunyan: "The Godhead is but One, yet in the Godhead there are Three. These Three are called the Father, the Son (Word), and the Holy Spirit, each of which is really, naturally and eternally God; yet there is but one God. The Father is true God, the Son is true God, the Spirit is true God. Yet the Father is one, the Son is one, the Spirit is one. The Father is one of himself, the Son is one by the Father, the Spirit is one from them both. Yet the Father is not above the Son, nor the Spirit inferior to either. The Father is God, the Son is God, the Spirit is God. Among the Three, there is not superiority. As to time, the Father is from everlasting, so is the Son, so is the Spirit. As to nature, the Son is of the substance of the Father, and the Spirit is of the substance of them both. The fullness of the Godhead is in the Father, is in the Son and is in the Holy Ghost. Each of these is God over all, yet no Trinity of Gods, but one God in the Trinity." This principle of doctrine is fundamental to our salvation. It cannot be grasped by human intelligence nor plumbed by finite reason, yet it is plainly taught throughout the Scriptures of divine revelation. In whatsoever measure we are led into it, it is by faith alone, not by natural faith, but by that God-given faith which is the evidence of things not seen, the substance of things hoped for. Lord, ever more give us this faith!

It is a blessed privilege to again be assembled together in associate capacity, to again greet brethren and friends whom we seldom see, and to have preaching by ministers we seldom hear. May peace and prosperity from the Lord abound throughout our beloved Zion. "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." The cooperation of interested friends in aiding to entertain this meeting is delightful to behold. Thank the Lord for such friendship which springs from heart interest in the truth. The hospitality of the homes which have been opened to us for entertainment over night is soul-cheering and heart-warming. We have come together in this meeting for the worship of God, that the sheep of his pasture may be fed with knowledge and understanding. It is not that we may put ourselves forward so as to be seen and heard of ourselves, but that Christ and him crucified may alone be adored and honored and glorified.

The next session of this associational meeting is appointd to be held, the Lord willing, in Philadelphia, Pa., in May, 1939, with the Salem Church.

DOUGLASS L. TOPPING, Mod.
JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Melissa C. Sparks, Calif., $3; Mrs. Carrie H. Horton, N. Y., $1; Hewitt Osborn, N. Y., $2; "A friend," Calif., $1.50; John F. Davis, La., $8.

IN MEMORIAM.

LITTLE FLOCK CHURCH, of Altus, Oklahoma, feels very deeply the loss of our dear sister, S. K. HUGHES, who departed this life April 28th, 1938, after a long illness. Funeral services were conducted at her home in Altus by her pastor, Elder W. N. Green. Burial was in Martha Cemetery, by the side of her late husband, Elder J. L. Hughes. She was a charter member of Little Flock Church, and her faith in God and loyalty to her church made her a shining example to all her fellow church members. The church extends deepest sympathy to her bereaved children. The church voted to have a copy of this notice spread upon the church Minutes, and a copy be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

W. N. GREEN, Moderator.
(MRS.) LOU KESLER, Church Clerk.

THE Pleasant Valley Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Kingman, Kansas, desires to express a deep sense of loss in the death of our highly respected and dearly loved brother, W. F. WINFREY. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family. Brother Winfrey held membership in this church from the time of its constitution until his death, during which time he never missed a meeting in nearly forty-two years. He served his church as clerk for thirty-six years.

We desire that a copy of this memorial be recorded in the church minutes and that it be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

J. R. HARDY, Moderator.
H. F. CATE, Clerk, pro tem.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MISS SALLIE HAVENER, our sister in Christ, departed this life of earth from the home of her sister, sister Martha Roller, and her husband, C. C. Roller, 1611 North Seventeenth Street, Arlington, Virginia, May 17th, 1938, aged 87 years. She was the daughter of the late James B. and Hortensia Havener, and was born in the vicinity of Leesburg, Loudoun County, Virginia. Funeral services were held May 20th at the Union Cemetery, Leesburg, Va. She was baptized July 19th, 1885, by the late Elder E. V. White into membership with the New Valley Church, near Leesburg. All her nearly fifty-three years in the church she has lived a consistent life in harmony with the doctrine she believed and with the faith in Christ she professed. She had not been enjoying good health for a long time before she passed away, and was known many times to sigh and long to depart from the scene of her earthly pilgrimage and to be with Christ at home. I have seldom seen such faithfulness and devotion to the meetings of the church as she showed, many times being present when she was scarcely able to sit up. None of the meetings were very near her home, thus making it necessary for her to ride some miles in order to be present; yet notwithstanding that, she could never feel satisfied to remain at home if she was at all able to get into an auto so as to get to the meetings. Many times, when doubtless others would have felt they had a good excuse to stay at home, she wanted no excuse, but came. She was a firm believer in all the principles of the doctrine of God's free and sovereign grace, being well settled in the absolute predestination of all things and in the unconditional choice of God of his people made in Christ before the world began. We shall all greatly miss her.

May the dear Lord strengthen and support our dear sister Roller in her loneliness, she being now the sole survivor of the immediate family. And may the church and all true believers composing our congregations seek, by the grace of God, to emulate the example of faithfulness set before us by sister Sallie.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

JOHN JORDON FRENCH, only son of Dr. John William and sister Velma Jordon French, of Palestine, Texas, was born in Athens, Texas, April 3rd, 1922, and died May 30th, 1938, making his age 16 years, 1 month and 27 days. Doctor and Mrs. French, with John, left Athens in October, 1924, and located in Palestine, where John grew up. In many respects he was a boy of unusual qualities, marked for his activities in school work and his sterling character and manhood displayed among his athletic associates. John had just finished his junior year in High School and was an enthusiastic member of the 1938 tract team, in which he lettered. He had cemented a close friendship with all his schoolmates, and endeared himself to both young and old, who knew him for his splendid and manly character. The young man met what seemed an untimely and tragic end. After finishing his duties in school, with some younger associates he went out to the edge of town and engaged in a little ball game. Later they decided to take a swim in a nearby pool. John was the first to take a plunge into the water, which is noted for its low temperature, being known by the neighbors in the community as the "Iceberg Pool," and is quite deep. John, not knowing the nature of the water, and likely being warm from his recent exercises, it is presumed that the sudden shock chilled his blood and caused cramps, resulting in his drowning.

Brief funeral services were held at the home, 209 West Pine Street, Palestine, and also at Pleasant Grove Cemetery (boyhood home of his grief-stricken father), some twenty miles distant, where services were concluded, conducted by the writer, assisted by Mr. Calvin Nelson, pastor of the First Baptist Church, of Palestine. Short talks were also made by the young man's foot ball coach and two young comrades, who spoke very touchingly and paid beautiful tributes to the fallen player. Surviving are his father, mother and other relatives. One aunt, sister Grace Jordon, of Philadelphia, Pa., was present at the funeral, and remained a few days with her grief-stricken sister and her husband. John was a first cousin to sister Helen Jones, also of Philadelphia, remembered by many of the Primitive Baptists for some of her beautiful writings in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Yes, he will be missed, not only by his immediate family, but also by his host of schoolmates and many of the church members, who had grown accustomed to seeing him drive up to the church meetings with his mother. While his life seemingly was cut short, yet his kindly manner, humble disposition and obedient traits are achievements which inspire us all to higher and nobler things. To the father and mother, may we again endeavor to impress the familiar words of the humble servant of God, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord," that the sorrows and burdens through which we are called to pass may be glorified benedictions to inspire us on in the cause of truth and righteousness, and enable us to say, Not our will, but thine be done.

In hope of mercy,

L. D. ROSE.

W. L. EDWARDS was born in Buchanan County, Virginia, April 24th, 1862, and departed this life April 16th, 1938, making his stay on earth 75 years, 11 months and 22 days. He was married to Nancy Alice Cochrum, daughter of John I. and Nancy Ann Cochrum, June 6th, 1888, and to their union were born twelve children, seven boys and five girls. All these lived to be grown, excepting one girl, who died at the age of nine years. His parents were Elder Lewis Edwards and Mary Edwards. He became concerned about his eternal welfare at a very early age, and professed a hope in Christ and joined Mount Pleasant Church of Primitive Baptists about the year 1896, and was baptized by Elder J. T. Stinson. Soon after, he was liberated to talk in public, and later was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry by Elder W. B. Sutherland, Reen Singleton, Nathan Edwards, and Deacons Mire Edwards and E. S. Counts.

Funeral services were held Sunday, April 17th, conducted by Rean Singleton and Hadley Edwards. He requested that his body be not buried until three days after he passed away, so burial did not take place until April 19th. Preaching was had by E. S. Stevens and Gorman Sutherland, then his body was laid in the grave beside that of his father, in the Arrington Cemetery, Dickenson County, Virginia. He leaves to mourn their loss a widow, ten children and one brother, I. M. Edwards, who lives near Birchleaf, Virginia. His children are as follows: Mrs. Sarah Silcox, Castlewood, Va., John Edwards, Dante, Va., Lewis Edwards, Decota, W. Va., Dave Edwards, Dante, Va., Mrs. Minnie Hicks, Castlewood, Va., Mrs. Nannie Ramsey, Dante, Va., Bud Edwards, Dante, Va., Mrs. Bertha Osboen, Helton, Va., Steve Edwards, Berwin, W. Va., Bascom Edwards, Castlewood, Va. He was a cripple for about eleven years. One day he boarded a passenger train and the train started before he was inside and he fell and the train ran over him and he suffered a broken leg, which he had removed from his body, and thus remained a cripple the rest of his days. He was a strong believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone, and was ready at all times to give a reason for the hope he had of heaven and immortal glory. He was always ready to defend the doctrine of the Old Primitive Baptist faith. He enjoyed going to meeting, and did go as long as he was able to. When Christ comes the second time without sin unto salvation to gather his people home the grave that now holds him will no longer hold him. He will rise up with all the redeemed of God, and them that are alive and remain on earth shall not hinder them that sleepeth.

Written by his nephew,

S. P. EDWARDS.

MRS. MARY R. KOONTZ departed this life at her late home, in Ashland, Illinois, Thursday evening, May 26th, 1938, aged 92 years, 6 months and 7 days. She was born at Luray, Virginia, November 18th, 1845, and was married to Samuel Koontz in the year 1865. Following their marriage Mr. and Mrs. Koontz moved to Cass County, Illinois, settling on a farm west of Ashland, where they resided until 1916, when they moved to Ashland. Mr. Koontz died five years ago. Mr. and Mrs. Koontz both united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Yatesville, Ill., in August, 1897. In the passing of sister Koontz, we have lost a faithful friend. We miss her pleasant countenance, her noble spirit and bright example. "She is not dead, but sleeping;" in our memory she still lives.

Funeral services were held at the Baptist Church in Ashland, May 28th, 1938, at two o'clock p. m., conducted by Elder William I. Dobbs, of Girard, Ill. Her body was laid to rest beside her husband, in Yatesville Cemetery. The following nephews of the deceased acted as casket-bearers: Glenn Sinclair, Harry Harding, Bert Thomas, Sam Thompson, Arthur Ayres and Richard Allen.

FRANKIE McDANIEL.

MARGARET JANE MELTON was born April 18th, 1866, and died April 5th, 1938, making her stay on earth 71 years, 11 months and 17 days. She was united in marriage to J. Everett Melton, June 17th, 1891. She is survived by her husband, four children, Mrs. Nannie Carney, Mrs. Edith Sommer, Charles B. and James Melton, eleven grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, one sister, Mrs. Mattie Williams, two brothers, Sam and Wesley Bailey, and a host of relatives and friends. The writer was called to conduct the funeral services, which were held in Poca, W. Va. Mrs. Melton never united with the church militant, but was a firm believer in the sovereign grace of God, and put no trust in the help of man, and we feel sure she was a child of God. Her home was always open to the Old Baptist people, and she enjoyed their company and attended their meetings whenever she could. May God enable her husband and children to bow in humble submission to his will, for the Lord's will will be done.

J. C. HAMMOND.

MEETINGS.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by Elder R. Lester Dodson in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in July (31st). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, (third floor) over Newberry's store, Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church holds meetings the fourth Sunday of each month at 1026 East Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Meeting begins at 10:30 a. m., dismisses for lunch and reconvenes at 2 o'clock p. m. Meeting days have been changed from the first to the fourth Sunday of each month. No Saturday or night meetings.

BURLIE HALL, Pastor
W. H. CAVE, Ass't Pastor.
(MRS.) H. B. CURLIE, Church Clerk

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

Cloth binding, 75c each. Paper covers, single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and all to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
MIDDLETOWN, N Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 106. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1938. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SALVATION BY GRACE.

THE wise builder looks well to his foundation to see that it is firmly laid and sufficiently strong to support the complete building before he commences to erect the superstructure; then, if he builds wisely, squares and plumbs all by the foundation and corner-stone, the entire structure will harmonize; otherwise he will find contradictions and misfits to constantly plague him in his effort to build. There are certain fundamentals underlying this most glorious of all God's works, which, regardless of where or from what angle we approach it, we must respect and hold those truths inviolate. Salvation is of the Lord. He is the author and finisher of it. Every step in the achievement of it from its inception to the culmination is embraced and settled in one covenant, every stipulation of which is ordered, sworn to, sealed and made immutably certain of fulfillment. (2 Sam. xxiii. 5; Heb. vi. 17-20.) Both in the purpose to save and in the execution of that purpose, God is an independent sovereign; without a counsellor, unprovoked, uninduced, he hath done whatsoever he pleased in heaven, in earth, in seas and in all deep places. (Psalms cxxxv. 6; Rom. xxxiv. 36.) Salvation from the first great purpose to the last grand end is wholly of grace, independent of and entirely separate from worthiness or merit in or of the ones who receive it. (Eph. ii. 8-10; Rom. xi. 5, 6.) In the very nature of grace it could not but be so. It cannot divide honors with any agent. Either is it wholly of grace or it is not by grace at all. The whole scope of this marvelous work subsists in two great gifts: the gift by the Father of the elect to Christ to be his bride, his church; and the gift of Christ to the church to be her husband and head in an indissoluble union. In the one are title, honor, position, wealth and glory to be conferred; in the other enmity, weakness, poverty, disgrace, shame, rebellion, sin and death to be overcome and put away before this

union can be honorably consummated, and the glory of God exalted. The achieving of this noble purpose is called salvation, and is entrusted to Christ, who voluntarily assumed the sacred responsibility, accepting all the names and titles belonging, as a certain seal of the imposing obligations. Not obligations to the chosen bride, to be, but to the Father with whom he is bound in covenant. This covenant is called, "The eternal purpose which he [God] purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Eph. iii. 11. The subjects of this salvation are sinners of the family of Adam, whose offspring they are, and in whom they became involved in sin and death by the one offense of Adam, who was both their seminal and judicial head. (Rom. v. 17-19.) Because the subjects of this salvation possess no qualities in themselves, neither inherent nor acquired, which are meritorious, but are wholly unworthy of and separated from the remotest right to any claim upon the Christ by whom salvation is wrought out, and the blessings in and through him, by which salvation is communicated, this salvation is said to be by grace. (2 Tim. i. 9.) Because all things that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, were created by him who is the image of the invisible God, and for him (Col. i. 10), therefore the purpose of God to save some of the fallen race of Adam, and leave others to the just consequences of their sins to perish everlastingly, did not terminate in the ultimate happiness of the former and the ultimate misery of the latter; but every purpose of God must have for its final end the glory of God. The testimony of Holy Writ unites in support of this truth. "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."—Rom. ix. 22, 23. "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."—1 Cor. x. 31. We deem these to be essential truths, and comprehend the foundation and framework of the christian's hope; and are so clearly and abundantly taught in the sacred record that there is little cause for arguing the proofs of them in the present treatise.

Election is one important branch of salvation by grace, and is the sovereign act of God. To elect is to choose, to express a preference for this rather than that. The very nature of the term requires that there be two or more objects from which some are taken and some are left, or refused. If all were taken there would be no preference given, no choice made. If the subjects of salvation are eternal children, the offspring of God as the children of Adam are the offspring of Adam; then an innate right to the heavenly patrimony inheres as an essential part of their being, and hence is in no sense of grace. Any theory which sets up a relationship between the Savior and the saved, as a ground for their eternal happiness, which is not established by grace, denies that salvation is by grace and makes a farce of the doctrine of election. "But

we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."—2 Thess. ii. 13, 14. Here it is plainly stated that these brethren, whom the Lord loved, were chosen to this salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, and that the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ was to be obtained in this way; and not by an innate right which eternally inheres in the ones chosen. Bible election is called, "The election of grace" (Rom. xi. 5); and those chosen and those refused were of necessity of the same kind and class, in like circumstances and standing in the same need; or it could not have been an election of grace. Moreover: If those appointed to obtain salvation through Jesus Christ (1 Thess. v. 9) were not equally sinners and exposed to the same degree of condemnation and punishment as those rejected shall receive, then their appointment was not the sovereign act of Jehovah, because the difference between the objects compared was sufficient grounds for bias; and the salvation following their appointment could not be by grace, because of supposed merit in those chosen or appointed. Any supposition which proceeds upon a hypothesis which recognizes a distinction that would deny the equal guilt of those who were chosen to obtain salvation and those who were passed by, and that they equally deserve to perish forever, denies that there is either equity in the law or grace in the gospel. It throws the whole economy of the salvation of sinners into the utmost confusion, and strips the gospel of grace of all its charm and beauty.

A casual survey of the names and titles of him who came, full of grace and truth, to accomplish the salvation of sinners will afford a comprehensive view of the scope of the work which he came to do, and the thoroughness with which he had engaged to complete it; also the complete history of those he came to save is unveiled in these names and titles which he wears. In fact, they represent a complete transcript of the covenant of grace.

Redeemer: to purchase the freedom of his people from sin and death and the power of the grave. Surety: to liquidate the insolvent's debts. Lamb of God: to be a sacrifice, and take away the sin of his people. The Lord our Righteousness: to justify the ungodly and present them faultless before the Father's glory. Propitiation: to satisfy the demands of infinite justice against his people. High Priest: to offer his own body a sacrifice acceptable to God. Mediator: to stand between the offender and the offended and represent the interests of both. Life and Light: by which his children live and walk. King: who reigns in righteousness in and over his people. Savior: who ordained, established, executed, imparted and perfected salvation for the elect. Good Shepherd: who laid down his life for the sheep and delivered them from

the power of darkness and the jaws of death, into the Shepherd's fold. Captain of our Salvation: who met by himself and subdued all our foes, made an end of sin, destroyed him that had the power of death, conquered death and the grave and put all enemies under his feet. Resurrection: who in holy triumph bore his children through death and the grave to immortal victory in eternal bliss. Intercessor: who is at the right hand of God in the Majesty on high (the court of highest authority, whose judgments are final), representing every interest of his people, and always causing us to triumph in Christ. Notice that every name and title of the Son of God, as well as every type under the legal dispensation, and every prophecy concerning him, pointing to his mission in the world strongly emphasize that his mission was to glorify his Father in the salvation of sinners.

Let us make a brief inventory of their needs. They became sinners by transgressing the holy law given by their Creator, and died under its penalty in trespasses and sin. This corrupted the whole course of nature and left them corrupt from the sole of the foot even unto the head, with no soundness in them, having no hope and without God in the world. There is none righteous, no, not one; and without holiness no man can see God. But God, who is rich in mercy and full of grace, for his great love wherewith he loved them, even when they were dead in sin, hath quickened them together in Christ. He chose those upon whom he set his love with nothing, absolutely nothing, in themselves as a cause for that love or choice; but freely, sovereignly, independently Jehovah willed to choose this and refuse that. "With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?" is a challenge that has never yet been answered. He chose those whom he would have mercy on and predestinated to adopt them as his children by Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved. (Eph. i. 5, 6.) It will be noticed that every step in the accomplishment of the salvation of the elect is to the praise of the glory of God's grace. Grace is the exalted Sovereign in the matter of salvation, who takes charge and reigns; enters the strongholds of sin, strips it of its power, disarms the strong man, takes possession of the house in which they dwell and spoils their goods, dismantles their fortifications, breaks down their bulwarks, and brings them into complete subjection. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound [notice that MUCH MORE]: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord."—Rom. v. 20, 21. Jehovah chose his people in Christ before the foundation of the world, even before they had being, when all futurity existed only in the purpose and thoughts of God. Here the whole covenant of redemption was ordered in all (both persons and

things) and sure. "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."—Isaiah xiv. 24. Christ was given as the covenant to the people of God, and he was full of grace and truth. Every grace blessing was in him, and he is the truth of every type and offering under the law, and of all prophecy concerning the hope and salvation of the elect of God. The Father gave them eternal life in Christ and he brought it and gave it to them as a gift of grace. "This is the record [which is in heaven], that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."—1 John iii. 11. "As thou hast given him [Christ] power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."—John xvii. 2. Christ is that eternal life which he gives to the heirs of promise. "This is the true God, and eternal life."—1 John v. 20. Only those who partake of Christ's flesh and blood can have this eternal life. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you."—John vi. 53. The first relation which the people chosen to be heirs of salvation bore to God was that of creature to their Creator in common with all mankind; and of necessity prior to their creation they had no being except it could be said they existed in the purpose and thoughts of Jehovah. They, together with all of their kind (all of the race of man), were dealt with as rational creatures under the law given them by their Creator. This was a law of justice, and consequently could grant no immunities nor show any favors. The people whom God had purposed to glorify were as certainly exposed to everlasting condemnation for the transgression of the law as were those left out of that purpose. This was definitely proven when all came under the penalty of the broken law and had the sentence of death executed against them because of the offense of one, or by the one offense in the morning of time. All died together in sin: "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."—Eph. ii. 1-3. Here all distinction between those quickened and those not quickened is completely erased, so far as their standing as creatures is concerned; and Paul's questions, Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? and, Are we any better than they? must find the answer outside of the creature, and in the gift of God by grace, if a distinction is ever to exist.

Thus when the great Sovereign of all worlds made choice of certain of his creatures, whom he purposed to bring into being, to bestow his favors of grace and glory upon, he did so without either worth or merit in those chosen, or anything whatsoever to distinguish them in

kind, quality, origin or degree from those whom he rejected, therefore acted as an independent Sovereign, exercising the right to do as he wills with his own. Hence we conclude that whatever cause there was for choosing this one rather than that, or for choosing any of his creatures at all to these exalted favors, was entirely outside of and apart from themselves, and to be found alone in God. "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight," is a sufficient reason for all that God does.

Brother Dodson, to avoid trespassing upon space in the SIGNS, I will send this article in, and, if it passes inspection, shall, if the Lord will, write further on the subject at another time. It is not meant as a continued article, but perhaps as a series of articles relating to the same subject: all truth is related.

J. R. HARDY.

DALLAS, Texas.

HOOKER, Oklahoma.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—With much hesitation this attempt is being made to send you a few lines to do with as seems good in your sight. I often wonder why I attend church, visit the members, write letters or love the brethren. The eighth day of April, 1937, I took train for Ontario, California, and was met at the station by Elder G. O. Walker and sister Walker. Here I will quote Acts xxviii. 22: "But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against." Now, there were several objects or reasons in my mind for taking this trip. I owned no home, and my children were caring for themselves, and natural conditions are very unpleasant here in this "dust bowl" at times in the spring. Then I wished to see some of the wonders of creation to be found in the western and northwestern States. I also had two children in California and two in Washington, besides other relatives and friends in other localities, so it was my hope to get many desirable pleasures as I traveled through many States. Yet this sect everywhere spoken against was on my mind, and I wrote before starting for the dates of several regular church meetings, so that I could be with them at a proper time. I met with the church at Claremont, California, heard three of the four ministers present, and met the other one. They were all kind to me, and seemed to be in peace. From there brother and sister Berry, of Santa Monica, California, took me to their home for two days. Surely I was among my friends. The next church I found was at Weiser, Idaho, the second Sunday and Saturday before in June. There I found a well settled and established church, with three Elders at hand, and there many of my kindred dwell. There I visited for two weeks with their Elders and the members round about. Elder C. W. Bond, of La Grande, Oregon, met my train there and I was given much real comfort in company with him and sister Bond for five days,. During that time we attended Elder Bond's church at Elgin, Oregon. That church

is very few in numbers, but it was the Father's good will to give them the kingdom. We met the next week at Touchet, Washington. It was their yearly three days' meeting, and we had good attendance, with five ministers present. I felt the time well spent. Many of you readers know that this is Elder J. T. Barnes' home church. Elder Davis Burch, of Bellingham. Washington, came four hundred miles to be with us. He and brother Barnes were quite feeble. My daughter and family met me there, and I was at their home, near Wenatchee, Wash., two months, but in company with Elder A. D. Hughett and sister Hughett, of Yakima, I was favored to attend meetings again. The little church at Riffe, south of Tacoma, held their three day meeting, I believe, the third Sunday in August, and it was a great pleasure to find this little sect everywhere spoken against nestled out there alone in the mountains and forests, yet there were eight preaching gifts there, ready to testify as to what they think of this sect and its Savior. I was told that this church has stood there for fifty years under the care of Elder Riffe as pastor. The first Sunday in October found me at Grain Valley, Missouri, attending their association. To me that was joy unspeakable, to hear the same gospel tidings I had been hearing at every church gathering since leaving home. But what do I think of that sect everywhere spoken against? That is too hard for me to say. Still it seems to be the pillar and ground of the truth.

At present the afore mentioned association has two ministers in it, and appears to be rather contented with the fatness of the Lord's house.

After visiting a daughter in St. Louis, I attended my home church, the last of October, at Kingman, Kansas, two hundred miles from my present abode. There I have had many very pleasant feasts at the Lord's table in his kingdom.

I have endeavored to be plain and concise in this narrative, not trying to mention many names, for that would take much space, and, besides, some do not care for personal commendation, saying, If we glory we shold glory in the Lord. Not being a public speaker myself, I could not help or comfort others much, so the blessing was mine and the glory the Lord's. Still I wish to thank all who helped me on my way, both in nature and in the gospel.

Some of the natural wonders I saw in my wandering rides are the great Pacific Ocean, the deserts, the great red wood and pine forests, the tall mountains, the two steel bridges at Oakland and San Francisco, costing thirty-five million dollars and seventy-seven million dollars respectively, and the great dam now under construction on the great Columbia River. These are some of the works of man which are interesting to see. Yes, these are all great things, but that little flock those "men wondered at," and their faith and gospel blessings are more to be desired and sought after, and I can suggest that if other Baptists are traveling as I was, that they will find it profitable to

make these churches their resting, feeding and watering places.

This letter may be altogether too lengthy and trashy for publication. If so, not much harm done, but to me it is mostly the same gospel I have attended all my life. And what do you think of this sect that is everywhere spoken against? Do you try to meet with it, and bear its burdens and receive it joys? "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves."

Yours in the pilgrimage of the saints,

E. G. WEBB.

[IN the December, 1937, issue of the SIGNS, appeared the obituary of Mrs. Alice Williams Dyer-Dodson, Since that time her experience, written early in the year 1895, has come into our possession. It was written shortly after she had lost her first husband and had united with the church. She was such a lovely character, and gave so clear and beautiful an account of the dealings of the Lord with her, that we want to share it with our readers.—R. L. D.]

I HAVE been impressed to write what I hope have been the Lord's dealings with my soul, and now if he will be my guide I will make the attempt. I do not want to write anything for vainglory, as I have nothing to boast of but the goodness and mercy of God. As far back as my childhood I had serious thoughts about the future, but my greatest dread then was the end of time. I was so afraid that would come before I was prepared for it. I had several dreams when I was a very small child that that day had come, and when I awoke what awful feelings I had. I would be troubled about it for some time, then it would wear off until I would see something to remind me of it. I would watch the sun, moon and stars, to see if I could see anything strange about them, as I had heard people say there would be signs in them before that day. I thought when I saw anything unnatural about them I would know the end was near. Well do I remember the first comet I ever saw. How scared I was! I had never heard any one say anything about such things, but was getting old enough then to read, and after reading much about it in the papers I did not feel so badly, as other people did not seem to think anything strange of it. I passed on in this way until I was married, which occurred when I was quite young. My troubles in the past gave me little concern for a long time, as my husband was so good and kind. I felt him to be a shield from my trouble. Until the year 1887, when one day I picked up my Bible to read, which I frequently did, and read where Christ taught his disciples on the mount. When I finished that chapter I could read no more. I felt so condemned. It seemed that something was weighing me down. I saw myself to be one of the vilest of sinners. I was impressed to go to some secret place and ask the Lord to have mercy on me. Then I would think, I am so vile it would do no good, it will soon wear off as my childhood troubles had done; but instead of leaving me they grew

heavier. I could not get rid of the impression to go and ask the Lord to be merciful to me, a sinner; until one morning while I was getting our breakfast I felt I could not live unless I obeyed the impression, so I left the room and went up-stairs in a closet and fell on my knees, but could not say anything but Lord be merciful to me, a sinner. I felt better then for a little while, but it was not long before I felt that I must keep asking the Lord to be merciful. Often I would then seek some lonely spot to plead for mercy, but instead of getting better I got worse. I would think that surely there was no mercy for me, for it seemed I had been too great a sinner to find favor in his sight. One morning my husband came in and told me he was sick, and fell down on the bed. I felt so uneasy about him I could not rest, and something seemed to say, Why don't you ask the Lord to keep him from being sick? he can cure him. I went off and tried to ask the Lord to keep him from being sick, and not long after I went back in the house he got up and said he felt better. How happy I felt to think my prayer had been answered. Some time after that I had a severe attack of neuralgia. I suffered so much I was almost prostrated, when that same impression came to me to ask the Lord for relief. I was willing indeed to ask him, and after falling on my knees and begging him to relieve me from suffering I do not think I had another pain during that spell. I then felt the Lord had answered another prayer, and I was made to rejoice, I felt so happy to think I had found favor in his sight. I wanted to go to the church and tell them what great things the Lord had done for me. But it was not long before the tempter told me I was deceived, and if I went to the church I would deceive them. I did not want to deceive them, for I thought them the best people on earth, as I had been brought up by parents who believed strongly in the Primitive Baptists, although neither was a member. I did not have a doubt where the true church was, and I had a love for them I did not have for others. I loved them so much I was afraid I would deceive them if I went to them with my trashy feelings, but how I did want to go. During that time I had a dream, or vision. It did not seem I was asleep. I saw a little child over the bed talking to me. It said, In my Fathre's house are many mansions, and there is room for you. I was rejoicing when I came to, and was happy all day. I thought I would not doubt any more, but it was not long before I was doubting again, questioning whether or not I had been changed, and as my husband was not willing that I should join the church, I made up my mind to stay away as long as I could. Some time after that my husband was taken sick, and continued to grow worse. I felt that it was sent upon me for being disobedient, so I promised the Lord that if he would spare his life for my sake I would take that as an evidence it would be right for me to go to the church. He lingered on for about ten months and died. That day was one of the darkest of my life.

I was made to cry, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? My companion gone, and forsaken by the Lord, what anguish of soul, after asking the Lord to spare his life that I might know I was a christian. I took this as an evidence that I was deceived in the whole matter. I thought I might as well give up my old troubles, if I could, as my new ones would be all that I could bear. So this was the way I passed on for a few weeks. Cane Creek meeting came on. I felt indifferent about going. I had always been anxious to go before this. Not many days after the meeting one of my fingers began to pain me so much that I could get no rest day or night. Nothing the doctor gave me helped me to sleep. For three weeks it seemed as though it would kill me. It developed into a joint felon. None but those who have had them can know how painful they are. The doctor said mine was in two joints. When I commenced suffering with it I felt that it was sent on me to make me willing to take up my cross and follow Jesus. One day, while in the greatest agony, I could not keep from saying, I will go. If it had been to save my life I could not have kept from saying those words. I though that if I ever had the chance again I would offer myself to the church. I was anxious for meeting day to come, and when the time came I went and found no preacher there. I thought fate was against me again, but the members had church meeting and opened the door for the reception of members. I was afraid not to obey, after promising I would go, so I offered myself, and was received. Brother Dameron came to the neighborhood that evening, and I was baptized the next day. I have doubts now, but I have never regretted joining the church, as I have found a peace there that I had not known for several years.

Your unworthy sister in Christ,

ALICE DYER.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, New Jersey, June 1st and 2nd, 1938, sends you this annual Letter to tell you of our pleasant meeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We do feel the Lord has been mindful of this branch of Zion, and we feel it has been good to be here, for those who came to hear were favored with the words of Spirit and life, which were given by His servants sent to us during this meeting, and our hearts were made glad. These sweet seasons cause us to loathe to leave the place where he shows his smiling face, but we hope to be favored to meet again, at which time we shall have our strength renewed.

Our next session is appointed to meet with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, at Hopewell, New Jersey, when we hope to again receive all present at this meeting, and many others who were not present at this meeting, at the regular time next year, and until then may it be His will to keep us in love and sweet fellowship.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

G. W. DANBERRY, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

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JOHN I. 1, 2.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God."

The books of Matthew, Mark and Luke give a description of the birth of Jesus, who his parents were, the place and manner of his birth, etc. These writers give us a literal description of the advent of the Savior into the world. The apostle John does not give the description of his natural birth, yet he has the Savior under consideration when he declares that in the beginning was the Word. This Word is Jesus. John carries us back beyond his entrance into the world, to the beginning, showing that Jesus was with the Father from and in the beginning. We use words to convey our thoughts one to another, so God uses the Word to convey his mercy, grace, love and every blessing his chosen people receive. Jesus tells us, I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me, and this is the will of him that sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. What a powerful Word this is. One that was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. There is a written word and there is a revealed word. The written word and the Word that is made flesh must be in perfect harmony and accord. Jesus as the manifest Word must fulfill the promises of the Lord by the prophets. God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake unto our fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds. Who, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. How wonderful that these two apostles could see eye to eye and speak the same things. Paul says of Jesus, "He was the express image of his person." John says, "And the Word was God." The coming of Jesus into the world was God speaking from heaven. God was in Christ reconciling the world

unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath given unto us the word of reconciliation. The word of men is often void and without effect, but the word of God (Jesus Christ) has not and cannot fail. This is a word that is so powerful that it raises the dead. The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. All the preaching by all the theological students of this world never has been able to raise the dead or to quicken the same. But the apostle further tells us that all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and come forth. How comforting to a child to believe in such a Word as this. That the power of Jesus is just as great today as it was when he was here. That it will be just as powerful when he shall gather together his own in the last time. The Father was well pleased with the work of the Son. When Jesus was baptized the Spirit of God descended from heaven in the form of a dove, and a voice said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him. The work of salvation is so perfectly wrought that there is a oneness in God the Father and God the Son. "The same was in the beginning with God." With the Father so perfectly that he could say, He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. This union between God the Father and God the Son is in a type seen in the journey of Abraham and Isaac to the place God had told Abraham to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice. The Scripture repeats, "And they went both together." Isaac never murmured nor complained as his father bound him upon the altar. So Jesus, our blessed Savior, said in his suffering, "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done."

God's Word was a body prepared as a perfect sacrifice, sinless, holy, the only thing that could reconcile a sinner to the holy God. God the Father chose the church of God in Christ before the foundation of the world, his Son redeemed her from all sin, and the Holy Spirit reveals the matter in the heart so perfectly that in the final resurrection there will be an honored God an exalted Son and a satisfied bride. No wonder David could say, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."

D. V. S.

SOME CORRESPONDENCE.

THE early part of this year, one of our friends here in Rutherford gave us a pamphlet, entitled "God for Us," to read. The crux of the whole matter as we viewed it was that God had done all he could for us and that the final outcome depended upon the creature's acceptance to make it effective. In returning the pamphlet to our friend we stated frankly that in our opinion it did not set forth the truth. Then ensued the correspondence which follows. In meeting our friend a little later he apoligized for not having replied to our letter, but said he would do so soon, and that he would cite a number of Scriptures to prove his contention that it was left for the creature to accept the salva-

tion which God proffers to sinners, otherwise they will be lost. We suggested that we would save him the trouble of looking up a lot of Scripture to support his argument, and that all we would require to prove his point would be just ONE single, solitary Scripture from the whole of the Bible that sustained him. This has now been many months ago, and, although he is a Bible student, up to the present time he has not yet produced the ONE Scripture we demanded. Being convinced that he will never be able to do so, since there is no such thing in the Bible, we are passing this correspondence on to our readers in the hope that it will be both interesting and edifying to them.

R. L. D.

THE LETTERS.

DEAR MR. DODSON:—Thanks for yours of the 12th, with inclosure "God for Us." Commenting on it you say, "To my understanding it does not set forth the truth. Salvation, from first to last, according to the Bible, as I read it, is of the Lord; therefore it is not left to nor depend upon whether the creature accepts or not." If that be the case, you have no responsibility whatever, and if you find yourself in hell after death it will not be your fault, I suppose you would logically argue. I assure you, Mr. Dodson, I am very certain you do not read your Bible right, nor do you give God thanks for his great salvation. Paul, by the Eternal Spirit, defines the gospel in 1 Corinthians xv. 1-8: Christ died for our sins. He was buried. He rose again. He was seen. The Corinthians had heard it from Paul, received it and were saved. (Verses 1, 2.) Also in Romans i. 16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation, *to every one that believeth.*" There is your responsibility and mine. Also see John iii. 36. I sincerely hope you will not be in the class described in 2 Corinthians iv. 3, 4, blinded by the god of this world, even Satan, until it is too late. Please read my wish for you in 2 Corinthians v. 18-21.

Sincerely yours, A. S. M.

DEAR FRIEND:—Your letter of the 14th instant is before me. Various pressing duties have prevented an earlier acknowledgment. Any sincere discussion of true religion should be based upon the Bible. You should have no objection to our taking the word of God as the man of our counsel and accepting, as final, the divine record of Holy Writ. Presuming you will agree to this, I shall undertake to prove by the Scriptures of eternal truth, not only that my contention that "salvation, from first to last, is of the Lord, and that it is not left to nor depend upon the creature even to accept," is the doctrine of the Bible, but that your doctrine that "salvation depends upon the act of the creature," or creature works, is absolutely false, and opposed by the Bible.

First, let me say that if Adam, in his upright state, was not able to keep the law and do that which was well-pleasing in the sight of God, it is not reasonable

to claim that his posterity, who are steeped in sin and depraved in nature, can rise above their level to meet God any part of the way. Creation, from the highest to the lowest degree, shows conclusively that the higher must condescend to the lower, and not the lower ascend to the higher, only as it may be constrained by a power superior to its own. May I take you back to Cain, the very first son of Adam, who was a tiller of the soil and brought forth of the fruit thereof an offering to the Lord, which was not acceptable to God, as an example, which holds true throughout the Scripture, that it is not by works of righteousness which we can do, but that it is because of his mercy he saves us. Let me quote the apostle Paul on this point, as found in Romans ix. 15, 16: "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. *So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.*" Please listen to this apostle further: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14. Come with me back to Romans viii. 5-8: "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death: but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. *So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*" Jesus, the great head of the church, said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."—John iii. 3. Nicodemus marveled at this doctrine, since it forever did away with the chance system, or the creature having any part to perform in the matter, and Jesus continued to emphasize this vital point by saying, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh: and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, *Ye must be born again.* The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."—John iii. 6-8. What power hath puny man to command the winds to blow, or to direct the course they shall take, or where they shall end? As man has absolutely no control over the wind, neither has he any power whatsoever over the Spirit to obtain or retain it. Again, may I take you to the ninth chapter of Romans, verses eight to thirteen, inclusive: "They which are children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son. And not only this: but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even our father Isaac: (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said

unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." You will see from this that the election was over and the polls were closed even before the children were born, so they could not have had any part in the matter, and it was to the end and purpose that to him to whom salvation belongeth, which is the Lord, should have all the honor and praise that is due his adorable name. You will gather from what I have said thus far, my conclusion is that if my soul were sent to hell, God's righteous law would approve it well, but that if I am among the redeemed of the Lord, it is all due to mercy and his grace, which means unmerited favor on my part. May I also say that I am made to earnestly hope that I do read my Bible aright, since there is often a witness within my own breast, which causes a burning within my heart, giving me the assurance that God is mine, and I am his, and then there is nothing that I can want beside. Contrary to the teaching in the pamphlet which you gave me, and which has brought about this discussion, the title of which is, "God for Us," and which maintains that the creature must accept of God's salvation in order to be saved, the apostle Paul in writing on this matter, from which no doubt the title of the pamphlet was taken, shows as plainly as is possible for language to state just the opposite to what is set forth in said pamphlet. Look at the record as it is found in the eighth chapter of Romans. In the twenty-eighth verse the apostle begins by declaring, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." He then goes on to show that whom God did foreknow, "he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." And, moreover, he says, "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." The question is then asked, "What shall we then say to these things?" And the answer that is given is, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" I can assure you, my friend, if God be for us, it matters little about the legions of devils who are seeking to devour our souls, or all mankind, including our own sin of unbelief, it has nothing to do with the matter, for God is above all, and where there is the word of a king, at least Israel's King, there is power, and none shall ever be able to pluck one of the least of the flock out of the hand, or power, of the Shepherd who gave his life for the sheep. Paul carries on this connection about God being for us, by saying, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Read the balance of this chapter and see how secure and safe are those for whom Christ died. And as to whether all will be saved for whom he came into the world to suffer and redeem, let there be a "Thus saith the Lord:" "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."—Matt. i. 21. *"All that the Father giv-*

eth me shall come to me: and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."—John vi. 37-39. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it thee."—John xv. 16. He came to seek and to save that which was lost, those who were given him by the Father before ever the world was, and he said on leaving this earth in addressing his Father, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."—John xvii. 4.

I wish to devote some time and space to answering the scriptural references which you cite. In the order you have them, 1 Corinthians xv. 1-8, is the first to engage my thought. You say that "Paul, by the Eternal Spirit, defines the gospel," and that "Christ died for our sins. He was buried. He rose again. He was seen [you do not say by whom], etc." You say that the "Corinthians had heard it from Paul, received it, and were saved," etc. Let us be more specific. Paul said, "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord," etc. There can be no question but that he is addressing the elect of God, and no others. In writing to Timothy (2 Tim. iii. 16) he says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: *that the man of God may be perfect,* thoroughly furnished unto all good works." You could not rightfully claim that this letter which I am now addressing to you is intended for the thirteen thousands of people there are in Rutherford, assuming that there are that number here. Therefore, the "our sins" for whom Christ died, are those under consideration; no more, and no less. Those by whom he was seen after his (Jesus) resurrection were his disciples, and I hereby challenge you to name one outside of this group and prove it by the Bible. Next, you quote Romans i. 16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation *to every one that believeth.*" The emphasizing here is yours; I wish to emphasize it also. First, I want to remind you that the apostle says the gospel is the power of God, and then I want to ask you, Is there any power in heaven, earth or hell, that can resist the power of God? Further, let me remind you that it is unto salvation to every one that believeth. This is quite different from saying that it is to any one who may if they will believe. God's word does not leave us to guess or in ignorance as to how one believes. If you will accept the word of Jesus for it, he said, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath

sent."—John vi. 29. You say that the responsibility for believing is mine and yours, and then refer to John iii. 36, which reads as follows: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." Are you so blind that you cannot see there are no conditions there? It says, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." He already has everlasting life and this is why he believes. In Acts xiii. 45, we find it declared, "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." God alone could ordain them to eternal life, and should the whole world join you in telling me that they will not believe, when God says they shall, I would not believe you. The psalmist said, if I remember correctly, Let God be true, and every man a liar. Next, you say you "sincerely hope I will not be in the class described in 2 Corinthians iv. 3, 4, which I will here quote: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." It is considerate of you to feel this way toward me, and I wish to assure you that I feel the same way toward you, but taking the scriptural method of deciding the matter, I am compelled to decide against you, since the Bible rule is to judge the tree by the fruit it bears, and you are not bearing spiritual fruit in the testimony which you have made. I must conclude according to the evidence in the case that you are among that number to whom the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is hid.

Finally, you ask that I read your wish concerning me, which will be found in 2 Corinthians v. 18-21. May I again remind you that the apostle is not writing to the whole world, but to the church and the saints of God. Paul in this portion of the word speaks of the servants of God as being "embassadors for Christ." An embassador speaks with authority only as he utters that which he has been commanded by the Government, or power, which he represents. God's ministers must of necessity be called and qualified by him, for how can a man preach except he be sent? and as Jesus commanded Peter after he was converted from the error of his way, the belief that he could stand in his own strength and go with his Master into prison, death, etc., and having experienced his utter weakness in even cursing and swearing that he never knew his Lord, then realizing that the compassion of Jesus never fails, he was prepared to do as he was told, to feed the lambs and the sheep of God's fold. I am afraid that you need considerable sifting. God is able to consume the dross in you if you are a chosen vessel of mercy. I repeat what I said to you in person this morning, that preaching is for the purpose of feeding the living sheep; they cannot thrive on anything short of that which proceeds from the very throne of God, therefore he must fill the mouths of his servants who proclaim glad tidings to the poor and needy.

The chance system absolutely will not work, my friend. It failed in the case of the man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. Both the Levite and the priest came that way by chance, but neither of them administered to the poor man's needs. It took the Good Samaritan, as he journeyed, or came that way on purpose, to do that which was so much needed, and neither was anything from any other source whatever required. Not only did he have everything that was necessary done for him, but he was not left to even walk in his own strength, but the means of his transportation to the inn was supplied and every bit of the cost was paid by the Good Samaritan. This illustrates what I mean when I say, Salvation is of the Lord. It was perhaps more pointedly portrayed by Jonah when he was in the fish's belly, beyond even the sight of mortal man, to say nothing of his reach. It was when in the place where he was cut off from all communication with human endeavor that he was taught of a truth that salvation is of the Lord, and he declared it in no uncertain terms. This is God's school, and not man's. Paul's language to the church at Ephesus is as follows: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."—Eph. ii. 8, 9. And in Romans xi. 5, 6, he says, "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." You must get off the fence, or out of the middle of the road. It is one or the other, and not a combination of the two. Oil will not mix with water.

You said to me this morning that if your letter seemed to be couched in strong language, or words to that effect, it was meant for my good, and may I likewise reply in a similar strain by saying that if my sword seems sharp and penetrating to you, believe me when I say that it is because I feel I have been called in defense of the truth, which I have no desire whatever to compromise. May the Lord enlighten the eyes of your understanding, if it be his will, and may we both desire to preserve and not destroy that which is truth.

Sincerely yours,

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Deacon G. W. Danberry)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, Hunterdon County, New Jersey, June 1st and 2nd, 1938, to the churches and associations with which we correspond, sendeth love and greeting in the Lord to all the household of faith.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—As it has been cast to our lot to write this annual Circular Letter, we feel our weakness, yet realizing that God is all-powerful, and hope that what we may be given to write will be to the honor

and glory of his dear name. The thought in mind which we will now attempt to write about will be found in the nineteenth chapter and thirtieth verse of St. John. The words of Jesus, "It is finished." "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." God had provided for himself an offering for sin in the person of his beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. This Jesus was ever with the Father as one brought up with him, who stood as it were a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world for the sins of his people, those the Father had given him, and their names were written in the Lamb's book of life. It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief, says the apostle. Therefore do we not see that according to the eternal purpose of God it was needful that there be sinners to save? Had there been no sinners there would have been nothing to save, therefore no need of a Savior. The first man, Adam, in the garden of Eden was given a law by his Creator. He wilfully disobeyed that law, and brought sin and death upon all his posterity. Being justly condemned, there was nothing he could do to make himself right with God. Neither could we, being sinners according to our natural birth, we must be born again, a spiritual birth, born of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, that liveth and abideth forever, before we can behold God in righteousness, and Jesus as our Savior and only hope of salvation. For Jesus is the only name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. He shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness. At the appointed time God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law and all their lifetime subject to bondage, held in the captivity of sin and death. He came to do his Father's will, and this is the will of him that sent me, that of all he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up at the last day. Yes, Jesus died for them, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring them to God; One who was a holy offering for sin, and said, Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now, where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. In this finished work Jesus said, A body hast thou prepared me. I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that he might establish the second. The just mandates of a transgressed law were fulfilled, his people justified freely from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses. His shed blood redeemed them from all sin, and sealed them heirs of heaven.

He cried out on the cross, "It is finished." The will of the Father was carried out, the work was done, the salvation of God's people was finished. Nothing can be added to it. The

foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. Therefore they are complete in him who is the head of all principalities and powers. So the apostle Paul could say, Not of works, lest man should boast. It is the work of God that we believe on him whom he hath sent. They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Sion, which cannot be moved. The crucified Jesus was bruised, whom the Jews called a blasphemer and a deceiver because he had told them, Destroy this temple and I will raise it again in three days. But he spake of the temple of his body, of which they did not understand, knowing not that he was the Christ. The powers of earth could not hold him. He arose from the dead the third day, and became the firstfruits of them that slept, a conqueror over sin, death, hell and the grave. It is finished, and thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. May the God of all grace keep us by his power, that we may glorify him in our bodies and in our spirits, which are his, and ever contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
G. W. DANBERRY, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Martha J. Disharoon, Del., $1; T. S. Chester, Ky., $1; Elder J. G. L. Hash, Va., $1; Mrs. J. B. Hill, N. J., $3; Mrs. Grace H. Hastings, Md., $2; A. F. Jones, Ga., $1.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER J. B. BAXLEY departed this life, after a lingering illness, June 24th, 1938. He was about eighty-five years of age. His wife preceded him in death last autumn. They lived a long and devoted life to each other, to their children and to humanity in general. They were natives of Barbour County, Alabama, where they became members of the Primitive Baptist Church, more than sixty years ago, in the old Choctawhatchee Association. Elder Baxley was ordained to the ministry about fifty years ago, and was an able minister in this section. He helped to organize the Mt. Carmel Church, at Coffee Springs, Ala., and served as its pastor for about thirty years. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace and in predestination. He was confined to his bed for several years, and during that time he dearly loved the association of christian brethren. It was the writer's privilege to speak in his home a number of times during his illness. By request, the writer officiated at his funeral at Wright's Creek Church, on June 25th, 1938, where a large congregation assembled to pay respect to one whom they dearly loved. The following scriptural selections were used: "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." And, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." These were favorite passages of Scripture with Elder Baxley, and seemed to

be impressed upon the writer. The remains were tenderly laid to rest between those of his mother and his wife, there to await the glad resurrection dawn, but we feel that his spirit even now rests in the presence of the immaculate Lamb.

J. J. COLLINS.

W. SCOTT MISKELL, our brother in Christ, departed this earthly life June 23rd, 1938, in the ninety-second year of his life, at the Primitive Baptist Home, Salisbury, Maryland, where he had been a resident about seven years. He was born in Loudoun County, Virginia, and lived all his life in this section, until he removed to Salisbury, Md. He is survived by two daughters: Mrs. Rosalie Costello and Miss Mabel Miskell, and by one granddaughter, Mrs. Catherine Cummins, all of Loudoun County, Virginia. His wife died some years ago. It was my privilege to baptize him into the membership of the New Valley Old School Baptist Church in August, 1930. But he had been a believer of the doctrine and a follower of the truth for many years before he united with us. He had the respect of all who knew him, and had been favored to live an industrious, upright and honorable life among his fellow-men and neighbors. His whole trust and faith for salvation were alone in the atonement of Jesus Christ for his elect people, and he had no use for creature merit as any basis of favor with God. He believed in the sovereignty of God, and that he works all things after the counsel of his own will. He was a good friend to me as his pastor. This makes three members gone from our Valley Church within a few months. We believe our loss here is more than made up to them in the happiness of their departing to be with the Lord.

Funeral services were held in Leesburg June 24th, interment in Union Cemetery. His mortal remains were laid to rest to await the coming of the Lord from heaven with a shout and with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, when those who have part in the first resurrection shall forever be with the Lord. Even so, Amen.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

It is with a sorrowing heart that we chronicle the death of our beloved sister, MRS. ELLA NETHAWAY. She was born July 19th, 1852, at Schoharie, N. Y., of the parentage of Calvin and Maria Kniskern, and passed away while visiting her daughter, Mrs. E. A. Stockton, in Severance, N. Y., on May 26th, 1938. Had she lived until July 19th, 1938, she would have been eighty-six years old. Sister Nethaway was united in marriage June 16th, 1868, to George Nethaway, who died July 6th, 1919, at the home of their daughter, Mrs. Margaret Miers, Schoharie, N. Y. Four daughters, two sisters, seven grand and great-grandchildren survive. Mrs. Margaret Miers, Schoharie, N. Y., Mrs. Thomas Ransley, Troy, N. Y., Mrs. E. A. Stockton, Severance, N. Y., and Mrs. William Church, Midland Park, N. J., are the four daughters, and Mrs. Ira Willsey and Mrs. Jennie Beard are the two sisters. Sister Nethaway had spent the winter with her daughter, Mrs. William Church, in Midland Park, N. J., and had been with her daughter in Severance, N. Y., about two weeks, enjoying excellent health, seemingly, until about one hour before she died. Realizing that her course was finished, she told her daughter she was ready and willing to go. While the suddenness of her passing was a great shock to her loved ones and friends, we hope they may be reconciled to the will of God and thank him that it was not her lot to have to lin-

ger and suffer for any length of time. According to the church records which have been furnished us, she united with the church at Schoharie, N. Y., on November 21st, 1874, almost six months to the day following the time her husband had united with the same church. She was baptized by Elder Balas Bundy, the pastor. On September 1st, 1912, they were both received by letter into the full fellowship of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, at New York City, where they remained faithful members as long as they both lived. The writer well remembers the place they occupied for many years in the meetinghouse, and has a vivid picture in his mind of their sitting together, and the blessed seasons we were given to enjoy with them. We shall greatly miss our sister, but we are convinced of the fact that she has only gone on a little ahead of us to enter into the joys of her Lord. Possessing the faith we do, we cannot wish her back, but desire to look with reconciling grace to the time when we, too, shall be found unto the praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen, yet love; in whom, though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of our faith, even the salvation of our soul.

The writer left the Baltimore Association in Baltimore, Md., Saturday afternoon, in order to be in Schoharie, N. Y., to conduct the funeral on Sunday afternoon. Many loved ones and friends gathered on the occasion to pay tribute to her memory. She was, indeed, a lovely character. We read and commented upon the following three verses from John xiv. 1-3: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." May the Lord comfort as only he can those who are left behind.

R. L. D.

JOHN R. WILSON was born in Walton County, Georgia, April 11th, 1850, and died April 5th, 1938, lacking five days of being eighty-eight years of age. He grew to manhood mostly in Gwinnett County, Georgia. He was married to Laura A. Hicks October 29th, 1874, and to their union nine children were born, as follows: Ada V., Walter Lee, Lou Esta, Drusilla F., Ela Ruth, James D., Anna Kate, John B., and Charity Ethel, who died December 7th, 1881. Walter Lee died September 13th, 1927. Left to mourn their loss of a precious husband and father are his widow and seven children. Our sad hearts are bowed in sorrow, but we desire to be submissive to God's will, to be still and know that he is God and doeth all things well. Our aching hearts are comforted in the sweet assurance that he is forever free from sin and pain. The Lord wrought a work of grace in his heart and brought him to the church. He and his dear wife, our mother, were baptized into the full fellowship of the Church of Christ at Shiloh, Walton County, Georgia, May 12th, 1882, where he remained true and faithful to the end of his pilgrimage journey. For many years he could not attend the meetings of his church, yet his interest in her welfare never waned. He never wavered in that faith and belief of the truth as taught in the holy Scriptures and as revealed to him by the Holy Spirit, which guided him to study and search the Scriptures. The Bible was the Book of books to him. He

waged a long warfare and endured a great many afflictions, but was patient in tribulation and graciously and humbly resigned to God's will concerning him, ever pressing onward as seeing Him who is invisible. What a shining example is his beautiful life to us lonely, desolate ones. Oh may we ever be found trusting in the living God, who alone is able to keep us in his fear to the end of our journey.

The dear, loved body now rests in its grave in the cemetery at Shiloh, until that day when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Yes, when Jesus comes again to gather his chosen home their dead bodies shall be raised from the grave incorruptible, to fade and die no more. Precious, comforting truth!

Dear saints of God, pray for our dear afflicted mother and us children, that we may be kept by the same God who kept our precious one through a long journey, then took him home to dwell with him in glory through endless days.

Humbly submitted in hope and sorrow by the very least in her Father's house,

SILLA WILSON.

LILLIAN MARIAH (HILL) CHESTER was born August 12th, 1872, and died November 13th, 1937, aged 65 years, 3 months and 1 day. Lillian united with the Primitive Baptist Church in November, 1892, and lived a consistent life and a faithful member of her church until death. December 24h, 1894, she was married to Thomas S. Chester, and to this union were born five children, four of whom are still living: Tazwell Wade having preceded her in death more than nineteen years. Those living are Mrs. Elizabeth Rhea, Brewers, Ky., Homer Chester, Brewers, Ky., Mrs. Martha Lyles, Paducah, Ky., and Mrs. Mary Hume, Taylorville, Ky. She also leaves her husband, four grandchildren: Carl Wade Chester, Polly Anna Rhea, Robert Thomas Lyles and Bettie Caroline Hume; three sisters: Mrs. Alice Little, Sherman, Texas, Mrs. Lola Lindsay, Owensboro, Ky., and Mrs. Madie Flowers, Sharpe, Ky.; two brothers: H. B. Hill and Boone Hill, both of Sharpe, Ky. She also leaves a number of nephews, nieces, other relatives and many friends. Lillie had been afflicted for a number of years. Her suffering at times seemed more than she could bear, but she never murmured nor complained, bearing it all with that same faith and patience that marked her christian life. Many times she said she was ready and willing to go. She longed for that sweet rest that is not disturbed by pain. Lillie is gone. Her sweet smile will greet us no more on earth, but her fine life will live on and on. We miss her here, but we believe she is living in that peace and love that is eternal.

After funeral services at Soldier Creek Church, conducted by Elders T. J. Prince and J. T. Stenson, her remains were laid to rest in the adjoining cemetery.

Written by her brother,

BOONE HILL.

MEETINGS.

There will be an all-day meeting at North Berwick, Maine, on the third Sunday, August 21st, and at two o'clock the Saturday afternoon preceding. This if the Lord wills. All who are interested are cordially invited to attend.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The regular all-day annual meeting will be held at Slate Hill, N. Y., this year, the Lord willing, on Friday, August 26th. We expect Elders Arnold H. Bellows and Charles W. Vaughn to be with us at that time. We cordially invite all who are interested to attend. R. LESTER DODSON.

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Shokan, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, September 14th, 15th and 16th, 1938, beginning at 10:30 a. m., Daylight Saving Time. Those who come by auto Tuesday afternoon, unless they have made other arrangements, will stop at Ashokan Rest, conducted by Mrs. Hazel Byrnes, a short distance below the Ashokan post office in Ashokan, N. Y. Those who come by train Tuesday afternoon will be met at the Ashokan station, and those who come by bus will stop at the Ashokan post office, where they will be met and places of entertainment assigned. Those who come Wednesday morning will go to the meetinghouse, opposite the Shokan post office. For the benefit of strangers, it might be noted that the villages of Shokan and Ashokan join each other, but have separate post offices. Ministers and brethren of our faith and order, and all who love the truth as it is in the Lord Jesus, are cordially invited to meet with us and will be welcomed in our homes.

NEVA BROOKS, Church Clerk.

The Original Mount Zion Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, with Oak Grove Church, in Jackson County, Missouri, September 30th, October 1st and 2nd, 1938. Oak Grove is situated on U. S. Highway No. 40, and on the C. & A. Railroad, the church being one mile south on State Highway 24 E. We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

DANIEL A. J. ADAMS, Moderator.
(MRS.) J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church holds meetings the fourth Sunday of each month at 1026 East Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Meeting begins at 10:30 a. m., dismisses for lunch and reconvenes at 2 o'clock p. m. Meeting days have been changed from the first to the fourth Sunday of each month. No Saturday or night meetings.

BURLIE HALL, Pastor
W. H. CAVE, Ass't Pastor.
(MRS.) H. B. CURLIE, Church Clerk

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 106. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1938. NO. 9.

POETRY.

"HE CARETH FOR YOU."

(1 PETER V. 7.)

When hard pressed with doubts and fears,
When clouds loom dark and silent tears
Flow gently o'er our cheek,
To whom then can we weary go?
To whom unfold our tale of woe?
Where comfort can we seek?

We have a rich, almighty Friend,
On whom our hopes of heaven depend,
And he has bid us come.
He walked this vale of woe and tears;
He sees our frame and knows our fears,
How foolish then to roam.

Our steps are feeble, strength is small,
But he has strength enough for all,
Then cast on him your care:
He cared for us when we were foes,
And will he now ignore our woes
When we seek him in prayer?

Has he then bid us to him pray,
And will he turn his ear away,
And mercy no more show?
Can we not on his word rely
When faith and hope seem apt to die?
To whom else can we go?

Did not the Lord his Father leave,
And come to earth to toil and grieve,
His people here to save?
Was it for sin that he had done
He trod the wine-press all alone
And laid in the grave?

Those whom the Father gave to him,
He died to redeem them all from sin,
Sinners they, each one;
No merit and no good they own,
Righteousness is Christ's alone,
All honor to the Son.

Love so amazing, so rich and free,
Prompted the mercy he gave to me,
Then let me seek him in prayer.
Help me, O Lord, on thy promise to rest;
They are at peace and securely blest
Who cast on thee their care.

The earth may all shake and mountains remove,
But what can sever his church from his love,
Safely borne on his breast?
Let us then carry our cares to his side,
He careth for us what'er may betide,
And there let us rest.

FLOSSIE I. FAULKNER.

ALABEN, N. Y., April 22, 1934.

"PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD."

(EPHESIANS VI. 11.)

Weary, wounded, sick and sore,
I beg thee, Lord, for grace;
I nothing am, but thou art strong,
Through Christ I plead my case.

I've met with many a snare and fall,
Been mocked and laughed to scorn;
But thou hast oil and wine for those
Who for thee seek and mourn.

When thou art near, I'm well and strong,
I cannot sink nor faint;
If thou art gone, I mourn and sigh;
Give ear to my complaint.

I need the virtue of thy robe,
The wisdom of thy grace,
And strength to walk the narrow way,
Though poor, despised and base.

Give me the girdle of thy truth,
The helmet of salvation,
And dress my feet in gospel peace,
Of food, a daily ration.

Grant me an overcoming faith,
A buckler and a shield;
When I am armed with these, thy gifts,
I'll stand, and never yield.

My wants are many, I'll admit,
But I am poor and lame;
If I may have thy armor on
I'll serve in Christ's dear name.

The Lord will then exalted be,
I'll gird his armor on,
Boast of his strength, and not my own,
Until the battle's won.

There's nothing too hard for the Lord,
God, grant us faith to see
The Lord still reigns: be still and know
His power and majesty.

FLOSSIE I. FAULKNER.

ALABEN, N. Y., March 4, 1937.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TERRA WELLS, Texas, March 4, 1938.

DEAR BRETHREN:—To-day I feel I wish I could speak in the ears of the brotherhood concerning that wonderful thought of our brother David after he had gone through many trials of this earthly life, when he made use of a beautiful statement in regards to the great future. He said, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."—Psalms xvii. 15. It would seem that all the little ones in this world who have been led to preach the wonderful doctrine of God our Savior were led into the glorious light of the same thoughts which we may notice along the road as we travel, all so wonderfully connected that it would seem rediculous for any one who claims a hope not to embrace the same principles of doctrine that David and so many others did. John let us know that he and David were a unit in doctrine, as noticed in his statement, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." Thus he draws the line of distinction between the children of God and the world, and says in harmony with David, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall apper, we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is."—1 John iii. 2. Oh! is not that glorious? To find that when time shall be no more with us here on earth, in God's divine providence he has caused so many of his dear saints who have been leaders in Israel to behold that wonderful chain of evidence he has placed on record for the comfort of his dear children here on the time side of eternity? And then Paul tells us, "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God."—1 Cor. ii. 9, 10. Then in looking further we find, "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in [not into] our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of God [or knowledge of the glory of God] in the face of

Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. iv. 6. Then he refers us to a statement of Paul, which places a certainty on the whole matter: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he [his Son] might be the firstborn among many brethren."—Rom. viii. 29. Just to behold a few of the foregoing quotations from the dear loved ones seems to implant in our minds the thoughts of the graciousness of God's everlasting love for his chosen on earth. Then further on we notice some more which would seem deeper grounded in the blessed thoughts of those of olden days, which is just as it has everlastingly been, and will be truth as long as time lasts, then the reality of the Lord's promise to his dear ones in this time state existence. I have in a few instances found one who does not seem to be exactly yoked together as to just what will in the end be manifested in regards to the resurrection of this mortal body. But we might go back and listen to old brother Job. First Job asked this question, "If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. [Not exchange.] Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands."—Job xiv. 14, 15. In the foregoing it is clearly stated that in the resurrection of this frail body this mortal shall be immortalized and brought forth in the image of the dear Son. For as Job further says, "And though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins [natural power] be consumed within me."—Job xix. 26, 27. I cannot see naturally why any one should denounce the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, for, as we might go further, it is stated by Job, "Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands."—Job xiv. 15. All of which is further stated by Paul, more than fifteen thousand years after the days of Job, when he speaks of the glory of the sun, moon and stars, then closes by saying, "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."—1 Cor. xv. 41-44. And then he says that the spiritual is not first, but last. So we see that Job and Paul were together in doctrine, showing to us poor mortals that the same Teacher taught both, and teaches all the way down the line. So we, when mentioning the doctrine of the dead, cannot go wrong in stating and declaring the resurrection of these vile bodies into the glorious image of that glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ. This poor frail body is brought forth from the sleeping dust by the almighty power of God in that day in which Jesus shall descend with the trumpet, which shall awaken the dead and cause them of his glorious choosing (chosen from the fallen mass of Adam's posterity) to hear the voice and come

forth into the immortalized state in which is the place fitted for the souls of the departed of earth to inhabit in eternnal glory, and unite with that throng around the glorious throne to ever sing the song of deliverance, where trials, troubles and separations will not be known.

Now, dear ones, I have written along the best I could over the undeniable ground of that better and glorious thought of the near future which all the dear ones of God look for. I have been several days trying to write this little article and hope the dear editors will see fit to publish it. I have been quite poorly for some time, and sometimes it is over a week at a time that I cannot get strength enough to sit here and write. I would love to have a letter from any who feel to write such a poor mortal as I am.

As ever, your brother in bonds,

J. B. BOWDEN.

HAW RIVER, N. C., March 28, 1938.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a letter of experience written by brother N. W. Doss, which you may publish in the SIGNS if you see fit. He is a good brother, one whom the Lord has rooted and grounded in the doctrine of salvation by grace. We Old School Baptists down here have been made to believe that God works and none can hinder. All things are working to the end which he declared. Thanks be to his holy name, he loves poor sinners, and men and devils cannot hinder.

I enjoy the SIGNS. It is good news from a far country. May God bless and keep you in Wisdom's way.

Your little brother, I hope, in Christ,

A. B. BARHAM.

BURLINGTON, North Carolina

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—It has been on my mind for some time to write some of the things I hope the good Lord has shown me.

I was born in the year 1871, was married in the year 1893, and enjoying this world's pleasures. I knew nothing else. But if I mistake not, in 1896, at my home, suddenly some great power struck me, and said, You have to die. That was the first time I ever felt myself a sinner. I did not know what it meant. I thought I was going to die and land in torment. I felt to be the greatest sinner in the world. I would try to pray to God to have mercy on me, a poor sinner. Sometimes the burden would leave me for a time; then it would come back heavier than ever. I did not tell any one. I did not want any one to know it. Some said I was going crazy. I would go to preaching, and the preacher would tell my feelings better than I could tell them myself. I knew I had never told any one. I wanted a home with the church, but felt unworthy. I felt to be such a great sinner I did not think they would receive me. I was afraid I would deceive them. It seemed that I could not live on. One night I gave up all hope. I thought I was gone. I could not move hand nor foot. I do not know how long I was in that condition, and have never been able to tell it. I have watched the

sun go down, not expecting to see it rise again. At times my sins would roll up before me and I would beg the Lord to have mercy on me. I begged God to give me evidence of my hope. I went on that way time after time. I would promise the Lord that if he would spare my life I would do better, but I seemed to get worse. I felt I had lied to the great God, the one who rules all things. I would promise myself that I would never call upon his holy name again, but the first thing I knew I was calling on him for mercy again. My very breathing was, Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner. I went on that way until the appointed time of the Lord. I went to old Weatherford. I lived near the church. The door of the church was open. I lost sight of myself, and when I came to myself I was standing at the stand telling the good people what I hoped the good Lord had done for me. To my surprise they received me, and the next day when we met at the water my wife asked a home with them, was received, and we were both baptized. When I came up out of the water I was in a new world. I felt that all my sins were gone and I would never see any more trouble. It looked as if everything was praising the good Lord. But it was not many days before doubts and fears came upon me. I felt I was deceived and had deceived the church. I still have doubts and fears. I feel that there is no one like me. Most of the time I am in darkness. Then the Lord will move the dark clouds from over me and I feel that the winter is gone. Then I can see the great Redeemer, who takes us out of the darkness. Then I am made to praise his holy name. Then I can see that he has blessed me all my days in many ways, seen and unseen. If I know myself, I trust in a God who has all power in heaven and in earth, and works all things after the counsel of his own will. I cannot think a good thought unless he gives it to me. What he thought, saw and purposed has and will come to pass. There is no power but of God. He speaks, and it is done; commands, and it stands fast. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Rom. viii. 1-4. When a man is born of the Spirit he walks after the Spirit. He is killed to the world and worldly things. I cannot do as I would like to do. It seems that sin is mixed with all I do. I feel sometimes, if not deceived, that it is by the grace of God I am what I am. I have had many ups and downs in this world. The good Lord saw fit to take two good and kind wives from me and leave me alone. That was more than I thought I could bear, but I feel they are at rest with Jesus, resting from their troubles, pains, fear, and death felt no more. I

hope I can meet them when my number of days are out. Then I must go. This world cannot hold me any longer. They both were members of the Old Baptist Church, and stood in the faith. I hope you will bear with my weakness. If you think what I have written is worthy of space in your SIGNS you may publish it; if not, cast it in the waste-basket and it will be all right with me. I feel the need of the prayers of all the saints of God.

Written by a sinner, saved by grace if saved at all,

N. W. DOSS.

NEWTON, Alabama.

DEAR EDITORS:—I appreciate very highly your offer to send me the SIGNS free of charge, but I feel that every one of us who possibly can should help to pay for the paper, therefore I am sending you my renewal for next year. Sometimes I fear some are receiving the paper free who should help pay for it. This paper has performed a noble service in behalf of the Sun of Righteousness, and it behooves us to aid it in every possible way. I surely enjoyed the December number, and was especially glad to read Elder Spangler's article on the condition of the Baptists in Virginia and North Carolina. I think I can join him in saying the Primitive Baptists who stand for the predestination of all things are at peace, so far as I know, in Alabama. It was a grand privilege of mine to attend four of our associations last fall, and I found peace and unity in all. The oldest association in south Alabama, so far as I know, is the Conecuh River, which was constituted on the same principles set forth by the earliest associations of America. Elder B. J. Wilson, of Glenwood, has been Moderator of this association for forty years, while Elder J. W. McLeod, of Rainer, is the Clerk of the association. The Claybank has also been in existence about a century, and Elder J. A. J. Mitchell, of Kinston, Ala., is its Moderator. Among the younger associations of this section are the Ebenezer, with Elder E. D. Gafford as Moderator; the Patsaliga, with Elder James J. Richards, of Dozier, as Moderator; Chipola River, with Elder W. A. Brooks as Moderator, of Altha, Florida; and The Western Primitive Baptist, with the writer as Moderator. All of these associations stand upon the principles of salvation by grace and the predestination of all things, and are earnestly contending for the faith as it is revealed unto them by that Master Teacher who instructs in righteousness and leads us in paths we have not known. While in nature's night, Malachi told us that He should arise with healing in his wings, and John verily proves by divine inspiration that He has arisen with that glorious balm of Gilead, and has gone to the celestial city, where he has prepared a home for every one whom he died for, and we surely believe that he has accomplished everything that he ever planned. He is the master planner, perfect designer and successful executor of all things. He never has, he never shall, make a mistake. Whatsoever he desireth he doeth. Then well might he say, My

people shall be a willing people in the day of my power. Salvation is alone of the Lord. Surely we long to see that number whom John saw who came up out of great tribulation, having washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. What a glorious thought, that we may live again with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, all the patriachs, apostles, saints and ministers of all ages in that perfect land where all is unending joy. Until then I long to see peace and unity in Zion, and I would be glad indeed if our ministers could visit throughout our land and be received everywhere where there was order and discipline in our faith. I surely do not believe in mixing and mingling with those in disorder however.

At our last conference it was decided to hold our Centennial Anniversary at my home church, Mt. Gilead, on May 29th, 1938. That is the fifth Sunday in May. According to our best records, this church will be one hundred years of age some time this year, so we plan to hold appropriate services to commemorate that event.

The writer recently received a copy of Hassell's History from Mr. G. M. Money, of Shelbyville, Kentucky, that had been used by him and the late Elder P. W. Sawin, whose writings in the SIGNS I dealy loved to read. I had never seen a copy of this History, so I have had a feast indeed in reading it. I would be glad to receive the Minutes of any associations of our faith.

Yours in hope,

J. J. COLLINS.

GORDO, Alabama.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In a former article I wrote of a worldly institution known as Sacred Harp singing, and its influence over some of our people. Now I wish to write of its effect in our churches which are afflicted with it. Not all of the churches in this country are involved. But as was the case with ancient Israel, when any of the children of Israel joined with the nations about them in idol worship, their next step was to set up altars in the land (given them by promise) to the idols and proceed in their worship. So it is the same to-day, when those among us join in with the institution above mentioned their next step is an effort to attach this institution to our service, and were it not that Christ sits as a refiner of silver, for "he is like a refiner's fire," (Mal. iii. 2), the identity of the church would soon cease to exist, but he keeps her, for "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." And "If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."—1 Cor. iii. 13, 15. The advocates of the singing use arguments like this: "Our forefathers as far back as I can remember made use of this institution in connection with the church service, and shall we now stop it and remove the landmarks our fathers have set?" Christ and the apostles are the forefathers that set the landmarks for the church throughout all ages, and not our immediate fore-

fathers, who were as subject to error as we are. Our Articles of Faith say, "We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the word of God, and the only rule of faith and *practice.*" Since in them there is no mention made of man-made helps and props, it becomes us to refrain from them and look to our Head and Husband in all our efforts in his worship. The following are remarks made by ministers of our order in regard to this idol: "Good singing (meaning Harp) is the very life of the church." I thought Christ was the very life. And, "Were it not for Sacred Harp singing Old Baptist singing would go dead." And, finally, to show where we are drifting, "Our increase in membership comes from those who attend our meetings, to drop the singing would mean that many of those who now come would cease to attend." If that be the case, we now have two ways of gathering people to our meetings. 1. The way Christ says they shall be gathered: "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."—Matt. xviii. 20. 2. Those who are gathered for the singing's sake. Should we not be satisfied with those who Christ gathers by his Spirit, though it be but two or three? Or are we desirous of being like the orders round about us with filled houses? To secure this there must be a sop provided to secure their attendance. This auxillany (singing) provides this sop. I acknowledge that the singing is very attractive to the human ear, with all parts harmoniously rendered. It is to our ears what a bouquet of many colored roses is to our eyes, but to the hungry two or three which Christ has gathered no edible fruits are found, but instead they are greeted by thorns. It seems to me that the sentiment of the poetry should first be considered. Is it true and scriptural? If not (and many used are not) it should not be used, for, if rightly viewed, to sing a lie is as bad as to preach one. Next, by the custom of singing only one verse of a poem we lose its real use to us of conveying truth and the message which was given to the poet by revelation.

W. L. CROWLEY.

SWEET SPRINGS, Missouri.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you some of my meditations regarding St. John x. 9, for your consideration, and use, if suitable; otherwise cast them aside. "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." Our Savior's parable here presents the spiritual relation, which the people at that time did not comprehend. Jesus is the door of the sheep. After telling them he is the good Shepherd, and knows every sheep of his Father's kingdom, and is the one and only Savior, the good Shepherd of the sheep so beautifully described by David, who, with all his sins, was a man after God's

own heart, and the sweet singer of Israel. Jesus here declares, "I am the door." A door opens and also closes a passageway. By me every heir of heaven enters this fold. A refuge from the storms and tempests of life. I am the door; there is no other. "There is no other name given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved." Now this entering in and going out reveals to us the blessed relation of the saints to this good Shepherd during their wilderness journey in the flesh. This door opens both ways, in and out. A door, a way, where Isaac's servant was, being in the way when he started his journey to find a wife for his master. Dear ones, we go in and out and have our souls restored beside the still waters. Our Redeemer bought the field with his own precious blood. Here is great joy, when we are enabled to praise his holy name, and to worship him in Spirit and in the truth, and are led in green pastures, and guided into truth, and given peace, which shall remain with us until we pass over Jordan. When in, the sheep (pilgrim) is protected from Satan's darts. When afflictions come, and our near and loved ones depart, leaving us keenly feeling our loss, we are drawn closer to the sheltering Door, and He abides with us until the storms are past. This Door never shuts out any that enter the fold by Him.

"Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved, to sin no more."

Yours in bonds of love,

J. L. KILLION.

DELAWARE, Ohio.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—While I could enjoy reading a letter from you any day, please do not feel compelled to reply when I write to you, because I know you cannot correspond with all of your appreciative readers. But I do wish to express my appreciation of your editorial upon the subject of God's predestination. Unless deceived, the Lord taught me, at least to some extent, the doctrine of salvation by grace, also the sovereignty of God over all worlds and created beings, before I had opportunity to learn it from preaching by men. I am glad that my grandmother left us a volume of Elder Gilbert Beebe's editorials, for in this volume I found the first amen to what I hope the Lord revealed unto me, and your editorial in the September, 1937, SIGNS seems to refresh my faith in the all-wise, almighty, righteous, eternal will and reign of our King of kings. When I was permitted to attend a session of the Owl Creek Harmony Association, in the year 1884, I heard salvation by grace preached for the first time. Two weeks later I was baptized into the same church. To my surprise, I found that some of the members did not seem to understand that God does rule and reign among the army of heaven and also amid the inhabitants of earth. The pastor, who baptized me, believed in the sovereignty of God, but preached mostly christian experience. He talked about doctrine when he came to visit us, and always agreed with our opinions. He and mother did most of the talking, I being only seventeen

years old, mostly kept silent. He would ask mother, How do you understand such and such Scripture? Often her reply would be, Joie thinks thus and so. I do not know why God revealed his all-wise, almighty, righteous reign to a little girl like me, except that it seemed good in his sight. My first lesson was in seeing him in nature (perhaps), though when I was so small that I was sleeping with my brother, I was made to feel the need of prayer. When I asked mother how to pray (perhaps because I was so young) she recited, "Now I lay me down to sleep," etc. But that prayer did not answer my need. I wanted to be forgiven and be helped to live as God would have me to live. I cannot take space to recount all that befell me. The burden grew, until I feared that I had forfeited every claim to God's mercy, so could only beg, O Lord, though you must banish me from your presence, cannot you keep me from sinning against thee during the rest of my life on earth? O do help me to serve thee until death, even though, because of thy righteous judgments, and to preserve thy honor, I must be banished from thy presence. The sweetest lesson was when a voice from heaven told me, Let all your anxious thoughts cease. Your many sins are all forgiven. Way back before you were born I saw you, knew you, loved you, fulfilled the law for you, bore its penalty for you. Then, finally, There is no more condemnation. Yes, I really heard it all. Oh why, I thought, does he reveal this to me, when no other in the world knows of it? Never had I heard it so proclaimed. I shall not try to describe my feelings. I believe that you know them. Now, when he himself told me that he did save me back in eternity, at least assured it, so there could be no failure, since God fulfills all of his pleasure, how can I believe in conditionalism?

Company came, so I was hindered from finishing. One would think that after hearing a voice from heaven proclaiming my salvation that there could be no more doubts, but sometimes I do fear that I was mistaken. Yet how could I have been, when I was not expecting that sort of revelation at all? Did not know that others had had somewhat similar revelations. I think I was fourteen or fifteen years of age when the God of heaven, and Lord and Ruler of earth, condescended to visit me, for the purpose of revealing unto me his glorious purpose, which he purposed in himself before the foundation of the world, to quicken me, grant me repentance, and faith in the Savior of all the family of the redeemed. Oh! it seems so much to claim, but is it not according to our experience, also according to the Scriptures?

I have read and reread a number of times your article in the September number of the SIGNS. You owe no apology to me. Of course when we write letters for the consideration of some, sometimes it has seemed expedient to express ourselves in a way that is understandable to them. I have been a nurse and know there are some foods which sick people cannot digest, though very strengthening to well persons. I

say it humbly, I hope, but I do crave the strong meat of the doctrine of the sovereignty of God. If he were not sovereign, and evil men and devils could work in spite of his ruling, might they not overthrow his plan of salvation entirely?

I realize that I do not understand God's predestination as regards evil as well as I would wish to do, but I am much more fearful of denying his power than I am of making him "the author of sin." Does not the Scripture say, It pleased Jehovah to bruise him; he hath put him to grief? I think differences are partly because some persons do not fully understand all of the ramifications, we might say, in the meaning of words. It is hard to think how the Father can be said to be the one who caused Jesus to be put to death and yet the men who crucified him to be charged with the guilt. But it is as in the case of Joseph: God meant it for good, but the murderers did not. "Ye meant it for evil," therefore guilty. The surgeon cuts into us for good, but that does not prove that others' cutting is good also. All men fell in Adam, are conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity, (and was this not a part of the plan, since we read, Thou turnest men to destruction, and sayest, Return, ye children of men?) So they are already sinners when it is said of them, The wicked are thy hand. Or what means the same. My memory is not as good as it used to be.

I attended our Association one week ago, where we heard some excellent preaching. My pastor preached upon the sovereignty of God strong enough to cause another preacher (or I suppose that was why) to say a sentence or two rather on the other side. Another sermon or two were good strong doctrine, very sweet to me.

Dear brother Dodson, I hesitate to send the foregoing, so poorly written, and I feel too insignificant in self to write upon so deep a subject, which I realize I do not fully understand. But of one thing I do feel sure: that the truth is contained in the passage, The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder (all that doth not work to his praise) he will restrain. To me it appears that an almighty Being who can suppress and hinder any evil or sin from taking place, would be about as guilty in not hindering it as he would be to be the cause of it, and the only thing that reconciles me to the thought is that God means it for good to his chosen people, and the spirit of evil is no worse after adding sin to sin than it was at first. If we never knew anything about sin, how could we appreciate being made righteous? If never sick, could we appreciate being made whole? If never hungry, could we appreciate being fed? The Bible declares that God hath set the day of adversity as well as the day of prosperity. I make peace, I create evil; I the Lord do all these things. Some would say that evil and sin are two different things. It is true, perhaps, that all evil is not sin, but who can deny that all sin is evil? Why did not God say, I create all evil excepting sin, if that is what he meant? Instead, he says, I the Lord do all these

things. Also, The wicked are his hand. The Bible plainly declares our Lord to be the supreme ruler of all the universe. If we fly to the uttermost parts of the universe he is there, or if we make our bed in hell he is there. Heaven can be no happier, nor hell any worse than his wisdom sees fit. The powers that be are ordained of God. Since God foreknew all things from the least unto the greatest, therefore foreknew the ignorance of man, he was wise enough to use speech which would be understood by all, powerful enough to give perfect understanding to all; but he gave to some one talent, to some five, and to some ten. Was this unjust? May we say, What doest thou? I think so much jangling about what God does is one of our greatest crimes. Hath he not power, righteousness and wisdom to do what seems good in his sight? Yea, surely, in heaven, earth and hell. He is our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification (though some think that we sanctify ourselves) and redemption. Therefore, let him that lacketh wisdom ask of God that giveth liberally. Ask, and ye shall be given. Seek, and ye shall find. Knock, and it shall be opened unto you. Dear Lord, show us our ignorance, weakness and sin. Help us to find in thee our all and all. May the Lord forgive all that is amiss, not only in me, but in all the household of God, from the least unto the greatest, for I love all of them, the weak and the strong. Oh that brethren would not bite and devour one another. We are all one in Christ.

Will you forgive me for writing, or rather sending, such a poorly written letter? My pen is poor, and my hand nervous from such extremely warm weather.

JOIE E. WOODS PETERS.

HUNTINGTON, W. Va., May 24, 1938.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I am sending herewith two dollars, for which you will please send the SIGGNS OF THE TIMES to Mr. R. L. Thomas, Charleston, W. Va. General Delivery. I love to see the SIGNS in the hands of all lovers of the truth. The SIGNS has been blessed to stand through the storms of years, and the same glorious doctrine of God our Savior is still advocated by both editors and correspondents as was advocated by our fathers through its columns. May you long be spared to send forth this medium among the scattered flock of his pasture, if it be his holy will. I wish I could write and express the joy I hope I have received in reading the many excellent articles in the columns of your paper. My heart has been made sad at the passing of so many able defenders of the truth, who have recently passed. But what God doeth is ever right. May he reconcile us all to his providential dealings with us.

Yours in love and fellowship, though ever so unworthy,

H. J. BIRD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Ella E. Nelson, Texas, $1; Joseph A. Johnson, Tenn., $1; H. A. Giles, Va., $1.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1938.

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REVELATION XVI. 13, 14.

"AND I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

In the December SIGNS of last year, brother S. L. Roberson requested our views on the above. In attempting to comply with his wishes, we feel to take this occasion to express some of our thoughts upon the book of Revelation as a whole, but at the same time we will endeavor to give special attention to the two verses in question. As we view it, there is a great deal in Revelation which applies particularly to the winding up of the old Mosaic, or legal dispensation, and the setting up and establishing of the Gentile portion of the gospel church. (We speak here of the Gentile portion of the gospel church for the reason that we plan later on to refer especially to the Jews.) To be more specific, let us say that the first ten chapters deal largely with these two things. The remaining chapters appear to deal with the bringing or grafting in of the Jews into the gospel church, the combined gospel church (Gentiles and Jews), her struggle with antichrist, the final destruction of the Great Mystery Babylon, and the ultimate glorification of the church of God, the holy Jerusalem, after the consummation of all things.

The book is introduced with the statement: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John." Then, with but one intervening verse, we find this important declaration: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." While these references show that at least a part of what was to follow concerned *things which must shortly come to pass,* which was further emphasized by the statement, "For the time is at hand," nevertheless John was shown "things which must be hereafter."—Rev. iv. 1. Blessed, indeed,

are we when we can read and hear, with understanding, and keep those things which are written in the Book of books, the Bible. After a wonderful description of him who was to be head over all things to the church, John was instructed what to write to the angels of the seven churches in Asia, and in each case the message was followed by this significant statement: *"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."* Jesus had previously declared, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."—John iii. 3. A man must of necessity be alive to see, hear, feel, taste or handle the Word of Life understandingly, and the way he becomes alive to spiritual things is by a new or spiritual birth. The number "seven" denotes fullness, or perfection, and signifies here the complete church, or the church in all of its travel, its various conditions and experiences. The true church to-day can profit much by examining the record regarding the shortcomings, as well as those things which were commendable, of the different churches described by John.

John was then given to see that a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne, with those who were about him, which was in fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah when he said, "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment."—Isaiah xxxii. 1. Following this, John says he saw "in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals." These seven seals indicated that the book was perfectly sealed; so much so that "no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon." Mankind, with all of his knowledge of Latin, Greek, Hebrew, English and all other languages combined, is utterly unable to pry open this wonderful book, or to look thereon in the sense of searching out or uncovering the hidden meaning thereof. For proof on this point, we again quote our Lord and Savior when he said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."—Matt. xi. 25. As we saw in the beginning, it is "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants." If it was not this way, what hope could there be for the infant, the ignorant, the idiot, the insane and thousands and thousands of other unfortunates? Speaking of the highway that would be cast up in the wilderness, the prophet Isaiah comforts us with the assurance that "the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein."—Isaiah xxxv. 8. We have been made to rejoice greatly, personally, when we had reason to believe that God by the workings of his Holy Spirit was pleased to open the book and to loose the seals thereof, in letting us in on the secret and making us to know that there is absolutely no other way than that of revelation by which "these things" can be comprehended. Jesus said to his disciples, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my

Father which is in heaven." He followed this up by saying, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

The opening of the first six seals appears to have disclosed something of the warfare and sufferings of the church and the destruction of the Jerusalem that then was. In the meantime, four angels stood on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, saying, "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we heve sealed the servants of God in their foreheads." Thus showing God's power and his sovereignty over all principalities and powers, and his ability to do his will in sealing not only the one hundred forty and four thousand, or twelve thousand of each of the twelve tribes of Israel, the Jews, but also "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," all of whom stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands, crying with a loud voice, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." When the seventh seal was opened we are told "there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour." This shows the solemnity and reverence of Zion when she truly worships her King. How often are we made to feel with the poet when he wrote,

"Keep silence, all created things,
And wait your Maker's nod;
My soul stands trembling while she sings
The honors of her God.

Life, death, and hell, and worlds unknown
Hang on his firm decree;
He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be.

Chained to his throne a volume lies,
With all the fates of men,
With every angel's form and side,
Drawn by the eternal pen.

His providence unfolds the book,
And makes his counsels shine;
Each opening leaf, and every stroke,
Fulfills some deep design."

John then saw seven angels standing before God, to whom were given seven trumpets. These signified the gospel ministry, which were blown in the setting up and establishing of the church in her ordinances and doctrine and which continue to ring out all down through future ages, so long as the world shall stand. When the apostles preached the word of God it was as the axe laid at the root of the tree, cutting down that which had stood formerly. The temple that then was had to be overthrown so completely that not one stone should remain upon another. Consequently, the next to appear was a "mighty angel," come down from heaven, who set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, "and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created the heavens, the earth, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer."—Rev. x. 6. That Jewish, or legal dispensation, was to be forever at an end, and the like shall never be known again. When the gospel is preached to-day, the precious is separated from the vile, and everything that savors of the flesh or of creature works is cut off and cast into the fire.

According to the eleventh chapter,

the Gentiles are to be given the temple which is without, "and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months," but they shall not be utterly cast off, for are not the Gentiles and the Jews the two witnesses to whom will be given power to prophecy "a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth"? "These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth."—Rev. xi. 4. In the eleventh chapter of Romans we are told how some of the natural branches, the Jews, were cut off and the Gentiles grafted in contrary to nature into a good olive tree, but they were warned not to be highminded, but to fear, "for if God spared not the natural branches [the Jews], take heed lest he spare not thee [the Gentiles]." We have never felt that the Scriptures warranted the conclusion that the Jews will eventually return literally to Palestine, nor that the Lord Jesus Christ will ever return to this earth in a bodily form and gather the Jews together to reign over them as their literal king. We do feel, however, that the Scriptures, Old and New, clearly indicate that the Jews will be brought into a manifested knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus and that some day they will gladly own him as their true Messiah. The Lord will undoubtedly graft them in again and establish them in the gospel. Then shall they know Jesus Christ and him crucified as the way, the truth and the life. This seems to be set forth in the twelfth chapter of Revelation, where it is said, "There appeared a great wonder in heaven [the gospel church]; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered." That this refers to the twelve tribes of Israel is further borne out, we think, by the reference in the tenth verse: "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night." Who knows but what this epoch is rapidly approaching? This woman may even now be travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered." Perhaps, never before in the history of the world have the Jews been more widely persecuted by the various nations of the earth than they are to-day. There may be a cause. The true church has ever brought forth her children in sorrow, and there will always be at hand a great red dragon ready and waiting to devour her offspring. What a mercy that she has been given two wings as of a great eagle, faith and hope, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, from the face of the serpent.

Next, John saw a beast rise up out of the sea (people) with the name of blasphemy upon his heads, for there were many, representative of false doctrines, but while the true church will always be opposed by the powers of antichrist, nevertheless God will not suffer his faithfulness to fail, and therefore will never leave nor forsake his

people. In this world God's children must suffer persecution, and they will always have their trials and tribulations. These are undoubtedly necessary and will work for their good. Israel of old had to go down into Egypt, to be in bondage and serve the Egyptians, but God's power was so wonderfully in evidence in preserving and delivering them from under the hand of Pharaoh that to this day his name is being poclaimed throughout the whole world. According to John, God will never cease sending his angels to pour out the vials of his wrath upon the powers of wickedness.

In our text John says he "saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." John had previously testified of the wonders of our triune, or three-in-one God, and here he is speaking of the trinity of iniquity. Paul said, Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, and with truth it may also be said, Without controversy, great is the mystery of iniquity. The dragon, the beast and the false prophet all possessed unclean spirits. Not only were they unclean, but they had the likeness of frogs. Such creatures are very abhorrent and repulsive because of their filthy nature, living in dirt and subsisting upon all manner of insects and creeping things, and the most that can be said about their croaking noise is that it is meaningless—if anything, annoying and disturbing to the peace of Zion. Well do they typify the enemies of God, who feed upon a great variety of doctrines, with little if anything of a certain sound or comforting nature in all they say, though they speak with great swelling words. These spirits are also said to be "of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." In the days of Israel of old the Egyptian magicians were able to perform miracles, but they had their limitations and could not equal the works of God. They turned their rods into serpents, but they could not make them bud as Aaron's did. We would have to be totally oblivious to what is going on in the world to-day not to see the workings of these "spirits of devils," including their miraculous powers. Certainly there are three great giants, or super-men, in the persons of Stalin of Russia, Mussolini of Italy and Hitler of Germany, going forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world to gather them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty, when he will arise and magnify his power in smiting them as a cumber of the ground. For the time being, however, it would certainly seem that the devil has been let loose and given a free hand; particularly is this true concerning the Jews, but the time will come when he will be bound for a thousand years, or for a season, and the Jews will

then be gathered into the fold, with believers enrolled, with believers to live and to die. During the thousand years respite they will worship God under their own vine and fig tree, and none will molest or make them afraid. Following this Satan will be loosed again for a little season, and then will be fought the battle of Gog and Magog, but the Lamb of God will be seen to prevail, for he will come to their defense and will cast out Satan, the devil, into the lake of fire; and all whose names shall not be found to be written in the Lamb's book of life will likewise be cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death. Thus shall the battle of the great day of God Almighty end in complete victory over his enemies and in glorious and everlasting triumph for his people. Then shall appear a new heaven, the whole elect family of God, the holy city, the new Jerusalem, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And God will wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. This great city of our blessed God is wonderfully described by John. Among other things, he says there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

We hope that we have neither added to nor taken from that which is written, but that in some small way, by the grace of God, we have been given to testify to these things in a manner that has been God-honoring and man-edifying.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Baltimore Church, Baltimore, Maryland, Saturday and Sunday, May 28th and 29th, 1938, to the churches, associations and meetings with which we correspond, greetings in the Lord.

"Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."

The above Scripture will be found in Hebrews fourth chapter, first verse, and is there for an express purpose, for we are told that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, and for reproof, and correction, so that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. We Old School Baptists believe in good works as the result of God working in us, for he tells us in Philippians ii. 12, 13, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." How can the children of God seem to come short of entering into that rest that he has promised us? It seems to me there are many ways, if we take heed to the admonitions that are the

major part of the Bible. We profess to love the religion of the Lord, and to love our brethren, but find that worldly matters keep many away from the meetings. Also we are told to shun the appearance of evil, and to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto the Lord. We read in James ii. 26, "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." So we see that by faith we are led to follow after good works and to live in this life so as to hold the love and respect of our brethren. We also know and realize that we are carnal beings and prone to sin and come short of the glory of God, and can say with Paul, When I would do good evil is present with me. And he found two laws in his members, the one warring against the other, the law of God in the inner man, in which he had great delight, and the other the law of sin, which caused him to do the things he would rather not do. So we find in all of us the same warfare going on, which causes us to fight daily to follow in the Lord's footsteps. I remember Elder Rowe saying just before he passed away that he felt he had fought a good fight, and that is what we as professed followers of the Lord are commanded to do, being ready at all times to attend the meetings, and to help one another, not only in worldly matters, but spiritually as well, by meeting with them and sharing their joys and sorrows, and giving comfort one to another. We know that we are not saved by works, but when we have some who show so little interest in the meetings does it not seem to you as though they come short of that rest that is promised us? And have we not all experienced that unrest that comes from neglecting our duty and walking unworthily? Be not deceived, God is not mocked, whatsoever a man sowest, that shall he reap. But thanks be to God, we have a Savior who loves us and suffered and died for us, and is now set down at the right hand of God, where he ever maketh intercession for us, and we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was tempted in all points as we are, yet being verily God he was able to withstand all temptation, and therefore was without sin. We are given a portion of this same power to withstand temptation, for God said he would make a way of escape for us, and if we withstand the devil he will flee from us. So let us strive to have this rest that the Lord has promised us, and to let our light so shine that others seeing our good works may glorify our Father which is in heaven, and we will be able at all times to come boldly to the throne of grace and obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

D. L. TOPPING, Moderator.
QUINCY A. GLADDING, Clerk.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE date opposite your name on the little pink slip on which your address is printed denotes the time your subscription expires. Dec 36 means it expired December, 1936; June 37 that it expired June, 1937; Dec 38 that it will expire December, 1938, etc.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Western Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Ramah Church, Cottonwood, Alabama, October 16th, 17th and 18th, 1937, to her sister associations with whom she corresponds, sends greetings. love, salutations.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the kind providence of our all-wise God we have been blessed to meet and hold another session of our body in peace and love, for which we feel thankful to Almighty God. Our correspondence has been reasonably full. Your ministers have come proclaiming salvation by grace, and grace alone, for both time and eternity, which is comforting to our poor souls.

Our next session is to be held at Wright's Creek Church, seven miles south of Slocomb, Alabama, on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1938, where we hope to meet you again.

J. J. COLLINS, Mod.
J. D. MERRITT, Clerk.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, convening with the church at Baltimore, Maryland, May 28th and 29th, 1938, sendeth greetings to the associations and meetings with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have received your Minutes and messengers, and had great pleasure in their company and communion. We have had some wonderful preaching by our visiting ministers proclaiming the wonderful works of God among the children of men. We have seen the wonderful fruits of righteousness which have been imparted to them through the wonderworking power of our Lord Jesus, and we hope we are thankful for the wonderful salvation which we have heard preached and experienced in our hearts. We hope, if it be the Lord's will, that we will meet again on this earth, but if not, that we will meet again around the great white throne of God, where our joy and praise will be perfect.

The time and place of our next Association will be announced in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Submitted in love.

D. L. TOPPING, Moderator.
QUINCY A. GLADDING, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

JOHN W. LAWS, son of Adna and Elizabeth Laws, was born in Jasper County, Illinois, February 9th, 1859, and passed away April 14th, 1938, making his stay here 79 years, 2 months and 5 days. He married Emeline Harker December, 1878, and to their union were born seven children, three of whom died in infancy. A son, Kennison, preceded him in death, May 5th, 1937. His wife passed to her reward in February, 1893, and thus the task of serving as both father and mother to his four children began. The oldst child then being thirteen years of age and the youngest five. It has been said that few men could have performed the duties better than he did. John Laws, with his two daughters and their families, left Illinois in the year 1908, and located near Nashua, Montana. Five years later he moved to Entwistle, Alberta, Canada, where he remained until his death. He had been in

poor health for several years, five of which were spent in the home of his daughter, Mrs. W. Catt. For four years he seldom left his room, as he could only move about with the aid of his crutches, yet he did everything he could to help himself. To the very last he was unwilling for us to sit up with him at night. He would say, "Go take your rest. I'm not alone. If God wills that I have to have you I will call." He was never heard to complain, and he always tried to comfort others in any affliction, saying they were for our good, for without them we could not be sons. He was bedfast for only one month. Until then he seemed to hav a hope that he might be well enough to sit up, but all hope died when he had to rest in bed. Father always had a pleasant greeting for all who entered his room, and especially enjoyed having his great-grandchildren visit him. He had been a member of the Old Baptist Church since 1895, and remained a firm believer in salvation by grace until death. He took the SIGNS for years. Most of the last few numbers had to be read to him, with explanations of some deep thoughts so plain to him he would say, "That, my daughter, is Bible doctrine, it is not of the world." He left a written request that simplicity in every respect mark his funeral: no flowers or preaching. There being no one we knew who believed as he did, we did the best we could. His wish was carried out. He desired the people to know that the unusual arrangements were his own requests. The last rites were read by his grandson, and the Lord's prayer repeated by all. Also this little poem, written by him, was read:

Poor and afflicted, Lord, art thine,
With the great unfit to shine;
Although the world may think it strange,
They would not with the world exchange.

Thus ended the last rites for a father who was poor in worldly goods, but, I think, rich in grace. On Easter Sunday we laid his body beside those of his son and brother to await the resurrection morn, when I feel they will be raised up. He leaves two daughters, Mrs. Minnie Catt, of Ft. Peck, Mont., and Mrs. Myrtie Catt, of Entwistle, Alberta, Canada, one son, Charlie Laws, of Longview, Wash., thirteen grandchildren, fifteen great-grandchildren, one half-sister, Mrs. Frances Kibler, of Newton, Ill., and many other relatives and friends. Dear father, we miss you. No more do we hear your dear voice singing, only in memory, but we would not call you back to suffer.

HIS DAUGHTERS.

WILLIAM F. DEEL was born in Dickenson County, Virginia, September 14th, 1863, and departed this life February 6th, 1934, making his stay on earth 70 years, 4 months and 22 days. He was married to Bitha Ann Owens, daughter of Elihu and Sallie Owens, January 22nd, 1885, and to their union were born two children. One died in infancy unnamed, and the other is now Mrs. Didama Edwards. His first wife died May 15th, 1889. He then married Tilda Edwards, daughter of B. H. and Sindusty Edwards. To them were born three children, Basil, Arthur and Bruce Deel. He leaves a wife and four children to mourn their loss. We have the evidence to believe that our loss is his eternal gain. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church of Sand Lick about the year 1898, and remained a member until his death. He was a hard working man and a good provider for his wife and children, always deeply interested in their welfare and always giving them good advice. He bore his sickness with great patience even unto

the end, ever looking unto God, the author and finisher of his faith. His spirit is now singing around the eternal throne of God, while his body is sleeping in the grave awaiting the second coming of Christ, then he will go home with all the redeemed family of God, to sing his praise for evermore.

ALSO,

J. T. EDWARDS was born March 14th, 1850, and died May 25th, 1930, making his stay on earth 80 years, 2 months and 11 days. He was married to Hetty Ann Cochrum March 30th, 1871, by Elder Lewis Edwards. To this union were born thirteen children, three of whom died in infancy, leaving six boys and four girls, together with his widow, to mourn their loss. We feel that our loss is his eternal gain. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church in the year 1897, and was baptized by Elder W. B. Sutherland. He lived and died a strong believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone, and was always ready to give a reason of that hope God had given him in days past. He was a hard working man and a good provider for his family. He enjoyed going to meeting, and did go as long as he was able. He bore his sickness with great patience. Very often while on his death bed he would sing. The last song he helped to sing was, "Sweet rivers of redeeming love lie just beyond my eyes." The Spirit of God made its appearance to him in his dying hours. He told those who stood by his bedside that he knew death was upon him, but that he suffered no pain. He had a beautiful smile on his face as he viewed that happy home beyond this vail of tears, where sickness, sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more.

Written by his son,

S. P. EDWARDS.

HANNAH WATKINS SMITH, our beloved sister in Christ, departed this life at the home of his son, in Barlow, Oregon, Sunday morning, May 22nd, 1938, after an illness of several weeks. She was the daughter of Nathan and Agnes Watkins, and was born in the State of Georgia January 12th, 1848, being 90 years, 4 months and 10 days of age at the time of her death, and the last member of a family of nine children. When a small child she, with her parents and family, moved to Iowa, where they settled near Knoxville, in Marion County. It was there she grew to womanhood, and on April 30th, 1876, was united in marriage to Charles E. Smith, with whom she lived a long and happy life, and whose death in March, 1928, was a great blow to her, yet she bore her grief with patience, and continued to live in her own home, alone much of the time, until three years ago, when no longer able to care for a home, she went to live with her son, the only child to the union. In the year 1920 she and her husband removed from Iowa to Oregon, and the next year located in Lebanon. A member of the Primitive Baptist Church for many years, and a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for more than half a century, she was a firm believer in the truth advocated by them, and often had the church services held in her home. Her membership at the time of her passing was with Little Bethel Church, at Tallman, some four miles from Lebanon. Her great delight and enjoyment was to entertain church people and friends and minister unto them of her substance. We who knew her best feel that life is better for her having lived. The long life of uprightness and usefulness is her enduring monument.

Funeral services were held in the Howe Funeral Home at Lebanon, Wed-

nesday, May 28th, conducted by Mr. George Simons, a minister of another denomination, as there was no Old Baptist Elder living near. The remains were then laid to rest beside her husband in the Lebanon Cemetery, to await the resurrection morn. Surviving her are the son, Ray W. Smith, of Barlow, Oregon, three granddaughters, Mrs. Maxie Culbertson, Cascadia, Mrs. Velta Pryer, Portland, and Mrs, Fern Young, Portland, one grandson, Charles Smith, of Barlow, seven great-grandchildren, besides a number of nieces and nephews, all of whom feel that their loss is her eternal gain.

Written by request, by her niece,
MINNIE W. BANKS.

JAMES T. MELTON was born July 10th, 1857, and died July 6th, 1938, making his stay on earth 80 years, 11 months and 26 days. He leaves to mourn his departure five daughters, Mrs. Ada Martin, Mrs. Myra Beane, Mrs. Lenna Bailey, Mrs. Vella Halbert, Mrs. Lela Crotty; three sons, Shelby, Harold and Addison A. Melton; one brother, Everett Melton; one sister, Dillie McClanahan; twenty-five grandchildren, eighteen great-grandchildren and a host of friends. He was a firm believer in the sovereign grace of God, but never united with the church, always expressing his unworthiness, but he had a good experience of grace. The writer of this sketch was called to conduct the funeral services, after which his body was laid to rest in the family cemetery beside his wife, who preceded him in death a little more than two years, there to wait until our dear Savior shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, to gather his redeemed home, where parting will be no more.

J. C. HAMMOND.

MEETINGS.

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Shokan, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, September 14th, 15th and 16th, 1938, beginning at 10:30 a. m., Daylight Saving Time. Those who come by auto Tuesday afternoon, unless they have made other arrangements, will stop at Ashokan Rest, conducted by Mrs. Hazel Byrnes, a short distance below the Ashokan post office in Ashokan, N. Y. Those who come by train Tuesday afternoon will be met at the Ashokan station, and those who come by bus will stop at the Ashokan post office, where they will be met and places of entertainment assigned. Those who come Wednesday morning will go to the meetinghouse, opposite the Shokan post office. For the benefit of strangers, it might be noted that the villages of Shokan and Ashokan join each other, but have separate post offices. Ministers and brethren of our faith and order, and all who love the truth as it is in the Lord Jesus, are cordially invited to meet with us and will be welcomed in our homes.

NEVA BROOKS, Church Clerk.

The South Arkansas Association will (the Lord willing) meet with Bethel Church, two miles north of Bearden, Arkansas, on the Missouri Pacific R. R., and on Highway No. 79, on Friday (at 10 o'clock a. m.) before the third Sunday in September, 1938, and continue three days.

J. T. EVERETT, Moderator.
J. L. WATSON, Clerk.
J. M. PROFFIT, Ass't Clerk.

The Original Mount Zion Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, with Oak Grove Church, in Jackson County, Missouri, September 30th, October 1st and 2nd, 1938. Oak Grove is situated on U. S. Highway No. 40, and on the C. & A. Railroad, the church being one mile south on State Highway 24 E. We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

DANIEL A. J. ADAMS, Moderator.
(MRS.) J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held at the residence of Elder L. L. Schenck, two miles north and one-half mile east of Williamstown, Kansas, to begin on Friday before the second Saturday in September, and continue three days (9th, 10th and 11th, 1938). There is train service by way of the U. P. R. R. to Williamstown; also bus service. All lovers of the truth welcome. Those wishing to be met should notify Elder L. L. Schenck, or can call by phone from the train or bus depot. For any other information address Elder L. L. Schenck, Williamstown, Kansas, or Mary Ellison, Clerk, Grantville, Kansas.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church holds meetings the fourth Sunday of each month at 1026 East Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Meeting begins at 10:30 a. m., dismisses for lunch and reconvenes at 2 o'clock p. m. Meeting days have been changed from the first to the fourth Sunday of each month. No Saturday or night meetings.

BURLIE HALL, Pastor
W. H. CAVE, Ass't Pastor.
(MRS.) H. B. CURLIE, Church Clerk

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed. J. R. HARDY.

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS.

I BELIEVE it, because I believe that God is wholly unlimited in his sovereignty over all worlds, principalities and powers. That being the case, he is entirely independent of any principalities or powers outside of his own Godhead; and that being so, he is contingent on no other than himself. Both the London and Philadelphia Confessions of Faith affirm that God decreed within himself according to his own eternal purpose and will all things whatsoever come to pass. Both Confessions of Faith also go on to affirm that this does not make God the author of sin. That is what I believe, and have contended for these many years. Yet some say that holding to predestination of all things makes God the author of sin. This I do not believe. Although we are accused of believing it, it does not make it so. For God to be the author of sin he would have to be the doer of sin, which he is not, and cannot be. Man is the doer of sin. Sin is the transgression of the law, which God does not do, neither can he, because he is under no law, and is accountable to no other than himself, for there is no authority or power higher than himself. Therefore he does not transgress law, let him do what he will. But God placed man under law, and man broke the law. By the breaking of the law came sin, and man was the doer of the transgression. Therefore man is the author of sin. God, the Father, decreed from before the foundation of the world that salvation should come to the church by his Son, Jesus Christ, and in Hebrews it says, "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Now if God predestinated the salvation to come by Jesus Christ, and yet Christ, not God, is the author of salvation, why could not God decree sin to come into world by man yet man be the author of sin? Those who put Christ to death did only what God's hand determined beforehand to be done, yet that did not

make God the author of the death of Christ, nor did it make those who did it any the less accountable to God for their having done so. Predestination does not make void man's accountability for his wicked acts. Some are fond of saying that if God predestinated all the wicked acts of men he has no right to hold them accountable for what they do. This is looking at things in the light of human reason, and these matters cannot be judged in that way. The Scripture plainly teaches that God is unlimited in his sovereignty over all things and in his predestination of all things, and the Scriptures just as plainly teach that man is accountable for his transgressions. Some try to make a distinction between God's foreknowledge and predestination, and to say that his foreknowledge embraces all things, but his predestination does not. This would make God unequal in his attributes, and that cannot be, because the Bible says he is equal in all his ways. God's foreknowing all things is nothing more nor less than that all things are sure to come to pass just as he foreknew they would. Any thing or event that may or may not come to pass cannot be known beforehand with certainty. The fact that the Almighty knew beforehand all things is proof positive that those things were sure to occur. Those things being sure to occur, what made them sure? Could any other power than God have made them sure to come to pass? The truth is that foreknowledge and predestination must stand or fall together. There can be no knowing all things without the predestination of all things. God created all things. The heavens and the earth were created by him. This was for a purpose, and this purpose cannot be thwarted, and he saw that every thing he had made was very good. Every thing after its kind would bear fruit. He made man and gave him dominion over these things, and gave him a law to which the penalty was death. Man transgressing the law received the sentence of death, and we, being Adam multiplied, are under the same sentence, dead in trespasses and sin. This did not come by chance, but it was decreed in the mind of God and it came by man. The creature was subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of of him who has subjected the same in hope. God knew that Adam would partake of the forbidden fruit, and it seems clear to my mind that it could not have been any other way. If it could have been so that he would not have partaken of it, God's arrangements and plans that were made before the foundation of the world would have been of no use. Hence all of his plans would have been thwarted. All things exist by the wisdom of God. His wisdom is eternal. There is nothing of any nature that is strange to him. He not only knew them as he declared them, but to him they were sure to come to pass, and he knew it as well as if they had already passed. If one thing, however tiny, could be new or strange to God it would be the eternal destruction of the great

Godhead. There is nothing so little or so weak which, if it could be unknown to God, and it were to get tangled up in the wheels of his great salvation but what would fully and completely destroy the whole of the great work of salvation. Therefore I believe that God has all power and eternal wisdom. Knowledge itself is jointly coupled with this, for it would be folly itself to know a thing and then not know it. And not only to know, but to know just how and just where to have it for the accomplishment of his divine purpose, and to have no confusion pertaining to his works and ways. This knowledge is coupled with wisdom, and both are eternal, and are complete in God, and in no other. Then it is sweet to know that God is perfectly stable and as completely unchangeable as is his eternal existence. "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Therefore the assurance of our salvation is altogether on the unchangeableness of our God. Through all of his attributes his love is so interwoven that they are joined one to another. They are solidly built, to stand forever. You will recollect that Joseph through all of his trials of being sinned against by his brethren, came forth more than conqueror, and those trials brought lean years. When there was no corn all of Joseph's brethren were forced to go down into Egypt on account of the famine, and Joseph forgave them all, supplied them with corn and put their money back in the sacks. He still had fellowship for them and he restored order, for he forgave them all without the asking. But said he, Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. There was reproof, but he gave God all the glory. While we deplore the evils which bring about these famines and this leanness, it is all in the eternal purpose of God, and though it may be meant for evil, God means it for good, for all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. We at times eat our bread in sorrow and may feel as though we are cast away, but with the still, small voice comes renewed courage, and a hope that God in his mercy has removed the fig leaf garments and has given us one of his own workmanship.

Let us glory only in the wonderful work of God. In the ninth chapter of Romans it seems that some of the brethren were not established in believing God's all-powerful power. Be that as it may, it was needful for them, as it is for all of God's people in all ages. The children not being yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth. Then all events are under his control and work out to the fulfillment of his all-wise decree, whether they be the rising or falling of nations or the falling of the drops of dew that revive the tender plants. The Son of God as was testified as Christ the Lord throughout the law and the prophets was none other than the Son of God in the Trinity that was to come and have

the power of the Father manifested to him, and with him and his angels should minister unto him and be called our Lord Jesus Christ, who should fulfill his Father's will, which not only embraced the works of the Father as to the coming into the world, but the purpose of God from all eternity, by which Jesus stood as it were a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Accordingly wisdom viewed him as red in his apparel.

When David's mind goes back to his faithful servant Uriah, whom he had killed so as to get Bath-sheba no doubt he sinks down and covers his face with shame, and we hear him cry out, My sore ran in the night. Ah, yes, that sore never healed. Time, the great healer, never caused that sore to cease to run. Only when God in great mercy raised him up together with Jesus Christ did he ever forget that awful crime he committed, and yet it must be done to carry out the purpose of God. This purpose did not lessen the heinousness of the dastardly deed. He must suffer all this for an example to those who should come after. Solomon must be born. Whatsoever is under the heaven is mine. This is the language of God. The One who said to Moses, I am that I am hath sent thee. This great incomprehensible, eternal, wondrous One is almighty in power, unlimited in wisdom, of whom it is said, There is no power but of God. The powers that be are ordained of God, omnipotent, omnipresent, everywhere at the same time, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders, into whose hands it is a fearful thing to fall, yet as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth whom he will. The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein; for he has founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods. The Bible plainly states that God is the creator and owner of all things. Not one inch can the wicked advance further than God permits. He overturns the wickedness of men and devils to the good of his people and his own glory. Not a dog was allowed to bark at the children of Israel as they came out of Egypt. Not a fly, frog, louse or hailstone was allowed to cross the line between the Egyptians and Goshen, where the children of Israel lived. The sea moved back and stood up like a wall at the command of God, so the Israelites crossed dry shod, and when the hosts of Pharaoh in their presumption and foolishness followed into the midst of the sea, at the command of God down came the waters and Pharaoh's hosts were swallowed up and drowned. You are not your own, therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are his.

I cannot see how any one can deny the predestination of all things in Peter's case, for the Lord knew as well what Peter would say before he said it as he did after it was said, for he told him beforehand that he would deny him. You will not deny that God brought up Pharaoh to do as he did, and that God hardeneth whom he will.

I love the doctrine of predestination of all things, for it ascribes all power, glory and honor to my Master, and it is in that that I find my rest (sabbath). This is real rest, and it matters not what my temporal troubles are I continue to enjoy this sabbath. When we understand the true meaning of the Scripture, Elect according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, we are willing to confess that all obedience of whatever kind we render unto God is of the Lord, and not by our own creature efforts. I do believe that God is a sovereign, and works his will not only in the army of heaven, but among the inhabitants of the earth, and none dare say, What doest thou? I firmly believe that all those who were chosen in Christ shall receive the fullness of all spiritual blessings treasured up in him. In Ephesians Paul declares that it is in Jesus we have obtained an eternal inheritance, and this being by the predestinated purpose of God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will. There are some among the Old School or Primitive Baptists who say that God predestinated all the good things, and who declare that all the bad things are against and contrary to the will of God, and they tell us what is good and what is bad. They seem not to realize that all God does is good and right, while much of his work with his creatures seems evil to us. None dare say that Job's afflictions were not sent upon him for his disobedience, for God said to Satan, who was to tempt or afflict him, "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?" Now this forever seals the fact that Job was no greater sinner than the rest of mankind, but if we by faith follow the trials of Job to the end we shall see God's purpose in every event which was working to this end. After Job's possessions were taken and he was afflicted in person, so wretched was his condition that all earthly friends, even his wife, abhorred him, and she asked him to curse God and die. This is just what Satan said he would do. But listen to the tried saint. He said to his wife that she spoke as one of the foolish women. He said, If we have received good at the Lord's hand, shall we not receive evil? Job's earthly blessings were good to him, but his afflictions were evil. No chastening at the time it is administered seems good to us, but is grievous (evil).

In the ninth chapter of John is recorded one of the greatest miracles Jesus performed while here. It was to open the eyes of a man that was born blind. The question was asked. "Who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents." Now this being so we must look for some other cause, for there is to be a cause for every effect. Listen to him whose words are spirit and life. He says that the cause is that the works of God should be made manifest. If

we could look for God's works to be made manifest in all our deep heart exercises, instead of marking out the way God should do, we, too, like Job, could say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Let us notice that all of our heavenly blessings were stored up in Christ, before the world was, and we were chosen heirs of these blessings there. It is according to the will and purpose of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will, and I firmly believe that the great purpose of our God in all things is the salvation of his elect people, whom he chose before the foundation of the world, and every link of that golden chain from the beginning of time is only manifesting to that people God's fixed purpose, or decree. To the end that his blessed name shall be glorified in all things.

(*To be concluded next number.*)

GRETNA, Va., Nov. 17, 1937.

ELDER J. F. STEGALL—DEAR BROTHER:—It has been on my mind for some time to try to write something of what I hope have been the dealings of the Lord with me. I have never felt satisfied about not talking more to the church the day I joined. I felt that I wanted to say more, but felt so choked I could not, and for some reason I feel it will be a relief to me to get this off my mind, and I do not think I could tell it to any one with a better understanding of the Lord's work than yourself, if indeed this is his work with me, which I truly hope it is, for if I have not been changed I do not have any hope of being. I became troubled about myself when quite young. When about eleven years of age I studied much about dying, and what would become of me. I wanted to die before I grew up, for I thought that if I could die in my childhood I would go to heaven. I would go to bed at night and cry for a long time. It seemed there was a weight on me that I could not understand, and I felt it would kill me if I did not get rid of it. I would steal away and read, especially all experiences, for I thought I knew something about the feelings of the writers when they spoke of feeling lost, but I never wanted any one to know that I read things of this kind. As I grew older and was enjoying the pleasures of the world, sometimes while on the ball room floor I would be possessed with a guilty conscience and a very sad feeling. I would try to throw it off, and think the other young people did not feel that way, why should I? I began to think about joining some church. I thought it was every one's duty to do that. I would go to revival meetings, and, as I thought, try to get religion, and would be almost in the act of going up when they would sing the invitation hymn. It seemed so easy to get religion, but after I would get home and study over the matter I could not think that was the right way, and would feel thankful I did not join them. But I thought something must be done, but did not know what. I just did not know what I did believe.

Whenever any Old Baptist would come to our home I would secretly listen to them talking, and would enjoy it. There was a difference in them from any other people that I liked. When about eighteen years of age, I dreamed I saw an arc, like a rainbow, in the east. I stood and watched it appear, and thought, This is to be the coming of the Lord. He did appear, and I heard his voice in my dream, saying, Time shall be no more. It seemed that mother and I were walking on air to meet him. She reached him, but I did not, still I did not think that I was lost. It troubled me afterward that I was not able to reach the Savior, but I was glad that I had seen him in my dream. After I had been married about two years my husband was called to war. I of course worried about it, until I thought I could not bear it. It came to me that he was taken from me for my disobedience to God, and I wondered what I had ever done to be punished like that. I had begun to think that every grievous thing that happened to me was sent upon me as a punishment for my sins. One night I had a desire to try to pray, and I am made to believe I did pray and my prayer was answered, for that night I dreamed of walking all alone. It was the most beautiful moonlight night I ever saw. Looking up, I saw around the moon these letters formed with stars: Trust in God. I will never be able to tell how I felt in my dream, and on awakening next morning I had a much more comfortable feeling than I had before. Mother noticed a difference in me, and asked what had happened. I seemed more cheerful than usual. I told her all about my dream. After that I did not worry about my husband as I had done. I feel I was shown here in whom I should trust. I began to enjoy more than ever the Old Baptist doctrine, and wished that I was worthy to be one of them. I was now fully satisfied that if I was saved at all it would be by the mercy of God, and that nothing I had ever done, or could do, would save poor me. Sometimes I would stay away from preaching for a long time. While I enjoyed it, they seemed to preach to me all the time, and I would worry much about it afterward. One day I was trying in my weak way to ask the Lord for mercy, and to save me, a poor sinner, from destruction, when something seemed to say, The Lord always takes care of his people. On the eighteenth day of June, 1936, a great storm arose. My sins rose up before me like mountains. It seemed that I was the vilest sinner on earth, with not a friend in the world. It seemed that every flash of lightning and every roar of thunder was to show me, and me alone, God's power to save or destroy. How little and helpless I felt to be. It was then I feel I was called on to pray and to beg for mercy, and unless God would himself say to my soul, I am thy salvation, I must eternally perish, for I knew I had no part to perform in the

matter. In a short time I felt that I loved every one, and from that time on I had a greater desire than ever before to join the Primitive Baptist Church. I did not feel worthy to be with them, but felt I could not stay away. When I would go to Springfield, sometimes I thought I could not go home without telling you all how I felt, but these thoughts would arise, What do you know of the lowly Jesus, and what could you tell these good people? so I would come away feeling it was true, I did not have anything to offer you as an experience of grace, and I had read so many times, By grace ye are saved, and that not of yourselves, etc. I would hear the tears drop on my pillow, and would wonder why I was ever born. I did not want any one to know I was interested in or loved the Primitive Baptist doctrine and would try to act as unconcerned as possible, lest some one should speak to me about it. But a mystery to me is this, why I went out of the house the day I joined, after hearing the wonderful sermon you preached from Psalms xl. 2: "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings." I was completely stirred up and turned about, for I had been in this horrible pit, and no way of escape. I felt I would have to talk to some one. I went out, as I thought, to go home, but when I came to the front door I walked back in the house, not knowing for what reason, nor did I know any one was talking to the church, but as I stepped inside I saw the prettiest sight my eyes ever beheld: all you people together and, as I could behold it, with the image of Jesus on your faces. Something seemed to say to me, Do not go home again to-day without saying something. I had made these promises to the Lord, as I felt sometimes it was my duty, but I did not think I was worthy, or that any one was expecting me to offer myself for membership. After I was received I felt that a burden had been lifted from my heart, and I was happy for a day or two, then began to worry again. Everything would come to my mind, such as, Why did you do this? and, You have no right to be with these people, they are too good for you. Things like these worried me, until I thought it was wrong for me to be baptized, for I felt I would just be trash and trouble to these people I loved. I thought that maybe after I was baptized all would be well with me, but I find it not that way. Sometimes I am rejoicing, then again I am in the valley. Another thing that troubles me is, If I am what I should be, why cannot I love all alike? I feel I want to, but find it impossible.

Brother Stegall, if you see this as a trifle and trashy, please forgive me for undertaking such a sacred problem and failing. I humbly ask to be remembered in your prayers.

Your little sister in hope,

(MRS.) WILLIE TOSH.

ANABEL, Missouri.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—If I may address you as such. I feel (if I know myself at all) that we are brothers and sisters in the spiritual kingdom. I received your letter of explanation about the "Home." Thank you very much. I surely do enjoy reading the SIGNS. I take three Primitive Baptist papers, and like them all, and at times get much comfort from all of them, but the SIGNS is my favorite paper of the three for its soundness of doctrine, and I think I see eye to eye with the writers of the SIGNS. It has been in our family longer than any other paper. My grandfather Rush took it before I was born. My mother also took it before I was born, and continued to take it as long as she lived, and I have taken it since her death. She resided with me the last ten years of her life, so I feel that I know most of the writers, especially in a spiritual way.

There is a passage of Scripture I would very much like to have your views on through the SIGNS. It is found in the Song of Solomon, eighth chapter, eighth verse: "We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for?" I understand this sister to be the church. Am I right? And I wonder if the breasts mean the candlestick or preacher? that is what puzzles me. I have thought of this for a long time, hoping some one might write on it. A sister called for views on it a few years back, and I watched the SIGNS very closely for it, but it never came out in the paper to my knowledge. It may have been answered privately. If you have the mind to write on it I will be very glad. I fully realize our understanding of spiritual things comes from the Father above, and unless he opens up or reveals to us the things of his kingdom we cannot talk or write upon them.

Pray for a poor, unworthy one, who sometimes has a little glimpse of heavenly things.

(MRS.) J. R. McAFEE.

ANABEL, Missouri.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I wonder sometimes if I should address any of God's little children as brother or sister, yet at times I feel my little hope so strongly I am made to rejoice in the knowledge there is a people that have been brought nigh by the blood of Christ, and that I am embraced in that number.

When I received my SIGNS a few days ago, as usual, I began to turn the pages to see who the writes were, and to my surprise I saw the Scripture I had asked you to write upon so long ago, and oh the joy I received in reading it. I felt I knew it was the church Solomon was speaking about, but to go back to the beginning, and on down to the New Testament writers, my mind was not capable of that. Unless God opens the eyes of our understanding how can we know the beauties of his kingdom? One thing I cannot understand about the love of God is, for instance, in the cleansing of the ten lepers only one returned to glorify God, and oh how many of God's little children to-

day have a good hope through Jesus Christ, yet never come into the visible church. All I can say is, that the "purpose of God might stand," for we know he has power to make the chords of his love so strong they cannot resist, yet men will bring sorrow and disappointment upon themselves by not obeying the statutes and commands of our Lord. One can never know the sweetness of God's kingdom until a member of it. I feel altogether unworthy of the love and fellowship of God's people, but if they will just let me live with them I will give God all the praise.

I want to thank you for complying with my request. I know we have to have the spirit to write or talk on spiritual things or all is vain.

Brother Dodson, if I have written anything that is dishonoring to God or his cause, please know it is of the flesh. I do not want to do or say anything that would take from God's power or glory. Pray for me, for I need the prayers of God's people.

In christian love,

(MRS.) J. R. McAFEE.

HOLLY SPRINGS, Arkansas.

DEAR PUBLISHER:—I do much appreciate your kindness in sending my paper on while I have fallen behind with my finances, so that it has been impossible to send the money sooner. Do hope this will not soon be the case again. If not asking too much, continue sending the SIGNS to me, and as often as I can I will pay promptly. I have given away many old papers, as well as new ones, and always ask that they be not destroyed. I have many filed away. Some way they seem sacred to me.. I wish I could say words of comfort and encouragement to you, for I am sure you have gone through many trials and afflictions. I have sincerely tried to pray that your eye trouble would be over soon.

I am sending four dollars, which will pay my subscription to January, 1939.

In christian love, and best wishes, a sister, I hope,

A. S. PATTERSON.

[IN the foregoing letter the writer did indeed "say words of comfort and encouragement" to us, which we much appreciate, and truly thank her for her good wishes and prayers in our behalf,—PUBLISHER.]

BURDEN, Kansas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I see it is time to renew my subscription to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. One year ago I thought to stop the paper because of failing eyesight, but it seemed as though I could not give it up, so, by the help of a higher power, I have been blessed to read every number, and oh such wonderful articles! The one in the August number signed "R. L. D.," in answer to "A. S. M.", was worth the price of a whole year's subscription. It has been said of old that one can chase a thousand, and two can put ten thousand to flight when the Spirit of Almighty God is at the helm.

Yours unworthily, in hope,

(MRS.) V. A. EDWARDS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1938.

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JOHN XVIII. 10.

"I AM glorified in them."

There is much that passes for religion in the present times that has nothing in it but the glorification of man; it finds its beginning in man and ends with man. It is not the work of God and therefore does not glorify him. Man may be sincere in what he does, but that does not make what he does right. Saul thought he should do many things against this name, which things he did, but it was when a work of grace was begun in his heart that he found that the things he thought were unto life were unto death. The words leading up to our text in the tenth verse declare that "All mine are thine." That is, all that belong to Christ, for whom at the time he uttered the prayer recorded in John xvii., when he was about to be crucified, were the Father's, they belonged to him and were given to the Son by the Father. God the Father and God the Son were united in purpose and choice, so they were chosen by God the Father and preserved in Christ Jesus. All that the Father gave to the Son, the Son redeems, and he is glorified in them. Not one of them but was lost and ruined, without hope and without God in the world. Nor did any of them by nature have the ability to come to him. He came to them. He concluded them all in unbelief, for there was none good, no, not one. This is Bible truth, but God's children are made to know it in a living way by the operation in them of God's Spirit, who convinces of the truth of those things that are written in the word. The Spirit does this, not because they have prayed for it, but because they belong to God and Christ, and they are not their own, nor can they do the things that they would. They are a number that no man can number, belonging unto God and Christ, to be called out from the race of mankind for God's own purpose, and for each of them there is an appointed time. One wrote, in hymn number 240,

> "The appointed time rolls on apace,
> Not to propose, but call by grace;
> To change the heart, renew the will,
> And turn their feet to Zion's hill."

We believe that all creatures and worlds were created for the glory of God. David saith, "The heavens declare the glory of God," etc.—Psalms

xix. Prophets and seers declare his glory, but to see it we find that even Moses must be placed in the clift of the rock by God himself (Exodus xxxiii. 22), and God told him, "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy." Saul was a persecutor, but it was God who called him by his grace and revealed his Son in him, and so great was the change, that when men who loved the truth, saw and heard, "THEY GLORIFIED GOD IN HIM." "Consider the lilies, how they grow," said Jesus, yet "Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, for one star differeth from another in glory, so we find the moon, or law, had a reflected glory. It set forth Christ, the Sun, and the prophets, or stars, varied in quantity of light or glory, but it was Christ, the Sun, when he arose with healing in his wings, who eclipsed the stars and moon by a glory that excelleth. He is ever in the midst of his people. The tabernacle was an evidence of his glory, and as the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud, so we find the innumerable cloud of witnesses all spake of him, of his suffering and the glory that should follow. Take Jesus away, and the glory is departed, just as when the ark of God was taken by the Philistines, the mother called her son Ichabod, saying, The glory of God is departed from Israel. (1 Sam. iv. 21.) No wonder then that Paul said, "We preach not ourselves [as though we were anybody], but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." When Martha had said unto him, "Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" It is his glory to raise the dead, for as the first Adam was a living soul, so is the second Adam a quickening spirit, and just as the natural man reflects Adam's shame and dishonor, so the new creature in Christ Jesus reflects Jesus Christ, for Jesus Christ is glorified in him. When the saints were to appear before princes and governors they were not to take thought what they should say. He would give them a tougue, the tongue of the learned. What a glory there is in the tongue giving utterance to the things of God. How unfit one is of himself to utter such glorious truth, as unfit by nature as Balaam's ass was to speak with the voice of a man. (Num. xxii. 28). To the glory of Christ and the power of his truth, the truth of God, his saints face an ungodly frowning world. How boldly these humble men faced their enemies, those who had crucified their Lord, and preached the love and power of a Christ that saves unto the uttermost. The power of love and its constraining and restraining influence is clearly manifest in the union and fellowship of the saints of God, who, led by the Spirit, and walking in the Spirit, do not fulfill the desires of the flesh, but rather esteem others better than themselves, and bear one another's burdens, and by a humble

submission to the will of God encourage each other to bear their own burdens. In such who walk in love we see the image of Jesus, and we love them for Christ's sake and glorify God for the grace given to them. The presence of Jesus in such has an humbling effect upon the soul, and sin becomes exceeding sinful, so that there is a self-loathing, and often there will be a laying of one's mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope, and we know that it is of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed because his compassions fail not. "They are new every morning, great is thy faithfulness." The faithfulness of Christ is such that he never leaves nor forsakes us. The presence of the glory of God in the cloud, his glory as set forth in the tabernacle, the priest, and the offerings, and above all in the ark itself, was to Israel an evidence not manifest to any other people, of God's goodness and mercy unto them, and when those evidences were taken from them, and the house left unto them desolate, the glory of God departed from them. But there is a house of God, a building not made with hands, in which the people of God are living as lively stones, and are built together a spiritual house, and it is in this house that Jesus is glorified. He of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, that if any man glory, let him glory in the Lord. Paul tells us that the head of every man is Christ, and that every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoreth his head. Every man, or servant of God, praying or prophesying in the spirit, is ever zealous not to cover up the head, Christ Jesus, but is ever forward to declare his work with rejoicing, while the church, as a woman, is ever covering herself, never telling what she has done for the Lord, but confessing in herself as having nothing to glory in but the cross of Christ, so that she, like Paul, glories in her infirmities, that the power of God might rest upon her. Thus as the woman covered is a sign that she is under the power of her husband, so the church, walking conscious of her own infirmities, and glorying therein, realizes the power of God resting upon her, enabling her to glory in her Lord. The first man Adam is the figure of him that was to come, but through disobedience and death that likeness was debased, and Adam had children debased, conceived in sin, but these children could not possibly know how debased they were except through the second Adam, who is a quickening Spirit. All that belonged to God and Christ groaned and travailed in pain until now, and Paul also says, "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Thus gracious men and women have received the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father, but they, like Paul, are still waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. Here they bear in their body the marks of the dying of the Lord Jesus. They have the Spirit of Christ, but they groan in the likeness of Adam, yet

faith, the result of God's word shining in their heart, gives them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It is in these earthen vessels that he is glorified here, for being common clay of the same lump, and being insufficient to even think a good thought, they show forth his power and his glory. They, as a people, are the house of his glory, and he has declared that he will glorify the house of his glory. What more can he do for his people than he has already done? Will he not change our vile body and fashion it according to his glorious body? Christ's body was more marred than any man's through sin. He died and rose again and ascended into heaven, the same body, now glorified, "decked with resplendent wounds." Once subjected to death, now the first begotten from the dead, possessing immortality, which immortality he has brought to light through the gospel. Thus we have a hope of eternal life, and we would remember here that hope that is seen is not hope, but under the humiliation of this body which is dead because of sin, we patiently wait for our Lord, who shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and when we see him as he is, we shall be like him, GLORIFIED. In this body of flesh they are declared to be children that will not lie; that is, they show forth the praise of Christ, who has called them out of darkness into his most marvelous light. How much more so when he, who is a quickening Spirit, shall quicken our mortal bodies, and all we have to possess and enjoy to all eternity will redound to the praise and glory of him who loved us and gave himself for us. If the mind of a man was put in a dog he would not be satisfied to live with dogs, he would want to rise to the level of the mind he possessed. When at that level he would be humbled because he had the likeness of a dog. The mind of Christ is put into a subject of grace, which causes him to no more be content with those things that please his fellow-men, but to rise above them, for he is an object of God's mercy, but he carries about a body of this death, a body that is dead because of sin, just like his neighbors, but having the mind of Christ, he loathes that which is of the flesh and wants the likeness of his Lord. It was this experience that made David say, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness," and it is the like experience that makes us long for the day when we shall behold his face in righteousness, and awake with his likeness.

G. R.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS."

WE will furnish extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder Jeff Staton.)

DEAR BRETHREN AND KINDRED IN CHRIST—CHILDREN OF THE MOST HIGH GOD:— It now becomes my duty to address you in the form of a Circular Letter. I realize my weakness and inability to write in a way that will be of comfort to God's humble poor, yet I hope it will be God's will to so direct my thoughts that I may write some of the truths of God. After thinking the matter over seriously, and, I hope, prayerfully, my mind more centers on the words of Isaiah the prophet, which he spake by the Holy Ghost and left on record, in the fifty-third chapter, first and second verses. The first verse reads as follows: "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" Dear brethren, it seems to me that the prophet has asked this question and answered it. I do not believe any one can believe our doctrine without the arm (his power) of the Lord being revealed. I also think, brethren, that when the prophet said "our" he meant men and women who had an experience of grace; who had been killed to the enjoyment of things of this life and made alive to the things of Christ, and made new creatures in Christ, made to hate the things they once loved and love the things they once hated, and that these men and women are mortals, not spirits. Brethren, I believe, and think it is believed by the Mates Creek Association, that instead of something in the man being saved, it is something in the man that saves the man. So the man is in the arrangement from start to finish. It was man that transgressed God's law; it is man that is born of God's Spirit; it is man that will be resurrected from the grave; it is man that will be changed from mortal to immortal and taken to heaven to ever be with the Lord. Brethren, I believe this is some of the report the prophet was talking about, and he goes on in the second verse, and says, "For he [to my mind he was talking about Christ] shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him." It seems to me that the doctrine of salvation by grace is fully set forth in this text, for Christ shall grow up before God as a tender plant which is precious in the sight of God. But, calling you back to your experience, was he precious to you in your sight when your sins were crushing you down like mountains? I say not as the beautiful text says, He had no form nor comeliness; that when we see him we should desire him. Brethren, is it not plain to see that an experience of grace is contrary to nature? If it was left to man to make the choice the change would never come, no more than this plant that springs out of a dry ground, that had no form nor comeliness. It is no wonder the apostle could say in his day, "By grace are ye saved," and no wonder that Old Primitive Baptists can say truthfully and by heavenly authority in this day that it is by grace ye are saved. Brethren, the apostle declared and said this grace was given us

in Christ Jesus (this tender plant) before the world began. Which time, brethren, I think was before this old natural world began, before God spake this globe into existence, even before he had made man of the dust of this literal earth, that God saw all of his children and gave them to his Son in that covenant of grace, and gave to them this favor, which was unmerited on their part, and is called grace. This, to my mind, shows the foreknowledge of God, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. It was the Father's pleasure to give the redeemed family to his Son in that covenant, and to send him into this natural world to bleed and die in their low room and stead. Now, brethren, Christ stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and was amply able to, and did, redeem his people from under the curse of the broken law, and saved them with an everlasting salvation.

The apostle said, Who hath predestinated us unto the adoption of children. Now I would love to make plain what we, the old Mates Creek Association, believe concerning the question of absolute predestination of God in all things. The word "absolute" means to us, a fixed certainty, unconditionally. They who do not believe in absolute predestination must surely believe in conditionalism. I cannot say salvation, for there cannot be salvation in conditions. This is plainly set forth in the man that fell among the thieves and was stripped of his raiment and left half dead. A certain Samaritan came along and took him to an inn and paid the fare. This again shows, to my mind, the tender plant, shows also Christ standing surety for his people.

The prophet says, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" Enough to say that if any one does not believe the report of these witnesses, it is because the arm of the Lord has not been revealed to him. The apostle says, "We know that all things work totogether for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" So we would conclude that whatsoever comes to pass in time God causes it to work "for good to them that love God," for he is allpowerful, and the only wise God.

Now, brethren, as I do not desire to be lengthy, I will bring my remarks to a close by saying I feel I have only hinted at the subject, and want you, brethren, to closely examine these few broken remarks, and if you think best just cast them aside, for the apostle

says, If they do not bring this doctrine, do not receive them into your house, neither bid them Godspeed.

H. W. MAY, Mod.

G. B. BIRD, Clerk.

The Original Southeast Texas Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with Antioch Church, Buna, Jasper County, Texas, to all who love and know the truth, and fear God and tremble at his word.

DEAR BRETHREN:—By the mercy and lovingkindness of the one true and living God, we were abundantly blessed above measure in this meeting, it being the ninetieth annual session of our Association. The churches were well represented, both by their members, messengers and friends. As it pleased Almighty God to sift the Association last year, there are only three churches now composing the Original Southeast Texas Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association. Nevertheless, it was the most pleasant session we have had for a number of years. Not a dissenting voice was heard, but love and fellowship freely flowed from heart to heart; all of the same mind, walking agreeably together, seeing eye to eye and speaking the selfsame thing. The preaching was all of one accord, in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, declaring all the counsel of God, ascribing all power, glory and honor to him that loved us and gave himself for us, which filled the hearts of his humble poor with joy unspeakable and full of glory. We hope and believe we were given to taste of the good word of God and the power of the world to come, and to witness with the psalmist when he said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." Where there is unity there is peace, love and fellowship, and ye need not that any man teach you of this love, because ye are taught of God to love one another, and perfect love casteth out fear, for where there is fear there is torment. We hope and believe we love our brethren who turned back and went out from us. But how can two walk together except they be agreed? We cannot fellowship what Jesus and his inspired apostles say is dishonor, which are the works of the flesh, being idolatry, fornication, adultery, hatred, envyings, murders and drunkenness, of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom, says the apostle Paul. He says again, "If any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother."

The next session of this Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with Pilgrims Rest Church, Security, Texas, where we hope by the mercy

and providential care of Israel's God to meet again. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth. Until then farewell, and may the God of peace that brought again from the dead the Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Submitted in love.

J. A. COLLINS, Mod.

LEONARD RICHARDSON, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, Bowdoinham, Maine, September 10th, 11th and 12th, 1937, sends greeting to the churches and associations with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year has passed and we are thankful to our heavenly Father that he has made it possible for us to meet again in an association. Your correspondence gladdens and strengthens us, and we desire a continuance of the same. Your ministering brethren, Elders Ruston and Dodson, have come to us preaching a gospel of peace and love in Jesus Christ and we were blessed to feel that He who has promised never to leave nor forsake us was in our midst. As we realize our ever decreasing membership, we feel this is as God purposed it to be, and that our strength, like the strength of Gideon's army of old, is not in numbers, but in God alone. Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.

The next meeting of the Association will be, the Lord willing, the Friday, Saturday and Sunday before the second Monday in September, 1938.

GEORGE RUSTON, Mod.

S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER J. F. HATFIELD was born in Pike County, Kentucky, on the head of Blackberry Creek, October 13th, 1870, and departed this life October 25th, 1937, making his sojourn on earth 67 years and 12 days. Elder Hatfield was the son of Francis M. and Josephine Hatfield, and was married to Betty Ball May 3rd, 1889, by Elder W. J. May, and to this uniion were born eleven children, six boys and five girls, all living. He had fifty-two grandchildren, of whom forty-three are living and nine are dead, great-grandchildren five, all living. Elder Hatfield united with the Samaria Church, of Mates Creek Association of Primitive Baptists, May 18th, 1913, and was baptized the same day by Elder A. Hatfield. Elder J. F. Hatfield was ordained to the full function of the gospel ministry July 17th, 1917, by a presbytery consisting of Elders J. D. Riffe, C. Hatfield, A. Hatfield, W. S. Weddington, H. W. May and G. H. Coleman. Elder Hatfield was sound in doctrine and was prompt to fill his appointments. When any one went for him to attend a funeral or to go and visit any one who was sick, he never said, "No, I can't go." He went, regardless of the circumstances at home. He was the most faith-

ful man the Baptists had. We can truly say he was a man of God. Elder Hatfield is sadly missed by us all, but our loss is his eternal gain. He was Moderator of the Samaria Church at his death. He was afflicted some over twelve months, but was blessed of the Lord to bear his afflictions with christian fortitude. Elder Hatfield was firm and sound in the doctrine of the resurrection of the bodies of the Lord's people, when Christ shall appear the second time, that all of the Lord's people will be taken home to heaven, without the loss of one. He was sound in the doctrine of God's absolute predestination of all things, and the punishment of the wicked. Elder Hatfield was blessed of the Lord to fight a good fight. Henceforth there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness. Elder Hatfield always stood firm and never was carried around by winds of doctrine of men and devils. Elder Hatfield's home was always a home for his brethren and sisters and friends, and he did everything he could to make them enjoy themselves. He could not be satisfied unless they went home with him and stayed all night. I often think, Will we ever be blessed of the Lord to have another man of God as faithful in every way as the Lord blessed Elder Hatfield to be?

He leaves a heart-broken widow, ten children and a host of brethren, sisters and friends to mourn their great loss of a man of God. Elder Hatfield had only one brother left in the world to sorrow over him, and that one is Elder Cordell Hatfield. The last sermon preached by Elder J. F. Hatfield was on October 17th, 1937, at his home church, text Luke viii. 35. Portion used, Sitting at the feet of Jesus clothed and in his right mind. The last song used, Goble selection 159, "I would, but cannot sing."

His funeral was held at his home on October 27th, 1937, in the presence of a large gathering of brethren, sisters and friends. Services were conducted by Elders Ben Chapman, Jeff Staton, Cordell Hatfield and the unworthy writer. Then the Elder was laid in the family cemetery to await the second coming of Jesus. Then the very body they buried in the grave will be immortalized and taken home to heaven to ever be with the Lord. I will say to all, Weep not as those who have no hope. Elder Hatfield is gone from us in this world, but not forgotten. He will live in the memory of his brethren, sisters and friends, and may we be blessed of the Lord to take his God's blessed counsel.

Written by a poor sinner by request of his family and friends.

H. W. MAY.

HENRY CHICK CAINES, our dear brother in Christ, departed this life June 13th, 1938, at the home of his devoted daughter, Mrs. Alice Caines Gladding, 5 Hilltop Road, Catonsville, Md. Brother Caines was the son of James and Julia Chick Caines, and was born August 9th, 1853, in Chesilbouse, Dorsetshire, England. He came to America in April, 1872, making his home near Catonsville, not far from where he passed away. January 1st, 1885, brother Caines was united in marriage to Mary Virginia Turner, by the late Elder F. A. Chick. To this union were born five children: Mary, James, Lillian, Alice and Florence. Lillian and Florence preceded their father in death several years. Florence, a talented young woman, often visited in the home of the writer. It is with fond remembrance the writer and his family recall her last visit, when she played beautifully several request numbers, at the close of which we joined in what proved later to be our farewell song on earth with her,

The blessedness of the days of long ago we love to retain in memory. Florence was baptized into the fellowship of the Baltimore Church several years before her death, by the late Elder Rowe, and lived a faithful member until illness prevented her attending the meetings, which until her health broke had been the greatest joy of her short but useful life. July 8th, 1883, brother Caines was baptized into the fellowship of the Ebenezer Church, of Baltimore, by the late Elder F. A. Chick, and proved to be a most worthy member until death. He was given a good hope in Christ, and he loved to talk of the conflicts and trials he was called to pass through before he was given needed grace to confess his Lord and Savior before the church. At the time of his deep exercise of mind he was employed by the late Judge Scott, of Baltimore, who was a highly esteemed member of the Baltimore Church. Brother Scott was not only qualified to judge at the trials of men in the earthly courts of men, but the Lord had instructed him in the affairs of His kingdom. Upon seeing brother Caines was in much distress of mind he gave him a copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and in it brother Caines found an article that seemed so much like his own case he felt that surely some one must have told the writer in some mysterious way about his soul trouble. Later brother Scott invited brother Caines to attend with him the services of the Baltimore Church. Again brother Caines thought that brother Scott had talked with Elder Chick about his depressed state of mind. In much bitterness of soul he continued for quite some time. The way of salvation was made plain to him for others, but for himself he could not see how God could be just and still save a sinner like him. "He that hath begun a good work," etc., was not for him, for the work had only wrought death and destruction, seemingly. Oh the joy of that hour when the burden seems to have been buried under the water never to arise again. Brother, not unlike many of God's dear children, was so happy in his baptism he felt surely the victory had been won and it could not be otherwise, that the conflict was over. Often he said to the writer, How sadly mistaken was I in this. Until the death of his dear, faithful wife his home was an open one for Old School Baptists and his friends. We love to think of the times when most of the entire congregation of the Baltimore Church would be entertained in his home by himself and his lovely family. Ever since the death of sister Caines he had made his home with his devoted daughter, wife of our faithful Deacon of the Baltimore Church, brother Quincy A. Gladding. No mortal could have been more faithful than was sister Gladding in her attention to her father. Brother Caines had been confined to his home for about two years. Much of that time had been spent in bed, and the care was such as is required in the care of a helpless child. Husband being busy during the day, and children at school, most of the burden fell upon his dear broken daughter. Though not of a robust nature, sister Gladding never faltered in her attention to her father, and was blessed to realize the fulfillment of the promise, As thy day so shall thy strength be. Since God's children are always interested in reading of his watchful care over his children, I cannot refrain from recording some of the most unusual events of recent illnesses of sister Gladding and her remarkable recovery, During the latter part of the year 1933 she was stricken with tumor in the head, near the base of the brain. After consulting with Doctor Bagley, one of

the world's outstanding surgeons, the doctor told brother Gladding his wife could live but a short time if not operated upon, and he had but very little encouragement to offer if she was. If I remember rightly, he said about one chance in a hundred. Brother Gladding bore up bravely, and said her case is in the hands of the Lord. Sister Gladding was also most wonderfully kept by the almighty power of God. Among many other useful duties, the Lord had one special service for her to perform. The Lord had so ordained that her father must be stricken in his old age. He had also ordained that only she must keep the daily watch over his sinking form, ministering to his earthly needs as no other could. Oh that the Lord would enable us to render continual praise unto him for his wonderful mercies to us. If I remember correctly, sister Gladding was on the operating table all told nearly eight hours. The second time, about two weeks later, they removed the entire tumor. Her recovery was as unusual as the operation had proven to be. Not only did the Lord bless her father in restoring her to health again, but her devoted husband, children, the Baltimore Church and many friends as well. Surviving are two daughters, Mrs. Mary Romer and Mrs. Alice Caines Gladding, one son, James, ten granchildren and five great-grandchildren. The writer was blessed to see brother Caines quite often during his last illness, and his interest never slackened concerning the services of his church and his desire to attend, until past the stage of natural strength.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer from the above mentioned home, June 16th, using as a text, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord." His funeral was largely attended, thus showing the high esteem in which our dear brother was held by those who knew him best. Burial was in beautiful Mt. Olivet Cemetery, Baltimore Md. May the Lord grant unto our dear sister all needed grace, and be her strong set tower when all earthly helps fail, is the desire of his pastor.

ALSO,

MRS. NETTIE STONER, our dear sister in Christ, passed from this troubled world June 15th, 1938, at her home, near Russellville, Pennsylvania. Sister Stoner was born February 25th, 1872. February 11th, 1896, she was united in marriage to Samuel Stoner, and to this union were born four sons, two preceding her in death. The eldest, Joseph, died in the year 1925, in the twenty-ninth year of his age. Sister Nettie was never able to live down this dreadful sorrow. A lovely young man, with what seemed to be a bright future, so quickly cut off from all that was mortal, was such a shock that his heart-broken mother could not shake off the dreadful sting that death had wrought. Over twelve years ago sister Stoner was stricken with paralysis. While there was some slight improvement in her condition to what it was when she was first stricken, yet she was always thereafter dependent upon others for almost constant help. During all these many years she could neither walk nor stand without assistance. Sister Stoner was one of the most patient sufferers I ever knew. I never called to see her when she did not portray the same charming smile, and never did I hear a word of complaint about her condition. She never tired of hearing of the goodness and mercy of the Lord. After she had partly recovered from the first attack her faithful husband and an attendant would from time to time bring her to meeting at Rock Springs. They would bring her from the automobile into the

meetinghouse in a chair, and at such times there would be but few eyes in the house that were not wet with tears. I recall years ago when Elder Lefferts had filled an appointment at Rock Springs, I said to her, I am so glad you have had the opportunity of hearing brother Lefferts. Her answer was, I am always glad to hear my pastor, too. I speak of this to show her thoughtfulness of the feelings of others. Many years ago she was baptized into the fellowship of the Rock Springs Church, by whom I do not know; more important is the fact that she was able by the grace of God to make her "calling and election sure." To visit her was to have one's spirit refreshed. One could but feel that she had been anointed with the oil of gladness, the fragments of which seemed to be lingering near. Her dear devoted husband is indeed very lonely without her. For some time past he had given up active business in order that he might devote his time to his afflicted companion. One had but to visit the home to see how wonderfully he was able to do that which few others could do. Sister Nettie Bell Stoner was one of the shining stars of the Rock Springs Church, whose passing from us we feel deeply, but we know that for her it is far better to depart and be with Him whom she loved to adore for His loveingkindness to her.

Her funeral was at the Rock Springs meetinghouse, which was fiilled almost to overflowing. The many years of being deprived of meeting with her former associates were not sufficient to cause her dear friends to forget the beautiful personality that meant so much to them even in death. Sister Stoner is survived by her sorrowing husband, two sons, Janse Scott and John Samuel, and two grandchildren, William T. and John Samuel Stoner, Jr., children of Mr. and Mrs. John Stoner. May the Lord comfort all who feel their loss.

Her pastor,

D. L. TOPPING.

MRS. ROSABELLE (TAMSETT) LEONARD died at 5:30 a. m. May 17th, 1938, from cerebral hemorrhage. She had suffered several previous shocks, the last of which was only about nine hours before her death. She was born September 3rd, 1869, in Kent County, England, and came to this country with her parents, the late James W. and Ann (Baker) Tamsett, in 1870. She had resided in Otego, N. Y., since the age of eleven years, and married Abner B. Leonard, also of Otego, November 2nd, 1918, who preceded her in death four years. Surviving are one sister, Mrs. Emily Solloway, of Oneonta, N. Y., three brothers, Walter F. and Clifford B. Tamsett, of Oneonta, and James E. Tamsett, of Leroy, Alabama, several nieces, nephews and cousins; also Miss Bertha Guernsey and Mr. Willard Guernsey, of Otego, whom she had cared for since their childhood. Sister Rose, as she was known, was a beloved and faithful member of the Otego Primitive Baptist Church for forty-one years. She had served as Clerk for twenty-four years, and was also Secretary and Treasurer of the Bundy Cemetery Association for many years. She had a very wide correspondence and her letters were always joyously received, because of the Christ-like spirit expressed in them. She prepared and showed the writer a list of thirty-six different names of Elders whom she had seen and heard preach. Her greatest pleasure in life was to entertain and be with the brethren, and her home was always open to any and all Baptists who came to

Otego. Perhaps she enjoyed the acquaintance and fellowship of as many, if not more, of our Baptist people than any other now living in these parts. The church at Otego has suffered a great loss in her passing, and her presence at the meetings is sadly missed, but we humbly pray to be submissive to God in his will to call her home, where she will ever be in his presence.

The funeral services were held Friday afternoon in her home on Follett Street, Otego, conducted by the writer. "Asleep in Jesus" was sung by Mrs. Walter Tamsett and Mrs. F. L. Shulley, as requested by the deceased. The host of friends, neighbors and church folks from far and near who came to pay their last respects spoke of the high esteem in which she was held. The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the relatives and friends there gathered. May God grant sustaining grace to comfort those left to mourn their sad loss, and help us all to emulate the life she lived, to the honor and glory of him who loved us and gave himself for us.

C. E. BENSON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Mrs. L. F. Bishop, Va., $1; Mrs. J. E. Chadwick, Texas, $3; William H. Morris, Mo., $1.

MEETINGS.

The usual all-day meeting will be held with the New Vernon Chuch, New Vernon, N. Y., on Wednesday, October 12th, 1938, to which all lovers of the truth are invited.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 12th, 13th and 14th, 1938. Ministering brethren and lovers of the truth in Jesus Christ our Lord are invited to meet with us. The meetinghouse is located on hard surface road between Chantilly and Herndon. Those coming by auto will follow Lee Highway out of Washington to Route 50, and thence on Route 50 to Chantilly, and then east three miles to meetinghouse. Those coming by electric train from Rosslyn and wishing to be met at Herndon either Tuesday evening or Wednesday morning, will please notify in advance Deacon Isaac T. Long, Herndon, Virginia. No trains will be met except by request.

G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

The Salisbury Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Indiantown Church, Powellville, Maryland, on Wednesday and Thursday, October 19th and 20th, 1938, beginning at 10:00 a. m. Standard Time. Ministers and brethren of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us. Those coming by train will be met at the station at Salisbury, Maryland. Those driving their own cars will please stop at the Primitive Baptist Home, where they will be met. Those coming by bus will be met at the Wicomico Hotel on Tuesday afternoon, October 18th.

GEORGE F. ADKINS, Clerk.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in October (30th). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church holds meetings the fourth Sunday of each month at 1026 East Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Meeting begins at 10:30 a. m., dismisses for lunch and reconvenes at 2 o'clock p. m. Meeting days have been changed from the first to the fourth Sunday of each month. No Saturday or night meetings.

BURLIE HALL, Pastor
W. H. CAVE, Ass't Pastor.
(MRS.) H. B. CURLIE, Church Clerk

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

Cloth binding, 75c each. Paper covers, single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and all to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 106. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1938. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS.

(*Concluded from last number.*)

In Jesus I hope I see the purpose or predestination of God in all things, and to him be glory, honor and power, now and eternally. Yea, all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. The wrath of man shall praise God, and the remainder shall he restrain. All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. When Balaam would have cursed Israel for Balak "the Lord put a word in Balaam's mouth, and said, Return unto Balak, and thus thou shalt speak." "How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy, whom the Lord hath not defied?" Sarah, the wife of Abraham, spoken of as the father of the faithful, to whom the Lord had said, As the stars of heaven for number, so shall thy seed be, was barren. She was old and it had ceased to be with her after the manner of women, before even the promise was made. According to nature, all hope had expired, so much so that she laughed at the absurdity of the thought. Nevertheless, at the set time of which God had spoken she bear Isaac (there is a set time for God to favor Zion), and when he was weaned, or separated from the consolations of the breasts of his mother (humanity) Abraham, the man of faith, made a great feast. The word that had gone out of the mouth of the Lord, which he declared should not return unto him void, had accomplished his pleasure in the thing whereunto he sent it, and the barren was made to bring unto him who works and none can hinder. Abraham, who by faith staggered not at the promise of God, saw his day, the Lord's day, the day of his power, and was glad, worshiping as he did at the altar when God staid his hand and provided himself an offering in a ram caught in the thicket. What a time of rejoicing and singing and crying aloud there must have been at the great feast which he made. When Abraham

sent his servant to seek a wife for his son Isaac, he commanded him, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I dwell, but thou shalt go unto my country and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac. He further told him, "The Lord God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land, he shall send his angel before thee; and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence." The success of the journey proved conclusively the selection to be of the Lord. The Lord loved you, is the reason he brought you out and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. The flock of God to-day is a little flock, and it is little in a two-fold sense: the members composing it are so few in number that they are not reckoned among the nations of the earth, and so little and helpless and dependent that they of themselves can do nothing. The Father does the work, and so by their experience they are barren and can bring forth no good thing, except the Lord be entreated of them and bless them in fruit and store, and then they do bring forth fruit, but it is with great travail, the flesh lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, the warring of two opposing members. The flesh serving the law of sin, and the mind serving and delighting in the law of God after the inward man. Out of this strife we are made to cry, Oh wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? We are made to exclaim, The good I would I do not, but the evil I would not that I do. Dear child of God, do you not realize that to be fruitful unto the Lord you must be killed all the day long? Oh may we trust him for all things, both for time and eternity. It is in him we stand clothed upon with that righteousness from above. Shall it be said of the servant that he is better than his Master? We have been stripped and shorn of our righteousness under the law which was proven to be nothing but filthy rags under the law, our only hope is grace, the unmerited favor of God. I do not know of any professing the name of Old School or Primitive Baptists who will deny that our God did most assuredly know every event of time before time was, but many will not admit that all these events were predestinated by our God. How did and how does our God surely know that this and that event will positively occur if he has not predestinated it? Is our God dependent upon some other power than himself to bring about the things which he foreknew? He most assuredly purposed to cut off the wickedness of Babylon from the land of Israel. Read Isaiah xiv. 24, 25. Did he not send the Babylonians there to destroy them? If not, who did move them to go where the Lord would show his wonderful power to save? For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? And his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back? (Isaiah xiv. 27.) If any are wise and can solve this

mystery, let them tell the judgments of God which he purposed against Egypt. (Isaiah xix. 12.) Many tell us that God's purpose or predestination does not pertain to anything but those directly connected with the salvation of the church, but the voice of inspiration tells it differently. It says, "The Lord of hosts hath purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the honorable of the earth."—Isaiah xxiii. 9. Upon whom does our God rely to see that his works are done? Let us hear him: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."—Isaiah xlix. 9-11. As we usually term it, all things to which we are referring are evil things, and yet they are things that God purposed as predestinated. Then we declare with our afflicted and bereaved brother Job, "Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? who will say unto him, What doest thou?"—Job ix. 12. And saith brother Solomon, "Where the word of a king is, there is power; and who may say unto him, What doest thou?"—Eccl. viii. 4. Or with Nebuchadnezzar, and all the inhabitants of the earth, they are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? This I consider an array of evidence for predestination. Predestination is sure to carry to the complete purpose of God in the things predestinated, and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. (Rom. viii. 27.) Some want to divide the "all things" into classes, but no table is furnished to show what class of things are embraced in the "all things," and what class of things are not in that declaration. I admit that I cannot see what class of things is not in that declaration. I admit that I cannot see while some things are being transacted how they can be for my good. I think Jacob was puzzled as to how the separation from his children was ever to be for his good, but when he was given to see his family's salvation in it he could say, It is enough.

God had told Abraham in a covenant when Abraham was in a deep sleep, but he did not know the meaning of it all. God had as much purpose in raising up a Pharaoh to show his power in him, by destroying him and his host, as he did in raising up Israel to serve him. He had as much purpose in destroying the wicked world by the flood of waters as he did in saving Noah and his family, the beasts and all the things that were with him in the ark, by the ark being borne upon the bosom of the waters. It was just as much the purpose of God to draw Pharaoh and his host into the sea by the receding darkness as it was to

have Israel go forward. God only used his will and purpose in leaving out of the eternal covenant of salvation all the nonelect, just as much as he did making sure the salvation of the elect.

When our Lord died on the Roman cross, and said, "It is finished," the door of redemption had forever shut in all the elect of God, never to be opened again, and the nonelect host were forever shut out. Thus the seal of God's eternal knowledge fixed on all the chosen of the Lord and they were perfectly and permanently drawn.

"Salvation, through our dying Head,
Is finished and complete;
He paid whate'er his people owed,
And canceled all their debt."

God in infinite wisdom and sovereign rulership has, does now and will make all things work for good to them that love him. Joseph's abduction to Egypt and the lying of the woman who had him cast into prison were for the purpose of his interpretation of King Pharaoh's dreams, so that sufficient storage for natural sustenance of the people would be to the saving of posterity and the saving of Israel of which Jesus was born, coming out through Judah, from whom the scepter should not depart, and the lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh come. Then shall the gathering of the people be. Here it was all to come through, and all of the falsehoods of Joseph's brethren and the other wicked acts connected with this. Joseph said God intended it for good, to the end to save many people alive, and to preserve this posterity, and these were called decreed things, and God in the decreed things made them all work out together for good to them that love him, to them who are the called according to his purpose. The taking of the young child Jesus and fleeing into Egypt with him was prophesied of, and had to be fulfilled, and all things had to come to pass as they did, or the Bible would have been a book of falsehoods. We see in this case the fulfillment of the Scriptures, yet it was wickedness and men did it through a vile and corrupt spirit, and were doing their own sinful, wicked desires, and God made it fulfill his prophecy. They that slew Jesus did identically the same thing in time of wickedness; it had its origin from the same source, yet it was God's determination, and that the Scripture must be fulfilled, that there shall be a son born, his name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. God promised us eternal life before the world began, and that life was in his Son, and the only way the promise could reach its completion was for the law to be fulfilled and taken out of the way by the sacrifice of the Son of God, who was without spot or blemish, and none could do this but Jesus, who was the only mediator for men, for he was the only one free from sin, and it required him to be made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them (all the Father gave him) that were under the law in order for the completeness, and to fulfill the promise God had made it was necessary for wicked men to rise up and to do what God's hand and counsel had before determined to be done, and God spared not his own Son, but delivered

him up, and they unknowingly crucified and slew the Lord of glory. This was all by the divine arrangement that he had decreed within himself, and it was the most wicked and heinous crime in the annals of history, and is the truth as taught in the Bible.

As this has been selected from many writers, and they used the word "absolute" often, I thought I would have to use it more than necessary, but I have not used it, yet I believe it from first to last. The foregoing is only a small part original, and I am indebted to the editors and other writers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It is a collection and summary of what I have read of their writings, and I have used the part that was best suited to the subject of predestination, and the part I did not use I believe to be the truth, and in accordance with the teachings of the Bible. Let us continue to give God all the praise.

To this I will add a few verses that are original:

Blest are the ones who have their trust
In higher power than man;
Power that, to the uttermost,
Can carry out the plan.

The God of power, the God all-wise,
Will guide us safely through
This world, and upward to the skies;
To him all praise is due.

Oh! that our trust may be in him,
Feeling that he doth care
For us, though we are all hedged in,
The way will open fair.

He has the wisdom, and the power,
And he can do for us,
In any place, or any hour,
Which he in love thinks best.

He cares for us; his love so great,
From harm can safely keep,
If 'tis his will he'll keep us safe,
E'en while we rest in sleep.

Now may the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob keep us as he did them, never letting us depart from giving him all glory, honor, power and sovereignty over all things, times and places, is my prayer.

In hope of life beyond this world of sin,

W. T. JUDY.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

I HAVE had some thoughts on the parable set forth by Jesus, which you will find recorded in the tenth chapter of St. Luke. I cannot promise to interest you, or to write anything of importance, for it seems that every time I write on the Bible when I look over what I have written it appears to me that I just left out all the sweetness, or things important, but still I have had some tell me to write on and on. Even sister P. D. Gold said she always indorsed my articles, which cheered me some, for I knew she had well established convictions in the doctrine of our Lord and Savior.

The apostle said to the lame man, Such as I have give I unto thee. So what he did was good for him in the name of the Lord. I have often heard ministers speak of a portion of this parable when they were trying to put down the choice system as to salvation, which I think is good and sound, but I see other things set up here just as important that none of them speak of: the love and fellowship one toward another. The twenty-fifth verse of the tenth chapter of St. Luke reads, "And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" A

very important question. Then Jesus asked him, "What is written in the law? how readest thou?" And so on until we come to the parable. I want to notice here the words "a certain lawyer," and "*a certain man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho." I believe Jesus had a meaning and a purpose in all he did and said. It seems this lawyer had read the Scripture, for Jesus said he quoted it correctly, but his knowledge as a lawyer did not acquaint him with Jesus in a saving sense. Let us go back to the twenty-first verse of this chapter, for instance. "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemd good in thy sight." So we see the wise of this world cannot learn a way to heaven by their natural skill and wisdom.

Now let us turn to a certain man who "went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead." A bad picture now before us, and I believe a good lesson is taught here, if I may be able to show it to my readers. This certain man that journeyed might represent a traveling minister who had good raiment, the righteousness of Jesus, which is one of the cords that bind the children of God together. Now if thieves come upon us and strip us of our good name and standing, and wound us, and leave us half dead, shall we leave them thus, without helping them? No. The good samaritan did not do so. Now, my readers, be patient with me. Have we not in our divisions here seen good brethren and sisters wounded in this way and left half dead to us? That is, they are not in full fellowship with us. What is the trouble? Some thief has struck them a blow, and left them half dead to us, shall we pass by them on the other side? Even naturally we should help those who are struck with blows that leave them half dead. Then why should not the church, those who claim to follow Jesus, be careful of each other when one who loves Jesus is thus wounded and half dead? Should we not help to bring him to the inn? I know of some who are thus half dead to many of us. My brethren and sisters, are we acting the part of the good samaritan? Oh let us reason together and see if we be found in the faith. I know, according to nature, I shall not be with the church here much longer, but how sad it is to see our loved ones thus scattered. The thieves will creep in among us, and a wolf in sheep's clothing can get closer to the sheep than without such clothing, so let us watch and pray to God for wisdom and knowledge from above that we err not in this matter.

I feel I have just hinted at what I desire to tell, but hope the Lord will cause some one to think of these things and write something to edify and comfort the saints. I often feel that if I can write so as to draw from some one something that God has shown him, then I feel well paid for my effort. Amen. R. L. DODSON.

CAMPBELLTON, Texas, Dec. 1, 1936.

DEAR EDITORS:—In my loneliness, beig away from my companions in tribulation, I wish to mention some of the things which seem to be of love to me while traveling down the long road of time and tribulation. One of the things I wish to speak of is a text used away back in the latter seventies by old Elder W. A. Bowden, of Kentucky. It would seem strange that a boy of such tender age would remember such, but in a dreamy way I do remember it, and since growing to manhood, after, as I hope, the Lord led me into the knowledge of these things, it is beautiful in memory. The text is found in Ephesians i. 3-5. This coupled with the language of Paul as recorded in Acts xx. 27. I will quote the three verses in Ephesians and give my understanding as to their meaning. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." And that "to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."—6th verse. I will not try to write much in this letter, as I am so broken-minded; that is my memory is so poor that I cannot remember just how the Scriptures read, and as I lost my large concordance and large print Bible I have to look a long time before I find what I wish.

When we look at the many deep points recorded in Paul's writings as afore recorded, it causes us sometimes to wonder why sane people will use a different meaning to the plain Scriptures. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath [in the past tense] blessed us," shows conclusively that all our spiritual blessings are and were deposited in Jesus before the world was manifested, and in time are given to his little ones by revelation, and made known to each of his little ones, who are born of God, made new creatures in Christ. The great blessings received here in time are awarded to them because of the choice of God in Jesus before the world began, "according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." This is an everlasting love, never to be forgotten, never to be consumed, that they shall stand absolutely uncondemned at the last day, for before the curtain of time was lowered from the stars, before even the foundation of the earth was laid, God in his divine mind and eternal purpose did from all eternity, without limits or bounds, predestinate them (us) unto the adoption of children by and through Jesus Christ to himself, and that according to his own good pleasure and will. Now is it not shameful in men who claim to understand language to get up before large congregations and tell people that the whole plan of redemption lies in their own power of

will, and that it is by their own works and the power of their own righteousness that they are saved and become one in Christ, when it is stated in such language, "For by grace are ye saved [both in time and eternity] through faith; and that not of yourselves; it [faith] is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus [not in Adam] unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them"? Then, to go on further, we hear Paul say, "To the praise of the glory of his grace [not our works], wherein he hath made us [not invited us] accepted in the beloved [Jesus]: in whom we have redemption through his blood [not through or by our works], the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace [not through our works]." Paul again says, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy [not our works] he saved us, by the washing of regeneration [not of water], and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Savior."—Titus iii. 5, 6. There is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God, therefore we have no earthly right to trust in an arm of flesh, for Jeremiah says, "Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord."—Jer. xvii. 5. There is one thing certain, and that is that man's eternal redemption depends absolutely on the arm of flesh (law), or it depends on the sovereign mercy, love, purpose and predetermined counsel of God as his deep design entered into the counsel of eternity. As I have often said in my weak attempts to speak, there are only two doctrines on earth, one false and the other true; and two distinct powers, one of God, the other antichrist manifested in the satanic kingdom. One doctrine plainly seen is a conditional doctrine, depending upon an arm of flesh, or law controlled by that arm of flesh; the other is the doctrine of the sovereign grace and mercy of God, depending upon the pure love, providence, the outstanding power of God's eternal foreknowledge and predestination, enshrouded by the omnipotent, omnipresent, eternal design as invested in his beloved Son as the everlasting Savior of his chosen people embraced in the covenant of election of grace. Those of the fallen race of Adam's posterity who through the power of the Spirit are led into the light of the covenant of grace receive a sweet hope of their final deliverance into that wonderful kingdom of glory prepared by his Son, who said before his departure, "In my Father's house are many mansions," and their hope is sustained by the flowing of divine grace in the heart, which gives them comfort in the thought that at the time appointed they will arise from the dead, leave in the grave (as did Jesus the napkins) our old depraved nature, and come forth bearing immortality, in the likeness of the risen Lord, to gather around the throne and sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, and to enter into that sab-

bath which hath no end, into the congregation which shall never break up, but last as the never-ending eternity.

I have written somewhat scatteringly and hope to be forgiven for any mistakes. My beloved, I realize my time is short here in this world of sin and all kinds of crime. My mind has been exercised for several years on the coming end of all nature, and often I have noticed that in most parts of the world crime has doubled during the last thirty years. The church seems to be closing in the Gentile world. All commercial powers will, I feel, soon come to an end, therefore the gathering of the church from the kings of the world is clearly seen. For in the last time, or last days, perilous times shall come. (2 Tim. iii. 1.)

Farewell.

J. B. BOWDEN.

P. S.—I wish you would mention in the SIGNS that I would love to get Minutes of all the associations, if not asking too much of you brethren.

J. B. B.

DEAR ELDER VAUGHN:—No doubt you will be surprised to get a letter from me, but I have a great desire to write to you, because you seem so near to me as a dear brother. If one such as I can be a sister to you. How I did enjoy your preaching Sunday. It was worth your coming through the rain to feed the church here. I believe you were sent by the Lord, for every word you spoke testified of his love and forgiveness to his redeemed ones, they who were chosen before the foundation of the world, who are called, and they surely come when they hear his voice, it matters not in what way. Your talk was food and drink to me, if I know anything about it. It is a great comfort to believe there is One who cares for us, and that he will never leave nor forsake us, and is an ever present help in time of need. And I want to tell you that is the way I felt when I went into and came out of the water, that I could by his strength and grace (for I am weak) forsake all for him who has done so much for a sinner like me. I did not feel happy, as I have heard of some, but a calm peace that passes all understanding. I do not feel any better (I am sure you will know what I mean), but I had such a desire to follow in his footsteps, to be buried with him to rise with newness of life. I do hope I may never bring shame or trouble to these people, for I love the Old School Baptists above any other people. My husband is a Methodist (not that I blame him) and I do not know whether it pleases him or not, but did not our Savior suffer and die for us? and shall I, who am so unworthy (if I am one of his), fear to own his cause, or be ashamed? I felt like that, that I could forsake all (my children included) for him who had done so much for me, who had forgotten him all my life and thought of the things of this world. My dear youngest daughter, when I told her the day before of my intention, if it was the Lord's will that you or another minister should come, said, No, I will not let you. You must not, because it is cold and the water will be so

cold it might give you pneumonia, wait until warmer weather. But I felt nothing could stop me if it were the Lord's will for me to get there. I did and do want to be with a people who give him all the glory and praise, and are dressed in the beautiful robe of his righteousness. There is nothing they can do to save themselves, all must come from him who is their righteousness, sanctification (I understand that means setting apart) and redemption. Like the sun which gives light and strength to things of this world, which I believe is a type of the Son of God, who gives light to the spiritual world. When I look at self all is dark, like looking at my shadow, but when I am made to look to him all is light, and there is such a peace that I feel like singing much of the time, to believe he will care for me, and never will turn a deaf ear to those who call upon his name. I believe they are surrounded by his eternal shalls and wills and all the Father gave to him shall come to him, and none can pluck them out of his hand. He has said that before they call he will answer. And I think, How can the dead hear? Like I for forty-seven years had a desire to be a christian, and before that, when I was a small child, but not so forcibly as then. I remember I bowed beside my baby's bed and tried to pray. These words came into my mind: Commit thy soul unto the Lord, as unto a faithful Creator. How can one, unless made alive, trust in him? I realized my helplessness then, but as the years passed my time was taken up with the things of this world. I tried going with my husband to the Methodist meetings, but did not feel satisfied, because I could not do anything to save myself. I did not know what to do. It seemed that I was groping in darkness for many years. About ten years ago I became so nervous I could eat and sleep but little, and thought I was losing my mind. No one will ever know how that troubled me for my family's sake. They took me to the hospital here, but they could not do anything for me, as my trouble was mental. I wanted to see Elder Coulbourn. He came and talked the same doctrine you and others believe in to-day. I wanted to understand, but could not. I was just looking to and thinking about myself all the time. It seemed I was in torment so many years, until the Association near here, at Nassaongo. Elders Ker, Bellows and Walker were the only ministers present, but they did not lack for words to declare the word of God. I attended each day. In the evening, at the Baptist Home here, Elder Bellows spoke from the twentieth chapter of Joshua, of how the sinner could flee for refuge to a place of safety. He made it very plain. I can never tell any one just how that sermon seemed to me. I believe faith came then and I was enabled to drink of that river of water you spoke of Sunday, and give all praise and glory to him who has called us out of darkness into the marvelous light of his Son and made us free from our sins. He said in Isaiah, And ye shall be led forth in peace, and go out with joy. What if persecutions come? We have One who will deliver in every

time of need. His grace is sufficient to deliver from all these trials and to keep us by his mighty hand.

You, I believe, will excuse my mistakes in this long letter, and the pronoun "I" so many times in it. You can understand the weakness and ignorance of one like me. What I desire is to be led and taught of the Lord, and to trust that I have a place in that kingdom which he has prepared for his children.

I had a dear letter from Elder Coulbourn. He said he might be able to come the fifth Sunday. I do hope he can. I heard you speak of your wife, and hope she is better. I am feeling well, and want to thank you for what you did for me. But not you; it was all of the Lord. All praise to him.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

MARY H. DAVIS.

HARDY, Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I thank you for the sample copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES you sent me. You will find inclosed a check for two dollars, for which send me the paper for one year, as it sets forth the doctrine I have believed for more than thirty years, and have been trying to preach for fifteen years. I thought when I was a boy that I would go on and have my pleasure here, and when I got ready I would turn over and be a better boy. But I hope it did not come that way. Many times I fell down on my knees and tried to ask the good Lord to forgive me, and I would try to do better. Then I would find myself doing just as badly or worse again. On the twenty-eighth day of August, 1907, I was in the field at work when I felt that I would never get to the house again. I thought I was going to die and be forever lost. Then I found myself down on my knees trying to pray, and begging the good Lord to have mercy on me, as I felt to be a condemned sinner. Then I raised up, singing, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound." I went to the house, thinking I would tell my father, but when I got there my uncle and aunt were there, and I could not tell it. That night when lying on my bed and trying to beg the good Lord to have mercy on me, a poor sinner, I saw three little angels hovering over me. They were dressed in white and were singing the sweetest song I ever heard Then I was very happy, and thought my troubles were all over. The next morning when I went outdoors it seemed as though the leaves and everything were praising the Lord for me. I went on for a day or two, when at the breakfast table my father told me to go to the mill. He said he would measure the wheat while I got the team ready. He went on to measure the wheat, but instead of me going to the barn I went to the granary where he was. He said, Son, go on and get the horses. I threw my arms around his neck, and said, Papa, I want you to pray for me. I could not go until I told him. Why? Because the appointed time had come. I could not tell it until the appointed time. The third Saturday in September I went to Lynville to church meeting, and when papa published an open door for the recep-

tion of members I found myself up there offering myself to the church. I was received, and my father baptized me the next day. The good Lord said, My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power. Yes, he works in us both to will and to do. There is no power but of him. I believe that the church of God was saved in the mind and purpose of God before the foundation of the world, and the Lord manifests it to his children at the appointed time and place. He says, All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me, and he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. We have nothing to do with saving ourselves, that is all from a higher power than poor puny man. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. Yes, he gives the life, and they shall never perish. Yes, the Lord makes the sheep and calls his servants out to feed them. He told Peter, Feed my sheep, and feed my lambs. We cannot feed the sheep and lambs unless the good Lord endues us with that power from on high. It takes the same power to prepare one to hear the gospel as it does to prepare one to preach it. So we are not our own keepers. The Lord says, I am the way, and the truth, and the life. He says, I am the door, by me if any man enter in he shall be saved. That is the only way one can get in. It is by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. His all-seeing eye is over all the world, and can even dwell in one little soul. O, child of God, are you not glad of a Savior like that one, who can comfort you at the hour of midnight? He says, Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. I will leave in the midst of thee a poor and afflicted people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord.

Dear brother, if this is not worth space in your paper, just cast it in the waste-basket, and all will be well with me.

Your unworthy brother in hope of gospel bonds,

P. L. PLYBON.

COLBERT, Ga., March 17, 1936.

DEAR EDITORS:—For some reason, I have been impressed to write a little of my experience, which I hope will be a true statement, but I feel unworthy in every way. Back in the year 1895 I was in great trouble, so much so that in June I felt I could not live. I could not tell my troubles to any one, and I could not sleep. Oh the many tears I shed! I wet my pillow many, many nights. I felt that it was hard to be sick and poor and have those who once loved me love me no more. I would get down on my knees by the side of my bed at night and try in my unworthy way to pray. One night I opened my eyes and it seemed that Christ was standing over me. I felt that meant something, and all through the month of July I was troubled. I thought I would go and offer my poor self to the church, then I thought, No, I cannot offer such a poor sinful one as I felt to be to live with the Lord's dear children. I worried much over my condition, and

one day as I was walking in the back yard, feeling very heavy, when suddenly it seemed that heaven opened up. I do not know just how long I stood there. The whole world seemed to be changed. Everything was beautiful. It seemed that the trees were dripping in gold and I was standing on holy ground. Right then and there something took place within me which I cannot explain, and since then my troubles have not been so heavy and I have experienced much happiness along the way. The fourth Saturday in August, 1895, was our meeting day, so I resolved that if I went to meeting I would offer myself to the church, but if no one said anything about going I would say nothing about it. Some one did say, We will go to meeting to-day, so I went along and offered myself to the church, was received and the following Sunday was baptized by our much loved pastor, Elder J. J. Manley. I am still here, for some purpose unknown to me, just wondering what I am. I know that the blessed Lord has been good to me all my life here on earth. In the year 1908 I had a very serious spell of sickness. I was very low, too weak to talk, and felt that I could not live. I turned my face to the wall, feeling that I would never turn it back again, but for some purpose I am still here. I feel to know that if I am saved it is by the grace of God, for the very best we can do is as filthy rags in the sight of God. I know that if God is for us no man can be against us, and this thought is very sweet to me.

I was born in Banks County, Georgia, January 24th, 1866, but have lived in Madison County about all of my life.

As ever,

(MRS.) W. W. BARNETT.

BRUNSWICK, Maine, Sept. 19, 1937.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I must try to write of the enjoyment I had in hearing the gospel preached by you and Elder Ruston, and with the loved brethren and sisters manifesting love and fellowship for me. It is true I feel unworthy of it, but when I am made to look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of my faith, and see him the chiefest among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely. I rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Here are election, predestination and foreordination all safely in his power, beyond the reach of man to change them the least particle. His word shall not return unto him void, it shall accomplish that which he please, and prosper in the thing whereunto he sent it.

The gospel's joyful tidings that you and brother Ruston declared so clearly and boldly, yet with the meekness of Christ, have given all of us much joy and comfort, and we are sure you fed and comforted us with the broken bread He gave you. Now it has come into my mind that Jesus said, I am the bread of life. My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. I would like to write plainly all that has passed

through my mind, but I cannot. There is a difference in the miracle of Jesus feeding the multitude with the loaves and fishes, and in his calling you and Elder Ruston to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ and "feed my sheep." I do feel to rejoice greatly that you were given the sincere milk of the word, and it was the will of God that I could have the evidence that I had been made to believe in Jesus.

"Our Jesus is the christian's hope,
Wrought in us by God's power."

We all enjoyed Elder and sister Ruston and family, and hope to meet them again. I think I shall have to write to them of the good things of the kingdom of our God. They came right in with us and had the same love and fellowship manifest. We are so few in numbers, it is good to have you and Elder Ruston sent to us and find us in order. The words of the apostle will express what I want to: "Let all things be done decently and in order" in our midst in the church. We realize we are kept by the power of God, and all praise is his, not any for us.

I have not seen any of the loved ones since the meeting, but I hope they are as well as usual. I have had the hymns come into my mind while sitting here alone, and the truth they express has made me sing of the joy of His salvation. It was good to have the brethren from North Berwick come to our Association, and be with us all at sister Annie Raymond's that evening. Those little meetings, like that evening, bring us closer together, and I have had many of them in the sixty-five years in the church.

But I must not write too long a letter for you to read, even if I have not said half I wish I could. All the loved ones would tell me to send their love and fellowship when I was writing to you. Do not feel you must reply to this, but if you have a time your mind has me in view, and you are not too busy or too tired, I should be glad to hear from you.

Love and fellowship, your sister,

ATTIE CURTIS.

[SINCE writing the foregoing good letter, this dear sister has been called to her eternal home. Her obituary was published in the June, 1938, issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.—ED.]

SWEET SPRINGS, Mo., Jan. 22, 1938.

DEAR EDITORS:—In reading the seventeenth chapter of Matthew a beautiful thought is presented, I think, at the transfiguration. Peter, James and John had the great privilege of being with Jesus on the mount; Moses and Elias were also there. Peter, impulsive and overjoyed, suggested that they build three tabernacles: one for Jesus, one for Elias and one for Moses. Jesus did not forbid the request in words, but "behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them," and they fell on their faces and were sore afraid. Then come the words in the eighth verse: "They saw no man, save Jesus only." How good for the poor tempted soul, when failing in all the works of the flesh, to see Jesus only. Moses and Elias (the prophet) had vanished; Jesus was alone. Moses' law was at an end. Elias' time of prophecy

was fulfilled. The gospel dispensation was here; the things of the kingdom were beginning to be brought to light through the gospel. Old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Jesus was the Son, Peter, James and John were the servants. No redemption but by the shed blood of our adorable Redeemer. Jesus stands alone in the preservation of his people. He is alone in the resurrection of their mortal bodies. Jesus, only, made the atonement, and every heir of heaven is complete in him. Jesus set up and perpetuates his church, and now, dear ones, we talk of it, we sing of this glorious redemption, we see him made higher than the heavens, and unto those who look for him shall he return the second time, without sin, unto salvation, wherefore comfort ye one another with these words.

Dear editors, you may publish these comments if you think them worthy; otherwise, cast them aside, and I will know better how frail I am.

Yours in joys and hope,

J. L. KILLION.

TAMPA, Florida, March 4, 1938.

DEAR EDITORS:—May I say, Brethren in the Lord? I am not worthy the great honor, yet I hope to be thankful for the privilege. Some dear brother has been so good to me as to send me your good paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I wish I could thank him personally, but I do not know to whom to write, nevertheless, let me thank the Lord (if I can in the right way), the brother and you editors, for I much enjoy the dear paper, and may it continue to be as a shining light to the pathway of many of the saints of God, who are enabled by his divine Spirit to read it and understand. I feel it has been printed lo these many years by men who have been taught of God and inspired by his holy Spirit to write and contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints, as those men of old were to write the Scriptures. They were moved by his holy and divine Spirit, just as you dear brethren of to-day are moved by the same, and thereby you comfort his people, and especially the "shut-ins," who are not able to attend their meetings. May God bless you.

Unworthily,

J. E. WHITNEY.

KINGMAN, Kansas, Dec. 21, 1937.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been a reader of the dear old SIGNS for about forty years, and can heartily say that I do love the doctrine it sets forth: predestination, election and salvation by grace, and grace alone. I can look back and see the hand of the Lord has led me all my life. I love all the editors, writers and the dear old publisher. He has certainly been faithful.

Now unto Him who is able to keep us from falling, may he present us faultless before his Father's throne.

Yours in hope,

W. F. WINEREY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1938.

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EXPERIENCE.

THIS article for publication is attempted with a felt sense of unworthiness, and to such an extent that we do not feel to attempt to write, or try to expound any special Scripture, but rather experimental, and in doing so we will tell you some of the exercises that we claim as a reason to hope in the mercy of God. When we were but a child a seriousness of feeling would come over us, and we would feel afraid of the dark, and the horrors of death bore heavily upon us. Our parents were devoted Old School Baptist believers, and united with the Old School Baptist Church at Little Flock, Floyd County, Virginia, and were baptized by Elder P. G. Lester, a cousin to our mother. At the time of their baptism mother's health was very poor, and she was not able to walk to the water, and our father and mother's father carried her to the water, and after baptism carried her back to the house. To us the expressions on their faces were very sincere and sacred, and bore to us that they were enjoying virtues that were not seen, which gave us great respect for our parents, and the sincerity of their religion. Taking us with them to the meetings, the scenes of the devotion and the manifested sincerity caused us to have great respect for public worship, and we often wondered if we would ever feel as they appeared to feel, and wherever we attended public service we had respect enough to give strict attention to what was said, and weigh the words in the scales of Holy Writ, and if found untrue we would not hold them up. That was before we hope the Lord forgave our sins. About the age of sixteen this seriousness of feeling semed to grow strong and expessive, and we felt our time on earth was not very long and that we were such a sinner that our soul would be sent to an eternal hell, separated from God to forever writhe in suffering and death, and when darkness would cover the earth we would fear that we would never see another day, which would bring tears from our eyes and groanings from our heart, in which state we would ask God to be merciful to us, a sinner, and when time forced us to retire we would fear to go to sleep. It seemed like mountains of darkness

were rolling over us and grinding us to powder. Mother woul often ask what was the matter, and we would answer her nothing. The truth was that we could not tell her how we felt. One night after retiring we dropped to sleep and felt that some one touched us and we awoke and the room was full of light and we could see our brother lying beside us. All the darkness and horrors were swept away and we were filled with praise to God for delivering us from such suffering. When we awoke next morning all things were praising God and our soul was singing praises we have never uttered. All seemed to go well with us for a few days, then we began to doubt, or, rather, feel that we wanted to know that what had taken place was the work of God, and the deliverance from sin, but at the same time we were hoping that it was a hope, and when we attended meeting it seemed we could understand and see as we never had before, and the love for the *doctrine of salvation by grace* was such that the stronger it was preached the more we enjoyed the meeting, and to stay away from a meeting at Little Flock Church was a great hardship to us. The love for the church of God grew stronger and stronger, and we wanted to unite with them, but the horror of deception, and deceiving the church of God, was of great concern to us. This condition continued until one night we had a dream, in which we were told to get the Bible, and the first sentence we read would be a command to us. We awoke and got the Bible, and these were the words we read: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you."—2 Cor. vi. 17. This caused us to feel we would be disobedient to God if we did not tell how great things God had done for our soul. So we decided to tell our mother, and after telling her we forget to ask her not to tell any one about it, so she confided in father and the news was handed out about our statement to mother. This also added to our burden, and we felt that we would give anything if we had not told mother. We feared that our exercises would drive all our young friends from us, and that only the aged, and perhaps a few others, would be all we could associate with, which would increase our loneliness, and we would be alone in the world. These conditions bore heavily upon us, but the quotation, that Jesus gave his disciples, was repeated in our mind: "Follow me," also the hymn

> "Am I a soldier of the cross,
> A follower of the Lamb?
> And shall I fear to own his cause,
> Or blush to speak his name."

And we knew we were not a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the only service we could possibly render was to tell the church how we felt, and of our love and fellowship for the truth. As is common, the flesh would say, In winter time the water is too cold, and during the most favored seasons we would often find excuses for staying home from Saturday meetings. Saturday before the first Sunday in November, 1895, we encouraged father to go to the meeting, saying we would take his place in the woolen mill which he

and one of our uncles owned and operated at that time, which offer he accepted. When they returned they were almost shouting, for the church had a good meeting, and three united by experience, and were to be baptized the next morning. Mother said to us, Would not you like to be baptized with them? We answered, We are too late, if we were worthy. She said, The brethren will judge for you, and I will speak to the pastor (the late Elder Amos Dickerson). He postponed baptism until after preaching, when an opportunity was given for any who desired to unite with the church to come before the church before the church had baptism. At that time we united with the Old School Baptist Church at Little Flock, Floyd County, Virginia, and was baptized that p. m. (The first Sunday in November, 1895.) For some time after our baptism we enjoyed the meetings, and all seemed to be well with our soul, but there came a feeling to talk of the mercies of God given in Christ Jesus for poor sinners, and it could reach to the lowest of all creatures, for we hoped he had forgiven us, and surely there could not be any lower or further away than we were. On Saturday before the first Sunday in December, 1896, while the church was in conference we related our exercises, and the church passed the order to invite us to speak before her the next day, to read a passage of Scripture we felt to talk about, and to say what we felt to be the truth of the gospel related to it, and on Sunday morning the pastor selected a hymn and spoke in prayer, then he spoke of the order of the church the day before, and invited us to speak, which was the beginning of the forty-three years of public life. After this, we were called on to take part in public worship at our home church, and after some time we were given a license to speak wherever God in his providence cast our lot. We were invited to attend churches and speak in their meetings, and give some service to older ministers on special occasions. We had some fruitful seasons, and many dark ones. After attending meetings and speaking we have felt to be the greatest hypocrite in the world, that we had deceived the church of God, and that the brethren could see that we were a failure, and while we were in this feeling we fully avowed that we never would try to speak again, and when we reached home we told our dear wife that we never would go again, but were going to stay home with her. This resolution seemed firmly fixed in us, but Wednesday night following we had a dream, in which we felt to be sick unto death and our wife and mother were in attendance, but nothing could be done, and the sting of death passed over me, and all this world passed from the scene, and our body seemed to float in the air (as we often see thistle down), and passed down and into a valley with a glow of light all about us. There Jesus came to us as a man and took us by the left arm and raised us to our feet, and we stood by him clothed with a white robe, just like he was clothed, and he led us up an exceeding high mountain, and as we advanced the earth crumbled away up

to our feet, and when we reached the summit it seemed we were turned to the right and we were standing before the throne of God and the Lamb, with the view before us of God on his throne and Jesus at his right hand, with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, James and John at his right hand, and we said, Jesus, where is Peter? and he arose, came to us, shook hands with us and kissed us. Then we awoke from sleep and out of the dream into meditation as to the meaning of the dream. This dream gave to us the realities of a death, that caused us to have no trust in man, and our trust is in the everlasting Arm to guide and direct our way and give us strength unto the end. Peter's experience has given us evidence that the apostle doubted, cursed and swore in denial of the Savior of sinners.

In our early life we felt to ask the Lord to grant us a wife who would be a companion in the life he had purposed we should live, which was given in the person of Miss Annie Elizabeth Pendleton, and we were married February 13th, 1898. We would not be satisfied to not say why we feel she was a gift from the Lord. She was a good singer, and loved sacred hymns, salvation by grace and always encouraged us in every way possible to go to the meetings and serve churches, and was in every way a good and faithful wife and mother, and after many years of life together she came to the Hopewell Church and asked a home, and we had the pleasure of baptizing her into the fellowship of the cause she had so long been an ardent supporter of. She is a good disciplinarian, with good judgment in rendering decisions. We shall not speak of our work in the ministry, but our experience has made us to be just what we are and to believe as we do. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."—Rom. viii. 28. We know that without him we can do nothing, and when we are shut up in feeling we realize our helplessness and depravity, but when our hearts are made glad, and the deep things of God are brought to our soul, then we can rejoice and feel bold and strong in the Lord. Dear brethren, it is by the grace of God we are what we are, and we have nothing to boast of, or any honors to take to ourselves, but we are given to see that we are not our own keeper and we cannot direct our steps.

Perhaps this writing should not appear in the editorial columns, but it is submitted to our publisher to do with as he thinks proper.

C. W. V.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

When remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it. By referring to these dates you can tell to just what time your subscription is paid. Dec 36 means your subscription expired December 1936; June 37 means your subscription expired June, 1937; Dec. 38 that it will expire December, 1938, etc.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANKS.

In each copy of this issue of the Signs of the Times we are inclosing a subscription blank for the convenience of our subscribers in renewing their own subscriptions and in sending the names of new subscribers, and we appeal to each of our friends to do what they can toward helping us build up our subscription list.

The date on the little pink slip bearing your address, which you will find either on your paper or the wrapper in which it comes to you, signifies to what time your subscription is paid. If your subscription has expired, or is about to expire, please send on your renewal if you can spare it, but if you are not at the present time in a position to renew your subscription, but hope to be later on, do not order your paper stopped, for we would much rather continue sending the paper to you until such time as you are able to pay for it than to take your name from our list.

When sending in renewals be sure and give us the exact name and address of the person to whom the paper is now coming, so we will not give the credit to the wrong person.

We sincerely thank all who in the past have in any way aided us in continuing the publication of the Signs of the Times, and hope they will continue such aid in the future, and do what they can in the way of sending us new subscriptions and renewing their own.

J. E. B. & CO.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by sister Luella Stevens.)

The Lexington-Roxbury Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Ashokan, New York, September 14th, 15th and 16th, 1938, to the several churches and associations in fellowship with us with which we correspond, sends love and fellowship.

Dear Brethren:—At the last session of our Association it fell to our lot, much against our mind and judgment, to write the Circular Letter. We attempt this with a feeling of weakness and inability, realizing that unless God directs the pen our effort will prove a failure. We shall in no wise be able to write anything of comfort to God's little ones, only by the guidance of his hand, as there is nothing in us to merit esteem or give the Creator delight. It is our desire to ascribe all greatness unto God and to praise the name of Jesus above all other names. Of the church, or family of God, it is written, "This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise." Since God must be, and is, all-wise, all-powerful and all-holy, he must have known, and did know, his people before the foundation of the world, otherwise he would not have been an all-wise God, thus in his wisdom he can make no mistakes. We rejoice to know that he made Jesus unto the church wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Jesus is not only the salvation of his people, but he, as wisdom, is the revelation of God unto his people

through the Spirit. This wisdom is contrary to the wisdom of men, hence cannot be acquired by human effort on any natural works. To comprehend this divine wisdom the poor sinner who possesses it must be taught that the wisdom of man is vanity and foolishness with God. We can see that wisdom would be of little avail without the power to execute its decrees. So would a thing however wise or holy have little value if the object of such will could not be attained. So God must needs be, and is, all-powerful, and infinite in ability to perform. Men, devils, angels, worlds and principalities are under his complete control. This power covers sin, death, the grave and all eternity. Therefore through Jesus, who is the wisdom of God, in a mystery, to whom is given all power in heaven and in earth, the church is kept by this power of God through faith unto salvation. Thus saved sinners cannot keep themselves. Through the incarnation of Christ, his righteousness, obedience, death, resurrection, ascension and eternal priesthood, the power of God is manifest to save them for time and eternity, a holy nation and a royal priesthood, presented faultless before the Father in love. God is also all-holy and never has or ever can sin, nor be the author of sin or confusion. Therefore there is no confusion in the operation of his wisdom, power or holiness. "What his soul desireth, even that he doeth." His will is accomplished in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. Thus all things work together for good to them that believe on his name, who are foreknown, called, predestinated, justified and glorified by God. Adam, the natural head of the human race, was not created holy, but sinless, liable to sin, in order that through sin grace might abound. Jesus Christ, the head of the church of God, was not made subject to sin, but as the eternal word was made flesh so Christ might bear the sins of all believers, suffer the penalty due them for all their transgressions and sins, and as they were chosen in him before the beginning of time, his death was their death, his burial and resurrection their burial and their rising from the dead in a mystical sense. Born in the flesh of Adam as helpless, ruined, condemnned sinners, without any knowledge whatsoever of God, in order for the life of Christ to be manifested in them, they must be born again of the Spirit an incorruptible seed by the operation of the Holy Ghost. In this birth they are given faith, which is counted unto them for righteousness, so God's people are justified by faith through the finished work of Christ.

As Christ is all-holy, the new creation that is born of the Spirit must be holy. As God is all-holy, what he does must always be perfect. Thus by the offering of Jesus Christ he has perfected his people forever, or made them holy. In order to show forth the praise of God the sinner must be made to feel his sinfulness and need of Christ, his utter inability to help or save himself, and the justice of his condemnation. He must fellowship the suffering of Jesus to experimentally praise God for

his great salvation. The more we see of God's glory and power the more we are made to detest self. We, if left to ourselves, are destitute of all strength, and cannot go forward either in delivering ourselves or others. We find the more we try, the more we fail, and we mourn our own sinfulness. We are led to beg for mercy and wait on the Lord in his due time for all. In this experience we are sometimes made to wonder if we have a hope at all, and yet are not able to give up our hope, even though it seems small at times. Though cast down we are not destroyed, and, bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus, we live unto him. When trials and afflictions come upon us, and clouds surround us in the valley of darkness, and we fear God has forsaken us, we then hear the voice of our Savior saying, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." He did not say. I am a way, or one way, as if there were many ways, but he is the one and only way, the strait and narrow way, and the new song in our mouth never becomes old. In praising God we find the Scriptures a storehouse of things both old and new confirming our faith and experience. "Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust; and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies."—Psalms xl. 4.

May we be blessed with the love of God, mercy and peace, and when time on this earth for us shall be no more may we be raised to see him as he is, and be like him, and be satisfied, and we of this Association, and all of like precious faith, hope that we are included in the term "this people," who are formed to praise God. The word "this" points out a people separate from all other peoples on earth, and designates sovereign choice and electing love in the foreknowledge of God. Jesus was born, died and arose from the grave to save his people from their sins, and will manifest his finished work to all the called of God. Let us then desire and pray for faith to be shown the hidden things of the Scriptures, and to praise him in our testimony as witnesses for the wonders of salvation made known to us.

At this session of our meeting we have appreciated the coming among us of your ministers and messengers, bringing us your correspondence and messages of love and fellowship. We truthfully can say, It has been good to be here. Our next session is appointed to be held with the First and Second Roxbury Churches, at Roxbury, New York, between the second and third Sundays in September, 1939, at the usual time, when we hope to meet and welcome all of you again. Until then, dear brethren, farewell.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
ORVILLE WINCHELL, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The original Mt. Zion Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, now in session with Oak Grove Church, sendeth christian greetings to the First Kansas Association, with whom we correspond, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus.

DEAR BRETHREN:—May grace, mercy and peace be multiplied unto you

in manifesting to you strong consolation in the blessed promises of God to his beloved people, chosen unto salvation by and through the shed blood of the only begotten Son of God, who came into the world to do his Father's will and to redeem them from the curse of a broken law.

We have rejoiced in the coming of your messengers, bringing the evidence of a living faith, manifested by the spirit of love and fellowship, reporting peace abounding in all of your churches and reminding us of the saying of the psalmist David, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" for there is only one Lord, one faith and one baptsm, one God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom all fullness dwells. The preaching brethren have come to us in humbleness of spirit, preaching salvation by grace, much to our comfort and spiritual uplifting, confirming us in the things that have been made precious to us in our hope of immortality. We desire a continuance of your correspondence, and may the God of all grace keep us humble and meek, and enable us to live and walk in that way that is well-pleasing in his sight.

DANIEL A. J. ADAMS, Mod.
WILLIAM H. MORRIS, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. May Derby Hoyt, N. Y., $2; Mrs. Laura R. Elgin, D. C., $2; Fannie Muir, N. Y., $5.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Arnold H. Bellows, at West Hurley, New York, September 24th, 1938, Marcel C. Maier, of Glenford, N. Y., and Hazel Thompson, of West Shokan, N. Y.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, &c. REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.

Of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, published monthly, at Middletown, N. Y., for October 1st, 1938.

State of New York, County of Orange, ss.:

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Gilbert Beebe, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the owner of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that the following is to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24th, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse side of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publishers, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publishers, J. E. Beebe & Company, Middletown, N. Y.; Editor: Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.

2. The owner is, Gilbert Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagers and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent. or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear on the books of the company, but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the corporation for whom such trustee is acting is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stocks, bonds or other securities than as so stated by him.

GILBERT BEEBE, Owner.

Sworn to and ascribed before me this 19th day of October, 1938.

(Seal) E. E. CONKLING.

(My commission expires March, 1940.)

MEETINGS.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church holds meetings the fourth Sunday of each month at 1026 East Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Meeting begins at 10:30 a. m., dismisses for lunch and reconvenes at 2 o'clock p. m. Meeting days have been changed from the first to the fourth Sunday of each month. No Saturday or night meetings.

BURLIE HALL, Pastor
W. H. CAVE, Ass't Pastor.
(MRS.) H. B. CURLIE, Church Clerk

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 106. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1938. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST.

By request, I am writing on the sin against the Holy Ghost. With diffidence I offer it for publication, not with a desire to set myself up as a teacher, but simply as my views, and if it might be as much as a cup of cold water to the followers of the Lamb, then I will have shared with them that which I humbly hope has been given me by the Father of light. Many times I have tried by searching to find out God, but my own efforts alone always fail. When, now and then, I sometimes feel to have been given something, and receive it with joy, yet am reluctant to speak of it, for fear of being a deceiver, myself deceived and deceiving others. But to true, tried and faithful soldiers of the cross, whose Leader is the Captain of our salvation, I need have no such fear, for with such a Guide they are able to rightly divide the word of truth, and separate the precious truth from the worthless corruptions of the flesh, and will not be deceived by a poor sinner like me. I am sure that some things dear to me will not be received by those who cannot see the distinction between that which is born of the flesh, and is nothing but flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit, and the utter contrariness of the one to the other. As it is now, so it was in olden times, common to call a spirit a ghost, the two words being synonyms, meaning the same thing, but as with other synonymous words, sometimes more appropriate to use one than the other. When the holy spirit of life was departing from the sinless body of Christ he cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Then it is said he gave up the ghost. Of other characters it is also said that they gave up the ghost, gave up the spirit which was to return to God who gave it. God is a Spirit, and he has said he will walk in his chosen, elect vessels of mercy, and dwell in them, and when these earthen vessels of mercy must lie down in death they yield up the ghost. Surely He is

a Holy Spirit a Holy Ghost. He, the Father, and Christ, the Son, are one, and the Son is the "Christ in you the hope of glory." Surely the Spirit of God, walking and dwelling in you, and the Spirit of Christ in you, are one and the same Spirit, and is rightly called the Holy Ghost. Oh, it it an awful, solemn thing, that poor fallen creatures are given a hope that it is the Christ walking and dwelling in us. This indwelling spirit is that which is born of the Spirit, and when we pray we are told to say, "Our Father," because these spritually born new creatures are the true born sons of God, and for this cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. Our old sinful bodies are dead to spiritual things, but the spirit, the Christ in us, is life because of righteousness. He is not the God, or Father, of the dead, but of the living Spirit of Christ in us, our hope of glory, and the living child must not be divided. Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of One, for which cause he claims us as his brethren. Oh. with what fervency we may sing,

"And oh, may this my glory be,
That Christ is not ashamed of me."

Now, dear people of God, I ask, Is not the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelling in you and walking in you? Is not the Christ in you the Holy Ghost walking and dwelling in you? As he hath said, That they may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in them, that they also may be one in us. Oh hear his transcendently sweet and sacred prayer, O Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are one; I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one. And these three are One. Oh who can deny this glorious eternal vital unity and oneness of Christ the Head and his body, the church, a spiritual life that was hid with him in God before the world was. Thus the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Christ in you, in every vessel of mercy, are all One, a lovely, eternal oneness.

"In union with the Lamb,
From condemnation free,
The saints from everlasting were,
And shall forever be."

So I do believe that the Holy Ghost is the new, inward, spiritual man which is Christ in you the hope of glory. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" A Holy Spirit, which is the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Christ, in you.

Now what is the sin agains the Holy Ghost, against the Christ in you, which man has called the unpardonable sin? I heard an able minister say that whatever it is, not one of the Lord's people will ever be let commit it. At this my heart trembleth, because I am shown that none but his people ever had the Holy Ghost dwelling in them, and they are the ones who can and do continually sin against it, and they are the ones to whom Christ addressed the words that all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto them, neither in this world nor in the world to come. Let us carefully analyze every word of

this, and ask ourselves if this declaration has ever been rightly understood, or if the general understanding of it is correct, and in harmony with the teaching of the Bible. In the first place, it is incompatible with our every conception of the blessed, merciful, forgiving, all-powerful Lord of heaven, the very Father of mercies, that there is or could be a sin which he could not or would not forgive, for it is declared that he is able to save to the uttermost all that come to him by the blood of Christ which cleanses us from all sin, not one special sin excepted, and he is now forever set down at the right hand of God, where he ever lives to make intercession for us, and the Father heareth him alway. Do we not love to sing that "While the lamp (the light of his love) holds out to burn, the vilest sinner may return"? And he will abundantly pardon, and we must not make the words of Christ, our advocate with the Father, to be in any sense in contradiction to the declarative, boundless mercy of the Father, who heareth him alway and will be merciful to our unrighteousness. Yet, as generally understood, it shows Christ to have made an exception, in contrariness to the characteristics of the Father of mercies, who declared himself well pleased with the finished work of his Son. So must it not be that this authoritative declaration of Christ is not rightly understood? for he and the Father are one, in perfect agreement, so that Paul, after he had enumerated everything which a christian has to combat, clinches it all by saying, Nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God. When Christ said "this world, nor the world to come," he was not speaking of this transient globe on which we dwell, nor of the ultimate paradise of God. "This world" to which he had reference, was the old Jewish world, or law dispensation, in which they were then living, which was then about to come to an end, and the world to come was the gospel dispensation then about to be ushered in. The eternal heaven above is not yet to come, for it always has been, and shall ever be as it is now, eternal. "This world" of the old law dispensation was then to be done away and the world to come was and is the gospel kingdom, which the God of heaven would establish, and should stand forever, through all time. It shall never be destroyed. It is the kingdom, or world, in which we now live, and shall not be left to other people.

Are we not shown that the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwelling in all his saints and raising them to walk in newness of life with him, and seals them heirs of heaven? It is the holy Spirit of him dwelling in us which we are told not to grieve. We are told in our infallible rule of faith and practice of many things which, if we do them, do grieve that tender indwelling spirit, and who of all the people of God have not done things that cause inward groanings that cannot be uttered? Have we not found in our every-day walk that all fleshly, sinful lusting, which wars against the soul, is grievous to the Christ in us? Yes, O brethren dear, it

is thus we do, by our fleshly lusting against the Spirit, constantly sin against the Holy Ghost, causing our daily cry of wretchedness, because we know that in our flesh dwells no good thing, but a constant lusting against the Spirit of Christ in us the hope of glory. Do we not feel self-condemnation for evil thoughts? Oh how I hate them, yet like "fiery flying serpents" they intrude and sting us in our most solemn sanctuaries, and though we may not give them utterance, we know they are enough every day to bring us into everlasting condemnation. Dear tried saints, do we not feel every evil word, deed or thought is a lusting against our hope of glory? Whether outspoken or not, we know that in the dark recesses of our hearts we are guilty, for we are by nature the children of wrath even as others, and not for our sakes, but for the sake of his dear Son, God, who is rich in mercy, lays not our sins to our charge. I ask in solemn sincerity, Was there ever a word of blasphemy uttered, or a single sin committed that was or is not against the Holy Ghost? O, dear children of God, it is not our rich Father, the very Father of mercy, who will not forgive to the uttermost all manner of sin and blasphemy, but our own selves, who have never forgiveness for our own sinful selves. There was never one in the old Jewish world, nor in this gospel dispensation, whose heart was right with God, who would ever try to condone his wrong doing, or ever try to excuse or forgive himself by hiding behind predestination. He knows there is no excuse but his own sinful nature, never feels to blame the One who made him thus, but ever blames himself, and never, never forgives himself for the grief he causes his inward, spiritual self by sinning against the God of grace, but seventy times seven he turns with tears of repentance to the Father of mercies, begging him who is able to forgive all manner of sin and blasphemy to "be merciful to me, a sinner." He feels the danger of eternal damnation, for when he has done despite to the Spirit of grace he knows he is worthy of sorer punishment. He is in danger of hell fire, which is no more nor less than the certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation to be meted out to us if we deliberately sin wilfully and knowingly after having received a knowledge of the truth, for there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin. David suffered this fiery indignation, and said, The sorrows of hell gat hold of me. I found trouble and sorrow. The sorrows of hell compassed me, and in my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God. His ears are ever open to the cry of the destitute, as we are all destitute of any worthiness or merit, save in the righteousness of Christ imputed, or accredited to us, and "no sinner shall ever be empty sent back, who comes seeking mercy for Jesus' sake," for the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. Not one single, special sin excepted. O, fearful saints, fresh courage take, for though you do daily groan, being burdened with the load of sinful flesh, which lusts against the inward spiritual desire for a clean heart, causing you to

do things you do hate, which do grieve the holy Spirit of Christ in you, making you feel your constant need of mercy every hour, "a beggar poor at mercy's door," still, while we were yet enemies to all righteousness, Christ died for us, and left on record his soul-cheering words, I have prayed for thee. He is our advocate with the Father, and his is the effectual, fervent prayer of the righteous that availeth with the Father, so that "our Father" will be merciful to our unrighteousness, and our sins he will remember against us no more. His eyes shall be open, and his ears attent to the prayer that is made in this place. He will pity and fogive our sins, for the Scapegoat has borne them away to the land of forgetfulness, never to be recalled or laid again to our charge. For, O Lord, if thou shouldest mark our iniquities against us who then could stand? for all our best performances are but as filthy rags, and there are none that doeth good, no, not one. Our good works by which we are to be judged are the good works which Christ hath done for us and imputed them to us and so they are ours, our good works, though poor, weak, sinful creatures we are. The grieved holy Spirit within us does lament and mourn "with a perpetual war within twixt reigning grace and raging sin." Is it not a grievous sin, the sin that doth so easily beset every child of God, to entertain unkind doubts and fears of the genuineness of the work of grace in our hearts, whether it be of God or of the flesh, which we know that neither men nor devils ever could have accomplished, yet fearing it may be only a deception of Satan, who can transform himself into an angel of light, and would deceive, if it were possible, the very elect? But we are saved by hope, though we often transgress against it, by esteeming it so little we almost lay it by, but "a glimpse of bright glory so surprises our souls," hope is revived sufficiently that if we were called to die we could fervently say, I know that my Redeemer lives. O, dear saints, I have often heard the still small voice say, Lo, I am with you. With me through the day, and when darkness overtakes me again I hear him sweetly say, I never will forsake thee. Surely I am a monument of his grace and mercy, but even in moments of rapture the ever recurring expression of sinful doubt creeps in as I am constrained to say, If I am not deceived. God knew, as well as he knew Peter would, that I would often by my works deny him and sin against his work of grace, against his Holy Spirit. But O, dear fellow-travelers, wayworn and weary, let us praise our God. We devise our way, but he directs our steps, and will never let us "rove beyond the limits of his love." His boundless, unlimited love to his people. O, Israel, trust in the Lord, for he is our strength and our shield, a covet from the storms and a hiding place in a desert land. Give thanks unto him, for his mercy endures forever. Let them that fear him say that his mercy endures forever. Never wavers, but endures, for we need it every moment we live.

In conclusion, let me again ask of any who may read these lines, Is there ever one single blasphemous word, or a single sin committed, be it great or shall, that is not against the Holy Ghost? For Father, Son and Holy Ghost are one. It does seem to me that when we sin wilfully, doing violence to our own inner conscience, doing things we do hate and for which our own conscience condemns us, we do sin against the Holy Ghost, especially sin against the leadings of the little Child, the Son given to each and every one of God's people, which is Christ in you the hope of glory. And as the sinning against the Holy Ghost for which, not the Father of mercies, but we ourselves have never forgiveness for ourselves, must come under the heading of "any other creature," and shall never be able to separate us from the love of God, because he assures us that the blood of his own dear Son does cleanse us from all sin. But let us never, never dare to sin wilfully because of predestination, lest he in his wrath shall declare that we shall not enter his rest, and be as wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever, as long as time lasts, for it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God. Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us any of us should seem to come short of it.

This feeble, imperfect effort is humbly submitted to the discretion of the editor, by an unworthy little sister who dares to cherish a hope of eternal life beyond,

MARY ELLISON.

PLENTY.

CHARLES WESLEY wrote, "Plenteous grace with thee is found; grace to pardon all my sins," and I am made to wonder if he was entirely destitute of that grace, even though he wrote and preached in defense of Arminianism for years.

Sometimes in looking back over past trials and tribulations we think we just were delivered—that if it had come any later we would have been gone completely, but, dear child of God, it cannot be too late. Neither can it be lacking in power, grace and love to effectually deliver out of whatever may be our trouble. To talk about deliverance being too late, or insufficient, is to talk about God failing in some particular to fulfill his promises. Banish the thought! How can he fail? Not because of a lack of power, because all that is in heaven and in earth was given into the hands of our glorious, conquering Immanuel, that he might give eternal life to as many as were given him. Will he give unto them that life? Ah yes, little doubting one, he will, because he is faithful that promised. So faithful is he that all the glory, power, honor, majesty, love, mercy and grace are behind the promise. If the promises of God were based on the ability of man to the least degree then there certainly would be room to fear a famine, or to look for an insufficiency in the grace of God. But, dear brethren, sisters, strangers in the land, wayfarers and sojourners, it is not of man. It is wholly and without instrumentality the work of God. The Strength of Israel

will not lie nor repent. (1 Sam. xv. 29). So you can see that there is plenteous grace for all of our needs. Moreover, every good gift comes from him, and what a Giver of gifts he is!

"My soul, repeat his praise
Whose mercies are so great;
Whose anger is so slow to rise,
So ready to abate."

"High as the heavens are raised
Above the ground we tread,
So far the riches of his grace
Our highest thoughts exceed.

His power subdues our sins;
And his forgiving love,
Far as the east is from the west,
Doth all our guilt remove."

Nothing lacking. Plenteous supplies for everything, and they come from a Giver who is without variation, and who is so much in one mind that there is not a shadow of turning. Here is a safe and secure place, dear saints, to find refuge. Here is a resting-place for the weary and wayworn. Here is strength, plenteous strength, for the weak-handed and feeble-kneed. Here is grace sufficient for those who are fearfully asking, When saw we thee sick and in prison and came unto thee? One of the beloved disciples leaned on the bosom of Jesus, and how longingly do we look toward such a haven, and how we would like to reach there.

What a sweet story of Rebekah! It would seem that she is a figure of the church. Behold the servant of Abraham as he comes to her and tells her of the richness of his master. He is greatly blessed (Gen. xxiv. 1, 35) of the Lord, and all of it belongs to his son. My dear children of God, when the Holy Spirit arrested you it made Jesus as the chiefest of ten thousand unto you. You were enabled to see him as having all power in heaven and earth, and you were compelled to say that you would go with the man. (Gen. xxiv. 58.) What was it that was done for you? It was plenty, and as far as you could see, beyond measure, because you had to sing with the poet,

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me."

Unto her was given earings, and the writer of old has declared, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance."—Psalms lxxxix. 15. And none can ever hear unless the deaf ears are unstopped by the Spirit. Then on her hands are put bracelets, representing, to my mind, that unto the church are given the holy Scriptures as having everything necessary for all of her rules and regulations. Furthermore, that a bracelet is a complete circle, without beginning or ending. So is the love of God to his people. It is complete to them, and is from everlasting to everlasting.

It is written that this Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and that he was full of grace and truth. (John i. 14.) If he was full of it nothing could be taken from him nor added to him. Is not this plenty? Is not this everything that a poor sinner needs? But listen what is said in verse sixteen: "And of his fullnes have all we received, and grace for grace." As he was full of it, so his children receive his fullness and lack nothing. Paul's letter to Rome tells us what a wonderful source of plenty and completeness the

children of God have in him. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."—Rom. viii. 16, 17. Everything that Jesus possesses in heaven is ours, because we are joint-heirs with him. Oh what a land of plenty! Ofttimes we feel weak and heavy laden here and are almost ready to faint by the way, but ere long our Husband will come for us, and then we shall be carried home. Going home! What does it mean? Like a little child that has been long in the dark and thorny wilderness and is brought safe home. To a land of plenty; to a land of joy and peace; to our long sought home, where the sun never shall go down.

Submitted in love.

W. D. GRIFFIN.

FAYETTE, Alabama.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—I received the telegram to-day that you attempted to have delivered to me on Saturday evening, and again I wish to say, Many thanks for your thoughtfulness and consideration in sending it to me. I was very much disappointed that I could not spend the entire day with you all on Sunday, especially when I learned it was the time of your communion service. I do not feel worthy to partake of this sacred, solemn ordinance, yet I feel it my duty to try in my humble way to be a true follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, being led (I hope) by the grace of the all-wise God, who has power to speak and it is done, whose power is far reaching, to all corners of the world, saying unto his little ones, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. When he speaks it is done; when he commands it stands fast, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Thanks be to his holy name, that when he begins the work of grace in the heart of a poor sinner he has power and will complete the work, without the help of poor puny man, who can only fall at his feet and the story repeat of how he brought him out of the horrible pit and miry clay, and put a new song in his mouth, even praise unto our God, and will ever lead and guide him in the strait and narrow path that leads to joys everlasting in that world without end, where sorrow and sighing shall be no more, where God shall wipe all tears from their eyes.

I think you have a lovely little band of true followers of the meek and lowly Jesus at your church in New York City, and I never could find words to express the joy and comfort that is derived from meeting with you. Words fail me when I attempt to tell you how much I enjoy hearing you explain the profound and deep mysteries of the Scriptures, so I take this opportunity of tellinng you that my heart is filled to overflowing as I sit under the sound of your voice and gather the crumbs as they fall from the Master's table. Thanks be to God for giving us such wonderful spiritual gifts as you, Elder

Lefferts and other dear ministers of the gospel. Without the wisdom from on high it would be impossible to portray the beauty contained in the blessed word of God. Sometimes I am made to marvel at how wonderfully it is done by you and others. May God give us grace, power and strength to continue contending earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, for without faith it is impossible to please God, and without the ever sustaining grace of our all-wise God we would be lost sinners, and without hope in a world of sin and sorrow.

Nothing could be sweeter in this life than the blessed privilege of being numbered with the people of Primitive Baptist faith, as I have always felt that our mingling together here is only a foretaste of the joy that awaits us in the world to come. God give us strength to forsake not the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is. It seems so wonderful and marvelous to find a group here in New York City so much like the little band in West Virginia, at dear old Mt. Olive Church.

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

Though we be miles apart, the same true love and fellowship is manifest in a spirit of humbleness in all they do and say, which is only more assurance that God is working in them the will and do of his own good pleasure. Without him we can do nothing, but with him all things are possible. He has all power in heaven and on earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? If God be for us, who can be against us? We are made to cry, Lord, save, or we perish. "A crumb of mercy, Lord, I crave." "'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home." Oh how sweet to have the blessed assurance and to know there is food for the hungry soul and drink for the thirsty, for we are told, Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Sometimes when listening to you I feel that my cup has been filled to overflowing, and I can only say, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow." God give us grace to grow in knowledge and truth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who shed his own precious blood to redeem poor helpless sinners from death, hell and the grave. He came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost. When he hung on the cross, and cried, "It is finished," he forever put away the sins of his people to be remembered against them no more. Praise God for such an eternal salvation that embraces every little one who will ever bask on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance. I feel this is all too great for one such as I am, but by the grace of God I am what I am. I hope and pray I have not been deceived and am not deceiving the dearest people on earth to me.

Again I wish to tell you how much I enjoy meeting with you all, who have been so kind, considerate and loving to me. Please excuse me for taking your time with these rambling thoughts of mine, and forgive anything that has

been said amiss. I even hesitate to send this to one so deeply and profoundly educated in the Scriptures as you are. I know you could tell the story much better, but sometimes I feel I must give vent to my thoughts, and there is no one here who could understand or appreciate how I feel, so please bear with one who is willing to gather only the crumbs, yet, like Ruth, I must say, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried."

A sinner saved by grace, I hope,

ELSIE LOEFFEL.

WARREN, Ark., Dec. 24, 1937.

DEAR SIRS:—I am inclosing one dollar, for which please send the SIGNS to my mother, Mrs. J. H. Blythe, R. 1, Warren, Arkansas. Many hours of happiness and comfort she has derived form reading this book, especially since the passing of my father, Elder J. H. Blythe, in February, 1928. He, too, knew that the bounds of all truth was from cover to cover. Last month God called in death another of our family. It was my brother, a twenty-nine year old soldier, who was located in your State when his final hour came. There is the sweet hope that he is at rest, as I believe my dear old dad to be. My only consolation is that God's will be done. He is a just and living God, and he knows best. Yet why do I mourn because of what he has chosen to do? I ask God's blessings for my mother, who is old, and trust that he will give to her in her remaining days the contentment of his love.

Very truly yours,

MARY E. BLYTHE.

WEINERT, Texas.

DEAR PUBLISHER:—Inclosed find postal order for two dollars, for which please send me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the year 1939. I hope to be able to take it as long as I live, and hope it may be God's will to restore your health and sight, that you may be able to continue to publish it as long as you live, and then when we older ones have passed on that he may raise up others to carry on the work as long as it is his will and pleasure. I receive much comfort from the many writers, and consider it the best paper published.

Yours in hope,

JOHN KILPATRICK.

ROCHESTER, New York.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending check of three dollars for my subscription to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES and one dollar to help send the good paper to "the poor of the flock." I could not do without the splendid paper, as it is about all the preaching I have in this city. My best wishes to all who have anything to do with the publishing of this paper.

Most sincerely,

(MRS.) DAVID FARNIE.

BOOK WANTED.

ANY one having a copy of the large type Hymn Book (Beebe's collection), or one that can be bound, who is willing to dispose of the same, will please communicate with J. J. Bailey, R. D., Prattsville, N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1938.

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WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE?

THIS is not a letter of criticism. Our purpose in writing is that all our minds may be stirred up to search the word of God in our reasoning, instead of the reasoning of the human mind. Our personal opinions regarding any point of doctrine are worthless unless they are in accord with God's written word. It is good for us to reason together, but let the Scripture be the foundation of our reasoning. What saith the Scripture? In attacking doctrine, would it not be better to examine the Scriptures that appear to teach this doctrine, and seek the interpretation of them, than to do as the Arminians: seek a few pet texts to attack it with? If we do this we are not seeking the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. We purpose here to quote some Scriptures from the word of God on gospel obedience, and some that point to the purpose of God in wicked men, and their acts. So if any of us feel to attack either of these doctrines, let us explain these Scriptures in doing so. Let us examine a few Scriptures pertaining to exhortation, etc. Romans xii. 1: "I beseech you threfore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof."—Rom. xiii. 14. Paul's charge to Timothy: "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."—1 Tim. iv. 14-16. "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate."—1 Tim. vi. 17, 18. "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children,

not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation."—1 Peter i. 13-15. "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall."—2 Peter i. 5-10. There are many, many more Scriptures we could mention, but space forbids. The Scriptures say we ought to do these things, and before any of us charge a brother with preaching conditionalism let us read these things and note how much is said in the New Testament about such. Surely the whole thing is summed up in the expression, I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me. Without him we can do nothing.

Now let us look at the Scriptures pertaining to God's purpose, predestination, etc. What saith the Scriptures? The crucifixion of Christ by wicked men, Acts ii. 23, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Acts iv. 26-28: "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."

The selling of Joseph, Genesis l. 20: "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." 2 Samuel xvi. 10, Shimei had cursed David, "And the king said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? So let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hath thou done so?" 2 Kings xxii. 23: "Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee." 2 Thessalonians ii. 11, 12: "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." If any feel to dispute the doctrine of the predestination of all things, or that God has no purpose in any wickedness, let them read these Scriptures, and many others, and explain them first. Let us read Psalms lxxvi. 10: "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." Having reference to God.

Dear brethren, we have not written these things to confuse any one, nor to agitate a question that would cause strife among us. The doctrine of predestination of all things should not disturb the church. Personally, we feel as opposed to those who believe in the predestination of all things making a test of fellowship over it as we do to those who do not see it to that extent. Yet it should not be denied. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, etc., that the man of God may be perfect, thorougly furnished unto all good works. Sometimes it becomes as necessary to defend exhortation, reproving, rebuking, etc., as it is to defend the predestination of all things. We think when the apostle said, "I am set for the defence of the gospel," there was the determination to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified, for the gospel is that good news that is brought by faith, that says to each believer, Christ is made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, santcification and redemption. So the command is, Preach the word. We, as ministers, are expressly forbidden in the Scriptures to be striving over words to no profit, but to hold fast the form of sound words.

For some time we have felt to write just as we have. Brethren, cast the mantle of charity over it. We feel we need one another. The church has persecution on every side. May we all be blessed to preach, talk, and, above all, manifest in our walk the glorious grace of God. We are pilgrims here, and that pilgrimage will soon end with us all. May we be found in our journey with our face toward the heavenly Jerusalem. May God give us grace to labor more in the present year for a unity of doctrine, faith and practice, in accord with his will.

"My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life or breath remains,
Here my best friends, my kindred, dwell,
Here God my Savior reigns."

We realize that in the foregoing we have quoted a number of Scriptures, with little said about them. Our object was to call attention to the variety of matter in the Bible. If we believe the Bible at all we must believe every word of it. To deny one word is to deny it all. The leadings of faith do not desire to change one word of it. The carnal mind will reject every word which it cannot reason out according to human reasoning. No individual understands all the Bible. Some is yet unfilled. But the believer believes it, and looks to God for wisdom, realizing that the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God. The Bible is the only complete rule of faith and practice for the church of Jesus Christ. Every principle of the doctrine of grace is wholesome to the church. If one principle is preached continuously, to the exclusion of other things, the church will no doubt be well established in that doctrine, but without a clear understanding of some other points. For instance, if there is continually an expounding of a doctrine, without bringing it home to our personal experience, there wil be a church well established in doctrine, yet in a cold condition. If there should be a

continual preaching on personal experience, without clearly setting forth doctrinal points, you will find a church lively, yet not established. May we all be given grace to see the beauty in everything in the word of God, to the end that Jesus is exalted, God glorified and the sinner saved and humbled under the mighty hand of God.

D. V. S.

SINGING.

A GOOD voice is a gift from the Lord, and it should be used to the praise of his glorious grace. To study the rudiments of music and properly train it should not detract from, but rather add to its beauty. We think good singing adds a great deal and forms an important part of our services. We know of a particular section of the country where there is a group of excellent singers, and it is next to inspiring to listen to the various parts of music as their voices are harmonized and blended together. On the other hand, we know of other sections where the lack of good singing is simply deplorable. We honestly feel that many of our people have sadly neglected to make proper use of their talents in this respect. We remember most vividly an occasion, early in our experience as a public speaker, when we had gone a long way from home in most inclement weather, and had made what we felt to be a miserable attempt to speak, we thought to try to save the day, so to speak, by asking that "How firm a foundation" be sung as a closing hymn. If we have ever heard anything "murdered" that hymn was that day, and had the ground opened and swallowed us up we felt it would have been a great relief. There have been similar occasions since, and while we have practically no knowledge at all of music, and little, if any, talent in that direction, nevertheless we have felt compelled to try until we are able to raise tunes and sing after a fashion. Some of our ministers with good voices have undoubtedly spoiled their congregations. We are well aware of the fact that it requires more than a good voice and a knowledge of music to make melody in the soul. We have known of instances where more or less wicked characters were paid substantial sums to sing in church choirs, simply because they possessed good voices and understood music, and this has seemd to us as almost the height of hypocrocy. We know a man in New York City who began singing in an Episcopal choir as a boy, and for upwards of forty years since he grew up has been singing for Catholics, Jews and Protestants alike. He has used his voice largely as a means of his livelihood, and we do not blame him for it, but there is certainly no place for this kind of thing in the true church of God. Some recent articles in the SIGNS have indicated that some Old School Baptists in the South and West, perhaps, are being taken up with and led astray by some modern singing schools or societies. Important as the cultivation of the voice may be, in our estimation, we most certainly would not approve of making use of such occasions for absenting one's self from their regular

church meetings. We would also warn against being led into false doctrine through this medium. Real Old School Baptists should be careful of the words they sing. They should both sing and preach sound doctrine. We regard it as timely to publish herewith one of the best things we have ever seen on this subject. We refer to the Preface to be found in the Beebe collection of hymns. It follows: "The most important subject that ever engaged the attention of men or angels is the worship of the true and the living God; it is that in which the saints are not only engaged while here in the house of their pilgrimage, but it is that in which they hope to be employed in the unclouded regions of glory. When God delivered us from the horrible pit and miry clay, and established our goings, he also put a new song in our mouths: even praise unto his name. And when John saw the Lamb standing upon Mount Zion, he saw also with him an innumerable company employed in singing the new song before the throne of the Redeemer, which song no man could learn but those only which were redeemed from the earth. And none but the redeemed, regenerated, called and spiritually taught can worsip God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. The Scriptures teach us that two requisites are indispensable to the acceptable worship of God; the one is that we should worship him in spirit, because he is a Spirit, and will have none other to worship him; and the other is that we worship him in truth, for he is the God of truth. If the vocal sounds of music, embellished by all the accomplishments of science or of art, could qualify us for spiritual devotion, then others might be found, besides the redeemed from the earth, to join in the songs of Zion; but none besides that company who are born of the Spirit are qualified to sing with the spirit; and in the absence of that spirit, God cannot be worshipped. Nor is it less essential or indispensable to the worship of God, that he be worshipped in *truth*. Not only with a true heart, with pure and honest intentions, but that which should be the theme of our song should be the truth as it is in Jesus. The accomplished vocalist, without a particle of grace, may command the admiration and charm the animal feelings of all lovers of music, and the natural passions of even christians may be stirred and warmed by the animated singing of words which are far from being in accord with the truth. But no such performances will be acceptable as worship by that God who searches the heart and tries the reins of the children of men.

With these convictions, it has been the aim of the publisher of this book to select only such songs, hymns and spiritual songs as are in harmony with the spirit and truth of spiritual devotion. Such subjects have been selected, and such only, as, in the judgment of the compiler, expressed the truth of God, and in a manner to show forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. Such subjects generally as are addressed to God, in humble but grateful acknowl-

edgment of his being, his goodness and his great salvation, avoiding such addresses as are too frequently made to the unregenerated sinner, as being altogether out of place when used under the profession of worshipping God. The words of the song which John heard the redeemed sing were, 'Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.' And such in substance should be the theme of all the children of God. God's people are not justifiable in using inappropriate words, and especially such words as are untrue, in their devotional exercises, for they are admonished to sing with the *understanding,* as well as with the spirit, and so to make melody in their hearts unto the Lord. Poems have been introduced into books which are used in many congregations that are not only destitute of the essential sentiment which the spirit of true devotion inspires, but actually express doctrines entirely antagonistic to the doctrine of the Bible. Christians should never sing what they do not believe to be true."

R. L. D.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS."

We will furnish extra copies of the Signs of the Times at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

CLOSE OF VOLUME 106.

One hundred and six years is a long, long time for a publication to continue, but with this issue the Signs of the Times is closing its one hundred and sixth volume. All those years it has been published by three generations of one family, and for more than fifty of those years your present publisher has been a member of the Signs' staff of workers. When we, in September, 1888, came into the office to work for our father, the late Benton L. Beebe, we had no thought of making it our life work, but thought we would continue only until we found some other line of employment. A number of times we about completed arrangements to give it up, but our way was not the Lord's way, and each time our plans were thwarted, until now at the present time we are still engaged in the same work we started at as a boy, but we have never felt qualified not fit for the task.

A great many changes have taken place during those years. All who were then employed in publishing the paper have gone to their eternal home, and of all who wrote for its columns at that time we know of few who are still living. Of all those who during those years were employed in the mechanical part of the work, but two or three are still living.

When our father was called home, in January, 1904, and our dear mother and ourself were left to go on with the publication of the Signs it seemed we could not do it, but a greater Head than ours had marked out our path for us, and we continued to walk in it as best

we could, until our mother was called to lay her burden down and enter that land where sorrow and sighing flee away and the weary are at rest. Since her passing we have had to go on as publisher alone, and though totally unfit for the position, yet God has allowed the paper to continue, and has directed the pens of the editors and correspondents to write, we hope, to the comfort and edification of the readers. If it is his will the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will continue to be published; but if not his will, no power in heaven or earth can continue it one day longer than he has use for it.

The financial condition of the SIGNS is nearly the same as it has been for the past few years, with about the same number of subscribers, etc, so we feel to hope it is the Lord's will for it to continue to be published.

Before closing, we wish to thank our editors for all they have done toward keeping the paper sound in doctrine, and for the interest they have otherwise manifested in its welfare. We also thank our correspondents for the many good letters they have contributed to our columns, and hope they will continue to write to the comfort and edification of the readers. To those who have contributed financially, or aided in any way, we extend our sincere gratitude. Your help has been much appreciated.

We fear we have failed miserably in the foregoing to express our thoughts as we would like to, but our calling is publishing, not writing, so we beg the indulgence of our readers, and hope they will pardon all that is amiss.

Farewell for the year 1938.

PUBLISHER.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Elders and messengers composing the Fist Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists, to those with whom we correspond, and unto the saints scattered abroad, greeting.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—We have been blest to meet once more in an associate capacity, and to feel that it has been a banqueting-house with the banner of love spread over us, and as we meet and greet each other under that banner we feel indeed that our cup of blessing overflows. We are few in number, for "the archers have sorely grieved us, and shot at us, and hated us," but we have not been left comfortless, for He who has himself been hit by the archers has verified his promise to be with his "fewest of all people," and of his fullness have we all received, and with ofttimes weary hearts we look forward to the time when we hope to taste the fullness of his grace and be forever blest; where all tears shall be wiped away, and neither shall we learn war any more.

To the visiting Elders and messengers we feel to say, If you deem us worthy for you to come under our roof, come again. Our next session is to be held with Little Flock Church, of

Oklahoma, in or near Booker, just over the State Line in Texas, when, if the Lord wills, we hope to meet again.

L. L. SCHENCK, Mod.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

LAWN, Texas, Sept. 26, 1938.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending the inclosed Minute for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if it meets with your approval. This Conference was held in Coleman County, Texas. There were two members of Macedonia Church, and five members of Pilgrims Rest Church, of Lawn, Texas, present and witnessed the proceedings of the church. We think the work was done in order. There were two members of the church who had been baptized while the church was in disorder. After the church had set itself in order Elder C. D. Varnell preached, then gave an opportunity for the reception of members. The two who had been baptized into disorder came forward, and were received by experience, and were baptized that evening by Elder Varnell. We who witnessed the work of the church are satisfied the church is now in order.

A sister in hope,

(MRS.) M. N. GRIFFIN.

HANDS CREEK CHURCH of Old Predestinarian Primitive faith, met on the fourth Sunday in September. After electing brother Dick McMann Modarator and brother T. W. Calk Clerk went into conference.

First, Called for the peace of the church. Answered, Not in peace, because of past disorder.

Second, Asked visiting members of our faith to counsel with us.

Third, Motion was made and seconded, that the church denounce all disorder that has been in the past, namely, the G. W. Green trouble, and the peace move.

Now we declare ourselves in order with all Baptists of our faith and order, and we invite brethren and sisters of our faith and order to come and visit us. We especially invite all ministers of our faith and order.

We request that a copy of these Minutes be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

This done in Conference, the fourth Sunday in September, 1938.

DICK McMANN, Mod.

T. W. CALK, Clerk.

[WE have what we believe excellent authority for believing that the foregoing was perfectly proper and in good order, and we are reliably informed that it will be good news and gladly received by many of our readers in the State of Texas. Apparently a grievous mistake has been rectified in the correct manner and we are glad to lend our columns to the aid and encouragement of those who are striving to maintain both good order and sound doctrine.—R. L. D.]

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. John T. Cockrell, Va., $1; Middletown and Wallkill Church, N. Y., $50; Martha E. Holloway, Md., $1; Lillian Ashurst, Ill., $3; Mrs. Orra A. Hasbrouck, N. Y., $1; Mrs. David Farnie, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Emma Ball, Va., $1.

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST HOME.

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST HOME, INC., in Salisbury, Maryland, was incorporated April 17th, 1928, and opened May 1st, 1929. The original Constitution and By-laws pedmitted only members and friends of the Primitive Baptist faith residing within the bounds of the churches composing what is known as the Eastern Associations, to become Residents. However, after nearly ten years of experience the Board of Trustees (fourteen in number) has voted to modify the Constitution and By-laws so as to permit the acceptance of others as Residents, even though they do not reside within said bounds.

The purpose of the Home has been to provide a haven for members and friends of the Primitive Baptist faith and order (both male and female) who are alone, or whose circumstances in life make it either necessary or desirable to seek a place of refuge for their declining years.

Since the Home opened on May 1st, 1929, twenty-eight have been admitted as Residents. The maximum number that can be accommodated at one time is twenty-five (25). While it is not feasible to list all of the requirements, rules and regulations here, which are applicable to those outside of the original bounds, we will state some of the most important ones, as follows: (1) No one can be considered who is not of the same faith and order as the churches in the Eastern Associations. (2) A certificate of health from a reputable physician, showing that the applicant is able to care for themselves, and that they have no contagious or incurable disease. (3) An entrance fee of $1,500 will have to be paid outright to the Home upon entering, and all other property will have to be turned over to the Home, with the understanding that the Board of Trustees will pay to said Resident such rate of interest as they may determine upon from time to time, but only on that portion of the property which exceeds the entrance fee. The Resident will be required to make a will and bequeath to the Home all property up to $5,000. Any excess over this amount may be bequeathed as the Resident may see fit.

The Home is presided over by a Matron, who is accountable to the Board of Trustees. The present Matron is a sister in the flesh of Elder H. H. Lefferts, former Editor of the SIGNS OF THE TAMES. Those who reside in the Home are loud in their praise of what is being done for them, and their peace and contentment of mind is evidenced by long life.

There are a number of vacancies at the present time, and those who can qualify and wish to do so should submit their case for the consideration of the Board of Trustees. It must be clearly understood by all that the Board reserves to itself the right to reject any application. First preference will be given to those within the bounds of the Eastern Associations. If there be any within the bounds of these Associations who are considering entering the Home, we would urge that they consult one of their Trustees without delay.

The Home receives its financial support mainly through voluntary contributions, bequests from those who are friendly to the cause and funds from deceased Residents. We believe there are many among our readers who when they realize what is being done for our brethren, sisters and friends, will be glad not only to support this cause during their lifetime, but will name the Home as a beneficiary under their will. The undersigned will see that informa-

tion is furnished to those who are interested.

December 8th, next, will be Donation Day at the Home, and I hope the friends of the Home will keep this in mind and send such donations as they may feel disposed at that time.

R. LESTER DODSON,
41 Addison Avenue,
RUTHERFORD, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

HENRY TOMLINSON LEFFERTS, my brother in Christ Jesus and also in the flesh, departed this natural life October 10th, 1938, at the Homeopathic Hospital, East Orange, N. J., where he had been a patient over four weeks, suffering from an incurable streptococcic infection which refused to yield to medical and surgical skill. His home was at Nutley, N. J., where now is wife and his only daughter are left together to survive him. He was born near Bustleton, Philadelphia, Pa., September 1st, 1870. He was one of the four children of George W. and Sarah P. Lefferts, late of Southampton, Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Our oldest brother, Howard L., died forty years ago at the age of thirty-six years. Father died in 1902, our mother in 1915. Besides myself, we have one sister living, sister Naomi L. Rounds, of Salisbury, Md. Brother Henry was married in December, 1891, to our sister Mary Lizzie Croasdale, who was at that time a member of the Southampton Church. They were married by Elder S. H. Durand, and in February, 1901, by brother was baptized by Elder Durand into membership with the Southampton Church. Not long afterward, both my brother and his wife removed their membership by letter from the Southampton Church to the Ebenezer Church, in New York City, the latter being served pastorally at that time by the late Elder John McConnell. Elder McConnell baptized sister Myrtle Lefferts, their only child, some years ago. They have been living in Nutley, N. J., a little over forty years, where my brother was the larger portion of those years a druggist. He served his town and community in the capacity of Treasurer and of Assessor and otherwise, always standing for clean and honest government. He was a Deacon and a Trustee of the Ebenezer Church, and had served as Clerk of the Warwick Association. At the time of his departure from us, he was serving as Treasurer of the Ebenezer Church, and likewise as Treasurer of the Board of Trustees of the Primitive Baptist Home, Salisbury, Md., and was also a member of the Board of Directors of the Bank of Nutley.

The funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Elder R. Lester Dodson, at the home the night of October 12th, and by the same, October 13th, in the chapel at William Penn Cemetery, Philadelphia, Pa., where we lovingly laid to rest his mortal body until that blessed time shall come when that which is at present in subjection to death, shall be raised deathless and immortal in power and in honor at the glorious coming of the Lord to raise from among the dead those who sleep in him. "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave. where is thy victory?" "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

I must not say too much about the personal character of my brother both as a man and as a christian, for fear I might be thought too effusive by reason of his close relation to me, but I think that all who knew him will agree that he was loving, patient and gentle, and that he steadily lived and acted the truth he

believed. He often spoke of regretting he could not express his feelings as he would like to, that he could not talk on the precious things of the kingdom of God as he so much longed to do; but no one, I feel sure, more strongly or firmly held consistently and steadily to the principles of the doctrine of God our Savior than did he. He was faithful in every relationship of life. He loved truth and honesty in every walk of life. He was a brother indeed to me, and no words of mine can tell how I shall miss him. May his dear wife and daughter, to whose every interest he was devoted, be comforted by the God of all grace, and may they be wholly reconciled to the perfect, just and holy will of our Lord in taking our loved one to dwell with him in paradise.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

HAVING known brother Lefferts for over twenty-seven years, we feel constrained to add at least a few words to what Elder Lefferts, his brother, has written. His true worth was appreciated most by those who knew him best. He was very highly esteemed and much beloved by the brethren and friends in the Warwick Association, and especially by those in the Ebenezer Church, which he served as Deacon so acceptably. We shall long mourn our great loss, but we are persuaded that he has gone up higher to be with and praise his Lord, whom he loved and served so faithfully while here on earth. Our hearts are yearning in prayer to be reconciled to the will of God and for his watchcare over those who are left behind.

R. L. D.

THOMAS WILSON BROCK was born February 28th, 1879, and died May 15th, 1938, making his stay here on earth 59 years, 2 months and 17 days. He was married to Miss Nettie Pearl Allen November 22nd, 1900. To this union were born nine children: Bradley W., Mrs. Maye Dutton, Mrs. Effie Berry, Rena, Mary Lee, Leon, Nellie G., Lawery and Naomi Brock. All of whom survive, except Bradley W. Brock, who died February 2nd, 1938. He was killed in an automobile accident. Brother Brock received a hope in Christ in the year 1901 and joined the Primitive Baptist Church in 1912. He was ordained to the full work of the ministry November 10th, 1934.

Elder G. W. Berry and the writer were called to attend his funeral. We tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved family and friends, by referring to the great things the Lord has done for his people. They were chosen in Christ before the world began, blest with all spiritual blessings in Christ, predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, called, justified and glorified, and no one can lay anything to their charge, for it is God that justifieth, and by the exceeding great and precious promises of God we are made partakers of the divine nature. In the death of this dear brother the community has lost a good citizen, the church an able minister of the new testament, his companion a devoted husband and his children a loving father. Then, dear ones, weep not as those who have no hope, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with them. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Submitted in love.

LYTLE BURNS.

It now becomes my painful duty to chronicle the passing of my beloved daughter-in-law, MARTHA AMANDA SLAUGHTER, nee Harry, who was born August 6th, 1893, the daughter of D. W. and Sarah Esther Harry. She was united in marriage to F. H. Slaughter, April 14th, 1928, by Elder R. E. White. She received a hope in Christ at the tender age of ten years, but never united with the church, but was steadfast in the doctrine of salvation by grace. A short time before the end she said she wanted to join the church. Her sister asked her which church, and she said, The Primitive Baptist. But that awful disease cancer had advanced so far that she was not able to be baptized. She taught school about twenty-four years, very successfully, and her pupils all loved her. She was a leader in the community, and to know her was to love her. She was always ready to help those in need or in trouble of any kind; in fact, her life was one of sacrifice. She delighted to prepare for and entertain the Old Baptists in her home. She suffered two years with cancer, but never murmured. She made her will and arranged her business as though she were going on a visit, and was perfectly reconciled to the will of God. She leaves her bereaved husband, three brothers (one brother was killed in the World War). The surviving brothers are Lloyd Harry, a lawyer of Farmersville, Texas, Ben, an osteopath doctor, of Commerce, Texas, and Lee Harry, of Amarillo, Texas. Also two sisters, Mrs. Ethel Alman, of Petersburg, Texas, and Mrs. D. C. Shelton, of Gilmer, Texas She chose her old parents' pastor, Elder S. C. Devenport, also a Mr. Goode, a Missionary, to conduct her funeral, which was held in a Missionary house, in Edgewood, Texas. Her remains were laid to rest in the Edgewood Cemetery, there to await the second coming of our Lord, when the dead in Christ shall hear the trump of God sound, then she will come forth in the image of Jesus and be adopted into the heavenly family, so shall she ever be with the Lord. So I would say to the bereaved, Sorrow not as others who have no hope, for she is not dead, but sleepeth; blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep.

Written by her father-in-law,

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

We are saddened to note the passing of MRS. AMELIA SANFORD RIAR, at her home in Dunraven, N. Y., October 24th, 1938, after an illness of a week's duration, from ptomaine poisoning. The funeral services were held at her late home the following Wednesday, conducted by the writer The interment was in the family plot, near Dunraven, on the Sanford homestead. Mrs. Riar bore the maiden name of Amelia Sanford, and was the daughter of the late Elder and Mrs. Ranson Sanford. She was born July 24th, 1873, and spent her girlhood days with her parents on the Sanford homestead, near Dunraven. She was married November 20th, 1895, to Avery Riar, and she and her husband resided at Kelly Corners, N. Y., in the employ of the late brother James Avery until 1903, when they moved to Dunraven, where she resided until the time of her death. Her husband and two daughters, Mrs. George Leyden, of Margretville, N. Y., and Mrs. Robert Van Keuren, of Dunraven, survive her. Mrs. Riar was a woman of many excellent qualities and noble traits, firm in her convictions, hospitable in her home, kind as a neighbor and interested in all that pertained to the welfare of the community. She will be much missed. Her last illness was brief, but everything that medical skill could avail was brought into requisition. She never

united with the Old School Baptist Church, but loved the doctrine of salvation by grace and the sovereignty of God, who works all things after the counsel of his unerring will. To her bereaved husband and children much sympathy is extended.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst and take unto himself our beloved brother, HENRY T. LEFFERTS, and

WHEREAS, we desire to place on record an expression of our love for him as a fellow-member, treasurer and deacon of this church, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we sincerely mourn our loss, and shall greatly miss his counsel and friendly spirit in all things pertaining to the church.

RESOLVED, that we desire to be reconciled to the will of him whose judgments we cannot question.

RESOLVED, that a copy of these Resolutions be furnished his bereaved family, our bereft sisters, and a copy published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Approved and adopted at our regular monthly church meeting November 6th, 1938.

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH in New York City.

R. LESTER DODSON, Mod.

CYRUS RISLER, Clerk.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE date opposite your name on the little pink slip on which your address is printed denotes the time your subscription expires. Dec 37 means it expired December, 1937; June 38 that it expired June, 1938; Dec 38 that it expires with this number.

BOOK NOTICE.

AN EXCELLENT VOLUME.

"Memoirs and letters of James Kidwell Potham."

Mr. Potham was Pastor of The Strict Baptist Church, at Brighton, England, for over fifty-five years, and Editor of *The Gospel Standard* for thirty years.

This book reveals much of the travel of a man greatly blessed of God in his ministry and writings. It is full of interesting matter, which on every page shows forth the power and goodness of the covenant-keeping God.

It can be obtained from the publishers, C. J. Farncombe & Sons, Ltd., 30 Imperial Buildings, Ludgate Circus, London, E. C. 4, England. Price, post-paid, $1.65, to Canada and United States.

I feel to recommend this book to our readers.—G. R.

MEETINGS.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church holds meetings the fourth Sunday of each month at 1026 East Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Meeting begins at 10:30 a. m., dismisses for lunch and reconvenes at 2 o'clock p. m. Meeting days have been changed from the first to the fourth Sunday of each month. No Saturday or night meetings.

BURLIE HALL, Pastor
W. H. CAVE, Ass't Pastor.
(MRS.) H. B. CURLIE, Church Clerk

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 107. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1939. NO. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PRESERVATION OF THE SAINTS TO GLORY.

By Elder J. C. Sikes.

Dear Brother Hudson:—Your letter, telling of the death of your beloved wife, came while I was away on a trip in Mississippi, Arkansas and Louisiana, and this is my first opportunity to answer it. I can certainly sympathize with you in your great grief, having once passed through the same heartrending ordeal. The best we can do is to be still and know that God is God.

Ever anon our loved ones are dying,
  Passing from time to eternity's shore,
Leaving us sorrowing, grieving and crying,
  Weeping because we shall see them no more.

Our time is a shadow; its length is declining;
  Our life is a vapor which passeth away;
No human invention with science combining
  Can either detain it or cause it to stay.

Our God hath decreed it, no mortal can change it,
  Then let's be silent, submit and be still;
In infinite wisdom our God did arrange it
  To meet the demands of his most holy will.

Then why should we shudder, or shrink from the message
  To meet the death angel which severs this life?
Death should not deter us, 'tis only the passage
  Through which we escape from commotion and strife.

Then let us not sorrow for loved ones departed,
  But rather be glad, give thanks and rejoice;
From all earthly sorrows their Savior hath called them,
  For they are God's blessed choice.

If not, it is still the right of Jehovah,
  As Sovereign, to do as he will with his own;
There are not powers enough in existence
  To force or persuade him to vacate his throne.

The Scriptures you refer to in Hebrews vi. 4-6, and Galatians v. 4, do not teach that a saint or child of God can so apostatize and fall away as to be everlastingly lost. Before taking them up and explaining their meaning I will prove by Paul himself that he did not mean to teach that the children of God can fall away and be finally lost.

To begin with, I will notice his very positive declaration in Romans eighth chapter, beginning with the twenty-eighth verse. He says, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." These fifteen words from Paul, if true, settle this matter beyond any room for a doubt. It would be the height of folly to argue

that anything that works for their good would result in causing them to fall away and be everlastingly lost. John tells us that every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. Paul's statement then is equivalent to saying that all things work together for good to all that are born of God. Or, in other words, to all the children of God. Paul did not close his argument at that point, he added, "To them who are the called according to his purpose." This letter of Paul's was addressed in its beginning "To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints."—Rom. i. 7. Keep in mind the fact that those he has under consideration are not only those that love God, but they are also the beloved of God, and according to his purpose have been called to be saints. Paul further assured them in Romans xi. 29, that "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." They are irrevocable. God will never revoke their calling nor take from them the gracious gifts which he has so freely bestowed upon them. Those very gifts, and that heavenly calling, which Paul assures us are irrevocable, are the same gifts mentioned in Hebrews vi. 4, 5, which he is assuring them if they fall away from they could never be restored to repentance again. Which falling away he assures them did not accompany salvation, but befell them whose fruits were thorns and briers, and whose end is to be burned. He assures those Roman brethren who had been made free from sin and become servants of God that their fruits were unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. But those who advocate the theory of everlasting apostasy say that the fruits of many of the beloved of God, in whose hearts the love of God has been shed abroad by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them, may yet have their fruits unto unholiness, and the end everlasting punishment. But we know this cannot be true of those who have been made free, if Paul told the truth. For he said, They have their fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. (Rom. vi. 22.) Speaking to this same people in the first and second verses of this same chapter, he asked three very pertinent questions. The first one is "What shall we say then?" Say to what? Turn back to the three last verses of the preceding chapter, and you will find what this first question is based on. They say, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." This statement alone should settle this question in the minds of all thinking people. For if God's people are made righteous by the obedience of Jesus Christ, and any of them are finally and forever lost, it will be because the obedience which Christ rendered for them was not sufficient to satisfy divine justice in their behalf, which is equal to saying that Christ has never risen from the dead. For if he came under the law for his people, and accepted their sins as his, and undertook to put them away by the sacrifice of himself and failed, then both he and those for whom he died are, and shall be, everlastingly lost. For he appeared once in the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself

(see Hebrews ix. 26), and if he failed to do what he came to do, the law, which he undertook to satisfy in the room and stead of his people, will never release him from the penalty which it had assessed against the people for whom he died, which penalty was death, and was due. For "in due time Christ died for the ungodly."—Rom. v. 6. Further, if he failed to accomplish all he came to do, he misrepresented the facts in the case when the hour came for him to be put to death, for in that hour he said to his Father, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. We are not left to guess at what he came to do, for he himself said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." If he failed in one jot or one tittle to fulfill the law, then he is yet held in death by the law, and neither he, nor his people, nor any one else, for that matter, could ever rise from the dead. But if he finished the law to its last jot and tittle, then every act of obedience that he rendered in his obedience to it was credited to his people so that it stands true and "by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." That certainly means that every one he fulfilled the law for shall surely be made righteous. But when he had fully and completely fulfilled every commandment of the law, and imputed his obedience to his people, the penalty for its violations had not yet been executed against any one. The penalty is called the curse of the law. The law still demanded that sin be punished. So it is written, He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. This being accomplished by the death of Christ, Paul said, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." He who says that one of them may be finally and everlastingly damned, says that the righteousness of God in Christ may be everlastingly damned. For if he was made to be sin for them, then they were made to be the righteousness of God in him. Hence, he who lays anything to their charge lays the same to the charge of the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. For that is what they are in God's account. Because of this Paul said, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" And then he adds, "It is God that justifieth." Meaning that he that justifies them surely will not lay anything to their charge. He then asks, "Who is he that condemneth?" And then, as if to say Christ will not condemn them, he adds, "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." This whole argument by Paul is to show the impossibility of any of God's elect ever being finally and everlastingly lost. It is perfectly absurd to say that a man can be lost with all things working together for his good. It is also absurd

to say that any man will be everlastingly lost whom Christ has redeemed from the curse of the law. Paul says in Galatians iii. 13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." The curse of the law is its penalty. Hence, if the penalty that was assessed against any violator of God's law was executed on Jesus Christ, that sinner is as free from the penalty that was assessed against him because of his sins as was Jesus Christ when he had satisfied for the sins of his people and rose from the dead. For it is written, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."—1 Peter iii. 18. And again, speaking of what Christ did for his people, he said, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." Here Peter makes it very clear that when Jesus bore his people's sins in his own body and died for their sins, they were, in God's account, reckoned as being dead. "Dead to the law by the body of Christ."—Rom. vii. 4. "Dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."—Rom. vi. 11. "For he that is dead is freed from sin."—Rom. vi. 7. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."—Rom. viii. 2. Hence, "Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."

Then comes the very pertinent question, "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" This question is for the man to answer who says that a man who is dead indeed unto sin, and has been made free from the law of sin and death, and is dead to the law by the body of Christ and who sin shall not have dominion over because he is not under the law, but under grace, which Paul said in Romans v. 21, reigns "through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord," and for whom all things are working together for his good, can be everlastingly lost.

So far I have only quoted from Paul, because both of the Scriptures to which you referred me were written by him, and if time and space would allow me to do so I could cite many more such Scriptures from his pen that prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that he did not believe that any one for whom Christ died would ever be finally and forever lost. The Scriptures to which I have referred you from him stand out as an absolute denial of such a thought. I will now cite you to a few texts in the Old Testament which will not allow such a thought as that one of the saints of God shall ever be finally lost. I will cite you first to Psalms xxxvii. 23, 24, which says, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." This text, like what I quoted from Paul, does not need any argument to

show what it means. It stands forth as an absolute denial that any one who is classed in the Scriptures as a good man shall ever be utterly cast down. If this is true, then it cannot be that any one whose sins were put away, and he justified by the blood of Christ, and made righteous by the obedience of Christ (Rom. v. 19), ever falls finally away. In Job xvii. 9, it is said, "The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall [Note this word "shall"] grow stronger and stronger." If the righteous shall hold on his way (which way is Christ) there is no danger that he shall ever be finally lost, and if he that hath clean hands shall grow stronger and stronger, then there is no danger of the man who has been washed from his sins in the blood of the Lamb ever falling finally away, for it is said that *he shall* grow stronger and stronger. In Psalms xxxvii. 28, it is said, "The Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever." Such texts as these need no argument to prove them, for it is a self-evident fact that if his saints are preserved forever, none of them will be forever lost. In 1 Samuel ii. 9, it says, "He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail." If by strength no man shall prevail, it follows as an inevitable conclusion, that if salvation depends on man universal damnation will be the result. This is the reason given why God keepeth the feet of the saints, and why the wicked shall be silent in darkness. His saints are not able to keep their own feet, nor are the wicked able to deliver themselves from the power of darkness. When the disciples asked Jesus, Who then can be saved? his answer was, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible. This absolutely denies that the possibility of being saved is left in the hands of men, and it just as absolutely affirms that the possibility of salvation is wholly in the hands of God alone.

(*Concluded next number.*)

WEST HURLEY, N. Y., Nov. 25, 1937.

DEAR FRIEND, and I believe a sister in the Lord:—I do not know whether or not you are a baptized believer, but my heart rejoices to know that you give evidence of having been born again of the Spirit and of knowing the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. Your beautiful letter to me, received about two weeks ago, has been a daily comfort to me and has strengthened me in my work in the ministry. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate it, and I am happy that you felt impressed to write to me. What a drawing together there is of those of like precious faith, and how sweet are the hands of love that bind together in spiritual bonds those who are in Christ Jesus. It was nice of you to take the time to write me as you did. I have happy memories of the Salisbury Association, and of the evening I spoke at the Primitive Baptist Home. Besides the Moderator, Elder H. C. Ker, Elder Walker and I were the only ministers present, and I felt mightily the sense of responsibility that the occasion thrust upon me, but the Lord gave me

liberty of utterance and I was able to speak that which I hope was of comfort to those hungering for gospel food. I think we had a very pleasant Association.

I may say that your letter was of cheer to me in more ways than one. I had felt somehow that my speaking at the Home that evening was more of a failure than a success, that I did not present my subject in a clear and interesting manner, and left many confused in mind as to what I was trying to say. Reading your letter made me think that my efforts were not in vain, but were blessed of the Lord to give comfort to those to whom it was sent. You spoke about the book of Joshua in which was my text about the upper and nether springs given unto Achsah, the wife of Othniel. It seemed to me a comforting thought that as Achsah means "anklet" it signifies the walk. It is the church that walks not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. A woman is sometimes used in Scripture to represent the church of God as the wife or bride of Christ, and in this case in the fifteenth chapter of Joshua, Achsah is a beautiful type of the church. Othniel was to have Achsah for wife if he took the city of Kirkjath-sepher, which was held by three Canaanitish men, which represent the works of the flesh, or Satan in the flesh through sin. Othniel means "lion of God," and typifies Jesus Christ, who is the lion of the tribe of Judah, who has prevailed by the death of the cross against Satan and all the works of Satan in the flesh of the people of God. As Jesus, by his stainless birth and holy life and ignominious death and glorious resurrection and ascension, overcame Satan, death, hell and the grave and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, the church is presented before the throne of God in Christ as holy and without blame, and Jesus receives the church espoused to him as a chaste virgin. Othniel took the city of Kirjath-sepher and was given Achsah for wife. Jesus died for his bride, the church, and Othniel would have given his life for Achsah. After Achsah became the bride of Othniel, who was of the tribe of Judah, she was blessed with upper and nether springs of water. She had already been given a field, but no springs of water were in it. These two springs, an upper and a lower one, were given to Achsah after the city was taken. In our espousal to Christ we are given the upper and the nether springs spiritually. There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one, the Bible tells us. Also it says that there are three that bear record in earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and these three agree in one. In nature the nether springs depend upon the upper. So in a spiritual sense the work of the Spirit, the water and the blood in earth depend upon, and are connected with the Father, the Word, or Son, and the Holy Ghost in heaven. The Father predestinated and chose a bride in Christ. Christ as God manifest in the flesh on earth redeemed his bride, the church, by his death on the cross, and then the Holy Ghost, or Comforter, or

Holy Spirit, comes into the poor sinner's heart and condemns him, making him of a broken heart and a contrite spirit, teaches him of Jesus, shows him the heavenly inheritance and gives him a new birth. When Christ was crucified a Roman spear was thrust into his side and blood and water came out bearing witness. The blood is for atonement and the water for cleansing, as regards their typical significance. We need to be cleansed daily from daily sin. By one offering Jesus perfected his people forever, but the water of the word needs to be applied to our hearts and consciences daily as we feel condemned in the flesh, and thus witness to the appearing of Jesus. The work of the Spirit, the water and the blood are connected with the cross on earth, and Christ was God manifest in the flesh to reconcile his people unto God. So the spiritual nether springs depend upon and are connected with the Trinity in heaven, the upper springs. So the church receives the blessing of these upper and nether springs, being a joint-heir with Christ, so that all that Christ has in heaven is shared in eternity with his bride. And the church on earth has spiritual blessings in her pilgrimage here, having the earnest of that incorruptible inheritance already, the blessed guidance and instruction of the Holy Spirit in the revelation of Jesus. We have natural blessings here as a people of God, and we have those that are spiritual, too. Through the work of the Spirit, the water and the blood we are saved with an eternal salvation, and this salvation was planned by the Trinity, the Father, the eternal Word and the Holy Ghost in heaven before the world was made. Christ is the eternal Word. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. So there is a beautiful connection, or relationship, between the work of the Trinity in heaven and the work of the Spirit, the water and the blood in earth. Those who have Christ have all things and so receive the upper and nether springs. No life would exist in a field without water. So spiritually God's children need the upper and nether springs, and as a result of the work of Christ receive them. I feel now that I have not made myself as clear as I wished on this same subject that I referred to, or took, that night at the Home. I have written to you informally, and not for publication, as I wanted to emphasize some points that I touched upon in my discourse at the Home.

The subject of the cities of refuge is always very appealing to me. Christ and the church cannot be separated, and all these six cities of refuge set forth the work of Christ in the church. Having sinned unwittingly in the fall of Adam, the quickened sinner flees to Jesus and finds a refuge in him and in the church. The one who had slain any one unwittingly or accidentally and had fled to the city of refuge was safe in the city until the death of the high priest, then he could leave the city and go to his home as he might please. Through the death of Jesus, who is our great High Priest, we have freedom from the law and Satan in this world as

we go in and out about our occupations, so far as eternal salvation is secured. Yes. you seemed to have grasped the subjects that I presented in a manner that is very comforting to me. It is a sweet thought to feel that one has comforted a child of God in speaking.

I enjoyed very much the night I spent at the home of sister Mellott. I hope that if you have never united with the visible church you will be led by the Spirit of God to do so. It seems to me that you have experienced the things that denote a work of grace in your heart. The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, and cannot know them as you do, and bear evidence in your appreciated letter to me, and the carnal mind is enmity against the law of God, so that they who are in the flesh cannot please God. Therefore, to understand the things of the Spirit of God, one must be born of the Spirit of God. I am sure that this will comfort you.

The natural man is a type of the Sun of righteousness, Christ Jesus. As all life in this world depends naturally upon the sun and its beams of light in nature, so in a spiritual sense all light comes from Jesus, and is necessary for the children of God. Sometimes a cloud hides the face of the sun in nature, and sometimes in grace a cloud of trouble hides for a time the face of the Sun of righteousness. Light from the sun in the natural sky shines through drops of water after a storm and forms the rainbow. So, after one feels in the soul the storms of the wrath of God because of sin, the light of the Sun of righteousness shines and he feels peace after trial and sorrow, even the peace of God that passeth all understanding.

My wife could not attend the Salisbury Association with me, but she enjoyed your letter, too, and would like to meet you. She feels that you could not write so expessively without you had tasted that the Lord is gracious, and joins me in greetings of christian love and hope in the mercy of Him who never makes a mistake.

With every good wish, I am yours in hope of immortality,

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

[THE foregoing letter was written to sister Mary H. Davis, of Salisbury, Maryland, who has since been baptized, and who had a good letter in the November, 1938, SIGNS, relating her exercise of mind.—R. L. D.]

CRAWFORD, Oklahoma.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—The SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been coming to my box in the name of Elder G. W. Gaines, which is incorrect. My name is G. W. Goin. I have never subscribed for this paper. Some friend of mine, I know not who, has had it sent to me. I regret to say that you will have to drop my name from your list, although I fully indorse the doctrine set forth by the SIGNS.

I was born January 11th, 1856, and I have spent fifty-two years of my life in the ministry. I have impoverished myself and family in giving my service to the people, and have become almost a total invalid.

I wish to give you a few lines to show

you where I stand. 2 Peter i. 3, "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness." All temporal blessings spring from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, so we have our temporal and spiritual blessings all as a gift of God. The world and all that is in it, both great and small, belong strictly to God, and he upholds, directs and disposes of all things, with no one to help and with no one to hinder. The things that are not yet done were declared from ancient times and must come to pass in the order they were declared, without any liability or possibility of a failure. This stands or falls. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."—Isaiah xiv. 24. "Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded, and they were created. He hath also stablished them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass. Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps: fire and hail; snow, and vapors; stormy wind fulfilling his word."—Psalms cxlviii. 4-8. Let it suffice to say that all things must function as God hath decreed. Every event of time, though slight it may be, was foreseen and its use was assigned. Salvation was an act of eternity, and none but God to dictate the election. When a choice was made there was a rejection, and it was just as indelibly fixed one way as the other, and whatsoever he doeth shall be forever; no names to be added in the book of life, and none taken from it. All the sins of his elect people were laid upon Jesus and all the grace that accompanies their salvation was given them in Christ before the world began. Jesus left the shining courts above and came to this world bearing the sins of this elect people and put them all away by the sacrifice of himself, when he cried on the cross with such a lamentable voice that it shook the whole earth, and said, "It is finished." He went down for their offenses and arose for their justification.

Long live the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

G. W. GOIN.

WALNUT CREEK, California.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have filled in the subscription blank and am sending along with it a money order for subscription past due. I feel thankful I can do so at this time, and surely appreciate from the depths of my heart your kindness to and thoughtfulness for me. I do not deserve it, but praise the good Lord for it all, who has ordered all things well. There is none other like him. He declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. He has spoken it, purposed it and will bring it to pass, unfolding every hour for his own purpose and glory. I have been sick a great deal. The good Lord knows why, and that is sufficient. Oh may I ever be made humble and content with my lot. I am so much of my time cast down, but I hope not destroyed, and my heart al-

most leaves its resting-place with longing to meet with the dear ones in the Lord. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES is a great comfort to me. I am so unworthy, and feel less than the least of all saints, but a few times I have been made to feel to say that he is mine, my all in all.

Just recently I enjoyed the most wonderful, sweet visit here in my home with Elder J. L. Sanders and his lovely family, a visit which I shall ever cherish in my heart. Everything works for good to them that love the Lord. May the good Lord, who is the author and finisher of our faith, in his tender mercy keep and bless the editors and publisher of this dear paper.

A little one in the Lord, if one at all,
(MRS.) MABEL LINDSEY.

PENNINGTON, New Jersey.

DEAR EDITORS:—Once more it is time to renew my subscription to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have read it as long as I can remember. Even as a child there seemed to be about that paper a something I wanted to understand. I would see my dear old grandparents, and my mother, too, read the paper, and see the tears run down their cheeks at times, and thought when I get older I will understand, and I will be just like grandmother. But I had to wait the Lord's time. I groped along for forty years before I was made to come to the church, and then what a peace. No one can know but those who have passed through it. When my husband died, over two years ago, I felt as though I must have the paper come on in his name, although I am making my home with my aunt, Mrs. C. Howard Sked, and she takes it, too, We are both asking you to send it to us for another year. I am sending my check for four dollars, to cover both subscriptions.
(MRS.) DAVID M. VOORHEES.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., Dec. 8, 1938.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending this to notify all lovers of the truth that Bethel Church of Regular Old School Baptists of the faith of Jesus Christ our Lord has been revived, whereas it went down by reason of the death and removal of its members. We met at the home of Mrs. R. G. Brown, and after choosing Elder A. D. Hughett Moderator and Davis Burch Clerk proceeded by singing "'Tis a point I long to know." Then we organized by choosing Davis Burch Moderator and Elizabeth Withers Clerk, and we chose the first Sunday in each month as our regular meeting day, and the Saturday before. We want any one who is waiting for the second coming of our Lord Jesus with an eager longing to meet with us, especially ministering brethren.
DAVIS BURCH.

FOREST GROVE, Oregon.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel I must send for this paper that my husband, Elder J. H. Beaman, did so much enjoy, also my parents, and I myself since receiving a hope of eternal life, a hope given me years ago. It is forty-four years since husband and I united with the Predestinarian Baptist Church in Smith County, Kansas.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
JEMIMA A. BEAMAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N Y., JANUARY, 1939.

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NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

THE year hand on the clock of time reminds us that we should once more appear before our readers in the form of a New Year's Greeting.

As we stand upon the line which divides the old from the new, the past from the future, many of us, especially those who have reached middle age or more, will be inclined to look back over the way we have come and long for the months that are passed, for the days when the candle of the Lord shone round about us, and when by his light we walked through darkness, but now, like Jacob of old, we go halting and limping all our days. To all such, this world holds no real charm, and we sincerely hope as old age creeps upon us and we pass down the slopes of time that we will prove that God is our refuge, our hiding-place from the tempest and the storm and a very present help in trouble. May he grant us strength equal to our day and cause us to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, that we should look only unto him who is the author and finisher of our faith, for it is by and through him alone that we shall finally be brought forth more than conquerors over all our foes.

The past year brought to some of our dear kindred in Christ the deepest sorrow they have ever known, and some have been sorely tried and severely afflicted, while others have been made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. This life is composed of both the bitter and the sweet. One thing is set over against another—the day of adversity against the day of prosperity. How reassuring it is to be told by the great apostle that "The sufferings of this present time are not to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."—Rom. viii. 18. It is, indeed, wonderful that we have the Scripture to sustain and encourage us. The same apostle just quoted said, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."—Rom. xv. 4.

Some very unusual and outstanding world history was made in 1938. A great catastrophe was narrowly averted. As it was, a terrific price was paid

for peace. If it proves to be of a lasting and enduring nature it will have been none too great, but, frankly, we confess our skepticism. We fear the worst is yet to come. A ravenous beast will continue to seek its prey. The Lord will, no doubt, in due time, avenge his people for the wrongs of their persecutors. We like to think, even here, though, that those who rule and are in authority over the things of this world are in subjection to Him who doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. Solomon said, "The king's heart is in the hand [power] of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will."—Prov. xxi. 1. How comforting the thought that our God neither slumbers nor sleeps, that he is God over all, ever doing his pleasure in all things. When we are made to realize this, we can truly say, "The Lord is in his holy temple: let all the world keep silence before him."—Hab. ii. 20. Then we can commit our life and our all into his care and keeping, being assured that all things will be made to redound to the ultimate glory of our exalted King. Whatever may be the outcome of negotiations between nations, and time alone will tell, it occurs to us that Old Baptists might do well to take a leaf out of their book by getting together and discussing their differences, where there are such, for the purpose of better understanding each other. We are not referring here to the different factions, but rather to individuals. It would be useless, in our opinion, to try to reconcile some of the various factions and the price which would have to be paid for peace would be too great. It would mean subordinating important and fundamental points of doctrine to such an extent that the true church would lose its identity. Such a thing cannot even be considered by God's faithful followers. We repeat that what we have in mind are individuals—good, sound and lovely brethren. We know of some who have actually been excluded from the church, and the brotherly love and fellowship of others have been greatly strained, because of strong wills and a lack of understanding as to what their differences really were. Much of the trouble in the world to-day is due to misunderstanding. If men and brethren would only put their heads together and give reason an opportunity to function, they would often find that they are striving for the same objectives and their problems would be solved. Cooperation is most effective in accomplishing the desired results. Here, again, how fortunate we are that we have the Scriptures to guide and instruct us. A most excellent rule is laid down in Matthew xviii. 15-17, where it is said, "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

This rule is too frequently neglected. If brethren would only live up to this standard many heartaches and much distress would be avoided. We are glad to report that on the whole, however, peace and prosperity prevail in Zion, so far as we are able to learn. There is much evidence of God's manifested love for his people in supplying their needs and preserving them from the evil of this world. We have been informed of many additions to the church militant in certain parts of the country, and for this we give thanks.

We are deeply indebted to many of our readers for their encouragement during the past year. There is before us a letter from a brother, eighty-six years of age, who says he has been reading the SIGNS for sixty-six years, and that its "sweetness and comfort increases with the years." We have received other assurances from various quarters to the effect that the SIGNS was never more enjoyed than it has been during the past few years. We are honestly striving to give our readers a clean and wholesome paper, and it is gratifying, to say the least, to know that we are succeeding in pleasing such a large number of our subscribers. By no means would we appropriate all of the credit to ourself, for a large share rightfully belongs to our associates, our publisher and our contributors. Several of our beloved brethren have contributed liberally and ably to our columns. They have also been especially considerate of our publisher, whose eyesight is still impaired, by having their articles typed. This helps a great deal. Some few articles have been withheld from publication for the reason that it has been next to impossible for our publisher to decipher them, and we have not had the time to type them for him. Again we would suggest the use of white paper, with either very dark pencil preferably ink to be used, the writing to be only on one side of the paper, where the article is intended for publication. Some other ways in which our readers can assist us are (1) Secure new subscribers. The SIGNS should visit the home of every real Old School Baptist. (2) Renew their own subscriptions as soon as possible. The publisher must have funds to continue in business. (3) Notify the publisher promptly of any subscriptions which should be discontinued, because of death or otherwise; this will save him considerable expense. Our ministering brethren particularly can be helpful along these lines. We would like to ask those of our ministering brethren who have not written for the paper, to please do so, and those who have, to continue their contributions. At the same time kindly be on the alert for good experimental letters which they themselves may receive, or that they know about, and send them to the SIGNS for publication. The Lord's people are often blest to set forth those things which are precious to them that believe, and we hope our brethren and sisters in general will not withhold more than is meet. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts," and some poor, famishing soul

will often be refreshed by those who are made to bemoan their own leanness and who are wondering if there can be any like what they feel themselves to be. There are many wayworn and weary travelers who are not privileged to visit among the brethren often and who seldom hear preaching, who are reached through our family paper. Therefore, we say again to our readers, help us make the SIGNS a comfort to the poor and needy. Nothing is impossible with God; he is able to fashion and fill an earthen vessel and cause it to show forth the glory of his wondrous grace.

In conclusion, we pray God's remembrance of Zion throughout the present year, that she may enjoy that peace which only he can give, and that he will continue to add to the visible church such as only he will have to be saved, doctrinally, here in this time state, for we are entirely dependent upon him to both build the house and keep the city. "Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust; and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies."—Psalms xl. 4.

R. L. D.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS."

WE will furnish extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder H. C. Ker.)

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Indiantown Church, at Powellville, Maryland, October 19th and 20th, 1938, sends greetings to the associations and other meetings with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have decided for our annual Circular Letter the subject of Duties of Pastors, Deacons and Clerks. This subject is rather unusual, but we hope not out of place. Usually doctrinal subjects are used in writing Circular Letters, though other matters are at times equally important. It is good to be stirred up concerning duty, and it can do no one harm to be reminded.

The Pastor occupies the highest office in the church, and many duties befall his life as a faithful Pastor. First, to take the oversight of the flock for its good always means a life of sacrifice, a giving up of everything, or, in other words, the church should be the first consideration of all things in his life. No man can be a true and faithful Pastor who would let worldly considerations come between him and the church, or churches, of which he is Pastor. "Do nothing by partiality," is one of the important duties of a Pastor's life. In the eyes of God there is no difference in the children of his kingdom. The blood of Christ, the gift of God, was shed for the pauper the same as for the rich, and for a subject of a kingdom as much as for

the king of the kingdom. Therefore, a Pastor should show no difference between his members in any way. If a rich man needs reproof, reprove him as he would a poor man. A fine home equipped with every convenience and comfort is luring, but the home of the poor is often more happy, and the joy given the destitute by a visit from the Pastor is often much greater than that of the luxurious home. It is the duty of the Pastor to advise any of his members when he knows they are slipping from the doctrine or order of the house, and to be ready to serve at all times, regardless of circumstances and conditions. It is very pleasant to sit in a well heated house when the storm rages without, but if the Pastor is needed for a funeral, or other service, it is his duty to forsake comfort for the benefit of those of whom he is Pastor. It is the duty of the Pastor to be present at every meeting of the church, regardless of the nature of the meeting, to advise and cooperate in all legitimate matters, thus acquainting himself with matters concerning the church. He should always remember, however, that he is a servant, not a lord.

Deacons should take the oversight of the ordinances of the church, to see that the Lord's Supper is attended to at regular intervals, and that everything is in readiness for such occasions. When a candidate is to be baptized it is their duty to see that all arrangements are made beforehand. It is their duty also to take the general oversight of the church property, to see that all things are kept in proper order and that the sexton performs his duties faithfully. It is their duty to see after the welfare of the Pastor, that he should not be neglected in any way. It is also the duty of deacons to investigate the needs of the poor of the church and report same to the church. Deacons should be courteous and attentive to members of the congregation, especially strangers.

Clerks are supposed to have possession of the church book, or books, and record all yearly meetings, baptisms, exclusions, deaths and all business meetings. Other than this, a clerk has no authority whatsoever, excepted as directed by the church. A clerk in any worldly office has his or her work laid out, and is to do whatever directed to do, and is always subject to his or her superiors. So in the church the clerk is to do as directed by the church. If letters are received by the clerk for the church, such letters are the property of the church, hence the clerk has nothing to do with them but to read them to the church, and if the church deems a reply necessary, the clerk is directed by the church to write, and such letters should always be submitted to the church before being forwarded, and a copy of all such letters should be kept with the records of the church. If a special meeting is necessary at any time, it is the business of the pastor and deacons to direct the clerk to call such meeting by notifying each member. It is never the privilege of the clerk without first being directed. There seems to be a tendency, in some places, to feel that the clerk holds a very important office,

and is looked up to by the church, instead of the clerk looking up to and being subject entirely to the church. The offices in the church are, first, Pastors; second, Deacons; and third, Clerks. A clerk never has the authority to allow privileges of any one in or to the church property, nor has a clerk the right to invite a Minister, or Ministers, to fill appointments in a church of which he or she is a member. It is not the right of clerks to give special invitations to Ministers to attend associations. The invitation published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES includes all Ministers of our faith and order. One special objection to such invitations is that those who do not receive special invitations feel a delicacy in attending such meetings.

Pastors, Deacons and Clerks should never exceed their authority, but always be subject to the church, ever remembering they are servants.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
JOHN H. TRUITT, Clerk.
GEORGE F. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.
HAROLD M. BENNETT, 2nd Ass't Clk.

(Written by brother Willard Garton.)

The Elders and Messengers composing the First Regular Old School Baptist Association called Kansas, unto the churches composing our body, and to the saints scattered abroad, Greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—One more year has passed and we are blessed with the high and happy privilege of meeting in an associate capacity with our brethren and sisters, whom we esteem highly for the truth's sake, and whom it has pleased the Lord to send once more in our midst. It gives us courage to know we are not alone in the doctrine that is so much spoken against, for we are at times made to feel like Elijah of old: "For the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword: and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." But our Association, we hope, has been granted the assurance given to Elijah: "Yet I have left me [says the Lord] seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him."—I Kings xix. 10, 18. In such manifestation we are raised far above earthly things and enabled to feast upon that heavenly bread whereof if a man eat he shall not die. Unless we are in the spirit we cannot eat of this bread. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." We need not go outside of the visible church to find the natural man, for he is ever near us, continually warring against the Spirit. If, however, the sinner were born again where would be the warfare? There would be none, for the flesh does not war against itself, neither does spirit war against spirit. A house divided against itself cannot stand. The natural man is made to bow to the will of the spiritual; not willingly, but by constraint. Then, brethren, we are made to say, like

Paul, "For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I." Here we have the flesh lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh. Paul says, It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. All this is in accordance with our experience. How could Paul say this if the old man were born again? How could he cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But in the resurrection the old man will be changed, and not until then. Let us then trust Him who is ever able to keep us from every evil and hateful way and do more for us and better by us than we are able to ask or are in any way worthy to receive.

L. L. SCHENCK, Mod.
MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church, Wednesday and Thursday, October 19th and 20th, 1938.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is through the kind providence of God that we have been permitted to meet again in another session as an association. We have been blessed in meeting with many brethren, sisters and friends who have been present, for which we hope we are thankful. We can truly say it has been good to be here. Our meeting we hope has been blessed of the Lord, as peace and harmony have prevailed throughout this meeting. Your ministering brethren have come to us preaching the power and glory of God. They have not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God, whereby we have been greatly comforted and strengthened.

The time and place of our next Association will be announced later.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
JOHN H. TRUITT, Clerk.
GEORGE F. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.
HAROLD M. BENNETT, 2nd Ass't Clk.

The Pocatalico Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, to the several associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greetings.

DEAR SAINTS OF THE LIVING GOD:—Through the abounding mercy of our gracious heavenly Father we have been spared to greet again your messengers as they come to us laden with the good things of that heavenly kingdom. This has indeed been a refreshing season, a feast of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined. May the Lord direct your messengers into our midst again in the years that may come. May his blessings continue to prosper Zion for his blessed and holy name's sake. Amen.

J. C. HAMMOND, Mod.
H. J. BIRD, Clerk.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE date opposite your name on the little pink slip on which your address is printed denotes the time your subscription expires. Dec 37 means it expired December, 1937; June 38 that it expired June, 1938; Dec 38 that it expired December, 1938, etc.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

It is with a sad heart that we write of the death of our sister, MRS. FLORA CORTRIGHT TITUS, who was the beloved wife of Romane Titus, and the mother of Floyd and Albert Titus. She was born in Unionville, N. Y., July 12th, 1884, of the parentage of Aaron and Hulda Cortright, and her death occurred on November 7th, 1938, making her stay on earth 54 years and almost 4 months. She and her husband were united in marriage by Elder H. C. Ker, in Middletown, N. Y., October 9th, 1906. After their marriage they went to Paterson, N. J., to live, where she resided with her husband until her death. She was, indeed, a true helpmate and an excellent mother, and her worth will long be cherished by her loved ones who are left behind. Both of her sons are married and have homes of their own. Her companion, therefore, will miss her most of all. May the Lord comfort and sustain them, according to his own will and purpose in Christ Jesus before the world was. Sister Titus was for many years a faithful member of the Middletown and Wallkill Church, at Middletown, N. Y. We regret that we cannot state definitely at this time just when she did unite with the church, but we feel confident in saying the church never had a more faithful member or one who enjoyed to a greater extent assembling with the saints than she. She had helped plan most enthusiastically an all-day meeting at New Vernon, N. Y., in June, 1937, but a few days before was stricken down and was never again able to attend another meeting. This was a great disappointment to her. Her illness lasted for about seventeen months, and toward the last her condition became most pitiful. The writer visited her from time to time, and on different occasions her countenance would light up as we talked of Jesus and his great love to poor sinners. On one of our most recent visits she related an experience which meant a great deal to her. She said that as she lay upon her bed pondering her condition and wondering why she could not get well, a voice as audible as if a man had been standing in the room spake and said, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."—Heb. xii. 6. And, also, Romans viii. 18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." These Scriptures were of inexpressible comfort to her. We used them in the funeral services; the first at her late home in Paterson, N. J., in the evening, and the other in a meetinghouse in Unionville, N. Y., the next morning at eleven o'clock, followed by interment in the cemetery at Unionville. Her former pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, said to us, "She was a real Old School Baptist," and with this we heartily agree. She was both Clerk and Trustee of the Middletown and Wallkill Church at the time of her death and will be greatly missed by her brethren and friends. None will miss her more than the writer, for her regularity in attendance at meetings and the encouragement she gave him in various ways will long be remembered. It is difficult to understand why the Lord would remove such an one while in the prime of life as she seemed to be, especially in this day and time when there are so few who appear to love and serve the Lord as she did, but it is not for us to question the doings of our Lord. All we can say is, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."—Job i. 21.

ALSO,

MRS. VIRGINIA WALLINGFORD DOLSON (better known as Nettie Dolson). It becomes our sad duty to record the passing of our dear sister in Christ, at The Primitive Baptist Home, in Salisbury, Maryland, November 8th, 1938. We have been unable to obtain exact dates regarding the most important events in her life, but according to the best information at hand she was born in Virginia September 18th, 1860. She was married to Chauncey C. Dolson in New York City about fifty-one years ago. They went out in Illinois to live for about two years, and then moved to Warwick, N. Y., where they resided until the death of her husband, about eighteen years ago. Following his death she remained in Warwick for awhile, and then went to live for a time with her adopted son and his wife, in Buffalo, N. Y. She later returned to Warwick, where she resided until going to the Primitive Baptist Home, in 1929, where she spent the remainder of her life, about nine and one-half years. She was the second one to become a Resident in the Home, and often expressed great satisfaction over her surroundings and associates. Practically the last letter the writer received from her was composed largely of her gratitude to God for having directed her steps to the Home, of which she spoke in the highest terms of praise and thankfulness. Besides her adopted son, Charles Stanley Dolson, to whom she was much endeared, and who was devoted to her, she leaves a host of friends and brethren. Sister Nettie gave herself freely to doing for others as long as her strength permitted and she will long be remembered for her kindness in ministering to others, not the least among whom were her brethren in Christ. She united with the Warwick Old School Baptist Church about forty-six years ago, and was baptized by Elder William L. Beebe. She was a genuine Old School Baptist, and remained a faithful member of the Warwick Church until her death. She believed firmly in the absolute sovereignty of God over all things, worlds, principalities and powers, both visible and invisible, and nothing was dearer to her heart than to assemble with the saints and hear the truth preached in demonstration of the Spirit and with power from on high.

Several years before she died, sister Nettie wrote us requesting, should we survive her, that we conduct her funeral, and to use on the occasion hymns 68 and 1265 of the Beebe collection, and the nineteenth verse of the second chapter of second Timothy as a text, which reads as follows: "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." We felt blest of the Lord to preach the truth she so much loved to a large group of loved ones and friends who gathered in the Warwick Old School Baptist meetinghouse, after which interment was made in the cemetery in Warwick, N. Y.

While the connections of our text indicate there were in those days, as there doubtless are to-day, those who were given to striving about words to no profit, and to the use of profane and vain babblings, and who concerning the truth erred, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." How glad we are that the foundation of God, or the salvation of his people, does not stand upon poor, weak, mortal flesh; not even upon our knowledge that we are the Lord's, but that the seal which binds and makes everlastingly certain, for all time to come, the

salvation in eternal glory of every elect vessel of mercy is, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." This disposes of all conditions and removes all possibility of any of the Lord's ever being lost. In conclusion, let us join with the apostle in saying, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

R. L. D.

KATHERINE REBECCA (DOYLE) FORBES was born February 12th, 1840, in Halifax County, North Carolina, where she grew to womanhood. She was married to Robert L. Forbes Febru- 12th, 1867, in Hardiman County, Tennessee. To this union six children were born, three of whom survive: Mrs. Marion Cooper, Miss Sadie Forbes and Mrs. Grace Gleason. Sister Forbes departed this life November 25th, 1938, being in her ninety-ninth year. She made her home with her daughter, Mrs. Grace Gleason, at Merriam, Kansas (a suburb of Kansas City), where she had the very best that loving hands and money could provide. Although sister Forbes had been weak in body for several years, her mind was unusually clear on scriptural matters, and she liked nothing better than discussing the reason for her hope in the mercies of God, and to have her brethren and friends come in and talk with her. Sister Forbes joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Altoona, Kansas, in 1882, and was baptized by the late Elder J. F. Sweeney. Later when the church at Mount Vernon, in Kansas City, Missouri, was organized, she was one of the charter members, at which place she had her membership when called from this mortal world. Sister Forbes had an unusual mind, not only on scriptural subjects, but on natural things as well, and her counsel was sought by both old and young. She was a strong force in building up the membership of Mount Vernon Church, and we truly feel that we have lost a wonderful mother in Israel.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder L. H. Clevenger, in Kansas City, Missouri, before a large congregation of relatives and friends.

FLOYD BURK.

OUR beloved father, O. M. (BUD) CHESTER, departed this life at his home, near Brewers, Calloway County, Kentucky, while at the breakfast table, December 1st, 1938. Had father lived until the coming February 7th he would have reached his eighty-third year. Father had been in delicate health for several years. Our dear mother preceded him in death nearly two years. Our dear father was the eldest son of William A. and Martha Chester, who were pioneers of Calloway County, Kentucky. Father was second oldest of twelve children. Three sisters and two brothers preceded him in death. Elder J. C. Chester, a younger brother, departed this life two years ago. Father, at the age of twenty-four years, claimed Mary Emmalon Patten as a bride, on December 11th, 1879. To this union were given five children. The eldest daughter passed away in 1916. The second daughter died in infancy. The surviving are two sons, William T. Chester, of Murray, Ky., and Coy Chester, who resided with our father near Brewers, Ky., since mother's death; one daughter, Mrs. Lola Smith, of Paducah, Ky. Father and mother purchased a farm adjoining his father's and resided there the remainder of their lives, which was fifty-nine years. Our dear father professed a hope in the Lord and united with the Old School Primitive Baptist Soldier Creek Church on Saturday before the second Sunday in May, 1881,

and was baptized the following day by Elder J. M. Perkins. A few years later father was ordained as Deacon, and served the church the remainder of his life. Father's and mother's home was a home to the Primitive Baptists. I can look back to when I was only a boy, and well remember how they enjoyed having the brethren and sisters in their home during the associations and other meetings. On September 15th, 1914, when I offered myself to the church, and when I was received, this dear father took my hand, and with his head on my shoulder uttered precious and sweet words to me. I feel to thank and praise God for these godly parents. Oh if I could only follow my father's christian walk. He was so kind and gentle, a man of few words, fighting to do as he deemed best. Father also leaves two devoted daughters-in-law, a son-in-law, nine grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

The funeral was conducted the following day by his pastor, Elder J. T. Henderson, in the Soldier Creek meeting-house. Burial was in the church cemetery. Pall-bearers were six nephews.

A sorrowful son,

WILLIAM T. CHESTER.

T. J. MONTGOMERY, son of Harvey and Sally Montgomery, was born November 8th, 1864, and died March 9th, 1938, and at the time of his death was 73 years, 4 months and 1 day old. Brother Montgomery was twice married, his first wife being Alice Crews, whom he married fifty years ago. Immediately after his marriage he moved to Oklahoma, where several children were born, some of them dying in infancy. Those surviving are Worthy, James, Mrs. Anna Gates and Grace, all of Oklahoma; also several grandchildren. His first wife died about eleven years ago. She was not a member of the church, but was a firm believer in the doctrine of God our Savior. In December, 1937, brother Montgomery returned to Illinois and was married to Mrs. Polly Pryor, who with the children and grandchildren are left to mourn his death. His sons and daughters, all of Oklahoma, were at his bedside at the time of his death. Tom Montgomery, as he was best known, professed a hope in Christ at an early age, but felt his unworthiness so much that he did not unite with the church until May, 1937, when he united with the church near New Castle, Oklahoma, and was baptized by Elder W. P. Snider, of Okemah, Oklahoma. I can truthfully say that brother Tom was a firm Baptist. He indorsed the SIGNS OF THE TIMES doctrine, and was a firm believer in the doctrine of God's unlimited predestination, and the final preservation of the saints through grace that was given them in Christ before the world began. He was held in high esteem by all who knew him.

His funeral was held at the Nine Mile Primitive Baptist Church where he used to go when a boy. His name still remains cut in the back of one of the seats, where he cut it when a small boy. Tom was my cousin, but I had not seen him for forty-eight years, until in 1936 when I visited an association in Oklahoma and met him there. Then I went back again in 1937, and he came home with me. Several times when we were talking about the Old Baptists he told me he felt that if it were possible he would just love to take them all in his arms at one time, and it was his request that if we could not get an Old Baptist to preach his funeral that we just put him away without anything being said, so, owing to the funeral being so soon after he died, we could not get an Old Baptist to conduct his funeral, and his request was carried out. May God reconcile us all,

especially his dear wife and children, to the end that our loss is his eternal gain. His body now lies in the old cemetery, near those of his grandparents and many others of his near relatives who were Old Baptists, there to await the summons from on high to arise and reign with Christ forever in that world that hath no end. May God bless all who mourn.

CHARLES M. HARRISS

OLLIE PLUNKETT SWINFORD, the subject of this notice, was born October 22nd, 1867, in Scott County Kentucky, the daughter of Ransom and Catherine Plunkett, and died October 11th, 1938, at the residence of her daughter, Mrs. Gilbert Renaker. She was married to James Russell Swinford fifty years ago. He departed this life in October, 1920. She leaves one daughter, Mrs. Gilbert Renaker, one son, Raymond Swinford, and one half-brother, Joe Plunkett. Mrs. Swinford was a friend to the Old Baptists, and a believer in the doctrine, and loved to visit among the brethren, was a woman of few words, but never had the courage to unite with the church, feeling too unworthy. During her last sickness she suffered much, but bore her trials with patience. The Lord has called her home and we bow in humble submission to the will of him who doeth all things well.

I was called to officiate at her funeral, which was held in the Missionary Baptist meetinghouse, at Cynthiana, Kentucky, October 13th, 1938. Her remains were laid to rest in the Cynthiana Cemetery. May the Lord comfort all who mourn.

ALSO,

BROTHER ZACHARY TAYLOR MARTIN was born June 27th, 1849, and died November 14th, 1938. He is survived by four children: Mrs. Robert Casey and Mrs. Robert West, of Anderson County, Miss Ella Martin, of Louisville, Ky., and Lester Martin, of Frankfort, Ky., one sister, Miss Kate Martin, nineteen grandchildren and fifteen great-grandchildren. He joined the Old School Baptist Church called Salt River, in Anderson County, fifty years ago, and remained solid in the faith he then professed.

I was called to conduct his funeral, which was held near Lawrenceburg, Ky., and tried with the ability the Lord gave me to comfort the congregation with the thought that death is not the end. O Lord, comfort the family. Thy will, O Lord, be done.

Burial was in Salt River Cemetery.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

MRS. TENNESSEE OLEVIA BOAZ, widow of Elder R. H. Boaz, Primitive Baptist minister, was born July 10th, 1849, and departed this life November 20th, 1938, aged 89 years, 4 months and 10 days. She joined the Baptist Church in her early married life, and remained a member until her death. She was the mother of seven children, six of whom survive her. "Aunt Jennie," as she was familiarly known, was indeed a true and devoted companion, a good and loving mother, a kind and helpful friend of all her acquaintances. She was firm, and rejoiced in her hope of eternal life by and through the grace and mercy of God. She was blind the last few years of her life, but bore her affliction with the greatest patience and christian fortitude. She spent a great deal of her time singing songs of praise to God and in talking of his great and sovereign wisdom, power and goodness, and often spoke of the psalm, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want," etc.

After the funeral services, conducted by Elder Wade Perkins, she was laid to

rest beside her companion in the Baoz Chapel Cemetery to await the resurrection of the dead. Eight of her grandchildren were pall-bearers. While it was with sorrow we gave her up, yet we can and must say, The Lord's will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Dear mother, sweet rest to your tired body, and joy to your immortal soul for evermore. Our hope is that we will meet again in heaven eternal.

In sorrow, her son,

L. A. BOAZ.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Sarah I. Rittenhouse, N. J., $3; Mrs. Mary J. Ege, N. J., $3; Mae Thomas, Ill., $10; Woburn Church, Mass., $10; J. K. Buckwalter, Ohio, $1; Ebenezer Church, N. Y., $10; Hulda J. Leonard, N. Y., $1; A friend, Va., $1; Mrs. Ray B. Shortridge, Ill., $2; Dr. Thomas H. McColl, Ontario, $3; Mrs. J. A. Mac Taggart, Ontario, $2; Anson Quint, Maine, $3; Mrs. Mary Duffus, B. C., $3; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $1; Mr. and Mrs. G. A. Dundas, Calif., $1; Mrs. S. E. Brown, Texas, $5; Mrs. Belle Lawrence, Mass., $1; Hannah E. Danks, Calif., $2; Mrs. Joab P. Stout, Ill., $1; J. N. Wageonheizer, N. Y., $1.

MEETINGS.

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IN

NEW YORK CITY

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The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church holds meetings the fourth Sunday of each month at 1026 East Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Meeting begins at 10:30 a. m., dismisses for lunch and reconvenes at 2 o'clock p. m. Meeting days have been changed from the first to the fourth Sunday of each month. No Saturday or night meetings.

BURLIE HALL, Pastor
W. H. CAVE, Ass't Pastor.
(MRS.) H. B. CURLIE, Church Clerk

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

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I feel to recommend this book to our readers.—G. R.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 107. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1939. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PRESERVATION OF THE SAINTS TO GLORY.

(*Concluded from last number.*)

But why multiply Scriptures to prove that which was absolutely proven by the first Scripture quoted in this letter? It says, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." If all things are working for their good, there is nothing left to work for their condemnation. Moreover, if God has called them according to his purpose, given them the Holy Ghost, which has shed abroad his love in their hearts, as is stated in Romans v. 5, they are absolutely safe, for Paul said in Romans xi. 29, "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." God never repents and revokes what he has done in the calling of one whom he has called with a holy calling, nor takes from him his Holy Spirit which he has given him, and with which he has sealed him unto the day of redemption, when he ransoms them from the power of the grave, and redeem them from death. (See Hosea xiii. 14.)

This brings me to the point of noticing the first Scripture to which you cited me, which is Hebrews vi. 4-6, and which reads as follows: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." When rightly understood under the search-light of truth, this is one of the strongest arguments that could possibly be made against the final apostasy of any of those who had been brought to the state, or condition, which those had reached who Paul was condemning. The many things mentioned as that which they were the beneficiaries of, identifies them as the truly

called of God. The first thing he mentions as having been done for them is that they had been enlightened. Peter tells how this enlightening came about. He says, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." This places them among those whom God has called according to his purpose, whom Paul affirms that all things are working for their good. This then proves that Paul was not even entertaining the thought that some of them were liable to fall away and be forever lost, for he had previously affirmed to the saints at Rome that all things work together for good to them who are called according to his purpose. It is absolutely preposterous to argue that a child of God can fall away and be everlastingly lost with all things working together for his good. If all things working together for good to one of God's children cannot prevent him from falling and being everlastingly lost, will some advocate of that theory tell me how all things working together for the salvation of a lost sinner could ever save him from his lost condition? The advocates of that theory are most assuredly advocating the universal damnation of the entire human race. For if *all things working together* for good to them who love God, and who have been called according to his purpose, and have been enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and of the powers of the world, are not able to prevent such characters from being everlastingly lost, then it certainly stands to reason that the same "all things" cannot so work together for good to them who do not love God, and who have not been called according to his purpose, who have never been enlightened, and who have never tasted the havenly gift, and have never been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and who have never tasted of the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, but who are enemies to God by wicked works, and unto every good work reprobates as to save them from everlasting damnation. I repeat, if all things are working together for good to such characters as are described in Romans viii. 28, and who have been so gloriously blessed with heavenly blessings as have those described in Hebrews vi. 4-6, cannot prevent them from falling away and being everlastingly lost, then there is absolutely no hope of any human being ever escaping everlasting damnation. All must know that if all things working together to that end cannot hold the children of God in a state of preservation and prevent them from being everlastingly lost, they cannot so work together as to prevent the ungodly from being everlastingly lost. Hebrews vi. 4-10, is a most wonderful argument against that blasphemous and God-dishonoring theory. Paul is showing what would be the inevitable consequence if one of the characters he therein describes should fall away. The only way such an one could be restored to

repentance would be to crucify the Son of God afresh and put him to an open shame. This, of course, is impossible. Note you, Paul did not even hint that it is possible for such characters to fall away and be lost, but he told them that it is impossible, *if they shall* fall away, to renew them again to repentance. Mark you, he did not say, *When* they shall fall away, but, *If* they shall. The insertion of the doubtful "if" shows he is not admitting the possibility of their falling away, and the way he follows this argument in the next four verses shows he is arguing against the possibility of them falling away and being lost. He says, "For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned." Now let us comment a little on these two verses before quoting what follows them. Paul is comparing man to the earth, or to the ground. Jesus did that in the parable of the sower who went forth to sow, and some seed fell by the wayside, and some on stony ground, and some among thorns, and others fell into good ground. In this parable Jesus shows clearly that the difference in what the land produced was not in the kind of seed that was sown on the land, but the difference was in the land on which the seed was sown. The good ground represents a good man, whose heart has been prepared for the reception of the word of God. For it is said that the sower sowed the word of God. The land which bore thorns was yet in its natural unprepared state, and Paul said in his comparison, That which beareth thorns and briers is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned. Jesus said, "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things."—Matt. xii. 35. And again, Jesus said in Matthew vii. 15-20, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." This certainly settles the matter as to what Paul was teaching in Hebrews vi. 4-10. His statement that "The earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned," shows conclusively that he is comparing one class of the people to good land which has been well prepared to bring forth a copious crop of good fruit under the care and working of him who tends it, while the other class is compared to

land in its native unprepared state, still bearing thorns as a result of the curse which God placed on it because of man's sin in the beginning. God said to Adam, Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee, etc. Paul has shown conclusively that the class whose conduct he represents as thorns and briers are still in their unchanged state, and are bringing forth after their kind, and by their fruits you know who they are. That those who have been made free from sin have their fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For further proof that he was arguing against the idea that God's people can fall away and be finally lost, he says in the next verse, "But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak." Although he has made an argument to show what the result would be if they should fall away from their blessed state, he is persuaded better things of them, and things that accompany salvation. As much as to say, If you shall fall away, it is because you have never been the recipient of the salvation which is in Christ Jesus. For that salvation is never accompanied by a falling away. For he says to those Hebrew brethren, in Hebrews x. 39, "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." As much as to say that those who draw back unto perdition are not of our class. They are evidently of that class where the seed fell among the thorns. But the strongest argument that can be made against a child of God falling away and ceasing to be a child of God and being finally lost, is based on their relationship to God. Peter says, Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. The reason why the children of Adam sin, die and go to corruption, is because they are born of a corruptible seed, and every thing brings forth after its kind. And the reason why God's children cannot sin, cannot die and go to corruption, is because they are born again, not of a corruptible seed, but of an incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. On this universal law is based the declaration of John, in 1 John iii. 9, which says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his [God's] seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." In whatever sense a man is born of God, he is in that sense as pure, as holy and incorruptible and undying as God is. John says in 1 John ii. 29, "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him." And in the seventh verse of the next chapter he says, "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he [God] is righteous." It is folly to argue that one who is born of an incorruptible seed can be corrupted, or that one who cannot sin can sin and fall away and be everlastingly lost.

So we will pass to Galatians v. 4, which says, "Christ is become of no

effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." I shall not enter again into a discussion of the subject as to whether or not one who has been justified by the blood of Christ can fall finally away and be everlastingly lost. I have certainly proven that point beyond any room for a reasonable doubt. Yea, I have superabundantly proven that it is not possible for one who has been justified from his sins by the blood of Christ to be finally lost because of the sins for which Christ died. I will only quote again on that point, Romans v. 8-10. It says, "But God commanded his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconcild to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." To argue that any of the "us" mentioned in the foregoing quotation can finally be lost, the one who does it must flatly deny the statements contained therein. Those who Paul said were fallen from grace were not justified by the blood of Christ, but were claiming to be justified by the law. Paul is making an argument against the idea that a man can be saved by obedience to the law. He tells them in Galatians iii. 10-13, "As many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed *us* from the curse of the law, being made a curse for *us*: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." The men whom Paul said were fallen from grace had not been redeemed from the curse of the law by the death of Christ when he hung on the tree of the cross. Those for whom Christ was crucified, representatively, and in the sight of God, were crucified and died with him. For Paul said to these same brethren, "For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." He then said, "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." The man who through the law is dead to the law can never be condemned by the law. That man is not under the law, but under grace. Therefore Paul said, Sin shall not have dominion over him, because he is not under the law, but under grace, which he says reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. Paul, not only in this epistle, but in all his writings, has argued the everlasting security of the saints. In Colossians iii. 3, 4, he said, "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall

ye also appear with him in glory." If the devil ever drags one of them down to ruin he will have to break in to the eternal God and drag from thence the Lord Jesus Christ and destroy him. Else, when he who is their life shall appear they shall also appear with him in glory. Hence, it follows that none ever fall from grace except such as are still under the law, and under its curse. So then

"If you fall from grace, your case is bad,
You fall from that you never had;
Then pray the Lord to fix your case
So you can never fall from grace."

If this satisfies your mind on this subject, and you think it might be of benefit to others, you can send it to Elder R. Lester Dodson, whose address is 41 Addison Avenue, Rutherford, N. J., for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if he thinks it is worthy of space in the only real Old School Baptist paper now published in the United States of America.

Yours in an humble hope through grace, J. C. SIKES.

SULPHUR BLUFF, Texas.

CLIFTON, New Jersey.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—DEAR FRIEND:—You will no doubt be surprised to receive this from me, but as I was reading some of the back numbers of *Zion's Witness* (which my sister-in-law has kindly let me have to read), I felt that I must forward one of the numbers to you, because of your name being mentioned in one of the God-honoring letters. It made me rejoice that it pleased the Lord to use you to feed his hungry sheep, and therefore felt that you should share in the fruits of your labor, and bless the Lord for this wonderful privilege to feed his flock. For surely, as the Lord gave unto his disciples, and the disciples unto the multitude, and they did eat, even so must the disciples have eaten of the blessed food and received their fill. So when we read where poor hungry pilgrims receive spiritual food, the one who ministers to them shall not be sent away empty. What blessed times are they for the hearer and speaker when it pleases the Lord to open the Scriptures unto them which testify of the ever blessed Redeemer. How their hearts do burn within they as they commune together. One place in particular drew me, where Mr. Dunkley (who, by the way, wrote this letter to the editor of *Zion's Witness*) writes about some of the people traveling as much as eight hundred miles, and himself one hundred and fifty miles, to attend these meetings. Surely there must have been a real spiritual appetite, and my breathings go out to the Lord, Give me this hunger after thee, that I may receive this food that cometh down from heaven. For the promise is, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." How much of this hungering is lacking these days. We see and hear of many traveling great distances for worldly pleasures (or husks) who would not go one mile to receive food for their soul. But alas, such is the desire of the flesh, and I must exclaim, Such was I, and it is only through the grace of God that I differ now, for I find no good thing in myself. When I look at the past, how

blind and ignorant was I in the ways of the Lord, and must humble myself in the dust before him to have him seek me out and have compassion on me.

But enough, for I was forgetting my object in writing to you, in which I also wanted to reply to that lady who, being over eighty years of age, had to testify of her glorious Redeemer, and I must exclaim, Lord, may my end be like hers. The letter herein referred to, you will find on page 271 of the inclosed copy. Please excuse my writing, as I am very poorly of hands. The rheumatism has me so that all my joints have become set and twisted, insomuch that I am not able to get up out of my chair, which I have to be helped into each morning. I have been obliged to keep to my room since the middle of December, 1937, and my condition is not improving, so unless the Lord performs a miricle on me (which he is able to do, bless his name) I may have to spend the rest of my days (in the wilderness) as an invalid. Although having lost mostly all by the depression, and my health, by the will of God, still it has been my unspeakable privilege to be able to thank God for his mercy toward such an one as I, for he has blessed me with a good wife and mother for my children, and we still have our home, and often when in bed I have felt his goodness toward me, in that he has given me a good bed to lie on to ease and rest my aching joints and body, besides the other blessings too numerous to mention, for we have not lacked in anything needful. Being mostly alone, the days at times seem long, but as I am quite fond of reading (that is, of better things), and having a cheery room, with a good view outdoors, I would not desire any better. So you see how good the Lord is to me in all these material things, and what is more, and best of all, it has pleased the Lord to keep me humble at his precious feet, so that in these long months the old man has been kept under, and I have been allowed to be submissive to his sovereign and holy will, and to say, Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me well, but if thy will be otherwise, give me strength to bear my cross, and take not thy presence from me. I can testify of a time, nine years ago, when I was on the mount and was so wonderfully blessed that I could not feel the ground under my feet, raised up, as it were, and filled with the goodness of the Lord, and his love so filled my soul that I had to exclaim, Lord, I cannot bear more, else my flesh will not be able to carry your rich blessings. I was for some weeks favored with his presence, insomuch that it made me unable to attend my daily calling, not being able to think of anything but the spiritual. No matter what the topic would be, it always turned to and ended with heavenly things. But since then I have been obliged to descend from the mount, and the Lord has withdrawn himself, so that I am mostly traveling across this stormy sea of life without my Lod in the boat, but I am persuaded that the Lord will appear at the proper time on the troubled waters, and say, Peace, be still, so that all storms will cease and this frail body may immediately reach the heavenly shore.

Dear friend, I do love to read of the way the Lord leads those who are his, and when I think how the Lord's disciples had to come down off the mount, and although they continued to be with the Lord, yet they could not behold him as when he was transfigured before them. Even so, I feel that although I cannot see him now as I could at that highly favored time, still at times his presence is with me, and he measures all things out for me, knowing what is best, because of my nature, and the devil is such, that it would soon exalt itself instead of the Lord, and it is needful for me to learn what I am apart from the Lord. May the Lord keep me so that I give him all the glory and wonder at his great mercy that he has not cast me in hell.

When I started this letter I had no intention of writing so much, as I am such a poor writer and know so little about spiritual things, and especially to you, who have received a calling to teach others. I do hope that you will not be offended at my being so bold in sending this scribble, but I did want you to see your friend's letter.

Hoping that the Lord's blessing may abundantly rest upon you, I hope to be your friend (and may I add brother?) in the Lord,

ROGER KNIGHT.

[THE foregoing letter was written by a man who we feel has been wonderfully and deeply taught of the Lord. He is only forty-eight years of age; has been afflicted seventeen years, and consulted doctors in various parts of the United States and Canada, only to grow worse. His sister-in-law sent him copies of *Zion's Witness,* published in England, one of which contained a letter written by Mr. John H. Dunkley, of Salem Depot, New Hampshire, in which he referred to meetings conducted by Elder H. C. Ker, at Woburn, Massachusetts, and the writer, at North Berwick, Maine, and the further fact of the writer being the editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Our friend is a building contractor, and did some work for us about twelve years ago. We had some conversation with him which led us to believe that God had wrought a work of grace in his heart, but upon the receipt of the foregoing letter we felt so drawn to him that we then and there determined to visit him the very next day, which we did. We want to share the letter with our readers. We also have a brother of the Warwick (N. Y.) Church who is very similarly afflicted. On a recent visit to him he was telling us that a lady in the neighborhood came in to see him one day, and when he smiled, she asked, How on earth can you smile with such an affliction? He replied by saying that there must be at least one million of diseases in the world, that he only had one and was very happy over the fact that there were nine hundred and ninety-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine which he did not have. When we see such cases it makes us ashamed of ourself that we should murmur or complain at anything, with all of the blessings which we have at hand. May the Lord cause us to appreciate his manifold blessings.—R. L. D.]

MEDFORD, Massachusetts.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—I have had some very pleasant thoughts of late on this Scripture, 1 John iii. 1, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." John was that disciple Jesus loved. He was especially beloved of his Master. Five times in his (John's) own letter he refers to himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved. He was favored, with Peter and James, more than others, at the transfiguration, and again with them he went with Jesus further to his place of agony in the garden, and he leaned on Jesus' breast at the last supper. He wrote of love, and said, Love is of God. This is true, both naturally and spiritually. It is the highest and best attribute of man in nature, and his greatest blessing in Christ. Without the attribute of love every other attribute would be of no avail and the race would become extinct. Love is that attribute which moves the creature to acts of kindness toward his fellow-beings, and makes his own offspring safe in his care, and holds in restraint his base principles, but the love of God shed abroad in the heart is incomparably greater than that given to him in creation. Natural love fails, and is overcome of wrath, resulting in war and general destruction and disorganization, as at present, but the love of God never fails. It does, and always will, triumph. It is because of this love that he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. The manner of this love is wonderful indeed, embracing us even when we were dead in sins, and by it we were redeemed from hell and from the power of Satan, translated into the kingdom of God and have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father, having become the children of God, and joint-heirs with Christ to all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. Oh what a wonderful manner of love it is! It purifies our hearts; it purges our conscience by the blood of Christ from dead works to serve the living God. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." Not merely heirs by bequest or appointment, but heirs because we are sons, born in the house of God. We experience this relationship through the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, and we cry, Abba, Father, with a feeling sense of relation. We worship him, not because the law demands it, but because we love him, and we love him because he first loved us and shed abroad his love in our hearts. We worship him, not in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the spirit. It is this love shed abroad in our hearts that enables us to love one another. God has so purged our conscience by love that we are able to now appreciate God and godliness, so that when we see Jesus manifest in our brethren and sisters love goes out from us to them freely and irresistibly, and so it is with all christian obedience, it is a result of the desire of the heart prompted by love, rather than by the thunderings of law reinforced by fear of punishment. How wonderfully superior this new covenant of love. Well did Paul

say, "Now abideth, faith, hope, charity [love], these three; but the greatest of these is charity [love]." "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God."—1 John iv. 7. And again in verse eleven, "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." It precedes all else except him in whom it eternally dwells, and will remain when all else fails. It pervades the christian character, and will manifest itself in every person who has received it, and like the leaven in the three measures of meal, it transforms our whole soul, body and spirit into that one spiritual lump which is in the likeness of Christ. O my Father in heaven, give me this love and I know that all else is mine. O give me this love, which consecrates, purifies, humbles, yet exalts and glorifies every one who receives it, and will finally transform him into such a high and holy state that he may with fitness, honor and justice enter thy presence in the kingdom prepared for thy children from the foundation of the world. Amen.

(MRS.) BELLE LAWRENCE.

BELLINGHAM, Washington.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Abraham is the father of us all through faith. What shall we say then that Abraham, our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? I speak to those who know the law. That Abraham, who is our father in the faith, hath found that faith is the gift of God. And Abraham was blessed with this gift, therefore he believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness; not his own, but the righteousness of God, which had been imputed unto him without works, for if it had been by works it would have been a debt which he had earned and he could have demanded payment of it. But since faith is a gift of God, and that by grace, to those who are no better by nature than others less fortunate, it makes us humble, because we have nothing to give in return but our love and devotion, and as Jude has told us, we should contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. Now there is a difference between contending earnestly and contending fiercely, for when one's anger is aroused he is not in a mood to learn. The promise that he should be the heir of the world was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith,. For if they which are of the law be heirs faith is made void, and the promise is of none effect. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be of grace, to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, nor the deadness of Sarah's womb: he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving God all the glory, being fully persuaded God was able to do all he had promised, therefore

it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him, but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offenses and was raised for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. I have followed Paul's description of the faith of God's elect, because I could find no words that so nearly gave God all the glory, and I can only add my testimony that I do hope I have access by faith into that grace wherein I stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. As God has formed the earth and all that is in it for his glory, he will not be robbed of his glory, for he is God, and there is none else, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. So the preparation of the heart and the answer of the tongue are of God, and it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God, who showeth mercy. It is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saves us, and if it is not by our righteous acts, it is surely not by our unrighteousness he saves us. It is all of grace, free grace, and that without works; it is because we are his and he has loved us with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness he has drawn us, and he has given us this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

DAVIS BURCH.

SIERRA CITY, California, Sept. 28, 1938.

TO THE EBENEZER CHURCH, NEW YORK CITY—DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—I feel I want to write you a few lines this morning, but seem to have nothing special to write at this time, unless the Lord is pleased to give me a message for you. I am thinking of you often, and wishing I could meet with you Sundays and partake of the spiritual food, which the Lord is pleased to provide for his people. I did much enjoy the article on "Predestination," written by Elder Dodson, in the last issue of the SIGNS. I must believe in it, if I believe the Bible. I can see it all the way through, from cover to cover. I remember one said to me years ago, The Bible only mentions the word "predestination" a few times. I replied, Yes, but it teaches it from beginning to end. But so few seem able to see it, I find. I have found a friend here who can see and understand, and you can imagine how pleased and thankful I am. There are meetings here Monday evenings. She asked me to go with her, which I did once. It saddened me. I told her I did not believe the Lord ever called that man to preach, and that I pitied the people if there were any here that needed spiritual food. I let her have two of my copies of the SIGNS, and she, with her aunt, seemed to enjoy them. Since then they come every Sunday evening and I read to them from

the SIGNS for an hour. She says the writings are so clear to her she can understand the Bible better than she ever did. She has listened to modern preachers, which is not preaching. I believe she has spiritual life, and I am very glad we found each other, which was all of the Lord's predestination, and had to be.

I am still alone in Sierra City, but my son and his wife will soon be coming home for the winter. I hope you are all well, and blessed as a church. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Just a little remnant, but more precious in his sight than a multitude. May God bless you all.

With love and fellowship,

NELLIE ARNOLD.

MCANDREWS, Ky., Nov. 23, 1938.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am writing you this letter to inform you of the death of my dear father and mother, Sam Smith and Rena Smith. My father was taken by death March 4th, 1938. He was seventy-seven years old. My mother was called away one month and three days after the death of my father. She was also seventy-seven years of age. They were both firm believers of the Old School Baptist doctrine. My father was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and had taken it for several years. He told me before his death, that he wanted me to continue the subscription, so I am inclosing a money order for two dollars for a year's subscription.

I would appreciate it very much if you would publish this letter in the SIGNS.

(MRS.) LOUISA KING.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church, Wednesday and Thursday, October 19th and 20th, 1938.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is through the kind providence of God that we have been permitted to meet again in another session as an association. We have been blessed in meeting with many brethren, sisters and friends who have been present, for which we hope we are thankful. We can truly say it has been good to be here. Our meeting we hope has been blessed of the Lord, as peace and harmony have prevailed throughout this meeting. Your ministering brethren have come to us preaching the power and glory of God. They have not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God, whereby we have been greatly comforted and strengthened.

The time and place of our next Association will be announced later.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
JOHN H. TRUITT, Clerk.
GEORGE F. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk.
HAROLD M. BENNETT, 2nd Ass't Clk.

A CORRECTION.

ON page eight of our last issue, the first sentence of the last paragraph, first column, should read, "The natural sun is a type of the Sun of righteousness, Christ Jesus," instead of, "The natural man is a type of the Sun of righteousness, Christ Jesus."

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1939.

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2 TIMOTHY III. 7.

"EVER learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

It has been requested that we give our views on the above Scripture, and while we do not know the reason why we are asked our views, we feel to comply, hoping that God, who is the giver of wisdom, will enable us so to do, for the comfort and edification of his children.

In this chapter Paul prophesies of the last days, that there would be perilous times, "For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." Now we quote the foregoing Scripture as it is given in connection with the professing churches in the last days. Such characters as described therein have always been in the world, the world was full of such, and worse, when Paul wrote his epistle, but for such to be found under a garb of religion. having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof, was a matter of solemn warning of Paul to Timothy and those who should live in the last days. We feel that the last days are upon us and that they are perilous times, deception is on every hand, and the words of our Lord are being fulfilled when he said, "For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect."—Mark xiii. 22. In the days of the apostle such characters were found among the heathen, but such are the present times that all these evil doers practice their seductions under the garb of christians, and in truth they have almost monopolized the name, for do we not see that the truly godly almost fear to be called by that name, while they who can be called legion for numbers would be greatly insulted if they were not recognized as christians of the first rank? These are the evil men and seducers spoken of in verse thirteen, which Paul there says shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. The church is sometimes referred to as a house, as Paul in the pre-

ceding chapter, twentieth verse, says, "But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor." The vessels of gold and silver are vessels to honor, they have passed through the furnace and been refined; these vessels of wood and earth are in their natural state and are vessels to dishonor, which set forth the men spoken of in Jude 4: "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." They creep into houses, Paul says; they creep in unawares, Jude says; and Jude also writes to the saints exhorting them because of these men, that the saints should contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto them. Paul also tells Timothy that if a man purge himself (by contending earnestly for the faith) from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work. (2 Tim. ii. 21.)

We have shown that the house often refers to a church, so does also a woman. Thus there were wise virgins and foolish virgins, so Paul could tell the Corinthians, "For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ," and knowing that the woman was deceived, he continues, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." These seducers were to creep into the house and lead captive silly women, laden with sins. Silly or foolish women set forth the churches in this apostasy of to-day, loaded with sin or error in their departure from and hatred of the truth of the living God. Paul in verse eight compares such men to Jannes and Jambres, who were two of the sorcerers and magicians that withstood Moses when he went before Pharaoh (Exodus vii. 11), mimicing the servants of God, but they could not proceed further, for Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. Their deceptions could not be carried beyond that circumstance in which they contended with a man of truth, so Paul would stir up the godly that they contend earnestly for the faith; in doing so the folly of these men and their seductions shall be manifest unto all as was that of the foolish magicians. Paul counsels Timothy to turn aside from such men; in other words, to have no fellowship with them. The churches, or women, who are led captive by them he calls silly women, laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, and says they are "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." Not satisfied with the simplicity of the gospel of Jesus Christ, they have, after their own lusts, heaped to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall turn to fables. (2 Timothy, fourth chapter.) So they turned away from the truth to believe a lie. This can be said of the churches men-

tioned in the New Testament, one by one, as Paul had declared, they were led away with divers lusts. Thus from the foregoing it will be seen of whom our text is spoken; it is of the foolish churches and their teachers. God's children, it is true, are ever learning, but they learn of Jesus. He is the truth and the things they learn about themselves are true, that they are poor, vile, helpless sinners, not able to take a right step or do any good thing. These, being taught of God, come to the knowledge of the truth, that there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved, and one of the evidences that they love him is that they love to hear the truth preached and Jesus' name exalted. Their delight is to learn of him, and there is no place to them so dear as where he has recorded his name. Yes, they are ever learning of Jesus and his love, yet the half has never been told, yet, as they learn, they prove they have come to Jesus and Jesus has come to them.

But let us return to these who are beguiled; they have been led astray by men. Even in the apostles' day the Galatians were led astray, so Paul cried, "O *foolish* Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth"? Who were these that had bewitched them, but men of perverse minds, who would ~~not~~ bring them back under the works of the law, and so under its curse, for it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." They would turn the Galatians from being justified by faith to the works of the law for justification, and he tells them that before faith came we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore, saith he, the law was our schoolmaster to bring us (in its teaching) unto Christ. So under the law they were ever learning, but after faith is come (and faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God) we are no longer under a schoolmaster, for such have come to the knowledge of the Son of God. There is no such thing as beginning in the Spirit and being made perfect in the flesh and faith presents every man perfect in Christ. Thus there was a tendency among the Galatians in that early day to be drawn under the law, which worried the apostle, for he knew and taught that the law made nothing perfect, and only by faith, the gift of God, could any one come to the knowledge of the truth. We have spoken of the Galatian church as an instance in Paul's day of the evil influence of men creeping in that church to the distress of all who would live godly, but Paul spoke of the last days, therefore we are bound to take this Scripture to ourselves and our own time, and we would pray alway that our God will give us grace that we might be found faithfully preaching the truth as it is in Jesus, standing fast in the faith, defending it against those who have crept in or those many who are without. If there are any of the legalists within, we are to turn away from them, not receiving their testi-

mony nor wishing them Godspeed. Whenever one teaches that there is anything that the creature must do to obtain Christ, or to get a covenant blessing, such an one is trying to establish a condition which shows with all his learning, that he has not come to the knowledge of the truth. Under the power of a God-given faith his children know that the body is dead because of sin, yet strange to tell, these are the only ones who add to that God-given faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For (saith Peter) if these things be in you, and abound, *they make you* that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Such, and such only, come experimentally to the knowledge of the truth. Now the one who is ever learning and never comes to such knowledge is spoken of by Peter in these words: "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." He turns, like a sow, that was washed, to wallow in the mire, and as a dog returneth to his vomit, so the fool returneth to his folly. (Prov. xi. 11.)

In this brief article we have neither space nor time to trace the history of the churches mentioned in the New Testament, or of the apostate church of Rome, who, during the dark ages, sat as a queen, making the nations of the earth drunk with her fornications, or of the churches that sprang from her in the reformation, proving in time that they were daughters of the mother of harlots. We know that at best they were led by man and carried along with them much of the bigotry and error of the mother of harlots. We rather want to dwell upon the last days, which we think are here, bigotry and persecution have decreased, the beast which was like a leopard (quick to pounce upon its victim) whose feet were like the feet of a bear and his mouth as the mouth of a lion (Rev. xiii.) has disappeared, but there has another one appeared out of the earth, and he has two horns like a lamb (more gentle), but he speaks as a dragon. It was this dragon that beguiled Eve through his subtilty, and it is he that deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, they are led captive by the devil at his will, yet such is the day we live in that Satan does not appear as a dragon, if he did, men would not be found in his company. No, it is rather as an angel of light, undermining by his subtilty the declared word of our God, making the meritorious life and death of our Lord to be totally unnecessary as a way to heaven. No, saith the devil of the last days, you need not be born again, begin right with a babe and raise it right and when it is old it will not depart from the right way, and when he dies God will have to take him to heaven. The devil, as an angel of light, is very well satisfied with the wonderful progress of a religion that has a form of godliness, yet denies the power. The devil hates electing love, that is why such truth, revealed from heaven, as election (Jacob have I loved, and Esau

have I hated) is denied and hated all the world over to-day. Yes, these are perilous times, times in which universities, schools and the public press are ready to give the people what they want. The word of God is presented as a myth and solemn truth ridiculed to please the crowd. These are days when study, printing and the making of books are colossal, people are ever learning, but with all their learning and all their schooling put together they cannot make one person "wise unto salvation," nor can all their delusions (and the world is full of them to-day) stop one of God's children from coming to the knowledge of the truth. Blessed be God. All the schooling of the Egyptians could not stop Moses at the right time (God's time) from remembering his brethren, even if they were down in the brick yards, "hated of all men." The multitudes on the plains of Babylon with the *wonderful music,* combined with the threat of a fiery furnace, could not bring the three Hebrew children to their knees, for they had a God-given faith that kept them and sustained them even in the furnace. Now we would not put the blame of this on the multitude, but upon their teachers, who, Peter says, are *willingly ignorant.* (2 Peter iii. 5.) They are lovers of their ownselves, etc., pleasing themselves, rather than trying to please God, and they certainly do despise the people of God. Leaving the well of salvation, they have swallowed the flood cast out of the dragon's mouth, which the dragon meant to overtake the elect of God, but the earth helped the woman and swallowed the flood. Now if this was only found in the earth and not in the church to-day, there would not be so much need for alarm, but Paul says,, "Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." God bless us with faith to be strong in the Lord, giving no quarter to error, having no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but reproving them. James Hervey, the man who stood valiantly contending with John Wesley and his free will doctrine, said his father sent him to college for three years, but God sent him to a poor plowman, and Mr. Hervey learned more in one talk with the plowman than in the three years at college. Their wisdom, which is of this world, comes to naught, whenever there is one of God's children entangled by it, the moment God says "*Loose him, and let him go.*" With such a God his servants can boldly say,

"Is there a lamb in all thy fold
I would disdain to feed?
Is there a foe before whose face
I'd fear thy cause to plead?"

G. R.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS."

We will furnish extra copies of the Signs of the Times at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN.

FROM what we have been able to judge from Elder Gilbert Beebe's writings, as well as others who wrote in his day, he was not always in perfect accord, or agreement, with what appeared in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES while he was editor. We have stated on previous occasions, and here repeat, that we do not agree with all we send to the publisher for publication. Some one or more may feel to ask, Why do you do it? Our answer is that we frankly confess we do not know it all, and we wish to show respect and consideration for the views of our brethren, being tolerant of them to the extent of publishing what they send us unless in our opinion it will do despite to some fundamental point of doctrine. We are human and may err in judgment from time to time, but we have confidence in the judgment of our readers as a whole that they will not accept anything that is seriously detrimental to the cause of truth. We would earnestly urge all to carefully and prayerfully compare what they read in the SIGNS with the Bible, and discard everything which does not glorify God.

We have reason to believe that some of our brethren would like us to republish at this time an article on "The Unpardonable Sin," written by Elder Gilbert Beebe under date of February 15th, 1878. While we have not heretofore, for some years at least, devoted much of our space to reprints, we feel that this subject is of sufficient importance to warrant it. We hope that our brethren whose minds have been exercised upon this subject of late may find comfort in what follows and become more firmly established in the truth of this matter by reason of what has appeared in these columns in recent months. Sometimes it is beneficial in the long run to have our pure minds stirred up; it should cause us to search the Scriptures diligently to see whether such things be true. We trust that our further consideration of this matter at this time will prove profitable and contribute to a better understanding of this phase of truth. R. L. D.

(REPLY TO S. KETCHUM AND E. D. VARNES)

IF these words had been addressed to the disciples, in connection with Christ's instructions to them in regard to their relative duties in the discipline of the church, the views of our brethren, to our mind, would have more force. But they were addressed to another generation, a generation of vipers, who had blasphemously charged him with casting out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. The connection shows that they were not addressed to the "chosen generation, royal priesthood and holy nation;" and it does not appear to us that he was speaking to those blasphemous vipers of the laws and ordinances of his spiritual kingdom. We observe, and the brethren take the same view, that our Lord makes a distinction between sins and blasphemy committed against the Son of Man, and the same sins and blasphemy which are against the Holy Ghost. In the eternal Godhead, in which the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are one, we cannot conceive

how a sin can be committed against the Father, the Son or Holy Ghost, and not against all the persons named. But when we consider the mediatorial character and relation of the Son of Man we learn that all the sins of his people are laid upon him, and that he has borne them in his own body on the tree. And he having put away the sins of his people, which embrace all manner of sins and blasphemy, by the sacrifice of himself, he is now risen from the dead and is exalted to be a prince and a Savior, for to give repentance unto Israel, and the forgiveness of sins. As this same Christ, whom the Jews blasphemously charged with casting out devils by the prince of devils, is the only name under heaven given by whom repentance and remission of sins can possibly come to any of the children of men, it seems to us that the declaration was designed to show that the canal Jews were rejecting and blaspheming the only being by whom forgiveness or salvation could possibly come to any of the fallen sons of men, for he had said to them, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."—John viii. 24. We do not understand that there is any manner of sin or blasphemy committed by the Jews that God's own redeemed children have not committed, for they were all the children of wrath, by nature, even as others, and in no wise any better in and of themselves than those whose sins were not imputed to or laid upon Christ as the mediatorial Head of the church. We cannot conceive how else any sin or blasphemy can be against the Son of Man and not against the Holy Ghost, or against the Holy Ghost and not against the Son of Man. Our brethren say truly, that none can transgress a law that they are not under. This we freely admit, but were not those carnal Jews under the law of God? and did they not sin against God in asserting that the Spirit of the Lord God, which was on the Son of Man, and by which he cast out devils, was Beelzebub, the prince of the devils? If ungodly men cannot sin against the Holy Ghost, why did Stephen say to them, "Ye stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom we have been now the betrayers and murderers: who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it."—Acts vii. 51-53. Does not this look as though the carnal Jews were under a law that held them under condemnation for blaspheming the Holy Ghost? It is true that they were not under law to Christ in the sense in which the saints are, for they must first become dead to the law which holds them under, wrath and condemnation, before they can be married unto him that has risen from the dead, and so come under the law to Christ. Again we ask, Are there any sins of any manner or kind, committed by the redeemed family of God, that shall never be forgiven them, either in this world or in that which is to come? If there are, we have not so understood the Scriptures.

If all manner of sins, from that of speaking a word against the Son of Man, to that of blasphemy, shall be forgiven unto men, unto what men shall this forgiveness be applied, if not to the saints? It is very true, the saints shall be chastised for their transgression of the laws of Christ, nevertheless God has covenanted that he will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities he will remember no more. (Heb. viii. 12; x. 17.) "Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sins."—Heb. x. 18. The chastisements which the saints receive make no atonement for their transgressions, still Jesus is, and must be, exalted to be a Prince and Savior, to give repentance and forgiveness of sins. Finally, were not all the sins for which Christ died committed against him as the Shepherd of the sheep, the Husband of the bride, the Head of the body, the church, and the responsible Surety of his people? Were there any manner of sins, in all the catalogues of crimes committed by men, that God's redeemed people were not guilty of? or that were not laid on him? or that he did not bear in his own body on the cross? And did not his expiation of their sins deliver them from the wrath of the divine law, and secure to them the forgiveness of all their sins? If not, how can they be justified before God or be saved? But if he, by one offering, perfected forever them that are sanctified, how can there still attach to them any sins for which they shall not be forgiven neither in this world nor in the world to come?

One question more, and we will close this article. Can any sin that was not against the Son of Man, and by him atoned for, put away and forever blotted out, be forgiven unto men, either in this world or in the world to come, from the speaking of a word, to the heaven-daring blasphemy of denouncing the Holy Spirit of the Lord God, by which he, as the Son of Man, cast out devils, as being the prince of devils? We are satisfied by the mild and christian spirit in which our brethren have written, that their sole object is to elucidate the truth for the edification of the saints, and we feel sure they will not take offense at the reiteration of our views on the subject. Let us prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Deacon C. M. Turman.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, convening with the Frying Pan Church, October 12th, 13th and 14th, 1938, sendeth greetings of love in the Lord to the churches and associations with which it corresponds.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The time has come for us to once more meet together in an association, that we may renew to each other the assurance of our love and fellowship. This can be done only as the Spirit of God manifests the gift he gives us. Our open hearts and minds are awakened to write a few things that might be of comfort to at least some of the little ones of the household of faith and that might be an honor to his high and exalted name. To do this it will be

necessary for our minds to be exercised by way of remembrance of the wonderful things of God, of the blessing he has in store for those that really hunger and thirst after righteousness, of those he has caused to see their smallness, and of those who have been made to rejoice in his name.

You know it is written that at his name every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that he is God, and with the poet shall sing, "Jesus paid it all." These are the ones he foreknew and did conform to the image of his Son, and to stand as a witness of him until he comes, comforting and making glad the children of God. Were not they such that the apostle Peter had under consideration, which he called strangers among the churches at that time? (1 Peter i. 1.) And he went beyond that in the second verse and calls them elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. His blood was the atonement for our transgressions, that we might be made to live up to those things, that we might have eyes to see and hearts to understand something of those things he has in store for those who have been made alive to them, and cause us at times to sing, "Jesus paid it all."

The apostle goes further, and in the third, fourth and fifth verses says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." So when we read the sacred word of God, if we could have the same spirit as that of the apostle Peter when he wrote this epistle to the strangers of the household of faith, we would indeed be partakers of the essence of truth and righteousness.

We might comment more on this epistle, yet we could not improve upon its contents. May you read it for yourselves and consider its beauty and truth, trusting your spiritual minds may be stirred up to a lively hope in Christ.

We greatly appreciate having your messengers present with us at this meeting, especially visiting ministers, and have gladly received your messages and welcomed the preached gospel of the grace of God.

The next session of this Meeting is appointed to be held (the Lord willing) with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, at the same time next year, when we shall hope to again have your messengers and messages.

C. W. VAUGHN, Mod.

G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE date opposite your name on the little pink slip on which your address is printed denotes the time your subscription expires. Dec 37 means it expired December, 1937; June 38 that it expired June, 1938; Dec 38 that it expired December, 1938, etc.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

LOUISA (HARMON) WOODRUM, the subject of this sketch, was born November 20th, 1852, and departed this life December 17th, making her stay on earth 86 years and 27 days. In the year 1878 she was united in marriage to Green Irwin Woodrum. To this union were born eight children, four of whom have passed in death, namely, Bertie, Sarah, Isaac and John. Left to mourn the loss of mother are Mrs. Louisa Belle Dolin, of Whorton, W. Va., Mrs. Virginia Cleveland Dolin, of Lory, W. Va., Mrs. Dora Alice Triplett, of Pedro, Ohio, Mrs. Geneva Carolina Miller, of Danville, W. Va., three step-sons, Robert L. Woodrum and Elder James Woodrum, of Ridgeview, W. Va., and Jehu C. Woodrum, of Charleston, W. Va. She also leaves to mourn forty grandchildren, a host of great-grandchildren, relatives and friends.

Dearly beloved, to write of the life and death of this dear tried saint is an undertaking of which I am altogether unequal to perform. Sister Woodrum was a mother in Israel indeed. She was wonderfully alert and deeply spiritual minded. Her convictions were deep seated and she was well established in all the cardinal points of doctrine. Salvation by grace was the theme of her song. She loved to extol the name of her Redeemer God. She was unwavering, and one could be in her company but a short while until she would be testifying of the wonderful mercy and the everlasting love of God. Her walk was in humbleness and meekness before her God. She was a native of Boone County, West Virginia. She was given a sweet hope in Christ in her youth, and united with the Old School Baptist Church called Sarah, in Boone County, West Virginia, in her seventeenth year of life, and lived devoted to her Master the remainder of her days. Many times has sister Woodrum spoken words of comfort and encouragement to the unworthy writer of this notice when I have been cast down and trials heavy were mine in my labors, as I humbly hope, in the Master's vineyard. Space will not permit me to speak of all her sterling qualities. She was one of the kindest persons it was ever my lot to meet. Sister Woodrum had been in failing health for some time, but was blessed to be able to attend the last session of the Pocatalico Association. Her final days of severe sickness were few. She spoke very sweetly to her daughters, the sisters Dolin, who were at her bedside when the end came, of her willingness to depart. She entered Jordan unafraid, since her trust was stayed upon Jesus. She gave instructions as to the singing of hymns at her funeral, which the unworthy writer was called to conduct, and never have I been present on a funeral occasion when there were so many hymns sung. Her request was carried out by singing those old hymns she loved so well. I tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved, from Solomon's Song i. 1-8. The floral offering attested of the high esteem in which she was held. The funeral was conducted at the home of her daughter, sister Dolin. She was laid away in the family buring-ground, by the side of her husband, brother Woodrum, to await the call of the Master, when he shall descend with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God to call forth the saints in his own blessed likeness. Weep not as those who have no hope. May God reconcile us all to his holy will. Amen.

H. J. BIRD.

IN MEMORIAM.

ATLANTA, Georgia.

THE East Atlanta Primitive Baptist Church In Memoriam, Witnesseth, That the great God of our salvation, Jehovah the omnipotent, the one and only true and living God, has in his divine wisdom seen fit, on June 14th, 1938, to remove by death our beloved brother, ELDER D. P. SMITH, whom we all loved very dearly. Though we mourn his passing, we are happy in the hope that we may join him in heaven, where we all will sing praises to the great God. The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

Therefore be it resolved by us in solemn assembly,

FIRST, That we believe our earthly loss is his eternal gain.

SECOND, Though in time his presence is known to us no more, memory of his work, his mild manner and his sturdy character will be cherished in the hearts of all who knew him.

THIRD, That we will, the Lord being our helper, pray the Lord of the harvest to supply our every need, and keep us in the way that will be for our good and the upbuilding of Zion.

FOURTH, That the within Memorial be spread upon our church book, and a copy be sent to his beloved family, and, also, a copy to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference, September 17th, 1938.

H. O. NASH, Moderator
RYAN JACKSON, Clerk

DAN GRIFFITH,
J. F. GARNER,
GEORGE LEE ADAMS,
A. R. JONES,
Committee.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

A friend, Ontario, $1; Mrs. W. B. Robinson, N. Y., $1; W. A. Corder, W. Va., $1; W. R. Wallis, Miss., $8; Mrs. John P. Bennett, Md., 50 cents; Sara Leedom, Pa., $2; Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $8; E. H. Winchell, Mich., $1; Mrs. Samantha Oakley, Mich., $1; Middleburg Church, N. Y., $3; W. H. Staggs, Texas, $1; A. E. Clark, Kans., $2; Mrs. T. H. Young, Ohio, $1; F. H. Richardson, Iowa, $3; Mrs. Louise M. Beebe, N. Y., $5; Mary H. Davis, Md., $2; Mrs. J. D. Shafer, N. Y., $1; Mrs. G. T. Franklin, Va., $1; A friend, Detroit, Mich., $3; Mrs. Charles H. Glascock, Va., $1.

MEETINGS.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Seclusia Old School or Primitive Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

G. O. WALKER, Pastor.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church holds meetings the fourth Sunday of each month at 1026 East Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Meeting begins at 10:30 a. m., dismisses for lunch and reconvenes at 2 o'clock p. m. Meeting days have been changed from the first to the fourth Sunday of each month. No Saturday or night meetings.

BURLIE HALL, Pastor
W. H. CAVE, Ass't Pastor.
(MRS.) H. B. CURLIE, Church Clerk

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

AN EXCELLENT VOLUME.

"Memoirs and letters of James Kidwell Popham."

Mr. Popham was Pastor of The Strict Baptist Church, at Brighton, England, for over fifty-five years, and Editor of *The Gospel Standard* for thirty years.

This book reveals much of the travel of a man greatly blessed of God in his ministry and writings. It is full of interesting matter, which on every page shows forth the power and goodness of the covenant-keeping God.

It can be obtained from the publishers, C. J. Farncombe & Sons, Ltd., 30 Imperial Buildings, Ludgate Circus, London, E. C. 4, England. Price, post-paid, $1.65, to Canada and United States.

I feel to recommend this book to our readers.—G. R.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

SALVATION BY GRACE.

"HOWBEIT that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." This is said respecting the persons of those who are the subjects of salvation through the grace which is communicated by Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior. They were not spiritual first, but natural, is a truth that is not debatable. This fact is not difficult to understand when we remember that nothing but God existed before creation, and when God made man he made him a natural man with natural life. His possessions reached no farther than natural things; neither had he capacity to receive and enjoy things beyond nature. By transgression he forfeited his right to live or enjoy the blessings even of nature, and thereby became the object of vindictive justice or of covenant mercies according to the eternal purpose and sovereign will of Jehovah. Some of his offending creatures God set his love upon, chose them before the foundation of the earth was laid, and provided grace in Christ to make them holy and without blame before him in love, that they might, through Christ, inherit eternal glory; while others he left to suffer the just penalty of the law which all had violated. And while those chosen to life and salvation and those appointed to everlasting punishment arrive at widely different destinations, yet each is dealt with according to the strictest principles of justice and right; so that it must still be said of Jehovah, "Just and right is he." The disposition of the former is to the praise of the glory of God's grace; that of the latter to the praise of the glory of his justice. These, as do all the works of God, terminate in His

glory. "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee."—Psalms cxlv. 10. The demands of justice are of a nature most exacting. Before transgression it demanded perfect and perpetual obedience to the precepts of the law; and the death of the sinner was added to its demands by the transgression. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."—Ezek. xviii. 4. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."—Gen. ii. 17. The transgression of the law neither fulfilled nor vacated its demands upon man for obedience, but it did put the sinner beyond the possibility of any right in or of himself to live under its blessings. And because man cannot now live and obey to satisfy the demands of justice for righteousness, while he dies to satisfy its penalty for transgression, strict justice cannot do otherwise than hold him bound in death, and continue to execute the penalty, "Dying thou shalt die," upon the guilty offender everlastingly. Could the sinner be released from dying and the state of death without a righteousness before the law which justice could approve, then the demands of justice would be defeated; the holiness of God's throne would be tarnished; ("Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne."—Psalms lxxix. 14.) the praise of the glory of his justice would cease; and there could no longer be found equity in the law, nor grace in the gospel. If vindictive justice exacted more of Christ, who was made under the law, and was thereby entitled to all its vacations, in his assumption of the place and obligations of his people, than was justly due from those who were equally guilty with them, then the demands of justice are not equal, and the whole economy of salvation is thrown out of balance. But there is no inequality here; justice did not demand more of Christ, the Savior of sinners, than it does of those whose sins he did not bear. Christ both obeyed for his people and died for them, thus fulfilling the demands of justice both for a justifying of righteousness and a retribution for transgression. "He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for [because of] our justification."—Rom. iv. 25. Raised from under the law, from under sin and condemnation, from under death and its dominion and from the grave. That which is true of Christ is true before the justice of God's holy throne of every sinner that Christ represented; as I shall presently show. All others are still under the law, under its curse of death and under sin. "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, just and good," and it will be found easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one jot or tittle of the law to pass or make any abatements until all be fulfilled. Therefore so long as the Judge pronounces the creature unjust, vindictive justice must reach out for satisfaction; and the penalty of the law continue to be inflicted.

There are two kinds of death which men die: one a death in sin, and the other a death to sin. The death in sin is common to all mankind, with the result that all come under the dominion

of sin and become its servants. In this condition, and under its reign, all were free from righteousness. (Rom. vi. 20.) In order to become the servant of righteousness one must be made free from sin. This can be accomplished by death to sin. ("He that is dead is freed from sin."—Rom. vi. 7.) The Scriptures tell us of one way only by which the sinner can become dead unto sin and unto the law, which arms sin with its damning power: that is by the body of Christ. (Rom. vi. 11; vii. 4.) In this transition, which was done first representatively, when Christ suffered and died in the flesh and rose again; and actually or experimentally when his people experienced the sufferings and dying of the Lord Jesus in their body by the life of Jesus being manifest in their mortal flesh. (2 Cor. iv. 10, 11.) The apostle to the church at Rome states certain known facts upon which he predicates indisputable conclusions affirmed or implied: "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband, so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man."—Rom. vii. 1-3. If I understand the apostle's reasoning here, he is setting forth the tenure of the law over man and how that tenure is terminated, and the degree of freedom obtained, for he says in the next verse, "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." The obedience which Christ wrought in the body of his flesh, together with his sufferings and death, is that which purchased the freedom of his chosen bride from the law, from sin and from death. She became dead to them and they dead to her by the body of Christ. "But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held: that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."—Rom. vii. 6. If I understand the apostle's meaning, the following truths are definitely taught here: The people of God, whom Christ represented in his obedience, sufferings, death and resurrection, are as completely delivered from the dominion and reigning power of the law, of sin, of death and of the grave as if they had personally performed the exact service which Christ performed. Christ became one with those he represented in their humanity, that he might pay the debt which humanity owed, and thereby effect their deliverance. "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise

reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Christ Jesus our Lord."—Rom. vi. 8-11. When Christ arose from the dead and came forth out of Joseph's new tomb, a new era had dawned in the world. The seed of David according to the flesh was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. (Rom. i. 3, 4.) Around this momentous event cluster, not only the fulfillment of prophecy, but the hope of the people of God as well as the immaculate glory of the eternal Jehovah. Here our thoughts turn when we read the pronouncement of the Lord God to the woman in the Garden of Eden, and the curse upon the serpent. "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow. and thy conception."—Gen. iii. 16. Unto the serpent he said, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."—Gen. iii. 15. Her conception was multiplied until the Son of God was conceived and born of the virgin Mary (Luke i. 35), and her sorrow extended to the sepulchre. Thus did Satan, by his unbidden incursion into the Garden of Eden, maneuver himself into a position from which he could not become disentangled until it swept him into the maelstrom of destruction; which was but the repercussion of his own subtle designs. When Satan connived at the destruction of the Son of God by death; when the powers of darkness were mobilized to exult in the defeat and dismay of the hopes of the righteous for deliverance; when Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered to do whatsoever God's hand and counsel had previously determined to be done; when Christ, the Captain of the hosts of Israel, met the combined hosts of Satan, while upon the cross, armed with their most potent weapon, death; he accepted their challenge to battle, received the last stroke of suffering and entered death, not to be overcome, but to overcome, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil. (Heb. ii. 14.) It is also written, "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction."—Hosea xiii. 14. Thus through death Christ took possession of Satan's most formidable weapon, the one he had wielded so effectually in his conquest through sin of the entire race of man, which now in the hands of Christ is turned to the torment and everlasting destruction of the devil and his kingdom, and to the deliverance of the chosen of God from the dominion of sin, death and the law, and by one mighty sweep bears them representatively into the glorious liberty of the children of God. The liberty which was made theirs in the covenant by the will and oath of Jehovah, and to which the way of access is now consecrated through the veil, that is to say his flesh, therefore we have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. In this most marvelous event was the prophecy fulfilled which said, "Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things?

Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children."—Isaiah lxvi. 8. Likewise did the apostle Paul confirm this truth: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kingdom toward us through Christ Jesus."—Eph. ii. 4-7. Thus by the eternal Word assuming the human nature and life of Adam sinners, being made flesh under the law under which they stood condemned as transgressors, and in physical and judicial union with them, performed the exact obedience and suffered the full penalty which the law demanded of them, they are made free from the law by the body of Christ. They are dead to the law, and the law is dead to them, and according to the apostle's reasoning, the law has no more right to command the redeemed sinner than the dead husband has to command the living wife; neither has it any more power to punish the redeemed sinner for failure to obey its commands than has the dead husband to punish the living wife for not complying with his commands. Neither has the redeemed sinner any more grounds to expect a reward for obedience to the law than the living wife has to expect a reward from her dead husband for obedience to him. But the redeemed sinner, being made free from the law (the former husband, now dead to them and they dead to it) by the body of Christ, are at liberty to be married to another, even to Christ; which is effected by the Holy Spirit imparting to them eternal life, by which they are made partakers of the divine nature, and thus are brought into spiritual union with Christ. They are now led by the Spirit of God and are the sons of God (Rom. vi. 14), and because of this union they bring forth fruit unto God; and they serve in newness of the spirit and not in the oldness of the letter. (Rom. vii. 3, 6.) This same Holy Spirit is the Spirit of which they are born in the second birth, and is also the Spirit of adoption by which they rightfully own God as their Father. All of this is the work of grace, is unmerited favor bestowed upon an unworthy sinner, the gift of God through Christ.

J. R. HARDY.

DUTTON, Ontario, Jan. 22, 1938.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:--Your good and timely New Year's address has stirred my mind to tell you of it, also to tell you that I felt guilty, or one of the guilty ones, in judging your judgment of what or what should not be spread before the readers of the SIGNS. The day after Christmas I got the twelve copies of the 1937 SIGNS and read some of the articles, and came across my letter. I felt as I read it over to tell you what I hope was a travel by faith and not by sight, but, brother Dodson, I shrink from a presumptuous spirit, which is my fear that I may be betrayed

by its guileful art. There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof is the way of death (spiritual). But I felt guilty to have corrected you in the matter, one of God's servants who he has seen fit to place in the exalted position of chief editor. I should not desire to add any burden to your labor of love and duty, so, dear brother, I felt impressed to write and tell you my convictions. I am so little, and unworthy of giving a cup of cold water in the name of the Lord, and if there is one who has traveled alike as I have God knows it would make amends for all my selfish pride. Pride must be humbled, and reflects a beautiful trait in it. God is honored and the flesh is put low. We should strive to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, and to uphold those in authority, and are forbidden to "muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?"—1 Cor. ix. 9. The sixteenth verse says, "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel." Dear brother, I feel we, as the sheep of his pasture, who are blessed with a true shepherd to feed the flock of God, realize but little of the worth of such a blessing, and do come short of our various duties enjoined upon us in our ministering to the pleasure and encouragement of our brethren. Paul says, Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live by the gospel. What is the worth of the glittering gold to the voice of the exaltation of the beloved Son of God proclaimed by his burdened servants? For each is burdened with the word of the Lord until he proclaims it as the mouth of the Lord has spoken. How beautiful upon the mountain are the feet of them that preach glad tidings, that publisheth peace, etc. His greatness is so great our finite minds cannot grasp the fullness. Only as his merit is vividly manifested in our frail minds can we say with the psalmist, I am a worm and no man. Then we would be anything or nothing to serve Christ, and when he shows himself through the lattice (trials) sanctified, we joy in tribulation that the power of Christ might rest upon us. I have to painfully realize the guilt of blind unbelief, which is a sore evil. Yes, many and all motives of sin which lurk in our mortal flesh are so treacherous to our soul's salvation in this time state. Jealousy, deceit and envy are cruel foes which serve to trample in the dust the sacred ordinance of the high and holy oracles of God. Hezekiah said, when he felt as a lion, So will he break all my bones. And when he felt the Lord had spoken to him and himself had done it, he said, I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul. Then uttered the words which bring us and keep us pleading our cause to Him who is able to save us. "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live." "We must

needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up." What is the interpretation of the last clause, I wonder. We know when we are weak then are we strong. in the Lord. Dear Elder Ker one time when he was visiting us at our May meetinng, after preaching one said to him, You had good liberty to-day. He answered, Very often when I have liberty, and feel I preached well, the devil tells me I preached a good sermon. So will I say, brother Dodson, in preaching, in writing and in our conversation, self, that legal thing and base, seeks to lure us, and sets up the "big I," as a dear brother quoted in his good article in the last SIGNS. How abhorrent is the proud flesh of man. Who can stand before envy? So we go from strength to strength, walking in the way laid out by our Protector and all-wise God, and though at times our cup seems bitter, yet it is the way, and we must walk in it, and when we are brought off more than conquerors praise sits silent on our tongue, and then we worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness, and we would drink all of the cup and crown him Lord of all. Pride humbled, or humbled pride, is a beautiful trait, but humiliating, and needful.

Dear brother, I have written along as my mind led me, and hope you will pardon my long letter, but I felt a desire to encourage you in your work. May you be strengthened in the inner man to wage the warfare and praise Him in it.

In gospel bonds,

(MRS.) JOHN McPHAIL.

CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY.

ACCORDING to previous arrangements, Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church celebrated her one hundredth anniversary on Sunday, May 29th, 1938. Elder J. J. Smith, of Slocomb, and brother J. A. Few, of Malvern, Alabama, preached at the morning service, while the afternoon session was devoted to a record of the church. Brethren J. D. Merritt, of Dothan, E. R. Sorrels, of Hartford, T. S. Faulk, of Samson, and J. J. Collins, of Newton, gave sketches of different features of the church. It is said that there have been five buildings used during the past century. The first three were of pioneer construction, while the last two have been of a more substantial character. The last one was built in 1936, and is of a beautiful modern type. When the church was constituted the Indians still roamed through our forests, and bear, deer and panthers were plentiful in this section. The church served the pioneers as a spiritual haven for refuge from the many hardships of the times, and it was one of the oldest of all denominations established here. During the trying times of the war between the States, when all men able to bear arms were away in distant armies, even then the members met regularly in conference and looked after the welfare of the church. During reconstruction times four members remained faithful and the church was a real Mizpah to those in distress, and some of the best refreshing seasons this church has ever had occorred during those trying years. Elder J. W. Collins became a member

August 15th, 1858, later a Deacon, and was later ordained to the ministry, in 1881, and served as Pastor for thirty-five years, and as Moderator of the Western Primitive Baptist Association at twenty-three sessions. To-day his grandson, by the help of that all-wise Creator who doeth all things well, endeavors in his feeble manner to fill both these positions held by his grandfather. During the last century the following have served as Pastors of this historic old church: Elders M. M. Pellum, Jesse Tomblin, W. I. Ward, D. S. Hood, Charles Stewart, J. W. Parker, W. T. Bell, J. N. Purvis, J. W. Collins, F. A. Collins, J. J. Smith and J. J. Collins. Two of these, J. W. and F. A. Collins, have together served for fifty-five years. The Deacons have been: John Vinson, M. Mount, J. W. Collins, B. M. W. Garrett, J. F. Adams, A. T. Byrd, Henry Childs, E. F. Collins, J. L. Collins, C. J. Simpler, A. E. Sorrels and R. S. Sorrels; and the Clerks: Jeremiah Tindell, B. K. Mosley, John Vinson, J. F. Adams, Charley Stewart, J. A. Tindell, E. F. Collins, J. L. Collins and E. A. Sorrels. The church was probably constituted into the Conecuh River Association, and then received by letter into the Choctawhatchee Association, and when the Western Primitive Baptist was organized, sixty-one years ago, Mt. Gilead was one of the charter churches of that Association.

As a church, we feel that Mt. Gilead can trace a direct lineage from the apostolic church at Jerusalem. According to Baptist history, the apostle Paul numbered among his converts at Rome one Claudia, who, with her husband, were Welsh people, and they returned to Wales, and there in the rugged mountainous section they kept intact the doctrine preached by Paul, and upheld by Peter and all succeeding ministers of the Baptist faith throughout sixteen hundred years of violent persecution. These Welsh Baptists constituted the Welsh Tract Church and emigrated as a church to America about the year 1701, and this church was one of the churches that helped to organize the Philadelphia Association in 1707, the oldest Primitive Association in America. From this Association, in 1765, the Kehukee, in Virginia and North Carolina, was formed, and from that Association I think all the other Associations in the South were derived, either directly or indirectly. At least we feel that we at Mt. Gilead have a direct line of descent from Daniel when he said by divine inspiration, In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom that shall break in pieces all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. We sincerely trust that this church shall ever uphold the principles set forth by Christ in his teaching to his disciples and earnestly contended for by Primitive Baptists in all ages. During this century no division has ever occurred on account of the doctrine, and we to-day stand for the same faith so ably contended for by Elders Beebe, Purington, Durand and others gone on before. We have been wonderfully blessed, especially during the past year. There has been an ad-

dition of eight members to our fold, by experience, letter and restoration, and it seems to us that many others are just outside and will come at the proper time.

I would be especially glad to receive a Minute of every Association. Will you please send me one of yours?

Yours in hope of eternal life,

J. J. COLLINS.

NEWTON, Alabama.

FAYETTE, Alabama.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a letter from a young sister who is attending college. I think such things are too good to keep. I baptized this sister recently.

Yours in hope,

W. D. GRIFFIN.

STATE TEACHERS' COLLEGE, LIVINGSTON, Alabama.

DEAR BROTHER GRIFFIN:—I will try to write (the Lord willing) on that blessed hope I possess.

Last spring I was alone in my room, my room-mate was studying with a friend, and I was reading my daily Bible chapter. Somehow it meant so much more than usual. Before I knew what it was all about, I had flung myself across the bed, sobbing wildly. In those moments I saw how wonderful God had been to a poor sinner. He had bestowed so many blessings upon me. Somehow, that night (May 16th) I had the desire to join the Primitive Baptist Church. Their people seemed to be everything I wanted to be, but I felt so unfit of being with them. Since I was very small I occasionally went to the Primitive Baptist meetings. Later I have listened to sermons by Old "Hard-shells" and not realized how rapidly the moments had flown. I would twist in my seat and wonder if the sermon would ever end at a meeting of another denomination. I have always thought that some day I would like to join the church. Jesus is head of the church, and baptism is a commandment, although it will not save any one. If I had gone to another denomination (which could not have been possible) I would be worried over working my way into the promised land. Thank God I believe he has shown me the only way. "By grace are ye saved through faith," and if I reach heaven it will not be by anything I have done, but by the mercy of the Savior who died for the sins of his people.

If the Lord sees fit, I want to try in my weak way to express the glory of the truth as I see it. God is all-wise. I believe with all my heart God has his elect, and what he does is his affair. His management does not worry me. What I have to worry about is the question of whether I am one of the elect. I recently heard some one say that the world was in such a turmoil and uproar because things were going against God's will. I thought to myself, Poor God! He created all things and has all power, yet has to suffer in agony as the world goes contrary to his purpose. If God does not have the power to have things his way he is not almighty. The Lord I hope I worship has all power. Things do not work against his will. I would not want my salvation in the hands of a god that lacked power, one that would do his part if I would do

mine. Thanks be unto God that the Savior is all-wise and has the power to build and destroy as he sees fit. If conditions were left partly in the hands of the human race we would be in a terrible state. Every one would try to make things exist according to his desires, and at heart he would not know what he wanted, as the mother who asked Jesus to take one of her sons on the right and the other on the left. Romans viii. 28, says, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." When disasters fall I have this passage for comfort, and then again I ask myself if I really love God, or if I have ever been called according to his purpose.

"I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

One of my friends said she knew she was going to heaven. What a glorious feeling one should have to be so sure of that everlasting richness of glory. Romans viii. 24, says, "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for." If we knew these things what part would hope play? But it is not intended for every one to be Old Baptists, or they would be. I am thankful that I believe as these dear people do. I would not exchange my hope for all the fame and wealth of this sinful world. His graciousness is hid from the wise and revealed unto babes. 2 Corinthians iv. 3, 4, says, "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

In conclusion, our salvation is a gift. A gift is given without charge. Nothing a mortal has ever done will lead him to that blessed eternity. (Eph. ii. 8, 10.)

Remember me in your prayers.

MARIE HOUSH.

HOLLYWOOD, California.

DEAR EDITORS:—Let me first make my acknowledgments for not sending in the notice of the fact that Seclusia Church had changed her place of meeting. Possibly the truth demands that I attribute the delay to my slothfulness.

The brotherhood removed from us by many miles, and some who are near, have not heard of brother G. O. Walker's affliction. He is deeply afflicted, and has not been forgetful of us all the time, but such are his afflictions in body and mind that he has been most of the time lately confined to his room, and for some time in the recent past has not been favored to answer his correspondence. This will explain, in part at least, why some of the brethren have not heard from him. This letter will, I trust, bear to you the assurance that while we yearn for his recovery, contrary as it may seem to the carnally-minded, at the same time we desire grace to be reconciled to the providential dealings of that God who doeth all things well.

Present arrangements were agreed upon while Seclusia Church was in conference during her fourth Sunday

meeting in December, 1938. The new place of meeting is 412 East Raulston Avenue, Ontario, California, where we expect to meet until other arrangements are made.

I have in mind the sister who requested some one to write on the eighth verse of the eighth chapter of the Song of Songs. Please say to sister McAfee that "the little sister" represents the church under the law, and much can be spoken and written about her. Sister McAfee, let me promise to write at length when it is more expedient.

In the common faith of the election of grace I am, I hope, your brother,

T. D. WALKER.

TOPSHAM, Maine, Sept. 20, 1938.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—If I am worthy to address you thus, which I do not feel to be this morning. Did you ever feel that the devil had you chained down and that in your heart there were words to be said that could not be uttered? He seems to have hold on me, when I feel if I could pray I have nothing to say. It is said, "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered," and I am not worthy of even a groan. Life sometimes becomes a burden.

I enjoyed your preaching at North Berwick. You were given great liberty, I thought, and it takes quite a lot to pierce this dense brain of mine. I also enjoyed Elder Ruston's preaching at Whitefield. He told of how at one time he feared he had committed the unpardonable sin, and oh how at times that comes over me, that I have done the same. But I cannot see how any one of the brethren could feel that way. I see nothing but good in them, and I am so full of faults.

How we miss sister Attie Curtis! Our first Association without her. The first night they were to use the Grange Hall, so we took our food and went up to Annie Potter's and had supper and spent the evening. She seemed much pleased. She was not able to have us, so we went over to sister Nellie's both nights. The people were over from North Berwick. Sisters Hall and Mason, and brother and sister Quint were there Saturday and Sunday, and sister Marcia Allen, son and family were there Sunday.

I wish I could write to you of what I feel, but I am so shut up. One of my trials is that I cannot speak of the good things of our Lord, when he has been so good to me. When Elder Ruston called on me to say something, I had no thoughts. I could have stood up and cried. Perhaps you do not know how the devil would say to me, You would look pretty standing up there crying. Father said, If you have cause to weep you have walked in the footsteps of Jesus, and he was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. Why should I think my life hard? When I look back I see how good the Lord has been to me, how he has cared for me, but my sins are a source of trouble to me. Still, I know Jesus said, My grace is sufficient for thee. I have faith he will bring me through all my trials, and will never

leave nor forsake me, for once he has begun a good work he will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ.

Well, I guess this is all you will want to hear, and if any faults, please overlook them, for I am made up of mistakes. May this find you and yours in good health, is the wish of an unworthy sister.

With love and fellowship, your sister,

RACHEL POTTER.

McDowell, Ky., March 26, 1938.

Dear Editors:—If not asking too much, I would like space in your paper for this short letter. I have been reading the Signs for at least six years, and have found many comforting words in letters from the children of God, which fed this hungering and thirsting soul of mine. I do not take the Signs myself, but I have a friend (a brother in Christ, I feel to say) who lends me his to read. He is Elder Milford Hall, and I truly thank him for his kindness. I wish much success to the editors and publishers, but all to the will and glory of God. I am one that must affirm there is no good in the flesh. By the grace of God I am what I am, and every true spiritually born child of God will have to say that, too, when he comes to the end of his own strength and sees that all his self-righteousness is as but filthy rags before God. With me there was no Savior in sight, and oh what a dreadful state that is to a poor child who feels he is sinking down to eternal punishment; seeking rest, and finding none. In due time, the appointed time of God, he spoke peace to my soul and the love of God was shed abroad in my heart. What great love it was! Bless the name of Jesus, then I could feel he died on Calvary and shed his precious blood for me. Was it for anything good I had done? No. It was by the grace of God that Jesus was mine and I was his. Then I cried, Salvation is of the Lord. By experience I know that it takes the love and power of God to keep and guide me on the strait and narrow way while in this world, but there is no falling away in the world to come. When one is saved he is saved forever. May all praise and thanks be to God; to God they are due. May the God of all grace keep his children and guide his children in these dark and perilous times. I can say with Job, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come," then go home to glory, to live with dear Jesus for evermore.

With these few words I will close, and if you dear editors think this little letter is worthy of space you may publish it; if not, just cast it aside, and all will be well with me.

From a redeemed sinner, I hope,

(MRS.) MAUDIE HALL.

St. Paul, Arkansas.

Dear Brother Dodson:—I have been taking the Signs for sixty-seven years, except for a gap that occurred through no fault of mine in 1877, when I moved from Mulberry River to the mountainous region at the head of White River on account of my health. I had an arrangement with my sister to send my paper to me, as there was no

post-office in less than ten miles of the place where I was moving. The postmaster notified old brother Gilbert Beebe and he stopped my paper, but just as soon as I could I paid up my arrears and took it again, a post-office having been established within two miles of me.

I have a strong desire to become acquainted with Baptists in England. If I sent you the subscription price would you forward it for me? If there is an agency in this country that takes and forwards subscriptions, give me the address on the inclosed card, and any other necessary information, and I can attend to it myself. I do not intend to stop taking the SIGNS as long as I live and keep able to pay for it. It was from some old copies of it preserved by my aunt in 1857, long after her decease, that I found there was a people scattered throughout America, Canada, and even Europe, that taught doctrine in line with my experience. The tempter had long assailed me with the suggestion that I, with all of my imperfections, could not be right and every one else wrong. But I am not able to describe the comfort and joy it gave me to discover these people, so I had just as well stop trying. I was eighty-five years old last September 5th.

Respectfully,

C. W. ANDERSON.

KERNERSVILLE, West Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—You will find inclosed two dollars for the continuance of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have enjoyed reading your good paper very much in the past. I have been a subscriber only a year, but I used to borrow it from others, and found it to be a comfort to those who are contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, if I am worthy to be called one. May God bless his dear people to the end here, to continue to confess he doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and no power can stay his hand.

An unworthy brother, if one at all,

D. R. PYRTLE.

LA GRANGE, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITORS:—As another year has come and gone, with its sorrows and joys, I find it is time to renew our subscription to the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as we do not want to miss a single copy, for it is our meat and drink through the cold weather. If possible, it is getting better as the years go by. We do hope that the dear staff who are laboring so hard and are giving us such God-honoring reading may be helped by the Lord to hold on. My dear kindred in the Lord, we can help them by being prompt in sending in our subscriptions, and may we all do our duty. I feel we should not delay, and am sending two dollars for another year's subscription.

(MRS.) J. J. VORIES.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE date opposite your name on the little pink slip on which your address is printed denotes the time your subscription expires. Dec 37 means it expired December, 1937; June 38 that it expired June, 1938; Dec 38 that it expired December, 1938, etc.

EDITORIAL.

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ZECHARIAH IV. 6.

"NOT by MIGHT, nor by POWER, but by my SPIRIT, saith the Lord."

It is well that we understand the meaning of the text. The word "might" meaning the ability to do anything requiring force or power; strength. The word "power" meaning strength manifested in effective action; the right to exercise control; legal authority. "Spirit," the part that is invisible and incorporeal, and has intelligence. A rational being not connected with a material body. This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, and the angel talked with Zechariah, and testified what the Lord of hosts declared. The word Ze-rub-ba-bel meaning those scattered, or born in Babylon. This prophet Zechariah has recorded these things given to him by the angel of the Lord, that talked with him, and we find ourselves feasting in them to our soul, because of the realities of our weakness to attain unto godliness. If our salvation depended upon the might and power of ourselves we know there would be no hope of salvation for us, for we know the truth of the word, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."—John iii. 6.

We understand that all the scattered throughout all generations, and all nations of the earth, must be born of the incorruptible seed by the word of God before they can see the kingdom of God, which is born again, or born of the Spirit. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."—John iv. 24. We believe in a triune God. Meaning God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost, for there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one. (1 John v. 7.) This is the work of God, that we believe on him whom he hath sent, and we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. (Eph. ii. 10.) What manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him

as he is. (1 John iii. 1, 2.) And ye know that he was manifest to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, neither known him. (1 John iii. 5, 6.) These evidences we have given prove to our minds that every one that is born of God is kept by the power of God, and saved with an everlasting salvation, through Jesus Christ, and he quickeneth whomsoever he will, and when one is quickened he is made alive, and he has feeling to realize the working of an almighty power, that he has no control over, neither can he hinder, and the virtues of life (the spirit) records all, that is realized, and they are marvelous to him. When the Holy Ghost comes and takes of these things and shows them unto us, then we are made to see them as the works of God, and by these manifested tribulations we have patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. (Rom. v. 3-5.) When the love of God is shed abroad in the heart of a poor sinner he will not blaspheme against his holy name. If he does, where is the purging from dead works that we serve the living God? The one that blasphemes against the Holy Ghost is carnally-minded, at enmity with God, and is ready to speak irreverently of the revelations of God to poor sinners, and that satanic spirit has never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation. (Mark iii. 29.)

The Holy Ghost came upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost, and every one heard in his own tongue, and understood works of Jesus the Son of God, and that God had exalted Him at his right hand. Many were added to the church in one day, which, to our mind, does not mean because the Holy Ghost was sent to the apostles that Peter preached with such demonstration and power that when they heard this they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. (Acts ii. 37, 38.) When they heard this they were pricked in their hearts. Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. This virtue is felt when one is quickened by the Son of God, born of an incorruptible seed by the Word of God (that was made flesh), or born again, but they had not yet received the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the apostle Peter continues, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."—Acts ii. 39-41. "Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto

him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven. And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say." —Luke xii. 10-12. We do believe that when the power of the Holy Ghost is given to an individual he cannot deny that power, and demonstration manifested to him, though he may often feel destitute and cast down, but the effects of that work remaineth, and a groaning, asking for Him whom my soul loveth, and where He resteth at noontide, and His presence is sought with reverence and devotion.

The doctrine of the scribes and Pharisees pours forth blasphemies against the Holy Ghost, and all revelations to poor sinners.

We have given to our readers these comments to answer many inquiries as to our views regarding the sinning against the Holy Ghost, and in conclusion, we must contend that the words of the Son of God are the truth, and are to all eternity, for he said, My words are spirit and life. (John vi. 63.) He bore the sins of his people, and put them away by the sacrifice of himself, and they are remerbered no more, and there is nothing to rise up to condemn, for he has made them free. We do not have any right to write or express ourselves in such way as would pervert or teach contrary to the emphatic words of Jesus Christ, for he spake as man never spake, and in him was no guile. We hope to be directed by the Holy Ghost to declare his sacred truth in writing and speaking, that our hands may be clean, and out of a pure heart worshiping God. We are glad to reflect over the many years that we have realized a lifting up into things beyond our sight, wisdom and power, and with much assurance exclaim that salvation is of the Lord, and point to him and with him that was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world," and as his ways and thoughts are as far above our ways and thoughts as the heavens are above the earth, we desire no other way, and receive no other interpretation of his word other than as he declared it. We do not claim to understand all mysteries, but feel to be fallible, and are made to rely on the Holy Ghost to guide us in the way of all truth. We do not classify ourself with Paul, but we rejoice in the reading of his experience, and the power that rested with him. Paul said, "Ye know, from the first day I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the

things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."—Acts xx. 18-28. This quotation gives evidence as to the office of the Holy Ghost sent unto us by the Son of God, and we hope we have felt in our experience some of the efficacious work of the Holy Ghost, and we truly hope that all of our readers may be guided during this year that they have a fruitful season, and have the power of the Holy Ghost constraining them to be faithful, in the house of God, that they may say, It is "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord."

We have no apologies nor excuses to offer, only to set forth the truth, according as we trust the grace of God is given unto us.

C. W. V.

YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN.

THIS Scripture will be found in John iii. 7. Jesus, here, was teaching a phase of truth which was of such vital and far-reaching importance that just the ordinary man would not suffice to emphasize it to the extent it deserved. He, therefore, chose a very unusual and outstanding character to portray clearly what was in his mind. Nicodemus was (1) A man of the Pharisees; (2) he was a ruler of the Jews, and (3) he was a master of Israel. The Pharisees pretended to be very pious, and are said to have separated themselves from the heathen by a scrupulous adherence to the letter of the law. Nicodemus was apparently a very prominent Pharisee. He is said to have been very rich in this world's goods, and to have been a member of the Jewish Sanhedrim, which we understand signified great learning. He was undoubtedly a great scholar and stood high in the councils of those who studied the law, or the letter of the Old Scriptures. Was it not his kind whom Jesus addressed when he said, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me"? Such characters were famous for their earthly wisdom. It is said that Nicodemus came to Jesus by night, or under the cover of darkness. We dare say that his natural pride was such that he was ashamed for those of his kind to know of his journey to see the meek and lowly Jesus, whose miracles he had literal knowledge of, for he confessed that "no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." We

find little in the record, however, to indicate that he had any real spiritual knowledge of Jesus and his power to save at this time. He was more than likely self-righteous and needed to be taught the truth.

Next, Nicodemus was evidently a great Jew, for the record is that he was a ruler of the Jews. This is no doubt meant to be understood ecclesiastically, rather than in a civil sense. He was probably one of those who in addition to the high position of superiority which he occupied while sitting in judgment and ruling over Israel, delighted in tracing his ancestry back to Abraham. With such a background he could well join others in laying claim to a very unusual lineage, but he had to be made to know that not all of the seed of Abraham were children of God, for it had been written at the direction of him who changeth not that In Isaac shall thy seed be called. The great apostle Paul tells us in Romans ix. 6-8, "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."

Jesus indicated that Nicodemus was also a master of Israel, and yet he could not comprehend the sayings of our Lord. Had Nicodemus lived in our modern time he would most likely have been called a Doctor of Divinity, an outstanding churchman and greatly in demand as a teacher and so-called preacher. Like another famous Pharisee, whose account was given us by Luke, Nicodemus doubtless gloried in his morality as he stood and prayed with himself, thanking God that he was not as other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, even as the poor publican, fasting twice a week and giving thithes of all he possessed, but Jesus swept aside all that this very unusual character typified and declared plainly and emphatically that "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This, Nicodemus, with all of his boasted knowledge, could not fathom. It was too deep for him. He was utterly unable to understand how a man when he is old could be born the second time. Theologians of this day and time are likewise baffled by it; their wisdom is not sufficient to cope with it, neither will any ever be able to overcome it, for no man by searching can find out God. Jesus emphasized that there are two separate and distinct creatures. He said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The way one comes into this natural world is by birth, and without any power to choose parents, time or place, and the only possible way that any one can gain entrance into the spiritual world is by being born again, "not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." Nicodemus, as well as all mankind, will forever marvel at this doctrine, nevertheless, Jesus insisted, YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN. Well, how can these things be? Jesus said, "The wind

bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: [There are mysteries of this life even which men are powerless to understand or explain.] so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Men claim that every rule has its exception, but there is none here. Jesus showed Nicodemus up by citing the illustration of the natural wind, which he could not explain, and then asked, "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" It is absolutely useless, and a waste of time, for one to try to teach spiritual things to those who have not been born again. This work belongs to God alone, for "no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven."

We wish to continue on with this chapter a little further, especially with reference to the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth verses, which read as follows: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Here we are shown how Christ was presented in type by Moses under the law. In this connection we wish to call particular attention to the fact that not all who were under the law were bidden to look upon the brazen serpent which Moses lifted up in the wilderness. A very strong and deep-dyed-in-the-wool Missionary once said to us that a universal opportunity was offered to all to look upon the brazen serpent and be healed, and she contended that in like manner a universal invitation is extended to all to look upon Jesus and be saved. We reminded her that only those who were *bitten* by the fiery serpents looked upon the brazen serpent which Moses put upon a pole, and all who beheld the serpent of brass lived. This symbolizes, to our mind, that only those who are shown that they are sinners, who feel the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and mourn because of it, will look to Jesus, who has appeared in the likeness, or image, of sinful flesh, and hath suffered for the sins of his people. In due time all of them will look away from self and from all human aid, of whatever kind and description, and they will, Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, and not a single one shall ever look to him in vain. By the workings of God's mighty power they will be made to believe on him, and to be sure they will never perish, but will have life everlasting.

Finally, we want to speak with particular reference to the sixteenth verse of this chapter, as it seems to be the pet verse of every Arminian that we have ever had any dealings with. Invariably, they try to tear it out of its proper setting and give it a meaning entirely foreign to what is intended. Let our readers remember here what has gone before this verse in this chapter: to what great pains Jesus went to show

that salvation is not conditional in any sense of the word, upon anything that the creature can do, by taking as we have set forth an extraordinary character, with qualifications which few could be found to possess, and he showed conclusively that they all amounted to nothing, and that only a new birth availeth anything. Naturally speaking, as Paul would say, we are all children of wrath, even as others, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."—Eph. ii. 4-7. Thus, indeed, is God's great love for his people revealed, or made manifest, through the gift of his dear Son. Jesus was consistent above all things, and he most certainly would not have emphasized as he did in the first part of the chapter the necessity of the new birth and in the next breath taught conditionalism. The doctrine which is being taught by the so-called religious world, to the effect that it is left for the creature to accept or reject salvation must, therefore, be false, and will fall to the ground from whence it came, while the teachings of Jesus are unalterably true, and will forever remain, that in order for a man to even see the kingdom of God, he MUST BE BORN AGAIN.

May the Lord enable us to become so deeply rooted and grounded in these glorious truths that no earthly power will ever be able to blow us off our heavenly course.

R. L. D.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER SARAH COONS ELMENDORF departed this life August 28th, 1938, at her home in Shokan, N. Y., after a lingering illness of many weeks,though for a longer time she had been in declining health. Until a few weeks before her death she was able to get about her home. All that medical skill could accomplish was employed in hope of improving her health or effecting recovery, and kind and loving hands ministered to her wants, but to no avail. She was born August 10th, 1858, and was therefore a few days past her eightieth birthday. The funeral services were held at the Olive and Hurley Church meeting-house, conducted by the writer. Interment was in the Ashokan cemetery. The immediate surviving relatives are three children: one daughter, Mrs. John Arnold, of Schnectady, N. Y., two sons, Burr and Earl Elmendorf, of Shokan, N. Y. Sister Elmendorf was born near Shokan, and spent nearly all of her long life in that vicinity. Her maiden name was Sarah Coons. When a young woman she was united in marriage to Henry Elmendorf, who died in 1933. Sister Elmendorf united by baptism with the Olive and Hurley Church in 1895, and a year later her husband also united with the church, both baptisms being ministered by the late Elder John D. Hubbell. She proved in every way a loyal, loving and capable helpmeet to her husband, a faithful and true mother, a helping and sympathetic friend to all, and her church life and relationship was above any reproach. She was truly a

noble and beautiful character, humility gracing every act. She loved to meet with the brethren of her church, and often opened her home for meetings, her hospitality being one of the outstanding traits of her gracious character. Her death cast a shadow of gloom over the community where she lived, and she is much missed by her brethren and friends. Sustained in life by an abiding hope in the salvation by grace of all of God's redeemed, we cannot doubt that unto her shall be given to wear the golden and glorious crown of immortality in the blessed presence of her glorified Redeemer.

ALSO,

DEEP sorrow pervaded many hearts upon the news of the death of CHARLES ELMER HOGAN, at his home, in West Hurley, N. Y., February 1st, 1939, after an illness of many months' duration of arterio-sclerosis, or hardening of the arteries. The funeral services were held at his late home on the following Saturday afternoon, conducted by the writer, with the assistance of Mr. Walter Baker, pastor of the Lutheran Church of Woodstock, of which deceased had been a member many years. The interment was in the Woodstock cemetery. Besides his wife, he is survived by his mother, Mrs. Julie Hogan, of Shokan, N. Y., also two brothers, George and Robert, of Shokan and Kingston respectively; also one sister, Mrs. Edna Hamilton, of Kingston, N. Y. Mr. Hogan was born in the town of Ulster, N. Y., October 15th, 1898, and was therefore but a few months past his fortieth birthday when called from the shores of time. When five years of age he moved to Shokan, where he resided until his marriage to Ruth Herrick in 1925, after which he lived in West Hurley. Mr. Hogan enjoyed good health until less than a year ago, when hardening of the arteries developed in a malignant form. All that medical science could do, the best treatment of recourse to hospital treatment at Kingston, N. Y., were brought into requisition, but to no avail, and he rapidly declined in health. He bore his sufferings without complaint and was given strength and grace to be submissive to God's will, and with faith unshaken, with hope undimmed in the mercy and salvation of Christ, and with unfaltering trust, he entered into his last sleep. He lived a beautifully exemplary life, and was never known to speak unkindly of any one. His gentle, unassuming ways, his devotion to his wife, his neighborly kindness, his thoughtfulness of others, his loyalty to the church of his membership, his honesty in industry, were qualities that gave him an abiding place in many hearts, and he will be much missed by the community at large.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

JAMES WILLIAM MULBERRY, the subject of this obituary, was born September 6th, 1864, in Scott County, Kentucky, and departed this life August 15th, 1938, making his stay on earth nearly seventy-four years. He was married to Miss Lizzy Jones October 26th, 1892, who died in the year 1900. To them two sons were born, Claud L. and Neil Mulberry, who are left to mourn his passing; also one grandson, James, two sisters, Mrs. John Mulberry and Mrs. Frank McCoy, one brother, Math Mulberry, of Marion, Ind., a host of friends and neighbors, and the brethren of Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church, of which he was a member. "Brother Billy," as he was called, received a hope in Christ, and upon the relation of his experience to the church he was received in their fellowship the first Sunday in September, 1918, and

was baptized by Elder C. C. Moore, then their pastor. To this church he remained faithful to the end. In May, 1934, he was elected Church Clerk, and served the church well. He also was one of the Trustees, and was always at the meetings if it was possible for him to get there. He was always willing to bear his share of the burdens, and contended earnestly for the doctrine and order of the house of God. How we do miss this dear brother in our meetings, but the good Lord in whom he trusted knows best. His trials in this life are over, he has entered into his rest, where all is peace, and may the Lord reconcile us to our loss, for it is his eternal gain, and may we be reconciled to his will. For several years he had handed me his subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, saying he did not want to miss a number, as it proclaimed the truth as he saw it and believed the Bible taught it. Last summer he was taken to the hospital in Lexington, Ky., for treatment for kidney trouble, where another brother and I visited him. They did not seem to give him any encouragement, so he was removed to his home, where he died in the triumph of a living faith.

The writer spoke at the funeral, which was held in the Christian meetinghouse, at Porter Ky., using as a basis for my remarks the words of Paul, "And now is Christ risen from the dead," after which all that was mortal was laid to rest in the cemetery near by.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

LESTER Z. ROSS was born April 1st, 1855, and died December 18th, 1938. He was the last and youngest of seven children of Harry and Pheobe Ann (Eastman) Ross, of the town of Candor, Tioga County, New York, who have all gone on to that great beyond. My father joined the Old School Baptist Church located a little south of Ithaca, in Tompkins County, New York, known as White Church, more than fifty years ago. Elder Charles Bogardus was the local minister, who has been dead several years, and the church building has been sold to another denomination. Father Ross was always a staunch Old School Baptist. He took the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years, and enjoyed reading it. Not knowing where to locate an Old Baptist minister, the funeral services were conducted from the home December 21st, at 2 p. m., by Mr. L. M. Blackmer, of the Baptist denomination of the village of Candor.

(MRS.) R. D. VAN SCOY.

MRS. MARY ELIZABETH BRINK, a resident of Middletown, N. Y., for more than sixty years, passed away at the Home of Aged Women, Sunday morning February 5th, 1939. She was born in the town of Mount Hope, N. Y., a daughter of Silas G. and Charity Ann Corwin. Mrs. Brink was in her eighty-third year at the time of her death. She was married twice, her first husband being Robert Thompson, and to this union were born two children: Bertha Leeland, of California, and Charles, of Binghamton, N. Y. Her second husband was George Brink. To them was born one child: Mrs. Delilah Hultslander, of Middletown, N. Y., all of whom are living. She is also survived by one sister, Mrs. Corie Anderson, of Plainfield, N. J., two brothers, Ira and Joseph Corwin, of Otisville, N. Y., and three grandchildren. Mrs. Brink did not desire an obituary, but I think we all knew her well. She was one who always felt at home with those of her faith, always trusting in Him, and I am sure He fulfilled her prayers, because she always wanted to go without being a burden to others, and not have to suffer in body as

many of her friends had to in their last sickness. Mrs. Brink also requested no funeral services, so our pastor, Elder R. Lester Dodson, read the twenty-fifth Psalm and said a prayer. Interment took place in Hillside Cemetery, Middletown, N. Y., on Tuesday, February 7th, 1939.

STANLEY B. HUNT.

DANIEL FERGUSON, of Highgate, Ontario, Canada, passed away May 3rd, 1938, in his seventy-eighth year. He firmly believed in the doctrine set forth in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He believed firmly in the absolute sovereignty of God and the predestination of all things. He is now at rest.

His sorrowing wife,

ISABELLA FERGUSON.

CORRECTIONS.

THERE are two errors in my article in the SIGNS. I do not know whether they were my errors, or errors made in setting the type. In the poem on the first page of January issue, the last of the fifth verse should read, "For they are the objects of God's blessed choice." In the February issue, on the first page, second column, third line from the bottom, the word "condemning" should be "describing."

J. C. SIKES.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Florence H. Disharoon, Pa., $1; Mrs. Alma M. Lambert, Va., $1; Mrs. Emma Mathis, Ky., $1; A friend, Wash., $1; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $2; Mrs. Kate Lunsford, Ky., $1.

MEETINGS.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church holds meetings the fourth Sunday of each month at 1026 East Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Meeting begins at 10:30 a. m., dismisses for lunch and reconvenes at 2 o'clock p. m. Meeting days have been changed from the first to the fourth Sunday of each month. No Saturday or night meetings.

BURLIE HALL, Pastor
W. H. CAVE, Ass't Pastor.
(MRS.) H. B. CURLIE, Church Clerk

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School Baptist Church of Primitive faith and order, will meet every fourth Sunday at 412 E. Raulston Avenue, Ontario, California, and should God will this will be her place of meeting until he opens the way and puts it into her mind to meet elsewhere.

T. D. WALKER, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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I feel to recommend this book to our readers.—G. R.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 107. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1939. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE SEVEN SAYINGS OF OUR SAVIOR WHILE ON THE CROSS.

BRETHREN, it is my desire to write a few lines, using Paul's language as recorded in 1 Corinthians ii. 2: "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." I cannot find one thing in myself to boast of, therefore all the goodness I have any hope in is that which Jesus accomplished while here on this earth. I believe that he fulfilled the law to a jot and tittle, and suffered the penalty for the many sins of God's chosen, by shedding his precious blood on the cross of Calvary.

Feasting upon the thoughts of the crucifixion of Jesus, brings to mind the seven statements that he made while hanging on the cross. Matthew and Mark record the fourth statement, Luke records the first, second and seventh, while John gives the third, fifth and sixth. Seven signifies fullness and completeness, and I verily believe the full and complete doctrine of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is given in these grand utterances Jesus made while suffering the intense pain and agony being nailed to the cross.

Let us first notice the first statement Jesus made, which was a prayer to his Father, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."—Luke xxiii. 34. I verily believe this was a true prayer, inspired by the God part of the character that was hanging on Calvary's cross. I further believe that all true prayers are answered, therefore conclude that all whom Jesus was praying for were forgiven. He was praying for those who had nailed him to the cross. We find that those who crucified him consisted of both Jews and Gentiles. Those who naturally crucified him were typical of those whose sins were laid upon his shoulders. Figuratively God's chosen among both Jews and Gentiles nailed Jesus to the cross with their sins. "The wages of sin is death," and Jesus died in the stead of God's chosen. In fact, he died that

God's people might live. In the death of Jesus justice was satisfied and the sins of God's people were forgiven. We, therefore, finally conclude that Jesus' prayer while hanging on the cross was answered.

His second utterance was, "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."—Luke xxiii. 43. He was addressing these words to one of the malefactors crucified with him. This one realized (as do all of God's children) that his crucifixion was just. He was also blessed to realize that Jesus was the Christ. Therefore he beseeched Christ to "Remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Each time the penitent child of God realizes his own hopeless condition unless he be "remembered" by that Christ who is the sufficiency of God's chosen. The other malefactor spoke as the ridiculing sarcastic world, who have never been brought to repentance and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Jesus said to that penitent one who was crucified with him, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." I believe it is a paradise for God's chosen who feel justly condemned to die to realize that Jesus has remembered them.

The third statement of Jesus was to his mother and the disciples he loved: "Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciples, Behold thy mother!" —John xix. 26, 27. The natural mother of Jesus represented Mother Wisdom, or the Holy Spirit. John, whom Jesus loved, represented those for whom he died. God's wisdom had designed the way by which justice must be satisfied. You will notice that John took the mother of Jesus unto his own house. Jesus told his disciples (John xiv. 18) that he would not leave them comfortless, but would pray the Father and he would send another comforter (John xvi.) which would guide them into the way of all truth. The mother of Jesus (Wisdom, the Spirit of truth) has abode in the city of God, the house of God's chosen, or in the hearts of his elect, the people for whom Jesus died. This Comforter is a grand Comforter, crying to Jerusalem, the city of God, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

His fourth cry was, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"—Matt. xxvii. 46; Mark xv. 34. You will notice that the Son of God did not realize his relationship, by noting the difference in address. He formerly addressed God as "Father," but after being forsaken he addressed him as "My God." Jesus was forsaken that those he died for might be owned. He could not have died had he not been forsaken. Jesus was bearing the penalty for the sins of God's elect. Justice had to be satisfied, therefore Jesus was forsaken in the stead of God's elect, that mercy could be extended them and the grace doctrine be the truth. Jesus was as destitute of the wisdom as to why he was forsaken as any of God's children are when it pleases God to withdraw his Holy Spirit.

The fifth saying of Christ on the

cross was, "I thirst."—John xix. 28. The result of being forsaken after enjoying the sweet relationship was this thirst. When Jesus thirsted he was given vinegar to drink. He was given something bitter to drink so that when God's children thirst they might be given something sweet. Jesus said in his sermon on the mountain, "Blessed are they which do hunger and THIRST after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Jesus drank the bitter cup that the people of God might be blessed to drink of that fountain of life. Yes, he wore a crown of thorns that God's elect might wear a crown of glory. He was forsaken that we might be owned.

The sixth saying that Jesus made while nailed to the cross was, "It is finished."—John xix. 30. He had fulfilled his mission upon earth. He had completely fulfilled law and prophecy. He had kept the law in behalf of God's children. He had suffered the agonizing pains of death as the penalty for the sins of God's people. Therefore justice was satisfied and every one of God's elect was blameless and without blemish. "It is finished." Jesus said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." —John vi. 38, 39. Again, in John iv. 34: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to *finish* his work." There on the cross he said, "It is finished."

We notice in the seventh saying that he was in possession of this wonderful relationship again as he addressed Jehovah as "Father." This alone shows that God was well pleased with his Son's accomplishment. In this seventh and last statement he said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."—Luke xxiii. 46. Then he gave up the ghost. This was a crowning work, worthy of acceptation with the Father. The voice which spoke out of the clouds to those on the mount of transfiguration proclaimed concerning Jesus, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Jesus said, I am the way, and the truth, and the life. I believe he is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the author and finisher of our faith, therefore my determination among God's people is not to know anything save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

I have only hinted at the beauties contained in these seven wonderful statements of Jesus on the cross. I have read over this manuscript and find it very imperfect, like the writer, and very brief, but I do not believe I have stepped aside from this determination not to know anything save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

In conclusion, permit me to say the editors and contributors to the SIGNS have been blessed to stay closer to this determination than have the writers of any periodical I have been blessed to read. May God forbid that private opinions, personal differences and confessions ever be published in this good paper which would mar the harmony of its contents. God grant its continu-

ance. This wonderful doctrine of grace and love is soothing and comforting to this poor, sinful, wretched mortal, who through sad tribulations and experience has lost all confidence in self and the arm of flesh. As Job, my earthly possessions and wealth have been taken away, to make me realize that even temporal and natural things are unmerited and blessings of God.

Dear readers, please write me when you can.

E. J. LAMBERT.

CULLENDALE, Arkansas.

CAMINO, California.

DEAR EDITORS:—I desire to write a few lines for publication (provided it meets with your approval) on a portion of Scripture which reads as follows: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."—Col. iii. 1-4. I do not for one moment think I could ever explain all that is in the foregoing Scripture. I only hope to give a few thoughts of my poor mind, which I trust to be in connection with this Scripture. It is said in the Scripture, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."—Rev. xx. 6. If it is scriptural to speak of the first and second resurrections, and I think it is, it is my mind at present to speak of the first, and if I am enabled to do so, it will evidently bear testimony that I believe in the second, or general resurrection of our vile bodies. Christ said, I am the resurrection. He also said, I am the way, the truth and the life. And he is that, not to himself only, but to his chosen elect people, therefore said he, Because I live, ye shall live also. Again in this was the love of God manifested, that he sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him. It is an evident fact that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, whom he hath and doth and will call with an holy calling out from the world of ungodly men, whom he sets apart from the world, sanctifieth by his Holy Spirit, to the praise and glory of the rich grace of his love, to reverence him with godly fear, and praise him for what he has done for them who are such poor and unworthy creatures. I do not suppose any one of the Lord's people ever felt and realized their insufficiency and wretched condition within themselves any more than did the apostle Paul, who wrote the foregoing Scripture which I have taken for a foundation to base my thoughts upon. He preached the complete depravity of all of Adam's posterity within themselves. He also preached the doctrine of election, and of the unchangeable and unshakable salvation for them in Christ. He declared there was no difference in the elect and nonelect by nature, but that God himself made the difference. He declared that by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin,

and death passed upon all men, for all have sinned. But God commendeth his love toward us (the elect) in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." Furthermore, Jesus Christ himself, with all of his apostles, preached, and it is the record that God gave of his Son, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, who were called his people, also elect according to the foreknowledge of God, whose will and purpose was in Christ, that they were elect, appointed and called of God to obtain salvation by the atonement of the blessed Son of God; and every step he made was ordered of God, and necessary and perfectly essential for their eternal salvation. This also is according to the promise that God gave to Abraham, which I shall speak of later, if the Lord wills. I will here state that it was the elect of God, who he, through the rich favor of his grace, chose from the beginning to salvation in Christ, that the apostle was addressing when he said, If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above. In the first and second chapters of Colossians the apostle had told the brethren what God, their Father, and Christ, their Savior, had wrought for his people: that they had redemption through Christ's blood, the forgiveness of sins; who is the image of the invisible God; that by him all things were created, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist, and he is the head of the body, the church. It pleased the Father that in him should all the fullness dwell; and in him (Christ) dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and the dear saints of God are complete in Christ. The apostle admonished and warned the saints against all ungodliness, and in a special manner the deceitfulness of ungodly men, who teach for doctrine the commandments of men, not holding the Head (Christ), from which all the body by joints and band having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. Now the apostle tells us in Colossians ii. 11, 12, what takes place with God's children at his appointed time, and how and in what manner they are risen with Christ. He says, "In whom [Christ] also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." The Scripture teaches the law is our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster, for we are all the children of God by faith in Christ. Now they that are such are risen with Christ, and are not under the law, but under grace, and are the children of light, and of the day, and members of Christ's body, the church. We are not of the night, nor of darkness, therefore let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober.

We read in Revelation xii. 1, "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." I understand this woman to be the church of the true and living God, the pillar and ground of the truth, the bride, the Lamb's wife. She is clothed with the righteousness her Husband wrought, the law is under her feet and she is crowned with the blessed doctrine of God, that the twelve apostles preached, saying to the heirs of promise, Ye are not under the law, but under grace; you are risen from dead works to a living faith in Christ and are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. This blessed doctrine tells the children of God that Christ died for their sins, and rose for their justification; that they are heirs of God through Christ. Yes, heirs of heaven and all that heaven is. It brings to the poor child of grace good news, the best news poor sinners ever heard. It declares to them that they are clothed with the best righteousness that ever was, that will endure forever, and will do for them to stand in the presence of God, and wear in the ceaseless ages of eternity. It teaches them that it was wrought by their Head and Husband, their King and Savior, their all and in all. He wrought it with his own skillful hand and brought it to her, and put it on her, and gave it to her, and told her it was her's, and was a manifestation of his great love for her. It just fit her, and she was well pleased, and thanked and praised his holy name. Furthermore, he teaches his children that he suffered and died for their sins, when they were dead in sin, without strength, or life, or hope, or God, in the world. Herein is the love of God commended to usward (the elect), not that we loved God (but were enemies to God), but that God loved his elect and gave his only begotten Son to die for them, and to render perfect satisfaction to pay all they owed to the just God of the whole earth this Christ did to perfection, and thus redeemed his people to God (all the way) by his own blood, out of every nation, tongue and people under heaven, so they are without blame before him in love. But is his righteousness all he teaches his children? No, indeed, he teaches them of their own corruptness, their vile and sinful nature. Every child of God's grace, who has been born again, has two natures to contend with while living in this world. One is earthly, the other is heavenly; one is opposed to the other, and they are in the very life, heart and mind of the child of grace. These two natures are called, and are, the old man and the new man. One is of the flesh, the other is of the Spirit: sin and righteousness. God's children are admonished to put off the old man and to put on the new man. Read Colossians iii. 8-10; also Ephesians iv. 22-24. God's children within themselves are helpless creatures, and those who realize it have learned a good lesson, otherwise they would keep on trusting in the old man. The child of God is subject to either of these natures that may rule over him, yet he belongs to the new, and the new belongs

to him, as a free gift of God, by right of the redemption that is in Christ. The old man is bound by the new, and his goods are spoiled, or condemned. That which Christ is made unto us is the new man; the old man is that of our earthly nature. As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. This is the same as to say, As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on the new man, for the new man cannot be separate from Christ, any more than those who have been baptized into his death and risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, or those who are dead, and their life hid with Christ in God, for he said, I in you, and you in me, and I in the Father. In the measure that Christ dwells in his children in the same measure do they dwell in him. As ye have received Christ Jesus, so walk ye in him. God has declared, I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. It is the elect, the very child of grace, that is risen with Christ through the faith of God, and he lives by faith. He cannot live by the old nature through faith, for it is death to the old nature, but through the new the poor child lives, and faints not. God's children cannot live as they desire in this world, for when they would do good evil is present, and though they grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth, yet they are dependent upon grace from first to last. It is the poor in spirit that are blessed; not the rich. God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. The Lord's people trust in him and call upon his name because he puts them in the place to feel the need of his mercy, and blesses them to do so. The promise of God was given to Abraham by faith: that in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Which seed is Christ, who is no less than the very love, grace and mercy of God, for such was in him, and came by him. And with him God has quickened his people together, raised them up together, and has blessed them together with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God before ordained that we should walk in them.

Submitted in love to the household of faith.

J. L. SANDERS.

BENTON, Kentucky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—The old year of 1938 is gone, and with it many sweet and precious memories, made so because I have hope of eternal life. My hope has been strengthened many times within the past year, and has almost left me at times, too, or, in other words, many have been the times in which I have doubted, but a little incident happened to me that I would like to share with you. The night our old year was going out (December 31st) I was studying the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and how Jesus was our Passover and our leavening power, when I grew weary and fell asleep, and

in a dream on my bed I was in the city of Mayfield, Kentucky, at the church of a very dear servant of God, O. W. Perkins, and I saw the faces of quite a number gathered there from different associations with whom we correspond, and also the ministers of said churches. It seemed to me in my dream that it was a regular association meeting, as we have in the autumnal season of the year. Sunday morning, first day of the year, I arose, and mentioned to one of the boys that it was the monthly meeting time at brother O. W. Perkins' church in Mayfield, and I would like to go. But having no conveyance it seemed impossible. So this son went over to a filling station, and at ten o'clock he and a neighbor's boy came back in a car. He said, Mama, you can go to church if you will pay the gas bill. I thought at first, brother Dodson, I was not financially able to pay the price, but oh those faces I saw in my dream drew me, so I took one of the children who was playing in the yard and we started. Before we were very far on our way, one of the brethren of our church, together with his wife and two widowed sisters, passed us. I knew they were going to this same place. When we arrived and I reached the door of this sacred little church there in the stand stood Elder O. W. Perkins, and behind him were four other servants of God, namely, Darnell, Poyner, Swann and Loviery. All around sat the congregation I saw in my dream. They had planned this meeting, but I did not know it. No one had let me know of their intentions of gathering together on this New Year's day, but oh how I was lifted up to think of my being there with them, and must I say because of being warned in a dream? I realized my infirmities were great, caused by sin. I knew of myself I was not worthy to be there in the midst of these holy people, this chosen few, but how easy it was to get there. On the way I read in the hymn book, I will not say I sang songs, but I did read the beautiful poem by Newton, "Savior, visit thy plantation, grant us, Lord, a gracious rain." This verse stirred up my pure mind, if indeed I have the mind of Christ, which is pure.

"Allure me no longer, ye false glowing charms,
The Savior invites me, I'll go to his arms.
At the banquet of mercy I hear there is room;
Oh there may I feast with his children, at home."

I sang that verse over and over in my weak and untrained way, and it seemed I was flying into the very place where Jesus was banqueting, and if I did not find the banqueting-place, then I have never feasted, for on that day five servants of the great high God proclaimed intercession for the bride of His choice until time should be no more and he comes for her. They preached Jesus, and him crucified, and knew nothing else. One dear brother said, I just tell you over and over the things that you know, and that is why I hate to talk to you, because I know nothing new to tell you, just the old, old story of Jesus and his love. I wondered if he had told us new things if would have loved them as we did, and do, the old, old story. The blood of our Savior never will lose its power, and the flesh we eat and the blood we drink, as we hope, will always be enough to satisfy the longings for

the length of time God predestinated us to stay filled, then we will become hungry again. We cannot lay up in store this heavenly manna and feed on it at our leisure, or at any time we would, but God will gather his children and feed them from his increase, and we will eat and rejoice over the same, and for a time go on in the strength of it. I often wonder where the flock will be feeding next; where is our Lord, and where is the flock? Then when I have such days as New Year's day I then think I have seen them feeding, and know it is so, that God does gather them together and his banner over them is love. He makes them to sit in heavenly places in Christ, because he chose them in him before the foundation of the world, that they (we) should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, gives them a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them, which hope is an anchor of their souls, both sure and steadfast, and having had their eyes enlightened they understand the exceeding greatness of God, how he gives hope and the Spirit of wisdom and revelation to them whom he chose and gave to his Son out of the world. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, Jesus says. All these he will raise at the last day, and they will have oil in their lamps and ready to meet him, for they are married to him. God says, Know ye not that I am married unto you, O ye backsliding Israel? God is the only Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord. It is of him that we are in Christ, because no man cometh to Jesus unless the Father draws him, and no man cometh unto the Father but by Jesus, for he is the way, the truth and the life. Now if I was in fellowship with God on this day of days, this New Year's day, it was through Christ I had fellowship, and if I have known indeed my Savior Jesus it has been because God drew me with his love to the Son, and he, being head over all things to the church, rules and reigns, and it being predestinated that we should be accepted in him, then where does our work come in? How can we accept, when we are made accepted in the Beloved? I see no room or place for conditions. It is all of him and by him, this holy child Jesus, that was begotten of the Father, to be Lord of all and King of his kingdom and Bridegroom of the bride.

Brother Dodson, I will try to close. I have been filled, I hope, with this new wine of the new covenant, because I hope I believe. When we are filled we soar away to heights unknown and forget time things, and oh we dread to come down again to battle with our infirmities of the flesh and sin. Oh if we could only stay lifted up and view the landscape, see at all times the new Jerusalem, her walls, her bulwarks, her high towers, the beautiful mountains where the lights twinkle, because God sets them there on this hill. I could see, I believe I did, the lights of his holy hill Sunday, because he does not put them under something to hide them, but they

are where the eyes of understanding can see and behold their beauty. This city of God is more to be praised for beauty and solemnity than all we can see with the natural eyes in this world of God's creation, but we see this holy city with an eye of faith. We see the people who make the city, they are full of light. So it is by grace we are saved, through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. All we have is the gift of God. If we have a little hope, he gives it. If peace, he gives it.

Excuse my many errors, dear brother, and my ramblings. It may be I should hesitate to write or speak of the greatness of God, but I often do this, and then feel ashamed that I did. I hope you will be spared, if God so wills, to feed the flock that was purchased with the blood of Christ through another year, and on and on until God says, Enough. I know I do not know how to ask God for anything, unless he leads me through his Spirit to ask in accordance to his will. Then if we ask it will come to pass. The future looks very dark to me, but God dwells in thick darkness. The great harlot is indeed playing her cunningness now, to the extent that even the very elect would be deceived if not kept by God's power in "the way," where the unclean cannot go nor walk. So let us hope on that our calling and election is sure, made so by the will of God, and that we are indeed his people, who are made to praise him.

Farewell in the Lord.

EFFIE BLOGG WHITENTON.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., July 29, 1938.

DEAR EDITORS:—Another year has passed since I sent my remittance for the SIGNS. A year filled with many disappointments, sorrows and heartaches. Sometimes they seem too numerous and heavy to bear, and if we did not have the everlasting arms underneath to bear us up we could not endure them. When we are on the mountain top, as I am at times, a poor, degraded, puffed up, arrogant and sinful sinner, everything seems to run smoothly. Even at home the little worries and differences that often arise to vex our vain and esteemed selves seem trivial, but when the Lord sees fit in his merciful, loving and divine way to chastise us we are cast down from the mountain top into the valley; our feet are in the mire and we cannot do or say anything that is right and everything seems lost, even our souls are only fit for hell and all its horrors. I am not a member of the Old Baptist Church, and it may be some will think I am out of place in trying to write and express some of my unworthy thoughts, but some one who is given to understand God's divine will may be able to read between the lines and understand. I often desire to express my feelings, but it seems that I cannot, for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that we cannot do the things that we would. (Gal. v. 17.) As far back as I can remember I have wanted to be good. I had that something mysterious in my heart that the very mention of Jesus' name would cause the tears to well up in my eyes.

I have tried many times to crush it down, and not be that way, and I may for a time, but not for long, for soon something will touch that secret cord in some mysterious way that I know not of and I am back again in the slough of despair. But I firmly believe that all things are predestinated to be and we cannot change them in any way, and it is good for us that God ordered it so, for if we could have it our way and do all the things the flesh desires, then we would take all the glory. I am glad it is so ordered and fixed and God has the glory. I believe all we can look forward to is God's grace, imputed through Jesus the Christ.

If I have written anything I should not, please cast it aside as unworthy, even as I am, a poor, weak sinner.

W. H. COLE.

[WE feel the foregoing letter is deserving of space in our paper, and would recommend to our friend that he quench not the Holy Spirit, but "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." We have no doubt but what they will be able to read between the lines and understand him, better, perhaps, than he understands himself. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." The militant church is a real HOME for truly repentant sinners in this world.—R. L. D.]

ANABEL, MO., Jan. 23, 1939.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As my time for the SIGNS has expired, I am inclosing two dollars to pay another year's subscription. I do not want to miss a single number, as I get much comfort and enjoyment in reading the many good articles from the pens of the editors and other writers. I, too, would like to contribute to its columns if God would guide my mind as he did all the writers in the January issue. They were all spiritually good and comforting. I like to hear it again and again that our God is a sovereign God. I hope he is the one I worship. How sinful and unworthy I am, but he is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. Praise his holy name. I am a poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

(MRS.) J. R. McAFEE.

MCDOWELL, KY., Feb. 20, 1939.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I wish you would publish a notice in the SIGNS that I will pay a good price to any one having the writings of Elder Samuel Jones, on discipline and order of the church of God. He was an Old Baptist living and writing about the year 1800, or earlier. Also to any one having any of Elder Wilson Thompson's writings, or those of Joshua Lawrence.

Yours by God's great mercy,

MILFORD HALL, SR.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Mrs. W. G. Thompson, Ontario, $1; Mrs. Phebe Horton, N. Y., $4; B. O. Willey, Texas, $1.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1939.

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CHURCHES AND PASTORS.

BEING asked some time ago to write some on the order and practice of the church, we shall endeavor to do so. We feel most any of the brethren could write better than we can on this important subject, yet if the Lord will direct we are glad to pass on to the household of faith our thoughts. We shall write first on the matter of churches calling pastors, and their accepting. The meaning of the word pastor is shepherd, one who watches over sheep. In the church to-day it is the one the church chooses who is to preach regularly for them, to advise with them, to be as a watchman, to minister of the Lord. He is the undershepherd of the flock, over which the Holy Ghost makes him an overseer. Christ is the great Shepherd of the sheep, upon whom not only the church depends entirely, but also the pastor, or undershepherd.

Choosing a pastor is a very important thing. We are told that the mind of the Lord is with his people, and in the multitude of counsellors there is safety. The church alone has power to call her pastors. No association, man or board of men have any scriptural authority to dictate to a church who or when she shall call a pastor. God gives the church alone this authority, and has declared he will give her pastors of his own choosing. We will mention here a few of the important things in calling a pastor. First, the church should feel as a body that the man they call is called of God and sound in the faith. Second, the church should feel that he is sent of God unto them as their undershepherd. The feeling certainly should be that he was the choice of the Lord, this being the reason he was their choice. This is manifest in most cases by a unanimity of heart among the membership, in feeling that he is sent of God unto them. In serving churches ourself during the last fifteen years, we have never accepted the care of a church except the call was unanimous. We are thankful the call has always been that way. There are exceptions to most rules, and sometimes there will be a member (or more) who does not receive the preaching of a certain man. The church being of one mind in other things, it is sometimes best for a man to preach at that place for awhile before accepting a call there. Sometimes the

member who hesitates to call him later receives his preaching with joy. The Lord must open the heart before any preaching is received. We remember an experience we had a number of years ago. We were called to serve a church. We were not present when we were called, but were told the call was unanimous. Shortly after going there we noticed one brother who was not receiving our preaching. He manifested no hostility toward us in any way, yet we could tell that our speaking was not comforting to him. After preaching there awhile, one Sunday while we were speaking we noticed he was overcome with emotion. When the meeting was over he came to us and could hardly speak for crying. He told us frankly how he had had the wrong impression; how he had tried not to hear us, and of how the Lord had taken it away suddenly and opened his heart. During the years we served there none was more precious to us than this brother. Dear brethren, how often these things require gentleness and patience. As a majority usually rule among Old School Baptists in all cases except fellowship, it is a serious thing for a member to seek to obstruct the performance of a church, unless such an one has scriptural authority for such action. The church calling a pastor should feel that the man they call would be an ensemple to the flock; that spiritually there was manifest in him the qualifications required in the word of God. Not greedy of filthy lucre, no striker, not covetous, apt to teach, not striving about words to no profit, etc. It is not a good sign when a man is found seeking the pastoral care of a certain church. It is much better for the church to seek him. Churches should avoid such. The Bible declares that a man's gift maketh room for him. All preachers have not a pastoral gift, in our humble judgment. In Ephesians iv. 11, 12, Paul says, "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." We have heard able ministers who we did not feel were called as pastors.

The most important thing we know of in a man accepting the care of a church is to be given of God, by grace divine, to feel that they have been given to one another in the Lord. A true pastor is a gift from heaven to a church, and the church is likewise given to him of the Lord. What a solemn thing it is for a man to be called to care for the church of the living God. No wonder Paul said, Take heed unto yourselves. Oh how serious! We who serve as pastors should consider the writings in regard to pastors, what Jeremiah says of them, Jer. x. 21, "For the pastors are become brutish." When a man expects the church to be his servant, instead of him being the servant of the Lord unto them, it is brutishness. "They shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered." And in Jeremiah xxiii. 1, we are told, "Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture, saith the Lord." First of all in consideration of the matter, the one

is to take heed unto himself, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost (NOT A BOARD OF MEN) hath made him overseer, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. (Acts xx. 28.) How solemn a thing it is to have the care of God's chosen ones, bought with such a price, the precious blood of Christ, the One without blemish. No wonder when trouble invades the flock of a God-called pastor he is often upon his knees in prayer to God for strength and wisdom, desiring to be wise as a serpent and as harmless as a dove. He often recognizes dangers others do not see. He is given to recognize often the wolf in sheep's clothing. There is no other tie like that between a true pastor and his church. In taking the care of the church a man must feel a willingness to spend and be spent for her. In Acts xx. 27, the apostle declares, "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." When a complete salvation in Christ is preached for all the chosen and redeemed family of God all the counsel of God is declared. Even the prophets' writing was the Spirit of Christ that was in them, signifying the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. When election, predestination, effectual call of all of the elect of God, justification by faith, and any other doctrine of God is preached, we are preaching him who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power." —Col. ii. 9, 10. "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace."—John i. 16. In Christ is all a poor child of God needs. His wall of faith, his rejoicing, his wisdom, resurrection, his all and in all. We are told, If any preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. When one receives Christ by the work of faith in the heart, he receives the fullness of the blessing of God, his obedience and every spiritual blessing. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"—Rom. viii. 32. To tell a child of God that he can obtain blessings that were not treasured up in Christ for him is to cast unto him only husks without corn.

We realize we have wandered from our subject, but feel right now we could write on and on, but in conclusion will say, May the Lord give us grace to seek the mind of Christ in these things, and if a man is called of God he will bear about in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the church Christ's image. In every problem of the church there is only one source of wisdom, and we must wait his will to know.

"Joined in one Spirit to one Head,
We wait his will to know,
That we in his right steps might tread,
And follow him below.

Oh may we ever walk in him,
And nothing know beside;
Nothing desire, nor aught esteem,
But Jesus crucified.

Closer and closer let us cleave
To his beloved embrace;
Expect his fullness to receive,
And grace to answer grace."

The Lord willing, we shall follow this with some thoughts about the duties of churches and pastors.

D. V. S.

MISSIONS.

INASMUCH as our readers manifested considerable interest in some correspondence which we published in the August, 1938, SIGNS, we are passing on to them something of a kindred nature, which we hope will likewise prove interesting and instructive. The position taken by our Missionary friends seems to us to be an insult to God. It not only reflects upon his wisdom and power, but his ability in every way. Most certainly, God understands the Chinese and Africans, and can speak their languages as well as he does the language of the Englishman and the American. His arm is not shortened that he cannot reach into the jungles of darkest Africa and save his people there as well as in any other part of the globe. In ancient days he caused the dumb ass to speak, and he is just as able to do all his pleasure to-day as ever he was.—R. L. D.

DEAR MRS. DODSON:—This is the questionnaire of which I spoke to you the other day. I am hoping that Mr. Dodson will be good enough to check it over an express his views. That is asking much, I know, but his convictions are not those of a "yes man," and I know would be of real help to those who are making the study. He could sign or not, as he pleased, and if he preferred to seal the envelope, it would not be opened here. I hope Mr. Dodson may have time to do this. Thank you any way.

Sincerely,

——— YULE.

DECEMBER 11, 1938.

DEAR MISS YULE:—Mrs. Dodson assures me that you honestly wish me to answer the question, WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE MISSIONARY IDEA? at the head of the four-page questionnaire. Briefly, "I'm agin it." Doubtless you will want more of an answer than this, and with the understanding that what I shall say represents my own sincere and deep-rooted convictions, and shall not be construed in any way as intended to offend you, since I fear you will not be found to be in agreement with me, I shall, by the grace of God, attempt to give you not so much what Lester Dodson thinks about the matter, for that alone would be of little value or use to any one, especially if not supported by the word of God. It would seem to me that all earnest seekers after truth should, above all things, desire to know what God's attitude is as set forth in the Scriptures of eternal truth. What mankind's attitude is, whether for or against anything that pertains to the true worship of God is of significance only as it is supported by the divine record, so let us turn to the Bible for the answer to the question. Paul tells us that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God

may be perfect, throughly [or thoroughly] furnished unto all good works." I take this to mean that the Bible contains everything needful or that is profitable for doctrine, or for the instruction and welfare of the true church. Jesus said to Peter, as representative of the disciples, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."—Matt. xvi. 19. Let us, therefore, be careful not only to make use to the fullest extent of those things which God's word authorizes, or looses to the church, but at the same time be equally careful to oppose those things which are bound, or forbidden in the church. In my humble opinion, the Bible consistently and definitely condemns the Missionary idea as we know it from the first chapter of Genesis to the very last one in Revelation. If the legal dispensation as set forth in the Old Testament Scriptures did nothing more, it showed conclusively and repeatedly the inability of the creature (man) to keep the law. Paul said, "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."—Gal. ii. 21. In the next chapter of this epistle he asks, "Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."—Gal. iii. 21-24. The purpose of the law was to show man's shortcomings, to show the need of a new and living way, even Christ, and him crucified, as the only means whereby sinners can be saved. Paul continued in the foregoing connection by saying, "But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." It was concerning this gospel dispensation that God spake by the mouth of his prophet Jeremiah, saying, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Isaiah (Isaiah liv. 11-13) first describes the characteristics of the Lord's people,

then tells what the Lord will do for them. Hear ye him: "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and thy borders of pleasant stones. *And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord: and great shall be the peace of thy children.*" Jesus Christ, the head and founder of his church, declared to Peter, "Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." This rock was REVELATION by God, and not the teaching of mankind. He had just said to Peter, when he conconfessed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: *for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.*" He not only told him how it was not, but told him how it was, thus presenting both sides of the question so that it cannot be brought into question. Jesus even went so far as to say, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."—Matt. xi. 25. These things apply to-day and are just as true as ever they were. The wise men, so-called, to-day, like Saul of Tarsus, are ignorantly persecuting the church of God, and nothing short of the same power which wrought wondrously in him, changing him from Saul (meaning a great one) to that of Paul the apostle, meaning little, at least in his own estimation, for he speaks of himself as being less than the least of all saints. Time forbids that I should go into his calling, which he emphasizes to have been according to the will of God, and not of his own choosing, and of the fact that he came preaching not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and with power from on high, to the end and purpose that the faith of God's elect, being much more precious than gold and silver, should not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God. Paul further takes occasion to remind his brethren as to their calling, saying, "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: *that no flesh should glory in his presence.*"—1 Cor. i. 26-29. Please take the trouble to look over the list of the twelve whom Jesus chose personally when here in the world and see how many were men of outstanding accomplishments as reckoned by the standards of men, but see how wonderfully God's power was manifested on the day when Pentecost had fully come when Peter, a poor, ignorant Gallilean fisherman, stood up and preached to men of all tongues, and yet every man

heard in his own tongue. No wonder they were all amazed and marvelled at the work of the Holy Spirit which came, we are told, from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind. God, who is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, is still calling and qualifying men to proclaim these glad tidings to those whom he quickens by his mighty power and causes to hear his gracious words. His servants preach to-day as independently of the teachings of men, with all of their institutions of learning, etc., as the apostles did of old, and thus his power is manifested.

John in the closing chapter of the Great Book tells what shall be the lot of the man who shall add unto these things, and also to the man who shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, so we should not deal lightly or deceitfully with these things. Of one thing I am quite certain, and that is that the Bible has not become antiquated, nor will it ever grow out of date, and as neither Jesus nor any of his disciples ever found it necessary or desirable to form any Missionary societies, or other man-made organization for the carrying on of his work, most of which are of more or less recent origin, I do not feel called upon to stray so far afield as to recommend any such departure from the well defined and clearly marked out path for the followers of our Lord. Jesus commanded his disciples to "Go" into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, etc., but nowhere do we find that he has delegated to any human agency the work of either preparing or sending men anywhere to preach his blessed gospel. The God I hope I worship and adore is an almighty God, an absolute sovereign over the whole earth, and there is no part of it where his power does not extend or where his word does not prosper when he sends it forth. He has declared it shall not return unto him void, and one of the writers said in substance, Let God be true and every man a liar. He is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent, all in one, and he doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or need any say unto him, What or why doest thou? Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." And he also said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." He took Nicodemus as an outstanding example to show that only a NEW BIRTH availeth anything. Nicodemus was a man of the Pharisees, possessing great natural learning and knowledge of the letter of the Scriptures. Besides he was a great Jew, being a ruler of the Jews, and no doubt could trace his ancestry back to Abraham, and, further still, he was regarded as a great churchman of his day, for Jesus spake of him as being a "master of Israel," but notwithstanding all of these things, Jesus swept them aside and declared emphatically, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." He insisted, "Ye must be born again," and in illustrating how the new birth comes about, he showed clearly that man could have

no part in the matter. He calls attention to the wind, that it "bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." There is no exception to the rule, and you, like Nicodemus, may feel to ask, How can these things be? Let me assure you that nothing is impossible with God, and in his work he is the beginning and the end, the first and the last of it. He is also a jealous God and will not divide his honor with another. Therefore all of the praise, honor and glory are his due, not only in this world, but in that which is to come, where he will be crowned Lord of all. Paul, in writing to his son Timothy in the ministry, says that God "hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Does this go back too far for you? It certainly does away with the chance system of works which we hear so much about in this day of spiritual darkness. Possibly this line of thought may seem very strange to you, but I hope you will weigh my words in the scale of Holy Writ, and if they be found wanting, or not in accord with the Scriptures, that you will cast them aside as being undeserving of your consideration. The religion of our Lord and Savior is of far too much importance to be dealt with lightly, or to take the word of any mortal man as being final. Let us, therefore, search as for hidden treasure the divine record in the hope of finding our names written in the Lamb's book of life. Finding no authority in the Bible for missions, either domestic or foreign, I cannot go beyond what the word of God teaches by advocating them or lending myself to the promulgation of such a doctrine.

I am not ashamed of the things which I have here endeavored to set forth, and therefore shall not hesitate to attach my name to this letter, which you may use as you see fit. The questionnaire, of course, was intended for those who favor such things and my report will no doubt be of a small minority of the opposition which you may gather. My address you will see from the heading of this letter, and my affiliations with what I believe to be the true church of God is that of minister, to which I feel that I have been called by none other than God himself. My age falls between the fifty-one and sixty group class, and my schooling in the "Less than full high school course." I have many times felt the lack of a natural education and am doing what I can to give my son all the advantages of which he may be able to absorb, but I am convinced that so far as the wisdom of this world is concerned, at best it is foolishness with God. I have taken no course in theology, and have never felt the need of such a thing. I have been speaking in a public way for about twenty years, and for many years have spoken twice almost every Sunday, and besides this work and that which such a place entails, I am also a business man, working six, or to be more exact about five and one-half days a week, so if God did not

inspire me with that food which is necessary for the flock before which he has called me to go in and out, I am certain they would have very poor pickings. I verily believe that God gives me that food which is needful for the sheep of his pasture.

I have written hurriedly and without the thought the subject deserves, but I am a very busy man and unless I act promptly I do not know when I would be able to answer the question under consideration. Mrs. Dodson gave me your note late this afternoon, and here is your reply.

Your friend,

R. LESTER DODSON.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MISS JESSIE MURRAY died at the home of her niece, Mrs. Wesley G. Thompson, Blenheim, Ontario, April 17th, 1938. She was the daughter of James and Jane (Galbraith) Murray, and leaves to mourn their loss a number of nephews and nieces. Sister Jessie, for many years, believed in Jesus as the Savior of sinners, but it was not given her to unite with the church until the second Sunday in October, 1929, when she, with four other brethren, were baptized the same day. The writer remembers with what pleasure we heard her relate her travel to the church. When telling of her darkness of mind, and temptations through which she had passed, she told of a dream she had had, in which she saw a wolf attacking a lamb, with intent to destroy it. Whenever the lamb would show signs of life the wolf would attack it, and her sympathy would go out to the lamb. When she awoke it seemed clear to her that the wolf was Satan, and the lamb herself, and that whenever Satan saw any evidence of the life of Christ in us he would attack us with a determination to destroy us, if possible. As these thoughts passed through her mind hymn 785, in Beebe's hymn book, "With Christ in God your life is hid." She was able to repeat the whole hymn, to the comfort of a number who heard her. Much of her time was spent in the homes of relatives and friends, where she always made herself useful to others. During the last few years, she spent many of her days alone, but she said she was often not alone. She was kind and considerate of others in many ways, and by her devotion to those near to her she held a place in their hearts and affections that they will never forget. She was a very humble, gracious person, and there was a bond between her and the writer, who was her unworthy pastor, that death could not break. Her sister, Mrs. Duncan McCallum, died a little over a year before her, and this left her sad and lonely. The day the sad news was conveyed to her, she lay in her bed, and it seemed to her as though she saw hands, clean hands, holding her, and at once she felt to lie passive in His hands, for although He had taken her dear sister home, she herself was still in His embrace. As she meditated on the clean hands, she thought of Jesus. "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath *clean hands,* and a pure heart," etc., and she had very sweet meditation on the clean hands, yet Satan tempted her to believe that this was not of the Lord. She told me later how in her anxiety she said, "Lord, if it were from thee, grant that my pastor may read that Psalm in meeting on Sunday." To her surprise and joy, I was led to read the very Psalm she desired. She often refreshed us with her good conver-

sation, we therefore can join with the bereaved relatives in sorrow, but would at the same time remember the joy and peace and rest that she now enjoys, "present with the Lord." We were present with her the last evening of her life, and spoke to her of the sweet fellowship we had enjoyed in the church of God. We reminded her, in her physical weakness, when it was hard for her to breathe, of the clean hands, and with the little strength she had, she said, "Yes, I am still in his hands," and not long afterwards her voice was silenced in death. We write the foregoing for the comfort of her nephews and nieces, who loved her dearly, that they sorrow not, even as those who have no hope, for of her we can say, "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep." She is greatly missed by her niece, Mrs. Wesley G. Thompson, and her nephew, Murray McCallum, and their families, with whom she had mingled so much. It was with this niece she had come to spend her birthday, the day upon which she was to leave us for her heavenly home. May God bless those remaining, with a blessed hope that to them the day shall come when they shall be joined forever with those who have gone before, "united in mansions of bliss." G. R.

MRS. SARAH KERR, widow of Deacon John T. Kerr, died at her home, in Iona Station, Ontario, August 5th, 1938, aged eighty-nine years. She was a daughter of John and Jane McCallum Gillis, of Albrough Township. She had been in poor health for a time, and confined to her bed about a year and one-half. Mrs. Kerr never united with the church, but she cherished secretly the unseen hope in her heart many years, which hope sustained her through dangers seen and unseen, and in the coming to the close of her life hope was so wonderfully manifested in her heart and on her tongue that she gave utterance to many sweet evidences of that hope and faith in her Lord. And how she longed to go home! She was so weary of patiently waiting His appointed time. Truly patience had its perfect work. She often spoke of the journey she would have to take alone, but would say, Jesus trod the wine-press alone. In her weariness of waiting the words would be spoken, Stand still, and see the salvation of God. The desire to be baptized impressed her mind, and knowing her weak condition, the Comforter soothed the dear one by saying to her that she was baptized by the Holy Ghost, which brought rest and peace to her soul, and as she was passing through the valley of the shadow of death she calmly and silently breathed her mortal life out and entered into glory, which beamed in her countenance in the flight of her soul heavenward. She always enjoyed Elder Ruston's visits. He came frequently, and sang, read and spoke in prayer. Often she sang with him. One time in singing the twenty-third Psalm she solemnly repeated, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." The serenity of her countenance as she neared the end was beautiful to behold, for it bespoke the virtues of the dying Lamb of God in her soul. Thus a blood-bought heir of heaven has gone to her reward, and in the resurrection morn she shall be raised a spiritual body, as Christ is, see him as he is, be like him and praise him eternally. She leaves one daughter, Mrs. Clara Elliot; two grandsons, John Kerr Elliot, of London, Ontario, and George Elliot, on the homestead; one great-grandson, James A. Elliot, of London; two sisters, Mrs. Effie Campbell, living with Mrs. Elliot, and Mrs. Mary Graham, of Dutton, Ontario.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder George Ruston, who spoke comfortingly from the words found in 1 Thessalonians iv. 18: "Wherefore comfort one another with these words," after which her body was laid beside that of her husband, in Cowal Cemetery. May God comfort the mourning ones.

Written by request.

(MRS.) JOHN McPHAIL.

LEON SHIELDS was fatally injured in a car wreck on December 16th, 1938. He was the son of S. T. Shields, who for many years was a deacon in the church at Goshen, Arkansas. His mother is now a member of the church at Mt. Gilead. Leon was only nineteen years of age, and leaves a host of relatives and friends to mourn his untimely death. Among his relatives who survive are his mother, two brothers and five sisters. He belonged to a family who are firm believers in salvation by grace, and who live model lives in their community, near Hartford, Alabama.

The remains were taken to Wesley Chapel, where services were conducted by the writer, with interment in the adjoining cemetery, on December 17th, 1938.

ALSO,

THE infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Philip Lamb died February 5th, 1939, and burial services were held from the home, February 6th, conducted by the writer, with interment in Goodwater Cemetery, Wichburg, Alabama. The Master well has said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

ALSO,

MRS. EMMA HENDRIX, the subject of this sketch, died February 10th, 1939, after a lingering illness. She was fifty-six years of age, and the daughter of Elder and Mrs. J. D. Baxley. He died about ten years ago. He was one of the pioneer Primitive Baptist ministers of this section of Alabama. Mrs. Hendrix was a firm believer in the principles upheld by Primitive Baptists, and had a large circle of relatives and friends around Slocomb, Alabama. She is survived by her husband, William Hendrix, four sons and three daughters.

Funeral services were in charge of the writer, at the home, with interment in Wright's Creek Cemetery, February 11th, 1939.

ALSO,

MRS. CATHERINE SELLERS, or "Aunt Catherine," as she was familiarly known, died March 3rd, 1939, after an extended illness. She was eighty-nine years of age, and a pioneer of this section of Alabama. Her husband preceded her in death about forty years. Among her survivors are three daughters: Mrs. Jesse Tindell, of Hartford, with whom she lived, Mrs. Wesley Killingsworth, of Newton, and Miss Julia. She also leaves a host of other relatives, and many, many friends.

The remains were taken to Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist meetinghouse, where funeral services were conducted by W. A. Davis and J. J. Collins, with interment in the adjoining cemetery.

J. J. COLLINS.

AGATHA PORTER BAKER was born in Garfield County, Oklahoma, June 29th, 1903, and departed this life December 31st, 1938, making her stay on earth 35 years, 6 months and 2 days. August 19th, 1918, she was united in marriage to Mr. George Baker, and to this union were born two daughters: Vivian, of the home, and Evelyn McDonald, of Enid, Oklahoma. These two daughters, her husband, her father, two brothers and one sister, together

with her aged grandmother, uncles, aunts and cousins survive her, to say nothing of the many neighbors and friends who mourn her passing. She was the daughter of our late sister Nettie Porter, who preceded her in death about twenty-one years. Agatha was a noble girl, and although not a member of the Old Baptist Church she was blessed with a good hope, through grace, and her delight was to talk of the goodness of God to his poor and afflicted people. She asked us to pray for her, and while on her bed of pain she said her mother appeared to her and told her to pray, and when her grandmother came to her bed she said, "Grandmother, pray for me. You know every one cannot pray. Everything is now complete." Meaning that she was ready to depart and be with Christ, which she felt was far better. It pleased the Lord to bless her with a peaceful mind and he gave her to trust sweetly in his name. She asked her uncle Willard Garton to talk to her on scriptural points of the Old School Baptists, which he did as the Lord gave him strength to do. She expressed her love for this church, and said she believed it to be the church of Christ. To know Agatha was to love her. She filled the sphere God allotted to her, and then he called her home, where she shall more abundantly feast on his glory and sing his praise undisturbed by sin, unmolested by pain, and so shall she ever be with the Lord. Her mortal remains were laid to rest in the Garber Cemetery beside her mother. I would say to her dear husband, Weep not for her, for from the many evidences she left we are made to feel she was ready to leave this sin-cursed world, to enter that haven of eternal rest and peace, where sin and suffering cannot come.

Funeral services were held in the Grand Avenue Methodist meetinghouse, in Enid. She joined the Methodists when a child of fifteen years.

Written by her grandmother by request.

THE foregoing was written by our dear sister, Lizzie Garton, and handed to me to correct and forward to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication. Sister Garton is Agatha's grandmother. I feel to add a line to express my sympathy for those who are left to mourn the departure of this dear child. It was my privilege to have formed an acquaintance with Agatha, and knew her to be a woman of sterling qualities and high ideals. We loved her, but God loved her first, and loved her most, and we can only bow our heads in humble submission to him, for he has only taken that which was his own. The Scripture assures us that though the earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. May the Lord comfort those who mourn.

L. L. SCHENCK.

MEETINGS.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in April (30th). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Seclusia Old School Baptist Church of Primitive faith and order, will meet every fourth Sunday at 412 E. Raulston Avenue, Ontario, California, and should God will this will be her place of meeting until he opens the way and puts it into her mind to meet elsewhere.

T. D. WALKER, Church Clerk.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church holds meetings the fourth Sunday of each month at 1026 East Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Meeting begins at 10:30 a. m., dismisses for lunch and reconvenes at 2 o'clock p. m. Meeting days have been changed from the first to the fourth Sunday of each month. No Saturday or night meetings.

BURLIE HALL, Pastor
W. H. CAVE, Ass't Pastor.
(MRS.) H. B. CURLIE, Church Clerk

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 107. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1939. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LEESBURG, Va., Feb. 14, 1939.

DEAR SISTER WORKMAN:—In your letter to-day, you ask why Christ has to intercede for his people after he has paid their debt to God for them. I understand you to mean, Why is it necessary for the elect to have an Intercessor in the court of heaven, when Christ has already made atonement for them? This has given me something to think about, and I can do no more than to write you some of my thoughts as they have come to me. At first thought, it would seem that the atonement for all the elect's transgressions having been perfectly and completely transacted by Christ, and all their sins having forever been put away by his sacrifice of himself, any further heavenly work by him in the way of intercession would be superfluous. Of course, this kind of reasoning can easily get us into a snare, for we know the intercession of our Lord before the throne of God in heaven's court is absolutely necessary, else the Divine Plan would not so have been arranged as to include this priesthood of Christ. We can do no better than go to the Scriptures. Space would not permit me in this letter to cite all the Scriptures treating on Christ's priesthood, but let us take some of them. The last words of Isaiah fifty-third chapter are, "He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." This was partly fulfilled when Christ, while on the cross, said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." If all our transgressions had come to an end when Christ made atonement for them in his death, perhaps no intercession by him for us would now be necessary; but while the atonement was finished in his death, our transgressions did not end then. We are continually transgressing, notwithstanding the atonement is an accomplished fact. We are sinners by nature and sinners in fact and by act, even though God does not charge this up to us since Christ has borne the sins of many. The fact that Christ is in

heaven and we are on earth, our Head in glory but we ourselves still living in the presence of sin in this lower world, his intercession is required to cleanse us moment by moment, hour by hour, day by day, from our sins experimentally. I doubt very much if we could have at his hands any experience of absolution were it not for his present heavenly work of intercession for us, despite the fact that the atonement has been finished, and accepted by the Father. On the cross, Christ's plea that the Father forgive his persecutors their cruel and wicked deed, was based on the fact that he was at that moment dying for them; yet even though he was accomplishing the atonement for them in the sight of God, how could they ever experience for themselves forgiveness except as he prayed for them that it might be so? We might just as well say, What is the use of our praying to God for anything? If God has predestinated before-time our blessings for us, will we not get them any way, whether we pray or not? No, we will not. It is as much a part of the divine plan that we should pray for these blessings, as that God has predestinated these blessings for us. Christ's atonement for us on earth is the basis of his priestly work for us now being executed by him in the heavens. His work would not be complete without this heavenly work of his ensuing from the work which he did for us on earth. His atonement without his intercession would be like a foundation without any building on it; and there could be no intercession without his atonement preceding it, else it would be like a house without any underpinning. When Christ said on the cross, "It is finished," what did he mean? Among other things, he did not mean that his work was done; but he did mean that all his EARTHLY work was done. He must now die and rise from the dead and go out of sight to enter upon his heavenly work for his people, which was to prepare for them the mansions in the Father's house in the heaven of heavens; and by his intercession for them, also prepare them to dwell in those heavenly mansions when it should come God's time for them to do so.

When Christ warned Peter that the time of Peter's denial was nearing, he told Peter, But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not. Would his faith have failed if Jesus had not prayed for him? Evidently so, if language means anything. By the same token, what would happen to us now as we go through this world were it not for Christ's praying for us? Our discouragements and difficulties would defeat us. Our stumblings would result in our falling. While our salvation might not be affected, inasmuch as our atonement is accomplished, yet our comforts and deliverances would be nothing at all without Christ's present intercession for us. We would be without any spiritual experience of salvation were it not for his intercession for us now, and would have to wait until we reach heaven before experiencing the forgiveness which his atonement has secured for us. In John xiv. 16, he says, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide

with you for ever." Would this Comforter ever have come without Christ's intercession? I believe not. The Holy Ghost has come upon the church and abides within the church throughout the ages, all because of Christ's heavenly intercession for his body ever since his ascension. If ever there is a prayer, a real prayer in the soul of any of the children of God, why is it? Only as the result and fruit of Christ's praying for them, now being accomplished for his body by him up there before the throne. All our time-experience of the grace of God rests on the intercession now going on for us above. Had Christ ceased to do anything at all after his intercession we down here would have long since ceased to know anything about mercy and grace while we were down here. Our present experience, so far as spiritual things is concerned, would be a vacuum, and we should have to wait until we get to heaven before knowing anything about heavenly things. It is his intercession keeps us alive. Like a tree growing in the soil and reaching up its branches to the sky, so Christ's intercession is rooted in his atonement and is the process by which he keeps lifting us up from the earth heavenward.

I leave this subject for you to further follow out in your meditation. May the Lord prosper you in this respect. I have but touched a few things as they have come to me. Oh, may he bless us to realize more and more in our own experience that carefulness and prayerfulness which are the fruit of what he is doing for us now, that we as branches of the Tree of Life may have our breathings toward him, and thus overcome that earth-drag which clogs our steps and thoughts, and threatens to keep us tied to temporal interests.

Yours in the blessed hope of his appearing,

H. H. LEFFERTS.

REIDSVILLE, North Carolina.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS:—I will try to write some of my travels. Every since I was a little boy, about eight or nine years of age, I would have serious thoughts about the hereafter, and I would be as good as I could. I remember one time when father had some company at night, and they sat around and talked and sang of the Lord. I got behind mother's chair and listened. I thought then they were the best people one earth, although father was very strict with us. Now father and mother are both gone, but I cannot wish them back, for I believe they are at rest. They both were members of the Primitive Baptist Church. It seemed that I was a peculiar boy. Once my grandfather was admonishing us how to live (not to steal, etc.), I said to him, I do not steal, for I know the Lord is seeing us all the time. I saw the tears drop from his cheeks when I said that. My dear people, it seems that God has taught me all along the way, though I have been disobedient in many things. My nature was like other boys, yet it seems that I thought upon the Lord a great deal. My father taught me to keep out of bad company, which I did avoid a great deal. Well, I grew

up to be in my teens, and many of my friends and I had grown up together and went around together and had a good time. It seemed I had forgotten the Lord, still we were going to meeting, but only for a good time. We went to Sunday School and prayer meeting, so the boys and girls I went around with would hold prayer meetings in a hilarious way, having fun and mocking the ones who were in earnest. We were once carrying on a prayer meeting through fun, and after calling on several and they said a little prayer, they called on me, and said, Now, brother Shreve, it is your time to pray. Well, I began in a mocking way, but before I had said many words something spoke within me, and said, You had better be praying. It was just like a thunder bolt. I left the room and I felt the need of prayer. I did not know what to do or what to say. I just felt that I wanted to pray, so I went in where my wife's mother was and told her what had happened. I told her father and mother were both dead and I felt I had no friend, and I thought that was the trouble. She told me that was a good sign. I saw her shedding tears, but I did not know what was the trouble. I only knew that I felt condemned and wanted to pray, and I have ben trying to pray ever since. My wife's mother told some of the Baptists about me, and some said they would be glad to hear from me. I did not know that the Lord was working in me. I felt sad and condemned. I went on in this condition for a long time. One beautiful morning I was wandering out, in great trouble, and all at once everything brightened up and it seemed that everything was praising God, and I felt as light as a feather. There was where I began to hope. I could see, as I thought, inside a little of God's mercies. I went to hear the dear Old Baptists. They looked so humble and kind, and I loved to hear them sing, pray and preach; though I could not understand all they preached, yet I had confidence in them. They told my experience better than I could myself. As time rolled on I worried because I could not live better. I would think the Lord had not changed me, else I would not get mad as I did. On one occasion my wife's little afflicted brother and I were on our way home from a party, and he began to tell me some of the Lord's dealings with him. He talked so beautifully I could not help shedding tears. After that he and I would tell our ups and downs to each other. I had confidence in him. At about the age of eighteen I married. My wife and I started out in the world, worked hard and began to raise children. I thought I would raise my children just as I wanted them to be, but I could not. I had a very bad temper, would get mad and then would be sorry for it. I have many times gone to the lonesome woods and begged the Lord for his mercy. Oh I could not get low enough, but it seemed that my prayers did not reach higher than my head. I would think, Oh is there any one like me? I felt to be vile and full of sin, and I feel to be so yet. I went on in sin and trouble until one day I felt to ask God to afflict

me in some way, that I might be humbled. I wanted to be like Jesus. I just felt that I was not humble enough. I felt that I might go astray, and I wanted to be humble. I would think every day that I would do better, but instead I grew worse, and it was a mystery to me, inasmuch as I wanted to live better, but could not. But I can see now, it seems, that if we get to where we think we are living a good life we may get puffed up above measure. In other words, we might get careless and step on some of God's little ones.. If I am one of his saints, I feel to be the least of all. I come confessing that the Lord is all and in all and that I am nothing but a poor, puny worm of the dust.

I aimed to mention about my wife's afflicted brother, who died. After he died I felt very sad. I thought a great deal of him. I was somewhat worried whether he was saved or not. Something seemed to speak in my heart and say, What better evidence do you want than what you already have? Then my mind went back to where he and I told each other our experiences, so I never worried a moment from that time until this day about his being better off. I have doubts and fears about myself. In the year 1918 they had an association at Macedonia. Wife and I attended the meeting and thought they had good preaching. On the last day I felt I wanted a home with them, but felt they knew about my sins and would not have me. I wanted a home with them, but felt unworthy. While they were breaking up it seemed that I could hardly stand it, but I did not offer myself. On our way home I felt very sad, and thought I would never have another opportunity. I felt I wanted to go back and offer myself, but I did not. I would have times of rejoicing, then times of sorrow and condemnation. I never doubted the Old Baptists at all, but it was me. Well, the split came between the absoluters and the nonabsoluters. I did not know where I was for a long time. Finally, it seemed that it opened up to me as plainly as could be that the absoluters were right. Then I went on and could enjoy hearing them preach. It seemed they could not preach it too strong for me. A colored person once asked me what I thought the Scripture meant where it says, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." I had never thought of it before, but it seemed to come to me as a flash that the "sinners" were those who felt like I seemed to be, so I told him the way I saw it: the "righteous" spoken of were righteous in their own estimation, hence the Lord did not come to save such characters. So all along the way I would defend the Baptist doctrine. I loved that doctrine because it suited my case. I found that I was not my own keeper, and that all the good I had done was of the Lord. I felt to be condemned. Oh what a wretched creature I felt to be! Sometimes after lying down at night I would think I would never see the sun again. Brethren, I have traveled much of my way in the dark valley and in the shadow of death. I do not feel to be any better to-day than I was when a

boy. As I told you, I wanted to be humble, so I tried to pray God to make me so, even if it took afflictions to do it, so he did afflict me. In the year 1935 I was stricken with arthritis, a dreadful disease. I tried all kinds of remedies, but to no avail. I went to Hot Springs, Arkansas, and stayed two months and ten days, and all the time I was there I was trying to ask God for mercy. It was very sad and lonesome for me there, though there were many people, but no one could comfort me. I seemed to be in prison. Well, I got some better, and when the time came for me to go home I was glad. I wanted to see my wife and family and go and hear preaching. I begged God to let me live until I got home, and if it was his will, to make a way possible for me to go before the church and ask for a home with the dear old saints. I arrived home March 1st, and was very thankful to be there once more. I went and heard preaching the first opportunity I had, and enjoyed it very much. In April I grew worse again, so my wife and I went to Florida and stayed one month. It seemed to help me, so I bought a little home there, with an intention of going back and staying one year or more. When I got back to my home in North Carolina I became worse again, but managed to keep up and around. I went to the meetings of the church every opportunity I had. I wanted a home with them, but it seemed I did not have anything to tell them. A few nights before the fourth Sunday in May brother Ray and his family were at my home, and were talking about going to Bunker's Hill the fourth Sunday. I said to him, Why not go to Macedonia? I said, I just feel that you will be there. He said, I cannot tell, Well, I had a mind to go before the church, but did not know whether or not it was the mind of the Lord. I always felt that if I ever joined I would have to feel the power of the Lord take hold of me. I had that desire. When the fourth Sunday came I was so sick that morning that I gave up going. Then a little before noon I felt some better, and told my wife to get ready and we would go for the evening services, which we did. About the first one I saw was brother Ray. I was very glad to see him. He helped me in the meeting-house and was kind to me, though I felt very unworthy. After brother Wyatt preached they had Communion Service. I was sitting there, feeling unfit to offer myself, yet I wanted to do so. Brother Spangler prayed, it seemed to me the most beautiful prayer I ever heard. I felt then that I must go, and all the condemnation was gone. I sat there until they commenced singing the song of dismissal and it seemed I could not keep my seat, as there seemed to have been some great power over me, and it was no trouble for me to go forward. I told a little of my experience, and, to my great joy, they received me. I went on rejoicing for a few days, then I thought I might have deceived those good people, so I began to ask God if I had to undeceive me, as I did not want to deceive them. I felt that I had rather go down into defeat than to deceive, so then I prayed to God, I feel, and now

I am reconciled. Before I joined I felt that if God would make it plain, and open the way for me, I could praise his holy name all the time, but I found that it takes the Lord to produce praise. I truly feel in my heart I have praised his name. He has been kind and good to me, though my affliction has been great, and I hope he will continue to reconcile me. On the fourth Sunday in June I was baptized by our pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler. It was a day of joy to me, for I had been so sick that I was afraid I would never see that day. I felt that I wanted to follow the way our blessed Savior had gone, and I wanted the world to know where I stood.

Now, my dear people, I am still afflicted, both naturally and spiritually. I am not able to work, and never expect to be able to again. Sometimes I think it is because of my disobedience that I am so afflicted, but I hope the Lord will make me submissive to his will. I will say to the brethren and sisters that I am still full of doubts and fears and my sins are many. I do not know whether or not it is so with you. I mourn and groan on account of my sins. Why am I thus tossed to and fro? Oh is there any one like me? If so, come and tell me so. When will the Comforter come again? or have I ever heard the Comforter? I feel the need of the Lord all along the way. I pray the Lord of heaven to direct my steps, that I may not turn to the right or to the left, but go on in that strait and narrow way. I fully believe that what God has done is done forever. There is nothing we can do to inherit the kingdom of heaven, but I believe God puts it in the hearts of his children to live obedient, as nearly as they can, and when his children are not obedient they are beaten with many stripes, and it is good for us, for it makes us love the Lord all the more.

In the midst of much sorrow, pain and sleepless nights, I fell asleep and dreamed that I was praising God and praying to him both at the same time. I have never in all my life felt so blessed for a few moments. All pain and suffering left me and I was at perfect ease, while before I had been in much misery and trouble. I awoke with the thought, Was that a little foretaste of heaven? If so, it would be wonderful to go there. I would like to have some one write and tell me what they think of that dream.

My dear brethren, I feel that if I had the education and words to express my feelings I could write on and on. Sometimes something says to me, You are acting the hypocrite, and it causes me to wonder if I am. I believe we do act the hypocrite in many things, but as for this blessed truth I do not feel that we do. My hope gets very small, but I cannot throw it away.

I have just finished reading the third chapter of 2nd Peter, and to me it is sweet reading. After reading the eighteenth verse I thought how sweet it was and a great love rolled across my breast, which made me hope again, and it renewed my strength and I want to fight on. I felt that I wanted to fall on my knees and ask God to give me that grace that I may grow in knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I

love this blessed truth; it is my meat and drink. Sometimes it seems that our Lord has gone forever, but again when he returns how sweet it is, even though we may be alone. My dear people, I have enjoyed some of the sweetest moments of my life all alone, praising God from on high. Yes, it is from on high. I believe it is so high that no man can reach it. I wish I could describe this beauty as I see it. May our Lord show each one of you some sweet day, if he has not already shown you. Now, my dear ones, I hope in Christ, you will still go on. Remember the commandments. I feel to say as David did, Sing praise to God. What a wonderful God is this! Who can forbear to sing his praise? Brethren, I have been to meeting when it seemed no love was manifested among the brethren. I feel that we should let our joys be known. Let love flow from breast to breast. If we deny our Lord, what more can we expect of him? I hope I am not ashamed to own our Lord, nor to defend his cause. And to love the Lord is to love the brethren. Dear people of God, I feel that you know more about these things than I do, but as it is I feel that I want to cast in my little mite.

I have written some of the things I have seen and felt, and if it is according to your experience I would be glad to hear from some one who has been led along this road.

Brother Dodson, you may publish this if you see fit, but if not, it will be all right with me. I shall not complain. What I have written is the truth as near as I can describe it.

Inclosed is a letter which my mother wrote to her mother and father thirty-two years ago.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

C. C. SHREVE.

My Dear Mother and Father:—I will try and write you a few lines this beautiful morning and try and tell you some of my feelings. For the last month or two I have been very low down in the dark valley of woe. I cannot see my way through, and am made to mourn all the day long. I am made to say, Surely the goodness and mercy of God has gone forever. Why hast thou forsaken me? O Lord, deliver me from this burden. It sometimes seems more than I can bear, and that surely I am deceived and never knew the Lord. Why am I thus tossed to and fro? I feel like Paul: to be the chief of sinners. Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I try to read the Bible, but there is no comfort there. I take up the hymn book and try to sing, but all sounds are lifeless and dull to me. Why am I forsaken and feel so onely and sad? I felt like my dear father, mother, brothers, sisters, brethren and friends had all forsaken me, yet they have not done any harm. I am made to wonder if it is all for my many sins. O Lord, have mercy on me. I know I am a sinner, and it is by the goodness and mercy of God that I am saved, if saved at all. I sometimes fear I am deceived, that I am not what I hope to be. I have so many evil thoughts. I feel that what I would do I do not, and what I would not that I

do. Sometimes my heart feels so sad and cold I cannot shed a tear over my many sins. My way seems so dark sometimes that I fear I will stumble and fall. When I do feel that my Savior is near and with me it seems so short a time that I am left in doubts and fears. I feel as the poet says,

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

Oh, is there any one like me? When I got up this morning I felt that I was cast away and that no one cared for me, and I began to think of how I used to go to meeting with my dear husband and see the dear brethren and sisters and hear good preaching and singing, and now to think that I cannot go, that he is not here to go with me, and my heart was filled with sorrow. All at once I began to sing, and it seemed my poor heart was filled to overflowing with love and joy. I felt that I loved every one, and every song sounded very sweet to my poor soul. Even the birds seemed to be singing praises to God and the trees seemed to be bowing down in praise to him. Every thing I looked at was praising him. For a time I was made to say, Surely the goodness and mercy of God have been with me all my days, and I knew it not; bless the Lord, O my soul, bless his holy name. I know that if I am saved it is by the grace of God. I do not feel that I ever did anything good in all my life, that all the good I ever did came from above and shall return to him.

I will stop writing, as I fear I will tire you with my scribbling. If I had the education and words to explain myself I would not mind trying. But I have done the best I could in my weak way. These few lines leave us all quite well at present. I was quite sick last week and had to have the doctor, but am very well now, for which I thank the good Lord. I hope you are all well. Give the children my love, and tell them their oldest sister has not forgotten them, that I think about them every day and wish that I could see them. Tell them they must write to me even if I do not write to them, for I am always glad to get a letter from them. You all must come soon and see me, and write and tell me of your feelings. Remember me at the throne of grace.

Your poor and afflicted daughter,

MALISSA SHREVE.

SULPHUR, Ky., May 17, 1938.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending the price of my subscription to the SIGNS, which I should have sent before. I would like to write to the dear people who read the SIGNS if I could write according to the blessed truth, and to the comfort of the Lord's people, but it is hard to write with a barren mind, when the words seem to be all hidden away and will not come forth. Is it to make us realize our helplessness, and to know that without him we can do nothing, and that we are only helpless worms of the dust? O, dear Lord, help me. Where must a weary sinner go but to the sinner's Friend? We know all our springs are in thee and all good must come from thee, for no good in creatures can be found. But how can we go to this dear

Friend except we be drawn by cords of divine love? We have no power of our own to move forward. But here is one comforting thought: Moses told the Israelites to stand still and see the salvation of God, and this great I Am that overruled all of Moses' objections, and sent him into Egypt to bring up the Lord's people, is the God we hope we adore, the haven of rest when all is so dark we cannot make one step alone. But his word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. He has been merciful to me in many ways. Oh that I were more deserving of his loving-kindness to poor unworthy me.

I had the blessed privilege of going to our meeting this last Sunday, at Old Sulphur Fork Church, and hearing a wonderful sermon by our pastor, Elder G. L. Weaver, and witnessing the beautiful ordinance of baptism to a lady sixty-one years of age, who was added to our little band, upon confession of faith. We hope she will be a blessing to the church, and the church be a blessing to her. We are only a few in number, and often feel discouraged, but the Lord adds to the church daily such as shall be and are saved. I meet people who seem to be well experienced in the grace of our Lord, and feel that they would make good members, but who seem satisfied to stay on the outside. We know this is all in the hands of the Lord. If he has not seen fit to impress the matter upon their minds we dare not try to persuade them to join.

Dear Elder Dodson, will you please, if the Lord so wills, give your views on Ezekiel xxxvi. 25-27? More especially the twenty-fifth verse, about the water cleansing.

May the Lord uphold his people by the word of his mighty power and his great love and mercy toward them wherever they may be.

From one who believes we are saved by grace, through faith, which is the gift of God.

(MRS.) ADDIE CHANDLER.

KINGSTON, New York.

DEAR SISTER SLAUSON:—You have been in my mind many times since your illness, and I have thought to write you before this, but the past week has not been very good for me. Beginning Monday, I felt very badly. I had but little strength. Tuesday the same. Wednesday night I had a spell with my heart, but not as severe as a previous one. It makes me very weak. To-day I am some better. The doctor was here Wednesday. He said I was doing as well as could be expected. I am the spared monument of God's grace and mercy for some purpose he only knows. It seems to me I am like the verse:

"Here like a barren tree I am,
With neither fruit nor leaf;
A useless cumberer of the ground,
Help thou mine unbelief."

Often my fleshly nature seems to get the better of me, then I cry to the blessed Savior for mercy: Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief. With all my doubts and fears, I would not exchange the doctrine of predestination, or the Old Baptist belief, for all the gold and glory this earth holds. If the blessed Savior has begun the work of grace in my heart it will never fail. It is a comfort to me to think that Jesus

knows my thoughts, and knows them he chose before ever the earth was formed. I know I cannot think a good thought unless indited by the Holy Spirit. I feel I cannot praise the blessed Savior enough for his untold mercies to me in this my affliction. I do pray to him each day to give me patience to bow in humble submission to his will, for I know whatever befalls me Jesus doeth all things well. I feel to be a poor miserable sinner, not worthy to be numbered among you dear ones.

'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought),
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

If God is for us who can be against us?

I enjoyed Elder Sikes' article in the last SIGNS very much. It was a comfort to me. I am cast down much of the time, mourning over my sins. Oh, is there any one so sinful and vile as I? In the seventh chapter of Matthew, twentieth verse, it reads, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Where can any one see the above in me? Jesus has said, "Cast down, but not destroyed," but can I take that for me? I have been reading the Sermon on the Mount. It reads, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." I do feel, oh, so poor spiritually. I have read the first chapter of first Peter recently, which is all very precious to me. The eighth verse: Who we have not seen, yet how we love the dear name of Jesus, the Rock of our salvation. The fourteenth verse of the sixth chapter of Galatians expresses how I hope I feel. The thirty-third Psalm is all of God's goodness and mercy. Surely blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he has chosen for his inheritance. Read hymn 628. It is just as I feel.

Well, dear brother and sister, I guess you will think this letter is like the writer, a poor, miserable affair. I wish I could talk on the Scriptures as the other members do, but my memory is so poor and I know so little it seems a waste of time to even try to talk. I feel that you will cast the mantle of charity over this.

I do hope it will be the Lord's will to restore your health to you. It has taken me most of the day to write this. It tires me, then I have to lie down and rest. I received your cards. Thank you. Best wishes to the girls.

May the God of all grace guard, guide and bless you both, is the sincere wish of your poor unworthy sister in a precious hope,

(MRS.) MARY B. COONS.

CAPE CHARLES, Va., March 3, 1939.

VERY DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I do want to tell you I have your good letter and have read it over and over, and just read it again. I wish I had the gift and the strength to write in like manner, but I can at least *thank you*. I was sorry to read that part of your letter that said your family and you have all been sick this winter, but hope you are normal now, or soon may be. I have thought of you often since your visit with me last November, but I have been in bed most of the time since then, and have not been down the stairs this year (since Christmas). I sit up some

now and write in my rocking chair on a book, so use a pencil, and do not write much.

Yes, I have done some planning for the farm work from my bed and room. We have a number of good tenants who must try to make a living, so I plan for them, and they have all the potato crop planted, and I think getting along well with the work, but how I do miss being on the farm to look after my work, but here I am.

Yes, I hope I have experienced some of the wonderful things you mention, which now seem too high for me to "attain," as David said, and I am trying to wait on the Lord. I heard to-day that Elders Ker and Vaughn were in Salisbury Sunday and they had a good meeting. I believe I miss these meetings more than I myself realize.

I am getting tired, so will stop, and hope to hear from you when you feel like writing. Pray for me.

Yours in trials and afflictions, but hoping, or trying to, for the mercy of the Lord,

G. E. COULBOURN.

[WE know many of our readers will be interested in the foregoing letter from our dear brother, Elder Coulbourn. If we know what prayer is, we believe we have, by the Spirit of God, been enabled to make supplication at the throne of grace for God's remembrance of this, his servant.—R. L. D.]

CLOVIS, New Mexico.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending four dollars for renewal of my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and what is left over apply it to whatever is needed. I do enjoy and indorse such writings as are contained therein.

In April, 1919, I visited the church then near Bronx Park, New York City, met and heard the late Elder John McConnell, also the present editor, Elder R. Lester Dodson, preach several Sundays. I went from there to Philadelphia, and attended the church at Park Avenue Hall, and heard the late Elder B. F. Coulter preach, and also visited with him at his home. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been in our household regularly since the days when the late Elder Gilbert Beebe was editor. I was then a child. I have his two books of editorials, which I prize very much. I am one of those Elder Coulter called dry land Baptists.

T. E. PRESLEY.

SULPHUR, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars, for which please continue my paper for another year. My husband, who passed away one year ago, had taken the SIGNS about fifty years, and to him it was next to the Bible. Awhile before he passed away he told me he wanted me to take the paper as long as I lived, and I hope to be able to do so. I enjoy the good letters and editorials. May it continue to come to us many, many years.

In hope,

(MRS. G. R. TURNER.

PARSONS, Kansas, Dec. 26, 1938.

DEAR EDITORS AND PUBLISHER:—Please accept my humble donation of two dollars to your wonderful paper,

that has been published for one hundred and six years. May this donation help to start it on its one hundred and seventh year, which I am more than delighted to have the honor of doing. I feel that I have gotten more out of it than I have put in it. I have been reading it for about thirty years, and I hope to continue to read it as long as the Lord permits me so to do. I consider it the best in every way, and the only strictly religious paper I have ever read. So long live its editors and publisher, is the wish of yaur humble reader,

A. E. CLARK.

[SUCH letters as the foregoing are indeed very encouraging, and we truly thank the writer, not only for his financial assistance, but also for his words of commendation.--PUBLISHER.]

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, September 8th, 9th and 10th, 1938, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more we have been spared by the kind providence of our God to meet in an association. Your correspondence was thankfully received, reminding us how sweet it is for brethren, though separated by distance, to dwell together in peace and love, given us through Jesus Christ. The gospel was preached with power, and the name of Jesus, the way, the truth and and the light, was exalted above every name; neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. While with us Elder Ruston was led to relate many dealings of the Lord with him, which recalled to our mind instances in our own religious experience, thereby renewing our hope and strengthening our faith. We felt that it was good to be there, speaking of these things one to another, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together. We were very glad to have so many of the North Berwick brethren and friends with us at our Saturday and Sunday meetings, and hope that they, and other lovers of the truth, will make us glad in years to come.

Our hearts are saddened as year by year we become a smaller Association, but we have the assurance that a just God rules in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. May we be reconciled to his will and not forget all his benefits.

Our next session will be held with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, the Lord willing, the Friday, Saturday and Sunday before the second Monday in September, 1939.

GEORGE RUSTON, Mod.
SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE date opposite your name on the little pink slip on which your address is printed denotes the time your subscription expires. Dec 38 means that it expired December, 1938; June 39 that it will expire June, 1939, etc.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1939.

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ROMANS IX. 17.

"For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth."

There are those who appear to think that God and Satan are two great gigantic creatures, or powers, independent of each other, eternally self-existent and self-perpetuating, with God being a little bit the stronger of the two and sometimes giving the devil permission to do certain things. We know of nothing in the Bible that will support such a theory. Job most certainly did not take any such position. He saw God as being SOVEREIGN in every sense of the word. In the twenty-sixth chapter he presents him as being infinite in power and unsearchable in wisdom, and says, "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent."—Job xxvi. 13. He recognized no power but that of God, for he said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."—Job i. 21. The Lord said by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah, "Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy."—Isaiah liv. 16. Solomon said, "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."—Prov. xvi. 4. Paul said, "For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."—Rom. xiii. 4. Jesus said to Pilate, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me except it were *given thee from above.*"—John xix. 11. He also said to his disciples, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve."—John vi. 70, 71. There was work for a devil to do, and Jesus chose Judas Iscariot to that end and purpose. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."—Acts ii. 23. "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do what-

soever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."—Acts iv. 27, 28. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist."—Col. i. 16, 17. What an array of Scripture there is to uphold and support the doctrine of God's sovereignty, who made all things, and without him was not anything made that was made. (John i. 3.) And when Jesus arose from the dead we are told that all power, both in heaven and in earth, was given into his hands, and that he holds the keys of hell and of death. What security there is in such a belief! Not long ago we had a practical experience which emphasized the insecurity of just one weak link in the chain. We had taken a friend who had some valuable papers in a brief case in our car to a place where the car was to be parked for a couple of hours. Our friend, desiring not to be burdened with his brief case, asked if we were going to lock the car. We replied that we could lock three of the doors, but the fourth could not be locked. He immediately replied, "I will take my brief case with me." He was unwilling to leave those valuable papers in the car under such conditions. We have many times stated in speaking that if there was just one loophole in all of the divine scheme of things, or if just one of the Lord's people could be utterly lost, they would all be miserable and there would be no comfort for a single one, for each one would be feeling that this terrible thing would be his lot.

We are convinced that man can have no true conception of God unless he enlightens the mind of his understanding. Man is prone to think of God as though he were a fellow-creature, like himself. He tries to pull the Almighty down to his own level and reason out these things from his own point of view. The Lord spake by the mouth of his prophet, saying, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."—Isaiah lv. 8, 9. Most certainly God is holy and of too pure eyes than to even look upon sin, in the sense we view it, but he hath made all things for his own glory, and he will control, direct and overrule all things to that end. Even the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder will he restrain. Paul, in writing to Timothy, told him that "in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor."—2 Tim. ii. 20. In the very same chapter in which our text is found, Paul says, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?"—Rom. ix. 20, 21. God is above all law and, therefore, is not accountable to any one. Whatsoever his

soul desireth, that he doeth. Where is there a man, woman or child with any appreciation at all of the masterpiece of a great artist, who will deny him the right or impugn the motive of his purpose in having a dark background upon which to paint the work which exudes his very life and being? There can be no picture without both a negative and a positive. If we rob Jesus of his cross, we must at the same time rob him of his crown. God created the kind of world he required for his own purpose, and while words cannot picture the blackness or horribleness of the pit of sin into which mankind has sunk himself, do we not become lost in wonder and amazement by the contrast of God's goodness and mercy as displayed in the gift of his only begotten Son, to be made flesh and dwell among us, that we should behold the glory of our blessed Redeemer? Such a scene neither heaven nor earth had ever witnessed before nor since. Let us, therefore, exalt the name of God and lift the name of Jesus on high.

"When man was created,
What wisdom we see,
The whole he possessed was
The image of thee;
But, oh! in his fall, we
Are led to espy,
'Twas all for the lifting
Of Jesus on high.

Here Satan was nonplussed
In what he had done,
The fall wrought the channel
Where mercy should run
In streams of salvation,
Which never run dry,
And all for the lifting
Of Jesus on high.

When Adam to eat of the
Fruit was induced,
It answered the end
Which Jehovah designed;
No purpose of wisdom
Was altered thereby,
'Twas all for the lifting
Of Jesus on high.

From hence it appears
He made nothing in vain,
For Adam thus formed
Was a link in the chain;
In him 'twas decreed that
His members should die,
And all for the lifting
Of Jesus on high."

The particular brand of predestination objected to so strenuously by some of our friends is very definitely vindicated by none other than God himself in our text. With reference to the plagues and the final destruction which God sent upon Pharaoh and the Egyptians, the Lord commanded Moses to say unto Pharaoh, "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth."—Exodus ix. 16. When the apostle, therefore, makes use of the expression, "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh," it is as though he said, "God saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." God had previously said to Abram, "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their's, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance."—Gen. xv. 13, 14. God not only determined beforehand what he would do, but had also declared it. The text will not ad-

mit of any such interpretation as "God permitting Pharaoh to rise up, or of some other power raising him up," but it plainly declares that God raised him up. Pharaoh was the symbolic head of the powers of darkness, and every single thing that he and the Egyptians did to Israel was embraced in the purpose of Almighty God. God's purpose, however, did not end with the persecutions which the Egyptians inflicted upon his people, Israel. It reached beyond this and embraced not only his deliverance of the Israelites, but the utter destruction of Pharaoh and his hosts. In all of this God did show his mighty power, and his name has been declared throughout all the earth because of this, and will continue to be declared until time shall be no more. We wish that all who love our Lord in sincerity and truth could see that God is glorified in all his works and give praise unto his holy name, but those who cannot, we would be glad if they could be content with what they have, and not disturb the peace of Zion by opposing those who like strong doctrine. We do not believe that we can truthfully be accused of hobby-riding on the subject of "the predestination of all things," nor do we desire that what we have written shall be provocative of controversy, but we want the record kept straight, and when we hear God's truth assailed, our hand becomes restless until we put our pen to work in defense of what we are persuaded is both glorifying to God and comforting to many of his saints.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by sister Nellie M. Palmer.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Lincoln County, Maine, September 8th, 9th and 10th, 1938, to the churches and associations with which we correspond, sendeth love and greeting in our Lord and Savior to our brethren scattered abroad.

OUR dear sister, who so ably officiated in this capacity, has fallen asleep, and of me it has been requested that I supply the vacancy. The brethren little know the felt sense of my inability accompanying their request, but, having to serve them, I make the attempt.

Our dear Savior said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."—Matt. xi. 28-30. This command was to his loved ones, his chosen, those who were weary of the conflict with sin and the manifold temptations of the devil, those who had nowhere else to go. "No sanctuary, Lord, but thee." Those who had suffered the felt torments of separation from God, justly condemned, cut off and treading the wine-press alone. Oh the terrible darkness, the torment that rages in the soul. No friend on earth to soothe the distress and no God in heaven to claim as one's own. Surely the arrows of the Almighty have pierced our soul and we are wounded

and broken, and, like Israel of old, we are made to stand still to behold the salvation of the Lord, and then to such an one he says, "Come." The Sun of Righteousness arises with healing in his wings, the blackness of night gives way to the morning light, our eyes are opened and we behold the crucified and risen Savior, the One altogether lovely, saying, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me." With what untold joy we behold him whom our soul loveth; we bow before the God of heaven and take the yoke and learn of him. We find the yoke easy and the burden light, and we rest in our first love, and sing, "The Lord hath triumphed gloriously." Little do we know of the untried journey before us, the wilderness road, the trackless desert. Like our fathers, they wandered in the desert in a solitary way, they found no city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty their souls fainted within them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their troubles and he delivered them out of their distresses. (Psalms cvii. 4-6.) And what was true of the Israelites of old is true in the present day. How many times we, too, have been made to cry unto our Lord, and has he not delivered us out of our distresses? Not by removing the trial, but by his felt presence whispering, My grace is sufficient for thee.

"And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation."—Psalms cvii. 7. Yes, we, too, are looking forward to that city of habitation. Traveling that highway cast up for the redeemed to walk in, and it shall be called, The way of holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those, the warfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. Paul, in his epistle to the Galatians, said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness came by the law, then is Christ dead in vain."—Gal. ii. 20, 21. "For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."—Heb. xiii. 14. So we would run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith: who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Heb. xii. 1, 2.)

GEORGE RUSTON, Mod.
SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS."

WE will furnish extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER G. O. WALKER departed this life April 6th, 1939, at his residence, Ontario, California, at the age of sixty-five years. Brother Walker's departure was not altogether unexpected, as he had been deeply afflicted for several months, and was not able to keep up his usual employment as a carpenter, nor to reply to an extensive correspondence. Brother Walker was a native of Walker, Oregon, and he moved to Southern California in the year 1927. He is survived by his second wife, Mrs. Clara Walker, the daughter of Elder Melton, of Missouri, seven daughters: Mrs. P. A. McKee, Seattle, Wash., Mrs. Henry Holmes, Waterville, Ore., Mrs. Paul Lane, Reedsport, Ore., Mrs. Rose Kinman, Bremerton, Wash., Mrs. Tress McClintock, Condon, Ore., Miss Sybil Walker, Boston, Mass., and Miss Clella Walker, Portland Ore., also three sons: Gail W. Walker, Walterville, Ore., Boyd F. Walker, Walker, Ore., and Ansel E. Walker, Pomona, California. Brother Walker at an early age was called with a high and holy calling, not according to his works, but according to the purpose and grace of God, given to him in Christ before the world was. To the writer he possessed many marks of grace, giving evidence in his conversation and conduct that he had been made to feel the plague of his own heart. At an early age, also, he was given peace in believing in Him of whom Moses and the prophets did write, to wit, Jesus the Christ. Among his many marks of grace I will mention in this only two: patience, shown in his readiness to bear with and forgive the erring, and at the same time contend for the truth as it is in Christ, declaring that God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth, and that He hath done all things well, and, as brother Walker often declared, he is too wise to be mistaken and too good to be unkind. The other mark of grace, I will now mention: a readiness to let his yea be yea and his nay be nay, avoiding an unprofitable and unholy strife of words and contentions about the law and other controverted questions. While his theme was the goodness and mercy of God, his just judgmenst and severity he did not dispute nor deny. His style was conversational, and in defense of our position he often quoted, in private conversation and in public discourse, the couplet from Dr. Watts, "If my soul is sent to hell, thy righteous law approves it well," etc. In seasons of despair and grief he enjoyed singing, and often selected, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in his excellent word." In times of triumph and relief he called for "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me." Possibly more often than any other song used by Primitive Baptists. Some years ago he was called for the rest of his natural life to serve Seclusia Church of Old School Baptists, of Primitive faith and order, which he did exceedingly well, getting to himself a good degree, until his last and final illness. But why should I write thus? He rested in the statement in which I try to rest: "Zion's teachers shall never be revoved."

Early in the morning of April 7th sister Walker left with the body for interment in the family cemetery, near Walker, Oregon.

Submitted in sorrow and signed by

T. D. WALKER.

ELDER H. W. MAY was born January 26th, 1873, and departed this life January 27th, 1939, making his stay on this earth 66 years and 1 day. He joined the Little Hope Church, of the Mates Creek Primitive Baptist Association, the first Saturday in August, 1895, and

was ordained to the work of the ministry the first Saturday in February, 1909, making his ministerial life thirty years. He was married to Nancy Jane Blackburn August 17th, 1894, and to this union was born one son, who preceded him in death. He leaves a broken-hearted widow, one brother, Harvey May, and two sisters, Armenda Whitt and Lucy Varney, also a host of friends and relatives to mourn their loss. But their loss is his eternal gain. Elder May was the most faithful the Baptists had, and was sound in doctrine, faith and practice. He served the Association as Moderator for the last five sessions. Pike County has lost an honorable citizen and the church a worthy member and faithful defender of the cause of God. Elder May will be missed.

His funeral was conducted, January 29th, 1939, by Elders B. F. Chapman, Caudill Hatfield, Jeff Staten and the unworthy writer.

G. B. BIRD.

HULDAH JANE LEONARD passed from this earthly life at her home in Prattsville, N. Y., March 18th, 1939. She was born in Johnson Hollow in the year 1859, the daughter of Daniel C. and Esther Cole Leonard. Had God so willed, she would have been eighty years old on her next birthday. She leaves one niece and several cousins. She was baptized by Elder Earl, and united with the Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa. Her membership in the church dates back over fifty-five years. God was a real and abiding factor in her daily life. She tried zealously to follow the precepts of his word, and she awaited with keen anticipation the days of worship, when she might gather with her brethren and sisters and listen to His teachings. Each passage of Scripture had a deep and abiding meaning, and she treasured them in her heart as one might treasure jewels of great worth. This beautiful and sacred belief permeated her whole body and soul so that she fairly radiated the joy that was her's in being a child chosen of God. To say that she felt it a duty to attend the meetings of the church would be ungracious, rather would one say that she loved to attend those meetings, for it was there she had communion with God and his children. She carefully garnererd the words of truth as they flowed from the lips of the Elders, and her very soul yearned after righteousness. In her meekness and gentleness she never sought to impose her beliefs on her friends, but rather by her life and daily deeds she was a living testimony. The floral tributes attested the high esteem in which she was held. Her funeral, which was held at her home, was largely attended, and was conducted by Elder C. W. Vaughn, assisted by Elder Arnold Bellows. To her many friends and to myself, who knew her so well, a memory as beautiful as a golden dream remains, and to the brethren and sisters of her faith a sister is removed; but she is not really gone, merely passed to that blissful shore and awaits beside the path for those she knew and loved so well.

Her niece,

FANNIE M. SHOEMAKER.

SISTER LUCRETIA FORAKER FRAZIER was taken from this earthly life November 26th, 1938, in the home of her daughter, Lillie McDevitt, in Philadelphia, Pa. She was born July 28th, 1856, near Dover, Delaware, and at the age of nineteen years was married to Mr. Elmer Foraker. She and her husband came before the church at Welsh Tract Sunday, June 5th, 1892, and she told some of her experience, or exercise of mind. Both were unanimously received

by the church, and the ordinance of baptism was administered immediately by Elder Lee Hanks, of Georgia. Elder H. M. Curry preached first in the morning service, from John xii. 42-44; followed by Elder Williams, from Solomon's Song iv. 12. After preaching Elder Hanks was made Moderator and the two persons afore mentioned came before the church and were received. Sister Frazier was granted a letter of dismission to Salem Church, Philadelphia, Pa., together with her husband, Elmer Foraker, as they were living in Chester, Pa., at the time, and it was nearer and more convenient for them to attend Salem Church. Elder William Grafton, supply at Welsh Tract at the time, preached from the forty-third Psalm at this Saturday meeting at Welsh Tract, November 16th, 1895. She was a consistent, faithful member, and her walk both in and out of the church was an example for all who knew her. Her friends were legion. She was always the first in her sphere of life and environment to visit the sick, in a practical way, catering to the comfort and service where actually needed in times of sickness and trouble. The old mothers in Israel, such as she, are rapidly passing from us. She leaves one son and two daughters. Her soul and spirit are resting with her Savior, awaiting his second coming, reuniting her body to soul and spirit.

Her friend and brother,

JOHN B. MILLER.

MRS. MARY ELIZA HERSTON, aged sixty-eight years, died March 23rd, 1939, at her home, Killen, Alabama. Surviving are her husband, W. G. Herston, one son, C. O. Herston, four daughters, Mrs. Lillian Mitchell, Mrs. Max Wheat, Miss Callie Herston and Miss Kathleen Herston, one brother, B. F. Walton, and a sister, Miss Sallie Walton. She had been a devout member of Blue Water Church for more than thirty years. She was loved by all who knew her. Her husband has lost a loving companion, her children a faithful and loving mother, while the church has lost a true mother in Israel, yet we fully believe that our great loss is her eternal gain. She has gone to receive that inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, which fades not away and is reserved in heaven for all the heirs of promise.

The writer in trying to comfort the bereaved ones called attention to the Bible signs, or characteristic marks of the Lord's people, which she surely possessed: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are thy that mourn: for they shall be comforted." "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." The character of food for which the sensations called hunger and thirst are felt are an index to the character of life that produced them. All who hunger and thirst after the food and drink that comes down from heaven have a spiritual life to produce that desire. May the comforting influence of the Holy Spirit be given to the bereaved ones to comfort them in their great sorrow.

LYTLE BURNS.

ETHEL CANNON LYNCH was born April 9th, 1881, and departed this life October 1st, 1938, making her stay on earth 57 years, 5 months and 22 days. She was united in marriage to Charles E. Lynch November 29th, 1900, and to this union were born four daughters, viz., Mrs. James W. Truitt, of Snow Hill, Md., Mrs. George Rounds, of Mardella Springs, Md., Mrs. Alvin Parker, of Delmar, Del., and Miss Doris Lynch, of Philadelphia, Pa, who, with their

father and five grandchildren, survive to mourn the loss of a good wife and mother. She united with the Old School Baptists at Little Creek Church, near Laurel, Del., and was baptized by the late Elder A. B. Francis, and it might well be said of her that she stood steadfastly in the faith and doctrine of the church of God, and her expressions were open, clean and without deceit. She loved to be in the association of her brethren, and it was a great pleasure for her to entertain them in her own home.

Her funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, and her remains were interred at Little Creek Church as her last visible resting-place, but we feel mother has an eternal rest, that we cannot discern with our natural organs of sight, and we should not weep for her as though she had no hope, but we feel our loss is her eternal gain. We miss her greatly, but none of us miss her as father does, and we do earnestly hope God will comfort him, in which we can all with one accord say, Rest on, dear one, and feel our loss is her eternal gain. Written with much sadness in memory of dear mother.

(MRS.) JAMES W. TRUITT.

JAMES MONROE WILLIAMS was born near Buffalo, Leon County, Texas, July 13th, 1861, and moved to Navarro County Texas in 1871. He was married to Jerushia Ingram April 3rd, 1884, and to this union were born fourteen children, eight of whom are still living. He united with Salem Church (of the Predestinarian Baptist faith and order) and was baptized by the writer the first Sunday in December, 1931. He departed this life December 1st, 1938, and was laid to rest near Purdon, Texas. The writer also officiated at his funeral. There was a large gathering of friends and neighbors, and I tried to speak words of comfort to the sorrowing ones. He leaves to mourn their loss a dear companion, eight children, the church and numerous relatives and friends. Brother Williams was loved by all who knew him. He was a kind, loving and dutiful husband and father, and was generous to a fault. He had suffered for several years with heart trouble, and frequently expressed his willingness to go at the Master's call. He seemed to manifest plainly the christian graces so freely bestowed upon him. He passed away in the full triumph of a living faith. His orderly walk and godly conduct left no room to doubt.

His pastor, who dearly loved him,

W. O. BEENE.

JAMES RICHARD BARKER died at Hilltop Sanitorium, Danville, Virginia, December 3rd, 1938, aged 33 years, 5 months and 1 day. He leaves a wife, one child, father and mother, several brothers and two sisters to mourn their loss, but their loss is his gain. He had a sweet hope in life beyond the grave. He was not a member of the visible church, but was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and attended all the meetings he could as long as he was able. He was the most satisfied sick person I ever saw, always had a smile for me every time I went to see him. He said he asked the Lord to take him home if it was not his will to make him well. He was ready and willing to go, and did not dread dying.

Written by his

MOTHER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Mrs. Nellie H. Arnold, California, $1; Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Okla., $1; E. G. Webb, Okla., $1.

MEETINGS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Salem Old School Baptist Church of Philadelphia, Pa., in Park Avenue Hall, 1315 Columbia Avenue, Friday and Saturday May 26th and 27th, 1939. All brethren, sisters and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

T. C. Koch, Church Clerk.

The next session of the Baltimore Association will be held with the church at Black Rock, Md., June 3rd and 4th (Saturday and Sunday). To reach Black Rock by automobile from Baltimore, drive out Falls Road about twenty miles to the village of Butler. A cordial invitation is extended to all to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Trustee.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, at Hopewell, New Jersey, May 31st, June 1st and 2nd, 1939. We hope the ministering brethren, together with all who are of our faith and order who possibly can will visit us at this time.

ELVIRA CONNER, Church Clerk.

This year the Border Union of Old School Baptists is appointed to meet with the church at Elgin, Oregon, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday (the third Sunday in June), and we extend an invitation to any interested friends or brethren to meet with us at these appointments. Elgin is twenty miles from La Grande, and both are on standard highways, and also on the railroads. We shall welcome any of our tourest friends who will arrange their schedules to enable them to stop with us. The Oregon Trail Highway, which is U. S. No. 30, will bring them here.

C. W. BOND.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Mod., pro. tem.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church holds meetings the fourth Sunday of each month at 1026 East Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Meeting begins at 10:30 a. m., dismisses for lunch and reconvenes at 2 o'clock p. m. Meeting days have been changed from the first to the fourth Sunday of each month. No Saturday or night meetings.

BURLIE HALL, Pastor
W. H. CAVE, Ass't Pastor.
(MRS.) H. B. CURLIE, Church Clerk

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

Cloth binding, 75c each. Paper covers, single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and all to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
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AN EXCELLENT VOLUME.

"Memoirs and letters of James Kidwell Popham."

Mr. Popham was Pastor of The Strict Baptist Church, at Brighton, England, for over fifty-five years, and Editor of *The Gospel Standard* for thirty years.

This book reveals much of the travel of a man greatly blessed of God in his ministry and writings. It is full of interesting matter, which on every page shows forth the power and goodness of the covenant-keeping God.

It can be obtained from the publishers, C. J. Farncombe & Sons, Ltd., 30 Imperial Buildings, Ludgate Circus, London, E. C. 4, England. Price, post-paid, $1.65, to Canada and United States.

I feel to recommend this book to our readers.—G. R.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 107. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1939. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ROMANS VIII. 29.

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son."

My purpose is primarily to offer a few thoughts respecting the foreknowledge of God as associated with or concerning the above scriptural declaration. That the infinitely wise, almighty, holy, self-existent, eternal, sovereign God, the creator, upholder and disposer of heaven, earth and all things did actually know from eternity all things which should come to pass, we deny not. However, we are to understand by the word that there are discriminative features embodied in his foreknowledge, as the text unquestionably sets forth. And truly if there was not a causative and discriminative feature of God's foreknowledge there could not be in this particular truth anything of comfort to the children of God. For me to understand that God in his infinite wisdom knew what a vile sinner I was, and would be, and am, could of itself be of no comfort to me, but to feelingly understand how and for what cause he foreknew me is a comforting truth indeed. Moreover, we might truthfully say that apart from his foreknowledge all other truths respecting our salvation would be without force: for God's foreknowledge has a major factor in the plan of salvation, indeed a major part, beyond what I can describe in my brief remarks on the subject in hand.

I have many avenues before me in the Scriptures, and as reference matter to enlarge, but lest I take up too much space, and believing that a hint to the wise is sufficient, I will proceed with the text. First, to show that there was an underlying cause for this expressed foreknowledge. Second, that it was restricted, or discriminative. Third, that it was to a definite purpose which in no wise could be forgotten or abrogated. Now it is not to be supposed that in a general view that anything precedes the infinite wisdom of God. However, respceting his scheme, or self-ordered,

eternal purposed plan of redemption, it is abundantly evident that there was a moving or underlying principle, or cause, which is wholly his own love (or was his love). For had he not first had a favor toward some there would not have been any provisions made for saving any. While this causative nature is not specifically stated in our text, there is scriptural testimony to the fact in its connections in the selfsame chapter, and I can readily agree with the poet on this point:

"Grace moved the cause for saving man,
And Wisdom drew the noble plan."

Or as it is put in another inspired hymn,

"Grace first contrived the way
To save rebellious man,
And all the steps that grace display,
Which drew the wondrous plan."

Dear reader, our salvation rests upon the foundation of God's sovereign, eternal, undeserved love, which grace was given us in Christ before the world began. Whom (signifying a particular number of persons; a definite chosen people) he did foreknow in covenant love and choice as his, whom he did predestinate to be conformed to his image. But before we pass from this point let us consider an alternate truth. The Lord spake concerning the judgment of some, that he would say to them, Depart from me, for I never knew you. Did he mean that he never knew them, who they were, what they were? No. He knew them in the fall as did he those whom he foreknew in covenant love. The difference being that he foreknew some as his covenant children and others as not his. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated. When? Before they were born, or had done either good or evil. It is further stated in the case of Jacob and Esau that it was to show that the purpose of God according to election might stand. So as it proves that it was according to God's own sovereign, electing love, it also proves that any doctrine which is in the least contrary thereto is false. The erroneous supposition that election stands upon God's foreknowledge of those who would believe in him and follow Christ has no foundation other than human imagination, for even the inbred and manifest nature of Jacob, as also all other vessels of mercy, refutes the idea. Much more God says: "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy."

It is not to be understood that I have endeavored to disassociate the eternal love of God from his foreknowledge of those whom he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. For to love them was to know them, and to know them in the language of our text was to love them, acknowledge them, receive them and purpose in himself to redeem, call, justify and glorify them.

Thus I have in a brief way shown both the causative and the discriminativeness of God's foreknowledge, although I have not sounded the depths of the matter. And now to show that the whole was to a definite purpose and to a desired end I shall consider the word "predestinate." The language itself declares that the persons ("whom" being individuals) he did foreknow were the ones he did also predestinate

to be conformed to the image of his Son. Thus it is by the light of the expressed purpose we who are by grace made to see our nonconformity to God's Son, but also by grace are enabled to lay hold upon the wills and shalls of a purpose-working God, can admire the truth of God's foreknowing us. There is also this comforting truth respecting his foreknowing us in his love: that is, he could neither forget us in his covenant arrangements, not ever in time or eternity, for having once known us there can be no forgetting of us forever. Thus it was impossible that even one whom he did foreknow should be left out of the covenant of grace, or, in other words, that their names be omitted in the Lamb's book of life slain from the foundation of the world. As surely as he knew us in mercy before time he can never forget us in the same. As surely as our text is discriminating in its nature (and I challenge the whole world to gainsay it) just so surely will the ones whom God foreknew be conformed to his image, for it was predestinated of God that they should be.

And now (though I have omitted some very precious truths in order to be brief) I wish to call attention to predestination, as here implied. For inasmuch as it relates only to the subject alone it must so be applied. As here used it sets forth a prearranged purpose of God in accordance with his own free and sovereign will, which was entirely of himself, therefore not influenced or coordinated by any outside means. (Thank God politics had no part in his plans.) This independence is expressed in the first chapter of Ephesians, as also in many other Scriptures: "According as he hath chosen us in him [Christ] before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself." In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. So then having loved, known and purposed all of himself and in himself, viz., God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost, the whole of our salvation was made infallibly sure, or certain, upon the ground of God's sovereign grace, without cost, worth or works on the part of the lost, sinful, hell-deserving wretches upon whom God's eternal love was bestowed. Now our hope of eternal life rests upon the promise of God in Christ Jesus, which promise God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began, and is now made manifest by the appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. If any should ask for proof of the infallibility of God's oath we could produce abundant proof in the Scriptures and our experiences. We are not of those who believe not the record that God hath given of his Son, and who draw back unto perdition as all nominal professors (and even the Jews) do, but believe to the saving of our souls. As one sufficient proof of God's unchangeable purpose in grace for the salvation

of his elect church, I cite you not only to the whole of the chapter from which my text is, but especially to the thirty-second verse, which reads thus: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all [the elect], how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" See here, poor sinner, the fulfillment of God's purpose and the extensiveness of his love for his chosen people, who were under the bondage of sin and death, justly deserving the penalty due their sin, even eternal damnation. If anything could have changed God's purpose, his will, his covenant or his love, surely it would have failed him when the time came to deliver up his own Son to suffer in our law place and pay the just demands of flaming justice, especially when he in his heavy load of bloody sweat and tears said, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me. Or when on the cross he hung, the Just dying for the unjust, he cried out in his pain, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

"Well might the sun in darkness hide,
And shut his glories in,
When Christ, the mighty Maker, died
For man, the creature's sin."

My time is up. I have only hinted at the substance. I could not dwell upon the experimental truth, but if in these brief and plain remarks you have been enabled to hold fast to them as being the only ground of your hope of heaven, and can get an humbling view of God's everlasting love in Christ to you as a poor, bankrupt, vile, depraved, rebellious, hell-deserving sinner, give him the glory for all that is past and all that is to come, a complete conformity to the glorified image of Christ, by the resurrection from the grave (dead).

LEO V. BAGLEY.

UNION, New Jersey.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—Once again with pen in hand I attempt to express some of my thoughts of thanks and praise to our blessed Redeemer for the wonderful privilege of meeting and mingling with such a lovely band of true followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, where the gospel truth is proclaimed in such a grand and glorious manner, ever giving all praise, honor and glory to the One who reigns and rules over all things, from the least unto the greatest. Not even one tiny blade of grass could be destroyed without the foreknowledge of God, who created all things for his own good. Thanks be to his holy name that he has all power in heaven and on earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? That is the only kind of God I would want to worship. One who rules and directs all things, who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast; who has power to speak peace to the tired and hungry soul, whose only hope is in the atonement and shed blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Though that hope be ever so small, only as a grain of mustard seed, it would not be exchanged for ten thousand worlds such as we have here to-day. Hope is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, which entereth into that within the vail, whither Christ, the forerunner, hath gone to prepare a place for those who love him because he first loved

them and gave his life a ransom for his people, that they might have life eternal in the heavens above, where joy, peace and rest remaineth for the people of God. What could be sweeter and more secure than the election and predestination of God's little ones, who if left to their own efforts would be as helpless as the tiny babe in its mother's arms? Without the ever-sustaining grace of the all-wise God they would be lost and ruined sinners, without hope in this world of sin, sorrow and shame, but with the faith and hope to believe that Christ died to atone for our sins we could go on forever praising the adorable name of One who condescended to come down to this world of grief and shame, the One who shed his own precious blood that we might have life eternal. We feel to shout it from the house top, proclaim it over and over again, Jesus Christ, our dear Redeemer, shed not his blood in vain. Every one whose name is written in the Lamb's book of life was included in that number embraced in the covenant of grace when Jesus hanging on the cross cried, "It is finished," meaning the complete work of the Father, who sent his only begotten Son into the world to seek and to save the chosen, the elect of God, the lost and ruined sinners, whose daily cry is, God, be merciful to me, a sinner; the ones who feel so helpless, weary and alone that they are almost ashamed to lift their eyes in prayer to ask God's blessing and guidance in everything they do and say while trying to walk in the strait and narrow way that leads to joys above, realizing more and more every day that all help must come from above, else they will wander far astray, and without his help they would never be able to say, By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Ye must be born again before you can see the wonders of the kingdom of God. Oh how could any one claim to have any part in this spiritual birth, any more than they had part in the natural into this world? Praise his holy name that he did it all, and needs not the help of would-be workers, who need to be pitied, for they know not what they do, nor will they ever know unless the God of love sees fit to open their eyes and unstop their ears that they might receive the message from above. But when he calls one of his little ones they have no power to resist the cords of love by which they are drawn away from the pleasures of this world. They are made to cry unto him, Lord, save or I perish, and with joy unspeakable they proclaim aloud the unspeakable riches of Christ, and are commanded to go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, whereof thou art glad. It is then they find a real safe and secure home with God's chosen few, whose humble and contrite spirits send out a warm welcome of love and fellowship to the little one who comes begging for a crumb of mercy, and whose story is one of meekness, such as can be found

nowhere else except in the heart of God's redeemed and chosen few. Though we be few in number, we should not feel discouraged, but rejoice in the thought that Christ has said, Where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them. And great will be the rejoicing when the message is sent from heaven through the chosen vessel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, whose command was, "Feed my sheep," those who come together for the purpose of receiving food for the hungry soul, as we are told, Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. There will always be some one to receive the message which God hath before ordained shall be delivered. He will not leave himself without a witness. When time shall be no more there will be some one living to be gathered home to glory, there to meet the loved ones gone before.

Salvation is by the grace of God, regardless of what man may say or do. We are told, Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me. How diligently we should search the Scriptures for more evidence that we are one of the elect, the chosen few, whose sins are washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." If God be for us who can be against us? Who has any power at all except it be given him from above by the Giver of all good and perfect gifts? For we are told that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. It sometimes seems as if it is all too great for poor finite creatures to comprehend. Then we can only stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, knowing that he has all power and none can change the great plan of salvation, which embraces every one whose hope the Lord is, whose election standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his, and he has promised to be with us through every trial and tribulation which may beset us on the way as we travel life's rugged highway, looking unto Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith, the One altogether lovely, the Savior of sinners, the One we adore for his great love wherewith he loved us before the world began, and will ever be our Guide and Leader, directing our footsteps in the way we should go. Oh may we be given grace to walk worthy the vocation wherewith we are called, esteeming others better than self, ever ascribing all praise to his adorable name for the great love he has bestowed upon us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins, calling us with an effectual calling. How effective it is when Jesus calls. No one is able to say no, when called out of darkness into the wondrous light of that eternal kingdom whose builder and maker is God. He hath said, On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Such a safe, secure foundation! Though storms may howl and tempests roll, yet the salvation of

God ever remaineth the same unchangeable story. It is alone by the grace of God a poor wandering soul is drawn from earth and earthly things to meditate upon heaven and its joys. Though the precious moments spent in communion with the dear Savior seem few and far distant from each other, yet we would not part with these seasons of joy, when the soul soars away from earth, as it were, and is lost for the time being amidst the glory that cannot be told in words, but may be understood by those who are able to read between the lines, because they have traveled the same road and experienced the same feelings. Praise his holy name for one moment of bliss, and by the grace of God may each and every one be given many more such moments as they travel onward in a way that seems to become rougher and more rugged as they go along.

Brother Dodson, these few rambling thoughts of mine may be consigned to the waste-basket, as I hesitate to take your time to ask you to read them, knowing you are so well taught in regard to heaven and its joys. If you should find any comfort or truth in what what has been said, I beg of you give all the praise, honor and glory to him who rules and reigns supreme in heaven above and on earth below. If anything has been said amiss please forgive me, as my earnest desire is to know nothing but the truth as it is revealed through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. By the grace and help of God may you be given strength to continue contending earnestly for the doctrine of salvation by grace, for that is the only way from earth to heaven, as we are told Christ said, I am the way, and the truth, and the life, and no man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day. It is alone through the shed blood of our blessed Redeemer that we can ever pass through the pearly gates of heaven into that home prepared for those who have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts. Oh may we grow in grace and knowledge of the truth as we travel along the way that leads from earth to heaven, is the sincere prayer of one who loves to sit under the sound of your voice to glean and gather the crumbs as they fall from the Master's table.

In bonds of love,

ELSIE LOEFFEL.

ROANOKE, Va., Feb. 6, 1938.

ELDER J. F. STEGALL--DEAR BROTHER—After having asked you what now seems a weak question, I feel burdened for some reason to write you some of what I feel has been the work of God in my heart, revealing his justice, his mercy and love to me, a sinner and an unworthy worm of the dust. I hope you may be enabled to bear with me. If I am a subject of his mercy, I do not know why I do some things, nor why I ask a question I most surely know within my own heart. Somehow I wanted one with the authority of God to testify to the thing that I do know, and you being the first one present since having the thought on it, was the reason I asked you. I know I asked in humble-

ness, whether I acted humble or not. That be as it may, my object here is to write some of my feelings.

When I was quite small I had some thoughts as to my welfare. I thought that if I did good God would bless me; if not, the devil would punish me. So you see where I stood. I felt that when I became as old as my mother and aunts I would join the church and be baptized. I wondered why my mother did not join, for I felt it was something she really ought to do. But I was brought out of those feelings by degrees, or from time to time. My parents went to none other than Old Baptist meetings. I think I went three times to different denominations. I was never in Sunday School, though about five years ago a woman of the world happened to see me reading, and hearing me talk, said I would make a wonderful Sunday School teacher. About the first time I ever felt aware of the fact that I stood in need of mercy was when in a passion of temper, with angry words in my mouth. I became very angry with my younger brothers and sisters whom my mother had left in my care while she visited. The words were brought to a close as they arose, and something told me how awful I was in the sight of God. Even now when I get angry, which I still do, I confess with shame, I have to remember that time. I was about twelve or fourteen years of age then. From then on from time to time I was burdened, but not enough to cause any great worry. I began though to read the Bible, and would lock myself in a room alone. I caught myself leaning forward listening to the preaching, but not understanding. In a dream I saw Elder Cole wearing a crown of pure light, brighter than the sun's light, yet softer. He came down the isle and shook hands with my dearest brother. That light I have never forgotten, and of course his preaching was more interesting to me. When I was about eighteen years old I read the Bible from start to finish, without getting any comfort, for oh I was still going to the law and trying to do something no one but Jesus Christ, the beloved Son of God, has ever done, that is, keep the law to a jot and tittle.

We left Floyd County when I was about eighteen years of age, and I lived the most careless life I ever have, never thinking or caring for anything special, but I could not enjoy the company of young folks, and could not do the things they did with any enjoyment. I tried, but could not. We moved to Roanoke County six or seven years ago, and the following spring I began attending Roanoke Church. The singing always sounded as from heaven, and I loved Old Baptists, not knowing why. That summer I was taken with typhoid fever and I feared that I would die in my sins and without God. One night while at my worst my mother sat by my bedside, I felt to be sinking, ah yes, sinking beneath God's righteous frown. Never has my mother's love seemed so great or near or dear, though I knew I did not deserve it. She slept in her chair and I smothered my sobs with my pillow. About dawn these words came to me, O Lord, if it be thy holy will, let

me live to wait on my mother as she is waiting on me. Little did I think it would be so soon. Oh that I did wait on her as best I could. When well enough to be out I walked around looking at the trees, etc. The birds' songs, and even the ugliest weeds I stooped to stroke, seemed to echo the song of praise in my heart to God. (It seems I cannot be brief, but I do not want to weary you.) Then I saw God in his mercy and love through his Son Jesus, and my burden rolled away for the time being. I am aware that if I have an experience of grace it is different than that of some others.

The following spring my mother became ill, and a few months later my oldest brother (Chester) was accidently killed, by a truck running over him, which of course made my mother worse. She was a strong woman and never showed her feelings much, but he was her first-born and she grieved in silence mostly. She was not able to attend the funeral, or even see him after he was killed. She died with what the doctors thought was a cancer, and I have never seen such suffering. It caused her to cry out and ask that her time to go would come quickly. She was known for her courage in bearing physical and mental pain, but she finally lost her control and was made to cry for mercy from her God. I suffered with her is the reason I am telling of this, but I received some comfort along the way. One day as I came through the gate I heard singing over her window, which seemed to come down from and return to heaven. I seemed to feel, see and hear it. I cannot describe it. I could not move. When I went into her room there was an expression on her face that I felt was good. One day, when I was about twelve years of age, she was under an apple tree in a field of tall grass, and I heard her pray aloud to God for mercy. She died Christmas eve. Though she had been unconscious for twenty-four hours, shortly before she passed away she smiled several times. She realized nothing of the things of this world, but I feel she saw Him and rejoiced. Her death almost killed me. Oh I rebelled. I tried to ask God to spare her, but I never could utter a word to that effect, though from time to time I went out alone and begged for mercy. I stood by her bed and watched life leave her body, and the words arose, O Lord, take her if it be thy holy will, and though tears wet the floor I could not ask that she be kept here. Brother, I was made willing. While she was sick all kinds of doctrine were offered to me. I even walked back and forth in the garden, crying aloud for them to leave me alone, for I could not trust their ways. Brethren Wood and Hash visited her, and it melted my heart. I could do nothing but cry. I could hardly speak, but I wanted to tell them of the things in my heart, for I felt they knew and would understand. I had a mind to go to County Line, the church of my childhood, which I did. As the meeting was closing they sang "What wondrous love is this." I walked up the aisle, trembling from head to foot, and could not speak a word until brother Cole said,

Take your time, you are among friends. When I finished talking he took my hand, and said, God bless you. County Line is now my home here on earth, and it is really the only place I can call home, naturally or spiritually, though I love to go among and visit with Old Baptists anywhere. I mean Old Baptists at heart. Elder Hash baptized two sisters named Greer, a sister Barton and me the Sunday just a year after my brother was laid beneath the ground. I go to County Line when I can. Last fall I became burdened and felt that after all it might be it was not for me. They were all lovely to me, but I felt so unworthy, more so than I had ever felt before. I walked out to the road, thinking, O Lord, if it be thy love that constrained me to come thus far all is well, but if not, how, oh how, can they bear with me? I entered the house of the Lord and heard the things my heart delights in: Jesus and his work, not ours. I came home and dreamed I was there again, and as I entered all were singing, but lowered their books and gave me a welcome hand shake. Brother Hash, especially, seemed to welcome me as never before. I had been burdened because I was young in years and they were mostly all old folks, but they looked beautiful to me. In my dream it seemed that as I took my seat I looked at my hand and it was old and shaky looking, but somehow it gave me strength, for I thought, Oh I am like them, and I felt they were the children of God. If I am one, I know it is by grace. I am sure the doctrine is right, for it is Jesus, and he is the way, the truth and the life.

I enjoyed your preaching to-day, as I have several times in the past. It is not always I feel I can hear, and I do know whether it is because I do not at such times have a hearing ear or whether it is that you cannot always preach in spirit. I do not mean anything against you by saying that, but rather it is my belief that it takes the revealing power of almighty God for you to preach, as well as for us to hear. Truly the letter killeth, but the Spirit maketh alive.

I am sorry I have been so lengthy, but I have only hinted at some of the things I have felt. I cannot tell it, but you told it to us to-day. Old sister Barber held my hand, and looking long into my face, said, Did you like the preaching? I said, It WAS preaching. She smiled, and said, Oh it seemed so good, so good to me. Without Him we can do nothing. I realize it, and I believe the constraining as well as the restraining power of our God is in all things, over all powers, be they men or devils.

Please make allowence, for I am weak, and pray for me, if you feel you can for such as I.

Humbly, in hope,

CATHERINE A. HOUCHINS.

SALISBURY, Md., Feb. 11, 1938.

DEAR ELDER COULBOURN:—Your letter was received and I did appreciate it very much, because I know your time is taken up with more worthy things,

and as you are not well I am sure you did not feel much like writing.

Yes, I am the Davis you took me to be, and if I am worthy to be a member of the church here you will be my pastor, and I feel like writing to you what I hope have been the Lord's dealings with me.

For many years I was in darkness and had no hope. If you remember, some years ago I was in the hospital here. They said they could not do anything for me, as my trouble was mental. I wanted you to come and see me and talk with me, which you did. It was the same doctrine then that I believe in to-day. At that time I felt dead to all spiritual things. For many years I could not shed a tear, my heart seemed so hard; neither could I eat or sleep much. Now I believe it was God's way of putting affliction upon me, if, as I hope, I am one of his little ones, for whom he loveth he chasteneth and scourgeth every of them he receiveth. I want to say here that should be a great comfort to you in your affliction, for we know what the suffering here is compared to eternity. I have had my limb broken twice, and now am suffering from a sprain in that same limb. It is very weak, and I fall so easily. But I deserve it all, and more. Much of my time has been taken up with the cares of this world; sin is mixed with all I think and do. I have felt many times that I was losing my mind. But God in his mercy, I hope, has revealed himself to me, and now all seems bright with his presence and there is a song in my heart all the time. When I was looking at and thinking about myself all was dark, like the shadow of one who has his back to the sun, but when the Sun of Righteousness shone into my heart I saw what a vile sinner I was and am. He sent sweet peace because his righteousness is imputed unto his redeemed, and if I am one of that number there is nothing in this world that can separate me from the love of God. I cannot do anything to save myself. If I know anything about it, his grace is sufficient. All things work together for good. I realize I cannot remain in this frame of mind, that there are clouds and trouble ahead, because if I am one of his I will have chastisement. But I feel at present that I could mount up with wings as an eagle.

You know so much more about these things than I do that I may be presuming to write so much about myself. The fifty-fourth chapter of Isaiah has been a great comfort to me, and if the Lord has called me out of darkness into light everything will come to pass in his own good time. We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren

I wanted to write to you long ago, but felt timid about it. Many times I went to hear you, but felt shut up and could not come forth. He has a time for everything. He works and none can hinder.

I could write much more, but fear I may tire you. I feel the Lord will keep and sustain you in your affliction, and I hope will return you to us again. We know he doeth all things well; that not

even a sparrow falls to the ground without our heavenly Father.

In hope of eternal life,

(MRS.) HILARY M. DAVIS.

BROWNVILLE, Alabama.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am late sending in my renewal to the SIGNS. It seems that Providence has made the delay unavoidable. I think at times I will have the paper discontinued, but I have learned to look forward to its coming with a great deal of pleasure, and, too, it seems to be a part of the family.

I notice in some old Minutes that I have that Elder John Norris preached the introductory sermon at the Tuscaloosa Association, Friday before the third Sunday in October, 1834, and, if I am not misinformed, he was taking the paper at that time, and he and his oldest son, Elder T. J. Norris, stood with Elder Beebe at that time in the division, and their mantle passed to Elder S. J. Norris, who passed away in May, 1936. Thus you see three generations have preached the word here for more than one hundred years. And, too, it seems to me the SIGNS is one of the best, if not the best, Old Baptist paper we have, proclaiming the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who changes not, neither is there a shadow of a turn, whose mercy endures forever. When I see strife arise in the Old Baptist family it always grieves me, for most of this strife is caused by envy and jealousy, and since we have been forgiven so much, why is it that we are so quick to fall out with our brother and say things that are hard to be borne? Yet I feel to know that it for good to them that love God, who are the called according to his purpose. But when I see them striving one with the other, I am ever turning to hymn 147 in Lloyd's book. It seems to me that this hymn portrays one of the sweetest experiences I ever read. I do not know why Old Baptists do not use it more in their services. It begins with a cry for mercy. He saw himself an undone sinner in the sight of God, and knew that grace and mercy was the only thing that would ever reach his case. I think at times that if I had such an experience I would be satisfied. And he does not stop at that, but listen to him sing, "Lord, remove this grievous blindness, let my eyes behold the day." You see he was praying for the light of divine grace to guide him, that he might walk in the paths of righteousness, peace, joy and longsuffering. Listen, he sings on, "Oh that all the blind but knew him, or would be advised by me." You see he was praying for others who were blind spiritually, that they might see theway. Now listen and hear him sing, "Friend, is not my case amazing? What a Savior I have found." Is it not wonderful what a Savior you have found? He has suffered so much for you, and has forgiven all your sins and transgressions, and looks down upon you with a smile of tender mercy, and is now seated at the right hand of his Father making intercession for you, and when we hear the gospel preached we know that our High Priest is yet alive and is making intercession for his elect according to his promise,

W. L. NORRIS.

DODGE CITY, Kansas.

DEAR EDITORS:—In compiling data concerning the family of Nehemiah Davis, 2nd, (my grandfather) I found the following, taken from History of Athens County, Ohio: "Nehemiah Davis. Elder Davis, a native of Maine, came to Marietta, Ohio, in November, 1797, lived in Washington County, Ohio, several years, and removed to Dover Township, Athens County, in 1808. While living in Washington County Elder Davis organized a Baptist Church, believed to be the first Baptist Church in Ohio. He died August 23rd, 1823." This, I believe, is the father of my grandfather, and I would be very glad if you would publish this in our much esteemed family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and if any who read it have access to old church or association records, or information from gravestones, or otherwise, I would greatly appreciate their correspondence and would also be thankful to you. In Hassell's Church History I find, page 909, Associations Formed—Miami, Butler County, Ohio, 1797. This same year my people were located temporally at Cincinnati, Ohio, before moving on up the river to near Hocking County, where the Sciota Association was formed, in 1805. Tradition also has it that my ancestors were of the ancient "hard shell" stock, and of course I would like to prove it by undeniable facts.

A brother, I hope, in Christ,

ROBERT L. DAVIS,
1000 Avenue G,
DODGE CITY, Kansas.

JOHNSON CITY, New York.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find one dollar, for which send me the SIGNS for the next six months. I only send for it for half a year, for I am an old woman and do notexpect to be here long and there is no one who would read it after I am gone. I want to take it as long as I live, for it is all the preaching I get. I have some old copies, published in 1863 and 1864, and I love to read them over and over. I do not go to any meetings, for I cannot believe as some others do, so stay at home and read my Bible and the SIGNS, for I do not like to hear God's power limited. They say God wants to do things, and my Bible says that what he desireth that he doeth in all places. But am I one for whom he died on that awful cross? For poor sinful me? I hope so. He says we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren, and I believe I love this people.

Your sister, I hope,

ANNA ROE.

KILDARE, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars for another year of the SIGNS. Husband and I have no other preaching. We seldom get to meeting, therefore I spend many hours reading the SIGNS. We sent old brother Beeman postage to send us a bundle of old SIGNS, several years ago, which I value highly and read over and over and find something new all the time.

Respectfully,

(MRS.) J. W. HUGGHINS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1939.

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PSALMS CXXXVIII. 8.

"THE Lord will perfect that which concerneth me."

In reading the one hundred thirty-eighth and one hundred thirty-ninth Psalms we cannot help but conclude that it is not mere accident that has placed these two Psalms together, but that they are both expressions of the Psalmist when deeply led "in the ways of the Lord." He undoubtedly was taught that God was ever present and working all things together after the counsel of his own will. Thus he had been under God's all-searching eye, and he confessed that God understood his thoughts afar off. One feels that there is a very clear evidence of "present concern" in these Psalms, and it is from that understanding that we would write our views. God's work is perfect, in part as in whole, there is nothing faulty about it, whatever faults and failures there may seem to be according to man's opinion, those faults and failures belong to man. David's concern was not with man, but it was with God, as every gracious person's concern is today. What God hath spoken becomes the concern of all those to whom he speaks. Thus it is written that faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Abel's concern was very different to that of Cain's concern, and Noah's concern was very different to those who did not believe his testimony. The parents of Moses had a concern above and beyond the wrath of the king. The three Hebrews were little concerned with what man could do. A God-given faith was their concern and it was proven in the furnace. While the Old Testament worthies were blessed with faith, and did wonderful things through faith, and it can be said that faith in a God who had called and led them was their concern, yet they were not made perfect in those acts. Promises were given of God and those blessed characters saw them afar off and were persuaded of them and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. (Heb. xi. 13.) In their walk it could be said, As they walked by faith, that they walked perfectly. In this Noah is called a just man, perfect in his generations, he walked with God, as did also Enoch. We do not here understand that Enoch was perfect and needed not to be saved.

Enoch was perfect in that faith which led him also to believe with David that the Lord only would perfect that which concerned him. David was under the law, and therefore under its curse, and the law could not make the comers thereunto perfect. The slaying of the lamb and sprinkling of the blood and the many other duties and ceremonies were of no avail, could not take away sin, yet faith, God-given, exercised in those very things, enabled those who possessed it to look beyond them to the antitype, Jesus, and they rejoiced in hope of the glory of God. It can therefore be affirmed that the Lord will perfect whatsoever concerns his children for time and eternity; whether it be gathering them from among the Gentile people, or the bringing of the Jew to the full enjoyment of what God has promised, or the presenting of every elect vessel of mercy faultless before the presence of his glory, with his likeness satisfied. But while we believe the things that are declared in God's word, those things which Luke says are most surely believed among us. We want to speak upon this subject as to present concerns of those who know as David did that they are open and naked before him with whom they have to do. What a tower of Babel the religious effort of this world presents, quite as varied as at the time when Christ came, when they had gods many and lords many. "Blind leaders of the blind," covers many of those who lead to-day, and happy are those whose eyes are open to see these things and who turn from what man can do to what God has done. We mentioned some of the worthies of the Old Testament, and Paul tells us in Hebrews that they all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. In the same epistle he tells that the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did. Thus Jesus came, David's son and Lord, to perfect that which concerned him, taking away the first covenant that he might establish the second. This covenant stands ordered in all things and sure. The Father chose a number that no man can number in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. This number, members of his mystical body, were written in the Lamb's book of life when as yet there were none of them. God loved them in Christ Jesus before the world began.

"Nor death, nor life, nor earth, nor hell,
Nor time's destroying sway,
Can e'er efface us from his heart,
Or make his love decay.

Each future period that will bless,
As it has blest the past;
He loved us from the first of time,
He loves us to the last."

At the fullness of time Christ died for them and by one offering perfected forever them who were sanctified. Paul said he labored to present every man perfect in Christ, that was his ministry, and how fully and blessedly he was, by the grace of God, enabled so to do. To the weak he became as weak, yet not so as to bring them under the law and under its curse, but to establish, before

their eye of faith, Christ as the hope set before us in the gospel. Wherever there is one for whom Christ died that one will never be left to perish. If it could be proven (but it cannot) that Christ died for everybody, then we could also affirm that everybody is already saved by his death. God's honor is engaged to bring, by his Holy Spirit, the knowledge of his salvation unto each one for whom he died, causing the light of truth to shine in their hearts, giving them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The Spirit applies the word, and faith cometh by hearing it, and this is a justifying faith, proving that the sins of such an one were by God the Father imputed to Christ and that Christ's righteousness is imputed to them. Here believers in the present religion of the world stumble like the Jews of old, not knowing the Scripture nor the power of God. For they, going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. We rejoice that there are still a few who are blessed with a justifying faith and have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulation also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." It will be noticed in the Scripture just quoted that tribulation works patience, and we are mindful that it is through much tribulation we enter the kingdom; and what trials there are laid out for the dear and afflicted children of God, trials they cannot escape, fiery trials, for the trial of their faith, and the Lord only can and does make such trials work together for good, and the things of God more precious, and the opinions and doings of men to be weighed in the balance of Scripture as less than nothing and vanity. It is in this trial that we learn that "thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever." The trials that come upon the Lord's people are often the same as upon the world at large, but to the Lord's people they are sanctified afflictions. "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." The devil brought the affliction, but the end, or purpose, was the Lord's, and Job proved his friends miserable comforters, but the Lord was merciful. Every example in the divine word is an encouragement to God's afflicted and poor people to wait upon the Lord. Joseph telling his dreams to his brethren brought hatred and sorrow upon himself, but God was in it and Joseph must be sold into Egypt or ever God perfected that which concerned him. God was in it all, such truth fills the soul with praise unto God, the God of our lives. What

sorrows encompass us round, yet when the soul experiences God's love shed abroad in the heart what mercies such an one can see encompassing him about as with a shield, and where one sees this perfecting work of God how one cries, "Forsake not the works of thine own hands." David desired the Lord to finish, or perfect, the work in righteousness. He knew that except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it, that it was in the Lord's building that one was established and in his keeping we are kept. That vanity was stamped upon rising early or sitting up late, for so he giveth his beloved sleep, which means rest and security, security in God, who is our refuge and strength. May faith be strong in us, that we stagger not at the promise through unbelief, but give glory unto God, believing that he who promised is able to perform. His promise is yea and amen in Christ Jesuse the Lord and never was forfeited yet. How low one gets at times, yet underneath are the everlasting arms, and God is not unmindful of those who call upon him in sincerity and truth, neither will he deny himself. Is it not in his work that the soul rejoices, singing of his lovingkindness in the morning and his faithfulness every night? In that Psalm the writer says, "For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work; I will triumph in the works of thy hands." Thus in trials, losses and sorrows the Lord has promised to be with his children even unto the end, and the soul can say by faith, "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me; thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me." Such concern is not of the flesh, but of the Spirit, and with a concern of this kind there will also be a confidence that he who hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ. David had a lifelong concern that he should build the house of the Lord, and the Lord said he did well that he had such a concern, but he could not, for he was a man of war, but his son, one that proceeded from his loins, should build it, and Jesus, David's son, perfected that which concerned him. G. R.

PROVERBS XXII. 28.

"REMOVE not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set."

This is undoubtedly a real proverb. A proverb is said to be a "brief pithy saying." In other words, a concentration or wealth of meaning in a few words. We believe this one to be all of that. Literally speaking, it was a well-nigh sacred custom for our forefathers in the days of old to fix a landmark as the boundary line between their lands, properties or estates, which ever we may choose to call them, to separate or distinguish them apart. With all of the new inventions of this modernistic age, our surveyors are still making use of a landmark, corner-stone or slab to determine the point where one man's ownership ends and another's begins. In the fourteenth verse of the nineteenth chapter of Deuteronomy we read, "Thou shalt not remove thy neighbor's landmark, which they of old time have

set in thine inheritance, which thou shalt inherit in the land that the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it." And in the seventeenth verse of the twenty-seventh chapter it says, " Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor's land-mark." They were in honor bound to strictly observe, generation after generation, such markers, otherwise they established a bad reputation or name for themselves. Solomon, no doubt, had reference to that custom when he said: "A GOOD name is rather to be chosen than great riches." One main trouble with the world to-day, in our opinion, is that man and nations, because of selfishness and greed, have shown an utter disregard for the rights of others. Honesty, however, is still a pearl of great price in the sight of honorable men, and a man whose word is as good as his bond is much to be preferred to the one who resorts to unscrupulous methods for accumulating his wealth. Character has been said to be better security than gilt edged bonds. When we consider the meaning of a "good name" to the Lord's people, yea, the best name in all the world to them, even THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, for it is by this name that the church is called, it is, indeed, rather to be chosen than great riches. Diamonds and pearls, gold and silver, and the greatest honors that can be bestowed by mankind, are but sordid dust compared with this good name.

Coming back to our text, we wish to call attention to the fact that "land-mark" is spoken of in the singular, as one, and not in the plural, as though there were many. Also, we would like to stress the fact of its being said to be "ancient." Sometimes we hear brethren speak of it as though it meant the modern writings of more or less recent men. Without turning back the pages of history too far, we may well esteem very highly such men as Dr. John Gill, J. C. Philpot, William Gadsby and others of England, and Samuel Trott, R. C. Leachman, Gilbert Beebe and others more recent in our own country, nevertheless, we must at all times keep in mind the fact that at most they were but fallible men. Personally, we are fearful that there are some who regard the sayings of such men too seriously, or as the very last word of authority. In this connection, we might do well to consider the writings of some of the apostles. Paul said, "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it; and profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto

Damascus."—Gal. i. 11-17. This same apostle admonishes the church even unto this day, in saying, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."—Col. ii. 6-9. Peter comes along and reminds us that we were not "redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ." In the ninth article of the original prospectus of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES Elder Gilbert Beebe said: "The Scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God." The "ancient landmark," which is not to be removed, is that which God himself hath set by the fathers between right and wrong, between the true and the false, between his own possession and that of the Mammon of unrighteousness. God by his Holy Spirit inspired holy men of old, being linked together in succession, although in many instances having no knowledge of each other, but nevertheless steadfastly contending for the same glorious truth, even down to the days of Jesus Christ and the apostles, thus plainly showing the unerring influence of the ONE mind of that I AM THAT I AM, who called and sent them forth as sheep among wolves. Do we need any greater evidence of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures than the fact that men who graced the stage of action at different periods of the world have constantly taken up the banner of truth, where it was lain down by those who had gone before, and borne it aloft as a standard for the elect of God in all ages of the world to rally around? Though Moses wrote of the creation of the world, and events which took place long before he was born, and others prophesied of things a thousand and more years to come, we have such an abundance of proof as to the accuracy of their testimony that none of God's children will dare question his word. The prophets foretold of the coming of Jesus and his mission on earth, and he came and sealed it with his own precious blood, fulfilling in every jot and tittle all that was prophesied of him. This was followed by the apostles who were a unit in bearing witness to the fact that Jesus finished the work of redemption in every detail and by declaring that the church is "built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." The doctrine of God our Savior has been clearly set forth by the foregoing divinely inspired authors, and we will do well to regard them with reverence and stand firm for the truth as it is in Jesus. Let us, therefore,

seek for the old paths, and inquire "wherein is the good way, and walk therein." "For other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Paul, writing to the Corinthian brethren, said, "I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." This is good, sound and wholesome doctrine. The flock of God can feed and feast and thrive upon this without suffering any ill effects. We wish we all might realize that we owe allegiance to God, that we are accountable to him for what we preach and teach, and may we be given to look to him, and him alone, for wisdom, for knowledge, for understanding and guidance in the way that we should go, being careful not to remove the ancient landmark which he hath been pleased to set by our spiritual forefathers, in moving them by his Spirit to stake out the bounds of eternal truth.

R. L. D.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE date opposite your name on the little pink slip on which your address is printed denotes the time your subscription expires. Dec 38 means that it expired December, 1938; Aug 39 that it will expire August, 1939, etc.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Maria French, Pa., $1; Lena Langford, Texas, 50 cents; Mrs. H. A. Strube, Texas, $2; Durwood H. Bradley, Texas, $2; Mrs. M. Smith, B. C., $1; Mrs. Charles B. Gordy, Mich., $2; Sadie T. Nicoll, Del., $1; Mrs. Mary A. Drew, N. Y., $1.50.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEACON WILLIAM ALONZO CORDER, our beloved brother, died February 20th, 1939, at 11 p. m., at his home, in Philippi, West Virginia, of a heart attack and other ailments incident to old age. He was born in the year 1862, the son of James W. and Mary (Bond) Corder. June 19th, 1884, he married Miss Nannie R. Reynolds, who proved to be a faithful companion and helpmeet until her death in 1927. He is survived by one son, J. Stanley Corder, two grandchildren, Mrs. Ruth Haney and Robert Stanley Corder, one great-grandchild, Ronald Loyd Haney, one sister, Mrs. W. F. Cole, our remaining deacon. In early life he was enabled to manifest the gentle drawings of the Spirit of grace divine, which was performed until the day of Jesus Christ. October 27th, 1894, he joined the Mount Olive Old School Baptist Church, and was baptized the next day (the fourth Sunday). In 1896 he was chosen deacon of the church, which office he filled until his death, waiting upon the church for the last time in October, 1938. After the death of his brother, A. B. Corder, in 1933, he took the financial part of the church upon his shoulder, so to speak, and was often about the meeting-house, having it repainted, etc. He was a retired farmer and stock dealer, and had the gift of accumulation bestowed upon him, but, like his brother, secular affairs had no charms for him, and when it came to the church his arm was not slack in caring. He was a whole-souled Old Baptist, so to speak, and in his last days his conversation was in heaven. It was a delight to be with him and hear him quote the Scriptures and tell of the sweetness of his hope in the Lord. I miss him sadly, and his lovely talk. One dear sister writes, "You will miss him sadly in the church. The whole Associa-

tion will mis him sadly. He stood as a pillar in the church, and was a staunch and faithful friend to the whole Baptist cause. May the Lord, who took him to himself, sustain and comfort the whole Association in our loss, which I feel sure is his glorious gain." I take the liberty of quoting the foregoing language, because it expresses our feelings better than I can. He had been a subscriber to the SIGNS about fifty years, and feasted on the doctrine it contains.

His body lay in state at his lovely home until 2 p. m., February 22nd, when brief services were held. Following this, services were held at the Primitive Baptist Church where his membership was. Interment was in the church graveyard, by the side of his wife. Elders J. S. Murphy and J. J. Poling conducted the funeral services, the pastor, Elder J. R. Dennison, being unable to attend. We ask the brotherhood to remember us in their prayers in our great loss, and also that we be enabled by divine grace to watch the hand of the Lord in choosing a pastor to go in and out before us. Our present dear pastor being old and infirm and a long way off and seldom can be with us.

SEMMA E. CORDER.

JOHN C. TURNER, our brother in Christ, was born October 18th, 1857, and died March 19th, 1939, in Henry County, Kentucky, in the vicinity of Turners Station, where his life was spent on a farm. September 16th, 1890, he was united in marriage to Miss Beatrice Neblett, and to this union were born six children, two of whom, with the mother, preceded him in death. Left to mourn are two sons, Hassel Turner, of Jackson, Mississippi, and Howard Turner, at the old home; two daughters, Mrs. Elizabeth Kelly, of LaGrange, Kentucky, and Mrs. Helen Chilton, of Turners Station; five grandchildren, two sisters, Mrs. Virginia Duncan, of Cleveland, Ohio, and Mrs. Anna Neblett, of Shelbyville, Kentucky, and a number of nephews and nieces. In the spring of 1898 he became troubled on account of his sins. He confided his trouble to the Cane Run Predestinarian Baptist Church, and was received for baptism. Because of the absence of their pastor, Elder P. W. Sawin, the baptism was delayed one week, and at a meeting of the Sulphur Fork Church the next Sunday he was baptized by Elder John G. Eubanks, their pastor, and his remaining days were spent with the church, loved by all who knew him. He was sound in the faith, strict on church order, a firm believer in the absolute predestination of all things, and always in his seat in the church until his health became impaired. Surely the church has lost a brother indeed, but we realize that our loss is his eternal gain, and we ask almighty God to reconcile us to his will, and to comfort them that mourn.

I tried to comfort the friends at the funeral, by using the fifteenth verse of the one hundred sixteenth Psalm: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints," then in the cemetery near by he was laid to rest. Surely a saint is sleeping in Jesus, in the hope of a glorious resurrection.

ALSO,

ROBERT LUTHER CLAGETT was born July 22nd, 1869, and died December 11th, 1938. He was the son of our dear departed sister, Elvessa Clagett. He is survived by one sister, Mrs. Anna Tingle, and four brothers, Joe, George, Ed and Noble Clagett, all in the neighborhood of Turners Station, and a host of friends, who will miss him. I was called from Frankfort, Ky., to officiate at the funeral, which was held in Turners Station. I tried with the ability

the Lord gave to preach Christ, and him crucified, to a large congregation, which had gathered to pay their last respects to a neighbor and friend. We laid him in the silent city of the dead to await the judgment day. May the Lord bless the remaining children

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

MRS. LEMILIA MINERVA SMITH, my dear aunt, passed away November 24th, 1938. (Thanksgiving Day.) She was born October 20th, 1860, making her stay on earth 78 years, 1 month and 4 days. She was the daughter, and youngest child, of Elder L. B. and Lucy Swann Chandler. She was the last to pass away of a large family. I am made to realize that they are having a family reunion in that sweet home prepared for God's children. Her father and mother came from Alabama to Louisiana, and if I am not mistaken, Aunt was born the first year they lived in Louisiana. At the age of sixteen she was married to Jimmie Clay, also from Alabama. He died and left her a widow with four little children. She lived alone with these children and her mother for two years, then met and married Isham M. Smith, of near Winnfield, Louisiana. To this union were born six children, four girls and two boys. They raised them all to be grown, and then she was left a widow again. Uncle Isham passed away February 9th, 1923. She was sick in bed when he died and was a long time recovering. She joined the Old Baptist Church forty-eight years ago, and was baptized by Elder E. R. Roberson. Aunt Miley was a true and faithful Old Primitive Baptist, and tried to do what she thought was right, and to teach her children to be honest men and women. She brought up a family that is highly respected here in this little town of Winnfield, Louisiana, where they live. They did all they could for their darling mother, yet the good Lord called her, and she answered the call. Her membership was at her old home church (Ephesus), of near Ruston, La. She loved her church above everything else in the world. Poor Aunt, due to ill health, for a few months before she died, would almost lose her memory at times. She realized this and it worried her. After my mother died I felt a great desire, more than ever, to visit her, and would do so at every opportunity. When I would go in and speak to her it seemed to cheer her very much. She would often tell me how lonesome she would get at times when her girls would be obliged to leave her for a few hours to go to their work. She was always glad of a visit from her relatives and friends. Just a few days before she died she was heard to say that she dreaded the cold, lonesome winter, but, bless God, she is now where all is love and joy. She does not have to feel sad or lonesome or dread the dreary winter. Oh I loved her dearly, and feel very sad since she has left us all. But why should we grieve so much for her, when we feel she is at rest? Children, I pray you will remember her good advice, and some sweet day I trust that you will all be gathered around that white throne with dear father and mother. She is survived by eight children: one son and one daughter by her first husband, and two sons and four daughters by her second husband, three step-children, two boys and one girl, several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Phillips, of Monticello, Arkansas. She was laid to rest in the old Douglas Cemetery, near Ruston, Louisiana.

May the good Lord bless all the bereaved, is the prayer of her niece,

LUDY PUCKETT SMITH.

MEETINGS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, at Hopewell, New Jersey, May 31st, June 1st and 2nd, 1939. We hope the ministering brethren, together with all who are of our faith and order who possibly can will visit us at this time.

ELVIRA CONNER, Church Clerk.

The next session of the Baltimore Association will be held with the church at Black Rock, Md., June 3rd and 4th (Saturday and Sunday). To reach Black Rock by automobile from Baltimore, drive out Falls Road about twenty miles to the village of Butler. A cordial invitation is extended to all to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Trustee.

An all-day meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the New Vernon Church, near Howells, N. Y., on Friday, June 9th, 1939. We are expecting several visiting ministers to be present, and cordially invite all those who love the truth to meet with us. It is planned to serve dinner at Mrs. Blumrhoder's, as last year.

R. LESTER DODSON.

This year the Border Union of Old School Baptists is appointed to meet with the church at Elgin, Oregon, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday (the third Sunday in June), and we extend an invitation to any interested friends or brethren to meet with us at these appointments. Elgin is twenty miles from La Grande, and both are on standard highways, and also on the railroads. We shall welcome any of our tourest friends who will arrange their schedules to enable them to stop with us. The Oregon Trail Highway, which is U. S. No. 30, will bring them here.

C. W. BOND.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Mod., pro. tem.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 168 East 70th Street, Manhattan. Near Lexington Avenue.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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I feel to recommend this book to our readers.—G. R.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

THE PREDESTINATION, PURPOSE AND FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD IN ALL THINGS.

LABORING under the impression to write an article containing some of my views concerning a subject which includes the whole work of God I have one thing in mind, and that is to bring to mind and stimulate the truth which has been contended for by the Original Primitive or Old School Baptists throughout all generations, and especially since the days of Jesus Christ's work on earth. Feeling unworthy and so limited in understanding, I am submitting this article in the humble hope of confirming the children of God of the certainty of God's work, and proving the same by "Thus saith the word of God."

Inasmuch as it has pleased the Lord to give me an impression to write some of my views on his predestination, purpose and foreknowledge, I humbly hope that he will lead and direct my mind to write soundly, and that I will not misconstrue or misrepresent any of his work. Feeling unworthy of his grace and mercy, yet trusting in him, I now desire to express my views upon these principles which I have before mentioned.

First, I will consider the word "predestinate," which means to before ordain; to prefix, or to before determine. Now we are positive, according to the Scriptures, that God himself is the only self-existing being. He was before the world was, and "all things were made him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."—John i. 3. Also, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."—Gen. i. 1. Which, alone, would prove that he created and made everything that exists or ever has existed in heaven or on the earth, if there was no other Scripture to prove it by (which there is). In the creation of heaven and earth God executed his own counsel and will. He did a work which he alone had determined. For there was none before him to counsel, influence or coach him

in his work. This work was known to him from the beginning. He planned it, and his hand brought it to pass. Now shall we say that it was a purposeless work? No. It is gross foolishness for men to think that God, who is all-wise, would do anything without a purpose, and much more foolish to think that a purpose of his fails, or that he does not know what the outcome of his work shall be. John, "in the Spirit on the Lord's day," heard the voice in heaven say, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."—Rev. iv. 11. So we see that all things were created for a purpose, and that God executed his purpose and plan according to his own will. Hence no one has the right to question as to whether his work has pleased him or not, for we have facts. None of his purposes could exceed what he purposed in them, neither could any fall short of what he desired of them. Can any one say that God has been disappointed? I will admit that such could be the case if he purposed anything and it should fail. It is inconceivable to think that anything exists which God has no use for. The creation of all things by the hand of God according to a well devised plan, "Known unto him are all his works from the beginning." The Lord hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed so shall it be. The word "it" as applied here, signifies all things, for there is no specific action or limitation placed, or can be placed, upon it. Again, it is written, "Declaring the end from the beginning," etc. God's predestination is certain, absolute and sure, because if it were not so nothing would be certain or sure in this world or in heaven. Furthermore, there would be a great possibility of God failing in his purpose, which we know is impossible. If God's predestination, purpose and foreknowledge were not prevalent in all things this world would be one awful place of chaos and havoc in which to live. The sun would be likely to rise in the west and set in the east part of the time; the bleak cold of the winter would be likely to come in the harvest season, midnight would be likely to break in at noonday, and many other things would get as unshapely as the human body would be without bones. But I am thankful that by him the sun shines and runs its course according to God's eternal plan, by him we have food, raiment, rain and all things, and the apostle Paul said, By him all things consist. If God is not an absolute Sovereign, then everything is coming to pass by chance and at random, and may God have pity on our poor souls, for we have no surety if such is the case. God forbid that we should believe any such theory. God not only rules the natural kingdom, minutely, but also the spiritual kingdom, so nothing can vary the slightest degree from what he purposed in it. God is all-wise and cannot be deceived; has all power, and cannot be overthrown nor hindered, and is everywhere present, and nothing can hide from him nor exist without him.

Now in going thus far I have touched upon the predestination, purpose and foreknowledge of God in creation. These principles are three inseparable principles which are the framework of all the work of God. Summarily: For God to know a thing was for the thing to exist, and signifies that he had a purpose in it. If God had no purpose in a thing it was because that thing was not, and never shall be.

Now let us see what the purpose, predestination and foreknowledge of God mean to us. Do they concern only natural things such as I have been speaking of, or do they concern also spiritual things? Both. The purpose of God in natural things is working to the maturing and bringing together the greater and spiritual things of him. The one is not working contrary to the other in God's purpose, but all things are wrought by him to the *one* end for the praise of his name. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." These things concern especially the saints who shall praise him above every thing, forever.

I have before stated that God's foreknowledge concerns all his people very deeply, that is, in regard to their soul's salvation. It is inconceivable to think that God has changed from what he once was, because the Bible plainly teaches that he is God, and changes not, and is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. He is not in line for education as we are, for he was as wise in the beginning as he is to-day. He knew exactly what he would be pleased with in this world and what his providence would be. Such was manifested in the salvation of his children, hence comes their deep concern.

Believing in the knowledge and purpose of God in the salvation of sinners, one first realizes that he is an eternal God, who had no beginning and neither shall have any end, and was before all things, and beholding all things, the evil as well as the good. God knew his people before they were created or formed, and their names were written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world. Every man's destiny was set, and God alone knew this, and he alone knows to-day the destiny of every individual. That destiny has not been altered nor changed from what it originally was, because God is of one mind, and who can change him? "I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him."—Eccl. iii. 14. Some my say, If my destiny is already set I will take my fill of sin and the pleasures of this life, and if it is to be so I will be saved anyway. Such is not the thought of the quickened sinner who has been taught the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the wounds caused thereby. He feels that he has his fill of sin, and is made sick of it every day, and finds himself unable to live free from its sting and unable to live as he wants and so much desires to live. So he must say with the apostle Paul, The good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not that I do. And, To will is present with me, but

how to perform that which is good I find not. He feels that sin is mixed with all he does, and that if it were not for the goodness and mercy of God he would in no wise be held blameless for his deeds and thoughts.

Did God know that man would sin? Did sin take Him by surprise? Yes, God knew that sin would enter into the world, and was not surprised, for his Son, Jesus Christ, stood a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world in the eternal mind of God to forever atone for sin. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. v. 12); "nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression."—Rom. v. 14. "But not as the offence, so also is the free gift."—Rom. v. 15. So by this we clearly see that all were sinners by reason of transgression, we, being in the loins of Adam, were as guilty as he. Yet we find that God, who had no pleasure of the offerings of men, perfected a pure offering, even his own Son, to put away sin. God's own children were as steeped in sin as the reprobate who shall never come to repentance. But he had treasured grace in Jesus Christ to ransom his people and save them from sin. (Matt. i. 21.) This thought brings to mind the choice of God in salvation. Is it not true that if God had purposed to save everybody that he could have done so? He could have even kept sin out of the world if he had so desired. God chose his people in Christ before the world. (Eph. i. 4.) Predestinated them unto the adoption of children. (Eph. i. 5.) This was before man was formed or made, and was in the eternal mind of God, and so it was no afterthought of him to save them, but was according to his well devised plan and purpose that he purposed in himself before the world began and was brought to pass at his own time. Strange as it may seem to the carnal mind, salvation does not depend upon the choice or merits of men, but upon the will and purpose of God, who said, I will have mercy upon whom I will. God knowing that man would sin does not mean that he had to force man to sin. Any one who has tasted the gift of God knows that he does not have to force man to sin, because man is subject to vanity and his natural inclination is to do wrong, and God does not regard sin in the same manner as he does righteousness. The purpose of God is so arranged that all the result of sin and what sin does takes place in fulfillment of his eternal will, and is working for good to the kingdom of God. Abounding with wisdom, knowledge and power, God in his great purpose showed his will in giving his Son, Jesus Christ, (who was ever with the Father) to conquer sin and forever put it under foot. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."—Rom. v. 6. So we see that it was due time for this work which God had purposed.

Some say that Christ died to save all men. Let us see about that. We know that he was sent to save some in eter-

nity, but not all men. He was sent into the world to give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him. (John xvii. 2.) All that were given him were the choice of God. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you."—John xv. 16. Some designing men have gone out teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, trying, as they term it, to "convert the world." To such I quote, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte [which means to convert]; and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves."—Matt. xxiii. 15. These men are trying to do the work of God. God knows his children and in his own time will bring them to repentance, and in his own manner. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." —John x. 27, 28. This not only shows that Gad knows his people, but also shows that he unconditionally brings them to the knowledge of the truth. So these men I before mentioned are not true ministers of the word, for money is their god and publicity and fame their highest ideals. The apostle Peter said they were "clouds without water." They claim that God is wooing and beseeching all men to be saved, or come unto him, and yet they will not. If such be the case, who is the stronger, man or God? Such a theory would be equalizing God with man, or attributing more power to man than unto God. Jesus said, No man can come unto me except my Father which sent me draw him. Again, No man can come unto the Father except by me. In this we find that the whole matter is sealed by the will of God, not by the will of man. Jesus Christ's mission on earth was to do the will of his Father. Did he fulfill his mission? Let him speak for himself: "I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."—John xvii. 4. Again, Of all that thou hast given me I have lost nothing, but the son of perdition, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. Let us refer now to another of the many proofs we could produce: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people."—Luke i. 68. This was a purposed and predestinated work and answers the question thoroughly that Jesus did save the chosen of the Father. In God's perfect and wise plan of salvation everything is purposed and predestinated according to his foreknowledge, and is in its proper place to fulfill its part and accomplishment in "bringing many sons unto glory." God knows his children when they are strangers and aliens by reason of sin, and he brings them to repentance, which work belongs to God alone. However sinful, vile and far away a man is, his bounds are set that he cannot pass, and God knoweth his heart, and "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." To my mind, there is no difference between the child of God who is dead in trespasses and sins and the wicked, because their thoughts and inclinations

are evil, but God loves one and hates the other, even though his child is a child of wrath even as others, "that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth."—Rom. ix. 11. When the appointed time of God comes to call one of his children unto the knowledge of the truth, that child is brought through sore exercise of soul and mind. He is brought to "the ends of the earth" (his own strength) and is made to see himself a poor, undone sinner. The awful feeling of despair experienced by that soul cannot be expressed. One of old said, He found me in a waste howling wilderness. Not that God did not know where he was, but this was a finding containing knowledge for the individual, and the place where he was found bespeaks his helpless condition. Another said, He brought me up from an horrible pit. This is the experience of the soul of a child of God being brought into the knowledge of the truth by the purposed work of God. This brings repentance, the only God-given repentance. No amount of pleading of men, nor physical punishment, will bring a man to repentance before God's own time, for the goodness of God leadeth to repentance. For instance, let us view the crucifixion of the Lord. There were two thieves also crucified. One repented, the other did not. This shows that physical suffering did not cause one to repent.

I feel to say in conclusion that I have only hinted at the wonderful work of God, for I can only "see through a glass, darkly," now, but I hope one day to see face to face. All things from the beginning to the end are fitly framed in the purpose, predestination and foreknowledge of God, and all work together in the salvation of God's children. Whether or not we are able to recognize good in it is not the question, for we see only from the surface, and God knoweth the hearts of men. Bear in mind, dear reader, that God is just and cannot do wrong, and he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and while he has all power in heaven and earth, he is so merciful that he has prepared an eternal inheritance, which is a free gift to all for whom Jesus died and rose again from the dead to justify. This inheritance is not promised to those who keep themselves (for none is able to do that), but is "reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."—1 Peter i. 4, 5. According to God's purpose, at the appointed time Jesus shall come again from heaven to raise his people whom he died for, and gather them together and take them unto his Father, and shall present them, as though to say, Here am I and the children that thou gavest me, without the loss of one. They were contaminated in sin and I have redeemed them and washed them in mine own blood, according to thy determinate counsel and foreknowledge. Then shall the Lord's host realize the fullness of their salvation and shall reign with God forever.

This, my friends, I submit in love for the cause and doctrine of our God. "Now to him that is of power to stablish

you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith; to God only wise, be glory, through Jesus Christ, for ever. Amen."

ROY S. SMITH.

PULASKI, Virginia.

TEAGUE, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—Again I find myself alone, all have gone on different missions, and my mind is full of many thoughts upon things too high for me. Oh to describe them I cannot, but in my little and foolish way I have been trying to describe them ever since the first Sunday in November, 1933, a few times with some degree of comfort, but many, many times in shame I have been forced to sit down, nothing said. Oh such is hurtful, but it would have been otherwise if left with me, for this old Adam man never lacks for anything to say. It is like poor old Job said: When one is shut up he cannot come forth. God says, I open and none can shut; I shut and none can open. Without being given of his Spirit a light to shine upon the way it is impossible to speak in his great and glorious name, and it is only given by measure, and at different times, and it is line upon line and precept upon precept, a little here and a little there. So wonderful is God's dealing with his people that it causes those who have a little hope to agree with the poet when he sang, "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." We are just creatures of circumstances, subjects of his own, helpless, dependent at all times upon Him from whom all blessings flow, the Giver of all good, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who says, I will be with you in the sixth trouble, and will not forsake you in the seventh, but lift your feet from the miry clay and place them upon the Rock (Christ Jesus the Lord) and put a new song in your mouth that none can learn except those who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb and made them white as snow, the redeemed of the Lord, whose goings are established, who are singing praises unto his great and adorable name. Great and marvelous are thy ways, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. He lifteth up, he casteth down, he maketh rich in the Spirit, he maketh poor when not given of his Spirit, and makes us cry with John the Baptist while shut up in the prison of darkness, Art thou he that was to come, or do we look for another? Yea, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Oh so low down in the valley of Lodebar we feel ourselves to be we are made to again sing with the poet,

"Will God forever cast us off,
His wrath forever smoke
Against the people of his love,
His little chosen flock?"

These lines fill my heart with emotions and my eyes with tears, for I, too, at times feel that I have been along the same road. But what else can we do but fast when the Bridegroom is not in

our midst? We but loaf, weep and cry aloud. We are as unturned cakes, turn thou us and we shalt be turned. O Lord, restore unto us the joy of thy salvation. But why complain? Fret not thyself, because, if not deceived, this is the experience of God's people. But when once they feel him to be lifted up it is then the lawgiver passes from between his feet and unto him the gathering of the people be. This is when the Bridegroom has returned; not fasting now, but drinking anew the fruits of the vine in our Father's kingdom, the church in its militant sense in this time world. Yea, the river of the water of life that never runs dry. Old things have passed away and all things made new. From miles apart are we drawn together by the cords of his love shed abroad in our hearts, teaching us to deny ungodliness and to walk worthy of the vocation wherein we are called, redeeming the time, for our deeds are evil. Brethren, let us continue our Lord's prayer that we might be kept from evil, and that we might be blessed to finish our sojourn in this time world in the walk of the newness of life in spirit and in truth, ever looking unto him as the author and finisher of our faith, the Captain of our salvation, who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works (obedience), but according to his own purpose and grace which was (beforehand) given us in (not out) him before the world began, praying that we ever be kept in unity, yea, in the bonds of peace and love, and ever be found standing on the walls of Zion, watching that no unclean thing come among us, for there are many antichrists, professing themselves to be teachers, having itching ears for an opportunity to bring in their damnable heresies, not sparing the flock. This I believe to be a portion of the duty of a true pastor. And He said unto Peter, Peter, lovest thou me? Peter answered, Yea, Lord. And the Lord said, Feed my sheep. Do we know when we are fed, in this sense? Paul said, We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. It was for this great love wherewith he loved us that God said, But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation, and they shall not be ashamed nor confounded, world without end. Israel is that world (church) that God said he so loved that he gave his only begotten Son (everlasting love) for, and this love is that same love that Paul said he was persuaded to believe nothing should ever be able to separate us who are in Christ Jesus from, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Oh if I only could know that what I am writing is not after the flesh, then I could say all is well. Seemingly, at times I have had, or enjoyed, a foretaste of God's goodness, and at these times I could catch a glimpse of the pure holiness that is ever to reign in that world that shall never end. Amen.

This is like the writer, very imperfect. Look it over, and if found to be worthless cast it aside, and all will be well with me.

Yours in bonds,

W. A. LITTLE.

TAMPA, Florida.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am still indebted to some good brother, and friend, for sending me your good paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I enjoy it very much, but am not worthy of such kind favors, and I know of a truth that the Lord is good to me; yes, good in greatness and great in goodness, and I wish I could thank him for each individual blessing, as well as the party, or parties, so good as to send me your paper. May the Lord ever bless them with every needful temporal as well as spiritual blessing while this life lasts. I hope I beg in Jesus' name, and for his sake. I am made to exclaim with the poet, "Count your blessings one by one," etc. If I *could* count them! But I cannot, yet I want to be thankful for them, if I know how to be.

In the February issue of your good paper I read the letter of a good brother, Roger Knight, of Clifton, N. J., who is sorely afflicted with rheumatism. I call him "brother," for if I am an Old Baptist, I feel he is, in belief, even if he has not been baptized. Just think of his patience in all his affliction, yet he is thankful it is no worse. Oh what faith! I have been sick a great deal, yet I am not bedridden, or nearly as bad as some I know, and if I should thank the Lord for all my many, many blessings I would keep busy talking of them each moment of the balance of my days here on earth, and then I could not praise him enough.

"If I had ten thousand tongues,,
And could speak with every one,
Then could live ten thousand years,
I could not thank him for what he's done."

I knew an invalid doctor, who came from New York. He was a good doctor, and practiced there a number of years. He was taken with arthritis and was in a hospital for six months or more. (Some of you readers may have known him: Dr. T. J. Cleland. His father was a Presbyterian minister, if I mistake not, and passed away while his son here was flat on his back and could not go to his funeral.) He came to Florida to get well, and being a physician, and knowing so many specialists he hoped he could prolong his days. I thought he had the most patience of any one I ever met. He fell off his front steps and landed on the cement sidewalk and was never able to walk again, and was flat on his back for ten years before passing away. The climate here agreed with him very well. He had to roll in his wheel chair at first, then got well enough to walk with a cane, by being careful, until that fall on the pavement. I helped him some, as my son was living with him and helping him for ten years or more, and he asked me to help him while he was away. Even the weight of the bed clothes hurt him, and toward the end he could only move his fingers, but when not in too much pain he would joke with those around him. The Lord enabled him to bear up wonderfully under it all, until one day he was taken with hiccoughs and he passed away in a short time. While sitting by his bedside reading to him I would wonder how any human being could stand pain for so long. I am sure I could not. Even now if I have a little pain once in awhile

I am very forgetful and complain, yet without the help of the Lord I am sure I could not even do that, for in him we live, move and have our being, and he gives us all we have, even the air we breathe. Oh why cannot we be more thankful? How true that the lilies toil not, neither do they spin, yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of them.

Again thanking you, I am yours in hope,

J. E. WHITNEY.

WINNSBORO, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—The time has come for me to renew my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so inclosed you will find a money order for the amount. What a wonderful paper to those who search the Scriptures, and the revelations that are revealed to them by our dear Lord only his people can understand. He calls them and they hear his voice and follow him. I have been reading the SIGNS for twenty-four years. It is all the preaching I get, as I seldom go to meeting. I cannot hear public speaking, so I am shut out from everything of the kind, but I hope the Lord has taught me in a way that I love all his people and enjoy reading so many good letters from gifted pens of many writers of our dear paper. I love the doctrine of salvation by grace it sets forth. It comforts me to remember the Scripture, By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Glory ye in his holy name; let the hearts of them rejoice that seek the Lord. (1 Chron. xvi. 11.) He is the Lord our God; his judgments are in all the earth. (1 Chron. xvi. 14.) Be ye mindful always of his covenant, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations. (1 Chron. xvi. 15.) There always has been, there is to-day, and there will be as long as time lasts, a remnant according to the election of grace, who know that God's tender mercy and loving care for his people will never fail. If it be the Lord's will, I hope some day to meet with his loved ones and see him face to face, but fear it will never be for one so vile and sinful as I know myself to be. I humbly ask all to pray for me when it is well with you. I hope the good Lord continues to bless our dear good paper and its editors and publisher, and that it continues many years yet to come.

FLORENCE S. PETTY.

DYER, Arkansas.

DEAR EDITORS:—This money is for back dues. I thank you very much for sending the paper to me, for I do not see how I could give it up. I read and reread it, for it is all the preaching I get. I do hope and pray that it is God's will for it to continue until time is no more. Pray for me when at the throne of grace.

KATE COTTRELL.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE date opposite your name on the little pink slip on which your address is printed denotes the time your subscription expires. Dec 38 means that it expired December, 1938; Aug 39 that it will expire August, 1939, etc.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1939.

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EPHESIANS II. 10.

"WE are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

This quotation made by the apostle Paul to the church at Ephesus embraces all the work of God in creation, and the continuation of all things. Before the world began God's decree embraced in his infinite wisdom all things, and declared the beginning and the end. In his Son he created the heirs of salvation, and the love of his Son embraced them as his companions, and weaker vessels, and delighted in them, to their eternal happiness with him in his Father's house, to inherit all things given him by his Father.

For us to be created in Christ Jesus unto good works, and ordained that we should walk in them, expresses that all that are thus ordained will be manifested, and their steps are directed by God's power. For anything to come short would express failure in God, and his work not perfect. But we are created in Christ Jesus and ordained unto works, that we should walk in them. When a thing is created is the beginning of its existence, and all this was done before the world began for the heirs of promise. In the body that Jesus said, Thou hast prepared, all its members were there, and the penalty for the violation of God's law was death, and wisdom embraced the transgression, and her standing in Christ Jesus, and justice must be met, for God ordained that she should walk in them, which involved her husband (Jesus Christ), and in her stead he suffered (the Just for the unjust). She was not yet manifested in the world as the multiplication of Adam, but God knew them, and created them in his Son before the world began. All these things were embraced when God created the heaven, which was placed first by Moses, for he said, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." —Gen. i. 1. God, who is rich in mercy for his great love wherewith he loved us, gave us the inheritance of heaven and immortal glory through Jesus Christ his Son, and by his suffering we were made free from condemnation and death, which infinite wisdom foreknew would

be the lot of the earthly creature. The divine Creator created the component parts of everything in the world, and for one to pause for a moment and note the innumerable atoms in one living thing, and God is the virtue of the atom. The mysteries of this world are very great, but to think of God, the Creator of life in Christ and the goings forth, is much more wonderful. In these relations we can truly say, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness."—1 Tim. iii. 16. As we are minded to write unto the saints of these truths, and the relations of life the God of heaven has given to poor sinners, we are made to rejoice in the meditation we hope has been given us, and we are constrained to assert of a truth as to the certainty of salvation to the elect of God in Christ Jesus, and at the same time not able to go beyond hope for these to be ours. At times we would, if possible, cause all men to know the truth, but we are wrong in this attitude, for had it been God's will he would have embraced and made universal salvation to all, and we feel he has made salvation to all the elect, or the created in Christ Jesus, sure, and nothing can separate them from the love of God in Christ Jesus. If we are embraced in God's created in Christ Jesus we feel to be the least, or we see others as having better assurances than ourselves, but Paul said, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ: and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known, by the church, the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named."—Eph. iii. 8-11, 14, 15. We rejoice to feel we have been blessed to preach Jesus and assure those who have faith in Jesus to the saving of the soul, that their inheritance in Christ Jesus is sure.

Dear readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, you may call this absolute predestination, if you are so minded, which is none other than God's predestination, the same doctrine that has been contended for by the editors and publishers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for over one hundred years, and those who have stood for these things have been assailed with accusations, to draw attention to themselves, and to increase their following, for the greed of filthy lucre, which is their own lust and is of the flesh, and you may mark the man that would send out to the brethren far and near things that should be kept at home and settled by the orthodox church of God, but some one will rise up and feel his position has not been given enough attention, so he assails the

other fellow, with the point in view to pluck the mote out of his brother's eye, and not discerning the mote in his own eye, which we do not feel are good works manifested by the Spirit of God. We do not preach circumcision of the flesh, nor sustain the acts of wicked, designing men, but we trust the Spirit teaches us that in the denying of ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this world, and we have been accused falsely of sustaining things which were not formerly countenanced by the SIGNS. We have been as faithful and true to the doctrine set forth in the original prospectus as we have been given to understand, and we have had very few criticisms come to us, and we submit to the readers and publishers as to our worthiness to continue, and we do feel that God is our judge and his Spirit will judge us and our assailants, and judge their motives, as to whether they are good works or not. We are chastened continually for the sins we commit, and we know our weakness, and when a brother shows repentance we can forgive him. We feel that all things that reprove us of sin are for our good and God's glory, and by these we are guided in the way ordained of God for the elect in Christ Jesus to walk. Dear readers, may we refer your minds to the sacred truths contained in the precious hymn in the Lester and Durand hymn book on page 222, and number 1296 in Beebe's collection:

"A child of Jehovah, a subject of grace,
I'm of the seed royal, a dignified race;
An heir of salvation, redeemed with blood,
I'll own my relation, my Father is God.

He loved me of old, and he loveth me still;
Before the creation he gave me by will
A portion worth more than the Indies of gold,
Which cannot be wasted, nor mortgaged, nor sold.

He gave me a Surety, a covenant Head,
To live in my name, and to die in my stead;
He gave me a righteousness wholly divine,
And viewed all the merits of Jesus as mine.

He gave a Preceptor infallibly wise,
And treasures of grace to be sent in supplies;
Yea, all that I ask for, my Father hath given,
To help me on earth, and to crown me in heaven.

He gave me a will to accept what he gave,
Though I was averse to his purpose to save;
He wrote in his will my repentance and faith,
And all my enjoyments for life and for death.

My trials and sorrows, my conflicts and cares,
The spirit of prayer and the answer of prayers,
The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Faher determined and wrote in his will.

My cross and my crown are both willed by my God,
He swore to his will, and then sealed it with blood;
'Tis proved by the Spirit, the witness within,
'Tis mine to inherit, I'll glory begin."

Written and submitted in love to the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

C. W. V.

A STATEMENT,

THE editor of *Old Faith Contender* has seen fit to make what we regard an unwarranted attack upon the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and ourself in his April, 1939, issue. We do not propose to open our columns to any controversy with him, but if he will agree to publish in full, and without modification, our answer to his accusations, we will make a reply for the benefit of our subscribers who also read his paper. In this way only his own readers need be disturbed. We will await his acceptance of this offer.

R. LESTER DODSON.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder D. L. Topping.)

The Delaware Association, and to the several churches and associations with whom we correspond, greetings in the Lord.

THE Scripture we purpose to have under consideration as a basis for this Letter may be found in the fourth chapter of Paul's letter to the Ephesians. Paul begins the chapter by referring to himself as a prisoner of the Lord. Prisoners are much restricted in their liberty. Unless they obey the one who has the rule over them they subject themselves to punishment, which may add much to their already heavy burden. Should it be less important to the children of God, as prisoners of hope? They are to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they have been called. Any failure to manifest that we have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life means that we will suffer the withdrawal of the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Hence our endeavor should be to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Could it be truthfully said that where the Spirit exists that the bond of peace may be lacking? Yes, we believe that such is possible. If we be in unity in doctrine, and at odds in the principles which govern the doctrine, then it must follow that the bonds of peaceful unity are lacking in our midst. If we are to give heed to the teachings of Paul, our striving must be to the end that we must be united not alone in the Spirit of Christ, but in the blessed spirit of peace which he came to establish. There is one body. Few persons have a perfect body. There may be some ailment with some member. No one would want to be separated from the afflicted member, but rather retain it, that it may be healed and thus serve its useful purpose with the body. One Lord, one faith, one baptism. All the redeemed family freely acknowledge that they desire with all their hearts to worship the same Lord. Then it must follow that there should be a oneness of the manner of their worship. Peter's loyalty to Jesus seemed to be of the right spirit, yet it was not founded upon the truth, for had it been so founded Peter would have known that Jesus must die in order that we might live. "I will go with thee, even unto death." Who could desire anything more? Only the blessed Jesus knew that poor Peter knew not what he was yet to endure. So, we cannot worship the Lord in spirit alone, but the truth must be fully united with the spirit.

We hear much said about faith. One says, So and so is not my faith. Another says, Such is my faith. Paul has said there is but one faith, and every child of God fully agrees with him in this information. What cause of rejoicing this oneness of faith should be in our hearts. Faith is that which brings us to God. He that cometh to God must believe that he is God, and whatever differences may arise among the children of God, the oneness of faith can never fail. It is God-given, and ever points the way to the everlasting city.

One baptism. Baptism enables believers to enjoy the blessings of church fellowship. Paul was told to arise and be baptized, and wash away his sins. And that is what baptism accomplishes. Not that we will not be beset with new ones, but oh how wonderful to have the old sins washed away. The Lord has promised that he will cover the new ones, for "he ever liveth to make intercession for us." While there are many forms of baptism, Paul says there is but one, and the Lord Jesus has led the way to the one. Peter has said that baptism is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. If it were true that our sins were forever put away in baptism, we would never again feel the plague of sin in our members. So there is a difference between having sins washed away and having them put away. The washing of our body to-day does not mean that it will remain forever clean. "Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken," said our blessed Lord. He that descended is the same also as ascended up far above all heavens that he might fill all things. In his ascension into glory our Savior established the proof of his power over death. He goes into the grave willingly, just the lone Jesus, he arises Jesus Christ the Lord. Paul says, But now Christ is risen from the dead and become the first-fruits of them that slept. I have never known a tree to change its fruits. In its season it produces the same fruit. So if Jesus became the first-fruits of those that slept, shall not all the redeemed of the Lord be partakers of the same fruit in their appointed time? "But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." —Dan. xii. 13. Whatever our lot shall be we will be found standing in it when the Lord Jesus shall appear again without sin unto salvation. Lord, increase our faith, and enable us to walk more worthy of our calling. We are fully persuaded that thou will not disappoint the hope that thou thyself hath wrought.

It is indeed a most blessed privilege to be assembled in love and in fellowship of the gospel to greet our dear kindred in Christ, and to hear his blessed word proclaimed by his different gifts in the ministry, all to the end that Christ be glorified and that his saints be edified. Not only to those who labor in the word, but to them that may be burdened with making provisions for the entertaining of the Association, the Lord has promised to all such, As thy day so shall thy strength be. Martha did not falter while serving in the presence of Jesus, for in his presence there is a fullness of all needful things. We have come together in this meeting to offer ourselves to the service, that his sheep may be fed with the bread of heaven, and his lambs instructed more fully in the footsteps of the flock.

The next session of the Association is appointed to be held at Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, in May, 1940.

CHARLES W. VAUGHN, Mod.
JOHN B. MILLER. Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Hopewell Church, of Hopewell, Mercer County, New Jersey, May 31st and June 1st and 2nd, 1939, to the churches composing the same sends love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As has been our custom in the past, we shall address you again with what is called a Circular Letter. This kind of letter usually conveys to our correspondents some point of doctrine or order of our denomination, and we do not wish to depart from our custom at this time. The doctrine of our Association is well known by all who know and correspond with us. There is no special point at this time needful to dwell upon, therefore we write in a general way and call attention to some things by way of remembrance. The doctrine of the prophets was of faith, and gave glory to God in the salvation of his chosen people. That doctrine was precious to those who felt their need of the almighty and all-wise God. Their faith was demonstrated by their walk in life, enduring hardships for their testimony of God. The Lord was good to them in giving them hope in his mercy and faith in his promises. They looked for the redemption of Israel through the promised Seed, yet could not understand how it could be. The mystery was too great for them, and is no less deep now. The old prophet could say, "A virgin shall conceive and bring forth a son," but how such a thing could be was more than he could understand. Mary, herself, asked how it could be. She was told more than was ever told mortal before, yet she had not the slightest conception how she could be overshadowed by the Holy Ghost, but accepted the word of God and believed it. Abraham did not understand how Sarah could bring forth a son when she was ninety years old, but staggered not at the promise, believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. When rightly considered, there is very little indeed we know of God and his mighty works. His ways are high, we cannot attain unto them; they are deep, we cannot fathom them. All of this causes us to walk by faith, and it brings us into sweet fellowship with the saints of old. Job said, "The thunder of his power who can understand?" When we think of Him we are lost in wonder, admiration and praise, especially when given to think of his purpose and plan to save, that we poor, vile sinners were loved by him when dead in sin and enemies to him. Such love is beyond the conception of man, but though we cannot comprehend it, we feel it at times in our hearts, causing us to rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

The ordinances established also by the Savior and apostles are perfect, and we as an Association are satisfied to continue in them. The ordinance of baptism, setting forth the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, is really wonderful, and those who thus put on Christ should be dead to sin, that they live unto God. That ordinance belongs to the church only, and believers only are proper subjects for it. On the other hand, those called of God to

preach the gospel are the only ones qualified to administer the ordinance. The ordinance of the Lord's supper, instituted by the Savior, is full of meaning, too deep for finite minds to comprehend. The New Testament is his blood, that covenant which speaketh better things than the one that never could make the comers thereunto perfect. The blood of the Lamb of God took away sin and brought in everlasting righteousness through the redemption that was in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The laying on of hands in setting apart the servants of the church, where the gifts are made manifest, is also of divine origin, and we gladly recognize it as the only way to appoint men to their several offices whereunto the Lord calls them.

We, as an Association, are glad to report to our correspondents that we abide in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and are satisfied with the goodness of the Lord's house. May the feet of all the redeemed stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Amen.

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.
G. W. DANBERRY, Clerk.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS."

WE will furnish extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, while in session with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, at Hopewell, New Jersey, sendeth greeting to our corresponding associations of the same faith and order.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We feel that it is by the goodness and mercy of Almighty God that we have been permitted to meet again in an associate capacity. We feel that while we are a little flock, it has been the good pleasure of our heavenly Father to give us the kingdom, and that while we feel to be poor in spirit, we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ Jesus. These thoughts are comforting to us, and with David we feel to say, Bless the Lord, O my soul, let all that is within me bless his holy name. The visiting ministers, five in number, have come to us speaking comfortably to us of the riches of God's grace, sufficient to save all that the Father gave him.

The next session of our Association will be announced through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, when we hope to meet you again in bonds of christian fellowship.

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.
G. W. DANBERRY, Clerk.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Salem Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, May 26th and 27th, 1939, to the several associations with which we correspond, sendeth greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more we

are blessed in another session of spiritual things, for which we truly thank our sovereign God. In this day of declension among the saints of God almost everywhere, this meeting revives us once more, and reminds us we are not altogether forsaken by Him whom we hope we can say still loves us, even though we may have shown indications that we do not walk in his statutes as we should. The preaching through your messengers is still an indication that he has not forsaken us altogether, for this preaching has edified us from beginning to end, and we thus feel inwardly that "thou hast been in our midst." May we hope for his extended and continuing mercy to be round about us in our homes and wherever dispersed, and that we may meet together in his holy name at old Welsh Tract Church, near Newark, Delaware, in May, 1940, with not only the present messengers, but others who may be sent to us, if it be consistent with his holy will, at the appointed time and place. Farewell.

CHARLES W. VAUGHN, Mod.
JOHN B. MILLER. Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER T. W. Walker's address is now Route 2, Ringgold, Virginia, where his correspondents will please address him.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Warren White, Ky., $1; Mrs. Mae V. Thomas, Ill., $25; Mrs. J. B. Hill, N. J., $3; Mrs. W. A. Horton, N. Y., $3; Mrs. Ananias Hastings, Md., $2.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER HENRY BENJAMIN JONES was born May 27th, 1856, in Bibb County Georgia, and died May 16th, 1939, at Gregg Memorial Hospital, Longview, Texas. He lacked only eleven days of being eighty-three years old. He was married to Miss Mary Ann McCardell in 1874. By this union were born six children, four sons, Walter E., Longview, Texas, C. H., Winnsboro, Texas, T. Arthur, Lone Oak, California, Oscar B. Conroe, Texas; two daughters, Mrs. Annie Culpepper, Dallas, Texas, Mrs. Lulu Mae Fuller, Longview, Texas, all of whom, together with eighteen grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren, are left to mourn the loss of a much loved and affectionate father. His faithful and devoted wife preceded him in death about ten years. In his early life he was quickened by the Spirit of God, and led deeply into the experimental knowledge of salvation by the grace which is in Christ Jesus. He united with Mt. Paran Primitive Baptist Church, in Bibb County, Georgia, at the age of eighteen. The church soon discerned in him the excellent gift which the Lord had placed for the comfort and edification of his children. But he shrunk from so sacred a duty, and thought to run away, as did Jonah when the Lord commanded him to go and preach to Ninevah. He left Georgia and moved to Texas fully resolved, as did the prophet, that he would not make mention of the Lord nor speak in his name any more. But shortly after he had located in Gregg County, Texas, he found the word of the Lord was in his heart as a burning fire shut up in his bones, and he was weary with forbearing and he could not stay. He began to inquire for his brethren, the children of God, and soon located some of them, who

at once read his secret and called on him to exercise his gift. In a short time he moved to Upsher County and placed his membership in Fellowship Church; here he began his labors with a godly zeal and sincerity which was actively carried on, principally in the eastern part of Texas, but at times carried him to different parts of the State, and into adjoining States, and extended to the Atlantic seaboard; and continued over a period of sixty years. He was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry in 1883, and immediately was called to the pastorate of churches, serving in that capacity until his death. However, during the last few years he was able to be with his churches only occasionally. He served some of his churches almost forty years without interruption.

Brother Jones possessed a rare gift as a counsellor and disciplinarian. He was a fearless and gifted exponent and defended of Bible truth, both with tongue and pen, and in the years past many of the readers of the SIGNS were comforted and instructed by his able contributions to its columns. Truly a great man in Israel has fallen; and he will be missed, not only by his family, who loved him ardently, and omitted nothing within their power to make him comfortable and happy in his declining years, but by the Primitive Baptists wherever his labors have been bestowed, by his neighbors and his friends, who are numbered by his acquaintance. But surely none can miss him more than the writer, who has not been out of touch with him either by direct association or correspondence for forty years. We have enjoyed a unity of faith and fellowship in the gospel which knit our souls together as Jonathan and David, and proved how good and how pleasant it is when brethren dwell together in unity. Brother Jones spent a good portion of his time since his health had been declining visiting among his children, which they were delighted to have him do, though he did not entirely give up his home until he had a stroke of paralysis in July, 1938, since which he spent most of his time, especially during the winter, with his son Walter, at Longview, where every convenience for his physical comfort was available. After the first stroke he recovered sufficiently to be at his home church, Hopewell, near Winnsboro, and preached with much of his former power and zeal, much to the comfort of the church. He also visited and preached to other churches. He had another light stroke in the winter, but had improved sufficiently to be with his home church the second Sunday and Saturday in April; preached at the church at 11 a. m., then at a sick brother's home in the afternoon, and delivered a short discourse on Sunday. From there he came on to Dallas to visit his daughter, Mrs. Annie Culpepper, where he planned to spend the summer and be situated conveniently to attend meetings, and where I could visit him frequently, which was my custom and very great pleasure when opportunity afforded. But in a short time he had a third light stroke, and he felt the end was near and he should get back to his son's at Longview. His grandson, D. H. Jones, of Longview, came for him May 8th. I spent several hours with him the day he left Dallas, and his whole conversation was on heavenly things. He told me he did not dread death, but shrunk from suffering; that his faith in the truths he had preached and believed during his ministry was unshaken; that his hope embraced the joys of heaven only through the finished righteousness of Christ being imputed to him, and he was ready when his Master called for him. He became weary on his trip to Longview, as he was

weak, and spent two nights and a day at Mineola on the way. His labors were not quite over. He spent a part of May 9th and night at the home of Elder S. C. Davenport, and a few of the brethren, sisters and friends gathered in and at their request he preached to them, which was to be the conclusion of his public ministry. He was carried on to Longview the next day, and on the 14th had another stroke, which proved to be the closing incident in the life of a man whom the Lord was pleased to honor, call with a holy calling and make good in His own goodness. He suffered intensely for a time, but before the end a peaceful calm came and he gently fell asleep in the Lord.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved family and sorrowing friends from Revelation xiv. 13, followed by Elder S. C. Davenport with very appropriate and comforting remarks. Services were held at Hopewell meetinghouse, and interment was in Hopewell Cemetery.

J. R. HARDY.

SISTER OLA HODGES was born March 1st, 1865, and departed this life April 7th, 1939, aged 74 years, 1 month and 6 days. She received a hope in Christ in early womanhood, but did not unite with the church until the third Sunday in May, 1937. Her home at that time was in Birmingham, Alabama. She came to our church in Sheffield, Alabama, and joined, as before stated, and at our next meeting was baptized by the writer in the Tennessee River. She told her friends that she was impressed in a dream to come to Sheffield and join the church, and that the writer baptize her; she also stated that should she die before the writer that he preach her funeral. She is survived by two sons, Raymond and Ray Hodges, of Birmingham, Ala., and two daughters, Mrs. R. E. Lewis and Mrs. T. D. Brooks, of Decator, Ala., one sister, Mrs. W. H. Lee, also of Decator, one brother, R. L. Wilson, of Fresco, California, and eight grandchildren. She was the daughter of the late Dr. F. G. Wilson, a widely known physician of Elkmont, also a prominent member of the Primitive Baptist Church. She was a subscriber and faithful reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as was her father.

The funeral service was held at the home of her daughter, Mrs. R. E. Lewis, in Decator, Ala., with interment in the family cemetery, near Pettusville, Ala. The writer tried to present a few of the doctrinal truths which she relied upon as the foundation of her hope. May the Lord abundantly bless the bereaved ones, giving them the spirit of reconciliation to his most holy and righteous will.

ALSO,

MRS. WILLIE COTTON O'REILY was born at Thomastown, Mississippi, and died March 2nd, 1939, aged 71 years, 9 months and 18 days. She united with the Baptist Church at Durant, Miss., in early life. She came to Cherokee, Ala., about thirty years ago as a music teacher, where she met and married Dr. J. E. O'Reily. After her husband's death, in January, 1832, she came to Sheffield to make her home. She united with the church at Sheffield by letter about twenty years ago. Surviving are a son, J. E. O'Reily, of Sheffield, a sister, Mrs. C. W. McKnight, Iuka, Miss., and a brother, A. J. Cotton, Tuscumbia, Ala. Funeral service was conducted by the writer at the chapel of the Brown Service Funeral Home, and interment followed in the Cherokee Cemetery. She was a devoted church member, well informed, possessing Dr. Gill's commentaries on the Bible, and requested that they be given to the writer, which I

greatly appreciate. The community has lost a highly respected personage, the church a devoted mother in Israel, her son a kind mother, her brother and sister a loving and faithful sister. Jesus said, He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die. She is not dead, but gone to her heavenly home.

ALSO,

WILLIAM E. MITCHELL was born February 5th, 1915, and departed this life April 27th, 1939, aged 24 years, 2 months and 22 days. This young man was a grandson of sister Mary Eliza Herston,whose obituary notice appeared in the May number of the SIGNS. He is survived by his father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. T. V. Mitchell, three brothers, Horace, Glen and Orian Mitchell, one sister,Miss Dorothy Mitchell, his grandfather, W. G. Herston, and a number of other near relatives. He united with the Methodist Episcopal denomination about two years ago. He was a model young man, loved by all who knew him. The writer was called, in connection with his pastor, Mr. S. L. Pruett, Methodist minister, to conduct the funeral service, which was held at the cemetery near Blue Water Church, in the presence of a very large assembly. His pastor offered prayer, and made a very appropriate talk relative to his faith in Christ, and that Christ was with him in life and even in death.

His was a tragic death. About seven a. m., as he was coming to Florence, Ala., his car missed the Shoals Creek bridge and fell into Wilson Lake, where the water was fifty to seventy-five feet deep. His body was found the following day. The writer tried to comfort the bereaved ones with the thought that the sentence of death passed upon all the Adamic race and God as holy, righteous and just Judge, has the right as the sovereign Ruler over all things, to determine the time, place and manner when death shall occur. "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord."—Prov. xvi. 33. "Seeing his days are determined, the manner of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass." "For now thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sins?"—Job xiv. 5, 16. Jesus taught his disciples to pray thus: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Then, bereaved ones, as it is God's will to take your dear one home, let us say, as did our dear Savior, Not my will, but thine, be done. God is a being whose will acknowledges no cause other than his own good pleasure.

LYTLE BURNS.

MRS. GLADYS BOWDEN WRIGHT was born October 3rd, 1905, near Wingo, Kentucky, and came to Texas with her father and family in July, 1909, and surely did live a nice and quiet life. She first was married to Marion Cade, in the year 1927, and to that union were born a son and a daughter, Bobbie and Wenda. In later years she was married to F. Wright. Dear Gladys gave precious evidence of a spiritual life. She was sound in the faith of God's elect children, according to her many expressions, and as far as we could see, never had any fellowship for conditional ideas. It surely is hard for me to sit here and try to write the obituary notice of one of my own children, but I am glad to have spiritual grounds to work on. All my children who are yet alive are sound in the true faith of the sovereign God. Gladys was carried to the hospital three weeks before she died, and then was carried to the Stockdale Cemetery for burial. I was so weak that it was about all I could

stand to make the trip, and have been in bed most of the time since, but, dear brethren, when it is well with you remember this poor mortal when at the throne of God's divine grace. One of the greatest consolations I have here now is that the dear child has gone through all trials in this world of troubles, trials and afflictions, and I wish to say that my strong hope is centered nowhere but in that glorious resurrection of the dead, when each heir of promise shall enter into that glorious realm where sorrow is unknown, and where love, mercy and the perfect fruits of God's divine grace abound in their fullness, with nothing to molest nor make afraid, where all is peace and joy, which come through no other source but that which God fixed and prepared away back in the ancients of eternity and declared to be. O dear brethren and sisters in hope, we are often made to rejoice in the perfection of that Anchor of the soul which in the time appointed of the Father will land each heir of promise in that glorious home beyond, where our dear Savior hath prepared the glorious mansions in his Father's house. Remember us when it is well with you.

J. B. BOWDEN.

DURSY P. HERNDON was born April 24th, 1861, near Russellville, Kentucky, and spent his entire life in the neighborhood of his birth. He was married to Miss Mary McCormach in his early manhood, and to that union were born four children, two boys and two girls, all of whom, together with his wife, survive. Brother Herndon departed this life on the night of April 14th, 1939, making his stay on earth 77 years, 11 months and 20 days. He had been in failing health for several months, but was around most of the time, until about two weeks prior to his death. His suffering was great the last few days of his life, but he bore his suffering with patience, as he did his entire life. Cousin Dursy (as the writer always addressed him) was a kind and loving husband and father. His loving companion and four children were with him during his last suffering. He told them they had been very good to him and had done all human hands could do. But the Master was ready for him to come home, and we all feel sure God had made the preparation. He had been a member of Lebanon Primitive Baptist Church, near Russellville, Ky., for a number of years, having joined during the first service held at the church just built, of which at that time our dear brother, T. C. Herndon, was pastor. Brother and cousin Dursy always filled his seat at church services unless sickness prevented. Brother Herndon was a strong believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone. He also believed strongly in God's predestination. To we few who are left our loss seems irretrievable, but God knows best, and we would beg to bow in humble submission to his will, feeling sure our loss is brother Herndon's eternal gain.

By request of dear brother Herndon, Elder W. L. Clayton (who is pastor of Lebanon Church) was called on to speak words of comfort to the bereaved family and friends. Funeral services were held in his late home, with a large circle of friends and loved ones present. Brother and cousin Dursy was loved and reverenced by all who knew him. To know him was to love him. Oh how we will miss him!

Written by a sorrowing cousin, and a sister in the church, by request of Elder W. T. Clayton, our pastor.

NINA SHEARON.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, it hath pleased Almighty God to call from us by death our beloved pastor and brother in the Lord, ELDER HENRY BENJAMIN JONES, and

WHEREAS, we esteemed him highly for the truth's sake, and worthy of double honor for his faithful labors in the word and doctrine, and

WHEREAS, we feel deeply the great loss to the churches and to the cause of so profitable a gift; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we bow in humble submission to the will of our heavenly Father in our great loss, and that we extend to the bereaved family our sincere sympathy, and assure them of our prayers for their comfort in this time of their deep sorrow. And be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this Memorial be spread on the records of Hopewell Church, that a copy be furnished to the family of the deceased, and that a copy be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

Done and signed by order of Hopewell Church, in Wood County, Texas, while in conference Saturday, June 10, 1939.

J. R. HARDY, Moderator.

J. J. MILLS, Clerk pro tem.

MEETINGS.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by Elder Charles W. Vaughn in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in July (30th). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church holds meetings the fourth Sunday of each month at 1026 East Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Meeting begins at 10:30 a. m., dismisses for lunch and reconvenes at 2 o'clock p. m. Meeting days have been changed from the first to the fourth Sunday of each month. No Saturday or night meetings.

BURLIE HALL, Pastor
W. H. CAVE, Ass't Pastor.
(MRS.) H. B. CURLIE, Church Clerk

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 2:00 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed. J. R. HARDY.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

DURAND & LESTER HYMN AND TUNE BOOKS

If you want to be certain of getting the books you need and want, in the next edition, please order at once. Do not wait and be disappointed. Books will be the same good quality paper and binding as in the past. Prices the same: $1.00 each, or $10.00 per dozen delivered. If you have not ordered for this edition, please do so at once, stating the number and kind of notes wanted.

P. G. LESTER, JR.,
846 Va. Ave., Va. Hgts.,
ROANOKE, Virginia.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers, and cloth binding.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 107. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1939. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SANCTIFICATION.

PERHAPS no part of the great work of the salvation of Adam sinners is more complex and involves more profound mystery than does the application of the work of grace to the needs of the individual, and the bringing him into the experimental knowledge of its virtues. So numerous and varied and unnatural are these experiences that the expressions employed by the Holy Spirit to describe them are such as could apply only to the work of God, which they are declared to be: "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." "This shall be written for the generation to come; and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord."—Psalms cii. 18. "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." It is called a deliverance from the power of darkness, and a translation into the kingdom of God's dear Son: a baptism into the death of Christ, and a rising to walk in newness of life; being taught of God; writing his law in the hearts of men, and putting it in their mind; making them his sons and daughters. All of these expressions are descriptive of the work of grace as it experimentally affects sinners whom God eternally predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son; whom Christ at the appointed time was made under the law to redeem, and did redeem from all iniquity.

The purpose of God to save, and the work of Christ in redeeming, justifying and atoning for sinners, did not in any way affect the manner of life or conduct of those for whom all this was done. While it indeed was a work of grace, and performed a definite service for all for whom it was wrought; but it was done outside of them, and independent of and entirely detached from any will or choice of their own, or foreseen merit or worthiness in themselves considered. It was theirs only by the will

and choice of God, the obedience, suffering, death and resurrection of Christ, and was purely a gift of grace, which was yet to be translated into the experience of each heir of the promised salvation.

Thus we see there are three phases of this great work of the salvation of sinners, all of which are by sovereign grace: First, the purpose and will of the Father to save, and the settlement of every detail of the plan, even to the choosing and naming the individual beneficiaries in that purpose and will before any creature of God had been given being. Second, the work in time of Christ, the Son, in redeeming, justifying, reconciling, adopting and pardoning those chosen by the Father and given to the Son; which he did when he trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him. (Isaiah lxiii. 3.) Third, the work of the Holy Spirit in revealing in the hearts and translating into the lives of men "the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory" (1 Cor. ii. 7), by taking of the things of Christ and showing them unto us. (John xvi. 15.) This last mentioned phase of salvation is experimental, and terminates in the practice of godliness in the fruit of electing love manifested through reigning grace, and is in no sense conditioned upon the merit or performance of the one who receives it. But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of God. (2 Thess. ii. 13, 14.)

The primary aim in this article is to treat this last mentioned phase of salvation, designated in the sacred word as "sanctification," and as it is also mentioned in the quotation above. Sanctification may be defined as that work of the Holy Spirit in man which conforms him to the image of the Son of God, and from which all acceptable duties naturally flow, and which are but the necessary expressions of that divine principle of love shed abroad in the heart. Sanctification and justification differ in these respects: justification respects the person in a legal sense, is a single act of grace, and terminates in a relative change; sanctification regards him in a physical sense, is a continued work of grace, and terminates in a real change, first, in feelings, habits and actions, and finally of the whole of his being from mortal to immortal and from the glory of the terrestial to the glory of the celestial. The former is by a righteousness without us, the latter by a holiness wrought within us. Justification deprives sin of its damning power, sanctification of its reigning power.

The various expressions in Holy Writ, such as "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever;" "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;" "Created in Christ Jesus unto good works;" "Being made free from sin, ye became the servants of

righteousness;" and many kindred expressions are descriptive of that change which is being wrought in man by the grace of the Holy Spirit, to fit him for the service of God, by bringing him into spiritual union with Christ. Until this work of the Spirit is begun in him he is the servant of sin and free from righteousness. (Rom. vi. 20.) But as he is experimentally made free from sin he becomes the servant of righteousness, the servant of God, and has his fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. (Rom. vi. 18, 22.) Notice the apostle here does not afford us the slightest ground to conclude that the man, who is first the servant of sin, is not the same man who is made free from sin and becomes the servant of God and of righteousness. He is the same man, the man who sinned and whom Christ purchased the freedom of, both soul and body, and sent the Holy Spirit to open the prison doors and set the prisoner free. Jesus says he calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out.

The terms "old man" and "new man," "outer man" and "inner man," as applied to God's children, are descriptive of the mental and physical activities of the Adam man as he is led and influenced by his human nature and life derived from his earthy head, Adam; or by his divine nature and life derived from Christ, his spiritual head. It is not intended to set forth two separate and distinct men, but rather one man with two lives and natures, the activities of which are ever in conflict, and therefore a perpetual warfare is being waged in the person of every child of God. Paul says, I find a law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. And then cries out, Oh wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? And adds, I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. (Rom. vii. 23-25.)

To make my understanding of this point clear, let me suggest that Christ, during his continuance in this world under the law, was in all things like unto his brethren, the children of God. He united in his person two lives and natures, a human and a divine, which constituted him the Christ, and made him equal with both God and man. He was God before he came into the world, but became man by his incarnation. This was necessary that he might be the Mediator between God and man: he must not only know the things of God as God knows them, but he must also know the things of man as man knows them; his mission lay along this line. He lived in perfect conformity to each of these lives and natures. Every natural act he performed was in perfect obedience to the law of his human nature, and likewise every spiritual act was the fruit of his divine nature. But Christ's human nature was not corrupted by sin, as is the nature of his people, whom he came to redeem, though he came in the likeness of sinful flesh. (Rom. viii. 3.) So it is with the children of God: they possess a human life and nature which pro-

ceeded from Adam, and they possess eternal life and a divine nature as the gift of grace through Christ. Jesus says, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish."—John x. 28. In this human relationship to his brethren and divine relationship to his Father, Christ did all that law and justice required to present his brethren faultless before his Father's glory. In him they were redeemed, justified, sanctified and made clean and holy, yet in themselves,before they were called,were unclean and unholy, both in their lives and conversation. But by powerful reigning grace through sanctification of the Holy Spirit, they are called unto the fellowship of God's Son: that is, equality in all he has done and inherits. By his Spirit he dwells in them and makes them partake of his divine nature; they are made members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones; are no longer strangers and foreigners, but are fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of faith. They are not only called by grace unto the fellowship of the saints and church on earth, but unto the fellowship of the Son and into spiritual union with him in his holiness, and shall share his grace and glory. In this grace and holiness they are confirmed by God unto the end, so they shall be blameless when their Lord comes again. Their own imperfections and imperfect acts cannot so stain and corrupt the works of grace wrought in them and performed by them under its reigning power as to attach blame to the actor, nor as viewed in fellowship with Christ, from whom the virtue, by which they are confirmed, is derived. (1 Cor. i. 4-9.)

Christ gave himself without spot unto God as the redemption price for his brethren. He purchased them and brought them into union with himself. Both their body and spirit are his, not only by creation, but by the Father's gift of both unto him, by his espousal of their whole persons unto himself, and by his redeeming them from death and ransoming them from the grave. (Hosea xiii. 14.) From the spiritual union of Christ with his children all of the joys of salvation flow, and it will finally bring them into the full blaze of God's glory in the heaven of eternal delights; but the joys of salvation make up only a small portion of the experience of the children of God as they travel through this world, in which they are warned by the Savior they shall have tribulation. Hence no treatise on the experimental phase of this subject can be complete unless it takes into consideration that relationship to Christ in which the major portion of their experience is found. This is that relationship which was established when Christ assumed the human nature, was made in all things like unto his brethren and became us under the law. In this relation he became their Elder Brother, and they his brethren: "Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren."—Heb. ii. 11. This was a physical union and preceded the spiritual union, and paved the way for it to be consummated; for Christ must be made to be sin for us

before we could be made the righteousness of God in him. Neither could Christ become the author of eternal salvation to his people until he was made perfect through suffering. (Heb. v. 8, 9.) The suffering and death of Christ in our flesh is what made it possible for him to bring us to God. (1 Peter iii. 15.) Those who are called unto the fellowship of the Son of God are not only called unto the fellowship of his holiness and joys, but are called also unto the fellowship of his sufferings and death; and as all of his sufferings and his death were in the flesh, so must his children experience in their flesh his sufferings and death, and that, too, before they can share his joys. Jesus, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God; and his children are told if they suffer with him they shall also reign with him. If Christ as the representative of his children could not bring them to God without suffering in their flesh, which he assumed, neither does the Holy Spirit bring them to God experimentally without them experiencing in the flesh the sufferings of the Lord Jesus. With these unions definitely established, the children of God are called upon to "glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." The sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit affects the persons of the saints, both spirit and body, and lays the obligation upon them to glorify God in their bodies and in their spirits, which are God's. (1 Cor. vi. 20.) This cannot be done except they are led by the Spirit of God; and "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." They glorify God in their body when they present their body a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is their reasonable service: and be not conformed to this world. (Rom. xii. 1, 2.) By punctually attending public worship, by maintaining a becoming course of behavior, both in conversation and in actions, by bestowing freely, cheerfully and generously of time, strength, thought, labor and substance for the cause and honor of God; by enduring with patience hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, and suffering for his name's sake; by filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in their flesh for his body's sake, which is the church. (Col. i. 24.) By bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. (2 Cor. iii. 10, 11.) As the child of God is led by the Spirit into the performance of these duties and this service, he not only glorifies God in his body, but the life of Christ is also made manifest in his mortal flesh, and he is thereby owned a child of God, and enriched in all utterance and in all knowledge by his grace, and the testimony of Christ is confirmed in him, which causes him to patiently wait for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. i. 5-7.) God is glorified in the spirit when the child of God is led by the Spirit to set his affections upon things which are above and not on things on the earth; when he is led to meditate upon the manifold mercies and goodness of God, and joy in God through Christ; when he is brought to the footstool of mercy,

and is given faith to resign all to God's will, feeling as did Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him;" when he can lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset him, and run with patience the race set before him, looking to Jesus for every supply of faith and every other grace; when he can count it all joy when he falls into divers temptations; when he can glory in tribulations, and can accent cheerfully the trial of his faith, though it be tried in the fire; and can receive with thanksgiving the spoiling of his goods. As the child of God is led to glorify God in his body and in his spirit in his varied physical and mental service, all of which is spiritual, because he is led by the Spirit in their performance, he not only becomes experimentally acquainted with the sufferings of Jesus, but also experiences the power of his resurrection. "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in you, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."—2 Cor. i. 5. The sufferings of Christ could abound only in the bodies of his saints, for all his sufferings were in the flesh; and the abounding of the sufferings of Christ in us is what we understand the Savior meant when he said, Except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood, you have no life in you. The life of Christ is only made manifest in those who are delivered unto death; who bear about the dying of the Lord Jesus in their body. At the very time and place, dear child of God, where you experience the dying of the Lord Jesus you also experience the manifest presence of the life of Jesus. This all transpires in your mortal flesh. No one can experience the victory over death until they first experience death, therefore Jesus brings all of his children in their experience to his cross, and makes them drink of the cup which he drank of, and baptizes them with the baptism with which he was baptized; then by the power of an endless life, which is Christ in them a quickening Spirit, he quickens their mortal bodies and raises them up to walk in newness of life. This is not done just a single time, this is the daily experience of his children. Paul said, I die daily. When you present your body a living sacrifice, acceptable unto God, the life of Christ is at the same time made manifest in your mortal flesh, for it is only by the life of Christ within you, taking control of your mind and thereby directing the actions of the body, that you would ever present your body as a sacrifice of any kind, and it is certain that it could not be presented a *living* sacrifice *acceptable unto God,* without the life of Christ both moved you in the service and sanctified the sacrifice. God accepts nothing from any except as they are in Christ: "He hath made us accepted in the beloved."—Eph. i. 6. Out of him there is no acceptance of any person or service. Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."—Gal. ii. 20. We are not to understand that the Paul which was crucified with Christ was destroyed. He survived that experience daily, but

it was done that the body of sin might be destroyed (not the sinful body), that henceforth he should not serve sin. (Rom. vi. 6.) It is the "old man," the man in his relation to Adam, who is crucified with Christ, and by virtue of Christ being crucified in the same relation, and Paul's crucifixion being included in the crucifixion of Christ, so also was Paul's living included in Christ's living, for He said, Because I live you shall live also. As certain as it is that the same Christ that was crucified is the Christ who lived afterward, so certain it is the same Paul who was crucified with Christ lives afterward. Not by virtue of the Adam life, which only leads to death, but by virtue of the Christ life being in him, which he has as a grace gift, and which he lives by faith. When the "old man" is crucified with Christ experimentally, the body of sin is destroyed and he is freed from sin: "For he that is dead is freed from sin." —Rom. vi. 7. In this experience the child of God drinks of the cup of suffering which Jesus drank of and is baptized with the baptism of death with which he was baptized, and by faith is given to view the sufferings and death of Christ as the destruction of his sins, and he is comforted in the assurance that his warfare is accomplished, his iniquity is pardoned, for he hath received at the Lord's hands double for all his sins. They are led to look upon him whom they have pierced, and believe "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." "If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Both the dying and living of the people of God are experienced in the fellowship and union with Christ. This fellowship and union can never be dissolved. The Spirit of sanctification does not destroy the inbeing of sin in the children of God in this life, but it does take possession of them and frees them from the bondage of sin, and leads them into the experimental knowledge of those things which the Savior endured in his suffering and death for them, and a foretaste of the joys that they are to have through him. It does purge their conscience from dead works to serve the living God; it does call them away from the practice of sin, to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously and godly in this world; it does subdue and restrain the activities of our human nature, but does not destroy it; it does work in the child of God to will and to do of God's good pleasure, even when he cannot find how to perform that which is good; it does lead him in the paths of righteousness for Christ's sake. But it is equally true that when he would do good, evil is present, and the good that he would he does not, and the evil that he would not that he does. And so the conflict goes on in the experience of the children of God throughout this life, as it did with their Elder Brother until the curtain of mortal death was let down and closed the scene. All the way they have been led has been through the valley where the shadows of death have con-

stantly fallen across their pathway; and it has been a journey of trusting and doubting, of hope and despair, of courage and fear, of being set on high from their afflictions only to be cast down into the pit of mire where there is no standing. But their Elder Brother, whose right it is to receive the double portion, has preceded them in the conflict with death, has met and conquered death, has run through a troop and leaped over a wall; still in physical and spiritual union with his brethren, the children of God, and having gained the victory he gives it to them. "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." It was through death that Christ destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. (Heb. ii. 14, 15.) Christ has brought you, dear child of God, through many conflicts and deliverances by the Holy Spirit, leading you into the experience of Christ's sufferings and death in this life; but when you are brought to experience mortal death, by virtue of the victory which Christ gained, who was was representing you, and with whom you are in union, which neither death nor life can dissolve, you also are given the victory through Christ, and you will as certainly be made to experience the passing through death in your body and in your spirit, which are God's, as it is certain that Christ, your Elder Brother, passed through death in his body. "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." —Rom. vi. 5. This is the victory which God has given you through Christ, the crowning work of salvation by grace. The Spirit will in the resurrection of the purchased possession complete its work of sanctification by changing our vile bodies and fashioning them like unto Christ's glorious body, clothed with immortality, made incorruptible, swallowed up of life, and made, not a spirit, but spiritual; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

J. R. HARDY.

DALLAS, Texas.

BENTLEY, Illinois.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE DEAR OLD SIGNS:—Dear to us who believe that Christ is precious, because you esteem Christ and his teachings above everything else, and so endeavor to have nothing appear in its columns that is not in harmony with the truth as taught all through the Scriptures. I was glad to read the edition in which was reproduced the original prospectus by Elder Gilbert Beebe, and by immediate comparison with it of recent copies I can see no changes in any way. I especially enjoy the gentle spirit of the writers in the SIGNS, for that is as it should be. I am glad to see our people firm for the right, but we do not need to be harsh. Too, I do not feel we should allow ourselves to be aggressors, but ever speak the truth in love. By not being aggressors, I mean we should not go into the fields of religious beliefs of other people to disturb them. I find myself worrying because of some evil doers to the Old Baptist cause, but we are told to

"fret not thyselves because of evil doers." "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." This surely is a desert way here in the world for God's children to travel, but in Isaiah xl. 3, we read, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." I believe this means for us not to go into others' troubles, but go straight through on or by the King's highway. "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."—Isaiah xl. 5. How safe, how secure we do feel when we are found going straight in this highway, for we are told in Isaiah xxxv. 9, "No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there: but the redeemed shall walk there." And now here is what those whose trust is in the Lord and who do his commands may expect: "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."—Isaiah xxxv. 10.

As long as the SIGNS stands as firm as it has in the forty-six years I have taken it I am sure it will be a real comfort to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus. I was glad to read W. H. Cole's letter. A good evidence, for we know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. Brother Dodson, I very much enjoyed the good way you so kindly and humbly granted the wish of the one who signed as "—— Yule," asking, too, in such a confidential and kindly way your views on mission work. I feel your answer will be kindly considered by all who are earnestly inquiring for the old paths.

We went with our son-in-law, Orvil Prior, to his appointment at Little Flock Church, Chandlerville, Illinois, where he is well received. There is quite an interest shown, though the church has not had regular services for a few years. While there we met brother John Copeland, who has been preaching for them for some time past. Though he has not yet been ordained, he shows evidence of being a good gift to the church. We have every reason to believe there will be a call for his ordination soon. These young brothers had good liberty, and their preaching was edifying to the church. They are humble and God-fearing men. Brother Prior had been preaching for Mt. Gilead Church, near Mt. Sterling, Illinois, for about one year when his ordination was called for and attended to, since which time he has served them as pastor. Though these churches are few in number and scattered, they are faithful and get together and are rejoicing to build up the waste places in Zion. A young sister was received for baptism at Little Flock last Sunday.

While visiting homes around these churches I found subscribers to the SIGNS, and it did me good, it was to me a good sign. I feel it would be better for our people if they would take and read the good, sound Baptist papers.

I hope what I have written is near enough in accordance with sound Baptist principles that I may still have a

home among you. Now may the grace of God be with us all to guide us in the way of truth. I enjoy reading and wish more would write their experiences. A brother Weaver, of Florida, writes some for the SIGNS, and I have had letters from him, and I do like the stand he takes for the truth and the gentle way he does it.

We have arranged for the ordination of a young brother, Lewis Curtis, for Deacon in our church here at Smyrna. I would go into detail, but my letter is already too long. Should you care to use any of it in the SIGNS you may, but do not crowd out good matter for it.

Wishing all well, and hoping to be more prompt next time with my subscription, I am, I hope, your brother in Christ,

LEONARD H. HOPKINS.

LA GRANDE, Oregon.

DEAR EDITORS:—The Border Union of Old School Baptists met with the Big Spring Church, at Elgin, Oregon, June 16th, 17th and 18th, 1939. All the four churches were well represented, and some members from California and Delaware, besides other friends from quite a distance, were with us. We all were blessed with the sweet fellowship which makes such meetings a real blessing; and we feel that our desire to worship God in meekness, humility and the beauty of holiness was granted to us, for which we feel more thankful than words can express. The meeting next year is appointed to be held with the Salem Church, at Weiser, Idaho, where all lovers of the truth who desire to meet with us will be welcome.

Our churches are so far apart, and the membership so scattered, that we learn that Baptists from other places often seek almost in vain to find us. We feel it will be quite a help to many friends desiring to find the Baptists here to have a notice of our meetings in your church announcements, so I am sending one for you to use as your judgment may suggest.

C. W. BOND, Mod.

EL DORADO, Arkansas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am reminded that my subscription to the SIGNS is due, which I am pleased to remit, and only wish more of the Baptists would subscribe and this would help the cause so much. I do not feel I could get along without it. It is manna to the hungry soul. Its writers are wonderful, and it is very informing in every way concerning the church. I hope it will be published a long time to come, and that the great Creator of all things will sustain you in your efforts to preach and teach the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, the way, the truth and the life. I hope to be able to take the SIGNS as long as God spares me here.

Yours with a little hope,

(MRS.) M. J. GOODWIN.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE date opposite your name on the little pink slip on which your address is printed denotes the time your subscription expires. Dec 38 means that it expired December, 1938; Aug 39 that it expires August, 1939, etc.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1939.

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DAVID AND SAUL.

DAVID and SAUL are two outstanding characters in the Old Testament. The lives of the two represent in many respects two principles. Israel desired a king, and to be like the nations round about them. The fact that Israel desired a king, and to be as others, manifested a fleshly desire. When God's chosen people manifest a desire to follow the doctrine and practice of others it surely leads to trouble. We see in the selection of Saul as the most outstanding man among the Jews to reign over them, inasmuch as he was from his shoulders up taller than any other man, a desire to be seen of men. The stature of Saul also typifies the Jews as being favored by the Lord above all other nations. Paul tells us that the Jews profit over the Gentiles, because unto them were delivered the oracles of God. Joshua describes the special care of this nation, and the blessings of God upon it, by telling Israel about the time of his departure, that God had given them land for which they did not labor and vineyards which they did not plant. Saul represents Israel as a whole nation, favored of Almighty God, yet falling upon their own sword, through their rejection of Jesus Christ as the promised Messiah.

David in many ways was a type of the Savior. The anointing of David over Israel before he was manifest unto them as their king shows that the Savior of sinners was anointed of God before he came into the world. It typifies the Lord Jesus Christ as chosen, qualified and prepared to save before his reign was made manifest. When David was called to reign over all Israel, Israel said, "When Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel." This shows David as a type of Christ, being the spiritual leader of his people in all the pilgrimage of the Jews before the coming of Christ into the world. Peter declares that the Spirit of Christ in the prophets signified beforehand the suffering of Christ, and the glory that should follow. When Saul had been rejected as ruler over Israel, because of his disobedience, Samuel was instructed to call for Jesse the Bethlehemite, saying, I have provided me a

king among his sons. When the sons of Jesse passed before Samuel the tendency of Samuel was to select one because of his outward appearance, but the Lord said, "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." Though David was now anointed king, yet his power must be made manifest unto his brethren before they believed in him. How well this shows the chosen people of God in unbelief, by nature the children of wrath even as others, until the power and goodness of God is manifest unto them in their deliverance from the power of the devil, even as was the deliverance of David's brethren from battling with Goliath, by his slaying him. One blessed thought in this was that it was the love David had for his brethren that brought him into the battle. They did not send for him. They did not believe in him even when he came down to the battle between Israel and the Philistines, and found the man Goliath, a giant, defying the armies of the living God. The anger of his brethren was aroused when he spoke of the battle. We see here several things typifying the Lord Jesus. Mainly they are as follows: David was not sent for by his brethren. This shows that the sinner does not send for the Savior in his distress over his conflict with the devil, but relies upon something else. This also shows that salvation does not come to men in the way they expect it. That their confidence in themselves must be destroyed, and evidence that he (Jesus) can save unto the uttermost be given them through a living faith before they believe. We believe according to the working of His mighty power. David was sent, but not sent for. This shows God sending forth his own Son to save a chosen people, dead in trespasses and sin. The armor of Saul would not fit David. Neither the fact that Jesus was a Jew qualified him to overcome all opposition to save his heart's delight. He was the Son of God in deed and in truth. All power was given unto him in heaven and in earth, and over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him. In the seeking of the life of David by Saul, we behold also Herod, a long time later, seeking the life of Jesus. How well the words of our Savior are brought home to us where David had overtaken Saul, and could no doubt have taken his life, but did not. Jesus said, I could ask the Father and twelve legions of angels would be given me, but how then could the Scriptures be fulfilled? Saul, in his falling upon his own sword in the midst of the battle, shows the Jews rejecting the Savior when he came, committing suicide as it were. Their house is left to them desolate, being cut off because of unbelief. They have been cast into the fire, and are there to-day, yet our God has not forgotten them. Paul tells us that God is able to graft them in again, if they abide not in unbelief.

The life of Jonathan typifies the believer among the Jews while the Savior was here. All are not Israel that are of

Israel, meaning that all Jews are not saved because they are Jews. But in Isaac the seed is called (Christ). Jonathan risked the wrath of his father to be a companion of David. How wonderful was the love that existed between David and Jonathan! It was the same love that abides with the children of God to-day, that causes them to forsake father and mother, often, to be the disciples of our Lord. The believer among the Jews while our Lord was here was an outcast among his own people, yet the tie that binds God's humble poor together is greater than earthly ties.

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in christian love!
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

When David had come to reign over all Israel he asked, "Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him?" He was told that one Mephibosheth, a son of Jonathan, was in Lodebar. He was lame on his feet. He was sent for, and David said, "Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually." Here, to our understanding, is the day when the Lord shall remember the house of Saul again. When he shall call for the Jews again. They will be found lame on their feet. The Jews are that to-day. How pitiful is their condition! But in calling for them it will be the seed of Jonathan that is called, and they shall eat at the King's table continually.

Brethren, there is no doubt we are approaching a great change of some kind. The persecution of the Jews, the condition of the world generally, shows we are approaching a radical change. Yet may he who suffers not a sparrow to fall without him give us to feel that he is Lord of all.

Space will not permit us to write as fully as we would like on this subject, so we must bring this to a close.

D. V. S.

ROMANS VII. 2, 3; 1 CORINTHIANS V.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—Will you please give your views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on Romans vii. 2, 3; also 1st Corinthians, fifth chapter?

From a reader of the SIGNS, and one who is earnestly seeking the truth.

WHILE the above request comes to us unsigned, it appears to have all the earmarks of being honest and sincere, and we will, therefore, undertake to state our views, notwithstanding our realization of the fact that some of our readers will disagree with us. If the Lord has called and qualified us to go in and out before the flock, there must be something required of us more than to voice the opinions of other men or to remain silent when we are aware of views different from our own.

For the benefit of our readers we will quote the second and third verses of the seventh chapter of Romans: "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be

called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man." While we are convinced that this concerns chiefly the church and her glorious Head, we, at the same time, are satisfied that it has a literal application, and we will first consider our subject from the latter angle. We cannot condemn too strongly loose living on the part of members of an Old School Baptist church. The people of God are referred to in the Scriptures as being the "salt of the earth," but the Savior said, "If the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under the foot of men."—Matt. v. 13. This matter was of sufficient importance for Jesus to give forthwith another simile, which he did by saying, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick: and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."—Matt. v. 14-16. Of all people on the face of the earth, Old Baptists should live honorable and circumspect lives, in every sense of the word, so far as it is humanly possible to do. The marriage relationship is unquestionably the most sacred of all earthly relationships and it should be kept inviolate. Human beings, however, are weak, and from time to time situations arise which definitely call for relief. A careful reading of the fifth chapter of first Corinthians will show clearly what we mean. The Corinthians were apparently as incestuous as any people could possibly be, and the apostle shows conclusively that some of the things which they were guilty of were not to be condoned by the church. He urged them to "purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump." He says, "I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."—1 Cor. v. 9-13. Jesus said, *"Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her that is put away doth commit adultery."*—Matt xix. 9. Certainly, no one could ask for any higher authority on this or any other matter than the Head of the church, but we have heard the point raised that Jesus was here addressing the Pharisees, and not his disciples. The very next verse, however, shows conclusively that his disciples were pres-

ent and continued the discussion with him. Neither does the language used by Jesus permit of any discrimination, for he said, "Whosoever shall put away his wife," etc. If this does not cover the entire field, we do not know what manner of speech he could have used that would. If we turn to Matthew v. 32, where Jesus was addressing his disciples only, and no one else, we find in substance the very same language. He said to his disciples, "But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, *saving for the cause of fornication,* causeth her to commit adultery, and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." Dr. John Gill, of England, regarded by some as the most outstanding commentator of all time, places a comma after the word "divorced" in the above quotation, which to our mind clarifies the meaning somewhat. Whether we so divide it or not, the meaning is, unquestionably, that whosoever shall marry her that is put away, or divorced, saving for any other cause than that stated, which is fornication, committeth adultery. The gospel writers (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) did not always use the same language in quoting the Savior, and with reference to this matter we find that Mark only says, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery."—Mark x. 11, 12. On this occasion Jesus had also been addressing the Pharisees, but his disciples, "in the house," the record reads, "Asked him again of the same matter." We find another instance of the gospel writers not agreeing exactly: in the case of the two thieves which were crucified with Jesus. In Matthew xxvii. 44, it says, "The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth." In Mark xv. 32, the record is, "Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him." In Luke xxiii. 39, 40, we find a different account. It says, "And *one* of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering, rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we received the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss." We believe that all accounts were true and correct: that in the beginning, both railed on him until there was a change of heart in one, when he confessed his own guilt and declared that Jesus had done nothing amiss. With regard to the divorce and remarriage question there are two statements by Matthew having the same meaning, according to our interpretation, while Mark did not quote Jesus as fully as Matthew did. If Jesus said more on one occasion than he did on another, or was more fully quoted by one than another, we are certainly justified in accepting the full and complete statement in preference to the one where he did not dwell upon the subject at the same length, or where he was

quoted only in part. May we ask that our readers examine for themselves very carefully both Matthew v. 32, and xix. 9, and see if they do not mean the same thing. According to our understanding, then this is the one and only Bible ground upon which a man can put away his wife and marry again without committing adultery. The sin of fornication, in our mind, is a sin unto death. If the law of the land was built upon and confined to this principle there would be far fewer divorces in the country. The laws of many States are unquestionably too loosely drawn in this respect, and while divorces may be granted on various and sundry grounds, leaving the parties free to marry again under such laws, the Lord's people are under a higher law than that of the land, and they should obey God rather than man. We repeat that the only ground which we believe warrants a man putting away his wife, or the wife her husband, is that of fornication. Nothing else, however grievous and hard to be borne, is justified by the Scriptures, in our opinion. Where there is guilt for this cause, the innocent party can have the marriage tie annulled and be free to marry again, without being guilty of adultery. We cannot conceive of a more horrible existence than for a virtuous woman to be tied to a licentious husband, who persists in living a lewd life with another woman, or vice versa. Under the law such an one was actually stoned, or put to death, according to Leviticus xx. 10, which reads as follows: "And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death." If this was carried out to the letter under the gospel, and the guilty ones were literally put to death, there could be no question as to the right of the innocent, living survivor, whether husband or wife, being free to marry again. In the gospel church, however, they are not actually put to death corporally, but such a sin is deserving of death, or separation, and if the guilty party is put away and accounted dead by the innocent party and the church, the latter is freed from the former and at liberty to marry again without committing adultery.

In our text, the apostle undoubtedly had under consideration mainly Christ and his church. He said, "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?" He then went on to show that the woman is only bound to the law of her husband so long as he liveth, but that if her husband be dead, she is free from that law, and is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Paul was writing to the gospel church at Rome, which was composed of both Jews and Gentiles, and he would have them (the Jews especially) understand that Moses, who typified the law, was dead; that all of the obligations of the church to the law had been met and satisfied by Christ, and that henceforth she owed all of her allegiance to him. When Jesus talked with the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well, he had a defi-

nite purpose in saying to her, "Go, call thy husband, and come hither." She answered, and said, "I have no husband." Jesus then said to her, "Thou hast well said, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands: and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly."—John iv. 16-18. Here is an illustration, in part at least, of what we have heretofore tried to set forth. He whom she then had was evidently still alive corporally, but there is also a sense in which he was evidently dead to her, else Jesus would not have said to her he "is not thy husband." Her five husbands no doubt represented the five books of the law, or the fullness thereof, but she had now reached the place where she could no longer receive any comfort or draw any consolation from the law, and being dead to the law, she was a fit subject of gospel address and was free to be married to another, even Christ. The apostle emphasized this in the verse next following our text, by saying, "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." The Scripture is a thorough furnisher unto God's children as to how they should live in this evil world. There is nothing wrong with the Scripture, but the difficulty is the inability of the creature to measure up to the standard set. It is in this very chapter that Paul stresses the weakness of the flesh. He says, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do." He further enlarges upon this by saying, "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."—Rom. vii. 21-25. How corrupt and loathsome, indeed, is "the body of this death." Well did the apostle ask, who shall deliver us from it, and he gave the only possible answer to the question by pointing out our escape through our Lord Jesus Christ. How diligent we should be then in all things pertaining to the cause of our Lord, "who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." There is a grave responsibility devolving upon those who have separated themselves from the world by uniting with the true church. How extremely careful, then, they should be to avoid even the appearance of evil and to refrain from spiritual adultery of all

kinds, by not affiliating with or partaking of the things of Mystery Babylon. Of one thing we are definitely sure and certain, and that is if they are kept from such things, it will be by the grace of God, and not of themselves, lest any man should boast. It is only through the Spirit that we can mortify the deeds of the body. John wrote, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."—1 John ii. 1. What a wonderful gospel is that which we have to proclaim, declaring as it does that the vilest of the vile may come and find forgiveness with God, by and through our Savior, Jesus Christ, and though one may so live as to be deprived of the love and fellowship of the church here in this wicked world, yet our heavenly Husband is merciful and faithful and will not put away his bride in eternity.

Submitted in love for the consideration of the household of faith.

R. L. D.

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OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEACON JOHN H. TRUITT, our brother in Christ, departed this life January 29th, 1939, at his home, near Snow Hill, Worcester County, Maryland, after several months of intense suffering. He was a son of the late Handy I. Truitt and Charlotte Laws Truitt. March, 1884, he married Miss Mary A. Hastings, who preceded him in death many years. To them were born three daughters and one son: Mrs. Ernest White, of Salisbury, Md., Miss Annie Truitt, of Richmond, Va., Mrs. Charles Littleton and Handy B. Truitt, of Snow Hill, Md. March 29th, 1899, he married Miss Iona Hancock. To this union was born one son, George H. Truitt, of Snow Hill, Md. He is also survived by one brother, William K. Truitt, and one sister, Mrs. Rosy M. Timmons, both of Snow Hill, Md., also several grandchildren. Brother Truitt lived on the same farm fifty-five years. He and his first wife were baptized the same day in June, 1884. Soon after he united with the church he was chosen Clerk and afterwards appointed Deacon of the Indiantown Church, at Powelville, Md. Later he united with the Snow Hill Church, at Snow Hill, Md., and continued faithful in all his duties as an officer of the church. He was Clerk of the Salisbury Association for fifty-four years, and never missed a session. The writer, his pastor, had visited the church of his membership from time to time for forty-three years, and pastor more than sixteen years of that time, and brother Truitt was never absent until confined to his home the last few months of his life. His home was open to the brethren, and no member of the church entertained more largely than did he. Such life was his chief delight. Many will remember the kind hospitality of the Truitt home. We all miss him very much, and sympa-

thize deeply with sister Truitt, the children and other members of the family.

The funeral was held from the Snow Hill Church, and was largely attended. Interment was in the cemetery adjoining. H. C. KER.

In the death of sister MARY ELIZABETH SMITH, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Emma Bogart, in Kingston, N. Y., June 13th, 1939, at the advanced age of almost ninety-three years, the Olive and Hurley Church, of which she was a faithful member, sustains an irreparable loss. She was a true ornament of grace, a real mother in Israel, deeply taught of the Lord, spiritually minded, meek and humble in all her ways, placing the welfare of the church always above her own desires in any personal matter, and devotedly loyal to her pastor. She was never absent from meeting unless hindered in ways she could not control, and even when past ninety years of age attended services with marked faithfulness, often going many miles to the place of service. Her hospitality was as notable as her remarkable strength of character and firmness in her conception of the right. Hers is a sweet, gentle and fragrant memory, a precious heritage to her brethren, her family and the community where she was so widely known and deeply loved. She was born June 16th, 1846, and bore the maiden name of Mary Elizabeth Hull, being a daughter of Dr. A. C. Hull, one of the locally famous physicians, who practiced medicine for many years. She was born in the town of Roxbury, New York. She married Eugene L. Smith December 22nd, 1869, who died in 1876. Of this union there were three children, of whom two survive, Mrs. Janette Bird, of Winnesetka, Ill., and Mrs. Emma Bogart, of Kingston, N. Y. There are also surviving two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. The funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Carr Funeral Home in Kingston, and the interment was in Wiltwyck Cemetery. Sister Smith spent most of her girlhood days in the town of Olive, Ulster County, New York, where her father, Dr. Hull, praciced medicine very efficiently and extensively. The world famous poet and naturalist John Burroughs studied medicine in Dr. Hull's office for a time, and it was there, in 1862, he wrote that famous poem, "Waiting," which has become an English classic, and which the poet Whittier included in his collection of verse, "Songs of Three Centuries," which brought the poetic abilities of Burroughs before the public. Sister Smith as a girl knew Burroughs well, and treasured the memory of her association with him. But people of letters and culture were not her only desire, for early in life she felt the arrows of conviction because of sin piercing her soul and teaching her the frailties of the flesh and the failure of all efforts to obtain righteousness by the works of the law. Receiving a good hope through grace, she united with the Olive and Hurley Church in August, 1873, and for almost sixty-six years, or until her death, continued her church affiliations, taking her letter to the Ebenezer Church of New York City, at one time, and returning later on to the church of her former membership. About four weeks before her death, sister Smith fell and fractured her hip. The best medical and surgical skill that could be obtained were employed in hope of relief, but it was in vain. After being treated at the Kingston City Hospital, she returned to her home, where she was tenderly cared for by her daughter, Mrs. Emma Bogart, who ministered to her with all

a daughter's love and all a daughter's care as far as was humanly possible. She bore her sufferings with sublime patience, fortitude and reconcilation to God's will. Her passing was as peaceful as the beautiful life she had lived. She exemplified in her walk and conversation the work of God the Spirit. A life lacking but seven years of a century has come to an honorable and glorious close on earth, to be crowned in heaven with a diadem of golden immortality.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

ELDER J. T. BARNES, son of J. S. and L. R. Barnes, was born in Boone County, Missouri, October 13th, 1855, and passed away, of pneumonia, at the home of his son, Edd, in Portland, Ore., June 6th, 1939. He was united in marriage to Sarah Jane Parks May 20th, 1875, and to this union were born eight children, three of whom preceded him in death: two daughters, Mrs. Josephine Haney and Mrs. Rebecca Hays; one son died in infancy. The five surviving children are Mrs. Anna Weathers, Seaside, Ore., Mrs. Edith Showalter, Othello, Wash., Edd. J. Barnes, Portland, Ore., Fred. L. Barnes, Touchet, Wash., Sam. R. Barnes, Freewater, Ore. The two surviving brothers are Charles H. Banres, Walla Walla, Wash., and Joe. S. Barnes, Jerico, Missouri. He is also survived by several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. His wife preceded him in death, passing away November 24th, 1928. Two years later he was again united in marriage, to Mrs. Emmaline Sater, who preceded him in death August 12th, 1933. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church in May, 1881, and was ordained to the ministry in 1889, and his whole life was truly devoted to the cause he loved so well, ever proclaiming the riches of God's goodness, grace and mercy, and striving and praying for peace and unity among the churches, yet ever ready to stand on the wall in defense of the cause he esteemed above all else. He served three, and most of the time four, churches, and traveled much among the churches in Missouri, and has said it was the love and high esteem the brethren everywhere accorded him, together with his dear wife always wishing him Godspeed, that so encouraged him to fill all his appointments. He, with his family, moved to Touchet, Wash., in November, 1901, where he was called to the pastoral care of Mizpah Church, which held him as pastor until his death. (Though Elder Peter Jones has been acting pastor the last few years, due to Elder Barnes' inability, because of ill health, to attend regularly.) The last four years of his life he was unable to visit among the churches, due to blindness and ill health. He last attended his own church, at Touchet, the fourth Sunday in June, 1937. It was the Union Meeting, and he gave a farewell talk at the close of the meeting, which was the last time he was ever able to address the ones he loved so well. He often said that in his last days he was just gathering up the fragments of the days gone by, living over again the seasons of rejoicing, which was a great comfort to him in his hours of affliction and loneliness, being isolated from his brethren.

Elders C. W. Bond, Peter Jones and A. D. Hughett spoke very comfortingly to the bereaved ones at Mizpah Church on Friday, June 9th, and our dear father was laid to rest in the Touchet Cemetery. Asleep in Jesus, that sweet sleep he so longed for, and we feel he left a beautiful and inspiring pattern, or example, for us to try to follow, with the dear Lord's guidance.

Written by his daughter,

EDITH SHOWALTER.

MRS. SARAH KATHERINE THOMAS our sister in Christ, left us for her heavenly home Monday night, July 12th, 1939. She had not been well for some months, was stricken with a heart attack a few days before she passed away. She was eighty-three years of age, a daughter of Thomas Asbury and Sarah Katherine Baker, of Frederick County, Maryland, both long since departed. Sister Thomas was the widow of our brother Ira H. Thomas, our former deacon of the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia. I have not the date of their marriage. Brother Thomas was a practicing physician. After marriage, both he and his wife went to Jonesville, Lee County, Virginia, where he began the practice of medicine, later returning to Aldie, Loudoun County, Virginia, where most of his years as a doctor were spent. Both he and sister Thomas were baptized by the late Elder J. N. Badger, the same day in 1907. Both were faithful and devoted servants of the church as long as they lived. Sister Thomas left this world from the home of her son-in-law, Paul P. Popkins, at Purcellville, Va., where funeral services were conducted by the writer of this notice, after which her mortal body was placed to rest in Ebenezer Cemetery to await the coming of the Lord from heaven, who, at his coming, will raise from the dead the bodies of those who sleep in him, fashioning them like his own glorious body by the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself, thus completely destroying death and forever taking from the grave its victory. Sister Thomas was preceded to her eternal home by her husband, brother Thomas, in 1925. The following year, in 1926, their only child, Mrs. Ellis Thomas Popkins, was called away from earth, leaving two young sons, George and Paul Popkins, now nearly grown young men. These last years of her life were not happy ones. Her cross was a heavy one, yet she bore it patiently and resignedly. For a long time, it had been her custom each month to come here to our home Saturday before the fourth Sunday and go with us to Mt. Zion to meeting. We miss these visits and it seems hard to adjust ourselves to the fact that she will be henceforth no more a regular visitor in our home. But we believe her going is a glorious change for her.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

MARY ISABELLE DYE, daughter of Alexander Mills, was born March 31st, 1857, in Rockingham County, North Carolina, and died April 9th, 1939, at the home of her son, H. P. Dye, of Rockingham County, North Carolina. The subject of this sketch was married to brother John H. Dye in December, 1885. To this union were born four children: H. P. Dye, T. F. Dye, J. B. Dye and Nora Dye. Sister Dye united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Pleasantville, N. C., in November, 1904. She later moved her membership by letter to Wolf Island Church, remaining a faithful member of that church until her death. The writer, being personally acquainted with sister Dye, feels that her church, family and friends have suffered a loss, but our loss is her gain, believing God in his all-wise providence has taken her unto himself. Sister Dye manifested a love for the church and doctrine of our Lord, and even in her last days, when her natural mind was impaired, often at meeting when the gospel was being preached tears of joy would be seen flowing down her cheeks. We feel the separation from us will be short, that soon we hope to meet all for whom Christ died, awakened in his likeness.

ALSO,

ROBERT MARTIN was born in 1869 and died November 13th, 1939. Mr. Martin was married to Fannie Wilson, and leaves his widow and three children. One daughter preceded him to the grave. Though Mr. Martin never united with the visible church, he had a blessed hope in Christ, having received it over forty years before he died. Mr. Martin was a man of few words, dependable in every way, but most important of all, he manifested evidences of the Spirit of God by his devotion to the church of God through a faithful attendance at the services and a willingness to share in all expenses. We well remember being by his bed while he was sick, and he said to us, "I wish you would read the Bible to me and talk about heaven." Many of us feel that it was a blessing of God to have had his friendship, and we would say to his widow and children, that they should not grieve for him as for one who had no hope. Our sincere sympathy is for his loved ones, especially his widow. We know of no others who are bound closer together as companions, husband and wife, than they were.

D. V. S.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN CORN, son of John S. and Saleta Bridges Corn, was born near Oak Grove, Missouri, October 18th, 1858, and died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Ethel Morris, of Liberty, Missouri, July 6th, 1939, at the age of 80 years, 8 months and 18 days. His first marriage was to Miss Julia Kimsey, who died in the year 1879. Surviving from this union is his son, Noah F. Corn, of Oak Grove, and he is the only male member left in Oak Grove Church. He and four sisters now compose the membership of that once flourishing church. March 12th, 1882, he married Miss Delphia Ann Adams, who preceded him in death December 12th, 1922. To this union was born one daughter, Mrs. Ethel Morris, of Liberty, Mo., at whose home he spent the last days of his life. Besides this son and daughter, he is survived by four grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, one sister, Mrs. T. S. Ligon, and a large number of other relatives, friends and neighbors. December, 1888, he united with Oak Grove Church, but I do not know by whom he was baptized, but having known him for the past forty-eight years I can truthfully testify to his earnest devotion and loyalty to the church, his strong belief in the sovereignty of God and that salvation is alone by and through the grace and love of the Lord Jesus Christ. He stood well in the estimation of the brotherhood, and served the church as Clerk the past several years. Early in life he established his home on a farm three and one-half miles south of Oak Grove, and was one of the best citizens of that community. He was a most kind husband, a loving father, highly appreciated by all for his sterling qualities. In his last days his suffering was severe, but he bore it all with patience, and expressed a desire for that eternal sleep, where there is no more pain or death.

His funeral was held at the Oak Grove meetinghouse on Saturday, July 8th, attended by a large concourse of relatives and friends. He had made requests for the arrangement of the funeral, selecting the songs and the singers, and who were to conduct the services. Elder W. T. Hughett was not able to be present, as requested, but I tried in my weakness to fulfill the request he had made that I preach the funeral sermon. I tried, with a feeling sense that God was with me, to comfort them that mourn by discoursing on some of the comforts found in the seventeenth chapter of St. John, and the twenty-first verse of the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthinans. His body was

borne to the Corn Cemetery, south of Oak Grove, where we consigned it to the grave to await the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in the power of the resurrection, when his mortal body will be raised an immortal body, raised a spiritual body, taken to the climes of everlasting glory, where he shall see Jesus as he is, be like him and be satisfied. May the God of all mercy comfort the bereaved relatives and us all for Jesus' sake.

W. L. HALL.

MARY A. MICHEALS, our sister in Christ, was born February 8th, 1861, and died May 25th, 1939, at her home in Sadieville, Kentucky. She leaves to mourn her departure one brother, John D. Micheals, of Grandfield, Oklahoma, several nieces and nephews and a host of friends. Our sister never married, and most of her life was spent with brother and sister Smith, of Stone Wall, Kentucky, who were called to their reward several years ago. After that home was broken up, she bought a home in Sadieville, Ky, where the balance of her life was spent. October 6th, 1906, she was received into the Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church, and baptized by the late Elder R. M. Thomas. "Sissie," as we all called her, was one of the faithful members, always in her seat in the meetings, always ready to help bear the burdens of the church and her house was always open to the brethren. In my fifteen years as her pastor she only missed two meetings, and they were the last two before she died. Her mind was clear to the end, and she made all arrangements for her funeral and burial, which were carried out. She did not want a show, nor flowers, just simply a quiet service by the writer. So, accordingly, we met and sang her favorite hymn, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound," I spoke briefly in prayer, we sang, "Jesus, lover of my soul," then I tried to outline some of the things she loved to hear all her life, namely, Jesus, the way, the truth and the life. Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of the Lord. After the services her body was taken about nine miles to the cemetery and laid to rest. Sleep on, dear one, your toils are over, sleep in him who loved you; he will come for you at the appointed time and bear you home to that mansion he has prepared for you. We will miss you; your place will be vacant. O Lord, reconcile us to thy will, and to thee be all the glory. May the Lord bless the remaining brethren of the church, and give us thankful hearts for the years of peace we have enjoyed in his name, is the prayer of your unworthy pastor,

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

In memory of Joseph F. Hall, Maine, $6; Mrs. Ettie Smith, Texas, 25 cents; "A friend," Ontario, $2; Mrs. J. E. Chadwick, Texas, $3; "H", Md., $4; A. F. Jones, Ga., $3; Joseph A. Johnson, Tenn., $1.

MEETINGS.

The Lord willing, there will be an all-day meeting at North Berwick, Maine, on the third Sunday in August (20th) and at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. the Saturday preceding. All who are interested are invited to attend.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The 1939 annual all-day meeting with the Brookfield Church is scheduled to be held on Friday, August 25th. Visiting ministers are expected, and we cordially invite all who are interested to meet with us on that occasion.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the First and Second

Churches of Roxbury, at the Yellow Meetinghouse, below Roxbury village, on Wednesday and Thursday, September 13th and 14th, 1939. The meeting will open at 10:30 o'clock, Standard Time, on Wednesday morning. Entertainment will be provided for all visitors, as in the past, and a cordial invitation is extended to all brethren and friends and to ministers of our faith and order in fellowship with us to be present with us and accept of our hospitality. Those coming by train or bus on Tuesday before the meeting will be met at Halcottville, N. Y., and those coming by automobile, unless they have made other plans, will go to the residence of Scott Clark, in Halcottville village, where arrangements will be made for entertainment.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held at the residence of Mrs. Alpha Garten, in Brooker, Texas, on Friday before the second Saturday in September, and continue three days, the 9th, 10th and 11th. Brooker is just across the State line from Oklahoma. Any one wishing to be met, or for further information, should write to Willard Garten, Brooker, Texas. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

GRANTVLLE, Kansas.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder D. E. Robinson pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 107. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1939. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FARMERVILLE, Louisiana.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I have had some desire for the last few hours to write some thoughts that have been presented to my mind, relative to the subject as presented in Exodus xx. 8-11. Please read these Scriptures before proceeding to read this article.

The Sabbath day literally in this instance no doubt is the remaining day of rest after all the work was finished. It would readily stand to reason that if the Lord finished all his work, as is stated, there was nothing else for him to do but rest, or cease from his work, as is stated here and elsewhere in the Scriptures. Human minds, unless divinely enlightened, cannot begin to conceive of the greatness, glory and wonderfulness of all God's works in the creation of heaven, earth and all the host of them, to say nothing of the righteous, divine, holy and all-wise purpose for which they were created, and which they serve to the complete fulfillment to a jot and tittle, to the glory, honor and praise of God's holy name, and for the good of his people. Romans viii. 28, will clearly prove this position. Read it. God gave his people the six days in which to do all their work. He also gave them the Sabbath day as a day of rest, and commanded them to do all their works in the six days and to rest, or keep holy, the Sabbath, and to do no work on that day, even as he had finished all his works in the six days and rested the seventh day. They were commanded, under strict penalty of death if they were found doing any work on that day, even as much as picking up sticks to kindle a fire, they were to be put to death, under the typical dispensation, therefore we must look for something of great significance in the antitypical dispensation, and if we find people who have professed to have ceased from depending upon their own works for salvation advocating the works of men's hands instead of the righteous work of Christ, they should receive exclusion, the same thing that I

think the punishment administered under the typical pointed to.

Now, dear reader, I am sure my finite mind is too inferior and my understanding insufficient to be able to express this wonderfully deep subject, but I desire to say that I believe every phase of each commandment and ordinance of the Scriptures as it is, and was written aforetime, was written for our learning, that we (even in the present time) might have hope. (Rom. xv. 4.) Therefore there is a sense in which all these scriptural laws and ordinances are applicable, or at least that is my humble opinion. For instance, I want to say the language of the ten commandments was spoken by the Lord himself. In fact, they are his words, and the Scripture says his word endureth forever. (1 Peter i. 25.) Not only that, but his mercy, his counsel and his dominion endure forever, thus proving his infallibility. In another place it says, Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever. (Eccl. iii. 14.) Then his words, Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy (Exodus xx. 8), are as much in effect to-day in an antitypical sense as they were in a typical sense when God commanded Israel.

I want to be understood. I do not feel that we are under the literal commandment to obstain from all literal or physical labor on the Sabbath day as the Jews were at that time, neither are we confronted with that severe and literal punishment of death as were they at that time, but there is a sense through Christ in the Spirit after the inward man that the children of God are still under command to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, and they do it not by human effort, but by the leadership of Christ, as he works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Phil. ii. 13.) But this is always after they have done fully six days' work, trying through the flesh to do what Christ, the blessed Savior, has done, is doing and will continue to do for them, in working in them that which is well-pleasing in his sight. It is an evident fact that after six days' hard work God's people always get tired of their works and become very faint, tired and weary; in other words, they work themselves out of tools and timber and fall flat on the mercy of God, who through Jesus has finished the work of redemption and salvation, as is clearly shown in John xvii. 4.

It seems clear to me that this great subject is amply verified in the eighth chapter of Hebrews, beginning with the seventh verse, to the end of the chapter. Read it. In the old covenant is was said that He took them by the hand to lead them out of literal Egypt, but they transgressed and were subjected to the most severe punishments and troublesome circumstances because of the weakness of their flesh, not being able to keep the things they were commanded. The new covenant is entirely different from that, and I am glad to say that we are under the new covenant, which is not according to the old. In the new covenant the Lord does the making of this covenant by writing his laws in their hearts and putting them in their minds and working in them both

to will and to do of his good pleasure (Phil. ii. 13.) in such a way that they are safe from violation through the Spirit, they are kept by the power of God though faith unto salvation. (1 Peter i. 5.) Also, in 1 John iii. 9, it says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." Then if it was sin for Israel to do literal and physical work on the literal Sabbath day, so it would be in this antitypical Sabbath day wherein Jesus came to save, and did save, his people from their sins, for his people to put forth their hands to work, since Jesus, the precious Savior, has finished the work. It is the holy Sabbath of the Lord that he has hallowed and set aside for a day of rest to his people (see Heb. iv.) since then, and it ever will be, the work is finished. When the light of God's blessed Spirit is revealed from heaven in our poor benighted souls and we are brought to see our lost and ruined condition before him after six days of hard work, we come to our wit's end, or to the end of the earth, so to speak, then the blessed Savior says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."—Matt. xi. 28. Mark the word "rest;" the six days are over when the blessed Savior gives us this sweet rest (or a foretaste of it). The opposite doctrine to this is that Jesus gives poor sinners a job; but to the opposite, he gives them rest; they are tired and disgusted with their own works, they have performed six days of them and they have become as filthy as filthy rags. Jesus, the righteous, holy and blessed Savior, has called them into the rest of this blessed Sabbath wherein Jesus has done all that justice demanded. At his command they take Jesus' yoke upon them and learn of him, not voluntarily, as all legalists believe, but through the constraining love of Christ, the meek and lowly Savior, which is shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them. This blessed yoke that Jesus gives them, dear reader, oh how easy it is! They are yoked to rest in the finished work of the Savior; they are yoked off from their works and a trust in them. This indeed, as the blessed Savior describes it, is an easy yoke; a relief, instead of a burden that had been weighing them down and crushing them beyond any ray of hope. It constrains them to cease from their own works, and oh, dear children, what a relief and rest this is to God's poor bewildered ones who have been yoked under the fiery and righteous demands of the law which says, The soul that sinneth, it shall die, and which no natural man has ever kept; neither are they subject to it; they are carnal, sold under sin, but this yoke of Jesus has freed them from the bondage of sin and has raised them above the law. This yoke is the yoke of grace, by which they are saved and made to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. By that heavenly light they learn of Jesus that the work is finished. They learn that that was his burden, and indeed it is as the Savior describes it in Matthew xi. 29, 30. "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." This burden was to finish

the work for his people, the work of redemption and salvation. They also learn of him that their entire six days' work is vain and delusive. Oh how light is the burden of the precious Savior to a poor wayworn pilgrim. His thought and burden has been that he must do something, and when he learns of Jesus that the work is finished, oh how light is this precious burden, and how easy is this yoke. The customary way to fit an animal for work is to yoke him to it, but in this case they are given a new yoke and are freed from the yoke of bondage. They are yoked to remember the Sabbath day to keep it, and are yoked off from breaking it, and are given that sweet rest and confidence in him that he finished the work as he said. David, the sweet singer in Israel, describes this yoke and rest where he said in the twenty-third Psalm,"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." David said he was made to lie down, which shows that it was not in David's resources to do it otherwise, hence it shows evidences of that easy yoke and light burden of Jesus. Oh, dear child of God, would you not love to stay beside the still waters? Would you not love to abide in green pastures? Do you not often desire the restoration of your poor bewildered and hungry soul? Yes, that is your experience. Why can you not do it? "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."—Gal. v. 17. "For without me ye can do nothing," said the blessed Savior in John xv. 5. But when Jesus, who is Lord also of the Sabbath day (Matt. xii. 8), appears unto them, saying, Peace be unto you (Luke xxiv. 36), then begins again to dawn upon them that peace and rest of that beautiful sunshine of that Sabbath of rest that they are given to keep in the Spirit when Christ, their blessed Savior, gives them rest in him. This is that rest that is spoken of in Hebrews iv. 9. I quote, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Now this rest remains, which shows conclusively that it does not get away from them; it remains to them. No one else gets this rest but them, and they are entirely dependent upon the Lord of Sabbath to give this rest and to enable them to walk in the light of it. And in the eleventh verse it says, "Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." It does not say, Let us labor to do all the work we can, nor to try to save some one, nor ourselves, but to rest, to rest in what the blessed Savior has already done for his people. Listen to this quotation of his blessed word: "For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it."—Luke ix. 24. Then the tenth verse of the fourth chapter of Hebrews shows who it is that has entered into that Sabbath of rest. It is those who have been taught that their works are vain, and that Christ has finished the work for them. They have been made to trust in what he has done, instead of what they once thought they could do. Re-

member the Sabbath day to keep it holy. How strange that in the light of these glorious truths blind nature believes and advocates that works are very essential to salvation, and instead of it being rest that remaineth to the people of God, they believe that it is work that remains to them, when it is positively declared that it is rest that remaineth to the people of God. When you see people working to save themselves, or some one else, you may know they are not remembering the Sabbath day, and by this you may know it is Monday, so to speak, or some other day with them, and (to clearly show this same doctrine) it is almost universally believed that any one can help in the salvation of sinners. But it must be remembered that in the type when given to ancient and literal Israel, no man, nor his man servant, nor his maid servant, nor his son, nor his daughter, nor his cattle, nor the stranger, is to do any work on this holy day. (Exodus xx. 9.) That is why we advocate that the sinner cannot do any work for himself, neither can all his closest relatives, nor the ox (which I believe represents the minister), neither can any other animal, and all these have their antitypical meaning in our day and dispensation.

(*Concluded next number.*)

RANDOLPH, Maine.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—Inclosed find two letters, one the experience of brother Anson Quint, the other a sweet letter from sister Lydia Mason. I trust both would be good reading for the SIGNS, so am sending them to you. As I looked out this morning I saw the little sparrows flitting from bush to twig and these lines came to me:

"His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know he cares for you."

What a great consolation to have the assurance, so vivid at times, and nearly, but not quite, extinct at others, that he cares for us, the sheep of his pasture. And again, the little sparrows beheld the ground practically covered with snow, and how eagerly they were searching for food. So it is with us. How many times we behold only a bare and empty waste, all around us is cold, dark and wild. "Filled with unbelief and sin, can I deem myself a child?" We look for food and there is none, the date and pomegranate have no fruit, the fountains are dry, and, behold, we thirst, and we stand, as it were, in a desert place. "Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses."—Psalms cvii. 5, 6. I must quote the next verse: "And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation." It is very hard to feel, when shut up and seemingly out from these precious truths, that we are being led in the right way, it seems more as though we are just drifting with the tide. But now and then we do catch just a glimpse through the lattice, and how sweet these glimpses are none but his loved ones know. How dear our brethren are to us. We have them in our hearts though we cannot behold their faces. I feel so

alone. No one around me speaks my language. I sometimes speak to my son on these things, but he keeps a respectful silence. I know he believes, but seemingly intends to keep himself well in check. The time has not yet come for him to declare what I feel he knows. If I were to talk to some, it would be speaking an unknown language, and earthly wisdom has never yet been able to interpret it.

I hear from the North Berwick brethren occasionally. All are very well at present, excepting sister Billings, who is poorly this winter. Sister Allen, who is eighty years of age, rode the long distance to Whitefield for the Sunday meeting last September. Love for the truth is not measured by years.

I am, I hope, a sister to the kindred in Christ,

NELLIE M. PALMER.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, Sept. 18, 1938.

DEAR SISTER PALMER:—I am trying to do as I promised. I will, the Lord helping me, and hope I can make it plain. This took place about forty-five years ago. The first I could see was something in the members of the church when they were together. It seemed to be a secret understanding. I could see it very plainly, and wondered what it could be. I knew they had something that I did not have. I went to a baptism soon after I noticed this, and I watched them there together. I stood off on one side and they looked so good to me that I wished I had what they seemed to have. It seemed that Christ must be with them. Soon after that I wanted to understand what I could do to get it. I went to meeting with my mother and listened and watched. The more I watched the more I wanted to understand what they had that I could not get. I could see the beauty of it in their faces, but could not get it. I asked God to show me and let me know what it was. I went on this same way for a few years, going to meeting and getting nothing more than what I had before. Then Christ in his wisdom took hold of me, and when he did he placed a great burden upon my shoulders. At first it did not feel so heavy, but as I went along it grew heavier, day by day I could feel it more. I could feel myself a God-forsaken sinner, whom the just and holy God would not have anything to do with. Week by week that burden grew heavier. I could not sleep by night. I would lie there and think, What could a just and holy Savior have to do with a sinful man? Many times I dropped on my knees and tried to pray to him. It seemed to me it did not go up, but just dropped to the ground. All this time my burden was growing heavier. I was trying to work myself out. I was down in the horrible pit and could not get out by my own strength. I did try very hard, but it was of no use. The Lord had not gotten through with me. I had to be shown that by my own strength I could do nothing. It went on for a number of weeks, until all my strength was nearly gone. I felt that I was so great a sinner that Christ would not have anything to do with me. How I felt God only knows. My strength and will power

were almost gone. I stood before my God a poor forsaken sinner. I did beg him to have mercy on me, but it seemed he would not. That is the way I felt. One night I went to bed and I do not think I slept one moment all night long. If you ever saw a God-forsaken sinner, I was one at that time. I got up in the morning feeling just the same, went down stairs and built the fire. I had given up. I went to the window, and said, I am through. I can do no more. How I felt God only knows. I felt justly condemned by God. While I stood there I looked up to the heavens and I saw a small light. It seemed to be floating around at first. As I watched I saw that it was coming down. My eyes were on it. It looked to be a round ball of fire. When it got close to me I thought, What can it be? It came on top of my head. I felt it go down over me and through me. I do not know how to tell you what a change came over me. I cannot express it in words. From the awful despair I had felt the most glorious feeling came over me when I felt that light go through me. I felt that everything was all right, that my Savior and my God was there with me. It was the most glorious day of my life, one that I never can forget as long as God keeps the breath of life in me.

As you read this you will get a part of what I went through at that time.

ANSON QUINT.

SANFORD, Maine, Sept. 20, 1938.

DEAR SISTER NELLIE:—We are in the midst of a wild storm. Lights have been off for some time, but we have a lamp and a candle. God rules the storms. He maketh a way for the lightning. His voice is heard above the tempest. He careth for us; holds us underneath his everlasting arms. What a blessed peace when we can feel it. Ever since the association in Whitefield I have felt what a lovely meeting it was. Not a thing to mar it. The precious truth of God was preached with sincerity and power. I feel that we were all given the ears to hear and the hearts to understand the gospel sound. Full salvation sweetly sounds through this blessed gospel, and love and fellowship flow from heart to heart. Hope, though faint, when built upon his word can never be overthrown. In my experience, when I saw Christ the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world, I thought I could never be sad again, or cast down. How frail we are when standing in our own strength. Dark days come, and we mourn an absent Lord, but he sends the Comforter and again we are made to have faith. What a wonderful doctrine is election!

"Determined was the manner how
We should be brought the Lord to know;
Yea, he decreed the very place
Where he would call us by his grace.

Also, the means were fixed upon
Through which his sovereign love should run;
So time and place, yea, means and mode,
Were all determined by our God."

What a wonderful hymn! The mysterious doctrines of election by free grace, and predestination, are so clearly set forth. I like the word "election." It shows there is a choice, and if we are his choice, foreordained in him before the world was formed, how we should re-

joice. Without his sweet mercy I could not live here. Sin would soon reduce me to utter despair.

I feel to thank you, and all the kind brethren in Whitefield and Bowdoinham, for entertaining so nicely at your home, and for all the good food provided. I trust Mrs. Bartlett's arm is improving. She is very kind to us, and we feel she is a subject of God's grace. It does not need words when God begins his work in the soul.

I intended this to be a note, but it is a long one. Give my love to all the brethren when you meet.

Yours in hope,

LYDIA R. MASON.

[NORMALLY, we think of Maine as the north country, from whence icy winds do blow, especially in the winter, but the foregoing three letters show that God is causing his warm south wind to blow upon his garden in that part of the country, and the sweet odors of the spices and pomegranates will, we are sure, pervade other parts of his vineyard, wherever there are precious plants of his own right hand planting. Our brethren in Maine are deprived of regular preaching, but their hearts are aglow with the love of God. We are made to thank him on their, as well as our own behalf, and feel to praise his adorable name for his remembrance of Zion.—R. L. D.]

NEWARK, New Jersey.

MY BELOVED ELDER AND BROTHER DODSON:—I would hate to hear you express your opinion of me for not writing to you sooner, but you see I am taking advantage of your good nature and abundant patience, and it is my earnest hope that you are gifted with that. I consider it one of God's most gracious attributes given to man, and I pray for it to be bestowed upon me in gracious quantities, for I feel to need it to the utmost. But that is not the only blessed attribute of God I need, but all of his attributes. By that you will know that I do feel most barren of all good things, of myself, but blessed beyond all expectations or merit. It humbles both my pride and myself when I feel and see how good our Lord is to me. I am feeling very well indeed, but not able as yet to stand, nor move about on my crutches, but I do get about the house on my kiddy car. You will have to call on me just to get a glimpse of that, if not of me. It was pleasing to me to hear you were able to call on sister Horton before she passed away, and also to hear that you officiated so nicely at the last rites and services for her. Brother Isaac informed me that your remarks were greatly appreciated. In fact, he said you came to the church those last two meeting Sundays with a basket laden with good things. We take it as an evidence that our good Lord does not send his shepherd of the flock with an empty basket (mind) with which to feed his sheep. It is the hope of all of us that his blessings will continue upon you to the end of your stay upon this earth, God's footstool. We feel we are not blessed so abundantly because we are worthy of it all, but because of God's graciousness and love for his called, chosen and redeemed ones,

joint-heirs with Christ of God's kingdom. No greater comfort can man pray for. This world of to-day is so filled with strife that the very air seems permeated with war or war talk. It seems to me that departing from this world would be a blessing. Our little band of the seekers of truth seems to be our only haven. When we are permitted to assemble ourselves together, there only joy seems to reign. What an untold blessing, and those of us who are unable to attend do realize what we miss, but are not left comfortless.

Your answer to your Missionary friend was a classic of itself. You said it all, and may we hope that some day she will see the truth as it is in Jesus, who needs not man to extend his doctrine.

I understand that brother Daniel is quite well again, but he is very lame, having to use a cane to get about the house.

I hope you and your family are enjoying the best of health and happiness, and may we, as "Happy Jack" on the radio says, "Plant a little smile in the garden of our hearts and watch its happiness grow," and with those words and my best wishes and love for you, I will write no more at this time.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

IRA T. DOLSON.

DELAWARE, Ohio.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:—Just now I came across some pages I wrote some time ago, thinking to stir up the mind of one or more of the editors or readers of the SIGNS so they would write concerning the Scriptures quoted, which have interested me very much. I may have copied and sent what I had written to the SIGNS, but do not think I have done so. It follows: Will the editors, or some one, write concerning at least some of the following passages of Scripture, which may, some of them, refer especially to national Israel, at least as many of the children of Abraham as the Lord shall "graft in again." (See Romans, chapter eleven.) Please read Jeremiah, chapter fifty. Does it bear a message against Babylon of our day? Beginning at verse four, it says, In those days, and at that time, saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come, they and their children together, going and weeping: they shall seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten. Please get your Bible and read. In verse nine it says, For lo, I will cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country: and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken; their arrows shall be as of a mighty expert man; none shall return in vain. Read on to verse nineteen, where it says, And I will bring Israel again to his habitation, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon mount Ephraim and Gilead. Down to verse nineteen it may be just speaking of national Israel in the old covenant, but in this nineteenth verse, and verse

twenty, which says, "In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve," it may refer to the gospel day, but I am inclined to believe that it refers to the dispensation ahead, when the wicked are taken away. "A little while, and the wicked shall not be; thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be." In the time when, "Thy people shall be all righteous." Please read from verse forty-five, chapter fifty-one. Jemiah believed in grace, for in Lamentations, chapter five, verse twenty-one, he says, Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned, renew our days as of old. Surely the Lord heard him. In Ezekiel, chapter thirty-four, beginning with verse eleven, we read, For thus saith the Lord God, Behold I, even I, will both search my sheep and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their food be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. Please read on, and beginning with the twenty-third verse, it reads, And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the Lord have spoken it. And I will make a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land; and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. Please read on and see if Ezekiel is speaking of a real land. In the last verse of this thirty-fourth chapter it reads, And ye, my flock, are the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God. Read on in your Bible to verse twenty-four, of chapter thirty-six, where it says, For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I understand the foregoing was spoken to those national Israelites who were scattered abroad, many of whom had lost their

identity, and who, at least the chosen of God among them, shall be back to their own native land, where they shall serve the Lord in the beauty of holiness, after the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. (Rom. xi. 25.)

In Ezekiel chapter thirty-six, beginning at verse eight, But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come. For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown: and I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it: and the cities shall be inhabited, and the waste places shall be builded: and I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and bring fruit: and I will settle after your old estates, and will do better unto you than at your beginning; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. Yea, I will cause men to walk upon you, even my people Israel; and they shall possess thee, and thou shalt be their inheritance, and thou shalt no more henceforth bereave them of men. Thus saith the Lord God, Because they say unto you, Thou land devourest up men, and hast bereaved the nations; therefore thou shalt devour men no more, neither bereave thy nations any more, saith the Lord God. Please read on in your Bibles through chapters thirty-six, thirty-seven, thirty-eight and thirty-nine. The last two verses say, Then shall they know that I am the Lord their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen; but I have gathered them into their own land, and have left none of them any more there. Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God. The last sentence in Ezekiel declares, And the name of the city from that day shall be, The Lord is there. It seems to me that the foregoing is spoken to the national Israelites, who shall be grafted in to their own olive tree. Now it seems to me that the foregoing Scriptures were addressed to the elect among national Israel, if it does not embrace all of them, and I also am inclined to the belief that the promise is for future fulfillment unto the children of Abraham, and that it will be consummated "in their own land." But since the Lord dissolved the old order of worship of the Jews, and also because he says, "I will pour out my Spirit upon them," and also "He is able to graft them in to their own olive tree," when the fullness of the Gentiles is finished, I believe their worship will be indeed and in truth, and they shall know that I (Jesus Christ) am their Lord (and also their Savior). I see no further use for the old order of the priesthood of Aaron, but that Jesus Christ will be their acknowledged High Priest. Whether they and the Gentiles shall worship together, I do not know; but it is written, Ye shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God. I do not recall the reading of a certain passage of Scripture which speaks of the court being reserved for the Gentiles. Besides, as there are scattered tribes of Israelites throughout the earth, and you

and I may be of them. Any way, we shall see him, be like him, dwell with him and be satisfied. As to whether the Jews shall eternally "dwell in their own land," or as long as the new earth endures, which is "forever." If this "forever" means eternally, then I believe the seed of Abraham shall dwell in their own land continually. No, I am not a "Russelite." I do not think that all men have the same "chance" to be saved. But his religion may be a caricature of the truth, since it seems that all of the things of the kingdom are caricatured by antichrist. An imitation of a thing usually infers that there is a real truth, which antichrist distorts and fails to see.

JOIE E. WOODS PETERS.

[If any of our associate editors or readers feel to comply with our sister's request, we are quite sure it will be appreciated.—Ed.]

Houston, Texas.

Dear Brethren in Christ:—If I may call you such. I do feel drawn to all God claims as his, but feel to be unworthy of his or their notice. If I can only gather a few crumbs from his table and sit in their company I have gained his mercy. You have been more than kind to send me the Signs of the Times without pay, and the sermons and dear letters it contains from month to month mean everything to me. It sets forth the only doctrine I believe, that God approves the one faith, one Lord, one baptism. I am satisfied our destiny is founded on no other. God's children are scattered far and wide, but he in his most perfect way and supremacy can keep them, and gather them together at that last day. That is great comfort to all his little weak children through all of our trying times and our many persecutions. My soul cries out to be able, if it be our Father's will, to hear his message of love preached, but the dear Signs supplies a great deal.

I will close by sending you a postal money order for six dollars, and hope to be included in the bonds of love through Jesus our Lord.

Your sister,

(MRS.) IRENE WISENBAKER.

Fort Worth, Texas.

Dear Editors:—Inclosed find two dollars for my subscription another year. I surely do get great comfort from reading these many articles. I wish I could have the understanding to write like some of the dear sisters. They may have the gift of writing, but they cannot excel me in believing these wonderful testimonies of the truth, as I feel that it is.

I hope you may be blessed of the Lord to continue publishing the Signs many years to come.

In hope,

MINNIE C. JAMESON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1939.

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ARTICLE IV.

THE TOTAL DEPRAVITY AND JUST CONDEMNATION OF FALLEN MAN.

IN presenting our views on this, the fourth article of the Original Prospectus of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, we shall undertake to show (1) that "fallen man" is *totally depraved,* and (2) that he is *justly condemned.* In the very beginning, we wish it understood that we are not at all sympathetic with the idea advanced by some that man in his infantile state is without sin, or innocent. It has been well said, we think, that a rattle-snake when it is first hatched out has the same poisonous venom in its embryonic state which later appears in such deadly form when it is fully developed. When God had searched David and made him realize that he was acquainted with all his ways, we hear him saying, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."—Psalms li. 5. How earnestly, therefore, did he petition God to purge him with hyssop, that he might be clean, and wash him, that he might be whiter than snow. He also desired that the Lord would create in him a clean heart; and renew a right spirit in him. The vision which Isaiah had concerning Israel showed them to be even worse than the brute beasts, for said he, "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider."—Isaiah i. 3, 4. The prophet Jeremiah (xvii. 9) declared, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," and then asked, "Who can know it?" No one can really fathom the depth of iniquity. Paul said, "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."—Rom. viii. 7. The Preacher, Solomon, in the very outset of Ecclesiastes summed up man in these words: "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity." Quoting David once more, we read, *"Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity."*—Psalms xxxix. 5. Our belief is that man is as prone to do evil as the sparks are to fly upward, or as water is to run down hill. His thoughts are evil, and that continually; and as God has made of one blood all nations on the face of the earth, there is no exception,

for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. It is written, "God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back: they are altogether become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." If any man or woman in their right mind should be inclined to deny the depravity of human nature, almost any edition of a daily newspaper will furnish abundant evidence to the contrary. Our hearts are constantly made sick over the horror which is daily spread before our eyes in the headlines of our papers. Crimes which are inconceivably shocking to the average person are being perpetrated all about us. Some are committed, perhaps, by those who are not altogether responsible for the time being, and should not be at large, but many are responsible for their acts, which are inexcusable. It has often occurred to us that if criminals would only use their brain and genius for legitimate purposes they would, in the long run, be better off. Neither is crime confined to what might be termed the lower and weaker strata of human life. The press has very recently carried an account of a scandal involving the president of a great university, where the youth of our land are supposed to be taught the high principles of honesty among other things in their curriculum. The *New York Times* in an editorial some weeks ago, under the caption of "Justice For Sale," had this to say: "The finding of guilt in the case of Judge —— will come as a profound shock to the whole country. As the senior judge of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals, after twenty years' service on the bench, he was outranked only by the nine justices of the United States Supreme Court." This is a terrible indictment against the courts of justice in our land. Many other instances could be cited to show that the corruption and depravity of human nature is to be found in high places, including even ecclesiastical circles, as well as in all other fields of endeavor. There are innumerable ways in which this human depravity will show itself, and while the sin may be cunningly conceived and great shrewdness may be employed in covering it up and keeping it hid, it will come out sooner or later. God, who discerneth both the thought and the intent of the heart, will have it brought into the open and, like David, confession will have to be made, accompanied by great sorrow. Let no man think he can stay the hand of God or escape the vengeance of his wrath against such things. Time is a great revealer and every man's work will be made manifest as to what sort it is. Sometimes the very best of us would flee from our good brethren if we thought they could read what goes on in our minds. What a mercy it is hid, but let us remember that it is only hid from man, and not from God. The following undoubtedly has some truth in it: "Let us be grateful for poor memories. None of us would sleep well if Nature made us remember all the mean and foolish things we have done."

If we turn for a moment from the

sins of individuals to the collective sins of large groups, particularly those committed in the name of War, our blood almost curdles as we recall to mind some of the numerous crimes inflicted upon helpless and defenseless women and children. These things only reveal what a flood of corruption and depravity is to be found in the sea of humanity when it is let loose. Our faith in a sovereign God is the only thing that saves us from utter despair.

Our second thought was to show that "fallen man" is *justly condemned.* In the beginning of the world, we are told that the Lord planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he formed. And out of the ground God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And the Lord commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." In the face of this, God's law would have become of non-effect and his justice proven to be a farce had he not held man accountable for his transgression. Had man not been justly condemned for the violation of God's law, and therefore deserving of eternal death or separation from God, he most assuredly would not have, in the counsels of eternity, entered into a covenant ordered in all things and sure with his Son, whereby he was to forsake, in the fullness of time, the glory which he had with the Father from the beginning, and come down into these low grounds of sorrow, take upon himself not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, be born of a sinful woman, with the capacity to suffer the very pangs of hell and all that was written of him in the volume of the Book, unless it had been absolutely necessary for him to stand in the stead of those chosen in him before ever the world was, and by honoring the demands of justice redeem and forever set them free from the curse which justly hung over them, thus paying to the very last farthing their full indebtedness. David said, "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne." Therefore, the guilty could not go free until a satisfactory ransom was found. This ransom was found in the person of God's dear Son. In his suffering and death Jesus magnified the law and made it honorable. This evidently was what David meant when he linked together in the very same verse with the above the declaration that "Mercy and truth shall go before thy face." If "fallen man" had not been justly condemned there would have been no need for mercy, no occasion for the manifestation of God's infinite love, as evidenced by the unspeakable gift of his only begotten Son. Void of these

things we would be without knowledge and understanding of the true nature of our God, and what a chaotic world, indeed, we would be living in under such conditions. The one thing which often puzzles a poor sinner most of all is, How God can be just and at the same time the justifier of the ungodly. This he will never be able to comprehend until Jesus is revealed unto him as the way, the truth and the life, or as the Savior of sinners. When by faith he sees that God has laid on him the iniquity of us all, and that it is by his stripes we are healed, then, and not until then can he understand anything at all of the mystery of godliness, or the purpose for which God was manifested in the flesh. Unless one is made to realize that he is a sinner, both by nature and by practice, and that he stands justly condemned before the holy and righteous God, he will never cry, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." But when he is brought before the bar of God's justice and is found to be wanting, then will he seek a place of refuge, and the only hiding-place he will ever be able to find from the storm and the tempest will be that of the man Christ Jesus. Then will he properly evaluate the gift of God's blessed Son, and realizing as did the prophet of old that neither the blood of thousands of rams, nor ten thousand rivers of oil can appease the wrath of God, with joy inexpressible and full of glory he will "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," and desire to crown him Lord of all.

R. L. D.

THE ORIGINAL PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

MANY of our readers do not possess a copy of Volume I., Editorials of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which contains the ten articles comprising the Original Prospectus, and would no doubt like to know just what they are. We are, therefore, glad to republish them in this issue of our paper. While we honestly feel that we could make an affirmative answer to the entire group, we would not wish to be understood by this as saying that we have adopted in to-to the views of any one man, or any group of men, on this or any other set of articles. We have felt that each article was deserving of a separate effort on our part to place before our readers our views, and for this reason we stated in the January, 1937, issue of the SIGNS our intention, the Lord willing, to write upon each article separately in consecutive order. Thus far we have written upon the first four articles. Article I appeared in the May, 1937, number; Article II in the September, 1937, number; Article III in the May, 1938, number, and Article IV is in this issue. It is our present plan to carry out our original intention, but our readers must appreciate the fact that there are many other subjects claiming our attention, and that we must wait until we feel some exercise of mind before attempting to write upon a certain Article. We hope our readers will exercise patience and charity towards us and in due course they will undoubtedly have our views upon the six remaining articles. The ten articles are as follows:

1. "The existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah—the revelation which God has given of himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These Three are One." 1 John v. 8.

2. The absolute predestination of all things.

3. Eternal, unconditional election.

4. The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

5. That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

6. The sovereign, irresistible, and in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

7. The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

8. The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

9. That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers; that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

10. That there is no connection between Church and State, and as touching a proposition for a marriage between them, the Hon. R. M. Johnson, in his report on the Sabbath Question, has expressed our faith. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath Schools, &c., &c., making war with the Mother, Arminianism, and the entire brood of Institutions."

Frankly, we are not familiar with the R. M. Johnson report, but otherwise, eventually, we hope to try to cover the various points.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Baltimore Association, in session with the Black Rock Church, to sister churches composing the same, and to the churches, associations and meetings with which we correspond, greetings in the Lord Jesus.

"BUT rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee."

The above scriptural quotation may be found in the Acts of the apostles, twenty-sixth chapter, verse sixteen. From reading the above Scripture it would seem that Paul could never doubt for one moment his call to the ministry of Christ. How wonderful must have been the unquestionable assurance given the beloved apostle, in that his work in the Master's vineyard was that which had been ordained for him in the gospel of the blessed One, whose voice he heard speaking from heaven, directing him in the line of duty, that would be mingled with joy and sorrow. He was not told that his pathway would always be strewn with roses, but, "I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's

sake." If we might only be able to realize the glorious gain that shall be ours when we are called upon to suffer for the cause of Christ. The question may be asked, But how are we to know that our disappointments and our trials are meted out to us that the cause of Christ might be magnified in us? What deep searching of the heart, what bitterness of soul one may be called upon to endure because of the anxiety to acquaint one's self with the mind of the Lord in our going in and out before him. "For I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen." It is well that we ponder well the things which we have seen. Have we not seen in the teachings of Christ and his apostles the order in which we should conduct our service before him? Is there anything lacking as to what our order should be? I am fully persuaded that not one thing can be rightfully added to that which we have seen. Christ always appears in his word, and it is upon his blessed word that our decision should be guided. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me." Christ is not the author of confusion. No sensible person would divide his own body, neither can any division of the people of God be rightfully charged to the work of the Holy Spirit. Paul has told us what we may find in the fruits of the Spirit. How beautiful to behold the leading of the Spirit of Christ in all our deliberations, so vastly different from the leadings of Satan. The latter always leading, when possible, in the opposition to the cause and the goodness of God's house. In no place of the word of God do we find that the works of Satan ever had the approval of Jesus, but to the contrary, his works were always condemned, and so they must forever be. "And of those things in the which I will appear unto thee." We are not only to await the appearing of the Lord, when he appears the second time without sin unto salvation, but we are to look for his appearing in our daily walk. In the order of his house in our every going forth of the sanctuary should be marked by our leaning not upon our own understanding, but by our earnestly waiting upon the appearing of the blessed Jesus, not only in our regular meetings, but in all the affairs pertaining to his house. "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."—2 Cor. v. 14, 15. When the love of Christ constraineth us in our actions, we can rest well assured that the church will be resting in the bond of peace. At such blessed times there will be no grounds for one member complaining about the doings of another. Paul has plainly told us that we should not live unto ourselves. That is, we are not to trust and rely upon our own judgment and disregard the mind of the church. The apostle refers to her as our mother. Who could lightly disregard a loving mother's advice? Her

many trials and conflicts have entitled her to a place as second in authority in the household. So with the church, her beloved Husband has bestowed upon her, or rather endowed her with, knowledge to be the judge of all matters pertaining to his household until he shall come again. May he grant unto us to so look upon her, and not to lean upon our own understanding.

It is a blessing of the Lord that we are again privileged to assemble in an associate capacity to again greet our dear kindred in Christ. The joyful sound of salvation by grace proclaimed by God's servants, whom we seldom hear, has so often brought joy to the hearts of God's dear children, and we are hopeful that he will again manifest his love and kindness in our midst, that there may be a long remembrance of his mercy in our daily lives.

We express our sincere thanks to the dear friends who have made the entertaining of this Association possible. To give of their substance and their labor is indeed loving to behold. Their hearts are as large as their homes, and their liberality make glad the city of God. May the Lord grant unto them the blessing of his promise, As thy day so shall thy strength be.

D. L. TOPPING, Moderator.
QUINCY A. GLADDING, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

William H. Morris, Mo., $1; Elder J. T. Everett, Ark., $1; Mrs. Alonzo Dykes, Md., $1; Mrs. Marietta Ferguson, Ark., $5.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

JOHN THOMLEY, the subject of this sketch, died at his home, near Wicksburg, Thursday, May 11th, 1939. He was about seventy-five years of age, and a prominent citizen of this section. He had been active in developing schools and the social betterment of this section. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and had been a sincere friend of the writer for almost thirty years. He is survived by his wife and several children. The remains were taken to Goodwater for interment, May 12th, where funeral services were conducted by the writer, with Ward-Wilson Funeral Home, of Dotham, in charge of arrangements.

ALSO,

FRANCES McSWEAN, the five-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Louis McSwean, of Slocomb, Alabama, was injured in an accident, and suffered intense pain, from which she died, June 9th, 1939, in a Hartford hospital. She was one of the sweetest children I ever knew, and seemed to be well prepared of the heavenly Father to live in that clime where pain never enters nor death ever comes. She expressed herself as being desirous of living with the angels.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at Goodwater Church June 10th, 1939. Active pall bearers were Kenneth Kinsaul, Haley Holden, Sam. Kinsaul and Charles L. Collins.

ALSO,

HENRY HARTZOG died at his home in Wicksburg June 11th, 1939. He had been in ill health for two years. He was forty-six years of age. Although he suffered intense pain he seemed reconciled to his condition, and expressed himself accordingly. He is survived by his wife and two children: Miss Agnes and Herbert, who were very faithful to him in his illness. It was his request

that the write officiate at his funeral, where he was assisted by Mr. Brown, of Newton, Alabama. Funeral services were held at Goodwater Church June 12th, 1939.

ALSO,

MRS. J. T. MURPHEY was seventy-six years of age, and a firm believer in salvation by grace. Although she never united with the Primitive Baptist Church, she was a firm contender for that faith, and was one of those who earnestly believed in predestination, election and the final preservation of the saints. Her husband preceded her in death about eighteen years. She is survived by three sons: J. T. Jr., A. M., of Graceville, Florida, and F. M., of Vero Beach, Florida. She is also survived by a daughter, Mrs. E. J. Riley, with whom she made her home, and who tenderly aided her mother in every way she could. The remains were brought to Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church, near Dotham, Alabama, for interment, on June 13th, 1939, where the last sad rites were conducted by the writer.

J. J. COLLINS.

It is with a sad and lonely feeling that I attempt to chronicle the death of JAMES ALEXANDER AMIS, born January 25th, 1872, in Hunt County, Texas, near Commerce, and departed this earthly life July 24th, 1939, at the age of 67 years, 5 months and 29 days. Early in life he united with the New School Baptists, and served as church clerk until he moved to Emory, Texas, where he lived until the end came. He became dissatisfied with their doctrine and embraced the doctrine of God our Savior as proclaimed by the Old School Baptists. He attended the associations and monthly meetings when circumstances would permit, and delighted in entertaining the brethren and sisters in his hospitable home at all times. He leaves his beloved wife and five children, two boys and three girls: Sam, and J. A., Jr., Mrs. Glass, Mrs. Ashworth and Mrs. Neal. All were present when the end came. They mourn, but not as those who have no hope.

The funeral was held in the Baptist meetinghouse at Emory, Texas, and was conducted by the writer and the pastor of the church, ElderPrator, in the presence of a large congregation of friends. The floral offerings were beautiful, manifesting the love and respect in which brother Amis was held. His body was laid to rest in the Pilgrims' Rest Cemetery, to await the coming of our Lord to gather his blood-washed throng, then the voice of the archangel will be heard and the trumpet of God will sound. Then the vile body will be raised and fashioned like unto the glorified body of Jesus and be manifested an heir of God and be adopted into the heavenly family. So shall we ever be with the Lord, where there is no death, nor parting of friennds, nor any more sorrow.

Written by one who loved him as his own son,

W. W. SLAUGHTER.

MRS. JOSEPHINE LATHAM HARPER was born and raised in Louisiana. She was united in marriage to brother Latham, and to their union were born seven children, six girls and one boy. Brother Latham died when most of the children were small. Later she married brother Frank Harper. He also preceded her in death. She was a faithful member of the Predestinarian Baptists for about forty years. She departed this life January 9th, 1937, at about the age of seventy-four years. She leaves to mourn their loss five children (two having preceded her in death), the church she was so faithful to attend, and a host

of friends. It can truly be said of her that she was a mother in Israel. Her life was worthy of emulation. The writer spoke at her funeral.

W. O. BEENE.

AGAIN the death angel has visited the home of one dear to the Old School Baptists and removed from a long life of activity and usefulness MISS PHOEBE MEAD, of Roxbury, New York, who passed away July 15th, 1939, having been in poor health for many months. She was past ninety-two years of age, and had lived her entire life in the town of Roxbury. During the past few years she was tenderly cared for by Mr. and Mrs. George Underwood, with whom she made her home. The funeral services were held at her late home the following day, and were conducted by the writer. The interment was in the Vega Cemetery. Miss Mead was born March 1st, 1847, at Vega, N. Y., and was the daughter of Erastus and Mary (Slauson) Mead. In 1883 the family moved from Vega to Roxbury, and resided on a farm near Stratton Falls until 1909, when they removed to Roxbury village. For many years she lived with her two sisters, Misses Chloe and Marietta Mead, who predeceased her by several years. Their home was noted for its hospitality, and many of the members of the Primitive Baptist Church and their friends will remember the many occasions when they stopped at the home of the Mead sisters when meetings were held in their vicinity. Her two sisters united with the church, but Miss Mead never was given strength to unite with the visible church, but she was a firm believer in the principles of that faith, being rooted and grounded in the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. Her blameless life was in itself a beautiful profession of christian walk and faith, as she never was absent from any of the meetings when she could possibly attend. Meekness, humility, kindness, hospitality, charity for all, a helping hand whenever there was sickness among her neighbors, and a cherry attitude towards her friends were among the many outstanding qualities of her strong and noble character. Her many deeds of kindness through her long life were like flowers perfuming the pathway of her life. She was familiarly called "Aunt Phoebe" by all her townsfolk, who loved her and respected her, and many of them had at some time been the grateful recipient of some kind act of hers. The influence of such a noble life as hers will still live on and her epitaph is rather inscribed in the hearts of grateful friends and neighbors, than alone on gleaming marble in a country cemetery.

ALSO,

UPON a monument may be inscribed the words, "JOHN CONSTABLE, August 11th, 1863--July 7th, 1939," casually read by passers-by who did not know the man who reposes in the friendly bosom of mother earth, but to those who knew him in life, there is a volume of meaning inscribed in those brief words that denote the date of his birth and of his death, for no man who has attained the age of almost seventy-six years has lived a busier, a more useful or more industrious life in the humble capacities of his employment. In hard labor, in devotion to his family, in faultless honesty, in genial ways and kindly manners, in unassuming deportment, in neighborly qualities as a helping friend, without malice or ill will to any man, this quiet man of gentle mien had few equals. No man is without the frailties of the flesh, but the many noble qualities of John Constable, who was known to every on in this vicinity as "Jack Constable," constitute a rich legacy of precious memory to his family and his friends. He was born at Mount Trem-

per, Ulster County, New York, August 11th, 1863. He married Delilah Haynes in June, 1892, who died July 10th, 1908. Five children were born of this union, of whom four survive, a son, Leroy, dying in 1928. Surviving are three sons: John Constable, of Halcottville, N. Y., Thomas Constable, of Guilderland, N. Y., Emerson Constable, of Schnectady, N. Y.; one daughter, Mrs. Adelbert Aldrich, of Rochester, N. Y. Six grandchildren also survive. The funtral services were held at Halcottville, and the interment was in the cemetery at Halcottville, N. Y. Mr. Constable made a specialty of concrete work, and it is said that there are not many homes in a radius of some miles in which he had not been at some time employed in his line of work.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

IN MEMORIAM.

In memory of our beloved brother, ROBERT Y. BLAIR, who passed from this life to the one beyond on June 18th, 1939, at his home, near Vance, Virginia. Brother Blair attended his church meeting at Canaan Church on Saturday and again on Sunday. While feeble, as he had been for some time, he seemed to be as attentive and interested in the preaching as ever. But his days on earth were at an end and his labors finished, for after returning from meeting Sunday, while sitting in his room with his family he quietly passed away sitting in his chair. Brother Blair was seventy-four years of age, and lived forty-six of those years peaceable and useful in the Old Primitive Baptist Church, always desiring and laboring for the peace and good of the church. Brother Blair always attended his meetings when not providentially hindered. He had many problems to try his faith, yet he knew no man after the flesh, being established in the faith and order of God's house.

Resolved, that the church at Canaan has lost a faithful member, his family a good husband, father and grandfather, the country a good and useful man and neighbor, and that we bow in humble submission to the all-wise providence of God, who doeth all things right.

The services were attended by Elders Thomas, Doss, Payne and the writer, in the presence of a large gathering of relatives and friends, which proved the esteem in which he was held by all. The burial was near his home.

Written by one who loved him,

W. R. DODD.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT.

Sister BELLE DYE, wife of brother J. H. Dye, was called from this life April 9th, 1939, by God, who doeth all things well. She was a faithful member of her church at Wolf Island, and we believe she lived a life worthy to be honored by all. We have lost a good sister, one we esteemed very highly, but we feel and believe that our loss is her eternal gain. We wish to extend our heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved ones.

Resolved, that a copy of this Resolution be recorded on our church minutes, a copy be sent to the bereaved family and a copy sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Signed by the committee appointed by the church:

R. D. SHREVE,
J. R. STONE,
O. J. WRAY.

The Border Union Corresponding Meeting of Oregon, Washington and Idaho adopts the following Resolutions of Respect:

Whereas, it has pleased our heavenly Father to call from our midst ELDER

J. T. BARNES, who had been a faithful minister, and highly esteemed among us for many years, and an able defender of the truth, and a father in Israel. We greatly feel our loss, and miss him, but feel he has gone to his eternal reward, and desire to say, "Thy will be done." We wish to express our sympathy to the friends and relatives, and to those who have been comforted for so many years by his preaching and writings.

RESOLVED, that a copy of these Resolutions be made a part of our church records, and also a copy sent for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

C. W. BOND, Moderator.

A. D. HUGHET,
MARION COLWELL,
Committee.

MEETINGS

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Bowdoinham Churh, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 8th, 9th and 10th, 1939, the Lord willing. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet wth us.

SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

The First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held at the residence of brother Willard Garten, in Brooker, Texas, on Friday before the second Saturday in September, and continue three days, the 8th, 9th and 10th. Brooker is just across the State line from Oklahoma. Any one wishing to be met, or for further information, should write to Willard Garten, Brooker, Texas. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

MARY ELLISON, Clerk.

GRANTVLLE, Kansas.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the First and Second Churches of Roxbury, at the Yellow Meetinghouse, below Roxbury village, on Wednesday and Thursday, September 13th and 14th, 1939. The meeting will open at 10:30 o'clock, Standard Time, on Wednesday morning. Entertainment will be provided for all visitors, as in the past, and a cordial invitation is extended to all brethren and friends and to ministers of our faith and order in fellowship with us to be present with us and accept of our hospitality. Those coming by train or bus on Tuesday before the meeting will be met at Halcottville, N. Y., and those coming by automobile, unless they have made other plans, will go to the residence of Scott Clark, in Halcottville village, where arrangements will be made for entertainment.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

The South Arkansas Association will be held with Pilgrims Rest Church, at Fordyce, Arkansas, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1939, at ten o'clock a. m., and continuing three days. On Rock Island and Missouri Pacific R. R.

J. T. EVERITT.

Providence permitting, the Original Mount Zion Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will convene with Little Flock Church, Cass County, Missouri, September 29th and 30th and October 1st, 1939. This is located on Old No. 7 Highway, six miles southeast of Pleasant Hill, Missouri. We invite all sound orderly Baptists to meet with us.

DANIEL A. J. ADAMS, Moderator.
WILLIAM H. MORRIS, Clerk,
7241 Jefferson St., Kansas City Mo.

CHURCH MEETING PLACE CHANGED.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets each first and third Sunday at eleven o'clock a. m. at 2407½ Main Street, Dallas, Texas, and on Saturday before each first Sunday at 2:30 p. m. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder D. E. Robinson pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Mod., pro. tem.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church holds meetings the fourth Sunday of each month at 1026 East Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Meeting begins at 10:30 a. m., dismisses for lunch and reconvenes at 2 o'clock p. m. Meeting days have been changed from the first to the fourth Sunday of each month. No Saturday or night meetings.

BURLIE HALL, Pastor
W. H. CAVE, Ass't Pastor.
(MRS.) H. B. CURLIE, Church Clerk

Saints' Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets on the first and third Sundays, at 11 o'clock, at 712 Hobson Street, on Trinity Heights car line, Dallas, Texas. Get off car at Hobson and Idaho, walk one and one-half blocks west. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 107. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1939. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

(*Concluded from last number.*)

There is quite a difference between the old and the new covenant. Under the old covenant, so far as Abraham and his seed after the flesh were concerned, it was impossible for them to keep the law. The new covenant is exactly the opposite. He that is born of God doth not commit sin (reference already given), but by the power and influence of the Spirit he remembers the Sabbath day to keep it holy, not through the carnal or Adamic nature or efforts, but after the inward man, or the new man, as the great apostle Paul explains: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature."—2 Cor. v. 17. He is in the new covenant of grace, he has the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus and is made free from the law of sin and death. (Rom. viii. 2.) He believes in his heart the words of the blessed Savior: "And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely."—Rev. xxi. 6. Remember it is done. It is not yet to be done, but is already done, hence no work, in this sense, but REST in what He has done. Yet when delivered to our fleshly mind we will, at least to some extent, practice our own efforts, and be forgetful under the clouds of nature of him and what he has done for us. Like that poor old servant when he sent his disciples to Jesus, and said, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? (Matt. xi. 3.) This same servant of the living God had said once before, at least, Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. (John i. 29.) O dear hobbling ones, how dark it gets with his little ones at times, when the light of that Sabbath dawns behind the western horizon and the shades of darkness hover so thickly around us, even that Egyptian darkness that is so thick that it is felt, and not only this, but darkness is the time the cruel beasts creep forth to lunge upon their prey, and oh how terrible is the sound of these

fierce beasts to the poor children, who cannot dispel the darkness, nor bring again the blessed Sabbath, nor the rest that they get only there when the Lord commands as he did, Go show John again how the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the blind receive their sight, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up. (Matt. xi. 4, 5.) So then the living soul or spirit that is in the children of God, or that the children of God possess, does not sin. As Paul said, It is no longer I that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in me. (Rom. vii. 17.) But the new creature, or the new or inward man, cannot sin, because he is born of God, therefore he not only remembers the Sabbath day to keep it holy, but the Lord works in him both to will and to do of his good pleasure. All the other commandments have their antitypical meaning and application in this dispensation and new covenant, by the righteous work and leadership of the blessed Savior through the Spirit, as is expressed in Revelation xxii. 14. It says, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Notice that the word "commandments" is in the plural, and it includes all the commandments of God, that no man after the flesh has ever been able to keep, but through Christ Jesus they are blessed to keep them, or do them. Mark the word "blessed." They are blessed to keep these commandments, and included in them is to keep the Sabbath day holy. Now I hope that no one will misunderstand this wonderfully deep and comforting subject. Remember that these under consideration do his commandments that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter into the city. There certainly could be no comfort for us to believe there is no way that we keep them, for then we would not have right to the tree of life, nor to enter through the gates into the city, which is the most longed for and cherished desire and expectation of every humble child of God. Then the way they do these commandments, including remembering the Sabbath day, is by being blessed to do so, as is stated in the text. As is stated in another place, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. ii. 10. They are created anew, they are created in Christ Jesus, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, sinless and pure. They are created unto these good works and the works are ordained before of God. They are certain and they are good works and his people are certain to walk in them. What are those good works? It would be impossible for me to name them all, but to give you an idea about some of them I will try to name a few. Faith, repentance, belief, longsuffering, meekness, gentleness, kindness, against such there is no law. (Gal. v. 22, 23.) So you can see that those who possess these things are blessed and there is no law against them. They walk in these good works by being yoked off, away, and made to cease from their own works in the flesh as a basis of their hope. The works of the flesh, or of Adamic nature,

are described as follows: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, sedition, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like. (Gal. v. 19-21.) Now as Paul said, it is no longer them (the new creatures), but sin that dwelleth in them (reference given), and their sins were laid on the precious Savior and he put them away by the sacrifice of himself (Heb. ix. 26), setting them free, and he also fulfilled in them all, through the Spirit, all the law and commandments, magnifying them. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. (Gal. v. 14.) See also Romans xiii. 9, 10. Then if the love of God is the fulfillment of all the law and commandments, as is clearly outlined in the Scripture, God through his blessed Spirit, or the Holy Ghost, sheds this love abroad in our hearts. (Rom. v. 5.) Then I have proven that they not only remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy in this sense, but all the other commandments as well, hence they have right to the tree of life, and to enter through the gates into the city. Oh what a wonderful and glorious hope is in the heart of the dear child of God! No wonder Paul said, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."—Rom. xi. 33. We are sinners in the flesh, and we are ever conscious of that fact, and cannot keep nor fulfill one of the holy and just demands of his holy law, but through grace he reaches down and creates us anew and gives us a new heart, a new spirit, a new covenant, saves us and washes us in his precious blood from our sins, gives us the precious obedience of Christ, his righteousness, his faith and his keeping of the law are fulfilled in us, because we are kept by his power and walk in his commandments through his ordained good works. But we are to abstain from our works, because it is the Sabbath; our works would pollute it. So it is a good work that is worked in them, to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, and to rest in the finished work of redemption and salvation. Christ said, I have finished the work. Then the six days are over, and when the light of the Savior reveals this to us we cease from our works, we enter into that rest the Savior gives. How sweet it is to the poor humbled child of God when that beautiful Sabbath begins to dawn from the darkness and toil of a full week's work, which has been all in vain, and when the Sun is above all the timber and shining above the brightness of the noon day, and the blessed Savior gives us that sweet rest and trust in him as the Lamb that taketh away our sins, we are overcome with joy, peace and gladness, because this is truly the Sabbath of the blessed Lord. The work is over, sweet rest is ours to enjoy, but as long as we are in the flesh there will come other days of the week, so to speak, and we will still find ourselves entangled, through our fleshly mind the light of this beautiful Sabbath will often be obscure, and we will, at least to some extent, become burdened in our

experiences, but the blessed Savior will visit us again and again and restore the joys of our salvation, and cause us to lie down in green pastures.

The eternal Sabbath is in existence since Jesus by himself purged our sins and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high (Heb. i. 3), even as all the host of heaven and earth are finished. We are only given the earnest of our inheritance (Ephesiaus i. 14; 2 Corinthians i. 22) here below, which means the interest on the entire amount. So if the little seasons of rest that are manifested, or given, to us are so sweet, glorious and precious here in time, what will the principal, or the fullness of our inheritance, be in that sweet land and home of eternal and glorious rest when time is no more, when we shall have lain down this vile, corrupt and sinful body, wherein we groan, weep and mourn? But when we come forth fashioned like our blessed Savior (Phil. iii. 21), without sin or corruption, then we will always live, body and soul, in that eternal Sabbath. No more of the toils, groans, afflictions and sorrows we are subject to here in the flesh, but eternal, glorious and peaceful rest, as is expressed in Revelation xiv. 13. I quote, "And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." The works that follow them are the good works that God before ordained that they should walk in them. Also in the seventh chapter of Revelation we find that John saw these same people who are given to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, standing before God in white raiment. So they have kept the Sabbath in the Spirit of Christ, and all the other commandments, and they have cried, Salvation to our God, and unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. Notice what it is that they cried, and look around and see who it is that say, Salvation to our God. Most of the people who are crying anything are crying that salvation be unto the sinner and unto the church, or unto something, but those who cry that it is unto our God are the only ones John saw in those white robes. Oh how I do hope that I am one of that blessed number clothed in the righteousness of Christ, the blessed Lamb of God, and may God forbid that I ever cry that salvation comes from any source except God and the Lamb. Who are the people here on earth who are crying that? Certainly not those who say that salvation depends upon man, or what he does. I have heard some say that it is just left up to man. Ah, folly! Those do not measure up to the testimony that John heard of those who were clothed in white. Their testimony was, Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. (Rev. vii. 9-17.) Dear child of God, read the eleventh and twelfth verses of this chapter and see what kind of indorsement this doctrine gets. "And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen."

Amen to what? To the doctrine that salvation is of the Lord. This doctrine is advocated by all the redeemed host of God's people, and then all the angels fall and say amen to it. Is this not indorsement enough? What more do we want than this? The world does not indorse this doctrine; it cannot; but all the redeemed do, and all the holy angels have indorsed it. I would rather believe a doctrine that is indorsed by those of the heavenly host and all the holy angels than one the world advocates and indorses. The world says salvation is by works, but they pollute the holy Sabbath of rest, wherein the Lord has finished the work and given his people rest in him. This people have also washed their robes, not in literal water, nor in human cleansings, nor in the works of their own hands, because they have been given to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, but they have washed them in the precious blood of the Lamb that cleanses his people from their sins. He gives them to do this, or they would continue to wash them in human works, like every one else does who has not been brought into this glorious Sabbath of rest, but instead of being made white by this process they are as filthy as filthy rags, but those that John saw were white.

But the best of the seventh chapter of Revelation is the last verse: "For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." O, dear children of the heavenly King, how I do humbly hope at times, if not deceived, that I am one of those who have been brought into that blessed Sabbath, and have ceased from my own works, and have been made to feel the sweet yoke and burden of Jesus, and his rest, and that some blessed day all tears of sorrow will be wiped away by the loving hand of God, and that I may be given to praise and glorify the blessed Savior for ever and with all those who have come out of great tribulation.

I hope those who read this may be given the true spirit of charity towards one of the poorest and most unworthy of all the flock, if one at all. May His grace, mercy and peace be with us all, is my prayer, if not deceived.

Your brother in a sweet little hope,

R. W. RHODES.

WEST HURLEY, New York.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—The inclosed letter was written to the Olive and Hurley Church by sister Alice Beesmer, who was received some months ago as a candidate for baptism into the fellowship of this church, but owing to ill health she has not been able to be taken into the water for immersion in the liquid grave. Sister Beesmer is a deeply experienced person, and has been led through deep waters to testify of the mercy of her Savior. For many years she has been totally deaf, and of late has been confined to her bed. I trust the inclosure will make comforting reading.

Your brother in humble hope,

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

SAUGERTIES, New York.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inasmuch as I am unable to meet you all at meeting, I will speak to you by letter, but I feel so unworthy to address you. Though absent in body, I am with you in spirit and truth. God's ways are not our ways, so I must not complain if I cannot get to meeting. I rejoice in him many times when I am alone. We are promised tribulation in this life to work us patience of the Scriptures. There is not a day or night but what I have some meditations of the law of God, and I think of his wonderful works and of his mysterious ways. I have wondered why I have so many trials to endure: sleepless nights, waiting for God's hand to lead me through. They are all sent for my good, and I trust that it is all for the glory of God. When I hear of others who have the same trials it gives me hope. God knows I am but dust, and I seem to live in the fear of the Lord. My thoughts are much upon my unworthiness, for I feel I am the greatest of all sinners. Sometimes my eyes are so filled with tears that I cannot see, for I am such a sinful being. What a blessed thing that the Savior said in his prayer that "they may be one, even as we are one." If we feel the assurance that this nearness is in him how can we help but rejoice?

In my childhood days I used to take the Bible and go to some place alone and read it with comfort and with tears flowing down my cheeks, and now when I read the Scriptures I always shed tears, for the word of God always touches my heart. When I look back I wonder how God let me wander all these years holding fast to the doctrine, and then to repentance. It was in God's plan for me to suffer much in my life. I always said I was born for that purpose. I often feel it is good for us to be afflicted. It weans us from the world. Never in all my life has the world seemed so full of emptiness. Jesus can make us lie down in green pastures and lead us by the still waters. The twenty-third Psalm is very beautiful to me. I used to sing it. Many times we are lost in darkness, yet his guiding hand is leading us in paths we know not. We cannot overcome anything ourselves, it is all grace and mercy.

I fear I have written too much to you. Much more I could say, but I am afraid of tiring you. May God give you all that peace that passeth understanding.

From a sister saved by grace, if saved at all,

ALICE V. BEESMER.

WINNSBORO, Texas.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—If one so unworthy as I know myself to be may thus address you, I will write a few lines. I am a Primitive Baptist in belief, and love the faith and doctrine they preach. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES has visited me twenty-four years, and always cheers me. I look forward to the time of its coming and can hardly wait for it. There is always some good in every copy worth the subscription price of the paper. It is the best paper of its kind published in America. I read

your good letter to Miss Yule in the April SIGNS. It is simply grand, and that is putting it very mildly. I have never read an article on the subject to compare with it. You surely put the Missionaries where they cannot reply to it; they will become dumfounded. That is the way they get wound up when they attack the Primitive Baptists. Missionaries teach that if any are not saved it is their fault, that God will save them if they will let him. That is giving themselves more power to save than God. God does not want poor puny man's help. The Bible does not teach it that way. He is as far above man as heaven is above the earth. He is Lord of lords and King of kings. He has all power in heaven and on earth. He rules, and none can stay his hand, nor say unto him, What doest thou? I am old and hard of hearing. I cannot hear common conversation nor preaching, so I read my Bible and the SIGNS. I have been cheered by its good letters and editorials, and it is a great comfort to me. I love to read of the way the Lord leads those who are his. We experience this relationship through the love of God shed abroad in our hearts.

In the February SIGNS I read a letter written to you by Roger Knight, of Clifton, New Jersey. It was a very fine letter, and oh so sad. I wrote him a sympathetic letter, and inclosed a pamphlet describing a mineral water from Hot Springs, Arkansas, which is said to be good for rheumatism. I have drunk the water and taken the hot baths, for I suffer much with rheumatism. I was not able to stay long enough for the water to benefit me as much as it should. Many people go there walking with crutches and canes, and after staying there for a time can lay them aside and walk as usual. The name of the water is Arsenic Water, to be drank all the time, no other kind.

Will you please tell me in what book, chapter and verse in the Bible I can find the clause you wrote in answer to Miss Yule? This is it, "Let us, therefore, search as for hidden treasures, the divine record in the hope of finding our names written in the Lamb's book of life." I want to read and find out if there is any hope for one so vile and sinful as myself.

Please excuse pencil, as I am too nervous to write with a pen. Pray for this sinner when it is well with you.

I am your friend, not worthy to call you brother,

(MRS.) F. S. PETTY.

[WE deeply appreciate the expressions of approval voiced by our friend, and the encouragement they afford. The words to which she refers were not a quotation, and, therefore, not to be found in the Bible in the exact arrangement used.—R. L. D.]

SWEET SPRINGS, Missouri.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you the following, which you may publish if you consider it worthy a place in our much esteemed SIGNS OF THE TIMES. "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." The subjects of these gifts are those born again. Born, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by

the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. Like every good and perfect gift, these abiding influences bring peace and joy to the believer as he travels on this wilderness journey. They are abiding, sweet gifts, overcoming and sustaining. The gift of love, the greatest of the three, and the one everlasting, is perfect in the spiritual life. It is shown as the more excellent way. Without this great gift, hope and faith are ineffective. If I could have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, or the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. O, dear ones, let us name some of the effects of this great gift as it affects our lives while in this world of sin and sorrow. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth. For now we know in part and prophesy in part, but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part; but then shall we know even as also we are known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity. (1 Corinthians, thirteenth chapter.)

"Love is the sweetest bud that blows,
Its beauty never dies;
On earth among the saints it grows,
And ripens in the skies.

Earth could not hold so rich a flower,
Nor half its beauties show;
Nor could the world and Satan's power
Confine its sweets below.

And soon on yonder banks above,
Shall every blossom here
Appear a full ripe flower of love,
Like him transported there."

Yours in love, faith and hope,

J. L. KILLION.

DUTTON, Ontario.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—When I got your letter from the office on my way home I rejoiced in spirit, for I felt it would contain some precious leadings of the Spirit's work, of doing business in the deep sea of affliction, for truly affliction is a stormy deep, where waves resound on waves. Though o'er my head the billows roll, I know the Lord can save. The blessed truth of knowing for ourselves that our precious Redeemer can save, is one of his blessed strongholds in the day of battle with the arch enemy of our souls. His grace is great enough to crush the cruel billows that crash against our souls, and when a poor sinful mortal is brought to say, "I am a worm and no man," as I have experienced in the days that are past, and this day I can say with one of old, Remembering mine affliction and my misery, my soul hath thou still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. O, dear brother, speak to me plainly of your trials by the way. It has pleased the Lord to lead me in deep waters, to be afflicted, smitten and as a stricken deer thirsting for water, as my soul was famished for the water of life, and with

Job I could say, and with a fervor of spirit, yet weakness of flesh, Wherefore was I brought forth from the womb. O that I had given up the ghost and no eye hath seen me. I should have been as though I had not been. I should have been carried from the womb to the grave. Those were my prayers in my extremity, dear brother. I believe you can fellowship me in Job's pleadings. But when he was cut down in the purpose of Almighty God and in his mercy he revived Job, he blessed his latter end so that out of weakness he was made strong in his God, and said, Though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me. And, dear brother, I believe I can say of a truth, yet in fear to even presume that, like Job, my latter end is better than the beginning, and I feel a great fear within me which stirs my very being, and the words come in mercy, Stand in awe and sin not, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. And says, Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season (his appointed time) we shall reap if we faint not. So, dear brother, in the afflictions of the gospel we by faith do press on for the prize, etc. Let me say, I labor in heart with the dear servants who have to go down to the sea in ships and do business in deep waters before they are qualified to declare the wonders of his love, his power to kill, to make alive, to wound and to heal. Then he says, Ye shall be as my mouth if ye take the precious from the vile, and through them the bitter cup we have to drink is sweetened and we take courage and go on our way rejoicing, and as I said, if I remember what needs be, that the flock of God who are strengthened and nourished by the tried and tempted servants of God should uphold their hands in their faithful labor under the yoke of their crucified and risen Redeemer. He says, Take my yoke and learn of me, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Not so when we are drinking of the cup of suffering to our proud flesh, is it, brother?

If you feel my letter might be food for the readers of the SIGNS I gladly consent to its publication, and would be humbled by it, as it always makes me feel so little; but we understand so little of his purpose in our goings forth. How we need to be withdrawn from our purpose and have him see fit to hide pride from man. By these things we live, and many such things are with him.

Yes, indeed we did enjoy our dear young brother Westbrook. His chief motive was to exalt the power of God in his beloved Son Jesus, and his mission from a child shows his Lord's work in him. "I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth," and he was powerful in the dear brother. Also, Elder Ruston was powerful with kindred love.

Write again.

Your sister in hope,

(MRS.) JOHN McPHAIL.

ROMANS XIII. 1.

"LET every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."

I know that the carnal mind cannot comprehend the great eternal truths of God that are contained in this precious portion of God's word, and knowing this I am made to shrink from any effort to write of my meditations on this or any other portion of the inspiration of God. Whether I have ever been visited by the revelation of God or no is a question that often harasses me, and all I can say is that I hope some little portion of his precious truth has been revealed to a worm like me.

Even the meaning of the first word of our text is hidden from the wise and prudent of this world, and that includes all human creatures, as far as their carnal mind is concerned. Our dictionaries do not, nor cannot, define the word. Human reason defines it to mean to permit, to suffer, to give leave to, but Jehovah's words never carry a meaning that would convey any condition or chance. The apostle Paul by inspiration defines the word rightly. He calls the word "let," as used in Genesis i. 3, a command. Jehovah spake and it was done. (See 2 Corinthians iv. 6.) "Let there be light, and there was light." "Let every soul [not just a few whom the world calls good and great, but every soul] be subject unto the higher powers," and it was so. Our God has willed and unalterably fixed it so that every creature is subject to the power that has them bound, the higher power. I sometimes feel to pity rather than blame any soul for what he is or does, for if he be evil and is an enemy to the truth, then blame the "power of darkness" that has him bound. If he does right, and loveth the truth, then I give credit, not to the creature, but to the power of righteousness that has him bound in the bonds of love. And the power of darkness is one of the powers that be (exists), and is ordained of God; that is, set apart to that end. I think we should be the last people on earth to want to kill a brother for an error, but rather through much mercy and pity try to save the brother from the power of evil that has him bound. We war not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers. And again, these truths do not argue that we cannot do anything, and no use to try, but to me the positive proof is that through Christ we can do all things whatsoever are commanded of us. I have never read in the Scriptures where God ever commanded a creature to do a thing he had willed him to do and that creature failed to do the thing ordained of God. I would hate to believe that God wanted me to preach a little abler or a little longer and was not able to subdue me and do all his pleasure, yet this does not lead me to neglect the gift that is in me (if so be the Lord has called me), but rather I the more desire that I might make his truths a little plainer and honor him more. I have never been satisfied with my feeble efforts, though a few times I have felt better satisfied than at other times.

The word "subject," as used in the text, means being under the governing or ruling power of; yielding to, ect. We see the evidence of many powers in nature made to rule over and govern other subjects, all of which are the power of God, for there is no other source of power but of God. We know of the power of hunger, the power of sleep, the power of fear, the power of love, to which powers we know we are subject and willingly obedient, and to preach to a man that he should not sleep or be hungry would be about as foolish as much of the Arminian preaching we hear to-day from the press, the pulpit and over the air. Our God hath said he has his way in the whirlwind and in the storm. It is indeed God's whirlwind and God's storm, and when these twisters come they blow in a circle, like a lost person, running in circles and never getting anywhere, ever returning to the place of starting. So it is with those who are carried about by winds of doctrine. Many of God's humble poor can witness with me of the lost and confused condition of mind when we in our times of trouble were carried about by the whirlwind doctrine to pin fig leaves together for a covering for our naked soul. Truly we had no rest day nor night. We were in the swirl of delusion, "strong delusions," and around and about were we carried, tossed to and fro, never getting anywhere; no relief was found. Ah! but it is enough for my soul to know that in all our distressed delusions he has his own sovereign way. All things were created by him and for him, and he had the sovereign right to do all his pleasure in the creation and righteous disposal of all things through all times. All things are his and he is sovereign over all. Praise his holy name.

A poor sinner,

G. B. BIRD.

CANADA, Kentucky.

TIPTONVILLE, Tennessee.

DEAR EDITORS:—It gives me much pleasure to send payment for the SIGNS another year. I hope we will always have it coming to our homes as long as time lasts, and I feel sure we will if the Lord sees fit. He has caused it to stand for over one hundred years, through wars and depressions and all opposition to its glorious doctrine. I hope I love its teachings above all things else, which I believe is according to our Bible, and through its pages this Scripture is fulfilled: Comfort ye one another wherewith ye yourselves are comforted. I often have a desire to write. My mind sometimes is lifted above the things of this world and I find myself so full of something (I fear sometimes to say what), if not deceived, it is the Spirit. Yes, a glorious feeling of love and sweet meditation. At the time I feel to say, I know that my Redeemer liveth. At such times I have no fear or dread of this world, and death seems sweet and peaceful, a blessing to die and leave this old world. But I do not stay in that condition, and when I find myself back on this earth again (so to speak) I, like Peter, begin to sink, and sometimes it seems a long time until Jesus takes me by the hand and tells me

not to fear. But oh my soul, if I am not deceived in it all, and I have tasted that the Lord is gracious, if my name is written in the Lamb's book of life, it is enough for me, much more than I deserve. Then I beg him to reconcile me to my lot and enable me to run with patience the race that is set before me. I feel the dear Lord has been very good to me all the days of my life. It is indeed sweet when I can look back over my past life and feel that surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life. He has not made my path smooth and pleasant all the time, and has not kept trouble, sadness and distress away from my house. Two of our children were taken from us by death, two of my brothers who had just reached manhood were taken within five months of each other. Several years later my mother and grandmother died form the effects of a car accident, in which my father was terribly injured, but finally recovered. A few years later the only brother I had took poison and died, leaving only my father and myself. This last death seemed to me more than I could bear, and I am afraid I was not like Job, who suffered so much and sinned not, neither charged God foolishly. Oh how badly I did feel! No one but God knows. But his lovingkindness changes not. He watches over his own wherever they are and whatever they do, nevertheless he does not spare the rod and spoil the child. He is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. He leads us in ways we know not and in paths we have not known. He is God and there is none like him. Oh that I could find words to express his love to usward, words to praise him and glorify his holy name, but this I cannot do as I wish.

My husband's father, Jes Campbell, sends his love and best wishes to you all. It is he who enabled me to send payment for the paper. He wished he could send more. May the Lord bless and keep you all your journey through. I love all the writers of the SIGNS and feel to know them. I had the pleasure of meeting sister Effie Blogg last October. I have enjoyed her articles. I also very much enjoy reading the editorials, and, brother Dodson, your father's letters mean very much to me. The whole paper is filled with good letters, written with trembling hands, depending upon God the Father to direct their pens, open up their understanding and fill their hearts with that faith and love that makes us not afraid. Pray for me and mine when at the throne of grace, that we all may be kept by his power, love and mercy.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
(MRS.) LUTHER CAMPBELL.

HALLBURG, West Virginia.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—It being Sunday to-day, I have been reading my Bible, and rereading some copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that date from 1921 to 1935. I was wondering if you still publish the dear old paper and if the gracious Lord of all spiritual Israel continues to bless and permit a number of the dear old brethren and sisters to write good letters and feast upon that sweet manna that showers from our

dear Redeemer. As I reflect over some of the letters written by some of the old brethren and sisters who are no more in this wilderness of woe, I recall the names of Elder Beeman, Elder J. W. McClanahan, brother W. J. May and several others. These letters are sweet to my feeble senses, and are refreshing to my spiritual understanding; that is, if I have one. I am in possession of a few copies of other periodicals claiming to be Old School Baptist, and have been a subscriber to one of them until some time ago, when I had a dream, and was introduced to Elder H. H. Lefferts by Elder J. R. Dennison, and if the SIGNS is still alive I desire to receive a copy, and hope to be a subscriber soon. My hope is anchored upon Jesus, the Savior of the church, the elect, the redeemed, the called, the chosen, those who have been bought with a price (the blood of Jesus). I am also a believer in predestination of all things (not causative).

GILBERT SEARS.

LIND, Washington.

DEAR EDITORS:—You will find inclosed two dollars for the continuance to me of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I enjoy reading the dear old paper, dear through my dear old grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. James Deal, who took it when I was just a small girl. They had a great many of them. They would save them and read them over and over. I wondered at that time what there was in this paper they enjoyed so much, but I surely know now. My dear old parents also enjoyed them, and were members of the Primitive Baptist Church. My father and I joined the same day, February 28th, 1920, at Deming, Washington. Their names were Mr. and Mrs. T. N. Deal. After they were gone I had the paper sent in my name. Dear old brother Davis Burch was there at the church when we joined. He has a daughter who is also a member. I saw them both at Yakima, Washington, at a three days' meeting, in June, 1938, at Elder Hughett's home. We surely had a wonderful time, and I look forward to those meetings, when we can get together, as we have no church here. I go to Touchet, Washington when I can. There are not many of the dear brethren and sisters left there, but when two or three gather in his name there is great comfort. My husband is very good about taking me. He seems to enjoy the meetings, too.

An unworthy sister,

(MRS.) DAISY YEISLEY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. N. B. Clem, Ala., $2; Mrs. E. Brunow, Ill., $1; H. A. Giles, Va., $1.

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EDITORIAL.

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JAMES II. 26.

"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

The chapter from which the above verse is taken is very plain, and simple, so that a child might understand it. This is one of many Scriptures that deal with practical religion, teaching that there is something else beside a belief in, or assent to, the word. While in this chapter James says that one is doing well if he believes there is one God, yet he tells us that devils also believe and tremble. Not all that hear the word do it, therefore James also said, "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."—James i. 22-25. It is true that faith does come by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, but there is as decided a difference between a living faith and a dead faith as there is between a living child and a doll. The doll can be dressed up with a dress, shoes and hat, as the living child, but it is still a doll, it is dead. In the child is life, and life must always be there before any evidence of life can be manifested. The heart beats, breathing and movement of limbs, the crying, hearing and seeing are evidence of of life which, as others see them, cause them to conclude that this is a living child. True faith is a living principle in the soul, that works by love, causing the possessor to do the word of God, as well as to hear it, while false faith stalks about in an empty profession. Paul says, "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."—Titus i. 16. To some, perhaps, as they read these things, it will seem hard to reconcile them with the utterance of Paul in Romans iii. 28, where he tells "That a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law," using the testimony

concerning Abraham as a proof, but does not James also use the same testimony in the chapter before us to prove his assertion that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only? Paul refers to works of the law; James is referring to very different works, as we shall try to prove. We fully believe that Paul and James were agreed, for the Holy Spirit inspired their testimony, and neither of them would have been faithful had he tried to mix works and grace, or law and gospel. One who has never been delivered from the law by the body of Christ does works which he, in his own mind, feels will help him to get to heaven and God's presence with a "WELL DONE." Working for a blessing. One under the gospel, led by the Holy Spirit, and blessed with a living faith, which is the fruit of the Spirit, will do those things that are well-pleasing unto God, and such an one is blest in his deed. We would have our readers note that he is blest, not for his deed, but in his deed. How strange that we should find such unruly characters in the church even in the apostles' days, who were so high-minded and indifferent as to their walk and conversation. They had "crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation."—Jude 4. It was so that God's servants should contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. There have always been those who seem to have a strong faith, a faith that could move mountains, and have not charity, and Paul says of such, They are nothing. They can speak with tongues of men and of angels, yet they know not how to bridle their tongues; they deceive their own hearts, and their religion is vain. Paul and James were both agreed in the cardinal truth of justification by faith. In Hebrews Paul tells us of the works of those who walked by faith, while James in the afore mentioned chapter is insisting upon the evidence of true faith in the every-day life of the brethren. He would not have them rest in a head knowledge, which they might call faith, and reckon that such is sufficient for salvation, when it does not affect the heart, nor influence the walk and conversation. Thus he first mentions "respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool."—James ii. 1-3. "If ye fulfill the royal law, according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors." —James ii. 8, 9. Again, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can [such] faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being

alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only thing that can make us acceptable unto God, but such a faith proves itself true and genuine, for it works by love and is accompanied by every good work. As faith in the Lord Jesus Christ makes us acceptable unto God, so the works of faith make us acceptable unto the brethren. A person professing that faith, yet who is at home in the world, having little or no care for better things, while he is enslaved by the love of money, and under the dominion of sin, his religion is vain. No doubt it was such people that James had seen. He noticed that in their excitement to bestow attention upon the man with the gold ring and goodly apparel, that they would slight God's humble poor. As an example of a true and living faith, James takes our father Abraham, who is called the father of the faithful. He says, "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God." "Faith wrought with his works." Though he knew that in Isaac his seed should be called, and was told by God that that seed would be innumerable, yet he believed God, and went to offer up Isaac, doing the work, going under the power of faith, or, as James says, faith wrought in what he did. Such a work was to be fulfilled of the Scripture. Every word of God shall come to pass, the things that God has said his people will do, faith will work in them, enabling them to work out those things well-pleasing unto God. This is what Paul meant when he said to the Philippian Church, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."—Phil. ii. 12, 13. Many who believe that there is one God, creator and disposer of all things, who has planned and purposed all things whatsoever come to pass, reason with a carnal mind, and say, that seeing that God has declared the end from the beginning, etc., and that his people are to be blessed, then why pray for a blessing which is purposed for us? With the same reasoning, Why go to meeting? Why read the Scriptures? Why try to influence our young to attend where the truth is preached, for if they are to be saved they will be saved? Why ask God for anything when he knows what we need, and in asking we might ask amiss? Why profess his name, or strive to live godly, for if we are to be saved we will be saved anyhow? We call all such reasoning carnal reasoning, and it is from our carnality it springs, and it is God-dishonoring, resulting in this day from ignorance of the Scripture and of the power of God. There is a place for prayer in God's purpose, a very special place, it is called a throne of grace, and God's children rejoice that there is a

throne of grace, and they know that praise is comely to the upright, and it is said that "God inhabiteth the praises of Israel."—Psalms xxii. 3. God has not only purposed the end, but every link in the chain of events, and his worship is in his appointments. The woman of Canaan was in trouble, her daughter was vexed with a devil. The Lord had sent this trouble, other women, perhaps, had the same trouble, but God's Spirit was in her, and a God-given faith was there also, and she pushed aside every obstacle. So mightily did faith work in her that she faced a rebuff from Jesus, and opposition from his disciples, and she worshipped him (what a work of faith), saying, Lord, help me. (Matt. xv. 22-28.) Public worship is also of God's appointment, and it is longed for by those who are deeply tried, to them it is a relief to leave the world and its noise; they often have a gladness of heart, as when David said, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."—Psalms cxxii. 1. Where true faith is there will be an exercise or work that will redound to the good of the soul and the glory of God. In the preacher, it will prompt him to go, leaving his home, and, if necessary, suffer privation for the cause of truth, he will endure the cross and despise the shame. He will lose sight of the gold ring and goodly apparel as in his heart he feels to be at the footstool of God's humble poor, and he is blest in his deed. Although he may feel that he cannot pray, yet many will desire an interest in his prayers, and it is good when his faith is exercised in the word of God, to the comfort and edification of the saints. It is in faith and by faith that brethren will esteem others better than themselves, it will enable those who have it to choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. What sweet fellowship there is enjoyed in the church of God when brethren are doers of the word as well as hearers. It was a work of faith when the jailer took Paul and Silas and washed their stripes, when he submitted to the believer's baptism and received them into his house and set meat before them. (Acts xvi. 33, 34.) What a work of faith was Abraham's and Isaac's as they journeyed into the mount. Isaac said, My father, behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And faith working in him mightily, Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb. What a blessed road, and what solemn thoughts were theirs as they journeyed. James not only gives us Abraham as an example, but he seems to go from the greatest to the least, bringing in the harlot Rahab, the last one that man would expect to look to for an example of good works. A fallen creature, like ourselves, who had done nothing good, and of herself could do nothing good, yet it is said "she believed in God." The proof of that were her works. She received the spies into her house, and sent them out another way, and she perished not with them that believed not, when she received the spies with peace. Her faith did not fail, for after she had sent the spies out another way, she confessed her belief in

the God of heaven and earth, and she displayed the scarlet thread in her window. Steadfast in the faith, she waited until she was taken by the spies, with all that she had, into Israel's camp in peace. We cannot possibly see how our subject can be twisted to strengthen a system of duty religion in which the soul would build up a store of works which would force God to change his mind. "He is in one mind, and who can change him?" There is no way of acceptance with God but in Jesus Christ our Lord. The creature by nature has no righteousness acceptable unto God, all he may have is a righteousness of the flesh, which Paul had made much of, but of which he spoke when he said, "Yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."—Phil. iii. 8, 9. To those who have another and different way to that which Paul had, in which they would set up the old creatures to work for heaven, we would say, should God, who is rich in mercy, lay judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, "hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place."—Isaiah xxviii. 17. Then they would confess themselves vile, without ability to do any good things. Jesus, the Savior of sinners, would then be the one thing needful and they would want to feel the word with power. It was the word with power that enabled Abram to leave his father's house and go to a land that God would show unto him. This word with power is "a springing well," within the person to whom it comes, enabling them to walk and do those things that are acceptable unto God. Faith embraces the beginning and the end, and every step of the way, it believes God and embraces the faith once delivered unto the saints. It enables the possessor to "hold fast the form of sound words," and accounts that "the words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times."—Psalms xii. 6. A respect unto the word will often bring about a self-examination, while a neglect of the word in its precepts and exhortations will result in a coldness, and the soul will soon find itself lusting after, and minding the things of the flesh. The carnal mind ever results in death, a death to all joy and peace in believing, but it is a work of faith, a faith of the operation of God, that makes one remember God and be troubled. Those precepts and exhortations are given that we may see our shortcomings and realize that only by faith, which is the fruit of God's Spirit, can we do them. They are given by inspiration of God, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Some of course will say that it is a lack of faith when one is troubled. We do not think so. True

faith lives and labors under loads, though damped it never dies. It, like a star, shines brightest in the darkest night. There may be a fearfulness lest we slip, yet such are kept by the power of God. It is through much tribulation, yet faith enables them to wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. While passing through trouble, Job, a possessor of faith, could say, "The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure; into whose hand God bringeth abundantly," as much as to say that there are no bounds in their death, their strength is firm, while the child of God seems often ready to slip. Surely this is for the trial of faith, which is more precious than of gold, though it be tried by fire. Many of us can look back to the time when we knew the Lord helped us, but this is not sufficient, faith wants a present help, past helps will encourage us to wait upon the Lord, knowing that he who has promised is able to perform. It will cause us not to despise the chastisement of the Lord, nor to faint when we are rebuked of him. We may not be able to say that our prayer is a prayer of faith, and we know that whatsoever is not of faith is sin, but our needs will be such that pray we must, it will seem to be our life's breath, and whether we are answered or not, we know at such times it is right to pray. The same applies to all our ways: if it is going to meeting we do not know that there will be a blessing for us, but the word saith, "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is," and we know it is right to go, and wrong to absent ourselves. If it is not our pleasure to go, it is our duty, for we should not please ourselves. If we are concerned as to our duty to the Lord and to those who have offended against us, the word of God is plain and will be followed if we walk in the faith, though often such work will be very unpleasant to the flesh. It is not easy to pray for our enemies, to do good to those who despitefully use us, yet it becomes us so to do, even though it is a painful work.

Much could be said bearing on this subjest, but we close with the observation that in the foregoing chapter James tells us in the last ten verses no less than three times that faith without works is dead.

G. R.

TO OUR MINISTERING BRETHREN, IN PARTICULAR.

Some of you have been kind enough to write in and inquire if you might be permitted to represent the Signs of the Times in your travels among the brethren. Please be assured that nothing would be more pleasing to both the editorial staff and the publisher than to have every minister of our faith and order securing subscriptions for the Signs. Remittances should be made payable and sent to J. E. Beebe & Co., 5 Linden Avenue, Middletown, N. Y. The subscription price is two dollars per year, or one dollar for six months.

We want to take this occasion to say to those ministers who have been receiv-

ing sample copies of the paper during the year, that it has been sent to them for the specific purpose of having them become thoroughly acquainted with it, in the hope that they will not only become subscribers themselves, but will actively recommend it to those brethren with whom they come in contact, provided of course they can conscientiously do so. Many of our readers have been very generous in their praise as to the soundness of the doctrine, the spirit in which the truth is presented and the usual promptness and good condition in which they receive their papers. We are honestly trying to do our best, and we feel that our publisher is doing an excellent job, considering the handicap under which he has to labor.

While we are on the subject, let us make it perfectly clear that we also desire the cooperation and assistance of each and every reader in doing what they can to get new subscribers and to keep their own subscriptions paid up as promptly as possible. Without the help and good will of our subscribers we cannot go forward. We have every reason to believe that God is blessing this medium of correspondence to the comfort and edification of his people, and as long as it has his support we know it will continue to carry its message of love to the household of faith.

If there be any who desire a more personal authorization to act as our representative than that presented above, we shall be glad to furnish same upon request.

R. L. D.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER WILEY BUNYAN ROBERTSON was born in Davidson, Ala., September 6th, 1857, and died at his home in Omaha, Texas, September 4th, 1939. He moved with his parents to Acworth, Georgia, when quite young. He was married to Miss Viola Peters May 18th, 1881. Ten children were born to this union, three of whom preceded him in death. Six sons and one daughter survive him: J. R. Robertson, Omaha, Texas; B. E., Charlotte, N. C.; A. J., Alvin, Texas; W. O., Tahoka, Texas; J. D., Dallas, Texas; D. C., Hobson, Texas; and Miss Una Robertson, Ennis, Texas. He is survived by eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild; also two brothers: Elder B. F. Robertson, Omaha, Texas, and J. H. Robertson, Acworth, Georgia. Brother Robertson united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Sorrell Springs, Cobb County, Georgia, in the year 1883. He was ordained to the full work of the ministry September 4th, 1896. He moved with his family to Texas in 1901, and located at Omaha, where he had made his home the past thirty-seven years. Brother Robertson was one of our gifted Elders. He had a clear conception of the fundamental principles of the doctrine, and a mild yet convincing manner of presenting the sublime truths of the gospel. He was most wonderfully blessed of the Lord: the graces of the Spirit of the Lord so adorned his life that it could truly be said of him that he was an ensample unto his flock. He was loved by the brotherhood, esteemed for his sterling qualities by all his friends and neighbors, had a good report of them that were without, and was devotedly adored by his children. Too much cannot be said in commendation of the home life of this excellent family. No one with discernment could be in the

home even a short time without being impressed with the superior efficiency of the administrative department of it: the very atmosphere of the home seemed to be charged with order, refinement and sympathetic understanding; and it is a pleasure to be able to say that most of his children, and may be all of them, now cherish a hope of an interest in the graces of the Spirit which were so manifest in the life their father lived before them. If it please the Lord, may he bring them to his banqueting-house, where his banner over them is love. Brother Robertson's wife, who was a most lovable and devoted wife and mother, preceded him in death several years. Brother Robertson was forty-three years in the service of the churches as an ordained Elder, during which time he was active and faithful.

The writer was called by the family to conduct his funeral, which was done from the late home in Omaha, in the presence of the family, except one son, who was on a vacation in the northwestern States and could not be located, and a host of relatives and friends, after which his body was laid to rest in the Omaha Cemetery to await the summons when his Lord shall come to make up his jewels, when we confidentially hope he shall come forth in the likeness of the glorified body of the Lord. His association for many years has been most sweet to me. We shall all miss him. The Lord's will be done.

J. R. HARDY.

MARTIN FRANCIS BELLIS was called to his eternal home April 10th, 1939. He lacked a few months of being ninety years old, having been born September 6th, 1849. He was a native, and almost lifelong resident of Hunterdon County, New Jersey, where he was widely and favorably known. He was married to Violetta Rittenhouse December 10th, 1873. This union continued for more than twenty-four years, until her death in 1898. Their children, Mrs. John Kugler, Jr., of Springfield, Mass., Wesley Bellis, of Bloomfield, N. J., Mrs. Mason F. Yeymes and Miss Edna V. Bellis, of East Orange, N. J., all survive. In 1904 he married Susan R. Kugler, a cousin of his first wife. Her death, in 1933, left him alone in the home, aged and greatly afflicted with near blindness and deafness. He then went to live with his son-in-law and two daughters, Mr. and Mrs. Mason F. Yeymes and Miss Edna Bellis, in East Orange, N. J., in whose home he received from all his children the kindest and most loving devotion that could be given. It is a joy to bear testimony to such a happy and cherished old age. He showed a marked interest for many years in the preaching of Old Baptists and was a faithful attendant at their meetings, but not until near life's end did he ask for a home with them. Late in the afternoon of a November Sunday in 1932, following our church service, he was baptized by our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, and received into the fellowship of the Kingwood Church, at Locktonwn, N. J. The beauty of that ordinance will linger in memory of many who witnessed it. Nature provided a perfect setting. While the sunset glow in the western sky shone through the leafless branches and in the east the full moon was seen rising, that hoary head was buried beneath the stream, and rising revealed a countenance of such rapturous joy it told us he had found the "peace that passeth understanding." His was not a spectacular life, but one the integrity, uprightness and kindness of which may well serve as an example to all. He is greatly and sorrowfully missed, not only by his children, but by his two grandsons, two granddaughters,

a great-grandson, many other relatives and friends, and the little church of his membership.

Ill health prevented our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, from attending his funeral, which was held at Frenchtown, N. J. Elder R. Lester Dodson kindly conducted the services, and declared comfortingly to the bereaved those truths which were so dear to the departed one, after which interment was made in the family plot in the Frenchtown cemetery.

AWILDA R. STRYKER.

ROBERT CLAIBURNE HUDDLESTON, age sixty-three years, deacon in the University Street Primitive Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee, died August 3rd, 1939. Funeral services were held August 4th, at the home, 310 Main Street. Survivors are his widow, Mrs. Carrie Whitehead Huddleston, three daughters, Mrs. A. Donaldson Ellis and Miss Sarah and Miss Ruth Huddleston, six sons, Ralph H., Clay W., Robert C., Jr., John W., Brannon and Elwyn Huddleston. This dear brother's companion was a member of the Methodist Episcopal denomination, and Dr. Anderson, a Methodist minister, offered prayer, Elder R. L. Biggs read a portion of the second chapter of Ephesians, and stated that the deceased had often spoken of how comforting this chapter was to his hungry soul, and the writer spoke a few words in conclusion, referring to the promises of God. In the death of this dear brother the church has lost a very useful and faithful member, his children a loving and devoted father, his companion a true and faithful husband, the community a useful citizen, who was highly esteemed by all who knew him. May God bless you all.

LYTLE BURNS.

MEETINGS.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed, the Lord willing, to be held with Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 11th, 12th and 13th, 1939. We cordially invite all brethren and all ministers of our faith and order to meet with us. Please accept this notice as a personal invitation to you who read it, to come and meet with us. No other invitations than this notice will be sent out. The meeting-house is located on Route 50, midway between the villages of Aldie and Lenah, easily accessible by bus or private auto. Those coming Tuuesday evening, will come to Lenah, where they will be met and cared for. Those coming Wednesday morning, come direct to place of meeting. Greyhound buses leave Washington at 14th and New York Avenue. For further information, if needed, write to the undersigned.

C. M. TURNER, Church Clerk,
ALDIE, Loudoun County, Virginia.

The usual all-day meeting will be held with the New Vernon Church, New Vernon, N. Y., Thursday, October 12th, 1939, to which all lovers of the truth are invited.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Broad Creek Church, five miles east of Laurel, Sussex County, Delaware, October 18th and 19th, 1939. A cordial invitation is extended our brethren, sisters and friends, especially our ministers, to meet with us. Those coming by rail on Tuesday will be met in Delmar, Delaware, seven miles south of Laurel. Those coming by auto, come to Delmar and inquire for the home of the writer of this notice.

H. C. KER.

PROVIDENCE permitting, we expect preaching by Elder R. Lester Dodson in the Woburn Old School Baptist meetinghouse, 452 Main Street, Woburn, Mass., the fifth Sunday in October (29th). All are welcome.

E. M. FORD.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder D. E. Robinson pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

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On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

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ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

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CHURCH MEETING PLACE CHANGED.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets each first and third Sunday at eleven o'clock a. m. at 2407½ Main Street, Dallas, Texas, and on Saturday before each first Sunday at 2:30 p. m. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Mod., pro. tem.

T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Church Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church holds meetings the fourth Sunday of each month at 1026 East Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Meeting begins at 10:30 a. m., dismisses for lunch and reconvenes at 2 o'clock p. m. Meeting days have been changed from the first to the fourth Sunday of each month. No Saturday or night meetings.

BURLIE HALL, Pastor
W. H. CAVE, Ass't Pastor.
(MRS.) H. B. CURLIE, Church Clerk

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R. LESTER DODSON.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

GLEN RAVEN, North Corolina.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I am inclosing a part of my travel. You may publish it in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES if you see fit and have space; if not, cast it aside and it will be all right with me. I have been reading the SIGNS for over a year, and this year I am taking it. I borrowed it all last year from my father. I get much enjoyment from it. It is my meat and drink, and what I love above all things, if I know myself. I just want to mix my travels and feelings with those of the good old brethren and sisters I have been reading after. It is of so much comfort and enjoyment to me I can hardly wait until my SIGNS comes each month.

It is with a heavy heart I try to write a few things of the paths I have traveled. In 1919, Saturday night before the second Sunday in May, I was shown what a lost sinner I was. I saw myself as I had never seen before. I was at Danville, Virginia, with my older sister at a meeting. She had had her name with the Old Primitive Baptists for many years. While Elder Spangler was preaching I was made to hear it for the first time in my life. I thought it was the sweetest sermon I ever heard, and I was made to rejoice. I went back home where I was boarding, went into my bedroom, fastened my door and put out the light, for I was afraid my sister would see me. In tears I fell upon my knees trying to pray and begging the good Lord to have mercy on me, a lost sinner. I felt so condemned I did not want to go to bed, for I was afraid I would die before another day, and that if I did there was no place prepared for me but eternal torment. I walked the floor and cried. I do not know for how long. I pulled off my shoes to be sure my sister would not hear me. I did not want any one to know my feelings. After a long time I went to bed to roll from one side to the other, with little or no rest for me. I slept but little that night and was begging the Lord to have mercy on me. I arose early the next

morning and went to the next street to the home of another of my sisters. She was talking about the baptizing that was to take place the next day, and I said that I wished it could be me who was going to be baptized. She said it could be. I said, No, I am not fit, they would not have me. I did not intend to say anything about it to any one, or let them know just how I felt. I went to meeting that day and sat nearly at the back of the house. A boy friend was with me and I was much afraid I would go up and offer myself to the church. I did not want him or any one else to know why I sat near the back. I went on in this way many years, and would go to hear preaching when I could, but I was trying to go two ways at the same time: I liked to go to meeting and I liked worldly things, too. I would try to forget all about the church, for I wanted to go out with other people and have a good time, and would often think I would have all the good times I wanted and then would give up worldly pleasures and join the church. Sometimes I would go to meeting and would say to myself, It is too old-fashioned for me. I am too young to throw my pleasure away that way. I will wait until I get older. I tried my best not to believe in the Primitive Baptist faith, and would say, I will not go any more; but somehow when the time came to go I would not stay away. I had the desire to do right, and would ask the Lord to have mercy on me and to forgive me for my many sins, and to lead me in the path of righteousness, and to show me what was right. But I just could not pray, for my prayers seemed to go no higher than my head. Many times I would think I would pray, but could not find a place. I would think that when I was alone I could find a heart to pray, wondering what was the matter with me. I did not know. My sins would get so heavy I would think I could not live that way. I would fall on my knees and all I could say was, Lord, have mercy on me, a poor sinner, and guide my footsteps in the right way. I wanted to live right, but I could not. I went on that way until July, 1936, when one morning, about eight o'clock, I was taken sick in the mill, but worked until eleven o'clock, and could hardly get home. The doctor who treated me early the next morning said I got over heated at my work. About one o'clock that same day my husband again went for the doctor. He said I had the Devil's Grippe, and I think he named it correctly, for he had me all right. The doctor changed my medicine, but I got worse instead of better. Later in the day my husband went to the mill to work. He did not want to leave me, but I told him to go on and if I got worse I would send for him. He had hardly reached his work before I sent for him, and also sent to Burlington for my sister who was working there at that time. She and my father were the only members of my family who lived there. I did not want to send for my father, because I felt it would be more than he could stand to see the last breath leave me. I thought surely I would die, and if I did there was no place of rest prepared for me. Eternal torment was my

home, I thought. My husband came in from the mill and asked me which doctor I wanted, or if I wanted both of them, as there were two doctors living in our neighborhood. I told him I did not want any doctor, but he said, Yes, I am going to get one of them. My three little children were walking the floor and crying, Mama, mama. I laid my head in my husband's lap and tried to pray to the Lord to have mercy on me, to spare my life for the sake of my children. I said, Lord, what have I done for my life to be taken this way? A small, sweet voice spoke to me and said, Stay away from dance halls and other worldly things; go and join the church, where you belong. I replied, Yes, Lord, I will do anything if you will spare my life. For the sake of my family I felt I could not leave them. After that my pain stopped and I felt as comfortable as if I had never been sick. I told them I felt better. They did not know I was trying to pray. The next medicine I took staid with me and I did get better. All who were with me while I was in that condition thought that I was dying, but it was as I told them, I did not need a doctor. My case was higher than a doctor could reach. After that I thought surely I would offer myself to the church, but the next time I went I felt so unfit I was sure they would not have me and there was no use offering myself. I craved a home with those dear Old Baptists and wanted to live with them. I thought they were the dearest people in all the world. I got so I was not satisfied with anything or any one if I was not at meeting or listening to some of the good brethren or sisters talking. When my husband and I would go and visit them we would stay so late I would be ashamed of myself, but I felt at home in their home and they seemed like my folks to me. I was made to love them with a love I had never known before, and I wanted a home in the church so badly that I felt if they made a footmat of me it would be all right, if they would just let me live with them, but I was afraid to ask. I felt so little, so unworthy, I was sure they would refuse to have me, and if they did where would I go? My husband did not bebelieve in the Primitive Baptist doctrene, so I did not have many opportunities of attending their meetings. If he did take me to the meetings, he would carry me in and leave me and come back later for me. I often tried to pray and ask the Lord to bless him and make him understand the good old preaching, but I know I could do nothing, for I believe the Lord does everything according to his will and not ours. My husband got so he would go with me, and sometimes he would say, That was good preaching, and it would make me rejoice to hear him say it. The first time I ever noticed that he looked as if he was enjoying the preaching was at old Bunker Hill Church. He was sitting quite some distance from me, with the tears rolling down his cheeks, and it was all I could do to keep from shouting, Praise to the good Lord. We went to meeting nearly every Sunday and I enjoyed the preaching, but it was all I could do to get out of the house with-

out asking for a home with them. It was two years this summer since I was made to love them as I do now, and I hate worldly things.

I went on in that way for some time, and when I would go to Burlington Church a small voice would say, Come inside; you are on the outside of the church. I would look about me to see who was speaking to me. March 6th, 1938, I went to Burlington Church and sat right where I had heard the voice so often. I had no idea of offering myself to the church when I went in, but while Elder A. B. Barham was preaching a feeling came over me. It looked to me like heaven was opened up, and the brethren and sisters appeared as angels sitting around the pulpit, and as if Elder Barham was Christ standing in the pulpit preaching. They all looked just that good to me. I tried to sing as they were singing, but was trembling so I could hardly hold the book. The next thing I knew I had the pastor, Elder Barham, by the hand, begging them to give me a home and let me live with them. The good people received me, and I was the happiest I had ever been in my life. There was a heavy burden taken from me. If they had not received me I felt I should have died. I was to be baptized the first Sunday in April, and I was rejoicing all that day, I never felt so happy before, and slept but little that night. I was not sleepy. All I could think of was how glad I would be when I could be baptized. Before I joined the church I saw there was a change in my husband, and one night as I was lying on my bed I asked the good Lord if he would go when I went to show me in some way. I had a dream that night. I dreamed all my people had turned against me, and one of my brothers who did not believe as I did had a shot-gun and was after me. He said he was tired of that kind of religion. I found myself down in the wilderness hiding from them, and hunting for my husband. I said he was going home with me—no one but him. I was made to believe that he would go in the water when I did. I did not tell him nor any one else, but I surely did watch every move he made. He grew dearer to me, and did not look like the same man. He was the most pitiful thing I ever saw. He would say, I cannot give you up, and they will not have me. But on Saturday night before the first Sunday in April he asked for a home with them, and was received. I was so happy I could hardly hold myself. The next day we were baptized with our arms locked together. Elders A. B. Barham and G. W. Hill baptized us both at the same time. I tell you I left the heaviest kind of a load in that water. I was never so happy in all my life as I was when I arose to the surface, shouting and singing, Amazing grace. I do not even remember seeing either my husband or the Elders until after I was dressed. There was a large gathering at the baptisms, which made me feel happy. Many of my relatives, including brothers, sisters, father, step-mother and others came from a distance to see me baptized. I thought they had forsaken me, and it surely did make me feel good to have them come home with

me. Elders Hill, Braham, Dross and brother Bowman and many others came from the church and we had preaching here at my home in the afternoon. I never enjoyed anything so much in my life as I did that day. I hope it will be the Lord's will for them to come again, for there is nothing in the world I enjoy more than having the brethren and sisters visit me. They feed my hungry soul, for I love their fellowship, and where they sit I want to sit, and where they stand I want to stand, and when my time comes to leave this world I want to be buried where they are buried, and, most of all, I want to meet them in that happy home above.

Remember me in your prayers.

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

(MRS.) R. G. ELGIN.

[WE welcome your letter most heartily, sister Elgin, and are certain our readers will feel drawn closely to you because of the reason of the hope within you, which you have beautifully set forth.—R. L. D.]

TIPTONVILLE, Tennessee.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending a letter written by G. M. Campbell, for your disposal. He has attempted writing it before, but never would send it. This time he gave it to me, and said to do with it as I thought best. He said he could not word it as he wished, but had a strong desire to write down what he hoped were the Lord's dealings with him, so I am sending it for your better judgment. He reads and rereads the SIGNS, and gets much comfort from it. If you think best, I would like for you to give his writing space in its columns; if not, all will be well. He is now seventy-seven years of age, but still is blessed with a clear understanding, and his greatest pleasure is to talk of the wonderful works of God, and to be with his brethren, though he is deprived of church privileges, as we live so far from a church and have no way of going, so the dear old SIGNS is indeed a welcome visitor in our home. I think it is a wonderful blessing from the hand of our Lord to read such good letters from all parts of our country. The New Year's Greeting, in the January number, is a wonderful writing. The Lord is indeed good to his own. Though we have often him forgot, his lovingkindness changes not. There are so many things to be said, but of ourselves we cannot say them or write them, nor can we think or feel them, we have to wait the Lord's appointed time. Oh how I do long for his return, when my way I can see, but I have not learned one little thing I can produce to bring him back, where I can feel him mine, though I continually try. I have experienced a very dark season, all feeling senses seem to be gone, which makes me fear that I am wrong. My neighbors are all very busy with their church work, and tell me that is the right way, and they look very strangely when I try to tell them what I believe. Full of sadness and gloom I grope along with my tangled thoughts, not knowing for sure if I have really tasted that the Lord is gracious. No one here except my family who believes the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace

alone, but when the Lord is pleased to restore again unto us the joy of his salvation we can say with Jonah, Salvation is of the Lord. I am so thankful he has hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.

I must close.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

(MRS.) LUTHER CAMPBELL.

TIPTONVILLE, Tennessee.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:—I have for a long time had a desire to write a sketch of what I hope have been the Lord's dealings with this poor old sinner, but unless the Lord is with me to uphold me it will be like myself, a complete failure, for of myself I can do nothing. To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not, so I will draw the bow at venture and beg the Lord to direct my mind.

To begin I will have to go back to my childhood days, for I learned then from those around me that all were pure and if they died before they crossed the line of accountability they were sure of heaven. So with this view of things the thought often became to me a very serious one, and at times I found myself wishing I might die before I crossed that line, or before I was twelve years old, which was supposed to be the deadline. This went on until I was twelve, and then seemingly I forgot all about it. The world got so big to me that I forgot everything but worldly pleasure. Until I was nineteen years of age I was a wild, reckless boy, when one day in May, that year, I was plowing in the field when I came to a period in my life I can never forget, nor find language to describe it. Like a thunderbolt from a clear sky, the most vicious monster I ever saw was just behind me ready to grab me and drag me down to perdition and the earth was opening to swallow me up. Just then how I did wish I had died when I was a child. I was so frightened I jumped to one side and looked back to see what it was, but saw nothing. I knew, or thought I did, that it was Satan after me for the sins I had committed. I saw clearly every sin I ever did commit, and they arose before me like mountains to crush me. Then my mourning began. As the dove, so did I mourn; as a crane, so did I chatter. My very breathing was, Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner. I would make promises to the Lord, only to break them. This added to my grief and increased my fears. No tongue can describe my anguish in those dark hours. To say life was a burden would be expressing it mildly. I tried to read the Bible, and it condemned me. I would get down on my knees and try to pray and my words would mock me, yet every breath was, Lord, have mercy on me, a poor sinner, not worthy to live and not fit to die. It seemed that every wrong action and thought of my whole life was before me, and all I ever did was sin against the just and holy God. Thus I ate my meat with bitter herbs. I got no respite from my grief in the daytime, and at night He frightened me with dreams. Finally I went and

told my mother, thinking surely she would comfort me some, and what she said was to me a parable. She said, George, they always told me the darkest hour was just before day. I got no comfort from that, but the next day, I think it was, it dawned upon me what she meant. I was having the third day chills at the time, but seldom stopped work for them, as they were very light. The next day was my chill day, and they came on me about nine a. m., and that day I had to stop work (as I thought for the last time), and I knew very little of anything until late in the afternoon. It seemed to me that my father (who was dead) had sent for me to come to him, and they told me where he was, and I started to go to him. I had to cross a creek to get there, and when I got to the creek it was very much swollen. It seemed there was a wall of water thirty feet high, and I never saw water run with such mad force as it did. It was very muddy and full of all kinds of logs and trees, and of course I saw no way of getting through it. But I had to go to my father, for he had sent for me and I had to go. So I started on, and when I went to step into it a voice called to me, and when I looked back I saw the speaker, and he said, Come back; you do not have to go there. I have gone there for you. Then I recognized the speaker as Christ. The the most beautiful light I ever saw shone all around me, and I could not help praising him for his goodness to me. I awoke with my heart overflowing with gratitude. I never felt so happy in my life; everything I could see or hear was praising his name. Then I would have given anything to have seen my mother and told her the day had dawned and the sun was shining all around. But I had to work and could not go for a week, and when I did get home I had nothing to tell. So I kept it all to myself, and told no one. I just pondered those things in my own heart.

Now this may not be the working of God with the children of grace, but it is what gave rise to my little hope that I would not exchange for all this world, for it is the dearest thing on earth to me.

There are some things from here on to where I joined the church that I would like to speak of, but this article is too lengthy already, so I will close.

Submitted in love by an old sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

GEORGE M. CAMPBELL.

RINGGOLD, Virginia.

DEAR LESTER:—For some years I have been impressed to write what I believe, and why I believe it. Going back to when I was six years of age, I would go to bed at night, cover up my head and close my eyes tight, but torment and Satan were ever before me. Every night, for a long while, I was scared nearly to death. I can see it now almost as I did then. A few years later, while about my work, I would find myself saying over and over, 'Lord, I crave to be a christian." I knew something was taking place with me, but I did not know what. One night I dreamed judgment day was at hand and I cried myself almost to

death. Papa asked why I was crying so. I told him people were coming from every direction and that it was judgment day, and I was afraid I would go to torment. Time passed on. I always had a high respect for the Old Baptists. I just felt that they were God's people. A few years later I got in much trouble. I dreamed one night of being down on the ground on my knees, praying that God might come down from heaven and speak "peace." I was going through much trouble for months, begging God for mercy; would read the Bible, but kept all this to myself. I went to Malmaison once during this time, and it seemed that every word the preacher spoke was directly to me. It was the first sermon I ever really heard in all my life, and, oh, I cannot describe my feelings. Later I attended a Union Meeting. Oh, how I was blessed to feast on God's precious love for me! I just wanted the meeting to continue on and on, preaching and singing, sweeter than any I had ever known. After this I went on for a year or two in great trouble, when suddenly some one spoke, saying, Your sins are forgiven. Oh, I felt like shouting aloud and everything seemed to be praising God. I was in the house, but my husband was out in the garden. It was the happiest day of my life, and I thought I would tell my husband, but soon felt I was afraid I was deceived and kept silent, and did not want any one to know about it. In a few days I was doubting and meditating over my past life, when this hymn came to my mind:

"Come, thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing thy grace!
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise."

I looked up into the sky and saw streams of mercy extending from heaven to earth, and I felt then that I would never doubt again. I would not tell my father, as I was afraid he knew me too well, so I decided to write to you, as you had joined the church only a few years before. To my surprise, you wrote Papa and inclosed my letter. At the next meeting I tried to tell the church what I hoped the Lord had done for my poor soul, and they received me. I was baptized at the next meeting, and have never regretted it. It is a sweet home to me.

"Father, I am weak and sinful,
Ever prone to go astray;
Like a wayward child of error,
I so often lose my way."

If I have any religion it is a gift of God. I tried to keep it all to myself; did not want any one to know my thoughts, but something said to me, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." I realize I do not live as I ought to, but it is my desire to treat every one right, and I want the good will of every one. I have been made to pray for people I never knew, and have often tried to pray for everybody the whole world over, and try to pray that God will lead my children in the strait and narrow path that leads to eternal life, and give them a desire to do what is right. Eighteen years ago I was in poor health; would have terrible dreams and would almost be afraid to

go to sleep. One night I dreamed of being in a place with many people who had wings and were flying around. I soon saw an opening where they were flying out, and I flew out and everything was as white as snow, and great throngs of people were all dressed in white. This gave me great comfort.

I would like to leave this on record, and perhaps some of my children would like to read it, if you wish to publish it in the SIGNS. I realize I have now reached the top of the hill and am going down the steeps of time, but I wanted to write this.

Fondly,

SISTER.

THE foregoing has been sent to me by my one and only sister in the flesh, Mrs. W. L. Ferguson, and well do I remember the occasion when I received the good news contained in the letter to which she refers. My very soul was so overjoyed that I burst forth singing aloud,

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost."

R. LESTER DODSON.

SCHOOLFIELD, Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing an experience and an obituary of Rhoda Shields Sparks. Please publish them in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES when you have time and space. She was a worthy old soul, and was liked by all who knew her. Elder R. Lester Dodson was well acquainted with her.

Yours truly,

H. C. ALEXANDER.

AUGUST, 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN JONES AND GOLD:—Since hearing you both preach at Mountain Springs and tell how a child of God feels after being relieved of his burden, I have felt impressed to write some of my feelings. Brother Jones, I have not had a long experience like I have heard my mother and others tell about, and it makes me feel I am not worthy to have a home with them and call them brother and sister. I was reared by Missionary parents, and in Sunday Schools, and thought everything they did was right. I knew nothing of the Primitive Baptists. In the year 1876 I was going to the spring for water, when I heard, as I thought, some one speak to me, and say, If you die as you are you will go to torment. I began to cry. I looked around, but saw no one. I did not think of it being the Lord. I tried to forget it, but at times I would find myself studying about it. That same summer the denomination to which my father and mother belonged held a protracted meeting, lasting two weeks, and my father had us go every day. My older sisters and brothers began to go to the mourners' bench and make professions. I thought I could not see them go and leave me with the thought of going to torment. The preacher was telling me that, too, so I went up. Somehow this thought and trougle left me, and I thought I was as good as any of them, so August 15th, 1876, I joined them. At times I would think I was all right and would rejoice, at other times I would dread death. I went on in this way until November 6th,

1894. I began to be dissatisfied and to think they were wrong, and came out from them. I began to see the Primitive Baptists and to think they were right, and as my husband was one of them I went with him to hear them regularly. I began to love them, and soon saw I had been at the wrong place, and had not had the change I should have had. I got in so much trouble I did not know what to do. I would read experiences of others and wonder why I did not feel as they did. I would go in the closet, where no one would see me, and try in my poor weak way to pray. At times my prayers seemed to go no higher than my head, at other times I would feel better. I was in so much trouble I said to my husband, I do not know what will become of me; I thought I was a christian, and had belonged to the church so long, and now I see I am nothing but a poor lost sinner. I thought my husband would pray for me, but instead of that he clapped his hands, and said, I am so glad to hear you talk that way. I thought surely he had turned against me. I would try to ask the Lord to make the way plain before me. I was in this trouble for a long time, but finally it passed away to some extent, but I cannot tell when nor how. I hear people say that God's people know when and where their burden left them, but, brother Jones, right here I am left, for I cannot tell when nor where mine left me. I only know I am not as I once was, for if I know my heart I do love the Baptists, whom I once scorned. I want to be with them, but feel so little, so unworthy. I thought I never could go to them, for I had nothing to tell them. I thought they wanted a long experience, and that I did not have, yet I believed they were right and the only true church. I would read the Bible to see if I could find some comfort. In John iii. 8, I found, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." This gave me some comfort. In another place I found, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." This gave me more comfort, for I love the Baptists, but whether or not I love them in the right way is hard to know. I went several times thinking I would offer myself to the church, but when the door was opened I would keep my seat. I thought I was not fit to say brother or sister, and they would not have me, but oh how I wanted to go. I could not hold myself still. I went on in this way until the first Saturday in September, 1895, when I went before the church at Malmaison and told a little of what I have written here, and was received. I felt more like shouting when they received me than I ever did in my life. Th next day, when I was baptized, my ears filled with water so I could not hear the preaching. I thought it was because I was not fit to be there. They were that way until after dark, when trouble began with me again, and is still with me.

When I commenced writing this I thought I would send it at once, but

when I read it over I decided it was not any experience and if the Baptists saw it they would not have fellowship for me, so decided I would lay it away for the children to read when I am gone.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

RHODA SHIELDS.

(*See obituary on page 260.*)

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST HOME, INC.

SALISBURY, MARYLAND.

IN order that those who are not familiar with the fact that we have a HOME for Old School or Primitive Baptists, I am writing to give them my opinion of it and the conditions which prevail there.

This Home is situated in one of the most productive areas of our country. It is within thirty miles of the Atlantic Ocean, and sea food of verious kinds is plentiful. The climate is comparatively mild throughout the year. Our Family residing there live as one happy group, as if born together; in fact, more so, because they are born of God, regenerated, and live by the word of God. And when one visits the Home there is a feeling of security, peace and love as they mingle with those dear saints of the living God. Their hope is one and each one is indoctrinated with the gospel of God our Savior. I desire that our Southern and Western people shall become better acquainted with this "haven of rest" which has been established in this section of our country. It is a "haven" indeed, and while not separated from the outside world, yet, in a sense it is, because they all understand the doctrine of "Salvation by grace" in a mutual and spiritual understanding, and many visitors who frequently call to see their friends residing there wonder at the contentment and happiness among them. This description of those residing in the Home is not all, for on the outside dwell a people of the same faith and order, widely distributed in an area for many miles of territory. There are at least six churches within those bounds close to the Home and any one can attend meetings every Sunday somewhere if facilities are provided.

If there be any of our faith and order who desire to enter the Home through meeting the requirements as set forth in our Constitution and By-laws, we will heartily welcome them. Again, if there be any who do not need this "haven of rest" for themselves, but who have a plenty of this world's goods, they certainly would do well to Will a portion of their estate to THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST HOME, INC., (which is the official title of the organization) for the purpose of increasing our Endowment Fund.

We will be glad to send any one who desires it a copy of our Constitution and By-laws, together with a picture of the Home. Address,

JOHN B. MILLER,
Secretary Board of Trustees,
Newark, Delaware.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1939.

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GENESIS XLI. 16.

"God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace."

In making this attempt to write an editorial for the comfort of the Zion of our God, we hesitated, because of a barren heart, and the words, "Peace that passeth understanding," came into our mind, and in searching for these words, the phrase of our subject has centered sufficiently to give us some thought to express to stir up the pure mind of our kindred in Christ, the readers of the Signs of the Times.

We note in reading the Scripture relative to our text, that Pharaoh was troubled because God was working in him as the head of the land which he was to deal with to bring about the things he had purposed, and Pharaoh was given a dream that none of all his realm could interpret, and the poor prisoner had to be brought from the prison, one who had been forgotten for two years, and he could answer Pharaoh, and testify to the truth of God, and as he began he said, "It is not in me," and then declared the words of our text, before he heard Pharaoh's dream. After hearing the dream, and giving the interpretation, Pharaoh's heart was moved to appoint Joseph head over all the land of Egypt, and as Pharaoh received the realities of his dream he had the answer of peace that Joseph declared God would give, and as we were worrying, and these were brought to mind, we had an answer of peace in our mortal flesh, that caused us to feel to make the effort to write. The relations of the work of God, with Joseph in Egypt, and Israel with all his household, and their bondage for four hundred years, and their deliverance were, in the purpose of God, in the dream of Pharaoh, and all the peace Pharaoh enjoyed was the satisfaction and preservation of the natural man, and he could consume the treasures laid up with honor to himself. We do not infer that God did not give grace in Christ Jesus for this Pharaoh (king of Egypt), but God dealt with him to bring about and manifest his purpose relative to his chosen nation, in whose loins the seed of the woman was ordained to bear his Son, that should give a peace that passeth all understanding. We must

call attention to God's teaching Joseph, and the bitter experiences he passed through, that caused him to say, "It is not in me." Our experience has given us the realization that we are not sufficient unto these things, but God is able to give, and prepare us, that we can come to his beloved with glad tidings of peace, and point out the way of salvation. God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform, and we are made to see his works among the sons of men, and all our afflictions and trials bring us to realize that our efficiency is of God, and all our strength and wisdom are of him.

The dream given to Pharaoh was enough to give an unrest to his soul, that he could not rest, and every refuge within his grasp was sought, and no peace in any of them, but God's prisoner (Joseph the prisoner of the Lord) must come to the appointment of God to tell Pharaoh what God shall do to him. Joseph was sent down to Egypt to make ready for the famine that was to come to all people of the earth, that the fertility of Egypt could bring the necessary relief for the natural man, but life to the natural man was bringing the spiritual (the elect of God) into bondage, and we note for man to be wise, knowing good and evil, was death, and involved the Son of God in the bonds of God's purpose, in which he stood as a Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world. The Son of God, being God's only begotten, was the only one from whom help could come to bring salvation for poor sinners, and upon him God laid the burden of our guilt, that he should have the preeminence over all worlds, principalities and powers, and deliver his own that were taken captive by the devil. Jesus could not return to glory with his Father until he had paid to the utmost farthing. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." —John viii. 36. Our understanding is that God's infinite wisdom embraced all things as present with him in the beginning, and in his counsel every sinner that Jesus saved by the shedding of his blood was remembered, or given an inheritance, that should be reserved in heaven, and when the time appointed comes for a sinner to be born of an incorruptible seed Jesus quickens him into life, then the warfare begins. We see the sinner writhing in his own blood, and no rest until the peace that God has given him in Christ is revealed to him by Jesus Christ. "All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him."—Luke x. 22. The revelation of Jesus Christ to a poor sinner brings to him the meaning of the name Jesus, and he is brought to the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and rejoicing is begun, and he rejoices in Christ Jesus, and has no confidence in the flesh. (Phil. iii. 3.) We are now viewing God's teachings among the sons of men during the patriarchal day, when God distinguished between individuals, and manifested his purpose, which pointed to greater things, and those so

plainly set forth are Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau and Joseph and his brethren, and many others, and how his blessings were bestowed, and understanding given that others could not receive, and each one testifies the same way. By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he, being dead, yet speaketh. (Heb. xi. 4.) Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. (Rom. ix. 13; Mal. i. 2, 3.) The Lord led Jacob about and instructed him, and there was no strange god with him. (Deut. xxxii. 9-12.)

Joseph's dreams, given him by the God of purpose, aroused the ire of his brothers, which caused them to be moved in strong resentment, that they sought to do away with him, and get clear of the thought of having to bow down to him according to his dream, but God was working his will, and as they were working evil God was working good, and when Jacob was brought down to Egypt he was given an answer of peace.

All these things we have recalled testify, according to holy writ, of God's work among the sons of men, and we feel to fear in attempting to write or speak lest we should come short of speaking words of sound doctrine and be an offense to the church of God. The sufferings of the people of God, and answers of peace as recorded that bear witness with the sufferings we have had give us strength, and we are hoping for the answer of peace that passeth all understanding, which is given by the God of heaven, that embraces soul, body and spirit. Then this poor vile sinner will be saved from the condemnation of death, and be glorified at the right hand of God, with his Son, to sing praises unto him eternally.

We are brought to the close of our correspondence for the year of our Lord 1939, and we are reflecting in our mind the communicated truth as we are made to believe, and as much as we can possibly recall we have not intentionally offended either in word or doctrine, and we earnestly desire that our readers carefully look over us for the good of Zion, that we may strive to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace. The answer of peace we are enjoying, that we have not written, having a selfish motive, that we might take honors in the flesh, but to uphold the truth.

Our text we feel is one of strong sentiment to us at this time of distress and bloodshed over all the world, and we are hoping God will give us an answer to all our distresses: PEACE. We cannot have peace until God lays low the hearts of these wicked rulers and makes them fear before him, then it will not be the binding of this or that treaty, but to him that has all power is the one to whom they will have to give account, and not to man. Our desires are that God will give us a meek and quiet spirit and exercise our heart as he did Joseph, and give us to realize more and more that all our help must come from him.

C. W. V.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANKS.

In each copy of this issue of the Signs of the Times we are inclosing a subscription blank for the convenience of our subscribers in renewing their own subscriptions and in sending the names of new subscribers, and we appeal to each of our friends to do what they can toward helping us build up our subscription list.

The date on the little pink slip bearing your address, which you will find either on your paper or the wrapper in which it comes to you, signifies to what date your subscription is paid. If your subscription has expired, or is about to expire, please send on your renewal if you can spare it, but if you are not at the present time in a position to renew your subscription, but hope to be later on, do not order your paper stopped, for we would much rather continue sending the paper to you until such time as you are able to pay for it than to take your name from our list.

When sending in renewals be sure and give us the exact name and address of the person to whom the paper is now coming, so we will not give the credit to the wrong person.

We sincerely thank all who in the past have in any way aided us in continuing the publication of the Signs of the Times, and hope they will continue such aid in the future, and do what they can in the way of sending us new subscriptions and renewing their own.

J. E. B. & CO.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by sister Nellie Palmer.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, Bowdoinham, Sagadahoc County, Maine, September 8th, 9th and 10th, 1939, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greetings with love in the Lord.

Dearly Beloved:—At this time we are expected to speak of the goodness, love and mercy of our God, and talk of his power, but our state of mind has been forcibly represented in the words, To him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have. In nature's darkness we hear and see nothing of a spiritual nature, but there comes a time in God's providence when we feel our eyes have been opened and we do see in a small degree the wonderful works of Almighty God. We bask in his smiles and feel he has remembered our iniquities and washed away our sins, by the shedding of the precious blood of the dear Lamb of God. Liberty at times is given us to speak of these precious truths, then the liberty seems to be taken away and we grope in vain, and feel, Where is the blessedness I knew when first I loved the Lord? We are made to stand still, like the children of Israel at the Red Sea, hedged in, as it were, then we are made to cry unto our God, plead and wait. The lines, "Thou shalt not look nor plead in vain," seem sweet to repeat, but we know and feel we cannot approach nor sit at the King's table

until he brings us in. Like Mephibosheth, we are lame on both feet, no possible way to get there. We know the table is loaded with the precious things necessary for life, but beyond our reach. Oh why will he not take us in and let us eat as of yore and feast upon the word? We can only cry in anguish of soul, Lord, help me. Then he tells us, I am thy God, I will still give thee aid, but you are my child, my power is made manifest in sending destruction into the soul. I am God, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. You shall again sit at the table, and we know while sitting there our deformities are cured. The lame feet (unsightly sins) are swallowed up by the entry into the divine presence of our God. Yes, we must pass through the fire and under the cloud, they were the guides and protection of the children of Israel while passing along the perilous journey. No, the Red Sea did not engulf them, neither will it us, the children of his own right hand planting, but we feel we shall pass over on dry land and our song will always be, The Lord hath triumphed gloriously. The horse and his rider hath he cast into the sea. Yes, the devil and all his train, who have pursued us so faithfully and sorely pressed us during our sojourn here, will be swallowed up, and on that blissful shore our song will ever be, Not unto us, but unto thy great and holy name be glory forever. Oh had we the tongue of the learned, that we could sing the song in clearer and sweeter tones, but we can only touch on the things so precious to the soul. It seems the treasure is so deeply buried it cannot be brought to the surface. No, we cannot divulge the sweet. The secret of the Lord is with his people and he will show unto them his covenant. We cannot reveal the yearnings and desires of our hearts to our brethren, but are alone with our God; to him, and him alone, we look for help, strength and deliverance. We have nowhere else to flee; no sanctuary, Lord, but thee.

These lines have been written after much labor, fear and trembling. We will hope they have been of the Lord, and may he keep us in the right way, even if it be under the rod, and all his work shall be to his praise. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

C. W. VAUGHN, Mod.
SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

(Written by Elder H. J. Bird.)

The Pocatalico Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Hopewell Church, Kanawha County, West Virginia, September 8th, 9th and 10th, 1939, to the several associations and meetings with whom we correspond, and to all of like precious faith, sendeth love and christion salutation in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:--Once more it has fallen to my unworthy lot to address you, and since it is our custom and endeavor to send something abroad among the household of faith in the way of a Circular Letter, that you may know more fully where we stand doctrinally, and as we see the time approaching, and spiritual darkness gath-

ering thick and fast, oh how we tremble before him who is the Judge of the quick and the dead, for when we begin to examine ourselves, according to his holy word, and according to our own experience, we find that we are utterly lacking in ability to touch upon the sublime principles of doctrine believed generally by our people, our poverty is such, our destitution is so great, and we are so carnally minded, we are so blind, that except the Lord mercifully leads we know that we cannot even behold these gracious truths, much less declare them unto you.

Dear brethren, we wish at this time to call your attention to the miracle of Jesus as record is given in St. Luke, fifth chapter, first to tenth verses. To conserve space we omit to give full record of the reading here, but humbly ask that each of you read this divine record. May the Lord so lead that we offer no violence to what we have called your attention.

"And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret, and saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets. And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship." Oh that we be given to perceive some of the beauties here declared. Revealed, and yet hidden. Hidden from the wise and prudent, revealed unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. Now this Jesus was verily God manifest in the flesh, so when the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, this desire could not have grown out of man's nature, but then, even as now, could only have existed in their hearts as the direct work of God, and even as his work, like him, is perfect, it led them to the right source to hear, even to Jesus, one who has heavenly authority and capability to teach. And again, before they could hear it was necessary that they be given the hearing ear, or have the eyes of their understanding enlightened, which only is in the providence and measure of his grace to give. Jesus spake as never man spake, hence when he sat down and taught them out of the ship, like on the occasion when he (Christ Jesus) seeing the multitudes went up into a mountain, and when he was set his disciples came unto him, and he opened his mouth and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven, etc. (Matt. v. 1-3.) Him being thus set is proof positive that the Son of man came not to be ministered unto (as though we could do for him, or help his cause), but to minister, and give his life a ransom for many. He, Jesus, your Elder Brother, your Redeemer, your Prophet, Priest and King, your Advocate with God, certainly was, or is, set to the rise and fall of many in Israel, "And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship." "And when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying." Oh, beloved, this bespeaks of the glory of

his condescension, his pity, his everlasting love, his compassion. Oh what would our lot and portion be without him being set in mercy to serve and minister (do for us what we cannot do for ourselves)? Yea, even in matchless mercy to visit men of low degree, even me, who am the chief of sinners. So when he taught them, the efficacy, the effect just extends to all the vessels of mercy, to all of the chosen race, for they shall all be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. "He opened his mouth, and taught them, saying." This opening of his mouth, he being verily God and verily man, his mouth is a mouth of wisdom, capable of speaking peace to a poor burdened soul; yea, even to the poor thief on the cross. And while he was thus preaching his own everlasting gospel to the comfort of his poor and afflicted people, I want to say that when the gospel is preached to-day in our midst it is but the gracious manifestation, or evidence, of the opening of his mouth, for when the gospel is preached it is only the voice of God in the power of his holy Spirit. He changes not. He is yesterday, to-day and forever the same.

Now when he had left speaking he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a draught. This brought the confession from Simon's mouth that they had toiled all night and taken nothing, nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. O, brethren, how we feel fellowship for Simon in this toiling all night and taking nothing. Night indeed, when his gracious presence is not felt, nothing taken, nothing accomplished without him. The work is his, he will perform. At his word the net was (and is) let down, and O beloved, the miracle of his power, the net brake because of so great a catch. The work of the Lord (not Simon's), so much so that both ships were filled to the gracious extent that they began to sink. His church being represented here as being filled in both Jew and Gentile nations, as the sovereign work of God, and not the work of man, overwhelmed in the fullness of his work, and the fullness of his love, overcome (began to sink) with his fullness until they, his people, could hold no more of his everlasting love. So overwhelmingly full is the measure of this glorious revelation that we are not amazed at Simon, saying when he fell down at Jesus' knees (that is where all of like faith fall on every such occasion), Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord. The gracious revelation of Jesus as the love wonder of heaven and earth in the fullness of his power and grace, always has the effect of uncovering our sinful condition, and when our full soul can hold no more we, like Simon of old, confess our sins. I hope I know this fellowship of suffering and rejoicing by experience. If I do not, I am only an impostor in your midst.

I have only brokenly hinted, and feel to fear that I have missed the substance altogether. May you be given charity to cover my many imperfections.

Grace, mercy and truth be unto you who fear his name. Farewell.

Submitted in love.

J. C. HAMMOND, Mod.

H. J. BIRD, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, of Bowdoinham, Sagadahoc County, Maine, September 8th, 9th and 10th, 1939, to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We hope we are duly thankful to our heavenly Father, who by his lovingkindness has seen fit to permit us to meet again in an association. Your correspondence was gladly received, bringing joy to our hearts with the assurance that peace and love still abound among them whom the Lord has called from nature's darkness into his marvelous light. The ministering brethren (Elders Vaughn and Dodson) preached Jesus as the way, the truth and the life; the only way of salvation to comfort the heart of a poor sinner. The churches of this Association are living in love and peace, each esteeming others better than self, claiming no righteousness of their own, but ascribing all honor and glory to God and our Savior Jesus Christ, through whose blood we are cleansed of all our iniquities. This is our hope (with all our unworthiness).

The Lord willing, the next session of our Association will be held with the Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Lincoln County, Maine, the Friday, Saturday and Sunday before the second Monday in September, 1940.

C. W. VAUGHN, Mod.

SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

The Pocatalico Old School, or Primitive Baptist Association, to the several associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greetings.

DEAR CHILDREN OF THE MOST HIGH GOD:—We have once again, through the mercy of God, been blessed to meet as an Association, where we have been refreshed, strengthened and comforted by the gracious messages and tidings from the holy mountain of Zion, as your messengers came to us so laden down with the good things of the kingdom. The love and fellowship that did so abound throughout this meeting bespeak of the wonders of his grace in his perfect reign in his own kingdom. Truly his name is great in Israel. This meeting will long be remembered, and cherished in our memory. May your messengers be directed into our midst again, for truly we desire a continuance of your correspondence and fellowship. Grace, mercy and truth be unto you. Amen.

J. C. HAMMOND, Mod.

H. J. BIRD, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

"A friend," N. Y., $2; Everett R. Kinney, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Val Werner, N. J., $1.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

In humble submission we bow to the will of God, who doeth all things well, who saw fit to remove from the walks of life our beloved brother, WILLIAM ALFORD SANDERS, who was born December 18th, 1878, and died August 19th, 1939, aged 60 years, 8 months and 1 day. Brother Sanders was married to Miss Lela Robertson July 23rd, 1906, and to this union were born eleven children, seven boys and four girls. Nine of the children survive. Together with his family, he left a host of friends and relatives to mourn his demise. He was a loving husband, a faithful father and a loyal citizen. All was done for him that could be. The best medical skill that could be obtained failed to reach his case. Surely the Lord called, Child, come home. Though his suffering was intense, he bore it with the patience of Job, accepting the statement of the great prophet: The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Brother Sanders was strict, honest and upright in all of his dealings with his fellow-man, calm and sedate in his walk before his family. Having joined the Old Baptist Church in 1906, his place of abode at once became the home for the Old Baptists. His wife, though not a member, shared the enjoyment with him, and was ever ready to receive and care for this peculiar company that her beloved husband loved so dearly. Brother Sanders was a strong believer in salvation by grace, the absolute predestination of all things and that all things work together for good to them that love God, having no confidence in the flesh. We, the Salem Church, feel the hurt of our loss, for he was so faithful in duty, so devout in his views, yet gentle, never trying to force his opinion upon any one. We would say to the bereaved, Let us accept our loss in good faith and trust that it is proven to and for his eternal gain, that he is now basking in the sweetness of God's love, singing the song that no man can learn, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. There awaiting the last call, when the trumpet of God shall sound and our Lord return the second time without sin unto salvation, bringing his saints (spirits) with him, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, to meet our Lord in the air to become reunited with their spirits that returned unto God who gave them when death was swallowed up in victory, there to reign forever with the Lord, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.

After a few weak remarks by the writer, the body was laid to rest in the Teknacana grave-yard to await the Lord's time.

W. A. LITTLE.

Sister RHODA SHIELDS SPARKS was born March 27th, 1856, to Willis Patterson and Ann Johnson Evans Patterson, who preceded her to the grave several years. She also had four brothers and two sisters who preceded her to the grave several years, namely: William, Willis, John and Joe Si Patterson, Mary Elizabeth Creasy and Sarah Jane Coleman. She leaves two sisters to mourn their loss: Lucy and Martha Patterson, two step-daughters: Mrs. I. J. Finch, of Danville, Va., and Mrs. N. H. Ferguson, of Charlottesville, Va., with many other relatives and friends, but we mourn not as those without hope, for we truly believe she is resting in the arms of the dear Savior, the One she loved and trusted. She was faithful in all things pertaining to the Master's house. Surely she was a mother in Israel, sound in the faith of salvation by grace and grace alone. She was a firm believer in

the Primitive Baptist doctrine, and lived a very consistent member until her death. She was a woman of very pleasant disposition, never speaking evil of others, always trying to build up and encourage those in trouble and ever ready to lend a helping hand to all she saw in need. She loved her church, and was always there unless providentially hindered. Many times I have known her to go to her church meetings and hear the joyful sound from the preacher's lips when she should have been in bed with a doctor by her side. She was always glad to have her brethren, sisters and friends come to see her. She was a good entertainer, and brought up interesting subjects, which made people feel welcome and glad they came. Her sweet voice is now ringing in my ears, saying, "Come to see me," which she often invited me to do.

Her first husband was James J. Shields, to whom she was married February 16th, 1891, who preceded her to the grave twenty-nine years. She was married to her second husband, A. M. Sparks, in the year 1917. He passed away nine years ago and left her to fight the cruel battles of life alone. But the God she loved fought her battles for her, and smoothed all her rough and crooked paths. She joined the Missionary Baptists August 15th, 1876, but not being satisfied with the doctrine they taught, and her experience condemning it, at her own request she was excluded November 6th, 1894. On the first Sunday in September, 1895, she went before the church at Malmaison and told a little of her experience, was received, and the next day was baptized by Elder McDowell. When they started to raise money to build a church-house on the Bradley Road sister Sparks was ever busy, helping in every way she could. She lived so far from the Malmaison Church that when the Danville Church was built, in 1916, she moved her membership to the Danville Church, where she remained a faithful member until her death. She suffered heart trouble and shortness of breath for two years, then was confined to her bed for seven weeks, during which time she had a stroke of paralysis, which deprived her of the use of the right side of her body. On the morning of March 13th 1939, the death angel bore her away to that sweet resting-place where sickness, sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more. She has crossed over on the other side and is basking in the sunshine of love. Her stay on earth was 82 years, 11 months and 16 days.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder W. R. Dodd, Moderator of the Staunton River Association, at the home of her step-daughter, Mrs. I. J. Finch, in Danville, Va. Pall-bearers were members of the Primitive Baptist Church. Her body was laid to rest in Leemont Cemetery, Danville, Va., to await that resurrection morn, when the dead in Christ shall be raised first to ever be with the Lord.

First, be it Resolved, that we, the Church of Danville, while in conference, bow in humble submission to God's just and holy will, and we express our deep sympathy to her loved ones.

Second, that we ever cherish in our memory her faithfulness, which she set before us as a bright and shining light. We deeply deplore her death, and she will be greatly missed. Her seat will never be filled.

Third, that a copy of these Resolutions be sent to the bereaved family, a copy be spread upon the Minutes of the Church and a copy published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and *Zion's Landmark*.

Humbly submitted.

J. E. HERNDON, Moderator,
HENRY C. ALEXANDER, Church Clerk.

LUCY E. BROME was born in Bridgeville, New York, January 21st, 1865, and departed this life August 14th, 1939, aged 74 years, 6 months and 23 days. For the past few years she had been in failing health, and sixteen weeks before her death she suffered a fractured hip, which led to serious complications and resulted in her death. She was united in marriage to Miner C. Brome in the year 1885, who preceded her in death. To this union four children were born: Mrs. Nettie P. Marion, at whose home she resided; Harrison C., who died June 4th, 1914; George H. and Kenneth P. Brome, all of Los Angeles. She has two sisters and one brother living: Mrs. George Norman, of Los Angeles; Mrs. E. R. Vial, of La Grange, Ill.; John Hoyt, of Downers Grove, Ill. When a young woman she united with the New Vernon Primitive Baptist Church, of New York State. In the year 1906 she moved to Illinois, and in 1910 she came to Los Angeles, and joined Liberty Church, by relation, where she remained a devoted and faithful member. She was possessed with a meek and humble spirit, and endured hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

Written by her pastor,

IVAN P. HINDALL.

SISTER PHOEBE A. HORTON, wife of Hiram T. Horton, passed away April 5th, 1939. She was born June 26th, 1854, a daughter of Jeremiah Dolson and Susan Ten Eyck, and was one of a family of fourteen children, of whom six brothers survive, all but one members of the Old School Baptist Church with her: Daniel J., George W., Charles G., Isaac T., Ira T. and C. M. Dolson. Of her immediate family three daughters and one son survive, together with fourteen grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren. Sister Horton was baptized October 27th, 1895, by Elder William L. Beebe, and her seat at all meetings was filled until a short time before she left us. She was chosen Clerk, and filled that office well. She was called to endure many hard trials uncommon to many of us mortals, and as severe as they were she was never heard to complain or feel her God was unjust. She was always interested in her brethren's welfare, and was a true peace-maker, and many times said, There my best friends, my kindred, dwell, there God my Savior reigns.

Her funeral was held in the Warwick meetinghouse, where a large gathering had assembled, and Elder R. Lester Dodson spoke wonderful words of comfort to us. Her casket was laden with beautiful flowers. Her brethren of the Warwick Church will miss her much, but we feel, and are assured, she is among that number of whom it is said, For we know that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. May that God who is too wise to err, to good to be unkind, reconcile us to his most holy will.

Her niece,

MINNIE E. HYATT.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT.

BE it known that

WHEREAS, it has pleased the Almighty God to remove from our midst by death our beloved brother WILLIAM ALFORD SANDERS, we, Salem Church of the Primitive Baptist faith and order, bow in humble submission to his holy and righteous will.

WHEREAS, the Salem Old School Baptist Church has enjoyed the unselfish services of this faithful member, we do now fully realize our great loss, yet trust it to be his eternal gain. So be it

RESOLVED, that as a token of our love and esteem for our departed brother,

who for twenty-seven years was a member in regular attendance, and as a record of our love to his memory, be it further

RESOLVED, that these Resolutions be spread upon the face of our Minutes, a copy be sent to the family of the deceased, and a copy sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Done in Conference, by order of Salem Church, on Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1939.

W. O. BEENE, Moderator.

W. A. LITTLE, Church Clerk.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, &c. REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.

Of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, published monthly, at Middletown, N. Y., for October 1st, 1939.

State of New York, County of Orange, ss.:

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Gilbert Beebe, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the owner of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that the following is to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24th, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse side of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publishers, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publishers, J. E. Beebe & Company, Middletown, N. Y.; Editor: Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.

2. The owner is, Gilbert Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagers and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent. or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear on the books of the company, but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the corporation for whom such trustee is acting is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stocks, bonds or other securities than as so stated by him.

GILBERT BEEBE, Owner.

Sworn to and ascribed before me this 17th day of October, 1939.

(Seal) E. E. CONKLING.

(My commission expires March, 1941.)

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder D. E. Robinson pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

CHURCH MEETING PLACE CHANGED.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets each first and third Sunday at eleven o'clock a. m. at 2407½ Main Street, Dallas, Texas, and on Saturday before each first Sunday at 2:30 p. m. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Mod., pro. tem.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church holds meetings the fourth Sunday of each month at 1026 East Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Meeting begins at 10:30 a. m., dismisses for lunch and reconvenes at 2 o'clock p. m. Meeting days have been changed from the first to the fourth Sunday of each month. No Saturday or night meetings.

BURLIE HALL, Pastor
W. H. CAVE, Ass't Pastor.
(MRS.) H. B. CURLIE, Church Clerk

WE are anxious to obtain one or more copies of the latest Minutes of every sound Old School Baptist Association throughout the United States. If our readers will send them to us at 41 Addison Avenue, Rutherford, New Jersey, same will be very much appreciated.

R. LESTER DODSON.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 107. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1939. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PSALMS XLI. 1, 2.

"BLESSED is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies."

Recently it was my privilege to hear one of those fellows who are saying lo here and lo there, use this particular Scripture as a basis for his money begging. Of course, as was to be expected, he took quite a bit of cash out of town. But I wondered if he did not leave town as destitute of the knowledge as to who it was under consideration, as when he arrived. Furthermore, I wondered if he was even one of the poor under notice. At least, he did not have the fruit, because one of those who have the fruit will not beg money in the name of doing work for the Lord. But we should never question anything that is said unless we can give something better. I wondered if I knew anything better, and, if so, did I know just what application to make of this Scripture? As I contemplated the wonderful display of sovereign grace, in the salvation of the dear children of God, I was made to rejoice that I even had, as I hope, a hope in this matchless consideration of the poor. The longer I live and the more I am made to see the corruption of this natural man, the more I am made to see what a high and complete consideration this was. The blessed character under consideration is none other than Jesus Christ our Savior. We would not speak of him being blessed as the Lord God from heaven, because, as him there would be none to bless him, as he is as old as God the Father, having been from everlasting to everlasting. But as the man Christ Jesus, we love to feel that he was blessed of the Father to come in the fulfilling of his will. "And I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say

unto Zion, Thou art my people."—Isaiah li. 16. In speaking of his work on earth, he says that he came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him (John vi. 38), and thus we see that in that sense he had to be blessed to perform the work he was sent to do. In further confirming this he says, Of myself I can do nothing (John v. 30), and, My Father doeth the work (John xiv. 10), and, I live by him (John vi. 57). What about considering the poor? And who are the poor? And in what way did Jesus remember them? And how and to what extent were they poor? Yes, dear children of God, he has most graciously remembered thee. He beheld you in your sins even before there was any of you. Here is one of the sure things about the covenant of grace: that it was ordered in all things and sure before the world began. Determination is not worth anything unless the determinant has a full knowledge and control of all things that are to transpire in the time that his covenant is to be brought into perfection. Thus, we run into the grand doctrine of predestination here, as elsewhere when we go to talk or write of the mercy of God. It is not so much a hobby as some of our enemies would have others believe, but it is the backbone of the whole scheme of salvation. To say that this consideration of the poor could come about and there be some power other than God Almighty determining things, certainly is a poor comfort to God's children. This poor that our text has inclosed in it want a sure doctrine. They are so poor that they would not dare leave any part of the salvation of their destitute souls to chance or works. Brethren, I believe here is a good place to say that these poor are not so afraid of making their God the author of sin that they are continually apologizing for his actions. He has done certain things, and will continue to do so, (and all by determination) and has set the bounds of all people in the same way. Not only has he considered us while we were dead in sins, but he is at it now. Some people have the idea that he does not remember us when we get in a poor state after regeneration. If such a dose of legalism was true, then our text would have to read that he is blessed when he remembers the rich, or those who are able to work in favor with him. Poor old Job would have been in an awful plight if the Lord had only considered him when he was in good condition. But listen, my dear readers, Job was a very poor man. "Oh that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat." "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him."—Job xxiii. 3, 8, 9. Do you ever get in this condition, precious brethren? Ah, yes, more that way than any other way, I hear you lament. If this was the heritage of the children of God what a dismal scene it would be. What would be the outcome of such a condition that you could not find him? Do you suppose you could ever find him while in this terrible conflict of soul? O, dear little ones, how

poor we mortals are. We do not know where he is. We are continually looking for him whom our soul loveth, but as long as we are looking in our ability to find him he is hid from us. Does God do a good work of hiding from his creatures? He hid Jesus from Herod, which is a figure of the natural man, and the natural abilities of man have never found him out yet, and never will. But has God forgot to be gracious to poor old Job in the extremity of his case? Oh no, he considers him, and teaches him of his loving remembrance. Let us look in on the poor destitute fellow and see if we find our own travel, our own hopes and our own deliverances. "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."—Job xxiii. 10. Ofttimes, dear tried soul, he is hid from you, but he considers you as his sheep and he knows where you are. We cannot consider him, only as he gives us grace to do so, but his love and care of his people are based upon the righteousness of himself. As to who are the poor, we find them spoken of all through the Bible. They are the children of God. They are that number that cannot be numbered by the enumeration of man. They constitute the bride of Jesus. Will he ever fail to take cognizance of his bride, that was given him in the covenant of redemption? If so, then his agreement is indeed a legal covenant, and will certainly fail, because we are not able, and never can be able, to perform any satisfactory work. They are not chosen for numerical strength or righteousness, but in him before the world began. The number is so definite that men nor devils cannot add to nor substract from it. (See 2 Samuel xxiii. 5.) To be sure the degree of being poor may vary with God's children. Some of them are dealt with in one way and some in another way, yet all by the Spirit, and for the good of them and his glory. Seemingly, the children he calls to the church are the poorest beings in this world. Everything must be taken away before one is fit for this kingdom. But all the different degrees of being poor are not a variation in God, but a confirmation of his work among his people. Paul, in writing to the church at Ephesus, says, But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. (Eph. iv. 7.) All of these little ones constitute the bride of Jesus, our Husband. There is not the least question about this poor woman being considered by her Husband. He has already paid all she owed, and I want to say that her debt was so enormous that she could never have made the first payment, or start, towards getting out from the condemnation she was under by reason of transgression. Her sins were such that she could never have met her Husband in that wretched condition, because he is without sin. But he considered her in the extremity of her case. Oh what love is this! What manner of attention, that he did take notice of this poor and sinful woman. Poor soul, when you are given to meditate upon the goodness and mercy of God, do you not often wonder how it is that you could be remembered and considered? No water to drink that would

be thirst-quenching to a poor soul. The pantry empty of that bread of life, but in his consideration of you it was to open a fountain that never shall run dry, but flow in winter and in summer. He gives his chosen ones to eat of that bread that comes down from heaven, and, poor hungry soul, it is from an inexhaustible source. In taking notice of this poor and afflicted people, he laid aside the glory that he had with the Father. Not that he needed it, but that she was lost to him in her sin and degradation and the covenant must be carried out. Look at the world in her giving of alms and see if she administers as does Jesus. No, I dare say not, but it is with an expectation of applause of men, and usually looking for it back. But he lays aside his glory, and even passes by the nature of angels and takes upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. (Phil. ii. 7.) Brethren, this is riches beyond compare, to think that he loved his people in such a wonderful way, veiling himself in flesh, being made like unto his own poor flock. Let us praise his adorable name for considering us enough to give unto his bride one coat.

No art of man can weave this robe,
'Tis of such texture fine;
Nor could the wealth of all this globe
By purchase make it mine.

'Tis of one piece, and wove throughout;
So curious wove that none
Can dress up in this seamless coat,
Till Jesus puts it on.

"I give unto them eternal life." Yes, he did this for you when you were so poor that you could not think upon his blessed name. He took our sins upon his shoulders and bore them to the cross, putting them away forever. While he had that terrible load on him he was working out that righteousness that we had failed to do. (See Romans v. 10.) I am persuaded that you have been comforted time after time because of his consideration of you. May he give you to continue to rest in such a Man, who has been poor that ye through his poverty might be rich. (2 Cor. viii. 9.) He will continue to consider your case, poor sinner, because

Grace led my roving feet
To tread the heavenly road,
And new supplies each hour I meet,
While pressing on to God.

And he is even now considering you at the throne of grace and mercy, and will continue to do so until the last one of his poor and afflicted people is safely delivered home. How can he fail in any of his promises to his little ones? How can he fail to consider them? Listen, poor soul, you who are so cast down, what a safe and secure fortress you have to abide in: "The Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive." We have ample proof that he delivered him from, every enemy that assailed him thus verifying the above promise to deliver. Moreover, he preserved him, and kept him alive. Blessed thought that he is now alive, and is our Advocate for evermore, because

He took our mortal flesh to show
The wonders of his love,
For us he paid his life below,
And prays for us above.

Father, he cries, forgive their sins,
For I myself have died;
And then he shows his opened veins,
And pleads his wounded side.

Let us see further as to his mission here

on the earth. "He shall be blessed upon the earth." Yes, he shall make many rich, and give unto them the keys of the kingdom, and they shall go in and out and find pasture. (John x. 9.) He shall complete the work his Father gave him to do, and even now while you, perhaps, dear reader, are low in spirit, it is a finished work.

It is finished, oh what pleasure
Do these charming words afford,
Heavenly blessings, without measure,
Flow to us from Christ the Lord;
It is finished, it is finished,
Saints, the dying words record.

"And thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies." Oh what matchless grace is this! Oh what boundless love, that Jesus, that immaculate One, was sent to consider such poor rebels as we are, and that power was given him to conquer death, hell and the grave over his enemies. Their will was to do him to death (they meant it for evil), but I am so glad to write this wonderful thought, that he came to do his Father's will, and I hope I believe in a sovereign God to the extent that while he was here doing that, that not for one moment was he turned over to the will of his enemies, because my Book tells me that all of them were gathered together to do whatsoever his hand and counsel determined before to be done (Acts iv. 28), and any other doctrine than this makes my poor and destitute condition dependent upon chance, or works. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." Poor sinner, can you get rich? No, but here is One that has made you so, and inasmuch as your great High Priest was not delivered to the will of his enemies, just so you will not be.

As poor as Paul, yet in hope,

W. D. GRIFFIN.

PULASKI, Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:--Since writing some time ago for the SIGNS I have had some feeling to write again, only to be assailed by a feeling of unworthiness, but nevertheless I feel to express my love for the principles contended for by the SIGNS.

There is a portion of the Scriptures (the language of the apostle Paul) which at this time seems to meet and accord with my experience, and if I am favored to write my views of it and would thereby comfort one of God's little ones I would feel I had accomplished my purpose. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." Every poor child of God who has been brought by grace to realize the goodness and mercy of God has often craved and longed for the deep and hidden things which are mysterious, and has desired to get to and lay hold upon the deep riches of God's love, only to realize each time the the depth of these riches. Some of our brethren seem content with the skimming along on the surface of things pertaining to the gospel doctrine, and are inclined to believe that the preacher who does the loudest talking and the most logical speaking is the one who does the greatest preaching, but I have been led to examine and weigh the substance of

a few matters concerning the doctrine, and am satisfied that before we can rejoice in the riches of God, which are deep, that we are brought down by the sovereign grace of God unto the depth ourselves, and in the depth is where both the riches of God are; to wit: the wisdom and the knowledge of God. It seems a great matter for one so limited in understanding as I am to claim to know anything of the riches of God, yet when I in my mind go back to that eventful day in the spring of 1933, when I feel that God brought me down to walk in the valley and to see, as it were, his boundless wisdom displayed in conjunction with his power over all things, my heart does burn within me, and I am made therefore to confess that he, in mercy, brings us down in poverty (spiritually) that we may feast the more upon his riches, and clothes us in weakness that we may in weakness realize the perfection of his strength. No man by searching can find out God, nor can any by carnal wisdom understand his ways or judgments. The only way any man knows anything of the riches of God is by God showing it to him. God's way of performance is like unto all his other ways, it is unsearchable. High above our ways are his ways. In the soul's experience of God's people is the acknowledgment of his boundless wisdom, his unlimited power and his unsearchable ways. We know these things of God's riches because we have felt them and seen them by the grace of God. It has pleased him in mercy to lead us by his gracious Spirit in the depth. "Deep calleth unto deep." Our experience lies in those things at the foot of the mountains, and our travel and pathway in among rocks, and sometimes here and again there in the low places we see, by the grace of God, the lofty peaks of God's towering strength, and in the depth we ofttimes become hungry, and we feast then upon the riches of God, for his riches are deep and we are brought thereto. While in the depth we can see higher, and also deeper, yet not as carnal sight, for we only see as God gives us light to see. There is no greater desire in my heart at this time than just to look into and see the riches of God, yet most of the time I can but grope in the darkness. When one feels the most unfruitful, dark, and without strength, then it is that God's light is greatest in him, because no man can realize the dark, weak and limited state of the flesh except God shows it to him by the light which is Christ in him the hope of glory. There is no man who can understand (of himself, or efforts) the wisdom, knowledge, judgments or ways of God. God's revealing grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord, is what gives us an insight into the mystery of God's way, which is contrary to the way we would take, yet "He knows the way I take." We cannot understand why God made a chicken, and a hawk to catch it, nevertheless he did. All the things which exist, or ever have been, are embraced in the deep wisdom of God, and the reason given for all God's work is because it is his will. We rejoice in the fact that Jesus is the means by which the water is drawn from the well when we are in

the depth and realize the well is deep and that we have nothing to draw with. That he teaches us again and again the lesson that though the riches of God be deep, his judgments unsearchable and his ways past finding out, we have access through Christ to the bountiful store of God's riches, and many times are brought down to feast, behold and rejoice in the depth, and our greatest lessons are learned when we are down.

Yours in hope,

ROY S. SMITH.

GRETNA, Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing two dollars, which is for back dues of the present year, and to you I wish to extend thanks in that you have been so patient with me, and sent me the SIGNS even after my subscription had expired, showing that spirit of love which does not take money to buy. The SIGNS has been of much comfort to me. The letters are wonderful, especially the editorials. The writers all seem to me to be blessed with that Spirit from on high, which I feel one must have to set forth such good news as I read in your paper, and I think one's heart must be prepared from the same source to receive such. At times (not always) I feel I have received that spirit of adoption and have the witness within my heart, and rejoice in the doctrine of salvation by grace, but so much of my time is spent in doubt that I fear I am deceived in the whole matter, but if I know my heart, it is a true desire to love and worship God in spirit and in truth, giving him all the praise for the many blessings of mercy he has bestowed upon me all the days of my life.

I am inclosing a little poem, which was presented to me, I hope by the Lord, in tune of "My dear Redeemer, dying Lamb." My feelings for a few moments I will never be able to tell. But all was well, and if I had been called to die I was perfectly willing to leave everything behind. My heart was filled with a great love of God, which excelled all earthly ties and things pertaining to this world. "But oft it causes anxious thought, am I his, or am I not?"

I have been asked to send this poem for publication, but fearing it might not meet with your approval, have not offered it until now. I leave it with you to do with as you desire, and it will be all right with me.

MY PRAYER. (In song.)

O Lord, give me a heart to pray,
More love for all mankind;
Then take me home to live with thee,
And in thy glory shine.

Dear Lord, I ask to love thee more,
And keep my heart aright,
And when I leave this world of woe
I'll never more see night.

I long to suffer every pain
That thou hast borne for me,
To know the pains that thou hast borne
Was for my eternal gain.

When I was being tossed about,
I did not know the cause;
This was the way I must be led,
That I must bear a cross.

I want to praise thee every day
For blessings I've received,
And when my race is near an end,
Oh may thy blessing give.

To tide me o'er the pangs of death,
Till I can reach that shore,
And hear thy voice, "Come, welcome home,"
To dwell for evermore.

With an earnest desire for your prayers for one with a faint hope of eternal life, I am

(MRS.) WILLIE TOSH.

LYNBROOK, New York.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—I received your welcome letter, and delayed replying until I thought you had returned. I hope your meeting with so many friends and people of like mind as yourself concerning the things of God has proven profitable to both you and them. I would truly like to attend such a gathering.

Your mention of the poet's words, "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform," stirs up the mind to review the path over which we have been led. The same poet writes, "He treasures up his bright designs, and works his sovereign will." This leaves all our puny efforts to gain anything by our own strength, or in our own way, without avail. Jeremiah says, The way of a man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. So we are led in ways and paths not of our own choosing, and find ourselves in places and circumstances in which we would not be if we were permitted to carry out our own plans. It is only as we look back over the past that we can see the hand of God in his dealings with us, and the clouds have been the dust of his feet. Man is like the wild ass "that snuffeth up the wind," as Jeremiah says, which pictures the natural man acting according to his stubborn and rebellious nature, for all his vain efforts to gain anything spiritually by offerings of his own works, or by any merit of his own, fill him with wind, so to speak. It is only when we have naught to bring, and appear before him naked and in abject poverty, that we are filled with things nourishing to soul and spirit. He gives to the hungry, but the rich he sends empty away. You say truly, that people do not look for the truth until they are awakened from within. The Scriptures tell us that the dead know not anything. So they cannot know anything of truth, nor of Jesus, who is the way, the truth and the life, except by revelation. When God has caused his light to shine in the darkness of the sinner's heart and shown him how deceitful and desperately wicked he is by nature, it is only then when convicted of sin and standing before the bar of justice, that, like the publican of old, we dare not raise our heads, nor have we any excuses or extenuating circumstances to offer, but acknowledge our guilt and plead for mercy. It is then we get a sight of Jesus made an offering for sin, when he suffered and died on the cross. It was there that mercy and truth met together and righteousness and truth kissed each other. God now does not see the sinner, but sees the blood of his dear Son, and as he told the Israelites while in Egypt, When I see the blood I will pass over you. So the guilty sinner to whom the blood is applied is passed from death unto life. This passing over is not merely a skipping over, but I like to think of it as a covering, as the poet says,

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
'Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

Have I any claim to such glorious apparel in the sight of God? Sometimes I feel faintly to hope that I have, but owing to the many weaknesses of the flesh, I often fear and tremble lest these things are not for me; but if indeed my feet are set upon this Rock, Christ Jesus (and I do tremble more often than not), of one thing I feel sure, the Rock does not shake, nor will it ever be moved.

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word."

He is a nail fastened in a sure place, upon which hang all the vessels of mercy.

I cannot write more, but wish to be remembered to all the folks. I trust also that this will find yourself and family in good health. They have my best wishes.

Sincerely yours,

S. W. SHIPWAY.

FRANKFORT, Kentucky.

DEAR PUBLISHER:—If any of the brethren ask about me, you can tell them I am still trying to preach Christ, and him crucified, even though it is a stumbling-block and foolishness to the unregenerate. My health has been fair, and I have been able to attend to my two churches. We have had no additions for some time, and several deaths, still I am more convinced every day that there is yet a God in Israel who never slumbers nor sleeps, who is carrying on his own affairs in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and if we were able to fathom the mysteries of to-day we could see the cause of it all, and I believe it is for our good, for our God makes no mistakes.

Now, my well wishes to you as publisher of the SIGNS, and to Elders Dodson, Ruston, Vaughn and Spangler. May the Lord enable you and them to carry on this medium of communication which your grandfather, Elder Gilbert Beebe, started one hundred and seven years ago.

I had thought that this fall the way would open so that I could visit some of your associations, but find I must be content and attend to my few sheep in old Kentucky.

I am, as ever, a poor sinner with a hope,

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

DUDLEY, Ontario.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been unable to write, so my renewal to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is several weeks late. I desire to let the editors and all of like precious faith who contribute articles and good letters know that they often provide me with a sweet morsel, which makes me realize that the Lord's arm is not shortened to feed in time of famine. I waited until I could at least send a note.

With love to all the household of faith,

(MRS.) ALMA V. MORTIMER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1939.

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REVELATION XVII. 14.

"For he is Lord of lords, and King of kings."

The Lord Jesus Christ is typified under many different names in the Scriptures. John tells us that the reason his saints overcome the beast is because he is King of kings and Lord of lords. A king is one in authority. Sometimes their power is limited, sometimes unlimited. A king is one who reigns over a kingdom, has subjects under him. People are not permitted to come into the presence of a king unless they are bidden to come. Jesus is the Lord of lords and King of kings. Jesus said, No man can come unto me except it were given unto him of my Father. The modern preaching of today sets forth Jesus not as Lord of lords and King of kings, but as a beggerly one by the wayside, wooing and beseeching sinners to turn in and become subjests of his kingdom. That he is in need. That unless he can persuade men and women to cooperate with him in the work of salvation many for whom he died will be lost. Those who believe such things have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof. Jesus told Nicodemus that except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. To see the kingdom is to be a part of it. No one knows anything of this material kingdom until he is born into it. Also, to see the kingdom under consideration one must be born into it. Born of an incorruptible seed by the word of God. All the excitement preaching, death-bed scenes told, calling upon men to repent, will never bring a poor sinner to see the King in his beauty. The question will be asked, How are sinners brought to see and rejoice in the Lord Jesus Christ as their King? The apostle tells us that he that comes to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. To really feel thankful for anything, one must first feel the need of it. Sinners are brought to rejoice in the reign of Jesus in the same way Joseph's brethren were brought to rejoice in his reign, who was a type of Christ. The first work of grace in the heart of men is for the Lord to send a famine in the soul. Gradually they learn that the Lord of lords and King of kings does not need their

money (works). They are brought by the same power to realize that the things they need they cannot obtain, and in this way they are brought to the end of the earth (their own strength), and as a beggar to beg for mercy before the King, not even hoping for it, let alone expecting an outpouring from him of all the multiplied blessings of God, and to receive the best of the land. Many never forget the moment when they waited trembling at the door, feeling it was sealed to them, and that they could not go back to the world. Feeling that if their soul were sent to hell, God's righteous law approved it well. Hoping not so much to see the King, feeling unfit to go into his presence, yet begging for mercy, feeling the fear of judgment. Here, my beloved, is where the word is heard, Come near me, I am Joseph (Jesus your Savior). We never forget the moment when faith was given, when the news was received, Your sins, which are many, are all forgiven. Not only do we by faith see him who says our sins are forgiven, but assurance is given that in the storehouse is grace to last until the famine is over. And as we further journey we truly learn that

"He reigns to grant me fresh supplies,
He reigns to guide me with his eye;
Oh the sweet thought this sentence gives,
I know that my Redeemer lives."

Earthly kings often err, do not know what their subjects need, what is best for them, but he who is King over all Israel never slumbers nor sleeps, knows what every one in his kingdom will need even before it is manifest unto them, and has promised to supply all their needs. So peculiar is their experience they learn that all their times are in his hand, that if he leaves them a moment they go astray. This King has reigned until he has put all enemies under his feet. Even the winds and the sea obey him. He speaks and all creation moves, obedient to his will. How rich the church of the living God is. Of his fullness have we received. Ye are complete in him. How wonderful is the One of whom we speak. His love for those the Father gave him has never been expressed. Realizing at times by faith that all the benefits of his obedience has been given, that he has imputed his righteousness unto them and that their sins were imputed (charged) to him, they can come boldly to the throne of grace to find grace to help in time of need. Not in their name, but in his; not in their works, but his. How tender is the care of those called by grace (according to the standing given them in him before the world) into this kingdom, which is not of this world. Jesus says to consider the lily, how it grows, it toils not, neither does it spin, yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed as one of these. Those clothed with his righteousness. A sparrow shall not fall without him; are ye not much more than many sparrows? Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. We are brought by experience at times to say, From his love he every trouble sends, all things are working for my good, and bliss his rod attends. As to how and when the subjects serve him, a question sometimes disturbing to some, we would here say that it is he

who worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure, and the service rendered by the subjects of this King is that they are led by his Spirit, and with a realization of his goodness, and because of the love of him. When Joshua last addressed Israel he recounted unto them the tender mercies of their God. He carried them back over their pilgrimage, and then said unto them, If it seems evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose ye this day whom ye will serve. If the relaization of the goodness of God unto a poor sinner saved by grace does not cause him to desire to serve the Lord, we do not know what will. The whole matter is summed up in the hymn,

"What think ye of Christ? is the test
To try both your state and your scheme;
You cannot be right in the rest,
Unless you think rightly of him.

As Jesus appears in you view,
As he is beloved, or not;
So God is disposed to you,
And mercy or wrath is your lot."

By the evidences, some of which are mentioned, we look to that day when we shall cast our crowns at his feet and crown him Lord of all.

D. V. S.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS."

We will furnish extra copies of the Signs of the Times at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

GOSPEL TRUTHS.

In these perilous days and times, it is very essential that "gospel truths" should be clearly stated. We believe our readers will be refreshed, spiritually, by the letter which will follow these remarks. It was written nearly one hundred years ago, by one, Daniel Matthews, in England, on the subject of Sunday Schools, preachers and adding to the church militant. We recall in our early childhood hearing how Robert Raikes started a school on Sunday for the benefit of unfortunate children in Gloucester, England, the purpose being that they might be taught to read and to become familiar with the Bible. We have known for many years that such schools have been countenanced by the Strict Baptists in England, but we were not aware of the use some made of them. We are, therefore, glad, indeed, to know of at least this voice having been raised so unequivocally against such practices as then existed. There is most certainly no reason in the world why Sunday Schools as they exist in this country today should be used as an adjunct of the true church. On the contrary, there is every reason why they should not be so used. The church of God should stand aloof and be separate and apart from all orders, be they secret or otherwise, and organizations of men which make any pretense to religious worship of any kind. And as much as we feel the need of preachers and church members, we had better be content to pray to the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest, and to

add to the church militant only such as he will own and have to be saved. Man-made preachers and Ishmaelites had best be left for other people, since Old School Baptists have trouble enough without them. If only the letter of the word was taught in the Sunday Schools throughout our land, we would not object to them, but the lessons which are prepared and taught by their tutors do not contain the truth, at least in our opinion, and in the vast majority of cases, undoubtedly, it is a case of the unregenerate teaching the unregenerate. The Scriptures say if the blind lead the blind, they shall both fall into the ditch. We have many good friends among other denominations who are loud in their praise of Sunday Schools. It is claimed that they create a good, wholesome atmosphere and environment, and that children are far better off there than they might otherwise be. We will not deny but what they may have a good moral effect, on the whole, upon those who attend them, but in this article we are not discussing morals, but religion. Neither are we writing this to offend our friends, for we have no objections to other groups using whatever methods they may wish to establish, maintain and augment their organizations, so long as our own religious freedom is not endangered. Occupying the position we do, both as minister in the church and editor of our paper, we claim not only to have a perfect right, but that it is actually expected of us, that we shall set forth as clearly as possible what we understand to be the doctrine and order of the Old School Baptist Church. We have sometimes feared that Old School Baptists have spoiled other good gifts in the church by trying to make preachers out of them. The questions may well be asked, How shall they hear without a preacher? and, How shall they preach, except they be sent? This infers that they must, without exception, be called, qualified and sent by God, and the best possible evidence that a man gives of this high and holy calling is that he preaches the gospel in demonstration of the Spirit and with power from heaven. Churches should be fully persuaded in their own minds before they ordain a man to the work of the gospel ministry and send him forth in the world. If God has not liberated him, he will be in terrible bonds all his life and, besides, will impose a great hardship upon those who hear him.

So far as we are aware, there are no Old School Baptist churches in the United States or Canada having any connection with Sunday Schools, but we have known of many cases where it seemed quite evident to us, at least, that too much urging or persuasion had been used in getting people into the church. God forbid that we should speak discouragingly to any who are spiritually taught, but churches should require of all who are admitted to the ordinances of God's house to give a reason of the hope that is within them. And let us say to all who long for a home with the people of God, but feel their unworthiness, that there is no better evidence of having passed from death unto life than an unfeigned love for the brethren. If

the fire of God's love has been kindled and burns within your heart, we advise you, by all means, to go home to your friends and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for you, whereof you are glad.

R. L. D.

THE LETTER.

To the Strict Baptists of Middlesex, and Others.

FRIENDS:—Having received an invitation from you to assist you in the training of young men for the ministry, and not being able to address you and all your correspondents, of both London and Manchester, separately, I write this letter to you and all, that I may state my views on a subject of so much importance. I also wish to write about some things practiced in the Sunday schools, but of which I cannot approve. To show you that I am no enemy to the Sunday schools, allow me to say that we have one connected with our place of worship, but we do not try to make *proselytes* of the children. We teach them to read the Bible, correct their manners and detain them in the chapel to hear the gospel preached. This I can approve.

As many who have written to me affirm that something must be done to keep the true doctrines of the gospel standing, I will give you a sketch of what I have handled, tasted and felt of religion, that I may show you that God will save his own, in spite of all the resistance of the devil. The truths of the gospel will surely stand without man's inventing any new plans to hold them up. My opinion concerning young men being taught to preach is that no man can make another a mouth for the Lord, though one may learn to give to others what man has given to him. As is the postman who carries a letter to an individual without himself knowing what is in it, so is the man that takes the word of another about religion, not having proven it himself. It may be right or it may be wrong, for aught he knows. Remember David would not go to war in armor that he had not proved; he had been delivered from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, and he had proved his sling and his stones, with these he would go against the great Goliath, and, with the help of the Lord, he overcame him. In this simple way God was seen in the work, and this brought to David Goliath's sword. The Holy Ghost says of this sword, that "there is none like it in Israel." My friends, this is the way into the field; there is no sword but this heavy enough to cut down self and self-righteousness, or strong enough to cut deep into the man of sin; for the man of sin has got broad feet to stand upon, and Satan will overcome all those who attempt to overcome him by any testimony that is not their own. Those who are *trained* by man for the ministry will give out what they have heard or read to one another, and as a carrier delivers his parcels, and leaves none for himself, so will it be with them when their head is dried up in death. Such come forth with the *Trinity* of Persons in their creed, but only *two* in their ministry, for the Holy Ghost, the third Person of the blessed

Trinity, they cannot preach. Though they say he is God, they cannot tell of his working and dwelling in the heart. The word from such men's mouths is like the east wind, it comes from a cold quarter. I say again that they cannot preach the Holy Ghost in his work and witness in the heart, for it is he that brings the power of the gospel, with dew and unction, to the heart. They are strangers to this power and unction, and the testimony of such men is like the light of the moon in a clear and frosty night, as cold as it is clear. They come with another man's testimony, and having this mark either in their heads or in their hands, they write down what they bring forth, and put it into their memory, or pocket, for fear lest it should run away from them. If God had put it into their hearts by his Spirit, it would save them that trouble; for no man would write his own name and put it into his pocket lest he should forget it.

Another thing I shall here name, is the practice of getting people so hastily into the church; for if they come into the church before they have left the world, they will bring the world with them into the church, and that will work the gospel out in the end. This is seen when a man that has preached the truth dies, or leaves a people, another being chosen by vote. If the church have many of these worldly spirits among them, these overturn the rest, and invite a man after their own heart, with the Trinity of persons in his creed, and but two in his ministry. Then, "O thou man of God, there is death in the pot." I think if unregenerate people were more kept out of the church, the gospel might be kept in; and this can be done in some measure by not mistaking good breeding for regeneration, in either rich or poor, but by waiting for the Spirit's work in the heart.

In Sunday schools, I cannot approve of the recitation of pieces by scholars at charity sermons. I have never yet seen God's glory come out of it, but I have seen Satan transformed into an angel of light therein. No more can I sanction the practice of young men preaching to the children instead of hearing them read. Young men preaching to the children at school is, in my opinion, the same as young men preaching at a prayer meeting on the Lord's Day afternoons. I think both had better be given up, for they only breed swarms of preachers, who are a great trouble to the churches. I was one morning hearing Mr. Abrahams, of London, and one of these afternoon preachers was in the same pew with me, his pencil and paper found me full employment, for he was in his study for the afternoon. The friend who accompanied me said he came there nearly every Sunday morning to study for the afternoon. Those whom the Lord sends to speak his word taste their sermons before they preach them. They cannot do with speaking from the *head;* they want their sermons to come from the *heart,* that they may warm the hearts of poor mourners in Zion. They are not catching at other men's words, or at other men's views of religion, nor do they study to get into mysteries. They aim at plainness in religion, and plainness in preaching.

They pray the Holy Spirit to give them their message, and to bless the message to both saints and sinners. They feel that except the Lord is with them their sermons will do no good; and they lean upon the Lord and wait for him, that he may be all in all to them. Without him they feel they can do nothing that is good; they can only work out as God works in. Though learning is a good thing, they that have it and are without the grace of God, will prove it to be a snare to their feet.

The cause of my writing to you is that I may show my views of spiritual things, to save you the trouble of repeating former invitations to me, requesting me to join in holding up the truths of the gospel. I believe the Lord will hold up the truths of the gospel himself, and raise up men to preach them, so long as he has a people to call and feed by those truths. Let man do what he may, God will outdo him for his people's good and for his own glory. I know that men can teach the sciences, such as medicine, law and astronomy, but to teach the secrets of the gospel is the work of the Holy Ghost.

As I have written only to those who have written to me, surely none can be offended with me for stating my views. If any be offended, however, they will show their malice either against the truths I have written or against me as an individual.

I conclude by saying that popery is at the door, and blessed are those who have the God of Jacob for their help. The time is near when they who have not religion wrought in their heart by the power of God will sell their religion, or give it away; and if they cannot sell it or give it away, they will run from it faster than ever they ran to it. But it shall go well with the righteous, be they never so vile in their own feelings.

Friends, I have not written to you out of strife; things appear to me as I have given them to you, and I hope the Lord will add his blessing.

When thou hast Christ put on,
He is thy wedding dress;
And fit to live or die thou art;
He is thy righteousness.

D. M.

ROWLEY REGIS, 1845.

DONATION DAY

DONATION DAY at the Primitive Baptist Home, Salisbury, Maryland, this year will be December 14th. Those desiring to remember the Home with either articles of food or monetary contributions may do so by sending them direct to the Home.

One of our ministers from the South recently visited the Home, and pronounced it to be all that the name implies. We wish more of our readers could go there and see for themselves what a lovely place it is, and how happy and well cared for are those who reside there. They frequently express their gratitude for the privileges they enjoy.

Our Constitution and By-Laws have been changed so as to permit of any one anywhere in the United States entering the Home, so long as the requirements of said Constitution and By-Laws are met, and a copy of these can be obtained by writing to the Secretary of the Board of Trustees, Mr. John B. Miller, Newark, Delaware.

Those who are desirous of entering should not delay. We know of several who could have easily gone to the Home five years ago, but to-day they are physically unfit, and some of them are in a sad plight financially. The co-operation of all who are interested is needed, and will be greatly appreciated.

R. LESTER DODSON.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The original Mt. Zion Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, in session with Little Flock Church, in Cass County, Missouri, September 29th and 30th and October 1st, 1939, sendeth christian greetings with love in the Lord to the associations and churches with whom we correspond, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus.

DEAR BRETHREN:--Another year has passed, and by the grace and mercy of a kind and indulgent Father in heaven, who holds the destiny of man in his hands, we are permitted to meet in an associate capacity and listen to the Scriptures being expounded in a way that would redound to the glory of God, for we are glad to hear extolled the glory of an omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient God, who is the author of our being. Who says, I am the Lord, and there is none else. There is no God beside me. Who says, I made the earth and created man upon it. I, even my hands have stretched out the heaven, and all the host have I commanded, who declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. We realize our own unworthiness, but we have received many unmerited blessings from his hands, and we have been made to rejoice because of his lovingkindness to us. The thought of his promises contained in the Scriptures is comforting to us, and we are led to sing praises and to bless his holy name.

Your messengers have come to us bearing messages of love and christian fellowship, preaching a crucified Christ, salvation by grace and Christ the only hope of glory. We are a small Association, our number is growing smaller each year, but we have lost none of our faith in a hope in our crucified Christ. We are at peace one with another, and are thankful to almighty God for his many blessings. To our visiting brethren who are in attendance, we bid you welcome and extend an invitation to come again. May love and fellowship abound among us, is our prayer.

DANIEL A. J. ADAMS, Mod.
WILLIAM H. MORRIS, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. John T. Cockrill, Va., $1; Mrs. Mary A. Drew, N. Y., $1; W. M. Harwell, Mo., $1; Mrs. David Farnie, N. Y., $1; Martha E. Holloway, Md., $1; Mrs. Mae V. Thomas, Ill., $20; Belle Neal, Va., $3; Mrs. E. J. Bolton, Mo., $1; Middletown and Wallkill Church, N. Y., $50; Sarah I. Rittenhouse, N. J., $3.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

On the night of August 25th, 1939, the death angel whispered, Come, and the spirit of my father, ELDER J. F. SPANGLER, took its flight to God, who gave it. Elder J. F. Spangler was born in Floyd County, Virginia, July 26th, 1860, and grew to manhood in the same County. He was the son of David R. Spangler. He was married to Roberta Ellen Howery (who survives him) in March, 1882. To their union were born ten children. Two died in infancy, and one daughter, Sallie Hughes, died a few years ago. The children surviving are, Naomi Ray, Eulalah Cannaday, Dalia Phillips, I. H. Spangler, A. F. Spangler, N. P. Spangler and D. V. Spangler. At the age of thirty years he was shown by the light of grace a lost condition, and though he never used the Lord's name in vain, when convicted of sin and shown a lost condition, he felt to be the vilest sinner in the world. When convicted he was in the field at work and the field and the clefts of the rocks were his mourner's bench. One day, eight months later, as he neared his mill-house to unlock the door, he was delivered from this burden. How often I have heard him tell of this. When he came to himself he was walking in the opposite direction singing, "Come, thou Fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing thy praise," etc. He joined Pine Creek Primitive Baptist Church in August, 1891. Later he felt called to preach the everlasting gospel of the Son of God, and was licensed to preach in the year 1887, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry April 6th, 1892, by the following Elders: A. D. Short, Q. D. Weeks, Valentine Cole and Amos Dickerson. The most of his ministerial life was spent near Spray, North Carolina. In the year 1902 he organized the Primitive Baptist Church at Spray, N. C., with thirteen members. He served that church until his death, thirty-seven years. At the time of his death the membership of that church was about one hundred. He also served the Danville, Va., Church about thirty years, and Dan River, Wolf Island and several other churches for a number of years. He was afflicted with high blood presure and a bad heart. For eight months he had felt his end was near. He seldom spoke during that time, but he would say, I realize my time is up, and I am ready to go. He often said he had not always felt that way. I have never seen any one so completely reconciled to death as he was. Last winter, while I was in the home, he said, I have only two reasons that cause me to hate to leave: one is I do not want to leave my family, the other is leaving my good brethren and sisters. He realized his departure would be sudden, often telling us his death would be like the blowing out of a candle. When he died he was on a visit to Floyd County, Virginia, where he was raised. He was sitting in the home of Sam Poff, about nine p. m., talking on the subject of the resurrection, when he suddenly reached his hand over his heart and, without a word or a struggle, was dead.

His funeral was conducted from Dan River Church, by Elders T. A. Stanfield, J. W. Gilliam and W. R. Dodd. Interment was in the church cemetery.

He preached only one God, Lord of heaven and earth, the only true and living God. Everywhere I turn I miss him. We stood together, speaking in that great name about twenty years. Surely there was none more tender, and his memory will be precious until I, too, shall cross the river, there hoping to meet him; not as the man of suffering, but in the image of Him who died for him. If I could, I would gladly take part

of the burden from Mother in her great loss, but we can only say, The Lord's will be done.

His son,

D. V. SPANGLER.

ELDER J. W. KERLEY was born January 20th, 1851, in Hardeman County, Tennessee, and died March 18th, 1939, in Lauderdale County, Tennessee, near Ripley, Tennessee, making his stay on earth 88 years, 1 month and 28 days. He was united in marriage to Miss Rhoda F. Ellis. I do not have the date of their marriage, but to this union were born several children. He leaves to mourn his departure his dear companion and six children. The children are Mrs. Lee White, Mrs. Loue Vest, P. L. Kerley, Mrs. Susie Chandler, Martha Cox and J. H. Kerley. Elder J. W. Kerley joined Macedonia Primitive Baptist Church September 25th, 1885, and was baptized by Elder H. W. Thomas. On Saturday before the fourth Sunday in April, 1887, the church set him at liberty to exercise his gift wherever he felt God in his providence saw fit to cast his lot. The church saw that his gift was very profitable, and on the fourth Saturday in July, 1888, called for his ordination to the full work of the ministry, and Elders J. M. Hicks, H. W. Thomas and Deacons M. D. Cox and John Harmon ordained him to the full work of the ministry, and we feel he was wonderfully blessed of God and was faithful in all his duties. He was pastor of Macedonia Church for fifty-two years, which is something marvelous to think of, and he was still its pastor when he died. This dear old soldier of the cross was to me one of the ablest expounders of the atonement I ever heard. He was also sound on all the cardinal points of doctrine, faith and practice, and I feel he honored God with an orderly walk and a godly conversation. It could well be said of him that he fought a good fight, he finished his course, he kept the faith, and surely there is a crown of righteousness laid up in heaven for him, which the great Shepherd and Bishop of his soul will give him at his appearing. We feel that on March 18th, 1939, the dear Lord gave that dear old soldier of the cross an honorable discharge, and laid him down to rest from his labors. We feel that he has ceased from his labors and his works are following after him. He will be remembered among the Old Baptists of Western Kentucky and Tennessee for a long time to come. He was Moderator of the Mississippi River Association for a long time, and the Association was appointed to be held with his home church the fourth Friday, Saturday and Sunday in September, 1939, and I was blessed with the privilege of attending that Association, but oh so sad when I got there. If ever I saw sheep without a shepherd, I surely saw it there at that place. This dear old soldier had met with them for fifty-two years, without missing a session, and they were at a loss to know what to do. Elder R. M. Brann and I were the only preachers at the meeting, and they were like the children of Israel were when Moses died, they surely were mourning. The Mississippi River Association esteemed him so highly that they appointed a committee to draft a Resolution in memory of him and had it printed in their Minutes, and ordered a copy sent to the SIGNS for publication, and all the associations with which his Association corresponded esteemed him so highly that they all drafted Resolutions in memory of him and had them printed in their Minutes. Brethren and sisters, a great man in Israel has gone home to rest. I had been with him for twenty-two years, and always found him gentle, mild and kind,

especially to his preaching brethren. To know Elder Kerley was to love him. I went to his late home in September, when I attended their Association, and while sitting on the porch of his home on that lonely hill, in silent meditation, I thought that doubtless that dear old soldier had many times turned his back, as it were, on his family and gone down that lonely hill, feeling burdened, to go and feed the flock of God which Christ had bought with his blood, while on the other side his natural duties were to stay and provide for his family. But he seemed to have been made willing to forsake all for the cause he loved so dearly. The Primitive Baptist Church has sustained a great loss, but I feel he has entered into great gain. His family has lost a true father, his wife a true husband. Oh may God reconcile dear old sister Kerley to his will. May he raise up another undershepherd to feed the bleating lambs and sheep in that part of his vineyard, is my prayer.

Elder P. J. Prince, a lifelong fellow-servant with him, and Elder C. O. Kerley conducted his funeral, at the home, in the presence of the heart-broken family, brethren and sisters, after which kind hands took the mortal body and laid it away to rest in the family burying-grounds on the his farm, to await that great and wonderful summons from on high. May God reconcile all who mourn, is the prayer of the unworthy writer.

Written by request, by one in hope of the resurrection of these vile bodies in the image of Christ,

O. W. PERKINS.

MRS. MARY JANE SMALL, widow of James Small, died August 13th, 1939, at her former home, now the home of her son, Clarence Small. She and her daughter, Jeanette, came up to visit and attend our Dunwich meeting, it being the tenth anniversary of Elder Ruston's pastorate. On Sunday she said to her son, I do not feel able to go to meeting, which was a great disappointment to her. In the afternoon she laid down to rest, and in a few moments passed into that blessed sleep in Jesus from which none ever wake to weep. Her birth date was April 17th, 1860. Mrs. Small was a daughter of Molcom and Janet Campbell, and granddaughter of the late Elder Thomas McColl, one of the first gospel ministers who preached in Canada to the few scattered saints throughout the then wooded forest, and who walked through blazed trails many miles. Elder McColl emigrated to Canada from Argyleshire, Scotland, in the year 1819. Mrs. Small was a God-fearing person from her youth, and in his mercy his guidance of dear sister was in pattern of his meekness. She loved to lisp his blessed name, but a fearfulness of her unworthiness to follow him in the sacred ordinance of baptism hindered her from the joy and rest of the sacred privilege which so benefited her, but I feel a glorious inheritance now awaits her in the realms of eternal glory. When the Lord shall come again to gather his jewels home, there and then she shall sing his praises. No more to sigh or shed a tear, no more to suffer pain or fear. Mrs. Small leaves four sons, Melvin and Samuel, of Detroit, Mich., Clarence and Molcom, of Dunwich, one devoted daughter, Jeanette, two sisters, Mrs. Terra McTaggart, of London, and the writer, Mrs. John McPhail, one brother, Samuel D. Campbell, of London, four grandchildren, Donald, Melvin, Maxine and Douglass Small.

Her funeral was held from her son's home, and was largely attended. Interment was in Fairview Cemetery. Her

pastor, Elder George Ruston, used as a text, "Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."—1 Thess. iv. 14. And spoke comfortingly to the sorrowing family and friends.

Her sister,

(MRS.) JOHN McPHAIL.

MRS. RUTH (TERRY) LAKE, the subject of this notice, was born June 17th, 1889, and departed this life February 26th, 1939, making her stay on earth 49 years, 8 months and 9 days. She was a daughter of the late Elder J. H. and Martha (Canady) Terry. She was united in marriage to brother J. E. Lake. I do not have at hand the date of their marriage. They lived devotedly together. Their home was enshrined with love, and never has it been my lot to behold a family more fully knit and bound together in love than was theirs. Space forbids us to speak of and enumerate the many noble qualities of Mrs. Lake. Through a felt sense of unworthiness, and through a feeling that she did not possess sufficient evidence of a hope in Christ, Mrs. Lake never united with the militant church, yet she possessed a good hope through grace, having received a hope at an early age in life. Her life was a living evidence of her hope in Christ. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone. She had no confidence in the flesh. Several years ago she and brother Lake lived on a farm adjoining the old home place where I then lived (brother Lake at the time was in the mercantile business), and through a period of several years, while living so close together, I was in their company a great deal, and in all that time I never heard Mrs. Lake speak an unkind word to any one. She was a kind mother, a loving wife, a good neighbor and as humble a person as I ever knew. Truly can it be said of her that she walked humbly and meekly before her God. The example she set before her children, and in the neighborhood as well, was wonderful indeed. Nothing but the grace of God could so humble one and cause their life to be spent in such a worthy way as her life was. Mrs. Lake had been in ill health for years. Brother Lake did all in his power for her, but the Lord was pleased to afflict her, and at the same time to bless her with a sweet submission and resignation to his holy will, and she patiently bore her suffering and afflictions. A few days before her departure I was traveling through the neighborhood where she lived (not knowing of her critical condition), when I met two of her sons, who told me of her critical condition, and of her desire to see me. When I called at the home and entered the sick room she manifested joy at seeing an unworthy creature like me. Both she and brother Lake said the Lord had sent me to them. Oh how their expressions brought me low, knowing who and what I am by nature, and feeling that I was not worthy of their love, but the sweet conversation that ensued I do not feel I shall ever forget as long as I remain in my right mind. My heart was filled with rejoicing as I listened to the dear afflicted sister relate her experience and tell of the desire she had carried so long to be baptized into the fellowship of the church, and also how fears had possessed her all the time that her hope might not be real. This having kept her out of the church. She expressed her doubts and fears as to the reality of the matter with her. I never heard one give more gracious evidence of a hope than she did. At her request, I tried to sing a few hymns, read a few chapters from the Bible, and tried to offer prayer at her bedside. She testifying that she had been comforted. Before the end came

her fears were graciously dispelled by Him who is with his chosen in every trouble. She was blessed to leave with her family by word of mouth that evidence as she related so sweetly what awaited her in that home of rest, where sickness, sorrow, pain nor death can ever come.

I was called to conduct the funeral, where I tried to preach a crucified and risen Redeemer to a large concourse of relatives and friends.

Since her departure it has been my privilege to baptize her husband into the fellowship of the church.

She leaves to mourn their loss her husband, brother J. E. Lake, two daughters, Anna Mae and Mrs. Martha Lovine, four sons, James, Wilson, Woodrow and Dan, all of Hurricane, W. Va., her mother, sister Martha Terry, one sister, Mrs. Clara Pierce, of Montgomery, W. Va., nine grandchildren and a host of nieces, nephews and friends.

In conclusion let me say to the bereaved, Grieve not as those who have no hope. The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be his holy name. She was laid away to rest in the family burying-ground to await the Master's call. May the Lord reconcile all who mourn.

H. J. BIRD.

MRS. SUE GANO MALLORY, our sister in Christ, widow of B. F. Mallory, member of a pioneer family of Scott County, Kentucky, died at her home in Georgetown, Ky., Saturday morning, October 7th, 1939. She had been an invalid for four years. Sister Mallory was the daughter of Daniel and Phoebe Griffin Gano. She had been a resident of Georgetown for the past twenty years. Surviving are one daughter, Miss Carry Mallory, at home, one brother, Stephen Gano, of Sadieville, Ky., and a number of nieces and nephews. Our sister joined the Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church the first Saturday in October, 1906, and passed to the great beyond the first Saturday in October, 1939, making her church life just thirty-three years. She was baptized by the late Elder R. M. Thomas. Sister Mallory had been in failing health for several years, and during my pastorate of the church had been present but a few times, but almost every time I would call and see her she would ask about the meetings, and often would say, I was with you in spirit, if I was not able to be with you in the flesh. She would get lonesome at times, and the radio was a great comfort to her. Her daughter was truly a helpmeet for her, always at her command, and everything that it was possible to do for her mother was done. Sister Sue had reached the ripe old age of ninety-five years. Her mind was clear to the very last. She would pray daily for the Lord to take her home, if it was his holy will. One time she asked me if it was a sin to ask the Lord to take her. I quoted the words of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane: "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." She answered, Yes, I want to live my appointed days, but I do long to be at rest. Her hope she professed thirty-three years ago was still her theme; she never wavered from it. Amazing grace was a sweet sound to her. She had lived by it, and as it was good enough to live by it was also good enough to die by. On the morning of October 9th we met at the home in Georgetown and I spoke briefly in prayer, and then the body was conveyed to the cemetery at Sadieville, about twenty miles distance, where a short service was held. By her request, the first six verses of the fourteenth chapter of John were used as a basis of my short

talk, hymn 1216 (Beebe's collection) "The day is past and gone," etc., by her request was sung, and the body was lowered into the silent tomb beside her husband, who had preceded her twenty years. May the Lord bless the lonely daughter, the brethren of Elk Lick Church and her many friends. May we all be reconciled, and say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

- GEORGE L. WEAVER.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, our heavenly Father, according to his divine will, on the 18th day of March, 1939, called from our midst our beloved brother, ELDER J. W. KERLEY, who was Moderator of the original Mississippi River Association of Old School Baptist churches of Christ, who we held in the highest esteem for his soundness in doctrine and practice, who contended earnestly and fearlessly for salvation by grace, for both time and eternity, before friend and foe. Be it

RESOLVED, that we, the several churches composing the Mississippi River Association, bow our heads in solemn submission to the will of our heavenly Father in removing from our midst our beloved brother, Elder J. W. Kerley. We feel our loss is great, but feel that our great loss is his eternal gain. Though he be dead, yet he liveth and will continue to live in the hearts and memories of his brethren and sisters who knew him. It could well be said of him, that he fought a good fight, he kept the faith and finished his course. We feel there is a crown of righteousness laid up for him in heaven, beyond this vale of tears. Be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be printed in our Minutes and a copy be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication, also a copy be sent to his family.

The foregoing Resolution was read and received and committee discharged.

O. W. PERKINS,
R. M. BRANN,
J. B. COLLIER.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder D. E. Robinson pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

CHURCH MEETING PLACE CHANGED.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets each first and third Sunday at eleven o'clock a. m. at 2407½ Main Street, Dallas, Texas, and on Saturday before each first Sunday at 2:30 p. m. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church holds meetings the fourth Sunday of each month at 1026 East Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Meeting begins at 10:30 a. m., dismisses for lunch and reconvenes at 2 o'clock p. m. Meeting days have been changed from the first to the fourth Sunday of each month. No Saturday or night meetings.

BURLIE HALL, Pastor
W. H. CAVE, Ass't Pastor.
(MRS.) H. B. CURLIE, Church Clerk

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Mod., pro. tem.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Church, Predestinarian Baptist, meets in Napavine, Wash., on the fourth Sunday of each month, one block west of railroad depot, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 108. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1940. NO. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE TWO SCHOOLS OF PREDESTINARIANS.

To-day I feel somewhat impressed to write on the above subject, but before discussing it will give you Webster's definition of the word "predestination." He says it is "the purpose of God from eternity respecting all events." An event is that which happens, or comes to pass. Owing to the perfection of God's nature, he decreed all things in one act of his eternal mind. His decrees are eternal, most wise, holy, just, absolute and unchangeable.

The two schools of predestinarians are defined as follows: Supralapsarians, or Anteriors, who believe that God's decrees were before, or anterior, to the fall. Sublapsarians, or Posterior Predestinarians, who believe that his decrees were after the fall. The latter theory would lead us to believe that God waited to see what man would do before he declared what He would do. This idea would contradict Webster's definition of the word, also many plain statements in God's word, such as the following: "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Eph. iii. 11. "And as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed."—Acts xiii. 48. This theory would also contradict the London Confession of Faith, "God hath decreed in himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever come to pass." "He is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth."—Job xxiii. 13. "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isaiah xlvi. 9, 10. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."—Isaiah xiv. 24. "This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth;

and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all nations. For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?"—Isaiah xiv. 26, 27. That eternal counsel, or covenant and promise, was between the Persons that compose the Trinity: the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God: and he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain."—2 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4. The foregoing presents a conversation between the God of Israel and the Rock of Israel, which Rock was Christ. Then a description, or the qualifications of Christ as a Ruler over his house is given. "Although my house be not so with God." That is, his church in her present state is not pure and holy as her Head which ruleth over her. Yet not up to the present time is the body, or church, as pure as her Husband, as the One who ruleth over her. "Yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure." All the stipulations of this covenant were agreed upon by the eternal Three: the Father, in election; the Son, in redemption; the Holy Spirit, in calling. It is sure there can be no failure. It is by the blood of that covenant that the prisoners are sent forth out of the pit wherein is no water. This house that is ruled over by the Builder and Maker does not grow or get any larger, men are not rendering any assistance in the erecting of that building. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."—Psalms cxxvii. 1. "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table; she hath sent forth her maidens; she crieth upon the highest places of the city."—Prov. ix. 1-3. The foregoing shows clearly that in the mind and purpose of God the church stood complete. Through his infinite wisdom and power he could call those things that be not as though they were. "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee."—Psalms cxxxix. 16, 17. Oh what a great God the children of God have. One who is eternal, all-wise, all-powerful, unchangeable, whose omnipresence fills immensity, able to save to the uttermost, nothing too hard for him, Creator of all things in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible, accomplishing his will and purpose, causing everything that hath breath to praise him.

We find in Psalms cxlviii. 1-4, the psalmist mentions the celestial bodies, the heavens, lights, angels and all hosts, sun, moon and stars of light, then ex-

claims, "Let them praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded, and they were created. He hath also stablished them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass." From the seventh verse to the conclusion of the chapter he speaks of terrestial things: "Ye dragons, and all deeps: fire, and hail; snow, and vapors; stormy wind fulfilling his word: mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars: beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and all flying fowl: kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth: both young men and maidens; old men and children; let them praise the name of the Lord." The word "let" here has the same meaning as in Genesis i. 3, when God said, "Let there be light: and there was light."

The foregoing is a faint description of our great God.

LYTLE BURNS.

FLORENCE, Ala., May 25, 1939.

RINGGOLD, Virginia.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—DEAR SON:—At your request, I attempt to write some of my experience, and of how it has been with me from my childhood up to this date that puts me eighty-two years old. I was born September 7th, 1857, near Ringgold, Virginia. I saw my father go and come from the war between the North and South, in which he fought four years. I saw the victors come to our home and take away good horses and leave some old broken-down and no good ones in their places, and take everything else they could find and wanted. I remember some of the sad hours seen and felt by my mother, who was left at home helpless, but she and father trusted in the God I hope we love and sometimes serve and worship. Oh may we ever seek the kingdom of heaven first and look to him and be enabled to say as Job did, Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. My parents sent me to school when convenient, and we generally had good teachers, but I never went to college. When I was about seventeen years old father died and I soon left home and entered a country store with a schoolmate, but did not remain there very long. I then went to manage a farm near my mother's, so I could see them often. I remember my mother looked at me in sorrow when I left home, and she gave me a Testament to read, but I was like other boys and went on gaily, caring but little for these things. In early manhood I was married to Eliza A. Shelton, and when we had four children she died, and you were only two years old. I was then merchandising and my mother was with me in my trouble, and probably the greatest trial of my life was when my children came home from their mother's parents and their mother was cold in death in my home. Under the trial and loss of my wife my business grew dull, and I owed money for goods and could not pay, so it seemed I must fail or make a consignment and give up. Of course I told mother about it, and she seemed greatly distressed, so one night when I walked in the house from the store I found mother on her knees, with her face buried in her hands, and I am

satisfied she was praying for her distressed son, and I believed God heard and answered her prayer, for in a short time two men came and asked me to keep some money for them awhile, and told me to use it if I desired, just so I would return it at a certain date. It was just about the amount I needed to pay notes due, so I gladly accepted it, and when they called for it I was ready to pay them back. So I felt the Lord was caring for me.

About two years later I married Nannie J. Williams, another good woman, who has been true and faithful to me, and who is yet able to keep house for us, although very feeble. We have now lived together for more than fifty years and I feel I could not live without her, often trying to pray that we may be taken at or near the same time from this world, but I also desire to say, The Lord's will be done. My prayer, if indeed I do pray, is that the Lord will forgive us and have mercy upon us, and remember our loved ones everywhere. He knows where they are and what they need and can supply them. May he remember the aged and the feeble minded, the sick and afflicted, and those bowed down or in trouble. I know he is the Great Physician and can heal and comfort them and change hearts of the "Hitlers" and cause them to desire peace. May he have mercy upon all for whom we should pray, even those who hate us for his sake, etc.

Now wife and I can sit down and talk of the goodness of God, and how he has blessed us all the days of our lives, and we hope he still cares for us in our old age and has not forgotten us. We are now living near Ringgold, Virginia, near my old home, on land owned by my youngest son, the only child by my last wife, and he looks after us with a careful mind. The Lord gave me five children, four boys and one girl, but he has taken away one by death. He was a handsome and bright boy, and lived to be over fifty years of age. Now we are waiting for the Lord to care for us still. Now, my son, I feel you and I are like Jonathan and David, and while I love you dearly as a child, I also love you because I see the marks of Jesus in your life and feel that he has called and qualified you to preach Jesus to poor sinners. Oh may I be enabled to praise, honor and thank him for his goodness and mercy to me, a vile sinner. I feel to have the experience of Mephibosheth, that I am lame on both feet, but at times I feel we are brought to the King's table and that our heavenly Father will some day enable us to praise him in an acceptable way for his goodness and mercy. Amen.

I feel I have thus far left out part of my experience, or the time I obtained a hope. It was while I was living on the place I sold to Douglas Dyer. I became distressed about my condition, feeling to be a great sinner, which caused me to weep and mourn, and often at night my pillow was made wet with tears, but one evening while standing on the back porch I was enabled to rejoice, feeling the Lord had forgiven my sins. Soon after that I joined Cane Creek Church, and was baptized by Elder James S. Dameron. He and

Elder Thomas N. Walton were serving the church together at that time. I am yet satisfied to remain with that church, though only a few attend our meetings. I joined about the time you were born. I feel sure I love God's children.

I doubt if I shall write much more, for my eyes are weak and I can hardly see the lines, but if the Lord gives me something to write he can also give me strength to do so. I hope you can read this, and if so, correct mistakes, and do as you please with it.

Your father,

D. L. DODSON.

HABAKKUK I. 12, 13.

MY MIND is now being exercised on some wonderful truth expressed by Habakkuk in the first chapter. The first paragraph expresses "the burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see." The burden was why he beheld grievance, spoiling and violence, and why there were those who raise up strife and contention. It is evident that the wicked doth compass about the righteous and wrong judgment proceedeth. We are sometimes made to wonder with Habakkuk why these things exist. Some would have us believe that this is the work of the devil over which God does not exercise control. But that god is not Israel's God. Our God works all things. We hear him saying, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isaiah xlvi. 9, 10. "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"—Dan. iv. 35. We see the fact revealed in the second paragraph of the first chapter of Habakkuk that the raising up of the "Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwelling-places which are not their's," is the work of God. God declares through the prophet that the heathen will not believe this though it be told them. The heathen of to-day will not believe that the raising up of the bitter, hasty and wicked people is the work of God. In relating the characteristics and actions of this bitter and hasty nation he also makes plain that "their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves." They are not forced to do these things, but do them of their own accord. This is their nature and delight. This thought is in harmony with James i. 13, 14: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." Nay, the Chaldeans could not charge their wrong judgment and actions to the predestination of God, because it was their desire to do what they did do. Neither can man charge God with being the cause of his sins (even though the predestination of God embraced them), for man

"is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."—James i. 14, 15. Yes, God created the waster to destroy, and the waster has pleasure in destruction. God also created the wicked for the day of evil, and the wicked hath pleasure in wickedness. The twelfth and thirteenth verses of the first chapter of Habakkuk give sufficient explanation of the purpose of God in raising up the bitter and hasty nation that deals treacherously and oppresses the righteous. God is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look upon iniquity, therefore it is *not* for the sake of evil and iniquity that these things are prevalent, but "O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction." They are established and ordained for the judgment and correction of the chosen of God. The wicked are the sword of the Lord, and they are raised up for that purpose. God hath a noble purpose in all things, and, as Paul states, We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. I believe it takes the wicked, the waster and all other things opposing godliness (even our carnal minds) to make up the furnace of affliction in which God's people are chosen. Ye are refined, but not with silver; ye are chosen in the furnace of affliction.

Now let us quote the complete twelfth verse of the first chapter of Habakkuk: "Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord, my God, mine Holy One? We shall not die. O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction." The first part of this verse is an interrogative affirmation, ascribing all power to God. As he is from everlasting, and beside him there is none else, let us conclude that nothing has transpired without his establishment and ordination. In the phrase, "We shall not die," "we" embraces all those whom "they" oppose. There are two classes of people under consideration in this chapter. "They" include the wicked and "we" include the righteous, or children of God. Even though the righteous are oppressed and persecuted by the wicked (whose aim is to harm and destroy the righteous), God hath even established and ordained their wicked acts to the good of his children. He plainly states it is for judgment and correction. Instead of being for the destruction of his people (as the wicked aim) God hath established and ordained them for the judgment and correction of his chosen. "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of his correction: for whom the Lord loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth."—Prov. iii. 12, 13. (See Job v. 17.) "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."—Heb. xii. 6. "But if ye be without chastisement * * * * then are ye bastards, and not sons."—Heb. xii. 8. In Psalms cxxxvi. 10-15, we read that God smote Egypt in their first-born and brought out Israel from among

them with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, and divided the Red Sea into parts, and *made* Israel to pass through the midst of it, but overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea. God was using Moses to lead the children of Israel, and the enemy to drive them. The Egyptians were zealously pursuing the Israelites, with a motive in mind different from the purpose of God, which was to drive them to deliverance. Just as soon as Pharaoh and his army had completed the purpose God had in raising them up (to push the Israelites to deliverance) they were drowned. This brings to mind these two Scriptures: With lovingkindness have I *drawn* thee, and, As with the horns of an unicorn Ephriam shall be *pushed* to the ends of the earth. The Israelites were *drawn* by Moses and the cloud, *pushed* by the enemy and *hedged in* by the walls of water.

I know this is considered hard doctrine by carnal reasoning, and does not give any credit or praise to man, but it pleases God to use the furnace of affliction to reveal this fact to God's children. Thus they are "driven to the ends of the earth." They are driven to the end of their own ability and *made* willing to comply with that effectual command of sweet deliverance: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is *none* else."—Isaiah xlv. 22. The journey to the "ends of the earth" is extremely unpleasant, and the "furnace of affliction" well describes this process of the new birth. But this well qualifies the child of God to deeply appreciate the paradise which is the result of the remembrance of Jesus Christ being made manifest unto them.

Brethren, write me when you have a mind.

E. J. LAMBERT.

CULLENDALE, Arkansas.

MORELAND, Kansas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find check for $2.10, to renew my subscription for the SIGNS. I surely enjoy every number, and I especially enjoyed the experience in the November number.

In going through my papers a few days ago, I came across a letter which I received from my dear sister in the flesh, who departed this life January 30th, 1933. The letter was, and is, so precious to me I decided to send it to the SIGNS for publication, if you see fit; if not, it will be all right with me.

Your brother in hope,

U. S. LOYD.

OGALLAH, Kansas, Feb. 10, 1929.

DEAR ULYSSES AND FAMILY:—As I am sitting here alone meditating upon your good letter, I feel like writing some of my thoughts and experiences, hoping it is all prompted of the Lord.

You spoke of wondering and wondering if our doctrine is true. Of course I do not believe we can possibly know, yet sometimes I feel that I do know. John the Baptist doubted after seeing all that he had, so there must be doubts and fears, but speaking just for myself, I really do not know that I can say I have ever doubted the doctrine after passing through what seems so plain to me, and yet how far it may be

from the truth. Can it be just fancy? Is it possible that it is all just a myth? Here is the substance of it: I can hardly remember when I was not interested in religion. I was brought up in Sunday School, from a small child until about the age of fourteen years. Father was a strong advocate of Sunday School, but Mother, being an Old Baptist, was not, though she did not object to our going. Well, we were taught about the same then as now, except we used the Bible instead of the quarterly; but, any way, the "do and live" system was taught to the letter: Read the Bible, pray and go to Sunday School, all of which I tried to do. As you know, Mother died in 1887, and we moved to Missouri. I never attended Sunday School there, but still my mind ran on the teaching I had had. About the time I was sixteen or seventeen years of age I became much troubled about the judgment. I suffered I cannot tell how much. I started trying to read the Bible, but, oh dear, how terrible it was! My fears increased one hundred fold. There was nothing there for me, or any one else. I was condemned everywhere. I dreaded the very sight of the Bible. I have put it down and piled books upon it, so I could not see it. Think what an awful frame of mind I was in. I wanted to tell Father, but realized he could not help me. I worried about him, too, for at that time he would swear and do other things I thought bad.

Well, time went on and we came back to Kansas, and, of course, in company with other young folks I started to go to Sunday School again, and to revival meetings, but all their talk to me was like water falling on a duck, but I began to see a change in Father, but none in myself, and oh how I did hate to see him pick up the Bible. How strange that may seem. But he, I believe, was given an understanding of it, and he began to talk it and I began to believe it, but time went on without much change, except that I loved to hear Father talk on the Bible. As you remember, we got in touch with some Old Baptists, A. H. Cook, and others, got some papers, and I enjoyed them more than I can tell. I could just sit and read and read and read. I remember an incident, and you do, too. It was when Elder Jacob Odle and Lon Cook came to our house. Father had gone to Wakeeney that day, and on the way home we talked on church affairs, and I remember I cried. It just seemed I wanted to see some of the Old Baptists, and when we got home they were there. Time went on, and the first winter we lived in the new house I was not very well and was lying on the bed with my face toward the wall, when a sweet, gentle peace came over me and I cried for joy. Peace which passeth understanding. Peace which the world cannot give nor take away. I remember how quiet I felt. I did not want to tell it. It was a treasure; a treasure in an earthen vessel. But a few days later I told Father, and he said, "Thank God, sister." I am still trying to say, "Thank God," but oh how many, many days I have had when all was dark and wild and I would think, "Can I deem myself a child?" I feel my guilt and am

very sorry for sin, and I grieve that I go right on the same way; no improvement. I say many mean things that hurt me, and I am very sorry. I am continually begging for mercy, for it is all my hope. With all this in my life, I cannot doubt predestination, absolute, and election according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. It is all I have to look to. I tried myself, and found I was ten thousand talents in debt, and not a farthing to pay.

"'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed."

Well, I have written much, but have hesitated to mail it, but you know how prone we are to make mistakes, and to assume more than we should, perhaps, and that sometimes we feel sure of a thing and the next minute find ourselves in doubt. Surely the flesh profiteth nothing.

I do prize your letters very much, and always keep them. Write again soon. Love to all.

IDA WIEBKE.

WOODWARD, Iowa.

DEAR BRETHREN:—My heart goes out in gratitude to you for your kindness in sending me your dear paper for so long without renumeration. Surely God will bless your every effort for your kindness to the saints scattered abroad, of whom I am the least, if one at all. I cannot in my weakness find words to thank you for sending me the SIGNS as long as you have, but I hope I am thankful that I have been given a way to pay up in full and a year in advance. I am nearing my stay here on earth, although I am in reasonably good health and strength, and am able to work, for which I am thankful, but I know the time will soon come when I will quit the walks of men, and through His grace and mercy I hope to reach the shore of sweet deliverance, without any works of my own or anything that I may do. Grace, and grace alone, is all the hope I have. I wish I could write to the comfort of the saints of God like some whose articles appear in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have met some of them in my time, and it was of great comfort to me. But none of them are strangers, for we all speak the same language and eat the same food when hungry, and that food is salvation by grace.

May God bless you, the editors and all who write for your paper. Your efforts are not in vain.

W. J. KIMBRO.

LONG BEACH, California.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been a constant reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for more than forty years, and think it the best Old Baptist paper published in the country. I fully indorse the doctrine it sets forth. My wife and I are in our seventy-seventh year, and we hope to subscribe for it as long as we are in this time world. Do with the extra dollar as you see fit. Wish it could be more.

Wishing the editors and publishers much prosperity, temporal and spiritual, for the coming year, I am yours in hope of a glorious resurrection,

G. A. DUNDAS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1940.

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NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

ANOTHER eventful and history-making year has come to a close. The good and bad alike have gone into the record and nothing can be recalled or changed. All must be locked up and sealed in the volume which is now to be filed away for future reference. Very few, perhaps, are without any regret for misdeeds done, or are fully satisfied with their own achievements. It, therefore, behooves us all to examine ourselves with the view of rectifying, as far as possible past mistakes, and resolving as much as in us is to mend our ways and constantly add to our virtues. At the most, we shall prove to be unprofitable servants of the Lord, but that is no reason why we should not strive to be more faithful and to enter in at the strait gate which leadeth to life everlasting. A large part of the world is heavily burdened with sorrows, sufferings and the horrors of war, which must be almost unbearable to those who have to endure them. For some reason, better known unto the Lord, we have been highly favored to dwell in peace. Should we not pause and give thanks to God for so graciously apportioning our lot and assigning to us the station in human affairs which we occupy? Most and best of all we should thank him for having revealed unto us his glorious truth. Our manifold blessings cannot be said to have honestly been earned by us, for by nature we, too, are but vile and corruptible creatures, but we should desire to keep constantly in mind God's mercy, which endureth for ever. As a nation, much may be required of us, and God grant that we shall have the wisdom and courage to do among the peoples of the earth that which shall be well-pleasing in his sight.

During the past year the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been upheld by the same omnipotent power which has sustained it for the previous one hundred and six years. It would not be true to claim, however, that its publication has been carried on without discouragements and trials, but, like Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego when cast into the furnace heated seven times hot, we have witnessed the counteracting influence of God's holy presence and his divine power in subduing the fires of opposition and preserving us and our family paper

amidst all of our difficulties. With but two or three notable exceptions, we received very little criticism of our work on the paper during 1939, while on the other hand we have received considerable evidence of satisfaction and approval from our readers. This has greatly encouraged us to carry on and to continue to "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." We are still endeavoring to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, and by the grace of God we shall not lay down our armor until we have gone whithersoever the Lord hath appointed and spoken and written all which he hath commanded concerning us.

There is no better time than the beginning of the year, unless perhaps it be all through the year, for all of us to resolve firmly to conform strictly to the Bible in presenting the truth. Not long ago we were much impressed by the fact that a very high official of the Federal Government in Washington took occasion to stress a number of points in connection with the Constitution of the United States, as well as the law of our country. He cited in considerable detail some of the many interpretations of the Constitution made by more or less prominent men during the past one hundred and fifty years, or thereabouts, and also emphasized the methods employed by some of our shrewdest lawyers in pleading cases before even the highest tribunals in the country, by quoting almost exclusively from decisions of courts varying in degree. His conclusion was, It is high time we swept aside many of the interpretations and decisions and came back to fundamental principles and the starting point: the Constitution and the law themselves. That which is of paramount importance should be, What is written therein? We are aware to some extent of the practice of lawyers in presenting as they often do decisions which were made under entirely different circumstances to the cases in question, and, therefore, such evidence should be regarded as irrelevant and immaterial, but nevertheless they will try to gain their point by such procedure. In considering the foregoing we were made to wonder if a parallel case did not exist in the ranks of Old School Baptists as regards the Scriptures and what men have written concerning their meaning. Some Old Baptists are given to reading extensively the opinions of other men both in and out of the church, with the result, we fear, that they have either consciously or unconsciously imbibed strange and erroneous doctrines, and from time to time foster them upon our people. We would very much like to see a "back to the Bible" movement among Old School Baptists. Let us take the plain word of God as the man of our counsel, independent of all that men may say or think. Let us also be careful to consider the Scriptures in conjunction with their contexts, otherwise we may not give them their proper meaning. Israel of old was forbidden to fraternize or to make a confederacy with the Syrians, or to go in their ways. It is written, "To the

law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."—Isaiah viii. 20. Even a truly called and qualified gospel minister may not always have light on every phase of gospel truth, and the fact that he is a gospel preacher does not necessarily mean that all he preaches is the gospel. Therefore, we should not be like young birds that open their mouths and swallow whatever is put in them, but rather should we try the spirits whether they be of God, and if any come among us bringing not the doctrine of God our Savior, we should refuse to bid them Godspeed. Paul admonished his brethren not to follow him beyond what he followed Christ. He was also careful when he stepped out of his apostolic role to say that he spake only as a man. We earnestly hope that our brethren will watch over us for good and we assure them that we will most gladly welcome constructive criticism when it is made in the right spirit. We most certainly do not wish any one to follow us when we depart from that which is written. Realizing our own limitations, we have hesitated to withhold from publication views of certain of the brethren whom we esteem for the truth's sake upon subjects which we saw differently from what they presented, and while desiring to be careful that nothing poisonous shall be spread upon the table which is set for our readers in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, at the same time we have endeavored to be fair, even to the point of being liberal in our attitude towards some who have contributed to our columns. We are glad that our efforts in this respect appear to be bearing fruit, and we are most grateful to one of our esteemed associate editors for having expressed in one of his letters to us, touching upon our work as editor, the following sentiment: "I have hoped that your fair way of handling the correspondence, and the freedom given us associates to write as we feel, would be enough to silence any, that the SIGNS was not denying its original prospectus." He further added, "Try to do the right thing and ask the Lord for wisdom and guidance." We feel this is excellent advice, and can truthfully say that it is exactly just what we have been endeavoring to do. Some may feel when we publish something with which we are not in full accord that we should then and there point it out and also state what we believe about it. This may well be said to be within our province and privilege as editor, but we doubt the expediency of such practice in general. We shall continue to watch and decide as best we can the kind of material which shall appear in our family paper, and God being our helper we shall also endeavor to state as clearly as we know how our own views on any subject when it seems proper or necessary. In the meantime we hope others will continue to write for our columns (using pen and ink on white paper or clear type whenever possible), and we promise in advance to give their articles every consideration consistent with the principles of divine truth as we see them. We have felt compelled to return a number of articles in the past to their authors, without publishing

them. In most cases, so far as we know, our brethren have either seen our point of view or gracefully accepted our decision. We are only human and must make mistakes ourself, so we hope the brethren will keep this in mind and bear with us as best they can.

In contemplating first what the basis of our New Year's Greeting should be, we thought of using the twenty-fourth verse of the twentieth chapter of Acts, but having already generalized to a considerable extent, we will touch upon this more or less briefly. Every subject of divine grace is familiar, at least in part, with the trials of God's elect, and knows that they are beset before and behind and on every side with problems too hard for them to solve in and of themselves. The great apostle met opposition wherever he went, and we hear him saying in connection with the Scripture to which we have referred: "And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me." Then, he continues by saying, "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, wich I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."—Acts xx. 24. If we are at all acquainted with our own heart, notwithstanding all that is contrary which seems to stand in the way of our rendering service to our God and his people, we feel to adopt substantially the words of the apostle, and say, None of these things shall move or deter us from our course. Having set our hand to the plow we are firmly resolved not to turn back. Neither do we desire to count our life dear unto ourself where the things of God are at stake. There is most certainly no cause on this earth that is more worthy or deserving of sacrifice, yea, if need be, the life of any individual than that of the gospel. We are persuaded, as the Holy Ghost witnesseth that bonds and afflictions shall abide whomsoever it may be that stands in its defense. Our hope and belief is that the Almighty hath appointed the time of our sojourn here below and the place which we are to fill, together with all that pertains to them (the sorrows as well as the joys), and our fervent prayer is that he will grant us grace sufficient for every need, that we may finish our course with joy and the ministry which we have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. By God's help we shall stand in our lot and await our appointed time to depart from this vain world and go to our eternal home, where we shall see Jesus as he is, and be like him, and be satisfied. As long as it is God's purpose for us to remain in this world we hope he will make us to be a faithful witness to his cause and enable us to fight the good fight of faith, ever looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. And, considering him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself,

we hope not to be overwearied or faint in our mind.

In conclusion, let us express the hope that God will reconcile our readers to whatever has been his pleasure concerning them in the past, and that he will give you faith to trust him for whatever lies ahead.

The future can bring with it nothing
But what he will bear us through,
For he who clothes the lilies
Will keep his people, too.

Our best wishes to you all throughout the year.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder H. H. Lefferts.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the Mount Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 11th, 12th and 13th, 1939, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Inasmuch as our printed Minutes of these meetings from year to year do not contain a statement of doctrinal principles for which we, as an association, stand; it may be well at this time for us to embody in this Letter an affirmation of our doctrinal position. *First,* then, we believe in the one true and living God, that God is not merely a Being but a Person. The Scriptures so reveal him. In the Godhead, there are three: Father, Son and Holy Ghost. These are not simply official titles of the one God, but three distinct Persons, yet not at all a plurality of Gods, but one God subsisting in three co-eternal Persons. This is very sublime, a subject to be handled only with deep reverence and with a very keen sense of our humility in being not able to grasp it comprehendingly in any measure farther than it pleases God to reveal himself in his word and by his Spirit.

Second, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the revealed written word of God, the one and only infallible record which God has been pleased to commit to writing. Those men by whom the Scriptures were written were so handled by the Holy Spirit that they were inspired not merely with the substance to be recorded by them, but were equally inspired as to the manner and words in which that record was to be given. The Scriptures are for the people of God principally, being for their indoctrination, for their reproof, their correction and for their instruction in righteousness. In order to be savingly believed, the Scriptures have to be applied by the Holy Spirit to the individual for whom God, in his grace, intends them. The truths and promises contained in Holy Writ cannot be rightfully and savingly appropriated to one's self at one's own pleasure by one's own will and intelligence. There must be an experimential inwrought work of grace in the conscience and soul before one can savingly and faithfully and hopefully embrace divine truth.

Third, we believe in what is generally known as the "absolute" predestination of all things, that the omnipotent and

omniscient Jehovah did freely and independently and absolutely predestinate before time all things that ever transpire in time. No event in all human history has ever occurred exclusive of the Divine Will. The eternal purpose and will of God embrace all things, yet so that, by no means, is God the author of sin.

Fourth, God the Father made choice of all those whom he designed to save. He made this election before time began. He chose them in his Son Jesus Christ, and he chose them not merely with regard to their souls, but inclusive of their whole persons: body, soul and spirit. This election of his people by the Father was wholly and entirely of his own good pleasure, the reason and cause of this election being altogether in God himself and in no wise with respect to any foreknown principle of virtue or merit that might thereafter be in any of the elect. In other words, this choice of God in which he chose his people in Christ before the foundation of the world was wholly an act of sovereign grace, without regard whatever to anything there might, or might not, be in his people thereafter.

Fifth, Jesus Christ the eternal Son of God was made flesh, born of a woman, having been properly and holily conceived by the Holy Ghost, in order to purchase with his own blood all those whom the Father entrusted to him before time began. What the Father determined, the Son accomplished. He finished the work which the Father gave him to do. He saved perfectly and forever, by the one offering of himself, by the one sacrificial atonement which he made himself, all for whom the Father had constituted him Head and Surety in the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, which covenant was made, signed and sealed by and with and in the three eternal Persons in the Godhead before the foundation of the world.

Sixth, the Holy Spirit effectually calls to repentance, quickens, regenerates and experimentally saves all those chosen unto salvation by the Father before time, and redeemed by the Son in time. The Holy Spirit brings the elect of God to the belief of the truth and maintains the believer in the bonds of the truth. The Holy Spirit is the imparter of divine life, the nourisher and maintainer of that life. The Holy Spirit convicts the sinner of his lost and ruined state of death and condemnation in the first Adam, and when this conviction has been enough deepened in the sinner's conscience, then the Holy Spirit reveals to and in the stricken sinner the marvelous salvation accomplished for him in the last Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ. Not only this, but the Holy Spirit abides with and in the believer as the Guide, Counsellor and Teacher and Comforter unto the future appearing of Christ himself, at which time the Holy Ghost will deliver into the embrace of the heavenly Bridegroom all the members of the bride, the elect church.

Seventh, the obedience of the child of God unto any or all the gospel precepts of Christ is alone by the grace of God equally as much as the believer's

first induction by the Spirit into a state of grace. Obedience to the gospel can never be acceptably rendered to our Redeemer in the energy of the flesh, because the body is declared to be dead because of sin. It is alone in the energy, and by the enablement, of the Holy Spirit that any believer can walk acceptably in obedience before God. In other words, salvation is wholly of grace, whether it be in the first instance of the soul's being quickened into divine life, or afterward in the maintenance of that life unto the day of Jesus Christ. All is of God, wholly of grace. The believer has no part in it save to be the blessed recipient of an already accomplished work yet to be revealed and made known in its fullness.

Eighth, this association believes in the resurrection of the dead, that is the resurrection of the bodies of the saints at the future coming of the Lord himself from heaven when the dead in Christ shall rise first, at which time those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall all be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air and so forever be with the Lord. This is the "blessed hope" of the church of God toward which the faithful in Christ Jesus look, unto which we are rapidly hastening: the "appearing of the great God and of our Savior Jesus Christ." The Scriptures plainly teach that there will be a future or second personal appearing of Christ. As he once came in his own blessed Person, but in humility, to transact the atonement through suffering, blood and death, to redeem his people and to justify them from all iniquity, so will he verily come in his own exalted Person, in outshining and wondrous glory, the second time, yet future, that he may (1) consummate the complete salvation of his elect in taking from the grave its victory by bringing from the dead the bodies of his redeemed ones, changing them into the likeness of his own glorious body; and then (2) later to raise from death unto judgment all those denominated the wicked, or nonelect, that these latter may receive their just sentence from him, the great Judge, from whose sentence there can never be an appeal, and be sent away by him into the lake of fire of the second death.

Brethren, these are weighty and solemn truths. We have not enumerated in this Letter a single truth but which has ample scriptural foundation, yet each of these principles no man can or will believe until he is brought to the belief of it by the Holy Spirit. Carnal argument or human logic cannot convince men of the truth of God. At every step, Satan opposes the believer's growth in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. Yet the "righteous shall hold on his way," because the Person of the Holy Spirit maintains the believer in the way.

It is expected the next session of this Corresponding Meeting will be held with the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, to begin on Wednesday following the second Sunday in October, 1940, and to continue the two following days. At that time, we desire our sister churches and associations to meet with us again that we may have a

continuance of their love and fellowship in bonds of the truth of God as it is in Jesus Christ. We crave a continuance of your correspondence with us, and that you may, not merely by letter and message, but by messengers and members from your several bodies come and sit down with us in these meetings and participate in all our deliberations and partake of such entertainment in our homes as the Lord has blessed us with that we might pass it on to you.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Mod.
G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

(Written by Elder H. C. Ker.)

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Broad Creek Church, Sussex County, Delaware, October 18th and 19th, 1939, to the churches and other meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—For the subject of our annual Circular Letter we have chosen the words of Christ, John xviii. 36: "My kingdom is not of this world." The words of Jesus are spirit and life when applied to the subjects of his kingdom; every one of this kingdom is subject to the King of kings. All power and authority are his, his word is law and verily truth. When he says, "My kingdom is not of this world," we are not to question what he says, but believe his kingdom is not of this world, whether we understand it or not. The apostles in their first acquaintance with Jesus, as a man, thought he would set up an earthly kingdom; two of them, James and John, desired to be prominent in such kingdom, by sitting the one on the right hand and the other on the left hand of Jesus. He answered, "Ye know not what ye ask." They had to be taught by many sorrowful lessons, in drinking the cup that Jesus drank and in being baptized with the baptism that he was baptized with, that his kingdom is not of this world. The apostles had no prominence in the world, we mean religious world, among men, because of being the servants of God. They were considered "the offscouring of all things," accused of most every evil, because they preached Christ and the resurrection. They were prominent, however, in the kingdom of God, where believers in Christ and his power to save are only found. These men did not seek the applause of the world, they did not love the world, nor did they seek to please men. Paul said, "If I yet please men, I should not be the servant of Christ." A most serious question arises here: Are we who profess to be the servants of Christ seeking to please men? If so, we are not the servants of Christ; he is our King and Master, to him alone are we accountable for our stewardship. Do we sometimes round the corners in presenting the gospel, or desire to speak "smooth things," lest some one of the world be offended? Do we fail to talk of Christ and his lovingkindness when in the parlor because some are present who do not believe the truth? What is this but denying Christ and pleasing men? The conversation of those of God's kingdom in the early ages of the church was, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." They

were not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. A command was once given, "Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it." Should not the gospel of the grace of God be so set forth to-day? Should we not be bold in the defense of the truth, to speak in such a way that all who hear may know where we stand in this matter of salvation? There is no place in the army of God for a coward. In ancient times those who were afraid were not numbered with those who fought the battles. The doctrine cannot be preached too plain nor too strong for those who believe it. If unbelievers are offended at the truth it will be no more than they were when Christ preached his own power, the efficacy of his own blood and God's eternal purpose in preparing him a body. Thousands were offended at this kind of doctrine at one time, twelve only in that great company heard with comfort, and said, "Thou hast the words of eternal life." Jesus did not shun to preach the truth just as it is because it would not be received by unbelievers. Why should we attempt to build up this kingdom of God (which he alone builds) with worldly matter? Why, if it is not of this world? John, when on the isle that is called Patmos, saw, in vision, the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven. This is God's kingdom, and the fact that it comes down from God shows conclusively that it is not of this world. It is in the world, but no part of it, it is of God. It is a peaceful and quiet habitation, "for God is not the author of confusion, but of peace." God's kingdom is spiritual, heavenly and divine, because he reigns in it without a rival, he is one Lord, and his name one, therefore there can be no such thing as division in his kingdom. The question might be asked, Deos not the strife and war in the church to-day prove clearly that there is division, and that all of his kingdom is not spiritual? No, unless the words of our text, "My kingdom is not of this world," can be proven untrue. If we say there is division in God's kingdom we say that in part his kingdom is of this world. We also say the Zion of God is not a peaceable and quiet habitation. In our ideas of the kingdom of God we must not deny his word. His word is true, and all things must be tested by it. How can there be division in a kingdom when there is but one power? There is no power in God's kingdom except his own almighty power, therefore no division, no strife. Now the question, What means all the strife in the church of God to-day? "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand." If there is division in God's kingdom, or house, what will be the result? "It shall not stand." Who would dare say the kingdom or house of God shall not stand? "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." If there is division in it, it cannot stand, but the fact that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it proves conclusively that in it there is no division. The fighting of Satan against it does not make Satan a part of the church; he may be transformed into an angel of

light "so that he as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God," but it is all false, this is only one of his ways of fighting against it; he is still Satan, a liar and deceiver. Would God work against himself? No. Satan cannot work against himself. "How can Satan cast out Satan?" Why should we imagine that God is divided against himself or there is division in his kingdom? God is God, Satan is Satan, truth is truth, error is error. "From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?" "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not; and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy." Does not James make the distinction clear between these two principles? They are set forth as being opposite in every sense of the word; the one of the earth, the other from above; the one working every evil, and the other all good. These principles cannot be blended, therefore are not divided against themselves. When trouble, war, strife and confusion are manifest we have no authority to say the kingdom of God is divided, but the two principles are made manifest, the one of war, strife, error, unrighteousness and every false way; the other of peace, truth, righteousness and every good work. In this we see the word of God still maintained: "My kingdom is not of this world." The precious is often separated from the vile, but the vile has never been a part of the kingdom of God. "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not of us." When the apostles spake of division, a careful reader will observe that the idea of division in the kingdom of God is not set forth, but carnality was ever manifest, and we know that carnality is not a part of that kingdom which is "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Should wolves in sheep's clothing get into the visible kingdom of God, they are no part of his house, any more than a goat would be a sheep if clothed in a sheepskin. God will cast out all such, because no worldly material can have place in his heavenly kingdom. When we say visible kingdom, we mean church organization. Nevertheless "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation." Mortal eye cannot behold it; the Holy Ghost guides and teaches, but by faith we see the house of God eternal in the heavens.

The saints of God do not differ in form and appearance from those of the world, but there is something within them that identifies them with God: "it is Christ in you, the hope of glory." They do not love the world with its fol-

lies and delusions; they hate the commandments of men when preached as the gospel of God; they hate all sin. Yes, even the appearance of evil. They hate their own life. This shows also that the kingdom of God is not of this world.

The bondwoman and her son were cast out, because her son could not be heir with the son of the freewoman; it was impossible that there could be division in the inheritance. This casting out of the bondwoman's children is still going on, and will continue; this is one of God's ways to make manifest the heirs of promise. Paul did not claim relationship with the children of the bondwoman, but said, "Now, we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." The children of God need not be disturbed with regard to his kingdom, he builds the house and keeps the city. In Christ were chosen a definite number before the world began; this number composes the kingdom of God, hence having been chosen in Christ it is not of this world. Neither has it, nor can it, diminish, "for whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." This kingdom cannot be divided on earth nor in heaven. May the Lord give us to see, by faith, its spiritual completeness and perfection.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
GEORGE F. ADKINS, Clerk.
HAROLD H. BENNETT, Ass't Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Association, in session with Broad Creek Church, to the several associations with which we correspond, sendeth greetings, we hope in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Again it is our pleasure to address you by way of a Corresponding Letter. It has indeed been a pleasure to have your messengers with us at this season, and to hear your ministers declare the unsearchable riches of the grace of God as it is in Christ Jesus. We sincerely hope that your messengers can say with us, in truth, that it is good to be here.

Our next session is appointed, the Lord willing, to be held with Little Creek Church, at Delmar, Delaware, on Wednesday and Thursday after the third Sunday of October, 1940, at which time and place we hope to meet your messengers again.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
GEORGE F. ADKINS, Clerk.
HAROLD M. BENNETT, Ass't Clerk.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS."

WE will furnish extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER GEORGE B. McCLANAHAN was born in Putnam County, West Virginia, August 20th, 1851, and departed this life November 1st, 1939, at Elkins, Randolph County, West Virginia, aged 88 years, 2 months and 11 days. For the past two years he had been in failing health, and had been bedfast for fourteen weeks prior to his death. He bore his sickness with patience, seldom complaining. He was loved by all who knew him. He had been a minister of the Primitive Baptist Church for over thirty years. He is survived by his widow, and eight children by a former marriage; also by six step-children and a host of other relatives and friends.

Written by his widow,

JULIA C. McCLANAHAN.

ELDER A. C. BURNS was born at Douglas, Texas, February 9th, 1857, and fell asleep in Jesus June 14th, 1939, making his stay on earth 82 years, 4 months and 5 days. He served his churches for more than sixty-one years. December 13th, 1877, he was united in marriage to Miss Martha A. Lyons, and to their union eight sons were born, three of whom preceded him to the grave. Sister Burns departed this life June 11th, 1929. Elder Burns united with the Old School Baptists at West Bethlehem Church, Newton County, Texas, the first Saturday in May, 1876, and was baptized by Elder J. R. Burns. On the second Saturday in December, 1876, he united by letter with the Little Flock Church, Sabine County, Texas. At their regular meeting in April, 1878, the church licensed him to preach wherever God in his providence should cast his lot. By the hands of Elders J. K. P. Burns, Thomas Britton, J. F. Conn and Deacon Alex Harris he was ordained to the full work of the ministry in September, 1878. Brother Burns will be greatly missed by the churches. His counsel and advice were greatly appreciated. He leaves three sons at Center and two at San Augustine, Texas, to mourn their loss, but we feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

Written by one who loved him, and, I hope, his brother,

J. P. McMILLIAN.

DEATH claimed JOHNATHAN BALLARD, of Vega, N. Y., at his home there, September 1st, 1939, at the age of seventy-six years. He had been in poor health for two years, but had been confined to his home but a week before the end came. The funeral services were conducted at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Vega, the writer officiating. The interment was in the Vega cemetery. Deceased is survived by his wife, also three children: Harris, of Denver, N. Y., William, of Guilford, N. Y., Mrs. Orra Sherwood, of Vega, N. Y. Johnathan Ballard was born in Vega December 29th, 1862, and was the son of William and Lois (Kelly) Ballard. From his parents he inherited a strong and noble character, and throughout his long and useful life he manifested those sterling qualities of honor, industry, veracity, dependability, hospitality and sympathy that endeared him to all who knew him. Probably no more obliging neighbor ever lived in any community. He possessed mechanical ability to an unusal degree, and was skilled in working with wood or iron. He made a saw mill that he successfully operated by steam power and did much custom work for his neighbors. Devoted as a husband and a father, firm in the principles of the Old School Baptists, he did much for the church whose faith meant so much to him, though he never united with the church. His home was for many years an Old School Baptist home,

in the sense that brethren and friends of that faith found a hearty welcome within its walls. He delighted in acts of service for the brethren. In the year 1896 he was united in marriage to Miss Virtue Sweet, who proved a faithful and helpful companion, and who is left very lonely by her husband's death. He followed the occupation of farming, and spent all his life on the farm where he was born. The passing away of such a man is a loss to any community.

ALSO,

THE removal by death of sister ALICE V. BESEMER, at her home in Saugerties, N. Y., September 1st, 1939, was the occasion of widespread sorrow among the many brethren and friends who knew her, were associated with her, and loved and respected her for those qualities of womanhood and christianity, which could not fail to impress those who came in contact with her. Born February 9th, 1867, near Kingston, N. Y., she grew to womanhood in that vicinity, and received her education in the district schools, where she applied herself diligently as a pupil. She bore the maiden name of Alice V. Besemer, and resided for a time with a grandmother, then taught school successfully for some time. Her influence as teacher is remembered and commented upon by her former pupils, who pay her deserved tribute, holding in grateful memory those impressions that come from a true instructress outside of the mere routine of school life, that so help to mould and develop character. In 1890 she married Jacob Besemer, and of this union one child was born, a daughter, Bertha. Most of sister Besemer's married life was spent at Olive Bridge, N. Y. In 1923 Mr. and Mrs. Besemer removed to the neighboring town of Saugerties, where Mr. Besemer died in 1932, and where sister Besemer resided the remainder of her life. She was ill many months, during which time she was most tenderly cared for by her daughter, Mrs. Edward Adsit, who ministered to her every want, as far as possible, with loyal loving hands, and, with her husband, did all that was humanly possible to make her comfortable.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Olive and Hurley church-house, at Shokan, N. Y., the interment being in the family plot at Tongore Cemetery.

Many years ago sister Besemer received a hope in the mercy and saving grace of God through Jesus Christ, and evidenced by her life and conversation the blessed realities of the earnest of that incorruptible inheritance reserved in heaven for those who are kept by faith unto eternal salvation. Owing to her weakened condition in body she was not able to be immersed in the liquid grave in the ordinance of believers' baptism, as she was received by the Olive and Hurley Church as a candidate for baptism into the fellowship of that church but a short time before her death. Steadfast in the faith delivered unto the saints, forsaking the world with its allurements and looking forward to the time of her departure with hope undimmed and with longing for a better country, that is, a heavenly habitation, she passed peacefully away. For many years she was totally deaf, yet she never complained because of her affliction, and when she could, attended services, carefully watching the preacher for crumbs of comfort by the motion of his lips. She possessed keen spiritual discernment and was fond of meeting with her brethren. Such an one cannot otherwise than be sadly missed by those of the household of faith.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

MR. LEVIN GRAHAM departed this life October 24th, 1938, at his home in Mardela Springs, Maryland. He was born May 19th, 1862. His age was seventy-six years. December 17th, 1884, he married Namoi Myers, to which union were born five children. One daughter and one grandchild survive him. Mr. Graham was not a member of the church, but a firm believer and loved the doctrine of grace. He was always present at our meetings when possible to be there. He was a quiet, inoffensive man, attending to his own business. He had many friends, which was attested by the great number attending his funeral, which service was conducted by the writer at the Graham home. Interment was in the Mardela Cemetery. We greatly sympathize with the daughter and grandchild.

Written by request.

H. C. KER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Robert L. Davis, Kansas, $1; A. J. Doggett, Ala., 25 cents; Mrs. Ray B. Shortridge, Ill., $2; Mrs. Mary Duffus, B. C., $5; Warwick Church, N. Y., $10; Anson Quint, Maine, $3; G. A. Dundas, Calif., $1; Dr. Thomas H. McColl, Ont., $3; Mrs. T. H. Young, Ohio, $1; Mrs. Emma Ball, Va., $1; Mrs. G. T. Franklin, Va., $1; Mrs. F. S. Petty, Texas, $1; Mrs. J. B. Cullen, Ky., $2; Mrs. Mary H. Davis, Md., $2; J. C. Smallbone, Manitoba, $2; Mrs. J. D. Shafer, N. Y., $1; E. H. Winchell, Mich., $1; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $1; Ebenezer Church, N. Y., $10; H. L. Gloer, Ga., $1; J. W. Wageonheizer, N. Y., $1; Elisha R. Myers, S. D., $4; L. A. Wiss, Okla., $1.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder D. E. Robinson pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

CHURCH MEETING PLACE CHANGED.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets each first and third Sunday at eleven o'clock a. m. at 2407½ Main Street, Dallas, Texas, and on Saturday before each first Sunday at 2:30 p. m. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church holds meetings the fourth Sunday of each month at 1026 East Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Meeting begins at 10:30 a. m., dismisses for lunch and reconvenes at 2 o'clock p. m. Meeting days have been changed from the first to the fourth Sunday of each month. No Saturday or night meetings.

BURLIE HALL, Pastor
W. H. CAVE, Ass't Pastor.
(MRS.) H. B. CURLIE, Church Clerk

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Mod., pro. tem.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers.

Single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
MIDDLETOWN, N Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 108. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1940. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

EXPERIENCE AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY.

In looking back over my past experiences of this life, and seeing the many crooked paths and perverse ways I have passed through I seem to realize more and more that it has been by the goodness and mercy of God that I am to-day yet alive and in some measure am able to enjoy his mercy. I know that there has been a change in my deportment to some extent, and also a tremendous change in the way I see and believe. I further know that there is a cause for me seeing and believing differently now from what I once did. There is a cause to every effect, and God is the first cause of all causes. I to-day rejoice more in the cause and the primary reason of the change I have felt than in the change itself. Yet to-day I cannot say that the change that has come over me shall mean anything in the resurrection, but I do know that it has meant much to me here in this life.

In relating the reason I believe as I do, I must start with my childhood days. I was born in Carroll County, Virginia, January 2nd, 1911. While yet a baby my parents moved to North Carolina. I have one brother and one sister older than I, and one brother younger. My parents were not members of any denomination, and, as far as I know, I was not taught any religious belief at home. When I became eight years of age my mind was exercised on the subject of the resurrection, and I would dream at night of the end of time, and a few times I saw the awful power of God manifested in that great and notable day, when all people shall be brought again from the dead. It was fearful to my childish mind. I could not understand it. I began to dread to retire at night, and many times I was forced by my mother to go to bed, yet I would not and could not tell my folks what horrors I underwent. After retiring I would cry until, because of fear of my parents, I would do everything possible to prevent it, then from ex-

haustion I would go to sleep. These thoughts very seldom bothered me by day, but oh! when the evening shadows fell I would begin to fear, for I knew the night was at hand. This feeling continued with me for perhaps a year, then there came a period in my life when I was not concerned about anything spiritual. During this period my time was filled with school days and separation from my kindred, being at school most of the time. It was my chief aim on entering High School to educate myself for the practice of law, and I did everything possible to accomplish that ambition, but I can see now what Job realized when he said, "He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."—Job xxiii. 10. For when I was ready, it seemed, to really go into my heart's delight I was possessed with a different mind. So instead of going ahead with my work, I was given a mind to leave the country in which I was reared, and thus began a series of travels. I might say now that the place where my parents lived was in a community where many people lived who were either Primitive Baptists or believers therein, and I felt that they were the only people of that old, hateful, peculiar and old-fashioned faith in the world. On my first journey from home I went to the State of Florida, and one Sunday while there, in company with some other boys and girls joy-riding near Plant City, we came to an old church in the country where there was a very large crowd gathered. Out of curiosity we stopped, and, to my surprise, I found them to be those Old Baptists, just like those at home, fifteen hundred miles away. This was surprising to me, and I was forced to admit I was wrong in thinking there was none of them except in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina and Virginia.

In the year 1926 I returned home and went to school another year, and, so far as I know, thoughts of my eternal welfare never crossed my mind, except thinking that when I had taken all the pleasures of this life and had become so old I could no longer keep pace with my surroundings I would make a change, and accept the Lord and be saved. I thought it was that easy, and remained with me to do that when I got ready. At that time I had read the Bible some, and though I cannot say I understood any of it, I, in the eyes of my friends, was all right, and was elected secretary of two of our Sunday Schools, and was really getting up in the world, I thought. I had (as most children are to-day) been taught in childhood that if I was a bad boy the "bogy-man" would get me, and if I was a good boy I would go to heaven. When I was a little older I was told that if I was bad the devil would get me and take me to hell, and if I was good I would wear a crown of many stars in glory. Oh how many people who are grown to-day still cling to that childish belief. "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things."—1 Cor. xiii. 11.

At the age of seventeen I left home

again, against my parents' wishes, and came to Pulaski, Virginia, and began to work on public works. I was at that time given somewhat to strong drink, and many other vices, which in looking back upon I feel that I tasted every sin the devil had invented and had in good working order. In the fall of 1928 I met a girl, Miss Lillian Jones, who I fell in love with and began to go with regular, and in the fall of the following year (September 21st, 1929) we were married, without my parents knowing anything about it until afterwards. My wife belonged to the Missionaries, and I had no religious belief at all at that time. Occasionally I would go with her to her meetings, but I never was able to get anything out of any man's preaching, and all my life, up to that time, I never had. There was one thing I felt glad of, and that was that there were no Primitive Baptist churches in the community where we lived, so we were not bothered with those people who, I thought, were so antique and old-fashioned that they could not be right. We began at once to build us a house in which to live and call our home, which we did, and I had a feeling of security and superiority about me, which in the ensuing years I found to be false and built upon false standards. In the spring of the year 1932, in the midst of that feeling of false security and of being superior to my fellow-man, there arose in me a trouble which I have never been able to express to my satisfaction. I would come home from my work and the place did not look the same. I would go about my work methodically and as a machine. It seemed sometimes that my heart was "burning within me," and yet I could not tell why I felt so, nor could I tell any one my feelings. I felt that it was a matter which was mine alone and mine to endure. Immediately I set about to relieve this situation secretly, and it seemed the more I would try to do the less I would get done. When suddenly, and to my amazement, and with as much force as anything I have ever experienced, the awful thought came that I WAS A SINNER. Oh the misery, the woe, the depth of the despair into which I went! It was not what I had done, thought or said that I felt so bad about, but it was the fact that I was a helpless sinner by nature in the sight of a sin-avenging God. I went about my work in this awful condition for several weeks, sometimes feeling better, and thinking, "It is all over, and was only a very foolish thought," and again it would descend upon me and make me feel that I was the vilest wretch God had ever permitted to live, instead of the good, secure and superior boy I thought I was a few days before. All thoughts of my early ambition for law, or anything else, were erased by those terrible days and nights it was my lot to pass through, and I was made to again witness with the old servant of God: "Wearisome nights are appointed unto me," etc. One day in the midst of my lonely feelings the thought came, to my amazement, If you will pray to God he can relieve you. I was surprised again, for I never had tried to pray, so I tried to think of some place where I could be in secret and try to pray, but

when I would get there it would not look to me to be a suitable place, and when I would go down upon my knees I could not get relief. After that I would try somewhere else, but to no avail, and I was made to realize from whence cometh prayer and supplication, and that God openeth, and no man can shut; and shutteth, and no man can open. When my condition had reached the place where it seemed I had done everything humanly possible and had not found any relief, but was growing steadily worse, I was ready to give up. One evening on coming home from work, my wife said that there was to be a meeting that night at her church, and she wanted me to go with her, and I consented to go. I do not know that I had ever as yet believed in any religious organization, and I am sure I have never believed in the practice of those people who have mourners' benches, and who try to persuade people to join their organizations, yet that night I sat in the rear of the house, feeling miserable and poor, and at the close of the meeting I started to leave the house and for the first time in my natural life my strength failed me, and it seemed that my blood flowed as water in my veins, and I fell to the floor begging God for his mercy. What a blissful hour when it seemed that I was alone in all that throng of people and there was a small avenue opened up between God and me, and my heart beat with joy for the first time in several weeks, and I beheld the darkened element above, when suddenly the light of God's eternal love shone from behind me upon those darkened elements, as a searchlight shines on a dark night, and I saw the command of God written in letters of pure gold, illuminated by the light of God, for me alone. These words were written, and I beheld them with joy unspeakable, Arise, and follow me. In that hour my strength returned, my face was set as a flint and my heart was made to feel free from the awful burden and weight I had borne for several weeks, and I was made to feel that though I should die my home was in heaven, and a love sprang up that has not since died in my soul, a love for the Lord Jesus Christ, for at that time I was not established in the doctrine that I now believe. At the end of the week I united with the Missionaries, and felt that I had found a sanctuary and that I would never do wrong again as long as I lived. I was baptized by one of their preachers, into their fellowship. It seemed that I derived some happiness then, but about a month later, filled with good works, and feeling that I was capable of doing many things, I started for town, and on the way I had to cross a small creek, and there were several men there making a foot-walk across the creek, and thinking this would be one more good deed to add to my list of self-righteous deeds, I stopped to help, and the first blow I made with the axe I hit my leg, and before I realized it I had cursed. Oh the trouble that arose in my soul, and it seemed that the very clouds of trouble and distress dropped down over and around me. I left those people feeling that I was the most awful person in the whole world, and I felt to pray for for-

giveness, and I believe that God for Christ's sake forgave me and taught me that I was not my own keeper, and that I wa not perfect, and further, that "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Up to that time I had never received any joy out of preaching, and I doubt very seriously that I knew what preaching was. I attended meeting often, and would contribute toward the expenses of the church, yet I was in a state of bewilderment and could not understand the difference between truth and error. In the late spring of 1932 I was in bed one night, trying to get to sleep, when suddenly I felt I was going to die, and I began to wonder why, for I was perfectly healthy, as far as that goes, and then I was commanded very forcibly in my heart to go preach the gospel. The command was so great that I felt I was going to die, and I felt that my heart was as a sponge and was drawing the blood from all the parts of my body, yet that awful command, "Go preach the gospel," seemed to echo with every beat of my heart, and the sad and horrifying thought was that I knew not what the gospel was, as I had never heard it, to my knowledge. In that hour of dark despair I was made willing to go forth in his name, trusting he would give me to speak all he had appointed. I had always thought that if such should ever happen to me (since I had received a hope) some one else would see or know it also, so my heart was made to rejoice one evening after the night I was commanded to preach, when I met one of my neighbors, and he said he saw me the night before in a dream speaking in the name of the Lord. That gave me courage and comfort. I was liberated by the Missionaries to speak in public, which I did, and there was a peculiarity about my preaching, for when I would arise to speak I would speak slowly and for the people with whom I was a member, but there would come an enveloping Spirit upon and in me and I would be filled with a power which was strange to me, and while clothed with this power and Spirit I would speak with joy words that ordinarily I could not understand. The people seemed to be divided in their attitude toward my preaching: some seemed to like it, while others did not seem to understand.

In the summer of 1932 I moved to North Carolina, and it was not long until all my time was filled filling appointments, and several people came to me during that time and told me I was contending for two doctrines. They said that when I talked I would contend for Missions, and when I preached I contended for and preached the Primitive Baptist doctrine. This caused me great concern, because I could not see how the Primitive Baptists could be right, and I told my wife that if I was preaching that doctrine I was surely going to stop it, for I did not believe it. In the latter part of the same year I was offered a place as pastor of a Missionary church, which I refused, because they wanted to pay me a salary, and I did not believe in that. I felt then, and do now, that it is not right, for whom God calls he provides the way. In December, 1932, God showed me the church of his choice, and to my surprise

it was a group of Old Primitive Baptists, and he showed me they were a people who loved the very things I was preaching and contending for when filled with that strange Spirit. I saw them in a vision, seated facing the south. and I was preaching the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God, and some power said to me, This is my people, whom I have called you to preach to. I told this to some of my Missionaries, and they only shook their heads, and seemed to say, Poor boy. I saw a shifting in my congregations, the Missionaries would drop out here and there and their places would be filled with Primitive Baptists, and they would rejoice in my preaching, and sometimes sisters would shout praises while I was preaching. One night while preaching my father was present, and he began to cry out, "I am lost, I am lost," and requested me to pray for him, which I did then and there. The next morning my mother told me that father told a wonderful experience of deliverance that was given to him that night. Shortly thereafter he joined the Primitive Baptist Church in Surry County, North Carolina, yet I remained with the Missionaries.

On Saturday before the third Sunday in January, 1933, I went to Franklin Church with my wife and parents, to see them turn an Elder out of the church, and as I had never had the opportunity of seeing this done I wanted to see it. I was still possessed with the idea that I would never be a member of that church, and I would never be baptized again, for I had heard that the only way I could become a member was to be baptized again by an Elder. To my disappointment, they did not exclude the Elder that day, and toward the close of that meeting I took my little daughter and left the house and walked around the lot outside. Finally I came back to the house and sat on the door-steps, and while sitting there a voice spoke in my heart, and said, The hour is come. I knew what for. I arose, and as I entered the door the thought came to me that if they published an open door for the reception of members again I would be bound to offer myself to the church. When I got about half way down the aisle old Elder W. H. Atkinson published the door open, and the next thing I remember I was talking to the church and had consented to be baptized the next day. When I left the church and went home, every step I took I went further down in despair. I had consented to a thing I said I never would do: be baptized. That night I saw a vision of being baptized, and I saw something coming down from heaven, and when it came down it was a necktie tied in a slip-knot and it fell about my neck and I pulled it up to fit my collar, and a voice spoke, and said, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." My worry and despair departed and I was reconciled to go down the next day into the liquid grave and thus into the blessed fellowship of the church, which I had been shown was the original church of the living God. I was baptized on the third Sunday in

January, 1933, when I was twenty-two years of age, and liberated to speak in public the same day. Two months later I came under the imposition and laying on of hands of a presbytery and was set apart to the full functions of the gospel ministry. So I was made to see that I could not wait until I was old and had my fill of this life before joining the church. I, since that time, have never found much rest, but have traveled from the mountains to the seacoast in the dear name of Jesus. Sometimes I feel the presence of the Lord with me, and again I am clothed in darkness, yet I realize that I am like the old colored Elder: "As for the doctrine I preach and the color of my skin I have no apologies to make, for I have nothing to do with either." In all the way that I have gone and come the good Lord has shown me from time to time that in his hand are all things, and the souls of all men, as well as the destiny of the same. I have never reached the place where I felt I was capable or able to preach, yet I cannot keep from going, for sometimes I am given to trust that His grace is sufficient and He will lead me on. Sometimes I begin to feel that by my own efforts I have wrought something, until I go back, and as the experience of the brethren of Joseph, who verily thought they had bought the corn until they started back and looked every man in the mouth of his sack and saw there his money. Every time I am blessed to look I can see that I have not wrought these things, but God, who is rich in mercy, has, through Jesus Christ, bestowed his imputed righteousness and grace and performed the things appointed unto me.

I will close this article with a quotation of a good old song, suited to the experience of all God's children:

"Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

Submitted in love.

ROY S. SMITH.

PULASKI, Virginia.

FORT WORTH, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is with a deep and sensible feeling of my unworthiness that I so address you. I am sending my subscription to you a little ahead of its expiration, as I do not want to miss a copy. I have tried to get more subscribers, but so far I have failed. I lend my copies to several old ladies who are not able to take the paper. I surely enjoy all the good reading, and wish I had the gift to write like some of the dear sisters who contribute to the columns of the SIGNS from time to time, but know from experience that we cannot write anything worth while unless it is given us from above, so I try to be reconciled to the little portion of understanding that I hope the dear Lord has given me of his wonderful works among the children of men. I most assuredly do believe he is all-powerful, and doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, nor say unto him, What doest thou? I also believe he is a God of purpose, and we read, To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven. A time to weep and a time to

laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance. But, dear brethren and kindred in Christ, I feel the time of weeping and mourning is far better than the time of feasting and dancing. This weeping and mourning I understand is godly sorrow set up in the heart, which causes us to weep and mourn because of our sins. Then we know the time of foolishness is of the flesh, so we are made to rejoice because we are made sorrowful. Paul, the chosen vessel of God to bear God's testimony to the Gentiles, says, But we glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulations worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. So I feel to say the time of weeping and mourning is greater joy than the time of feasting and dancing. I have often thought how many and many times Old Baptists will travel hundreds of miles to meet with their dear kindred in Christ, and their conversation will be mostly made of sorrow and tears: sorry for their weak, sinful condition in their fleshly nature, and weep and shout their joy together. Surely this is my life. I long to be with the dear saints of God, yet know I am not worthy the least notice of any one. As I travel along life's pathway I sometimes desire, if it is the dear Lord's will, to lay this earthen vessel by and dwell with my blessed Savior. Here we have no abiding city, we seek a city not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. But yet I try to be reconciled to my days, and as old Job said through his mighty afflictions, Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. So many things come into my life that I deplore and cannot see where there can be any good in them, yet I know the Bible declares that all things work together for good to them that love God. I sometimes have many doubts and fears as to whether I am one of those included in that declaration. I believe I love the Lord and desire to walk humbly before him, and I do love to hear the name of Jesus exalted above every name, and I feel to say that I do dearly love my brethren and sisters in the church. These are sweet and precious evidences to me that it may be I am one of those little ones Jesus came to save, yet I am so weak, so prone to sin, I fear that I am not born again.

I want to again express the enjoyment that I receive in reading the dear old SIGNS. I have Elder Gilbert Beebe's editorials and I often go back and read them, and it seems the SIGNS is still in line with what he wrote. I always enjoyed Elder Lefferts' writings, also all the other contributors. I would love to read more from Elder D. V. Spangler. I think brother J. R. Hardy is an able writer as well as an able preacher. Hei is our beloved pastor, and we hope we appreciate him, yet we fall far short of what we would love to do to show our appreciation. I surely do hope I am thankful to our heavenly Father for all his wonderful blessings I have received.

Yours in hope,

MINNIE C. JAMESON.

DALLAS, Texas.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I am inclosing a copy of a letter from a young sister who recently came to a church I am now serving, and because I am trying to care for five other churches this one has to hold meetings on a week day. Elders S. J. Priddy and W. S. Ingland, of West Virginia, were visiting among my churches, and at their appointment at this church this and another sister came to the church and were received for baptism. Because it is good to rejoice with those that rejoice, I feel it will be profitable to pass this letter on to the household of faith that they may share its comforts. What can give more joy to the household of faith than to learn that the day has dawned from on high, and the Day Star has arisen in the hearts of our young people? This church was pastored by the late Elder H. B. Jones for about thirty-five years, but has not been having meetings regularly since he became unable to serve them. He is held in loving remembrance by them. The visit among the churches and associations in this section by the brethren from the East, and also of sister Priddy, who accompanied her husband, was indeed refreshing, and the preaching they did was comforting and strengthening. We were made glad by their coming. God be thanked for his unspeakable mercies.

J. R. HARDY.

WINNSBORO, Texas.

DEAR BROTHER HARDY:—It has been impressed upon my mind this beautiful Sabbath morning to write to you. I have been rejoicing ever since Friday, when the brethren and sisters received me into the church, although I was somewhat surprised, because it seems that they should have said no, instead of yes, for I feel too unworthy to belong to a band of what I feel to be God's children. But I was indeed happy when they said they would receive me. I was not hungry at noontime, nor at night, either; it seemed as if I was already full, and I hope I was filled with the Spirit of the Lord. Everything seems to be praising God this morning, although I was disappointed because I could not come to Hopewell to-day and be with the people I love (I hope in Christ). I am so happy, it seems my spirit soars to heights unknown, and I have been led in paths I have not known; there is a song in my heart I cannot sing. These simple words cannot express the feeling I have, so I will just have to say, Surely salvation is of the Lord, and does not belong to man; because, if I am not deceived, this glorious feeling I have experienced the last three days is just too good for such an one as I. When the words of my beloved Savior would come into my mind it seemed as if my cup of joy runneth over, when his disciples said, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" It is so wonderful to think of these things, until I feel as if I need no earthly blessing. Brother Hardy, I have been given a little hope that I would not exchange for all the world,

by these things I have written, and, of course, things I have not written here. I just could not tell all of it, because I hope it is the work of the Savior, and you know how impossible it is to praise him enough; he is worthy of all praise. I feel that he has blessed us with much good preaching lately.

Give sister Hardy my love. I hope to see her more, and, if it is the Lord's will, to have you both in our home. I feel so unworthy of all the good things I have received. I want to tell every one about how wonderful the Savior is, but I just keep quiet and rejoice within. I feel so helpless; I know it is not anything I have done, because there is nothing good about me, and I feel to be the chief of sinners, so all the praise, honor and glory belong to the Lord, now and forever. I believe in the predestination of all things, both good and bad, and that God works all things according to his own will and pleasure, and none can stay his hand. How proud I am that it is that way. I am not ashamed of the doctrine of predestination. I hope I have been taught of God that this is true, because I have tried when I was burdened down with sin and sorrow to just forget it and go on my way without a care, but I soon saw that was impossible. I saw myself one of the vilest of sinners; and I still feel to be a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

Brother Hardy, I could write always and then not tell it all. I would have liked to have told the brethren and sisters this Friday, but I could not. I hope I can be submissive to His will, and say, Thy will be done. I have had a few doubts and fears, because I would hate to deceive you people—any kind of suffering other than that.

This all seems weak compared with the joys I have experienced. I have not even wanted to sleep for fear this glorious feeling would leave me. Brother Hardy, pray for me.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

MYRTLE RHODES.

CLARKSVILLE, Tennessee.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As it is time for me to renew my subscription to the dear family paper, I will at least pen a few lines of appreciation of your brave effort to make it interesting food (spiritually) for the many readers all over the nation. It comes as a welcome visitor each month and the editorials and many sweet experiences are heartily indorsed by me, a poor, unworthy creature, one who feels too unworthy to even call on the name of the Lord, one who feels to be nothing, and less than nothing, but one who believes, if not deceived, the doctrine set forth by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the only paper the Predestinarian Baptists need.

Oh here I am writing, when I am too unworthy, I guess, to express my belief. But if I know myself, I love this old doctrine salvation by grace, and grace alone, and predestination of all things. It is all I have to cling to in this life; in fact, if not for that I could not endure the trials of this sin-cursed world. Pray for me, a poor old sinner.

(MRS.) B. C. SHEARON.

EDITORIAL.

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1 PETER III. 13.

"AND who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?"

We live in a world of unrest, wars and much cruelty, where events are speedily broadcast by radio and the press into almost every home, and where the things one counts dear are denied by many, and what we know as good government is jeopardised, and, in some places, replaced, by the iron heel of dictatorship. No doubt many envy the beasts of the earth and the birds of the air that have no storehouses and barns, yet for whom God has provided, and of whom Jesus spake when he said, Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father, and ye are of more value than many sparrows. We have at times found comfort in those words of our Lord, but sometimes we sink lower than a sparrow or a worm, so that we feel ourselves to be nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity. It was while we had such exercise of mind that the foregoing Scripture came to us, and we take it up, hoping that the Lord will direct us as we write. We have felt during these anxious days that those who have a good hope through grace are greatly blessed, for they have a God to go to; yes, a God who is with them in trouble, while the worldly have no such Friend. It has also seemed to us that the word of God and his Christ has stood out in our mind and thoughts like starlight in a very dark night. We say in our mind and thoughts, yet it has been in such a way, that our brethren that we love, both far and near, seemed to be embraced in that light, as if they were surrounded and led and kept by our Father's love and care. They are in the world, yet not of the world, and we think of this in a two-fold sense, they are not of the profane world, nor of the professing, or religious world, for we find they are of no account, just as the doctrine they love is considered of no account in these days. In our right mind we are glad that there is such a clear and decided difference, and that the popular religion is willing to leave us alone, for we know when those who belong to the Lord begin to be in want, his goodness will find out a way to bring such from that darkness into the light,

As neighbors and friends in things pertaining to this life we could not have better, as long as religion is not mentioned, but the doctrine is like a cloud; it is darkness to them, but it is light to us. That is how it was to Israel. In Exodus xiv. 20, it states that the cloud came between the camp of Israel and the camp of the Egyptians, "and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night." Such is the variance caused by a close adherence to the doctrine of grace, and a constant desire to be directed by the Holy Ghost and we have little or no concern with them unless it be at times to point out their errors and desire that the Lord shall open their eyes, if it be his blessed will to do so. Our concern is ourselves and those to whom we belong, heeding Paul's admonition, Acts xx. 28-30, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." No doubt we are living in such times, and we need wisdom to direct our way, and strength to do God's will. The admonition just quoted does not give any man the right to establish himself as a judge of the church, so that he may assume to himself the right to judge those far and near. Nor does it tell those who are grieved at the conduct of such men to fight back. It says, Take heed unto thyself. If a man is afraid of himself the brethren need not be afraid of him. Often those who set themselves up as something, when in reality they are nothing, will go on for a time in their strife and contention, deceiving some, perhaps, until they are proven to be grievous wolves. The Lord sent the seventy forth as lambs among wolves. Some years ago, a friend from the South, in telling some of the troubles that the church there at that time was passing through, said, Brother George, that minister is just a wolf, he is just out to destroy the sheep. We said, No, the wolf catcheth the hireling and scattereth the sheep. Our text says, "And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" There are those who may seek your life, as Saul did David's. It is better to leave them alone, rather than to fight back. Remember what David said when Shimei cursed him, and Abishai would have slain him, calling Shimei a dead dog. (2 Samuel xvi. 11, 12.) David said, "Let him alone, and let him curse: for the Lord hath bidden him. It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day." This was a chastisement from the Lord upon David, and it was not joyous, but grievous, and David could see the Lord and his purpose above man's purpose and spleen, and he knew the Lord, although a sovereign God, was very pitiful and of tender mercy. (James v. 11.) One says, "When men

of spite against me turn, they are the sword, the hand is thine." Such men are to be pitied, happy are they who are given wisdom to leave them alone. Peter says, "And who is he that will harm you?" He did not mean to say that you would never have trouble or be persecuted, for he knew they had foes on every side, within and without, but he believed as Paul wrote, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" As the hymn we often sing says,

"The flame shall not hurt thee,
I only design
Thy dross to consume,
And thy gold to refine."

We believe that an afflicted and poor people are those who bear the rod and know who has appointed it. Such we believe could not walk the thorny road unless they had trials of various sorts, and they will all work together for good. Under the trial the flesh will murmur, because it hates the way, but the new man approves it well. "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God be in you." Paul in addressing the Philippians says, "Do all things without murmurings and disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world." Paul desired them to be Christ-like, the very thing we also desire, but how to perform that which is good we find not. While we may be unable to perform that which is good, yet our text speaks of following after that which is good. Paul's life was a life of following after that which is good, yet in one place he says, "The good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do," but he also tells us that he delights in the law of God after the inward man. It can be said that there are many and varied opinions of what is good. One declares the Lord was good, and we will say here that God's word is good, and the teaching and instructing of God in the souls and lives of men is good, even in affliction, as David says, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." Also, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word." There is nothing good in the flesh, that is why none in the flesh can please God. but the hidden man of the heart that Peter mentions in the fourth verse is not corruptible, and it is of a meek and quiet spirit. The reason of so much contention and strife, among those wo profess the truth to-day, is because too many are following after the flesh, minding the things of the flesh. Rendering evil for evil, railing for railing, and so strife and contention abound. Let us read verses eight and nine: "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing." Then Peter goes on to quote from Psalms xxxiv. 12, "What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good?" Yes, this is the new man of the heart, the heart where the love of God is shed abroad by the

Holy Ghost which is given unto us. He desireth life, while he sees death on every hand, for he has, through the Spirit, been able to crucify the flesh with its lusts, learning in God's school that "if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Such an one, living, desires life, and it is such an one who said, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after." He wanted to dwell in the house of the Lord all his days and to behold the beauty of the Lord, that beauty for which Moses prayed when he said, "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." He would be more spiritually-minded, more Christ-like. There is so much to discourage and dismay, but faith in the One who has begun the work in us may be damped, but it can never die, so the new man can say, "I had fainted unless I had believed to see the *goodness* of the Lord in the land of the living." This land of the living sets forth the kingdom of God, which is not of this world, as Jesus said, if it was my servants would *fight*. James asks, "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God."—James iv. 1-4. This is of the flesh and belongs to the land of the dying and the dead, but the new man desires above all things to live in the land of the living, and to walk in the light of God's countenance, for that is righteousness, joy and peace in the Holy Ghost to him. The Lord has taught such an one to fear him, and he leads him in the way that God shall choose, and as God sheds abroad his love in his heart, so he, in turn, can, and does, set his upon God. It is of this new man we read in Psalms xci., for it is he who abides under the shadow of the Almighty, and the last three verses of that Psalm are written for him, to encourage him to wait upon his God, for it is God that shall do all his works in him and for him. We have heard it said, that as man was created on the sixth day, so the number six belongs unto man and labor, but where God is for that man, and Christ has redeemed him, while that man cannot rest in himself, he can surely rest in God. So we will see that God has spoken six "I *wills*" for this man in the following verses: "Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore *will I* deliver him: *I will* set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and *I will* answer him; *I will* be with him in trouble; *I will* deliver him, and honor him. With long life *will I* satisfy him, and shew him my salvation." It is God therefore that gives man rest from all his labors, and such a man needs not fear what man can do unto him. It is this man who is commanded to take heed unto himself and

the doctrine, that he continue therein, and as he is blessed so to do, it is always to the salvation of himself and those who hear him. These things will seem too high for him, so that he cannot attain unto them. He will never feel good, but such an one will follow after that which is good. There are peacemakers, but it is generally proven that where one sets out to make peace, he generally ends up as a peace breaker. The only sure way, according to the word, is for brethren to *follow after* the things that make for peace. Many want peace of their own making. Such generally will have peace even if they fight for it. They will seem to have a peace with those who agree with them; such a peace the devil has with those who are his. This is as we hear the world repeating, Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth to men of good will. We rather would stress at this time that it good will toward men, not just to men of good will. The precepts and admonitions of the gospel are good, and to be practiced by those who profess the truth, for they are the things that make for peace, and the things wherewith one may edify another. We could here take up the rest of this article in repeating those admonitions and precepts, but will refrain after repeating the words of our Lord: "By this shall ye be my disciples indeed if ye love one another." In such a way we all seem to come far short of what we may sincerely desire, but the desire in itself is a blessing. Our Lord Jesus Christ alone has performed the perfect work. He was a perfect offerer and he was also the perfect offering. Nothing having a blemish could be used for a peace offering unto the Lord, so Jesus was made sin, who knew no sin, that we might be the righteousness of God in him. (2 Cor. v. 21.) He was the Lamb without spot or blemish. There are none of us without blemishes, yet we can say, "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again."—Rom. viii. 34. And it is through him that we have access unto God and to the word of his grace, and "'Tis his love his people raises over self to reign as kings." In Leviticus xxii. we find that Moses gives instructions concerning the offering for peace, also as to fitness of the offerer, to which we have before referred. It also says that for a free-will offering either a bullock or a lamb that hath any thing superfluous or lacking in his parts could be offered, but for a vow it could not be accepted. Our services, prompted by love, have much that is superfluous and lacking in them, yet they are acceptable unto God through Jesus Christ, so the blind, the halt and the lame are blessed in Christ Jesus the Lord. It is in such loving service that Paul beseeches us by the mercies of God that we present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is our reasonable service. It is as we consider our infirmities that we are more able to bear with others, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

In conclusion, we have spoken about men fighting for peace, a peace of their own making, but in the things we have

written we hope we have also shown a people that are willing to lay down their lives, to take the spoiling of their goods joyfully, and who love not their lives unto death. Persecution and tribulation are assured, and it is through much of them that the path lies, yet it matters not, for your God is able to deliver you, "And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?"

G. R.

A CORRECTION.

DEAR EDITORS:—This is for the purpose of calling your attention to my understanding of the true improvement in the language used by me in the obituary of brother William Alford Sanders, on page 260 of the November issue of the SIGNS. Line eleven, second column, beginning with the first six full words, "Bringing his saints (spirits) with him," should have been left off, allowing it to read, "There awaiting the last call, when the trumpet of God shall sound and our Lord return the second time without sin unto salvation, and the dead in Christ shall rise first," etc. This was my error, and by no means is it believed by the church. Please publish.

Praying that the blessing of the Lord may rest upon his little church, I am

Yours in bonds,

W. A. LITTLE.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

A. E. Clark, Kans., $2; Mrs. Brittie Caudle, Okla., $1; Mrs. Mary J. Ege, N. J., $3; F. H. Richardson, Iowa, $3; Hannah E. Danks, Cal., $1; "A friend from Detroit," Mich., $3; Florence H. Disharoon, Pa., $1; "A friend," Cal., $1; "A friend," Ontario, $1.

MARRIAGES.

BY Elder Arnold H. Bellows, at West Hurley, N. Y., January 7th, 1940, John J. Lawrence, of Roxbury, N. Y., and Mrs. Ella Miller, of Halcottville, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER M. J. TOWERY was born September 5th, 1863, and departed this life December 13th, 1939, aged 76 years, 3 months and 8 days. He was united in marriage to Miss Mary Frances Phillips October 15th, 1883, and to their union were born thirteen children. Eleven children, his companion, twenty-five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren are left to mourn their great loss. This dear brother had suffered from heart trouble for two or three years, but Sunday before his death on Wednesday he attended meeting and talked for a short time.

Funeral services were held at his church. Elder R. M. Hawkins offered prayer and read some very appropriate texts from the Scriptures, then made a very comforting talk, speaking of the many noble traits of character and the high esteem in which the deceased was held by all who knew him. The floral offerings were beautiful, manifesting the love and respect as a tribute to his memory. The deceased had requested the writer several years ago, that should he be called home first that I conduct his funeral, having been associated with him in the ministry for more than forty years. I tried to tell his loved ones, brethren, sisters and friends the principles of doctrine loved, believed in and defended by this dear brother. First, the total depravity of all the Adamic race. That man being dead in trespasses and sin, has no will, no ability, to extricate himself from the Satanic bondage. Second, that all the elect family of God will be effectually called, because

the psalmist says, "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee."—Psalms lxv. 4. Jesus says, "All the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."—John v. 37. "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." —John xvii. 2. "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."—Verse 4. He was a firm believer in unlimited predestination as held to by all the Bible writers, the early church fathers, St. Augustine of the fifth centuary, Luther, Calvin, Toplady and many others of the church of England, the London Baptist, Dr. John Gill, who wrote a commentary of every verse in the Bible, the Baptists who withdrew from the modern Baptists in 1832. This dear brother believed that the sovereign God he worshipped was so unlimited in wisdom that he knew all the thoughts of the sons of men, both good and evil. As David says in the one hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm, "O Lord, thou hast searched me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." Again the prophet in foretelling the events of the present war says, Ezekiel xxxviii. 10, "Thus saith the Lord God, It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought." This dear brother believed that God's government of the world was such that he causes the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder he restrains; that God's eternal and unchangeable will is the cause of all things.

In conclusion, I will say to the bereaved ones, he has only put off this tabernacle and has a building in the heavens, an house not made with hands. He has an inheritance that is incorruptible, that fades not away. In his death the church has lost an able and sound minister, his companion a loving husband, his children a faithful and devoted father, but as we believe our heavenly Father doeth all things well, let us bow in humble submission to his will.

Submitted in love.

LYTLE BURNS.

MR. A. C. GREENLAND, brother of our beloved sister Laura Greenland, departed this earthly life December 10th, 1939, at his home in Trough Creek Valley, Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania, after being very ill for two weeks with pneumonia. His age was 87 years, 3 months and 25 days. He was the son of Barton and Susan (Baird) Greenland, both long since deceased. On January 17th, 1900, he united in marriage with Miss Bessie Pheasant, of Calvin, Pa. To this union were born one son and three daughters. The surviving children are Harry C. Greenland, of Three Springs, Pa.; Mrs. Martha Scott, of Colfax, Pa. and Mrs. Hazel Scott, at home. Besides these children and his widow, he is survived by six grandchildren and by two sisters: sister Laura, named above, and Mrs. Walter Kurtz, of Huntingdon, Pa. The funeral services were held in the Baptist meeting-house in Trough Creek Valley, interment in the cemetery adjacent. Mr. Greenland was a real and true friend of the Baptist cause, took great interest in the meetings and was always ready and willing to do all he could for the welfare and entertainment of those who attended the meetings. He was a kindly man, a good neighbor and useful citizen, doing his part as best he could to advance the

interests of the community in which he lived. We shall miss him sorely, he was so thoughtful and considerate of his wife and family and for the comfort of his sister Laura, who lived near his home. His daily care and oversight of these whom he loved will be attentions greatly missed by those left to mourn his departure. We feel that he was a believer in the truth of God as revealed and taught by Jesus Christ, that he had a heart-interest in the mercy and grace of God through the beloved Savior, that the Holy Spirit had begotten in him a lively hope of eternal life. He never united with the church, but showed by his actions that he was far from indifferent to the cause of truth. May the Lord the Spirit comfort all who truly mourn and reconcile them to the Divine Will.

ALSO,

MRS. ANNA R. McCLELLAN, our sister in Christ, fell asleep in Jesus November 22nd, 1939, at the home of her son, Hubert A. McClellan, of Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio. She was born in Bedford County, Pennsylvania, October 28th, 1850, making her stay on earth 89 years and 24 days. She was the daughter of Benjamin and Rebecca Mirely Greenland. She has one brother yet living, Miles C. Greenland, of Bedford, Pa., who has just recently passed his ninety-eighth birthday anniversary. She was married to brother George W. McClellan February 20th, 1873. He died February 26th, 1917. Of this marriage there are three children living: Hubert A., at whose home sister McClellan passed away, Chester G., of Toledo, Ohio, and Mrs. Edna M. Ake, of Akron, Ohio. One son, Charles E., died in 1932. Five grandchildren and two great-grand children are living. Brother and sister McClellan were both baptized the same day in 1881 into the membership of the Providence Church, in Bedford County, Pennsylvania. At the time of her death, sister McClellan's membership was with the Huntingdon Baptist Church, in Trough Creek Valley, Pa., of which church the writer of this notice is the present pastor. She and her husband moved to Ohio in 1916.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Kinter, of Toledo, Ohio, at the Mann Funeral Parlors, Fostoria, Ohio. Interment in the Fountain Cemetery at Fostoria. Our beloved sister was a very spiritually-minded character; she was a good writer on spiritual things. It was given her of the Lord to know what she believed and to be firm therein unto the end. She dearly loved the place of meeting with the children of God when and where the gospel of the grace of God was believed and preached. We feel that she is resting with the Lord, which is "far better" than anything here below. May the Holy Spirit comfort the bereaved family and church.

ALSO,

MISS ELLA GULICK, our sister in Christ, obeyed the call to depart this earthly life, January 7th, 1940, at the Loudoun Hospital, Leesburg, Va. Late in the evening of December 24th last, she fell while in the second story of her home at Lenah, Va., and broke her hip. She was moved to the hospital and the fractured member was surgically attended to, but her heart was weak and could not successfully withstand the shock, so she steadily grew weaker until the hour of her departure came, when she left us. She was the oldest of the seven children of the late Sanford and Nancy Gulick. Of these seven, two now are living: our sister Mary J. Gulick, Lenah, Va., and J. Sanford Gulick, near Little River Church, Loudoun County, Virginia. One sister-in-law is living, the widow of Robert L. Gulick, our sister Roberta P. Gulick. Sister Ella Gulick was born

August 22nd, 1856, near Aldie, Va., so she was in the eighty-fourth year of her age at the time of her demise. From early life, she had been a follower of the truth, indeed she was never able to tell just when her spiritual exercise of mind began, so gradually from the beginning had been her growth in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. By the ordinance of believer's baptism, she became a member of the visible church called Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church September 27th, 1936. Years before her baptism, however, she had been deeply interested in all that pertained to the welfare of the church, deeply concerned in her own soul's salvation and in her interest in the everlasting covenant. During the several years that it has been my privilege to know her, I have not had a more faithful and devoted member of the flock of my care than she has been to me; regular in her attendance at all the meetings, her's is a good example for all of us to follow. Sister Mollie misses her sister keenly, because sister Ella so tenderly looked after her sister's needs and comforts at all times. When I last saw her at the hospital, forty-eight hours before the end, her thoughts were about sister Mollie, wondering how her sister was getting along during her absence from home. May the Holy Spirit comfort the bereaved sister and brother and the little flock at Mt. Zion, reconciling all to our Lord's righteous will. Burial was in the family plot at Sharon Cemetery, Middleburg, Virginia.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

On January 7th, 1940, JAMES C. FAULKNER, of Fleischmanns, N. Y., passed away at his home there, after a brief illness of pneumonia. He was nearly eighty-eight years old. The funeral services were held at his late home on Wednesday following. The funeral discourse was delivered by the writer. Interment was in the cemetery at Clovesville, N. Y. Deceased is survived by his aged widow, and five children: Mrs. David Earl, of Halcottville, N. Y., Miss Lucy Faulkner, of Fleischmanns, N. Y,. and Clarence, Frank and Edward, of the same place. The subject of this article was born March 21st, 1852, in Lexington, N. Y., where he spent his early boyhood days, moving when thirteen years of age to Vega, N. Y., where he grew to manhood. In March, 1880, he was united in marriage to Miss Ella McCann, of Fleischmanns, N. Y., who proved a very loyal and valuable helpmeet in facing the problems of life. Their happy married life spans a space of almost sixty years. Mr. Faulkner was a quiet, unassuming man, well known and much respected. He was a believer in the principles of the Old School Baptist faith, holding most firmly to the blessed doctrine of the sovereignty of God and salvation by the grace and work of our Lord Jesus Christ, but he never made an open profession of religion. In spite of his age, he was able to do manuel labor until recent years, and had been wonderfully preserved physically. His widow is an invalid and much sympathy is extended to her.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

SYLVESTER HASSELL EUBANKS, son of the late Elder John G. and Mary Eubanks, was born June 6th, 1880, and died December 13th, 1939, in Louisville, Kentucky. He married Miss Mary Elizabeth Cromley, and to their union were born six children: Mrs. Albert Greenburg, Mrs. Joseph Hillman, Mrs. Robert Hauntz, Miss Florence Eubanks, Robert H. and Jesse L. Eubanks, all living in Louisville, Ky., and the following brothers and sisters: James, of Louisville, Beebe, of Washington, D. C., Perry, of Wilmington, Del., Mrs. Henry

Townsend, of Media, Pa., Dolly and Eugena. Brother Eubanks was a painter by trade, which occupation he followed all his life. He was industrious, and was a loving husband and father. The widow and children will miss him sadly, but their loss is his eternal gain. May the Lord reconcile them all.

I am indebted to the clerk of the church, sister H. B. Curlee, for the following record: "Brother Eubanks came asking for a home in the Bethany Primitive Baptist Church, in Louisville, Ky., July 16th, 1927, was received, and baptized in full fellowship August 20th, 1927, by Elder W. L. Murray, of Nashville, Tenn., and has remained a true and devoted member until death. I wish you would say in the obituary that the church feels a great loss. You spoke comforting and true words at the funeral, and I know that both the church and the family appreciated it. I hope it is so we can come to your meetings some time, as we do not have church here any more."

To the foregoing I wish to add that his early life was spent around Campbellsburg, Ky., where his father, Elder John Eubanks, was pastor of Sulphur Fork Church, where he would often visit, and at the time of his death was contemplating bringing his membership there, as his home church was no longer holding meetings, and he wanted a home, but this last desire was never fulfilled, his race was run, and he has entered into his rest. Brother Eubanks was one of the most lovable characters I ever met, and we looked forward to his visits. He was a wise counsellor, always willing to help in church matters, and the church always considered him one with us. How we will miss the dear brother! He was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, a good singer and a great help to me in the meetings. He had complained some of feeling poorly, but was in bed only a few days. The day before he died the doctor advised that they take him to the hospital, which they did, but pneumonia developed. When they advised him of the fact he told his son that if he died he wanted them to send for brother Weaver for the funeral. I was called, and with the ability the Lord gave me spoke from 2 Timothy iv. 7: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." They gave me his hymn book and told me to read whatever I thought would be appropriate, and in looking through it I found where he had marked hymn 489 (Beebe's collection), and had written there, "One of my most favorite hymns." This I read to a large congregation of brethren and friends, then he was laid to rest in the Cave Hill Cemetery, in Loisville, Ky., to await the call of his Master in the resurrection. Surely he has died in the triumph of a living faith; fought a good fight. Rest, dear brother, until the Savior comes to bear you home, to the place he has prepared for you from the foundation of the world. May the Lord reconcile the lonely widow and enable her to carry on, bless the children, every one, the many brethren in the faith of God's elect, and me, his unworthy pastor, that I may be reconciled to our great loss, and say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

ALSO,

LUCY B. CHILTON, nee Lindsey, our dear sister in Christ, was born January 21st, 1862, and died December 10th, 1939, at her home, near Turners Station, Kentucky, after a month's illness. She was united in marriage to Robert J. Chilton February 10th, 1881, and to their union were born seven children, six boys and one daughter: W. F., C. O., Turner, Robert, Jr., Ben, Bell. All of the children were born at the homestead where sister Chilton and her husband spent their entire life, on a farm in Henry

County, Kentucky. In the winter of 1902 she became troubled on account of sin, and upon relation of her experience to the Cane Run Old School Baptist Church she was received for baptism. The weather was very cold, the pond was frozen over and some wanted her to put off the baptism until later, but not our sister, so they cut a hole in the ice, and there she was baptized. Oh what faith! And to that faith she then professed she has remained faithful. Her home was always a haven for the brethren, and many times your humble servant has been entertained at her home. Her husband, who has been faithful, and a hard-working neighbor, also delighted in Old Baptist company, and all the family, are left to mourn. How they will all miss our dear sister. Her place is vacant in the home, in the church and in the neighborhood. How we all will miss her. She lived a life of patience, her faith was strong in her Savior, but her toil is over and she has entered into rest. May the Lord reconcile the lonely husband, the children and grandchildren, and enable us all to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done. The writer was called to speak the last sad words at the funeral, which was held at the old home, using the words of John: Let not your heart be troubled. Ye believe in God, believe also in me. Her brethren sang from Beebe's collection the hymns "How firm a foundation," "Rock of ages," and part of "Jesus, lover of my soul," then in the cemetery near by she was laid to rest, to await the call of the Savior in the resurrection. May the blessing of the Lord be to all who mourn.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

MRS. BELLES ANN CROWLEY died at the Robertson-McNease Hospital, Fayette, Alabama, August 10th, 1939. She was the daughter of Hiram F. and S. H. (Carroll) Foster. She was united in marriage to brother George M. Crowley December 21st, 1892, making nearly forty-seven years that they lived together. To this union were born seven children, four of whom are still living. She leaves to mourn her departure her husband, four children, to wit: Lycurgus, of Gordo, Ala., Clayton and Milton, of Kennedy, Ala., Mrs. Hettie Godfrey, of Gadsden, Ala.; four grandchildren, one brother, J. I. Foster, of Rising Star, Texas, one sister, Mrs. Dona Shepherd, of Russellville, Ala., and a host of other relatives and friends. Sister Crowley was born December 8th, 1873, making her stay on earth 65 years, 8 months and 2 days. She joined the Harmony Old School Baptist Church on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1897, and lived a faithful member until claimed by death. We know that the children and dear old brother Crowley have missed sister Belles Ann many times, but it seems that we cannot get over our loss at Harmony. It has been my privilege to attend services here all my life, and I do not remember of her being absent but one time, and that was within the last two months of her life, after disease had gotten hold of her. She really was a good mother and wife, but it was in the church that the Lord especially blessed her with grace to adorn her glorious calling. Her advice was sought by the Lord's poor, because they felt that her Father had given unto her a rich storehouse of the good things of the kingdom. If ever there was a sister in Christ that could qualify as a mother in Israel, surely it was she. But knowing her as intimately as I did, I know she would not want those things spoken of her without giving God all the glory, honor and praise for all that she was in this life and what her hope was for the after life. Very deeply did sister Crowley feel her weakness and unworth-

iness, feeling that the grace of God was the only thing that would save a poor sinner. It has often been said that if salvation was by good works, that sister Crowley had come as near to living it as any one, but how, instead, did she depend upon her glorious Savior as her complete salvation. One of her most cherished Scriptures was Paul's wonderful declaration to the little children of God, that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose, and I have been comforted many times since I have been speaking in his all-powerful name, by her sweet expressions of consolation and advice, saying that the Lord would bring out his purposes at his appointed time. Not only did the Lord bless sister Crowley that she might minister to the saints at home, but she has written much in the years gone by, always writing of what grand and glorious truths were in the gospel and expounding them in her writing. One by one the Lord is calling away his children, and it sometimes looks as though we are soon to be forgotten, but may he give us of that grace and faith to trust him implicitly, and let us not despair as those that have no hope, knowing that it is his to call them out to his kingdom and to take them home to heaven, and it is my desire as I type these lines that I might have that assurance to rely fully upon him as did our dear sister, believing that he is God and beside him there is none other. I am thankful that the Lord gave us at Harmony the fellowship of one who fully believed in a complete, all-wise and all-powerful God.

Elder G. W. Berry, together with the writer, were called to conduct the funeral. I tried to use as best I could Revelation xiv. 13, and was followed by brother Berry, who read and commented upon the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians. Her body was then conveyed to the grave in the family burying-ground near Belk, Ala., there to wait until called from the dust in the resurrection.

In conclusion, I would say to all those who mourn, that we firmly believe our loss is her eternal gain, so let us not mourn, but rejoice that she left the evidence of having been with Jesus, and that she is now resting from her labors.

Written by request.

W. D. GRIFFIN.

MRS. MARTHA E. ADKINS, widow of George W. Adkins, was born near Parsonsburg, Md., November 23rd, 1864, and died October 15th, 1939, making her stay on earth 74 years, 10 months and 22 days. She was united in marriage to George W. Adkins January 20th, 1885, and to this union three children were born: Mrs. Cliff Radcliffe, of Marvin, N. C., G. Virgil Adkins, of Salisbury, Md., and Clarence O. Adkins, of near Parsonsburg, Md., with whom she made her home most of the time. Her three children, six grandchildren and one sister, Mrs. Mary Hastings, of Salisbury, Md., survive her. She is also survived by several nieces and nephews and a host of friends. She was baptized by Elder A. B. Francis into the fellowship of the Forest Grove Primitive Baptist Church June 10th, 1894, and lived a faithful member ever afterward. The writer knew her almost her entire life, and had the privilege of being in her company very, very often. She was a good talker and liked to talk about her God and his people. She believed that God is supreme, just and full of mercy. Not many days before her departure, I was at her bedside and her talk was about her Savior and his people, whom she claimed as her people. She was a good wife, a good mother, a good member of the church and a good friend. The Forest

Grove Church has lost a good member and a good friend, and while we have suffered a great loss, we feel our loss to be her eternal gain. May the Lord give abundantly of his grace to the bereaved family and friends.

Funeral services were held at Forest Grove Church October 17th, conducted by Elder H. C. Ker, assisted by Elders T. W. Walker and Arnold H. Bellows, after which the remains were interred in the Forest Grove Cemetery.

Written by request.

A nephew,

GEORGE F. ADKINS.

IN MEMORIAM.

We, the Mt. Olive Primitive Baptist Church, do hereby acknowledge by this Memorial Record our deepest love and sincere grief in the loss of our dearly beloved brother, Deacon W. A. CORDER, who passed away in February, 1939. Brother Corder served the church faithfully and tenderly for many years, always standing firm in the doctrine of election and predestination, carefully defending the faith and church discipline at all times. We shall deeply cherish his memory throughout our lives, and while bowing in humble submission to the will of our dear heavenly Father, feeling that our loss is his eternal gain, we do hereby extend our heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family, and most earnestly commend them to the Savior, who has promised to be a "Father to the fatherless."

The church orders that a copy of this Memorial be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication, a copy sent to the bereaved family and a copy be spread upon the Minutes.

Done by order of the church this the 27th day of May, 1939.

J. J. POLING, Moderator.

Gertrude B. Cross, Ass't Clerk.

BOOKS WANTED.

Any one having a copy of Hassell's Church History they are willing to sell will please communicate with Mr. W. J. Coulter, 86 Watkins Avenue, Middletown, N. Y.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER

OLD SCHOOL

BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder D. E. Robinson pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

CHURCH MEETING PLACE CHANGED.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets each first and third Sunday at eleven o'clock a. m. at 2407½ Main Street, Dallas, Texas, and on Saturday before each first Sunday at 2:30 p. m. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Mod., pro. tem.

T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers.

Single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,

MIDDLETOWN, N Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 108. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1940. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

UNION, New Jersey.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—Since it is past time that I should have sent my renewal to the SIGNS, I am inclosing the necessary amount to renew it for two years, as I feel it is always a welcome guest to me, and I anxiously look forward to the time when it is due each month. Many are the precious moments I have spent perusing the pages of glorious truths as told by the dearly beloved brethren who tell of their travels along the road that leads to joys above. The letters of experience are especially dear to me, as they take me back in memory to the earliest days of what I hope was the Lord's dealings with me some twenty years ago. Also the letters that portray the beauty and sound doctrine of salvation alone by the grace of God are food for the hungry soul whose hope the Lord is. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled," has always been one of the greatest assurances to me that I can hope that I have a hope, for, unless badly deceived, there is a constant longing and yearning to hear more about the blessed truth as revealed in the Scriptures. We are told to search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me. Of Christ, the dear Redeemer, who condescended to come down into this low ground of sin and sorrow to shed his own precious blood that we might have life eternal in the heavens above.

The thing I like most of all about your writings and sermons is the fact that you shun not to declare the whole counsel of God, giving power over all things in heaven and on earth to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, regardless of how small or insignificant it may seem in the sight of man. Oh how comforting to know that not even one tiny blade of grass can be destroyed without the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Praise his holy name for giving us faith to see and believe that he is all-wise, all-powerful,

omnipotent and omnipresent at all times. How could any one find comfort in worshiping a God who had failed in anything at all? If it were possible that even one tiny happening could go amiss, what assurance would we have that our salvation is sealed forever? But thanks be unto the One who first loved us, when he speaks it is done, and when he commands it stands fast, declaring the end from the beginning, and things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

How much better and sweeter to declare the truth in its unadulterated form to a small group of followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, rather than to sound aloud something that has no foundation in the Scriptures, just to please men of the world. Jesus has said, Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them, and oh how sweet to feel his presence with us when we gather for the purpose of worshiping him in spirit and truth. How thankful we should be for such a gift as you are, brother Dodson. We know that without the help of God it would be impossible for you or any other man to portray and expound the truths contained in the Scriptures as you do, and I often feel like saying, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow" when you are blessed with the liberty to feed poor hungry souls who are satisfied to get the crumbs as they fall from the Master's table, yet sometimes their cup is filled to overflowing with joy unspeakable, it is then they feel like singing praises to his ever-blessed name for the many mercies he has bestowed upon them. Unto us it is given to know the mysteries of heaven, and great is the rejoicing within when the light shines in the heart of a poor sinner, thus revealing to him that Christ came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost. The whole have no need of a Physician or Savior to make them whole, but it is the sin-sick soul who is deep in the horrible pit and needs to be raised up to a livier hope, given an assurance that Christ shed hic blood for those whose faith is such that, like one of old, if they could only touch the hem of his garment they would be made whole. Those whose only hope is in the atonement and redemption of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who said, I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. When he calls it is answered with a spirit of meekness and humility, it is then the poor sinner is drawn by the sweet cords of love into the blessed embrace of his Redeemer, where he is given the assurance of "My grace is sufficient for thee." Those words, spoken as it were by One from above, gave peace and rest to my weary soul in the winter of 1921, just when I seemed on the brink of destruction and despair. That moment would not be exchanged for ten thousand worlds such as we have to-day, for one moment in thy presence, dear Lord, gives sufficient strength for years to come and gives a hope of heaven and immortal glory beyond this vale of tears. Yet I often

stop and ask the question as I travel along life's highway,

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought;
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

Am I assuming too much to even hope that Christ could have died for such an one as I am? My greatest assurance seems to be the love that I hope I have for the brethren. Again, I am taken back to my early experience, when I was shown that our meetings here are just a foretaste of the joy that awaits us in the world to come, which is almost too much for me to contemplate, as our meetings here are a great source of joy to me. "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." Such sweet words, and regardless of how or when that shall be, it will be a joy that cannot be comprehended by poor natural man, and can only be understood by those who speak the same language, who have a seeing eye, an ear to hear and a heart to understand the mysterious messages coming from above, because they have been blessed with this spiritual knowledge by the Giver of every good and perfect gift. We might read the Bible from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation, over and over, but without the interpretation by the divine power it would just be a succession of of meaningless words, but when the Father above opens the door of understanding it becomes a feast of fatness to those who are seeking evidences of the fact that they are included in that number Christ came to redeem when he said, I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. What a blessed assurance that there is a home prepared for them that love him because he first loved them. Regardless of how rough and stormy the way may seem at times as you travel the strait and narrow path that leads to heaven and immortal glory, there is One who is traveling every step of the way with you and will be with you until the end, then he will gather his loved ones home, there to be with him and be like him. Though we poor finite creatures sometimes cannot comprehend just how that change will take place, is it not enough to know there is a home and when we awake in his likeness we shall be satisfied? Take courage, dear brother or sister, as you travel through this world filled with so many trials and tribulations, for we are told that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. If God be for us, who can be against us? Nay, there is none greater than God. He has predestinated and caused to come to pass all things in this world and in the world to come. There is nothing that can separate us from the love of God, which was bestowed upon us long before we knew anything about the joys of the great world beyond.

I must bring these rambling thoughts to a close. This has been written for quite some time, but I hesitate to send it for fear it contains nothing of value to any one. I hope you will cast the

mantle of charity over what has been written, and forgive anything that has been said amiss, and if you deem these thoughts worthless just consign them to the waste-basket.

Wishing you a speedy recovery, I remain a sinner saved by grace, I hope, in bonds of christian love,

ELSIE M. LOEFFEL.

MARTIN, Tennessee.

DEAR BRETHREN:—For some time I have been impressed to write a sketch of my experience of my past life.

I was born in the year 1857, of Old Baptists parents, and in my childhood days at times I had some serious thoughts of death, but I grew to manhood loving the pleasures of this world of sin, yet I never got into the habit of cursing as other boys did, and of course I thought I was a very good boy. In the year 1876, when I was about nineteen years old, one day I was at a church meeting of Old Baptists with my father and mother, and after services I was walking home with my brother and two of my cousins when very suddenly I was deeply impressed with the thought that I was a lost and ruined sinner. I felt that I wanted to seek some place where I would be alone and ask the Lord to have mercy on me. I did not want those who were with me to know how I felt. That day my mourning began. I mourned sore like the dove and did chatter as the crane, and my very breathing was, Lord, be merciful to me, a poor lost and ruined sinner. It seemed there was no mercy for me, yet I continued to beg for mercy. At times I would feel the burden not so heavy, and think I was mistaken, and think to turn back to the pleasures of the world, but oh my soul, my burden would return with more force than ever and I would think that surely there never would be any relief for my pressed down and burdened soul. In the meanwhile my father was badly afflicted with dropsy. We were living in Tennessee at that time, but had been living in Illinois, and Father wanted to go back to Illinois, so we took him back, and he died there in the year 1882. I was at that time in the deepest of my troubles, had no hope, and was without God in the world. When Father was dying he bid me farewell, hoping to meet me in that rest that is prepared for them that love God. Oh that was the darkest hour of my life! Father going to that home of rest and I feeling doomed to eternal banishment from the presence of God. I had come to the place where I felt I was too unworthy to even try to pray the Lord to have mercy on me. In fact, felt there was no mercy for me. After Father died we moved back to Tennessee, but I could not be still, for I was in such deep trouble. This heartfelt trouble went on with me until the winter of 1883. But I came to a place in my life I will never be able to express. I seemed to fall into a sub-conscious condition. In fact, I had come to the end; I could do nothing more. I felt sure the day of grace was past for me, and I had to stand still. I could not turn back, for when I looked back over the way I had come it was nothing but eternal banishment from the Lord.

So it was with me for about a month, as nearly as I can tell, that I was in a dormant state of life, and it seemed that I could do nothing else but stand still. While in that sub-conscious state, one day I went to hear two traveling preachers speak at old Gibson Church, and went again that night to hear an old brother preach in a schoolhouse, and the rest of the night after preaching I staid at the home of a brother Stallings. When I awoke the next morning the burden that had been pressing me down since the year 1876 was gone, and I felt like shouting praise to God. I felt like I wanted to take brother Stallings in my arms and tell him what a change I had met with, but something kept me from telling any one how I felt. My heart was filled with praise to God. The next day I went back to my home, feeling I would tell my mother and brother what a glorious change I had met with, but something kept me from telling them, yet my heart was full of praise to God for four days and nights. On the fourth day my brother and I were in the field gathering corn, when these words were spoken in my heart: Go preach the gospel. When this heavenly call came I almost fell to the ground, and felt in my heart to answer, O, Lord, I cannot preach the gospel. I surely did feel to be nothing; yea, less than nothing, but I was given a strong impression to go. I tried to think I surely was mistaken, but the impression grew stronger instead of leaving me, but I said in my heart I would never try to preach. After that I even denied I had ever had any change, when a preacher asked me to do my duty and join the church. They saw in me something I had tried to keep secret, and when I did join I went to meeting saying in my heart I would not join. But I was made willing, and could not forbear any longer, so I offered myself, was received and was baptized the next day. After I was received as a candidate for baptism, as we were going home my sister-in-law said to me, Tom, you have gotten rid of a burden you have carried a long time. I said, Yes, Mary, but there is a greater burden behind it all. I had reference to my impressions to try to preach. The next time I went to meeting after I was baptized the preacher asked me to take part in the preaching. I declined, and told him he was sadly mistaken in me to think I would try to preach. Soon after I joined the church in Gibson County, Tennessee, we moved to Union City, Obrian County, Tennessee, and I said, They shall never know I have been impressed to try to preach. So I suffered under the impression for about four years. My mother would say to me, You will have to try to preach. I would reply, No, I will die before I will try to preach. I just could not be obedient to the heavenly call. I was as the apostle Paul was. I went on suffering, until one night the Lord showed me he had power to kill, and I thought my time had come, that I must die. It seemed I felt the burning of hell for my disobedience, so I begged the Lord to spare my life and I would try to speak in his great and dear name. So the next meeting day I went, and the pastor of

the church asked me again, as he had been doing, to take part and try to preach, and I feared to not try at least to open services by song and prayer, so I humbly went into the stand, gave out a hymn and kneeled down and offered a few words of prayer. I thought that was all I would try to do, but as I arose to my feet my mouth was opened and I spoke for about twenty minutes as fast as my tongue could speak, and I sat down in perfect peace. That was my first effort in the way of preaching. If I am not mistaken, that was in the latter part of the year 1888 or some time in 1889. The brethren seemed to think my gift was self-evident, so in the month of May, 1890, they called for my ordination, and the third Sunday of that month I was ordained and set apart to the full work of the gospel ministry, or duties of an Elder in the church of Christ, and from that time until now I have been trying with the ability God has given me to speak to God's beloved Zion of his wonderful love and mercy to the children of men.

I could tell many more things, but this letter is getting too lengthy.

Now may the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Dear editors, if you deem this article worthy a place in the SIGNS, please publish it, for I have for some time been impressed to write it to the household of faith. I have passed my eighty-third birthday and have become feeble. I have heart trouble, and know not the time when I shall be called from this old world of affliction and trials, so farewell.

I remain your unworthy brother, in hope of eternal life,

THOMAS J. PRINCE.

DANVILLE, Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—As you requested, I will try, the Lord willing, to write my experience.

Several years ago I began to have sad thoughts about my condition. I felt to see that I was in a sinful condition, and fear came over me. I would try to pray, but my words seemed empty and not to go higher than my head. I realized I was weak, vile and undone. These troubles were worse at times. Foolish thoughts that I hated would come into my mind when I so much felt the need of prayer. This would bring me so low in feeling that I feared the mercy of the Lord was gone forever. I thought I deserved torment. This burden of mind continued to get worse, until one rainy afternoon I was sitting by the window, and when I looked out the sun had broken through the clouds and was shining the brighest I had ever seen it shine. The sky looked peaceable, and I heard some one singing. My heart was full of song, and I felt the mercy of the Lord had come right to me. I did not have the burden I had known so long; all seemed to be well. This calm, satisfied state did not last

long. I would doubt, and the knowledge of my imperfections did not leave me. I loved good christians, and I knew some I loved who seemed to be pious and without any faults. I tried to make improvements in my walk, but I was still imperfect, and to my disappointment I did not measure up to what I thought a christian should be, which gave me trouble and would bring me down in my feelings and I would have many doubts. Once I got low in health and I feared I was not going to get better. I promised the Lord if he blessed me to have good health again I would try to go to the church, as I thought this bad health had been sent upon me for something I had done. The Lord did bless me with better health, and I would think of my promise, and much desired to fulfill it, but my unworthiness was so great before me. I felt to be nothing in the sight of the Lord and was unfit to be in the church with good people. In the churches I attended the members looked calm and satisfied. I did not feel satisfied, and to me the sacred place of the church was too exalted a place for one as imperfect as I, yet I did not find that the world could offer me satisfaction, and I did not enjoy the company of worldly-minded people. I have seen much trouble, but the Lord has shown mercy in it all. At times his mercy has been shown me so vividly that I did not have a single doubt at the time. I do not at all times feel such security. Once when I was attending a sick child that I thought was surely going to die, I dreamed one night I was sitting in a room with three friends and we had our heads bowed down, when a woman came into the room with a vessel of oil and poured it on my friends' heads, then came to me and poured oil on my head. I awoke, and thought of my dream, and there was a calmness in my mind, I felt that the dream was a token to soothe my trouble. The child took a turn for the better. That dream helped me and gave me encouragement to hope the Lord was near me. I had a feeling of loneliness, and desired to be baptized. When seasons of trouble would come that desire was greater, as I felt to be outside, and in an unfriendly world. The words, "Arise and be baptized," would come forcibly into my mind. After meditating upon the church, I dreamed one night that I was standing with the members of Cane Creek Church beside a river, the water was smooth and clear, and I thought a little child took me by the hand and led me out into the water while they were singing. Some time after that I dreamed of walking with dear sister Morris in a long road. We were walking close together and keeping step. I have had a tender feeling and deep love for the members at Cane Creek since, and have desired to be one among them. I tried to ask the Lord that if it was right for me to join the church to open the way and to put the impression to do so in my mind. I believe it was opened to me on the fourth Sunday in July. On that fourth Sunday morning in August, when I was baptized, I was standing by the pond with the dear people of Cane Creek, and as I looked at the pond, the

water was still and calm, my dream came before me very plainly. I was glad to be baptized that morning, and have not been sorry that I did, although I feel to be unworthy to be with the dear ones. I would not be outside the church again for anything. I know I would be miserable outside. I trust the Lord will lead me and I will never do or say anything to cause wounded feelings against me. I desire the prayers of God's people, and I trust the Lord will bless and comfort you and yours.

Brother Dodson, I have written here what I trust the Lord has shown me.

In hope of eternal life,

MARY J. HERNDON.

[THE foregoing was sent to my father, and forwarded to me by him, for publication in the SIGNS. It is my understanding that she is the wife of Elder J. E. Herndon, of Danville, Virginia. —R. L. D.]

MARTINSVILLE, Virginia.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—If you can bear with one so little, vile and unworthy as I feel myself to be, I will try to write some of my travels, the Lord willing.

To begin, I must go back down the annals of time twelve or fourteen years. Then, when just a boy of twelve or fifteen years of age, I used to get copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and read all the dear, sweet experiences of the saints, and cry because I so wanted to be like them and could not. The years drifted on, and sometimes I would grieve about my condition, then again I just followed the world. The dear Lord's appointed time had not yet come. But August 4th, 1939, while at my work in the factory, I fell to grieving about my sins, and the grief was so strong within me that I could see no rest, and at last I was made to cry out, over and over, Lord, be merciful to me, a poor sinner. I felt a desire to unite with the church, and thought that if the Old Primitive Baptists would not have me I would join some other denomination. Then all at once my grief and burden fell away, and the words came into my heart so plainly, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast," and it came to me that was the way the Old Primitive Baptists believed, and I fell to rejoicing. Then it was I felt such a definite change come over me that if I had a mirror I would have looked to see if my face looked different. Truly then I was made to understand why "Amazing Grace" was written. The word "amazing," because I, of all the people in this world, the most unworthy and hell-deserving, should be set apart to share in that blessed plan of salvation, through the grace of God. Brethren, that day I rejoiced for awhile, but not for long. I wanted it to last always, but, as I hope, I have found out since then that it is only for short periods of time we are made to rejoice in the Lord. I went through several steps gradually, if not deceived in my own feelings,

killed to the love of this world, daily, felt, and still feel at times to be, the vilest, most depraved, wretched creature on earth, and doubt at times, wondering if it is not all imagination, hating the fleshly way I still have to live in this world, and have been made to see that Jesus Christ is our only hope, in this manner, that all our sins, from birth to the tomb, had to be imputed to him, and his righteousness had to be imputed, or transferred, to us. Thus he is the way, and the only way. All praise and glory and honor to his blessed name forever.

The second Sunday in October, 1939, I went before the North Fork Church and tried to tell them the way I felt, and the indescribable love I felt for the dear Old Primitive Baptists, and to my great joy I was received, and on November 12th was baptized by my father, Elder Lee Wingfield.

Dear editors of the SIGNS, please do with this as you see fit. If you deem it worthy of publication publish it, but if not, just throw it in the waste-basket, and all will be well with me. I have never written anything for publication before, so please cast the mantle of charity over my mistakes and imperfections.

I just want to add that I love to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and get much spiritual enjoyment from it. May the dear Lord continue to bless the SIGNS, its editors and all the Old Primitive Baptists everywhere, is my prayer.

Submitted in love and hope of life eternal through Christ, by your little, unworthy brother,

LAYTON WINGFIELD.

BELINGTON, West Virginia.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If not asking too much, I would like to inquire through the SIGNS if there might be a church of our faith and order within reach of Albuquerque, New Mexico. I know there are churches in Texas, but I do not recall ever having heard of any in New Mexico. If any who read these lines can give me the desired information I shall be pleased to have them communicate with me at 223 South Harvard Avenue, Albuquerque, New Mexico. The Lord willing, I expect to be there for a few weeks, hoping to arrive about February 15th.

With an earnest desiire for the welfare of the SIGNS and the cause of Zion, I am, I hope, an unworthy sister,

(MRS.) F. W. GAINER.

SPRINGFIELD, Illinois.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a check for three dollars: one year's subscription and the small balance where it is needed. I am never too busy to look over and read much of the SIGNS when it comes. The other day I read a copy which was printed in the year 1841, and enjoyed it. My husband's grandfather, J. E. Brasfield, had the SIGNS in those days, and my father Elder John G. Sawin, of Mattoon, Illinois, always took it, so I would miss having it.

With wishes that you may have a good year, sincerely,

(MRS.) JOAB P. STOUT.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1940.

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MATTHEW XI. 19.

"WISDOM is justified of her children."

God is wisdom, and there is no wisdom but of God. God hath created all things and hath given every thing wisdom as seemeth good in his sight. As we have meditation upon these things our minds seem to fall short in comprehension, and when we read from his inspired word that "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confuse the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," (1 Cor. i. 27-30), we know that no man by searching can find out God. We hope God has given us wisdom to comprehend the things of God, and to know the depravity of man. Wisdom hath spread abroad the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth, and men are trying to find the extremity of them, but God hath reserved unto himself these mysteries, and man cannot go beyond God's purpose. The people of God are the only people that we have any knowledge of who are satisfied to leave these things with God, and rest in the love of God given in Christ Jesus, realizing the glory of him as the only begotten, full of grace and truth. The children of God were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. (Eph. i. 4.) Wisdom knew that no sinner could stand blameless before God without the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, and all the way was decreed by him according to the good pleasure of his will. The house not made with hands was built by wisdom, and every part and particle was brought together without the sound of an axe or iron tool upon it, and all the pillars were hewn out in the mount of God, and according to wisdom the foundation of the house of God was laid, and "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. iii. 11. The directing hand of wisdom works in the people of

God to will and to do of his good pleasure, so the flesh cannot build or grow in strength to attain unto the power and wisdom of God. The children of wisdom have passed through tribulation, which worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; which gives them faith, the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, but they with patience wait for it, and by that God-given faith they know the world was made by God's almighty word, and faith assures us that though we die, that heavenly building stands. The more of these things they are given to know the more they feel God's ways are right, and they can only be discerned by the Spirit of God. Jesus, the fullness of all these things, exclaimed, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."—Matt. xi. 25, 26. The children of wisdom are zealous of good works, and everything pertaining to the house of God, which is the reason the Old School Baptist faith and order does not change, and when diversions from these things arise the faithful watchman cries out, and condemns by the authority of the Spirit within, which makes him faithful in the house of God. Though trembling and afraid he stands, and the only strength and comfort that will make him bold is the witness within, which justifies wisdom, and condemns foolishness. All that arises in opposition to the truth of God comes from the carnal mind, and is enmity against God. We feel the discernment of these things at times, which makes us rejoice in that we have a hope in God's salvation, and as wisdom has designed it must come to pass.

The children of wisdom express the language of those who are taught as Paul, the apostle of Jesus Christ: "We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory."—1 Cor. ii. 7. This wisdom is given to a poor sinner through Jesus Christ, and none can know it until Jesus quickens them by his Spirit, which is the manifested virtue of the incorruptible seed by the word of God, and when they come forth they come seeing, beholding the wonderful works of God, which gives the sinner reverence for God and godliness. We are made to expect of those who profess to have a hope in the mercy of God, given in Christ Jesus, love for the church of God and a desire to live godly in this world, and we hear them saying, There my best friends, my kindred, dwell; there God my Savior reigns, which justifies wisdom, and these are the children of wisdom. Dear reader, can we apply these things to ourselves? Do we find these manifestations in our hearts? Were these relations the prompting motives that stirred us to go home to our friends and ask a home to dwell with them? If so, we are set forth as the called of God to manifest understanding, which this world cannot receive, and that we do know and testify to that we have seen. And who believes our report? None

but those to whom the arm of the Lord is revealed; and their reason for believing our report is that they have the witness within, which says yea and amen to the glory of God. It is through these relations that God is justified by his works among the sons of men, and with Job they say, Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.

We realize the swiftness of time that passes, and we are hastening to the end of our pilgrimage here on earth, and as wisdom has purposed in us so it is with all living. We note the changes, but the world goes on and on, one generation passing and another coming up. So it is, generation after generation,

The children of wisdom do not justify themselves in wickedness or wrong doing because of the conception of sin in them, but by the Spirit they mortify the deeds of the body, and confess continually their uncleanness, which brings a groaning in their hearts for God to be merciful to them, poor sinners, and having condemnation weighing them down, they cry, God be merciful to us, poor sinners; and realizing the all-seeing eye is upon them, they feel unworthy to lift their eyes toward heaven, for all records of righteousness, and condemnation against sin, are there, and each one feels to ask, How can such a sinner as I be just with God? "For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."—Rom. viii. 18-25. We truly hope as we quote from Paul's letter to the brethren that were in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints, that we have a like feeling for the beloved of God everywhere, and as you read this as coming to you as a letter of our dictation, we want you to know our heart is filled with emotion and love for all of God's elect, which we hope includes you and us. Paul, by the Spirit of God that was with him, could justify wisdom in raising Jesus Christ from the dead, and also see the redemption and complete salvation of all the saints, and how they should be brought off more than conquerors through Jesus Christ. God is just in choosing in his Son the heirs of salvation, and in glorifying Jesus at his right hand to intercede for them.

Wisdom has so directed that we should continue to write of the goodness and mercy of God, and the desire of our heart is that the Spirit of God direct, that words, phrases, clauses and connections may be filled with the Spirit, that our relations with the household of faith

may be portrayed, and we wish for every one the manifested presence of Jesus, that you may have a fruitful season, and feel the purging in your hearts that the Spirit manifests, that you may be separated from dead works to serve the living God, and be turned from evil and drawn after Jesus, in which we will strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace.

As we are nearing the close of this letter to you through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we are minded to think of the suffering and death of poor mortal creatures in Europe, and believing in an all-wise God, a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart of man, who knoweth our thoughts when they are afar off, before they enter our minds, may it please him to give to all those who have rule and power over others a feeling and sympathy for their suffering, and a desire for peace, and may it please him to give us to see wisdom come out of all that transpires, that wisdom may be justified of her children.

C. W. V.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS."

WE will furnish extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

SOME INTERESTING BAPTIST HISTORY.

NOT long ago we came across a bit of interesting Baptist history, some of which will follow this preamble. It convinced us of three things: (1) We should be very careful about going back too far into the record of man, lest we discover something that might not be to his credit. (2) While we should highly and rightfully esteem some of our forefathers for their valiancy in huing to the line in an effort to set forth and maintain the faith of God's elect, we must not forget that even those who possessed the greatest gifts were still only fallible men. We should follow no man blindly, but should prove all things by the word of God and hold fast to only that which is good. We do not believe that the day of perfection has yet arrived, but we do believe that the church (collectively, as well as the individuals composing it) is growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. She has, through persecution and trial, been stripped of some of her graveclothes of superstition and tradition, and by the continued revelation of God's blessed truth to her she shall go on and on unto perfection. We are persuaded she will have to pass through flood and fire to be purged of a lot of her dross before that day comes, and we sincerely hope she will ever be found to be alert and on the watch. (3) We are more than ever convinced that the only way she can show forth the praises of her Lord is to be found faithful in clinging to her one and only infallible guide, the holy

Scriptures, for both the doctrine and order of her house. Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. She will be wise indeed if she build only upon this rock. It is the only foundation that will withstand all the assaults of hell. Every work of man will come to naught and be destroyed, but the work of our God shall stand forever—it shall not be destroyed. Let us, therefore, take the *infallible Scriptures of inspired truth,* and them only, as the base upon which we are to build. All other ground is sinking sand and the house which is built upon it is sure to fall, and woe be unto him who buildeth upon such a foundation.

We hope our readers will be profited by what is here presented from Hassell's Church History, pages 335 to 337, inclusive: "The earliest Confession of Faith denominated Baptist was published in Switzerland in 1527. While affirming the spirituality of the membership and ordinances of the church, and the unworldliness and the purity of her discipline, it makes no direct statement in regard to the doctrine of grace, though the phraseology of the document seems Arminian. In 1609 an Arminian Baptist 'Church' was formed at Amsterdam, Holland, of refugees from persecution in England, and in 1611 they published an Arminian Confession of Faith. In 1633 the first Particular or Predestinarian Baptist Church was formed in London, and in 1639 another; and in 1644 there were seven of these churches in London, and they published a predestinarian Confession of Faith. In 1656 sixteen churches in Somerset and adjoining counties published a similar Confession. In 1677 and in 1688, and again in 1689, was published the fullest and most esteemed Baptist Confession of Faith,—in 1689 the ministers and messengers of above a hundred churches in England and Wales meeting in London for that purpose, and, as they say in their prologue, *'denying Arminianism.'* This Confession is published in this volume, and adopts, on the subject of predestination, the strong language of the Westminister (the most esteemed Presbyterian) Confession. The great majority of the Baptists in England and America (those called the Particular Baptists in England, and those called Regular or Calvinistic or 'Missionary' Baptists in America) still profess to adhere to this old London Confession. Thus from 1523 to 1633 it seems that those called Baptists, so far as we can learn, favored Arminian views, and from 1633 to the present time (1886) the most of those called Baptists have professed to be Predestinarians; as, from 1727 to 1754, the members of the churches in the bounds of what was in 1765 called the Kehukee Association, were General or Arminian Baptists, and were not at all strict in discipline. As Whitefield says, 'We are all Arminians by nature.' And so, quite often, babes in Christ retain for awhile something of this carnal feeling, and have to be fed upon milk, and not, like men, upon strong meat. But 'Jesus Christ,' says the inspired penman, is 'the same yesterday, and today, and forever; and it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace,

and not carried about with divers and strange doctrines.' (Hebrews xiii. 8, 9.) Still it takes time for even the plants of our heavenly Father thus to grow and be established; and with improper food, administered by unqualified attendants, the plants may remain stunted and feeble for many years. Besides, the growth of plants depends greatly upon the influences of air and light; and so growth in grace depends greatly upon the in-breathing and illumination of the Holy Spirit. If these blessed influences be withheld, the children of God may long remain as babes. These considerations, which should be forcibly impressed upon us by early Baptist history, give us reasons to hope that there are many of the dear children of God who have not yet been led to identify themselves with his visible church; who as yet see men as it were trees walking; who, though cleansed by the atoning blood of Jesus, still do not properly give glory to God. (Mark viii. 22-25; Luke xvii. 11-19.) Another instructive lesson to be derived from early Baptist history is that *all human authority is only fallible and imperfect;* and our faith should, therefore, be *entirely* based upon the *infallible Scriptures of inspired truth.* We are to call no man on earth our spiritual father or master, but to acknowledge Christ as our only Master. (Matt. xxiii. 8-10.) Taking the *Bible only for their standard,* our Baptists predecessors were gradually led from Arminianism to the doctrine of salvation by grace alone; and the same Divine guidance has led the Bible Baptists of to-day to abandon some *unscriptural* practices of some former Baptists, such as open communion and affiliation with unbaptized professors of religion, the formation of religious societies based upon money for the evangelization of the world, the substitution of human education for the call and qualification of the Holy Spirit as a preparation for the gospel ministry, having ruling Elders as distinguished from teaching Elders, the laying on of hands upon all believers, shaking hands while singing, inviting mourners to the anxious bench, etc. These unscriptural practices were, many of them, but *rarely* and *occasionally* adopted by any Baptists *before the present century.* Into a few of them even the old Kehukee Association was at times, to a very small extent, inveigled between the years 1803 and 1827. But, as the Scriptures do not, by precept or example, authorize any of these practices, the child of God, who disregards human tradition, cannot indorse, much less idolize, any of these modern innovations. Believing as he does, in the sovereignty of God's grace, in the perfection of Christ's redemption, in the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit, and in the freeness and fullness of God's salvation towards all who shall be saved, he cannot for a moment suppose that any human means have ever sent, or will ever send, a single soul to glory. Others may fall down before these idols; but, as for him and his spiritual kindred, they fear the fiery furnace heated seven times hotter than usual *less* than they fear and reverence the God of their salvation, *and him only will they worship.*" R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder Arnold H. Bellows)

The Lexington-Roxbury Association, now in session with the First and Second Churches of Roxbury, at Roxbury, N. Y., September 13th and 14th, 1939, to the several churches and associations in fellowship with us with which we correspond, sends love and fellowship.

DEAR BRETHREN:—With a realizing sense of our inability to write a Corresponding Circular Letter, we attempt the task, desiring to present some thoughts from the twenty-first verse of the first chapter of Matthew, which reads, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." These are words spoken to Joseph by an angel before his espoused wife Mary gave birth to Jesus. The salvation referred to is prefixed by the word "shall," which denotes certain fulfillment of the promise. The salvation of a lost, ruined, helpless and justly condemned sinner from all the penalty of a holy and irrevocable law is the most solemn matter that can receive consideration by men or angels, for it involves the person and work of the eternal Son of God. This salvation also embraces in its scope the electing decrees of God the Father and also the work of God the Holy Spirit in the hearts of those who comprise the election of grace, the offices of these two Persons of the Trinity being related to that of the dear Redeemer, in whom dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily. The word "Jesus" means savior, and is a New Testament word for Joshua, of whom we have two types in the Old Testament, that of king and that of priest, both offices being combined in Jesus, who as Priest put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and who as King reigns in the kingdom of heaven, having put all things under his feet, and who will reign in glory while the eternal ages roll their endless courses on.

The promise was that Jesus should save his people from their sins. The word "people" means persons, and therefore a complete work is promised or expressed. Sin is a transgression of the law, and the penalty of sin is death. The people of God had their fleshly origin in Adam, their federal head or representative, and through sin in him became the children of wrath even as others, incapable of thinking a holy thought, or doing that which could save them. Because of sin man died bodily and also to that sinless state of perfection which was his before the Adam-fall. In bodily death there is separation of soul and body; in the sin of man there is separation from God. Before the transgression of our first parents, there was agreement between God and man, converse but not communion. In the sinner's separation from God there is the penalty of everlasting condemnation and woe. The transgressor is born with the nature of sin in his being and will ever be inclined to act out his nature in continued sin. The very thought of foolishness is sin, and one offense under the law makes the violator guilty of offending in all points. God is infi-

nitely holy, of purer eyes than to behold evil, and none but the righteous can stand in his presence or have communion with him. In the blood is the life of the soul, and the soul that sins dies. So the penalty for sin must be death, and there can be no remission of sin without the shedding of blood. God's inflexible justice demanded as the ground for salvation a holy life, a holy offerer or priest, and a holy sacrifice or offering. As man was made of the earth, the curse that came upon him because of sin made it impossible for any holy offering to be obtained from the fruits of the ground or by the sacrifice of any animal. Because of the weakness of the flesh man cannot keep the law of God, and sin reigns unto death in his flesh, is ever present with him, and he is under its power and sentence. Therefore to be saved eternally man must be saved from the penalty of sin, the power of sin and the very presence of sin. Though chosen by the Father in eternity and redeemed by the Son in time, man must be born again of the Spirit of God in order to taste and handle experimentally of the word of life, abound in the fruits of the Spirit and present his body a living sacrifice unto God. The divine nature of Christ must be made manifest in the sinner saved by grace as he is conformed to the image of God, lives by the faith of the Son of God, and is crucified with Christ.

Then let us consider some of the aspects of this great salvation. The fallen creature man was without fellowship with God, with no manifest union with him any more or as much as could exist between a cultured human being and the lowest beast of earth. Man was made of the dust of the earth, was an earthly being, had sinned in the flesh and received the sentence of death in the flesh; and so salvation must come in the flesh by obedience in the flesh, suffering and death in the flesh, and life from the dead in the flesh. Man could not meet the just requirements of God's holy law in his helpless state. But through the matchless grace, the eternal wisdom, the almighty power and the immutable decrees of the thrice holy God salvation was provided by this blessed Jesus whose coming birth was announced to Joseph. As man born according to the operation of nature in a human being comes into the world a sinner with death having power over him, the child Jesus came into the world contrary to nature, having God for his Father, being conceived of the Holy Ghost, and therefore holy, harmless, undefiled, having power over death. Having a woman for his mother, Jesus was enabled to take human nature into union with his own divine person, thus establishing a basis whereby there could be union and communion between God and man. He became one with his people in taking their flesh that they might be one with him in spirit. The recipients of eternal salvation must be participants in both the flesh and Spirit of Christ, therefore the Word became flesh and dwelt among men that true believers might behold his glory. The expression "save his people from their sins" signifies that the church of God belonged to Christ before the

foundation of the world, therefore Jesus came into the world to redeem that which belonged to him from eternity. In one Mediator, Jesus Christ, God and man are brought together. For a sinner to be saved there must be a holy life in the flesh, and Jesus rendered it. The law required a holy sacrifice, and Jesus through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God. As bodily death was imposed upon the sinner, Jesus took the sins of his people upon himself and died for sinners. God's inexorable justice separates sinners from God, and Jesus on the cross was not only forsaken by God, but endured the infinite consequences of his people's sins that they might be brought nigh to God and divine justice forever satisfied. By his resurrection from the dead he brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Death lost its sting and the grave its power. He therefore saved his people from the penalty of their sins. Through the work of Jesus on earth, the work of God the Spirit is made possible, and the work of Jesus as our High Priest in heaven continues in time. The testimony of Jesus in our hearts is the spirit of prophecy and we are taught of the things of salvation by the Holy Spirit. By the intercession of Jesus in heaven penitent sinners are washed in the laver of the water of the word and presented faultless before the throne of God, as they mortify the deeds of the body through the Spirit and live and are crucified with Christ. In Old Testament times the priests washed in the laver after the offering of the sacrifice upon the altar. The church of God is a holy priesthood of believers, and as the blood of the sacrifice was first shed, and then the cleansing water applied from the laver before entering the holy place, the work of the cleansing water depends upon a previous application of blood, so the work of the washing of regeneration and of renewing of the Holy Ghost follows the work of the death of Jesus on the cross and is dependent upon it. The blood of Christ on the cross was applied Godwards to satisfy justice, and the water of spiritual washing and renewing is applied manwards. God's people are sanctified by the word and set apart as a holy nation. Therefore the saved sinner is delivered from the power of sin. We are saved not only by the death of Jesus, but by his life also. He must fellowship our sufferings in the flesh and we must fellowship his sufferings to experience the power of his resurrection. The meat or meal offering of the Old Testament is a beautiful example of the sufferings in the life of Christ. This meal was ground to the same degree of fineness to show the equality of the perfections of Christ. Then oil was mixed with it to show that grace was mixed with all that Christ did. He was perfect man and God. Also oil was poured upon this meal to show the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in his anointing at his baptism. No leaven was mixed with that meal that it might signify the spotless humanity of Christ, free from all evil. There was salt mixed with the meal to typify the preserving power of holiness. Then the meal was baked in

a pan, showing the action of fire, typifying the sufferings of Christ; and as the priests ate of this burnt offering, we see that the church does fellowship the life of Christ in some measure, for we were with him in his life, in his death, in the tomb, in the resurrection, and are in him in a mystical sense before the throne of the great and glorious God. Jesus was the great antitype of all the offerings of the old Levitical priesthood, thus forgiving us our trespasses, making peace for us with God, and making the cross upon which he suffered the death of our sins. The water and the blood that came from the side of Jesus at his death, bore testimony to this as the spirit, the water and the blood agree in one, bearing record in earth. But to effectually save his people from their sins, they must be saved from the presence of sin. While here in the body during our earthly pilgrimage, sin is present in the flesh but when death has sealed the lips of man, the penalty of corporeal death has been exacted; and when that which was sown a natural body is raised a spiritual body in the mystery and glory of the resurrection, the creature is free from the presence of sin, never again to be marred by it. It is Jesus who hath delivered us, who doth deliver us, and who will yet deliver us, the family of God therefore being freed from the penalty, power and presence of sin. What a price the Son of God paid to redeem his bride! The value of a thing is what one is willing to pay for it. Of what inestimable value to Jesus is the church that it required heaven's costliest treasure to redeem it! How it behooves us to consider what we are saved from, by whom saved, and what we are saved to! In view of these facts, how much the children of God should desire to live uprightly, to be careful and prayerful each day, to examine self, to be at one another's feet, to show each other the spirit of charity and forgiveness, to be careful not to dishonor the cause of Christ by unbecoming conduct or conversation, and to set their affections on things above, knowing that the precepts of the gospel are as binding as its doctrinal points, and so honor Him who is made unto them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

We have been comforted by the coming among us of your ministers and messengers, bringing us your correspondence and your love and fellowship. We feel that this meeting is another mile-stone along our pilgrimage here, and we hope to meet you all again next year at our Association, which is appointed to be held with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Shokan, New York, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday between the second and third Sundays of September, 1940. Until then, dear brethren, farewell.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
ORVILLE WINCHELL, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Joab P. Stout, Ill., $1; H. M. Bowden, Tenn., $1; W. J. Coulter, N. Y., $2; Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $8; Mrs. Corbin Arnold, Cal., $3; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $2.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER G. E. COULBOURN, of Cape Charles, Virginia, passed away February 5th, 1940; also DEACON DANIEL DOLSON, of the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., has passed on, being in his ninety-second year. We hope suitable obituaries of these two esteemed brethren will appear soon.

R. L. D.

ELDER DAVID EVAN ROBISON passed away at his home in Weiser, Idaho, January 8th, 1940. He was born near London, Kentucky, September 20th, 1869. At the age of nineteen he moved to near Dutton, Arkansas. He was married to Frances Ann Hibbard in the year 1889, and engaged in business in that County until 1901, when he moved with his family to Weiser, Idaho, and continued his occupation as a farmer and stock raiser until 1925. He then leased his farm and took up his residence in town, where he resided until his death, working during that time for the Weiser Irrigation Company, having charge of their main canal and the distribution of water to the various farms.

Elder Robison was of a religious turn of mind, and began to be exercised in early life, and at the age of twenty he united with the United Brethren, near Dutton, and soon began to speak in public and was ordained by them and preached acceptably, having satisfactorily filled all duties of his ministry among them, conducting revival meetings and baptizing new converts. In the midst of these activities a new and strange state of mind took possession of him. The works' system in which he was so zealous, and which he thought to be unto righteousness, he began to find was unto death, as applied to him. A new way of salvation was revealed to him, based entirely upon the atonement made by Jesus Christ, perfect in all ways and sure, where there can be no failures, and not depending upon human ability or conditions. His exercises in these things were so strong that he was soon forced to give up his ministry and membership with those people and to unite with the Old School Baptists, as he found them near him. To make this change required more than human strength, as all those know who have come this way to the true church. All natural ties and relationships must be denied and the pleasant and approved work of the ministry among his former brethren must be broken off. The confusion in which he left his baptized converts when he disregarded his former baptism and must come in under a new baptism was put before him by those he loved but must leave for conscience's sake. It was wonderful to hear Elder Robison relate these incidents, and the struggle necessary to change from the works' system to that one entirely of grace. But the exercises of mind one must pass through to become established in every principle of truth, and to fully understand the deceitfulness of the carnal nature places one thus exercised upon a foundation that is sure and unshakable. Such was Elder Robison, whose subsequent life was one of conscientious faithfulness to the truth and the work of his church. He was soon ordained by the Old School Baptists, and after coming to Weiser took membership with Salem Church, at that place, and served it as pastor from 1926 until his death.

Elder Robison leaves his wife, three sons, four daughters and nine grandchildren. The sons are Joe A., of Boise, Clarence E. and Roscoe S., of Weiser; the daughters are Mrs. Idabel Briggs, of Medford, Oregon, Mrs. Carl Robinson, of Payette, Idaho, Mrs. Clara

Christainson, and Miss Bama, of Weiser, Idaho. Also a brother Roscoe, of Kentucky, a sister, Mrs. A. L. Dowell, of Salem, Oregon.

The writer conducted the funeral, January 30th, at the Funeral Parlors at Weiser, where a large number of brethren and friends attended to honor the services as befitting this useful man, after which interment was made in the beautiful cemetery at that place. We shall miss him, but we do not mourn as those without hope. May all who knew him be strengthened by the worthy example he left of both business and spiritual life.

C. W. BOND.

WINFIELD SCOTT FOX, son of Abraham James Fox and Elizabeth Ann Bunting Fox, was born May 23rd, 1861, in Pella, Iowa, where he grew to manhood. At the age of twenty-one years he went to Kansas, then an unsettled country, especially the western half of the State, and spent two years in Winfield, Kansas. In the spring of 1884 he went to Kiowa County (then a part of Edwards County) and took up a homestead adjoining the present town of Wellsford, Kansas. In 1893 he was united in marriage to Miss Marticia Isabelle Hardy. A daughter, Marticia Eva, and a son, Winfield James, were born to this union. In 1910 the children had arrived at the place where they were ready for more advanced educational opportunities than the schools in Wellsford afforded, so the family left the homestead and located in Emporia, Kansas, and the children were entered in the Kansas State Normal School. After eight years, when they had completed their courses, the family moved back and resided a few years in Kiowa and Barber Counties; but in the spring of 1924 they located at the present home, in Hodgman County, Kansas, where he passed away January 11th, 1940, at the age of 78 years, 7 months and 18 days. He lived a normal home life. He was kind and affable, always had friends, because he was a friend to all. He was a kind father and husband, and lived the virtues in his daily life which were worthy of emulation. So far as I know he never made any public profession of a hope in the blood and righteousness of Christ, yet he left an abundant evidence of his deep concern regarding spiritual things, and a satisfying evidence that he had a heart understanding of them. He was an interested attendant upon our church services, and a believer in the principles of salvation by grace; and there was nothing in his manner of life to contradict his belief. He is survived by his widow, who will continue at the home, their son James, who is on a farm and lives near the home in Hodgeman County, Kansas, and the daughter, Miss Eva Fox, who is a teacher of Home Economics in the schools in Cheyenne, Wyoming; and five grandchildren. Also two brothers: John, of Summerville, Missouri, and Robert J., of Los Angeles, California.

The writer was called for to conduct the funeral, but owing to a severe blizzard which was raging through Kansas and northern Oklahoma at the time I attempted to make the trip, and my own physical condition, I had to turn back at Wichita, Kansas, and return to Dallas. After a short service at Haviland, Kansas, by a Methodist minister, the body was laid to rest in the cemetery not far from the old homestead in Kiowa County, Kansas. I would say to the bereaved family, Be not overcome with sorrow. Look not upon the things which are temporal, but look upon the things which are spiritual. Temporal things must soon be passed, but spiritual things are eternal. May the Lord sustain you

by his grace in the trying loss you have so lately sustained. No weapon that is formed against the redeemed of the Lord shall prosper; even death has lost its sting and the grave must give up its victim. "Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

A brother-in-law,

J. R. HARDY.

A LONG life was brought to an honorable close February 2nd, 1940, when sister PHOEBE FAULKNER departed this life, at the age of ninety-two years, having been born August 30th, 1847, and having spent all her years not far from the scenes of her childhood days. For thirty-eight years she had made her home with a niece, Mrs. Bertha Sanford, of Margaretville, N. Y., where she died after an acute illness of about a week's duration. She had been a semi-invalid for about forty years, and in all that time had never gone far from the place of her residence. About fifty years ago she united with the Middletown and Andes Old School Baptist Church, and always remained one of its most faithful and devoted members. She was deeply experienced, firmly indoctrinated in the principles of eternal truth as it is in Jesus Christ, and bore evidence of having learned of him, and her life abounded in the fruits of the Spirit. She exemplified by her walk the precepts of the gospel. Though of a quiet and retiring disposition, she made many friends and was endeared to those who knew her.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Sanford home, and the interment was at New Kingston, in the family plot. Sister Faulkner was a spiritually-minded woman and delighted in conversations upon things that pertain to the kingdom of our God, and dearly loved the companionship of her brethren. It was a pleasure to call at the place of her residence and to note her unshaken faith and reconciliation to God's will. She had seen many changes in things of this world in her unusually long life, but she felt and saw no change in the matchless love of her Redeemer.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

STAFFORD B. AGEE, my uncle, was born in Patrick County, Virginia, November 4th, 1844, and died December 20th, 1939. At the age of five years he came with his parents to Butler County, Missouri, where he resided until his death. My grandparents, known in those days as "Uncle Samuel" and "Aunt Polly," settled in this County long before the Civil War, where my deceased uncle grew to manhood, and at the age of twenty-one was united in marriage to Mary J. Hicks, who preceded him in death nearly four years. He was given a sweet hope in the finished work of the blessed Redeemer in his early days, but because of a feeling of unworthiness, and for lack of sound Baptists in this part of the country in his latter days, he never united with any church. Many times I have heard him remark that Baptists did not advocate the doctrine as they once did. Most of the the Baptists of this County were those claiming to be conditional time salvation Baptists, and Uncle could not go with them in this plan. He was a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone, and wanted man's works left out of it entirely, and he showed by his walk and conversation that he feared the Lord and wanted to live in a way that would be in honor to Him, and we rest in a satisfied hope that our loss is his eternal gain. So we beg the Lord to make us submissive to his righteous will, and not wish him back to travel in this vain world where sorrow and trouble ever come, and may he pre-

pare us all to meet with all our loved ones in that home not made with hands, there to praise his adorable name throughout eternity. I have often wished I could walk as straight and submissive as our dear departed uncle. When I was called to his bedside the day he was taken he was unconscious, and apparently knew nothing, and did not say anything until he was almost gone, then he was heard to say, "It is all right now," and give just one more weak breath, and all that had been mortal with Uncle Stafford was no more on earth. I cannot keep from weeping over our loss of so good a man.

His nephew,

W. A. HARWELL,

SISTER CALLIE BEST was born July 21st, 1867, and was married to Elder J. D. Best December 16th, 1883, in the State of Georgia, and to their union were born six children, one son and five daughters. The surviving children are sister F. N. Morgan, of Crossett, Ark., Mrs. Bulah Ward, of New Mexico, and Mrs. J. H. Ward, of Rison, Ark.. The deceased are Walter, Jannie, Sue and Dollie Best. Sister Best received a hope early in life and united with the Old School Primitive Baptist Church the second Sunday in July, 1886. Sister Best and her family moved from northern Alabama to Arkansas in 1890, where she lived until she departed this life, June 21st, 1939. She lived a devoted life to the cause of her Master, always contending for the doctrine of salvation by grace through a crucified Savior. She had a fervent love for the brethren and sisters wherever they might be, and often entertained great numbers of them in her beautiful home, and always made them feel welcome. Sister Best was very active in community welfare, not by joining or setting up organizations, but by the precepts she set before us, and every good citizen loved and cherished her. She was a kind and loving mother, exerting a great influence over her children for good, and was a good companion for a ministering servant of the Lord, and always insisted on her husband filling his appointments, even in her illness.

Sister Best was laid to rest in the cemetery at old Bethel Primitive Baptist Church. The funeral services were conducted by the writer. Sister Best will be greatly missed by all who were associated with her, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. May her dear companion continue to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ her Savior.

H. H. HARROD.

IN MEMORIAM.

WE, the New Hope Association of Predestinarian Primitive Baptists of Arkansas, now in session, do hereby acknowledge by this Memorial Record our sincere love and great grief in the loss of our esteemed Moderator's (namely Elder J. D. Best) companion, who passed away June 21st, 1939. Sister Best had been affiliated with this Association for nearly thirty years, and had tenderly and faithfully watched over it for good in her quiet and unassuming way. We shall deeply cherish her memory through the remainder of our lives. We desire to bow in humble submission to God's holy will, for we know that all his work is holy and righteous.

Moved and seconded, that a copy of this Memorial be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication, a copy be sent to the bereaved family and a copy be printed in our Minutes.

H. H. HARROD, Mod., pro tem.

FLOYD N. MORGAN, Clerk.

BOOKS WANTED.

ANY one having a copy of Hassell's Church History, Gill's "Body of Divinity" or Gill's "Cause of God and Truth," please write to H. M. Bowden, 1076 Jackson Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee, giving condition of books, and price wanted.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder D. E. Robinson pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

CHURCH MEETING PLACE CHANGED.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets each first and third Sunday at eleven o'clock a. m. at 2407½ Main Street, Dallas, Texas, and on Saturday before each first Sunday at 2:30 p. m. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Mod., pro. tem.

T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

ROMANS VI. 23.

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

It is generally conceded and expressed that the Scriptures and the preached word are of four divisions, viz.: fundamental, experimental, practical and governmental, or disciplinary. I say this because this expression of inspiration is generally accepted and preached by free grace adherents only in the light of what is termed a fundamental text. All the preaching I have ever heard on the subject, and what I have read, has been strictly confined to that point of view. While I do not deny its bearing upon the consequences of Adam's apostacy whereby sin entered into the world, and death (in all its phases) by sin as the wages (or penalty or fruit) thereof. and that eternal life was and is wholly the free and sovereign gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, I am bound to state that the full and proper import of this Scripture expression goes further, or embraces a wider scope, than a mere fundamental (so called) meaning. It is my observation that even the most learned ministers misapply stated truths by not considering the relation of the text to its context matter. I am not an educated man, but I cannot just wildly blunder over language connections. Although I do not propose to privately interpret holy writ, for the Scriptures are of no private interpretation, and to merely interpret language, without the unction of the Spirit, is of no profit to the hungry soul. But we must notice the fact that our text is a connecting clause, and also an explanatory and a declarative one, and without consideration of previous stated truths we cannot properly elucidate it. Then to apply it as most do we would have to leave off the word "for," and make it read, The wages of sin is death. The gift of God is eternal life. Without further comment and grammatical analysis I shall proceed, trusting the Lord will enable me to

rightly divide the word of truth and command his blessing to rest upon what little I may write to the edification and comfort of some poor soul to the praise of his majestic name.

The holy Scripture was given to the church of Christ for instruction in righteousness (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17), and I do not propose to expand it beyond its restrictions. The unregenerate cannot either believe nor rejoice in the truth. So as this language, together with the entire epistle, is directed to the church, we are constrained to speak to the characters to whom it is directed. And we know the church is none other than God's elect, redeemed and called ones. There are two things I desire to clear up in my treatise, viz.: sin hath its wages; that is, the consequences, or fruits, of sin are reckoned as wages; second, the gift of eternal life, and show why it is so. Briefly stated, the distinction is made upon these two existing facts: First, sin is a work of the creature (not the holy God), and it goes on to say that what one works for he is lawfully entitled to. "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die." "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." "When lust hath conceived it bringeth forth death." In every instance and under every circumstance where sin is committed, and there are many recordings of it in the Scripture, the wages is death, and only so as being the deeds of the creature. Now sin is considered from two points of view: (1) original sin; (2) practical. And practical sins are to be taken under two headings first, while unborn of the Spirit; second, after regeneration. While I shall not deal with each phase at length, I must consider these distinctions in order to elucidate our text. All true believers know, in a measure at least, the results of Adam's sin, for they have in a measure felt the force of it by experience. Now, some readers may suggest that I have overstepped all bounds in saying that "in every instance the wages of sin is death on the ground of the deeds of the creature," thinking to justify infants and irresponsibles. I admit that so far as actual transgression against God's given moral law such are not reckoned guilty in that sense, but that wages of original sin reaches unto them none can successfully gainsay, for the apostle states in the fifth chapter that by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. So while infants have not sinned of themselves, they are nevertheless sinners by nature, being conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity. And the wages of original sin is both moral or corporeal and spiritual death, and without the free gift of God eternal burning is the ultimate payment to all. Contrary to the honest opinion of some, infants are not saved because of their innocency, for our text states plainly that eternal life is the gift of God. If there was in anywise any merit in any one eternal life in that case would not be a gift, but rather a debt or wage. Quickened sinners know by divine teaching the Almighty did not set his love upon them (or, as John said, bestow it upon them) because of any goodness of their's, for

they looked for hell, and they confessed, and do confess, that if they should be sent to hell God's righteous law would approve it well. They know that there has not, nor ever shall be, one thing in them deserving of God's mercy. They know if they have or ever shall enter into eternal blessedness it is and shall be wholly upon the ground of God's free gift. But is this all they know? No, they know the plague of sin in their own flesh and that its wages is death. And one thing you will never hear one of them say, viz.: That they ever got one penny in wages more than was justly due them for their sins and grievous revoltings against a good and just God. Nor will one ever lay his sins to God's charge, or charge God as being the author of them. Nor will enlightened sinners feel that any faithfulness on their part (if I might use such language; though faithfulness is never reckoned on their own initiative) in any way obligates God to bestow any favor upon them.

And now as I have come to this point, in order to be brief, I shall leave off much that I could say connectedly, and come to the import of the text as I have been exercised therein. The apostle after setting forth to the church at Rome their salvation, their deliverance from the bondage of sin, then warns them of wilful transgressions; that is, that now being freed from sin they should not henceforth serve sin, that is when they were its bond slaves or willing servants. While all quickened sinners know that they are not freed from the workings of sin in the flesh, and though they groan under the weight of their sins in the flesh and labor to be delivered from its wiles, they know that the grace of God does not license them to lasciviousness. For if we sin wilfully there is a certain fearful looking for of judgment, etc. We must bear in mind that the apostle in his bold statement in this chapter of being made free from sin did not overstep what he later said of himself in the seventh chapter: "For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I," etc. "So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." For Paul well knew that there was a warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, from which there could be no freedom while we live on this earth. But he did teach here that quickened souls were not to serve sin in the manner of deliberately obeying the sinful lusts of the flesh. "Know ye not [says inspiration], that to whom ye [quickened souls] yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience [to the law of Christ] unto righteousness?" We well know that it appears to poor tempest-tossed, devil-dragged, plagued, sin-beset souls that the more they strive against sin the further they get from perfection, the more snares are laid in their pathway, and they cry out with the apostle, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" We often feel such barrenness, bondage and death as to almost declare we never had any spiritual life and are still the bond slaves of sin. I

often feel, religiously speaking, that my feet are turned backward, and while I have my face one way I walk the other. Temptations sore are in my way. If our feet escape one snare another one is set directly in our path. But the apostle was wise, and says, You hath obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine delivered you. There is a vast difference in will worship and obeying from the heart. One may attend upon all the ordinances of the Lord's house and comply with all christian duties and yet be as destitute of grace as a blind man is of sight. Paul said that though he gave all his goods to feed the poor, and even gave his body to be burned, unless it was of charity it would not profit. So whether obedience is rendered to Christ must of necessity be from a divinely inwrought principle, in order to be acceptable to God. Not in the oldness of the letter (a formal work), but in the newness (new life) of the Spirit. Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart and of a pure conscience and of faith unfeigned. And Paul writes again that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. And as many as are led by the Spirit they are the sons of God. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. It goes without gainsaying that until one is born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God which abideth forever, such an one cannot be the servant of righteousness. For when ye were the servants of sin ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin and becoming the servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life. Every quickened soul knows by experience the bitterness of the wormwood and the gall and what the end of those things are. Well do I remember the bitterness of my former state, and what I felt would be the just wages thereof. I had sown a bountiful crop, but I did not wish to receive its wages. But have it I must, I verily believed, and I should have received a just recompense had it not been for the riches of God's grace which without my knowledge, at that time, and without my labor, was treasured up in Christ Jesus our Lord to be freely bestowed upon me in due time. O, friends, behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us (if you have had a like experience) that we should be called the sons of God. Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

For brevity's sake I am only hinting at the matter, and much I am passing over which I hope the reader will grasp. I am very low, and about the best I can do is to hold up the mirror before you. Can you not see what wages you had and what would have been the payment in full for your sins had it not been for the gift of God? Our first parent ate of the forbidden fruit, and in like manner so did we. Not only that our teeth were set on edge and we were likewise corrupted through him as tasting of the same, but we, being born in sin, were

disposed to eat the same and by enlightenment saw we were naked, and thus exposed to the all-seeing eye and wrath of God.

But to the question: Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Others tell us that if they believed as we do they would take their fill of sin, for it would be all right any way when they came to die, if they were saved as we preach. Such are not dead to sin, and know nothing of grace. Evidently such doctrines were prevalent in the apostle's day. So he labors to set forth the truth, for he was set for the defense of the gospel. Thus the warning against such error, which error later crept into some of the seven churches of Asia to their destruction. In passing I must say that if it were not possible for the children of faith to fall into error, and to such an extent as to fall victims to their former lusts, the end of which is death (though they can never be eternally lost), there would be no reason for the apostle's warning here. And though I have merely hinted at the fundamental phase of this, I shall conclude with a few remarks of its practicability. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? * * * That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." While every one who hath been delivered from the power of sin and into the light and liberty of the kingdom of righteousness and have by experience learned that they cannot live as holy as they would, by reason of indwelling sin, and feel the truth of the death it works in them, know, nevertheless, that grace enjoins upon them a service never before required, and a godly walk and conversation which if they turn away from brings forth death. "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." That as they were once free from righteousness and the servants of sin, yielding their bodies as instruments of sin unto uncleanness, walking after their carnal lusts, they are now commanded to yield their members (all faculties) as instruments of righteousness, walking in newness of life, etc. That they should not henceforth serve sin, etc., for the wages thereof is death.

Now I come to the gift of God, which is declared to be eternal life, and that through Jesus Christ. I shall speak of this latter clause, first as a gift; second, to whom; third, what it is, of its nature; fourth, its extensiveness. It is declared to be a gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, but in order to understand it to be so, according to the truth in contradistinction of the theories of uninspired men, we must know upon what premises, for there must of necessity be a basis for reason for the gift being bestowed. This truth is not only lightly esteemed by the normal professor, but it is also reckoned upon the ground of creature acceptance. While this is entering into our third proposition, I have not detracted from my purpose, because it is impressive in speaking of the gift to mention the fact that the same is, while being a gift, not bestowed upon the recipient because of his worthiness, or willingness to receive

it. The gift is declared to be upon the basis of grace, and the definition of grace is unmerited favor, or favor bestowed upon the undeserving (as by grace are you saved). It is a gift of God being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

"Grace moved the cause for saving man,
And wisdom drew the wondrous plan."

(*Concluded next number.*)

HUDDY, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed is the experience of Elder W. J. May, a former member of the Primitive Baptist Church, who preached for us sixty years, until his death. He lived ninety-one years, four months and twenty-one days. If you will, please publish this experience in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Very sincerely,

LAFE SMITH.

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER W. J. MAY.

I WAS born near the head of Pond Creek, Pike County, Kentucky, on the tenth day of January, 1836, and was never but a very few miles away from home until I was grown; and then I was extremely bashful, having been out from home to mix and mingle with other people but very little. On January 7th, 1857, I was married to Sarepta Retherford, and the following November we moved to, and settled on, the place where we now live. At a very early period, almost as far back as my memory extends, I was at times seriously impressed about eternal things, and the awful solemnity of dying. Notwithstanding these solemn reflections, I was very wicked most of the time; yet these serious impressions still followed me at times. In 1859, very unexpectedly to me, I was brought to see my lost, ruined and undone condition. This occurred to me seemingly in a moment of time; although previous to this I knew I was a sinner, having no hope and without God in the world. My tongue never has, nor ever can, fully express the distress of heart and anguish of soul I was then in. I had a great desire to try to pray, but was afraid to make the effort. It seemed to me that it would be death for such a justly condemned criminal as I was to presume to call upon the name of the thrice holy God, against whom only I had so greatly sinned.

I went on in this state of mind for about one week before I ever bowed down on my knees to pray, and at times when I would resort to some secluded place, and there bow down and pour out my grief to God, I would find relief, some ease of mind for a short while, but soon the awful burden of sin and condemnation would return. I went on in this way for nearly two years, when I gave up all for lost. It seemed to me that I need to never make another effort, and it occurred to my mind that back in former years I could have repented, could have been saved, but now it is too late. You are doomed to everlasting destruction, woe and misery. I was so distressed I knew not what to do. I wandered off up the lonely branch where I now live, about one-half mile, and fell upon my knees on the ground, when in a moment my burden was gone

and I was praising God in the highest. As I well remember, I was saying, Glory and honor to him who liveth for ever and ever. It did seem to me that the trees, whose branches clustered over me, were bowing in praises to God, and everything shone with unusual brightness. It looked like a new world to me; but before I got back to the house doubts and fears assailed me, and I began to fear that I was deceived; that these things were only imaginary. However, the Lord enabled me to go to the old Pond Creek Church on the Sunday following the second Saturday in September, 1861, and tell to the church a few of the things I have here written, and I was received into the fellowship of the church, and the same day I was baptized by Elder George Pinson, and remained a member there until given off with other brethren and sisters, and constituted into a church on the sixth day of July, 1872, which church is "Little Hope," where my membership has remained until now, and where I was called to exercise my gift, and was licensed to preach the gospel January 1st, 1873, and was ordained the first Saturday in July, 1874, by a presbytery composed of Elders John Wallis, Stephen Trout, James Williamson and James May.

Soon after I was baptized, my mind was much exercised about preaching. The impressions were so great that I could find but little rest day or night. When awake I tried to pray daily, and to ask the Lord to remove the impression from my mind, for it seemed to me that I never could make an effort to preach. I was so weak, sinful and unworthy, and of an uncommon backward disposition, I did not know what to do. My cry was, Lord, undertake for me. I would dream almost every night about preaching, and would often promise the Lord that if he would just spare my life until the next opportunity I would try to speak in his name; but when the time would come, and I would go to meeting and the brethren would urge me to go forward, I could not. The impression seemed impossible to me to ever raise before a people to try to preach; and when meeting was over I would return home with a heavy heart, realizing that I had vowed to the Lord and had not paid. I lived this way for about ten years. I sometimes call them ten long years.

There is one thing I will mention here that I have told to but two or three persons, and never mentioned it publicly in all my life, neither would I speak of it now, but I realize that my voice will soon be silenced in death, and my moderatorship and pastoral care of churches be succeeded by ablier and worthier servants. Therefore I have thought it might be for the better, in some way, for me to let this dream, or vision, be known before I go home and be no more, although it is very embarrassing to me. While I was in sore trouble, and pleading with the Lord to relieve my mind of preaching, for I never could, I dreamed one night that I was with a number of persons, where there was about one bushel of small round fruit, about the size of small peaches, all in one pile, and all looked just alike, and

some of them were good and fit to eat, and some were not fit to eat, and I was picking out the good ones and running them out into a straight row, and as I would run them out in the row the people would take them out of the row and eat them. But this I have kept in my own heart and mind until now, and have divulged it to but two or three persons, and never in a public way, but I am now in my sixty-ninth year, and have been, and am, thinking of the years that are past, and of the changes they have wrought, and of the goodness of God to me in so many ways, even thousands of ways, to poor wandering me.

On the fourth Saturday in November, 1871, at Peter Creek Church, I made my first effort to preach; or rather made a few remarks, and then tried to pray, and from that time until now I have been trying to preach the gospel of the grace of God, which blessed lesson I have some hope was written in my experience: Salvation by rich and sovereign grace. I hope that then and there, and some few times for over forty years I have felt its precious power in my deliverance from the grave of sin and death. I have many doubts and fears as to my calling to preach, and my hope of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ. What I have thought was a call to preach is as plain and impressive to me as my experience and hope of being born again. I am of the opinion that they will either stand or fall together. If I have to give up my call or impression to preach, I should have no hope of ever having been born again.

I have written much more than I intended, yet have left out many things I could have written. If I am not deceived, my heart's desire has been, lo, these many years, and is now this lonesome evening, that I may not count my life dear unto ME, that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received (I hope) of the Lord Jesus Christ.

W. J. MAY.

DANVILLE, Va., Dec. 18, 1939.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—DEAR SON:—We received your card and were glad to hear from you, and hope you will soon be well again. There is not much change in our sick ones. I have enjoyed the contents of the *Landmark* and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES so much lately that I want to let them know they did me good.

I would be glad if you would write in regard to trials of some of God's servants, say Abraham and Isaac, Joseph, Job and others. I feel that the field is large and it would be interesting to the children of God. If you are too feeble, do not undertake it, and I will ask some one else. My eyes are weak and I feel that I will not be able to write much more. I woke up last night at twelve o'clock and much Scripture came to my mind and I feel that if I could collect my thoughts I could interest some of our loved ones, but now it all seems to be gone from me. May the Lord be with you in your trials, is my prayer.

In love to you and yours,

PAPA.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I am writing to let you know in part how much I have enjoyed the contents of our paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the last few months. All that was written seemed to have been for the comfort and edification of God's children. There were many of our able gifts who joined in the noble work, and I feel that many have been comforted and built up by the good work, all done in love and fellowship. Oh how poor and needy I feel to be! I would but cannot pray. The words of the poet have been in my mind for some time; so much so that I found the book containing the hymn and saw it was written by Newton, and Romans vii. 19, was also marked at the head of it, which reads thus: "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." I do so often feel to sweetly fellowship the apostle Paul, who at times seemed to be very low in his feelings. It is hard to get under him, for he said he felt to be less than the least of all saints, for he persecuted the church of God.

Now, brethren, I am truly glad the Lord has those able expounders of the Scriptures, preachers and writers, for I find so much of the great Book that seems to have confusing problems in it that the average person is like the eunuch, who said to Phillip when he was asked if he understood what he read, and the eunuch asked, How could I, except I have some man guide me? So we need men like Phillip today, those who are taught of God to rightly divide the word of truth. Take, for instance, the parable of the fig tree, which you will find in the twenty-first chapter of Matthew. Read it. I cannot believe Jesus meant to teach he did not know when figs got ripe, for the disciples knew that, so what did he mean to teach? I shall not undertake to tell, and there are many parables I do not understand. By reading after the blest of God to teach us we are often comforted and built up and made to rejoice and praise God. So I hope that all who are gifted to preach, and to write for our papers, will continue to do so, for I feel it is with many as it is with me: I am eighty-two years old, cannot see nor hear well and cannot run a car, and do not go to meeting often, so I greatly enjoy reading after any who I feel the Lord has been working with and given light to see they are sinners. We must feel they have been taught of God to have fellowship for them. I will be glad if two or three brethren will write on the trials of God's servants, such as Abraham when he felt he was commanded to slay Isaac. Oh can we picture the circumstance?

Now, I have to say, I would, but cannot pray, except the Lord teach me.

R. L. DODSON.

(*See editorial comment on page 90.*)

CLIFTON, New Jersey.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—Another year has passed, through which the Lord in his mercy has supplied all our needs, and I thank him that we have lacked for nothing. I am still in the same spot as when you visited me, although it is more than two years that I have been confined to my room, I am

still able (through God's mercy) to sit up and do many things. The condition of my body in general is worse, but (praise the Lord) my hands, which I need most, are somewhat better, so that I am able to do more things than a year ago.

While looking out of my window this morning, seeing the snow on the ground and the bare trees in the woods and everything looking dead, several sparrows came in the yard, flying about and looking for food and, as it were, playing with one another, and this Scripture came to my mind, "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?"—Matt. vi. 26. O, dear friend, this broke me down completely, so that I had to exclaim, Dear Lord, how good and gracious thou art, and how thy care is over these creatures. Open our eyes to behold thy goodness so that we may praise thee. And these words came, He careth for thee. Who can describe this blessing? for if the Lord careth for us all is well. We can better see these things when they are past, and as I have been wonderfully blessed during this past year, I am grateful (I hope) that I have been able to see the gracious hand of God leading, in every way, Through affliction, pain, joy and hope, so that I can say (in part) with the apostle, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."—Phil. iv. 11.

There is an incident I want to relate (you have probably seen the account of it in the Passaic paper). It is about a neighbor of mine who lives just opposite me, who has been afflicted with spinal trouble and confined to his home for the last three years. The Lord has blessed him with a good wife and six well-behaved children, who are all grown, living home and working (except one), supporting their parents and keeping the home, so that he was well provided for. About seven weeks ago, early on Sunday morning he got up and slashed his throat with a razor. How shocked I was when I heard of it! It made me exclaim, Why not me? What makes us to differ? Surely of myself I am no different. But, dear friend, there is a difference. His hope was of this world, without a future, and having lost his health he lost all, and my hope (through the grace of God) is in the future, and not of this world. What a contrast! We do not blame him, poor soul, for if I look back I find that there is nothing but failure in myself, but if I can be content with my lot blessed be the name of the Lord, who has made me so, and I pray to the Lord that I may be kept to look beyond the grave, to where there is no pain, sorrow or any such thing, and where I may forever praise him for his mercy to a poor lost sinner.

Many are the blessings I received during the past year, too numerous to mention lest there be not paper enough to contain them all, so will therefore write as briefly as possible, hoping I will not weary you, but I do want to show some of the Lord's leadings, not that I want to be heard, but that the

Lord may be glorified, and we can only record these things after they have passed by, for the Lord in his all-wise plan does not reveal himself face to face with man to behold his glory, but only as he goes by, for he tells us in his word, "Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me, and live."—Exodus xxxiii. 20. And verse 21: "And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock." That is the only safe place: the Rock Christ Jesus. Also verse 22: "And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by." What a blessing that the Lord does it all himself, for I have no covering of my own to be able to stand before him. And then verse 23: "And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts; but my face shall not be seen." What a mercy, dear brother, that the Lord does give us sight to see his blessings, so that we can say with the psalmist, Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness. So then, if we have been privileged to see these things, let us not keep them to ourselves, but proclaim them, so that we may praise the Lord together.

I must say that the Lord works in a wonderful way, for when I was first made to keep to my room my thought was, What shall become of us now? For we know (humanly speaking) that to provide for a family, with six dependents, we must be up and around, and need all the faculties of our body to earn a living for them. All looked very dark. I thought we would lose our home and be made to live on charity. All these things were, of course, my thoughts and not the Lord's, and I am ashamed of myself for not trusting in the Lord, who makes the weak strong and the strong weak according to his own sovereign will. How wonderful are the ways of the Lord, for through all the years since 1920 I have been led to be prepared for this time, so that now, with the experience I have in our line of business, I am able to be useful in my helpless (?) state, and thanks for the modern improvements, such as the telephone and other communications to conduct our business, I can prepare all drawings, estimates, do book-keeping, can contact the supply houses for prices and give orders from my room, so that now it does not seem to interfere with our business at all, and we have been blessed with many good sized orders, of which the changing of the old Rutherford Borough Hall was one. Many have asked how I am able to figure on changing or converting an old building into another type without being personally able to see the premises. I can only answer that through experience and the Lord's leading I can. For when we consider a contract such as the one afore mentioned, where we had to compete against nine other contractors, of which we were successful, and the size of the building in which we had to complete the work in nine weeks or pay a fine of twenty-five dollars a day for every day over time, you can readily see that all things must work together in order to complete it in time. Here I

must admit that it was not I that got the work, but through a small mistake I made it brought our price just right to get the contract, which mistake was readily reimbursed in saving on some other material we could secure and which could not be seen before. When we started the work we needed a great deal of help, and my partner was worried for fear we would not be able to get enough men. So after a day or two, having tried meanwhile to get carpenters, without success, he called up on the phone, and was juite angry with me, because when we had spoken about this before I had said, The Lord will provide. He said, Where are the men now? We need them. You said we should not worry, now we are in a mess, having a large contract and a fine hanging over our heads. You always talk that way. Well, you can imagine how I felt, for I need him in the business, else I would not be able to carry on, and on the other hand, helpless to do anything, as I had tried all I could to get men, even going as far as sending my young son out as late as eleven o'clock the night before. As it happened, a christian friend of mine was over to see me at the time my partner called and heard the conversation. So we made it a subject, and laid it before the Lord in prayer. Well, dear friend, that same night I was able to hire five men, and the next day three more, so that when the third day came and three other men came over for work I had to call up and ask if he could place any more men, and he said, No, we have all we need; so I had to tell these men we could not place them. How prayer changes things, and the Lord in his goodness has not made me ashamed, and still causes me to trust in him. We finished the work two days before the specified time, with every one satisfied. Praise the Lord for his goodness to the children of men. I must also add that in all the work I figure on I seek the face of the Lord, and pray that if it pleace him to make us successful, but otherwise not to let us have it. All these things, dear friend, we can better see as the Lord passes by, and it makes me feel ashamed of ever doubting his sustaining power, and all these trials work in us and give us a stronger faith and a hope that maketh not ashamed. At present, after all these deliverances and blessings, I am better able to face the future with less fear than before, because of the Lord revealing himself in all my ways so that my trust is in him who has directed my past will also continue with me in the future. In the course of my business I come in contact with many people who must come to me, as I am not able to go out, and nearly all of them sympathize with me in my condition, and wonder how I can conduct our work so well, and that is a wonderful opportunity for me to speak of my Lord and Master, who really does it all. I have for a long time seen how unable I am to do anything of myself, and daily ask the Lord to be my counsellor and guide, and that I may do all things as unto him. As I speak to these people when the opportunity permits, and tell them of the blessings I daily receive, and that I have no desire for any of what we call the world's

pleasure, most of them wonder, and say, You are very optimistic. Well, let them think what they will, but I know I would not change with the world for all of the world and give up that blessed hope I have in Him who is worth more than a thousand worlds, and to be with him in eternity is worth all the strife and pain we have to endure in this life.

I had a party in yesterday to see me about business, and one made a remark about me being optimistic, and when I told them the reason was that I did not see things as some who think they deserve and ought to have everything, but that as I saw it I did not deserve anything, and that all things I did receive were blessings and cause for thankfulness. When I looked at them one had tears in her eyes. May it be that the Lord may open her eyes to see from whence all blessings flow. There is a verse in my Bible which I have marked and would like to have framed, so that I can continually see it, for it is very needful to me, for I know what I am of myself, and must be reminded that I am but dust. The verse is, "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker!"—Isaiah xlv. 9.

Please pray for me, dear friend, that I may be kept humble before the Lord, and not question the way I must travel, but that I may submit myself entirely to His will, for the Lord can do no wrong, and will give the reason for all things in due time.

I should have written you before to thank you for your kindness in sending me the SIGNS, but have not done so, as I did not like to send without inclosing something, for although I know that it was freely given, still I felt that my appreciation would show stronger by inclosing a small remittance, as the Lord has enabled me. I have enjoyed reading the SIGNS very much, and many of the articles have moved me to rejoice with the writers in the goodness of the Lord, that his tabernacle is still with the children of men, and that he has not removed himself entirely from us. I also wish to thank you for your kind thoughts in sending me a Christmas greeting.

Please forgive me for my lengthy letter, but not being able to come in person I let myself go on beyond my intention. Hoping the Lord may abundantly bless your labor to the feeding of the flock, and that the seed of his word may bring forth much gracious fruit to the honor and glory of his name, I remain your unworthy brother in the Lord,

ROGER KNIGHT.

NEWTON, Alabama.

DEAR EDITORS:—It was the writer's privilege to attend the District Meeting of the Yellow River Association, at Atlanta, Georgia, on the fifth Sunday, and Saturday before, in April, 1939. I had a great desire to meet these brethren, and was made glad to find them sound in the faith, and earnestly contending for the cardinal principles of predestination, election, effectual calling, salvation by grace, and the final preservation of the saints. I do not feel worthy of the entertainment extended to me during my stay among them, but I was

made to rejoice that love, peace and unity abound among all orderly Predestinarian Associations in the southeast. I was blessed to meet Elder G. W. Hill, of the Salem Association, of North Carolina, Elder J. H. Stewart, of the Oconee Association, of Georgia, Elder W. D. Griffin, of the Hopewell Association, of Alabama, brother Pitts and sister Hayes, of the Buttahatchie Association, of Mississippi, and Elders H. O. Nash, W. F. Beauford, J. C. Hewatt, J. R. Chandler, W. A. Brooks, and brethren Adams, Jackson, Garner, Croker, Griffith, Doss, and many, many others of the Yellow River and other Associations. It was almost like a reunion of the readers of the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I was more than glad to meet relatives of Elder Adams, who wrote so many able articles for the SIGNS during his pilgrimage. I also met close relatives of Elder Lefferts, who I hope to meet during our earthly journey in this vale of sorrow. It was a blessing indeed to meet these dear soldiers of the cross and to be entertained so royally as I was in the homes of brother J. Runyan Jackson and Elder H. O. Nash, and also to be shown every possible courtesy by brother Garner and many others. Perhaps the greatest privilege of all was to find each Elder, as he came forward, contending earnestly for salvation by grace, and grace alone, in time and eternity. I was almost constrained to believe we were being entertained by heavenly messengers, and indeed we were, since these heralds of the cross most surely were inspired to speak and cry aloud unto Jerusalem that her warfare is accomplished. I surely believe that these heavenly visitors make us sit together in heavenly places and feast upon the dewdroppings of the sanctuary. It mattered not from what section an Elder came, it was the same heavenly story. Oh may we continue in the good old way, and ever be permitted to uphold the principles so sacred to our faith, which were revealed unto us from that celestial fount beneath the throne of God.

The writer has just received a bundle of Minutes from brother A. S. Rowe, of Baltimore, Md., which he highly treasures. Among them were the Minutes of the Delaware, Delaware River, Baltimore, Virginia Corresponding, Salisbury, Lexington-Roxbury, Kehukee, and perhaps others. I am always glad to receive Minutes, and especially glad to find peace and love prevailing. We have had many good communion meetings in this section this year.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

J. J. COLLINS.

NOANK, Connecticut.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—When the kind Christmas greetings from you and Mrs. Dodson reached me I felt I must write at once. That same prompting has been with me for a long time, but even in my quiet life there seems to be many things calling for my attention, and when I am through with the responsibilities of the house I am usually too tired for mental exertion.

While giving little evidence to you and the church, I think I can truly say

my heart is still with you all. I miss being with you once or twice a year, as in the past. While circumstances prevent me meeting with you, I have some comfort in living over and over again those pleasant days . I was in the desert many years, with my heart crying out as in the hymn,

"With long desire my spirit faints
To meet the assembly of the saints."

Then in the Lord's good time he brought me to his banqueting-house and surely his banner over me was love. How strange it seemed to talk with those who understood my language and to listen to preaching comforting to my hungry soul. Such memories reconcile me to dwelling again in the desert, and more than all is the hope, big with mortality, securing me the confidence that the Lord reigns and his will is best. I am not always submissive, not by any means. Often I question if I do love the Lord, or if my seeming security is only a theoretical acceptance of the word. So much of the time I seem like a log drifting down the stream. The experiences in the November SIGNS brought the tears to my eyes as I read, and comforted me with the hope that I did understand the writers. So life goes on from day to day. While my uncle and I are as pleasantly situated as any one could expect to be in this life, I often feel I would be glad to be released from all these things and be with Christ, which is far better. Then I think, What am I that I should presume to dictate to the Lord? I cannot go until his time. I must fulfill all his purposes. Perhaps that is why I am so anxious to go, fearing the fulfillment of his purposes. I am such a coward. What opposites I find within. I think that is a line of a hymn, but cannot recall any more of it. Anyway, it expresses my state.

I trust that you, Mrs. Dodson and Lester are in usual health, and that the new year will bring you many blessings.

With love and all best wishes to all the church, sincerely yours,

EVA ASHBY.

LYNWOOD, California.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find check for three dollars, for which please renew my subscription, and use the other dollar where you find it will do the most good. I leave that to your judgment. Please pardon my delay. I should have renewed a month ago. I would like to send some new subscribers, but not many in these parts read the SIGNS, but as for me, I think there is no better Old School Baptist paper, and I have not yet found one that equals it in my estimation, and I have read it nearly fifty years, or since I was a child.

Sincerely yours,

(MRS.) M. E. KUNS.

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EDITORIAL.

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SALVATION IS OF THE LORD.

Of the millions of people upon the earth only those who have been taught by the Spirit of God realize the truth of this expression. To know the source of salvation, one first learns what he is by nature, and is brought to feel his need of mercy, and finds himself a helpless creature in the sight of the holy God. Only those who have been led thus by God to know themselves as they are, and have felt a deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the kingdom of God's dear Son, can witness with the expression that salvation is of the Lord. When God told Jonah to go to Nineveh and cry against it, he decided to go in a different direction, obtained passage on the ship and no doubt felt he was making some progress in his efforts. Jonah was to learn that the sea, the wind and the vessel upon which he was riding, and everything connected with them, were in the hand of God. No doubt those who saw the waves close over his head thought he was drowned. To the unregenerate the salvation that is of God is hid just as perfectly as the hiding of Jonah and his deliverance from the deep, where their eyes could not follow him. The Israelites, when the Red Sea was reached in their journey through the wilderness, must stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. There are "stand still" places, many of them, in a believer's experience, but these are the places where he learns who the Deliverer is. The various deliverances of man recorded in holy writ each sets forth a perfect work, and a complete salvation for the believer in Christ. When Daniel was cast into the den of lions, men had done all they could. The law itself could not be altered, yet there was a God who could deliver, and did deliver Daniel from the mouth of the lion, after the demands of the law had been satisfied. Does not this signify the salvation of the church of the living God by the Lord Jesus Christ, after the demands of the lay had been satisfied? Two things are noticeable: The law is satisfied, in the salvation of the church of God, and the Lord sends his angel to shut the lion's mouth, to control the one that would devour, the one that otherwise would destroy (Satan). Where the arm of man fails God's salvation shines, and all things

are controlled by the almighty God, from earth's smallest insects to the king upon his throne, to the end that every deliverance realized by the subjects of grace, whether in regeneration or at later times in life, is unto the praise and glory of his grace.

We do not object to the term "time salvation," as God's salvation, wrought through Christ (his atoning blood) for the chosen people of God, is manifested to them in time, but the expression, "conditional time salvation" has no place in the doctrine of grace, nor has any other expression that would imply that obedience to God was something we could render at any time or place, after we were born of the Spirit. Such doctrine would place part of the salvation of God and part of men. Some will say, Does not the Scripture say, Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling? Yes, and it also says, For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. The writer was addressing the children of obedience, those who had received the benefits of Christ's obedience by the washing of regeneration. The working out of this salvation, is as they are given the weapon of warfare (faith increased), whereby they can lay hold upon the finished work of Christ as their hope, and every thought is brought into captivity, unto the obedience of him. Surely he is working it out, and God gives him something to work with, and he is working out that which is already his. In this way he lays hold of eternal life. Surely this salvation is of the Lord. The apostle Paul tells the Hebrews that they shall not escape if they neglect so great salvation. The great salvation is that expressed by the poet when he says,

> "Salvation through our risen Lord
> Is finished, and complete;
> He paid whate'er his people owed,
> And cancelled all their debt."

This is brought to the elect of God by the Holy Ghost, and every time our eyes are turned from the cross, and a finished work, we are brought into a feeling of bondage, and then is the neglecting the great salvation.

So as we note, dear friends, the pilgrimage of those who have gone before we find they had to wait upon the Lord. The travel of the children of Israel through the wilderness for forty years shows that God must and did hold their hand, and each time they were brought into a condition or place of danger they were learning two things: How weak and helpless they were, and that salvation is of the Lord. God often leaves the objects of his peculiar care to their own heart, that they might learn that their walk is not of themselves. Dear reader, is it thus with you? Are you not being brought from time to time to feel your heart prone to wander, and to find the thorns pricking on every side? Here we are made to say, Lord, hold my hand. How peculiar are these experiences of God's humble poor. The greatest seasons of rejoicing come after great trials of mind. After they have tried to order their own course and have been brought to their wit's end. Then, dear friends, we are brought to wait upon the Lord, and when all things are given up for lost, suddenly we are

brought to feel that the eternal God is our refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms.

There are many deliverances felt by the taught of God, but only one Deliverer, one salvation. So we hope by the grace of God that we are one of those called an afflicted and poor people, who shall trust in the name of the Lord. May God be praised, if it is his will that we might more and more feel the effect of that salvation of the Lord.

D. V. S.

COMNENT UPON MY FATHER'S LETTERS.

THE two letters from my father, published in this issue, were received by me a few days before Christmas, while at home recuperating from an operation for a fistula. Altogether I was laid up for about a month, but the kindness of friends, and especially the brethren, including those from a great distance, more than compensated for my suffering and inconvenience. It is really overwhelming when one who knows he is undeserving of the love and fellowship of the brethren to have it bestowed upon him in such large measure. I can only thank God for such brethren, and try to assure them of my deep gratitude.

With reference to my father's request to write on the "trials of some of God's servants," particularly Abraham in offering his son Isaac, Joseph, Job and others, there is certainly no one in this world whose request I would rather comply with than that of my father, but, as he says, the field is a large one. A dear sister who visited me in the hospital, in speaking of physical afflictions, said, "Les, the only way one can sympathize with another is through actual experience." If one is to visit the widow and the fatherless in their affliction, he must first be a partaker of the same affliction. In looking back over my life and the various trials through which I have had to pass, I have sometimes been made to hope that it was through such trials that I was brought into fellowship with Abraham and Job and Joseph. I have often said in my efforts at preaching that the faith of Abraham in going to offer Isaac, through whose seed the Lord had said all nations of the earth would be blessed, was comparable to that of Job (and vice versa) when in his extremity he said, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." Both of these old servants, by faith, received life from the dead, so to speak, and we are persuaded that all of like precious faith must experience what it means to pass through death in order to enter into that life which is in him who died and rose again. Paul tells us why the trial of our faith is necessary, which is that it "should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." The only way one can appreciate the deep calling unto deep is by going down into the depths, and it is the Lord's doing when we go down to the

sea in ships and do business in great waters, for according to nature we will never choose to suffer for Christ's sake. Joseph did not volunteer to go down into Egypt, and neither did he choose the chain of circumstances by which he was carried down there. He suffered at the hands of his brethren, who meant evil against him, but the hand of God was at the helm, steering the course of the vessel, and only when it had reached its final port of destination did Joseph see and understand that God had meant it for good. He then saw that all things had worked together for good to those who love God, to the called according to his purpose, to the saving of his people. As Abraham had gone out not knowing whither he went when the Lord commanded him to get out of his land and country, so Joseph walked and lived by faith. What a wonderful thing, indeed, is faith! It is the gift of God, and a veritable staff for those who possess it to lean upon. With it they can walk through the valley of the shadow of death and fear no evil. The all-important question for you and me, dear reader, is, Do we possess it? Are we the children of faithful Abraham? Is not the fact that we are vitally concerned about the matter an indication that we have an earnest in that inheritance which is incorrupt, undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept, not by any conditions in themselves, but by the power of God? If we are hungering and thirsting after righteousness we are already blessed, and we may be sure that we shall be filled and be satisfied, for possessing Christ we have all things and there can be no lack.

Not long ago we were led to speak from the Scripture found in Matthew xxi. 18, 19, and we hope it will not seem presumptuous for us to offer some thoughts in connection with that also at this time. Down through the ages the Jews had typified the true spiritual Israel, and the prophets all through the night of legalism had been as stars reflecting in part the true light of the Sun of Righteousness, but when Jesus came that which was only in part was done away with, for he fulfilled all that was written of him. By this parable of the fig tree he was showing the emptiness of the law and of those who worshipped thereunder. He showed clearly that those chief priests and scribes who were displeased at those who in referring to him said, "Hosanna to the son of David," were as the fig tree which has leaves only, representing an empty profession. We are told that it was in the morning when he returned to the city that he hungered, and seeing the fig tree he came to it, "and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforth for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away."—Matt. xxi. 18, 19. Our understanding is that he was setting forth by the morning the new, or gospel day, and was showing that the former mode of worship, which was only a shadow of the true, would not be glorifying to God, nor would it be of any comfort or consolation to those who are blest to worship God in spirit and in truth. The chief priests and scribes,

while loud in their outward protestations, nevertheless their hearts were far from him and they were, therefore, like the fig tree, full of foliage but minus all fruit. Under the gospel dispensation the flock, being composed of living sheep, must have real food. It was of this day that Solomon was speaking when he said, "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons." Jesus is the fruitful bough or tree whose fruit is sweet to our taste, and it requires nothing less than his righteousness to fill the need of poor sinners. They feed upon what he has done and all else to them is as husk that swine eat. That which the fig tree typified is gone forever. As the fig tree withered away so has the form of worship indulged in by the Jews at that time disappeared and will never be revived, nor will any true spiritual worshipper ever be able to feed his hungry soul upon legalism or the works of the flesh.

I hope what I have written will be of comfort to my father and all others who may read iit.

R. L. D.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Miss Sara Leedom, Pa., $2; Mrs. H. A. Strube, Texas, $2; Salem Church, Pa., $6; Mrs. M. E. Kuns, Calif., $1; Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Okla., $1; Isabel W. Mace, Pa., $1; A. J. Doggett, Ala., 25 cents; Mrs. W. C. Thompson, Ont., $1.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

On Monday, February 5th, 1940, in the forenoon, at his late residence, in Cape Charles Virginia, ELDER GEORGE EDWIN COULBOURN quietly bid adieu to this world and all that is earthly and entered into that rest that remaineth to the people of God. He was born in Snow Hill, Maryland, October 27th, 1879, of the parentage of George W. and Mary Fooks Coulbourn, and was therefore in the sixty-first year of his age. He was united in marriage to Miss Emily Ames, of Baltimore and the Eastern Shore of Virginia, and to this union were born two daughters, Mary and Edwina, both of whom are now married, the former to Mr. Frank M. Fossett, of Baltimore, Md., and the latter to Mr. W. Henry Sykes, Jr., of Smithfield, Virginia. Those surviving him besides his wife and two daughters are John I. Coulbourn, brother, of Philadelphia, Pa., Mrs. Frank Mason, sister, of Blairstown, N. J., and two granddaughters, Mary Coulbourn Fossett and Edwina Sykes. He also leaves to mourn their loss eight nephews, Fenton and John M. Coulbourn, of Windsor, N. C., G. Irving, Edwin T. and Uriah F. Coulbourn, of Suffolk, Va., William C. Coulbourn, of New York City, U. Oscar, Jr., and John I Coulbourn, of Waverly, Va. These nephews served as pall-bearers. The following nieces also survive him: Miss Jane Coulbourn, of Waverly, Va., and Mrs. Rice Edwards, of Washington, D. C.

Elder Coulbourn possessed outstanding business ability and for many years prior to his death was a member of the famous Coulbourn Brothers' firm, composed of four brothers, two of whom, G. G. and Oscar Coulbourn, died several years ago. He also lost a sister many years ago, who was a member of the Old School Baptist Church, of whom he

thought a great deal. He and his wife were perfectly devoted to each other, and during his many years of severe affliction she stood by him day and night, proving her true worth. She appeared to be given superhuman strength, and we pray God's blessings upon her for having been such a good soldier in ministering so faithfully and untiringly to her companion, who she loved so dearly. We know it will be hard for her to give him up, but the Lord is able to supply all her needs, whatever they may be, and we earnestly hope she may be given to look to him and ralize that he careth for her.

Elder Coulbourn united with the Snow Hill Church, and was baptized by the late Elder B. F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa. His ordination to the full work of the gospel ministry took place in the Snow Hill Old School Baptist meetinghouse on November 28th, 1926. Elder H. C. Ker, of Delmar, Delaware, was pastor of the Snow Hill Church at that time, and still is, and the presbytery consisted of the following ministers: H. C. Ker, H. H. Lefferts, C. W. Vaughn, George Ruston and the unworthy writer. Elder Coulbourn was soon called to the pastorate of a number of churches in Maryland. He was a wonderful gift to the church, and his preaching could truly be said to have been in demonstration of the Spirit and with power from on high. He was almost idolized by those he served, and they have long been crushed because of his extended affliction, and now that he is gone his memory will long be cherished by them. We truly hope the dear Lord will provide another undershepherd, of his own choosing, to minister and preach the blessed gospel of his dear Son unto them and give them to trust him for all things and look to him for grace sufficient for every need. Elder Coulbourn and the writer were very closely drawn to each other from the very first of his ministry. We had a great deal in common and corresponded freely, agreeing most of the time on what we understood the Scriptures to teach. We feel keenly our great loss, and our heart is sad indeed that we shall see his face no more, but we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, being assured that our dear brother has departed to be with Christ, which is far better, so far as he is concerned.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral services, assisted by Mr. S. K. Emurian, of the First Presbyterian denomination in Cape Charles, Virginia, who spoke in prayer. The two hymns which we read were "Jesus Lover of my Soul" and "Rock of Ages Cleft for Me," and the Scripture used was Acts xvii. 27. About three years ago we rode with Elder Coulbourn in his car from Salisbury, Md., to near Baltimore, where we took our train for New York, following an all-day meeting in Salisbury. A portion of this Scripture appeared to be impressed upon his his mind at the time and he talked about it at some length. Recalling this, we felt to use the same Scripture in which he had a part. The apostle Paul's experiences as set forth therein appear to portray a good picture of the life and experiences of our brother, and were therefore peculiarly fitting for the occasion. A large gathering of loved ones and friends were present to pay their last respects, and more beautiful floral designs we have never before seen anywhere. Interment was in the Belle Haven Cemetery, about twenty-five miles from Cape Charles. If it be his will, we hope God will comfort those who mourn after a godly manner, and give them to realize it is not death to die, to leave this weary road, and be at home with God.

R. L. D.

MRS. ANNA ELIZABETH SNYDER, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life March 11th, 1940, at the home of her son-in-law, Mr. Iley Hiett, Cumberland, Maryland, in the eighty-eighth year of her life. She was born in Fulton County, Pennsylvania, June 1852. Her father was Joseph Powell, her mother was Anna Mellott. She was married in 1875 to our late brother Jesse Snyder, who passed away eleven years ago. At the time of her decease, sister Snyder was a member of the Sideling Hill Old School Baptist Church, Fulton County, Pennsylvania. She was baptized many years ago, but I have not the date of her baptism, nor the name of the Elder who baptized her. She is survived by two daughters: Mrs. Iley Hiett and Miss Anna M. Snyder, both of Cumberland, Md. She was very ill for about five weeks before she passed away. Her daughters and Mr. Hiett, as good to her as any real son could have been, gave the mother every attention and comfort and care they possibly could. Funeral services were held in the Tonoloway, Pa., Baptist meetinghouse. Interment in the graveyard there. As her pastor, I desired at the funeral to bear testimony to the genuine faith and living hope by which she had lived and deported herself all these years. Hence, I read from the first epistle of Peter, from the second to the fifth verses of the first chapter, and made that the basis of my remarks. I could think, at that time, of no other passage of Scripture which so succinctly expressed the principles of the faith by which God's elect pass the time of their sojourning here in this present world. Our sister had known many trials and conflicts during her pilgrimage here below, but the manifold grace of God had unfailingly been her strength and reliance in her manifold temptations. We sorrow for her, but not without hope, for we believe she is at rest in the paradise of God.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

JAMES F. JOHNSON was born July 25th, 1844, and died April 18th, 1939, aged 94 years, 8 months and 23 days. He was born and reared in Elliott County, Kentucky, and at the age of twenty-eight years he joined old Regular Baptist Church and was a member for almost sixty-seven years. At the age of twenty-five years he was married to Nancy Thornberry, at Hunnewell, Greenup County, Kentucky, later moving back to Elliott County, where he spent the remainder of his life. To this union thirteen children were born, eleven of whom are still living: Mary J. Johnson, of Burnwell, W. Va., Amos Johnson, of Bellingham, W. Va., Eliza Oney, of Stephens, Ky., Bill Johnson, of Boyd County, Kentucky, Joseph Johnson, of Ohio, Sarah E. Salyer, of Beetle, Ky., Walter Johnson, of Charity, Ky., Jerry L. Johnson, of Trench, Ky., Eliza Johnson, of Chillicothe, Ohio, Jimmy Johnson, of Burke, Ky., Narmon Johnson, of Grindstone, Pa. Tommy and Tilda Johnson deceased. Mrs. Nancy Johnson died August 6th, 1931. Brother Johnson lived a quiet christian life, doing unto others as he would have them do unto him. He believed in an all-wise God, in the predestination of all things, in the wisdom and foreknowledge of God, the King of kings and Lord of lords. He believed Christ chose his bride before the foundation of the world, and loved her with an everlasting love, and saved her with an everlasting salvation, and sealed it with his own blood. Nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it. It is a finished work.

Written by his daughter,

SARAH E. SALYER.

EDITH MAY ZAVITZ was called from this life June 26th, 1939, in her sixty-third year, this being the first break in a family of six, leaving Ida Benstead, Arthur S. and Ernest L. Zavitz, Rose Douglas and Flossie Bishop to carry on without her interest in them. Our sister suffered with cancer many years, besides having many other trials and tribulations, which she realized were for her good. The last eleven weeks of her sojourn here were spent in bed at the home of the writer, who felt it an honor to have the privilege of caring for her. It pleased the Lord to apply sanctifying grace with all her afflictions so that she bore her suffering with much patience, and often voiced expressions of gratitude to her God in giving her relief from intense suffering, then again in sparing her from it, and in giving her a comfortable frame of mind and resignation to his will. While waiting on her my thoughts were often on the verse, Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed upon thee. Her God-given faith, patience and gratitude have left a marked impression on the minds of those who witnessed it, and one could well desire that all their sufferings and trials might be so sanctified that all honor, praise and glory be given to our Father in heaven, the great Physician. The words, "It is finished," from which our pastor, Elder George Ruston, spoke comfortingly at her funeral, were very sweet to the departed the last few months of her life, viewing in that statement the completion of the minutest details of her every-day life. We desire to rejoice in the goodness and mercy of the Lord in taking our loved one to her desired haven, rather than mourn over the gap caused by her departure.

FLOSSIE BISHOP.

MEETINGS.

The Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, at Hopewell, New Jersey, expects to hold an all-day meeting April 23rd, 1940, which is the two hundred twenty-fifth anniversary of its constitution, and brethren, sisters and friends are invited to meet with us. We are expecting several ministers of our immediate correspondence to be with us.

By order of the church.

ELVIRA CONNER, Church Clerk.

P. S.—Those coming to Hopewell on Monday evening, please go to Elder C. W. Vaughn's, 127 W. Broad Street, or to Deacon G. W. Danberry's, on West Prospect Street, to be directed to places for the night.

C. W. VAUGHN.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, Saturday and Sunday (two days), May 18th, and 19th, 1940, meeting to be called at 10:30 a. m. Ministering brethren of the same faith and church order are invited to be in attendance with us, also visiting brethren and friends from the different churches, wherever dispersed, are welcome. Those coming via rail transportation will find the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company station is located in the heart of our town. The Pennsylvania Railroad Company is a mile south of the town, but one mile or more to the meetinghouse. Strangers coming will call at my home and be distributed from there.

JOHN B. MILLER, Church Clerk,
20 West Delaware Avenue,
NEWARK, Delaware.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

The church in Baltimore, Maryland, will hold a Saturday and Sunday meeting about the last of May. See May issue of the SIGNS for exact date.

A. S. ROWE, Clerk.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder D. E. Robinson pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M

ALL WELCOME

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

CHURCH MEETING PLACE CHANGED.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets each first and third Sunday at eleven o'clock a. m. at 2407½ Main Street, Dallas, Texas, and on Saturday before each first Sunday at 2:30 p. m. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Mod., pro. tem.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 108. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1940. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ROMANS VI. 23.

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

(*Concluded from last number.*)

I may well justify my position here with the statement, "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Christ Jesus our Lord."—Rom. v. 21. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."—Eph. i. 7. "But God, who is rich in mercy; for his great love wherewith he loved us, * * * hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved)."—Eph. ii. 4, 5. It is a certain truth that God's gift of eternal life was solely a result of his own free grace, and that grace was given us in Christ before the foundation of the world, and as it was entirely out of the bosom of God's everlasting love before the world was, it could not in any sense be of works of righteousness which we have done, nor of any foreseen goodness in the creature, because if such could have been the moving cause it could not possibly have been of grace, for if it be of works it is no more of grace, and vice versa.

Having shown in a brief way the promises upon which the gift of God rests, I shall leave off some things I would like to say and come to our second proposition, viz.: To whom is eternal life given? Jesus said, respecting himself, that the Father had given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to all which the Father had given him. (John xvii. 2.) Again, All which the Father hath given me shall come to me and I will raise him up at the last day. So eternal life was procured for those whom God loved and gave to his Son to redeem, and it is given to each and every elect vessel of mercy at God's appointed time to call them by grace. According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. For whom he did fore-

know, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified them he also glorified. (Rom. viii. 29, 30.) This is sufficient to show the truth of eternal and particular election of some to grace and glory, so I pass on to the third: What it is, and its nature. It is eternal life. This is something which even the most enlightened can neither comprehend in its fullness nor describe its glory; yet we can understand it in part. It could not from the very sense of it, being eternal, be created nor procured by even the most sinless mortal that ever lived (Jesus incarnate excepted.) Eternal life. The term itself stirs our souls with reverence and admiration and calls forth our every faculty to grave attention, wonder, with an earnest desire to comprehend it; not merely in the sense that it is a gift of God, but also its reality, its substance, glory, etc. Surely it is the grandest subject that could claim the attention of dying men and women, the most precious gift, the greatest gift and the most priceless possession we could have or consider. Nothing of greater value could dying mortals possess. God could have never promised a greater blessing nor have given a better gift to unworthy, undeserving, hell-bound, hell-deserving and hell-bent, degenerate, defiled, corrupt, vile, abominable, depraved, wicked, apostate sons and daughters of Adam. Priceless! It cost the greatest sacrifice, suffering and price that has ever been paid: the life and blood of the only begotten Son of God, the sacrifice of incarnate Deity. O, my soul! wonder and adore. Thy payment of thy ransom and the just penalty of the law's demands caused the greatest catastrophe this world has ever known. At the voice of the holy, suffering Jesus the very foundations of the earth shook throughout creation's vast extent, and the brighest illuminary body was black as sack cloth of hair for three hours, and

"Well might the sun in darkness hide,
And shut his glories in,
When Christ, the mighty Maker, died
For man, the creature's sin."

Yes, it cost the life and blood of the Son of God to rescue God's elect from fiends and fires and chains and procure eternal deliverance and life for them. And as it was wholly a sovereign, free and willing act of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost, according to his eternal purpose, which he purposed in himself before the world began, before ever a person could have choice or voice in such a covenant arrangement, it seems that any intelligent man or woman would yield to the truth of it. But alas, only heaven-born souls can joyfully believe it. Eternal life! How much is contained in it. Divine nature, the life of God, imparted, given, bestowed. An endless life, an everlasting life, indestructible, an everlasting portion, an eternal possession here and hereafter; something which cannot be corrupted, cannot rust, corrode, mould, tarnish, fade away or perish. Cannot be sold, bartered or lost. Floods and flames cannot touch it, nor can Satan lay hands on it, for your life is hid with

Christ in God. Such, and much more, is the gift which God did and does give his people: ETERNAL LIFE, through Jesus Christ our Lord. But some may object to the expression "does give." My view is that while God purposed it and procured it for his loved, chosen and predestinated people, the gift is not handed over (so to speak) until God's appointed time, which time is to create anew, impart spiritual liife to us, who were, as all others, dead in trespasses and in sins, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. When ye were the servants of sin ye were free from righteousness. As one dead in trespasses and in sins is not in possession of spiritual life, such have not received the gift, for spiritual life is eternal life.

And now I have come to the main object in view. Too many are disposed to look upon the gift of God, eternal life, as being something in the far distant eternity, when in fact the gift is imparted to us here in time, although we cannot enjoy or know the fullness of it until death is swallowed up in victory and our vile bodies are immortalized. The language of our Lord shows this clearly: "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." Thus saying plainly they possess it here, else "they shall never perish" would not be used. To know Christ is eternal life. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." This is given at the revelation of Jesus Christ. He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and this is of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. But whom do ye say that I am? Peter answered, and said, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Surely the devil cannot destroy divine revelation, which is eternal life. Could we have a more understandable definition of what eternal life is? It is not altogether a gift reserved for us when die and are carried into the presence of God in glory. It is given us in time; for surely were it not we should never enter the realms of everlasting blessedness. Christ is the life, and he is spiritually formed within us the hope of glory. We are born of God by the eternal Spirit, which is endless (or eternal) life, and that cannot die. Oh it is magnificent in scope and power! Sufficient to quicken our mortal bodies in the resurrection. But how are we to know we have received the gift of God, which is eternal life? Well, there are many manners in which this is evident. I shall pass over those commonly given, in order to give you something on the subject of what is not ordinarily set forth. It is this: The fruit of the Spirit. (Galations v.) Divine life is an independent agent in all its workings, in every phase we may consider it, from the giving of it to the most feeble actings of it within, it is self-operative. Flesh and blood, the dispositions and will of the creature, cannot effect its moving and animating influences. Now

every spiritual act (as we are accustomed to say) is not only the effect of spiritual or eternal life, but all are in reality the substance of it, and we cannot separate one from the other, except in one way. Jesus said, Make the tree good and its fruit will be good. When the soul is cleansed and made new the tree (not the old man) is made good and will bear fruit after its kind. But the thought I have is this: Christ is the Tree of Life. Christ is formed within us and the fruit of that tree is good. When we get a taste of the Tree of Life (Rev. xxii.) we eat the substance of Christ, and "except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, [He is the true Vine and Branch of Righteousness from which the blood of the grape is pressed out], ye have no life in you." Now if you have true spiritual repentance, humility, the spirit of prayer, faith, hope, charity, hunger, thirst, joy, peace, etc., you have eternal life abiding in you. When you eat you eat of eternal life. Apart from eternal life there are no spiriitual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. So if we have in reality been favored with any spiritual grace we may rest assured that we have eternal life, and also that such favor was a sovereign and free gift. The Lord will keep all his own work in the soul and finally bring every trophy of his grace safely to glory.

This is a poor expression. I could not incorporate much I contemplated. All honor be unto him for his unspeakable gift.

Dear Elder Dodson, I am sending some thoughts upon Romans vi. 23. If you can make them out and wish to you may publish them. I am lying at death's door with scurvy, pellagra, with gall bladder and an enlarged kidney complication. I also have neuritis all over my body. Misery indescribable! I have been in three hospitals nine times within the past fifteen months, and have been bedridden for twenty months. Given up as incurable by the best of physicians. I have been seriously ill since last June and not expected to live through each day. I was placed in an insane ward for six weeks. Only God has kept me from insanity and death thus far. It may come though any hour, as I do not improve, even under the care of a noted specialist. Though not able, I labor hard to finish my course by writing.

I beg an interest in your prayers, and wish you every covenant blessing for his name's sake.

The chief of sinners,

LEO V. BAGLEY.

MACON, Ga., June 15, 1939.

SWEET SPRINGS, Missouri.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you some comments on the following Scripture for your consideration and disposal: "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me."—Luke xxii. 29. The kingdom here spoken of is a spiritual kingdom, not of this world, but appointed unto the suffering saints in all ages. You who are tempted and exercised, you who have continued with me in my temptations, you who walk in the paths of tribulation, you who follow in the footsteps of the suffering Savior; such a

kingdom is appointed to the meek and lowly followers of the Lamb. It is the same kingdom that the Father hath given to Jesus. What kingdom is this that the Father appointed unto his dear Son? Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world." In this kingdom there is made an everlasting end of sin, to abolish death and destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and to reign spiritually in the hearts of his chosen ones; to be King and Lord in Zion, and to rule in the lives of his willing subjects. A kingdom of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, a spiritual kingdom, which none can see nor enter into but those who are born of the Spirit. All the inhabitants of this blessed kingdom see him as he is and glorify him, a people to love him and be loved by him. Jesus does not diminish his grace by imparting it to his people, nor lessen his own joy by imparting his glory to them. The glorious Sun of Righteousness does not lose the fullness that is in him by communicating of his grace and glory. So the kingdom which he appoints to tried and tempted disciples is the kingdom of the reign of grace, the kingdom of God in the soul, the presence of Jesus within, the kingdom spoken of in Daniel ii. 44, as set upon the ruins of all other kingdoms when it has broken them in pieces.

"I love thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of thine abode;
The church our blessed Redeemer saved
With his own precious blood.

Beyond my highest joy
I prize her heavenly ways,
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
Her hymns of love and praise."

J. L. KILLION.

FLEMINGTON, New Jersey.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—I just recently learned that you had been in a hospital for an operation. I did not hear, however, the nature of your illness, and sincerely hope that by this time you have completely recovered. Such things are painful to hear, and especially so when they concern the people of God. It has been very lonely with us at Locktown in not having any meetings this winter, but Elder Ker's health is not good enough to permit his coming to us in the cold weather, although he writes that he has been exceptionally well this winter, and for this we should be thankful indeed. I hope the spring will bring us all together again, but this, of course, is in the hands of our omnipotent God, whose ways are just and right. I have been in a dark and bewildered state of mind for some time past, and wonder if I shall ever see again the briightness of his glory. I know he shuts and none can open, and opens and none can shut, and if he dealt with me according to my iniquities I should be banished forever from his presence. I have found comfort at times in reading my Bible, and would be able to grasp a little here and a little there, and again it is a closed book. How little we know of so great a mystery as the works of God, and how often we ask, Why is this? or that? or, of what purpose? yet no man by searching can find out God. It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth and the inhabitants are as grasshoppers. We hear of this terrible war that is now going on, but who of us know the purpose of it?

The powers of the earth must fall out at his word, and the conflict cease at his bidding. How great is the God that we worship, and how feeble are words to express his matchless holiness. Why should we fear?

"Our Maker is our changeless Friend,
His love surrounds us to the end."

A few years ago I stood inside a hospital door, on the top floor the assembly was singing (for it was Sunday morning),

"Thou, the source of all my comfort,
More than life to me;
Whom have I on earth beside thee?
Whom in heaven but thee?"

I thought that if I could just feel forever as I did at that moment I could never doubt again. But how soon we are plunged in a state of utter darkness, again just groping along.

I hope I am not writing too much. These are just a few thoughts. I will close. May the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob be with you always.

Your sister in hope,

GERTRUDE PYATT.

ELKINS, West Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—When I was seventeen years of age I had a long sick spell and thought I was going to die; and I believe I did die to the law. I tried to keep the law, but found I could not. Then I did evil in the sight of the Lord. So I never could agree with the works of man, for salvation is all of grace. Once while in Charleston, W. Va., I was in conversation with a man by the name of Young. He said that if I would lay aside all prejudice and begin reading the Bible I would find out better. The next time we met I told him that I claimed all the Bible. He put his arms around me and said I was all right. His father being an Old School Baptist, I asked him what he had against the doctrine they held to. He said he did not have much against them. So I went on in sin for many years, and then I saw myself a great sinner, and thought there was no help for me. I felt to be a wretch undone. Then the burden left me. I was caused to praise the Lord for his unspeakable gift. I thought then that I would sin no more. It is so with all God's people. They expect to be delivered by something they have done. But God does not intend it to be that way. He must have all the praise. Christ must be all in all to the glory of God

I have given some of the reasons why I have been trying to preach, and trying at the same time to quit. This is my experience of grace. If you think it is worth printing you may do so; if not, throw it away.

Your brother, I hope,

GEORGE B. McCLANAHAN.

[THE foregoing was written before Elder McClanahan was taken sick. His obituary was published in the January, 1940, SIGNS.—ED.]

A WORD OF APOLOGY.

OWING to the sickness of your publisher, this issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES contains but sixteen pages, which fact we hope our subscribers will overlook, as under the circumstances it is the best we could do. If it is the good pleasure of the Lord to give us health and strength to do so, we will give you the usual number of pages in the June issue.

PUBLISHER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1940.

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EZEKIEL XXXVI. 25-27.

"THEN will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."

In the May, 1939, SIGNS sister Addie Chandler asked that we give our views on the above, and more especially the twenty-fifth verse, "about the water cleansing." We also find these same verses, among others, inquired about by sister Joie E. Wood Peters in the September, 1939, SIGNS. We had hoped some one of our associate editors, or a contributing reader, would answer sister Peters, as it strikes us as though her's is a very big order to fill. We can only look to the Lord to enable us to write in a way that will be instructive and comforting to our sisters, as well as other readers, we hope.

First, we shall undertake to deal with the twenty-fifth verse of our text, which reads as follows: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you." Undoubtedly there was a definite time in the mind and purpose of Almighty God when these things would most certainly take place. We will here quote the verse just preceding our text, as it may shed some light upon WHEN these things would come to pass. It reads, "For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land," and then (at that time) the Lord says he will sprinkle clean water upon them, etc. There is certainly a large field before us here, and all we can hope to do is to hint at the fullness of its meaning. From what has gone before in the chapter it is quite evident that national Israel had been taken captive by her enemies and her land was left desolate. Her enemies were laughing her to scorn, and saying, "Aha, even the ancient high places are our's." Israel was being derided, humiliated and made light of by them, and referred to as the "residue of the heathen," and "taken up in the lips of

talkers" and were an infamy of the people. They had defiled their own land with pollution and idolatry while they dwelt in it, and because of this the Lord "scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries." According to their way and according to their doings the Lord judged them. They profaned the name of the Lord in the land of the heathens among whom they went. There was therefore no reason whatsoever, so far as they were concerned, why the Lord should show kindness towards them, but "Thus saith the Lord God; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for my holy name's sake." Having left their land which flowed with milk and honey and desecrated all that pertained to God and holiness, they were no longer deserving of his favor, but here is where God has designated to make his goodness and mercy known, for salvation must be by grace, and not of works. He says, "I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes." How was he going to sanctify himself in them? By taking them from among the heathen and by gathering them out of all countries, and bringing them into their own land. This was not all, but, being altogether filthy and unclean before a just and holy God, he says, "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you." The cleansing qualities of natural water are of inestimable value in our every day life and it is almost indispensible in every household for even a short time. Not long ago the bursting of a water main in New York City made it necessary to cut off the water supply from a hospital for two hours, but in the meantime water had to be hauled to the hospital in barrels, the need was so great. Water is very vital to the cleanliness and health of a people. Without it they cannot long survive. But what our text contains is far beyond anything the natural mind can comprehend. We read in John that when one of the soldiers with a spear pierced the side of our Lord "forthwith came there out blood and water."—John xix. 34. Not only is the blood of the Lamb required to atone for the sins of the people, but they need to be washed and cleansed from all of their filthiness before they can be presented to God the Father without spot, wrinkle or any such thing. Thus was opened to the house of David a fountain for sin and for uncleanness. It requires nothing less than the blood and the water from our Savior's side to cleanse the soul of its guilt. Its cleansing power was seen in the type when Israel was commanded to take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood of a lamb and strike it upon the lintel and the two side posts of the doors of their houses when they dwelt in Egypt, and the death angel seeing this passed over and did no harm to a single Israelite, while at the same time striking with death the first born of every Egyptian. God was here sanctified in them before the very

eyes of the heathen. But before Israel was completely delivered from the land of Egypt, or the land of darkness and bondage, she had to pass through the Red Sea—then she could sing the Lord hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath he cast into the sea, etc. While this was typical, Moses, who represented the law, was not allowed to enter the promised land. This was left for Joshua to do, who was a type of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is written that the law is our schoolmaster unto Christ, and also that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness for every one that believeth. (Rom. x. 4.) It was Joshua who carried Israel across the river Jordan, which in type separates between the law and the gospel, between the unregenerate and the new creature, and thus water baptism is one of the ordinances of God's house which is necessary to establish and separate the militant church, or body of worshippers who worship God in Spirit and have no confidence in the flesh, from the world. To be properly qualified to receive this ordinance, however, one must first be baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost. Our text declares that it is the Lord himself who will do the work, or who will sprinkle clean water upon them. Water baptism does not purify the flesh, but what the Lord does is done forever, and he was to sprinkle them with *clean* water; not that water which is contaminated with sin, for Jesus was separate from sinners in this respect, but there could be no question whatever as to the result when the Lord did it: *"And ye shall be clean,"* and that *from all your filthiness, and from all your idols."* In other words, those whom Christ presents to his Father are without blemish of any kind. His work is so perfect that none shall be able to lay anything to their charge. God not only begins the work but carries it on to completion by taking away the stony heart and giving a heart of flesh—one that has his law written in it and will love to do his commandments; one that will long, yea, yearn after the true and living God and for the things of his kingdom. He goes on to say he will put his Spirit within them *and cause them to walk in his statutes,* and as a result *they shall keep his judgments and do them.* This beautifully sets forth God's dealings with spiritual Israel in the gospel dispensation in gathering them from every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue, for he shall "say to the north, Give up: and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him."—Isaiah xliii. 6, 7. Such Scriptures do not leave the gate open to conditionalism, or to the creature, of himself, to work or not to work. David said, "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest and causeth to approach unto thee, that they may dwell in thy cuorts."—Psalms lxv. 4. Those whom the Lord hath chosen he works in them both to will and to do of all his good pleasure.

While it is true that national Israel actually experienced at the hand of the

Lord manifold evidences of his goodness and mercy towards them during their sojourn in Egypt and their forty years in the wilderness, and especially in the land of Canaan, which literally flowed with milk and honey, all of this was but a dim type of his dealings with true spiritual Israel. Paul says, "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not of the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."—Rom. ii. 28, 29. Again, Paul tells us in Hebrews that the law had only a shadow of the good things to come, "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God."—Heb. vii. 19. National Israel was a type of spiritual Israel, at the same time we believe they typified more than the gospel church as we know it to-day. The apostle, writing concerning the Gentiles, says, "For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were graffed contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be graffed into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins."—Rom. xi. 24-27. The time will undoubtedly come when the Lord's people among the Jews will be brought into an experimental knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and then will they acknowledge him as their own true Messiah. When all of God's purposes shall have been fulfilled concerning his people here below, "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power," he will then present his church, complete in every detail, comprising every member (Gentile and Jew) of his mystical body and they shall enter into the joys of their Lord and experience the fullness of that which they have here known only in part, for the apostle tells us, "Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."—1 Cor. xiii. 12. Here we have but a foretaste of that which is beyond, which will be inexpressible and full of glory; beyond the description of mortal power to relate, and the name of the city will be, "The Lord is there." Eternity will be none too long to sound forth his matchless praise.

R. L. D.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Mildred D. Gordy, Mich., $1; Mrs. Mary C. Martin, Mo., $1; W. R. Wallis, Miss., $8.

MARRIAGES.

By the bride's father, April 6th, 1940, at his home in Dutton, Ontario, Miss Ellen Ruston, younger daughter of Elder and Mrs. George Ruston, to Sub-Lieutenant John Loaring, Naval Officer, elder son of Mr. and Mrs. Wilfrid Loaring, of Windsor, Ontario. They expect to sail for overseas in the near future.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DANIEL J. DOLSON passed away at his home in Warwick, N. Y., January 18th, 1940, at the ripe age of ninety-one years, having been born November 22nd, 1848. He was the eldest son of Jessuiah Dolson and Susan A. Ten Eyck, one of a family of fourteen children. He was born near Warwick, N. Y., and always made his home there. One daughter, Sarah, wife of A. Russell Vail, survives to mourn the passing of a devoted father. Besides his daughter, he leaves three grandsons, Albert, Daniel and Arthur Vail, also five brothers, C. M., of Fishkill, N. Y., George, of Poteet, Texas, Charles G., of Waverly, Pa., Ira T., of Newark, N. J., and Isaac T., of Warwick, N. Y., four of whom are members of the church. He united with the Old School Baptist Church August 4th, 1895, and was chosen deacon July 8th, 1911, which office he filled according to his ability. It is sad to write of the passing of one who was such a lover of the truth, faithful in the household of faith and delighted in the law of God after the inward man. His seat was never empty until the infirmities of age settled upon him, and then only one meeting did he miss. Calling at his home one would find him reading his Bible or hymn book, and before he would speak he would say, Wonderful, wonderful. He dearly loved the singing, and while his voice was feeble he always followed along, and he loved the hymns 488 and 684. He was well known from Canada to Maryland. After his visit among his brethren he talked about it for months, and was planning for the next meeting. "Uncle Dan," as he was affectionately called by all his friends, had a host of friends in our town, and while they did not agree with his religious sentiment, loved him for his sterling qualities, as was attested by the large gathering at his funeral, which was held in the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Warwick, N. Y. His pastor, Elder R. Lester Dodson, spoke on the occasion, after which his remains were laid to rest beside his dear companion in the beautiful Warwick Cemetery. Only those who lose such a dear one can sympathize with his daughter and niece,

MINNIE E. HYATT.

In the years we have known brother Dolson he has been diligent not only in attending his own meetings, but other meetings at a distance, whenever it was possible for him to do so. It was given to him to feast upon the preached word, and often he would try to tell of the goodness and mercy of the Lord towards him all the days of his life. For a number of years, after services at Warwick in the morning he would accompany us in our car to the afternoon meeting in Middletown, N. Y., and we shall now greatly miss his company and conversation. He was a great comfort and encouragement to us in our ministry, and has often spoken in recent years of the joy that was his in mingling with those of like precious faith. While he has gone from us and we shall see his face no more, yet he is not forgotten and we will long cherish his memory. We, therefore, do not mourn as those who are without hope, but earnestly look to Jesus, who is the author and finisher of

our faith, to bring us off more than conquerors over all our enemies and who hath robbed death of its sting for us. We desire the blessings of God our Savior to rest upon those who ministered so faithfully to his earthly needs, especially during his last illness, and hope it may be his will to make known unto them the riches of his saving grace as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. May the Lord enable us to bow in humble submission to his holy will in all things and give us needed grace to sustain us in all our goings forth in this life, with faith to trust him and believe that though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we need fear no evil, for he will be with us and after death will receive us unto himself in that home of eternal glory, where we shall go out no more forever. Amen.

R. L. D.

ELDER G. R. HATHCOCK, our dear old brother and pastor, was born in Stanley County, North Carolina, March 25th, 1859, and was called from the walks of this life October 3rd, 1939, making his stay on time side of eternity 80 years, 6 months and 8 days. He was married to Zina Hartsel in the year 1879, and to this union were born nine children. Mrs. Hartsel Hathcock was claimed by death September 23rd, 1905. August 31st, 1908, he was married to Miss Nancy Thornton, and to this union were born four children. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church about the year 1881, and was baptized by Elder Alex Mason. He began preaching in the year 1883. He served the churches as minister fifty-six years. On his return home from a visit to several associations, he was raking trash in his back yard and fell dead. I am sure he was feasting on the good things that had been his to enjoy when the end came. He loved the dear old church, and spent the greater part of his time in serving it. He was a father to the old church. He visited among his brethren and sisters, always laboring among them for peace and love. Oh how we, together with his family, do miss him, but we hope that our loss is his eternal gain. Few of his kind are left.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. T. Everett, who spoke comforting words to a large gathering of relatives and friends. By request of the deceased, we sang the old hymn, "Jerusalem my happy home," then slowly passing by we paid to him the last respect by viewing his pale face for the last time. The body was laid to rest in the Arbor Cemetery, twelve miles west of Malvern, Arkansas. He believed in salvation by grace, and grace alone, and preached it. He believed in the finished work of Christ, and that the church was chosen in Christ before time began. He also believed that God predestinated and decreed all things whatsoever come to pass, and that nothing, though it be ever so small or ever so great, ever has or ever will come to pass or transpire different from the predestinated plan, which was foreseen, foreknown, settled and sealed with the seven predestinated seals of God Almighty before time began. This he believed, and he was a strong defender of the same. It was his heart's desire that after his departing the old church might be bound together in one bundle of love, and that each one would ever be at his post, humble, at his brother's feet, and stand firm for the doctrine of God our Savior, and to not be carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the cunning craftiness of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. As one of old has said, may we stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. He was always very prompt in attending his appointments. Back in his early life,

the distance, or a way of traveling, was seldom the hindering cause of him not being present. I have known him to walk twenty miles to his appointment, and many times the weather was not all sunshine. Often on Sunday nights the neighbors could hear him singing some old hymn on his way back home, and sometimes at a very late hour of the night. But he as a hireling fulfilled his stay here and has been called home, where he will tread the lonesome roads alone no more. There he will sing the sweet songs of redeeming grace, while we, together with his family, are left to mourn. But, blessed thought, there is One who will never leave us, and in all these troubles that are laid upon us he will make a way of escape. May God bless his family, together with Macedonia Church, which he served a number of years.

We hope it is the dealings of the Lord with us to send us Elder J. T. Everett for our pastor, a loving, God-fearing man and a great defender of the truth, to fill the vacant stand, which was left empty by the cause of death. May God bless him and cause him to lead the old church on in the same old path. Above all things, may it be the Lord's will that the old church may at all times be found in peace and fellowship, and friendship one for another. I believe that old brother Hathcock could have had no greater joy than to know that old Macedonia Church would be found walking in love and peace after his departing, so if one may speak for all, both the church and his family, we ask the prayers of all who may read thiis article. So farewell in the Lord, in a sweet hope that somewhere we will meet again.

One of the least of the little, I hope, your brother,

B. D. DRAPER.

On February 5th, 1940, death claimed DR. MOODY M. HARVILL, of Nashville, Tennessee. He had previously suffered from heart trouble, and about 4:30 o'clock the end came suddenly, while attending a patient in his office. The deceased was a son of the late Elder Y. J. Harvill, of Hickman County, Tennessee, a very able and representative minister of the Primitive Baptist Church. Dr. Harvill was a physician of high standing in his profession and was loved and highly esteemed by all who knew him. He was a strong believer in the doctrine of his church, but was kind and gentle unto all men of other creeds. The deceased was seventy-three years old, and is survived by his wife, Mrs. Mary Duke Harvill, one daughter, Mrs. Johnathan P. Bandy, Jr., one son, Heiskell Harvill, of Tampa, Florida, two grandchildren, Beverly and Johnathan Harvill Bandy, and two sisters, Mrs. Lela and Stella Hite, of Nashville.

Funeral services were held at his home. After singing, Elder Litton Alley, a close friend of the deceased, a member of the "Christian Church," read several passages from the Scriptures, Mr. E. B. Crain, a Missionary Baptist minister offered prayer and then the writer spoke for a short time, setting forth the attributes of God and some of he things God has done for his people from before the foundation of the world: "Hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," giving also the Bible signs or characteristic marks of the Lord's people: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." God's people feel to be poor and helpless. The Savior says the mourner

shall be comforted, therefore every poor sinner who has really and truly mourned on account of his sins will be saved in heaven. The writer tried to comfort the bereaved ones with the thought that God's people have an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them. In addition to that blessed thought they are kept by the power of God to enjoy it. What a comforting thought, to know that Jesus was rich, yet he became poor that we, through his poverty, might be made rich. We have God for our Father, Jesus Christ our Elder Brother and eternity for a lifetime.

The deceased was a Spanish-American War veteran, and interment was in the National Cemetery. May the Lord bless the bereaved family with the comforting influence of the Holy Spirit.

ALSO,

ISAAC CALVIN EDWARDS was born near Linden, Tennessee, July 12th, 1856, and passed away at 3:10 a. m., Tuesday, March 12th, 1940, at the home of his son, Harvel C. Edwards, Lawrenceburg, Tenn. Calvin Edwards was married to Deborah Analova Meredith January 13th, 1887, and to their union were born eight children, one of whom died in infancy. Besides his wife he is survived by the following sons and daughters: Mrs. Anna Copeland, of San Diego, California, Clyde, Hershel, Clarence, Lovic D. and Mrs. Pauline Queen, all of Waynesboro, and Harvel, of Lawrenceburg, Tenn. Also three brothers, Amos, of Dallas, Texas, John, of Goldwaithe, Texas, and Luke Edwards, of Trenton, Tenn.; sixteen grandchildren, one great-grandson, several nieces and nephews, besides a host of friends, to mourn his death. His death was due to cancer of the ear. He was a son of the late Elder D. L. Edwards, of the Buffalo Association. The deceased never united with the church, but was a strong believer in the doctrine of the Predestinarian Baptists, and loved God and his people. He that loveth is born of God. He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.

Funeral services were held in the Methodist meetinghouse, Wanesboro, Texas. After prayer by Mr. Whitten, a Methodist minister, the writer tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved ones, telling them that he was not dead, but only had put off the earthly tabernacle; that God's people have a building in the heavens, a house not made with hands. On the fourth Sunday in May, 1894, the father of the deceased, Elder D. L. Edwards, and Elder Y. J. Harvel ordained the unworthy writer to the full work of the ministry, and according to God's unerring providence the writer was called to conduct the funeral of Dr. Moody Harvel on February 6th, then on March 13th the funeral of Calvin Edwards, the sons of the dear old fathers in Israel who laid hands on the unworthy writer. While it was a sad duty indeed, yet it was a joy to try to comfort the mourning descendants of these dear old fathers who stood so firm for the faith of our fathers. Interment was in the cemetery at Salem Church, where the writer was ordained. May God abundantly bless the bereaved ones and keep them in the faith of God's elect.

LYTLE BURNS.

ELIZA (HALE) SLOAN, the subject of this notice, was born August 13th, 1853, and departed this life December 9th, 1939, aged 86 years, 3 months and 26 days. She was united in marriage to James Y. Sloan. (I do not have at hand the date of their marriage.) She and brother Sloan were natives of Franklin County, Virginia, until they became disabled by reason of age and infirmities,

several years ago, and were unable to keep house, since which time they made their home with their son, brother D. O. Sloan, of R. 1, St, Albans, W. Va., until they were called in death. Her husband, brother James Y. Sloan, preceded her in death, leaving her to mourn a few years, until she, too, was called. She had been in failing health for years, yet the end came as a great shock to the family, for they did not realize her critical condition, as she did not seem any worse than usual. She ate her supper and retired, but awakened in the night with a hemorrhage of the lungs and lasted only a few minutes, as death appeared to come as a result of strangulation from the hemorrhage. I feel unequal to undertake to write a sketch of the life and death of this dear saint of God. Sister Sloan possessed a noble character. She was very industrious, very patient and kind, bearing all her sufferings and afflictions with much humbleness, patience and with marked resignation. Sister Sloan united with the Pig River Old School Baptist Church, of Franklin County, Virginia, early in life, and lived the life of her profession. She was given a good hope through grace, and her life was crowned with many marks of grace. Truly could it be said of her that she was satisfied with the doctrine and order of God's house. She loved the doctrine of salvation alone by the grace of God, and she put no confidence in the flesh. To her and brother Sloan were born eight children, five of whom remain to mourn for her. They are D. O. Sloan, of St. Albans, W. Va., E. C. Sloan, of Calaway, Va., Mrs. Della F. Sumner, of Roanoke, Va., Mrs. Minnie L. Canady, of Ferrum, Va., Mrs. Bertha Trout, of Roanoke, Va., three step-daughters, Mrs. Lydia A. Hamilton, of Columbia, Va., Mrs. Mary F. Singman, of Salem, Va., Mrs. Isabella Stanley, of Hurricane, W. Va., three sisters, Mrs. Martha Hoy, Mrs. Amanda Gibson, Mrs. Mary E. Wade, two brothers, P. C. and Lewis Hale, together with a host of grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and many friends. The children mourn the loss of a kind mother, and all others who mourn their loss keenly feel that their mourning is not as those who have no hope. Sister Sloan was a loving, devoted wife, a kind mother and a good neighbor and friend. Notwithstanding that she had been absent from the church of her membership for a number of years, by reason of making her home here with her son, we feel that the church has sustained a great loss.

The unworthy writer was called to conduct the funeral, and tried to speak words of comfort to a large concourse of relatives and friends, after which her body was laid away in the family burying-ground, here in West Virginia, to await her Master's call. Much more could be said of this noble one, but space forbids. May God reconcile us all, for truly the Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be his holy name.

Submitted in love.

H. J. BIRD.

MEETINGS.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, Saturday and Sunday (two days), May 18th, and 19th, 1940, meeting to be called at 10:30 a. m. Ministering brethren of the same faith and church order are invited to be in attendance with us, also visiting brethren and friends from the different churches, wherever dispersed, are welcome. Those coming via rail transportation will find the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company station is located in the heart of our town. The Pennsylvania Railroad Company is a mile south of the town, but one mile or more to the meetinghouse. Strangers coming will call at my home and be distributed from there.

JOHN B. MILLER, Church Clerk,
20 West Delaware Avenue,
NEWARK, Delaware.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.

The church in Baltimore, Maryland, will hold a Saturday and Sunday meeting on May 25th and 26th, 1940. All are cordially invited to be with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Southampton Old School Baptist Church, Southampton, Pennsylvania, on Wednesday and Thursday, May 29th and 30th, 1940. The Southampton Church and congregation desire that a goodly number of our ministering brethren may be wih us at that time, and all lovers of the truth will be gladly welcomed.

CASPER G. FETTER, Church Clerk,
SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

The Black Rock Old School Baptist Church, Butler County, Maryland, will hold an all-day meeting on Sunday, June 2nd, 1940. We hope all who can will meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Trustee.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 108. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1940. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE ELECTION, BY THE GRACE OF GOD, OF THE SAINTS.

THIS is one principle of the doctrine of God that the greater portion of the inhabitants of the world do not understand or believe. It is the principle which eliminates the efforts of men in regard to salvation, and, if it were possible, there are a great number of people who would love to prove that there is no such thing as the election of grace. The election of grace is set forth in the Scriptures in a way quite peculiar to the way in which the world to-day looks upon the elections. The elections to-day, as far as public office is concerned, are very much upon merit. In other words, the man running for office either announces his candidacy or his name is entered into the race by friends, or some political faction, and however he is entered his merits are lauded high and wide in his campaign, then he is elected by popular vote of his fellowmen. The election of God's grace is quite different, as are all the other ways of God different from the ways of man. They are high above our ways, as the heavens are above the earth, and his thoughts above our thoughts. In order for us to convey very clearly just what is in this great subject, we must bow in acknowledgment to the wisdom, purpose and foreknowledge of God. First, that he is all-wise, that there is nothing hid from him, now, nor has there at any time been any event, principle or circumstance that he did not know in the beginning of the world, or even before the world, and, further, He who is the first great cause of all causes purposed all past, present and future events, giving them designated places and times to take place in this world, or in heaven, to the glory of his own name and to the good of some one, and that *some one* is the people elected by the grace of God to an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away, etc. Since the beginning of the world God has repeatedly shown that "therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have

mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." —Rom. ix. 18. And upon those whom he will have mercy there has been abundantly bestowed many multiplied blessings. There has also been made a great distinction between the favored and the ones God has hardened.

There are two women figuratively spoken of in the Scriptures: one the elect lady and the other the bond woman. The elect lady, in one sense, is symbolized in Sarah, Abraham's wife, and the nonelect is symbolized in Hagar the bond woman. There has been, and is now, a reason why the elect of God enjoy his blessings, and it is because God loves them, and there is also a reason why those whom he has hardened, or the reprobates, do not receive and enjoy the blessings of God's eternal salvation, and that reason is because God hates them. It is no more the work or merit of the elected, or chosen, of God which causes him to love them than it is the work, or demerit, of the others that causes him to hate them. It is not so in either case. The elect of God are the elect because they were elected by and of God "according to the foreknowledge of God," etc.—1 Peter i. 2. The distinction between the two is more clearly set forth in Romans ix. 13. Jacob is a representative of the whole elect family, or the whole family of God. "The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." —Deut. xxxii. 9. In Romans ix. 13, Paul says that God loved Jacob and hated Esau, and in Romans ix. 11, he says that the children were not yet born at that particular time, which of itself would prove that they had not merited nor demerited that love and hatred.

Contrary to the afore mentioned method of electing public officers today, is the election, by grace, of the saints of God. In this election merit could not be considered, because there was none to consider, because God chose his people in the Lord, his Son, before the foundation of the world. (Eph. i. 4.) In regard to the election, or choice of God in salvation, we find that instead of the elected seeking election, the Scriptures say, Romans xi. 7, "Israel [the representative of the triumphant church] hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it," etc. Some will admit that God elected his people according to his foreknowledge, but will say that he foresaw them to be obedient children and chose them accordingly. The experience of God's people discredits this theory, for let us look at him who is the "lot of God's inheritance," Jacob, the figure of the church. The name Jacob, itself, means surplanter, and he deceived his father and did many things that in this day would be called outrageous and ungodly, and in his day was not what we would call good. Hence God did not regard what Jacob would be when he loved him, but said that his purpose, "according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." God spoke by the prophets many times, confirming to them this peculiar choice to which he has been merciful since the beginning of the world. Not in regard to their obedience or disobedience, but in regard to

his will and purpose, which he purposed in himself before the world.

The election, or choice of God, embraced every son who finally shall be saved in heaven, for unto them was the promise given through the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, even before they had any existence in this world. In the divine arrangement which God made before the world, of all events, as before mentioned, he fixed and determined that he should make of one blood (Adam's) all nations (black, white, yellow or red) to dwell upon all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation. In this "all nations" is the "Lord's portion," or his elect, who by reason of Adam's transgression became sinners, thus separating them from the most holy, sin-avenging God, who because of this terrible intervention did not cease to love them, but loved them ever the same, even though they could not be accepted before him through their own efforts, or by the keeping of the law, for the law entered that every mouth might be stopped and the whole world become guilty before God. Nevertheless, our fathers valiantly tried to satisfy divine justice by the offerings prescribed by the law, only to find that "Thou art not justified by the deeds of the law." Could works accomplish the desired end? Remember this elect body was loved "that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, *not of works,* but of him that calleth." The condition as described above of this elect body had been thoroughly understood by God before the world was, for God treasured grace for her, in his Son, before the world, for this very thing which developed. Bear in mind that regardless of the condition of the elect, or the church, that God had made choice of her and loved her with an everlasting love. In looking upon this situation, it seems now that it is impossible for this elect of God to be at peace with God when they have fallen in sin and cannot by works or efforts of their own justify themselves, yet known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world, and in due time he confirmed his promise to our fathers and the elect by sending his Son (an offering he alone prepared) into the world to make reconciliation for sin and save our lives by a great deliverance. Hence Christ is the only way of deliverance for the elect body. He died that we might live to God. The specialty of this atonement is shown in a more forceful way when Christ died upon the cross, for before he was crucified he said, This is the will of him that sent me, that I give eternal life to as many as my Father giveth me. They that were given him were the elect lady. All from Adam until the resurrection that were numbered in the covenant of God's electing grace and are born into the world at the appointed time of God and are given to feel his precious love and mercy. In other words, the fountain of Christ's blood, which atoned for sins, flowed for the sins of all the family of God whom God had chosen in Christ before the world, both infants and adults. This blood alone brought about reconciliation for sin. This blood alone saved men from

sin. Who hath saved us and called us, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us (the elect of God) in Christ before the world began. No man on earth is able to point out who are God's people, or who is one of the elect, but the precious thought to me is that "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." There is a work which is going on every day (by the hand of the Lord), and that is the manifestation of his love to his people personally. This is not done by the efforts of the individual, but by God manifesting his love in a great way to those whom he has redeemed. We have seen some of our dear brethren going in by and forbidden ways, enjoying the pleasures of sin for a long time, and then being turned into careful people, and walking differently, and loving things they were once so adverse to. We are made to see the change, and I believe the world has in a measure looked in astonishment at the difference in such persons, yet they cannot understand what has taken place, but it is easy for the children of God, who themselves have been delivered, to recognize the work of God in the change that has been wrought in the lives and hearts of people who once lived and loved in the world with joy, when they are brought by God's hand to know the truth. When one of the elect is given a hope of heaven he does not say he got it himself, or worked it out, but confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh; that he quickened him when dead, and that the Lord had been merciful to him. In the regeneration and birth of the spirit one of the elect is made to hope that he is one of that number for which Christ died, for he knows that if he is he will finally be saved, and this hope and the feeling of the certainty of God's promise that of all that my Father hath given me I have lost nothing, but will raise them up again at the last day, does not make the proud possessor say, as the world does, I will do all manner of wickedness and be saved any way, but on the contrary, it keeps him humble, and continually inquiring for more evidence along the way. Any one possessed with the thought that if he believed in the election of grace he would live as he pleased and be saved any way, shows that he has never been killed to the love of sin, or he would not desire to live any longer in sin. The elect who have been born again rejoice in the doctrine of election, because it is the only certain doctrine preached under heaven. They believe the elect are those the Lord died to save in heaven, and that he did save them. The world believes that he died to save the entire world, and yet some are going to be lost. That would mean that in those who are lost Christ failed to accomplish his desire. Yet when he died on the cross he said, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." Of all thou hast given me I have lost nothing. How sure, how certain, and I believe that is God's eternal truth, that he saved as many and all for whom he died, and they are the ones who are elected by the grace of God and in due time saved by the shed-

ding of the blood of the Son God and given a precious hope of heaven while they live in the world, to live by and rejoice in while they are tossed to and fro, here to walk the lonesome valleys and feel the arrows of distress, and sometimes to go down into deep despair and wonder if his mercy is clean gone forever, but when he appears to them they feel to say with David, Let all that is within me praise his holy name. The elect wait with hope for the fullness of that promise of eternal life, and in the strength of that hope look across the chilling tide of death to lay hold upon the joy and gladness that shall be their's when they can see face to face their King, who loved them and died for them.

Submitted in love.

ROY S. SMITH.

JOHN XIV. 6.

"I AM the way, and the truth, and the life."

The above declaration is full of meaning to the Lord's people. It is positive and definite and lays the foundation for all their joys and consolation, both in this world and the world to come. "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." The same I Am that sent Moses to the children of Israel. I am the way, and no man can come to the Father but by me. This way is strait and narrow, and invisible to all learning and science, the keen eye of the vulture hath not seen it, nor the fierce lion passed by it. It is a difficult way that none can walk in except those who have in them the Way as a leader, Christ in them the hope of glory as he leads them in paths of duty for his name's sake. Jesus is the way of all the redeemed. He is the head of the body, the church, the first-born of every creature. He it was that tread the winepress alone. He bruised the serpent's head; he gained the victory over death; he spoke as never man spake, and died upon the cross for his church, which he hath redeemed with his own blood. How different is the way of God to his elect people than the ways of men, which are many, broad, easy to travel, where all along the way we read signs pointing no discomfort, the way of least resistance, which say, You can come if you will. You will have no cross to bear. It will help you in business, no matter what you believe. Come, you are welcome. Bring your children, your neighbors and any one you can persuade to come. We live in an enlightened world. We never mention doctrine any more. This old-fogy idea of election and grace is long ago out of date. We are a progressive organization. We often hear them quote the Scripture, Choose you this day whom ye will serve. Jesus died for the human race, and it is your own fault if you are lost. Jesus is pleading and coaxing you to come. Will you come? He cannot save you unless you give your hearts to him. Oh what blasphemy! Oh what a weak Savior! They claim more power than Jesus. Let us pity their delusions, for they know not what they say. Jesus is the way, and he is not coaxing, pleading nor striving for them to come. He hath saved his people from their

sins, and the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood, is safe in his arms and no man is able to pluck any of them out of the Father's hand. They have been born unto God, and are sons, and as such can speak in truth when they say, Our Father which art in heaven. Would it be a truth if we were not born of God to address him as our Father? The way is firmly shown by the writings of the Scriptures, as a witness, and by his people in their experience. Job said, "God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof. For he looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven; to make the weight for the winds; and he weigheth the waters by measure. When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder; then did he see it, and declare it; prepared it." In the mouth of these witnesses the way is established.

I have spoken of the "I Am" and "the way," now let us consider "the truth." As Jesus is the truth, all who do not possess the truth are liars. Nowhere can it be found but in him. He is the truth.

Here let me digress for a moment. Some of the writers for the SIGNS use the plural when speaking about truth. I do not think we are justified in this when speaking of the Lord and his kingdom. I do not remember ever reading in the Bible of truths (plural), only as it referred to the world, as the devil, devils many, lords and gods many, evil spirits, but to us there is one God, one truth, one way. Think this over, and correct me if I am in error.

Next let me speak of that mysterious gift called "life." What is it? That which precedes action. Quickening is the giving of life. Before we were quickened unto life and brought forth of the Spirit we were dead, and Jesus has told us that except a man be born again he cannot enter the kingdom of God. Jesus is the life of the body, the church, a relation established by birth. We are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones, a complete unity of them, a oneness between God and his people. He is our life, and without him we are dead. Before our natural life we were not capable of performing any acts whatsoever, but when we were born to our parents we began to hunger and thirst. Our parents did not teach us to be hungry and thirsty. We were born into this world and nature taught us to hunger and thirst and our mothers supplied the food. The babe is not consulted, but takes the nourishment as given by the mother. She knows what is best for us. Jesus uses this as a type for the heaven-born, and shows us that it is necessary. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Here they are quickened unto life, born of incorruptible seed and all their food comes direct from our heavenly Parent. They hunger and thirst after righteousness, and Jesus says they shall be filled. This life that Jesus gives is not subject to death. It is eternal life, and the food the elect subsist on is spiritual food.

The Lord deals out for them what seems good in his sight, and each day, each hour, their needs are supplied. This water of life that flows from the throne of God never dries up, is never contaminated. It is a pure river, clear as crystal. Oh what a wonderful thought! To be allowed to drink of this fountain! How our hearts go out to him in gratitude for the evidence of this life, for the hope he has given us, for the comfort we derive from it, the faith to substantiate our belief and rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, for he has told us, I have died for you. I have called you by grace, because I love you. I have led you beside the still waters. I have made you to lie down in green pastures. You are kept by the power of God through faith, and I will never leave nor forsake you. Comfort one another with these words, for they are truth, and truth is part of you, for it is written in your hearts. Your Father is God. Worship him in spirit and in truth.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

SAN ANTONIO, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—If you feel to do so, please publish this experience of Elder W. A. Bowden in the SIGNS. It was written in the year 1886, while he lived in Missouri. Elder Bowden was a highly gifted man, as some who are yet living can testify. Wealy Bowden, as he was known, was a second cousin to me, and I knew him ever since I can remember. Though but a small boy at the time, I yet remember a three hour sermon he preached at old South Mt. Zion Church, in Graves County, Kentucky, in the year 1877.

As ever, your brother,

J. B. BOWDEN.

I WAS born in Randolph County, North Carolina. My father, Travis Bowden, was of English and Welsh descent. My mother's maiden name was Elizabeth Garner, and she was of English descent. My grandfather Bowden was a minister of the Old School Predestinarian order, and lived to the age of ninety years. My mother's family was of the Methodist faith. I was the youngest of seven children, five daughters and two sons. My father moved from North Carolina when I was nine years of age and settled in Maury County, Tennessee. I was early taught to believe there was a God who took cognizance of all we did or said, and unto him we were accountable, and that our eternal happiness depended upon the way we spent our lives here. I often had serious and alarming thoughts about death and my future state. I felt that I was not prepared to meet God in peace, but intended to get better later on, so that God would love me and save me before I died. When I was about sixteen years old I attended an old-fashioned Methodist camp meeting, and while there I became alarmed. Seeing so many of my comrads seemingly concerned about their souls' salvation, and hearing so much preached about hell and the torments of the damned, I became frightened and concluded that I, too, would get religion. Many of my youthful friends and asso-

ciates professed religion and I seemed to be left alone, so I started in with the determination to get religion, too. I gave up my sinful habits and turned to reading the Bible. I had my secret place to pray, and verily believed I could and would become good enough for the Lord to love and save me, and that he would make it known to me by a great light or voice that my sins were forgiven, and that I would know it and have no more doubts and fears about it. I went on in this way for about three months and had so many disappointments that I began to despair, and as many of my associates who joined the church (as they called it) had gone back into their old habits, I concluded it was all hypocrisy, and there was no reality in what people called religion. Hence, as I still loved the pleasures of youth, to me this great noise about religion was only a farce after all. In the year 1831 my father concluded to move to Maury County, Tennessee, and moved to what was called the Kentucky Purchase, which was then beginning to be settled. He sent me, with three Negroes, in advance to enter land and make some improvements, which we did, before the family came. Here I enjoyed the chase and hunt among the wilds of Graves County, Kentucky, killing deer, wolves, snakes and turkeys, which abounded in this new and sparsely settled country.

Not to be tedious, and passing by many things that might be interesting to some, I come to the spring of 1835. While riding alone on the road between where I lived and Boydsville a feeling of gloom and horror seized my soul. I saw myself a poor, lost, condemned sinner before the just and holy God, against whom I had sinned so long and so much that I thought my day of grace had passed and that there was no chance left me for salvation. I then, for the first time in my life, saw that God was holy, just and good, and that I was carnal, sold to sin, and that if justice was meted out to me I was lost forever. I was made to cry, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. That was my only plea, and for mercy I continued to beg, more or less, until it seemed to me that my pleadings and prayers were all in vain, and for me to plead or try to pray for that which appeared impossible was only adding sin to sin, for it was impossible for God to change, and consequently my eternal condemnation was sealed. In distress, I continued to mourn my sad fate, more or less, for several months, until one dark and doleful night, while sinking, as I thought, down, down to a yawning hell, when suddenly my dear Savior and Redeemer appeared to my view and raised my sinking soul from the terrible pit and gave me joy and peace, as I trust, in the Holy Ghost. With the evidence of forgiveness of my sins through the Lord Jesus Christ, and what he had done for poor me before I had a being in this world, came the impression to preach the riches of his grace in the great plan of salvation and scheme of redemption, according to God's eternal purpose, which was purposed in himself to save his people from their sins, through the blood and merits of his Son, Jesus Christ, who is the head

of his body, the church, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. And when I doubt and fear that I am deceived in my hope, and at last may be cast away, I also fear that God has never called me to the work of the ministry. I am sure that if I am mistaken in one I am in the other, and necessity has been laid upon me, and woe is me if I preach not the gospel. The first time I ever tried to preach, I found myself in the midst of the congregation, speaking at the top of my voice, and I immediately sat down, not knowing what I had said, or how I acted. I remember that I felt easy and empty, and thought that if I had said or done anything wrong the brethren and sisters would forgive me. I felt then that I should never try again, and if I could have been easy and satisfied I never would have tried. This took place in the fall of the year, after I had united with the Regular Primitive Baptist Church at her meeting in July, 1835. That winter I was licensed, and on Old Christmas day, 1836, (Old Christmas day was then the 6th of January), at brother Joel Williams' I took my first text: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"—Luke xxiv. 26. The church called Mt. Zion had been constituted but a short time, and was weak in members, but she was greatly blessed of the Lord, and we have great reason to believe that the Lord added to her the saved until she became strong in numbers and in the spirit of his might. I was ordained to the ministry by prayer and the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, composed of Elders Hanes, Harder and Volentine, on the fourth Sunday in March, 1837, and served the church as pastor forty-four successive years, and served as Clerk of the Bethel Association thirty-four years, and was its first Moderator. And now, dear brethren and sisters, with all my suffering and weeping and preaching and trying to comfort and build up the household of faith, I have nothing to rely upon or glory in save the grace and the cross of Christ, and if I ever reach heaven it will be because God loved me and Christ died for me and saved me by his grace, and I am sure that if ever I reach that holy city I shall have as great reason to praise my God as any poor sinner that ever was saved. Glory in the highest! The Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Amen.

W. A. BOWDEN.

BENTON, Kentucky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I do not have a mind to take up the things that comfort me to-day. I do not always know why I am thus. If I could feel that it was of God, then I would be more reconciled to this feeling of discontent and disinterest in home things and surroundings. So if you will bear with me a few minutes I will try to find relief in writing you a few of my travels this summer. How God has so graciously blessed a poor sinner. For some reason, best known to himself, it has pleased him to gather me together with his children in so many ways, so many times and in different places. I was at our union meeting at Rock

Springs Church, Simpson, Illinois, the fifth Sunday in July, and on Friday and Saturday before, and there I saw with these eyes and heard with these ears, if not in a spiritual sense, the going home to his friends of a very dear brother, and also witnessed his baptism. Voices were praising God, and cries of shoutings were returning to him who had filled hearts to overflowing. It was indeed good to witness the power of God as he saw fit to fill the earthen vessels with his treasures. The first Sunday in August a few from our own church, together with our pastor, Elder John Henson, attended a union meeting in the Obion Association, near Paris, Tennessee. This Association has no home preachers, but preachers from other Associations were there. Elder Lytle Burns, from Alabama, was present, together with Elders R. L. Biggs, from Nashville, Tenn., R. M. Brann and Elder Prince, from Fulton, Kentucky. The house was crowded with hearers all three days. They also had preaching both nights. The fourth Sunday in August the same members from our church (Soldier Creek), in Marshall County, Kentucky, attended Little River Association, held with Saline Creek Church three days, in Bumpus Mills, Tennessee, where much rejoicing in the Lord was made manifest. This last Friday, Saturday and Sunday our same party motored to near Nashville to attend West Tennessee Association, and this poor heart of mine was, and has been, so lifted from time things that it does not seem that I could ever sorrow any more over anything. It was a hard drive from our homes to this place on Friday, but before we were there long we felt well paid for all the hardships of the trip. There was preaching Friday and Friday night, Saturday morning, also Saturday afternoon and night. Words have failed me so far in trying to describe this Saturday service. The half cannot be told. I do not know when we ate natural food. It was done between sermons, some time in the afternoon. But the most beautiful day of all days seems to have been this Saturday and Saturday night. Around about us all was peace, and every one was singing grace and praising God. The preaching brethren were given light and liberty to hold up Christ, and to know nothing but him. So many things were told of the prophets, who testified to his coming and prophesied what would be in that day. The theme of salvation by grace never grows old. I keep hearing their voices proclaiming how we Old School Baptists are the people scattered and persecuted and trodden down by all other nations. I keep hearing brother Lytle Burns warning us of antichrist, and how to try the spirits to know if they are Christ or antichrist, and how sweetly and solemnly he commended us to Christ Jesus our Lord for all fullness, and to God, who is able to keep us from falling. I wonder how a man in his eighties can have such a mind as that man has. While I live I shall never forget the sacred, solemn look on his face, and how a halo of glory, or light, seemed to stand around about him, and he filled with Jesus as his life and light,

and as Jesus filled the basket, so he was filled and we hope we all did eat. He (Jesus) was preached these few days and nights as the life and light and resurrection, and to have to come home and return to this dull mortal life and work out as best we can the problems of the days we live seems dull indeed, and no life therein. How blessed I have been to enjoy these seasons this summer, away from our home church as well, as we have had sweet gatherings together at our little church. I never want to act a thing that I do not feel. Saturday of that meeting, brother Dodson, I seemed to leave earth, carried away off some place, and I wanted to scream out and cry aloud, but instead I opened my hand-bag and took from it a pen and paper and began to write my feelings. I looked over and saw brother Prince, a very dear old servant of God, shedding tears, and I saw others filled, as I hope I was, full, and to keep from screaming I started writing. Like this, This is the day the Lord has made. This way they preach he also made. I see tears in brother Prince's eyes. I feel them in my heart, although I have my doubts and fears. We are not far apart. This oneness that we all hope in when the Spirit's power overwhelms us makes us forget all flesh and sin and why God created us thus.

I sat so still, and felt no ill,
My heart was surely singing;
I felt no sigh, no mournful cry
Within my heart was ringing.

But rather felt my knees had knelt
Unto some gracious power;
I had no fear, but felt so near
To God in that same hour.

I went away from this house of clay,
Where all was peace and love,
With my poor mind I saw the time
When the Son should reign above.

We won't come back, to feel ur lack,
No, never; ah, no, never;
Where God shall move and all be love
Forever and forever.

But all be love in our home above,
Where the three-one God is reigning;
No dark, drear night, no doubt or fight,
But all his praise be singing.

I like to go to a meeting when I hope he gives me to see a moving, effectual working of his mighty power on and in the children of men, gaze on the ministers whom we have seen shut up and see new liberty and new fields open up to them, and they stand and tell what they see; not them, but God using them. We love the battle of Gideon with those three hundred men. We love Gideon's experience when he said, I am the least in my Father's house; and, too, we feel as he did when he said, O my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? We love, we hope, poor, crippled Mephibosheth, lame on his feet, but enabled to eat at the king's table. The grand and glorious feast spread thereon hides our crippled condition from others. We are aware of it, but they who are made to sit down and eat only eat and rejoice, eat his flesh and drink his blood, and at that time are not aware of the lameness of nature. I hope I believe in God's foreknowledge. I like to think that before Jeremiah was God knew him and sanctified him before he came forth from his mother's womb. I am glad it is left for us to read about John the Baptist leaping in his mother's womb at the salutation of Jesus' mother. We are always

in the mind and purpose of God, before we are born, or ever we are, we are his in purpose, in his determination. He never sleeps. God knew the end from the beginning. No wonder he knew Nathaniel while he was under the fig tree, and knew he was an Israelite in whom was no guile, because he knew him, or went in unto him under the fig tree and quickened him, born him of a right spirit, because God had given him to the Son and he was his, and in his time he came into a newness of life. I believe that God permitted nothing to just happen, but he, being all-wise, determined things to be, and as they now exist, cannot be contrary to God's will and determination. David learned that there was no use for men to fight against the living God, nor a living people in whom God moved, so he took off the armor Saul placed upon him, even the helmet of brass on his head, and took his staff in his hand and went out to fight the mighty Philistine, and slew him, he the stripling of a boy that had been delivered from the paw of both lion and bear, and also had rescued the lamb out of the mouth of same. To-day, in this day, that same power that fought David's and Gideon's battles is fighting the battles of His children. He is all power, both in heaven and in earth. He works and none can hinder, and the way of the strange woman is death, but the way of the true woman is Jesus.

Brother Dodson, I feel some better since I have been writing. I find I feel relieved somewhat. Now should I destroy this or send it on? When one feels relieved after expressing one's self on paper would it not be just as well to burn the paper? and no one then would know our foolishness and our cries and pleas,

Yesterday I read your father's article in the November, 1938, SIGNS, on The Good Samaritan, and the words you wrote about the thieves creeping in, in sheep's clothing, and that they in sheep's clothing could get closer to the flock of sheep with this garment on. I believe I had to find that article and read it, for I needed to be warned by some one in whom I place confidence as a true servant of God, able through the Spirit's power to warn the flock. We find many things contrary to the teachings of Old Baptists, but when one comes in among us and fails to declare the whole counsel of God, then we better watch as well as pray, and we can do neither only as it is given us of God, and while we have an High Priest making intercession for us, who hope we have been called by God, the Father, and preserved and elected, then we only beg and plead for mercy, that we might be able to stand while he intercedes for us at God's right hand.

Excuse this, and may God bless you and all for whom you pray.

EFFIE BLOGG WHITENTON.

NORWOOD GROVE, Manitoba, Canada.

DEAR PUBLISHER:—Please let the inclosed two dollars supply the contribution for one more year to some "poor of the flock" who may be glad to read the SIGNS.

Elijah miscalculated when he said,

Lord, I only am life. Abraham could not count the stars, nor can the wise of this generation, with all the instruments invented, find out what God hath in store for his elect. And none shall pluck them out of his hand. Your paper maintains this truth, and there are some scattered and poor, but they are to be supplied with all needful blessings.

We are glad to hear that by the mercy of God your eyesight is so far sustained. When we are undergoing similar affliction we can in some measure sympathize. May light be granted in these dark days to those that sit in darkness.

Sincerely yours,

J. C. SMALLBONE.

[WE truly appreciate the kind words of this writer, and sincerely hope it may be the pleasure of our blessed Lord to also sustain his eyesight.—PUBLISHER.]

TIPTONVILLE, Tennessee.

DEAR EDITORS:—Find inclosed a check for two dollars to pay for the SIGNS another year. I certainly wish I could send more, remembering the many copies I received without price, and I hope to some day be able to repay, though the value of this dear paper cannot be measured with silver and gold. The many good letters and editorials are rich with food when it is ours to read with understanding hearts, with eyes to see untold beauties through tears falling from our eyes, manifesting the witness within to those things, reading from dear ones far and near, who can tell our feelings better than we can ourselves.

I have been reading the book Predestination lately, and oh how good it is to read such grand and noble truth. I am very weak, ignorant and blind, only as enabled by the Lord can I see a little, I hope. James i. 5, says, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." And the sixth verse says, "But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed." I often fear that is the way I am. I truly feel as helpless before God as a wave of the sea, for the waves only roll to and fro, up and down as the wind forces them, so I can only see when he sends the Comforter to take the things of his and show them unto me. I can only read when my eyes are opened, and cannot open them when I please, yet I crave to understand the written word and to be kept by the power of God to be enabled to walk soberly and righteously in this world, ever looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Pray for me if you can, and forgive me for writing so much and saying so little. My husband and his father join me in love and hope of eternal life.

(MRS.) LUTHER CAMPBELL.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Elder T. W. Walker having moved from Ringgold, Virginia, to Route 2, Burlington, North Carolina, requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1940.

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ISAIAH IV. 1.

"AND in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach."

We have been requested to write our views upon the above Scripture, which we do, hoping the Lord will bless us with wisdom, that we might not appear wise above what is written, and that those who may have a different view of this Scripture will bear with us as brethren should. We say this, as we are aware that the opinion has been expressed that this Scripture refers simply to the time when, after Jerusalem was taken by the Chaldeans, and the young men were slain by the sword, the young women who survived would have but little prospect of marriage, so that one man would take seven wives, who would be willing to work and clothe themselves, thus being of little expense to him, while they, being called by his name, would be saved from the reproach that was generally cast in Eastern countries upon women in an unmarried state. There might have been such instances, but there is no record of them, and we are rather of the opinion that women in a conquered country were carried away as captives. Another opinion, very much more common, is that this verse has reference to the apostate churches of the world who find little food for them in the word of God, are very diligent in preparing that which they can eat which is of the flesh, who say, We will eat our own bread and wear our own apparel, the apparel of self-righteousness, in which they can boast, while all they want of Christ is to be called by his name to take away their reproach. Sush a view is very interesting and has given subject matter to not a few good men when they have wished to expose the worldly institutions around them, but does such a view belong to the foregoing Scripture as we consider it in connection with the third chapter, which precedes it? In our opinion, it is as much a misapplication of the Scripture as we consider is shown in the song that some sing, "There were ninety and nine who safely lay in the shelter of the fold." Jesus did not say they were in the shelter of the fold at all, but rather that they were left in the

wilderness. It was the ninety and nine who were "far away from the gates of gold," for they were the unbelieving Pharisees, self-righteous, therefore in no need of repentance. The song is interesting and very touching when we do not look up the Scripture from whence it is supposed to be taken. Just so with the foregoing view, it is interesting and seems to fit the Arminian denominations of to-day.

Now let us look at the Scripture. Especially would we first look at Isaiah, third chapter, where the prophet is speaking of the Lord's people, of the daughters of Zion, who had become lewd and wanton, that the Lord would bring them into judgment, stripping them of their ornaments, bringing them down into the dust, so that instead of a sweet smell there was a stink, and instead of a girdle, a rent, and instead of a stomacher, a girding of sackcloth, and burning instead of beauty. A prophet later speaks of this time of judgment when he said, "But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he shall be like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's sope."—Malachi iii. 2. This is the day of the Lord. in which he would judge his people and take away their pride and bring them down to the dust, desolate, to lament and mourn and sit upon the ground. The prophet and the prudent and ancient, the judge and the mighty men had to be take away. At this very time children were their oppressors and women ruled over them. Jesus compared the Jews to children in the market place, and in Matthew xxiii. he said, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore be ye witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the *children* of them which killed the prophets." A remarkable instance of the influence of women and children in that day is seen in the power Herodias and her daughter had upon Herod, which resulted in the slaying of John the Baptist.

In that day, that is, the day of the Lord, seven women shall take hold of one man. Seven, the perfect number that does not belong to the Arminian churches whose number is legion, but to God and his chosen people. Seven was to the Jew a sacred number, and appears many times in the Scripture. There were seven pillars that wisdom hath hewn out, and the seven golden candlesticks typical of the seven churches. These women, we believe, are the daughters of Zion, verses sixteen and seventeen in chapter three, and are referred to again in chapter four, verse four. These were to take hold of one man. The Jews never took hold of Christ. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. They fell through unbelief, but these women represent the seven churches who took hold by faith, and they represent, in our opinion, the spiritual daughters of Zion. Literal Zion under the legal covenant, was proud and lifted up, but their house was left unto them desolate. She that

had many children (legion) is now waxed feeble, and she which was barren (meaning spiritual Zion) hath born seven. (1 Sam. ii. 6.) Thus the seven churches set forth by these seven women were the daughters of the Jerusalem Church, and they were espoused to Christ, their husband, as it is said, "Thy Maker is thine husband. * * * The God of the whole earth shall he be called." They took hold of one man. The Jews had Moses and the prophets, but these women were enabled by grace through faith to take hold of Christ's words and doctrine, and were built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, *Jesus Christ* himself being the chief corner-stone. Peter and Paul were but servants who preached, not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. As in the third chapter Israel had to be judged, so before any can or will take hold of this man they must be humbled. The Lord smites with a scab the crown of the heard until they confess they are full of wounds, bruises and putrifying sores. It is He that can and does discover their secret parts. What were ornaments of glory now they see as their shame, and they would be forever undone but for the grace of God. They must be taught to cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils, and it is then that her gates lament and mourn and she, being desolate, sits upon the ground. But the Lord will not leave such comfortless, for he says, "Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee."—Matt. xxi. 5. She could then sing,

"Come, let us to the Lord our God
With contrite hearts return;
Our God is gracious, nor will leave
The desolate to mourn.

His voice commands the tempest forth,
And stills the stormy wave;
And though his arm is strong to smite,
'Tis also strong to save."

He stood alone and of the people there were none to help him, and he became their refuge. "A man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of waters in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."—Isaiah xxxii. 2. They took hold of this man, saying, We will, for they were made willing in the day of God's power, we will eat our own bread. We would mention that their bread to us means all that is necessary to sustain them in their life. It is the bread of adversity in which they fellowship Him who was a brother born for adversity. While they are seven they are as one, like the seven golden candlesticks. They were made of one piece of gold beaten out, and it is one bread, they being many are one bread and one body. Eating of the bread and doing of God's word to them is one and the same thing. They eat and praise the Lord, not as under the legal covenant it is said the people sat down to eat and rose up to play. With them there is always a self-examination whenever they eat. The things necessary to sustain spiritual life in them seem to be trials and afflictions, which are their's, and it is their meat to do the will of their heavenly Father. Bitter herbs are a part of their bread also, and as the lamb was eaten with bitter herbs so in adversity they feed upon Christ. The ap-

parel also of these women who had been brought down into the dust of self-abasement, was humility and meekness. They had experienced the stripping spiritually that literal Israel had passed through, and with the psalmist they confessed, My days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as an hearth. My heart is smitten and withered like grass; so that I forgot to eat *my bread.* The pride of the Jew was such that he would come into the feast not having on the wedding garment, but he was cast out. Literal Israel must be cast out as the bond child who could not be heir with the free. Pride came before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. Paul exhorts the Ephesians (one of these seven) that they walk with all lowliness and meekness, and these women, or churches, had their own apparel. Meekness is a temper of mind that is not easily provoked, and suffers injury without desire of revenge, submitting to the will of God. It can be said of these churches as the psalmist says, "The King's daughter is all glorious within." Now while this apparel is their's it is the fruit of the spirit that dwells in them. This spirit kept them mindful of the low estate which was their's by nature, and filled them with one desire, which is expressed in our text: "Only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." The worldly churches do not take away their reproach by tagging Christ's name to them, for before God in the day of the Lord they will be judged by him, and he will say, Who hath required this at your hands? But the true church knows that it is in his name they rejoice all the day, for it is in his name they are made whole and free from condemnation, for Jesus said in Psalm sixty-nine, "The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me." So he became a reproach for them. They were without the gate, like poor Lazarus (the gate of Judaism). Jesus was crucified without the gate. If the Jews are to be joined to Christ they must leave their legalism, as Paul, writing to the Hebrews, said, "Wherefore Christ also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us [Jews] go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach." Thus by their being joined in one flesh unto the Lord he took away their reproach, while the five foolish virgins, not having grace to serve him acceptably, were left in their reproach, as all legalists will ever be if grace does not prevent.

We would have the reader here notice that it was in that day, the same day, that the Scripture says that the branch of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious. This is the same person spoken of in chapter eleven, where the prophet declares that there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: who was to judge with righteousness the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth. The world (Gentile) was to dwell with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid, this same Person having removed the middle wall of partition, thus making peace. It is here the Gentile and Jew find peace,

and his rest shall be glorious. There are two short chapters in Isaiah, the fourth and the twelfth. The fourth should be read first, the whole six verses, and then the twelfth, which also has six verses, which begins, "And in that day." It is still the same day, THE GOSPEL DAY, when instead of "gates that lament," we have the "gates of praise," and it is, "OLord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me." His judgments had been in the earth and the Lord had washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning. To just apply this to a future day yet to come, applicable only to the Jew, as many do, is doing violence to the word and robbing the children of their bread, for we must remember that they are not Jews that are Jews outwardly, and when the day comes for the Jews to find the favor they will be grafted in through Christ, the true Branch. The children of the flesh cannot be, and never were, the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. Thus these two chapters belong to spiritual Zion, whether Jew or Gentile, and these two women about which we have been writing are the daughters of Zion. They are God's workmanship, God's building, it is there judgment must begin, and if any of these daughters get high-minded and proud they will be judged. If they cease to walk in humility, and become haughty, walking with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, that is, walking with affected delicacy, as though they were something when they are nothing but poor unworthy sinners, putting on a vain show which is set forth by the ornaments. Changeable suits of apparel, implies that they can act meek and humble when it pleases them, or proud and haughty when occasion suits. The earrings and jewels, the rings and nose jewels seem to set forth the pride some show when they can only hear certain preachers, as though their ears were better and should be given more attention than God's humble poor. James saith, "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou in a good place: and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?" Wherever such things are done, the Lord will judge, not by the sight of the eye, or the hearing of the ear, but will judge righteously, and his people, in that day, will learn that such that remain shall be called holy, even every one that is written in Jerusalem; with joy shall such draw water out of the wells of salvation.

G. R.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MRS. MINTA MAPES, the oldest member of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church, was born in New Vernon, N. Y., July 20th, 1849, and passed away in Howells, N. Y., April 13th, 1940, in the ninety-first year of her age, following an illness extending over a period of several months duration. She was the daughter of Samuel B. and Phoebe Comfort Beyea. Her marriage to James Riley Mapes took place December 20th, 1870, Elder Gilbert Beebe officiating. Only cousins survive her, and two of them, Mr. and Mrs. John Coleman, faithfully cared for her during her last illness. She had requested Mrs. Coleman never to leave her, and she sat by holding her hand when the end came. Sister Mapes asked for a home with the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church on May 7th, 1898, and on the following day, which was Sunday, she was baptized by Elder H. C. Ker, who was her pastor for many years thereafter. During the past twenty-odd years that we have known her we can testify to her faithfulness in every way to the cause of Christ, by both attending and supporting her meetings. In more recent years she has also attended the meetings held in Middletown, N. Y., and she is going to be greatly missed by all whose privilege it was to mingle with her in the worship of our God. The esteem in which she was held was evidenced by the large gathering of friends who came to pay their last respects at the funeral service held in the meetinghouse, which we were called to conduct. The following text was used on the occasion: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." Verses forty-five to fifty-eight, inclusive, of the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians were also read in connection with the text. Interment was made in the New Vernon Cemetery adjoining the grounds of the meetinghouse. In this age of coldness and indifference towards spiritual things, it is sad to part with those who manifest a lively interest in the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, but we are persuaded that he doeth all things well, and we pray that he will reconcile us to his will and sustain us by that grace which was giiven us in Christ before the world began.

R. L. D.

MARY FRANCES WEBB was born April 2nd, 1862, in Jackson County, Missouri, where she spent her entire life. She departed this life to enter eternal rest April 20th, 1940, at the age of 78 years and 18 days. When yet a young girl she joined the "Christian Church," and remained a member of that denomination until after she married Addison Samuel Webb, which occured on the twenty-fifth day of December, 1879. After her marriage to brother Webb, she united with Little Blue Church of Primitive Baptists, and ever after lived a most consistent and loving member, always attending her meetings when it was so that she could get there. They lived in the Oakland neighborhood for twtnty-five years, where four of their children were born. They were hard working people, and while raising their children accumulated a nice little farm home. She said that on their meeting days they would load their children in the old lumber wagon and drive often several miles to be at the meetings, which they loved to attend. They moved to the little town of Buckner in the year 1907, where her husband peacefully passed away August 27th, 1938, which was a great loss to her. But she would not give up her home, and lived there most of the time alone, but was kindly looked after by some of her grandchildren and students of the High

School, of whom she was very fond, and gave several of them assistance. "Aunt Mollie," as she was known and called by most all who knew her, was a most lovable woman, truly devoted to her husband, and to her children and grandchildren, and but few had more friends than she, for she was of such lovable character that all who met her were attracted by her smiles and her affectionate demeanor. She was a woman of great courage, honesty and industry, filling her life with worthwhile labor and countless acts of kindness. She leaves to mourn her departure, three daughters, Mrs. Lizzie Jackson and Mrs. Ella Ward, of Buckner, and Mrs. Ruth Bradshaw, of Smelterville, Idaho; two sons, C. C. Webb, of near Oakland, and William Webb, address not known; twenty-three grandchildren; eighteen great-grandchildren; one brother, C. G. Graham, of Independence, Mo., and many other relatives and friends, besides the church she so dearly loved.

The funeral services were held at the M. E. meetinghouse near Oakland. The house was well filled, and I tried to substantiate the doctrine of salvation by grace, and to comfort the bereaved, by using the first and second verses of the eighth chapter of Romans. Her body was laid away in the cemetery near by to await the wakening of the dead when Jesus comes in the power of the resurrection to fashion their bodies like unto that of the resurrected Christ and receive them unto himself to eternally be with him in praising God through all eternity.

ALSO,

JOHN H. URKUHART, son of William and Betty Asher Urkuhart, was born near Shady Grove, Virginia, June 22nd, 1856, and peacefully passed from this world of pain and sorrow May 6th, 1940, at his home, near Harrisonville, Missouri, at the age of 83 years, 10 months and 14 days. While yet a young man he left his home in Virginia, in the year 1881, and came to Missouri, where he spent the remainder of his life. May 26th, 1889, he was united in marriage with Miss Eliza E. Warren, and they by hard labor acquired a very nice little farm, where they spent forty-seven years of their lives and raised their family of eleven children happily together. He was a man of a quiet attitude, and became one of the highly and respected and honorable citizens of the community. He united with Little Flock Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, of Cass County, Missouri, March, 1914, and was baptized in May of that year by the late Elder J. A. Teague. His wife had been a member of that church for several years prior to that time, and to say that they lived to the honor of their profession is no vain eulogy, for they endeared themselves to the brotherhood of the church by their godly conversation, showing a strong faith in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and they were always in attendance at their meetings when it was conveniently arranged for them to be there. I have spoken of sister Urkuhart here in relation to their christian lives, for they were so happily companionated, not only in their natural lives, but in the love for the church and the fellowship of the brethren and sisters, whom, with their pastors, they esteemed highly for the truth's sake. Of those left to mourn are his wife, sister Urkuhart, five daughters, and five sons, to wit: sister Mabel Lindsey, Walnut Creek, Calif., Mrs. O. C. Dawson, Mrs. Clint Phillips and Mrs. Al Baldwin, of Pleasant Hill, and Mrs. Herbert Spencer, of Kansas City, Mo. The boys are J. L., Long Beach, Calif., O. C., Newport, R. I., O. M., Norfolk, Va., W. E., Kansas City, Mo., and F. E., Lone Jack, Mo.; also twelve grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. The funeral was

held at the Norfsinger Funeral Home, in Pleasant Hill, Mo., and was attended by a goodly number of the neighbors and friends. By special request, after Elder W. T. Hughett had read a chapter and offered prayer, I tried to comfort the bereaved ones, using as a text the second and third verses of the seventeenth chapter of St. John, after which he was laid away in the beautiful cemetery at Pleasant Hill, to await the coming of the risen Savior in the power of the resurrection, to take him home to eternally praise the eternal God, and may he comfort the bereaved with that blessed hope, is my prayer.

W. L. HALL.

ROBERT V. ALEXANDER departed this life March 14th, 1940. He was born near Springfield, Illinois, Apriil 5th, 1845, making his age nearly ninety-five years. When nine years old he moved with his parents, brothers and sisters to Sullivan County, Missouri, and settled near the town of Milan. There he grew to manhood. When a young man of nineteen years he came west with an immigrant train drawn by oxen. He spent two years in Walla Walla County, Washington, then returned to his home in Missouri. August 19th, 1869, he was married to Margaret Ellen Taylor. In May, 1878, he and his family moved west again. That trip they traveled by wagon, drawn by horses, and settled near Elgin, in Union County, Oregon. He united with the Predestinarian Baptist Church named Big Springs on Saturday before the second Sunday in June, 1887, and was baptized on the following day by the late Elder G. E. Mayfield. In the year 1900 he and his family moved to Touchet, Washington. His family at that time consisted of wife and five children. At the time of his death he was a member of Mizpah Church, located near his home. His wife was a member of the same churches during her lifetime. She has been gone from this world of sin and sorrow thirty-one years. He was always prompt in attending church meetings, although for a number of years he was so deaf he could not hear the services. He always enjoyed being with the Baptist friends, and as long as he maintained a home they were welcome there. Among those left to mourn his departure are two children, twenty-three grandchildren and twenty-seven great-grandchildren, besides numerous other relatives. He had many friends, which fact was attested by the great number attending his funeral, which was conducted by Elder C. W. Bond, of La Grande, Oregon. Interment was in the Touchet Cemetery. We greatly appreciate all the kindness shown by the many friends.

Written by his daughter,

ELLEN COLWELL.

AGAIN the death angel has visited us, and taken our mother, MRS. JOHN WILLIAMS. Mamma had a slight stroke in August, while visiting in the home of brother Bryant, on Tuesday after the Association at Canaan. She loved this family, and they seemed to love her, and were very kind and lovely to her. His mother and she loved each other dearly, and often spent a week together with them. Mamma revived from that stroks sufficiently to visit me and attend meeting. She had a fall in October of the same year, which broke her hip, and she never walked again, though she had good health, and was only confined to her bed a few days. She sat in a rolling chair a large portion of the time. Her speech was affected so much she made signs for her wants. She spent these years (I think eight) with my brother, J. Floyd Williams, and they (especially his wife) cared for her as only devout christians can. I often vis-

ited them and keenly felt my nothingness Mamma was born December 3rd, 1851, a daughter of Colonel and Mrs. David Dyer. She was married to J. L. Williams when nineteen years of age. They celebrated their fiftieth anniversary at Floyd's home. It was a happy occasion for me. During the service my father was very happy. Father preceded her to the grave in February, 1927. January 24th, 1940, we were called upon to bid farewell to mother and lay her precious body to rest underneath the snow-clad earth. It was one of the deepest snows we have ever had. God saw fit for me to be with her, and as I saw life ebb out of her crooked frame something inside me rejoiced in the comforting thought that there would be no cripples in heaven. In death she looked peaceful, sweet and pretty. Our pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, was sick and not able to be with us, and God prepared the way for Elder J. F. Stegall to conduct the service, which was sweet and impressive. He made it plain that she adorned her profession, and lived and died believing that if we are saved it is by grace. I cannot do justice to her noble character. She slaved for her family, and reared four girls and two boys. One preceded her to the grave. God has been gracious to poor unworthy me, for I have enjoyed sweet church fellowship with parents and one brother for a number of years. Mamma uniited with the Banister Church, with the privilege of membership and baptism at Malmaison since August, 1894. To attend the meetings and entertain the Baptists were real feasts to her. We took her to meeting as long as it seemed expedient. The last time was communion Sunday, and she sat in the car outside the building and partook of the emblems there. May God in his mercy see fit to let me meet her where tears are dried and there is no parting.

May you who read this pardon my imperfection, and, if you can, pray for a worthless sinner, who, I hope, loves the household of faith.

(MRS.) ELLA RICHARDSON.

DAVID F. WEST was born in the State of Georgia and when young moved to Texas, where for many years he farmed it near Keller, Texas. He retired nineteen years ago and moved to Henrietta, Texas, and moved to Fort Worth, Texas, a few months ago. He was in ill health for years, and was suddenly stricken with a heart attack, from which he died. Surviving are his wife, two sisters, Mrs. Annie Largent, of Fort Worth, Texas, and Mrs. Mollie Jecker, of Victoria, Texas, and a brother, Lee West, of Bellevue, Texas. Funeral services were held in the Old Baptist meetinghouse, the writer officiating, with interment in the Bourland Cemetery there. Brother West had been a member of the Old Baptiist Church since the first Sunday in October, 1899, when he was baptized by old Elder A D.. Bourland, and was a strong believer in the doctrine of the Predestinarian Baptists, and lived a life commending him to all who knew him. His conversation was always in heaven, from whence he looked for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his own glorious body. He was so filled with this glorious conversation that I delighted to visit him in his good home, which was a home for Old Baptists. He tried to live like Zacharias and Elisabeth of old, in all the statutes and ordinances of God blameless, but he would many times complain, and say, Oh wicked man that I am! feeling like poor Paul, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of

God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

At the funeral the writer tried to talk some from 1 Corinthians, fifteenth chapter and twelfth verse. Our people miss brother West very much, as he was a man of great worth to his people. His was a long life of suffering, and for several years he seldom passed a comfortable day, but he bore his suffering with patience, feeling that it was the Lord's will for it to be so, and could say with poor old Job, The Lord wounds and he heals, and could also say with that great faith which God gave him in resignation, Blessed be the name of the Lord. He knew it took faith to be reconciled to say, Thy will be done, in his own case at least. But the good Lord can make us say, Come, death, I will gladly go with thee.

Written by one who loved him for Christ's sake,

C. Y. OSTEEN.

LORENAH ANN KEE, daughter of Tom Noland, of Franklin County, Alabama, was born May 9th, 1863, and died December 16th, 1938. She came to Texas in the year 1877, and was married to J. D. Kee July 10th, 1879. She joined the Old School Baptist Church at De Leon, Texas, in the year 1900, and was baptized by Elder S. N. Stephens. She moved to Young County, Texas, in 1914, but at the time of her death was living at Elbert, Throckmorton County, Texas. Sister Kee was a strong believer in salvation by grace in time and for eternity. She often said she was a SIGNS OF THE TIMES Baptist. She believed the doctrine the SIGNS contends for. She leaves her husband, a large family of children, brothers and sisters and a host of friends to mourn, but we feel our loss is her gain, for she is only asleep in Jesus, and in the morning of the resurrection shall come forth with that body fashioned like unto his glorious body, and so with all the redeemed of the Lord shall ever be with the Lord.

Funeral services were held at Elbert, conducted by Elder S. L. Poiner. Burial was at Olney, Young County, Texas.

Written by request.

JOHN KIRKPATRICK.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Mrs. May Derby Hoyt, N. Y., $2; Isaac T. McIntyre, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Chas. E. Bernard, N. J., $1.

MEETINGS.

The Black Rock Old School Baptist Church, Butler County, Maryland, will hold an all-day meeting on Sunday, June 2nd, 1940. We hope all who can will meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Trustee.

An all-day meeting is planned to be held in the New Vernon meetinghouse, near Howells, N. Y., on Friday, June 7th, 1940. It is hoped that several visiting ministers will be present, and we cordially invite all lovers of the truth who can to come and worship with us.

R. LESTER DODSON.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M

ALL WELCOME

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

CHURCH MEETING PLACE CHANGED.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets each first and third Sunday at eleven o'clock a. m. at 2407½ Main Street, Dallas, Texas, and on Saturday before each first Sunday at 2:30 p. m. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Mod., pro. tem.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 108. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1940. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MEDIA, Pennsylvania.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The following scriptural readings have been impressed upon my mind, and whatever I write or whatever remarks I make in regard to these readings have been given, I hope, as I have been taught by the word of God. I know that many ministers of the gospel have talked upon this certain passage of Scripture, but as much as I have longed to hear these things explained, I do not know of a single time that I have had man reveal this mystery to me in any way. But God forbid that I should boast except in Christ, and him crucified.

The reading I wish to call your attention to will be found recorded in the book of Deuteronomy, the thirty- second chapter, beginning with the seventh verse: "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee; when the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in a waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him."

Now to understand these things which are recorded in the Word, let us start at the foundation. When a builder starts to erect some large building he must first build a foundation. In the construction of the building there has to be a certain amount of excravation done, in order to secure a solid foundation. So I am going to take you down below the surface, down to the very bottom, where the foundation was started, that you may inspect this building,

by beginning at the bottom. (This building is the Word of God.)

Let us proceed by going back. How far back can we go? What does Scripture say? "From everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." Can man fathom the length of God's time? We know that God came forth out of infinity; the heavens, the earth, and all things therein, were made by God, and without him there was not anything made. Knowing that God created all things, let us turn to the text: "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam," for we are taught that it was by Adam that sin entered into the world. To proceed, when did he make this division and separation? While he was in infinity. We are taught that all things were created, and the world was formed, by the word of God. Out of infinity came the word, and through the word the foundation of the earth was laid. Before he laid the foundation of the world God foreknew that man would fall. God created man, and therefore he knew his weakness. God did not intend that man should be his equal. He foreknew before he placed Adam in the garden of Eden that after he was put on earth he would fall in sin. By this fall sin entered the hearts of men. "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance." When did God do this? Before he separated the sons of Adam. What does the text say further? "Inheritance." Then we know that some were to receive an inheritance with God, because it pleased him to bring forth a certain people in himself. Therefore, it was part of God's plan before the world was framed and the foundation of the earth laid that he would create man, and that out of this fallen man of sin should come forth an elect, or chosen, people, and they would be his people, and he would be their God. God foreordained the election of his children, who were predestinated before the foundation of the world. Since the foundation of the earth, there has never been a single child of God born who was not predestinated from the very beginning, and until the fulfillment of God's plan there shall never be another child of God born into this world whom the Father had not predestinated at the beginning. Does not the Scripture say that this eternal election was fixed before the time that the sons of Adam were divided? Out of this fallen man of sin God selected one small branch which he would nourish, that those who were elected by him should fall heirs to that heavenly reward which he had prepared for them before the world began. "For the Lord's portion is his people." What saith the Scriptures? "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Why did the Lord choose one and hate another? Was man God's equal? Man was of sin and corruption; God hated sin. Although God created all things, including the world and all that is in it, God did not create sin. God is not the author of sin. That old serpent, Satan, the devil, is the evil spirit who is the author of sin and the father of all corruption. Having infinite wisdom and knowledge, God knew that this evil

spirit would enter the hearts of men, hence he predestinated the election of his own before the creation of man. God was too wise for Satan here; he made plans for his own.

"Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness." Where did God find his people? Where does every son of God come from? From that waste howling wilderness of sin, the desert, a place where all is waste and barren, out where nothing exists but the blackness of night, and where great packs of wolves are continually roaming. When God had chosen and predestinated his people, what did he do for them? What does the golden eagle do for her young? She soars high and locates the tallest cliff, and up there among the rocks she builds her nest. Can we illustrate God in this manner? What kind of a nest did he build for his own? He chose the realms of glory for its location. He gathered sticks and branches from which to build the nest. He placed one large piece of faith, another of hope, another of charity, a cross to hold them down, and upon that he placed a branch of meekness and another of patience, and interwove with them a branch of love. Upon these were placed many twigs of God's mercy, and the nest was lined with the gospel of Jesus Christ. This was the place where God's little ones were hatched, and, brethren, any bird not hatched in that nest does not belong to the brood. From whence came the lining of the nest, that soft and fleecy down? It was the gospel of Jesus Christ. In the days of old, these were the words of the Lord to the prophet Malachi: "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." God was not referring to the son of any man, but he spoke of that Sun of Brightness which was to come. God had told his people from time to time that he would send to them a Shepherd, a Prince and King. "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." That great power of God was descending, whose brightness was greater than the sun. This was that promised Messiah, that Holy One who was to reign over his people.

"So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." I have had many people tell me that Jesus came into the world to save the world. What did our blessed Redeemer say in those last hours before he was crucified? His work was all finished here, and he was to ascend to the Father: "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." Then if Jesus did not pray for the world, but prayed for his own, his own were not of this world. Many have asked if none are saved except by the intercession of Christ, and about those who lived before his kingdom. To those let me say that the Son was with the Father before the world began, and was commissioned by the Father to descend and declare those unsearchable riches of God's mercy and love, which Jesus did do by showing and demonstrating

of that Holy Spirit which he had descended from. At his birth there was a new order of things to take place; the old order had passed away. From the time of God's covenant with father Abraham, and up until the coming of Christ, God's people were living under the covenant of the law, but after the birth of Christ they no longer lived under the covenant of the law, but under the gospel of Jesus Christ. Some not familiar with the doctrine of the new order have asked, Why is it that you preach baptism now, when under the old order of the law it was not required? This I have explained by what the law says: That our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. Let me refer you to the words of our Lord to Nicodemus. Jesus said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. Those were the words of our Lord, and they must be true. Does this refer to baptism? If I have any understanding of the Scripture it surely does; but, my dear one, this does not mean that all who stand up in the audience and say they want to be baptized will be numbered among God's elect. No, not at all; the baptism our Lord and Savior had reference to was that inward baptism. When God sends his holy Spirit into the soul of one of his little ones who is outside the fold, when that child has been brought down in grief, and acknowledges he is completely lost, and by this acknowledgment he is made to mourn over the plight of his fallen condition, and his natural inheritance from the fallen man of sin, and in this mourning is brought to a full repentance, that he will continually cry, Save me, Lord, or I will perish, and by this continual mourning and grief that child is wet from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet by the shedding of tears, this is the baptism Jesus had reference to when he said that you must be born of water and of the Spirit. Brethren, when God in his infinite wisdom touches the heart of one of his little ones in this manner it is not brought about by some minister standing up before an audience, after having delivered a stirring address, and asking the congregation to come forward and give their hearts to God. There is a time and a purpose for everything under the sun, and when God is ready to call his own he will not have to have man intercede for him, for when those little ones have been apprehended by the mighty power of God's holy Spirit and come trembling in out of the waste howling wilderness of sin, they will seek companionship with the brethren, for they cannot rest until they have received their fellowship, and have been given that baptism that was administered by John when Jesus was baptized of him: "Lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him." This is the ordinance of baptism that we are commanded to obey as the manifestation of that inward baptism.

To those who have passed through the walls of the Jordan, and have in

their soul a hope, I beg of you to go up and inspect the nest of God's love. You will find it located in the highest place obtainable, up in the realms of God's glory. You will find that the foundation laid was one piece of faith, one piece of hope, and across these was placed one large piece of charity to hold them down, then upon these were placed one piece of meekness, one piece of patience, and across these, interwoven like a ring, one piece of love, and the lining a soft, fleecy down, the gospel of Jesus Christ. Why did God plan such a place for his own? Why could it not have been different? you may ask. Now let us look this over and see. Would faith amount to anything if it were placed in more than one God? What about that single hope that we hold so dear? Suppose he had said that if this hope does not materialize we might have another? He did not say that in his promise, did he? What did the apostle refer to when he said, Above all things put on charity? He did not mean that because one was blessed with more of this world's goods than his brethren that he was supposed to divide with them, but render unto God such, such as God hath blessed you with. Why did God make the nest round? Is there any length to a ring? I have been unable to find any, neither is there any length to God's love. What about the gospel of Jesus Christ? Is not that nice and fleecy for his little ones? Brethren, it will keep them warm and comfortable in the nest while the storm rages overhead. When those who are born of that light see that light they walk therein, and without that light none shall be awake at His coming.

HENRY TOWNSEND, SR.

JOHN XII. 32.

"AND I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

I have been asked to give my views on the above text, but feel my ignorance so much that I fear to venture, yet have an impression to write my views to the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and if they think them worthy of space they may publish them; but if not, all is well. I have also been impressed to write something regarding a trip I took to Alabama in October, which I enjoyed very much, having been invited to go with sister Clay and two of her daughters, also sister Martha Murphy, all of El Dorado, Arkansas, who looked after me and cared for me with so much carefulness that they all will have a warm and tender feeling in my bosom as long as I have a sane mind. We visited the Hopewell Association, of Samantha, Alabama, where we met many loving brethren and sisters and heard some very good preaching and singing. On Friday when we arrived on the grounds Elder Rhodes, of Louisiana, who has visited us (the South Arkansas Association) very often, and who we have learned to love very dearly, was preaching the introductory sermon. Elder G. R. Hathcock, of our Association, the oldest minister of our Association, was sitting in the stand, which made us feel better, as almost all of the large congregation were strangers to us. But

when we began to be introduced to them by those we did know they received us with so much love that we could but feel at home with them all. We again met Elder McCord, who was at our Association in September, also Elders M. Brock and W. D. Griffin, who visited us last year. All preached the same grand and glorious doctrine that we believe has ever been preached from the Primitive Baptist pulpits. Some have gone out from us and are preaching strange doctrines, but that is no more than has been foretold in the Scripture would be done. So let us take courage and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, with love and firmness.

We wish to say to all the dear brethren and sisters of Alabama, also to those of other States who were there, we do feel very grateful to you all for such a warm and loving reception. You will live on in our memories in love and sweet fellowship. On our return we spent Sunday night with brother Brock and his dear family, in Fayette, Alabama, where we had the pleasure of hearing Elder W. Brock preach that night on the wonderful subject of man being created in the image of God, and in what way we bear the image of God. It was very interesting and comforting to me.

Well, the subject I mentioned in the beginning I have not touched, and do not know whether or not I should attempt to write upon it. If I have any understanding of the true meaning of the text, the first thing we must notice is that the word "men" is a word supplied by the translators, which to leave out would read, "Draw all after me," which gives me this view: that all who *are drawn* are drawn by Him. My view is that the translators had the same idea that the so-called religious world has now, that He is trying to save every one. But even to use the supplied word, agreeing that it belongs there, does in no way cause me to believe that He meant to save all men in the world from sin. Jesus said in another place, No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him. We also read in the Scriptures that God is love, and Jesus said that all that the Father giveth me shall come to me. Now these are all saved with an everlasting salvation. But the ones referred to in our text. Is it not true that all men are in a way drawn unto Him? But is it to the saving of the soul? Is it not a fact that all men are drawn to wander with great awe and mysterious wanderings, some indeed to the saving of the soul and some, like many of those of the multitudes who followed after Him while here on earth, but only for or because of the many miracles which He performed, without a true understanding according to wisdom of the way he was, and is, the Savior of his chosen people? Then it occurs to my mind that some are drawn by God (or love) and some by curiosity, or for the loaves and fishes only. I would much appreciate the views of some of my brethren Elders on this line.

I notice I have not mentioned my own little efforts to speak in a public way at the Association in Alabama, and

lest it might seem that I am trying to hide my gift (if indeed I have one) I will say that I spoke from the pulpit once (on Saturday afternoon), and once from a brother Huett's home (on Friday night), following Elder Huett, of Georgia, and once at Elder Brock's home, in Fayette, Alabama, following Elder W. Brock, a brother in the flesh to brother M. Brock, both of Fayette, Ala. I also spoke at a brother Howell's home on Saturday night.

Now may the God of all grace increase our love and tender affection one for another, and enable all to esteem our brethren better than ourselves here in this world of much confusion, and may he guide our feet in the paths of christian duty, and especially may he enable his ministers to shun not to declare the whole counsel of God, as bold as lions and as wise as serpents, but as harmless as doves.

Your unworthy servant,

T. J. EVERITT.

BELLINGHAM, Washington.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—In looking over my old letters I came across one written to me by Elder J. C. Chester, and I think it is too good to keep shut up here with me, so I will send it to you for publication, if you think it has the right ring. He is gone, but not forgotten. Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord. Yea, saith the Spirit, and their works do follow them.

DAVIS BURCH.

MAY 5, 1934.

DEAR BROTHER BURCH:—I am sending you some thoughts I penciled while sitting in my easy chair, after your letter came. Some thoughts on shut-ins, as to scriptural meaning. Since our God, the Creator, Ruler and Preserver, is eternal in his duration, this word "shut-in" means much in his mighty work. To make a true or safe landing it is needful to get a true and certain starting point, or corner-stone. Then considering the work of God, as considered by all bearings, considering his character, we are bound to believe that he purposed to act or move according to a fixed rule. The events of time enter upon the great wheel of events, as God creates according to his law of action. Nothing contrary to his purpose or wisdom in all events of time is bound by the everlasting wills and shalls of our God. This we call the everlasting covenant or counsel of this sovereign God. This wonderful document not only sets bounds to "shut-ins," but to "shut-outs." The most wonderful and important thing is the protection and preservation of poor corrupt sinners. God saw all and devised a plan, or remedy, for the perfection of this very important work, so all praise and honor would be given him in eternity when time should be no more. As the wheels of time begin to roll we find the world peopled with a race called man, together with beasts and fowls and fishes, and man was ordained of God to rule over all of them, and Noah was warned of God to build an ark for the protection, or salvation, of themselves and all that God had shut in in his covenant to preserve life, shut in and shut out. When all that were bound by the

infallible law as set forth in his covenant were in the ark, not one of the very least left out, the rain began to fall, as was planned by God, and not until God shut them in. The rest were shut out, with no way of getting in, and must all perish according to the covenant. The rain continued to fall until those who were shut out were drowned. Those who were shut in could not see the destruction going on, for the ark was shut up and sealed by God himself, and none could get out until all danger was passed, and God must break the seal of the ark. What a wonderful picture of the resurrection, all by the power of God. As we travel on we find ten virgins, all slumbering and sleeping, until the cry came forth, Behold, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him. All arose and went forth at the set time, midnight. The five that had oil in their lamps went in to the marriage, and the door was shut. Some were shut out, as at the ark. Who did it? The God of the whole earth, the One who had shut some in and shut some out by the decree of the court in eternity. Is there any way for those five virgins to get out since God has shut them in? No, not without dethroning God, and that can never be done. Neither can any of the five foolish virgins break the seal, since God has sealed them out. Then let us travel on and see Satan working in his realm. He is shut out; can go no farther than God wills that he shall go. He is shut out from the realms of the blest. Praise God for his protection.

Since I have been afflicted bodily I have not been able to do manual labor. Neither am I now able, nor will I ever be able to cross the boundary and go to God; neither can any other man, and hence I am a "shut-in." But in the midst of all this I take courage and look up, believing from the abundance of proof testifying from true and faithful witnesses, that God has shut in in his everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, even to the overthrow of sin, Satan, hell and the grave. While this natural, corrupt, suffering body will be a "shut-out" all the time from the throne of God, who is holy and just, only the stronger leads about the temple of God. When the last trump shall sound then all that were shut in by the everlasting counsel of our God will come forth from their graves, drawn by the irresistible cords of boundless love, released from our prison of clay, to be free from everything that would mar our peace and rest, fully clothed and in our right mind, and filled to overflowing with praise to the honor and glory of our God and his matchless grace, securely and forever shut in the realms of ineffable day, and shut out from everything of alloy or impurity in any sense, and

"When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright, shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun."

Oh what will it be to be there? The question with me is, Am I worthy to be one of the blessed of God shut in his everlasting love?

J. C. CHESTER.

BLUEFIELD, W. Va., Nov. 22, 1939.

DEAR EDITORS:—Almost one year ago I wrote a portion of my experience, but failed to mail it, so as the desire continues I will again make the attempt. I was reared by Primitive Baptists in the State of Virginia, and was taught by them to be honest, sober and industrious, for which I hope I am thankful. As I remember, they never attempted to teach me to know the Lord, but my mother encouraged me to read the Bible, but I had very little inclination in that direction. I grew up in these surroundings until I was about the age of twenty-four, when I married, and soon after that moved to the State of Illinois, where wife and I lived nearly two years. While there my brother died, and I was shown plainly in a dream that he was dead, the night he died, and before I had any news. I was so convinced from what was shown me that I told my wife he was dead, and about eleven o'clock that morning received a telegram that he was dead. After returning to Virginia from Illinois we went to Bluefield, W. Va., where we have lived since, my wife took the children and went to her home in Virginia on a short vacation, and while she was there one night I was shown our baby dead and prepared for burial. The same day late in the evening, I received word from my wife to come at once, baby not expected to live. I went home that night, but baby had died before I arrived. These and many other things were shown me when as yet no change had taken place in me that I can call an experience of grace, if indeed I have one. Some time after all of these things, when I was well satisfied with myself and the world, something seemed to speak within me, saying, You must die. Of course I had always realized I had to die some time, but this was different. It was spoken with power in my very being, so that I was brought low in my feelings. That was the first time I had really felt something lacking, and at once I began to search the Scriptures to find something that would justify me, for I thought there was some duty required, and no doubt I could comply fully. But it seemed that every passage of Scripture condemned me, and taught me it was impossible for me to comply. I recall this one especially: One day I opened the Bible by letting it fall open where it would, and it opened at Galatians iii. 10: "For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." All of these conflicts had covered quite a period of time, and I had been reading much, and mostly the law, so I knew something of its many requirements, and after this particular Scripture opening up before me I was brought to fully realize that Jeremiah knew what he was saying when he penned down this statement: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." These things left me without one single thing to rest my case upon, as far as I myself was concerned, but I feel to hope in that moment the Lord appeared to my view as the sin-bearer,

having already accomplished the justification which I was trying to accomplish. None can rejoice and understand at least what is hinted at when these experiences are told except those who have had similar experiences.

It was a period of happiness with me after light dawned on my benighted soul, and then began a desire to join the church; but I had a feeling of unworthiness, also a desire to know more about the doctrine, so it was over three years before I offered myself, and was received. I truly hope the Lord added me to the church, for it seems to me if that is not done, and by him, we are guilty of climbing up some other way, which is evidence that we are thieves and robbers.

It is written, He works, and none can hinder; hinders, and none can work. He works and hinders; not as the world would have us believe, that he tries, or can. Also, All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Holy men of old spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. In the face of all these testimonies I sometimes wonder if the limited folks who went out from us actually believe the Scriptures. It is recorded in Daniel iv. 17, "The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men." A few years ago, I heard one of their leaders say that God did rule supreme in the church, but it was too much to say that he ruled unlimitedly. I wonder what could be plainer, more easily understood, than the Scripture just quoted, or Habakkuk i. 5-12: "Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously: for I will work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told you. For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwelling-places that are not their's. They are terrible and dreadful: their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves. Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more fierce than evening wolves: and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far; they shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat. They shall come all for violence: their faces shall sup up as the east wind, and they shall gather the captivity as the sand. And they shall scoff at the kings, and the princes shall be a scorn unto them; they shall deride every stronghold; for they shall heap dust, and take it. Then shall his mind change, and he shall pass over, and offend, imputing this his power unto his god. Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? We shall not die. O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction." What could be plainer? He tells us they were ordained for judgment and established for correction, so we have the reason assigned, and it agrees with what we have always contended, that man is account-

able. I would like every one doubting what Old Baptists teach to read the whole chapter.

I do not feel I am getting my thoughts together as I would, so will close.

Dear editors, you may publish this if you think best; if not, it will be all right.

Your brother in hope,

L. B. HYLTON.

PLEASANT HILL, MO., Dec. 3, 1939.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing two dollars for my subscription to the SIGNS, on which I am in arrears since July. I have been an invalid since October, 1938, and the Lord has seen fit to sorely afflict me, until I have felt I could stand no more, but the inclosed good letter arrived this morning and cheered me. You may publish it if you see fit. The books he speaks of are Uncle David Bartley's "The Christ man in Type" and "The Priesthood of the Son of God."

With best wishes for you and yours, from my husband and myself, I am sincerely,

(MRS.) J. W. TAYLOR.

KIRKSVILLE, MO., Nov. 30, 1939.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER TAYLOR: —I told you when I was with you that when I had read the books you gave me I would write to you. Well, I have read the books through and like them very much. I let one of the members of my church read one of the books, and then gave it to another to read. The first one thought it a fine book; the second had not read any as yet. I also have Elder Wilson Thompson's book about half read. On my next trip I expect to get Elder Branstetter's life. I have read these books before, but like to read them again. These men, and others, had trials and afflictions that perhaps few, if any, know much about in these days.

I often think of my visit in your home; also of the good Association at Little Flock Church. I will never forget the kindness of you all to me. I would be glad to visit your churches again some time. I have heard from Elders Hall and Hughett, also from sister Addie Rowland, concerning my leaving my song book at the church.

I was called a month ago to serve Hopewell Church as pastor for the seventh year. I believe a church and pastor should work together, that the pastor should exhort, rebuke and admonish in love, that none may feel that it was done for selfish motives on the part of the pastor. When all desire peace it can be had, by all being willing to forego selfish motives for the good of all. When each member knows every other member is willing to sacrifice personal desires because he loves the brethren you have a church that abounds with peace.

I feel Elder Hall is a good and safe Moderator, as well as a good disciplinarian. We have exchanged several letters since we met at the First Kansas Association.

Sister Taylor, I pray the Lord will ease your affliction, and give you grace to humbly bear all he sees fit to burden you with. Paul prayed that his affliction might be removed, but the Lord

told him, My grace is sufficient for you. May he reconcile us all to his purpose and grace.

Regards to your daughter. Wife sends her best wishes. May the Lord bless you all in a good hope through grace.

CHARLES A. JONES.

TOPSHAM, Maine.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—Ever since our Association I have felt I wanted to write to you, and then I would think, What could I say that would be of interest to one so well versed in the Scripture? I felt you were given much liberty that Sunday p. m., although you said you were in a nervous condition. It was Jesus who said to Simon, "Feed my sheep," and I think you fed the flock at that time, for surely I feasted. You told of things that have been told before, but they are always new. I wish I might write of those things, but my mind seems to be dumb, and I wonder why the brethren have fellowship for me, for I am not worthy to be among such people, yet I love to be among them and hear the truth proclaimed. I want to be assured again and again that it was for sinners like me that Jesus was born, died and arose again to sit at the right hand of God to make intercession for us. What would I do without the hope I have, and faith to believe in a God who rules all things? But at times I feel myself such a sinner that I wonder the Lord is ever mindful of me. But I know he has been, for he has taught me as never man taught, and I have something that the world does not give, nor can it take it away. Still at times my mind is full of doubts and fears, and I will say, Why do I fear? "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." Well, the Lord knows them that are his, and he makes no mistakes, like poor mortals do, and if my feet go astray at times he knows I am but dust.

Thank you for your remembrance at Christmas. I hope you and your family are well, and that God will be mindful of you at all times.

With love and fellowship, your sister,

RACHEL BEAL POTTER.

AUSTIN, Texas, June 3, 1940.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find two dollars to pay for my renewal to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It is a great blessing that the SIGNS has been provided us by our Lord, as it is the means of getting good spiritual food that otherwise we would be deprived of. I pray that it may continue and that our heavenly Father will send his richest blessings upon the editors and publishers in their efforts.

I am visiting in Austin, Texas, for awhile, and if any of the dear readers in Austin or vicinity know of a church of Old School Baptists of this faith and order, I would appreciate it very much if they would write me, as I would be very glad to meet with them. We are made to feel closer to our God in these perilous times, and the hope he gives us is our only anchor, but it is a sweet as-

surance and comfort to know he is supreme, and has set the bounds of all other powers and they cannot go beyond that which he has ordained. His great love keeps us and his grace is sufficient for all our needs. But we forget all this, and he in his great wisdom knows how to bring it to our minds, and so saves us from falling, as without him we could never obtain or keep our hope of eternal life. He is our all in all.

I will be glad to receive information of a church near here, or learn of the address of any. Address me at 1805 Nickerson Street, Austin, Texas.

A sister in hope, if one at all of God's dear ones,

(MRS.) IRENE WISENBAKER.

LEXINGTON, Kentucky.

DEAR PUBLISHER:—I am reminded my subscription is lapsing, and am inclosing my check for three dollars. Please use the extra amount as you see fit, since it is so small.

I hope your health is very much improved by this time. You have been so faithful for so many years, surely your subscribers would be understanding and sympathetic in unavoidable illness.

It is with regret I read so many obituaries of our older brethren, and we cannot help but wonder who will be raised up to take their places. The dear Lord will not leave himself without witnesses. We are promised that, but it seems typical of human nature to doubt and to question, when all around us seems so dark and full of chaos. May we be given strength for each day to faithfully fill the place allotted to us here in this life. May it be his will to speak peace to warring nations, and save us at last for his own kingdom.

Sincerely yours,

GOLDIE S. WHITE.

MANSFIELD, Georgia.

DEAR PUBLISHER:—I want to thank you for not cutting me off your list. I have been made to sorrow over the death of my wife, who departed this life November 8th, 1939. She loved to read the SIGNS and wanted it to come in her name. I want it to come to my home as long as I live, and I want to say that wherever I go and see the SIGNS I feel at home. I am this day sending you two dollars, for which please move my name to the 1940 page. I am also sending the obituary of sister Bettie Adams Lunsford, who for seventy years had read your paper, and had visited among the churches from Georgia to Maine.

I want to thank you, and I hope you are now well and able to do your work as in the past.

I remain your brother in Christ,

W. F. ADAMS.

(*See obituary on page 159*)

[WE truly appreciate and sincerely thank the writers of the two foregoing letters for their words of encouragement and their good wishes, and we feel very thankful to our great Physician that we are able to announce to our readers that he has seen fit to restore our health and we are again back to our normal condition.—PUBLISHER.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1940.

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2 PETER III. 8.

"BELOVED, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

Peter wrote this epistle that the "beloved" should have their pure minds stirred up, that they should be mindful of the words spoken by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of the apostles, knowing that there should come in the last days scoffers, walking in their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." This is the stirred up feeling of the apostle, and his earnestness for the gospel urged him to write, which was according to God's purpose to be to all generations. The question so much in the minds of those Peter was writing unto was the promise of the coming of Jesus Christ the second time, and they interrogated the apostles to prove to them the time, that they could behold with a natural eye these manifestations, that they might prophesy the time, and according to the flesh raise a great stir among the sons of men. These times and manifestations are reserved according to God's word. For no man knoweth the hour. No, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. (Matt. xxiv. 36.) "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."—Verse 37. Known unto God were all his works from the beginning, which includes that all things are one eternal now with the Lord. With us time is measured, and the tribulations are included in God's purpose, and the events leading up to these things are the working together, and shall glorify the Son of God. We poor sinners in this pilgrimage are weary, and often seek after the indications of the signs recorded in the word of inspiration for the coming of the Son

of man, and the resurrection of the dead. These wonderful mysteries are kept in God's wisdom, and we are reconciled to believe that what God does is right, for he is not subject to any law. We are assured that all things as God has purposed shall stand; all the powers of heaven and earth cannot change one of God's purposes. As God in his determinate counsel has purposed, salvation through Jesus Christ made Jesus the way sinners must be saved, which was before the world began, and extends to all eternity. We are viewing the natural life, which God created accodring to his purpose, and when one is born into the world he is a very small body, composed of organs and glands to function together for the growth and development of a natural body, and individual person, and while all this maturity is taking place there is nothing old or new with the Lord, as he hath purposed the whole life, which took years to perfect in the process of the growth. The child of grace when born of that incorruptible seed grows in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus, and, according to our understanding, grows to have less and less confidence in the flesh and greater trust in the Lord. The time of the pilgrimage of this life comes to an end and mortals must die, but that which is in them is eternal and swallows up the mortal, which brings the sinner into rest, and he may sleep in the purpose of God for a thousand years and it would not be any more in eternal life than one day, and there is no perishing in eternal life.

Men have been prophesying the time of Jesus' coming the second time, and the way he will appear, and what will take place, and how the sinners saved will be, and what they will be. The word declares they shall be saved with an everlasting salvation, and we are made to believe that to be the lot of every sinner that will be saved. We rejoice in our feelings to think and feel that those who live and remain shall not hinder those that sleep, but they shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and caught up in the cloud to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall they ever be with the Lord. This is called the resurrection of the dead, and all the purpose of God in Christ Jesus in the salvation of sinners will be accordingly manifested, and the apostle said, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be," but we shall be like Jesus. I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness. When a natural child is born it doth not appear what it will be when the matured development comes, but the different changes doth make manifest what the individual was born into the world to be, and by the grace of God, given in Christ Jesus before the world began, and the thousands of years that have passed does not change God nor make his grace in Christ Jesus of none effect. We are thankful to realize in our hearts that we believe Jesus will save to the uttermost, and not a member of the body of his bride can be taken, for he will present her a perfect bride, without spot, wrinkle or any such thing, and there is no separation between Jesus and his bride, for he said, I will never leave nor for-

sake you. Though we die, and become corporeally dead, we are as much in the purpose of God as we were while living. With God all things are as one eternal now, and by his grace we are what we are. May you, dear reader, rest in his love, and desire no will but his.

C. W. V.

HERE AND THERE.

HERE and there, in different parts of the world and in all walks of life, from the king upon his throne to the lowliest peasant, are to be found those who have testified to the honor and glory of our God. After Peter had been shown that what God had cleansed he was not to call either common or unclean, he said, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."—Acts x. 34, 35.

In this article we wish to call the attention of our readers to some of the cases which have come before us. The first we will mention is that of King Haakon VII., of Norway. Upon the death of Queen Maud (his wife) in 1938, who was a sister of the late King George V., of England, and an aunt of the present King George VI., on being informed of her sudden death, King Haakon is accredited with having sent the following message to the Norwegian Church: "God has taken the Queen from me this night and it is a very heavy loss for me to bear, though I well understand it is his will. He has taken her because her work on earth is finished, and he has, I know, spared her thus much suffering." He evidently saw the hand and purpose of God in this matter, and while he was doubtless unaware of it, he spake prophetically of the future. How little did he know what even a few short months would bring forth. During these intervening months, when he himself has been hunted almost as a partridge upon the mountain side, as David would say, by German soldiers, he must have thanked God that his wife, the Queen, had been spared the terror and humiliation which has been his lot. On one occasion he is reported as having said, in substance, that while his ministers might seek refuge in other countries, he himself would not forsake Norway so long as there was an inch of free ground for him to stand upon, and from all accounts he has remained true to his word. These are the days when God-fearing and courageous men are greatly needed. The following passage taken from a recent and memorable speech by the present Prime Minister of Great Britian, Mr. Winston Churchill, has the ring of rare courage and unfeigned faith in God and the final triumph of the cause of righteousness: "We shall defend our island whatever the cost may be. We shall fight on the beaches, the landing grounds, in the fields, in the streets and on the hills. We shall never surrender. And even if, which I do not for a moment believe, this island, or a large part of it, were subjugated and starving, then our empire beyond the seas, armed and guarded by the British fleet, will carry on its struggle until in God's good time the New World, with

all its power and might, sets forth to the liberation and rescue of the Old."

Some months ago we saw the picture of a poor woman of foreign birth in a New York paper, where she was being told by a noted surgeon that the operation which she was about to undergo was a very serious one, and one from which few recover. Upon receiving such news she was evidently given to look to a higher source for help, for she was reported as having prayed aloud to God, acknowledging in substance no claim upon him for mercy or merit on her own account, but earnestly desiring, if consistent with God's will, that she be spared for the sake of her husband and three small children. Her recovery was regarded as miraculous.

Many who have heard us speak publicly have heard us relate a personal experience of encountering an old colored man on a boat coming out of Miami, Florida, bound for New York. He came into our state room with a large pitcher of ice to put some in a small pitcher in our room. We thought to have some fun with him by asking a foolish question, but his reply was such that it caused us to begin asking other questions of an entirely different nature, and within a few minutes he was relating what to us was a wonderful experience of grace. He related among other things how, many years before, after (as he expressed it) eating the bread and drinking the wine as a member of the Church of England for twenty years, he had been quickened by the mighty power of God and was made to realize that all those years he had been as dead spiritually as the pitcher which he then sat on the floor by way of illustrating his point. After this change had taken place with him he said he read the Scriptures as never before, as a light appeared to shine from heaven upon them and he saw beyond the letter of the word and beheld to his amazement a beauty hitherto unknown to him. While we only asked questions of him, when he took his departure he bade us good-bye, saying, he sure was glad he had met one of the *brethren*. We will never forget this experience, for we were deeply touched by what had taken place so unexpectedly to us, and immediately a love and fellowship had sprung up in our heart for him which we believe is only realized between those who are born of God.

Not long ago one of our good Old Baptist friends presented us with a booklet entitled, "The Wonder of the Book, by Professor Hague, M. A.," from which we here quote the following excerpt: "Men think of the Bible as a book that *was* inspired. But the wonder of the Bible is that it is vivifying and operative *now*. From the far distant heights of time it comes sweeping into the hearts of men to-day, and the same breath of God that breathed into it its mystic life makes it living and energizing to-day. It is the living Word, vital with the life of the living God who gave it and gives it living power.

"The twenty-third Psalm was inspired. But again and again to-day, as it is whispered in the hush of the death-chamber, or read with the hidden cry, 'Open thou mine eyes, that I may be-

hold wondrous things out of thy law,' it is a living Word, and the Spirit breathes life through it once more.

"And this is the most remarkable and unique feature of the Bible: I feel that it is *mine*. Its promises are mine. As I read the one hundred and third Psalm, it is not ancient Hebrew, it is present-day power; and I, a living soul, overwhelmed with gratitude, cry out, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul.'

"The other day I took up an old Bible that my mother gave me, and I noted a verse in Genesis with a date written on the margin. There floated back upon my mind a time, some years ago, when I was in great trouble. I had to leave my dear wife and children, and to travel in quest of health in distant lands, and my heart within me was sad. One day, on opening my Bible at random, as men say, mine eye caught these words in Genesis xxviii. 15: 'Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land.' Shall I *ever* forget the flash of comfort that swept over my soul as I read that verse? All the exegetes and critics in the world could never persuade my soul that that was a mere echo of some far-off relic of a Babylonian legend, or of an Oriental myth. No, not that. That was a message to *me*. It came straight down to me. It swept into my soul as a voice from heaven. It lifted me up, and no man will ever shake me out of the conviction that that message was God's own Word to me—inspiring, because inspired; inspired, because inspiring."

Surely, those who are spiritually taught will not deny that the author of such language had knowledge and understanding of Him who taught and spake as never man did. It is good to realize from time to time that God has not altogether forsaken all who are in this sin-cursed world, but that "Here and There" are to be found evidences of his love and mercy to those whom he has ordained to eternal life. Because of these and numerous other evidences of God's work being wrought in the heart of his people, and we are sometimes made to hope in our own heart, we feel to put our trust in the Lord and to stay upon our God. The poet expresses it beautifully in the following hymn:

"My soul, take courage from the Lord,
Believe and plead his holy word;
To him, alone, do thou complain,
Nor shalt thou seek his face in vain.

Upon him call in humble prayer,
Thou still are his peculiar care;
He'll surely turn and smile again,
Nor shalt thou seek his face in vain.

However sinful, weak and poor,
Still wait and pray at mercy's door;
Faithful Jehovah must remain,
Nor shalt thou seek his face in vain.

Though the vile tempter's rage
Will, with his darts, thy soul engage,
God through the fight shall thee sustain,
Nor shalt thou seek his face in vain.

Though the corruptions of thy heart
Daily new cause of grief impart,
Pray that thy lusts may all be slain,
Nor shalt thou seek his face in vain.

Though sharp afflictions still abound,
And clouds and darkness thee surround,
Still pray, for God will all explain,
Nor shalt thou seek his face in vain.

In him, and him alone, confide;
Still at the throne of grace abide;
Eternal victory thou shalt gain,
Nor shalt thou seek his face in vain."

For some time we have felt impressed to send the foregoing thoughts to our readers, but we frequently find ourself halting between two opinions and

often ask the Lord to decide the doubtful case. Solomon said, "Thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all. In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."—Eccl. xi. 5, 6. We send it forth as bread cast upon the waters, hoping that God may comfort and sustain, by his grace, those who though they be scattered as the isles of the sea, yet underneath, far from the gaze of mortal eyes, they are joined together and united with Christ Jesus our Lord.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder C. W. Vaughn.)

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Welsh Tract Church, sendeth greeting, and love in the Lord, to all the churches composing the same, and to all the churches and associations with which she corresponds.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We are again addressing you in the regular order of a Circular Letter, and the thoughts of you and your life cause us to be much concerned as to the expressions of love and fellowship in which we embrace you in our hearts.

After Paul's salutation to the Philippians the said, I entreat thee whose names are in the book of life, Rejoice in the Lord alway. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand, and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (Phil. iv. 3-7.) These quotations are not in full of all Paul wrote in these verses referred to, but the substance of the whole matter we have quoted. We are addressing those whose names are in the book of life, and our evidences are the fruit you bear. We know a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit, because its nature is vile and corrupt, and before good fruit can come from this corrupt tree it must first be made good. The good fruit borne by the sinner is the rejoicing in the work of the Lord alway, which does not give any time for rejoicing in the flesh, or works of righteousness that men can do. Their supplications are to God for his mercy and guidance. They know they cannot direct their steps, and except the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain. (Psalms cxxvii. 1.) We realize a peacefulness in our hearts that cannot be expressed, which was not brought about by an organization of men who were empowered to order and decree certain privileges to us, but there came a time in our lives that a power turned darkness to light, and removed mountains, made crooked paths straight and rough ways smooth. He established our goings, put a new song in our mouths, even praise to his name, and fought a great battle, that conquered death, hell and the grave, and gave us the victory. The victory was not a mere retreat of our enemies, but

he destroyed them, which gives us an everlasting peace. The peace of God passeth all understanding, so we are not given language to express the depths of the riches given in the victory through Christ Jesus, and only a foretaste of the riches of God's grace reserved in heaven for all that love his appearing is given to us.

In these perilous times we are desiring peace in this world, and if it were possible we would establish a quiet place of habitation for all mankind, but we realize our helplessness, and are made to trust the One that giveth everlasting peace to direct all things according to his own will.

Our hearts are made glad to meet with the messengers and correspondents of our Association and hear of their exercises of heart, which gives us courage and strength in the Lord. We feel it is good to meet and associate together under the banner and guidance of the Captain of our salvation. The messages to us through the tender mercies of our heavenly Father are wonderful to the realities of our hearts, and to have the renewed evidences of our Savior (Jesus Christ) that was given to his disciples when he commanded them, and sent them out to comfort his church, is demonstrated in our midst, we can say with the truth of these things in our hearts, that this is the very gate of heaven, and it is good to be here. We miss individuals we would have been glad to meet, but God has thus directed, and we cannot change it.

In conclusion, we express the gratitude of our hearts in thanksgiving to Almighty God for his care and keeping, and the granting us this one more privilege to meet in the name of his Son and worship under our own vine and fig tree, and we truly hope it is his will that we may again assemble in these heavenly places next year and be refreshed in spirit, and the joy of our brethren who sought and established the places be in our hearts, that we shall realize Paul's letter, The Lord is at hand, and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

The time and place of our next meeting, with the Rock Springs Church, the Lord willing, will be announced in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT.

WHEREAS, The all-wise and merciful God has removed by death our beloved brother, W. A. RAY, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That in the passing of brother Ray Macedonia Church feels keenly her loss, yet believes our loss is his gain. Brother Ray joined the church in October, 1912. He was faithful and attentive to the church. He seemed to be well grounded in the faith. His wife preceded him to the grave about three years. We miss him much, but desire to bow our heads in submission to God's will, hoping to meet him with the redeemed.

A copy of these Resolutions to be spread on our Minutes, one sent to the family and one to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

C. C. SHREVE
S. J. SHELTON
Committee.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ALLEN JONES GIBSON, son of Allen Jones Gibson and Martha Davis Gibson, was born in Bulloch County, Georgia, March 20th, 1865, and died at his home in Dallas, Texas, January 25th, 1940. He came with his parents to Texas in 1871, stopping a short time in Upsher County, then located in Bell County, where he grew to manhood. Later he moved to Graham, Young County, and located in Dallas in 1907, and established a connection with the White Engraving Company, being an engraver by trade, and continued with them for about twenty years, a portion of the time as manager, until he retired. Mr. Gibson was a very intellectual man, and a man of high ideals, and was a thoughtful, kind-hearted neighbor. In his earlier life he was a teacher. He professed a hope in Christ in 1899, and joined the Missionary Baptists, but had been dissatisfied with them for more than twenty years, and had come more and more into an understanding of and in favor with the faith of the Primitive Baptists, which was also the faith of his parents. I visited him frequently in his late sickness, which continued for about two years, and he expressed great desire for baptism and a home in the church, but was not permitted to realize this desire. He was married to Miss Annie Eliza Rogers in Blanco County, Texas, November 21st, 1894, and to this union eight children were born, four of whom preceded him in death. He is survived by his widow, three girls: Mrs. Frances DeFir, Mrs. Alma Louise Campbell, Miss Ruth Gibson, and one son, Lew Wallace Gibson, all of Dallas, Texas.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at McCammey-Campbell Funeral Home, in Dallas, Texas, and interment was in the family burying-ground in the cemetery at Waco, Texas. I would say to sister Gibson and the children, While your loss has been great, it is but the call of the Lord to another one of his children, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." May he teach you more and more to lean upon him for your strength and comfort.

ALSO,

ELIZABETH ANNE WAGNER ROGERS was born near Decherd, Franklin County, Tennessee, October 10th, 1843, and died February 26th, 1940, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Jess Wright, in Graham, Texas, at the ripe age of 96 years, 4 months and 16 days. She was the daughter of the late Elder James Wagner and Mary Frances Hudson. She was given a good hope in Christ and united with the church when she was but nineteen years of age, and her life was so adorned with the graces of the Spirit of Christ that her seventy-eight years of untiring devotion to the faith and cause of her Master was an astonishment to her many friends. She was united in marriage to Samuel Preston Rogers October 13th, 1870. Two years later they moved to Texas and located in Blanco County, where she shared the hardships and privations of a frontier life, but was enabled to accept it uncomplainingly. The trip from Tennessee to Texas was made in covered wagons, and they were accompanied by several other families. On account of being delayed in Arkansas by sickness the trip required three months to reach their destination. They set up their furniture in a two room stone cabin, which is still standing. It was in running distance of a small fort which was also used by two other families as a protection against attacks by indians, which were a constant threat at that time. They made their home in this county

about forty years, and saw it transformed from a wilderness into a highly developed civilization, blessed with churches and schools, and her husband served as Deacon of the church of their membership for many years before his death. After their children were grown and away from home, she and her husband lived a short time in Austin, and in Dallas, then moved to Graham, Texas, where her husband passed away July 31st, 1920. After her husband's death, sister Rogers made her home with her two daughters, Mrs. Annie Gibson and Mrs. Frances Fischer, of Dallas, and Mrs. Mary Wright, of Graham, Texas, having made her home with the latter the past four years. Sister Rogers had a wonderful memory, and retained her physical and mental strength remarkably to the end. She loved poetry, and was a sweet singer. She repeated many stanzas of poetry during her last sickness, and after she ceased to talk with any one she sang the song, "Twilight is stealing over the sea," in a clear voice, so that every word was understood by all who were in the house. She gently fell asleep in the triumphs of that faith which had sustained her through a long, devoted and useful life; a character so amiable that to know her was to love her. Surely the world is better for her having passed through it. Many of the noble virtues which were outstanding in her life will be a benediction upon those who were associated with her, and may they be reflected in her offspring.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders Thorne and Strickland from the Morrison Funeral Home, at Graham, Texas, and her body was laid beside that of her husband, in the Medlin Chapel Cemetery. She is survived by three sons, John Rogers, of Weslaco, Texas, W. J. and G. B., of Austin, Texas; four daughters, Mesdames Annie Gibson and Frances Fischer, of Dallas, Mary Wright, of Graham, and Minnie Rogers Bvler, of Blanco; twenty-eight grandchildren and twenty-two great-grandchildren; one half-sister, Mrs. Jeff Buckner, and two half-brothers, Joe and Andrew Wagner, all of Blanco, Texas.

J. R. HARDY.

WILLIAM BENJAMIN SAYER died at his home on Main Street, Warwick, N. Y., May 14th, 1904, in his seventy-fifth year. Mr. Sayer was the only son of William Ellison Sayer and Mary Ann Brook, both of Warwick, N. Y. He was born March 14th, 1866, in the old stone house which his father bought and moved into in the year 1858, and which has been in the family ever since. His ancestors, both the Sayer and the Burt families, were pioneers in the Warwick Valley. Mr. Sayer inherited much of their pioneer spirit, their freedom, independence and fair dealing at all times. He was a life member of the Historical Society of the Town of Warwick, was well informed on the local history of the township, and had greatly enjoyed making a collection of old-time tools, household furnishings, mostly hand made, and many articles of historic value, some ante-dating the Revolutionary War. Being very patriotic, he regretted that he was too old to enlist in the last World War, so gave the use of the front room on the first floor of his home to the Red Cross for the duration of the war, and later for relief work overseas. All his life Mr. Sayer was active in the Old School Baptist Church. He was a member of the Excelsior Hose Company of Warwick, and always took an interest in all village improvements. Every one who knew Mr. Sayer will have some memory of a kindness shown or some thoughtful neighborly act in their behalf. He is survived by a half-sister, Mrs. Lydia Sayer Walker, of Montclair,

N. J., one niece, Mrs. George M. Van Duzer, of Warwick, three grandnieces and one grandnephew.

The funeral was held at the Old School Baptist meetinghouse Friday afternoon, May 17th, Elder R. Lester Dodson officiating, and the burial was in the family plot in Warwick Cemetery.

It is with a sad heart we publish the foregoing obituary. While not a member of the visible church, Mr. Sayer was nevertheless one of its best friends, and believed firmly in the doctrine of God our Savior. He served as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Warwick Church, of which he was the Treasurer, and he was also a member of the Board of Trustees of the Brookfield Church, at Slate Hill, N. Y. He will be greatly missed by his many friends, and we mourn his passing.

R. L. D.

Sister BETTIE ADAMS LUNSFORD, widow of S. H. Lunsford, (deceased many years ago), was born June 14th, 1851, a daughter of the late Elder William and Frances Adams, and one of a family of sixteen children, of whom three brothers and two sisters survive. Following her marriage to Mr. Lunsford, five boys and four daughters were born, of whom Mrs. Sallie J. Crawley, Mrs. Rose Harwell, Mrs. Fannie Mae Mitcham, Mr. Reuben Lunsford and Mr. Ed. Lunsford survive, together with a number of grandchildren, to mourn their great loss. She was born in Newton County, Georgia, and lived within two miles of her birthplace all of her life. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church of Christ at Harris Springs, Newton County, Georgia, August 17th, 1872, and was baptized by Elder Isaac Hambly, William Adams, Church Clerk. Sister Lunsford believed in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and rejoiced in spirit when the truths of the Bible were preached to her, and even in conversation and fellowship with those who love the truth as taught in God's word. Her's was a long, industrious and useful life, never giving up until affliction disabled her. She passed from earthly life May 2nd, 1940, after an existence here of 88 years, 10 months and 18 days.

The funeral services were conducted at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Rose Harwell, by Elder H. O. Nash, of Atlanta, Ga., assisted by Mr. O. L. Vickery, of Newborn, Ga., after which interment was in the Adams Cemetery. A large gathering of friends and relatives attended the funeral, and the floral offerings were many and beautiful.

By order of the church in conference, June 8th, 1940.

H. O. NASH, Moderator.

W. F. Adams, Church Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Goldie S. White, Ky., $1; Mrs. J. B. Hill, N. J., $3; W. M. Harwell, Mo., $1; Mrs. Carrie H. Horton, N. Y., $3; A. J. Doggett, Ala., 25 cents; Joseph A. Johnson, Tenn, $1.

MEETINGS.

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association for the session of 1940 will convene with Springfield Church, at Gretna, Vinginia, beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in July and continuing the two following days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially the ministers.

J. F. WILLIAMS, Clerk.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M

ALL WELCOME

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Mod., pro. tem.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

CHURCH MEETING PLACE CHANGED.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets each first and third Sunday at eleven o'clock a. m. at 2407½ Main Street, Dallas, Texas, and on Saturday before each first Sunday at 2:30 p. m. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 108. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1940. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DALLAS, Texas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I am just now getting to your request to write on the subject of Jacob and Esau, and especially touching the circumstance of Jacob's deception in obtaining the blessing which his father purposed to bestow upon Esau, as recorded in the twenty-seventh chapter of Genesis. I feel a willingness, with such understanding as the Lord has been pleased to give me, to grant the request, trusting that if he has inspired the request he will likewise cause the effort to comply to result in some good to those who love him.

In treating this or any other gospel subject, we should not seek a solution which would be unobjectionable to the carnal mind merely to escape its criticisms. The Lord by his apostle has assured us, "The carnal mind is enmity against God," and no amount of polishing the words with which gospel truth is declared can remove that enmity, nor take away the offense of the gospel, nor afford an escape from reproach for those who declare it. The sovereign will and eternal purpose of Jehovah, being both infinite and immovable, is the only sure foundation upon which to erect any phase of gospel truth, because it is the only one capable of supporting its eternal weight of glory. Here we must resolve every truth for its final solution. It can be only if God wills it so; and whether this truth be agreeable to us or repulsive, we cannot escape it. With these observations I shall now attempt to consider the subject of your inquiry.

Isaac had two sons born to his wife Rebekah, and they were twins. Esau, the first born, it seems was the favorite of his father, while Jacob was the favorite of their mother; yet. no doubt, each parent had a parental affection and regard for both of their sons. But all human passions are susceptible of being excited into greater fervor or rendered less ardent by extenuating circumstances, which is doubtless in some measure the occasion of the preferences

shown by each of the parents toward their respective favorite. While these things were but casual incidents in the lives of the different members of this family, which were too commonplace to be ordinarily noticed, yet it was secretly working, under the unerring guidance of a divine providence, the fulfillment of the purpose of God laid in eternity, and which had now already been affirmed and reaffirmed in time, first to Abraham and afterward to the mother of the two sons.

To Abraham God had made promise that in him and his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed, and that to him and his seed the land of Canaan should be a perpetual inheritance. Unto Rebekah it was made known that the interest in this inheritance and the promise made to Abraham, which also embraced the antitype of Canaan, should be realized through Jacob and not through Esau, saying unto her, "The elder shall serve the younger." And Paul affirms that this was said that the purpose of God according to election might stand. Again, Moses says, The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. Thus it clearly appears it was God's purpose that Jacob should receive the blessing of his father, which, if given after the natural law of inheritance, which prevailed among the Israelites, would have been bestowed upon Esau, and which Isaac purposed to do, but was prevented from doing by intrigue designed by Rebekah and executed by Jacob, concerning which I now desire to speak more specifically. Isaac had grown old and his sight had failed him. Rebekah heard him give Esau instructions to bring him savory meat that his soul might bless him before he died. She told Jacob what she had heard, and commanded him, "Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats: and I will make them savory meat for thy father, such as he loveth: and thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death." But Jacob objected on the ground that his father might feel him and detect the deception, and he would receive a curse and not a blessing. But his mother said unto him, "Upon me be thy curse, my son: only obey my voice, and go and fetch them." Jacob did as he was commanded, which was but his duty. Rebekah put goodly raiment of Esau upon Jacob, and she put the skins of the kids upon his hands and upon the smooth of his neck; and gave him the savory meat which she had prepared, and the bread in his hands. Here begins the conversation between Jacob and his father. "And he came unto his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I; who art thou, my son? And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau, thy firstborn; I have done according as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac said unto his son, How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son? And he said, Because the Lord thy God brought it to me. And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not. And Jacob

went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau. And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy as his brother Esau's hands: so he blessed him. And he said, Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am. And he said, Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee. And he brought it near to him, and he did eat: and he brought him wine, and he drank. And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son. And he came near, and kissed him: and he smelled the smell of his raiment. and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed: therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee; be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee; and blessed be he that blesseth thee."—Gen. xxvii. 18-29. In analyzing this event it seems proper to consider each party separately and the incident as a whole. Before the two sons were born, when they struggled within their mother, Rebekah went to inquire of the Lord, "And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger." This word from the Lord is sufficient to determine the outcome of this whole procedure. No doubt Rebekah remembered this, and when she heard Isaac give Esau instructions what he should do that he might receive the blessing, which both by foreordination of God, and by barter, legally consummated between Esau and Jacob, in which Esau sold to Jacob his birthright, and confirmed the transaction by his oath, which Paul says, "With men is an end of all strife," rightfully belonged to Jacob, Rebekah immediately moved to thwart the purpose of Isaac and secure the blessing to Jacob, to whom it rightfully belonged. I am not prepared to say Rebekah sinned in planning the deception of Isaac. The fact that she fearlessly assumed the consequences of the deception upon her husband, though it be a curse, suggests to my mind she was moved by faith in God and the certainty of the promise, and was confident her efforts could not fail. She said in answer to Jacob's objection to her plan, lest he might be found out to be a deceiver and bring a curse upon himself, "Upon me be thy curse, my son; only obey my voice, and go and fetch me them." That which is of faith is not sin. Faith acts from a higher principle than that upon which the law is founded, and its acts are acts of righteousness even though in contravention of the commandments of the law. By faith Abraham offered up Isaac, even when the law cammands, "Thou shalt not kill," and was both justified and declared righteous in so doing. There is a righteousness which is of the law that may be stained by the imperfections of man, but the righteousness of God, imparted

by faith of Jesus Christ, is a righteousness without the law and above the law, and though performed by imperfect man, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, can never be tarnished by his imperfections, being the fruits of the life of Christ within them and springing from the incorruptible fountain. "All my springs are in thee."—Psalms lxxxvii. 7. Isaac either did not know the thing the Lord had told Rebekah, or he was wilfully attempting to defeat the will of God, and cause the younger to serve the elder. Be that as it may, it was right that he fail in his purpose, even if it be accomplished by deception. So whatever means may have been employed to defeat the purpose of Isaac to bless Esau, could afford him no ground to claim that his rights were invaded, for he had no such rights. Behold a greater than Isaac was there and had spoken.

Esau despised his birthright, esteeming the comforts of the natural body of greater value than it, and he sold it to Jacob for a mess of pottage. He then confirmed the legality of the transaction by his oath. This was meant to secure Jacob against any future claims by Esau to the birthright. Thus it is evident, no rights belonging to Esau were invaded by Jacob securing the blessing from their father, because Esau had eliminated himself from any claim he might have thought he had, and that by his own choice. Jacob seemed to be moved, in his effort to secure the blessing from his father, wholly by a selfish interest. The success of his efforts seemed to be his chief aim, therefore he did not restrain himself from any deceit or falsifying which he thought might promote his success. In this he sinned wilfully, and was often afterward made to feel the sting of a guilty conscience for his folly. No justification can be found which will exonerate Jacob from guilt when he falsified to his father. Though the end to be attained was purposed and foretold of the Lord, and all the means necessary thereto were certain, yet Jacob was moved in no way by that which he knew nothing of, but wholly by a selfish desire to succeed in obtaining the blessing. His conduct was under the jurisdiction of the law, and must therefore be judged by the law. Regardless of what holy purpose of God these acts of Jacob, in conjunction with the others connected therewith, may be made by him to serve, the sinfulness of the acts as designed and performed by Jacob are not diminished in the least; neither is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance. (Rom. iii. 5, 6). Those who would attribute unrighteousness to God for making the unrighteousness of men commend his own righteousness, would attempt to disbar God from sitting as Judge of the world. So says Paul. That the purpose of God is made to stand out in this whole transaction is abundantly evident to the discerning mind. The promise of God, which the law could not nullify, was made to Abraham, confirmed in Isaac and fulfilled in Jacob. This purpose, in its typical setting, embraced not only the inheritance, but all the circumstances and experiences of the chosen seed of Abraham through

Egypt, the wilderness and the promised land of Canaan, and in the antitypical setting, the everlasting covenant which was ordered in all things and sure; holding Christ as the everlasting portion of his elect people, which Jacob represented, and they the members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. God so rules over both the type and the antitype that all chance and uncertainty is excluded from their fulfillment. One is but the pattern of the other.

This event is one among those things which were written aforetime for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. In this the wisdom and purpose of God stand out in bold relief, and as Cowper says,

> "Deep in unfathomable mines
> Of never-ending skill,
> He treasures up his bright designs,
> And works his sovereign will."

Though Isaac was doubtless ignorant of God's purpose that Jacob should receive the blessing, and he was wholly deceived as to the person upon whom he pronounced the blessing, yet, no doubt he was moved by faith as to the matter of the blessing, and under the guiding hand of Providence Jacob was present to receive the blessing which Isaac meant for Esau, but which the Lord purposed should be upon Jacob. Either Isaac's purpose must fail or the Lord's purpose must fail. But the purpose of the Lord cannot fail: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."—Isaiah xiv. 24. But violence is not offered to the will of the creature when God defeats his purpose, so Isaac chose to do all the things he did, but he was wholly deceived as to whom the thing was done, until his purpose had utterly failed and that without remedy. When he became disallusioned by Esau coming in with his savory meat, he seemed to realize that the Lord had fulfilled his own purpose in the matter and acknowledged his reconciliation to it in these words, which he spoke tremblingly: "Who? where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed." Isaac seems here, for the first time, to see the hand of the Lord in this matter, and immediately manifests a submissive spirit.

The name Jacob means a supplanter, and his nature being in harmony with his name, he needed only opportunity, with the fear of the consequences of failure removed, to move him to attempt to secure the blessing, which at that time perhaps he had but little understanding of, nor the road he must travel to reach it. Jacob, like his father, acted freely under the impulse of his own will and choice in lying to and deceiving his father, and showed at that time he feared not God, neither regarded man. His conduct cannot be too strongly condemned, even though it was made to terminate to the fulfillment of God's previously revealed purpose, which was a right purpose and a holy end. But Jacob was not moved by a righteous motive, neither were his actions directed to a right end by any purpose within himself. It is clear then

that the sinfulness of his act arose from his own heart, and blame can attach nowhere else but there; neither is the vitiosity of the act diminished in the least because God purposed it should issue to the fulfillment of his most holy purpose. "The wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."—Psalms lxxvi. 10. God is good, the source and only fountain of goodness. He can have no purpose but a holy purpose; neither can any purpose of God terminate in anything but ultimate good. God, who is infinitly wise and has all power in heaven and earth, is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He brought nothing into being, neither will he suffer anything to enter the universe, that will stain his glory or defeat his purpose. While man acts with that degree of liberty and freedom of will that he is unconscious of any compulsion or restraint in the thing he chooses to do, yet from the first moment of his life to the last breath he is as completely bounded by infinite Sovereignty as is the sea, whose bounds are set that it cannot pass.

A purely mechanical act without either design or purpose, is neither right nor wrong. Every right act must be designed by a right motive, must be performed by a right rule, and must be directed to a right end. If any of these are lacking, it vitiates the act. God is the only source of goodness, therefore all his dealings are likewise good. His own sovereign will is the supreme standard of right by which he works all things. His own honor and glory is the lofty end which all his purposes and works must issue in, therefore all his ways are ways of righteousness, a God of truth, without iniquity, just and right is he. But the creature has a lower scale of being, is not moved in what he does by such lofty designs, but by a corrupted human nature and perverted will and choice; his acts are not measured by the sovereign will of God, which must be done in earth as it is in heaven; but by a law which was weak through the flesh, could command and punish, but could not enforce respect nor obedience; neither does man in his creature relationship act for the purpose of glorifying God, but for less noble purposes, or ignoble ones. Thus an act may be both good and bad; bad as designed in the evil heart of the creature, and performed contrary to the law, which is the rule to measure his conduct by, and with an evil purpose in view. In which case the law is just in punishing the offender. Yet the same act may be good in its relation to the purpose and supreme will of God, who so limits, bounds and controls that the act cannot fail to end in good. And as all the evil that is associated with the act proceeds from the creature, who performed it; so also all of the good attained through it must be attributed alone to God. Many illustrations of this truth are recorded in the Scriptures, among which the crucifixion of Christ is an outstanding one. The incident which is the subject of this article is another. In no sense is it proper to say that God is pleased with or approves of sin. Sin is the transgression of a holy, just and good law, performed

at the suggestion of Satan. Christ was manifested to destroy Satan and his works, and though he will be taken in his own craftiness, tangled in his own net and punished in the snare of death in which he trapped the human family, yet Christ will continue to reign until sin is ended, the grave is destroyed, all enemies, including death, are put under his feet and his people are brought forth in victorious triumph over sin, death and the grave, while an uninterrupted strain of praise shall pour forth to the King of kings and Lord of lords from all his works, and his saints shall ever live to bless him.

J. R. HARDY.

KINGSTON, New York.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—If one so unworthy as I feel myself to be may call you brother. It seems I cannot longer refrain from letting you know how much I enjoyed the letter you wrote in reply to your dear father, and brother I hope to me. I always look for your letters first when I get the SIGNS, and do enjoy them much, but the one I speak of seemed most precious to me. It seemed the Lord blessed you with the thoughts you wrote, and I have read it over many times when my mind seemed strong enough. It seems this last sickness has greatly weakened me, and also at times caused the loss of memory, so that I cannot put my thoughts on paper as I wish. I feel to praise the God of mercy. Yesterday I was in bed all day, but to-day I got up about eleven a. m., and sat up about three hours. For some purpose, only known to God, my life is spared.

This will be on the installment plan, as usual. I had intended to write as soon as the April SIGNS came. I got stationery ready, but was taken with trouble and had to lie down at once, and was there for the day. It seems I cannot get away from the impression I must tell you of the sweet rest I seemed to get from it. While lying in bed I often read the Sermon on the Mount, and the verse you quote so many times: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Dear brother, if ever a poor unworthy one did hunger and thirst after righteousness and long to have some one come in and talk on the precious word of God, I do. In your letter you say they are already blessed. I had to stop and consider the words and just had to wipe the tears that welled up in my eyes, and hope sprang up in my longing heart. I feel I have to an extent traveled with Job, and still must say with him, Though God slay me, yet will I trust in him. I am sure I can say I have been down to the very depths, so surely deep answereth to deep, but I feel to bless the Lord, for it all has been for my good and his glory. I have been near death's door three times. It was all to show the wonder and power of a just and holy God. As I have stated before, I feel this suffering I have passed through had to come to cause me to really see what a vile and miser-

able sinner I am, and I do praise God for it all. Since my affliction I have been made to see the Sun of Righteousness more than ever before, for I know that God has not promised skies always blue and flower-strewn pathways all our lives through. God has not promised sun without rain, joy without sorrow, peace without pain, but God has promised strength for the day, rest for the weary, light on the way, grace for the trials, help from above, unfailing sympathy, undying love.

This is another day. I have read so often the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, on faith, and thought what wonderful faith and trust Abraham had in taking Isaac for an offering. What an example of trust in the Lord. How many times have I asked God in my poor weak way for stronger faith and courage since my affliction. It seems to just think on his name is a sweet comfort to me. How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear. It is through experience one with another in various ways we can really smypathize with each other. Had I not been so sick while you were in the hospital I also would have been one you would have heard from. There was a long time I could do no writing, only through my girl. I have a letter from sister Livingston since last year unanswered.

Not long ago sister Sickler and I were talking of the fig tree. What you said on the subject was very plain. The explaining of it was just what I wanted to hear. It seems to me I am so barren, yet cry out, Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief. In the one hundred and third Psalm it says, He hath not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. How true it is. Many times I think of these words: "'Tis my happiness below not to live without the cross," but feel I could not say it in the flesh. In the forty-third chapter of Isaiah it says, When thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee. I have found it my comfort in my long hours in bed and in my room. If it were not for many words of comfort and my abiding faith in the blessed Jesus, how could I have gone through what I have? That chapter is a comfort to me.

Oh how I do miss all you dear ones. One thing I want of you as my Elder is to preach my funeral sermon. I hope God will enable you to grant this request, here in Kingston, at Carr's Funeral Parlors..

I could keep writing many things that are on my mind about the Scriptures. I would like your views on the eighth chapter of Revelation, verses one to nine, either in the SIGNS or privately, when you can write them. I hape your health is getting better each day. I know none but the God of heaven can ever cure me. I try to ask him to let me say, Thy will, not mine, be done. Give my love to all the dear ones. I feel you will cast the mantle of charity over this imperfect letter.

A poor unworthy one,

(MRS.) M. COONS.

ROMANS VIII. 31.

"If God be for us, who can be against us?"

These words have been lingering in my mind for some time, and with it a desire to write. They came very forcibly to me while about my duties of work. The Lord being my helper, I will try to write why these words mean so much to me. If this is not of the Lord it will only be as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

Some time ago I was very much troubled, my very soul was in distress. I wrestled wth this burden day and night, until it seemed I must sink in despair; friends seemed few, and all my days were gone. When, several months later, in a dream I came to a low but level and grassy place in the woods. Here before me was lying a rugged looking bundle which was carelessly wrapped in a white sheet, and this I knew was the crucified body of Christ our Lord, whom my soul loveth and had cried unto for relief. I felt much grieved at heart to know his body was so mangled and lying in this place. I wanted to touch him, to lift his head, which I did, and as I lifted his head I was singing the sweetest song I ever heard. With tears of joy streaming down my cheeks, I helped to carry his body to the designated place, the cross, upon which he was crucified. The burden of weight was so heavy I could go no farther than the cross. I lifted my hands upward before a great white wall. There was a living Savior, not a dead one, but alive for evermore. I felt he was mine. My Savior. My trouble was gone to such an extent that I have not seen it altogether as I once did. I feel this dead body, so mangled, so rugged and dead, in a sense represents my own, and Jesus, being my strength, lifted me up by his quickening Spirit, begotten again into a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Again I feel to say, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. How grand and glorious when he makes us to know he is God, a present help in time of trouble. My only hope is in him, who hath delivered and is able yet to deliver, and in the morning of the resurrection to be raised in his likeness, and be satisfied.

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

(MRS.) WILLIE TOSH.

Island City, Ore., Dec. 31, 1939.

Dear Editors:—As this year draws to a close I am reminded that I have been a member of your family of readers for forty-five years. Quite a long time when we look that far in the future, but a short time when we look back after it is past. Then what a crooked way I have come to this time and place. Like the wanderings of Israel on their journey to the land of promise. I have often been brought back to the camping places I rested at in the earlier days of my pilgrimage. Not much progress and very little improvement as I view it, and, like Jacob of old, I must confess, Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and I have not attained to the

greatness of my fathers. Now, nearing the sunset of life, with most of the journey back of me, and knowing that soon I must go the way of all the generations of the past, a serious and anxious longing fills me regarding what is ahead. In trying to compare the measure of faith which inspired me in youth with that which now affords me consolation, I see quite a contrast. In youth it was a sort of theory or yearning which moved me to activity, but in age it is a real substance, built up by experience, with a mixture of joys, sorrows and tribulations sufficient to make it an assurance that cannot be denied, considered lightly, or its substance doubted. It is said that faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. The years have brought me to know this substance and produced the real evidence. When the weary pilgrim near the end of his journey speaks of his fears and hopes it is not a matter lightly considered by him, and those of his brethren who hear such testimony realize of a truth that he knows whereof he speaks. Paul wrote to Timothy, his son in the gospel, that he had fought a good fight, he had finished his course, he had kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give in that day, and not for him only, but for all who love his appearing. That is the most blessed assurance any can have as they feel to be slipping in their physical strength and the joys of the worldly surroundings are fading to them.

I have been reading Revelation recently with renewed interest, such as I had never felt before. These things John saw and heard are now, have been or shall be, realized by the saints before heaven with all its glories shall dawn in fullness on them. I once thought those mysteries were doings in heaven, but not so. In the beginning of it John was directed to write of the things he saw and heard, which must shortly come to pass. Heaven begins when time ends. In time events, changes and developments succeed each other, but in heaven all is perfection, joy and realization of fullness of glory which is never-ending. When the angel declared that time should be no more, he announced the beginning of heavenly duration, the fullness of which it is impossible for even saints to realize until they are brought into it. It has never entered into the mind of man at any time the things which God has in store for those who love him.

"When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun."

The poet uses "years and days" to convey to us mortals a comparison of time and eternal things, but when the fullness of eternity shall dawn on us there will be no comparison needed.

These thoughts may be a little scattering, but such as they are they are the source of much consolation to a weary pilgrim, who started on his journey to the heavenly Jerusalem over fifty years ago, and has found many of his desires and ambitions at that time disappointing, but an unseen hand has shielded in many times of danger, and

an unseen power has strengthened in times of weakness, so that to-day I have nothing myself of which to boast; have found and fully realize that in my flesh there dwelleth no good thing, yet I feel that I have fought a good fight; yet not I, but the grace of God that both began the good work and has finished it to this assurance. To Him be all the glory. Brethren, when we can rest upon this strength the infirmities of age have no terrors for us. We know that the house of this earthly tabernacle must soon be dissolved, but we have another house, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. In that house there will be no disappointments, no troubles, neither pain, sickness nor death, and our God will wipe all tears from our eyes, and we, eternally clothed in the robe of righteousness our blessed Savior has wrought for us, be glorified together with him and be like him throughout that blissful eternity. Oh how rich are we! Who is so blessed as the people of the Lord? May his grace dissolve our hearts in thankfulness and melt our eyes in tears.

A pilgrim in tribulation and hope,
C. W. BOND.

SULPHUR, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is with fear and trembling I try to write to you people, a people prepared of the Lord. My hope seems so small and my mind so barren, surely I am not one that has been prepared unto glory. This causes me many anxious moments and serious thoughts, but when I am brought to think of all the way I have been led and all the snares I have escaped, then hope seems a little brighter, and I know

"Thy ways, O Lord, with wise design,
Are framed upon thy throne above,
And every dark and bending line
Meets in the center of thy love."

Last Sunday I felt very low. It was our meeting day and I had gone to my daughter's home to be near the meeting. On Saturday I was taken sick and could not go, and I felt I must be too unworthy to be allowed to meet with the dear ones there, who meet to worship the Lord in spirit and in truth, for the Lord seeketh such to worship him. When my daughter came home I asked her about the meeting, and she said they had a good meeting, that Elder Weaver preached a good sermon, and all seemed to enjoy it, and I felt glad. She said they all asked about me, and I thought, Poor old sinful me, who am less than the least, and not worth asking about. But the dear Lord put it in their hearts to ask, and some of the folks stopped in to see me on their way home, and I hope I did feel thankful to the Lord, for I know he directed their steps, for the steps that we tread, and the station we fill, our Father determined and wrote in his will.

Thank you, Elder Dodson, for the editorial in the last SIGNS; I enjoyed it, and I am sure others did also. I was glad sister Peters made the same request. She is such a good writer I love to read her letters. She has been blessed with a fruitful mind. I hope you have fully recovered your health.

Sickness and death are all around us. When I read in the SIGNS of some who are so terribly afflicted and yet are given such great faith, I think how well blessed they are, even in their great afflictions. Surely the Lord will not be unmindful of nor forsake his people, but oh for such faith let rocks and hills their lasting silence break. May the Lord bless and prosper the SIGNS, and all connected with it, as he sees fit. My heart goes out to the sick and suffering ones. It will be seven years to-morrow since I lost my husband, but I have hope he is at rest, and I have been sick more than four years with heart trouble, yet the Lord has surely been my helper and keeper, and if he has kept me thus far I have hope he will keep me all the way, and at last take me home to rest.

I only thought to send in my subscription, and did not mean to write so much.

Saved by grace, if saved at all,

ADDIE CHANDLER.

POOLESVILLE, Maryland.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find money order for two dollars, for which please renew my subscription for this year. My absence from home last month caused this delay. For the past half century I have read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and so long as I live and am able to subscribe for it I want to continue to read it. I believe in the doctrine which it proclaims. May the Lord bless you to continue its publication. I will soon be seventy-nine years old.

Sincerely yours,

J. F. WHITE.

NOTICE.

BECAUSE of the fact that a number of our brethren and friends who live at a distance have expressed the desire to assist the church at Dallas, Texas, when they were ready to build a house to worship in, I am taking this means of giving notice that we are now ready to begin. A short time since we appointed a treasurer and began accumulating a fund to purchase a lot and build. We now have our lot paid for and a small fund for purchasing material, and plan to start construction in a few weeks if we succeed as we now hope to do. The church is not numerically nor financially strong, but it possesses the happy faculty of all moving in the same direction, and this encourages us to believe the Lord will cause us to succeed. All who have met with us appreciate how badly we need a house.

This is only meant for those who may desire to assist toward our building, and not to put any one under any obligations. Any such contribution from any source will be duly appreciated. If they are sent to me I will see that they are applied as directed. Or you can send direct to Steve F. Seabolt, 4618 Reiger Street, Dallas, Texas.

J. R. HARDY,
1134 Melbourne Avenue,
DALLAS, Texas.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

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EDITORIAL.

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ROMANS VIII. 28.

"AND we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Yesterday we tried to speak from this Scripture, and as our mind is on the matter yet, we will try and pen a few thoughts in connection with it.

The apostle, in addressing the church of God at Rome, uses the expression, "And we know," showing that the knowledge he speaks of is not known by him alone, but aslo by those he was addressing, as he says in another place, We do not tell you these things because you do not know them, but because ye know them. Amidst a world of confusion and strife, where nations are falling right and left, where men's hearts are failing them, where fear is in the hearts of man, it is a comforting thought that God is Lord of heaven and earth, and all things are in his hand, from the falling of a sparrow to the heart of kings, and are in his hands as rivers of water and he turns them whithersoever he will. God works all things after the counsel of his will, and none can stay his hand. If we could feel as sure that we are the ones who love God and are the called according to his purpose, as we do that he works all things for the good of such ones, it would suit our feelings better, but God has so arranged that our walk should be a walk of faith, and not by sight. No doubt the apostle Paul, as he reviewed his journey from Jerusalem to Rome, could certainly realize that all things had worked together for his good. God appeared unto him before he started from Jerusalem to go to Rome, and told him that he should bear witness of him at Rome. When we examine the journey to Rome we find Paul traveling in the hands of his enemies. They were carrying him to Rome to preach the gospel, yet they did not know what purpose the Lord had in the matter. To-day wicked men, and the wars that are raging, are fulfilling some wise design, and all these things shall work together for good to the chosen of God, yet the wicked know not anything about his wise purpose, and their wickedness shall fall upon their own heads. God punishes not only his people for sin, but also nations, and often the wicked are

used as a sword to punish them. His people often need purging and humbling. We are often brought in these times to repeat the hymn,

"When thou, my righteous Judge, shalt come
To fetch thy ransomed people home,
Shall I among them stand?
Shall such a worthless worm as I,
Who sometimes am afraid to die,
Be found at thy right hand?

I love to meet among them now,
Before thy gracious feet to bow,
Though vilest of them all;
But can I bear the piercing thought,
What if my name should be left out?
When thou for them shalt call."

No doubt the reason men reject the idea that all things are being worked together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to his purpose, is because they only see the act, and cannot behold the purpose.

"Blind unbelief is SURE to err,
And scan his works in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

His providence unfolds the book,
And makes his counsel shine;
Each opening leaf, and every stroke,
Fulfills some deep design."

Even the apostles of our Lord when he was being crucified did not understand the purpose of God in it. They did not know it was necessary that Christ must suffer and enter into his glory. They had earthly hopes of the restoration of an earthly kingdom. It would appear to human reasoning that with the prophecy concerning the suffering of Christ, the prophets declaring before his birth the place of it, the foretelling the manner of his death, that a bone of him should not be broken, that they should look on him whom they had pierced, that for his garments they should cast lots, etc., that they would have understood these things. But the Holy Ghost must reveal these things. Many to-day are trying to foretell the outcome of the present war, but unless God has revealed it to some one, no one knows. The reasoning of the carnal mind is always contrary to truth. Peter was a stronger predestinarian on the day of Pentecost than he was in the judgment hall, and so are we all. As he stood in the judgment hall and bitterly denied that he knew the Lord, he knew not the purpose of God in the matter. The Savior had told him that before the cock crow this night thou shalt deny me thrice, yet it took the completion of the denials for him to remember the word of the Lord. All this was working together for his good. He had declared that he would not forsake the Lord, even though others did. Now he had learned how weak he was, and had been converted, and sifted as wheat, so that he could strengthen the brethren with the doctrine that, You are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation. None know their weakness as those God has left to try themselves, and have found they are not their own keepers. Through such experiences we learn that our only hope is that underneath are the everlasting arms.

From the creating of the garden of Eden, placing man there, giving him a law, unto the crucifixion of Christ, or in other words, all things in time, from the beginnig to the end, work for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose, and God so worketh all things that his word declares, Surely the wrath of man shall

praise thee; the remainder of wrath shall thou restrain.

As we close this article, we would say unto the beloved of God, you unto whom his word is precious, that in every dispensation the darkest times are always before the dawning of a new day. We know not how much trouble is in store for us, how many heartaches and sorrows the world of strife may bring to us, yet if it does we need them. Lift up your heads, for your redemption is drawing nigh. May we as a people, separate from all the people of the earth, seek the welfare of one another, the things that edify one another, and love one another with pure hearts fervently.

D. V. S.

GENESIS II. 10.

"And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads."

In requesting our views on the above and the following four verses, sister W. T. Chester, of Murray, Kentucky, says, "Please understand I want the spiritual meaning of these four rivers which go out from Eden to water the garden." She also asks a second question, as follows: "Does not a child have to be full of the Holy Ghost before he sees or feels he is down in the wilderness?" We are by no means certain that we can delve sufficiently into the mysterious depths of the spiritual significance of this Scripture to satisfy our sister, but we will undertake to offer such thoughts as may be given to us. There will be found in the Bible various types of Christ and the church, each one presenting a beauty peculiarly its own. Let us mention some: the human body, with the head representing Christ and the members of the body typifying the church; the Bridegroom (Christ) and the bride (the church); the true vine and the branches, presenting Christ and the church. In the instance of our text we have Christ typified as a river and the church as a garden. In the forty-sixth Psalm we find something similar in this language: "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of our God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High." All of these types are full of significance and beauty.

In the first chapter of Genesis is to be found the record of the creation of heaven and earth and all that in them is, and in the second chapter we are told that "the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed." A garden is suggestive of a chosen piece of ground, where many delightful fruits are produced, and, therefore, Peter says concerning the elect family, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."—1 Peter ii. 9. If the plants in a garden are to grow, develop and become fruitful, of necessity they must have both sunshine and rain, and the wisdom of God is seen in planting his garden eastward in Eden. This location is well suited to the needs

of that which is to grow in the garden, that it should be towards the rising of the sun, which furnishes both light and heat. While this is not spoken of particularly in this connection, we know of a truth that Christ is not only the river that goes forth to water the garden, but that he, and he alone, is also the Sun of Righteousness which must arise with healing in his wings before the garden of the Lord will produce that which is acceptable in God's sight. The husbandman of this garden, possessing, as we have already said, infinite wisdom, designed that it should be well watered in all of its parts. Therefore there was to be a *river* of water, denoting an abundance, to the end that there should be no lack, or that it could never be said that one single plant died of thirst. Sacred historians tell us that a great mystery surrounded this river. Apparently, there was none who was able to explore its sufficiently to determine its hidden source, and in this sense it was truly typical of Christ. It is written, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."—1 Tim. iii. 16. We cannot even begin to fathom the depths of this great mystery, much less to trace it to its fountain head. This river was parted and became into four heads: these were Pison, which encompassed the land of Havilah, or the land of gold, and Gihon the land of Ethiopia, and Hiddikel went toward the east of Assyria, and Euphrates, apparently the original and greatest of all. Some have thought these four heads signified the eternal election of God, particular redemption by the blood of Christ, regeneration and sanctification by the Spirit and eternal life and happiness. We have thought of the division of this river into four parts and going to the four corners of the garden, or all points of the compass, as setting forth the whole world, and the various countries through which the waters flowed as indicative of the fact that God has a people in every kindred, tribe and nation on the globe, and that he is mindful of them, whether on land or sea, and will nourish and provide for them until the day of Jesus Christ. The psalmist said, "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy; and gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south."—Psalms cvii. 1-3. It is also recorded, Isaiah xliii. 5-7, "Fear not; for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him." Thus we see that every plant of his right hand planting will forever be tenderly cared for by the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. What a blessed thought in this sad day of world-wide distress!

When the Word was made flesh and dwelt among the disciples, there were especially four of them, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, who beheld and heard and made record of many of the things which Jesus did and said. This river and garden most certainly set forth the fruitfulness of the gospel dispensation. However, the half cannot be told, for Mark, after summing up in part, said, And other things did Jesus, the which if they were written in a book the world itself could not contain them. How fitting then that wonderful book, called the Bible, should close its last and final chapter by beginning with this language of John: "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." This can well represent the great love of God which was manifested by Christ coming into the world, according to the forearranged covenant between God the Father and God the Son, entered into in the counsels of eternity, or long before the morning stars ever sang together, which covenant was ordered in all things, and sure. John was thus shown (1) that it was a *pure* river; (2) that it was the water of *life,* and (3) it was clear as crystal. How beautifully this typifies the perfections which in our Savior shine, all of which, according to the riches of his grace, proceed forth from the throne of God and of the Lamb. It is good, indeed, to have some faint knowledge and understanding of these precious things, and to long for them as the hart panteth after the waterbrooks. Jesus said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." —Matt. v. 6. He also said, to the poor Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Is it any wonder, then, that this poor woman should have said, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw"? Only those who have partaken of this water and had their thirst assuaged know how all-satisfying it is. Of what untold comfort and consolation it is to the weary traveler who, discovering that the wells of nature are of no avail to him, realizes that this Great Rock was smitten in a weary land for him, that living waters should flow forth to quench his thirst. Oh for that faith, and more of it, which enables us to "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," to see that our sins and our iniquities were all laid upon him, and that it is by his stripes we are healed. When we are made to comprehend this, he becomes the chiefest among ten thousand and the One altogether lovely to us, and there is then none in heaven or in earth that we desire beside him.

With reference to our sister's second question, it is quite evident to us that a child must, of necessity, be in possession of the Holy Ghost in order to realize his true condition in nature, or in the wilderness, as she terms it. It is only in God's light that we see light. When the voice said to Isaiah, "Cry," he said,

"What shall I cry?" The answer was, "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass." The underlying cause or reason for knowing that all flesh is grass is *because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it.* It is the work of the Spirit. The flesh profiteth nothing; it is the Spirit that quickeneth. Jesus told Nicodemus, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." God must send forth his Spirit into our hearts before we are made to cry, Abba, Father. His word is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and the marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. This word then has a two-fold effect: It not only kills, but makes alive; it not only reveals the hidden evil of the human heart, but at the same time enables one to behold the glory of God as it appears in the face, or person of Jesus Christ. And, in conclusion, we would say to any and all whose heart has been pierced with the arrow of God's wrath against sin, not to give up hope, but to take courage in the Lord, for he is faithful who has promised, and the apostle Paul has declared, saying, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." God is declared to be without variableness or a shadow of turning; therefore cast all your care upon him, for he careth for you.

With the foregoing remarks, we leave the subjects for the consideration of our sister and readers, hoping that they will feel repaid in some measure for their efforts in following our pen, but remembering always that if there be any praise, it belongs to the Lord alone. As much as in you is, then, trust in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Elder C. W. Vaughn.)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, sendeth greeting, and love in the Lord to the several churches and associations with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We feel glad in our hearts to greet you in the name of our covenant-keeping God.

"Abraham fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations."—Gen. xvii. 3, 4. According to the multiplication of the flesh these words were fulfilled in the generations that followed, and many refer to these manifestations as the fulfillment of God's inspired word, but we must remember that God's covenants are spiritually discerned, and when Abraham is referred to spiritually he is called the

father of the faithful, and the faith of Abraham was a God-given faith, and every one that is exercised by faith believes God and staggers not at his promises, for they know the power of reigning sin, and the clouds of sin and darkness that hang over, and it seems to entirely separate them from the mercies of God. But God's covenant cannot fail, and in the beginning, before the world began, he appointed the work of his Son, and he came into the world and did the work his Father gave him to do, and when he had filled the appointment he said, It is finished, and bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. Peter, preaching on the day of Pentecost, said, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him, in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."—Acts ii. 22-24. This quotation proves God's covenant in the Trinity before the world began, and that covenant ordered in all things and sure must come to pass accordingly. Jesus declared, My Father worketh, and I work hitherto, and the works that I do I do not of myself, but of my Father, and as God hath appointed salvation through Jesus Christ to all the elect out of every land, kindred, tongue and nation under heaven, they are called by name, and led out, and brought through the cloud in which God's covenant in his Son is displayed, which was portrayed by many miracles and covenants under the law and prophets, which is but a foretaste and shadow of the covenant in righteousness, and she shall be called by a new name, The Lord our Righteousness. I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (Jer. xxxi. 33,) God's covenant shall ever be before them, and as the covenant made after the flood hath been perpetually, it proves that God's covenant in Christ Jesus shall not fail, and also the declarations to Joseph and Mary are equally eternal and will never become of none effect. Jesus praying to his Father declared, according to the seventeenth chapter of John, the tie and power in whch all the elect are embraced in him, and his suffering for them, and as the Father hath appointed Jesus heir of all things, and his Father heareth him always, hath embraced his beloved in these words: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."—John xvii. 24. It is sweet communion with the saints to meet and hear of these glorious truths, and realize the power of One who hath delivered, and have a hope that he will yet deliver, and hear his messengers declare these things unto us in demonstration and power. Our minds and hearts being exercised by

these things we are made to hope in his mercy. Our God is all-wise and eternal, which gives assurance that his kingdom shall not fail, nor be taken by the crafty, for he says, "Not a weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper," and Jesus, in whom God gave us his covenant, neither slumbers nor sleeps, but his all-seeing eye ever beholds us, and the way of escape is prepared, which constrains us to declare that God hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

We rejoice to meet with and hear the messages of God's faithful soldiers from the battle front, sent unto us, how our faithful Shepherd hath intercepted the enemy and given us the victory, which calms our troubled breast, and we rejoice in Christ Jesus. In the law of the Spirit, that is, in Christ Jesus, is where the covenant God made to us is written, and to take away our covenant the entire Godhead must fail. He has all power in heaven and earth, and upholds all things by the word of his power, and we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

We hope to live to greet you in another Association, and hear of your steadfastness in Christ Jesus. Amen.

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.
G. W. DANBERRY, Clerk.

PLEASE state in the next SIGNS that if there are any Old Baptists near Wenatchee, Washington, I would be pleased to hear from or meet them.

E. G. WEBB,
R. F. D. 4,
WENATCHEE, Washington.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, May 29th and 30th, 1940, to her sister associations of the same faith and order with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is through the kind providence of God that we have been permitted to meet again in another session as an Association. We have been blessed in meeting many of the brethren, sisters and friends, and were glad to receive your messengers and ministering brethren. We feel we have had good preaching, and that it has been the gospel of peace and love in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon County, New Jersey, beginning Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1941, when we hope to again meet and greet your messengers.

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.
G. W. DANBERRY, Clerk.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS."

WE will furnish extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

EDITH PEARL THORNTON LEDDINGTON, wife of D. C. Laddington, died October 9th, 1939. I have no record of her birth or early life. She was united in marriage to D. C. Leddington February 2nd, 1909, and they raised a family of five sons and four daughters, one daughter dying in early life. She was a faithful wife and mother, devoting all her energies for the benefit of her home and family. She was afflicted the last three or four years of her life, and submitted to surgical operations, but without benefit, and was confined to her bed most of that time. In her afflictions she became reconciled, and longed to depart from this life of tribulation and enter into rest in the blessed hope of immortality. She never united with the church, but at her request preaching services were held at her home when convenient, and she was much rejoiced when these services were held. On October 9th she sank quietly to rest, and at her request the writer was called to minister at her funeral services, and interment was made in the cemetery at Weiser, Idaho. Do not grieve for her. She has passed from the evil to come.

ALSO,

DEACON DANIEL CLARENCE LEDDINGTON was born in Oswego, Kansas, November 13th, 1880, and moved west with his parents in 1887, and settled in Salubra Valley, above Cambridge, Idaho. In 1897 he, with his parents, moved to Mann's Creek, near Weiser, Idaho, where he made his home until 1935, when he purchased a farm in Weiser Flit, and lived there until his death. February 2nd, 1909, he was united in marriage to Edith Pearl Thornton, who died October 9th, 1939. Nine children were born to their union, all surviving except one daughter, Golda Ruth. Of these there are five sons: Harvey, Delbert, Victor, Loran and Robert Leddington; three daughters: Mrs. Allyn Bowman, Mrs. Donald Morgan and Mrs. Walter Parsons, all of Weiser, Idaho. Also surviving are two sisters: Mrs. Jess Morgan, of Camos, Idaho, and Mrs. John Ross, of Klamath Falls, Oregon, and one brother, Calvin Leddington, of Midvale, Idaho. In March, 1908, he united with the Salem Church of Old School Baptists, near Weiser, and continued a faithful member until his death. In 1913 he was ordained a Deacon of this church, and also chosen Clerk about the same time, and he filled both offices acceptably until his death.

On May 8th he suffered a stroke of paralysis, growing worse until Friday evening, when he passed peacefully away. Brother Leddington was known and respected by all his brethren and a wide acquaintance of friends. He was a kind and loving husband and father, and he will be greatly missed. His splendid example of industry and honesty is worthy of imitation by his children who now mourn for him, but not as those without hope.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral, after which the body was interred beside his wife in the beautiful cemetery at Weiser, Idaho.

C. W. BOND.

JAMES EDWARDS, our dear brother, was a resident of Corvallis, Oregon, for the last twenty-three years, until November 8th, 1939. His health failed a few years ago. He was the son of James and Rachel Edwards, and was born in Speedwell, Tennessee, August 4th, 1864. He was united in marriage to Elizabeth Bowman, at Speedwell, Tenn., in the year 1888, and to their union five sons were born. His wife passed away January 30th, 1908. The family moved to Crosbyton, Texas, and later moved to Corvallis, Oregon. His second wife,

whom he married here in Oregon, passed away August 5th, 1926. Brother Edwards united with the Old School Baptists young in life, and was a very able soldier in defense of the doctrine, and his walk was orderly and his talk was clear and with love. He entered public life and preached for some years, but his health failed and he was never ordained. His manner was love to the cross and humbleness to the brethren, yet bold in the defense of the purpose of God as it was revealed to him. Brother James Edwards completed the work the Lord gave him to do, and was faithful to the end. I was by his bedside many times and he often spoke of a loving Redeemer. I talked at the funeral service, and read the third chapter of Ecclesiastes. There were a goodly number of friends present. It was sad to give him up, though we are blessed to know that we parted in peace and love. Amen.

PETER JONES.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT.

Resolutions of Respect for Elder D. E. ROBISON and DEACON D. C. LEDDINGTON, adopted by the Border Union of Old School Baptists, when in session with the Salem Church, June 7th, 8th and 9th, 1940.

As it hath pleased our heavenly Father to call from our midst during the past year ELDER D. E. ROBISON and DEACON D. C. LEDDINGTON, both of Weiser, Idaho, and for many years useful members of the Salem Church of Old School Baptists, it has left a vacancy it will be hard to fill.

We, as representatives of the four churches composing the Border Union of Old School Baptists, while convened in the annual session of our Union, with the Salem Church, of Weiser, Idaho, do acclaim the following Resolutions in respect and memory of these departed brethren:

It becomes us to bow in reconciliation to the will of our God, and to say, "Thy will be done," although our loss is heavily felt, we feel assured that the faithful services of these departed brethren merit the approval of our God: Well done, thou good and faithful servants, enter into the joys of thy Lord. May the wisdom of this Providence which has thus bereaved us also comfort and reconcile us all to whom the departed were near and dear.

We request that a copy of these Resolutions be sent to the families, one made a part of the church records and one sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

E. N. FIELDS, Mod.
C. W. BOND
PETER JONES
EMMA WEBB
Committee.

BOOKS WANTED.

PLEASE state in the SIGNS that I am very anxious to obtain copies (preferably bound volumes, but not necessary) of the SIGNS from the first issue down to the year 1897, with the exception of the following years: 1864, 65, 66, 67, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86 and 87. One copy of the Labors and Travels of Elder Potter. One copy of the Biography of Wilson Thompson. I am interested in the literature of the Old Baptist family, and those books, periodicals and pamphlets that I do not have I am willing to pay a fair price for.

W. D. GRIFFIN.

FAYETTE, Alabama.

MEETINGS.

To the brethren and sisters of the same faith and order: We take pleasure in notifying all Predestinarian Baptists that we have our yearly meeting in August, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday, at 10 o'clock a. m. If you wish to come and visit us, come by way of Chehalis, Washington, and take the stage to Riffe.

Done by order of the Bethel Primitive Baptist Church.

J. W. PETERS, Moderator.

J. W. BLANKENSHIP, Clerk.

The New Hope Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will convene with Sanits Rest Church, at the Cavalcade Stadium, in the Fair Park, Dallas, Texas, beginning Friday, at 11 a. m., August 16th, and continuing three days. A cordial welcome is extended to all who love the truth and the worship of God.

J. R. HARDY,
1134 Melbourne Ave.,
DALLAS, Texas.

Providence permitting, there will be an all-day meeting in the Brookfield meetinghouse on Friday, August 23rd, 1940, at Slate Hill, N. Y. We hope a large number of our brethren and friends will meet with us there at that time.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will meet with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Shokan, N. Y., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1940. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to be with us and partake of our hospitality. Ministering brethren of our fatih and order in our correspondence are especially invited. Those coming by train or bus on Tuesday before the meeting will be met at the New York Central station in Ashokan, N. Y., or at the post-office just across the street from the station, where directions will be given to places of entertainment. Unless other plans have been made previously, those coming by automobile on Tuesday will go to Ashokan Rest, conducted by Mrs. Hazel Byrnes, in Ashokan, where they will be provided for. Those coming on Wednesday will go to the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Shokan, N. Y. We might say for the benefit of those who have not attended meetings at Shokan, that the villages of Ashokan and Shokan join each other, each with its own post-office, and the place of services is at Shokan, as before stated.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Moderator.

The North Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association will meet with Ephesus Church, near Emmet, Arkansas, on Friday before the second Sunday in October, and continue three days. We invite all lovers of truth to meet with us.

J. D. RHODES.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M

ALL WELCOME

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

CHURCH MEETING PLACE CHANGED.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets each first and third Sunday at eleven o'clock a. m. at 2407½ Main Street, Dallas, Texas, and on Saturday before each first Sunday at 2:30 p. m. All lovers of truth are cordially welcomed.

J. R. HARDY.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Mod., pro. tem.
T. D. WALKER, Supply and Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers.

Single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,
MIDDLETOWN, N Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 108. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1940. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY.

"WE know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."—Rom. viii. 28. Elder J. M. Watson says, "All things here mean both good and evil." Paul's enemies slandered him by saying that he taught, "Let us do evil that good may come." Paul denied the charge and affirmed that the damnation of his enemies was just. In a Circular Letter written by the church at Smyrna shortly after the martyrdom of Polycarp they ascribe the ordering of all things unto God, and that the persecutions they suffered were according to God's will. (Paly History of Christianity.) Hassell's Church History, page 367, we find the following: Tertullian calls the Greek philosophers the patriarchs of all heresies, and scornfully asks, What has the academy to do with the church? What has Christ to do with Plato? Jerusalem with Athens? His theology revolves about the great Pauline antithesis of sin and grace and breaks the road to the Latin anthropology, and sateriology, afterwards developed by his like-minded, but clearer and calmer and more considerate countryman, Augustine. Schaff, the above shows that Tertullian and Augustine taught the same doctrine. Hassell's Church History, page 395, "Augustine was in the fifth century the chief champion of truth, and he is still regarded by many as the ablest advocate of the doctrine of grace since the days of the apostles." "We observe that Augustine, Calvin and Gottschalk all advocate the same truths and have shrunk from the blasphemy of attributing the cause of sin to God." Again, on pages 397 and 398 Augustine says that from its eternal design to its eternal accomplishment grace does all the work in salvation, even working in the sinner all his good will and good works, so that he shall go at last into divine presence as a poor helpless beggar, a poor lost sinner, saved by grace alone from first to last, and shall be thus prepared to give

God all the glory of his salvation. I think the Bible teaches the foregoing doctrine, and I know my experience (if I have one) teaches me that I am a little child, stumbling and falling, crying to my heavenly Father all the while for help. Who believes the foregoing doctrine now? A few old line Baptists, with bars of fellowship against them by some very modern Baptists.

Again, on page 456, Hassell's Church History, we find the following: "John Wycliffe affirmed that the original eternal ground of all things, including sin and the punishment of sin, was the divine predestination, but still he would not throw back the causality of evil upon God, no more than ascribe the cause of darkness to the sun. While sin was necessary, its guilt and punishment were equally necessary." "Wycliffe's predestinarian Augustinianism," says J. R. Green, "formed the ground-work of his later theological revolt." Hassell's Church History, page 472, "All attempts genuine for the reformation of the church have proceeded from Augustinianism." While it is admitted that Calvin was a follower of Augustine, Catholic writers say he inherited his doctrine from the Waldenses. I am surprised at some of our brethren. I notice in one of our Baptist publications the following questions from one of the brethren: Is it not a fact that about the years of 1829 to 1882 this one salvation idea was first preached among the Baptists? Is it not a fact that about the same time the absolute predestination of all things was first advocated among the Baptists in this country? Is it not a fact that the New School Baptists were the innovators of these strange doctrines? This brother certainly never read the Black Rock address. Elder Gilbert Beebe was one of the ministers appointed to write the address. He was editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. His paper was recommended by the committee of correspondence. The second article in the prospectus was the absolute predestination of all things. This was no new doctrine then. That paper has contended for the same doctrine for over one hundred years. Elder B. Hassell, on page 942, says, referring to the views of Elder Gilbert Beebe and his sons, "These views are in general substantially the same as those expressed in the third chapter of the old Philadelphia and London Confessions of Faith. I believe and think every Bible Baptist believes that God is the almighty, all-wise and all-holy Sovereign of the universe; that he could have prevented the entrance of sin into the world; that he perfectly foreknew the fall and all the wickedness of man; that he had a purpose worthy of himself, however inscrutable to us, in regard to this and all things else; that by his supreme power and decree he restricts all the rage and malice of wicked men and devils to do no more nor less than what he will overrule for the good of his people and for his own glory." Brother Hassell's foregoing statement is in line with Paul, Tertullium, Augustine, Wycliffe. Hassell's Church History, page 495, "Augustinianism became the legally recognized orthodoxy of Western Europe, and actually tinctured the

leading minds and events of that community for several centuries. Bede, Alcuin and Claud of Turin, and afterwards the best and greatest of the school men, Anslem (910), Bernard of Clairvaux (1140), Hugo St. Victor, Thomas Aquinus (1247) and Thomas Bradwardine (1348) were all of the school of Augustine." "The same is true of all the reformers before the reformation: Wycliffe (1324-1384), John Hus (1368-1415), John Goch (1475), The Waldenses of Piedmont, John Wessel (1419-1489)." On the next page (496 H. C. H.) the statement is that the doctrine of Augustine and Calvin was received by Baptists and Presbyterians in all lands. It is stated in almost all histories that the early Baptists settlers in America were Calvinistic. Hassell's Church History, page 652, Dr. John Gill says that "God decreed the fall of man," and that God's absolute and universal dominion was constantly present to the minds of the children of God in ancient days. Its effect upon the mind was solemn and impressive and never suggested the faintest presumption of injustice in God, even when the acts that were sinful in his creatures were traced in another sense to his holy and awful will. Dr. Gill says again, "The belief in universal causation is a primitive and fundamental intuition of the human mind. All secondary causes point the thoughtful mind to the great first cause, omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent, and to His eternal sovereign will, either efficient or permissive in accordance with which all events occur."

Now I believe the foregoing to be the true doctrine of God our Savior, as taught by Christ and the apostles. God's eternal and divine will is the supreme law of the universe, the events of time are the result of his decrees, and his decrees are not based upon or according to foreseen acts of the creature. God is doing his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth as though sin had never entered the world. If I work out my salvation it is because God works in me both to will and to do of his good pleasure. God reserved a remnant under the law dispensation who never bowed the knee to the image of Baal, and in the gospel dispensation there is a remnant according to the election of grace. God could have caused all the house of Israel to to worship him just as acceptably as the remnant, but he did not. If I have walked in the ordinances of God's house and have been obedient to his law, I attribute it to grace. My works are fruits of his grace.

May the Lord bless his very elect and enable them to walk in the strait and narrow way.

Submitted in love.

LYTLE BURNS.

FLORENCE, Alabama.

LEESBURG, Va., July 8, 1940.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—Herewith I am sending you two letters written to me by Henry Townsend, Jr., son of the Henry Townsend whose letter appeared in the July SIGNS. It was my privilege to baptize both father and son at Welsh Tract on the third Sunday of

September last. I have shown these letters to several of our people, and they seem to think they are fit matter for the SIGNS. If you deem them so, you may use them.

Yours in the gospel of grace,

H. H. LEFFERTS.

MEDIA, Pa., Sept. 10, 1939.

MY DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—Although I feel I have a very poor conception of the glories of God and the mercy of his saving grace, I would like to tell you of the impressions which I have received, I trust, from the Holy Spirit.

You are acquainted with the fact that I was raised in a household where the doctrine of holy writ as advocated by the Old School Baptist Church was accepted as divine law. From my early youth I have been surrounded with publications of the church, which I naturally read. My first association with these periodicals was only in a casual way. I read them as one would read a railroad time-table, without meditation upon the truths which they advanced. It was not until about four years ago, when I was around twelve years of age, that I began to have any interest in the things of the Lord. It was at this time, also, that I began to realize for the first time that there were definite variations in churches. I was living in the town of West Chester, and I frequently accompanied my cousin, Jefferson Lee, to the services of several churches. Rather vividly do I remember one in particular. The speaker was an evangelist of great lung capacity, who pled with the sinners of the audience to come forth and be saved. He told gruesome stories of hardened creatures who died "in sin because they shut out Christ to the last." I went to hear him speak twice, but his words had no effect upon me. You see, I was just beginning to ponder over the momentuous problems of sin, hell, the way of salvation, and paradise. Slowly and by degrees the light broke upon me. I found myself making comparisons between the evangelical churches I had attended and old Welsh Tract. It became more and more evident to me that the quiet, humble manner of the Old School Baptist ministers had an indefinable something which was lacking in the screaming evangelists. As a young child, when the third Sunday came around and the family went to meeting, I had only visualized a boring day of "long-winded sermons." Now I discovered that I was willing, yes, eager, to attend the dear old church. But I was not content to let others tell me that salvation is of the Lord, that the creature is hopelessly weak of himself, and that sin is the inherent quality of every man. I was determined to discover these things for myself. The greatest things which the schools have taught me is to be open-minded and to hear every side of a question. I will put both works and grace to the acid test, I told myself. One must fall, and the other must be right. I will analyze the situation as one would a mathematical problem. Poor vain fool that I was! My fall was quick to come. I had no sooner began my analysis than I discovered that the

problem was already answered. The truth broke in upon me like a hurricane. It had been gathering for years, and the rush of it upon my poor carnal faculties left me weak and sick at heart. You are a sinner of the most wretched type, spoke the inner voice. With every breath, with every step you sin. You cannot even approach God of yourself. You cannot even think good thoughts. I was broken down like a crushed reed. Now that I look back and remember the phrases of the evangelists, "Shutting out Christ," "Losing his chance," etc., I shudder with horror at these near blasphemies. I could not "shut him out." I could not rebel. When he saw fit to reveal his truth to me I was *made* to believe it. Then indeed did the sacred words of the Bible begin to have a real significance for me. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9. I have been made to realize that there is but one true and living God; that he gave his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to save his elect people, and that the salvation of these elect is not in consideration of any merit (which none possess) in them, but only for the glorification of the Father on high.

During the last few months my attitude has been mellowed, shaped and developed to a point where I now see but one light, Christ. This precious sacrificial Lamb I worship with my heart and soul. The more I ponder on high things the more I realize my extremely desperate condition. "There is none that doeth good, no, not one."—Rom. iii. 12. As I look out upon this war-torn, sin-filled world, the solemn truth of that doctrine becomes even more evident to me. But the sins of other men do not shock me. Why should I call others to mend their evil ways, when my own heart is a black and bitter thing, overflowing with corruption? One thing is evident to me above all others: I am so miserably weak that I would crumble into atoms were it not for the grace of God to strengthen me and utilize me for his purpose, which is blameless. But this very weakness is my hope. "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence."—1 Cor. i. 26-29. And to hope is to be secure beneath his divine guidance. "For we are saved by hope."—Rom. viii. 24. The belief which God in his mercy has seen fit to bestow upon me is my greatest comfort and consolation. Because of my belief I know that I shall never be without a Friend. "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth

in me shall never die."—John xi. 25, 26.

In my miserable way I have attempted to explain some of the things which I feel from the depths of my heart. I pray that if it be God's will I shall grow in his wisdom and he will teach me the true way of life.

The Lord willing, my parents and aunt will accompany me to Welsh Tract next Sunday. If it be his sacred will that I lay down my heavy burden of sin at that time, and unite with the brotherhood of the church, I shall do so; however, I feel that I am too guilty to even entertain such thoughts.

It is my earnest hope that I have not written anything that is untrue. My only desire is that God will use these words as best he sees fit, and, as an English theologian said, "Forgive them where they fail in truth, and in His wisdom make me wise."

Sincerely, in hope,

HENRY TOWNSEND, JR.

MEDIA, Pa., Nov. 5, 1939.

MY DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—It has pleased God to recently lead me through a most troubled period, in which I have been made to see the glories of his justice and the utter iniquity of my own heart. For a short interval prior to this I had experienced a feeling of exultation and release. But the Lord permitted me to sink once more into my old sins, and I then realized his holy purity and my own vile nature. For some time before the Spirit gave me strength to come before the visible church I had been attempting to "reform" myself. In an attempt to accomplish my purpose I formulated rules of conduct and thought which I resolved to follow. This was done no less than three times, yet each time I failed completely in my resolutions. I understand now that the dear Lord was showing me that the "good works" of Henry Townsend lead to hopeless destruction. The realization eventually came to me that I must place all trust in Him who rules from the great white throne, subordinating, with his aid, the lusts of the flesh. If it is his holy will, I shall never again make the mistake of thinking that I am capable of producing anything worth while of myself.

I have been much surprised by the results of my investigations into the history of christian religion. I never knew before that at one time Calvinism, now so sadly depleted by the ravening wolves of Arminianism, was embraced by the greatest body of Protestant dissenters. Toplady tells us that Martin Luther, the father of the reformation, championed divine predestination with more zeal than Calvin himself. It would appear that the Church of England itself (which now celebrates the mass with as much gusto as Rome ever did) was dedicated by its fathers to the sovereignty of the Holy One. But the blood-stained doctrine of free will gained more and more converts (or victims), until at the present time the Primitive Baptists stand alone, the only fully enlightened church on the face of the earth.

May the Lord bless you and keep you, and finally bring you home.

Unworthily, in hope and faith,

HENRY TOWNSEND, JR.

DELAWARE, Ohio.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Having just reread the SIGNS of January, 1940, I wish to express my appreciation of, and my agreement with, its sentiments, if I understand them, and I hope and believe that I do. In fact, I would not conceive the thought of an eternal, all-wise sovereign God who would be different from the sovereign God described in that number of this valuable magazine. When the God of heaven spoke to me in the year 1881, I believe it was, informing me that he had seen, known, loved and saved me, way back there, before I was born, how could I believe otherwise than in a God of purpose? Yes, I believed that he ordained that I should be conceived, though shapen in iniquity, and that I should know something about condemnation, that later I might know what I was redeemed from, therefore could more fully appreciate Jesus as my Savior and Redeemer. If we were never hungry, how could we appreciate food? If we had no sin, how could we appreciate salvation from it? "Thou turnest man to destruction: and sayest, Return, ye children of men." No, this does not justify sin, but does magnify the wisdom and sovereignty of our Lord and Savior in his wise, eternal, holy, righteous, sovereign reign over angels, men, Satan and all the powers of evil devils, sin and hell. It does not make wrong right, does not make evil good, wickedness holy, foolishness wisdom nor sin holiness. But after the experience of these things we are the better enabled to appreciate the holiness of God, and our salvation from sin and hell. All the ways of Jehovah are just and righteous, true and perfect. Surely all thy ways praise thee, in wisdom hast thou done it all. Yes. proving that the foolishness of God is wiser than men. I do not consider, nor believe, that our Lord God is the victim of circumstances over which he has no control. Being all-wise, before he began to build he counted all the cost, and he has, will and shall demonstrate that he can say, As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; as I have purposed, so shall it stand. Nothing ever has, neither shall disappoint him who rules in righteousness, mighty to save all who come unto God by him. It is also true that he does not look upon sin with allowance, as excusing it. But he has set the day of adversity over against the day of prosperity. I make peace, I create evil; I the Lord do all of these things. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. Let the word of God be true and every man a liar.

God, I trust, showed me his sovereignty as well as his mercy, during the days of my youth. Possibly not at the age of twelve years, but at the age of fourteen, perhaps, when he began to teach me of his sovereignty. I did not live in a Baptist neighborhood, did not know what their doctrine was, but I humbly hope that God found me, taught, led and preserved me in the

truth that salvation is of the Lord, also directed and led me to his people, where I was joyously received. But I was surprised to find that not many were as firmly fixed in the doctrine of the sovereignty of God over natural things, though strong in the doctrine of salvation by grace. But I trust that God taught me concerning his almighty power, wisdom and dominion over all things, and has graciously preserved me in the truths which he himself taught me. I believe that all of his works and ways are true, sovereign and altogether righteous and wise.

I have been a reader of the SIGNS since I became a member of the church, in October, 1884, which was the time of my first meeting with the church, and my first opportunity, when I seemed to hear, I have shown you your duty, now go. Pardon me, I believe I was received in September, but baptized in October, 1884. We, mother and I, were baptized the same day. My father was baptized eleven years later. Though I believe all of father's family were believers, only one other, a sister, Mrs. J. J. Darnell, of Campbell, Texas, united with the church. I believe she was baptized by Elder J. C. Sykes, of Texas, who, together with his lovely wife, are very kind and dearly loved friends of mine. I heard him say of me (not aware that I heard him), She is a straight Old Baptist all right. That was when I was living in Texas, the wife of F. L. Woods, who was baptized here after we moved to Ohio. I have ridden miles in Elder Sykes' "schooner" down in Texas (a three-seated covered wagon) almost thirty years ago.

Brother editors, I am ashamed of this feeble letter. Possibly I should not try to write after a blood pressure of two hundred and sixty, but I trust that you will have charity for my weakness, and of course you are at liberty to cast aside any or all that I send you.

May I refer again to my experience? though much ashamed of my scattering thoughts. I cannot recall thinking that God hated me, but I feared that justice tied his hands, since his justice is as infinite as his mercy, and I seemed to be so vile that the air surrounding me seemed polluted. On the other hand, Satan approached me in the dark, and said, You are good enough, you do not need to pray. But I knew that he lied. Almost immediately after Satan's lie, was the assurance given me from God that I was pardoned and purified through Jesus Christ. Though I was a very timid child, afraid of the dark, when I heard the Lord speaking pardon to my soul I could not feel much alarm, neither because of the presence of Satan nor because of the darkness. I was so happy that my body seemed ready to fly upward to meet my sovereign, almighty Savior, who was able to shield me from every foe or ill.

I will add no more, since my pen is dilapidated, as well as my natural powers. I am strongly tempted to cast this poorly written missive into the furnace. But you know that you need not read it if it is too much bother. Yes, I really mean *just that.*

JOIE E. WOODS PETERS.

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

In Isaiah xvi. 5, we are told, "And in mercy shall the throne be established; and he [Christ] shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness"

In view of the fact that there is arising an ever increasing number who deny that Christ set up his kingdom at his first appearing, but delegated it to some future age, when he is to come in person at a second or third appearing and set it up for an earthly reign, wherein it will be visible to the natural eye and carnal sense of man (in fact, an earthly kingdom), I shall endeavor to show it is naught but another of man's inventions, and can be given no support of Scripture, except by a horrible mutilation of God's word. At times we speak of this kingdom as the kingdom of grace, because it is this kingdom of Christ and of God wherein saving grace doth shine, and will continue to shine until Christ shall come again in the resurrection and judgment, his mediatorial office finished, and the full glory of his kingdom brought to light in the closing of the dispensation of time, merging into eternity. This kingdom of grace, then, is made known in the sovereign efficacy of Jesus' blood to cleanse from sin, which God, the Holy Spirit, exercises in the consciences of his people, and differs not in nature from his kingdom of glory, but only in degree. It is the beginning of the kingdom of glory as spoken by Thomas Watson: "The kingdom of grace is glory in the seed, and the kingdom of glory is grace in the flower; the kingdom of grace is glory in the daybreak, and the kingdom of glory is grace in the full meridian; the kingdom of grace is glory militant, and the kingdom of glory is grace triumphant. There is such an inseparable connection between these two kingdoms, grace and glory, that there is no passing into the one kingdom but by the other. We cannot go into the kingdom of glory but through the kingdom of grace. These two, which God hath joined together, may not be put asunder."

Almost every word of our text is emphatic, containing an allusion to the throne of David, which was a type of that which was later to be set up by Christ, wherein a picture of the deliverance of the church appears, which has no material resemblance to the thrones of earthly kings, and not embellished with sparkling jewels after their manner, yet, although this prophecy was spoken seven centuries prior to the appearing of Christ, we are assured that this kingdom would be established upon earth, and among men, at the appearing of Christ; the prophet makes certain. If he had only said the throne of Christ would be established, the people might have been left in doubt whether that throne of Christ would be in heaven among the angels or on earth among men, but this is confirmed by the words, "In the tabernacle of David," and it remains no phantom of a distorted mind in wild imagination, wherein it is to be seen by natural eyes, but it was to be "diverse from all other kingdoms," partaking of none of their earthly qualities. It was visioned by

Daniel (ii. 44) in the following words: "In the days of these kings [the kings just previously, and briefly, made mention by Daniel in interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's dream] shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people [as earthly kingdoms are], but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." This language does not embrace alone the establishment of the kingdom, but also the eternal duration of it, embodying its glory (the glory of God shining in the hearts of believers) dispensed throughout and shining in the whole world, with its glory through grace descending even until the second appearing of Christ from heaven, the Lord of glory. This is the kingdom of which John the Baptist came declaring, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Or was it at that time ready to be revealed? Again, in Daniel vii. 14, we have further confirmation of this kingdom, as follows: "And there was given him [Christ] dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Further testimony is given us in Luke i. 32, 33, in quoting the angle's salutation to Mary: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Surely its stability needs no further proof, although much more could be added to prove its duration, and how differently it is distinguished from all earthly kingdoms, however they may be founded upon seeming indestructible stability, endowed with much wealth, and supported by great armies and all accruements pertaining to the defense of nations, yet we see them, since their earliest establishment, soon crumble and fall, and in many instances, where God has pronounced judgment against them, never to rise again; but this kingdom of Christ, though the persecutions of the world and the darts of Satan have never ceased to rage against it, and at other times, as well as at the present, it has almost seemed to be forsaken, and overwhelmed by false teaching, and its servants departing from faithfully preaching the "gospel of the kingdom," and profaned by hypocrites of every sort, yet, as in the past, its glory shall not utterly be obscured, and all the machinations of men and devils can never overthrow it. Numerous and powerful its enemies are, and many of them housed within its militant assemblies, yet, whatever weapons they may employ, and though hell itself vomit out its consuming flames of fire and train all its batteries againnst its "walls of salvation," and endeavor to break down its "gates of praise" (Isaiah lx. 18), and extinguish its light of which the "Lord God and the Lamb are the light thereof" (Rev. xxi. 23), it shall stand, for its King is not without power, having *all power* in heaven and upon earth, and all

judgment to "judge among the nations," of which they all combined are, as compared with him, "but the small dust of the balance;" and *skill* and *wisdom* to discharge the office of a good governor who shall "seek judgment, and hasten righteousness." He doth not judge after the manner of men, who judge according to the common law, or the wisdom of the flesh, but after the "law of righteousness," and in his righteous judgment the wicked (the persecutors of his church) shall not go unpunished, for he hath declared that the same measure every one metes, shall be measured to him again.

Augustus Toplady said in defense of Christ's kingdom, "Inherent grace is the dawning of eternal glory, and eternal glory is the perfection of inherent grace. They are parts of one magnificent and undivided whole. Grace is the earnest of glory; glory is the full possession of grace. Grace is the first fruits; glory, the unbounded harvest; and he that has the former, shall as certainly have the latter."

In this kingdom of grace and glory there is a total death, and a partial death. We experience the latter from the very moment we are "made new creatures in Christ." We shall not experience the former (I speak of the whole man) until mortality is swallowed up of life and our bodies raised incorruptible in eternal glory.

The gospel of this kingdom is that gospel alone whose proclamation runs, "By grace are ye saved." Not by grace considered as a sanctifying principle communicated to us by an agent left to the disposal of "free will," but by grace considered as it is in God, viz., by his own unmerited, unconditioned, sovereign goodness. This is God's saving grace, given through faith, and that not of ourselves, but it is the gift of God. The grace of eternal life infused into the soul. Supernatural, regenerating grace, inwrought by the powerful ministration of the Holy Spirit of God. A grace springing up as a fountain of life from the unity of the Godhead, in which there are three distinct, eternal, consubstantial and equal persons, sealed by the blood of the incarnate God, whose crucifixion and resurrection wrought salvation eternally for every elect heir of grace and glory; a grace that seals every syllable of God's word upon the heart as true (and those who scorn it now will yet in hell open their eyes to its truthfulness). A grace that enables the believer to rejoice in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, and feel his visitation confirming him in the doctrine of election and predestination wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and to receive sweet, pleasant and unnspeakable comfort in the mortifying of the flesh, and drawing our thoughts to high and heavenly things. A faith grounded in reverential love, the language of which is, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God."—Psalms xliv. 1. A faith inseparably connected with holiness, an ever aspiring to practical obedience, leaving the things of earth behind, and, looking beyond, its subjects hold sweet communion with God, and earnestly desire the presence of,

and to be conformed to, and bear the image of God in soul, body and spirit. In their hope of salvation they find the merits of Christ to be all-sufficient, and in the goodness, covenant and promises of God in Christ they anchor their hope, and rely upon him in them, and take shelter under them as the sole procuring cause of pardon and salvation, and all its holiness and all its happiness are treasured up in the faithful hands of that holy, blessed and adorable Comforter. Blessed, yea, thrice blessed, sovereign holy Trinity for distinguishing grace and electing love! O sinner, sinner, who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive from the sovereign, discriminating bounty of free grace? O ye potsherds of the earth, who presume to cavil at the Divine decrees, strive no longer against your Maker. Remember your lost condition in sin, and that you are unqualified to arraign the glorious Majesty of heaven at your puny bar, question his predestinated purpose in all things, and comprehend the whole of his designs. Fall down at the footstool of the Omnipotent and acknowledge, without limitation or reserve, that God is holy in all his ways, and righteous in all his works; be content to know no more of his motives than what he has been pleased to reveal, for herein we learn how to live unto God, and, supported by his grace, we shall ever be content to rest our all upon him, and say, Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

JOHN GIBSON.

HAVRE, Montana.

LOUISVILLE, Kentucky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—If one so little and sinful should address you thus. I am alone this morning and no one to talk to; in fact, I seldom have any one to talk with on the subject of grace. I am very poorly, and have been ever since Christmas; was not out of the house for six weeks, and still do not get out very often. I have been reading the last number of the SIGNS this morning, and read your and your father's letters and enjoyed them very much. I do not know how I could get along without the dear SIGNS, for it is all the preaching I get, except over the radio, and of course that is not Primitive Baptist doctrine. I like to hear salvation by grace, and grace alone, for, like the poet,

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

The brethren did hold meetings here, but for the past year or more we have had no meetings, as brothe Sylvester Eubanks, the main member, died in December, I think it was. His obituary was published in the SIGNS. I enjoyed talking with him, for we could agree. How I long for some one to talk with. That is the way I feel to-day, and that is the reason I am writing to you.

I was born in the year 1869, in Hopkins County, Kentucky, and was raised by Primitive, or Old School, Baptist parents. Father joined the church when I was about ten years of age. Mother never did join, but was a firm believer in their doctrine. When I was a child I thought I would join the Old Baptist Church if I ever united with any denomination. When I was about

seventeen years of age, while in meeting one Saturday, and William Gamnlon was in the stand preaching, it seemed something said, You are a lost and ruined sinner. Oh how miserable I felt. It seemed as if I could not hold my head up, and it seemed that every word the preacher said was meant for me. I went on in great tribulation for about two years. My prayer was, Lord, have mercy on me, a lost and justly condemned sinner. I felt I was too great a sinner to call upon such a just and holy God as I felt him to be, and concluded to stop trying. But, my dear brother, it was impossible for me to stop, for the very breathing of my poor troubled heart was, Lord, be merciful to me, a poor lost sinner. I felt there was a place, if I would go, kneel down and pour out my heart in prayer to the good Lord I would be answered, but I could not tell where that place was, so I went down in the field, and many different places. I desired to read the Bible, but did not want any one to know it. So I took my grandfather's Bible upstairs so no one would see me reading it. That was fifty-two years ago, but is as fresh in my memory as though it were yesterday.

On Saturday night before the fifth Sunday in October I went to spend the night with my grandmother. She and I slept together, and after we went to bed it seemed to be dark in a way I had never seen it before. I laid there and turned and tossed about and felt that I never would see daylight again. But after a long time I dropped off to sleep, and awoke, I think it must have been about midnight, and my burden was gone and I was very happy, and the dear old song, "Jesus, lover of my soul, let me to thy bosom fly" rang sweetly in my mind. The next Saturday and Sunday were my father's meeting days, so I went with him, and when we arrived and the brethren and sisters came in how good they looked to me; I loved them more than I ever did. When preaching was over an invitation was given for members, and before I hardly realized it I was up there and gave my hand. Five others also joined and we were baptized the next day, the first Sunday in November. Brother Dodson, that was a long time ago, and I have since had many troubles and trials, ups and downs, but I feel the good Lord has brought me through them all. He has been better to me than I deserve. Oh that I could live near him every day, but it seems I am so worldly-minded, so forgetful of his tender love and mercy.

I guess I should not have bothered you with this letter, for I realize you are very busy, but I wanted to write to you. May the Lord bless you and yours, is my prayer.

Your little sister,

ADAH CHANDLER.

ANABEL, MO., Jan. 11, 1940.

DEAR EDITORS:—I must send my price for the SIGNS for another year or I will not be getting it, and I do not want to miss a single number. I do enjoy the many good articles, and would like your views, brother Dodson, on the sixth chapter of 1st Samuel. In read-

ing where the ark of the Lord was restored, or going to restore it, I can see a hidden meaning in making a new cart and taking the two milch kine and the kine going straightway to the way of Bethshemesh, etc., but I know I do not get all the beauty of it, so would much enjoy reading your view on the same. You know the Old Testament is in types and shadows and I do enjoy hearing it explained. It seems my mind is "shut up" so much of the time that I often ask myself that if I had any spiritual life would not more of the Scriptures be revealed to me?

I wonder what happened to the brother (I forget where he was from) who was going to write on the eighth chpater of the Song of Solomon. I have watched with interest every number of the SIGNS for his writing, but I realize that unless the Lord directs our mind we can do nothing.

May the Lord continue to bless you, the editors and publishers of the SIGNS, to continue to put out a paper that stands for the same faith and doctrine that Jesus Christ and the apostles preached. It is wholesome food for the poor sin-tossed creature, such as I feel myself to be, yet I have a sweet hope.

Unworthily,

(MRS.) J. R. McAFEE.

(*See editorial reply on next page.*)

GRETNA, Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed two dollars to pay for the renewal of my subscription to the SIGNS, which comes as a pleasant visitor each month. I would feel lonely without it. I read of others who feel as I do, which makes me feel I am not alone. I often wonder if there is any one loke me. Why are we who claim a hope in Christ so often doubting, and fear we are deceived in our hope? It seems that I am continually meditating upon these things; then after hearing a good sermon, as I feel I often do, I am satisfied for awhile why it is this way. But soon I am in the same strait as before, a "doubting Thomas," and think that if I was a christian I would not do the things I do. But many times when alone in the flesh I feel that I am not alone in Spirit. Sometimes I look around at the pleasant faces at our meetings, who look as if they never had any trouble, and I wish I could feel as they look. Again, I have this Scripture come to my mind, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me peace.

I only meant to write a few lines for my renewal.

A sister in hope,

(MRS.) WILLIE TOSH.

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1940.

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1 SAMUEL, SIXTH CHAPTER.

On page 198 of this issue of our paper will be found a letter from sister J. R. McAfee, of Anabel, Missouri, asking for our views on the above chapter. She also refers to seeing a hidden meaning in certain portions of the chapter, but does not disclose her thoughts regarding it. We shall have to ask that our readers get their Bibles and read this chapter, in order to be familiar with the subject matter, as lack of space forbids our quoting from it extensively.

Sister McAfee well says, "The Old Testament is in types and shadows." The apostle Paul informed the Hebrews that the law had a shadow of good things to come. He was referring to the gospel dispensation as containing the substance of what was presented only in type under the law. It has been said that the Old Testament conceals what is in the New, and the New Testament reveals what is in the Old. We are confident no one will find fault with this. It is recorded in Romans xv. 4, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." Jesus said, "Search the scriptures [meaning the Old Testament]; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me."—John v. 39. While this was directed more particularly, perhaps, to the Jews, it is also for us Gentiles, who believe, for anything that testifies of Jesus is of utmost importance to his people. And we like to believe, in this connection, as Paul clearly sets forth in his epistle to Timothy that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that *the man of God may be perfect; thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*" When Jesus talked with Cleopas and another, who was with him, and opened up to their understanding the Scriptures, their heart burned within them, and when the Holy Spirit draws aside the veil and bids us behold something of the hidden mysteries of the Old Testament, there is often revealed a beauty which transcends anything that we had ever dreamed of before and OUR hearts are made to burn within us at the sight.

Before attempting to get at the heart

of our subject, we wish to review some of the background as to why the ark of the Lord had been taken away from Israel and was in possession of the Philistines. We understand that the ark was in Shiloh. typifying the covenant of promise in Christ Jesus and denoting him as the only procurer of peace and happiness for spiritual Israel. Moses had before declared, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."—Gen. xlix. 10. Since this ark typifies Jesus it was, therefore, the most sacred of all of Israel's possessions, and they were very unhappy when they were without it, while it was a cause of distress to the Philistines when in their possession. The same thing is seen to-day: the Lord's people are miserable until Christ and him crucified is preached as the way, the truth and the life, while on the other hand this very same doctrine causes distress and death and destruction to those who, although they may have a form of godliness, yet deny the power thereof. Brother Roy Smith set forth in the February SIGNS how when he was blessed to preach the gospel in demonstration of the Spirit and with power, it drove the people with whom he was then affiliated from him, but at the same time drew those who had an ear to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches all the closer to him. Not only was the ark of the Lord sacred to Israel, but the things pertaining to God's house and the worship thereof were to be handled with reverence. Eli, the priest, however, at that time had permitted his sons, Hophni and Phinehas, to disregard the sacred customs, and worse still, they desecrated their high and holy office by lying with the women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. As the result of this great wickedness God sent one unto Eli to remind him that of all the tribes of Israel he had chosen his father (representative of the Levitical priesthood) to be his priest, with all that that high and holy calling implied, but now the Lord foretold of the utter destruction of that priesthood and the establishing of a faithful priesthood. He said, "I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind: and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever." This prophecy reached beyond Samuel, even unto the priest which was to be after the order of Melchisedec. Before the dawning of that day, however, Israel was going to be made to weep bitterly because of her sins. She was to be arrayed in battle with the Philistines and made to know she was no match for them. After thousands of the Israelites had been slain they were made to inquire, "Wherefore hath the Lord smitten us to-day before the Philistines?" At least they saw the hand of the Lord in this matter, and what a mercy it is to be chastened by the Lord. David said, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." They had wandered off and were made to desire to send to Shiloh for the ark of the Lord, for it meant their salvation and

their all, and when it was brought into the camp of Israel we are told that "all Israel shouted with a great shout." How glad they were and how they did rejoice in the Lord, but they had to be taught again and again that the flesh was weak. When the Philistines heard and understood the meaning of that shouting in the camp of Israel they were more determined than before against them and urged their soldiers to quit themselves like men, and fight, else they would find themselves serving the Hebrews as the Hebrews served the Egyptians under Pharaoh. In battle the Lord was with the Philistines for a season, for it is said there was a great slaughter of the Israelites, thirty thousand of them falling in battle in one day, the two sons of Eli among them, and besides the ark of the Lord was taken from them and carried into captivity by the Philistines. This was a crushing blow to Eli, who fell from off the seat backward by the gate, and his neck brake, and he died. His daughter was with child and the day of her deliverance was hastened, and she died, but she named the child Ichabod, saying, "The glory is departed from Israel: because the ark of the Lord was taken, and because of her father-in-law and her husband."—1 Sam. iv. 21. The Philistines then took the ark into the house of their god, Dagon. While Israel seemed utterly subdued and conquered and the Philistines were gloating over their seeming victory, little did they know of the ways and the mighty power of Israel's God. This they were to learn to their great sorrow, as did the Egyptians at the Red Sea, for God was to afflict them sorely with emerods and mice, which he did until they were made to call their priests and divines in council as to how best to rid themselves of the ark of the Lord. First, they wanted to make certain that their plagues were sent upon them by Israel's God, of whom they had heard and dreaded, and being sure of this they decided to try to appease his wrath by not returning the ark empty, but sending it back with a trespass offering, in the hope of buying his favor and having him heal them of their sore affliction and drive out the mice from their land. How true that was to present day workmongers. They verily feel that God's favor can be purchased with their so-called good works and offerings of gold and silver. They finally decided to make golden images of their emerods and their mice as a lasting testimony against them, so to speak, and in this we believe we see the hand of the Lord, showing that he is the unchangeable God and will never be satisfied with the works of mortal creatures. Their own righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and shall ever remain the same and be abominable in the sight of the just and holy God.

Our sister seems particularly interested in the "new cart and the two milch kine," and we will endeavor to present such thoughts as we have on these points. As intimated before, these things undoubtedly in type were full of significance for the gospel dispensation. As the ark of the covenant of the Lord, which was made of soft wood, and overlaid within and without with pure gold,

contained the testimony, typified the humanity of Christ, but at the same time clothed upon with divinity, for we are told that in him dwelt the godhead bodily, and in him are all the promises yea and amen. This new cart signifies a new creation, and Jesus as the first new creature was as a cart beneath many sheaves as he bore our sins in his humanity, which had to be sacrificed in our stead, as the new cart was clave in type (see verse fourteen of this chapter). The apostle tells us that "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight," and then says, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Rom. viii. 3, 4. In this service of the Lord, which was to be acceptable in his sight, there had to be a new cart to bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and this is what was seen when Jesus miraculously born of the virgin Mary came to bear the sins of his people.

In this gospel dispensation, where Jesus is the head and husband, the church is his bride, and is referred to as the Lamb's wife. There is no male and female in the church, but all are one in Christ Jesus, and in that sense all are feminine. There are many gifts in the church, but none is to lord it over God's heritage, for Christ is head over all things to his church, and the government is upon his shoulder. In some instances the ox is referred to as a type of the gospel minister, but in this instance inspiration has employed the feminine gender, not for the purpose of authorizing women as preachers, for the apostle Paul said distinctly that he suffered not a woman to teach, or to preach, as we understand him to mean, but in the case in question it shows unmistakably that the gospel ministry is to be composed of characters who, like the milch kine, upon which no yoke had ever been placed, have never been trained or educated in the schools of men for work in the gospel ministry. No mortal man has ever placed any yoke upon them, neither are they subject to any earthly head or governing body, but like the milch kine they are tied to the cart—they are firmly bound to that which supports or bears the ark, or the covenant of salvation by grace. The calves of the two milch kine were to be kept at home from them, nevertheless "the kine took the straight way to Bethshemesh, and went along the highway, lowing as they went, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left; and the lords of the Philistines went after them unto the border of Bethshemesh." Those who know anything about a cow with her young calf know how difficult it is to get her to leave it, but only God's truly called and qualified ministers know what it means to have to forsake wife and children, father and mother, and all that is dear by the ties of the flesh, often filled with many doubts and fears, and yet there is something in them which impels or causes them to go, offering their bodies a living sacrifice in the cause of their

Lord, just as the two milch kine went and had to be offered as a burnt offering at Bethshemesh. There is an high way cast up in the wilderness, and it is upon this highway the Lord's people travel, and the true servant of God often travels this road with an heavy heart and bowed head and is heard lowing, or mourning, or groaning, as he goes; neither will he turn either to the right hand or to the left, but with an eye single to the glory of God he is found pressing onward and upward towards the mark of the prize of his high calling in Christ Jesus. He goes straight, proclaiming the truth and hewing to the line, letting the chips fall where they may, for his lot is cast into the lap and the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.

As the Philistines were mystified at what they saw, so the religious world and others are equally mystified to-day when they see those, in many cases without educational training, but wrought upon by the mighty power of God, go far and near, and without any monetary guarantees for expenses even, preaching the gospel. Occasionally we are asked when we prepare our sermons, etc., and our inquirers are perplexed when we try to tell them how it is we preach when we are really blest to preach. The Lord must direct his servants to-day by an unseen hand the same as the milch kine were directed in the time of the Philistines. It would appear that when the two milch kine reached Bethshemesh, it was the RIGHT time, for they were reaping their wheat harvest in the valley, and when they lifted up their eyes and saw the ark, they rejoiced to see it. How the Lord's people do rejoice when Christ is preached. We are told that when the cart came into the field of Joshua, and stood there where there was a great stone, "they clave the wood of the cart, and offered the kine a burnt offering unto the Lord." Those who are tied to that new cart, which bears the testimony of our Lord, are crucified with him. Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."—Gal. ii. 20. The Philistines, seeing what had taken place, returned to Ekron, their own city, or habitation, for there was no place for them in Bethshemesh.

In this chapter we are further told that the men of Bethshemesh were smitten, more than fifty thousand in number, because they looked into the ark of the Lord. "And the people lamented, because the Lord had smitten many of the people with a great slaughter." This would indicate that God's servants should better content themselves by declaring only those things which are revealed and not attempt to pry into secret things, which belong only unto the Lord, for as the men of Bethshemesh said, "Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God? And to whom shall he go up from us?" "And they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kirjathjearim, saying, The Philistines have brought again the ark of the Lord; come ye down, and

fetch it up to you." These men of Bethshemesh were made to desire that the ark might be carried further inland, or up in the mountains, farther from the Philistine border, where it might be kept more secure and safe. Sometimes we see the distress that is caused by brethren delving into things which are forbidden, or because of their departure from the truth our enemies are empowered to slay us, and when the Lord returns again we are made more zealous and more anxious for the peace and welfare of our beloved Zion. While the earth may come between us and the sun, thus causing darkness and night, or while because of living after the flesh we may be cut off from the joys of our Lord for a season, we are glad that nothing can separate us from his love permanently, and when we can behold him, leaping and skipping over the mountains and hills of our sins and showing himself, a little here and a little there, or as it were through a lattice, then it is springtime in our souls; it is then a time of the singing of birds, when flowers appear, and our winter is over and gone. How wonderful, indeed, is it to experience deliverance from the dormancy of winter and to be brought into that ecstasy of soul where it is no effort to burst forth into praise and adoration of our God.

We have written more or less at random, with several interruptions while trying to consider our subject, but we hope it will be seen that the Lord hath directed both our thoughts and our pen. We know by experience that no man by searching can find out God, for oftentimes we are made to mourn our barrenness and destitution, but in some favored hour the Lord is pleased to shine upon our path, and then it is we can walk about Zion, beholding her towers and marking well her bulwarks. We desire to be faithful and to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, but realizing that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, we have to look to the Lord to supply our needs, and we are glad when there is some evidence of the fact that he by his Holy Spirit enables us to feed the flock which he hath purchased with his own blood with the sincere milk of the word. There are no doubt many things of great importance in this chapter which we have not even touched upon, but, if nothing more, we hope the pure mind of at least some of our readers may have been stirred up to meditate upon these things, and it may be that what we have been remiss in presenting the Lord will give to each according to their several needs.

R. L. D.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder George Ruston, at the home of the bride's parents, July 27th, 1940. Dr. Francis George Ruston, of Hamilton, Ontario, eldest son of Elder and Mrs. George Ruston, of Dutton, Ontario, and Miss Marion McColl, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Thomas McColl, of Tilbury, Ontario.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Mrs. S. E. Brown, Texas, $3.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

In the departure of sister CYNTHIA PERRY the Covenanted Baptist Church at Ekfrid, Ontario, has lost a very dear and faithful member, who was much beloved by those who knew her, for her steadfast walk and godly conversation. She departed this life after a rather prolonged illness at her home in Appin, Ontario, on May 1st, 1940, in her sixty-seventh year. She was married to Arthur Perry in the year 1887, to which union were born six children, who, with her dear husband, are still left to mourn their loss. The children are Mrs. Robert Gastle, of Carlisle, Ontario, Basil, of Metcalf, Ontario, Albert and Clifford, of Ekfrid, Ontario, Mrs. Charles Alexander, of Melbourne, Ontario, and Mrs. Emerson Hodgson, of Appin, Ontario. There are also nine grandchildren. Sister Perry was baptized on the second Sunday in July, 1938, by the writer, and from that time to the day of her death she was highly favored with a wonderful enjoyment of spiritual things, both in private meditation and while listening to the preached word. She had a number of Scriptures applied to her which comforted her greatly, and it could be said of her that she went in the strength of that meat many days. On one occasion, during her sickness, while feeling very cast down in body and mind, she was shown that it is through much tribulation we enter the kingdom, the Holy Ghost applying this Scripture to her soul: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." This remained with her for days, and she asked the writer to speak from it at her funeral. All that loving hands and hearts could do for her could not stay the hand of her God in taking her blest spirit to himself. May he comfort her sorrowing family, that they sorrow not as those who are without hope.

The funeral service was largely attended in the meetinghouse at Ekfrid, where she had loved to be, and her mortal remains were laid to rest in the Mayfair Cemetery beside the meetinghouse.

G. R.

The bitter pangs of sorrow pierced many hearts when the news of the tragic death of our sister in Christ, ASENITH KINNEY, of Ashokan, N. Y., on July 5th, 1940, was received by her many brethren, friends and relatives. She died immediately following injuries sustained when struck by an approaching automobile as she became confused in attempting to cross the highway in front of her home, and stopped before deciding which way to turn. She was carried several feet by the impact and suffered severe fractures and other injuries. She was carried to her home and soon became unconscious. A certificate of accidental death was issued by the coroner, Jesse McHugh. She was born near Ashokan, May 10th, 1866, and was therefore past seventy-four years of age. Her parents, the late Jacob W. Bishop and his wife Sarah (Elmendorf) Bishop, were people of strong character, sterling qualities, thrift and enterprise, and left their impress upon their descendants, and were evidenced in the life of the subject of this article, who was widely known, deeply loved, highly respected, and known for that purity of character which is a legacy to the brethren and to the community at large. In the year 1916 she was baptized into the fellowship of the Olive and Hurley Church by Elder George Ruston. Her hospitality, kindness and unassuming ways endeared her to many. On June 4th, 1917, she was united in marriage to Everett R. Kinney, to whom she proved a loyal and

worthy helpmeet in facing the problems of life.

The funeral services were held at her late home on July 9th, and were conducted by the writer, assisted by licentiate Adelbert Mead, of Charlotteville, N. Y. The text used was Revelation x. 1, 2. The interment was in the Tongore Cemetery. The nearest of the many surviving relatives is one sister, Mrs. Emily Greene, of Shokan, N. Y.

ALSO,

MANTON HENRY SHOUT, son of the late Samuel Shout and Phoebe (Hill) Shout, was born near Roxbury, N. Y., October 19th, 1864, and departed this life July 6th, 1940, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Ray Roberts, of Halcottville, N. Y., after an illness of many months, but of a severe nature for about three weeks. The immediate cause of death was a stroke of apoplexy. The funeral services, in charge of the writer, were conducted near Roxbury, where the interment was made in the cemetery adjoining the Primitive Baptist meetinghouse. Mr. Shout spent his early life in the town of Roxbury. He married Miss Mary E. Greene in 1890, and for many years conducted farms in eastern Delaware County. The immediate surviving relatives are two children, Earl Shout, of Oneonta, N. Y., and Mrs. Ray Roberts, of Halcottville, N. Y., and his widow. For seven years Mr. and Mrs. Shout had made their home with Mr. and Mrs. Ray Roberts, who tenderly ministered to him in every way possible. Mr. Shout will be much missed, as he was an honest, industrious, capable man, of genial manner and pleasing personality. He never made a profession of religion, though he believed in the principles of the Old School Baptist faith.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

MEETINGS.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will meet with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Shokan, N. Y., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1940. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to be with us and partake of our hospitality. Ministering brethren of our fatih and order in our correspondence are especially invited. Those coming by train or bus on Tuesday before the meeting will be met at the New York Central station in Ashokan, N. Y., or at the post-office just across the street from the station, where directions will be given to places of entertainment. Unless other plans have been made previously, those coming by automobile on Tuesday will go to Ashokan Rest, conducted by Mrs. Hazel Byrnes, in Ashokan, where they will be provided for. Those coming on Wednesday will go to the Old School Baptist meetinghouse in Shokan, N. Y. We might say for the benefit of those who have not attended meetings at Shokan, that the villages of Ashokan and Shokan join each other, each with its own post-office, and the place of services is at Shokan, as before stated.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Moderator.

Providence permitting, the First Kansas Association of Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptists will convene at the home of Elder L. L. Schenck, two miles north and one-half mile east of Williamstown, Jefferson County, Kansas, on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1940, and continue the two following days (13th, 14th and 15th). Plenty of bus service to Williamstown, and limited service on the U. P. R. R. All are welcome, and lovers of the truth and ministers of our faith and order are invited. For further information write to Elder L. L. Schenck, Williamstown, Kansas.

L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator.

Providence permitting, the Original Mount Zion Association of Old School Baptists will convene with Little Blue and Sni-a-bar Church, at Grain Valley, Jackson County, Missouri, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 4th, 5th and 6th, 1940. We invite all sound orderly Baptists to meet with us.

D. A. J. ADAMS, Moderator.

WILLIAM H. MORRIS, Clerk
7241 Jefferson Street,
KANSAS CITY, Missouri.

The North Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association will meet with Ephesus Church, near Emmet, Arkansas, on Friday before the second Sunday in October, and continue three days. We invite all lovers of truth to meet with us.

J. D. RHODES.

This year's session of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting is planned to be held, the Lord willing, with the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 16th, 17th and 18th. We invite to meet with us, ministers and brethren of our correspondence and those also who may not be in direct correspondence with us, yet who are of like precious faith with us and who have a desire to be with us in this meeting. The New Valley meetinghouse is located eight miles north of Leesburg and four miles from Point of Rocks, just a mile north of U. S. Route 15, from the little cross-roads village called Lucketts. Those coming Tuesday will come to Leesburg and ask for Elder Lefferts or Mr. McIntosh. Those coming Wednesday in own conveyance will go directly to the meetinghouse. Buses for Leesburg leave 12th and New York Ave., Washington, D. C. Buses Tuesday afternoon and early Wednesday morning will be met at Leesburg. If any further information is desired, please address the writer of this notice.

(MRS.) W. F. GARRETT, Church Clerk,
LEESBURG, Virginia.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will be entertained by the Little Creek Church, in Delmar, Delaware, on Wednesday and Thursday, October 23rd and 24th, beginning at 10:30 a. m., Standard Time. A cordial invitation is extended to those of our faith and order to meet with us. We hope our brethren in the ministry will remember us and make an effort to be present. Trains will be met from both north and south on Tuesday and Wednesday morning. Those coming by auto, come to the home of H. C. Ker. They will be distributed from there.

H. C. KER, Pastor.

JOHN L. HASTINGS, Clerk.

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Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

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I feel to recommend this book to our readers.—G. R.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 108. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1940. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WAIT UPON THE LORD.

"BUT they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary, and they shall walk, and not faint."—Isaiah xl. 31.

Although this was spoken to the Jews who had unthankfully used the blessings of God, and were soon oppressed by cruel captivity, no people could have had greater need of this comforting doctrine. It is designed not alone for them, but to teach us of our weakness, and the folly of running ahead under the influence of personal ambition, but, realizing our weakness, to patiently wait upon Jehovah, who is our strength; as Paul says in 2 Cor. xii. 9. that the power of God is made perfect in our weakness. Not that anything can be added to the perfecting of God's power, but that the realization of that power is made manifest, and realized by us, when in humble submission we in faith wait for his guiding hand; then with our strength renewed we "shall mount up with wings as eagles." A figurative illustration, but by the Holy Spirit suited to our feebleness. Again, in Psalms xl. 1, "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry." And in Hosea xii. 6, we are commanded to wait on God continually. Oh how often we become too hasty in our desires and wish that God would immediately perform his promises, but we should remember that he is not slack concerning his promises, but faithful to fulfill them. It is therefore our duty not alone to "pray without ceasing." but to wait patiently for that mercy, however long, for God will remember his promises in his own good time if we wait patiently and humbly before him. By faith we should keep our eyes upon the kingdom, the church wherein the Lord doth visit his people and cleanse them from the defilement of the world, and establishes that kingdom within our hearts so illustrious its glow doth cast a darkness over all other enchantments, be they ever so bright in

outward appearance. This, our kingdom, God hath established on Mount Zion, the hill of his glory, and so great is its splendor in the restoration of God's elect that those things which dazzle the eyes of the most illustrious of the world, in comparison, become as dark and blind allurements. The reign of God in Mount Zion always denotes mercy and salvation, and it is only in Christ those things are fulfilled. They are not perceived by the light of the natural eye, nor by the bodily senses, but by faith. Christ reigns in the heart of the believer in such a manner that we feel he is present with us, and if by faith we do not comprehend this, then it will yield us no consolation. "But we have this treasure," says Paul, 2 Cor. iv. 7, "in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." Great was that splendor and glory of God when the kingdom of Christ was revealed, and three thousand souls added in one day. Its brilliance must not be obscured and the glory of Christ become but a common thing. "O Lord, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name: for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth." —Isaiah xxv. 1. We are often appalled to see the wicked stand unamazed at the judgments of God: unmoved by any terror. All his commands thunder at them, as it were, from Mount Sinai, but they go on in their rebellion and become more hardened in sin; but it is not so with the righteous, who tremble at the slightest tokens of anger, and humbled at the foot of the cross, under the overpowering influence of grief and anxiety betake themselves to the Lord, and in the midst of these tempests they plead his promise of mercy, and give unto God the praise and glory due him. But let us remember this cannot be unless a firm belief of his grace dwells in our hearts and holds a superiority; from which grace springs a joy which yields to us the most abundant ground for praises; for praises flow from a feeling sense of his grace and goodness, which sense gives us a surety of our salvation in the convincing power of the Holy Spirit that the Lord is our God; and thus believing, we are enabled to cast our all upon him, and find our chiefest delight in praising his name. Triumphing in faith we look beyond and know that all is well, and are not disturbed by the outward appearance of things, knowing that "all the promises of God are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."—2 Cor. i. 20. We witness to-day the whole world gone mad, as it were, and astonishing events transpiring by which men are perplexed, and many of the rulers overcome with amazement and dread, but believers, having tasted of the goodness and wisdom of God, behold his ruling hand and profit by his wonderful works, perceiving his end is to "bring light out of darkness." (2 Cor. iv. 6.) This is the method by which he establishes his kingdom and raises his church from death to life, regulates and directs it to his own purpose that his own glory may shine within it and upon it. "Thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth." Thus with God nothing happens and

nothing is unforeseen, and although his judgments now being visited upon the nations of the earth appear as a sudden catastrophe, yet they were certainly ordained by him from the creation of the world, as testified to in Acts xv. 18, "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world." Thus all the miraculous things of whatever kind transpiring in the world, often contrary to the plans and expectations of men, are the results of that regular order which God maintains in governing the world, and speak his secret arrangement of all things whatsoever, from the beginning to the end. Our powers of understanding are not so acute that we can ferret out and unravel this divine mystery, and we are forbidden entrance into the secret counsels of the Most High, for his decrees are unsearchable and his ways past finding out, yet our minds should be directed to the manifestation of them, that we may not be moved from beholding his divine arrangement. When Isaiah could declare by the inspiration of the Spirit that God's counsels of old are faithfulness and truth, this word "truth" confirms the certainty of whatever God hath declared; that it is unchangeable, unalterable and cannot fail of accomplishing the end to which it is directed. If by faith we can thus receive it, we shall be planted steadfast in the word, and will not question its truthfulness however mysterious it may appear to the carnal sense of man. In the presence of such a gracious God and Savior how often should our feverish fears be silenced, and, waiting upon him, fervently plead for his chastening rod, knowing that by it the will of the flesh is subdued, and we are trained and brought more perfectly into the will, and obedience to God by it. Vain confidence is put on the execution block, and self-righteousness beheaded. These are enemies that are strong and powerful and rebel against God, and under their leadership we cannot be made humble and submissive. All their fierceness must be restrained and subdued, that we may be prepared for receiving the doctrine of the word, and rendering obedience in humbleness and simplicity. "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."—Eph. v. 14. Awake! Awake! Oh how often has the Spirit thus spoken to our hearts, bidding us throw off our slothfulness, go forth and bear before the world the fruits of our conversion. In it, as it were, the Lord stretches out his hand to us from heaven, to rescue us from our waywardness, and awaken us to a feeling sense of our poverty, to behold the riches we have offered us in him. It is necessary that we be poor and needy, that we may wait upon him and that we may be enriched by him. Self-reliance and self-confidence must be crucified by chastisements and with the cross ere we can be trained in the way of yielding obedience to him. When numerous and diversified temptations arise they will master us unless Christ is our strength, our refuge and hiding-place, but if we are hidden away in "the cleft of the Rock" of the eternal ages, whatever be the nature of the dangers and assaults

which threaten us, the Lord our God will protect and defend us against them, and will supply us with the "whole armor of God," which Satan's darts can never pierce. Thus in patience should we wait upon him, though our hearts often tremble with doubts and fears, we know we have in him a safe abiding place. Who should engross our time and thoughts but God? In no way can they be better employed. Our minds are narrow, capable of understanding but little, and attending to but few things at once. Our span of life is short and will hardly admit of our pursuing things that tend to separate us from our Beloved. O dear children of God, wait upon him for deliverance from our ignorance and our sins, that we may become more and more humble and willing to be taught of God. Desire, as Mary, to sit at the Savior's feet and hearing his words be enlightened with saving wisdom and rejoice in the comfort of saving faith, whereby his many and sweet promises become allurements to draw us heavenward. "The meek will he teach his way."—Psalms xxv. 9. "The meek" are they who, with a humble and contrite spirit, receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save the soul. (James i. 21.) The Holy Spirit ingrafts it inwardly in their hearts and enables them to bring forth the precious fruits of it in their lives, and thus by it they are taught his way. The purpose of God in our calling is that we may lead a holy and blameless life, as the whole of Scripture testifies. Be ye holy, for I am holy, is the divine injunction. We are not called to uncleanness, and this chief part of our service to God must be rendered with a pure and upright heart. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." Not only they be blessed eternally, but are blessed now. "Grieve not the Holy Spirit." The presence of God with us should be our chief concern, for by it we shall know that all our prosperity is from his guiding hand directing and his precious love controlling. People may tire themselves in their imaginations and contrivances of their own hearts, and lay out plans that will not profit nor advantage them, but will be found as fruits of the carnal mind, but those who wait upon him shall experience the gracious ends of his mercy, love, kindness, pardon and salvation, for these are things flowing from it. Not hinged upon conditions, for in the covenant of his grace there is not such a sandy foundation left us of our abiding with God in Christ, as though we merited it, but on the security of better terms, consisting in the immutable purpose of his grace, which received eternal ratification in the blood of Christ, where all things pertaining to salvation are made effectual in the covenant, where all the ordering, disposing, guiding and ruling of all things things pertaining to the *church* are according to his own wisdom, and his own power, unto his own glory. Observe his promise to Joshua: "I will be with thee," (Joshua i. 5); and to Gideon, "The Lord is with thee," (Judges vi. 12); and with Jeremiah, "I am with thee," (Jer. xv. 20); and so he says to his elect in Isaiah xliii. 1, 2,

"Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." God will protect and care for his people, and wickedness, though it seems to engulf the whole world, can never abound to such an extent that he does not at the same time preserve his elect and provide for their safety. When turmoil and strife in destructive wars abound, and Satan's hords seem to be uprooting all godliness and laying in desolation all human forms of government, our almighty Deliverer bids us, "Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name." He does not say that we shall not pass through sorrows and afflictions, but bids us in another place to maintain a constant wrafare against sin, the world, the flesh and the devil. We are not to be carried to the skies on flowery beds of luxuries and pleasures, nor abandon ourselves to ease and indolence, but rather that we should put on "the whole armor of God," that we may be prepared for enduring every kind of evil. The "fire" and "waters" we are to pass through, for faith to be made strong must be put to trials in many ways; tried by afflictions, buffeted by the billows, scorched by the flames, but we are not "consumed," for supported by the grace of God and fortified by his Spirit we faint not, but wait upon him in patience until he shall lift us up to himself on high.

JOHN GIBSON.

ROMANS IV. 8.

"BLESSED is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."

This is a wonderful consolation to a poor wayworn child of God who has been made to see and feel that he is a vile, wretched and undone sinner. In the face of ample scriptural proof that there is not, nor has ever been, a single Adamic being on earth who did not and does not sin, as is evidenced in Romans iii. 10, "There is none righteous, no, not one," then surely every one who is not righteousness is certainly sinful. There is no escape from this conclusion. Read Romans v. 12. Now that we have reached the pointed and scriptural conclusion that there is not, nor has ever been, one on earth (except Jesus) who is not a sinner, let us see who it is that the Lord will not impute sin to. Certainly there could be no misunderstanding as to what the text means. If it means blessed is the man who does not sin, or has not sinned, or will not sin, the text would not read as it does. But blessed is the man unto whom the Lord will not impute sin. Impute means to charge to, so there are some, even though they are sinners, it will not be charged to. The question might arise, Are all men in this category? I say, No. If they were who would have sin to account for? Universal salvation would be the ultimate result. Is there any room for a scriptural proof of universal salvation of all Adam's race? No. I have but to cite you to one passage of Scripture to prove this point: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment."—Matt. xxv. 46. This

proves that their sins were charged to them, and as a result they received everlasting punishment. On the other hand, if you will read the rest of this verse you will find a good Scripture on which to base a good conclusion as to whom it is the Lord will not impute sin. I quote, "But the righteous into life everlasting." So you see there are two different peoples in the world. We cannot escape this conclusion scripturally, no mater how hard we try, nor how intelligent we may be. In the beginning, with the first two boys born in the world, this very subject we are discussing was thoroughly demonstrated. Read the fourth chapter of Genesis, all of it, and you will find where Cain sinned and was punished. Surely he would not have been punished as he was if his sins had not been charged to him. Jacob and Esau are another shining exexample, and even though Jacob was worse, from a human standpoint, than Esau, we have the language of the Lord himself, in Romans ix. 13, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Now is it not only reasonable but scriptural to believe that the Lord did impute Esau's sins to him and they were visited upon him, insomuch that in Hebrews xii. 17, Esau sought repentance from his sins and found no place, though he sought it carefully with tears? There is extensive effort on the part of almost all creeds (except the Old Baptists) to prove that the Lord's attitude towards Jacob was affected by conditions performed by the creatures, but this is so positively denied I cannot see how any one can fail to see it: "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." —Rom. ix. 11. It is perfectly true that both were sinners, even in conception and immediately afterwards, but the one unto whom the Lord will not impute sin is the blessed one. Then I might also mention Isaac and Ishmael, and so on down through the Bible. In short, before there was a world, or even the foundation of it, the all-wise, all-powerful, self-existent, perfect and unchangeable God determined to create and bring into existence a world, just as it is, was and shall be. He purposed to people it just as it is, was and shall be. He also determined, or purposed, that sin should enter into it. He also made choice of and determined to save some of this race of people. Let me quote one verse, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."—Eph. i. 4. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."—Eph. i. 5. Therefore, we see from these passages that they were chosen in Christ, the Savior, the Sin-bearer, who stood in the mind and purpose of God before the foundation of the world. Who was he the sin-bearer for? The whole Adamic race? No, but for those whom the Father chose in him before the world began, those to whom the Lord will not impute sin, or those of whom the angel said, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his

people from their sins." Mark the words, "His people," and you will see there is certainly quite a significant meaning in those two words. Then one who does not believe this doctrine might say, Is not everybody his people? If so, then universal salvation will be the result, unless Jesus failed to do what he came to do. If he failed having all power in heaven and earth (Matt. xxviii. 18), holding the keys of death and hell (Rev. i. 18) and working all things after the counsel of his will, then what hope have we? There could be no hope at all for a sinner if his Sin-bearer failed, but we would ask this question, How could One fail who has all power, the will, and who holds the keys of death? Another question that could be asked is, If he came to save his people from their sins, and our text says the Lord will not impute (or charge) their sins, how is he to save them from their sins? Well, here is the point: their sins were charged to Jesus by decree, or purpose, for him to atone for with his precious blood. The text does not for a moment in the least imply the idea that the sins of every one are not charged to some one. They are, and they must be satisfactorily and completely atoned for. That is why he came, and that is what he accomplished when he said, "It is finished." Now that this is done, the only way we are ever entitled to forgiveness is by grace and mercy. All the gifts and graces and callings of our gracious heavenly Father are because all our sins were charged to Him who is mighty to save, and they were not charged, or imputed, to the Lord's people, but to Christ the Savior, the High Priest, the Prince of Peace. Let us see if we can find a suitable portion of Scripture which will prove this. "All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." All who? All unto whom the Lord will not impute sin; all who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world that they should be holy and without blame before him in love (Eph. i. 4), all that he came to save, his people. As he said in John xvii. 2, "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." As many, and no more. I will admit they are all his by creation, but not as his chosen people. If this were not so, then again universal salvation would be so. But to prove there is a sense in which they are not his people, read what St. John records in the tenth chapter: "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." The sheep are all his, but the goats were not his in a covenant sense. You will find in the end the sheep are all still his, and he says to them, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom," etc.—Matt. xxv. 34. I want you to note the word "blessed" in the last verse quoted. Remember that is the man unto whom the Lord will not impute sin.

Dear child of God, what a wonderful consolation that our sins were never charged to us (because we would not have been able to pay), but to our blessed Redeemer and Savior, who came traveling in the greatness of his

strength and mighty to save. He paid the redemption price and washed us from our sins with his precious blood, out of every nation, kindred and tongue under heaven. No doubt every child of God would love to know that he is embraced in these precious and glorious promises of the Lord. We only have hope, yet we have abundance of evidence in our experience which, if the Lord blesses us to recall, gives us great hope, comfort and encouragement. Let me relate some of the identities of the blessed. Jesus said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Do you ever feel hungry and thirst after righteousness? If so, you are one of those to whom the Lord will not impute sin. "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." Dear child of God, do you not often mourn because of your felt sense of sin? Then you are one of the blessed unto whom the Lord will not impute sin. Then Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." Dear ones, do you ever feel so low and destitute that you almost despair? Then you are in the kingdom of heaven. What a glorious and precious hope! It is worth more than all the vain treasures of this earth or all the glory of vain man. The hope of heaven shines in my poor mind and heart above all that I have ever thought of. I had rather dream of it, if the Lord will bless the dream to my comfort, than anything else I have dreamed of. Once I dreamed of the resurrection, and I can never express the beauties and glories to my satisfaction that I was blessed to see, hear and feel at the time. I saw the graves burst asunder and those who were in them come forth dressed in the most beautiful white. They were ascending slowly toward heaven as I looked on in wonder and amazement. There was a voice that spoke to me that affected me to the extent that I was completely changed. I was dressed in the most beautiful white and ascended with them as long as the dream lasted. It was a glorious and blessed sight, and I was filled with praise as I saw, felt and heard. I felt free from sin dressed in that beautiful white. I joined in the sweet anthems of praise, that I fully felt and understood at that time, but truly I am now, and have been, unable to relate much of it since I awoke at the time. Truly I saw, heard and felt "things unlawful to be uttered." I ascended until about fifteen feet from the earth and it seemed that a dark shroud of a cloud came between us and the earth. The elements were as white as the most beautiful snow, and white clouds were around as we were ascending heavenward shouting and singing praise to His blessed name. This Scripture came to me and seemed to awaken me, Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be kings and priests, and they shall reign with him on the earth. Oh how light I felt, but how I have wept that it was not a reality instead of a dream, yet I have often been made to shed tears of joy that I was given this

beautiful experience, which I feel so unworthy of.

Dear children, I have digressed long enough to tell you a part of my dream. I desire to say that if you mourn, hunger and thirst; weep and cry, long and crave to be embraced in these blessed things, you are one of those to whom the Lord will not impute sin, and some sweet and blessed day you, together with the redeemed family of God, will ascend to meet the Lord in the air. Your soul, body and spirit will be quickened into the glorious likeness of the precious Redeemer and Savior, no more to hunger or thirst, mourn or weep, no more to find yourself a sinner in the flesh. Pain, death, sickness and sorrow will be felt and feared no more, but praise, glory and honor to His blessed name will be yours to sing and shout for evermore. Oh may this be the lot of every one who loves these things; yea, and it will be. May the Lord bless and keep every one who loves these blessed truths, is my prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen. Beloved, pray for me, a poor and often cast down sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all.

Your unworthy brother, in hope of continued mercy and great goodness,

R. W. RHODES.

FARMERVILLE, Louisiana.

ROCKY MOUNT, Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—Your letter just received, calling my attention to a promise I made to write something on the subject "We have a little sister." I wish to say in the outset that I have never written anything for publication, feeling my inability to write anything that would be of interest to any one, much less the household of faith. However, at your request, I will try, the Lord willing, to write my views on the foregoing subject, and send to you for your approval, and if in your judgment you think it not worth printing in your good paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, just cast it into the waste-basket.

The subject under consideration is found in Solomon's Song, eighth chapter, eighth, ninth and tenth verses: "We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for? If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver: and if she be a door, we will inclose her with boards of cedar. I am a wall, and my breasts like towers: then was I in his eyes as one that found favor." Solomon was a Jew, the wisest man that ever lived, and was blessed by the Spirit of God to look into the future and see this little sister afar off and claim relationship with her, calling her sister. I think this little sister is the Gentile church. Solomon saw her before she was spoken for, when she was in darkness, without the law or the prophets. At that time she had no breasts. She was a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. The breast is where our little ones are nourished and fed on the sincere milk of the word or gospel. But this little sister did not have the gospel at that time when Solomon saw her, for she had no breasts, but he saw that she was to be spoken for, and asked the question, "What shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for?" What did the Jews do for

her when she was spoken for? They received her into christian fellowship, into the church of God, and after she was spoken for, or called of God, she had breasts like towers and did feed the church of God with the gospel of his Son, and she is still feeding the flock of God. But the Jews have fallen away and gone back to Moses and the law and there is not a christian church among them. But the Gentile church still holds to the apostolic doctrine and practice, which is the foundation, or wall, upon which the christian church is built. "If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver." Here we see a beautiful building, the church of God. We see both Jew and Gentile coming together and building on the same wall, or foundation, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, in whom the whole building is fitly framed together, and groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord. "If she be a door, we will inclose her with boards of cedar." Both Jews and Gentiles compose the church of God, and they are inclosed in the covenant of grace. Jesus has removed the middle wall or partition between Jew and Gentile and hath made both one in Christ. "If she be a door, we will inclose her with boards of cedar." The Jews probably will be received back into the fellowship of the Gentile church (the door) before the fullness of the Gentiles be brought in, and will build upon the same foundation that we are building upon. Jesus said to the Jews, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when you fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." That is, into the fellowship of the Gentile church, which is the everlasting love of God that binds the family of God together in one body.

So this little sister that was once in darkness and had no breasts (the gospel) now has breasts like towers and is feeding the church of God on the sincere milk of the gospel. She says, "I am a wall, and my breasts like towers: then was I in his eyes as one that found favor."

Yours in hope,

RANDOLPH PERDUE.

KERNERSVILLE, North Carolina.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—You will find inclosed two dollars for the continuance of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, a paper which is welcome in my home, every copy, for its soundness, and surely it is a God-sent gift, for when we think of Jesus being the head of the church in all things, this must be then God the Father working through his dear Son in the hearts of his people, causing them to write many comforting thoughts to each other, thus showing the work of Christ in them, and not only that, but enabling men like you, together with many others, to contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, and to not be ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto the believer. The Scripture tells us that there were seven thousand in Elijah's day that had not bowed to the image of Baal, and I believe there will be some here who will not bow to the deceitful works of Satan or worship

after the traditions of men, until Christ shall come again to carry his jewels home.

I will close, as I do not feel I can write anything to God's humble poor or worth publishing. Hoping some time I will meet all God's humble poor who are traveling this road of affliction and from time to time are made to sing, "I am a stranger here below, and what I am 'tis hard to know," where we will no more be strangers, but will all see Christ, be like him and be satisfied.

In hope of eternal life,

D. R. PYRTLE.

STOCKDALE, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find two dollars for the renewal of my subscription. For thirty-eight years I have been taking the SIGNS and have never failed to pay, nor have I ever failed to get the paper, and have always thoroughly enjoyed reading it. I often read an article and try to thank my good Lord for all the goodness that has come from above. It is food to all those who love the Lord. I am seventy-seven years old and am nearing that home, sweet home, prepared for his children who have received that gift from above. I have been a member of the Old Baptist Church for forty-six years, and am thankful I was given faith in the Lord, and was shown what church was built upon the Rock. Not any trouble that was sent to me ever weakened my faith in the Lord, and in his good and grand work. I have eight children, one of whom is a member of our church. I am helpless to save one soul, as I was to save myself. I am glad I was given faith to go home to my friends and tell them what the good Lord had done for me. The joy I felt when I was raised out of the water is still with me.

Cast the mantle of charity over this.

Sincerely,

(MRS.) W. L. HAWK.

BENTON, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed please find money order of two dollars for my subscription for another year. I surely get great comfort from reading this good paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It is wonderful. I do not get to meeting very often, but I get the good old SIGNS and read and it fills my heart with love to all the saints of God. I hope you may be blessed of the Lord to continue publishing it for many years to come.

In hope,

(MRS.) REBECCA GREGORY.

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EDITORIAL.

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ISAIAH XXXVIII. 14.

"O LORD. I am oppressed; undertake for me."

It seems that in these days of trial and affliction we are often a companion of Hezekiah. How thankful we ought to be if we have some of the traits which that gracious man had. First, he lived in trying times; so do we. He had the sentence of death: "Set thine home in order: for thou shalt die, and not live." We also have the sentence of death in ourselves so that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raiseth the dead. Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall; that is, he ceased from man, whose breath is in his nostrils. He knew that all flesh is grass; that it has no more lasting power, neither can help any more than the grass, which is to-day and to-morrow is cut down and withereth. He had recently been greatly distressed by Sennacherib, king of Assyria, who had defied him and his God, and he had seen God save him and Israel from that cruel foe, and therefore in trouble Hezekiah turned to his God. It is true God had sent the trouble, and God also gave him a heart to seek the Lord. Trouble with some makes them more hardened and determined to go their own way; it drives them to the follies and indulgences of this present vain world, and sometimes, if God does not keep them, to despair and destruction; while to those who, like Hezekiah, are kept by God's power and blessed with his Spirit, the trouble is sanctified, and ceasing from man they pray to God. They pray, yet wonder if it is prayer; they mourn and cry; their time is spent in confession and self-abhorrence, of fearful looking for the judgment which shall and does consume the adversary, the flesh. What an adversary the flesh is when we have the sentence of death within ourselves. It must be consumed or we would never trust in the Lord. Like Hezekiah, have we felt that our prayer was as the chattering of the crane or the swallow? Have our eyes failed with looking up? Such experiences are not pleasant, but they are profitable. Wherever such an one is he will not be a fault-finder, nor a busy-body, nor a tattler among brethren; rather he will be ready to lay his mouth in the dust if so be there may be hope. (Lam. iii. 29.) What a

check this was to Hezekiah's ambitions. This kingdom had been preserved from the Assyrians, but as yet he had no son to reign in his stead. His natural desire was to live happily and prosperously, but the Lord's ways are not our ways. God has appointed that trials must and will befall; and many and varied are the trials that we must meet, yet in the hands of God, the Holy Ghost, those many and various trials "worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen." Here, if our readers will bear with us, our mind goes back to an incident a little while ago. We were on our way to an evening meeting in a town near here when we received very distressing news, which concerned our immediate family, and which came so suddenly and unexpectedly that our mind was overwhelmed. In a little while we thought of the meeting at which we were expected to speak. We were very distressed, and felt that the incident was a proof that our sins were finding us out. We were in deep distress of soul, and cried, "O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me." Words from the twenty-seventh Psalm came into our mind and we turned to it and felt it was written for us, especially when we came to the last verse: "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord." With it strength and assurance came, and it seemed the Lord had heard the cry of the destitute. How small we are when in face of overwhelming trouble, yet how strong when the Lord is the strength of our life. When Gideon was questioning how the Lord could be with Israel when everything seemed to be against them, the angel of the Lord said, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor. The Lord was with him, and that made him strong, not in himself, but in the Lord. The Lord's way was to hide pride from man, so Gideon must see his army diminished to three hundred men who lapped water like a dog. How strange are God's ways. We find when they came to the fight, the pitchers had to be broken for the light to shine. Is not this true today? We have this treasure in earthen vessels, but the vessels must be broken for the light to shine, and this is right, for God says a broken and contrite heart he will not despise.

Let us go back to the exercise we referred to above. Had we not been overwhelmed we would not have felt the sweetness and suitability of God's word, and the incident strengthened us in the Lord and in the power of his might. Soon after, we went a long way from home with the desire to visit a dear sister who had been very sick, having had a stroke, and we found that her sickness had been blessed to her soul, and though our trials were so different, yet the Spirit of God had blessed both of us to prove that the Lord teacheth to profit. It is not necessary to have the same trial; our trials vary more than our circumstances, but it is the Lord undertaking for us that brings the trial to a blessed issue. Our God has undertaken for us long before we cry to him, his

mercies are from everlasting to everlasting. Like the natural sun, its light has been coming towards the earth long before poor puny man feels its beneficial rays. When trouble comes upon us or our people we do well to examine ourselves, for it is true that as a man sows that shall he also reap, the curse causeless does not come, and when we can, like Hezekiah, confess our sins, we are told that he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. When the brethren were brought back, and had to stand before Joseph (Gen. xliv. 16), "Judah said, What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants." They knew they had not treated Joseph, their brother, right, they had known that for a long time; they had also deceived their father, they knew that, and now it was God's time to bring them into judgment, to humble them before Joseph, and they are distressed. There is a sowing and a reaping, and they were reaping, in their distress, what they had sown, before Joseph they were self-accused and self-condemned. So it was with Hezekiah, one of his great troubles was that he would not see the Lord in the land of the living. He had cut off his own life, like a weaver might cut a thread. "I reckoned till morning, that, as a lion, so will he break all my bones: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me." What revenge and self-loathing he now felt because of sin, his mouth is laid in the dust. There are many such cases in the word of God, although few were given to express themselves just as Hezekiah did. He tells us in verse three that he had walked before his God in truth, with a perfect heart and had done that which was good in his sight and he wept sore. Job was called by his God a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil, yet in trouble Job confessed, "How many are mine iniquities and sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin. Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy? Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble? For thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth. Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks, and lookest narrowly unto all my paths; thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet."—Job xiii. 23-27. These instances are left on record that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope, but how many cases there are that are not recorded, where the exercise of the soul in trouble is between them and their God. We cannot think that Rahab's lie (Joshua ii. 4), though at the time she perhaps thought it was in a good cause, went uncondemned before the just and holy God, even though it was not left on record as to her sorrow and distress. We have often wondered about Jacob, just what his reaction was when Laban deceived him, by giving him Leah instead of Rachel. He must have remembered with distress and self-abhorrence that he, too, once deceived his own father by pretending that he was Esau.

If he did, it at least made him a little more tolerant to selfish Laban. Thus distress can come from sins and faults of youth, from backsliding and disobedience. It also comes from trouble that is sent, not because of any particular sin, but for the purpose of God and the glorification of his name. But whatever it is, for it to be distressing to the soul it must be galling and hard to bear. When a thing is unbearable, like a running sore, then distress abounds and all the remedies perhaps will be tried. There are remedies in God's word which are very often neglected, which if tried would often be to the health of God's people. Jesus said, If thou hast ought against they brother, go and tell him his faults between thee and him, but how many there are to-day wickedly transgress this admonition and bring distress and sorrow to those they have professed to love. Wherever a pastor or deacon is prompted by selfish aims; that is, a consideration of themselves, rather than what is the mind of the church, it will bring distress to the church, and wherever brethren are worldly in their ways it will lead to the church's undoing. To-day the Lord's people seem to be scattered and peeled, and this should be a distress to those who fear the Lord, for if there is one place that seems in these trying days as an oasis in the desert it is the church of the living God in this wilderness world. National conditions and troubles have been a distress to many of us for a long time past. Especially is this so to those who, like the writer, live in a country that is now at war, a war that is demanding the lives of our finest young men and the wealth of our land. The circumstances referred to earlier, when we were overwhelmed, concerned one of our own children, who felt it was her duty to marry and go with her husband to the shores of Europe. This was very trying, but God has so far preserved her and comforted us. Another of our dear ones is learning to fly, to take his place with many more such noble boys, to be sacrificed in what seems to us to be a most awful waste of life and material to stem the tide of those wicked men who are determined to conquer, but our eyes are up unto the hills from whence cometh our help. It is very distressing, and brings us often before the Lord like Hezekiah with his face to the wall, and who, knowing the terrible destruction and desolation going on, does not cry, O Lord, I am distressed? No doubt the German people are being judged, as we are, they are being scourged, wicked rulers are among them, for it is God's way of chastening the nations. The country of Martin Luther, which once stood valiantly for the truth and freedom from the dictates of an apostate Rome, has left its simple faith in God's word, followed the "higher critics," belittled the word of God and seems now content to worship evil men. What of ourselves? Is there the zeal for the truth that there once was among us? Do we search the word to see if these things be so, or are we content to take it from our favorite Elder? which seems, to say the least, in this day, to be bordering upon the worship of angels. The ways of Zion mourn, few attend

her solemn feasts, and who among us lay it to heart? Cars can go to this town and that, money is spent freely for papers and smokes, and not a few questionable things, but when it comes to the family going to meeting it is easy to find an excuse; such conditions distress us. Does it grieve us to see membership of churches of our faith decreasing all over the land, and do we lay it to heart? Is the name of Old School Baptist trodden under the foot of men because of our inconsistent walk? This is a day of small things, and brethren have much to discourage them in the way, but let us not forget that the comfort of Zion is our comfort and their joy is our joy; equally so their sorrow is our sorrow, and we are in our right place when we are asking the Lord to undertake for us. Here perhaps we do well to remember that much we complain about in the church can be traced to the indifference of its members, and therefore it becomes us to examine ourselves and weigh the motives that actuate us. Are we the cause of a decline? Are we endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace? Are we in every way expressing hate for our enemies, or are we praying for them? Examine yourselves, and see if ye be in the faith, for know ye not, that Christ Jesus dwells in your hearts, except ye be reprobates? Are we distressed because of our own spiritual condition? Do we fear that God has forsaken us? Can we look back to the day when we did love the brethren, when we were glad when they said unto us, Let us go to the house of the Lord? It was then we sang with melody in our hearts, "I love to meet among them all, before thy gracious feet to bow, though vilest of them all." Now perhaps you are cold and lifeless and poor and needy, be thankful if you know this and confess it before the Lord, and in your distress ask him to undertake for you.

Should there be those among you, our precious brethren, who have us in heart and mind because of this cruel war, be assured that your love and sympathy and your prayers are highly prized by us. We do find our God a present help in trouble. He has undertaken for us, he is our refuge and strength, and often we are willing to leave all our cares in his hands.

In closing we will quote a hymn that has for years been a great comfort to us, and desire that our readers might get something from it. It was written by the German hymn writer Neumarck in 1653.

"Leave God to order all thy ways,
And trust in him what'er betide,
Thou'lt find him in the evil days
Thy all-sufficient strength and guide;
Who trusts in God's unchanging love
Builds on the Rock that nought can move.

What can these anxious cares avail,
These never-ceasing moans and sighs?
What can it help us to bewail
Each painful moment as it flies?
Our cross and trials do but press
The heavier for our bitterness.

Only thy restless heart keep still,
And wait in cheerful hope; content
To take what'er his gracious will,
His all-discerning love, hath sent.
Doubt not our inmost wants are known
To him who chose us for his own.

He knows when joyful hours are best,
He sends them as he sees it meet;
When thou hast borne the fiery test,
And art made free from all deceit,
He comes to thee all unaware,
And makes thee own his loving care.

Nor, in the heat of pain and strife,
Think God hath cast thee off unheard,
And that the man, whose prosperous life
Thou enviest, is of him preferred.
Time passes, and much change doth bring,
And sets a bound to everything.

All are alike before his face;
'Tis easy to our God most high
To make the rich man poor and base,
And give the poor man wealth and joy.
True wonders still by him are wrought,
Who setteth up and brings to nought.

Wait, pray, and swerve not from his ways,
But do thine own part faithfully;
Trust his rich promises of grace,
So shall they be fulfilled in thee;
God never yet forsook at need
The soul that trusted him indeed."

"And Hezekiah received the letter of the hands of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up into the house of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord."

G. R.

TO OUR READERS.

You have been most generous with your applause in registering your approval of the Signs, and for this we wish to assure you of our heartfelt thanks.

The Signs of the Times is now one hundred and eight years old, and there are occasional references from those who have been subscribers for forty, fifty and even sixty years, or more. These things indicate that a substantial number of our subscribers are advancing in age and the mortality among them is very high, which means that we must constantly keep securing new subscribers if we are to maintain the high standard of our paper. In addition to our present number keeping their subscriptions paid up to date so far as it is possible for them to do so, another real tangible way in which they can assist and encourage us is to actually get others to subscribe for the paper.

We are confident that the vast majority of you are not only pleased with its contents, but that you are also pleased with the size type that is used, making it easy to read by even those with weak eyes, and the prompt and efficient manner in which the publisher does his job. In this connection, you might keep in mind the "poor of the flock" column and the approaching Good Will season of the year, when a year's subscription to the Signs will gladden the heart of some poor soul all through the year.

It is seldom that we call upon our readers for assistance of this kind, so we sincerely hope you will do what you can to help us advance the benefits of the paper by enlarging our circle of subscribers.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:—According to the appointment of Mates Creek Association last year, it is my duty to address you a communication in the form of a Circular Letter, and after thinking over the matter seriously, and prayerfully too, I hope, I have decided to write on the subject of the resurrection of the bodies of the Lord's people, the saints, and in so doing will call your attention to a passage of Scripture which we believe is appropriate at this time, and which reads as follows: "If a man die, shall he live again?" This deep and searching question, asked by the inspiration of God through his servant Job, demonstrates

the fact that there were men in that day and time, as well as in our time, who denied the resurrection of the bodies of the saints. Hence, Job takes up the subject of man that is born of a woman, and shows his mortality, shortness of life and certainty of death, and then asks the question as quoted in the text: "If a man die, shall he live again?" The contention was then, as it is now, over the man that dies, over the mortal man, whether the same man that dies and is buried in the grave is the same man that lives again. That seems to be the argument now of the nonresurrectionist: that this mortal man that dies never lives again. Now the question involves the following idea: Can this mortal man, that is born of a woman, dies and returns to dust, live again? Will God revive his sleeping dust, and wake him out of his sleep? Most assuredly he will, for Job would say on this point, "But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost [spirit], and where is he?" That is, where is mortal man when the spirit is gone from him? Let the Scripture answer: "As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up: so man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep." This is as plain as the sun at noonday, that Job was speaking of mortal man after he had given up the ghost, which is the spirit, which returneth to God who gave it, and the mortal man lieth down in the dust to await the moment of the resurrection; and he shows emphatically in this array of Scripture testimony that the man that lieth down in the dust shall awake and be raised out of his sleep when the heavens be no more, but not until then. But this man shall sleep in the dust till the heavens pass away and are no more. Then the identical man who dies and lieth down in the dust shall live again; not a mortal man in time, but an immortal man in eternity; death is swallowed up of life, or this mortal put on immortality. It is not an exchange of body, but a changed body of all the saints of God. In proof of this I will quote the following passages of holy writ: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." —Phil. iii. 20, 21. Now the apostle has been so plain on this point that no argument can upset it, or explain it away to mean anything else but that it is this mortal body of ours, this man that dies, that is immortalized and raised in the likeness of Jesus, for he says, "Who shall change our vile body, that it [this vile body of ours] may be fashioned [or made like] unto his glorious body." Hence it is the vile body that is changed, for it is the vile body that sleeps in the dust, and then and there waits till the change comes: changed from vile to pure, from mortal to immortal, from corruption to incorruption. It goes down vile and mortal, but is raised pure and immortal. It is not raised and then immortalized, but raised immortal. "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead

shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."—Rom. viii. 11. Now Paul neither says, nor means, that the Spirit of Christ that dwells in God's people is quickened, or made alive, for it is life itself, but he boldly affirms that the same Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies; and, furthermore, Paul embodies all the saints of God together with himself, and says, "Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."—Rom. viii. 23. We do not wait for that we already have, but for that which we have not, but are in expectation of and hoping for. In this Paul has plainly expressed each and all of our personal experiences, for we daily groan within ourselves, being burdened; not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. That is, our vile body changed, or quickened, or redeemed from corruption to incorruption, etc.

"And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept, arose, and came out of the graves after his [Christ's] resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."—Matt. xxvii. 52, 53. This proves to demonstration that it was the bodies of the saints that were sleeping in the graves, and that arose from the graves. Who can deny the resurrection of the bodies of these saints? They arose after Christ's resurrection, showing that they were members of his body, and that it was by virtue of Christ's resurrection that they arose and went into the holy city, and we have no account of their ever returning to their graves, but shall ever be with the Lord. On this doctrine of Christ's resurrection is also built our faith in his promise to give life and immortality to his people, whom he chose for his own inheritance. Christ's resurrection is both the cause and pattern of our resurrection. Paul implied a plain impossibility for Christ to rise and his people not to rise, when he said, "For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised."—1 Cor. xv. 16. The whole bone of contention over the resurrection, from the morning of time to the present day, has been about the dead, the mortal body, the Adamic sinner, the man that dieth, if he shall live again or be raised from the grave. It seems clear to my mind that Job , as well as all other inspired writers, has proven conclusively that the very man that dies is the very man that lives again, for in the text, "If a man die, shall he live again?" he has fully established the fact by saying, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." He does not intimate that he will wait to see if the change come, but will wait till it does come. Its coming was, and is, an absolute certainty, as much as his dying was; one was as certain as the other. Each was the fixed purpose of God, and he, like Paul, was waiting for the change, to wit, the redemption of his body, in order to live again. "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised in-

corruptible, and we shall be changed." The argument is over the dead. The spirit is not dead, it goes to God who gave it. It is the man that dies that lives again. The man that dies is dead, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" If the dead bodies of the saints did not rise the graves would have the victory over them. If the doctrine of the resurrection of the bodies of the Lord's people could be set aside by the Scriptures it would forever prove that there is no salvation for poor mortal man, all our hopes must perish, and we would be of all men most miserable. "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ," in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. Christ is himself the resurrection and the life, and if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and our faith is also vain, and we are all yet in our sins. We had as well preach that Christ has not been raised as to preach that the dead rise not, for Paul has shown that they are so interwoven that one cannot be without the other, for he is the head of the body, the church, and as sure as Christ, the head, has raised from the grave, all the members of his body shall be raised from their graves and fashioned like unto his glorious body. Therefore, the Scriptures teach that Christ died and rose again, and that death has no more dominion over him, neither over the members of his body, but that he will bring each and every one of them to heaven and immortal glory in Christ, their resurrection and life. Therefore, the man that dies shall live again. If the poor Adamic man is not saved now and forever, all our praying, preaching, etc., is vain, and we are yet in our sins. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.

Dear brethren, stand fast in the Lord, and contend for the doctrine of God our Savior.

The next Circular Letter is to be written by Ben Chapman.

Author—J. W. May. Reprinted—H. W. May and Tom Chapman.

JEFF STATON, Moderator.

G. B. BIRD, Clerk.

VIEWS WANTED.

I WOULD like to have some brother who has a mind to do so write his views on the following Scriptures: Zechariah x. 4, and Ezekiel xvii. 5-7. Also, I would like to have some brother write and explain fully in what way Adam was the figure, or is the figure, of Christ, or him that was to come. It is said that Adam was not deceived, the woman being in the transgression. It is said also that by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin. In what way then was Adam the figure of him that was to come, Eve being the transgressor, and sin coming by Adam? I would appreciate it if one of the editors, or any other brother, will write through the SIGNS and give me what light they can on any of the above subjects.

One seeking to know the truth,

W. L. HALL.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, at our home, Leesburg, Va., December 23rd, 1938, Joseph Withers Murphy, of Herndon, Va., and Miss Virginia Alice Marshall, of Arcola, Va.

By the same, at the home of the bride's grandmother, sister Elizabeth Mellott, Pleasant Ridge Fulton Co., Pa., Michael E. H. Bard and Miss Evaline Elizabeth Mellott, December, 24th, 1939.

By the same, at the home of the bride's mother, Shepherdstown, W. Va., August 30th, 1940, Thomas Marshall Hunter, of Berkley Springs, W. Va., and Miss Mary Mierley Thompson.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER GEORGE W. BERRY was born February 16th, 1858, and his age at the time of his death was 82 years, 4 months and 9 days. I do not think a death among our people in this section for a long time has caused as deep a feeling of loss as did the word on June 25th that our dear old father in Israel had fallen asleep. Elder Berry was twice married, first to Miss Nancy Newton, and to this union were born eight children: Horace, Aaron, John, Thomas, Dan, Mrs. Mary Thompson, Mrs. Maggie Treadaway and Mrs. Ruth Smith. The mother died in 1934, and he married sister Hassie Davis, who survives him. Surviving also are three brothers: Sid Berry, a Methodist minister, Robert Berry, a Missionary Baptist minister, and Monroe Berry, together with many other relatives and friends, to mourn his departure. Elder Berry was born and reared in Fayette County, Alabama, and spent his entire life here, farming, preaching and serving his fellow-man in other capacities from time to time. His preaching was not popular among his friends, but as a man he had the respect of one and all, and was known far and wide as a strictly honest, God-fearing citizen. I have had the privilege of growing up under Elder Berry. As a boy I liked to have him come home with father and mother, for he was an interesting talker, but since coming into the church he has been a great deal of help to me, and to the brethren in general, and many young ministers have felt the advantage of his able gift in the ministry. He was an able gift to the churches, and was the last of our old ministers. He was ordained the third Sunday in May, 1900, and has served the churches all this time, having been pastor of his home church (Hopewell) all the while.

To dear sister Berry, the children, other relatives and the Primitive Baptists, may the Lord give you a spirit of reconciliation in this great loss. Our loss is great, and how we do miss him in town, at home, but especially at Hopewell. May the Lord give us others to take his place. And to the SIGNS, which he read and supported for forty years, may the Lord raise up other readers.

The funeral was held at Hopewell Church. The writer read the thirty-first Psalm, Elder M. H. Brock spoke in prayer and Elder Lytle Burns preached the discourse, after which his brother, Sid Berry, made a few remarks. Burial in the cemetery at Hopewell, to await the resurrection, which was his hope and belief.

W. D. GRIFFIN.

W. C. CORBIN, the subject of this sketch, died June 18th, 1940, after a long illness. He was prominent in educational, social and religious affairs, and was ever ready to help those in distress. He is survived by two sons, W. H. and Wyatt, four daughters, Effie, Tempie, Velma and Mrs. J. W. Price, and Mrs. W. C. Corbin, his wife by a second mar-

riage. Funeral services were held at Goodwater Church, Newton, Ala., June 19th, 1940, with his lifelong friend, Elder J. J. Collins, officiating.

ALSO,

THE infant child of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Tindell, of Hartford, Ala., died, and funeral services were held at Mt. Gilead Church, with Mr. W. A. Davis and Elder J. J. Collins officiating. It is survived by its parents and a large number of other relatives.

ALSO,

THE infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Bennet McKinnon, of Dalesville, Ala, died August 6th, 1940, and funeral services were conducted at Goodwater Church by Elder J. J. Collins August 7th. It is survived by its parents and four brothers.

ALSO,

MRS. J. A. SOWELL died August 13th, 1940, after a lingering illness. She is survived by a son, J. T., with whom she made her home, and two daughters, Mrs. W. H. Johnson, of Dotham, Ala., and Mrs. Albert Muns, of Largo, Florida. She was prominent in social and religious life. Funeral services were held at Goodwater Church, with Mr. E. O. Sellers and Elder J. J. Collins officiating, and Ward-Wilson Funeral Home in charge of arrangements, on August 15th, 1940.

ALSO,

JOHN HOWELL, a firm believer in Christ, died at the age of ninety-four years, at his home, near Hartford, Ala., He was one who was ever ready to aid those in need and to uphold the principles dear to Primitive Baptists. By his request the writer officiated at his funeral. Interment was at Pondtown Church.

J. J. COLLINS.

LITTLE FLOCK CHURCH, at Altus, Oklahoma, was made sad by the passing of our dear sister, MATTIE BELL GREER, who died May 21st, 1940. Sister Greer was married to Thomas M. Greer (deceased) in October, 1884. She was seventy-three years old, and was the mother of seven children, three of whom survive her. They are Mrs. Eliza Snider, Mrs. Nellie Simpson and Lee Greer. Sister Greer professed a hope in Christ at an early age, and united with the Old School Baptist Church about thirty-five years ago, and lived a consistent and true member, always contending for the faith of which Jesus is the author and finisher.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder W. N. Green.

Little Flock Church voted while in conference that this notice be entered upon our church book, and that a copy of same be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The church extends sympathy to her family.

W. N. GREEN, Moderator.
(MRS.) LOU KESTER, Church Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

"A friend," Ontario, $1; A. J. Doggett, Ala., 25 cents; Mrs. Orien Mellott, Pa., $1; William H. Morris, Mo., $1.

MEETINGS.

Providence permitting, the Original Mount Zion Association of Old School Baptists will convene with Little Blue and Sni-a-bar Church, at Grain Valley, Jackson County, Missouri, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 4th, 5th and 6th, 1940. We invite all sound orderly Baptists to meet with us.

D. A. J. ADAMS, Moderator.
WILLIAM H. MORRIS, Clerk
7241 Jefferson Street,
KANSAS CITY, Missouri.

The North Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association will meet with Ephesus Church, near Emmet,

Arkansas, on Friday before the second Sunday in October, and continue three days. We invite all lovers of truth to meet with us.

J. D. RHODES.

The usual all-day meeting will be held at New Vernon, near Howells, N. Y., on October 12th, 1940. At the same time there will be a business meeting for the election of Trustees, etc. We cordially invite our brethren and friends to meet with us on that occasion.

R. LESTER DODSON.

This year's session of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting is planned to be held, the Lord willing, with the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 16th, 17th and 18th. We invite to meet with us, ministers and brethren of our correspondence and those also who may not be in direct correspondence with us, yet who are of like precious faith with us and who have a desire to be with us in this meeting. The New Valley meetinghouse is located eight miles north of Leesburg and four miles from Point of Rocks, just a mile north of U. S. Route 15, from the little cross-roads village called Lucketts. Those coming Tuesday will come to Leesburg and ask for Elder Lefferts or Mr. McIntosh. Those coming Wednesday in own conveyance will go directly to the meetinghouse. Buses for Leesburg leave 12th and New York Ave., Washington, D. C. Buses Tuesday afternoon and early Wednesday morning will be met at Leesburg. If any further information is desired, please address the writer of this notice.

(MRS.) W. F. GARRETT, Church Clerk,
LEESBURG, Virginia.

The Ebenezer Church of Baltimore (Madison Street, near Calvert) will hold an all-day meeting the third Sunday in October (20th). A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will be entertained by the Little Creek Church, in Delmar, Delaware, on Wednesday and Thursday, October 23rd and 24th, beginning at 10:30 a. m., Standard Time. A cordial invitation is extended to those of our faith and order to meet with us. We hope our brethren in the ministry will remember us and make an effort to be present. Trains will be met from both north and south on Tuesday and Wednesday morning. Those coming by auto, come to the home of H. C. Ker. They will be distributed from there.

H. C. KER, Pastor.

JOHN L. HASTINGS, Clerk.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists is now settled in her new church-house, at 4614 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas, where she holds her regular monthly services on each first Sunray at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. Preaching services also on each third Sunday by Elder C. B. Teague, and each second Sunday by brother O. C. Lee, at 11 o'clock a. m. A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. R. HARDY, Pastor.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers.

Single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,

MIDDLETOWN, N Y.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 108. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1940. NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE LORD OMNIPOTENT REIGNETH.

NEVER in all my experience have I seen a time when more people were concerned about the developments that are being made in regard to the conflict now going on in Europe. It is somewhat astonishing to me, and, too, it is serious, but in all the things which each day and hour bring forth we acknowledge that God is still ruling in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. I am proud, at times, when my fellowman and family talk and discuss these turbulent times, to tell them that the things which are coming to pass to-day are no worse than the things people of Biblical days underwent, and out of those times God led his people triumphantly. He delivered them by his own hand and gave them hearts to praise his name for the same. The only way we are able to form an opinion is to recall some relative event which has happened, or come to pass in the past, thereby judging the future, or rather, trying to judge the future. I know that the only things we know we have learned them by experience, whether they be natural or pertaining to the kingdom of heaven. It seems to be the lot of people to wonder why God does so and so, and our minds are quite often searching to find out the reason, but we cannot, unless it pleases God to reveal through his Son to us his purpose. We cannot understand why God allows, permits or suffers the rulers of one nation to overrun and terrorize another nation and order his armies to kill in wholesale order, but He does. We cannot understand the even smaller things that we daily come in contact with. For instance, why did God make the chicken and the hawk to catch it? and many things too numerous to mention God did, yet we must acknowledge that he made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. Who knows but that God hides a smiling face behind the great clouds of trouble of this present time? for I have been convinced that the

most wonderful blessings we receive, and the ones we most appreciate, are the ones in disguise. When one trouble after another seem to overshadow us, and we seem to faint and feel that surely his mercy is clean gone forever, God is only preparing us then for a reception of his mercy, and also preparing us for his praise, becauuse when we are delivered we know whom to praise. Not men, nor ourselves, but the Lord omnipotent, who reigneth. Nation may rise against nation and many lives be taken, and troubles be ever so great, there still is no schism in God's work. He reigns omnipotent over all the inhabitants of the earth, and in his divine control is every thing, from and including the rise and fall of nations, the government thereof, and even the little and seemingly insignificant insects and plants of the field seem by their very existence to say, He upholds me; he made me. If I did not believe that God had full knowledge and purpose and control of the wickedest rulers of the earth today, I do not feel that I would have any surety that he would keep me from the evil of my own way. The reason I believe God is all-powerful is because he has dealt with me in an all-powerful way. The reason I know God is merciful is because he has been merciful to a poor sinner such as I. The only way we can mention, as David did, the lovingkindness of the Lord is "according to all that he hath bestowed upon me." Kings' hearts are in his hand, and he turneth them about as rivers of water. However bold and audacious the aggressive leaders of the world are to-day, their hearts are in the hand of the Lord, and the Lord omnipotent reigneth, which means he reigns with all power. I am glad that the bounds of all are set, even the devil, the evil perpetrator of all evil. I am glad that he cannot go beyond the eternal decree of the Lord omnipotent, otherwise we would have no surety, and the Lord could not reign omnipotent. However great the aspirations of men and devils may be the blessed child of God has the wonderful consolation that "if God be for us, who can be against us?" The faith that those little children are exercised with is so strong that they, through Christ, fear not those who can destroy the body and have no further power over them, but they fear Him who can destroy both soul and body in hell's fire, and when possessed with that blessed Spirit it matters not whether they die in battle, or in the deep blue, or any other way, for we are given to feel that the One who rules omnipotent has triumphed greatly over death, hell and the grave, and hath given us a glorious victory over all foes, past, present and future, which causes us to feel that all flesh is as grass, whether it be the flesh of dictators, presidents, kings or paupers, and that sooner or later, according to the purpose of God, it shall have to be dissolved and go back to its mother dust. Whatever our station is in this life, and regardless of what our lives have been like, whether in peace or in trouble, the Lord omnipotent has decreed that we shall all come to the same level: even unto death. With God's children this is only a dressing-place for heaven,

For this is the place (even in death) where "this mortal shall have put on immortality," "this corruptible shall have put on incorruption." Though our bodies may be burned and the ashes scattered, though they may be sealed in rust proof steel vaults, or mangled in battle, or in the depths of the sea, when the Lord omnipotent comes the second time to put an end to all wars, famine and pestilence, and calls for these bodies they shall surely come forth, and the elect shall meet him in the air, and before the judgment bar of God they shall be not only pardoned, but freely justified by the imputed righteousness of the Lord omnipotent. The wicked shall be raised and shall be condemned by the same Lord omnipotent. The joys of the righteous shall be eternal, and the punishment of the wicked everlasting. They shall not be burned up by fire, as the idea of some is, but "their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched," they shall suffer for ever and ever

Dear brethren, you who have tasted the goodness and mercy of the Lord omnipotent, we groan within ourselves at the manifold heaviness of this present time, and desire to be clothed upon with such an armor as to withstand the fiery trials of the way, and sometimes join the poet in the hymn, "Will bear the toil, endure the pain, supported by thy word," for it is in our experience that we must acknowledge that the Lord omnipotent reigneth, and hath divine control over all events of time that seem to go contrary to our way so much, yet we realize he can bring peace out of trouble and light out of darkness, and that he turns all things to his own praise and glory, which to my understanding is the ultimate purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, that his name shall be praised above every name in earth, heaven or under the earth.

May the Lord omnipotent, who reigneth in heaven and earth and all deep places, give you peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

ROY S. SMITH.

A FEW THOUGHTS ON ADAM AND THE TRANSGRESSION.

We find people to-day who claim to believe that God did predestinate and determine all things to come to pass at certain times and places, and they say the reason every one sins is because it is their nature to do so, and in saying this they feel they have made it so plain that any one can understand how it is. But the question is, Where did man get the nature he has? If God created man perfect (in the sense in which it is believed by most people) and then the devil came along and put the evil principle in him, contrary to God's will and purpose, then the devil has more power than God has, which is denying the fact that God is supreme, and does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. Please do not understand me to say that God made anything that was not perfect, for Adam was a perfect man, but perfection in man is not to be compared with the perfection of God. Adam was so perfectly created that he did everything

God foreordained that he would do. So in the creation he was perfect in the purpose for which he was created. So Adam was a perfect man. Even so is the devil a perfect devil, otherwise he would not be the devil. There is nothing pleases the devil more than for people to say that he is the one that put man in the fallen state, and that God was disappointed in Adam. God has never been disappointed in man, nor has man ever done anything that God did not know about it before the world was. To be disappointed in man would mean that God expected him not to do that which he did do. To advocate that Adam was able to stand, but liable to fall, is to deny the foreknowledge of God. In Acts xv. 18, the writer says, "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world." In Genesis ii. 16, 17, "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." So it is evident that when the commandment was given Adam did not know good from evil. Then he did not know it was evil to disobey God, for had he known good from eveil he would have been in possession of the knowledge and would already have known the consequences. But that was what the tree was. It was the knowledge of good and evil, and Adam did not have the knowledge until he did eat, for "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." God did not say, If you eat of it thou shalt surely die, but said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," for God did know that he would eat of it. This commandment was given to be broken, for when God said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" he was affirming that it would be broken, and it was broken, and God was not disappointed. This does not mean that God is the author of sin, for sin is transgression of the law, and God is under no law. But God did create man with the nature and disposition that he has. Paul says, in Romans viii. 20, "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." So Adam could not help, nor keep from, doing what he did, any more than we can keep from doing the things we do. God's people (those who have been brought to the knowledge of the truth) confess that they cannot help their condition. The world says they can. The devil would have the world in a worse condition if he could. God would have it better if he wanted it so, for he says that whatsoever his soul desireth, even that he doeth. I wish to say here that it was necessary for things to be as they are. It was necessary for Adam to transgress, so that the entire human race would be in a lost and ruined condition. It was necessary for the church to be under the condemnation of sin. It was necessary that the church was chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began. It was necessary for him to redeem them with

his own blood, that he did suffer and die for the bride that she should reign with him some sweet day, when the troubles of this world are over. Some will ask the question, Why was all this necessary? My answer is this, Since God is all-wise, if there had been a better way than the way it was, and is, would not God have preferred it? So any one who says that all things are not necessary denies the knowledge and wisdom of God. But Paul says, Romans xi. 33, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."

I wish to say that what I have written has not been written in a spirit of malice, nor with the desire to make any one believe as I do, against their will; neither is it written in a spirit of boldness, but I hope it was written in the spirit of love. I felt impressed to write my convictions on the matter, but feel it is very poorly done. I hope I have not left the impression that I believe the Lord's people boastfully say that they cannot keep from doing the things they do, for God's humble poor sorrow after a godly manner for their deeds and thoughts that they are sometimes made to know are evil, and then they are made to cry to God for mercy. Here is the warfare that Paul spoke of when he said, The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. So every one who was chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began will some day be carried home, and will dwell with Christ and God forever, away from trials, sorrows and afflictions, in the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

L. P. MARTIN.

BURLINGTON, North Carolina.

HAW RIVER, North Carolina.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—It is with much fear that I write what I feel are the dealings of the Lord with this poor sinner. It was in the year 1916 that I was made to know that I was a sinner. I had been told to keep the law, and I thought I could keep the law and would be a good christian. I did many things that men called good and was getting along very well, so far as my friends knew, but in the fall of the year 1916 I was in the field one evening, when the sun was agout one hour of setting, and something came into my very life, with these words, "Where art thou?" That killed me. All of my good works were gone. I saw myself, for the first time, to be a sinner. I saw there was no good thing I had done, or could do, and was made to beg for mercy. I fell on my face, down in the little patch of pines near where I was working, begging God to let me die. I felt I was so sinful that I could never face any one again. It seemed to me that the stock I was working were all looking at my sinful life, and I felt they were better than I. I went on in this condition for some time, feeling my damnation was very great. I asked God to bless me that I might pass away. But, to my surprise, a most beautiful form appeared before me and I heard and felt these words: As I live ye shall live also. All my troubles rolled away and my very

breathing was to his praise. I was carried on for a time with much comfort, and then was impressed to be baptized, but did not know where to go. I went to several different meeting places, but could not find my people. In the year 1927 I went to Cross Roads Church, and while I was in the house a man got up to preach. I remember but a few words he uttered, but when he said that his God controlled the dust of the air and the quivering of the leaves on the trees I knew he was speaking of my God. From that day I was made to love the Old School Baptists, and was afraid to visit them, and afraid not to. I could see perfection in them and imperfection in me, yet when I could I went to hear them preach. It was my meat and drink. I remember once when I had gone to the mill to get some wheat ground, on my way home I saw where my father was buried, and I very much wished him back that I might have his fatherly advice and counsel. I was riding along crying, and could not help it, and a feeling came over me and a small voice said, There is a power working over you stronger than flesh and blood. Then it was again my sorrow was turned into joy. In the fall of 1927 I went to Cross Roads Church, with no thought in mind of offering myself to the church, but when I came to myself I was asking a home with them. Again to my surprise, I was received in the fellowship of the church, on the third Sunday in November, 1927. I was buried in the watery grave by Elder G. W. Hill. It was he who first preached to this sinner. On coming out of the water I was made to feel it is a heaven below the Redeemer to know. I lived for a short time in peace, with no trouble at all, but oh what came to me a short time after I was received into the church. I felt that my troubles had just commenced, for I was made to feel that I had to speak in public, and I knew that I could not. I tried to keep it to myself, and would not talk of it to any one if I could help it. I remember going to my home church on Sunday and our Deacon, brother Knight, came to me on the church ground and asked me if I did not have a mind to preach. I could not open my mouth. Then he said, The church feels it, so yesterday we liberated you to speak. On going into the house our beloved pastor, Elder G. M. Trent, called me to the stand. I went with much fear, and from then I have had many fears that the brethren made a mistake. Then later the church called a presbytery for my ordination, without my consent. The presbytery was composed of Elders J. W. Gilliam, G. W. Hill, G. M. Trent and D. A. O'Bryant. I remember what Elder Hill said to me there, that the greatest blessing to me was that the Lord had hid the future from me. I realize that is the truth. I have had people tell me what and how to preach, but thanks be unto God, man is not my keeper. I know there are many crosses in the way, but my God knows the steps I take and the station I fill. Many times I have returned home saying I had gone for my last time. But at God's time there is a going out again, and there are not enough men and devils to stop one of God's little

ones, only as God ordained him to stop, for my God is high as heaven and deep as hell, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, Why is this done? Sometimes I am made to say with David, The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. Then again I am made to say, Where is my Beloved? is he clean gone forever? I remember once on coming home from meeting I said I was not going among the Old Baptists any more, but would stay away and visit other people, for it seemed to me they had no trouble. While sitting at dinner I had this thought, this Scripture came to me with much force, I am the Lord, and I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. So the Lord comes when least expected. If I know anything of his coming, I do know that there is some power greater than mine that makes me and keeps me, and I know this, that since I was delivered of that great load of trouble down in the pines it has never been to me as it was then. But many times I am afraid I am mistaken, yet I feel sure at times that every heir of promise is everlastingly saved. When the Lord said, It is finished, I believe everything that ever stood against the church was paid then, therefore we hear him saying, All that the Father has given me shall come to me. If one should fall away, then the work of my God has failed. But not so, for he is from everlasting to everlasting, and there is nothing too hard for him. Since it is already his, he has perfect right to do whatsoever he will with his own, and there is none to hinder. Since it was his will to give his Son a people, and his people a Savior, where is the power to prevent his will? We hear Paul saying that sinners are saved by the effectual working of his (God's) power. I am made to believe that there is nothing coming, is now or ever was, that is not in accord with the will of my God. I could not say this but by my own experience. I know the Lord takes the things of his and shows them to his people. I know that we as creatures would like to have all of the sweet and no bitter, but in sorrow is deliverance, and we are made to look away to that eternal city whose maker and builder is God, with the hope that some sweet day we will hear that good command, Come, ye blessed of my Father, and inherit the kingdom which was prepared from the foundation of the world and ever be with the Lord.

I have written of some of the things that are sweeter to me than all carnal things.

Yours in hope of a better world,

A. B. BARHAM.

DANVILLE, Va., March 11, 1940.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I have had a mind to write you a line for some time, but have put it off from time to time. I appreciated your thoughts of me in regard to my father's death. It was a great shock, though we expected it sooner or later. I miss him very much, especially at service, as he was with me very often at Dan River and Cascade. Many things happen in the course of a year, and the last year has brought both sorrows and joys, yet I

have realized that one is set over against the other.

We had a very peculiar thing happen last year. Our oldest daughter, Mildred, who is nineteen years of age, came down to the store one morning to get the morning paper. When she started out the door she caught her class ring on the strike of the door lock on the door facing, and when she stepped down her weight was thrown on the ring and it stripped the meat and muscle entirely off her finger, throwing it half way across the room. I had dreamed the night before of seeing a snake bite her, and told her of it at the breakfast table, telling her to stay out of the weeds. As she is in college, it seemed that the thought of having to have this finger amputated would almost kill her. I carried her to the hospital, and they did not give me any encouragement in regard to saving the finger, but agreed to put the meat back on and try it until Monday. This was Friday. This was done to pacify her more than anything else. Between Friday and Monday I was brought through one of the greatest trials of my life, seeing her suffer so severely over the thought of losing the finger. I knew she had been exercised in a spiritual way more or less, and often defended the doctrine of grace, but she would not talk of these things very much. On Sunday night when I left the hospital she said to me, Father, pray for me to-night, that I will not lose my finger. She knew the decision would be made in the morning. That was a dark night, the moon and stars hidden, prayer was gone. Oh the anguish, the wrestling I had! The next morning when she went to the operating room she was crying aloud. She said to me when she started, You did not pray for me, did you? God would not give you a prayer. She said, I tried to pray, but could not. When she began to awake after the finger had been removed, the first words she said were, Daddy, God held my hand. He stood by my bed. His face was so bright. He said to me, I will go with you, and I will be with you the rest of your life. God loves me. He told me he did. I have been afraid to die, but I am not afraid to die now. What is a finger compared with God? What is a hand compared with God? I think she repeated a dozen times, or more, He is a gracious God. He is a wonderful God. She went back to the time when she was eight years of age, and told of a conviction of sin, and the day, etc. I shall never forget that time. My grief was turned into joy. I then could sing as I had never sung it before,

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!
What more can he say than to you he has said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

Well, it seems I am writing mostly about myself, but I just felt I wanted to tell you of this experience.

I hope you have been well and enjoying God's felt presence. I have been favored to turn in a number of subscriptions to the SIGNS of late. I think that brother Roy Smith has done some good writing. I have heard a number of favorable comments on your and his articles.

Elders Lefferts, Westbrook and

Cobb plan to be at Gooch Memorial the second Sunday in May, at the yearly meeting. If you plan to be down this summer, please try to arrange to be here on second Sunday, if possible, and visit Gooch Memorial with me.

With best wishes to you and yours, yours in fellowship,

D. V. SPANGLER.

[As the good news contained in brother Spangler's private letter to us, regarding his daughter, far outweighs the sad, we are taking the liberty of sharing it with our readers, feeling assured they will both sympathize and rejoice with them both.—R. L. D.]

EAST POINT, Georgia.

ELDER ROY S. SMITH—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I will endeavor to tell of some things I hope the Lord has shown me, a poor, vile, helpless, undone sinner; some of his wonderful and mysterious purposes in the working together of all things for good to them that love the Lord and are the called according to his purpose. As my hope is for a home beyond this vale of tears, I do hope he has shown me that everything, all things in heaven above, on the earth beneath, in the sea and all deep places, every event that is taking place, or ever has taken place, is coming to pass just as he in his wisdom purposed it should, and is in some way carrying out some purpose for the perfecting of the saints of God. I have not words to tell what I hope I saw in this great sea of mystery, but do desire, if it can be the will of God, to pen down a few of the thoughts that came so sweetly to my mind and were of much comfort to my poor hungry and thirsty soul. Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? Who can bring this great omnipotent power of the all-wise God into question? The earth, and the fullness thereof, is his. He formed it; he spoke it into existence out of nothing. He created all things that have ever come to light or been seen by mortal man, and even man was created, with all things else, in the bowels of the earth, and each thing, large or small, at the proper time, as God saw fit, was formed and fashioned for the use for which it was created, and all for the benefit or destruction of mankind. The same mighty God of heaven and earth told Noah just how to build the ark and to take his family and two of a kind of every living thing on the earth inside, and he, God himself, shut them all in, then sent the flood that destroyed all living creatures from the face of the earth. And who could say unto him, Jehovah, why doest thou this or that? The same God, according to the covenant of grace made with his only Son before the foundation of the world, sent him into these low grounds of sin and sorrow to redeem his people from under the law and its curse, a people given to him by the Father in that same covenant of grace. He was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief and a mourner all the days of his life, thus bearing every burden, sorrow, heartache and pain his bride would ever have to suffer here in this world. O, dear humble mourner, think what he suffered. Then he, by the

determinate will and foreknowledge of God his Father, had to be taken and by wicked hands crucified and slain, all for the sins of his people chosen in him before the world was. Oh such a wonderful mystery! Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. It is beyond our human comprehension to know why God, being pure and holy, all-wise and independent (and we know could have had the whole thing different had it suited him), should look down in pity and mercy through the ages of time and eternity and so arrange the things (all things) to work together for good to them that love him and who are the called according to his purpose, and cause them to show forth his praise, for he formed them for that very purpose, and no weapon that is formed against them shall prosper. Yet he said follow him, and in so doing they are led through the valley of the shadow of death, but he is their rod and their staff and he comforts them with the same comfort wherewith he was comforted, with the assurance that he will be unto them a God and they shall be unto him a people. And lo, he is with them always, even to the end. Everywhere present at the same time, nowhere is his voice not heard. He speaks and it is done; commands and it stands fast, and as he purposed so shall it come to pass. I often wonder why we have to go through so many fiery trials and have so many doubts and fears, but when, as I hope, I am enabled to get a little glimpse of this grand and glorious arrangement of all things working together for good to them who love the Lord, and am made to feel and see it carrying out, as I believe, some of the purposes of God, I am made to be still and know that he is God, and sometimes cry out, Lord, correct me and I will be corrected; turn me and I will be turned. Helpless, and dependent upon the all-wise and independent God, we are not our own keepers. (Oh I shudder to think where we would be if we were.) But thanks be to his gracious name, we are kept by his mighty power, ready to be revealed in the last day. Oh I would praise him with every breath I draw if I could, but he controls that, too. Without him we can do nothing. I love to think of him being able to subdue all things unto himself. It is sweet to me where he said, Fear not, thou worm Jacob. Things that are not, and yet are; that is my hope. The old king thought he would surely get rid of the poor Hebrew children by having such fervent heat in that furnace, seven times hotter than need be, and could not know that God was only putting that into his mind and had already predestinated it should be that hot that he might show his power by preserving them, they being chosen in that Son before time was. He was seen in the flame of fire with them by the king himself. Yea, long before he was manifested here in the flesh. He has ever been with the Father and his people were chosen in him back there in eternity, therefore they have ever been with him, and he with them, and they are safe, walled around by grace; their life is hid with Christ in God. They were put in prison, made

fast in stocks, yet they prayed and praised God, and other prisoners heard them (while the keeper was asleep, feeling sure they were safe, *and they were*). Suddenly an earthquake shook the earth, and immediately the prison doors were open and they were free. They verily thought they were well rid of Christ when they had made his tomb secure and set a watch around it, but they awoke, and, lo, he was gone, risen triumphant over death and the grave. And, sweet hope, he is coming again, without sin unto salvation, and the graves shall give up their dead. He will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far and my daughters from the ends of the earth, and they shall all be caught up with him and carried home to glory, and shall ever be with the Lord, and shall come into possession of that inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Shout, O ye heavens; break forth into singing, O ye mountains. Let the inhabitants of the Rock sing, The half has never yet been told. It is glorious beyond comparison. Paul said that our sufferings here were not worthy to be compared with the glory that should be revealed in us. Seeing then that we have a great High Priest that is passed into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession, for we have not an high priest whose feelings cannot be touched with our infirmities, but he was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Your brother in hope,

HUGH L. GLOER.

WINCHESTER, Virginia.

DEAR ELDER LEFFERTS:—I have been wanting to write to you for some time, but have put it off, as I do so many things that I should do. I want to tell you of an experience I had, if I may call it that. I have loved the Old School Baptists ever since I used to go to meetings with my dear father and mother. I often longed to join the church and be one of the dear brethren, but, knowing my weak and sinful nature, I felt I never could offer myself to the church to become a member. During the summer of last year I deliberately staid away from the meetings, for I felt I had no place there. But I could not stay away from the Association, and I received so much comfort from the preaching and being with the dear brethren that I felt I could not stay away much longer. After the Association I began to have the same doubts and misgivings, and I knew I could never bring myself to come before the church. Brother and sister Turman asked my dear wife and me at the Association to come to the next meeting at Mt. Zion, Saturday before the second Sunday in November. We promised them we would come, the Lord willing, but as the time for going drew near I felt I could not go. But somehow I went, and I hope and trust the Lord was with me. Your sermon made me realize all the more the lost

sinner that I was. When you asked any one desiring to go before the church to come up to the front bench, Inez asked me to go with her, but I could not do it. When you said what you did to me my burden seemed to lift, and I felt it might be I had a small place among God's children. I experienced a great relief, though I could not understand why you dear brethren should be willing to take such a sinner as I in the church. We went to sister Turman's for the night, and I soon began to have the same doubts and fears, and felt that I had done wrong. After supper a severe thunder-storm came up, and something told me that the Lord did not want me to be baptized and sent the storm so the water would be too high for the baptism. We went to bed, but I could not sleep. I never was in such torment. Some time after midnight, as I was lying there tossing, trying to get some relief, a small voice said to me, Be not afraid, I am with you. Oh what a blessed relief came over me! My Lord had spoken to me. I never knew such joy. After awhile I went to sleep. The next morning was the most beautiful I ever saw. I was going to be baptized, and I was very happy. I was especially happy because I could be baptized with my dear wife. That day was surely the happiest of my life. I feel the Lord was with me that day, and I hope and pray that he will watch over and guide me, for I know I will fall by the wayside unless he sustains me. I have had many doubts and fears since that day, but sometimes I have a glorious hope in the Lord.

You must excuse this poorly written letter. For some reason I cannot talk much about these precious things. I wish I could express what all this has meant to me.

I will not trouble you more. All of our family are well and send love to your dear wife and yourself. Inez will write to you if she has time. She does not have any help in the house, and it is very hard for her. We hope to see you Saturday at Mt. Zion.

Your most unworthy brother, I hope,

WALTER NORMAN.

DUQUOIN, Ill., Dec. 12, 1939.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find five dollars to apply on my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I should have sent it in sooner, but better late than not at all. We have been subscribers for a long time, and while I have read several other papers, I find the SIGNS the best I have ever read. I often read one article that alone is worth the subscription price to me. So trusting that the paper may continue as long as I live, and that you may have a happy and prosperous year, I am, I hope, your brother,

CHARLES M. HARRISS.

HARRISONVILLE, Missouri.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars, which please place to the credit of my subscription. I am old and afflicted, but have been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES from childhood, and desire to continue reading it as long as I am able to have a home for it to come to.

(MRS.) J. P. TAYLOR.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER, 1940.

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JOHN III. 7.

"MARVEL not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

Dear Readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, we have come to the task of writing to you, in the fear of God and the love of the truth, and we realize more and more our dependence upon the Lord Jehovah for strength and understanding to guide us to edification in the Spirit to edify you in the gospel. We assure you the ability to edify you in the gospel is not in the writer, for we have had demonstrations that taught us over and over that the flesh profiteth nothing, and we would that you would not consider the writer as you read from our pen.

Our blessed Savior is the author of the quotation we have called attention to, and we feel assured every reader of the SIGNS is interested to know of his sonship in the kingdom of God. We will call attention to the sayings of men, and the multitude of them that are telling how one is born again. The multitude is great that are telling how this new birth is brought about, and the principal way they have is for the men who are dead in trespasses and in sin to enroll their names with an organization of professed followers of Jesus Christ, and by their association with this organization it will give to them the inheritance of the one that Jesus had under consideration when speaking to Nicodemus, and the multitude as to numbers would compare with the multitude that stood against Jesus when he was crucified, and Jesus standing alone. Jesus, referring to the multitude born again, said, Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. In this we must consider the first Adam, of which we are according to the flesh, and how we are generated and come forth according to the seed, being Adam multiplied, and that which is born of us is of the flesh, and will not produce a higher order of life than the virtue that is in the seed. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Every act of the creature (the first Adam) is of the flesh, and with the desire to elevate himself in the material things of the earth. When he is born again is a very important matter, and we desire to take up the

matter in the order according to conception of natural life. We know conception takes place when the germ of life contacts the germinating substance to produce that multiplication, and then the work of life in the conception takes place, and when development has been made the quickening time of that individual takes place. This is all brought about by the incorruptible Seed by the word of God, and Jesus quickeneth whomsoever he will, and the flesh is brought into subjection and made to serve the spirit, according as it is written, The elder shall serve the younger. "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils."—Luke xi. 21, 22. This bears witness with our experience: that the sinner is constrained by the Spirit to serve the Lord, which brings the sinner in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. God's purpose in bringing sinners to Christ Jesus is entirely different from the way taught by men, and carnality cannot receive that way, because it seems to be the way of death, and was plainly expressed by the apostle Paul when he said that which he thought to be unto life he found to be unto death. When the deliverance of the child of grace is brought into manifestation, the realization as a babe would express his helplessness, and he hears the affectionate voice of his Savior saying, Peace, be still, and in that voice is love beyond degree, which calms the troubled breast, and he has the understanding to realize that the old heavens and the old earth have passed away, and a new heaven and a new earth appear, wherein dwelleth righteousness, and the sacred lap of the motherhood of God's grace is the resting-place of all the babes in Christ Jesus. Then they sing,

"Amazing grace (how sweet the sound),
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see."

The pilgrimage of the child of grace enters into the steadfastness of hope, the anchor of the soul sure and steadfast, and he realizes there is salvation in no other and he speaks of His goodness and talks of His power.

"Jesus is our great salvation,
Worthy of our best esteem;
He has saved his favorite nation,
Join to sing aloud of him:
He has saved us!
Christ alone could us redeem."

We hope we have been born again, and all we enjoy in this life under the influence of God's holy Spirit is but a foretaste of the joys that shall be revealed in us when we are glorified together with Jesus Christ at the right hand of God. We hope every thing in this life and in the fullness of the joys of our salvation is to be like Jesus Christ.

We have had a full year traveling among the brethren and speaking his goodness and power, and also writing, in which we have not felt the opening unto us of the mysteries of his kingdom all the time, but we are kept in supplication unto God to give us understanding in the truth, and liberty of soul to have strength to proclaim liberty to the captive, which is to preach Jesus Christ, and him crucified, and when we have

that strength given us we rejoice, and when we are shut up and have no light we mourn, and realize we cannot come forth without him. In this experience we are assured that the Spirit of the Lord must be upon us before we can preach the gospel. We believe the one that is born again is comforted when the office of Christ is proclaimed. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek: he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified."—Isaiah lxi. 1-3.

If the description we have given in this article of the sinner born again is not the truth we are without understanding, and the one born again is fed by the shepherd and bishop of his soul, as is described by the prophet.

We are closing for this year the work assigned us in our correspondence through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and we thank our publisher and all the household of faith, who have borne with us during this year, and we cannot express the gratitude of our heart for the sweet fellowship and associations we have enjoyed during the year, for our labors are of love in the truth. We hope to finish our course in this way, and should it be the purpose of God for us to continue another year, we feel to ask you to pray for us, and may we be kept in the unity of the Spirit and the bonds of peace, is our prayer.

C. W. V.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANKS.

IN each copy of this issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we are inclosing a subscription blank for the convenience of our subscribers in renewing their own subscriptions and in sending the names of new subscribers, and we appeal to each of our friends to do what they can toward helping us build up our subscription list.

The date on the little pink slip bearing your address, which you will find either on your paper or the wrapper in which it comes to you, signifies to what date your subscription is paid. If your subscription has expired, or is about to expire, please send on your renewal if you can spare it, but if you are not at the present time in a position to renew your subscription, but hope to be later on, do not order your paper stopped, for we would much rather continue sending the paper to you until such time as you are able to pay for it than to take your name from our list.

When sending in renewals be sure and give us the EXACT name and address of the person to whom the paper is now coming, so we will not give the credit to the wrong person.

We sincerely thank all who in the past have in any way aided us in con-

tinuing the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and hope they will continue such aid in the future, and do what they can in the way of sending us new subscriptions and renewing their own.

J. E. B. & CO.

PRIMITIVE BAPTIST HOME,
SALISBURY, MARYLAND.

Some time ago a group of nine of the Residents in the Home addressed to me the following joint-letter:

"Dear Elder Dodson:—We, the residents or the Home, wish to express ourselves regarding the many comforts it has given to us in the years we have lived here. It is, indeed, a haven of refuge. Its home-like atmosphere, clean, appetizing food, the care we are given each day, and especially in time of sickness; all these we deeply appreciate, and we feel they are rich blessings. In saying these words, we feel that there are many others who could find the same peaceful home for themselves by becoming one of our number."

I am sure it will be a source of great satisfaction to those who have in any way contributed to the welfare of our dear ones in the Home, to realize that their efforts have been as fruitful of success as the foregoing would indicate. If there be others who would like to enter the Home, information can be obtained by writing to Mr. John B. Miller, Secretary of the Board of Trustees, at Newark, Delaware.

The next Annual Donation Day will be Thursday, December 5th, 1940, and those who wish to donate articles of food can send or leave them at the Home, while those desiring to make monetary donations can send same to Mrs. Grace H. Hastings, Treasurer of the Home, at Route 4, Salisbury, Maryland, or to the Home direct. Mrs. Rosalie M. Costello is the Matron of the Home, and she will be glad to receive any donations on behalf of the Home.

I sincerely hope the brethren and friends will keep this matter in mind, and not forget those who are so appreciative as to write the letter quoted above.

R. LESTER DODSON, President.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Pocatalico Old School, or Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with Harmony Church, Cabell County, West Virginia, to the several churches of which she is composed, and to all with whom we correspond, sendeth loving greetings.

IT has fallen to my lot to address you in the way of a Circular Letter, and may the God of all grace direct my pen. I will call your attention to 1 John iv. 18: "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth, is not made perfect in love." I realize I myself am not able to handle this subject, for if led by the carnal mind we are dead. John was given to write more upon this sublime subject than any of the apostles; not that he loved more than they, but it being in the purpose of God he so wrote. Love is the power that rules heaven and earth. First it was with God, and made manifest to

man in the gift of his begotten Son, that through him man should live. This love passeth understanding, in that he loved his enemies and gave his Son to die for them. The love that man can understand is the kind that man loves them that love him. The secret of God's love to man lies in the fact that he loved his people in Christ before the foundation of the world, before they sinned in Adam, and his everlasting love changed not. When they became sinners, by transgression, Christ, the head of the bride, or church, was responsible for her debt. Had there been no debt, there could have been no payment; no payment no salvation or eternal blessedness with God in the haven of rest. "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world." —1 John iv. 17. The love of God in the heart of man produces boldness in the day of judgment. In it the sons of God face all enemies of truth and godliness, put to silence every tongue that riseth in judgment, and triumph over every weapon formed against them. The people of God have no fear of man, whose breath is in his nostrils, knowing that in His love they are without fault according to his eternal purpose, which he purposed in himself before the world was. Men have risen up blaspheming the name of God in denying his word, denying the sonship of Christ, denying the creation and formation of man, ridiculing those whose faith is in God and whose hope is in the blood of his Son, yet through it all because of no fear they abide safely alone. "As he is, so are we in this world." "We love him, because he first loved us."—1 John iv. 19. He, Christ, is delivered from the terror and demands of the law. He is exalted above all principalities and powers. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Who shall separate us from the love of God? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, and sitteth at the right hand of God. If God be for us, who can be against us? Therein is love made perfect, that we have boldness in the day of judgment. This love is shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost, being made perfect through love. Death and the grave have lost their terror; death its sting, the grave its victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be glory forever. Amen. Farewell.

J. C. HAMMOND, Moderator.
H. J. BIRD, Clerk.

(Written by sister Elnora Sickler.)

The Lexington-Roxbury Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Shokan, New York, September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1940, to the several churches and associations in fellowship with us, with which we correspond, sends love and fellowship.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—We are assembled together through the providence of God to receive spiritual food from the undershepherds, or servants, whom he has seen fit to send among us to feed the flock, also to exchange words of comfort with our brethren and friends concerning the wonderful word of God, which is a

lamp to our feet in our walk here below. We desire to render praise and thanksgiving for the many blessings we receive daily from the hand of God, though we feel to be unworthy of the smallest favor. Surely we have great cause for thankfulness that we have been kept safe thus far from the calamities and hardships which are so prevalent in the world to-day, for surely we are living in the latter days, according to his holy word, when all these things are foretold as coming to pass before our blessed Lord comes again to receive his bride, the church, which is composed of those whom his heavenly Father chose in his beloved Son before the earth was formed.

It is our desire, if directed by the Holy Ghost, to write some thoughts on the thirteenth verse of the thirteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians, which reads, "And now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity." Yes, the greatest of these is charity, for it embraces love. It was love that caused God to plan a bride for his Son before he laid the foundation of the world. It was love, such wonderful love that it is beyond the comprehension of man, which caused our Lord and heavenly Husband to stand as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world for his bride, the church, that he might present her holy and without blame before God in love. This bride, as the true church of God is called, is composed of those called out from every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue, who are not under one head or denomination according to the world, but are all taught the truth through the operation of the Holy Ghost within their hearts, who reveals the wonderful things of God, convicts them of sin and brings them all under one spiritual head, Jesus Christ, their Savior. God gives faith to each one as it pleaseth him to give it. All do not receive an equal amount of faith, but it is measured out to each one according to the infinite wisdom of God, as it seemeth good to him to give it. Faith cannot be earned or attained by the creature, but comes solely and only as a free gift from God. This faith is considered as heavenly currency, for without it we are powerless to acquire anything pertaining to spiritual life. It is this God-given faith which causes us to have a hope that we may be among those for whom Christ died, and thus a member of his glorious body, the church. In Romans, chapter eight, verses twenty-four and twenty-five, it reads, "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." In the fourth verse of the fifteenth chapter of Romans we find this language: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." Also the thirteenth verse of the same chapter reads, "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost." In the fifteenth verse of the third chapter of first Peter it reads in part that ye be ready

always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear. Our answer should ever be that we have this hope as a gift from God through faith. Those who have been given this wonderful hope know something of a warfare not fought with carnal weapons upon a battlefield, but a warfare between flesh and spirit, which at times nearly rends this body of ours asunder, and only God knows our anguish as we cry to him for mercy and help to overcome the adversary, our flesh. He never fails to answer true prayer, which is indited by him; but when we try to pray in our own strength our prayer does not seem to rise higher than our head. As the spiritual life or new man born within us through the operation of the Holy Ghost becomes stronger, the flesh is gradually brought more and more into subjection to it, but cannot be kept so, only by the help of God. How often we say we will never do a certain thing again, and before we realize it we have done that certain thing, as Peter did when he said he would never deny his Lord and Master. We are thus taught that unless God holds us up daily we must fall. We cannot walk in the way as we would desire to, but must go lame as Jacob was made to do after he had wrestled with the angel and had prevailed. After that he was called Israel, and became the father of the twelve tribes of Israel, of whom God has promised to save twelve thousand of each, making the symbolic total of one hundred and forty-four thousand spoken of in the seventh chapter of Revelation. In the ninth verse of the same chapter John tells of seeing also a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and tongues, which stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands, who cried with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." These we believe are the saved of the Gentiles, who went through great tribulation in this world, and whose robes are washed in the blood of the Lamb. It is with this company we hope we may have a part through the faith we receive at the hand of God. These two companies typify the entire election of grace for whom Christ left the realms of glory, that he might come down to earth and redeem them. One can redeem only that in which is vested the title of ownership, so when the word says that he redeemed his people from their sins by his death on the cross, it proves that they were his from eternity, but the curse of the law had separated them temporarily from their heavenly Husband, until he redeemed them with his own precious blood. Thus he can present them holy, without blame, in love, before his Father in heaven. The whole plan of salvation for poor, needy sinners was based on love. The river which flowed through the garden of Eden typifies the river of salvation which flows from the throne of God. In the four branches we see represented the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, as declared by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. As the source of this great river is said never to have

been found by man, this typifies that the stream of salvation truly flows from the throne of God. In faith, hope and charity we see a trinity of words which which suggests the heavenly Trinity. Faith comes from God, hope by the Holy Ghost and love is exemplified in the life, death, resurrection and mediatorial office of Jesus Christ. One cannot have faith and hope without charity, and it is this that we need so much in our churches to-day. Let us solemnly remember that the precepts of the gospel are just as binding as the doctrine of the gospel. Without this gospel there can be no charity or love, but if we have love, we would always seek to save erring brethren by applying it, instead of wounding them by harsh methods. The carnal mind seeks revenge, but God says, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." We all make mistakes, so all stand in need of mercy, and Jesus said, "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." This beatitude should cause us to be at each other's feet. What have we in this world that we have not received? so wherein should we take any glory to ourselves? All glory and honor and praise belong to our God forever and ever.

We are glad to welcome every visiting member and friend to our Association, and may God grant that each one has received some heavenly manna to nourish the inborn spiritual life of those who have been given a hope through the redeeming blood of Jesus Christ.

We expect that our next Association will be held with the First and Second Churches of Roxbury, at Roxbury, New York, between the second and third Sundays of September, 1941, at the usual time. Until then, when we hope to meet you all again, we bid you farewell, hoping that the blessing of God may abide with, and comfort and strengthen you all.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
ORVILLE WINCHELL, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MISS NANCY FLETCHER, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life September 12th, 1940, at the Primitive Baptist Home, Salisbury, Maryland, where she had been residing since 1929. She was born September 4th, 1858. I have heard her say that she was born on an island in the Potomac River. This being so, she must have been born in Maryland, since these islands belong to the State of Maryland. But she spent most all of her life in Fauquier and Loudoun Counties, Virginia, with the exception of the past eleven years spent at Salisbury, Maryland. She was baptized by the late Elder J. N. Badger into the membership of the Upper Broad Run Church, Fauquier County, Virginia, but I have not the date she was baptized. In 1920, she moved her membership to the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia. Being the present pastor of that church, I was called to attend her funeral at her request. Also, at her request, I used the twenty-third Psalm, and the hymn, "How firm a foundation" was read at the funeral services. Interment was in the burying-ground near the Forest Grove meetinghouse, a few miles from Salisbury, Md. Funeral services were held at the Home on Monday morning, September 15th. She was very appreciative of every kindness and atten-

tion shown her, and endeared herself by her gentleness and humility to all who knew her. She never ceased to be thankful for the care and attention bestowed upon her by those in charge of the Home, and often said it was the best home she had ever known in all her life. She had none of this world's goods, yet she never lacked for anything required for her needs and comfort. I think I have never known one more grateful than she was, for every blessing. She looked to the Lord for everything, and he never once failed her. "Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." Hers was a good hope through grace, which now has reached fruition in the Paradise above. She loved the church of God, its doctrine and order, and all things connected with the place where God's honor dwells. We feel that she is at peace and at rest in the presence of her Redeemer.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

NAOMI A. (MORRIS) DRYDEN, a daughter of the late John F. and Hannah Morris, was born July 3rd, 1860, near Salisbury, Maryland. She was united in marriage to the late Peter J. Dryden, September 12th, 1892, soon afterwards making their home in Baltimore, Md., until Mr. Dryden's death, twelve years later. She was baptized in fellowship with the Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, in Baltimore, Md., by Elder F. A. Chick (date unknown), and remained a member of that church until the death of her husband. Having no children, she made her home with her sister and brother-in-law, both in the flesh and Spirit, Mr. and Mrs. Jacob M. Adkins, near Parsonsburg, Md. She got a letter of dismissal from Ebenezer Church and presented it to the Indiantown Church, where she was gladly received (date unknown), and remained a faithful member until her departure, January 24th, 1940.

Funeral services were held at Forest Grove Church, conducted by Elder H. C. Ker, after which the body was laid to rest in the Forest Grove Cemetery by the side of her late husband. Sister Dryden was one of our most active members at Indiantown Church, until physically unable to attend. Her's was a kind disposition. I do not know that I ever saw her without a smile on her face. She was a good talker, especially of the things the Lord had done for her. We miss her presence with us, and count it a great loss not to be able to see her. While we have suffered a loss, we believe it to be her eternal gain. May we be reconciled and made able to say in truth and in spirit, The Lord gave; the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

Written by request.

GEORGE F. ADKINS.

MARY LETITIA HUGHETT was born at Goldendale, Washington, October 27th, 1883, and in the year 1899 moved to Yakima with her parents, who were Elder W. J. Hess and Serena A. Hess. She died July 19th, 1940, in her home, near Yakima, Wash. She was united in marriage to A. D. Hughett, and to them were born five children, one daughter and four sons, all of whom are now living. She was a member of the Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church, uniting with it and being baptized by her father in June, 1903. She remained a faithful and consistent member until her death. About four and one-half years ago she was operated upon for cancer of the breast, but it seems it was let go too long and she never fully recovered, but until about the last six months she was able to do most of her house work, and visit with Elder Hughett on his travels among the churches. She was patient, kind and loving during the time she suffered, and greeted those

who came to see her with a heavenly smile. She showed by her countenance and the peace that seemed to fill her soul that she was indeed drinking of the Fountain which never shall run dry, that she felt safe in the arms of Jesus, and said, For me to die is gain. Her only anxious thoughts were for the loved ones she was leaving behind, but had faith to believe they would be provided for. She was conscious up until the last few hours, and then quietly and peacefully went to sleep.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder C. W. Bond, and her mortal remains were laid to rest in the Tahoma Cemetery, near Yakima, Wash. Her sufferings are no more, and though we miss her in the home and at church, we would not wish her back.

Submitted in love.

MARGUERITE SIMPSON.

LYDIA A. ROBINSON died Sunday, September 29th, 1940, at her home, near Prentice, Illinois, after an illness of eight months. She was the daughter of W. J. and Rhoda J. Lathom, and was born May 25th, 1854, at Yatesville, Ill. She was married to Martin L. Robinson at Jacksonville, Ill., in the year 1874. He died in 1929. For more than forty years she was a devoted and beloved member of the Primitive Baptist Church at Yatesville. During her illness she was tenderly cared for by a loving daughter, Mrs. Pearl McClure. May God bless this daughter for her loving care and kindness. Surviving are four daughters: Mrs. Carrie Sheppard, of Woodson, Ill., Mrs. Anna Buker, Mrs. Rhoda Bloomfield, Mrs. Pearl McClure, all of Ashland, Ill. One son, Leroy, died several years ago. One sister, Mrs. Hattie E. Virgin, of San Francisco, California, also survives, together with eighteen grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren and a host of friends, in whose memory she still lives.

Funeral services were held at her late home, Tuesday, October 1st, conducted by Elder L. P. Harris, of Duquoin, Ill., in the presence of large gathering of friends. Two favorite hymns of the deceased sister, "Oh come, come with me to the old churchyard," and "A home in heaven, what a joyful thought," were sung for the occasion. Interment was in Yatesville Cemetery. She is not dead, but sleeping.

FRANKIE McDANIEL.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, &c. REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.

Of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, published monthly, at Middletown, N. Y., for October 1st, 1940.

State of New York, County of Orange, ss.:

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Gilbert Beebe, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the owner of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and that the following is to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24th, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse side of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publishers, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publishers, J. E. Beebe & Company, Middletown, N. Y.; Editor: Elder R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.

2. The owner is, Gilbert Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagers and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent. or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear on the books of the company, but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the corporation for whom such trustee is acting is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity

other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stocks, bonds or other securities than as so stated by him.

GILBERT BEEBE, Owner.

Sworn to and ascribed before me this 21st day of October, 1940.

(Seal) E. E. CONKLING.

(My commission expires March, 1942.)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Maria French, Pa., $1; W. M. Harwell, Mo., $1; Elder A. D. Hughett, Wash., $1; Mrs. Val Werner, N. J., $1; Mrs. Lillie N. Henry, Miss., $4; Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Okla., $2.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists is now settled in her new church-house, at 4614 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas, where she holds her regular monthly services on each first Sunray at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. Preaching services also on each third Sunday by Elder C. B. Teague, and each second Sunday by brother O. C. Lee, at 11 o'clock a. m. A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. R. HARDY, Pastor.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

AN EXCELLENT VOLUME.

"Memoirs and letters of James Kidwell Popham."

Mr. Popham was Pastor of The Strict Baptist Church, at Brighton, England, for over fifty-five years, and Editor of *The Gospel Standard* for thirty years.

This book reveals much of the travel of a man greatly blessed of God in his ministry and writings. It is full of interesting matter, which on every page shows forth the power and goodness of the covenant-keeping God.

It can be obtained from the publishers, C. J. Farncombe & Sons, Ltd., 30 Imperial Buildings, Ludgate Circus, London, E. C. 4, England. Price, post-paid, $1.65, to Canada and United States.

I feel to recommend this book to our readers.—G. R.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers.

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MIDDLETOWN, N Y.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 108. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1940. NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

2 CORINTHIANS V. 20.

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

Among the various terms used in holy writ in describing the office-work of the gospel ministry the apostle comes forth in holy boldness here, declaring it to be that of an ambassador for Christ. This is indeed putting the ministry into a sacred and solemn position. A representative for Christ. A spokesman for Christ. When I consider what the term means I shrink because of my felt weakness, unworthiness and unfaithfulness of the sacred duty committed unto me. (If indeed I am called.) If I am blessed with the Spirit of grace, I desire to write upon this subject to the glory of God and the good of the whole church, yet I feel the least competent to do so. I realize I need the grace of wisdom and patience to venture upon the subject, and may, if I have the forbearance of the editors and readers, be lengthy in my effort to get this before us from a doctrinal and practical point of view. This I say because of our natural inclinations to not consider seriously our calling, and the disposition of the body (or church) to treat the ministry very lightly at times, and in certain localities. I have no disposition in what I shall say to pity or humor the ministry. I am personally acquainted with most of their trials, and have not as yet found place to pity or humor myself. Nor do I wish to humor the disposition of the church or its treatment toward the ministry.

There are two essential facts to bear in mind in the office-work of an ambassador. First, he must truthfully and faithfully represent his government by word and deed. Second, his office and work must be respectfully honored and received by those to whom he is sent. Failure in either case lessens, and in many cases nullifies the benefits of the work of an ambassador. Indeed it is true if the failure is on the part of the minister. There is therefore a necessity

for taking heed to the sacred charge given to preach the word, and to ourselves. As the Lord told Ezekiel, we must hear the word at His mouth and speak accordingly.

While the office of ambassador places one close to the head of the government represented, it never does get him higher than a servant's place. Christ remains head over all things. This authority was given him of God, for the apostle says in the eighteenth verse of this fifth chapter, "All things are of God." As God the Father gave his Son Jesus Christ as an offering for our sins, in order to reconcile us to himself, the government of that kingdom and its subjects were laid upon him (Christ). Therefore he was made to be Head over all things to the church, which is his body, and as all things are of God, who is before all things, and by whom all things consist, he did in Christ his Son not only reconcile us to himself by the death of his Son, but also gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation, and this ministry has, in the meaning of the apostle's language, two phases. As an ambassador is a messenger, he must, as Abraham's servant in the matter of carrying out the will of his lord and master, first tell of the wealth and glory of his lord, and how his son was heir to the whole, and then inquire of the damsel if she would go. We cannot have any success as ambassadors without first telling poor sinners of a full and complete salvation (or reconciliation) in Christ; that he made complete satisfaction to God for all their sins; that they are now justified from all things in the Person of Christ, from which they could not in any other way be justified, and that by the Spirit they have been created in Christ Jesus unto good works, and, we might say, as joint-heirs with him of his riches in glory, and as such are the objects of his grace and subjects of his kingdom.

But I wished first to notice the expression of the apostle, "We are ambassadors for Christ." Let us think of this expression seriously. If we do we cannot find words to speak our thoughts. Ambassadors for Christ. For whom? For Christ. For the church? No. To the church. For any earthly or worldly power? No. For the heavenly. To please men or ourselves? No. To seek any earthly honor or wealth? No. To be governed by any law other than the law of Christ? No. To be influenced by any power or wishes other than the Lord? No. But an ambassador is to be acquainted with the power and wishes of the government he represents. How is this information attained? He must first be a subject himself by birth, then by tutoring, and then by appointment. I might enlarge here, but I hope this is sufficient. Jesus says, I henceforth call you not servants, but friends, for a servant knoweth not what his master doeth. It is true that we are servants in one sense, but Jesus meant to teach us, as he did the apostles there, that he would reveal his will to us. This he does to all his own servants, or ambassadors, and that is the way we are acquainted with the power and wishes of the government we represent. Now no subject of Christ's

kingdom (as well as a natural government) has any power or authority of self-appointment to any office-work. It must be done by the Head. Appointment is always made by Him who has the power, and always according to His will and choise. Therefore no man taketh this honor to himself but he that is called as was Aaron. It is well that we note the fact that an ambassador is, after his appointment, given his credentials, and instructions relative to his work and manner of conduct. Without these he could not be know or received as an ambassador. His credentials are his authority from the King of kings. This always comes from him, not from the church, or by any other means, such as natural heritage or worldly wisdom. Credentials given a man by the presbytery are only an acknowledgment of his God-given authority. But now the proper conduct and use of the authority rest with the appointee, or the one appointed. His success as an ambassador depends upon the manner of his conduct as an individual man, and toward both his Lord and those to whom he is sent. Jesus spoke of an unjust steward who began to beat and abuse his lord's men servants and maid servants, and told the judgment of such a steward. There must be a mutual, or friendly, understanding between the man and the people, for it is the purpose of an ambassador to bring about a better understanding and friendship between his Lord and his brethren. Brethren, let us think on this point. I never have thought any good could be done through strife or vain glory, nor by railing and abusing any one, and especially other demoninations. If we practice such they will mark us as egotists, bigoted and unfriendly. Moreover, his individual conduct should be in keeping with the laws of his government. He must respect and obey the laws of his kingdom. Loyalty is a determining factor to a man's worth as an ambassador. Other subjects may get along and not be noticed so much in minor acts of disloyalty, but not an ambassador. If he is disloyal how then can he induce others to be loyal? And this seems to be his principal task; that is, to beseech, persuade or pray others to be reconciled to God. I might say to beseech them to be subject to His laws and government, to be obedient to Him in all His commandments, for they are not grievous. To be submissive to His will concerning His dispensations toward them, both in Providence and in grace. To insist upon them that it is better to seek the King's favor and blessings. To prove to them that He is not an unmerciful and haughty ruler, but one who is kind, compassionate, sympathetic and faithful, showing mercy to thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and will not clear the guilty. The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and in truth. Now he who is faithful in his office will have the full support of his Lord and His government, at any cost, let the trial be what it may, for says the Scripture, Vengeance is his and He will repay. He says, Touch not the Lord's anointed and do his prophets no harm. An individual, or church, who will abuse

or in any way wrongfully treat one of God's ministers, or ambassadors, commits a crime which will not go unpunished. Such is an insult to his Lord. When our Lord sent out his disciples, at the first he told them that in whatsoever city (or place) they were not received, to shake off the dust of that city from their feet, and that it would be more tolerable in the day of judgment (or his wrath) for Sodom and Gomorrah than for such. The same is true to-day in the matter of God's ambassadors. Beware, brethren, how you receive and treat those whom the Lord hath sent. There is a lesson for us ministers to learn concerning those who will not receive us. It is this: The judgment is not ours, nor with us, that belongs to the Lord. What we are to do is just humbly depart out of such places and make no trouble over the matter, then or thereafter. Leave the whole affair in the hands of your Lord. Has an ambassador the right to refuse to leave a place where they will not receive him? or after leaving demand of his lord revenge for their treatment of him? No. I have been where I was not received, and I have had others write me that if my church or association had done certain things they could not receive me. What did I do about such matters? Nothing. That is all there is to do. Jesus said in effect that if they received him they would receive his messengers, and if they would not receive him they would not receive his messengers, and it goes to say that if they will not receive those he sends they will not receive him. This ought to suffice on this point. I desire to get closer to the declaration of the apostle and the sense expressed by him in the words, "As though God did beseech you by us," and also, "We pray you in Christ's stead." Would we pause here and try to get the sense of this language. I said in the beginning that an ambassador was a representative, or spokesman, for a power, or government. As Aaron was given as a spokesman for Moses, so in like manner is the ministry given in the gospel day as a spokesman for Christ, who is the Mediator of a better covenant. This is done by the Holy Ghost working in the ones God hath called. Without it no man can speak for the Lord.. It is my conviction that the true meaning of the word "gospel" is not only good news, but is the Holy Ghost speaking, or God by the Spirit speaking. I would not, however, have any one believe that I mean to assert that we are wrought upon in the matter as a machine or tool in the hand of God. The gift of the ministry embraces all the graces of the Spirit, for it is through grace we receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and these graces and gifts can be misused and abused by the individual, and therefore be unprofitable. We cannot destroy the Spirit, but we can quench it and destroy the usefulness and benefits of its graces. There is a dispensation of the gospel committed unto every man the Lord calls, and he can use it or abuse it. Paul admonished Timothy not to neglect the gift that was in him. If it was impossible for Timothy to neglect it, or, in other words, if Timothy was a mere tool, or machine, why admonish

him thus? The charge says, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; and continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." Also, "Preach the word." Speak the truth in love, charge them that are rich to be ready to distribute to the necessities of others, put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers; teach wives to be in subjection to their husbands; husbands to love their wives, children to obey their parents, etc. All these, and many more, duties rest upon the ambassador for Christ.

LEO V. BAGLEY.

MACON, Georgia.

HOUSTON, Texas, Sept. 17, 1939.

DEAR ELDER SIKES:—I have thought since I received my first copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES I would write and tell you how I have enjoyed it, though to tell you, or any one, how much I have enjoyed it would be impossible. I feel that now I cannot do without it. I also want to tell you again that I enjoyed the preaching you did at Cana Church. It was as food and drink to a starving person, and it seemed there was shouting and singing in my heart for a time after I heard you. But that all passed away, and at times it seems to me I cannot go on. But I cannot tell you, or any one, just how I feel, so will not even undertake to do so. I wish it were so I could be there for the Association, but things being as they are I will not be able to be there. I had the privilege of attending the Fellowship Association on Saturday, one week ago yesterday, and heard some more good preaching.

My mother (Mrs. J. K. Hill) came to visit me, and brought several copies of the *Lone Pilgrim,* printed in the years 1931 and 1932, so I commenced reading some of your article "God's Decree and Predestination of all Things." I only wish I could tell you the missing copies, so I could read it all.

I hope I have not taken too much of your time, and thank you for sending in my subscription. I send my love to both you and Mrs. Sikes. I hope you both are well, and remember me some time.

(MRS.) R. C. WRIGHT.

HOUSTON, Texas, Sept. 23, 1939.

DEAR ELDER SIKES:—I received your kind letter this morning, and it seems that as I wrote you before about my heavy burden, I would now like to try in my weak way to tell you of something that has happened to me since I wrote to you. As I told you, I have felt at times that I could not go on. Well, it has been like that, and seemed like I got worse. Wednesday morning I got up, feeling that I could not go on, so after the children left for school and husband for work I sat down and began looking over the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and a copy of *Sovereign Grace,* printed in 1932. It contained an article written by J. T. Barnes, which I read through, and by the time I finished it seemed to me it blotted out all light or hope for me, if I have ever had any. I put the paper down and the thought seemed to run through my mind that there was nothing to any of it, that I had only been worked up over it all. I went into the living

room and knelt down, and though I uttered no word or sound it seemed that my heart cried to God for strength to go on with what was before me, whether I was one Christ died to save or one of the eternally lost; the latter was what I felt I was. I then got up and walked to the window, where I had left my hymn book and read the verses,

"Though Thomas was of doubtful mind,
Yet Jesus leaves him not behind;
Thomas, he saith, behold my hands,
And, Simon Peter, feed my lambs."

"Then, like children, do not fear,
For Jesus lives to answer prayer;
And doubting souls are in his hands,
And precious food for all the lambs."

It was not as if I were reading, but as though those words were spoken to me, and it seemed that my heart cried out, There is a God, and he is with me. That dreadful burden was lifted and it was as if a light flooded my being, and yesterday and to-day I have been very happy. Of course I do not expect it to last, and if it his blessed will that I travel in darkness I can only look to him for strength.

As to sending that letter to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, you do as you see fit. It is all right with me.

I humbly wish to be remembered in the prayers and hearts of all God's little children.

(MRS.) BUNA V. WRIGHT.

JEFFERSON, New York.

DEAR EDITORS:—It has seemed the stones would cry out if I did not write and tell you how much we enjoy the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and also what I hope the Lord has done for this poor, weak, unworthy worm of the dust. It is with trembling and fear that I try to write. I have written many times and burned it, as I knew I was so ignorant. Then I would promise the Lord that I would write again, but time goes so fast, and I have so much work to do, I kept putting it off.

Over two years ago I was very sick with the measles, and the doctor and every one said I could not live, but one night a voice said to me, You will live, and I said, I will tell God's people what great things you have done for me. I have known and felt I have been punished many times for disobedience. I said to my husband, I will get well; God told me so. At the same time he saw a face at the window, and had wonderful things told him, and promised many things. A short time ago I told him of my feelings about writing, and he said, Beware, lest a worse thing come upon you, and told me letters did not belong to me after they were written, so I will try, God helping me, to write.

I was nearly forty years of age, when one day my father went to Stamford, a distance of ten miles, to meet Elder David Earl, and on their way home they stopped to see an aunt of mine who was very sick. She had been helpless with rheumatism for fourteen years, and when they came home at night they said she could not live. A short time after that a voice said, If it was you you would go to hell. I was in terrible torment, the tears were running down my face, and I went into another room and opened the Bible and a voice said, How dare you touch a Bible? I closed it and

took a hymn book and opened it at the hymn,

"Alas, poor soul, what ails thee now,
So feeble and so faint?
Why hangs a cloud upon thy brow?
Come tell thy sad complaint."

I tried to ask my people and the Elder to pray for me, but I could not. A voice seemed to say, You will die before morning and go to hell. I went to bed and cried, and prayed for the Lord to have mercy on me. Near morning God made me sleep. When I awoke the sun was shining in my room, and a great thankfulness took possession of me as I thought, I have one more day before I go to hell. My father was a good singer and had taught my sister and me the notes and we helped with the singing at the meetings, but that day I said I wanted to sit in the back seat, so we did. I did not sing for several years, and most of the time could not keep from crying through the meetings. An aunt of mine said to my mother in a low voice, What makes her cry so much? My mother said, She says she has toothache. That added to my torment, and instead of getting better every day, as I thought I would, I was getting worse all the time. It seemed there was nothing I could do to escape the vengeance due me. I would take the SIGNS, wrap them up, or keep them under my apron, go to the woods, or by the wall, and read them. Early one Sunday morning I took a small Bible and went out by a tree, thinking I would have a good chance to read it, but we had company arrive and that Bible laid out there all night. I never took it out again. I would go in a clothes room with a candle, where there was a large very old Bible, and read there as long as I could. At school I did not study, but would sit in a back seat and put a little Bible inside of my other books and read it. I begged my people to let me stay home, for I had been sick so much, because I had croup and whenever I caught cold I had to stay at home, so they let me give up school. I went on in this way until the year 1892, when I dreamed I was on a hill with a wall of fire around me, and as it kept coming nearer I felt I must die. The Savior came and took me in his arms and carried me to safety. I was very happy, and it seemed everything was praising God. I thought it would always be so, but I soon found that in this world I should have tribulation. I was baptized by Elder James Miller in the year 1894, together with my cousin and his wife. In 1903 I was married to my husband. He knew I was an Old School Baptist, and asked what their belief was. He then hated the Old Baptist doctrine, and for ten years or more he would argue with every Old Baptist he talked with. But in 1913 he came to the church with a wonderful experience, and was baptized by Elder John Clark. Since then we have enjoyed talking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, and can say that the Lord has been with us in six troubles, and in the seventh he has not forsaken us, and hitherto will help us all our journey through. We do not get to meeting through the winter, and when the dear old SIGNS comes and we read it, it seems as if we had been to a great and wonderful meeting,

Dear Elder Dodson, I have written some of my experience, and know if it is published in the SIGNS it will make quite some work for you, and we know you are a very busy man. When we heard of your operation we could not help praying that you would be brought through it all right, if it was the Lord's will, and still be editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Oh what a merciful God! Though the world despise and forsake us, our God is with us through it all, and all things work together for our good.

A little sister in hope,

(MRS.) ISAAC T. McINTYRE.

HURDLE MILLS, N. C., Feb. 27, 1940.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have filled out my subscription blank and am inclosing it, together with a money order, for another year's subscription. I am very glad I can send it at this time, but money is very scarce, yet I feel that the blessed Redeemer will provide for his humble people. For twenty-eight years I have been a member of the Old School Baptist Church. I was made to love these people above all things of this world. This love is a peculiar love; it is a union love, and a wonderful love, too. I like to hear from these true soldiers of the cross. When the SIGNS OF THE TIMES comes to me I sit down and begin to read. I find some letters so near and dear to me I cannot help shedding tears. However, I have my doubts and fears and get back in the dark.

Well, I wish I could write my experience, as I have never written it. I feel that mine is so poor that it is not fit to be among the good ones.

I do not ever want to do without the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as I am getting old and love to read it so much, as I can sit at home and read God's blessed words. For about fourteen years I have been taking the SIGNS, and am always glad when I receive one. Whenever I am able I attend my church meetings. I also visit old Wheeler Church, which is near here. I do feel that I hear the word of the Lord preached from solid doctrine and lasting treasures at these meetings. I have also visited Elder R. Lester Dodson's church in New York City. As my mother and I were turning the corner to go in the door, I heard the sweet sound of sweet fellowship. I said to her, Do you hear that joyful sound? I did enjoy being there and hearing Elder Dodson preach.

I did not write this especially for publication, but just felt to write a few words, telling how I enjoy the good SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I hope it may be blessed to continue on and on. However, I would be glad, if my letter is worth publishing, to see and read it again.

I shall stop here, as I might be imposing. Please pardon mistakes. I have never gone to school much, but I do hope I have gone to the spiritual school, which is above all things of this world.

This was written by a poor sinful worm of the dust, as I feel to be.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) SALLIE VINSON.

REIDSVILLE, North Carolina.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I am inclosing a letter I received from brother J. W. Linn, also my answer to the same, trusting they may be worthy of publication, though I am fearful mine is not worthy of notice, but I felt brother Linn's letter was too good for me to keep to myself. You must excuse pencil, for I have arthritis so badly I can hardly write at all.

Your brother in Christ, I hope,

C. C. SHREVE.

HAMMOND, West Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER SHREVE:—I received your good letter to-day, and was glad to hear from you. You did tell me some of my feelings. Oh how sinful man is! I know my own feelings, and oh how we would dread to have our thoughts written on the wall over our heads in the pulpit of our church-house for every one to read our lives as God reads them. But God is a God of mercy and of love toward his children, and he knows them, with all their evil doings, and his purposes cannot be thwarted. He purposed to save his elect children, who were chosen in Christ Jesus before sin entered into the world, and sin entered into the world by man. God created man, but not sin, because sin is the transgression of the law, and God never was under the law, so he could not break the law. Now listen. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. They were the first two things God created. The earth was without form and void. Then there was no knowledge in all the earth, except for God, who is full of knowledge and wisdom. And darkness was upon the face of the deep (so then deep calleth unto deep at the noise of the waterspouts), and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. Now let us notice the word "void", just before the darkness. No knowledge yet, only in the Creator. Darkness is what evil men love, rather than light, so God said, Let there be light, and there was light. This shows where light came from. After that God created man. Male and female created he them, and called their names Adam; not Adam and Eve, but called their names Adam. So let us keep in mind the Lord Jesus Christ, our Lord, he stood as a lamb slain. Not as a lamb and his bride, but as a lamb slain for his bride, to redeem her from her sin. Now listen. Eve first took and gave to Adam, Christ's bride was brought forth in sin, because Adam was the head of all the human race, and Eve is the mother of all living. So then the Lord God created man in his own image. Let us create, or let us make, man in our image, after our likeness. Jesus was a man of sorrows and was acquainted with grief. So no wonder we must have his likeness, if we are to be like him. He had flesh and bones, so have we.

But let us return to Adam. Then on the sixth day God planted a garden, and put the man in the garden to dress it and keep it. But the man created out of the dust of the ground did not dress and keep the garden, for Eve ate of the tree. But listen. Sin must enter into the world by man, as well as the Lamb of God must enter into the world to bring

life to his bride, who fell in Adam's sin, and the second man Adam was made a quickening Spirit and he kept his garden; he dressed his garden. So out of the ground did come knowledge, for out of the ground did the Lord God cause to grow every tree of the garden that was good for food and pleasant to the sight. But the tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge. The tree of knowledge was not an apple treee, as some claim that Eve took an apple and did eat thereof, but is plainly stated to be the tree of knowledge. Then we might ask, What kind of knowledge is it? Well, that is stated also the tree of knowledge; it is of good and also of evil. Now knowing good and evil, just as the Lord God had said in the twenty-second verse of the third chapter of Genesis: "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." So the tree of knowledge was in the midst of the garden. Not a single word said of it growing outside of the garden. Oh no, no. The woman said, Genesis iii. 3, "But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." The first time the word "knowledge" is mentioned in the Bible is in Genesis ii. 17: "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it." The tree of the knowledge of what? Of good and evil. If we are called trees of righteousness when we are called by his name, then is he not the tree of all knowledge, when he is full of knowledge and understanding, and all knowledge comes from him? But one source, and that the Lord God, whose Son took on him the image and likeness of man, who was created from the dust of the ground, where there is no knowledge. Then God breathed into the nostrils of man the breath of life, but not knowledge. After life we get knowledge (or learn), so after they partook of the fruit of this tree of knowledge their eyes were opened, now to know good and evil just the same as the Lord did, "become one of us." not as both of us, to know all things, but only as one of us in knowing good and evil. The tree of life, is it not of the same tree? Is not Jesus, the Son of God, equal with God? Is he not the tree of life just the same as he is the tree of knowledge? Because life came by no other source life and knowledge are both in One, just as Adam and Eve were both in one. Jesus had flesh and bones after he was born of the virgin and man and had become as one of us. Now in knowing good and evil, while God knows all things man only knows in part. Jesus said God only knows when the end of the world will be. So then man has "become as one of us" in knowing good and evil. Man hath taken of the knowledge that brought death to him, death in trespasses and in sin. Now lest he put forth his hand and take of the tree of life as he took of the tree of knowledge and died, lest he take of the tree of life and live forever, God says, Then how could our purpose stand, when you, my Lamb, was slain for man and his sins; and how could man have been quickened and made alive? So I will put the flaming sword, which

turns every way, to keep the way of the tree of life, for you are the way, you are the truth and you are the life, so I preserve you as the only way of life, and you will be slain at the time appointed time for sin, and you will be the only One who can give to eat of the tree of life. And except we eat of his flesh and drink of his blood we have no life in us. We do not eat and drink with our mouth as we would natural food, but we eat these things spiritually as we discern that his body was slain and his blood was shed for our sins. So the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. In Revelation xvii. 15, "the waters" mean people: "And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." In the beginning the earth was without form and void. A pattern of a house is void unless the house is built, it is but a pattern. But all things must be done in order. Man only brought death upon him. He could not bring life, for the life is in Jesus Christ. We take knowledge of him in transgression, for the law is the knowledge of sin. Our eyes are opened and we know we are naked. But we cannot clothe ourselves and hide our nakedness from the all-seeing eye of God, though we try to hide among the trees. They used fig leaves. Man was driven out of the garden, where he was put to dress it and to keep it, to till the ground, from whence he was taken. Instead of dressing and keeping the garden, man transgressed God's law which commanded him not to eat. The law could be broken, but the new covenant of life cannot be broken, and wherein man failed the heavenly Man kept it and fulfilled it for us. The first man was of the earth earthy. The heavenly Man kept his garden, which was planted in him. He dressed it up in shape, and it will be kept blameless before God in love. Notice it is in love. He loved her with an everlasting love, and with loving kindness he draws her and keeps her in his love, so we should praise him, knowing it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, for a good man's steps are ordered of the Lord. The Lord God did know that the first man, Adam, would partake of the tree of knowledge, eat and die in that day, in the day set forth, for he said, In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. And he did know his Son would come and redeem his garden; that is, those planted in Christ, the fertile ground, or garden, of his spiritual family, those who were placed in there, planted there, and his Spirit would move them, and they would be quickened and made alive in him and bring forth fruits of righteousness, and he would give them eternal life to overcome, and then would he give to them to eat of the tree of life, give his body and his blood for them that they might live forever in him.

Now let us notice Genesis ii. 16: "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat." As this permission is to eat of every tree of the garden, it must be the tree of knowledge was not included within the garden, so it must have been the tree of life in the

midst of the garden, for Adam and Eve no doubt heard the voice of the Lord, and he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and hid myself. So it must have been the Lord in the midst of the garden as the tree of life and as the tree of knowledge, for every tree of the garden was given for man to freely eat thereof. Now listen. God being full of all knowledge and full of all life, where else could there be any source for knowledge and life to come from? The Lord God was there, and Christ dwells in the midst of his brethren, for in the midst of the church will I sing praises unto thee, the God of Israel. For he was made a little lower than the angels. What for? That he might taste death for every man. Not for vipers, swine and dogs, but for every man. My brethren, both Jew and Gentile, every one who is called by my name. So you see we must consider who are addressed. "Repent, and be baptized every one of you." You who were pricked in your hearts. Not the unbeliever, but the believer. As we receive all things from God, it is well for us to know good and evil. Jesus knew and chose the good, and refused the evil. He knew no sin of himself, but he bore our sins.

Dear brother, read this letter, then reread it, and see if there is any food to be gathered from it. I hope I have found some comfort from the subject, though man hath written but little on it. I do not know that I have ever read anything man has written, except the Bible itself. I am weak, and very ignorant, so cast the mantle of charity over my mistakes, and tell me what you think, as I am very anxious to know, for I do not want to be mistaken.

JAMES W. LINN.

REIDSVILLE, North Carolina.

DEAR BROTHER LINN:—I have read your letter with interest. It does seem to me that your points are correct, yet I cannot preach the other ones, but I can just believe as it is given me. I arose this morning thinking of what I may write you, being so destitute and barren in mind, and my mind fell upon the words of one of the apostles while they were breaking the bread. He said we will have all things in common. So then this doctrine and experience is just one common thing among the children of God. There are no "big I's" or "little you's." Our experiences are generally about the same, but we never get too much. Then we will have all things in common. What did Eve say to the Lord after he spoke to her concerning the forbidden fruit? She said, The devil beguiled me and I did eat. Adam's excuse was that Eve gave it to him and he did eat. So it seems that they were yet in their nature. They had commenced to see though that they had done what they were commanded not to do, and they began to blame it upon some other one, and that has been the case ever since. We try to have some excuse, and it does seem that we have a pretty good excuse, but when we see our nakedness, then it is a different tale. We are the ones that are condemned, and we hang our heads in shame. But thanks be unto God, he has made us coats of skin to hide our naked-

ness. The fig leaves are like all other works of man. They are no good; they will not stand the storms nor the parching sun. But the coat of skin which represents the coat of righteousness that God did clothe Adam and Eve with hides our sins. It is something that is worth something, and it will stand the heat and the cold. Bless the Lord, for he has given us the coat of skin, and were it not for this our sins would ever be before us. Paul says, It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. We are not sanctified both soul and body; it is just the soul that has been sanctified. We know that sin dwells in us, and we do hate the sins that do so easily beset us, but when we are clothed with the righteousness of our God it puts the old Adam man in the background. But, mind you, we did not have anything to do with skin clothing, but Adam and Eve did try to hide themselves with fig leaves. I love to think of a God who has done everything perfect. It seems that love and righteousness go together, for one says love covers a multitude of sin. So God clothed Adam and Eve with coats of skin, and they covered both of them. They must have loved each other right there, for the first time their eyes were open they could see their vile and sinful nature, but the coat of skin which He did clothe them with hid all their unrighteousness and they could not see each other's nakedness. Is it not so with us? When we are clothed with the love of God we cannot see our nakedness, nor that of our brother. Oh what wondrous love is this! We cannot put it on, nor can we take it off, and we do not care to take it off when we are in that love.

Well, it seems I have drifted from the thoughts I would write about. We will have all things common. I will say it is one common thing, and the Lord's people all see eye to eye, and come forth speaking the same thing. We have no righteousness of our own to plead. We love to hear one tell of his ups and downs. One does not claim to have a bigger experience than another; it is just one common thing. True enough it seems that some have a harder time than others, but this is according to God's purpose, and we have no right to question his ways. We know, according to the Scriptures, some have come into the vineyard early in the day to work, and some late in the evening, but they all received the same pay, and the one who worked all through the heat of the day complained of his hire, so he reminded them they agreed to work for the two pence. This is the Lord's doings. So we see it is not required of such an one to do the same amount of work, for He says many are called, but few are chosen. Those who are chosen are the ones who are made to go forth and fight His battles—just the ones who can lap water like a dog. God does not need a large army to fight his battles, for he is the Captain. Sometimes men get uneasy because so few come out to our meetings, but we need not be uneasy, for it is God's way.

I must close. I cannot write any more, for I am too ignorant. I will say that I enjoyed your letter. Write

again soon. I hope this may find you well.

Your brother, I hope,

C. C. SHREVE.

DELAWARE, Ohio, Feb. 19, 1940.

DEAR EDITORS:—Though weay, empty and unworthy to address you, it again has become my duty to remit for your beloved magazine, which I have been reading for over fifty years. I so much enjoyed the February number that I read it and reread it, and, no doubt, shall read it yet again. My dear grandmother and parents (Ekelberrys) read it years before I was born. My other grandparents were Primitive Baptists also, but as they died before I was born I do not know whether or not they were subscribers, but it quite likely they were. At the time I hope the saving grace of our blessed Lord and Savior was revealed to me we were not receiving the paper, nor attending Baptist meetings, so when our glorious salvation by grace and electing love was revealed unto me I verily thought that no one else knew anything about the salvation of our Lord, not having heard it preached by man, and I am glad it was that way, since this fact greatly increased my hope that I must have been taught it of the Lord himself. My parents did not try to "save me," since they knew it was an utter impossibility, but they taught me obedience to whom obedience was due, decency, brotherly kindness and morality; and especially I was taught to shun a lie as I would the plague or the devil. So I was no more inclined to lie than to commit a murder, both seemed equally repulsive to me, for which I am thankful. But when the knowledge of my sinfulness was revealed to me all my morality seemed of no avail. I seemed the worst sinner upon the earth. I even felt that the Lord was so loving he would like to save me, but that justice tied his hands, as it were, since he was perfect in all his attributes, and could not just overlook my sin, but must be just. I have before told you of my deliverance, of hearing his pardoning voice with my ears, as well as with my understanding. I may be happier in heaven than I then was, but do not see how I could be. But oh, what a miserable failure I have been in walking, talking, feeling and doing as I would like to do. Surely there have been two armies, if indeed, as I hope, there have been righteous feelings and loving intentions of obedience. But I fondly hope and trust that the Lord led me in the way that he chose for me. I feel that my sin is mine, and only I myself am guilty, but I believe that he knoweth the way that I take, and that after all of my trial, sorrows and failures I shall be brought forth as gold tried in the furnace, and that his hand has upheld me.

JOIE E. WOODS PETERS.

JACKSONVILLE, North Carolina.

DEAR EDITORS:—Unto God all our ways are known. For some reason, those words came into my mind yesterday with some comfort, and my mind now is to write just a few lines of what I think about it. I do not think there is anything hidden from our God. I

feel to believe at this time that he saw the Adam family before the world ever was spoken into existence. We hear some say, If Adam and Eve had not done as they did what a wonderfully happy place this world would have been. But unto God all our ways are known, so the fall of those people was known. Let us go a little farther with this. I believe it was according to the will and purpose of our God. It was all open before him, and he declared the end from the beginning. This means from the crawling of the ants to the greatest thing can be thought of. We in nature do not believe this, or anything else, for at times the devil tells me there is not anything to it, it is only imagination, and sometimes when the children of the Most High start to go to meeting, where is heaven to their souls, he tells them they are not worthy to go, and asks what they are going for. He is trying to deceive them in every way he can. But unto God all our ways are known, and he (God) is the only one can handle that old serpent, for when he spake eternity was filled with his voice, and his voice is gone to the ends of the earth, and the flesh of men is brought under subjection to his will, to worship and to serve him. And just a word here concerning peace meetings. That is the only way they come about, but at this present time it is a peace meeting to the poor child of God. He can sing, The Lord has triumphed over the horse and the rider, he has thrown them into the depths of the sea, and his eyes are upon that new world, where they do not need the light of the sun, nor the light of the moon, but they see the glory of God which lights that new world. We hope we experience those things here in this life, because if we know nothing about heaven here, I do not feel we will over yonder.

I feel to write a little of my experience and views just here, but do not know that it will be of comfort to any one, but it has come to me, concerning prayer. It was about ten years ago that I was going to an association, and just before I got there I saw a child standing by the side of the road, whom I thought was going to cross the road, so I almost stopped the car, and the child stopped, too, and as it stopped I went on, and the child went on, too, and it struck its head against the fender of the car and fell in front of the wheel, which ran over its leg and broke it. When I got out of the car it was lying almost in front of the door, and when I saw its eyes the thought came to me, Oh that I could pray for it. For two days and nights this was my desire, but I could not pray, no more than if I had been a beast, but on Monday night after that meeting on Saturday I have a hope the Lord manifested himself to me in power, and I called my little family to me and told them that if they could bear with me I felt I had to offer prayer. That being the first time I ever made the attempt in my home openly, and I felt great relief, and as soon as I could I went to bed, with joy in my heart, feeling that the Lord of heaven and earth had blessed me with some relief.

I felt assured the child would get well. The child was five years old, and we lived six miles apart. The next evening my wife suggested that we go see the child and its parents, and I was feeling so good about it I was glad to go. As we entered their yard I saw the mother come to the door, and she was crying, and the thought came to my mind, The child is dead. As soon as she could speak she said, I am not crying for sorrow, but for joy. I said to her, Mrs. Brown, how can this be? She said, Last night, at eight o'clock, my child looked in my face, and said, Mamma, the man who broke my leg has prayed for me. This was enough to prove to me there is a God, who can bless us poor unworthy sinners to pray, and not only us, but can reveal it to little children and make them speak it out for our comfort.

I feel I have not written as I thought I would when I started, but I have not power over my mind or thoughts. I hope I may be blessed to always believe in the doctrine that honors the true God of all believers in Christ Jesus. If there is any comfort to any one in this letter, praise the Lord for it, for I feel he gave to me to write, and I have written as my mind led me. Unto God all our ways are known.

Brother Dodson, you can look over this, and if you think it is worth publishing you may do so; if not, throw it away, for I now have relief in my mind. I hope brother Roy Smith will write some more for the SIGNS.

Yours in hope and fellowship,

T. H. EDWARDS.

STAR CITY, ARK., Feb. 6, 1940.

DEAR EDITORS:—It has been quite some time since I paid anything on my subscription, so I inclose three dollars, and will try and send the rest some time this year. I surely appreciate your kindness in sending me the SIGNS, for it has been of great comfort to me, with the many good letters, such as the one written by sister Elgin, of North Carolina, published in the November number. I read it and shed tears, and thought, Oh if I just had such an experience I would not doubt so much. I wrote her a letter, telling her how much I enjoyed her letter, and very soon I received a good letter in reply, and I surely did enjoy reading it. Elder Ker also wrote a good letter. In fact, all were good, but some I get more out of than I do others. I am weak and shallow of understanding, and there are some who wade in too deep water for me. If I be one at all, the place for me is in the shallow water with the little fish. At times I feel that I am not fit to be numbered with any one. Sometimes I feel that if I could just be the footmat they wipe their feet on that would be good enough for me. If I am saved at all, it is through the goodness and mercy of God. There is nothing I have done, or ever will do.

I just finished reading the SIGNS a few minutes ago, and it surely was good. The first letter, written by brother Roy S. Smith (if he will allow me to call him brother) surely was good, as was the letter written by sister Myrtle Rhodes, of Winnsboro, Texas. I feel that the dear sister is in her first

love stage, for it is all rejoicing with her. That is a happy way to be, but when one gets off the hill he has to pass through the valley before he gets on the hill again, and the older I get the farther apart the hills seem to be. I get to studying at times, and think, Oh if I could just get back in that first love stage, but I cannot. A baby is just a baby once, and then is when it needs the sincere milk of the word. After a time it gets stronger and is able to stand the strong diet. I once felt (when I first came into the church) that after awhile I would know more about the goodness and mercy of God; in other words, I would be stronger, but I learned differently as I grew older. It seems the older I get the less I know.

Well, I want to thank you again for your kindness. Please excuse bad writing and mistakes. I am full of mistakes.

From an unworthy brother, if one at all,

W. A. WOMACK.

DODGE CITY, Kansas, July 7, 1940.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I have just finished reading your editorial in the July number of the SIGNS, and would like to state that your experience with the old colored gentleman, and its total surprise to you, parallels nicely many similar experiences that have presented themselves to me, more especially during the last quarter of a century. It may have been because I have been working with larger groups of men, and with several nationalities represented, and although, as the prophet expresses it, "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips," it is remarkable at times to hear some of those unclean lips in unguarded moments speak of the wonderful works of God. Not the gods which the fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, nor the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell, but the God that worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, the God that is superior to Satan, death, hell and the grave, a perfect God. On the other hand, how sickening to hear some great (so called) christians (and church goers) explain in great welling words the utter impossibility of (his) God to succeed in his plan of salvation without the assistance of man. Much rather I would say, The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him. Jesus also, in speaking of his heavenly mission, says, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."—John xvi, 7, 13. Here is the evidence that his people (the generation of Jesus Christ) shall have that he (Jesus) has died for the remission of their sins, has ascended up on high and is now seated at the right of God to make intercession for them, and, brother Dodson, I would have to hesitate a long time, if ever I should say,

such a message as Jesus mentioned was not revolving in the mind of King Haakon VII. as he delivered the message you so fittingly recall in your letter, for His elect people shall come from every kindred, nation and tongue, both the noble and ignoble, great and small, rich and poor, so none of us ignorant worms of the earth can point out the objects of God's love with certainty here below, but God knoweth them that are his. For them that he did foreknow he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren; and them he did predestinate he also called, and them he called he also justified, and them he justified he also glorified. So he works in them (the elect) to will, and works with them, that they may not will in vain, and if I believe anything, it is this: God's purpose can never fail.

R. L. DAVIS.

DUQUOIN, Ill., Jan. 30, 1940.

DEAR EDITORS:—I will try to write a few lines to let you know I am still receiving the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for which I feel very thankful to you, and to those who make it possible, as I am not able to pay for it. It is a great pleasure to have it to read, for I know it sets forth what I believe the Bible and my experience teach me, that is if I believe anything. Most of my time I am doubting if I believe anything, and then things rise up and look so bright that it seems there is no room for doubt. Here in this association we have two able preachers, and have meeting almost every Sunday at one or the other of the four churches. Words fail me in expressing to you my love and appreciation of your sending the paper to me without pay, but please do not let me be too great a burden to you. I have been reading the SIGNS for more than fifty years. My parents were subscribers as long as they lived, and then I had it changed from their name to mine, never thinking I would get so I could not keep my subscription paid up, and if it is proving too heavy a burden you can drop my name from your list and it will be all right with this poor old sinner, although it would be like one of the family dropping out. I am ashamed of not writing before now. I have moved from where I was when I last wrote you. My present address is 411 Winters Avenue, Duquoin, Illinois.

An unworthy sinner saved by grace,

H. M. BERRY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. John T. Cockrill, Va., $1; Mrs. Mae Thomas, Ill., $24; "A friend," N. Y., $2; Middletown and Wallkill Church, N. Y., $50; Mrs. David Farnie, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Mary H. Davis, Md., $3; Martha E. Holloway, Md., $1; Mrs. Julia T. Murphy, Ark., $1; W. R. Wallis, Miss., $3.

BOOKS WANTED.

ANY one having a copy of Hassell's Church History who is willing to sell it will please communicate with Mr. John H. Walker, 131 Claremont Avenue, Jersey City, N. J.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1940.

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HEBREWS VI. 19.

"WHICH hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail."

Often when a child of God speaks of his hope, the expression is ridiculed by those who claim to have reached a condition where they know they are going to heaven when they die. The home spoken of by the apostle in the foregoing Scripture has a sure foundation. When we hope for or in anything there is usually some reason for that hope. The Gentiles are spoken of, before being grafted into the gospel, as without hope and without God in the world. God's sovereign rule over them was the same before the gospel was delivered unto them as afterwards, yet they were shut up until such time that God purposed to manifest unto them his mercy through the gospel. We are commanded to be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is within us, with meekness and fear. A man dead in trespass, and in sin, in other words, the natural man, who has not been born again, has no reason to hope in God. He may have a hope based upon his works, but this is a dead hope, and shall perish. The hope of a true believer in Christ is a living hope, because it is in the finished work of the crucified, risen and exalted Savior, who is seated on the right hand of the Majesty on high, having accomplished a complete salvation for all the Father had given him. When the eyes of an individual are opened to his true condition, as a totally depraved sinner in the sight of the holy God, the first thing he usually does is to flee to the law for justification. How well we remember our own experience in this. Often we read the Bible in secret, searching for something whereby we might feel at peace with God. We find ourselves cut off, the word of God declaring that if we offend in one point we are guilty of the whole; that cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the law to do them. The convicted sees nothing wrong with the law, but through the quickening Spirit's work he finds the trouble is with himself. Often it is not only what he does that causes him to call upon God, but

what he is by nature also. He is like a man drowning, or sinking in quicksand, at first he hopes by his own efforts to extricate himself from his condition, as Joseph's brethren no doubt felt that the money they carried to Egypt would purchase all their needs. Salvation is never fully realized, and a sinner enabled to rejoice in Christ, until he has found that God does not need our works, that all the works of the flesh are but filthy rags in his sight. Those who have tasted that God is gracious have been stripped of self and self-dependence, and brought to the place where they know that if their soul is sent to hell, his righteous law approves it well. All these are manifestations of the Spirit's work, yet the tempest-tossed sinner can find no grounds for hope in God's salvation. Rather is he passing Mount Sinai, where all the terrors of the law and the holiness of God are being made known unto him. This is part of the new birth, but not known unto him yet. We feel that many of our readers remember these experiences. As the Israelites passed Mount Sinai before reaching Mount Sion, a place of rest, so must each believer be brought this way. There are usually three steps in the new birth: conviction, conversion and deliverance from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Here Christ is revealed unto us as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, and through a God-given faith we receive the atonement, and are able by this grace to lay hold upon the hope set before us. Regardless of how this work may have been wrought, when one is given something within to at times lay hold upon the sufferings of Christ and his obedience as his hope of heaven, then he has a living hope, one that has a sure foundation, one that shall weather the storms and safely land him into that land where there shall be no more night. There is nothing surer than this hope. If the hope is in organizations of men, works, formalities, or the arm of flesh in any sense, it shall perish; but they that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Sion, that shall never be removed. Ships often drop anchor to hold the boat fast. Sometimes the anchor is not strong enough to hold the boat and the anchor is broken. Sometimes that to which the anchor is fastened gives; sometimes the current is so strong that the anchor does not hold. Not so with this hope. It is the anchor of the soul, and entereth into that within the vail. Though often afflicted, persecuted, tempest-tossed and often in despair, they are bound unto that heavenly kingdom by an anchor that shall never fail.

How often we must wait upon the Lord for a renewal of a manifestation of his mercy unto us. At times darkness hides him from us, and we feel he is clean gone forever. So often we cannot call upon him in prayer, even when we are facing trying times, yet when there is a renewal of his loving-kindness manifested to us we learn over and over again that we must wait upon him.

October 22nd we went to Richmond, Virginia, for an operation on our vocal cords, and as we waited in the hospital room to be carried to the operating room we could not call upon the Lord in prayer; could not think upon his name. Suddenly the Lord, we trust, gave us this verse of a hymn,

"When trouble, like a gloomy cloud,
Has gathered thick, and thundered loud,
He near my soul has ever stood,
His lovingkindness, oh how good."

Suddenly the world looked different and a sweet submission, we trust, was given us, and we could be still and know that he is God. That which we lay hold of in these times is the finished work of Christ. Everything he has accomplished he gives unto his people, and they are complete in him. While we live here we shall hope for that we see not. We are saved by hope, and hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for? There is assurance in this hope. It is not a myth, therefore we can sing,

"We travel through a barren land,
With dangers thick on every hand;
But Jesus leads us through the vale;
The christian's hope shall never fail.

Huge sorrows meet us as we go,
And devils aim our overthrow;
But vile infernals can't prevail;
The christian's hope shall never fail.

Sometimes we're tempted to despair,
But Jesus makes us then his care;
Though numerous foes our souls assail,
The christian's hope shall never fail.

We trust upon the sacred word,
The oath and promise of our Lord;
And safely through each tempest sail,
The christian's hope shall never fail."

D. V. S.

PRIMITIVE BAPTIST HOME,
SALISBURY, MARYLAND.

Some time ago a group of nine of the Residents in the Home addressed to me the following joint-letter:

"Dear Elder Dodson:—We, the residents of the Home, wish to express our selves regarding the many comforts it has given to us in the years we have lived here. It is, indeed, a haven of refuge. Its home-like atmosphere, clean, appetizing food, the care we are given each day, and especially in time of sickness; all these we deeply appreciate, and we feel they are rich blessings. In saying these words, we feel that there are many others who could find the same peaceful home for themselves by becoming one of our number."

I am sure it will be a source of great satisfaction to those who have in any way contributed to the welfare of our dear ones in the Home, to realize that their efforts have been as fruitful of success as the foregoing would indicate. If there be others who would like to enter the Home, information can be obtained by writing to Mr. John B. Miller, Secretary of the Board of Trustees, at Newark, Delaware.

The next Annual Donation Day will be Thursday, December 5th, 1940, and those who wish to donate articles of food can send or leave them at the Home, while those desiring to make monetary donations can send same to Mrs. Grace H. Hastings, Treasurer of the Home, at Route 4, Salisbury, Maryland, or to the Home direct. Mrs. Rosalie M. Costello is the Matron of the Home,

and she will be glad to receive any donations on behalf of the Home.

I sincerely hope the brethren and friends will keep this matter in mind, and not forget those who are so appreciative as to write the letter quoted above.

R. LESTER DODSON, President.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by Deacon G. C. Spindle.)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 16th, 17th and 18th, 1940, to the churches composing this Meeting, and to the associations, churches and meetings with whom we correspond, sends greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In our attempt to prepare this Circular Letter, we refer to the language of Jesus in Matthew ix. 12: "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." And in the thirteenth verse, same chapter, "For I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." In nature only the sick need a physician; they that are in good health (or whole) do not. When Jesus said he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, Jesus did not deny that all men are sinners, but that he came to redeem his people from their sins, his people who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Those who are sick are sinners convinced that they need a Physician for their sin-sick souls. The ones who are "whole" are those sinners who have no feeling sense of their need to be healed. This divides all humanity into two classes: (1) sin-sick souls who must be healed of all their infirmities by the Great Physician, the Lord Jesus Christ, because there is none other name given under heaven among men whereby such must be saved; (2) self-righteous souls who depend upon their fancied good works and who are never brought to repentance, have no part in the redemption work of the Lord Jesus and are left to perish in their sins. An ordinary physician administers medicine or treatment to the patient, the patient enduring all the sickness and all the suffering incident thereto. Christ is no ordinary doctor, however, but an infinitely super-human one, who himself feels in his own Person all the sicknesses and sufferings of his people. He comes at an understanding of each individual case of his peoples', not by diagnosing symptoms, but because he himself knoweth their frame and remembereth that they are dust. Indeed, Christ is both the Physician and also himself the Medicine and Treatment. He administers no bitter dose or purging draught to any of his people, but he himself has first undergone the same curative process that his healing might be their healing. We understand this to be in accord with the teaching of the Scriptures. We feel we know something of this truth in our own personal experience, and we have hope that Jesus has been revealed to us as our Savior, that he bore our sins, died for us and rose again for our justification, and is set down at the right hand of God, and

that he ever lives to make intercession for his people.

If it proves to be the Lord's will that we do so, we hope to meet next year with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, at the usual time in October. Then, we shall hope to again be favored with the coming among us of your brethren, our kindred in Christ, and of the ministering brethren who come in Christ's name bringing glad tidings from a far country that is an heavenly. We thank you in Christ's name for your coming unto us this year, and we glorify God on your behalf because of his enabling grace manifested from him through you unto us in the preaching of the gospel of Christ, and him crucified. Peace and love and unity seem to have prevailed in this meeting. How good it is when such is our blessed state.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Mod.
G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Pocatalico Old School, or Primitive Baptist Association, to the several associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greetings.

DEAR SAINTS OF THE LIVING GOD:—Another year has passed by with its many changes, and through the abounding mercy of our God we have been blessed to meet in this another session of our Association in peace and harmony, with love abounding, where, too, through the blessing of God, we have had with us a goodly number of your messengers, and truly they have come laden with the truths of God. The preaching has been in power and in demonstration of the Spirit. This has been a time of love, a time to long be remembered. We desire a continuation of this correspondence, if it be God's holy will. May the covenant blessings of God be yours for his name's sake. Amen.

J. C. HAMMOND, Moderator,
H. J. BIRD, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER

OLD SCHOOL

BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. — 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists is now settled in her new church-house, at 4614 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas, where she holds her regular monthly services on each first Sunray at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. Preaching services also on each third Sunday by Elder C. B. Teague, and each second Sunday by brother O. C. Lee, at 11 o'clock a. m. A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. R. HARDY, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers.

Single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

J. E. BEEBE & CO.,

MIDDLETOWN, N Y.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 109. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1941. NO. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ACTS XX. 32.

"AND now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

What a doctrine! What a merciful God that would bestow such wonderful things upon sinners! Sometimes, when we are given to ponder over salvation by grace, it seems too much that such worms as we sons of Adam know ourselves to be, are freely given Christ as our Surety, whereby we are called sons of God. Believing in the harmony of divine testimony, we find John calling the attention of the children of God to this same doctrine: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."—1 John iii. 1. This "manner of love" caused the old apostle to write to Ephesus the language of our text. It caused him to be bold as a lion, wise as a serpent and yet harmless as a dove, to write that christian's theme, We know that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them that are called according to his purpose; to fight the good fight of faith; to instruct them that needed it, and to rebuke the unruly.

We hear much about preparing ourselves to preach, but God prepared Paul for his preaching and writing. One, if not the chief, reason we have so many isms in the church to-day is because of man's preparation to preach. Paul, prior to his miraculous calling from nature to grace, believed in keeping the law for life and salvation. God brought him out of this step by step, making him testify all along to God's children that it was due to grace. Some people, many of whom are wearing the name Old School Baptist, do not like to speak of God making his children do things. But in no other way could Paul leave this admonition with the church at Ephesus. Love, this kind that is peculiar, insomuch that when it is bestowed upon the heirs of promise the world no longer knows them, as it

did not know Him, must efficaciously be shed abroad in the hearts of his dear children, and it produces fruit. It is strong as death, and none of these modern workmongers are able to withstand death. It seizes upon rich and poor, high and low, bond and free, and they answer the call. To illustrate: We have recently been in the limelight in Alabama, because a poor miner's wife gave birth to quadruplets. They were lifted from obscurity to prominence, from rags to riches. The town in which they were located was enjoying thousands of dollars of tourist trade. But in the midst of this wild celebration disease seized upon one of the babies and laid it low in death. Everything was done for it that money and medical skill could offer, but it had to die. So love, being as strong as death, when it is shed abroad in the hearts of the children of God, it produces obedience; it honors and glorifies the Creator instead of the creatures; it causes them to lose confidence in the flesh, and last, but not least, it causes them to fall out with the frivolous things of this world.

Believing that we have a foundation for whatever the text contains, let us look into its beauties. Let us remember that we must have grace to go into these things, and I do hope, if it is His will, that I may have an unction from the Holy One as I make the attempt. "And now, brethren, I commend you to God." Why do that, Paul? Why not tell them that they have matters in their own hands, and that they are able to have a prosperous church and live above trouble while in this world? We might imagine the amazement of the apostle to call in question his statement. Every genuine Old Baptist knows that God is all we have to look to. Paul had lost everything that was precious to the natural man, including friends, position and money. Something had to be given him of more magnitude, power and wonderfulness to make him write as he did: "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God through faith: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death." —Phil. iii. 8-10. Watch that man as the Lord brings him on the way. Oh how we cling to our own power, the things of this world and our own righteousness! But Paul was made to renounce all things as but dung. Oh what are riches without Him? What are families and friends when we are in the gloom? Yes, the text is a good one, and I feel that the apostle was well qualified to commend the brethren to God "and to the word of his grace." Many people who have never been brought into the saving power of this Word of grace are ready to say that this is the written Bible, but, dear brethren, Paul commends and points us to something more wonderful than that. To

the word of his grace. Ah, methinks I see him as he lays aside his glory and comes to his brethren, manifest in the flesh. This is the One that admonishes this grace of God. We hear him as he forever puts a seal on salvation by redeeming grace: I came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. This living Word of this grace is not bound and waiting for men to act first (to do so would not be grace, but works), but as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, so the Son quickeneth whom he will. (John v. 21.) Furthermore, the Word of this grace is all we have right now. He is a living Savior. He is a present Savior. No wonder the apostle wanted to commend to the brethren the Word of His grace. He had found him such a refuge in time of trouble (Heb. vi. 18; Psalms xlvi. 1) that he could well commend the brethren to him.

"Which is able to build you up." Let us praise such a wonderful Being. The world cannot understand why we are such sticklers for grace. None but those who are grace-taught can read this language right. Learning cannot see this statement is one coming from One who is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent, but rather they all hinge salvation on conditions. Ah, poor, wayworn Old School Baptist! Here is something that was spoken to the church. The Builder of the kingdom is an able builder, even a master-builder. He cannot fail to keep this city set upon a hill. Our persuasion is that no power will ever pull it down. But, brethren, the apostle is not treating upon the bringing in of new material altogether, but rather let us cherish the idea that He is able to build us up. Us, we who are, as we hope, already in the kingdom, need building up.

As I pen these lines to the poor and afflicted Old School Baptists who are scattered over land and country, I meet them in my mind, in union and sweet fellowship, each sighing and groaning as they look back in retrospection upon the rough journey they have so far come. Ah, with what shame must we confess that so many times we have builded on sand. So much of the time have we tried to walk in our own strength; so many times have we hewed out cisterns of our own, only to find that they are broken; so many times does the poor old minister fear that he has run when he did not have the unction from the Holy One. But, dear brethren and sisters, be of good cheer, He is able to build us up; yea, he will perform all the purposes connected with us.

Let us look for something besides those places of shifting quicksands. It is bitter contrast and warfare to the christian, and just as sure as we see so many scenes where we have builded by our own efforts, on a sandy foundation, we are sure to see spots that are like unto a Bethel to our poor souls. As said, He is a wise Master-builder. He knows we are ofttimes ready to despair and he builds us up at the proper time. I shall never forget when I had builded high ambitions in an educational field, and believed that I was all right. Oh what a scene

when Paul was turned from what he chose to be to that the Lord chose and called him to! Ah, the very elements were shaken and all nature seemed to be sad in sympathetic pose because I was dying. Dying, did you say? Ah, yes I was dying to the stability of my own building and workmanship. But I cannot forget that time, so precious and full of consolation, when the Lord showed me another building, and even gave me a boon, that troubles and unfitness have not removed, that I was part of the building.

I have doubted much as to my call to the ministry, as by birth, name and life have been peculiarly connected with circumstances of other people. I have lamented that I felt that if I had not been caught in a whirl of circumstances I would not have been connected with the church as I am, and that I feel that I was deceived and deceiving others. Several times in the midst of these soul-searching times have I received that building up by this same Word of his power. This same Builder is the chief corner-stone of the building. Every member of this building is fitted in as it pleases the Builder. To all the Old School Baptists who feel they are nothing, and not worthy to be among such people, let me say that every member is a particular member. Then every blessing is yours. He will build you up.

"And to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Oh, poor soul, why art thou cast down? You have an inheritance that the Lord will give you among the sanctified. It is sweet here sometimes to enjoy the "earnest" of this inheritance, among his dear children here, in a church capacity, but in that day we shall see him that was slain for our sins, and shall look fondly on him.

I do not expect to meet many of the SIGNS' readers, but I want to commend you to God, and the Word of his grace, who is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among the sanctified. At that time I hope to meet you.

Submitted in love.

W. D. GRIFFIN.

FAYETTE, Alabama.

NEWTON, Alabama.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—Since receiving your special request to write for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES I have had a great desire to write again, however, my duties have been heavy in my vocation, and also in church affairs. I do want to write about my trips this summer, since it was my privilege to meet so many writers for the SIGNS. It was almost like a glad reunion to me, for there is a relationship among these writers that is indescribable and full of glory.

On the fifth Sunday in June I attended a Union Meeting in the Yellow River Association, of Georgia. Each minister in that Association was present, so I was informed, and a Deacon was ordained on Friday, while a beautiful baptismal service was held on Sunday morning. It was a great privilege to meet the widow of Elder L. H. Hardy, whom the writer greatly loved, through his writings for the SIGNS, and

also to be entertained in the home of brother and sister Hugh L. Gloer in a way that my family and I shall never forget. I shall always remember my fond association with Elders Nash, Brooks, Hewatt, Chandler, Lifsey, Huff, Beauford, Thomas Huff, and brethren Jackson, Gloer and many, *many* others in this Association, who are standing firmly upon the fundamental principles ever upheld by true Primitive Baptists.

On the second Sunday in July, by special invitation, I was permitted to attend the Staunton River Association, in Virginia. When I arrived on Saturday morning I was a total stranger, but we were soon made to realize that there is an acquaintance that transcends personal friendships on earth. At the close of the buainess session dear Elder W. R. Dodd, the Moderator, called for me, and I was made to feel at home among these dear brethren and sisters. As each minister arose it seemed that the very glory of the Lord shone around and each lamb and sheep was made to feast upon the heavenly manna which was prepared for them by that great Giver of every good and perfect gift. Unity prevailed and joy abounded in that harmonious throng. Oh may peace and the communion of the Holy Spirit ever abide with these lovely brethren and sisters. To the writer it was almost like a meeting of the SIGNS' family, since there I first met Elders Dodson and Spangler, who are on the editorial staff, and Elder Roy Smith, whose able articles are read and treasured by so many peace-loving Baptists everywhere. The writer was most favorably impressed with these humble leaders of the flock. May they continue to pen thoughts too deep and sublime for mortal man to perceive, and may they be kept in that way that the lion's whelp hath never trodden nor the vulture's eye hath ever seen. It is a perfect highway, wherein the purified throng of God are kept by the power of God, there awaiting the welcome plaudit, Come in, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. What a welcome invitation! Truly here we have our trials, troubles and tears, but up yonder it will be one eternal day. Inasmuch as within us is possible, let us press forward toward the mark of the prize of that high calling, ever looking unto Jesus, the *author* and *finisher* of our faith. He indeed is the One who ruleth wisely in all things.

We also met many other writers of the SIGNS, and we trust that each of these as the years roll on may be inspired of that heavenly One to pen mysterious messages from that abode where all spiritual messages are kept, to be meted out to us as the need arises. I firmly believe that no sermon or message has ever been delivered until the need for it has materialized. A great disappointment to me was my failure to meet brother R. Lester Dodson, whom I looked forward to meeting with much fond anticipation. May his remaining days be his best and brightest days, and may his pen continue to be used in composing consoling messages for the edification of the SIGNS' family.

I shall never forget the courtesies extended to me during my stay in the Staunton River Association, and wish I might acknowledge each personally, but space and time will not permit. I was most royally entertained by Elders Dodd, Wyatt, Gilliam, Perdue, Payne, Doss, Evans, Herndon, and brethren and sisters Williams, Midkiff, Pickerell, Richardson and many, many others. May the Immaculate One ever keep and guide the membership of the Staunton River Association in the true and tried paths of the fathers.

Returning to my home, I attended the following week-end and Union meetings in our own Association, and there we were wonderfully blessed. Each minister seemed to be inspired to declare the unseachable riches of Christ, and peace and unity were everywhere manifested.

By special request of Elder J. W. Gilliam and others, I was at the Upper Country Line Association, at Bush Arbor Church, near Burlington, North Carolina, on the fourth Sunday in July. I received a glad welcome from the Moderator, Elder T. A. Stanfield, who impressed me most highly as being one who was ever ready to uphold the standard of truth and righteousness. Here, too, it seemed to be almost a reunion of the writers for the *Lone Pilgrim,* that for so many years upheld the banner of Christ with that clarion call of salvation by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves. I was glad to find both Elders Wyatt and Gilliam, and many, many others, contending for the faith of the fathers just as they had composed so many articles in the *Lone Pilgrim, Old Faith Contender* and *Sovereign Grace* and *Pilgrim* Here I would say that I feel it is just as essential for Old Baptists to read only sound Baptist literature as it is for them to use only sound ministers. More trouble and dissension have arisen in our ranks from unsound ministers and so-called Baptist literature than any other cause. May trashy Arminian literature be forever banished from our homes. Old Baptists know that sound Predestinarian principles are being upheld by a very few religious periodicals to-day, and I feel that it is not necessary to name them here. Oh may we ever stand united behind such soldiers of the cross as Wyatt, Dodson, Gilliam, Spangler, Walker, Roy Smith, J. R. Hardy, Hill, Stanfield, Griffin, Berry, Dodd, Perdue, Harris, Stegall, Nash and many others too numerous to mention here.

It was my privilege during the summer to meet some fifty new ministers, and it was a far greater privilege to find them almost as a unit proclaiming the principles ever upheld by Primitive Baptists since the time of Daniel, Isaiah, Malachi, Peter and Paul. These principles cannot be controverted. Let us press onward and upward, knowing that we have the precious truths that will stand when all else shall have faded away and vanished as nought, so far as so-called doctrines are concerned.

I cannot begin to acknowledge the many favors that were extended to me during my stay among the Upper

Country Line brethren. I do want to mention Elders King, Gilliam, Stanfield, Barham, Trent, Hill, Smith, Harris, Stegall, and many others that space prevents. I was entertained in the home of sister Gillman and her husband, who extended every possible courtesy to me.

In conclusion, I want to say that Elder Trent's sermon on Monday morning should serve as a spiritual light to younger ministers in their pilgrimage through this low ground of sorrow. It was indeed a spiritual feast for the writer as each minister came in the order of his name. If on earth no more we meet, oh may we meet around the dazzling throne of God, where we may worship him perfectly in an "eternal day." When I arrived home from this trip the Union meeting of our Association convened with our home church, at Mt. Gilead, and again we were visited with heavenly messengers, bringing the glad story that never grows old. May this story ever comfort and console all the spiritual family of the Lamb.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

J. J. COLLINS.

MC DOWELL, Ky., Oct. 22, 1939.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been my desire for some time to write a short letter, feeling that if it should be written by inspiration of the Spirit it may do some poor hungry soul good to read it and then look back over his past life, even when he was not able know the difference between dark and light, in a spiritual sense. One reason why I have not attempted to write, is because I have always seen myself so little and so unworthy I have felt that my writing might be in vain. As I read so many good letters in the SIGNS it causes me to rejoice and to shed tears. Dear ones, if it pleases the Lord, I will write a little of my experience. I will never forget, it was in September, 1920, when I believe the good Lord saw fit to stop one of his children from traveling that wide and crooked road that leads to destruction. But I must tell you that often I felt this quickening Spirit come into my life, and something told me all things that ever I did, and after all this I wandered in many forbidden paths. But you know his little children have to be taught. One Scripture says that we learn obedience by the things we suffer, so I went on in this trouble until about the year 1931, when I began to have a feeling within that Jesus loved me. I had always seen him to be the Judge that would judge me according to my works, and we know that according to Paul's experience while we are under the law our works come up before us as filthy rags. By this time I felt that God had forgiven me of everything I ever did. While I was under the law I was telling people that salvation was of the man, and according to the works of the man, but you know this was all for a teaching. When I went to the Primitive Baptist meetings I found comfort in their singing and their preaching was food to my soul. There came a time when I felt I would go to the church. I felt I had an interest there, and it had been revealed to

me that Jesus was crucified and had finished the work his Father gave him to do, so the fourth Saturday in April, 1932, I gave my hand as an offering to live with his afflicted people. I was received and taken down into the liquid grave, as I believe, my Savior was buried in the natural water. I felt that I left my burden in that water, and I never have been able to meet up with it again. For about eighteen months it pleased the Lord to let me be at peace. I was still attending the meetings of the church, when I began to be troubled within, and soon I was struggling with another burden. I felt it was a preaching burden, and I suffered for four and one-half years before I was made willing to declare salvation is of the Lord. You know Jonah had to go down to the bottom before he was made willing. The Lord said, My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power, so I have been trying to speak in public for about three years.

Dear editors, if you have space to publish these few scattered remarks I would be glad; if not, throw them in the waste-basket.

From a brother in hope of eternal life, one saved by grace, if saved at all,

B. T. HALL.

BENTON, Kentucky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I am sure what I may say will sound like sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal to you, you who are so graciously taught the depths and heights of our God. Who am I that I should say anything? I am corrupt in ways and evil in nature, always doing the things that cause me to mourn, and I go on in the way that I abhor, in spirit and in truth, if indeed I have ever been led by that true Spirit which makes rough places smooth and our places of rest oases in the desert land. He maketh me at times, I hope, to lie peacefully down in green pastures and leads me (I know he does if I go) by still waters. Not a sound to molest my peace, and my calm is so tranquil that no harsh, rough speech can enter, and the north wind cannot touch. And oh how we hear it blowing from those who do not know what it is to be touched by that warm southern breeze of our God and their cold hearts set aglow with love and truth. I feel a sorrow for those who never have known hope. I feel a pity for those who know they will all be in heaven, their families all there, and selfishly looking forward to the time when the families will be united in their mansions above, and they have worked so hard, they say, for the walls of this mansion to be decorated. They add a decoration when they lead a soul to Christ. Poor and unlearned! I call that unlearned in truth, and unlearned in the finished work, which is truth. I am very glad I believe that Abraham and Sarah had to come to the end of their own strength before Isaac could be conceived in Sarah's womb, and he was the one in whom the Lord said all nations of the earth would be blessed, and he was fruit his parents brought forth when they had no strength. The fruits of the Spirit show forth in God's children when they have ceased from their own

labors and have entered fully into their Pentecostal day, in which no servile work was done. After we have worked our seven times seven, which is forty-nine, then the day after, which is the morrow, after the perfect workings of the seven times seven, we enter in to our day of Pentecost. We will not do any servile work. According to the twenty-third chapter of Leviticus there should be no servile work done on that day. A type of our gospel Pentecostal day, as I see it. I may be mistaken in it all. I often fear I am, and doubt that I see anything. Another thing I am glad of, is that Job had to live on through his days of desiring to trust in his own integrity and strength, and had to come to the point in his life where he could see that he had only been hearing with the ear (naturally) about it, but when God spoke he saw face to face and went down to the ground on his face and repented in sackcloth and ashes and acknowledged the truth as God gave him truth to acknowledge. No man can acknowledge or speak of a thing that he does not know something about. If it is shed abroad in your heart, and liberty of speech is given, you will speak, your voice will proclaim the beauty of Jesus, your Christ, and you will run and not be weary, because you cannot stay, and you grow weary of forbearing to go, and it being a fire (God) in you, a consuming fire, you tell it to get rest for your own self.

A few days ago a few of us drove over to Mayfield and heard brother Ward Perkins preach a wonderful sermon. He read the fifty-fifth chapter of Isaiah, preaching mostly from the word that did not return unto God void after it went out of his mouth, but accomplished that which he purposed. Brother Dodson, that chapter haunted me and I could not rest for days and nights, so one night when I felt I could not rest without speaking or writing my thoughts about those thirsty ones to whom God said, Come, buy and eat, without money and without price, I sat down to read and write. My family of boys are usually rather loud, and all talk at once, and laugh quite noisily, but on this night the boys were reading, and did not speak until I had thoroughly found rest in penning my mind to brother Perkins. He started it, and I finished it by writing my thoughts to him. I then could see for a certainty that there is a time when the mountains and hills break forth before God's little ones into singing, and all the trees of the field do clap their hands. Some go out rejoicing, seeking the Lord, and finding him, for it is the time appointed unto them to seek the Lord while he is near, and to call upon him (and they will). The wicked will forsake his way when God turns him about, and says to him, Come, buy without money and without price, and makes him thirst after righteousness, and when he hears he shall live, or he is alive when he hears. Where there had been thorns, brother Dodson, the evergreen trees began to grow. This, then, is the sign. I once saw nothing but thorns in the Old Baptist people, and to me they appeared ugly, and then they all at once changed to trees of living green, and not a thorn

in sight; not a thing to prick me when I spoke to them of my hope, but lovingly they told me of their own hope, and it seemed to be almost as poor (or they thought so) as mine. Then we loved with love divine. Or did'nt we? We saw the fir-tree and the myrtle springing up where once we thought only thorns grew. We then in these changes have to say that all our times are in his hands. Our joys and peace do come from him. He turns us about and our reins are in his hands. Jeremiah says, He has turned aside my ways, and pulled me in pieces. Bent his bow and set me as a mark for his arrow. The arrow of his quiver he hath caused to enter into my reins. We were going about, and we do yet go about at our own natural desires until our ways are turned in us, and we gò His way. When we were without hope we went on happily, but now, since we hope He bent his bow and shot us with His arrow, we go killed all the day long for Christ's sake. We hope. we have been turned from our natural ways and are now living after the faith of the Son of God, which faith exercises us instead of us exercising faith, and makes us hope we are the heirs of promise. But we have to have faith given if we ever bring forth fruit acceptable to our God, even as Abraham was given faith to believe the Lord his God would prepare himself an offering. We believe by faith that God did prepare the offering, and it had stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life, for he that hath the bride is the Bridegroom. The names of every one of them were in his heart and in his mind when he came into the world, and had been there from the foundation of the world, because the Father gave them him, and his they were. He being the first fruits among many brethren, God gave all things into his hands, and he finished the work. Now all that comes to pass is not because of the gospel being preached to make a sheep, but because they were sheep he sent his disciples to preach, that they should hear and rejoice in him, their Savior, even as the Father sent him. Brother Dodson, even so he would send others and they should preach and teach as he gave them gifts to do, and he prayed for them that would believe in him, because of the disciples' words, for he sent them. They are going yet, brother Dodson, and speaking the truth, and I hope I hear them. I hope I see by your writing that Jesus also sent you, and if he did he sends you to them who can and do believe what you preach, and believe what you write, for your words are truth, as I see it, and bless your dear old father, he sees and knows and loves you for your own sake, being his son, and for Jesus' sake, being a child of God. What a wonderful love he must have for you! I sometimes hear one of my sons singing, "Amazing grace" and "How tedious and tiresome the hours when Jesus no longer I see," and my heart melts within me. What would I feel if I should hear him declaring the truth as your father no doubt has heard you? I do not want to think that I

would glory, only in Him who is head over all the church, and in the Father who draws us to the Son. I am sure your father only glories in that God who was able to make your's a feeling heart, when it had been a heart of stone. When you became pricked in heart you could then say, What must I do? Then arrow after arrow was shot at you, and struck you "through the liver," then you no longer had a heart of stone, but it felt and felt after truth and godliness, and though your sins, and mine, and others, are as scarlet, when struck and tendered and hurt and penitent we were given grace to believe and see and hear the truth as it is in Jesus.

Brother Dodson, there is no end to this. It does not end on earth and it will not end in heaven. We have the earnest of it here, and were sealed with that holy promise after we believed the truth we were foreordained to believe, having been predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

Farewell in the Lord. May God preserve, protect and strengthen you to feed his lambs and sheep of his own pasture. Give your father my love and sweet fellowship. If I know myself, I believe I love God's children for Jesus' sake.

EFFIE BLOGG WHITENTON.

TAMPA, Florida.

DEAR EDITORS:—I again write a few lines to thank some unknown brother or sister for sending me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and this being "Thanksgiving Day," I hope I am thankful for the pamphlet, as well as for many, many other blessings that the Lord in his lovingkindness and tender mercy has seen fit to extend to me and mine; not only to-day, but each and every day of my life. I feel so unworthy. I wonder why it all is so, and am reminded of that good old hymn, "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." It seems to me the greatest wonder of all is that he should stoop so low as to have pity and mercy upon me, such a vile sinner. So why should not I be thankful? But I fear I am not thankful enough, for if I should praise him every day of my life, and be able to live ten thousand years, I could not praise and adore him enough. "Here, Lord, I give myself away; 'tis all that I can do."

Wishing you all, all the best wishes I can, I pray the Lord, if it be his holy will, to enable you to go on and continue printing the dear old SIGNS in the future as in the past, for I feel it is so essential to so many of God's dear children. And again, God bless you.

In hope,

J. E. WHITNEY.

MONTROSE, West Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I am sending my subscription for the paper for the year 1941, I thought I would write a few lines. I was eighty-eight years old the 21st day of November, 1940, and am the widow of G. B. McClanahan, who died November 1st, 1939. He was a minister of the Primitive Old School Baptist Church, of which I have been a member for sixty-two years.

JULIA C. McCLANAHAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY, 1941.

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NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

NOT since the dawn of creation has the civilized world ever undergone, on so large a scale and in so brief a period of time as one year, such rapid and radical changes as it did in 1940. It will undoubtedly be recorded as one of the most cruelly devastating and destructive periods in the world's history. Never before was such utter disregard of human rights witnessed; never before was such ruthless, inhuman, barbarous and diabolical treatment visited upon so many people, with a consequent amount of suffering and misery, which no artist can picture and no pen can describe. If we did not believe that there is a God to whom belongeth vengeance, who will some day arise and speak in no uncertain terms to the Dictators of the world, our heart would most certainly faint within us. Despite all that is taking place, we are still convinced that God is at the helm and that when it shall have served his purpose he will bring order out of chaos, and peace, like a river, will then flow for a season in the world of to-morrow.

In our New Year's Greeting of last year, we made this statement: "As a nation much may be required of us, and God grant that we shall have the wisdom and courage to do among the peoples of the earth that which is well-pleasing in his sight." Subsequent events have emphasized the great need of the United States taking its proper place, whatever that may be, in the catastrophe which is going on. For a time there were those who took the position that we should isolate ourselves and stand aloof from the rest of the world, but this theory has long since proven to be a "fool's paradise." We must take our rightful place in the world, and in so doing we will most certainly need both wisdom and courage. The Scripture declares that "none of us liveth to himself," and this is equally true of nations. As it is expected of a man according to that which he hath, and not according to that which he hath not, in like manner it is expected of man multiplied, or nations, and we are glad there has been an awakening in our land, and feel to repeat once more our prayer that "God grant that we shall have the wisdom and courage to do among the peoples of

the earth that which is well-pleasing in his sight."

Here and there we still find those who profess such great zeal for the things of God that they refuse to take any part in the preparation for the defense of our country. They even go so far as to defy the law of the land, which requires military training and preparedness. It seems to us that they have their church and State terribly mixed up. These should not be confused, but kept separate. God, who spake to Israel of old, saying, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," is the same who inspired the apostle Paul to write, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."—Rom. xiii. 1. Paul also exhorted Timothy that, "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority." Jesus, by both precept and example, taught his disciples to have respect for the customs of men and to render obedience to civil authorities. He sent Peter to the sea for a fish with silver in its mouth for tribute for himself and Peter, and he commanded to, "Render unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's."—Luke xx. 25.

On various occasions, we have stressed the need of Old Baptists adhering to the Bible and its teachings. The importance of this matter forbids any apology from us for mentioning it again. Some of the brethren, however, seem content to quote certain portions of the letter of the written Word, independent of their connections and other parts of the Scripture, and then declare with an emphasis of finality which does not even permit of any questions being asked that, "the word of God says so and so." This seems to us an untenable position to take. We are convinced there are numerous portions of the word which do not mean literally what they say. For instance, it is written concerning Jesus Christ that, "He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world."—1 John ii. 2. If that is exactly what is meant, the Universalists are right and the doctrine of God's choice and election is overthrown. On the other hand, Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you."—John vi. 35. If that quotation be taken literally, no one has life abiding in them, for the record of divine truth nowhere discloses any evidence of any ever having eaten of his literal flesh nor drinking of his literal blood. Neither do we believe that the communion bread and wine actually become the body and blood of Jesus, as some would have us think. They are only symbolical. Again, let us quote our Lord and Master, when addressing his disciples: "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."—Matt. xviii. 3. This was undoubtedly meant figuratively, and not literally. Once more, Jesus said unto Nicodemus, "Verily,

verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."—John iii. 3. It is quite evident to us that Jesus did not mean that flesh, blood and bone would have to reenter the womb of its mother and be born the second time in order to see the kingdom of God. According to the connection, if this were to occur a million times, it would still be flesh, for Jesus said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh: and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." What he undoubtedly meant was that except a man be born of the Spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God, for God's kingdom is a spiritual kingdom. Jesus often spake in parables, and those who heard the literal words which proceeded forth out of his mouth needed to have them interpreted and explained. Some years ago, we recall listening to a lengthy discourse by one of our able Elders on the different meanings of the word "world." He very properly showed how the meaning varies, according to the connection and what is under consideration. We earnestly wish that more of the meekness and humility of Jesus might be manifested in the church than there is to-day. Among the qualifications for a bishop, or minister, we find it stated that he is to be "no striker, patient and apt to teach," and Paul said, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."—1 Cor. xiii. 1. We would do well to go often to the Scriptures, hold them up as a mirror before us and compare what they reflect with what we see in ourselves. When this is done even the most Christlike will have to turn away and confess they are unprofitable servants.

According to Paul, we should study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, but this does not mean that by studying languages and the meaning of words we can learn to preach the gospel of the blessed Son of God. It will be well worth our while to examine the record of Daniel on this point. In his day, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, commanded his servant to use great care in selecting from among the king's seed and princes, and from among the captives of Israel, as well, those who were "well favored, and skillful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and tongue of the Chaldeans."—Dan. i. 3. To such as measured up to his requirements, "the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king." We are told that among the captives of Israel were four of the children of Judah: namely, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. We are further told that Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank, and he proposed to the prince in charge that

he and his three brethren be given pulse to eat, and water to drink. Pulse being a vegetable, or common diet, at first the prince was loath to permit them to have it, for fear of his king, and reasoning as he did that they would not thrive upon pulse and water as well as those who ate the king's meat and drank his wine. Daniel finally persuaded him to try them out for a period of ten days and then judge their countenances, and when this had been done, lo and behold, "their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat." When Melzar, the prince in charge, saw this he took away the portion of the king's meat and wine that had been apportioned to them, and the record is that *God* gave these four Hebrew children knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. What a God-send this was, for king Nebuchadnezzar was about to dream a dream of far-reaching importance to his kingdom, which was to upset him to such an extent that he would be unable to sleep, and which none of his own magicians, astrologers, sorcerers nor soothsayers could recall or interpret for him. Man's wisdom had to be proven to be an utter failure. Had it not been for Daniel, who freely confessed no good in himself, but said there was a God in heaven who revealeth secrets, they all would have lost their heads upon the guillotine block. By the revelation of God, Daniel was not only able to *tell* the king his dream, but was also able to give the interpretation thereof, and it all came to pass and was fulfilled just as he said. They could teach the tongue and learning of the Chaldeans, but they could not teach the things of God. We have thought of Nebuchadnezzar's group and their three year course as representing Babylon's hord of recruits in Theological Seminaries and their kindred institutions. Even after years of preparation and studying theology, and the like, they neither know how to describe the poor sinner's malady nor where the remedy can be found. Only those who are wrought upon by the Spirit of Almighty God can properly diagnose his case and point him to the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world, and the most ignorant man in the world can do this if he is called and qualified by God. Languages, of course, are good in their place, and it is sometimes helpful to be able to understand the meaning of words, but it requires something far beyond the ability of man to delve into Latin, and Greek, and Hebrew for the root and meaning of English words to reach and comfort the hearts of God's dear people. Jesus said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight."—Matt. xi. 25, 26. We cannot emphasize too strongly the fact that the religion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has to be revealed by God himself to his people, and, therefore, the foundation is as firm and solid as a rock. The people who know

and understand this are the most wonderfully blest people in all the world. When Peter confessed, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," Jesus answered, and said unto him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The fact that it is revealed, and no man by searching can find out God, removes it from the realm of all human endeavor and fixes it where he that glorieth must glory in the Lord, and all self-glorying is forever made impossible. We are made to hope at times that God has revealed himself unto us in the person of his only begotten Son, whom we have come to know as the way, the truth and the life, and the light which lighteth every man that cometh into an understanding of his glorious truth. We are persuaded that the Scriptures, when rightly understoond, are in perfect accord and harmony with each other, and we have sometimes felt that what the apostle meant by his admonition to "study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed," etc., was that we should search the Scriptures diligently, taking into consideration their connections, and compare Scripture with Scripture and treat them as a whole, and when this is done we do not believe it will be found that any one Scripture contradicts another. One mind has inspired them all and they converge and dovetail into one great and glorious plan. To rightly divide the word of truth does not mean that we should be restricted to or by the traditions and customs of men, but rather that we are to proclaim whatsoever God hath commanded. We have heard ministering brethren say publicly that they were determined to preach the truth, whether men would hear or forbear, and we have said the same ourself on certain occasions, but there have been times when the question would arise, Did you not soft-pedal for expediency's sake, perhaps, and in doing so did you not withhold more than was meet? If we, like Ananias and Sapphira, keep back part of the price, are we not also most likely to share their fate? Personally, we would much prefer to be a workman approved unto God and rightly dividing his word, and have all the world against us, than to have all the world on our side, but have God against us. We hope we crave above all things to know what is the mind of the Spirit and what it is that the Spirit saith unto the churches.

We have no doubt but what there are many among the circle of the SIGNS' readers who have had bitter experiences during the past year. If the SIGNS' family could be gathered around some great hearthstone and the roll of a year ago was called, there would be quite a number of absentees, and many of those who would answer to the call of their name would testify to the loss of loved ones, friends and good brethren. We have sustained the loss of a number of dear brethren, but we are persuaded that God makes no mistakes, and that

he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. Intermingled with our losses and crosses, thanks be unto God, there were seasons of rejoicing and thanksgiving, so we have not been left comfortless, and we hope the same can be said of our readers as they have partaken of their cups of sorrow and affliction. We can wish nothing better for you during the present year than that you shall all trust in the name of the Lord and look to him to supply your needs. Our God is able to do exceeding and abundantly above all that we may ask or think, and as he has helped us hitherto, let us confidently look to him to guide us through all the dangers, both seen and unseen, which lie ahead.

Before concluding this greeting, we wish to express our appreciation for the consideration shown us by our readers, and to thank each and every one who has in any way contributed to the success of our family paper. We hope those who have written for publication will continue to do so, and that those who have helped in other ways will also continue to put forth their best efforts in behalf of the SIGNS. It needs the assistance of those who read it. Most of those who wrote for its columns either had their articles typed or wrote with ink or black pencil on white paper, which made it easy on the eyes of our publisher. Some few, however, used a dim pencil on pale paper, and this combination made it too difficult for our publisher to read. He sent them to us to be typed. Having other numerous duties, we have been unable to type them all, so if some are wondering why their letters have not been published, this may be the reason. May we suggest once more the use of at least a BLACK pencil and WHITE paper, where ink or type is not available. During the year we received many letters from those to whom we would have very much liked to have sent a personal acknowledgment, but it has seemed impossible for us to do this. We hope all will understand our position, and not think hard of us for not writing to them individually.

We bespeak for all our readers such blessings as God in his infinite wisdom sees fit to bestow upon you, and hope that the comforting influences of his Holy Spirit will abide with you all throughout the year 1941.

R. L. D.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER Roy S. Smith having changed his address from Pulaski, Va., to Cascade, Va., requests that his correspondents address him at the latter place.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS."

WE will furnish extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEACON DAVID RECORD was born February 16th, 1857, and died July 24th, 1940, making his stay here on earth 83 years, 5 months and 8 days. He was married to Mrs. Hannah Jane Barton January 10th, 1878. Brother Record and wife joined the Primitive Bautist Church at Kansas, Kentucky, and were baptized the third Sunday in November, 1886, and he lived a strong and faithful member of the same until the dear Lord called him home. Brother Record was the father of fourteen children, four of whom preceded him in death, leaving ten children, two boys and eight girls, to mourn his going. Brother Record was ordained as a deacon in Kansas Church, and he surely filled that office as well as any man could. He was well established in all the cardinal points of doctrine and practices of the Primitive Baptist Church. He was held in the highest esteem by all who knew him. He was humble and kind, yet uncompromising when it came to what he believed. I do not have the date, but he entered the race for County Jailer, and was elected and served Graves County, Kentucky, as jailer for four years. I can truthfully say that brother and sister Record raised as noble a family of children as I ever knew. They were, and still are, the most devoted to one another of any family I ever knew. Oh what a pleasure it was to me to go to their pleasant home and enjoy the company of such a noble family. Sister Record died October 3rd, 1933, and after death had taken her brother Record seemed to be just waiting for that call from on high to put off this old clay house and be clothed in the image of Christ to dwell with him forever on high, and when that call came the unworthy writer was called to preach his funeral in the presence of his dear heart-broken children, neighbors and friends, and while I was trying to speak at the funeral of this dear old soldier of the cross I thought, If it could only have been the dear Lord's will to have taken me and left that dear old man, who was such a bright example to every one. But no, he had lived his allotted days, and had to go at the call of his Master. I heard several say at his funeral that if he had an enemy no one knew it, which seemed true, judging by the large congregation at his funeral. To know brother Record was to love him. Two of his daughters were blessed to live with him in his declining days, and all that loving hands could do was done for his comfort and consolation. The Primitive Baptist Church has surely lost a dear old father in Israel, his family a dear and loving father and the neighborhood a noble man. I will say to his dear bereaved children, May God reconcile you, comfort you and save you in heaven, is the prayer of the unworthy writer.

ALSO,

HANNAH JANE RECORD was born March 20th, 1857, and departed this life October 3rd, 1933, making her stay on this earth 76 years, 6 months and 13 days. Sister Record, together with her dear husband, united with the Primitive Baptist Church of Christ at Kansas, Kentucky, the third Sunday in November, 1885, and lived a devoted christian life until the Lord released her from the toils of this life. Sister Record was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and loved to talk and to hear that glorious truth preached. I was her pastor at the time of her death. I have driven ten miles to Kansas Church, facing the cold north wind, and when I arrived dear old sister Record and her husband would be the only ones there. I remember one Saturday in February, that we three were the only ones who

came to meeting that day, and I said, Well, I guess we will not have any meeting to-day. Sister Record said, Brother Perkins, the Lord said, Where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them. She said, I want to hear preaching just as much as if this house were full. So I made the effort, and tried to preach Jesus to those two old soldiers of the cross, and I fully believe the Lord was there in the midst. Sister Record got so full that she arose from her seat and shouted the everlasting praise of Jesus. Oh what a pleasant, dear old mother in Israel she was! She was a sweet singer and well versed in all the cardinal points of doctrine. Brother and sister Record surely lived a happy life. The Lord enabled them to see both alike religiously, and sister Record came as near filling the qualifications of a deacon's wife as any woman I ever knew. They raised a noble family of children, and their children certainly were devoted to their parents. I have never known a finer family, and their home was a home to the Baptists. Oh how it did hurt me when I was called, together with Elder T. J. Prince, to officiate at her funeral. But we should not sorrow for her as others who have no hope. She has only fallen asleep, to rest that peaceful night of rest, when her Savior will come and call the entombed millions to arise from the graves, and surely that very same dear old sister we all loved so well will be raised from the grave in the image of Jesus, to be just like him and be with him, to live forever in a world that will never end, to shout his endless praises forever and forever.

I will say to her eight girls and two boys, May God in his kind providence reconcile you to your lot to the end. Your loss is your dear mother's gain. May God bless you with a sweet hope, and when you are done with the trials of this life may he give you a home in heaven, is the prayer of the unworthy writer,

O. W. PERKINS.

ARMEDA RIFFE, our dear mother, was born at Grundy, Virginia, November 16th, 1855, and fell asleep in Jesus September 18th, 1940, making her stay here 84 years, 10 months and 2 days. She was the daughter of Conley and Elizabeth Blankenship, and was married to Floyd Riffe, of North Spring, West Virginia, March 3rd, 1881. To this union were born six children, two sons, Charlie, of Riffe, Wash., Jesse, of Maple Valley, Wash., and four daughters, Mrs. Elizabeth Collins, of San Diego, Calif., Mrs. Maude Schwartz, of Kansas, Wash., Mrs. Vernie Schoonover and Mrs. Rosa Coleman, of Riffe, Wash. Also, a brother, N. S. Blankenship, of Vulcan, W. Va., twenty-five grandchildren and sixteen great-grandchildren. At the age of eighteen years she united with the Panther Creek Church of Old School Baptists, later transferring her membership to Laurel Bottom Church, near Jettsville, W. Va., where she, her husband and two children moved in the year 1885. In September, 1893, they were in a party of sixty who moved to Lewis County, Washington, near Swofford. As most of the members of the Laurel Bottom Church were in this party the organization was also moved, and reestablished under the name of Sulphur Creek Church, later changed to Bethel. With her husband, Elder F. L. Riffe, she attended this church regularly for more than fifty years. Only those who have had the experience of a true minister's wife can know what the extra burden and cares are for the faithful ones so often left alone in loneliness to carry on

the work of the home. She was indeed faithful to her God, her dear companion, her children and to all. Her home was a home for her brethren and sisters, and to her many neighbors and friends. She faithfully cared for her dear companion, whose health has been very poor for many years. Of late years she many times expressed the wish that she might go to rest, and did, very peacefully and without illness, September 18th, at about 12:30 a. m. Her life had been, and always will be, an inspiration to her children and those who knew her. Oh if we could only be like she was! God in his wisdom has recalled the boon he gave.

Her funeral was held in the old church-house where she had attended church so many years, and was conducted by one she dearly loved to hear: Elder C. W. Bond, of La Grande, Ore. Her dear body, carried so gently by her loving grandsons, was placed to rest in the Riffe Cemetery. The profusion of beautiful flowers was a token of many friends she left behind. Not forever will she sleep. Some sweet day will the call of our dear Lord awaken her sleeping dust and she will come forth, then soul and body will be reunited and so shall she ever be with her Lord.

One of her little granddaughters wrote of her passing thus: She closed her eyes, and there He stood with outstretched arms, saying, Come. She touched His hand, and said, Yes, Lord, I'll face the land unknown. Her eyes were lifted to His face, she knew she had reached the land called home. He placed his hand upon her head, she smiled, for he had said, My child, well done.

Written by her daughters,

ELIZABETH COLLINS,
MAUDE SCHWARTZ,
VERNIE SCHOONOVER,
ROSA COLEMAN.

MISS SARAH IDA RITTENHOUSE, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life December 10th, 1940, at the home of her brother-in-law, Mr. William M. Case, Ringoes, New Jersey. She was born at Locktown, Hunterdon County, New Jersey, March 4th, 1857. Her parents were Wilson M. Rittenhouse and Martha J. Post. She was the oldest of a family of six children. All these have passed away except the youngest: Mrs. John Hoff, of Quakertown, N. J. She has three nieces and two nephews living. Since the death of her sister, Mrs. Case, about twenty years ago, she has been making her home with her brother-in-law at Ringoes, where she has had every care and comfort possible for human hands and hearts to give her. No brother could have possibly been more kind and devoted to her than Mr. Case has been. For the past four months before her death, she suffered from no disease particularly, but was extremely exhausted and weak owing to her age, and for three months was able to take practically no nourishment. She starved, it might be said, in the midst of plenty, owing to her inability to eat or digest food, yet no definite disease could be detected by the physician. It was my privilege as her pastor, to baptize her in March, 1909, into the membership of the Warwick Old School Baptist Church, Orange County, New York, during my brief pastorate at that place. All these years since, she has held me in fond fellowship, unworthy as I am of myself to be thus held by any of the Lord's people. It was her request before passing away, that I be called to officiate at her funeral, which request I tried to comply with. Funeral services were held at Mr. Case's home in Ringoes, interment in Union Cemetery there. Thus another of our loved ones has gone to be with the Lord, another link to earth is broken. What a glorious consummation it must

be to fall asleep in Jesus, thence to awake in due time in the wonderful resurrection of the dead, and so to be forever with the Lord.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

BROTHER CHARLES BOWEN passed away at his late home, in Fishkill, N. Y., October 17th, 1940, at the age of 86 years, 3 months and seven days, having been born in the town of Rockaway, Morris County, New Jersey, on July 10th, 1852. At the age of ten he moved to Warwick, New York, to live, and it was there he met and later married Rachel A. Dolson, April 25th, 1876, Elder J. N. Badger officiating. Two children were born to this marriage, and both survive him. They are Mrs. A. May Benjamin, of Fishkill, N. Y., and Mr. Jesse A. Bowen, of Montreal, Canada. Also, a niece and nephew, Mary and John Freeman, of Warwick, N. Y., survive him. Brother Bowen did not unite with the visible church until late in life, having united with the Warwick Old School Baptist Church, at Warwick, N. Y., and was baptized by the writer on June 26th, 1931. Brother Bowen was of a quiet and inoffensive disposition, but he was a firm believer in the doctrine of God our Savior and loved to hear the truth preached. His daughter writes, "His Bible and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES were his constant companions until within two weeks of his passing." After which time he became too confused in mind to understand. Towards the end he suffered intensely, but the dear Lord delivered him out of his distress and we are persuaded that he has now entered that home where there is no more pain.

We were called to conduct the funeral services, after which interment was made in the Fishkill Rural Cemetery. At the time of his death, brother Bowen was the oldest resident in the town of Fishkill, N. Y., where he had resided for upwards of fifty years, and was held in very high esteem by those who knew him. May the Lord comfort those who mourn, and reconcile them to the dispensation of his will.

ALSO,

MRS. AMY R. BARNSLEY, our sister in Christ, departed this life to be with Christ, December 4th, 1940. She was born June 27th, 1866, and was therefore almost seventy-four and one-half years of age. Sister Barnsley was baptized by Elder Joseph L. Staton on May 30th, 1890, and was received by letter into the fellowship of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, at New York City, on July 4th, 1926. In recent years she was unable to attend her meetings, because of failing health. She expressed the hope that she might go quickly when her time came, and this was granted to her, as she apparently passed away without a moment's notice. She was alone at the time. She leaves one daughter, some nieces and nephews and many friends to mourn her departure, but we are persuaded that our loss is her eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer, both in New York City on Friday evening and at Southampton, Pa., Saturday afternoon, where interment was made. May the dear Lord make us submissive to his will in all things, is our prayer for Jesus' sake.

R. L. D.

MRS. LIZZIE GEER McCOOL was born September 17th, 1886, was married to J. W. McCool July 19th, 1905, and joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Zion, Pickens County, Alabama, the third Saturday in August, 1919. To their union were born eight children, seven sons and one daughter. The

daughter and one son are deceased. Those left to mourn their great loss are her husband, Elder J. W. McCool, six sons, Robert, Vernon, Dewey, Gilbert, Enlie, Albert, and many distant relatives. This sister died suddenly, while attending a church meeting. Delegates from many churches had met to settle some differences regarding church order, and while in conversation with Elder H. M. Brock death came upon her. Her last words were, "I want peace." She died October 12th, about 11 a. m. The writer was called to attend her funeral the next day, Sunday, at her home church, where a large congregation attended. It was her request that the writer conduct her funeral, and the family and other relatives seemed to be comforted during the service. May God bless you all.

LYTLE BURNS.

MRS. LUCINDA ETTA ROGERS, aged seventy years, died at her home west of Healing Springs, Alabama, Tuesday morning, November 12th, 1940, after a lingering illness. She is survived by three daughters, Mrs. Dan M. Williamson, Millry, Ala., Mrs. William H. Corbin, Atlanta, Ga., Mrs. Charles R. Pettus, Mobile, Ala., three sons, Chester W. Rogers, York, Ala., Elmer M. Rogers, Millry, Ala., and Dr. A. Zack Rogers, Detroit, Mich.; two sisters, Mrs. Ophelia Mosley and Mrs. Artie McIlwain, of Gilbertstown, Ala., and two brothers, Morgan Doggett, Gilbertown, and Andy Doggett, Frisco City, Ala., nine grandchildren and other relatives.

Funeral services were conducted from the Collomburg Baptist Church, Wednesday morning, by Elder O. D. Mason, who spoke in the highest terms of the deceased. The body was interred in the Rogers Cemetery, near Cullomburg.

HER CHILDREN.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT.

MRS. BELLE NEAL departed this life October 1st, 1940. To the dear household of faith and to the family and friends of sister Neal, words cannot express the great loss and sadness caused by the sudden death of sister Belle Neal, when the death angel visited her home and called her, so useful and precious to us, from time to that never-ending home prepared for her and all who look for our Lord to come the second time to claim his dear elect to ever be with him. Sister Neal, who was seventy-six years of age, was blessed to receive a precious hope in the Lord Jesus Christ when quite young, which hope had been to her from then until the end as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. The faith of God had kept sister Neal all these years, and no one at any time had known her to depart from the faith once declared unto the saints of God, or to look for something better than salvation by grace, or for a better place to go than to her church. Therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That our loss is her eternal gain, and we desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our great Heavenly Father, and say, Thy will be done. Be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of these Resolutions be spread on the church records of Moon's Creek Church, a copy sent to the family of sister Neal, and, also, published in our church papers.

W. R. DODD,
MATTIE HODGES.

[IT is with sorrow that we learn of the passing of our dear sister, Belle Neal. She and her late husband were among those whom we met on our first visits to North Carolina, about thirty years ago. They were both among the salt of the earth, and they will be long remembered

by those whose privilege it was to know them as sound, peace-loving Old Baptists.—R. L. D.]

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Alma V. Mortimer, Ont., 50 cents; Mrs. L. H. Stanley, N. C., $1; Dr. Thomas H. McColl, Ont., $3; Mrs. Dosie Deal, Mo., $1; Mrs. M. J. Duffus, B. C., $3; Mrs. F. S. Petty, Texas, $1; Mrs. Ray B. Shortridge, Ill., $1; Florence H. Disharoon, Pa., $1; Miss Sarah Leedom, Pa., $3; Mrs. T. H. Young, Ohio, $1; Elisha R. Myers, S. Dak., $5; Mertie E. Bailey, N. Y., $1; O. E. Eiland, Miss., $1; "A friend," N. Y., $1; Ebenezer Church, N. Y., $10; Judson Zeh, N. Y., $2; Mrs. T. L. Carey, Ont., 65 cents; G. A. Dundas, Calif., $3; "A friend," Wash., $2; F. H. Richardson, Iowa, $3; Hannah E. Danks, Calif., $1; "A friend in Detroit," Mich., $3.

MEETINGS.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

EBENEZER

OLD SCHOOL

BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists is now settled in her new church-house, at 4614 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas, where she holds her regular monthly services on each first Sunray at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. Preaching services also on each third Sunday by Elder C. B. Teague, and each second Sunday by brother O. C. Lee, at 11 o'clock a. m. A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. R. HARDY, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H. Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1.00. If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers.

Single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

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AN EXCELLENT VOLUME.

"Memoirs and letters of James Kidwell Popham."

Mr. Popham was Pastor of The Strict Baptist Church, at Brighton, England, for over fifty-five years, and Editor of *The Gospel Standard* for thirty years.

This book reveals much of the travel of a man greatly blessed of God in his ministry and writings. It is full of interesting matter, which on every page shows forth the power and goodness of the covenant-keeping God.

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I feel to recommend this book to our readers.—G. R.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

ROMANS VII. 24.

"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

After passing through seasons of darkness and many seasons of heart-breaking, soul-despairing dreariness this summer, many times feeling to cry out as the prophet: I am as lonesome as an owl of the desert, or as a sparrow upon the housetop, I feel to write concerning the mystery of God in leading and teaching his people in this present world. The things which are to-day manifested to his children are merely the manifestation of the mystery of God's will which has been kept secret since the world began, but now is revealed by the gospel. I feel that every experience through which a child of God passes in this life is for the good of the child, and God has ordered these experiences (whether they be down-sittings or uprisings) that the child shall not become exalted above measure nor abased beyond His decree. It pleased God (who knew all things before the world began) to provide all things that are necessary to accomplish his will and purpose, before time began, and in time he blesses these provisions unto us as he sees we need them. (Psalms cxxxii. 15.) Regardless of what the circumstances may be in our personal experience, whether joy or sorrow, peace or trouble, or the wrath of man, or the most benevolent out-pouring of our soul's contrition, I feel that it is in those provisions, and relates unto God as good, and is to his name's praise and our ultimate good, whether we see it at all times or not. There is no man who knoweth the sweetness of God's grace except God first show him his lost and wretched condition, because all men in nature feel a sense of security in themselves, and as long as man continues to feel that self-confidence and self-reliance it is a manifestation that God has not as yet revealed to him his true state and standing in Adam. There are many

changes in the life of a child of God in this world. There are changes of mind, changes of course and feelings, all of which God has ordered, that we should be to the praise of the glory of his grace. The most effective and most notable of these many changes is the change of mind. This change effects the whole body, life and way of an individual, and is the work of the Spirit. All the course of his children he in wisdom has ordained, even when we were by nature the children of wrath, even as others, as much as also since, by grace he has revealed to us the glorious knowledge of this truth as it is in Christ Jesus the Lord. So minutely and accurately is this ordained that every event surrounding us fills its proper place to the furtherance and accomplishment of the final result. When we were by nature the children of wrath, even as others, we were not concerned with things above, but were concerned only about things pertaining to earth. We were not troubled over our soul's welfare, but nevertheless everything was maturing as God had purposed, ripening the time when he by his Spirit should manifest his truth in our hearts, which truth first appeared unto us as the judgment of God unto condemnation, later to appear as the mercy of God unto deliverance. During this exercise of mind and spirit we are made to go down into death. We are as Ephraim, "pushed to the ends of the earth." We in a spiritual sense are in "an horrible pit," a "desert place," a "waste howling wilderness." Oh the depth of this death in which we find ourselves engulfed! There are not enough words in my vocabulary to express the unspeakable misery and woe of that awful realization that we are lost and ruined sinners. This is the travail of a child of God. This is the experience of one passing from death unto life. There is not a human being on earth who will voluntarily go into such sore exercise of soul and mind of his or her own volition, if such were possible. There is death there. There are anguish, pain and dark and cold despair in the course through which God brings his little ones. This is God's way of preparing us for his kingdom and purging us of all self-works, self-confidence and self-righteousness as a means of justification. At an appointed time God delivers us and gives us to feel that our sins have been atoned for and we are made free in the Lord Jesus Christ. In contrast to the grief, misery and woe of our condemned state, we now feel life springing up and hope beyond our fondest imagination, also a love exists which we had never before felt for things never before loved by us. Thus exists a change of heart and mind. This is God's work. This is not the will of the flesh, except as our will and carnal desires are swallowed up by the will of God.

I have written of this marvelous change which takes place by the grace and Spirit of God merely to show the character unto whom this text applies, and who it is along the rugged pathway of this life from time to time cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

This glorious truth is only felt and acknowledged by those so wrought upon by the Spirit and called by his grace. Those whom God has predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son. God knows them. "I know my sheep." He has a set time to visit them and make known his love, also he has an appointed way to bring "many sons unto glory." Not only in regeneration does God work sovereignly. There is a continuance of the leading, teaching and preserving of a child as long as it lives. Which is very necessary. If we were not kept after regeneration and continually taught anew we could not persevere, for, O Lord, we know that the way of man is not in himself, for it lieth not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

The old man, or the outer, is not changed in regeneration, which fact is manifested daily in our personal experiences, but is sometimes made to serve submissively the desire of the inner man. The very fact that the old man is continuously in conflict with the inner produces the cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Often we are so troubled by this conflict that we go down in the depth of despair and come to our wit's end, realizing that we of ourselves can do nothing. In those depths we cry out for Him to "return unto us the joy of thy salvation." We weep bitter tears, and we do mourn as a dove, yet in the depth of our heart we realize that if we be partakers of his joy we must also be partakers of his suffering. Every great lesson that we have ever learned in our souls that we have prospered by and been the beneficiary of, God has taught it to us according to the mystery of his will when we were at our wit's end and all other help was gone, and passively we were made to look to him from whence cometh all our help.

In God's wonderful provisions there are many things that if we had our way we would not have to be. We would not have the thorn in the flesh, nor would we have the necessary temptations which it takes to prove to us our weakness, nor would we have a body of death to bear about, but these things are necessary to fit and prepare, and keep us fit and prepared for his kingdom. Though we are often low in spirit, and feel dead and plucked up by the roots, and of all people on earth we are the most wretched, we continually long and with hopeful eyes look for the time when we shall be delivered from the body of this death. When for us "death shall be swallowed up" and this old tabernacle shall be dissolved in death and raised in eternal life. Dear child of God, the suffering of this life, the conflicts in the experience of one possessing a hope, are the great cloud of witnesses that surround us, giving evidence that we have passed from death unto life.

In conclusion, my experience has taught me, and does teach me, that I am wretched and poor, and that I am not worthy of myself of the least of God's mercies. But I could not live without his mercy, nor could I stand without his grace. It is this feeling, in

a general sense, that keeps the children of God at each other's feet in humbleness and peace. May God keep us, and finally deliver us from the body of this death.

ROY S. SMITH.

WINNSBORO, Texas.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—If it is the Lord' will, and he will guide my hand, I will try to write what I hope to be some of his dealings with me.

When I was a very small child I had serious thoughts about God and heaven, and in my childish way wanted to go to heaven. We lived among the Arminians, and of course their preaching was to live right and one could believe and be saved. I felt that I had a desire to do right, and would even try to pray that if I did wrong something would happen to make me see the wrong I did, and that God would punish me some way. When I was fourteen years of age I joined the Missionary Baptists, still with the thought of wanting to do right, but not being satisfied. I thought that if I joined the church it would help me to live right. Instead I felt to be a hypocrite and a deceiver. They claim to be good, and I knew I was not. I thought I could see I was a sinner, but they seemed to be satisfied, and when I would try to get them to take my name off the book they would not do it. The older I grew the more I longed to do what was right, but it seemed that I grew worse. I would think of the passage of Scripture that says, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled," always thinking it had to come from me, and knowing that I had no righteousness. One day, as I was studying on those things, it seemed as if something said, You are a vile sinner, and God is all righteousness and just and holy. Then my troubles began. If God sent justice upon me I knew I was lost, because I was a vile sinner and hell was my doom. Unless the Lord saved me by his free goodness and mercy I would not be saved, and I did not see how a sinner like me could expect that. I longed to talk with some one, but when I would be with them I would not say anything about it. I did not want them to know I was thinking about things like that, so I just kept it to myself. I went on this way for about three years. Sometimes my burden would be lighter and I would think it was gone and would forget it, only to have it return heavier than before, until I would wonder what was the matter with me, and if I was losing my mind. I would try to throw the feeling off, but could not. I would try to pray, but my prayer seemed to get nowhere, and I would think to myself, A sinful person like you calling upon the Lord, and it would make me want to strike the lips that had tried to utter his holy name. But where else did I have to go? and I was not fit to be in his presence. A full length mirror, with all my sins crushing me down, and oh what a weight. I had no hope of heaven, and this world afforded me no pleasure. Where did I belong? Then one night, oh wonderful night! I had gone to bed, and a storm was coming

up. We always went to the storm cellar, but for some reason we did not think this storm would be very severe, so did not go, and as it was thundering and lightning I was lying there studying, not about the storm, but about myself, when suddenly these words came to me,

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

Oh joy! It seemed his presence was in the clouds and coming right to me. I wanted to shout when it seemed I could see his face with love and mercy looking down on me and felt that my sins were forgiven. I did not tell any one, for I was afraid I was mistaken

Brother Jones would come to our home, and oh how I did enjoy his being with us. I wanted to tell him I felt I had been given a little hope, but something held me back. I wanted to join the church at this place (Good Hope), but did not feel worthy, and was afraid I was mistaken, and I did not want to deceive any one. Brother Jones would call for members, and it seemed as if every one had discovered my secret and was saying, Go on. I had to fight with myself to stay away. I did want to join, but felt I was too unworthy, and unfit to be with people who looked so good to me. No, I would not spoil their good meetings and sweet communion with such a vile presence as my own. I would just stop going to their meetings, and thought I would, but the next time I would want to go. I could not keep the tears from my eyes and I felt the people would suspect something. I was forced by illness to miss some meetings, and then it was I felt my stripes were many.

I went to the Association at Providence Church, and oh how I did enjoy hearing the words of God. I remember how these words filled me: "Even when we were dead in sins, [God] hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Am I one that was made to sit together in heavenly places? That was the question I asked myself. I had hope that he did give me seasons of rejoicing (even then) that were wonderful indeed, but I was full of doubts. Elders Pridy, England and Hardy came here to Good Hope, and oh what good preaching we did have. Elder Hardy consented to come to Good Hope and preach every Friday, as all of his time was taken up on Saturdays and Sundays.

In order to show a few of the things which make me believe there is an all-wise, all-powerful God, I must go back to a few days before the meeting. My mother was with me and we were talking about the Scriptures, and she commenced telling me about her experience. I must have said something I did not mean to, because she said, Myrtle, why do you not join the church? I told her I would never join, but knew at that time I was not my own keeper, and knew I would join if the Lord meant it to be that way. I told her I was not worthy, and if I did join I would feel that I was a deceiver. She said that

was the kind they wanted. I went on attending their meetings, without any intention of joining, but felt different, as if I was weak and could not resist much. They started singing, and the hymns never sounded sweeter, but I could not sing them. I would just fill up. Brother Hardy called for members, and I had the same feeling as before, only stronger. My sister-in-law, Gertrude Rhoades, went up and asked for a home with the church, and oh how glad I was, but still I was fighting to stay back, and thought to myself, If I could just get out of the house, but the next thing I knew I was up there telling brother Hardy some of the things I have here told about. It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. I hope I have been taught that by the most wonderful Teacher there is. But I am shown myself more often than I like, and what do I see? A vile sinner, but hoping I trust in One who is full of goodness and mercy, and I can say with Paul, His grace is sufficient for me. "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Do I have that Teacher? I have seasons of rejoicing, but I cannot put my thoughts into words. They are wonderful indeed to me, for which I am thankful, giving God all the praise, even for the thankful feeling. I have doubts, which cause me to grieve. I know I am sinful, but God is good and just, and there are many sweet promises to his children in his holy word. But am I one of his children?

"When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark, and vain, and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?"

The day I was baptized was a happy one and I wanted it to last forever.

Loved ones in Christ, if one so unworthy may address you thus, I have just told part of it. It can never all be told, and I feel so ignorant of the things I would like to understand, and make such a blunder trying to tell of these wonderful things. If I am saved, which I have a little hope that I am, it is all of grace, not of works, lest any man should boast. I have nothing of myself to boast of, but I hope I can boast of a supreme God, who does all things after the counsel of his own will, and none can stay his hand. In the day of my power my people shall be a willing people. I hope I have been taught by God that this must surely be so, for when I think over these things they seem strange, knowing myself, and I can say with the poet, If a saint, the least of all.

Dear brother Dodson, we are strangers in the flesh, but I hope not in the Spirit, for, if I am not mistaken, I do love the things of the Lord, and enjoy reading the SIGNS so much that at times I have to stop reading until I can clear my eyes of tears of joy. I wrote the foregoing for my own satisfaction, but after I finished it I felt I had no right to keep it if it would benefit others, for I know how I enjoy reading of these things. It is very imperfect, like myself, but if you can read it and

wish to publish it in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES it is all right with me, but if you feel as I do, that it will take too much valuable space, then all will be well. I do not like to bother you again so soon, but whether or not it is published it will be all right with me. If printed, correct all mistakes, and have me in remembrance in your prayers when given the spirit of prayer.

Your unworthy sister, I hope,

MYRTLE RHOADES.

ISLAND CITY, Oregon.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have received my last number of the SIGNS for this year, which reminds me that another year has passed, and we are standing at the beginning of the new one with anticipation and hope for what it may bring to us. As I take a backward view I find blessings, disappointments and surprises scattered along the way, but when I sum them all up I must confess the Lord has been good to me, for I have been blessed far above what I deserve.

The first vacancy in the families of my children occurred this year, when my oldest daughter lost her husband. He was a respected and reliable citizen, and we miss him in our family circle, where his advice, counsel and services could be depended upon. This reminds me that with the swift passing of the years we may expect other vacancies like this to come, and we wonder who will be the next. I have been called many times during the past year to minister at funerals, some were of our members, others with no church connection, and in all of these I have but one source of comfort to offer, and that is salvation through the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Those who feel it here in life strong enough to cause them to confess it before the world, and openly live it, give us who are left the best source of consolation, but others may have it as the strength of their lives, and with a secret hope pointing to that brighter and better day in the celestial city above. We have no right to judge of a person's relationship to God by the outward manifestation we see. We are reminded to be watchful for the wolves in sheep's clothing, and also that the Lord has reserved unto himself a people who have not bowed to idolatry in any of its forms, and this secret of the Lord is kept unto himself, and the testimony of these witnesses is secret, and hidden from even the Lord's manifest witnesses. Even the prophet Elijah did not know any of the seven thousand in Israel the Lord had reserved unto himself. He did not even know that such were there, and wanted to die because of the complete idolatry of that nation. O, my brother, when downcast and lonesome for want of outward manifestations of faith, remember the Lord keeps his people. He looks on the heart and not outward forms, and your next door neighbor may be one of the ones ordained unto eternal life, and you should consider him so. When the death stones of persecution were being cast at the martyr Stephen, Saul of Tarsus was there, consenting to it all. What man could have discerned God's

electing grace as applied to man's redemption on that occasion? A chosen vessel at God's appointed time now exerting the limits of the wrath of man for the destruction of the righteous. Or where is the wisdom in man that could detect any difference in the two thieves dying beside the Son of God? Both justly suffering the pains of death, both praying for deliverance, but what a difference in their prayers. The first prayed, "If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us." The other, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." The first is a prayer prompted by suffering, without any faith or knowledge of the power or divinity of Christ, and asked only temporal benefits. The other shows faith, revealing to him divinity, and power, and the kingdom which would be realized after death. Here is fulfilled the Scripture, "Faith is the gift of God," and this dying man had it given to him in this critical hour, and the blessed response he received from his Lord carries with it realizations which we mortals cannot enter into, but it means all which being with Christ can be taken to mean, which is beyond the power of mortal tongue to express.

A comforting thought was given to me recently: that the burdens of death fall upon the living. Of course mortal sufferings which precede death are felt by the passing one, but in death itself there is no pain or consciousness. The struggles we witness and would relieve, but cannot, are no longer felt. The sorrows which follow death, with the regrets and wasted opportunities we find so plentiful at such times, are the heritage of the living. The calm features and peaceful rest of our departed ones are not disturbed by our bursts of grief and sorrow. If we could lift the veil which hides the glories of the future life from us and could comprehend its full realization there would be no tears shed by us who remain. The Scriptures give us brief pictures of heaven and heavenly glory, but natural eyes cannot behold them, nor can they be seen but by the revelation of God. The spiritually-minded can discern these by the heavenly light which is permitted to shine in our darkness to confirm us of the glories of immortality. The mount of transfiguration is a picture of heavenly glory. The disciples saw it as a vision, as it must always be seen by mortals. They knew Moses and Elias and saw the glorious transformation of Christ and these departed saints. The question is often asked, Shall we know each other there? This Scripture shows we shall, and in a more perfect manner. There will be no deception or false knowledge. Nothing but wisdom and truth can exist there. The saints shall know Jesus. Not by the death scars he received on the cross, but by the glorified character he occupies in Divinity. The saints shall not only know him, but shall be like him. One of old said, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." Who are so blessed as the saints of God? And the most blessed part of it is that it hath pleased him to manifest these precious evidences to us poor, weak, unworthy mortals, which exalts

us to be kings and priests to him. The fullness of these is to be realized in the world to come, but the evidences we receive here in this life make us strong for the conflict, and by the strength of our risen Savior we shall surely conquer. May his electing love and saving grace establish his saints in every place, so that the fear of death shall not frighten them from the immortal joys he has prepared for his children in the world to come.

Yours in tribulation and hope,

C. W. BOND.

LUKE XXII. 31, 32.

"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."

I have a desire to write a few thoughts concerning the words of Christ to Peter: "And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." I know I cannot write anything that will be comforting to the children of God if I am not given the spirit of understanding, for I have been taught that I can do nothing of myself, so I hope the Lord will give me understanding, that I may write to the honor and glory of our Lord, to whom all praise and honor is due.

We must bear in mind that Peter was one of the first disciples that Jesus called to be one of his witnesses, and Peter was with him all the time he was preaching and teaching, and I believe that Jesus was teaching Peter to know that the carnal man does not understand the things of the Spirit and could not do anything when left to himself. I believe Jesus was preparing him for greater service, and he told him he would deny him, but Peter, I believe, thought he could go with him to prison, and even death, but he was too weak. But after Jesus was crucified and had risen he appeared unto them, and breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost (John xx. 22), then I believe they were prepared to be his witnesses. And then Peter was converted, and was able to strengthen the brethren. I must say I believe that all of God's children are brought along in ways that they know not; they are made to see they are sinners, and are shown that they are as weak as Peter was, and they try to do what is right, but they cannot save themselves. As the Lord showed Peter that he would deny him, and after he had received the Holy Ghost, we read where Jesus asked Peter, Whom do men say that I am? Peter answered, Some say Elias, some John the Baptist, and some say one of the prophets. But Jesus saith, Whom do you say that I am? Peter said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus answered, and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (Matt. xvi. 13-18). And we read in John xxi. 15, where Jesus asked Peter some more questions.

When they had dined Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith unto Peter the same thing the second time, and said, Feed my sheep. Also the third time. Then Peter was grieved, and said, Thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus said unto him, Feed my sheep. I believe that Peter was qualified by this time to do the things Jesus had sent him to do, for it was the Lord working in him both to will and to do of his good pleasure. If we are endowed with the Spirit of the Holy Ghost and have that revelation from heaven, then we can comfort one another. Peter was not commanded to comfort the world, or carnal man. For man shall no more say to his neighbor or brother, Know the Lord. Jesus said that no man knows the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son reveals him. So no man can teach one to know the Lord; they all must have that revealed from above. We cannot find words to describe the works and goodness of our God in us, and to us; we can only hint at it, and the world cannot understand what we are trying to tell. But they who have the same revelation, or experience, know that the things we try to speak are true, and there is fellowship and union, or communion, and I sometimes love to talk about these things with the brethren, for it is a great comfort to me. I do not believe we brethren talk enough about the workings of the good in our heart, and that is why there is contention and trouble. It is in us, for we seek after the things of the world too much, and do not take enough time to talk over the things of the Spirit. Yet I believe our ways are ordered of the Lord, and I am often made to wonder if I am one of his chosen, for I feel I am the most unworthy person of all the Lord's creation to even receive the children's crumbs, and then I am made to rejoice when Jesus says, I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, for I know I am a sinner, and if I am ever saved it will be by the mercy of God and not of my own righteousness, for my righteousness is as filthy rags. But we are taught that Christ is our righteousness, and that causes me to take courage and hope that I may be one of the least of the Lord's chosen and made to love the doctrine of salvation by grace and not of works, for I feel all my works would condemn me, for I know of myself I can do nothing, and if I am not saved by the grace of God I am forever lost, world without end.

Written with love, I hope, to the brethren,

CHARLES T. ABSHIRE.

TERRELL WELLS, Texas, Sept. 30, 1938.

MRS. N. H. ARNOLD—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I was very glad to receive a letter from one I feel to be so near unto me by that tie that binds all the children of God together here on earth. My greatest concern, dear sister, is, Am I one for whom Christ died on Calvary? I will say further, that you and I seem

to be united in doctrine, as the distance that separates us here does not matter, and the same tie that united the children of Israel we hope unites us to the same God in love one for another. I have in days past been made to see wonderful things in vision that I would not take the whole world for, as poor as I am in this world's goods, having lost three good homes because of much sickness. But I live in strong hope that it will work out all right in the end. I hope to be rich in the mercy and love of that God I have in my weakness tried to set forth among the little children of the everlasting covenant that will never be wasted, never be mortgaged nor sold, but will stand throughout all eternity. As our Lord told the apostles, to whom he spoke so comfortingly when he said, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."—John xiv. 1-3. O, dear ones, what more do we want? We want nothing better than that precious hope which is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and to live in hope that that hope is sure and steadfast and enters into that within the veil (Christ) whither the forerunner hath entered, and, dear one, there is no failure in him, neither is there any chance in the cord which is united to the great Anchor. Why, a large ship of the sea has its anchor, which is attached to the ship, and has a rope which holds the ship in time of storms. But, say, it can be broken, but that three-fold tie which unites our soul is the three-one God, a three-fold cord which all the powers of the world, combined with the entire army of Satan, cannot break nor cause to fall, for it is sure and steadfast. Though this old body die and return to dust, as it was, yet nothing can destroy it from the presence of God. The storm may howl, the night grow dark (the grave night), yet when the Son of God, who said, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also," is not that glorious? Yes, dear sister, nothing on earth, nor under the earth, can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. As Paul said, I am persuaded that neither life, nor death, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, is able to separate us from the love of God. We hear many forms of doctrine preached, many ways mentioned among men, but unto us there is but one way, and that is mentioned in the Bible. It says, John xiv. 6, "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Oh how good that sounds to me! But just listen one moment to the high-up preachers, who tell their congregations that if they do not do right and live perfect lives they can never be saved. They say that any one can come to God at his or her own option. Just how do you think any man who has to

study theology for years can fail to see what Jesus meant when he said, "No man can come unto the Father, but by me"? If Jesus told the truth, which he did, how in the name of God can any man make such statements in the presence of a congregation of people? But, dear one, is it not wonderful that our Lord left on record plain and undeniable testimony that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life, and that he is the only One who delivers us to the Father? That is my daily thought; and then I can read a portion of the seventeenth chapter of John, where Jesus said, They are not of this world, even as I am not of the world. In my past days I have witnessed much confusion among people, some have one way and some have another, but Jesus gave us but one. According to our latest history of worldly churches, since the days of Paul there have been seventeen hundred different sects called churches. No wonder Jesus said, in teaching his disciples, that there be lords many and gods many. But unto us there is but God, one Lord, and, I am willing to say, one chuch which stands firm on all the doctrine the apostles set up.

I will close, as it tires me to sit up long. I surely love to get letters from the brethren and sisters. I am in very poor health and have not been able to do anything for a long time. I usually have to write in parts, as some days I cannot sit up long and write, unless I have a prop for my back.

Hoping to have another good letter from you, I am your brother in hope,

J. B. BOWDEN.

GRETNA, Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—My mind has been lingering between two opinions for some time concerning this writing, fearing not to obey what seems a feeling of duty sent upon me, which I keenly feel my inability to perform, yet it seems I must try, asking you on the outset that if it does not meet with your approval to do me a great favor and do not publish it.

The Scripture, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," and the Scripture concerning Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch are what follow me. Were not they (two of them) gathered together in His name? and they, believing on His name, were gathered together, drawn by the working of the Holy Spirit. Not by chance, but ordained so. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Philip preached Jesus the truth, the gospel, to the eunuch, and he believed Jesus was the Son of God. Surely he had the witness within his heart that caused him to believe, for as many as were ordained to eternal life believed, and where there is a true believer the Lord causes that one to hear the gospel preached, by opening his deaf ears and giving him a heart of understanding. They that are born of God hear and believe. So it was by him the eunuch believed, and by him Philip joined himself to the chariot and preached Jesus to him, for the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to all that believe. By him all are justified from all things from which they

could not be justified by the law of Moses. How can any one believe that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life until he is quickened by the Spirit of God and given an understanding, or guide? The eunuch said, How can I understand unless I have some one to guide me? That guide is Jesus, for the Spirit will guide thee into all truth, and when Jesus is preached he leads the believer to his banqueting-house and his banner over him is love. This is that heavenly manna that feeds the children of God. This is a time when the Comforter comes and they are given a glimpse of that city whose builder and maker is God. The eunuch was in the way that goeth into Gaza, which is desert, when Philip came to him. Is not this where all the children of God are when Jesus reveals himself to them? Where there is no food, no water or life; in a desert.

Now that I have written it seems of little importance, if any, yet I hope I will have relief of mind.

Brother Dodson, please give your views on this Scripture.

A sister in hope,

(MRS.) WILLIE TOSH.

[WE do not feel that we can add much to what sister Tosh has written on the foregoing subject. We have thought of the Ethiopian eunuch and Philip as being representative characters. The Ethiopian was black, or sinful, and could not change his skin or condition, and being at the same time a eunuch, he was powerless to have any part in propagating or helping the Lord in his work. Philip was a type of the one whom the Lord calls, qualifies and sends wheresoever he wills to preach the gospel to his scattered people. God, according to the riches of his grace in Christ Jesus, had mercy upon the Ethiopian, and caused him to hunger and thirst after righteousness, as indicated by his interest in searching the Scriptures, and then sent his servant, Philip, to expound the very same Scripture which he was reading, by preaching unto him Jesus, which was satisfying or filling to him. They were most certainly brought together by the workings of God's Holy Spirit in them and the word of God was verified where he said that where two or three are met together in his name, there he would be in the midst of them. Wonderful, indeed, are such experiences, as many of God's dear children can testify.—R. L D.]

ELKINS, West Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—I look each month for your paper, and enjoy it. I seldom get to any of our meetings during the winter season, but love to hear the word preached in its purity. May the Lord remain with the editors and publishers, and comfort you all with the same comfort wherewith you comfort us.

Yours in fellowship,

(MRS.) E. E. WORKMAN.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE date opposite your name on the little pink slip on which your address is printed denotes the time your subscription expires. Dec 40 means that it expired December, 1940; June 41 that it will expire June, 1941, etc.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY, 1941.

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MATTHEW XVI. 13-20.

THE opinions of men varied concerning the person of the Son of man when he was here below, just as they do now when there are many and strong organizations established to teach others who he was, but our Lord did not pronounce a blessing on what man teaches, but declares the one blessed to whom it was revealed by the Father, that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God. Peter knew Jesus by divine revelation as the foundation rock upon which the church is built, and Jesus knew Peter as a subject of God's love and mercy. Jesus said, Thou are Peter, "which is by interpretation, A stone."—John i. 42. "And upon this rock I will build my church." Not on Peter, who was but a stone, just as all subjects of God's love and mercy are as lively stones built together a spiritual house. Jesus is the Rock. His work is perfect. (Deuteronomy xxxii. 4). But we do not feel that it is he himself that he would present to Peter, but rather this carnal truth concerning Him, which can only be known as it is revealed from heaven. Thus the foundation of all those who shall be saved is the Father's electing love for those whom he chose in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, which God not only revealed to Peter, but to all the apostles, Paul included, who declares, God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, revealed his Son in me. "On this Rock," which is the truth, as unshakable as God himself, for it is God revealed, "will I build my church." This means not visible structures or organizations known in various lands by different names, headed by certain dignitaries, but "the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven."—Heb. xii. 23. These are his workmanship, his building, and it is by his obedient life, and obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, and through his mediatorial work, we have access by one Spirit unto the Father. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, and by his Spirit are builded upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus himself being the chief corner-stone. Revelation xxi. had the names of the twelve apostles in the foundations, for they all testified to the

same truth which had been revealed to them, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. We have been asked for our views principally on the nineteenth verse, and God grant that we may be blessed with ability to give them clearly so that a child might understand. Jesus said unto Peter, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." It was in the power of Jesus to give unto whom he would. "He gave gifts unto men, even the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them." Keys represent authority in position or place. Thus Gibraltar is the key to the Mediterranean Sea, as the Suez Canal is the key to its exit. The preaching of the gospel which the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, was given unto Peter, as it is given to all who have or ever shall preach. It is a gift, but it was given first to Peter. He occupies that place in God's purpose, not because of any special qualification, but because there had to be a first and he it was that Jesus appointed, notwithstanding the fact that Jesus fully knew he would deny him, and in this very chapter Jesus says to him, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offense unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." It would have been impossible for Jesus to speak to Peter that way if Peter, as some affirm, was the rock on which the church is built. Now although Jesus knew Peter, with all his weaknesses, yet it was given to Peter to unlock the mysteries of the kingdom. First, on the day of Pentecost, Peter standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and by the Holy Spirit he was enabled to open up the mystery of the prophecy of Joel and the utterances of David, showing that God had made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. (Acts ii.) Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Without that gift Peter could not, neither could any of the apostles, have had an entrance in unto the church at Jerusalem. Peter was not only the one who should first open up the truth to the mixed multitude who had witnessed the crucifixion, and some were Jews who had assisted in it, but we find he is also the one who is sent to the Gentiles in Caesarea. Peter could not of himself have done this, for, being a Jew, he had not any thought or desire to preach among the Gentiles. The Spirit of God must prepare him for the task. The tenth chapter of Acts is the record of what took place. The Holy Spirit not only prepared Peter, but also prepared Cornelius for Peter's entrance into Caesarea. Peter would not have gone, being a Jew, but was told, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." Peter "saw the heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet, knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth; wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air." These strange creatures, my brethren, set forth a number that

no man can number, who are saved; saved by the one offering of their Lord and Savior, from among the Gentiles, to whom Peter is about to be sent. Such was the Spirit's work in the heart of Cornelius, that had not Peter been given the keys by our Lord his testimony could not, and would not, have been received. It was a gift that he ministered to Cornelius and his household. Paul also had the keys given unto him, the same keys, for he, too, was sent to the Gentiles, and he was blessed to preach Christ crucified, yet not of his own will, but wherever God, the Holy Ghost, would open a door of utterance for him (Col. iv. 3), and he could say to the Thessalonians, "For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain."—1 Thess. ii. 1. If Paul had preached any other gospel than he had received from heaven, he would not have been received, there would have been no opening up of the hearts and consciences of the brethren to his testimony, for it would have proven that he had not the *gift*. In Acts xv. 7, when the brethren began a dispute about circumcision, some commanding the Gentiles to keep the law of Moses, after much disputing Peter rose up, and said unto them, "Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us." This brings us to the latter part of our subject. "And whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shalt be loosed in heaven." They were to be faithful in the things they had received, so in chapter ten he tells them, "He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me." As they went preaching the gospel, it was loosing to some and was binding to others. It was a savor of life unto life in some and of death unto death in others. Thus He could say in John xx. 23, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." These apostles were, with the power of the Holy Ghost, to loose the Gentile believer from the ordinance of circumcision, the feast days and fast days of the legal covenant. Their ministry, coming at a time when there were many of their hearers still holding to the law and its ordinances, we find much in the apostles' testimony, when blessed by the Holy Ghost, to the loosing of the Jews from the yoke of the law; while those who would come to the gospel feast, spoken of as a marriage feast, not having on the wedding garment, were to be bound hand and foot and cast into outer darkness. We see Paul laboring to establish the church in the gospel, declaring to the Galatians that they stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage, declaring that those who would be under the law were also under its curse. If a brother trespassed against a brother (Matt. xv.

15-17), the Lord bade him, "Go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." Thus Jesus taught his disciples, and Paul in 2 Thessalonians iii. 6, says, "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us." It has been asked on one or two occasions why the church has in certain places excluded members for drunkenness, or some other wrong-doing of which they have been proven guilty. It should only be after much labor with the offender that the church should exclude a member from their fellowship, but if such be thieves, fornicators, covetous, drunkards revilers or extortioners, and are obdurate, the church is bound by the Word to cast them out. It is the word of the apostles that binds such. Paul, in 1 Corinthians v. 11, tells the church not to keep company with such an one; no, not to eat. It is not a sign of disease or decay, but of health and strength, when a church, following the admonitions of the Word, and walking in the orderly way, excludes those who deny the doctrine, and disgrace the church by their ungodly walk. When the church walked in the faith, steadfastly rooted and built up in Christ and established in the faith as they had been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving, it was then that they kept themselves in the love of God. Of some they could have compassion, making a difference; and others they could save with fear, pulling them out of the fire (loosing their bands), as they saw them hating even the garments spotted by the flesh. There is in the word of God abundant evidence of the power of the Holy Ghost in the testimony of the apostles. The word of their testimony covers all flesh to the end of time. Carried by the Holy Ghost, who enabled them to write, it is to the loosing of those on earth who shall be loosed in heaven, and it is to the binding on earth of those who shall be bound in heaven. We have spoken of Peter as the first among the apostles, and would mention his judgment of Balaam and of the false prophets and false teachers who were among the people. His words were like bonds that could not be broken, they were the word of God, and he said, "But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the *same word* are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and pardition of ungodly men." How awful to be bound in unbelief! It is as awful as the fixed great gulf (Luke xvi. 26) that cannot be crossed, yet how blessed and comforting to know that through the

Spirit we have been brought out of the prison in which we were bound. Loosed from those bands, we know that there is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, and this joy no man can take away, and it is a sweet foretaste of that which is to come. We have spoken of those who walk in disobedience, and of the needs be of the church to deal with them, but let the church first examine herself and see if she be in the faith. Let her take heed unto herself and the doctrine, considering herself lest she be tempted. Let there be a diligent search into what saith the Lord by the mouth of these apostles. Exclusion is an ugly word, and should be the last resort, even as it would be for us to amputate an arm or a leg that has served us well. Let us consider well what these apostles say, for Jesus said, I pray not for these only (the apostles), but for them also that shall believe on me through their word. To despise them is to despise their Lord. Be not deceived, God is not mocked, sowing to the flesh will always be an evidence of mockers, and the word says, "Be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong." The evidence of the Spirit's presence will be that the church will continue steadfast in the APOSTLES' doctrine and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread and in prayers. Such will suffer long, until it is clearly proven that the unruly one does not belong to them and they must do according to the word.

G. R.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Original Mount Zion Association of Predestinarian Baptists, in session with Little Blue and Sni-a-bar Church, Jackson County, Missouri, October 4th, 5th and 6th, 1940, sendeth christian salutation and greetings to the churches with whom we correspond, and to all who are in fellowship with us.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Another year has passed through the annals of time, and through this manifestation of the goodness of a kind and loving Father in heaven we have the blessed privilege of again meeting in an associate capacity and hearing preached the unsearchable riches of a crucified Christ. We are a small Association, and our correspondence with sister associations is likewise small, yet our Association is one of great interest to us in our lonely condition, and though we are still growing fewer in number, our preaching is clear and sound. Though our Association be small, and we be few in number, we none the less enjoy the feast of spiritual blessings and the association of those with whom we can mingle in spiritual unity.

To our corresponding Associations, We welcome your messengers who have have come to us bringing messages of love and gospel truth. We humbly beg for a continuance of your correspondence, and ask you to come again. May the blessings of spiritual love be with us all.

DANIEL A. J. ADAMS, Mod.
WILLAM H. MORRIS, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, in the meetinghouse at Mt. Zion, near Aldie, Loudoun County, Virginia, December 24th, 1940, William Hudson Carper, of Culpeper, Va., and Miss Mary Alice Turman, of Fredericksburg, Va., daughter of Deacon C. M. and sister Lillie Turman.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

THE sad news of the death of sister MARY HESTER DAVIS, widow of Hilary Davis, who died at her home in Salisbury, Maryland, November 22nd, 1940, brought sadness to many hearts and homes, not only in her own community, but wherever she was known. She had been ill about a week before the end came, but was taken suddenly worse just a short time before her death. All that loving hands, careful nursing and professional skill could minister were brought to her relief, but it all proved in vain. The funeral services were conducted the following Tuesday afternoon by Elder H. C. Ker, of Delmar, Delawars, at the Holloway funeral home in Salisbury. The interment was in Wicomico Memorial Park, Salisbury, Maryland. The surviving relatives include one son, Dr. Luther A. Davis, of Scituate, Mass.; two daughters, Mrs. Russell V. Baysinger and Mrs. Russell White; also one sister, Mrs. Turner Davis, of Girdletree, Md.; two brothers, Albert S. Bailey, of Cottingwood, N. J., and Robert H. Bailey, of Hollywood, California. Had she lived until February she would have been seventy-five years old. Her husband died in 1939. Sister Davis was a daughter of the late Robert W. Bailey and Mrs. Bailey, who before her marriage was Miss Martha Julia Smith, and was born in Whaleyville, Md., in February, 1866. After her marriage to Hilary Davis their home for many years was near Snow Hill, Md., where he was engaged in trucking and farming. About twenty-five years ago they moved to Salisbury, where they spent the remainder of their lives. They had many friends in Wicomico and Worcester counties, and elsewhere, among their many acquaintances. Nearly all her long and useful life sister Davis believed in the principles of the faith of the Primitive Baptists, but she did not unite with the visible church until late in life, being baptized by Elder Charles W. Vaughn, of Hopewell, N. J., into the fellowship of the Salisbury Church in May, 1938, as her pastor, the late Elder G. E. Coulbourn, was ill at that time. Sister Davis was a woman of strong character, of pleasing personality, kind and considerate of others, and charitable regarding those who differed with her. She will be greatly missed in the community as a neighbor and sympathizing friend when troubles came. Her love for the church was one of her outstanding qualities, and she never missed the meetings of her faith when she was able to attend church services. She evidenced her faith by her works, and leaves to those who knew her the legacy of precious memories. By precept and example, by true humility and self-sacrifice, by sublime patience in affliction and trouble her life reflected the true christian. Her death is a loss to the church of her membership as well as to the community in general. Of such as she it is written, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

Written by request.

ALSO,

DEATH entered the home of Mr. and Mrs. Earl Stevens, of Central Bridge, N.

Y., December 24th, 1940, and removed from life's activity and usefulness ALPHA CROUSE, who for ten years had made his home in part of the house occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Stevens. Mr. Crouse was nearly eighty-one years old, and had been in feeble health for several years, though able to be about his room most of the time. A few days before his death he fell and fractured his arm. Owing to his age and weakened condition, it is believed that this injury hastened his death, though he was given the best medical care obtainable, and Mr. Judson Zeh, who occupied the same part of the house, looked after his welfare and cared for him, with the aid of Mr. and Mrs. Earl Stevens, all of them doing whatever loving attention and faithful ministration could accomplish.

The funeral services were held at the Stevens' home on the following Thursday afternoon, being conducted by the writer. The interment was in the Slate Hill Cemetery, on Sharon Hill, a few miles from Cobleskill, N. Y.

Mr. Crouse was born January 14th, 1860, at Stone Arabia, N. Y., spending his early life there and at Amsterdam. In 1888 he was united in marriage to Miss Jennie Zeh, who proved a faithful and worthy helpmeet to him as they bravely and successfully met the problems of life. She died in 1931. In 1928 Mr. and Mrs. Crouse removed to Central Bridge and lived in part of the house occupied by her daughter, Mrs. Earl Stevens, and her husband, after spending most of their married life at Seward, N. Y. Among the surviving relatives are one daughter, Mrs. Earl Stevens, of Central Bridge, N. Y.; one son, Floyd, of Binghamton, N. Y., and eight grandchildren. Mr. Crouse made no profession of religion, though for years he had been an attendant of the Reformed Church. He was a man of quiet, unassuming ways, possessing those virtues that make for all that is honorable, upright and moral in a person, and his obliging manner combined with these to make him many warm friends. He will be greatly missed. He was a good father and a true husband, and will live in the memories of the many who knew him and were associated with him in any way.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

JOSEPH ALEXANDER AWTREY, son of John and Margaret Awtrey, was born in Tuscaloosa County, Alabama, April 20th, 1858, and departed this life at the home of his youngest son, Henry B. Awtrey, Cleveland, Alabama, August 30th, 1940, aged 82 years, 4 months and 10 days. He was married to Miss Permelia Sanders January 17th, 1884, and to this union were born twelve children, six sons and six daughters, nine of whom are still living. One boy and two girls died while they were very small. He moved to Pickens County, Alabama, in 1889 and united with the Old School Baptist Church the third Sunday in June, 1897, and was baptized by Elder Jim Carver, and lived a consistent member of this denomination until his death. He was blessed with a deep conviction and clear understanding of the scriptural truth. He was gifted as a fireside preacher, and was happy when surrounded by his brethren and engaged in conversation on scriptural things. He was one of those attentive listeners whose quick perception enabled him to follow the speaker with felt interest and response reflected in his countenance, and was an inspiration to any one who preached the truth, and his disapproval was equally outstanding when the truth was sacrificed. The interest of his church was always given first consideration, and he never wavered from this cause throughout his whole life. His home was always open to his breth-

ren, and he made preparations to take care of a large number during associations. The most he ever cared for at one time were forty men, women and children. He was able to read, and enjoyed the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in his last days, through a gift of Elder I. R. Greathouse. His wife and other members of his family have also enjoyed reading the SIGNS. He had moved his membership several times when he moved to different places, and when he died his membership was with Mt. Zion Church, Pratt City, Jefferson County, Alabama, but he was laid to rest in the cemetery in Pickens County, Alabama, where he first united with the church. His funeral was conducted by Elder E. M. McCool.

Written by his oldest daughter,
(MRS.) REVIS L. PATE.

MRS. LULA MOUNT died Sunday morning, December 29th, 1940, at the hospital in Crystal City, Texas, following an illness of several months. Funeral services were held Monday morning at ten o'clock from the Fist Baptist Church, with Mr. Ray McCollum, pastor, officiating.

Lula A. Hartsfield was born in Alabama April 17th, 1866. She was married to John Wilson in 1881. To this union two children were born. Mr. Wilson died in 1888, and in 1901 deceased was married to James B. Mount, and to them two children were born. Mrs. Mount came to Crystal City with Mr. Mount, who preceded her in death four years ago, from Quitman, Texas, about twenty years ago. She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church of the Oak Grove community, Wood County. Mrs. Mount was a good wife, mother and neighbor, and loved her friends. As long as she was physically able, she visited neighbors and friends when she could do them good. She was a lover of flowers and enjoyed growing varieties of them when she was well. Mrs. Mount was the mother of two children by her first marriage, a son, who died in infancy, and a daughter, Mrs. John T. Spann, of Crystal City. Two children were born to her after her marriage to Mr. Mount, they are Glynn O. Mount, of San Antonio, and Mrs. A. E. McCluskey, of Galveston. Other survivors are six step-children, J. B. Mount and Mrs. J. G. Gibson, of Crystal City, Mack C. and William Mount, of Dallas, Mrs. Lucille Russell and Mrs. Ola Wood, of Mineola; also several grandchildren and three sisters, Mrs. A. J. Horton, of Quitman, Mrs. J. W. Dowman, of Sanderson, and Mrs. Sterling Landrum, Frederick, Oklahoma, the only sister who was unable to be here for the funeral services. Mrs. McCluskey and Glynn Mount were at the bedside of their mother for more than a week before her death.

[THE foregoing is a clipping from a Texas paper, sent to us my Mrs. J. T. Spann, daughter of the deceased, with the request that we publish in the SIGNS.—ED.]

VICTOR R. BADSKY was born in Overbrook, Kansas, March 28th, 1893. His mother died when he was five years old and he was raised by his uncle on a farm. He came to Haines, Oregon, in February, 1917, and was employed as a farm hand. Here he became acquainted with Miss Elizabeth Bond, a schoolteacher of that section, and they were married April 29th, 1921, I being honored to perform the ceremony. He continued his business of farming, and in 1925 bought a farm home, where he lived, maintaining a high class of operations, producing standard crops and stock. One son, Ted Badsky, was born in 1929. His health began failing in April, 1940, and he underwent an opera-

tion for appendicitis, from which he seemed to recover, when an attack of influenza sent him back to the hospital. He was treated there for two weeks for an affection of the lungs, and was thought to be slowly recovering, when, on July 3rd, as his nurse was preparing him for his night's rest, he was taken with a violent spell of coughing, and passed away instantly. His death was quite a surprise to his family and friends, who were expecting him to return home the next week, although he had told them it was doubtful as to his recovery, and just that day he remarked that whether death was now or in ten years it was all the same. In his passing his community lost one of its best citizens. His was a modest, unassuming life, strictly honest and upright, and he followed the spirit of the golden rule, to "do unto others as you would they should do unto you." He never made any pretensions to religion, but in his walk and activities he showed the fruit of it. I requested to be permitted to preach his funeral discourse, and took as the subject, "By their fruits ye shall know them." A friend of his wrote me a few days afterward, "You said many good things about my friend, and every one of them was true. He lived the full life, and God took him." His wife and son have much to cheer them in their bereavement in the example of faithfulness he left them, and to take up the duties he laid down with the cheering hope that he is not lost, but gone before. May our record at the close of life be such that the welcome plaudit, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant," be ours.

C. W. BOND.

DELIA STOUT BURACKER was born June 20th, 1862, in Morgan County, Illinois, and passed away at her late home, in Ashland, Illinois, December 20th, 1940, at three o'clock a. m., after a few hours' illness. She was married to Charles L. Buracker February 6th, 1888, near Prentice, Ill. Mr. Buracker died about six years ago. She was for many years a worthy member of the Primitive Baptist Church at Yatesville, Ill. She is survived by the following nieces and nephews: Mrs. Nellie Smith, Virginia, Ill., Claude Bailey, St. Louis, Mo., Walter Bailey, Ashland, Ill., Mrs. Ida Sapp, Granite City, Okla., Mrs. William Ulysses, Chicago, Ill., Tilman, Ernest and Edgar Stout, Mrs. Alta Harber, and Mrs. Robert Reid, Jacksonville, Ill.

Funeral services were held at the First Baptist Church, in Ashland, Sunday afternoon, December 22nd, conducted by Mr. E. M. Gallagher, pastor of Ashland Christian Church. Interment was in Diamond Grove Mausoleum, Jacksonville, Ill.

FRANCES McDANIEL.

BROTHER G. L. MARTIN, a pioneer citizen of Van Zandt County, Texas, passed from our midst at his home, in the Lundra community, August 21st, 1940. Brother Martin was the son of the late John R. and Mary Martin. He was born February 13th, 1865, in Kaufman County, and came to Van Zandt County when he was but a small boy. He was married to Mollie Burns, and to their union were born three children, one preceding him in death. He is survived by his widow and two daughters. Brother Martin united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Cool Springs, in Van Zandt County, Texas, on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in November, 1894. He received the ordinance of baptism on the following Sunday. On the fourth Saturday in July, 1896, he was chosen a Deacon of the church, and in 1915 he became the Clerk of the church. These positions he held until the time

of his death. Brother Martin was known far and wide for his genuine hospitality and active support of the church. The members of the church and his many friends feel deeply the loss of this greatly beloved man.

His body was laid to rest in Cool Springs Cemetery, there to await the resurrection. The writer, his pastor, assisted by Elder L. D. Rose, tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved.

W. T. FUGATE.

MRS. OTTO SCHROEDER, our beloved mother, passed away December 10th, 1940. Please publish in your paper.

Her daughter,
(MRS. ROSE GAMMONS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Isaac T. McIntyre, N. Y., $1; E. H. Winchell, Mich., $1; Hubbell Brothers, N. Y., $8; "A friend," Ont., $1; J. N. Wageonheizer, N. Y., $1; J. K. Buckwalter, Ohio, $1; Mrs. Mary J. Ege, N. J., $3; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Maynard Finch, N. Y., $1; "H", Md., $4; Mrs. J. D. Shafer, N. Y., $1; A. J. Doggett, Ala., 25 cents; Mrs. Daisy Yeisley, Wash., $1; Mrs. Ella C. Young, Ky., $3.

MEETINGS.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M

ALL WELCOME

EBENEZER

OLD SCHOOL

BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists is now settled in her new church-house, at 4614 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas, where she holds her regular monthly services on each first Sunray at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. Preaching services also on each third Sunday by Elder C. B. Teague, and each second Sunday by brother O. C. Lee, at 11 o'clock a. m. A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. R. HARDY, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1 00 If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers.

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I feel to recommend this book to our readers.—G. R.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 109. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1941. NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE PRODIGAL SON.

THIS is one of the great parables of our Savior, and like all his teachings it is so full of meaning that we poor, sinful, finite creatures are dependent entirely upon the light and leadership of his holy and divine Spirit for leadership. But his teachings are always full of comfort and consolation to his children when he leads them beside the still waters and makes them to lie down in green pastures of light, understanding and the feast of his everlasting and unwavering promises.

This parable, I think, clearly sets forth the breaking down of the middle wall of partition, nationally, between Jew and Gentile. I understand this wall of partition to have been the law and ordinances that the natural Jews were so zealous to pretend to keep, but which they did not and could not keep. However, Christ Jesus, the blessed Lord and Savior, kept the law to a jot and tittle, proving that as to the flesh Abraham might glory, but not before God. I think the older son in this parable is national Israel, who feel that salvation is through the works of the law. Therefore they feel they have served as is stated in the parable and that God has not given them as much as a kid to make merry with their friends. But not so with those who are described as the younger son, who seemed from the early dawn of nature as one of old said, "In sin did my mother conceive me," and they go astray from their mother's womb, speaking lies. Therefore, the poor prodigal son took his journey into sin and riotous living, like all the children of God do, and when that mighty famine arises, when it is revealed to them what sinners they are by nature, and have been all their lives, they begin to be in want. Then, like the poor prodigal son, they go join themselves to a citizen of this same country, and they become swine feeders (which is equivalent to feeding the unclean), and they grow so hungry under the light of true conviction that they

(like he) would fain have filled their bellies with the husk that the swine did eat, but no man gave unto him. Now surely swine food is unclean. Let us see what it is, although it is a deep subject. First, it is called husk, which has not the germ of life. I think this husk is that pharisaical righteousness of the law, of which the great apostle Paul said, as touching the law he was blameless, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and he died. (Rom. vii. 9.) Then they are blessed to see as one of old, that all their righteousness is as filthy rags. They are brought to the place where the poor prodigal son was when he said, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants." Oh how unworthy they do feel in this condition! Yet they still want to be as a hired servant, but instead they are sons and heirs. "Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father."—Gal. iv. 1, 2. So the Father was at the helm all the time. No man gave unto him, and he was starving as a result of this famine God sent. Dear child, there is nowhere else to go but to him in your prayers, your meditations and desires. You are utterly helpless to cause the appointed time of the Father, and you are also helpless to prevent that time.

Now let us see what the prodigal son got instead of what he asked for. He asked only to become as a hired servant, but what did the gracious and merciful father command? "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet." —Luke xv. 22. The robe is nothing short of the righteousness of Christ, the ring is the token of the everlasting love of God, which has no end, and the shoes, I think, represent their walking in the good works which God before ordained that they should walk in them. What a wonderful scene! One who realizes his utter unworthiness, his filth, his sinfulness, yet is given very unexpectedly the best robe, the ring and the shoes. And the fatted calf is slain for him. Jesus, his sin-bearer and Savior, is crucified in his law room and stead. Oh what a joy, a relief, a comfort, for a poor unworthy sinner to be shown from the light of heaven and immortal glory that instead of depending upon works as a hired servant, that Jesus came and suffered, bled, groaned, died and satisfied for all your sins, was buried in Joseph's new tomb and rose again, and said, As I live ye shall live also. Oh what music and dancing and leaping of souls for joy! What a feast to the poor and hungry soul who would fain have filled his belly with husk that the unclean eat. Instead of the husk of the swine pen (what could be more filthy?) it is the dainties of the king's table.

The older son, I understand, did not want any of such a feast. But the reason was that he had never been made to see his unworthiness. He never thirsted nor hungered after righteousness. He was a hired servant and

he was not aware of the best robe, the ring, the shoes, nor the sweetness of the fatted calf. He was satisfied with swine food or the husk of the law, which was only a shadow of that law written in the heart and that the Lord puts in their minds, which is the stipulations of the new covenant. "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."—Heb. viii. 12. So the best robe is upon all those who feel no more worthy to be called "thy son." Then, dear child of God, when you are brought so low in poverty, filth and hunger, and are made to feel so unworthy, take courage and be comforted, because the best robe is yours, the ring of his everlasting love, and all things else that pertain to life and godliness. So those who hunger and thirst are blessed. Yes, blessed indeed, and they shall be filled. They who mourn have the unfailing evidence that they are the blessed. When God sends famine and we are bowed down in poverty of spirit, the evidence is that the kingdom of heaven is ours. But I so often feel that I may be deceived in the whole thing. However, according to my understanding of 1 John i. 8, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," a person who is deceived says he has no sin. Dear children of God, I cannot say that, but on the other hand I confess I am a sinner in the flesh. Then in the next verse John says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." So then, take courage. When we are encompassed with so great a cloud of witnesses all the Scriptures from Genesis through Revelation witness this very thing. This may seem strange to some readers, but I am bound to say that I am glad I feel I am a sinner. If I did not, I do not think I would have evidence of the best robe. You know in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, in the parable of the sheep and goats, the sheep felt they had failed to do the good things Jesus had enumerated, and said, Lord, when did we do them? Nevertheless, they are given the best robe, they inherit the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world, because they are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God before ordained that they should walk in them, and God works in them both the will and the do of his good pleasure. But the goats on the left hand did not feel as I do, dear child of God, although I am always afraid to say this. When the Lord said to them, Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat; thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; naked, and ye clothed me not; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. They did not feel like the poor prodigal son, nor like the sheep. They expressed no unworthiness, and, on the other hand, they felt the Lord was wrong about it, and asked when they failed to do these good things. They were bold enough to insist also, in Matthew vii. 22, "Many will say to me in that day,

Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" But he shall say, Depart, ye workers of iniquity. They do not get the best robe, but the worst. But God's poor, weak, unworthy and sinful beings cry out in the greatness of famine, hunger and thirst after no man gave unto them, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants."—Luke xv. 18, 19. Dear child of God, my hope of heaven and eternal glory does not depend upon my own worthiness, nor upon any of the fleshly works of the creature, but upon that best robe of the blood-washed and holy righteousness of the immaculate Lamb of God, who died on Calvary's cross to take away the sins of the world; that world that God so loved that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should never perish, but have everlasting life. They always get the best robe. They all confess their unworthiness, which is an evidence that robe was prepared for them.

Now I desire to quote one text in connection with John iii. 16, which is often taken to mean that eternal life is conditional on belief. But not so; belief is only a good work that is worked in them, and to prove this position I have only to quote the latter portion of Acts xiii. 48: "And as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed." Notice the words AS MANY. No more; no less. Then belief is evidence of the best robe, and all things that pertain to life and godliness are the same.

Dear readers, I hope these things are at least in harmony with the Scriptures. I hope also that my poor soul has felt and expressed them.

May the Lord comfort us in sustaining our hope of the best robe.

R. W. RHODES.

HUNTINGTON, West Virginia.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am inclosing two good letters written by my little afflicted niece, Mrs. Clarice Johnson. I feel to pass them on to the household of faith, if you feel to give them space, as I feel they would comfort others, even as they have comforted me. She has had many afflictions and trials, has been sick so long, and has been graciously blessed as well.

Yours in hope,

G. B. BIRD.

HUNTINGTON, West Virginia.

MY DEAR UNCLE:—For a long time I have been waiting for strength to write you a few words, but it seems my strength is gone. My doctor says he can help me. Tells me to lie still and be patient. I try to not complain, for I know it is when we are afflicted that we can feel God's love and care the most. I feel sure that when God's appointed time for me to recover arrives, it is then, and not before, that I shall be able to be up again, and if he has prepared a physician to help me, there is not a doubt I will find this certain physician. I have been confined to my bed now for three and one-half months. It seems to me our greatest pleasure here in this

world is to have health enough to go about in our homes. I believe our goings are all appointed. We cannot hasten his set times. We are going to meet all our troubles and pleasures. It seems we have more trouble than pleasure. I know I must, and feel willing to, bear my part. My affliction is welcome if that is what it takes to bring me nearer to the blessed Redeemer. My pathway of life has been very hard, yet I have not been pressed as hard as you, Uncle Harvey and dear Aunt Bessie, and should not try to tell you what trouble is, for you have suffered your share. I have had people tell me that God would not let me suffer and be weary if I will love and trust him, live right and have faith. I refer them to your case. I say, If God picked out people who were mean and cruel, how can you be one of them? Dear uncle, if the good book did not say that none is perfect, none is without sin, I would say you are perfect, but I know that would be denying the Scripture. Yes, we are going to suffer every pain and heartache that is in store for us, and I know that I deserve all that he sees fit to put upon me. Sometimes my suffering is almost unbearable, but still there are times I feel it is a blessing. It is God's will for me to suffer, and I trust that he rules all things for our good, even though sometimes we cannot see just why. I feel sure God's rule is perfect and that he doeth all things well. If it were not for God's love and tender mercy how could I stand these long and lonely hours? He surely makes me able to bear my burden. I feel he has blessed me to have a true, kind and loving companion, one who can agree with me and believes the same true doctrine that I do, and what a comfort that is to me. How unworthy I am of this.

Uncle Harvey, I am writing this secretly. I hide it under my pillow when any one comes in the room, for I feel ashamed and fear I am a hypocrite. I feel unfit to write to one as good as you are. I feel too unworthy to try to draw any one's attention to my feelings, and, too, I am ashamed of my scattered remarks. I am too weak to sit up and write, and can only write a little at a time. I cannot stand the least exertion, because of the condition of my heart.

How I would like to talk with you, or hear you talk. I much love to hear the singing I hear once a month. How I would love to sing with the rest, but my voice is too weak. While I am ashamed to let any one hear me, still it is hard for me to stay out of it.

I hope the Lord will enable you to understand what I have tried to tell. I hope you are getting along well, and that Aunt Bessie is still improving. I hope reading this will not weary you too much.

With love to all, your unworty niece,

CLARICE.

HUNTINGTON, West Virginia.

MY DEAR UNCLE HARVEY:—This morning, feeling impressed, I will write my mind as it wanders along, but I can only write awkwardly what is on my mind. I spent a night of trouble. This

morning I arose and as I tried to help my sympathetic companion fix breakfast I was blinded with tears. It seems my burden is more than I can bear at times. I believe there are not many who understand my reason for weeping, therefore I am burdensome. If every one could know my mind, surely if ever they see me as I see myself, they will pity me. I cannot be like others. I do desire to be more holy, but I fall so far short of doing my duties that I often fear my experience is not reality. Very many times the great fear that I might be a deceiver causes me to secretly, from all others but God, cry so hard I have to go to bed from exhaustion. For six years my lot has been one of afflictions. Still I have not been left to murmur or repine at God's ways. A number of times while lying on my bed of affliction I found my mind rejoicing in the goodness and mercy of God. I could feel a fullness in the Lord Jesus Christ for all my sins. I could see the benefit of all God's ways. Knowing his ways are just and right, I feel at times my seffering is only a small part of what I justly deserve, for I know I am a guilty creature. I see myself as the worst of all sinners. It pleases God to show me my sinful condition. Many days have passed with me when I could see the guilt of my past sinful life so great that I would feel I had sinned away my life and was a justly condemned sinner in the sight of God. Oh how miserable and heartsick we can feel! But oh is it not good for us to seffer? What a blessed thing it is to be a sinner and know it. Then we can see our weakness and it is plain that we can do nothing without God. He is the Sovereign who rules and controls all things according to his will. He saw all his works in eternity. He will do it all in his own time and way according to the good pleasure of his own will. Surely so vile a sinner as I am unworthy to be one of God's children. I love to see God's children united. If I be one at all, it is because of the Lord's tender mercy. Oh for some comfort and peace of mind! If only I could be satisfied.

Dear uncle, you are so kind, so helpful, that is why I write to you. I know you will bear with me in my weakness. It is good to have one like you to unload my burdens on. The talks we have together help me along my journey through this unfriendly world. I know your troubles are many. That is why you are so sympathetic toward me, but I am afraid you will tire of it if I write you many more times. I think of you in all my troubles, though it may be that I should not complain to you, for you have troubles of your own.

My dear Aunt Bessie, my mind is with her, though I never come to visit her. I am not strong enough to come by bus, and do not have much opportunity when I feel able to come in a car, but my sympathy is with her. I hope to see you soon.

Your unworthy niece,

CLARICE.

BENTLEY, Ill., Nov. 12, 1940.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Another year has rolled around and the time of our subscription is overdue, so I am herewith sending my renewal for another year. I have been hoping for some time to have something impressed upon my mind to write that would at least in a small way express to the staff and readers of the SIGNS how much we enjoy the writings of the editors and other writers, and we are not forgetful of how the publisher has done a workmanlike job, and always in the mail at the proper time. I am glad to note that no controversies are indulged in through its columns, especially with those adhering to Arminian beliefs, or what they think they believe. The children of hope have no time for doubtful disputations. Nor should we offend a brother for a word. There is much to write and talk about that will be edifying to the church and a real comfort to each other. Could I but stop and consider my own shortcomings, and return to my first love, when I wanted a home with them, I would recall how I thought what a Christlike, lovable people they were, loving one another, casting the mantle of charity over each other's imperfections and walking worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called. Did I not then have a great admiration for their orderly walk and godly conversation?

Now in my meditation of the foregoing, if I have returned to my first love I will have no time for unfriendly criticism. We are still blessed with brother Claude E. Webb as our pastor. It is now fifteen years he has been our faithful counselor. Our meetings are held every third Sunday, and Saturday before, when and where we are blessed to sit at the banqueting feast in God's house, where his banner over us is love. Here, under our own vine and fig tree, we can feel to worship our God, and none can molest nor make afraid. Here we hear the gospel sound in no unmistakable terms, and our hearts are made glad. When we hear the sound of the bells and smell the smell of the pomegranates we know our High Priest has entered into the holy of holies once for all. Through the years just passed our faithful pastor, with us, has seen our skies overcast with storm clouds, and some damage has been done, but through it all we feel he has been endowed with wisdom from on high to so counsel with us that we feel that now, by the grace of God, that though our little barque has been riding on a tempest-tossed sea, we are now sailing on a calm and placid water, with no storm clouds near, and the sunlight of God's love shining on the deck of our ship, warming our hearts toward one another, and again we greet one another with that former glad feeling of love and real confidence. Our spirits are again revived and we go on our way rejoicing, and are glad when we again and again say, Come, let us go up into the house of the Lord together. While the Lord walks and talks with us how easy it is to forgive. How often he comes into our hearts, at times a very welcome guest, but ofttimes our minds go to business, or trifling things, and

the spiritual light is withdrawn, and we feel, Oh that I had been more inclined toward my lovely guest. Oh where is my Beloved gone? O Lord, return to me the joys of thy salvation. And so we are all journeying on in our christian pilgrimage through sunshine and clouds, hoping that we will be with our blessed Lord, and shall see him and be like him and be satisfied. While here below may we go on our way feeling that the Lord has many blessings for us to enjoy.

Brother Orvil Prior was ordained to the full work of the ministry last year, and has been called as assistant pastor to our church (Smyrna) with brother Webb, but he has been urgently called to the pastoral care of three other churches, and, too, to fill fifth Sunday appointments here and there. It is very plain to see that his chief desire is to know the path of the Lord and walk therein. Brother Prior visited an association in eastern Ohio and reported sound and able preaching: Christ the only way poor sinners are saved. Brother Webb has been called for a three weeks' preaching tour through east and southeastern Illinois, where many members have heard him at various times, and have urged him from time to time to come. There is this about our pastor and assistant pastor, our church has no fear that wherever either of these Elders go or preach they will do the cause any harm, or say aught we need at all be ashamed of. For this the great goodness of the Lord deserves all the praise.

Brother Roy S. Smith presented very clearly in the November issue of the SIGNS the subject "The Lord omnipotent reigneth," and the article following, written by brother L. P. Martin, sets forth the perfect work of God, showing how perfect he made Adam for his purpose, also a perfect devil. It is a comfort to note how these brethren remind us in these perilous times that the hearts of wicked rulers are in God's hand. These first two articles of the November SIGNS both substantiate the omnipotent power of God, and I could not refrain from reading them to others who love more than anything else to hear of the wisdom and power of God being extolled above everything in the heavens, or in the earth, or under the earth. These, and other such writings, too numerous to mention, are just the encouraging testimonies we faltering wayworn travelers need to strengthen the weak knees and hold up the feeble hands, and cause us to again go on our way rejoicing and giving glory to our God, who is the God of all power, unlimited, eternal, everlasting. There is nothing so small but God puts and keeps it in the place he has designed. The most minute thing is not beyond his notice, nor is the most gigantic beyond his power; even the immensity of the whole universe is known to him in its entirety, and all things are controlled by him. However or whatever comes or goes, if I believe in God and heaven at all, I believe he should have all the praise, and if I have a heart to praise him aright it is he who gave it.

Since I started this letter brother

Webb has returned from his preaching tour, and reports a very pleasant trip, seeing many warm Baptists. We are all glad for his safe return, and for his good time while gone, for we all feel he is indeed worthy of their kindness and of much trust.

I just received the last SIGNS, and there is so much good reading in it I said to myself, Had I better send this letter when the SIGNS is already full of such good reading, and likely will be from now on? So I will just say that if you should be short of articles to publish in our good paper, and you find this worth the space, use it, but not at the exclusion of any writing as good as has been coming through the SIGNS.

I am inclosing a postal order for four dollars, for my own and another brother's subscription. May the good Lord be with all to guide and keep us.

A brother, I hope,

LEONARD H. HOPKINS.

WINCHESTER, Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find two dollars to pay for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES another year. I want to tell you, if I am given words to do so, just how much joy my dear husband and I get from reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. There is always much in each issue to furnish food for our poor hungry souls. As long as I can remember, my father subscribed to the SIGNS, and when I was very small I tried to read and understand it. The thing that impressed me most was that all the members called each other brother or sister. I thought then, If only I could have that privilege. I realized that something beyond my understanding would have to take place before I could. I was always glad when meeting days came, for mother and father always took all five of us to meeting with them. That was when my grandfather, Elder E. V. White, was pastor at Frying Pan Church. I could always see much more kindred spirit and brotherly love among the Old School Baptists than among any other denomination. After I was married, my husband enjoyed going to meeting as much as I did, which made me very happy. Nearly eight years ago we moved from Loudoun to Frederick County, Virginia, which made it much farther to go to attend meeting, but whenever Walter mentioned going to meeting it made my heart rejoice. I felt for a long time that I would like to be one of you dear people, but felt too sinful and unworthy to have even a small place among you. During the Association at Mt. Zion in 1939, I never heard such wonderful preaching. I know, and I felt while Elder Lefferts was preaching from St. Mark xiv. 3-10, that the Lord was speaking to me, such a sinner as I, and I believe he was. After the Association my heart seemed heavier than ever, and I felt doubtful as to the Lord speaking to me, but when the fourth Saturday in October came the Lord was surely with me, for I thought I could not stand it if I did not get to meeting. So we went, and Elder Lefferts preached such a sweet sermon I felt he was again preaching to me. When he gave the invitation, nothing

on earth could have held me back. I felt all my burdens were lifted, and a small voice kept saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And he did give me the precious rest that no earthly person could. I felt sure my dear husband wanted to go with me, and after I went forward I prayed as I never had prayed before, that he might be shown the way, and my prayer was answered, and we were both baptized, together with brother John Simpson, the next day. What a heavenly day it was! No other day in my life has been as perfect. I have had many doubts and fears, when I would feel so unworthy of all the blessings bestowed upon me, yet I feel that by the grace of our precious Savior I have a hope, and what a wonderful hope it is! I still think as I did when a child, that to call our dear ones brother and sister is a privilege only given us through the grace of our blessed Savior.

We look forward each month with great pleasure in knowing we will have another copy of the SIGNS, if the Lord is willing. May God bless you to carry on this blessed work, is my humble prayer.

I had no intention of writing such a long letter when I started, and I hope you will pardon the poor expressions in it, but I love to write about these precious things the best I can.

Your sister in hope of eternal life,

INEZ LONG NORMAN.

[WE are confident our readers will greatly enjoy this excellent letter, and we earnestly hope our dear sister may not feel to quench the Holy Spirit, but write often of these glorious things.—R. L. D.]

HOPE, Arkansas.

DEAR EDITORS:—It is time for me to renew my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I have a desire to write a few words to the household of faith. The years are passing by, each one carrying us nearer the end of our pilgrimage here and nearer to the haven of rest and peace which God hath prepared for those who love him and long for his appearing. According to the Scriptures, those who believe in God should grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth as it is in the Lord Jesus. I cannot hope that I have made this growth, except it be by coming to realize more fully my own weakness and imperfection, and my inability to do the things that pertain to righteousness without God's help at all times, and have come to see more clearly the power, love, mercy and justice of God. I desire to give all praise and honor to him. I feel the need each day of calling on him for guidance, strength and faith to endure unto the end. I feel assured that nothing is impossible with God, and I believe he will take care of those whom he has brought to believe on him through the name of our Lord Jesus. When our natural minds lead us to try to trust in our own strength all becomes confusion, weariness, and we are glad to look to the God of our salvation. In the presence of our dear Lord and Savior Jesus Christ I feel to know that

many others like myself are crying, Lord, help me. Oh what am I but a sinner?

I am very lonely since I lost my dear husband in the year 1934, and am just a wanderer now. Before I write too much I will tell you dear editors that I do not think I could live without the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I do enjoy it very much. Our dear pastor has been sending in my renewals the last two or three times. The brethren and sisters are certainly proud of him. He is truly prompt in coming to us, and you know that means a great love for us all.

I must close, for I am writing too much. May grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with us all and guide us in the pathway of peace and sweet fellowship of love. Pray for me.

Yours, with a blessed hope, though the least of all,

(MRS.) J. K. KENNIDY.

RINGGOLD, Va., Aug. 2, 1940.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—DEAR SON:—I am now thinking of the real pleasure brought to us by having you and Raleigh visit us, as you see we are both feeble and not able to take long trips. Both you and he looked well and happy. I am sorry I did not hear you preach more, but I feel sure you know and preach the truth, and if we know and love the truth it is enough. What a blessing to be taught of the Lord to know these things.

I will write what I feel is my prayer, that is often on my mind and goes out from my heart: "O Lord, forgive me and have mercy on me. Teach us to pray, and remember our loved ones. Thou knowest where they are and what their needs are and can supply them. Remember the aged and the feeble-minded, the sick and afflicted, and those who are in trouble, with the poor and needy ones. Thou art the Great Physician, and thou alone can heal and comfort them."

O, my son, if we can be blessed to pray to our heavenly Father with faith, but oh how helpless, poor and needy I feel to be. I want you to remember these things when you can pray, and the Lord to remember your sinful dad.

Love to all, from your papa,

D. L. DODSON.

(See obituary notice on page 67.)

ELDRIDGE, Missouri.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—DEAR BROTHER:—If one like me should call one of the Lord's called servants "brother," for I am a poor black man, without any learning, but I think it is Solomon who said look not on him, because his skin was dark. I think he was talking to a lady, which I think means the church. Now, dear brother, I only want to thank you for the article on 1st Samuel, or should I say thanks to God for using you as a mouthpiece to his children? I want to say a few words about the calves being shut up at home, and as you spoke of how hard it is to get a cow to leave her calf, how hard it is for any one to leave the calves of this world. He must be called as one of old when at the seat of customs; there he

left his calf. Then and there Christ tied him to the gospel plow, not to look back to see what became of the calf. Now these uncircumcised Philistines could not go to the stone where the kine were to be sacrificed; they had to turn back to the calves, or rather their silver and gold, but the true child of God cannot turn back to his calf. I think we read where Paul said he could wish himself accursed from Christ for his brethren's sake, that is according to the flesh. Job said it had been better had he never been born. How often do I find myself saying the same thing as Job did, but God says his children must be tried in the furnace of affliction, and in that furnace we must stay until Christ says, Come forth, without the smell of fire.

Dear brother, how my heart did rejoice when I read your article on 1st Samuel. I will close, hoping that I have not said anything that is contrary to Holy Writ, for I know that I am not perfect, but just a poor, helpless sinner. W. W. KENALY.

[It is not often we receive such letters as the foregoing from our colored brethren. We very much appreciate said letter, and feel that our brother has the root of the matter in him.—R. L. D.]

Miami, Florida.

Dear Publisher:—Inclosed please find check for two dollars, which pays for Signs of the Times for the year 1941. The paper is edited by a nephew of mine, whom I believe is called of God, as was Aaron, to preach the gospel,, to go in and out before the people preaching Jesus, and him crucified, as the way, the truth and the life, and there seems to be no strange god with him. The paper comes to me as a legacy from a far country, and brings news of that inheritance that fades not away, but is reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of our blessed Savior, and none of the recipients of this inheritance will ever go down to perdition, for our blessed Jesus, in whom we trust, is able to take care of his bride, the Lamb's wife, and this blessed family will ere long sing his praises in those blissful regions, and in his glorious presence, to go out no more for ever, so shall they ever be with the Lord, and be satisfied, and this is a glorious thought to the redeemed family. C. W. DODSON.

Louisville, Ky., Jan. 16, 1941.

Dear Brother Dodson:—Just a few lines to let you know I am very poorly, and have been for some time; in bed most of the time. I received the Signs, but did not feel like reading it until yesterday, and I want to tell you your "New Year's Greeting" is wonderful. Words fail to express how much I enjoyed it. I would write you a long letter if I felt like it. How thankful I am to you for being so kind as to send me the Signs, for I much enjoy reading it. It is all the preaching I get.

How is your dear father? I enjoy his writings very much. May the Lord bless him in his remaining days

Brother Dodson, I enjoy reading

your writings very much, and I realize you are a very busy man, but I would greatly appreciate having a letter from you.

I will close by wishing you a happy new year.

Your little sister, in hope of eternal life, ADAH CHANDLER.

CLARKS SUMMIT, Pennsylvania.

DEAR PUBLISHER:—I am inclosing two dollars to renew my subscription, and I wish to commend you in your labors. The promptness of each issue and the few errors in typesetting all testify to your deep and sincere interest in giving the readers the very best. Also, the editorial staff bears witness to the mighty workings of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of men, and brings comfort and edification to the saints of God throughout our land. Such mediums are among our greatest blessings when kept free from false doctrines, and other things that engender strife and confusion. I appreciate and enjoy reading articles that give evidence of the Spirit of Christ in the way of peace and fellowship among the few Primitive Baptists now living in our land. If Christ has forgiven me my many sins, can I not forgive my brother? I hope I can and do. To have a hope in his love and sacrifice upon the cross, as the way of my salvation, and not find a time or cause for some experiencing this same upon myself, would not give reason to believe I have manifested it unto others. If we hope to rejoice with him, we must first suffer with him. Our rejoicing is the sweeter, by the extent of our sufferings. Before Christ could have the joys of the resurrection, he must suffer the pains of death upon the cross. Our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, are not worthy to be compared unto his. We groan and murmur under our cross, sometimes forgetting the one great sacrifice which was made for us upon the cross, whereby we are at peace with God. May this price paid for our peace be more fully understood by us all and our hearts made to rejoice in suffering the crucifying of the flesh, that Christ may be manifested a living thing among us. May the year 1941 bring unto you, and all Zion, a happy, prosperous season.

Unworthily yours,

C. E. BENSON.

HURDLE MILLS, North Carolina.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a money order to pay for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES another year, and am very thankful to the good Lord that he has blessed me to be able to take it again this year. I do not know how I could do without this good paper. I love to read it because I find so many witnesses in it that just suit my case. I wish I could write my experience as I feel it at times, but at the present I am shut up and cannot come forth. I cannot do anything unless it is given to me from on high.

I hope the editors will continue to stand for this cause, in sending out the SIGNS to the Lord's humble poor, and I really hope it will continue on and on. This is from a poor and weary pilgrim, cast down, but not destroyed.

(MRS.) SALLIE VINSON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH, 1941.

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MATTHEW X. 34-36.

"THINK not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household."

Dear brethren, we realize the time has come according to present arrangements to address you through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and we feel there is much to be thought and felt in this present time, and the thoughts of the great cry for peace is ringing in our ears, and we would bring about such relations to the sons of men if we could. As we read from the sacred word we note the anticipations of men after reading the written prophecy of holy men of old as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, in which they were expecting to have perfect reconciliation of all matters pertaining to this life, and clear understanding of things that are eternal, and when Jesus came into the world and was declared to be the Son of God they could not accept his teaching, as it was a cross to all their anticipations, and things existed and time passed along, as it had throughout all generations.

This was a sword that cut off all flesh, and divided flesh and spirit, and every one that received his words was taught of God, and the Holy Ghost gave understanding, by which they could affirm truly that Jesus was the Son of God. All the wisdom that the virtues of men can produce cannot exceed the natural source of the kingdoms of this world, and the evidences are before us daily. When we take account of these things we find the fulfillment of the word, "They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."—Rom. iii. 12. When one is born of an incorruptible seed he is put at variance against that of his natural birth, and he is turned about, and his thoughts are not as they were in former time; he sees different, hears different and old things have passed away; behold, all things are new. This virtue comes to the sinner through Jesus Christ, and is the fulfillment of the words of Jesus, "I am come to set a man at variance against his

father," which is the seed of natural life, and the same with his mother that bore him, and as Paul described, it is a warfare in our members, and this warfare brings us continually before the foes of our own household, and we often feel our foes are getting their fortifications around us and there is no way of escape, but suddenly we are reinforced and our foes are captured and bound, until it is impossible for them to come against us. We, knowing our depravity and weakness, are bound to give the praise to the power that reinforced us and gained the victory for us, and with Paul say, Thanks be to God, who gave us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. As sure as Jesus sent his sword it was one that could not be taken, and has prevailed through death, hell and the grave, and his Father hath exalted him above all principalities and powers, and we hope he was our deliverer, and nothing can separate us from him, for the victory is won and our foes are destroyed. Dear friends, what wonderful mysteries are in godliness. We often measure passing events, and call them wicked, and almost question the righteousness of God to allow such to exist, and men plan and scheme to stop this or that great tragedy, but they cannot prevail until a power greater than the strength of man prevails, then we see the change manifested, and the oppressed are given the victory. God in his wisdom hath created all things, and purposed their powers and virtues that shall be manifested, and all are for the comfort of the One he created, to till the ground and have the comforts derived from them, and are a blessing, but man is so captivated by the devil he corrupts the use of them and brings a curse upon himself. We have all the flora and fauna of the earth, and all the mineral wealth that is stored in the earth for the blessing of God's creatures, and in this present day man is using these blessings to promote a selfish end and reign death upon helpless mortals who do not want war, but desire peace. Our mind is continually watching all the movements to see the hand of God bearing the sword of his power and leading forth to victory. He goes before his people and they are clothed with power from on high and have an humble boldness, and are not afraid to face the enemy and follow their Captain. We note a few years have passed since Italy invaded Ethiopia and murdered its inhabitants and seized their government, taking their property, and now we note they are being driven into the sea and seem to be helpless before their enemy. We have the history of the Colonial army during the Revolutionary War, and their sufferings at Valley Forge, and how their commander was moved to implore the God of heaven to be with them and give them victory. In these things we see the hand of God, and the blessings to humanity this Nation now has to bestow, and our prayer is that God will direct all things and purge the hearts of wicked men that are in power, that they shall learn war no more, and all their tactics and strength made to melt before them, and the helpless be given to

realize His blessings, and praise God for them

We hear a great cry to christianize the world, and send missionaries to teach men and women the way of salvation, and they even take advantage of little children by the administration of an ordinance of baptism and teach the little children that they are of a certain creed, as they were baptized when they were little babies, thereby claiming their allegiance to that creed, which is, to our mind, mockery against salvation through Jesus Christ. These things have not availed anthing in this great war in Europe, as those in power are persecuting, and driving out all such relations, and confiscating their property, and we are wondering if this great war is purging from dead works, to serve the living God. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee."—Isaiah liv. 13, 14. The teaching of the Lord comes through tribulation and the instruction is effectual, and the time required cannot be measured by man, for in deep sleep God sealeth his instruction, and in one night the whole plan of salvation has been taught, as in the experience of Jacob, or in the experience of Saul of Tarsus. (It came suddenly.) They led Paul on to Damascus, which was the destination of the journey to carry out the mission they set out to do, but we see the sword of the Lord was wielded and Saul fell on the earth, which separated him from his former course, and after the sword of the Lord was upon him it was three days before his eyes were given to see. During the three days we note the work of God, which was manifested to him, and not a particle of his instruction was in vain, and not a purpose testified of failed, which proves the perfection that was in the teaching and all the Holy Ghost revealed to Paul, that he has so earnestly testified of are true, and we trust they bear witness with the teachings we have received, that it is the work of God that we believe on him whom the Father hath sent.

We truly hope as these things are referred to that all who read them may feel to turn to the ninth chapter of the Acts and read the chapter, and pay special attention to the latter part of the sixth verse: "And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." We feel all who are taught of God are given the positive command, Arise, go, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. God works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. When the Holy Ghost is come upon us we are made witnesses of Jesus unto the utmost parts of the earth. (Acts i. 6-8.) It is not given unto us to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. We are made to marvel at them, and say, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."—Rev. xv. 3.

We (the SIGNS OF THE TIMES) and

all the household of faith, take heed unto ourselves and to the doctrine, and, as we trust, that God hath given us the spirit to discern these things, that we may be made to prove these things by our walk and conversation, and may we ask ourselves,

"Am I a soldier of the cross?
A follower of the Lamb?
And shall I fear to own his cause,
Or blush to speak his name?"

C. W. V.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by brother H. M. Bennett.)

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Little Creek Church, at Delmar, Delaware, October 23rd and 24th, 1940, to the different associations with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We greet you again in the form of a Circular Letter, hoping that our unity still remains in the same faith and order for which the Old School Baptists have always stood. It was by faith that Noah built the ark, and also that Abraham offered up Isaac for a sacrifice in the face of the promise God had made unto him regarding his son Isaac, that his seed should be great in the land. By this God-given faith Abraham believed in God and doubted nothing, knowing that God was able to raise up another in Isaac's stead if it should be necessary for him to take the life of his only son by his wife Sarah. Now when God promised Abraham and Sarah that they should have a son they were both well stricken in years, Abraham being one hundred years old and Sarah ninety, being contrary to nature that they should have a child at such an age. Now this is where faith comes in, and is manifested that we might know it is not of works, but by faith. Moses, by faith refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and fled from the land of Egypt, and later was made to go back in this same land, along with Aaron, to lead the Israelites out of Egypt, according to the promise of God. You see the necessity of this God-given faith as being a link in the chain of carrying out the plans of God. It was by faith all through the law and the prophets that the power of God was manifested, since then it has been through faith we have in Jesus Christ our Lord, by revelation, by which is built the church of God. The manifestations of this faith that the different chosen people of God possess cause God's followers to realize the power of God, which is their hope. The Scripture, in speaking of hope, reads in this manner: "Knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." We people of this Association believe that God did declare the end from the beginning, and not a sparrow can fall without our heavenly Father. We also hope we understand how the lilies grow and the ravens are fed, therefore we are resting in this hope of eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ. In the gospel according to St. John,

the first chapter, sixth and seventh verses, it is recorded like this: "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe." Now as you know, this John received the Holy Ghost from the womb, therefore he was prepared to be a witness of the Light that is represented in this Scripture. He came as the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. This same Light was manifested in Saul of Tarsus when a light shone about him greater than the noonday sun, while he was on his way down to Damascus to persecute those who had had the revelation of the same Light. The power of that Light operated upon Ananias and caused him to face that one who before he had been in fear of, but you see that Light is so powerful that it surpasses all natural fear of men and causes them to stand in fear of God and to set forth that Light, and to be a witness of it. Now when that voice came to Saul, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Saul said, "Who art thou, Lord?" setting forth the revelation of the Lord to Saul before Jesus even answered him. We, as an association, believe that all of God's people are brought into the knowledge of their salvation by this same Light, and it causes them to see themselves as Paul saw himself when he cried, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" and it was given him to see the only way of escape, and he said, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." Therefore, brethren, having this Light, or the Spirit of God, dwelling in you ye are of God, and may he be with you for evermore.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
GEORGE F. ADKINS, Clerk.
HAROLD M. BENNETT, Ass't Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Little Creek Church, at Delmar, Delaware, October 23rd and 24th, 1940.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—We feel that we are blessed to have this privilege of addressing you once more as brethren, by way of a Corresponding Letter. We are glad to welcome your messengers and correspondents to this meeting, and feel that we have been much benefited by the coming together of the different churches, and particularly the preaching of the gospel by the different ministers. They have most wonderfully set forth the doctrine of grace in which we all believe, and we feel to praise God for such a blessing, which is rest to poor wretched sinners. The meeting was well attended, and thereby is the evidence, we hope, of the working of the Spirit among a people of God. We hope to be privileged again during our next session to address you in the same manner.

Our next session is to be held (the

Lord willing) with Snow Hill Church, Snow Hill, Maryland, beginning on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, and continuing two days.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

GEORGE F. ADKINS, Clerk.

HAROLD M. BENNETT, Ass't Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

NATURALLY speaking, it is with a sad heart that I undertake to write of the passing of my beloved father, ROBERT LEONARD DODSON, familiarly known to a host of friends as "Len Dodson." My father was one of seven children (three sons and four daughters) born of the parentage of Felix S. and Mary Elizabeth Dodson. Few, indeed, are the families more devoted than they, and all were members of the Old School Baptist Church except two sisters, one dying at the age of two years, and the other at the age of nineteen years. He was born September 7th, 1857, and died of pneumonia on January 18th, 1941, thus making his earthly stay 83 years, 4 months and 11 days. He was twice married, the first time to Eliza Shelton, in 1878, and to this union were born four children, three sons and one daughter: Raleigh W., Harry F., Laila F. (Mrs. W. L. Ferguson) and R. Lester. Mother died shortly after my birth. Later, he was married to Nannie J. Williams, and this union was blessed with one son, C. Willard Dodson. His second wife and all of the children except Harry (who died about six years ago), together with a number of grandchildren, six great-grandchildren and one brother, Charlie W. Dodson, of Miami, Florida, survive him. About twenty years ago he retired from the farm and went to Danville, Va., to live, but three or four years ago he returned to a part of the old homestead, now owned by my brother Willard, where he spent his last days. Willard did all that a loving son could for the comfort and pleasure of his father.

Many demands were made upon my father by his fellow man to serve in a public way, and with respect to the various honors which were bestowed upon him, I prefer to let him speak for himself, by quoting from a letter received over a year ago. Referring to a letter which he had written, relating some of the dealings of the Lord with him, which letter was published in the SIGNS, he said, "I failed to state how good my friends had been to me in sending me to the House of Delegates (The Virginia State Legislature) three times; they chose me to pay one hundred thousand dollars to build the first hard surface road in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, and I was elected several times as Supervisor for Dan River District, and served as Justice of the Peace, and was Constable and Tax Collector. All of this I feel I was not worthy of, but my people seemed willing to trust me, not knowing how vile a sinner I felt to be in the Lord's sight. Often when I meet my friends and they ask me how I am, I will say, A little older, but no better."

After losing his eldest brother, Henry, October 25th, last, who was in the ninetieth year of his age, my father began to fail quite noticably, and being informed that it was doubtful whether he would live through the winter, I went to see him the fourth Saturday and Sunday in December, and I shall always be glad of having had that visit with him. I went unannounced, so it was a real surprise when I walked in the house and greeted them. On Sunday we all went to his meeting, where after listening to his pastor, Elder J. E. Herndon, with profit, I spoke from the text, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."—Matt.

xi. 28. He had before expressed the desire to hear me preach Jesus once more, and I was made to hope that that desire was fulfilled on that occasion. He was Clerk of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association for many, many years, and was also Clerk and Deacon of Cane Creek Church. He was faithful in maintaining good order and in contending earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, and being the only male member residing close enough to his meetings to attend regularly, he is going to be greatly missed by the church, and the community has also lost one of its foremost citizens. My father has been a wonderful spiritual companion to me for over thirty years, and we have enjoyed many long-to-be-remembered hours, by me, in discussing the Scriptures. Well do I remember one occasion when he visited me here in Rutherford. I took two days off from my business in order to be with him at home for an undisturbed spiritual visit. It was, indeed, a delightful season, and during our talks he told me that he had never discussed the Scriptures with any one with whom he felt to be in more complete agreement than he was with me. I shall long cherish that expression of his confidence. He had the very highest regard for the things of God, especially the calling to preach the gospel of his blessed Son. He once wrote me that he would rather that I should be a true gospel preacher than to occupy the White House in Washington as President of the United States. In his passing, one of the most sacred bonds on earth has been severed, that of an earthly father and son closely yoked together in the cause of Christ, but he has only gone on ahead, and my earnest hope is that I shall ere long follow him to that world of glory beyond this vale of tears. He passed away early on the morning of January 18th, and I was called on the long distance telephone and apprised of it shortly thereafter. After returning to bed, of course I could not sleep, and as I laid there pondering my great loss, methought I could hear him saying to me, Weep not for me, my son, for I have gone to that better home above. One, hearing of his passing, wrote me, saying, "His and your faith is so deeply rooted that his passing can only be an entrance into the kingdom." So far as he was concerned, I feel that was true. I firmly believe that he has entered into that rest that remaineth to the people of God, and being firmly persuaded of this, I can truthfully say to those who are left behind that our loss is his eternal gain, so let us not weep, but rather let us rejoice in Christ Jesus, through whom we, too, shall in due time be brought forth more than conquerors, if we, indeed, be among those who love our Lord in sincerity and in truth.

Funeral services were held on Sunday afternoon in the home of my brother, Willard, in Forest Hills, Danville, Va., where a large company gathered and many beautiful floral designs were sent as tokens of the esteem in which he was held. The ministers who took part in the services were Elder J. E. Herndon, his pastor, and Elders David V. Spangler and W. R. Dodd. Elder Herndon began the service by reading, "Jesus, lover of my soul," and he closed it at the house by reading, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound," etc. The fourth verse of this latter hymn was especially blessed to my soul. It reads as follows:

"Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess within the veil
A life of joy and peace."

Interment was made in Highland Burial Park, on the outskirts of Danville, proper. The family very deeply appreciates the many acts of kindness and the sympathy manifested in this time of our

sad bereavement, by so many brethren and friends, to whom we desire to express our most heartfelt thanks.

May God mercifully remember the feeble widow, who for over fifty years was the faithful and devoted companion of my dad, for she will miss him the most of all, and may God give us all to realize what a blessed heritage has been handed down to us and cause us to thank and praise him continually for the manifold blessings which he has so graciously bestowed upon us all the days of our lives, is my humble prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen.

His devoted son,

R. LESTER DODSON.

DANIAL E. VARNELL, aged fifty-five years, a resident of Taylor County, Texas, since 1916, died at his home, near Abilene, Texas. The family physician believed death was either accidental or the result of a heart attack. He was born in Henderson County, near Athens, Texas, December 8th, 1886, and was married in November, 1914, at Canton, Texas, to Ida Beard, who survives him. The couple moved to Taylor County in the year 1916, where brother Varnell taught school for several years. They moved to the home east of Abilene in the year 1919. Besides his widow he is survived by a daughter, Rachel Varnell, of Abilene, a son, Mayo Varnell, of Portales, New Mexico, his mother, Mrs. Annie Varnell, who makes her home with the family, two sisters, Mrs. J. B. Ward, of Canton, Texas, and Mrs. T. B. Windham, of Abilene, three brothers, Elder C. D., of Potosi, Texas, W. R., of Pleasant Hill, and L. E. Varnell, of Abilene, also two grandchildren. Brother Varnell was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church. He joined the Pilgrim Rest Church in June, 1924. He was a faithful member and an able defender of the doctrine of the predestination of all things, and was weel beloved by all who knew him.

His body was laid to rest in Potosi Cemetery to await the resurrection morn, when the dead in Christ shall be raised to life everlasting. The writer tried to speak words of comfort from the first and second verses of the twelfth chapter of Isaiah. We have lost a good friend and brother in the church, but do not mourn as those having no hope, but all of us must say, Thy will be done. His funeral was held at the Elliott Funeral Chapel, Abilene, Texas. May the good Lord comfort those who mourn the death of this noble brother, is my prayer.

C. Y. OSTEEN.

WILLIAM ROBERT COBB, my dear father, was born in Caswell County, North Carolina, February 14th, 1883, and was called from the walks of this life October 3rd, 1939, making his stay on time side of eternity 56 years, 7 months and 19 days. He was married to Miss Susan Page, and to their union were born six children. As far back as I can remember he was a believer, or Primitive Baptist. He united with the church in the year 1935, and was baptized by Elder J. W. Gillam, pastor of Gillams Church. He loved his church and brethren, and that was all of his talk. He believed in salvation by grace, and in the complete work of Christ, and that the church was chosen in Christ before time began. He also believed that God predestinated and decreed all things, and all through his sickness that was his hope. He and my mother would go to meetings far and near. He said he hoped when he died he would be at a meeting of the church or on his way to attend one, but he was critically ill before his death, so did not realize his wish. Three different Elders came and preached for him, and when we would

ask him how he enjoyed the sermons he would say, He preached me a farewell sermon. I am sure he felt his time was near. I remember going in his room one day, he was lying on his bed, but could not speak, for he was suffering so. I said, Papa, I wish there was something I could do for you; I hate to see you suffer. He said, I know you do, but it is not in your power. God is the only one can help me. He much enjoyed talking about the grace of God, and sometimes during his sickness he would get very happy and would praise God. He said he wanted to pray. His seat is empty, and can never be filled. We mourn because of his death, but I hope he is at rest. He was laid to rest in the family burying-ground at Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church.

Written by his daughter,

PEARL SAUNDERS.

LILLIAN MILLER CANADY was born June 2nd, 1892, was married to Fred Canady November 12th, 1911, and departed this life January 11th, 1941. She is survived by her husband, one son, Duane, one brother, two sisters, a stepmother, three half-sisters, one half-brother and a host of other relatives and friends. She was a dutiful wife, a kind and loving mother. She united with the Salem Primitive Baptist Church July 4th, 1931, and was baptized by the writer. She was a loyal and faithful member, a firm believer in a sovereign God, election, predestination and salvation by grace. She will be greatly missed by the church and her neighbors and friends. To know her was to love her. She was laid to rest in the Union Cemetery, January 12th, to await the glorious resurrection morn, when these vile bodies will be raised and fashioned like the glorious body of our Savior. By her request the writer conducted her funeral and tried to speak comforting words to the bereaved ones, and to a very large concourse of friends, using as a text Hebrews iv. 9: "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Sister Canady's life and conduct bore evidence that she was a child of the most high God. We desire to be submissive to the will of our God, and to say, Thy will be done.

Written by her pastor,

W. O. BEENE.

WILLIAM DUNCAN, our brother in Christ, was born in Anderson County, Kentucky, about eighty years ago, one of a family of five children, of whom two brothers and one sister survive. Of his own family one son and one daughter survive. The daughter lives in New York City, the son in Cleveland, Ohio. His wife preceded him in death twenty years. I was not able to find exact dates of his marriage, or of his becoming a member of the church, but I do know about forty years ago he was received and baptized in the fellowship of the Salt River Old School Baptist Church, located near Lawrenceburg, Kentucky, and remained faithful to the church all his days. The last five years of his life he was very miserable. He was taken to the hospital in Lexington, Ky., and died there on New Year's day. I was called to conduct the funeral services, which were held at the Gordon Undertaking Parlors in Lawrenceburg, Ky., January 4th, 1941, and all that was mortal was laid to rest in the Lawrenceburg Cemetery. May the Lord comfort and reconcile the children, the brothers and the sister, also the brethren of the church to which he belonged, and enable us to say, Thy will, O God, be done.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder C. W. Vaughn, June 6th, 1940, at the home of the bride, in Philadelphia, Pa., William H. Larkin and E. Doris Cole.

By Elder C. W. Vaughn, at his home, in Hopewell, N. J., October 12th, 1940, Howard S. Bowers and Charlotte Mulhall, both of Lambertsville, N. J.

By Elder C. W. Vaughn, December 25th, 1940, at the home of the bride, in Ewingville, N. J., Earl D. Stires and Lillian E. Drake.

By N. V. Johnson, assisted by Elder C. W. Vaughn, December 14th, 1940, at the home of the bride, in Hopewell, N. J., Scott Dansbury and Sally Blackwell.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $2; A. E. Clark, Kans., $2; H. M. Bowden, Tenn., $1.

BOOKS WANTED.

If any one has a set of Exposition of the Scripture, by Gill, or Body of Divinity, by Gill, or Cause of God and Truth, by Gill, I would like to hear from them.

H. M. BOWDEN,
1717 Tutwiler Avenue,
Memphis, Tennessee.

MEETINGS.

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1315 Columbia Avenue
(Park Avenue Hall)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A. M.
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OLD SCHOOL

BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us

---

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists is now settled in her new church-house, at 4614 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas, where she holds her regular monthly services on each first Sunray at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. Preaching services also on each third Sunday by Elder C. B. Teague, and each second Sunday by brother O. C. Lee, at 11 o'clock a. m. A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. R. HARDY, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

I still have on hand some copies of the Autobiography and Later Writings of my father, Elder Silas H Durand, and I am selling them at the reduced rate of $1 00 If any of the brethren or friends wish copies they can get them by sending orders to me at 1929 Loraine Place, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

(MRS.) MILDRED D. GORDY.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers.

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I feel to recommend this book to our readers.—G. R.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 109. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL, 1941. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JACOB'S LIES.

I HAVE had some thoughts concerning the purpose that God had for this, that or the other thing, the conclusion being that my mind has become satisfied that truly God has a purpose for all things. The creation of the earth was for a purpose best known unto himself. The aim, object and purpose for all things are to a certain end, and to have a certain effect, thereby turning out a certain result, regardless of what the nature of the same may be. God is righteous in all his works, having created all things in righteousness, but not all things righteous, and for every piece of his handiwork he alone has a particular use, and for every piece there is a certain and particular place for it to work and fit, and for it to fit the same must first go through the plaining-mill of perfection, and there be shaped, formed and so fashioned as to fit no other place than the one that fits it. And unto every piece of his handiwork he gave a certain and peculiar nature, surrounding each piece with such environments as to subject it to such circumstances and conditions as might be repuired to incline it to the fulfilling of the purpose it was created for. So it was with Jacob. He being a piece in the machine, fit in the proper place, the one ordained of God for those lies to be made manifest, using Jacob as the source from whence they came. As I believe there is a purpose for all things, I also believe there was a purpose for those lies. As for knowing the purpose, it can be added to the long list of things I do not know concerning the teaching of the Scriptures. The psalmist says that it is not in man to direct his steps. If this be true, then it follows that neither can man direct his mind. Hence, if correct, there is no chance for a man to be left to himself. Such a view that some part of God's handiwork might be left to itself, for the shortest period of time, according to my opinion, destroys the fixedness, the certainty and purpose; yea, the perfec-

tion of things. I understand it to be believed by the Old Baptists that all things are in a fixed position, but some, for fear of this report not being believed, and wishing to change the aspect of things right here, assume the position that at this juncture God left Jacob to himself for the purpose that he tell those lies of his own free will, which explains the fact they do not believe God willed it, yet it is maintained by those of such belief that all things and creatures are dependent upon God for all their needs. Will it also be claimed by them that they are dependent creatures when once left to act according to their own free will and accord? The argument has long since been made in this sense: Suppose all the planets above to be in certain and fixed positions but one, and it be left to shoot about pell-mell through the elements of its own free will (which would be of course left to itself), can it not be sure at once that the safety of all the rest would become dependent upon the one left at random? Such an argument is too weak. It will not serve as evidence supporting the fact that God wrought a perfect work, and that every piece of his work is for a certain and particular purpose, and that God alone works his every piece of creation after the counsel of his own will and accord. And so if this be true the conclusion is that those lies as told by Jocob were ordained links in the chain of Jacob's sojourn in this time world, and, as I see, by no means was he left to act, or to tell them, of his own free will, for if it were so, it can be seen at once that at the period of time taken up or required in the telling of the lies there was no God ruling over him. In other words, at that time God was not working this piece of his handiwork, but it was working itself according to its own free will and accord. Hence I say that if this be so, it is an evident fact that for the time being Jacob at this juncture was a god within self. There is found to be more than one lie made mention of in the Scriptures, and one in particular that I deem was of no more importance in its place than were those of Jacob in this place, and I am quick to defend the position that by no means was Peter left to himself that he might tell the lie of his own free will, and will answer by saying that it was ordained in all things and sure. Why not so class the lies of Jacob? If God decreed to bring to pass all that he foreknew, then by no means did those lies of each party escape his foreknowledge, for David says, There is not a word in my tongue but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Did the knowledge of this fact only apply to David, or does it apply to all men? If so, then is it not a fact that what he knew he also foreknew? If true, then it is an absolute certainty that God alone brought it to pass according to his own will and decree. We take it for granted that all things are fixed, and if so then the things that are so fixed must act according to the will of the Fixer, for he is before all things, and by him all things consist (fixed). Hence it can be seen that that which is left to act according to its own free will is certainly a free, independent character, can tell a lie or not tell it at

will. Notwithstanding this fact, the same contenders will say that though it be so that Jacob told a wilful lie, yet God had a purpose in it, and of course I agree that whatsoever God had a purpose in, or purposed, he also predestinated. And if this be true I assume the position that such a conclusion is inconsistent, for predestination is never applied to anything acting of its own free will, and if there be a stopping-place for predestination, then it is there also that the will and purpose of God are concluded. Hence if Jacob's lie was wilful, then it follows the free will gave him a perfect right to do it or not do it, and no other rule of government has the right to call it in question. God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. Yes, so very much so are God's works mysterious to some of us that we are ready to say that God purposed all things, but at the same time some go a little slow in charging that he also willed all things. The same opinion is brought out in the charge that God willed to deliver his only begotten Son, in whom there was no guile, into the hands of wicked men to be crucified and slain, but did not will the wickedness. Jacob, you remember, was only obeying the demands of his mother, she being the one in whom those lies originated, and from the reading one might judge that Jacob was somewhat inclined to refuse to tell those lies. One might read the twelfth verse and find that it had some bearing on this conclusion. He offered his reason for not telling the lies in verses eleven and twelve: "And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man: my father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing." But Rebekah persuaded him, in other words, he was influenced by what Rebekah said in the thirteenth vers: "Upon me be thy curse, my son; only obey my voice, and go fetch me them." One cannot persuade, induce, entice or influence a willing mind.

If you decide to use this, leave out all that is not sound, if it be all of it, for I had rather suffer exclusion than to read something unsound in the SIGNS.

Yours in bonds,

W. A. LITTLE.

THEAGUE, Texas, Aug. 22, 1940.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Nov. 7, 1940.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I do not feel worthy to call you by such a sweet name as brother, but somehow at times I feel I might be related to the brethren of the household of faith, and if so I hope I love the brethren, although at times that hope gets very dim and I feel that I cannot carry on. And then, I know I cannot, except by the grace of God.

Inclosed you will find a letter written by J. D. Palmer, my uncle, to Spencer Palmer, his brother. My uncle, J. D. Palmer, died several years ago, and Spencer Palmer died recently. About a year ago Uncle Spencer expressed a wish that I send the letter to you to be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if it seemed good to you. I did not forget the request, and attempted to write you

several different times, but it seemed that when I would try I could not, until my dearly loved cousin, Elder R. L. Biggs, reminded me that I should do so. My only hope is that God is with me and is guiding my hand, for I clearly see that without his help and guidance my efforts will all be in vain.

I remain a lowly sinner,

W. H. COLE.

NOVEMBER 23, 1930.

MR. SPENCER PALMER—MY DEAR BROTHER:—You asked me some five years past to write you concerning my very little, or rather, very great experience. I should not doubt it, and yet how can I help it when the doubt is there before I know it?

You well know where the old sugar tree stood. I was working a few yards below (south), and I think I could come within a very few feet of the exact spot now, though it has been so many years (about forty) since I was working in the corn and I heard myself saying, "What is this? Oh what is this? What is this?" My arms were stretched out to the east, and there was an answer, just as plain as if you had spoken. It said, "It is the spirit of prayer." A feeling possessed me that I cannot describe. If man could describe it he would be perfect. Although I will say that I felt light as a feather. I fell to my knees, and was laughing. I cannot remember what occurred the rest of the day, but I was very careful that no one knew about it. It seemed too precious for others to know, but now since you have asked me I am very glad to tell you all. It is more than I can write, so if you will ask me for such as you do not understand I will tell you all that I may leave out in this letter.

But I want to write just a little about the spirit of prayer. All these years I have argued (though I may be wrong) that if one had the spirit of prayer that one has everything God gives one. Can it be that all these years I have been wrong and have not repented even, as sometimes I do? But instantly my mind goes to the time in the corn field, and to the text, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," which has come to me more than any other Scripture. I wanted to join the church and be with the brethren, but I could not bring myself to go forward early, as you did, and now I feel that my life has been misspent, and it has been a great trouble to me, especially since I did go forward that day I went to the University Street Church, in Nashville, to join, if they would take me. Knowing that I wanted to join so many times before, and did not, I did not even tell my family. You know Ida was a member at South College Street, but I had no thought of going there, for I did not think they held the old landmarks as in the London Confession of Faith; though years before, when they had Elder C. M. Hood, brother Harville and brother Hite, one Sunday night Elder Stephens, their pastor, asked brother Hood to preach. He preached a great sermon, and it seemed that it was directed mostly at me. I got half up from my seat to go,

but sat back down. Why I cannot tell, but as the hymn goes, "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform," though I did go, perhaps twenty years later.

But to go back to the day I did join at University Street Church. After I started and sat down, not knowing that brother Covington had seen me, I thought if he did not see me, and said nothing to me about it, I would explain it the best way I could, and never again would attempt to join any church. But when he turned from the three sisters who had come, and it seemed hurried forward, he spoke to me, and then I was in a hurry to get to him. When it was put to the vote, and every one seemed to vote as one, I listened for a No, but none came. It was the same way with the three sisters. When the song was started to give us the right hand of fellowship I could not see, feel or hear until it was over. The first thing I realized was that our brother Joe, not a member of that church, was sitting perhaps twenty feet in front of me. He began to arise to come to me, and then I saw you and Walcie also coming toward me. Then I began to be troubled because the members of this church did not come, and wished I was far away from that place. It seemed strange to me that so many had taken my hand and I did not know it. I wanted to realize fully that they had given me their hand. The day for the baptism was set. I told brother Carter and brother Biggs (who has since become one of our very best preachers, and who is our nephew) that I was not feeling very well and might not be there on the day set. Brother Carter said the water would not hurt any one. I hurried off to go to our oldest sister (Mrs. Cole) to tell it to her, thinking that perhaps she could explain it all to me. She smiled, and said she was sure it was all right, and yet I found myself thinking I would ask you some day.

But to go back. I always thought it would be a very happy time when the brethren and sisters gave me their hands, yet I had not realized their doing so. I felt rebellious, and thought I would go home and never be baptized. I felt that but for my immediate family and my brethren and sisters I would like to go away and never come back. I began trying to lay plans to escape being baptized, but everything I thought of was unreasonable, so I just wrote to Elder Biggs I could not be there (he being clerk at that time), and mailed it Thursday morning. Then I was worse off than ever, for a heavy feeling took possession of me and troubled me greatly. When it came time for the evening meal I could not eat much, so left the table and went back to my walk on the porch. When the others finished their meal I asked Ida to come to me. I told her that since mailing my letter to Raymer I had had a heavy weight on my breast. She said she thought I had better go on and be baptized. I said, I will, and immediately the weight was gone. So I wrote a letter that night and sent it special, and when Sunday came I went to the church and asked Raymer if he received my letters. He smiled, and

said, "Yes, both at the same time." So the weight on my breast had forced me to be baptized, and I have never felt it since.

Great are the mysteries! I had seen the creek where the baptism took place before, further up, but it looked strange when I got there. But something else: about a week before I saw this place, and Jesus standing in an arched doorway, and when I got there it was pretty much as I had seen it, and Jesus was standing there, even that day. I was very happy, and when I came up out of the water I thought that was the happiest moment of my life. I had done at least one thing that Jesus had done. All four of my children saw me baptized. But I began to have troubles at once. When I try to pray, remembering the time when I heard the voice saying, "It is the spirit of prayer," I cannot seem to have the spirit and pray right. My troubles are very many, but maybe you can help me. I could tell you much more, and it may be that some day we will have the time to talk fully.

But I must close or you will be tired of reading.

JAMES D. PALMER.

EWING, Illinois.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—The time has come that I should make good my promise, so I am sending my dues to the SIGNS. This year, which is nearly out, will make five years I have read the SIGNS, and it has been a great comfort to me, for I esteem all the editorial staff as able writers, and the correspondence is along the same line of divine truth. Besides this, it is a comfort to me to know that although my name has appeared only twice in the paper, I have been favored to meet some of the readers who remembered me from what they read from my pen, and desired to see me. Again I am sending an article for your consideration. If you think it is that which darkens counsel, and fails to present the truth, then cast it aside, as you should all false theories.

For some cause my mind has been made in recent weeks to meditate upon the parable given by Jesus, Luke xvi. 19, as follows: "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day." This rich man, I think, represents the unregenerated Jews as they stood in the law covenant of works. There was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at the rich man's gate, full of sores and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. I think Lazarus represents a mourner in Zion in that day, who was not a Jew, but a Gentile, or Greek. This people had no standing among the Jews, for the Jews had been protected and blessed in God's covenant made with Abraham before Christ was born. God had said unto Abraham, In thee, and in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed. But since he had made a covenant special with Abraham and the mark of circumcision which pointed to that faith given unto him, it also pointed to him

and his family after him as the chosen of God, called out from all the people to walk in all of the ordinances of God given unto them. Space forbids that I attempt to give all the wonderful and worldly fame that came to that people under God's protecting care. When we think of David, who fought the battles of his God, and Solomon, who built the temple of God, it all points out clearly the power and the wisdom of God in the salvation of his chosen people. But this people in their nature were only sinners, and no better than other people, therefore it was easy for them to take the wrong view of the truth, and this they did, being so raised up and dignified under this great fame which came to them as an inheritance promised by the Lord unto their fathers. Through the weakness of the flesh they could never understand how the blessings of God came only for their own obedience to God, and since no other people were rendering such obedience the Jews looked upon them as unworthy of the least of God's blessings. So if I am right in my views of this parable, let us view Lazarus as a poor beggar, full of sores. Not covered with sores that would appear on the surface, and to be full, or filled, it seems to me would mean to fill the inward capacity. It would seem that Lazarus' strength was gone and he could not stand upright, since he was laid at the rich man's gate. We are not told by what power or by whose hands he was laid there. It is not said that he ever begged or asked the rich man for one of the crumbs he so much desired to be fed with, but it is said that he was a beggar, and desired to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table, for he looked on the Jews as a people blessed of the Lord, as they stood before all people favored and protected by him, but I cannot understand that Lazarus was desiring to be fed with the literal bread which the rich man ate to sustain physical life, but I think he was like every other sin-sick soul who is given to see his sinful, corrupt nature, who is full of corruption (sores), he desired the bread that comes only to the blessed of the Lord. But all the comfort he could get in that day must come from dogs that came and licked his sores. It is known by all Bible readers that the Jews looked on the uncircumcised people as dogs, and called them dogs. This is proven by what Jesus said to the Greek woman who fell at his feet, asking him to cleanse her daughter. Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled, for it is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it unto the dogs. She said unto him, Yes, Lord, yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs. He said unto her, For this saying (this truth) go thy way, thy daughter is healed. I think it was these dogs that had been blessed to eat of the children's crumbs that spake comforting words to Lazarus, but they could not heal him, for sin when it is finished brings forth death, and it was the sins of the guilty, corrupt children of God that brought his only begotten Son into death, for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that

whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. And as Christ died for their offenses, he was raised again for their justification. The life of Christ (eternal life) imputed to his people is that which gives them a view of their sinful nature and kills them to the love of it. It is this that enables them to see the kingdom of God and pray for mercy that they may be brought into it. This life being imputed to Lazarus enabled him to see that he was dead in sin, and it was not the bread that sustains natural life that he so much desired, but it was that bread which is life (eternal life), which never dies, and if I know anything about it, this is the road all of God's children are made to travel. First they are brought to death in sins, then they are brought to life in righteousness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. It is by God's Holy Spirit, or his ministering angels, that all of his humble poor are carried into Abraham's bosom, where they all receive the same righteous faith, for he is the father of all them that believe the rich man also died and was buried. When the rich man died and was buried he was buried out of the sight of his self-righteous people, who lived in their self-righteonsness. (See Genesis xxiii. 4.) There never was a Pharisee so rich that God could not bring him into his spiritual kingdom, if it was God's will. But the salvation of God had not been revealed to all people in that day. It was only the prophets that spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, as may be seen if we will notice Abraham and the rich man, for the rich man, seeing Abraham and Lazarus in his bosom afar off, cried and said, Father Abraham, send Lazarus, that he may cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame. Let us see how beautifully Abraham sets forth the truth as taught in the covenant of grace. But Abraham said unto him, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime had thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things. In the days of his purple and linen he rejoiced in his good things, and looked on the things of Lazarus as evil things, but now he is comforted and thou art tormented. This shows how the Spirit changes a man from nature to grace. But Abraham said unto him, Beside all this there is a great gulf fixed so that they that would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us that would come from thence. This clearly sets forth the truth as set forth in the covenant of grace. They shall no more teach every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least to the greatest of them. If there is no way in this covenant for one man to teach another to know the Lord, then we can see what this gulf means. It does not matter how much the poor mourner in Zion desires to tell the people of God his troubles, that he may have their prayers and sympathy, he must learn that all his help must come from God. I am made to believe that I was in the rich man's hell for four years myself. Many times it seemed to me I must tell my troubles to some of the dear Old Baptists, for it seemed to me they were

the people of God, but to make this confession to them I could not, because God had not ordained it so, yet I hope I was made to see God's beautiful Zion as she stands on Zion's hill. I believe I was given to see that their doctrine is the truth. I read the Bible, which taught me more and more that what they advocated was the truth, and if I ever had any call to the ministry it came right along with the call from nature's night of sin and darkness into the glorious light and liberty of the people of God. I was raised among the conditional people, but their doctrine had no charm for me, but oh this doctrine of predestination, of election and salvation by grace which the Primitive Baptists taught I believed with all the power of my poor soul. It is the truth, and how earnestly I prayed to the Lord for mercy that I might be among them. The fourth Sunday in October, 1889, I went to their communion meeting, and it seemed that I could never be one among this people blessed of the Lord. I went home in sadness, put my team in the barn and went a little way to a place where I thought I would try once more to pray to the Lord for mercy. But just as I came to the place a joy filled my poor heart that raised me above the troubles of this world, and in one moment I was changed from sorrowing to rejoicing. I had never told any one of my troubles, but now I thought I would go to the house and tell my folks all about how I had been blessed. But in a short time something said, Do not do that, for this may not be what you think. You may be mistaken. So I never said anything about it to any one. But my burden was gone and it seemed the way was now clear for me to do that which I had so long desired to do. But when the opportunity was given me to join the church I was again brought to sadness, for I had not the ability to go forward. This I know seems strange to some people, but I am speaking for myself, and I want to tell the truth. All I could do was to leave my one talent laid away, and suffer the chastening of the Lord for it. We are told that those who are without chastisement are bastards, and not sons, and I hope that when the Lord's time came I was given the ability, through his mercy and grace, to obey him. But I must confess the truth that I have never been able to obey him, only when his blessings in mercy and grace have brought me to it.

Now let me say in conclusion, I have not given my views on this parable in order to criticise those who may differ with me, but what I have written is submitted in love to all the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as my own views, with a desire to have a place in your minds, that I may be remembered as one of God's humble poor.

JOHN NEAL.

MERRYVILLE, Louisiana.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—It is my mind, God being my helper, to pen a few thoughts on prophecy. I realize that if God is not in the matter my effort will be just like myself: good for nothing but to be cast aside.

"Prophecy came not in old time by

the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."—2 Peter i. 21. The understanding must be prompted by the same power. The world is full of people telling what is going to come to pass. Unless our assertions are backed up by good authority we have no right to expect any one to pay much attention to them. God is an all-wise, unchangeable God, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. (Isaiah xlvi. 10.) He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. (Isaiah xxxiii. 9.) Seeing that we have such a powerful God, we have a perfect right to believe that in the wisdom of God that which hath been is now, and that which is to be hath already been, and God requireth that which is past. (Eccl. iii. 15.) I believe the time is not far in the future when the true worshipers of God will have to do so in dens and caves. The religious world is striving to come under one federal head so that they can bring more souls to Christ, and I think they are advancing to that end very rapidly. When that is accomplished, the powers that be will enact laws forcing all people to worship their image. Those who do not do so will see a repetition of Daniel's day. Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. These are the beginning of sorrow. (Matt. xxiv. 6-8.) Be ye not troubled, for such things must needs be. (Mark xiii. 7.) I believe that these things are being fulfilled in our day, though God spake of them by the mouth of his prophets hundreds of years ago. For whatsoever things were written afore time were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. (Rom. xv. 4.) I believe the United States is the only major nation that is not in war, and they are spending billions upon billions in defense against the dictatorial powers, which I believe were spoken of in years gone by. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, the beast and the false prophets. (Rev. xvi. 13.) They are described as spirits of devils. May I suggest that the three dictators of Europe represent the unclean spirits spoken of above. These same dictators are trying to conquer the whole world. Their destruction is only a matter of time. Hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure, and their glory and their multitudes shall descend into it; but the Lord of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God, that is holy, shall be sanctified in righteousness. (Isaiah xiv. 16.) It matters not which way this great conflict turns, it may not go according to our wishes, but God will be glorified. The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord as the rivers of waters: he (God) turneth it whithersoever he will. (Prov. xxi. 1.) Men think they are very smart and do things not knowing that they are fulfilling God's predestinated purposes. David says, Is there not a

cause? God is the first great cause of all causes. There cannot be an effect without a cause. All of our downsittings are blessings in disguise. The Lord of hosts hath purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the honorable of the earth. (Isaiah xxiii. 9.) The prophet was warning the wicked nations of that day what would befall them. I believe the turmoil of to-day is for the punishment of the church (the elect lady) for her disobedience. In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils. (1 Tim. iv. 1). How often, on conference days, there is hardly a quorum present. Large churches have dwindled to a mere handful. Some of our tall cedars are preaching a spiritual operation on the Adam man, when we are plainly told that what is born of the flesh is flesh, and is sown in corruption. (1 Cor. xv. 42.) The apostle Paul was not speaking at random when he declared, The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. (2 Tim. iv. 3, 4.) When God's purpose for these sinful creatures has been fulfilled time will be no more.

I realize these thoughts have been scattering, and may not have hit the mark at all. I will ask all praying people to remember this old sinner, saved by grace if saved at all.

J. PAUL McMILLIAN.

NOANK, Connecticut.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—When your kind Christmas greeting came I had a great urge to respond, and did start a letter to you, but did not get any further, as you see. You, Mrs. Dodson and Lester always have my best wishes, even if I am slow in writing. I keep in touch with you through the SIGNS, but you do not know where I stand if I do not write. I hope I am standing on the solid Rock, for there is no standing at any time anywhere else, and it would seem people would realize it now, under conditions to-day, but they will not believe, though One rose from the dead, for the natural man cannot see the things of the Spirit. We have to be born into the natural world before we know anything about it, and the same is the case in the spiritual world.

I was glad to hear that one more had joined the Ebenezer Church, and I hope you are cheered and encouraged in preaching the word, and that the church is blessed the same in listening to it. God's work is bound to prosper, even if we cannot see it, but our shortsightedness cannot hinder His omnipotence. What a thought! God has all power, in spite of all the havoc in the world to-day. Sometimes thoughts come to me that open up a field of thought, or inquiry, but only open it. I was thinking recently of what we call the Lord's prayer: "Our Father, who art in heaven." I have always pictured God as above the sky, although I know he is everywhere present. Some one said to me years ago that heaven is a state, not a place. Heaven, the state

of the Supreme Being, holy, just, righteous altogether, that is his condition always. That places him, but in no particular location. Then the thought came, If heaven is no place, where are his children who have passed from this life? He said they will be with him where he is. I cannot go any farther. Perhaps I have gone too far now. Secret things belong to our God, and it is not for me to pry into them. But I hope I am only inquiring.

After my father died I was greatly concerned to know what was occupying him. I was over fifty years old when he was taken, and had practically always been home, intimately associated with him in his work, and even with much of his thinking. It seemed he could not have an existence in which I did not have a part. I searched the Bible and hymn book to see what was said about the state of those gone before, but I found nothing, until one day I came across this: For whom the whole family in heaven and earth are named. That relieved my mind. I felt that God's children in this world are in the same state spiritually as those who have passed on. This may not sound very clear to you, and it seems vague to me.

I would like to write a little more, but I am not equal to putting anything more into words this morning. I think of you and the church often, and wish I were near enough to meet with you, but am thankful for a lovely memory of meetings in the past.

With love to you all,

EVA ASHBY.

WINSTON-SALEM, N. C., Oct. 15, 1940.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—In reply to your welcome letter I received some time ago, asking me to write and tell you what I think of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I will say that to me it is the best paper published by our people. If not deceived, I love the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace, for time and eternity that you and other able gifted writers are blessed to contend for through the medium of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The doctrine that honors God and comforts his people.

Through trials and afflictions I have been made to believe that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, working all things according to the counsel of his own will, and none can stay his hand, or say, Jehovah, why or what doest thou? This is why I feel the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is a blessing to God's humble poor, especially to those who are not blessed to attend meetings and hear the glorious gospel preached by the called servants of the Lord. I feel sure it is a great source of comfort to them, as well as to me, and others who are blessed with the wonderful privilege of meeting with the family of God, and I hope the grace of our God will be with you and yours to the end, together with this unworthy worm of the dust, that I may be found earnestly contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, until I am called from this sinful world, and I hope that he (Jesus) will not forsake me then, but that I may be blessed with his divine presence even in death. If

it be so with me, I feel that I can depart this life in peace, and feel glad that I am born to die, to await the morning of the resurrection, wherein I hope to be raised, with the whole redeemed family of God, and fashioned like his own glorious body, and carried to a city that hath foundation, whose maker and builder is God, there to join in that song of everlasting praise to Father, Son and ever blessed Spirit, in that world that shall never end.

Brother Dodson, I did not intend to write as much as I have, which I feel is very scattering, but what I have said is the truth to me, and I hope in accord with the experience of the Lord's people.

I am inclosing a check for ten dollars, for four new subscriptions, including my own, and one renewal.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

Z. L. RHUE.

BENTLEY, Ill., Nov. 25, 1939.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find two dollars, for whch please extend my subscription for another year. I surely would miss the SIGNS *if* it came to our home no more. I would miss it especially for its sweet messages of love and its firm determination to stand on the sound principles as laid down in the Scriptures as a pattern for the church in all times. We must use the original pattern. "Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount." In using the original pattern for our carrying on of our church in this present time we may feel we will have the Lord with us and we may enjoy the smiles of his approval. In carpentry, say a correct pattern for a rafter is made, this pattern is laid on and as many rafters cut as needed. Though there might be a thousand, for the last one to meet the specifications the pattern must be laid on the same as the first, and all succeeding rafters must be like the pattern. So with the true church. There is a necessity of applying the original pattern, just as when the first church was set up. We must measure by the pattern or we soon will have a little arminianism, and more is quite sure to follow. This carelessness in some of our churches is becoming more and more apparent, and the Lord surely will not bless us when we neglect to do as pleases him.

May the writers for the SIGNS ever hold the blood-stained banner of King Immanuel high, and may the SIGNS continue as in the past, a good, clean paper, as free as is humanly possible from strife and vain-glory.

Written with the desise to encourage a good work. The Lord bless and keep you.

Your brother in hope,

L. H. HOPKINS.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE date opposite your name on the little pink slip on which your address is printed denotes the time your subscription expires. Dec 40 means that it expired December, 1940; June 41 that it will expire June, 1941, etc.

EDITORIAL.

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PHARISEE—PUBLICAN.

(LUKE xviii. 10-14.)

As we sit down to write this article, which is required quarterly of us as associate editor of our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, it is with much fear and trembling. How often we who write and speak are brought into a condition in which we ask, What is the motive? And we have so often been taught that all is vain unless the Spirit of the Holy One blesses our pen, or moves our tongue, to walk in wisdom's ways to His name's honor and glory. Those who speak, or write, being led by the Holy Spirit feel, when enabled to speak, like we imagine a man feels who has been delivered from confinement in a dark prison and is suddenly brought forth as a free man. In contrast to this, every service in which we engage, in which the delivering hand of God is not felt, brings us into bondage in mind.

We are told that his paroble was "unto a certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself: God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican: I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." How often in reading the Scriptures one is inclined to accept the Scripture that points out a favored one as applicable to himself, and apply the part that condemns to some one else. Yet all are Arminians by nature, and whether regenerated or unregenerated, the tendency is to rely upon some works of our own. The Lord Jesus Christ was comparing the reasoning of the carnal mind of men and the convicted sinner who feels the need of mercy and knows it is his only hope.

The Pharisee thanks God that he is not as other men are, and then he tells us the difference. He is not an adul-

terer, extortioner, unjust, or even as the publican that is present. What a prayer the Pharisee has. Thanking God he is not as others, and in the same breath commending himself to God because of his works. A man is often in great danger and does not know it. Like a man in a dark doom within a few feet of some poisonous reptile. He does not know his danger until the light is turned on. So the poor sinner who has not been taught the depravity of his own heart, that it is deceitful above all things, that in his flesh is every violation of all the laws of God, whether these emotions have been put in action or not, is in like condition. It is much better to stand naked before God, and know we are naked, than to stand clothed before men and not see and know that all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass, that soon fades away.

Let us consider the publican and his prayer. We are told he stood afar off and did not so much as lift his eyes to heaven, but smote himself upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. Reader, have you had like experience? Has there been the time with you when you carried a trouble in your breast words would not express? When your lost condition was revealed to you? Your trouble was not only for what you had done, but it was also because of what you were. You could declare with the prophet of old, I am undone. I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell amidst a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Your thoughts were hateful to you. Your resolutions had been broken, and instead of improving your condition you seemed to be getting worse. If the time had been when you thought with enough time you would learn to live a christian life, all these hopes were blasted. Your troubles were inexpressible, like this poor publican. His trouble was in his breast. Oh that he could have opened his heart to God, but we only hear a few words. How few words there are in true prayer. It is with groaning that cannot be uttered. Beloved, has the time been with you, and is yet, when you bow upon the tarth, you fear to look toward heaven, and all that you can do is sigh and groan? If you have had such experiences you feel a relationship with this publican.

God be merciful to me a sinner, He was here confessing what he was, and asking for what he so fully felt was his need. He was covering all praying ground. Regardless of what we say, this is the substance of true prayer. His prayer was not based upon what he had or had not done. He could not commend himself to God, feeling better than other men, or because of his works. Not only is this the condition of a convicted sinner fallen under a holy law, but he is continually being brought to this same place, to say, God be merciful to me a sinner. The longer we live the more we learn how weak we are. It seems our feet are prone to wander, Lord, we feel it, prone to leave the God we love. Almost everything we do is mixed with self, yet in the Spirit, if indeed we may claim to have it, we loathe

this condition. How seldom we are enabled to lay aside the weight and sin that does easily beset us and look to him alone. We are made to say, Lord, hold our hand. So often we have tried to walk on the water and felt ourself sinking, and have been brought to say, Lord, save us, that the words of this hymn are precious:

"Oh may we ever walk in him,
And nothing know beside;
Nothing desire, or aught esteem,
But Jesus crucified."

When it is all summed up, though the publican and the Pharisee represent two peoples, those who trust in themselves and those who through the work of grace have abhorred themselves, there is throughout the life of a child of God the manifestations of both principles. When a man is born again Christ is formed in him the hope of glory, but the Adamic nature is not changed. A warfare is set up within him, the flesh against the Spirit. The will is present, but how to perform that which is good he finds not. He finds that he cannot do the things that he would, and is often brought very low and made to call upon God. Even as a fountain does not bring forth both sweet and bitter water at the same time, so that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. The works of the flesh and the works of the Spirit do not mix. One is from heaven, the other is the product of a carnal mind. When there is glorying in self, whether it be in following tradition, seeking the applause of men, seeking the upper seat, or in any sense making a fair show in the flesh, it is only the evidence we are living after the flesh. Truly when the Spirit of God is manifested one would rather have the smile of God than all the praise of men. He desires that Christ go before him. He would rather follow Christ than men. One thus exercised had much rather hear the small still voice commending unto him the works of his blessed Savior than anything else. He knows he has nothing except that which he has received. When even the thought of service is mentioned his heart says, Lord, when did I do these things? In this frame of mind he seeks the mind of Christ, and his will to know, desiring above all things to speak the truth in love, shun not to declare all the counsel of God, and asks God for wisdom, and a revelation of the word, that he may speak boldly in the name of Jesus. Surely these are they who worship God in spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh, and when he comes to make up his jewels "they shall be mine," saith the Lord, and our humble hope is that we shall be among that number that shall awake in his likeness.

D. V. S.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS."

We will furnish extra copies of the Signs of the Times at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

MATTHEW XXVII. 36.

"AND sitting down, they watched him there."

A brother in Florida says he would be glad to have our views on this portion of the Scripture. His request contained only the number of the chapter and verse, and when we turned to it and saw the reading of it, our first reaction was, What can we say about it? and we were made to wonder why such a request had been made of us.

We have on various occasions called attention to the importance of considering the connections which surround a text, in order to give its true meaning. Frequently brethren disregard this altogether, and we fear they fall far short of the mark in so doing. In this instance, however, it would seem absolutely imperative to be familiar with the connection if we are to get any proper perspective at all of what is under consideration. To undertake to treat, intelligently, upon this verse of Scripture separate and apart from what has gone before would, to us, seem the height of folly. We shall, therefore, take the liberty of quoting here the three preceding verses and the verse immediately following the one we are asked to comment upon. Beginning with the thirty-third and reading through the thirty-fifth verses of this chapter we have a vivid picture of one of the most horrible scenes that the eyes of mankind ever gazed upon. It is described in these words: "And when they had come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, they gave him vinegar to drink, mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink. And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots." One of the saddest things that can possibly be imagined in connection with the law enforcement agency of our land is that a man should be put to death for a crime of which he is perfectly innocent. In the case before us, not only was Jesus (a man in whom no guile could be found) crucified with wicked hands, but his executioners did everything that the human mind could conceive of to add to his ignomy and shame. A robber, Barabbas, was released and Jesus was made to hang in his stead, between two thieves, and the place chosen for this to be carried out was the most despicable known to them: namely, Golgotha, or the place of a skull. Not being content with this, they did all that their fiendish minds could perpetrate by stripping him of his clothing and causing him to hang naked before the eyes of a vulturous world, and then proceeded to give him vinegar and gall to drink, which supposedly was a determent to death, and thus intended to prolong and aggravate the agony and sufferings of our Lord. The record is, however, that he tasted but "would not drink," so he died before they came to break his bones, as was their custom, in order that the Scripture which declared that not a bone of him should be broken, should be fulfilled. All that

they did was in fulfillment of the Scriptures which testified beforehand that they would part his garments, and for his vesture would cast lots. Having exhausted their fury against him, they sat down and "watched him there," indicating that their work was done and that they had no further power over him. Normally, when life becomes extinct the body of the victim is readily released to his loved ones or friends, that it might be borne away and buried without interference, but Jesus having foretold of his resurrection, they were determined to use every precaution to prevent it and, therefore, they sat down to keep watch, which they continued to do even at his tomb, lest his disciples might steal him away and claim that he had risen from the dead. A guard was placed at the tomb, with instructions to make it as secure as they could, but all of their hellish powers combined could not thwart the purpose of Almighty God, and the superscription written over his head was to stand and could not be changed. That writing was, THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Pilate was importuned to modify it so that it would read as though he only said that he was the King of the Jews, but Pilate replied, "What I have written, I have written." It could not possibly be changed, for it was the truth, and all that wicked men and time can do cannot change or eradicate it. We should take courage and comfort in this thought to-day when so much of the world is doing its utmost to nullify and obliterate all that is good and godly from the face of the earth. We are told that Pilate caused this to be written in Hebrew, Greek and Latin, that all might read it. We are persuaded that in all of the war-ridden nations of the earth, God's people who have this truth written in the fleshly tables of their hearts will not cease to hope, and that they will continue to worship God inwardly in spirit and in truth. And may it be our heavenly Father's will and good pleasure to hasten the day when all mankind shall be privileged to worship him according to the dictates of their own consciences, and under their own vine and fig tree, with none to molest or make them afraid.

We will here leave the matter for the consideration of our inquirer and readers, hoping that what we have said will be of some profit to them.

R. L. D.

NOTICE.

BECAUSE of the fact that a number of our brethren and friends who live at a distance have expressed the desire to aid the church known as Macedonia Church, at Rising Star, Texas, when they were ready to build a house in which to worship, I am taking this means of giving notice that we are now ready to begin. A short time since, we appointed a treasurer, and began accumulating funds to purchase a lot and build a house. We now have our lot paid for, and a small fund for purchasing material, and plan to start construction in a few weeks, should we succeed as we now hope to do. This church is neither numerically nor financially strong, but it possesses the happy faculty of all moving in the same direction, and this encourages us to believe

the Lord will cause us to succeed. All who have met with us appreciate how badly we need a house.

This is meant only for those who may assist towards our building, and not to put any one under obligations. Any such contributions from any source will be duly appreciated. If they are sent to me I will see that they are applied as directed. Or you can send direct to R. A. Denman, Route 2, May, Texas.

C. Y. OSTEEN,
PERRIN, Texas.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

WILLIAM ELBERT ELLIS, son of Richard and Emma Ellis, was born July 28th, 1869, and died January 4th, 1941, in the hospital at Austin, Texas, making his stay on earth 71 years, 5 months and 6 days. He was married to Effie Lee Dykes December 24th, 1888. Three children were born to them, all of whom are still living: Sidney J. Ellis, of Plainview, Texas; Mrs. Addie B. Guthrie, of Barger, Texas, and Mrs. Lois Thomas, of Silverton, Texas. Both he and his wife professed a hope in Christ and united with the Primitive Baptist Church, and were baptized by Elder J. G. Grant in the summer of 1894. His wife died November 1st, 1894. He was married to Matilda Culpepper December 23rd, 1895. Seven children were born to this union. The eldest, Jesse Aaron, died at the age of eighteen months. His wife, five sons and one daughter survive him: Richard and Gilbert, of Austin, Texas; Jerry, of Albuquerque, New Mexico; Paul, of Big Springs, Texas; Silas, of Silverton, Texas, and Mrs. Effie Cox, of Austin, Texas. His dear companion and loved ones did all for him that it was possible to do to relieve his great suffering and add to his comfort. We miss him much now that he is gone. He had been in failing health the last five years, and had been in the hospital for almost three months. He bore his pain prayerfully. He said so many loved ones had gone on before, and what a blessing it would be if God would call him home, but he must wait until He was ready, for it is God's will be done and not ours. He prayed almost all day Thursday before he passed on Friday night. They raised their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; taught them to be truthful and honest, and to do unto others as they would that others should do unto them. He was a cotton farmer for many years, and took great pride in all his work. His friends and neighbors loved and respected him. He and his wife owned and operated a cafe in Ralls, Texas, for eight years. When his health failed, and they sold out their business and left there, the people of the community continue to celebrate a "Bill's Day" every year in honor of their good friend "Bill" Ellis. He is survived by one brother, C. Q. Ellis, of Austin, and three sisters, Mrs. May Clairborne, of Mineral Wells, Texas; Mrs. Susie Nolan, of San Antonio, Texas. Also thirty-four grandchildren and fourteen great-grandchildren. Elder Jack West conducted the funeral services.

The foregoing data was supplied by his daughter, Mrs. Addie Guthrie, and his sister-in-law, Mrs. Ollie Dykes Culpepper.

I wish to add that it was my pleasure to know and be associated with brother Ellis and his surviving wife, as well as his estimable family. He and his wife were members of a church which I pastored for about seven or eight years. They enjoyed the highest confidence and esteem of the brotherhood and were faithful in their devotions to the church. They made their home a place of wel-

come for their brethren and sisters. They were sound in the faith and unwavering in their belief and adherence to the distinguishing doctrine and order of the house of the Lord. The church, as well as his community, sustains a great loss in the passing of brother Ellis. We all must feel that the world was better for his having dwelt here as long as he did in passing through. But I would counsel his loved ones to not be overcome of sorrow; his seeking another country was proof that this world was not his permanent home, and no doubt he has reached that heavenly country which he sought. May the Lord give you the patience of hope and the comfort of love to wait until he shall call you hence.

J. R. HARDY.

MARTHA (CANADY) TERRY, our dear sister in Christ and mother in Israel, departed this life December 8th, 1939. Death was due to old age and a complication of diseases, which had been preying on her frame, as it were, ripening her for the tomb. She was the widow of Elder J. H. Terry, that dear man of God who so humbly and faithfully spent many years of his life serving the churches of his care in this part of God's vineyard. He departed this life April 20th, 1915, at the age of seventy years. Sister Terry was born in Patrick County, Virginia, February 20th, 1844. She, together with her parents, moved to Raleigh County, West Vifginia, while she was yet a young girl. While living in Raleigh County she met and married the late Elder J. H. Terry, at about the age of twenty-one years. To this union were born eight children, seven girls and one boy, all of whom have also departed this life, and, too, all were blessed with a good hope, through grace, in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Sister Terry was given a hope in Christ at a young age, and deep and trying was her conviction for sin, and marvelous and glorious was her deliverance. She united with the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church at about the age of twenty-five years. Her life was truly spent in humbleness and meekness. Her daily life and deportment was such as becometh her profession. She and Elder Terry, with their family, moved into Putnam County, West Virginia, in their early married life, where much of his ministerial labors were spent. Much of his traveling was done on foot, horseback or in his buggy, over the mountains of this State. Some of the churches of his care were at a great distance for that mode of travel, but never was he found to shrink from duty or responsibility that was thus laid upon him. He was a farmer, but his Master's service was truly first with him. When the time of his appointments rolled around he would quit the field and go without murmuring or complaining. No sacrifice was too much for him to make as an humble undershepherd in the Master's service, and in all of these trials sister Terry proved herself a helpmeet indeed. She would take up where her husband laid down, even laboring in the fields in her husband's absence. Throughout all their married life love and true devotion crowned their home. Never have I seen a more devoted couple. Marked humbleness was manifest in them and their children, and never an unkind or cross word did I ever hear either of them speak to the other. Their home was open to their brethren, and it was their great delight to entertain them there, and willingly spend and be spent in the service of the Master. Words fail me in expressing this noble character. Sister Terry was strong in her religious convictions and

uncompromising with error. She was strongly entrenched in the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things, of salvation by grace, and grace alone, and all the cardinal points of doctrine of the primitive faith, and possessed that rare gift of expression, which made her ever bold to defend the doctrine in the face of all opposition. Never while my mind is rational shall be erased from my memory their frequent visits in my father's home while I was but a small boy. I shall never forget the earnestness of the conversation that ensued between sister Terry and Elder Terry while conversing with my parents upon heavenly things. It made an impression upon me that has lived through the years that have intervened. After Elder Terry's departure sister Terry remained a widow until death came to her. In her declining days it was my privilege to visit her a few times, even after her natural eyesight was almost gone and she was almost deaf, but she was strictly alive to the things of the kingdom of God's dear Son. Her spiritual vision had not be dimmed, and without doubt her spiritual hearing had hearkened to the voice of her Beloved. "The eyes of them that see shall not be dim: and the ears of them that hear shall hearken."—Isaiah xxxii. 3. I remember one occasion when a little group of brethren and sisters, together with myself, visited her and heard her tell of her trials by the way, and her eagerness to depart and be with Christ, and while her feeble voice was lifted in her Redeemer's praise every face present was wet with tears. Sister Terry lacked from December 8th to February 20th of being ninety-six years of age when she departed, and it seemed her faith grew brighter and brighter as the end approached. A mother in Israel is fallen. She leaves to mourn a host of grandchildren and great-grandchildren, some sons-in-law (among whom is our precious brother J. E. Lake), a neighborhood and church, but we grieve not as those who have no hope.

I was called to conduct the funeral, as she had so requested, and tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved, by trying to preach Christ crucified, after which she was laid beside Elder Terry in the family burying-ground on the old home place on Sycamore Ridge, there to await the call of the Master. May God comfort all who mourn.

Submitted in love.

H. J. BIRD.

AMON M. SAYLOR, a friend of the cause of Jesus Christ, departed this earthly pilgrimage October 17th, 1940, at his home, Cassville, Pennsylvania. He was born in Trough Creek valley September 7th, 1856, the son of Cornelius and Mary Ann (Shore) Saylor; hence, was 84 years, 1 month and 10 days old at the time of his falling asleep in the Lord. He married Miss Laura Jane Hyle October 24th, 1876. Had he lived a week longer they would have marked their sixty-fourth wedding anniversary. His widow survived him at the time of his leaving us, but has since died. She passed away January 19th, 1941. They are survived by three daughters and one son: Mrs. Nettie Wilson, of Calvin, Pa., Mrs. Bertha Smith, of Mapleton, Pa., Mrs. Winnie Spangler, of Huntingdon, Pa., and Mr. Howard Saylor, of Johnstown, Pa. One son, Luther Saylor, preceded his father in death about eight months. There are thirteen surviving grandchildren. It was Mr. Saylor's request that a minister of the Old School Baptist Church preach at his funeral, so I was sent for; but on account of the funeral, which was held the third Sunday in October, being on

the same day as our regular meeting-day at the Welsh Tract Church in Delaware, I did not go. I regret that I was so situated that I could not comply with Mr. Saylor's request. The services were conducted by Mr. A. M. Freer, a minister of the New School order, I think. He later conducted Mrs. Saylor's funeral also. Both Mr. and Mrs. Saylor were buried in the cemetery at the Trough Creek Baptist Church. They attended our meetings whenever they could, always manifesting deep interest in the preaching. Mr. Saylor was an adherent of the true faith, though he never united with the membership of the church. We believe he had a good hope through grace. I have been requested to write this notice, and it affords me gratification to attest to Mr. Saylor's belief, especially in these times when so many, even professed believers, will not endure sound doctrine.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

THE death angel claimed MRS. MARTHA E. WHITNEY, the only daughter of the late Elder James Miller and Polly Maria (Van Valkenburg) Miller, who passed away after a short illness at the home of her son, William Whitney, in Roxbury, N. Y., February 9th, 1941, at the ripe age of almost ninety-one years. Mrs. Whitney was the only surviving Civil War veteran's widow in the community where she lived. He death marks the close of a long, useful and honorable life, and one whose outstanding character, whose genial ways, obliging manner, neighborly qualities, quiet dignity, abounding hospitality and unblemished moral conduct were known and acknowledged, will be long and sadly missed. Save for impaired eyesight, Mrs. Whitney enjoyed excellent health almost to the last. She was born in Halcott, N. Y., March 21st, 1850, and spent most of her life in that town. Her father, Elder James Miller, lived in that town many years and was a well known Old School Baptist preacher. He died twenty years ago. In 1869 she married Johnathan Whitney. Three children were the fruit of this union, of whom but one, William, survives. Her husband died in 1904. Her funeral services were conducted by the writer at Halcott, N. Y., the interment being in the cemetery at that place. Mrs. Whitney was a firm believer in the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists, though she never united with the visible church. In addition to her son, she is survived by nine grandchildren, thirteen great-grandchildren and four great-great-grandchildren.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

ELISHA R. MYERS passed away at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Riggle, on West Pleasant Drive, Pierre, South Dakota, February 13th, 1941. He was born September 19th, 1847, at Stockton, New Jersey, and was in his ninety-fourth year at the time of his death. He had been in failing health for some time and the end was not unexpected. He was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, with which he had been affiliated since early manhood. In the year 1871 Elisha R. Myers and Julia G. Sharp were married in the home of her parents, at Richmond, Massachusetts, and to this union seven children were born. Soon after this date they came west and located at Waterloo, Nebraska, where they remained until 1903, when they removed to South Dakota, and filed on a homestead at Hopewell, in Stanley County. For many years Mr. Myers was postmaster at that place. One of the family, Mrs. Luella Babbitt, of Waterloo, Nebr., died a number of years ago. Those re-

maining are: Mrs. Keturah DuBois, of Pennsylvania; Mrs. Elizabeth Riggle, of Pierre; John Myers, of Nebraska; James Myers, of Oregon; Granville Myers, of Iowa; Mrs. Dan Anderson, of Michigan. Twenty-three grandchildren and twenty-two great-grandchildren complete the family circle.

Funeral services were held at the Dotson funeral home in Ft. Pierre on Saturday at 2 p. m. with Mr. Besselievre of Pierre in charge. Burial was in Riverside Cemetery, beside Mrs. Myers, who passed away in 1930.

[THE foregoing is a clipping from a Pierre, South Dakota paper, sent to us by Mrs. Elizabeth M. Riggle, a daughter of brother Myers, with the request that we publish it in the SIGNS.—ED.]

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Primitive Baptist Church of Christ at Crumpler, West Virginia, bow in humble submission to Almighty God in removing from our midst our beloved associate pastor, EIDER H. V. SNOW, and be it further

RESOLVED, that we tender our heartfelt and profound sympathy to his bereaved wife and family, and that we spread a copy of this on our Church Minutes, and also a copy be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

This done while in conference, January 4th, 1941.

S. J. PRIDDY, Moderator.
J. H. GENTRY, Clerk.

INASMUCH as it has pleased Almighty God in his all-wise providence to take from us and out of our midst our beloved brother, ELDER G. E. COULBOURNE, one of the ablest and most sincere gospel ministers of this section of country, be it

RESOLVED, That we, the churches of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, bow in humble submission to the will of the Lord, knowing that he doeth all things well. Be it further

RESOLVED, That we extend to the widow and children of our departed brother our deepest sympathy in their great loss. Be it further

RESOLVED, That this Resolution be spread upon the Minutes of this session of our Association, and published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as a token of our love and fellowship for our departed brother and servant of the most high God.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
GEORGE F. ADKINS, Clerk.
H. M. BENNETT, Assistant Clerk.

A CORRECTION.

PLEASE state in the April SIGNS, if this reaches you in time, that the name of my father's mother was Elizabeth Margaret Dodson, and not Mary Elizabeth Dodson, as erroneously stated in the obituary appearing in the March issue.

R. LESTER DODSON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. M. E. Kuns, Calif., $1; Mrs. R. S. Craig, Va., $1; Mrs. Joe Wright, Ky., $3; Mrs. Charles B. Gordy, Mich., $1; Mrs. G. T. Franklin, Va., $1; Joe Mac Kenzie, Canada, $3; Mrs. H. A. Strube, Texas, $2; Mrs. Ettie Smith, Texas, $1; Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Okla., $1; Mrs. W. G. Thompson, Ontario, $2.40; Elder George Ruston, Ontario, $4.

MEETINGS.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us

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OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue
(Park Avenue Hall)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A. M
ALL WELCOME

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists is now settled in her new church-house, at 4614 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas, where she holds her regular monthly services on each first Sunray at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. Preaching services also on each third Sunday by Elder C. B. Teague, and each second Sunday by brother O. C. Lee, at 11 o'clock a. m. A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. R. HARDY, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 109. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY, 1941. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JUSTIFICATION BY THE LAW, OR BY GRACE?

THE apostle Paul in Galatians ii. 21, states, "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." In other words, as you will see, the apostle was opposing the idea of some of the brethren who believed they were saved wholly or in part by works, or keeping the law, and they could have been saved by keeping the law if they could have kept it, for that is the promise of God. But where can the man of earth be found who can keep the law to a jot and tittle? seeing he has fallen under sin and condemnation, and his fallen nature is corrupt and his heart is evil continually, unless the Lord incline him to the ways of righteousness. "The law is not of faith; but, The man that doeth them shall live in them."—Gal. iii. 12. The law of God is holy, just and good, and the law of God was broken by the disobedience of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, and thereby the whole human family fell under the curse of the law and became condemned to eternal death, unless some one could be found who was holy, harmless, separate from sinners, who could be offered to God as a sacrifice to atone for the sins of a people cursed and corrupted by their disobedience to their God. No such character could be found of all the race of Adam who could satisfy the demands of the law, because all are sinners, and God could not accept a person stained with sin to make sacrifice and satisfy the demands of his holy law and make peace with him by making satisfaction to him, by keeping every precept and paying the death penalty with his life. The earth did not, and does not, afford such a person, therefore God prepared such an one in the person of Jesus Christ, who is the eternal God from heaven, to fulfill all the precepts of the law by obedience to the Father, and he paid the penalty of the law, which was death on the cross. Therefore God said,

Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. The apostle Paul says Christ is the end of the law to every one that believeth in Christ, and then he makes this statement: "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." But this could not be done, and why? Because no one of the Adam family, polluted with sin and enemies of God, even if they could have kept the law, could have been a holy sacrifice to offer in satisfaction of the demands of the law. Who but the Son of God from heaven can love with all his heart, all his soul and all his strength, and love his neighbor as himself, and he that would borrow of thee lend, not expecting to receive? We see that the only way and the only time we can love God and our enemies is when God overpowers our natural inclination, which is evil, by his holy Spirit and deposits love in our heart for God and our neighbor. Therefore that is a fulfillment of the law through the saints by the operation of God as a free gift, without the merit of our works, for we cannot merit any reward from God by the best of our works, for our righteousness by works, or keeping the law, is as filthy rags in the sight of God. Christ said that after we have done all that is commanded for us to do, then say we are unprofitable servants, and have only done our duty. Our reward of eternal life is not by our works, or any part of them, but our works are only evidence of the gracious salvation, which is wholly of grace, and a free gift of God.

Now the question is, Can we work out all or any portion of salvation for time and eternity? I say, Not the least bit, for that would make Christ's atonement not complete for all our sins, and we would have to atone for a portion of them by our good works, and that can never be, for God claims the glory for the whole of our salvation.

Second, Are we saved and justified by grace? The promise of Christ, which is salvation, was given to Abraham because he believed what God said, therefore the apostle says his faith, which was a gift of God, was counted for righteousness. Paul says that if Abraham was saved by works of the law, he has somewhat to glory of, but not before God, for God claimed all the glory to himself for our salvation, for he worked it out on the cross by the obedience and death of his Son, and for any one to claim to work out any portion of it, is the same as to say we can rob God of part of his glory. Any gospel that does not give God all power in heaven and in earth, and does not contribute all our salvation to Jesus Christ, and does not represent God as being the ruler and disposer of all things in heaven and in earth is false, and is attempting to rob God of his glory. What seems strange to some is this: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you form the foundation of the world."—Matt. xxv. 34. You can see from the words of Christ that the kingdom was prepared from the foundation of the world as an inheritance to them, according to the purpose of God, without any

conditions attached to it on the part of man, but according to God's eternal purpose, which he purposed in himself. Just under this passage he mentions the judgment day, and pictures all the world gathered there to be judged according to their works, or the deeds done in the body. To the class on his right he says, I was hungry, sick, in prison, and you ministered unto me. He mentions this as an evidence of the state of their heart, and as evidence, or fruits, of the Spirit of God, and as evidence of their faith and confidence in Christ, who has saved them by the grace and operations of God, and not on conditions of their works, repentance, faith, etc., which are all gifts of God. On his left are placed those whose hearts are not right in the sight of God, which is evident from what Christ said: I was sick, in prison, etc., and you did not minister unto me, and this is evidence as to the state of your heart, and your works prove it, therefore depart with the devil and his angels into everlasting punishment. This is the last judgment, and all the saved are justified by faith in the Son of God, their Redeemer and Judge, as an operation of God. We are sinners saved by grace, and are only counted justified and saved by the life and death of Christ. Our justification and salvation are in Christ, and we have none outside of him, for in him all fullness dwells. "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."—Gal. ii. 16. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."—Eph. ii. 8, 9.

The Scripture proves beyond doubt that we are justified by faith, which is a free gift, and of grace, and so is repentance. Instead of the sinner exercising faith, it is the faith of Jesus Christ which exercises the sinner to repentance, faith and good works, which are all the work of God, so there is no boasting or glorying on the part of the sinner, for it was all a free sovereign gift of the grace of God, and not by works of righteousness, but according to his mercy we are saved.

THOMAS W. KIMSEY.

HIGH POINT, North Carolina.

TEAGUE, Texas, Dec. 17, 1940.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am so little, so weak, so insignificant, so vile, so prone to sin, so depraved, so unworthy, so disobedient, so worthless to myself or any one else, it causes shame, gloom and doubt, and fear comes into my poor, wretched, miserable heart when sometimes I think that once more I will bow in my weakness and offer thanks unto the great I AM that doeth all things well for the manifold blessings thus bestowed upon me. "This man," not the man in part, but "this man," complete in its every essence of nature in this time world, for it is here on earth that man receives blessing, and indeed it is the only place created and set apart for the blessing of man while yet as a man.

Mark you, I said the earth was the designated place for man to receive the blessings of God, and I said *man,* in his entirety, flesh, blood and bone, in its natural sense; soul, body and spirit in its spiritual sense. This man that is born the first time of woman, the same man is born the second time of the Holy Spirit, the three-in-one God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. This is in line with my experience, if indeed I have one. At least it left me with a little hope that thus it is with me. My first birth was May 3rd, 1883, and my second, I hope, was in December, 1915. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." There is some body dead here, but now alive, for "quickened" means to make alive. What is it dead? It is the Spirit that quickeneth. What does it quicken? Paul has just told you. It is you (the man), who was dead, hath he quickened. And because ye are sons (in covenant) God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father, leading you from nature to grace, out of nature's darkness into the light and liberty of God's dear Son. Old things have passed away (now), and all (the same) things have become new. In fact, you are a new creature in Christ Jesus, walking worthy of the vocation wherein ye were called from nature's darkness. Do you not find it to be the same man? It is the same man, whereas prior to this operation of the Holy Spirit your life was hid with Christ (the covenant) in God, shut up unto the knowledge of these things. But it pleased the Father to send forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem you. Evidence cannot become so plain to you to cause you to admit that you are not the man that was redeemed from the curse of the law. So now you are no longer under the law, but under grace, therefore there is no more condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made you (the man) free from the law of sin and death. So it can be sure, as the man is no longer under this law the law has no more reign over him; that is, there now is no relationship existing between the man and this law, for the man is separate and apart therefrom. Hence the man cannot sin against this law any more, for now the man is dead to this law and made alive in Christ. In connection with this, the question is asked, What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin? That is, shall we yet violate, or sin, against this law that grace may abound? God forbid. No, the man will never again come under a charge from this law. How shall we (the children of God) that are dead to sin live (rejoice in the things of this world) any longer therein? The man has lost all taste for the follies of this law (the world), for unto this man old things have passed away, and all things have become new. The man is no longer a stranger to the covenant of promise, but his feet have been lifted from the mire and clay (the law) and placed upon the Rock, Christ

Jesus the Lord. A new song has been put in his mouth, that no man can learn, his goings established right to the reverse of his prior condition, and he is made to sing praises unto His great and adorable name. Great and marvelous are thy ways, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. It is then this man is no more a stranger and a foreigner, but has by the operation of the Holy Spirit been taken from among the heathen, having been sprinkled with clean water, a new heart put within the man (not a spirit). And I will put my Spirit within you, and ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers. And ye shall be no longer foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, built upon the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. This is the same man that was dead prior to all this, but is now made alive. For in that he died he died unto sin, but in that he liveth he liveth unto God. For he (the man) is no longer under the law, but under grace, hence cannot sin or violate this law, for it has no more dominion over him. For (because) when we were in the flesh (under the law) the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members, to bring forth fruit unto death. And this law worketh wrath. In other words, the works of the flesh manifest themselves in adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditious heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, which while in two natures cannot inherit the kingdom (church) of God. Why? Due to the fact that a life of this nature is evidence against him as ever being born of the Spirit. But inasmuch so as this serves as evidence of this fact, it by no means excludes the fact that one in the kingdom can so indulge, yet while in this frame of mind it is an evident fact that such an one is not in the Spirit that connects him with the kingdom (church). Hence it is from this viewpoint that Paul said one cannot enter the kingdom, for the kingdom disavows all fellowship for such fruit, and truly this is the work of the flesh. Therefore, seeing the law as it was, and that it was weak through the flesh, and could not do, God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh. Thus we can begin to see, as is claimed, a separation, thus becoming two, one the servant of sin, the flesh, which is free from righteousness; whereas one is free from sin, and becomes the servant unto God and your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. But the fruit of this life herein mentioned in this time world we hope to be in: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, for against such there is no law.

Yours in bonds,

W. A. LITTLE.

REVELATION XXI. 21.

"And the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass."

Several years ago I wrote in an old church book with a pencil an article on the above text, and just recently I ran across it again, and after reading it over decided to share it with my kindred in Christ.

This city, as I see it now in my dream, or imagination, presents to me a wonderful picture, and at times I am anxious to leave this life, with its trials and tribulations, and enter that beautiful mansion, which I hope to do some day, through the blood of Jesus Christ, who died upon the cross for all the members of his body, the church. There are several things in this twenty-first chapter I wish to call your attention to. First, He carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and there the angel of God, one of the seven, was saying, Come hither, and I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife. Now let us keep in mind, He carried me in spirit. This is the only way we ever catch a glimpse of things spiritual; it is through the Spirit, and being carried by it. It was at the top of Pisgah that Moses was led, and the Lord showed him the wonderful land of Canaan, but Moses was not allowed to go over. Neither did John walk in the street of pure gold. He just saw it and wrote about it, and like all who have ever beheld this beautiful picture, was led into it by the Spirit. And as John saw himself so unworthy he fell at the feet of the angel to worship, which is forbidden. Remember he is on the mountain top, like Moses. It is a lofty place, and a dangerous place. There is where Satan shoots his most deadly arrows, for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers; against the rulers of darkness of this world; against spiritual wickedness in high places, and were it not for the fact that Jesus overcame the devil on the high mountain there would be no hope for you or me, for it is only through him we can enter in. He is the door to the sheepfold, the pearl of great price, the way that leads to God, the very truth and life of all the members of his body.

John saw a wall great and high. A wall is for security, protection, also beauty. This song shall be sung, We have a strong city, salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks around Zion. This wall surrounds the church of God in her glorious, perfect, triumphant state, spoken of as the Jerusalem above that is free, having the glory of God. And her light was as a stone most precious, clear as crystal, far above the imagination of mortal man, according to John, the wall was over two hundred feet high, and it was equal each side, about fifteen hundred miles long, and it is upon this wall that God hath placed watchmen who will not hold their peace day or night. The watchmen on the walls have a two-fold view. Through the Spirit they behold the glory of God as they look upon Zion, also see the sinfulness of sin as they see self and the world on the outside. What a protection to the city whose streets are pure gold. No

watchman can climb this wall. They may have Abraham to their father, and be brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, have much of this world's goods, and may give it to feed the poor, and give their bodies to be burned, make long prayers, be full of good deeds, but through none of these will they ever be able to climb the heights and see the beauty of the building of God, the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. In the text John was carried up by the Spirit, Jesus was led up by the Spirit, Moses at the top of Pisgah was shown by the Lord the dwellings of the tribes of Israel. Now the watchmen have not as yet walked on these golden streets, but have caught a glimpse of the beauty of them. This city wall has twelve gates, three in each direction. A gate is an entrance, and each gate is of one pearl, and the number corresponds to the twelve tribes of the children of Israel, and none can enter but those whom the Lord has framed their tongues to say, Shibboleth. (Judges xii.) There is no vacant side to the wall Zion. God is omnipresent, immutable, omnipotent, and in perfection has elected his people in Christ. Before he made the world they were his choice. He hath redeemed them, he hath saved them by his grace, they are worthy to be arrayed in white, for they are redeemed from the earth. "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." Not to come in and get righteous, but enter in because ye are a righteous nation. The wall was as jasper, built of the most precious stones. For firmness and lustre, the wall is impregnable as well as precious. The form of it was regular and uniform; it was four square; the length and the height and breadth were all equal. In the new Jerusalem all shall be equal in purity and perfection; there shall be an absolute uniformity in the church triumphant, a thing we so much desire here on earth, but not to be expected until we come into the heavenly in the resurrection. There is nothing in this world magnificent enough to set forth fully the glory of heaven. Could we in a strong magnifying glass of our imagination contemplate such a city as here described, even to the exterior part of it, such a wall, such gates, how amazing, how glorious it would be, and yet this is but a faint representation of what it is, and only as we are led by the Spirit into these things can we comprehend the hand of God that leads us beside the still waters and makes us lie down in green pastures. "But, as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."—1 Cor. ii. 9, 10. All of it is a mystery to us. As we walk around Zion and tell her towers, consider her palaces and mark well her bulwarks, in fear and trembling take off our shoes, for we are treading on holy ground, sometimes, like Paul, fearing that while we

have preached to others, we ourselves should be castaways.

O God, grant that my vision is real, and that some day I will walk with all the redeemed on the street of pure gold.

Now to my brethren everywhere do I consign these imperfect thoughts. First to the editors of the SIGNS, and if they deem them worthy of a place in their columns I ask the prayers of all for me, a poor sinner, that I may be kept faithful.

Yours in hope,

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., November, 1940.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I feel impressed to write you a few lines and tell you how I am. I am old and infirm, and do know and feel that my understanding of the Scriptures grows less, but I know and feel that if it is not opened by the all-powerful hand of God I must remain ignorant. The SIGNS has been rich in food for me of late. In the October number was the timely letter of brother Gibson, then the good editorial, Isaiah thirty-eighth chapter, fourteenth verse, last clause. It did reach my case to the bottom. The terrible conflict of the war that is going on has not bothered me much. The people of the world are becoming so wicked, and some of the dear saints so cold and slothful, that there is a needs be for the war, that "the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed." We certainly as a people need the chastening of the all-powerful hand of the omnipotent God. It seems to me very few are willing to present their bodies a living sacrifice. I have so often told my questioners that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Then what am I that I can withstand the great God who spoke this world into existence? Then why murmur and complain when "clouds are round about him," but "righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne?" I say, "Wait on the Lord," in due time we shall reap, if we faint not. His promises are yea and amen, to the glory of God through Jesus Christ. Yea, the Lord's people are already blessed.

Then came the November number of the SIGNS, and on opening it my eyes caught the words, "The Lord reigneth," and my feelings were indescribable. I read brother Smith's good letter, then the consoling letter of our new editor. I mention these because they were blessed to poor me, but all were good and enjoyed by me. Write on, brother Smith, you surely have the cause of our Lord at heart.

A kind neighbor called at my home a few days ago, and he, being a fluent speaker, talked much on the Russell doctrine, and all the while these words rang in my ears: If it were possible, they would deceive the very elect, but it is not possible. Poor fellow, he is in his grave.

On the first day of May, 1938, I broke my hip bone and had to be taken to the hospital, where I remained until May 29th, when my loved ones brought me home, and the following day brought a lady to care for me, and she

has been with me since. She reminds me of my own dear departed mother, who wore a wreath of kindness through the years of my affliction and for my second childhood. It was thought by my friends that I would not leave the hospital alive, owing to my advanced age (seventy-nine years) and physical weakness, but "who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?" Here I am to-day trying to tell my kindred in Christ what befell me. There are seven octogenarians in our church, and all are growing older, but I do not feel discouraged like some do, for the Lord omnipotent reigneth. They take me to the church-house (about three-quarters of a mile distant) when I can go, and when I cannot they assemble at my home, though I do not feel worthy that they come under my roof. The foolishness of the world has no charms for me. I hope I love the brotherhood, but am so unworthy, I often feel that I am a barren fig tree by the wayside; then again I feel a wrestling with the angel, when I believe the sweet anchor of hope holds me fast. Once upon a time I wanted to go to a meeting, but was sick, and I felt unresigned and rebellious, and the lines came into my mind:

> You might not get a crumb
> If you were present there;
> So be thou reconciled,
> For God is everywhere.
>
> He can be with you here,
> Just as well as there;
> So be thou reconciled,
> For God is everywhere.

Remember, dear kindred, we are one in Christ Jesus if we are what we profess to be and the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

I am pleased to tell you I am up now and walking about the premises some, for which I would be thankful if I could. When it goes well with you remember me at the great throne.

Unworthily,

SEMMA E. CORDER.

PREDESTINATION.

Pre means before, destinate, determine. Scripturally the term means that God before determined a certain work, and the end of it. Destination is the end of a certain purpose. God purposed a certain thing and devised all the means necessary thereto. And as he gave his word unto us as an instructor, we are thereby informed of the matter. It is set forth in two statements which mean the same thing in substance: "Whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." And, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children." It is clear that to be a child one must bear the image of their heavenly Father. While adoption might set this aside in nature, it is true in grace, as in grace one is born again. Adoption, scripturally, means the bringing in of an alien, or stranger, or one who has no right by natural generation of heirship unto heirship, and thus makes one legally entitled to an inheritance, and with God this work is done by regeneration. While regeneration and adoption are distinct in meaning, they are one with God, in that the work of adoption and conformity to the image of

Christ are one in process. When God begins the work of conforming a sinner to the image of Christ the process of adoption begins. To be born again makes one a legitimate heir of God, and to be adopted into the heavenly family shows that one was not before an heir, nor had he any legitimate claim upon the inheritance. Though men cavil and dispute over the doctrine of predestination, it is so clerly set forth in the Scriptures as to be indisputable by any one. God determined to save a people before time, for there is no doubt that being conformed to the image of his Son and adopted into the heavenly family is to be saved from sin and its damning justice, so salvation is wrought in the very work. Moreover, it cannot be conceded that God would predetermine to do this without also devising all the means necessary thereto.

I am not making this a lengthy argument, as some wish to do. The careful reader will see the matter without so much detail.

When Adam violated God's commandment he fell under the curse of the law of sin and death, and so ruined the entire race. He and all his posterity were then at once alienated from God and eternal life, and rendered wholly impotent of attaining it of themselves. They were left, so far as they were able to prevent, in everlasting ruin, and had not God predetermined to recover and save some of them all would have been forever damned. But in his mercy, and for his own glory, he determined to save some. He could have justly left all to everlasting ruin. He devised the means of accomplishing the work of salvation, and he purposed to prepare a sinless offering, a substitute, and he bowed the heavens and came down himself and took the sinner's place.

Predestination is only mentioned four times in the Scriptures, and in three cases it speaks directly of the salvation of sinners experimentally, and in the other of the accomplishment of the end thereto. Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. (Acts ii. 23.) This declaration of Holy Writ proves the matter so clearly that none can gainsay it. And if we notice it, the determination was according to God's counsel, i. e., he took thought, consulted the matter in seriousness, and considered the whole affair, and there was none beside him. None other could have been admitted into his audience and consultation in the matter. There was no one to counsel him in the matter of his thought, his deliberation, choice and purpose. Then he purposed in himself to save those whom he loved and chose of and in himself; and then it was according to his foreknowledge. Alas! what would we base the certainty of the matter upon without his foreknowledge? How could he have definitely determined and fixed the scheme unless he had had a previous and perfect knowledge of the state of man, the necessary means which would satify Him, and the ability to perform it all? But the supposition arises with some, that as he predestinated some to eternal life and glory, he predestinated others

to damnation and all the wicked works men do. This is only supposition, and is plainly trying to solve a mystery God reserved unto himself. It is absurd, in that such a thing would be inconsistent with his holiness and justice. While he saw before time the ruined race, I cannot believe that he predestinated the fall, yet it is a fact that as he determined to save some, he determined not to save others, but he did not determine to damn any.

LEO V. BAGLEY.

SIERRA CITY, Calif., March 27, 1940.

TO THE EBENEZER CHURCH, NEW YORK CITY—DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—I will endeavor to write you a few lines this morning, the Lord helping me, for unless he does I know I shall write nothing worth your reading. I am thinking of you this "Easter" morning, and knowing that our pastor is away at Warwick and Middletown there will be no meeting in New York. I would like to hear a good sermon on the resurrection to-day, or any other day, but Easter entertainments to draw people into meetinghouses do not appeal to me at all, and, if I know myself, I do thank God from my heart that the one church I believe in bars her doors against those things which seem to me of the world. I read my Bible more than I ever did before, and that teaches me that the church is the body of Christ, and is not of the world, and should have no fellowship for the things of the world; that we are in the world, but not of it; and also that the world hates us, because he (Christ) has given us the word which the Father gave him, and says, Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. These are evil days, the perilous times that should come before the end, so it seems to me, and the three unclean spirits of Revelation seem trying to draw the whole world into the great war. We know that our God is greater than all, and we can trust him whatever comes to pass. How wonderful that such an one as I feel myself to me has been given a hope! May he keep us all to the end in his blessed faith, and then take us home to himself. I hope all are as well as usual, and dwelling together in peace and unity, as the Savior prayed the Father for us, As thou, Father, art in me, and I in them, that they may all be made perfect in one. I am hoping that I am included.

With love,

NELLIE H. ARNOLD.

MARTIN, Tenn., March 20, 1940.

DEAR EDITORS AND PUBLISHER:—I want to let you know how much I appreciate your kindness in sending me the SIGNS, now for a long time, free of cost to me. It certainly is a welcome messenger each month to me, as I am confined at home, and have not been able to fill any of my appointments at the churches I have been trying to serve since the year 1914. I have had the care as pastor of four churches, two in Tennessee and two in Kentucky, but since last September I have been able to leave my home but very few times, and then for very short periods. I have heart trouble, and I know not

when I will be called from time to eternity, but I believe that all my days are numbered, and that there is an appointed time to die. I believe that God is all-wise and works all things after the counsel of his will, and that he has all power in heaven and in earth, and all things come to pass just as he purposed they would. He said, As I have thought so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed so shall it stand. I believe God has a chosen people, chosen in Christ before the world began, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. I believe that Christ fulfilled his Father's will, and that will was that he should give eternal life to as many as his Father gave him. Now the question with me is, Am I one that the Father gave the Son? I have been given to hope, if I am not deceived, that I was embraced in that number.

Well, as I am very weak in body and mind, I am getting weary, so will close these few scattering thoughts I am writing for you to read, and if they are worth anything to you all is well; if not, all is well with me. I wanted to write and thank you for your kindness in sending me the SIGNS as you have. As I have not been able to be out this winter, I have read the Bible a great deal, and when I have light to understand I do enjoy reading it. I also have reread many of the old numbers of the SIGNS of several years past.

From your poor unworthy brother, in hope of eternal life,

T. J. PRINCE.

DUTTON, Ontario, Dec. 18, 1940.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—Once again I have a desire to remind you that you are often on my mind, as also are many of my dear kindred in Christ in distant lands, across the sea, amidst the sore conflict, and no doubt many of the Lord's people are slain in battle. One says, He will keep the feet of his saints. Yes, and that is our consolation. Many other precious promises has he given his afflicted people, and we so desire and pray to be kept, and we truly need his sustaining grace to enable us to walk worthy of the high calling of God in Christ. In our great conflict with our enemy of truth and justice we are in danger of murmuring, as Job, at the chastening hand of our God, so deservedly sent upon wicked men and nations, and upon his chosen people, but I feel as one says, The wicked are as a sword in the hand of God to chasten his backsliding people, and I verily believe it is in his all-wise purpose for the wayward and rebellious people of his choice to bring down the high looks and the proud heart of man. We do not read of Job being a proud man, nor rebellious, but how he was humbled. We know of a truth that the human heart is full of idols. No doubt Job idolized his children, prided in his worldly possessions, yet when all were swept from him he murmured, but how reconciled he was to God's will, and said, Shall we receive good at the hands of God, and not evil? We know of a truth that prisons can palaces prove if Jesus will dwell with us there. We can joy in tribulation then, can we not, dear

brother? I hear you respond, Yes, indeed. His rod and his staff they comfort us while we walk through the valley of the shadow of death. I often meditate upon those words. This world is the valley, it is a shadow of death. It is the last enemy.

We have lost from our midst of good friends Mr. John Campbell and Mrs. Neil Blue. Sister Jennie Gillis' sister, Hester Young, came over and is still with Jennie in London, who is very frail. I am sure you have been in John Campbell's home at the time of Lobo meetings. Brother Dan requested Elder Ruston to speak from the words which comforted John some time ago: "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench." So many of our church people are passing away, Elder Ruston gets quite discouraged at times, and none coming in to take their places. But what weak, faithless mortals we are. When faith is not in exercise we are just fit fuel for everlasting burning, yet not consumed, but mercifully saved from ourselves.

Probably you know I had a cataract removed from my eye, for which I hope I am thankful to the Giver of all perfect gifts. I can see to read, and am able to be alone in my humble little home. I hope you are quite restored to health. May God grant you many years of health to carry on the work he has laid out for you. May you not falter under your work of love and labor for his name's sake, and that of your brethren. I feel the SIGNS is good, very good.

Pardon errors, and pardon me for my imperfect letter. I have one mind not to send it, and another mind to send it on, that you may know I enjoy the SIGNS and have tried to get one or two new subscribers, but have failed. Remember me to your little company, if any should think of me. I often think of the evening you spent with me. It is pleasant to be in the company of those of like precious faith and use the time in talking of his love and mercy to poor sinful creatures.

With christian love to you and family, and wishing you a prosperous new year, I am your sister,

(MRS.) SARAH McPHAIL.

[WE appreciated this letter very much, which came at Christmas time, with the following verse also inclosed. —R. L. D.]

"Rich gifts the Magi carried
To the Babe in Bethlehem,
But gifts of true magnificence
Were those he gave to them:
The gifts of life eternal,
Faith, hope and love so true;
So may the Christ for evermore
Bestow these gifts on you."

ISLAND CITY, Oregon.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am inclosing a personal letter from a faithful and afflicted sister in Kentucky, whose membership is with the old Little Flock Church, in Anderson County, where I was received and ordained. She has been a faithful Baptist for over fifty years, and the SIGNS has been a regular visitor in her parents' family and her own for the greater part of a century, and her testimony as to its comfort to her in her affliction is a sample expression of the great place your paper is filling in the lives of the scattered and

afflicted saints of our God. May his blessings and guiding power sustain you in this labor of love you are filling in the ministration of the truth. This sister's letter was not written with any thought of publcation, but the spirit of it commends it to me as suited for a place in the SIGNS, where it may be read by many readers just like her, and many may recall to memory the hospitality they have always received in her home. This is all submitted subject to your approval. May the God of all grace direct you in Wisdom's ways.

C. W. BOND.

LAWRENCEBURG, Kentucky.

DEAR BROTHER WESLEY:—I have read and reread your good article in the SIGNS, and am very glad you had a mind to write as you did. My mind has often run in the same channel since I lost my dear companion, but at times I would fear it was the natural love I had for him that caused me to forget his weaknesses and remember his goodness to me, and his godly expressions. I feel that none but those God has taught to know Him could be as reconciled to all things as he was. He would often say of his fellow-man, "The Ethiopian cannot change his skin, but the Lord will do all things in his own time. We could not get married until you were past the prime of life; the Lord knew your affliction." In his last sickness he said, The Lord brought me here in March, he takes me away in March. He will have been dead five years Marsh 21st, 1941. He would be seventy-seven years old now. He left me a comfortable living, but I am still lonely, and my afflictions make me more lonely. I have not been out of the house since I came from the hospital, a year ago. I have good people in the home with me, so try to count my many blessings and patiently await the call home, where there is no pain or sorrow. The dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES is a godsend to revive our hope of a life beyond.

May you often have liberty to send out a good sermon to be published for the benefit of us who are shut in and are never able to go to our dear old churchhouse, although I often live in sweet memory of the past, which is a great comfort to me.

With love to you all from your sister,

ELLA YOUNG.

PINEVILLE, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITORS:—I surely do get much comfort from reading your good paper. It is wonderful. I do not get to meeting very often, but I get the good old SIGNS and read it until it fills my heart with love to all the saints of God. I hope you may be blessed by the Lord to publish it for many more years.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

H. N. HOSKINS.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

THE date opposite your name on the little pink slip on which your address is printed denotes the time your subscription expires. **Dec 40 means that it expired December, 1940; June 41 that it will expire June, 1941, etc.**

EDITORIAL.

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Middletown, N. Y.

DANIEL XII. 1, 2.

"AND at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

If we correctly understand the Old Testament Scriptures and the prophecies contained therein, they concern the coming of the Messiah, whose name was to be Emmanuel, or God with us, which is Christ the Lord, and the kingdom which he was to establish here in the world. We shall, therefore, endeavor to bring forth from the great storehouse of the types and shadows of the law and the prophecies and show that they not only pointed to and portrayed the coming of our Lord, but that when he came and finished the work assigned to him by the Father, he fulfilled every jot and tittle of all that was typified and prophesied concerning him. In his memorable sermon on the Mount he said of himself, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill."—Matt. v. 17. Then he added, "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Luke quotes him as having said, "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man [Jew and Gentile] presseth into it. And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail."—Luke xvi. 16, 17. If the law was the schoolmaster unto Christ, and Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, most certainly it shall have no further dominion over whomsoever Christ justifies, and neither shall it protrude itself or reach beyond the setting up and establishing of the kingdom of our Lord, which is an EVERLASTING kingdom.

We shall attempt now to present for the consideration of our readers some of the types to be found in the law and the prophecies and, if God will bless us so to do, show something of their sig-

nificance. The first scriptural reference we shall employ in this connection is Genesis iii. 15, 16. God, speaking to the serpent, said, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Then God said to the woman, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be unto thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." All who have spiritual understanding will undoubtedly accept the view that in the first instance God was declaring beforehand that Jesus, his Son, would come into the world and conquer Satan; yea, even destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil. This is what God meant by saying the *seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head.* But God also said to the serpent, "And thou shalt bruise his heel." The heel is that portion of the body nearest the ground, and this meant that Satan would annoy, harrass, and even torture many of God's people here on earth. In the second instance, God had respect to his church here in the world as being the Lamb's wife. In Revelation it is recorded that the Lamb prevailed over the great red dragon, and the gospel church is set forth in the great wonder which appeared in heaven by that woman who was clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. John verily witnessed the fulfillment of what Moses in the law did write. The fact that this woman was clothed with the sun and the moon was under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars, clearly shows to our understanding that when our Lord appeared in great glory, the moon, signifying the law, was put under her feet and therefore had no more dominion over the church, and the further fact of a crown of twelve stars being placed upon her head, showed that she was verily crowned with all that had been prophesied of her, thus indicating fulfillment of the law and the prophets. How true it is that the gospel church here in the world brings forth her children in sorrow, but at the same time her fervent desire is unto Jesus, her Husband, and he, indeed, rules over her. This Scripture is not perfectly fulfilled by the earthly husband and wife, but only by Christ and his bride. He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely to her, and there is none in heaven or earth that she desires beside him.

The next scriptural type we shall produce is that of Joseph and his going down into Egypt to save much people alive. Let it be remembered that he was the first-born of Jacob by Rachel, who was Jacob's true wife and the one he dearly loved. All the evil heaped upon Joseph by his envious brethren could only show in part the enmity of the human heart and the sins of the elect of God which were imputed or charged to Jesus. The mysterious dealings of God with Joseph give us at the most but a glimpse of the great mystery which enshrouded God manifesting himself in the flesh and coming

to earth in the person of his only begotten and dearly beloved Son. Well might the apostle declare, "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

Time and space forbid our enlarging too much upon this type of Joseph and his going down into Egypt in advance of his brethren, but perhaps a hint to the wise will be sufficient. We cannot refrain from saying, however, that all that Joseph encountered and the manner in which God worked all things together for his own glory and Israel's good, was but a dim shadow of what it typified, namely, Christ's coming into the world to suffer ignomy and shame at the hands of both his brethren and the world at large, to learn obedience by the things he suffered and thus become a glorious High Priest whose feelings could be touched with the infirmities of those he came to redeem, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. (Heb. ii. 15.) His sufferings and death and the glory which followed exceedeth that of the types as the brilliance of the sun eclipses the stars of night, and Jesus by his perfect work saved his people with an everlasting salvation.

We will now turn to Numbers xxi. 9: "And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent, he lived." There in the wilderness, which typified the flesh, were both the elect of God and the nonelect; those who were alive and those who were dead, and the dead know not anything, neither were they bitten by the fiery serpents; therefore, they had no knowledge or understanding of the deadly poisonous venom injected by the bite of the fiery serpents; consequently there was no real desire for the remedy which was a certain cure, but when those who were alive were bitten and realized that they were under the sentence of death, oh, how they prayed and yearned to be made whole of their disease. What a mercy it was that God had prepared an unfailing remedy, and how they did rejoice to look upon that which meant life and salvation to them. John, referring to this (iii. 14, 15), said, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." As the fiery serpents and their venom typified Satan and sin, which once injected into the system was certain to result in death unless the effects were arrested or destroyed, and as only those who were bitten were in distress, even so only those who are quickened and made alive in Christ know anything of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and only these, and no others, will have the desire to look to Jesus to be healed of their malady. How unspeakably glorious that all such are commanded to "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

How wonderful that we have that which is far superior to all the types, even the substance, which is Jesus Christ the Lord. Let us emphasize John's saying: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up." The Son of man *must be lifted up*. Christ, and him crucified, must be preached as the way, the truth and the life, in all the world for a witness. As God purposed, so shall it come to pass, and who shall disannul it? And the reason God hath purposed it is, "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." Poor sinner, whoever you are, and regardless of how deep the dye of your sin may be, the hope of your salvation is fulfilled and is complete in every sense of the word in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We could continue on, *ad infinitum,* with our illustrations from Holy Writ regarding the types and prophecies of our Lord and the glory of his kingdom, but discretion dictates that we come direct now to our text. Daniel, in keeping with all of the prophets, was foretelling what should come to pass in that great and notable day of our Lord, concerning which each and every prophet in his own time and way testified. Daniel said, "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." We are persuaded that he had reference to the time when Jesus was to be manifested in the flesh, for he it was who was to stand up for and in the stead of those chosen in him before the foundation of the world; he it was who was to partake and drink even to its bitter dregs of that cup which the Father had given him in the counsels of eternity, and concerning which, because of the weakness of his humanity, he was made to cry, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." Luke tells us that "being in agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." What scenes we view in the garden of Gethsemane, and then follow him on to Calvary, where he was suspended between heaven and earth, between two thieves, with his hands and his feet nailed to that awful cross, and a sword piercing his side, that his life's blood might flow out as a ransom for as many as his Father had given him. Surely that was a time of trouble such as the world has never known, before nor since, nor will ever know again. Is it any wonder that even the sun should go into hiding and that total darkness should cover the face of the earth? It was at that time that he *delivered* his people. He did not do all of this only to make a way of salvation possible, or to make an offer of salvation, but to actually *deliver* every one that shall be found written in the book.

Daniel then went on to say, "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlast-

ing life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." This that is spoken of in the second verse of our text, was to take place at the same identical time that that in the first verse was to occur. In our opinion they cannot be separated, and neither do we desire to tear them apart. In the famous vision of the valley of dry bones which God gave to Ezekiel, the true condition of the "whole house of Israel" (Ezek. xxxvii. 11), both Jew and Gentile, as they stand in nature, was clearly portrayed. We are told that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14. Therefore, as we stand in Adam, we are as destitute of spiritual life as the bones, which were said to be very dry, were destitute of natural life. Daniel was prophesying of what was to come to pass when the new day dawned, when the Sun of Righteousness would arise with healing in his wings, and this no doubt had special reference to the Gentiles, who all down through the centuries had been asleep to the things of God. To the Jews were committed the oracles of God, but not even they fully understood what the Spirit in them did testify. The Gentile part of the church, being manifestly without God and without hope in the world, and with but only a few references made to her, were indeed asleep and laid dormant all down through the ages of time. Even such references as appeared showed her sad plight. Take, for instance, where Solomon said, "We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for?"—Solomon's Song viii. 8. She was spoken for when Jesus came and broke down the middle wall of partition which separated the Jew from the Gentile; she that was afar off was brought nigh by the blood of Christ, and since then the Gentiles have been no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. Adam was formed of the dust of the ground, and as they stand in him there is no difference between the Jew and the Gentile; they are both corrupt, and there is none good, no, not one, but as they stand in Jesus Christ they are all members of one body, for it is in him that they live and move and have their being. Jesus came to quicken those who were dead in sin and to raise them up and cause them to walk in newness of life. We do not believe that our text has the slightest reference to the raising of these dust bodies after the close, or end, of the gospel dispensation, but we do believe that it refers to the coming of Jesus and the establishing of his gospel church. John had reference to the same event that Daniel was writing about when he said, "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. * * * * And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into

the lake of fire." John was then beholding a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away. The books signified the law, which only condemns, but the book of life was significant of the gospel. When Jesus came and set up his church he separated the sheep from the goats, the wise from the foolish, and the living from the dead. When the gospel is preached to-day, it divides between the precious and the vile. John says, "He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."—John iii. 8.

If any doubt should linger in the minds of any regarding the fulfillment of the law and the prophecies by Jesus, it would seem to us that it should be dispelled once and for all time by the example of Jesus himself. He took Peter, James and John with him up on the mount of transfiguration, and there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Moses and Elias unquestionably represented the law and the prophets. Peter wanted to build three tabernacles as a lasting memorial of all three of them, but God would have none of this, and we are told that a bright cloud overshadowed them, and that a voice out of the cloud spoke, and said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."—Matt. xvii. 5. And when the cloud was lifted, or disappeared, they saw no man save Jesus only. It would seem from this that neither Moses nor Elias were to be given any further recognition from this time henceforth.

Isaiah was prophesying of Jesus when he said, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." And this same prophet was made a mouthpiece for Israel in his day when he prayed so fervently, saying, "Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence."—Isaiah lxiv. 1. This prayer was heard and answered when God's dear Son came to earth and redeemed his people. It was as impossible for Israel then to keep the law, with all of its exacting demands, as it was to remove mountains, but they had faith to petition their God for his aid. When Jesus came and fulfilled the law he said to his disciples, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain [meaning thereby the law with all its requirements], Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible with you."

When we have faith to look to Jesus and to believe in the efficacy of his cleansing blood, even though our sins may rise up as mountains before us, or the keeping of the law be utterly impossible so far as we are concerned, there is no obstacle so great but what it will melt and fade away as the snow beneath the summer's sun, if Jesus will but smile and bid us come to him.

We used the two verses at the head of this article as a text at the Salisbury (Maryland) Association last October, and to those who heard us on that occasion there will be some repetition in this, but if we presented the truth then it is still the truth now and will bear repeating.

May God give us to rightly understand and present the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. Amen.

R. L. D.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ANNIE S. BYRD KELLY, our dear sister in Christ, sweetly fell asleep in Christ March 9th, 1941, at her late home, on the Messongo's Road, not far from Hallwood, Virginia. Sister Kelly was the youngest and the last of four children of Jacob K. and Susan F. Byrd. The mother and four children were members of the Messongoes Church, in Accomac County, Virginia. No church could have been more highly blessed with faithful members than was the Messongoes Church during their stay upon the earth. The father never felt worthy to offer himself to the church, but was for many years one of the church's dearest friends, and his home was an open door to all Old School Baptists who desired to visit among these godly people. Sister Kelly was married February 7th, 1883, to Parker S. Kelly, and to them were born five sons and one daughter. Two sons died quite young, as did the one daughter. George E. died at the age of thirty-two years and six months, and the dreadful shock of his death was so trying upon sister Kelly she never seemed to recover from the effects of her great loss. She remarked to the writer, "I buried my heart with him." March 20th, 1904, sister Kelly was baptized into the fellowship of the Messongoes Church by the late Elder Thomas M. Poulson. Ever living thereafter a faithful and godly member of that body. Sister Kelly was indeed a Baptist of the Old School, a firm believer in the doctrine of predestination, and of the resurrection of the bodies of the saints, and the second coming of Christ. Nothing short of all the counsel of God was satisfying to her, and nothing delighted her more than to sit under the sound of the voice of him whom the Lord had sent forth crying upon the highest place of the city, Whomsoever is weary, let him turn in thither. Sister Kelly had been in failing health for several years, but was greatly blessed in having a faithful niece who unfailingly gave her aunt every attention that made for her comfort, as much so as circumstances permit of when the body is weakened by the weight of many years. Mrs. Kinights is very lonely in the home without the presence of Aunt Annie, but they who render help to the helpless shall be held in high esteem by the Lord. On March 10th the writer was called by Byrd Kelly, the eldest son, to conduct the funeral services of his dear mother, which I did, gratifying the request of the three lovely sons of our departed sister, and in the circle of many old acquaintances, and amidst the scenes of my early childhood, I tried to speak from the text Revelation xiv. 13. Since the spirit of the child of God cannot be subject to death, then it must follow that the body is blessed, because it has died in the Lord, and the Lord never confers a blessing in vain, but it shall abound to his honor and glory. When he shall come to awake his sleeping saints, then shall the blessed dead be made like unto their glorious Lord.

Sister Kelly was the last member of the Messongoes Church. Several years

ago she wrote a short history of the Messongoes Church, and in it she requested that the church property pass into the possession of the Salisbury Association. Thus did she show her vital interest in the welfare of the cause of Christ, and proved it by her works. Those left to mourn their loss are three sons, Byrd Parker, Martin Thomas and Joseph Arnold Kelly, together with grandchildren, nieces and many friends. We laid all that was mortal in the earth, there to await the Master's call, and to receive the full reward of the blessed dead at his second coming without sin unto salvation. May the Lord comfort all who mourn. Sister Kelly has gone from us, but a remembrance of her faithfulness and her many loving deeds will long linger with those who knew her best, Had sister Kelly lived until April 5th, 1941, she would have been eighty-one years old.

D. L. TOPPING.

ONCE again we chronicle the departing of a very dear friend of the Baptists: THOMAS EVAN NEBLETT, beloved husband of our dear sister in Christ, Anna Turner Neblett. Tom, as we all called him, was born near Turners Station, Kentucky, May 13th, 1865, and died January 30th, 1941, in his seventy-sixth year. He was married to Miss Anna Turner, who survives him, together with the children: Robert E., William O. and Mary Caroline, now Mrs. Watkins, of Smithfield, Kentucky. It was my pleasure to know Mr. Neblett for more than twenty years, as we lived close neighbors in Shelbyville, Ky. He was a very industrious man, and would take odd jobs. I have worked for him, he has worked for me, we have worked together, and a more honorable man I never met. While he never joined the visible church, he took great pleasure in meeting with us, and at his home the brethren were always welcome. He understood the handling of tobacco and was much in demand, as Shelbyville is a large tobacco center. How we all will miss him, especially his widow, who will miss him most, for the home will be broken up. I quote from a letter to me from her: "Tom had a vast number of friends on account of his honest and upright dealings, true and good to his family, and we will miss him."

I was called for the funeral, which was held in the Christ Church building, in Shelbyville, and tried to comfort the believing friends, using John xiv. 2, 3, as the basis of my remarks, leaving this thought, that no power on earth could separate the elect from their salvation, for it is the work of God. Then the body was taken to Smithfield, Ky., a distance of about twenty miles, for burial. May the blessing of the Lord be upon the lonely widow, the children and the friends, and enable us all to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

MRS. WILLIE DORIS SAREPTA RHODES, whose maiden name was Brown, was born November 17th, 1861, and departed this life December 8th, 1940, making her stay on this earth 79 years and 21 days. She was united in marriage to Alexander B. Rhodes in the year 1877. To this union were born twelve children, five of whom preceded her in death, leaving six boys and one girl surviving, together with our dear father, who is in his eighty-fifth year, also nineteen grandchildren and six great-grandchildren, to mourn her death. Mother was kind and affectionate to her family and many friends. She had a very strong constitution and did nearly all her housework until a few weeks before she died. I do highly appreciate the good advice she gave us children while we were growing up.

Mother and father united with the Primitive Baptist Church in the year 1907, and mother lived a devoted member until her death. She believed in salvation by grace, and grace alone, and was a firm believer in the predestination of all things. I have often heard her say, concerning this present war, that it would all end just as God has decreed it, and that Hitler, or any one else, could not go beyond God's decree. We miss mother very much, but we would not call her back if we could, knowing our loss is her eternal gain. I feel to thank God for giving us children such a good and noble mother.

Written by a son,

J. D. RHODES.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Mrs. George M. Beebe, N. Y., $10; R. L. Davis, Kans., $1; Mrs. Alice M. Hall (In memory of Joseph Hall), Maine, $8; Mrs. Corbin Arnold, Calif., $3; Mrs. J. H. Hasbrouck, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Mary C. Martin, Mo., $3.

MEETINGS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held two days, providence permitting, with the Black Rock Church Butler, Baltimore County, Maryland, (corner of Dover and Falls Roads) beginning Saturday before the first Sunday in June (May 31st and June 1st), at 10 a. m. Standard Time. Ministers of our faith and order, and all peace loving Baptists are cordially invited to meet with us. Any one desiring information as to how to reach the meetinghouse will be instructed if they will correspond with our pastor, Elder D. L. Topping, Linthicum Heights, Maryland, or the clerk, Owing Mills, Maryland.

EMMA A. PARKER, Clerk Black Rock Church.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held, providence permitting, with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, commencing on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in May, at 10:30 a. m., Standard Time, and continuing two days (May 24th and 25th, 1941). To those coming by automobile, the meetinghouse is located on Route 222, north of Conowingo, Md., and slightly north of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line. If there are any who may be coming by bus over Route No. 1 from either Philadelphia or Baltimore, they will be met at intersection of Routes 1 and 222, Conowingo, Md., by special request to the undersigned. To those who might arrive on Friday, stop at the Royce Jenkins home, near the meetinghouse, for overnight directions. Ministering brethren, brethren of our faith and church order, and friends, as well, are cordially invited to meet with us.

CHARLES B. OSBORNE, Deacon,
Route 2, Quarryville, Md.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

The Delaware River Association of Primitive Baptist churches will hold its annual meeting with the Kingwood Church, situated at Locktown, Hunterdon County, New Jersey, on Wednesday and Thursday, May 28th and 29th, 1941. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren and friends interested in meeting with us to be present.

Lehigh Valley R. R. trains wil be met at Flemington, N. J., and Pennsylvania Railroad, Belvidere Division, trains at Frenchtown, N. J., on Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. Those coming by auto on Tuesday are requested to stop at 190 Main Street, Flemington, or see Mr. C. Hoff, Postmaster, Frenchtown, so that entertainment may be provided for them.

ALWILDA R. STRYKER, Church Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

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ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

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(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M

ALL WELCOME

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists is now settled in her new church-house, at 4611 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas, where she holds her regular monthly services on each first Sunray at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. Preaching services also on each third Sunday by Elder C. B. Teague, and each second Sunday by brother O. C. Lee, at 11 o'clock a. m. A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. R. HARDY, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER,

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 109. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE, 1941. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

THERE is no truth more plainly taught in the Bible than the resurrection of the dead. Any man who can read can see that the Bible plainly teaches that the bodies of men who die and are buried in the earth shall be raised from the dead when Christ appears the second time unto salvation, whether he believes it or not. Some one is ready to say, You are wrong, for Paul says the resurrection of the dead is a mystery, and a mystery is something which we do not understand. Paul did not say the fact that the dead shall be raised is a mystery. The mystery is how it can be done in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Men who have died and have molded to dust, and perhaps their dust has been scattered to the four winds of the earth, will, at the word of God, be reassembled and changed to immortal beings, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. The mystery is not that the dead shall be raised incorruptible, but is how it can be done so quickly. Listen to Paul's statement. He says, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep [die], but we shall all be changed [from natural to spiritual], in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Nothing could be more plainly stated than the fact that at that time, which is at the last trump, the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and both the living and the dead shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. And he then tells just what kind of a change that shall be, for he follows this by saying, "For this." Mark the word "this." It means something that is present, or near in place or time. And Paul meant to tell the saints at Corinth that his, and also the corruptible and mortal body of each of them, which they then possessed, must, at the last trump, be raised from the dead, and be changed from corruption to incorruption, and

from mortal to immortal, and he therefore said, "For *this* corruptible *must* put on incorruption, and *this* mortal *must* put on immortality." If people who read would stop and study the meaning of the language used in what they have just read they would avoid many mistakes which they often make which ofttimes lead to confusion. The foregoing quotation is a full sentence in Paul's discourse on the subject of the resurrection of the dead, and a clear understanding of each word in the sentence will give one a clear understanding of what it is that shall be raised from the dead. The first word in this sentence is "for," which is here used as a conjunction, joining that which follows it with that which had just gone before, and means the same as "therefore." The next word is "this," which means that which is present, or near, in space or time. The next word is "corruptible," which means that which may be corrupted; that may become putrid; subject to decay and destruction; as our bodies are corruptible. This word cannot be applied to our bodies after they have died, putrified and come to a state of corruption. Christ died, but his body did not see corruption. But David's body did see corruption. (See Psalms xvi. 9, 10; Acts ii. 25-32.) This proves that the word "corruptible," as it occurs in this text, can only be applied to a human body before decomposition sets in. This is proven by the Scriptures themselves in the promise God made to David concerning Christ. He said, I will not leave his soul in hell, neither will I suffer my Holy One to see corruption. The Jews then, as they do now, believed that it meant David, their king, should arise from the dead and occupy his throne as a literal king, and all the dead of national Israel should be raised from the dead, and all Israel be gathered together into one place and live forever with David as their king. But Peter, on the day of Pentecost, denied this, and said, Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne. He, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This settles forever what is meant by the word "corruptible." It means the fleshly body of a man, which is subject to corruption after it dies, but in the case of Jesus did not see corruption, nor did the bodies of Enoch and Elijah, nor will the bodies of any of God's people who are alive on earth at the second coming of Christ, when he shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation from the last enemy to be destroyed, which is death, see corruption. See Heb, ix. 27, 28; 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26, and you will see that I am right on this point.

The next word in the text which we are considering is "must," which means to be obliged; to be necessitated, etc. It is the strongest word in our language we can use to express absolute neces-

sity. In this text it means that the end under consideration cannot be attained without it. What is it that *must* be done? This corruptible *must put on* incorruption. "Put on" here means to invest with, as clothes or covering, as to put on a cloak. So this corruptible must be clothed in incorruption before the aimed at can be attained. And following the next sentence after this one we are told what it is that shall come to pass when the things herein mentioned as that which *must* be done, have taken place.

The next word in the sentence is "incorruptible," which means that cannot corrupt or decay; not admitting of corruption, as gold is incorruptible. Spirits are supposed to be incorruptible. Our bodies shall be changed into incorruptible and immortal substances. Wait. See Webster. There are two more words in the sentence which I have not yet given the authoritative definition of, and they are "mortal" and "immortality." Mortal, as an adjective, means subject to death; destined to die; as man is mortal. As a noun, it means man; being subject to death; a human being. The last, and only word in this sentence which I have not given you the definition of, is the word "immortality." It means the condition or quality of being immortal; exemption from death and annihilation; unending existence. Thus, I have given the meaning of every word in this sentence as they are given by our standard authors. They certainly show that the word "corruptible" cannot mean a human body which has been dissolved by putrefaction. Neither does the word "mortal" mean a dead body. This sentence, therefore, proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that Paul was talking to the saints at Corinth about his and their then present living, fleshly, mortal and corruptible bodies when he said, For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. Therefore a certain scriptural saying can never come to pass until these things take place, for Paul goes on to say, So when *this* corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and *this* mortal shall have put on immortality, then (and not until then) shall be brought to pass the saying, Death is swallowed up of victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Why any one who can read cannot understand the only meaning the words contained in this sentence will admit of, I cannot understand. The reason I have taken so much pains to define and bring out the meaning of each word in the sentence contained in the twenty-third verse of this chapter is that I might leave no room for a doubt as to what is meant by the resurrection of the dead. When you have found the exact meaning of the language used in this sentence you may know of a truth that every other inspired truth in the Bible on this subject is in perfect harmony with it.

The third verse above this one, in view of what is contained in this verse, is easy to understand. It says, Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit

incorruption. This means that our natural, physical, mortal, flesh and blood body must undergo the change already mentioned and discussed before it can inherit the kingdom of God. The body, after it has died and gone into a state of corruption, cannot, while in that state, inherit incorruption. No, it must be changed; not exchanged. This is absolutely proven by the next verse, which I have already quoted, which begins by saying, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep [which means die], but we shall be changed [both the living and the dead must be changed. The living from their mortal state to a state of immortality, and the dead from a state of corruption to an incorruptible state], in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." I do not know how language could make anything plainer than Paul has made this matter. He starts out in this chapter, after the caption of his letter, with an argument, affirming the resurrection of the dead, based on the resurrection of Christ.

Now let us go back to the beginning of this chapter, and read it verse after verse, commenting on each verse as we go, and see whether or not we can arrive at an exact conclusion as to what, or whose body, or bodies, he had under consideration in his affirmation of the resurrection of the dead. Follow me closely, dead reader, and test carefully what I say, and if I do not present the exact meaning of the language in what I quote, please write me and call my attention to my mistake, that I may reconsider and correct it, if indeed I have made a mistake.

(*Concluded next number.*)

KINGSTON, N. Y., Oct. 27, 1940.

DEAR ELDER AND SISTER RUSTON:—I feel impressed to write you a few lines after reading your good letter in the October SIGNS, as it seems as if you are a part of us. The poet says, Our bodies may far off remove, but still we are joined in heart, and I believe that is true. The word says, What God hath joined together let no man put asunder. I believe in some measure I do know something about how true the word of God is, and hope that some things I have tasted and handled of the word of life make me believe this. I know that in a natural sense that, as the word says in the nineteenth chapter of Matthew, meaning man and wife, that they should be no more twain, but one flesh, also saying, What, therefore, God hath joined together let no man put asunder. But we do see and know much of natural ties, and being joined together by natural love through the barrenness of the heart and wickedness of men there is much separation done. But I do believe there are those whom God has joined together that no man can put asunder. God hath joined his people together, and I believe no man can put them asunder. Jesus said, No man can pluck them out of my hand, neither out of my Father's hand, for my Father is greater than all. Paul said he was persuaded there was no

power or thing, present or that should ever come, life or death, or any other creature, that was able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. I understand Paul to mean those who are born of that incorruptible seed by the word of God that liveth and abideth forever. How can man separate this kindred? God has joined the head to the body, Christ and his people, the church, the bride, and there can be no divorcement in this marriage. They shall be mine in that day when I shall come to make up my jewels, saith the Lord, What God hath joined together let no man put asunder. If there were no shalls or wills any stronger than those given by puny man we surely would not have a very solid foundation to stand or rest upon. We would be like the man who built his house upon the sand. We can look back and see the time when we trusted more in the earth, as the saying, our house was built upon the sand, and when the winds and floods came surely our house did fall, and great was the fall thereof. Yes, how soon the Holy Spirit can make us know we have no place to lay our head. How soon the power of God can make us know that all is sinking sand. But oh how we did rejoice when we could feel that our house was rebuilt, but upon a much different foundation, a foundation which man did not lay. David spoke of that when he was brought up from that pit, not only a pit, but a horrible pit. But what a difference when his feet were set upon the Rock which no man can move, and no rock liken unto it. It is the chief corner-stone, the Rock which supports this great building, whose builder and maker is God, a building which God has joined together, and no man can put it asunder. Paul said we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus. How plainly we can see that this great building, fitly framed together, as the word says, is not built by man, for the great Master Mechanic does all the work, without the aid of puny man. As man takes the timber or trees from the forest or wilderness and hews and cuts away unneeded and useless portions of the trees and forms and fashions them to suit the workman, then he joins them together in a building for his own use, and then we will say that building is such a man's workmanship. Much more so does this great master builder (Jesus) bring his material for his great building (the church) from the wilderness of this world, fits and prepares it for his building. Yes, he hews them on all sides, to cut off the many parts, portions and things of the flesh which are so unprofitable in this great building. He also cuts them down, as he did the apostle Paul. But we must remember that Paul was part of the foundation of this great building, for the word says the church was founded on the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. As the natural workman joins and fastens all his timber and material together for his building, much more so does God join his material together in his church. In the natural each timber supports the other as they are connected together, and, dear Elder and sister, how much

we realize what great support the members are to each other in the church. Of course the natural building has something to fasten the timbers together with, such as nails or pins, or it would surely fall apart, and these nails or pins are much needed and are just as important as the timber. Dear ones, it is much the same in the building of God (the church). And do we know what it is that is needed to hold brethren together in this building (the church)? We do if we are in this building not made with hands, which God has built and joined together, and not man. John spoke about that which I believe is the strongest material ever used. He said he knew he had passed from death unto life, because he loved the brethren. Now we must remember that it is not man's love, but the love of God shed abroad in the heart of a poor sinner that binds him to all those of like precious faith, as Paul says, and I will say, makes them love the brethren; yes, drawn by the cords of his love. Fire and water can destroy man's building, but sometimes it seems as though fire and water wake the love of God shine brighter. Sometimes trials give new life to prayer, bring us at Jesus' feet, as the woman who washed Jesus' feet with her tears. Fire burns up the dross and then the gold is more plainly seen, as in the case of the three Hebrew children, the faith they had, which God had given them, fire could not take away, but made it shine brighter, made it shine more and more unto a perfect day. God had joined this faith to them so strongly that man nor fire could have any affect, only to show forth the substance of their faith, and the God-given wisdom which had been given them. It only burns up and destroys the false and preserves the genuine, or true. What God hath joined together let no man put asunder. Dear ones, this is just the reason I have written this letter, because I feel that God has joined us together with that great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and in sin, as says the word.

Our hearts ache for you in the much sadness you are passing through. Well you know that when one part of the body suffers the whole body is in agony. What would we do if we did not have a God to go to? I hope you are all well. Our love for you is just the same as when you were among us. Your sorrow is our sorrow and your joy is our joy. We, too, have had a great deal of sorrow in the past two years. Lizzie has been sick two years next month. Last winter I thought that surely her time was short, but that was not the Lord's mind. God has given her faith which has shone very brightly through all her illness. For seven weeks last winter her mind was impaired, but that faith was clear and strong, and seemed to live above everything. Sometimes I think of Daniel in the lions' den, and God is just the same to-day. Sometimes I think of

"When David and Goliath met,
The wrong against the right,
The giant armed with human power,
And David with God's might,
God's power, with David's sling and stone,
The giant low did lay.
The God that lived in David's time
Is just the same to-day."

Dear ones, I feel we must fight on in this fight spoken of by Paul, and ask God for the much needed weapon to fight with, and that is the sword. Oh not of man's making, but the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, that we may be able to stand the hard trials which are to try us, as though some strange thing had happened unto us.

I want to say that we did much enjoy your letter in the October SIGNS. It seemed to tell much of my experience in the past two years, for it seemed many times that all I could do was to ask the Lord to undertake for me. I was oppressed, and, as you say, all I could do was to wait on the Lord. But sometimes there is so much flesh that it seems the vessel will surely be dashed into the deep and be destroyed unless the dear Lord does arise and calm the troubled sea, and say, Peace, be still

I will close, with much love and best wishes. Lizzie joins in love.

Your brother, I hope,

AMASA J. SLAUSON.

LADELLE, Arkansas.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have decided to write a part of my travels here in this pilgrimage. I was reared by Free Will Baptist parents, and at the age of sixteen years, while attending a revival meeting, I had a desire to join them, as I had been told that was the thing to do to be saved. I arose to my feet at one time to go, but did not. One year from that time I was received and baptized in their faith, which is work. For thirteen years, as the poet says, I sailed on flowery beds of ease, only when I would be at the water's edge when there was a baptismal service I had the desire to go with them. Why this was is unknown to me. I thought as I had already gone through it I was perfectly safe, but at the Lord's own appointed time I became troubled. First, about foot washing. I asked some of them why they did not wash one another's feet, and they could not, to my satisfaction, explain why they did not do it. Then I became troubled about a set salary for a preacher. I did not believe they had a Bible right to it. The more I heard the further I was driven from their doctrine. In June, 1915, during a wind storm, while the wind was tossing things to and fro, the thought came to me that my two little ones and myself would be the next to go. I was very much frightened, for I did not know what would become of us, when suddenly I seemed to hear a voice saying, Fear not, I am with you. All my fear was gone, and I sat down and sang that dear old hymn, "How firm a foundation," which is the hope of the children of God. My seven-year-old son said, Mama, why are you not afraid? I told him I did not know. The first Sunday of the following August was the first day of a revival meeting, so I dressed my baby and myself and walked one mile to the meeting. I had to carry the child, as my husband did not like their preaching and would not go with me. When I arrived the preacher was in the stand, and he talked about the bruised reed and the smoking flax. How he applied them I have no

knowledge, but it was a feast to me. I drank it down as an ox drinketh water, but before I reached home my mind was as blank, seemingly, as a marble statue, and I could not tell what those Missionary Baptists believed or practiced. As I hope, it was in the determinate counsel of God that I should be struck down as old Paul, and it was all taken from me in the twinkling of an eye. Oh the agony I was in on reaching home! I told my husband he should have gone to the meeting with me. He asked me what the preacher spoke about, but I could not tell him. One of the ladies present, speaking of the new preacher, said, "He has a big mouth, maybe he will scare some into joining the church." I told her that if he affected them as he did me he would tear up more than he would put together. They asked me what I meant. I tried to tell them what I meant, but my mind seemed as blank of spiritual things as the floor I stood upon. Oh the torment I was in! I thought that if I went back to meeting I would get some relief, but I only grew worse. They talked of it being such a wonderful meeting, but I said it was no more to me than the dry leaves upon the housetops, for they are sure to come to the ground. They wanted to know the cause. I only answered, It is me. A very old sister walked up to me, placed her right hand upon her chest, bowed her head and all was silent a short time, and then she lifted her eyes. I felt sure she was praying for me, but I got no relief. I did not go again that week. Oh what a cast down sinner I felt to be! I did not know anything. I was nothing, and knew nothing of God and godliness. Nothing I tried gave me relief, and I grew worse for twenty-five months, and it seemed more than I could bear. The only comfort I got was when I was with the Primitive Baptists and heard them tell of their feelings, as they would tell mine (as I hope) better than I could. It was a little comfort to me, as I had learned to love them and thought they were the children of the living God. But I could see no hope for me. I could not feel as they looked to me. At night in slumber I would be very happy with them, but when I would awake the same old trouble was present. One night I was with them in sleep and saw One dressed in a long white robe in the midst of them. He was gong aronud to all giving them something. I knew not what it was, but had a desire for it. I was afraid it would all be gone before he reached me. At last my time came and he laid a small mite in the palm of my right hand, and said, This is the bread of life. As I stood wondering what I was to do with it I was left alone. If ever I received a hope of the bread it was then. I cannot make it grow, nor can I cast it away, so I am made to stand still and wait upon the Lord.

September 16th, 1917, I was reading Colossians ii. 6, 7, and my burden left me in a minute of time. The first thing I knew my Bible was laid aside and I was walking the floor and singing, "How happy are they who thier Savior obey." The rest of the afternoon I was

talking to the church in my mind. I thought I had a pretty story of Jesus' love which he bestowed upon me to tell the church the next meeting day. I intended to make it known to them, but it was not the Lord's time. I could not move in that way. Before I reached home I was condemning myself because I did not make a profession. I told a sister of my feelings, and she told the pastor. He came up to talk with me. I felt so little it seemed that if the earth would open up and swallow me it would be a great relief. I told him I could not go to them, for I was not fit to be with a people who looked as they did to me. I felt I would be a wolf in sheep's clothing. I would be different from them. I could not feel as they looked. I did not want to be a deceiver of God's humble poor. I had no doubt where the church was, but I felt too unworthy. But the Lord's time (as I hope) was just a few hours ahead. We are not our own keeper, our steps are ordered of the Lord, so at services that day (September 23rd, 1917) I asked for a home with them. I was received and baptized that afternoon. When I came before the church it seemed as if my tongue was paralyzed, and I could not tell what I had enjoyed the week before. One day my sister asked me what was the happiest day of my life. I did not answer at once, and my mother said it was the day I was married, or should be. I love my husband, but there was a day that excels all earthly joys: it was the day my burden was lifted from this poor old soul of mine, as I was given a sweet hope that Christ had pardoned my sins and caused me to sing glory to his name.

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all, a sister in hope,

(MRS.) L. M. BAKER.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

THE LAW AND ADULTERY--Matt. v. 27-33.

MOST writers regard Matthew v. 32, 33, as forming a separate subdivision of our Lord's sermon, but really it belongs to the same section as Matthew v. 27-31, treating of the same subject and reprehending the same sin, though a different aspect thereof. Under the general head of Adultery occurred another evil, namely, the use and misuse of Divorce, concerning which the law of Moses had been grossly corrupted. Having shown the strictness and spirituality of the seventh commandment, Christ here took occasion to condemn the lax views and practices which then obtained in connection with the annulment of marriages. The Jews had fearlessly perverted one of the political statutes of the law, so that divorces were granted on the most frivolous pretences, and it was this our Lord here condemned. Thus, in reality, he was continuing to restore the seventh commandment to its proper place and perfections.

In the passage which is to be before us we are supplied with a further illustration of the vast superiority of the righteousness of Christ's kingdom over the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. There is an invariable outworking of the principle that where spirituality wanes morality also deteri-

orates. All history bears witness to the fact that when vital godliness is at a low ebb, the sacred institution of marriage is held in light esteem. It is both solemn and sad to behold an exemplification of the same in our own times. As the claims of God are less and less regarded, by those of high and low estate alike, the holy obligations of wedlock are gradually whittled down and then increasingly disregarded. When a country, avowedly christian, begins to tamper with the institution of marmiage and make more elastic its divorce laws, it is certain proof of its ethical decadence. Even those with only a smattering of ancient history are aware of the fact that in the last few decades before the fall of both the Grecian and Roman empires, marriage was held in such low esteem that it was a common thing for the women to keep tab on their divorces by the number of rings worn on their fingers. It may be replied, They were *heathen* peoples. True, but of what our moderns would term "highly civilized." Moreover, human nature is the same the world over, and when the fear of God is lost moral corruptions quickly abound. It was not otherwise with the favored nation of Israel, as a glance at the prophets will show. The case of the woman in John iv., to whom our Lord said, "Thou hast had *five* husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband," (iv. 18) is not to regarded as an exception, but rather as symptomatic of a disease which had spread widely through the nation.

"It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement."—Matt. v. 31. The original statute on this matter is found in Deuteronomy xxiv. 1-4. But so perversely had that injunction been interpreted that one of the leading schools of theology (that of Hillel) taught that a man might put away his wife for any cause. In the Apocryphal writings we read, "The son of Sirach saith, If she go not as thou wouldest have her, cut her off from thy flesh, give her a bill of divorce, and let her go."—Ecclesiaticus xxv. 26. Which is one of the many definite indications that the Apocrypha was not inspired by the Holy Spirit. Josephus also wrote, "The law runs thus: He that would be divorced from his wife, for any cause whatever, as many such cases there are, let him give her a bill of divorce." He also confessed that he himself put away his wife, after she had borne him three children, because he was not pleased with her behavior. Moses had indeed been divinely directed to allow divorce in case of adultery, for the prevention of yet worse crimes. But that which had been no more than a temporary concession was changed by the Pharisees into a precept, and that so interpreted as to give license to the indulging of their evil and selfish desires. And yet, hypocrites as they were, they made a great parade of obeying Moses with regard to the "bill of divorcement." The Talmudical writings, though they took little trouble to describe the justice of divorce, were rigidly definite with regard to the *form of*

the bill, insisting that it must be written in twelve lines, neither more nor less. Such is ever the folly of those who strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.

Let us now consider a few details in Deuteronomy xxiv. 1-4. The first thing we notice is the *kind* of statute there given. It was not a moral, but a political or civil one, for the good ordering of the state. Among such laws were those of tolerance or permission, which *did not approve* of the evil things concerned, but only suffered it for the prevention of greater evil—as when the sea makes a breach into the land, if it cannot possibly be stopped, the best course is to make it as narrow as possible. Such was the law concerning usury (Deut. xxiii. 20), permitting the Jews to exact it of a stranger, but not to exercise it towards a brother. Similar, too, was the law regulating polygamy. (Deut. xxi. 15.) These laws tolerated what God condemned, and that for the purpose of preventing greater evils. Such was the Mosaic law for divorce: not approving of the giving of a bill of divorce for every trifling cause, but permitting it for the sake of preventing greater misery and crime. For instance, if a man took a strong and rooted dislike to his wife and wished to be rid of her, he would be likely to ill treat her, until she was in danger of her very life. This law of divorce, then, was granted so as to remove the temptation for a hard-hearted husband to commit murder. Divorce is always a deviation from the original marriage institution, consequent upon the human depravity. In this instance if a man found that in his wife (something short of adultery, for that was to be punished by death) which made her repulsive to him, he was permitted to divorce her. But this was not to be done verbally and hurriedly, in a fit of temper, but after due deliberation. A "bill of divorcement" had to be legally drawn up and witnessed, making the transaction a solemn and final one.

Second, we may note the *strictness* of this law. The man only was permitted to give this bill of divorcement. Neither here nor anywhere else in the Old Testament was this liberty granted unto the wife. If this strikes us as being unjust, or unduly severe, two things are to be taken into consideration. First, in the case of a husband being guilty of immorality, the wife could bring it to the notice of the magistrate, and relief was then afforded her by her guilty partner suffering the death penalty. Second, this statute was expressly designed for the prevention of violence and bloodshed, to protect the weaker vessel; it being taken for granted that the man could protect himself if his wife should attack him.

Third, a brief word now upon the *force* and effect of this law. It made the bill of divorcement, given for the stipulated cause, to be regular before men, and marriage thereafter lawful in human courts. (Deut. xxiv. 4.) Nevertheless, in the court of conscience *before God* the divorce and second marriages thereon were unlawful, for God hated such separations (Mal. ii. 15), and whichever guilty party under such

divorcement married again committed adultery. (Matt. xix. 9.) Now this law the Pharisees had grossly perverted. They taught that it was a "commandment" (Matt. xix. 7), whereas Moses only gave a permission, as the language of Deuteronomy xxiv. 1, plainly denotes. So, too, they taught that for *any* cause (Matt. xix. 3,) a man could divorce his wife and thereby be free from her before God, and therefore at liberty to marry another. "But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery."—Matt. v. 32. Here Christ refutes the corrupt interpretation of the scribes and Pharisees, and positively affirms that divorce is permissible anly in the case of that sin which in God's sight disannuls the marriage covenant, and even then it is only allowed, and not commanded. Many have understood (being misled by the meaning of the English word) the "saving for the cause of fornication" to refer to this sin being committed *before* marriage and concealed by her until afterwards, arguing that only a married person can be guilty of "adultery." This leads us to raise the point, Do the Scriptures make any real and definite distinction between fornication and adultery? We answer, No. True, in Matthew xv. 19, and Galatians v. 19, they are mentioned separately, yet in Revelation ii. 20 and 22 they are clearly used interchangeably, while in Ezek. xvi. 25-28, the wife of Jehovah is said to commit *both* sins.

"But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery." These words of our Lord are too plain to be misunderstood. "According to this law, adultery is the only sufficient reason of divorce. He who for any other cause puts away his wife, is to be held an adulterer if he marry another woman; and she, by marrying him, commits adultery, while, at the same time, he becomes the guilty occasion of adultery, if the woman, who is still his wife, marry another man; for in this case she commits adultery as he also who marries her."—J. Brown. No matter how unscriptural be the laws of the land in which we live, or lax the sentiments and practices of the public to-day, nothing can possibly excuse any one from flying in the face of this express declaration of the Son of God, repeated by him in Matthew xix. 9. Something higher than the laws of man must govern and regulate those who fear God. The laws of all "civilized" countries sanction the practice of usury, but the word of God condemns the same. The laws of our land are open for men to go to court at the first, upon every light occasion, without seeking for some means of agreement. But those who do so are guilty before God, notwithstanding the liberty given them by our political statutes. In like manner, human laws permit divorce for "incompatability" of disposition, "mental cruelty" and various things, but the law of God condemns such

licentiousness. Baptists allow divorce for religious reasons, appealing to "every one that hath forsaken * * * * father, or mother, or wife, * * * * for my name's sake."—Matt. xix. 29. But in that place Christ refers not to divorce at all, but to a separation caused by imprisonment, banishment, or death. Marriage is not a mere civil thing, but is partly spiritual and divine, and therefore God alone has the power to appoint the beginning, the continuance and the end thereof. Here the question is likely to be asked, What of *the innocent party* where a divorce has taken place: may such an one marry again with divine sanction? To the writer it seems strange that, though there is a decided concensus of agreement, yet all christians are not one on this matter. In seeking the scriptural answer to the question, let it first be borne in mind that infidelity on the part of either husband or wife annuls the marriage covenant, the man and woman being no longer "one flesh," one of them having been adulterously united to some other. Divorce goes yet further, for it legally dissolves and removes the marriage relation. We are therefore in hearty accord with the Westminister Catechism of Faith, which declares, "In the case of adultery after marriage, it is lawful for the innocent party to sue out a divorce, and after the divorce to marry another, as if the offending party were dead."—Chap. 24, Sec. 5. In his excellent piece on "Of Marriage after Divorce in Case of Adultery," John Owen pointed out that to insist that divorce simply secures a legal separation, but does not dissolve the marriage relation, would bring in a state harmful to men. God has appointed marriage to be a remedy against incontinence (1 Cor. vii. 2), but if innocent parties lawfully divorced may not marry again, then they are deprived of this remedy and debarred from this benefit. If the divorced person has not the gift of continency, it is the express will of God that he should marry for his relief; yet on the supposition of the objector he sins if he marries again; yea, is guilty of the horrible crime of adultery. Is not this quite sufficient to expose the untenability of such an anomoly? Again, can we suppose for a moment that it is the will of a righteous God for an innocent person to be penalized the *remainder* of his or her earthly life because of the infidelity of another? Surely the very idea is repugnant to all who are really acquainted with the divine goodness and mercy. Why, if an innocent man upon a divorce is not then at liberty to marry again, he is deprived of his right by the sin of another, which is against the very law of nature; and on such a supposition it lies within the power of of every wicked woman to deprive her husband of his natural right. The right of divorce in case of adultery, specified by Christ, for the innocent party to make use of, is evidently designed for his liberty and relief; but on the supposition that he may not again marry, it would prove a snare and a yoke to him, for if thereon he hath not the gift of continence he is exposed to sin and judgment.

But apart from these convincing

considerations, the word of God is plain and decisive upon the matter. In Matthew v. 32, Christ lays down a general rule, and the he puts in an exception thereto, the nature of which exception necessarily implies and affirms *the contrary* to the general rule. The general rule is that, Whosoever putteth away his wife causeth her to commit adultery, and he who marrieth her becomes guilty of the same crime. The "exception" there must be contrary, namely, that the innocent party in the divorce may lawfully marry again, and the one marrying him or her is not guilty of adultery. But *that* is the *only* exception. 1 Corinthians vii. 15, has been appealed to by some as warrenting remarriage in the case of total desertion, but that passage is quite irrelevant, teaching no such thing. The verse refers to an unbelieving husband deserting a believing wife. In such case(says the apostle) she is not "bound" to pursue her husband and demand support, nor go to law on the matter; rather is she to follow a course of "peace." The verse says nothing whatever about her being free to marry again; nay, verse thirty-nine of the same shapter says, "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth," In Matthew xix. 9, Christ declared, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, *except* it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery." Here again it is evident the plain sense of these words is that he who putteth away his wife for fornication, and then marrieth another is not guilty of adultery. In such a case the bond of marriage has already been broken, and the one so putting away his guilty wife is free to marry again. When our Lord condemned the putting away and marrying again for every cause, the *exception* he made of "fornication" clearly allows both divorce and remarriage, for an exception always affirms the contrary unto what is denied in the rule, or denies what is affirmed in it.

Prevention is better than cure. Even a temporary separation should be the last resource, and every possible effort made to avoid such a tragedy. Marriage itself is not to be entered into lightly and hurriedly, but once the knot is tied each party should most earnestly consider the relationship which has been entered into and the serious importance of its duties. If love rules all will be well; unselfishness and forbearance are to be mutally exercised. If the husband gives honor to his partner as unto "the weaker vessel" (1 Peter iii. 7), and the wife sees to it that she render unto her husband "due benevolence" (1 Cor. vii. 3), much needless friction will be avoided. Let them bear with each other's infirmities, study each other's dispositions, and seek to correct each other's faults. Above all, let them often together draw near unto the throne of grace and seek God's blessing on their married life. The holier their lives, the happier they will be. Nothing is more honoring to God than a home which bears witness to the sufficiency of his grace and shadows forth the

union which exists between Christ and his church. A. W. P.

[In the August, 1939, Signs we published an article treating on divorce and marriage, and since this matter is of such vital importance to the welfare of the church, we herewith present an article along the same line, taken from the September, 1939, *Studies in the Scriptures,* written and published by Arthur W. Pink, 31 Colbourne Road, Hove 2, Sussex, England. This article is so much in line with our own thought on the subject that we wholeheartedly commend it to the careful consideration of our readers. Order and decency, as well as sound doctrine, should be maintained by the saints everywhere, and this message from the British Isles is reassuring to us.—R. L. D.]

Keeling, Virginia.

To the Household of Faith:—Since the departure of our much loved sister, Belle Neal, I have felt a desire to write for publication something to her sweet memory. A comprehensive feeling of unfitness confronts me, yet, fully realizing all power is in His hand, may I be given unction from on high, and used as the pen of a ready writer. She and I had much in common. Both were left widows with children to rear. We loved the same sweet doctrine: "Saved by grace." We traveled many miles together to hear this soul-cheering message declared from the pulpit. O God, is it in thy providence and mercy to receive my poor sinful soul in glory with hers?

As I take a retrospective view of this past year of 1940, which will last only a few days more, I recall so many sad changes, feeling I bid farewell to two mothers, my own (Mrs. John Williams) having died in January. Our beloved pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, having been silenced by a throat trouble, also having to see sons enlist to train for war, should we feel alarmed or try to caution "God to take care of himself?" as I heard come over the radio. A portion of the time He gives me to feel his presence, and that he ruleth and never slumbers nor sleeps, but worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. May he reconcile us poor worms of the dust to the dispensation of his will.

This year, with all the sadness, has been broken here and there with some joy. My family is well and happy, often given the mind to gather around our parental homestead, and many of us know what it means for the children to come home. I am thinking of the great joy experienced when such a dutiful child as sister Neal is called. Such comfort to know she went as she often expressed a desire to. Just as though she had gone to sleep. Such a valued friend, plus the blessed privilege of church relationship, was too great for such as I. However, I feel the desire to emulate her walk, talk and practice. She adorned her profession, was well versed in Scripture and at all times declared the sovereignty of God. My family looked forward with pleasure for her visits in our home.

Written by one who loved her.

ELLA RICHARDSON.

EDITORIAL.

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GENESIS IV. 26.

"THEN began men to call upon the name of the Lord."

The above sentence has been lingering in our mind and we will give some expressions of our views upon it.

Men had lived on the earth two hundred and thirty-five years when Enos was born. How many daughters had been to Adam is not recorded, but we presume that Cain's wife, and possibly Seth's wife, were of their own sisters. No doubt Adam had often called upon the name of the Lord, for he had had communion with his God, and could not have forgotten the days that were past, but here we find that there was a day when "men" began to call upon the name of the Lord. In the years that had passed, at least one man had been slain by his brother, and no doubt life, even to those of early time, was more and perplexing, and there was a "needs be" for men to call upon the name of the Lord. The death of Abel did not exclude from their minds that he, a righteous man, had received true instruction from his God as to the right way of approach when calling upon the Lord. Abel brought of the firstlings of the flock, and shed its blood, which certainly showed that he had been taught that he was a sinner, and by that act of sacrifice manifested faith in the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. They had also seen Cain, who was so different from his brother Abel, his walk and conversation showing that he was just a worldly man, with no sense of sin that called for the shedding of blood, but desiring a favor from God, he brought of the fruit of the ground (which was cursed) unto the Lord. Cain's offering was not respected of God, and Cain was wroth, and his countenance fell. "And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." His anger was caused because God had respect unto Abel and to his offering. These men under consideration saw what Cain's anger led him to do, even to slay Abel, and into what sadness and sorrow they were then plunged. What a hideous monster sin must have appeared unto those men, as the lifeless form of their brother came so often to

their memory. Not so with Cain. He had turned from his heinous act with very little evidence of consciousness of guilt, but he thought his punishment greater than he could bear. If men then began to call upon the name of the Lord, how much more need have men now to do so, with men so tremendously multiplied upon the face of the earth, and men slaying their brothers by the thousands, with deceit and wickedness on every side. Sin and wickedness have become so common, and the heart of man so desperately wicked, that very few seem to lay it to heart. It will be interesting for us here to note who were among this group of men. Adam, the father of us all, walked with his offspring, lived many years in the days of Enoch, but died before Enoch was translated. From Adam to Lamech, the father of Noah, a considerable number were born of one common parent, and among them there were men that called upon the name of the Lord. These men believed in the Lord, for it is written, "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?"—Rom. x. 14. Undoubtedly, to call upon the Lord is to believe in him, as a possessor of a God-given faith, "for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Thus to call upon God is to seek him, to present our desires before him, for thich we hope is lawful and right, supplicating his aid and confessing our sins, asking for mercy for Jesus' sake. There was a needs-be for man to call upon the name of the Lord, for although it is not mentioned in Genesis that God appointed it, yet it is clearly shown in God's word that he will be inquired of by the house of Israel to do these things for them, and he has also said, Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. It is according to the ordered way, and God manifests himself as a prayer-hearing and a prayer-answering God. Were they in trouble, they looked unto him and were lightened, and their faces were not ashamed. David said, "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles."—Psalms xxxiv. 6. They were able to bless him as he, in his love and mercy, blessed them, and this was acceptable unto the Lord. When Noah came out of the ark, with all that he had, his first thought was to call upon the name of the Lord, and he offered burnt offerings on the altar which he had builded unto the Lord, and it is stated, The Lord smelled a sweet savor, and God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be ye fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth. Some men have been greatly blessed with a nearness unto God as they called upon his name. His felt presence was with them, and God spake to them and blessed them. How well this is seen in the account of Abraham, who staggered not at the promise through unbelief, but was strong in the faith, giving glory unto God. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were of that blessed number that called on the name of the Lord.

Jacob proved that "wrestling prayer can wonders do." Jacob said, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." We have set before us in the word a wonderful example of a man blessed to call upon the name of the Lord in David. Many of his prayers are written down for us, but when or where David as a child or youth was blessed to join with men who called upon the Lord, we are not told, but with David, as with the men mentioned in our text, there was a beginning. A time when David first called upon God. It was God who first began this work of faith in David, which found him not wanting in the day when the bear and the lion came against him. No doubt the green pastures had been a Bethel to him, and there he learned to lisp God's name. Let us think of the many and varied trials he had to endure, misunderstood, as Joseph was, by his brethren, for Eliab said, "Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle." David's answer to him was short. He said, "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" David testified before Saul, and slew Goliath, and with the favor of God resting upon him, the hatred of man was manifest. Cain slew Abel, and Saul would have slain David, but David trusted in God. David could have slain Saul, for he and Abishai found Saul sleeping, and those who should have been watching for his care sleeping also, and Abishai said to David, "God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day; now, therefore, let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear, even to the earth at once, and I will not smite the second time. And David said to Abishai, Destroy him not: for who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?"—1 Sam. xxvi. 8, 9. Saul hunted him as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains, and while he hunted David, David called upon the name of the Lord. Hear, for instance, this expression of David, as found in our Psalter:

"Lord, thee, my God, I'll early seek;
My soul doth thirst for thee;
My flesh longs in a dry parched land,
Wherein no waters be:

That I thy power may behold,
And brightness of thy face,
As I have seen thee heretofore
Within thy holy place.

Since better is thy love than life,
My lips thee praise shall give;
I in thy name will lift my hands,
And bless thee while I live.

Even as with marrow and with fat
My soul shall filled be,
Then shall my mouth with joyful lips
Sing praises unto thee.

When I do thee upon my bed
Remember with delight,
And when on thee I meditate
In watches of the night.

In shadow of thy wings I'll joy,
For thou my help hast been;
My soul thee follows hard, and me
Thy right hand doth sustain."

How full of evidence are the Psalms that men called upon the name of the

Lord, and there is much encouragement to those in trouble to wait on the Lord. There is a spirit spreading over the earth, and which is creeping among some who profess the truth, that if you are to be blessed you will be blessed, therefore why pray? The same spirit is seen in some in an indifference to the assembly of the saints. They have abundant means to provide a way, but often are not in their place. Such people may say, as we have heard it said, I shall hear just as many sermons as the Lord intends me to. We have never heard them say when meal time came around, I will sit right here and all the same, I shall have just as many meals as the Lord intends me to have. It is true they will hear just as many sermons as the Lord intends them to, whether they go or not, but they are sinning in forsaking the assembling of themselves together, and unless their bands of unbelief become strong, and their hearts hardened, and they be proven to be as the dog, turning to his own vomit, or the sow that was washed going back to wallow in the mire, they surely will be sorry for it. The one who wonders what is the use of praying, certainly in spirit is opposed to our Lord, who said, "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." They might have asked the Lord for certain things, and if they did not ask subject to his will, *they asked amiss*. To encourage us to call upon him, Jesus gives the example of the widow and the unjust judge. (Luke xviii. 1-8.) "Men ought always to pray." That was true then, and it is true now, and while the writer is convinced of his own lack of wisdom, he has been told by James to pray to God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not. Is there a limit to what we should pray for? We should not pray for that which is unlawful and contrary to the word of God, as, for instance, did the Pharisee, who prayed with himself with a lie in his mouth, and a proud spirit in his heart, despising others. We are rather to pray for them which despitefully use us and persecute us. Paul exhorted the brethren, "That, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." Paul asked the brethren to pray for him, and he remembered them in his prayers, praying he might be blessed of God to see the brethren who were distant from him, for he tells them he longs to see them, and God answered his prayer very differently from what Paul expected. Read Acts xxi. to the end of Acts xxviii. There we see God answering Paul's prayer. Paul exhorts widows to continue night and day in prayer. There is nothing too small to call upon God about, if so be our mind is exercised therein. On one occasion a woman came to the writer in her anxiety about taking a husband. After some questioning we asked her if she had asked the Lord's guidance in the matter, and when she answered in the affirmative, our mind was more at ease over the step she afterwards took. What saith the word? "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not

unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."—Prov. iii. 5, 6. We have had some exercise over days being set apart in the world by certain men, particularly those of the Empire to which the writer of this article belongs. Our sovereign, King George vi., also our prime minister, have asked that prayer to Almighty God for an Empire in peril shall be made at certain times. We have known of men making light of such things, but what saith God's word? We are of that number, in this day, who are very thankful when Almighty God is acknowledged in high places. We have in our heart a deep sympathy for our own prime minister in these terrible times, and especially for our King and Queen. They are humbled with the common people among whom they dwell. There are nations to-day that forget God, and there are those that remember God and are troubled. The city of Ninevah, at the word of the king, humbled itself, either willingly or unwillingly, for their's was an absolute sovereign, and there was a "who can tell" in his testimony: "Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?" The Lord heard and Ninevah was spared. Daniel reminded Belshazzar of the abundant blessings God had bestowed upon his father, king Nebuchadnezzar, whom God had humbled to the level of the beasts of the earth, "till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will. And thou, his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, *though thou knewest all this;* but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven, * * * * and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified." There is much among our nations and our own people that God will surely judge. With the church, it is high time for the priests, the ministers of the Lord, to weep between the porch and the altar, and for them to cry, "Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?" The church has been passing through evil days, when men were lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. No persecution, no living godly, a treacherous calm, which is to be dreaded more than tempests bursting over our head. Many are like swine, who pick up the acorns, and never look up to the tree from whence they come. No wonder of such Jude said, "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core."—Jude 11. We do not presume to know just what prompts men in authority to ask that men call upon the name of the Lord, nor can we tell what will be the disposition of our God concerning them, but speaking for ourself, we feel to call night and day upon the Lord for ourself and for those who belong to us, and we can say with Psalm xci., "I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge,

and my fortress: my God, in him will I trust." Nationally there have been evidences of God's mercies, and we trust there will yet be reason to acknowledge him. As far as we are concerned, we have seen those we love spared through dangers seen and unseen, which should encourage others to call upon him.

G. R.

IN MEMORIAM OF R. L. DODSON.

DEAR LESTER:—I am writing this as a memorial to our dear father. Mama was here Sunday and had dinner with me. It just seemed more than I could bear: her presence and his absence. He was one of the best of fathers in every way. Going back to my early childhood, I remember the good old days when he would have preachers spend the night at our home. They would read some Scripture, have prayer, and it made an impression on me. I felt it a very sacred thing. He was happy when entertaining his good brethren, or even strangers. He never wanted to turn any one away. He was always kind and sympathetic and wanted the good will of every one, and never spoke harm of any one. He was very spiritually minded, read his Bible daily and was blessed to understand the Scriptures, as others know. He lived a very active and useful life. On one occasion I was asked by a lawyer, just before being called as a witness, Are you as good a woman as your father is a man? Somehow it pierced my heart like a sharp sword. It came so unexpectedly, and being excited, I answered by saying, I hope I will be. His thoughts and ideals were high, and he was always striving to help mankind. He was of a very cheerful disposition up until the last few months of his life. He knew he was growing weaker fast and realized he could not live long. He said, I know it cannot be long; I hope I do not have to linger and suffer. I saw him the day before he died, and he was then in a dying condition, and it hurt me badly, for I knew the end was near. When the nurse said, Your father has passed away, I could not shed a tear, but thanked God that he did not have to suffer much. I felt I knew he was at rest.

I here want to relate a dream I had about him. I was standing with several others near a beautiful high mountain, every color of the rainbow, and suddenly we looked up, and he was standing on the top of the mountain. Some one asked him, Why did you get up there? He said, Because I wanted to be near heaven. The mountain almost reached the sky.

He was always eager to attend the meetings of his churches, and it gave him great pleasure to hear the gospel preached in its purity. He never doubted God's unlimited power, and was willing to wait on the Lord. Sleep on, dear father, our loss is your eternal gain. We miss you, oh we miss you. May God reconcile his poor wife. She was faithful in her feeble condition and did all she could. If we could only live the life you have we would have nothing to regret.

Lovingly, your daughter,
(MRS.) LAILA F. FERGUSON,

DANVILLE, Va., March 27, 1941.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. J. E. Hicks, Texas, $1; Mrs. L. T. Genung, N. Y., $1; E. G. Webb, Okla., $1; Mrs. C. Edward Bernard, N. J., $1; A. J. Doggett, Ala., 25 cents.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEACON WILLIAM P. McLONEY was born December 16th, 1862, and died February 22nd, 1941, aged 78 years, 2 months and 6 days. He was married to Miss Willie McLoney, who survives him and will miss him greatly, as they had lived together many years. To them two children were born, Henry Thomas and Nina Frances, both dying in childhood. He also leaves two half-sisters, one half-brother, several nieces and nephews and a host of friends. In the summer of 1898 both he and his wife joined the Elk Lick Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, Scott County, Kentucky, and were baptized by Elder George S. Weaver, of Indiana, then pastor of the church. A few years later he was ordained as one of her deacons, and served the church faithfully until his health failed. The last meeting he attended was our yearly gathering, Sunday, September 4th, 1940. Gradually through the winter of 1940 and 1941 his condition grew worse and he was taken to the hospital in Cynthiana, Kentucky, where he died. Brother McLoney was a very orderly man, sound in the faith he professed when he was taken into the fellowship of the brethren. He was an inspiration to me, and whenever he thought I had made an error in my my preaching he would come to me and tell me how he saw it and ask me to think it over. This I appreciated very much, and would thank him for it. So few of the brethren nowa-days seem to take much thought of what is going on, but brother William was interested and wanted to know. The Bible was his try square at all times, and he often told me it was all predestinated, or else nothing was, and that salvation by grace was Bible doctrine, and could not be tampered with or changed, it was free.

We met under a tent in the cemetery, and I read his favorite hymn, number 488 (Beebe's collection), and spoke briefly of the love of God that passeth all understanding, of his power, which is absolute, and whose work is perfect. May the Lord comfort the lonely widow and give her grace to carry on, and reconcile us all to whatever is to come, and to the brethren it has been my pleasure to serve for twenty years as pastor, may he reconcile us all, and enable us to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

ALSO,

LUTHER B. ELSTON, the subject of this notice, was born April 30th, 1872, and died March 9th, 1941. All his life was spent at or near the village of Turners Station, Kentucky. While never joining the visible church, he loved the meetings, and his home was always a home for the Old School Baptists. His wife, sister Mattie Elston, was a member of the Cane Run Church, at Turners Station, which church was amalgamated with the Sulphur Fork Church, near Campbellsburg, Ky., and was at one time pastored by the late Elder John G. Eubanks, and Elder P. W. Sawin, and for the last eighteen years by the writer. Our friend Luther was of a very jovial disposition, a good farmer, tobacco raiser and auctioneer, and leaves many sorrowful neighbors in the neighborhood in which he lived. March 24th, 1892, he was married to Miss Mattie Ransdell, and to this union four children were born: Bulah May, Charles Benton, Wallace Smith and Mary Elizabeth. Bulah May and Wallace Smith are deceased. Charles Benton Elston is County Agent of Nelson County, and resides in Bardstown, Ky. Mary Elizabeth is now Mrs. Mary Baker, and resides at Ghent, Ky.

I tried to comfort the friends at the funeral, using as a text Psalms xxiii. 1,

"The Lord is my shepherd." A large gathering of brethren and neighbors were present, and after the services all that was mortal was laid to rest in the Turner Cemetery. May the Lord bless the lonely widow, the children and friends, and enable us all to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done, and may he, the great Shepherd, reconcile us all.

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

JOSEPH WATSON, our dear brother, was born May 20th, 1870, and died March 4th, 1941, making his stay on earth 70 years, 10 months and 14 days. His first marriage was to Miss Lizzie Douglass, of Tinsman, Ark., and to their union were born three sons and five daughters, all living. His first wife died in July, 1935. She loved the Old Baptist doctrine, but never united with the church. They raised an honorable family of children. After the passing of his first wife he married Miss Jewel King, of Hermitage, Ark. They lived peacefully and happily together until he was called home. He united with the White Water Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church on Saturday before the second Sunday in February, 1901, and was baptized by Elder J. H. Draper. He served as clerk of the church until his death; also, was clerk of the South Arkansas Association. The church and the community sustain a great loss in the passing of brother Watson. We all feel that the world is better for his having dwelt here as long as he did. He was sound in the faith and unwavering in his belief and adherrence to the distinguishing doctrine and order of the house of the Lord, and, I will say, to his Lord. Left behind to sorrow are his loved ones, who sorrow not as those who have not a sweet hope, for we feel that while his body is resting beneath the sod his soul is basking in the sweet smile of a once crucified, but now risen and highly exalted Redeemer. His funeral was conducted by Elder E. J. Lambert, at his home, where he passed away, and his body was laid to rest in the cemetery near Tinsman, Ark., by the side of his first wife, there to await the call on the resurrection morn.

Written by request of his bereaved widow.

T. J. EVERS.

MRS. FANNIE WORD was born March 3rd, 1864, and died April 2nd, 1941, aged 77 years and 29 days. She was married to J. T. Word March 27th, 1883, and to this union were born two sons, Lee and Walter Word, who survive her, and were at her bedside when death came. She also leaves eleven grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren and a host of friends to mourn her passing. Brother and sister Word lived together fifty-eight years, and this is the first death to come to their family. Sister Word was a true believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, but had been unable to attend church services regularly the last few years, because of ill health. Little Flock Church extends heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family.

Done by order of the church while in conference.

W. N. GREEN, Moderator.
(MRS.) LOU STARR KESTER,
Church Clerk.

MEETINGS.

An all-day meeting is planned to be held with the New Vernon Church, near Howells, New York, on Friday, June 6th, 1941. We expect Mrs. Blumroder to supply the dinner, as heretofore. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

R. LESTER DODSON.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us

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OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists is now settled in her new church-house, at 4614 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas, where she holds her regular monthly services on each first Sunray at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. Preaching services also on each third Sunday by Elder C. B. Teague, and each second Sunday by brother O. C. Lee, at 11 o'clock a. m. A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. R. HARDY, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us. A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 109. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1941. NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

(*Concluded from last number.*)

Paul begins this chapter by saying, "Moreover, brethren, I declare [in the present tense] unto you the gospel which I preached [in the past tense] unto you, which also ye received [in the past tense], and wherein ye stand [in the present tense]." We learn in this first verse that Paul was at that time preaching unto them the same gospel that he had preached unto them before, and which they had received, and wherein they yet stood. There are two things in this verse that we should keep in mind. First, that whatever it was that Paul had preached unto them, and which they had received, and wherein they were yet standing, Paul called it the gospel, and let me add just here that there can be no gospel of Jesus Christ if the dead are not to be raised. The name Jesus means Savior, and the angel told Joseph that He should save his people from their (in the plural) sins. And I know of no people who are sinners except the offspring of the earthly Adam, who died at the age of nine hundred and thirty years, because he was a sinner. It was the creature man which God made of the dust of the ground who died at that age, and it was the mortal body that died, and this is the kind of people Paul is discussing the resurrection of, for he speaks of them as being mortal and corruptible. So the next verse says, "By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached [in the the past] unto you, unless ye have believed in vain." There is a saving power in the gospel to the saved, but not to the unsaved. (See 1 Cor. i. 18.) In the next verse Paul says, "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures." He is here referring to what he said at the first, as what he had preached to them in the past, and that they had received it and were still standing in that belief.

But a little later he found some who did not accept what he was then preaching, and he asked them how they could say what they were saying, since the first could not be true unless what he was then preaching to them was true. The next verse goes on to say, "And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." In the foregoing verse he continued to tell them what he preached unto them first of all, and which they had accepted, and still believed it, and in the next four verses he is telling how many people saw Jesus after his resurrection, the greater part of whom he said remained unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. Keep in mind that he means by "the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep," that the greater part are yet alive, but some of them have died. It is common with him, and with many of the scriptural writers, to speak of the dead as being asleep, and especially when they are talking about the resurrection of the dead. He ends that part of it by saying, "And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." Then he does not mention the resurrection in the three next verses. They are given to statements concerning himself. But he begins the twelfth verse by saying, "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" Keep in mind the fact that they are not differing as to whether or not Christ had risen from the dead, for he affirms that he had preached the resurrection of Christ from the very first of his preaching among them. He says that he did that first of all, and he says that they received it and were still standing in that belief. So it was not the resurrection of Christ which some were now denying, for in the next verse he follows that statement by saying, "But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen." Let me here say that the phrase in this verse does not mean, *If Christ did not rise in the past,* nor that he, or any one else, is now, at the present time, rising from the dead. The language will not admit of such a conclusion. And, beside this, the expression in the twenty-ninth verse, which says, "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all?" "What shall they do?" is in the future, and "if the dead rise not at all" is in the future tense. This thought of the future resurrection of the dead bodies of the saints runs through this entire chapter, and is found clearly indicated in almost every place in the Old and New Testaments where the resurrection of the dead is mentioned. Job tells us that it shall not take place until the heavens be no more. This places it at the time of the second coming of Christ, when, Peter says, the heavens shall pass away with a great noise (2 Peter iii. 10), and which John saw take place in his vision on the isle of Patmos (Rev. xx. 11), where he said, "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found

no place for them." And he saw, immediately following this scene, the resurrection of the dead, both small and great, all of whom stood before God to be judged; and he saw all places which held the dead, give them up, among which places was the sea, for he said, "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it." We surely ought to understand what kind of dead the sea will give up to be judged, for they are now going down by the thousands almost daily. Job was certainly inspired, for the time set by him is fully corroborated by these writers fifteen hundred years after he wrote.

But back to Paul. He said in the next verse, "And if Christ be not risen, then is your preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." Why was the preaching of the apostles vain if Christ had not been raised from the dead? It was because he had been preaching that Christ died to save them from their sins, but that end could not be accomplished by a dead Christ. For Paul said in Romans v. 10, "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." If he remained dead we could not be saved by his life. This will be made more evident as we go on down. The next verse says, "Yea, and we [the ministers] are found to be false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not." Paul is here arguing that if the dead should fail to rise, then the entire end for which Christ died would be a failure, and all they (the ministers) have preached is but a farce and a falsehood, and there is nothing to it.

The next three verses say, "For if the dead *rise not,* then is Christ not raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." The direct consequence that could possibly befall God's people is, and will continue to be a fact, if the dead are not to be raised in the future. And the reason is made very plain in these three last verses. "For if the dead rise not, then is Christ not raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." There can be only one reason why Christ should not have risen from the dead, if he did not rise, and that would be that he failed to satisfy the law for those for whom he died. Jesus himself said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Christ went under the law to redeem his people from under it, so neither he nor his people can ever be freed from under it, and rise from the dead, unless he fulfilled it to its last jot and tittle. If he failed to do this he is perished, and all they which are fallen asleep in him are perished, and all the rest of mankind at their death will perish forever, because he failed to satisfy for their sins. Their faith is vain; they are yet in their sins.

And he follows this up by saying, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." He means by that saying that God's people suffer more in this life than the wicked do. (See Psalms lxxiii. 3-6.) Their hope in Christ is that in the resurrection they will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. (See Romans viii. 18-25.) They also hope they will then obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. But if Christ did not rise he failed to put away their sins by the sacrifice of himself, and they are yet in their sins, and are left without hope and without Christ, and are of all men most miserable. But thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, Paul did not leave us without hope, for the next verse says, "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." In my mind's eye and ear it seems that I can almost see him and hear him triumphantly waving his blessed right arm, with something in his glorious hand, and shouting, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." A most glorious truth is this, for he hath said of his people, by the mouth of the prophet Hosea, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." Meaning he will not turn from this promise and fail to fulfill it. Paul, in what I have already quoted, tells us just when this promise shall be brought to pass. He says, "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, *then* shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" It is wonderful how those Old Testament writers and the New Testament writers are so perfectly agreed on this subject.

I mean, if the Lord is willing, to continue to write on this subject until I have commented upon every place in the Scriptures which I think will throw any light on the subject, and as it will be too long to print in the SIGNS I aim to publish it in pamphlet form, with this article in the beginning of it, and I would like for all who read this, and would like to have one of them, to write me, so I can enroll their names and know when I have enough to meet the expense of getting it out. The price will be as low as it can be to pay for getting it out and handling it. I mean to show that the end for which God made everything which was, and is, is to make manifest, or make known, his eternal glory, the riches of which can never be made known without the resurrection of the dead. For Paul said, What if God, *willing to shew his wrath,* and to *make his power known,* endured with much longsuffering the *vessels* of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might *make known the* RICHES of his glory on the *vessels* of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory. Even

us, whom he hath called, not of the *Jews* only, but also of the *Gentiles.*"

You will note that I have put certain words in italics, to which I wish to call special attention, and have put the word "riches" in small capitals, and have italicized the phrase "of his glory," to show that the RICHES of his glory can only be known on the vessels (Note this word "vessels") of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory. This will not take place until the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, and he shall be seated upon the throne of his glory to judge the quick (living) and the dead, and God shall call for all nations to gather before him to be judged. He will then "say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my *sons* from far, and my *daughters* from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him." I will show that all the foregoing applies to the outward man, the flesh, which perisheth; while the inward man, which consists of two parts, which are called the spirit and soul, is renewed day by day. Those inward parts are where Jeremiah says God promised to put his laws. (Jer. xxxi. 33.) Paul said to the Thessalonians, "And the very God of peace sanctify you *wholly.*" Meaning every part of you, and named them, by saying, "And I pray God your *whole* spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Then he adds the blessed part of it, by saying, "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." Does any one think that man's whole spirit, soul and body will be preserved blameless in God's account unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and then God will condemn the body to everlasting annihilation? I do not. Back in creation, where God made man, when he stretched forth the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth, he formed man's spirit in him, and if you will consult Deuteronomy xxix. 29, you will not ask any one what he formed it of. And I have never read of the spirit or soul of man dying and returning to dust, or of being buried, and a promise that they should be raised up at the last day. Jesus taught that men can kill the body, but they cannot kill the soul. (Matt. x. 28.) And I aim to show that the work of changing man from the image of the earthy and conforming him to the image of the heavenly is begun *in* man while in this life, and will not be completed until the day of Jesus Christ. Paul said to the Philippians, that he was confident of this very thing, that he which had begun a good work *in* them would continue it until the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil. i. 6.)

I mean to try to present the exact scriptural teachings on these things, if God is willing. I also aim to show that the resurrection of the dead bodies of the saints was the foundation of the hope of the prophets, of Moses, of the

fathers and of Paul, and that the entire end and aim for which God created all things will be a failure if the dead do not rise in the glorious image of his blessed Son. John said, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Then he added, "Every man that hath this *hope* in him, purifyeth himself, even as he is pure." From this we see that this was the hope of John, and the believers of his day, and it is my only hope for a blessed immortality beyond this life. I am in my eighty-third year, and this doctrine grows sweeter to me as I approach nearer the end of this life.

When I begin the continuation of this subject, I will leave off the last part of this article, and go back to where I left it at the twentieth verse of the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians, and finish the investigation of that chapter, for there is much more proof in that chapter to substantiate the position which I have herein taken. I will bring in those thing which I have proposed to prove, at the proper time and place.

If any wish to write me concerning this article, they will please address me at Sulphur Bluff, Texas, R. F. D. 1, Box 65.

I remain a poor old sinner, but in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began,

J. C. SIKES.

UNION, N. J., May 18, 1941.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I cannot refrain from expressing again how my hungry soul was filled with spiritual food from the hymn used at the beginning of your afternoon services to-day, feeling that I would have been bountifully paid for my trip to New York if you had not said another word from the pulpit. That hymn has been on my mind almost continuously as a silent prayer for the past two or three months, due to a little experience one night when awakened from sleep. Several times I have felt like suggesting it for the services, but have not, because of a feeling of unworthiness, and who am I that I should even entertain a thought of suggesting a hymn? It was a great comfort to me when you announced hymn 1046, as I had just opened the book and was perusing the words of that hymn. This is just one more instance where we can see the hand of Almighty God directing the work of his servants. I cannot help feeling that his ever-watchful eye is over us at all times, leading, guiding and directing us in the way that we should go.

It is with much hesitation I mention the word "predestination," knowing that it is a subject of controversy among some of our brethren, yet it forms the foundation for the hope of all true followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. God predestinated that you use the hymn you did to-day, and, if not deceived, it was his divine will and purpose that it should be food for a poor hunghy soul such as I. All

things are in his hand, be they great or small, and not one thing shall be left undone in the eternal plan of salvation, and not one of the redeemed shall be lost; every one for whom Christ shed his precious blood shall meet around that great white throne in heaven above, where all is love, there to sing praises to his name for evermore. We are told that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Though it may be very difficult to comprehend the good of all things, yet time will prove that the foregoing Scripture is true, and how glad we should be that "all things" are embraced in his covenant and nothing is left for poor helpless humanity to perform without the guiding hand of the all-wise God. Some of the most bitter experiences of my life have proven to be the greatest blessings, thus I feel to speak from experience, that the bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower. If God be for us, who can be against us? He who predestinated that his only begotten Son should come down to a world of sin and sorrow to give his life a ransom for his people that they might have life eternal; moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What more could any sin-sick soul desire than to know there is no power greater than that above? The winds and waves obey his will, and his voice can speak peace to the tempest-tossed, weary, wayworn traveler, whose only hope is in the all-sufficient grace of the blessed Redeemer, who said, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. There is no other way to enter into the sheepfold except by and through the door, which is Jesus Christ himself. The one who climbeth up any other way is a thief and a robber. Jesus, the great Shepherd, calls his loved ones into the fold and his voice they cannot resist, but the voice of a stranger they will not follow. They are drawn by the sweet cords of love, and how thankful we should be for the hope and faith to believe that he has spoken peace to our souls when deep down in the pit of utter blackness and despair. For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. What could be freer and more assuring than a gift? We do not have to pay for it by works, or in any manner whatsoever, not of works, lest any man should boast. What do we have to boast about? Yet if it were not for the all-sufficient grace of God it is only human nature to boast of many things done. Thanks be to his holy name that we are kept humble at his feet and made to feel that we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. If it has been ordained by God, how can we do otherwise? Who are we to resist the power of God, when not a sparrow can fall to the ground without him? Con-

sider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin. Put your trust in God, seeking first the kingdom of God above everything else and your life, which is hid with Christ, shall be eternal in the heavens above.

"By their fruits ye shall know them," and our faith is shown by works which are implanted in our hearts and minds by the Spirit from above. Our very thoughts and intents are known by the Father above. Oh may he guide and direct us in the way that leadeth to joys above. This is the way, walk ye in it. But how could one walk in the way if not led by the Spirit of God? It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, and if left to himself he would fall by the wayside, but thanks be to God, he has promised that he will never leave nor forsake his own. Oh how sweet and wonderful are the many promises contained in the eternal word of truth, if it be the will of God to reveal them unto us, but without his revelation the Scriptures have no spiritual meaning at all. Though our seasons of feasting be few and far removed from each other, yet we would not exchange a moment in thy presence, dear Lord, for ten thousand worlds such as we have to-day, which will perish or vanish with the years. Thy grace is all-sufficient, everlasting, eternal and far reaching to all corners of the universe. May we be given strength to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, ever looking to Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith, the One altogether lovely, knowing that in and of ourselves we can do nothing. He is our all-sufficient aid, and ever present help in time of trouble.

Brother Dodson, please do not feel that these rambling words of mine were written for publication. It is just a means of giving vent to my feelings, to relieve my mind of some thoughts that would not be understood or appreciated by the majority of people in the world to-day. Perhaps it will be only a waste of your time to read this. If so, please pardon the intrusion. If there should be any truth or comfort in what has been written, give all praise, honor and glory to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. May God give you grace to continue contending earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. May he sustain you at all times in your work as editor of the SIGNS, which is a great comfort to many people, also in your work as pastor of the Ebenezer Church, where I found such a lovely home among a group of true followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, if I know anything at all about such things. My heart was filled with joy the day you so graciously accepted my letter asking that my name be placed on your church book, feeling that I needed so much the guidance and watchcare of one so deeply grounded in the truth as you are.

"Oh that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still;
Oh that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will."

In bonds of love,

ELSIE M. LOEFFEL.

WESLACO, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If one so weak and unworthy as I may address you as brethren. If indeed I have ever tasted of any of the heavenly things it was not because of any good thing I have done. Ever since I was a child I have seen myself a sinner, and when playing hide-and-seek with other children I would be behind the door begging God to have mercy on me. I wish I had the ability of a ready writer to express my thoughts in words as I hope I sometimes am made to see them in my mind, then I might be able to express them so I would not be mistaken in expressing my thoughts. I love to think of that great God that never had a beginning, and will have no ending. Oh yes, a God that foreknew all things, and one who purposed all things that will ever come to pass. Some say that predestination causes things to come to pass. I do not believe that, for purpose or a plan never did cause a building to be built. It takes power to carry this plan out, and this great God has this power, unlimited power, to cause it all to come to pass. What comes to pass to-day has already been (in his mind and purpose). It is not one whit different when it comes to pass, for it was in his master mind before the creation of the world. It is one eternal now with him, the same yesterday and forever. All things work together, both good and evil, to bring about what God has purposed to come to pass. I believe it was necessary for Jonah to go through with every bit of the experience he had on that journey before he went to Ninevah, that God had the whale growing all those years to be right there on the spot ready to take poor old Jonah down, and all this was arranged by the God of high heaven before the world was made, and he caused it to be manifested just as it was. So I admonish, but I cannot teach that you can avoid these things coming to pass in your life, for I believe that we will commit every sin that Christ suffered for on the cross, and at the same time it is I who will have to account for all of my sins. I believe that in the new birth here in time it is the first man (old man) that is born again; it is first natural, then spiritual. So the Lord's little ones have two births, two lives, two natures, bear two kinds of fruit. The spiritual birth is a new eternal life that takes up its living abode, or place, with the old man in the same body, so when a person is born of the Spirit it shows the old man what he is by nature, shows him that he is a sinner in the sight of God, and it is because of this birth that the old man tries his best to get himself out of this sinful condition. The spiritual life doth not commit sin. Its fruit is righteous, holy, etc., while the fruit of the old man is sinful, and contrary to the spiritual life. So the new birth does not free the old man of his sinful condition, but it is sin condemned in the flesh; yes, left there until death, but even then they are alive to their sinful condition: they are left with a hope. Yes, a hope that this sinful body, this sinful life, will some sweet day be changed into that glorious state of our blessed Savior. So it is the old man

that praises the Lord here in time for that blessed hope given him by this blessed Man. It is then that he can sing that sweet old song, "I once was lost, but now am found; was blind, but now I see," etc. The spiritual man will never go bach to earth, but will return to God, who gave the spiritual life, when death comes. It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we shall be like him, and be satisfied, a glorious spiritual body. "For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven."—Mark xii. 25. But with me personally, the question arises, Am I one? I cannot see how such a just and holy God can have mercy on such a sinner as I am. Sometimes I get so low in spirit that I begin to doubt, and wonder if it is all just imagination. Some time back (about two years ago) I was on my way to a meeting, about two hundred and seventy-five miles from here, where I go once a month, and as I drove along the highway I never felt worse (spiritually) in my life. It just seemed I had fooled the brethren, and was a hypocrite, and I began to wonder if there was a God or not. But after a time I felt better and went on to the meeting. After the meeting, when brother Smith and I got in the car a Mr. Culpepper got in with us, and when we had stopped at a sister's home for dinner he began crying, and said, Eugene, I wonder why I keep going to meeting, when the Lord showed me more than thirty years ago that my place was in hell. Then He showed me the world, and all the commerce in it, then showed me heaven, but my place is in hell. Then Mr. Culpepper said that last week while working in the field he said to himself, Why did Eugene bring all those good people and come to my home? Then he said a voice spoke to him, and said, Eugene did not bring them, he was sent. He said, Well, then I broke down and began crying for joy, for that was just the evidence I had been looking for, as I had been longing to know if the Lord was in the matter, or not. I told this precious brother he ought to rejoice and feel comforted that the Lord had shown him heaven and given him a love for the brethren. This love for the brethren is an evidence that he has passed from death unto life.

These days with good highways and cars more and more people are coming south for the winter. I live in the southernmost part of the United States, in the Rio Grande Valley, where we have mild winters, with fruit and vegetables all winter. We will be glad to have Old Baptists or believers meet with us on fourth Sundays here at my home or on second Sundays at Denhawkin schoolhouse, Stockdale, Texas. We still hold to the doctrine of predestination of all things. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust, the general judgment, and that the mortal bodies of the saints shall be made spiritual and fashioned like Christ's glorious body, to reign with him forever.

You are at liberty to print any or all of this letter if you see fit; if not, cast it

in the waste-basket, and remember this poor sinner in your prayers.

E. B. AULT.

CLAYTON, MO., Feb. 6, 1941.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—The SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been in my home ever since I can remember. When I was in my teens I was in school in Kentucky, where my grandfather, J. F. Johnson, had charge of four churches. I often attended these meetings with him, and although I had not at that time thought I would ever join any church, I was charmed with his preaching, and thought how wonderful it was that he could understand so well the Scriptures. I was married young, and after my parents died, in 1887 and 1890, the SIGNS was sent to me in Missouri. I have never missed a copy since that time, fifty years. I read and reread each copy many, many times, until the next one comes, and in its columns I find much comfort, and do thoroughly enjoy it. I joined the Old School Baptist Church in Henry County, Indiana, where my grandfather, Elder J. Foster Johnson, did his first preaching, and where my parents were members, and my father was a deacon until just a short while before he died in Lawrenceburg, Kentucky.

For over forty years I have been gathering data of my ancestors Hickman, Mellott and Johnson, and now I am assisting a distant relative in getting as many descendants as I can of these ancestors. They came from eastern Virginia into Pennsylvania and West Virginia, and on to Ohio and Indiana. A great many of them lived and died in Henry and Delaware Counties. Now we find them from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Dr. Franklin Miller, a teacher of physics in Rutger University, at New Brunswick, N. J., (our relative) wants to publish a book of our ancestors and as many of their descendants as we can find. I am writing to a great many throughout the West, and in last month's SIGNS I found the name J. J. Collins, of Newton, Alabama. I am looking up a branch of the Hickmans in Virginia. Rebecca Hickman married Abel Williams, their daughter, Sarah W., married Dr. Sam K. J. Collins, and they had seven children. I have their names, but nothing more. Can you send me the house and street number, or R. F. D., of the Elder J. J. Collins, of Newton, Ala., also a Mrs. Elizabeth Collins, of San Diego, Calif., whose name was signed to the obituary of her mother, Mrs. Armeda Riffe, who went from North Springs, W. Va., to the Pacific coast in 1885? Do you know the address of Elder W. R. Dodd, a Miss Hickman or James Dodd in Virginia? One of their descendants lives here in University City, by the name of Medsker (or Metsgen), and we want to learn more about this family of Dodd, also.

Sincerely, and with christian love,

(MRS.) E. J. BOLTON,

23 Lee Avenue, Clayton, Mo.

[WILL those referred to, and others who are interested, please write to sister Bolton direct, at the addresss given,—R. L. D.]

ANABEL, MO., March 6, 1941.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I have thought ever since you answered my request to write on the sixth chapter of first Samuel, I would write and thank you. I received much comfort and joy from it, and read it over and over. You were kind to answer my request, and I feel I want to show my appreciation, hence I am inclosing one dollar you keep fifty cents and hand the other fifty cents to the publishers of the SIGNS, to help send it to some one who is not able to pay for it. I enjoy the many good articles in the SIGNS, and know the writers have to be inspired by divine inspiration to write of the things of God's kingdom. We cannot pay for these things, for God's word can neither be bought nor sold, but we can in some ways show our appreciation of them.

I read in my last SIGNS of the passing of your father, and by the reading of the obituary I feel you are reconciled in a spiritual way, but there is a natural tie that is hard to sever. While we know they are much better off than we who remain, yet we feel the loss of our parents when they are gone, but we cannot wish them back. Your father gave me the impression of being very sincere, humble and earnest, and I surely did enjoy his writings. So many whose writings I much enjoyed reading have gone to a rest that is never molested by the trials and temptations of this sinful world. I sometimes ask myseelf the question, What would I do could I not die, and had to stay on here amid the storms of life? Some say death is cruel, but I feel that it is a blessed release, and we can go home to glory, there to praise God through all eternity. I have a sweet hope that one day I will see him as he is.

Back in the year 1900, while I was on the dancing floor, my Savior appeared to me in a still small voice, as it were, saying, You are doing wrong. Oh the burden of sin and guilt seemed more than I could bear, and I was very glad when husband and I came home. That reminds me that God is everywhere, for I was not seeking him, but he found me, as he did Jacob, in a waste howling wilderness. David says in the one hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm, "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."

My letter is getting lengthy, so I will close. I just wanted you to know I appreciated the favors. I would like to ask more, but do not want to be a nuisance. May God bless you and family and all the other editors and writers of the SIGNS. Pray for me.

In a sweet hope,

(MRS.) J. B. McAFEE.

PANAMA CITY, Florida, May 6, 1941.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I appreciated your good letter of February 2nd, and also appreciated your article on Matthew xxvii. 36, as requested by me. I caught the point. I think your editorial in the May SIGNS is fine. If you have a mind to, I would like you to

write on Esther iv. 16: "And if I perish, I perish." I appreciate the SIGNS very much.

I came to Florida nearly ten years ago, to stay a year and then return home, mostly because of an afflicted wife, and am here yet. We have not organized a church, but we hold meetings every month. We have had some as good meetings this year as I ever attended. Some of our members want to wait until we build to organize. We have letters ready for constitution. We want to build a house. Dr. J. M. Whitfield gave us a lot, nearly three-quarters of an acre, the N. Y. A. will make our pews and enough have promised labor to build free. We are now geared to go with the following committee: C. H. Byrd, W. C. Stanley, J. H. Hurst, L. P. Hanelson and Adolph Hartzog.

Those who desire to help us can send to me, Box 644, Panama City, Florida, or to W. C. Stanley, Millville, Florida. We will be grateful, and see that the money is rightly applied.

In gospel bonds,

C. H. BYRD.

SULPHUR, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending two dollars to pay my subscription for one more year. It is a little overdue, but I hope I have your forgiveness. My health is failing fast, and only the Lord knows how long I will be here to read the dear old SIGNS, but I hope the SIGNS will live long and prosper after I am gone, for I believe it is food and drink for many hungry, thirsty ones of the Lord's people, and these are perilous times, and the clouds are dark all over this beloved land of ours, and again the Lord only knows what the outcome will be. I believe the Lord has a purpose in all things, and when that purpose is accomplished the war will stop. They can do no more than the Lord wills, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

If I am saved it is by the free gift of God, through grace.

(MRS.) ADDIE CHANDLER.

WILMINGTON, Delaware.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find one dollar, for which please send me the SIGNS for six months. It is now all the preaching I get, as I have lost my hearing. I am now well along in my eighty-seventh year, and the things the SIGNS stands for are dearer than in my younger days. I was baptized by Elder Benedict, of Warwick, N. Y., in the year 1876, and am still a member of that church.

ELEANOR J. RITTENHOUSE.

SAN ANTONIO, Texas

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed find one dollar, for which please send the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to my sister in California. Our parents were Primitive Baptists, and I hope we are, too. I surely enjoy the SIGNS every month. My sister is a widow, too, and I know she will love the SIGNS. I wish I could send it to every one who would enjoy reading it.

Yours in hope,

(MRS.) ETTIE SMITH.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY, 1941.

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MATTHEW VII. 13, 14.

"ENTER ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it."

The word "strait" means of small dimensions; narrow; close; tight. This language was spoken by our Savior in his exhortation after his sermon on the mount, and was the answer to those desiring to be justified by the deeds of the law, and the teachings and traditions of their fathers. This "strait gate" is the opening into the way of eternal life, and we are much concerned about this way, and our heart's desire is to be right, do right and act right in all our deliberations. Jesus said, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets."—Matt. vii. 12. We do well if we consider our brethren this way, the life of the virtues of our hearts is made manifest, but this as an act of the creature will not give life. If we enter in at the strait gate it is because we are guided by One that knows the way, and is strong to give strength to the weak, and bind up the broken-hearted, and every one He came to save will enter in at the strait gate. He is the way, and the Porter that openeth the gate. "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."—Luke xiii. 24. In all our writing and speaking we hope to be in this narrow way and enter in at the strait gate of the truth as it is in Jesus, and when we write to try to antagonize instead of edify, and prevail that we should get to be master over our brethren, we are in that broad way and wide gate which leadeth to destruction, then we destroy the peace and pleasures of ourselves, and of the brethren also. We cannot add one cubit to our statue by striving about words to no profit, and making mountains out of mole hills. We should examine ourselves as to the motive prompting us to write upon certain points of doctrine, or to preach from a certain text, and we feel to testify if the motive is to give certain brethren a reprimand we are prompted by the flesh, and we are in that broad way and wide gate which our Savior speaks of.

We have in our experience the witness of these truths, and are given to discern between flesh and Spirit, which is plainly set forth in our text, and we do know the flesh profiteth nothing. "As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone: and the place thereof shall know it no more. But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep his commandments, and to those that remember his commandments to do them."—Psalms ciii. 15-18. We do not set forth in these expressions the idea that the creature is able to perform these things by the ability of the flesh, but to bring to mind the things that are manifested as the fruit of the Spirit. We truly hope our readers will be charitable to us, and measure us by their own experience, and by that you will know our shortcomings, and not forget that we are fallible creatures, but above all things we desire to contend for the truth as it is in Jesus, and at the same time the prayer of our hearts is that God in his purpose decreed that the Holy Ghost should put us in remembrance of his abundant mercies and his lovingkindness that draw us to him, which will prove that we are followers of Jesus and he hath put us forth in the narrow way that we should enter in at the strait gate. The Scriptures abundantly testify of the work of God in the heart of the sinner, and all who are taught by him hath the witness in their hearts. They are not forgetful hearers, but doers of the word, and these are they that the mercies of the Lord are upon, and God's covenant is not taken from them, hence they keep it, and are those who remember his commandments to do them, and they are not grievous, and every one that cometh bringing these tidings is the servant of the most high God, and their testimonies are in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. They have no time to be pulling the mote out of their brother's eye, but they are given to see clearly the mote that is in their own eye, and it draws them up to see themselves, and makes them little to walk in this narrow way and enter in at the strait gate. But those who can go about bearing a measuring rod to measure every brother and sister they come in contact with in their pilgrimage, and feel their judgment is unquestionably right, are in a broad way, and have a wide gate to enter into the riches of God's grace, and there is no question too hard for them to answer, or judgment to render but what they should give the directing verdict, have a broad way and wide gate.

These truths are witnessed by the church of God in its pilgrimage in this militant state, and God's *little ones* are watching continually for the manifestation of this fellow who travels in this broad way, and this wide gate is opened to notice and allure them into his snare, that he might destroy their peace, that he could look on and watch them suffer and writhe in their own blood. Dear *little ones,* your Savior has declared that he will never leave nor

forsake, and he will be a present help in time of trouble, and not a weapon that is formed against you shall prosper, then with such evidences as are witnessed by you in this narrow way your heart is made glad, and there is just room for two in this narrow way, and oftttimes the little one feels he is alone, and begins to cry, and then his Companion comes in manifestation and embraces his loved one and drives away all his fear. As we write "all his fears" the sufferings of this present time, or eternity, are taken away. We are as pilgrims and strangers in the earth, and the admonition is to go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the Lord hath done. It is a great task to go to those we see are so pure in heart and are walking uprightly, and say to them, I am such a great sinner, and I am so vile and unworthy, and I have been in such a wilderness, and the way was so narrow I had no companion, for there was no one like me, and it seemed I was so far from any place of refuge and the gate was guarded by One who is so wise that he knoweth me altogether and I cannot escape his all-seeing eye, so I must perish alone. But instead of perishing, our blessed Jesus, our Deliverer, comes and takes us in his arms and brings us in this narrow way, and opens to us the gate that is so strait that not one of our enemies can enter, and we are given to know that he is our Deliverer, and these are the reasons for our trust in him, and he is our All in All. We love to sing praises unto him and speak of his goodness and tell of his power, and of the grace of God given in Christ Jesus for such a poor sinner as we feel to be. All these are but a foretaste of God's salvation, with such manifestations as we have manifested to us in regeneration, raised from death in sin to life in Christ, and the realities of praise and adoration we have in this life. What a wonderful deliverance and salvation is to be realized by every subject of His love and mercy when they come into the fullness, and not only deliverance, and salvation from this sin-depraved condition, but triumphant over death, hell and the grave, and be like Jesus. Dear reader, we have not yet attained unto these things, but this is the inheritance Jesus will give to *all* the "blessed of my Father," and he will say, Come in, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

We can discern the thoughts and intents of the hearts of men as they are manifested by their fruits, for by their fruits we know them, and by the fruits of Judas Iscariot he proved to be just what Jesus said he was, and all the repentance we have any record of was of himself, and he went out and hanged himself, and such is the lot of all who walk in this broad way and enter in at this wide gate, and God forbid that we should go outside of his word and give version or teach some other way.

Dear readers, we are submitting these thoughts for your faithful consideration, and we hope many may be comforted by them, and to you who do not find comfort either in what we have written or the things connected there-

with, cast it from you; and those of you who do find comfort, give God the praise, and our desire and prayer to God is that he has purposed these things unto us by his grace, and that he will keep and guide us in the narrow way and bring us in through the strait gate, that we may enter into eternal rest.

C. W. V.

JOEL III. 3.

BROTHER S. L. ROBERSON, of Haile, Louisiana, has written us that the text at the head of this article has been on his mind for some time, and requests we give our views on it for him and his wife, and we like, as far as possible, to meet the wishes of our brethren by complying with their various requests.

The verse to which reference is made reads as follows: "And they have cast lots for my people; and have given a boy for an harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they might drink."

While Joel may be regarded as one of the minor prophets, nevertheless, after reading his prophecy, we are convinced that he summed up in the three chapters constituting what he wrote the substance of God's dealings with his people and their adversaries. We might sub-divide these into three headings, or parts: (1) God exhorts Israel to mourn because of her own desolation, and in order to make this absolutely effectual he who controls and directs all things after the counsel of his own will, works all things together so as to bring this about. A remarkable description of this was set forth in that day and time by the Lord sending throughout their land (a) the palmerworm; (b) the locust; (c) the canker-worm, and (d) the caterpillar, which destroyed all of their crops and their vineyards. This was followed by a great drought, which dried up their pastures and fields, thus making desolate their flocks and their herds, and to make bad matters worse the fire swept over and devoured the trees of their forests. The distress was so great that their old men were called upon to witness that neither they nor their fathers had ever known the like before, and they were commanded to tell these things to their children, and their children to their children, etc. Their drunkards were even made to weep and howl because the wine was cut off from them, and they were made to lament, according to the record, "like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth." Likewise their priests and ministers were made to mourn because the meat and drink offerings were withholden from the house of God. Then were they commanded to sanctify a fast, to call a solemn assembly, and to gather all of the elders and the inhabitants into the house of the Lord their God, and cry unto the Lord. (Joel i. 14.)

(2) After having experienced their own vileness they must next experience the terribleness and depravity of their ungodly enemies. Even though they made swords out of their plowshares and spears out of their pruninghooks, in preparation of war, they of themselves were not the equals of their op-

ponents, who were mighty men of war, whose chariots leaped over the mountains and pressed down upon them, sweeping everything before them as the fire devoureth the stubble, until the time was ripe for the Lord to defend them. The wickedness of their enemies was likened unto that of the Tyrians and Zodonians, who took the precious things of Israel and debauched them in their own temples, selling the children of Judah and Israel unto the Grecians. Our text shows how inconceivably intemperate and abominably wicked they were in their treatment of the Israelites, whom they sold as captives. They cut lots, or gambled for them (God's people), and even sold them as slaves or chattels of the lowest types of merchandise, stooping so low as to give a boy for an harlot, and selling a girl for wine, all for the gratification of their beastly lusts. Even the beasts were better than they. But are not worse things than these even being reproduced before our very eyes today? It would seem as though the human race instead of making progress is slipping back into the darkest ages, for the world certainly seems to be set on the fires of hell to-day, and never before in its history was wickedness of all kinds and descriptions so prevalent and rampant throughout the whole world. It would appear as though God had closed his eyes and ears, that he should neither see nor hear what is going on, but we are persuaded that he has a purpose in all things, and that when we shall have been made to know the depths of the degredation of the valley of Jehosaphat, we will call upon the Lord and he will do great things for us.

(3) The third point we wish to mention in connection with Joel's prophecy is God's final blessing upon his people. Although they were made ashamed of all their ways and felt severely the heel of their oppressors, nevertheless the time came when they could lift up their heads. When the day of their redemption drew nigh, the Lord roared out of Zion; he uttered his voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth were made to shake, and the Lord was proven to be the hope of his people and the strength of the children of Israel. Thus were they made to know that their God was dwelling in Zion, in the mountain of his holiness. And it came to pass that the mountains dropped down new wine, and the hills flowed with milk, the rivers of Judah flowed freely with water, and a fountain came forth from the house of the Lord to water the valley of Shittim. Egypt was made a desolation, and Edom a desolate wilderness, for the violence against the children of Judah, because they had shed innocent blood in their land, and it was made known that the "Lord dwelleth in Zion." By these things they experienced what Israel of old endured when the famine came upon Jacob and his sons, which of necessity forced them down into Egypt, where they spent four hundred years in servitude and bondage, but those years were not spent in vain, for when they came up out of Egypt they brought with them great treasures, or

evidences of God's great love and protecting care for and over them amidst all of their adversaries. They also saw the God to whom vengeance belongeth pour out his wrath upon their enemies in the various plagues visited upon Pharaoh and the Egyptians, and finally their complete destruction at the Red Sea. These things were typical of the things which God's people in all ages of the world must witness to more or less, and they should establish and encourage us in these perilous times through which we are now passing to stand fast in the doctrine of God our Savior. He has ever proven to be faithful by his people, and we shall not be ashamed if we trust in him to the end.

We fear we have not done justice to our text, but hope we have not written altogether in vain, and that our brother and sister who made the request will get something out of it, as well as others of our readers.

R. L. D.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

When remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it. By referring to these dates you can tell to just what time your subscription is paid. Dec40 means your subscription expired December, 1940; June41 means your subscription expired June, 1941; Dec41 that it will expire December, 1941, etc.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, Hunterdon County, New Jersey, May 29th and 30th, 1941, to the churches and associations with which we correspond, sendeth love and greeting in the Lord to all the household of faith.

Dearly Beloved Brethren:—As we were appointed at our last Association to write the Circular Letter for this year, we feel barren and destitute as to what to write. We do desire to present some gospel truth, and hope the Spirit of God will lead us into all truth. One said, Lord, what is truth? Jesus said, I am the way, the truth and the life. In the fourth chapter of Ephesians, first and second verses, Paul says, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love." The apostle here speaks of himself as a prisoner. When one is taken a prisoner it is because he has been arrested for something he has done. Paul, formerly called Saul of Tarsus, was guilty of persecuting Christ and his church, going about to establish the works of the law for righteousness, and preaching for doctrine the commandments of men. Therefore the Lord arrested him when he was on the road to Damascus, and he beheld that light which is brighter than the noonday sun. Sometimes men arrest individuals and prosecute them when they

are not guilty. But God never makes a mistake. He knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust. The apostle is here calling to the attention of the brethren at Ephesus that they walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they had been called, having been called with a holy calling, not according to their works, but according to His own purpose and grace given in Christ Jesus before the world began. This same truth applies to all brethren and churches of like precious faith and order to the end of time. That there be a unity of spirit, that the bond of peace be not broken. Where there is unity there is union, communion, fellowship, love, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. The church of God has one Lord, one faith and one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, through all and in you all. Jesus, the Son of God, came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and give his life a ransom for many: for all those whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life. He that descended into the lower parts of the earth is the same that ascended on high. He led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men. "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man." Jesus Christ, the perfect man, who was verily God and verily man, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. There are lords many and gods many, but to us there is but one true and living God. There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. There are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, the water and the blood, and these three agree in one. Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for he is faithful that promised. We contend for salvation by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast, and being made obedient unto every good work, we stand upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and Jesus Christ the chief corner-stone, in whom the whole building is fitly framed together. May God by his divine grace keep us from every false way, that we walk worthy the vocation wherewith he has called us.

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.
G. W. DANBERRY, Clerk.

BOOKS WANTED.

Mrs. Myron Vroman, whose address is Box 387, Middleburg, N. Y., would like to purchase any or all of the following named books, either new or used copies: Volumes One, Two, Three and Four of the "Exposition of the Gospel of John," and "The Four Gospels," all by Arthur W. Pink.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon County, New Jersey, May 29th and 30th, 1941, to her sister churches of the same faith and order with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We feel that it is by the goodness and kindness of a merciful God that we have been kept and permitted to meet again in an associate capacity. We greet your messengers and brethren with brotherly love. The ministering brethren have come among us laden with good tidings of great joy, preaching Jesus, the way, the truth and the light.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, at Hopewell, New Jersey, July, 1942, when we hope to meet you again. The grace of God be with you all. Amen.

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.
G. W. DANBERRY, Clerk.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS."

WE will furnish extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy **free of charge.**

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MRS. LULA ALICE EANES, daughter of H. B. and Nannie A. Eanes, was born near Mountain Valley, Henry County, Virginia, November 30th, 1872. She had been in poor health for several years, and February 21st she had a stroke, and died February 28th, 1941. All that loving hands and physicians could do could not stay the hand of death. Her stay on earth was 68 years, 2 months and 28 days. She was married to Thomas H. Eanes the second Sunday in November, 1890, and to this union were born ten children, three of whom preceded her in death; seven are living: Harry, Leonard, Homer, Richard, Noel, Elsie and Beulah. Left to mourn her departure are her husband, seven children, two sisters, three brothers, thirty-two grandchildren and a host of brethren and friends. We feel our loss is her eternal gain. Sister Eanes professed a hope in Christ and joined the Primitive Baptist Church at North Fork in the year 1897, and was baptized by Elder W. S. Minter. She lived a loyal member to the church and to her pastors, loved the doctrine of predestination and election, prized highly the privileges of the church, and loved to meet in the assembly of the saints. Brother and sister Eanes covered a very large territory in visiting the churches and associations and were personally acquainted with the brotherhood far and near. Among her greatest pleasures of life was to entertain her brethren and sisters, and her doors were ever open to the people of God. The husband and children have lost a devoted wife and mother, the church a devoted and worthy sister, the community a good citizen.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders J. F. Stegall and J. E. Burgess Saturday, March 1st, at the home, and

attended by a large concourse of relatives and friends,, and the beautiful floral offering attested the high esteem in which sister Eanes was held. All that was mortal was laid to rest in the family cemetery. Of our esteemed sister I would say, Sleep on; take thy rest. We only sorrow in that we shall hear her voice and see her face no more.

Much more could be said of this good woman, but space forbids.

J. E. BURGESS.

Our sister in Christ, MRS. ANNIE BELLE DUNLAP, of Bowdoinham, Maine, departed this life April 7th, 1941. She was the daughter of Deacon Nathaniel and Lois Ann Campbell Williams, and was born September 29th, 1861. Had she lived until September 29th of this year she would have attained the age of eighty years. All of her life was spent in Bowdoinham. Sister Dunlap was married to James A. Dunlap September 24th, 1883. This union was fruitful of seven children:, one, Lois Ann, died at the age of thirty. All the rest survive her, and they are as follows: James Albion, Principal of Broomfield School, Harvard, Mass.; Vining Campbell, with the United Fruit Company, at La Lima, Honduras; Minerva Frances, Bowdoinham, Maine; Geneveive (Mrs. C. R. Webb), Ocean Park, Maine; Jeannette (Mrs. Wilfred Burrell), Bowdoinham, Maine, and Albert Atchison, A. & M. College, Texas. Ten grandchildren also survive. She was the ninth child in a family of eleven. Her eldest sister was married to the late Elder F. A. Chick. Sister Dunlap was received for baptism by the Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church in July, 1885, where she remained a loyal and faithful member until removed by death. Her sterling character and admirable qualities were best seen and appreciated by those most intimately associated with her, and while it was our privilege to have known her for over fifteen years, it seems to us that her true worth is far better set forth in the following letter from her daughter, Minerva, than we could possibly do, so we herewith present to our readers the letter.

R. L. D.

Dear Elder Dodson:—I am sending you some of the facts concerning my mother's life, which you can use or not, as you see fit. She, as we, was brought up in a home where the Old School Baptist Church was the only one ever attended, and her folks loved to have the members come to their home. Her mother was not a member. She had before her marriage joined a "Christian Baptist Church," I believe, and she thought her baptism at that time was all that it should be, and although she loved the people in her husband's church as much as he did, she could not feel like being baptized again in order to join. Their home was the headquarters for the visiting ministers and members. When Mother married and came to her new home she kept up the tradition, and as a child I loved to have the big wagons arrive the night before Association began, when every room in the house was turned into a bedroom, and often mattresses were put on the floor to accommodate the members and friends coming from other churches. My father was not a member, but I know he used to enjoy having them come, and did all he could to make them comfortable. I did not know then what it was all about, but I believe there was even then a great love in my heart for the people of God, and I did not want to miss a word of their conversation. There is such a difference now in the number that come, but I know the same truth is loved and there is the same love among the brethren as was in evidence then. Mother

loved the brethren and loved to hear the truth preached all her life, and whenever it was possible she attended her meetings, and did everything she could for her church. I feel it has been a great blessing to have had such a mother, and I wish that I might walk in a way that will do credit to her. I know, however, that her disposition was far different from mine, and I am far from having her unselfish and easily contented spirit.

The funeral day was one of peace and comfort to me, and the others have said the same. The service was beautiful, and I think we all felt there was no need to mourn. We shall miss her, but there is no sting. Her Lord had upheld and sustained her all her life and she has fallen asleep in him, whom she loved.

Thank you again for coming to us. I rejoice that he is able to raise up ministers of his word, who are enabled to tell of his wonderful works. How our hearts go out to those who have been made to see the beauties of his love, and how we rejoice to hear the truth proclaimed.

From the least of all,
MINERVA F. DUNLAP.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. J. B. Hill, N. J., $3; Mrs. Martha Disharoon, Del., $1; Grace Cunningham, Del., $1; Harry Cunningham, Del., $1; Mrs. Carrie Horton, N. Y., $3.

MEETINGS.

The next session of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will be held with the church at Whitethorn, Va., north of Chatham, Va., on the second Sunday in July, 1941, and Friday and Saturday before. All lovers of the truth are invited, especially ministers.

F. WILLIAMS.

KEELING, Virginia.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue
(Park Avenue Hall)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A. M.
ALL WELCOME

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists is now settled in her new church-house, at 4614 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas, where she holds her regular monthly services on each first Sunray at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. Preaching services also on each third Sunday by Elder C. B. Teague, and each second Sunday by brother O. C. Lee, at 11 o'clock a. m. A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. R. HARDY, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 109. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1941. NO. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

[AFTER our article on Daniel xii. 1, 2, appeared in the May SIGNS, one of our good brethren in the South asked us to elaborate on certain phases of it, particularly on our reference to Revelation xx. 12, 13. We find that the late editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, Elder F. A. Chick, in the April 24th, 1889, issue dealt with this identical portion of the word along with several other kindred Scriptures, and since we feel we can adopt his explanation as our very own, we are submitting same herewith for the consideration of our readers.—R. L. D.]

REISTERSTOWN, Md., April 2, 1889.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Some time since some thoughts from me were published in the SIGNS upon the common idea of the future general judgment, in which I tried to show that for believers at least the judgment was already past. Since then I have received several requests to write more fully concerning the same theme, and some texts that are commonly supposed to refer to the future judgment have been presented, and my views upon them solicited. I had already intended to write additionally upon this theme, and in the same direction that has been suggested to me. To-day I will try to fulfill my desire and that of others in this matter. In my former letter I tried to show that the saints could stand in no danger of a future judgment, since it was expressly declared in the word that they should not come into judgment; also, that the finished work of Jesus forbade it and that the types could not otherwise be fulfilled. I do not purpose going over all this ground again, but wish to consider some of those Scriptures that have been generally understood as sustaining this common idea. It will at once be evident that I cannot in one letter take up and consider every portion of the word which might be supposed to sustain the popular view of this matter, but I will try to consider a few of the texts which are more commonly appealed to. A brother in Ar-

kansas wrote me referring to two such Scriptures. The first was Hebrews ix. 27, 28. It reads as follows: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation." Aside from the fact that the Savior expressly declared that his people should not come into judgment (for the word *condemnation* means *judgment,* in John v. 24), and that all Scripture must be interpreted in harmony with itself, a careful consideration of the text itself will, I think, show that here is no reference to what is commonly called the future judgment. Carefuul examination of the reading of the text will show that there is a double comparison presented by the apostle. First, "As it is appointed unto men once to die," is set over against "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." The second is, "But after this the judgment," set over against "And unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, withouut sin, unto salvation." The first comparison seems plain. Man is appointed to die because he has sinned; and unless redeemed he muust forever abide under the sentence of death. So in order to redeem his people Christ must once be offered, which is equivalent to saying that he must once die. As it is appointed to man once to die on account of sin, so Jesus, the sin-bearer, muust likewise die. This, it seems evident, is the meaning of the first comparison. Upon this I will not enlarge. Now let us see if we can find the point of comparison in the second clauses. First I will say that we shall strive in vain to find any similitude between a future general judgment which shall send some to endless woe and receive others to glory, and the blessings of salvation secured at the appearing of Jesus for them that look for him. Yet in the second clauses of each verse there is a similitude, as well as in the first clauses, else all the laws of language in the construction of sentences are wholly untrustworthy. Where then is the comparison? What, let us ask, always takes place when men die? I answer, Just that which makes the natural a true figure of the spiritual. After the death or offering of Jesus, those who look for him, his disciples and heirs, receive the spiritual inheritance secured to them. So after the death of men naturally, the estate which they leave passes the judgment of the court and is settled finally, and so passes to their children or heirs. The words of the text might be paraphrased and their true meaning brought out in this way. "As it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this comes the settlement of the estate so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear, bringing to and bestowing upon them the rich treasures of the heavenly inheritance of which they are heirs." This opens up a rich field for reflection as to how and when these blessings are bestowed, and what they are; but I desire to consider some other texts, and so

will confine myself to brief remarks upon each.

The brother in Arkansas also referred to Revelation xx. 12. The verse reads as follows: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." In the fifteenth verse of the same chapter we read, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." I want to say first that no child of God need fear the language of this text, for not only "the books" have been opened, but "another book" has also been opened: "the book of life." By "the books" I have no doubt is meant the books of the law of God, which judges all men, and which always condemns all men. When they are opened the judgment of all men is seen. When any soul sees himself as these books speak of him, that soul reads his own condemnation there, and also, like Isaiah, sees that all men are guilty and lost; but the "book of life" is then opened before the trembling sinner and in it he sees the record of what Jesus has done for him, and of all the work of salvation which he so much needs provided for him by the free and full love of God, which was set upon him from all eternity. The books are opened now to the convicted sinner, he is judged and condemned now, and the book of life is opened to him now. In this hour of judgment the soul finds no excuse, but pleads only the mercy of God. The language of the whole book of Revelation is highly figurative, and much of it has always seemed very dark to me, but it is evident that there is nothing in this text to sustain the idea of the judgment combated in my former letter.

The text in 2 Corinthians v. 10, is sometimes supposed to teach the common idea of the future judgment. It reads, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." I want to say, in the first place, that this language belongs to believers only. The epistle is addressed to "the church" and "the saints." The pronoun "we" in the text means no more and no less than these characters. In the second place, "the judgment seat of Christ" is for none but those who belong to him; and the judgment seat of Christ is where he dwells, and he dwells within each saint and in his church. In the church and in ourselves, then, is the judgment seat of our Lord, and here saints are judged and here they receive according to their deeds whether good or bad; that is, whether of the Spirit or of the flesh. Paul knew the terror of the Lord in this judgment, and so he persuaded men, and besought his brethren to be reconciled to God. To the same end the Master spoke when he said, "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." —Matt. xii. 36.

Another text often used is found in

Matt. x. 15, xi. 24, and in other places in substance: "But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee." (Capernaum.) Now I want to call attention to the fact that here cities are named, and not individuals; also, that in those cities were infants as well as men. The judgment which fell upon Sodom for its wickedness they knew, and we all know. Fearful as it was, the judgment of God upon Capernaum should be less tolerable still; and no one ever read Josephus' "Wars of the Jews" without feeling (if he thought of these words at all) that Jesus spoke what was true. It is evident that there is not the slightest reference here to future judgment, not to degrees of punishment in that world. The sole reference is to God's temporal judgments upon nations for their wickedness. Our God is a God of providence, and holds the balances to a hair's breadth, and what men sow, sooner or later shall they reap. There are a whole class of texts which come under the same head as this one, of which I cannot now speak. Surely thus far we have found nothing which contradicts the view I have given of this matter in my former letter, but much that sustains it. I will briefly consider one more text and leave the subject.

In Matthew xxv. 31-46, we have a lengthy parable of our Savior, which is generally supposed to depict the scene that shall be realized at the end of the world. It is more lengthy than I have room to quote. It is what is known as the parable of the sheep and the goats. Let us turn to it and read it. It will appear, first, that this parable occurs at the end of several parables, commencing with the parable of the ten virgins, all of which related to the setting up of his kingdom here on earth at the end of the old or Jewish dispensation. The parable of the ten virgins begins with the word "then," an adverb of time, meaning either "at the time" or "just succeeding the time." Before that the Savior was speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem. Then in all the parables that follow some great truth in relation to the setting up of his kingdom on earth is stated and enforced. In the parable under consideration it is said, "When the Son of man is come in his glory." While he was speaking these wirds he was yet in his humiliation—his glory was veiled, but soon the cross would be past forever, and the time of his glory would dawn. We find it so hard to disassociate the glory of the Lord Jesus from material things. The natural mind sees no glory unless it be in numbers, wealth, dignity and worldly influence. Consequently the carnal mind does not and cannot see that Jesus entered into his glory when he ascended on high, and led captivity captive, and received gifts for men. But this is his glory, and he is even now sitting on the throne of his glory, and now all nations are gathered before him, now they are being divided, now he is receiving one and rejecting another. I will not undertake to point out all the precious things that this parable contains. My object here is

simply to to present one thing, viz., that the parable contains no reference to a future judgment. I think what has been said will show that. I will leave the theme. May God lead us into all truth.

I remain as ever, your brother in hope,

F. A. CHICK.

YAKIMA, Wash., Feb. 5, 1941.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Elder W. L. Hall has asked for information about in what way Adam is the figure of him that was to come, and how it is that Eve, being the transgressor, sin is said to have come from Adam. For it is written, "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression."—1 Tim. ii. 14. Also, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: for until the law, sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come."—Rom. v. 12-14. I have been waiting, thinking some one else would undertake this task, but as nothing has appeared so far, I will offer such as I have, and I may have some light; I do not know. If I have no light all will be in vain, that is sure.

The name "Adam" embraces both the man and the woman in the figure, for it is written, "Male and female created he them, and called *their* name Adam, in the day when they were created."—Gen. v. 2. The figure seems to begin here in the creation, for in the creation, and also in the formation, the man and woman were in one body: that of the man; and the husband and wife are still called by the same name to-day, so the figure in this respect seems to still be in force. This is also true of Christ and the church, for we were chosen in him (Eph. i. 4), created in him (Eph. ii. 10), and also called by his name, for we read of Christ, of whom the whole family, both in heaven and earth, is named. (Eph. iii. 15.) And to further complete the figure, Paul says, "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body."—Eph. v. 23. And in verses twenty-eight to thirty-two we read, "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church; for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father, and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." It is quite evident here that the husband and wife were intended from the very beginning to be *the* figure of Christ and the church, for right after and in direct connection with the statement that we are his, members of his flesh and of his bones, he says, "For this cause shall a man leave his father, and mother," etc.

In the beginning Adam said it was because she was of his flesh and his bones, so it must be that the man and woman (Adam) is the figure of Christ. I believe this figure has been so preserved for our benefit, that we to-day may have a better knowledge of Christ and all he means to us, and we may have this knowledge of him by considering the marriage relationship as it now exists naturally. Now in the natural relationship the man is head of the woman. He is responsible for her support and protection, to nourish and protect her. She has power to contract debts, and the husband is bound to pay them. The act of one is the act of the other. They are one; one body, one flesh, one name. All this was true of Christ and the church in the purpose and wisdom of the Father before Adam was ever created or formed.

"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also to her husband *with* her, and he did eat."—Gen. iii. 6. It is not clear here just in what way we are to understand her husband was with her, for he was with her in a two-fold sense. Naturally he was with her in the figure, in all the figure implies, as stated above. The male member (or man) representing Christ, and the woman representing the church, and as Christ did not and could not sin in his own person, it was necessary in the figure, in order that it might be a perfect figure to represent Christ, to be free from personal sin, and yet a member of the body, which is the church. (Col. i. 24.) For it was necessary as a husband, or head of the woman, to be one with the church, that we might share with him all that pertains to him as "the savior of the body." And it was also necessary for the woman to be alone in the transgression that she might be the perfect figure of the church, as it was in Adam. But if the man had sinned himself, he being the figure of Christ, or rather representing Christ in the figure, that would have pointed to Christ as a sinner in his own person, which is impossible. But the woman, representing the church in the figure, which is composed of both men and women, was the one that transgressed. And the man was with her also as one of the elect members of the body of Christ, for I think it is evident from what follows the transgression that they were elect children of God, in which body we are all, every one, members one of another, for we read, "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."—Rom. xii. 5. So if we are every one members, the woman in the figure, if one of the elect, surely was a member with all the other elect members of Christ's body. "And whether one member suffer, all the other members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it."—1 Cor. xii. 26. How true is this in the case of the husband and wife, the figure. From the foregoing quotation, it is quite evident that the sin of one member is sufficient to involve the

whole body, and whether it was the man or the woman that sinned it was Adam's transgression. Although he may not have sinned in his own body, yet he became a sinner by the act of the woman, together with all the members of the body. The name Adam is not only applied to the man and woman in the figure as a surname by which they are both known, but the name Adam is also applied in a general way to all mankind, both men and women, so it is Adam's transgression any way we look at it. And Christ was involved in sin and death in the same way, for it is written, "He was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many."—Isaiah liii. 12. Paul also says, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."—2 Cor. v. 21. It would seem here that we being made the righteousness of God in him, were dependent on him being made sin for us. Or, in other words, it was necessary that we be one with him, or in him, for it is by that one principle, by which we are all one, that he is made sin for us, and we are made the righteousness of God. So I understand that Christ was not made to be sin by an arbitrary act of the Father, but was actually involved in sin and death to the extent he was actually joined in one body as an husband to his bride. So I do not understand that he was a substitute husband, any more than his bride was a substitute. They were joined together by a covenant and an oath. The same as a man and woman are joined in the figure under consideration, for we read, "Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine."—Ezek. xvi. 8. And in Jeremiah we have some similar language that also fits the figure very closely, for it speaks of the marriage relationship. "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married to you,"—Jer, iii. 14. There are many more such illustrations in the Scriptures where the marriage union of husband and wife is used as the figure of Christ and the church, but this should be sufficient to show in what way Adam is the figure of him that was to come. But there is no one portion of Scripture that is conclusive in itself; it takes all the testimony on any one subject to establish it. There are places where the name Adam refers individually to the first man. But it is also evident that the same name embraces the man and his wife, which are said to be one flesh, the same as Christ and the church, which is composed of many members, are said to be one body, and the act of any one member in either of these unions affects the whole body and becomes the act of all the members of each separate body, and this is the fundamental principle in connection with which Adam is said to be the figure of Christ, and I do not believe it makes any material difference just who it is that sins as long as it is a member of the body, for the record is, "And whether one member suffer, all the

numbers suffer with it." But it was charged to the woman in the figure, because she represented the church, to show it was the church and not Christ that was responsible for sin. And the woman's surname was Adam, and in the Scriptures the terms "all men," "every man" and other similar expressions include women as well as men, so in this way it could be called "one man's disobedience," although it was the woman that sinned, and it was also Adam's transgression. But when it comes to being made righteous, there was but one member of the spiritual body that was capable of being righteous, and that was Jesus. And while Jesus suffered, and we all suffered with him, and he suffered with us, yet he was honored, and he was the only member of the body that could be honored in his own person, and all the members rejoice with him, and I understand that all the members of his mystical body are made righteous and glorified by virtue of the same fundamental principle that made all to be sinners, and that is the principle found in the figure as it exists in the marriage relationship, and this is the only relationship in heaven or on earth of which we have any record in the Bible by virtue of which one person can be convicted of sin or be made righteous by the act of another person. Therefore it is called THE figure, IS the figure, for that relationship still exists, and by virtue of this relationship a poor peasant girl like Rebekah or Ruth or Esther can be elevated to a place of honor and great wealth, as has been exemplified time and again all down through the record of God's saints. And by virtue of this same principle the Lord of glory was brought down to a level of the most vile wretch, but, thanks be to God, we are married to him as his bride, and will ascend with him to glory. The essence of this principle is love, and well deserves the first place which it occupies in heaven as well as on earth.

A. D. HUGHETT.

LYNBROOK, New York.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—Many thanks for the papers you so kindly sent me. I received them yesterday, and will return them to you in due time.

I have read your article in the SIGNS from Daniel xii. 1, 2, and am in full accord with your views. Jesus says in Luke xxiv, 44, "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me." And in Acts x. 43, "To him give all the prophets witness." Toward the end of the ninth chapter of Daniel it speaks of Messiah being cut off, but not for himself, but to put away iniquity and bring in righteousness. Daniel speaks of the three and one-half years, and Revelation refers to the forty-two months, and I think both refer to the same event, i. e., the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 70 A. D. This event of the latter times, or last days of the Jewish dispensation, does not preclude the

events that go before. The temple would not have been destroyed except that Jesus had fulfilled the law, and by his death and resurrection made it of no effect, and there began a fading away of the old and a setting up of the new. In Matthew xxiv. 15, 16, Jesus says, "When ye, therefore, shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains." Also in Mark xiii. 14, Jesus was speaking of the destruction of the temple. Revelation xix. 10, says, "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Too many I fear seek to satisfy their curiosity as to dates and times for certain events to happen, which times and seasons the Father hath put in his own power. A prophet primarily is one who speaks for another, and the foretelling of events is only incidental to warnings, promises, admonitions, threatenings, exhortations or encouragement which the prophecy is intended to convey to God's people in their present place and situation among the surrounding nations. So the prophets wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, and "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." The real intent then is always in the interest of God's kingdom, and the key is, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people" in the present, and give us hope and encouragement for the future.

I trust I have written nothing which does not conform to the truth, but if I have let me know.

Sincerely yours,

S. W. SHIPWAY.

[WE appreciate this good letter from a dear friend, who has been confined at home for some time. He has endeared himself to the brethren who know him, because of his understanding of and love for the truth.—R. L. D.]

SHARON SPRINGS, N. Y., Feb. 3, 1941.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—You may be surprised to get this letter, but I have had in mind ever since the Lexington-Roxbury Association that since I did not get a chance to see you I should write to you, who came up to our Association and preached such a splendid sermon. At least it seemed so to me. The other ministers had preached very good indeed. Elder Topping opened the Association with a good sermon, which just suited me, too. Elder Vaughn is always good; at least has been when I have heard him. Your sermon was so very good, but I said if you had imbedded faith in grace a little more at the start it would not have harmed it any. I think the start of faith is when we are first relieved of our burden, and with me I was given the first three verses of the hymn "Amazing Grace." I never had had a hymn book, but the first three verses were given me, and it was amazing, to say the least, a joy unspeakable and full of glory. I think faith starts there, but we do have to be given faith to know all along through the years that we have a Savior, that he loves us with an ever-

lasting love, and has all power to keep us, wherever we are. We desire to take no glory to ourselves, but give him all glory of a free and full salvation.

Recently I met two ladies and told them what I believed. One of them was quite offended. She said children were so much happier after they knew Jesus. I told her he was everywhere and had just as much power to reveal himself in one place as another, and would save all that the Father gave him; that he said none could come by him unless they were drawn by the Father. I told them that I did not see how any one who had been brought up out of darkness into light could think they had anything to do with it, or want to take any of the glory.

I much enjoyed your article on the answer to a Miss Yule, and I think your editorial in the July, 1940, SIGNS was as good as any. However, I have read and reread all of them. The SIGNS is surely a good paper to pick up and read when we have been working and are tired. I was fearful when Elder Lefferts gave it up, but knew that if it was the will of God it would be continued, and just as good. I not only read them now, but send them on to a daughter who has had a sweet experience and I am hoping some day it will be the will of God for her to attend the meetings with me, but we must wait God's time and way. She lives near near Syracuse, N. Y., and it is too long a distance, she says, yet she and her husband have brought me to Cobleskill a number of times to hear Elder Ruston.

Brother Roy Smith's article is good. I agree with most of it. I have said a number of times, Oh wretched being that I am! when am I to be delivered from it all? but I cannot witness to being lonesome. I have felt forsaken many times, but usually would think it must work for my good, but could not see it at the time.

When you were ill last winter, I wondered what the will of God was, and was very thankful to hear of your recovery and to see you at the Association, and hope you may be able to attend this year.

With the exception of part of the year 1913, and all of 1914, I have had an opportunity to read the SIGNS ever since I can remember. My mother took it, and when she died, in 1913, we were not financially able to take it. David Elliott, of Conesville, came to a yearly meeting at the Middleborough Church, staid with us, and when he found I was not taking it he had it sent to me, I think for two years, and since then the Lord has enabled me to pay for it, for which I surely am thankful. Each number has been read and reread. It advocates just what I believe: salvation by the mercy and grace of God, through Jesus Christ.

I was baptized in June, 1902, by Elder Clark, and have always felt to be the least among them all, but like to do what I should at all times.

Yours in hope,

AGNES B. GOODRICH.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST, 1941.

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EXPERIENCE.

How peculiar is the experience of the people of God. He has chosen unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Their puculiarity is not in the way they dress, the food they eat or their manner of life as natural men and women. It is in the doctrine and practice they contend for that separates them from all the people on the earth. They are zealous of good works, but not their own, but the works of the Lord Jesus Christ. They know that the worship of God is a spiritual service that cannot be rendered of themselves. The letter killeth. Only that which the Spirit applies enables them to rejoice. The leading of God is such that it seems that no two days' journey is alike. At times they mount up to heaven, then go down into the depths. Their souls faint within them. They cry unto the Lord, and he maketh the storm a calm. He bringeth them to their desired haven, yet not as they expect. In paths they have not known, and in ways they have not trod, so are they led.

We shall mention some of our own late leadings of mind. Of late much of the time our efforts to speak in his name have seemed to be a repetition of dead things; no sweetness of the spirit; full of dead bones. How well we could say, My leanness, my leanness. When we first united with the church (more than twenty years ago) everything went very smoothly for several months. Almost any one could preach to us. We could look forward from one meeting to another, expecting a feast to our soul. We were joined unto the church on the fifth Sunday in September, 1918, and immediately on leaving the house a great fear filled our heart that we had deceived the church of God. We were tried in this way very much until the second Sunday in November of the same year, when our father baptized us. As we came forth from the watery grave we could repeat, "The remnant of my days I would spend to God's praise." Monday after the third Sunday in May of the following year, suddenly we felt a deep impression of heart (we trust) to preach the gospel. We were at that time only eighteen years of age. We have heard some say that they did not want to preach the gospel. We did not feel

that way, but felt it was something we could not do. How terrible we felt for a poor sinner as we were to profess before men to be called to preach. We determined to bury the matter in our heart and mention it to no one. We believed that even our age forbade us to profess to be called. Our rebellion was over our own weakness. We had a desire to speak in his great name. The anguish of soul through which we went we cannot tell. Often when others slept we walked alone, calling upon God to relieve our troubled heart. When we went to meeting, instead of leaving with joy in our heart we often felt we would die if we did not mention our troubles to some one. Soon the brethren began asking us about an impression to speak. We remember one night, in the middle of the night we were lying across our bed, had not undressed, feeling that we could not live another day without relief. Our father came to ask what was the matter, but we could not tell him. We believed that if God had called us he would open the way for our speaking. That a man's gift maketh room for him we are sure, and bringeth him before great men. A brother-in-law was living in the house with us at the time, sick with tuberculosis. When we were a boy he had been unusually kind to us, and we had been made to love him dearly. Often he had asked us about our impressions of mind, and spoken encouragingly to us. About two days before he died he called us to his bedside, and said, "I am going to die, and I want you to pray with me here, and I want to hear you preach before I die." We knelt beside him, we two alone in the room, and the heavens we believe were opened and we were blessed to pour out our soul unto God in his behalf. When we finished praying he requested that we preach for him the next day. We knew his time on earth was short, and if we refused his request we would suffer the rest of our days because of our refusal, yet to comply we felt was an impossibility, so we told him we would make the effort. A number of our neighbors were invited in for the service, and we spoke a short time. We did not get any relief, but he clasped our hand, and said he was satisfied. A short time later he passed into eternity, saying a few minutes before he died that he saw angels over his bed.

The church had given us the privilege of speaking before we used it. In other words, we had been liberated to speak before this, but had not made the attempt. It was six months or more before we were relieved in mind in speaking. Certainly if any one believes there is a tarrying until God delivers, it is us. Many trials, afflictions and persecutions have been our lot as the years have passed. In the early years we thought of all persecution as from the world, but how sad to learn that the greatest persecution comes from those within, those often who have professed to be our friends. No wonder, it was Judas, one of the twelve, who betrayed the Lord with a kiss. We have sometimes been fearful when seeing too much outward emotion, fearing something would happen. Just as

surely as one contends earnestly for the doctrine and practice as taught by our Lord, just so surely shall he be persecuted. If not, then the words of Christ are of none effect. When brought through fiery trials a true servant will examine himself more closely, whether he be in the faith, will cry to God to undertake for him, will realize how weak he is, and at times thank God he is counted worthy to suffer, even when he feels his heart will break, at times thanking God that these things have happened. We claim no perfection in the flesh. In the twenty years we have tried to serve churches we have felt the most of the time that we were only stumbling, yet in our poor heart there has been the welfare of the ones thus given us of God to be our chief concern, rather than the designs of men. The only time we are strong is when we are weak. When we have been slain to all self-confidence we are brought to know that our great enemy dwells within. So much of the time the Lord's face is hid. Often in persecution we can say, This is just what we need. We certainly must die to live. During the past week we have looked for him, but found him not. We reach the condition that we are beyond the care state, desiring to see his lovely face, but not believing it possible. On Saturday, after speaking at our union in the afternoon, we spent the night in tossing to and fro. Many times during the long night did we feel that we should be upon our knees. Our soul was hungry and thirsty. No water in sight. Oh that we might feel, as in the days of our youth, the sweetness of his Spirit, see his beauteous face. On Sunday when the service began we were as an owl in the desert, or a sparrow upon the house top: one alone. Suddenly the icy heart began to melt, and where the dragon lay became pools of living water and a feast began. When we are hungry enough, we are not particular whether the rain be a shower or a settled rain; just to know that He has been gracious to a worm again. Surely we will mention the lovingkindness of the Lord. Oh that we might sit at his feet, rejoice in his love and hear his words, Be not afraid, it is I. To know no husband, prophet, priest or king but him who is head over all things to the church, which is his body.

Last week we wrote another article to send to the SIGNS for this editorial, but this morning we felt constrained to write this one. If it is his will, may he bless it to his glory. A pilgrim stranger here.

D. V. S.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

WHEN remitting for your subscription, see that the date opposite your name on the little pink slip is changed, for if not changed you have not been given your proper credit, in which case notify us immediately and we will attend to it. By referring to these dates you can tell to just what time your subscription is paid. Dec40 means your subscription expired December, 1940; June41 means your subscription expired June, 1941; Dec41 that it will expire December, 1941, etc.

ESTHER IV. 16.

"If I perish, I perish."

Having been asked to write on the above words, we will do so with such ability as the Lord may be pleased to give. We wish it understood in the beginning, however, that we are not in accord with those critics who claim that because the name of God, or the Lord, nowhere appears in all of the book of Esther that it should have no place among the books of the Bible. On the contrary, we feel it is a most valuable, instructive and important part of the Sacred Scroll. Much of the Old Testament Scripture is composed of types and shadows, of which there are a number in this book. Where can we find, for instance, a more beautiful type of our Lord and his church than is presented here in the figure of the king and queen? King Ahasuerus was a "mighty man," who ruled over many provinces and was the possessor of great wealth. He typified in part our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, in whose hands all power, both in heaven and in earth, now rests, and whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. He is, indeed, King of kings, and the hosts of heaven and earth must obey his commands. Vashti, the first queen, was said to be beautiful, but she refused to obey the king's command to come unto him when she was bidden. This was a very great and serious offense, and because of it she was forever put away and her royal estate was given unto another that was better than she. In our opinion, she was a type of national Israel, who while beautiful in type, yet would not accept Jesus as the Messiah when he came into the world. They saw no beauty or comeliness in him, and, therefore, they were put away from him forever as a nation worshiping under the law. Esther, or Hadassah, as she was also called, was an orphan, her father and mother both having died, nevertheless it is said concerning her that "the king loved Esther above all women, and she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti."—Esther ii. 17. It was not generally known at first that Esther was of that people, the Jews, greatly despised and everywhere spoken against, and Haman, who had found favor in the sight of the king, not realizing the relationship which existed between the queen and Mordecai, laid a plot for the destruction of her people. He said unto the king Ahasuerus, "There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom: and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them. If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed."—Esther iii. 8, 9. A little examination of his words will show the spirit which was motivating him, at the same time he gave a good description of the Lord's people. Esther and her people unquestionably portrayed the true Israel of our God, and all that they had to suffer and endure was typical of the trials, the tribulations

and the afflictions of the saints here in the world to-day. Wicked Haman could not go one inch beyond the bounds fixed by Israel's God, and the part which he played was so overruled and turned about to glorify God and make his goodness and mercy known towards his people in displaying his power over their enemies. At times "all these things" seemed to be against them, and God appeared to completely withdraw himself from them, but this was to the end that they might the more earnestly seek his face and favor. More and more the lines seemed to tighten about them, until Mordecai sent a most urgent message to Esther, requesting her to "go in unto the king, to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people," to which she replied, "All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called, there is one law of his to put him to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live: but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days." What a sad plight she and her people were in. Not only her own life, but the life of her people was seemingly hanging in the balance, with certain destruction apparently staring them in the face. What could she do? To whom could she go or turn? There was but one, and only one source from whence help could come, but she had not been bidden for thirty days to see the king, and could she dare venture nigh with the law all against her? Would it mean life, or would it mean death? After fasting for three days and nights, and neither eating nor drinking, she finally resolved in her desperation to stake her life and the life of her people upon the one and only hope of salvation, and in her extremity she determined to go in unto the king, "and if I perish, I perish." Perish she must if she remained away, and she could do no more than perish if she went, and she with holy boldness entered into the inner court in the very presence of him who alone had power to forgive and to deliver her and her people from their awful dilema. This seems typical of Matthew's record where he says, "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."—Matt. xi. 12. Peter said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." How amazingly astonished she must have been, upon entering the "inner court," where according to the law she had no right to be, to behold the hand of love and mercy extended to her in the emblem of the golden sceptre which the king held out to her. The king not only inquired concerning what her request was, but assured her in advance of its being made that he would grant it even to the half of his kingdom. She must have exclaimed inwardly at least, How divine thou art, oh king. By extending the golden sceptre to her, hope beyond her greatest expectation sprang from the very depths of her soul. If we know anything of the

travel of the true church of God here in this world, it is clearly put forth in the narrative of Esther. Many of our readers can no doubt say, Amen and Amen, to much that is found here. And, wonderful as it was when God spoke peace to our distressed souls, we still find, day by day, that there is much to try and perplex us and to test the faith that is in us. Paul said we walk by faith, not by sight. Amidst all of our trials, we hope we are building upon that sure foundation, the chief corner-stone and Rock Christ Jesus, which not even the powers of hell will ever be able to move or shake.

How mysteriously did God work in bringing to light the hidden evil of Haman's heart, and causing him to endure the humiliation which he had determined upon for Mordecal, and finally he himself hung upon the gallows which he had prepared for Mordecai; even Haman's ten sons were destroyed, so that nothing remained of his seed. If not mistaken, we have had to witness hatred similar to that of Haman's toward Mordecai manifested by one brother against another, and we have also seen it all set at naught by the hand of God, and the one who had divined evil against his brother was made to hang on his own gallows. while God exalted the one whose life was sought after. It might be well for those who harbor murder in their hearts or who seek the destruction of their brother to consider well the mysterious works of God before plotting the overthrow of his anointed. Paul says, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Let us take heed, therefore, lest we be found to fight against God.

In conclusion, we would remind our readers that the favor which was shown by the king to Esther was according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which no man could alter or change, and it was typical of the unchanging love of our God towards those whom by his grace he is pleased to honor by calling them his people. Israel in that day set aside days for gladness and feasting in memoriam of God's goodness to them, and it is only proper that we should in this day and time forsake not the assembling of ourselves together for prayer and praise, but that we should thus manifest outwardly our sincere gratitude for all the benefits which we have received at his hand. Let this evidence be left on record, that those who come after us may know of our great love and adoration for him who loved us and gave himself for us.

R. L. D.

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CIRCULAR LETTERS.

Written by sister Nellie Palmer.)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Lincoln County, Maine, sendeth greeting and love in our Lord to the several churches and associations with which we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED:—Gladly would we fulfill the request of our brethren to write to you at this time could we feel we had the ability, but instead we come to you in weakness and a felt sense of our lack in expressing even what we feel. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. (2 Cor. iv. 7.) We are constantly made to feel the weakness of the flesh, our unfitness before the just and holy God, to die daily, yet do realize the source and excellency of this unspeakable power that sways our whole life and being, causing us to feel that to us the earnest of the inheritance has been given. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Rom. viii. 1.) And we are made glad in knowing that he who searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. (Rom. viii. 27.) Oh that we could praise him whom our soul loveth, for his wonderful works to the children of men. He bringeth the blind by a way they know not; he leads them in paths that they had not known; makes darkness light before them, and crooked things straight, and does not forsake them. It is he, and he alone, who opens blind eyes, unstops deaf ears and puts this new song in the mouth, even praise to his great and adorable name, causing us to love our God and our brother with a love surpassing the love of women. God has been so good in bestowing so many precious evidences of his love to usward, and we love him because he first loved us, and gave his only begotten Son (as a perfect sacrifice) for the sins of his people when as yet there were none of us. He cast up this high way for the redeemed to walk in (and they are daily walking therein, though at times we feel we are not advancing), a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen. No, the sharpest, most far-seeing eye in nature cannot penetrate its depths. The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it. There is no fierceness or strength in nature that can drive us from this path, because it is for the redeemed of God. They are rooted and grounded on this Rock, Christ Jesus, and no power in nature can disturb that blessed foundation. When we are given a mind to consider these things how our hearts burn within us, and we may well sing,

"All hail the power of Jesus' name,
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem
And crown him Lord of all."

"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you."—Luke

xvii. 20, 21. And when a poor sin-sick leper feels himself cleansed, and feels the light burning brightly within the pitcher of clay, though a stranger, he will declare it from the house top, and will sing unto the Lord a new song and his praise from the ends of the earth. "Ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof. Let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains."—Isaiah xlii. 10, 11. When the God of heaven says "let" there is no power that can stop that song. It is a well of water springing up into everlasting life, a fountain that can never go dry; but as long as God is in his heaven it will quench the thirst of his beloved, his chosen *strangers* here below. Give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever. (Chron. xvi. 34.)

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

(Written by Deacon Q. A. Gladding.)

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Black Rock Church, Butler, Maryland, May 31st and June 1st, 1941, sends greetings to the churches and associations with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more we have been blessed of the Lord to assemble together and feed upon his spiritual food and enjoy the fellowship and love of one another. What a wonderful blessing it is to be living in this land of liberty, where every one can worship God according to the dictates of his heart. As we know, in times past, and in many lands to-day, many were and are being persecuted and put to death simply because of their belief in the Lord Jesus. The Scriptures promise us many trials and tribulations in this world of sin and tears, and from our past experience we know we have had many of them, yet feel that the Lord has blessed us far beyond what we deserve. Great and marvelous are thy ways, O God, and as high as the heavens are above the earth, so are your thoughts above our thoughts, and your ways above our ways. We would many times, if we had the power, change things to suit our convenience, but must be made to realize that God rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and none can say unto him, What doest thou? Paul says we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, and to them that are the called according to his purpose. Many times when tribulation comes we feel that things are working against us, but after they have passed we are made to realize that it was God's way of educating us in his gospel and bringing us back to his throne of grace to beg for mercy for our backslidings and sinfulness. We realize more and more as we grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord how vile we are and how holy and just are God's laws and God's ways, and we know there is nothing in us to merit esteem or give the Creator delight. We are made to feel like the words of the hymn,

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

Dear brethren, is it thus with you? If so, then you have a very good reason for hoping that you are born again, for it is just such subjects that the Lord Jeesus came into the world to save. Jesus says, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." We see here that it is not because of something we do that causes us to be blessed, as the teachers of the world would have us believe, but it is because we do mourn over our sins and do hunger and thirst after righteousness that we are in this state of blessedness. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but because of His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins He hath quickened us together with Christ. By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. All good and perfect gifts come from the Father of light, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. So we see from all this that we are born in sin, and in sin remain except for the quickening power of God entering our hearts and making us alive to all these wonderful promises, which before this meant nothing to us, but now they are both meat and drink to us. We are few in number, but we hope with God's help that we will ever be found faithful to his cause, and be found walking worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called.

And now we would record that in all things we would give God all the glory, and if we are blessed to awake in his kingdom, and in the likeness of our Lord and Savior, we are told in the Scriptures that we shall be satisfied. May the God of peace be with you, and all who love him, now and for evermore. Amen.

D. L. TOPPING, Moderator.
QUINCY A. GLADDING, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Lincoln County, Maine, sendeth greeting and love in our Lord to the several churches and associations with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We feel deeply thankful to our heavenly Father for making it possible for us to meet in another session of the Maine Association at Whitefield. We were very glad that so many of the Maine brethren could be with us, and also that such a large number of friends were present at the Sunday meeting. Elder Bellows was richly endowed with the Holy Spirit to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the comfort and edification of our hope, and we were filled with the peace that passeth natural understanding, and we were made to know that Jesus was in our midst. Where churches are dwelling in unity, Jesus must be dwelling in the hearts of the members.

There are only seven members left in the Maine Association and our future seems uncertain in this storm-tossed world of to-day, but we have a good hope in him who is the author and finisher of our faith, knowing that he hath declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient time the things that are not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

The next session of the Maine Association will be held with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Maine, the Friday, Saturday and Sunday before the second Monday in September, 1941, the Lord willing, where we hope to meet again.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER J. B. BOWDEN was born in Tennessee July 4th, 1871, and died at his home in Terrell Wells, Texas, May 27th, 1941, making his stay on earth 69 years, 10 months and 23 days. His body was laid to rest at Stockdale, Texas, where the Lord showed him in a dream months before where he would be buried. He dreamed he flew in that spiritual body along over the natural body the forty-five miles from San Antonio to Stockdale looking down at the old body as it was being carried to burial, and when they arrived at the cemetery he saw the congregation gathered, including the poor unworthy writer, who, per his request, tried to speak a few words of comfort to the bereaved ones. He leaves to mourn his absence a wife, four children, four brothers, two sisters, eleven grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and a host of friends. Truly a father in Israel has fallen. He had been in ill health for a long time, but bore his sufferings with patience. All who have read his writings know what an able defender of the truth he was, faithful, kind and true to the cause. Thirteen years before he came to Texas, from Kentucky, he dreamed he moved to a new country, went to meeting and an elderly man opened the gate and said, Drive in, this is the place. They invited him to preach, and he took for his text Isaiah xl. 1, 2, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." All this came to pass thirteen years later. The elderly man was M. V. Dykes, the writer's grandfather, and he preached from the above text. Oh what a wonderful God he had, to give to him these warnings ahead of time of what was to come later. He was a firm believer in an all-wise God, predestination, foreknowledge and the resurrection, giving God all the honor and power.

Mt. Olive Church, Stockdale, Texas, in conference last third Sunday in June, wished to express their love and fellowship for their beloved pastor, Elder J. B. Bowden, who has passed on to that blessed beyond to be with his Savior, realizing our loss is his gain. Mt. Zion Church, of Weslaco, Texas, will also miss their pastor and his sweet counsel and guidance. For the past two years Elder Bowden's health had allowed him to go to his meetings only occasionally. Through the tender mercies of our heavenly Father the poor writer has been able to go the two hundred and seventy miles every month (with a few exceptions) to be at meeting at Mt.

Olive Church, and on forty-five miles more to be with Elder Bowden for more than two years. Oh how we will miss him.

Written by request.

E. B. AULT.

THE "Cause of Truth," at Dunwich, Ontario, lost one of its most faithful friends when death came to FLORA ESTHER McCALLUM at her home at Iona Station, Ontario, on May 1st, 1941. She was a daughter of the late Daniel and Flora Shaw, and was born October 4th, 1869. Prior to her marriage to Ardah McCallum, which took place December 4th, 1918, she taught school in Dunwich township for several years. Her death came at a time when those near to her knew that she was ill, but did not look for her decease, and many join her dear and affectionate husband in his sorrow at her departure. She was a splendid wife and companion, a woman of a meek and quiet spirit. We do not know when her interest in better things began, but ever since the writer became her pastor he was satisfied that she had a love of the truth in her heart. For a long time she found much pleasure in reading God's word, portions of which were, at times, very precious and comforting to her. Not long before her departure, the words came to her one morning with much comfort, "I will neverf leave thee, nor forsake thee," and for days her joy was full. Another time she was impressed to turn to the one hundred and twenty-first Psalm, but household duties were pressing at the time and she neglected to look it up, but when the words sweetly came to her mind, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help." She then took time to look them up, and found them to be in that one hundred twenty-first Psalm, and that also was a great comfort to her. Many, like the writer, will miss her cheerful smile and genuine friendliness, but none of us can fully realize the loss that has come to her dear companion, and our hearts go out to him in loving sympathy. God, who has called her home, grant unto him comfort and reconciliation in his sorrow, so that he can say in faith, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." The writer officiated at the funeral services, which were held at her home, where a very large assembly of her relatives and friends met to pay their last respects to the departed. Interment was in the McColl Cemetery, Aldborough.

G. R.

WILLIAM VANCE MULBERRY, the subject of this notice, was born in Scott County, Kentucky, almost eighty-six years ago. He was the son of Jacob and Lucinda Mulberry, and all his life was spent in the neighborhood. March 27th, 1879, he married Miss Mary Frances Burgess, and to this union were added nine children, six of whom are deceased. He leaves to mourn his departure his widow Mary, two daughters, Myrtle, at home, Sarah, of Atlanta, Ga., one son, Durward, of Scott County, Kentucky, two grandchildren, Mary Frances and Martha Elizabeth Jones, and one sister, Mrs. Lucy Lancaster, of Sadieville, Ky. December 11th, 1886, both William and his wife told their experience to the Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church, and the following day they were taken to the frozen waters of Eagles Creek and baptized by Elder George S. Weaver, of Indiana, and all these years he remained a firm believer in the doctrine and order of the church. Shortly after his admittance he was chosen Church Clerk, and served faithfully until the fall of 1930, when his health failed and he begged

the church to put in a younger man, and after several months his desire was granted. He also served as one of her trustees for many years. Brother "Bunk," as he was known to every one, was truly a watchman and pillar to the church, whose counsel was wise. It was his delight to entertain the church and talk of a wonder-working God who declared the end from the beginning. Predestination, election and the resurrection of the dead were subjects he liked to talk about, and many happy hours we have spent together. All this is now over for him. He has entered into his rest. How we will miss him. Our hearts go out in sympathy to the widow and children, who did all that was in their power, but his allotted time had come. His part of the great project is over, and like a sheaf of wheat fully ripe he has been gathered into the garner. May the Lord bless the family, the brethren and his many friends and neighbors, and reconcile us all to his will, who doeth all things right.

At our regular metting, held on the fourth Sunday and Saturday before, he was so very low that no one but me was allowed to see him, and that just for a moment. He lived until the following Monday morning. On the following Wednesday afternoon the brethren and friends met, I read his favorite hymn, 973 of Beebe's collection, two ladies sang "Rock of Ages," I spoke briefly in prayer, then tried to comfort the brethren and friends, speaking of that grace that is free, that grace that saves, that grace that is given through our Lord and avior Jesus Christ. Then to the family burying-ground, about two miles distant, and all that was mortal was laid to rest, to await the call of the Master in the resurrection.

His unworthy pastor,

GEORGE L. WEAVER.

MRS. GEORGIA HIXSON CARRUTHERS, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly pilgrimage at the home of her niece, Mrs. Marion Cox, near Somerville, Fauquier County, Virginia, June 7th, 1941. Had she lived until July 19th she would have been eighty-eight years old. She was the daughter of John and Mary Ann Hixson, long deceased. She was married in 1907 by the late Elder J. N. Badger to Mr. John Carruthers, of North Fork, Va., who passed away some years ago. She was a member of the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, having been baptized some years ago by Elder Charles W. Vaughn. I have not the date. She is the last of her immediate family, though survived by several nieces and nephews.

The funeral services were held in the meetinghouse at North Fork, and she was buried in the graveyard there by the side of her husband. Prior to her passing away, she had made arrangements for her funeral, and had given out detailed requests as to how everything was to be carried out: selecting the undertaker to have charge of the funeral, her pall-bearers, the Scripture to be read and hymns to be sung. The Scripture was the first part of the fourteenth chapter of John, from which I attempted to speak at the services. The hymn was "Asleep in Jesus." Sister Carruthers was a firm friend of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and had annually contributed to the "Poor of the Fock" for some years. She was faithful to the church and to the interests of her pastor and his family. She was firm in the conviction that God works all things after the counsel of his own will, and her reliance for salvation was wholly in the free and sovereign and unmerited grace of God revealed to her through Jesus Christ her Lord and ap-

plied to her soul's experience by the Holy Ghost. We believe she is with the Lord in the paradise of God, where she rests until the morning of the resurrection, when the Lord shall come with all his saints to be admired in all them that believe.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

MRS. IDA HOLLOWAY BRATTEN, my beloved sister-in-law, and daughter of the late Daniel and Margaret Holloway, died at the home of her daughter, Miss Estelle Bratten, Parsonsburg, Maryland, May 13th, 1941. She was born May 24th, 1864, thus making her stay on earth seventy-seven years, lacking eleven days. She was married to Mr. Hilary Bratten January 20th, 1885. She had been a semi-invalid for several years, and truly hers had been a life of trial and tribulation, but she was always cheerful, thus her neighbors, relatives and friends feel the time well spent while in her company, for she was a good talker. She was not a member of any church, but loved the assembly of the saints, and delighted to hear the truth proclaimed as it is in Jesus. Her hymn book and SIGNS were of much comfort to her in her declining years, as she was not able to attend meetings. Her daughter with whom she made her home provided her with the comforts of life and did all that loving hands could do to make her comfortable. She leaves to mourn the loss of a dear mother five children, two daughters and three sons, fifteen grandchildren, one great-grandchild, two brothers, three sisters and a host of friends, but we sorrow not without hope, for we believe for her to die was gain.

Elder H. C. Ker conducted the funeral on Friday, the 16th, at her home, then her remains were gently borne to the family burial lot in Forest Grove Cemetery, near Parsonsburg, Maryland. May the Lord comfort all who mourn.

Written by request.

M. E. HOLLOWAY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Ananias Hastings, Md., $2; A. F. Jones, Ga., $1; Joseph A. Johnson, Tenn., $1; Mrs. M. J. Goodwin, Ark., 75 cents.

MEETINGS.

The regular annual all-day meeting is scheduled to be held at Slate Hill, N. Y., on Friday, August 22nd, 1941. Those who are interested are cordially invited to meet with us there at that time.

R. LESTER DODSON.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists is now settled in her new church-house, at 4614 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas, where she holds her regular monthly services on each first Sunray at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. Preaching services also on each third Sunday by Elder C. B. Teague, and each second Sunday by brother O. C. Lee, at 11 o'clock a. m. A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. R. HARDY, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

EBENEZER

OLD SCHOOL

BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us

---

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 109. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1941. NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PROVERBS XVI. 4.

"THE Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."

This subject is one which I realize is a very broad and tedious one, and one which I will not endeavor to show all the connections thereto, but, if it is God's will, I hope to show forth what it means to me. The very scope of the power of God has been and is now a very controversal question among men, and often discussed, and more often avoided, by the disputers of the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ. The rights used by our God in making all things have been vainly and foolishly questioned by those who do not understand, yet this is not astonishing to the few who do understand, because they once were as ignorant of the omnipotency of God as the unbeliever is today. I feel that sometimes some of the brethren will to their own hurt use the Scriptures which apply only to the power, wisdom and predestination of God, without so much as showing where we as God's people are benefited in the least by these attributes. The very doctrine that God made all things for himself in a cold, dry material sense, is of itself a horrible doctrine, except when we are given by grace and the hope within us that we also are one of those "all things" and are made for God. I realize that the vast majority of people will readily admit that God made all the good things, but they say he had nothing to do with the bad (as they term them), but if we look at this matter by the right light and with the proper understanding we must confess that in their relation to God all things are made for a purpose and are good. To those who are skeptical and to those of God's people who either through ignorance as to the fact or through temporary unbelief would misconstrue the essence or sweetness of the doctrine by dwelling upon the fact that God made all things, and not giving the reason why he made all things, I wish to say

he made all things for himself; yea, the wicked for the day of evil. From the beginning of the world unto the end of the world there has not been, and never shall be, anything which is not made of and for God. Being therefore made of God, leaves the fact bare that he is the sole creator and also the sole disposer of all things. He made them for himself, and this is a very essential truth. All things were not made for us, but for God, yet God has made such provisions that all things work together for good to those who love God and to the called according to his purpose. The ultimate purpose of God in making all things is in the reason why he made them: *for himself*. There are many things in this world that we cannot use, and so far as we are concerned are not for us, but they are made of the Lord, and for a purpose, and if made of and for the Lord they also in a very sure respect are made for us also, for saith Jesus, I in you, and you in me; and I in the Father, and the Father in me. In the sense of this union they are made for us also, because we are a "building of God" and have a "house of God." It is gross foolishness for us to even think that God loves us and then allows, suffers or permits (or whatever term should be applied) anything he has made (and he made all things) to disrupt the progress of his work in regenerating, teaching, leading, preserving and ultimately delivering all those whom he loved, and, on the other hand, sending the wicked into everlasting punishment. He made all things for himself. We, in the sweetness of our hope, sometimes feel to say deep down in our hearts that inasmuch as he made all things for himself that he is working them for our good. We feel that the clouds that sometimes rise dark over our horizon are not to our destruction, because he made them who gave us our hope. The bitter trials of this life, and the many heartaches, toils, temptations and cares seem just all right at times, because we are given to realize "the Lord hath made all things for himself," and if for himself, for us also. There are a few lucid and blissful moments in our experience when we are proud to express our hope that the Lord that made all things for himself is "for us," and "who can be against us?" Yea, he hath even made the wicked for the "day of evil." Not any specific day of evil, but for any day of evil. When the wicked are permitted to fulfill the lustful desires of their own genious this is a day of evil. Not unforeseen of God, not made of God to do evil, but made of God for the day of evil, and all the result of their evil is according to his purpose, which does not excuse nor justify them in doing evil, because it is of their own evil ingenuity that they do it, but God uses them (yet *hates them*) to accomplish his purpose toward the ones he loves (his people), and hence they are made "for the day of evil." They are tools in the hands of this Master-builder. They are made to be "taken and slain." They are "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," yet they are made of and for God. Their work is for a purpose, which we are not always given to see, yet it is

"together" for our good. The Lord hath made all things for himself, and so fitly and acutely purposed all things that there is not the remotest possibility of one of these "all things" being for any one else but him, and if for him, then for us also, because we are, by choice, regeneration and justification, his, and a thing cannot be of any service to God without also being of service to His children, because they are in Him. We have very often seen, I trust by faith, the working of things which have proven to be blessings in disguise, that we cannot for a moment doubt that all things are so mysteriously and curiously wrought by the hand of the Lord that we ultimately are the beneficiaries of the working of all things. It took the wickedest act of man that we can recall to bring the most blessed event ever to be manifested in this world: the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ. Had God made no wicked for the day of evil he would not have been crucified. Nay, this was one of these days of evil, and the result of which has been that many poor unworthy sinners, such as I feel to be, have had the sweet hope whereby they, and wherefor they, praise the blessed name of God.

There are many connections that can be brought to further prove the essence of this undertaking, but I feel that I have made myself clear on this subject, that God did not merely make all things and no one is benefited by it, but that the Lord hath made all things for himself.

I realize that I am younger in years, as well as in the practical ministry, than most of my Elder brethren in this part of the country, but there is one thing I do want to do, and that is to come with "plainness of speech" and let people wherever I go have no doubt as to Roy Smith's position in regard to what God has taught me in my heart. We, by mental training or cultural education, cannot preach or write the gospel truth. It does not come that way. It comes by the Spirit of truth, which guides us in the right way. Age does not qualify, nor does practice. Experience is what is an essential. We must feel, we must see and we must handle with our own hands. After all, it is just a part of us that is cultivated, nourished and instructed by the Spirit of God. The Spirit takes the things of God and shows them unto us in such a way that we see the essence of the deep mysteries of God, and by that Spirit we see that "the Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil," and that he will dispose of all things according to his will, and our hope is that it is to our good, because we must confess it is to his name's praise and honor.

May I take this opportunity to thank the many readers of the SIGNS who have by private letters, as well as through the columns of the SIGNS, shown their appreciation of my weak efforts to write for the paper, and also to my many friends who have otherwise shown kindness to me from all over the whole country. I appreciate it. It makes me feel more and more my unworthiness, and also that I nor you can live or die to ourselves. We

need one another, and could not live without one another, and it very vividly brings to my mind what Paul said: "Let brotherly love continue."

Yours in gospel bonds,

ROY S. SMITH.

[WHILE brother Smith's article needs no word of our's to commend it to the brethren, we feel to say a hearty "Amen" to what he has written, and wish to thank him sincerely for his interest in the SIGNS, and for the contributions which he has made to its columns. When he says, "Experience is what is an essential, we must feel, we must see and we must handle with our own hands," our heart responds readily. And we could earnestly wish that many of our good brethren might take to heart what he says at the close of his excellent article about our needing each other and letting "brotherly love continue." There are no two gifts exactly alike, but they were all—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers—given, says Paul, "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."—R. L. D.]

BENTON, Ky., Oct. 23, 1940.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I am often applying Scriptures to things I feel. This morning I am glad John says, "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them." This has been a beautiful summer, and seemingly has been summer in my heart. I have been, I hope, gloriously wrought upon by divine love and the effectual workings of that God who was able to raise Jesus our Savior from the dead and set him down at his own right hand in the heavenly places and put him above all principalities and powers. This same power, brother Dodson, has sent special gifts to us: brethren from distant places, and has sent us, as I hope, to other churches. Our Union meeting in the summer, at our old church, Soldier Creek, was not after the manner of men, nor was it man-pleasing, but God-fearing, and we had (a few of us) centered our minds on what preachers we would get to make the meeting a success, but I am glad to say that in the finished work of our God he had foreseen, and did foreknow, other ways than our choosing, so another minister, to wit, Elder W. D. Griffin, from Fayette, Alabama, was sent to us, and we did rejoice to have

him. We were not expecting him, but a very dear brother who knew him, and knew how his pleasant, rich gift would cheer us, were we in the right spirit to receive it, wrote him and got his consent to come our way. We received him with great joy, we hope, and we did hear him, and his ring was true, making us to know in Spirit and in truth that out High Priest liveth and is yet interceding for us, having entered once into the Holy of holies, and made the only offering that could forever atone for sin. Then we could, and did, go on many days in the strength of that meat. How pleasant it is to dwell together in unity of spirit. Now as I write my mind runs on to the many heavenly places we have been gathered together and made to sit together in Christ our Lord, we in him and he in us, and he in the Father, and the Father in him. Oh what a oneness, when we have little seasons that we hope in this oneness, all because God first loved us, and called us with an holy calling, and gave us a hearing ear to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches, and eyes to see that indeed Jesus must suffer and enter into his glory. He learned obedience by the things he suffered. O brother, was there something Jesus did learn that he did not already know? or did he on walking the road set before him enter into the fullness thereof and by suffering know of a surety by experiencing what it was in reality, that which he already did foreknow? I often think when it repented the Lord on the earth that he had made man, it was because he could and did foresee all the sorrow and roughness of the way, knowing that in Him all the fullness dwelt, and seeing and having it come to pass in reality what he already had predestinated, being Jesus in the flesh back there, standing as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. He knew it all, the suffering, and knew the remedy prepared, so no wonder the flesh could say he learned obedience by the things he suffered. He was chosen to bear it all and be the one offering for sin. He was bowed down and stricken, he was acquainted with grief and sorrow, yet he opened not his mouth, but was led as a sheep to the slaughter. So he in us and we in him, a hope in him, makes us to say, Greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world. Satan going about to deceive is only going when and how and where God does not restrain, for all powers that be are ordained of God, and under his majestic power and divine providence he can work and none can hinder.

A little experience here, and I must close. One night about a week ago, I dreamed of traveling a southern route in Tennessee, out of the city of Nashville, where I once lived a few years. I traveled this southern highway through the State and on into Alabama, counting the miles. I said on awakening, What was I doing, dreaming of this trip? I went to the mail box the next morning and received a card, and on it was a lovely invitation to visit the Hopewell Association, in Alabama, and the invitation also included ministers from our Association. I sat down and wrote this brother (Elder W. D.

Griffin) that we would not be there. I thought it was impossible, but when our Association met on Friday these ministers were there and I let them read the card, and they both were anxious to go. I said, If you two go I will go, too. They said, We can carry two others also, and so it was agreed that a dear brother from our church, brother Tommy Chester, and wife should go, and we went, brother Dodson, seemingly in the spirit that God had sent us. When he putteth forth his sheep he goeth before them. We learned that on the trip, making one thousand miles or more while away from Kentucky, and oh what lovely friends we did meet, and found such sweet fellowship. The half can never be told. You know we can only hint at the things we hope in the things that come to pass and teach us that all things work together for good to them that are called according to his purpose. Our hope was renewed and love revived, and friends among strangers realized and appreciated they were our friends, and their God was our God. We knew not what it was all about, but we did hope God was in it for our good and for his glory. Nothing in our hands could we carry them, not a thing from the land of our nativity would have comforted them, but they were comforted with the same spirit of love that flows freely from God's storehouse of supplies, which is increased as we need it, and which never fails nor diminishes. What wondrous love is this, that caused the God of bliss to send his Son into this vile world of sin for us. We hope we are the called and chosen to witness to these truths, and I hope that often he has shown me, even me, in a dream or in some impressive way, the things which must shortly come to pass in my journey onward in the race he has set before me and has given me patience to run, the course he did foresee and predestinate. How fearful it is to feel we have indeed fallen into the hands of this living God, whom to know is life eternal, and that when he called we were indeed naked and ashamed to go out to meet him, our Husband, King and Friend, seeing we could only at our best approach him with an apron of our making and not a full dress. How we like to approach him with songs of goodness and psalms of praise, as we hope, in adoration of his great love toward us.

Am I over confident to-day? I feel that he has been with me this summer and fall and has chosen my changes and gathered me together with his glorious family in many dear places on this globe, and in our Beloved we sat and all was silent and still, while a voice shouted forth his glory and beauty, fullness and sovereignty. Then, at such times, we felt satisfied, and it was good to be there.

In hope,

EFFIE BLOGG WHITENTON.

ROCKY MOUNT, Virginia.

DEAR EDITORS:—I, for some cause, feel to write what I hope have been some of the Lord's dealings with me, but I am made to wonder if it is the prompting of the Lord or of the old

man Adam. One thing I am sure of, and that is if it be of the Lord it will comfort some of the Lord's little ones, but if it be of the flesh it will comfort no one.

Now I will try and tell the cause of my hope, if I have any. I was born November 25th, 1888. In about the year 1900 I thought many times of what would become of me if I should die, for I was not good, like I felt some people to be. I would have bad dreams and my mother would tell me not to be so bad and I would not have them. I did the best I could, but continued to have them, until about 1902, when I dreamed every one thought I was dead, and that they were burying me. I saw myself put in the grave and I could hear the earth covering me, and I was afraid. They covered me all but a very small opening, and there appeared a very small light, in the shape of a new moon. When I awoke I did not feel so bad, and was made to think of God, who made the stars, but I still had trouble. People would tell me to be good and join the church and the Lord would save me. In the year of 1903 or 1904 I was persuaded to join, and was baptized. But I was not satisfied, and after I did all the "do's" the church required I seemed to do worse than ever. I had my name on the church book about thirty years, but I hope I was made to see that a child of God had to have something more than his good works and his name on the church book to be saved, and I told them to take my name off, for I did not believe as they did. I had tried to be satisfied with my works, but the more I worked the deeper I got in the quicksand. I tried to call upon the Lord to help me, but my prayers seemed to mock me and I grew worse and worse, until I felt that there was no forgiveness for such a sinner as I. I was married in 1909. I had been going with my wife to her meetings for several years. She joined the Primitive or Old School Baptists about 1919 or 1920. I felt out of place when with them, but the day came when I felt differently. I was made to see that I was lost, and could do nothing to save myself, and if I was saved it had to come some other way than by human efforts, and I was greatly troubled and did everything I could to cast off my burden, but it grew so heavy it seemed I could not live. I began reading the Bible to see if I could get some comfort, but everything I read condemned me and all I had ever done. Finally something told me to go and talk with a certain brother. I went, but could not tell him very much. He said he knew how I felt, and that I would be all right at the Lord's time, that many had felt the same way. I went home thinking that my end had almost come. The next day I read Revelation vii. 14, and found for the first time any real comfort in reading the Bible. I was made to love the doctrine of salvation by grace, and was made to go to meeting on the first Sunday in July, 1938, and ask a home with them. I was received and the time was set for me to be baptized, which was the fifth Sunday in July. Then my troubles truly did begin. Something

was constantly telling me I was deceived and that I was acting the part of a hypocrite and I was deceiving the church and the good people, and I thought I would have to tell them I could not be baptized, that there was nothing to me and I had no hope, and had deceived them. I thought I had trouble before, but not what I had then. On Saturday night before I was baptized it rained and the river was up a little, and Sunday morning I was up by daylight and drove about three and one-half miles to the river to see if I could be baptized. The river was muddy, but it looked good to me. I was baptized about nine o'clock that morning, and felt some better, but for many weeks something kept telling me I had deceived the church and was deceived myself. I was troubled, and could not rest night nor day. I felt I must pray, but could not. Then there came a season of many days when I could do nothing but pray. I would lose sight of everything. At my work I would start one place and come to myself going in another direction, praying to my God that if I was deceived he would please undeceive me. During this time I dreamed I had gone to a sister church and the house was full and they were singing, but there was no preacher there. I do not know how I got there, but I was at the book-board and read the first chapter of Romans, sixteenth verse, and preached from it, and selected a song I do not remember ever hearing to close with. We sang it and extended the right hand of fellowship and friendship, and I thought there was one brother who would not fellowship me, and I thought I asked him why he did not shake hands with me, and he said I had preached unsound doctrine. I thought I had preached an all-powerful God, and that salvation is by the grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, and not by the works of the creature. The song we sang was,

"Father, I stretch my hand to thee,
No other help I know;
If thou withdraw thyself from me,
Oh whither shall I go?"

It did not make feel any better after the brother refused to fellowship me, and I continued to try to pray, and it seemed I had more trouble than any one in the world. Then I truly believe the good Lord gave me a vision that has given me great joy and strengthened my hope. The vision I saw, or dreamed I saw, was that I saw myself and many others on our way to the judgment-seat of God. There appeared to be two roads running there side by side, and it seemed there was a board fence about three feet high between them. The road on the left side was as rough as a dirt road could be, and all who walked that way were weeping and moaning, with bowed heads. The road on the right side was as smooth as any polished floor, and they who were on that road were laughing and shouting, with their heads up, and seemed not to have a care in the world. All the people were going in the same direction, with just the fence between, and when we came to the end

of the roads there appeared the Lord on the fence, facing us, and when those who were on the left road came to where he sat I thought they all looked up and their faces did shine, and he waved his right hand, and said, These are they who have come through great tribulation, enter thou into the joys of the Lord; and they who were on the right hand road, when they came to where the Lord was they lowered their faces and could not look up, and he waved his left hand, and said, Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you. Now, dear ones, sometimes I am made to rejoice in troubles, at least when they are past, for I know they are for my good and God's glory. Dear ones, I was with those who were on the left road, and that is why I am made to rejoice and have hope, for we read in John xv. 33, that we shall have tribulation in this world, but in Christ peace. Please read Romans v, 3-5, and see what tribulation does for the children of God. I also get much comfort from reading 2 Corinthians i. 1-15. Dear ones, the darkest hours are just before the dawn. For we say, "When shall I arise, and the night be gone? and I am full of tossings to and fro until the dawning of the day."—Job vii. 4. But when the Day Star arises in our hearts then is great rejoicing. (2 Peter i. 19.)

Now I must stop, for I am afraid I will take up too much space. I hope by the comfort I am comforted with that others may be comforted. (2 Cor. i. 4.)

Dear editors, if you feel that any one may be comforted by reading this, a part of a sinner's experience, you may publish it; if not, cast it aside, and all will be well.

A sinner saved by grace, I hope,
CHARLES T. ABSHIRE.

EL DORADO, Ark., Feb. 11, 1941.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If it be the will of the Lord, I will try to write a little on the text John iii. 16, which is so greatly used by the so-called religious world of to-day. Is this Scripture confusing to our doctrine, or does it help prove our doctrine? If I have any understanding at all, it helps prove it, inasmuch as the Lord Jesus Christ said, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Just what does this mean? He loved the world in such a way that he gave his only Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Just who is it that believeth? and why does any one believe? The apostle Paul tells us, "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?"—Rom. x. 14. Does every one hear? I say, No, not spiritually, because the Scripture tells us in Mark iv. 9, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." What kind of ears is he talking about? Surely it is the spiritual ear under consideration, because "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because

they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14. The Scripture also proves that some do not have a spiritual ear to hear with, for Christ's own words in Mark iv. 12, tell us "that seeing they may see, and not receive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them." So, does every one hear and understand? Can a child hear before it is born? Christ tells us in John iii. 3, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Is there anything we can do in order to be born again? We had nothing to do with being born naturally, or of the flesh, and surely we have just as much power over our natural birth as we have over our spiritual birth, but since we do not have power to be born of the flesh, it is certain that we do not have the power to be born of the Spirit. Therefore, we do not have the power to believe, unless it is given us of the heavenly Father, just as the spiritual birth is given us of him. The spiritual birth brings about the belief, and not the belief the birth.

What does he mean when he says whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but shall have everlasting life? I believe with all the power of my mind that he means every one out of every nation, kindred, people and tongue who believeth in the only begotten Son of God shall be saved, and the promise is no more to the Jews only. But, under the new covenant, he has people in all nations. Christ tells us in John iii. 18, "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." So, he that believeth is not condemned, nor does he say there was a time when he was condemned in the mind and purpose of God. God knew all things from the beginning, and chose his people in Christ before the world began. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9. So, surely he was not condemned in the mind and purpose of God from the beginning, for "God hath not cast away his people, which he foreknew."—Rom. xi. 2. "For whom he did forknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."—Rom. viii. 29, 30. Therefore, it is God who calls, chooses, justifies and glorifies. Then it is certain we cannot justify ourselves by works without the grace of God. "If it is of grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more of grace: otherwise work is no more work."—Rom. xi. 6. "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."——Rom. iii. 20. "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is

in Christ Jesus."—Rom. iii. 24. Therefore, God freely justifies his elect, according to his own will. (Rom. i. 4, 5.) Inasmuch as his elect must believe to be saved, it is the Lord who causes them to believe, for he freely justifies them. How does he cause them to believe? By revealing his Son to them. For we must know him or we cannot believe in him. "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."—Matt. xi. 27. When he reveals his Son to us, gives us ears to hear with, eyes to see with and a heart of understanding, then we can believe in the only begotten Son of God. Otherwise, we cannot, because we have not known him. Neither have we heard the preaching of his word, except with the natural ear, which cannot understand spiritual things, because they are spiritually discerned. Before we are born of the Spirit the natural, or carnal, mind is all we have, which is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be: it is enmity against God. (Rom. viii. 7.) So, how can we be saved except by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? He makes it plain, there is no other way to enter the kingdom of God but by him, and says, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."—John vi. 44. How does he draw them? "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."—Jer. xxxi. 3. Who is it he loves? I say it is the elect according to the foreknowledge of God. "(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth.) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."—Rom. ix. 11-13. So, surely it is the elect that he loves, calls, draws, chooses, justifies and also glorifies. Surely it is the elect according to the foreknowledge of God that will believe in the only begotten Son of the true and living God and be saved from eternal destruction.

Your little brother, in hope of eternal life,

W. W. TAYLOR.

TYLER, Texas, March 27, 1941.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON—DEAR BROTHER:—I have been a silent reader of the SIGNS ever since I can remember, as I have heard my father, Elder S.C. Davenport, say he had been a subscriber since 1905 or 1906. I feel I would like to tell you some of my experience, if I have any.

When I was small my parents would take me to meeting with them, and especially can I remember communion time. I would want very much to get down on my knees at one end of the bench and go to the other end washing every one's feet, as it looked like it was so hot and tiresome for the poor old souls to do, but I could see no reason for such washing, when I knew their

feet were clean when they left home. But I believe that I have since been led by a higher power to see the reason. The days my parents would go to their meetings I knew there was no danger of their slipping in on me, and I would get the SIGNS down and read them, and oh how I did wish I could have some of those good experiences. I tried several times to get the Bible down to read it, and something would tell me to let it alone, that there was nothing in it for me. But finally I took it down, and sure enough, I could not understand it.

When we grew up we had the privilege of visiting the meetings we desired, and one summer evening there was a meeting held not far from our home. They got almost every one in that community, and one night my sister and I got there late. When "the doors were open" no one would go forward. The speaked pleaded with us, and finally he pointed his finger at us, and shouted, "Die and go to hell. I don't care. I don't want to save you." That worried us, and we talked with our mother about it. She told us not to worry. She believed that we were saved by a higher power than man. Then I got married. My husband's parents were Primitive Baptists, so we went to meeting quite often as long as we lived near a church. When my husband went into office, that took up most of his time, "we thought," and we both got to "running around" for two or three years. Finally something came over me. I could see my mistakes, but did not know what to do for myself. I saw that I was too weak to do anything. I was tired of myself, the whole world and all that was in it. One day I fell across the bed and cried bitter tears and prayed my first prayer. I asked God to take me, for I was not fit to live. The next day we started on our vacation and we had a car wreck. I did not think I was hurt very badly, but felt that my husband and two girls were going to be taken from me and I would be left in this old wicked world alone. I wanted to die. The girls were not hurt, but my husband had concussion of the brain, but soon recovered. On the seventh day something came over me and I knew I was dying. There was no pain, I was nearly across the waters and something pulled me back, I could not go on. There was a curly, dark-haired, blue-eyed baby before me. I wondered whose it was. Something told me it was mine and I had to live for its sake. Then I wanted to get well, but I suffered agony for nearly three months. I promised God I would be good and try to do better if I could only get well, but when I did recover the temptations were too great for me. It was the same thing: too weak. Then finally one day I was lost. I do not know for how long. I was shown how wicked and sinful I was. I wsa carried through the land of affliction and told that I was filthy; not even my feet were fit to walk upon the earth. I wanted to die, but I was made to see that I would be lowered down in darkness, never to rise again. I tried to pray, but it seemed that God did not hear me. Then late one evening some-

thing told me to go to my front door and look up. I had never seen the world look so bright and beautiful before. There hung a cross. I said, That cannot be real. It told me to look at some cows eating hay that some one had given them, then look up, and sure enough it was a cross. I was so happy I began to sing "Amazing grace." I realized I was a wretch saved by grace, "once was lost, but now am found, was blind, but now I see." I went on for a year or two wanting to join the church. My husband wanted to join the Missionaries. I thought I would be happy with him, but was not. Then we thought there was something in Eastern Stars for us, but there was not. One day I was telling my mother how discouraged I was, and said I wished I could hear a brother from Kansas I heard once when I was young. She told me he was living in Dallas, Texas, and came every second Sunday and Saturday before to preach at a little church about fifteen miles from me, so I went to hear him every month for a year. Something asked me why I acted the part of the hypocrite and staid where I was, when I would be so happy there. But I hated to leave my husband. One communion time something asked me why I did not join that home and have my feet washed, so they would be fit to walk upon this earth. I told my husband I was going to join that church next meeting time. On Saturday of the meeting he was out of town, so I got ready to go with my mother to the meeting. Then I began to feel that may be that was not my home, so I said I would put it off a little longer. But my husband came home that night and we went to meeting the next day, and when the door was open something said, The way is clear; why don't you go on, and he will follow. They gave me a home, although I am made to wonder sometimes if I am worthy of such a peaceful place. My husband did not join until we got to the water, and then I was oh so happy. We were baptized by Elder J. R. Hardy, of Dallas, Texas, August 13th, 1939, and that little baby that came to me in spirit six years ago next June is with us now in the flesh, and will be one year old April 5th. We are happy and attend our meetings as often as we can, for we live forty miles away. Sometimes I get blue and wonder if there is a chance for a poor wretched sinner like me to be saved.

This letter is getting long, yet I have not told the half, but I will not bother you any longer. Pray for me. Will you?

Your unworthy little sister,

(MRS.) HUBERT T. FAULK.

WINNSBORO, Texas.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—Some time ago I sent you my experience, and have been worried about causing you so much trouble, for I realize I made many mistakes, yet it means everything to me, for it is the sweet evidence that gives me my hope and makes me see Jesus is my Savior, if I am saved. Sometimes I find myself saying, Oh to be set free from this sinful state I have to dwell in here below. "O wretched

man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin. There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." I like to read these things and to feel that may be I do understand. That is what I meant when I said "bondage of sin," although I am sure I was mistaken in that, for God's children are not under bondage, but under grace. Therefore God has written his laws in their hearts and printed them in their minds, and he shall be unto them a God and they shall be unto him a people. I like to try to write about these things, and sometimes wish I could put my thoughts on paper, but they are like the wind: come and gone. I read letters in the SIGNS and wish I could meet the writers and shake hands with them. Oh what a wonderful union of love our dear Lord formed us all in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, in which union I have a little hope of being one, although I do not feel worthy of a place at the dear saints' feet, but if I have any place there is where I want to be, if I am not mistaken. They are the people I love, and I want to say with Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for where thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." I feel that it is better to suffer affliction with the Old Baptists than to be with the others shouting my good works (which I do not have) from the house top. When anything seems to go wrong I have a feeling that tells me God rules supreme, so everything must be all right. If the last few moments I spend on earth can be in singing and shouting praises to that great King on high, then I will ask for nothing better.

I meant to write only a few words, but sometimes I want to write these things and shout it to the world that God is the beginning and the ending, and there is no other, who sent his Son to die for such a sinful wretch as I am. How can sin be pleasant to us in any form, when it cost our dear Savior so much? But what a foundation our hope is built upon!

My father's and mother's names were Alvin and Georgiana Keith,, both were Primitive Baptists. My father died when I was eleven years of age, and my mother never talked much about her belief, so I did not really know what the Primitive Baptists believed until I married and moved to Good Hope community. I live close to Good Hope Church, of which Elder J. R. Hardy is pastor, and I thank God for such an able preacher, who was sent to us at a time when it looked as though we would never have any more meetings.

Your sister, I hope,

(MRS.) MYRTLE RHOADES.

SANFORD, Maine.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I appreciated your card at Christmas, and intended to acknowledge it long ago. It was with pleasure I heard you are to

be with us again next August, God willing. We as a church feel to be greatly blessed of God that he puts the desire in the hearts of his servants to come to us proclaiming the eternal truth of the gospel. What a sweet privilege to hear with the hearing that is given only to those who are called by that divine calling. "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." —2 Tim. i. 8, 9. What a wonderful assurance to know and feel we are called according to the promise. Often men make promises that they do not fulfill, but with God his promises are sure and steadfast.

"The people of Jehovah's choice
Are registered on high,
And they shall hear his sovereign voice,
And by his grace draw nigh.

Yes, they shall come, 'tis heaven's decree,
They shall to Jesus bow;
This precious 'shall come' conquered me,
And gives me comfort now."

If left to ourselves we would choose a different way, but like Saul, when God's voice calls it is hard to kick against the pricks. When the day of Pentecost was come Peter lifted up his voice, and spoke of the wonders of God. "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" The answer came to them, as it does to all poor sinners whose hearts God has pricked, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."—Acts ii. 37, 38. I like that phrase, "In the name of Jesus Christ." In the world to-day there are many ways and many names and means by which we may be saved, but to those called by God only one way, for Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

I trust that you and yours are well.
Your sister, I hope,

LYDIA KEENE MASON.

SAN ANTONIO, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed is a money order for two dollars, to renew my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I enjoy its contents more than any one can ever know. Being alone, so to speak, having no one to converse with upon the spiritual things of the true doctrine of the loving and merciful Savior, I look forward to the monthly appearance of the SIGNS, and hope I desire to be thankful to him who is the giver of all good gifts for this blessing, as well as for all other blessings he has so abundantly given me, who am unworthy of the least of his mercies.

A sinner, whose every hope is in the free grace of the loving Savior,

(MRS.) R. C. WRIGHT.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1941.

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MARK V. 18-20.

"AND when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. Howbeit, Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel."

At the Delaware River Association last May, we used the above Scripture as a text, and although we felt some leading forth of the Spirit in our efforts to speak, we did not feel that the subject had been exhausted when we had finished. As it still lingers in our mind, we will undertake to present some of our thoughts upon it for the consideration of the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, in the hope of both interesting them and finding relief of mind for ourself.

In order to more fully appreciate the picture here presented it is necessary to recall some of the background, and thereby get a more complete description of the main character involved. We wish to call attention to the fact that Jesus had left the other side of the sea and had come over into this Gadarene's country. This is worthy of note for the reason that many present the idea that the sinner must first seek Jesus. In crossing the sea a "great storm" had been encountered and those who were aboard the ship had feared the loss of their lives, but when they awoke Jesus, who was asleep and apparently unaware of their predicament, he arose and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, "Peace, be still, and there was a great calm." Those who witnessed this display of his mighty power exclaimed one to another, "What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" And "when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces. Neither could any man tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting

himself with stones." Herein is set forth the pitiful condition which this poor man was in, and it is sad, indeed. It takes our mind back to a scene which we witnessed in southern Virginia many years ago. We were too small to be at work in the field, and were playing around the house. Our house was on the main road, but about one-half mile distant there lived a man with his family who one day became violently insane. Early in the morning of the day in question he began calling to my father at the top of his voice, "Ah, friend Dodson; Ah, friend Dodson," which he kept repeating, and finally, later in the day, he brought his small daughter over and threw her into the gutter of the road directly in front of our house, and for several hours he shouted and raved, breaking down mullen stalks, which he pretended to use as guns, shooting at the passersby on the road. My father was not at home and I was sent to the field to call the workers to the house. Others stopped, until finally quite a crowd had gathered. Eventually, it was planned that one of the strongest men in the group should slip up behind him and pin his arms to his sides, when others would rush up and assist until he was overpowered and bound with a rope, placed in a wagon and taken to Danville. Frequently, a man appears to possess supernatural strength under such conditions. We will never forget that scene as long as we live, and the sadness of it almost brings tears to our eyes as we pen these lines. A serious mental affliction is undoubtedly one of the most pitiful things that can possibly befall a human being. It is very baffling to medical science. Jesus sought out such a case to show how sad our state by nature is and to manifest his power to heal the most difficult of all diseases. This poor man saw Jesus afar off, and ran to worship him, crying with a loud voice, "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not," for Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of him. Jesus had here performed a great miracle and it was seen that the devils which dwelt in the man, for their names were legion, were subject unto him. They in turn recognized his power over them and asked leave of him to permit them to enter a herd of swine, which he granted, and the record is that the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea and were choked in the sea. Those who had fed the swine, seeing their herds destroyed, fled to the city and they that dwelt in the city came out to see what was done. And when they had come to Jesus and saw him that was possessed of the devil, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind, they were afraid, and well might they have been, for their doom was sealed. When those who had witnessed what took place related it to them they prayed him, Jesus, to depart out of their coasts. The feeders of those who will eat anything to-day will have none of the real Jesus, but those who rejoice in his love and power want to be with him all the time. This poor Gadarene wanted to accompany Jesus in the ship and pass

over the sea to the other side and be with him, and he prayed him to that end, but our text says he suffered him not, but commanded him to, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath compassion on thee." Until recently we had thought of this Scripture as applying only to those outside of the pales of the visible church. We have heard it quoted by others and have also quoted it many times ourself by way of trying to encourage those to whom the arm of the Lord has been revealed, to take up their cross, go home to their friends, be baptized, and become full-fledged members of the militant church. We do not want to detract from this point of view in the least, but rather would we emphasize it and urge those who have been with and learned of Jesus to do their duty in this respect. At the same time we would like to stress another point, one which we have heretofore overlooked, and that is that, "He departeed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him." In view of this our text takes on a broader meaning. It shows that Jesus had not only done great things for this man in relieving him of his distress and giving him a sound mind, but that he had called him to go forth and declare his wonderful works among the children of men. There are doubtless many of God's humble servants to-day who would prefer to cross over the river and for ever be with Jesus, but he still has work for them to do here in this sin-cursed world, and that work is to go among their friends, declaring his power to save unto the uttermost, and his ability to cure the hardest of cases, for nothing is impossible with him. He is able to deliver them from the legion of devils, who tempt and harrass them the most of their days while here in this time state. He is the Great Physician who can heal all of the diseases of their sin-sick souls, and he will have compassion upon them. What wonderful things, indeed, we have to tell our friends, those who are acquainteed with our travel, our doubts and fears, our sorrows and our joys, our downsittings and our uprisings, who share all things in common with us. Truly, they are our friends and they understand our language, which is not strange to them. They know of his sufferings for his people, of his compassion, or sympathy for those who have been called by his grace. Decapolis, we understand, signified a group of villages, towns or cities, or the community in which this Gadarene was to publish these glad tidings, and we are told that "all men did marvel."

We also read in this chapter that Jarius, whose daughter lay at the point of death, was encouraged to pray that he might heal her and that she might live. There is also the record of a certain woman who had had an issue of blood for twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all she had, and was nothing better, but rather grew worse, when she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment, for she said, "If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole." What

wonderful faith was her's, and it was fully rewarded, for it is declared that "straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague."

In our natural state we are as mad men. We will fight and oppose this way with all of our might and main, and if left to ourselves would never seek Jesus, but instead would drive him out of our coast, or lives, and refuse to have him reign over us, but, oh, what untold and everlasting gratitude springs up in our poor hearts when we discover that he has come our way, that he has sought us out, and that he commands the unclean spirits to come out of us and depart, for a season at least. Then it is we find ourselves in our *right minds,* and we not only can think rightly of him, but we are imbued with the desire to go home to our friends and tell them what great things he has done for us. The trouble with us is that we cannot begin to tell these things to our friends as we would like. We find that words cannot express what we feel, but sooner or later we realize that a hint to the wise is sufficient, and that our friends who have likewise had these things wrought in them are witnesses to the same power that has been working in us, and then, oh what a relationship there is between us. We can then sing, Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in christian love, and declare that the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above. What a mercy it is that those of like precious faith can rejoice together in telling and hearing of him who has loved us with an everlasting love and, therefore, with loving-kindness draws and constrains us to forsake the ways of sin and to seek him, whom to know is life eternal. God is still calling his people with an effectual calling, and when he commands them to go home to their friends and tell what great things he has done for them they have nothing good to say for themselves, but it is all of his grace. And when he calls and qualifies and sends forth his servants to preach the everlasting gospel of his blessed Son, they go preaching in demonstration of the Spirit and with power sent down from above, and those who hear marvel at these wonderful things.

R. L. D.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS."

We will furnish extra copies of the Signs of the Times at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

The date opposite your name on the little pink slip on which your address is printed denotes the time your subscription expires. Dec 40 means that it expired December, 1940; Dec 41 that it will expire December, 1941, etc.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MRS. SARAH ELIZABETH BRADSHAW, nee Robey, our beloved sister in the faith of Christ, departed this temporal life July 26th, 1941, at the Primitive Baptist Home, Salisbury, Maryland, where she had been for several years a thankful and contented resident. She was born in Loudoun County, Virginia, January 4th, 1853. Her father was William T . Robey, her mother Mary S. Robey, nee Hibbs. She was married February 6th, 1913, to Mr. George W. Bradshaw, of Ryan, Va., then a widower. He died April 7th, 1923. She was baptized the second Sunday in June, 1885, by the late Elder J. N. Badger into membership with the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun County, Virginia. In 1913, after her marriage to Mr. Bradshaw, she transferred her membership by letter to the Frying Pan Church, in Fairfax County, Virginia. Her church-life of fifty-six years is thereby divided into two periods of twenty-eight years each, spent in the two churches named above. As her pastor, I am thankful the Lord gave her to me to be among the flock over which, I hope, the Holy Ghost made me overseer, however inadequate I have been in myself for such service. If there was one grace more than another which characterized her christian life, I should say it was "love." And without "love" none of us profit anything in the house of the Lord. She loved the truth, loved the church, loved all things godly. I have never known her to speak an ill word of any person, either in or out of the church. She was charitable in excusing or ignoring the frailties of others. She planned her funeral services beforehand and noted down the hymns she wished used and the Scripture she wished me to speak from. The hymns were 751, 1231 and 1256, all in Beebe's collection. The text was 1 Peter i. 24, 25. She left behind her a good evidence that she is one of the Lord's accepted ones. For her, faith is now sight, hope is fruition. She has that "better part" which is to depart and be with Christ.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

EVERETT H. WINCHELL died at his home in Nelson, Fremont township, Michigan, May 25th, 1941. He was born May 21st, 1864, in Ulster County, New York, where he resided unto 1886, when he moved to Michigan and settled on a farm near Nelson. After thirty years of farming, he purchased the general store at Nelson, and continued in business there until his death. In 1889 he married Mrs. Ardell Marsh, who died April 13th, 1916, and March 4th, 1917, he married Florence Sawtelle, in Brooklyn, N. Y., who has been a faithful and devoted wife and companion, whose constant thought was for his comfort and welfare. He leaves his wife and daughter, Mrs. Carrie Hodgins, of Saginaw, Mich., a step-daughter, Mrs. Grace Ballard, of Birmingham, Mich., a foster-daughter, Mrs. Florence Sheltraw, of Fremont township, a brother, Stewart Winchell, of Saginaw, Mich., two sisters, Mrs. Agnes Ballard, of Birmingham, Mich., and Mrs. Effie Wolfersteig, of Newton Hook, N. Y. Brother Winchell was a small child when first he heard the truth preached. In his own words he said, "There was an instance in my life I can never forget: it was back in Old Olive, N. Y. They held an Old School Baptist meeting one night at brother Alvah Bogart's, up on the mountain, and I was taken there by my father and mother. Elder Hubbell preached from John xiv. 1-3, 'Let not your heart be troubled,' etc. After that I went on just the same as other boys, until I was about thirty years old, with

the exception that I always held to the Old School Baptist doctrine. Some time after that it was made known to me that I was a guilty sinner before the just and holy God. I could see him just in all his ways, and me a condemned sinner, with no way of escape. I can see myself now, walking through the fields ploughing, with tears running down my cheeks, and I, a poor lost sinner, pleading with God to forgive my sins. Such has been my walk all through the remainder of my life, and I have had many times when I felt that God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven my sins, and made me sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord." Brother Winchell united with the Old School Baptist Church years ago, in Cement City, Mich., and attended there until that church closed its doors. It was his pleasure several times to attend our meetings in Canada. We knew him as a brother well established in the doctrine of God our Savior, having a very humble opinion of himself, but he was strong in the faith, giving glory unto God. We were called to officiate at the funeral services at Saginaw, Mich., where we tried to comfort his sorrowing ones. Interment was in Fremont township Cemetery.

ALSO,

THE Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada lost another of its faithful friends when WILLIAM A. JONES died suddenly of a heart attack at his home in Tillsonburg, Ontario, November 12th, 1940. He was born in Strathroy, Ontario, March 25th, 1872, and in 1861 moved to Ekfrid, Ontario, where he and Ella J. Carter were married December 25th, 1897, by the late Elder William L. Pollard. He leaves to mourn their loss, his wife, also a brother, Arthur Jones, of Detroit, Mich., and a sister, Mrs. Thomas Williams, of London, Ontario. Mr. Jones never united with the church, but for many years showed a lively interest in good things. Situated as they were, at quite a distance from any of our meeting-places, he was always anxious to make it possible for his wife, who is a member, to fill her place, even if he were unable to be present. When able to come himself, he has, on more than one occasion, told the writer that it was worth coming so far to hear such preaching. He was a true friend, loved by all who knew him, especially the young, who loved his company.

At his funeral the writer spoke from Job vii. 16, a chapter that he at one time expressed as being his feelings. He was a very devoted and loving husband, and our dear sister cannot help but mourn her loss, but she sorrows not as those who have no hope. For years he resided in Tillsonburg, where he was well known and greatly respected, and the town has lost one of its most faithful and conscientious servants, as stated by the Mayor when the Council met following his death. It is natural for us to mourn our loss, but our hope is that he is "forever with the Lord," which is far better. The interment was in the Aylmer Cemetery, Aylmer, Ontario.

G. R.

J. W. MOORE, the subject of this sketch, was born August 8th, 1870, and died July 6th, 1941. He is survived by his wife and seven children, six girls and one son, namely Mrs. Lawrence Harrison, Mrs. Howard Harrison, Mrs. Willie Westbrook, Mrs. Olivia Kitchens, Mrs. Thelma Carpenter, Mrs. Emeriop Lafsrcle and Mr. Leon D. Moore, of Mexico. Mr. Moore spent his life in Morehouse Parish, Louisiana. He was a farmer and had many friends. He received a hope in Christ several years ago, but never did unite with the church.

Before his helth failed he attended services of the Concord Church, of the Primitive Baptist faith and order, and delighted to hear the truth proclaimed as it is in Jesus. He seemed to bear his suffering with great patience. He loved his family and was interested in their welfare. Some two years before he died he realized he could not be with us much longer, and requested the writer to conduct his funeral, so I tried to speak words of comfort to his bereaved family and a large concourse of friends who came to pay that last tribute of respect. I used as a text that Scripture that if in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable. I would say to his wife and dear children, Weep not for him, for he gave a bright evidence of a sweet hope beyond the grave. His body was laid to rest in the Cansey Cemetery, to await the resurrection morn.

Written by request of his sorrowing wife.

T. J. EVERS.

MRS. PINKIE CHAMBERS, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Key, was born in Attala County, Mississippi in the year 1870, and died in Vinson, Oklahoma, May 13th, 1941, aged seventy-one years. She was married to W. F. Chambers December 22nd, 1891. No children were born to this union. Her husband preceded her in death, passing away in the year 1937. She is survived by one sister and two brothers (whose addresses are unknown), also three brothers-in-law and their families, and a host of friends. She united with the Primitive or Predestinarian Baptists of Hopewell Church Sunday, June 19th, 1938, at Reed, Oklahoma. She was a strong believer in that faith and doctrine.

Funeral services were conducted in the Methodist meetinghouse at Vinson, Okla., by her pastor, Elder W. N. Green, of Altus, Okla., at her own request. Her body was laid to rest in Cave Creek Cemetery, beside her husband. She had been able to attend church services but little since she joined, because of ill health.

Hopewell Church extends heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved ones.

Done by order of the church while in regular conference.

W. N. GREEN, Moderator.

R. L. BUCKNER, Church Clerk.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT.

WHEREAS, it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst by death our beloved pastor, ELDER J. B. BOWDEN, we, Mt. Olive Church, bow in humble submission to his holy and righteous will.

WHEREAS, Mt. Olive Old School Baptist Church has enjoyed the unselfish services of this faithful Elder, we do now fully realize our great loss, yet feel it to be his eternal gain. So be it

RESOLVED, that as a token of our love and esteem for our departed brother who has come to us laden with the best from the Lord's sorehouse whenever he could for the last thirty years, be it further

RESOLVED, that these Resolutions be spread upon the face of our Minutes, a copy be sent to the family of the deceased, a copy be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and a copy to *The Old Faith Contender.*

Done in Conference by order of Mt. Olive Church on Saturday before the third Sunday in July, 1941.

E. B. AULT, Moderator.

LELA CULPEPPER, Church Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

F. L. Riffe, Wash., $3; Mrs. C. E. Lawrence, Mass., $1; "A friend," N. Y., $1; Mrs. May Derby Hoyt., N. Y., $2; Mrs. Lillie N. Henry, Miss.,$1; A. J. Doggett, Ala., 25 cents; Wm. H. Morris, Mo., $1; Mrs. Ella E. Nelson, Texas, $1.

MEETINGS.

The next session of the Maine Association is to be held with the church at Bowdoinham, Maine, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 12th, 13th and 14th, 1941.

SANFORD BARTLETT, Clerk.

The annual session of the Lexington-Roxbury Association will be held at the Yellow Meetinghouse, below Roxbury village, on Wednesday and Thursday, September 17th and 18th, 1941. The meeting ill open on Wednesday morning at 10:30, Standard Time. All are cordially invited to meet and worship with us and accept of our hospitality, and entertainment will be furnished for all visitors as usual. Ministers of our faith and order in fellowship are especially invited to meet with us. Those coming Tuesday afternoon will come to Halcottville, N. Y., where they will be met at the railroad station, and those coming by bus or automobile will inquire for the homes of John B. Hinkley or Walter Harrington in Halcottville village, where provision will be made for entertainment. Those coming Wednesday morning will go to the meetinghouse.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

Providence permitting, the Original Mount Zion Association of Old School Baptists will convene with Oak Grove Church, near Oak Grove, Jackson County, Missouri, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1941. We invite all sound orderly Baptists to meet with us.

D. A. J. ADAMS, Moderator.

WILLIAM H. MORRIS, Clerk,
7241 Jefferson Street,
Kansas City, Missouri.

The regular appointment of a yearly meeting is to be held at Welsh Tract Church October 19th, 1941, by order of the Delaware Association, convened at Rock Springs Church May 24th and 25th, 1941, for one day, services beginning at 10 a. m., Eastern Standard Time. All ministers and brethren are cordially invited to be with us who are sound in the faith and doctrine of God our Savior, in the faith once delivered unto the saints. Welsh Tract Church is centrally located, at Newark, Delaware, and those coming from a distance may use the Baltimore and Ohio R. R., or the Pennsylvania R. R. Call at my home and all will be directed accordingly.

JOHN B. MILLER, Church Clerk.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will be entertained by the Snow Hill Church, Snow Hill, Worcester County, Maryland, on Wednesday and Thursday after the third Sunday in October (22nd and 23rd), 1941. We extend a cordial invitation to all sister churches and friends of our faith and order to meet with us, especially our ministers. We shall do all in our power for your comfort and pleasure. Those coming by auto Tuesday, will come direct to the meetinghouse, on the main street of the town, where you will be met and directed to places of entertainment for the night. Those coming on Wednesday or Thursday, come direct to the meetinghouse. Should any come by train, inquire for Mrs. Ernest West.

H. C. KER, Moderator.

M. A. HOLLOWAY, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue
(Park Avenue Hall)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A. M.
ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists is now settled in her new church-house, at 4614 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas, where she holds her regular monthly services on each first Sunray at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. Preaching services also on each third Sunday by Elder C. B. Teague, and each second Sunday by brother O. C. Lee, at 11 o'clock a. m. A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. R. HARDY, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers.

Single copy 25 cents; 5 copies $1.00; 12 copies $2.00. All to be ordered at one time, and to the same address. Cash in all cases to accompany the order. Address,

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MIDDLETOWN, N Y.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 109. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1941. NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FLORENCE, Alabama.

DEAR EDITORS:—Please find inclosed an article for your consideration, and if you deem it worthy of space or of any comfort to God's little ones you may publish it. I enjoy the SIGNS very much.

"Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks." The above is a prophecy foretelling what is to occur in the future. We find the fulfillment of it in the fourth chapter of Matthew: "Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him." Later he found James and John in a ship with their father, Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. They left the ship and their father and followed him. We find that Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of diseases among the people. And there followed him great multitudes of people from the different surrounding towns. "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set [or had seated himself], his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for their's is the kingdom of heaven." Meaning that the church, or organic kingdom that he was to set up, as foretold by Daniel (ii. 44), was to be a home for the people bearing the marks as presented in the seven Beatitudes. Remember Jesus sent them forth to fish and hunt for something he had created, not to assist him in creation. The fish and sheep they were to

fish and hunt for represent God's regenerated people.

Two men went into the temple to pray. Only one prayed. He said, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. The other boasted and bragged about what a good man he was. The publican was poor in spirit. He had the life of Christ in him, which is the light of men. By that light he could see the depravity of his heart. He had two natures: the nature of the first Adam and the second Adam. The Pharisee had only the nature of the first Adam. His worship was from a legal spirit. In order to worship God acceptably we must have the Spirit of Christ. To be poor in spirit was not only a sign of the Lord's people, as shown in the New Testament, but the prophets of the Old Testament gave them the same marks. "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth, for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid."—Zeph. iii. 12, 13. "Hath not God chosen the poor of the world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?"—James ii. 5. And I will feed the flock of the slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock. And I took unto me two staves; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bonds; and I fed the poor of the flock. And I took my staff, even Beauty, and cut it asunder, that I might break my covenant which I had made with all the people. And it was broken in that day. And so the poor of the flock that waited upon me knew that it was the word of the Lord. Notice it was the remnant of Israel that should not do iniquity nor speak lies. Remember that God, under the law dispensation, reserved seven thousand men who had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal, even so at this present time there is a remnant, according to the election of grace. The Savior calls this remnant the very elect, and asserts that if it were possible, some would deceive even the very elect.

Passing from the first mark, the poor in spirit, we come to the second. "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." Every poor sinner on earth that has really and truly mourned on account of his sins will be saved in heaven, because the Savior says he is blessed and he shall be comforted. In the natural kingdom, when a child cries you know it is born. So in the spiritual kingdom. The Savior says, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. So in both kingdoms we see that when a child cries it is born, but is not yet a child by faith, nor is it comforted. But when it grows and gets old enough to know its parents, and finds that its parents relieve its wants, it is comforted, and believes in its parents because it is born. Not in order to be born, as some people teach. I want to ask every child of God who may read this, Do you not remember when you first saw yourself a poor lost and ruined sinner? How

you mourned and begged for mercy. How your heart was broken on account of sin. Let us go to the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah and see if you cannot realize what Jesus has done for you. The prophet is here describing the office-work of Christ. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted." Was not your poor heart broken on account of sin? Did he not bind it up? "To proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Did you not feel that you were a captive of Satan? Bound by the strong cords of sin, did you not feel that Christ delivered you from the powers of darkness and translated you into his kingdom? "To comfort all that mourn." Remember that Jesus said the mourner shall be comforted. "To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them the beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Did not Jesus do all these things for you? If so, I am sure you remember it. The prophet then tells why Jesus did this: that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. Remember that Jesus said, Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up.

I carry you now to the Old Testament, that you may have fellowship with those saints and receive comfort in hearing one tell his experience. We find that King Hezekiah was sick unto death. The Lord's prophet told him to set his house in order, for thou shalt surely die and not live. Do you not remember when you received this message? You not only thought that you were going to die, but you thought hell would be your destiny. Now see the similarity in your experience and this Old Testament saint. He "turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the Lord." Now listen to his experience, and see if you have fellowship with him. "I reckoned till morning, that, as a lion, so will he break all my bones: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me. Like a crane, or a swallow, so did I chatter; I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward: O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me." Now let us see if you are in fellowship with Paul. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am shief." "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints." "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." I once thought it strange that a saint of Paul's ability could not find how to do good, but Job, in the twenty-third chapter, gives us the key: "He performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him." "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." In the work of regeneration Christ only divides the spoil with Satan, drives him out of the soul, and leaves him in the flesh, hence the warfare, the flesh against the Spirit.

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." Meekness is a grace which Jesus alone inculcated, and which no ancient philosopher seems to have understood or recommended. Jesus was meek and lowly in heart, and those born again inherit the same quality.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." The character of food, for which the sensations called hunger and thirst are felt, is an index to the character of life that produced them. We hunger and thirst after natural food because of a natural life. If we hunger for the bread that came down from heaven (Jesus Christ) it is an evidence that we have a life to produce that hunger. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.'

In conclusion, I will refer to a few more comforting Scriptures. Paul to the Romans, eighth chapter, says, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." He concludes the chapter by affirming that there is no separation from his love. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" If God is for us now, he has always been for us, and will always be for us, because he is unchangeable, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent and unity. The Father chose a people in Christ before the world began, and predestinated them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ according to the good pleasure of his will. The Father gave Jesus power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father gave him. He finished the work the Father gave him to do. He told his troubled disciples, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also."

"Some day he's coming to this earth,
To take his children home;
All those who have a heavenly birth,
Without the loss of one.

Oh how we long for that sweet day,
When God shall be our light;
When all our sins are put away,
And there will be no night."

LYTLE BURNS.

DELAWARE, Ohio.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—What am I that I should be addressing you? In myself, how unfit! But if we are what we sometimes hope we are in Christ, it may justly be said to us, Thou art all fair, my dove; there is no spot in thee. Yes, if we are his we are not simply pardoned, but also purified, clothed upon with the righteousness of Jesus Christ, our dear Brother, our eternal Redeemer. I may be wrong, but it seems to me that the only way we could be accounted innocent was to have our sins imputed to our blessed Redeemer before they were committed. Of late my mind has dwelt much upon the sweet theme that Jesus Christ is our *eternal* Redeemer, otherwise, at one time we had been "the guilty," and it hath been said, He will in no wise clear the guilty. Yes, in his love and pity he bear them and carried them all the days

of old. Bearing our guilt and sin that we might be accounted not only forgiven, but righteous. Oh what wonderful love, compassion and wisdom, to purify, cleanse and save us in such a wise way that we are not only absolutely free, but accounted innocent in the sight of our heavenly Father. No sin-sick soul could be satisfied with simply a pardon, but we wish to be pure, even as He is pure, and we are told that the half has not yet been told. Oh what a wonderful redemption it must be in order that we might sing God's praise and never get to the end of it. "Things new as well as old," and the more we tell it the bigger and grander does the sweet story of his love become.

I have been thinking of writing for some time, but with the fear that I should fail to do justice to the subject and woul only be wearisome to the readers. Besides, I wanted to write to so many that I just could not decide whom to address. I have been reading old numbers of the SIGNS, and felt like writing to all the many writers. I have much enjoyed letters from most of the Elders who have been on the editorial staff of the SIGNS, yourself included. I read one letter from Elder Frederick Keene, who has gone on before us. I still have one letter in his beautiful penmanship. I could not well keep all the good letters I have received from different writers, from whom I would much enjoy hearing again. I have all the time I want to read, or as much as my eyes can stand. Oh what a blessing to be cut off from the vain and foolish things that tempt the flesh, and free to meditate upon the wonderful things of the Spirit. But the flesh is weak and does still (too much of the time) waste the moments which should be spent praising the Lord for his wonderful goodness and boundless love and grace to one like me.

I recently received a splendid letter from Elder W. W. Slaughter, of Edgewood, Texas, in reply to one of mine sent to Hon. Lindley Beckworth, his grandson, and also he is "The Baby Congressman from Teexas," who professes an interest in my letters, and who suggested that I write to his grandfather. Elder and sister Slaughter often wrote to me when dear sister Slaughter was living and was kind enough to say that our hearts were knit together as those of Jonathan and David. I used to know this family personally, than whom I had no better friends. I often think of the dear brethren of Texas with whom I enjoyed association for a number of years. Several of the Elders used to write to me, some of whom now find it difficult to write because of the infirmities of age. I remember and love them still, and look forward to that grand association above, where north will meet south and east meet west. I wish that I were able to write to every one of them, whom I have met and loved, especially the Elders who so comforted me by preaching. It is pleasant to recall a trip which I once enjoyed riding with Elder and sister J. C. Sykes in their canvas covered wagon containing three spring seats (I believe). Sister

Sykes (No. 1) and I rode together in the rear seat. She and I often slept together at associations. His present wife is very pleasant and lovable and is dearer to me than I can express. It is two years or more since brother Sykes and I rode together last, when, as he was not driving, he preached all the way. How sweet to recall blessed times spent together with brethren whom we have known and loved.

"Though sundered far, by grace they meet,
And glory crowns the mercy-seat."

No wonder fellowship is so sweet, being "one in Christ Jesus." Yes, all the redeemed throng are united in love in the Lord, even some who are not included in our church fellowship, for "he that loveth is born of God," is no truer than the other way around, "He that is born of God, loveth," Though some seem to love to a greater degree than others, among whom is the present sister Sykes.

Now, brother Dodson, I feel a little ashamed to send what I have written, for it is so scattering and sounds so much like me. But sometimes the weak can love the brethren as well as the strong do, perhaps.

My health is much better, but the doctor tells me my blood pressure is still above two hundred, altrough there is marked improvement and I look quite well once more. I have hoped that if my son should go to the Fair at New York he would take me with him, but I think it would be more of a treat to me to meet the brethren than to see the Fair. I inclose a card, so if it is not too much trouble you can jot down the time and place of some meetings this spring, not too far away, for my son is a very busy man and could not remain in the east very long. They told me that on his next trip to New York it would be my turn to go along. He took his father-in-law and mother-in-law with them when they went east the last time.

I hope to send remittance for the SIGNS soon.

JOIE E. WOODS PETERS.

BALTIMORE, Maryland.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—With sister Dance's permission, I am inclosing her letter to be published in the SIGNS, for we feeel this good letter should be shared with our kindred in Christ, who have loved this dear sister for many years. She is now in her ninety-fourth year.

Your sister, I hope,

M. E. NORMAN.

TOWSON, Maryland.

DEAR SISTER NORMAN:—Your letter received, and I assure you it was appreciated. Thank you for telling me of sister Godwin's death. I have thought often of her afflicted condition, yet she seemed cheerful and bright. I visited in their home when brother Godwin was living, and it is a pleasant memory. We must all learn patience and submission in whatever way the dear Father deems best. We prove this to ourselves: "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." You are younger; that may not mean so much to you now as it will later on. When the body is

sick, the patience near exhaustion and the endurance worn thin, then the given strength of all three is leaned upon as a strong support. I have found it so. The affliction put upon me at this time is the bad foot. It is a continual ache; not bad, but the constant grind calls for patience. I did not mean to complain, and only ask for patience and strength to walk, without complaining, in the way marked out for me.

It was a very keen disappointment to me not to be at our Association and see the people I have walked with since 1869, hear the spoken word and the voices raised in praise of the Creator of it all. But to be remembered and to receive messages and letters comforted me greatly. "Whatever is, is best."

Your letter of June 19th was good, and I thank you for it, but, as I say, being first better, then worse, disturbs the level of things. A letter from sister Griest said your call helped her much. She said it eased the ache of disappointment at not being able to go to the meeting. And so with me, the call from Elders Topping and Walker, the letters that have come, the Minutes from brother Charles Osborne, with all the account of the meeting, make me ashamed to complain. I eat well and sleep well. A niece visiting here has her camera and last night threw on a screen some pictures in color of Pocono Mountains, the Philadelphia Flower Show and many of our family, so entertainment comes to me if I must stay in. I only mention this to let you know that I would be ungrateful to our Father and my people if I whined and failed to appreciate all that comes to me. But I think you can understand how very much I miss my church privileges and the company of those who understand the things I think I do. If that is my burden, I ask for strength to walk in a becoming way, as viewed by those I love best.

I hope sister Robey is comfortably well. I am glad she has you to lean upon. Really, I should sing of the beauties and glories of our Redeemer, instead of ever being discouraged or distressed, for he is beautiful and glorious and worthy of all praise and adoration.

Your sister in hope,

SUE R. DANCE.

TERRELL WELLS, Texas, June 20, 1940.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:—It has been on my mind for a long time to write a few lines to the SIGNS and its many readers who stand in line with the old order of doctrinal principles as laid down in the SGNS, but I may not hold up long enough to write as I desire, because of my weak feelings and poor health. I have been able to attend my home church but three times the past year, but my love and fellowship are the same as they have ever been for those who love the old original doctrine which has been contended for by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and several of the old regular Baptist papers in the United States and England on back to the apostles. I have been a believer of the old doctrine for more than fifty years. I would love to tell of five of the most noble visions that have come

to me during the last thirty years, which, if I could, I would not part with for all the money on earth, for they have led me along that narrow path I feel all the Lord's chosen ones here in time have walked, for, as the old prophet said, There is a path which no fowl knoweth and the vulture's eye hath not seen, the lion's whelp trodden nor the fierce lion passed by, yet it is said that fools shall not err therein. If I know anything about the word "fool," it is often used against the old order of Baptists because they have not partaken, and never will partake, of any of the doctrines of the world, for their doctrines are not food to the hungry soul, nor comforting to the weary.

Well, I had to rest some before I could continue writing, I wish I could write to the dear household of faith as I feel, but I may not be able to say much concerning the old doctrine which the Old Baptists have contended for since Paul's day. The Lord hath chosen his precious elect from the ancients of eternity, and hath declared the end from the beginning, and nothing shall ever turn to the left or the right, but go straight ahead to the end purposed for it. Yes, I have spent most of my past life in trials and sickness, and all I have to rely on is his precious mercy. If I am one of those he hath chosen to be delivered into his Father's kingdom there shall I be, together with the chosen saints, and we shall all sit together under our own vine and fig tree, with nothing to molest or make afraid. I, in some way, may not write all I should to the edification of the bewildered here in time, but I hope to let each of you realize just where I stand. Away back when the great convention was held at Black Rock, Maryland, a line of distinction was drawn between the old order of Primitive Baptists and the New School. I well remember listening to old Grandfather Bowden, of North Carolina, tell of how he and many others in the year 1828 moved to west Tennessee and set up a church in that community, and in 1832 the convention was called and Grandfather went. He was Clerk of the new church in Tennessee, also a Deacon, and died in the faith the Old Baptists had stood for since the days of the apostles. He was well acquainted with Elder Gilbert Beebe. So I will say, dear brethren, there is no ground for any form of conditionalism, just the true doctrine of God's pure grace, and there is where I yet stand.

Inasmuch as I cannot do the writing I would like to I will close, for awhile any way. I just want to mention some or the dear brethren and sisters who have, in love I hope, contributed to my needs at different times, which makes me feel that unworthy I am of their notice. I yet get letters from brethren from over most of the United States, and some from other nations, but am so feeble most of the time I cannot do much writing. I wish as many as can would write me, for their letters give me consolation.

Dear editors, if you feel this letter is worth its room in the dear old SIGNS you may publish it. I wish all the household to pray to the Father of

mercy for me and for all the dear ones in Christ Jesus.

As ever, your brother in hope,

J. B. BOWDEN.

[ELDER J. B. BOWDEN'S obituary was published in the August, 1941, issue of the SIGNS.—ED.]

TIPTONVILLE, Tennessee.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am sending you a written experience of a dear sister. We have exchanged several letters, but you can see she did not write this to send to any one. Just penned down some of the most precious things in her experience. She took it out of her Bible and sent it to me to read and return to her, as she wanted it left for her children and others to read after she leaves the walks of this life, that they might know what she believed, and why. Brother Campbell and I thought it would be good reading for the SIGNS, so I copied it and returned her's and asked her consent to send it to you for publication, which she gave. It is sweet indeed when we can see God's great moving power that moves his little ones to take up their pens and with trembling hands venture to write praises to his name. Oh he is so good to his children! He calls them by name and they follow him. They are not drawn by the hair of their heads, but by sweet cords of love that cannot be broken. He said, By lovingkindness have I drawn thee. Words fail us to fully express the sweetness of our hope and experience. We are not always viewing this pleasant field. No, no, there are times we wonder about the cares we have, when all things seem to be against us. Oh why? we ask, and commence to examine ourselves, and think, Is it this that I have done? Oh why am I thus? The things I would do, I do not, and the very things I would not, those I do. We look at others who seem to be doing so much, who seem to feel happy and free, and think, Is it true that I am wrong and they are right? How we are tossed to and fro! It is a bitter experience when we cannot find our Lord, but so good when we feel his loving presence. All things are well then, and we can see the sweet promises again, and see the hand that is leading and protecting us all our journey through. We can then sing,

"'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

Yours in hope of a better life beyond,

(MRS.) LUTHER CAMPBELL

MARCH 20, 1935.

FOR some cause I feel I want to write some of my experience, which I hope has been the dealing of the Lord with me. I was raised by Missionary Baptist parents, and when I was eleven or twelve years of age beptized in the Missionary faith. Blind! Oh so blind! But because my parents were of that faith they thought the sooner I joined them the better it would be. I went on with nothing troubling me until I was fifteen years of age, when uneasy feelings would come over me and I would think of dying. When I had an opportunity I wanted to ask people to pray for me, as I thought there was a work

to be done, and I wanted to do good works. There was a change, and I thought the Lord had blessed me for my good works. I went on in that way for about six years. After I was married I was very zealous, thinking there was something I had to do. I was determined to show Earl (my husband) I was right, and within myself I was going to prove it to him by the Scriptures. Never had I read the Bible, only the letter I had seen once in awhile. But oh when it pleased the Lord (I hope I am not deceived) to show me how blind I was it stirred me up so that I began to search the Scripture. I found that I was condemned on every side, and the more I read and the more I heard my people preach the further they got from what I found the Scripture taught. I got in so much trouble that I began to inquire among them how they felt. They told me I had grown cold and needed to pray. I had realized by this time that my works of righteousness were as filthy rags in the sight of God. I said I was not fit to live with those people, so I would leave them, and I did, and was not so troubled for a time. We had many copies of the SIGNS that belonged to Earl's grandmother. I never had cared anything about reading them, but one Sunday morning, on my meeting day, Earl left the house, telling me to get ready and we would go to the meeting (the same as we had always done), and after he left I got one of those SIGNS and began reading it, and when Earl came in I was crying. He said, Why are you not going to church? I told him I had rather read that SIGNS than to go and we would go to Cane Creek, but I did not care for their preaching. I liked the people. We had been going for some time, but I did not hear them preach. The second Association they held there after we were married we arranged to attend on Friday, but it was nothing to me. We went again on Saturday, and I took a seat near the back of the house. I do not remember how many had preached, but how I do remember brother Hatcher in his preaching. He told of some of his travels, and I do believe I was prepared by God Almighty to hear the first gospel sermon I ever heard. After that I was troubled more and more, yet it was food to my poor hungry soul to meet with those people and get a crumb from the Master's table, but felt I was unworthy and unfit to sit with them and hear them talk. The time came when I wanted a home with them and I wanted to be baptized. I carried that burden for three years, and one morning when I went to gather some greens for dinner it seemed to me I could not live, and I doubted everything. It seemed to me for a time that there was no God, and as I started to go to the house it seemed that my Savior stood in his full beauty before me, and said, It is I, be not afraid. I cannot express my joy. I had not told any one, not even Earl, that I desired to live with the Old Baptists. One July meeting they were getting ready to commune and wash feet, and I did not leave the house when the congregation was dismissed. I could not keep

the tears from rolling down my cheeks. Brother Kerley started to leave the house, and when he got to where I was he stopped, and said he would love to see me in the Old Baptist Church. Oh it was like a chill. I felt that I was deceived, and had Old Baptists deceived. Some time after that I dreamed I was at meeting, and they came together singing, "Come, thou Fount of every blessing," and before they finished singing I was shaking hands with brother Kerley and talking. Not long after that I offered myself to the church and they received me. Before I sat down Earl offered himself. That is a space of time in which I do not yet know what was said. I am so unfit to live with them, but it is a home for me. I hope I am made to feel that meeting with God's people when they are all of one mind, and can praise the One to whom all praise is due, is a foretaste of the home where his people will meet to praise him in eternity.

I do not know whether my brethren can fellowship my experience or not. It seems so little that sometimes I almost lay it by, and sometimes it seems sufficient if I were called to die.

ASINITH JONES.

Walla Walla, Washington.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been given the privilege of traveling some during the last three or four years, and I hope I have been entertained by the servants of the wonderful God, yet I cannot understand how they can render love and comfort to me. I met many strange faces, yet they said they hope I can return to meet them.

I have had some meditation upon the words, "In the beginning." That covers oh so much. God has ever been, so he never had a beginning, and he is a God of his own will and purpose, to reveal, or make manifest, such things as do exist. So in the beginning of manifestation he created the heavens and the earth, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and God said, Let there be light, and there was light. At that moment it was revealed that darkness is the opposite of light, and it was made manifest that light had the preeminence over darkness. There are many things that could be commented upon here. I read that God made man, and God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him. Male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply. The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. Notice the formed man is a living soul. And God planted a garden eastward in Eden. It is a certain fact that the garden was in a certain and specific place, and the formed man was put in the garden. He and his wife were living souls, and God never made record of putting any other creature in the garden, yet there were trees in the garden. God gave the man and his wife great liberty. They could eat of the fruit of all the trees of the garden but the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. These two were naked, and not ashamed. Also,

the tree of life was in the midst of the garden. Much could also be commented upon here. I am wondering why so many give an idea that the garden of God is as though the human eye could see and comprehend what the garden contained. I consider the living souls are the saints of God, and their names are recorded in the Lamb's book of life. In one man all transgressed, for in the garden the law was given to the living souls. They were given the law, and the serpent beguiled Eve and she did eat of the forbidden fruit, and gave to her husband and he did eat, and the soul that sinneth must die, and to break the law is sin. Notice, where there is no law there is no transgression. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."—Rom. v. 12. Notice that the living souls are the ones God gave the law to, and they ate the fruit. As the saints of God they were under the covenant of grace and their names recorded in the Lamb's book of life, yet they lived in sin and died to the liberty God gave them. So by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, and by the obedience of One many shall be made righteous. Notice that the serpent was not given the law. God did not tell the serpent to not eat of any of the fruit in the garden, and we have no record that the serpent did eat of any fruit of any kind. God said to the serpent, Cursed art thou above all cattle and every beast of the field. Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat. Satan never can raise from his belly. God speaks, and it is done; commands, and it stands fast. So before the law sin was in the world, yet it was not manifested when there was no law. In the beginning of manifestation darkness was upon the face of the deep, and Satan was manifested before the begotten Son of God was manifested. Notice what Jesus Christ said in John x. 7, 8: "Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers." If you want to have the word of God as to the destination of the devil, just read Revelation xx. 10. Eve was deceived in the garden af God by the beguiling influence of the serpent, and the devil that deceived her was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall burn for ever and ever. I consider when any man says there is no lake of fire and brimstone he is limiting God's power to make manifest such things as do exist. God in the beginning purposed to make manifest the two principles. God is the Spirit of love and truth; he is the Father of the good seed, the children of the kingdom. It is impossible for God to lie, for he is truth. The devil is a liar, and the father of lies. Paul fought with spiritual wickedness, and the saints of God are yet in warfare with false doctrine.

PETER JONES.

SANFORD, Maine.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I mislaid your letter, by putting it in an envelope with another letter, and just found it last night. It had been my intention to answer it long before this. In reading your letter I saw you asked my permission to publish my letter. I had forgotten it, but if I ever write anything that you feel is worthy of sharing you have my consent.

Last Sunday we met at Oak Woods. The meeting, I felt, was very good to us all. We read and talked of the promises of the Lord to the church, of how he is their strength through waters and fires, upholding them in all their tribulations. "Fear not; for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him."—Isaiah xliii. 5, 6. What a precious comfort this is to Christ's little ones, to know and feel that he has made us for his own glory, and will keep us as the apple of his eye, holding us up when we are in the pit of despair. Without his sweet mercy we could not live; sin soon would reduce us to utter despair. If only we could feel that sweet assurance more. I very often am low in spirit, doubting all the time, wondering why I am numbered with his little flock, yet feeling I want to be. I want the sweet fellowship of my brethren. Just to see them and hear them talk is a comfort and a blessing.

The time of our Association draws near, when we hope to hear God's truth proclaimed through you. May we have the listening ear.

Yours in hope,

LYDIA K. NASON.

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52 E. PARK ST., WEISER, Idaho.

DEAR EDITORS:—I am writing to let you know how much I appreciate the SIGNS, for it is all the preaching I get, as I have not been able to attend the meetings for more than two years. What I have suffered no one but the Lord and I know, but I believe every pain will yield me good, and that in the end I will come off more than conqueror through him that loved me from before the foundation of the world, and if he really died for me I will be saved, world without end. It seems at times I almost sink in despair, and would, I suppose, if the Lord had not said, Fear not, I am with thee. Oh be not dismayed, for I am thy God and will still give thee aid, and, believing his primises are true, I take fresh courage. I am all alone and have had all kinds of trouble overtake me, besides all of my sickness, but am thankful that I am a little better. I have been taking Hoyt's Compound, but will have to stop taking it, for I have run short of money.

I meant just to thank you for the paper, and let you know that I surely do appreciate it very much. I am so nervous I will have to stop. I hope you can read it.

LEVICA C. PRATT.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1941.

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ELECTION.

In meeting the request of sister Attie Smith, of San Antonio, Texas, we shall, with God's help, give our views on the above subject. Knowing, as we do, the many questions and anxious thoughts that we ourselves have had upon it, and remembering the comfort and pleasure that have been ours in sweet meditation upon the many Scriptures bearing upon and connected with it, we would like to pass along a few of our thoughts. It concerns the choice of God, a people that were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. (Eph. i. 4.) It concerns an act of God, who is sovereign over all worlds and all flesh, in choosing a people for his praise, in which choice he appointed all means for the accomplishment of his purpose, settling and sealing those very means that he ordained, so that not one of the elect can possibly be lost. We are familiar with the words "electing love," which express the good will of Almighty God, especially in the particular way that he has embraced his chosen people in his eternal purpoce. In this purpose, every person that shall be a partaker of heavenly bliss was loved by God the Father and chosen to that blessed portion in God the Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. It is in this relation that Jesus is spoken of also as "Mine Elect." "Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul deligheth."—Isaiah xlii. 1. Every blessing that they enjoy, every favor that shall be their's, was appointed them in him. Thus electing love has treasured up in Christ Jesus a sufficiency of grace for every elect vessel of mercy, grace to help in their every time of need. We believe it can be said of every one of them, that by the grace of God they are what they are, for the salvation of all who are made manifest as God's children is founded on grace, so that they are spoken of as "the election of grace." By grace we mean God's unmerited favor, which carries with it a fullness of covenant blessings ordained for the help of the whole family of God. It is unconditional, not, as some explain, that God foreknew that Jacob would love him and that Esau would hate him, and so God chose

Jacob and hated Esau. The Lord declares, "There is none good, no, not one." From where does Jacob's goodness spring, but from the Spirit of God? Does it not declare that "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God"? There was no virtue in Jacob. As he stood in the flesh he was of the same lump as Esau, and he, like Esau, went from the womb speaking lies. It is not, as some say, that God chooses certain ones because he likes them better than others as they show merit of their own. This would not be *election,* but *selection,* as the following illustration proves. There was a group of children of various families playing together, and a child joined them who had been adopted by a nearby family. After playing awhile, they got to quarreling with the new comer, telling her she did not know who her father was, or what her real name was. At last she told them that their fathers had to have them whether they liked them or not, but her father chose her because he liked her. As we have stated, this does not prove the doctrine of election, but is a clear example of the modern religious way of substituting *selection* in the place of Bible *election.* We would here quote seven points verbatim from the Article of Faith on election of the church of which we are pastor, as it is simple and embraces the matter sufficiently:

"1. We believe that election is free and permanent, being founded in grace and the unchangeable will of God.

2. We believe that this decree, choice or election was before the foundation of the world, and so before the elect themselves had being in themselves.

3. We believe that the decree of election is so far from making works in us foreseen, the ground or cause of the choice, that it containeth in the bowels of it not only the persons, but also the graces that accompany their salvation.

4. We believe that Christ is He in whom the elect are always considered, and that without him there is neither election, grace nor salvation.

5. We believe there is not any impediment attending the elect of God, that can hinder their conversation or eternal salvation.

6. We believe that no man can know his election but by his calling.

7. We believe therefore, that election doth not prevent the means which are of God appointed to bring us to Christ, to grace and to glory, but rather putteth a necessity upon the use and effect thereof, because they are chosen to be brought to heaven that way, that is by the faith of Jesus Christ, which is the end of effectual calling."

As the sixth point declares, so we believe, that no man can know his election but by his calling, so we find that those who are chosen in Christ Jesus will be called out of nature's darkness, which calling is effectual, as we see in the instance of Lazarus. He came forth, though bound hand and foot with graveclothes. By nature all are dead in trespasses and sins, and it is not in any one to turn to God, or, as some express it, close in with Christ. Just as God's will concerning those whom he has

chosen is absolute, so they are his, every one of them, in his purpose. His, even when they are dead in trespasses and sins, just as Israel were his people even when they were ground under the heel of Pharaoh. God said, "Let my people go." The time and place where each of God's children shall be called by grace is appointed, and it is in this call by grace that we learn more about election. Election, to the natural mind, is a stumbling-stone and a rock of offense, and it can only be spiritually discerned. Election is known by calling, so Peter wrote, "Therefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall."—2 Peter i. 10. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God, and these are those who are elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Election carries with it and in it a positive union of Christ and his people from eternity to eternity, and God's predestinating power will see to the accomplishment of those things that concern the people of his choice.

"Though men and devils aim to kill,
They can't exceed my Father's will."

The people who would undermine the predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass, are generally found among those who would undermine God's electing love. Hating God's purpose, which is absolute, they oppose and hate the people of his choice.

Our sister would learn more about election, but we have no desire to present at this time a dry doctrine, as this sometimes has been so described. We shall, therefore, speak of some evidences, that we hope the inquirer will at least read, about this blessed subject. First, as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God, the Spirit's work is to guide such into all truth. (John xvi. 13.) This is the way one rightly learns and rightly believes these things. Paul writes the Thessalonians, "We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." Peter admonishes the brethren to give diligence to make their calling and election sure. He does not mean making it sure in God's purpose, for that was settled and fixed before time began, but making it sure in their own minds and understanding, that they shall be well established in the truth, and not tossed about by every wind of doctrine, and the cunning craftiness of men who lie in wait to deceive. This same diligence Peter mentions again in 2 Peter i. 5-7, in which he has listed seven things that tend to prove their calling to be of God. The people of God are not only hearers, but doers of the word, so Peter says, "Add to your faith, virtue." The church is spoken of as a virtuous woman, whose price is above rubies. (Prov. xxxi. 10.) False churches, who teach for commandments

the traditions of men, despise the word of God, and, by their willing ignorance of its doctrine, prove themselves to be foolish women, who are ever learning, and yet are never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Solomon says, "A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones."—Prov. xii. 4. How then does a believer add to his faith virtue? By continuing in the doctrine. Jesus is our husband, and we, if we be the true church, are his bride, the Lamb's wife. It is good to confess him before men, and to follow his ordinances, facing a frowning world, like the woman pressing through the crowd, the crowd of unbelief and doubts that often seem like the crowd between us and our Lord. Pressing through, she said, "If I can but touch the hem of his garment I shall be made whole." Thus it was the touch of living faith of a living Christ that added virtue to her faith, that healed her. When wrestling faith is fixed upon the Lord Jesus Christ as "the angel of the covenant" the blessing of the virtue of grace will be seen and felt. This virtue restores our souls, also aids in increasing our knowledge of him, and of those who belong to him. Here we would say that there are two kinds of people in the world, they are either the gracious or the graceless. If gracious, they will know that this grace is not of themselves, *it is the gift of* God, *u*nmerited, and so according to election. This, we repeat again, is the way to learn more about election, and this does not lead us to looseness of life or a belittling of sin, it will make us loathe our own life and ascribe all the glory to our Husband, Jesus Christ. We can only hint at these things. "Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge," Paul says, "that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings." There are a few things we know. We often admit we know nothing as we ought to know it, but if that we know is by grace, through its virtue, then we are learning more of election. We shall also know that those who sing of amazing grace will not be glorying in what they can do, but in what Christ has done. Adding to this virtue knowledge, they will prove and know that not all who name the name of Christ are to be brothered, neither all who profess to be Primitive Baptists, for where there is a denying of the doctrine, or of an indifference to the walk, which is a walking after the Spirit, such prove by their walking after the flesh that they belong to the foolish women, who are void of true virtue. But we are to add to this knowledge temperance, which makes us careful not to cut a man off for a word, or to be overbearing, but considering ourselves, lest we be tempted; we should weigh our words, and with this temperance will be patience. Here we will mention the needs be for care in expressing the sacred truths that we profess, not in our own tongues, but in the tongues of the apostles and prophets. We ought not to say that God makes a man to lie or do wickedly, but rather, as our brother writes in the last SIGNS, page 194, "Not unforeseen

of God, not made of God to do evil, but made of God for the day of evil." There is a sufficiency in the word to furnish the man of God with material and expression for sober consideration and temperance in expressing those things that pertain unto salvation. In a God-given diligence to add unto our faith these various graces, how patient we ought to be, especially with those we know and love in Christ Jesus, who may have erred. Who has not erred? Electing love melts us down, causing us to renounce and denounce the flesh, yet how the flesh creeps in. Do you know it? Add to your knowledge and temperance patience, and to patience godliness. Patience, not only with others, but when we are under burdens, afflictions and sorrows. To be godly in Christ Jesus we need all these preceding graces dwelling richly in us by faith, before we can add to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, in which we can, and will, lay down our lives for one another. Have we learned sufficient of God's electing love that we feel we can lay down our lives for the brethren, or is there strife and contention among us? Look, dear ones, look to him who is the embodiment of electing love.

"See from his head, his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet?
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?"

"A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband." "And to brotherly kindness, charity." Do we know what charity is? Would you learn more about election? Then see yourself black, vile, undone, ignorant, foolish, vain, wretched, miserable and poor. See yourself as fit only for the company of devils in hell, and at the same time, through electing love, you are assured by God himself that he has chosen you in Christ that you should be holy and without blame before him in love. (Charity.) Add this charity to your zeal for truth and the order of God's house, consider what you yourselves would be but for grace. Give diligence in this matter, and who would not feel happy in your fellowship, and delight in your company; yea, wash your feet with their tears?

May these rambling imperfect expressions come with encouragement to the household of faith, and be an assurance to our dear sister that she knows something of election.

G. R.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS."

We will furnish extra copies of the Signs of the Times at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

EXPLANATION OF DATES.

The date opposite your name on the little pink slip on which your address is printed denotes the time your subscription expires. Dec 40 means that it expired December, 1940; Dec 41 that it will expire December, 1941, etc.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

MRS. MARTHA ALTON WALKER, widow of George Walker, died at the home of her son, John B. Walker, of Denver, N. Y., August 21st, 1941, having attained the ripe age of eighty-five years. She had been in poor health in recent years, and had been confined to her room many months before the end came. A stroke of apoplexy was the immediate cause of death. All that tender loving care, skillful nursing and patient devotedness could accomplish were done by Mr. Walker and his wife to aid the sufferer and make her as comfortable as possible The funeral services were conducted at the home of Mr. Walker, the writer having charge of the services and using as a text these words, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." The interment was at Fleischmanns, N. Y., in the Clovesville Cemetery beside her husband, who was killed while razing a barn in 1919. Mrs. Walker's entire life had been spent not many miles from the scene of her birthplace. Mr. and Mrs. Walker were married over sixty years ago. Part of their married life was spent on a farm, and much of it in operating a mill at Denver. For over twenty years she made her home with her son, John B. Walker, and his wife. In addition to this son, she is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Loren Sanford, of Margaretville, N. Y.; one brother, John B. Alton, of Roxbury, N. Y., and three sisters, Mrs. Mary Beadle and Miss Cora Alton, of Fleischmanns, and Mrs. Harriett Clark, of Margaretville, N. Y. Mrs. Walker was a woman of sweet and noble character, of stainless honor, unquestioned integrity and possessed a pleasing personality. She knew the meaning of thrift and industry, of self-denial and hospitality, of hard work, and deserved success. Her life has left its impress on the community in which she lived. During her last days she was reconciled to her suffering and evidenced in her talk the presence of Jesus in rich and reigning grace, desiring crumbs of mercy from the Master's table. And truly the seeking seed of Jacob seek not in vain their Lord, when they are made willing in the day of his power.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

MARTHA GODWIN SCHEURMAN was born October 20th, 1899, and died March 21st, 1941, aged 41 years, 5 months and 1 day. She was the daughter of Littleton C. and Oliva Martin Godwin. From her birthplace, Accomac County, Virginia, she moved with her parents to Baltimore, Maryland, in early childhood, where she grew to womanhood and in favor with her acquaintances. Martha was a most adorable girl. Her loving disposition won for her many friends, and they will long remember her inspiring personality. In July, 1926, Martha was married to Lewis Scheurman. No man could be more highly blessed with a loving and devoted wife than was Lewis. It could truly be said of her, "She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness." During the year of 1936 Martha moved with her husband to Detroit, Michigan. Her active brain and busy body seldom sought rest. In Detroit, as had been since the closing of her school days, every wakeful hour seemed to be calling for more and more service, and her thought was to render even more than was required of her. During her stay in Detroit she, with her afflicted mother, attended some of Elder George Ruston's meetings in Canada. Brother Ruston and wife grew very fond of her, and brother Ruston had many interesting talks with her, which satisfied him that Martha was a child of grace.

The writer seldom called upon her that she did not speak of the pleasure she had in visiting in the home of brother Ruston and wife. I recall that during my last visit with Martha she said, "I can never forget the kindness that Elder Ruston and his charming wife showed mother and me when we visited them." In 1940, broken in health, Martha returned to Baltimore, making her home with her sister, Mrs. Ethel Chesser, 1528 Park Avenue. It was at this home that Martha passed from the distress of mortal suffering to the home that awaits those whose life has been garnished with so many loving deeds. Martha was a great sufferer, but her faith in the mercy of God was ever abiding. Until the very end her daily companion was her Bible. I have no doubt that within its pages she found hope and rest for her weary soul. Before the end came Martha seemed to go into a coma, and her husband and sister thought that the end had come. When she was awakened out of this deep slumber by the loud calling of Lewis she said, "Oh why did you call me back, for I was at rest, and so blessedly happy." What a wonderful God we have, that he should so highly favor those dear ones who are left behind with the abiding evidences that their loved one shall awake at his appointed time in his likeness, and shall be forever with the Lord. At the time of her passing Martha left an afflicted mother, two brothers, four sisters and many other relatives and a host of friends. Ethel is very lonely without Martha. May she find comfort in feeling that while her nursing skill failed to heal the afflicted body, that the Lord has banished forever the dark and dreary nights and the bitterness of death has passed forever for Martha. May she not be waiting to-day on the beautiful strand to welcome those who shall later pass over?

Her funeral was held from the funeral home of Robert Brooks and Son, where relatives and many friends gathered to pay their last respects to one whose life was filled with many loving deeds. Burial was in Lorain Cemetery. May the Lord comfort the hearts of those who mourn.

Written by request.

ALSO,

OLIVIA MARTIN GODWIN, our dear sister in Christ, passed from all earthly strife June 27th, 1941, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Needham Turnage, 1222 Decatur Street, Washington, D. C. Sister Godwin was born February 9th, 1864, and was married to Littleton C. Godwin in August, 1883, at the parsonage of the late Elder T. M. Poulson. To this union were born nine children. The husband and three children (William J., Mary Ethel and Martha Olivia) preceded her in death. Sister Godwin suffered a stroke fifteen years ago, and was never able thereafter to care for herself in the many ways of life's requirements. She was highly blessed in having faithful children and in-laws, who were ever mindful of her comfort. Over twenty-five years ago, sister Godwin (on the same day as her devoted husband) was baptized into the fellowship of the Ebenezer Baptist Church, of Baltimore, Md., by the late Elder J. T. Rowe, and lived thereafter a faithful and profitable member, always alive to her church duties and most graciously blessed with a charming personality. During the life of brother Godwin their home was always open to the Baptists from far and near. The writer often shared with them the joy of sweet fellowship in their home, where the time was spent in singing praise to God and rendering thanks to him for his wonderful mercies to the children of men. How I like to think of

the blessedness of the days of long ago. Not only by the parents was one made to feel at home with these dear people of God, but also by the loving children. The writer feels to be deeply in debt to each of them for the acts of kindness they have shown him in the past. I never knew sister Godwin to make any complaint about her affliction, for she bore it as only those who are blessed with the grace of God can. I have often heard her express herself concerning the afflictions of others, but not one word of complaint did I ever hear her make of her own helpless condition. While attending the service on Sunday night in the home of her son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Needham Turnage, I said to Mr. Turnage, Needham, I want to thank you personally for your kindness to dear sister Godwin. He said, Why, Elder Topping, she did much more for me than I was ever able to do for her. I knew how he had many times taken her in his arms and carried her to her bedroom on the second floor, and just what he did mean I could not understand. Why, said he, often when I would return home weary with the burdens of the day she would greet me with a smile, and inquire how I was feeling; she made me forget my little ills in a moment. While sister Godwin's time was divided in the homes of her children, after her affliction much of it was spent in the home of Mable (Mrs. Turnage), and it was in this home that she passed from a weary world of sorrow to that blessed home of everlasting rest. What could be said of the kindness of Mable and Needham could also be said of the kindness of Clarence Dishon and his dear wife Louise. Really, if any one of the children did more to make their mother comfortable than did another it was because of more opportunity to do so, and not from neglect by the other. Clara found much comfort in that she had the privilege of nursing her mother in her last days. Nursing being her profession, she was able to render a double service, as it were. Sister Godwin leaves six children to mourn her departure: Mrs. Needham Turnage and Clara L., of Washington, D. C., Mrs. Ethel Chesser, of Baltimore, Md., Mrs. Clarence Dishon, of Maplewood, N. J., Harry L., of Richmond, Va., and John H., of Baltimore, Md., one sister, Mrs. Armanda Lewis, of Accomac, Va., her church, nephews, nieces and a host of friends. One child, Mary Ethel, died when one month old; William J. died August 1st, 1940; Martha Olivia, whose obituary notice precedes this one, died March 21st, 1941.

Funeral services for sister Godwin were held in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Turnage, it being their request that such should be before their dear one was taken from their home for the last time. At the request of Mr. Turnage, the writer was assisted by a Presbyterian minister, whose part in the services was enjoyed by many present. On Monday afternoon the remains of sister Godwin were taken to the meetinghouse in Baltimore, where the writer conducted the last rites, using the twenty-third Psalm. Many relatives and friends gathered to pay their respects to the dear one whose sufferings are forever over, and the joys of the redeemed are her's for evermore. She was laid to rest in beautiful Lorain Cemetery, there to await the Master's call, when the dead in Christ shall be raised in his likeness. May the Lord comfort all who mourn.

Written by request.

D. L. TOPPING.

IRA T. DOLSON, my beloved father, passed away from this life July 31st, 1941, to join his blessed Lord, Jesus Christ, whom he so devotedly loved and served while on this earth. He was born May 23rd, 1871, in Sussex County New Jersey, and was the youngest child of the late Susan Ten Eyck and Jeremiah Dolson, long deceased. His first marriage to Mamie Deavey ended shortly after a son was born of this union. On September 28th, 1896, he married the late Sarah A. McCue, who bore him three sons and two daughters, who are still left to mourn a good father. May 26th, 1935, he was baptized by Elder R. Lester Dodson into the fellowship of the Warwick, N. Y., Old School Baptist Church. Having been confined to the house for more than ten years, and at the time of his baptism hardly able to walk, God granted him his wish. For the past seven and one-half years he was almost helpless, but never lost hope, and his afflictions only tended to strengthen his faith in his God. His Bible and his SIGNS were among his most cherished possessions. His many friends gained strength and comfort in his cherry disposition. He also leaves three brothers, two of whom are members of the Old School Baptist Church. The funeral services were conducted from his home in Newark, N. J., after which the remains were borne to the Warwick, N. Y., Church, where a lovely and beautiful sermon was delivered by his dear friend, Elder R. Lester Dodson. Interment was in Warwick Cemetery on August 4th, 1941. We who mourn feel reconciled that he has joined his God in heaven, after twenty-five years of pain and suffering. May God rest his soul, is our constant prayer.

His daughter,

NETTIE C. DOLSON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Annie Miller, Pa., $1; Mrs. S. E. Brown, Texas, $4; Bruce McIntosh, Va., $5; Maria French, Pa., $1; Mrs. Rose Stevens, Del., $1; Mrs. John T. Cockrill, Va., $2.

MEETINGS.

The Buttahatchie Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, in her one hundred and fourteenth session, beginning on Friday before the second Sunday ni October, 1941, with Bethel Church, fifteen miles west of Millport, Ala. Lovers of the truth are welcome.

J. R. PENNINGTON, Moderator.
HOUSTON PITTS, Clerk.
Sulligent, Alabama.

The usual all-day yearly meeting will be held, the Lord willing, at New Vernon, near Howells, N. Y., on Monday, October 13th, 1941. We cordially invite our brethren and friends to meet with us on that occasion.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The annual session of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held this year, the Lord willing, with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 15th, 16th and 17th. We invite to be present with us all ministers and brethren of our immediate correspondence, as well as those others of our faith and order who may have a mind to come with us. Arrangements are being made to entertain our guests ni the home of Miss Rogers, across the road from the meetinghouse, as well as in the homes of the members and of our interested friends. Those coming by auto Tuesday before the meeting begins, will go direct to Miss Rogers'. The meetinghouse is three miles north of Chantilly, Va., which is on U. S. Route 50, and six miles south of Mock's Corner, which is on U. S. Route 7. The place of meeting is not to be reached by either train or bus directly. Those coming by bus will come to Chantilly, Va., and notify beforehand the undersigned at address given below, so arrangements can be made to meet them and have them conveyed to Miss Rogefs' or to the meeting.

G. C. SPINDLE, Church Clerk,
914 Ninth Street, N. E.,
WASHINGTON, D. C.
Phone: Atlantic 5091-W.

The Hopewell Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, in her fifty-seventh session, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in October, 1941, with Pleasant Ridge Church, twenty miles south of Fayette, Alabama. Lovers of the truth are welcome.

MATT H. BROCK, Moderator.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Clerk.

The Ebenezer Church of Baltimore, Maryland, (210 E. Madison Street), will hold an all-day meeting on October 19th (third Sunday), 1941. A cordial invitation is extended to all.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

The regular appointment of a yearly meeting is to be held at Welsh Tract Church October 19th, 1941, by order of the Delaware Association, convened at Rock Springs Church May 24th and 25th, 1941, for one day, services beginning at 10 a. m., Eastern Standard Time. All ministers and brethren are cordially invited to be with us who are sound in the faith and doctrine of God our Savior, in the faith once delivered unto the saints. Welsh Tract Church is centrally located, at Newark, Delaware, and those coming from a distance may use the Baltimore and Ohio R. R., or the Pennsylvania R. R. Call at my home and all will be directed accordingly.

JOHN B. MILLER, Church Clerk.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will be entertained by the Snow Hill Church, Snow Hill, Worcester County, Maryland, on Wednesday and Thursday after the third Sunday in October (22nd and 23rd), 1941. We extend a cordial invitation to all sister churches and friends of our faith and order to meet with us, especially our ministers. We shall do all in our power for your comfort and pleasure. Those coming by auto Tuesday, will come direct to the meetinghouse, on the main street of the town, where you will be met and directed to places of entertainment for the night. Those coming on Wednesday or Thursday, come direct to the meetinghouse. Should any come by train, inquire for Mrs. Ernest West.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
M. A. HOLLOWAY, Clerk.

On the fourth Sunday in each month, until further notice, meeting will be held with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner of Roberts and Cottage Streets, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us

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The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., meets every Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

A. S. ROWE, Church Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,

1315 Columbia Avenue

(Park Avenue Hall)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 a. m. 2 p. m.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists is now settled in her new church-house, at 4614 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas, where she holds her regular monthly services on each first Sunray at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. Preaching services also on each third Sunday by Elder C. B. Teague, and each second Sunday by brother O. C. Lee, at 11 o'clock a. m. A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. R. HARDY, Pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

This pamphlet contains the following articles, viz: First, "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School and the New School Baptists. Second, The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England. Third, "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fourth, "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry. Fifth, "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion of the same title. Sixth, "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. All the above six articles are bound in one pamphlet of 128 pages, in handsomely colored paper covers.

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J. E. BEEBE & CO.,

MIDDLETOWN, N Y.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

VOL. 110 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JANUARY, 1942 NO. 1

CORRESPONDENCE

1 THESSALONIANS V. 9

"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."

If my mind is exercised in that way, I desire to write some thoughts in connection with this Scripture. I do not know that I can write profitably and comfortably to the family of God. For that matter, I have never known, on entering the pulpit, that I could speak in that way, and I feel that it is too much for me to say that I ever have. One thing I am sure about, and that is that unless the Lord gives me that unction from the Holy Spirit I cannot do any speaking or writing that will edify the household of faith.

As we launch out into the text I desire my readers to notice this entire chapter. We must always remember that all Scripture is by inspiration, one part being as useful to the Lord's people as another, bearing in mind that none of it can be to our good until an application of it is made by the Holy Spirit. This idea that is prevalent among Old Baptists that the child of God can wield the Spirit to the taking of any passage of Scripture to their advantage is not sound Bible doctrine. We should keep in mind, though, it is "from faith to faith." It is all by the Spirit, all of the Spirit, and yet it is from one member of the family to another at many times. I think our text is used as a foundation for what went before it and what follows it. In fact, we often lose the object in view, or the lesson being taught, because we do not notice the context. At this time I may write things that my brethren do not agree with. The apostle seems to be exhorting the brethren. Does it not seem that way to you? What does it take to constitute exhortation? What does it take to constitute preaching, praying or singing? The only answer is, Preaching, praying or singing. In the Bible we have some doctrine. Did Paul write any along that line? To be sure he did. Now is it not a fact that

many who call themselves Old Baptists do not have much use for the doctrine? In fact, I have in my library their own statements that the preaching of such things as election, predestination, etc., is discouraging to God's children. We have some reproof. Is it wrong to reprove? I am not gifted along that line, but a few times in my ministry I have felt the necessity of it as much as I have the doctrine. The same brethren who highly indorsed the scriptural doctrine I had preached were more apt to frown on it than they were to be benefited by the intended reproof. In the Scriptures we have some for correction. Is it sometimes necessary to correct God's children? It must be. It was in the apostolic age of the church. Was the church to be progressive in ability to perform? or did God's people only need correction at the time of its early days? To illustrate: Do we ever get strange ideas in our minds now? Is it right now to correct one another? Or is it scriptural to say that if God wants so and so he will bring it to pass? Once upon a time an Old Baptist editor was permitting a certain subject to be discussed in his columns in an unbrotherly way. I wrote this dear brother, pleading with him that it was hurting the Old Baptist people, tending to scatter them, instead of gathering them. His reply to me was that if it divided let it divide. I have not yet approved of his course, nor his reply. I do not believe in following any man, only as he is a follower of Christ, but I feel that I am in a position to know the attitude of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe towards those things. He would not allow discussions to go on through the SIGNS when they tended to divide instead of heal. Now in the text under consideration the Apostle Paul is giving the church at Thessalonica an exhortation, but is not neglecting the doctrine, correction and instruction. "Ye are the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness." Ah, blessed thought! Children of light and of the day! Is not that grand and sublime encouragement? He tells us what we are and what we are not. It is a good doctrine and our poor souls cleave to it and our hope is refreshed and built up. We cannot rejoice in nor believe this doctrine without being led of the Spirit. After telling us these things, he then continues, "Therefore [something has gone before] let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." The apostle has been given grace to lay a foundation and then to build on it. A foundation without a building is useless. A building without a foundation is useless. To preach to God's children that they are of light and the day, and to go around preaching christless (as Mahomet did) predestination, instead of dropping some encouragement, correction and instruction, is as a foundation without a building on it. On the other hand, to give the encouragement, correction and instruction, without the foundation (doctrine) is as a building without anything under it.

Now brethren, until our text was given Paul was telling the brethren how to conduct themselves individually. Who of you would accuse him of being

a conditionalist? Did he not tell us how all of it comes about? Did he not attribute all that he was, as a child of God, to grace? Did he not tell us that in our warfare, as christians, we could not do as we would? Yes, all this is true, but at the same time did he not admonish his brethren how to conduct themselves? Why? There must be a reason. It must be a higher reason than that of pay or reward. If there was that reason, then does it not still exist? If it still exists, is it not profitable for us now? If not, why not?

"For God hath not appointed us to wrath." Is this not a good foundation? How do you behold its loveliness? Grace is the moving cause. You have such a foundation as this. You are given to see that some one is appointed to wrath. But the "us" are not. They are (appointed) to obtain salvation by their Lord Jesus Christ. This "salvation" covers a great deal of ground; in fact, all the ground. Let us, brethren, not try to uncover some of it. This salvation is accompanied by things. (Heb. vi. 9.) Notice they (these things) accompany salvation. Now how does salvation come? By Jesus Christ. Then does our gift of preaching and the ability to hear of the doctrine come by Jesus Christ? Most assuredly it does. Now who needs the doctrine? Paul, in the second chapter of Titus, tells us who the doctrine is for. In short, we could well say, For the children of God. Who needs exhortation? I need it, brethren. I do not know much, if anything. Is it wrong for my precious brethren and sisters to admonish and exhort me? If so, on what ground? Because some one has wrested the Scriptures to teach conditionalism? If so, we will have to quit all of it. We are appointed to obtain salvation. I do not think I am gifted to do this. But, brethren, the thing I want to know is, is it wrong to exhort, admonish and encourage the children of God? Before our text (which is only intended for a foundation) the apostle tells the brethren to watch and be sober. This evidently is the same as keeping unspotted from the world. After our text then he tells them how to act towards one another.

Brother Dodson, this answers your request in a poor way. But so many of the Old Baptists have expressed to me that they still believe in exactly what I have put down here, while some others have, seemingly, thought a man was unsound if he did not say predestination about every other breath.

Your poor afflicted brother,

W. D. GRIFFIN.

FAYETTE, Alabama.

PHILADELPHIA, Pennsylvania.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—Inclosed find three dollars. Two dollars for one year's subscription, and one dollar to help send the SIGNS to some who cannot afford to pay for it. I have been thinking for some time of writing something of how I have been led, and you can do as you see fit about publishing it and all will be well with me.

I was born September 1st, 1883, on a farm near Laurel, Delaware. My father, William R. Lynch, was a firm believer in the Primitive Baptist doc-

trine, but was never baptized. My mother was a granddaughter of Elder Jesse Green, and was baptized by the late Elder A. B. Francis. I was a very small child at the time, but I can remember it. I also remember the various ministers calling at our home and talking of spiritual things, and I would listen with great interest, but I did not become very greatly concerned until after I was married, when my burden became so great I felt I surely was going to die in my sins and would be eternally lost. At night I would have many passages of Scripture come to me in my dreams, and I would ask my mother if there were such readings in the Bible, and she would tell me where to find them. They would be about the same as I would hear in my dreams. The words, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand, came very plainly to me. I did earnestly beg forgiveness, only to have my burden become worse. At another time these words came: As ye believe ye shall be saved. Well, that only added to my burden and made it much heavier for me to bear, for I felt that I did not believe anything. And again, Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all other things shall be added unto you. And all the time I was crying to my Savior for forgiveness, but instead of getting relief my burden was growing worse, and I thought surely I was going to die in my sins. I felt sure there was a Savior for some, but that surely there was not for me. Many nights I would fall asleep crying for mercy. One night I dreamed of a great bottomless pit with a very narrow board walk across it, and it seemed I had to cross that pit without varying either way or I would go down and be lost. I started and was successful, and with great care did cross, yet there was no relief for me. I thought hell was my portion, and after again earnestly asking forgiveness these words came to me as plainly as if some one had spoken them: Are you willing to forsake all and follow me? My husband and baby were presented to my mind, and a voice seemed to say, Even if they were taken? I said, Yes. And again I was made to cry to God to be merciful to me, a sinner. Blessed Jesus, save me or I perish. My pillow was wet with tears that night, and during the night I had a vision in which I seemed to be walking alone, and a long way ahead of me was a very glorious light in which I could see Jesus walking toward me. I put my two hands together, as a little child would in evening prayer, and said, My Savior at last, and walked on and met him. He shook my hand, and I said, Blessed Jesus. He smiled and went on, and immediately I was back in bed beside my husband, and I thought, Why could not I have remained in that glorious place with my Savior? The morning came and the sun arose in all its glory and the birds and every thing seemed to be praising God. I went on for awhile, thinking I would never have any such trouble again. Then I had another dream, in which I seemed to be following my Savior in the baptismal water, obeying his words, Follow me. When I went to meeting and heard Elder

Coulter preach I felt that I must tell them some of my feelings, but I felt too unworthy to ever be numbered with such a righteous people, or ask a place with them. One day Elder Coulter visited our home and it just seemed that I must tell him some of the things I have related here. He said, Well, we do not believe in persuading any one, but I feel that I can say to you, Present your case to the church and let them decide. Finally I went before the church, was received and was baptized by Elder Coulter October 7th, 1906. It was a very cold, rainy day, or a heavy mist, but everything was beautiful to me. Sister Duffield, sister Yerkes' mother, was baptized at the same time, she being the first, and I will never forget how beautiful it was as I stood and watched her coming out of the water and thinking that I was next. When I walked in the very sky and water seemed to meet in great glory and praise to God, and these words were on my lips: Blessed Jesus, lead and I will follow. But if I have been a follower of my Savior I have indeed followed afar off.

Well, Elder Dodson, I did not think I would write such a lengthy letter when I began, but even now the half has not been told. May God's richest blessings ever rest upon you and yours, and may the SIGNS OF THE TIMES ever be published, if it be the dear Lord's will. I do ask you and the readers of the dear old family paper to remember me when at the throne of grace. Indeed it is by the grace of God that I am what I am, whatever that may be, and if I am, or dare to claim to be, your sister in hope of eternal life, I am indeed the least and most unworthy of all.

ANNIE MILLER.

KINGSTON, N. Y., April 27, 1941.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—If one so unworthy may claim to be a sister. It seems I do have to wonder why God has spared my unprofitable life. The words will come to me, Be still, and know that I am God. I have thought to write you many times since your dear father passed away, for in a way I do realize how you miss him. I always did much enjoy his letters. Now this will be an instalment letter, for I am not very strong. I have to rest after I have been sitting up in bed writing. I sit up some days for one hour. My mind is with you to-day, wishing I could hear your sermon. I have many times in the past longed to be at rest, then I think, Am I doing right and trusting my Savior and saying as often as I should, Thy will, not mine, be done? I do so often ask him to help me say those words, and do ask the God of all mercies to grant me patience and courage and stronger faith to the end. At times my pain is very severe, still I know I will be given strength as my day. Many times I long for some one to sit by my bed and tell me things of Jesus, for I get very hungry for spiritual food. Brother Slauson comes in when he can, and we do have a feast of fat things that the world knows nothing of. Sister Sickler comes when she can. God has blessed her with spiritual food, and to me it is all like a ray of sunshine, and how I do thank God for those precious

moments. When alone I think on his goodness and mercy to such a vile sinner as I am, and feel he is with me in my long, weary hours.

"The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake."

[THE foregoing is part of a letter received from sister Mary Coons, who has been suffering for a long time with a severe affliction. We sympathize deeply with our sister and sincerely hope she may realize constantly that her Savior is always near. In the remaining portion of her letter she asks that we give our views on verses thirty-one to thirty-three inclusive of the thirteenth chapter of Matthew. These read as follows: "Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof. Another parable spoke he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." In our opinion, both of these parables treat upon the same subject. When God spake by the prophet Isaiah, saying, "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation," he had reference to the coming of Jesus of Nazareth. Nazareth was a small, insignificant place, so much so that one asked, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? To this question it was said, Come and see, and when he came and saw he realized that neither heaven nor earth had ever known his equal; therefore he confessed, saying, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." While he was despised and rejected of men, nevertheless he became the chief corner stone of the structure which was to be erected here on earth. That structure was none other than the gospel church which he and his immediate disciples were to set up and establish as a haven of rest for weary travelers here in this time state. It was not to be popular with mankind, and was to have a very small beginning, with but a mere handful of faithful followers to earnestly contend for the faith, but they were not to despise the day of small things, for in due time it was to become the greatest organization the world had ever known. Earthly kings and kingdoms might rise and flourish, but their days were numbered and in due time they would crumble and fall, but the kingdom of our God which was set up here on the earth will stand and nothing shall ever be able to overthrow it. Not even the gates of hell shall be able to prevail against it. There are seven parables presented in this chapter and they all deal in variations with Christ and his church. In the first of the two now under consideration, Jesus used the mustard seed to illustrate his point. While this is said to be the least of all seeds, nevertheless when it was grown, or developed, it was to reach way beyond the "little flock" of

the Jews and embrace those who were afar off, even the Gentiles, comprising every nation, kindred and tribe on earth, for he who spake and it was done, commanded and it stood fast, was to say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth. And his word was not to return unto him void, but would accomplish that which he pleased and would prosper in the thing whereto he sent it. Again, he likens his kingdom, or the work of grace in the heart, unto leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened. There are three stages, in our opinion, through which the subject of grace must pass and experience before he is fitted for the gospel kingdom. He must first be regenerated or quickened by the power of God, and when God has commanded the light to shine in his heart, he becomes vitally concerned and feels that there is something he can do, so he performs his six days of labor and finds that there is nothing in his hand he can bring to appease the wrath of God against him, when lo and behold he discovers that the work was finished by Jesus, then he ceases from his labors and enters into gospel rest. Therefore the working of the leaven shows conclusively the irresistible and effectual working of God's mighty power in the hearts of poor sinners. The apostle asks, Who hath resisted his will? Having been wrought upon mightily himself to such an extent that he felt the world was turned upside down, he was well qualified to assure the people of God of his confidence in him who begins the good work in them to perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Leaven, normally, is used to typify the workings of sin, but in this instance it shows the perfect work of our God with those souls in whom he takes delight. He is able to purge and purify us unto himself and cleanse us from all unrighteousness by and through the shed blood of his blessed Son, in whom we are preserved and shall be kept from final falling, and when we shall be assembled in his holy and divine presence, to go out no more forever, then will we render undivided and perfected praise to Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and Christ shall be our song. By speaking in parables, the true meaning of the words of Jesus were concealed, or hid, from even the wise and prudent of this world, and if we are given to comprehend something of their beauty and significance, it is all because of grace and because he has been pleased to reveal their meaning unto us. How blessed, indeed, are our eyes if they see, and our ears if they hear the gospel's joyful tidings, and our hearts if they understand even the least bit of the height and depth, the length and breadth of the glorious mystery of the gospel of the Son of God. We hope these hastily written remarks, scattering though they be, may bring comfort and consolation to our dear sister and others who may read them.—R. L. D.]

BENTON, Kentucky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I see in the SIGNS an article I wrote last fall,

describing what I hoped God had done for me in gathering me together with his children in places where we ate at his bountifully spread table. Well, brother, that was a year ago, 1940. This year a change came. Our Union Meeting was held at Mt. Pleasant Church, Graves County, Kentucky, several miles from my home. The weather was very warm. We had visiting brethren coming in from Alabama and Georgia, and were very desirous of having a good Union Meeting, and did. It will live in our hearts many days to come, and while we are clothed and in our right minds we will see and think of the power brought to bear in God's bringing to pass his sovereign will. Friday morning before the fifth Sunday in June I left home to go to this meeting, with three preachers in the car, God's ministering servants, and two other God-fearing men. I left my mother to come on Saturday morning. Friday the day was joyously spent, three sermons preached, the Union's business meeting attended and business fully transacted. I went to the home of a brother and sister who lived near the meetinghouse and we spent the afternoon in singing; also brother Hewitt, from Georgia, preached in the afternoon and again at night. It was a wonderful feast of fat things. Saturday morning a brother in our church, Tommy Chester, his wife, and elderly sister and my mother, Mrs. Amanda McGregor, arrived in time for the business part of the Union. After the business part was over songs of praise were sung and enjoyed. Then brethren Hawkins, Hewitt and Darnell preached, and all touched upon the predestination of God. Brother Hewitt in closing said that he was old, felt badly and might not live to get back to his home (which is in Georgia), but he felt he was among friends, and was up here in Kentucky with men in whom he trusted, who would carry his bones back home should he fall asleep in death while here. That statement, brother Dodson, struck me very forcefully, while he was yet speaking, and some way it sounded trustingly. I kept hearing it over and over, and wondered why. I was soon to know. On leaving the meetinghouse, the car in which my mother was riding, driven by brother Tommy Chester, was crowded off the highway to the extent that he could not control it sufficiently to make a bridge safely, and the car overturned and fell from the bridge into a small stream of water. This brother and his wife were not badly hurt, his two sisters, elderly ladies, suffered broken ribs, and my mother was seriously hurt internally and died the following Sunday morning at eight o'clock. After the accident she and I rode home in an automobile which was called to take her home, and while traveling those miles alone with her I wanted to ask her many questions, and did. She, in her right mind, replying to them in hope of life eternal. One question, brother Dodson, I asked was, Mother, are you still glad you came to the meeting this morning? She said, Oh, yes, so glad. I said, Brother Hewitt's sermon on Predestination, Mother, was so grand.

Weren't you glad you heard it? She said, Yes, both of them—meaning the two preachers she had not heard before. Never did she say she wished she had stayed at home. I said, I wished you had stayed there, feeling her time was so short, and feeling, too, what it would be here in time to be without a Mother, even though they grow old and lose some of the patience they once exercised. Yet we know it's still Mother; so I felt, Could it have been God's will to have worked in me to have remained at home, she would have been at home, too. I censured myself for going, wondered if I went because of the calling and drawing and desirous to be fed with the sheep, or did I go to be seen and heard of men. The morning I left home I had the Scripture in Revelation, nineteenth chapter, on my mind, where it speaks of Jesus being called True and Faithful, "And his eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and his name is called The Word of God." Then, in the fourteenth verse, it says, "And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." And I felt if the same white horses, or power, which moved the Christ, would move me to go, I would be satisfied, and we spoke of no satisfaction here in time, but only hope, and hope that is seen is not hope. Thursday night I read to her your wonderful piece in the May SIGNS, on the first two verses of the twelfth chapter of Daniel, and said, Mother, if I knew I believed that as brother Dodson has so wonderfully explained it, I would be the happiest creature living. Her reply was, You do. She enjoyed the piece as I hope I did; enjoyed a salvation given her of that God who works and none can hinder. And the same white horse that the True and Faithful sat upon, which to me represents power to move of himself and not hindered by man. This same power moved her to go and be in the army of followers on the occasion who were of old predestinated to sit in this heavenly place in Christ—following and none could hinder—following though death awaited her. She had to meet the cause of her death on that Saturday afternoon, at the place she did meet it; then, could I take thought and change it. Do we not feel anchored and safe when we can believe none can stop or thwart the purposes of that God, who puts down all rule and all authority and power that rules man in any sense, for He must reign till he puts all enemies under His feet, and the last one is death—and when all is subdued, then God will be all and in all. Did I not see the time with Mother when God was all in all to her, hoping in Him to take her safely home across the River of Death, which I hope He did, for in that crossing a smile came upon her face that had been drawn with pain for several hours, and she died as though death had no sting, and where then is the Sting to God's child, and where, O Grave, is thy Victory! Has not the Son of Righteousness, whose name is The Word of God, over-

(*Continued on page* 21)

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. JANUARY, 1942

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NEW YEAR'S GREETING

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES enters the one hundred and tenth year of its career under New Management so far as its publication is concerned, as Mr. Gilbert Beebe, of Middletown, N. Y., because of seriously impaired eyesight, finds it necessary to relinquish his reign as publisher of the paper. For one hundred and nine years the paper has been published by the Beebe family, which is a long time, and the present Mr. Gilbert Beebe has a record of over fifty-three years of personal services, of which he may well be justly proud. He will carry with him into his retirement as publisher of our family paper the everlasting gratitude of our readers for his labor of love, stretching over more than half a century in duration, and in extending to him our hearty good wishes for many more years of good health and happiness, we know we are only voicing what is felt in the hearts of all of our subscribers.

An "Important Announcement" will be found elsewhere in this issue which will give more of the details, including our plans and hopes for the future of the paper. We have faith to believe that the same God which has guided the destiny of the paper for now near one and one-tenth centuries, will continue to sustain and preserve it until all of His purposes concerning it shall have been fulfilled.

We are living in momentous times, and the beastly powers of darkness are exceeding everything that history records by spreading more and more their gloom and destruction over the earth. Today, the entire world, practically, is at war. Since it had to come, we are glad that it came to the United States in the manner that it did, for the issue is clear and our great country has been solidified and will undoubtedly fight to the very last in defense of its principles. We think even now there glimmers on the horizon the hope of a better day, because the righteous nations are thoroughly aroused and have determinedly fixed as their purpose that peace and tranquility shall once more, some day, settle down over the world. May the infinite God supply them all needed wisdom and strength in attaining such a goal. We should all be as calm and reserved as possible, under the hardships we shall be called upon to endure, and not become panicky. We only hope when the present awful carnage is over that we will have sense enough to aid materially in establishing a world where such

things can never occur again. World conditions of today appear to be influencing men's minds in all walks of life, and we fear that even some of our brethren have not been altogether immune from their effects, as there are a few, at least, who seem determined to promulgate the misery and woe which they profess to see among our churches. We are unwilling to admit that conditions among us are as bad as the picture some are trying to paint, but much prefer to agree with the sentiment expressed in the following by an Elder from whom we heard recently: "I have heard so much about the Baptists being in such a terrible state. I do not want to add to what some are saying is leading us into destruction. I do not share their ideas with them, for as far as I know there is no difference in the Baptists among whom we mingle than there was fifty years ago. As far as I am able to judge, there is no difference in the doctrine which they believe now than then. Some in that day believed in the resurrection of the bodies of the saints and some did not. All that I know who visited my mother's home, believed in salvation by grace, and grace alone, and in the predestination of all things, and so it would seem that we are about where we were."

This is the time of year when much of the economic world is taking stock, listing its securities and inventories and footing up the ledger columns in order to strike a true balance. Is it not a good time for all true Old School Baptists to examine themselves in a spiritual way to see whether they be in the faith of God's elect as it is set forth in the Bible. Let them weigh themselves in the scales of Holy Writ and see if they are found to be wanting. Surely, no one can honestly object to being asked to do this. If we as a religious people haven't something more than is possessed by others it should, indeed, cause us grave concern. Most of those of our faith like to tell of the change which has been wrought in them in their travel from nature to grace, and of their experiences in having been translated from a world of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. We were all once, more or less, captivated by the things of this world and many of us willingly served with other religious denominations, until we were delivered by the mighty power of God, and it might prove spiritually healthful to us if we would make a careful analysis of what we now believe concerning many of the fundamental points of doctrine as compared with what we once believed and what the religious world stands for today. In many things we fear a great similarity will still be found to exist. If so, should this mean anything to us, or should we deeply concern ourselves about it? If the religious world is right on what we consider to be some of the vital points, may we not with reason fear that it may be right about all the rest. When Paul and Silas went into Thessalonica preaching "Christ must needs have suffered, and rise again from the dead (Acts 17:3)," the unbelieving Jews protested bitterly to the rulers of their city, saying, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." From this we would infer that what they

preached was entirely different from and overthrew everything they had formerly believed. Can as much be said of us, or are we still clinging to and preaching those things held by our fathers before the flood or by the Amorites in whose land we now dwell. As for ourself, we feel the world as we once knew it has been turned upside down, and that we now see and understand things entirely different from what we once did. There has been a complete change with us, and we are made to hope that it is because of what God has wrought in us. We are convinced that that which we have received, we received it not of man. If the religion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ can be taught and learned by men, which we definitely do not believe to be the case, the Arminian Ecclesiastics can undoubtedly succeed at the task much better than Old School Baptists. We much prefer to believe God, who declared, "They shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." Jer. 31:34. The prophet Isaiah wrote, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." Isa. 54:13 The beloved disciples could not convince Thomas of the truth; Jesus by revelation made himself known unto him, and not until then did Thomas confess, saying, "My Lord and my God." John 20:28

Not long ago, one of the soundest Old School Baptists we know, said to us (and our experience bears him out), There are only a very few among us who are willing to actually search the Scriptures for themselves; the vast majority are ever ready to accept, without question seemingly, whatever is said or written without going to the Bible for confirmation, which is the only authoritative source for determining whether it is true or not. If we are guilty, let us here and now resolve that with God's help we will search His word diligently and prayerfully and give no credence to what any man may say when he does not back it up with a "Thus saith the Lord." Some years ago, our next door neighbor, who was a very intelligent man and who took a great pride in tracing his family back for seven generations through a line of Doctors, Lawyers, Ministers and College Professors, said to us that when he was sick he sought out his Doctor; when he was involved in legal matters, he went to his Lawyer; if it was a matter of finances, he consulted his Banker, and if he wanted to know anything about the Bible or his soul's salvation, he talked with his Minister. How well do we remember telling him that so far as we were concerned our soul's salvation was entirely too vital and important a matter for us to entrust it into the hands of any living man. We hope we have experienced something of the sacredness of that communion which is known only when God takes us into the privacy of his own chamber and whispers his message of love to us, and nothing short of that will ever satisfy the longings of our soul.

The year just closed brought us much

sorrow and sadness. It began in January with the passing of our dear father, who we verily believed to be a true man of God. In August our step-mother, who was the only mother we have ever known, as our own mother died when we were too young to remember her, was called from the transitory scenes of this life, and on October 20th we lost Mrs. Dodson's mother. In addition to these we lost two of our business associates and then as the year drew near its close, we were deprived of the pleasant association of our former Publisher. In all of our sorrow, however, we have desired to be reconciled to the will of our God, verily believing that what he does is always wise and ever best. On top of all that has been mentioned above, our heart has been saddened because of the attitude of some in attacking the doctrine of the "predestination of all things" and claiming that the churches which permit it to be preached are going to wreck and ruin. Others have seemingly been wont to make the "resurrection of the dead" a test of fellowship. Elder Gilbert Beebe did not advocate destroying those with whom he differed on that subject. He said, "We desire not to kill or wound them, but if possible to admonish them in the spirit of the gospel." (See page 701, Vol. 2, Editorials.) There are still others who either have very little knowledge concerning church order or are most indifferent about putting it into practice. Such things are both discouraging and disheartening, but, evidently it was not intended that our lives should be too rosy, and if there was nothing to try us and oppose us, there would, of course, be no reason for our having to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. We verily believe that the great apostle spoke the truth when he said, "We walk by faith, not by sight." After all, one must be put to the test to be actually proven, and we are deeply grateful to the Lord for the many faithful brethren whose hearts have been inclined to encourage and assist us in our editorial work for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We shall now need the cooperation of our readers more than ever and bespeak their active support of the SIGNS, by sending us good letters and articles for publication, and especially would we like for our Ministering brethren to write for the paper from time to time.

As has been customary in our New Year's Greetings in the past, we have touched upon various topics, summarizing after a fashion on the events and happenings of the previous year and expressing hope for the future. We are more hopeful this year than last over world affairs. We are unfaltering in our belief that the fierce storm which is now raging will ere long subside, though it may require several years for it to spend its fury, but then a new and better day will be ushered in and there will be sunshine and happiness for those who live to see it. A new world is undoubtedly ahead of us, and we doubt not but that future generations for a long time to come will benefit by the purging of selfishness and greed which is now under way. Human nature, like the volcano which lies dormant for awhile and then

smoulders until at last it must throw off its poisonous gases, may appear docile and mild for a season, but its corruptness will sooner or later come to the surface and show what it really is. For the elect of God, however, there is, indeed, a new world ahead. This world has but little charm for them, for their hope entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, and there can be no question as to what the change will mean to them when they are called to depart and be with Christ, for they shall arise and go home to be forever with Him at whose right hand there are pleasures forevermore. There will be no tears there, for sorrow and death shall be unknown, and nothing unclean will be able to enter the celestial city of our God, whose brilliance shall illumine its mansions and endless praise shall be ascribed, world without end, unto the Triune or Three-in-One God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. May this God preserve and keep us all until He comes to welcome us to that heavenly home above, where all is joy and peace and everlasting love, is our prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen.

R. L. D.

"ADAM THE FIGURE OF HIM THAT WAS TO COME"

Sometime ago Elder W. L. Hall asked through the columns of the SIGNS that some one write on, "In what way was Adam the figure of him that was to come." Elder A. D. Hughett, of Yakima, Wash., was kind enough to respond to this request and his views appeared in the August issue of our paper. There seems to be quite an interest in this subject and as we have recently come across the following article written by Elder Gilbert Beebe over one hundred years ago on it, we are taking the liberty of republishing his article, believing that it will be of interest to our readers.—R. L. D.

REIGN OF DEATH

ALEXANDRIA, D. C., April 1, 1840.

BROTHER E. E. HAWKINS, of Kentucky, has requested our views on Rom. v. 14. "Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come."

In presenting the deliverance of the church from the dominion and wrath of the law, and establishing her justification upon the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, the apostle in this place dwells with great beauty and comfort on the two headships—Adam and Christ. The fact being established that Adam was a type of Christ, by the record handed down of the creation of the world, that God made man in his own likeness, image, etc., and that that image was not in all its bearings completed until man had followed the woman in the transgression, and had "become as one of us," knowing good and evil. Had the likeness in which Adam was created consisted, as some have supposed, in righteousness and true holiness, he would have been spiritual, and consequently immutable; and therefore could not have fallen. He was never designed to be like his Maker in the peculiar per-

fections of the divine nature, for that would have been to make him a god and not a man. Nor could he have been like God in point of holiness, as immutability, omnipotence, eternity and self-existence are essential attributes of the Holy One; these holy qualities man did not originally possess; and the apostle Paul, inspired by God himself, declares that Adam was not spiritual. By the terms *likeness of God, and image of God,* we are therefore to understand that Adam is the figure of him that was to come. An image or likeness is a figure or type; the terms in this case are perfectly synonymous, and are used as convertible terms throughout the Scriptures.

The two very lucid communications in this number on this part of our subject, written by brethren Flint, of Ohio, and West, of Pennsylvania, will supersede the necessity of our tracing the general analogy of the figure. It will suffice, in this place, to repeat what has often been insisted on in our paper, viz: that Adam, as the head and representative of all the human race, comprising the entire family of mankind in himself as he came from the hand of his Maker, was a lively figure of that spiritual Head and representative of the whole spiritual family which were created in him; who in a spiritual life is the beginning of the creation of God, and the first-born of every creature; and who being set up from everlasting, did contain in himself a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, to which people the Psalmist says he has been a dwelling-place in all generations, even from everlasting, etc. As therefore all the natural life of all his posterity was created in Adam, and all the long succession of generations down from him to the end of time will develop or bring into formation no more human beings or life than what were created in Adam, so neither will length of days, use of means, or powers on high, or powers below, bring forward one single soul, in the scale of spiritual being, that was not fully represented in Christ before the heavens were garnished by his hand; or one particle of spiritual life, light, joy or faith that was not hid with Christ in God from the ancients of eternity. Therefore in regard to the people of God, when they are born into this world by ordinary generation they are quickened into that natural life in which they were created and represented in the natural Adam; but when they are born again they are quickened by extraordinary generation by the Holy Ghost, with spiritual life, in which they were created in Christ Jesus before the world began. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." "As is the earthy, such are they that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly."

In the subject under consideration the apostle shows the application of the atonement to all the spiritual seed of Christ, by the figure of Adam's involving his whole natural posterity in death by his transgression. "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. For until the law sin was in the world, (that

is, prior to the giving of the law by Moses) but sin is not imputed where there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." Is it not easy to perceive the design of the apostle's argument in this connection? To Adam God gave a law in the day of his creation, prescribing the extent of his liberty, and the penalty for exceeding such limitation. "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." As we have shown that all the natural seed, or human family, were in the loins of Adam when he was created under the law, when he received the law, and when he transgressed the law, so we prove that all the human family were created under that law, they all received it, they all transgressed it, and consequently death passed on them all, because all had sinned.

> "Death was the sentence—death began
> To take possession of the man;
> His unborn race received the wound,
> And heavy curses smote the ground."

Those who lived from Adam to Moses were sinners, and subject to and under the reigning dominion of death, although they had not personally sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression; and this was a proof that all were involved in the guilt of Adam's sin, for until, or before, the law, which Moses gave, sin was in the world; but as sin could not be imputed where there was no law, the imputation of sin and death to them anterior to the law by Moses, shows their identity with Adam in the sin and in the curse. By the *similitude* of Adam's transgression, we understand the likeliness, or in the same manner; for it was beyond the power of man, from Adam to Moses, to sin as Adam sinned. Where there is no law there can be no transgression. To understand correctly a similitude, we must examine the original. Adam's sin consisted in a transgression of a law which God had given him in express terms. "Thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." With a perfect understanding of this law, (for Adam was not deceived) he ate of the forbidden fruit; but from Adam to Moses, (a lapse of about 2300 years) neither the law that Adam had transgressed, nor that which Moses brought, had been by any authorized proclamation enjoined on the sons of men. That given to Adam was for a test of creature perfection; it had accomplished this, and there remained no further necessity for its promulgation. Hence the very existence of sin and death in the world from Adam to Moses established the point for which Paul contended, viz.: that they were not held under the reigning power of sin and death by personally eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; but that by *one offence,* many were made sinners, and by the disobedience of *one man,* etc. The original transgression of Adam was therefore the transgression of all his natural seed, and the dreadful sentence, "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return," was as emphatically passed on all that Adam represented as on himself personally.

The apostle further continues the sub-

ject in this chapter, showing that the Sinai covenant, or the law of Moses, was not added either as a test of creature excellency or as a way of life; for all human excellency was prostrated in the original violation of divine authority, and man irretrievably (by human power or providence) consigned to the curse and to the dark domain of death. But Paul adds, "Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound," etc. Not that offences might abound, nor that man should become a greater sinner. There could have been no call for such an entrance; but as by the law is the knowledge of sin, so the law which was given on Sinai, which Paul says was holy, just and good, showed that we were carnal, *i.e.* fleshly, or having a fleshly nature derived from Adam, and consequently sold under sin. Hence also the law, emanating from and being, to some extent at least, a transcript of the perfections of God, shows sin to be exceedingly sinful, as the plumb-line and the rule will show the imperfection of a defective piece of work. The plumb-line does not make the work or building disproportionate, but shows the enormity of the fault. Thus also in the christian's experience, "I was alive once without the law; but when the commandment came, sin revived (or abounded) and I died." "I had not known sin except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."

Finally, in the concluding clause of the text, the apostle gives us to understand very definitely the object of his tracing so minutely all the prominent features of the man Adam, as the head of mankind viz.: he is the figure of him that was to come. As he and the natural posterity which he represented could not be separated in the transgression, guilt and consequences of eating the forbidden fruit, so neither is it possible to divide between Christ and his spiritual seed, body, bride, or church; and as the one offence of one man, legally representing all natural men, involved them, legally, justly and indiscriminately, in the ruin of his apostasy, so the obedience of one, even the man Christ Jesus, as necessarily, as legally, and emphatically must extend deliverance to all the spiritual family.

From the letter of brother Hawkins, which we intend to publish hereafter should opportunity serve, we conclude there is some difference between us and some of our western brethren on the subject of the headships, and of the seeds which they respectively represent. Where our Lord says that certain characters are not of God; that they are from beneath, of their father the devil, etc., we understand him to speak not of their creation; but of the spirit by which they are actuated, and of their spiritual relation to the prince of darkness; of their utter destitution of any part or lot in the provisions of the gospel, or the inheritance of the saints. Serpents, vipers, goats and wolves are used figuratively to set forth their fixed opposition to God and the economy of his grace. And when our Lord says, "I am from above, and my kingdom is from above, Jerusalem which is above or coming down from God out of heaven," etc., he alludes to the spiritual life and grace given to the people of the saints in him before the

world began. Both the elect and reprobate of mankind are on an even level in their Adamic natures, hence their bodies are alike corruptible; but the heaven-born child is born of God; a life which is hid with Christ in God is communicated to him, Christ dwells within him the hope of glory. All others of the human stock are under the influence of that spirit which is from beneath; and the ministers of anti-christ are from these considerations called the angels of the devil, the children of the devil, serpents, scorpions, vipers, etc.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

After fifty-three years of service in publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, Mr. Gilbert Beebe, of Middletown, N. Y., and grandson of Elder Gilbert Beebe, who founded the paper in 1832, because of impaired eye-sight, due to cataracts, feels he has to give up publishing the paper.

Having been associated with the editorial staff since 1923, and feeling that we cannot bear the thought of the SIGNS falling by the wayside, we are firmly resolved to carry on and do all within our power to continue the publication of the paper, beginning with the January, 1942, issue.

So far as we have been able to judge, about the only fault that any of our readers have found with us in editing the paper in the past has been what they may have understood to be our views on the subject of the "resurrection of the dead." As we have never published an article on this subject, we are at a loss to understand how our readers really know where we do stand. We are now being told by even some of our good brethren who differ with us that we have erred in not giving our readers our views on this subject long ago. When we became associated with the paper over eighteen years ago, we understood that there were two schools of thought on the matter of the "resurrection of the dead," and that from time to time those two schools of thought clashed and brought about a state of hard feelings between excellent brethren. Being a lover of peace and harmony among brethren, we refrained from stating our own views on a subject which we knew in advance might cause strife and controversy. We have actually written three articles on this subject, but have withheld them all from publication, and we will leave it to our readers to judge whether, under the circumstances, we have made a mistake in so doing. From all we have been able to gather, our understanding of this subject is substantially the same as that which has been expressed at one time or another by at least four out of the five other ministers, excluding ourself, who have held the position of editor of the paper during the past sixty years, or since Elder Gilbert Beebe's death in 1881.

We would like, here and now, to have our readers understand for all time to come that we are not a non-resurrectionist. On the other hand, we wish to very definitely affirm our belief in the resurrection of the dead, but we do not feel justified in going beyond what the apostle Paul declared when he said: "It

is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body: it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." 1st Cor. 15:42-44. Our mind has been exercised upon this subject to such an extent of late that we are resolved to undertake to express ourself more or less fully upon it. In order to do so, however, we feel it will require several articles, written on different texts of Scripture, and our plan is that these articles shall be published in book form. In this book we propose to publish what may prove to be the greatest collection of outstanding articles ever written on this subject. These articles will not be confined to those which support our own point of view, but we want to honestly furnish our brethren with both sides of this question, and let them judge the matter for themselves. This book may have to contain 150 to 200, or more, pages, and will necessarily entail considerable expense. Before obligating ourself for the cost of publishing such a book, we will give our readers a rather complete description of what to expect and then wait to hear from them, in order to judge whether the demand will be sufficient to warrant publication. In this way our readers who disagree with us will not be annoyed by reading our views on this subject through the columns of our family paper. We expect the book to be somewhat similar to the book we published in 1926 on the subject of Predestination, which proved to be very popular with Old School Baptists throughout the country. We feel that our readers are entitled to know what our views are on this point of doctrine, and the method we are choosing should not lend itself to offense or dissatisfaction among our subscribers.

Let us repeat for the purpose of emphasis, we are determined to exert our best efforts towards making available to all true Old School Baptists in the United States the very best religious paper which it is humanly possible for us to turn out. Obviously, we are going to need all the cooperation we can possibly get from our readers, both by way of quality material to publish and an enlarged subscription list to justify a good paper. With this in mind we would like to have every Old School Baptist Minister throughout the country to act as our agent in securing new subscriptions for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The majority of our ministering brethren need financial assistance, and in order to make it really worth their while to work for the paper, we will be willing to allow them $1. for every NEW subscription they send in at the annual rate of $2. per year. They can make the deduction in advance and send only $1. payable to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, P. O. Box No. 70, Rutherford, N. J., with the full name and address of the subscriber. We would like to know just who are willing to represent us and shall be glad to send them sample copies of the paper, together with a form of receipt. Please give us your assistance in this matter, brethren, but we must have it understood that the Ministering brethren who secure *new* subscriptions for us are to retain their fees

in full as the price of the paper is $2. per year. Renewal subscriptions shall, of course, be payable in full.

Yours for the best paper in the country,

R. LESTER DODSON.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANKS

Enclosed with this issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be found a subscription blank. We earnestly hope that every subscriber whose subscription is due or past due will make prompt use of this blank by sending in what is due. In taking over and carrying on the publication of our family paper we are going to need all possible funds, and as there are several spaces on the blanks, we are going to ask that all of our subscribers who can will make use of at least one of the spaces by getting ONE new subscriber for us.

We are going to take our subscribers into our confidence and speak freely and frankly with them. We have over 200 on our Free List, and we are honestly wondering if improved business conditions have not made it possible for some of them to resume paying for their paper. We feel those who are unable to pay should be willing to at least drop us a few lines to that effect. We plan to continue sending the paper without cost to those who we have reason to believe are entitled to it free. Will each free subscriber kindly write to us?

We also find that there are about 350 subscribers who are from three to thirteen years behind with their subscriptions. We have no doubt but what some of these are no longer living, and for some reason or another many others are not receiving the paper. We are anxious to correct and bring up to date our mailing list and are, therefore, going to ask that our subscribers keep us informed of all changes of address, and also advise of all cases where they have knowledge of the fact that the paper is not reaching the hands of those who really appreciate it. We have no way of finding out in all cases when our subscribers die, or when the paper should be discontinued. We would like for those who are long overdue with their subscriptions and who cannot pay up or send something, but at the same time enjoy reading the paper, write us a letter explaining their situation. We want to know whether the paper is actually being received by our subscribers, or whether they are being piled up or thrown away by various Post Offices because no one calls for them or the correct address is unknown.

We are glad to say that the majority of our readers are reasonably well paid up with their subscriptions, but the New Year is here and a considerable number will soon be due again. A very few have paid two, three or even four years in advance. In addition to continuing our system of showing on the wrapper of the paper the date to which the subscription is paid, we will, beginning with February, enclose a subscription blank calling attention to the fact that the subscription will be due with the following month's issue where that will be the case. In this way each subscriber should have a notice a month in advance of the due date of his subscription.

We are confident that in a great many

cases our subscribers just overlook or neglect, for no real good reason, sending in their dues. We have emphasized elsewhere in this issue our desire and determination to give our readers the very best paper which is possible to send them, but we must be practical in order to carry this out, and we bespeak for them their kind cooperation in attaining such an end.

One more thing which we are convinced of is that in most sections of the country only a small percentage of Old School Baptists actually subscribe for the SIGNS, and in some instances they pass them around to half-a-dozen others. We hope all who can pay for the paper will assist their pastors and ministers and us by having them send in their subscriptions. In this way they will be aiding them financially as well as getting a paper which we are confident they themselves will enjoy all through the year.

With reference to the November and December, 1941, issues which did not go out, if those who would like to have us make it up in some way will be good enough to write us to that effect we will endeavor to make it satisfactory with them. R. L. D.

(*Continued from page* 9)

come all things for them for whom he died. Brother Dodson, this is not an obituary, but an experience to me—a very sad one. I have one sister who belongs to the same church with me. There was only the two of us children. Mother was a member of Soldier Creek Church; had been a member forty years or more; was baptized into the fellowship of the Church while I was yet a child. In 1913 I joined the same church, and in a little while my sister came into the same church. We feel a great loss in her going, but there is a joy, too, to know that she will not know pain and suffering any more, so we find joy in tribulations.

EFFIE BLOGG WHITENTON.

OBITUARY

MRS. ZORAH E. COLLINS, nee Robey, our sister in Christ, departed these earthly scenes September 16, 1941 at her residence, 42 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C. She had been in failing health ever since, and before, retiring a few years ago from her work in the General Accounting Office of the U. S. Govt., where she had been engaged several years. She was born June 18, 1881. Her parents were brother Lewis and sister Charlotte Robey, both of the Frying Pan Church, deceased several years ago. Her husband, the late Harry R. Collins, died September 12, 1916. She is survived by one son and a grandson: Harry R. Collins and Harry R. Collins, Jr., both of Washington, D. C. Other survivors are two sisters and two brothers: Mrs. Lula Friess of Washington, Mrs. Mollie Herrell of Silver Spring, Md. and Mr. Earley Robey of near Herndon, Va. and Mr. Irving Robey of Washington. Sister Zorah was baptized in May, 1910 by the late Elder J. G. Eubanks into the membership of the Frying Pan Church in Fairfax Co., Va. Funeral services were held from Lee's Funeral Home in the city, using Psalm 116, interment in Cedar Hill Cemetery. She had not been without her trials and afflictions. She had many misgivings about herself, but none about the faithfulness of her Redeemer in whom she believed and trusted for salvation and eternal life. She had implicit confidence in Jesus Christ, that what He had begun He would victoriously consummate; that He gives grace to His own here and glory to them hereafter. While frail and nervous, loving to be alone and to live so, she had at times a blessed sense of the companionship of Him who, though unseen, is ever near those that put their trust in Him. May the Lord

comfort the bereft son and others of the family, reconciling them to the Divine Will as only He can.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

I feel it a sense of duty, love and respect, to write a brief notice of the passing of my step-mother, MRS. NANNIE J. DODSON, widow of my late father R. L. Dodson, who died on January 18th, 1941. Mamma's maiden name was Nannie J. Williams, and she was born April 11th, 1861, of the parentage of Cephyus and Levinia Williams, and died on August 20th, 1941, or seven months and two days following my father's death. They spent about fifty-two years of married life together. I feel thankful that neither of them had to linger and suffer very long. After Papa died she seemed to miss him a great deal and appeared to lose all interest in life. She lived a very active life and while she was quite feeble for several years she was only confined to her bed about two weeks before she died. While she was not a member of the visible church, she was an Old School Baptist at heart and firmly believed the doctrine contended for by them. I was informed that the night before she passed away she told her sister-in-law that she saw a beautiful cross, and I am persuaded she has entered into her eternal rest. Lester and I were very young when our real mother died, so Mamma was the only mother I ever knew. Having lost both in so short a time makes me feel very sad and lonely, but I feel sure they are at rest. She had only one son, C. Willard Dodson, of Danville, Va., who survives her.

Lovingly, her step-daughter,
LAILA D. FERGUSON.

JOHN B. RUSTON. We regret exceedingly the delay in publishing the following sad announcement by our esteemed Associate Editor, Elder George Ruston. We know our readers will deeply sympathize with brother and sister Ruston in their great sorrow. A more complete account of John's death may appear later. The announcement: JOHN B. RUSTON, Pilot Officer in the R. A. F., was killed while on air operations September 20th-21st. He was the second son of Elder and Mrs. George Ruston and was twenty-six years of age. Elder and Sister Ruston would like their many friends who have written them to know how very much they appreciate their messages of sympathy and love, and they hope to answer them as soon as possible. The Lord has been very merciful to them so they can say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

R. L. D.

Our dear sister in Christ, MRS. VIOLA EUGINE JACKSON, daughter of John Coe and Prudie (Weatherford) Coe, was born in Alabama, April 13, 1867; departed this life October 14, 1941 at her home in Franklin County, Texas, near Good Hope Church, of which she had been a faithful member since in the year 1900. She was united in marriage to John Jackson on the third Sunday in August, 1892, who preceded her in death August 7, 1939. To this union were born six children, three girls and three boys. One son, Dempsy, preceded her in death Jan. 1, 1923. The surviving children are Mrs. Vadie Hill, Mrs. Maddie Lee Keith, Jim and John Jackson, all of Good Hope community; Mrs. Fadie Jorden of Dangerfield; all of whom were with her most of the time during her last sickness and did all that loving hands could do to make her sufferings less and her last days as pleasant as was possible.

Funeral services were conducted at Good Hope Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder J. R. Hardy, who spoke to a large and attentive audience of the relatives and friends who came to pay a last tribute of respect to one who was loved by all who knew her, using the words, "The last enemy which shall be destroyed is death." He spoke comfortingly of the sweet and precious promises and assurances to those whose hope and faith rested in Christ Jesus; the things that "Aunt Sissy," as Sister Jackson was familiarly called by so many, loved; and we felt as we looked upon her calm and peaceful face we could say of her that she had entered into that rest that God had prepared for her, and for which she so much longed. She was buried beside her companion in Good Hope Cemetery.

Sister Jackson was baptized by Elder John E. Carter, who was pastor of Good Hope Church at the time she joined. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace and grace alone. She never missed her meetings unless providentially prevented from being there, and was given strength to walk the mile and a half, until her last illness, when she had no other way to get to her church

meetings. I have seen her with tears in her eyes say that her meetings were everything to her. She took the SIGNS, so if she had to miss meetings, she would find food for her hungry soul in them. We feel that the light which the Lord lit in her soul was not put under a bushel, for all could see her good works; and to the Lord she gave all praise, honor and glory. When she was laboring under a deep conviction of her sins, and felt there was no relief for her, these words came to her: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." She said she did not even know those words were in the Bible, but it brought peace to her troubled soul. The next day she was looking to see if it was in there and found it. She said, "I was so happy I wanted to shout." We feel the Lord placed His yoke upon her and it was easy and His burden was light; for He gave her grace to sustain her to the end.

Elder Beene preached at her house during her illness, and when he closed she reached out and clasped his hand and said, "Brother Beene, if I believe anything, I believe what I've just heard"; and asked us to sing, "Awake my soul in joyful lays." She expressed the wish that she could write her thoughts on paper; we asked her to do so, but she said, "I can't, they are like the wind, come and are gone."

I would say to her children, relatives and friends, grieve not for her now that she is gone; for the same one who led her here, most surely has conducted her home: her heavenly home which she loved best of all. We should humbly bow to the will of God, and feel thankful that we had such a dear one with us so long; and feel that our loss is her eternal gain. May God reconcile all of us that we may say from our heart, Not my will, O Lord, but thine be done on earth as it is in heaven.

MRS. MYRTLE RHOADES.

MISS MARY J. GULICK, our sister in the Lord, departed this earthly life December 8th at the home of her brother, Mr. J. S. Gulick, near Aldie, Loudoun Co., Va. She was 83 years of age the 13th of September. She was the last surviving daughter of the late Sanford and sister Nancy Gulick, was born near Aldie, Va., and lived all her life in that neighborhood. She is survived by one brother at whose home she died, and whose wife so tenderly and faithfully cared for our dear sister in the several months of her last illness. After the death of a brother, Robert Gulick, some years ago, the widow of the latter, our sister Roberta Gulick, had lived with sister "Mollie", as we called her, until the latter's removal to the home of her brother some months ago. Not immediately, however, after the death of Mr. Robert Gulick, did sister Roberta go to live with sister Mollie, but after the death of sister Clara Lamb who was sister Roberta's sister, and at such time as both sisters Ella Gulick (now deceased) and sister Mollie needed some one to live with on account of their increasing frailty. Sister Mollie was baptized several years ago by the late Elder J. N. Badger into membership with the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, I have not the exact date. She was a faithful, humble and loving member of the little church up to the time of her falling asleep in the Lord, though for several months past she had not been able to come to the meetings on account of her failing health. At the funeral, I read the hymn "Asleep in Jesus" (No. 1257 Beebe) and commented on four of the verses of that hymn. How wonderful is that God-given faith which can look death in the face and be unafraid! We have lost another member of little band of believers at Mt. Zion, but heaven's inhabitants increase as earth's population lessens. Our loss is indeed her gain in the Lord. Our loss is but temporary her betterment is eternal. May the Lord make the power of His saving Truth the supporting staff of our fainting hearts in the trying days which lie ahead before our dismissal too shall come.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

MARRIAGES

Due to the inability of Elder H. C. Ker, the Pastor, to be present, the undersigned was called to officiate at the marriage of William H. Schopfel, Jr., and Ella R. Johnson, which took place in the Southampton meeting-house, Southampton, Pa., on Saturday afternoon, September 13th, 1941.

R. LESTER DODSON.

MEETINGS

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.
Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 A.M. 1:30 P. M.
To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A. M.
ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A. M. 2 P. M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists is now settled in her new church-house, at 4614 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas, where she holds her regular monthly services on each first Sunday at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. Preaching services also on each third Sunday by Elder C. B. Teague, and each second Sunday by brother O. C. Lee, at 11 o'clock a. m. A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. R. HARDY, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Eligin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

VOL. 110 RUTHERFORD, N. J., FEBRUARY, 1942 NO. 2

POETRY

(To Elder John McConnell, on the ordination of R. Lester Dodson)

I hope to attend your meeting place,
In which your church has called
In council a loving brother,
For work to be installed.

In him a gift discovered
Whatever it may be;
May your acts be done in wisdom,
Guided by Divinity.

May love, truth, and candor,
Be bound by sacred bands,
And all be done in order,
By the laying on of hands.

God hath ordained the power;
A lamp for his anointed:
Hath ordained the hidden wisdom,
For servants thus appointed.

And if it is His Holy will,
This brother's gift be sealed,
To speak his wondrous mysteries,
May it be to him revealed.

For from out the mouth of babes,
Strength, he has ordained;
May grace be ever with him,
And righteousness maintained.

Defend His glorious mandate,
Where there's an open door;
And be endowed with manna
To feed His humble poor.

This is my humble prayer,
I hope its from above,
And all that's done this day
May be in christian love.

With hearts close knit together,
And eye to eye may see,
What is the Master's pleasure;
Amen: so let it be.

(The foregoing poem was composed by our late brother, James E. Moore, who was a member of the Lexington Church in the Catskill Mountains, for the occasion of our ordination in the fall of 1921. We are indebted to his daughter, Mrs. Burgess, who resides in Rutherford, for having just presented it to us. R. L. D.)

CORRESPONDENCE

Written by ELDER J. C. SIKES
SULPHUR BLUFF, Texas

DEAR BROTHER TATUM:—

As it is raining today, and I cannot get to do anything on the outside, I will endeavor to give you a few of my thoughts on the two subjects on which you have made inquiry. The first is James 1:5, which says: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." This verse might lead us to wrong conclusions, if we ignore the explanation which James gave in the two following verses, which say, "But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think he shall receive any thing of the Lord." This means that if we have the least shadow of a doubt, that God will hear and answer our prayer, and give us that which we are asking for we are wavering in our minds, and have no right to expect him to give us what we are asking for. At this juncture I am made to ask, who is sufficient for these things? We will let the blessed Saviour answer that question. He says in Matt. 17:20, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto

this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." Here again my helpless soul inquires, who is sufficient for these things? Just here let us put this statement of Jesus, and the one we have quoted from James together, and see how helpless man is. But before we do this, I will quote one more statement from Jesus. In Matt. 21:21, 22, he said to his disciples, "If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." Again helplessly I ask, who is sufficient for these things? From James we learn that God will give us any thing that we ask him for, if we ask in faith, nothing wavering, and Christ explains that if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, anything whatsoever that you ask for, shall be given to you. And he further assures them that if they have that kind of faith, nothing shall be impossible for them to do. No man ever obtained that kind of faith by asking for it, for he must have it before he can ask for it, for it is in faith, nothing wavering. That kind of faith will never move a man to ask for anything that is not according to the will of God. If a man was moved by that kind of faith to ask God to stop the awful war now raging throughout almost the entire earth, and give us universal peace, he would do it at once. Religionists all over the world have tried to get him to stop it, but it has only increased. The Pope of Rome has tried it, and has asked his subjects throughout the world to join him in prayer to God to stop it, but it continues to increase. What is the matter with all these religionists that God will not hear them? There are two reasons why God has not answered them. First, they have no faith, and Paul says, "Without faith it is impossible to please Him." And second, they have been asking God to do that which it is not yet his will to do. John says, "This is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." James said, "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." All such prayers are moved by carnal, or fleshy lust, and are never answered. As I have said before, a true and God given faith will never move a man to ask God for anything that it is not God's will to give. Jesus taught his disciples to pray "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." This sentiment must, and will, be in every God given prayer. Paul said, "Likewise the spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what to pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." True faith is the fruit of this spirit which helpeth our infirmities, and which maketh intercession for us ac-

cording to the will of God. This Spirit must be in us, and produce this faith in us, which is its fruit, before we can ask for anything in faith, nothing wavering. And being moved by this faith, and the help of this Spirit which is in us, we can ask in faith, and we will not, when thus moved, ask for anything which it is not the will of God to give, for Jesus said, "For your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before you ask him." There are two things that are clearly proven by the above scriptures, one is that no man can pray to God in faith nothing wavering, who has not that unwavering faith, and the other is, that no one who has not that unwavering faith can get it by asking for it, for he must have that faith before he can ask in faith, and he must ask in faith before he can get anything by asking for it. This forever destroys the very foundation of all shades and grades of Arminianism. They tell the people that it is God's will that everybody be saved, and they tell us that it is their will that everybody be saved. If this is true, one prayer from any one of them, sent up to God in faith nothing wavering, would bring the desired effect, and there would be no need for them to ever offer up another prayer for one to be saved, nor to preach another sermon to try to help them to be saved; or to ever suffer one moment from fear that any of the human family will be lost. For, as I have already quoted, John said, "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." If what they preach is the truth then it is God's will that everybody be saved. And if they have unwavering faith in him, and are confident that he will hear and answer the prayer of faith, and will ask him in that faith and confidence to save everybody; John tells us that it will be done. So, if they are right about the matter, and any go to hell, it will surely be their fault. For if they believe that it is his will that everybody be saved and also believe that he will hear and answer the prayer of any who will ask in faith for him to do that which is according to his will, and they fail to ask him to do it, and anybody goes to hell, it will surely be the fault of them who could have asked God in faith to save everybody, but failed to do so. The truth is, if they believe what they say, then they did not want God's will to be done in the matter. For if the people found out that they had asked God to save everybody, then they would not hire any more preachers to help God do that which he himself had faithfully promised to do. That would leave such preachers with no room to claim that they were helping God to keep sinners out of hell, and they would be left without a job. But back to James, all that you wanted to know on that point is summed up in his statement, that, "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss that ye may consume it upon your lusts." I have asked for thousands of things which I have not received and I feel sure that my desire for them was of fleshly origin, and that it was best for me that God did not grant my request. There is much more that I

would like to say on this subject, but time and space will not allow it at present, if I am to say anything on the other subject to which you called my attention. I may have said more already than will be of interest to you. As to the last matter which you inquired about, with the many scriptures which you referred to, and the many questions which you asked concerning them: to answer them, each in detail, would make a book half as large as the New Testament. Of course I realize that you did not expect me to do that. I think I see two main thoughts over which your mind is somewhat confused. I come to this conclusion from the following questions and statements in your letter. Three of the questions which lead me to this conclusion, are as follows: First, "just what was it that Israel fell from when they were blinded in part until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in?" Answer. They fell from all the rights and privileges which God had promised them in the old covenant so long as they lived up to its requirements. In fact, God put them in possession of his kingdom, or his visible militant church, which Paul called the "Church in the wilderness." See Acts 7:37, 38, 39 which says, "This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear. This is he, that was in the Church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in Mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us: To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, and in their hearts turned back into Egypt." Jesus Christ likened those rebellious Jews to some wicked husbandmen to whom a certain householder which planted him a vineyard, "And let it out, and went into a far country. And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And they took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, this is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize the inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They said unto him, he will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, Therefore I say unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." This shows beyond any room for a reasonable doubt, that national Israel first possessed the kingdom of God under the old covenant, which was given from Mount Sina. It is not only called the kingdom of God, which Jesus informed the Jews should be taken from them, as a nation: and given unto a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof: but it is also called the

Church in the wilderness, when and where God called Moses up to the top of Mount Sina, and there made a covenant with Moses and with Israel. First see Acts 7:37, 38, 39; and then turn to Exodus 34 and read the entire chapter, and you will find the following language in verse 27, "And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel." You will note that God did not say, IN these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel; but he said, "After the TENOR of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel." The word tenor, means, that course of thought which holds on through a discourse; the general drift, or direction of thought; purport, intent, general meaning, understanding. The entire set of laws, which God gave to Moses on the Mount Sina, were fundamentally contained in the ten commandments. Moses repeats the ten commandments in Deut. 5 and in the 6th chapter he gives them many statutes, or commandments, the basic principles of which are contained in the ten commandments. In the 4th verse of this chapter, Moses introduces these commandments by saying, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord:" and he then gave them what Jesus said is the first and the greatest commandment. He said, in the 5th verse, "And thou shalt love the Lord they God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." Jesus not only said this is the first and great commandment, but he added, "And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." On these commandments hang all the law and the Prophets. When these two commandments shall be perfectly fulfilled, then the entire law will have been perfectly fulfilled to its least and last jot and tittle.

(*To be continued*)

St. Albans, W. Va., Route 1

The enclosed was written by Sister Smith, Elder Smith's widow. (See obituary notice in this issue). It is with a felt sense of my own weakness and with a sad heart that I attempt to add something to what she has written. Since the time of Elder Smith's ordination I have known him, and was much in later years in his company. We traveled hundreds of miles together, over mountains and valleys, through heat and cold. Truly much of my own ministerial labors were spent with him as that humble trusted yoke-fellow. I have traveled more with him, I expect, than any other man I have ever traveled with, and I know there was never one any closer to my own heart. He was ordained about twelve years before I was. In all our travels together and in all the many times I heard him preach I never heard him voice anything but with what I was in hearty accord. Elder Dell, as he was most commonly known, was that brother in whom I could always confide, when my own way seemed so hedged in, and when my own weak stammering so discouraged me he could say that word of encouragement so often unto me.

I make mention of these facts to express the very high esteem in which I

held him. Elder Smith was a man of sterling qualities. His disposition was such that endeared him to his brethren and friends. He was an able talker around your home, and his conversation was much on heavenly things, yea even the deep things of God. He would take up some portion of scripture and in such depth of light explain so feelingly its profound and sublime meaning. His gift in the ministry was that rare gift to the church, his preaching was in power and demonstration of the spirit, yet in such marked humbleness, and in plainness of speech. He was so connected in his utterances that he truly was set in the defense of the truth, uncompromising with error. His course was always straight ahead, never varying to the right or the left. As a citizen in the neighborhood he was useful and greatly beloved. If he had any enemies it was because of the doctrine. He was well equipped and posted in church history, and many and interesting were his talks along this line. He was well versed in national and current affairs. Words fail me to express the noble qualities of character of this great man.

We so keenly felt our great loss, dear kindred, our hearts are bleeding over the spoils that death hath won, but 'tis God who hath bereft us, he can all our sorrows heal. Hopewell church has lost a pastor indeed, he had served this church since the passing of the late Elder J. W. McClanahan, the neighborhood has lost a most noble and useful citizen, the children a kind and loving father, his wife has lost a loving, kind and gentle husband, her head and stay. My heart goes out to sister Smith in her deep grief and affliction.

By his request I was called to conduct his funeral where I was assisted by Elder J. J. Smith. I tried to speak words of comfort to an unusually large concourse of sorrowing brethren and friends. May the good Lord in his mercy turn his healing hand upon the sorrowing, grieving ones. While we personally expect to continue to miss him while we live, we grieve not as those who have no hope, for we feel assured in our heart that for him to die was gain. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. He was laid away in the family burying ground near the place of his home to await the call of the master.

Much more could be said of his faithful service to the churches of his care, but space forbids only to mention that many times he has walked the distance of about 25 miles from his home in Jackson Co., W. Va. to the Hopewell church in Kanawha Co. to serve the little flock there, through rain and mud, through heat and cold, not for filthy lucre sake but of a ready mind.

Submitted in love,

H. J. BIRD.

BELLINGHAM, Wash., Route 1, Box 402

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—

If I may call you that though I feel unworthy to claim any spiritual relationship with any of the dear chosen ones of the Lord. It was seventeen years ago the first of last June that I asked for a home among the only people on earth I have ever met who have my own experiences, and it is only those dear

ones who can be of any comfort to me. When things are going along smooth and pleasant or undisturbed for awhile I seem to almost forget them, but not for long, until trials and tribulations arise, then I reach out for the comfort of the dear brethren and sisters.

I wrote you a few lines recently and sent in my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and asked you to discontinue the paper to my dear father, Davis Burch, as he cannot read them any more, and wanted me to tell you, but I could not seem to write as I wanted to at that time. I thought you would like to know how he is as it has been nearly two years since he last wrote for the SIGNS. His mind got so he could not seem to grasp the meaning of any of the articles in it, and it has been about one and one-half years since he read any of the paper at all, and has been in bed for the past year. I saw him a few minutes yesterday, he is always so glad to see me, and he told me the July SIGNS had come and said: "I read every piece in it but the first one, they were all so good and made me so happy." It surely made me happy to know he could once more enjoy his dear paper that he has loved for so many years. I will take the paper to him as long as he is able to read it, and I hope that will be as long as he lives. He was eighty years old last March and never uses glasses to read. We hope, the Lord permitting, to have meeting next month which will be indeed a treat to us. I hope to be able to take the SIGNS the rest of my life as it is like a part of my life. If you have room you may publish this as I am sure many of the readers, who have read father's writings will be glad to hear of him again. It does not look like he will write any more. May the Lord bless and sustain you to continue publishing the SIGNS for many years to come.

A little sister in hope of God's mercy,
(Mrs.) BLANCHE B. BROWN.

WILLIAMSVILLE, MO., Route 1

DEAR EDITORS OF THE
SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—

I have a desire to write a few lines to you this morning expressing to you the enjoyment I receive from your beloved paper. Without it I would be deprived of hearing from many of God's true witnesses of the true teaching of God's eternal truth. It causes my hope to grow stronger as I read the many good letters from far and near. I have been in bad health for over a year, not able to get far from the house at any time. Wife and I are growing old and are very poor and hard pressed, unable to buy the comforts of this life any more. We surely do appreciate the kindness in your sending the SIGNS to us free as our condition is such that we do not have the money to pay for it after buying medicine, food and clothing. I tried for two years to get my old age pension and last month received a check for $11.60 which was soon spent for the necessaries of life. We have a hope that all the trials in this life will bring to us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory and blessing. As I sit in my home feasting on the good articles from the dear old SIGNS it makes me feel like a portion of God's word that reads something like

this, the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from the master's table. I received a good letter from a dear old brother a few days ago which did my poor soul good to read and if you think it worthy of space in the SIGNS you can publish it for others to read. This dear old man of God was ordained to preach the gospel nearly half a century ago. My great uncle, Y. J. Harvill, of Hickman County, Tenn. was one of the presbytery that helped to ordain him. He was an able minister of the Old School Baptist doctrine.

I cannot describe the joy I receive in reading the good letters of Elder Lytle Burns, Florence, Ala. In his eighty-third year he is still preaching to the comfort of many of God's dear ones. I feel unworthy of the care of God's dear children, and that I am only in the way in this low ground of sin and sorrow since I have been deprived of my health and feel it would be better to pass away, but we all have to abide God's time. Dear brother editor I hoped that I would be able to send you some contribution to help you with your expenses, but if I cannot and you feel that I am a drawback to you I will not blame you to stop sending your paper to me. By so doing you might be better able to go on feeding the flock of God over which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseer. If you do send it to me please change my address from Poplar Bluff, Mo. Route 1 to Williamsville, Mo. Route 1. May the God of all grace abundantly bless you in all your trials is my desire. An unworthy reader,

WM. H. HARWELL.

113 So. 12th St., MURRAY, Ky.

DEAR MR. BEEBE:—

Please pardon our delay. We notice our time has expired for our family paper so you will find enclosed $1 remittance for renewal. We feel we cannot get along without its pages, we receive many sweet messages from it. Sorry we failed to renew before the first, however, we feel that the July number will come any way as we have been a reader for a long time. Elder David Bartley was the first to place a copy of the "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" in my father's and mother's home. I think it was in the fall of 1900, and I so well remember the experience of a thirteen year old girl, Ruth Keene, the daughter of Elder Keene. I was quite a young girl at that time, and have passed under many trials. At times it seems I will have to fall beneath the rod, and then the scripture of inspiration is given to me, and I often feast on the words spoken out to me in name by our dear Elder J. N. Darnell of Kadiz, Ky. while he stood in the stand of our little church in the city of Mayville, Ky. On Sunday morning as he was proclaiming the wonderful power of the all wise God he was so happy while he was preaching he spoke out and said: "Sister Chester, look up, lift your head; straighten your bended knees for your redemption draweth nigh." With streaming tears I wondered how he knew my head had been so low, and my knees in a continual bend. May I mention the past week end, our Soldier Creek union meeting met at Mt. Pleasant church. A wonderful meeting it was, we had as our visiting ministers, Elder Hawkins of

Alabama, and he was accompanied by a brother Marrs, also Elder Hewitt of Georgia and three brothers Adams of the same state. However, on Saturday afternoon, hearts were made very sad, when my husband's uncle, Tommy Chester and wife, who was furnishing a conveyance for three aged widow ladies, when it seemed something went out of place with the car, and it ran off a narrow bridge turning the car upside down. He and wife escaped with minor bruises, while his two aged sisters, Aunt Emma Mathis and Aunt Alice Mathis have broken ribs. The fifth occupant of the car being sister McGregory, the mother of sister Effie Blogg Whitenton, was seriously injured and died the following morning at eight o'clock. Her funeral was conducted in the home Monday morning by the pastor, Elder John Henson and she was then conveyed just across the road in front of the house and placed by the side of her husband. How our hearts go out to her two children, sister Effie Whitenton and sister Trudy Smith. Sister Effie Whitenton resides in the old home. May God's blessing be hers in this trying time. May it be God's will to be remembered in your prayers.

FANNIE H. CHESTER.

WETUMKA, Okla., Route 1

DEAR PUBLISHERS:—

It is again that my health is such that I have changed post-office address from Seminole, Okla. Route 3 to the above address. Dear brother in the Lord, if I should address those of the household of faith in Christ Jesus. I feel to be one of the least but believe there is no other place I can go, no other people, and I hope to follow them and where they are buried I long to be buried. Dearly beloved it is not for any good that I have done for I feel to be corrupt from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet, but if I have any hope it is centered in Christ Jesus for he has been with me all through my unprofitable life and given me strength for his arm is underneath, and given me grace to trust in him. He is the author and finisher of our faith, and I thank thee, O Father, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes, yes, babes in Christ according to thy wisdom. So then, dear ones, it is not by good works we have done, but by the grace and favor of him who loved us and saved us even when we were dead in sin, and has raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Is it not a heavenly place?

Well, I did not want to weary you with many words, but the dear old SIGNS is highly appreciated by me, it is like one of the family. I cannot go much as I am under treatment for high blood pressure and kidney trouble and suffer all the time with my head and neck, but there is one thing I know, I will not suffer one pain too many and I know that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are called according to his purpose. Yes, it is all of him and to him all praise is due for it is in him we live, move and have our being. I realize my shortcomings and am made to wonder could such a sinful wretch claim to know anything of that wonder-

ful, all wise, eternal, ever merciful God, that works all things after the council of his own will, speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. It is by revelation that we receive any knowledge of spiritual things. Jesus said, ye must be born again, so by this we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren, and he also said he would send the comforter which is the Holy Ghost, and he would guide you in the way of all truth. Oh, how sweet, to meditate on the wonderful works of God, and stand still and see the salvation of God. Yes, God's little ones have been made to stand still, they have been brought to the end of all struggle. I cannot write long but hope and pray the Lord will still be with his dear editors and publishers of the dear old SIGNS and may they be blessed to declare the truth as it is in Jesus. With love to the household of faith, farewell,

ELLA DAVIS.

Route 1, Box 49, PATTERSON, Calif.

J. E. BEEBE & Co.

DEAR SIRS:—Find enclosed cashier's check for Fifteen Dollars ($15.00) to take care of my delinquency on the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and to pay one year in advance; also $3 for the benefit of others. I have been very close run financially for quite awhile, but have been in a little better shape the present year, and want to thank you for sending the SIGNS to me so long and hope that this will never happen again.

Respectfully yours,

R. R. PETERS.

(We thank our brother sincerely for the above letter and its contents. We believe there are others throughout the country who have experienced an improvement in their finances, and we will greatly appreciate it if those who are behind with their subscriptions will follow the above example. If each one will do his share it will be easy on us. We would also like to ask those who send in remittances to make them payable to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and send them to P. O. Box 70, Rutherford, N. J. Quite a number are sending their remittances direct to us at our residence which necessitates our either endorsing them over to the paper or depositing them in our own account and then drawing a check to the order of the paper. We bespeak the co-operation of our subscribers in this respect as well as in other ways. R. L. D.)

6904 Brownsville St., HOUSTON, Texas

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST:—I feel unworthy to call you such. Enclosed find $2 to pay my subscription for another year from last May. I am very sorry to get in arrears, but thank you dear Elder Dodson for sending me the dear old SIGNS. I would miss it so much if it did not come. I pray that God in his most sovereign way will see fit that his little weak ones will continue to be nourished in his word and his power cannot be hindered. I think so much of God's sovereignty on down through the ages. He has led them through the wilderness of despair and desolation and kept them from falling. There have been many perilous times that the people of God have gone through, as well as now, and to the end of time, and his power

keeps his jewels from being plucked by the arch enemy, Satan. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. To believe is given from above, through Jesus Christ our Lord, not of works, lest any man should boast. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." James 1:17. There are many gifts, all of which are perfect and we know, if he through our Lord and Master has given the gift of eternal life, we will remain with him in love and hope and he will supply grace for all our needs, but that old serpent is busy trying to tear down and uproot all God's work but his bounds are set and he will go no further. "We can only say the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." Heb. 13:6. But we are so unmindful, so prone to lean on the arm of the flesh, we forget God's promises, and his unfailing goodness, and but for his most perfect and everlasting love, and keeping power, we would have no strength to withstand the ravages of the enemy. Brother Dodson, I believe in the Old School Doctrine of Predestinarian Baptists and love to listen to others more than trying to say anything myself. I love all God's little ones wherever they may be and only hope to be numbered in his chosen few. Please look over this poorly written scrawl and throw it away if you do not see fit to publish it. A sister in love, saved by grace if at all.

(Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER.

130 West Chestnut St., Louisville, Ky.

Dear Brother Dodson:—

It is with much fear and trembling I make the attempt to write you again. Why, O why, am I impressed to write for I am so weak, so little and imperfect. I can exclaim with the great Apostle Paul if I am a saint I feel to be the least of all. I get so low and cast down, it seems at times, I cannot go any longer, my hope seems so little I almost lay it by and sometimes it seems sufficient if I were called to die.

Brother, as you know, I have been sick, under the doctor's care since last November, and I want you to know I have had some sweet seasons of rejoicing. I felt the good Lord was near me and if he called me all was well. So many sweet passages of Scripture and songs were in my mind. Oh, how I crave to leave this troublesome world. I have thought maybe it was wrong as I want to be submissive to the Lord's will. I read in the Book of Job where he longed for death. Oh, what a sweet thought if we are what we profess to be, one of his chosen ones that he shed his precious blood for we will see him as he is and be like him and that is enough, is it not?

I think brother Spangler's editorial in the August number of the Signs is wonderful, he expresses my feelings so well I have read it over and over again. I got some of the back numbers of the Signs and in June 1939 I saw a letter written by sister Elsie Loeffel of Union, N. J. and to me it was a wonderful letter. She expresses my views exactly, gives God all the power, glory and honor. I want to give him all the praise, he has been so

good to me all these years. Sometimes I feel I am forsaken but I hope he remembers me, a poor sinner saved by grace if ever saved. Dear brother, pardon me for bothering you with this, it is like the writer, very imperfect. I have thought I would never write you again. We read it is not in man to direct his steps so pardon and pray for poor me. I am feeling better of late. Hope you and your family are well.

Your little sister, I hope in Christ,
ADAH CHANDLER.

BURLINGTON, N. C.

DEAR MR. GILBERT BEEBE:—

As my subscription to the SIGNS is due, I am enclosing money-order for $2 with which you can credit me for another year. It is in my heart to owe no man and surely I do not want the dear old SIGNS to discontinue on account of funds to carry on.

Mr. Beebe, I thought I was in sympathy with you in your trouble with your eyes but since I came from the doctor's office a few days ago, and he told me I had cataracts on mine I immediately thought of you, and my sorrow went out to all those that are blind and those that are otherwise afflicted. I am still recovering from an operation I had in December which made my fifth operation, and now my eyes have gone bad. I would love to be resigned to the will of God but in my nature I know I cannot. David said it was good for him to be afflicted and "Afflictions, though they seem severe, in mercy oft are sent."

In last November I went to Duke's Hospital for an operation for hernia and I suppose I had a thorough and complete examination from 1:20 until 5:00 by about a dozen doctors. They told me there was none there that would want to do it and I was turned down. I came to see Dr. Carrington here in Burlington and he took my case and operated on me. Just before going to the operating room these words came to me: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee." I was given faith to believe the Lord would be with me. I have been given to embrace the words of Paul: "We glory in tribulation"; also: "Knowing that tribulation worketh patience, etc.". There are times my heart swells in praise and adoration and I praise him for the spirit of humiliation. I full well know that without him we can do nothing. We cannot walk until he bids us, neither can we be still until he commands, neither can we go forward until the waters are smitten and the command given us. So our God is far above all gods having all things under his supreme control. Kings, empires and dominions are under his control and in his good time he will demonstrate his mighty power, and we shall be saved from our enemies. His Holy word says: "Blessed is the man whose hope the Lord is."

I am getting near the age of three score and ten and with these afflictions I know my time here upon the earth is short and my great desire is to spend it to his honor and praise.

I trust, Mr. Beebe, that your eyes are much better and that it will be your desire to continue to publish the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years to

come, and that the heritage as left by your venerable father be still handed down as a legacy to many of the little ones. My best wishes to you and yours.

An unworthy sinner,

T. W. WALKER.

1008 E. Allen St., FORT WORTH, TEXAS

Dear Brother Dodson and Editors:—

Enclosed find my subscription for another year. I hope I feel thankful to my Heavenly Father that I am able to have the paper in my home. My mother, also several old members, read it with comfort and joy, as well as myself.

I am very sorry to hear of your dear father's passing, yet I know you do not mourn as those that have no hope. May the dear Lord give you a reconciling spirit that you may feel to say, God's will be done. We have many hard places to pass through here in this low ground of sin and sorrow. Oft times I feel maybe I am deceived and am not one of the Lord's people, but when I hear the many testimonies of the sheep I take courage that I am as they are. We must all have dark seasons for if we should always be rejoicing how could we understand anything of the sufferings of our blessed Saviour while he was here in this world. It is necessary that we suffer that we may know and be in fellowship with our kindred in Christ. No chastisement seemeth good for the moment, but in the end it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness. So as much as in us is we should be patient in our afflictions and tribulations, and be submissive to God's ways and as Job says, "though he slay me yet will I trust in him."

May the dear Lord uphold you and give you courage by the way: we know you will miss your dear father's counsel yet the God of all Grace is able to counsel you more than any mortal man could do. Love to all the household of faith.

MINNIE C. JAMESON

HONEY GROVE, PA.

Dear Editor:—

I received my Signs of the Times this evening and see we have a new Publisher. I have taken the paper for fifty-five years; it is all my comfort and I would be lost without it. Forty-nine years ago I united with the church and was baptized by dear old Elder Grafton. I felt five years ago I could not take the paper but the Publisher told me as I had taken it that long I was entitled to it still and he sent me every number. It is worse now as everything is so high in price. I am eighty-one years old and not able to do much. The Signs is all the preaching I have now. After Elder Mellott we had no preacher but Elder Lefferts and Elder Topping came to us and I felt God was good to us. I am sorry for our former Publisher in his trouble with his eyes.

IDA M. HART

CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED BY MR. GILBERT BEEBE PRIOR TO JANUARY, 1942, TO SEND THE SIGNS TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE SIGNS.

Walter Harrington, Halcotville, N. Y., $1; Mae Thomas, Petersburg, Ill., $25; Mrs. L. F. Bishop, Roanoke, Va., $1; Middletown and Walkill Church, Middletown, N. Y., $50; L. B. Parker, Murray, Ky., $1; Mrs. David Farnie, Rochester, N. Y., $1; Mrs. E. J. Bolton, Omaha, Neb., $1; A. Friend, Johnson City, N. Y., 75c; John Ruston, Akron, Ohio, $1; Lena Langford, Ft. Stockton, Texas, $1; Marcella Wickham, Altoona, Pa., $1.50; Mrs. M. J. Culpepper, Stockdale, Texas, $1; A. J. Dogett, Frisco City, Ala., 25c; Mrs. F. S. Petty, Winnsboro, Texas, $1; Mrs. J. A. Levins, South Norfolk, Va., $1.

EDITORIAL

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ELDER R. LESTER DODSON
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41 Addison Avenue Rutherford, N. J.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
ELDER GEORGE RUSTON - - - Dutton, Ontario
ELDER CHARLES W. VAUGHN - Hopewell, N. J.
ELDER DAVID V. SPANGLER - - - Danville, Va.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and remittances made payable to,
SIGNS OF THE TIMES
P.O. Box No. 70
Rutherford, N. J.

Psalm VII. 5
"Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not."

This is the first day of a New Year in which we attempt to write for the February number of the SIGNS. We have felt very keenly the trial that has come upon our late publisher of the SIGNS, and are sorry indeed that he has been forced to relinquish what one might call his life's work. We are thankful that there are others who have a willing mind to face the arduous task which our dear friend, Mr. Gilbert Beebe, has had to lay down. The SIGNS is needed, especially by those who are so placed that they cannot hear the truth preached. To such their regular appearance each month is awaited eagerly, and they are often a source of encouragement to them, coming, as we believe, like a word in season to them that are weary. We would take this opportunity to wish the editor and publisher success in this labour of love, and ask that the many, who in the past have loved the SIGNS, will rally to its cause, to aid in its prosperous course, and, if possible, increase its circulation.

War having been forced upon the United States, as it was upon Canada, we would earnestly desire that the SIGNS might become a medium of a fuller and more spiritual expression of the exercise and travel of the Lord's people. We do not doubt that, with many of our readers under this awful cloud of war, there is, on the one hand, a national pride, mingled with an appreciation of what our country has meant to us, bringing into being a patriotic determination to do our part in upholding our national honour and meeting with every means in our power the desperate effort of a wicked foe. On the other hand, there is a constant fearfulness of what this means to the hearths and homes of the millions affected. The lovely youth of our land, whose lot it is to meet the foe, have most of them a clear vision of what faces them, yet so noble is their character, they do not hesitate to place themselves between us and our foes. This may fill us with a sense of pride in our youth, also thankfulness that privileges enjoyed by them through living in democratic countries in a time of peace and prosperity, have not softened them and made them entirely unfit for such a time as this. There are among them those who will go down as the bravest of the brave. What are our feelings in all this?

As God's professed people we know that this awful cloud is of His appointment, and that He hath a purpose in it.

This universal beating of plowshares into swords and pruninghooks into spears may be in His purpose the bringing-in of a better day. His judgments are now manifest in the earth, have been for almost three long years. As a prelude to a better day Isaiah saith, "And he shall judge among the nations and shall rebuke many people." Isaiah II:4. Micah, referring to the same, and using almost the same words, saith in Micah IV:3. "And He shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." His judgments are in the earth; men have been lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. They have been satisfied to do what they pleased. The wise man saith, "All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the Lord weigheth the spirits." This self-pleasing is because we are in the flesh and mind the things of the flesh.

Carnality has had much to do with many in the easy times through which we have been passing. As a result, the ways of Zion have mourned, and few have had any desire to attend her solemn feasts. Causes of truth have in some places died out, and in other places there is but faint evidence of life, for men have been satisfied with themselves, their ways have been clean in their own eyes. The spirit of criticism has been very prevalent on all sides, why should it not? seeing that the brethren have been judges of one another, with a spirit of "Stand by thyself, for I am holier than thou." "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned everyone to his OWN WAY." We do not wish to point the finger at anyone, we have all sinned, none can wipe his hand over his mouth, and say, I have done nothing amiss. With the terrible clouds hanging over us, with little or no knowledge of what is in store for any of us, yet fearful that the freedom we have enjoyed as citizens is at stake, and what is far more serious, if we only realize it, the freedom to worship as we wish, which our forefathers died to establish. To those who are fully satisfied with themselves, our words will seem vain, for being used to a sound that lulls to sleep, the sleep of carnal security, they may feel that there is no need for alarm. Such will no doubt make light of our message. Job saith, "He that is ready to slip with his feet is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease." Job XII:5.

Now we come to our subject. "Hold up my goings in thy paths." We have for a long time felt thankful that our churches had articles of faith, and that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES had certain foundation truths for which it was determined to contend. Truths in which our fathers walked, and found that in the enjoyment of them, they had the light of God's countenance. Let us remember that the day is too far spent now in the twentieth century, for men to bring forth what they may think is new light on the Word, which would upset the foundational truths on which the church was established. Not that we believe in any person accepting the articles of faith in lieu of the Spirit's work and

witness, but we believe that the Spirit teacheth according to the Word of God. God's absolute sovereignty is proved abundantly in the Scripture, as is every article of faith to which the church of God has in days past subscribed, and in which she has walked. There has been much contention of late, in some quarters, that certain men or churches have departed from some of the articles, and there have been those, who, for various reasons, have been very forward to proclaim that even the SIGNS has departed from its original prospectus. Let such men examine themselves and see if they be in the faith. We believe that our articles are founded on the Word of God, and that we should strive as a people and as individuals to walk therein.

Have we proved that do all we can, THAT WE CAN NOTHING DO? "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." Here then we see a needs-be for such troubles that the Lord sends, and this war is one of the things He has sent to blast our fair designs, and to humble us at His feet. It is He only that can hold up our goings in His paths, without Him we can do nothing. We need the same God who upholdeth all things by the Word of His power, to uphold us, who are but worms of the dust.

"In Thy law's paths make me to go,
For I delight therein;
My heart unto Thy testimonies,
And not to greed, incline."

Yes, it is a delight to walk in His paths, after He has humbled us in the dust of self-abasement. When we have been found "out of the way", we are more like Jacob, who said "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been." So much failure through it all, that it looks just like the work of man. Our text says, "Hold up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." The Psalmist is fearful of slipping himself, and he knows it is God alone who can put his foot on the Rock, and, by His amazing grace, has enabled him to stand, while God has withheld His grace from others, and they have slipped. In meditating upon this, he says, "But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well-nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no bands in their death, but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued like other men. Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment." Psalm LXXIII: 2-6. "Surely Thou didst set them in slippery places." Psalm LXXIII: 18. Salvation is of the Lord, and we cannot take God's glory to ourselves.

It is in the Lord's gracious dealings with our souls that we find trouble and sorrow, and we are enabled, by His Spirit, to call upon His name, and our confession is that "I was brought low, and He helped me." We can then say, "Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling." It was when Israel could say, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth," that it was said to her, "He

will not suffer thy foot to be moved." We know that Zion shall never be moved, and that he that trusteth in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion. It therefore becomes us to look for God's upholding. The servant of God needs to look for it, and here we desire to be understood aright.

It is good to have the approval of the saints, and brethren should tell their minister when his testimony has been a help and comfort to them, but it is folly, that should be reproved, when ministers go out of their way, in an unseemly manner, soliciting approval. Our intention, in referring, earlier in this article, to criticism of churches or of the SIGNS, is not that we would desire to stop criticism, God forbid. Criticism is just what we need. The reason for the existence of the SIGNS is to cultivate among us a healthy and helpful expression of what we do not approve, and what, according to the Word of God, can be, and is, approved among us. Let it be done IN LOVE with a desire for the upbuilding of Zion in her most holy faith, not a trying to establish factions, which would divide, and add to the shades and stripes of the many, who, throughout this continent, still cling to the name of Old School or Primitive Baptist. Let us desire not to minister to, or to build up, any faction, but to seek God's approval, as those who must give an account unto Him. Let the peace and the health of the flock speak for the care they are given.

It is a sad condition in the church when brethren have their favourites, when brethren can only "hear" this or that preacher. Such will be a snare to the servant of God from which only the Lord will be able to deliver his feet. There is a needs-be for prayer, and prayer is the vital breath of a servant of God. Hold up my goings, Lord, in thy paths, hold me up in the doctrine, for does not Paul say, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." The Lord upheld Job's goings when everything seemed to be against him, and he was able to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. "Yes, if He uphold your goings in His paths, you will find that "when thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

This war has given us terrible trouble and grief. It has gone where God sent it. It began, and over-ran one country and then another, and those who seemed the strongest to stop it, collapsed before it, and Britain's army seemed an easy prey. God helped Britain, and several hundred thousand were saved at Dunkirk. He kept the enemy from invading and crushing Britain, and later turned the hordes upon Russia, and Britain was spared, for a time at least. Yes, God is over it all.

Nothing but God could have made a united people of the United States, and rebelling against this will not change it. These tribulations are appointed, and it is in these things that we are MORE THAN CONQUERORS, for He it is that

will uphold our goings in His paths. The doctrine will be more of a delight to us as we tread the furnace. The many and varied trials that await our readers will give new life to prayer, will cause them to cry, "Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe." They will make you steadfast, so that your foot will not slip, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. G. R.

UNITY

New creatures, such as those we feel to be addressing, have dual personalities, or two natures. They have been born (1) of the flesh and (2) of the Spirit, or in the language of the apostle Peter, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." I Peter 1:23. We, therefore, propose to deal with the subject of "unity" from two points of view—natural and spiritual. We are told in God's word that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them," and the reason why he cannot know them is "because they are spiritually discerned." Unity in the natural realm of things, however, is not only frequently desirable but also vitally necessary. It is a lovely sight, for instance, to see families dwelling together in unity, but this is found only where toleration and consideration is manifested one toward another. These things sometimes prevail sufficiently among families which have branched out and developed into the second, third, fourth and in rare cases, fifth generations, by their coming together in reunions, thus renewing their regard and esteem for one another. On the other hand, it is very sad to find, as occasionally we do, even small families who cannot live together without continual strife and dissensions. The Savior said, "Every city or house divided against itself shall not stand." The home is often referred to as the foundation of civilization. How important it is then to preserve peace and harmony around the hearthstone. To carry this farther, the time has come when not only should *unity* be maintained throughout the nation, but that there must be a unity of nations whose fundamental principles are essentially the same. For two or three years, some of us were greatly disturbed because of disunity in our land and country. There were "crackpots" who vociferously broadcasted their opinions and there were factions and groups who were either motivated by selfish aims and ulterior purposes, or who because of their hatred of certain individuals and principles, worked under cover and in the dark against our best interests, but we are glad to say that a quietous has been put upon all such now. One of the enemies' most effective weapons was termed the "Fifth Columnists," whose purpose was to undermine the morale of the people by working from within, thus dividing and putting them at variance among themselves. It took only a few hours for the little Brown Bombers at Pearl Harbor, to awaken a slumbering people and unite and solidify them as nothing else could. Sometimes a dose of severe medicine is good for the patient.

Wisdom now dictates that this unity and solidity should be so extended as to embrace all of those nations and peoples whose aims and hopes are one. To this end we have recently witnessed one of the most outstanding, epoch history-making events of all time in the coming to this country for consultation and planning with our own President, the famous Prime Minister of Great Britain, Winston Churchill. His masterful presentation of the needs of the hour both thrilled and electrified both Houses of our Congress, who had joined together to listen to his great message. His very being (having been born of a British father and an American mother) symbolized the union which is so necessary at this time of America and England, along with the other allied nations, in their struggle for a righteous cause. It is imperative that their commands be unified for one purpose, in order to defeat and conquer their common enemy wherever he may be found. And we should be deeply thankful to God for having given us in these distressing times leaders who fear and look to Him for guidance and help. One of our Jewish friends recently remarked to us regarding the frequency in which men of great prominence now implore the guidance and help of God. The close of Mr. Churchill's address is here quoted, as it gives us an insight to the secret yearnings of his innermost soul and at the same time expresses his faith in that God who never fails his people, and we believe it will be reassuring to our readers: "If you will allow me to use other language I will say that he must indeed have a blind soul who cannot see that some great purpose and design is being worked out here below, of which we have the honor to be the faithful servants. It is not given to us to peer into the mysteries of the future. Still I avow my hope and faith, sure and inviolate, that in the days to come the British and the American people will for their own safety and for the good of all walk together in majesty, in justice and in peace." Blessed, indeed, is the man or people whose trust the Lord is.

Some may be saying that we have gone far afield in dealing with the unity of God's people, but our answer to that is that when Jesus was here in the flesh he repeatedly resorted to the things of nature to illustrate and emphasize the lessons which he taught, and we cannot be wrong in following his example. All of that which has gone before has a bearing upon what we now want to come to. We have before us a letter from a good brother and Elder in which he is bemoaning the sad state of Zion. To quote him, he says, "It seems that the church is facing her Gethsemane at this time by foes within and without. One thing I have noticed is that the foes within are more bitter than those without." From this we would judge that there is a need for unity among Old School Baptists, and if we are not terribly deceived in ourself, one of the main and most important purposes of all for which we are laboring and for which we wish to rededicate the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as long as we have anything to do with it, is for the unification and the edification of our beloved brethren and, finally, for

the glorification of our God. Many of those things which have been referred to in the first part of this article are types of the condition of our people and of their need to be aroused and made to earnestly seek help and guidance at the hand of God. Faith must needs be exercised, otherwise it will be thrown in the discard, and we believe that the Lord will see to it that some of us at least will be made to look to Him.

We feel that there is a diversity of gifts in the church, among whom there are various and often opposing opinions and views held, but in the final analysis, they are all for the edifying of the body of Christ. No one individual gift has been supplied with all knowledge and understanding of spiritual things. There is one body, but many members, and no one member can do without the rest, neither should any one member, however important he may appear to be, lord it over God's heritage. They all need each other. The eye cannot say to the hand or the foot, I have no need of thee. While here in the flesh (and we certainly have enough to keep us reminded of the fact that we are still in the flesh) we need to exercise patience, forbearance, longsuffering, forgiveness, meekness, etc., towards those of like precious faith. Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John 13:35. And how can it truly be said that a man loveth God, whom he hath not seen, if he love not his brother, whom he hath seen? The Lord who is just and holy and of too pure eyes than even to look upon sin, designed a plan through his Son, our Lord a Savior Jesus Christ, by which he could say to those who in themselves are vile and corrupt, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isa. 1:18. If His love be shed abroad in our hearts, should we not be able to reason together, without falling out by the way. We honestly feel that the doctrine that, Salvation is of the Lord, that it is by grace we are saved through faith; and that not of ourselves: it is gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast, is that which has distinguished our people from every other people on the face of the earth, more than anything else. Paul in writing to Titus said, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." And if these things be in us and abound, we are confident that they will make us that we shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of the things of our Lord Jesus. The flesh will of necessity have to be crucified and kept under, which can only be done through the workings of God's Holy Spirit, and as much as in us is, let us keep before us that shining example of all time, how

Jesus the great, the mighty God,
A man of grief became;
In paths of meekness here he trod,
And bore the sinners shame.

And then,
O may his meekness be my guide,
The pattern I pursue;
How can I bear revenge or pride,
With Jesus in my view?

We earnestly hope that our good brethren will labor in love for the unity and peace of Zion, remembering the words of the Psalmist, where he said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." In the spiritual realm there is an inexhaustible field, which no man nor group of men can fully explore. There are so many wonderful things to admire, and so many good things which we are agreed upon to talk and write about, without picking flaws and finding fault with what our brother is saying, that we often feel like reminding the brethren of what Abraham said to Lot: "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; and if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left." Gen. 13:8. We are by no means advocating a compromise with the enemies of truth, but we are strongly advocating that in the vineyard of our Lord there is room, in abundance, for the various gifts in the church to go their own way and preach the preaching that is bidden them, remembering at all times that while there is no two gifts exactly alike, they each and every one have their proper place in the mysterious plan of our God.

The word "unity" came into our mind and we felt to offer some thoughts upon it for the consideration of those who may read, earnestly desiring, we hope, that their pure minds may be stirred up by way of remembrance in the way which the Lord hath led them to comprehend the unity of the Trinity, that although he is Triune, or Three, nevertheless that He is One, indivisible, and that in Him is light, and no darkness at all, blessed for evermore.

R. L. D.

ASSOCIATION MINUTES

In the past, Mr. Gilbert Beebe has printed the minutes for quite a number of Associations. We regret that we shall be unable to continue this practice, but we are going to have all that we can do to look after publishing the SIGNS. We would, therefore, kindly ask that Moderators and Association Clerks take note of this and arrange to have their minutes printed elsewhere. We shall be glad, of course, to publish Circular and Corresponding letters of Associations, and hope the brethren will not hesitate to send them to us.

In the meantime, we will greatly appreciate it if the brethren will be good enough to send a copy of their latest minutes to "SIGNS OF THE TIMES," P. O. Box 70, Rutherford, N. J.

R. L. D.

MARRIAGES

At Central Bridge, N. Y., Dec. 24th, 1941, by Elder Arnold H. Bellows, William Schermerhorn of Canajoharie, N. Y., and Miss Barbara Stevens of Central Bridge, N. Y. Mr. and Mrs. Schermerhorn will reside at Canajoharie, N. Y.

OBITUARIES

Our beloved friend, WILLIAM S. MARINER, died October 12, 1940, at the home of his son, George, of Greenbackville, Va., aged 90 years, 3 months and 13 days. Mr. Mariner never united with the church, but was a firm believer in Christ and the doctrine of God our Savior. It was his joy to attend the services of the church wherever he was on meeting day. A number of years ago he lost his wife who was also a believer and a faithful companion. Since that time he had made his home with his children who were delighted to have him. He was indeed "a grand old man." The writer had known him almost fifty years and was deeply attached to him. The funeral was held from the home of his son, George, and was largely attended. The service was conducted by the writer and interment was in the family plot in the cemetery near New Church, Va. He is survived by the following children: C. E. Mariner, Wilmington, Del.; A. N. Mariner, New Church, Va.; G. F. Mariner, Greenbackville, Va.; Mrs. Ida Pilchard, Stockton, Md., and Mrs. J. A. Levins, Norfolk, Va., who miss their devoted father. Several of the children living near attend our meetings at Snow Hill, Md. By request.

— ALSO —

Our sister in Christ, MRS. EFFIE GIVAN, of Salisbury, Md., departed this life October 25, 1941. She was born Sept. 12, 1891 making her stay on earth 50 years. She was a daughter of Charles F. and Rosa Gordy. May 1, 1912 she was married to Ira D. Givan, one son was born to them. The late Elder T. M. Poulson performed the marriage ceremony. On Nov. 26, 1916, she was baptized by the late Elder J. C. Mellott in the fellowship of the Nassawango church near Salisbury, Md. She was a devoted member to the end of her life. For many years she was clerk of the church, in which office she was faithful. She is survived by her husband and son Charles, father, mother, two brothers and one sister: Prof. Burton Gordy, Ann Arbor, Mich.; Herman Gordy and Mrs. Laurena Adkins, Salisbury, Md., also several nieces and nephews.

H. C. KER.

MRS. MARY J. SMITH passed away at her home in Newcastle, Okla. Nov. 27, 1938 in her 79th year. She was born in Tennessee in 1860 and moved to Arkansas at the age of 6 years. In 1878 she was married to Milton Smith who predeceased her. To this union was born seven children: C. T. Smith, Wolf, Okla.; Brittie Cardle, Orlando, Okla.; Rhoda Bean, J. H. Smith, Nancy Miller and M. M. Smith of New Castle, Okla. Gracie Thomas of Newcastle, Okla., died on March 10, 1936.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder W. P. Snider, Okemah, Okla. and Elder Green, Atlas, Okla. on Nov. 29. A large crowd of relatives and friends gathered to pay their last respects. She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for 55 years and always met with them when possible. A kind wife and loving mother. May God reconcile her children with the thought that their loss is her eternal gain. We feel she is resting in the Lord.

HER CHILDREN.

JACOB PERKINS died August 30, 1941, making his stay on earth about 73 years. He was born in Graves County, Kentucky, son of the late Jacob and Rhodie S. Perkins. He first married Dollie Skaggs and to this union were born two children. Mrs. Odessa Fisher, Paducah, Ky. is still living. His second marriage was to Mrs. Ella Wren and to this union was born one son and six daughters. He was a strong believer in the Primitive Baptist Doctrine and his great pleasure was to talk on the scriptures and tell what he hoped the Lord had done for him. He felt his unworthiness so keenly he never asked for a home in the church. The morning of his death, which came suddenly, he spent reading the scriptures. It had been his desire that when his time came to go he might not linger. He was laid to rest in Highland Cemetery, Mayfield, Ky. to sleep that peaceful night of rest until Christ shall come again without sin unto salvation to call his children from the tomb in his own likeness.

For his widow, our Aunt Ella, and the heartbroken children, we desire their reconciliation to God's will and feel that their loss is his eternal gain. The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved family and friends. May God comfort all that mourn his passing. His nephew,

O. W. PERKINS.

RHODIE FRANCIS ELLIS KERLEY was born Nov. 3, 1854 and departed this life May 15, 1941 making her stay on earth 87 years, 6 months and 12 days. She was united in marriage to the late Elder John William Kerley Feb. 14, 1872. To this union were born 7 children. One died in infancy and the following six surviving. Mrs. Lee White and P. L. Kerley, Memphis, Tenn., Mrs. Lane Vest and Mrs. Susie Chandler, Atlanta, Ga., Mrs. Martha Cox and J. H. Kerley, Lauderdale Co., Tenn.

Sister Kerley and her husband united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Macedonia, Lauderdale Co., Tenn. Sept. 25, 1885 and were baptized by the late Elder H. W. Thomas. She was a faithful member of her church and a true and loving companion and mother. It was her chief delight to entertain the Baptists in her home.

The writer and Elder R. M. Brown conducted the funeral service and tried to comfort her children and friends. Her mortal remains were laid by the side of her husband to await that summons from on high. May God bless her children and give them that faith in Him in which she died.

O. W. PERKINS.

DEACON JAMES JEFFERSON VORIES: was born April 1, 1861 in Henry County, Kentucky; died October 15, 1941, in his 81st year.

He was the son of Evaline and James Vories.

October 17, 1894 he married Miss Lucy Chilton, also of Henry Co. and to this union were born three children, two daughters and one son. Mrs. Hubart Brown of Cincinnati, Ohio, Miss Evalyn of LaGrange, Ky. and Harry of Louisville, the widow and one brother, Emmett Vories, in the Masonic Home at Shelbyville, Ky. are left to mourn.

Bro. Jeff, as we all called him, was a farmer all his life, both in Henry County, where he and Sister Vories started out, and in Oldham Co., where he died, was a good neighbor, loved by all that knew him, and it was often said there was only one Jeff Vories.

Early in the year of 1900 he received a hope in the Savior, and was received in fellowship of the Cane Run Old School Baptist Church. He was baptized by the late Elder P. W. Sawin, then the pastor, and all his life was spent in the same church, a faithful brother. Shortly after uniting with the church, he was ordained one of her deacons, which office he filled to the satisfaction of the brethren as long as he lived. Our brother was a strong predestinarian, and had the courage to say to all that asked about it, this is what makes the promise sweet, one can rely upon it. It is sure, for God has declared it before the world was made, and there is nothing impossible with him.

It has been my lot to have been his pastor for the last twenty years and during that time we have had many visits together. His wife, Sister Vories, was also a member of the same church, and it can be truly said, it was an Old Baptist home. During his last sickness he suffered much, and would ask the Lord to be merciful to me, a sinner, and O Lord, teach me how to pray. The appointed time was come, and he fell in sleep like a sheaf of wheat fully ripe. He believed in God. We laid him to rest in the cemetery nearby to await the call of the Saviour in the resurrection. Dear Lord, reconcile the family and the church and give us strength to carry on, and to Thee be all the glory.

The text used: "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."

GEO. L. WEAVER.

ELDER DELLA LANFRIED SMITH was born June 24, 1886 at Belgrove, Jackson Co., W. Va. and died May 7, 1941 at the Starcher Hospital, Ripley, W. Va., aged 54 years, 10 months and 13 days. Son of John and Elizabeth Smith he was of a family of 12 children, seven boys and five girls. Three brothers, one sister and his mother preceded him in death. He was married to Lucy Mae Siders, July 23, 1910 by Elder A. H. Hamon. To their union were born eight children, five boys and three girls. Clessie died in infancy. Ray, Coy, Mildred and Lenore are at home, Stinson at Advent, W. Va. Stanton, Mt. Vernon, Ohio and Quentin, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. He was united with the Elium Primitive Baptist Church in 1918, later moved his membership to the Hopewell Church. He was baptized by Elder J. W. McClanahan and liberated to preach July 20, 1918. Ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry in September, 1918.

MEETINGS

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.
Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 A.M. 1:30 P. M.
To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A. M.
ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A. M. 2 P. M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists is now settled in her new church-house, at 4614 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas, where she holds her regular monthly services on each first Sunday at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. Preaching services also on each third Sunday by Elder, C. B. Teague, and each second Sunday by brother O. C. Lee, at 11 o'clock a. m. A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. R. HARDY, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Eligin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

VOL. 110 RUTHERFORD, N. J., MARCH, 1942 NO. 3

CORRESPONDENCE

FAITH

The subject of this undertaking is of vital necessity to the child of God, and without which it is impossible to please God. It is the fruit producing element by which the church is identified.

The literal definition of any word or group of words means nothing in comparison with the realistic definition. In other words, that which the child of God experiences for himself cannot even be classed with what is given by any other source because it is far superior.

The poor child of God, in his standing in Adam, has not faith; therefore, it is impossible for him to please God. Yet he does not know that he has not faith until God deals with him. The first knowledge of the lack of faith is shocking. The sinner can only see the displeasure of God and that because of this displeasure he must surely be cut off and die in his sins. He does not know that God does not look upon him save through his son, Jesus Christ. He does not know that all he can see is the justice of God unto condemnation. That is how I first saw Him, it was in the sense of strict justice. By the light of God's counsel we see that we have no faith, and, therefore, we are lost and cannot come before God acceptably. God does not accept anything which is not perfect, and nothing can be perfect except that which he has perfected.

Our continual cry begins to go out from this condition as Job cried: "How should man be just with God." Paul answers that question in Romans 5:1. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord, Jesus Christ." Here comes that vital, essential part again, *faith*. It is the sum and substance of our hope, it is our peace with God. Without it we cannot be just with God, yet, how do we obtain it? Having this first knowledge that we are dead and separated from God, without faith, without hope, and on top of that find that by all our efforts we cannot obtain the one pass-key into the favor of God, we are in a depraved, deplorable and awful state.

Now comes the most particular part of the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God, special atonement manifested to us poor sinners. God has ever been pleased with his order of dealing with his children, and even before the world began, He, by his own wisdom, ordered his work and designated in and to himself the times and seasons of his different operations in regard to his people. God has a specific time for his children to

remain by nature as others; he has a set time to arouse them to the knowledge, or to impart to them, that the very thing necessary to establish them in peace with him they have not. We do not know what he has purposed at this particular time. We do not know that he must be satisfied in every particular, and that everything necessary for that satisfaction he has treasured in his dear Son, but we do know by sad experience that, "we cannot satisfy the law, nor aid, nor comfort from it draw", nor have we the means of exercising in that perfect obedience which the justice of God demands, and so in order for us to come unto God, He gave his Son, Jesus Christ which was verily God and verily man. He was God manifested in the flesh; he was the means of divinity communing with humanity. In him God gave us every necessary thing to fit and prepare us to come before his face. God qualified Jesus to render perfect obedience to him for us, and to do his will which fallen man could not do. This is faith, our faith, that Jesus Christ came into the world, and did the will of him that sent him for us, and doing for us, that which the perfect law of God demanded of us, that we were not able to do. Behold the mercy of God in that he has imputed what Christ did to our account. His faithfulness in doing the will of our Heavenly Father is what today is the faith of God's elect people. Beside this we have no faith, yet God has allowed us to lay hold upon this faith through Jesus Christ. God brings us in many ways to know that we have no surety in ourselves, and no means of justification, and the more we see of the weakness of the arm of flesh, and powers of man, the more we realize our need of the means by which the people of God walk—*faith*.

The woman with the issue of blood had spent all she had and instead of getting better was growing worse when the most precious thing in her whole life occurred. She, hearing of Jesus, ("Faith cometh by hearing") said "If I may but touch the hem of His garment I shall be whole." Faith is that living substance which cannot be hid, it is what exercises us to act. It is productive in righteousness, and it comes by hearing, not by the ears, but by the EAR. The works of faith are not seen by the eyes, but by the EYE, and in sum and substance Faith is God's gift to a poor helpless people through his son and his way (or one of his ways) of manifesting his sovereign power over all things.

We cannot begin to mention all the products of faith because, if we knew them, the length of this article would be too great, but in our experience it is the works of faith that are all that is of any import. We cannot pray, sing, preach, hear nor engage in any service of God without faith. We are all saved by it, justified by it, walk by it, and die in it, yet we cannot get it but we do receive it from God. It is a gift because Jesus lived that perfect faithful life for the whole family, and by his perfect obedience we are freely justified in the sight of God. We are only faithful in Christ and, speaking for myself, I am just as unable to perform or render obedience to the divine and holy law of God as I have ever been in my life. If being born again

and possessing faith gives one the ability to go ahead and act as he feels that perfection demands, I am not born again, nor do I possess faith, but if it gives one the will to do good and act perfect and yet he, himself, cannot find how to perform, then I have a hope that I have been dealt with of God.

Faith in God, I feel is the very seed of righteous action in the lives of men and women, yet he who is so blessed does not say, I have performed, but the more evidence we see in our brother of the works of faith in him, the more humbleness we see in him, and the less boasting on his part. Faith is, to my mind, clearly shown or depicted in the lion whom Sampson slew. The swarm of bees and the honey well represent the work of faith in a dead sinner's heart, and the sweet product of that work. It is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. It is that thing which I feel has prompted many of my good brethren and sisters in the country where I live to administer kind acts to me, and it is faith that causes us to sacrifice one for the other, and it is that principle within us that goes out over many miles, mountains, and streams when we are apart in body to embrace one another in love. It is the strictest tie by which men and women can be bound on earth, and it does not stop there, but it is the principle of the Lord's obedience in us which triumphantly shall bear our spirits unto God, its author, when death comes. It is that blessed principle that has made death less horrible, seeming to God's saints, for when they come to the hour of death by this one great gift and medium they (or we) can by it look across death's chilling tide to the end, or the full realization of the thing we, in this life, have hoped and so longed for—the fullness of salvation and adoption.

Dear reader, in conclusion, I must say that, though we are dependent here in this life, we, who have tasted that God is gracious, are given faith as a means by which to see that the dependence, depravity, weakness, troubles, trials, afflictions, persecutions, wars, rumors of wars, deaths, and every other thing that arises against us and so disturbs us in this life is not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. Yours in hope,

ROY S. SMITH.

Written by ELDER J. C. SIKES
SULPHUR BLUFF, Texas

(*Continued from February issue*)

Paul said, "love is the fulfilling of the law." He also said, "he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law"; and again he said, "and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." From these declarations of holy writ, all shades, grades, and kinds of arminianism fade into thin air. This law was given to manifest man's inability to live up to its requirements. No man who was born a sinner can keep any part of that law in the spirit of it. If it was possible for one to keep or perform the letter of it, he would still be as far from having obeyed the spirit of it, as if he had not kept the letter of it. Nothing but the

unspeakable love of God in the heart of man, moving him, without any thought of gain to himself in any shape, manner, or form could approach anywhere near to spiritual obedience. Paul could not do it. He said, "to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." And again in the same chapter he said, "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin." Jesus said, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Matt. 5:18. And Peter asserted to the brethren assembled in counsel at Jerusalem, that neither they (the apostles and elders which were there) nor their fathers were able to bear the law of Moses, meaning they were not able to live up to its requirements. And the fathers, to whom he referred, when they were gathered at the foot of Mount Sinai, while Moses was at the top of the Mount receiving the law, and heard the voice of the Lord when he gave the law to Moses, "they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: for they could not endure that which was commanded." Heb. 12:19, 20. Out of all these things we certainly learn that no carnal, natural man was ever, in spirit, able to keep any part of that law. If man could have kept it, there would have been no need for Jesus to come and keep it for them. There are many more things that I would like to say on this matter, but for lack of space and time I cannot say them now, but before I turn away from this line of thought let me say that Jesus Christ, as a man only, could not have kept that law. John the Baptist said in John 5:19, "The son can do nothing of himself." And in verse 30 of the same chapter Jesus said, "I can of mine own self do nothing." And in chapter 14:10, he said, "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." And it is said to Christ in Psalms 91:11, 12, "For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." If it was needful that God should put Jesus in the hands of angels to hold him up and prevent him from falling as Adam did, it certainly follows as a self-evident fact, that none of the fallen, sinful sons of the first Adam are able to keep the law. I guess you are wondering in your mind as to what all of the above has to do with the questions you asked me, and the scriptures which you called my attention to. When rightly understood, it has everything to do with them. The above abundantly proves that no fallen son of Adam has ever been able to keep the least of all of God's commandments, and, therefore, none of them are worthy of the least of all his mercies. Unless God is in them and they in him they cannot have a single righteous thought, much less perform a righteous deed. Jesus said he could not, and I am sure there are none able to do what he could not. I am sure from the fact that you, after quoting from the 11th chapter of Romans where it says that Israel, as the natural branches of the olive tree,

were broken off because of unbelief, and also that if they continued not in unbelief they should be grafted in again, etc., and then followed this by asking, "What kind of language is this?" that your mind was somewhat confused over the many ifs in the matter. Here is where men usually flounder. Most people think that this language means that they were able to have believed and thereby prevented their being broken off, and also that it was left to them as to whether they believed and be grafted in again, or continue in belief and never be grafted in again. This is based on two errors. First, it is based on the mistaken idea, that belief is a voluntary act of the mind. The truth is, that belief is an involuntary act of the mind brought about by the force of evidence. When you are convinced from such evidence as you have, that a thing is true, you cannot keep from believing it. On the other hand, it does not matter how much you desire to believe that a certain thing is true, but you cannot believe it unless you think you have evidence that it is true. This is true in natural things. The natural mind must be convinced that a thing is true before he can accept it as the truth. The natural man, which has not been quickened by the spirit of God; or in other words, has not been begotten of God, cannot have a spiritual thought. He only has a natural, carnal mind. Paul said, "the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 1 Cor. 2:14. In Romans 8:7, 8, Paul said, "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Some one is ready to say that Christ said, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." Yes, Christ said that, and that statement is just as true as the one which says, "Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." John 6:47. Those statements are in perfect harmony with each other, and also with all that I have said in the above. It is a scriptural truth, that every one of God's elect will be begotten of God and will believe on his son, Jesus Christ. It is equally true, that all who were left out of God's choice, will die in unbelief and in their sins.

When Paul and Barnabas preached at Antioch, it is said that, "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." All that the Father gave to Christ were designated as sheep. He called them sheep before he died for them. In John 10:11 he said, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep," and in verse 26 he said to those wicked Jews: "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep," and verse 11 shows that they were sheep before he died for them; and he gave his life to save them. Verse 26 shows that they were sheep before they believed, and that none ever believe on him only such as are sheep before they believe. He follows this up by saying, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out

of my hand. My father, which gave them me is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Verses 27, 28, 29. These verses show they were sheep before they heard his voice; and were sheep before they followed him; and were sheep before he gave them eternal life. The above scriptures show that none but his sheep will ever believe on him, and that they cannot believe on him of themselves, no more than Jesus could do anything of himself. He tells us that even the things that he said, he said not of himself, but it was his Father in him that did the work. When Paul commanded the church at Philippi to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling: he added, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." When the disciples said to Jesus, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" Jesus answered and said unto them, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Paul makes it very clear that for man to believe on the son of God, is as great a miracle as the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Paul said in Eph. 1:18, 19, 20 "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, etc."

These scriptures are too plain to be misunderstood by those whose eyes of understanding have been enlightened that they might know them as stated by Paul in the above quotation. Not only is it true that God, by the same miraculous power by which he raised Christ from the dead, works belief in his people, but it is also true, that he by the same power, works in them everything they do that is well pleasing in his sight. Paul said in Heb. 13: 20, 21, "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever, and ever, Amen." Isa. 26:12, reads, "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us." This should forever settle it as a fact that man never does anything good unless it is wrought in him by the Lord himself. Peter said, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God." Here it is positively asserted, that it is by him that his people believe in God. The Jews fell, or were broken off because of unbelief; and yet it is a certain

fact they could not have believed, unless God worked that belief in them, which he did not see fit to do. Forty years after God gave Israel the law from Mount Sinai, Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, "Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land; the great temptations which thine eyes have seen, the signs, and those great miracles: Yet the Lord hath not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day." From this statement of Moses, we cannot fail to see why it was impossible for them to believe.

As I said in the outset, God gave his kingdom with its perfect and holy laws to natural Israel to prove them, and they proved to be entirely unable to keep them. The command had no power to give them the ability to keep it. This was all in God's pre-arranged plan, to prepare the way and his people for a new and better covenant founded upon better promises. See Hebrew 8:6, which says, "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." In Heb. 7:19, Paul said, "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God." If you will now turn back to the 11th chapter of Romans and see how Paul concludes his treatise on that subject you will see that I am correct after saying, "And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them in again." He then continues thus: "For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be graffed into their own olive tree? For I would not brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." This shows that a part of the purpose for which Israel was blinded, was that they might be broken off from the good olive tree, which is the kingdom, that it might be given to the Gentiles till they attain to the fulness which God has ordained for them. Now go back to the 7th and 8th verses of this chapter, and you will find what I have just said is true. Paul said, "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he asketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded (according as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear) unto this day." John asserts that because of this blindness which God gave them, they could not believe. See John 12:36-39 where Jesus said unto them, "While ye have light believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light." John follows this command of Jesus, which he recorded, by saying, "But though he had done so many miracles before them yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, (saying) Lord, who

hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because Esaias said again, He (God) hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted and I should heal them." This certainly proves my statement, that a command does not give the one commanded the ability to obey the command. Neither does it signify that the one commanded has the ability to do the thing which he is commanded to do. The scriptures just quoted certainly prove that. This answers your inquiry, "What kind of language is this?"

We will now turn back to where I left off in Romans 10. After saying that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, he then says, "And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." This shows that it is a fact, fixed and determined, that Israel shall be graffed in again: notwithstanding the language which you inquire about. Let us follow him and see his conclusion of the matter. After quoting, so all Israel shall be saved, etc. he quotes, "For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching election, they are beloved for the father's sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet now have obtained mercy through their unbelief: Even so have these also not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." Then he concludes by exclaiming, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, (decrees) and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him are all things: to whom be glory forever, Amen."

The closing arguments of Paul on this matter show that every turn in the things mentioned in this chapter was fixed in God's purpose for the accomplishment of certain ends. This is seen in many expressions in the chapter. For instance note verses 31, 32, which say, "Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they may also obtain mercy." *That,* in this verse, introduces a clause expressing purpose. Note the expression, even so have these (Jews) *not* believed, *that* through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. First it is stated in verse 28, that the Jews were enemies to the gospel for the Gentiles sake. We certainly know that the Jews did not volunteer to disbelieve for the purpose, on their part, of benefitting the Gentiles, and yet Paul said they were enemies to the gospel for the sake of the Gentiles. The whole of it was in God's purpose. Verse 32 says, "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon

all." It means that God purposed the unbelief of all (Jew and Greek), that each class might be subjects of his mercy. So his purpose runs through the whole thing. Hence, Paul's statement, that of him, and through him, and to him are all things to whom be glory forever. Amen.

I hope, dear brother, you can see that the language that seemed to confuse your mind, does not mean that these matters were left to the volition of sinful men to determine their own course in relation to them, and thereby determine the course of God himself in dealing with them. When you have read this, if you wish to do so, you may send it to Elder R. Lester Dodson, 41 Addison Avenue, Rutherford, N. J. for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES if he thinks it is worthy of space in said paper.

Yours in humble hope through grace,

J. C. SIKES.

73½ Brady St., SAN FRANCISCO, California.

DEAR EDITORS, and I also hope I have the right to say, Brethren in the Lord:

O, I hope I am one of the souls that believe in Jesus, shall so live, and be included in that number I hope he will receive.

"Where dost thou at noontide resort with thy sheep,
To feed on the pastures of love?
Say, why in the valley of death should I weep,
Or alone in the wilderness rove?"

So much of the time I feel so alone in the wilderness, seeking the fold of God, ever seeking to know if I truly am one of his, for in me, my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. I look all around me seeking the Prince of Peace. Even though he hides his smiling face, I trust him for his grace and praise him for all the blessings he has bestowed on me in his own time. If I could feel his dear presence now as I did when I was so low before and after a very serious operation in April 1939. They did not think I would recover but I am still here for his own purpose, feeling better in health, though still under the doctor's medical care, yet not strong enough to keep up my work but God's will be done in all things and that is sufficient unto him from whom all blessings flow. I have longed and also wept over the thought that I wish I could have passed on when I was so near death, but my pass-port was not sealed.

I am so far away from any of the dear Baptists here in California, but was blessed, more than I deserve, with a sweet and most precious meeting in Nov. 1940 with the Baptists at Exeter, Cal. in the good home of brother and sister W. A. Barrett. There were four preachers there and my poor hungry soul did enjoy it so much though I felt unworthy to be among those dear Baptists whom I adore above all others. I, with other Baptists, went to this wonderful meeting with Elder J. L. Sanders and his dear wife and how I praise the Lord for it all. We miss Elder Sanders so much since he has gone back to Alabama. When the Lord's time comes for us to move to other places to live we will go at that time. All things for our good are given: comforts, crosses, staffs or rods, we are Christ's and Christ is God's. If he with-holds it is good also.

"They that in the Lord confide
And shelter in his wounded side,
Shall see the dangers overpast,
Stand every storm and live at last."

I have grieved that I am behind with my subscription and am sending a money-order now. Hope to send more the latter part of the month. I do enjoy the articles in the dear "SIGNS." May the dear Lord in his divine, tender mercy, bless you and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and give grace unto all the household of his faith, the only landmark.

A very unworthy sister if one at all.

MRS. MABEL LINDSEY.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—

I want to write you a few words to say you have my sympathy. Words at these times cannot express what I feel for you, but we have a Comforter and he is ever ready in time of need for I have proven him such. Elder Dodson I have lost father, mother, sisters and brother, but it does not compare to the loss of your companion, a part of yourself, but we know it is but for a short time when we too will have crossed to that eternal shore where sorrow and sighing will flee away and then we shall obtain joy and gladness. A year, the fourth of this month, and it has been long and lonesome, but the Lord has been good to me for one so sinful. I never feel to question the whys and wherefores of this life.

"Not Gabriel asks the reason why,
Nor God the reason gives;
Nor dares the favorite angel pry
Between the folded leaves.

My God, I would not long to see
My fate with curious eyes,
What gloomy lines are writ for me
Or what bright scenes may rise.

In thy fair book of life and grace,
Oh may I find my name
Recorded in some humble place,
Beneath my Lord the Lamb."

I always loved to read the pieces your father wrote for the SIGNS. They went to my heart and were comforting. May God comfort you and supply you with strength daily as needed, and when at the throne of grace remember this poor sinner.

Love and fellowship,

RACHEL POTTER.

DEAR BRETHREN—EDITORS:—

It was in the year 1886 when I first read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES with, as I hope, love and understanding of what the paper contained and set forth as the Truth. At that time, and many times since, the desire to write a letter to the SIGNS has been uppermost in my mind. But first, a little about my present condition. Something over three years ago I suffered a stroke of paralysis of my right side. Since then I have been confined to my bed. At the time of my affliction I was made to know, in part, both the justice and mercy of God.

This may be rather fragmentary as I must lie on my back in bed and write with my left hand. But that is not my greatest obstacle—the knowledge within that I am vile and sinful, unfit and unworthy even to think of those who I feel sure are God's dear children.

I have been made to feel it was a gracious blessing prepared of the Lord when I was afflicted. At that time I was made very weak. Very suddenly something as

plain as the spoken voice gave the inward knowledge that I would not die but live and be made glad to write this long delayed letter. "Thy people shall be made willing in the day of my power." But for over three years I have continued to be willfully and knowingly stubborn in a studied resistance against God. Like Job, I have longed that God might blot me out, and wished many times that I might die and not live. "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it?" Jeremiah wrote those words through the power of the holy spirit. I am glad he was moved to write them. They give me hope, for I know they are true words. Could I know it but by the power of the holy spirit? Like Paul, I can truly say, "for in me (that is, in the flesh) there is no good thing." Again Paul says, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" That seems to be a question and answer in the same sentence and applies as though written directly to me. How shall I escape this great salvation, this great blessing, only by writing to the SIGNS, its readers and many writers of hope-inspiring letters.

But what shall I write except about those things that vitally have to do with all the children of God? All are guilty sinners justly condemned before God, but only the holy spirit can make them know it. They become more and more aware of this fact as they are "led about and instructed". In this way, too, we learn that Jesus is our only hope of salvation from the awful condemnation of a just and holy God until we come to where Peter was when he could say with confidence, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." After the Lord has found us in a "desert land and in a waste, howling wilderness" we sometimes, in our desperation, are made to "cry by reason of our affliction", but always we find Jesus an ever-present help in time of need. At such times we find David saying, "if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there".

Moses was made to sojourn at the back side of the desert forty years, away from his own people. Jonah went down to the bottom of the mountains, "Out of the belly of hell, cried I. And thou heard'st me". Jonah was one of God's holy temples and must be preserved. These are some of the things, "written aforetime for our learning that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope".

I spend much time in meditation and thought with these holy men of old. They were holy men because the Holy Ghost moved them to write the truth about man's sinfulness, his inability to save himself, and God's infinite power, mercy and love. We who hope we are the Lord's portion, his inheritance, his spiritual Israel, are still being led about and instructed; still made to suffer afflictions, and when the burden becomes so great they always remember the Lord in his temple within from whence their cry for deliverance must come. It is here that the Lord's people are made to "suck honey out of the rock and oil out of the flinty rock".

I desire to write about the new birth, something of which I always have been very reticent of speaking. Jesus said un-

to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God". Nothing more positive and decisive can be said, nor is there a higher authority. I wish to write, briefly as I can, about what I have hoped was my own vital interest in the new birth.

I was 19 years old when I decided I ought to "get religion", as everyone termed it in my home community of northwest Ohio. I had thoughts and wonderings about God when I was only eight or ten years old. I had great delight in watching the storm clouds with no fear. When I became older I thought religion was easy. I jested with a friend that as I had better grades in school than he did, it should be easier for me. How utterly helpless is man to know God. After going to an old-fashioned revival, I found my troubles had only begun. Instead of being a "pretty good boy", as my friends thought, the Lord showed me I was a poor, helpless and hopeless sinner. I knew and felt I was doomed for destruction. For the following eight months no words can tell what I was made to endure. The last day I was in this hopeless and almost physically helpless condition I was cultivating corn, about ten o'clock one morning. Instantly there was a change in me and in everything about me. A bright but soft, mellow light was all about and lingered a short time. Stopping the team and removing the lines from about me, I stepped back one step to be in the exact spot where I first knew of this wonderful change. My first thought and desire was to feel again just how the great load had gone; for now I was so light and free. For the first time that morning I was conscious of the sunshine or the nearby birds singing. But above all else, I knew this was the Lord's work. It was this knowledge alone that has caused the light to shine out of such gross darkness. It was the light of His presence that filled me with such peace, joy and happiness. The sunshine, the trees, the waving corn were all showing forth praises to the Lord.

I write these things with much hesitation, but if I have, as I hope, the grace of God in my heart, then my experience as one of those who are the Lord's portion, must begin when the spirit of Jesus appeared to me and removed that awful load, never to return; and left in its stead joy, peace and a hope in his mercy. But if one of the Lord's people, I have been one of the "foolish and unwise". About three years after I received a hope, I became a member of the Old School Baptist church here in Missouri, but much of the time has been spent in moving up and down the land trying to establish a home for my family. In that way I tried to forsake the sure mercies of a covenant-keeping God.

How often I have read good letters in the SIGNS with tears and desires to write in consideration of those letters, thus to provoke one another unto love and good works; but I willfully sinned by neglecting to do according to the law of God, for He promised to "put His law in their inward parts and write it in their mind". He is also faithful in the judgment of His people. God's rod is very manifest in my affliction, as through His power

all the strongholds of opposition are torn down (which is the flesh and all its works). We know this only when His staff, which is the spirit of God, reveals it to us. Then we are made to say with David, "thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me". When a table is prepared for us then we can count our afflictions a great blessing.

Elder W. L. Hall is our pastor. He lives one half mile distant. He comes to see me when able and brings letters he gets from his Baptist friends. They give me much comfort. One time when he was here I told him I sometimes wanted to tell him not to come to see me any more, for I was too unfit and unworthy for him to look upon; that I often was like Mephiboseth; "What is thy servant that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?" He was lame in both feet, but he did eat bread at the King's table continually.

David says, "The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth". Many precious things in the scriptures were written when those who wrote were in deep sorrow and tribulation as they experienced their Lord's righteous judgment, which alone was able to make humble and fit them to write, through the power of the holy spirit those things which through the same holy spirit, bring to the Lord's people of today those blessed writings that fill them with joy and gladness and confirm them in their hope that Jesus Christ alone is their sure salvation, and will continue to be a blessing to all his people down to the end of time. A few scriptures I will mention which give me great comfort: "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth"; "and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose". A double assurance of God's love and care for our comfort: "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God". How shall I escape if I neglect to write to the SIGNS and its readers confessing that for many years I have desired to tell of my hope that it was this same Jesus Christ who appeared in his glorious brightness to take his abode within me that morning in the corn field. First the great load was gone, then where I stood I began to see God's power manifest in a glorious, wonderful way. At my feet were some earthworms. I knew that God had placed them in His purpose; I looked around at the trees, the growing corn, the hills, everything in my view was where God had placed it. In thought—the world, the universe, all was just as God would have it. My whole being was filled with joy and gladness that it was God's way. Here I was taught that predestination is the foundation of the doctrine of God, our Savior. That is why I love the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It always has set forth and with diligence maintained this comforting truth as the scriptures teach.

I have written this over a period of weeks, only a few lines at a time. It is very disconnected and scattering, but I am trusting to the good judgment of the editors. If deemed unfit for the SIGNS, throw in discard. As my writing is hard to read, my daughter will copy with

typewriter for more convenience. I am making this too long and must stop. Time would fail me to tell it all. I have a peculiar feeling of peace and quiet. My eyes fill with tears of thankfulness to God that He is still gracious, although I am so sinful and unworthy.

A sinner in hope of God's mercy,

J. A. McCLAIN.

KERNERSVILLE, N. C., Route 1.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—

I received your letter and was glad to hear from you. I subscribed for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES through Elder G. W. Hill in 1937 and I hope that I have become acquainted with what it contends for for I feel I can say if the Lord has ever taught me to know the truth as it is in Christ, your paper is worthy of a place in every Old Baptist home that does believe in the absolute sovereignty of God. It sets forth and contends for the faith once delivered to the saints, and if I know what I believe, I believe that Christ died to save all God's elect, and to destroy all the works of the devil, and that his power is sufficient to save them all, and to give them everything that is needful for them in time and eternity, regardless of what it is, to keep them here in obedience unto him. If it is afflictions, or prisons, whatsoever does take place with him, God knows how to give it to him and to work it for his good. I believe the apostle Paul realized that when he said, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." The blessed Jesus tells us in his own word, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." If I am not deceived I believe what he said was the truth, and he could not lie because the Father was in him. I feel too unworthy to claim relationship with these good people the most of the time, but I feel that I have no other flock that I want to pasture with for their voice does not sound strange when they say they are helpless and can do nothing. That has been my condition for about twelve years when the good Lord appeared to me and stripped me of every living substance of this world, and showed me I had no legal right to heaven nor to anything in this world. I was not worthy of the bed I slept on by that just and holy law of his which was sinking my soul to hell, when the blessed Jesus appeared to me, showed me the just had suffered for the unjust and that, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." I will never be able to praise him enough for what he has done for me. I am not ashamed to confess I believe everything that transpires both in heaven and on earth was predestined of God, and that he works it all to the good of his saints and to the glory of his great and good name.

Brother Dodson, I have been trying to tell you in my poor, weak way why I like your paper. I feel you are a God-sent gift to comfort God's humble poor in many parts of the world, and to edit a paper that does not shun to declare all the counsel of God, while others are modernizing by adding man's work to help the work of grace. I hope I appreciate such gifts as you, together with your associate editors. I am personally

acquainted with Elder D. V. Spangler, but not the many other able *gifts* that write for your paper. May God bless you all to continue on to write many good messages to the saints. I will be glad to recommend your paper wherever I go to Old Baptists. A brother in hope, if one at all. D. R. PYRTLE.

SIERRA CITY, California.

DEAR SISTER JENNIE BOWER:—

I cannot let Christmas pass without writing you a few lines. I often think of you and remember that when I went to the New York Church you were there to greet me. I said so little to them that day I feel they could not have received me but for this, the only thing which I said that I can remember. Elder Jenkins said to the church, if any of the members wished to ask me any questions they were at liberty to do so. Elder McConnell, who was not an Elder at that time, said, "Had you any reason to believe the church would receive you?" I spoke out clearly then, "Yes, I had one, if God is for me no one can be against me." I can see Elder Jenkins now as he nodded his head and smiled, and I felt the church was satisfied with the answer the Lord had given me, and I, a poor needy and unworthy one, was truly blessed to be received and numbered with the Lord's people. That was forty-five years ago and I still feel to be the most unworthy one of all, just a sinner saved by grace. I can only hope, but hope is an anchor of the soul sure and steadfast. I have been tossed about and sorely tried, the storms have been severe at times, but the anchor still holds.

I am nearly eighty-five years old so it seems the end cannot be far distant, but I have much to be thankful for. I can see, hear and walk. I walk nearly a mile every day when the weather is good, when the deep snow comes I am shut in for awhile but we are having fine weather here now. I know you are sorely afflicted, my dear sister, but you are where you are having good care so in that way you are blessed and I hope there is some who reads to you. I wish you all the joy and blessings for Christmas and the New Year that our kind Heavenly Father is pleased to send you. With love, your sister I trust,

NELLIE H. ARNOLD.

CHICO, California, Route 1, Box 69.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—

I just received the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and was much surprised to see it had changed hands. It has been in my family as far back as I can remember and always J. E. Beebe & Co., New York. Well, I wish you all the blessings of God, but I cannot pay for the SIGNS so must ask you to discontinue it. I have long received it without pay. I asked J. E. Beebe & Co. to discontinue it but they did not. Of course I was very glad. I have never heard a sermon in my life and have seen very few people that believe the good old doctrine set forth in the SIGNS. How I wish some of the children of God, including an Elder, would move to Chico. I was very sorry to read of your father's death, but I feel sure he is at rest. Anyhow he is not here to suffer the terrible things that war brings. The worldly churches are saying this is Ar-

mageddon war. I wonder what the church of God says about it? Love to the household of faith. I am, I hope, your sister in Christ.

MARION S. BROOKS.

(If there is one reason above all others why the SIGNS OF THE TIMES should be published, it is for cases like the above, and we shall, therefore, be glad to send the paper without charge as in the past. R. L. D.)

MARTINSVILLE, Va., Route 2.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,
DEAR BROTHER:—

January SIGNS received. I am much pleased that you have taken over the publication of our paper. Regrets for our former publisher that he has to give up the publication. I cannot recall that I ever read anything from your pen that I could not say Amen to and enjoyed same. May God prosper you in the great undertaking. I have several prospects as subscribers to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES I hope to send soon. May the Lord bless you and yours in every sense of the word.

Your brother in hope.

ELDER J. E. BURGESS.

(We are deeply grateful for such expressions as those contained in the foregoing letter of Elder Burgess. We also very much appreciate his efforts in behalf of the SIGNS. Evidences like these will go a long way towards making our efforts to serve the brethren a privilege. R.L.D.)

NOTICE

I am asking you to put this notice and request in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have before me a copy of the "Gospel News", published by J. W. Perkins, Mayfield, Ky. In the October 1st number is a Circular Letter written by Alexander Campbell to Red Stone Baptist Association in 1817. The letter was continued. I have the first and would like to have the second. If anyone knows of or has the continued letter, will you please inform me, and I will pay the expense of copy and mailing. I would also like to have a copy of Campbell's article on Predestination, which was published in the *Primitive Baptist* two or three times.

Firmly believing that God will bless his dear people with every promised blessing,

Yours in Christian love,
ELDER LYTLE BURNS,
406 VIOLA ST., FLORENCE, ALA.

(Will anyone who can assist Elder Burns in securing what he wants. R.L.D)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS": Miss S. Leedom, Pa., $3; L. J. Wiss, Okla., $1; F. H. Richardson, Ia., $3; Ebenezer Church, N. Y., $10; Miss S. M. Gainer, W. Va., 50 cents; H. E. Danks, Cal., $2; M. J. Disharoon, Del., $1; T. H. McColl, Ont., $3; C. Willard Dodson, Va., $20; Mrs. M. E. Holloway, Md., $1; M. J. Ege, N. J., $3; D. L. House, N. C., $1; Mrs. R. S. Craig, Va., $1; Mrs. M. C. Martin, Mo., $1; Mrs. B. H. Shearon, Ark., 50 cents; A Friend, Ill., $1; Mrs. Mary Duffus, B. C., $8; A Friend, Wash., $1; Mrs. D. Deal, Mo., $1; Mrs. C. A. Glascock, Va., $1; Mrs. I. L. Reilly, N. Y., $2; Mrs. J. D. Shafer, N. Y., $1.

EDITORIAL

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P.O. Box No. 70
Rutherford, N. J.

"Let Brotherly Love Continue." Heb. XIII, 1

We were much edified in the reading of the letter of Elder Roy S. Smith, which he closed by calling attention to the exhortation of Paul to the Hebrews and quoted the words we are presenting as a subject.

When we speak of love in a natural way we are given the inclination of our affections one for another, in which our desires and esteem for them are expressed. We know of the love we have one for another, because it is the relation God created in us, that we should care for each other, and seek each other's welfare, and we see this manifestation everywhere we go among the sons of men, and when such manifestations are not prominent in the attitude of individuals, they are referred to as barbarous and hard-hearted. We know when these barbarous and hard-hearted people are allowed to wield their hand trouble, sorrow and distress is sure to follow in their wake, and nations are made to mourn. We are suffering under their tyranny now, and the whole world is involved.

This is not the kind of love Paul was speaking of in his epistle to the Hebrews, but the love which is in the second Adam, and is manifested in all that are identified as the generation of Jesus Christ. All this generation of Jesus Christ hath the assurance, of their sonship, and have passed from death unto life because they love the brethren. 1st John III, 14. If we love the brethren, what manifestations are expected to be shown in the attitude of our living to them and for them? We feel this is a very important question, and we should be continually asking ourselves, am I manifesting love for that brother or sister by the course I am pursuing? We know when we do things not having the peace and welfare of the brethren as the prompting motive we are sowing to the flesh, and the spirit of that ungodly person is prompting us to do evil, and hurt our brethren.

We love the brethren continually, and when separated from them our thoughts are going out to them, and we long to see and mingle with them.

When we are cast down the love for the brethren does not pass from our hearts, but the perfection we see in them draws us closer to them, and we would be like them if we could, and be separated from the vileness of our own hearts. Our heart goes out to those who profess to love the brethren, and their

walk and conversation are feasted upon, and they are nursed in our affections as little children.

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure. Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth. hath not seen Him, neither knoweth Him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness, is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." 1st John III, 1st to 10th inclusive.

Often the little children are deceived, and ensnared, and led in paths of unrighteousness, and we might lay hold to try to extricate them from his snare, and they consider us evil to them, and all this time we are watching for a manifestation of repentance, and when repentance is in evidence we go out in our feelings to them, and our hearts are made glad. For the work of God is being manifest in bringing them to repentance, and Godly sorrow is expressed in their deliberations among the sons of men. All those that are exercised by faith are given to see their good works, and glorify God for their deliverance. The work of God thus manifested in a poor sinner causes love and fellowship to go out to them, and they are loved for his work's sake. The poor sinner may be tossed to and fro by the wiles of the devil, but this love is not removed, for he is born of God, and his seed remaineth in him.

By these things we feel God's covenant is sure and nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God, for His promise is sure to all the seed, and all this precious seed is the embraced relation to which brotherly love continues. If we are looking upon individuals for other relations according to the flesh it is not brotherly kindness, and brotherly love does not exist in our hearts, and we are easily offended and turned from walking with our brethren and sisters, and go after idolatry in many ways.

The greatest idol is in our own flesh, and we will seek to please ourselves, and if possible draw disciples after us, and every time an opportunity is afforded us we will try to be a solace to some one that has been overtaken in a fault, that we might increase an appearance before men, that we were righteous, but true deception is being proven to the house-

hold of faith, and there is no brotherly love in us, and the church of God does not love the working of iniquity, so brotherly love does not exist, hence it can not continue.

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if he have love one to another." John XIII, 34-35. If we profess to love the Lord, and have not love one to another we prove we are not a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Dear brethren, we have expressed our feelings relative to the love in the fellowship of the truth, and the power that directs our lives in the way of righteousness, and these truths will stand when we have passed and gone the way of all the earth.

We might examine ourselves, and try ourselves as to these manifestations. If we have the witness of these things in our hearts we are encouraged in our hope of life, and immortality beyond this life, and the question, "What manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God", comes to our minds.

As we have been in contact with brethren where division and trouble existed, we have noted there was a lack of brotherly kindness. All the sympathy we may feel towards individuals we are not allowed the privilege of turning aside from the order of God's house, and holding up ungodliness to please individuals. Every true Israelite will honor God's servant in the defense of the truth and integrity of the house of God. This is the brotherly love we believe Paul had under consideration when he was writing to the Hebrews.

We are made stronger, when we see the faults of others, as we are taught that we might flee from such mistakes.

May the God of all comfort be with you, and keep you, and through Him brotherly love will continue.

C. W. V.

REST

Rest. What a great thing it is. Suited to only the weary. Deliverance from labor, peace of mind, rest of soul, and being prepared to press onward. There are mainly two kinds of rest: To the body, and to the soul. Whether it be body, or soul, only those who have labored can appreciate it. Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." This is not an invitation, left to men to accept or reject, but is unto certain characters, those that are weary because of sin, who have tried to save themselves, labored through many nights, found all their own righteousness as filthy rags, abhorred themselves because of the knowledge of their uncleanness, and finally gave up all for lost. How well these know after deliverance from such conditions, by the Grace of God, that there is none other who can give rest to the soul.

Under the legal or old covenant the sabbath day was typical of the day of rest, the gospel day, when that which is

perfect is come. Martha, the sister of Mary, represented the Law dispensation, when under the legal covenant there could be no rest. There was continual serving, sacrifices must be made from day to day, blood must be spilt often. The High Priest must go every year into the holy of holies. This was a time of much serving. They were troubled about many things. Under this dispensation, only those who by an eye of faith could embrace these things as a promise from him who cannot lie, that his Son was coming, that he would be offered once in the end of the world for sin, and by one offering perfect forever his people. These saw the promises afar off, and embraced them, confessing they were pilgrims, and strangers upon the earth. They beheld the future as though it was present; Abraham saying, "God will provide a Lamb"; Job saying, "I know that my Redeemer liveth"; Jacob dying, leaning upon the top of his staff, his faith. These are they who are brought from Lodebar, lame on their feet, and made to sit at the king's table.

How well Mary, who sits at Jesus' feet, lives upon his words, portrays the church under the gospel, the day of rest, her prophet, priest and king.

In regeneration, before one finds rest unto his soul, he is usually brought into great labor. God shows him his terrible condition, as a fallen creature under a holy law. The law of God he knows is spiritual, and good, but he is carnal, sold under sin. Many, many times the very breathing of his soul is, Lord be merciful to me a sinner; save or I perish. If my soul is sent to hell, thy righteous law approves it well. Unto these, Jesus says, Come, I will give you rest. Men cannot hasten the hour, neither can they hinder it. All the inventions of men, such as mourners' benches, telling death-bed scenes, calling upon men to have faith, to make peace with God, and accept the Lord, have never given rest to the soul. The year of Jubilee must come when those that are ready to perish hear the word, COME.

When one is given a living faith (which is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast) in a living God, and by sovereign grace can lay hold of the righteousness of Christ as his very own, he has been delivered from the miry clay, the horrible pit; then his feet are placed upon a rock (Christ, the rock of his salvation) and a new song put in his mouth, even praises unto God, then he finds this rest.

Oh, how our soul often says, Have these things been imaginary? or have I heard the voice of my beloved saying, rise up and come away, the winter is passed, the buds appear, and the voice of the dove is heard again in the land. This rest remaineth for the people of God, for those who have been translated out of the kingdom of darkness, into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Nothing can take it from them. At times they will find themselves seeking it, laboring in their own strength for it, looking to themselves, finding no place for the sole of their foot. Always we must return unto the ark, to Christ, who appears in the presence of God for us. By his compelling, *come*, we draw nigh and behold him whom our soul loveth.

Observing the ordinances of men, such as keeping certain days, eating meats or seeking to be justified by the deeds of the law in any way, can never bring us into this rest, the rest of the gospel. Christ has fulfilled these for his people, and they are not under the law, but under grace. Only those who have the spirit can enter into this rest. If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his.

There are times when believers seem to come short of this *rest*. When they lean on an arm of flesh, or in any way look to any other source for spiritual comfort and peace, except to him who shed his blood for them. When faith is increased, and by it one knows that the handwriting of ordinances have been blotted out by the blood of Christ, and we can behold in him all our needs, as our righteousness, and obedience, then, and then only can we come boldly to the throne of grace, and find grace to help in time of need. Then we find this *rest*.

This rest is often experienced during the most trying hours, when he maketh the storm a calm, and the place where the dragon lay becomes pools of living waters. D. V. S.

APPRECIATION and EXPLANATION

First, we wish to express our appreciation to those of our subscribers who so kindly responded to our suggestion to send in what was due the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We would have liked very much to have been able to make a personal acknowledgment to each one, but this has seemed next to impossible. We also wish to thank through this medium those who have made partial payments on their accounts, and those who have written to us explaining their situations. We are convinced that we will get along together all right when we understand each other. A number who are on our Free List have been good enough to write and tell us how much they enjoy the paper, and we would like to assure those who are unable to pay for the paper but really want to receive it, that we have no thought of discontinuing it. We have received notification in perhaps twenty-five or more cases of subscribers having passed away, and this has been very helpful to us in bringing our mailing list up to date. In quite a few cases we have been told that the paper was sent originally as a present for a year and they never took the trouble to notify the Publisher to stop the paper, notwithstanding the fact they were not interested in it. We are anxious to have the paper delivered only to those who want to read it and will thank anyone to let us know where this is not the case.

Second, we would like to explain to our subscribers the system we are employing for crediting their remittances. We have an understanding with the concern who makes our stencils, which contain the name, address and the date to which the subscription is paid, to furnish them with a corrected list by the 15th of each month. This means that anyone who pays for their subscription subsequent to the 15th of any month will not be credited on the wrapper until the second month following their payment. This applies as well to changes of address. R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

JOIE E. WOODS PETERS, whose maiden name was Joanna Ekelberry, was born April 22, 1867, near Delaware, Ohio, and died in this same town June 12, 1941. She was the daughter of Jacob and Maria Redman Ekelberry.

At the age of fourteen years she received a wonderful experience of grace and at the age of seventeen years united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Marlborough. Her parents, grandparents and great grandparents were also members of the Marlborough Church. Great grandfather, Capt. David Dix, helped to organize this pioneer church and served as it first clerk.

She was married to Emmet M. Wickham August 14, 1888. To this union one child was born, Joy Carroll. During this marriage she lived in Delaware, Ohio.

On March 29, 1905 she was married to Francis L. Woods. To this union two sons were born, Francis Jacob and Joseph Riley. Mr. Woods died February 26, 1920, and Francis Jacob died three days later, February 29, 1920. The greater part of this married life was spent near Graceton, Texas. The last two years near Marengo, Ohio.

Her third marriage was to George D. Peters, August 24, 1926, who passed away January 10, 1929. They lived very happily at Zanesfield, Ohio.

The latter years of Sister Joie's life were spent in Delaware, Ohio. She had been in failing health for several years and died suddenly June 12, 1941, in an attack of coronary thrombosis at the age of 74 years, 1 month and 21 days.

Funeral services were held at the Marlborough Church, conducted by Elder Ivan Hindall. Burial in Marlborough Cemetery.

She is survived by two sons, Dr. J. C. Wickham, Cleveland, Ohio; Joseph Riley Woods, Bellefontaine, Ohio; one sister, Mrs. J. J. Darnell, Campbell, Texas; six grandchildren, one great-grandchild and one niece.

MRS. J. J. DARNELL.

THOMAS EDWARD ATTEBERY was born in Macon County, Illinois, Feb. 26, 1865 and died October 31, 1941 at Kelso, Washington. He was the son of William Thomas and Milly Attebery.

On Feb. 17, 1881, he was united in marriage to Martha Idella Waggoner, by Elder Jesse Shields at Bruce, Ill. To this union was born 13 children, four of whom passed on before he was called, his wife dying over twenty years ago.

In 1921 he was united in marriage to Mrs. Lovica Miller at Pleasant Hill, Missouri. There were three sons born to him during this marriage, all of whom are living. In 1931 he was again left without a companion, and in 1933 he was married to Lila Portwood of Mowequa, Ill. To this union was born three children, one of whom is still living. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at the age of 14 years and was a faithful member and a firm believer in the doctrine for the rest of his life on earth.

On Saturday before the second Sunday in Feb., 1901, he was licensed to exercise his gift in the ministry, and on Oct. 13, 1906 at Winona, Washington, he was ordained to the full functions of the gospel ministry, and filled this position until a few months before his death. At the time of his death, he was pastor of Little Zion Church at Chehalis, Wash. His membership was also at Little Zion Church at Chehalis.

He was a firm believer in an all-wise, all-powerful God. He was never willing to and never did concede any power, except the power of God. He was a believer in the doctrine of fore-knowledge and predestination of all things and was enabled to fearlessly defend it.

During his last long illness it was often evident that he was a blessed child of God; his sufferings were very great, yet he never ceased to call on his heavenly father.

I have been for many years, often a member in the same church with him, living his church life with him for nearly 50 years, and Oh, how I do miss and shall long miss the sweet communions we had together. A few days before his death he said to me, "Sister, I can even sing a little inside myself" and then he recited the first verse of "Oh, thou, in whose presence."

He never lost sight of his Heavenly Father or his desire to worship him. I mourn and sorrow not as one without hope. I saw so much evidence that he was only waiting for the gate of death to open, that he might escape from pain, and rest in the arms of his loving Savior. When death is the only gate through which a loved sufferer may escape to relief and rest it becomes a beautiful gate, the opening of which we eagerly await.

He left behind in this unhappy world his widow, thirteen children, 42 grandchildren, 21 great-

grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren. His funeral was conducted by Baptist Elders that he had labored with and loved. Elder I. F. Coleman offered prayer at the funeral home. Elder J. W. Peters delivered the sermon. Elder A. D. Hughett offered the committal benediction.

We feel that our loss, even though great, is his greater gain, that he is asleep in the Savior's arms, awaiting the resurrection in which he so strongly believed.

Written by his daughter,

EFFIE M. PARKE.

Sister M. E. JONES departed this life Nov. 10, 1941 at the home of her son, O. G. Jones, Duke, Okla. and was laid to rest in Stag Creek cemetery in Comanche Co., Texas.

She was born Nov. 27, 1866 and is survived by one son, O. G. Jones, and one daughter, Mrs. W. C. Moore, 8 grandchildren, and 2 great grandchildren to mourn her passing. Sister Jones united with the Primitive Baptist church 45 years ago and was baptized by the late Elder Kilgore. She was for several years affiliated with the Limited Baptists but became dissatisfied and begged to be restored to the Predestinarian Primitive Baptist church and was a member of Little Flock church at Altus, Okla. at the time of her death. She had been in very poor health for several years. Little Flock church extends deepest sympathy to her bereaved family. This church instructed the church clerk to send a copy of this notice to SIGNS OF THE TIMES and also to have it entered upon our church book.

ELDER W. N. GREEN, Moderator.
MRS. LOU STARR KESTER, Church Clerk.

URIAH GARTON, the son of Zachiriah and Rebecca Garton, was born September 28, 1860, in Atchison County, Kansas and departed this life, at the home of his youngest son, Jubal Garton, at Billings, Oklahoma, December 14, 1941, aged 81 years, 2 months and 16 days.

On the 24th day of September, 1882, he was united in marriage to Nancy Catherine Wood, of his immediate neighborhood.

To this union were born seven children, six boys and one girl, one son having departed this life in infancy.

In the fall of 1893 he, with his family, moved to Oklahoma, where they suffered all the privations incident to a pioneer life, but where through untiring energy and by the blessing of Providence they procurred unto themselves a comfortable home.

Those surviving him of his immediate family are, Clarence of Perry, Oklahoma; Earl of Longview, Texas; Mrs. Grace Barket of Perry, Oklahoma; Walter of home address; Roy of Holdenville, Oklahoma; and Jubal of Billings, Oklahoma; ten grandchildren and two great grandchildren. Besides these he is survived by two sisters, Mrs. Betty Wood, Guymon, Oklahoma, and Mrs. Sallie Cockrell, Durham, Okla. Besides these are numerous other relatives, friends and neighbors who mourn his parting.

In the fall of 1933, he with his wife and one son, united with the Old School Baptist Church at Topeka, Kansas and were baptized by Elder L. L. Schenck. Brother Uriah as we knew him, with his wife, had been for many years, strong adherents to this faith, dating their experience back 40 years, but like the children of Israel were led about 40 years in the wilderness until it pleased the Lord to give them strength to go home to their friends and tell them what great things the Lord had done for them. He died in the glorious triumph of the faith he professed.

Thus has passed from our midst a dear brother in Christ, a faithful husband, a loving father, and a loyal neighbor.

We sorrow, but not as those who have no hope. May the dear Lord strengthen all to say, "Not my will, but thine be done".

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

MEETINGS

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.
Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 A.M. 1:30 P. M.
To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A. M.
ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A. M. 2 P. M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists is now settled in her new church-house, at 4614 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas, where she holds her regular monthly services on each first Sunday at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. Preaching services also on each third Sunday by Elder C. B. Teague, and each second Sunday by brother O. C. Lee, at 11 o'clock a. m. A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. R. HARDY, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Eligin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

VOL. 110 RUTHERFORD, N. J., APRIL, 1942 NO. 4

DESTINY

"When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me by His grace."—Gal. 1:15.

So passive brought through gate of birth
And landed on this rock the earth,
A helpless infant in life's morn—
I did not know when I was born.

As void of will, as void of thought
As if I were a thing of nought;
Until some days and weeks had flown,
As mindless as if wood or stone.

'Twas not my choice, nor yet by whom,
I entered in this world of gloom,
Where sickness, sorrow, pain or death
Might then assail at any breath.

With foes and fears of every grade,
With grief and woe of every shade,
With heat and cold and raging storms
And death in all its frightful forms.

I was not asked if I'd be white
Or red or brown or dark or light;
Was not consulted as to when
I'd come among the sons of men.

If such be then first birth of men
How is it when they're "born again?"
If diff'ring wide as poles of earth,
Could it, in truth, be called a birth?

As atom in a boundless sea
Moves on to what it is to be,
Is moved by pow'r to it unknown,
And by a pow'r not its own.

So we're as clay in potter's hands,
We're shapeless still till he commands;
Let that be late, or be it soon,
By Him whose word formed stars and moon.

There's nought more passive runs in grooves
Unconscious of the power that moves;
There's nought that's found in all the earth
Less active than a human birth.

Man does no more in his own birth
Than in creation of the earth,
Than in the making of the stars
Or setting for the sea its bars.

And yet vain man his course to fill
Hangs destiny upon his will
As if protection from all harm,
Was only brought by his own arm.

While speechless ox his owner knows
And mute appreciation shows,
Creation's lord in guilt and shame
DENIES the maker of his frame.

—C. W. ANDERSON.

CORRESPONDENCE

"It is finished"—John 19:30.

The thirtieth verse of the nineteenth chapter of the gospel according to John contains these words: "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, 'It is finished': and he bowed his head and gave up the ghost." This verse is a part of John's narrative of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, and the words of Jesus contained in it form the sixth of his seven sayings on the cross, and are of momentous meaning and sacred import to all true believers in the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. The words, "It is finished" embrace in their application the predestination of God in sending his beloved Son into the world to die for believers and in making it possible for the Holy Ghost or Comforter to come into the world to reprove it of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, and to manifest unto the heirs of glory the riches of their heavenly inheritance, to show unto them the things of Jesus, to quicken them into eternal life, and to guide and instruct them in righteousness. It is through this finished work that the law was fulfilled in Jesus Christ; that Satan's head was bruised by the woman's seed; that death became a conquered foe; that the power of the grave was overcome; that the types which relate to the life and death of the Redeemer had their fulfilment; that the way into the holiest by sacrificial blood was now made open; that all the called of God received justification; and by which the old dispensation came to a glorious close. The finished work of Jesus meant that the cross became the grave of sin for believers and that the resurrection of the dead in Christ became possible. It is true in a certain sense that Jesus uttered these words somewhat anticipatively, for he had not yet bowed his head nor given up the ghost nor commended his spirit to the Father nor reposed in Joseph's rock hewn tomb wherein man had never been laid. All the prophecies that relate to Jesus until the time of his death had their fulfilment in these very remarkable words of triumphant accomplishment, which marked the goal of the very incarnation of Christ. The fact that Jesus uttered these words before he bowed his head in death proves that he laid down his life willingly to become a ransom for many.

Let us now briefly consider some of the aspects of the work embraced in the words, "It is finished." Scripture teaches that sin is a transgression of the law and separates the sinner from God, and brings him under its awful curse and dread penalty. It imposes upon him death to that sinless state which he had enjoyed when in Adam, his federal head, he walked with God in Eden, and also demands bodily death of the transgressor and further imposes the penalty of eternal wrath and woe with eternal separation from God. Because of his sin-marred nature the offender can not beget an offspring free from the taint of sin and from the curse and penalty of the law or capable of attaining any righteousness of their own. Through inherited sin and because we act out the nature within us, we are all by nature carnal and sold under sin, and we do

the sins of our corrupt nature whether of heart or hand, as we transgress even by a foolish thought. Though outwardly we may be moral and law abiding, cultured and refined after the manner of men, inwardly we are full of dead men's bones by nature, and God looking on the heart, finds no goodness there, no claim even to his mercy. The life of the soul is in the blood, and the soul that sins must die. God is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and such is his ineffable holiness and matchless glory that none but the holy can stand in his presence. It must then be by the shedding of blood that the remission of sin is effected, by the giving up of life, by some one's enduring the penalty for sin, who is qualified to do so, by enduring suffering, by taking the place of the sinner and suffering in full the penalty due the sinner. More than that, the blood that is shed for sin must be holy blood, and the sacrificer must be holy, and the sacrifice also holy. The law can not be lessened one jot or tittle or the honor of God would be tarnished, his glory and holiness set aside, and he would in fact cease to be God. Man, a guilty, hell deserving, helpless sinner could not possibly meet one of these divine requirements, so had no hope through himself. But God in matchless grace had ordained the way to rescue fallen man before the transgression or ever the stars scintillated in the heavens. In the counsel of infinite wisdom he made a covenant with his eternal son whereby he prepared a body that in the fullness of time was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary, contrary to nature, through the operation of the Holy Ghost. This body is spoken of as a holy thing, a new thing that the Lord created in the earth, when a woman encompassed a man. This child that was born, this son that was given in the person of this holy thing was Jesus the Christ. He was the word made flesh, he was God manifested in the flesh, the God-man, having a holy human nature and taking the flesh and blood of believers. The blood that flowed through his veins was the blood of the son of God as well as the blood of the son of man. This blood had all the power, efficacy, and virtue of the Godhead, for in Christ dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily. This blood was holy blood and could cleanse from all the taint and filth of sin. So awful is sin that it took nothing less than the blood of the son of God, who has all power, to cleanse the sinner from its taint and curse. That is why the blood of the son of God had the efficacy to remove sin and made possible the justification of the sinner, because the son of God represented God. As Jesus was holy, he could make a holy sacrifice by offering himself through the Holy Spirit. Both the offering and the offerer must be holy to satisfy divine justice. So Jesus alone was able to save a penitent sinner, being both priest and offering, thus meeting all the requirements demanded by the holiness of God.

In his finished work on the cross Jesus was the antitype of the offerings spoken of in the Old Testament, finishing all that was signified by them, relative to his death. Jesus was our sin offering. A sin offering was made because of the nature of sin. Believers must have a new nature

imparted unto them in the new birth that is necessary for them to enjoy the blessings of eternal life. There was another offering called the trespass offering made because of the sins of our nature, the sins that we perform in thought or act. Jesus was the antitype of the trespass offering and so atoned for all our trespasses, if so be we have a hope in his mercy. Under the legal dispensation restitution was made by the offender to the offended and one fifth added to the value of that which was restored. If a wrong had been done against Jehovah, a fifth part was added and given to the priest. If a neighbor had been wronged, the person who had been defrauded received the extra fifth. An unblemished ram from the flock was always offered as a trespass offering. How very beautifully this foreshadows the redemptive work of Christ, who gives the redeemed subjects of his grace not only restoration, but eternal salvation, and security from ever falling again under the condemnation of the Adam-transgression. Thus God brings a greater glory to himself and a greater blessing to the subjects of his love and mercy. There were three sweet-savor offerings of which Christ was the antitype, and his finished work embraced all these, the peace offering, the burnt offering, and the meal offering. The sweet-savor offerings denote acceptability with God and our acceptance in him through Christ. The burnt offering offered at the altar at the entrance to the court of the tabernacle or temple often consisted of a bullock without blemish, though sometimes sheep and goats and even turtle doves and pigeons were offered. The offering of the burnt offering signified that by the laying on of hands on the head of the sacrifice that the ceremonial righteousness of the sacrifice was imputed to the sacrificer, just as ceremonially the sins of the sacrificer in the sin and trespass offerings were imputed to the sacrifice that died for and in place of the sacrificer. In the case of the sin offerings in type, sins were put off the offerer, and in the case of the burnt offering, righteousness was put on the offerer, the ceremonial righteousness of the innocent victim being transferred or imputed to the offerer. Jesus Christ is both a sin offering and a burnt offering, and through faith in him by his finished work on the cross, the sins of believers are imputed unto him and his righteousness unto them. The peace offering differs from the burnt offering in that part of it was eaten by the priests, and it denotes that peace with God believers enjoy through Christ in walk and fellowship with God. Jesus is also our true peace offering, having made peace through his death on the cross, and we spiritually feast upon him. There was another of the sweet-savor offerings that demands attention, the meal or meat offering, which was a bloodless offering, and may represent the life of Christ in his suffering and in his holy attributes. This was eaten by the priests, consisting of meal ground fine to the same evenness throughout, and mixed with salt, signifying the preserving power of grace. Oil was mixed with the meal and also poured upon it. This beautifully typifies the holiness that was in Christ in his incarnation, for he was conceived of the

Holy Spirit which this oil typifies. The pouring of the oil upon the meal denotes the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon him. The meal was baked in a pan or oven, so subject to great heat. Jesus was subjected to great suffering, and of him it was prophetically written, "From above hath he sent fire into my bones." If we have the life of Christ, we have a life of trial and affiction, of suffering and sorrow as it may please God, and in this we fellowship the son. On the cross when Jesus finished the work of redemption, he felt the flaming wrath of God on his holy soul because of the sins of believers.

In the finished work of Jesus we must not fail to note that judgment and mercy met at the cross. Judgment was executed, not upon the believing sinner, but instead upon Jesus, his faithful surety. All the pangs of torment that the saved sinner would ever have to endure were suffered by Jesus before he said, "It is finished." When he was forsaken by God during those awful hours of darkness, the seven fold thunders of God's righteous wrath flamed in full against his dear son, instead of against the transgressor, so that divine justice was satisfied, God's holiness vindicated, the law fulfilled, and the work of redemption accomplished once and forever that righteousness and peace might meet together. When Jesus said, "It is finished", the spotless Lamb of God had made full expiation for believers' sins that life and immortality and fellowship with the son of God might be made blessed and golden realities for all the elect of God.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

SHALL

The comfort and consolation that is derived from the scriptures, is in a great measure due to the absolute certainty and force of the expressions used, their force and certainty being derived from the power which accompanies the word, when the children are ministered unto by the Spirit. The Lord's people become babes and sucklings, when the work of grace has been wrought in the heart, and like such helpless creatures, their belief in what they see and hear is not based upon the work of their reasoning faculties but by an inherent principle within them which as an invulnerable fortress keeps out any doubts or questionings that might insinuate themselves into their minds. Concerning things, (that are not visible to the natural eye, nor accessible to the natural ear, nor understandable to the natural heart, but) which are invisible and unsearchable, the invisible and unsearchable things of the kingdom of heaven, the mind and heart of God's people take hold of them with an assurance and positiveness and certain knowledge that all the teaching concocted by mortal man could not instill into them. Life is light, and light is knowledge. Jesus is declared to be the word, and the word, life, and the life the light of men. Hence their knowledge comes not from an external source but from within, by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, which is Christ within them, the hope of glory. Thus was the apostle enabled to declare to his Corinthian brethren: "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Christ Jesus; that in

everything ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, so that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord, Jesus Christ."

The wise purposes of God are made known to his people according as it pleaseth him and in a certain tongue known to that favored people. He, himself, declared to his people, "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." None else save spiritual Israel can understand his wondrous language, which, whatever way it may come it speaks to the heart, wherein is the knowledge of it treasured up in the wisdom of God by the grace of God. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his son" yet always in the same pure language and by the same power from above. The dreadful scenes upon the mountain of the law (Sinai) "which burned with fire, and blackness and darkness and tempest, the sound of the trumpet and the voice of the words," the sight of which was so terrible "that Moses said I exceedingly fear and quake", was not more audible to the understanding by faith, than were the words of the Lord to Joseph in the quiet stillness of a dream "And she shall bring forth a son and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins". While the one sets forth the ministration of the law and the other the ministration of the gospel for the confirmation of present things, both necessary in the completion of every detail in the salvation of sinners, yet the voice is the same voice of the eternal God, making known his purposes in declarative "Shalls" in no unmeaning terms. The mighty God publishing his mighty acts to a rebellious and unbelieving people saying, "Remember the former things of old; for I am God and there is none else; I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." The word "shall" when used, in a natural sense, in reference to an act to be performed by the person spoken to or of, is always indicative of authority vested in the person speaking, but inasmuch as man cannot control circumstances or events, but is controlled by them, so his determination is only certain of fulfillment so far as his authority reaches and circumstances favor their consummation, but when the Lord (who speaks and it is done) said to Joseph's faith, "And she shall bring forth a son" he hesitated not to take the gentle Mary to wife, for his faith opened up to him the whole field of God's sovereign power, and by that faith, he believed implicitly the voice of the Lord which said "For that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." No man need now tell Joseph that these things were true, and had Moses and all the prophets told him the same thing he could not have believed more certainly. The knowledge that comes by faith so fully enlightened his understanding that he was fully

cognizant of the simple truth that God was the creator and controller of all events causing them to work in perfect harmony with his will and pleasure, and also that he was the author and finisher of the faith that revealed all these precious truths to him. God's "shalls" therefore, cannot by any possibility fall short a hair's breadth, of the mark designed for them, because all power on earth, in earth and in heaven rests in the omnipotent hand of him who said: "My council shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." The very first manifestation of the power of God's eternal "shall" was in the beginning when he said: "Let there be light and there was light." Likewise the first manifestation of the power of God and the indwelling of his holy spirit in our mortal body, was when the same command entered our heart through a gracious experience by which the light of divine wisdom and love shined in our heart "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." The voice of the Lord in the experience of dear old Simeon surely did say, you *shall* see the consolation of Israel before you die, for it was that he waited for, his faith had revealed it to him or he could not have known to wait for it. "And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And when he was in the temple by direction of the spirit, and the child Jesus was brought in, he recognized him by revelation of the spirit and so took him in his arms and blessed God, that the promise was fulfilled, and now was he ready to depart." What a lasting consolation to the tried pilgrim is the assurance, that God is of one mind and none can turn him, no, not all the powers of earth and hell combined, for when by the light of divine grace the precious gift of Jesus is vouchsafed unto us, with its abundant and precious consequences, we, with positive certainty, lay hold on the promise of God that we shall rest from all our labors as God did from his, and behold the transformation in the same moment we realize that we have already ceased to labor, and have sweetly entered into that rest which remains to the people of God.

The teaching of the Lord's people all comes through a gracious experience, they suffer tribulation because of the knowledge that sin reigns in their mortal bodies, having tasted that the Lord is gracious and having the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, and having learned that, "the carnal mind is enmity against God" whom they now love in consequence of which they hate sin with a perfect hatred, so tribulation arises because they cannot do the things that they would, and also because the sins which they hate do so easily beset them. Tribulation, through grace, is working a good work in them, for it "worketh patience (endurance), and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." In all these things the Lord is our teacher. The "shalls" of the gospel are clearly revealed to us, for the spirit takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us. Carnal religion does not deal in impera-

tive shalls, but they subsist upon the husks of a "you may if you choose" system. Not all the professors of man made institutions could teach a living child one iota of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge that are hid with Christ in God. The prophet of the Lord knew the secret of the Lord when by inspiration he left on record these precious crumbs, "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones (blessed teaching) with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows agates, and thy gates of carbuncle, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And thy children *shall* be taught of the Lord, and great *shall* be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established; thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear; and from terror; for it shall not come near thee." The ministration of the Spirit reveals to the spiritual understanding, in the pure language of spiritual Israel, all things pertaining to the salvation of the people of God. All that we receive both in providence and in grace points to Jesus. He is the beginning and the ending of the whole work of grace which leads us out of darkness into the marvellous light of his everlasting kingdom. And when his finished work on Calvary is revealed in our experience, we rely no more upon dead works. We view with holy dread the curse resting upon the man who trusted in man with awe inspired by the fear of God and the love of God. We realize that once we were blind but now we see, and we comprehend in the fullest sense, that whatsoever the Lord has promised he will perform, and whatsoever he has ordained concerning us, *shall* come to pass. For we now see him as the fullness of him that filleth all in all. And as by faith we view "the throne of God and the Lamb" we *shall* hear the voice of the angel saying: "And there *shall* be no more curse but the throne of God and the Lamb *shall* be in it, and his servants *shall* serve him, and they *shall* see his face, and his name *shall* be in their foreheads, and there *shall* be no night there, and they need no candle neither light of the sun for the Lord God giveth them light and they *shall* reign for ever and ever."

(The late Elder) B. F. COULTER.
Philadelphia, Pa.

ISLAND CITY, Oregon.

"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers."

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS:—

I am enclosing an obituary for publication. The incident pertaining to it causes me to reflect on the above quotation, and to wonder how and when this applies in our modern civilization. The incident, briefly related in the obituary, is but a sample of many happenings in our day. A few years ago a well-to-do young man of an Eastern state was travelling by auto through the Northwest. He overtook a well dressed young man walking along the highway and took him to ride with him. This traveller was generous to his new acquaintance, bore all the expenses of the trip and entertainment, and their friendship became quite congenial.

After two or three days of this company, while he stooped to get a drink of water at a road-side fountain, his new

friend killed him by a blow on the head, put his body in the car beside him, drove several miles and cast it over an embankment at a lonely place on the mountainside. He took the car, travellers checks, and the man's name proceeding under this name until all could be disposed of. Friends of this traveller began tracing him but obtained no clue until about four months later. The body was found, the drivers license was with it and the murderer soon found. Happenings of this kind have caused our state to make it unlawful to take a stranger to ride, but still our generosity causes us to do so sometimes. I relate this incident in connection with the other one in order to put a vital question before us for our consideration. Is the gospel order changed from what it was when given? We run a great risk now in entertaining strangers or giving them assistance in any way. We are witnesses that the love of God in our hearts begets in us a desire to extend to our fellow man a kindly feeling to assist him when we can, but not being able to read his mind, and to judge correctly his secret purposes we must harden our hearts toward all men and treat the deserving in the same way that we do the criminals. Is this the gospel order? "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." When we obtain mercy of our God and the forgiveness of our sins and rejoice in the blessings this manifest relationship brings to us we want to show our joy and thankfulness by doing good to our fellow man, but start out to do that now and see where it will soon bring you. I once thought our common law was to protect us from criminals, and if a man did right he need never have a lawsuit. I have had three lawsuits to protect myself and property that were brought by cunning men to defraud. Two of them were decided for me and one against me. In our generosity wife and I have felt to give a home and needed assistance to two old men at different times. After several months they left and brought suit for high wages under a state law that no man can work for his board and it is supposed that a stranger cannot be in a home except that he is serving there. When this was fully explained the lawyer withdrew the suit, but they could have put us to a lot of trouble and expense. Instances of this kind are frequent and they train us to disregard the gospel injunction and to practice the strictest selfishness. "Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." Words of the Master, the only perfect man that ever lived. When he was reviled, he reviled not again. He knew the will of his Father and did it at all times regardless of his personal comfort, even unto death. He knew the mind of every person whether it tended to good or evil and so was never disappointed by the actions of any one. But his saints in the world, while admonished in all things pertaining to godliness and perfection, are subject to deception and are often the victims of designing evil doers. What shall we do then in order to be safe from the unseen evil which is always around us? Shall we be suspicious of our fellow man at all times because we do not know the

secret designs of his mind? "Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." Again, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." By these scriptures I understand that our wisdom should be shown by waiting for some manifestation of the fruits before we are to show our goodness of heart or to dispense our charity. All public charity has its bad effects, even if directed to worthy causes. The solicitors of such are to be watched and then no one knows how much they take for themselves. The saints in this world have a knowledge above that of the unregenerate and if they base their activities on this knowledge of the depravity of human nature and let their good works follow, at least, some evidence that the work of Grace operates in the recipients of their favors, there would be less deception. It is plainly taught in the scriptures that God's regenerating power goes ahead of all requirements of the saints termed good works. Hence the gospel injunctions before mentioned, which may sometimes appear to be impractical and impossible, are just as true now as they ever have been and shall continue to be so to the end of time. Phillip joined himself to the chariot of the Eunuch and he found the work of Grace operating there. Peter was called to the house of Cornelius; the Lord both prepared Peter to go, against the custom of the Jews, and prepared the hearers to receive Peter's message. Paul once thought to go to a certain place to preach and was restrained; again he saw in a vision a man of Macedonia calling and he went there. Many such instances are recorded in the scriptures, and not a single one of failure or disappointment where the Grace of God was fully discerned and obeyed. One instance is recorded which shows that too much generosity is not approved by the Lord. When king Hezekiah showed to the visitors from Babylon all the treasure of his house and the precious things he possessed the prophet rebuked him for it and pronounced a judgment that should follow. "Neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." This indicates that the pearls attract the swine to some extent but their turning to rend you shows you to be of more concern to them than the pearls. The greed of the world to-day makes a man's property of more value in the sight of men generally than his life, and if they can get a chance to get his property nothing stands in their way when a suitable opportunity is afforded. This spirit is moving the warring aggressor nations of the world to-day to destroy millions of innocent people and the accumulated wealth of generations of the past, and putting indebtedness on the survivors that it will take many years to pay, if ever it is. This all causes us to wonder where it will lead us and when it will end. But do not for a moment doubt that God is still on the throne of Heaven, and even the vilest of men can go no further than His purposes are served and He has declared. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."

Yours in Hope,

C. W. BOND.

(*See obituary in this issue.*)

DEAR EDITORS:— SHIPMAN, Ill.

For some cause I have felt that I would like to write a few words to the brothers and sisters and also feel that if I do not do it soon it will be too late. In my weak way I will try to write about some of the things the Lord has done for a poor sinner like me. I felt myself to be a great sinner in the sight of God when I was about 18 years old. My brother, John Vantrease, was a member of the Old School Baptists. He loved to attend meetings and to sing, and when I would go to his home to stay over night I felt very lonely and sad, and longed to be happy as he seemed. When I was crying over my sad condition the verses in Matthew 5 came to me, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted," and all the blessings that Jesus has promised his little ones. To my surprise I was trying to sing and a feeling came over me that I will never forget. This verse of a song my father used to sing came to me:

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform,
He plants His footsteps in the sea
And rides upon the storm.

Dear readers of the SIGNS I feel that if I am one of his little ones God saves by grace and it is not of works lest any man should boast. Think how Jesus bore his cross and was nailed to the cross and shed his blood for sinners here on the earth. How weak and helpless we are and can do nothing without the help of God. I first united with the so-called Brethren Church, and was not satisfied, then I united with the General Baptists and still was not satisfied. I went to Benton to visit my sister and she was going to be baptized into the fellowship of the Old Baptists there. When they began to sing I joined at the water and we were baptized together. I felt like I had found a home no more to roam. I am now sixty years old and living with my son. Four of my children are living, my oldest daughter died at the age of 23. It is my prayer that they may all be brought into the fold but we can do nothing of ourselves except to trust in our Saviour, Jesus Christ. I live 32 miles north of Alton and do not get to meeting often as there is no Old Baptist Church near here. I enjoy reading the SIGNS and believe that God watches over all both great and small and I should be willing to bear what comes. I would like some of the dear readers to write their views on, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" God watches over the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, the worms of the dust, and even the hairs of our head are numbered. How can we think of having any power to boast. I do not have words to express my feelings and my thoughts are scattered so I will close.

A few more days on earth to spend,
And all my toils and cares shall end.
also
There I shall see my Savior's face,
And dwell in his beloved embrace.

Your sister I hope,
(Mrs.) MYRTLE C. GREGORY.

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913 E. Buffalo Ave., TAMPA, Fla.

DEAR EDITORS:—

It is again I attempt to write and thank some brother or sister who is sending me your good paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. As I wrote you last year I do not know who to thank, but will say

I enjoy it very much but am not financially able to take it. If sending it to me is keeping some other poor brother or sister from enjoying it, who is more worthy than I, (I feel so unworthy of any of God's many blessings, yet thankful I hope.) then I would say, and be perfectly willing, and glad to know of their getting it instead of me. I just finished reading your January number. It is full of spiritual food and drink to the children of God who know the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. He says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," and I believe that is about all the poor little child of God needs while sojourning here in this unfriendly world. Am I justified in saying "unfriendly world" though? St. Paul speaks of it as such if I am not mistaken. But back to the subject of Jesus Christ being "the way, the truth, and the life" of His people. I believe it as strongly as any one can; it is just so strong that take it away from me and I would feel lost, world without end. As Peter said upon one occasion, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." St. John 6:68. When some of his disciples went back and walked no more with him, "Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? then Peter answered him as above. He had been telling them "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man (or woman either I believe, as woman is part of man) eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." St. John 6:47 to 53 inclusive. But they were unbelievers, and always found fault, and stirred up the people against him. In so much as some of his disciples, who were hearing these mighty words of life, believed the Jews rather than Jesus and went away; but though they did the twelve stayed with Him right on. Just so to-day there are a few who will stay on as they believe His Word and they "eat and drink of his flesh and blood, and they live." Live in the spirit which comes down to them, just as the manna did in Moses time in nature. This is the heavenly manna which they so much love. Just so I believe in you dear people publishing the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. In a way you are feeding many, many poor children of God this heavenly food and drink. Why some of them do not believe it I cannot see only as those that went back and followed Him no more; not but what they were his people (disciples) yet listened to unbelievers instead of Jesus, himself. Again I feel I can say with one of old, "Lord I believe, help thou mine unbelief."

Well, dear brethren, I did not think I would write so much, just wanted to thank you. May God's richest blessings

enable you to go on publishing the good news, on and on, many more years. To Mr. Beebe I would say, "God bless you," for you will never know the "good news from a far country" that you have been publishing these 50 odd years; no, I say again, you will never live long enough to know how much good you have done the dear children of God. God alone knows. May God bless you.

Unworthily,

J. E. WHITNEY.

1309 California Boulevard, ONTARIO, California.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—

When I received the SIGNS was much surprised to find it had passed into new ownership, and I surely hope it will continue to be the same comfort to God's little ones as it has been in the past. The SIGNS has meant a good deal to me. I learned my alphabet from the letters on its front page over eighty years ago. After I named the letters my mother would read, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." I wondered what it meant and I am not sure that I do know now. Dear Elder Beebe stopped at our house in Cincinnati every year, until his death, on his way to the Licking Association in Kentucky. He was an honored guest as were many others from the East. Elders Durand, Leachman, Joseph L. and William J. Purrington, William Beebe and Elder Furr. I remember when Elder Chick came and I was to meet him at the Union station. He had asked me to carry a number of the SIGNS to identify me which I did. Nor do I forget, that after many years feeling to be a great sinner in the sight of God, that it was while reading in the SIGNS peace and hope came to me. I was reading the experiences there when the words came to me "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I thought of all the many Old Baptists I had known with a new love and fellowship. I sat on our back porch looking across the Ohio river to the green fields of Kentucky and sang of "Sweet fields arrayed in living green and rivers of delight." Everything seemed to be praising God and how could I keep silent. We moved from Cincinnati to College Hill, a distant suburb, and attended the Mill Creek Church. In 1881 I was received into its fellowship and was baptized in a nearby river by my father who was pastor of the church. As we left the river I looked back and the words came:

> "Blest pool in which I lately lay,
> And left my fears behind;
> What an unworthy wretch am I,
> And God, how good and kind."

After Father's death Elder Peter Sawin supplied for some years, and Elder Eubanks was our pastor for twelve years before he went to Welch Tract. In 1908 we moved to California and several years after I became a member of the Little Flock church in Riverside. It felt to be a good home to me, but several years ago it was dissolved for lack of membership. Dear brother, I did not mean to write so long a letter, only meant to say I sent a money-order on Dec. 15 for four dollars. Two for subscription and two for helping the fund. If it is lost I will remit again. Most of all I wanted to wish you success in the new undertaking. Yours in christian love.

HANNAH E. DANKS.

Box 185, WESLACO, Texas.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,

DEAR BROTHER:—

If one so unworthy as I be permitted to call you brother. Glad to receive the January SIGNS and glad to know that the dear Lord has arranged for its continuance. I have been a reader of it for about 44 years, ever since I was 8 years old. I remember one time, when I was about 12 years old, coming into the house and saying to mother, who had been in bed for months, the SIGNS has come. She said: "Son put them away and take care of all of them, I cannot read them now, but may be there will be some of the family that will want to read them some day." I had to go out of the room to keep her from seeing the tears in my eyes, for I had been slipping them into my shirt and going out into the woods and hunting for the experiences trying to find some comfort. I see that my subscription has expired. Enclosed find $3 of which apply $2 to my subscription and the rest for a new subscriber, see subscription blank enclosed. I am taking you up on your offer to ministers, however, dear brother, I do not feel like I am one of them, and do not know that I have ever preached. That seems like too holy a place for a sinner like me. I realize that unless God is in the matter we can do nothing towards feeding or comforting the little ones; it is faith revealed from faith to faith, they must both be taught by the same teacher. God is the first cause of all causes, and how beautifully he can work the evil along with the good to accomplish his purposes for those that he loved before the world was. How I do miss Elder J. B. Bowden since the Lord called him home to be at rest. I do not know of another Predestinarian Baptist preacher within 300 miles of here, and how I do long for the Lord to send another one in our midst. We have lots of Baptists in the country but I cannot take their limited doctrine. I read the book of Jonah last night, and my mind went back to some of the arguments I have heard among the other Baptists regarding Jonah. They say he did wrong in going on that voyage; he should have done as the Lord commanded without the voyage and would have received the blessing. But, dear brother, my mind goes back to that God that existed before the world was, and there I see Him with all of Jonah's acts before he did them, all set down in his mind, God's mind. O yes, before the world was they were there, and he saw in them Jonah going down to that ship, and he saw him telling the men that he feared the Lord and was getting away from Him (as he thought), but the Lord saw that storm coming on and saw that the lot was to fall on Jonah; and He had that great fish growing all those years to be right there at the appointed spot to catch Jonah at the appointed time. No "if's and and's" about it, it was all certain even if Jonah did not realize it. We see that the Lord kept it from Jonah as to how he was going to overthrow the city. Jonah was expecting it to come in a different way, but God was not fooled in any way for He had power to carry out his plans or predestination in their fullness and none can stay His hand.

There is a time to be born and a time to die.
A time to be born in the kingdom of grace,
A time to redeem all the Lord's chosen race.

With us, or the natural man, we say things happen out of time; they do according to the regular order of things; for example, nine months is the time for a baby to be born, but we often hear of a 7 or an 8 month's child, so we say it was born out of time; premature, but none can say it was not God's time. He can reverse all nature and bring things to pass on time according to His plan whether it seems right to us or not.

Brother Dodson I hope the Lord will hold you up and bless you in the labor of getting out the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES so it may comfort many poor souls scattered over this earth. We are indeed sorry to learn of Mr. Beebe's eyesight failing him but hope the Lord will be his guide and stay as long as he lives. If any Old Baptist or friends are visiting in the South or the Lower Rio Grande Valley we would be glad to have them come to see us. Meeting at Sister J. A. Moor's near Weslaco on the 2nd Sunday. She is getting old and nearly blind but surely enjoys the company of the Baptists. Meeting of Mt. Zion church on the 4th Sunday here at my home, 3½ miles south of Weslaco on Progresso Highway. Be glad for you to meet with us. Remember this poor sinner in your prayers. Saved by grace if saved at all.

E. B. AULT.

(As long as God is pleased to carry on his work of grace in the hearts of poor sinners as he has with brother Ault, there will be a place in the world for a paper like the SIGNS. We deeply appreciate his letter and we are glad he took us at our word and sent us a NEW subscriber. We hope others will do likewise. R.L.D.)

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190 Main St., FLEMINGTON, N. J.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—

We had grown quite anxious about the SIGNS and it was indeed welcome news to us that you had undertaken the added task of publishing the paper. I marvel when I think of you with your varied cares accomplishing all that you do, but I know that the praise must be given to Him who has granted you strength, desire and ability to carry on as you do. My best wishes, although entirely valueless except in sentiment, are fully yours for success and real happiness in all your work. I am enclosing payment for my subscription to the paper. I wish I could fill the blank with names, but my efforts have been futile. Let me continue to hope I am, your sister.

ALWILDA STRYKER.

CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED TO SEND THE SIGNS TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE SIGNS

Mrs. Nellie H. Arnold, Cal., $3; Mrs. M. Wickham, Mo., $2; Mrs. J. C. Florence, Ga., $1; Mrs. Emma Mathis, Ky., $3; Mrs. Val. Werner, N. J., $2; Brittie Caudle, Okla., $1; Mrs. Maynard Finch, N. Y., $1; Isaac T. McIntyre, N. Y., $1; Floyd Johnson, W. Va., $1; A. E. Clark, Kans., $2; A friend, Mich., $3; E. H. Rounds, Md., $1; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $1; Florence H. Disharoon, Pa., $1; A friend, N. Y., $1; Mrs. L. R. Elgin, D. C., $1; G. A. Dundas, Cal., $3; D. W. White, Tex., $8.

EDITORIAL

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IT BECOMETH US

Today as many are brought into serious thinking about the conditions of the world in general, and especially the Church of God, the pillar and ground of the truth, in our meditations we are wondering what relation there is between the world events and the elect of God.

When wars, famines, earthquakes, pestilences and divers things of this kind are sent upon the earth, the country is usually filled with men who use certain Scriptures to try to point out by them present existing conditions. Often prophesy that has no relation to the present time is used to excite people. The question with many of us is where do we fit into this picture, that is unfolding over the world today? The only way anyone understands these things is by revelation, and we should all take heed that the things we lay hold of are not imagination, instead of revelation.

The Church of Christ is a chosen generation, a royal priesthood that shows forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light. Of Christ's fulness have they received, and regardless of what happens his word says that all things work together for good to them that love God, to those who are the called according to his purpose. Nothing has, or will happen but what will be for their good and his glory. Even the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder he will restrain. He is King of kings, and Lord of lords; the one-eternal, immortal, invisible, the all-wise God.

As far as I know the Old School Baptists are agreed among themselves that salvation is wholly of the Lord, by grace, through faith, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works lest any man should boast. There is now even as there has been through the ages some differences of opinion on some points of doctrine. Preaching and believing the doctrine of the sovereignty of God, election, the necessity of a new birth, before one sees the kingdom of heaven, the perseverance, preservation and resurrection unto eternal glory, for all for whom Christ died are the things that separate us from all the people upon the face of the earth. Moses asked God that if he had found favor with him, then separate him and his people from all of the peoples of the earth.

Are we adorning the doctrine we preach? As faith without works is dead,

even so the preaching of doctrines that we do not lay hold of with the heart, as well as the head, is a dead thing. Paul commanded Timothy, his son in the ministry, to take heed unto himself, and unto the doctrine; and continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.

The things which are in accord with Holy Writ that are wrought in us by his Spirit, such as an orderly walk, and a godly conversation, become God's people, as they by his sovereign grace are suited to these things. I want to mention here some of the things that become us. Are we following the word in practice? Do we search the Scriptures as did the Bereans, to see if the things we hear are in the word? Do we lay aside all traditions and traditional practices? How easy it is to accept some point of doctrine because it has been generally believed. Let us hold fast the form of sound words. Sometimes when a point of doctrine has been accepted for years the tendency is to ignore other Scriptures that often have some bearing on the same matter, but because these Scriptures cannot be harmonized with the opinion that has been held on the subject these other Scriptures are ignored.

The subject of the resurrection is one which I thought when I united with the Church that all Old School Baptists believed alike on this important question. For many years I thought that, but in later years I heard it remarked that some among us did not believe in the resurrection at all. I wondered then what those who were accused of not believing in the resurrection did believe. I have talked with a number on both sides of the question, and I have not found any who did not believe in the resurrection. There seems to be a difference as to when it is, and the kind of body we will have, if indeed we are so favored by his grace to awake in his likeness. In my humble opinion these things should cause no strife or confusion. It doth not yet appear what we shall be, and as brethren it becometh us to be charitable towards one another on this subject. We would all do well, even though we are settled in our minds about the matter, to try the spirits and see if the attitude towards the brethren who differ is right, and whether we receive the word with meekness. Surely, a frank discussion of these things might be profitable, if we adhere to the word and take heed unto ourselves and unto the doctrine.

Where are we in Church matters? Are we exhorting one another, confessing our faults one to another? Do we do things without partiality? When a brother is overtaken in a fault, do we restore such in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted? Do we manifest a respect to persons? There is often a carelessness about attending church meetings. In coming into the church one agrees to abide by the rules of the church, by the help of God. When possible, we should always attend services. You may think you won't be missed if you don't go, but you will. Suppose all felt that way and stayed at home, the meeting houses would soon be closed. We are bound unto the Lord,

and unto one another in ties far greater than earthly bonds, and it becometh us to adhere to these things.

We are told not to receive an accusation against an Elder except before two or three witnesses. So if any should accuse an Elder of something, we are commanded to have witnesses present before we should listen to them. Jealousy and malice sometimes causes one to try to destroy the usefulness of an Elder, and it certainly becomes us to first find out for ourselves about the matter before it is repeated. This also applies to our criticising brethren behind their backs, and often things that belong to the church and should be kept within the bounds of the church are broadcasted. These things ought not to be.

We are commanded by the King of kings and Lord of lords to love one another fervently, to be tender one toward another, forgiving one another; to be of one mind one toward another; to avoid old wives' fables and striving over words to no profit, but to edify one another. I think the entire matter is summed up when we are told to add to our faith, virtue, and to virtue, knowledge, and to knowledge, temperance, and to temperance, patience, and to patience, godliness, and to godliness, brotherly-kindness, and to brotherly-kindness, charity. For if these things be in you and abound they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his own sins. Wherefore, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure, for if ye do these things ye shall never fail.

The pure mind is to be stirred up by way of remembrance of these things, and we do not tell you these things because ye do not know them, but because ye do know them.

One reason we have written as we have is because we fall short of attaining unto these things and, yet, having the welfare of Zion at heart, we trust. We desire very much to see the doctrine adorned and to live as becometh the followers of Him. If anyone knows that we cannot do these things in and of ourselves it is the writer. There are a number of things that become the ones who preach and believe the doctrine of salvation by grace more than they would become any other people, such as following the Lord in being baptized, manifesting our love one toward another, mentioning the loving kindness of the Lord, and many other things, and greatest of all ascribing all the praise unto the Lord.

D. V. S.

SOMETHING FOR OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS TO THINK ABOUT

"Dear Editors:—

Just a few lines to let you know how I have appreciated your kindness in sending me your good paper these many years free of charge, and now my son-in-law wants to pay for it this year for me, and I surely do appreciate his kindness. I have felt embarrassed all the while because I could not pay for it, still I love the doctrine the dear editors and all the good writers hold to. I enjoy

reading it so much; its about all the preaching I get, as I am hard of hearing and don't get to go to church very often either, as the churches here are in a wrangle, or split up so the children don't care to go, and you know I am sure sorry about it on their account as well as my own, for we all love the Old Baptists, but we don't love wrangling.

I have read your New Year's Greeting and enjoyed it so much, as well as the whole paper. May the Lord bless you all with a prosperous New Year and guide and direct us all through the remainder of our lives, and then if it can be His Holy will to take us home to glory, where we can sing and praise Him forevermore and see him as he is and be like him. Oh, can it be for a sinner like me.

I beg your pardon for writing so much. I only intended to write a few words. Pray for me and mine when it goes well with you. A sinner saved by grace if saved at all."

When we received the foregoing letter, which for obvious reasons we are neither giving the name of the writer nor the city from whence it came, we could but feel that it contained much food for thought and should give Old School Baptists much to think about.

We have known of individuals who were deeply interested in the Church, but because of unsatisfactory conditions which prevailed where they attended meeting they never asked for a home in the Church. Not long ago we questioned one in whose heart we are convinced the Lord has wrought his work of grace, to know their mind concerning uniting with the Church. They confessed to having been on the verge of doing so some years ago, but because of disturbed circumstances in the Church at the time they did not, and now the claim is made they are no longer exercised over the matter.

As to our children, we all well know that it is not within our province or power to teach them true religion, nevertheless the apostle Paul in his epistle to the Ephesians admonished fathers to "provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Those of us who have been taught of the Lord that "this is life eternal that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent," feel that such knowledge is worth ten thousand worlds like this, and we would gladly spend a life time and all that we possess if thereby we could impart such knowledge to our loved ones and friends, but, alas, we are absolutely helpless in and of ourselves to do the least thing to that end. It does seem to us, however, that we should do everything possible to encourage our children to attend our meetings and make things pleasant for them. It is, therefore, a sad commentary upon us when because of wranglings and dissensions among us our children and friends are driven elsewhere. Our writer above says she is "sure sorry about it on their account as well as her own, for they all love the Old Baptists, but they don't love wrangling." We trust that we may all be given to consider these things. It most certainly behooves us to live as becometh the profession we make.

We would to God that we might all so live as to encourage those who have passed from death unto life to take up their cross and follow their Lord by coming home to their friends, being baptized, and thus enter the militant fold. The Poet has well said,

> How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
> When those who love the Lord
> In one another's peace delight,
> And thus fulfill his word, etc.

Our Sister was, as her letter states, on the Free List, and while we, too, appreciate the generosity of her son-in-law in subscribing to the SIGNS for her this year, we wish to assure her that now she has informed us of her condition, we do not intend that she shall be deprived of the paper she so much loves, regardless of whether it is paid for or not, and this applies to others in similar financial circumstances. God grant, if consistent with his holy and divine will that she may yet live many years to enjoy the SIGNS. R.L.D.

ORDINATION

The ordination service of Brother Harold M. Bennett took place at the Old School Baptist meeting-house in Delmar, Del. on Jan. 8, 1942. Each of the eight churches comprising the Salisbury Association was represented. The ordination of Brother Bennett was at the request of the Indiantown and Forest Grove churches to be their pastor, which churches have been without a pastor since the death of Elder G. E. Coulbourn two years ago less a few months. Brother Bennett is a member of the Rewastico church, located between Mardela Springs and Quantico, Wicomico Co., Md., one of the oldest organizations in this section of the country.

The order of the ordination was as follows:—Statements; Hymn and prayer by the pastor, Elder H. C. Ker; Ordination sermon by Elder R. Lester Dodson of Rutherford, N. J., text, 2 Timothy 2:15, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth;" The laying on of hands by Elders Ker and Dodson; Prayer by Elder Dodson; Charge given by Elder Ker; Hymn and benediction by Elder Harold M. Bennett.

COMMITTEE.

NOTE OF THANKS

Elder and Mrs. George Ruston wish to thank all who have sent messages of loving sympathy to them in the death of their dear sister, Grace Aston. Coming so soon after the death of their son, it seems impossible to acknowledge them individually.

ANNOUNCEMENT

We have just learned of the death of Elder J. R. Hardy, of Dallas, Texas, on March 8th. A very able gift has passed from our midst and our readers will greatly miss his writings. A suitable obituary will appear in due course. R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

MINNIE WATKINS BANKS, the daughter and oldest child of Dennis and Jemima Watkins, was born near Knoxville, in Marion County, Iowa, on January 28, 1870, and passed from this

life in her apartment at the old parental Watkins home, now the W. D. Watkins home, near Jefferson, Oregon, January 5, 1942, at the age of 71 years, 11 months, 7 days.

The early years of childhood were spent in her native state, Iowa. The family moved to Oregon in April 1879, and spent the first summer near Corvallis in Benton Co., the next year near McMinnville in Yamhill Co., and the following winter in Eastern Oregon. Returning to the Willamette Valley in the spring of 1881. Later in the same year they located in Linn Co. where the deceased spent the greater part of her life.

Educated in the public schools and the old Jefferson Institute, with short terms at Philomath College, and McMinnville, now Linfield College, she was a teacher in the Linn Co. schools for a number of years.

She was married on July 4, 1900 to J. C. Banks, who survives her.

No children were born to this union.

She had been a member of the Baptist Church for almost thirty years having been baptized into that faith by Elder Silas Williams, a fundamental Baptist preacher of Linn Co. for many years.

Surviving members of her immediate family are; one sister, Mrs. Virgil Weddle of Jefferson, one brother, W. D. Watkins of Jefferson, one niece, Mrs. Raymond Arnold of Scio, and one foster niece, Mrs. Harold Logsdon of Jefferson.

MRS. L. C. McQUEEN,
Clerk of Bethel Church, Linn County.

MARVIN BRUCE ADAMS was born Nov. 25, 1913 at Touchet, Washington and passed away near Hermiston, Ore. Sept. 25, 1941 aged 27 years and 10 months. He is survived by his mother, Mrs. Edith Showalter, brother, Lawrence Adams, and step-father, Charles Showalter. Also two step-brothers and three step-sisters. He was a grandson of Elder J. T. Barnes, deceased. He was raised in Baptist society and attended meeting regularly most of his life at the Mizpah church of Touchet where his grandfather was pastor and his step-father, deacon. He was an unfortunate child in that he never developed the ability to meet responsibilities of life as normal children do but retained much of childishness after reaching the age of manhood. While his parents were on a summer vacation he was living with an aunt and her son. A stranger spent the night with this family and the next day he came and killed the woman in order to rob the house. A short while afterward this young man returned from his day's work and was murdered while feeding the cattle. When the son returned he was saluted in a friendly tone by this murderer, and while feeding his hogs he, too, was killed. His purse and car were taken and this stranger, thinking all knowledge concerning him was destroyed, left the state. Later the identity of the car through its license betrayed him and he is held for trial pleading, "Not guilty because of insanity." I was called to minister at the funeral at Walla Walla and tried to comfort the bereaved by reminding them of an over ruling Providence in whose hands are all things and events, many of which are so deep and mysterious that we cannot understand them, but in all of them His wisdom predominates; and the redemption wrought by Jesus Christ is sufficient and the only way to our heavenly inheritance, no matter what our position in life may be or what manner of death we may meet. "Man's goings are of the Lord; how can a man then understand his own way?"

C. W. BOND.

MRS. MINNIE ALICE RICE, wife of T. W. Rice, was born March 19, 1870. Departed this life November 7, 1941, aged 71 years. She was married to T. W. Rice December 27, 1887. Sister Rice united with Wolf Island Primitive Baptist Church in July 1892 afterward moving her membership to Dan River Church, both churches being in Rockingham County, N. C., where it remained until her death. It was my privilege to serve her as pastor for eighteen years. She was firm in the principles of the doctrine of electing grace and is greatly missed by her church. Her life appeared to be as nearly like an open book as any I have ever known. She spoke her mind frankly about things and one admired her frankness and sincerity. If you disagreed with her she always showed a charitable attitude. She is survived by her husband, one of our oldest members, also two children, Mrs. Lelia Cobb and A. M. Rice. Her funeral was conducted from Dan River Church the second day in November, 1941 by Elders T. A. Stanfield, W. R. Dodd, W. C. King and the writer. I feel assured our loss is the gain of our sister. May the grief be not as

for one without hope. May the God of all grace comfort all that are dear to her.

D. V. SPANGLER.

MRS. LOTTIE A. DAVIS, our sister in the fellowship of the grace of God, fell asleep in Jesus January 24, 1942 at the home of her daughter Mrs. H. R. Kidwell, 3832 So. 9th St., Arlington, Va., aged 65. She had been in failing health for a long time and practically helpless for the past several months. I administered to her the ordinance of believer's baptism in July 1914. Her membership was with the Frying Pan Church in Fairfax Co., Va. She first heard the gospel preached in the power of it, and to the deliverance of her soul, from the lips of the late Elder John G. Eubanks. He was made God's messenger to her, and her heart, like Lydia's, was opened of the Lord to receive the preached word. It was one Saturday morning about 1908 or 1909, during which time Elder Eubanks was suppling the church here in the absence of a regular pastor. That morning, Mrs. Davis was driving to Herndon to transact some business; and in passing by the meeting-house where the meeting was then being held, an impression came over her irresistibly, to stop and go into the meeting. Before that, she had attended the meetings only very rarely. But from that day, Frying Pan Church became her spiritual home. She loved the place and the people and the doctrine preached there. At the funeral, I could think of no more appropriate text than the 8th verse of the 26th Psalm. Her heart was ever in the meetings, even when physically it was impossible for her to be present. She is survived by three daughters and four sons, and by three brothers and five sisters. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." She passed out from us in the embrace of the same faith and hope in the Lord Jesus Christ which has held her soul fast thirty and more years. She had been so long in affliction that we felt it wrong to be sad at her funeral, and that we should rejoice for her that she is at rest with the Lord. Her body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Herndon, Va.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

Pilot-Officer JOHN B. RUSTON, second son of Elder and Mrs. George Ruston, died on active service, September 21, 1941. He was born in New York City, July 14, 1915. He grew up fond of home and friends, and it could truly be said of him that he was a lover of good men. He had no love for war, as he was blessed with a lovely, unselfish disposition, which was reflected in his face, and it was his joy to make others happy. It seemed that necessity was laid upon him, so that although he was well-liked by the company that employed him, and he had been advanced several times, he felt very deeply that it was his duty to go to the aid of his country, even though he knew it might result in the loss of his life. Knowing that he had given the matter months of serious thought, I could not oppose his determination, feeling that our only trust and comfort were in the living God. After he had gone, the boy was almost constantly laid on my mind, and my soul wrestled for him, and it seemed that God was not unmindful of our cry. We felt we had not talked to him much to find out where he stood, but would often feel that he was not without serious thoughts. We wrote him on one occasion soon after he arrived in England, and opened our heart to him as to our hope, and tried to encourage him, if his mind was that way, to not fail to look to the right source for help in every time of need. In reply he said, "Dad, your letter, which I received soon after I arrived in England, has meant a lot to me, I have read it several times, and it does me good." Later he wrote, "I've just been reading your letter again. I really do appreciate it more than I can say. More and more I feel that there is something behind all this mess, controlling it for some purpose. That is the only way I can feel at all reconciled to having things as they are. Anyhow, Dad, your letter expresses my feelings, better than I can, at the moment." His sister Ellen, who is in England, recently sent us some of his letters, to her. In one he wrote, "Have no fear that I shall start cursing when I am in a tight spot. On the occasion you mentioned, (one of his raids when his plane was shot up badly,) I felt very calm, and satisfied that we should be safe if it were the right thing. I do not see how anyone can do this job without seeing a guiding Providence controlling everything. It is not easy for me to express my feelings, but, Ellen, you can rest assured that I am not entirely callous to the beliefs and faith of Mother and Dad." In another letter he wrote, "More and more I feel that we

can only do our best, and beyond that we have to depend on something a bit higher." He was an observer and navigator on a night bomber, had made thirty successful raids over Germany, and had navigated his plane back to the airdrome in England to find a thick soupy fog through which the pilot was unable to make a landing, though he tried several times. After the sixth attempt, they rose to try again when their gas supply failed, and they crashed. He died on the way to the hospital. Of the six boys in the plane, only one is living. John's body was taken to the home of his aunt, Mrs. Harry Price, where many relatives and friends met to show their love and esteem. Mr. Banks, a Strict Baptist minister at Rowley Regis, Staffordshire, officiated at his funeral service in the chapel where my late father, Joseph Ruston, was pastor, and loving hands laid him to rest by his grandfather and grandmother. For over a year we carried our lovely boy to a throne of grace, begging the Lord to preserve him to us, if it were His will. When the news of his death came, our first words were, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord," and like David, we felt to say, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." We bless the Lord that we can say, "God took him." We do feel it was not our enemies. We thank God that we know where he lies, for so many in this cruel war do not know where their boys are, but even they can bless God, for He knows where they all are, and not one can fall without Him. The sweetest expressions from John to us during the past year, could not have come from him except through such trying experiences, and we believe the day will come when we shall see a needs-be for our greatest sorrows.

The wish was expressed by many in the community that a memorial service be held here. Elder Lefferts acceded to our request, and spoke comfortingly to us. G. R.

ELDER C. W. ANDERSON was born September 5, 1853 and died July 29, 1940. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Lottie Anderson, of Elkins, Arkansas who sent us this brief information. He was a modest, humble man who shunned publicity for himself. For many years he was a minister of the gospel and was a SIGNS subscriber for over 60 years. For several years prior to his passing he was in declining health.

(On the first page of this issue we submit a poem composed by Elder Anderson.)

MEETINGS

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sundays in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y. at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell and Fizer Sts., Memphis, Tenn., second and fourth Saturday nights and Sunday at 11 a. m.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas. Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Texas.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Salem Old School Baptist Church of Philadelphia, Pa., in Park Avenue Hall, 1315 Columbia Ave., Thursday and Friday, May 21st and 22nd, 1942. All brethren, sisters and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

T. C. KOCH, Church Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held, Providence permitting, with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, N. J., for two days, June 3rd and 4th, services commencing at 10:30 a. m. Eastern War Time, or the time that is then prevailing. All ministering and other brethren and friends of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us. Those coming by train on June 2nd will be met at the Station in the afternoon, and those coming by auto should go direct to Elder C. W. Vaughn's home, 127 W. Broad St., Hopewell, N. J., and all who come either by train or auto on Wednesday, June 3rd, should go direct to the meetinghouse.

ELVIRA H. CONNER, Church Clerk.

MEETINGS

EBENEZER
OLD SCHOOL
BAPTIST CHURCH
IN
NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.
Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 A.M. 1:30 P. M.
To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A. M.
ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A. M. 2 P. M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists is now settled in her new church-house, at 4614 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas, where she holds her regular monthly services on each first Sunday at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. Preaching services also on each third Sunday by Elder C. B. Teague, and each second Sunday by brother O. C. Lee, at 11 o'clock a. m. A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. R. HARDY, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Eligin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

VOL. 110 RUTHERFORD, N. J., MAY, 1942 NO. 5

CORRESPONDENCE

ROMANS 12:1

My mind is now arrested by some thoughts concerning Romans 12:1. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." The word "therefore" implies that the subject under discussion is considered. This exhortation is in harmony with the doctrine of grace that has just been discussed. This letter is addressed "To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints." Romans 1:7. Therefore, we conclude that the "brethren" in the text could not apply to any other people or by those of any other place, than those who are in possession of the same blessing as being "beloved of God, called to be saints." In the first part of this letter Paul is inspired to point out that there is no respect of persons with God in regards to the Jews and Gentiles. The Jews have nothing to boast because they are Jews outwardly, "For we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one." Romans 3:9, 10. Then Paul explains the doctrine of salvation solely and wholly by the grace of God and proves the folly of depending upon works for salvation. In the chapter just preceding the text Paul says, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." Romans 11:7. Then it is according to God's mercy that any of us are in possession of any gift or calling of God and not according to any works or worldly wisdom of ourselves. It is not upon the volition of our own will but "by the mercies of God" that we are enabled to "present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God." God's calling is holy and acceptable, His gifts are holy and acceptable. Those who are called to be saints were made accepted in the Beloved. Of course all for whom Christ fulfilled the law and died are holy and acceptable unto God. Paul says, "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Romans 11:29.

God does not call in vain, neither does He bestow a gift in vain. His calling is effectual and His gifts fit in the proper places to perfect a complete body of believers. "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us." Romans 12:5, 6. In Isaiah 55:10, 11 we read of the effectual working of God's mighty power. "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Therefore, I contend that to whomsoever this exhortation is applicable will be enabled to present their bodies a living sacrifice. Paul calls this a "reasonable service." I verily believe this is a reasonable service instead of a very difficult task as some of the people in this world would have us believe. The scriptures explain the yoke as being *easy,* the burden *light* and His commandments as *not grievous* to His people. The reasonableness of this service is made simple when we are blessed to realize the reason, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Paul said, "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." In this experience Paul was taught that God not only must work the will but also *to do* before any of us could be enabled to manifest any of these graces. Paul was blessed with the gift of exhortation in the remaining part of this letter to the brethren at Rome and I am persuaded to believe that this exhortation was received by "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches." I believe these exhortations were effectual to God's children then and have a place in God's church today and when exhortations are necessary now some one is blessed to exhort. Some of these gifts are spoken of in this chapter and they are all necessary and fit in the proper place and function according to the will of God. We are not authorized to say that any gift is more necessary than any other but we must admit that it takes all to constitute the body of Christ. Some of our brethren seem to err in considering some special person who is especially gifted as a straightedge to use in measuring all Old Baptists. Paul, in his letter "To the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus," said, "Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." Eph. 4:7. And he enumerated the apostles, prophets, evangelists and teachers, "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Eph. 4:12. I verily believe God has a specific use for every gift which is bestowed upon his children. When one of God's ordained is blessed with the gift of exhortation, some are in need of exhortation; when one is blessed to teach, some need to be taught (not to change their belief but to more fully explain to them just what

they do actually believe). God knows how and when to strengthen the faith in His children and to renew their hopes. Some are blessed to give and the scriptures say, "Let him do it with simplicity." I do not believe that it is according to this standard when man made institutions and boards plead for donations, publish and praise the names of the donors, and distribute the donations according to man made rules and regulations. This does not occur to me to be with *simplicity*. When God puts it into the heart of one of His children to give, the giving is done cheerfully, liberally and freely to the proper place. When the giver is at a loss to know where the gift is most needed, he is reminded that the church, as authorized by the scriptures, have ordained deacons who are blessed to know how to distribute wisely to the necessity of the saints. Brethren, let us be content with our lot, to abide in our calling, be thankful for the gifts God has seen fit to bestow upon us; and may God bless us not to accuse a brother of heresy until we have been thoroughly convinced that we thoroughly understand his position and that position of doctrine, order or practice to be in opposition to that which is authorized by Christ, who is the head of the church. Brethren, I am now under the treatment of doctors for very high blood pressure and upset nervous system and have not been able to work for several months but I feel to have been made to "Glory in tribulations also." I believe that it pleased God to consecrate such things as deaths, lingering illness, financial calamities, false accusations, persecutions of false brethren and many other unpleasant things to make more perfect the belief instilled in me to wit: the predestination of all things; salvation in time and eternity, solely by the grace of God; God's choice of His elect in Christ Jesus; Jesus, the perfect workman, who obeyed the law and shed His blood that the elect might be holy and acceptable unto God. Yes, I believe in the final preservation of the saints and that some sweet day after awhile God's complete family will be blessed to bask in the sunlight of God's eternal love on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance praising Him more perfectly in that endless eternity. Cast a mantle of charity over my many imperfections. Remember me when at the throne of grace.

E. J. LAMBERT.

[We approve thoroughly all that Elder Lambert has said and can, therefore, utter a hearty Amen. R. L. D.]

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER JACOB F. SPANGLER

(The following experience of the late Elder J. F. Spangler, father of our esteemed associate editor, Elder David V. Spangler, has been sent to us for publication in the SIGNS, as many of our readers in North Carolina and Virginia are anxious to read it. We gladly comply with the request. R. L. D.)

DEAR BRETHREN GOLD AND LESTER: —Beloved brethren in Christ. As it has been requested of me to write my experience for publication in the LANDMARK, I will try, hoping the Lord may direct my mind. I was raised a moral

boy. My mother has belonged to the Tunkered church ever since before I could remember her joining any church, and my father is no professor of religion at all. My parents raised me up to not swear, nor drink and be drunk; and when I was 21 years of age I had never sworn an oath, and I am thankful that they brought me up in morality, but morality is not religion. If I ever have experienced any of the dealings of the Lord, and I am living with that humble hope today, in the year 1887, when at work alone in the field, I saw myself a sinner, and meditating upon death and judgment I got in so much trouble on account of my sins that I shed tears along as I was hoeing corn, and could hardly keep from crying aloud, and the tears fell upon the ground until I got to the end of my row. There I looked all around to see if there was any one to see me, and then fell on my knees, and tried to pray to the good Lord, and it seemed that my prayer did not rise above my head, and I arose and went to work promising myself to do better and live a better life; but this wore away until in the year 1890 in the hours of night, after going to bed as usual, thinking nothing of my soul's welfare, and at the midnight hours when I felt to say that the good Lord did arrest me in my wickedness, and did show to me in a dream of the night that I was sinking in death. I thought the blood was gushing out of my mouth upon the ground. It seemed that myself and wife, my brother-in-law and his wife were walking through an orchard, and I thought I spoke to them and told them that I was bound to die, and I awoke, and was begging the Lord to be merciful to me a sinner, save or I perish was my very breathing. O, my dear brethren and sisters, this was the time I felt to be the most wretched being that ever had lived on earth. It seemed that everything that I had done wrong was unfolded to me and it appeared it was more than I could bear. I wept till my pillow was wet, no more sleep for me, for I felt that I was going to die at any minute, and sink into everlasting woe and misery, and if so it would be just, for then I saw myself to be such a sinner, and had trodden the goodness and mercies of God under foot. The next morning when I got up and went to the cook room, where I would be out of sight of my family, and made a fire in the cookstove with tears falling in the fire, and my very breathing was, Lord be merciful to me, save or I perish, and went on in this condition for eight months. Some times it would wear away a little, and then trouble would come again, and I would go to the lonely pine grove where I thought no eyes could see me except the All-seeing God, and there would try to pray the best I could, and I could only say, Lord save, I perish. After I had gone on eight months in this awful trouble, one Sunday I read the Bible the best part of the day, and in the evening started to the mill-house to throw out a little grain to my hogs. As I was going along the path I became in so much trouble I thought I would try to ask the Lord one more time to pardon me of my sins, shedding tears of sorrow on account of my sins, and when I got into the mill yard my burden was gone

and I knew not how it went, and I found myself in praise to God aloud, and thanking him for the wonderful work I felt he had done in pardoning my sins, and felt that I wanted to be baptized, and went on this way a day or two, and then doubts and fears did arise, and then I feared that I was deceived, and was in as much trouble as ever for two months, feeling at times that I wanted to offer myself to the church, but fearing I was deceived, and might deceive others, and was at a stand-still point. I could not be satisfied, and I would go to the Baptist meetings, and to the baptizings, and would stand on the bank and shed tears wishing I could feel fit to go into the water, and be baptized. On going to bed one night, when I lay down I prayed to the Lord that if I was deceived that he would undeceive me, that he would show me in some way before morning. I dreamed that night that I was traveling along, and a great, exceeding mountain where the rocks were hanging over me, and when I had gone so far the way was closed up, and could go no farther, and I was in great trouble, and thought that I turned to go back, but the way was closed up behind me, and I could not go back, and was under this great mountain. O, what trouble I was in, but in a moment I heard a noise in front of me in the way I had been traveling, and there was a way opened, and two came marching up to me, one on each side of me, and marched me out with the sweetest music I ever heard, and when I came from this distressing place, as far as eyes could behold, it was the most beautiful place I ever saw, and a multitude of people standing with their faces in the direction in which I had just come from with a smile on their faces. This showed to me the trouble I was in, feeling I was deceived, but it was my duty to go on and offer to the church which I did, and was received into the Primitive Church and was baptized by Elder Amos Dickerson, and feel that I am at home with the loved ones that I met when I came from this mountain of trouble.

Brethren, remember me and mine in your prayers. Your little brother if one at all,

JACOB F. SPANGLER.

Little River, Va.

WILSON, N. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—

A few days before receiving the last issue of the SIGNS I asked my wife if we had been missing copies, and we agreed that we had, but when the last one came I found out what had taken place, and somehow it just satisfied me when I read it through, and will say that I enjoyed it as well as any issue I had read in a long time and a little better. I feel to say that I am glad you have taken over the publishing of it, and will look after its contents. I felt that Mr. Beebe did a good job, but when one is not a member it seems that we do not get that fullness of feeling that we do when one is a member, and especially when one can write as well as you. I read with special interest what you had to say about the resurrection which I feel is a vital point in the doctrine of grace, and you said that you believed it, but no fur-

ther than Paul, and that is enough, for he set it forth as plainly as anyone could. None of us have been to heaven to find out any further and none of us were at the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, so no one living now is an eye witness, and the bible which is the word of God is all that we have, and what we feel that the Lord has revealed to us by His spirit of what Paul and others wrote, so I am hoping that the SIGNS will stay with the doctrine of grace all the way through which is for time and eternity. I have been reading it for several years and have considered it one of the best papers printed among our people, and have asked a few of my brethren and friends to subscribe for it and they have enjoyed it, and I feel that they will continue.

I hope I am a firm believer in the doctrine of grace which embraces the foreknowledge of God, the predestination of God, the selection of His people before time, and the final resurrection of the whole church without a single one being lost. In trying to preach this glorious doctrine it has seemed so plain that every one should have no trouble in believing it, but it is a matter of impossibility with them, for it is said that it is hid from the wise and prudent, and is revealed unto babes. Oh how dependent we poor nattural creatures are; just cannot do anything without Him, and if you want to know my feelings I am glad that it is so, for nothing else would be safe, and I have felt that His predestination also takes care of it all, "for whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His son," and, "whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified." A few days ago there came to my mind the language of the prophet, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Then the thought followed if there was a power that could say how anything should come out at the end from the beginning He must have power to control all things that come in between to prevent them from destroying His decree that it may come out as He has determined. Then the apostle said, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Do we understand this to mean just what it says? I think so. If we do not then we are bound to do some twisting. I did not intend to write all this but just felt to commend you in your undertaking with the SIGNS and hope that you will be successful. Wish you could visit us some time and be at our Association. Last year we had a very large congregation on Sunday, well over 5000 people and 43 visiting preachers. They are not all dead yet, some going out, some coming in. May the dear Lord bless us all to stay with the truth and be faithful to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. In hope beyond the grave.

E. L. COBB.

[We deeply appreciate Elder Cobb's letter. R. L. D.]

JACKSONVILLE, N. C.

For some reason it was the Lord's will some few months ago to reveal some beauties to me in regard to the people of God which I saw as the church of God shown to me as a woman. I know I cannot tell or write anything about this that will be to the comfort of any one else, or myself, unless the Lord directs me. This appeared to me in deep sleep. I was taken up and carried to a strange land, away from my wife, my children and all my earthly possessions. In this strange land I saw a beautiful building and I was carried inside it. I looked at the beauty of it and there appeared a woman inside and she was standing with her back to the wall of the building. I heard her groaning and complaining, I looked at her and she was in tears. I do not feel worthy to finish but I was carried to her side and as I stood there I was married alone to her. There was no beauty about her that I should desire her yet I hope there was a feeling went out for her, seeing her tears and hearing her complaints. As soon as this took place there was something said to me "You are a criminal for you have a wife and now you are married to another". I will never be able to describe the awful feelings I had, but just as these words were spoken to me a man appeared on the other side of the woman. In this sad condition I looked at the man and asked him one question, "How can I get a divorce from this woman and go home?" This was the first time I had remembered my natural kindred. I never want to forget the look he gave me. There was a smile on his face as he said, "This woman is not like other women, for the man who is married to her will never be divorced from her." There was a feeling followed those words that did me so much good that I could say of a truth that God can separate me from every trifle of the world and bless me for a few minutes to look at the beauties that rise from the saddest moments of my life. I do not know that this will be worth anything to any one but I am writing for my own relief. There have been expressions made about the Lord's people that the time is so critical that some of them may be lost. Whoever believes that is not my brother. I believe at this time they are just as safe in the midst of all the confusion as they are in peace time, for their God whom I love is in the air, on the sea, on the battle field, in the trenches, and everywhere else and does His will. It is His purpose that the wicked shall do wickedly, that is what they were made for and to do, but I do rejoice in the one power who has ever defended this woman in the midst of all her conflicts. No matter how lame or sad she may be, she is my love, my dove, my undefiled. When we can see her coming, dancing upon the hills, leaping upon the mountains we can surely say she is our mother, the only one we love. There is no one like her, for love sits upon her eye-lids and scatters delight. So many times she hides herself and I am made to wonder where she is gone but those times are just as necessary as to feel contented. So many times the children of God are made to wonder about many things concerning their hope. I would like to say here that the best evidence of a hope be-

yond this world is that you love the brethren, and if we love them we love the Lord, and heaven will be our home without the loss of one.

Sometimes I want to tell all fathers and mothers who have sons in this war of my own experience in the World War. I feel your hearts have been made to mourn. I remember so well the morning I walked out on top deck of the battleship I had been sailing on for forty days and nights and I was blessed to see the Lord's people standing over the sea in a beautiful brightness I have never forgotten. Elder Isaac Jones was standing before them preaching salvation by the grace of God and grace alone. I am sure your sons and mine, if they are taught of the family of Jacob, will be taught of the Lord and it will take place at God's appointed time and in the right place. When every man falls and the mountains are leveled God will be the same unchangeable one. When we are cast down as low as David was when he said the Lord had forgotten him and he was left alone, this to your flesh is sad but it is the place where God reveals himself as one who is able to make your tongue sing His praise. To be alone is not to be where there is no other person, but if we are among ten thousand without His presence, we are alone. I feel the days I have spent in the past have been filled with much sorrow and disappointment. I was only fourteen years old when I felt to be condemned to hell without the mercy of God, now I am forty years old and you can see at times under doubts and in fears. I would love to tell the whole world just how good the Lord has been to me. He has blest me with everything I have ever received since I was born into the world. It was not because of my obedience either, but I believe it was prepared for me, naturally and spiritually, before the world began. Some think the Lord has a purpose in all things but it is not in keeping with His will. I do not think at this time He would purpose anything contrary to His will. When we are blessed to look and see the beauties there are in the seven attributes of God we do not see any of them contrary to the other, but all of them are equal, one with the other. I will close for this time. If there is anything in this that is unsound to the reader I will appreciate your calling my attention to it, and if it is any comfort to anyone I will be glad to know it. Yours to remember in love I hope.

T. H. EDWARDS.

FLORENCE, Ala.

To the readers of the SIGNS, and all lovers of the truth:—I wish to comment on the statements of two prominent Editors. No. 1 says, "When God says a thing, it shall be done, all hell can't prevent it." No. 2 says: "When God says anything shall be, it will be, and must be, God's shalls are unchangeable." I am confident that the real old Predestinarian Baptists will accept the above statements as bible truth, but is it consistent with the doctrine these gentlemen preach? Well, let us try them by the standard of truth. "She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21. God has declared the things that shall be done. No.

1 says: "All hell can't prevent it." No. 2 says: "When God says anything shall be, it will be, and must be, God's shalls are unchangeable." Now keep in mind the statements of the Editors while we present more of God's shalls. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." John 6:37. It is written in the prophets, "And they shall all be taught of God." John 6:45, "And other sheep I have, which are not this fold: (Jewish fold) them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd. John 10:16. "This shall be written for the generation to come: (Christ's generation) and the people which shall be created, shall praise the Lord, Ps. 102:18. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem" Isa. 27:13. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you." II Peter 2:1. "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." John 5:25. "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isaiah 55:11. "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." Isa., 45:25. If all the seed of Israel are not justified, and all do not glory, is this prophecy fulfilled? The Saviour said: "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished." Luke 18:31. The prophet said: "All the seed of Israel shall be justified, and shall glory." The Saviour said: What the prophets wrote, "shall be accomplished." No. 1 editor said: "When God says a thing, it shall be done, all hell can't prevent it." In a discussion he said: "Yes, I believe in Election and Predestination and fore-knowledge of God. God put it in his Bible and you can call it Old Baptist doctrine if you want to, but I believe it." Again says he: "They talk about two sides to salvation, there is but one side. Whoever heard tell of a dead man getting out of his coffin?" Again, "Salvation is unconditioned on works past, present, or future." The above was spoken in debate, in his preaching he says: "the sinner must accept Christ and believe on him as his personal Saviour in order to be saved." The word accept occurs but one time in the New Testament, in the 24th chapter of Acts, and does not refer to the salvation of a sinner. In the natural kingdom a child accepts its parents after it is born and grown old enough to receive evidence of the fact. "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." Did we perform conditions in order to be born of the earthy? If not then we do not perform conditions in order to be born of the heavenly.

Each form of life brings forth its own
Through nature's given laws.
It is a fact, that is well known,
Effects arise from cause.

All life that belongs to earth is a created life and is reproduced through the laws that govern its generation, everything bringing forth after its kind. "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die." "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." In that eternal covenant it was agreed that Jesus should be born of woman, and die that his life be given to the chosen vessels of mercy, and his redeemed family is a great multitude that no man can number. It is the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus that makes us free from the law of sin and death. No. 1 Editor in his paper says: "And we, we are by nature of the world and the things which are in the world, the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life, are by nature the governing principles of our lives." I accept the above statement as truth, we are in bondage under the elements of the world, as No. 1 says: "We are dead men and cannot get out of our coffins." No. 2 Editor says: "But when we turn to him, when we acknowledge that we are sinners, lost and condemned, when we hear his words and believe him who sent his only begotten Son into the world and gave him to be the propitiation for our sins and when we fully accept that Christ died for our sins and trust in him, the Holy Spirit begins to do His work and we experience a new birth." What I want to know, is the sinner in the flesh, or in the Spirit, when he does the things mentioned above? If he is in the flesh he cannot please God; if he is in the Spirit he is already a child of God, "for as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Paul refuted this heresy long ago. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." How do we believe? "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." If so can we believe until God does that work? If we believe according to the power of God, can we believe until we feel that power? Who by Him (Christ) do believe in God, is there any other cause for our belief? Do we not believe because we are "ordained to eternal life?" Acts 13:49. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." Christ is their word and "quick and powerful and sharper than any two edged Sword," He is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Now according to No. 1 Editor God's people shall believe on Christ, "and all hell can't prevent it." One smooth stone out of the five is enough to slay Goliath. He has said too much for the safety of his craft. May the God of all grace bless and comfort His poor and afflicted people.

Submitted in love,

LYTLE BURNS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS":

Mrs. G. E. Jones, La., $1; A Friend, Ont., $1; Mrs. J. H. Wright, Ky., $3; Mrs. J. J. Vories, Ky., $1; Mrs. J. H. Jones, Ga., $1; D. H. Bradley, Tex., $2; Mrs. M. E. Kuns, Cal., $1; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $2; Mrs. M. French, Pa., $1; Mrs. G. T. Franklin, Va., $1; J. Furr White, Md., $3; Mrs. L. T. Genung, N. Y., $1; J. S. Mace, Pa., $1; Mrs. R. C. Wright, Texas, $1.

EDITORIAL

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ISAIAH 35:10

"And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

A brother in Texas writes us as follows: "I am writing to ask if you will give your views on Isaiah 35:10. The main thought in this is the returning and coming to Zion. Do they in this get back to where they fell from in the Garden of Eden, or where do we locate Zion behind the Gospel Day?"

We are not certain that we clearly understand our brother's query in its entirety. We believe we do understand it sufficiently, however, to realize that we are likely to find ourself in very deep water, so to speak, in attempting to comply with his request, unless the Lord undertakes for us. There have been occasions when our mind has been led to consider the significance of this scripture, but we have never undertaken to enter into the depth of the subject and it is with fearfulness and trembling that we do so now.

Unquestionably, the prophet of the Lord was inspired by the Holy Ghost to look down through the centuries of time, by faith, and see some great and notable event taking place. He first declares that "the ransomed of the Lord shall return." It might be helpful at this point to ask a couple of questions; (1) Who are the ransomed of the Lord? (2) Where were they originally, and where had they been that it might be said of them they "shall return?" In attempting to answer the first question, we believe the Apostle Paul had "the ransomed of the Lord" in mind when he was writing his epistle to the Church at Ephesus. He said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Eph. 1:3-4. And in the tenth verse of the second chapter of this same epistle, the apostle says: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Our understanding is that these ransomed ones are the true spiritual church of God, the Lamb's wife, who was created in Christ. Therefore it was said after God created the world and the fullness thereof and was ready to create man, or Adam, "Let

us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them." Gen. 1: 26-27.

The record shows that Eve was created in Adam, and it is said that God caused a deep sleep to fall upon him and he took out one of his ribs and made a woman. And when they had partaken of the forbidden fruit, God called unto Adam and said, "Where art thou?" This sets forth in type the Church of God as she stood in Christ before ever the earth was, and also showed that God only looked to his Son as the responsible head for the sins of his bride and, therefore, it is written, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Isa. 53:4-5. We have been reading something along this line of late in the SIGNS under the topic of Adam being the figure of him that was to come.

As we have already said, the Church of God was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Like Eve, at first she was not manifested, or did not appear separate and apart from her head. David, speaking on behalf of "the ransomed of the Lord" said, "My substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." Psalm 139:15-16. God, seeing the substance of his Son, saw his bride as she stood in him, and she was perfect in him, though not yet manifested. It is to be noted it was said she "being unperfect," not imperfect, but *unperfect,* or not fashioned, for as yet there was none of his members manifested. In due time, however, they were to be manifested in Adam and take on flesh and blood, and through the transgression of Adam, their federal earthly head, were to become involved in sin and come under the condemnation of death, thereby being separated from God, who would hold his Son, their Spiritual Head, accountable; and who in the fullness of time would come in the likeness of sinful flesh, to suffer and die, to ransom or redeem and deliver them from under the curse of the law. Therefore Paul says, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them, who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Hebrews 2: 14-15.

In trying to answer the second question, we wish to say that "the ransomed of the Lord" stood originally in Christ, but as we have already indicated, when

they partook of flesh and blood and Adam transgressed they all fell from their first estate and died, or became separated from God by wicked works with Adam in the transgression. We read in first Corinthians 15:22, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Therefore when Christ came and gave his life as a ransom for them, they were redeemed, which means they were his before they sinned, otherwise he could not have redeemed them, for to redeem means to buy back that which was possessed before and having redeemed and delivered them from the bondage they were under, they became free and reinstated, or restored in favor with God. And when Jesus said, as is recorded in John 17:1-8, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me," they stood complete in Him and as perfect as though they had never sinned. In Romans, eighth chapter, verse thirty-two, Paul says, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" He then asks some questions and shows conclusively in the answers which he gives that nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. While our readers have doubtless read and heard them many, many times before, they cannot be said or repeated too often.

Here they are: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." This is certainly reassuring to poor sinners.

Our brother asks, "Do they in this get

back to where they fell from in the Garden of Eden, or where do we locate Zion behind the gospel day?" If they do not get back beyond their standing in Adam in the Garden of Eden, may God pity them still, for their standing in Adam was only an earthly standing. It is written, "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." Adam in his first state was not a subject of salvation, being upright and not having sinned. To return to that state, or condition, would mean little, comparatively speaking. When Adam transgressed, the calamity which came upon "the ransomed of the Lord" was that their standing in Christ was jeopardized, but when Christ came and stood and suffered, the just for the unjust, in their stead, their sins were imputed unto him and his righteousness was imputed unto them, and then they became all fair and without spot, wrinkle or any such things before God in love. Let it be noted it was not said the ransomed of the Lord shall return to Zion, but rather that they shall return and *come to Zion.* The same prophet in the seventh verse of the fifty-fifth chapter says: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." It is this returning unto the Lord which is so vital and so all-important to the people of God, and the prophet not only tells of the highway by which they shall return, but also what would take place when these things should come to pass. He begins the thirty-fifth chapter by saying, "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God." This was foretelling what would come over both Jew and Gentile when the Lord Jesus Christ would appear in his glory in the gospel day. It is in this day that the weak hands need to be strengthened and the feeble knees confirmed, and that it should be said to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you." Let us take courage and be comforted in these things. The prophet continued to tell of the blessings that would accompany this day. He said, "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes." Herein is set forth the fruitful condition of Zion. Then he says, "And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall

not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." He is here exalting Christ who said of himself, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." It is the way of holiness which was cast up in the wilderness, when Jesus came and was manifested in the flesh. Nothing unclean shall pass over this way; no lion or any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, neither has the vulture's eye seen it, but it is for those, the wayfaring men, though fools shall not err therein, and the redeemed of the Lord shall walk there. The truth is gloriously beautiful when seen in its simplicity, and the humblest may behold it when it is revealed unto them. Then it is that Zion is seen as a city set on a hill, which is beautiful for situation and the joy of the whole earth, and those who have returned unto the Lord do desire to come to Zion, and when they come it is with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, and they do obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing flee away.

We trust the Lord has guided and directed us in our attempt to comply with our brother's request, and if so it will redound to His own praise and glory, and we most certainly would not have it otherwise. R. L. D.

WRITINGS OF THE LATE ELDER P. D. GOLD

(One of our good friends in the South has sent us *Zion's Landmark* of January 15th, 1910, with an article entitled "Decay-Immortality," by Elder Gold, for publication. Immediately following that article was one under the caption of the "Prayer of Faith," and we have decided to publish both of these articles herewith. R. L. D.)

DECAY—IMMORTALITY

Exhaustion is evidence of finiteness and failure, and is the result of the wearing away of the agencies of nature. Vegetation springs forth in luxuriousness and with promise of long life in its early growth. But towards autumn it bears marks of decay, and fades and perishes before winter.

The soil in its virginity puts forth crops that show its fertility, but soon exhaustion follows unless aids are added to stimulate productiveness. However it may be recuperated by feeding the soil with suitable fertilizers.

Man, the noblest creature on earth in his formation and rank, is equally as subject to succumb to the wear and tear of labor, and the taxing of his forces to compete with nature's demands. So that emaciation and death follow. His limbs weaken, his nervous system loses its vitalizing sensitiveness, his taste fails to enjoy the youthful zest of food, his energies relax and weaken, and man soon wastes away and ceases to have pleasure in things of earth. Even that mysterious character known as a Christian who, at times rises above the dull powers of mortality, and finds pasture in the Carmel heights of heavenly manna at times becomes so benumbed by the corrosions of earth, and the wasting of disease, and the gnawing of worldly care as to faint by the way.

All such things of sorrow, decay and disappointment arrest our expectations of satisfaction in this transitory world

of vanities, and furnish a ground of hope and expectation of another and enduring state of perfection—not created out of decay of this perishing state, but a resurrection where former things are done away, and all things become new—not old things made new but out of the old there springs up a new creation in which the desire of immortality dimly felt in the imperfect state as one is renewed in the spirit of his mind, as a vitalizing sense of love and divine joy warms in the soul, and kindles a flame of sacred love for things that never perish, and there appear the foundation and pillars, the frame and substance of a glorious building not made with hands, but eternal in the heavens, and its glories so entrance the soul as to persuade it of a better resurrection wherein mortality is swallowed up of life, and hope is perfected in fruition of eternal youth.

P. D. G.

PRAYER OF FAITH

Sister M. A. Hardy requests my view of James 5:14. "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church: and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord."

The religion of Jesus Christ is the most practical, active, thorough, effectual, complete religion ever known. For there is nothing it comes short in or fails to do.

It digs up by the roots all false systems. The axe is laid at the root of the tree, and every tree that brings not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. Those born of God are new creatures. Old things are past away. Behold all things are of God. Make the tree good and the fruit will be good. The whole teaching of Jesus was new to the world, and condemned every false system of mankind. It was not a rehash made of the selection of the tenets of mankind considered the best, but his doctrine came from heaven, and is pure and holy. It appealed to the judgment of every one born of God, and the doctrine that is pure and true. For instance it is said, as much as in you is live peaceably with all men. What rule could be better than this? Is not the friendship of a man better than his enmity? Is it not good to so live as to conciliate men to peaceable living with you? Where is there as good a rule as the rule of reciprocity, As ye would that men should do to you do ye even so to them.

Jesus teaches his love to his people. He taught also that all power in heaven and earth is delivered into his hand. He showed that he could heal all diseases. His mercy was wonderful. Then if one is sick among you what should he do? The sick among members of the body of Jesus are believers. Now what should they do? Call for the elders and let them pray over him. There must be faith in the one that is sick so that he will call for the elders, and they must have faith in Jesus and pray for him, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick. What is there that the doctrine or truth of Jesus does not do? It makes a sober man out of a drunkard, a loving disciple of Jesus out of a persecutor, an honest man out of a rogue, a truthful man out of a liar, a peaceable man of a violent one, an industrious man out of one too lazy for labor, and is willing to burden

others to support him.

When the people asked John the Baptist what they should do. He said he that hath two coats let him impart to him that has none. To the tax collectors he said, exact no more than what is appointed you. When the soldiers said, and what shall we do? He said unto them do violence to no man, and be content with your wages. What could be safer and better living than this? A religion that does not make any man better than he naturally is does not reach the case. I do not mean that the truth will cause you to feel better in your nature than you were before, but it will improve your conduct, your ways, your thoughts and your doing. It reaches from your head to your feet, and supplies you with the principles that control your entire conduct.

James was an apostle, and preached the gospel, and wrote an epistle full of condemnations of errors and faults, and full of exhortations and instructions as to the manner of living of each child of God. He did not flatter silly human nature that it does not matter how you live—that if you are of the chosen of God you will do all things that are right; but he pointed out the faults of the brethren, and told them how to act concerning their general conduct.

Does our preaching set for the same things? Is it intended that we should prove all things—hold fast to that which is good? How little faith there is among those professing to be God's people? Men ought always to pray and not to faint. God will avenge his own elect—which cry day and night unto him, and will avenge them speedily though he bear long with them. His elect people cry to him day and night. Do we act that way? But shall the Son of man find faith on the earth when he comes?

Did you ever know it to fail to bring a benefit when a sick member sent for the elders and they prayed over him, and anointed him with the oil of joy and love that he was not benefitted?

The most practical, real, effectual thing that is shown in a child of God is that he has been with Jesus and has learned of him.

How much better to be healed by the Lord than to take a lot of bitter medicine from doctors, pay a heavy bill, and then perhaps not be benefitted.

But our proud nature does not like to be humbled to submit to the Lord.

P. D. G.

OBITUARIES

MISS GRACE ASTON, our sister in Christ, departed from this earthly life January 18, 1942, at the Ontario Hospital, London, Ontario, Canada. She received the ordinance of believer's baptism several years ago at the hands of a "Gospel Standard" Baptist minister, and had been a member of Grove Chapel in Drayton Gardens, London, Eng. She came to the United States some years ago, during the period when her brother-in-law, Elder George Ruston, was settled as pastor over churches in the bounds of the Lexington-Roxbury Association in New York State. At about the time when Elder and sister Ruston, with their children, moved from New York State to the service of the Covenanted Baptist Church in Ontario, Canada, sister Grace went to Florida in company with the late Elder John McConnell's sister as a companion for the latter. From there, she came to Virginia where she lived for a few years, becoming identified with the membership of the Frying Pan Church in Fairfax Co., Va. While in Virginia, she made a

visit back to England to visit her aged father and other members of her family whom she had not seen for a long time. While in England, she interviewed the pastor of Grove Chapel relative to getting a letter from that church dismissing her to the church at Frying Pan, but was advised that the Strict Baptist churches do not grant letters of dismission to any churches in the United States; but her pastor further advised her that if she was steadfastly minded to cast in her lot with a church of sound gospel faith and practice in the U. S., that she should do so by "confession of faith"; and that upon her doing so, the Grove Chapel body would drop her name from their membership upon their being advised by the church-clerk here that she had been duly received into membership by some church over here. Following out this course, she stated to the Frying Pan Church her desire to be numbered with them as one of her members, related to them her experience of grace embodying her confession of faith, and was unanimously received as one with us. All the churches of which I am pastor here in Virginia, in Maryland, in Delaware and in Pennsylvania loved her for the truth's sake. She endeared herself to all by her quiet, gentle, humble manner; but much more by her God-given ability to discern between truth and error, by the steadiness of her faith in Christ, by the christian charity which she evidenced toward those within and without the household of faith. She was well-versed in the scriptures both in the letter of them and in their spiritual import. She accepted nothing simply because a preacher said it. While respecting and esteeming those who preach the gospel of the grace of God, she required a "thus saith the Lord" before accepting some interpretation of scripture with which she could not readily agree. During the few years she was among us here in Virginia, she helped me both by her approval and by her criticism. She was an attentive hearer of the Word, and she desired to be found walking in it and not merely believing it. She desired to be both a doer and a hearer of the Word. On account of her frail health, she was so circumstanced that she had to go from Virginia and make her home with her brother-in-law and his family at Dutton, Ontario, Canada. Sister Esther Ruston is her sister in the flesh as well as her sister in Christ, and no sister could ever be more faithful and devoted to another sister than sister Esther has been to sister Grace; and Elder Ruston has been a brother in very deed and truth. There are other members of the family who survive, living in England; and, I think, some surviving relatives here in the U. S. I am not able to list these, not knowing them well; nor is it necessary. The main purpose of this notice is to bear testimony to our sister's faith in Christ and to her love and devotion for the cause of Truth. Funeral services, using the 23rd Psalm were held by her pastor from the meeting-house at Dunwich, Ontario, Can. Interment in the burial-yard adjacent. We have a good hope for her toward God, that she sleeps the sleep of the blest; that she is with her beloved Redeemer until the morning breaks and the shadows forever flee away.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

MR. MERIT C. FOX was born Dec. 29, 1860, in Calhoun Co., Miss. and died Jan. 25, 1942, making his stay on earth 81 years and 26 days. He was united in marriage to Miss Josephine Clark and to this union were born 7 children, 3 of whom are deceased. Those living are Bannie L., Walter C., Price and Merit J. His wife died in 1893 and some years later he married Mrs. Hattie Barrett, widow of Tom Barrett, formerly Hattie Gulledge. Two sons, Nat and Willie were born to this union. His second wife died in 1929. He came to Arkansas in 1890 and spent the rest of his life here. In his early days he united with the Missionary Baptists but later he became dissatisfied with the doctrine they preached and went to hear the Primitive Baptists and was shown that they were the true church. He loved their doctrine and enjoyed going to the meetings but feeling his unworthiness keenly he never united with them. He enjoyed the old hymns and was often heard singing them in the mornings. He had a hope in the Lord that he would never be cast away. We miss him greatly but feel that our loss is his eternal gain. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord". Elder Henry Phillips of Ladelle preached the funeral at Allas Cemetery, near Wilmar, where his body was laid to rest. His granddaughter,

LULA B. FOX.

MRS. JOSEPH BURROUGHS, whose maiden name was Hattie Stout, was born Sept. 27, 1867 and died Oct. 18, 1940. She was married to Mr. Joseph Burroughs Nov. 11, 1891 and to this

union was born one son, Orion Burroughs. She is survived by her husband, son and one grandson, Kenneth Burroughs, who mourn the loss of a devoted wife, mother and grandmother. There is also one brother and one sister, Mrs. Leo Drake, who survive her and realize the loss of another of the family to pass from their associations in this life. She was a devoted lover of the truth and a regular attendant at the meetings of the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. At the times of our Associations she was one to be depended on to assist in every possible way. Her regular duties never kept her from the sacred worship of her Saviour. She never felt to ask for membership in the ordinances but the fruit she bore gave evidence of her relation with the doctrine of the Old School Baptist Church. Her steadfastness could well be stated in the language of Peter when he said, "Although all shall be offended, yet will not I." Mark 14:29.

Mrs. Burroughs had some of the burning away of the flesh manifested to her. Her stand of loyalty was through adversity as well as peace. The Hopewell Church and pastor miss her very much but feel that our loss is her eternal gain. The writer was called to conduct her funeral service but was prevented on account of personal illness. Mr. Burroughs requested that another minister in fellowship with the Hopewell Church be called and Elder Arnold H. Bellows of West Hurley, N. Y., was chosen and filled the requirements with satisfaction to all who mourn for her and we feel that embraces all who knew her. May we feel that she is gone from the evil to come. Her remains were interred in the Pennington Cemetery to sleep in the dust until the time that those who sleep shall be caught up in the cloud to meet the Lord in the air and so shall they ever be with the Lord.

CHARLES W. VAUGHN.

Brother JOHN MacFARLANE departed this life at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Charles Hardy, Sarnia Township, Ontario, March 1, 1941. He was born at Tarbert, Argyleshire, Scotland, in the year 1836, so that when he died, he was in his one hundred and fifth year. He came to Canada with his parents, John and Margaret Mac Farlane, in 1842, and they settled in Caradoc, Ontario. In 1863 he married Margaret McIntyre of Komoka, and to this union were born seven children, two dying in infancy. Five daughters remain, Mrs. A. B. Hunt of Seattle, Washington; Mrs. B. H. Shewman of Pomona, California; Mrs. T. G. Turnbull of London, Ontario, and Miss Margaret and Mrs. Charles Hardy at home. In 1866 he went on the farm where he died to spend the remainder of his long and useful life. Being a man of much natural ability and excellent character, he was widely known and highly respected. He was soon called upon for public office as tax collector, assessor, councillor, reeve and treasurer of the township, and held many other offices of trust. He was an excellent husband and father and his home was a place where many enjoyed his hospitality. He was a very meek man, always lovable and truthful. He had always attended the Covenanted Baptist Church, and was baptized by the late Elder John B. Slauson at Lobo. He was an humble and faithful member, often finding such sweetness in the fellowship of his brethren that he would wonder why he had not joined them long before. More than twenty years ago the writer first heard him express himself as to the love of the brethren and his ardent desire to walk together with them in the fear of God, and from that day we observed a consistency in his walk and conversation which showed it was well with him. We were favoured to be with him and his family on his hundredth birthday, when he received messages from the King, the Prime Minister and many other notable persons, and a throng of friends and acquaintances came to greet him, many testifying what his unselfish life and honourable character had meant to them. Above all this, he loved the habitation of God's house and the place where His honour dwelleth, for what are earthly honours compared to this? For his heavenly gifts his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren will rise up and call him blessed. The writer remembers him as a meek and humble follower of the Lamb, and for him to die was gain. The funeral services were held at his late home, and interment was in Sarnia Cemetery.

G. R.

Our beloved sister, MARY J. SMITH was born March 14, 1852 and departed this life Oct. 30, 1941, at her home 3 miles East of Sipe Springs, Texas, where she had lived many years.

She leaves seven children to mourn her loss, namely: Ida, Ora, Ed., Lucy, Zeak, Etta and Jim. One child, Jessie, having died. Sister Smith, or Aunt Joe as she was lovingly called by her friends and neighbors, had been a member of the Primitive Baptists over 50 years. Her husband died when her children were young and she raised them on the Old Homestead to be grown. She never missed going to meeting when she could do so. In her last days she was very hard of hearing but always sat close to the preacher. I being her pastor spoke loud enough for her to hear and she told me many times she did hear and was comforted. The funeral service was conducted at her home by Elder S. W. Short. Interment in the Winona Cemetery one mile East of her home. She was loved by all that knew her and we miss her at our meetings. The last time I saw her was at our three days meeting in May 1941. We mourn our great loss but not as those having no hope. May the Lord's blessing rest on her mourning children is our prayer.

Her pastor, C. Y. OSTEEN.

SUSAN R. DANCE, our dear sister in Christ, was born March 23, 1848, and passed away Oct. 13, 1941 at the home of her son Milton J. at Glenarm, Baltimore Co., Md. Sister Dance was the daughter of George and Susan Jenkins, and had six sisters and four brothers. She was married to E. Scott Dance, Nov. 24, 1870, and to this union were born eleven children. The four older ones dying before the fifth one was born and all within a period of 18 days. J. Gilbert died at the age of 16. Clifton died in 1914 leaving a wife and two children. Those surviving sister Dance are the dear, devoted husband and five children. Mrs. George C. Baird, Towson, Md.; Lawrence F. and Ernest S., Baltimore, Md.; G. Willard, Phenix, Md., and Milton J., Glenarm, Md. There are eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren; also several nieces and nephews.

From the record of the Rock Spring Church, Lancaster, Pa., we have the following: "Susan R. Jenkins came before the church on Wed., Aug. 18 1869, giving her christian experience which was satisfactory to the church. She, with two other candidates, was baptized the following day by Elder Hartwell. Three others who came before the church the same day were baptized a month later by Elder Wm. Grafton." She was appointed to the clerkship of the Rock Spring Church Oct. 21, 1922 and served until Aug. 27, 1939 at which time she resigned in favor of our present deacon and clerk, Charles B. Osborne. Sister Dance was a faithful member of the Rock Spring Church for over 72 years. Nothing delighted her more than meeting with her brethren. It can truly be said that it was her meat and drink to sit under the sound of the preached word and to mingle with her dear kindred in Christ. After her marriage she moved to the old Dance farm house in the Longreen Valley, Baltimore Co., Md. This delightful old home was a home for Old Baptists for over 50 years. Many Baptists who have passed on have taken away with them fond memories of the hospitality of the Dance home. For many years she took an active part in all the affairs of the Harford Church, better known as the Old Brick, it being much nearer her home than Rock Spring Church. She gave freely whatever assistance it was possible for her to do and her interest was always appreciated by the Harford members. To the writer, sister Dance was a real mother in Israel. For many years it was one of the greatest pleasures of his life to call at the home of Mrs. Baird and take sister Dance and her dear husband to her sister's home at Rock Spring, and then to the church to meeting the following day. Her mind was so filled with the thought of the goodness of her Father's house that it was indeed inspiring to be blessed with her company. She possessed a brilliant mind and a charming personality. These qualities garnished by the grace of God made her a most adorable person. God be praised for such a profitable gift to His church. He alone can bless us with such faithful and devoted members of His body. Sister Dance could truly be called an Old School Baptist, not only in doctrine, but also in walk and conversation. Her life was all that the name implies. Six of the daughters of Brother George Jenkins were members of the Rock Spring Church namely, Susan R., Hannah, Mamie, Hattie, Annie and Lillie. All have now passed into that everlasting rest that awaits the redeemed of the Lord. Mr. and sister Dance, for many years, made their home with their daughter, Mrs. George Baird at Towson, Md., but visited from time to time with their sons. All are now sorrowful that these visits from

mother are now forever ended. I wish to say to each of the children, that however great mother's joy might have been with you, it cannot compare with the joy of the home which is now hers forever more. Mr. Dance is now in his 100th year, and is able to look after many of his needs, and to attend to his duties in the Towson court as he has been doing for many years. Her funeral was held from the home of her son, Milton, and was largely attended. Burial was in the Hartford Church burying ground adjoining the house. The writer felt very unworthy to conduct the last rites over such a godly person. I know how to sympathize with you, father Dance, for I, too, must now gaze upon the vacant chair. Her loving pastor,

D. L. TOPPING.

MRS. MARY GARLAND, our aged sister in Christ, fell sweetly asleep in Jesus February 11, 1942 at the home of her son, Sherman Garland, in Fulton County, Pa., beyond Warfordsburg. She was born April 19, 1850 making her stay on earth 91 years 9 months 23 days. She was the widow of our late brother David R. Garland who died October 10, 1923. She is survived by her son, Sherman Garland, and by one grandson. Her membership was with the Fairview Church at Needmore, Pa. It was my blessed privilege to administer to her the ordinance of believer's baptism March 30, 1920 in company with two others. She was gifted with a spiritual mind, was an interesting talker, and had a large measure of love for the Truth of Christ and for all her brethren in the bonds of that blessed Truth. The one outstanding principle in her was her faithfulness to the cause of Christ, her devotion to the church. She was never so well satisfied as when in the company of her brethren and sitting under the sound of the preached gospel. She was poor in this world but rich in faith. Her deportment was godly, humble, gentle, patient, meek and quiet. Her adornment was that of grace in the heart: outwardly plain, inwardly she was one of the King's daughters. At the funeral, we used as a text the words in 4th chapter of First Thess. from the 13th to the 18th verses. Two hymns were sung. One beginning: "I would not live alway, etc."; the other: "I love Thy Kingdom, Lord." Interment in the cemetery at Sideling Hill, Pa. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." "The memory of the just is blessed." May the Lord comfort the bereaved son and grandson. Her daughter-in-law, our sister Mary, Sherman's wife, could not have been more faithful and devoted to our aged sister had she been her own daughter. The Lord be praised for His goodness and mercy to the children of men.

H. H. LEFFERTS.

In my weakness I will endeavor, the Lord willing, to write something by way of remembrance of my dear parents, whom we hope have been called of the Lord to come up higher. My Mother, SARAH S. (BRYAN) TATUM, was born in Jackson Co., Ala. Aug 22, 1858 and passed away Oct. 4, 1930. My father, ELDER W. H. TATUM, was born in Georgia in 1850, departing this life Jan. 27, 1938.

Feeling my own insufficiency for such things I have made some effort to get some one else to write this, but it seems this was not the Lord's will. I will endeavor, if it is his will and by his help, to do what I feel is my duty. My parents were both, I believe, securely founded in the faith as it is in Christ Jesus. The faith of salvation by grace and grace alone and so far as I know they both carried this faith with them to the end. I have reason to believe they did having been blessed to attend both in their last illness and until the end came. They both, I believe, bore their afflictions, which were great, without murmur, looking ever to Him who is able to save to the uttermost and feeling that what he does is just and right. I have heard Mother say that twice in her life she had been brought to the point of saying, "Lord save or I perish", and if I perish the Lord is just and in Him will I trust. I believe she experienced this again in her last illness. My Father suffered severely saying the only relief is or must come from the Lord, feeling he was the only one that could grant that relief, and desiring relief one way or the other, but bore his suffering patiently as did my Mother. Father had been preaching the Primitive Baptist Doctrine for sixty-three years. He was ordained in North Alabama in 1875. I do not know the church but I believe it was in Jackson Co. Some there who read this may remember him by the fact that his only brother, Lafayette Tatum and wife, were killed by lightning there about 1888. He returned, having come to Texas about 1886,

there to get the children and straighten up affairs. He frequently spoke of the hospitable reception he received there on that occasion. He was widely known having preached from Louisiana to New Mexico and from Oklahoma to the Rio Grande Valley, also in Alabama about eleven years. My Mother was earnestly and firmly established in the faith being widely read both in the scriptures and the doctrinal papers. She read constantly but said she had little time to spend reading worldly things. She woefully lamented the fact that until her death not one of their children had followed after the faith that she and Father had so earnestly contended for all their married lives. Mother united with the church soon after they were married, April 7, 1880. Father united five years before. After her death my brother Silas and I, we hope by the workings of the Lord, united with the Primitive Baptists. Only one other brother, Alfred, and one sister, Mrs. Celeta Bridges, survive. Two other brothers, Paul and Henry, and one infant having preceded them in death. A host of grandchildren and great grandchildren also survive. One girl by a previous marriage of my Father's, Mrs. Chloe Bridges, also preceded him in death. It was hard indeed to give them up but we feel that our loss is their eternal gain, and we feel to be submissive to His most righteous and holy will, who doeth all things well. Funeral services were conducted by the late Elder S. M. Dickens and Elder J. C. Sikes for Mother and Father respectively. Submitted by NOAH TATUM.

SAMUEL DAVID BEENE was born June 17, 1874 in Ittawamba Co., Miss. and departed this life Feb. 1, 1942 at his home near Mexico, Texas. He moved to Texas with his father's family in Jan. 1885. In 1901 he was united in marriage to Isla Wren. To this union were born eleven children, eight girls and three boys. One girl died in infancy. He professed a hope 30 years ago but a feeling sense of unworthiness kept him from uniting with the church. He was a strong believer in the doctrine of the Old Predestinarian Baptists and was always ready to contribute to their expenses. He was well posted in the scriptures and was ever ready to defend the doctrine of the sovereignty of God and salvation by Grace. All who knew him were his friends. A devoted wife and ten children were at his bedside during his last illness. All that medical skill and loving hands could do was done but the Lord had called him to that home above. He told his wife and children not to grieve for him, he said, "I am going to that beautiful home above." Besides his wife and ten children he leaves three brothers and one sister and a host of friends to mourn his loss but not as those without hope. Elder Willis Blackman spoke at the funeral to a large congregation of relatives and friends to the comfort of the bereaved ones. His six sons-in-law were the pall-bearers. His wife has lost a devoted husband, his children a kind and loving father, the community a good citizen. May the Lord comfort all that mourn. His body was laid to rest in the Point Enterprise Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection morn when we shall awake with the likeness of our Saviour. His brother,

W. O. BEENE.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Whereas, it has pleased our Heavenly Father, Almighty God, to remove from time, and from our midst our precious brother, Elder Dell Smith, he having passed away in death May 7, 1941, be it

Resolved, that we desire to bow in humble submission to the Divine Will of our Master, knowing and realizing that he doeth all things well. Oh, for grace to own his hand in all our bitter trials.

Resolved, that the Pocatalico Association has sustained a great loss, truly a great man in Israel hath fallen, his labor spent in the service of Zion's Blessed King in all his ministerial labors among the churches of our Association has been that labor and service of love. His preaching has been to the comfort of the household of faith and to the honor of God. The wife and family has sustained a great loss indeed, the neighborhood has lost a useful citizen, and while words fail to express our deep-felt sense of grief, yet we grieve not as those who have no hope. Our loss is his eternal gain. May our God who is rich in mercy bind up our broken hearts, and comfort all who mourn.

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

Adopted and signed by order of the Pocatalico Association. H. J. Bird, Clerk.

J. C. HAMMOND, Moderator.

NOTE OF THANKS

Mrs. J. R. Hardy and family wish to thank the many friends who rendered assistance and sent messages of sympathy in the death of their husband and father, Elder J. R. Hardy, 1134 Melbourne Ave., Dallas, Texas. They find it impossible to answer them all individually.

PRINTING OF ASSOCIATIONS' MINUTES

We are pleased to state that Mr. Gilbert Beebe, No. 5 Linden Avenue, Middletown, N. Y., former Publisher of the SIGNS, now informs us that his eye is improving to such an extent as to enable him to take care of the Minute work for the Associations. He further says that he will be glad to do this work for them and since he does not have the SIGNS to get out, he will be able to give prompt service.

We hope the brethren will keep this in mind and send him such work of this nature as they feel disposed. Please address all communications in connection with such work direct to him in Middletown, N. Y.

R. L. D.

BIBLE TRUTH

Is the title of a 115-page book by ELDER LYTLE BURNS, 406 Viola Street, Florence, Ala.

Many beautiful truths are presented by him in PROSE and POETRY in this book. Please order direct from Elder Burns at $1 per copy.

MEETINGS

There will be no session of the Baltimore Association this year. Instead there will be held two all-day meetings during the latter part of May. One Sunday with the Church at Black Rock, Md., and one Sunday with the Church in Baltimore City. For exact dates of these meetings communicate with any member or friend of either place or address A. S. Rowe, 628 St. John Rd., Baltimore, Md.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Salem Old School Baptist Church of Philadelphia, Pa., in Park Avenue Hall, 1315 Columbia Ave., Thursday and Friday, May 28th and 29th, 1942. All brethren, sisters and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

T. C. KOCH, Church Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held, Providence permitting, with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, N. J., for two days, June 3rd and 4th, services commencing at 10:30 a. m. Eastern War Time, or the time that is then prevailing. All ministering and other brethren and friends of our faith and order ar cordially invited to meet with us. Those coming by train on June 2nd will be met at the Station in the afternoon, and those coming by auto should go direct to Elder C. W. Vaughn's home, 127 W. Broad St., Hopewell, N. J., and all who come either by train or auto on Wednesday, June 3rd, should go direct to the meetinghouse.

ELVIRA H. CONNER, Church Clerk.

An all-day meeting is planned to be held with the New Vernon Church, near Howells, N. Y., on Friday, June 12th, 1942. Several visiting ministers are expected to be present and all lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

R. LESTER DODSON.

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sundays in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y. at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed. R. LESTER DODSON

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell and Fizer Sts., Memphis, Tenn., second and fourth Saturday nights and Sunday at 11 a. m. W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10.30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas. Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Texas.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure, we will mail them another copy free of charge.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every Sunday (except fourth Sunday) at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.
Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 A.M. 1:30 P. M.
To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A. M.
ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A. M. 2 P. M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists is now settled in her new church-house, at 4614 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas, where she holds her regular monthly services on each first Sunday at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. Preaching services also on each third Sunday by Elder C. B. Teague, and each second Sunday by brother O. C. Lee, at 11 o'clock a. m. A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. R. HARDY, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Eligin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

VOL. 110 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JUNE, 1942 NO. 6

POETRY

NATURE AND FAITH

2 Cor. 4:17, 18

We wept! 'Twas Nature wept; but Faith
Can pierce beyond the gloom of death,
And in yon world, so fair and bright,
Behold Thee in refulgent light!
We miss thee here, yet Faith would rather
Know thou art with thy Heavenly Father.
Nature sees the body dead;
Faith beholds the spirit fled.
Nature stops at Jordan's tide;
Faith beholds the other side.
That but hears farewell, and sighs;
This, thy welcome in the skies.
Nature mourns a cruel blow;
Faith assures it is not so.
Nature never sees thee more;
Faith but sees thee gone before.
Nature tells a dismal story;
Faith has visions full of glory.
Nature views the change with sadness;
Faith contemplates it with gladness.
Nature murmurs; Faith gives meekness;
Strength is perfected in weakness.
Nature writhes and hates the rod;
Faith looks up and blesses God.
Sense looks downward; Faith above.
That sees harshness; This sees love.
O let Faith victorious be;
Let it reign triumphantly!

But thou art gone! not lost, but flown.
Shall I then ask thee back, my own?
Back, and leave thy spirit's brightness?
Back, and leave thy robes of whiteness?
Back, and leave thy angel mould?
Back, and leave those streets of gold?
Back, and leave the Lamb who feeds thee?
Back, from founts to which He leads thee?
Back, and leave thy Heavenly Father?
Back, to earth and sin? Nay, rather
Would I live in solitude!
I would not ask thee if I could,
But patient wait in high decree
That calls my spirit home to thee.

(Author unknown)

CORRESPONDENCE

315 N. Tennessee Ave., LAKELAND, Fla.

THE GREATEST GIFT BY THE GREATEST GIVER TO A PECULIAR PEOPLE. I Peter 2:9.

Will eternal life be according to the will of man, the will of the flesh; or will it be altogether the result of the will and choice of the triune God? Or, is it a co-operative proposition between God and man? Man has ever proved to be a complete failure and I cannot believe that Christ, the Saviour of sinners, would have ever agreed to come to earth to do what he did on an uncertainty; which could only have been the case if left to the will of man. Christ "Redeemed us (his people) to God, (not part of the way), by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Rev. 5:9. It is plain to me that preaching the gospel only savingly finds the redeemed, the sheep; calls them out of the world so that they are no longer of the world; but not without the regenerating power of the Spirit. The gospel of itself, the written word, has no power to call to life the spiritually dead sinner. It takes a new creation by the Holy Spirit. I am well aware that it is generally believed, and taught, that the sinner must first repent, accept, yield and trust Christ for salvation, before

the Holy Spirit gives the new heart, the new creation. That belief it seems to me, greatly conflicts with much scripture, as well as with man's state and condition. The invitations of the gospel are many, and seem so easy and simple, yet too hard for all who are not in a state or condition to receive and rejoice in them. At this point I wish to say that the preaching of the gospel of God's grace was never intended to win all the human family to Christ; but as shown in Isaiah 55:10, 11 it would surely accomplish what he purposed it should. "It shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." As the rain and the snow cannot cause dead trees to bring forth buds and grow; neither can the gospel, the written word, cause the dead sinner to grow into life eternal. It is often said that God has done all he could to save a lost world. See Isaiah 53 and study verses 5, 6, 8, 10, 11. I see no indication of haphazard or failure there. Isaiah 35:8 represents the wayfaring man as the cleansed man, and they are the ones that shall not err (and not, need not as most folks say).

Men in their natural fallen state are all going the easy, broad way to destruction, and to rescue them just takes an effectual call of the Holy Spirit. As proof of that statement, I refer to scriptures I here point out. Eph. 2:3, "By nature the children of wrath." In John 1:12th verse teaches that "as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." The 13th verse shows the cause of their receiving him.

Now turn to John 6, and carefully read and study verses 37, 44, 45, 64 and 65. John 8:47. "He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." 1st John 4:6 teaches the same truth. When Christ was on earth there was some who could not believe, John 12:39, 40. We find the blessing of salvation coming to those only who are effectually called of God. Proof, 1 Cor. 1:23, 24. 18th verse teaches the same; which reads—"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God." Therefore something must come to the perishing one that the gospel cannot give before he can lay hold of and rejoice in it. See Matt. 11:25-27, Heb. 9:15, the called receive the promise. Romans 11:7, the election obtained the blessing. Romans 9:24, the called again which can only mean that special effectual call of God, which gets results, see John 10:11, 15, 16 and 26 verses. The 26th gives the reason why some did not believe "because ye are not of my sheep." Acts 10:15 shows there had been a cleansing before Peter reached Cornelius, and as to nationality, Peter confessed that, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." Cornelius had a good heart and a willing mind before Peter met him. God chooses a man and causes him to approach unto him, Psalms 65:4. Romans 8:28-39 shows the predestinated and called ones and they are the ones that are kept by God's power, and they are the over-

comers and prove faithful to the end. Their faith never fails. Many are saying, they cannot receive such a doctrine because the promise is to whosoever will. Certainly the great blessing of salvation does not come to all the whosoever wills, and an earnest humble seeker is always received, and never cast out, John 6:37. Psalm 110:3—"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Phil. 2:13 "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." From all this Bible evidence (and much more) I am forced to understand, and believe, that God has chosen his people, already before they choose him. Is the all powerful omniscient God and his Christ and the Holy Spirit, trying to call out Christ's bride and in many instances making a failure? I fail to be able to believe it: though I admit from the human viewpoint and certain scriptures it is a little hard to explain satisfactorily. See Psalm 139:15-16, 2nd Sam. 23:5. If that was true with David's house, "In thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them," surely it is not too much to say the same of God's redeemed family, that their names were written in the Book of Life when as yet there was none of them. David confesses that such knowledge is high and too wonderful for him. See Rev. 13:8, 17:8 and 20:15. Names already in the Book of Life.

It is not possible for us to understand God and his wisdom and ways: but I do think we should be careful to preach and teach in a way so as not to be denying his plain truth. Paul says, "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." Romans 11:33. Who are we that we should be judging and finding fault with what God has done, and is doing. Romans 9:20-24.

I do not think it wise and best to make a hobby of this deep and hard to accept, and explain doctrine: neither do I think it wise and right to preach and teach in a way to disregard and deny it: (which it seems to me most preachers and teachers are doing). I have to ask—What are all these unmistakable plain truths given to us for, just to fill space? The Old Baptists of 1689 clearly taught this doctrine. They had this to say of it—"This high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care." The church is said to be the "pillar and ground of the truth." I would be much pleased indeed if I could find the church that was really holding to all the plain truths, and not afraid to teach them in this modern age. It is written, "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." The day must be here when "they will not endure sound doctrine." 2nd Tim. 4:3. The doctrine of election is not, nor ever has been, a popular doctrine; and by most folks a hated and rejected doctrine; and the big majority do interpret it in a way that makes it according to the will of man and not according to the will of God; so this is the picture—Christ's bride has not been chosen but they are to be the ones that can be persuaded to accept and yield. Surely it cannot be that way with the all powerful triune God, and surely I have referred to enough plain scripture

to prove it is not. See 1st John 5:4 "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." So faith here is that which is born of God. The true faith of God's elect is born of God, and it, therefore, will never fail. This popular belief that election is according to foreseen faith would appear to me to imply that it is not born of God. The gospel does bring life and immortality to light: 2nd Tim. 1:10; but it does not create life in giving the new birth: therefore, "the preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness." 1st Cor. 1:18. I am sure that the Old Baptists of past ages did hold to this doctrine and faith; and it appears to me that I have abundantly proven by the word, that they got it from the plain teaching of Christ and his Apostles; and I am sure the great preacher Spurgeon held to it; and it bothers me to see so many rejecting it.

Notwithstanding all these mysterious and hard to accept, and explain, scriptures which God saw fit to give us; which belong to him, and may well be called his secret Deut. 29:29, he also shows the human side; the commands given them, and the many invitations to the human family; their responsibility and accountability. But because of that we must not deny the truths I have been showing. As I stated in the beginning man has always proved a failure, and if left to himself to meet conditions required would still be. All men ought to worship and serve God as their Creator and giver of all good things; but how easy and certain when man, left to himself, under the influence of the wicked one, fails and takes the broad easy way. Man's depraved condition is such that it just takes him that way, John 3:19 and 5:39-40. All the way down God has seen fit to reserve to himself a people, as in Romans 11:4-6 and Isaiah 1:9. We will now notice a few of the many invitations and demands of the gospel, which is to be preached to all in a general universal way, and when and where it has the desired effect in calling out men and women to true repentance and faith, we have the only evidence of God's electing grace, that we get in this world. (These are the tangible things for us to handle, for we are not able to handle God's secrets.) Jesus said to the people, "him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." "The spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that heareth say, come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Such invitations give all true earnest seekers the assurance that they will be freely received: but we will do well to remember what God has said concerning his part in the transaction. Phil. 1:6. Remember that election never stands in the way of the true earnest seeker; in fact it is the real, or primary cause of one seeking earnestly and finding the blessing and never finally losing it. We may not be able to put the two sides together satisfactorily; but I am sure when God does his part it is not in vain, and I know it is all plain and certain with him.

I now refer to a few of the many ex-

amples of how, (the style and manner) the Apostles addressed the outside world, see Acts 10:42-43. "And he commanded us to preach unto the people, etc." Acts 2:39. "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Verse 40, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation." Acts 17:30, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." See Acts 13:46, Acts 18:6, Acts 26:19-20, Mark 16:15. Paul called on all, wherever he went, exhorting them to repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. Acts 24:25, Paul reasoned with Felix "of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." Acts 20:21, "Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." 2nd Thess. 2:10, Condemned "because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved." Such scriptures as these clearly show that we are to make the gospel call to all without any discrimination as to their receiving it, that is between them and their God. We have already shown that it takes the effectual call of God to get the desired results. Jer. 13:23, John 5:25, and Luke 16-31 all clearly show that we cannot persuade or teach folks dead in sin, and in love with the world, to turn about and be good. (It takes the new creation within.) We are not able to gladly receive a thing against our will, so it is plain that the first great thing in salvation, all of grace, is the giving of a new heart, which is the new creation, which only the Holy Spirit gives; then it is that we have changed will and mind, and no longer love the things of the world as we once did; then it is that we yield gladly and willingly and can see Christ as our only hope and rejoice in the wonderful salvation as a free unmerited gift; even repentance and faith, the channels through which we receive it, being the gift of God. 2nd Tim. 2:25, Romans 12:3, Eph. 2:8. That leaves out any room for boasting on our part. 1st Cor. 1:26-31 and that is the kind of salvation Christ purchased for his people which makes it a sure thing and not just something offered. I would be happy to find the church standing firm in the original faith. Let us examine ourselves by the word (not by custom and practice) and see if we be in the faith. 2nd Cor. 13:5. In this modern age of improvements, a church operating in the simple plain way the Master started it, would hardly be recognized as his church, by a great many churches with their many auxiliaries, societies, and helps. Better get back to the old time, simple, plain, gospel preaching, as taught, and shown by Christ and his Apostles, and depend on the Holy Spirit to call out of the world whom he will, since it is only those thus called out that are profitable spiritually, to the church. I fear there is too much faith in man's work. Salvation, eternal, is all of the Lord. I send this out hoping to stimulate a closer study of God's truth.

W. L. HANCOCK

(The author of the foregoing article says he is not affiliated with any church at the present time, which condition he is not pleased with, but as to just where he belongs is hard for him to decide. He claims he often wonders where the church is that the Saviour

set up while here on earth. He says he knows something about the Primitive Baptists, or Hardshells, and while the soundest of them seem to be the nearest, as he sees it, nevertheless he feels they come short in some respects. He is apparently desirous of finding a people who conform more closely to the sacred truths than any Hardshells he knows. If he is successful, we hope he will tell us about them. We believe our readers will be interested in, and benefitted by, what he has to say. R. L. D.)

1601 South Main St., HOPE, Ark.

"Ye must be born again." John 3:7.

DEAR EDITOR:—

In order to be born there must be a father and a mother. The child that is born naturally or earthly must have a natural or earthly father and mother. The spiritual child must also have a spiritual father and mother so we see that the child becomes an heir by birth, not by choice. No child has anything to do with his or her birth; it does nothing to bring it about and nothing to delay it. "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." Rom. 9:16. We see that the work is all of grace and the spiritual birth is the work of God "for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10. Again "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Eph. 2:1. How are we dead? We are dead to God, dead to righteousness and alive to sin. How are we to get out of this condition? Can we do anything for ourselves or any Adamic man? Eph. 2:8 tells us, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Now, "Ye must be born again." Can the child do anything to hurry its birth or anything to prevent its birth? Could a protracted meeting bring about this spiritual birth? I say no I think not. "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted." Eccl. 3:1, 2. We see we are helpless like a tree. It cannot bear fruit until the sap comes. It is dead as far as fruit is concerned but when the sap comes the tree is able to bear fruit for it is made alive by the sap. In the tree then where is the glory of the whole thing? It is in the sap. Did the tree do anything to bring this life about? No it was the sap that brought the life to light. So it is with God's people. When God sends his spirit in our hearts, crying for mercy to our Father, then we are made alive; then it is the spirit that causes us to bear righteous fruit. As the tree, we have done nothing to bring it about and can only praise God for his goodness, mercy and life and walk in the light as God reveals this light to us. "Ye must be born again." This birth is not brought about by man but is a spiritual birth which is from above, "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:13. I have heard this subject preached so much by men that claim to be called of God and they said it was brought about by repentance. What is repentance but to feel sorry? Can a dead child feel sorrow? Does not this act in a child manifest that the child is alive? Does action cause life? We will all say no, but life causes action. I hope I have not written too much, and that I have been led by the spirit and not just a fleshly

desire. I know if God is not in it to direct, it will not do the poor hungry child of God any good. May the Editor cast his mantle of charity over it and do what he thinks best with it. Your unworthy sister, saved by grace if saved at all.

(MRS.) J. W. KENNEDY.

WINONA, Kansas.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—

You will find enclosed $2 as renewal for one year. My father took the SIGNS OF THE TIMES some 60 years ago. I am 81 years old and do all my reading and writing without glasses. Most all the preaching I get is through my religious papers and that seems so sweet to me. I hope you will be able to publish the SIGNS as long as did Elder Beebe. Your brother in a precious hope.

J. S. KELLER.

PLEASANT HILL, Mo.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE
SIGNS OF THE TIMES,

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have just had a visit from a very dear sister and she requested that I send you the following article written by my paternal grandfather, and to tell you the reason for his writing it. My grandparents lived in the small town of Dover, Mo. ten miles east of Lexington, the county seat of Lafayette Co. where the battle of Lexington was fought during the Civil War. Grandfather was a member of the Lutheran church as a young man. Grandmother was an Old School Baptist. There was only a Missionary Baptist minister in Dover. He often talked with grandfather and at one time said, "Mr. Startzman, I have never heard you express yourself in or on the scriptures." Grandfather told him to come back in a few days and he would talk to him. When he came grandfather handed him a sealed envelope, and told him he knew he had not long to live, and that he being the only minister in Dover would be called on, and when he was, to please just break the seal, sing one hymn and no other comment. When the seal was broken it was the following article. We prize it so much and perhaps the readers of the SIGNS would feast on it also, but use your own judgment.

Unworthily,

(Mrs.) J. W. TAYLOR.

THE CHURCH
BY NATHANIEL STARTZMAN

The long existence of the Christian Church would be pronounced, on common principles of reasoning, impossible. She finds in every man a natural and inveterate enemy. To encounter and overcome the world she boasts no political stratagems, no disciplined legions, no outward coersion of any kind; yet her expectation is that she will live forever. To mock this hope and to blot out her memorial under heaven, the most furious efforts of fanaticism, the most ingenious arts of statesmanship, the concentrated strength of empires have been frequently and perseveringly applied; the blood of her sons and daughters has streamed like water; the smoke of the scaffold and the stake where they were the crown of martyrdom in the cause of Jesus has ascended in thick volumes to the skies; the tribes of persecution have rejoiced over her woes, and erected monuments (as they imagined) of her per-

petual ruin. But where are the tyrants and where their empires? The tyrants have long since gone to their own place. Their names have descended to a roll of infamy. Their empires have passed like shadows over the rock, they have successively disappeared and left not a trace behind. But what became of the Church? She rose from her ashes fresh in beauty and might; celestial glory beamed around her; she dashed down the monumental marble of her foes, and they who hated her fled before her. She celebrated the funerals of kings and kingdoms that plotted her destruction, and with the inscription of their pride has transmitted to posterity the records of her shame. How shall all this be explained? We are at the present moment witnesses of the fact; but who can unfold the mystery? The Book of Truth and Life have made our wonder cease. The Lord her God, in the midst of her, is mighty. His presence is a fountain of health, and his protection a Wall of Fire. He has betrothed her in eternal covenant to himself. Her living Head, in whom she breathes, is above, and his quickening spirit shall never depart from her. Armed with divine virtue his gospel, secret, silent and unobserved enters into the hearts of men and sets up an everlasting kingdom. It eluded all the vigilance and baffles all the adversaries. Bars and bolts and dungeons are no obstacles to its approach; bands, torture and death cannot extinguish its influence. Let no man's heart fail him or tremble because of fear, let no man despair in these days of rebuke and blasphemy of the Christian cause, for the ark is launched indeed upon the flood. The tempests sweep along the deep, the billows break over her on every side, but Jehovah Jesus has promised to conduct in safety to the haven of peace. She cannot be lost unless her Pilot perishes.

R.F.D. 8, Roanoke, Virginia

Dear Brother Dodson:—

I have received my copy of the Signs for January and must say that I am well pleased both with the typography and the spirit you express in your undertaking as both Editor and Publisher. I am indeed sorry that Mr. Beebe is no longer able to continue his work as Publisher. He has done a good job for a long period of time and I am sure all the readers of the Signs wish for him that satisfaction which comes from having done a job well; they pray that God will give him grace in his declining days. All of your readers, I feel sure, are glad that you will continue the publication of the paper and pray that you will be enabled to continue its editorial policy, as well as all other matter, in the same line it has been all these years. May our God give you strength and patience and everything else it takes to continue the work.

I have been a reader of the paper for about 25 years and have enjoyed many of the articles I have read. I have always been delighted when I visit a home where I find the Signs. Some way I have been made to feel they were sound in the faith if they enjoyed reading that paper. I shall be glad to do all I can to promote the paper among our people and friends wherever I visit. You may send me some

sample copies at your convenience.

I think that you will have found the right solution to the problem in publishing a collection of articles on the resurrection. I shall await its publication with interest.

May God continue to bless you in this and your other undertakings.

Yours in gospel bonds,
JOHN D. WOOD.

DUTTON, ONTARIO, Canada

Elder R. Lester Dodson,
Dear Brother in Christ:—

Will you forgive me for trespassing on your valuable time to read these few lines? My best wishes for you is the dear Lord's guidance in your labor of love for his cause and for your brethren's sake. I realize only in a small measure your undertaking, but he is able to direct you in all wisdom and patience. I have no doubt your times of anxiety and perplexities will bring you to his Mercy Seat to ask guidance and forbearance and for faith to pursue on the work he has ordained for you. We are all glad you have taken the oversight of the publishing of the SIGNS. We missed having it come to our homes. I should like very well to send new subscribers if I could impress on the minds the value it has been to me these 50 years. I have gotten fifteen subscribers from time to time in years that are past. God grant that many of our young friends may, as children, be led in wisdom's way. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." He only can enlighten the darkened state of natural man, and he shall have all the glory for he is worthy. Dear brother I found in my box of correspondence this beautiful poem [see first page] and thought to send it on to you for insertion in the SIGNS. I know it is lengthy but so expressive of the sorrow of nature in the parting of loved ones, yet beautiful in the emblem of faith. I leave it to your judgment. We have cause to fear and tremble at the awful, the great, the dread, I AM, yet long suffering and merciful God to us, and we can all say guilty, guilty. His anger is kindled and justly so but we cry for mercy and to be kept from evil.

You will want to know that dear sister Grace Aston has gone to her reward. Elder Lefferts came up and preached and would be, I feel, a comfort to them. We feel assured she is at rest. I feel you have heard of it before now. I hope you are all real well. I am very well and have my three high school girls, none of them Baptists, not concerned about religion, yet very noble girls. Well, dear brother, I should like a letter but do not expect one. As you said, I will read them in the SIGNS. In gospel bonds, your sister,
SARAH McPHAIL

CLARKSVILLE, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—

As it is time for my renewal, I feel I would like to write a few lines to express my appreciation for the dear family paper. So glad you have taken it over. I am sure you are taking a very great task on yourself, but I, for one, want to bid you Godspeed. May it be His will for the paper to continue for a number of years yet. I would not think of asking a replacement of the two missing papers.

So sorry Mr. Beebe had to give it up as it has been in that name so long. To me the paper is 100 per cent. Dear brother, I am sending in a few lines in remembrance of a dear cousin and sister in the church [see obituary]. If it is not asking too much I would like to see it in your paper. Am also sending $2.50, two dollars for the paper and $.50 to help the SIGNS, a widow's mite. My subscription is paid until Jan. 1942. May the Lord bless you and hold you up to carry on with the SIGNS. Without him we can do nothing. A little sister I hope.

NINA S. SHEARON.

NEWTON, Ala.

DEAR BRETHREN:—

Although you made a special request for me to write for the SIGNS I have not done so recently. However, this beautiful morning it seems that I so crave the fellowship of and association with the household of faith until I want to write a short description of my trip to the Upper County Line Association. Leaving home very early on Saturday morning I went by way of Montgomery, Atlanta, Greenville, Spartanburg, Charlotte, Winston-Salem and arrived at Greensboro early Sunday morning where I was most royally entertained in the home of Elder George Hill whom I first met at a union meeting in Atlanta several years ago. Elder Hill contends most earnestly for the faith that sound Baptists have ever upheld since the days of the first Pentecost, and I would so much like to hear him preach again the unsearchable riches of Christ. Brother and sister Lester Doss took me out to the Association on Sunday and it was a pleasant trip indeed to converse with them as we traveled through the beautiful countryside whose landscape had been designed by a Master Architect and well and wisely planned in every particular by the successful executor of each and every thing that is, hath ever been or shall ever be. What a perfect piece of workmanship! When we arrived at the church we found a large number already present, and soon a multitude had assembled, and as each minister came speaking of the hidden wisdom, which none of the princes of this world know, it seemed that all were comforted. Unity, love and peace abounded to the joy of all and Elders Stanfield, Gilliam and King presided as moderator and clerks in such an able manner in the deliberations of the Association that all were made to feel the presence of Him who holds within the hollow of his hand the issues of life and death, and freely dispenses unto each that which he would have him have, and none can call him in question or say, Jehovah what doest thou. His works are perfect. Great and mysterious are his ways. How secure do we feel when we are kept in his way. On Sunday night we were entertained in the home of brother and sister Johnson near the meeting place where Elders Sumner, Harris, Broom and several others also spent the night. What a glorious feast it was to spend the time so pleasantly with those dear brethren. Never shall we forget our fond recollections of the pleasures we enjoyed there. Returning to the Association on Monday many heavenly treasures were in evidence, and

after the business session a dear sister came home to the church to the great joy of all. We were indeed made to sit together in Heavenly places and feast upon the dew-droppings of the Heavenly Sanctuary and to eat of the true Heavenly Manna which comes down from above. It was a pleasure indeed to attend this Association and to be with the dear brethren and sisters again after a year of absence. After leaving the meeting we went to the home of Elder T. A. Stanfield with Elder J. W. Gilliam and sister Richardson. Never shall we forget our visit in the home of this true soldier of the cross and the way we were entertained by sister Stanfield and daughters. They accompanied us to our appointment at Danville Church, in Danville, Va. on Monday night and again it seemed the windows of heaven were opened wide and we were made to feast upon things Divine. May the Lord's richest blessings ever abide with these dear brethren and sisters in North Carolina and Virginia. Elder W. R. Dodd, Moderator of the Staunton River Association, met us at Danville and took us to his beautiful home near Dry Fork where he and sister Dodd and daughter extended every possible courtesy to us, and made us feel that we were welcome indeed. On Tuesday morning we went to Springfield Church where we met Elder Stegal at our last appointment. It was very heaven below to be there that day. At the conclusion of the services a dear sister came forward asking a home with the church, and there was indeed great rejoicing as she related such a heavenly experience. During the afternoon the writer left for a visit in Washington and returned home in time to fill his appointment at Bethlehem Church on Saturday where a brother and sister came home to the church. It was indeed a period of great rejoicing to the unworthy one. In conclusion I want to say that our Association has just closed and I believe we had the best session in 20 years. Elders Oscar Broom and H. L. Almond were with us from North Carolina and brother and sister Gloer of Atlanta in addition to our regular correspondents, and we were ever made glad by their coming. May others of our faith and order come our way. Yours in hope of eternal life.

J. J. COLLINS.

DEAR EDITOR:— GORDO, ALA.

On the subject of Adam as the figure of Christ I wish to add a few thoughts. We will first look at Scripture, Genesis 1:27, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." One of the meanings of the word image is, "A visible representation." In other words God designed, in his creation of Adam, to show in a figure something of his own eternal being, that man under the light of his spirit might understand and rejoice in his Heavenly Father and, to some extent, his purpose in creating the world and its fullness. It seems that the key to the passage, "In the image of God created he him" is the next sentence, "male and female created he them." Adam was created with his bride, Eve, in him. Her existence, or life, was in him before her formation, or visible

appearance. She was as old as Adam, being created in him, for God "called their name Adam, in the day when they were created." She was bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh so in a like manner is Christ and his bride. "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Eph. 1:22, 23. Spiritually his bride or church is bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Eph. 5:30, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." Eph. 2:10. But let us keep in mind, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The Adam sinner is first born of the flesh and inherits in this world all belonging to the first man Adam, but in the second birth which is of the spirit he inherits all things belonging to the second Adam which is Christ. Hence his two natures and conflicts, the one warring against the other, so that we cannot do the things that we would. What was Christ's purpose in coming into this world in the flesh to suffer, die and to rise again? Was it not for the benefit of those of the first man Adam, whose names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life from the foundation of the world; who were created of the dust of the earth; who were sinners, helpless and condemned? They receive the spirit of adoption, "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." It is this body then that Paul so earnestly desired to be redeemed which could only mean from the grave, for the grave or death must reign over this body until the resurrection. Would not the work of Christ in this world have been a failure had he failed to secure the bodies of his saints? Paul says, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." This coming we understand to be the last day when he shall gather his bride from this time world. Yours in hope,

W. L. CROWLEY.

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-:-

W. A. Winfrey, Kans., $2; Mrs. A. J. Krenshaw, Okla., $2; G. M. Money, Ala., $1; Mae Thomas, Ill.; $10; Mrs. M. D. Gordy, Mich., $1; Eld. G. L. Weaver, Ky., $1; N. L. Cullen, Ky., $2; Mrs. W. L. Ferguson, Va., $10; J. F. Hall, Me., $6; Mrs. D. W. Holland, Md., $1; Eld. H. O. Nash, Ga., $1; Mrs. L. H. Henry, Miss., $1; Mrs. J. C. Holley, Va., $1; W. S. Gordon, Ark., $1.

EDITORIAL

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HEBREWS XIII:2

"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."

The above Scripture was suggested to our mind as a subject for our consideration after reading Brother C. W. Bond's letter in the April number of the SIGNS. We hope that Brother Bond will pardon us should our views cross with whatever conclusions he might have made through the distressing circumstances he narrated, as we venture to give them upon the above admonition.

There have been men of violence in all ages. At the time of the Apostle Paul, wicked men and deceivers were on every hand, and usually the law aided persecutors of the Christians, so that Jesus said, "Whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." John XVI, 2. Because some, who have shown kindness, have been shamefully used, we must not for a moment think that the Scriptures do not fit in our day. If men are bent on robbery or killing, they are more likely to carry out their foul designs when the door is locked against them, than when kindness is shown to them. The gospel order is not changed from what it was when given. We should not harden our hearts towards all men, and treat the deserving in the same way as we should criminals. Such is what will be found among people in whom there is no regard to the admonitions of the Gospel.

The Apostle begins this chapter by saying, "Let brotherly love continue." When the Church was first established, the disciples were taught to love one another. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another." As the number increased, the love of some waxed cold, especially as differences came among them, and we find, particularly with the Jewish believers, an aloofness towards the Gentiles who were strangers. This is understood when we remember that the Roman Gentiles were ruling over the Jews with an iron hand. They laid all their misfortunes to the presence of the Gentiles in their midst. To them the Gentles were unclean. When God would send Peter to Cornelius, he first gave him the vision of the sheet knit at the four corners let down from heaven, Acts X. After Peter had baptized Cornelius and his household, he returned to Jerusalem, and there they of the circumcision contended with him. Peter rehearsed the way God had directed him, and how the Holy Ghost fell upon Cornelius and his household, as he did

upon the Apostles in the beginning. When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." From then on the Church grew and multiplied, and what seemed unsurmountable was overcome, so that John, a Jew, could say, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." Jesus said "I send you as sheep among wolves." Men like Saul of Tarsus made havoc of the Church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere, preaching the Word.

Here we would observe that preaching the Word, was not then just talking, any more than it is now, but DOING THE WORD, testifying to those things they had handled, tasted and felt. In doing the Word, they preached and practised the truth as God enabled them, and as they met a brother or sister, they desired to show that same love to them that they themselves had received. Then the Apostle says, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers." You love people that you know, with a brotherly love, as John says, "How can we love God whom we have not seen, if we love not our brother whom we have seen? It is strangers, whom you do not know, of whom he is speaking. If you knew them, they would not be strangers. Here we would say that sometimes our children may be strangers to us, our wives or husbands may be, but we do not feel to put that construction upon our subject, for we find Paul, in his admonition to Timothy, writing approvingly of the widow who is "well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, IF SHE HAVE LODGED STRANGERS, if she have washed the saints' feet, etc." I Timothy 5:10. In the Word, we are commended, if hurt or persecuted for doing right. Therefore we desire to state clearly that hospitality is right, even for the widow who trusts in God. God can, as he has always done, take care of you, and should you, in duty's path, meet with pain or death, is it not better to suffer for doing as his Word saith, than for doing wrong? and it would be wrong to turn away from those in need. We live under governments that are tolerant, allowing men to worship according to their own conscience, governments who have made provision for indigents so that those needing help and shelter need not beg it from door to door. It is therefore wisdom when characters of doubtful reputation ask help or shelter, to refer them to the proper authorities. There are occasions, however, when people are away from home, who have been caught in a storm, have met with an accident, or who have been taken ill, who should be cared for, and Christian admonitions should dictate our course, even to our enemies, as it is written, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink."

Here we would enter into our subject. Most of us are conversant with the hymn, "I am a stranger here below, and what I am 'tis hard to know." The Lord's people are strangers to themselves and to everybody else, and they

can say with the Psalmist, "I am a stranger with Thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were." One of the meanings given to the word stranger by Cruden in his concordance is, "One that uses this world as if he used it not, who does not think himself at home while in this world, but has his mind and eye fixed on his country, which is above." Such is a description of those who feel to be strangers here, who are weary of wandering round and round this vale of sin and gloom, who need a cup of cold water, and some sweet promise upon which to rest their weary heads. It is the Lord, who by his command saith, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee." Like Job, they can say, "He hath put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me. My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me. They that dwell in mine house, and my maids, count me for a stranger. I am an alien in their sight." Job 19:13, 14, 15. He cried "Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O, ye my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me." The cloud of witnesses all "confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." Moses became a stranger when he fled from Egypt (a type of this world) and it was while a stranger that "the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of the bush." Jacob also was a stranger when he dreamed of the ladder from earth to heaven. What should make us not forgetful? It is the fact that we are the offscouring of all flesh, wanderers and wayfaring men, as a body with many members having need of each other. Let us not be forgetful, for when we do forget, it is generally as we get puffed up and high-minded, and cannot condescend to men of low estate. It was in that place that Christian found three men fast asleep with fetters upon their heels. The name of the one was Simple, another Sloth, and the third Presumption. Christian tried to awaken them to their peril, and Simple said, "I see no danger;" Sloth said, "Yet a little more sleep;" and Presumption said, "Every tub must stand upon his own bottom." So they lay down to sleep again, and Christian went on his way. He soon caught up with Formalist and Hypocrisy, who were willing to follow the custom of the times, and thus do violence to God's revealed will. Later he met Timorous and Mistrust, who in the day of trouble turned back. They saw lions in the way, and were afraid of being torn to pieces. These made Christian afraid, and he began to be perplexed, and then he remembered he too had slept, and at once began to search for his credentials or roll which had fallen out of his hand when he was sleeping. It is the remembrance of our folly and forgetfulness that should give us at all times a willingness to entertain strangers. We know that in this day there are many of God's strangers around us, who at one time were at home in the worldly organizations to which they belonged, but are now strangers. We can never tell when Providence shall bring to our door those who need help, need a word in season, or may need our

care and our kindness, and "whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Do it as to the Lord.

If so be God's strangers come, treat them with kindness. Not a few professing the truth think when one of another persuasion comes near them that they should make sport of them, as the Philistines made sport with Samson, thinking to make such an one look foolish to others, and no doubt desiring to impress others as to their own knowledge. This is wrong. Ministers also are often to blame, for sometimes they have known that there were those present whom they thought differed from them, and have made a point of dwelling upon those differences, and that without the promptings of a Spirit of love. It is becoming of us all to remember, as one has said, that we are not sent to whip the goats, but to feed the sheep, and what is more entertaining than the things of God as we have handled, tasted and felt them? In entertaining the unbelieving Jews, Stephen showed the Lord's dealings with Israel down to their time, and that their hearts had not changed. He asked them "which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One." They stopped their ears, were cut to the heart, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him to death. Yet in that unfriendly throng there was one man who held the clothes of those who stoned Stephen, and that man, though very determined and obstinate, was soon proving, if not even then, how hard it was to kick against the pricks. Stephen did not die in vain, nor did his entertaining testimony fall to the ground. Peter entertained others, and while declaring the same truths, he found he had entertained those who could be called angels. No doubt this reference to angels was to bring to our minds those of old, who, like Abraham, Lot, and Manoah and his wife, entertained angels.

We have made reference to Bunyan's Pilgrim. When he was received in the "Palace Beautiful", he was entertained by Prudence, Piety and Charity, virtues that, when exercised, will draw out of strangers a TRUE REPORT as to whether the visitors are spies who have come to see the nakedness of the land, or whether they be true men. Genesis 42:9. Returning to Bunyan's account, he narrates that they sat talking until supper was ready. "So when they had made ready, they sat down to meat. Now the table was furnished with fat things, and with wine that was well-refined; and all their talk at the table was about the Lord of the hill; as namely, about that he had done, whereof he did what he did, and why he had builded that house, etc." Above all, they showed that Christ makes princes of beggars, whose origin had been the dung-hill. They discoursed until late at night, and after they had committed themselves to their Lord for PROTECTION, they betook themselves to rest. It states that they laid the Pilgrim (or stranger) in an upper chamber whose window opened towards the sun-rising. The name of the chamber was Peace, where he slept till break of day. Then before they let him depart, they entertained

him, not as King Hezekiah did, who showed his own wealth, to his own undoing, but to the establishment of their faith, they told of the wonders God had wrought, of Moses' rod with which he entertained Pharaoh, and confounded his magicians, of the hammer and nail that Jael used when she entertained Sisera. They spoke, too, of the pitchers, trumpets and lamps with which Gideon put to flight the armies of Midian, then they showed him the ox's goad wherewith Shamgar slew six hundred men, and they showed the jaw-bone with which Samson did such mighty feats. They showed him, moreover, the sling and the stone with which David slew Goliath of Gath, and the sword also with which their Lord will kill the man of sin, in the day when he shall rise up to the prey. Our readers will see just what is real entertainment to strangers, food for the flock of God. Times have not greatly changed, for men and women still go up and down as tale-bearers, and the Word of God still condemns them. "Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among thy people." Leviticus 19:16 for "The words of a tale-bearer are as wounds, and they go down to the inmost parts of the belly." Proverbs 18:8. We have learnt "Where no wood is there the fire goeth out; so where there is no tale-bearer the strife ceaseth." Proverbs 26:20. Let us remember that dust shall be the serpent's meat, and we should not give place to the devil. No doubt he is entertained far too frequently to the sorrow of most of us. These things have always been, and in fighting the fight of faith, we shall strive to avoid them and overcome them.

It was not long after Christian had seen the error of Simple, Sloth and Presumption that he found that he also had been asleep, and so we often prove that those who point the finger at others need to watch their own steps. The admonition of Paul is good to-day; "Awake to righteousness and sin not; for some of you have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame." Our sympathy goes out to Brother Bond as we read of his troubles with some of those whom he had befriended, and most of us could tell of similar incidents, but we could also tell of many instances where we have done according to the Word, and have had a little satisfaction, especially if we have been enabled to not let our left hand know what our right hand doeth.

We need more of the right kind of entertainment in these days. I believe it was on my first visit to Maine, where there was another elder present, and we were in a circle of brethren on the first evening. The other elder and I were talking of every-day affairs, just as many who meet in this day, talk war, politics, farming and crops, but what are they in entertainment of such guests? As we sat in that circle, one, an old sister in Israel, said, "Here you brethren, TALK OF BETTER THINGS." It came to us both as a mild reproof. Talk of better things, things wherewith one may edify another, for who, even in this day, has not proven our text to be true? Only a few weeks ago we stopped in a town far from here

to see an aged sister who has not been able to visit her brethren or go to meeting for years. She has been a member of our church for sixty-two years, and is now ninety-three years of age and blind. She entertained us as she always has done. She said she talked to people in the town, but they did not understand her. Here she was a stranger entertaining strangers, and, as we talked, I felt we were no more strangers, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.

Let us strive to do that which is set before us in the Word, and though we may not always be satisfied with our guests, yea, we may have those who turn again and rend us, as we, in our zeal, go further than the Word, and cast our pearls before swine, yet we shall be amply rewarded should we ever be found entertaining angels. G. R.

VIEWS WANTED

Requests have been made for views on the following Scriptures. We hope either our Associate Editors or corresponding Elders, or both, will help us out by giving their views, if they are impressed so to do:

(1) Luke 15:11-31. Sister Addie Chandler of Sulphur, Ky., wants to know if the elder son represents the JEW, and the younger son the Gentiles? Who wants to answer?

(2) Sister Frank Loden of Quinlan, Texas, wants the 24th chapter of Matthew explained. Does it mean the final end of all things, or is it the destruction of Legal Jerusalem that is under consideration.

(3) Brother J. G. Ratcliff, of Emmet, Ark., desires views on Mark 12:28-34, or Matthew 22:35-40.

(4) Brother E. T. Loyd, of Cortez, Calif, asks for views on John 10:7-8.

(5) Sister J. R. McAfee, of Anabel, Mo., says she has often wished that some one would write on Matthew 18:7.

(6) Some one else wants the Book of Daniel explained.

It has seemed utterly impossible for us to comply with all of the requests which have been sent in, and we will greatly appreciate any assistance that any of our Associate Editors or corresponding Elders will give us along this line.

R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

ELDER J. R. HARDY was born in Kentucky, Jan. 25, 1872. Finished his course and passed to his reward, Mar. 8, 1942. His alloted time on earth was 70 years, 1 month, and 11 days. He leaves behind to mourn his loss his widow, Sister Gussie Hardy, nee Miller; three sons, Roy K., Edwin R., and J. R. Hardy, Jr.; four grandchildren; five brothers, W. L., J. T., J. E., J. B., and H. W. Hardy; four sisters, Mrs. Sarah Enoch, Mrs. Marticia Fox, Mrs. Bertha Clark, and Mrs. Verdie Machesney; many other relatives; a host of friends; and the Old School Primitive Baptists throughout the nation. The deepest grief is felt among the churches of his personal care, who looked to his monthly visits, which brought to them a message of cheer and comfort from the storehouse of his God. A great gift is taken from earth. I want to say to the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, relatives, and friends who may read this article, allow me to speak freely, and in my own language, not honoring the man, but the gift of God, that was manifested in the man. Elder Hardy came to the church in 1897. About one year later he was ordained to the full work of the ministry, and by the grace of God, did a work, and lived a life, that did not die with the body, nor go hence with the spirit, but remains here a living memory among those with whom he came in contact personally; also those he contacted through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and other church periodicals, with his messages of comfort, admonition, instruction and love. From the date of his union with the church, one more laborer was placed in the vineyard of his God, and the fruits of his labor is proof that he got his instruction from the Master of the Vineyard. Yes, his orderly walk and godly conversation was evidence, to all that knew him, of his calling. Space will not permit me to say all that I would like to, that the readers might get the full testimony of his stewardship while on earth, but will try to condense and make pointed only the things that

would honor and ascribe greatness to our God. Oh, for more of such God honoring gifts as we found in this man, both in private and public life. It was our blessed privilege to have known and been in constant touch with him for about 25 years. I always found him to be a lovable, and agreeable companion in the Gospel, and a safe and qualified instructor in the house of God. My association with him has been very pleasant, and I hope instructive. I cherish highly the memory of the many conversations we have had touching the doctrine of God our Saviour as is taught in his Holy Word. In his deliberations he was sound, yet fair, always allowing the other fellow the same privilege he had taken, yet would not compromise between truth and error. He was bold in his convictions, but mild in relating them. He sacrificed all for the cause of his Master. His own feelings and temporal things were not consulted when the impression, or call, came to go. His desire and delight was to do the will of God, and to that end many afflictions, privations, sorrows, and sacrifices were his in his short life on earth. He was truly a servant of God, yet always ready to confess hs faults, and acknowledge he was just a sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all. Yes, Brother Hardy believed in, and advocated salvation by grace and grace alone. He affirmed there was nothing left for the creature to perform in order to be moved. In trying to write the obituary of this great gift, I recall many precious, comforting words that fell from his lips, both public and private, in the many hours, yes weeks, we spent together. I found him unchanged in conversation and in his walk. His delight seemed to be in discussing the glorious promises of God through Jesus, and his walk was such that we could say with David, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Yes, and his feet were shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace. He was a great lover of peace, always ready, when there was confusion among our people, to labor with them for peace. I knew him so well I was just selfish enough to covet his gift, and did not feel bad about it for Paul said, "covet earnestly the best gifts." The latter part of his life on earth was especially full of labor. His correspondence was heavy, and at the time of his death he was serving six congregations. This was his portion and he must fill it. In the very end of his labors his health was failing so fast, Sister Hardy would beg him to take a rest, but he would say, "No, I must be about my Father's business." Surely a servant of God. "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn." In what I have said in this article not one word is meant in honor to the natural man, but honoring the giver of the gift which is God. I was called to officiate at the last rites of Elder Hardy. I tried to comfort a large company of brethren and sisters in the Lord, relatives in the flesh, and a host of friends from the language of Paul just before he departed this life. 2 Tim. 4:7, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." Sorrow not dear brethren and sisters, but rather rejoice because he is gone from the evil to come, and God is not at a loss to know how to carry on in his absence. He (God) is yet able to make a dumb ass speak with man's voice if it is his will. To his weeping companions, sorrowing children, and other relatives, wish him not back in this old sinful world, but praise God for the memory of the life he lived through the many reverses amidst which he passed. May God bless and comfort you all as he sees fit. Written by one who loved him for the Master's sake.

ELDER W. N. GREEN.

My dear cousin, MRS. ELLEN C. PARHAM was born in Logan County, Ky. near Russellville and passed away June 13, 1941. She was the only daughter of Beverly and Isabella Piper. In 1897 she was married to Robert Lee Parham and to this union were born two sons, Bradly Parham of Nashville, Tenn. and Richard Parham of Guthrie, Ky. She was a sufferer for a number of years before her death. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized, with the writer, by the late Elder T. C. Herndon, at the age of 16. We were near the same age and were the same as sisters. I hope we were sisters for Christ's sake. We shared our joys and sorrows together all our lives especially since we united with the church. Shortly after we united we began doubting and wishing we had not united feeling we were deceived and had deceived the Baptists. She had a wonderful experience. After her marriage she began doubting to the extent of feeling lost and without God in this world and the world to come. She remained in this condition for three years, but when God revealed himself to her anew she shouted,

"Thank God, saved at last." So with this wonderful evidence we feel all is well with her soul. O, what a blow it was to the writer, two sons, three grandchildren and one brother, R. B. Piper. She had been such a stay to me especially since I have been a widow. She, too, was a widow for a number of years. Our dear brother, and pastor spoke comforting words in her home to a great number of sorrowing friends and loved ones. The great floral designs showed she was loved by all both colored and white. To know her was to love her. O, how we do miss her at the church and everywhere but she is done with suffering and heartaches. Some time ere long I hope to meet her and know as we are known. Written by a heartbroken cousin, pal and sister in the church, Nina, as she so sweetly called me.

(Mrs.) B. H. SHEARON.

B. A. CHANDLER was born October 2, 1880 and departed this life Jan. 12, 1942 making his stay on earth 61 years, 3 months and 10 days. He was born in Jackson Parish, La., and lived there until grown. July 2, 1902 he married Miss Docia Gentry in Gran Parish near Dry Prong and then moved to Winn Parish near Winfield, La., where he resided until his death. To this union were born 5 children. His wife and three of the children predeceased him. April 26, 1931 he married Mrs. Jessie Boyett and to this union was born one son. Mrs. Boyett had 3 children when she married Bro. Chandler. He united with the regular Predestinarian Baptists of the Primitive Faith in 1904 and was baptized by the late Elder J. R. Chandler. He remained in full fellowship with all orderly Old Baptists and was highly esteemed where he was known among our people and will be greatly missed, not only among Old Baptists but by his neighbors and friends. He enjoyed the company of the brethren and sisters, was devoted to them, and was always at meeting when not providentially hindered. He was in bad health for the last 20 years and suffered untold agonies but never murmured. Unworthy as I am, I have had the pastoral care of his church for the last 25 years, and let me say of him to one and all, in all our trials he stood firm and unwavering, earnestly contending for the faith of God's house. A great man in Israel has laid his armor down in death. His widow, children, friends, and brethren and sisters of our Association, the Louisiana, are left in sadness and grief. Let us bow in humble submission to the ruling hand of our God who doeth all things well. The writer tried in his weak way to speak words of comfort to the bereaved and friends at Corinth Cemetery where he was laid to rest to wait the coming of the blessed Saviour to carry his jewels home, when they shall be resurrected and changed into a spiritual body fashioned like his glorious body and to sing his praises forevermore. May the good Lord have mercy on us all and lead us in the way is our prayer for Christ's sake.

W. B. VALENTINE.

ELDER T. J. PRINCE quietly bid adieu to this world and all that is earthly, and entered into that rest that remaineth to the people of God, at 1:30 A.M., Jan. 17, 1942 at his home near Martin, Tenn. He was born in McNairy Co., Tenn., Dec. 9, 1857 of the parentage of William and Matilda Prince. He was in his 85th year. He was united in marriage on Nov. 4, 1894 to Miss Fannie Tuttle, near Carbondale, Jackson Co., Ill. To this union were born nine children six of whom survive. Mrs. H. L. Collier, Mrs. Bernard Foley, Elmer Prince, near Martin, Tenn., Harbie Prince, near Dukedom, Tenn., Leonard Prince, Chicago, Ill. and Lawrence Prince, near Benton, Ky. There are fourteen grandchildren, two nieces, Mrs. Lyman Badgley, Mound City, Ill., Mrs. S. S. Kerley, Mt. Vernon, Ill. and one nephew, Walter Prince, Mt. Vernon, Ill. also other relatives and friends.

In his early life he had a hope in Christ and united with the Primitive Baptist Church and on May 17, 1890 he was ordained to the full work of the ministry. He was loved by all and will be greatly missed by his companion, children and friends. We feel our loss is his eternal gain. He preached unceasingly for 54 years and was a firm believer in, and loved, the doctrine of grace. Elder Prince was a genial gentleman of good, clean moral principles and an able defender of the doctrine of salvation by grace; in fact he was well established in all the cardinal points of the doctrine. Many times I have heard him say he believed he would preach every sermon and speak every word that God ordained for him to preach and speak before the world began. He had absolutely no use for conditionalism in any form. O, how I loved that dear old soldier of the cross. I well remember hearing him preach at my father's house in 1904 when I was just a mere boy. He

was dearly loved by his brethren, sisters and friends and it can be truthfully said, he fought a good fight, he kept the faith and when the summons came he laid his armor by and quietly fell asleep in Jesus never more to mourn or carry the burden that he carried for 54 years, but to sleep on though it may be a million years to await his dear Saviour to come to awake him from that sweet night of perfect rest to carry him home to glory.

My heart goes out for his dear wife and children, brethren and sisters. In fifteen days Bethel Association had to give up two able ministers, leaving only one minister to serve five churches. Elder Prince's funeral was held in Cain Creek Church, Obion Co., Tenn., 3rd Sunday in Jan. 1942 amidst many sad and sorrowing brethren, sisters and friends. Elder E. C. Lowery and the writer tried to speak words of comfort and consolation to his many friends and loved ones after which his mortal remains were laid away in Cain Creek Cemetery to sleep until the Captain and Bishop of his soul comes to carry him to his Eternal Home. Sleep on dear soldier and take your rest. How we will miss him as well as Elder Brann, but our loss is their gain. It seems there cannot be enough said of these two men. My dear loved ones, why should our tears in sorrow flow, when God recalls his own and bids them leave this world of woe for an immortal crown, for God's arm is not shortened. He is able to still raise up men and make them feed his sheep and lambs. May God bless all that mourn is my desire enshrined in hope, embalmed in tears.

O. W. PERKINS.

MRS. ELIZABETH EMMA GOSSIEN, our dear mother, passed away April 30, 1940 at the home of her youngest daughter, Mrs. L. A. Calvert, Warren, Ark. Born Nov. 27, 1857 near Mobile, Ala., she was the daughter of A. H. and Kathrine May who moved to Arkansas later. She was married Oct. 28, 1886 to Mr. Byron Gossien who died Mar. 28, 1928. After father's death she made her home with her youngest son near Little Rock, Ark. She leaves to mourn five children. Two sons, A. O. and W. L. Gossien of Little Rock, Ark., three daughters, Mrs. James Fitzgibbon, Little Rock, Mrs. L. A. Calvert and Mrs. J. W. Gambrill, Warren, Ark., one brother Mr. W. A. May, Ellisville, Ark., and two half sisters, Mrs. Ida Mitchel, Ellisville and Mrs. Caroline Word, Kingsland, Ark., 19 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Mount Parron in Cleveland Co., was baptized by Elder Little and remained a faithful member until her Heavenly Father called her from a world of sorrow to a better home on high, the fullness of which will be her's to realize on the morning of the resurrection. She always enjoyed attending the Old Baptist meetings. The preaching was her meat and drink. When the end came it seemed a great shock; she had just returned from a visit with her brother and other relatives, and also attended her home church at Fordyce and seemed very happy. Retiring later than usual she soon became seriously ill, breathing her last mortal breath at early dawn. A dear mother in Israel has passed on; the spirit returned to God who gave it; she is safely sleeping in the arms of her God in whom her only hope of salvation relied. Soon he will call her sleeping dust to come forth from the grave, changed to a spiritual body like unto his own glorious body. Her hope was in the resurrection of the body which will be changed to a spiritual. She was strong in God's predestination of all things giving all honor and glory to the one great eternal God, in whom was her only hope of free unmerited salvation. She was a gifted talker on spiritual things and a sweet alto singer. She will be sadly missed by all who knew her, especially her children. May we bow in humble submission to God's will. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away." "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." She was a precious mother to her children, and a sweet companion to our dear father. Previous to her departure from time to eternity, she contracted pneumonia and we had but little hope of her recovery. Much of the time she seemed in a stupor and while in that state many beautiful and most wonderful things were given her and she talked freely to those around her bedside; she was carried away from this earth; she saw the saints gone on before; she saw Elder Lambert who would be called to preach her funeral.

Her funeral was held at the family cemetery. Many beautiful flowers were placed upon her grave by her many relatives and friends who gathered there to pay their last respects to our precious mother in Israel. We hope to meet her some day where sorrows are unknown and parting comes no more. HER CHILDREN.

MISS HALLIE J. DRAKE was born Oct. 22, 1860 and departed this life Feb. 27, 1941 making her stay on earth 80 years, 4 months and 5 days. She was a daughter of the late Enoch H. and Elizabeth Titus Drake who lived about two miles east of Pennington, N. J. After their departure their heirs, three daughters and one son, sold the farm and moved to Hopewell, N. J. in the residence just east of Elder F. A. Chick's which was a great blessing to Elder and sister Chick and their family. Elder Chick passed away April 14, 1914 leaving sister Chick and family living neighbors to Miss Hallie, as she was called. She realized the great value she had in Miss Hallie as neighbor and friend. On one of the writer's trips to Canada the two joined the party and visited the Covenanted Baptist Church. After the passing of Elder Chick, the writer was called to the pastorate of the Hopewell Church and sister Vaughn and I found in Miss Hallie the same superior qualities which Elder and sister Chick had realized. In our home she was a welcome guest, companion, and helper, and often accompanied sister Vaughn to meetings at a distance, and proved herself a worthy companion and true friend. She often expressed the love she had for the gospel truth she heard preached. She leaves two sisters, Miss Altha Drake, who is a resident of The Primitive Baptist Home, Salisbury, Md., and Mrs. Elizabeth Conover, Hopewell, N. J., and several nieces and nephews to mourn her loss also many other relatives and friends. Her funeral was conducted by the writer. A large gathering assembled to pay tribute to her memory after which her remains were laid to rest in the Hopewell Cemetery. We could continue to write of her qualities and personality but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain and that she lives in the memories of her many friends and relatives.

CHARLES W. VAUGHN.

MEMORIALS

Whereas, it has pleased Almighty God to call from us by death our beloved pastor and brother in the Lord, Elder J. R. Hardy and

Whereas, we esteemed him highly for the truth's sake and worthy of double honor for his faithful labors in the word and doctrine and

Whereas, we feel deeply the great loss to the churches and to the cause of so profitable a gift, therefore, be it

Resolved, that we bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father in our great loss, and that we extend to the bereaved family our sincere sympathy, and assure them of our prayers for their comfort in this time of their deep sorrow, and be it further

Resolved, that a copy of this memorial be spread on the records of Hopewell Church, that a copy be furnished the family of the deceased, and that a copy be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication. Written and signed by order of Hopewell Church while in conference April 11, 1942.

ELDER W. W. SLAUGHTER,
Moderator pro tem.

J. E. Raley, Clerk.

ALSO

Whereas, the most high and all-wise God has removed by death our beloved and highly esteemed pastor, Elder J. R. Hardy, therefore, be it

Resolved, that in the passing of our dear brother the Ft. Worth Church feels deeply his loss. He was faithful, not missing more than six meetings in almost nine years, and was so kind and patient in all his undertakings. We miss him and are sad and cast down, yet we desire to be submissive to God's will, feeling he has gone from the evil to come and his spirit is now with his blessed Redeemer of whom he loved to set forth in beauty and perfection. Words fail us to express our love, as a church, we had for this man of God.

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be recorded in our minutes, a copy sent to the family, and a copy to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Adopted at our April conference meeting.

ELDER C. D. VARNELL, Moderator.

Minnie Jameson, Clerk.

MINUTES WANTED

We are anxious to obtain a copy of the latest minutes of the various Associations throughout the country who are in fellowship with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We will be glad if the Moderators and Clerks, in particular, would take note of this and send us a copy of their 1942 Minutes as soon as they hold their meetings and have their minutes printed.

R. L. D.

PRINTING OF ASSOCIATIONS' MINUTES

We are pleased to state that Mr. Gilbert Beebe, No. 5 Linden Avenue, Middletown, N. Y., former Publisher of the SIGNS, now informs us that his eye is improving to such an extent as to enable him to take care of the Minute work for the Associations. He further says that he will be glad to do this work for them and since he does not have the SIGNS to get out, he will be able to give prompt service.

We hope the brethren will keep this in mind and send him such work of this nature as they feel disposed. Please address all communications in connection with such work direct to him in Middletown, N. Y.

R. L. D.

BIBLE TRUTH

Is the title of a 115-page book by ELDER LYTLE BURNS, 406 Viola Street, Florence, Ala.

Many beautiful truths are presented by him in PROSE and POETRY in this book. Please order direct from Elder Burns at $1 per copy.

MEETINGS

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held, Providence permitting, with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, N. J., for two days, June 3rd and 4th, services commencing at 10:30 a. m. Eastern War Time, or the time that is then prevailing. All ministering and other brethren and friends of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us. Those coming by train on June 2nd will be met at the Station in the afternoon, and those coming by auto should go direct to Elder C. W. Vaughn's home, 127 W. Broad St., Hopewell, N. J., and all who come either by train or auto on Wednesday, June 3rd, should go direct to the meetinghouse.

ELVIRA H. CONNER, Church Clerk.

An all-day meeting is planned to be held with the New Vernon Church, near Howells, N. Y., on Friday, June 12th, 1942. Several visiting ministers are expected to be present and all lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

R. LESTER DODSON.

LOWER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION CHANGES DATES

Since the tobacco crop in this section is being taken in earlier than formerly and interfered with many of our brethren, sisters and friends attending our Association, we decided at our last session to change the dates of the meeting from the third Saturday, Sunday and Monday in July to the first Saturday, Sunday and Monday in July making it two weeks earlier. This being done on Monday of our Association, and many of our visitors having left, we are publishing this change in "Zion's Land Mark" and also in the "SIGNS OF THE TIMES". Our next session will be held with the church at Mebane, N. C. and we hope our brethren, sisters and friends will come to see us.

Roxboro, N. C. F. D. LONG.

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sundays in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y. at 10:30 a.m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. on South 7th Street, Mayfield, Ky. Those interested will be welcome.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure, we will mail them another copy free of charge.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
IN
NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.
Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.
To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A. M.
ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A. M. 2 P. M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists is now settled in her new church-house, at 4614 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas, where she holds her regular monthly services on each first Sunday at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. Preaching services also on each third Sunday by Elder C. B. Teague, and each second Sunday by brother O. C. Lee, at 11 o'clock a. m. A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. R. HARDY, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Eligin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell and Fizer Sts., Memphis, Tenn., second and fourth Saturday nights and Sunday at 11 a. m.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas. Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Texas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

VOL. 110 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JULY, 1942 NO. 7

CORRESPONDENCE

McANDREWS, Ky.

Written by (the late)
ELDER HOWARD WALLACE MAY

Having been born January 26, 1873 I am 58 years old at this writing. Born on the head of Pond Creek, Pike County, Ky. the days of my pilgrimage have been few and evil. I was raised a poor boy by a kind and loving mother with the aid of two brothers, John and Harvey. I grew up a vile wretched boy. Only at times I would have some serious thoughts but was mostly unconcerned until the age of 22 I plainly saw my state as a vile and wretched sinner condemned to die and go to an awful hell indeed. I went on in that condition for some time; there seemed no mercy for a poor sinner like me. One Wednesday evening about 3 o'clock I thought the time was up for the execution to be made on poor wretched me. My natural strength seemed to be gone. I laid down on the upper end of the family porch not expecting ever to get up when to my surprise a still, calm and loving voice seemed to say in my poor burdened heart, son, thy sins which are many are all forgiven you for Jesus sake. I was made to praise the Lord, I hope, for saving a poor sinner like me. It was the happiest time I ever experienced before or since. Then and there I received what I have thought was a blessed hope for heaven, not something in me but *me,* which was worth all the world to me. Since that time I have had many, many doubts and fears and thoughts that I was deceived. These fears I have daily and hourly. O how could I ever live without this God, blessed hope. Then something began to press this poor mind of mine. You must go and stand before my people and tell them what the blessed Lord has done for you by the way of grace, but my thoughts were O Lord I never can, I am too vile, too weak, and so sinful. I am of slow speech and slow of tongue but this impression was heavy on my mind. I would often dream of trying to preach the blessed gospel of Christ yet I would think that I was deceived. Sometimes I would go to meeting and after trying in my weakness to pray in public when it was time for meeting to commence I would go out of the house until it began. All this time this heavy burden was on this poor mind of mine. Since those times I have made many attempts though I often think it

has all been a failure. The Lord knows I have never reached the place that I can feel that I have been any comfort to God's blessed children.

Most two years have passed since I began writing this and I have thought many times I would not finish it but of late have thought to write some more before I go hence and be no more. I want to leave a record behind me as to what I do believe in regard to the doctrine I believe and enjoy; God and his sovereign will over all things; that he created this vast universe, and that he (God) had a purpose in everything that he created, and there was nothing created or made only what God created or made, and to say that he does not use it for the self-same purpose that he created it for is a false reflection on the thrice holy God for he says he created "even the wicked for the day of evil." Prov. 16:4. Also in Romans 8:24 to 30 inclusive: "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." God is sovereign over all things, he (God) is from everlasting to everlasting and is unchanging and his purpose is as certain and as sure as he is for he says in Psalms 33:7 to 9 inclusive, "He gathereth the waters of the sea together as a heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." I would as well believe that God himself would fail to be God as to believe that one of his purposes would fail. One often hears it said, Oh, I believe his eternal purpose is sure. There are none but that are eternal and the eternal salvation of God's people is sure. There is but one salvation and that is Jesus Christ, the Lord, and that salvation is enjoyed here in this time world. I believe that it is all of grace and there is nothing left on condition. The enemy of truth says, "If you will, God will: if you will not, God cannot." Lord save me from such delusion and falsehood. God says concerning Jacob and Esau, "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil:" "Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated." Was this not a predestinated purpose of God to love Jacob and to hate Esau? "Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that

bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy." Isa. 54:16. If he was created to destroy how can he keep from it? "That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none besides me. I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." Isa. 45:6, 7. We will have to admit that God made and created these things according to his will or against his will and I would hate to believe that the thrice holy God ever did anything that was contrary to his will. Amos 3:5, 6, 7 says, "Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth, where no gin is for him? Shall one take up a snare from the earth, and have taken nothing at all? Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it? Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants and prophets." When one scripture says a thing we need not hunt for anything else in the scripture to condemn it for all scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. It was impossible for those men to pen the scriptures except when they were moved by the Holy Ghost and at those times it was absolutely impossible for them to make mistakes. There are some that claim to be Old School Baptists who say they believe in Predestination but not in Absolute Predestination. Anything that is not absolute is not predestinated at all. Take the word water and say there is a cup of water; does it not imply that it is wet water? Say there is fire in the grate; does it not imply that it is hot? Using the words ice or snow; does it not mean that it is cold? The word predestination implies that it is absolutely fixed, settled and unchangeable. There is an unchangeable God, "and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth." I know I shall soon go the way of all the earth and be no more, but that is in God's purpose. This is a dark and cloudy day with the Lord's people, and I sometimes think I would be glad and rejoice to leave this unfriendly world, then I think of leaving God's blessed children here in this poor world and want to stay with them. I want to quote one more scripture, Acts 4:24 to 28 inclusive: "And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is; Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." If they were gathered together to do what before was determined to be done, was it not the unchangeable purpose of an un-

changeable God, and they were gathered together to do that for the inspiration of God says they were. I would as well believe that God would fail to be God as to believe that this people could fail of being gathered together, or have failed at doing what his hand had before determined to be done, no more or less. All scripture was given by the inspiration of God and holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Could we believe that the Spirit of the thrice Holy God ever moved men to speak in any way that was wrong, or speak something that he (God) did not want left on record here for his dear children to see? His afflicted and poor people is the object of his love, and he is the same yesterday, today and forever, and changes not. He does not teach some one way and others another way; he does not teach some that God's mercy is bestowed on them here in this time world by their good works, and teach others that it is the gift of the Lord. God does not work that way. He teaches that it is of free and unmerited Grace of God bestowed on poor mortals, men and women of Adam's race, and it was according to his love and mercy that his darling Son came into this low ground of sin and sorrow to suffer, bleed, and die for his people who were given him before the world began. David said: "He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." This blessed covenant was made just as God wanted it to be.

(*To be continued*)

"From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I." Psalm 61:2.

We find this portion of Scripture connected in meaning with the fifth verse of the sixty-fifth Psalm, which says in part that God is the confidence of all the ends of the earth, also with the twenty-second verse of the forty-fifth chapter of Isaiah, which reads, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else". How often it becomes apparent that when Scripture is compared with Scripture, the Bible becomes its own commentary. David breathed forth the language of prayer and complaint, of faith and assurance, of hope and grace, from the depths of his heart as he felt overwhelmed with sorrow, trouble, a sense of his sinfulness, and his utter inability to save himself. He felt beset with many difficulties, by foes external, foes internal, and foes infernal. The Psalms of David not only foreshadow Christ in his suffering, death, resurrection, exaltation, and mediatorial work, but also breathe forth the very experiences, exercises, trials, and deliverances of a child of God in his journey through this wilderness world, as he realizes his ruin in Adam and finds his redemption in Christ.

There is something of profound import in the expression, "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed" in that no cry is uttered or felt until and unless the heart is overwhelmed, and also because to cry denotes life. The dead in nature know nothing of natural things

and are utterly without power, whether life has been extinct for a second or for a thousand years. Also the dead in trespasses and in sins are utterly without comprehension of their condition before God and know nothing of grace and spiritual life until they experience the quickening operation of the Holy Spirit in being born of God. There can be no cry to God unless that cry is preceded by a knowledge of God, and there can be no knowledge of God except through the revelation of Jesus Christ by the Holy Ghost. The office of the third person of the Trinity must be performed before there can be a knowledge given of the other two persons of the Trinity by which God is revealed to a child of God, the law of God written in the heart of the penitent sinner, and that individual sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of his inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of the glory of God.

It is of equal significance that the Psalmist realized that he could not, by human means, reach the rock that was higher than he, the place of his salvation, and that he must be led there. This rock typifies Christ Jesus. How very beautifully this all sets forth the doctrine of the grace of Jesus Christ effectually applied to a poor, needy, hell-deserving, helpless, justly condemned sinner of Adam's fallen race, who feels the arrows of conviction from the quiver of the Lord pierce his soul; senses the pangs of hell in his very bosom; sees himself sold under sin, and justly awaiting the execution of the wrath of God. He mourns his sad and awful state, and realizes that he is as far from holiness as the East is from the West, that he is at the very end of the earth, the end of all self righteousness, legal attainment, and creature effort in his earthly nature. God is the center of all glory, perfection, power, holiness, and wisdom, and the poor penitent laden with an intolerable load of guilt, entangled in the snares of Satan, and overcome by his lusts, passions, and fleshy desires, finds himself overwhelmed and sinking beneath the billows of righteous judgment, the very opposite of all that goodness implies, that is, at the end of the earth, or the greatest possible distance from God. The creature under conviction of sin realizes that justice and judgment are the habitation of the throne of the most high God before whom no sinner can stand and live. As more and more of sin with all its filth and folly, with all its fault and fruit is revealed to his tortured mind, he looks out of and beyond himself for deliverance. In the midst of that terrible darkness a light shines, a gleam of hope enters his soul, and there is the unfolding of Jesus in the glory of his person, work, blood, and righteousness. He sees, with eyes anointed by heavenly eye-salve, a rock that is higher than he. He can not of himself reach it, but he utters a cry, "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I." The poor publican beating his breast with his hands in the temple in anguish of soul cried, "God, be merciful to me a sinner". The meaning of that petition is equivalent to the cry of David to be led to a rock that was higher than he. It is the Holy Spirit

that leads the penitent sinner to that rock; shows him the merit of the atoning blood of Jesus Christ; makes him a partaker of new covenant blessings; gives him a peace that passes understanding; and enables him to be seated in the kingdom of heaven with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to enjoy that rest that remains to the people of God.

Not only do we note that there must first be given life for the suppliant sinner to cry; and that this life is manifested in the knowledge he has of his lost condition; that sin has become exceeding sinful; and has separated him from God and placed him under its awful curse; but also that this knowledge is revealed in his heart. God puts his law in the sinner's heart and writes it in his mind. The sinner that is saved by grace has his heart made broken and contrite, so that his knowledge of Jesus Christ is a heart knowledge out of the abundance of which his mouth can speak. It is not his natural affections that are treated; and his natural wisdom that is cultivated; and his moral goodness that is improved upon; and his good resolutions that are strengthened in the process of his heart being overwhelmed; but it is the operation of a new principle within, Christ being formed in him the hope of glory, as he is led to the Rock of Ages and has his feet placed securely upon it. A rock to serve as a foundation or chief corner stone must be deeply imbedded in the soil in order to support the weight placed upon it. The greater the structure upon it, the deeper it must find lodgment in the earth. The church of the living God is the temple of the living God, and its chief cornerstone, Christ Jesus, must be laid low in earth. The children of God being partakers of flesh and blood, having fallen under the law of sin and death, Jesus partook of their flesh, his flesh being holy by reason of his birth of the virgin Mary by the operation of the Holy Ghost, and was made under the law in the fullness of God's time that he might take upon himself their sins and the full penalty of all their sins and die for them, perfume for them the grave by his presence, and rise from the dead because of their justification. By taking a holy human nature he was enabled to be touched by the feeling of their infirmities, to be their obedience and righteousness in his glorious person because of the efficacy of his Deity, his blood having therefore all the power of Godhead in it, and so he could reach the vilest sinner in the election of grace and justify him from all guilt, and give unto him eternal life. As a daysman who can lay hands upon both, Jesus is enabled to face God for man and render to God all the requirements of divine justice and to face man and give him all the benefits of a full salvation. That is one meaning of Christ being the chief cornerstone of the spiritual temple. As a rock he saves the object of his love and grace from all the storms of wrath, from all the billows of judgment, from all the assaults of Satan, from all the condemnation of the law, and makes him a joint heir with himself unto eternal glory.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

Co. E. 39 Inf. A.P.O. No. 9, Ft. Bragg, N. C.

Dear Publisher:—

Indeed I feel very unworthy and unfit to write you, but if not deceived I have a desire to express a few of my thoughts that caused me to ask Elder Broom of Monroe, Ga. to send in my subscription as I did not know your address. I do not know how often you hear from soldiers, but if you hear very often it surely must be from a different part of the camps than that in which I have been, and I have been in four different camps though only for a week or so. I have been in the army eight months and I have not seen one soldier that I thought believed as Primitive Baptists do, but I feel sure there are some in our large army even though few. I may not be one myself and my feelings tell me I am too small to be considered one. I often feel so low that it seems I cannot be one, but then I find Scripture that teaches that the chosen elect shall be brought down. How often I have been made to rejoice in the Scripture found in the 10th chapter of Mark. "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." My parents are members of the Old Baptists, and as a lad at home I often found myself listening in silence, and agreeing with their many sweet conversations, but felt that the reason I agreed was because I was raised by parents of that faith. That feeling was present as long as I was there, but when I was called to the service I got so hungry for that kind of conversation I searched for miles around my camp in Georgia finding nothing to comfort me. I found what was called Old Baptists and tried to believe their preaching and to feel at home in their homes in which I was welcomed heartily, but I found myself differing with their conversation and longed for something firm, sound, and pure. I would leave feeling so blue and strange that I would say to myself I would not go back again but the very next Sunday I would try it again. I spent three months there and was sent to Carolina on maneuvers where I spent one month maneuvering over the state before I found what I had been looking for. I would slip off from my outfit after dark, and every other way possible to get away to inquire for the Old Baptists. I did everything in that line one might think of to find some one of that faith and failed. After I had given up, thinking there were none around the maneuver area their identity was given me. I had been all around them proving that our works here on earth are useless indeed. I have been to the churches most every Sunday since and instead of trying to believe their preaching I found myself trying not to, and instead of trying to feel at home I found myself trying to fight off that feeling. Each time I left the church for camp, instead of that blue feeling, I felt filled with rejoicing. The other Sunday I found myself trying to express a true desire, I hope and trust, to unite with what I believe to be the one body, the one Spirit, one faith and one baptism mentioned in the 4th chapter of Ephesians. I could not find words to express my unworthy feelings.

There are all kinds of books, etc. for us to read but if I am not mistaken in

myself there is no book that it is a greater pleasure to read than the SIGNS OF THE TIMES except the Bible itself. If not deceived in my little hope of understanding I will look forward to each issue even on the battle front with the bullets flying by if I am sent there, and it surely looks as if part, if not all, of my outfit is going. There are but few that seem to fear it in the least. Realizing that they are likely to be called into action at any time now they say, "Come on boys, have a good time while we can." What seems to be a good time to them is the lust after the wickedness of this world. I do not feel that my views are worth expressing, but it seems to me the Lord has hardened the hearts of all nations just as was done to Pharaoh as explained in Exodus 10:12. I sincerely believe that it is done for the same purpose which is to harden the hearts of nations that he might show his signs before them that they may know that he is the Lord and all that are of his fold will see his signs, and their hearts will be humbled with a realization that he is the Lord. With that wisdom of understanding being present it makes no difference how rough the sea may toss or the battle guns roar, shaking the earth, it will enable that trembling heart to say, yea Lord, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. When we realize that he is the Lord, we know that his power is greater than all, a Supreme Power, working all things after the counsel of his own will, which is his good pleasure, and unless it so pleases him there cannot one hair of our heads be harmed throughout these trying times or forevermore. I only intended to write a few lines but I will send it on with the two dollars hoping you will pardon me. As my address changes I will notify you. Though I feel unworthy to be on your mailing list let alone causing you the trouble I am likely to make you with changes of address, if a brother in the Spirit surely the least and most unworthy of all.

WAYLON H. CHANDLER

(While reading the foregoing letter from our young soldier brother our heart was strongly drawn out to him. His experience in many respects parallels our own. If we are not deceived, we have known what it means to earnestly yearn for the companionship of God's dear people, and all the while feel to be like the lone sparrow on the housetop. But in God's own time and way we were made to feel the blessedness of his Holy Spirit abiding with us, and it seemed a veritable truth that he brought us into his banqueting house, with his banner of love over us. We confidently believe that God will make his glory known to our younger brother, wheresoever he may roam. To possess the unfeigned faith which he evidences in the Omnipotent God is more precious than all the gold of Ophir, and it will endure when all that is earthly passes away. We shall do all within our power to have the SIGNS reach him, and hope he will keep us informed of his changes in address. R. L. D.)

ATHENS, Texas

ELDER R. L. DODSON,
Rutherford, N. J.,

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:

After reading your letter under "greetings" for the new year, also your letter "Important Announcement" I feel a desire to express to you a renewed interest and zeal, and in some way, a new inspiration for the cause of truth and for the cause of the SIGNS, as we brethren in the far-away fields deem ourselves very fortunate in the announcements, that we will still be able to get the paper and enjoy its contents as we have the past several years. Missing the two issues

made us a bit uneasy, learning through the paper some time back of Mr. Beebe's eye trouble, much to our sorrow; but hope yet the trouble may be overcome with him, and if not actively with the paper, may be able to render much assistance and service in its promulgation.

In your announcement, you mention the subject of the resurrection of the dead, a subject which has been preached and believed by the Old School Baptists lo these many years, but as you say, some appear to hold different views, while in my humble opinion most all sound Baptists, I mean this in general, sound in the fundamentals of the doctrine otherwise, that if they could properly understand each other, most all, when reduced to their final analysis would be practically in agreement. In every published Confession of Faith, which it has been my privilege to read, the expression, "We believe in the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust," etc., has appeared and evidently, to this extent, is received by all. To this, many have added or expressed their enlarged views which have been expressed in different words. I hardly feel the different views I have heard from different brethren, from most all parts of the country, are indeed at variance sufficient for any serious controversy. Quoting as you did the Apostle in 1st Cor. 15:42-44, "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption," etc., the least we can say is, whatever was sown, whatever was raised, it was the same something. I think the Apostle was speaking of this body, which in this great transformation will be raised and fashioned like unto the glorious body of our Lord, and like David, when we awake in his likeness we shall be satisfied. Dear brother, this is sufficient, in my opinion it's good theology to leave it there. I love to hear and read the different expressions and opinions from those lead in this field of thought, not that they can improve on the Apostles' theology, but it is all food when presented in the proper spirit. The Apostle said in this chapter, "Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." By this, declaring we do not have to die, go back to dust, suffering the immediate sting of death, which is in common for all, but this exception is brought by the Apostle, but whatever we are here, the same is changed, and the same thing which *was,* will, in my opinion, be found in heaven, but in a changed state. The mystery shown here by the apostle appears to me somewhat clarified in the resurrection of Christ, only. His body did not see corruption, but this body, which was made flesh and dwelt among us, and, we beheld his glory, is that body which according to the promise, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself." Ph. 3:21. Now that Christ is raised, being the first fruits of them that slept; and being the head of the Church, over all things pertaining thereto, that our justification, our cleansing, our righteousness, yes our very obedience are found in him, consequently the fruit which follows must be good because the tree is good, Christ told

his disciples, because I live, ye shall live also, so briefly because of his resurrection, we are assured of ours. He said to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

I notice this is reaching further out than was meant in the beginning, I do not feel capable of doing justice to so great a subject, but trust what we have offered for your consideration, will be found in keeping with the doctrine of the Church, and also meet your approval.

Speaking of your intended writing on this subject, I shall be glad to have the opportunity of reading, and gladly pay the price if and when the work is ready.

Also be assured that we shall aid all we can in securing new readers for the SIGNS, and feel you are very liberal in your offer, that many of the disturbing elements among our brethren could be avoided, could they be better informed, and have the opportunty to read the opinion of different brethren, over the country, and better understand each other.

As to your suggestion, as to the mind of the brethren concerning writing on the subject of the resurrection, I feel the brethren in this country would be very liberal in this, and do not fear you need rest uneasy as to the brethren receiving it with much interest, however we do commend you for the manifest spirit in trying to avoid these things which you feel would in any way offend the readers of the SIGNS.

You will find attached our check to apply on our subscription which I think is past due. Again wishing you success, and praying for Divine guidance throughout your new undertaking, feeling that we bespeak the full assurance, and co-operation, and confidence of the brethren in this country. So resting in the hope that, through the wonderful working power of our glorious head, we may have part in this first resurrection.

Your brother in Christ,

L. D. ROSE.

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34 N. Adams St., CARTHAGE, Ill.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON:—

I am sending the obituary of my sister for publication in the SIGNS. Our father was E. D. Varnes and he and sister have visited the Associations in the East in the past. Father's people all lived there, and I would love to hear from any of our people still living there who might not know where E. D. Varnes's children are located.

Father always read the SIGNS and took them years before I was born. I so often received much comfort in reading from the dear saints of their travels and experiences through life when I was burdened and felt to be a great sinner. I could feel we were traveling over the same road, and being kept by the same merciful God.

CLARA E. PRIOR

Route 2, Box 92, VICKSBURG, Miss.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER:—

If one so little as I see and feel myself to be should thus address you, but the Eternal God knows all things. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been sent to me a little over two years and words fail me to express how much comfort and joy I have received reading the

grand and good articles that are published in it. It still contends for the same doctrine that it did in 1832 when it was first published by Elder Gilbert Beebe. Dear brother, I got so much comfort out of Elder Roy Smith's writing in September issue of the SIGNS. It was so plain. The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. If I know anything I feel that I do know that all has been for my good. I have been a member of the Old Baptist Church for thirty-six years and I have believed the God honoring doctrine as far back as I can remember, this may sound strange but it is true. My father was an Old Baptist preacher and died before I was eight years old. The Baptists loved father and loved me too and made much of me because they loved father so much but that was natural love for me. So I loved the Old Baptists at nine years of age. I had a vision and thought I was going to die or be killed, so I prayed for my playmates, for I felt I dared hope, prayed that we might meet in heaven. That was the first time I remember praying. I was a poor, fatherless boy and was a mourner on and on. So many things would throw me down, so to speak. My feet all tangled with briars, ready to cast me down, so I went mourning, except for a few minutes at a time, until I was twenty-nine years old. On July 24, 1908 I was relieved to some extent, but another trouble began that I had something to tell God's people what a wonderful God we had so I ran away. I am sixty-five miles from any Old Baptist Church, my wife is sick and I cannot leave her long. I am still poor but I do feel and believe that I know the truth when I read it or hear it. I still try to pray, the same poor sinner that I was when I tried to pray for my playmates at nine years of age. That is as plain now as it was then though fifty-two years ago. Now, Brother Dodson, I wrote for a few copies of the SIGNS about two years ago and they have been sent to me ever since and I do not see how I can do without them. I cannot write much but I wanted to write to all for they say so much that means all the world to me; what they write and preach will stand when the world is on fire. I ask all to pray for your unworthy brother, saved by grace if saved at all.

A. J. ODEN

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64 Center Street, ST. THOMAS, Ont.

DEAR ELDER:—

I am enclosing money-order to cover a year's subscription to the SIGNS to be sent to the above address and also to me at Detroit. The first number printed under your direct supervision is very fine, and you are to be congratulated on its very excellent set up, type, paper, etc. The nature of the contents I expect to go along as heretofore, which of course cannot be changed to any great extent, or at least I hope not. I do not now recall in the stress of the occasion having advised you of the passing of our very dear mother, who died on the early morning of Monday, Nov. 17 and was buried the following Thursday. You will recall that mother was in poor health and had failed greatly during the past year. We knew that it was impossi-

ble for her to recover from the ailment which was apparently an abdominal growth, but she went down much more rapidly than we expected, suffered greatly for a spell, and was unable to take sustenance for a week prior to her passing. We miss her so much but we feel we have much to be thankful for in that we had her with us for a long time. She was not made to linger in pain and discomfort for an unduly long period, and we have such wonderful memories of her, and we know she is better off than we are. In case you do not recall, and to keep the record straight, I am working in Detroit but get down to St. Thomas frequently, but not so often now as heretofore. I would like to have the SIGNS at both places. We plan to keep the little home here going and my aunt, Nellie Rawlinson, will be here to welcome you and all Old School Baptist friends. With kindest regards to yourself and family, and best wishes for your success in the publication of the SIGNS, I remain, yours faithfully,

KENNETH L. BLACK

PRESTON HOLLOW, N. Y.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—

I am so glad you can continue the publishing of the SIGNS. Would be very sorry to have it stopped. I have always kept every copy but would miss it if it stopped coming. Have not taken them so many years but had them to read before I became a subscriber. I am now in my ninety-fourth year. My mother was a member of the Middleburg church and I cannot remember when she did not take the SIGNS. My father was a believer of the same doctrine but never united with the church. When only twelve years old I loved to read the experiences in the paper but had no interest in the other writings. Now I am glad to say I love to read everything in the paper and look for it when it is due to arrive. I should have renewed my subscription before this but waited for the December paper which did not come. I now have the January number and am remitting with this letter. I live with my daughter and family in winter but have rooms and care for myself the rest of the year. God has blessed me all my life with many, many blessings. I feel unworthy of the least of them. I hope I realize that he is Supreme and does all things according to his will. He knows the end from the beginning and reigns in heaven and earth. I am glad that he does and my desire is to be reconciled to his will in all things. I often wonder why he is keeping me in this sinful world to such a great age, but feel that it is sinful to question his purpose. He has blessed me with good health, good eyesight, strength to care for myself and a good home. Are these not wonderful blessings? When his purpose is fulfilled I trust he will take me to himself. My prayer is that he will give me faith to the end. I did not mean to write so long a letter but my mind kept leading me on. Sorry to take your time, I know you are very busy. May God bless and keep you and give you health and strength as long as it is his purpose to do so. Sincerely yours,

HATTIE B. ALGER

Box 807, Borger, Texas

Dear Editors:—

I want you to know I want the Signs another year and am enclosing the $2. Sorry I am a week late but let it slip my mind until yesterday. You see I have to get the most of my preaching from the good writers of the dear Signs. We have preaching here once a month. I wish we had it every Sunday. I have need of Spiritual food, and do hunger and thirst for it. I wonder what we poor weak creatures would do if we could not go to God in prayer when we are so troubled and grieved, and what a blessing Jesus left us when he left us the "Comforter." My son is in the marines, and I am so thankful an All-wise God is holding and guiding the reins for I know everything will end just as God intended it should. I am afraid we mothers feel too sorry for ourselves instead of being proud we have sons who can go out and fight for the sake of Christianity or Jesus sake. It is so hard to understand all of God's ways. When I received the news from my boy that he had joined the marines I went to bed tossing, moaning, and praying until it seemed I was in a cloud and saw or heard these words:

"Must I be carried to the skies,
On flowery beds of ease;
While others fought to win the prize,
And sailed through bloody seas?"

Then I began to try and put the words where they belong and saw at the top in plain words, "Am I a soldier of the cross?" A calm came over me and I slept a good restful sleep the rest of the night. My prayer is that God will give me patience and grace and pardon all my sins and help me to be a better soldier. If I am one it is by the mercies and grace of God and not anything I have done. Yours in hope,

ADDIE GUTHRIE

Sierre Madre, California

Dear Elder Dodson:—

Enclosed find check for $3 for which please renew my subscription to the Signs for 1942. The extra dollar you may use where you think it will do the most good. I am sorry to be late with my subscription but it is only due to carelessness on my part, and maybe some others could make the same confession. Let us not be careless in this matter and try and be more prompt in the future. No doubt the transfer of Editor and Publisher has been an added expense to the paper so let us all make an effort to see our new Editor and Publisher start on his new task with a clean slate and not a single subscription in arrears. That would be so nice and we would all feel better about it I am sure. The good old Signs has come out at the beginning of 1942 with a brand new dress, very plain and neat looking. I have been a reader of the Signs since I was a child, and a subscriber for over thirty years. I have seen it come out in several different covers in that time, but so happy to know that its contents are the same as from its beginning, always contending for the faith once delivered to the Saints with no new ideas or modernisms as some of our papers have. I sincerely hope Mr. Beebe's health will improve now that he will be able to get more rest. We will all miss your father's

good articles for the SIGNS. Brother Dodson, it always seemed as though he was speaking directly to us as he wrote. While we will all miss him, we feel that our loss is his great gain, and we trust you will be able to carry on as he did and may the good Lord uphold you as Editor and Publisher of the SIGNS. May he lead you in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. I will not write more but I want you to know I am wishing you every success in your new undertaking and may the good Lord be your Guide and Councilor. Sincerely yours in the hope of a better life beyond this vale of tears.

(Mrs.) MIRIAM E. KUNS

DEAR BROTHER BURGESS:—

The Lord willing, I will try to write a few words in reply to your letter. Brother Burgess my heart was made glad when I learned some one else felt as I did about our meeting at Old North Fork, second Saturday in November. I believe we are told to forsake not the assembling of ourselves together. Though we are few in number Christ says where two or three are gathered together in his name he will be in the midst of them. What a glorious declaration if we could feel that we have met in his name. The most of my time I feel so poor, so little and unworthy that I am made to wonder do I love the Lord or no, am I his or am I not. Sometimes when I am wondering over my past life, and of the goodness and mercy God has extended to me through our brethren and sisters of Old North Fork in giving them a forgiving heart towards me, after I had brought reproach upon her as I feel, it looks like more than I can bear, and as I told the church when I offered back, I do not feel like I could live long enough to not regret it. I wonder sometimes if God would ever let one of his little ones go so far. While I was out of the Old Baptist Church, Brother Burgess, I believe I learned what is meant about Jonah's hell. I said I would never tell anybody or let anybody know if I wanted to come back to the church, but when God's appointed time came I did not care who knew it for I felt like I could not leave the church without asking her forgiveness. Sometimes when I am blessed to believe in the Absolute Predestination of our God in all things I feel like it was all for my good. I never could have loved the church as I love her today and I never could have been able to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as it were, and to have feasted upon the bread that falls from our Master's table as I indeed hope I have been made to sometimes now. I am looking for the same Jesus, who has been so merciful, to clothe me in his righteousness in the morning of time. I feel like I have to be dressed up. I am in no condition to meet him now. You all come to see us. Love to Mrs. Burgess.

A sister in hope,

HILDA MOSELEY

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND AID TO THE "SIGNS":

H. Osborn, N. Y., $1; Mrs. L. Vories, Ky., $1; A Friend, N. J., $8; Mrs. W. White, Ky., $1; Warwick Church, N. Y., $25; Mrs. A. Hastings, Md., $2.

EDITORIAL

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ROMANS 8:14, 15

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."

Dear readers, we desire to point out to you our relationship to Christ Jesus, the Lord, the Saviour of sinners. As the creature God created does not give to us the eternal virtues of eternal life, and we are the manifestation of his power in creation, but it pleased God to so create man of the dust of the ground, and breathe in his nostrils the breath of life in which was the seal of multiplication, which God purposed should take place after he had transgressed his law and dead in trespass and sin. We are Adam multiplied, and this condemnation and death resteth upon Adam in the entirety, and in that all have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God. We are under the just condemnation of death with perfect wisdom knowing us altogether. God, being merciful to his creature made provision for him, in that of this creature his Son should have a companion, and be a partaker of his divine nature and infinite wisdom, thought upon these things and the just mandates of his law and nothing could measure up and satisfy divine justice but the offspring of God, which was his Son; and in that he appointed his Son heir of all things, and predestinated that all his work should glorify his Son, and the only heir which involved him to redeem; wash and glorify his bride from all condemnation and death. According to God's counsel Jesus must save her with an everlasting salvation. God did bow the heavens that his Son should come into the world to save her and pay her debt and make her free as his Son, that she should be like him. God was in Christ with reconciliation perfected by his Son, and acknowledged him in his fulfillment of righteousness. Known unto God was all his work from the beginning. Jesus hath adopted his elect, and when he bowed his head and said "It is finished" the adoption was made to every poor sinner that will sing the praise of God in Glory. The assurances were certified by Jesus in the phrases, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me," and "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Jesus calls them by name, quickens them and leads them out. When one is lead out the flesh is hedged about, and the carnal mind is confused, and all the carnal weapons are useless. It is then that the creature cries

out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" The Leader knows her altogether, and comes to her in this depraved state, and gives her understanding that he is her Saviour, and embraces her and covers her with his presence by which her sins are covered, and her iniquity is pardoned, and the glory is more than she can express and mortal tongue will never express the half of it. The word *her* embraces every member of the bride of Christ, and we hope every one that reads these lines may feel the witness within their own hearts. Those having the witness of these things are not in the spirit of bondage to fear; but have received the Spirit of adoption whereby they cry, Abba, Father. Having the adoption through Jesus Christ we are in the Spirit of our adoption, and realize the works of God in the flesh, and our spirit receiveth the witness of the Spirit that we are the children of God. The Spirit of adoption being in us we live after the Spirit, and sow to the Spirit, and worship God and have no confidence in the flesh, and gives us our acceptance with him. In no other way do we have any acceptance with the household of faith. Every one that hath the Spirit of adoption will bear fruit of the Spirit, which are the only marks given that we may know those led by the Spirit. The question is often asked if it is "by their fruits ye shall know them" how can one individual bear fruit different from another when all are of the same flesh? One is led out from the world and the manifestations we have given are realized, and he is praising God for his mercy and loving kindness with the realization of his depraved condition in sin which causes him to feel unworthy of the household of faith in which he is adopted, but in the day of God's power he is made obedient to go home to his friends and tell them how great things the Lord has done. But what about those who do not come to the church? The power of God has not constrained them, or strength not given, but every one is exercised by the same Spirit and led by the same Saviour and their faith is the same, and the church militant is given to partake of their fruit. She (the church) is encouraged and strengthened to press on toward the mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus who is the author and finisher of the faith of all his elect. Every one that is born of the Spirit receiveth the Spirit of adoption, and to them adoption is sure to come. The life of a pilgrim stranger is to walk by faith and not by sight. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Rom. 8:16. Having received the Spirit of adoption gives us the assurances of our adoption by which we wait for the adoption, "to wit, the redemption of our body." Rom. 8:23. Not until we are fully adopted, soul, body and spirit, will we be satisfied and be like the Son of God. By getting the various declarations of Scripture we could abundantly prove when the poor sinner is fully adopted into the body of the bride of Christ, but you, our dear readers, may read the entire chapter, Romans 8, and you will have Paul's statement relative to the adoption of the child of grace, and before

he finished he said: "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:37, 38, 39. We note the word *nor* is used nine times and the word *neither* once in expressing the assurance of our adoption, and we are not left to decide this question or wait for some of our loved ones to come back, after passing through death, to tell us, and we dislike the spirit that would prompt a man to quote language not written by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit as was the apostle Paul.

C. W. V.

CORRESPONDING CIRCULAR LETTER

Written by sister Prudence O'C. Hinkley.

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the First and Second Churches of Roxbury, N. Y., September 17th and 18th, 1941. *The churches composing this Association send greetings in the Lord.*

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—It has been the custom of long standing to address the brethren yearly by an epistle of love. We do not feel competent to write this letter, and if the brethren knew our vileness as we know ourself they would not put us to the task. We pray for the guidance of our good Lord to instruct us. It has been a great quandary on our mind what to write but the thought comes, the works of the Lord, which will be found in Acts ii. 11: "We do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God." It is a great mercy that we have been taught by the Spirit of the living God, and delight in God's wonderful works, if we have an ear to receive them as they are proclaimed and a heart to understand them. Men are ready to talk of their own good works; many so-called religious people do this. The Pharisee who went up to the temple to pray did not speak of God's works, but boasted of his own works, saying, I thank thee that I am not as other men are. Oh the pride of the human heart! Our hearts are deceitful and desperately wicked above all things. On this occasion the apostles were preaching the Lord Jesus Christ. It was on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Ghost was given, as had been promised, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost and began speaking with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. This was a wonderful thing, and they spake every man in his own tongue, and they all spake the same thing, the wonderful works of God. We do set forth good works. Not our own, but the works of God as our Creator and Preserver of all mankind, and unless you by divine grace receive that work, and believe that work, you are out of the picture. We are saved by

works; not our own works, but the works of the Lord Jesus, who on earth said, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. Just before the Lord Jesus gave up the ghost he said, "It is finished." So it was a finished work. There was nothing connected with salvation for us to do. If so, we never could have done it. For by grace are we saved, through faith, which is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. God created all things. He formed the hills and valleys, the dry land and the seas. He is the mighty God. He formed the earth, and set the sun in the universe. What a mighty planet is the sun! It is like a great ball of fire. It gives light and heat, and it is the work of God. It causes all vegetation to be brought forth. God also placed the stars in the heavens. He made man, and the more we know how we are so beautifully joined together the more we admire the wisdom of God. There are the seasons, the wonderful works of God, winter, spring, summer and autumn, they are all necessary for man. God gave us seed time and harvest, heat and cold, day and night. His promises have all been fulfilled to the present time. What a mercy if he has given us a word to rest upon. If he gives he will fulfill that word. "Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away." It endureth forever.

> "All thy times are in thy hand,
> All events at thy command."

God in his infinite wisdom foresaw everything before the foundation of the world.

We can look back on our life and see how the Lord God has led us. We can see our mistakes and sins. If we were left to ourselves where would we be today? David said, "My sin is ever before me." It is a wonderful thing that God in this very manner humbles us at his feet and teaches us that every mercy we receive is the divine favor of God. Our road will be a crooked path, but we shall prove here and there along the road, and when we come to the end we can say God has been good to us; better than all our fears.

Peter said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Did he want the Lord to leave him? No, but when God's goodness comes and rebukes our sin and unbelief we feel we are not worthy of it, and it brings us to confess from our hearts our unworthiness and God's goodness.

God also gives us grace. God's works in grace were all fixed and settled in his eternal mind before the foundation of the world. Where he begins he finishes. He chose a people who should be saved by his divine grace.

> "Grace all the works shall crown,
> Through everlasting days;
> It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
> And well deserves the praise."

He was willing to accept the wrath of Almighty God, and the sins of his people. He bore that wrath in his own person. He (God) said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." We hope our experience comes from God, but with this contrite heart we feel the darkness of soul, and long for a word or a blessing from God. God's teachings in the poor man turn him upside down. He is turned from the

world, and is made willing to endure anything so that he could be one of those people. Now this desire is to be found with them in life and in death. God's works are wonderful works. "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." It is good works to quicken a man and keep a man, and it is good works to inscribe our names in the Lamb's book of life, by his own sacrifice provided on Calvary's cross.

We certainly appreciate you coming among us, your ministers and messengers, bringing messages of love through the preached word of the gospel of Christ.

The Lord willing, our next session will be held with the Olive and Hurley Church, Shokan, N. Y., between the second and third Sundays in September, 1942, at the usual time. Hoping to meet you all then, we bid you farewell.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
ORVILLE WINCHELL, Clerk.

OBITUARIES

ELDER REUBEN MILTON BRANN was born Dec. 23, 1867 and died Jan. 2, 1942, aged 74 years and ten days. He was married to Mary Vaughn Oct. 4, 1888. Seven children were born to this union three of whom survive him, Laura Davis, Clover Wall and Silas Brann. Also his dear companion, one sister, eight grandchildren and a host of relatives and friends mourn his passing. Elder Brann and wife united with the Concord Primitive Baptist Church of Christ, Weakley Co., Tenn. the second Sunday in Sept. 1890 and were baptized by the late Elder Jim Yates the following December. Endeavoring to rid himself of the impression to preach, he and his wife moved to Texas for awhile but came back to Lauderdale Co., Tenn. where he worked on the railroad. He became acquainted with Elder J. W. Kerley and he and sister Brann united with the Macedonia Church. He was licensed to preach while he lived in Texas but when he came back to Tennessee ceased to speak in public for awhile. Then they came back to Weakley Co., Tenn. and put their letters in at Concord Church where they had first united. He was elected clerk of the church which office he filled until he died. He was chosen deacon and ordained in June 1918 filling this office to the best of his ability. The impression bore down on him so heavily and unceasingly that he again began to speak in public. The church saw his gift was profitable, and while attending the Bethel Association of Old School Baptists asked that a Presbytery be formed to ordain him to the full work of the gospel ministry. The affirmed brethren, Elders J. T. Prince, J. W. Kerley, R. L. Biggs, M. J. Towery, J. N. Darnell, W. B. Overby, E. C. Lowery, O. W. Perkins, and Deacons E. J. Easley, J. B. Collier, M. D. Emerson, J. W. Yates, T. D. Nabors and L. B. Parker ordained him the first Saturday in Oct. 1935. I feel that he was the ablest defender of the Doctrine of Absolute Predestination of all things I ever heard. Held in highest esteem by his brethren and sisters, he was a man of good character, a straight honorable citizen. The Baptists of the Bethel Association of Tennessee and Kentucky have lost a noble brother and faithful servant, his family a noble father and husband. Brother Brann was ever held in highest respect by those that did not believe as he did. He was a patient man and seldom complained of his affliction, which was cancer of the throat, even when he was up and able to go to his churches. He was buried in Sandy Branch Cemetery in Weakley Co., Tenn., Jan. 4, 1942 to await the call from on high, when the trumpet of God shall sound and the dead in Christ shall arise and ascend on high to be with Christ and be like him. Elders E. C. Lowery, P. E. Poyner and the writer tried to comfort the bereaved family. Relatives, brethren, sisters and friends, a truly great man has been called from our midst, enshrined in hope, embalmed in tears. May God comfort all that mourn on account of his passing.

O. W. PERKINS

MARY JANE (VARNES) THURSTON was born Dec. 7, 1860 and passed away Nov. 20, 1941, aged 80 years, 11 months and 20 days. She was united in marriage to John L. Thurston who died in January 1931. Surviving are two sons, Leroy, of Columbus Jct. with whom she made her home, and Albert, of Oregon, Ill. and two grandchildren. There are also two brothers and three sisters; Stewart and Albert of Michigan and Idaho respectively, Mrs. F. P. Meeker, Cucamongo, Cal., Mrs. C. E. Prior, Carthage, Ill. and Mamie Varnes, Galesburg, Ill. Mrs. Thurston was a member of the Baptist Church. Her father was E. D. Varnes who, at the time of his death, was living at Farmington, Ill. She was humble in manner, her ways and tastes were plain and simple and she was devoted to her home and children. She bore her suffering from a broken hip for four weeks with great patience. The funeral was held on a Sunday afternoon at the Stevens Funeral Home. Burial at Columbus City Cemetery.

Another leaf has fallen,
Another soul has gone,
But still we have God's promises
In every robin's song.

Her sister, CLARA ELLA PRIOR

It is with a sad heart we write in memory of one who was loved so dearly and who has done so much for the good of his loved ones, his many friends and his community as a whole; JEPTHA MONROE WRIGHT was born December 13, 1860 in Troup County, Georgia, and departed this life November 29, 1941 at his home in the Myrtle Springs community in Wood County five miles north of Quitman, Texas—making his stay upon earth 80 years 11 months and 15 days. He was the third child of George and Bettie Wright. He came to Texas in December 1883 and was married to Miss Sarah Elizabeth Galloway July 26, 1885. To this union eleven children were born; four having died in infancy and Bettie, the eldest child preceded him in death by four years.

In the fall of 1886 he bought a number of acres of unimproved land five miles north of Quitman where he and his companion settled and he resided until his death. At that time Wood County was very thinly settled and conveniences of this day unheard of, but he was a fearless man of courage, hard working and undaunted by the hardships of his newly settled home. He and his companion toiled early and late to improve their land and build a comfortable home. Mere words cannot do justice in trying to express the kind of life this noble man lived, and to the many people that have ever known "Uncle Jepp" as he was fondly called there need be no words, for no one ever associated or had any dealings with him but what was made to feel the influence of his kind and goodly nature. No man regardless of creed or color did he ever turn from his door hungry or wanting anything he had, but was always ready to share the material things of life to the comfort and good of his fellow men who were less fortunate; and many are the sad hearts he has cheered with kind words of encouragement and wise council. The way was never too long or rough or the weather too stormy for him to visit the sick or assist those in need. Not only a good father to his family but to the community as a whole, ever doing and giving of his means to the widows and orphans, always ready and willing, never shirking to do the things that were upright before God and man to the upbuilding of his community and country, yet never doing these things simply because he felt it his duty but out of the goodness and generosity of a kind and noble heart. Yes, a whole volume could be written of this noble character yet it could never portray the true beauty of his life as was seen and felt by his near and dear ones, or anyone who was ever the recipients of his love and kind deeds; as a loving husband and devoted father he experienced many providential trials and afflictions in rearing his family, yet these trials proved the faithfulness and love of God toward him and he was enabled to provide the comforts of a good home and gracious surroundings for them, the hospitality of which is known far and wide.

Early in life he united with the Missionary Baptist Church, but later became dissatisfied and withdrew from them and in 1900 he joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Hopewell where he remained a member until 1915 when the little church at Cana near his home was organized and he was ordained a deacon and served in that capacity (also served as clerk) until his death. He filled the office of deacon faithfully, the cause of God and the good of his people lay near his heart, this was well attested by his constancy for so many years, never missing a meeting if he was able to get there and oft times went when he was not able, and when it was so he could he went

far and near to the associations, thereby has met and known many throughout the country that will be made sad to hear of his passing. He was a man of simple but strong faith unassuming and humble, he set a Godly example to all around him,

"His hope was built on nothing less
Than Jesus blood and righteousness".

He had been in declining health for some years but was able to be up and about his work seeing after the interest of his business until a week before his death. His sufferings at times were intense but he bore it with great patience and fortitude, never heard to complain or murmur. He died resting upon a finished work of his dear Redeemer and was laid to rest in the Myrtle Springs cemetery there to await the coming of our blessed Lord and Saviour. His well loved Pastor and long time friend Elder S. C. Davenport, had charge of the last sad rites. He spoke befitting words of comfort and solace to the bereaved ones from the text which he read in 2nd Timothy, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith". The hymns, "Amazing Grace" and "How Firm A Foundation", were sung in the way he had so loved to hear them.

He leaves to mourn his passing his aged companion and six children to wit: Mrs. Buena White, Quitman; Robert C. Wright, San Antonio; Mrs. Myrtie Blalock, Quitman; Mrs. Nevie Thompson, Quitman; W. Owen Wright, Quitman; and Mrs. Lutie Granberry, Big Sandy, twenty-six grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. Also two brothers and one sister all of Georgia, and a host of other relatives survive him.

Sadly and greatly will he be missed in the home, church and community, but we feel our loss is his eternal gain, and the confidence of a glorious resurrection forbids sorrow which is without hope both for the church and his bereaved family. "The memory of the just is blessed." One who loved him by ties of nature and of spirit. His daughter-in-law,

(Mrs.) R. C. WRIGHT

MRS. JULIA C. McCLANAHAN, our beloved sister in Christian fellowship, a daughter of Levi and Mary (Canfield) Coberly, was born Nov. 21, 1852 in Randolph Co., W. Va. and died Aug. 19, 1941 at the home of her daughter, Mrs. H. H. Murphy, with whom she resided, near Montrose, W. Va., making her stay on earth 88 years and 9 months. She was married to Johnson R. Wilmoth on Dec. 21, 1876. To this union were born nine children. Two died in infancy, one son, Ewen Wilmoth died June 11, 1927. Six surviving children are T. C. Wilmoth, S. L. Wilmoth and Mrs. H. H. Murphy, Montrose, W. Va., H. J. Wilmoth and Mrs. A. L. Perry, Elkins, W. Va., and Floyd Wilmoth, Pittsburgh, Pa. Her first husband died Feb. 13, 1923 and on Nov. 25, 1924 she married Elder George B. McClanahan who died Nov. 1, 1939. She united with the Leading Creek Church of Old School Baptists by experience and baptism June 14, 1879 and was a devoted member to the end of her life. She never missed attending meeting if it was possible for her to get there and attended the regular meeting on Saturday and Sunday before her death on Tuesday evening following. Always standing firmly for peace and good order she manifested gentleness and charity toward all and was not given to speaking ill of any one. Her walk and conversation were an example to all of us. She was blessed of the Lord to walk uprightly before him and in the presence of her brethren, and manifested meekness, humility and childlike, simple faith in her God and Saviour. She enjoyed reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES very much, visited the sick whenever possible, rendering any service or comfort she could to them. She had been a member of the church over 62 years. I had been her unworthy pastor more than 38 years. There were forty-six members in the Leading Creek Church when I united nearly 50 years ago. She was the last one of the forty-six to be called home. When I was feeling low down and in the dark she always had a word of comfort and encouragement for me. We miss her presence very much at church. She was a good, kind wife and mother. At her request her funeral was conducted by the writer at the church of her membership Aug. 21, 1941. Her body was laid to rest beside her first husband in the church cemetery nearby. Written by request of Mrs. H. H. Murphy.

J. S. MURPHY

MRS. MARY MARTHA SCHOOLEY, nee MELLOTT, our beloved sister in Christ, was called to her eternal home March 13, 1942 from her earthly home near Andover, Fulton Co., Pa. aged 74 years 5 months 28 days. She had, for many months, been suffering from a heart affliction which caused her extreme weakness at times,

and as the end approached she suffered such pain as hindered her from resting or lying down, yet the end came to her peacefully. She was a daughter of the late Elder Ahimaaz Mellott and his wife, Catherine. She is survived by two brothers and two sisters. She leaves two sons: Clem Schooley of Andover and Vernon Schooley of McConnellsburg. There are thirteen grandchildren and one great-grandchild. She was baptized over 50 years ago by the late Elder E. V. White, into the membership of the Sideling Hill Baptist Church. Her husband, G. L. Schooley, passed away in May, 1933. She proved by her Christian deportment that she had been with Jesus and had learned of him. Her adornment was that of a meek and quiet spirit, becomingly fitting her profession of faith in Christ Jesus as her Lord and Savior. In her measure, she was humble and lowly even as her adorable Lord before her had been in his fullness. Only as true believers take his yoke on them, do they learn of him to be meek and lowly even as he was. Such experimental learning on the part of true believers is the effect of their vital union with Christ as their head. She loved her brethren and was always in her place at the meetings unless providentially hindered. She was gifted with spiritual discernment to know truth from error, and to choose the good and refuse the evil. She faithfully held to the doctrine of salvation by grace, of the absolute sovereignty of God, of the resurrection of the body and of the life everlasting. Her mortal body was laid to rest in the Siloam burying-ground not far from her earthly home. Funeral services were conducted by the writer of this notice in the church-house at Siloam. May the Holy Spirit comfort the bereaved church and family. The Lord has taken to himself one of his jewels. Her going has been gain to her.

H. H. LEFFERTS

Once more it is my sad duty to write an obituary of a highly esteemed sister of the Elk Lick Old School Baptist Church at Sadieville, Ky. SUSAN MELISSA MULBERRY was born Jan. 6, 1857 in Scott Co., Ky. and died Feb. 6, 1942 making her 85 years old. She was united in marriage March 3, 1878 to John L. Mulberry and to this union were born three children, Clarence of Sadieville, George L. of Lexington and a daughter Myra Jones who died in 1908. She left one son, Charles Paul Jones, who has spent all his life caring for his grandmother at the old home. Our sister had been an invalid for many years partly in bed and the rest of the time in a wheel-chair. She would help with the housework and with the assistance of Charles Paul kept the home fires burning. One time I visited her with several of the brethren. We found her in bed with several copies of the SIGNS and a much worn Bible on the bed with her. I said to her, "you have good company." She said, "yes, the best there is and the only enjoyment I have, I keep them handy." December 1886 she and her husband were received and baptized by Elder George S. Weaver, pastor of the Elk Lick Church. Both she and her husband died in the faith which they professed that day in 1886. Her walk was upright, her faith in Christ was strong, her allotted time came and she has entered into the joy of her Lord. We shall miss her and may the good Lord reconcile us all to our great loss which we feel is her eternal gain. After a short service in the meeting house we buried her in Porter Cemetery beside her husband and daughter. Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord. As thou hast given us grace to live by, give us grace to die by and to thee be all the glory.

GEORGE L. WEAVER

MRS. LOVA MEREDITH EDWARDS, daughter of Lovie R. and Anna Belle Meredith, was born Feb. 11, 1866 and died March 5, 1942. She was married to Isaac C. Edwards Jan. 13, 1887. To this union was born seven children: Mrs. L. W. Copeland, San Diego, Cal., Clide, Hershel, Clarence, Lovie Edwards and Mrs. Briley Queen, Waynesboro, Tenn. and Harvel Edwards, Lawrenceburg, Tenn. She also leaves sixteen grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and two brothers, Lou Meredith, Millsboro, Texas and Wat Meredith, Waynesboro, Tenn. The writer was called by the family to attend the funeral of their mother. She nor her husband, who died two years ago March 13, ever united with any church organization but professed a hope in Christ, and bore the character marks of the children of God. The writer tried to present the principals of doctrine that the Christian hope is based upon the eternal purpose and promises of God, confirmed by his oath, that there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. May the comforting influence of the Holy Spirit comfort the bereaved ones.

ELDER LYTLE BURNS

MISS JANE C. BOWER passed away at The Primitive Baptist Home in Salisbury, Maryland, on February 10th, 1942, after having been confined to her bed for several years. Sister Jennie, as she was familiarly called by those who knew her well, was born February 23, 1857. This made her earthly career a little short of 85 years. She was received into the fellowship of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in New York City on June 24th, 1883, and was baptized by Elder William J. Purrington the first day of the following month. She spent nearly sixty years in the church as a faithful member, and nothing delighted her soul more than to hear the praises of her Savior extolled. She was quite a student of the written word and, therefore, was very familiar with the Scriptures, and liked to talk with those who understood them. Many has been the time when we felt to be ministered unto by her conversation.

She came of a large family, but so far as we know none of her immediate family survive her. Some years ago she went to The Primitive Baptist Home to reside, and her last days were spent there with others of like precious faith. Her funeral service was conducted by Elder Harold M. Bennett, of Mardela Springs, Md., and interment was made in the Forest Grove Cemetery near Salisbury. We shall miss her but are persuaded that our loss is her eternal gain.

R. L. D.

MINUTES WANTED

We are anxious to obtain a copy of the latest minutes of the various Associations throughout the country who are in fellowship with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We will be glad if the Moderators and Clerks, in particular, would take note of this and send us a copy of their 1942 Minutes as soon as they hold their meetings and have their minutes printed. R. L. D.

MEETINGS

LOWER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION CHANGES DATES

Since the tobacco crop in this section is being taken in earlier than formerly and interfered with many of our brethren, sisters and friends attending our Association, we decided at our last session to change the dates of the meeting from the third Saturday, Sunday and Monday in July to the first Saturday, Sunday and Monday in July making it two weeks earlier. This being done on Monday of our Association, and many of our visitors having left, we are publishing this change in "Zion's Land Mark" and also in the "SIGNS OF THE TIMES". Our next session will be held with the church at Mebane, N. C. and we hope our brethren, sisters and friends will come to see us.

Roxboro, N. C. F. D. LONG.

The next session of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will be held with the church at Banister Springs, Va., on the second Sunday and Friday and Saturday before in July. The church is on Highway 29 leading from Danville to Chatham. All lovers of truth are cordially invited, especially preaching brethren. J. FLOYD WILLIAMS.

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sundays in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y. at 10:30 a.m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed. R. LESTER DODSON.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. on South 7th Street, Mayfield, Ky. Those interested will be welcome.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

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We will furnish extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure, we will mail them another copy free of charge.

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ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A. M. 2 P. M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists is now settled in her new church-house, at 4614 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas, where she holds her regular monthly services on each first Sunday at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. Preaching services also on each third Sunday by Elder C. B. Teague, and each second Sunday by brother O. C. Lee, at 11 o'clock a. m. A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. R. HARDY, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Eligin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell and Fizer Sts., Memphis, Tenn., second and fourth Saturday nights and Sunday at 11 a. m.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas. Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Texas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

VOL. 110 RUTHERFORD, N. J., AUGUST, 1942 NO. 8

CORRESPONDENCE

ELECTION

Among the many things held to be true, and, therefore, a part of the doctrine of the Church, is the Election of Grace. This highly important subject is denied in fact, if not by admission, by much of the so called Christian world. Rational minds immediately become foundered when trying to give a plausible exegesis of the subject; so much so, that they usually explain away the truth of the matter to such an extent that this part of their doctrine should be given a more appropriate name. This is because the inception of election was before the world began and, therefore, can only be understood and believed by faith. Since faith is the gift of God, all of us are dependent upon him for an understanding of truth.

The word ELECT, used as a verb, means "to choose out", and, of course, as a noun, means "one who is chosen out". In its doctrinal sense it means, "one who is chosen of God to salvation". The following, therefore, is the true meaning according to our understanding: The sovereign act of God in choosing a people, peculiarly and particularly loved by him, out of the posterity of Adam, upon whom he would bestow sufficient grace in the person of his Son, Jesus Christ, to cleanse them from all sin and iniquity; thus preparing them, after all the work of grace is wrought in them, for an eternal habitation with him in heaven.

The term Election, in any sense in which it may be used, always presupposes that the elected are chosen by others and they are not able to choose themselves. In considering the subject further, let us lay our foundation on safe and sure footing of proper depths by calling to mind what the inspired Scriptures say in part about it. First, who did the choosing? Isaiah wrote in the 45th chapter, "For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name, I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me." Mark, in the 13th chapter says, "And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days". In the 11th chapter of Romans Paul wrote, "But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace". Paul also says in the first

chapter of Ephesians that we are blessed "with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him", etc. In the 2nd letter to the Thessalonians, 2nd chapter, we find, "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." It is written in the 15th chapter of John, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you". The above lay the foundation that God did the electing or choosing.

Second, when did the choosing take place? Above was quoted Paul from 2nd Thessalonians, that, "—God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation", etc. Finishing the quotation above from the 1st chapter of Ephesians, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love". Paul further says in 2nd Timothy, "Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began". These quotations lay the foundation that the choice was made from the beginning or before the world began.

Third, what was the moving cause of the choosing? As already quoted from Timothy, "—but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." In the 9th chapter of Romans, Paul says, "(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth); It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Jeremiah in the 31st chapter says, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." We find in the 1st chapter of Ephesians, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." These lay the foundation that the choosing was according to God's purpose and love for his people.

Fourth, was the choice made because of any merit or work of the chosen? As quoted above from 2nd Timothy, "Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace," etc. Before was quoted, "For the children, being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." In the same 9th chapter of Romans we find, "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." Then, in the 15th chapter of John, we read, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain," etc. These show that it was not because of

merit or works on the part of those chosen.

From all these references to the Scriptures, and many more, this, then, is the sum of the evidence on the doctrine of Election:

That it was part of God's purpose, before he brought anything into existence, that is, before the world began, to choose or elect a people as his own, out of the family of Adam; (who should also according to the same purpose be brought into existence). These people were to be redeemed from under the curse of their fall in sin, (for it was also a part of God's purpose, however distasteful to carnal thought, that they should fall), by a redeemer who was given them at the same time they were chosen. Therefore it is said they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. This redeemer was the Son of God, Jesus, the Christ.

At the proper time Jesus made his appearance into the world and, since there could be no remission of sins without the shedding of blood, he died upon the cross, bearing their sins in his own body, being made sin for us, who knew no sin. Thus, being a perfect offering given of God, dying for the sins of his people, he forever satisfied the wrath of God which stood against them. Indeed, such a wonderful saviour was he, when he arose from the dead he even justified them in the sight of God. So all that Jesus died for—all who were chosen in him—are made perfect, so much so that in their standing before God in Jesus, they are as perfectly clean as they would be if they had never fallen in sin and condemnation. Nevertheless, both the sin and the redemption were necessary before they were prepared for their inheritance.

However, this state of perfection is not realized so long as His people remain in their natural life. Death is inevitable and is necessary for there must be a resurrection from the dead before they are brought "Unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." In the resurrection they are "Fashioned like unto his glorious body" and shall "Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." When all of this work of grace is completed in them then shall they be in possession of that unto which they were chosen.

That a person is chosen of God is manifested to them in a pecular way—an unmistakable way. Whoever has been made to feel the "exceeding sinfulness of sin" and to realize he is justly condemned, and knows that all of his own efforts have availed him nothing, and who has been made to beg for mercy and has felt the relief from the awful burden of sin and made to rejoice in the hope that Jesus died for him, is surely of the chosen and redeemed family. No other people have this experience. No other people feel the weight of sin. No other people know the calmness and joy and peace that Jesus only can give.

JOHN D. WOOD
Roanoke, Va.

EUREKA, New York.

Dear Brethren in Christ:

I have never written to you before. I hope that God will guide my hand, in

the spirit, to relate something of Christ's dealings with me, and that it will prove to be in harmony with the experiences of others. I have heard some wonderful and beautiful testimonies and feel that maybe mine is not one. We all believe and know that salvation is of the Lord our Saviour Christ Jesus.

I was born, raised, baptized, and confirmed, as it is called, in the high Episcopalian order. I went to Sunday school regularly, receiving various medals for perfect attendance and an album of stamps, I remember, of fast days and saints for the same reason. When older and confirmed, I went to church with fair regularity for a time and gradually less. The proceedings of the church were all written down in our prayer book, so when I was not in attendance, I did not miss very much. There was the same ritual for the morning service and the same certain service for every evening. I gradually drifted away, and I know now that it was the predestination, and the foreknowledge, and the will of God that led me into many denominations searching with God's guiding hand after righteousness. I did not see all this until I had the desire to unite with the Old School Baptists. My wife, and sister in Christ, with me came nearly uniting with the New School Baptist Church at one time, but again the ever blessed omnipresent, omnipotent hand of God kept me from going forward.

Sometime later through sister Adsit's mother, who was a believer in the invisible church, we came to the Old School Baptist Church at Shokan, New York to hear Elder Arnold H. Bellows. And there, brethren, I for the first time sat on hard and straight-backed seats, saw no beautiful stained glass windows, saw no beautiful altar or minister dressed in the calling of another denomination, and for the first time I really seemed to understand the spoken word of God, and not for fifteen or twenty minutes, but for one and one half hours of continuous preaching, and I was not even tired of sitting. As I see it now, I was having my eyes opened to the word and truth, and there I find my happiness. I do not know what I have said then or since, but the brethren came to me. Think of it! I was condemned that day and condemned more since that time, and if it was not for that blessed hope that I have, I do not know what would become of me.

I truly say, how could the brethren come to me? There is nothing good in me, no, not anything. If I said anything I know it not except that I loved the brethren each and every one, and that such a sinner as I was not worthy. I feel to be the least, if one at all, and like the woman who said that the dogs ate of the crumbs which fell from their master's table. It was all God's purpose. The brethren have taken me into their loving fellowship when I feel that I can not even pray. I have known beautiful man-made prayers. I can not say one of them now. Why? God knows. They were not from the heart, as I now know that only true prayer is from the heart. The Lord has taught me to say, "God, be merciful to me a sinner," and to feel sweetness in the shortest verse of the Bible, "Jesus wept." If the brethren had known the

hardness of my heart! I never knew I could be brought down and made to cry. But God knoweth all things and judgeth all men. He is the one, the Alpha, the Omega, the beginning and the end. Jesus was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and must needs know. Sin was laid on him. It was not in him. He was crucified, shed blood and water, died and rose again to God's right hand to reign in glory. Before Christ went away, he told his disciples that he would send the Comforter, the Holy Spirit. How happy we are, brethren, when he sends us a little hope. Sister Adsit and myself were baptized the same day, the nineteenth of May. It was a cloudy day, threatening to rain. I was laid down in the deep water of that spring day. As I came up out of the water the heavens actually opened up to let sun shine through, and it was the most fearful, the most solemn, and the happiest moment of my life. I have felt fearfulness since then and do say often, "God, be merciful to me a sinner." I have been drawn more and more to the brethren in bonds of love and fellowship in the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. I have had many seasons when it seemed my hope was dimmed, but Christ has made his grace sufficient for me (II Cor. 12-9). The rod and the staff (Psalm 23) have been a comfort to me. The rod to me is the word, the promise, the Bible, and the law, and the staff is the grace of Christ Jesus, who is the great Shepherd who guides and guards his little flock. I have written this to relieve my mind, and I will conclude by saying that I hope and pray that God will ever keep me at the feet of the brethren and in their love and fellowship although I feel so unworthy.

A brother saved by grace if saved at all. E. K. ADSIT.

Written by (the late)

ELDER HOWARD WALLACE MAY

(Continued from July issue)

God's purpose is like a great chain, link in link. If anywhere in the chain one link was to fail it would separate the two ends of the chain. If God's purpose was to fail in one thing there would be no certainty of the Lord's poor people ever being taken to that God blessed home where they will never have to suffer. If one thing had failed, with Joseph being in Egypt, the corn would not have been stored up for the famine, but Jacob sent Joseph to see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flock, and when he (Joseph) came to where his brothers were they aimed to kill him, or some of them did. Reuben aimed to deliver him back to his father, but God over-ruled both of their intentions for he (God) had decreed from all eternity, within himself, that Joseph should be sold to Pharaoh's officer and captain of the guard, to be lied about, to be cast into prison on a false accusation, and to interpret the dreams of the chief butler and the baker. If this lie had not been told on him he would not have been in prison, and he would not have interpreted their dreams; then the chief butler could not have told Pharaoh, I remember my faults, there is a young man, an Hebrew, that can interpret dreams. Joseph was brought before Pharaoh and he (Joseph) told Pharaoh

what God was going to bring to pass. The hand or power that caused the dreams to be dreamed caused these three to be in the prison. The chief butler, the baker, and Joseph were all there according to God's will and purpose. The same hand or power that sent Joseph down there caused these dreams to be, and the way was fixed of God from all eternity, and God watched over Joseph and took care of him all the time. Joseph said to his brethren, "be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life." It was all of the Lord from the start to the finish like everything else both in heaven and in earth. I believe it was God's purpose for sin to be in the world. He did, from all eternity, purpose that his name should be praised by poor sinners here in this time world. Had there not been any sin there would have been no sinners to praise his blessed name, but God, unchangeable, fixed that sinners should be in the world. Paul said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." If there had been no sinners Christ Jesus never would have come into this sin-cursed world, if there had been no sin there would have been no sinners and God's name never would have been praised, but it was all fixed in God's eternal mind for each and every thing to be just as it is without any failure, that his name might be praised by poor sinners which was the object of his love. Paul says, "of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question." He also says by the authority of high Heaven that these bodies shall be changed from natural to spiritual bodies, "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." If Paul was not talking about the bodies of God's children pray tell me what was he talking about. Who ever heard of a spiritual body being changed. He was absolutely talking about these mortal bodies of God's children. It make no difference what any one says they are to be made like him, Jesus. If it is something in this mortal body why did Paul say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" If all that ever goes or is taken to Heaven and Immortal Glory is when God's blessed children die the common death of all men, what did the grave have victory over and why would Christ appear the second time without sin unto salvation if he, Christ, is not coming after the very thing that the grave has the victory over? Thes. 4:13 to 18 inclusive. "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever

be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Paul was talking about the dead that had died the common death of all men, and was buried in the grave, or wherever they be if it be in the bottom of the mighty deep. The Lord knows where they are and he will bring them with him at his second coming without the loss of one of them. What words are we to comfort one another with? That the Lord himself shall descend the second time, and that he, the Lord, will raise the dead from their sleeping dust. Brethren and friends I believe the dust of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob with all the rest of the redeemed family of God will raise them to meet the Lord in the air, and God's people that are alive at that time will be changed in a moment from a mortal body to a spiritual body. Brethren, Paul was talking about the dead that had died and they that were alive of the redeemed family of God when time will be no longer. This is as plain as the sun at noon day when there is not a cloud to be seen and cannot be explained away to mean anything else. Men can say they do not believe it, but that does not change God's purpose in raising the dead and changing the living. If Paul was not talking about when this world was coming to an end, pray tell me what was he talking about? If the dead are not going to be raised from the graves, and the living are not going to be changed, and all caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and ever be with the Lord, Heaven will be a blank for we do know that we take our people out and bury them in the grave, and if that very body that is laid down in the grave never is raised from the grave it would never meet the Lord in the air to ever be with the Lord. All the arguing that men and devils can do will never keep this from coming to pass at God's time. God's people are saved by grace and grace alone in time and eternity for the scripture says in Gal. 3, 21, "Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, but there was no law given that could give life, life comes by Jesus Christ, the Lord, and by him only. "By grace ye are saved." I want to say regarding the time on the end of the old family porch referred to at the beginning of this writing, the first Saturday in August 1895, that I went down to the Little Hope Church and tried to tell those good old people what I hoped the blessed Lord had done for poor, unworthy me by his work of grace and was received. The next day, Sunday, I was baptized by my uncle, Elder W. J. May. I had been in water many a time before, but never that felt like that time, and went home that evening with an easy mind. The next day my wife and I were out in the woods singing when I just lacked one step of stepping on a large copperhead and I thought then it was God's eternal purpose that I should not make that step. John 9:22, "These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of

the synagogue." The same threatening is going on in this world in our day and time. If you preach the Absolute Predestination of all things, Salvation by Grace and Grace alone, that God is Sovereign, and that Christ Jesus is the obedience of his children they put you out of the church. You have to preach that you can do something of yourself to merit God's blessings.

(The late) ELDER
HOWARD WALLIS MAY

R.F.D. 1, St. Albans, W. Va.

Elder R. Lester Dodson,
Dear Brother in Christ:—

I am enclosing a letter written me by my niece, Clarice Johnson, written after I had the gracious privilege of burying her in baptism, also two letters written by another niece of mine, sister Lena Byrnside. She wrote the first letter to me during the time of her trial and labor of soul. Her trial and weight of conviction was sore and deep, and during this time she was drawn in, or united with, the New School Baptists to find it was not her home before they baptized her. The last letter was written shortly after she united with the Providence Church (Old School Baptist), and another blessed privilege was mine to bury her and her husband in the liquid grave. If you deem these letters worthy of space in the columns of the dear old Signs of the Times give them space, and if not please return them to me. Let me express my sincere well wishes to you as Editor and Publisher of the Signs. May the God of Israel bless your efforts and uphold you with his Almighty power according to his own holy will. Yours in hope through grace.

HARVEY J. BIRD

Huntington, W. Va.

My Precious Uncle Harvey:—

I will try again to write you a few lines although sometimes I vow to myself I will never be so bold as to write any one. I think I tire people with my poor letters when I feel so lost and low down. I am not like you dear people and feel no better than any Arminian. While it is my greatest pleasure, and I know I love the dear people of God, yet I feel I do not deserve to stand in the place that I do. Oh, how pure, clean and good they all looked on Sunday when I was at the waters edge, when I lost sight of fear, was not ashamed and was made bold enough to ask that I might be received and live among those whom I hope are my dear kindred in Christ. I left behind in the water a great burden. The heavy weight is gone and I can talk more freely with my dear sister who followed me into the water for baptism. In a way we were such strangers. I was afraid to speak and she doubtless was also to speak freely of these things. How I would love to see my other sister follow us in the steps we have taken and I feel she will have to come soon as well as others. I regretted that my beloved companion was away. He had to be in Maryland and I in West Virginia but it pleased the Lord to have it that way and he came back the next day. My faults are many and it requires much patience from my family and from God's children to overlook them but God has put that love in our hearts. Bless his right-

eous and divine will. Without his love and tender mercy I would be left to perish. We know not what is good for us or in store for us, but the Lord knoweth and doeth all things well and none can hinder. Everything will come to pass at the Lord's time. May I not deceive you dear ones. Think I shall always carry that fear. Have written plenty to weary you but before closing I want to say your preaching Sunday was the sweetest I ever heard and I have heard others say the same. It seemed to me any one loving Old Baptists would have enjoyed every minute of it. Forgive me if I have written anything amiss. I am weak in the flesh. Your unworthy niece and sister I hope.

CLARICE JOHNSON

HURRICANE, W. Va.

Dear Uncle Harvey:—

It has been on my mind for several days to write you, but just put it off feeling part of the time too bad to write. I wonder sometimes if any one else has gone through such trials as I have for the past year. It came on me in such a mysterious way. I have always felt that when one united with the church all their burdens would leave them but it has not been that way with me. I was made to feel worse. That worried me, I felt like I was ruined forever. I am wondering what is the trouble and have spent many sleepless nights in such misery I just wanted to wring my hands and cry and try to pray for relief. Often wish I could be as I once was and not have such a burden on me. I read these words in the Bible the other day, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." This comforted me for awhile but not for long. I have often seen people that I thought were good christians and wished I could be like them but feel like I am lost and ruined forever. I have often retired at night feeling so badly that I was sure I would not live until morning, desiring that I might have just a little evidence that I was all right and then I would be happy. I have had little dreams that would make me wonder about myself. After a few days of feeling my natural self when I think it was just nervousness then this burden comes on me again. Nothing I do is a pleasure to me. I have had company and would have to go off to myself and cry wondering what they must have thought of me. Virgil will ask me to help him sing and I feel I cannot stand it to hear him sing. I wanted to keep my feelings a secret from him. The last few days I have been reading the SIGNS and they seem to comfort me more than anything else. Some of the writers tell my feelings better than I can. Last spring someone told Virgil they knew a doctor in Huntington would help me in a short while. I was encouraged that if it was nervousness it might be so but in a short while I had no hope of his helping me. It seems like my mind is not on the things of this earth. I want to know more about God's word. If I am never baptized I feel it is my desire to be in a church somewhere.

LENA BYRNSIDE

HURRICANE, W. Va.

Dear Uncle Harvey:—

I think I will write just a little more now and mail it. Everything that hap-

pened Saturday night and Sunday seems like a sweet dream to me. I hope I can always feel as I do now. I have had a desire to be baptized for so long that it is off my mind now and I feel satisfied. Down in my heart I have had a longing for something and did not know just what it was but as soon as you began preaching Saturday night I knew it was to be with you all. I tried hard to fight it off but could not do it any longer. That proves to me that God will show us the right way in due time if I did worry so much about it. I feel like I want to hear your sweet words again. Do not think I would ever tire of listening to them. I could not sleep for thinking about it. It was so different from what I had been listening to and made me feel so different. Excuse this poor letter but I wanted to express some of my feelings. It had been on my mind all day to write. Hope we will be seeing you all again very soon. Your unworthy niece and sister I hope.

LENA BYRNSIDE

FAYETTE, Ala.

Hebrews 13:2

I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again.

Fear and trembling takes hold on me as I come into your presence by way of the written page. For some months I have been in the "Slough of Despond" with Bunyan, and at times have so despaired of ever being lifted out that it has caused me to seriously doubt that I have ever known anything of the Lord's graciousness to me, a poor, rebellious wretch, full of sin, and vile, polluted, cankerous sores. But at the same time I have been so deeply in the dark, that my life (if indeed I have any spiritual life) has been despaired of I have not lost some little impression to write and speak in the name of Him who fills heaven and earth. My pen has been still for some time, and I have not done as much speaking, being compelled to work on Saturday and, to honestly confess to the truth, because I have had such little liberty that I have been afraid of the pulpit. Ah! brethren how I hate my ways. How vile I am when, as I hope, the Lord gives me grace and light of the Holy Spirit to look into the dark recesses of my soul or self-righteous self. But there is a strange peculiarity about all this. I cannot teach it to any man, I cannot explain to them why I cannot. Here is something that, if we know anything about it, we must be taught it from above by the teaching of the Holy Spirit. Here is a mystery. The wise and prudent know nothing of it. It is completely hid from them by him who rules heaven and earth. As a whole, the noble, the wise, and the mighty cannot fathom its mysterious depths, but the poor, the afflicted, the despised know it. Heaven reveals it to them. It seems good in the sight of the Lord to do this. My readers know this, the mercy of the Lord has taught it to them. How hateful they appear to themselves; how lean, barren and destitute they are; how poor, afflicted and wretched have they become; how hungry, thirsty and empty they are; how polluted, sinful and wretched they are; how weary, footsore and ragged they are; how sick of sin, of worldliness (in

themselves) and the flesh they are; how they would quit sinning if they could; how close to Jesus and his followers they would live if they could; and Oh, dear brethren, how strange they are; how little can they understand themselves; how different they have become. Once all their goods were in peace; their way was smooth and easy; they had gotten religion and were feasting on the riches of arm-of-flesh God. But now, Ah yes, now; their goods, they have none; their way, it has become rough, hard, stony and thorny; their religion, it has been taken from them, and their feasts have gourds in them; and how the children of God hate all this. How they do wish and long and hope to measure up to the standard of those that know the Lord. But (and here is the mystery, the characteristics of strangers and the peculiarity) as much as they hate and abominate themselves they love those that are like them.

Now let us see how Peter would talk about this matter. "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is within you, with meekness and fear. 1 Peter 3:15. I have my doubts about the children of God being under any obligation, or having any admonition given them to entertain and care for every stranger (in the flesh) that comes along. If that were true, some of us who live on the main thoroughfares would have to turn out some of our own at times in order to do it. I cannot see how the Lord's people can take literally what the Bible says. Let me give you some examples of what I mean. "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Prov. 22:6. I think this is to and concerning the church. I cannot believe for an instant that I can, by training, instill into my two boys morality and good citizenship to where they will not depart from it. To so understand the above text would mean that by good parents the depravity of the human race might be overcome. In the sixth chapter of Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus he gives some admonitions to children, parents, servants and masters. Brethren, I cannot take that literally. I do not think it is written to parents, children, etc. after the flesh. To me it spoils the Bible. It is a flat contradition of Old Baptist doctrine. There are fathers in Israel, in fact, Paul called himself Timothy's father and Timothy, his son. There are the children, those that are young, that still speak as a child. They are admonished to obey their parents. After the flesh? No, sir; not that, the law teaches that, and it is a good law, and it is nice to see people with regulation and system and obedience in the family although they are not acquainted with grace, but their parents in the Lord. The parents in this chapter, and the children, are each the Lord's handiwork. One has grown in grace, the other is a new arrival in the church. I think I have given sufficient hint to show what I mean. Now under this taking of the Scriptures does not our text take on new meaning? The chapter starts out with brotherly love continuing. We are told to let it continue. What kind of love? Continue to love (in the Spirit) those that show by their talk and walk that

they know nothing of the travel of a heaven born soul? No, continue to love the brethren. Now what kind of a character is a brother? Go back a few paragraphs and read a description of a child of God, or read Paul's experience in the seventh chapter of Romans. A man with this kind of complexness is a stranger to himself and to one another, and yet, well acquainted. This man is told to give an answer to his hope. When strangers in the flesh stop for entertainment speak to them of their hope. If they tell you what Paul tells you about his then take them in, they are strangers indeed and in truth. If they do not I do not think the admonition has you bound. In the entertainment of these strangers sometimes we have lodged and succored to the needs of angels. An angel is a messenger or agent (not free) of the Lord. It does not necessarily mean a preacher, although that might be the primary meaning. I feel that many times the Lord has sent some poor, afflicted child of God my way. They had a message for me. A message from afar, a message from heaven, a message that was as cold water to my thirsty soul, a message that enabled me to rejoice in the fact that I am a stranger and far from home, that I have no abiding city here but that I seek one not made with hands. I hope Elder Bond may be comforted with this and if I am wrong I hope to be put right. Yours cast down, yet in hope.

W. D. GRIFFIN

OXFORD, Pa.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—

Enclosed find check for $2 to pay for SIGNS OF THE TIMES until Dec. 1942. I am so very glad the SIGNS is still to be published. The passing years bring so many changes. For fifty-four years I have read it and for fifty years have been a subscriber except for a few years I felt I could not take it. When the time came that I could not get to meeting I felt so shut off I just had to take it. I am now in my eightieth year and feel I must take it as long as I can see to read. In the last number a letter written to sister Jennie Bower by sister Nellie H. Arnold cheered me. She spoke of Elder Jenkins and Elder McConnell both of whom I knew well. I was baptized by Elder William Grafton almost fifty years ago. My membership was at Rock Springs. I have had many bright seasons listening to the gospel preached at our little meeting house. You may not remember me but I have heard you preach with comfort and your letters in the SIGNS have come with healing. When my paper expires if you do not hear from me you will know to stop it. I have many dark seasons but am never left entirely in darkness for that passage, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I could not understand why I loved the people at Rock Springs when I had known them such a short time never having been among Old Baptists until we moved to sister Tollinger's farm. I know you are busy and will close. Your sister in gospel bonds.

MARY J. GRIEST

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND AID TO THE "SIGNS":

Mrs. C. Horton, N. Y., $3; Mrs. J. Jeffares, Ga., $1; A friend, N. Y., $1; Elder H. H. Bennett, Md., $4.

EDITORIAL
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"Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew." Matthew 26:74.

The apostles of our Lord, though called and sent of God to preach his everlasting gospel, were men of passion and subject to error. There had lingered in the minds of the Jews the belief that Jesus would reign as a natural king over them, and restore the kingdom of Israel when he came. This thought was often in the minds of his disciples. The language of the prophets, though foretelling of his coming and pointing out many things connected with his death, was such as to leave the impression that his would be an earthly kingdom. This was God's way of hiding these things until the time was ripe to show that his kingdom was not of this world. Christ was spoken of by the prophets as the king. A king shall reign in righteousness, etc. After the resurrection of Christ, before his ascension when he was with his disciples the last time before being received up into glory, he was asked if he would at that time restore the kingdom of Israel. So we see that during his life, and even after his resurrection, before his ascension there was with his own chosen an earthly hope of being restored to power again as a nation upon the earth. When one took the sword and cut off the ear of the high priests servant, Jesus rebuked him saying, "My kingdom is not of this world." At the conclusion of eating the passover after Jesus and the apostles had sung a hymn and went out into the Mount of Olives, Jesus said unto them, "All ye shall be offended because of me this night" having reference to his being delivered into the hands of them that would crucify him. Peter said unto him, "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." Jesus said unto him, "Verily I say unto thee, that this night before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice." In the face of these words Peter yet insisted that he would die with him before he would deny him. So said they all. How little the disciples knew of what was to follow. The earthly kingdom and earthly hopes was in their minds. Here we see something of self confidence about something that they knew nothing about. How emphatic Peter was in his assertion that he would never be offended because of Jesus. How weak we all are when left to ourselves. Our vows fail, our resolutions are broken. Jesus had told Peter, "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." Jesus did not pray that he would not deny, but that he would have that which would bring him through this

terrible ordeal through which he was to pass, "And when thou art converted strengthen thy brethren." How necessary it was that he be sifted, that self confidence be pulled down. Not only was it so with Peter, but it is necessary today that our props be taken from beneath us from time to time and so learn that we are kept by the power of God. One can never strengthen his brethren as long as his confidence is in himself, and he is boasting of what he has or can do himself. The time that Peter was to deny his Lord had been set. It was not a year from then, neither was it a month, it was tonight. This very night, how close it was at hand, how positive Peter was. The number of times he would deny was determined. Not once only but thrice. Nothing could prevent him from doing this the number of times Jesus had said. All things were determined of God in the matter. After the denial thrice the cock was to crow, not before. How can any who believe the Bible question the all-prevailing power of God over all worlds and events when we find the mouths of lions have been stopped; the dumb ass has been made to speak with a man's voice, rebuking a man; the fish delivers Jonah on time to preach to Ninevah; the raven fed a prophet daily; and the cock crows on time; all because of God's power. Sometimes the thought is advanced that after one has been born into the kingdom of God he can live in such a manner that he will never receive the chastisement of God, that in the new birth he is given this ability. The word teaches, "But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." The chastening by the Lord of one of his people is an evidence of sonship. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." It was a small thing for the word of Peter to fail. Not so with Jesus. He upholdeth all things by the word of his power. When Jesus was taken into the judgment hall Peter followed. He had already learned that he could not watch one hour. In the judgment hall Peter was to learn a lesson he would never forget. The sifting now begins. Satan's bounds are set. He can go no farther than God allows. The sifting will be no more or less than Jesus has purposed. At times it is a great comfort to believe with all our heart that not a dart of Satan can hit, except the God of heaven sees fit. All that is necessary to cause one to forget the tender mercies of our God is for God to forsake us in a manifest sense, and when left to ourselves we are prone to wander, Lord we feel it. He is now questioned, and accused of being a disciple of Jesus. His speech is betraying him. If one is a follower of Jesus, there will be some manifestation of it. Peter, professing not to know what they are talking about, pleads ignorance. Another approaches affirming that he was a follower of Jesus. This time he could no longer claim he did not know what they were talking about, he says he does not know the man. Twice will not do, the sifting is not over. Three times he must be questioned, and the same number of times deny his Lord. Why? Because Christ has said, he would deny him thrice. The ones who questioned the apostle knew not what the Lord had

said. They knew nothing of the purpose of God in the matter. The cock could not crow until the third denial, neither could the questioning stop until the word of the Lord was fulfilled. The last time this tempest tossed one is approached he begins to curse and swear saying, I know not the man and immediately the cock crew. It could not wait. The apostle must be reminded of the word of his master. The time for weeping is at hand for a proof that the faith has not failed. What a blessing it is that God causes us to weep. All things are in the hand of him with whom we have to do. He can use anything to remind us of his word, whether it be a promise or a chastening. Peter remembers the word of Jesus. What a terrible thing he had done. Not only denied knowing his Master, but cursing and swearing about it. How enduring is the love of Jesus for his people. No natural love would endure such a test. To have one who had been so graciously blessed deny any knowledge of Jesus when he was being tried for his life, and every accusation brought against him was false so that finally a sentence is passed like this; crucify him I find no fault in him. How peculiar are His ways in revealing unto his people their weakness, and then enabling them to know something of his everlasting love, and feel beneath the everlasting arms. Jesus now looks on him, he remembers the word of the Lord. Weeping begins, what bitter weeping. Only those that have had a like experience know. The knowledge of what he had done being now brought home to him. The weeping was evidence his faith yet abided, that self confidence was overthrown, and he is not his own keeper. Weeping never goes with self works and self confidence. It is evidence of life, only the living naturally weep. How true also is this spiritually. Do we not at times even groan because we cannot weep? Child of God is this not your experience? Though one knows the purpose of God embraced the entire matter, and that God for his own glory, and the good of his chosen ones, often leaves them to the designs of their wicked hearts, thereby causing them to learn how frail they are, yet they weep over such things, and are made through these experiences to say over and over—Lord lead me, Lord undertake for me. They cannot excuse themselves, hate their own lives, and are brought to say with the poet:

O that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still!
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will!

By these things men live, and the life we live in the flesh, (that honors God) we live by the faith of the son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us. Peter can now strengthen his brethren by declaring unto them the all-prevailing love and grace of God. That they are kept by the power of God, through faith, ready to be revealed at the last time. That all flesh is as grass, all the glory of man as the flower of grass, each passing shortly away, but the word of the Lord endureth forever.

D. V. S.

CIRCULAR LETTER

Written by sister Nellie Palmer.

The Maine Old School Baptist Asso-

ciation, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, Bowdoinham, Sagadahock Co., Maine, Sept. 12, 13, 14, 1941, *sendeth greetings and love in our Lord to the several churches and associations with which we correspond.*

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—We come again in weakness and poverty, knowing the flesh profiteth nothing, but we feel we know of the love that passeth understanding. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. This love of God, who can fathom it? It is without beginning of days or end of years. We, who are fathers and mothers, feel we know the depth of natural love. We would willingly take the trials of our children upon ourselves to relieve them, but could we give them to save others? I fear we would falter. But this love of God is a love surpassing the love of women. It strengthens us daily. In him we live, move and have our being all because of his deep love for us. God loved us from everlasting, therefore, with loving kindness hath he drawn us unto himself and we love our brethren with the same love. The natural mind cannot comprehend it, but we do feel their sorrow and with them bear a part. We feel burdened when their hearts are sorrowful. It is this great love that leads us out of darkness into the glorious liberty of the children of God, and how great is this liberty after having been encompassed by darkness that could be felt, cut off, alone without God, like the storm and darkness of night, followed by the bright sun of the morning ushering in a new-born day, so old things have passed away. The works of the flesh have failed us, and now we behold the Son of Righteousness riding triumphant over death, hell and the grave, and he came to where we lay in our filth and nakedness. He covered us with his skirts, and when he looks upon us sees only the beautiful robe with which he has covered us. "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." Cant. 4:7. Is it not wonderful? "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isa. 9:6. This wonderful love has brought us all the way along. He has carried us in his arms, as it were, and we came home to our friends. We do not need to tell them very much before this joy flows from heart to heart, and why? Because of this love that passeth understanding. We love them afar off when we behold in them a desire to hear of this great love, and as children of the Heavenly King as we journey we do sweetly sing at times, but when he withdraws his face then our harps are hung upon the willows. We cannot sing the Lord's song in a strange land, but he will lead us out.

As surely as he overcame and triumphed once for you,
So surely you who love his name shall triumph in him too.

We will now leave the subject, we have but touched upon, adding the lines of the hymn writer, "The love of Jesus what it is, none but his loved ones know."

ELDER A. H. BELLOWS, Mod.
SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, Bowdoinham, Sagadahock Co., Maine, Sept. 12, 13, 14, 1941 *sendeth greetings and love in the Lord to the several churches and association with which we correspond.*

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through a kind providence the Bowdoinham and Whitefield Churches of only three members each have been able to meet again in an Association. Your correspondence was gladly received reminding us that we are all kindred in Christ even though we may be strangers in the flesh. Your ministering brethren, Elders Bellows and Vaughn, came to us preaching the gospel like the Apostles of old as directed by the Holy Spirit, thereby renewing our hope and strengthening our faith in the saving power of Almighty God. In the war scarred world of to-day, where so many are suffering from mental and physical afflictions, we must not forget that nothing happens contrary to God's will. As he sent his angel to loose the bands of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and walk with them in the fiery furnace so that the fire had no power over them, nor was a hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed over them; so will he always care for them that are his wherever they may be to their good and his glory. Our meeting was attended by nearly all the Maine brethren. The next meeting of our Association, the Lord willing, will be held with the Whitefield Church on Friday, Saturday and Sunday before the second Monday in September 1942.

ELDER A. H. BELLOWS, Mod.
SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING CIRCULAR LETTER

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 15*th,* 16*th and* 17*th,* 1941, *to the churches composing this meeting and to the associations with which we correspond, sends christian greeting.*

DEARLY BE OVED BRETHREN:—Luke xviii. 1: "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." There is no time and no circumstance in the believer's life when or where one can afford to be without union with the Redeemer who is our Lord. Prayer is the fruit of such union, communion and fellowship with the Lord. Lacking this, we faint. There is no half-way stop between praying and fainting; either we pray or we faint. To faint is to become discouraged, disheartened, to "stagger" in unbelief. Unbelief is the root sin of all fainting or staggering. Abraham believed God and this alone was imputed unto him for righteousness. It is written of him that he "staggered not through unbelief." To stagger is to wander, being not able to hold a straight course. Drunkenness causes staggering. Hence the need of being temperate in all things, that our moderation be known to all men. To be drunk is to be intoxicated with the things of the corrupt present world and of our fallen human nature. Sowing to

the flesh results in reaping corruption. From this arises "staggering," a wandering from the precepts of the Lord to whom we are in subjection through his grace by virtue of his having bought us with his blood. Truly believing in the word of God, both written and living, produces soberness which is the ability of the believing soul to steer a straight course by the compass of faith, looking alone unto Jesus the Author and Finisher thereof. "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." The truth of the vital unity of Christ and his people is realized experimentally through prayer. Prayer being the outbreathing of the believing soul Godward, it can only be produced by the dwelling of the Holy Ghost within the believer, and the Holy Spirit dwells in none but the people of God's own choice. The natural man cannot pray, neither can unregenerate persons. These have not the Spirit of Christ to enable them to pray. Even in the true believer, the hindrance of the unregenerate human nature yet persists, obscuring often such evidences of our quickened state as God has been pleased to graciously grant us. We believe with one of our natures (the spiritual), but we disbelieve with that other nature of ours (the carnal). No wonder, then, Christ tells us we always have need to pray. Whether we always do so or do not do so, does not affect the fact that we ought to do so. The enabling power unto ceaseless prayer is alone of God the Spirit, yet there is no time or condition when or where we can escape the necessity for prayer. If joyful, we need to pray that we become not too exalted through elation; if sorrowful, we need to pray that we become not despondent through abasement; if tempted, we need to pray for power to prevail over the accuser of our souls who seeks to work us woe; if delivered from temptation, there is need to pray against the danger of taking any credit to our own arm for the victory. These are some of our personal needs for prayer. Collectively, as churches we need prayer which links us up with Christ at the Throne in the Heavens, in order to supplicate him to send laborers of his own choice and qualifying into his vineyard. The ministers of the gospel are very few and far between these days. We need, as churches, to pray the Lord to maintain his cause in the earth that we may be truly living testimonials of his grace and truth, not fearing to own him before men nor shunning any principle of the whole counsel of God. Though these times in which we live be full of difficulty for men of faith, though the tumult all around us may give rise to doubting, now is no time to "stagger" through unbelief. God has not gone off and left us to the working of chance or blind fate. He is on the Throne of the Universe working all things after the counsel of his own will, conforming his elect among all nations more and more to the accomplishment of his end for them, which is that they shall be brought into conformity with the Lord Jesus Christ in their bodies, souls and spirits finally. "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patient waiting for Christ!"

We thank you in the name of the Lord

for the coming of your messengers, visitors and messages among us this year, and we earnestly beg for a continuance of your love and fellowship in the kingdom and patience of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord willing, our next annual session is appointed to be held at this same time in 1942 with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, when and where we hope to meet you all again.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

CIRCULAR LETTER

Written by Elder H. C. Ker

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Snow Hill Church, of Snow Hill, Maryland, October 22nd and 23rd, 1941, *to the different associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth love in the Lord.*

At this time we will call your attention to the following Scripture: "Greet one another with an holy kiss." The longing desire of the apostles for the peace and unity of the church seems to have been unbounded. To that end they prayed, preached, exhorted and wrote, and willingly spent and were spent in the cause of Christ, deeming it of more importance and worth than all the world beside. After the brethren were instructed in the word of God, nothing preceded the desire of the apostles that they might live in peace and unity as brethren should. All fleshly ambition and pride should be sacrificed to that end. The same desire, and delight in it, was in David when he said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

It seems to us that the apostle had several things in mind when he penned the words of our text. Likely he remembered some things of the Old Testament, when kissing was indulged in by some, and not always in a godly way. He may have also remembered the kiss of Judas, and would not have those of his love and care follow such an example, therefore said, "Greet one another with an holy kiss." In ancient times a kiss was a sign of reverence and submission to a superior, also of love and affection. Traitors, however, practiced deception with kisses, as was the case when Joab kissed Amasa, and slew him, and when Judas kissed Christ and betrayed him. These kisses were anything but "holy," hence could have no place in the kingdom of God. Kissing was not an ordinance in the apostolic age of the church, nor will it ever be, as no such commandment was given by the Builder and Maker of the house, therefore we do not understand this exhortation of the apostle's to mean that the children of God, male and female, young and old, should kiss each other every time they meet, regardless of occasion or circumstances, but that when they do so greet one another to let it be "an holy kiss," and not such as Joab and Judas. Neither did he mean that brethren should kiss the sisters and the sisters kiss one another, but that neither male nor female should be known in this sacred relationship. The word "holy" means sacred, pure, guiltless, and well did the apostle use the word "holy" in this connection,

and all will do well to consider this when greeting with kisses. To convey the thought in our mind with regard to an holy kiss we shall call attention to the father and his prodigal son, not to prove them brethren in the Spirit, but to show, as near as we can, what "an holy kiss" is. The son had sinned against the father and in the sight of heaven; had wasted all his living and become, as it were, a vagabond, but notwithstanding all his faults and short comings his father loved him still, and when he returned home filled with shame and self-loathing his father, full of pity, compassion and forgiveness, and his very being aglow with love, ran to meet him, and fell on his neck and kissed him. That kiss was as near "holy" as anything in this life can be that is not altogether, entirely and absolutely of the Spirit of God. In that kiss was no hypocrisy, no guile, no deceit, no evil surmisings, no selfishness, no thought of vice, no thought of sex. Not another man in all the world could have kissed that boy as his father did. No kiss of men or angels could have meant the same to that son as did the kiss of his father. That kiss spoke louder and said more than all the voices of men combined could have done, and the chief thing it said to the wayward boy was, my son, I love you. That love covered all the boy's faults, and he knew it. The father loved his son because he was bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. The children of God are members one of another, and because of this union should love one another with pure hearts fervently, and their kisses should be "holy," embracing every thing, as above illustrated by the father and his prodigal son. There can be no such thing as "an holy kiss" when malice, envy, hatred or pride find place in the feelings of God's children toward one another. Backbiting and fault finding never suggest to those to whom we thus speak that we love the one in whom we see so many faults. When an old lady kisses a young man who is her brother in Christ, it should be an holy kiss of a mother to her son, in it telling him of her love for him in the Lord and her interest in his spiritual welfare. The kiss of a young man upon the lips or cheek of an old woman should be an holy kiss of a son to a mother, recognizing her age, faithfulness and steadfastness in the gospel.

We have wondered that if a kiss is a sign of reverence and affection, is the grasp of the hand or the falling of a tear less so? We feel sure that the same good feeling of love one toward another is made known in the hearty hand shake that is demonstrated by a kiss, and can there be stronger evidence or greater manifestation of affection and good will one toward another in the kingdom of God than when in trouble or distress to see "the sympathizing tear" steal across the cheek of a brother or sister? Sometimes kissing is indulged in perhaps without the slightest thought of brotherly love; some are naturally more affectionate than others, but those who kiss less do not love less, nor is their desire for the peace and spiritual prosperity of others less. A kind word often means much to a poor, discouraged soul who

(*Continued on page* 191)

OBITUARIES

MRS. MARTHA (HANES) KINGREY, our sister in Christ, departed this life March 15, 1942 after a lingering illness. She was afflicted with cancer on the face just below her eye. Her suffering was most intense as the infection of this dread cancer spread and wasted her frail strength. In all her suffering and afflictions she was resigned to her lot, and as the end drew near she often expressed her desire to depart and be with Christ. Sister Kingrey was born July 9, 1848 in Franklin Co., Va. United in marriage to W. B. Kingrey in 1867. Mr. Kingrey predeceased her many years ago leaving her a widow to face the many trials of life in sorrow. She remained a widow until the end. She was given a sweet hope in Jesus in early life and united with the Pig River Old School Primitive Baptist Church in Franklin Co., Va. Soon afterward in the year 1887 she and her family moved to Lincoln Co., W. Va. The Bethel Church was soon organized in this county and she moved her membership by letter to this church. Many are the evidences and incidents that yet live to bespeak her faithfulness to her church and to the cause of Christ. Through cold and heat, through rain and storm she came to fill her seat at the place of worship when she was physically able. Many have been her visits to the sister churches of Providence and Sarah, traveling over mountain country by primitive modes of conveyance, horse back, ox wagon or even on foot, to meet with the Saints of God in worship, all because her heart was aglow with love. She was humble and quiet in disposition, so childlike in her implicit trust in God. Her convictions were deep, hence she was not carried about by every wind of doctrine, but was established, rooted and grounded in all the cardinal points of doctrine. She was not given to much talking but it can be truly said of her that her conversation was in Heaven. Her profession was adorned by a godly walk and conversation. The Doctrine of Grace was the theme of her song. She had no confidence in the puny arm of flesh. As I am made to look back to the days of my childhood I remember how at meeting time at old Providence Church she would visit my father's home, and how she, together with my parents, would join in such earnest conversation of the things of the Kingdom of God's dear Son, or join in singing songs of grace around the old hearthstone in simplicity of spirit. Words utterly fail me in portraying the many noble qualities of this dear Saint of God. Let me say she was endeared to all, she was a mother in the neighborhood never sparing herself to lend a helping hand. She was baptized by the late Elder John C. Hall and was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church about fifty-three years. She leaves six sons to mourn their loss. J. B., W. C., and John Kingrey, Hamlin, W. Va., and George L., J. H., and Taw Kingrey Yawkey, W. Va. Two daughters, Mrs. Mary Wade, Griffithville, W. Va., and Mrs. Cora Mays, Yawkey, W. Va. There are also fifty-one grandchildren, one hundred and one great-granchildren and eleven great-great-grandchildren together with a host of friends. Her loss is keenly felt by the church but we grieve not as those who have no hope. A mother in Israel has fallen. I was called, according to her request, to conduct her funeral where I tried to set forth the doctrine she believed and loved. A large concourse of friends and loved ones attended the funeral. The floral offerings were many and beautiful thus attesting the high esteem in which she was held. Burial was in Beech Grove Cemetery near her old home. Her last hours were spent in the home of her granddaughter, Mrs. Everett L. Saul. All that loving hands could do was done for her in her last hours of suffering. May God reconcile us all. Written by request.

ALSO

MR. O. F. BELL, our brother in Christ, was born in Franklin Co., Va., Nov. 13, 1867, and departed this life March 15, 1942, aged 74 years, 4 months, and 2 days. He was the son of Peter and Ella (Castle) Bell. He was united in marriage to Fannie J. Oxley in 1887 and to this union were born six children, two of whom preceded him in death. He leaves to mourn their loss four sons, Elder R. C. Bell Huntington, W. Va., R. A. Bell, South Charleston, W. Va., C. R., and F. L. Bell, Galveston, Texas. Also two brothers, E. P. Bell, Hurricane, W. Va., and H. C. Bell, St. Albans, W. Va. It is with a felt sense of my own weakness I make the attempt to write this notice. Brother Bell was so very close to me. He was convicted of sin and guilt before God many years ago, was visited with sweet deliverance and given a good hope through grace in the blood and imputed righteousness of Christ. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church about the year 1908, however, this band of Baptists proved to

be conditional in doctrine and he became dissatisfied and came out from among them several years ago. He then united with the Providence Old School Baptist Church of Lincoln Co., W. Va. When the Harmony Old School Baptist Church of Cabbell Co., W. Va., was organized, Brother Bell went into the Harmony Church as a charter member and lived a faithful and devoted member until his death. His seat was seldom vacant at meeting time although he had been very frail in health for several years. He was always satisfied with the goodness of the Lord's house. He was licensed by the church to speak in public and was blessed to speak many times to the comfort of his brethren. Through all the years of his pilgrimage I feel that he had nothing in view but the Glory of God and the welfare of Zion. He visited much among the churches of the Pocatalico Association and some among sister Associations, the Elk Horn, Mates Creek and Tygarts Valley River. He had many friends, was well known and well liked. Many were his visits in my humble home, and many and sweet have been our conversations together. So often in conversation would he so feelingly refer to the time of his deliverance, when peace was spoken to his troubled soul. Nothing but the Doctrine of God our Saviour, yea even the sure mercies of David, would cause his soul to rejoice. Our loss we keenly feel and I realize his seat will be empty from henceforth in the Harmony Church, the little flock I have tried in weakness to serve since it was organized, but, dear brethren, it is God who has bereft us. He saw fit, according to his own will, to call Brother Bell from our midst, yea to call him from the evils to come, and what he does is ever right. May our God reconcile us to our loss and visit the bereft children and family with grace and reconciliation if it be his holy will. Brother Bell had a stroke and was paralyzed in one side two years ago but recovered sufficiently to travel around until a few weeks before his death when he was confined to his bed and seemed to gradually weaken away. He bore his sufferings without murmuring or complaining with sweet resignation to his Master's will. The end came placidly and peacefully without a noticeable struggle. For the last several years his home had been with his son, Elder R. C. Bell, where every attention was given him by both Elder and Sister Bell. In accordance with his request I was called to conduct his funeral. I tried, in weakness, on that occasion to set forth the merit and worth of the crucified and risen Lord hoping it might be the Lord's will to bless it to the comfort of the sorrowing ones, after which I was hastily conveyed to speak on the sorrowing occasion of Sister Kingrey's funeral. Elder John J. Smith assisted at Brother Bell's funeral which was held at the cemetery on the old home place where he was laid away to rest and return to the mother dust in hope of the glorious resurrection from the dead. Submitted in love.

ALSO

JOHN MARTIN BIRD, our cousin, was born April 9, 1860 and departed this life October 19, 1940, aged 80 years, 6 months and 10 days. He was united in marriage to Mary Perdue Nov. 25, 1883 and to this union were born five children. One son, James, predeceased him several years ago. He leaves to mourn their loss his wife, Mary Bird, and four children, W. H. and L. C. Bird, Miriam Meddings and Naomi Morris all of Scott Depot, W. Va. Also thirteen grandchildren and seven great-granchildren and a host of relatives and friends. Cousin John was a man of noble character, a useful citizen, a good friend and neighbor. He had very few, if any, enemies. Always kind, friendly, self-sacrificing, never speaking ill of any one. He never united with the church because of his felt sense of unworthiness, but he was strongly entrenched in the doctrine and had a wonderful spiritual knowledge and perception of the deep hidden, yet revealed, mysteries of God and Godliness. He would earnestly contend for the doctrine of truth against opposition. His only hope was the blood of Christ. I have heard him so feelingly express that his only hope was in the mercy and grace of God. During the great conflict between the states his father, who was serving in the Confederate Army, contracted cholera morbus and died in camp. His mother also sickened and died in those perilous days leaving him an orphan in the world. Because of a lack of full statistics I can only present this brief notice. I was called to conduct his funeral, according to his request, where I tried to preach Christ to a large concourse of relatives and friends. We feel our loss is his great gain. May the Lord bless according to his own will and cause us to own his holy hand in all our many trials while we remain here below. Submitted in love.

H. J. BIRD

Salisbury Circular Letter

(*Continued from page* 188)

feels like giving up the race. Is not this, in a sense, greeting one another with an holy kiss? If the widow and fatherless are poor and needy, and we visit them with the necessities of life, watching over them to see they do not suffer, is not such service greeting them with an holy kiss? If a brother be destitute of food and clothing, and makes his needs known to us, and we kiss him, saying, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding we give him not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Was it an holy kiss? We do not mean to spiritualize away the exhortation of the apostle, because there is no doubt that he meant just what he said, but we make these few suggestions as they occur to our mind in connection with brotherly kindness.

May the Lord help us to take heed unto ourselves that we endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

H. C. KER, Moderator.
GEORGE F. ADKINS, Clerk.
H. M. BENNETT, Ass't Clerk.

Dedication of New Building and Good Meeting Reported

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

We had a pleasant meeting at Dan River last Sunday. We have just completed a new building there, and this was our first meeting in it. I wish you could have been with us. Elders T. F. Adams, Roy Smith, W. C. King, and J. W. Gilliam were there. All spoke ably, and indeed it was a lovely meeting. It was estimated that about three hundred communed at the close of the service. Your sister was there, also the Wiles as the Cane Creek meeting was called off.

I hope you will visit us this summer. Would be glad if it could be during some meeting.

With best wishes D. V. S.

(While the foregoing note from our Associate Editor was intended to be personal, we are confident our readers will be glad to hear of the new meetinghouse for the Dan River Church and their good meeting, but of particular interest to many will be the large number who communed. It is a very unusual event for three hundred Old School Baptists to be able to commune together at one time and place. We hope this will be of encouragement to many of our brethren who are scattered and where only small groups are able to assemble together. R. L. D.)

MINUTES WANTED

We are anxious to obtain a copy of the latest minutes of the various Associations throughout the country who are in fellowship with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We will be glad if the Moderators and Clerks, in particular, would take note of this and send us a copy of their 1942 Minutes as soon as they hold their meetings and have their minutes printed. R. L. D.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED

The Salem Primitive Baptist Church, Panama City, Fla., was constituted May 31, 1942. Elder F. A. Collins, Pastor. A meeting house is being erected as fast as funds can be collected to pay for materials. Owing to war conditions we must pay as we go. We will be grateful for donations sent to C. H. Byrd, Treasurer, Box 644, Panama City, Fla.

MEETINGS

The regular all-day meeting is scheduled to be held in the Brookfield meetinghouse at Slate Hill, N. Y., on Friday, August 21st, 1942. All who are desirous of meeting with us there at that time will be heartily welcomed. R. Lester Dodson.

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sundays in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y. at 10:30 a.m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed. R. LESTER DODSON.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
IN
NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.
Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.
To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A. M.
ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A. M. 2 P. M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists is now settled in her new church-house, at 4614 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas, where she holds her regular monthly services on each first Sunday at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. Preaching services also on each third Sunday by Elder C. B. Teague, and each second Sunday by brother O. C. Lee, at 11 o'clock a. m. A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. R. HARDY, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Eligin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas. Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Texas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

VOL. 110 RUTHERFORD, N. J., SEPTEMBER, 1942 NO. 9

CORRESPONDENCE

MATTHEW 11:28

Art thou weary, heavy laden,
Full of grief and sore oppressed?
Look to Christ,—for he has spoken
Come to me, I'll give you rest.

Each one here is just a sinner,
Just a mass of loathsome sin;
Not one better than another,
When the light shows what's within.

No one but God's Son was holy,
He was perfect, kept the law;
And he only gives acceptance,
Those he through the Son doth draw.

Does he not array the lilies,
Though they toil not neither spin?
Will he then forget his children,
When they're burdened, groan within?

Have you sought him, told him trembling
Of your care and grief of mind?
He will hear you, he has said it,
Seek of me and ye shall find.

He has mercy without measure
For his people burdened here;
If they but go seeking mercy,
He will give his listening ear.

Nothing in the law can help you
If you need to be made whole;
Seek him, tell him and implore him,
He will give rest to your soul.

FLOSSIE I. FAULKNER

214½ East Main St., WALLA WALLA, Wash.

I have been requested to write on the subject of the garden of Eden which is a great field for comment. Gen. 2:7, 8, 9 reads: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." We see in this ninth verse the ground there produced the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil, there was every tree that was pleasant to the sight and good for food. In the same chapter verses 15, 16, and 17 read: "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." We must consider the garden of Eden was not planted

as we plant our vegetable gardens for in all of our gardens are such plants as can be transplanted, and handed out to our friends, and moved about from place to place. God formed this man and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and he became a living soul. This living soul was not to cultivate as we do in our gardens and I consider the difference so great as to be incomparable. We find at times cattle or other destructive animals in our gardens but the Lord God put this living soul out of his garden "lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever." The man and his wife that God placed in the garden transgressed God's law and ate of the forbidden fruit. The serpent came into the garden of Eden but to steal and destroy. He beguiled Eve and she ate of the forbidden fruit and she was a subject condemned to die for God told the living souls in the day they ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil they should surely die. She was deceived by the beguiling influence of the serpent. To break the law of God is sin and the soul that sins must die so here the saints of God transgressed the law in the garden of Eden. The saints of God are these living souls that God put in the garden, their names are recorded in the Lamb's book of life and they are the ones that were chosen in Christ before the world was. Listen to the angel of heaven that came to Mary and declared she should bear a son and she should call his name Jesus for he should save his people from their sins. When Christ Jesus came to his disciples he told them all that ever came before him came to steal and to kill but he said, "I am the Good Shepherd" I came to redeem that which was captured and led into sin. Satan was manifested before Jesus was manifested. Satan was manifested for the day of evil. If the wicked act had not been revealed there would have been no transgression, and there could have been nothing redeemed. Had there been no death there would not have been any resurrection of the dead. God manifested the serpent for the day of evil. The Devil is a liar and the father of lies. The Son of God came to redeem the living souls that were deceived by the beguiling influence as they were deceived in the garden of Eden. God sent his only begotten Son to save his people. Jesus Christ never came to bring the serpent back to the garden of Eden where the tree of life is, yet the saints are led back and are feasting on the gospel truth, for Jesus set up the gospel kingdom and the gospel is manifested and given to the elect family of God by Jesus Christ. Notice the servants of God occupy the same ground that God planted his garden in such as Eden, and that is the ground Moses stood on when God gave him the command to loose the shoes from off his feet for the ground on which thou standest is holy ground, even so all of Eden is the same ground. God's garden is at a specified place, eastward in Eden is where the garden was planted, and the living souls were put there by Almighty God. God's purpose in the beginning was to manifest such things and has ever been so. God created the heavens and the earth. This was not the beginning of light nor the beginning of

darkness it was the beginning of revealing such things as have ever been. God revealed darkness first. Here is Satan the opposite to light. God is light, in him is no darkness. God revealed darkness first in our experience. We were in darkness or convinced of condemnation. Then at God's pleasure he said let there be light and there was light so then it was revealed that God's light was the greater power, even as the truth of God is a greater power than the Devil's lies. It is manifested that the gospel truth shines above all false doctrines or systems. In this day, we, as Paul, are in war with spiritual wickedness. He never fought with flesh and blood in the war that God's saints are soldiers in. David met Goliath and won the war, or battle, in his day. They said he killed his tens of thousands. His weapons of war were five smooth stones. There could be much commented here but I am old and often times wonder if God has given me the power to defend his truth, yet I hope that I love those that declare that God's elect are saved by his only begotten Son. Consider my weakness.

PETER JONES

BENTON, Ky.

Dear Brother Dodson:—

If you will bear with me I would like to express myself to you for this one reason, I cannot think of anything else but the thousand years that Jesus is to reign here on the earth with his saints. Often it is this way with me, if I have an awful shaking up on a text and cannot sleep, nor eat, nor do as I would like to do naturally because of the text keeping itself before me, if I write or talk about it I get relief. You being familiar with the Scriptures I want to write you, God willing, and please remember it is not for publication that I write you, but it is for relief on subjects that come to me and will not leave me. If, indeed, I were able to write I would be glad to do so, but I know I am nothing and less, but do sometimes hope, and when hope is great in my heart I do not fear anything. Few of these seasons come along with me and I cannot draw nigh to bring about peaceful, hopeful seasons, but because of this hope, which I hope is Jesus in me, I am drawn nigh by God's own power, as I hope, and he feeds me and his power shakes me and causes me to lay down my natural life and natural ways. I would go and be about his business. Oh, is that saying too much? This thousand years that I want to write about I seem to not want to believe, and neither can I that Jesus will come and have a first resurrection and a few will come forth and live with Jesus on this earth, and he will again dwell on earth in the world as the Saviour with a few of the saints, and Satan bound one thousand years and then afterward Satan loosed a little while and the rest of the dead live. I was so wrought upon by some power, I will not say it is God's (I really do not know whether I have ever felt a divine power or not), but may be I started out to making scripture and speculating and added it all together and found this, but you know a thousand years is but a day and a day is a thousand years with the Lord. I find a peace in believing that we have had the time before the flood and we call

it a day, and it might have been a thousand years or more. We have had the legal day and perhaps it was a thousand years or more, and in that legal day the old Prophets prophesied of what would be. We know they were prophesying of the Bride and Groom in the gospel day, so it is clear to me that the gospel day is the time when Jesus should come, he being the Saviour, the hope of Israel, the Wonderful One that could finish the work and did. He came to this earth born of a woman, and for sin, was made flesh and was the word, and I see Jesus then coming for a purpose and finishing it. Going away and sending a Comforter to dwell in the hearts of who? And to comfort who? Those whom he redeemed and who should know him in spirit and in truth and who would live on earth here and be in them and they in him. The Gentiles were, in the mind and purpose of God, to come into the church just the same as the Jews were his chosen ones in the dispensations of time for the Gentiles were prophesied of to come to Jesus. One said, "the Gentiles shall come to thy light" after He had said, "Arise shine; for thy light is come," speaking to the Israelites or prophesying their light (Jesus) would come, and the little sister would come to the same light. Why? God did take out of the Gentiles a people for himself, and then I began to see Jesus coming to his own and his own, the Jews, received him not, but as many as did (meaning some did) "gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name". You know why they believed. Man could not will it and make it so, man's blood nor power of the flesh could not cause it, but the will of God caused it, then this gospel day. The Gentiles must come first into this beautiful reign with Jesus in them and they in him and Satan bound and cast into the bottomless pit, and an angel with the key. I see that during this thousand year reign with his church on earth they have peace with God and it is the Gentiles part, the Gentiles time to set in heavenly places in Christ, the Devil thrust out. Oh, what peace, what foretastes of heaven, the church, the Gentiles, have enjoyed here. It has been a heaven below our Redeemer to know, and the promise is, he (Satan) is bound and he could not work in us to destroy our peace, and if we needed tormenting, and we all feel we have been at times cast into hell, but blessed be God, the guardian angel of mercy that guides each one of us, only turns us into hell when it is good for us, and if we make our bed in hell he is there and it is not for long. The angel, the one who guards lest we dash our foot against a stone, opens to us the beauties of our Lord, and Jesus having overcome for us poor Lazaruses, who are now enjoying the same faith as did faithful Abraham, are in the same bosom with him, feeding and living by the faith of the Son of God, and the Jew, who was first, is last to come in in this gospel day, and cannot come in until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. So, when the Jews who are called and chosen of our God to come in, when our thousand years are over as the Gentiles reign with Jesus here, then they shall come in, but they were dead and buried as a church and felt rich (and

were in their minds), but do you not believe that this rich man will cry for water, being tormented by the thoughts? The Gentiles are now claiming the same faith of Abraham, they are at rest in a heavenly place, and the Jews are tormented (they are dead and buried as a church) during the time of the Gentiles reign which will be a thousand years here in the gospel day. While the Gentiles are reigning it is to them a new life, they are resurrected to a newness of life, and reign as priests with God and with Christ and they who have this newness of life have part in the first resurrection, the second death will have no power over them. Do I see these things correctly? When it is time for the Jews to come in, after the thousand years reign of the Gentiles with Jesus here on earth in the beautiful enjoyment of a church or a bride, Jesus coming in unto her and her bearing fruit of him, then Satan will be loosed and go out to deceive nations and they will rise up against each other and it is going on now it looks like the Devil is working fast. His time is short and he knows it so he stirs up Gog and Magog to battle. I think Gog and Magog are powers ordained of God. Mystery Babylon and they are battling, each denomination trying to kill the other one and set him up as the right church, preaching another gospel that is not a gospel. All this had to be and it seems is now coming to pass, and it is all to be at the same time that the poor Jews will be brought to know Christ, that Jesus is come unto them in spirit and in truth and they will be true witnesses in their time, the last part of the gospel day. Jesus is the gulf between Jew and Gentile. They could not go to each other, but he, Jesus, can make them one fold and did when he finished the work, but it is being made manifest to the sons of God in time and in the way God did foresee and know. The Jew wondered what they would do for the little sister when she was called for but Jesus did it all and tore down the middle wall of partition and made them one in him.

I am sorry to burden you with this but I cannot rest and if it is something Satan has blinded me with I hope you will not cast me out, but will have experienced what it is to fall into his hands and still be desirous of knowing God's will and being glad to suffer for the cause of Christ. If he, indeed, is mine why have I had this on my mind? Do I see anything or am I just not wanting to believe the little Missionary Baptist idea they pass on to me and send me tracts of how beautiful it will be to be in the first resurrection here and dwell with Jesus and Satan bound. I have an idea they have studied this all out. I have not read even a reference and I cannot believe but what John saw the church coming down from heaven, the new Jerusalem, adorned as a bride to meet her husband. He saw it all and told it as he saw it. Seeing the finished work he said, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still:-and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." Rev. 22:11. Why, John? Because the work is finished.

EFFIE BLAGG WHITENTON

(What our sister has written is very

acceptable and satisfying to us and we believe it will be to others. Such things are hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes.

R. L. D.)

BENTLEY, Ill.

R. L. Dodson, Dear Brother in a precious hope in Christ:—

I had thought for some time of writing again for the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES that has come to my home continually since 1893, and which has been a source of great comfort all these forty eight years though not to me for the first three years of its arrival in our home. My wife, who was a member of the Old Baptist Church, was taking it and greatly feasting on its contents, going quietly about her household duties and enjoyed meeting with the Baptists when they would have meeting in her father's (a "drylander" but surely a true believer) house or at the schoolhouse. In the meantime learning of their peculiar belief, having never associated with them before, I knew nothing about their ways much less about their doctrine. I soon began to discern that they used Scripture such as, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done," "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God," and many others in line with these. All this time I was comparing their teachings with those I was accustomed to and loved and could not see any reason in some of their quotations such as, "But whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath." I thought how can there be anything taken from any one when he hath not? And so on did I compare their way with mine but got little consolation. One question had bothered me after I had united with the Methodist Church about ten years before this (and there were godly, Christian people in this church) and that was the question of the money matters of the church. I verily believed it took money to run the church and care for the preacher, and I had read where Jesus said: "Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes," and again he said: "When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing." The church to which I then belonged seemed to call for more and more money and by this time I found there was not much difference in any of like churches. After I had known my wife's people, or church, about three years Elder John Downey was the preacher at one of their meetings. Next morning my father-in-law was taking Elder Downey to the train and asked me to go along. While standing by the railroad track my father-in-law (who had but little of this world's goods) handed Elder Downey two silver dollars, saying, "This will help you pay your fare home," and Elder Downey said, "No, John you keep it." Father Markle urged him to take it, this time saying, "No, I do not need it." To me this was a wonder, an eye opener, for I had never seen a preacher refuse money before, and for quite awhile I did not see how they kept up their church and never pass around the collection box. Consequently I observed how they conducted themselves in the house of God

and before men how they had a good report and would accept nothing that did not harmonize with a thus saith the Lord. Brother Dodson I have enjoyed reading the SIGNS for I found it encouraging to the weary, heavy laden and when we are cast down. I am expecting to take it as long as I am able. Hope those who are able to pay up will do so. None of us should be careless. We surely would not want the Editors and Managers to be careless as to letting unsoundness get into its columns, or be neglectful about getting the paper in the mail about its usual time. I feel we should all extend to Mr. Beebe our deep appreciation for his earnest efforts in getting the SIGNS in the mails so promptly and in such workmanlike manner all these years. May He who is the giver of every good and perfect gift be with him in his declining years to comfort and help him in all ways. I want to say our church, Smyrna, is enjoying peace and we are blessed with Elders C. E. Webb and Orvil Brir coming to us laden with the good things of the kingdom. As I am not very well it bothers me to write and I feel so unable to say what I want to. It will be all right with me if you discard this as there is plenty of edifying reading in the SIGNS. I am sending a letter from a brother Cox who is not very well but is a great Bible reader whom I like to read after so well. I feel like it should be shared with our readers. Pray for me, a poor tempest tossed sinner saved by grace if saved. A brother in hope of life beyond the grave.

LEONARD H. HOPKINS

CHICAGO, Ill.

Brother Hopkins:—

I note you write for the SIGNS occasionally and as I have been sick I have been reading old numbers. I have also been reading the Bible and at times my attention has been arrested by some passage I had read before but did not notice at the time. I am past seventy-five now and at best with me, as in the ninetieth Psalm, it is a case of labor and sorrow and my thoughts have been turning to that better kingdom where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest as said by Job in the midst of his afflictions. Looking back over my unprofitable life even since I received a hope fifty years ago I exclaim, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Romans 7:24. "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." Romans 7:19. This conflict between flesh and spirit rages on and hymns 1248, 1249 and 1250 (Beebe's Collection) are before me, "Death loosed the massy chains of woe, to let the mournful captives go." At times I try to imagine what heaven will be like, but we are expressly told in the Bible that it has not "entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep,
From which none ever wake to weep!
A calm and undisturbed repose,
Unbroken by the last of foes.

Asleep in Jesus! peaceful rest,
Whose waking is supremely blest;
No fear, no woe shall dim that hour
That manifests the Saviour's power.

I sometimes think the end of time is

not far off. We have the wars and rumors of wars mentioned in the Bible. Many things prophesied in Revelation have come to pass. I cannot write for the SIGNS for so many good articles appear I feel anything of mine printed would crowd out better matter. Whatever heaven shall be we know this as David said, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." "Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty." Isaiah 33: 17. Like Job I can say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and "The righteous also shall hold on his way." We may never meet again on this earth but around the throne among that blood washed throng may we meet and mingle our voices in praise to Him who has redeemed us and washed us in his own blood. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." May grace, mercy and peace be multiplied to you and all God's children everywhere. In hope,

W. C. COX

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601 North 7th St., FREDERICK, Okla.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,

DEAR BROTHER:—

I feel myself to be too sinful and unworthy to thus address you. An apology is due you for not writing sooner but please forgive me for neglecting my duty. My husband was receiving the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES free and had been for several years. Both he and I surely enjoyed reading them and endorsed the doctrine it advocated. He has been gone nearly two years and had been so nearly blind he could not see to read but I read every paper to him and when he was gone just felt I could not be without it. I began reading it in 1890, over fifty years ago and it advocates the same doctrine today. I have been in the Old School Baptist Church since 1888 and I, too, stand firm in the same doctrine as then. I surely appreciate the kindness of the Editors in sending the paper to me for it is nearly all the preaching I get as my church is about thirty miles from me, and I am crippled and cannot go more than two or three times a year. If you cannot continue to send it I will not think unkindly of you but if you can it will be greatly appreciated. I am past 72 years of age. Pray for me when at the Throne of Grace. Your poor unworthy sister, saved by grace if saved at all.

(Mrs.) O. H. BREWER

Route 1, THOMASVILLE, N. C.

DEAR BROTHER LESTER DODSON:—

Upon writing you I wish to state that I have been a subscriber to the SIGNS for four years, and I believe at this time a word of praise or encouragement to our Editor in Chief is quite in order. Through your efforts we still have a paper worthy of recognition in every home that loves the Truth, and we feel sure for the Truth's sake you are in the work, and we trust God will bless you in the future as he has in the past to carry on. However, while I am on the subject of expressing my appreciations I

feel it would be proper at this time to extend our thanks to the Associate Editors and all those who have contributed to its pages in an interesting way and bid them Godspeed. I have received every issue almost on even dates each month since I subscribed for it. The greater the interest the more comfort I get out of reading and as I read I like to think that many of the brothers and sisters of a like precious faith are visiting me through the medium of our church paper and all are welcome. I must admit that I am not personally acquainted with many of them that write, nevertheless, let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving and declare his works with rejoicing. In closing I want to say I have some promising prospects as subscribers whose names I hope to send in in the near future. Yours in hope,

L. T. TUCKER

(The foregoing letter affords encouragement to those who are laboring for the upbuilding of Zion in her most holy faith, and we thank our brother on behalf of all to whom he has referred. We shall be very glad to receive the names of the NEW subscribers he has in mind, and hope others will keep in mind the fact that we are desirous of building up our subscription list and do what they can to assist us in this undertaking. R. L. D.)

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632 C. Camilla St., MEMPHIS, Tenn.

Unto you that love salvation by grace both in time and eternity, grace be unto you and peace from God the Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, "who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

I have often wanted to write to the Lord's people through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but knowing myself to be so sinful and unworthy I hesitated to take space that would be better for some one else. I have been reading the paper for several years and it is comforting to me for you write with the spirit of the Lord and not of man. Friends, if I could write a few words of comfort unto you it would be my only desire, but I know that if the Lord does not give me grace sufficient it will be as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. Brethren, I desire to teach no new thing among you, but by the grace of the Lord to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance of the wonderful works the Lord hath wrought among the children of men. The Lord by the mouth of Isaiah spake these words, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." My thoughts go back to the law that the Lord gave unto Israel by Moses which said, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," Exodus 20:3, with all the things the law said that they should not do. When we read the travels of Israel how that they did not keep the law then Divine Justice declared, "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." Was this the book written within and sealed with seven seals that John saw in the fifth chapter of Revelation? "And I saw in the right hand of him

that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." O wretched man, that I felt to be, when I was made to see my lost and hell deserving condition. I tried to keep the law, I tried to open the book and loose the seals thereof, but when the strong angel proclaimed, "who is worthy to open the book" I was so sinful I could not keep the law. I feel sometimes I wept much as John did because none was able to keep the law. But one of the elders saith, "Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof." Did he not keep the law? This is comfort unto us poor sinners who know, as Paul, that in us dwells no good thing, but when we trust in the Lord we will sing the new song saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and loose the seals thereof for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation. Are not these things too wonderful for us to forget? Paul said they were written that we, through the comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope. Brethren and sisters, did you receive this consolation from the Lord or the doctrines of men? If you received it from men, it is written, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." If you received it of the Lord then do we not believe that the Lord is able to deliver us from the fiery darts of the Devil for he hath said he came to do the Father's will. John 6:39 "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Yes, Jerusalem received at the hand of the Lord double for all her sins. He paid the debt to Divine Justice and set poor sinners free. Oh, that we could cry from the walls of Zion, that her warfare is accomplished for he finished the work and before he went to the Father spoke these comforting words, I will send a Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, and he shall teach you all things. Brethren, I believe he is teaching the Lord's children all things for he is God in the Spirit, the third person in the Trinity. I may be deceived in what I am, but those things are my only hope while I live, and last but not least, they are promised not only to keep us here, but when our race is run and we have finished our course here in this world of sin and sorrow the Lord hath promised to raise us in his own likeness when this mortal shall put on immortality and this corruptible put on incorruption. Then shall be brought to pass the saying, "Death is swallowed up in victory." Brethren, I feel that you will cover up my mistakes with the mantle

of charity and give God all the glory. Visit and write us when you can. Pray for me when at the throne of grace. A sinner in hope.

W. O. WAMMACK

Box 1, HITCHINS, Ky.

Luke 17:20, 21

"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you."

I think here, Christ meant the coming of his kingdom in the hearts of his people in the work of regeneration, and it comes in the heart of an individual in an instant, alone by the power of God: without learning for one way to learn a thing is by observation. The new birth comes without observation, does not give ideas but a new nature by which one can receive and believe the gospel of Christ. No one can discern the very moment of their birth. Natural observation comes after natural birth, and spiritual observation comes after spiritual birth.

There are some who experience bright and sudden manifestations in their exercise. This is not regeneration, but the manifestations of it. If a match is lighted in a dark room, the room is full of light, but the match must be lighted first before it can produce the light. So one must be born again before they can discern the things of the spirit of God. Life is one thing, and the manifestations of it is another. There are many variations in the manifestations of life. Some are plain and some are faint. A man may be apparently dead, but if he breathes he is alive, so a man might feel like he has little or no evidence of an experience of grace, but if he desires the sincere milk of the word that he may grow thereby he has eternal life. There is no interval between death and life, a man is either dead or alive. Agreeable to this fact, the work of regeneration is a creative work, (Eph. 2:10) done in an instant, quicker than human agency or means could act, and all the child of God can discern in it is the manifestations and evidence that follows it. If one has the right hearing and understanding of the gospel it is the result of the new birth. If one loves the brethren (in a spiritual sense) he has passed from death unto life.

The above is the way I understand we are born spiritually. If we are one of God's children we are bound to give him all the praise for it. His holy word plainly teaches that the natural man can not do one righteous act that is acceptable with him. Christ, himself, said: "The flesh profiteth nothing."

WILLIAM BRANHAM

Route 1, SULPHUR, Ky.

Dear Editors:—

A brother in the church would like to have your views on the scripture in Luke 15:11 about the two sons. Does the elder represent the Jews and the younger the Gentiles? This scripture has been on my brother's mind for some time, and I would have been very glad if he had felt to give his views. He has a much better understanding than I have. I feel to be so ignorant and so weak I cannot write like others which makes me hesitate as I do not want to crowd out better matter. I will send in my subscrip-

tion with this. It is a little in advance but I suppose that will be all right. Very glad I can send it now, and would be glad if I could send more. The few times we failed to receive the SIGNS made us realize something of what it would mean if we could not get it any more and we were truly glad to see it coming again. I am very sorry for Mr. Beebe. Failing sight is a very sad affliction and I hope his may be restored. Where some must leave off others are raised up to carry on and the lot seems to have fallen on you. May God see fit to bless you with wisdom and all things needful for your good and his glory. He makes no mistakes. My heart goes out in sympathy to Elder and sister Ruston in the death of their dear son. May the Lord comfort them. Our pastor, Elder George Weaver, is passing through some hard trials at this time, his wife being very sick for many months, but he has been blest with patience and faith in the Lord to help him through. He has been faithful to come and preach to the few here leaving his wife sick at home. Last Sunday, our meeting day, he read the 111th Psalm and must have been in the Spirit for I thought he preached a very beautiful sermon. The Bible tells us "All things work together for good to them that love God." These words have been much comfort to me. And then "To them who are the called according to his purpose." The thought comes am I one of that number, I only have a little hope. It also says he has *all* power and there is no power only of him, the powers that be are ordained of God. In this terrible war of death and destruction is he working all these things for the good of his elect people? We must believe that he is or where could we find any comfort. Though many of his people may be and surely will be taken away, yet we know he is the one Supreme Ruler in heaven and in earth and there is no other. I believe this war as well as all other wars have been in God's predestinated purpose to take place just as they have and are taking place, and may we all be calm and of a quiet spirit, looking to the Lord for help and guidance in these perilous times for as the little child said, God is on the ocean just the same as on the land. There are so many precious promises in the Bible and in the dear old songs we love to sing. It makes us hope we are not alone. He is everywhere present, and when these dark war clouds roll away the sun will shine again for some. I want to list a few hymns that have given me much comfort. "How firm a foundation," "There is a fountain filled with blood," "Amazing grace," "Come thou fount of every blessing," "Rock of ages," "A child of Jehovah" and "The righteous shall hold on his way." There are many more I cannot mention now. With love I hope to the household of faith.

(Mrs.) ADDIE CHANDLER

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS":

J. F. Davis, La., $2; H. McCormick, Pa., $2; Mrs. M. Wickham, Pa., $1; A. F. Jones, Ga., $1; J. A. Johnson, Tenn., $1; Mrs. E. E. Nelson, Texas, $1.

EDITORIAL
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1 Thessalonians 5:23

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Judging from the interpretation given to the above Scripture by some of the brethren, it is quite evident to us that they either do not read the connections or having done so utterly disregard them. Where this practice is followed the Scriptures can be made to mean whatever the one using them may choose. A reportedly very popular and famous New York City Air Minister almost invariably quotes from Revelation 3:20 in his "Call to worship," as follows: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in." He apparently interprets this to mean that God is knocking at the door of every human heart, and if they will but hear and open the door, he will enter and save them. This places Salvation, as we see it, upon the acts of the creature. We are confident our brethren will not accept any such conclusion. Nevertheless, the quotation, what there is of it, is correct. It is only when we see that it is addressed to the Laodicean Church that it is correctly understood. Old School Baptists of all people should be careful not to lift the Scriptures out of their proper setting, or take them separate and apart from their connections, or half or misquote them, and thereby give a meaning entirely foreign to what the context warrants.

The question which Jesus asked his disciples in his memorable sermon on the Mount is, we believe, apropos and applicable here. Jesus asked, "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" Mat. 7:16. From this we would learn that if we would gather figs we should go to the fig tree, and if we would gather grapes we should go to the vine. We know in our practical every day life that we do not go to the peach tree to get apples, or vice versa, and, therefore, if we are to correctly understand the apostle's meaning when he said, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," (1st Thes. 5:23) we should consider the nature of the things which surround it; what the apostle has been talking about prior to and immediately after this petition on behalf of his brethren. He does not dwell upon a certain matter and all of a sudden

inject something else entirely foreign or extraneous to what is under consideration, without a proper pause or break to separate and distinguish between them.

In this fifth chapter particularly of 1 Thessalonians, after reminding them that "the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night," the apostle says, "Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness". "For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." He then proceeds to instruct them how they should look after their ministering gifts by saying, "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves". He then exhorts those who minister by saying, "Brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and unto all men." Then he takes the trouble to enumerate seven definite and distinct things which they should do: namely, (1) *"Rejoice evermore."* A large volume, indeed, could be written on the reasons why the children of light should rejoice for-ever-more; (2) *"Pray without ceasing."* It is written "that men ought always to pray," and we are persuaded that every true subject of divine grace who is really acutely alive to his own condition and need feels to pray constantly; (3) *"In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."* Give thanks for all things, both spiritual and temporal, for "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Jas. 1:17. We should give thanks for the day of adversity as well as the day of prosperity, for both alike cometh according to the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning us, and they will most certainly work together for our ultimate good. To do this one of necessity must needs have faith, which is the gift of God. With this faith one can even glory in tribulations, for faith penetrates through and beyond the things which are seen, which are contrary, and believes as did the apostle when he said, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Rom. 5:1-5. (4) *"Quench not the Spirit."* In other words, cease not to speak of the

goodness of God and his mercy, which endureth for ever; and continue to manifest the fruits and graces of the Spirit of Christ, such as love, compassion, tenderness, sympathy and forgiveness towards the poor and needy, against which there is no law; (5) *"Despise not prophesyings."* Be not prejudiced against any who are called and qualified by God to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and to preach the unsearchable riches of God, through Christ Jesus our Lord, and be not as some who have their favorite preachers and will not even go to hear others; (6) *"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."* Accept nothing from any man, even your own pastor or favorite preacher, simply because he says it, but test it by the word of God, and when he speaks not according to that word, receive it not, and neither bid him godspeed; neither follow him in anything beyond what he follows Christ. And once it has been proven and found to be good, hold fast to it, regardless of who the man may be who would dissuade you or dare to oppose it, always, of course, in the Spirit of the Lord; (7) *"Abstain from all appearance of evil."* Surely, there is no one who will deny that these things pertain to this life, and immediately following this is to be found the text. Having dwelt upon the fact that his brethren were children of light, and having admonished them as to how they should live and conduct themselves in order to adorn the profession of their faith in God here in this world, the apostle does not in the very same breath, or line, jump to something entirely foreign to it, but being well acquainted with their weaknesses and their inability to perform that which is good, he calls upon the God of peace to sanctify them wholly, or set them apart completely unto these things. Like Jude, in writing to his beloved brethren, who were to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, in opposition to ungodly men, after saying, "Keep yourselves in the love of God," and at the same time knowing it was an utter impossibility, in and of themselves, for them to do so, he turns away from them and says, "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." Paul, therefore, followed up his admonition to "Abstain from all appearance of evil," with the language of our text: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." He would have them remain faithful unto death. Nothing is said here as to how or when Jesus would come, except in the first part of the chapter, where it says, "The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night," but the apostle prays that "your whole spirit and soul and body be *preserved* blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Preserve means, "To keep in safety; protect from harm," and this is what the apostle is praying for on their account and in their behalf, and this means here in this world, or time state. We are per-

suaded that when our earthly race is run and we are ready to quit the walks of men that Jesus, our Glorious Head of grace, will come for each and every one of his people and will pilot them across that Great Divide, and that not an hoof shall be left behind. The record says, "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." The apostle concludes this thought by saying, "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Like the thief on the cross who had been dead in Christ, or dead to all knowledge of Christ as the Saviour of sinners (nevertheless chosen in him from before the foundation of the world) until practically his very last moment on earth, when Christ was revealed in him the hope of glory, he cries, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom," and in answer thereto receives that most joyful of all news, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." We have long since believed that many are called, but few are chosen; that is to say that only a few, comparatively speaking, of the Lord's people are regenerated and brought out to testify here in time as witnesses before men to give glory to God, but even those who so far as we can know here are dead to all knowledge of the truth, we have comfort in the assurance which God's word gives that the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. Those who are *dead in Christ* must first be quickened, regenerated and made alive before they are to be caught up together with those who are alive and remain to meet the Lord in the air, and then shall we all be forever with the Lord. Jesus said to Martha, "he that believeth in me, *though he were dead,* yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." This transition or change can take place in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Let us emphasize the words of Jesus to the thief on the cross by repeating them. He said, "To-day (not tomorrow or a million years hence, but to-day) shalt thou be with me in paradise." We believe that herein is to be found untold comfort and consolation for God's people, not only in these most distressing times but in all others, whether in the past or the future, for they can be assured that their loved ones and friends, as well as untold millions of the redeemed of the Lord, of whom they know nothing, shall never stray beyond the pale of their heavenly Father's care, neither will God ever be too late or too far off to save his own. And although they may have never given any inkling of having known the Lord in the pardon or forgiveness of their sins, yet they are safe in the arms of their Beloved. This change can take place with a loving companion upon the death bed, and we may never know of it; it can take place with a darling son as he comes down out of the air to the earth for the last time upon the field of battle; it can take place with a precious daughter as she

sails on a mission of mercy across an ocean infested with submarines that torpedo, set afire and sink the vessel upon which she travels; it can take place with the unborn babe, as it did with John the Baptist, and the centenarian is none too old, for our God is not confined to conditions, time or place. He is not only Omnipotent and Omniscient, but Omnipresent as well, and it should be enough for us to know that all we are and have is in the hands of him with whom we have to do. This is the comfort wherewith we, ourself, are comforted of God and we can wholeheartedly join the apostle in saying, "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." It is here in this life that we need to be comforted and need to comfort one another with the same comfort wherewith we, ourselves, are comforted of God. There will be no need of comfort in that world which is beyond this vale of tears, for nothing can enter there to molest our undisturbed repose.

We have presented our views on this Scripture for the consideration of our readers, desiring that God may give those of us who write and speak to study to show ourselves approved unto him, workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

R. L. D.

A QUESTION ON ORDER

Brother Thomas J. Knight, of Laurel, Miss., "Wants to know through the SIGNS if it would be good order for an Elder and two Deacons to ordain a Minister of the same faith and order."

So far as we know, the Scriptures no where stipulate the exact number required to perform the functions of the church. Jesus did, however, say to his disciples, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Mat. 18:20. He had just said in this connection, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." Mat. 18: 18-19. The all-important thing, as we see it, in ordaining a man to the full work of the gospel ministry, is for the church, or churches participating to be definitely convinced of the fact that God has called and qualified the man to preach, and the best method known to us of determining this is that he actually does preach the gospel of the blessed Son of God, in demonstration of the Spirit and with power sent down from heaven. All of the ordinances of the church should be participated in by as many members as possible, and in a matter of this importance as much of a multitude of council should be sought as possible, but where circumstances do not permit of this, we do not feel we have any ground to question the sovereign act of the church in setting a man apart to this work even though only one minister and two deacons take part in the laying on of hands. The same God who calls a man to preach, calls a people to hear, and they should have the witness within before calling for his ordination.

R. L. D.

CORRESPONDING CIRCULAR LETTER.

(Written by Deacon Chas. B. Osborne Rock Springs Church.)

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Salem Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Thursday and Friday, May 28th and 29th, 1942, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations, churches and meetings with which we correspond, sends greetings in christian love and fellowship.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—By the abundance of the mercies of the Three-One-God we have been permitted to continue as an association, for which we desire to be thankful, and pray that his blessings may continue to be bestowed upon us, though unworthy, rebellious children we are, for so we feel to be in hope, and thus we are proved by the light of Him who is our light and salvation.

The purpose of this letter is to set forth some exhortation or doctrine of vital interest to the brethren at the time of our associational meeting. However, it is not intended to bring in, or set forth, any new doctrine or ism, but should be written as though patterned upon an epistle of Paul, or Peter, or Jude, or John; that is, it should be in line with the biblical standard and scriptural truth. With this view in prayerful remembrance, we shall undertake an exhortation on St. Matthew xviii. 20: "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." These are the words of the Savior Christ. This portion of Scripture is the ending verse of an exhortation of our Lord with the disciples concerning the brother that trespasses against one his brother. The manner in which the brother that is trespassed against should proceed is given. How often the trespassed against brother has not followed the procedure set forth by our Lord! The verse above, on which we are basing this exhortation, is sometimes quoted with reference to the meeting of two or three for worship. The promise is, "There am I in the midst of them." This is just as true, we feel, as it is in the matter of coming together to settle, or correct, a trespass. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." The two or three must be gathered together in His name. Whether for the purpose of settling a trespass, or whether for hearing the preached word, or whether to sing praises to God and the Lamb, or whether for prayer. We understand that the two or three must be brethren, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."—Rom. viii. 16. Whenever the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit; that is, with the second man Adam, the born-again man, then Christ is present with the glad tidings that we are the children of God. It is truth, we believe, that the unregenerate, unborn man is not

blessed with the presence of Christ, for he is not a called and chosen child of God. Unto the Pharisees and the Sadducees John the Baptist said, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" In this day of apostasy, or falling away, it surely is as advisable as in any age for the children of God to come together, in their humble meeting places, for the worship of their God and Savior. The falling away seems more marked now than in the years past. Even in the worldly churches the attendance has diminished greatly as the recent years have gone by. This portends the beginning of the age of the destruction of the second Babylon, the great, monstrous, worldly antichristian church. This will in all probability be an age in which the true worshipers of God, by the compulsion of the non-religious, intolerant forces, powers, or governments, will worship Him secretly, as they did in the centuries past. "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."—Heb. x. 25.

We now come to the corresponding section of this letter. It is a blessed privilege to again be assembled in associate capacity, to again greet brethren and friends we seldom have opportunity to see, and to have heard the gospel ably proclaimed by ministering brethren, who labor in the love of God, bringing glad tidings of joy and peace. We feel that we have been greatly blessed of the Lord to have been permitted to meet in this Association. We have come together in this meeting for the worship of God, not that we should be seen or heard of ourselves, but that Christ and him crucified should alone be adored and honored and glorified.

We value the attendance from our sister associations; we value the visits of your messengers and your correspondence and desire a continuance of the same.

The next session of this Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, in May, 1943. May the Lord guide and direct us all until then.

CHARLES W. VAUGHN, Mod.

JOHN B. MILLER, Clerk.

OBITUARIES

Elder W. P. SNIDER was born September 17th, 1885, near Hector, Arkansas, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Snider. He died at Holdenville Hospital, Holdenville, Oklahoma, on Monday, May 25, 1942, at the age of 56 years, 8 months, and 8 days.

On November 15th, 1903, he was united in marriage to Bertha Chambless, and to this union was born Bernice Snider, now Bernice Perry of Odessa, Texas, Gladys Snider, now Gladys Norton of Okemah, Oklahoma, Thelma Snider, now Thelma Grotton of Levelland, Texas, Bonnie Snider, now Bonnie Wilson, Joseph Houston Snider of Levelland, Texas, and Lorene Snider, now Lorene Collins of Okemah, Oklahoma, all of whom survive together with his mother, Mrs. Joseph Snider, to mourn his death.

He united with Shiloah Church of Regular Old School Baptists on Saturday before the 4th Sunday in August, 1904, and was liberated by them to preach on the 4th Sunday in November 1905, and was ordained to preach on the 4th Saturday in August 1909.

A more fearless defender of our cause I have never known in all my life, and I feel that I can truthfully say that no sweeter character has ever enriched the realms of death. The only Old Baptist preacher that I ever saw whom I thought to enjoy as sweet a gift as that of Elder Gilbert Beebe. He was so great that he never became haughty or high minded, and so lowly as to always be found at the feet of his brethren, as firm as the rock of Gibralter, with broad vision and deep foresight. He was the friend of truth and the foe of error wherever he found them. He was loved by every sound Old Baptist in the middle West, and was highly respected even by those who do not believe our doctrine in this section of our country.

During his life time he mastered two professions. He first took up and finished the study of law, and soon tiring of this profession he became a doctor and followed this profession until a few months before his death, when he retired to his farm near Dustin, Oklahoma.

He was the pastor of two churches and also the moderator of The Frst Primitive Baptist Association of Oklahoma at the time of his death. All sound in the faith of God's elect.

At the request of the deceased, the writer of this sketch was called to conduct his funeral, and I feel that it was the most difficult task that I ever undertook in all my life. However, I drove from my home to his, approximately 700 miles, and tried in much sorrow to speak words of comfort to his sorrowing family and a host of friends gathered to pay the last sad tribute of respect they could pay, while upon earth, to one who had been called from the walks of men.

Brother Snider was a loved and loving brother, husband, father and friend. He died where manhoods morning almost touches noon, and while the shadows still were falling towards the west. He had not passed on life's highway the stone that marks the highest point; but being weary for a moment, he lay down by the wayside and using his burden for a pillow fell into that dreamless sleep that kisses down his eyelids still. While yet in love with life and raptured with the world he passed to silence and pathetic dust. Yet, after all it may be best, just in the happiest, sunniest hour of all the voyage, while eager winds are kissing every sail, to dash against the unseen rock and in an instant hear the billows roar above a sunken ship. For whether in mid-sea or among the breakers on the farther shore, a wreck at last must mark the end of each and all. And every life, no matter if its every hour is rich with love and every moment jeweled with a joy, will at its close become a tragedy as sad and deep and dark as can be woven of the warp and woof of mystery and death. Brother Snider in every storm of life was oak and rock, but in sunshine he was vine and flower.

The record of a sweet and noble life runs like a vine around the memory of our dead, and every sweet unselfish act is now a perfumed flower.

Speech cannot contain our love. There was, there is, no gentler, stronger, manlier man.

We here involuntarily recall the truly said, yet beautiful and impressive lines of the poet:—

"Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north-wind's breath,
And stars to set—but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, O Death!

We know when moons shall wane,
And summer birds from far shall cross the sea,
When Autumn's hues tinge the ripening grain,
But who shall tell us when to look for thee?"

ELDER L P. HARRISS

THADDEUS D. SMITH, our beloved brother in Christ, and son of Pen and Rhodie Smith, died at his home April 9, 1942. He was born August 17, 1883 making his stay on earth 58 years, 7 months, and 22 days. He was married to Fannie Alice Dalland January 11, 1905. To this union were born six children. The Misses Tempie, Erma and Roy Smith and Mrs. Hettie Tosh, Redwood, Va. and Mrs. Vina Ferguson, Bassett, Va. One son, Roscoe, died about four years ago. There are four grandchildren, Sarah, Joyce and Harry Ferguson, and Elaine Tosh. There are also five brothers and two sisters; Charles, Roy, and Jacob Smith, Wirtz, Va., Lewis Smith, Union Hall, Va., Jack Smith, Redwood, Va., Mrs. John McKinley and Mrs. Sales Perdue of North Dakota. In addition to his widow and the relatives mentioned there are many more relatives and a host of friends to mourn their loss. Brother Smith had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for twenty or more years and was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace. He was a faithful member and always attended meetings unless providentially hindered. Having been in failing health for

some time he was stricken with paralysis April 7 and fell at the plow. His wife saw him and she with her daughter went to him. He was lying near the feet of the horse with the lines around his shoulders and never spoke again. I called to see him twice. All that the doctor, nurse and loving hands could do was done but the time had come for the good Lord to call him home. The Lord's power was shown in causing the horse to stand quietly. Brother Smith was a good husband, father, brother and neighbor. Many people were sorrowful about his death. We will all miss him but we hope and believe he is done with suffering, and we hope to meet him in a better world that is prepared for the people of God. May the Lord reconcile all of his loved ones that were near and dear to him, his neighbors and his church. The Lord works and none can hinder, hinders and none can work. The funeral was conducted by Elders J. A. Brooks and P. L. Plybon before a large company of relatives and friends on April 10, 1942 at Gills Creed Church. He was laid to rest in the cemetery there beside his son, Roscoe. Written by request.

P. L. PLYBON

ELDER D. H. RIDDLE, son of Thomas and Mary Riddle, nee Grun, was born April 11, 1861 near Overton, Smith Co., Texas and died Feb. 20, 1942. He was married to Miss Rosie Lane to which union were born four children two of them surviving, Noah Riddle of Midland, Ark., and Pauline McMillian of Memphis, Tenn. He later married Miss Jennie Baker. They having no children adopted two boys, Billie and Garland Riddle. Elder Riddle united with the Primitive Baptists of Predestinarian Faith at Coal Springs, in Vanzandt Co., Texas in 1886 and was baptized by Elder Laden. He was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry in 1901 and served in that capacity for forty years. He is survived by his widow, three boys, one daughter and one sister, Mrs. Sophie White, Grand Saline, Texas, a host of nieces, nephews and friends. He fought a good fight, he kept the faith and I feel sure there is a crown of righteousness laid up for him. His trouble was cancer and he bore his suffering patiently. His wife asked him if he was suffering to which he replied, "No, I am rejoicing in my affliction." The writer together with Elder L. D. Rose tried to speak words of comfort from Romans, 15:4 to a large concourse of friends after which his body was laid in the Merrideth Cemetery to await the second coming of Christ when the voice of the Archangel is heard and the trumpet of God sounds and the dead in Christ shall rise first. A manifest heir of God, a joint heir with Christ, he is adopted into the heavenly family where there is no more death, sorrow nor parting. "So shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Dear bereaved ones sorrow not as those who have no hope.

W. W. SLAUGHTER

KATE LESLIE RAWLINSON BLACK was born in Newark, England, near London, on November 15, 1855, and died at her home, 64 Centre Street, St. Thomas, Ontario, on November 17, 1941, at the age of 86 years and 2 days. Mother was the daughter of Thomas W. Rawlinson and Lydia Ann Gompertz and was brought to Canada by her parents at a very early age, living most of her life previous to her marriage in Toronto, where she was brought up under the very strict tenets of the Anglican Church. On February 7, 1884, she married Archibald John Black of St. Thomas, Ontario who predeceased her 32 years ago. In June 1894 she was baptized into the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, where father had long been a member, by Elder William Pollard and remained a faithful and dearly loved member until her death. Mother was a talented musician, being a pianist of note, and prior to her marriage was organist in several churches in Toronto. After coming among the Old School Baptists, many a gathering of church members and friends was made more enjoyable by her playing of hymns and sacred music, which she was enabled to continue up until recent years, when diminishing eyesight and hearing forced her to give up her music. She will be greatly missed by the church members with whom she loved to meet to hear the Truth preached in all its fulness and sweetness, and by a great number of friends and acquaintances who loved her for her kindly disposition and sympathetic nature. Besides her sister, Miss L. E. Rawlinson, who lived with her, she is survived by four sons, Duncan R., Vancouver, B. C.; James W., Winnipeg, Man.; D. Crawford, Cupertino, Cal.; and Kenneth L., Detroit, Mich.; one step-son William T., St. Thomas, Ont. and thirteen grand-children. The funeral, which was largely attended, was

conducted by her pastor, Elder George Ruston, on November 20, and burial was made in St. Thomas Cemetery, where her mortal remains were laid beside her dear husband, there to await the final resurrection. We have lost a wonderful mother, but we grieve not, for we know that our loss is her eternal gain. Written by her son

JAMES W. BLACK

We cannot let this obituary of Sister Black, written by her son, brother James Black, go to the SIGNS without mentioning the deep personal loss to myself and family, in her death. She was very near and dear to us all. Our sorrows and joys were hers, and we miss her greatly, as for many years we were favoured to hold services in her home the last Thursday evening in each month. I will here quote from a letter of Elder Lefferts to me after her death.

"In the recent passing of dear Sister Kate Black, you have lost from earth, one of your most interested, devoted and faithful members. She had a personality all her own, and did not copy the graces of others, nor did she express herself in any language but her own. What I mean is: most of our people fall into the habit of using certain set expressions when talking on their experience, but she did not. She was so honest that she was fearful of making a wrong impression on her brethren, thus causing them to think of her other than she felt they should. She seemed to feel that her having been raised under the influence of the Anglican communion kept her from being what she felt a real Baptist should be. She wanted the Truth only; wanted to be established in it; wished that she could be settled in it more firmly than she felt she was."

The above expresses our mind, and we quote it in loving remembrance.

G. R.

MATTHEW MOORE was born in Lee Co., Alabama, May 16, 1858, and died March 29, 1936, making his stay on earth 76 years, 10 months, and 13 days. He was the son of Milton J. and Rever Lee Moore. On December 20, 1881 he was married, the first time, to Miss Emily Ann Peach, Salem, Ala. December 10, 1883 he moved to Denton County, Texas, where he resided until his death. To this union were born seven children, five boys and two girls. His wife and two boys predeceased him. Emily, our mother, passed from this life April 19, 1915. She felt unworthy to ask for a home with the Old School Baptists although she was a firm believer in the predestination of all things and liked to hear the gospel preached in its purity. One son died in infancy, and one son, Claude Milton Moore died March 31, 1912 at the age of 23 years. The surviving children are W. O. Moore, Walters, Okla., E. M. Moore, Ralls, Texas, C. S. Moore, Houston, Texas, Mrs. V. H. Lindsey, Lobbuck, Texas, and Mrs. D. E. McNeill, Lewisville, Texas who was living with him at home when the end came. Father received a hope in Christ at the age of 29 and in July 1915 united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Blooming Grove, Denton County, Texas. He was a firm believer in the God of all power who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? He was faithful to his church until his death. In 1923 he married Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton. She was also a Primitive Baptist. A good wife, kind and loving step-mother and loved by all who knew her. She departed this life March 15, 1933. Father is also survived by two brothers, Alf Moore, Temple, Okla., and R. L. Moore, Walters, Okla. He was laid to rest March 30, 1936 at Shiloh Cemetery by the side of our dear mother. Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. C. Sikes, Sulphur Bluff, Texas. He spoke comforting words to a host of sorrowing relatives and friends. Written by his daughter.

MRS. D. E. McNEILL

DR. ELIJAH WOOTTON WHITE, a friend of the church and a lover of the Truth as it is in Jesus Christ, departed this earthly life May 29, 1942 at his home, Poolesville, Maryland, aged 60. He had been subject to heart attacks for the past five months and was stricken fatally three days before passing away. He was the youngest son of our late Benjamin and sister Sarah Elizabeth Jones White, and a nephew of the late Elder E. V. White. Dr. White lived all his life in Poolesville except during the time he was acquiring his medical education. Upon graduating in medicine, he took up the work of a general practitioner in his home neighborhood, and for 35 years served a large rural section faithfully and well. He was more than merely a professional man, he was friend unto real need and felt sympathetically with all affliction and destitution. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Florence Pyles White; one son Elijah W. White Jr. in the U.S. armed forces;

three daughters, Mrs. J. B. Nicholson, Jr., Rockville, Md.; Mrs. Albin Knight, Asheville, N. C.; Miss Helen White of Poolesville. Also there survive two brothers and two sisters: brother Harvey J. and Benjamin White both of Poolesville; sister Mary Clagett and sister Louise Ball both of Washington, D. C. Dr. White was a predestinarian in faith, a believer in salvation by the free and sovereign grace of God. Though not a member of the visible church, he always attended all the meetings and was a liberal contributor of his substance to both church and pastor. In his going, we have lost not only one of the best friends we ever had, but one who was, and is yet, as close spiritually to us as a brother. Funeral services were held at his Poolesville home, interment in Monocacy Cemetery at Beallsville. The great gathering of people at his funeral was proof of the love and esteem in which that whole section of country held him. The undertaker in charge said it was the largest funeral he had ever had. May the Lord give grace and mercy, with reconciliation to his will, to the sorrowing widow and family. We feel the Lord has taken his own unto himself.

H. H. LEFFERTS

MEMORIAL

WHEREAS, it has been the will of Almighty God to remove from our midst by death our beloved brother and deacon, George Will Danberry, and

WHEREAS, the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J., has sustained a grievous loss and great sorrow as brother Danberry was a member of our church for eleven years and served with utmost faithfulness as deacon and member of the Board of Trustees. He felt that necessity was laid upon him to speak publicly of the mercy and goodness of God which he did to the honor and glory of God and to our comfort and edification, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we do hereby testify to our sorrow at our loss and desire to bow in humble submission to His divine will, feeling we have reason for assurance that our loss is his eternal gain and say "Thy will be done."

RESOLVED, that these resolutions be spread upon the church minutes, a copy transmitted to the family of the deceased, and a copy sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

Adopted by order of the church. ELDER C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator. Elvira H. Conner, Clerk.

PRINTING MINUTES

Mr. Gilbert Beebe, 5 Linden Ave., Middletown, N. Y., will be glad to print the Minutes for the various Associations.

MEETINGS

PLACE OF MEETING CHANGED

The Maine Association will convene with the Bowdoinham Church, Bowdinham, Maine, Sept. 11th, 12th and 13th, 1942, and not with the Whitefield Church, as previously announced.

SANFORD BARTLETT, Asso. Clerk.

The annual meeting of the Lexington-Roxbury Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Olive and Hurley Church, Shokan, N. Y., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, Sept. 16, 17 and 18, 1942. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us and partake of our hospitality. Ministering brethren of our faith and order will be welcomed. Those coming by train on Tuesday will be met at the Ashokan railroad station, and those coming by auto on Tuesday are requested to go to the home of Mrs. Hazel Byrnes, Ashokan, N. Y., a short distance below the Post Office where entertainment will be provided. Those coming by bus Tuesday will stop at the Post Office where they all will be directed to the home of Mrs. Hazel Byrnes. Those coming Wednesday morning should go directly to the meeting-house at Shokan, N. Y., which is less than one mile from Ashokan station. The Association will convene at 10:30 o'clock Wednesday morning.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sundays in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a.m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meeting-house, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th Street, Mayfield, Ky. Those interested will be welcome.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Due to local conditions over which we have no control there will be no session of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting held this fall of 1942.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.
Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.
To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A. M.
ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A. M. 2 P. M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists is now settled in her new church-house, at 4614 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas, where she holds her regular monthly services on each first Sunday at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. Preaching services also on each third Sunday by Elder C. B. Teague, and each second Sunday by brother O. C. Lee, at 11 o'clock a. m. A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. R. HARDY, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Eligin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas. Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Texas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

VOL. 110 RUTHERFORD, N. J., OCTOBER, 1942 No. 10

CORRESPONDENCE

Re-Published by Special Request

EDITORIAL OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

"MARVEL not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again"—John iii. 7.

THE NEW BIRTH

At the conclusion of our article on "Regeneration," in Number 17 of the current volume, we proposed to give a more full expression in a subsequent number, on the subject of the New Birth. This we have felt inclined to do in order to correct the impression entertained by some of our readers that we have changed our views on this vitally important subject.

The very emphatic manner of our Lord's declaration to Nicodemus forbids the thought that any one of all the race of Adam can ever see the kingdom of God except he be qualified for such perfection by a spiritual birth. Our natural birth capacitates us only for a knowledge of natural things, but cannot qualify us for an understanding of things beyond the sphere of nature. If it were possible for the natural faculties and perceptive power of a natural man to be so improved by education, moral, intellectual or religious culture, as to enable him to see the kingdom of God, or comprehend, receive or know the things of the Spirit of God, our Lord would not have thus positively declared its utter impossibility. Nor would the Holy Ghost, by the inspired apostle, have corroborated the testimony, as in 1 Cor. ii. 14: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." By a natural man we understand is intended a man that is born of the flesh, or an earthly man, possessing all the natural elements and properties of a man. Adam, both before and after his transgression, was a natural man. The qualifying adjective is used in a scriptural sense to distinguish a man who is made of the dust of the ground, and inspired with vitality and intelligence, from a spiritual man who is born of the Spirit. The distinction between

the natural man and the spiritual is fully set forth in the two distinct headships, from whom the two distinct natures are derived. These two distinct progenitive heads are called, as such, the first and the second Adam, the one of the earth earthy, the other is the Lord from heaven. The first was made a living soul, the second Adam is a quickening Spirit. From the first or natural Adam emanates all our natural or earthly being; from the second Adam emanates all that spiritual, holy, heavenly and eternal life in which we are manifested as the sons or children of God. As our natural life, or natural man, or nature, descended from the earthly Adam, by natural generation, was developed by a natural birth wherein we were born of the flesh, even so our spiritual, eternal life is developed and brought into manifestation by a spiritual birth. That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. As we were totally ignorant and unconscious of all that was transpiring in this world in the development of the things of nature until we were born of the flesh, so that it could in truth be said of us, Except we were born of the flesh we could not see or know the things of nature, so it is most positively declared of all who are born of the flesh that, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." If without a natural birth we could not come into this world nor see the things of this world, must it not follow that a birth of the Spirit is an indispensable perquisite to capacitate us to either see or know the things of the kingdom which is purely a spiritual kingdom, which flesh and blood cannot inherit? Then, let us not marvel that Jesus has said, "Ye must be born again." As neither spiritual life nor spiritual capacity can be born of the flesh, so neither can natural life and natural capacity be born of the Spirit. No amount of spiritual gifts can change, enlarge or perpetuate our natural man, or shield the earthly man from hunger, thirst, disease or death; neither can any development of our natural powers, either physical or mental, contribute in the smallest degree to our spiritual life, perception or enjoyment. That nature in the christian which is born of the flesh must, as well after the new birth as before, subsist on the productions of the same earth out of which our mortal bodies were fashioned, and that spiritual life or nature which is born of God must subsist on bread that cometh down from heaven, from whence that life proceeded. If spiritual consolations would sustain our earthly nature Stephen would not have died in the full and rapturous view of the opened heavens, and of his exalted Savior; and if earthly comforts could sustain our spiritual nature, no child of God would ever despond while abounding in wealth and luxury. In contemplating the gospel doctrine of the new and spiritual birth we should not confound the birth either with redemption or remission of sins. As transgressors of the divine law we could not possibly be saved from sin and wrath without redemption, but even redemption by the blood of Christ, and the forgiveness of all our sins, would not supply the place of being born again. Redemption has met the demands of eternal justice, borne the pains and

penalties which are due to our transgressions and so secured for us the remission of our sins. All this was accomplished for us, if we are interested in it, many centuries ago, but still, until we were born again we could not see the kingdom of God, or feel the joys of his salvation, or know anything about the things of the Spirit of God. If it were even possible for us to put away from us all our transgressions and perfectly obey the holy law of God, that would free us from condemnation, but could by no means make us any more spiritual than we were in Adam before sin entered into the world. For we are expressly informed that the first Adam was not spiritual, but natural; but the second Adam is spiritual. It is true, if we were not sinners we could not leave this present world, for the sting of death is sin; we could not be sinners if we were not subjects of God's government, for sin is a transgression of the law, and where there is no law there can be no transgression. Hence we are told, "The strength of sin is the law." Nothing short of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus could deliver us from the power or strength of sin but a power fully equal to that sin, and that must be equal to the law which is the strength of sin, therefore if we are saved we may well exclaim in the inspired language of the apostle, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Redemption has removed the insuperable impediment which forbade our exemption from everlasting wrath, abolished death, opened the everlasting doors which were closed upon us, and bade the everlasting gates of life and immortality to be lifted up, and thus brought immortality to light through the gospel. All this belongs to our redemption, but to qualify the redeemed of the Lord to come to the heavenly Jerusalem, and see the kingdom of God, and to behold the King in his beauty, and feel the power of the resurrection of the Son of God, and to enter into his resurrection life and immortality, we must be born again. The question has been repeatedly asked and urged, What is it that must be born again? We would not dare attempt to improve on the words of our Lord: "Except a man be born again." The man that has been born of the flesh and is flesh cannot see the kingdom of God except he be born again; this is necessary, not to make him a man, nor to change him from a man to an angel, but to bestow on him a new spiritual, immortal and eternal life, which he never before had, and which he could never have without being born of the Spirit, as he had been before born of the flesh. That man who was chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and consequently before he was manifestly the subject of any birth, before he was born either of the flesh or of the Spirit. We think it will not be disputed by any intelligent christian that all the children of God were personally elected or chosen of God in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, according to Ephesians i. 4. If this be admitted, it must follow that they all had a personal identity and existence as members of the mystical body of Christ before Adam's dust was fashioned to a man, and therefore prior to their first or second birth.

The developments of time have demonstrated to us that it was the purpose of God that every one of his elect should, in the fullness of the dispensation of time, be born first of the flesh, and then be born again of the Spirit. Both of these births were ordained and provided for by the wisdom and decree of God, not to give them being or identity, for these they had in Christ before the world began. By the first birth they were to be developed in their earthly and fleshly nature in common with the whole natural posterity of the earthly Adam. This first birth was necessary, that they might see and know the things of nature, for except they were born of the flesh they could never have known the things of the flesh. "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" In the stupendous mystery of the hidden counsel and purpose of God this fleshly birth and identification of God's elect with the family of mankind was indispensable to the development of the great eternal purpose which God had purposed in himself before the world began, that in the first Adam they should all die, and in Christ they should all be made alive. If we admit that God has saved us and called us according to his purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, then we cannot consistently deny that the purpose and grace provided for our being born of the flesh, and identified with all the rest of Adam's posterity, and with them sink into death by the transgression of Adam, and be quickened from the dead, and raised up from condemnation and wrath, be washed, cleansed and purified, and freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Whether brethren can agree with us, that the absolute purpose and immutable decree of God embraced our fallen state and condition, as well as our salvation from sin, death and hell, through his dear Son, or whether they regard our fallen condition as an afterthought, occasioned by some unavoidable failure of his purpose, if it be admitted that our redemption from sin and death was predestinated, we must also and unavoidably (we think) admit the indispensable necessity for the fleshly birth of all the children of God which were from everlasting identified and personally chosen unto salvation in our Lord Jesus Christ. By our natural birth then we enter into and become a part of this world, are capacitated to see it and to sojourn in it until like an hireling we shall have fulfilled our allotted number of days; but our first, or fleshly birth, while it capacitates us for a knowledge of the things of nature, can supply us with no capacity for anything beyond bounds of this world, and hence the necessity that we should be born again in order that we may see the kingdom of God and know the things of the Spirit of God. In being born again, then, this man, who was chosen of God in Christ before the foundation of the world, and born of the flesh since the foundation of the world, must, at some period still later than his fleshly birth, be born again, or he cannot see the kingdom of God; must be born of water and of the Spirit, or he cannot inherit the kingdom of God. As our first or natural birth belongs to

and results from natural generation, so our being born again belongs to and results from regeneration. The seminal life of all the posterity of Adam was created in him, in the day when they were created. So the spiritual eternal life of the generation of our Lord Jesus Christ was given and secured to all the children of God in Christ when he was given to be the head over all things to his church. The words of our Lord which we have placed at the head of this article were addressed to one who was already born of the flesh, and they are applicable to such only as are born of the flesh. A birth can only develop, or bring forth into manifestation, the same nature of which it is generated and born. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The first birth brings forth that life, flesh and nature in which we were created in the earthly Adam, but the second birth brings forth into manifestation that life, spirit and immortality which was given to us in Christ Jesus, as the second Adam, and the Lord from heaven.

(*To be continued*)

MADISONVILLE, Ky.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE
SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—

You will find enclosed $4 for which give credit from July 1941 for your valuable paper which has been in my family since it was first published. My grandparents, Cyrus and Hannah Clark, my great- grandmother Gray, and old brother Louis Wilson held Providence Church together while the balance of the members went man-hunting during the "Missionary Craze" in 1832. For this I claim no credit except that as Mephibosheth felt that he was but a dead dog, and said, what am I that I should eat at the king's table? I want to say that Divine Providence, as I hope, has set me down at the table with the saints of God, and made me to love them, and to worship with them, though if a saint the least of all. I feel that it is by the grace of God that I am what I am, and that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. My life has been unprofitable, but I feel that the Lord is merciful to my unrighteousness, and if I am among that innumerable host which John saw coming up out of great tribulation all will be well with me then. I hope to live at the feet of my brethren while I am permitted to stay here in honor preferring one another. Your brother in hope.

L. A. BROWN

The following are some of the travels of brother Brown.

One night in about the year 1890 brother J. M. Perkins preached at Old Stony Point Church. If I have ever heard a sermon preached, that was the first one. Oh, how I did wish to be one of those dear old people of God. My grandfather, Daniel Brown, that dear old man of God had united with the church when he was old, arose and said he wanted to talk to the church, expressed regret of his wasted life, and said he had wanted to be with them so long. He did look so happy, his face was so bright and full of love, and something said to me is that your life? How lonely

that made me feel. I knew I was not fit to even think of requesting fellowship with those dear children of God. I resolved that night that I would offer myself as soon as I could get good enough to be a useful member. I loved those dear Old Baptists too well to bring reproach on them as I thought I would do in the condition I was in. I felt to be such a vile and sinful wretch. There I was, had lost sight of what I was hoping the dear Lord had done for me and would finish the work he had begun. I thought I had been a firm believer in the power and predestination of God. That blessed truth so dear to me, then in my vile and sinful life thinking I could ever be good and useful to you dear children of God. Oh, how important we feel sometimes. Soon I was made to wish for a seat at their feet, so time passed on. I was not making any change either worse or better and making very little effort, thinking very little about it.

One morning in the spring of 1901 I went to the barn to feed, and I heard a whippoorwill crying. I looked through the fence and the bird was sitting on a plank and did not fly. It was the first one I had ever seen, they are a wild bird and stay in the woods. The next morning it was there in the same place. I wondered what was the meaning when I went to the barn the third morning and the bird was there again. I became alarmed and stopped within ten feet of the bird and wondered what it meant in my life. I was sure of something and then I thought it was a token of the end. I was going to die and what would become of me. The bird was still crying. I thought if I could pick it up I would be satisfied with my condition so I walked to the gate and threw it back to the bird. O that mournful whippoorwill call. By that time I did want to pick it up so much and began to think I could. I walked some twenty feet to the gate and back to the bird with no attempt at quietness. It was still crying and as I stooped to pick it up it flew away. My hope of satisfaction had flown away, and how desolate I was left alone in the darkness of the morning without a hope, and only God could prepare me for the church and eternity then. I felt so desolate and lonely. The next two months were spent in this condition, and I told no one of my sorrow except my dear companion. She would console me the best she could. My little boy two years old would run to meet me when he saw me coming from work, and how those blind tears would flow at the thought of him soon losing the father he loved so well. Sometimes now I feel it would have been much better if my unprofitable life had ended there. My life has been so different from what I wanted it to be, but the dear Lord we hope we love so much knows best and will get glory for himself out of my failure and persecutions. But back to my subject—In June of the same year we, wife, baby and I took the measles at the same time. That was my time to go, so I thought. Wife and baby were very sick from the first but I was able to be up and wait on them some. The fourth day about 2:30 o'clock P.M. I thought I was sick enough to die. I turned my back on everything dear to me in this life, went in another

room and laid down on the bed to die in that dark and lonely hour. My wife and baby too sick to know where I was the thought came to me I was going to die and a just God would send me to hell and I was satisfied to go. When I awoke late in the evening to my surprise my burden was gone, and I felt calm and composed. Then I remembered I thought I was going to die and wondered why. I knew then I was not in a serious condition and I began to wish for my burden back so I could see how it went, but through all my sorrows, trials and tribulations that trouble has never returned. Maybe it does not mean anything, and sometimes I cannot see how it could through all the dark gloomy years of my misspent life, but in the darkest hours of my vile and sinful life my mind is led back to that dreadful lonely hour I went to bed to die, and then I would not take the world for that memory for I am made to feel at such times it was the hand of God leading me through what I hope was that death to the love of sin and natural things of this life, and made me to love the dear children of God. It seems then my warfare began. I wanted a home with the dear Old Baptist people but I loved them too well to offer my filthy self to them so I resolved to offer myself as soon as I felt I could be a useful member. What a sad failure I went to church. They were so kind and loving with me, but when the invitation was given for membership I would leave the house as I was afraid I would deceive those dear children of God. I spent twenty-five years in this condition. I knew I was not getting any better and lost hope. Then I said I would offer myself and let them do as they saw fit. I spent ten years in this condition, and did not have to leave the house any more but could not leave my seat. How I wanted to go to them but I could not. Highland Association was held with the church at New Hope beginning Friday before the third Sunday in August 1936, and I started from home with my mind fully settled that I would offer that day. No invitation was given, that seemed to seal my doom. I thought they knew and did not want to hurt me. How lonely I felt yet was glad the dear children of God were not burdened with a sinful wretch like me. They had been so patient and loving with me but now I knew not what. I could still hear them preach, what a comfort that thought was. There was preaching at sister Essie McGregor's home that night and brothers G. D. Clark and O. W. Perkins preached. When the song started my mind went blank. The next I knew brother Perkins asked me a question. Those dear people received me into the church and I was baptized the next day. What a joy and peace to be at last in full fellowship with the dear Old Baptists. May it please God that I will never feel exalted, but wish, as I do now, to always live at their feet, and what a comfort to wash the brethren's feet.

LESLIE A. BROWN

Arch & Dempsey Sts., MADISONVILLE, Ky.

DEAR SISTER FANNIE:—

I want to write you. We are trying to work and hope you are both able to be

out in the sunshine. You spoke of the genealogy of the people of God. I really think that all are descendants of the first forefathers. Some think that the Gentile race might be the children of Ishmael. This is only supposition, yet might be true. We have no right to say, "What doest thou." Christ said, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." There is a light to the Gentiles which is a glorious light, and whoever walks in this light need not stumble for Christ is their light and no darkness is there. Though we feel our way is hedged in, and our hope is gone, yet the light shines and we feel no fear. This light shines when it pleases Him from whom it comes. Oh, what a blessed thought! Numbers 23:9, 10. "Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations. Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" What a beauty this old prophet saw in this great people. I saw it once when I felt that I was made to love the household of God's people. They looked so pure to me. I saw them, I hope, with an eye of faith, and if so I saw them in the state of pure holiness as God is holy. It was with a sweetness that is sweeter than honey in the comb. I love to think of it and to dwell upon it. I saw it all in a moment, in the twinkle of an eye. It shined brighter than the noon-day sun, and it satisfied my poor troubled soul. It came at a time when my last thought of them had been to view them with a decided hate, and I had fully decided that I would never join in and be one of them. I had expressed myself that every one else could join them if they wanted to but I was satisfied to remain where I was. I hope it was this God who has loved me from before the foundation of the world that spoke to me at that moment and said, Are you really satisfied to remain with a people who have no understanding of these deep Scriptures which you read and in which you take so much delight? They even say that you are crazy for reading them and wanting to talk about them. Do those Old Baptists call you crazy for wanting information about such deep things which are written in the word of God? Do they turn from you as if you were a heathen for wanting to talk about the precious things which are written there, and for which cause the Son of God left his glory that he had with the Father, and came down here and suffered and died that such poor worms of the dust might be raised to dwell with the God above, and to see such glory as that which dwells with the Father and the Son? Christ prayed to the Father for them that they might see his glory. John 17. Dear sister this is my hope, my bread and my meat, and I believe that this God is able to the end. He says that he is the first and the last. I know that things look dark for us today, but where is our hope if we have no hope of a living God? 2 Kings, chapters 18 and 19 strengthen the hope that he is able though many kingdoms be taken and their gods not able to save them because they are false gods. If we stand alone and are not reckoned among the nations we have nothing to fear.

Fannie I hope you may write me often. I feel that I need your good letters, your watchcare and above all your love. Yours unworthily,

(Mrs.)
CYNTHIA PERKINS BROWN

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113 S. 12th St., MURRAY, Ky.

DEAR EDITORS:—

I am enclosing a letter from sister Cynthia Brown and would like to share the sweetness of it with others. How little and unworthy I was made to feel at the close of her letter. I deeply feel the need of the love of the dear brethren and sisters. So often I feel so far from the eternal God. With tears I beg his love. I need him every hour, every minute, yes every second I sincerely need him. How I feel to thank the precious heavenly Father for all the blessings he has so freely given this poor unworthy worm of the dust. Please pray for me and mine.

(Mrs.) FANNIE H. CHESTER

Route 1, WILLIAMSVILLE, Mo.

To the Editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—

I have been a reader of your paper pretty much all my life, ever since I became able to read. My mother took it when I was a child and well do I remember stealing it out and hiding some place to read it and cry. I have been made to wonder many times why it was so interesting to me when I was so young. I would hide to myself and read the many good letters from God's poor and afflicted people and I have wondered if the Lord did, at that early date of my childhood, reveal to me that I was a poor, miserable sinner, and that the doctrine for which I feel to know is the only way poor sinners can ever see any redemption for them. But why was I so interested back there sixty years ago if I did not love the Lord. As I grew up to manhood I became more interested in the world and worldly ways but often would catch myself having serious thoughts about my poor sinful condition and would wonder what would become of me if I should die. Maybe it was just all imagination with me and still is, but why do I crave after these things when the world is so full of all of its bewitching snares. There is no lasting comfort to me following after the world but I do feel to know that the doctrine that the Old School Baptists believe is the only lasting comfort. I have tried to throw it away many times and tried to follow the way of the world in all ther ways of worship and doings but I find out soon that I catch myself hungering and thirsting for the crumbs that fall from the Master's table. I am located here where there are no ministers of the faith for which the SIGNS OF THE TIMES contends. There are a few Conditional Time Salvation Baptists scattered about but they do not see it like the writers of the SIGNS put it. They call it extreme views on predestination and claim that our time work belongs to us but this leaves me in a helpless condition for all my works seem no comfort to me. Give me the imputed righteousness of Christ alone, the only way to strengthen my hope. I am getting old now and am very poor in this world's goods but hope to be found among God's

humble poor who have been made rich by his loving kindness. I have been having the privilege of reading the SIGNS so long without being able to pay for it which causes me to feel that I am just a burden to the Editors. All I have now is a form of relief called old age assistance but I am going to send you $1 out of that to help you with your burden for I surely would be miserable indeed not to have this welcome visitor come once each month. I am afflicted with pulmonary tuberculosis in my left lung but from time to time I will try to send you something as I can spare it hoping that the Lord will spare you to go on publishing the glad tidings of great joy to all believers who love the truth. A poor sinner saved by and through God's eternal purpose, through mercy and grace if saved at all.

W. M. HARWELL

GRETNA, Va.

Dear Brother Dodson:—

I am enclosing $2 for my renewal to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I get much pleasure from reading it. There are no pleasures the world can afford that compare with a feast from the Lord. But, like Mephibosheth, we have to be carried to the King's table. So it is when he prepares our hearts for this gospel feast, we receive it with great joy and gladness that exceeds all worldly attractions or amusements. It makes us feel renewed in faith and hope and that our Redeemer liveth. As Mephibosheth fell from his nurse's arms and was made lame in both feet from the fall, so it is, and how true, with us when He makes us to see our helpless and lame condition in our fall, a condemned sinner, naked before God, stripped of self righteousness, then we must say salvation is of the Lord. Sometimes in my meditation I ask the question whether or not one who has never been born again gets comfort from hearing the gospel preached. My mind is full of meditation on these things but I am not able to put them in words. Do not know that the Scripture referred to has in type or meaning anything I have written concerning it, but if not, please look over my blunders and pray for me that I may be led in the right way. It is all of the Lord and we know he is able to do with us as it pleases him. A sister in hope.

(Mrs.) WILLIE TOSH

ABILENE, Texas

DEAR BRETHREN IN HOPE OF A LIFE BEYOND THE GRAVE:—

Should one so weak as I address you thus? I feel so little, so unworthy, but the God I hope I have been made to believe in is so great. Ah! what a wonderful God is our God. He rules in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. He is so wonderful in knowledge that he knew how to make and create all things so they would praise and bless his holy name. David said, "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee." Yes, he knew all our sins even before the world was and laid them on one that was able to save. We find that the Lord spake through the prophet Isaiah and said, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set

judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law." So there was a judgment back in counsel before the world was; all of his elect people were judged; all of their sins were imputed to Jesus; Jesus came and put them away by the sacrifice of himself and will not remember their sins against them any more. So his people are saved, sanctified, wholly justified and glorified not in themselves but in Jesus. Yes, they are washed in water, by the blood, and made white as snow, and stand before him blameless altogether in love. Paul asks, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." What wonderful love. Paul also says, "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Let me say to the people of God, remember your King rules and all things are going according to his will. May the Lord bless you and guide you by his spirit is the prayer of a poor, weak brother in hope. A sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

C. D. VARNELL

McDowell, Ky.

Elder R. Lester Dodson,

Dear Brother in Christ:—

In reading over your article in the February Signs I noticed you used the word, *toleration*. (Now obsolete or nearly so among the brethren.) I have thought a great deal about your using this word. I had begun to think that I, perhaps, was the only one who believed in toleration in the house of God, or religion, in these dark and cloudy days. It seems to me the "writing preachers" are nearly all extremists, either divers or skimmers, but not divers or skimmers like Paul of old who could, "please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved." It seems the skimmers preach loud and long on the mystery of godliness, trying to separate and divorce the *conditional* promises from the *absolute* promises of God. While on the other hand the divers labor long and preach loud, trying to show that the *absolute* promises are the big promises, and that the household of faith is exempt from the *conditional* ones, and the promises have no connection with each other. This is not toleration, neither rightly dividing the word of truth, so it seems to me. I believe that John Bunyan expressed it all in a nut shell when he said, "The absolute promises are big promises, containing in themselves all the conditional promises, with all their conditions and all their blessed fulfillments." All that the Father giveth the Son shall come to him; they may say they will not, but they will be found liars for God's word is true; they shall come to him; they shall be enabled to see and repent and believe; their hearts shall be inclined to come to God, who worketh in them both to will and do of his good pleasure; he will give them

power to come and to rest in Jesus and be saved. They that believe are born to it as an heir is to an inheritance—born, not of natural privileges, or desires, or will (I am not a free willer, I do abhor it) but born of God, of the Spirit of God, raised out of the grave of sin, and translated into the kingdom of His dear Son, and made to live a new life. The newborn child that has life will cry; the spiritual child will cry to God for mercy, and will desire the sincere milk of the word that he may grow thereby, and will crave to be clothed comfortably with the golden righteousness of Christ, and will be satisfied with the breast of God's consoling promises, and will bear some resemblance of his heavenly Father, and will be trained up in the ways and house of God, the true church, and will go to God for the supply of his necessities, and for relief and strength in trials and temptations. If you have not these works you will fall short of the kingdom of God. If you are not a child of God you will have no heavenly inheritance. If you have these marks you are the children of God, and you should set your affection on things above, and not on things below. You should talk of your Father's promises and love his will, and be content and pleased with your worldly lot, and live lovingly together with all the children of God. Serve one another, do good to one another and if any wrong you pray God to right you, and be holy in all manner of conversation, and live like the children of the holy God. Now what I am trying to stress is *toleration among the children of God*. By this, I do not mean that we should tolerate corruption among ourselves and not to please ourselves. Let us walk softly before God. I can see no use for Christians unchristianizing each other over some mysterious point of doctrine when there are no faults of any other kind to mar their religion or christian character. Away with so much bigotry! Let us not forget that we are all yet human and prone to sin, we now see through a glass darkly and know only in part. Let us not be like the fabled blind men who went to see the elephant though all of them were blind, remember? They disputed loud and long, though each was partly in the right and all were in the wrong. Let your moderation be known unto all men. Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John Newton said, "I can conceive a living man without an arm or a leg, but not without a head or a heart; so there are some truths essential to vital religion, and which all awakened souls are taught." Charles H. Spurgeon once said, "All the words of God are important but not equally important." Now, were these pious men of God *tolerant?* Brother I want you to go forth in the name of the Lord preaching toleration in the household of faith and upholding toleration in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Yours in Him.

MILFORD HALL, SR.

BOYNTON, Fla.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—

I have delayed writing you about my subscription for the reason I wanted to write you about the Baptists in south

Florida. I do not seem to be getting any nearer doing it so I am sending the money in this letter. I do feel that the last paper was worth the price for the year. Elder Ruston's articles always seem so substantial to me, they strengthen me. I have been unable to get to meeting since November. It is sixty miles and help is so scarce Mr. Peck does not like to leave. These are trying times, but sometimes I think we needed these things. The real things of life are looked upon so lightly. I do thank God he has given me the faith to stand for the things he has taught me regardless of who believes as I do. Predestination to me is one of the most beautiful things any one can think of. Still I hear it presented sometimes in such a way that I do not blame Baptists for saying that it is damnable. I once heard a preacher say, and he claimed to believe as we do, "Go on and do what you want, you do not have to pet God." I know nothing of such a feeling. I believe there is a sincere desire in the heart of every one who has felt their sinfulness in the sight of God to serve him more and better than they do. To ask for guidance. I also believe in the fear of God. I remember the day I went before the church. I was a stranger, having been there but twice, but I felt it was God's will for me to go and tell them what I felt he had taught me. Before I started to talk, Elder White said to me, "Don't you think you had better wait awhile?" I answered, "I am afraid if I go back without doing this God will punish me." His answer was, "You have touched upon a very precious thing, the fear of God." He called the church together as he had dismissed the congregation. He told me after it was one of the most peculiar circumstances in his ministry. I never felt to wonder if they would receive me, I was doing what God told me to do. "Closer is He than breathing, nearer than hands or feet." I am sorry to have rambled on in this way. Please excuse me. (Mrs.) H. A. PECK

VEGA, N. Y.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—

I am enclosing a check for $2 for which please send the good old SIGNS to my address for another year. I want to tell you how very glad I am that it has been made possible for you to take over the SIGNS and keep it up. I am sure it has been a lot of work and worry for you as well as expense to do so, but I am sure the good Lord will bless you for your kind interest in so doing, and I know it will be appreciated by the brethren and friends as without the paper many would be robbed of a great deal of comfort that it brings them. Many of them do not get to hear the preached word at all. Not only is it a comfort to each one but it sort of joins the brethren together to read the many messages of faith and love. I hope the Lord will continue to strengthen you in your labor of love for the cause. It is written that, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," and if we do love the brethren it is because God first loved us and gave his only Son to suffer, bleed and die that we might live. Dear brother, I love to think of a living Saviour, one

that has risen and sits with the Father on the throne. I believe he has said, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." The little hope we have is like "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus." Please pardon my intrusion on your time. I did not intend to be so lengthy but only to renew my subscription.

A little sister if one at all.

(Mrs.) VIRTUE BALLARD

VIRDEN, Ill.

DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIENDS AND EDITORS:—

I want to write and tell you how grateful we feel toward all of you for sending your good paper to us. We are getting old and unable to attend our church which is the same faith and order as yours about sixty miles away. Very sorry we could not contribute to the cause. Nothing short of a christian spirit would have caused you to remember the poor. This is the time when the rich grow richer and the poor more dependent, but I would not exchange places with them if I could. If not mistaken I think there is a Scripture reading like this, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you." There are several churches in our little city but their ministers do not preach the gospel that is good for our hungry souls, so our preaching is in reading the Scripture and the good old SIGNS. My prayer is the good Lord will bless you with abundance to carry on the publishing of the SIGNS as long as time shall be. Pardon me for expressing my views in regard to time. I know I am unable to delve into the mysteries of God, but according to my understanding of scripture I do not believe the dear Lord will permit this world to go on in such wickedness as it is engaged in at the present time very many more ages. I feel myself a poor sinner but through the mercies of the good Lord he gave me a hope sixty-three years ago which is the anchor of my soul, and if I, a sinner, look on this wickedness that seems so dreadful to me with horror, I am made to wonder how our dear Lord, without sin, will look down through the veil of secrecy to us and see it all and permit it to go on much longer. I am confident that when he sees fit he will speak "Peace be still" and it will end.

Jesus thou Prince of life,
Thy chosen cannot die:
Like thee, they will conquer in the strife
And reign with Thee on high.

ELDER J. A. MODLIN

(Elder Modlin being unable to write, the above was written by sister Modlin who tells us she is in her eightieth year and will rejoice to leave this weary road and be at home with God. They both send christian love.)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS":

Mrs. M. J. Goodwin, Ark., $1; T. S. Chester, Ky., $1; Mrs. W. A. Hightower, N. Y., 50 cents.

EDITORIAL
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Luke XV:11-31
THE PRODIGAL SON

In taking up the above Scripture for our article, we would say that it is in reply to the request of Sister Addie Chandler, found in the June number of the SIGNS.

The chapter begins with the announcement that all the publicans and sinners drew near unto Him for to hear Him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them. Moses says of this people, the Jews, who are a type of the legalist, even to this day, "They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation." Deuteronomy XXXII:21. Let us bear in mind that this is the setting for the three parables that follow. We shall not dwell upon the lost sheep or the lost piece of silver at this time, but devote all our space to the third, known as the Prodigal Son.

"And He said, a certain man had two sons." Abraham had two sons, the elder, Ishmael, was the son of Hagar, the bondwoman, therefore a bond-child. The younger, Isaac, was the son of Sarah, who was free, and is the mother of us all.

In this parable our Lord chooses to say much more about the younger son than the elder one, for in his history is unfolded the wonderful love of God to man, as set forth in the Covenant of Grace. Abraham stands as the father of many nations. Undoubtedly his family was under consideration when God divided to the nations their inheritance, for Moses tells us in Deuteronomy XXXII:8, "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." Before Abraham was, it was purposed that Abraham should be the father of these two sons, and the division unto them of what pertained to him was all in the plan. It is remarkable how later Esau and Jacob were both true to type. Esau stayed at home, Jacob wandered. They of the Covenant of Grace were wanderers, strangers and foreigners. "They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way, they found no city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty their soul fainted in them."

This lad took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. He had no thought of a day of want, neither did he listen to

the preacher who has declared in Ecclesiastes XI:8, "But if a man live many years, and rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many. All that cometh is vanity." He also declares that God will bring this young man into judgment.

The election of grace are just as much at home in the world as other men are, until God's time comes. There arose a mighty famine in that land. God sends this mighty famine. The sins and follies of youth now come to mind, for he began to be in want. He had spent his money for that which was not bread, and now, so foolish was he, that he would labour for that which satisfieth not. Isaiah LV:2.

The preacher tells in Ecclesiastes X:15, "The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them; because he knoweth not how to go to the city." He would never know, and could confess himself as foolish and ignorant. He really does not belong there, but in his effort to do something, he "joins himself", he lines up with one who is in the world and of the world. He was a citizen, not of heaven, but of this world, that country, and instead of taking him home, he put him to work in his fields.

Fleshly attainment is food for swine, and swine here represent unregenerate characters, who may have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof. These people seem to be able, like swine, to swallow anything and everything that is put in the trough. His hunger increased, and as God had brought him to this condition, man could not feed him. "He would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat." He would have been satisfied with the things that satisfied them, like Israel, who were God's people, he would have stayed, as they would have stayed in Egypt, but for the hand of God. The mighty famine seemed in God's purpose to bring him to himself as a beggar poor at mercy's door. Thoughts of his father's house and his father's servants came to him, and he knew that they had "bread enough and to spare." The prophets of Abraham's household not only testified and ministered to the Jews, but to those who should be "heirs of salvation." Hebrews I:14.

By God's instruction, the child of grace, especially the vile and polluted Gentile, does not find comfort, but trouble, under the law, they are without the gate, full of sores. In desire he goes back to his father. Read Romans 4. This desire to go to his father comes when the soul is led to believe in a God who can justify the ungodly, which is the faith of Abraham. The meeting-place of Abraham and his son is in Jesus Christ, it is there we are owned as children of Abraham through Jesus Christ our Lord. "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels: but he took on him the seed of Abraham." The son comes with confessions of sin, the father sweeps them aside with loving favor, for it is in him and in his seed, meaning Christ, that all the families of the earth are blessed. This faith in a God that can justify the ungodly, brings the son into his father's house, not into the field as a servant, but into the house as a son. The testimony of our father Abraham is

as a kiss on the neck of every one of the promised seed. The servants bring forth the best robe, and put it on him. Those citizens of the far country, where the son had seen so much trouble, had nothing like this to present. How favored are God's servants to preach a faith that justifies. Who, as they stand in service to the people of God, bring forth the best robe, the righteousness of Christ, which is unto and upon whosoever believeth. They bring it forth, they also put it on. Though the son may, and does, protest that it is not for him, that he is not worthy, they put it on him. "And put a ring on his hand." A token of God's faithfulness and love, which establishes before all men on earth, devils in hell and angels in heaven that this one, so unworthy in his own sight, is a favorite of God. "And shoes on his feet." It is he who is shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, the shoes which are said to be of iron and brass. Iron because the Word of our Lord is spoken of as a rod of iron, and they shall walk according to the Word, and brass because it is the strength of One who has trodden the furnace for them. The prodigal was brought into the banqueting-house, and the banner over him was love. He found in the house a table which was prepared before him in the presence of his enemies, for here was Jesus set before him that he should feed upon him, and he rejoiced, sitting down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This music and dancing is only known by those who have tasted of the heavenly gift (the fatted calf) and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost and have tasted of the good Word of God and the powers of the world to come, for he who feels so unworthy, has become one of the household of faith.

"Now his elder son was in the field." He was a worker and sets forth the Jew or legalist who, like Ishmael, is a bond-child. The prodigal's return was not looked for by him, but the rejoicing was enough to provoke him, and he murmured against his father. To murmur against the faith of Abraham is to murmur against him, for it was that in which he stood and hoped for the glory of God. This self-righteous person, like the ninety-and-nine who were left in the wilderness through unbelief, had always done right, and had many years of service to his credit. "Neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment." Abraham gave unto his household, including his bond-servants, the commandment of circumcision, and the good legalist is very faithful to cut off all that is superfluous, or in other words, to circumcise. Thus he does not say, as he might, if speaking unto God, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandments in the plural, but he speaks in the singular, which, to our mind, implies the commandment of circumcision which Abraham gave, but if it were to God that the Jew, or elder son was speaking, the result would be exactly the same, for the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. Hebrews IV:13. Legalists today preach reformation in the place of regeneration. The Jew always was forward to practise circum-

cism, but Jesus, at the cross, took away everything that was superflous. "And yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends." Paul says "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." There was no gift under the law, he worked for what he got, and being in bondage, he was held guilty, for the law was not a minister of life, but of condemnation and death.

The father said, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine." Does not this set forth that natural relation after the flesh, in which they boasted? Did they not say, we have Abraham to our father? We believe that the land that God sware to Abraham, still belongs to the Jew, and the day will come when it will be proven his. In the faith of Abraham we find good servants striving to persuade the Jew that this was the very Christ, as though they would have him come into the house, but he would not go in. "He was angry, and would not go in." Thus the Scripture mentioned before in this article was fulfilled, He provoked them to anger by a foolish notion. Yet we find Paul saying, "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh." Rom. IX:1, 2, 3. In Rom. X:1, 2, 3, he says, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." We hope in the above that we have made it clear to our dear sister. There are two covenants set forth, of which Sarah and Hagar are types, and the elder and younger represent those who are either under a covenant of works or of grace.

We do not think that the elder son represents a church member who has always been faithful, complaining over the fuss made when one who has been, in years past, wayward and disobedient and has now returned to the church. What sort of a church would it be where they were so self-righteous? and it does not say the elder son was in the house, but in the field.

Paul says "God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." I Corinthians XIV:33. Salvation unto the Gentiles was a hard matter for the Jews to receive, and those who were able to receive it, did so by the power of God. John said "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." Peter had to see the sheet let down from heaven, knit at the four corners before he could minister to Cornelius, and if the elder son could ever come into the house, his estimate of his brother must be changed, for God said to Peter, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." Acts X:15.

History proves that all the entreaties were of no avail, for they were the children of disobedience. Did they not cry,

in another place, away with such a man from the earth, when that man (Jesus) was their only hope? Blindness in part had happened unto them until the fullness of the Gentiles shall come in. Romans XI.

It seemed final, as we do not see that the elder son yielded to his father's entreaties, but we believe the days will come when they shall see and be ashamed for all their evil ways, when the Lord shall be pacified towards them. Then they too will come into the house and join in the dance of those that make merry. This will come in GOD'S TIME.

G. R.

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, New Jersey, sendeth greeting, and love in the Lord to the several churches and associations with which she corresponds:

Dear Brethren: —

We are again favored to address you in this annual epistle to express the gladness of our hearts for the manifested assurances of the power of God, that he has kept us, and exercised our hearts, that we are still rooted and grounded in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and having been mutually comforted together we feel it unnecessary to exhort you as though you were the director of your steps, but rather we feel you are in the relation of the household of faith, as Paul was persuaded of the brethren at Rome. Now may the God of hope fill you with joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost, and I also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another; nevertheless, brethren, Paul said, "I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God." Romans 15:13, 14, 15.

We are given to realize the sovereignty of God over all worlds, principalities and powers, and the sweetness of the joys of salvation. But that does not take away our tribulations, and we hope the exercises we have manifested in us are the exercises manifested by the Holy Ghost, and having hope in his mercy we glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. Romans 5:3, 4, 5.

The eminent apostle Paul expressed in his epistles words of exhortation and comfort. It is very good to feel that one so highly favored of God had such tribulations, and through all his afflictions comes so close to us in our experience. To give you clear declaration we quote him: "Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might de-

part from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. 2 Cor. 12:7, 8, 9.

This revelation to Paul gave him the understanding to realize the imperfection of the flesh, and realizing how far short he was to attain unto the righteousness of God he sought the Lord thrice, that the relations of flesh might depart from him, and then he would be like the Son of God in the flesh, but God's Son was God in the flesh and Paul was Adam after the flesh, but adopted into the household of faith. God hath adopted us in Christ according to his purpose in grace, and at the appointed time of God he sent Christ into the world to redeem the adopted ones, and when he had come in the flesh he was Jesus, and to every one thus quickened he is to them the Lord Jesus Christ, and in this relationship every one is taught of God, and in that teaching they hear and learn of God, and are brought to Jesus, and are followers of Jesus, and are called the household of faith.

This letter is addressed to that people of the household of faith to assure you of the relationship in which we are accepted one with another. Jesus has borne the thorn, and we do hope he was pierced for us, and having this understanding given we worship Jesus Christ the Son of God our Saviour, and we rejoice to receive our brethren, and hear them tell of his wonderful works.

Our hearts are gladdened with the thought that the messengers of the Bridegroom of our saints are coming to us, not with a message only, but bearing precious fruit, and all of it good fruit, of which all are partakers.

May the Holy Spirit comfort and direct you is our prayer.

CHARLES W. VAUGHN, Mod.
M. W. RAULSTON, Clerk

OBITUARIES

LILLIAN HOLLOWAY RILEY, my dear sister-in-law, was born Sept. 21, 1869, and died June 15, 1942, making her stay on earth 72 years, 8 months and 24 days. She was the daughter of the late Daniel and Margaret Holloway. Feb. 18, 1891 she was married to Asbury C. Riley by Elder T. M. Poulson of New Church, Va. Living on a farm near Snow Hill, Md., until July 1904 they then moved into that town to the home where she died. Her busband preceded her in death more than twelve years. She had been a semi-invalid for several years, and for the last two or three years was unable to care for herself. Her son and family shared the home with her. Although so frail and poorly her death came as a shock. She was on the porch enjoying the summer breezes on Saturday when she let it be known she was not so well. Immediately she was taken to her room and a doctor called, but all that loving hearts and hands could do was of no avail, and she grew steadily weaker until Monday evening when she breathed her last. Though sorely afflicted she always greeted her callers with a smile and was never known to complain. She never made a public profession of religion, but was a firm believer in the doctrine of God, our Saviour, and attended our meetings at Snow Hill, helping to entertain as long as she was able. "By their fruits ye shall know them." When she could go no more our pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, invariably called on her on fourth Sundays when he filled his appointments. She looked forward to the meetings with joy and gladness and he told me when writing the obituary to say for him, "I esteemed her highly for the truth's sake and counted her among my very best friends." I loved her as a sister-in-law and as a christian woman, and have spent many happy hours in her company. As Elder Ker was not able to officiate at her funeral, Elder H. H. Lefferts was called and came to speak comfortably to us in our time of

need. His subject on the sad occasion was, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." He also read, by request, one of her favorite hymns beginning, "One there is above all others." The large attendance at her funeral and the many floral offerings contributed attested the high esteem in which she was held by friends and relatives. After the sweet, solemn and sacred services her dear form was gently laid to rest by the side of her late husband in the Old School Baptist Church Yard at Snow Hill. She leaves to mourn her departure one son and three daughters. Samuel Riley and Mrs. Walter Price, Snow Hill, Md.; Mrs. Norman Morris, Dover, Del.; and Mrs. Fitzgerald Crockett, Pocomoke City, Md. There are nine grandchildren, also two brothers and two sisters, Archer C. Holloway, Newark, Md.; John L. Holloway, Newark, Del.; Mrs. Stella Hastings, Delmar, Del.; and Mrs. Charles Dickerson, Snow Hill, Md. There are many nieces and nephews, and a host of friends. Written by request. (Mrs.) A. C. HOLLOWAY

ANDREW JACKSON WEBB, better known among his relatives and friends as "Doc" Webb, was born May 27, 1856, near Carrolton, Mo., and passed away in Kansas City, Mo., May 30, 1942 at the age of 86 years and 3 days. He was the fifth child and the second son of Larkin M. Webb and his wife Jane Webb, both sound and faithful members of the Primitive Baptist Church. On October 31, 1878 he was united in marriage to Miss Flora Strider who preceded him in death about twelve years ago. To them were born six children, but leaving to mourn his departure are only three, Mrs. Harry Lockwood of Kansas City, Kans., and two sons, Harry L. Webb and Jesse L. Webb both of Kansas City, Mo., one sister, Mrs. Mollie Lowe of Tulsa, Okla., three grandchildren and six great-grandchildren, besides a host of other relatives and friends. He was for some time engaged in the undertaking business at Calhoun, Mo., but later moved to Blue Springs, Mo., where he lived for nineteen years. Then he went to Kansas City where he made his home with his son, Harry Webb, and niece, Mrs. George Frazier. He was a highly respected citizen, and made many friends wherever he lived. He was not only a kind and affectionate father, but had a tender heart and sympathetic nature, that endeared him to all with whom he had to do. He united with the Baptist Church in Kansas City, Mo., about thirty years ago, but after moving to Blue Springs, he placed his membership in the Little Blue Primitive Baptist Church at Grain Valley, where he lived a consistent life, exemplifying his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and the gospel of the Son of God, by manifesting a spirit of love and fellowship for the saints of the living God. He loved the songs of Zion, and sung them with melody in his heart. A short funeral service was held at the Webb Funeral Home in Blue Springs on the second day of June, conducted by the writer, in the presence of a number of relatives and friends, after which we laid his body to rest in the beautiful cemetery at Blue Springs, there to await the awakening in the resurrection when his body shall come forth a spiritual body, and he shall see Jesus as he is, and be satisfied. Weep not for him.

W. L. HALL

MRS. LILLIE STAGGS, was born in Mississippi, March 6, 1872, and passed away at San Antonio, Texas, May 27, 1942 making her stay on earth 70 years, 2 months and 2 days. She was married to J. W. Staggs, March 11, 1886 and to this union were born ten children. Six of them are living, also seventeen grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. She united with Zion Hill Church, Parker Co., Texas, at the age of thirty-four and lived a devoted member. Her membership was, as Mr. Staggs is now, at Sculica Church, California. Elder W. L. Slusher, pastor. Many will recall her extended experience in the religious papers. She was a good writer and many will miss her able articles. She was laid to rest in the Stockdale Cemetery where the unworthy writer tried to speak a few words of comfort to the bereaved. She was sound in the doctrine of sovereign grace, and the predestination of all things both good and bad. She loved the Old Baptists from childhood and the rest of the family would call her the "Little Hardshell" because she started keeping company with brother Staggs who went to the Hard Shell meetings. Oh, the wonderful working of our God. How he brings things to pass and causes union between man and wife, and how glorious it is when both see alike and love the same things as it has been with brother and sister Staggs. How he misses her but according to the flesh it will not be many years before he will join her in that heavenly home, the glories of which the Lord has laid up

for them we fail to find words to express. They have been blessed these many years together. She loved so much for the Old Baptists to visit them and was continually doing for them all the time they were there. Many times when I have visited their home we would have meeting. I have heard her tell of the wonderful experiences the Lord had brought her through, when her expression would glow with that rich grace the Lord had given her. Another sheep has been called home to that inheritance prepared for her before the foundation of the world. Her hope was in the resurrection, when some day this old mortal body would be raised an immortal, a glorious spiritual body like her Saviour. She told me of a dream she had some time back. She thought the ruler of Russia was over here and had all the Old Baptists lined up and was shooting them one at a time. Finally it came her time and he raised the gun and shot her in the chest. She fell over and yet she was standing as she thought in another body. She could see that mortal body lying there with the wound in it and at the same time she was alive and said, well after death. The poor writer has gotten so much comfort out of that dream and all it portrays and means to mortal beings here on earth that have a hope. Time and space will not permit me to comment on that dream. May the Lord give strength to brother Staggs and the children to bear up under this grief, and to realize that God has just called another one of his little ones home, and that it is far better for her there in that heavenly home. We hope to meet her some day, where sorrow and parting will come no more. Written by request.

E. B. AULT

SARAH ELIZABETH MOON was born in Alabama, Feb. 23, 1868, and passed away Feb. 9, 1942. She moved to Texas in 1886 and was married to John Louis Moon Sept. 20, 1888. To this union were born nine children, six of whom survive her, also her aged husband, dear old brother Moon, about ninety years old. Sister Moon gave evidence in her early life of a hope in God and love for the church but did not unite until Oct. 15, 1927. She was baptized by the late Elder E. A. Moreland into the fellowship of the Ft. Worth Predestinaian Primitive Baptist Church. A strong believer in the predestination of all things she had no confidence in the works of man. On account of poor health she was unable to attend meetings often for the last ten years, but when she was so blessed she was always rejoicing in her blessed Saviour for his goodness to her and dearly loved to hear the preaching. She possessed many gracious virtues. She was meek and quiet and not given to foolishness, believing that women should be very modest and quiet. She did not lack in expressing what she felt it was her right to speak about, but always desired to live humbly and walk worthily. She spoke much of her unworthiness and desired to live better. Her daughter said when the Lord took her from us he took her in a peaceful sleep, and they felt so thankful after all these years of suffering she was blessed to go that way. She will be greatly missed by her husband, the children, and the church. We all feel her departure has left us minus a dear mother in Israel, one whose life was worthy of emulation by the younger members. To her loved ones we would say "Sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder J. R. Hardy, who followed her in death just one month hence. May the dear Lord reconcile her family, especially her third son, J. F. Moon, who was so devoted to his mother that he will feel to say, dear mother, I would not have you here in this sinful world to suffer any more for we do feel you are at rest, and we hope we will be able to emulate your many beautiful virtues, and remember your good deeds. May the good Lord reconcile us all to his providential dealings with us. Written by one who loved and esteemed her greatly.

MINNIE C. JAMESON

Deacon W. P. BEENE was born Jan. 10, 1860 and departed this life April 20, 1942, age 82 years, 3 months and 10 days. He united with the Predestinarian Baptists at Old Salem Church, Freestone County, Texas, twenty-five years ago. The church soon discovered in him the qualifications of a deacon and he was ordained to that office and filled it to the satisfaction of the church until the death angel called him home. He was faithful to the church, to his brethren and to his God. Never missed a meeting unless providentially hindered. He was united in marriage to Miss Mary E. Sarter, Dec. 23, 1887. To this union were born three boys. Two died in infancy, the

other living to the age of five years. His house was always a home for Old Baptists as many who were entertained in his home can testify. It was a great pleasure to talk with this man of God of the great things God has done for his people. He was confined to his room for nearly a year but never murmured. He was patient in all his suffering. I was at his bedside when the end came. His mind was clear and he passed away as gently as a child going to sleep. We could scarcely tell when the end came. God had given him a peaceful moment in which to die. He will be greatly missed by his many friends and the church, but most of all by his dear companion who was so faithful to him for the fifty-four years they lived together. The writer tried to speak comforting words to the sorrowing ones after which he was laid to rest in the Old Salem Cemetery to await the call of our Master when we shall awake with his likeness. Written by one who loved him for the truths sake. W. O. BEENE

MARRIAGES

By Elder George Ruston, at 64 Center St., St. Thomas, Ontario, July 13, 1942. Lieutenant James Wallace Black, of Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Miss Dorothy M. Eckton, also of Winnipeg, Manitoba.

The above is the son of brother James Black of Winnipeg.

By Elder J. J. Collins, at County Line, Ala., June 27, 1942. Mr. James W. Godwin, Newton, Ala., and Miss Mildred Searcy, of Piney Grove, Ala.

By Elder J. J. Collins, at the home of the bride's parents, Newton, Ala., July 15, 1942. Mr. Carl Ingram, Biloxi, Miss., and Miss Ruby Dove Weeks.

Other recent marriages by Elder J. J. Collins have been Kenneth Kinsaul, Mobile Ala., and Rubie Tindell, Newton, Ala. J. W. Kinsaul, Tallassee, Ala., and Catharine Kinsaul, Hartford, Ala. Sam Kinsaul, Fort Sill, Okla., and Bettie Mae Allgood, Newton, Ala. Fred Kinsaul, Newton, Ala., and Luverne Eldridge, Newton, Ala. James Thomley, Newton, Ala., and Edna Earl Bond, Dothan, Ala. Jack Hollis, Dothan, Ala., and Merle Snell, Dothan, Ala.

PRINTING MINUTES

Mr. Gilbert Beebe, 5 Linden Ave., Middletown, N. Y., will be glad to print the Minutes for the various Associations.

MEETINGS

The Hopewell Primitive Baptist Association meets with Union Church nine miles south of Winfield (Frisco R.R.; Highway 78) Ala. on Friday before third Sunday in October, 1942. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

ELDER H. MATT BROCK, Moderator.
ELDER W. D. GRIFFIN, Clerk.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala.

ELDER W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.

ELDER H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.

ELDER H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.

ELDER O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will be entertained by the Salisbury Church, Salisbury, Maryland on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday after the third Sunday in October (21st, 22nd and 23rd) 1942. A cordial invitation is extended to ministering brethren and all lovers of the truth of our faith and order. Those coming by train on Tuesday will be met at Union Station, those by bus at Wicomico Hotel and those by auto at The Primitive Baptist Home, 1101 E. Church St. Those coming on Wednesday will go direct to the meetinghouse corner Baptist and E. Church Sts. The Association will convene at 10:30 Wednesday morning. Elder David V. Spangler, Pastor.

MAUD T. LAWS, Clerk.

An all-day meeting is scheduled to be held with the New Vernon Church, Howells, N. Y., on Monday, Oct. 12th, 1942. A cordial welcome awaits all.

R. LESTER DODSON.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Due to local conditions over which we have no control there will be no session of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting held this fall of 1942.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator.
G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
IN
NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.
Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.
To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A. M.
ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A. M. 2 P. M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists is now settled in her new church-house, at 4614 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas, where she holds her regular monthly services on each first Sunday at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. Preaching services also on each third Sunday by Elder C. B. Teague, and each second Sunday by brother O. C. Lee, at 11 o'clock a. m. A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. R. HARDY, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Eligin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas. Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Texas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

VOL. 110 RUTHERFORD, N. J., NOVEMBER, 1942 No. 11

CORRESPONDENCE

"Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord: and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen. And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? Tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not anything in the house, save a pot of oil. Then he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbors, even empty vessels; borrow not a few. And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full. So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured out. And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed. Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest."

The first seven verses, 4th chapter, second Kings, quoted above, record an incident in the life of Elisha, that embraces much of doctrinal import and experimental value to the election of grace. Among the outstanding prophets of the old testament dispensation were Elisha and Elijah, and it is to be noted that in his prophetical work Elisha immediately succeeded Elijah when the latter was translated to heaven. There is a spiritual significance in the work and relation of these two men in their ministration to Israel of old. Elijah means, "My God is Jehovah" and stands as a type of the work of Jesus Christ in his earthly ministry. Elijah raised the dead to life, demonstrated the power of God in overcoming the wicked followers of Baal, passed dry shod over the parted waters of the river Jordan, and was translated to heaven, dropping his mantle, which was picked up by Elisha who received a double portion of Elijah's spirit. Jesus Christ raised the dead to life, overcame Satan and all his followers, passed through the waters of the Jordan of the Judgment of God for the sins of believers, rose from the dead, overcame the grave and became our high priest after the order of Melchisedec. The intercessory work of Jesus in heaven follows his work under the law, which he finished on earth, and will continue until the last vessel of mercy has been called home to God. The work of Elijah was immediately followed by that of Elisha after the trans-

lation of Elijah, so we see that both of these prophets represent Jesus. The one, Elijah, typifying the work of Jesus on earth, and the other, Elisha, typifying the work of Jesus in heaven in manifesting to the heirs of glory through the Holy Spirit the work of salvation, and in applying the merit of that work to their hearts. Elisha means "my God is salvation," and salvation is known only to the quickened sinner by the operation of the Holy Spirit of God. Elijah was translated to heaven after his work was done on earth. Jesus ascended to heaven when he had by one offering perfected them that are sanctified. Unless Jesus ascended to heaven and sent the Comforter into the hearts of his people to manifest unto them the things that belong unto himself, there could be no salvation. The work of Jesus on earth and in heaven is necessary for the salvation of every redeemed child of God. We have in heaven one mediator, the man Christ Jesus, who makes intercessions for the saints and is their Surety and Counsellor before the Father's throne.

Elisha is a type of Christ as our great salvation in the account of the miracle that forms the content of this subject. It is written at the beginning of the verses under consideration that there cried unto Elisha a poor widow, a wife of one of the prophets. This shows that she was an Israelite under the law. When the fiery law from the hand of God pierces the conscience of one who is condemned by sin and finds it exceeding sinful, and makes the conscience sore and tender, there is a cry unto the Lord from a broken and contrite heart. The convicted sinner does not cry until he is in distress because of his sins. When all is ease and fancied security with the sinner, there is no cry from him. His attempts at prayer are but formal utterances, and no supplication proceeds from his heart. As this poor widow cried unto Elisha, the convicted sinner cries unto Jesus when he feels in distress, utterly lost, sold under sin, and guilt lying heavy upon his conscience. The widow did not trust in self or in works, but came poor and needy to Elisha. It is to be emphasized here that the woman was a widow. In Scripture some times the Holy Spirit makes use of a woman to set forth the church in a figure. By nature we are married to the law as our husband, and to it we cling with a full measure of carnal devotion. But Scripture tells us that the church must become dead to the law by the body of Christ that she might be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that she might bring forth fruit unto God. It was Jesus who came in the fullness of time and redeemed his bride, the church, from under the law by fulfilling it for her, by receiving its sentence in full, and suffering for her all the wrath of God that she would otherwise have suffered. He arose from the dead and brought her off a glorious conqueror by his own sacrifice. In the miracle under consideration this woman's husband was dead when she came to Elisha. She was then a widow and so entitled to remarry. So the sinner who feels the weight of his transgressions pressing down upon him, and feels the sentence of death in himself does not

cry unto the Lord until he has this experience, does not cry until he has life to cry. The dead know not anything, and those dead in sin and not dead to sin have no life to cry spiritually any more than a dead person has ability to cry. The sinner must be born of God before he has life to cry, and his crying is an evidence that he is a child. A cry to God for mercy evidences spiritual life already. The sinner cries because he has life, not to obtain life. The widow went to Elisha when the creditor came to sell her sons into bondage. This creditor represents divine justice. A sinner in an experience of grace goes to Jesus with a cry for mercy and salvation when the inexorable justice of God manifests to him the stern and unrelenting demands of God's holy law, shows him the fruit and folly and fault of sin, and that he is sold under bondage, being unable to meet the requisitions of the law, and that he has not one farthing to pay. In the case of the widow and her two sons, if the widow represents the church collectively as a figure, the two sons of this one mother may typify the family of the redeemed under the old testament dispensation and those that are redeemed under the new testament day of our Lord Jesus Christ. The saints of the legal day died in faith, not having received the promises, but they saw them afar off, were persuaded of them, embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims in the earth. Also these two sons stand as witnesses to the wonderful miracle performed by Elisha. It is the Church that is the witness unto Christ of his great work of salvation, as it is revealed in their hearts and testified to by their walk and conversation. The law of God requires holiness from man, perfect and unremitting obedience of all its precepts. The slightest infraction renders the transgressor guilty of offending all points of the law, and divine justice as the creditor takes its relentless course and subjects the offender to its full and awful penalty, eternal separation from God, everlasting death, and all the endless misery of the terrible wrath of God. When the sinner feels in his own soul that divine justice as the creditor is already enforcing the just claims of the law, a cry for mercy ascends to the holy throne of God, as the Holy Spirit operates in the heart of a subject of grace.

It will be noted in the second verse of the account of this miracle of Elisha, that he asked the woman what he should do for her, and also what she had in her house. The woman replied that she had nothing but a pot of oil. As the woman approached Elisha in her distress, he manifested compassion towards her, desiring to know what he, not another, should do for her. The poor, destitute, needy sinner stripped of all self righteousness comes to Jesus in extremity and receives assurance from the King of Kings. The woman acknowledged that she had nothing in her house save a pot of oil. This oil typifies the grace of Jesus Christ, the unction, savor, power, and influence of the Holy Spirit operating in the heart of the sinner who feels the arrows of conviction within his breast. It is because of grace that the sinner is enabled to cry for mercy; it is because of grace that the needy sinner knows

there is a Jesus, an anti-typical Elisha, to whom he may go for help; it is because of grace that the sinner feels his spiritual need; it is because of grace that provision was made for him before he ever transgressed in that a saviour was provided for him; it is because of grace that the Holy Spirit operates in his heart to reveal that salvation and seal him with that holy spirit of promise which is the earnest of his inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession. But at the time the supplicating sinner comes to Jesus, he does not know that his very experience is a manifestation of saving grace, that is, before he experiences deliverance in his soul. When distressed because of his sins and feeling their heavy burden, he did not then realize that there was an inexhaustible supply of the oil of grace stored up for him before the world was.

In the third verse of the scriptural narrative the woman was bidden by the prophet Elisha to borrow empty vessels of her neighbors, not a few. The fact that she borrowed vessels shows that she did not possess them. We possess nothing of ourselves in the way of righteousness as we stand in Adam. The vessels must be empty before they are filled. So God's children must become empty vessels before they can come to the house of God. They must be emptied of all creature works, self righteousness, Pharasaic holiness, fleshly wisdom, and self presumption before they can be filled with the fullness that proceeds from the grace of God and through it. The fact that many vessels were borrowed shows that the vessels of honor and glory unto the Lord are indeed not a few. God's children are of every nation, tribe, tongue, and people, an innumerable company.

The fourth verse records the closing of the door upon the widow and her sons after they entered the house with the borrowed vessels. Oil was to be poured out into all the borrowed vessels and the filled ones set aside. Only the widow and her sons entered the house: only the empty vessels were brought into the house, and the door was shut. When all the Lord's people are gathered into the house of God in that sense, the door is shut. None but those entitled to enter the house can gain admission. When Noah and his family and all the animals were in the ark, the Lord shut them in, and the door was shut. All those who die under the curse of the law find the door of mercy shut against them forever. Oil from the one vessel that the woman had in her house was poured into the other vessels, and so miraculously was the supply maintained from some hidden source that there was sufficient oil to fill every other vessel there, the oil in the widow's vessel being in no sense diminished in quantity. It remained full and flowing with oil. The grace of God is efficient and sufficient for all the vessels of God's mercy, and flows from Jesus as golden oil from the good olive tree. By that grace every child of God is sanctified. As each vessel was filled with oil it was set apart or aside. Because of the effectual operation of the grace of God through the work of the Holy Spirit every vessel of mercy is set apart as a member of Christ's body, which is a holy priesthood of believers. Jesus is made

unto his people wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. In the annointing of Aaron and his sons under the legal dispensation, oil was used, and so the church of God must receive of the annointing oil of grace and have the seal and power of the Spirit applied to their hearts and consciences that the power of the gospel may be manifested in their lives.

In concluding, it is stated that the oil was poured out, that the proceeds of the sale of the oil were amply sufficient to pay every obligation that encumbered the family and that the widow and her sons were sustained during their natural lives of what remained. How the graces of faith, hope, and love are poured out in the heart of a believer! How many times the power of the gospel comes with much assurance to one who has been cast down and been heavy-hearted, and the recipient of salvation feels filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory. As there were no empty vessels left in the widow's house, so all the vessels of God's unfailing mercy receive their measure of fullness, and none are left out. All that the Father giveth the Son come unto him, and none of them shall perish. As the oil stayed in the vessels in the widow's house, so the oil of God's grace does not diminish, but stays.

No matter what the trials and tribulations of the Lord's afflicted family may be, grace fails them not. Even the seeming withdrawal of the felt presence of the Lord from a child of God for a time is an act of grace in that it tends to produce the peaceable fruits of righteousness. One must hunger to feed spiritually; one must be in want in order to feel a need supplied; one must be cast down in order to be lifted up. The Lord's people are given grace to live by, grace to die by, and their rest is glorious. Because of the fullness of the grace of God all that is written against the believing sinner is paid in full, once and for all, so that he lives not only in time, but while eternal ages roll, and is presented holy and blameless before the Father to reign with Christ in his throne of fadeless glory.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

NEWTON, Ala.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—

Herewith find $2 to pay on my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I should have paid before now but neglected doing so. I very much feared that the dear old paper had been discontinued last autumn when it failed to come for several issues. Although I learned to love its contents under the Beebe management who were so firm in the faith, I was glad indeed when you took over the SIGNS for I feel assured that the greatest of all Counselors will direct you to contend earnestly for the fundamental principles set forth by Jesus and upheld by Peter, Paul and all succeeding apostles, ministers and saints in all ages. May he direct you in that way that is perfect, that is pure, that is spotless, and that has been earnestly set forth by true Primitive Baptists since the sun first shot forth its golden beams, and the moon reflected her silver rays in resplendent glory. Since last I wrote for these columns many joys and sorrows have come my way, but I am constrained to believe that all things work together for good

to those who are kept by the power of God ready to be revealed at the last time. As a whole our meetings have been sweet and refreshing to the dear saints of the omnipotent God. At Bethlehem where Elder J. A. Tew is with me we have received six members during this year—two on confession of faith and voucher and four by baptism. Three of whom were baptized by this unworthy one at the last service. It was the writer's privilege to visit Elder J. J. Shields home church at Pleasant Ridge, in Coffee Co., Ala., for the first time in May, and as I stood beside the graves of Elder and sister Shields in the large cemetery many things passed through my mind. For many years he was the Moderator of the Claybank Association which today is the largest Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association in Alabama. As a young man I had heard Elder Shields speak ably and set forth the cardinal principles of election and predestination. In few discourses did he fail to mention Matilda, his good wife, and Scot, his faithful mule, who enabled him to meet his many appointments. He was both humorous and sound in his sermons and commanded the respect of all. Sometimes I think that we are prone to forget too soon these true soldiers of the cross who labored under very adverse conditions in pioneer times in America. May their rest be glorious indeed.

On the 5th Sunday in May the writer with Elder W. T. Johnson of the Chipola Association, and Elder F. A. Collins of our Association, the Western Primitive, composed the Presbytery that constituted the new church at Panama City, Fla. which was named the Salem Primitive Baptist Church. Brother C. H. Byrd was elected clerk and each 5th Sunday was set apart as a regular service time for the church. A beautiful stone building is being erected there and we trust that it will be a haven of rest for the weary for many years to come. May God's richest blessings ever abide upon the membership of this church, and may its principles be ever sound and orthodox as the years roll on.

At our regular communion service at Mt. Gilead on the 3rd Sunday in June we were blessed to have with us as visitors, Elders W. T. Johnson, J. J. Smith and E. D. Gafford. The preaching services were conducted by the following: Saturday, Elders W. T. Johnson and F. A. Collins, Sunday, Elders E. D. Gafford and J. J. Collins. It was a glorious blessing to be present and all seemed to enjoy this quaint service which has been held on the 3rd Sunday in June for almost a century. It has become a homecoming indeed for many in Florida, Georgia and Alabama. For the writer, that day shall long be remembered for his youngest son who is a member of the U. S. Army Air Corps, having volunteered for service last January, returned home to visit relatives. He is stationed on a heavy American bomber. His plane recently crashed but he escaped death almost by a miracle. At a later date my son was assigned to special duty for the first time in three months when his crew sailed without him. As the plane returned the assistant radio operator signaled that the bomber was in trouble and called for an emergency landing, but the mammoth plane

crashed within a mile of the field killing six instantly while a seventh died the next day and the eighth and last member of the crew is in a serious condition. My son wrote me, "Daddy I feel awfully blue with all my crew called to their eternal home but one. They were such fine boys, none drank or used profane language. I feel to know that the Lord is with me all the way. I have faith in him. Don't worry about me Daddy, I have an everlasting friend. He will be with me." No one knows how much those words mean to me. What a glorious consolation to know, dear fathers and mothers everywhere, who have sons in the camp or distant battlefields, that the same God that ruleth wisely free America is shielding, guiding and directing your son perhaps upon the Australian plains, China's lofty mountains, the Alaskan ice fields, Eire's verdant fields or Norway's stormy fiords. Yes indeed, God is everywhere. He has promised to be with us alway even unto the end of the world. He will never forsake one of his children. Oh may we be comforted in the absence of our loved ones by his royal presence. It has been my great desire to visit the Baptists in the North this year, but from present indications I may be unable to do so. I have so greatly enjoyed my visits among the dear saints wherever I have been during the last few years, until I long to see you all again. If on earth no more I have this privilege may we meet again beneath the dazzling throne of God where we may continue to sing praises unto a perfect King of Righteousness forever and ever.

Yours in hope.

J. J. COLLINS

Written by (the late)

ELDER GILBERT BEEBE

(Continued from October issue)

Having thus briefly considered the subject doctrinally, we will now offer some remarks on the personal experience of this birth by the children of God, and point out some of the prominent evidences by which we know that we have experienced it, if indeed we are of that happy number. These evidences are discovered by comparing and contrasting the state, condition, capacities, elements and exercises of those who are, with those of them who are not born again; as also by the peculiar exercises produced by the birth, while under the quickening operation of the Spirit in our passage from death unto life. First. Before we were born again we were dead in trespasses and sins, where we walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, among whom we all had our conversation, in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath even as others. (Eph. ii. 1-3.) In the full possession of all the elements of a carnal, depraved and sinning nature, and totally destitute of any spiritual life or knowledge. The carnal

mind, which was all the mind we had, was enmity against God, our selfish depraved propensities, with every imagination of our hearts, were evil, and only evil continually. Possessing at the same time exalted views of our own imaginary virtues, and of our ability to commend ourselves to the favor of God, and to secure for ourselves an inheritance of glory by our own works. Held under chains of darkness and strong delusion, believing lies, and sporting with our own deceivings. Every ray of divine truth shut out from our mind totally incapable of receiving, appreciating or even desiring a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus; hating that truth, and hating all who love or contend for it. Condemned already, and the wrath of God abiding on us, yet boasting of our goodness, and holding that God was obliged in justice to view things as we viewed them, and to save us on such terms as we proposed. In love with sin, at enmity against holiness, at war with heaven, and in league with hell, calling light darkness, and darkness light; truth error, and error truth; and altogether ignorant of our real condition. In this wretched state we all were by nature, and nothing belonging to or emanating from our earthly birth could by any possibility comprehend or know the condition we were in. By the new birth a new life is implanted in us, and that life is light. The nature of that light is to make manifest the things which by the power of darkness had been concealed from us before. Quickened by Christ, the second Adam, who is a quickening Spirit, we are made to see and feel our sinfulness, and our lost and helpless condition. We are alarmed to find that we are much worse than we had ever before supposed. The law enters, and sin revives, the purity as well as the inflexible severity of the divine law appears, and the same light which reveals this also shows us the enormity of our guilt, the justice of our condemnation and the impossibility of salvation by the law. All our boasted abilities to save ourselves are withered and vain. Lost, helpless and despairing our legal hopes yield up the ghost. The commandment came, sin revived, and I died. The incorruptible seed by the word of God is deposited in our heart, and all that is felt of conviction and despair are but the legitimate consequence. The light of life now begotten in us reveals a holy God, a righteous law, and a poor guilt-stricken, helpless and despairing sinner just sinking into everlasting perdition. All this is, however, the effect of life. All this is a struggling for deliverance. As the birth into liberty draws near the conflict becomes the more intense. "God be merciful to me a sinner," is now uttered in the most terrible earnestness, as quivering under the unsheathed flaming sword, which justice has raised to strike the decisive blow, when lo, the birth reveals the almighty Savior, who has died for our offenses and arisen for our justification. The fiery sword was quenched in his blood. Surely he has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. Lo, now the guilt is all removed, the terror is gone, the darkness vanquished by bursting light

and refulgent glory. God's method of saving sinners now appears, and the sinner is born again. This is the birth, and that which is born is spirit. *It is not flesh.* It is born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Being begotten and born of God, it manifests not only a new life, but a new relationship. The life which is manifested by this birth is not a revision of our Adamic life, but it is the life of the Father, by whom it is begotten; and it is the vitality of that which is born, hence in this new and heavenly birth we are made partakers of the divine nature. Christ who is our life, is formed in us, and his sonship, his heirship, his inheritance of glory and immortality is born in us, and we are one with him, even as he is one with the Father. From this heaven-born spirit flows all the fruits of the Spirit, which testify that we are born of God. As we have shown what are the works of the flesh which characterize the fleshly birth, so the new and heavenly birth is demonstrated by all the fruits of the Spirit of Christ which is given to us. Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, temperance, brotherly kindness, charity, and etc., are some of the living fruits of this heaven-born child, *this new man,* which after God (not after Adam) is created in righteousness and true holiness. Now in the man who is born again, *two natures appear.* The one is born of the flesh, *and is flesh,* full *of lust, and in opposition to holiness,* warring against the Spirit, and constantly performing the works of the flesh, as described by Paul, Galatians v. 19, 20. The other is born of God, and yields the fruits of the Spirit, as described above. A conflict between the old man and the new, between that which is born of the Spirit, a love for holiness and hatred of sin, a love to God and loathing of self, a love for the truth and aversion to error, a love to the saints and desire to be in company and communion with them, an appreciation of the beauty of the ordinances of Christ, baptism and the Lord's Supper, a veneration for the order and laws of the kingdom of Christ, and a desire to walk in them, with a deep sense of our own unworthiness, an ardent desire for the peace of Jerusalem and prosperity of the church of God, with a relish for the doctrine of the gospel, and willingness to suffer reproach for defending it, these are all of them scriptural, and therefore reliable evidences that those who possess them are born of God, and heirs of immortal glory, and joint-heirs with Christ to an inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that cannot fade away. As our earthly nature which is born of the flesh is depraved and sinful, nothing pure and heavenly can proceed from it, and so that life which is born of God is pure and heavenly, no evil can proceed from it. It cannot sin, because it is born of God. The conclusion is inevitable, that all that is unholy and sinful in us is of the flesh which is born of the flesh, and all that is spiritual, pure and heavenly in us is born of God, born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. No man can therefore glory in the flesh, for in our flesh dwelleth no good thing. He that glorieth

must glory in the Lord, in that which God hath done for us. Every spiritual emotion, aspiration or thought, is of that spirit which is born of the Spirit, by which we are qualified to see the kingdom of God.

"Then give all the glory to His holy name,
To Him all the glory belongs;
Be ours the high theme, still to sound forth His fame,
And crown Him in each of our songs."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., October 15, 1868.

GOOD NEWS AND A GOOD SUGGESTION FROM ELDER SPANGLER

(We are confident our readers will be glad to read what follows from brother Spangler, and we hope many will also act upon his suggestion to send the SIGNS to their sons, brothers, relatives and friends who are in the Service. R. L. D.)

On the 4th Saturday and Sunday in August I attended the Yearly Meeting of Willow Springs Church, near Raleigh, N. C., where Elder T. F. Adams is the Pastor.

At the Saturday afternoon service a young man came before the church, asking for membership with them and was received. He was a sailor, in his sailor uniform, a single man twenty-two years of age. On Sunday morning he was baptized. It was very impressive as he was baptized in the uniform of his country, acknowledging the civil powers, and as he was buried in baptism, acknowledging the King of kings, and Lord of lords.

Our friend, Wayland Chandler, the soldier, who had an article in the SIGNS some months back, is now a member of the Old School Baptist and is speaking in the church. I am sure many of our readers will rejoice to hear of this.

No doubt many of our members and friends have sons, or brothers, in the service who are interested in the truth and who would be glad to receive the SIGNS. Why not send it to them? Some are doing this down here.

D. V. SPANGLER

2014 Axton Road, BELLINGHAM, Wash.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—

I have just received the January SIGNS and want to tell you how glad I am to get it. I feared something had arisen that prevented you from carrying on. As that is about all the preaching we get we would be very much lost without the SIGNS. They contain so many comforting and interesting letters. I did, indeed, miss the November and December issues but know you would have sent them if it were possible. Very sorry to hear of Mr. Beebe's eye trouble but feel sure you will be successful in the publication of the paper. May the God of love strengthen you and the writers to keep on as it has been kept for the last 110 years. A little sister in hope of mercy.

(Mrs.) R. G. BROWN

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—

Enclosed you will find $2 for my subscription to the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I do not see how I could do without it as I am still unable to attend meetings and never get to hear any preaching except through the paper, but that is

surely good if I know what good is. I hope I do and hope I have been taught it by the Lord. I believe I have been taught many wonderful things by the Lord and hope and trust he will guide me until the end in the way I should go. Two dear, good sisters in the East each sent me a dollar or I would not have had it, and how thankful I am to them and to the Lord for putting it in their minds to do so. I cannot write much as I am very nervous, but I hope the Lord will be with you to the end and believe he will. Your sister in a precious hope beyond this vale of tears.

LEVICA C. PRATT

PALESTINE, Texas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—

Enclosed you will find my subscription to the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES for next year. I am unable to express to you my deep appreciation of the dear old paper that has weathered the storms of more than century. It seems to me that it is needed now, more than ever, in these trying times to cheer the weary pilgrims as they struggle onward towards the promised land. It is such a boon to the sick, the afflicted, the shut-ins, and all others who are deprived of hearing the preaching of God's word by his chosen servants. Every issue contains many good letters, some experiences of grace of God's dear children, and several good sermons from the pens of able writers from all parts of our beloved land. May God in his mercy guide you and the Associate Editors so that you may continue to comfort God's children, giving them strength and hope as you so ably expound the great riches of God's hidden mysteries. May you be permitted to continue your work for many years, ever striving to keep down confusion, stressing those things which tend to build up the dear old church we love so well is the prayer of your unworthy sister in hope.

VELMA JORDAN FRENCH

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS:—

I would like to say a few words to you all. I feel very unworthy and not able to comfort you, but desire that the Lord would give me grace to teach me to set forth some of the truths of the gospel as it is in Christ Jesus. If our gospel be hid it is hid to them that are lost lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine into them that believe not. When we preach, we preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord and ourselves your servants for Jesus sake. These are some of the plain things that Paul was speaking when he said, "Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech." So there is a light in the gospel that shines unto those that have faith, which is the gift of God, and we must all have this faith that exercises us to believe and see and understand these gospel truths. This is food to the hungry souls. I only thought to ask you to forgive me for letting my time run over so long in sending my subscription for the SIGNS. I feel that I should have sent it long ago. Your brother I hope in much mercy

C. Y. OSTEEN

CHURCH LETTER

Written by sister Rachel Potter.

The Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church to the Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Bowdoinham Church at Bowdoinham, Maine, Sept. 12, 13, 14, 1941.

DEAR BRETHREN:

We are expected at this time to inform you of the welfare of the church which stands firm in its faith. A sure foundation built upon the Rock, Christ Jesus. "For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. We exalt His name above all others, and well we may rejoice that a just God rules and reigns over the world at this time of so much greed, strife and trouble. We have nothing to fear for, "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Our church has lost one member, sister Anna Bell Dunlap, who has passed on to her reward. We shall miss her much but what is our loss is her gain. In memory of our loved sister we quote these lines:

"Faithful through trial, temptation and sorrow,
Faithful though all things of earth she lost hold;
Looking above through the clouds, read the promise,
"I will be with thee," she had been told.
While there are yet lonely hearts needing comfort,
While there are always dear ones to be loved;
While there is sunshine or blue sky above us,
She has passed on to God's kingdom above."

Elder Dodson was present and spoke to the comfort of all. Our membership numbers three. We have met this summer as circumstances allowed at sister Nellie Palmer's, and once at brother Sanford Bartlett's. There is always the same love and fellowship manifested for each other as has been in the past, and we hope to always continue in that love. "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised." Heb. 10:23. May we, "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen."

CHURCH LETTER

Written by Mary Louisa Hellings.

To the sister churches composing the Delaware River Association in session with the Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J., June 3, 4, 1942.

DEAR Y LOVED ONES IN THE BONDS OF FAITH:—

It is our privilege as a church to once again correspond with you by letter and messengers. In these times of conflict we feel thankful to assure you of our hope in the unchanging love of the Heavenly Father, the giver of every blessing bestowed upon us, and who has granted us the pleasure to greet you in the same love and fellowship it has been our former joy over the many years past. We feel especially grateful, too, that during these troubled times we have been spared in strength and number to offer you a welcome in this annual meeting. It is a precious privilege for that reason, and also to feel enriched by your presence. It is our hope you will rejoice with us as we express the goodness of our blessings in the meeting, and have a fellow-feeling for us as we confess our weaknesses.

In the year since we last met, peace and love has abided in our midst. We

have been favored to hear the divine truth proclaimed by our pastor, Elder C. W. Vaughn, as it has been spoken in this church since it was organized over two hundred years ago. When he is called away to the Salem Church at Philadelphia, or to fill other appointments, or absent because of illness our deacons, G. W. Danberry and M. W. Raulston speak comfortably to us. Thus we have rested in Christ's love by the stability of the doctrine they defend. In our weakness we continually need their teachings, not to give us faith, but to help us grow in grace and knowledge of the truth. We need the example of their faithfulness to strengthen us, and their prayers to comfort us. We need to be taught over and over again to rely wholly upon the unseen power of God, and his infinite mercy and amazing grace. At a time such as now we trust all will be made to feel that the darkness that cloudeth our skies is but a darkness that precedeth a glorious dawn in which we may rejoice in the hope of having been steadfast in the faith once delivered to the saints. And to the friends upon whom we so appreciatively depend, we are thankful that they continue to keep in the way of the truth, and feel glad in our belief that they share with us the divine word. It is our fervent prayer that this meeting may be one of good cheer, and we may be edified and inspired, so that as we journey on our way we will have renewed courage to meet the conflicts of a troubled world which surrounds us. Submitted in love. (Since this was written Deacon Danberry has passed away. R.L.D.)

78 BUCKLAND ROAD, Maidstone, Kent, England

Dear Mr. Dodson:—

I cannot recollect whether I acknowledged your kind letter with the return of the two dollars. I, therefore, now do so with thanks. I instructed the publishers (Farncombes) to send you both our magazines each month from January this year in exchange for yours. I think a copy of both of ours also goes to Mr. Beebe.

I also have to thank you for the SIGNS duly to hand. What excellent printing it is! We here have to do with rather poorer paper just now and fewer pages, but hope the time may come when we shall be able to send out the full size magazines again. But it is not the quantity, if the Lord will but bless the little that we are able to publish it will be a mercy.

The state of the world is sad in the extreme, and one wonders often where the scene will end. Sympathy is felt with Daniel 12:8, "O my Lord, what shall the end be of these things?" The answer he got might not please the carnal mind but it will well suit faith, "Go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."

It would be interesting to know how matters are with you in the various churches in USA, and the connections between the different states. I receive several papers, such as the Primitive Baptist, Baptist Monitor, Messenger of Peace, etc.

With kind regards and best wishes to all who truly fear God in your circle.

Yours in the gospel, J. H. GOSDEN

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. NOVEMBER, 1942

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"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Ecclesiastes 9:10.

This quotation was the admonition of the preacher of righteousness. We are commanded by the word of God. Jesus spake to John the Baptist saying, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." Math. 3: 15. John the Baptist found it laid on him to administer the ordinance of baptism to those whom the Holy Ghost gave him evidence of the fruit for repentence, and Jesus realized at the age of twelve years the work his father gave him to do. As he "grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him," "Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it. But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey." It took three days for Joseph and Mary to locate him, "And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." Read Luke 2. This narrative brings to us the virtue of life in which we are made to keep the commandments of God, and live after the spirit. When a sinner is born of that incorruptible seed by the word of God there is a growth in grace, and as the grace of God increases unto him, the ordinances of the church and the fellowship of the saints are more precious, his hunger for them increaseth more and more, the felt manifestation is that he could not live without them; and they are constrained to go home to their friends and tell them how great things the Lord has done, the joys realized in the fellowship of the brethren, they are ready to serve them and feel glad to have the opportunity.

Speaking experimentally, when I was a young man and the brethren and ministers visited our home, it was a pleasure to care for their horses, and when the time came to go to meeting their horses were groomed and made ready for them to mount while they were visiting with father and mother. To do things for the church about the place of meeting was a pleasure and not for filthy lucre. "If

ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." We have passed along life's pilgrimage in church affiliation for forty-seven years, and we can truly say all we have done has been through love for the brethren, and the household of faith. It is grating and hurtful to hear those of our faith speak of doing for the church of God for hire, and are continually pressing their relations where they would receive greater contributions of this world's goods, and more exaltation in the flesh. If we do the work of a servant of God we will be meek, gentle, and forbearing one another in love, preferring another before ourselves, exhorting one another to faithfulnes and good works. We often meditate on the state and condition of the church militant. The minister is the servant of the church, which the Holy Ghost has made him overseer; he is commanded of God, and the Holy Ghost will open to him to feed that flock. We feel every member has a special place in the church, and according to the measure of grace given they will be exercised, and those who are active in church affiliation will encourage others to attend the meetings, and those that are slothful will be visited and encouraged to attend. Often when church members and congregation get slothful we find the members are attending places of entertainment and allowing their children to attend them and omit going to meeting. Is this doing what our hand findeth to do? In doing what we feel our hand findeth to do we are directed by the apostle Paul in the epistles he wrote unto the churches, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." 1st Timothy 4:16. As we read, we find in the experience of Paul he found many things for his hand to do, and he did it with his might. The writer of our text witnessed much in natural things in the house of his father, David, king in Jerusalem. We are minded that one, born of an incorruptible seed by the word, is given to discern between the works of the spirit and the works of the flesh, and to know, if they sow to the flesh, what their harvest will be.

As brethren we should strive to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace whereby we would edify one another in the body of Christ. "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven." Eccl. 3:1. There is much to be said along this line and we will not try to write all that we find connected with it, but we will quote the words of Jesus, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." John 9:4. All we have referred to in this letter was manifested by the work of the spirit in the heart, in manifestation of the grace of God given in the embodiment of flesh. Jesus was God in the flesh for he said, "a body hast thou prepared for me." Heb. 10:5.

We are thankful that God has kept us to pass another year and to write to you, dear kindred in Christ. If it be his will, we hope we may have the continued manifestation of his mercy for another year. This concludes our writing unto you for 1942.

C. W. V.

EDITORIAL

"Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God."

The foregoing Scripture is a portion of what is contained in the thirty-third verse of the tenth chapter of The Acts of the Apostles. Two outstanding characters are vitally associated with it: (1) "Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian," and (2) "Simon, whose surname is Peter." In order to better comprehend the significance of the text, we wish to call in review something of their backgrounds, with all that may be implied in each case. We will first undertake to present the case of Peter, as representing the Jews and that for which they stood. The oracles of God had been committed unto the Jews and for centuries they had typified the true Israel of our God, by worshipping him in types and shadows as the ages rolled along. Their history was rich in tradition and customs, which had become second nature to them. Before Peter's day they had long since come to feel their seclusiveness and their superiority over every other race of people upon the face of the earth. This had been instilled into them so long that they absolutely regarded the Gentile nations as unclean; yea, even as dogs, and would not stoop so low as to have any dealings with them. They had practiced certain customs so long that it was next to impossible for them to be reconciled to anything to the contrary. Peter himself was so steeped in the custom of circumcision that when he had come to Antioch, Paul withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed for his inconsistency in first eating with the Gentiles, and later withdrawing and separating himself from them, fearing them which were of the circumcision. Paul, after having been truly taught of the Lord, was persuaded that "he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Roms. 2:28-29. Therefore, when the Lord came to make use of Peter for the glorifying of his name and the prospering of his cause, he first had to qualify him for the work in hand. This he did by giving Peter a vision and showing him that all the customs and traditions of his fathers were at an end and that a new day had dawned, wherein they that worshipped God would worship him in spirit and in truth. The woman at the well said to Jesus, "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." But Jesus said unto her, "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father," and following that he goes on to say, "But the hour cometh, *and now is,* when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." The vision which God had given him was when he had fallen into a trance "and saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel

descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: Wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air," and we are told that "There came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven." This was repeated three times in order that Peter might become thoroughly indoctrinated with God's blessed truth. And the same God who had wrought this work in Peter had also been working, mysteriously, in Cornelius. While he came of that race which had not been called the people of God, nevertheless the time had now come when they were to be recognized and acknowledged by God as his people. In addition to being a Gentile, Cornelius was a military man, in charge of an hundred soldiers, as the name centurion implies, but at the same time it was said of him that he was "A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway." God also gave him a vision and in this vision he saw an angel of God coming to him, calling him by name, and saying unto him, "Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God." How touching this must have been, to realize that God had taken note of him and had sent his angel to him. He was further told to send to Joppa, and to ask for Simon, whose surname was Peter, and when his men arrived and inquired for Peter, lo! and behold, none other than Peter, himself, answered and said, "Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what is the cause wherefore ye are come?" When they had explained their mission, Peter lodged them, or took them in, and on the morrow they proceeded with Peter and certain brethren from Joppa and returned to Caesarea, where Cornelius, who had called together his kinsmen and near friends, waited for them. The record is that "as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell at his feet, and worshipped." The translators added in italics "him", making it read as though Cornelius worshipped Peter, but we are confident it was God whom Cornelius worshipped, and not Peter. As Peter began to talk with Cornelius, he went in, for the door of the house was already open, God having preceded him, and Peter began by telling those present how God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform. He reminded them that it was "an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation," but then he went on to tell what God had done; how he had showed him that he was not to call any man common or unclean. The law to which he referred had been abolished and put an end to and, therefore, had no further dominion over them, for they had been made free by a revealed knowledge of the truth, and they were then free, indeed. Cornelius, in turn knew how the Lord had dealt with him; how

as he prayed a man stood before him in bright clothing and said, "thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God," and how when he was told to send for Peter he acted immediately and sent for him, and then added, "and thou has well done that thou art come." What, kind reader, do you suppose was uppermost in the minds and hearts of those assembled in the house of Cornelius? Were they at all concerned about the traditions and customs of the Jews, which they had been practicing down through the centuries? The answer is, No, a thousand times, No. But, again, we ask, what were they so desirous of knowing? Suppose we let Cornelius speak for himself and his household: "Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God." They didn't want to hear even *some things* of men, but to hear *all things* that are commanded thee of God. There was to be no restrictions placed upon him so far as the things of God were concerned, but no more and no less, and nothing of the things of men. We wish this might sink deep down into the conscience and soul of every Old School Baptist throughout the length and breadth of our land for, alas! we fear there are too many among us who—parrot like—only repeat what they have heard said by others. We are too prone to follow customs, and while some of them may be good, nevertheless they should not be used to divide good brethren. In some parts of the country it is the custom to ordain Deacons by the laying on of hands, while in other sections this is not practiced; it is the custom in certain localities to practice footwashing as a sacred ordinance, while others view this in a spiritual sense and believe that is the lesson taught by the Savior; most churches follow the custom of licensing those whom they feel have a gift to preach before ordaining them, and this is such a serious matter that we feel every precaution should be used before sending abroad those whose gifts may lie in some other direction, but some of the ablest preaching gifts who have been found among Old School Baptists have been received into the church, baptized and ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, all in the very same day. Paul in writing to the Corinthian brethren said, "Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life." 1st Cor. 6:3. We do not question the judgment of the Church in matters pertaining to the reception of members, then what right have we to question the judgment of two or more churches when they call for the ordination of one to serve them as Pastor. It is true that we are to lay hands on no man suddenly, but when he has been tried and proven to the satisfaction of those whom he is to serve, what right have we to say to them, Nay? Where there is no definite rule laid down in the Scriptures, it seems to us that we should be privileged to accept the judgment of the Church in her sovereign acts. Much could also be said about traditional expressions which often are local in their nature. If we would but follow scriptural rules and use biblical expressions, go where we may,

they should be acceptable to the people of God. We hope our brethren will think on these things and have a "thus saith the Lord" for all they preach and teach.

If Cornelius, as spokesman for his house, could say to the inspired apostle, Peter, "We are all here present to hear all things that are commanded thee of God," why should not faithful spokesmen in our churches today say the same thing to those who come among them preaching and teaching in the name of the Lord. We believe many of our churches have failed to do their duty in this respect. When Peter opened his mouth, he said, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respector of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him." Acts 10:34-38. It is the Word, which is Jesus, and him crucified, that is to be preached, for there is salvation in none other: "for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." We are told that "while Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." This is the kind of preaching that is most effective in the heart, to the pulling down of strongholds, and when it is experienced, all barriers are removed and the Jew can say to the Gentile, "For we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." On one of our earliest trips to speak in a public way, when we arrived at the home of a dear sister where quite a company had gathered, an old brother quoted to us what Cornelius said to Peter and we shall never forget it. We hope we shall always remember it for the place we occupy is too solemn and sacred to be used in repeating what only men have said. We want to speak and hear that which God hath commanded. May the Lord bless those who speak in their goings forth, if it be his will, is our prayer.

R. L. D.

ERRATUM

On page 234 of the October SIGNS, in Elder Ruston's editorial, thirteenth line from the bottom of column one will be found the expression "foolish notion." This was an error. It should have been "foolish nation", in keeping with the Scripture before quoted by him from Deut. 32: 21. We very much regret that such an error should have occurred.

OBITUARIES

WILFORD R. LAWSHE, who was for over fifty years a resident of Trenton, N. J., passed away at the Mercer Hospital in that city June 28th, 1942. Mr. Lawshe was born Feb. 23, 1855, making his earthly pilgrimage 87 years, 4 months and 5 days. He was born in Hunterdon County, N. J., and settled in Trenton when he was about thirty years of age. Ten years later he married Miss Margaretta Staton of Snow Hill, Md. Mrs. Lawshe predeceased him by about twenty-one years. He is survived by one brother, David Lawshe, Trenton, N. J., one sister, Mrs. Elizabeth Lealand, Hamilton Square, N. J., other relatives and many friends.

While Mr. Lawshe was not a member of the visible church, he was unquestionably a strong believer in the Lord Jesus Christ and rejoiced in the things pertaining to the kingdom of our God. To show something of his feelings we quote from a letter written by his own pen about two weeks before he died, as follows: "I feel God has been very merciful to me, that he has given a hope that sticks by me, although I have been so useless and of no benefit to him. I sometimes wonder if I am kept living to gain wisdom to see how vain and useless my life has been. Paul's words, "sinners; of whom I am chief" hits me. Having been requested by him several years before his death to conduct his funeral service, the undersigned fulfilled his promise by going to Trenton and conducting the service in the Poulson & Van Hise Funeral Home, using as a foundation for his remarks the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth verses of the first chapter of 1st Timothy, which read as follows: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen." Interment took place in Evergreen Cemetery at Berlin, Md. the following day. In his last letter he made reference to the Association which had just been held at Hopewell, N. J., and particularly appreciated the visit of Elder George and sister Ruston at that time. He suffered severely, but it is all over now and he has gone to his eternal home of rest, forever to be with his Lord.

R. L. D.

MRS. ELEANOR J. RITTENHOUSE, our sister in Christian bonds, departed this lower life July 20, 1942 at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Oliver R. Higman, 825 Vandever Ave., Wilmington, Delaware aged 88 years, 2 months, 1 day. She was a daughter of John and Emma Wheeler Hooton and was born in New York and reared under the influence of Methodist teaching. At the age of 18 she went to live with her uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. George B. Hooton, Brooklyn, N. Y. Thus, in the providence of God, she was brought in touch with Old School Baptists. Here, upon her heart and conscience being awakened by the Holy Spirit, she found the doctrine and the experimental teaching in which her soul rejoiced, and where her seeking heart found abiding rest under the shadow of the Almighty, and where she dwelt in the finished work of her blessed Redeemer until the time when she was called away to the fullness of that peace in the presence of her Lord on high. She was received by relation of experience into the Ebenezer Church of New York City and was baptized September 3, 1876 by the late Elder William L. Benedict. She was a faithful devotee of the cause of Jesus Christ all the 66 years of her church membership. She was married June 10, 1889 to our late brother, Arthur W. Rittenhouse, son of the late Elder Ephraim Rittenhouse. Her husband died Dec. 18, 1903. To them were born four children, one son dying in infancy. The one daughter, Mrs. Alice Higman, at whose home she died, is the only surviving child. There are living two granddaughters and one great-grandchild. Her two sons, Frank and Ralph, are deceased. For the past twenty years sister Rittenhouse made her home with her daughter, Alice, in Wilmington, but seven of those years she spent in the home of Mr. Wilford R. Lawshe, Trenton, N. J. who recently passed away. Funeral services for sister Rittenhouse were held in Wilmington, Del. Interment by the side of her husband at Sparkill, N. Y. Our monthly gatherings at the Welsh Tract Church will miss our beloved sister because she regularly attended there even though her hardness of hearing prevented her

hearing much that was said. She left us a good example of faithfulness.

H. H. LEFFERTS

DAVID H. STOUT, our beloved brother in Christian bonds, departed this earthly life in the embrace of the faith of God's elect, August 5, 1941, from his home in Germantown, Phila., Pa. He was born August 22, 1854 near Huntingdon Valley, Montgomery Co., Pa., the son of Henry and Mary Ann Stout. He married Miss Anna Rebecca Knight of Feasterville, Bucks Co., Pa. July 10, 1879. She died in Sept., 1934. They had one daughter, Anna Maud, who died in Seattle, Wash. in March, 1934. He was baptized in the Old School Baptist faith by the late Elder William J. Purington, and was a consistent and faithful member of the Southampton Baptist Church from April 11, 1868 until his death. For many years, he was a member of the board of trustees of the Southampton Baptist Church and served his brethren humbly and devotedly. In all the more than 73 years membership in the church, he sat under the ministry of but three pastors: Elders William J. Purington, Silas H. Durand and the present pastor, Elder H. C. Ker. Brother Stout was always in his place in the meetings unless hindered by circumstances beyond his control. He loved the doctrine of God's unlimited sovereignty and of salvation by God's free grace to the excluding of all human merit as a basis of the sinner's acceptance with God. At the time of my ordination in June 1903, he spoke to me most encouragingly and feelingly, bidding me godspeed in my ministry; and frequently thereafter whenever he would greet me, he would encourage me to steadfastness in the doctrine and in the experience and fellowship of the saints of God. We all miss him sorely but believe he is with the Lord which is "far better". His life was spent in educational work, beginning as the teacher of a small country school and ending at age 71 as the head of one of the largest schools in Philadelphia. Funeral services were held from his late home in Germantown conducted by the writer of this notice in the absence of his pastor Elder Ker. Interment in the graveyard adjacent to Southampton meeting-house. He was a rare gift to the church from the Lord, taking part in the conference meetings of the church in former years, and speaking to the comfort and edification of true believers, with good spiritual discernment. The Lord has taken but his own. We bow to the Divine will.

H. H. LEFFERTS

MISS IDA SEARCH of Spencerville, Montgomery Co., Maryland, was born July 28, 1852 and died June 25, 1942, making her stay on earth 90 years, less 33 days. She was a daughter of Griffith M. and Maria Fetter Search. She united with the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in Baltimore, Aug. 26, 1868, and was baptized by Elder William J. Purington in her 16th year—thus consecrating 74 years of her life to the service of the Lord. Although a member in Baltimore she seldom had the opportunity to meet with the church, but always kept in close touch by writing a letter four times each year which was read at our quarterly conference meeting. Sister Ida lived all her life in Montgomery County and was a regular attendant at Columbia Church. She loved the gospel preached there and often spoke of the kindness of members and neighbors in providing her a way to get to meeting. After she became too feeble to get out she was visited by Elder Seekford, pastor of Columbia Church, also Elder A. J. Garland, former pastor. She wrote me of her joy in being thus remembered by these ministers. Living most of her life alone, she was most appreciative of the many favors rendered her by neighbors and by her nephews and nieces, children of sister Cornelia S. Parsley. During her last days she was ministered to most tenderly by her niece, Mrs. Isabella P. Whitfield of Gaithersburg, Md. Funeral services were held at Columbia Church, conducted by her cousin, Elder H. H. Lefferts of Leesburg, Va., assisted by Elder D. L. Topping of Baltimore and Elder B. H. Seekford of Washington, D. C. Burial was in a cemetery near Spencerville.

It was my privilege to have known that dear woman for thirty years, and I consider her a genuine Old School Baptist. It is sad to feel that we shall see her no more on earth, but we know it is better for her to depart and be with the Lord. May the life she lived inspire each of us to lay aside all malice, all guile and evil speakings, and as new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby.

A. S. ROWE

MRS. MARY A. DREW, a life long resident of Warwick, N. Y., passed away June 1, 1942 from the infirmities of age at the home of Mr. George Baird where she resided for some months. Sister Drew was born in Warwick, Feb. 4, 1852, making her stay here 90 years and 5 months. She was the only daughter of deacon John E. Conklin and Sarah Minturn. She married Albert H. Drew whose death occurred in 1917. Surviving are two children, Fred C. Drew, Warwick, N. Y., and Sarah M. wife of Albert Sterling, Brooklyn, N. Y. Two grandchildren, Albert H. Drew, New York, N. Y., and Robert D. Sterling, Brooklyn, N. Y. Sister Drew was baptized Oct. 8, 1905 and in her early days entertained many from sister associations, also visited many, especially in Virginia. She seldom attended her meetings of late years as she suffered a great deal from head noises but was active almost to the last. Her funeral was held from the Warwick meeting-house and conducted by an old friend of the family, Mr. Charles V. Sanford. She was the oldest member of the Warwick Church. Written by request.

MINNIE E. HYATT

MEMORIAL

In remembrance of, and respect for our late Elder J. R. Hardy, Pastor of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas.

Whereas, it has pleased God to take from us, and from this world of sin and sorrow, our late Elder J. R. Hardy and

Whereas, his going has left his brethren and sisters with sad hearts, yet we believe it is right, and that our loss is his gain, knowing that God is too wise to make a mistake and too good to do wrong and

Whereas, he was a great man of God and stood firmly for the fundmental principles of doctrine, our committee feels at a loss to tell how much we miss him. We feel that his place cannot be filled for he did as Jesus said to Peter, "Feed my sheep." How often have we feasted on the wonderful truths brought us from time to time, therefore, be it

Rosolved, that we sorrow because he shall be with us no more, but not as those without hope, nor would we ask that he be returned to us because we believe that he is not dead but sleeping, and is with our loved ones who have gone on, and there all is peace in that place that Christ has prepared for them where we, too, shall some day be. As David said, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." We are sure if brother Hardy could speak, he would say, "Weep not for me," but look ye to God and be reconciled to his great will and all-wise counsel.

To sister Hardy and family we would say, do not grieve, but we know that is impossible, therefore, we say look to God as he is the only one to give relief at a time such as this. We know he fought a good fight and finished his course, and we say, thank God for giving him to us as long as he did.

Done by order of Saints Rest Church, Dallas, Texas, while in conference April 4, 1942, and approved by the same May 3, 1942.

W. L. CLARK, Church Clerk.

W. N. GREEN, Moderator pro tem.

A resolution was passed some time ago at one of our meetings to have written and printed in the "SIGNS" a memorial to Sister Attie Curtis, who died Feb. 26, 1938, and whose loss the Bowdoinham and Whitefield churches feel keenly, especially as our members grow fewer. Sister Attie was our mainstay and guide through many years, always zealous for the good of the church and for the faith once delivered unto the saints. She loved to visit among the brethren while she was able, writing to them of the dealings of the Lord and of her precious hope when not able to see and talk with them. She lived with her Savior and her walk was that of his followers. It seemed as if she lived in spirit and walked in spirit, that she had "crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." She feasted upon the holy Scriptures and she sang with joy the hymns that comforted and afforded her company all through her life. In our meetings, after the death of Elder Beal, sister Attie was always ready to read from the Bible, offer prayer and talk of God's glorious kingdom. Whenever we had preaching, she could hardly wait for the end of the sermon to stand and testify of her joy in hearing the truth proclaimed; of her hope of salvation through grace "and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; Not of works, lest any man should boast"; of her love of the brethren, and of her experience. She had a marvelous memory not only for the hymns which she sang so beautifully, but also for the

Scripture which she quoted at length. We can still hear her as she stood there in the front row: "I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver three from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence." "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day." "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us."

Her whole life showed forth those fruits of the Spirit—"love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance", and we loved her for those fruits. We believe she was one of those spoken of in Malachi 3: 16, 17, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, said the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."

THE MAINE ASSOCIATION,
SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure, we will mail them another copy free of charge.

MARY PARKER'S BOOK

Bro. Dodson:

I would like to know where I could get a copy of the Book, Reminiscences and Letters of MARY PARKER, by Bessie Durand. Please ask the readers of the SIGNS to help me, and oblige.

Miss Eunice Lindsey,
Sciotoville Station,
R 2 Portsmouth, Ohio

(Anyone having a copy of the book they are willing to part with, please communicate with the above. R. L. D.)

MINUTES WANTED

We are anxious to obtain a copy of the latest minutes of the various Associations throughout the country who are in fellowship with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We will be glad if the Moderators and Clerks, in particular, would take note of this and send us a copy of their 1942 Minutes as soon as they hold their meetings and have their minutes printed. R. L. D.

MEETINGS

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala.

ELDER W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.

ELDER H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.

ELDER H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.

ELDER O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th Street, Mayfield, Ky. Those interested will be welcome.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sundays in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y. at 10:30 a.m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed. R. LESTER DODSON.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
IN
NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.
Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.
To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A. M.
ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A. M. 2 P. M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sundays in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P. M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sundays each month at 11:00 A. M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Locust Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Eligin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas. Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Texas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

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CORRESPONDENCE

Written by Elder John Neal, Ewing, Ill.

Mr. E. G. Webb, Dear Cousin:

As I am trying to get caught up with my writing I must answer your letter. You seem to be a little particular this time, you want a *good* letter. It would be something nice if I could write you a good letter. I think I know what you mean by the term good letter. You mean something on Bible truths and experimental knowledge. Please answer this question, how can you ask me to write a good letter if I am not good myself? How can I be good when I know myself to be a poor sinner not worthy to be called good? Jesus said to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." When Nicodemus heard this he was like many others who have heard of this wonderful and mysterious birth. Nicodemus saith unto him, "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?" Jesus answered, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Here we have two important truths we had better mark down and not get confused about them later. One is, a man must be born again to see the kingdom of God; the other is, he must be born of water and the Spirit before he can enter into it. When Christ had spoken these words he then gave two more truths we must consider. The first is, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh;" the second is, "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Then he said, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." Christ here declares that a man must be born again before he can enter into the kingdom of God. Then he said, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Nicodemus could not understand these sayings: he said, "How can these things be?" "Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our wit-

ness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Now we have observed that most false doctrines and false theories are contradictory in themselves for they admit some Bible truths then come back and deny them. It is sweet and comforting to know, or believe, that we have been born again; born of the Spirit; born not of corruptible seed; but of an incorruptible by the word of God that liveth and abideth forever. Some will say that in regeneration, the second birth, it is only the spirit of man that is born of the Spirit of God, and in this birth the flesh is not born but it will be born in the resurrection day. I do not understand that Jesus was speaking of heaven above where God and the angels dwell when he said, you must be born again before you can enter into it, but he was speaking of his spiritual kingdom on earth, that new covenant which he said he would make with the house of Israel; the one in which he puts his laws into their hearts and writes them in their minds; the covenant in which they worship him in Spirit and in truth because they are born of the Spirit of God. When Jesus said, ye must be born again, he did not say your spirit must be born again, but he was speaking of the man who is given a spirit, or breath of life. God said to Adam after he had given him this spirit, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." It pleased the Creator of this earthly man, to whom this spirit of life was given, to make or create him "subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." Yes, we understand man was created good and innocent, and was considered so by his Creator. He was good because he had committed no sin, he had transgressed no law, but the all wise Creator, when he made man, saw that it was not good for him to be alone, and he caused him to sleep, and took from him a rib and made a helpmeet for him. And when he made her of the rib and brought her to Adam, he (Adam) said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman." She was from part of the man who had been given a law, or command, saying, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The woman that God made from the rib which he had taken from Adam, being bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, and they twain were one flesh, for this reason she was under the law, the commands of God, the same as Adam was. When it came time for the serpent to use his subtility he went to the woman, the weaker vessel, and said to her, "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said

unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons." When they heard the voice of God in the garden they hid themselves and Adam said to the Lord, I heard thy voice and I was afraid because I was naked. God said, "Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle and above every beast of the field." "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Oh, how wonderful and mysterious are the works of God. Why should I, a poor weak worm of earth, attempt to write of them? I hope it is according to his purpose that I do so, and I hope it is also according to his purpose that I set forth the truth. We have found by what means man, whom God made, has been corrupted. It is because he has yielded to vain influence and transgressed God's holy law. Now let us think of God, not as we view man, for we hear his saying, Isaiah 55: 8, 9, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." If we could only view God in this light, that he is not like man, that he is under no law, that he is just and holy, that he can do no wrong; yet he has a right to do as it pleases him, and when it pleased God to make man in his own image, to make him subject to vain influence, and then in his (God's) providence allow him to be seduced, and brought, with all his posterity, into iniquity, sin and death. The Devil being a liar and the father of it, through his subtility and evil influence, brought the children of men into a sinful life with him, and it is said of them, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." God admitted that the serpent had a seed when he said to him, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." If the seed of Satan embraced all the race of man where did the woman's seed come from? There is but one human race

called man, and that race, or seed, all came from their first parents, Adam and Eve. God said he would put enmity between the serpent and the woman and their seeds when as yet there had been no children born. When God speaks he does not speak as man speaks for man only knows the past and the present, but God knows the future as well as the past and the present so when he was speaking of the woman's seed, he was speaking of the future, for her seed (children) was yet to be born, and when he was speaking of the woman herself, he was not speaking of Eve only, who then was the only woman in the world, but he was speaking of all the women that should ever live in the world, he was speaking of the female sex that should bear seed (children) and replenish the earth, and this seed they shall bear is a corrupt seed, born in sin, born of the flesh and the lusts thereof, but in childbearing the woman bears not only female children but male children also. So when God put enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman her seed embraced man as well as woman, and there was a certain part of this sinful, fallen race, or seed, chosen in Christ before the world was, and this number was special without others, and was foreknown of God, and predestinated by him to be conformed to the image of his Son, and it is his people that was foreknown by him, that is born of the flesh for him (not by him) for they are the promised and appointed seed to him. They are a chosen seed to be born again, to be born of water, (to be cleansed) born of the Spirit (to give life). Of them we hear the apostle saying, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." So then the first birth of God's people is of the flesh, and in this birth it is only the nature of the flesh that is brought forth and manifested, and this is what Jesus taught when he said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." In the same manner he said, "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." In this birth when God's people are born again they are born of God's Spirit, and that which is brought forth and manifested in them is Spirit. It is of the Spirit and not of the flesh.

(To be continued.)

FRANKFORT, Ky.

Luke 15: 11 to 32

This is a parable and Jesus takes things that we are familiar with to represent a hidden meaning. This is the third parable in the 15th chapter and we notice the first one, first, just to get a foundation for the one we have in question. Verse one, "Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him." Verse two, "And the Pharisees and scribes murmured" and Jesus spoke this parable unto them saying, "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the

ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?" Here is a thought which the poet wrote about the ninety and nine that safely lay in the harbor of the fold, but Jesus says left in the wilderness. Here we are taught that Jesus watches over his flock, and when one strays away he goes after it himself and brings it home. Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, she lost one and searches and sweeps till she find it, the silver belonged to the woman and she searched till she found it herself, and when she told her friends there was reason for rejoicing. Now we glean from the first two parables an answer to the third (even though the scribes and the Pharisees murmur), and that is, the Lord is ruler over all his works, that he keeps watch over his elect in every place and circumstance, and when his sheep go astray he does not send his servant after them but goes himself, punishes them in different ways, brings them to his feet humbled and clothed in their right mind. As he has said to the scribes and hypocrites this parable is not for you to understand; your eyes cannot see, you have not been given understanding, you have never tasted that the Lord is gracious, he works in a way that the world by wisdom knows not God. Now to the third one. "And he said, A certain man had two sons." He does not name the man nor the two sons, it is not necessary. Our mind goes back to Abraham, he had two sons, the elder born of a bond woman, the other or younger by promise. Isaac had two sons, twins, Jacob and Esau, the ones that are spoken of that have done neither good nor evil. It was said unto her that Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated that God's purpose shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. Then Jacob had two sons by his beloved Rachel, Joseph and Benjamin. There is a similarity in all this that might have a bearing to the certain man that had two sons in our text. Now the older son which represents to me the dispensation, the law, and what we are by nature, sinners of the race of Adam, striving for an existence, believing that gain is godliness, giving an eye for an eye, and tooth for a tooth, satisfied with his earthly possessions, thinking he could keep the law, as he later remarks "Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment." The younger son was born and raised under the same environment, wished he might get rid of the servitude of the law, thinking if he had his worldly possessions he would get away from it all, so he asks his father to "give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living." Here is a sample of all of the Lord's people. This younger son: there is an unrest within him, he desires to get far away to some strange country, and now that he has all his worldly goods in his possession he feels capable of handling his own business. Notice he did not ask for a part, he wanted it all, he is anxious to get away and feels now he will never come back. The Lord is leading him by his spirit, as Jesus was led of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil, as Israel was led out of darkness on their trip to Canaan. Little does he

know of the pitfalls the devil has laid for him in the far country. There does not seem to be any objection by the father or the elder son as he takes his departure. He finally lands in what Bunyan calls "vanity fair" and according to the elder son wastes his substance in riotous living with the harlots. How apt is one in this condition to try and show off and make the people think we are smart. Like Peter when he found out they thought he was a follower of Jesus, he cursed and swore. When his money was gone the harlots and all his other fair-weather friends forsook him and cast him out. After all was gone and his friends also he began to be in want. He then joined himself to a citizen of that country who sent him out to feed swine. Did you ever feed swine? No doubt you have and you also wished that you might fill yourself with the husks that the swine ate, but there is no nourishment for the sheep in swine food. They feed on chaff and husks. Their food is *do* and *works*.

I have never transgressed thy law at any time, I thank God I am not as other men are. The elder could say to the father I am not like him, I am jealous of him, I will not even call him brother. But back to the subject. There is no food for him (the younger) and he perishes with hunger. O my father I have sinned, I am an unworthy wretch, no more worthy to be called thy son, he comes to himself, a light has shined about him above the brightness of the sun, his days of feeding swine are over, he has become dead to the law, and made alive to God, he has felt the quickening power, his eyes have been opened, he sees the order of his father's house and repents in dust and ashes, I will go back to him. Plenteous grace with Thee is found says the poet. In my father's house is plenty and to spare says the younger son, and he says, as many of us have said, Lord deliver me and I will go, or as Paul, what wilt Thou have me to do. So this younger son, like Naomi of old left her country full, her husband and two sons down in the land of Moab, and the Lord has brought me back empty, and afterwards found there was an inheritance laid up for her in her old country. Call me not Naomi, call me Mara for the Almighty hath dealt bitterly with me. The younger son comes to his father saying, I have sinned and I am no more worthy to be called thy son. Instead of being turned away as a worthless scamp, one that has wasted his substance with the harlots, fed swine, worn out his shoes, and come home dirty and in rags; his father sees him coming afar off, and runs to meet him, falls on his neck and kisses him. Come home, yes, the Lord has dealt bitterly with you, but he has brought you back to me. Like the brethren of Joseph when the cup was hid in Benjamin's sack, it was the means of bringing him back to Joseph. Much worry was caused by finding the cup in his sack. When Joseph made known to them I am your brother that you sold in Egypt, he said do not feel hard about it although you through jealousy did it for evil, God ordained it for good. So the father said to his servants, put shoes on his feet, bring the best robe and put it on him, put a ring on his hand, and hasten and kill the fatted calf, and let us be

merry for this my son was dead and is now alive. The elder son who would represent the ones that Jesus is giving this parable to, scribes and Pharisees, or call it the old order of things, is very righteous in his own eyes. All these years have I served and never transgressed thy commandments when this, thy son, has wasted thy living with harlots. Notice he did not call him brother, but this, thy son. I will not go in, his father entreated him to come in and make merry, but there is no rejoicing among the scribes and Pharisees when one has been brought back into the fold. It is unto them foolishness and a stumbling block but Jesus and his followers rejoice. How mysterious are the ways of God to the unregenerated, how foolish and unjust. It was so with me when the time came and I wanted to unite with the church. I wanted to join the biggest and finest, the largest building, the finest pews, the preacher with the longest coat and the smoothest tongue, and I wanted them all to take notice when I came in and make room for me. Here I come, bend the knee, etc. I expected to be a great honor to them, I had never once transgressed the laws, paid tithes of all my possessions, looked with disdain on the younger that was brought in, and I refused to go in and make merry. O what a difference when I hope the Lord found me in the valley of sin. Not only was I bad but less than the least of all saints. Not worthy to be among the brethren, Lord save or I perish.

The first two parables clearly show that the government of all things is of God, that his servants are not commanded to bring in lost ones, but to comfort those the Lord brings in. The sheep that was lost belonged to the man, and he was the only one that could rightly redeem. He did not send some one else after them but went himself. Of course he rejoiced when he found his sheep, and his true friends rejoiced with him. Likewise the woman that lost the piece of money. It was hers before she lost it and she rejoiced as also did her friends.

"The Pharisees and scribes murmured." They could not understand. The world by wisdom knows not God so he speaks to them in parables. The father did not send a servant to meet his younger son. He went himself, and clothed him, and feasted him, put the best robe on him and shoes on his feet. Now we find him clothed and in his right mind. Here is the weary traveller spending what was his own and no better way could be found than with harlots who can soon clean one out of all his worldly goods. Not until we spend all our natural religion, all our good works, all our Pharisaical thoughts are we made willing to enter in with the younger son and make merry with the elect of God.

GEORGE L. WEAVER

WEBBVILLE, KY.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,

DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:

This is to acknowledge receipt of the SIGNS which you sent me some time ago. I was glad to get them. I have been a reader of the SIGNS for some years although I have not been a subscriber. Allow me to say it is the only really sound publication of its kind that it has yet

been my privilege to see. I like the SIGNS very much and would like to get it regularly. I have read many of your editorials and other articles and I heartily endorse every one of them. I am sending herewith an article by Elder George L. Weaver of Frankfort, Ky. with an earnest request that you publish it as I think it is well worthy of space in the SIGNS. I have been acquainted with Elder Weaver a few years and have been blessed with the privilege of trying to preach in his churches several times and he is really an Old Baptist. Brother, there is nothing I can say for myself in this letter. I am just an "old hardshell" I hope, and they are much hated in this section. There are just a few of us in this immediate neighborhood who have been made willing to bear the Arminian ridicule. So far as I know all the churches in Pocatalico Association believe in the absoluteness of God, in all of his attributes, and all that he does is absolute. He is the sovereign ruler of heaven and earth, the creator and upholder of all things, working all things after the counsel of his own will, and causing all things to work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. I have probably written more than you will care to read so must close. A brother in hope.

J. S. HUNNICUTT

HAMMOND, W. Va.

T. S. CHESTER, DEAR BROTHER:

I have long waited to hear from you and my letters I wrote you some time ago in answer to your letter. I fear that you did not get them or I wrote something that did not suit you. Please let me know because I have had some sweet moments at your home and out there among the Baptists. Is Elder Henson still living? I liked being in his company. I am now past seventy-three years old but the same sinner, yet I hope a live and saved sinner. I hope I have been killed to sin so that I hate it instead of loving it for I know that I am a wretched man. I want to be delivered from the body of this death. Dear brother Chester, the eternal God is our Creator. I am that I am because he is the first and the last, the beginning and the end, who created all things by Jesus Christ for himself and his glory, and by him all things consist. He created the waster to destroy and the wicked for the day of evil, and this surely is an evil day when Gog and Magog gather in battle array and compass the camp of the saints about and come against the Holy City. Then God will send the fire down from heaven and consume them. He once sent the rain down for forty days and forty nights and destroyed them from off the face of the earth, but this time it will be fire for he hath put it in their hearts to agree and give their power into the beast for it is nation against nation now at war and they are agreed, but they will when they are gathered together, and when they are fully deceived and gathered by the old, deceitful, crooked serpent, the Devil. It takes time to gather all nations. Yes, Gog and Magog, the ungodly world, who are claiming that they were right when they started out with their missionary preachers to christianize the heathens and made such a

complete failure. Like the building of Babel hath always done, getting their language confounded until they left off building the tower and instead of christianizing the heathens they have only proselyted them and made them two fold more the children of hell than themselves. Now they are at war with each other, destroying each other. See what the works of man will do. Their house being built upon the sand goes down when the wind and rain comes. They are like the foxes in the deserts. They never were brought out of the old desert, wilderness land. When those foxes get their game back in the desert they go with the fleece. They bring not Israel up by the gaps, O no, but climb up some other way and are thieves and robbers. The gap is an open way. John came up by the gap, the door, when he came out of the wilderness, crying, "behold the lamb of God." Yes, this was that Lamb that stood as a Lamb slain before the foundation of the world for sin when sin had not yet entered into the world. Notice, it was man who sinned, it was man who violated the law. Man was made upright but he was made subject to vanity, and after vanity he went until he was made subject to hope, and so he clings to that hope which enters within the veil through the flesh of Jesus Christ. Christ came in the flesh, he came by flesh, blood and water. These three are one that bears record in the earth. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, these three bear record in heaven and these three are one. So out of the flesh, the body of Christ, when pierced came blood and water. Under the law the children of Israel were commanded to take two birds, kill one and dip the live bird into the blood of the dead one; blood over running water. Lev. 14:4, 5, 6. There was the live bird, the water and the blood, all three. It was running water, the water and the blood that flowed from the pierced side of Jesus. It flowed, it was living water. His body died but his divinity could not die. He was verily God and verily man because he was the son of man as well as the son of God. When Noah was born they said of him, the same shall comfort us. Noah was found righteous in his generation and his generation was his family with him included. His family had a right to enter the ark because he provided for his own. He was not an infidel. Christ provided for his household of faith and they have a right in him by choice and by redemption, and by being called "with an holy calling, not according to our own works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." We were elected before we were born naturally so that the election might stand. Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated and that before either of them had done any good or evil. It was said that the elder shall serve the younger. The dove in the ark was sent out but she found no rest for the soles of her feet, so the weary dove returned, and Noah reached out and took her in. Come my dove, yes come my bride and I will give you rest. I am the husband I will bear your sin away. Come with the olive branch, with the experience of grace and I will receive you. The prodigal son returned so re-

turn you who are heavy laden and I will give you rest.

A few years ago I heard a man over the radio who was dwelling on this subject of the dove, and he said it was the Spirit of God sent to the sinner's heart. The Spirit wanted admittance, wanted the sinner to open the door of his heart, but the sinner would not do it until the Spirit was grieved and departed because it found no resting place in the heart of the sinner. The rain does not return to heaven because it finds no room. It finds plenty of room in the earth; it waters the earth to give bread to the eater and seed to the sower; it returned not again, but the dove found her resting place in the ark and no other place, so we find rest in Christ and no other place. It is not in the law, the law is the shadow and our schoolmaster unto Christ. The dove is a harmless bird and we, in the inner man, are harmless, but our old nature is not, it is vile and full of sin, corrupt from the crown of our head to the soles of our feet. Then to think that sinful and corrupt man thinks he can please God. Cain could not by his offering because he was of that wicked one, and his offering was not good for he offered the fruit of the ground, but Abel was righteous, his offering was in righteousness, the righteousness of Jesus Christ being imputed unto him and his sins imputed unto Christ. What contrast there was between them. Abel's sacrifice was far more excellent, Cain's work was evil. Man can build but God throws down what he builds. Tell that old fox I cure today and tomorrow and the third day I shall be perfected. Solomon speaks of the little foxes spoiling our vine for our vine hath tender grapes. Christ is the vine and we are the branches. Samson caught the foxes and tied their tails, tail to tail, and how they ran into the Philistines' corn and burnt it up, both the standing corn and the shocks. These cunning foxes, tie them up by their tails because the false teachers that teach lies they are the tail while the ancient and the honorable are the head. Yes, Satan being ancient and honorable with Eve deceived her and he is the head of lies so his ministers being the tail. They are false teachers teaching lies. Tie them by their tails and what a howling there is when each cannot go his way because their tails are tied together, and they consume the Philistines' corn because they are uncircumcised in heart and their corn cannot stand the fire. No, their food will perish in the fire for every man's work shall be tried by fire. How can man stand the fire brand? They cannot agree with their works, they did not build out of stone when they started to build the tower of Babel to reach heaven. It was brick and slime. Jesus is the door and they who entered into the ark went in by the door and the door was then shut by the Lord God. Notice God's spirit shall not always strive with man, no, it is not always raining forty days and nights. When God sends his Spirit it does its work. He finished his work and rested on the seventh day and today is the day of salvation. Today is the accepted time, not yesterday, while under the law and in your sins, but today when you hear my voice. It is *my* sheep who hear *my* voice and they that hear shall live. Today is the day of salvation. Sim-

eon in the temple saw his salvation when he saw the babe Christ, and he only saw one salvation, one babe there, neither is there salvation in any other, no other name given under heaven whereby we must be saved. My sheep shall hear my voice, and they that hear shall live and they follow me. Those creeping things, the fowls of the air, the beasts of the field and forest came and entered into the ark, yes, everything that God had commanded. They entered in by the door and the Lord shut them in. No danger of being destroyed by the flood. We are enclosed in Jesus Christ and cannot perish. It is sealed and sure "having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his." They will reign with him in glory. Darkness covered the face of the deep, the deep hidden mysteries which were hid in God from the beginning of the world, and yet hidden from the wise and prudent but revealed unto babes made manifest in the church by Paul who was the preacher sent to the Gentiles. Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy water-spouts. O look at Jesus calling unto God, deep calling unto deep because of the spirit beneath. Darkness covered the people and a veil was over all people but his elect. They see Jesus, yes, they see Jesus while the false teachers see nothing and run in vain. We preach Jesus and not self. Please answer. Fare you well.

JAMES W. LINN

NEOGA, Ill.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,
DEAR SIR AND BROTHER:

I had some correspondence with you some time ago and I have thought at different times I would write you again, but there always seems to be a reasonable excuse that I have not gotten to it. I find that in performing my daily tasks in which I try to provide for a large family, and two churches which I visit on the second and third Sundays in each month, with some extra duties thrown in, about all of my time is used up before I realize it. A few years ago when I was attending the little church in Chicago I met a dear brother, W. C. Cox. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace and believed the doctrine of the Old School Baptists. His companion has mailed me a partly written obituary and asked me to finish it and mail to the SIGNS. I have tried to do so as well as I am able and am enclosing it for publication. It seems we are facing some of the perilous times which we read of in God's word. We have one boy in service and three more who may go before long. We know God watches over us all wherever we are, and it is our prayer that if it can be his will he will send them safely home to us. I feel that this conflict will last until the purpose of God is fulfilled and when that is done he will stop it. He ruleth the council of kings and turneth it in whatsoever way it pleaseth him. I hope to be able to help some on the paper in the near future. Wishing you success and may God bless and guide you is the prayer of your brother,

I hope.

ELDER HAROLD T. JAYNES

(See obituary in this issue)

CANADA, KY.

DEAR EDITORS:

I wish to write concerning the following passage of scripture as I hope the Lord has given me light. Rom. 9:13. "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." We will now go back to Gen. 21:10 "Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac." Abraham had two sons, the one by the bondwoman, Hagar, the other by the freewoman, Sarah. The son that was born of the bondwoman, Hagar, was conceived and born by the will of flesh, but Isaac who was born of the freewoman, Sarah, by promise. Rom. 9:9. "For this is the word of promise, at this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son." In the above (spiritually speaking) we have Jacob and Esau. Now we continue with Jacob and Esau who were twin brothers (literally speaking) of Isaac and Rebecca. Gen. 25:21. "And Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife because she was barren: and the Lord was entreated of him, and Rebecca, his wife, conceived. And the children struggled together within her." This spiritually means that the works of the flesh (Esau) struggles with the spirit (Jacob) and even so it is today. "And the Lord said unto her, two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger." We now take the above verse and see what the Lord meant. Esau represents the first man Adam, earthy, nature. Jacob represents the second Adam, Christ, heavenly, and the stronger; Christ, rules the weaker first man, Adam. The elder shall serve the younger. Esau was born first, then Jacob, though they were twins. That makes the elder, Esau, to serve the younger, Jacob. In Gen. 27 we see how Jacob received the blessing. If the calling and the gift of God comes by the works of nature Esau would have received the blessing and not Jacob. Continuing in the same chapter we find that Isaac sent Esau to prepare him some venison that he might eat before he died, and while he was yet gone Rebecca told Jacob to go and get two kids of the goats and she prepared it and gave to Jacob that he might give to his father, Isaac, and receive the blessing. Jacob said my brother is a hairy man and I am a smooth man; my father peradventure will feel me and I shall seem to him as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon me and not a blessing. Doing as his mother wished she clothed him with skins that he might appear as Esau. This proves that he put on the works of nature (Esau) for he lied and said, I am thy very son, Esau. It is written in Rom. 9:11 that it is "not of works, but of him that calleth." The voice is that of Jacob but the hands are the hands of Esau. So we have the same Esau striving today for the blessings and promises of God and never receiving them. Through nature receives blessings such as rain, sunshine, air and all that pertains to nature, these are to perish with the using, but the blessings which Jacob receives reaches beyond this life, and it is impossible by the works of nature (Esau)

to obtain the promises. Gal. 4:28, 29. "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." Now we that have the promises as Jacob are persecuted with nature (Esau). My opinion is we have this teaching throughout the scripture and with our experience, and one is contrary to the other, yet the elder (Esau) shall serve the younger (Jacob) because the spirit, representing Jacob, is stronger than nature, representing Esau, thereby making him (Esau) do whatsoever he (the spirit) will. It is impossible to know the goodness of God without knowing the sting of sin as it is written, Rom. 7:7. "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." But to know them both works death in our body, but to be free from this death we must be killed completely to this sin (death) not killed in sin but to sin by the coming in of Christ, the stronger man, into our mortal flesh thereby killing the works of nature, Esau. As it is written in Rom. 6:7. "For he that is dead is freed from sin." This does not come as often as we would like, and when we sum it all up here is the conclusion: God loves the works of the spirit, and hates the works of nature (Esau) for nature is all sin.

BENTON WEST

BUNA, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS:

I will write a few lines to let you know I am still living and enjoying the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES which I have been receiving about fifteen years. I kept my dues paid up as long as I was blessed with the money to pay with, but it has been a number of years that I have not been able to pay, but I have been getting it every month through your kindness and God blessing you to do so in some way. I thank you very much for your labor of love, but I am not expecting you to keep this up as I know it takes money to carry this good work on. I am sorry to have been a burden and you can drop my name from your list as it does not look as though my financial condition will improve. It will be alright with me for you to do as you think best. I know what it is to hunger and thirst after righteousness and God says they that do shall be filled. I hope I love all the true household of faith. I want to thank you and the Associate Editors for your kindness to me in the past and hope God will continue to bless you in your good work. Your sister in hope.

ARA COCHRAN

(We shall be glad to continue sending the SIGNS to our sister.—R.L.D.)

MOUNTAIN AIR, N. M.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES,

DEAR EDITORS:

I have been receiving the dear old family paper so long and have not been able to pay for it that I am proud I can send a year's subscription also another subscriber. I truly hope that sometime I can send in enough to bring my back time up to date, at least I hope that I may be able to send $2 each year as long

as I live. This cannot be many years as I will soon be seventy-three. I so much appreciate your kindness in making it possible for my wife and me to still get the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have been reading it as long as I can remember and think it is the soundest and best Old Baptist paper we have. Thanking you again I am your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life.

J. A. ROGERS

TOPSHAM, Maine.

ELDER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER:

Time passes on and we know not what is in store for us, but whatever is will be by the will of God, and I have no fear for he never errs. I am glad God has given me faith to believe and I pray he will keep me in that faith. We read, "without faith we cannot please God." I was told the other day God did not hear a sinner's prayer and I thought "What am I to do?" I feel I am chief of sinners. Seventeen years ago you preached a sermon that God sent Christ to redeem the sinner from his sins. I was a sinner then and still feel myself to be. "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil that I would not, that I do." "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" I see myself so vile and black, I often wonder if I have been born again. Do I love the Lord? I confess with my mouth,

'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?

I read that Christ came to call sinners to repentance, not the righteous, they that are whole need not a physician but they that are sick. I was sick, soul, heart and body. There was no ray of light down, down into the dark depths. God has mysterious ways to bring the sinner who is taught of God not of man. In September, 1925 God prepared you to preach and also prepared this poor sinner to receive it, and it was a happy day. I often go back to that day to be glad I was given a hope. "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." Glad that I should have been brought out of such darkness into a marvelous light that made the world brighter, that took me from that horrible pit of miry clay, set my feet upon the solid rock, Christ Jesus, and put a new song in my mouth, even praises unto God. I know "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." Often in times of darkness and sorrow he sends the Comforter with words of comfort which makes me feel very humble for I know I do not merit it, and to think he would be mindful of me. Hope you and your family are well. I was saddened to hear of the passing of your mother also of your wife's mother, for I know what it is to lose a mother. Also sorry to hear about Mr. Gilbert Beebe. I note you have taken over the duties of Editor and Publisher. May God give you strength and help to carry on your duties, and I feel sure he will. Hope I have not wearied you too much trying to express my thoughts with which I am never satisfied. May God be mindful of you and yours. In love and fellowship.

RACHEL B. POTTER

WALNUT CREEK, Cal.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

This is a notice of my change of address. I will send it by air mail as I do not want to miss a copy of the dear, good SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It is a great comfort to me in my lonely days, yet I hope not alone. I do believe He is ever and always watching over His chosen people of whom I hope I am one yet I am filled with fear. My hope and trust is in the dear Lord. He is the only one I can look to for sweet peace, sweet grace, and sweet comfort in this world of war and sorrow. I firmly believe he rules supreme and needs no help from any one. He declared the end from the beginning and, therefore, he knows all things that have been and are to be and none can stay his hand. He works his own wills and shalls and all is well with him. His covenant is ordered well and O may I be reconciled to his will. I ever long to be. I am so weak and find myself murmuring which grieves my heart, but God knows what is best for me at all times as there is a time for everything. May you be blessed to keep on publishing the dear SIGNS. In sweet hope.

(MRS.) MABEL LINDSEY

MATTHEWS, Mo. Route 3

Dear ones in Christ:—

Enclosed you will find $2 for which renew my subscription to the dear old SIGNS for another year. It seems like I could not do without it. I have been reading the SIGNS for a number of years, I cannot say just how long. It is the only paper that contends for the good old doctrine that I hope I believe. It is the only preaching I get. I long for the good pieces every month. Elder Gilbert Beebe's article on regeneration in the last issue was so good. I feel so unworthy to write you but I want to thank all in my weak way for the dear old paper that contends for the absolute predestination of all things, salvation by grace and grace alone for both time and eternity. I often wonder if I will get to hear any more of those dear old songs I used to hear in Arkansas.

I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again.

I used to hear Elder G. R. Hathcock, our old home preacher, sing those old songs, and I believe he was the best singer I ever heard. He was so kind and I loved him so much. I must close this for I fear it will worry you. Dear people may the good Lord be with you in publishing the SIGNS. I hope to have the privilege of reading them as long as I live. If this is not worthy of reading throw it in the waste basket. Yours in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began.

I. O. PORTERFIELD.

TERRELL WELLS, Texas

Dear Editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—

I have been reading the SIGNS most of the time since 1880. My father was a reader many years, and as old and feeble

as I am I hope to get to read it as long as I live. I wish to thank those of our dear brethren and sisters in different parts of the country, that have remembered my condition both financially as well as my spiritual condition. I so often feel that I can get along in my low estate in health better than in my so often low feeling spiritual condition. If I could only feel all the time that I was deeply grounded and settled spiritually then I would not have so much to mourn over. My mind is still set on the old doctrine as I hope the Lord led me to see it in the summer of 1888. Just what was shown me one evening when plowing in the field was too great for any form of humanity to show any one for the natural light has no such form of that spirituality, as that which comes directly from the Father of Lights in which he leads his chosen and elect which was everlastingly set in his mind and purpose away back from the ancients of eternity. All the conditionalists in the world cannot show one speck of light or one hopeful desire in the heart like one of God's divine elect which was in his deep mind from the foundation of the world. In his mind stood every one embraced in his covenant which was carried on by the Father, Son and Holy Spirit of our three one God. All the powers on earth cannot set aside one who was embraced in the glorious counsel. Dear brethren and sisters I hope that I was embraced in that holy counsel which cannot be destroyed by all the powers of the natural world. All things are under his divine power and our God will, in his divine will and eternal purpose, carry out all things that are or ever will be with no one to frustrate or hinder. This morning there was a beautiful letter came to me with a little mite in it for which I feel very thankful to the one who sent it, knowing that our great God was the power to cause any one of his dear ones to send help to the ones whom the Lord directs the mind of any one of his dear elect in that line of feeling and thought. Some time ago the Lord placed in the mind and heart of one of his elect to take notice to the direct needs of his children for, dear brethren and sisters in Christ, it makes no difference on what part of the earth any of his children live in this world they are one family for all the dear children of God are the offspring of one Father. I will close for this time Editors and dear ones. If I have failed to be right in my scribble just lay it aside and all will be well with me. I have been aiming to write a letter for the great cause of the truth, but since I had those two spells of lumbago last winter it left me pretty low in strength, and must just write a few lines at a time. Pardon all errors and pray for this poor sinner. As ever yours in hope.

(The late Elder) J. B. BOWDEN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS":

Mrs. A. D. Hoyt, N. Y., $2; Mrs. M. French, Pa., $1; Mrs. C. E. Lawrence, Mass., $1; Mrs. J. T. Cockrill, Va., $2; Mrs. M. C. Jameson, Tex., $1; I. T. McIntyre, N. Y. $1; Mrs. E. Smith, Tex., $1; R. L. Davis, Kan., $1; Mrs. S. E. Brown, Texas, $5. Lt. E. R. West, N. Y., $1; Mrs. Mae Thomas, Ill., $25; Dr. T. H. McColl, Can., $3; Y. R. Starr, Md., $1.

EDITORIAL

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THERE ARE MANY DEVICES IN A MAN'S HEART; NEVERTHELESS THE COUNSEL OF THE LORD, THAT SHALL STAND.
Proverbs 19:21

A short time ago we used the above Scripture for a text. Afterwards we were asked to use the same subject for our December editorial. We shall endeavor to do so, hoping that He who is unerring may guide our pen.

When considering a point of doctrine, one of the first thoughts is, what is the scriptural proof of it. To find comfort in such things we must behold more than the scriptural proof, for we must see the relation of it to God's chosen people, in this pilgrimage journey here, as it affects their lives and glorifies God.

There has been in the past, is now, and there will no doubt be in the future many devices in the hearts of men. Some of these appear good and some of them bad, but whether they be good or bad, they shall not interfere with the counsel of the Lord. After the apostle Paul had visited Jerusalem on one occasion and been persecuted and beaten because of his defense of the gospel, the Lord stood by him one night and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul, for as thou has testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome." Following this experience, we see some of the devices of men; their scheming and planning to take the life of the apostle, but his life was not in the hands of men, and none could destroy him, because God had said, thou shall bear witness at Rome. Shortly after being told by God that he should go to Rome, forty Jews bound themselves under a curse, saying they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. The devices of these men, although wicked, was the way ordained to start Paul on his trip. Their planning must fail because God was sending him to Rome. From this time until the apostle reached Rome he was a prisoner of men, but the gospel of Jesus, his Lord, was carried on the wings of persecution. In every instance, beginning with his defense of the gospel before Felix and his personal experience before king Agrippa, we behold the efforts of the Jews to convict him of some crime. If they could have done that his journey to Rome would have been stopped. This could not be. As Paul appealed his case from one court to another he was moving towards the place appointed unto him—to Rome. In all this he was from time to time seeing the hand of God in the matter, and he was to be assured that God was yet mindful of him. One of these times was when he was placed on a ship with other prisoners,

and was sailing towards Italy. During the voyage the boat was overtaken by a storm, and the ones with him felt they were going to perish, but the Lord stood by Paul that night and told him that he had given him all that traveled with him and that none should perish.

God today remembers his people, and although they are all prisoners of hope, he assures them from time to time that all is well, saying, "Be not afraid, it is I." In God's own time and way Paul reached Rome and all the devices of men were only to the furtherance of the gospel of God his Savior.

We will briefly mention a few of the things connected with the life, sufferings, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ in which the devices of men were manifested, yet in the end we find that they worked only to the fulfillment of God's word and counsel. When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, Herod the king of the Jews began at once to seek his life, but Joseph was warned of God to take the young child and flee into Egypt, so the prophecy might be fulfilled which had said, Out of Egypt have I called my Son. The devices of the one who sought his life were to lead up to the things which had been promised before. When Herod was unable to find Jesus, he sent forth and had all of the children in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under slain, believing that in so doing he would certainly take the life of the babe of Bethlehem. In all this he was only fulfilling the prophecy of Jeremiah, which said "A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not." All things written in the prophecies concerning him had to be fulfilled. The counsel of the Lord must stand, regardless of the devices of men. It was written of him, a bone of him shall not be broken, and when he had been crucified soldiers came to take down his body, and the bodies of those who were crucified with him, it not being lawful to leave them hanging on the Sabbath day. The legs of the two who died with him on the cross were broken by the soldiers, but when they came to Jesus they said he is dead already. Then his side was pierced with a spear, thus fulfilling the word which had declared, They shall look on him whom they have pierced. Those who did these things knew nothing of what had been promised before of God; they were only following their own plans and devices, but at the same time they were fulfilling the purpose of God.

When the Savior was crucified and buried, there lingered with the Jews a fear that something might happen to their plans and that his disciples might steal his body at night. Soldiers were, therefore, placed around his tomb and a great stone was rolled unto it, and the king sealed it with his seal. Everything was done that men could do to prevent his resurrection from the dead. We are glad it was so because there might be the manifestation of that power that overcomes all things to God's eternal glory. We could go on mentioning scriptures as proof of these things, the devices of men being worked according to the

purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, but we will just mention a few briefly to stir up your pure minds, God willing, and pass on. Haman a wicked man sought the life of Mordecai, and even prepared a gallows to hang him on, yet, when the time came for the hanging Haman himself was hung on it. The devices of the enemies of Daniel, and the three Hebrew children, caused them to be cast into the den of lions and the firey furnace, yet it only served to the manifestation of God's delivering hand unto them. When God told Jonah to go to Nineveh and to cry against the city, he immediately set about to go another way; he paid his fare and started to Tarshish. He was yet to learn that, salvation was of the Lord; that God's counsel would stand, and although he had to go through the belly of hell, he was to reach Nineveh as God had told him. His devices must fail, whether they were good or bad. The planning of Joseph's brethren to do away with him, only carried him into Egypt to store up corn for the day of famine.

As to the day we live in, it is a dark and dreary day, and the devices of men are at work; Hitler seeking to rule the world. Planning and scheming has been going on for years, bringing us to the places and conditions in which we live; yet, we are sure, it is for a wise purpose of God. Not a dart of Satan can hit, except what the God of heaven sees fit. They are working together for good to them that love God. Oh, that we might have the assurance that we love him! We are sure that the wrath of man shall praise him and the remainder he will restrain. God's sword is hanging over the earth and we believe God's humble poor are being brought closer together. We know by experience that we are often thinking of our beloved brethren in the Lord, in their trials, hoping that we might be blessed of God to speak some word of comfort to them. Yet the minister must have like trials as his brethren before he can comfort them with the same comfort wherewith he is comforted of God.

May God give us grace to love one another freely, be affectionate one to another, gentle, forbearing, kind, manifesting a brotherly kindness, for if these things be in us we shall never fail.

D. V. S.

CLOSE OF VOL. NO. 110

This issue of our paper brings to a close Vol. 110 of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. That the Lord has blessed those who have labored all these years for its continuance and preservation, there can be no doubt, and we pray that his blessing may yet rest upon it for many years to come, if it be his will. We verily believe that God, according to his infinite wisdom and purpose, has laid this matter upon us for the time being, and we are persuaded that he will provide that as our day, so shall our strength be. We are told that God works all things after the counsel of his own will, and we are further told that he who declared "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done," said, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." It hum-

bles us to be given to hope that his wise purposes embrace us; that the steps that we tread, and the station we fill, our Father determined and wrote in his will. This includes our trials and sorrows, our conflicts and cares, the spirit of prayer and the answer of prayers. God has been inexpressibly good to us all the days of our life, and we only wish that we might in some small way show forth the praises of him who hath done great things for us. As we come to the close of this, another year, we have to confess that "his mercy endureth forever."

This issue also brings to a close our first year as Publisher, our seventh year as Editor and, lacking six months, twenty years of association with the paper. We realize that during these years many of our imperfections and shortcomings have been brought to the view of our brethren and friends, but much charity and forbearance has been shown us by them. We are grateful, indeed, to one and all for the manner in which they have borne with us. We sincerely appreciate their manifestations of love towards us in the work we have undertaken and, with the help of our heavenly Father, we will maintain the present standard of the paper.

We still bespeak a continuance of the kind cooperation of our readers, and if they know of any who would enjoy reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES during the coming year, we feel confident they could not give them anything for the same monetary value that they would begin to esteem and prize as they would a year's subscription to the SIGNS. Our Associate Editor, Elder David V. Spangler, made the suggestion in the November issue that the SIGNS be sent to those in the Armed Services of our country, who might like to read the good things to be found in our family paper. We would like to see the scope enlarged so that the paper might be sent to those in all walks of life whose affections are fixed upon heavenly things. Our paper brings good news and glad tidings not only at Christmas time, but every month throughout the entire year. Any effort on the part of our subscribers to aid us in enlarging our circle of readers will be very much appreciated. With this we bid you all adieu for 1942.

R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

ELDER A. P. CARDWELL was born Jan. 24, 1851 in McNary Co., Tenn. and passed from this life at the home of his youngest son, H. T. Cardwell, Vernon, Texas, May 23, 1942. His stay on earth was 92 years, 3 months and 15 days. His parents moved to Hope, Ark. when he was four years old. Here he grew to manhood and married Jennie Herreld. To this union were born six children, two boys and four girls. Day, Ceola, Lela, Beulah, Eula and Addie. His wife, Lela and Addie preceded him in death.

He was married again to Elevenyre McClain in Ellis Co., near Ennis, Texas. To this union were born four children, two boys and two girls. Ethel, Hiram, Lasha and Hester all of whom are living but his wife passed away some years ago. He received his hope in Christ at the age of fifteen and began preaching although he was not ordained to the full work of the ministry until June 25, 1898 at Zion Hill Church, Navarro Co., Texas. Those taking part in the ordination were Elders J. H. Weeks, Solon Gibson, J. H. Barland and J. F. Watson. He served as moderator of Pilgrims Rest Association for about fifteen years. The last few years of his stay here he was almost blind and was not able to do much preaching or reading though he seemed to get much

comfort talking of the Bible and the many glorious promises of the Lord to his people. We have many bright evidences of his hope in Christ and while suffering some in his last days he bore it with fortitude and was perfectly submissive to the sovereign will of Almighty God. "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." "Can a woman forget her suckling child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet I will not forget thee." These were some of his favorite scriptures. He was proud of the fact that he had raised a large family having over one hundred eighty-seven direct descendants. He was a constant reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and it was in his home about thirty years ago that the writer first saw and read it, and has been reading it most of the time since.

On Monday morning, May 25th, at 10:30 his body was conveyed to the Primitive Baptist Church in Vernon, Texas. Elder A. B. Hughes conducted the services after which his remains were taken to East View Cemetery to his last resting place to await the pleasure of his Almighty God when he will be raised, not as he once was, but in the likeness of Him who died and rose again. The dead shall be raised "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." We loved him not only as an uncle in the flesh, but as a brother in Christ, we hope. We feel to know that our loss is his eternal gain, and to his loved ones sorrow not for in death he has reached the fruition of his hope. Written by his nephew.

CHAS. A. TAYLOR

DEACON GEORGE W. DANBERRY, son of the late David A. and Mary Duffield Danberry, was born Dec. 24, 1883, and departed this life May 21, 1942, making his stay on earth 58 years, 5 months and 27 days. He was married to Miss Gertrude R. Johnson Oct. 27, 1909 and to this union was born one son, David Wilber Danberry. He is now in the American Army stationed at Fort Bragg, N. C. In addition to his widow and son, brother Danberry leaves to mourn his loss one brother, Charles E. Danberry, Hopewell, N. J., many relatives and friends besides the Hopewell Church and congregation of which he was a faithful and active deacon. His father and mother sold their farm to him and moved to Hopewell several years before he did. They both united with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. Then the son began to attend the services, and after his father and mother were called away he came before the church relating his conviction and hope of salvation. He was unanimously received into the fellowship of the church Aug. 15, 1931 and baptized Aug. 16 when the right hand of fellowship and all the rights and ordinances of the church order were bestowed on him by the writer. Having been brought into the church before deacon David L. Blackwell was called to his reward, at his suggestion the church unanimously called brother Danberry to the office of deacon. We feel to express that from our understanding and discernment of the word of God relative to the scriptural requirements of a deacon brother Danberry filled the office as nearly perfect as it was possible to do. He was able in preaching the Word and edifying to his audience. It was a pleasure to know and associate with him. In 1928 he sold his farm and moved into Hopewell where he resided and made many friends until he was called away. His funeral services were conducted by the writer using the words of Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am," with the feeling that it was the life in brother Danberry's heart. I was told later that he had preached this text all the way to the hospital, the nurse in attendance asking if he was a minister as they were not used to hearing such from patients. Asking him to be as quiet as possible for the doctor thought it was against him to be talking he answered, "I have so much to say and such a short time to say it." He was laid to rest in the family plot in Hopewell Cemetery. His widow is left very lonely, no one being in the home with her. The only son being in the army. "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." We feel our loss is his eternal gain. May it please God to comfort all that mourn. Written by his pastor.

CHARLES W. VAUGHN

W. C. COX, son of Robert and Mary Cox was born in Shirley, Ill., Oct. 9, 1866 and departed

this life July 17, 1942 making his age 75 years. He was united in marriage to Lula Goode in 1892. To this union were born four children three of whom preceded him in death. Besides his companion he leaves one son, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church in his younger years and was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God. While we mourn because of earthly ties being broken we have faith we shall dwell in a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens. To the dear companion and family I wish to say may you sorrow not as those who have no hope. The testimony tells us that though our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

When we've lived there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun;
We've no less days to sing his praise,
Than when we first begun.

ELDER HAROLD JAYNES

MRS. REJINA CAMPBELL, wife of Archibald Campbell, was born at Dundass, Ontario, Dec. 2, 1860, and died Nov. 28, 1941 making her age 81 years less a few days. She was a daughter of our late pastor, Elder William Pollard and Mary (Jamison) Pollard. Her father and family moved from Dundass, Ontario to Michigan when she was a young girl, and some years later moved to Canada where he was called as pastor about the year 1868. I think the church and congregation bought him a farm adjoining my father's farm, and she and I grew up, mingled and went to school together; rode horse-back on Elder Pollard's old grey horse through the sugar brush in the spring gathering sap. Thus we enjoyed the vanity of pleasure together for a time. Sister Rejina moved, with her parents, to Warwick, N. Y., where Elder Pollard was called to serve as pastor for about three years when they moved back to their home. Elder Pollard still remained our pastor as the Canada Church would not give him up. He was knitted to them in love and sweet fellowship. About a year after, Rejina married Archibal Campbell in 1882. To that union six children were born: Robert, Alexander, Humphrey, and William (in teen-age) who was killed by being crushed under a load of wood while driving down an incline in the road. Two daughters, Mary, Mrs. William McCollum and Jennie, Mrs. Archy McCollum, at whose home she died after an illness of four weeks, three weeks of which were spent in a London Hospital. Sister Rejina went many years mourning on account of sin, and was made willing in the day of God's power and appointed time to ask for a home with the church, and was baptized by her father in 1894. Her husband asked a home some years later, was baptized and after a few years was chosen deacon. She and her husband retired from farm life and moved into Dutton fourteen years ago. He passed away in 1930 leaving her a lonely widow. She and I spent twelve years living as neighbors here. In our girlhood days we enjoyed life together and in our later days, as widows, we spent many mournful days over the loss of our companions, my companion passing away in the same year as hers. Now she has left me here and gone to a better home beyond this vale of sorrow and strife to rest in hope of a glorious resurrection, when this vile body shall be raised a perfect body like our blessed Lord, and in that perfect life of immortality she shall awake in his likeness to praise him evermore without the veil between. She possessed sterling qualities and a pattern for her children's memory of her: firm in the doctrine of electing love, frank and sincere in speaking her mind, charitable in her judgment toward an offending foe. The Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada has lost a worthy member and myself a tried and true sister and friend. She also leaves one brother, John, 94 years old and hosts of relatives and friends. A short service of prayer was held at her daughter's home, then a public service was held in the Dunwich meeting-house where many friends came to pay tribute to her memory. We laid her mortal body in the dust of the grave whence it shall return. Her pastor, Elder George Ruston, used as a text the first verse of the 103rd Psalm. May God comfort the mourning children, and lead them by the right way and in paths they have not known for his name's sake.

(Mrs.) SARAH McPHAIL

ALSO

MRS. CATHERINE (POLLARD) CAMPBELL, daughter of John and Effie McTavish Pollard, died in September 1941, aged 57 years. She was married to John Campbell of Oxford Township on June 28, 1906. Four children were born to this union: Alfred, Effie, Clara and Howard. Her husband met his death in an auto ac-

cident shortly after her death. From a girl she was afflicted with asthma. Her life was marked out for her, a path of hardships and trials, but out of the depth she cried, and the Lord opened a way, and by faith implanted in her heart she was upheld and came forth out of them all and lived a worthy member. Her funeral was held at the home of her youngest son, Howard. Burial in Fairview Cemetery. Elder George Ruston conducted the service. We laid her mortal body in the ground to be raised and fashioned like unto His glorious body to die no more, but to live and behold Jesus as he is and praise him eternally in a world that shall never end. She was a niece of Mrs. Rejina Campbell whose obituary I am enclosing with this.

(Mrs.) SARAH McPHAIL

G. A. DUNDAS was born in Dorchester, Ontario, Canada, June 26, 1863, and passed away in Long Beach, California, August 29, 1942, making his stay on earth 79 years, 2 months, and 3 days. Before coming to California in 1907, he was a member of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada having been baptized in 1901 at Poplar Hill by Elder W. J. Carnell, who was then pastor. At the time of his death he was a member of the Little Zion Church, Compton, California. He was a faithful and devoted member for over forty-one years. Our married life, which covered a period of a little over fifty-one years, was very happily spent. He has gone home to be with Jesus, his Saviour and Redeemer.

His sorrowing widow,
(Mrs.) RACHEL DUNDAS

WILLIAM IVERY STEWART, my dear husband, passed away July 14, 1942 at his home near Munday, Texas. He was born in Cleborn Parish, La., Nov. 26, 1866, making his stay on earth 75 years, 8 months and 12 days. He moved to Lincoln Parish when a small boy and grew to manhood there. He was married the first time to Miss Mary Lou Edwards Dec. 27, 1891. Ten children were born to this union, three of whom are deceased. Those left to mourn his passing are Norman, Generel, Neal and John Wesley Stewart, Mrs. Mettie Hunt, Cisco, Texas, Mrs. Ida Henderson, Brownwood, Texas and Mrs. Bertie Thackerson, Mineral Wells, Texas. Also twenty-eight grand children, eleven great-grandchildren and two sisters, Mrs. W. R. Liner and Mrs. F. E. Baxter both of Ruston, La. In 1908 he moved to Texas and Mrs. Stewart died on March 14, 1910. June 27, 1916 he was married to Mary Lea of Knox City, Texas. He never united with the church but was a strong believer in absolute predestination and that the Lord had all power in heaven and earth. He went to the association when he could and enjoyed the preaching very much. He had been a SIGNS reader for a long time. He left us in great sorrow but is at rest. He was a good husband and father. Has been in failing health for several years but never tired of work when able to perform it. He was stricken with paralysis about four years ago but the end came suddenly with a heart attack. His body was laid to rest in Munday Cemetery to await the resurrection morn when the dead in Christ shall be raised to life everlasting. The funeral services were at home conducted by brother Ponter. May the Lord guide and protect use from all harm. Remember us at the throne of grace. Written by his sorrowing wife, a sister in Christ I hope.

(Mrs.) W. I. STEWART

MEETINGS

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala.

ELDER W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.

ELDER H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.

ELDER H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.

ELDER O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th Street, Mayfield, Ky. Those interested will be welcome.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
IN
NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.
Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.
To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A. M.
ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A. M. 2 P. M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sundays in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P. M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sundays each month at 11:00 A. M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Locust Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Eligin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas. Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Texas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

VOL. 111 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JANUARY, 1943 No. 1

OVER THERE

When we become tired of the journey of life,
And we long for release from its care;
It is sweet to remember that after the strife
We will find a long rest—Over There.

When the ones we have loved have grown careless and cold,
And our hopes have been crushed to despair;
We may smile when we think of the Friend we've been told
Is waiting to welcome us—There.

Here our eyes have been dimmed by the tears we have shed,
The winters have whitened our hair,
But the trials and sorrows through which we are led,
Shall never be known—Over There.

He shall wipe every eye, with His own gentle hand,
Make our forms like His own, pure and fair;
There are mansions prepared in that beautiful land,
For His children who dwell—Over There.

No sorrow, no tears, no sin and no pain,
But love, joy and peace we will share;
Forever with Jesus our Lord to remain,
In that beautiful land—Over There.

ADELA JONES.

CORRESPONDENCE

CASCADE, Va.

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. John 14:27.

I have had numerous requests to write more for the SIGNS, but they just could not give me the necessary incentive to write. However, I do appreciate the manifestations that what I have written in the past has been endorsed by my people, but until recently I have not had a desire to write which accounts for the reason that I have had no articles in the paper. Recently I have been stirred again to endeavor to write some of the things I see and feel to be the wonderful works of God in dealing with his people, and I hope this undertaking will be under the guiding influence of God's Holy Spirit.

There has never been a time in my own life and in the lives of many others that we feel our utter helplessness so far as our natural surroundings are concerned as this present day. It is needless for me to try to make a detailed description of the many problems which face us for I do not know them. We all remember how in the beginning of these sorrows that everything, apparently, that man could do to preserve peace was done. There were conferences in many places where kings and rulers met to try to establish what they called a lasting peace, but on the other hand God had said "there shall be wars and rumors of wars." How true are these words. In the midst of the chaotic and troublesome times there is a people, the Lord's people, which have a peace that is not written on paper. It is more far reaching than any document signed by the kings and rulers of this world, yet it is not a peace which is won by carnal weapons, such as planes, tanks and guns, neither is it a bought peace with filthy goods of this world, but it is a peace which "passeth all understanding" and is given to us through our Lord Jesus Christ. I know that this terrible war causes us to worry and gives us trouble, and I wish I could tell every father and mother, who have given and who must give their sons and daughters for this cause, not to worry and could give them power to cease to worry, but I know I could not do that neither am I able to grant such comfort.

Our God has so completely appointed all things that all of our worries, trials and conflicts, as well as temptations, are as much appointed as our comforts and joys. They serve his purpose and are just as good for us as anything to cause us to remember him, and in humbleness to trust him, even though we are not able to see those benefits as we pass through the valleys which we sometimes do afterwards. After all, what is this material trouble to be compared to the eternal joy that God gives us poor sinners in Christ? There is no comparison. The most awful trouble a person can ever experience is the realization that he is a sinner and not at peace with God, and worse still has no way or ability to make peace with him who never has looked upon sin with the least degree of allowance, but has declared that "every transgression and disobedience receive a just recompence of reward." God's people who have passed this way know the truth of the above quotation. There is no present national trouble, neither has there been nor shall there be, that will cause me to feel so wretched, hell deserving and troubled, as did the awful truth that I was a sinner in the sight of a holy God and hopelessly and helplessly one. I continued to feel so until that long to be remembered night in 1932 when I feel that the Lord Jesus gave me that blessed peace. Gave it to me! What a joyous gift! And he not only gave it but he said my peace I leave with you! This very well "passeth all understanding." The peace of every nation today has been shattered with one exception and that is this *holy nation,* the church, which is redeemed by the blood of Christ. Our Lord said, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer;

I have overcome the world." He is still our peace, and there is no power in earth or hell that can destroy that peace nor any power in heaven that will do it. The lines of communication have never been broken between us and our Peacemaker. He is ever near and when troubles and trials seem to weigh us down, and all things seem to be against us, he only speaks and we are calmed by his peaceful voice. It may be, and has been with me many times, in the darkest hour of night that he says, "My peace I give unto you", but whenever the time and whatever the trouble when we feel that peace all is well. He speaks as man never spake.

His disciples were troubled at his telling them he would be betrayed but he said, "My peace I give unto you." Dear child of God, what more could one desire in this world or the world to come than this peace, and I feel tonight that there are a few mothers who have been comforted, even in these perilous times when they have given up their sons to go to war, with this peace which causes a great calm in their breast and caused them to say deep down in their very hearts that God's will be done and not mine. This peace which Christ gave is not given as the world gives. The world gives with the expectation of something in return and to make a show to be seen of men. God gave peace to us because he loved us and it is the fruit of justification. There is nothing sweeter than when we lay down at the close of the day to take our rest than to feel the presence of peace and O may I, when I come to die, feel it most of all. All the redeemed will enjoy it in this world in seasons. A little here and there along the wild and rocky shores of time, and shall enjoy the fullness thereof in eternity. Sometimes we feel its presence in this life so fully that our mind is carried away from everything in this life and we "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory," yet we cannot make peace. It is a gift of God. He is a God of peace. When it is present we can say come what may of joys and sorrows I will glory in his name. There is nothing can be desired above this gift of peace because if we have that gift, even though we be consumed, destroyed, or even in this world scorned, evilly spoken of, evilly entreated and all manner of falsehoods told on us, there is a consolation that we have a Friend in heaven, peace with whom is all that matters for this peace does not fade nor pass away. Even death does not mark an end to it. One great day He, who gave us our peace and left His peace with us, will bring us forth from the grave in immortal prime. What a glorious peace! What a wonderful hope! So, dear friends, let the wars come and whatever else God has appointed, we have a peace which is an unbroken tie to heaven that the world's conflicts can neither erase nor abolish. It is enduring and unchanging. We know not what we will be called upon to suffer, but if I could, I would comfort God's people with the assurance that whether it be through floods or flames, fiery trials or deep waters, God's peaceful eye is ever on you and his everlasting arms underneath you, and none shall be lost but ultimately be saved.

Another thing I have learned is that this peace which God gives will give us strength and courage in a necessary time, and will knit your hearts with the hearts of others, and make you feel for them, and desire to march shoulder to shoulder with them in their conflicts and troubles, knowing that he who has given peace is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. I have visited several associations this year and all, so far as I could see, manifested the fruit of this peace, and I have met many new as well as old acquaintances who spoke often of the peace that has done their souls good. In closing this article I wish to say that Jesus Christ not only made peace between God and us, but he gave us that peace, and every time a poor sinner's heart is soothed and there is in him a clear and acquitted conscience, it is the evidence of that blessed gift of Christ. It is good for us here, it will be good for us when we come to draw our last expiring breath, and when we are raised from the dead in the resurrection it will be the fullness of that which we have tasted here of the peace of God, and the peace of God which passeth understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Yours in bonds.

ROY S. SMITH

(*Continued from December issue*)

The apostle plainly sets forth these mysterious truths and has simplified them by saying, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." "That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause (love) shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh." The apostle speaks of it as a great mystery and it appeals to husbands and wives in the fleshly family, or the sinful state of the Adamic man as well as it does unto the spiritual family, those that have been born again. Born of the Spirit. The first union spoken of between husband and wife is a type, or shadow, of the union of Christ, the husband, and his bride, the church. When a man marries his wife she becomes heiress in all that he possesses, even his name is given to her because they are joined in holy matrimony, they have become one flesh, but before this marriage the wife had a name in which she was heir in her father's estate and the law says she must hold it while she lives although she is married to a husband and become heir in his estate. While this is only given as a type or shadow in temporal things it fully sets forth the truth as it is taught in spiritual things in spiritual life. The husband in the flesh freely gives of all that he possesses to his bride to make her know and feel that she is one with him in all these things. In this he very truly stands as a type of his Creator and Saviour, but all

the ability he has is to give only of natural things which belong to this world. Types and shadows are only given to represent things that are real. Christ, who is the husband of his bride, the church, when he came to seek and save that which was lost (the church) came to the same family of sinful flesh where all husbands obtain their wives, and he is not the figure but the true, and it is his people that are lost, not him. They are alienated and lost from him by reason of sin and transgression in this sinful life. Christ loves his people because they were chosen in him to be conformed by him to his own likeness, or image which is his life, or nature. The chosen people of God as they appear in the earthly family are both male and female, but when they are adopted into the spiritual family of God they are known only as a bride for they have been treated as the true husband treats his wife, they have been given of all that he possesses. Even his life (eternal life) is given to them that they may be born of God and see his kingdom and enter into it and enjoy the blessings that are prepared for them in this kingdom. The great mystery is how God's children can be his children and the children of Adam at the same time, but we know this is true. When we sin we do it for the reason of the nature of the flesh for it is not taken away when we are adopted into the Spiritual family of God. When a man adopts a child to be his heir he may love him as his own child, but he cannot change his relationship to his real parents. Only death can stop it. Christ does more for his adopted children than we can do for ours, he gives them his life and they shall never die. Here we want to notice that adopted children have nothing, as such children, except that which has been given them by their foster parents, and there was nothing that they could do before being adopted to bring their foster parents under obligation to adopt them, and what they have gained by adoption is only grace, mercy and love. Favor through him (Christ), and all they hold in him, and by him is that which is given graciously to them. Oh! wonderful thought, the life of God in his children, what it has accomplished. It has manifested them as "A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." So when the people of God work in life and righteousness they do so because it has been imputed unto them, they could never obtain it in any other way, and why should they when this is God's way. God said unto Adam, "dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." The wages of sin is death, and when sin is finished it brings forth death, and does not our life and every day's experience teach us we do not sin by reason of God's blessings being bestowed on us? But because of his life and blessings being imputed unto us, if it were possible, we would put sin away from us "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are

contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Gal. 5:17.

It seems I find no place to close this letter, but I must close it, and I want to say when we die in the flesh and return to dust we are not dead in Christ, but are asleep in him, and he is our spiritual life, and our spiritual life is in him when we are in the grave just the same as when we are permitted to live and worship him in spirit and in truth. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Submitted in love and sweet fellowship with best wishes to you and yours.

JOHN NEAL.

UNION, N. J.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I have a desire this evening to tell you how much comfort I received from your messages today. I am made to marvel at your wonderful understanding and knowledge of the Scriptures as you expound them, even to the meaning of each individual word. It must be a pleasure to proclaim the gospel in all its glory when endowed with power from on high. Realizing my inability to judge, I feel that regardless of what you say if it be spiritual food for some one it has been given by the power of every good and perfect gift. Without Him we can do nothing. We would not want to as our doctrine of predestination embraces every event that has taken place or ever will come to pass in the future. If not directed by the almighty hand of God it will come to naught. Many times I have been at the brink of despair, ready to give up, yet my faith in the predestination of all things made me realize "that all things work together for good to them that love God." Often there would be no courage to continue without the above doctrine to increase our strength and brighten our hope for the future. All pleasure of this world we know will perish in the years to come, (if there be any pleasure in this world, sometimes I wonder), praise His holy name for a blessed hope of life immortal in the world to come where at his right hand there are pleasures forever more. Just what this shall be like I do not know, but I am made to say when I awake in thy likeness, dear Lord, I shall be satisfied. Just to have a hope that my name may be written in the Lamb's book of life is more than I deserve, feeling that the words used today "less than the least" certainly could be appropriately applied to my case. What am I and why am I thus is a question I have tried to answer for the last twenty years but to no avail, seeming to be unable to find a reason for such a condition of utter helplessness and dependence on the ever-guiding hand of an all-wise God. Why should he condescend to send his only begotten Son into the world for one such as I, yet it is all of him, else there would be no hope at all. We are told that "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." What can we boast of? We have done nothing at all yet it is only human nature to do so if left in our own natural frame of mind. Thanks to his blessed name for the assurance that "we are his

workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." If it be his holy will that we should tread the path ordered for us, we can rest assured that we will do so, though the way be filled with trials, tribulations, and sorrow, it will be a pleasure to follow in the footsteps of our blessed Redeemer. Dear Lord, give us strength to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, to walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." "They that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth," because the Father seeketh such to worship him. They do not come into his banqueting house of their own free will (how well I know and realize that from my early experience) the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak, the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things ye would. There is a continual warfare in these fleshy bodies of ours. Strive as we may, we cannot rid ourselves of the many snares, temptations, and pitfalls that meet us on the way. Our only hope is to trust in Him to lead us through the dangers along life's rugged highway, and take us home to glory when our task on earth is done. These many blessings are hid from the wise and prudent, revealed to the poor sinner when he enters a new world. Man had nothing at all to do with his natural birth into this world, neither can he assist himself or any one else (no matter how dear to him they may be in a natural sense) to a knowledge of spiritual things. "Ye must be born again", born of an incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth forever, before you can enjoy the pleasure of worship in spirit and truth. This is all in the hand of a God of wisdom; it was foreordained before we came into the world; all man may say or do will not take from nor add to the spiritual kingdom; it is a complete body in Christ. "There is one body and one spirit." "One Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." He is the beginning and the end, an ever present help in time of trouble. It is impossible to visualize with our natural mind the power of God who foresaw all things that would take place from the creation of the world until the end, yet we are told: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." We never shall know unless God reveals them unto us by his spirit. He knows the very thoughts and intents of our minds and hearts. We might be able to deceive man in this world, but not God, he knows all things. The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. The wisdom and knowledge of God is too deep for our finite minds to comprehend, his judgments unsearchable and his ways past finding out, yet he can speak peace to the heavy laden soul in such a manner that he can only fall at his feet, and the story repeat, and

the Saviour of sinners adore.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you Godspeed and success in your undertaking as editor of the SIGNS. I have been much pleased with the copies that have been published since you took charge of the paper. I was glad you felt the desire to continue the publication, feeling confident that the Lord will be with you and guide you in the way you should go. As long as it is his will for the paper to continue it will do so and may the standard of the paper remain as it has been, and should be, under your direct supervision. Though the burden may seem heavy at times, I am sure you have the best wishes of many readers whose only means of obtaining spiritual food is from the Bible and the SIGNS. Today as I sat under the sound of your voice I thought how wonderful it would be to have a copy of the many messages you deliver to peruse at some future date; yet there is something in our feelings and thoughts that we take home with us, a feeling of having once more tasted of the word of God, knowing that it is good for us; it does something to us which words cannot describe, but it is understood only by those who are traveling the same way and whose hope the Lord is; those who have been quickened and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. In bonds of love. ELSIE LOEFFEL.

Route 1, MAYNARDSVILLE, TENN.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON AND TO THE LITTLE ONES OVER THE MILES: I am fast approaching my sixty-fifth birthday and have never attempted a word for publication in my life, but after receiving Vol. 110, No. 9 of the SIGNS tendered me by a highly esteemed Elder and brother in hope of West Hurley, N. Y. I am moved in mind for some purpose, best known to God, to tell you and the dear readers I greatly admire its contents so far as I am able to understand. I am especially impressed with Editorial, page 205 on I Thes. 1:23. So much so I have read the entire chapter and fully agree in detail that you have presented the truth concerning it as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Is it not clear to our poor minds that we will not need the Bible as man of our counsel beyond this vale of tears, when these vile bodies of ours are made immortal and holy before Him and like Him? Most assuredly it appears to us the teaching in the entire chapter is to us in this time, mortal state and only administered by our King as we need it. The poet says, "As thy days may demand, shall thy strength ever be." "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." Let the world go by with all its conditionalism. It will perish with its using.

We have copied Circular Letter for the Powell's Valley Association minutes written by Elder John Wilder, and hope you can and will give it space in the dear SIGNS as it portrays our faith, too, and believe it will be comforting to the many, many tempest-tossed little ones many miles away. "Now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Yours in hope of immortality.

J. E. WALTON.

Route 2, Box 269, Ft. Worth, Texas.

Signs of the Times, Dear Editors:

Will you kindly change my address to that given above? We are permanently settled, we hope, as we have bought a little place here, and I do not wish to miss a copy of the dear Signs. That is the only preaching I get except the sweet letters I receive from Old Baptists who take pity on me and write me once in a great while. An Old Baptist sent in the subscription in my name and I did appreciate it so much. I have only four more copies before my subscription is up. I so often wonder why the very sight of a Signs of the Times is so sweet to me. I wonder if it is because it is a reminder of all the years back to my earliest remembrance as a child, for my mother had it as long as she lived and even her mother was a subscriber to it. When I see one lying on a table, dresser or anywhere in a home it makes me feel like that home surely is the home of a believer in the truth. I believe the Old Baptists have the truth and Oh, how I wish I could feel myself one of them. I feel like I know their feelings when I hear them tell of their experience of grace, yet I feel myself apart from them, for in myself there is no good thing and in them I see perfection in the spirit. I once thought I had an experience, too, that God was ever watching over me and keeping me, but of late I have suffered so many doubts and fears that I do wonder if the dear Lord has ever known me in his precious love. It has been my sad lot to have to be as contented as I could be in my little hope because I have not been permitted to attend meetings and enjoy them as I feel like a true believer should enjoy them. So many obstacles are ever in my pathway for me to stumble over, but the dear Lord has blessed his people with one thing that nothing can take away, and that is their hope. Nothing can come between him and his chosen ones, neither can anything in this world keep them from crying out to God in their hearts for mercy. The thing that troubles me most is am I one of the chosen few, or why am I an outcast among others, no home with the people I love, and assuredly no home or desire to have a home with the worldly-minded Christians. Please forgive this letter of complaint. I hope it will not be too much trouble to you to change the address on my paper. I would like so much to get a letter from dear brother and sister Beth Bynum of California. I miss their letters so much and do not know their address. Dear brethren and sisters, will you please remember me when at the throne of God's rich grace? A poor begging sinner who does more doubting and complaining than praising of our precious Redeemer.

(Mrs.) BESSIE WILTON.

Newark, Del.

Dear Brother Vaughn: Again, and it occurs invariably so, my visit to hear you proclaim the gospel of the Son of God was fruitful and profitable to me, I hope, if I have a hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. Another proof that he directs our very steps was the contact with our mutual friend, Mr. Baily of Collingswood. It reminded me of the meeting of Philip and the eunuch. They came to-

gether, not by chance, but by decree of the Almighty. Indeed, that visitation on the part of Mr. Baily put the very words you spoke in your mind and heart, and the Holy Spirit surely did the rest. You spoke comfortingly to Jerusalem, to those very few who were gathered together there, the last remnant of the little vine which the Lord himself planted many years ago in Philadelphia. When light, Christ himself, is spoken of, the other extreme, darkness, enters in, and I love to repeat and meditate upon the inspired words of J. C. Philpot on the subject of darkness in one of his sermons, September 19, 1858. "When I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me." Micah 7:8. In this darkness the Lord's people often sit, yet in the midst of it there is light, the best and most blessed, for it is the Lord himself. Here the saint differs from all others. None but the elect know what darkness is for none but them have light to see it. A beautiful thought, is it life to feel it? Life and light are synonymous, they go together in His elect people. His light in the soul makes him see the darkness. The Lord's life in his heart makes him feel the cold damps which chill his feelings. Those who walk in the sparks of their own kindling never complain of sitting in darkness, they know not the loss of the light of the Lord's countenance for they never saw and enjoyed it. Those in whom the god of this world hath blinded, the minds of them which believe not, never sit in darkness because they never sat in the light, nor do they know the hidings of the Lord's face because he has never lifted the light of his countenance upon them. Though thousands are in darkness, none of them sit in darkness, feelingly and experimentally, but the saints of God, his elect, they walk or sit, both postures implying life, in darkness, but "the dead" lie in it; but when the saints sit in darkness the Lord is their light-beams, and rays of divine light to illuminate their darksome paths. You ask why this darkness spreads over their minds? Because it is in this school we learn our best lessons. Pride needs to be humbled, self-righteousness obliterated, self-exaltation and self-dependence laid low, all of which are opposed to the life and power of God in the soul. These weeds, then, that overspread the Lord's garden, need to be uprooted and plucked out that the fruits and graces of the spirit may have room to live and flourish. Cowper says:

> "Bastards may escape the rod,
> Sunk in earthly, vain delight;
> But the true-born child of God
> Must not, would not if he might."

I just feel to encourage you. I feel I know how you felt but I thank God for his way to kill the flesh in order that it may not have power to boast of. O that men would praise the Lord for his wonderful works to the children of men. The children of men spoken of here are surely his own, his elect, for if they come not unto him as a little child they are none of his. Your brother, I hope, a sinner to the last.

J. B. MILLER.

(I think this contains sound doctrine. —C. W. V.)

ROXBORO, N. C.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Sorry you could not attend our association this year as I thought we had one of the best associations we have ever had. It was in the little town of Mebane, N. C., and I think I never saw such love and friendship manifested toward our association from the people in other denominations in my life. It seemed there was nothing they had nor anything they could do that they minded doing for the association. Leading citizens of the town went so far as to tell us that if we had more company than we could take care of we should send them to the hotel and send them the bill. Also all of the different churches of all denominations in the town suspended services on Sunday for the benefit of the association. I hope that we were very thankful and grateful for these blessings and kindnesses shown us. We are having some splendid meetings with the various churches in our state this summer. Some in-gathering to the churches. Our next association will be held with the church at Stem, N. C., the late brother J. H. Gooch's home church. I well remember you were present when the association was held there last. I hope you can be with us at our next session, which will be, as I am sure you understand, the first Saturday, Sunday and Monday in July.

We are having some splendid meetings at our church here in Roxboro. Elder J. A. Herndon is still serving us as pastor. He will soon reach his thirty-second year of continuous service. He has practically lost his eyesight and has to be led around as a child. Although his natural body weakens he seems to be growing in the knowledge of spiritual things. He is really doing some of the best preaching he has ever done. We have a lovely little band of brethren and sisters here at our church which I hope I am thankful for. Some time when you are visiting your people in Virginia we will be very glad to have you come down and be with us at our church. Our meeting time is on the first Saturday and Sunday. I have gotten hold of several copies of your paper, SIGNS OF THE TIMES, here of late. Certainly enjoyed it. I think you are getting out a splendid paper. Enclosed you will find check for $2 for which send the paper for one year. Yours in fellowship,

F. D. LONG.

ELKMONT, Ala.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am sending you one new subscriber and with it $1 to help pay the expense on my paper. Thank you for sending it to me. I promised Mr. Beebe I would send in some money every time I could and will still do so for I do enjoy reading the letters so much. I am very sorry Mr. Beebe had to give up publishing the paper on account of afflicted eyes, but am glad the Lord had another prepared to take up the work. If I know anything I love the doctrine the SIGNS sets forth.

(Mrs.) N. B. CLEM.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Mrs. I. G. Holloway, Md., $2; H. L. Gloer, Ga., $3.50; Mrs. D. Farnie, Va., $1; H. A. Giles, Va., $1; Elder H. O. Nash. Ga., $1.

EDITORIAL

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NEW YEAR'S GREETING

The rapid passing of time has brought us once more to the beginning of another New Year, and while we would like to blot out of memory the horror, destruction, suffering and death of the past year, it will avail us nothing to close our eyes to the facts. So far as our own country is concerned, the worst is doubtless yet to come, and we might as well steel ourselves for what is ahead. To many, it must appear as though we are standing upon a great and high precipice, peering off into the unknown future, wondering what 1943 will bring forth. With unfeigned faith in our God, let us face it with indomitable courage and hope for good news before another New Year is ushered in. We are well aware of the fact that with millions of our fellow-countrymen there will be great anxiety of soul, because of loved ones who may be scattered throughout the world, we know not where, or how it will be with them, but it behooves us to stand in our lot and carry on to the very best of our ability until they return; and if they never return, we shall take refuge in the knowledge that they were in God's hands. There will, also, be innumerable hardships and privations for us who remain behind at our posts to endure, but we, too, must prove ourselves to be good soldiers. It is such times as these that try the hearts and test the souls of men, and it is wonderful, indeed, to those of us who have been given a good hope through grace in the mercy of God to stand still and see his salvation. That hope was given us "as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast," and to be sure it enters "into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Heb. 6:19-20. It is the Lord of hosts who hath charted the sea of life upon which we are sailing, and he is the pilot who is at the helm and will finally bring us to the port of our desired haven of rest. The needle in the compass of faith which he has given us will ever point to him, and he that trusteth in the Lord shall never be put to shame. As much as in us is, therefore, let us trust him whatever betides. Isaiah said, "Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength: for he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city, he layeth it low; he layeth it low, even to the ground; he bringeth it even to the dust." Isa. 26:4-5. In the words of the poet,

The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2 Peter 3:9. If the culmination of what is transpiring throughout the world to-day will be to bring all the nations of the earth down upon their knees, before their God and Creator, it will be well worth the price they are paying. So far as the Lord's people are concerned, we have the assurance in his blessed word that he will not suffer them to be tempted above that they are able to bear, but that he will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that they may be able to bear it.

With regard to the world, notwithstanding the terrible condition in which it finds itself to-day, we can but believe that we already see arising out of the wreck and ruin of much of the best that science and art has given us in the past—a great deal of which can never be replaced—a better and brighter world for those who shall follow us to live in. In the days of Noah the world that then was had waxed wicked and needed to be destroyed; even so, our world, before this war, had grown corrupt and much of mankind was full of haughty pride, its heart and soul being fixed upon the things which perish with the using. Greed for wealth and lust for power were things which were craved above all else by ambitious and designing men, and nothing stood in the way of those who sought it. Men and nations lost their prospective of the better things even of this life, such as honor, justice, liberty and freedom. They were steam-rollering, so to speak, and crushing to earth much of that which makes this life worth while. There is a certain law of life which works inexorably and sooner or later the sins of individuals or peoples will find them out, and whatsoever they sow they are sure to reap. The harvest only proves what was sown, and after the harvest there is a winnowing to separate the chaff from the wheat; the chaff, or that which is useless and vile must be burned with unquenchable fire, while the wheat or that which is of real value will be preserved in the storehouse. As we view it, out of this awful carnage and conflagration, there will come forth much that will be for the advancement and betterment of the human race. Unquestionably a new era is ahead, and war, terrible as it is, is only hastening its coming. Necessity, which is said to be the mother of invention, has laid much upon us, and we have already begun to get a glimpse of some of the miraculous things which are being brought forth. Sciences of all kinds are being greatly advanced; the inventive genius of men's minds is being worked overtime, and the miracle of production is abroad in our land; and in the crucible with our world Allies we shall come to know and understand them better. These things will undoubtedly bear fruit for the good of mankind, and if along with them a World Charter can be produced which will give to all nations alike, freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want and freedom from fear, great progress will have

been made. These things are more precious than life itself to the human race.

While we have been writing above after the manner of men and concerning the things of this world, with which we can but be vitally interested in to some extent, we would not have our readers get the impression that we believe the millennium age is upon us, or that we are facing a Eutopian period. Humanity is corrupt at best and will ever remain so, but it has its depths and its heights and will continue to rise and fall until time shall be no more. There will be wars and rumors of wars till the end shall come, but we have the feeling that after this storm is over there will be a long lull and that during the cessational period that will follow the hell of war, the human race will enjoy as it has never before enjoyed the things which pertain to this life. We would be gloomy, indeed, if we thought all of that through which the world is passing would be for naught. We only hope that it may be the will of our God to grant wisdom to those in authority to see the errors of the past and cause them to build more solidly and securely for the future, and lay a foundation for a more lasting and enduring peace. Unless we misread the handwriting on the wall, after the great conflict is over, there is going to be far more toleration, sympathy and consideration shown to all classes of people, and especially towards the lower or less fortunate groups, than the world has hitherto witnessed.

Having devoted considerable space to the things of time, we will now turn again to the things which shall survive all time, to the things which are eternal. There is no such thing as time with God. All things are present with him. With us here there is time, but it is comparatively such a fleeting moment as to call forth from the noted apostle the following declaration: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." 2 Cor. 4:17-18. When Jesus came into the world to suffer ignomy and shame, he was looking beyond the things which were seen. We are told that it was "for the joy that was set before him" that he "endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Heb. 12:2. The joy that was set before him was that through his sufferings, death and resurrection, his bride, the church, would be restored to him and that they might be joined together in everlasting wedlock throughout all eternity. He verily saw of the travail of his soul and was satisfied, and it is by his knowledge that he justifies many, for he bore their iniquities. It is because of this that Paul admonishes us to "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." "The race that is set before us," and which we cannot alter or change in any way whatsoever, is one that will bring us into contact with many and varied conflicts and ob-

stacles, but with patience, which means endurance, we must run it, and how wonderful it is that we have that faith by which we can look to Jesus. The true church in all ages of the world has looked to Jesus. Every sacrifice and offering made by faith during the legal dispensation was a look to Jesus, to the Lamb of God that should take away the sin of the world. He was that King whom Isaiah said would "reign in righteousness;" he was that man who was to be "an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Isa. 32:1-2. In the forty-sixth Psalm we read, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah." What wonderful assurance is given us here! In the Scriptures the sea is often used to signify the people, while the mountains and hills signify the high places, or the rulers of the earth. It would seem as though some of the literal significance of the foregoing Psalm is being unfolded before our very eyes, for kings, emperors and those who rule the kingdoms of the world are being overthrown and their kingdoms swept away; their governments will go back to the people, and out of them will arise others to rule over them. Seeing, as we believe we do, the hand of God in it all, we shall not fear, but will wait and stay upon our God, who we are persuaded will work all things after the counsel of his own will. In the Psalm referred to the writer says, "Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." We must first see what desolations are wrought in the earth before we stand still and know that he is God; then it is we are taught that he is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Brethren and friends, in this year one thousand nine hundred and forty-three of our Lord, let us not faint or be discouraged, but rather let us take courage in the Lord; let us believe and plead his Holy Word, being assured that none shall seek his face in vain. If we know him in whom we have believed, we are persuaded that he is able to keep that which we have committed unto him against that day, and let us hold fast the form of sound words, which we have heard of him, in faith and love which is in Jesus Christ. While the SIGNS OF THE TIMES enters upon the twelfth decade of its career in the midst of perilous times, our sincere desire and prayer to God is that above the din of battle shall be heard the triumphant shout in every soul, "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

R. L. D.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

In the January issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of last year, we told our readers frankly some of our problems and plans. We feel to follow that precedent again this year.

First, let us say that the brethren and friends have been very considerate and liberal in contributing to the fund for sending our paper to those who are unable to pay for it. If they could only realize what joy they have carried to the hearts of the recipients, they would feel compensated many times over.

We also wish to take this opportunity to thank personally each one who has paid either in whole or in part their back subscription, as well as those who have been prompt in paying their current subscriptions. Beginning with last February we adopted the plan of enclosing a subscription blank in the last issue preceding the expiration date of each subscription. We did this as a reminder, believing in the vast majority of cases failure to renew promptly was due to an oversight, and by this method our subscribers also have thirty days notice of the due date of their subscriptions. We hope this has met with the approval of our readers and that they will continue to send in their renewals as promptly as possible. Some commercial magazines have found it necessary to increase their subscription price, because of having to pay more for paper and the increased difficulties which printers are having with their typesetters and other help incident to war conditions. We do not contemplate increasing the subscription price of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and do not think it will be at all necessary if our subscribers do their part by the paper. There are extra spaces on the blanks referred to for sending in NEW subscriptions and we hope these will not be overlooked. Quite a number of our subscribers have sent in new subscriptions with their renewals and we hope more of them will do so as time goes on.

In this connection, we wish to thank particularly our ministering brethren who have been active in securing NEW subscribers for us. One Elder has sent us nineteen new subscribers; another has sent in sixteen, and a number of others have sent in lesser numbers. Some of our ministering brethren have found it helpful to have sample copies of the paper. These we shall be very glad to supply upon request. Let us emphasize our offer of last year to Ministering brethren by repeating it: We will allow them $1 for each NEW annual subscription they send us. All they have to do is to send us the name and address of the NEW subscriber with $1, retaining the other $1 for their own use. Many of our ministers need financial assistance, and we believe that our brethren and friends will be glad to subscribe to the SIGNS through them if they will only let them know that they are authorized to take subscriptions for the paper. We hope our ministers will make mention of the matter on appropriate occasions.

We would like to request all who have notices of any kind to be published in our paper to send such notices to us at least forty days in advance of the issue of the paper in which said notice is to ap-

pear. We like to furnish the printer not later than the first of each month the material which is to be published in the following month's issue, and we need about ten days in which to prepare copy for the printer. As previously stated, changes of address must reach us before the 15th of the month in order to become effective the following month. Changes reaching us after the 15th of the month cannot be made effective before the second month following such notification. Where changes are made too late to get the next paper at the new address, we suggest that our subscribers have their papers forwarded for that particular month. Normally the paper should be in the hands of our readers around the first of each month, but if they do not receive them by the 10th of the month at the latest, if they will notify us we shall be glad to send another paper. What we have said regarding changes of address also applies to the date to which their subscription is paid that appears on the wrapper cover of the paper. Any subscription which is not paid before the 15th of the month, cannot be credited on the wrapper cover until the second month's paper is received. We have to furnish corrected lists of changes of various kinds on the 15th of each month to the firm who makes our stencils, in order to have them for use by the first of the following month. We make these explanations in order that our subscribers may understand and know what to expect, and if they will be good enough to keep these things in mind they will help lighten our burden very materially.

In conclusion, we wish to say to those who have written to us personally that we would have liked to have answered each one individually; and to those who have requested our views on various portions of the Scripture, we would have been glad to have complied promptly, but it has been physically impossible for us to do all of these things, in addition to other duties. We are endeavoring to do the best we can and hope our brethren will bear with us. We wish to thank those who have contributed to the paper in the past, and since some have fallen out of the ranks and gone to their eternal reward, we hope those who have not heretofore written for the paper will do so.

If our subscribers will kindly make all remittances payable to SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and not to the Editor personally, same will be appreciated.

R. L. D.

Report on Progress of Book to bear title "The Resurrection of the Dead."

In the January, 1942, SIGNS we told our readers that we planned to get together what might prove to be the "greatest collection" of outstanding articles ever assembled on this important subject and publish them, with several articles of our own, in book form. We further stated that the book would probably consist of 150 to 200 pages and that before "obligating ourself for the cost of publishing such a book, we would give our readers a description of what to expect and then wait to hear from them in order to judge whether the demand

would be sufficient to warrant publication."

We are now prepared to report that we have sufficient material to publish a book 9 x 6 inches in size, in good readable type, to consist of 150 to 175 pages. It will be a companion to the book on PREDESTINATION which we published in December, 1926. It will contain 20 to 25 articles, by some of the ablest gifts that the Old School Baptists in this country have ever known. The book will be arranged in two parts: Part I will contain 10 or 12 articles which we regard as favorable to our own point of view, and in this part we plan to have a PREFACE, to be followed by seven articles of our own, covering various particular texts bearing on the subject. In Part II will be found 10 or 12 articles by ministers whose views differ from our own.

The price of the book will be $1 per copy, which will include postage. In order to encourage NEW subscriptions to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, we are going to make a couple of special offers to those who will want the book but are unable to pay for it; (1) With any NEW subscription for a year to the SIGNS at $2 we will send the book free, and (2) in order to make it easy for all of our old subscribers to secure the book, we will send them a copy for each NEW subscription for a year they send us at $2.

We honestly feel that our brethren and friends should read both sides of this question. While able gifts have differed in their views on this subject in the past, it will be seen from the articles which we have gathered together that they continued to walk together in love and fellowship, which was as it should have been. Our purpose in publishing the book is to bring about a better feeling and understanding between the brethren on this point of doctrine.

This notice will probably appear in the January, February and March issues of the SIGNS, in order to afford all of our readers the opportunity of seeing it and making up their minds just how many copies they will want. We hope by the first of April to have heard from a sufficient number to decide how many books to order from the printer. It will then no doubt require until June 1st before the book will be ready for mailing.

May we ask that every one who plans to get a copy of the book let us hear from them promptly. They do not necessarily have to pay at this time, but please place your order now, so as to help us proceed and determine upon the quantity of books to have printed. Those who plan to get a book free by becoming a NEW subscriber at $2 per year, or our present subscribers who will send us a NEW subscription for a year at $2 can do so immediately, if they wish, and we will start sending the paper upon receipt of the subscription, with the understanding that the book will be sent as soon as it is ready for delivery.

We shall now await the pleasure of our readers.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Mates Creek Primitive Baptist Association, held with the Samaria Church, Pike County, Ky., September 4, 5 and 6, 1942.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—Fellowship is a substance, a vital substance. It is the fruit of the Spirit. It is a oneness of feeling, a comradeship, that grows upon the tree of life, and is not manufactured by a man, or any body of men, nor is it ruled or controlled by any earthy power. It is a feeling within the heart, a thing you either have or you do not have, and you cannot create it, nor can you eradicate it. Those who are made one in the Spirit have true and living fellowship for each other, and it matters not whether this is ever written on paper or not, it exists just the same, and even though it be written upon our church records in a formal manner, and later on it be erased, yet if it be the true sort it will endure all the fires of hell. Before a band of people can have fellowship one for another, there must be a oneness of belief, of practice, a oneness of spirit. We often have fellowship of the richest sort for those in tribulation, because we are also in the same condition. Our fellowship reaches to every condition we have ever been in, when we find a companion there. So then fellowship must be a mutual feeling, both in joy or sorrow.

Churches can handle the formal article, which is of very poor quality at best, but they cannot either extend or withdraw the true kind, for it is purely a *personal matter* with the individual, within his or her heart. Most certainly then an association has no jurisdiction whatever in matters in which fellowship is involved, and when an association assumes to be in authority in such matters she then ceases to be an association of the saints of God, but becomes the old red dragon, which John saw. Just because people are in the church together, even though they be the children of God, does not mean that they have fellowship for each other. Surely the two wonders John saw in heaven (the church) were not in fellowship with each other, but on the contrary, they were very antagonistic towards each other, but not any more so then than now. Light has no fellowship with darkness, and the flesh and the Spirit are contrary the one to the other. And I have no doubt but that the old red dragon is in the majority many times in our churches, at least for a time, hence death prevails. And what is true of the church as a whole, is true of all the members individually. I think I know something of that "Law in my members," and the warfare we have within, I feel sure *this is where John saw* the two great wonders, *for "My kingdom is within you,"* HERE RIGHT IN THE HEART. I not only do not have fellowship for my own flesh, but I hate my hateful ways, which cause me to mourn.

There is the natural fellowship, such as is seen in nature everywhere, in our homes, in our schools, in each political

party, and that sort we call patriotism, which is national fellowship. All of which is of, and belongs to, the animal kingdom, and is in no wise different in kind or quality to that possessed by a flock of wild geese, or a hive of bees. And no doubt many church members have never known any other kind, only the formal kind.

The living waters that go out from Jerusalem, in that day, are not and cannot be bounded, nor hindered, nor hurried by any formal order of any church organization, this living water has living fellowship in it. It also has in it peace and love, and all the good things the family of God shall ever need. It reaches to the north and to the south, and in its boundless reaches it goes into all the world, even to those of God's humble poor who have never partaken of the formal ordinances of God's house, even to those countless numbers who have never taken water baptism mere formal church membership cannot hold it in check, as I believe all who are called of God to preach fully realize. Having our names on a church book does not make us members of that church, neither does it give us fellowship, of the true sort.

All our business in both the church and the association should be done in decency and in order, as much as in us is, in a quiet, business like manner, and as such there is a wholesome beauty in it: "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." When all the brotherhood are blessed with soberneess, humbleness, meekness and reason, esteeming another above ourselves. Such order, even an orderly walk, a soberness of conversation, is beautiful to behold, but let us never forget that this is only formal, and cannot give us the substance, and that hypocrites can often excel us in these things. And while we should value these things for what they are worth, we should shun the danger of erroneously over estimating them and making them a hobby.

While I deem fellowship as being a treasure of great value, yet I value forbearance still more highly. In the ark there was a great variety of animals, both the clean and the unclean, and we would naturally conclude that they differed in many ways, and could not have had fellowship in the real sense of the word, however they got along all right together, because of forbearance. The ark is the church, and the creatures therein are the family of God. In the great HOUSE, where there are so many vessels, some to honor and some to dishonor, we again have a vivid picture of the church of God, and those vessels of dishonor are as much the children of God as those vessels of honor, although they could not be in perfect harmony with each other, yet sovereign grace so ruled them that "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb." And while this is true of the body as a whole, it is just as true of all of us individually, as we know by experience. "And a little child shall lead them." May the LITTLE CHILD, CHRIST THE LORD, lead us all in the paths of peace.

Yours to serve,

GILBERT BEEBE BIRD.

CIRCULAR LETTER

Written by Elder John Wilder

The Powell's Valley Association of Primitive Baptists in session with the Mountain Creek Church at Lone Mountain, Tenn., Sept. 4, 5 and 6, 1942.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN: Having been appointed to write a Circular Letter for the Minutes of the Association I will endeavor in my weakness to comply. The scripture that now impresses my mind is: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Isaiah 14:24. These are two immutable things he swore by in which it was impossible for him to lie. We understand that all things that have been, or will be, were thought of by the Lord, and a thought is a formed design of doing something. His design was to do his purpose in all things. Could we say he purposed the coming of Christ and not the fall of man? That would limit God in wisdom and purpose, and if he had not known that Adam would fall why did he give somebody grace before the world was? The Lord knew what he would do before he made him. The prophet well said, "The Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it?" Isaiah 14:-27. According to the Great Architect of heaven, he peopled the earth with its numerous inhabitants, gave to each its specified being, provided all the means for their preservation, continuance and departure in their different generations from the beginning to the end. He sees under the whole heaven and directs all his works. His eyes are on man and he directs all his goings. He hath established his throne in heaven and his kingdom ruleth over all. The eyes of all wait for him and he giveth them their meat in due season. He opens his hand and satisfies the desire of every living thing. He shuts his hand and they are troubled. We are now in trouble in the crisis of the most powerful war that has ever been. We are helpless creatures waiting for the development of His purpose which was considered in His architectural work before the world was.

We will close by saying, "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations." His purposes, designs and understandings are successful and irresistible. This is our faith and we are trusting in God to keep us in this way until the end. Yours in hope.

JOHN WILDER,
Pineville, Ky.

JOHN E. WALTON, Clerk.
Maynardsville, Tenn.

ELDER T. B. THOMAS,
Moderator.
Newport, Tenn.

MEMORIALS

We, the Old School Baptist Church of Jesus Christ called Harmony, Cabbell Co., W. Va., desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our heavenly Father in calling from time, and from our midst, our beloved brother, O. F. Bell.

Resolved, that the church has sustained a

great loss, the children a kind and loving father, the neighborhood a kind and loving neighbor and friend; but while our grief is great indeed, we grieve not as those who have no hope. We feel that our loss is his eternal gain, for 'tis God who has bereft us, he can all our sorrows heal. Oh, for grace to uphold us in our every trial and loss while we remain as pilgrim strangers here below.

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be spread upon our church record book, a copy sent to Elder R. C. and Sister Bell, and a copy sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication. Adopted by order of the church.

H. J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Church Clerk.

Whereas, the churches composing the Bethel Association of Old School Baptists, while in session at Concord Church, Weakley Co., Tenn. desire that a committee be appointed to draft resolutions in memory of Elders R. M. Brann and T. J. Prince, whom we all held in the highest esteem for their soundness in doctrine, faith, practice, orderly walk and godly conversation, and

Whereas, no words can express the loss we feel in their removal from our midst. Elder Prince having served this association as moderator and an humble leader. How the churches served by these brethren do miss them. They were so humble, pleasant and kind we feel their walk and lives were a light for our feet to walk in. They fought a good fight, finished their course and kept the faith and were ready to be offered up. We feel there is a crown laid up for them and that our great loss is their eternal gain, be it

Resolved, that we bow our heads in humble submission to the will of our heavenly Father who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind in removing Elders R. M. Brann and T. J. Prince from our midst, our highly esteemed and greatly beloved brethren. Oh, may God send other laborers in the field to feed the flock which our Lord redeemed by his own blood. We, the committee, feel there are no words to express the confidence that their brethren held them in as servants of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Resolved, that these resolutions be printed in our minutes, and a copy sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Committee { O. W. PERKINS, J. B. COLLIER, T. D. NABORS

OBITUARY

JOSEPH W. CULPEPPER was born April 14, 1859 in Lavaca Co., Texas, and died April 11, 1942 at his home, Stockdale, Texas, making his stay on earth 82 years, 11 months, and 27 days. He was married in 1893 and to this union five children were born. His companion, sister Culpepper, and two children are still living. He united with the Mt. Olive Church, Stockdale, Texas, in 1896 and was chosen deacon, living a devout member until his death.

When Elder J. B. Bowden moved from Kentucky to Texas he preached his first sermon in Texas at brother Culpepper's home. The church had gone down at that time on account of trouble, but the Lord blessed it in the years that followed under Elder Bowden's preaching and brother Culpepper's watchful care. Truly a fireside preacher and a father in Israel has gone to his reward. He was highly thought of in his community, and his home always had an open door to the Old Baptists. He passed away peacefully. He often spoke of his willingness to go when his time came, believing that in that morning of the resurrection he would come into possession in its fullness of that body that Jesus taught his disciples that they would have in that day. No more aches, pains, disappointments or sorrows, but to praise his holy name for evermore. O the wonders of our God, and his working among his little ones here on earth. Written by request of sister Culpepper. E. B. AULT.

WILLIAM MESHACK DORRIS was born May 17, 1877 and departed this life August 25, 1942, making his stay on earth 65 years, 3 months and 8 days. His mother, Mrs. Henry J. Dorris, was an Old School Baptist. He professed a hope in the Lord at the age of 23 and united with the New Hope Baptist Church (Missionary) of which he was a member until he died. We both enjoyed reading the SIGNS. It was like going to preaching and we agreed that when one of us passed away the other would send an obituary to the SIGNS for publication. He was in bad health with lung trouble for thirty-one years and suffered very much. He felt that he could not get well and was ready and willing to go, feeling that he would be at rest. Having been married Sept. 21, 1910 we lived together almost thirty-two years and I miss him greatly. He cannot come

back to me but I am thankful to the Lord that I can go to him. I surely feel that he is in a better world than this where there are no farewell words and no tear dimmed eyes.

A precious one from us has gone,
A voice we loved is stilled;
A place is vacant in our home,
That never can be filled.

The funeral service was conducted by Mr. W. W. Miles at New Hope Church, at three o'clock, August 26, 1942. Interment in Beech Cemetery. Written by his loving wife whose pleasure it was to do all she possibly could for him. (Mrs.) W. M. DORRIS.

MRS. SADIE F. HARDY passed away September 21, 1942 at my home in Onalaska, Washington. She had lived with me but two short months. She was born April 16, 1863 and married Joel D. Hardy September 9, 1888. Both had been members of the Primitive Baptist Church for many years. Father preceded her in death a little more than six years. On September 15th she suffered a stroke followed by another on September 19th. Her entire right side was paralyzed. After having many heart to heart talks with her previously I am sure this is just as she would have wished it to be. There are seven children left to mourn her passing. Mrs. Flora Whealdon, Tacoma, Wash.; H. Boies Hardy, Olympia, Wash.; Mrs. Jessie H. Bailor, Onalaska, Wash.; Warrant Officer, John M. Hardy, U. S. Navy, Moffett Field, Cal.; Joseph P. Hardy, Portland, Ore.; Pvt. Thos. J. Hardy, Ft. Lewis, Wash., and Mrs. Cassie M. Stevens, Seattle, Wash. She also left eleven grandchildren and many other relatives and friends. She was laid to rest beside our father in Mt. View Cemetery, Centralia, Wash., September 24, 1942. Jesus said, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." I feel that mother is now experiencing that joy.

(Mrs.) JESSIE HARDY BAILOR.

BIBLE TRUTH

Is the title of a 115-page book by ELDER LYTLE BURNS, 406 Viola Street, Florence, Ala.

Many beautiful truths are presented by him in PROSE and POETRY in this book. Please order direct from Elder Burns at $1 per copy.

WANTED

Volumes I and II of Editorials, by Elder Gilbert Beebe; also JOHN GILL'S Commentary on both the Old and the New Testament Scriptures.

Anyone having or knowing of one who has any or all of the above will please communicate with Elder W. D. Griffin, Fayette, Ala., giving particulars. R. L. D.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure, we will mail them another copy free of charge.

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. ELDER W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
ELDER H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
ELDER H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.
ELDER O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th Street, Mayfield, Ky. Those interested will be welcome.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
IN
NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.
Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.
To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A. M.
ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A. M. 2 P. M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sundays in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P. M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sundays each month at 11:00 A. M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Locust Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Eligin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas. Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Texas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

VOL. 111 RUTHERFORD, N. J., FEBRUARY, 1943 No. 2

CORRESPONDENCE

FAYETTE, Ala.

"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven." Psalms 107:23 to 30 inc.

This language comes from the sweet singer in Israel. It is to, for and by the Lord's anointed. None can write such sublime things save those who have been brought to such a place. None can receive them save those who have been chosen and caused to approach unto him (Psalms 65:4) who fills heaven and earth. These people are a certain, restricted people. It is not everybody that goes down to the sea. It is the elect lady and her children. The Bible is full of pronouns that limit. It is us and they and them, and to these people the promises, commands and exhortations of the Bible are universal. None are more firm in believing in the universality of the salvation of the Lord than are the Old Baptists. In fact their brand of universality is much better than the world's can ever be. The world's kind is to everybody (without Bible authority) but based on conditions to be performed by the creature, which would damn the whole Adamic race, but the Old Baptists teach universalism to all the family of God (by Bible authority); not one of them can ever fail because the blood of the Lamb cleanses from all their sins. My understanding of this going down to sea may not coincide with your experience. If it does not, cast it aside. If it does, praise God who has given you all things pertaining to life and godliness. 2 Peter 1:3. Now, the non-elect do not go down. They are down to start with and stay down. They think they are up to start with and that they stay that way. To God, our Saviour, the elect are up and have been from everlasting, but they must be tried. Oh, how wonderful and blessed it is to have God, the Almighty One, as the one to try his own

precious children, and how good to be given an eye (God's dear little children are one eyed—an eye single to the glory of God) to see and understand that he does not try us to know us better. No, no, not that. The trial of his people brings him glory now and good to his people now and later glorification in heaven. The sea is used a lot in the Bible to portray the travel and experience of the family of God. There are many references in the Bible in regard to the literal or natural sea that must be treated in spiritual sense. I think that I am safe in applying the sea to our trials and tribulations; to our experience here in time and to the manifold temptations of the evil one. Commerce is carried on on the sea. It is a place to trade what you have to another for what he has. A trader might have a storehouse of goods and another not know it. They might not know that the goods he had were very valuable, but if the necessity came up and circumstances were altered, the same independent trader might come to be very dependent on the goods of the rich trader. Our God is not a trader. He does not have anything to trade, offer or sell to any would-be traders, but we, natural men, are traders. That is the system that runs the modern religious world. God brings his people to see his law as a righteous, holy law. Seeing that law and seeing ourselves we start in business. It is not our intention to go down. To us it is going up. Jericho means fragrance and we have a good smell to ourselves. Such an odor undoubtedly goes up. It cannot but lead to higher and nobler things. Another name for this fragrance is free will. Some people call it ability, a few know it by self-righteousness. Seeing God in possession of heaven and earth and all things in them, and having religion, (Acts 26:5) we set out (to us up, to God down) to procure us some of God's possessions. I do not mean that we join a navy and literally go to sea, but we go in business—trading our self-righteousness to God. Now dear child of God, do you not remember the gaudy ship that you set sail in? Ah, yes the sea was angry; the wind was howling on the face of the deep; waves were rolling high in many mighty surges, but you had a ship in reserve to stand up under all the hammering of the sea.

> Self-righteous souls on works rely,
> And boast their moral dignity.

They start out in their ships to trade and traffic with Jesus. Poor pilgrim did you ever go to sea like this? Have you ever been given to see God's holy law? Did you not realize that you had broken it? Did you not see that to live with him you must be a law-keeper? Ah, methinks I have traveled with you. May be I should blush but I am going to say that I am glad that I went (as I hope) down to sea to do business in great waters. I believe I was taught a valuable lesson. I went into great waters, great religious schemes for trading my good deeds for God's notice. To go into great waters calls for great ships. I had one of the fairest colors and manned by the finest captain that was in the navigation business. Oh, what great business I had to carry on! A storm plays more havoc among great edifices. The plain shows

but little results of the raging winds, but among the huge structures it brings a terrible devastation. I am trying to tell my experience just here. In some ways I believe and hope it will cause your poor heart to respond. Travel with me on this journey of retrospection. It seems to me tonight but a days journey, so vividly, so clearly do I behold those things again. Can you remember the Titanic? I was she. A vessel setting forth to do great business in great waters. I was the captain! The law could be kept! I was going to exemplify that once and for all. I intended—the children of God intend—to show their own works while on the sea. I think that our first experience teaches us of God's predestination. We proposed to show God and the world (not his children) our works. God disposed of our intentions (as he does the intentions of all men) to his name's honor and glory and showed us his works. A storm comes up. It is not the evil one's storm, but, it belongs, as does all things to our God. Poor trembling soul have you ever felt horror in your soul because of the dark clouds that were arising? This storm is good for the children of God. This is one experience that you cannot completely forget. This is one storm that you will be able to recall for evidence many times. To forget the mighty wind (John 3:8) you cannot; to run away in memory from the mighty flood (Psalms 69:12) is something beyond a child of God; to get away from the violent fire that accompanies this wind and flood you cannot. Fear begins to grip you in its grasp. Perhaps after all the graceful ship was not as seaworthy as you thought it was. Oh, how we did struggle to man our ship and keep it aright of the waves. Up, down, up, down, to and fro, we were tossed, but, alas, to no avail. Our strength was ebbing away; no longer could we ride the tempestuous waters evenly; our soul was melted in us because of the sore trouble we were in.

Prayer after prayer left our sin polluted lips; not any more were we able to keep the law; not any more did we have anything to trade to the Lord; not any more did we esteem our ship as being gaudy and able. We set out willing to have justice done in the matter, but now we have seen how ruined and wretched and foolish we were. Justice is not our theme any longer, but mercy is our desire. Oh, dear reader, now after all these years do you not recall to mind the many spots that you stole away to try again and again to beg for mercy? Are not these scenes very precious to you now? Do you not have to travel back to them in the day of temptation and adversity? This storm is in and of and through God. Every good and perfect gift comes down from God. He does not have any variation about him, he does not have a shadow of turning. This storm is God's storm, it is his gift to his children, it does not vary or turn from its course until it has laid waste every object that it is directed against. It brings them to their wits end. Job, David, Moses, Isaiah, Jonah, Paul, Peter and all of those witnesses came to their wit's end. Here is the time, here is the place, here is the way. I know, if I am not deceived, that it is grievous to God's dear

children to come to the end, but I do not know of anything that we enjoy hearing about any more. Here our ships and our goods sank away into insignificance. Our ship was a complete wreck. Wind and flood and fire had wrought havoc on it. We left it strewn and scattered. Our goods that were so fit at the outset of our voyage are now become a stench in our nostrils. It is to the God of this storm that we now cry. Up until now we have not known the sovereignty of God, his all prevailing name has never had the beauty that it now has. Dear child of God, he hears you cry to him. Our dear Saviour has never sent one away empty that came begging mercy for the sake of himself. He does not have to wait to see if we will cry, but he knows the outcome of our voyage. All is already known to him, but we must be carried completely through to victory. Our cry to him may not be in an audible voice, but nevertheless he hears our cry of exhaustion. There amidst all the tumult and confusion of the roaring wind, boisterous waves and searing flames, he comes to us in swift answer to our cry unto him. Talk about conditionalism! No place for it here. We do not cry until we have it to do. He does not come to us with relief until we do cry. So it is grace first, last and all the time. It is a complete deliverance from the power of the storm. Notice, dear trembling child, that peace, joy and love becomes yours there in that same sea that brought you so many distresses and sore afflictions. This is God's way. The children of Israel found dry ground when the Egyptians found a watery grave; the Hebrew children had Jesus as a companion in the fire; Sampson got sweetness from the carcass of the lion; Paul was sent on to Damascus. So we could go on telling of God's miraculous ways of dealing with his children. In our experience, when we are in the midst of the storm, we do not see how we could ever be in peace and calm again, but our God controls everything. He raises the storm, he makes the storm a calm. Not that Satan raises the storm and God makes it calm. This is all the work of God. The bringing of the calm, the stilling of the waves—all of it is of God. Who can keep from being still? After all the conflict we have been in being still is so sweet and restful. How glad are the children of God in this quietness. Our meditation of him is so sweet. We are glad in the deliverance of the Lord. (Psalms 104:34). Here we rest our case in him. No more do we labor and carry a heavy and wearisome burden. We have heard his voice, it is the sweetest voice to our ears. We sing,

> Lord! submissive make us go,
> Gladly leaving all below;
> Only thou our leader be,
> And we still will follow thee.

knowing that he brings into the desired haven of rest. In love.

W. D. GRIFFIN.

MERRYVILLE, La.

"By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent."—Job 26, 13.

In order to get a solid foundation it is necessary to go back to the foundation of the world. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Gen. 1:1. On down through the chapter we see that God created everything just as he wanted it for he said it was good and

very good. Yes, good for the purpose for which he created it. "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." Gen. 2:1. "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." (Note it does not say every good thing.) There is "A (specific) time to be born, (naturally and spiritually) and a time to die." Eccl. 3:1, 2. This same omnipotent God says, "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." Isa. 45:7. "By his spirit he hath garnished (decorated) the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent." Job 26:13. "I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me." Isa. 46:9. He looked down through time and declared, "I will do all my pleasure." Isa. 46:10. We feel that we have proven beyond the doubt of any spiritual minded person that God is above all things that exist. We also affirm without fear of successful contradiction that whatever he doeth is right. We find fault because it does not suit our sinful desires. God is above all law, therefore, cannot be arraigned before any court of justice. Yes, says somebody, I thought you were going to make God the author of sin. When Jesus Christ was here on earth the people fell out with him for teaching the very same thing I have tried to set forth above. We hear him declaring, "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me." Therefore, if it is God's doctrine all the demons in and out of torment are not able to overthrow it. God has all power both in heaven and on the earth. The devil has only the power delegated to him. Prior to 1832 there was only one class of baptists in the United States. About that date came a division. Some claimed that there were conditions binding on the creature which would make it possible to save and be saved. Those same people are amongst us yet and I am sorry that some of them are trying to wear the name of Primitive Baptist. Primitive means first and there was no conditionalism taught by Jesus Christ in the apostolic day. "They went out from us, but they were not of us." 1 John 2:19. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it (faith) is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Eph. 2:8, 9. He has declared that he will never leave himself without a witness. Acts 14:17. Things went on more smoothly amongst the Old School or Primitive Baptists for a number of years. About the year 1892 there arose another sect; men who had crept in to spy out the liberty of the saints, who are teaching works for time salvation. These false teachers made havoc of the church and drew off disciples after them. One of old wrote of these same characters as saying, our craft is in danger. Acts 19:27. Salvation by grace alone cuts man out (endangers our craft). As a slur against those who contend for grace doctrine they have been named absoluters by the enemies of the truth. They are also called predestinarians. Let us see if their nicknames are any disgrace. Absolute means sure, unchangeable. Not such a bad name after all. Predestination simply means fixed before hand and Israel's God did that. "I am God, and there is none like me, Declar-

ing the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isa. 46:9, 10. Now let us hear the witness, Job. "He taketh away, who can hinder him?" Job 9:12. Israel's God was able to make a world like this out of nothing and hang it upon nothing. He only has to speak and it is done. His decrees stand fast, so we must conclude that he is absolute (unchangeable). A God who has fixed all things in his eternal mind before time was (predestinated if you please). "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed so shall it stand." Isa. 14:24. O well, says somebody, I heard that you predestinarians teach that God makes man sin. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." James 1:13, 14. That falsehood is a twin brother to the one that says they preach infants in hell not a span long. If there is such a thing as preaching infants in hell, the Primitive Baptists are the only ones under my knowledge that do not preach it. Salvation by grace is the only doctrine that will reach the infant and adult alike. Grace doctrine is the only doctrine that could have reached Jacob. "(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger." Rom. 9:11, 12. Grace doctrine is the only doctrine that could have reached John the Baptist three months before he was born and caused him to leap for joy. By the transgression of Adam all have sinned, therefore, man does not have to be made to sin, it is just as natural with him as it is for a fish to swim, and unless kept under subjection by the power of Almighty God he is sure to sin. Some teach that Adam was made able to stand but liable to fall. Such doctrine is just as rotten as its author—the devil. Holy writ teaches that Christ stood a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Rev. 13:8. Had Adam not sinned he (Adam) would have outwitted God, and he (God) would not have had any use for Christ as a sacrifice for sin. Because God knew Adam would partake of the forbidden fruit did not make him (Adam) sin but had Adam stood as some say he could God would not have been all wise. My belief is that God had just as much use for the serpent as he had for the Saviour. Had it not been for the serpent Adam would not have fallen, consequently there would have been no need for a redeemer. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Rom. 8:28. God works on both ends of the rope. "What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Job 2:10. A preacher once said it was a shame Christ was crucified. Poor blind fellow. If Christ had not been crucified where would lost sinners have been today? Without shedding of blood

there is no remission, but the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. Heb. 9:22. It was needful for the precious Lamb of God to shed his blood for lost and ruined sinners like you and me, and it was just as needful that there be somebody ready to commit the crime. "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" John 6:70. Yet God is without fault. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Acts 2:23. Can any one entertain the idea that an upright, God fearing person would have committed such an horrible crime as that? There was a Judas (a devil) raised up for that very purpose. Judas was not forced to betray the Saviour, but for the lust he had for the reward, he did it of his own accord. God knew this wicked act would take place and declared it hundreds of years before hand by the mouth of his prophets, yet his knowing it and declaring it would be did not make him the author of it. He knew it, therefore, it had to take place else he would have thought something that was not. Will ask all praying people to try to remember me at the throne of grace.

J. PAUL McMILLIAN

Route 1, Box 69, CHICO, Cal.

DEAR CHILD OF THE MOST HIGH GOD:

It is with misgivings, much fear and doubt that I attempt to set down what I hope has been the dealings of the Lord with me, but I have long felt that I would like to tell some one. As I am not acquainted with a single person that I feel I can write to I have picked on you as one most apt to cast the mantle of charity over all faults and tell me if you think it only a sick, deranged mind. I was born of Old Baptists on both sides. All of mother's people and, as far as I know, all of father's were members of that church. They came to the middle West and there I was born and reared. There was no church there so I never heard a sermon, but they took the SIGNS and my younger sister and I spent so much time listening to our uncle and second father talk we thought they were almost gods. Time passed and mother died. I was past seventeen and began to realize I was a very great sinner. As I went about my work I became incompetent, my mind wandered and it was very hard. I was working on a big ranch, cooking and doing house work. I had spasms but still I worked. The woman I worked for hated me, so she said later, because my eyes were always red from crying. I could not help it. I would have liked to run away and hide but could not leave my work. I surely was miserable. We all went to a literary meeting one night. I felt like they were all rejoicing right at hell's door. We also went to church there in an old log school-house. You think I am crazy, or was then, as I felt like the house was suspended over the bottomless pit. They sang "Ninety and nine that safely lay in the shelter of the fold." It seemed I was the one that was out on the desert away from the fold. This went on for some time when one day it seemed I could not stand it any longer and live. I was in the kitchen washing dishes and words fail me to tell of the agony I was in. I closed my eyes and dropped my head back as far as I

could holding it there. It seemed I wasn't there at all, but sitting behind some oak bush with cliffs on three sides of me, and the open desert spread out before me. You will remember it, or read it if you will, that ninety and nine song. "Out in the desert, he heard it cry; sick and helpless and ready to die." It seemed I was in a dying condition. I seemed to look above the high bluff, and there I saw a crescent of clouds. I noticed grey, white and gold. Then above and on the clouds with a long white robe and bare footed, Jesus stood. I do not know how long I looked, and I cannot remember how I finished the dishes. I was still sick for many months, and I was not in that happy, rapturous frame of mind that many tell of, but there was a sweet, quiet peace, undisturbed by other things. It was a strange thing, there was a bluff called Stancliffs Castle to be seen from the kitchen window, and I could hardly work for the desire to gaze at that cliff. It seemed Jesus would step out on top. I know no mortal eye could see a man so far but that did not check that desire.

I moved with my oldest sister to a mining town. We lived down by the river away from the town some distance. There across the river was a round topped hill. It was on the top of it that I watched as long as we stayed there but I did not see Him. May be you do not believe in dreams, as a rule I do not, but many years after, my husband and I lived at a stone quarry out from Fort Collins, Col., when I had this dream. I was on my knees on the edge of a porch and saw a light coming towards me from the East. Like a cloud it got brighter and brighter until it came almost to me, and in the midst of the light, kneeling with his hands clasped and his eyes looking up, his back to me, knelt Jesus praying. I called my husband and we both knelt. Jesus was still kneeling but much farther away. Going as he came. I awoke and for many days it seemed I was filled to the over flow. There is a spark of hope that refuses to die though I surely have had many trials and sorrows. I have not been baptized. How often I have been told the Scriptures demand it, that one can not be saved except they are baptized. This is not for publication, but please take a few minutes of your most valuable time and tell me if you think it was only the deranged mind caused from my sick condition. Whatever you may think, I hope you will not quit sending me the SIGNS. If you do I will have only the Bible. From an old sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

MARION S. BROOKS

[While the writer of the foregoing letter says it was not written for publication, it impresses us as being an oasis in the desert and we do not believe that many of our readers will read it without being refreshed in the inner man. If we are any judge at all of God's dealings with his people, we feel confident that he has written his law in the heart of our friend, and we are made to rejoice over the testimony which she has given. God is most certainly able to communicate with his people in dreams when it is his pleasure so to do, and we do not wish to deprive any of comfort and consolation which has come to them in this manner. So far as we, personally, are concerned,

we have never had many dreams that we felt to attach much spiritual importance to, but at the same time we do not question that God speaks to his people through the medium of dreams. There is one thing that we are very definitely convinced of, and that is that water baptism is not essential to eternal salvation. If there was no other case in all of the Bible than the one which comes to our mind at this time, it would be sufficient to satisfy us that our home in heaven is not conditioned upon any such flimsy foundation. We have reference to the thief on the cross, to whom Jesus said, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." There is no evidence to show that the penitent thief received water baptism, but there is evidence to show that he received baptism by the Holy Ghost, which is the all-important thing, and without which no one is properly qualified to be baptized into the fellowship of the gospel church. Paul in his second epistle to Timothy said, "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." 2nd Tim. 2:19 Water baptism is the doorway through which the Lord's people enter into the visible church, but it is by no means essential to eternal salvation. Let us not be deceived about this matter. R. L. D.]

ISLAND CITY, Oregon

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

I have just returned from the annual corresponding meeting of the Idaho, Oregon and Washington Border Union of Old School Baptists held with the Pleasant Grove Church of Yakima, Washington, at the home of Elder A. D. Hughet. This was one of the most interesting and best attended meetings we have ever had. Seven churches were represented there by members and in most cases by their pastors. We had almost doubted the propriety of trying to hold a meeting this year because of the war conditions and the restrictions prevailing now, but letters from brethren from distant churches desiring to attend caused us to go forward, and we were all surprised and blessed when we saw the many visitors and the interest manifested. Most of these people came two hundred miles or more and deep interest and solemnity prevailed at every service. A number of members and friends subscribed for the SIGNS, a list of which I am enclosing herewith. Many of us, like Bunyan's Pilgrim, had gotten into Doubting Castle, held captive by Giant Despair, but at this meeting we were reminded of the key of faith we carried in our bosoms, the bars of the door were thrown back, and we went forth on our journey with renewed joy and hope. If it will interest our brethren to know more of us here in the Northwest I will give a brief account of our Union or Corresponding Meeting.

About twenty-five years ago four of our churches organized the Corresponding Union which meets once a year at one of the churches, taken in regular order, and has not missed a meeting since. At first there was little interest for the membership generally did not seem to consider it of importance suffi-

cient for the sacrifice of going the necessary distance to attend, but from year to year it has grown in favor, and we now look forward to it as of special importance. Our churches of small membership are encouraged when numbers of their brethren come to visit them, and join in the worship of the God it is their chief desire to honor and praise. There are still the four original churches in this union and we get to each church once every fourth year so that our members have become acquainted, and a strong fellowship exists among them. This could not have been attained by the independent church services of themselves. There were three other churches represented at this meeting, and they are considering the organization of another union to include them, when, if organized, these two unions will be appointed to meet, one in the spring, the other in the fall, so that exchange of visits of the two may be possible and encouraged. We feel to encourage such a move, but we know that unless the Lord builds the house they labor in vain that build it.

Our next annual meeting is appointed to be with the Big Spring Church and is likely to be with us here in Island City where we have plenty of room and we extend an invitation to all lovers of the truth, who can, to meet with us. Our membership is small in number and our churches are one hundred twenty-five miles apart, but we believe as firmly in the sovereignty of God as any people on earth, and we feel blessed to welcome his saints to our assemblies. Most of our ministers are in the evening of life and we feel that their work is almost finished. We pray the Lord of the harvest to send us some young gifts to help feed the flock of God. We have a good country, good climate, good people as anywhere in the world, plenty of room and a welcome. Yours in tribulation and hope.

C. W. BOND

TILLSONBURG, Canada

DEAR PASTOR AND SISTER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:

Again it is about time for another of our meetings, and as much as I would like to be there and mingle with the dear brethren and sisters, and hear the gospel preached in its purity, I do not expect it to be my privilege. Somehow I am allowed to stay here and it looks like I may be here for the winter if I should be spared. We do not know what is in store for us, but we hope we may be given faith to look to the One who has brought us thus far, and that he will keep us to the end. Does it not say, "He will keep the feet of his saints." At once the question arises, yes, but am I so favored as to be numbered among them. Still I hope on against hope. I realize the anxiety you must have with the care of the flock you are over. One by one both those inside and outside the camp are called to the great beyond which I feel must be very depressing, but we know it is but the course of nature. We are told, one generation passeth away, and another taketh its place, and we all do fade as a leaf. Surely this time of year reminds us of that. It also causes a sadness. It is, as it were, the evening of life. I should like so very much to hear Elder Dodson again, but if it is the Lord's will I know

we can be fed at home. I look back to many pleasant meetings at Duart. A staunch sister, in Mrs. Campbell, will be missed. Two years ago was the last I was there when my dear companion was favored to be there with us. Little did I think his end was so near. I did not think I could go on without him, but I trust the dear Lord has been my strength and helper. I hope you have an enjoyable and profitable meeting in the Lord. Yours in hope.

ELLA JONES

(The above letter was written to Elder George and sister Ruston.)

Route 3, COLEMAN, Texas

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,
DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:

Please send the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to my present address. I am enclosing $2.00 P.O. money-order. This is my first time to subscribe for the SIGNS. I have read it occasionally for thirty-years as my father and mother have been taking the paper for about that many years. I have said such papers should not be printed, but I was wrong in that as I have been in many things. We have the Bible but it can be understood but one way. Paul says, "I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Many things could be put on paper today that some could not understand, but to others it would be a comfort, and so I am glad the SIGNS is still being printed. A brother in hope if I am a child.

C. U. LANDERS

NEW YORK, N. Y.

DEAR SISTER SHAFER: I wish it were possible to tell you how sincerely we appreciate the loving kindness you have always manifested toward us, ever since we first met. But it is something that cannot be put in words. When we try to speak of what the love of God toward us means, we find it to be inexpressible; "the love of Jesus, what it is, none but his loved ones know." And thus it is with all them who love one another for Jesus sake. It cannot be expressed, but it *is* lived. And the comfort and joy of our life is the assurance of the living, undissimulated love of the brethren toward us.

The loving kindness of my people, and its demonstration toward me, is all that makes life worth living, and the fervent prayer in my heart is for the Lord to preserve me from ever hurting their peace and welfare. The fear oppresses me continually that offense may come by me, in word or deed, to disturb the quietness and rest of this people whom I trust are my people, and whose God is my God. "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," is the living, moving spirit of our people, and I am glad and thankful to God for his mercy and goodness to us.

In the love and fellowship of gospel bonds I am, I hope, your brother in like precious faith.

(The late Elder)
JOHN McCONNELL.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

Several times I have picked up my pen with the intention of writing you but I could not. I am writing this just

before leaving. I know not where my duties in serving my country will carry me. When I was drafted in peace time I will never forget the strange feeling that I had. I could not have told why I felt that way but I did not believe I would be back in a year. Though I was blessed to keep it hid and face it with a smile I lost a few nights sleep, but just before I left, every fear left me so quickly and clearly I could not help but feel that nothing of harm was before me but a blessing instead. I have witnessed several occasions that would be considered shaky times. So many others on all sides of me seemed to be deeply troubled. I could not help but fall in with them, but as soon as I had done so (my mind on the troubles of situations) the remembrance of the relief of the fears in the beginning returned with such shining brightness that I could not erase the smiles, and tried to speak encouragement to those near me. It may seem strange to you, and you may pronounce me crazy, but I am going to say that I do not believe Hitler will ever make a bomb or bullet that will cause me to fear, and I feel I have learned enough to have a good idea of what it is going to be like when the bombs and the bullets start roaring. That is saying a lot, and when I concentrate on what I have said, and on my feelings from time to time, then is when the fear comes, a trembling fear that I might be deceived in myself, fearing the power of God not Hitler. I used to wonder why such great fear would rest on me in that way when nothing whatsoever would stir me naturally. I hope my prayer is, and will continue to be, that I be made humble and kept humble at all times. If I now have any enlightenment it is the fear of God that causes one to be humble. One might think that when a mystery was unfolded (which had caused a fear) there would be peace and no more fear. This might be so for a short while, but just as sure as the fear was a fear of God, this natural life which we have to live will surely bring new fears. If we were allowed to live in peace and have no fear the humbleness would soon disappear which is not to be among God's children. May it please God to bless you in your work with all needs and when you are met with those trembling fears it will be for the purpose of humility. I do not think my address will change any more until after the storm so please make the change in your mailing list if not too much trouble.

PFC. WAYLON H. CHANDLER,
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PSALM 133, 1.

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

EDITORIAL
RUTHERFORD, N. J. FEBRUARY, 1943

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EDITORIAL

1 Corinthians 15:22-26

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

Of Adam it is written: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. Genesis 2, 7. Also, "God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." Genesis 1, 27. Thus the first man was of the earth, earthy, for the name Adam signifies red earth. Adam lived, begat sons and daughters in his own likeness, and died when he was nine hundred and thirty years old. Adam's family, each generation of them, has died, down to the present time, except two persons. One, Enoch, the seventh from Adam, was translated that he should not see death, and was not found, because God had translated him. The other was Elijah, who also was taken from the earth without dying. Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. These two gracious men are exceptions, but it can be said, "in Adam all die." We believe that death passed upon Adam and all his seed the day he transgressed. When he begat children they were conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity, and went from the womb speaking lies. They were dead in trespasses and sins, lost and ruined by the fall. The soul of man, made by the breath of God, was through that transgression dead to that holy innocency which man once enjoyed when he walked with his God, and alive in sin in which man was conceived. When man's body has lived out the number of his days, that body dies. He may be killed by his fellow-man, but his soul lives on, either in a state of blessedness or of everlasting woe. Jesus said "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Matthew 10, 28. It is Adam's body that died, and all his family, from the beginning to the present time, have gone that way, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. Paul asks, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" Acts 26, 8. The Sadducees said that there was no resurrection, the Pharisees believed in the resurrection of the just and the unjust. Paul had a hope towards God, which they also allowed,

that there SHALL BE a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. If the resurrection was just Christ's body being raised, why does he say he has a hope, for hope that is seen is not hope. Paul had been born again, so he was not hoping for that, but he had a hope towards God, which they also allowed, that is the Pharisees. Some, who may have contrary views, will say, when the resurrection is spoken of, you believe just like other religions. The Pharisees believing it did not make it wrong. Other religions believe in the Word of God, both Old and New Testaments. Shall we renounce the Bible for that reason? Let us consider the words "even so," which means without limitation or subtraction but just as he says. Jesus said, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." Taking these words in their simplicity, God having hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes, he would have it just that way without any reservation. It is the man made of the dust of the ground that has sinned and who must die and after death be judged according to the deeds done in his body, whether good or bad. Adam was a sinner when he begat his first son, and that son was born dead in trespasses and sins, but he did not know this, nor ever would in this life unless he were quickened by the Spirit of God. That body is not quickened here, it is the soul who was alive in sin. By the Spirit's work it is made alive to sin, and the flesh not then being changed, from that day there is a warfare of flesh against spirit and spirit against flesh. It was this truth that made Paul to cry "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Another rendering of the translators is, who shall deliver me from this body of death? When deliverance first came to us from our burden of sin, it came through the operation of the Holy Spirit. Christ was born in our hearts the hope of glory. "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." Such have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, although the body is still in the bondage of corruption, but they have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry "Abba Father." Thus we are enabled to worship God in the Spirit and have no confidence in the flesh, the Spirit bearing witness with our spirits that we are children of God. In spirit, children of God. In body, sons and daughters of Adam. In the body we find infirmities, in it we groan, suffer pain and privation, yet Paul says, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God," "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Ro-

mans 8:22, 23. God's children already have the Spirit of adoption which Paul calls the first-fruits of the Spirit, as distinct from the first-fruits of the body, which is in Heaven in the person of Jesus Christ. We have the Spirit of adoption, but are waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. Some might ask, where is the body redeemed from? We answer, according to the Word, it shall be redeemed from the grave. It would be interesting here to look at the word resurrection, does it not mean the raising up of that which has gone down in death? It is like the awakening out of sleep or the quickening of a seed. It is the same IT that is sown in corruption that is raised in incorruption, the same IT that is sown mortal is raised immortal. If the same body be not raised, then it is not a resurrection but a creation. If one died and were immediately quickened and taken to Heaven, it would be a quickening but not a resurrection. There is an order in this matter in the fulfillment of God's purpose. Let us examine it, for they are not changed into the likeness of Christ at death. Jesus' Spirit went to Paradise at death, so did the dying thief's, for Jesus said, "Today shalt thou be with me (my Spirit) in Paradise." The spirits, all that have departed in Christ, are in Paradise, the "Paradise of God." Their bodies are sleeping in the graves until the last trump. Not so, the Spirit of. Jesus. It left Paradise, joining his blessed body, God raising him from the dead. This is referred to by Paul as fulfilling the second Psalm. "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." From that moment the Eternal Son of God had an *immortal body*. His mortal body died and was raised immortal, so that he, Jesus, hath brought life to light. More than that, he hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. Paul tells us that the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible. Some have inferred that this trumpet is the gospel trumpet, but follow the thought a little further. Does the blowing of the gospel trumpet raise the dead? The Arminians may think so, do we? No, the trump of God is not the gospel trumpet. It has never been blown by man. It will be blown at the end spoken of in our subject. Christ's body was laid in the grave with the whole company of those who had died before, but Jesus has risen from the dead and become the first-fruits of them. Under the law, as was the first-fruits, so was the harvest. Jesus was acceptable unto God as the first-fruits of them that slept, and all them that ever will sleep in the grave. We say again, he has already risen. The rest, that is, those who are Christ's, will be raised at his coming. Does this just mean when he comes by his Spirit to comfort his children, or when he came to destroy the Jewish nation, and scatter them as wanderers upon the face of the earth? No, we do not feel that. That is not the coming here spoken of, for we see in the following when his coming will be. It will be before he has delivered up the kingdom to his Father, before the end spoken of in our text. It will be at the last day, whatever and whenever that day will be. Until then, the heavens have received

him until the times of restitution of all things, and he now sits at the right hand of God, expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. That body, which was crowned with thorns, is now in heaven, "decked with resplendent wounds," yet glorified. John speaks of him as the Lamb in the midst of the throne, the Lamb, to show that it is the same Jesus who suffered, who is now Lord of all. How glorious and soul-comforting is this truth to God's despised and afflicted people, for they shall see his face. The disciples saw him taken up into heaven, a cloud receiving him out of their sight. "And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? *This same Jesus,* which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." But had he not said "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." His Spirit is with his people while he is in heaven on his throne. He will come in like manner and he will be the same Jesus, and every eye shall see him. We look for his appearing. The Church of God, as wise virgins with their lamps trimmed, is waiting for her Lord. Paul said the Thessalonians had turned from idols to serve the living God; and to *wait* for his son from heaven, even Jesus. I said that those who have departed this life and are in the Paradise of God, are waiting also, but what different waiting is theirs to ours. With our waiting, temptations and care annoy, sin distresses us, and our joy is damped, while in this tenement of clay, for we that are in this tabernacle do groan, here we are never satisfied. They are satisfied to wait, for they are with his presence satisfied, he leads them to fountains of living waters, and the Lamb in the midst of the throne feeds them. With them, as with God, a thousand years is but as yesterday when it is past. Being heirs of God and joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ, they are waiting for all the joint-heirs to be made manifest, they wait for all the family to come home, for that time when death shall be shallowed up in victory. Instead of death being swallowed up now, death is swallowing up young and old. They wait, but it is pleasant waiting in perfect love, what restful waiting where perfect happiness abides. John says in Revelation 6, "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet *for a little season,* until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." There is an interesting account of an experience of Paul's related by himself in 2 Corinthians 12, which dates back fourteen years to the time recorded in Acts 14, 19. Paul was stoned, then drawn out of the city and left for dead. We do not desire to speculate, but does not this circumstance suggest that his soul for a while

left his body. This occurred in the twelfth year of his ministry, and fourteen years after this experience he wrote his letter to the Corinthians. He was caught up into the THIRD HEAVEN. Whether in the body or out of the body he could not tell. He was caught up into PARADISE, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

Of the coming of the Lord, Paul often reminded his brethren. Especially do we see this in his first epistle to the Thessalonians, where he mentioned it in every chapter, and in the fourth chapter he gives us more particulars. His words are "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain (unto the coming of the Lord) shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Our corruptible bodies are not changed until then, even if we should be here when the Lord comes, because these bodies must beget children who shall be conceived in sin. If the body was born again here, it would beget a seed that would not need salvation, nor would any of them enter into perdition. This will go on, men and women marrying and being given in marriage until he comes. The dead in Christ shall rise first. There will be two resurrections as set forth in the Word of God. The bodies of the saints are being preserved in the earth, blameless, unto his coming, the bodies of the wicked are being preserved blameable. The resurrection of the dead in Christ will be first. John saith of them, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." The resurrection of the ungodly will come later, for the upright are to have dominion in the morning. Psalm 49, 14. His coming is to deliver his saints from the WRATH TO COME, but how different God's Word declares it will be for the wicked. Let us see what Paul says of them, "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord: Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." Do we need more proof? Jesus said "The hour is coming, in the which ALL that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." In Job's afflictions he was made to confess that he had heard of him by the hearing of the ear, but he said, now mine eye seeth thee. This was the eye of faith, which the soul is given, and by which the soul beholds Jesus as the altogether lovely and the chiefest among ten thousand. At such a sight of him Job said, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." So with Job it did not yet appear what he should be, yet he said earlier, "I know that my

Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine EYES (plural) shall behold, and not another." That is, it would be that same Job whose eyes would behold his Lord. Over seven hundred years B.C., Hosea wrote, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." Isaiah, about the same time prophesied "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces." When Jesus came as our sin-bearer, he came weeping, bearing precious seed, and here we fellowship him with penitent and broken hearts. "And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him." His second coming is referred to by the Psalmist, who says "He shall DOUBTLESS come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." During Christ's ministry on earth, death was not swallowed up in victory, and in Paul's day, he called it a saying, but when the trump of God shall sound, and we are raised incorruptible, then shall come to pass the saying. It has not come to pass yet, but it will come to pass when he comes from heaven with a shout. Revelation 21, 4. tells that "God shall wipe away all tears from their EYES; (plural) and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this is not putting on Christ in our profession and walk, as the new man of the heart desires to do, for the new man of the heart never dies, and is not corruptible, but is created after God in righteousness and true holiness. I have heard it said several times by good brethren that they had enough trouble with, and in, this old body in this life that they would never want to see it again after death, but let us all remember that the Word saith "Who shall change our vile body, that IT may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." None of us want our old bodies as they are. David did not, but he said, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake, with thy likeness." Psalm 17, 15. How often we have longed to be like him, but it doth not yet appear, but when he shall appear we shall be like him. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, EVEN SO them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." For, "we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (go before) them which are asleep." It will be no harder for God to change those that are alive, than to raise those that have been dead, whether in the earth or seas. Our God made this earth, and all that in it is, out of nothing. He who assembled everything, giving it being when it had none before, can, in his time, assemble that which has been. It is admitted that those bodies will be different from what they were here, in likeness they will be like him. Their qualities will be different, but the substance will be the same there, as it was in Jesus, and as

it is in the plant or blade that has come up from the seed. 1 Corinthians 15. Thus the substance which was corruptible, shall be incorruptible. Our Lord's body was not corruptible, it did not see corruption, nor did it need salvation, for he was not a sinner. We say the substance will be there, for it will be a body of flesh and bones. We say flesh and bones, for Jesus said, "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." This is to show that it was not his spirit, but him. Paul says, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." This is of course a form of speech, he means mankind as it is. We have shown that mankind is dead, and all that he inherits here from Adam are sickness, pain and ills that are legion, but through our Lord's resurrection from the dead, we have been begotten unto a LIVELY HOPE, to an inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. In conclusion we ask our readers to read 2 Thessalonians 1. to see when this will be revealed. G. R.

Report on Progress of Book to bear title "The Resurrection of the Dead."

In the January, 1942, SIGNS we told our readers that we planned to get together what might prove to be the "greatest collection" of outstanding articles ever assembled on this important subject and publish them, with several articles of our own, in book form. We further stated that the book would probably consist of 150 to 200 pages and that before "obligating ourself for the cost of publishing such a book, we would give our readers a description of what to expect and then wait to hear from them in order to judge whether the demand would be sufficient to warrant publication."

We are now prepared to report that we have sufficient material to publish a book 9 x 6 inches in size, in good readable type, to consist of 150 to 175 pages. It will be a companion to the book on PREDESTINATION which we published in December, 1926. It will contain 20 to 25 articles, by some of the ablest gifts that the Old School Baptists in this country have ever known. The book will be arranged in two parts: Part I will contain 10 or 12 articles which we regard as favorable to our own point of view, and in this part we plan to have a PREFACE, to be followed by seven articles of our own, covering various particular texts bearing on the subject. In Part II will be found 10 or 12 articles by ministers whose views differ from our own.

The price of the book will be $1 per copy, which will include postage. In order to encourage NEW subscriptions to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, we are going to make a couple of special offers to those who will want the book but are unable to pay for it; (1) With any NEW subscription for a year to the SIGNS at $2 we will send the book free, and (2) in order to make it easy for all of our old subscribers to secure the book, we will send them a copy for each NEW subscription at $2 a year they send us.

We honestly feel that our brethren and friends should read both sides of this question. While able gifts have differed in their views on this subject in the past, it will be seen from the articles which we have gathered together that they continued to walk together in love and fellowship, which was as it should have been. Our purpose in publishing the book is to bring about a better feeling and understanding between the brethren on this point of doctrine.

This notice will probably appear in the January, February and March issues of the SIGNS, in order to afford all of our readers the opportunity of seeing it and making up their minds just how many copies they will want. We hope by the first of April to have heard from a sufficient number to decide how many books to order from the printer. It will then no doubt require until June 1st before the book will be ready for mailing.

May we ask that every one who plans to get a copy of the book let us hear from them promptly. They do not necessarily have to pay at this time, but please place your order now, so as to help us proceed and determine upon the quantity of books to have printed. Those who plan to get a book free by becoming a NEW subscriber at $2 per year, or our present subscribers who will send us a NEW subscription for a year at $2 can do so immediately, if they wish, and we will start sending the paper upon receipt of the subscription, with the understanding that the book will be sent as soon as it is ready for delivery.

We shall now await the pleasure of our readers.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Elder H. J. Bird)

The Pocatalico Old School, or Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the West Fork Church, Calhoun County, West Virginia, to the several churches of which she is composed, and to the several associations and meetings with whom we correspond, sendeth greetings and christian salutation in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SAINTS OF GOD SCATTERED ABROAD:—In fear and trembling we approach the task of venturing on this our usual Circular Letter.

Dearly beloved, we feel it would be good and timely at this time to touch upon some of the cardinal points of doctrine that are most surely believed by us, but we are conscious of the fact that we are wholly unable to do so unless it please our gracious Lord to direct our pen, and in his love and tender mercy create within us a clean heart and renew within us a right spirit.

I wish at this time to call your attention to Isaiah 49:16: "Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." This scriptural language, like all other Scriptures, is portraying the sure

mercies of God, and declaring his fixed and unchangeable purposes, the security and safety of all the seed elect. We desire to notice, if the Lord wills, some of the blessed things of this text. First, the word "behold" signifies, or means, double note of attention, and this in the order of its giving double note of attention to all whom God in his rich and adorable mercy has given the mind of the Spirit in discerning the wondrous work of God in what he has done for his poor and afflicted people in raising them up from their lost and ruined condition through his grace, and in his matchless power and redeeming love cleansing them from all sin, and making them kings and priests unto God, established their goings, put a new song in their mouth, even praise unto their God, placed their feet upon a Rock (Christ), the eternal Rock of ages. Oh that we might extol his name above every name, for his goodness and his mercy's sake. Bless his name, oh my soul; all that is within me bless his holy name.

"Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands." Dear brethren, notice these precious words. The little word "thee" signifies a definite or specific people, embracing all the election of grace, in every age, every land, every tribute, every dispensation of time. The palms of his hands represent not only the almighty power of God, but notice, brethren, the palms of the hands are the inside of the hands. Hence when the hands are shut is not all the inside shut in, and who could pluck you hence away? "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and *none* is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." So here we have it declared that your God has graven you, written you with an iron pen, in the palms of his hands (inside of his power), his everlasting love; chosen you in Christ, and that before the world began, that you should be holy and without blame before him in love, and what God has graven in the palms of his hands eternity will not erase, for what God doeth shall stand forever; nothing can be added to it or anything taken from it, and God doeth it that men shall fear before him. So, dear brethren, we have the glorious truth set forth, the *purpose* of God to save his *people,* (elect and precious in his sight) in his own blood; not by reason of any foreseen good in them, no, no, but by reason of his own choice, and his own everlasting love. Hence he, your God, has graven you (his people) upon the palms of his hands. How gracious is his love, when we deserved not the least of his notice. We were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. In the glorious purpose of our God to save his people from all sin, there must of necessity have been his fixed and unalterable purpose in all things, to the all-glorious end that nothing could overturn or thwart his holy purposes. If there was the least thing in existence running loose or uncontrolled by the sovereign hand of our God there could positively be no certainty or safety for anything. But, dearly beloved, do we not rest in the haven of doctrine, that our God declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My *counsel shall stand,* and *I will do all my pleas-*

ure? And again, *The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.*

Just a few more thoughts in conclusion, i.e., *Thy walls are continually before me.* Let us notice by the light of divine grace, some of the glorious truths left upon record by the pen of inspiration pertaining to these blessed walls. Hear the glorious promise, *"Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks."* Dear saints of God, you need no other walls or bulwarks to shield you and keep you while you are pilgrims and strangers far from home, and to finally safely (without the loss of one) house you safe in the holy presence of God in that unending day of bliss, where with immortal and unfettered tongues you will praise his hallowed name forever and forever. These walls, the appointing of God, will ever keep his children. Who hath saved us, and called us, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, and that before the world began. The saints of God shall persevere through grace, to ultimate glory. We feel to acknowledge, in conclusion, that our expressions are broken and disconnected, but we humbly hope we have had no vain purpose in view.

Submitted in love.

J. C. HAMMOND, Moderator
H. J. BIRD, Clerk

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Pocatalico Old School, or Primitive Baptist Association, to the several associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greetings and christian salutation in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Another year has rolled around, with all its many sorrows, trials, bereavements and cares. Truly this is a dark and trying day, a time to try men's souls, a time when the earth seems to reel and shake to its very center, when nations are at each other's throats, in the most cruel and bloody war, perhaps, of all time, but our God is even now ruling in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, nor say unto him, What doest thou? He will do all his pleasure, in all things. He works his sovereign will. Bless his holy name for evermore.

Our hearts are made glad, and we feel to be built up again in our spirit and hope, by the coming of your messengers, as they come declaring the whole counsel of God, proclaiming Christ the way, the truth, and the life of his people. We greatly desire a continuance of your correspondence. Our Minutes will inform you of the place and time of our next session, when and where we hope to meet you again, if the Lord wills. Grace, mercy and truth unto all the Israel of our God for his name's sake. Amen.

J. C. HAMMOND, Moderator
H. J. BIRD, Clerk

OBITUARY

J. A. LYNCH, one of the older men of Carroll Co., Mo., died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Roscoe Spotts, Thursday, Oct. 29, 1942. Death came to this pioneer citizen after he had suffered failing health for a period of six months, due to complications that are frequently prevalent in advanced years. Brother Lynch was born near Tinneys Point, Ray Co., Mo., Sept. 29, 1851 making him 91 years and 1 month old. He was the son of William and Sarah Lynch and was a member of a family of four brothers and four sisters. On Oct. 19, 1871 he was united in marriage with Miss Ella M. Davidson, and to this union were born eleven children, eight boys and three girls. Two boys died in infancy, one girl died March 12, 1928, and one son died in July 1937. After a happy married life of sixty-two years, his wife passed away Aug. 6, 1933. To mourn the death of their father are seven children, twenty-six grandchildren, and twelve great-grandchildren. When young in life brother Lynch united with the Primitive Baptist Church at a meeting at Wakenda and remained a staunch member of that faith through the remainder of his life. The church where he first united having become dissolved, brother Lynch lived a number of years without church relationship, but on the fourth Saturday in November, 1937 he united with Little Blue and Sniabar Church at Grain Valley, Mo., and ever after was a strong contender for the doctrine of predestination and salvation by grace. My acquaintance with brother Lynch dates back only a few years, but I found him to be a deep thinker in meditating upon the Scriptures. For the past few years his eyesight failed him and he had to depend upon his daughter and granddaughter to read to him which they did in a spirit of kindness. Mrs. Spotts, his daughter, devoted her life to making her home a place of comfort for him in his last days. I was called a distance of more than fifty miles to preach his funeral, Sunday, Oct. 1 at 2:30 P.M. It was held at the Missionary Baptist Church in Carrollton where a large concourse of people had assembled, but I was the only Primitive Baptist there, and no one to do the singing. I submitted to let them use their choir provided they sang "Amazing Grace" and "How firm a foundation." After a short prayer I tried to speak about forty-five minutes, using as a text, Isaiah 57:1, 2. While several of the family said they enjoyed my talk, I was sanctioned by only one old man that seemed to enjoy the true gospel. I speak of this to show how few Baptists there are in some parts of Missouri. As to his life as a citizen, the local paper said of his passing: "It brings to an end a life that long had been associated with the interests of this county, and he has left an honorable name which is being emulated by the members of his family."

His body was consigned to the dust in the cemetery near by, there to await in the resurrection the full fruitions of hope that his body will be raised a spiritual body, and he shall see Jesus as he is and be satisfied. He will be greatly missed by the family, especially in the family of Mr. and Mrs. Spotts where she so patiently and tenderly cared for him after he became blind, and our prayer is that God will comfort them as he only can comfort, and that he will give them to know God whom to know is eternal life.

W. L. HALL

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala.

ELDER W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.

ELDER H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.

ELDER H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.

ELDER O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th Street, Mayfield, Ky. Those interested will be welcome.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
IN
NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.
Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.
To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A. M.
ALL WELCOME

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A. M. 2 P. M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sundays in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P. M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sundays each month at 11:00 A. M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Locust Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.
G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.
(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.
E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church will meet, God willing, every second and fourth Sunday in the hall corner of Eighth and Yale Streets, Claremont, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor and Moderator.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. Elder E. N. Fields pastor.

Big Spring Church, Eligin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder C. W. Bond pastor.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before. Elder Peter Jones pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. Elder A. D. Hughet pastor.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.
LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.
C. M. FISHER.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, pastor.
(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before.
W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas. Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.
G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Texas.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

VOL. 111 RUTHERFORD, N. J., MARCH, 1943 No. 3

PRAY FOR THEM

They're guarding their country with their lives,
And facing the dragon with his lies;
They've left their homes, their dear ones all,
And must they fall? Oh, must they fall?
Ye believe in God, pray for them all.

The battle is His, as He wills it goes,
Whether to His own or to their foes;
His arm is strong, mighty His power,
If He wills, He can save from this hour.
Ye who believe in God, trust in His power.

But we know so little, God knows all,
What this war is for, why brave men fall;
Trust in His wisdom, why do we fear?
To Him from the beginning, the end is clear.
Ye who believe in God, pray He is near.

The battle is His, life, death in His hands,
Assyrian hosts fell at His commands;
His people were freed from warring hordes,
His own, a people He leads and guards.
Pray for them all, His will, not ours, be done.

NELLIE H. ARNOLD

CORRESPONDENCE

Acts 3:1-11.

Of all the signs and wonders that the apostles did through the power of God, only those are recorded in the Scriptures that are needful for the instruction of the children of God in righteousness and the confirmation of their faith. The first eleven verses of the third chapter of Acts relate an incident in the apostolic ministry of Peter and John that occurred soon after the descent of the Holy Ghost and the establishment of the visible church on the day of Pentecost. Peter and John visited the temple at Jerusalem at the ninth hour of the day, a special time of prayer, and saw a lame man that had been carried daily and laid at the gate of the temple, that is called Beautiful, to ask alms of

them that came to the temple for worship, and who was about to ask alms of the two apostles . . . Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk". Peter then took the cripple by the right hand and lifted him up, and the bones of his ankles and feet received strength. The cured man leaping, stood and walked and entered with them into the temple, praising God. Those who witnessed the miracle were filled with wonder and astonishment at that which had happened to the lame man, who held Peter and John, as they ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

Peter and John were witnesses of this demonstration of the mighty power of God. Out of the mouths of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. These two apostles were thought to be the oldest and the youngest of the apostles respectively. It seems appropriate that they should participate in this miracle, for it is by a miracle of grace that every child of God enters savingly into a knowledge of the truth, from the time that the first one of the family of the redeemed tasted that the Lord is gracious, until the last one finds a place in that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Peter and John went together into the temple, denoting that blessed fellowship that the children of God have together in spiritual companionship when they sit down in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Peter and John were together at the trial of Christ, they ran together to his sepulcher, and they came to the temple together, not to offer up the sacrifice of lamb or bullock on a Jewish altar, but to attend to prayer and to offer spiritual sacrifices, also to preach to the Jews who assembled in numbers at the ninth hour, which was three o'clock in the afternoon.

This was one of the hours observed for prayer and sacrifice by the Jews. It was the ninth hour when Jesus Christ on the cross commended his spirit to God as he gave up his life, saying, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Prayer is the christian's vital breath, his means of communication with God. A sigh, a cry for mercy, a groan because of sin from a burdened soul is prayer, is indited in the heart by the spirit of God and is heard and registered in heaven. When the high priest under the law dispensation made intercession for Israel, he took a live coal of fire from the brazen altar of sacrifice and placed it upon the incense on the golden altar. As the fragrant incense vapor ascended, perfuming the place of worship, the high priest offered prayer. When a child of God, one of the priesthood of believers, prays, there is a work of the Holy Spirit in his heart, convicting him of sin and teaching him the justice of his condemnation and the righteousness of that fiery law that went forth from the hand of the Lord at Sinai. It shows him his ruin in nature, and in its application consumes all the combustible material of creature effort and legal works. The law burning in the bosom of the convicted sinner as holy fire shows him the vileness of his heart and causes him to groan within himself

and to cry for mercy. The creature was born in sin, and to live unto God, must die to sin and realize his need of Christ.

As the ninth hour was observed as an hour of prayer in Jewish worship, there is in this a spiritual signification. It denotes judgment in the sense that when a sinner prays for mercy, he acknowledges the righteous judgment of God for his sins. It was not far from the ninth hour when the first passover lamb was offered up at the time of the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt for the promised land. This lamb died typically in the place of and for the Israelites, and by the sprinkling of the blood of this passover lamb on the lintels of the door posts of the houses of the children of Israel, they escaped the wrath of God and became a nation. Jesus met the judgment of God for his bride, the church, at the ninth hour of the day. He suffered for her and in her stead all the penalty that she would have had to endure if he had not been a propitiation for her sins. By his death and resurrection the church became a holy nation and a peculiar people of the Lord. At the very hour Jesus died, the high priest in the temple was about to slay the passover lamb when suddenly the earth shook, rocks were rent, many graves were opened, and the veil of the temple was rent asunder from top to the bottom, showing that the way into the holiest was now made open, that the type had ceased, as Christ the true passover lamb fulfilled the requirements of the law and made the observance of ceremonial rites no longer necessary. At the ninth hour Jesus died with a prayer upon his lips as he commended his spirit to the Father. When we enter the church, which is the true temple of God, it is through prayer and supplication; it is because of the merit of the sacrifice of Christ; it is through a sense of guilt having lain heavy on our conscience and our inability to lighten the burden. We can not stand or walk in our own strength before God. The man who was healed in the miracle under consideration could neither stand nor walk. He was lame from his mother's womb. All mankind is conceived in sin, born under its curse, unable to meet its just requirements and under its condemnation. This man had been carried daily to the temple that he might receive alms. This shows he could not stand or walk or live of himself, and that no man could relieve his infirmity. Vain is the help of man to relieve the sinner.

The word certain is used by the Holy Spirit to designate this man from all other individuals and shows him to be a representative character. A subject of grace is distinguished from all other individuals not receiving God's favor. This man represents a sinner who is convicted of sin and is slain by it. Such a character is separate from the world. This man had no strength or means by which he could relieve himself and was fully aware of his physical infirmity. He had to be brought to the gate of the temple to which reference has been made. It is the law that brings a subject of God's redeeming love to a realization of his need, for the law is the schoolmaster of believers unto Christ that they might be justified by faith. The decalogue

manifests the wound of sin and the ceremonial law points to the remedy, but is powerless to apply it. The law therefore is a ministration of death. Sacrifices under the law dispensation were offered daily, but could not take away sin. The repetition of these sacrifices day after day and year after year emphasized their impotency to purge the conscience or cleanse forever the foul stain of sin. The daily presence of this invalid at the temple to beg alms proved the gravity of his condition. He was incurable by any aid of man.

Peter and John bade this man to look upon them, not that they could of themselves effect a cure, but that through their ministration he might look to Jesus who is the fullness of grace and truth. Peter bade the afflicted one in the name of Jesus of Nazareth to rise up and walk, stating that he had neither silver nor gold to give him, gifts that perish with the using. Jesus had resided a considerable time as the word made flesh in his holy humanity in Nazareth. So the lame man was bidden to rise and walk in the name of Jesus Christ, the God-man, the holy one who had left the shining courts of heaven's effulgent glory to assume holy human flesh, that he might bring many sons to glory. When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his son, made of a woman and made under the law to redeem his church, which was under the law. The children of God being partakers of flesh and blood, Jesus likewise partook of the same that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, and deliver them that all their lifetime are subject to bondage. The law of God required obedience in the flesh, therefore Jesus was manifest in the flesh. In Christ dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily. In the matchless name of Jesus the lame man was bidden to rise up and walk. Peter then took the afflicted one by the right hand, which denotes acceptance, fellowship. Those that enter into fellowship with the son of God are placed at the right hand of Christ when the Lord shall come with his angels and sit upon the throne of his glory. Immediately the lame man was lifted up, his feet and ankle bones received strength and he was able to leap and walk and to praise God.

The poor child of God who has felt the plague of his own heart, and to be without hope in the world, leaps in a spiritual sense when his burden is removed, when peace is spoken to his soul, when he discerns Jesus as his great salvation, when he is lifted up from law into grace, when he enters into manifest life in Christ, and his soul magnifies the Lord and rejoices in his Savior. It is then that he walks, not after the flesh, but after the spirit. It is stated that the healed man entered into the temple. When the child of God is lifted up above the condemnation of the law, he enters into that rest prepared for the people of God and has his place in that antitypical temple of lively stones built up for a habitation of God through the spirit. The lame man, fully restored, resorted to Solomon's porch, one of the precincts of the temple that then was. Solomon typifies wisdom as well as peace. In the spiritual temple the subject of God's

grace learns that wisdom that is from above, and which is pure and peaceable. Jesus Christ is made unto his people wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. By nature we learn wisdom from man, which is foolishness with God, but through the healing power of the Great Physician of our souls, we are taught the wisdom of God. The lame man did not enter the temple until he was healed, and the little ones in Zion do not learn the wisdom that is from above until they are made alive spiritually. It was in the temple that the healed man praised God. It is in the true church that God's redeemed family praise him. Of such it is written: "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." The lame man was cured without the use of silver or gold, which emphasizes the truth that all the gold, that all the natural wealth of men poured into societies and organizations of men, whether at home or abroad, can not suffice to save a single soul from bondage to sin and death. Only from Jesus comes the priceless blessing of eternal life.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

Route 2, CLARKSVILLE, Tenn.

BROTHER DODSON AND OTHER EDITORS:

I am enclosing what seems to me a wonderful experience written by sister Ellen C. Parham whose obituary appears in the SIGNS of June 1942. It was found awhile after her death and I have copied it from the original. If it finds favor with the Editors, the writer would love to see it printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I feel it may be some comfort to God's sorrowing, tried saints as it has been to me, a lonely one, without her.

(MRS.) B. H. SHEARON

These are some of the travels I hope the Lord has led me through. When I was fourteen years old I began to have serious thoughts on religion. At sixteen years old I united with the Old Baptist Church, and in a few weeks I began to think I had sinned against God in uniting with the church. I tried to ask his forgiveness and felt to be a sinner in God's sight. I went on that way for several years and finally worse off. In the meantime I wanted my name taken off the church book, feeling too unworthy to be with such dear old people. When I was twenty-four years old I married Robert Lee Parham. He was the best of men and a dear Old Baptist although he never united with the church. When my first child was born I nursed him too long the doctor said as I was not strong any way. I was reading in the new testament and came across the scripture about the unpardonable sin. It seemed I had committed it and I nearly went crazy. Thought I would for several months although the doctor said I would not and I finally got over it. Some years after my husband died. Our pastor preached one time on what he believed the unpardonable sin was and I liked to have shouted, the first and only time I ever felt like shouting at preaching. He said the unpardonable sin was not to believe in the Holy Ghost so I was cleared up on that. As I was coming home on the train that night a

news boy handed his wares to me. The thought came to me, give me Jesus, give me Jesus. Oh, how happy I was for awhile but it did not last. Before that I had lost my husband and that was the most sorrowful time of my life. I loved him dearly, it seemed no one ever loved their companion better, but after he had been dead a few days it came to me I had not grieved over his death and, too, right here I went through a very peculiar experience, so very peculiar I will not try to put it on paper. When it seemed I had not felt his death I begged God to make me feel and also begged him for mercy. My prayer was Lord be merciful to me, a sinner. Most of the time a lost sinner for that was what I felt to be. I have not words to express nor tongue to tell what I suffered for three long years. I tried to read the Bible and it condemned me. Brother Anderson, my pastor, told me not to read the Bible. I told him he had preached if any one was not in the covenant they were not saved and I was not in it. He quoted this scripture, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth", "But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." That was a little comfort but did not last. I told my mother that God could work and none could hinder, also I was not the cause of my suffering. She said of course not. So I suffered three long years. If my tongue had been removed I would have breathed, Lord have mercy on me, a poor lost sinner. How unworthy I felt. Felt that any one no matter what they had done was better than I, even a murderer, for I felt I was a Judas. I felt all I have written, even more, for no pen can tell all the agonies of soul I had. One night after three years of agony, as I was retiring something said to me very plainly, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." I got into bed wondering what this meant and being tired went to sleep. Next morning my youngest son, Richard, came and told me the man had gotten more milk than common. I looked in the bucket and turned and said to myself, no more than usual and I saw a vision of some kind. I sat down by the table, hit my fist on it and said, I am saved at last. My aunt was living and I went into her room and told her I was not afraid of the devil any more, it was God I feared. She jumped up, threw her hands up and said, "Thank God." I was happy two or three days. It has been about twenty-three years. I thought with all this I would never doubt any more, but have had three or four seasons similar to the first although not quite so bad. My hope was on a thread and is most of the time. I believe it is just my suffering here on earth and again I fear I am all wrong. Feel too unworthy for any one to come see me and bring me flowers and good things to eat, and O, how weary and heavy laden I feel, just feel like I would love to be at rest if it was God's will. I hope it is because he loves me that I am so chastened. If anything I have written is any comfort to any of God's people give him the glory. Just feel I am less than nothing and down at the Saviour's feet, a beggar. Written June 7, 1935.

ELLEN C. PARHAM

BENTON, Ky.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS:

My mind being led to this subject I will try to pen you my thoughts. "Thus Ezekiel is unto you a sign: according to all that he hath done shall ye do: and when this cometh, ye shall know that I am the Lord God." Ezekiel 24:24. Ezekiel, the strengthened prophet of our God, was at one time among the captives by the river Chebar, and the heavens were opened and he saw visions of God. The hand of the Lord was upon him, and the word of the Lord came expressly to him. He tells what he saw, and what the Lord told him to say, that he said. The Lord saith on one occasion to him, "Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down." "So I spake unto the people in the morning: and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded." The children of Israel that had sought other gods, and had forsaken the true and living God, trusting in lying words, committing adultery, leaving the true husband (God) taking strangers in, these same Israelites asked Ezekiel, "Wilt thou not tell us what these things are to us, that thou doest so?" Ezekiel spake the words the Lord told him to speak expressly as he gave the words out to the house of Israel. "Behold, I will profane my sanctuary, the excellency of your strength, the desire of your eyes, and that which your soul pitieth; and your sons and your daughters whom ye have left shall fall by the sword. And ye shall do as I have done: Ye shall not cover your lips, nor eat the bread of men." "Ye shall not mourn nor weep; but ye shall pine away for your iniquities, and mourn one toward another. Thus Ezekiel is unto you a sign." Ezekiel speaking as the spirit gave him utterance is the sign, the same sign to-day that we hope we know who the Ezekiels are by the way the Lord's hand leads them, and the words he puts in their mouths, the same word bearing witness to that which is in our own heart. When Ezekiel had all the desire of his eyes removed with one stroke, he was commanded to not mourn nor weep. When God commands it stands fast, when he speaks it is done. So, my dear children of the Heavenly King, do we not all feel that we have had the natural joy of our natural glory removed with one great stroke of his mighty power, and we did not weep for the natural enjoyment, or glory any more, neither did our tears run down because of same, but rather we mourned because with the same stroke he killed to one and made us alive to another. We were made alive to him through Jesus Christ, our Saviour, and he being the true light that lighteth up every one that comes to God through him. When this light shines in we rather mourn because of our iniquities, and not because of the death of natural joys or glories, and desires of our minds and our sons and daughters. We realize then after the stroke has been made, and its effect set up in our hearts, that we are powerless to help, or to save our own, and it will take the wielding of the same mighty sword to kill our sons and daughters to these

things that it did to kill us. If these things were true in Ezekiel's time, and he did prophesy them in spirit, and this had been his experience, and he was a "SIGN" to all true Israelites, then do we not see the same, dear children, today? See it with an eye of faith. The same word that came expressly to Ezekiel is nigh unto us even in our mouth and our heart. That is the word of faith which we preach in this our gospel day for with the mouth confession is made unto salvation and with the heart man believeth unto righteousness. Feeling inclined to read before retiring, I read the book of the prophet, Ezekiel, and after I did finally retire God's words to Ezekiel kept reading to me. I did not close my eyes in sleep, neither have I had any rest, I seem to want to talk or write about it. I know I do not know how to express myself, and I am not eloquent as Moses replied, neither do I know that I have the right understanding. I have not observed all of the rules and regulations that Jesus told the young man to do, and he said he had done them, observed them from his youth up. I fear, oh, how I do fear so often that I lack the *one thing*. I fear I do not know how to observe the *sign* that Ezekiel is to the house of Israel, but I hope I see how he mourned not for the dead wife, the one to whom he had been married, but kept on in spirit uttering the words that God gave him to utter, and that his natural desires were not bothering him enough at the time he was in spirit to even shed tears over the stroke. When we are in the spirit on the Lord's day, and it will be his day if we are ever in the spirit, we are tasting the joys of our Lord and we have quite forgotten the joys of our natural glory, the things our natural minds were set on. I guess this twenty-fourth chapter was the prettiest and sweetest to me of all the book of Ezekiel. While his experience throughout is great to us who hope in spirit and in truth, as we hope we do, having to lean on Jesus as our hope, and only hoping at times that we have a hope. After we have lived in a cold, north country (the state we are in before the warm winds of God's love blows upon us) we love to feel like his effectual workings have been wrought in us, and if we lose a night's sleep it is as nothing. Sleep is easily regained and if I could feel like for his sake and because he chooses to know me and call me he makes me concerned over his works and ways, then I would be content to stay awake until I could fall asleep in him to wake in the resurrection morning in his likeness, then to be satisfied. So, when these things come to us as they did to Ezekiel, and we do not mourn the loss of them, neither shed tears because our love for them is gone, should we not rejoice that God has given us hope in his Son, that we have been killed to natural things with the same stroke that he took away these things from Ezekiel, and the same command that he gave him to not mourn, nor to shed tears, nor close his lips has been given us, and that is the answer why we do not mourn, but we do see and know we are sinners and that is grievous to be borne. But with Paul we hope to say, it is no longer I that sin-

neth, but sin that dwelleth in me, and we hope we hunger for the true bread which is Jesus our Lord, and not to eat the bread of men nor to worship other gods, nor go after other lovers, but have been made accepted in the beloved, when we are robbed and stripped and beaten for Jesus sake, then we go in his strength, in his riches, in his righteousness, and not our own. When the Ezekiels are told to speak they will be no more dumb, but their mouths will be opened to speak the word of truth, the word that was made flesh and dwelt among them, and they that hear shall be the true Israelites indeed, circumcised in heart, that God through his love, and with his great love wherewith he loved them when they were dead in trespasses and in sins, has called them and chosen them to be heirs of his, and joint heirs with his Son. The fire which consumes all dross is our God, and it will continue to baptize each and every heir of promise until the last son and daughter is safely housed in that Holy of Holies, where Christ, our elder brother, the High Priest, has gone to prepare a place that where he is we may be also, and if it were not so he would have told us. So let not our hearts be troubled for when we do in deed and in truth, desire with desire, as our elder brother Jesus did, we will desire God rather than gold. We, with fear and trembling, hope we have desired him. Then it is, my dear readers, that he bringeth us unto our desired haven. It is then he turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry places into water springs. He blesses them and brings them low through sorrows and afflictions, but there is joy in affliction. Whoso is wise will observe these things, and will understand the loving kindness of the Lord.

EFFIE BLAGG WHITENTON

HALCOTTSVILLE, N. Y.

DEAR BROTHER AND PASTOR:

I am writing you a few lines as I do not think I can attend the fourth Sunday meeting and I desire that you, who will assemble to talk and hear of the things that remain when all else shall fail, may know my mind is with you. In speaking Thursday at Ashokan you referred to the *rod* and *staff* from the twenty-third Psalm. I was so lifted up for a short time for it seemed I must have some part with those to whom that Psalm referred, otherwise the same thought would not have been with me and you be led to speak of it. I do not recall hearing any one speak of the *rod* since I left the New School Baptists and they seemed to think the *rod* and the *staff* were the same, but I have felt for some time that each word had its own meaning. The Psalmist had many occasions to call on his God for deliverance, which would not have been needful had not the *rod* of chastisement been felt when he forsook the law of God. When the children of God forsake his law and walk not in his judgments their transgressions will be visited with the *rod*. Even the *rod*, when we are enabled to see the hand of God in the trial, becomes a comfort for we then know only those whom the Lord loveth are chastened when they walk according to this world. "Blessed is the man whom thou chasten-

est, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law." Psalms 94:12. "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent." Rev. 3:19. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons." Heb. 12:6, 7. These and many other scriptures prove to us how necessary the *rod* is to correct God's straying ones. Then how wonderful the *staff* to support. His loving kindness will not be utterly taken from them, nor his faithfulness fail. "The peaceable fruit of righteousness" is yielded unto them that are exercised thereby. The Psalmist was made to cry, "Bring my soul out of prison that I may praise thy name." Psalms 142:7. When the soul is shut up and cannot come forth, that soul is made to realize the same power is needed to bring him out of this low prison, that brought him out of his first realization of a prison of darkness. I feel like writing more of the goodness of God in counting them worthy to suffer with Christ, and then bringing them out of the prison house that they may praise his name, but I must get this off in the mail. With love and fellowship to the dear ones in Christ.

AMY S. HEWITT

LEESBURG, Va.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,
DEAR BROTHER:

May I ask that the enclosed article, which I wrote out at the request of the aged brother, be published in the February issue of the SIGNS if at all possible. When it is published please see that twelve copies are mailed to me. This is because the aged brother has asked me to distribute them among his children and others of his family. I enclose $2 for these copies. If you cannot get it in February number then by all means have it in the March number, but in February if you can. The brother has committed this to me, and he has since passed away. I want to get it off my mind as soon as I can, I mean by that, I want to discharge the promise I made to him that I would see his children and others get copies of it.

As another year opens I hope you may be sustained in your labors by the spirit of wisdom and understanding which is alone from the Lord. May you bear in mind that you are his steward to whom you must render some day an account of that which he has committed unto you. Endeavor to preach and to write that which the Word of God teaches, that you may acquit your conscience in his sight. His approbation is all that his servants need. We must not seek to please men, not even to please our own brethren, but to "preach the Word," to give the Word its full significance, not merely to square ourselves with our own or other's preconceived notions. Until you and others of us do this, we shall not have reached our mature stature as servants of the true and living God. Yours in gospel bonds,

H. H. LEFFERTS

(We are thoroughly in accord with the sentiment contained in the foregoing expressions of Elder Lefferts. For several years we have constantly borne in

mind, both in writing and in speaking, the fact that we at least occupied the place of a steward of the Most High God, and that we were accountable unto him. Because of this firm conviction, we have endeavored not to waiver or to swerve, either to the right or to the left, from the beaten path of truth in our service to him. We can truthfully say that our conscience is thus far void of offense toward our God in trying to serve the brethren to the very best of our ability, according to the light which has been given to us. We honestly believe that we have God's approbation, and it is this assurance which has been our main stay and our strength, by day and by night. It has been our lot to have to pass through some very trying and distressing experiences, and the only reason we have not fallen a victim to the floods and the flames is that Israel's God has been with us. He has said to our very soul, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness," and our soul has responded, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." We have neither sought to please nor to offend our brethren, but have prayerfully desired to present the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and all, we trust, in love. Perhaps love has not abounded as much as it should have, for we are human and liable to err. We have endeavored to avoid being influenced by men and their traditions, but rather to be a faithful workman by hewing to the line and clinging to the word of God as the man of our counsel, and determining not to know anything among men save Jesus Christ, and him crucified, as the only means by which sinners can be saved. Our readers have been the jury and have sat in judgment upon us, and with but few exceptions the verdict rendered has been favorable. For this we trust we are truly thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, who, we are persuaded, has called us to serve in the capacity which he himself hath appointed. R. L. D.)

Brother R. Jackson Phillips came to me (H. H. Lefferts) Friday morning, December 18, 1942 and requested me to write down for him a relation of his christian experience. Recently he has had some strong impressions resting upon him to leave such a record as this for his children and others interested. He feels he ought to record something of the Lord's dealings with his soul, and not keep silent. I have tried to put down here from memory the things he has told me.

When I was about seventeen years old, I was stricken very ill with typhoid fever. At the same time, I was convicted of my sins and realized that I would die and go to hell, that there was no escape for me from damnation. Dr. Clark of Pulaski was sent for, and he told my parents I was going to die. Verily I thought so myself, and I truly believed hell would be my portion because of the awful load of sin upon my soul, but I did not die. In spite of the doctor's verdict, my life was spared. When I recovered, I soon forgot the sense of condemnation which had rested upon me, it gradually wore off and I concluded it

had all been the result of a feverish imagination. When I was about nineteen, this burden of condemnation came back on my conscience with redoubled force. This time it did not fade, but I knew I was lost eternally and could not escape that conviction. This continued with me for quite awhile. Deliverance came not by any effort of mine nor by any certain portion of scripture being brought to me. Deliverance when it came, was effected by a wave of love which seemed to sweep over me and fill my heart. I believe now it was the love of God; at the time I did not know what it was except that it afforded me perfect relief and rest from my condemnation. The burden was entirely gone. I united with the church called Indian Creek and was baptized by Elder Tommie Dickens, and have been a member there for about fifty years. After moving to Loudoun County, I again got into a very dark state of mind in which I lived for fourteen years. During all this time, no comfort was mine; I became persuaded that my experience of conviction and of deliverance had all been a mistake. The devil convinced me that I was his, that I knew not God, that I was deceived as to religion, and that hell would indeed at last claim me for its own. These were long, weary, dark years. Several times during this period, I felt tempted to take my own life and thus plunge straight into the damnation for which I felt I had been created. During this time, one morning I went to see Elder Lefferts at the office of Saffer Bros. where he then worked, and told him my trouble, told him I was about to end my life. He talked with me, quoted to me many portions of the Scripture, but nothing he said did any good, nothing reached my heart and darkened mind. Also, during this time, one of my sons went to Elder Lefferts and had him come to my son's home that he might again talk with me and try to comfort me. But again his conversation did me no good, no word had any meaning for my soul in the midnight in which I was. At the end of about fourteen years of this distressing state of mind, I was afforded deliverance again. It came in such a way as completely surprised me. I was not looking for it, had given up all hope of ever having any peace of mind again, but when the deliverance came, I was happier than ever I had been in my life. I could shout: "I know that my Redeemer liveth." It was a most blessed assurance. I have never lost the power of it since that day. I have never since fallen into such doubt and despair as had been mine for those fourteen years. I have my ups and downs, am not very well, but the assurance that Christ is my salvation has not been taken from me. I know that he alone is God, that there is no God beside him, that he orders and sustains all things. I know that he commands and it stands as he says. I believe in the predestination of all things, in the unconditional election of the church in Christ before the foundation of the world. There is a time to live and a time to die, I believe my bounds are set and that I cannot leave this mortality until he calls, and when he calls I shall answer him.

Five or six days after the above was

written by me at brother Phillips' dictation, he became ill and was taken to the Loudoun County Hospital, Leesburg, Va. where he succumbed to pneumonia and passed away December 30, 1942 in the 80th year of his age. After brief services, the morning of the 31st, in Leesburg, his body was taken back to Floyd County for interment at Indian Valley.

H. H. LEFFERTS

Box 577, LEVELLAND, Texas.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

Enclosed you will find $2 to pay my subscription to our dear old paper for another year. My husband was a subscriber to the SIGNS at the time of our marriage forty-five years ago. It has been a regular and welcome visitor in our home ever since, and we still love and enjoy the doctrine it contends for. It sets forth the only doctrine in which we find any hope or comfort. It is dear to our hearts, and we find it indeed a comfort. It is dear to our hearts, and we find it indeed a comfort and solace in the dark and troubled times. I believe our captain, the God of heaven and earth, who made and rules all things therein will guide the old ship of Zion into the sunny port of sweet deliverance without the loss of one. O may his love and tender mercy ever hover over his people, wherever they may be, is the prayer of one who feels to be the least if indeed one at all. Written by his wife.

T. W. BOWERS

CLEVELAND, Texas.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON:

Please find money-order for $4.50 for which you can give me credit on my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. My father has been reading the SIGNS ever since I was a small girl and I am now sixty-six years old. He is eighty-eight and gets great pleasure reading the paper still. Father, my pastor, J. A. Collins, and I all read it and enjoy it so much. I am getting a pension now and will try to keep my subscription paid up. I surely thank you for sending the paper to me so long without pay, and may God bless you and keep you by his power. If it is not asking too much please pray for me. I am a widow and have had hard times but I feel that God has been merciful to me. Your sister in hope of eternal life through Christ.

MOLLIE POWELL

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS".

A. E. Clark, Kans., $1; W. S. Loyd, Kans., 30 cents; Mrs. J. D. Shafer, N. Y., $1; H. E. Danks, Cal., $2; L. J. Wiss, Okla., $1; J. N. Wageonheizer, N. Y., $1; J. K. Buckwalter, O., $1; D. L. House, N. C., $1; F. H. Richardson, Ia., $8; Mrs. R. S. Craig, Va., $1; C. Willard Dodson, Va., $18; J. F. Lax, Ill., $2; Miss S. Leedom, Pa., $3; R. B. Potter, Me., $2; T. L. Disharoon, Pa., $1; J. J. Nance, Tex., 50 cents; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $1; E. C. Young, Ky., $2; Dr. T. E. Presley, N. M., $1; A. D. Hughett, Wash., $4; F. Johnson, W. Va., $1; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $2; C. E. Tacey, N. J., $2; G. A. Carlson, Cal., $1; J. M. Davis, N. C., $1; A friend, Mich., $1; Mrs. D. O. Yeisley, Wash., $1; Eld. E. B. Ault, Tex., $5.

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. MARCH, 1943

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A word spoken in due season, how good is it!
Proverbs 15:23

As we come to address the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, our desires are that we may write unto you as though we were speaking directly to you of the kingdom of God and his righteousness. In our meditation upon attempting to write at this time, the text, "A word spoken in due season," was given us and we will present some thoughts we have regarding it. The Word, as recorded by the apostle John, was in the beginning, and was with God, and was God. Before God created the heaven and the earth, this Word held a counsel and all God's purposes were declared which is proven in the word of inspiration: "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isaiah 46:10. The word of inspiration speaks of God as though he began and did work according to his purpose, and after he had performed certain work he called it a day, and he continued until he had finished all his work, and saw everything he had made, and, behold it was very good, which was the end of six days work. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. This portion of the *word is in season* to give to God's creatures the beginning of things manifested by God's power. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Timothy 3:16, 17. We get instruction in the literal word as to the dealings of God with the sons of men through all the law and the prophets as God inspired them to write, which is the *word spoken in season.* As we come on down through the record of the prophets, we have the word of prophecy of the Messiah that was to come for the time drew nigh for God to be manifest in the flesh, and the virgin of man to bear his Son, and God spake to Joseph telling him of the things he had purposed, and his determined will, "for he shall save his people from their sins", which was his *word in due season,* and all this was done in fulfillment of the word of the prophet saying, "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." Matt. 1:23. When, at the time of his birth, God inspired men to know his purpose, and directed them to

where he was, and gave them words in season to utter, and worship his son, and glorify God for the manifestation of his salvation, and Simeon was directed by the spirit into the temple; "When the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary, his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." Luke 2:27-35.

These words were all *spoken in due season* and the Holy Ghost opened to those exorcised, that they should behold the wonderful works of God. The sweetness and joy of salvation, when expressed in words that come to our hearts, "is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Prov. 25:11. And when we behold them in their beauty we would feast our souls without ceasing, but tribulations come and we are made to doubt and feel that we are cut off, and we will never have the privilege to enjoy the sweetness of such fruitful seasons again, and go down into the valley of Achor and have no light; then in an unexpected moment and way it seems light is sprung up, and words are repeated in our hearts that make us rejoice which were *in due season*. When the day of Pentecost had fully come, the Holy Ghost came upon the apostles, and they spake with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance, and there were dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews, devout men out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad the multitude came together and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. Acts 2:1-6. These *words are in due season* to express to men the prophecy of Joel, and to assure the apostles of the promise of Jesus, that he would send the Comforter to them. The fourteenth verse of this second chapter of the Acts tells us how Peter standing up with the eleven lifted up his voice and said, "Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words." These are *words in due season,* and redown to the glory of God. The remainder of this chapter gives account of the effects manifested in the speaker and hearer, and the obedience the flesh was made to manifest, which to us are the manifestations in every creature born of the incorruptible seed by the word of God. We do not mean the literal word but the revealed word. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation spoken by the servant of God to the believer, which stirs up his pure mind in the manifested power in his heart, and are *words in due season*. The minister of the gospel is strongly admonished in God's word to shun profane and vain babblings. 2 Timothy

2:16. Profane means to make common or unholy, or manifesting irreverence toward the Deity or sacred things. Vain means elated with self admiration; greedy of applause. How true it is, when one who has the esteem of the church of God is left to the flesh, that the ordinances of the church of God and the order thereof is so irreverently referred to, and are so easily entreated to turn from them, his words will become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal, and the church of God will not have a due season to hear his words.

Vain babblings: Often we are lifted up with pride in the flesh, and have esteem for our standing among the brethren; we feel that our words should have much consideration, and the way of our goings followed, in so much that we will pull to the division of the organization of the church militant,and trouble and sorrow is felt through the whole body. Oh, if we could then see ourselves and know as David, "Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah." Psalm 39:5. When vain words are spoken from the pulpit, we hear what great things individuals have done, and what wonderful achievements have been made. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another." Galatians 5:24-26. "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." Luke 12:21.

Our sincere desire is to *speak words in due season* to all men whether they come as reproof, correction, or exhortation if given by the exorcise of the Spirit, and when comfort and strength is given to the meek it is proof that God had ordained that strength to them. When we were ready to perish, and were made to cry out, "Lord, save us: we perish" the words which were spoken to us, or were repeated in our hearts, were *in due season,* and when and where the gospel is preached it is the *word in due season.* In this time of sorrow throughout the whole earth, if we could, we would speak a word to strengthen the faith of God's people, but we know it is not in man so we can only commend you to God, and may his word abound in your hearts that you may see him as an all powerful God. "And he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Daniel 4:35.

C. W. V.

JOHN 4:16-18

"Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly."

Brother S. L. Roberson, of Haile, Louisiana, has asked that we present our views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES

on the above portion of Scripture. This incident of our Lord and the woman at the well should undoubtedly be considered as being intimately associated with the miracles at the marriage at Cana of Galilee, the healing of the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, and others, all of which have a material bearing upon the dispensations of *law* and *grace*. The numbers five and six are both legal numbers. The law which God gave to Moses consisted of five books. The legal or work period of time is six, for we are told in Genesis that God created the heavens and the earth and all that in them is in six days, and that "he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made."

There are some things to which we wish to call attention in the record which John gives us of the Saviour and the miracle he performed in converting the water into wine. First, we are told that this took place on the third day, which is significant of the last or gospel day, and, second, that there was a need for more wine at the marriage feast. John says there were set there six waterpots of stone, and when Jesus' hour was come, or the time for him to manifest his power, he commanded the servants to, "Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim." Then he said unto them, "Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast." And "When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, and saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now." John 2:9-10. The six waterpots were used under the law in connection with the purification of the Jews, and as there could be no justification or cleansing of a sinner in the sight of a just and holy God except the law be perfectly fulfilled, the six waterpots were of necessity filled to the brim, thus denoting in type that all the demands of the law were absolutely met in full when Jesus shed his blood for his people. When the servants drew off from the pots the wine was pronounced to be the best wine. All of the blood that was shed on Jewish altars could not atone for the sin of a single sinner, but the blood which Jesus shed on Calvary's cross could and did make full and complete at-one-ment for all of his people throughout all ages of the world—those who dwelt upon the earth before he came into the world as well as those who were to follow after him. This wine was therefore the best wine and signified the blood of the gospel dispensation, without which there could be no remission of sin. This miracle then set forth the fulfilling of the law and the bringing in of righteousness by Jesus Christ.

In the fifth chapter of John we are told that "There is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches," and that "In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water." This was legal

Jerusalem, and to be sure a great multitude of sheep, or the Lord's people, lay there in these five porches, being held for a ransom until the law's demands could be met. How pitiful was their condition! Some were impotent, or absolutely helpless and unable to do anything for themselves; some were blind, and some were halt, and some were withered. It would be difficult to picture a more pathetic scene. But in the providence of God there was this pool called Bethesda, which means, "House of Mercy." Wonder of wonders it is to the dear child of God that "Justice and Mercy" have met together and kissed each other in the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, he could say to the impotent man, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." It is said that, "*immediately* the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the Sabbath." Truly, never man spake like Jesus, and when he speaks it is done, and when he commands, it stands fast. When he heals, or delivers, it is invariably the Sabbath, or the day of rest with the sin burdened soul.

In connection with the text under consideration, it is said, "He (Jesus) must needs go through Samaria." There was a necessity for all that Jesus did, and nothing that he did was in vain. Jesus did not go through Samaria by chance, but according to the providence of God, who orders all things after the counsel of his own will. In the purpose of Almighty God this poor Samaritan woman was to come to Jacob's well and there find one whom she would be astonished to have take any notice of her. Neither was it by chance that his disciples were not to be present at the time, for Jesus must needs converse with her alone. He who discerneth the thought and intent of the heart of man, who knoweth all the secrets thereof, and from whom naught can be concealed or nothing hid, he communes with the sinner in the solitary places and, independent of all human aid, when he speaks, his words carry force and conviction.

This Samaritan woman was accustomed to drawing water from Jacob's well, where she had to come again and again, for it was only a shadow or type of that living water which Jesus had to give. When he said unto her, "Give me to drink," she was surprised that he should condescend to look upon her since, as she said, "the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." Jesus then told her if she had known the gift of God and who it was that spake unto her, she would have asked of him and he would have given her *living water*. Seeing that he had nothing visible to draw with, and the well being deep, according to her natural powers she could not perceive how he could give her living water. She was soon to learn that she stood in the very presence of him who was indeed far greater than Jacob, who gave the well from which she had come to draw water. Jesus first told her of natural things, that "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again," which she well knew to be the case, and then he said unto her, "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of

water springing up into everlasting life." Here was something different from anything she had ever heard of before. She would not have to draw water from this well day after day, and year after year, for the lack of which she would thirst again, but this water would indeed be living water, and it would constantly be springing up into everlasting life. She, therefore, thirsted for this water, and said unto Jesus, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." She was thus made to experience that salvation was not by works of righteousness which the creature can perform, but that it is "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Having learned this and having ceased from her labors and entered into gospel rest, Jesus said unto her, "Go, call thy husband, and come hither." Surely, no one will doubt that Jesus knew the innermost desires of her soul, and needed not to be told by her that she had no husband, even though she had had five husbands, but it was for her sake and our sakes that he said this to her. She typifies the Church of the first born who has come to the end of the law and must confess before men the wonderful works of our God. When she said she had no husband, Jesus commended her by saying, "Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly."

Our understanding is that she had done all she could to comply with the demands of the law, but had utterly failed in every point and had become guilty before God. The law condemned her, and she was miserable and wretched and poor and could receive no comfort or consolation from it. Being brought to the end of the law, she realized it was her schoolmaster unto Christ, and there he was revealed and she perceived of a truth that he was some wonderful one. After Jesus had instructed her more perfectly regarding the true worship of God, he said unto her, "God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Thereupon came his disciples, and the woman left her waterpot and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, "Come, see a man which told me all things, that ever I did; is not this the Christ?"

It is after this manner that God brings his children from nature's darkness into the marvelous light of his glorious gospel, teaching them that his blessed son is the end of the law for righteousness sake. Then it is they know the difference between law and grace, and once they have been truly taught it, it is all of grace forever afterwards, for they can never believe anything else, and they should not live in adultery by pretending to be married to another by partaking of the works of the law. Let them come out from among Babylon and be separate and not partake of her sin, returning to give glory and honor unto him who hath loved them and gave himself for them.

We trust our thoughts will prove satisfying to our brother and all who may read them, and if so may everlasting praise be rendered to him to whom everlasting praise is due. R. L. D.

Report on Progress of Book to bear title "The Resurrection of the Dead."

In the January, 1942, SIGNS we told our readers that we planned to get together what might prove to be the "greatest collection" of outstanding articles ever assembled on this important subject and publish them, with several articles of our own, in book form. We further stated that the book would probably consist of 150 to 200 pages and that before "obligating ourself for the cost of publishing such a book, we would give our readers a description of what to expect and then wait to hear from them in order to judge whether the demand would be sufficient to warrant publication."

We are now prepared to report that we have sufficient material to publish a book 9 x 6 inches in size, in good readable type, to consist of 150 to 175 pages. It will be a companion to the book on PREDESTINATION which we published in December, 1926. It will contain 20 to 25 articles, by some of the ablest gifts that the Old School Baptists in this country have ever known. The book will be arranged in two parts: Part I will contain 10 or 12 articles which we regard as favorable to our own point of view, and in this part we plan to have a PREFACE, to be followed by seven articles of our own, covering various particular texts bearing on the subject. In Part II will be found 10 or 12 articles by ministers whose views differ from our own.

The price of the book will be $1 per copy, which will include postage. In order to encourage NEW subscriptions to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, we are going to make a couple of special offers to those who will want the book but are unable to pay for it; (1) With any NEW subscription for a year to the SIGNS at $2 we will send the book free, and (2) in order to make it easy for all of our old subscribers to secure the book, we will send them a copy for each NEW subscription at $2 a year they send us.

We honestly feel that our brethren and friends should read both sides of this question. While able gifts have differed in their views on this subject in the past, it will be seen from the articles which we have gathered together that they continued to walk together in love and fellowship, which was as it should have been. Our purpose in publishing the book is to bring about a better feeling and understanding between the brethren on this point of doctrine.

This notice will probably appear in the January, February and March issues of the SIGNS, in order to afford all of our readers the opportunity of seeing it and making up their minds just how many copies they will want. We hope by the first of April to have heard from a sufficient number to decide how many books to order from the printer. It will then no doubt require until June 1st before the book will be ready for mailing.

May we ask that every one who plans to get a copy of the book let us hear from them promptly. They do not necessarily have to pay at this time, but please place your order now, so as to help us proceed and determine upon the quantity of books to have printed. Those who plan to get a book free by becoming

a NEW subscriber at $2 per year, or our present subscribers who will send us a NEW subscription for a year at $2 can do so immediately, if they wish, and we will start sending the paper upon receipt of the subscription, with the understanding that the book will be sent as soon as it is ready for delivery.

We shall now await the pleasure of our readers. R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Deacon Isaac McIntyre)

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, of Shokan, N. Y., September 16, 17 *and* 18, 1942 *to the several churches and associations in fellowship with us, with which we correspond, sends greetings and love in the Lord.*

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—As the custom is to write a letter at this time, it fell to our lot, much against our wishes, to write a letter to God's people. The portion of Scripture found in the first epistle of John, second chapter, twelfth verse, has been on our mind for several days: "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake." This is not to accommodate us, but for the name of Jesus, who was announced by the angel the Savior of sinners and witnessed by a multitude of the heavenly host. There is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. He raises the beggar from the dunghill and sets him among princes. He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them in his bosom, and when they are grown sheep he places them into the fold, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd. They are sheep, and he calls them all little children. No big ones. That is why we are writing this to you, because we feel to be the least of the little ones. We feel we are not worthy to take the name of Jesus on our sin-polluted lips, to say nothing about our writing to the people of the living God, a God that has all power in heaven and on earth, that even commands the fish in the sea, one to come and take Peter's hook, and another to spew Jonah out on dry land. Yet poor sinners think they can do something to save themselves. But it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. He has to be drawn by the Father, for he says, No man cometh unto me except the Father draw him. And he that cometh unto him he will in no wise cast out, but will raise him up at the last day. A wonderful God, who can raise the dead and fashion them like his own glorious body. We often think of John, who was banished to the isle of Patmos, and how his little children are often in

the same isle, and nothing but rocks and crags surround them; the Lord knows what we need. Then we can say we cried unto the Lord and he heard us, and feel for a time he has delivered us out of our troubles, and we feel to praise and adore his holy name. Surely he has been with us in six troubles and in the seventh will not forsake us, and we are made to say, Roll on thy undisturbed purposes. At times we feel to be exalted above measure, and can follow him to prison and to death. But then is when we have to be shown, like Peter, how weak we are, and immediately the cock will crow, at the very time when we have denied him thrice. He even controls the fowls to act at his appointed time. There is nothing too hard for him to do. He speaks and it is done; he commands and it stands fast, and can save to the uttermost them that come to God by him. This same man that was proclaimed the Savior of sinners has been exalted on the right hand of God, a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sin. He can say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth, even as many as the Lord our God has called.

We feel truly thankful that this same Jesus has sent his messengers to us, bringing glad tidings of great joy, preaching Christ and him crucified. If the Lord will, our next session will be held with the First and Second Churches of Roxbury, between the second and third Sundays in September, 1943, where we hope to meet you all again, if the Lord wills.

Farewell, my dear brethren. The time is at hand that we must be parted from this social band. Our several engagements now call us away. Our parting is needful and we must obey. Farewell until 1943.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
ORVILLE WINCHELL, Clerk
EDWARD ADSIT, Ass't Clerk

OBITUARIES

MRS. DONIA WOOD, our sister in christian bonds, sweetly fell asleep in Jesus November 28, 1942, aged 70 years, 6 months, 6 days. She was born in Bell Co., Texas, May 10, 1872 and died in Coleman County, Tex. At the age of seven, moved into Taylor Co., Tex., but was there only one year. With the exception of three years in east Texas, the most of her life was spent in Coleman County. She was reared in an Old School Baptist family, both her parents being of that faith. Her mother's father was the late Elder G. W. McDonald who died in July, 1884. Her father was the late S. H. Williams whose obituary was in the SIGNS of June, 1926. Her husband passed away in 1938. Since then, she lived with her son who is not married and who devoted himself to her comfort and welfare in these past three years during which she had been having heart spells from time to time. During this time, her son left her only to go to his work. Surely he had his reward in thus being disposed to look after this dear mother, for love's labor is never lost or in vain. The Lord is ever mindful of our labor of love in his name, and inasmuch as service is rendered to one of his own, he counts it as rendered to himself. She was baptized the first Sunday in May 1938 into the Mountain View Old School Baptist Church at Santa Anna, Coleman Co., Texas. She leaves two sons, three grandchildren and three sisters: Mrs. Drue Stoval who was with her when she died, Mrs. W. S. Copeland of Salinas, California, and Mrs. Ettie Smith of San Antonio, Tex., at whose request I am writing this notice. I quote from her sister's

letter to me as follows: "Her heart just stopped, she passed away peacefully, not a struggle. She was ready and willing to go, to meet her Savior that she loved and worshipped. She was always in her place at church until this last sickness. She believed strongly in election and predestination." From this description of her, we gather that sister Wood was one of the Lord's redeemed, sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise unto the redemption of the purchased possession. To be made fit for the Savior's presence is the accomplishment of the Holy Spirit in applying to the subjects of God's grace, the efficacy of the atonement made for them through the work of Jesus Christ in giving himself for them that they may live to him forever in his presence. "The memory of the just is blessed." Of such as sister Wood, it may be said they have a goodly heritage, the lines have fallen to them in pleasant places. May the Lord reconcile us all to his divine will, and cause us to desire his will to be done at all times.

H. H. LEFFERTS

MARY JANE CAMPBELL was born at Wardsville, Ontario, July 2, 1858, and departed this earthly life March 13, 1942. She was in her 84th year. She was the only child of John B. McArthur and Martha Mills. On December 28, 1880 she married Daniel W. Campbell of Duart, Ontario. He predeceased her twenty-three years ago Jan. 12. On the fourth Sunday in March 1885 mother was received into the Old School Baptist Church and, with father, was baptized the first Sunday in May at Dunwich by Elder William Pollard. Mother was a faithful member and a great Bible reader. She loved the truth and was a firm believer in absolute predestination. She always looked forward with joy to her church meetings, and enjoyed the entertainment of those she held so dear, and the conversation of those things that were so very precious to her. I remember that when home duties would interfere at meeting times she would remain at home so that father, who was a deacon, might be in his place. After father's death she sold the farm and moved into Highgate where she lived until about a year and a half before her death when she came to live with us. She suffered severe heart attacks, and when they became more frequent and more painful she would long to be at rest where there was no pain or suffering. Her family was with her when she passed away. She leaves to mourn, three daughters: Mr. G. H. Strauch, Waltham, Mass., Mrs. F. W. Kanter, Detroit, Mich., and the writer, Mrs. E. C. Guyitt, Muirkirk, Ontario. Also five grandchildren and one great-grandson. Her funeral, which was largely attended, was held from the Duart meeting-house, and conducted by her pastor, Elder George Ruston. He spoke from Timothy 1:1. Her remains were laid to rest in Duart Cemetery beside her dear husband and infant daughter. We feel the loss of a wonderful mother more keenly as time goes on, and miss her in so many ways, yet we know our loss is her gain and feel to say "Thy will be done".

(Mrs.) E. C. GUYITT

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.
O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canada, California.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th Street, Mayfield, Ky. Those interested will be welcome.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 A. M. 2 P. M.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. C.W. BOND, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1315 Columbia Avenue

(PARK AVENUE HALL)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10.30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Texas.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sundays in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P. M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sundays each month at 11:00 A. M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10.30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

VOL. 111 RUTHERFORD, N. J. APRIL, 1943 No. 4

BIBLE TEACHING

Of all the sinners I am chief,
A carnal man and sold;
In Christ alone I find relief,
And comfort to my soul.

It is by Christ that I believe,
By him that I repent;
From him each blessing I receive,
His spirit brings content.

He thanked his Father he had hid
His truths from prudent men;
In covenant he did forbid
Men teaching to know him.

They shall not teach men me to know,
That is the Spirit's work;
Poor mortals living here below
Will soon go back to dirt.

Now all thy children shall know me,
From greatest unto least;
I shed my blood to set them free,
That they might have a feast.

Let not your hearts be troubled now,
Believe in God and me;
The Comforter will teach you how
From sin you are made free.

This sinful world is not your home,
You have a home above;
Some day I'll come and take you on
To that sweet home of love.

LYTLE BURNS

CORRESPONDENCE

WEBBVILLE, Ky.

Predestination and the Problem of Evil

The objection is often raised that if God predestinated the entire course of events in this world he must be the author of sin. It is because of this objection that I, with fear and trembling, attempt to give my brethren everywhere a few thoughts on this very vital subject. Thoughts which I most sincerely believe were given me by our Heavenly Father who is the only sovereign ruler of heaven and earth, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, infinite in all of his attributes, "Holy and reverend is his name." To begin with allow me to restate that, "God hath decreed in himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever come to pass, yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin, nor hath fellowship with any therein; nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor yet is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established in which appears his wisdom in disposing all things, and power and faithfulness in accomplishing his de-

cree." *London Confession.* It is matter of fact, and well understood by many, that the doctrine expressed in the foregoing statements is the doctrine held by all genuine Baptists everywhere from the very earliest of their existence, which of course began when our Lord instituted his militant church at Jerusalem. Many will admit readily that God did predestinate what they term the good that comes to pass, but flatly deny the predestination of anything which seems to them evil, and of course they want to be the sole judges of what is good and what is evil. We dissent from them on the ground that they are incompetent judges, remembering that, "every way of a man is right in his own eyes." There has ever been those, and at this present time their number is legion, who "call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter." Therefore, we cannot accept their ideas relative to God's eternal decrees. And now as we venture upon this great subject, my brethren, let us not lean upon the arm of flesh, but may we trust in the Everlasting Arms which alone is sufficient to guide us safely to our desired haven. The word, predestinate, as used in the Scriptures, is not hard to understand. It means simply, to appoint beforehand. It is to purpose a thing to be, and not only to appoint or purpose a thing to be, but to appoint the very time, yea, the exact moment when it shall come to pass, and not only to appoint the exact time for an event to take place, but to appoint all the intervening events, or secondary causes, necessary to bring the event to fulfillment. Now, these secondary causes do certainly produce effects, and these effects do in turn become causes of other effects, but the primary cause of all things, of all secondary causes and effects, is God's predestination of them, and all things and all events so decreed are rendered absolutely certain from the fact that God, by his omnipotent power (not by his Holy Spirit) so bounds his decrees, and so governs and controls the wickedness of men as renders it impossible for wicked men and devils to go beyond the thing which God decreed to allow (not make) them to do. The decree itself is the bounds to which they inevitably go, and the decree is the bounds at which their wicked devices are stayed. "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." Job 38:11. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." Psalm 76:10. The corruption of men's natures and the wickedness of demons, under divine control, renders it absolutely certain, yea, impossible for them to do otherwise than come right up to and fulfill the decree. Not that God causes men and devils to do wickedly contrary to their wills, no, a thousand times no, but their carnal wills are in bondage to sin, (John 8:34—2 Peter 2:19) so that they drink iniquity like water. Job 15:16. They will freely, only within the limits of nature with no coercion on the part of God, to do the evil which God decreed for them. The Scriptures abound with proofs to the effect that God did, from all eternity, freely ordain all things that come to pass

here in time. "And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them." Isa. 44:7. I ask, who is so able to declare it as he who appointed it? Also in Isa. 46:9, 10 we read, "I am God and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Here, as indicated, we are certainly not obliged to interpret this passage to mean that God decreed, foreknew and declared only the good things to come to pass, but the evil as well. He foreknew and declared the end of all things because he purposed all things to be just as they are and not some other way. God's foreknowledge and predestination go hand in hand. Neither can be independent of the other though he did not predestinate anything because he foresaw it would take place, that would be no predestination at all, for why should he predestinate a thing which was going to take place any way, and that without his predestinating it? Such an argument is extremely illogical, and to a heaven-born soul, in contrast to this argument, the truth rings loud and clear. God foreknew and declared all things just as we see them coming to pass to-day, simply and for no other reason than that he had purposed it to be just that way. Who could question the fact that the crucifixion of our Lord took place according to the appointment of God? The most wicked, atrocious act ever committed by wicked men or devils, and yet he was delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, into wicked hands to be crucified and slain. Acts 2:23, and in Acts 4:28 we are told that the wicked hands which crucified him did just what, "thy (God's) hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." If we can accept this truth, that God did predestinate the most evil crime in all history, then we should have no difficulty in believing that he also predestinated all other evil acts of lesser import. Physical death is generally conceded and acknowledged to be the worst evil that could come upon a mortal. In the Scripture it is called, "The last enemy," 1 Cor. 15:26 and surely such an enemy as death must be an evil thing, and yet this very evil thing was included in the eternal purpose of Almighty God, and certainly comes to us all by his appointment. Heb. 9:27. But this objection may here be raised that the appointment of death was because of transgression, which is eternally true. Adam's transgression was the secondary cause of his own death and that of his posterity, but the primary or first cause of death was God's appointment of it. He appointed it of course as one result of the fall. Separation from God and physical death were the certain results of the fall of man. "Thou shalt surely die." As to his people, their separation from God was temporal, the others had no connection with him in his eternal purposes. They were reprobates (Refuse). This leads us to consider another great evil which came upon all mankind. The fall of man which no doubt was also included in the divine

purposes from eternity, and I feel sure we can find scriptural evidence sufficient to justify this contention. I am positively not in accord with the statement we so often have heard, that Adam was made able to stand but liable to fall. That would mean that he might or he might not fall. It certainly implies that he might have stood, and, if so, God's purposes to redeem his people by Christ would have been thwarted, for he stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and God had from the beginning chosen his people to salvation, and had recorded their names in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. No, dearly beloved, God was no spectator standing by in doubt as to what Adam would do for he knew that his own hand had formed the crooked serpent to present the temptation. He knew also that he had made Adam a creature subject to vanity (fall), and as such, he had the very germ of disobedience within him which would cause him to respond to the temptation. No, Adam was not able to stand, not within himself, without that divine grace which God was under no obligation to bestow, and he had not purposed to bestow it. The omniscient God had perfect knowledge of the results of that fall, that all of his elect which were in Adam by nature would be involved in it. He knew that death would immediately ensue, and for this reason, God, who loved his people with an everlasting love, and who, no doubt, included in his great purposes their fall, also purposed to redeem them from the fall, and in their fall, his people found, not the wrath of God abiding on them, though by nature just as deserving of it as the others, but instead they found the Everlasting Arms underneath, for God had placed there a scaffolding of grace, and though his righteous indignation and wrath was displayed upon their sin, his divine law was honored, his justice satisfied. His stroke did not fall upon the weaker members of this mystical body of Christ, but upon the head, Christ the Lord. For this point of doctrine we find an apt illustration in Lev. 16:21, 22. Here Aaron was commanded to bring the scapegoat upon which the Lord's lot fell and to "lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness." Herein is set forth beautifully, the great transaction which took place in the purposes of God from all eternity. God the Father took the guilt and the sins of his people and laid them upon their federal head for he had decreed that he shall bear their sins. I say he took their guilt for God's justice could not strike the innocent, and his justice must be satisfied. "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." It seems very evil to carnal reason that the just should suffer for the unjust, but it was really very good in the eyes of Omnipotence to make the innocent Son guilty by transferring

our guilt to him, and to lay upon him the iniquities of us all, and though it seem evil to carnal reason none can deny that the prophets, who spake by inspiration of God as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, foretold those very events. This is proof sufficient to the Lord's people that it all took place in the purposes of God from all eternity, and that it came to pass actually, in time, by eternal decree. Yes, God's purpose to redeem his people is easily traced back into eternity from plain scripture teaching. The fall of man and its consequences, from which his people were to be redeemed, is also easily traced back into eternity, but to admit the former and deny the latter part of this doctrine is not only inconsistent and illogical, but unscriptural as well, for how could God purpose to redeem a people while as yet he had not purposed the thing from which they were to be redeemed? So we see to deny the one means that the other must fall to the ground, and so a limited predestination is worse than no predestination at all. The doctrine of God's unlimited predestination of all things, and his absolute control over all things and all events, is not only the true doctrine of both the old and new testaments for the people of God, but is undoubtedly the true philosophy of the ages, which none can approach unto nor comprehend, who have not experienced the deep things of God. Now in rounding up this article may I suggest some reasons for God's purposing all things to come to pass just as we see them, and of his supreme control of all things as displayed in his divine providence. First, to show forth his majesty in the government of the universe, and to give to his people the knowledge of his sovereign rulership over all worlds and all things, that we should know something of the greatness of his might and fear him because of his greatness. Surely such a sovereign does work "all things after the counsel of his own will," and is able to make "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." His people also are made to rejoice in the knowledge of his divine omnipotence, and when wicked men and devils, who were made for this very day of evil, are allowed, as great ocean billows, to surge against us causing us severe trials, then we have the divine assurance that our God is able to deliver us, and in due time that still small voice shall speak "Peace be still," and instead of harming us, these severe trials and temptations are made to contribute to our salvation. No, my dear kindred in Christ, this doctrine of God our Saviour is not a cold, barren, speculative theory as many imagine it to be, but a warm, living, vital and important account of God's relations and dealings with his people. It is a system of great truths designed by the power of Almighty God to mould the affections of the heart, and to give right directions to the conduct of his people. The child of faith, who has this doctrine in his heart, believes and rests in the assurance that his entire course of life was predestinated for him personally, and that God directs his every step, that the very hairs of his head are all numbered, and not one shall fall without his

Father's consent. They also are made to believe that, though all the raging billows of evil, of earth and hell itself, were turned loose upon them, it would still be under divine control, and could not possibly harm them, but would work for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory in the end. Dearly beloved everywhere, I must close this article, not feeling that I have made a contribution to the faith of any, but I have only tried to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance, that this is the doctrine of God our Saviour, and the truth in which we live. Farewell. A brother in hope of immortal glory.

J. S. HUNNICUTT

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406 Viola Street, FLORENCE, Ala.

DEAR BRETHREN:

After receiving a letter recently from an organization in a distant city telling me of the benefits I might receive by becoming a member of that organization I was impressed by the spirit of our God to write of the benefits the Lord's people receive from his gracious hand. The organization that I hope I have an abiding interest in is eternal, unlimited in wisdom and power, immutable, omnipresent, able to do what it has promised to do. It was organized in eternity by three persons who owned all the "gold of Ophir" and all "the cattle upon a thousand hills". They said, to a certain class of people who represent them as being very poor and needy and are continually begging money for them, if we were hungry we would not tell you. One of the members of this company wrote his brother as follows: "Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." Now if this company has made this promise and cannot lie, will we not certainly get what they have promised? Now another member and servant tells us that they are not slack concerning that promise as some men count slackness, but are long suffering to usward (or toward us embracing the elect and to himself to whom he was writing) not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Now to further comfort and console these members, who are often cast down but not destroyed, one of them writes as follows: "For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife: Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." The above shows that this company is under oath to give life to all the heirs of promise who are members. This same servant wrote again: "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee." The

above shows that this company is under oath to both bless and multiply Abraham's seed which is symbolic of Christ's seed. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise." Another servant writes as follows: "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." There is no other way of obtaining this faith except by the method as stated above according as his divine power hath given us all things that pertain to life and godliness. He has not offered us all things, but given them. He then tells how they were given through the knowledge of him that called us to glory and virtue, whereby are given unto us exceeding and precious promises: "That by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature." They are called exceeding great and precious promises, they exceed all other promises because they are older, they are precious to the children of God because they promise the greatest blessing that could be bestowed. These blessings were put into the hands of one of the members of this company that He should bestow them upon all the heirs of promise. He was rich yet He became poor that his loved ones might have the life he had promised them. He came here, was born of a woman, was made flesh and dwelt among us. His enemies tried to kill him when he was born, and did kill many little children in that effort, but God's prophet assured them that their children would receive this promised life when he said to them: "Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy." He lived here on this earth as a poor man, had not where to lay his head, no money to pay his taxes, was buried in a borrowed tomb. He comforted our poor hearts while here by preaching his everlasting gospel by saying that he came to give eternal life to as many as his Father had given him, and all the Father giveth me shall come to me, and his Father was not willing that one of them should perish. And he plainly states himself that I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish. When Lazarus died Jesus told Martha, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." No God's dear people do not die, they put off this tabernacle and have a building in the heavens, a house not made with hands. This company asked me to give my occupation in detail. Well sir, I am a fisher and a hunter. This company spoke through one of their servants and said, "Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks." When the second person that belongs to this company was here He saw two men fishing, and said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." He spoke to two others, they left their nets and followed him. He ordained twelve of them and sent them forth to fish for His people. He sent them with-

out script or purse, told them where and what to preach. After His resurrection he sent the eleven as hunters and told them he would be with them always even unto the end of the world. I am in my eighty-fifth year, will soon go the way of all the earth.

We now, O Lord, make this request
When we shall come to die;
That we may on thy promise rest
And on thy oath rely.

Love to all the saints.

LYTLE BURNS

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113 South 12th St., MURRAY, Ky.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

We see our time expires with this December issue 1942 for the dear family paper. Enclosed you will find remittance as we feel we must continue. We enjoy the sweet letters so much. How we wish more would write experiences for the paper. I am enclosing a letter written by our dear sister, Mrs. Stella Odom of Cambria, Ill. I would be glad for others to know her feelings too. It has been over five years since we have seen each other but this morning I feel she has made me a visit, and "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

FANNIE H. CHESTER

CAMBRIA, Ill.

MRS. W. T. CHESTER,

DEAR SISTER:

Received your letter which I was glad to get. Glad you are well. We are about as usual, just getting older, but I hope I am thankful it is as well with us as it is. Sometimes I wonder if we are thankful enough. We sometimes think we have the hardest time, and when we look around and see others in worse shape, then is when I am ashamed that I have complained. To think our precious Saviour, Jesus, who did no sin, suffered for our sins, neither was guile found in his mouth. O what a merciful Heavenly Father we have to give his only Son to suffer for our sins. Sister, I feel like the poor publican. I do not feel like lifting my eyes unto heaven, such a worm of the dust as I feel myself to be. Yes, I can say "God be merciful to me a sinner." Often I am made to say:

" 'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought,)
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

I do know I love the brethren and sisters, I love the church, and I am glad my hopes are built upon the precious word of God. The Scriptures say, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Yes, I have thought about Zaccheus often, and of our precious Jesus knowing all our thoughts. He knew where to look for this little man and said unto him, "This day is salvation come to this house." "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

The second Sunday in October Elder Harris preached a wonderful sermon. He was given liberty by the Higher Power to speak that day for one hour and a half. When the invitation was given brother Simmons and his sweet wife came into our church and were baptized in the afternoon. On account of

the gas and rubber situation we are not meeting this winter. Oh, how I do miss going to our meetings. We will have to be content with reading our Bible and the good paper SIGNS OF THE TIMES. There is so much suffering and sorrow in the world we, none of us, feel like celebrating anything. Christmas will be dull for us. My daughter has been sick for five weeks and is two hundred sixty miles from me. Then two grandsons in the camps makes a lot to think about. I feel like crying most of the time, then I think God knows best and has promised to be with us in all our troubles. That is all the consolation I have. When in real trouble we look to the Lord who is able to keep and comfort us. Dear sister, what a wonderful Saviour, who loved us even when we were dead in sins. You asked me to write you about myself. I fear you will not ask me to do that any more as I am such a sinner and ramble around so. I will close and look for a long letter from you. I love to read your good letters as they are comforting. Pray for me when at the throne of grace. May God bless and keep you and yours until we meet again. From one who loves you.

STELLA ODOM

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46 Cedar St., KINGSTON, N. Y.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—

As my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has expired I wish to renew it. It is the dearest of all papers to me, one I have read since my childhood with much comfort to my poor hungry soul. I find it both comforting and edifying. The experiences of the dear children of God are comforting to one who has traveled that way. To read after those who write on the Scriptures is both meat and drink to our hungry souls as well as edifying. It made me rejoice when I read in November SIGNS of that young sailor coming out from the world, and coming before the church and being baptized in his uniform as Elder Spangler stated. Buried in baptism acknowledging his Saviour. While he was baptized with his uniform on I feel he also had on the robe of righteousness which far excels all other uniforms for he was in the right way. Thank God for his wonderful works to the children of men. How many times I have been made to say, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." I feel keenly that he has taught me to know that his works are great with poor me, one who is not worthy of the least of his notice. Yet I have to say that he has blessed me in so many ways though very unworthy of it all. Like Jacob, he found me in a waste howling wilderness, led me about and instructed me, and kept me as the apple of his eye. When only a child I was made to cry for mercy after I was shown what a sinner I was, and he heard my cry and delivered me out of all my distresses. For a time I was made to rejoice in him as my Saviour. I was made to say, "What a mercy is this, what a heaven of bliss! how unspeakably favored am I." I felt that "Now my remnant of days would I spend to his praise." How far short I come of it. Before I am aware of it I am

complaining again. Then when we think of where it says in his word, "His mercy endureth forever," do we not find it true and our hope is renewed. If it were not for these precious promises and his word to go to what would we do. Meeting with the brethren is a great comfort to me. We were at covenant meeting Sunday. Had a very good meeting. All talked and spoke of their unworthiness which I feel so much of the time. I should bring this to a close lest I weary you, but I feel you know something about these wanderings, or else you could not comfort me as you do in your speaking. In order for one to comfort another they have to know something about being brought from nature to grace, also about being brought low and being lifted up, and about the old and the new man, or the warfare, or conflict one has between the flesh and the spirit. Sometimes I wonder if there is anything but flesh in me, and then again I am lifted up and made to say, my Lord and my God, for I can see in me dwells no good thing, and he is my all and my refuge in time of storm. He is the only one to lean upon in the days of trial which have been many in my life. With it all he has led me beside the still waters and I have been made to be still and know that he is God, and to feel I have not had more trial than was meant for me, nor suffered one more pain than was destined for me to bear. With it all I feel to say that he has been our dwelling place through all generations and by his stripes we are healed. Those stripes were much greater suffering than we have suffered. With these words I will close, praise the Lord, oh, my soul, praise his holy name and forget not all his benefits. Your unworthy sister, ELIZABETH SLAUSON.

MANSFIELD, Ga.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

I am ashamed to have you wait one year for past dues on the SIGNS and am enclosing money-order for 1942 and 1943. I do not think I can keep house without your paper, and am glad you can carry it on. I am sending you an obituary of one of our dear sisters, Mrs. J. H. Adams. A sister-in-law of Elder H. H. Lefferts and one of our best members. She was a lover of the SIGNS and what it stood for. I have not missed a copy in forty years. I hope you and your wife are both in good health. Your brother in Christ. W. F. ADAMS

(See obituary in this issue.)

MIAMI, Fla.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—

Please find enclosed check for $2 which pays for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the year 1943. The paper is edited by a dear nephew of mine, and my hope is that he may be directed by Divine Providence to keep it up to the standard it has borne for lo these many years to feed the poor of the flock, and to strengthen those that are seeking after the truth, those that love the ways of righteousness. May he be directed by God, who makes no mistakes, to preach his everlasting gospel to those he purchased by his own blood. I am now in my eighty-fourth year and am not feeling well, and, therefore, will close ask-

ing all that love our Lord in sincerity to remember this poor worm at the throne of grace that I may improve in health, and be able to hear the gospel preached a few more times. In hope of a better life.

C. W. DODSON.

(We are thankful, indeed, to the Giver of every good and perfect gift for such expressions as those contained in the foregoing letter. Uncle Charlie is the youngest of three unusual boys. They grew up together and for many years owned adjoining farms, but best of all the three were given a good hope through grace in the mercy of God. The oldest brother lived to the age of eighty-nine, and my father was in his eighty-third year when he departed. They all lived honorable lives, serving their fellow creatures and their God as few men are blessed to do. We truly hope that our Lord will cause Uncle Charlie to realize that he will never be forsaken by him who loved him and gave himself for him. May it be God's will to spare him for some years to come, and enable him to hear the gospel preached in its purity, which has been his meat and his drink for many, many years is the prayer of the undersigned. R. L. D.)

DENTON, Ky.

MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:

This morning while feeling so much cast down will drop a few lines. My mind seems to be somewhat exercised on the greatness of Almighty God, who hath created all things for himself both in heaven and in earth, and is absolute as to condition, absolute in purpose, in perfection, in will and in power. Working all things after the counsel of his own will, so that all things in heaven and earth are giving honor, glory and praise to his most holy name. All of our uprisings and downsittings are in his purpose, and working for our eternal good and his glory. Only intending to write a few lines I will close. Enclosed find my check to pay up my subscription and renew for another year. Your brother in hope of a glorious immortality.

H. L. ROGERS

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210 Court St., EDENTON, N. C.

SIGNS and WONDERS

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

In 2 Timothy 3:16, 17 the apostle Paul says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." The evidence of the truth of the Bible is this, the miracles that God performed through the prophets of old with *signs and wonders,* as when Moses was sent of God to Pharaoh, the king, to deliver the children of Israel out of bondage, who were there for their sins of rebellion, and according to the providential decree of God, that they should be in bondage for four hundred years, but now the time has come for the fulfillment of the prophecies of God and you see great *signs and wonders* in the events that are taking place or coming to pass. There were signs in heaven above and in the earth. Lightning, thunder, hail and rain, destruction of property, plagues and famines, death to the eldest sons of the Egyptians. The king's heart was

hardened till he would not give up until he was drowned in the Red Sea and his body floated upon the waters, but God delivered the children of Israel by parting the waters, and they came through walking on the bottom of the sea. These were some *signs and wonders* and any one without faith cannot believe it. Through and by the power of God given to Moses, the prophet of God, going according to the instruction of God by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he just stretched out the rod over the waters, and they parted for the deliverance of the children of God. Some of the old prophets had the power given them, or through them God raised the dead. The old prophets by the inspiration of God have cited the events of time on down to the end of the world, and if we could understand all the Holy Writ we would know by the events where we are in the history of the world. You will find where Daniel, the prophet, pictured the events even to the time of the end of the world. I am not saying that the world is now coming to an end for I do not know. Moses, the prophet, spoke of Christ, the great prophet and redeemer, who was to come, and Moses says a prophet like unto me God will raise up and him ye shall hear, and all the prophets witnessed and testified of the Messiah, and described his manner of life, his birth and even the place of his birth, his death, his betrayal by Judas, and even put the price that Judas received for the betrayal of him to the high priests of Israel. It was prophesied that his bones should not be broken, and he was to be Wonderful, the mighty God, Jehovah, Prince of peace, a great High Priest who has all power in heaven and in earth. He was a mediator between God and man to reconcile man and bring him back to God. Therefore, it is said and prophesied that the law and the prophets are fulfilled in him (in Christ Jesus). As the law has been fulfilled to a letter, we are not saved by trying to keep the law which was a schoolmaster unto Christ Jesus, who is full of grace and truth. His righteousness is imputed unto us and we are counted righteous for we are saved by his merits which he wrought out on the cross of Calvary for us. I should call this wonderful *signs and wonders* God has done in our midst, and it has been recorded in the Holy Bible by inspiration of God's spirit and has been preserved by the providential care of God through all these ages and handed down to us in our own language. Holy Writ also prophesies that there will be scoffers, antichrists, infidels and so forth who will deny the inspiration of the Bible, and some will fall away from the faith or doctrine, and some will be turned to novels, and some will have itching ears and turn unto fables, and the way of truth will be evilly spoken of. What is all this the evidence of? Answer, it is the proof beyond any doubt that the word of God is true. The miracles of Christ were proof that God had sent him for a special purpose. His birth was a miracle, being born of a virgin by and through the power of the Holy Ghost, and God was his father, and he was God himself manifest in the flesh. This is the chief corner stone that was to be rejected of men and crucified on the cross

of Calvary. He was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, he healed diseases, he raised the dead, opened the eyes of the blind both natural and spiritual, turned water into wine, said the poor have the gospel preached unto them, walked on the water and even the wind and sea obeyed him. Then he called the twelve apostles and gave them power to raise the dead, open the eyes of the blind and cast out devils. God did this through the apostles. They did not claim this power of themselves but in the name of Jesus Christ they commanded one to rise up and walk. The apostles received this through God's inspiration just the same way the Bible was written. There shall be signs in heaven above and in the earth beneath. There shall be wars and rumors of wars, nation shall rise against nation, and men's and women's hearts shall fail them for fear of the things that are coming upon the world, but Christ said be ye not troubled for these things must be, just the same as saying all these things have been prophesied by the Holy Spirit through the prophets and apostles and they must come to pass that the Scriptures be fulfilled. There is no such thing as the Scriptures saying a thing must be and then for it to be some other way. I believe that all things, both good and bad, will come to pass just as the Bible states they will, and even the wrath of man shall praise Him and the rest he shall restrain to the fulfilling of his counsel and purpose, and there is no difference in that and the predestination of all things. We wonder why Adam fell and plunged us in death, sorrow, disease and all the other plagues. Then we wonder who Christ would have saved if Adam had kept his first estate. Then we wonder why the fallen angels did not keep their first estate, but they sinned and lost out with God and are reserved in chains of darkness to judgment day. I wonder sometimes what will become of all the disembodied spirits of men from Adam to the end of the world, or at the great Judgment day of God, and also of the fallen angels who have never had a body like as man, but that is the way God created them. The Bible is a lamp and a light unto our pathway, and is the book of God, and a wonderful book to read if we have the inspiration of God to understand what we read. There is a natural knowledge there that we can gain without inspiration. "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." Mark 16:17, 18.

THOMAS W. KIMSEY

5 Shaw St., SANFORD, Maine

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

Weather and road conditions have made it possible for us to meet more often as a church during the past year. The last three services have been held in homes most central thus saving fuel, gas and tires. The first Sunday of this year all were not able to be present at my home when we met but we felt it was profitable. What a privilege it is to see and converse with those we love and fel-

lowship for the truth's sake. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." Mal. 3:16. God hath promised that where two or three are gathered together in his name that he will be with them. How often have I felt we are so few, so insignificant, so undeserving of God's love and mercy, but if Christ, the King of kings, is in our midst what more can we ask? God hath called his chosen people from all nations and all parts of the earth to dwell in safety in the shadow of his love. "And they shall be my people, and I will be their God: And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me forever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." Jer. 32:38-40.

"While Jesus in love, my affection engages,
With softest emotions my soul does o'erflow;
This sweet consolation each trouble assuages,
He'll ne'er cease to love me, Ah never! Oh no."

His word is full of promises of love and kindness to those who call upon his name, and the poor and needy in spirit he will never forsake.

"He knows how deep their groanings are,
And what their secret sighs declare;
And, for their comforts, has express'd
That all such mourning souls are bless'd."

It has been comforting for the churches in Maine to have our ministering brethren come among us preaching the truths declared in the Bible. At our two days meeting in North Berwick, Elder Vaughn was certainly given great liberty to proclaim God's redeeming love to men. In Bowdoinham Elder Bellows and yourself brought those same sweet truths. What a pleasant and profitable evening we spent at sister Minerva Dunlap's singing and conversing together. Our dear sister Quint who was there has been called to her eternal home. How we all miss her. Though feeble for some time she was interested in the church, and always wanted to be in her place, and entertain visiting brethren. We feel our loss is her gain, that she has gone to that heavenly country which is far better. Wishing you a peaceful New Year, your sister I hope in fellowship.

LYDIA R. NASON

Route 2, AMARILLO, Texas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:

As I sit alone in deep meditation on life, and the many issues of modern so called christianity, I am made, seemingly, to cry O Lord, God of heaven and earth, thou and thou alone knowest how to rightly judge the hearts of men. Thou also knowest why our thoughts are exercised to question the truth of the beautiful sentiments almost universally expressed by those who teach the do and live doctrine. Asking ourselves, dear Lord, is it just possible that we deceive ourselves, and if wrong O how wrong we are. If not deceived we would know the true interpretation of thy blessed word. How diligently we try to search to find

the truth for we know we have a soul to be saved or lost, and when we teach and affirm that man is a helpless creature, as far as his own ability is concerned, it truly makes us feel the great responsibility of being right. Again, on the other hand, we are made to ask why, if man can and must make his own choice, and his eternal destiny is in his own hands, need Christ to have come from the realms of glory, suffered and died on the cruel cross, if his coming did not accomplish anything? Could man not have made the same choice, exercised the same faith, rendered the same obedience to God in heaven without Christ's advent into the world? If what the so called christian world says is true, that man's eternal destiny is in his own hands, I am forced to openly confess that what I had hoped and called my travel from nature to grace is but a myth and an imagination as I have been repeatedly told it was, and I am still an alien from God without any ground for hope. Oh what an awful picture for I must confess if it were not for the shed blood of a crucified but now risen Saviour, I say if it were not for his obedience and substitution for my sin then indeed I am lost. All my tears and grief on account of sin, and my feeling of being ten thousand talents in debt and not one farthing to pay with is all in vain, but with my little hope almost extinct at times, and knowing my best thoughts are mixed with sin, yet ten thousand worlds like this one would not buy that little hope regardless of how I came to possess it. I did not intend to make this so long. My main thought was to send in my past due subscription and renew for as long a time as the money I send will pay. Also take out one dollar for the book you mentioned in the last SIGNS to be out about June. If there is anything in this poor effort of mine that would be of any comfort you may pass it along if not cast it aside. Forgive me for being neglectful in remitting. I have no excuse to offer. I ask you to please remember me when at the throne of God's mercy. I am, I hope, your brother in hope of mercy beyond the grave.

G. G. TURNER

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS".

Mrs. J. Jefferson, Tenn., $1; D. H. Bradley, Tex., $2; D. W. White, Tex., $3; E. Lock, Mich., $1; Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Okla., $2; M. C. Martin, Mo., $2; Eld. D. L. Topping, Md., $3; Mrs. J. H. Wright, Ky., $5; M. J. Absher, Ga., $1; A. S. Hewitt, N. Y., $3; M. D. Gordy, Mich., $1; Mrs. Mae Thomas, Ill., $14; Mrs. V. Machesney, Kans., $1.

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EDITORIAL

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MATTHEW 17:1-5.

"And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with them. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."

In his account of the transfiguration Mark tells us that the raiment of Jesus was white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them. Luke says that Moses and Elias appeared in glory and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. There is no doubt about Jesus having a definite purpose in taking these three disciples into this mountain to be transfigured before them, and what they beheld they were instructed to tell to no man until after he was risen again from the dead. In the preceding chapter Jesus had asked his disciples who men thought he was. Some had thought he was John the Baptist, others Elias or one of the prophets. Then he asked them: "But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." The apostle was told that flesh and blood had not revealed this to him, but his Father in heaven. So we see that though Jesus now walked about in the body that God had prepared him, some seeing him as a prophet, some one person, others another, the only ones that knew him as the Son of the living God were the ones who received this knowledge (not by flesh and blood) by revelation. In coming into the world, Jesus came down from heaven not to do his own will but the will of him that sent him. He was with the Father before the world began. He is the Word spoken of as being in the beginning with God. In his coming into the world the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. "He took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." "As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." Now we are told why he came this way: "That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." He was the perfect sacrifice.

His body was prepared for him by his Father. We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Up until now the three had beheld him in the body prepared as a sacrifice. They were looking forward to his reigning over them as King over Israel. They knew nothing of his suffering. He now prepares them for things they are later to remember. At the time of the transfiguration Jesus had not yet entered into his suffering. There had been no resurrection from the dead. The grave was unconquered. Three witnesses were selected to behold it, Peter, James and John. In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established. What a wonderful sight they now behold: His raiment is white as the light, and his countenance shines as the sun. They look upon the King of kings and Lord of lords. They are to remember these things on the Day of Pentecost, when Peter declares that God has highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name. The Exalted One now appears, and Moses and Elias appear with him. Moses represents the law, Elias (or Elijah) the prophets and Jesus as the fulfillment of what the law shadowed forth and the prophets promised. It was decided by the three apostles to build three tabernacles, one for Moses, one for Jesus and one for Elias, but the glory of the prophets, or the law, is never to be compared with the glory of the Only Begotten. While they yet spake a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice out of the cloud said: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." God now places the stamp of approval on the work of his Son, the one glorified before them. He said the same at his baptism. When the cloud had passed away, Moses and Elias were gone, and they saw no man save Jesus only. Whether it be in the glorious gospel, or beholding Christ by an eye of faith, seated in heaven, crowned with honor and glory all others fade into insignificance when his glory appears. Moses and Elias were recognized by Peter, James and John, yet it was not recognition like we see one that we have known before. The apostles had never seen these two while they lived. They knew Moses, and they knew Elias. This was a revealed knowledge, and was not the heavenly recognition some think and talk about. There had been no resurrection of the dead. Christ had not yet died and risen. The natural bodies of the people of God were in the graves, none had risen. Moses had died about fourteen hundred years before this, and God had buried him. Elijah had been carried to heaven in a whirlwind nearly nine hundred years before. Now both appear; this is not a myth, they retain their identity as the prophet and the lawgiver.

D. V. S.

MATTHEW 24:27-28.

"For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together."

Under the caption of "Views Wanted" we published in the June, 1942 issue of

the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the request of sister Frank Loden, Quinlan, Texas, for some one to explain the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew. To be more specific, she asked, "Does it mean the final end of all things, or is it the end of Legal Jerusalem that is under consideration." Thus far there has not been any compliance with her request published. Perhaps the magnitude of the task has deterred others, and while we realize in advance what an undertaking it will be for us to attempt to adequately cover the subject, since our mind has reverted to it several times during the past year, we shall present such views as we have regarding it. The position which we shall take is that the language in this chapter very definitely and very clearly shows that it has to do with the end of Legal Jerusalem, and not the end of this natural world. What we shall say will, therefore, be for the purpose of substantiating this point of view. We have selected the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth verses as a text for the reason that we feel they, more than any other verses in the chapter, lead us to the crux of the matter. Let us here get before us again the words of the text, in order that they may be fresh in our minds: "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together." Whatever our Lord had in mind, there was to be nothing half way or incomplete about it, for his reference to the lightning coming out of the east and shining unto the west most certainly signified that it would be complete, far-reaching and all-embracing in its effects, and he used this illustration to show that, also, or in like manner and degree, would the coming of the Son of man be. Again we say, whatever it was Jesus had under consideration, it was to be accompanied by death and destruction, for he said, "Wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together." Had he meant the destruction of this literal world he would hardly have followed it up with any such statement as the eagles gathering around the carcase, for when this natural world is destroyed there will be no eagles or anything else left to gather together.

Let us now make a brief review of some of the things contained in the chapter. In the first verse it is said, "Jesus went out, and departed from the temple." The wonderful building or group of buildings which constituted the temple, which were constructed of huge and choice stones and requiring forty and six years to assemble or put them together at Jerusalem, were symbolical of the form of worship under the law, under which Jesus came as a priest, and the very fact of his taking his departure from the temple indicated that the end of that world, or age, was fast approaching. In the second verse, Jesus said that not one stone would be left remaining upon another, so complete would be its overthrow. In the third verse his disciples asked when those things which he had referred to would be accomplished, and what would be the sign of his coming, and the end of the (that particular) world. He answered them first with a

caution that they, "Take heed that no man deceive you" for, he said, many would come in his name, claiming to be the Christ, and would deceive many. He then proceeded to enumerate the things which would take place before the actual destruction of the city of Jerusalem, or what it typified. He said there would be wars and rumors of wars; that nation would rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and that there would be famines, pestilences and earthquakes, in divers places, all of which would be only the beginning of sorrow. He continued by telling them that they would be delivered up to be afflicted and killed, and would be hated of all nations for his sake; that many of them would be offended, betraying and hating one another; that false prophets would arise and that iniquity would abound, etc., and he concluded this by saying: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Those who are familiar with the history of the Jews will undoubtedly agree that all of the things Jesus referred to actually came to pass, including the desolation prophesied of by Daniel, and the things spoken of in verses sixteen to twenty-four inclusive. If any one should question this let him read Josephus' Works covering what the Roman Army did to the Jews. Jesus then said, "Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers, believe it not." And then follows our text. In this we are told (1) what the coming of the Son of man would be like—the lightning which illuminates the whole world instantly and reveals the things of darkness. This had particular reference to the time when Jesus would occupy his mediatorial throne as King of kings, and Lord of lords in the gospel kingdom, and when that time came the ceremonial law with all that went with it was to be at an end. Therefore when the kingdom of our Lord was fully established here in the world the Jewish system was dead, and as it existed at that time has been dead ever since and will forever remain dead, for sacrifices are no longer offered in the manner that they were before Jesus came and set up his kingdom here in the world. We understand that the Romans had on their banners and standards the emblem of an eagle. To the Jews the eagle was an unclean bird, and vulture-like did the Romans at the time of destroying their city of Jerusalem prey upon them, their wives and their children. The temple was so completely torn down that not one stone remained upon another, as Jesus had said, and what the Romans did to the Jews symbolized what Jesus had foretold his disciples would be the end of that world. The Romans were the eagles that gathered together around that dead carcass of the Jewish dispensation.

Jesus having told them of the utter destruction of the Jewish economy, etc., then began he to tell them what would follow. He said, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the

heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Mat. 24:29-30. We do not understand that he was referring to the natural sun, moon, stars and powers of the heavens, but that he was speaking figuratively (1) of the total abolishment of the rites and ordinances of the Jewish heavens, and (2) of his appearing as the Son of man, coming in the clouds of the gospel heavens with power and great glory. Then he would send forth his angels, or gospel ministers, with the great sound of a trumpet (the gospel) and gather together his elect from the four winds of heaven. This is a portion of the work he is carrying on here in the world today.

Now, please listen, kind reader, for Jesus is still speaking and as usual when he speaks it is important, and this is what he says: "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." Those things were actually fulfilled before the passing of that generation, and there were those, John for one, who might be called as a witness, but Jesus' own words should seal it forever. He followed those declarations with these words: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Mat. 24:35.

The balance of the chapter is, to us, in the form of an admonition to those whom he calls and qualifies to follow and represent him here in this age in which we now live. As the Jews could not tell just what was the first or the last thing that began or ended the dealings of the Lord with them in that experience, neither do we know the exact beginning of God's dealings with us, nor can we foresee or conjecture what our end here in this life will be. Therefore it behooves us not to sleep, as others do, but to be on the alert, and do as our Lord told his disciples, "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many."

We have honestly endeavored to give the right interpretation of this portion of the written word; however, we make no claim to infallibility and, therefore, we recommend to our sister, and to all of our other readers as well, that they carefully compare what we have here written with the word of God and accept or reject, any or all of what we have said by that standard. Our desire is that God should forbid that we should intentionally attempt to deceive his people, but we may be deceived ourself, and if so we are in the dark and cannot shed any light on this subject. We are persuaded, however, that what we have presented here concerning this Scripture is the truth. We will leave the matter with our readers to ponder over, earnestly hoping that they will prayerfully read their Bible in order to see what it teaches.

R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

MRS. DELILA ENSOR CHICK widow of the late Elder F. A. Chick, was born March 3, 1853 and departed this life Dec. 21, 1942 making her stay on earth 89 years, 9 months and 18 days. She was the daughter of the late John H. and Elizabeth Ensor who resided near Butler, Md. Here she grew to womanhood, residing on a farm until she was united in marriage to Elder Chick Sept. 26, 1889. Five daughters were born to Elder Chick by a former marriage. Alice, Mrs. Frank H. Zouck (Deceased); Nellie, Mrs. Marna S. Poulson (Deceased); Annie, Mrs. Warren F. Hart; Bonnie, Mrs. F. Selby Fisher; Lucy, Mrs. M. F. Johnston. Sister Chick lived the vows she made before God with reverence for her husband and a faithful mother to his children. To this union were born two children. Mary, Mrs. Harold O. Johnson, Hopewell, N. J. and Dr. Forris E. Chick who is a practicing physician in New York City. Mary purchased the Chick residence from the estate of her father and her mother resided with her. She gave to her mother every comfort in life it was possible to bestow. Sister Chick often spoke of the kindness she received from Mary, her husband and their two children, Barbara and William. Dr. Chick administered to his mother's welfare and all was done for her that loving kindness could do. Her nieces, the Misses Ensor, came from near Butler, Md. to assist in caring for their devoted aunt. Dr. Chick has two children, Dorothy and Forris. Two children and four grandchildren of her family, three step-daughters, nine step-grandchildren, two step-great-grandchildren with many relatives and friends realize the loss of such a dear person from their circle of associates. Having passed through tribulations that gave her experience, and that experience a hope in the grace of God, she was drawn to the Old School Baptist faith and went before the church of God at Black Rock in the village of Butler, Md. Nov. 17, 1872, was received into their fellowship and baptized by Elder F. A. Chick who was then pastor of that church. We can truly say sister Chick was established in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and often expressed the joy she received from the preached word. Elder Chick was given a call by the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. to take the pastoral care of the church which he accepted in the spring of 1896 and brought his family to settle in, what was to them, a strange community to live the remainder of their lives. Sister Chick proved the virtues of a devoted christian. Elder Chick passed away April 14, 1914 and after several months the writer was called to the pastoral care of the church. As her pastor we can say of her that her life was dedicated to the church and her pastor. Through all the trials of the church she was faithful and willing to labor with the erring and try to show them the right. In the evening of her life she came to our home and, speaking with sister Vaughn, gave the directions for her funeral services which were carried out. Her remains were taken to Black Rock where the service was conducted by the writer and Elder D. L. Topping of Linthicum Heights, Baltimore, Md. in the Black Rock meeting-house. After which her remains were laid in the Chick burial plot in the Black Rock Cemetery to rest in the paradise of God until the time when the Son of God comes to make up his jewels, and according to his word be caught up in the cloud to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall she ever be with the Lord. May God comfort all that mourn, and give us strength that we may press on toward the mark of the high calling in Christ Jesus.

CHARLES W. VAUGHN

It is with deep sorrow and an aching heart I write the sweet, precious memories of MARY PARKER, wife of Rudy G. Parker. She was born and raised in Calloway Co. near Murray, Ky. Her life on earth was 34 years and 17 days. She was married to Mr. Parker 17 years ago. They were never blessed with children. With the exception of a few times going to Detroit for work, they always lived in Calloway Co. On one of these times when she was on her way to Detroit by train to meet her dear husband, the heart ailment she had for the past few months grew worse, and when she arrived she was in a critical condition. However, after three or four days rest she felt better and remained quiet, but the following day, Thursday, she grew worse. The doctor was summoned but to no avail. She was taken to a hospital where everything possible was done for her, but she grew steadily worse and around midnight August 20, 1942 the dear

husband, her father, mother and sister-in-law were forced, with bowed heads, to step aside and submit to God's will. While Mary was passing on to the heavenly home she was looking at her husband who bowed down close to hear her words, and ask her if there were any fears. She said, "No, everything is all right. O Lord, Lord how beautiful, Oh, how beautiful." Blessed are they that have a part in the first resurrection, and blessed are they that die in the Lord. Mary's mother asked her if she was saved. She answered by saying, "Yes, I am saved." She was raised by Missionary parents and baptized in that church when a mere girl. For the past several years she became greatly interested in the Primitive Baptist faith and order and had quit the Missionaries entirely. Though she had not united with the church she so deeply loved hardly a day passed that she did not mention her unworthiness. She and her husband enjoyed each other very much. They read and talked together of the wonderful power of the Lord. They saw the Primitive Baptist as being the true church, built upon the Rock which is Christ. She was ready to go each Sunday to hear the gospel preached, and gave her entire strength to do something for them. She believed she was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. We fully believe she has been baptized by Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." Mary knew if the Lord had prepared a place for her he would surely come again and receive her unto himself. The Lord said, "that where I am, there ye may be also." Mary's life was too precious, and her going too sweet not to be mentioned, however, I am unable to give half of what should be told. Oh, the many aching hearts that met the Saturday evening train that conveyed the lifeless body and the lonely, grief stricken husband back to Murray where the J. H. Churchill ambulance met and conveyed the remains to their home which she had arranged and left closed expecting them to return later. It was closed, however, only one week. She is greatly missed by all that knew her, but the grief for her is not as for one without hope. Her husband's love is as the ring of gold which has no end. He said to me a few days past, "He knew her suffering was over, she had passed on and he would not call her back if he could." She was deeply loved by the Parker "in-laws." Besides the lonely husband she leaves a father, mother and one sister. It was her request that her funeral be conducted by Elder O. W. Perkins of Mayfield in the Elm Grove meeting-house. Her favorite songs were sung by the Primitive Baptists whom she so dearly loved. The house was filled and many on the outside. The floral offerings given were many and beautiful. Many tears followed her remains as it was conveyed from the meeting-house just across the road to the cemetery where it was lowered into the grave to await the resurrection morning. Then the body will be raised and crowned with glory. Now, dear ones, we must say for a little while goodbye Mary dear.

(Mrs.) FANNIE H. CHESTER

VIOLET BELLE MUMFORD, daughter of J. R. and Clella McAfee was born Dec. 7, 1894 at Redman Macon Co., Mo. In this home she grew to young womanhood. She had a lovable disposition and many friends from childhood as was shown by the many acquaintances at her funeral. Aug. 5, 1915, at the age of 20 she was married to Charles Hubble and to this union one son was born. Just a few months later the husband and father was stricken with a fatal disease and passed away May 20, 1917. She and her baby lived in her parents' home devoting the next 20 years to rearing her son, ever cheerful and courageous. Feb. 13, 1938 she was united in marriage to Eugene Mumford and for four and one half years they were very happy. Nov. 4, 1942 God called her home at the age of 47 years, 10 months and 27 days. She leaves to mourn their loss, her husband, father, mother, son, Adren Hubble, St. Louis, Mo., four brothers, Rodney B., Hannibal, Mo., Lloyd W., Noel S. and Cecyl W. of St. Louis, Mo. One niece, Wanda McAfee, two nephews, Robert and Paul. Also a host of relatives and friends. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace and had expressed a desire to unite with the church but never did. She always attended the meetings, carried provisions and enjoyed mingling with the Primitive Baptists. She is sadly missed in her home and the community, but we mourn not as those who have no hope. We are looking beyond this vale of tears to a reunion in a land of everlasting joy where there are no farewells or partings. The

funeral services were conducted by the pastor of the church, Elder Bryan Adair, assisted by Elder S. L. Pettus. She was laid to rest in a nearby cemetery. Her lonely mother,

(Mrs.) J. R. McAFEE

Sister MARY E. ADAMS, widow of the late J. H. Adams, was born Feb. 20, 1869. She was the daughter of the late J. W. and M. R. Whatley of Walton Co., Ga. She was married to J. H. Adams, Social Circle, Ga., June 9, 1891. Five children, one son and four daughters, survive her. John Colman, Georgia Anne, Martha Frances, Rachel, and Sarah Rebecca. She united with the Harris Spring Old School Baptist Church June 17, 1883, and was baptized by the late Elder William Adams. Sister Adams believed in the doctrine of salvation by grace and rejoiced in the spirit when the truth of the Bible was preached to her, and even in conversation and fellowship with those who love the truth as taught in God's word. She lived a useful life, never complaining even in her long afflictions. She passed out of this earthly life Nov. 21, 1942 aged 73 years, 9 months and 1 day. The funeral service was conducted at the Methodist meeting-house, Social Circle, Ga. by her pastor, Elder H. O. Nash, Atlanta, Ga. and Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va. Interment in Social Circle Cemetery. There was in attendance a large audience of relatives and friends. Her beautiful life was attested by the many floral offerings. Written by order of the church.

Brother L. E. SKINNER was born Feb. 7, 1860 and passed away March 26, 1942. He was pastor of our church in Oklahoma for several years. He was a subscriber to the SIGNS for many years and sent several articles for publication. Brother Skinner united with the Old School Baptist Church in 1905 and was baptized by Elder Fisher. His wife still lives alone on the farm where they resided for many years. Their children are all scattered about. Brother Billie Snyder conducted the funeral service using the Scripture in the second chapter of Ephesians. We feel this old brother and sister have been very dear to us for many years. Your brother and sister in faith,

(Mr. and Mrs.) R. W. O'NEAL

The Resurrection of the Dead

is the title of a book to consist of 150 to 175 pages, containing between twenty and twenty-five articles by some outstanding ministers.

If you want one of these books and have not yet sent in your order, may I suggest that you do so without delay, as I must let the Printer know how many copies to print.

The price of the book alone is $1., or if you are not a subscriber for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, you may have the book and a year's subscription to the SIGNS for $2. If you are at present a subscriber, by sending in a NEW subscription at $2. you can have a book FREE when it is published.

Please let me know how many of these books you will want. R. LESTER DODSON.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sundays in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y. at 10:30 a.m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed. R. LESTER DODSON.

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.

O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canada, California.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th Street, Mayfield, Ky. Those interested will be welcome.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 A. M. 2 P. M.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. C.W. BOND, Pastor.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m. C. W. BOND, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A. M.
ALL WELCOME

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10.30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Texas.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sundays in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P. M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sundays each month at 11:00 A. M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10.30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

VOL. 111 RUTHERFORD, N. J., MAY, 1943 No. 5

THE LORD KNOWS WHY

I may not know the reason why
Dark clouds so often veil the sky;
But though my sea be smooth or rough,
The Lord knows why, and that's enough.

I may not know why I am led
So often in the paths I dread;
But trusting Him I'll press my way,
The Lord knows why, I will obey.

O yes, He knows, the Lord knows why
These things are ordered from on high;
And though dark clouds may hide the sun,
The Lord knows why, His will be done.

I may not know why death should come
To take the dear ones from my home;
But though mine eyes with tears be dim,
The Lord knows why, I'll trust in Him.

So, though I may not understand
The leading of my Father's hand;
I know to all he has the key,
He understands each mystery.

(Selected by Mrs. Lena M. Lowe, Laurel, Md. in memory of her husband, James W. Lowe.)

CORRESPONDENCE

MADISONVILLE, Ky.

Written by
(Mrs.) Cynthia Perkins Brown

DEAR EDITORS:

While walking home from a neighbor's house at the age of fourteen I was trying to reason as to what I was and this thought came to me. Why do you meditate on the things that be of God, and why have your greatest desires been to know the Lord and to be one of his people? I thought can it be possible that you are one of God's people is why you love him and want to be like him? Then, if so, why can you not be given words of prayer to him? I remember here that I had often gone to the altar of prayer where father, mother and friends had gathered and had prayed for me and others, some could be consoled but not me. How often I had gone to secret places and had tried to pray and scarcely could utter one word. Then I thought if I could go to some secret place and be given words of prayer I would take this as evidence that I was a child of God. I went to the house, took the bucket and went to the spring for water. Near the spring were bushes that I could hide from the whole world, that no living person could see me trying to talk to that all seeing eye. When I knelt before Him alone, to my surprise, I was given words of prayer, as I hope, to Him. This made me leap with joy. I got the water from the spring and hurried to the house to tell father and mother the great news, but, just as I was ready to enter the door something said to me, do not tell them for you might be mistaken, it will not hurt for you to be deceived, but you do not want to deceive your parents. I cannot forget this caution. In a few

weeks they made it convenient to ask me about it. I could not say no, and told them what had happened. My older sister said, "why Cynthia you have done so and so since then". "Yes", I said, "if I have ever committed a sin it has been since then." I felt that I had not known sin until after then. That caution stayed with me, and I never united with a church until about four years later. The preacher said in his discourse, "If there is any one here who feels that they have a hope, yet cannot live up to their duty, perhaps if they united with the church and were baptized it would help them to live up to their christian duty." I felt that if there was one thing left for me to do that would help me I was willing to do that, so I united and was baptized. In a few days I found myself wanting to go out with my associates to entertainments and having a good time just as I did before. This, I thought, was not a christian's duty so I found myself no better than at first. This gave me the most trouble I ever had. I had done to the best of my ability, everything that I knew to do, and all that I had been told to do, and was in deeper trouble than ever. I felt so steeped in sin that there was no relief for me. One night during prayer at my father's house I felt too unworthy to be there. My sinful condition was before me and I viewed myself as one who had never trusted in God, but had trusted in my own works. I could see a merciful God who, if I was ever saved, would save me by his mercy. He owed me nothing, but if he ever saved me it would be by a merciful hand. I began to say to mother, "there is no hope for me, I just have to live this sorrowful life," and just then something like lightning struck me. It was of the same power and light as when it strikes a green light and bursts it asunder, and covers it with a blaze of fire. It first sent me to the floor, then raised me on my feet shouting praises to Him, and instead of telling mother of my sorrow I told her, and to all around me, of my joy for I had no sorrow to tell, it was all gone and I was filled with joy and praise to God for he had loved me all this time from the foundation of the world, and I had not known it until now. Oh, what a joy this was to me. I thought my troubles were over, but I found life too steep for me. In a few days I realized a heaviness in my breast which I thought was brought on by my negligence to keep up doing my duty. What a sad mistake; it was this great power which relieved me, but my experience could not end here for I have to be taught over and over again. It does seem that I am so rebellious that I have to be shown over and over many times. "Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." Matt. 11:4, 5. Dear brethren and sisters, this should have been the time for a new life in me. Paul says, "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." I cannot say this, no, for instead of being obedient I began telling people that I came to the end of my own strength, then the Lord took me up and saved me, and if they would all do all they could do then the Lord would bless them too. Brethren and sisters my life

seems full of mistakes, but I feel the Lord has been merciful to my transgressions for my experience could not end here. I sometimes read Matt. 21:44 where Christ spoke of the stone which the builders rejected and said, "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." I feel that I had not been ground to powder yet; for I forgot the righteousness that be of God and went about trying to establish my own righteousness. I went preaching the power of man, that man could (the natural man) pray to a spiritual God, asking him for a spiritual birth, asking him for something that the natural man knows nothing about. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. 2:14: I forgot the righteousness of God and tried to establish my own. "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." Rom. 10:3. Now some might say to me, why did you not submit yourself after you were shown that you and all the works that you had done was as filthy rags in the sight of that just and holy God who made himself known to you in the powerful flame that struck you? My answer would be that I submitted myself just as Paul did when he fell to the ground when the light from heaven shined round about him. Yet his experience was not ended, he was not yet made ready to proclaim the power of God. The Lord said to Ananias, "Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." Dear people of God, blame me not when I tell you what great things I had yet to suffer for the sake of Christ. Some of these things I have told and already have been published in the Gospel News by dear brother J. M. Perkins, in April 1904. I was put to the test of my works by the Scriptures. I had never known what was meant by doctrine, therefore, I had no prejudice against any church. I never knew that one believed in the grace of God by their works, and another believed that the grace of God was a free gift. I had always believed that the Lord knew all about me, and knew just how long I would live and how and when I would die. I wanted to have a home of prayer and singing, and reading the Bible just as my parents had. So when I was married to a man who believed that he could not even turn his hand over, but believed that the Lord would turn it just at the right time and in the way that it pleased him this looked strange to me, but it somehow gave me a thought that he was depending on a power that was not of man. I handed him the Bible to read, and to my surprise he opened and began to read aloud. It was the first time I had been able to get him to read. He then turned to me and said, "what does this mean? When I read a thing I want to know what it is talking about." I began as I had been doing in school always telling my pupils to the best of my knowledge just what was meant by an expression or problem before us. That

was alright until I struck something that I did not understand, and I freely confess that there were many Scriptures that I knew nothing about, and still I lack a great deal of knowledge of the Scriptures. I would try to explain some part to him, then when he read on to something that I thought I had an idea I would tell him. Then he said, "well, what does all this mean that he is talking about between this and the other?" I was free to say I do not know. Then I began to ask him "what do you think it means Les?" "Oh," he said, "I think it means this" and then he would go back and read again and explain as he read, but I could not understand him. I could have understood as well if he had been talking in Greek or Latin or any other language that I had never studied. I soon saw that he fully understood what he was talking about; he spoke with assurance which gave me to understand that he well knew what he was talking about; he understood these Scriptures which connected together and did not have to skip some and take up another somewhere else. I soon found that what little Scripture I knew had no foundation, but I could not understand his way of thinking. This filled me with wonder, the Scriptures seemed to condemn me. We read on and talked until I got so I could not read. Then I would catch myself wishing that he would not read the Scriptures. Then I troubled over such thoughts for I had thought that a home would be so much pleasure if we could read and sing and talk. As time went on, even months, my trouble increased until I would study and cry for hours after he had gone to sleep. Sometimes he would wake and find me crying then try to comfort me as he thought. He would say, "I will never say a word to you about the Bible again," but this would only increase my trouble for my conscience would say to me, you are a pretty christian for your own husband at home cannot even read or speak of the Bible to you. If you brethren and sisters have never had an experience like this you can not realize what a load I was carrying.

(*To be continued*)

Route 1, Box 354, NASHVILLE, N. C.

DEAR EDITOR:

I received the January number of the SIGNS the day after I mailed my check, hence my reason for not using the blank. I enjoy the paper so very much. Your letter in January issue "New Years Greeting" was good, also Roy S. Smith's letter. I have read them over and over. I love the old doctrine I heard when a child. All the changes that take place do not change my love and belief in that grand old doctrine that sets forth a God that had power to make a world and everything in it. "Made all things for himself, yea, the wicked for the day of evil." He steers the ship of time and anchors where he sees fit, and no power can change it. To me the days are dark and I feel gross darkness will cover the earth before this nation will bow and earnestly seek his face. Then, and not until then, will the Son of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings, and poor sinners like me, if indeed I am one he has blessed to think upon his name, can view the sunny hills of Zion and rest in the sunshine of his love. How sweet to travel in that fair Canaan land with the

walls of peace around us. I love so much to read from the pen of those in distant lands. It assures me the God of all grace rules in the hearts of poor sinners the wide world over and speaks peace to the troubled soul. Who has a God like our God? Oh for faith to trust him and strength to serve him is the daily cry of a poor sinner in hope.

(Mrs.) D. WOMBLE

Route 1, Box 340, WALNUT CREEK, California

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

I am sending money-order for $3.50. Two dollars to go on my subscription for another year, one dollar for the book you hope to publish, and the rest to aid the good paper, SIGNS OF THE TIMES. If not blessed to publish the book use the other dollar to aid the SIGNS. As I sit here trying to write, I am thinking of the many dear Baptists that are blessed to meet together in different parts of the country to praise and sing the beautiful hymns, and to be fed by and through the wonderful sermons which God blesses his servants to proclaim, and which they cannot utter unless he is with them. My heart rejoices with them that they are enabled to meet together, and yet there is a sadness in my heart that I am so far removed from the dear people whom I love, or hope I love, above all others. Being with them, the real true ones of God, is the greatest comfort to me in the whole world. Though I never feel worthy, they are so much better than I, I do love and enjoy an humble place with them when blessed to be there. It has been some time now and I do get lonely, hungry and cast down, but the dear Lord will have his way with all his dear ones of which I hope I am one, and hope is all I can do. I find myself so unfit in every way for him though I find him fit in every way for me. All hail the power of his name. His name above all, will and shall ever be. He is the ruler over all times and events, and I believe the Scriptures are being fulfilled each moment of time for his own purpose and glory. He says in Isaiah, "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." His shalls and wills, will and shall be done, his word never grows old, and he can and will feed us wherever we may be in his own time. Some times when feeling so low a sweet meeting I have been blessed to attend will come to my mind, and I will enjoy a sweet feast just thinking of the meeting and wonderful sermons. May God bless you to keep up the work of publishing the SIGNS. An unworthy one looking to God for all help and comfort.

(Mrs.) MABEL LINDSEY

1306 Cumberland Ave., EVANSVILLE, Ind.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON:

Dear brother, if one so steeped in sin and unworthiness as I feel myself to be may thus address you. I have just been reading the SIGNS and most of the time it is the greatest pleasure I have. I often get the old numbers out and read them over and over, and the story told in them never grows old. My father, Elder L. Chandler, took the SIGNS for many years and I remember reading them as a child, but had not read them for a good many years until about one year ago. It is hard on this old carnal man to live with the spiritual man for they are enmity

the one to the other, but our understanding is based upon a sure foundation and our belief is according as it is revealed to us. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." God does not say they may be, or they can be but he puts it in positive terms "they shall". I tried twenty-seven years to work out my own righteousness, but at last was brought to the brink of space and there was no turning, it was just eternal space. I was forced, or taught of God as I hope, to say, Lord I am passive, save or I perish. I was buried in the watery grave one year ago the seventeenth of August last by Elder J. N. Darnell and thought my troubles were at an end, but, alas, they seem at times to have just begun. The Scriptures teach us of such is the kingdom of God. I only meant to renew my subscription and mention our Association so will close this scribble and enclose one of our minutes with money-order. When it goes well with you remember me in your prayers. An unworthy brother if one.

WADE Y. CHANDLER

TEAGUE, Texas

By one eternal decree all things live, move and have their being. Their metes and bounds are laid out, their paths marked, their movements established, their works certain. All things were ordered in council, and ordained unto perfection, and for a certain and particular purpose. God in his own mind and wisdom foresaw the whole in its completeness, yea, in its perfection when as yet there was none of them. He had but to speak and all things were as he purposed, only to command and all things obeyed. In this one decree God's holy and righteous sovereign law exists, of and by which, all things, yea, events, signs and wonders stand at attention and are governed. Under this law he worketh all these things after the counsel of his own will, "and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Under this law all other rules and regulations adhere to, for this is the sovereign law that reigns over the whole. It is this, and only one, law that has never been violated or in the least insulted, for it is by this God asserts himself in no uncertain tones saying, I am the great I am, in one mind and none can turn me. What my soul desireth even that I doeth. I open and none can shut, I work and none can hinder. "Declaring the end from the beginning," "saying, My counsel (this law) shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Great is the God of the universe. He sits on no precarious throne nor borrows leave for his doings. Great and marvelous are his works and his ways past finding out. He alone established the heavens by his power, brought the earth in wisdom, created the world, sun, moon and stars also, and stretched out the heavens by his understanding saying, "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Mighty in deed, wonderful in counsel, giving unto the mighty deeps their bounds, saying thus far shalt thou come and here thy proud waves shall be stayed. Then walk ye about Zion and behold her bulwarks (the doctrine of God, our Saviour), and "ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect." So systematically tied

together, end to end, so that the whole machine becomes an endless chain, each link serving in its proper place, a purpose for all their separate parts to be accomplished, a certain end to be effected, a certain result from the works of each to be obtained regardless as to the nature of whatsoever part or whatsoever sort. It is all to the lifting of Jesus on high which is the glorifying of God and ever ascribes greatness unto his great and adorable name. This I believe to be the God of our fathers and the half, as pertaining to his greatness, has never yet been told. The God of the whole earth, God of the hills, God of the valleys, the great judge who is at the head of all things, and has passed sentence upon all of his works and pronounced it good, and who will dispute the verdict, or say unto him why judgest thou? For unto all things he is its beginning also its end, the great I am here and everywhere at the same time. The same yesterday, today and forever, holding the power thus delegated by him unto all things within himself, thereby the sole ruler, and unto all things its government of action, leaving no one part to itself to act, not one moment of its sojourn in this time world of its own free will and accord. Things in this relation one to the other cannot be systematic in their work or movement if not geared to a certain and fixed rule which governs one way and not two. Anything left to itself can choose its own rule, therefore, regulate itself to meet any requirement thus made of itself. It is free, it is independent, it is subject to no law except its own. Such is not Bible, but is beyond the least shadow of a doubt fatalism, and I do not believe it. I believe God to be the chief governor unto every piece in the machine, that according to his eternal will the world in all of its parts stand arrested and subject thereto. If this is not something similar to the government of God then I am misled. Yours in bonds.

W. A. LITTLE

1237 N.W. 1st St., OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,
DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

I am sending you a letter which my father, Elder W. N. Green, wrote to an old friend of my husband's whom he (my father) had never seen. When this Mr. Walker learned that my father was an Old Baptist preacher he longed to see him, but many miles lay between them so he expressed a wish in a letter to us that father write him which he did. I am sure there are many readers of the SIGNS who will enjoy this letter. It was sent to me to be forwarded to Mr. Walker. I copied it and have read and reread it many times. I hope God has been pleased to give me some understanding of the truth though I feel so unworthy to be so blessed, if indeed I do understand and enjoy such writings as this and others I have received, I know it is of God. I have a number of letters from the late Elder J. R. Hardy which I treasure very highly. If the enclosed letter meets with your approval please publish it for the comfort and enjoyment of the readers of the dear old SIGNS. A sister in Christ I hope.

(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER

Box 654, ALTUS, Okla.

MR. G. A. WALKER, DEAR SIR AND BROTHER IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD:

I call you brother because of that relation I feel is evidenced by your good letters which you have written to my children in Oklahoma City. Mrs. Foster, my daughter, sends them to me, and your statements to them relative to your faith in one God sounds good to me. I feel that he (God) has done something for you that this old world knows nothing of, and that evidence has knit our hearts in that secret tie that no man has ever been able to tell. Strange to say this secret flows from breast to breast. Distance being eliminated. Yes, brought together in one God, through faith, and that faith is the faith of God. Yes, this faith, love and hope of God's children are centered in him, and flows from God to them. Because of the feeling of the oneness I take the sweet privilege of expressing to you (and I hope to your comfort) some of my convictions on the Scriptures of Divine Truth, relative to the sovereign rule of one God over all worldly things and beings, and his will being done in every event of time, and his promise of salvation through Jesus, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. First I will say one must be born of the Spirit of God before he can be in possession of the things of God. To establish this fact, Paul said, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." So by the Spirit of God given us, we believe through faith which is of him, and do, through the inner-man, honor, glorify, and magnify his holy name as God over all. To establish this fact we go to the statement of David in 1 Chron. 29:11-15 but especially notice verses 13-14. This convinces me that we cannot even think of him as God, without the gift of thought from him. Paul carries this out by saying, without him we can do nothing, not even think as we ought to think.

Another evidence of this fact is, the prophet Isaiah said in chapter 26, verse 12, "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us." If this testimony harmonizes with our experience and attitude toward God, surely it is an evidence of life. Without this life, faith has never moved upon any man to believe in God. These are some of the evidences of the children of God, so it seems to me. These bible witnesses express my feelings towards God better than I can tell them, which gives me a hope that the Lord has been merciful to my unrighteousness and included my name in that covenant that was ordered in all things and sure. I do not want to worry you or get more in this letter than you can solve, and be a stumbling block rather than to edify, but I do want to say a few words relative to the covenant that embraces salvation for all the heirs of promise, and these heirs of promise are sons and daughters of the earthly Adam, and sinners (according to my understanding) in the purpose of God before the world began. Before there was a world there was a God, and we read of the counsel of God. You will find this counsel spoken of in the 46th chapter of Isaiah, saying, "My counsel shall stand,

and I will do all my pleasure." O wonderful statement of God. I understand this council is composed of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit. These three are one, all eternal, and everything that was embraced in that document, or council, was according to the will of the Father, and this council is nothing more or less than the eternal purposes and unalterable decrees of God, touching all things whatsoever comes to pass, and is as old as God is, and as sure as God is. And as he (God) is eternal, he is before all time or decayable things. Then we conclude that God is the first great cause of all time, things, beings and events of time. This opens up a line of thought that we will not be able to finish, but will say briefly, that whatever God willed in eternity, for time, is going to be manifested in time, and we will reverse this statement and say every event that is manifested in time, he did will in eternity. Hear the words of inspiration found in the 3rd chapter of Ecclesiastes. "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." Listen to Isaiah, 14th chapter, verses 24-27. In the 24th he says, "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." These statements are full of thought and comment. God is perfect in wisdom, knowledge and power, and any comment or application made to any part of God's word that would inflict or set aside any one of these perfections of God is absolutely wrong. We must also understand that God is not man, neither are his ways our ways, nor our thoughts his thoughts. God is good, holy and righteous and cannot have an evil thought. Yet is was embraced in his counsel, which was his will, that sinners be saved through Christ, which is the second person in the three in one God. The Scriptures teach that Jesus, who was God manifest in the flesh, is surety for this salvation, which makes it as sure as God is sure. Hear Paul to Timothy, "Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Is this salvation sure? If so, how is it made sure? Is it not by the certainty of the decree, will and purpose of God? Then pray tell me how this salvation can be certain without the certainty of a sinner to save. And how can there be a sinner without the transgression, and how can the certainty of the transgression be without the certain decree of God. A sure thing cannot be uncertain. Then it follows that nothing can be certain that depends upon something that is uncertain. We know the world says, away with such doctrine. They say it involves God, and makes him the author of sin. I know that is not the truth. They say these things through their lustful and sinful nature, not knowing the purity and righteousness of God. Pray tell me what law is God under, or what judge sits on the throne to judge him and bring him under the sentence of sin and death? It is folly to make such charges against God. Whatever God purposes is, in any event, holy righteous

and right. The act may be a sinful one influenced by Satan, but that very act that was influenced by Satan cannot in the end, according to God's purpose in the act, fail to bring forth the good his purpose demanded in the act. I do not know whether this is clear to you or not, but the sum of it is this: every sinful act that ever has or ever will be done in this world was influenced by the evil spirit. You would then ask me if God purposed the act? I answer yes, but his purpose in the act was for good. You would again ask me, if God purposed the act of the sons of Jacob that sold Joseph into the land of bondage? I will let the Scriptures answer. Joseph said to the ones that did the deed, "Be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life." They meant it for evil but God meant it for good. If true in that case, why not in every sinful act that has been done or ever will be done since the world began. Yes, God purposed, or ordained, that wicked hands should crucify the Lord of life. They meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. I am making this too long, so in concluding these remarks will say, I understand the Scriptures to teach that out of everything that God created and made for himself, and that embraces all things, his people is his portion, and to that end all time and things in time will function until all his purposes are full. Paul said, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." These are the principles involved in this Scripture. "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." May God bless these precious truths to your understanding and comfort. I know if God is not in the matter it will all come to naught. Yours in hope of a better world.

W. N. GREEN

CASCADE, Va.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,

DEAR BROTHER:

Enclosed you will find an article which I feel will be of much interest to many of your readers as it shows the sore exercise of soul and mind through which God brings his little ones in bringing them out of the world. I am well acquainted with Mr. Harris as he attends the churches I serve at Cascade and Draper, N. C. I hope you will give this writing space in your paper. Yours in hope.

ROY S. SMITH

Route 2, RIDGEWAY, Va.

I have a mind to write a few things that I hope has caused me to believe in the original Primitive or Old School Baptists. Until the early part of 1938 my pleasures were in the perishable things of the world, especially drinking, gambling, dancing, etc. I had a dream that worried me. I dreamed that father, brother and I were walking through a field. I looked toward the east and saw a great light. I had never seen anything like it

before. It grew nearer and nearer until it was right at us, then there was a great fire and smoke that came up from beneath the earth. I told my brother that it was the end of time, and if we had lived the life our father had we would be alright. By that time the brimstone had taken my last breath. I fell to my knees to ask God for mercy, but I could not utter a word. Then it seemed like the fire, smoke and brimstone had disappeared and everything was alright. This worried me until I could not sleep at night or hardly work at day, but I did not want any one to know about it. At last one day when I came home I broke down crying and my wife ran and put her arms around me and wanted to know what was the matter. I had to tell her the dream and that I was a sinner and what an awful life I had lived. She tried to comfort me, telling me that I was a good fellow, etc., but that did not have any effect because God had showed me I was a sinner, yet I thought there was something I could do and that I could get forgiveness. I began to try to do better. I promised God that I would do better and I was honest in it. The will was present but how to perform I found not. For weeks, months and a year, almost every night my pillow would be wet with tears. I would be awake when my companion would be fast asleep, promising God I would do better, but it seemed to me that I grew worse all the time. That fall I asked my foreman to let me off one Saturday morning. My intentions were to ask a home with the Old Baptists but I could not. I asked God to remove this burden from me unless it was something concerning being born again or eternal life, and if that was the case that I might be made to suffer all that I could stand that I might have more evidence, wisdom and knowledge. I went on like this until Easter Sunday 1939. I went to the cemetery where father and mother were laid to rest feeling as if I would like to get down in the ground between them that I might get a few moments rest. It seemed that I would never live to see the sun go down in the west or rise in the east any more. I went from there to my brothers to spend the night. Before resting I walked out into the yard, and I fell to the ground as if I was a dead man. When I came to I got up and fell the second time. I saw that I was a lost and helpless sinner in the sight of God, and if I was judged according to works the bottomless pit of hell would be my home, and if I got forgiveness it would be by the loving-kindness and tender mercy of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The things that I once loved were taken away, yet I cannot live as I desire. For two years after this I would go to church, but not regularly. I was ashamed for the people to see me, but I would be burdened so it seemed I could not live. I would seek the lonesome groves and ask God to be merciful to me, a sinner. For the last year I have been going to church regularly, because it seems there is a consuming fire gets in my bosom and I cannot resist. My desire has been to have more evidence. I dreamed that I was at church and the preachers came to me with some papers to be fixed up, and I told them that I could not, that I was not a member, and they told me that I was and had been for

a long time. I also dreamed that I had a field to cultivate, one side of it was rough and full of stumps and a multitude of people came to me and said I was doing a good job. On the other side of the hill there were several cultivating and the land was smooth. I have been made willing at times to ask a home with the church but I cannot. I have been to church sometimes when my natural eyesight was taken away and I could not see the preacher. I was made to say, "Not my will, but thine, be done," not by force but by God's constraining power. For a long time I just could not see and understand the Bible, or just what it was all about anyway until one day when I was at my daily work, meditating over it, when in less than a minute it seemed to me that I was lifted up above this world and I could see all of it just how it was from beginning to end. I almost hollered out loud. I looked around to see if I could see anyone I thought would be interested in it. I wanted to tell someone but I could not see anyone I thought would like to hear it. I rejoiced in that the rest of the day thinking I would tell it when I saw some one that would like to hear it, but it was like the manna the children of Israel had for food, it would not keep. I have had lots of sickness and trouble. At times it seems more than anyone in the world. I believe it is appointed unto me. Sometimes I am made to rejoice in it, that God has been merciful to me. I have been a number of times to visit preachers and members of the Primitive Baptist Church, desiring to tell them my troubles and the way I have been brought along, but I would be shut up and could not talk. God knows best, as he has purposed so shall it be. I am hoping that before I leave this world I can tell the saints of God the love I have for them although if I was blessed to tell them it would only be a hint for words cannot express it.

LONNIE J. HARRIS

Re-Published by Special Request

ACTS VIII 35.

"THEN Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus."

Philip was one of the seven men of honest report, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of wisdom, chosen by the whole multitude, and set before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands upon them, thus appointing (or ordaining, as we now say) these seven men to the business of serving tables, and attending to the widows in their daily ministrations. Philip was a deacon, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom. These deacons, as all deacons should be, were wise, even though they may have been illiterate. Yes, they were wise unto salvation. A man may be wise and yet not educated, but if he is wise he will not remain illiterate. Peter the apostle was an illustration of this fact.

But it is not Philip, the servant of tables loaded with bread and meat to nourish the natural man, but Philip, the servant of spiritual tables bearing spiritual food, setting in order the King's table, where those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness are filled with the consolation of the gospel, which is Christ, that true bread which came down from heaven, whereof if a man eat he shall never die, of whom I would

speak. As he journeyed toward the south, "the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert," he beheld a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority, under Candace, queen of Ethiopia, who had been to Jerusalem to worship, and was returning, sitting in his chariot, and reading Esaias the prophet. "Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet." Philip was not sent by the church, there were no missionary boards to send him, the angel of the Lord spoke to him, telling him to go. That angel, or messenger, was not the church, or any committee or board authorized by the church, it was not a prophet, or an apostle, or preacher, or teacher, in some way authorized by the church, but, as we find in verse twenty-nine, it was the Spirit of God; or, closer yet, it was Christ in Philip that said to him, "Join thyself to this chariot." Yes, Philip had been in the desert, searching if happily he might find him whom his soul loved, and thus was, by experience, prepared to go near to this man of Ethiopia. Philip was sent, and this case thus brought to our notice, tells us how preachers are sent and by whom they are sent. In Romans 10:13, Paul tells us, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." The interrogation follows, "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?" Now by this it is shown how the preacher is sent, and by whom. It is therefore a fearful thing to seek to hinder, by any means, the preacher from going to the desert places and drawing near to those who are seeking for him whom their soul loveth.

The Lord Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who begins his work in the heart, writing his law there, and imprinting it in our minds, is also sending the preacher, as he did Saul of Tarsus after appearing to him in the way from Jerusalem. Saul was on his way from the temple of Solomon and the law written on tables of stone, down into a desert place. This eunuch was hungry, poor, naked and half dead, reading the prophet, and praying for light to understand. No wonder Paul in Romans, could say, "As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that publish the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." If to this poor inquiring soul the feet are beautiful, how much more beautiful the face and hands must have been. Isaiah said, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings." The beauty is not in the feet of the preacher, as all must know, but it is in the exaltation of the feet, lifting them up out of the mire and clay, and placing them upon a rock, and when we see such an one we are made to cry, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful: but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." When the preacher sent by the Spirit draws near to such an one he sees one whose feet have been washed by the Master, and anointed with that

holy anointing which teacheth all things. He who has been prepared thus and sent draws near to the hungry, thirsty inquirer, the little one upon whom the Lord has laid his hand. Here is a unity of heart that brings the preacher into communion with this little one, and the simple story of Christ as the Saviour is bread to the eater; yes, the very bread whereof if a man eat he shall never die. The mind of Philip was interested, and with a fellow-feeling, which makes us wondrously kind, he draws very near and asks, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" You know that the apostle Paul said to just such little ones, Ye are our epistle, known and read of all men. So Philip read the eunuch and the eunuch in turn read Philip, and he asked him to come up and sit in his chariot. The place in the Scripture where he had been reading was Isaiah 53:7-9: "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth." Here the eunuch had entered into the broad fields of living green, through which ran the pure river of the water of life.

Just such a scene as this between Philip and the eunuch binds together by the bands of christian love, breaks down all barriers, and cements the hearts of both preacher and hearer. So heart answers to heart because they are touched by the great Master, who plays upon these harps of a thousand strings. This caused the great singer of Israel to break out with ecstasy and sing, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."

It is recorded that Philip began at that same Scripture and preached unto him Jesus. Paul to the Colossians said, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." The psalmist said, "For there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." The wayfaring man led by the Spirit shall not err, as says the prophet Isaiah; in this way no lion shall be. No, my brother, this way that leads to life is not found by lions of free agency, or men of strength, but by babes, wearied, hungry, lame, wounded, suffering and little; and these have lost all their strength trying to obey the law. Here is a blessing commanded of the Lord, coming down from heaven and resting upon the mountains of Zion. How the poor, contrite sinner feels lifted up when he finds himself seated at the King's table and eating of that bread which comes down from heaven. Jesus is this way of holiness, and the prophet says that the unclean shall not pass over

it. Paul to Titus says, It is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, [past tense] by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." In another place the apostle said, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Being therefore cleansed by the blood of the Lamb, the wayfaring man passes over this way to immortal glory. The eunuch was a wayfaring man, and was in this way, which is the way of holiness; not the way to holiness, but the way of holiness. Because of this, the apostle said in 2 Cor. 5:17: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away." Yes, the old covenant of works, with all its ordinances, has passed away, Christ Jesus has taken them all away, nailing them to his cross, where he, as the head of the church, died, the just for the unjust, pouring out his blood. This was the washing that cleansed us from all our sins. This washing of regeneration, spoken of by Paul to Titus, was effectual; it saved; it cleansed; yes, it cleansed all the body, the church, from all sin, and so no unclean person enters there, and there can be no erring in this way, to impede the progression of the wayfaring man.

The apostle Paul again says, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead." And the law had said, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." According to the above language of Paul, the law is fully satisfied, ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. Here mercy and truth met together, and righteousness and peace kissed each other; here truth did spring out of the earth in the Son of man, who is the way, and the truth and the life; and Righteousness looked down from heaven, and said, This Jesus, the Son of man, is my beloved Son. In him we live, and move, and have our being; and looking to him, he shall set us in the way of his steps.

Philip had, no doubt, told the eunuch that Jesus had said to John the Baptist, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness," and that Jesus was baptized by John in Jordan, and that Jesus had died, and had risen again, and that by his Spirit he himself had been led down into this desert way, and also that the eunuch had been led by the same Spirit in the same way. While he was thus preaching Jesus they came to water. The Spirit of Christ was setting the eunuch in the Master's steps, and so he cried out, "Here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Philip answered, "If thou believeth with all thine heart, thou mayest." And the eunuch replied, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." And the eunuch was baptized and went on his way rejoicing, no doubt crying holiness unto the Lord.

Yours to serve for Christ's sake,

W. W. POLK

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

J. S. Mace, Pa., $1; Mrs. A. V. Pearce, Va., $2; Dr. G. H. Griffith, Ga., $2; M. J. Disharoon, Del., $5; Mrs. M. Lindsey, Cal., 50 cents; I. P. Breazeal, La., $2; PFC H. W. Buckner, N. Y., $3; A. L. Blankenship, O., $2; Mrs. E. Smith, Tex., $1; M. F. Dunlap, Me., $3; Mrs. J. H. Jones, Ga., $1; S. F. Buckner, Okla., $2; N. M. Carey, W. Va., $2.

EDITORIAL

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(*The following article was written by us for and published in Zion's Landmark, July* 15, 1930. *One who reads both papers has made a special request that it be published in the* SIGNS OF THE TIMES. *We are, therefore, using it as our editorial for this issue. R. L. D.*)

IN RIGHTEOUSNESS SHALT THOU BE ESTABLISHED

DEAR BROTHER DENNY:

Remembering former days, when some of my letters found their way into the columns of the Landmark, and your recent invitation to write again, I have a mind to submit for the consideration of your readers some thoughts on the latter portion of the 54th chapter of Isaiah. The 11th to the 18th verses, inclusive, read as follows: "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee. Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me: whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake. Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." To my mind, the prophet in the eleventh verse has reference to the Church under the Law. As such, she is, indeed, "afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted." The demand of the Law strips her of everything and she is made to realize her nakedness before a just and holy God. Her affliction with sin and her utter inability to perform a single act that will commend her unto God makes her feel cut off, and without hope in the world. In that condition she is tossed about with tempests; all of the Lord's billows are encompassing her and comfort is nowhere to be found. When she is made to give up in despair, the Lord speaks to her, saying, "Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires." When Jacob journeyed alone to

Padan-aram and night overtook him, he lighted upon a certain spot—there God gave him a vision of the only way by which sinners could ascend into heaven. The ladder which reached from heaven to earth signified the coming of the only begotten and blessed Son of God into this sin-cursed world to open the channel through which mercy should run. Jacob later regarded that place, or experience, as none other than the very gate of heaven, and he took the stones of that place and made for himself a pillow and lay down and slept. God's revelation to and his communion with him was a foundation upon which he could truly rest. The stones in our text can well signify the experiences of the Lord's people—the times when he brings them by a way they knew not and makes known his goodness and mercy to them. 'Tis a heaven below, the Redeemer to know, and when he shows his smiling face to a poor sinner, the occasion is never forgotten. Stones endure, perhaps, as nothing else the elements of the ages, and the subject of grace, once he is shown the way of life as it is in Christ Jesus, will cling to that hope as long as life shall last. Such an experience is an Ebenezer to which the child of God will often return in meditation and wish that it was with him as in the days that are past. Such leadings forth are of the Lord, therefore, it is said, "I will lay thy stones in fair colors." How good to realize as we journey along through life that an all-wise and omnipotent God is at the helm. He also says he will "lay thy foundations with sapphires." Sapphires are of different colors: blue, green, yellow, etc., and can truthfully denote the attributes of our Lord as set forth in the Scriptures. Blue is significant of truth; green of life, and yellow of pure gold tried in the fire. Paul told the Ephesian brethren, who by nature were afar off from God, but who being brought nigh by the blood of Christ, and therefore were no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, that they were "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." The doctrine of faith and hope as set forth by the prophets and apostles; of love and mercy of God as embodied in his Son, Jesus Christ, together with the leading forth of the soul by the Holy Spirit into these things, comprises the very foundation upon which the Christian's hope rests for peace with God in time and for eternity. Continuing, the text says, "And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones." An agate is a stone in which a great variety of colors appear, and the windows in the Church are those characters who discern and see and understand the doctrine of God our Saviour and the order of his house, with the various gifts who minister of the things of God to the flock. Carbuncles are blood-red; therefore, the gates being of carbuncles signify that none shall enter into the celestial city except by the blood of a crucified Saviour. "And all thy borders of pleasant stones." How wonderful when the Church can see and feel that she is a garden enclosed! It is declared that God shall be a wall of fire round about Zion, and when experiencing that sense of security which exists

only in the Lord, and enjoying that peace which surpasses all understanding, how pleasant are our borders. These were precious stones and they set forth precious things. Then, it is declared, "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." This is good Old Baptist doctrine and it seems to set at naught all the works and machinery of the so-called religious world in its efforts to bring souls to Christ. It is also evidence of the Old School Baptist Church being the true Church. Men have prophesied for centuries that the Church built upon the faith of the Old School Baptist would soon crumble away and become extinct for lack of nourishment afforded through such mediums as the Sunday School, Theological Seminaries, etc., for educating and bringing in the young, as well as maintaining the ministry. Notwithstanding there are no such nurseries or institutions to aid the Lord in His work in our ranks, the Church has stood for all ages and will withstand all the assaults in the ages that are to come, for the head of the church has declared that it is built upon the rock of revelation and that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The Lord spake by the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah, saying, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." He takes away the first, or Legal Covenant, that he might establish the second, or Covenant of Grace, under which covenant he writes his law in the inward parts and in their hearts, and thus he teaches them. What is the result of this teaching of the Lord? "And great shall be the peace of thy children." Words cannot be found to adequately express that peace which comes by and through our Lord Jesus Christ. Again, let us ask, What are some of the results that follow this teaching of the Lord: "In righteousness shalt thou be established." This can only refer to his righteousness. That which the creature once thought to be righteousness has now become as filthy rags. The one taught of the Lord, then, is established in the fact that "Salvation is of the Lord," and he cannot be easily shaken. "Thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror, for it shall not come near thee." Can it be possible that this is spoken to the same character that was before said to be "afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted?" Yes, it is the same character, but under entirely different conditions. The character has now been taught of the Lord and enabled to behold the

Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. He is now established in the way of righteousness; he is no longer oppressed by the Law, for Christ has made him free from the law of sin and death, neither does he fear or stand in terror of the Law, because the truth has made him free and he is free, indeed. There is none that is able to lay anything to the charge of God's elect now, for Christ has died, yea, rather is risen again and is now set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, for ever to make intercession for his people. Justice has been satisfied. This does not mean, however, that the children of God shall live in this world of sin and sorrow free from distress. Rather the opposite is true. In the world ye shall have tribulation, said the Master, and our text goes on to say "Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me: whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake." As long as the world shall stand, men and devils will combine in their assaults to overthrow the faith of the elect family of God and to destroy them from off the face of the earth, but vile infernals, they can't prevail, for the text says they "shall fall." The next verse declares that the Lord has created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work, and that he has created the waster to destroy. The work of the smith that bloweth the coals is necessary. The materials that go into the building of God must be tried, though as by fire, to be shapen or fit them for his use. He knows what is necessary for each individual, and he must teach and instruct them in the things which are needful. This he does, nor does he leave it to others to do. He has made the waster to destroy, nor does this apply only to our enemies that are without, but to those that are within, which, after all, are our worst enemies. There is much dross, or flesh, about the most of us which has to be consumed, before we are made to walk softly and humbly before him. Truly, his judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out. In the last verse, we are told, in effect, that nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, for he says, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper: and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Could the servants of God desire a richer or greater heritage than this? The God of heaven and earth, and all that in them is, is for them and with them, and, if God be for them, who can be against them? How consoling to those who are tried as was Job, to be assured that no weapon that is formed against them shall prosper, and that every tongue that shall rise against them in judgment, they shall condemn. The children of God, truly, have meat to eat that the world knows not of, and without exception, "their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." May the God of all grace and comfort give each one to experience and understand these things for himself, that he may be rooted and grounded in the truth and established in the doctrine of him who is our Saviour, and not easily shaken and blown about by the winds

of doctrine of men, is the prayer of one who hopes he realizes that all his righteousness is of the Lord.

OBITUARIES

Sorrow entered many a heart and home when the death angel removed from life's activity and usefulness JOHN B. HINKLEY at his home in Halcottville, N. Y., Feb. 21, 1943. He was considerably past eighty-six years of age, and had been active until six weeks before his death when he was confined to his bed. The infirmities of old age were largely contributory to his death. The immediate survivors are his widow, sister Prudence O'Connor Hinkley, Halcottville, N. Y.; one brother, Scott, and a son, Everett, Roxbury, N. Y.; three daughters, Mrs. Wilson Gavett, Kingston, N. Y., Mrs. Loren Hubbell, Halcottville, N. Y., and Mrs. Frank Hammond, Denver, N. Y. all of whom are the recipients of widespread sympathy. The entire life of Mr. Hinkley was spent in or near Halcottville, and most of the time he followed the occupation of farming. By his industry and excellent management he was rewarded with material success. In early life he married Miss Emily Keator who died many years ago. To this union six children were born, four of whom survive as mentioned above. In 1919 he was united in marriage to Miss Prudence O'Connor who also proved a loyal and worthy helpmeet, and who tenderly ministered to him in his last illness, giving him every loving attention that could be desired. Mr. Hinkley was a faithful attendant at meetings of the Primitive Baptists, a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and in the other principles of the Primitive Baptists. He gave evidence of being taught of the Lord though he never united with the visible church. This meek and quiet man of unassuming ways, strict integrity and unwavering honesty will be much missed. His sterling character and his faithfulness as neighbor, husband, father and friend are qualities that constitute a legacy of sweet and tender memories. John B., as he was known by his legion of friends, was very hospitable in his home and delighted to entertain the friends and members of the church. The community is poorer by the passing of such a citizen.

The funeral services were held Feb. 24 at the Halcottville meeting-house, and the interment was in the Yellow Church Cemetery below Roxbury village. The writer officiated.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

EMELINE E. WORKMAN died Nov. 3, 1942 after an illness of more than one year which became acute about ten days before her passing. She was born in Randolph County, W. Va., Jan. 23, 1865, one of nine children of Levi and Emeline Kittle Findley, one of the pioneer families of the vicinity. Of these, a sister, Mrs. Isaac Scott, and a brother, Mr. John K. Findley both of Elkins survive. At the age of eighteen she had a hope that Christ was her Saviour, and was taken by baptism into the Valley Primitive Baptist Church near Elkins, W. Va. Nov. 7, 1888 she was married to Andrew Johnson Workman, which marriage was broken in its fiftieth year by the death of her husband. Two children, T. R. Workman, Cincinnati, O., and Mrs. Roy Gallaher, Huntington, W. Va., both survive, also a granddaughter, Miss June Gallaher of Huntington. Her life was one of simplicity, love for home, husband and children. Intermingled through it all was her gracious and inspiring spiritual life of continuous faith and adoration of her Saviour. I know of no one who depended more on him for guidance and comfort until her last mortal moment. At times it was difficult for her to attend the meetings but only illness kept her away. I believe I truly speak the voice of her brethren when I say she was wonderfully esteemed by them, and her labors were diligent in person as were her spiritual gifts bountiful. We of her family sat in reverence at what seemed an actual foresight into the eternal kingdom as she said her farewells and quoted the twenty-third Psalm. In her own words she asked to go into the "valley of the shadow." Her last testimonials will be as a guiding star to us children in the years ahead, and no more beautiful heritage could have been left by her. It softens our grief to realize that from the very day of her hope she lived above all else for this day that by His grace she would see her Lord. Her funeral services were conducted by Elder H. H. Lefferts at the funeral chapel in Elkins, and she was laid to rest in nearby Maplewood Cemetery. So we bow to His will of perfect love and un-

changing promise assured that she dwells with Him in paradise.

(Mrs.) ROY GALLAHER

ELDER S. P. MITCHEM was born Sept. 13, 1869 and died April 14, 1942 making his stay on earth 72 years, 7 months and 1 day. Elder Mitchem was married to Nancy Ann Bishop Feb. 17, 1890. To this union were born six children, five girls and one boy. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church April 22, 1911 and was baptized by Elder J. A. Tilley. On Sept. 25, 1920 he was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry by Elders O. D. Riffe, Reuben Hawks and J. A. Tilley. From 1915 until his death in 1942 he was clerk of the Guyandotte Church. He was faithful in attending the meetings when able, and his home was a home for Old Baptists. He was ever looking unto Jesus as the author and finisher of his faith. His warfare is now over for the natural mind has finished its course and I feel that his troubles are now over, and that it was God's time to call his spirit home there to await the resurrection of the body. I feel that the same body that fell asleep April 14, 1942 will be the same body that will come forth in the resurrection for it is sown a natural body and hailed a spiritual body, sown in weakness and hailed in power. Here is where the change comes with God's children for we come into this world sinners and are sinners while we live and when sin is finished it brings forth death. Then it is that sin and corruption and the natural mind have finished their course; then in the resurrection day they come forth possessing a spiritual mind, and their bodies changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus; then we shall see him as he is and be satisfied. I feel that the church has lost a faithful minister and a beloved brother, and that our loss is his gain, and when the trump of God shall sound and the dead in Christ shall rise I hope to be with my beloved brother forever where there will be no more separations, where the congregation shall never break up and the sabbath never ends. Submitted in love and hope of a better world.

Bud, W. Va. M. A. CANADA

JOHN L. MOON was born Jan. 15, 1852 and died Dec. 2, 1942 making his stay on earth almost 91 years. Born in Huntsville, Ala. he moved to Texas in 1887. He was married Sept. 20, 1888 and to this union were born nine children, six of whom survive him. (His wife's obituary appeared in the SIGNS, Oct. 1942) He united with the Missionary Baptists in early life, but was soon dissatisfied with them and went to hear the Primitive Baptists in whose preaching he rejoiced, and you would not have known from his conversation that he was not identified with the church. He always spoke of grace and mercy, had no confidence in weak, puny man, and rejoiced in hearing his Saviour's name exalted above every name. His daughter wrote me she believed it was his intention to unite with the church in his last sickness as he would say, oh, if only I could be permitted to go again to the dear Old School Baptist Church. This impressed the children that he intended to unite with them, but the hand of God had reached down for him and he could not attend again. As a church we feel that we have lost a faithful friend and brother. He was bedfast six months but his mind was clear, and he talked almost continually of going to meeting and rejoicing with the people he felt were the true worshippers of God. He was calm in his manner and never enjoyed foolish talk. His daughter wrote me, "It is so hard to give dear mother and father up within ten months of each other," but I would say to the children rejoice that the dear Lord was so good to them to give them such dear parents that they can say, they are not dead but have fallen asleep in Jesus. Their godly walk is precious to reflect upon. O that we were humble in spirit as these dear saints were while they sojourned in this low ground of sin and sorrow. All our members sympathize with the dear children, and hope they will be reconciled to God's will, that they can say in their hearts, God's will be done. Written by request of his dear children.

MINNIE C. JAMESON

DEACON WILLIAM A. LEITCH departed this life December 14, 1942, in his eighty-second year. He was born in Metcalf Township, Middlesex County, Ontario, and was the son of the late Archie and Flora Leitch. Brother Leitch is survived by his widow, Sister Jessie (Watson) Leitch of Ekfrid, to whom he was married fifty-three years ago, two daughters, Mrs. Flora McColl, London, Ontario, and Mrs. Neil McColl, West Lorne, Ontario, one son, Daniel Leitch, Cleve-

land, Ohio, a sister, Mrs. Joseph Howes, London, Ontario, and a brother, Daniel Leitch, Metcalf Township, Ontario. There are also a number of grandchildren to mourn his loss. Brother and sister Leitch went on a farm after their marriage, and farmed a number of years in Lambton County. They moved to a farm in Dunwich thirty-eight years ago, where they farmed successfully until twenty-one years ago. Retiring from the farm, he came to Dutton, Ontario, where he became caretaker of the Public School, and by a long and faithful service endeared himself to a great many young friends, who knew him as Grandpa Leitch. His kind and genuine interest in the young, and his faithfulness in his duties, made him a friend of both the staff and children, and it was a fitting tribute to his memory, to see, on the day before his funeral, a large number of children silently and respectfully pass by his casket in mute testimony of the love they bore him.

Brother Leitch united with The Covenanted Baptist Church in November, 1929, when he, his wife and three others were baptized. From that day, he ever showed that he had been with Jesus, and learned of him. He showed a lively interest in the welfare of Zion, and although naturally quiet and unobtrusive, was one in whom the church felt to have confidence. When set aside to the office of deacon, his manner was that of a servant, humble, and at the feet of his brethren. Some time before his death, it was noticeable that his health was failing. One day the words came very sweetly to him. "Death is the messenger of peace, and calls the soul to heaven." Soon after he was unable to leave his bed, and he realized that the end was near, but he had no fear, but a longing desire to depart and be forever with the Lord. During his illness, he would look for us daily to read and pray with him, and when he could no longer speak he would point to the Bible on a stand near his bed. His funeral was held at his late home, and interment was in the Alvinston Cemetery.

The writer esteemed him as a brother beloved, and misses his smiling face and loving cooperation.

G. R.

ELDER L. W. OWEN died Sept. 29, 1942 at the age of 82. He lived in and around Birmingham, Ala. for over fifty years and was known by a large number of Old Baptists in this section. I will quote the first verse of a poem printed in a recent issue of the SIGNS as it seems to fit his case so well.

"When we become tired of the journey of life,
And we long for release from its care;
It is sweet to remember that after the strife
We will find a long rest—Over There."

He told us on his death bed that he had lived his time out, and did not want to get well, but wanted to go and be at rest with the Lord. I thank God that I had such a father and the same kind of a mother who passed away in 1929. She, also, was an Old Baptist.

J. A. OWEN

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

We are informed by Elder, L. P. Harriss, Duqouin, Ill. that Mrs. W. P. Snider, widow of the late Elder W. P. Snider, is now located at 2338 N. 14th St., Phoenix, Arizona. Letters to her from Old Baptists, especially those who knew and loved Elder Snider, will be greatly appreciated.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

On account of war conditions there will be no session of the Delaware River Association this year which was to have been held with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Pa.

CASPER G. FETTER, Church Clerk

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure, we will mail them another copy free of charge.

MEMORIAL

We, the Old School Baptist Church of Christ at Hopewell, Mercer Co., N. J., feel to bow in humble submission to the will of Almighty God in removing from our midst our beloved sister, Mrs. Delilah Ensor Chick. We feel the church has sustained a great loss, and the realization that we cannot have her with us any more in our meetings spreads a mantle of mourning over us. We should not weep for her as though she had no hope, and may we feel to rest in the assurances of a good hope through grace by which our loss is her eternal gain, and say rest on dear sister in the beloved embrace of the Saviour of sinners.

Resolved that a copy of these resolutions be spread upon our church record book, a copy sent to her daughter, Mrs. Harold O. Johnson, and a copy sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Written by order of the church. Adopted by the committee.

(Mrs.) LETHA A. BLACKWELL
(Mrs.) SALLIE A. MORRELL
(Mrs.) ANNIE E. VAUGHN

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

There seems to be a good demand for this book. A very substantial number of orders have been received. We must decide definitely how many to have printed by the 15th of this month. The book alone is $1. A NEW subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at $2. entitles either the subscriber or the one sending in the NEW subscription to a book FREE. If you want to make certain of owning one of these books, please order promptly. Description of book has appeared in previous issues of the SIGNS. R. L. D.

MARRIAGES

By Elder H. H. Lefferts, March 20, 1943, in the meeting-house of the Ebenezer Baptist Church, Baltimore, Md., Elder Douglas L. Topping and Sister Mary Elizabeth Norman.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

An all day meeting is appointed to be held with the Welsh Tract Church, New Castle Co., Delaware, the third Sunday in May, at which time we hope to have with us Elders D. V. Spangler and C. W. Vaughn. Our brethren and lovers of the truth are invited to spend that day with us. There will be no session of the Delaware Association with the Welsh Tract Church this year owing to conditions and restrictions prevailing at this time.

We wish to announce that our Union Meeting will be held in Island City, Ore., June 18, 19, 20, 1943. U. S. Highway No. 30 passes through LaGrande and we are 2 miles out on a good highway. We especially invite brethren to time their trips, if possible, to suit the meeting dates. Trains and buses will be met at LaGrande to accommodate those coming that way.
C. W. BOND

Pilgrims Rest Church, Colquitt, Miller Co., Ga. will hold a two days meeting, 5th Sunday and Saturday before, May 29 and 30, 1943. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited. H. A. WADE

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.
O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canada, California.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th Street, Mayfield, Ky. Those interested will be welcome.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 A. M. 2 P. M.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m. C. W. BOND, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A. M.
ALL WELCOME

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10.30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Texas.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sundays in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P. M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sundays each month at 11:00 A. M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10.30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

VOL. 111 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JUNE, 1943 No. 6

CORRESPONDENCE

Route 1, HAMMOND, W. Va.

DEAR EDITORS AND BRETHREN READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

My mind is lingering on the parable of the sower who sowed his seeds. In Matthew 13:4-8 it tells us plainly where these seeds fell. The way side is not in the way. The servant who was sent to procure a wife for Isaac said I being in the way which the Lord God hath led me. So he being led was led to the right place where the damsel was who was to be Isaac's wife. Like in the case of Joseph who was told, "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife." The work is true and certain "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." The seeds that fell by the way side, on stony places and among thorns never yielded any fruit unto perfection because of where they fell. No good ground was there to yield and they did not have understanding given them, so here lies the key which opens the door into the mysteries of the kingdom, but the key did not unlock the door for these, but it did for the others because other seed (not some seed) fell into good ground. "But other", now let us examine this. Not one of this class failed to yield a crop, some thirty, some sixty and some an hundred fold because these heard the word and understood it. Why? Because it is given to you to understand, and unto those who are without, not in the way, it is not given to them to understand these things, so none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand. So here are these two classes of people set forth. One class is the multitude, the other class is His disciples. He spoke to the multitude in parables because it is written concerning them I will open my mouth in parables because they have eyes and see not, ears and hear not, hearts and understand not, so in hearing they perceive not. The one talented man who hid his Lord's money in the earth never gained anything so "from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." All is taken away from such characters. Yes, the kingdom shall be taken from you because you do not bring forth fruit; because you are carnally minded and let the cares of this world choke out the Word. The one talent is the knowledge of the law, and the law could not give

life, so without life how can a man gain? The next man had two talents given to him. The fruits are fruits of the Spirit. He had the Spirit in him as well as the knowledge of the law, so he gained because the Spirit gives life to the dead sinner. "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." My words are spirit and life. The third man had five talents given to him so he likewise gained, others five, some thirty, some sixty and some an hundred fold as God giveth the increase. When those spies were sent out to view the land of Canaan, the promised land, they brought an evil report of the land, but Caleb and Joshua had another spirit. They gained and occupied the land while the other spies lost, so faith without works is dead being alone, and works without faith is dead. You must have the two given you before you gain, before you can bring fruit unto perfection. Caleb and Joshua gained the promised land by the Spirit of God. Not by the letter which killeth, but by the Spirit which maketh alive. So the law covenant, like an old garment waxed old being ready to decay, vanished away. Some seeds fell by the way side, some on stony ground and among thorns. These yielded not, so says the word of God. Moses could not give life to the children of Israel, none of them ever kept the law, therefore, they being dead could not yield fruit to perfection because their fruit was the fruit of the flesh. Just like the man with the one talent, who buried it in the earth and then murmured and complained saying, thou art an austere man, gathering where thou didst not sow, and so forth, for he was a slothful man and wicked servant. Yes, he hid it in the earth. Did not the children of Israel, who were only fleshly children, do the same thing? They buried the knowledge of the law in their traditions, in the flesh, the earthly ground, out of which man was taken. When cares, temptations and persecutions arise because of the word, by and by he is offended. The words of Moses and the prophets and Christ were too hard for the flesh to endure so they went back to their natural way of living. Not so with the other seed, the gospel seed, the holy seed, the blessed seed, the seed that shall serve Him, the seed of the woman, which is Christ Jesus, and his people. The Sower, he sowed the Word. The words of God under the law covenant were not the words of life, the word which gives life and knowledge and understanding, they took away the key of knowledge, buried it with their traditions and the doctrines and commandments of man, Satan being the head of it. In seducing them with his lie, he is a liar and the father of it so these things are hid from the wise and prudent of this world, but are revealed unto babes because it seemed good in the Father's sight; yes, our Heavenly Father's sight so he spake to them in parables, but he speaks to you from heaven by his Son, the words of life, for the words that I speak they are spirit and they are life, and you are the ones that are blessed to hear and understand them, yes, the mysteries of the kingdom. There have been two classes of people in the world ever since Cain and Abel were born, and two kinds of worship and offerings. The one is fleshly, the other

is spiritual; the one is by faith, the other is by works; faith is the gift of God; works is the act of the creature. Faith cometh by hearing and the hearing which counts in God's sight is hearing the word of God. If we hear the word of God, and understand what the word of God is, then we have it pretty well summed up. Let us sum it up and see what is here meant by the word of God. John said, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." We have handled the Word which is Jesus Christ our Lord. Here we have the sum and substance of the whole thing, it is his sheep who hear. I put my spirit within you and it leads you into all truth, so then ye are my sheep, and my sheep hear my voice, and they that hear my voice shall live. Faith cometh by hearing the voice of Jesus Christ. Like the five wise virgins, they go in with the bridegroom while the door is open for they are set in the race, and an open door is set before them and no man can shut it. When they enter in with the bridegroom the door is shut, and when shut no man can open it. These mysteries are given to his children, the children of God, the ones who are born after the Spirit, because these are children of God. The multitude was born of the flesh and not of the Spirit and are not the children of God, but they are like Cain, they are of the wicked one, and like Ishmael, "shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac." Ishmael was not Sarah's son, but Isaac was and "in Isaac shall thy seed be called." This is the seed which shall serve him, not *may* but *shall* serve him. Unto you it is given, but unto them who are without, yes, without this new covenant, it is not given to them to understand because this kingdom is set up by the God of heaven and is not left to other people. It was set up in the days of those kings who ruled Israel, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people." You see why those foolish virgins were shut out. The wise shall understand and they shall inherit all things and enter in while the door is open. I am the door and my sheep enter in by the door. The foolish virgins went away to buy. They lacked wisdom, they did not ask of Him, and what profit did their works do for once the door is shut it shall never be opened. Faith and works must go together hand in hand. James said: "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." Faith, true and living faith, produces the good work which is love, joy and peace in the Holy Ghost and assurance forever. Here are the fruits unto perfection because it is the fruit of the Spirit which did produce the fruit. Like the woman who had spent all her living and received no cure, but when faith came to her she spoke by faith, and faith moved her to action, to touch Jesus, or as she said, "If I may but touch the hem of his garment, I shall be made whole." She proved her faith by her actions, she pressed through that

crowd and touched him, and virtue went out of Christ and healed her. You see faith cometh by hearing for faith is the gift of God, faith is the fruit of the Spirit. She had the Spirit in her, yes, Christ in her the hope of glory. We are saved by hope and the Lord is our hope. See the other seeds, see the good ground, see the sower who sows those seeds. He gave the law and his words to the children of Israel, but none of them kept it and there were no fruits yielded to perfection. The other seed, the gospel seed, the living word, fell into a good and honest heart, yes, the preparation of the heart in man is of the Lord. Yes, a good and honest heart given and the old stony heart is taken away, and his law is not written on tables of stone to be thrown down and broken, but the new, the inner law shall be written in their hearts, and in their minds, and they shall be imprinted there to stay and never be broken. Is there not a vast difference between the "some seeds" and the "other." "But other fell into good ground." A vast difference where they fell. The apostle Paul said, "But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned." As the rain comes down from heaven the earth opens her mouth and drinketh in the rain which oft cometh upon it, receiveth blessing from God so it yieldeth forth fruit to them who dress it and they receive the blessing from God. The earth is prepared by the sun and the rain to produce the herbs and fruit for man, it does not prepare itself, it does not yield without the sun and rain, so neither do we. It is very, very needful for us first to be blessed and then we yield by the Spirit. Fare you all well.

JAMES LINN

YAKIMA, Wash.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

Enclosed you will find P.O. money-order for $6. You may credit me with one year to the SIGNS and use the balance to help send it to some of those who do not feel like they can pay for it themselves. I feel that I would like to do more for them, especially those who are confined to their beds. God no doubt has a purpose in it all, and it may be better in the end that we cannot do any more than we do. We would not allow any suffering in this world at all if we had the power to prevent it. If Peter could have had his way Jesus never would have suffered death. The Lord told Peter that he savored of the things that were men's and not the things that were God's. I think we are all like Peter, and I feel it is right to do all we can, and we are told to love one another, and that means in deed and not just in word. We are all joining in with the world to-day to try to make this world a better place to live in, but God will have his way in the end, and if it is God's will for us to suffer all we do will not stop it. In the end the glory will so far transcend all we have suffered here that there will be no comparison, and all we have suffered here will be utterly insignificant.

In much weakness,

A. D. HUGHETT

8924 S.E. 17th St., PORTLAND, Ore.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

I am writing you to change my ad-

dress again. I do not want to miss a copy as I am too far away from my home church, and the SIGNS is all the preaching I get now as I am with my daughter. I have a son in this terrible war which makes my weak heart very sad. I try to pray day and night for his safe return. Pray for me as I am alone most of the time. I feel I cannot do without the dear family paper. I read it over and over again as it is a lot of company for me. Pray for faith that will not shrink.

"Must I be carried to the skies,
On flowery beds of ease;
While others fought to win the prize,
And sail'd through bloody seas?"

also

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

I hope and pray that God will continue to bless you and the Associate Editors in helping to keep the family paper going as it is such a comfort to the dear saints of God. God is everywhere and knows our every thought, good or bad. May he bless all everywhere. His will on earth be done. Your little sister if one at all in a precious hope.

CARRIE A. HORNER

ARTICLE BY (Mrs.) CYNTHIA PERKINS BROWN

(Continued from May issue.)

Sometimes by nine or ten o'clock next day, after he had made such a promise, I would see him coming from the field, and when he got in sight of me he would begin, "Paul says," "How to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do," and here he would come and we would have a discussion over these things. One day I said, "Les, you need not think what few Old Baptists there are, is all the christians there are." He said, "No, Cynthia I do not think that, there are christians, many of them, but they are blinded to the truth." I said, "O that will not do for the Scripture plainly says they shall all be taught of God, by that they are not blinded, the christian is not." Just then as though something said to me, two of Christ's disciples walked and talked with Christ and did not know it was he until he revealed himself to them. They must have been blinded. Well this was my secret, I must not tell him that I got this point, but from that on I remembered that, and when we had a discussion, which we often did, something would be given me on this same line. Then I began, when I would think of some scripture, to think how does that read? I would get the Bible and when I found it was connected with other scriptures which I did not know were there I really enjoyed them. Still I did not want him to know I was reading the Bible, I had not read it for several months. I seemed to want to consult my Missionary brethren and sisters and see what they thought about these scriptures. I seemed to see them in a different light to what I had always seen them, just as though I had read with the Bible turned upside down. Now I had it turned around straight. Before long I began trying to get their knowledge of these scriptures. I had decided that I was the only foolish

one among them; that they all understood the Scriptures and I was a foolish impostor. I was anxious to know so I began to ask them what they thought of certain scriptures and soon found that some few of them believed in the purpose of God, but we have to do our part and they soon got ready to go. Then they began talking with each other that Cynthia was going crazy, she reads the Bible all the time and does not want to talk about anything else. When the Baptists came to see us almost their whole talk was on some scripture or point of doctrine, and if I wanted to know anything they were ready to tell me what they knew. Les had an uncle who came more than others, Uncle Lafe Clark. A man who was generally understood to know more scripture that any other one. He could quote the testament almost verbatim. I had enjoyed these good talks on the Scriptures and was so glad when these old people came. One evening there came a feeling over me as quick as thought that I had been doing very wrong in entertaining these old selfish people for they would not dare come to my church or mix with us in any way at all, and O they did look so ugly to me. It was just unbearable and what would my friends say about me giving up my church and going with them. I viewed that with a hate that I had never had for any people, and I thought it will never do, no indeed. After supper I brought this subject up before my husband, and after telling him of their selfishness and all else how they looked to me I said, "Now Les, you may be an Old Baptist if you want to be, and every one else may be, but I am satisfied to remain right where I am." He just looked at me and turned and went to bed. Just as I finished my emphatic proclamation I put the light out and followed him to bed. These words came to me. Are you sure you are satisfied? Do you remember how that these people do not want to talk to you about things of the Scripture that you want to talk about? They say that you are crazy for reading the Bible and wanting to talk about it. Are you really satisfied with them? Do you not enjoy talking with these old people who search deep down into the Scripture and try to understand its meaning? Do these other people do this? Brethren and sisters this was too much for me, I could bear it no longer. I was placed by something unknown to me, in my grave and awakened deep down there where I thought my friends had buried me thinking I was dead, and now here I am in the ground with the dirt over me. If I call my friends will not hear me for the dirt is between me and them. If I call no one can hear me but God. At this thought I said, "Les, I am in the darkest place I ever was in," and at that moment my mind went blank to everything that I had been talking about and I just knew that I was in darkness. He began to talk to me and I was so calm, I had forgotten everything. I told him that I believed I was dying. He said, "No, I think not," but I said, "Yes I believe I am dying." He got up and came around the bed to me and said, "Do you want me to do anything? Do you want me to light the lamp?" I said, "If you want to." He lit the lamp and raised me up

in bed. I said, "Yes it's death." Then I said, "What are you going to do? and what will you do with this baby?" Then I said, "Les, raise it up and let me look at it." He raised our baby up and held it in front of me and I looked at it for the last time. I do not know whether I was helpless or not, I do not think I offered to touch the baby. We sat up for a long time and I thought, well, I have not died yet I wonder what is the matter with me? He said, "You just have not been feeling well lately and you are all right now," but my mind was that I surely had no hysterics. That was not me to have a hysterical spell and think that I was going to die. I could not believe it. I had forgotten about being in my grave and all of my talk about the churches and the people. I had forgotten everything except that I had a hysterical spell. The next morning I saw my sister coming to spend the day. I said, "Les, do not tell it." I could not stand for any one to know it. It was a thing unusual for Bettie and me to spend a day together and not talk on the Scriptures, but that must have been so for one day I was busy about my work and I thought I wish Uncle Lafe would come. It was with a sweetness that I wished to see Uncle Lafe, and in a moment with the same sweetness that all of the Baptists would come. Yes, something said to me, I thought you hated them! Now brethren it all came to me as bright as day in a moment of time, everything that I had said about them and the Scriptures, and my being put in my grave with the dirt between me and every living thing except my God, and that these were his people that I now see which look so pretty to me. The whole church of God, and I saw them with such sweetness and love that I was wishing for the whole world to know this had happened to me. I had never been allowed to look on the whole household of faith, and the brightness could not be described. I feel that it was the Lord who woke me up in almost the twinkle of an eye for I remembered it all, and had not been allowed to think on him, nor his people, nor the Scriptures, since I viewed it all while in my grave about two weeks before, and was made to see the Lord was my only dependence. He ground me to powder, as I hope, and put the love for his people in me which will never fade, for it is the love of God. This has been many years ago, and if left to myself I am just as rebellious to-day and have to be kept, but Christ prayed the Father to take them not away but keep them from evil.

I wish to give you a short sketch of a recent experience. I am now in my seventieth year. The time has come for my baby, which was lying by my side and has grown into manhood, now forty three years old, to enter the army. As the dreadful time came for him to take the last examination I just had one more half day to spend with him, and wondered how I was going to hold myself up in his presence. It had been so heavy on me for so long a time that I had almost lost hope, and I could not pray, "Thy will be done," I just could not say the words. I had many times said this and thought I was willing, but, Oh! my soul, these words were too much for me now. When I woke that last morning I

was dreaming that I had gotten down on my face, and was begging God, and was saying to him Lord I am in as humble a position as I can come to thee, and I will do the best I can and however it be, "Thy will be done." I woke and was lying on my face in the same position that I had dreamed that I was in, and felt the same way that I had felt. Then I came to this conclusion, that where I had failed to be able to say, "Thy will be done" the Lord had put me to sleep, and put me on my face and put these words in my mouth and had me to speak them, and since that time I can not refuse to say "Thy will be done." I only hope his grace is sufficient for all our needs, and that he will guide us through just as he did the children in the furnace which was made seven times hotter than was needs be. Brethren if you think best publish this in your most valuable paper, and if not all is well. Unworthily your sister in hope,

(Mrs.) CYNTHIA
PERKINS BROWN

Route 1, HARTFORD, Ala.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

Back in the summer I received a letter of a circular nature from you relative to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I appreciated the letter although being of a circular nature. At the same time I also received a copy of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES which I have had ample time to scrutinize, and upon such scrutinization as I am qualified of God to give, I hereby make this statement to believers scattered throughout the world, conscious of the fact that belief is not a voluntary act of the creature, but an involuntary act brought about by evidence of which the creature is not able to produce, as the evidence relative to the belief in God is of a divine origin, hence, God must of necessity and does furnish the evidence to all who believe in God. If there are some who do not believe in God, which there are, then they are in no way responsible for that fact for God has not given them the evidence whereby they are qualified to believe in him, and those that do believe in him are in no sense responsible for the fact that they do for it is the eternal purpose of God that some believe and some do not believe. So to those who believe and cannot help it I commend the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as being sound in principle, constructive in fact, and comforting to those who are footsore and way-worn and panting God's truth to know. It abounds with morsels of luscious food for the hungry tired pilgrim while he tabernacles here in this world of sin and strife. I most heartily recommend it to those who are acquainted with the afflictions of the Lord, and to those who are not thus afflicted it is good reading for you and your children. As I take a retrospective view of the past on this cold blustry March day I pause to acknowledge my first effort thirty years ago to preach the gospel. I am reluctant even to wonder if I did or if I ever have, if I did not, or if I have never. What a thought, I wonder from whence it came. "For necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! 1 Cor. 9:16. The gospel is the power of God to every one that believeth, the medium God ordained

by and through which his righteousness is revealed from faith to faith, and not faith to where there is no faith, neither from where there is no faith to where there is faith, but from faith to faith. "As it is written, The just shall live by faith." Rom. 1:17. The reason why the gospel is the medium by and through which God's righteousness is revealed is because the gospel is the power of God, but only the power of God to those who believe. You had as well sing Psalms to a dead mule as preach the gospel to a person who has no experience of God's power in his own heart. The fact is he would not believe it. Not because it was not the gospel, not because it was the gospel and he was stubborn and just would not believe it, but because he knew nothing about God's power in his own heart. Submitted in love of the truth and sweet fellowship for the believers of the truth in the bonds of sweet gospel ministry. Though I be a trembling sinner, yet I hope.

ELDER F. A. COLLINS

JOHNSON CITY, N. Y.

DEAR FRIEND AND I HOPE SISTER, THOUGH I FEEL UNWORTHY TO SAY THAT:

I received your ever welcome letter on Thursday and was glad to hear from you, but, oh, so sorry to hear of your trouble, especially of Walter's poor health. I believe it is for some good and wise purpose though we cannot see it now; nor do we understand why it is so when we work hard, endeavor to be honest, try to get along, and love our dear Saviour who did so much for us. I often think how much he does for me (if I am one of his children, and I hope I am), and what have I ever done for him? I hope I love him and try to live as one of his children should, but I come far short of doing and saying what I should. It seems Satan gets the best of me. I murmur and complain of my lot all the time when I should be praising my dear Saviour. What a miserable creature I am, no one knows but myself and the ones I live with, they know what I am. Do you take the SIGNS? Mine came Saturday but it does not usually until the first of the month. I have read most of it. I read them over several times. There are excellent articles in this one, in fact all are good. I have just been listening to the radio. A minister saying, "God wants to save everyone if they will only let him." How can anyone believe such things when the Bible reads contrary. My Bible says, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," and in another place, "What his soul desireth, even that he doeth." "O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" "Who may say unto him, What doest thou?" How badly it makes me feel to think some have gotten into such unbelief. This I cannot understand. God rules in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. How can men dare to say such things as they are preaching now, and so many are falling into their ways and trying to make all others believe it. They compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when they have made him he is two-fold more the child of hell than themselves, and they think and say they are doing work for the Lord when he said, he had finished his work.

Why are people so blinded? It says in John 12:40 "He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart." What a great mystery it is when it seems there is so much that teaches election how can they doubt it. How I should like to have some one to talk with who believes the truth. I want to go out to the country where I have a friend who believes as I do, and what comfort we take when I am there. I do not know when or how I can go for those who have cars cannot get gas to run them. I had better close for it will take your time to read all this, and you know these things better than I. Hope Walter is better and has no more heart attacks; all we can do is pray to the Lord to restore him to health and strength, and keep you able to do your work and earn your needs. The prayer of the righteous man availeth much. I shall be glad to hear from you any time you can write.

ANNA ROE

NEWTON, Ala.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

Since my subscription is now due I am enclosing the amount herewith. May I say in the beginning that I have just completed the reading of the September and October issues and found them comforting, reassuring, and firm on the fundamental principles ever contended for by orderly Baptists. I am so glad that you are inspired by the Heavenly Master to carry on so ably the paper founded by Elder Gilbert Beebe. You have an able body of Associate Editors who devote themselves untiringly to the cause of the elect family of God. Oh, may each of us help to sustain this paper in both material and spiritual means. All realize that without the guidance of the Immaculate One we can do nothing in the spiritual realm. He alone is the author and finisher of our faith, and without him we can do nothing. Truly he speaks and it is done; he commands and it stands fast; he sits on no precarious throne nor borrows leave to be. He is Lord of lords and King of kings, the Emanuel, the Just One. He reigneth wisely in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. Truly he is the Righteous One, great and marvelous is he in all things. He sets the bounds of our habitations; he leadeth us beside the still waters; he is a perfect teacher; he makes no mistakes in the premises; he is the Great Physician and has a remedy for every one of our diseases. We are in the hollow of his hand; we are kept as the apple of his eye. Why, oh why, should we fear when we have such a wondrous Advocate, King and Companion? Indeed he says, "I am found of them that sought me not." "I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me." But why should I write these things unto one that knows them so well? I intended in the beginning to write you how much I enjoyed the able editorials by you and Elder Ruston in those two issues, together with the other comforting articles. It seems to me that the recent articles have been the best in the history of the paper by each of the Editors. Oh, may you be inspired to continue to write and

edit these soul stirring meditations. Well do we know that unless you are spiritually directed you cannot write to our comfort and edification, and neither can we understand without the spirit and guidance from on high. It seems to me that if ever we have needed this spiritual consolation it is just now with everything in turmoil and strife. I grow so weary in my travels here below that I like to steal away into the deep recesses of nature and admire the greatness and solemnities of an all wise Architect, who drew the wondrous plan for each and everything in the natural and spiritual realm, and never left the execution of a single one of these plans into the puny hand of man. Truly in these moods I dearly love to wander away to some distant association as I did on the first Sunday in September when I attended the Smith River Association in Virginia and heard such able discourses by Elders Spangler, Helms, Wyatt, Turner, Wood, Rhue and Hill, and met such firm believers as Elders Hash, Terry, Jefferson, Turner, Moran, Koger, Thompson, Helms, Martin, Bryant, Jarrell, Beasley, Monday, Hawkins, Priddy, Marshall, Dunbar, Dalton, Harris and many, many others. Indeed it is reassuring to be with such stalwart soldiers of the cross as these dear brethren. Everyone extended every possible courtesy to me far beyond what I deserve for I know my shortcomings. Without His guiding hand I am nothing. The meeting-house itself is located in the midst of beautiful mountain scenery near the famous "Parkway Drive" and many other places of national interest. The writer spent the night with brother A. W. Rakes in a typical mountain home where everything possible for our comfort was done, and long shall we remember our visit there. After services on Sunday when sad farewells were exchanged the writer left with Elder John D. Wood and family for Christiansburg where we caught a bus for home. Now in conclusion if on earth no more we meet, oh, may we meet around the dazzling throne of God where our imperfections will not be, but where we shall be perfect in the Immaculate Lamb of God, where wars, pains, distresses, pestilences, famines and deaths are unknown and where spiritual perfections abound eternally. Yours unworthily, J. J. COLLINS

WILMINGTON, Del.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

I am pleased to be able to send you this check for the renewal of my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and also to see you carrying on with this undertaking so faithfully and well. I am sure it has required a great effort on your part, and also that it is a great pleasure and satisfaction to you to be able to do so. Sincerely,

LEWELLYN GRUWELL

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS".

Miss C. M. Duffus, Canada, $5; B. Evers, Ark., $2; L. C. Poling, Ohio, $1; Mrs. L. T. Genung, N. Y., $2; W. Y. Chandler, Ind., $2.

EDITORIAL

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HEBREWS 3:1

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus."

Paul tells us in this epistle that God hath appointed his Son heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds, for he was with the Father before the world was. He is the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his person. This glorious person was appointed to redeem "all that the Father loved in him." The full number were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Being of both Jew and Gentile races, it was declared that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This Son was given from heaven, while his human nature was born a child from the virgin's womb. These two natures, human and divine, were in this one person. He was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, and had a righteousness of his own before the world was. The only way this person could redeem his people, was for him to humble himself and be made under the very law that his people had transgressed, yet while he was made under the law, the law could not touch him unless he took our guilt as his own. Thus he who did no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. To become our surety, mediator, advocate and intercessor, he must do as was demanded by the law, doing that which Aaron and his household, with their many offerings under the law, could not do. God's works were finished from the foundation of the world, but in the manifestation of those works, there was appointed a worldly sanctuary, and many beasts were slain, but such blood could not take away sin, but these sacrifices and offerings were a shadow of what God had purposed, which was yet to be brought into clear manifestation. The tree must be there before a shadow of it can be cast, and Aaron, with his priestly robes, (made according to the pattern Moses saw in the mount,) bearing on his breast the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, testified that there was one, high above the heavens, who loved his chosen Israel, and was ready in the fulness of time, to come in the likeness of sinful flesh to save them from their sins. Neither his holiness and the glory he had with the Father before the world was, nor his righteousness, for he was the Righteous God, made him meet to be our Redeemer. All these attributes of

our glorious Lord separated him from us, vile mortal offenders against God, nor could all the blood, on Jewish altars spilt, appease an offended God. How vain are all the efforts of man to satisfy the God against whom he has sinned. The Lord of life and glory must become obedient unto death. He to whom his Father gave a number that no man can number would become sin for them, would be the guilty one, having their sins imputed to him to answer for them the law's demands. "When he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me," A body that did no sin, yet could bear the sins of his people, also bearing their grief and carrying their sorrows. In his humiliation, he, who was greatest, must become least of all. "It behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." "And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest: but he that said unto him, Thou art my son, today have I begotten thee, as he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." The high priest Aaron was a type of Jesus, and the tabernacle and all that pertained to it were types or patterns of things in the heavens, and while the offerings and sprinkling of blood and washing were necessary to purify the earthly tabernacle, the heavenly things themselves must be purified with better sacrifices than these. We shall omit reference to many of the things that comprised the ritual of the tabernacle, and later, the temple, and confine ourselves chiefly to the atonement or reconciliation of Israel to their God, as set forth in type, once a year throughout their generations. The atonement is mentioned first in Leviticus 16. The chapter opens with a reference to Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, who had offered strange fire before the Lord, and were burnt with fire, Leviticus 10, showing that none are acceptable unto God but those whom God appoints to an office and upholds in it. Of Jesus, God saith, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold." There was a time set for Aaron to enter into the holy place, which was once in the year on the seventh month and the tenth day of the month. Unlike Jesus, Aaron was a sinner, and needed first to offer for himself and his household before he could offer for the sins of the people, so Aaron, on the day of atonement, must first strip himself and wash in the laver of brass before he went forth. Our Lord stripped himself of all his glory, and became a servant. As Aaron washed his hands and feet, so Jesus saith, "I will wash my hands in innocency: so will I compass thine altar, O Lord." Psalm 26:6. In doing the letter of the law, being circumcised on the eighth day, loving God and man, being reviled and reviling not again, he washed his hands and feet in the water of the Word. Aaron offered a bullock and a ram, but before doing so he must put on holy linen clothes, coat, breeches, girdle and mitre, which foreshadowed the right-

eousness wrought out by Jesus in his perfect obedience under the law, covering every part of his body, the Church. In this work of atonement, Aaron went into the holy place, in place of Israel, so Jesus did these things in place of us. Jesus, let us also remember, is the bullock that treadeth out the corn, yet he must die at the hands of sinful man. He is also the ram caught in the thicket of God's predestination by his horns, and without him, as both bullock and ram, Aaron could not have approached the Lord, even in an earthly sanctuary. Paul saith "Our God is a consuming fire," so to approach God, blood must be shed and fire must burn the innocent victim. It was burnt after it died. Jesus endured the fire while he lived and upon the cross. Aaron must take a censer full of burning coals, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small. Jesus alone could dwell with devouring fire. He it was who trod the furnace with the Hebrews, for he "walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly." Under the righteous demands of God, because of sin, our Lord could say, "From above hath he sent fire into my bones," yet he knew that he had come into the world for this very thing. He is the author and finisher of our faith, and his faith was the golden censer in which he took the Word of God to do it, and he went with his hands full of incense beaten small, humbled so low he called himself a worm. His life was spent with grief and his years with sighing, all this in obedience to his Father, and like Noah's offering, it was of a sweet smelling savour to the Lord. The prayers of the wicked are a stench in the nostrils of God, but not so the prayers of this perfect man which availeth much. He came with his hands full of sweet incense, which sets forth the sweetness of his prayers, and it is his supplicating prayers that sweeten and make our prayer and praise acceptable unto God. Without the prayer of this righteous man, we should be yet in our sins. His prayer avails. He said to Peter, "I have prayed for thee," and he has prayed for all his children to the last one, he did this in the travail of his soul. It is he who can, and did, say "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice." Psalm 141:2. "He shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat." Jesus was the ark in which the law was kept, upon which the mercy seat rested, and it is here at the mercy seat that God communes with man. The burning of the incense produced a cloud over the mercy seat which was sweet and acceptable unto God. Jesus' humble and lowly submission to God's Word in all points was acceptable unto God, who said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The life of Jesus was necessary as well as the death, and thus in his life he was not without witness that he pleased God, and while Aaron offered for himself and his household first, Jesus lived the life for us, in which he produced a righteousness for us, as linen, white and clean, which is the righteousness of the saints. To reconcile the people, and to make an atonement for them, Aaron must take two kids of the goats

for a sin offering, and cast lots upon them, and the goat, upon whom the lot fell, had to be slain and offered as a sin offering. This casting of lots sets forth that they were at the disposal of God. Our High Priest was God and man. As God and man he was presented before the Father, delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. As man he must suffer, it fell on him so to do, for God said, Awake O sword and smite the man that is my fellow. As man he must die, and his blood alone must atone for the sins of his people. As God, he could not die, as man he bore our grief and carried our sorrows. As our High Priest, he confessed all our sins upon his own head as the scapegoat. "He was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people was he stricken." Aaron went into the holy place at least twice on the day of atonement. Jesus entered into Paradise the day he died and returned to enter heaven again at his ascension. When Aaron went into the holy place there was no man in the tabernacle of the congregation. When Jesus came, he alone was born of a virgin, he was alone at twelve years of age in the temple, disputing with the doctors, while other children were at their play. He alone had not where to lay his head. In his ministry, he alone had the words of eternal life. It was required of him alone to satisfy the law, and he alone did it. When it came near the time that he must die, he alone would set his face toward Jerusalem, although he knew it would mean his death, and when he came to face the ordeal, he stood alone. Peter said he would go with him to prison and to death, and not deny him. When he stood alone, Peter denied him and said, "I know not the man," and of the rest it is written, they "forsook him, and fled." He trod the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with him. Aaron sprinkled the blood with his finger seven times upon the horns of the altar, and round about. Jesus in his dying, as the sacred blood dropped from his head, his hands and feet, uttered seven last sentences. The first as efficacious as the blood that was sprinkled all around, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Each one spoken showed his thought for others in what he did. The sixth, for six is a number under the law under which man laboured, for there were six days of labour, he cried, "It is finished," and the seventh, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." At the time for the High Priest to perform his ritual, the tenth day of the seventh month, just as the High Priest was beginning his ritual, Jesus uttered those words with a loud voice, and the vail of the temple was rent, and Jesus' body was rent from head to foot. The next day, being the sabbath, and a high day, the Jews requested that the bodies be taken down from the cross, so the soldiers were sent and found the thieves alive, and brake the bones of their legs, but when they came to Jesus, he was dead already, so they brake not his legs, that the scripture should be fulfilled, "A bone of him shall not be broken." But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. Jesus'

body was taken from the cross and laid in the grave of a rich man, Joseph of Arimathea. On the first day of the week he arose from the dead, his soul and spirit rejoining his body. The brethren who entered the tomb after his resurrection saw the napkin that had been about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself, showing that the head should die no more. No more need for the napkin, but the graveclothes were not folded, to show that his body, the Church, would need them. There is something covers them even in the grave, it is the word of God, which tells of a good hope through grace, and their word of hope is, "MY FLESH SHALL REST IN HOPE." The saints are laid in the grave in hope. After Aaron had made an atonement, he came out of the holy place, (Jesus came from Paradise and his body from the grave) and Aaron laid both his hands on the head of the scapegoat and confessed the sins of the people there. Jesus, in taking his sins upon himself, did this. After he had risen, he joined two disciples on their way to Emmaus, and declared, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." After Aaron had confessed the sins of the people over the head of the scapegoat, the scapegoat had to be taken by a fit man and set free in the wilderness. Jesus, who became a scapegoat for us, could not remain in the camp of Israel. They hated him because he said he was the Son of God, and said, "Away with him." Peter, until after the death of Jesus, was not a fit man to carry the gospel of our sins being laid upon Jesus, and that with his stripes we are healed, but after he was converted, he became a fit person, and was chosen by our High Priest to carry this truth to the Gentiles, or Wilderness, which was accomplished when he went to Cornelius. Paul also was a fit man, who tells us that "the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach." Hebrews 13:11, 12, 13. He became a scapegoat for us, and as he is formed in our hearts, we shall be made willing to bear his reproach. Our risen Lord remained upon earth with his disciples forty days, much of the time instructing them in things pertaining to the Kingdom of God, and opening their understanding, that they might understand the Scripture, instructing them that they tarry at Jerusalem until they be endued with power from on high. He led them out to Bethany, and there he was carried up into heaven, a cloud receiving him out of their sight. When Jesus died, he shouted with a loud voice: this was the shout of victory. When he ascended, his disciples blew the trumpet of the gospel, a trumpet with a certain sound, for they preached Jesus and the resurrection. We believe heaven rang with the trump of God when he ascended, for it is written, "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord

with the sound of the trumpet," for he has ascended into the holy place, which is heaven itself. The slaying is over, the blood has been spilt, and he has entered the holy place on the merits of his blood and death. As prophet, his word stands, as our high priest he has made an atonement, reconciling us to God. Now he is our mediator, advocate and intercessor. He presents our petitions, pleads our cause. Not necessarily with words, his hands, feet, side and head are enough. Before our Lord was crucified he communed only with his disciples, establishing a memorial service to continue until his second personal coming. After his resurrection he was seen only by believers, his true followers with whom he communed, they feeding upon him as he opened to their understanding the things concerning himself. This seemed to set forth the seven feasts spoken of in Leviticus, to which only true followers can enter and rejoice. Much could be written here, but space prevents, but our readers may be sure that here the saints find that "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars." In these feasts the beasts are slain and the wine is mingled, and the Lord of the Church says, "Eat, O friends: drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved," a sweet foretaste of that which is above. In his ascension, our Lord took his own body as a wave offering of the first fruits, thus as the high priest went, for the people, into the holy place, so Jesus went into heaven for us. The earthly part of his atonement completed, he takes his place in heaven, and the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, according to his promise, came to earth, and this on the fiftieth day after the wave offering. Those who were to tarry at Jerusalem could now go forth into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, proclaiming liberty, peace and pardon, in his name, to all who come unto God by him. The heavens having received him out of their sight, we, as Israel of old, look for the return of our High Priest, having the testimony of angels, Acts 1:11 that he shall so come in like manner as the disciples saw him go. This does not for a moment change the fact that he comes in spirit and power, as he did in old times, as he also came in Judgment when Jerusalem was destroyed. The Jews were a typical people. The sacrifice had ceased, therefore the Lord, who had been their light, withdrew himself from them, and left unto them their house desolate. The law (the moon) ceased to give her light when the sun withdrew himself, and the priests, the stars, fell to the earth, there being no more need for them in the earthly tabernacle. This took in that worldly generation, but there was a generation there, the generation of Jesus Christ, which was not to pass away until the world came to an end, when what took place in type would be fulfilled. This was not the coming of the high priest, but of the King who shall reign until all his enemies are made his footstool. This coming at the destruction of Jerusalem was not his second coming, for, when this takes place, the believing Jew will say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." His first coming, set forth in the Word of God, was when he came

in our likeness as our sin bearer, his second coming will be his return from the holy place (heaven) in that body in which he ascended. Glorified, he will descend from heaven with a shout and with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God. Then the true jubilee trumpet will sound, and the captives, who have been held in the bondage of corruption and the prison house of the grave, prisoners of hope, will be raised incorruptible, and we shall then see him as he is and be like him. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." G. R.

RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

This book is now ready for distribution; in fact, it should be in the hands of several hundred readers. Besides our own, it contains the writings of twenty other men. We confidently believe that it will be very much appreciated by a large number of our readers. As previously stated, the price of the book alone is $1. To any one who is not at present a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, we will send the book FREE for a year's subscription at $2. To old subscribers we will send the book FREE for each NEW subscription they send in for the SIGNS at $2. Secure your copy of this book without further delay. R. L. D.

WANTED

A copy of Hassell's Church History.

Any one having or knowing of any one having a copy they would like to part with will please communicate with James Alfred Ward, 1902 County St., Portsmouth, Va.

PRINTING MINUTES

Mr. Gilbert Beebe, 5 Linden Ave., Middletown, N. Y., will be glad to print the Minutes for the various Associations.

OBITUARIES

MRS. GEORGIA E. ANDERSON, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life at her home near Catharpin, Prince William Co., Va., April 26, 1943 in the 80th year of her age. She had been in frail health a long time and not able to attend regularly the meetings of the church at Mt. Zion where her membership was. She was last there in September 1941. She was not confined to her bed prior to her death, and death came suddenly and peacefully for her, we believe. She was the daughter of George Matthews. Her mother's name was James, whose given name I do not recall. Her husband preceded her in death some years. She is survived by two daughters: Mrs. Estelle Franklin and Mrs. Iva Matthews, and three sons: Lester of Catharpin, and Linden and Berkley both of Washington, D. C. There are some grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Sister Anderson was baptized by the late Elder J. N. Badger into membership with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun Co., Va. but I have not the date of her baptism.

She was faithful to her church and was in her place at the meetings except when her health kept her from it. Her heart was there whether she was able or not to present her body there. We shall miss her in the meetings, and she will be missed by Lester and his wife who lived in the home with her. Lester's wife has been as good to her as an own daughter could have been. Everything was done for her comfort that was humanly possible. It becomes both church and family to bow in submission to the divine will. We believe it is now far better with her soul than when she was here on earth. Services were held at Mt. Zion, reading 17th chapter of John, afterward her mortal body was laid to rest, to await the summons from on high.

H. H. LEFFERTS

NORA BELL SRONCE was born August 8th, 1883, near Du Quoin, Ill., the daughter of Peter and Charlottie Sronce, among the pioneer citizens of Southern Illinois. She died at her home at 110 South Peach St., Du Quoin, Ill., April 6th, 1943, at the age of 59 years, 7 months and 28 days. Her father and mother both preceded her in death when she was a very young child and she

grew to young womanhood in Du Quoin. On account of the loss of her parents she was required to keep house for her brothers and was deprived from attending the local schools except for a very short time.

She was married to L. P. Harriss on August 19th, 1900, and for a short period resided on a farm in Paradise Prairie. She was possessed with a personality as calm and as sweet as the morning glory kissed by the dews of Heaven, she was loved and admired by all who knew her.

She was the mother of seven children, Mrs. Irene Winkelhake of St. Louis, Mo., Theodore Harriss of Du Quoin, Illinois, Mrs. Lottie Bertane of Herrin, Ill., Philip Provart Harriss of Pittsburgh, Pa., and T-Sgt. Frank E. Harriss of Du Quoin, Ill., who is temporarily stationed at Madison, Wis., all of whom, together with her husband Judge L. P. Harriss and four grandchildren survive to mourn her departure. Two sons Alva M. Harriss and Edgar Carnell Harriss preceded her in death.

She also leaves the following brothers and sisters, William Sronce, Alva Sronce, John Sronce, Mrs. Ora Tilley and Mrs. Alva Bridges all of Du Quoin, together with a host of friends and relatives to mourn her loss.

Funeral services were held Friday, April 9th, at the Primitive Baptist Church in Paradise Prairie, at 2:00 P. M. and the body interred at the cemetery near by the church.

Oh, why should the spirit of mortals be proud?
Like a swift fleeting meteor a fast flying cloud,
A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,
Man passes from life to his rest in the grave.

The leaves of the oak and the willows shall fade
Be scattered abroad and together be laid;
And the young and the old, the low and the high
Shall moulder to dust and together shall lie.

The peasant whose lot is to sow and to reap;
The herdsman who climbs with his goats up the steep
The beggar who wandered in search of this bread;
Have faded away like the grass that we tread.

So the multitude goes like the flowers or the weeds;
So the multitude comes, even these we behold;
To repeat every tale that has ever been told;
We are the same that our fathers have been;
We drink the same stream and view the same sun;
And run the same course that our fathers have run.

From the death we are shrinking, our fathers would shrink
To the life we are clinging our fathers would cling
But it speeds from us all like a bird on the wing.

If I can compose my thoughts for a few brief moments I hope to be able to perform the most solemn task of all my life, that is to send to you a very brief obituary of my beloved companion who passed away April 6, 1943 while all nature seemed to be suffering or the universe falling apart. She had not been well for almost three years, but had been able to be up part of the time when she suddenly became worse and suffered intensely for almost a week. I have not the language at my command to correctly portray such a sweet example of christian womanhood. While the very heavens wept through the lowering clouds, the thunders tolled the bells of sorrow mingled with happiness and rejoicing, and the lightning suscribed in letters of gold another name on heavens scroll, we tenderly laid her body in the tomb to await the coming of the incarnate Christ. When he has made the clouds his chariot driven by the strong and mighty wind, when he has come with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, to claim his own, then we have the satisfaction of believing that she will be raised in a blessed state of immortality, fashioned like unto his glorious body and sweetly wafted home, where she will be permitted to join together with all the blood washed throng whose names were inscribed in the Lamb's book of life before the dust of the highest hills were laid; before the sun or moon gave their light or the morning stars sang together, there to sing the praises of Israel's God, who also was her God throughout all the ceaseless ages of eternity. Truly a mother in Israel has fallen, but she fell with her face to the enemy. No truer believer in the doctrine of God our Saviour could be found in all the camps of Israel. While her voice is stilled and her pallid lips can never more sing God's praises in this time world, but in that glory land she will sing the songs of redemption to God and the Lamb. She will sing with one of old, thou art worthy O Lord to receive honor, and glory and riches for thou hast redeemed by

thy blood out of every kindred, people, tongue and nation, and hast made us kings and priests unto our God forever and forever. How blessed it is to die in that faith. Yours in sorrow.

ELDER L. P. HARRISS

MRS. MARY JANE DUFFUS (widow of John Robertson Duffus), our sister in Christ, departed this life in Vancouver, B. C., on February 8th, 1943. She was born A. D. 1860, near Thamesville, Ontario, which made her earthly pilgrimage approximately eighty-three years. She is survived by two sons, Henry C., of Vancouver, B. C., John P., of Irvington-on-Hudson, New York, one daughter, Catherine M. Duffus and one sister Mrs. L. C. De Cou, both of Vancouver, B. C. In her early twenties she united with the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, where she remained a faithful member until her death.

We met Sister Duffus and her daughter, Catherine, some years ago when they came East to visit their son and brother. They attended our meetings while here and during their stay the Lord wrought so wondrously his work of grace in the heart of sister Catherine that she was moved to ask for a home with the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in New York City and was cordially received and baptized into the full fellowship of the church. The writer will long remember what was to him one of the most remarkable letters he ever received, written by sister Catherine before she came before the church. God had most graciously dealt with her soul and both she and her mother have been very dear to us ever since. In recent years sister Duffus has written us some very excellent letters, which we highly prized. She was a great lover of the truth and therefore her Bible and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES were her close companions. We are deeply grateful for the encouragement she has given us in our work of publishing the SIGNS. She was very highly favored of the Lord in her last days, as will be seen from the following letter by her daughter, Catherine. "Blessed," indeed, "are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." Rev. 14:13.

May God give needful grace to the loved ones left behind, that they may not mourn as those without hope, and may he reconcile them to his divine will and enable them to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Job 1:21.

R. L. D.

I cannot imagine anything more beautiful than the memory of mother's last two weeks of this life. There was a strong, loving power gently drawing her. She was inspired so deeply with her Bible and her SIGNS, the two books on which her thoughts dwelt. She lived on this reading. I look back to this Omnipotent Presence with humble thankful prayers. It was so gentle and loving. I wish I could remember more quotations which she would repeat during her busy, active day's work. There was such strength and power in it as she read from her Bible. "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." There were many times when she could have told it all to an audience with eloquence, all from the one book. "In my Father's house are many mansions." "I go to prepare a place for you." "Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." She went to the hospital for an operation about a year ago with, "Thy faith hath made thee whole." "Go in peace." She was so strong and forceful about her faith once delivered unto the saints. I was blessed to see all this beauty. The afternoon the stroke released her she sat down with February's SIGNS just in from the mail and oh, such beautiful letters! The first one was about "They that go down to the sea in ships." I wish I could put down on paper the unseen power which was so real and loving in this house. Every detail of the plan seemed perfect and made easy for me. Please be charitable over this disjointed information. It is not a letter. There is no use in my trying to write one. Humbly,

CATHERINE DUFFUS

JAMES ARTHUR McCLAIN, son of George and Elizabeth (Davis) McClain, was born in Janesville, Ohio, Sept. 16, 1866, and passed out of this life March 22, 1943 at his home in Independence, Mo. being, at the time of his death, 76 years, 6 months and 6 days old. He grew to manhood in Ohio, taught school one term then went to Michigan and worked in the timber two years. He then returned to Wellington, Mo. where he met and married Miss Nancy Annie Murray, Nov. 29, 1889. To them were born five children, three boys and two girls only three of whom are

living. Mrs. Ada Johnson, Independence, Mo., Mrs. Ora Godding, Klamath, Ore., and Arthur Earl McClain, Bellflower, Cal., and one grandchild, Ruth Johnson, Independence, Mo. After his marriage he and his family lived in Independence for a number of years, then after living in Nebraska a short time they moved to Riverside, Cal. where they lived thirteen years. Coming back to Mountain Grove, Mo., where they lived until 1935, they came to Independence where he lived until his death. One reason why he was so restless and moved so often was that he felt God had called him to preach, and he said he would die before he would preach, and was trying to run away from the call. If he ever tried to preach I know not of it. Nearly five years ago he was paralyzed on the right side, and ever since had been confined to his bed, most of the time lying on his back. After his affliction, he learned to write with his left hand and wrote out his experience which was published in the March 1942 number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He said he was nineteen years old when he first thought he ought to get religion, but while attending a protracted meeting God in his mercy showed him that he was a sinner, and how utterly helpless is man to know God. At God's own time he revealed to him the glories of salvation by grace, and the love of God was shed abroad in his heart that made him rejoice and praise the Lord for his mercy. He united with the Sniabar Church of Primitive Baptists the fourth Sunday in May 1889, and was baptized by the late Elder H. W. Newton. Brother McClain was a strong believer in the sovereignty and predestination of God, and salvation by grace, and he was as well posted in the doctrine of the Bible as any man it has been my pleasure to know. He was also well taught in the weakness and sinfulness of the flesh and often mourned because of his own imperfections, and felt that his afflictions were sent on him as a chastisement for his disobedience. It has been my pleasure to visit him often, and we conversed on many things taught in the Bible, and we were in perfect agreement, so much so that a warm christian love and fellowship sprang up between us. At the same time he would tell me how sinful and unworthy he felt to be, and at one time he said, "I had it in mind to tell you not to come again for I am too sinful for you to look upon." On Friday before the second Sunday in September I took Elder Berry and Elder L. P. Harriss and his brother over to see him. To see them and to hear the words of hope and consolation that Elder Berry said to him was of the great consolation that he feasted upon as long as he lived. He spent many hours in communion with the Lord, often in the lone hours of the night, and was moved to write to brother and sister Berry although he had to lay on his back and write with his left hand, sometimes only one line at a time. In this letter he said, "I do not want you to feel sorry for me, but rather rejoice and be glad for me, for much of the time I have felt the presence of the Lord in sweet meditation of his goodness and mercy, something the world can neither give nor take away." For eight or ten days before he died, he suffered the most terrible, agonizing pains, causing him to moan and rave both day and night, and the doctor could not relieve him of this suffering. I want to speak of the dovoted, patient, consecrated kindness of sister McClain who so tenderly cared for him until the last, and now she is left a heart broken widow to live alone, but we feel that God will be her comforter and she can lean upon his strong arm for support for in him she cherishes a precious hope. Brother McClain had requested that I preach his funeral which in much weakness I tried to do on Tuesday following his death, reading John 7:1, 2, 3 for the foundation of my remarks. The funeral was held in the Conley Funeral Home in Independence, after which we laid his body to rest in the beautiful cemetery in Independence, there to return to dust, as God has said to dust thou shalt return, but we cherish the hope that in the resurrection his body will come forth, raised a spiritual body, and he shall see God as he is and be satisfied. Prayerfully submitted.

W. L. HALL

JASPER N. KEITH, son of John and Rachel Keith, was born Oct. 2, 1860 and departed this life Feb. 12, 1942 at his home in Franklin Co. near Good Hope Church of which he had been a faithful member since about 1922. He was united in marriage to Susan F. Barrow, Dec. 14, 1886. To this union were born eight children, five girls and three bovs. Three girls, Millie, Elsie and Lunie preceded him in death. The surviving children are Clenton Keith, O'Donnel, Texas, Newton and Lester Keith, Winnsboro, Texas and Mrs. Hattie Ellidge and Mrs. Ollie Ellidge also at Winnsboro, Texas. Uncle Jasper

was a firm believer in salvation by grace and his hopes rested on the finished work of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. He loved the church but was unable to attend the meetings a few years before he died. His home was always a welcome place for any visiting brethren and sisters, and a warm hospitality was shown his friends. You could see the light in his eyes, the light the world knew nothing of when you clasped his hand at meeting him. Many times you could hear young folks speak of their enjoyment at the home of Uncle Jasper and Aunt Fannie. He liked to sing and many pages were turned down in his hymn book indicating favorite hymns. One of these which we sang together many times was:

"Weep not for me, Oh, weep not for me,
I am crossing o'er death's river,
And you soon will follow me."

I feel if he could speak to us now he would say to all, weep not, I have passed out of this unsatisfied state into a state of rest, so let us not grieve as those having no hope, but look upon death as a passing into a better world. Although he had been in bad health for some time he was ill but a few minutes at the last. How wonderful that he did not suffer long, and what a sweet thought that God goes with his children through death the same as through life. We feel that our loss is his eternal gain. Funeral services were conducted at Good Hope by his pastor, Elder J. R. Hardy. He spoke words of comfort to a large company of relatives and friends.

ALSO

His beloved wife, SUSAN F. KEITH, was born Dec. 2, 1862 and departed this life Nov. 1, 1942. She was a faithful member of Good Hope Church although she had been in declining health for some years and unable to attend. She talked very little of her belief but her daily walk told of the sweet hope she had and the patience with which she awaited her appointed time. She was almost helpless about a year before she died but she bore her suffering with patience. She fell and broke her leg only living a short time thereafter. All was done that loving hands could do, and all earthly help had passed when this dear sister obeyed God's summons. She had spoken to her children about the arrangements for her funeral which she wanted as much like her husbands as possible. This was done and she was carried to the cemetery in the same manner, and the same songs were sung, namely: "O land of rest, for thee I sigh;" "O sing to me of heaven;" and "Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep." Although Elder Hardy had already passed on Elder S. C. Davenport conducted the funeral services using for his text 1 Cor. 15:19. He spoke words of comfort to the broken hearts that mourned this dear ones passing. Aunt Fannie was a bright example to her children, grandchildren and friends. Her life will live on in their memory although she is gone, and all credit is due to God and his endless power. Let us be thankful we had them with us as long as we did, and say to our God who never errs, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." One who loved them, their niece. (Mrs.) MYRTLE RHOADES

MEMORIAL

In remembrance and respect of our late brother, Deacon Walter L. Clark, of Saint's Rest Church, Dallas, Texas.

It is with sad hearts we try to write a few remarks in memory of our beloved brother who has passed from our midst. The place he left vacant in our hearts and lives, as well as the place he so ably filled in the church, can never be filled. The efficiency with which he filled the offices of deacon and clerk is too indelibly stamped on our minds to need further comment. It is a well known fact that brother Clark was faithful and punctual to perform his duty long after, due to failing health, those of less faith would have faltered and fell by the way side. In our memory we can yet see him wearily and toilsomely making his way—when other means were not available—to the church, filling his place and performing his duty to the best of his ability. Oh, that we could follow the example he so earnestly set before us. Realizing brother Clark's time had come, as surely as ours must come, let us bow in humble submission to the will of God, and say, O Lord, "thy will be done."

To his bereaved companion and family we would say, grieve not as those who have no hope, but rather feel that our loss is his eternal gain, and as Paul has said, it is better to depart and be with Christ, and we feel he is indeed at rest.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that a copy of this resolution be spread on the church records, a copy sent to our dear sister Clark, and to each

of the children. Also a copy to be sent to the "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference Saturday, March 13, 1943.

ELDER G. E. RUSHING, Moderator
N. T. TATUM, Church Clerk

ORDINATION

Pursuant to a call made by New Hope Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church of Christ of South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association located in Union Parish, Louisiana, the following Elders and Deacons met with said church on Sunday, April 4, 1943, for the purpose of ordaining John Lee Smith to the full work of the gospel ministry. Elders John T. Everett and W. W. Taylor of South Arkansas Association, and Elders R. W. Rhodes and E. J. Lambert, Deacons J. W. B. Roberson, Marion Smith, J. W. Hudson, G. F. Murphy, T. P. Wilson and S. J. Slaughter of South Ouachita Association. The above named Elders and Deacons composed the Presbytery.

The Presbytery was organized by choosing Elder John T. Everett, Moderator, and E. J. Lambert, Clerk. Elder John T. Everett to word ordination prayer, Elder E. J. Lambert to deliver charge, Elder R. W. Rhodes was spokesman of church in presenting brother John Lee Smith to the Presbytery. Brother John Lee Smith was presented and the Presbytery was thoroughly convinced of his call to the ministry and proceeded to ordain by prayer and laying on of hands. After the charge was delivered by E. J. Lambert the right hand of fellowship was extended to Elder Smith by the Presbytery and the body of Baptists present.

Resolved that we commend Elder John Lee Smith to the Baptists as being enabled by the grace of God to be sound in doctrine, humble and meek, and worthy of the love and fellowship of the brethren.

Be it further resolved that one copy of this be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and one copy filed with New Hope Church records.

R. W. RHODES
S. J. SLAUGHTER
J. W. B. ROBERSON
J. W. HUDSON
W. W. TAYLOR

T. P. WILSON
J. T. EVERETT, *Moderator*
E. J. LAMBERT, *Clerk*

SPECIAL MEETINGS

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sundays in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y. at 10:30 a.m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed. R. LESTER DODSON

We wish to announce that our Union Meeting will be held in Island City, Ore., June 18, 19, 20, 1943. U. S. Highway No. 30 passes through LaGrande and we are 2 miles out on a good highway. We especially invite brethren to time their trips, if possible, to suit the meeting dates. Trains and buses will be met at LaGrande to accommodate those coming that way.

C. W. BOND

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.

O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canada, California.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th Street, Mayfield, Ky. Those interested will be welcome.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 A. M. 2 P. M.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m. C. W. BOND, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A. M.
ALL WELCOME

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10.30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Texas.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sundays in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P. M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sundays each month at 11:00 A. M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10.30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

VOL. 111 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JULY, 1943 No. 7

POETRY

The presence of the Saviour
How it brightens all my way;
How it helps me, how it strengthens,
How it cheers me day by day.

The presence of the Saviour
How it makes the darkness light;
How it brings a ray of sunshine
Into sorrows dreary night.

The presence of the Saviour
How it fills the longing heart;
With a sense of deep, sweet gladness
Nothing earth born can impart.

The presence of the Saviour
How it chases every fear;
How it sooths the restless spirit
When faith feels that He is near.

The presence of the Saviour,
And the knowledge of his love,
How it seems a sweet, bright foretaste
Of eternal joys above.

The presence of the Saviour,
Surely it is heaven begun;
For 'twill be the brightest glory
Of the life beyond the sun.

—MRS. ISAAC T. McINTYRE.

CORRESPONDENCE

FAYETTE, Ala.

SOLOMON'S SONG 8:8

"We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for?"

I have not done very much writing on texts that the children of God bring to my notice, because I feel very deeply my deficiency in taking up deep and mysterious things of the Bible, but at this time the request to write to our family paper on the above text has been followed by an impression to do so. I trust by the grace of God that I make the attempt at this time, looking to him to guide my mind into the truth. If I write that which is not true I hope the brethren will set me aright, and that some one will be given a mind to give us an article on it. Many of the books of the Bible are unique. Solomon's Song is the most singular of all in the Bible and is, perhaps, the first instance of a dialogue. It is the sweet voice of Jesus speaking to his bride. His speaking to her brings forth from her the sublimest language. Each of them would be, and are, miserable when not in the company of each other, so we will find them setting forth their mutual love for the other. Now I must say here that in a certain sense this is the church for all time and under all dispensations, but in another restricted sense it is the Jewish church under the law. Please notice that as they speak it is to and about each other. They do not talk about other people or things. They are so absorbed in each other that there is not time to give it any notice, but now they come near the end of their wonderful conversation. In our text they have

turned away from each other. Something precious undoubtedly has been brought to their notice. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Rom. 11:33. Nothing is nearer earthly perfection than the unity, love and companionship of husband and wife. Even that is not worthy to be compared to that holy union of Jesus and his bride. Their hearts beat as one heart; the welfare of the other is of primary importance; their aim is the same, but even with all that we find in our text that something in the future calls attention to them. They do not speak of each other now; they do not speak of their hopes and desires; the church did not say, I have a little sister; the Saviour did not say, you have a little sister, but at one time in perfect accord they speak and say, we have a little sister. Oh, the preciousness of their voices being blended together to include the heathen Gentiles. Just tonight as we study the text together it surely is enough to cause jubilation among the redeemed of the Lord to be known as the little sister. My poor heart responds with joy and adoration to such language. The Bible does not have much to say about God's big children, or fearless children, or learned children, but the precious promise, admonitions, and encouragement to the little children are all through the book. In nature it is a beautiful thing to see an older brother taking care of and shielding a younger sister. Much more so is it true in regard to this little sister. She has the most wonderful Brother to shield and protect her, one who knows all about her as to how frail and little she is. Now may I suggest that the Jewish church had breasts. By that she was commanded to teach the law; look to the law; live by the law; die by the law and be judged by the law. The law afforded plenty if kept and obeyed. Furthermore, as we first came into a knowledge of the law, we still think that we may be fed by going to these breasts, but to these parties who are blended into one in looking forward toward the day of their little sister she does not have any breasts. May I be permitted to dwell rather intimately on the question of this little sister not having any breasts? Earlier I said that in our text it was the church under the law speaking. Now may I say that this little sister is the church under grace. To come under grace is for the helpless, poor, destitute, and barren to receive sustenance and strength. Now I see this little sister as the bride of Jesus Christ. Reader can you contemplate such a husband? Nothing lacking in him! Completeness and perfection in one! What about his bride? Ah, reader, look yonder at her as she comes up from the wilderness. She is a little one and she is leaning on the arm of her beloved, but she does not have any breasts. She cannot hope to feed any children. As in nature in some cases, so with her in every case, the nutrition must be supplied from some other source. Sometimes she is so ashamed that she does not have any ability, sometimes she is so glad that her husband furnishes all the food for the feeding of the household. Perhaps in nature if a man was fooled into wedlock with a woman with no breasts it would end in a separa-

tion, but not in this case. He knew all about this woman. He chose her in himself before the world was, and she is all fair to him, and I feel inclined to say that she is not deformed in any sense, but has perfection in him, and thus is supplied with breasts filled with the richest milk that supplies just exactly the right amount of love, and grace and faith for the satisfaction of the spiritual appetite, and for the development and growth of the child. Perhaps I am over zealous in regard to everything by grace. I do want my churches to be firmly established in the stable, unwavering doctrine of unconditional election and predestination. Let us look at this matter of this little sister not having any breasts. If she has no breasts, she has no nourishment for her children. If she has no breasts I would like to know just how long she would have to exercise in order to have some? If having no breasts does not constitute perfect helplessness in regard to food just what would it take to be helpless? And who preaches a doctrine that covers, consoles and includes this little sister? Will conditionalism before birth help any? Oh no, all Primitive Baptists agree that conditionalism this early will not do. But what about conditionalism after birth? Is it any good? Will it produce milk for the babe? Will it put breasts on this little sister? And after putting them in place will it fill them? Fearless of all brands of Arminianism I would say that that good (old fashioned to the many, but highly prized by the few) doctrine preached by the people sneered at and called Absoluters is the only one that will reach her case. "Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child." Isa. 66:7. Is not that devoid of works, conditions, merits or any other creature? "Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. Shall I (who, God or the little sister?) bring to the birth, and not cause (Who cause, God or the little sister?) to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God." Isa. 66:8, 9. No doubt this little sister is to have children (See Prov. 31:28), and to many how sad it is to see a woman with children and no breasts, but we are not left in despair. "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, (little sister) and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her." Isa. 66:10. Then the rejoicing is with and for the little sister. Be glad that she has not any breasts! If you, dear reader, have been courted by the strange woman (Prov. 7:5) and led to mourn that the church (little sister) has not any breasts, may God turn your mourning into joy. Why all this? "That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory." Isa. 66:11. I want to preach and write Him as all of your salvation; as a whole and complete Saviour; (Col. 2:10) as your food and drink; as your life and light; as your strength and health. Is that too much grace? Is that extreme doctrine? Is that unprofitable to the dear little children of God? I think not! I see (and I hope to

have felt) in the gospel just what is included in the verse above. O, how the dear little children of God desire to suck at this place of nourishment. It satisfies, it delights. This is the gospel of the new covenant. "For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her (Jerusalem, church, little sister) like a river, (notice it is God that extends peace and that it is plentiful) and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees." Isa. 66:12. Ah, how highly favored of the Lord, her elder brother, is this little sister. A woman without breasts is pitied and sneered at and made fun of by other women. So it is in the religious world. This little sister does not have any, all the women around her do have. They wonder at her. They know their cause would be helpless without them. Not knowing the power of God they cannot see how she can survive, so they have been preaching her funeral for many years. But what shall we do for her when she is called for? This is clearly shown in the action of the Jews. Peter did not think it proper to minister to the Gentiles. He did not know they were his little sister. He was not willing to admit them as children of God. Not only that but they refused to receive the elder brother of this little sister. They did not do anything for their little sister, and put to death the only One that did do anything, but that is to the glory of God after all that we might exalt him as our all and in all. Thus the little sister is well supplied with nutritious food. In love and fellowship,

W. D. GRIFFIN.

ISLAND CITY, Oregon

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

I am enclosing $2 for my renewal of the SIGNS. This completes my forty-ninth year as a subscriber. I began in 1894 and my experience was the first article in the January number. I had united with the church in October 1893 and was baptized by Elder John G. Sawin on the fifth Sunday in that month. As I look back over my travels during these years in which I have tried to preach the gospel I loved then, and love more sincerely now; when I see my natural ties to earthly things slipping; I feel to have been of little value as a minister and an unprofitable servant; but I have done what I could, and at all times have declared the truth as I have seen it, and have no desire at this late date in my ministry to change to any other foundation than which I have stood upon. I am enclosing a few thoughts you may publish if you think them profitable. I desire to contribute to the columns of the SIGNS if my writings will be of interest to the readers. Yours in hope.

C. W. BOND.

What must I do to be saved?

This is a question which has stirred the souls of all the saints of God at the beginning of their spiritual exercises, and is such a serious matter with them in their bewildered and lost condition, that every effort that is presented to them will be tried in honesty and sincerity in order to obtain the blessing so earnestly sought. I have known of some Old School Baptists answering this question put to them by burdened sinners, that they could not do anything, that God will save all his people and there is

nothing they can do to bring this about. I feel that such an answer is discouraging to the crying and hungry child in their helpless condition at this period of their experience. It is coming close to the scripture statement, "If his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?" There are two sides to the purposes of God as his people learn of his dispensations. One the eternal purposes he has decreed from the beginning, known only to himself and to which nothing can be added, and in which no change can ever be made. The other is his revealed purpose as his people learn them in their spiritual experience. This last is what concerns his people most, and what they seek after experimentally, and is the cause of this question, "What must I do to be saved?" The carnal nature which all persons have, and the spiritual which the elect of God have, are two opposite powers, the one warring against the other, and the warfare is in the growth of the spiritual to overcome the powers of the natural or carnal. At first the spiritual seems a weak and struggling power, often seemingly overcome and at times lost sight of, but it is of God, the evidence of the new birth, and its destiny is to overcome all things and continue eternally to the praise of its Father, the omnipotent God. This fulfills the Scripture which says the elder shall serve the younger, and is the interpretation of it. It is also the development of the Master's statement that, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him," also, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me," "that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." The babes in Christ do not know these blessed assurances, and the hungering and thirsting of this spiritual nature causes many cries for the bread and water of life, or rather the sincere milk of the word, which is adapted to the early growth of the spiritual life. Here is the time and place for the ministry to do its most effective service instead of allowing worldly influences, and the popular worldly religions to lead the child into captivity which is so hard to get away from afterward, and many of God's saints spend their whole lives as "hewers of wood and drawers of water" for these carnal masters. The saving we experience in the liberty of the gospel is from the bondage of these false doctrines, and this develops in us strength and knowledge of righteousness leading on to perfection, and finally to the full realization of an eternity of bliss at the right hand of God. We know that Christ has redeemed his people with an eternal and finished salvation, and it cannot fail, but believing this causes us, or should at least, to be jealous to overcome all carnal desires, that we may rejoice alone in the perfect redemption which is our heritage, and being wholly subject to the law and love of Christ. Doing things brings us to works, and we are told we are saved by grace and not works. Why then do all of God's saints ask this question, or labor to accomplish this important evidence? The two-fold nature, the carnal and the spiritual, makes it necessary and must be exercised that way to produce the evidence of faith. No one will ask to be saved until they have felt themselves to be lost, nor will they desire the love of God until

they have tasted its life giving effects. These are the first and surest evidences that they are born again. The new birth also produces the evidence of being sinners, and the state of condemnation, and leading on to the godly sorrow which brings repentance. When we see one downcast because of the knowledge of sin, and seeking deliverance from the condemnation of this unhappy state, we might assure that one it is the best evidence that he is born of God, and that all such mourners are blessed characters, and are sure to be comforted with that comfort from above. They are already asking the question in their hearts, "What must I do?" Let us then answer correctly and scripturally, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Another question then arises because we do not have the comforting evidence of the sufficiency of the faith we have. Faith is evidence, and until sufficient evidence is produced faith may be weak. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him." All that one can do in the absence of faith is sin. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" is the scripture declaration. Your desire to pray, even when you cannot pray acceptably, and your prayers seem to fall unanswered to the earth, is based on faith. The desire shows the faith and there are fruits of righteousness in it. There are two kinds of righteousness spoken of in the Scriptures, that which is of faith and its opposite. The apostle defines that which is of faith by pointing to the negative first, making plain that which is not of faith then stating, "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach." Faith is the gift of God, and it is the first evidence of the new life, and all works of righteousness which follow are based upon it. Many desires and efforts seem to fail, and much tribulation must be endured before the child of God comes to the knowledge that, "Thou also hast wrought all our works in us." Then let us come to the conclusion of the whole question and its answer. The desire for righteousness and the seeking for it shows that such an one has been born of the Spirit, and has the gift of faith. The mourning because of sin, and the state of condemnation is because of this, and is producing the evidence of righteousness. Not your righteousness, but that which is to glorify God and exalt Christ as your Redeemer. At this period of the experience it might be told the mourning sinner to accept Christ as his Saviour and it would seal him an heir of heaven. Your humble writer has been told to do this, and in sincerity he tried for a long time and in every way he could or was advised to do, but the more he tried the greater hypocrite he judged himself to be when like a flash it came to him, it is not a question of your accepting Christ, but whether he accepts you. In this way my works of righteousness were destroyed and the righteousness of Christ exalted, and I have never lost sight of it, or doubted the foundation of my hope since. When one asks, "What must I do?" and they all ask it, it is proper to instruct him as to the cause of his inquiry and the evidences it is producing, and to follow the Scripture, begin at that place and preach unto him Jesus. Believe on him and thou shalt be saved. This

saving is from all the false ways and doctrines that have before filled his mind and heart, and brings peace and rest, and shall grow on to the perfection in Christ Jesus that shall adorn him at the right hand of God throughout eternity. "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled," saith our Master. He is our righteousness and in him our acceptance with God is perfect and complete. Believe on him and him alone and you shall be saved. "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief," is our continual prayer, and it reaches the throne of grace, and seals all the heirs of promise. C. W. BOND.

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721 N. Main St., EUREKA, Kans.

Written by Elder C. A. Hunt

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS AND ALL OF GOD'S POOR AND AFFLICTED PEOPLE:

If one so vile as I be allowed to address you by way of letter, I would like, if it be the Lord's will, to speak of the "Crumbs which fall from the master's table." What mercy can there be without atonement? And what without blood and sacrifice? And what mercy without the application of this blood to the conscience? Tens of thousands have been held fast in the refuges of lies only to discover the cheat when too late.

> "Mercy is welcome news indeed
> To those that guilty stand;
> Wretches that feel what help they need,
> Will bless the helping hand."

The realization of one's guilt and the revelation of pardon are altogether supernatural, and are only revealed to God's chosen people. There are many other refuges in which the sinner that has been quickened by the Spirit of God tries to hide, and broken cisterns which he hews out to himself, but the hail of God will sweep away all such refuges sooner or later. What a mercy when he does it in this world. But why are they called refuges of lies? Is it not because they are exactly opposite to the truth of God's word that says, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Men say, if I do the best I can, pay my own way, and do my neighbors no harm I shall be all right at last. I therefore see no necessity for a new birth. Which do you think will stand? "Let God be true, but every man a liar" who speaks not according to the Word. God's word says that without holiness no man shall see the Lord, but there is not one holy, no not one. Man says there is something good in all of us if we will but cultivate it, and that the righteousness of God is unnecessary, or at least is only required to make up our deficiencies, and so we might go on. The natural man and God are ever at variance for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Does not the nature of redemption and the character and glory of Him who accomplished it speak loudly, if we can but hear, the utter ruin of man by sin, the depth of the fall, and the breach caused by sin between God and man? Does it not show the greatness and the hideousness of sin when we consider that nothing but the sacrifice of Jehovah-Jesus could redeem us? "Thanks be unto God," the apostle breaks out, "for his unspeakable gift." Jesus came forth from the Father to

raise his people from an unspeakable death, to cleanse them from an unspeakable sin, to wash them in unspeakable blood, to clothe them in unspeakable righteousness, to make them partakers of unspeakable blessings, and to give them at last abundant entrance into his unspeakable glory. What an insult to the Majesty Divine for a man to present his filthy, worthless, rag-righteousness in the place of the righteousness of Jesus. This is nothing less than throwing ones self upon the thick bosses of his buckler. Refuges of lies indeed! Lies because they promise peace, life and safety, whereas, nothing but death is found there. You remember what was the fate, or truth, of the house built on the sand. It fell and great was the fall thereof. What is the language of the grace inspired heart when his standing in and on Jesus is revealed? "On Christ, the solid rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand." Blessed soul! "The eternal God is thy refuge," thy hiding place, thy fortress, thy high tower, thy shield and buckler; In this refuge thou shalt live, in this refuge thou wilt fall asleep, and in this refuge forever thou wilt chant his worthy praises forevermore. Now let me say, if I may do so, that the Lord has given me, even me I hope, a commandment to comfort his people. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." I can use the words but the sweet spirit alone can apply them. Poor, weak, trembling, doubting, fearing souls I hope I have a message from God unto thee. Good news, glad tidings, there is a positive side to this text as well as a negative one. I will now give you the positive, "The eternal God is thy refuge." The devil says he is not, unbelief is sure he is not, the world scoffs and sneers at you and pours the utmost contempt upon such a thought, but the eternal God says, I am thy refuge. Cast your eye back and see if you cannot behold certain spots where you were privileged to run unto Him and find shelter? Was there not this circumstance and that trouble and the other affliction where he manifested himself and made himself strong on your behalf? The eternal God was thy refuge, and he is thy refuge still, and he will be so forever. Your doubts and fears will never alter his tender love to thee though they bring you much wretchedness and misery. Doubtless the cry of your burdened heart often is, O could I believe then all would be easy. So it would be for the time being, but darkness would come again and hide this refuge from you. We have no abiding city here, we seek one to come whose builder and maker is God. "The eternal God is thy refuge" child of God, though you may feel to be without one, in due time he will become your joy, your treasure, your consolation, your Redeemer, your Lord and your all, and think of the nature and substance of this refuge. As we have hinted, it is eternal, impregnable, comfortable, secure, blessed and holy. Everything that you need for time and eternity, body and soul is to be found therein. Christ is your refuge, he is a full Christ, a compassionate Jesus, a tender Shepherd, a loving God and Father. Have you fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before you in the gospel, the hope to the exclusion of all others? Natural hopes, their name is

legion, but they are worthless, not being founded upon a right basis. If you hope for salvation entirely and alone upon the ground of the merits of Jesus and what he has done for poor sinners; if that hope has purified you, and separated you from the world, and turned your feet to Zion's hill, that is a good hope. And where does this hope enter? Within the veil, into a precious Christ, and "Thy anchor once in Jesus cast, shall hold the soul till thou at last, Him face to face shalt see." "The eternal God is thy refuge," and he will make it plain to you in due time. You must be pressed a little closer, stripped a little more, worried and perplexed yet further, tried and tormented for a longer season, but this preparation of the heart is of the Lord, and he will not lay upon you more than you are able to bear, nor take from you what is essential to your real happiness. He may come in the night, at the cock-crowing or midday, but when he comes, pardon, justification, joy and peace in believing will come with him. Son give me thine heart, and what will be the response? "Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it; seal it for thy courts above!" He is the one, beloved, to unravel your hard knots, to resolve your difficulties, to explain matters to you and to arrange your greatest as well as your meanest affairs. Nothing is too great for him and nothing is too small. Though he is infinitely high and to be adored and reverenced by all that are about him, yet he stoops with infinite condescension to undertake for us, even the tiniest details in connection with his people. Did he not do so, woe be to them. Grasshoppers sometimes become burdens, mole-hills assume the proportions of mountains, and the smallest troubles grow into insurmountable difficulties. What would we do if he forsook us then, turned a deaf ear then, steeled his heart against us then? We are so weak and ignorant that we can manage nothing properly and yet we are always trying to do so. Fools will be meddling, but what a mercy that he gives conduct to fools and courage to worms. What does he say of this? "I knew that thou wouldst deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb." Nevertheless, "I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." May we not say—was ever grace, Lord, rich as thine? Has the spirit ever shown you the tender heart of God as one of our poets puts it? If so, it has been through the presentation before the Father of the peace-speaking blood on your account. Tender heart. If we could believe this always what different persons we would be. How we should besiege his throne day and night, confident that we have only to ask to receive, but what is our usual experience? We disbelieve that he loves dearly, deals with us tenderly, and is overflowing with sympathy and loving kindness to us, and yet, in wondrous and conspicuous ways he shows his love; he makes his goodness to pass before us in the way; his mercies are new every morning; great is his faithfulness. And yet, what unbelieving wretches we are! Without me ye can do nothing. As Christ is the author of true faith, so is he the life, the sustainer, and the reviver of the faith. No man can quicken or keep alive his own soul, how could we manage

our own faith? Why we have not wisdom to manage our temporal affairs, let alone our spiritual concerns. Oh, what a mercy it is, dear children of God, that the key of the storehouse is still in the hand of Joseph, our brother, the lord of the land. Do you believe he is the lord of the land? Perhaps some of you can say in answer, I not only believe that he is lord of the land, but is lord of my heart also; the chief of my delights and the one altogether lovely. He is my all, my brother, my transport and my trust I hope. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." This is full confidence, a rich assurance. May the Lord grant it to his feeble ones. He has but to speak and the thing will be done, but I would just notice that, in fleeing to this refuge, many obstructions will be found in the road. (*To be continued*)

428½ Alemeda, NORMAN, Okla.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR ELDER:

I have several reasons for writing you this afternoon. The first, and I am ashamed that I have not written sooner about it, is to thank you for so kindly entertaining my twin brother in your home, and in your New York Church last fall. He is PFC Herman W. Buckner and at that time was stationed at Fort Devens, Mass. He wrote that you were so very kind and that he enjoyed all of his trip so much. He is now at Camp Pickett, Va. For how long of course we do not know. My father wrote me you were publishing a book of articles or letters giving different views on the resurrection. He did not say how much the cost but I hope the enclosed will pay for it and one year's subscription to the SIGNS. If more, use the balance as you deem best in forwarding the cause of the SIGNS. My father has taken your good paper since before I was born and for many years I know he was not able to pay the subscription price. The publishers were very kind then and I am sure you still adhere to their policies in that way in so far as it is possible. I hope to be able, God willing, to help again later. I am one of those (and I think there are many as I) who clings desperately to a faint hope (which is made to seem fainter at times by reading the experiences of those whom we feel so sure of) of coming to the promise made by God to our fathers. I would that I had a fraction of the assurance that Paul had when he defended himself before Agrippa. For some years I was privileged to attend with a fair degree of regularity the Hopewell Church at Reed, Okla. (since moved to Mangum, Okla., where it meets at my father's residence, R. L. Buckner, 1300 N. Byers) of which Elder W. N. Green was and is pastor. Many, many times when I had all but lost sight of that slender ray of hope, brother Green's wonderful, edifying, "Thus saith the Lord" sermons have brought me a new splendor. But alas! it will not remain. I do so envy those who have a definite experience and seem to walk in a wonderful nearness to the Saviour. A nearness which I know I can never attain in this life and can only hope for in the next. So many of my acquaintances stoutly acclaim a positive knowledge of an eternal home with Christ, and tell me that I, too, may become possessor of such knowledge if I will accept his con-

ditions and go to work for the Lord. But nay! I cannot believe it is is that simple. With my small learning I believe that the unimpeachable evidence of God's sonship is too wonderful a possession to hold in this earthly body, for which reason I must continue to pursue my ray of hope, a hope fostered by the fact that I love the Old Baptist brethren and their doctrine of salvation by grace to those who wholly unmerit it. May God further the interests of you, the SIGNS, and the cause which you so sturdily and steadfastly defend therein is the prayer of one who knows not that he has the right to pray. SHERMAN F. BUCKNER.

NOANK, Conn.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

This letter was started a week or more ago as I wanted my subscription to reach the SIGNS office before the first of March, but I am getting so old the arrows are beyond me all the time, and I cannot begin to accomplish all I would like to do. I am sending also another dollar for your book on the resurrection which I want to read when it is published. I think I can truly say my heart is with you and all of Ebenezer Church though many times I wonder if I am sincere and speaking out of the abundance of my heart or only seeking glory to the flesh. I hope this questioning is the searching of the heart for the divisions of Reuben. So many of the Lord's children, as they get older, mourn their sinfulness greatly. While I can see that sin is mixed with all I do, yet I do not mourn, which makes me wonder if it is just a cold mental acceptance of my condition rather than a spiritual experience of the knowledge of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ. It is certain that the knowledge of Jesus Christ must show up the darkness of the sinful heart. I think that is what growing in grace means, growing in the consciousness of our sinfulness. That is not what the flesh considers growth, but the things of the Spirit are contrary to the things of the flesh and one cannot grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ without growing in the knowledge of his own sinful self. He must increase, but I must decrease. The flesh cannot glory in his presence. As I read the SIGNS month by month I see things I would like to talk over with you by letter, but the usual cares and responsibilities seem to tire me so, mentally and physically, that I am not equal to writing very often. I do not forget all the pleasant associations of the past and feel I was like one whom his mother comforted in those happy days with Old Baptists. With loving fellowship for you and all the church. EVA ASHBEY.

STOCKDALE, Texas

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:

I have just read an article from a dear old brother that hurt my feelings so on the resurrection of the dead. Why do brethren fall out by the way when our blessed Saviour said, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." What more could we want? I am so happy to think, if I am his, I shall see him and be like him. Oh, glorious thought! Not of myself, it is the gift of the living God. Why do some find fault? I have been a reader of the SIGNS for

forty years. I find it the cleanest paper published. It does not need any recommendation from anyone. They do not publish anything but the truth from the Bible. No hatred or malice. It is founded on love for the good Lord and bible readers. If all could forget self and walk and act in love for each other. Do not put anything in your paper that is not God honoring. If the world hate you they hated Jesus. I am eighty years old. I have a sweet hope in the living God. He first loved me is my hope. I am willing to leave the resurrection with my good Lord and try to live obedient to a Higher Power. Before Jesus left us he said, *love one another*. He never said, *fight one another*. God is love and seeks such to worship him. All else is vain. Submitted in love.

(Mrs.) MATTIE HAWK.

(We are in thorough accord with the sentiment expressed by our sister and deeply appreciate her endorsement of the course being followed by the SIGNS. It shall be our purpose to continue publishing that which is honoring to God and comforting and edifying to his people. We believe the vast majority of our readers will approve of the foregoing. R. L. D.)

3347 Tutwiler Ave., MEMPHIS, Tenn.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:

It is time for payment on our dear paper for another year so I am enclosing money-order for it. If it is God's will I desire at this time to write a few words of praise and honor to our blessed Redeemer's name and of his wonderful power. He who spoke this world into existence by the word of his power, he who made all things that were made, and set the bounds of their habitation, and established their going. Yea, the animals, the birds and the insects are daily and yearly coming forth, living their lives and passing out just as God foresaw and determined they should. This same God formed man out of the dust of the earth, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and he became a living soul. We notice God in his great wisdom knew so well what would take place in this man that he was the last of them all to be made, so man in all his deceitfulness cannot claim any part in the creation of all things. Christ stood as a lamb slain from before the foundation of the world, and in due time came and dwelt among us. He did many wonderful works and finally suffered and died that we might live, and as he died he cried "It is finished." O such wonderful words to those who have learned their helplessness in the matter. All our hopes are in Christ who laid down his life for his people. We know not who they are, but "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Many are the times we examine ourselves, and long to find some evidence that we are numbered among those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. In ourselves we see no good thing, all is dark and vain and wild. Can I deem myself a child? We learn over and over again that where the Lord shuts none can open, but bless his most holy name when he opens none can shut. Then we can see the complete finished work of Christ, and hope is renewed that we have learned the works of God. On one occasion one asked what

they might do to work the works of God? They were told, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." People get off on the wrong track when they conclude God's work is hanging on the shoulders of the preachers, singers or church workers of any kind to get the gospel to them one way or another. The gospel is not carried about and distributed where ever we desire, but "it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." To the unbeliever it means nothing, but when God's works in the individual are wrought, then we believe and can hear the gospel, and hope is sprung up. Faith, hope and charity fills our whole being for awhile, we think all our troubles are over but we have many things yet to learn. O the many hateful things that do confront us and would destroy us if it was not for the blessed Lord who promised never to leave us nor forsake us. We feel many times he has forsaken us. We see ourselves so corrupt and full of uncleanness, we even feel it is our just reward. We feel ourselves sinking down beneath the waves and like Peter we cry, "Lord, save us: we perish." He so lovingly at his own appointed time reaches out and holds our hand and lifts us above the waves that seemed anxious to destroy us. So thus we learn that it is of him that we live, move and have our being. May this great God whom we hope we love bless you in basket and in store, and give you strength to carry on with the dear old SIGNS, and keep it as it has been kept for many years to come. Remember me and mine when at the throne of grace. Yours in hope of eternal life. (Mrs.) LUTHER CAMPBELL.

Route 6, DANVILLE, Va.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,

I have been impressed to write you for some time. I have read several articles that you wrote to the SIGNS and have enjoyed them. I feel you are one that understands and I desire your advice. I do not wish to worry you, yet I do not wish to deceive the dear Old Baptists for I hope they are the people I have been made to love, and my problem is that some of them have taken the idea that I am one of them. I will say I cannot deny I do have a blessed hope at times, and I am not ashamed to own my Lord for I hope he is more precious to me than everything else. If I know what righteousness is I love it and hate sin, but what troubles me is I cannot say, as those dear people that I know, when I first believed or when I first loved. As far back as I can remember I have loved them, and I had a terrible dread of death. It seems from the time I first remember when the night began to fall I could hardly bear the thought of darkness. I would cry myself to sleep many times fearing that what we called the last day would come before I awoke again. One night when I was very small I dreamed old Satan just burst right out of the ground and began to dance, looking right at me and smiled. I was so afraid for a long time but I do not know how long. Every time I was alone I felt he was right behind me. Many times I would feel his presence so close upon me I would just have to look back to see if he was really there. One Sunday we were at Old Knob Church in Franklin County where I was raised. I loved to sing so I was helping them sing. The

preacher looked straight at me and said, "Let those refuse to sing who never knew their God." I felt he meant for me not to sing for I did not know Him. I began to cry for my heart just seemed to melt to tears. Then I began the best I could from my childish heart to beg to know Him, but for a long time I seemed to get no answer. One night I dreamed that I was upstairs and in some way I was brought down through the air not touching anything until I reached near the bottom step and I was seated beside Moses. I had read of him and loved to read of him. I thought he had the Bible in his hand and was explaining the Scripture to me. I looked down at my dress and it was snowy white, and I had no shoes on. I was so happy when I awoke. My burden seemed to be gone and I felt like I wanted to sing and that I had a right to do so. Later on my burden rose again. I felt the need of prayer and desired someone to pray for me. A crowd of us young people went to hear the Holiness people preach. They said if any one wanted them to pray for them to raise their right hand. I felt the desire so deeply I raised my hand. Then they said if you really mean it come to the altar, so they lead me on until I united with the church, but I could not stay. I still kept my burden. I would go from one church to another trying to find one that would take me as I was for I did not feel that the Old Baptists would have me and I was not satisfied out of the church. I felt I had sinned by taking the name of the church and then leaving it. I finally got in such a condition I thought I could not live. One night I had a dream or a vision. Sometimes I think I was not really asleep. I felt my time had come to die, my last breath leaving me and I said Lord have mercy. Then I was caught back and could breathe clearly. A voice said I will take you back as a servant because you have left your first love. I was so happy because I was a servant. I was carried into a building of clear glass, and people were seated around glass tables. I was pouring something into their cups. I could see vapors rise from the cups, and it was revealed to me that those were the saints of God. I was so happy because I was a servant for them I awoke. For awhile my burden was gone. Again I united with another church. They put me to teaching Sunday School. Then I felt I was being a servant filling the cups of His saints, but all at once I was burdened again. I could not eat or sleep. When I went to church I was miserable. I got no food, I was starving. One day I told my husband I just had to hear some old time preaching and I knew the Old Baptists was the place. I had heard it when I was a child. He, fearing I was losing my mind, set about to carry me where I wished to go. I stopped a policeman on the street and inquired if there was any Baptist Church in Danville. To tell you how I found them would make this too long. I will have to leave out a lot. Anyway I found Elder W. R. Dodd and he told me there would be an association at Old Mountain Church. I went and the very first sermon was by Elder Keene. I will never forget his text. It was Noah's dove. He told how it went out seeking for land and came back so cold, tired and hungry, how Noah reached out his hand and took her in, warmed and fed her. I felt

like he was talking right to me for I was so cold and so hungry, and had roamed around trying to find food. I was filled to overflowing that day. I begged for a dream to show whether I must leave my church or not, and one was sent me about my church that very night. I will not relate it here but it made me very unhappy so I felt I had to leave it. I went back to sleep and dreamed the same night that I was with the Old Baptists and Elder Herndon and another Elder was sitting together with the Bible teaching us the Scriptures, and they were both transformed into little babies about twelve months old. They were so beautiful something said to me this is a symbol of the Old Baptist love. I felt satisfied then so I wrote to my church and asked them to exclude me, and have never felt like I wanted to go again. When one has taken up His name twice and done as I have is it not crucifying the Son of God afresh and putting him to an open shame? Do they not deserve to go mourning all their days? Could they find fellowship with such dear people? I leave this for your consideration. Please pray for me if it is not time wasted on such an one as I.

(Mrs.) FOSCO WILLIAMS.

(Judging from the contents of the foregoing letter, we are not at all surprised that Old School Baptists should feel that our friend is one of them. In our early experience we, too, united with another church organization, but we soon discovered that we were in the wrong place, and after suffering untold misery we were finally made willing to give them up. We then sought solitude in the wilderness of the world for a season, but ere long the Lord brought us into his banqueting house and his banner over us was love. Also, we are among the many who cannot point to the place, or name the day and hour, of their deliverance, as some are able to do. We have sometimes taken comfort in the thought that none of the other apostles, excepting perhaps John, had such a wonderful experience as the Apostle Paul. We have heard brethren relate experiences that made us feel if we had had the like we would not doubt our title to heavenly things, but though the work has been gradual with us, nevertheless we are made to hope that it has been effectual to the pulling down of strong holds, and that we have been made to honor and revere the name of King Jesus above every other name that earth has ever known. We verily believe that we live and walk by faith, and not by sight, and having had these things in common with our friend our heart goes out to her in love and fellowship as she testifies to hungering and thirsting after that which the world can neither give nor take away. The Lord has been good in showing her by two experiences that she has not yet gone home to her friends and told them what great things he has done for her, whereof she has been made glad. Our honest and sincere advice to her is that she confess before men her great love for the brethren and leave her case with them, and we are assured that they will not turn her away. We feel confident she will never find that peace of mind and rest of soul for which she so anxiously longs and waits until she has told the brethren what God has wrought for her and in her. R. L. D.)

EDITORIAL

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We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. John 3:11.

These words were spoken to Nicodemus when he came questioning Jesus and said, "How can a man be born when he is old?" The questioning of Nicodemus is of natural occurrence as to the quickening of a dead sinner, and the realizations felt in the flesh. Jesus was God manifest in the flesh, and his words were spirit and life. When he spake, wisdom was expressing truth that was with God and God's purposes were expressed. The words of our text declare that he spake that he did know, and he said, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." Jesus knew how poor sinners were born again and the life that should be manifest by every one, and the reason for this conclusion of the matter is that a measure of grace was given in Christ Jesus for them which should exercise the hearts of every quickened sinner that they should fill the purpose of God in them in this life's pilgrimage. The eminent Apostle Paul said, "By the grace of God I am what I am." When an individual mortal creature gives testimony he is sworn to speak the truth, and when he has finished and the court is satisfied and there being no conflict in his statement it is received as the truth, though he may have sworn deceitfully. Jesus knew the thoughts and intents of the heart of Nicodemus, and after he had spoken the words of our text he said, "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." These words testify that the Son of man is in heaven, and Jesus was on earth speaking with Nicodemus, and doing the will of the Father that sent him. All this teaches us the greatness of infinite wisdom, and when the finite creature begins to try to reason out the infinite he is lost in meditation. All that a poor sinner can truthfully say is I know I am a sinner and there is nothing good in me for I have seen the corruptness that is in me, and sin is mixed with all that I do, and when I would do good evil is present with me. It pleased God to form man of the dust of the ground, and breathe in his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul. His purpose in man in the flesh is manifested before our eyes, and to all the senses of man the things of this world are manifested, that he should be a partaker of them for his well being in nature, but this does not give him the realization to know he

is a sinner or to know the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and to that understanding he is dead, and knows not that life. Jesus quickeneth whomsoever he will, and from that deadness in nature he is brought into a realization of suffering for sin felt in his mortal flesh, and the groanings are not for sharp cutting pains in different organs of the body, but the whole body seems to be involved, that there is no soundness in me, and these groanings are worked in us that we cannot utter, and when the time comes that God has appointed Jesus opens to us, and his Comforter is present to give us the earnest of the spirit and we are made to rejoice. We truly believe all these things are felt by every sinner born of the spirit. We can truly testify of these realizations, but we are fearful that they are not the working of God's mighty power in leading a child of God about and instructing him, that we could say we know we are a child of God, but we can truthfully say we hope we are. So we live hoping in the mercy of the grace of God, and are made to love all of like precious faith. What a wonderful blessing to love all of like precious faith. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." We hope we may be kept that we shall not offend one of these little ones for "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." The offense to the child of God is to speak irreverently of the work of God in the heart by which he is made to believe on him whom God hath sent, which is blasphemous against God and the Holy Ghost. We may give occasion at times for an affront to our brethren, but the Spirit will bring to our understanding our faults, and we are made to repent for our sins, and to come to our brethren and prove a godly sorrow, but for us to say I repent and go in the same course there is no evidence of repentance. Men were offended in Jesus because he was righteous, and they were evil and carnal, sold under sin. Often we contact brethren we feel are experimental, or have the evidence of the work of God in their hearts, and before you are with them very long they begin questioning about some of the expressions of Jesus, and say did he not mean certain things which would be the interpretation they would like to have you know was their thoughts about the word under consideration. We have never felt to press our thoughts on brethren for fear we might be mistaken ourselves. The words of Jesus are acceptable to us, and our reason is, infinite wisdom did speak the truth always. If we say we love the brethren and strive not to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace we have proved what we said was false. There are many ways for offenses to come, "but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh!" We truly believe Paul was a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, and in all the epistles he wrote to the churches, and Timothy, Titus, Philemon and the Hebrews he was directed by the Holy Spirit, and the expressions written were from the abundance of his heart, and we feel his admonitions to Timothy and Titus are as applicable to us as though we were personally addressed, and the admonitions to the various churches are given for the church of

God to-day for her correction and instruction in righteousness that she should have a thus saith the Lord. We would ask you, dear reader, to read the seventh and eighth chapters of Romans, and you will have Paul's writings which we feel were directed by the Spirit, and lest we should come short of expressing our feelings as clearly as Paul has set them forth, you will note Paul speaks of our spiritual life and also our natural life, and also how we are directed by the Spirit. If directed by the Spirit we do mind the things of the Spirit, but if we are after the flesh we do mind the things of the flesh and are carnally minded which is death. (Rom. 8:5-6).

We have written an outline of the exercises of what we hope is felt by a child of grace, and we have an earnest expectation waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God, for we are waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body for our hope is not seen then do we with patience wait for it, and according to Paul's language in Rom. 8:37-39 we believe Jesus has all power in heaven and earth. We are looking unto him for all our help must come from him, and when he comes to make up his jewels we hope that we are one. Dear brethren, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto yourself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:1-3. "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 1 Thes. 4:14-18. C. W. V.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE

MATTHEW XXIV

(The April, 1943, SIGNS, contained an editorial by us on the above chapter, at the request of Sister Frank Loden, of Quinlan, Texas, and we believe our readers will be interested in reading the following by Elder Gilbert Beebe, founder of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, on portions of the same chapter. R. L. D.)

MATTHEW XXIV

MY BROTHER:—Will you please give me your views on Matthew xxiv? I am at loss to know how to present the subject in the form of a text; but I will try to let you know just what I want. In the third verse it is said, As he (Jesus) sat upon the Mount of Olives, his disciples asked him privately, What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? It appears to me that from that verse to the thirty-fourth, Jesus describes and tells them what shall take place before his coming and of the end of the world. And then he tells them, "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." The words, *This generation shall not pass,* is what is a mystery to me. The general acceptations of the word, *generation,* means all that were living at that time, and so I understand it. Now the query with me is, what does it mean as used in this place? This is what I want you to explain. Believe me to be your devoted friend, and, as I hope, your humble brother in the Lord. May God bless us, and give us light and understanding in his word. Farewell. E. T. HORN.

LEAK COUNTY, Miss., Jan. 29, 1860.

REPLY

There were three questions privately asked of the Lord by his disciples, as he sat upon the mount; our brother has embraced but two of them in his inquiry.

The questions stated in the third verse are, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming? and of the end of the world?" "These things," mentioned in the first question, referred, as we understand the subject, not to the following questions, but to the things which Jesus had just told them in the second verse should come to pass; namely, the destruction of Jerusalem, the temple and its buildings. The disciples had just attempted to show him the buildings. And in reply to them, Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things, namely the buildings of the temple, and then added, "Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, "Tell us when shall these things be?" This first question must therefore have been asked in regard to the time when the things just predicted should come to pass. Why this inquiry was privately made, may be accounted for on the ground of the well known sensitiveness of the Jews, when anything was said disparagingly of the temple which they held in such veneration. As they had charged him with saying, Destroy this temple and I will rear it up again in three days, Christ had used these words when speaking of the temple of his body; but as the Jews understood him to speak of the temple which the fathers had been forty and six years in building, they were incensed at him for suggesting that it should ever be destroyed. The Jews were so exceedingly hard to admit that the temple would ever be destroyed, that we are informed by historians that when their city was besieged by the Roman army, and famine, pestilence and death raged within their walls until famishing parents feasted on the flesh of their deceased children, and even after Titus had applied the flaming torch and the devouring element was rapidly consuming the building, they would accept of no peaceful negotiations, but persisted in their belief that God would avert the blow, and preserve the temple, and deliver the city. The buildings of the temple were nevertheless doomed to destruction, and not one stone should remain on another. It is not strange that the disciples should feel desirous to know when these things should be; and therefore they asked him who only could inform them of the matter. In his reply to this first question, Jesus told the disciples of many things that should accompany the fulfillment of his fearful prediction; but, as a final answer to the first question, he told them distinctly that, "This generation should not pass away until all should be fulfilled." We understand the term generation, here used, as our brother Horn does, to mean those who were at that time living; some should live to see the fulfillment of what he had said on this subject; and this was actually the case; there were those then living who did not see death till all these things were accomplished.

The second question was, "And what shall be the sign of thy coming?" Some have understood this question as relating to his coming in the last day, to raise the dead and judge the world, and some have supposed it to embrace only his coming in the execution of this judg-

ment on Jerusalem, and the destruction of the temple. But to us it seems that his answer to this inquiry clearly presents his coming to occupy his throne, to set up his gospel kingdom, gather in his saints, and to make himself known to them as their risen, glorified and reigning King, as he had frequently said to them that in this wise he would certainly come. I go, he says, to receive a kingdom, and will return to you again. And as he told his apostles, When the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye that have followed me in the regeneration, shall also sit up twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Was it not probable that in the expectation of these things the disciples would seek to know clearly as possible what should be the sign of his coming? At all events they inquired of him, and he told them of many things that should indicate the near approach of that coming. On the signs of his coming, we have not time now to dwell; but like the first question, this second is also settled by the emphatic declaration, this generation shall not pass away until all these things be fulfilled. This declaration being made in the thirty-fourth verse, is a conclusion of his answer of the first and second questions; must include them both, and expressed the certainty that the overthrow of Jerusalem, and also the coming of Jesus in power and great glory, as the King of Zion, should both transpire while some who were then living should continue to live on the earth. The apostles themselves who were to occupy the thrones of judgment in his gospel kingdom, were then living and reckoned in that generation, and certainly they did live to witness his coming to organize and preside over his kingdom. But in his answer to the third and last question, he does not, as we read the chapter, say, This generation shall not pass away until the end of the world shall be accomplished, but he says, Of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels of heaven, but the Father only. The day and hour of the end of the world, in whatever sense we understand him here to speak, is not a matter of revelation; it is only known to the Father, and must be regarded as among the secret things which belong to God, and which we have no right to meddle with; while things which are *revealed* (by the Word and Spirit) belong to us and to our children. While therefore every subject published in the Bible, belongs, as revelation from God, to us and to our children, and it is our privilege and duty to search them, and strive with all the saints to know what is their dazzling height, their awfully profound depth and to know the love of God that surpasses the narrow limits of our understanding, it is not lawful for us to go beyond what God has revealed.

> "Not Gabriel asks the reasons why,
> Nor God the reason gives,
> Nor dares the favored angel pry
> Between the folded leaves."

It is enough, but not too much, for us to examine prayerfully the unfolded and constantly unfolding leaves of that blessed book which the Lion of the tribe of Judah has unsealed, and given as a volume of revelation. Therefore, To the law and to the testimony; if any speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

We do not attempt to fix the applica-

tion of the "end of the world," as here used, to the final dissolution of nature; for, from what follows in this and the next chapter, we have long believed that the "end of the world" here intended to be the end of the Jewish economy, which was simultaneous with the coming of Christ in his kingdom, as set forth in the foregoing remarks. But as that subject is not fairly embraced in our brother's inquiry, we will leave it, at least, for the present.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 1, 1860.

ERRATUM

When submitting the obituary of brother James Arthur McClain for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which appears on page 141 of the June issue, I erroneously stated that I read John 7:1, 2, 3. This should read John 17:1, 2, 3. W. L. HALL.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. Ettie Smith, Tex., $2; Mrs. W. L. Ferguson, Va., $4; Mrs. A. D. Hoyt, N. Y., $2; J. H. Smith, Sr., Tex., $1; Mrs. A. Hastings, Md., $2; Mrs. C. Arnold, Cal., $2.

OBITUARIES

THOMAS W. RICE, our beloved brother in Christ, was born in Rockingham County, N. C., Sept. 25, 1860, and died July 10, 1942 at the age of 81 years. His first marriage was to Miss Cora Ray, March 10, 1885. His second marriage was to Minnie Brindle, Dec. 27, 1886. To this union were born three children, Ollie, Lelia and Allie. Of the three, two survive, Mrs. Lelia Cobb and Alice Rice. Brother Rice united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Wolf Island, Rockingham Co., N. C. in August 1893. He later moved his membership by letter to Dan River Church in the same county. In his passing the church has felt a great loss. He was one of the most faithful members in attendance at his meetings I have ever known. His home was ever open to the brethren, sisters and friends, and many were entertained by him. It was my privilege to serve him as pastor for nearly twenty years, and I loved him, I trust, for Christ's sake. By his interest in the church, his joy in hearing the gospel, his love for the brethren and many other tokens, he has left with us the evidence that his falling asleep was in Christ from which none ever wake to weep. His funeral was conducted by Elders Hunnicutt, J. W. Gilliam and the writer. Burial followed in the church cemetery at Dan River.

D. V. SPANGLER

MISS SEMMA E. CORDER was born May 23, 1859, a daughter of the late Elder J. S. and Virginia (Grant) Corder, and died March 6, 1943. She was born, reared and spent her entire life of almost 84 years at the old Corder homestead located on the waters of Hackers Creek in Barbour Co., W. Va., and was the youngest and last survivor of the three daughters of Elder and Mrs. Corder. She leaves to mourn the loss of a dear and precious aunt, one niece, four nephews, four great nieces, ten great nephews, four great-great nieces and five great-great nephews who were faithful to her unto death. In early life Aunt Semma was very frail, but in middle age was able to faithfully and tenderly care for her aged parents, and was their constant companion and nurse until their death. After their death she was in fair health and was active in visiting among the brethren and among friends and relatives. Having been born into a Primitive Baptist family she was a devout friend and servant of the Primitive Baptist people from early childhood, and in 1893 was given an experience of grace and expressed a desire to unite with the church. Being at that time unable physically to leave her home, her father, Elder Corder, called a meeting of the church at their home in the very same room in which 45 years later her precious body lie in state, and at that meeting she related a beautiful experience of the divine grace of God and was received by the Mt. Olive Old School Baptist Church. The following day she was baptized by her brother-in-law, the late Elder J. N. Bartlett, who was also my grandfather. Being her great niece and having been a close companion with her my entire life, and having spent 25 years in the church with her I feel to say that Mt. Olive has never had a more faithful, God fearing or more humble member. She has served

as clerk of the church for many years, and was a tireless, obedient and conscientious servant of the church body. Her home has always been a home for the ministers and brethren and her doors were always open for church service when it was inconvenient to go to the meeting-house. Five years ago she fell and broke her hip and has been an invalid ever since. Many, many times the church body has gone to her and she from her wheel chair or her bed has gleaned from the sweet messages of her brethren in the ministry, and her voice has mingled with ours in hymns of praise to the blessed Redeemer in whom was her strength, her shield, her hiding place. Some years ago she asked me to write a short obituary for her upon her departure, without excess eulogy to her life, but giving God the glory, honor and praise for all she was or any influence she may have had over her loved ones or the church. She also expressed the desire that I be present with her in the passing moment, and to pray that "God have mercy upon her, a poor weak worm of the dust." Such was my sad and solemn privilege, and in those silent moments her aged head pillowed on my arm I felt to say a soldier is passing away. She has fought a good fight, there is therefore laid up for her a crown of righteousness, and as I silently closed her eyes, closing out the light of this earthly day, she lived on in the light of a glorious and never ending eternity, and into the care and keeping of Him above ascended the soul of one of the sweetest, dearest and most precious companions in both spirit and flesh I shall ever know, while I, broken hearted, turned away saying, "Thy righteous law approves it well." Funeral services were conducted for her by her assistant pastor, Elder J. J. Poling, and she was tenderly laid to rest by the side of her parents in the Mt. Olive Old School Baptist Cemetery. The church has lost a precious member, but our loss is heaven's gain. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away," "and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." A great niece.

GERTRUDE BARTLETT CROSS.

MARY CATHERINE (FLORA) BLANKENSHIP of Boones Mill, Virginia, was called away by death July 21, 1942. She was born January 23, 1876, making her stay on earth 66 years, 6 months, and 18 days. She was united in marriage to Elder E. L. Blankenship October 28, 1894. To this union there were born 10 children; viz., Harry Blankenship, deceased, Mrs. Effie B. Clarkson, William Luke Blankenship, Mrs. Eula Naff, Mrs. Ola White, Thomas D. Blankenship, Mrs. Catherine B. Shively, Arthur L. Blankenship, Mrs. Frances Fisher, and Miss Flora Blankenship.

Sister Blankenship was received into the fellowship of the Little Creek Primitive Baptist Church many years ago and baptized by her husband, the late Elder Blankenship. She was a beautiful christian character and lived a life worthy of emulation. She was a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God. Surely a Mother in Israel has fallen. She was a kind, gentle and lovable person, good and faithful wife, kind mother and a good neighbor, ever ready to lend a helping hand to those in distress. She will be sadly missed in the home and family and the church at Little Creek has sustained a great loss in her passing. But we have hope and believe she was the planting of the Lord, and the hand that planted, watered, and nourished it here will some day transplant it to heaven where it will live forever and be changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of our Lord and Savious Jesus Christ. Then heaven with all its beauty and glory will be hers to enjoy forever.

The funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder Randolph Perdue, at the home in the presence of the family and a host of sorrowing friends, after which her body was laid to rest beside her loving husband in the Mountain View Burial Park, to await the resurrection morning.

THEREFORE, be it resolved:

FIRST, That the church at Little Creek bow in humble submission to God who doeth all things well, we humbly submit to his providential hand.

SECOND: We extend to Sister Blankenship's family our heart-felt sympathy and pray that God will bless them all in their bereavement.

THIRD: That a copy of these resolutions be spread upon our church books, a copy sent to her bereaved family, and a copy sent to Zion's Landmark and SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference.
Old Faith Contender please copy.

RANDOLPH PERDUE,
CHAS. T. ABSHIRE,
C. C. JAMISON,
Committee.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Elder T. W. Walker wishes to advise the brethren that his address now is Gibsonville, N. C. General Delivery.

DEBATE

We have been asked particularly to announce that there will be a public debate between Elder R. W. Rhodes, of the absolute predestination of all things persuasion, and Elder Ariel West, apparently of the contrary opinion, to be held at Friendship Primitive Baptist Church, at El Dorado, Ark., beginning Monday after the second Sunday in August, and continuing through Thursday, the 12th, 1943.

RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

Is the title of a 172 page book in which will be found articles by twenty other men and ourself, treating upon this interesting and mysterious subject. Great interest is being manifested by our readers in this book and several hundred copies have already been mailed out. Being anxious to make it possible for every reader to own a copy we are offering a copy FREE to every NEW susbcriber to the SIGNS at $2. for a full year, or to every old subscriber who will send us a NEW subscriber at $2. for the SIGNS. The price of the book alone is $1. R. L. D.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The next session of the Stanton River Primitive Baptist Association will be held with the church at Malmason, Va., the second Sunday in July and Friday and Saturday before. (July 9, 10, 11) All lovers of truth are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren. The church is about 7 miles from Danville and 10 miles from Chatham.

J. FLOYD WILLIAMS, Keeling, Va.

The Upper County Line Primitive Baptist Association will convene (D.V.) with the Church at Harmony, in Orange County, N. C., services beginning at 10 A.M. Saturday before 3rd Sunday in July and the meeting-house is located North of the town of Mebane, N. C., a distance of about ten miles, with hard surface and top-soil roads leading within a short distance of said meeting-house, and that further inquiries may be made by those coming from the South via Mebane at Lynches store; those coming from Danville and Yanceyville via highway 14, and those coming via Hillsboro over same highway, will inquire at Prospect Hill store. Because of War-Time Restrictions now in force, it may be advisable to hold our Association on Saturday and Sunday only, holding a TWO DAY SESSION this year. Preaching brethren and our correspondence are cordially invited to attend this session.

ELDER J. W. GILLIAM, Association Clerk.
ELDER W. C. KING, Moderator.

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sundays in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a.m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meeting-house, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed.

R. LESTER DODSON.

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.

O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canada, California.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th Street, Mayfield, Ky. Those interested will be welcome.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 A. M. 2 P. M.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m. C. W. BOND, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1315 Columbia Avenue

(PARK AVENUE HALL)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10.30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Texas.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sundays in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P. M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sundays each month at 11:00 A. M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10.30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

VOL. 111 RUTHERFORD, N. J., AUGUST, 1943 No. 8

CORRESPONDENCE

MARDELA SPRINGS, Md.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

I just feel disposed to write you a few words, and have been feeling that way since reading your editorial in the September (1942) issue. Perhaps what I may write will not be worth taking your time to read, and now that I have begun to write I feel more like I should not than before beginning, still something prompts me on. I never read much of anything but the Scriptures, and do not have the time I would like for that, or at least I do not take the time. I never was one who liked to read in my earlier life, but there came a time after returning from World War one that I began to get interested in the Scriptures, but just why I am unable to say. Soon after I arrived home the Methodist Protestant church people, where I was a member, asked me to tell of some of my experiences during my stay in the army and I did so in my feeble way. A short time after that I was asked to relate the same at another meeting near our home and the Missionary Baptist minister accompanied me there. I was considered to have been right active in my own church, not that I was talented in any way, but did have a Sunday School class which was perhaps to keep me more interested in going to the church as I know I was not as capable of teaching a class as some of the others, nevertheless, I continued that way for perhaps six months before the time came that I mentioned before about becoming interested in reading the Bible, and it remained that way with me for about six months more, the most of my reading being confined to the Old Testament. During this time I never thought once of different denominations, the most of my thought was to be able to argue with different ones on the Scriptures of which I now feel ashamed, as some were Old School Baptist believers or leaners as they call themselves. During this last six months of this condition something began to change in my life. There were things I would find myself doing that I knew the Protestant Church did not approve of, still I thought perhaps they would not find it out and that would relieve me for awhile, but it began to get worse and worse and it seemed that every way that I looked I could see something wrong with myself, yet I kept

arguing that I could or could not do things of myself. My wife and I both felt the same about the matter but as time grew on I began to be more distressed for some reason concerning these things, and so much that my mother said to me one day, "why don't you go and hear the Old School Baptists preach sometime?" I had some very good friends who were Old School Baptist leaners (even if I did sometimes argue with them), and found out through them when there would be preaching again. It was in the Salisbury Church, Elder Ker being the preacher for that service. I can go to the very spot where I sat at that meeting. His text was, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." It seemed to me that I understood just what he preached, and where I had thought this Scripture meant some future time after we died and left this world, that we should live, I could see where my understanding had been false and I had never before seen anything like this. After this I would visit my Baptist leaners and began to feel as they did, but still I continued to read all I could and finally one day while reading in my home it came to me, "It is enough," I want to unite with the Old School Baptist Church if I can. I got right up and went to see one of the members who has since passed on to be with Christ forever, and she told me I would have to go before the church, relate my experience and ask for a place in the church which I did at the next meeting at Rewastico Church. After my baptism I discontinued reading so much until about two years ago I began to have a desire to learn more of the wonderful works of God, and in reading I found at times I would be comforted and at other times I would feel that I had never understood the word of God at all and that there was something of my human nature that had caused me to be doing as I had, but I could not understand myself, and tonight I am almost afraid to send this letter to you thinking perhaps I have stated some things that I should not have bothered your mind with, and when I began to write I had no intention of writing so many useless things but just to let you know how well my wife and I have enjoyed reading the September SIGNS. Usually before retiring she has the SIGNS and I have my Bible and now and then she calls my attention to something she likes real well and wants to read it to me, and this time in particular we have had very much rejoicing from the writings it contained. We both feel to thank God for such blessings, but find ourselves at a loss to know just how to do or what to say. May God continue to make you all able to write such things as poor lost sinners need, and that we will be made able to understand such things. Elder Dodson we feel that you have been made able to bear with the poor and we beg to be pardoned for such a letter as this, but just felt we could go no longer without writing to you as we wanted you to know how much we enjoyed the issue of the SIGNS we have referred to. We ask to be remembered to your family. A brother I hope.

H. M. BENNETT

Written by Elder C. A. Hunt

(Continued from July issue)

The cities of refuge in the land of Canaan were well appointed. It is said that the roads were ordered to be kept clear of obstructions, and well made up so that poor, hunted manslayers might have every opportunity of reaching the city. How sweetly typical of the city of refuge, Jesus. It is the work of God's servants, ministerially, to take up the stumbling blocks out of the way of his people. Hence they are commanded to "Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones." The principal stumbling block is their own iniquity, and yet the refuge was appointed for sinners. How is this obstruction removed? By the application of some timely word by the Spirit, for instance, "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." This may be spoken directly by the Lord, or through the mouth of one of his servants, it has the same effect in either case. There are in addition the many stumbling blocks which Satan casts in the way, including his own personal opposition. He often straddles across the whole way and declares that the poor saint shall go no further. How can he be overcome? By faith in the blood of the Lamb and by the sword he wields, which is the word of God. Many of his suggestions and insinuations are not perceived to be his work until the Lord, perhaps by one of his servants, discovers it to the poor soul, and thus that obstruction is removed. Then there is the opposition of the world and the old man of sin, which are ever striving to keep him from the refuge, but whatever the obstruction may be if he is enabled to press through the crowd, like the woman of old, and but just touch the hem of Jesus' garment these obstructions are removed. These mountains flow down at his presence, and all rough places are made smooth and plain. How beautifully Mr. Hart speaks of this:

"When for a time we stop,
Perplex'd and at a loss,
He, like a beacon on a hill,
Erects his bloody cross.

We then move cheerful on;
The ground feels firm and good;
And, lest we should mistake the way,
He lines it out with blood."

How nice! This way to the Father is an open way, cast up, testimonially, by the prophets and apostles, and I need not say who this way is, for it is Jesus. "I am the way." So he is not only the refuge, but the way to it; and not only the way to it, but the procuring cause of it; and not only so, but in him are contained and hidden all the provision that is to be found in it. In fact Jesus is everything to his people. He is the way, the truth, the life, the sustenance, the bread, the wine; he is husband, father, brother, friend. "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen." Do we dishonor the Father and the Spirit when we speak thus of him? Listen: "At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of all things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." It is the Father's delight to exhibit his beloved Son to his own, and it is equally the Spirit's delight. "He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

This blessed Spirit omits to speak of what himself has done, but bids the enlightened sinner seek salvation in the Son. Has the blessed Spirit ever been revealed to you as God over all, blessed forevermore? The revelation may not have been very great, but was it sufficient to induce in you reverence for his holy name? He, in unity with the Father and the Son, contains all the fulness of the Deity, and he is verily God himself. Have you not sometimes responded to the language of the poet:

"Thou, with the Father and the Son
Art that Eternal Three in One,
God blessed forevermore!
Whom, though we cannot see or comprehend,
Feeling thou art the sinners friend,
We love thee and adore."

What should we know of this refuge, but by the revelation of the Spirit? What hope of salvation could we have apart from his regenerating grace? None. How could we know the Father except the Spirit revealed him to us in a precious Christ? Ah, you say, but it says, "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." It is so for there is no revelation of the Father or the Son but by the Spirit. Our salvation, in an experimental sense, depends on the revelation of the Spirit. Therefore, what do we not owe to His Blessed Majesty? Are we not debtors to mercy alone, and desire to sing of convenant mercy? But there another thought about this refuge. "The eternal God is thy refuge," and this excludes all other gods which are the work of mens hands, or god self, or the devil, the prince of this world. Truly we may echo the words of the Assyrian commander, "Where are the gods of Hamath, and of Arpad?" Where indeed? Of what use are the gods of gold and silver, and wood and stone? Of what avail are the images which the poor, deluded papist worships? None whatever. "They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not." "O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered." The eternal God, the self-existent Jehovah who upholds all things by the word of his power; who sits on no precarious throne nor borrows leave to be is the refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. So we have the eternal God and his everlasting arms. Of course the Lord Jehovah possesses not limbs as we, but is a Spirit who fills immensity. He built the universe, founded the heavens, controls the stars in their orbits, manages the earth and seas, and keeps in check the raging occupants of the pit. Every creature lives on his bounty, their breath is at his disposal and departs at his command. He lifts up his hand and says, I live forever. It is this glorious person who commissioned Moses to say to his people "And underneath are the everlasting arms." Yes children of God, the everlasting arms of your beloved, this refuge for sinners, Jehovah Jesus. Do you think those arms can ever fail? Yea, they are not subject to decay or weariness as ours. What does the church say of these arms? "His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me." Let me remind you, children of God, that he never really vacates this position. You are always in those arms of sovereign, unchangeable love though you do not always realize it. Why is it said that they are underneath you? So

that when sinking you may not sink too deep, or if you do, that you may feel their firm support. They are underneath you to uphold you and to prevent your sinking into perdition, and to come between you and the powers of hell, which he has declared shall not prevail against you. The everlasting arms are underneath you, sink as low as you may, despond as much as you may, despair as much as allowed to. I believe that these arms are not only underneath God's children, but that they are firmly holding and embracing them, and when you sink, it is because he lowers his arms. He has a fire and a furnace in Jerusalem, and he places you with his own hands into that fire, but he does not let go. No, no, you sink or rise according to the movement of those blessed arms. May this be a cheering, consoling thought to you, that whatever trials and afflictions you are the subjects of, your Jesus appoints them, and in due time you will rise up again into your high places. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles." He who supports the universe and controls all things by the word of his power, can he not sustain poor worm Jacob? O to realize it by faith! To feel the gentle, yet firm pressure of the everlasting arms. How desponding, dejected, cast down and despairing God's children often are, and how they seem at times to be altogether without support, without foundation, but "underneath are the everlasting arms." These shall convey them safely through the perils and cares of time, shield them from every enemy, and place them in their Father's house on high, and when they come to die do they not need both refuge and support? And does he withhold it from them? When their heart and their flesh fail; when all their mortal faculties decline; when earth recedes from view; and eternity appears in sight; when friends and relatives stand helpless by; when the cold sweat lays upon the brow; when the eye-strings break in death, and the heart ceases to pulsate they do and shall prove that "underneath are the everlasting arms."

"When call'd to meet the king of dread,
Should love compose my dying bed,
And grace my soul sustain;
Then ere I quit this mortal clay,
I'll raise my fainting voice and say,
Let grace triumphant reign."

These everlasting arms support you, carry you along, bear you through, lift you over, sustain and strengthen you for "to them that have no might he increaseth strength." Where from? These everlasting arms, yes they draw out of his fulness, and grace for grace; they live in him, upon him and by him; in fact they do not exist apart from him. How safe, how secure, how eternally blest is she, as the bride of the Lamb, destined to appear with him in unsullied glory, and cast her crown at his feet ascribing the glory to God and the Lamb. These arms not only support her, but they fight her battles, control her enemies, subdue her corruptions, make a way for her even to the dividing of seas, the leveling of mountains, and the elevation of valleys. They are wonderful arms because they belong to him who is wonderful. Who can tell or define a millionth part of the power and strength, and the efficacy and glory that they contain? So the church of God has the eternal God for her refuge, and his everlasting arms for her sup-

port, and what can she have more? Why the kingdom—and he is that—and that one of immense delight. "Where ransom'd sinners sing God's praise the angelic host among; Sing the rich wonders of his grace, and Jesus leads the song." Do you expect to join in that song? Do you long to join in that anthem, and praise him with all your heart and soul? What! has he done so much for you?

"He plucked me as a brand from hell,
My Jesus has done all things well;
And when to that bright world I rise,
And join the anthem in the skies,
Among the rest this note shall swell,
My Jesus has done all things well."

May the blessed Spirit reveal to you your welcome to this refuge, and your safety in his everlasting arms, so that you may sing with joy of heart, and give him some of the glory that is due his holy name. Amen.

C. A. HUNT

3808 Broyles St., HOUSTON, Texas

DEAR DADDY BEENE:

I want your opinion and advice so am going to write you as nearly as I can how I feel. I know it is going to sound strange and mixed up. It is that way to me. I feel that you will come nearer understanding than any one I know. I cannot talk to Aaron or any one else. I read the letters in the book and they seemed mixed too, but more complete than my feelings I must admit. I will start at the very beginning of my life because that is where it began, that is, as far back as I can remember. I have had a flame within me or perhaps I should say devil because it changes about. Sometimes it is a flame kindled and drawn by a magnet, sometimes it is a terrible burden, sometimes icy fear and sometimes a mischievous imp or downright devil. When I was little it prompted me to do the following things: to sacrifice flowers on an altar to die; to try to walk on water to prove my faith; to pray hard for things that I wanted; to bring self imposed hardships on myself when wanting something for some one else; I would do something wrong, then go before God in prayer and promise not to do it any more if he would forgive me. Then I would find peace. Then I would do something else wrong and would be ashamed and try hard not to think upon him being afraid he would see my guilt and shame. Then I would try hard to believe I was not old enough for the sin to be on me. Mama said the Bible said the kingdom of heaven was made up of people likened to little children, and I would make believe I was too young, but in my heart I knew I was trying to take shelter in a paper house because I knew it was not years alone, but the knowledge of what is right or wrong, and if I thought I had done wrong it did not matter how young I was. As I grew older sometimes when alone, reading the Bible, in church or thinking of God for my cause, the desire would come, the flame intense and overpowering. I do not know why it was or how, but it seemed to take me out of myself. The flame consumed, filled me and the magnet drew the flame until it seemed nothing would be left. Then a thought would come, a vain or worldly thought of people or time or other things. It would come between the magnet and the flame. Then the flame would be icy fear and dread and horror. Fear that I was vain and deceitful, that I was letting more of the earthly come before God and separate me from the things of heaven.

Gradually the ice turned to stone, a great burden that is almost more than I can bear. Sometimes it grows lighter and is placed aside, almost forgotten, but always it is there on my heart. Sometimes it rises up to mock and jeer me, telling me I am horrid, all that is bad, not fit to live or to be a mother or a creation of God; that it is more likely I am a creation of the devil, that it does not matter what I do because I am all that is earthly and am even more a disgrace because I dare to think upon God, to imagine in my wildest dreams that I am good enough to be accepted into the midst of his chosen. His precious Son gave his blood that men might live. I cannot, I just cannot believe I am good enough to accept even the smallest part of that sacrifice upon my head for I would surely disgrace it, and prove unworthy and sometimes I almost go mad with fear, pain and despair. The flaming burden is very heavy and the magnet I know could lift it from me, but the fear is there, I cannot dispel it. I am not fit to touch his garment in mind, I cannot allow myself to be drawn in spirit before him. I am hiding or trying to like when I was a child because I am afraid of myself. I have tried and tried to dispel the fear but I cannot. I feel that I am being called but I dare not go. I cannot find peace going to church either, it makes the pain greater, I feel I am too conscious of people and too little conscious of God. I am not saying the churches are like that but I am in them. To me they seem too much of a social function. I cannot seem to take them to my heart as brothers and sisters as I feel I should. They seem more like just people to me or rather me to them. In your church, the few times I went, I found more of a promise of peace, more of a nearness to God. I felt that if a bastard (that is the only way I can phrase it) was found among the children, the brothers and sisters no matter if they were the strongest, richest, or fairest they would be weeded out if they did not fit, if they brought trouble, unrest or you might say golden idols contrary to God into the church they would not be tolerated. That is the way I feel as well as I can tell it. It seems a tormenting scale with a weight of hot desire and longing on one side, and a weight of fear and despair on the other. I guess that is all. What do you think about it? Do you think I am mad? Do you think I am on the right track, but still incomplete or what? Will you write me just what you think with no softening of blows? Will you advise me if you can? Oh! I hope you can enlighten me in some way. I feel that I truly need help, but perhaps it must come from within or from God. Answer soon. Your daughter.

FRANCES BEENE

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

(Considerable interest is being evinced in this subject in various parts of the country. Elder R. W. Rhodes of Lillie, La., plans to publish a book on it, and by request we are republishing the following article written by Elder H. H. Lefferts under date of February 19, 1905. R. L. D.)

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 19, 1905

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS, AND BRETHREN:—Some time ago brother Everett R. Kinney, of Glens Falls, N.Y., wrote requesting my views on Hebrews ix. 28, as submitted by me to the church of Albany and Troy, Sunday morning, November 27th, 1904, at the

Red Men's Hall in Troy, N. Y. This is not by any means an easy thing to do, and I have been trying my very best to forget his request, not because I wished to ignore it altogether, but the task is entirely too big a one for me to handle as it deserves. One thing I cannot do, and I may as well confess it at the start, I cannot reproduce here the sermon of that Sunday morning in November in Troy to the very attentive brethren gathered there; I will not attempt such an impossibility. The best that I can do is to state here my present view of this subject, nor am I aware that this has in any way changed since the time referred to. Much controversy has occupied the mind of many able men, both in and out of the gospel, as to the second coming of Christ: what it is, how it is, and when it is. Truth can alone hush babbling tongues and soothe us with the assurance of what it really is. The words in Hebrews ix. 28, are these: "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." If I want to know the real truth about this matter, I would rely upon the testimony of those who have thus looked for Christ, and unto whom he has appeared unto salvation; these could certainly tell me about it; none others possibly could. To be more definite, I would go to those who have experienced these things; experience is the only key to the understanding of divine things. The natural mind cannot help us any, it is enmity against God. Sin to be understood, must be experienced; salvation to be understood, must be experienced; the second coming of Christ to be understood, must be experienced. Is this last a matter of present experience with the saints? Undoubtedly, yes, and just as certainly, no. I will endeavor to explain what I mean before I am through.

This ninth chapter of Hebrews, as well as the entire letter, is a connected whole, and to be rightly understood must be so handled. The apostle uses the things of the Old Testament to illustrate the things of the New, he shows here the Old Testament was dedicated with blood, likewise the New; he brings to our mind this truth, that "a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." A man may make his will leaving all his possessions to his heirs and discriminating among them as he chooses, but as long as the man lives, his will thus written is only so much paper, no more. In order for the conditions in the written document to be fulfilled, the man must die; by his death the paper becomes a thing of power, it maketh rich or poor, according to its contents. In order for the will of God to be made known unto his heirs, Immanuel (God with us) must die. As Moses dedicated the law with the blood of calves, and goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, so did God dedicate unto his children the gospel in the blood of his only begotten Son. Every heir of God is judged in this New Testament just as in a man-made testament, or will, the father judges each of his heirs. Not until the father dies, can the children know how the father has judged them. His death however looses the seal, the will is opened, unto all the heirs it becomes known

what the father has apportioned unto each.

"As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Some have thought this to refer to a final day of judgment some time in the future, when the world shall come to an end. To read such a meaning in these words would be to disconnect it entirely from the theme which the apostle is here considering. "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return," is a decree of God, and concerns all men. After the fulfillment of this decree, then comes the judgment. What judgment? That which is in their wills concerning their heirs, or whoever is interested therein. As I have before said, after a man dies, and not till then, his will is opened and the judgment which he has written there is made known.

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." As all men die in obedience to the decree of God, so Christ also died. Why? That the new covenant which was in him from the Father, might be made known unto all the heirs. There are many things in this New Testament of our God made forcible in the death of the man Christ Jesus.

"It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." What more do we want? Having, therefore, shed his precious blood that the will of God might be secured unto all the children, he will appear the second time unto them that look for him, without sin unto salvation. His first appearance was with sin, his second, without sin. "He hath made him to be sin for us." "God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." This first appearance of Christ as being made sin for us, considered as a separate and distinct event in time, occurred during all the time of his sojourn here as a man. Considered experimentally, his first appearance is in the law, as it is consciously applied unto every quickened sinner and causes him to know his errors, his wickedness, his condemnation. This first appearance of Jesus is always one of condemnation. The second appearance of Jesus is unto salvation, apart from sin. The experience of this is one of love and joy and the losing sight of one's iniquities for the time being. "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." Experiencing this, is to know Jesus at his second coming. When speaking unto his disciples of his approaching death, he promised them the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, which should be their guide, teacher and reminder. If this is not the second coming of Christ, then I do not know what is. It certainly is the messenger of the new covenant which comes unto every heir of God wherever he is and in whatever condition he may be, searching him out, bearing witness with his spirit that he is a child of God, that he is interested in the will of his heavenly Father, and apprising him of what is his Father's will concerning him. It makes known unto us the judgment of God concerning us, and we do not have to die the death of the body in order to find it out, but Christ died this death in order that we should find it out; these blessings are hinged upon his death, not ours. This coming of the Holy Ghost unto us as a Comforter, Instructor, Guide, &c., is

unto every one that looks for him. With what eyes do they look? With the eyes of faith, of course. They hunger and thirst for righteousness, looking for a new heaven and a new earth, weary of sin, they long to be delivered from it; unto such comes the Holy Ghost without sin unto salvation, apprising them of their purity before God, of their eternal blessings in Christ. You see how, therefore, this second coming of Christ is a matter of present experience, and yet it is not. What I have said above, presents it as a matter of every day life with the children of God who dwell in the fullness of the gospel. We do not yet know what it is to conquer the grave, to triumph over death, but, by the grace of God, we will some day know this, each for ourselves, and then will we also know the fullness of Christ's second coming, which is unto salvation.

Now I have told you all I know about it. Yours to serve in the gospel,

HORACE H. LEFFERTS

Pinecrest, BECKLEY, W. Va.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:

I have had a mind to write you for some time, but feeling that I would fail to write anything that would be of interest to you. I want to thank you for sending me the copies of the SIGNS. I have never subscribed for that paper but it was not because it was not sound in doctrine for I find it to be sound in every way if I be allowed to judge. Maybe I should not say judge but any way the many good letters have comforted me. My mind has been somewhat concerned on a scripture found in the New Testament reading this way. "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." John 5: 25. I feel my weakness and my inability knowing that I am only flesh, and knowing that all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for reproof, for correction in righteousness that the man of God may be throughly furnished unto all good works. Notice all these shalls are positive terms. Then we would say that all that do not hear the voice of the Son of God will not live. But I am satisfied that all that the Father gave the Son will hear his voice for their names are written in the palm of his hand, and that he (God) loved them with an everlasting love and with loving kindness has he drawn them. The word drawn leaves out all freewillism, and the choice also leaves the creature out, having nothing to do with man's redemption from death. It is alone the work of a mercy covenant keeping God. The God of the whole earth. One that speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. When God commands anything to stand it has to stand until he commands it to move. So man cannot move until the command comes for him to move, and he cannot keep from moving when God gives the command. All things are in his hands, all power both in heaven and in earth. If God does not rule all things the Bible would have said so for he is God and cannot lie. So all that hear his voice are the redeemed children of God. Christ paid the debt of sin for all the Father gave him, and if it was for all the Adamic family there would never have been a lake prepared for the Devil and his angels, and God would not have

said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." The world can say what it will, but God's people are a chosen and elect people. Chosen before the world was. All things that are coming to pass o-day and that have ever come to pass are the predeterminate counsel of our God for God declared the end from the beginning. He knew all things that he purposed and they shall come to pass. His all seeing eye beheld all things. He said, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." He created the waster to destroy, and could the waster do anything but what he was created to do? The wicked shall do wickedly and none of the wicked shall understand. Job said, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Is it not the same power that casts us down that raises us up? David said, "Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off." If there was a power to work all evil things and God just worked the good things there could be no certainty in either the evil or the good. If there was no power to check our evil doings where would we ever stop? God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and there is none to say what doest thou Lord. I will bring this to a close hoping that the Lord will bless you and that you will keep on publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for I feel like it comforts God's poor, humble children. May he bless all the redeemed family of God now and forevermore. Your brother in gospel bonds.

S. F. COLLINS

Route 1, Box 104, ST. ALBANS, W. Va.

ELDER S. F. COLLINS; DEAR HIGHLY ESTEEMED BROTHER IN CHRIST:

Your good letter received. I am so sorry to learn of your afflictions, but such is our lot and portion here below. Your letter came laden with the good things from the Master's kingdom. I know I am unworthy to receive such letters, and altogether unable to answer a letter like yours. I can only venture humbly, hoping the gracious Lord from his unwasting fullness will provide word and matter and substance for me. I, who am less than the least of all saints. Yes, dear brother Collins, many have been our sweet seasons of communion together in the past. I remember your coming into our section and your visit in the old home, long before I was ever identified among the Old Baptist people, and I felt the same measure of love for you then as I do now. I could then realize something about the humbleness and meekness that crowned your life through grace. I could see that sincerity and depth of conviction so manifest in you, and was then a silent lover of all those who through grace were manifestly bearing the fruit of the Spirit. Yes, I humbly hope it may be the Lord's will for us to meet again in time. We do know his blessed and holy will is done in heaven and earth, in air and seas; he executes his wise decrees; and by his saints it stands confessed, that what he does is ever best. He, who declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying that my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. This God is our God. Bless his name forevermore. Truly he is

ruling and reigning from his own everlasting throne. He holds the destiny of all things in his own holy hands for there is no God beside him. Yes, he spake and it was done. Eternally fixed and finished in his eternal mind and purpose. He commands and it stands fast. He commands and the things embraced in his eternal mind and purpose, in his everlasting covenant that from all eternity stood present with him, stood complete, stood finished in the one eternal now with him, stands fast. That is, comes to pass in time to us and with us who are creatures in time, for did not the Lord's prophet declare there is no new thing under heaven or under the sun. Nothing new unto our God. I believe that in God's eternal mind and purpose that his chosen people stood saved and safe from all eternity for Christ was at his side. But with his poor, fallen children it necessarily takes the unfolding of time to manifest what our God had hidden in his will, that was the coming and person of Christ, and that hope in the shed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. For this was and is the one and only determined way of redemption of his people. The person and coming of Christ, his suffering and death on the tree of the cross, the suffering of the just for the unjust was all determined and written in his will, and to my mind was as eternally present with him ere man was formed as when Jesus hung on the cross of Calvary. And, too, in God's account you were as much a saved vessel of mercy before peace was spoken to your troubled soul, as you were after you were given a sweet hope in his blood. But to you and me how graciously different with us, what joy did this revelation bring to us. These, dear precious brother, are some of my sincere convictions. I know I am a poor depraved sinner and without his grace a wretch undone, but my only hope of a life of peace in the blissful, blessed presence of my God beyond this vale of tears is a hope in the blood and righteousness of Christ. Our health is not so good. I am not well, my wife is complaining, some of my children have deep colds or flu. Write me when you feel to remember one like me. Yours in hope through grace.

H. J. BIRD

LAUREL, Delaware

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

After reading some of your good works through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and of the many dear old elders some of whom have entered into rest, I will try in my weak way to relate a little of my experience. When living on my father's farm at the age of fifteen I was going down a path in the field to work when I heard a voice call "Lena." I supposed it was my mother back home, and turned and looked back at the house, but saw no one. I looked up at the sky and saw no one. Deciding I did not know what it was I went on that way very little concerned until I was twenty-one years of age and married. I went to a revival meeting at a Methodist Church. After hearing the sermon, the invitation was given and I went to the altar. I wrestled with the devil for two periods until one o'clock in the morning when all of a sudden I was caught up in the light of heaven. Yes, born again of the Spirit just as the verse reads in John 3:8. "The

wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." When I came to myself I was made to sing praises unto our God. "Oh happy day that fixed my choice on thee, my Saviour and my God." I did not unite with the church for some reason. I went on for forty years until last July I went before the Little Creek Church near Laurel, Delaware, and was baptized by Elder Harold Bennett. As I was coming out of the water God blessed me. Brother Dodson I have been reading the good old SIGNS back to 1860 and I do enjoy reading them. Elder Ker has been very good to me. A sister in hope.

(MRS.) LENA M. LOWE

Route 2, ALBA, Texas

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN GOSPEL BONDS:

I will try to answer your request and write a few lines for the SIGNS if you see fit to publish it. I am a nephew of the late Elder J. R. Hatcher of Lyals, Tenn. I have been trying to preach since 1911 but it seems to me my preaching has been very weak.

"When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." John 19:30. What was finished? The work his Father gave him to do, and that was to save his people from their sins. Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Jesus was to come and die to pay the redemption price for them the Father gave him which were those whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life, and they must be born again. Not of the corruptible seed (Adam nature) but of the incorruptible seed, by the word of God. Jesus is the Word that liveth and abideth forever. Our natural life fell under the curse of the law when Adam violated the law. The whole fountain was corrupted in the fountain head so we all became sinners in Adam. By one man sin entered the world and death by sin so death passed upon all for all have sinned, so in order to be saved, "Ye must be born again." Jesus was conceived by the Holy Ghost. Here is a life that came down from heaven which is holy and incorruptible, and ye must be born of that life in order to be saved. If you have that life in you, you have the living witness in you that Jesus came in the flesh. He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ hath the witness in himself, not that you believe in order to get the witness, but you must have the witness before you can believe. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." Jesus trod the wine press alone and of the people there was none with him. Again we read, "mine own arm brought salvation unto me." The angel said unto Joseph, "She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." Simeon said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Jesus said, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world," and again, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him," and again, "I came down

from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me," and this is the will of my Father, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." When Jesus cried out, "It is finished" with that one stroke he forever saved all of his people. Being born again is the manifestation. "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." He was delivered up for our offenses and rose again for our justification. It is not by works of righteousness that we have done, but by what Jesus did for us. Oh, how good it is to realize that Jesus paid it all. In him was treasured up everything that was needful for his children for time and eternity, blessing us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Jesus according as he purposed before the world began. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." He declared "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel *shall* stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Known unto God are all of his works from the beginning. Not even a sparrow can fall without him. He sends his Holy Spirit to his children, shows them they are sinners (that is why they mourn), and then shows them he is their righteousness, sanctification and redemption (that is why they rejoice). He leads them in the way of righteousness is why they walk in obedience. He leads them in ways they have not known and in paths they have not trodden, and they love him because he first loved them. He gives them a new heart and causes them to follow him. He put away their sins when he hung on the cross and there forever satisfied the demands of the law for them. Therefore, he finished the work and his Father accepted it, and all that he gave his life for will finally be housed in heaven. Can a poor, weak worm like me be of that number? If so I will awake in his likeness and be satisfied, all because Jesus finished the work and gave up the Ghost. Please cast the mantle of charity over my blunders and do as you please with this poor attempt to ascribe greatness to our God. Yours in love and gospel bonds.

J. S. ROBBINS

Route 3, Box 166, Snow Hill, N. C.

Elder R. Lester Dodson
Rutherford, N. J.

Dear Brother:

I am enclosing my check to renew my subscription to the Signs which expired recently. I think your paper is among the best published in the world today. I take several publications but none is as clean, good and sound as I take yours to be. The piece of Elder Gilbert Beebe's on the New Birth republished in a late issue of the Signs is five times the value to the church today as the price of the paper for one year. I hope that the Lord will continue to bless you to carry on in the future as he has done in the past. Yours in the hope of the resurrection of the body.

W. B. KEARNEY

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. AUGUST, 1943

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P.O. Box No. 70
Rutherford, N. J.

BROTHERLY KINDNESS

2 PETER 1:4-15

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore, the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. Moreover I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance."

We are not left in doubt as to whom this epistle is addressed. To them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Let us note that this faith mentioned is obtained one way, through the righteousness of Christ; the fruit of the Spirit; the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen; the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast. Without faith it is impossible to please God. Before any one can perform any work that will please God he must first be given faith. Works do not produce faith, but faith will produce good works. Nothing we do pleases God except it be mixed with the faith that was once delivered to the saints. One must have something to add to before there is an increase. The adding and multiplying of these things comes through the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ our Lord. The more one is given to comprehend that ye are complete in him; that in him all fullness dwells; of his fullness have ye received and grace for grace; that he is Christ, head over all things to the church, "how shall he not with him also freely give us all things." God has blessed his people with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. So there is no question as to the power by which all the things mentioned by the apostle in the fifth, sixth and seventh verses is performed, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue. There can be no question as to who it is that adds these things. They who have been born

again, children of God, the living in Christ, not dead sinners. Neither can there be any question as to how they perform such things—according to his divine power. "And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity." Brotherly kindness! What a wonderful thing it is. In all our conduct one toward another, at no time is the meek and lowly one manifest more than in brotherly kindness. One may be as bold as a lion in defense of some point of doctrine; he may speak fluently; understand mysteries; contend earnestly for the matter, but unless brotherly kindness is manifest in so doing it profits him nothing. If we are favored with this thing we will watch over one another for good and not for evil; will not make a brother an offender for a word when he is overtaken in a fault. He will be restored in the spirit of meekness, considering ourselves. Oh, may we be given to be wise as serpents (not like serpents) and harmless as doves, that we may adorn our profession with an orderly walk and a godly conversation, be kind one toward another, forgiving one another even as Christ has forgiven us. As to points of doctrine may we hold forth the faithful Word, adhere to the teachings of the Scriptures. Especially where there is a difference of opinion, it is important that we go no further in a matter than the word of God goes. I remember several years ago hearing one brother say of another, he is a limited predestinarian. Why! I said, I thought he believed in the predestination of all things. No, he said, that brother in all his preaching is preaching and proving the predestination of wicked acts of men, and not that ALL things work together for good to them that love God. The thought I want to present is this: the brother under consideration was preaching the truth as far as he went with the matter, yet many things pertaining to this doctrine were ignored. So when any of us use certain Scriptures seeking to prove a point, yet at the same time are ignoring other Scriptures, pertaining to the same thing, we are not holding forth the faithful Word. Some will ask the question: Are we to ignore the preaching of false doctrine and questionable conduct on the part of the brethren and call it brotherly kindness? I say no, rather to the contrary. A labor of brotherly love should be bestowed upon him to save him. In all our contending for doctrine or practice may one thing above all others be manifest—brotherly kindness, and to this add charity. In looking back over articles of many of our able ministers who have been discharged from the battlefield I note that they were not always agreed on everything, there was a brotherly difference, and in all their writings that spirit was manifest. They all agreed that all the salvation that sinners receive was of God, that salvation was all of grace, that it is sinners that are saved. How beautiful was the spirit of their writing, how kind and tender toward one another. Each one said, I am weak, I know so little, I am unworthy of God's mercies. Each esteemed the other better than themselves. How sad to-day to behold in some of the periodicals a spirit contrary to the things manifest in these brethren that are gone. The tendency in some to lay down the rule and say, if you

do not subscribe to this you are not an Old School Baptist. When I was asked to join the editorial staff of the SIGNS by our beloved brother Dodson, the first question I asked was, will matters of controversy be in the SIGNS? Will local differences of brethren be aired through the pages of the paper? I was given to understand that these things would not be. What I meant by these questions was whether there would be allowed to go into the paper articles contentious and harmful to the peace of Zion. Today it has weathered the storms of one hundred and ten years, being the oldest Old School Baptist paper in the United States. Since its publication started many others have come and gone, and when a carnal sword is used we may expect to fall also. May he who suffers not a sparrow to fall without him, grant us grace to steadfastly contend for the faith, bearing one another's burdens, being a comfort to one another and so fulfill the law of Christ. "For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."

"Jesus the great, the mighty God,
A man of grief became;
In paths of meekness here he trod,
And bore the sinner's shame.

O may his meekness be my guide,
The pattern I pursue;
How can I bear revenge or pride,
With Jesus in my view?"

By one who is continually in need of the tender mercies of God. D. V. S.

INTRODUCTORY

We have the pleasure, in this issue, of presenting to our readers a new Associate Editor in the person of Elder W. D. Griffin of Fayette, Alabama. Having written for the paper for several years, Elder Griffin really needs no introduction to the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We do not have at our disposal many details regarding him as a man but do know that he is in his fortieth year, is married and has two children. He has been preaching for ten years or more.

For some time we have felt the need of lightening our burden to some extent, and we are confident that an editorial representative in our Southland of the standing and ability possessed by Elder Griffin will meet the hearty approval of our subscribers. He is correct in stating that he has been led to believe "that it is the purpose of the SIGNS to edify and comfort God's dear scattered children." We sincerely hope that he is entering upon a long and useful service and bespeak for him the same charity on the part of our readers that they have shown to us for more than twenty years.

R. L. D.

SALUTATORY

DEAR SIGNS READERS:

Our Editor, Elder Dodson, has asked me to come in as an Associate Editor. With hesitancy I am complying with his request, knowing at the same time that my writing like all other work as a servant of God must have the seal of ap-

proval of the Holy Spirit. I fully realize by experience that I am not able to take that approval by schedule but that it is a gift, as all other things of the Spirit, to be applied by and at the proper time alone through the Spirit. I feel a desire to ask each of you to watch my writings, and you that have contact with me my conduct. I hope that you do not set too high an estimation on me for I know I am not qualified to write and preach and conduct myself as a minister but by God's grace. If you love the cause of the Old School Baptists you will watch over me as a very small child and see that I am not a reproach to them. Do not expect me to be a "yes" writer and write only things that some one else has already affirmed. We cannot be agreed about everything. All the "ifs", and "ands" and "buts" that are hurled at the church, or individual, or editor, or preacher, or paper does not change nor alter the fact that no two of us are agreed upon all that the Bible teaches. If at any time in my misguided zeal I undertake to conform you to myself in practice or doctrine I think it is your duty to reprimand me or any other servant of the church. I do not want to reform the church. Above all things brethren, sisters and dear children of God do not ever allow me to become a standard while I am officially connected with the paper. I want to reprove, rebuke and exhort, and I want to (not be the standard), but to set up the standard. I want us to study the Scriptures and let them (but not some man's interpretation of them) be our last resort for anything we practice or believe. I do not think in this, my salutatory, that it is necessary for me to rehearse my doctrinal beliefs. As far as I am able to understand I am in accord with the prospectus of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. On some of those points I have written volumes and do not care to retract anything that has gone forth except to say that some of it has been for strife instead of edification, and I regret that. In regard to that prospectus allow me to say, especially in regard to predestination, salvation in Christ and the future resurrection of the dead, that I believe them and until I am convinced otherwise I expect to continue advocating them in writing and from the pulpit as I may be blessed with power to do so. At the same time I want to say that in no sense of the word do I mean to say that all who are nominally in line with that prospectus are faithful servants of God. On the other hand many have lived and died among us who were faithful that did not conform to it. I am led to believe that it is the purpose of the SIGNS to edify and comfort God's dear scattered children. As long as it continues in that way I think it is worthy of our support. May God give each of us, editor, associates, contributors, supporters and critics grace that we may make an examination of ourselves. An inquiry into our own bosom will often reveal that we have eye trouble. In love and fellowship.

W. D. GRIFFIN

OBITUARIES

ELDER J. B. WOODRUM, the subject of this notice, was born March 4, 1871 and departed this life April 16, 1943. He was deeply burdened and convicted for sin early in his life. After a long season of trials and darkness he was given a sweet hope in Jesus. In my walk and conversation with this dear servant of God many have been the times when I have heard him in meekness refer to and relate some part of his trials and experience. He united with the Old School Baptist Church called Sarah in Boone Co., W. Va., in June 1905 into the full fellowship of the church. His walk was such as becometh his profession for he was truly a God fearing man. The church noticed the evidence of a gracious gift in him and gave him license to exercise his gift in public. He was ordained to the full functions of the gospel ministry the first Sunday in June 1925. His preaching efforts were blessed to the comfort of his brethren. His preaching was with power and demonstration of the Spirit. He was rooted and grounded in the cardinal principles of the doctrine of God our Saviour. He led a quiet and peaceable life, kind and considerate of all, and labored hard with his own hands on a farm to provide a living for his family. In the year 1890 he was united in marriage to Elizabeth Terry, daughter of the late Elder J. H. Terry, and to this union were born three children. His wife was called away in death in 1898. In 1899 he was married to Hester Beleher. To this union eight children were born. His wife departed this life in 1923. He then united in marriage to Carrie (Williams) Ball who preceded him in death departing this life in 1937. Again he united in marriage to Martha (Smith) Vanmeter in 1938 who survives and is left to mourn her loss. There were no children born to the two latter marriages. I do not have at hand sufficient data to know how many children and grandchildren remain to mourn. The children have sustained a great loss in a kind and loving father. Truly the loss is great to the church. He had in faithfulness served Sarah Church as pastor for a number of years, and while he had been a chronic sufferer for years, being afflicted with a bad heart, yet he was at his post when able in body to attend. The end came with a sudden heart attack. I was called to conduct his funeral according to his request. The services were at his home on Scary Creek where he had moved and resided for only about one year. I tried to preach the same Jesus whom he served to the concourse of relatives, brethren and friends feeling a little measure of liberty of utterance as I was given graciously to trace the theme of doctrine so dear to him, the doctrine of grace, the sovereignty of God, etc. While brother Woodrum was so very close to me I was made to feel not to weep as I stood by his bier and looked on his peaceful, placid features believing that he had fallen asleep in Jesus. Burial was in a cemetery on Scary Creek. I feel to say in conclusion that he died in the full triumph of a living faith, and in hope of that blessed immortality. May the blessings of God rest upon the bereaved family, and may he graciously visit them with that sweet reconciliation to his will.

H. J. BIRD

JOHN B. MILLER, our brother in Christ, fell asleep in Jesus at his home in Newark, Delaware, May 24, 1943. He was born August 8, 1866. His father was George Platt Miller, his mother before marriage was Miss Agnes Lindsey. She died in 1923. Brother John had a brother, James Lindsey Miller, who died in 1924. Brother Miller was married June 13, 1889 to Miss Elizabeth Wright, daughter of Joseph and Elizabeth Wright. Their son, Rodney, died in 1914 aged 19. Their daughter, Agnes E., died in 1937. The surviving children are William W. Miller and Miss Audrey E. Miller of Newark, Delaware and Mrs. William Gordy of Laurel, Del. There are five grandchildren. Brother Miller's wife also survives him. He was baptized by the late Elder J. G. Eubanks into the membership of the Welsh Tract Church in 1914. Since the death of the late brother Peter M. Sherwood, brother Miller has served the church as her clerk most efficiently, keeping the records of the church carefully and accurately. He has also served the church well as one of her trustees, and was a member of the Board of Directors of the Primitive Baptist Home at Salisbury, Md. To say that I personally shall miss him, as well as that the church shall miss him, does not half express it. We all feel his place among us to have been such that his departure leaves a vacancy never to be filled. We have a blessed assurance for him that he is at rest with his blessed Saviour whom he loved and served. Brother Miller was devoted to the principles of the Old School Baptist faith and hated to see

those principles side-stepped, compromised or denied in the least measure. No pastor ever had a more devoted friend and brother, nor one more faithful than he has been to me. May the Lord comfort the dear widow and all the family, as well as the bereft church, and make us reconciled to the Divine Will. Funeral services by the writer were held from his late home in Newark, Del., at which time I read hymn 1289 Beebe's Coll. and spoke from Isaiah 1:9 in connection with Isaiah 57:1. Interment in the burying-yard adjoining the Welsh Tract meeting-house until the time when that which is mortal and corruptible shall be raised immortal and incorruptible at the coming of the Lord from heaven to change the vile body and fashion it like unto his own glorious body.

H. H. LEFFERTS

MRS. MARGARET COFFEY (formerly BADGER), nee HUNTON, our sister in christian bonds, departed this present life May 7, 1943 at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John G. Thomas near Aldie, Loudoun Co., Va. She was 88 years of age, having been born April 16, 1855 in Fauquier County, Va., a daughter of Thomas Hunton and Ann Carrington, long deceased. She is the last one of her father's and mother's family. She was married in June 1885 to the late Elder J. N. Badger who died in 1914. In April, 1928 she married J. L. Coffey who died a few years ago. She was baptized into the membership of the Upper Broad Run Church by Elder Jos. L. Purington, but I have not before me the date of her baptism. In later years, she moved her membership by letter to the Mt. Zion Church. Her walk as a child of God was characterized by a becoming humility and by a spirituality of mind in the things of the kingdom of God. She was gifted with a good discernment in the things of the truth. Hers was not the easy religion of the carnal professor, but the heart-searching, conscience-probing vital religion of the Lord Jesus Christ. She had much anxiety to read her title clear to mansions of eternal rest, but was often beset with doubts as to having been called by grace to a right knowledge of saving grace. Her very fearfulness was an evidence in her favor, yet she could not always take it that way. Truly she had that love of God shed abroad in her heart by the Holy Ghost whereby she had a good hope unashamed, and what better evidence can one need that they have been regenerated by the operation of God, than that they love the brethren. She loved that preaching which abases man and exalts Christ, she truly had no confidence in the flesh, her rejoicing was alone in a crucified, risen and exalted Redeemer. Funeral was held at Mt. Zion Sunday, April 9. Text: Solomon's Song 6:2. Her mortal remains were laid to rest in the graveyard there by the side of the late Elder Badger, to await the resurrection of the body at the last day. We rejoice that her redeemed soul is resting with the Lord above, what a blessed relief for her after all the weaknesses and anxieties of this mortal state.

H. H. LEFFERTS

Our father, STEPHEN P. HICKS, son of the late Elder David and Dinah Jarvis Hicks, was born Dec. 16, 1872 and departed this life March 22, 1943, making his stay on earth 70 years, 3 months and 6 days. He was married to Louisa Ann Truman March 4, 1895 and to this union were born eleven children, eight sons and three daughters. His wife passed on to her reward Dec. 18, 1933. One son, Homer Lee Hicks, aged six, was called away Oct. 24, 1921. Left to mourn their loss are seven sons, Hurshel Hicks, Newton, W. Va., Huey C. Hicks, Stinson, W. Va., Harley and Truman Hicks, Douglas, W. Va., David Hicks, Floe, W. Va., Roscoe Hicks, Swandale, W. Va., Evert Hicks of the United States Army, and three daughters, Mrs. George F. King and Mrs. Dwight Metz, Douglas, W. Va., and Mrs. Toll Jarvis, Minora, W. Va. There are forty-two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Also one brother, B. F. Hicks, Fink, W. Va., and four sisters, Christine Carpenter and Rachel Methney whose addresses are unknown, Josie Rose, Calvin, W. Va. and Rebecca Rose, Swandale, W. Va., together with his friends and neighbors. Our beloved parent united with the Primitive or Old School Baptist Church and was baptized by Elder J. R. Dennison, June 8, 1941, but for many years prior to this he was a faithful believer in Christ as the way, the truth and the life, knowing that "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his." The door of his house was always open to all lovers of the truth, denying himself that those coming from distant parts to our Association might be cared for. He walked orderly and uprightly before men as the neighbors and all who knew him can truthfully testify. It has pleased Almighty God to call

him home to rest and spare him from the trials to come, there to await the resurrection when our Lord shall come and claim his own. Written by his son.

HURSHEL HICKS

I wish to add a few lines to the foregoing, and state that I have known brother Hicks for many years and to know him was to love him. The simplicity and humbleness of his walk, that marked soberness that was so apparent in him was abundant testimony of the gracious marks and fruit of grace. He, indeed, spent a quiet and useful life. Always thoughtful and considerate of others, willing to spend and be spent for his brethren. From the first visit I made into his part of the country many years ago until his death, I learned by visiting in his home, of his kind hospitality and of the sincerity of his convictions and belief. He loved the doctrine of grace, was faithful in his attendance of his church meetings and he was truly satisfied with the goodness of the Lord's house. The church of West Fork, the children and the neighborhood has sustained a great loss, but we grieve not as those who have no hope. We could say many things about the sterling qualities of this noble man if space would permit. In accord with his request I was called to conduct his funeral assisted by Elders J. C. Hammond and M. S. Douglas where I tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved family and friends by proclaiming the finished work of Jesus. Funeral services were conducted in the West Fork meeting-house May 9, 1943 since it was impossible for me to attend at the time of the burial. May God in his mercy reconcile us to his holy will and comfort the bereaved family and all who mourn according to his own will.

H. J. BIRD.

"The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Even so it was in the passing of MRS. MARY F. STEPHENSON, nee Bond. Born in Free Stone County, Texas, April 17, 1881 and died May 16, 1943, making her sojourn in this time world a little better than 62 years of age. The subject of this sketch was married to Mr. John Stephenson June 28, 1897. To this union were born eight children, two having preceded her in death. Six surviving in this order named, Mr. W. A. Stephenson, Teague, Texas, Mr. E. A. Stephenson, Donie, Texas, Route 1, Mrs. Floyce Knight, Teague, Texas, Route 2, Mrs. Gladys Wren, Teague, Texas, Route 3, Mr. A. L. Stephenson, Dallas, Texas, Mr. G. D. Stephenson with the Armed Forces, U.S.A., Savannah, Ga. Sister Stephenson leaves all those as her family together with a host of friends and relatives to mourn her demise. All was done for her that could be done, and though she was under the best of medical skill this failed also, but alas she was summoned. The Lord called her to a higher plane of life, the one in which her hope rested beyond this mode of existence. We would say to the bereaved weep not as those having no hope but rather rejoice in the fact that she is done with this time world and all its troubles, trials and tribulations, and last of all but by no means the least, thanks be to God, done with death. Therefore (that is for those reasons) in all justice toward her we cannot wish her back again for she has suffered the ordeals of this life, and paid the last vow. So then let our hopes be as hers that wherein the body has returned to the earth from whence it came, her spirit has returned unto God who gave it, and that she is now basking in the sun light of his love, ever to live, singing the sweet song of redemption. "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." We cannot find words to express ourself regarding this mother in Israel. So gentle, kind and sedate not only in her home, but also among her many friends and neighbors. Once to know her was only to love her in as much so as a faithful wife, beloved mother, friend and neighbor much more for the sake of the truth. Sister Stephenson united with the Old Baptist Church, Salem, a number of years ago, but for the last few years her afflictions forbid her regular attedance, but well can it be said she died in the faith, and unto those of like faith her home was an open door. Let us mourn with the family our great loss in as much so to the community as that of the church. She lived a life above reproach. One in which all would do well to walk after, but our loss we hope is her eternal gain. After a few well chosen remarks by Elders Blackman, Barger and McKissack the body was lowered to its resting place in the Old Union Cemetery there to await the second coming of our Lord without sin unto salvation to gather his jewels unto himself, raising these vile bodies and fashioning them like unto his glorious body, and presenting them to the Father pure, holy and without blame before God in love. It is then the dear sister in Christ will know as she was known

and see him as he is, the author and finisher of the christian faith, the captain of our salvation who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works (obedience), but according to his own purpose and grace which was (before) given us in (not out) Christ Jesus before the world began. Sister Stephenson was a firm believer in salvation by grace, the absolute predestination of all things, the resurrection of the dead both of the just and the unjust. May the blessing of God rest upon the bereaved family is my prayer.

W. A. LITTLE

VIOLA SIMMONS ENNIS born March 2, 1858, died May 24, 1943. She was the wife of Richard P. Ennis, he a native of Prince William Co., Va. Brother Ennis was baptized in June 1890 at Greenwood Church by Elder J. T. Alexander. In June 1900 he was received into the Ebenezer Church in Baltimore by letter. He departed this life Feb. 10, 1928, aged 75. Sister Ennis united with the church in Baltimore in May 1899 and was baptized by Elder J. T. Rowe. In June 1929 sister Ennis became a resident of The Primitive Baptist Home in Salisbury, Md., where she remained until her death. Funeral services were conducted by Elder Harold M. Bennett of Mardela Springs, Md. He read and spoke from the 107th Psalm. Burial was in Forest Grove Cemetery near Salisbury. While living in Baltimore brother and sister Ennis were frequent visitors to my father's home. Both sister Ennis and my mother had a fine sense of humor and enjoyed each other immensely. It is sad when those we have known since boyhood pass away, but when rendered helpless by the infirmities of age it is a blessing to depart and be at rest.

A. S. ROWE

ANNA S. VOORHEES, nee Fetter, widow of the late David M. Voorhees, was born June 1, 1869, and departed this life April 3, 1943 making her stay on earth 72 years, 10 months and 12 days. She was the daughter of the late Christopher S. and Mary C. Vandyke Fetter of Southampton, Pa. and was united in the holy bonds of wedlock to David M. Voorhees of Pennington, N. J. in 1890. She and her husband moved to the old home of her grandfather where they resided until his decease April 11, 1936. She then moved to Pennington and made her home with her aunt, Mrs. Howard Sked, until she was stricken with her last illness. She bore three children. One daughter, Lillie V. Drake, preceded her in death several years leaving three daughters who found refuge in the arms of their grandmother, and they were loyal to their grandmother. Their father, though married again, was kind to his first mother-in-law. A son, Eugene D. Voorhees, is second class petty officer in the navy, stationed at Camp Peary, Williamsburg, Va., and a daughter, Elizabeth V. Blackwell, Marion, Ind. These, with a host of relatives and friends, mourn their loss. She united, by relation of faith, with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J., May 26, 1918 and was baptized the next day by the writer. She was a faithful member to the end. After the decease of her husband she bore that part of the services that he filled by leading the singing. We can truly say she was a devoted christian lady, and we miss her very much, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain, and we should not weep for her as though she had no hope. We bow in humble submission to Him that worketh His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and may it be the will of God that we shall press to the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, looking unto Him who is the author and finisher of our faith.

C. W. V.

MRS. MYRA A. QUINT, our sister in christian bonds, died November 27, 1942 at the home of her son, Eben Brackett, Sanford, Me. She was the wife of our brother and deacon, Anson Quint, and the daughter of the late Eben and Sarah Quint. She had lived the most of her life in Sanford and on their farm in Bauneg Beg, North Berwick. Sister Quint united with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, and was baptized June 8, 1913 by her pastor, the late Elder Frederick W. Keene. She remained a devoted member until God saw fit to take her home. Her desire was at all times to be present at the meetings of her own church, and at those of our sister church in Bowdoinham and Whitefield. Our sister was of a quiet, retiring nature, but always testified of her love and esteem for the brethren, and of how soul satisfying it was to hear our ministering brethren proclaim the sacred gospel truths. The home of brother and sister Quint was always open to entertain their friends and brethren. We miss her sadly but feel that our loss is her eternal gain. During her long illness she often desired that the Lord would take her home. Be-

sides her husband and son, she is survived by three step-children, Raymond Quint, Bridgeton, Me., Mrs. Ralph Blanchard, Mrs. George Estes and a nephew, James Quint, North Berwick, Me. During her last acute illness she was kindly ministered to by her stepdaughter, Mrs. Blanchard who is a nurse, and her son's wife, Mrs. Brackett. Funeral services were held at her son's home, Mr. John L. Quigg of Sanford officiating. The high regard of her friends was shown by the many floral offerings. Burial was in the family cemetery on the farm.

LYDIA NASON

RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

Some early comments on this book:

"I am sure it will be of absorbing interest and very helpful to the believer." "It is very interesting—well gotten up and written in an excellent spirit." "I have suspended my work—reading, rereading and meditating." "Instead of disturbing, it has confirmed our faith."

If you are not a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, you can receive a copy of the Book FREE by sending $2. for an annual subscription to the paper. Any old subscriber can obtain a FREE copy by sending in a NEW subscription to the SIGNS for $2. If the book alone is desired, send $1. R. L. D.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS".

Mrs. C. A. Horton, N. Y., $3; A friend, Fla., $8; Mrs. W. White, Ky., $1; Mrs. E. L. Ferris, D.C., $6; J. A. Johnson, Tenn., $2; Mrs. E. R. Emmons, N. J., $2; J. B. Dyer, Va., $3.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

It is planned to hold the annual all-day meeting at Slate Hill, N. Y., on Friday, August 20th, 1943, this year the same as heretofore. We cordially invite those who can come and meet with us.

R. LESTER DODSON.

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sundays in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a.m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meeting-house, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will hold its annual session with the Olive and Hurley Church at Shokan, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 15 and 16, 1943. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us and entertainment will be provided for all. Those coming on Tuesday before the meeting by train, bus or auto, unless otherwise arranged, will go to the residence of Mrs. Hazel Byrnes, Ashokan, N. Y., who conducts the Ashokan Rest a short distance below the post office where they will be provided for. Those coming on Wednesday morning will go direct to the meeting-house at Shokan. It should be noted that the two villages of Shokan and Ashokan adjoin but have separate post offices. The place of meeting and the place of entertainment being one mile apart. The Association will open Wednesday morning at ten o'clock. Ministers and brethren of our faith and order are especially invited.

ORVILLE WINCHELL, Clerk.

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.

O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canada, California.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th Street, Mayfield, Ky. Those interested will be welcome.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 A. M. 2 P. M.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m. C. W. BOND, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1315 Columbia Avenue

(PARK AVENUE HALL)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10.30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Texas.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sundays in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P. M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sundays each month at 11:00 A. M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10.30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

VOL. 111 RUTHERFORD, N. J., SEPTEMBER, 1943 No. 9

SOMETIME-SOMEWHERE

Unanswered yet the prayer your lips have pleaded,
In agony of heart, these many years?
Does faith begin to fail? Is hope departing?
And think you all in vain those falling tears?
Say not the Father hath not heard your prayer;
You shall have your desire sometime, somewhere.

Unanswered yet! though when you first presented
This one petition at the Father's throne,
It seemed you could not wait the time of asking
So urgent was your heart to make it known.
Though years have passed since then, do not despair;
The Lord will answer you sometime, somewhere.

Unanswered yet! nay, do not say ungranted,
Perhaps the work is not yet wholly done;
The work began when first your prayer was uttered,
And God will finish what he has begun;
And he will keep the incense burning there,
His glory you shall see sometime, somewhere.

Unanswered yet! faith cannot be unanswered,
Her feet are firmly planted on the Rock;
Amid the wildest storm she stands undaunted,
Nor quails before the loudest thunder shock;
She knows Omnipotence has heard her prayer,
And cries it shall be done sometime, somewhere.

(Mrs.) MARY COONS

CORRESPONDENCE

214½ East Main St., WALLA WALLA, Wash.

DEAR EDITORS:

I am asked to write on the word flesh as Jesus Christ said, "For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." I am meditating on the words of St. John 1:13-14. "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Here are the ones that are the offspring of God as they are born of God. Not of the will of the flesh nor of man. Surely they are the elect of God, and their names are recorded in the Lamb's book of life, and they are heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. These are the members of the body of Jesus and they complete the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife. Notice the word of God is life, truth, power and wisdom. Read verse 14: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." I consider this is the body of flesh that came from God and is the spiritual meat that the saints of God feast on. As we are born of God, that is a spiritual birth as God is a spirit, even so his offspring is Spirit. "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." John 6: 54-56. As the servants of God were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world and their names recorded in the Lamb's book of life, so God's predestina-

tion or purpose is to reveal his own flesh, which is his Word and is full of grace and truth, and as they are born of the Spirit then they have the law of God planted in their inward parts, and written in their minds. Then God opens their eyes to understand the things of the Spirit, and as the saints of God feast on the gospel truth they eat the flesh of Jesus Christ for it is full of grace and truth. So here is the body of flesh that is in the kingdom of God at his right hand. There is the place Christ said, "I go to prepare a place for you." He told the apostles to feed his sheep and lambs. Here is where the saints of God are fed. The Word is made flesh and full of grace and truth so in spirit the gospel truth is our meat and drink, and as the children are his seed note the reading of Matthew 13:24-25. "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat." Here are plain terms that there are two different seeds sown by different characters or not the same family. Read all of the thirteenth chapter of Matthew and note verses 38-40. The good seed are the children of the kingdom, but the tares are the children of the wicked one. The enemy that sowed them is the Devil. I consider the good seed are the offspring of God and are born of the Spirit of God, not born of the will of man or of blood, but of God. The elect of God are his offspring, and are the same as God, full of grace and truth for God is truth and in him is no lie. The tares are the offspring of the Devil as he is a liar and the father of lies. Read John 8: 42-44. There is no relation between the good seed and the tares for the truth is as God, love, power, mercy, wisdom. As his Word is made flesh so he sent his Son to feed his sheep. Jesus Christ said, "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Math. 25: 31-34. Verse 41 reads: "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Verse 46 reads: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." Here is the word of God as it is recorded by God. God chose his servants to give the knowledge as to the separate destination of the two principals. God is truth and love, the Devil is a liar and a thief. The serpent came but to steal and deceive. "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." His torment is without any end. This is a great field for consideration. Lots could be spoken here. I am getting old and failing. Cannot stir out in the winter season. I get many letters

from the brethren asking me for my thoughts on so many things. I will say the word flesh in a Bible sense is a great word for consideration. Pardon mistakes as I am not perfect and I am not a debater. Not worthy even to meet the saints of God yet they write me and invite me to their homes and give me so much kind love. I will send this to the Editor. Perhaps it will not cover space for nought. I have tried to encourage brethren to read the SIGNS. If this is not published I am yet, I hope, a friend and in fellowship.

PETER JONES

(Elder Jones would like some one to write on Rev. 19, 9 and also Rev. 19: 17-21. We hope some of the brethren will be given to comply with the request of our brother. R. L. D.)

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:

Forgive me if I seem to be presumptous. I hope you nor any of the Old Baptists ever do think so. I can say I hope you and I are indeed brethren in Christ Jesus, and that I am always kept in the state of humility. Not that I would be always or ever begging your sympathy, except in this one matter, that I could crave your kindness and be at home with you in common bonds of love. I have been sheltered by the Old Hardshells for about two years which has seemed a very short period. I have been a subscriber to the SIGNS a few months and I have missed it so much since I have been in the army. It has been sent to my old address for which I am glad for my father's sake, so you will not misunderstand my subscribing for it again this year. In my younger years (I am now thirty-three) I always dreaded the death of friends, especially old people, and of the old elders whose pictures I have seen in brethren's homes. I have a very lonely feeling that it has not been my pleasure to know them, and yet fears that I would not have been worthy of their consideration, fearful that I would at some time be guilty of falsehoods which was and is dreadful to me. I hope I believe the doctrine of predestination, foreordination and the unmerited saving grace of God. Unto what high, high hill could I go to proclaim unto God my own righteousness? By what route could I travel? Could I, indeed, if I be set on the very highest peak be able by my very loudest shouting (my good deeds) command the attention of Jehovah? Am I not, indeed, of the first Adam earthly? I hope I have been made partaker of the second man, the Lord from heaven. I confess that I set out at one time to scale that (supposed) lofty peak, and thought then that I had achieved my end, but later realized that I had climbed the wrong hill. On that hill sprang up thorns and brambles which were very fretful to me. I could not go to my desired journey's end neither could I come down again. I hope I know of that holy sabbath, the rest for the people of God, spoken of in Hebrews 4:10 which has been so much comfort to me. I have been so much blessed with peace in hope of eternal life by Christ Jesus since I have been here. I hope it is the mind of God that I will continue to be so blessed. I know only one fellow here that defends the doctrine although he claims no home with them. Tell the brethren to write to

me if they be so minded, and if they do I hope God spares me the time and occasion to answer them. Yours in hope.

PVT. WALTER L. YOUNG,
6881454, Co. K. 263rd Infantry
A.P.O. 454
Camp Blanding, Florida

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632 C, Camilla St., MEMPHIS, Tenn.

ELDER R. L. DODSON:

Dear brother if indeed one such as myself could claim that sweet kinsmanship with which God's people are related one with the other. Hope all is well with you and yours. I am receiving the SIGNS regularly. I notice you requested minutes of the latest Associations. I am sending one of ours and also one of our Corresponding Association. We are few in number and it seems sometimes as if we, too, will soon be gone, or fall away as many others have done. I feel so unworthy sometimes I fear to take the name of the God who made all things for himself. There is no other who is trying to preach the gospel I believe to be the truth in over one hundred miles from here. We are still meeting together in peace one with the other for which we hope to thank Israel's God. This church was organized here by Elder J. W. Kerley over forty-six years ago. He was pastor over forty-three years. When the Lord called him home his last words were, "It is all of grace." Then Elder R. M. Brann of the Bethel Association in north Tennessee and south Kentucky was called. He died in January 1942 in the faith of the Lord. The church then called me. I am as the speckled bird. All the birds around me are against me and the doctrine I am trying to preach alone by the mercies of our Lord who is rich in mercy and loves his people with an everlasting love. Pray for us when at the throne of grace, and if it is ever so you can, visit us. May the grace of our God lead you to continue in the faith as an undershepherd over the little flock which it was the Father's pleasure to give the kingdom. Hoping to meet you face to face and hear you praise the Lord of Hosts yours in hope of eternal life.

W. O. WOMMACK

Route 1, Box 121, GREENSBORO, N. C.

ELDER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER:

I am sending some of our son, Burch's, writings which, if you consider worthy, would like to see in print. If not mistaken I have been made to rejoice in an all powerful God. The only one who is able to cause us to rejoice in time of storm. In a mysterious way I have been made glad that our son, Burch C. Wray, is just where he is. When I see and understand as the world does (and I often fear I have never seen and understood any other way) then I weaken and feel that everything is all wrong, and realizing my weakness and imperfection I often feel this is more than I can bear, but when, as I hope and trust, I am blessed to see the perfect way then I see by an eye of faith and all is well. I see everything in praise to the great and almighty God and I feel to say, "thy will be done," oh God, not mine. He is the only one able to execute truth and judgment. If I am blessed to look to the Lord of lords and King of kings for my spiritual life and enjoyments then I believe I have been blessed to look to him for my

natural life and every natural need in this life. If indeed I have been blessed with revelations of his holy will I feel I have also been blessed with a thorn in the flesh lest I should be exalted above measure. When I see and feel my flesh is full of corruption and my best works are as filthy rags in his sight this causes sickness that no natural man can heal, and in this condition there is not much room for being exalted. About four years ago I viewed my natural mind as a network all in a tangle, and this is what I beheld. I was standing on a highway and two beautiful green fields lay before me. It seemed I was looking through a microscope and I saw the little green plants all the same size, same height and same distance apart. The earth was smooth, no rocks, no clods of dirt. Next I saw a field which had been prepared for seed, the field was about one foot higher than the surrounding earth. This field was laid off in each way which made checks, neither row interfered with the other. This earth was also free from rocks and clods of dirt. The color of this soil was very dark and rich looking. Next I beheld a field which had grown to maturity, the growth was a golden brown, was in full bloom and were so matted together that you could not detect one from the other. The blooms were all bowed. These fields lay between the highway and a stream of water and a row of beautiful lights of many colors lighted these fields. I feel sure man will never be wise enough to cultivate, sow and reap in this manner.

Unworthily,

MARY E. WRAY

My Dear Family:

Just a few lines to-day, do not feel that I have anything to write. Have just received your card, and enjoyed it although it makes me feel mighty little to hear of anybody that I esteem like I do you Old Baptists saying that they enjoy my letters. If I have ever written anything that has been any benefit to one of God's little ones it is only by and through the all prevailing grace of Almighty God. Some of the letters that I have written have been sweet to me. I feel that a few times I have been blessed to write part of the dealings of the Lord with me, a hell deserving sinner, and it is sweet to me when I am so blessed. A few times as I have sat here by my bunk writing I have been lifted up so in my feelings that I did not even realize that these other boys were around me, neither did I care, although they do not understand when they sometimes see tears of joy rolling down my cheeks. Yet when I am blessed with that humble boldness I do not care what they say or do because they cannot say or do anything but what they should do. "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." "The wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand." Neither do they understand when they sometimes see me tossing to and fro in my bunk at night and crying with a sorrowful heart because I cannot find my God. Many times have I been made to try to find my God, but I cannot behold him.

As Job said, "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold," if I am what I hope I am. I have received another good letter from Waylon Chandler. I am sending them home for you all to read, I am sure you will enjoy them. He, too, feels that he is going to be sent across. He feels that there is something over there for him to receive or witness. I feel the same way and also feel reconciled to go. It seems strange to me in a way because I have always hated to leave my home even just to spend one night away, and to think that I feel that I want to go on across. "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." The most of my time I feel that it is all just my imagination and not the work of Christ in me. They seem to think now that we will be here until about the first of October. Our planes are flying day and night, dropping practice bombs. They are getting ready to go somewhere. Waylon also says that he thinks that he will be sent across in a month or two. I wrote him Sunday although I did not feel worthy to do it. I felt that I wanted to write him yet I was fearful. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." I feel glad that these words are recorded for it is my experience. Mama I have not received the testament and dictionary yet, I do not know where they are. I do not want you all to send me any pears as I get all the fruit I need out here. Get more than I can eat. Mama I hope that you will be blessed with a good meeting Sunday. I want Papa to give Mr. Hill a dollar for me and take it out of what I send home. I will send the money home as soon as I get paid. Dear Haywood and Rachel I hope this finds you all well and feeling fine. I hope you all are blessed to enjoy the meeting on Sunday. Junior I cannot think of anything to write as you can see so I will close. I enjoy your letters very much and hope you will write to me often. Love and best wishes to all.

Unworthy,
BURCH

SGT. BURCH C. WRAY,
34212182, 337th Bomb Sq.,
96th B.G., A.P.O. 3917
c/o P.M., New York

(Other letters from this young man will appear in the next issue.)

CASTLE ROCK, Wash.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:

It has been on my mind for a long time to write the following thoughts. Until now I have not attempted it because it seemed rather a presumptuous thing for one so ignorant as I know myself to be to undertake. However it has been impressed on my mind to write it in so commanding a way that I dare not delay the attempt any longer. It will be for you to decide whether it is fit for publication, and whatever decision is made concerning it will surely be all right with me. I should hate to see an unworthy or damaging article printed in the SIGNS. For a good many years I have observed things that are hurtful to our churches. One of these is the conduct of members concerning their attendance. The place is known, the time is set, the pastor is there, but where is his congregation? Some are at home entertaining guests, some have gone fishing or hunting, some are peeved at sister So-and-so and have declared they will not attend if she does. Others

will not go because their pastor does not preach on the resurrection or predestination as they see it, or perhaps the assistant pastor preaches to-day and his discourses are too long. The absent one may be the clerk or deacon or the only one capable of leading the singing, but no matter he stays away often with only a trivial excuse to offer. It is all very detrimental to the welfare of the church. I have often been in a congregation of only five or six when I knew the membership to be as many as thirty-five or forty. The pastor is there, the most of the members absent. How would it seem to have the congregation there and the pastor absent? I have been a member of the Baptist Church forty years and I have seen this happen only twice. The first time the pastor was taken suddenly ill and it was impossible to either come or send word, but the deacon was there with the church door key and the hymn books. We went in, sang a hymn, the deacon read a chapter and spoke to us about our pastor's absence, begging us to believe it was unavoidable, and pointing out the fact to us that since we had ourselves been each one several times absent we could have only charity for our pastor. We sang another hymn and went home feeling that we had been to meeting after all. Suppose our faithful deacon had not been there either? The second time I saw this happen I had driven sixty miles to church and found the door locked and both pastor and congregation absent. By the time I reached my home I had asked myself many times, "Is this the way the pastor feels when I absent myself from church? I vowed within my soul that with God's help I would never be absent again if it were humanly possible to be there. This was a good lesson to me and I have since believed it was providentially meant for me. Brethren and sisters attend your church, thereby refreshing your own souls and encouraging your pastor. The rest that remaineth to God's children is found in thus meeting, singing and praying together. When your meeting time arrives lay all else aside and, God willing, meet with your brethren and your Lord for he has promised to be there also. His promises are good. The other thing that I have observed as being a detriment to our churches lays at the fault of the ministers. Not to pastors, but to our ministers as a group. Did you ever have a minister come to your church meeting and introduce himself, or possibly be introduced by a member of your church as a Primitive Baptist of the same faith and order and invite him to preach? He did very well, some of the members fell in love with his mannerisms, and you yourself could see nothing wrong. Later you found that he was an excluded member of some distant church in a different state, or perhaps learned that he could preach as well for any church of any faith whatever if only given an opportunity to do so. I have seen this happen a good many times. I have seen it take members from churches, I have seen churches torn to pieces. This is deplorable but true. Should we not as churches require traveling ministers to show us their credentials, and letters stating their standing in their home church? Would it not help? I know one minister who came west from a far eastern state several years ago. He came to the church in

which I had my membership for several years. He was sound, saw deeply into the mysteries of the Scriptures and was asked to be assistant pastor. His reply was, "I will give you my home address, you write to the church there and find out all you can about me, then if you are all of the same mind I will accept." This would be a good example for our traveling ministers to follow. I think I could find scripture to back up most of the things I have written, but shall not as I am not, after all, writing of the scripture but only of my own observances. They, like myself, are faulty and perhaps you will see no good in them. If not it is all right. I have been deprived of attending my own church meetings for the past three months, and it makes me realize how much I need to be where I can partake of the blessed refreshment contained in the preached word of truth. I am now beginning my fourth month of being bedfast, seven weeks of which were spent in hospitals, and surely of all things I long for most is to be enabled to attend my church meetings. However this, as are all things, is in the hands of Almighty God. He doeth all things and doeth them well. So far he has never given me more of adversity than he has given me strength to bear. How I hope he may continue to give me the tiny mite of faith I so need. May he bless all your efforts to keep the SIGNS as you now have it. With christian love and fellowship.

EFFIE PARKE.

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174 Front St., DRAPER, N. C.

ELDER J. E. BURGESS, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:

The thought is in my mind to attempt to write you, and I humbly hope God will guide my mind and pen. First, this leaves us well as usual, and hope you all are also well. I want to tell you we like it down here just fine. I am working in the blanket weave room of Marshall Field & Co.'s cotton mill. I hope to learn to weave, it is a well paying thing to learn. Much better paid than knitting, but will leave these vain and transitory things and turn, the Lord being my strength, to things that endure, things eternal, realizing full well that if I write anything of comfort to you or praise to God, it will have to come from that great and mighty source of all good, even Israel's God. No good thing can come from this vile flesh of mine for daily, it seems, new corruptions arise, and I am often made to bow my head in acknowledgement from the heart to the truth of these words uttered by the apostle Paul nearly two thousand years ago, "In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." I feel a great longing hunger to live as I desire, but O, how far short I fall! The Scriptures declare that God's ways are as high above man's ways as the heavens are above the earth. Surely, then, this desire of the heart to live righteously is of God, for the way I desire to live is as high above the way I do live as the heavens are above the earth. Paul says, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh," and the result is "ye cannot do the things that ye would" (or desire). Now what would we do? Live righteously, but Paul tells us in the foregoing scripture just why we cannot live as we desire. Well, is there any necessity for this to be? Surely, for did not Jesus declare except a man

hateth "his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." Because of this warfare between flesh and spirit, indwelling sin in the flesh, we find the way we live falls so short of the way we would live, therefore, we are made to hate our own life. Sometimes I can say with one of the old writers, "I abhor myself." Again I can say with Peter, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord," not worthy of the least of thy mercies, yet recipient of thy greatest, I hope, even eternal life. This hope of eternal life is the mainspring around which my life now revolves, the most precious possession, that I would not exchange for ten thousand worlds like this nor the fullness thereof, for the things of this world perish with the using, but this hope will never perish but one day give way to possession of all the glorious fulfillment of all that God promised to his chosen before the world began. Paul says, "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." Yes, we are now down in this low ground of sin and sorrow, going about many times with bowed down heads and heavy hearts, and are often made glad that we are born to die as one poet so beautifully expresses it:

"Where storm after storm rises dark o'er the way;
The few lurid mornings that dawn on us here,
Are followed by gloom, or beclouded with fear."

Yes, this world is temporal, and full of sorrow for God's poor, suffering children, but oh, by the eye of faith we see another land. Yes,

"Far beyond death's gloomy vale, a heavenly building stands,
Prolific streams of glory flow, in those celestial lands."

We find again the words of one of the writers, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." That eternal house, dear brother, is the church triumphant as she shall be in that day that yet awaits us, when Jesus shall present his bride, his church to the Father, without spot, wrinkle, blemish or any such thing, being clothed in a garment whiter than snow, purer than sunlight, even the glorious and majestic robe of righteousness of the lowly Lamb of Life, even Jesus, imputed to us. Dear brother, though we are often faint now, and ready to perish, and would perish were it not for the almighty arm of our God underneath us, bearing us up, keeping us, yet one day this warfare here shall be over, and we shall bask in the glorious sunshine of the smiles of our blessed Saviour's face on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance. Yes, by the grace of God we will suffer on our threescore years until our deliverer comes, then to be raised and changed into a glorified spiritual body like unto our Redeemer. Then to be wafted home on the wings of his love where we will never know any more suffering, sorrow, pain nor death, where sin can never come, and that sad word farewell shall nevermore be heard, where we will blend our voices with those now gone on before in one glorious, wondrous, triumphant and never ending song of praise to our God for so great a deliverance, so wondrous a salvation. This church, this house shall be complete in that day without the loss of even one for whom Jesus died for this house is built of "lively stones", and if

one stone were missing the building would not be complete, the work would, therefore, be imperfect. God being perfection, therefore, the works of his omnipotent hand are also perfect, and being persuaded that he has all power in heaven and earth I am not the least bit uneasy that any of his words or work shall fail in any way or fall short of full accomplishment. The point that bothers me most is whether I am included in that building or not. Can only say my hope that was given me Aug. 4, 1939 is still within me and just will not let me go. The main object of this letter is to stir up your "pure mind" that you may be given to meditate upon the glorious riches of our Heavenly Father's kingdom, realizing that these things are given us in Christ, that his name may be exalted above every other name that is named as Lord of lords and King of kings. Surely we have no abiding city here but are seeking one to come. May God, who is rich in mercy, one day grant us the fulfillment of the riches of his promise, the fruition of all we are hoping for now. Paul says we see here as through a glass, but one day, ere long, mortality shall be swallowed up in the victory of immortality, thus, the glass being done away with, we shall feel the fulness of joy, see him whom our soul loveth clearly face to face. Then we shall be satisfied, and not until then, except momentarily. We had a good meeting here at Draper Church Sunday. Elders Staples, Dunbar, Bryant, Flinchum and the poor writer. It was indeed good to be there. Brother Burgess, write and tell me about your meeting at North Fork Sunday. I want to fill out the minutes correctly, and also want to hear from you all. Will close now. May you and I and even as many others as the Lord our God has called, and shall yet call, be one day housed in Heaven Eternal where Jesus is, never to go out of his beloved presence anymore, where the Lamb shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God himself shall wipe away all tears from their eyes is the prayer of this poor sinner for Jesus' sake. Amen. Humbly, your little brother in Christ, I hope.

LAYTON WINGFIELD.

BENTON, Ill.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

I am sending in my 1943 subscription for our little family paper. I hope the Lord will bless you as he has in the past to continue earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. That word bless, brother Dodson, covers a broad field for we hear Jesus saying, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." His people is a blessed people for he says, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears for they hear." They did not hear in order to be blessed, but they were blessed in order that they might hear. Abraham could not see the land which God had promised him, but by the eye of faith he could see it afar off. If Abraham was justified by works he would have whereof to glory, but not before God. Abraham was justified by faith and Paul says, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." If works had profited any one Cain would have been wonderfully

blessed because of all the working of his hands which he had labored for the production of the earth, and the earth at that time was corrupt by the reason of sin that was within, and after he brought all of his works and presented them to God, he (God) had no respect for them. As for Abel and his offering God did have respect for Abel brought the firstling of the flock which typified the Son of God. Jesus said I am the good sheperd of the flock. I lay down my life for the sheep. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it up again. God had respect for Abel and his offering. Abel was able, by faith, to offer a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. That being so faith is the fruit of the Spirit, and the Spirit is our God, and that faith dwells in none other than the children of God. Jesus says, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." The question is will they come or reject? Let us just say they will not come, and we see Jesus standing with outstretched arms wooing and beseeching them, but they say no we are going to follow Satan awhile yet. If that were so we would see a power that was overthrowing the power and purpose of God. If I had the power to serve God or Satan I would refuse to serve either one of them, but I believe every one that he calls will be there at the appointed time. It is said, "The sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him." "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." What causes them to hunger? It is by the reason of the holy Spirit of God that dwells in them. Just back one moment to the power of God. He has all power both in heaven and in earth. "Before the day was I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work and who shall let it?" "His hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The poet must have tasted the sweetness of our God when he said, "Poor and afflicted Lord are thine, among the great unfit to shine." In closing please overlook my scattered remarks. It is alright to pass this on to other readers if you desire, but please do not crowd out any good reading. I enjoyed very much the letter the young soldier wrote. Wishing you the season's greetings, and may God bless you is the prayer of a poor sinner saved by grace if saved at all. The least of all.

BRYAN MORRIS

NORTH BERWICK, Me.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

I am trying to answer the good letter that you wrote me in January. You said in that letter "now you will have to fight the battle alone," and I have found that out, but the Lord has been good to me in having a good daughter with whom I have been living, and who has taken the best of care of me at North Berwick village and for that I am thankful. But it is hard just the same, however, the Lord has ruled it that way and whatever he does is right in our lives. Myra had hardening of the arteries that feed the brain,

and she was not herself much of the time near the end. She was so bad that it was a relief, for her sake, when she drew her last breath. It is hard to lose one's wife. Everything is changed within or without the home, and it seems it can never be the same again, but the Lord has given me good health for which I thank him, and as you said in your letter I should be thankful that I had her for so long a time and I am. We lived together for thirty-two years without one family quarrel and hardly ever a cross word. We both loved our Saviour and our God. I feel that she has gone home to her reward. Hope everything is going well with you. Would liked to have had you preach the funeral sermon, but Eben and his wife are members of the Baptist Church so we had Mr. Quigg. Will say good bye and I hope the Lord is blessing your good work with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. When you have time I am always glad to head from you.

ANSON QUINT.

(We deeply sympathize with brother Quint in the loss of his wife. We have spent some very enjoyable hours in their home, high up on the hill overlooking the surrounding country, not far from Sanford, Me. Brother Quint is advancing in years, but he has been wonderfully blest of the Lord, and we are persuaded that, "e'en down to old age" he has continually proved, God's sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love. God is faithful to his promise and he will never, "no never forsake." This, indeed, is the firm foundation upon which the everlasting hope of his people is built. May God enable us to put our trust in him. R. L. D.)

401 McPhearson St., NASHVILLE, Ga.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES AND BRETHREN IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE:

It is with thankful hearts my wife and I are enabled to read your good old SIGNS which comes each month laden with "good news from a far country." It is also food and drink to our poor, hungry, thirsty souls. My wife is bedridden and deprived of going to meeting, yet sometimes they hold services at the house for her which she enjoys very much. We enjoy such good, wholesome and gospel truths as are laid down in your good paper more than we can tell you. We want to thank you for sending the SIGNS to us but feel so unworthy of it. We have moved to Georgia to the above address. My wife's people live near here so we came from Florida. Please note change and send to new address. If sending it will cause some other one or more to be deprived of it please do not do that for I would feel very badly about it as they would be more worthy than I. We pray that if it be the good Lord's will he will enable you to publish it for many years to come, thereby giving many "babes in Christ" the sincere "milk of the word" as well as older ones the food they need as you have in the past. Your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life.

J. E. WHITNEY.

EL DORADO, Ill.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN AND EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

Find enclosed money-order for $2 to renew my subscription to our good old family paper. I certainly do appreciate the many good articles contained therein. I fully endorse its sentiment and

hope you may be supported by the brethren in a financial way. I am seventy-eight years old and do not get to meeting very often, but I do enjoy the good articles by so many sound Baptists. If I am not mistaken it advocates the same doctrine as contained in Elder Beebe's Editorials which book I have and value very highly. Dear brethren remember me when at a throne of grace. Yours in hope of a better life.

BERRY CARNAHAN.

Route 1, SULPHUR, Ky.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

Once more I will send money-order for the SIGNS, the book we love to read. Also the book you are having published on the Resurrection of the Dead. I am anxious to read this book if I am spared to stay here that length of time. I am almost seventy-four years old and I feel I am nearing the other shore. A few years ago I had a heart attack and never fully recovered from the effects of it. Now I am with my only daughter being nursed through another attack. The doctor advised me to be quiet and give my heart complete rest. Do not know when I will be able to return to my home and my son who lives with me. I do not know what is the mind of the Lord with me concerning this matter. I have the very best of care, the very kindest of treatment, but all of these things cannot prolong our time here for one minute. I would ask an interest in your prayers that the Lord's will be done and that I may be reconciled fully to his will in all things. I feel I have many things to be thankful for, and of myself can never thank him enough for what he has done for me. I am a great sinner but our God is a greater Saviour, and I know if I am saved it is by the free and unmerited gift of God through grace so all praise to him. Please pardon this poorly written letter as I am very nervous. May the Lord be with you and bless the labor of your hands as he sees you have need of through the coming years. God is the ruler and upholder of all things, and as he sees fit may he bring peace to our beloved land and bring our boys home again. I believe he has a purpose in this cruel war, and that he will work it out for good to his chosen people and to his own glory. May he, who only can, comfort his saints through these trying times as they are called to pass through the deep waters, and through fiery trials. Father hold our hand for Jesus sake.

(Mrs.) ADDIE CHANDLER.

Box 146, WOODWARD, Iowa

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

Enclosed find money-order to pay for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES which you have so graciously sent me for so long and for which I hope I am thankful. I believe the money-order will pay me up to December of this year as well as my arrears. I love the old paper and for what it stands. There are many wonderful writers sending in their mites which is a great comfort to the many saints scattered here and there who have no other way of hearing sound doctrine. There are many who claim to be Old Primitive Baptists, but when they are sounded down they are only Arminians. I am a very ignorant old man as to worldly affairs and still more ignorant of spiritual ones, but I love the old doctrine of salvation by grace, that we have no more to

do with our spiritual than we do with our natural birth. I believe in the resurrection of the dead at the second coming of Christ, when this mortal body shall put on immortality and live with the blessed Redeemer throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity where there will be no more sorrow, tears and heartaches to mar that blessed existence with the one Redeemer who works and none can hinder. I want to thank you for being so kind in sending me the paper so long without receiving any recompense. There have been so many times in the past when I have not even had money to buy a postage stamp to write and thank you for sending me the paper, but I do thank you and will always have a warm place for you in my heart for being so kind and generous. I hope to be able to take it as long as I live. I have been a subscriber for many years. I do not know how many but my subscription for the Gospel News, edited by Elder J. M. Perkins of Kentucky was replaced by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES when he discontinued its publication and I have taken it almost continually since. There have been times when I have been in arrears but through the kindness of an all wise Creator I have been permitted a way to pay up in full so far. Wishing you success as Editor and Publisher I am I hope your unworthy brother in a precious hope in the great beyond.

W. J. KIMBRO.

SEAGROVE, N. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

I am enclosing check for renewal of the SIGNS. I have been reading it for some time and find it food for my poor hungry soul. May the Lord bless you to continue to publish it, and may the children of God be blessed, as they have so wonderfully been in the past, to earnestly contend for the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone. I hope, if I know anything about it, that the surety of it is what is so precious to me. The foundation not made with hands eternal in the heavens, that there is no power which is able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. If I am not deceived I have an humble hope abiding in me that some day I shall see him, be like him, and be satisfied. I love the song, "When I can read my title clear to mansions in the skies." I believe I have been made a few times in my life to view for a few moments those mansions. The most of my time I feel to be the least of God's children if one at all. I had not thought of writing you what I have but to just express my appreciation to you for your wonderful paper. Will you please remember me when at a throne of grace. Your little sister in Christ I hope.

BERTHA R. STUART

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure, we will mail them another copy free of charge.

EDITORIAL

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P.O. Box No. 70

Rutherford, N. J.

II PETER 3:1-17.

Inquiry having been made of us concerning our "view (Spiritual) of the End of the World, (2 Peter 3:1-17)" we shall undertake to comply with the request to the best of our ability.

From time to time, some of our readers as well as some with whom we come in personal contact express the opinion that the utter destruction of the natural world in which we live must be close at hand. Especially have we heard this idea advanced in recent years and particularly since the great conflagration appears to be about to engulf the entire globe. As a rule those expressing this belief are advancing in years and we have sometimes wondered if the approach of old age could possibly have a bearing upon the mind so as to create such an outlook. Be that as it may, we have to confess that we do not, at the present time, share that point of view. Apparently, the scripture referred to more than any other as supporting the position taken that this literal world is soon to be destroyed by fire is the above chapter. As we do not feel it would be expedient to quote the entire chapter here, we would like to suggest to our readers that they open their Bibles at this chapter, in order that they may better follow our reasoning, as we shall endeavor to deal with the greater part of what is contained in it.

We would like to make a few observations, however, before taking up the chapter verse by verse. We believe it will be pretty generally conceded that time has been divided into three periods or dispensations: (1) the *patriarchal,* or that portion that was before the flood; (2) the *legal* or *prophetic,* which bridged the time of Moses and the prophets until (3) the coming of Christ and the establishing of the *gospel dispensation.* So far as we are aware these three dispensations, or periods of time, fill up the full measure of what we know as TIME, and beyond this is the vast unknown eternity which cannot be measured by mortals. We believe the apostle Peter viewed the matter in this light and, therefore, he took up in logical sequence these three periods of time and dealt with them in their respective order, as will be seen by a careful reading of the chapter.

Having written a previous epistle to his brethren, he begins this epistle by saying, "This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remem-

brance: that ye may me mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." (verses 1-4) In order to stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance they must of necessity have been told or informed of the matter on a previous occasion, and Peter tells us here distinctly that it was that they might be "mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour." Various prophets had spoken before of what should take place when Jesus would come into the world, but we will content ourself at this time by citing only what the prophet Malachi, the last of the prophets, had to say in the first two verses of the very last chapter of his book: "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." Mal. 4:1-2. Thus spake the prophet. And now let us hear what the apostles said: "But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers, in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts." Jude 17-18. "And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." According to the marginal reference in our Bible, Malachi's prophesy was made B. C. 397, which meant that the intervening period between the last of the prophets, or the last star to twinkle in the legal heavens and the appearing of the Sun of righteousness was about four hundred years. What an awfully long night that was! What a time of utter darkness, with nothing said on the side of truth. Is it any wonder that in the last days of that period of time, or dispensation, that scoffers should be walking after their own lusts and saying, "Where is the promise of his coming?" For over four hundred years, or "since the fathers fell asleep, all things continued as they were from the beginning of the creation." After a night of that duration of time it would seem that even the staunchest believers would have given up in despair, but here Peter was reminding his brethren of something which those scoffers were willingly ignorant of, and that was "that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was being overflowed with water, perished," or was destroyed by the flood. Likewise he would have them understand that the world which then was, which was the one that began following the flood and was to extend to the coming of Christ and the setting up of the

Gospel dispensation, was also to be destroyed, which was what he referred to when he said, *"But the heavens and the earth, which are now,* (meaning the legal heavens and the legal earth, which had not at that time yet been destroyed) by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." In other words, the same unchangeable God who had declared, or decreed, the destruction of the wicked world in the days of Noah by water and had brought it to pass, had also decreed and would most certainly bring to pass the destruction of the legal world or dispensation, which was at that very time approaching its end, and this was "reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." Malachi had said that when this day came they would "burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." The illustration of stubble being consumed by fire, and they destroyed root and branch, foretold how complete their destruction would be. We know that once stubble is consumed in the fire, all scientists are utterly incapable of reinstating or restoring it to its former state, and Peter was driving home the point that God's word could not and would not fail. As Isaiah had also declared, "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." We, in this *gospel dispensation,* see how completely the *legal or jewish dispensation* was destroyed, root and branch. The priests under the former dispensation were descended from the tribe of Levi, but the rabbis of to-day have descended from no particular tribe and, therefore, cannot be traced. Neither do they any longer even pretend to follow the customs of the former age by sacrificing on their altars the firstlings of the flock, turtle doves or young pigeons and the like. That age is now locked in the bosom of history. At the time Peter was writing, these things had not been completely brought about, but they were even then in the making and he was as certain of their fulfillment as though they had already actually taken place. In other words, he was really replying to the scoffers of his time, which were the "last days" of that dispensation. It was they who were asking, "Where is the promise of his coming?" and saying, "for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." At the same time the apostle was reassuring and comforting his brethren by saying, "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." What does time, as we reckon it, matter with the Lord? If a thousand years is as one day with him, how long is four hundred years with him? It was enough that God had promised, and he would surely bring it to pass. For "the

Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." He would have them avoid growing impatient or discouraged, and though he tarried, they were to wait for him. He was unable to tell them exactly when those things would take place, nevertheless he was firm in his belief of their fulfillment. He told them that the day of the Lord would come as a thief in the night; "in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." Then he says, "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Surely, no one can read this and what follows and then say that what Peter has been talking about is the destruction, or end of this natural world. After the destruction of this earth, there is no scripture to our knowledge which says there will be another earth, but following the legal heavens and the legal earth there was to be, as Peter expressed it, "new heavens and a new earth," or the *gospel heavens* and the earth in the *gospel age,* and in these righteousness would dwell. This was the age that the prophet had reference to when he said, "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall harken." Isa. 32:1-3. "Wherefore, (says Peter) beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." It should be as clear as the noon-day sun to anyone who will read carefully, that these things which followed the end of the world that Peter was talking about, did not refer to that heavenly land, where all will be understood and the scriptures will no longer be employed. It is here in this world where there are things hard to be understood, and where the scriptures are wrested to their own destruction. Peter's brethren having these things more or less in common with him, he could well say unto them, "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both

now and for ever. Amen." We repeat that these things do not pertain to that life which is beyond this vale of tears, but they belong to us here in this *gospel age*. It is here that we grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is in this *gospel dispensation* that we grow up as calves of the stall. Calves or cattle of the stall, with their heads in stanchions, are absolutely dependent upon their owners or caretakers for all the food they eat and for all the water they drink, and they will certainly perish if their needs are not provided for. How well, therefore, they typify the Lord's people here in this *gospel age*. To grow in grace must mean that we become more self-conscious of our own helplessness and dependence upon God's unmerited favor and more firmly convinced of the fact that in our flesh there dwells no good thing. Peter having been dwelling upon the legal world and its end, it was perfectly proper that he should speak of a growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Under the law they had known only Moses, but under the dispensation of grace they were to be taught that knowledge which pertains to our Lord. These things are so clearly taught in this chapter that we do not see how any one with spiritual understanding can hold differently.

We would say in conclusion that we do not believe that the Bible has a great deal to say about how long this world will stand. So far as we know it may have been in existence millions of years already, as we reckon time, and it may continue for still other millions of years. We feel definitely certain, however, that at the most only a few short years has been allotted to each of us and our days, be they many or few, all are His due, and they should all be devoted to Him. It, therefore, behooves us to use our time well and insofar as it is possible for us to do, we should consecrate our lives to the service of our blessed God.

R.L.D.

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Nellie M. Palmer)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Bowdoinham Church, Bowdoinham, Sagadahock County, Maine, September 11, 12, *and* 13, 1942, *sendeth greetings and love in our Lord to the several churches and associations with which we correspond.*

Dearly Beloved Brethren:

Through the tender mercies of a covenant-keeping God we are again permitted to address you, though reduced to a handful, six members, we feel that the Lord has blessed us both spiritually and temporally. We come together in the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace. At times we feel destitute, then again our hearts burn within us as the Lord visits us by the way and unfolds to our vision his loving kindness and wonderful works to the children of men. He loved us with an everlasting love, there-

fore with loving kindness hath he drawn us. He loved us before the foundation of the world, carried us in his bosom all the days of old, prepared a perfect sacrifice for us, that we through the shedding of his blood might become kings and priests unto God. How wonderful when we contemplate the way in which we have been led, not one step in all the way where we can say we have furthered God's work in any way: it has ever been so.

Gideon's army was reduced to a handful, and why? "Lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me." Judges 7:2. Though few in number, they were divided into companies (as we are at this present time), "and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers. And he said unto them, Look on me." Judges 7:16. When we as empty pitchers, of the earth earthly, having the light of the glory of the knowledge of God's dear Son shed abroad in our hearts, look upon him whom we have pierced, we as broken pitchers feel to blow the trumpet and say, "The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon." It is written, "And they stood every man in his place." How important in this time and generation, that we, as soldiers of the cross, stand every man in his place, immovable knowing nothing but Christ and him crucified, the way, the truth, and the life. Yes, let us as loving with the same love wherewith we have been loved, stand shoulder to shoulder, bearing the burdens and sharing the joys. "Let us run with patience the race set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Hebrews 12:1-2. The God in whom we trust is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Though perilous times are upon us, he still doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, "What doest thou?" Daniel 4:35. We would be still knowing that the God of the whole earth doeth right. He knows the end from the beginning, and nothing takes place contrary to his will. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." Psalm 24:1. "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof." Psalm 50: 10-12.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Moderator
SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk

MARRIAGES

At Halcottville, N.Y., June 26, 1943 by Elder Arnold H. Bellows, Carson Bouton, Halcott, N.Y., and Miss Dorothy Earl, Halcottville, N.Y.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

J. W. Black, Can., $1; A. M. Hall, Me., 75; E. E. Nelson, Tex., $1; A. F. Jones, Ga., $1; A friend, Ky., $1.75; R. L. Davis, Kans., $2.

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Bowdoinham Church, Bowdoinham, Sagadahock County, Maine. Sept. 11, 12 *and* 13, 1942 *sendeth greetings and love in our Lord to the several churches and associations with which we correspond.*

DEAR BRETHREN:

Another year has passed and we have been blessed to meet you again in an association. Your correspondence and ministering brethren have come to us laden with the fruit of the Spirit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Our meeting was well attended and we all felt it was good to be there. In times like these, when this world is stirred with this terrible war, and so many are in trouble, it seems fitting to remember the words of Job 2: 10. "What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" We are apt to forget when we are in trouble that all things in our lives, both good and evil, are according to God's decree, and for our ultimate good and his glory. If left to ourselves we would despair. It is only when we feel God's presence within that we like the Apostle Paul can glory in tribulation; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. The time and place of our next meeting will be announced by notice in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS,
Moderator
SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk

OBITUARIES

Deacon, JOHN S. YERKES, was born near Southampton, Pa., Oct. 7, 1866, where he grew to manhood. He was united in the holy bonds of matrimony to Miss Josephine Duffield Dec. 25, 1889. To this union were born three children. J. Harold Yerkes, Harrisburg, Pa., Mildred D. Yerkes, wife of Walter Hastings, Cambridge, Md. and Milton D. Yerkes, Laurel, Del. and five grandchildren all survive to mourn the loss of a devoted husband, father and grandfather. He united with the Salem Old School Baptist Church in Philadelphia Oct. 24, 1909 and was baptized by the late Elder B. F. Coulter. Seeing in him the qualifications of a deacon, the church appointed him to that office which was filled in the true spirit of faithfulnes in his home, and with all with whom he came in contact which endeared him to all who knew him. By his passing away we have lost one that was a good husband, father and the church a devoted christian gentleman. He was called to his reward March 23, 1943. Funeral services were conducted by the writer March 26 in the Old School Baptist meeting-house at Southampton, Pa. after which his body was laid to rest in the cemetery adjoining to await the manifested power of God in the resurrection of the dead. We feel our loss is his eternal gain. Our desire is that God will comfort all that mourn, and give them grace that they may have a good hope in Christ Jesus. C.W.V.

My dear mother, MRS. MARY COONS, widow of John B. Coons, was born Aug. 5, 1863 at Town of Olive, Ulster Co., N.Y., and departed this life May 20, 1943 at Orthmann's Sanitarium, Kingston, N.Y. She was the daughter of the late Abraham and Eliza Simmons who later moved to Texas. She was united in marriage to John B. Coons Oct. 17, 1880 at Town of Olive. Two children were born of this union, one son and one

daughter. The daughter living at Palisades Park, N.J. and one grandson living at Grantwood, N.J. She is also survived by one brother, Mr. L. J. Simmons, Greeley, Col., three sisters, Mrs. Lincoln Smith, Ashokan, N. Y., Mrs. Ida Ellington, Hillsboro, Tex., and Mrs. Rosa Winchell, Englewood, Cal. Mother grew to womanhood residing on a farm. After she and father were married they remained there for a few years and finally moved to Pennsylvania. In 1892 they moved to Highland, N.Y. and in 1894 to Kingston, N.Y. where they remained in business until the death of my father Dec. 5, 1910. Shortly after that mother closed out the business and bought a cottage in Kingston, spending some of her winters in Texas with her brother and sisters. Selling the cottage in 1914 she then made her home with her daughter who resided in New York City. She traveled a great part of the time. In 1930 she developed a chronic throat condition, and on the advice of her physician in 1933 went to live with her sister at Ashokan, N.Y. It being a higher altitude she improved in health and generally spent her holiday seasons with her daughter and family in New Jersey. During 1937 she was not very well and on July 20, 1938 was taken to Kingston City Hospital for an operation which proved to be cancer. From that time to her death, a period of four years and eight months, she never left her bed for a whole day. She united with the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church at Ashokan, N. Y. and was baptized by Elder J. D. Hubbell. On Oct. 7, 1923 she was received by letter into the fellowship of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in New York City. Her suffering was intense but she never murmured, always asking the God of all mercies to grant her patience and courage, and a stronger faith to the end. She was strong in God's predestination of all things and spent much of her time reading her Bible and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Many, many times she would repeat:

"O land of rest, for thee I sigh,
When will the moment come,
When I shall lay my armor by,
And dwell with Christ at home."

She never lost sight of her Heavenly Father. Many days as she grew weaker she would say, as I sat by her bedside, "Some day the golden cord will break" and "As thy days, thy strength shall be." She told many beautiful experiences as she lay in pain on her bed. Her funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder R. Lester Dodson, and Elder Arnold H. Bellows at the W. N. Connor Funeral Home, Kingston, N.Y. and she was laid to rest by the side of my father in Wildwyck Cemetery at Kingston. She has gone to rest in the arms of her Saviour where everlasting sunshine reigns. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Written by her daughter.

(Mrs.) R. MACPHEE

MOLCOM W. SMALL, my nephew, the third son of my sister Mary, and James Small now deceased, died after an illness of 8 months in his 51st year. He was given a beautiful home and farm and married Jean Campbell of Howard Township in 1922. Three sons and one daughter were born to them. Donald, Melvin, Maxine and Douglass. The dear boy strove hard to gather together the wealth of this world, but under the labor and strain of his worldly ambition his health and strength gave way, and he realized all was vanity and vexation of spirit as disease and death was slowly wasting almost every vestige of sinew and flesh from his mortal body. As he lay on his bed in a Windsor Hospital he was taught as the Psalmist "By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation." It was judgment with mercy, and as he was being taught of the Lord to realize that "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." He would exalt his Lord, and under the fearful trembling of his poor body under his suffering, he used those words as his subject to tell the nurses who came in his room, and he wished all people could hear his story. One day his brother Melvin entered his room. He told him he was talking with Jesus. He stood by my bed. His tongue was loosed to tell of the Lord's mercy and teaching. The nurses thought his mind deranged, but it was the secret of the Lord he was talking of, the wisdom of God in a mystery. Jeanette, his sister, spent a few huors each day with him also his brother. They heard him often in silent prayer, yet not audible for weakness. In all his illness tribulation worked patience which was solemnly beautiful to witness. Never a murmur escaped his lips. He wished to come home with his wife and family to die, and it was granted him, and after a couple of months of less suffering he passed peaceably into the sleep that knows no waking in this life in the night of the 19th of March 1943, but shall awake in His likeness on the resurrection morn, see Him and crown Him Lord of all. Molcom was an honorable, trust-

PERMANENT OFFER
(until further notice)
TWO BOOKS
PREDESTINATION AND RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

Either one of these books will be given FREE with a year's subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at $2. to anyone who is not now a subscriber to the paper, or to any old subscriber who will send us a NEW subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at $2. The price of the books alone is $1. each. We only have about seventy (70) of the books on Predestination on hand, but as long as they last we shall be glad to send them out on the above basis. R. L. D.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will hold its annual session with the Olive and Hurley Church at Shokan, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 15 and 16, 1943. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us and entertainment will be provided for all. Those coming on Tuesday before the meeting by train, bus or auto, unless otherwise arranged, will go to the residence of Mrs. Hazel Byrnes, Ashokan, N. Y., who conducts the Ashokan Rest a short distance below the post office where they will be provided for. Those coming on Wednesday morning will go direct to the meeting-house at Shokan. It should be noted that the two villages of Shokan and Ashokan adjoin but have separate post offices. The place of meeting and the place of entertainment being one mile apart. The Association will open Wednesday morning at ten o'clock. Ministers and brethren of our faith and order are especially invited.

ORVILLE WINCHELL, Clerk.

ASSOCIATIONAL NOTICE

Owing to government restrictions on traveling, there will be no session of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting either for this current year or for the duration of the war. It is our hope to resume these annual meetings as soon as possible after the war ends.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.
Leesburg, Virginia.

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sundays in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a.m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meeting-house, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Forest Grove Church, near Parsonsburg, Wicomico Co., Maryland, Wednesday and Thursday, Oct. 20 and 21, 1943. We cordially invite sister churches, brethren, sisters and friends of other churches of our faith and order to meet with us. We especially invite our ministers and others of our faith and order, who are in good standing with their home churches, to be with us. Trains and buses will be met in Salisbury, Md., Tuesday afternoon and evening before the meeting and convey those coming to places of entertainment.

H. M. BENNETT, Pastor.
FANNIE ADKINS, Clerk.

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.

O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canada, California.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th Street, Mayfield, Ky. Those interested will be welcome.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 A. M. 2 P. M.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m. C. W. BOND, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1315 Columbia Avenue

(PARK AVENUE HALL)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10.30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Texas.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sundays in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P. M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sundays each month at 11:00 A. M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Salem Church, four miles south of Teague, Texas, meets on Saturday before the first Sunday in each month in conference.

W. A. LITTLE, Pastor.
DORA WREN, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10.30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

VOL. 111 RUTHERFORD, N. J., OCTOBER, 1943 No. 10

CORRESPONDENCE

EWING, Ill.

DEAR BROTHER AND EDITOR:

In setting forth what we have hoped to be our call from nature to grace, our aim or intention is to give our own views on the spiritual birth and spiritual life, and the death and resurrection of the children of God. Born March 11, 1861 I was the youngest of a family of eight children. My father had died six months before. When I was born my mother had two sons and six daughters. My brother was eleven years older than I. When he was twenty-two years old he married. By this time four of my sisters had married leaving mother, two sisters and me at home on her one hundred twenty acre farm. After I was old enough to go to school I went most of the time in winter months until I was fourteen. At this age, having got to where I could do farm work that was so much needed on our farm, I quit school and by so doing we were able to have as good a living as most of our neighbors. I think I can truthfully say that I was respected by those that knew me as being a moral boy. I never used profane language nor intoxicating drinks, never went to a dance in my life though raised in the community where it was much practiced. My mother was always able to furnish me a good horse to ride and I went where I pleased. I went to Sunday School, went to church, often to the revival meetings held to save sinners by different orders. I often went to the Primitive Baptist Church where my mother was a member, and when I went to church it was always my manner to go in and pay attention to the service although my main object was to meet my young friends and associates for in those days all classes of young folks went to church. In this manner of life I lived enjoying myself to the age of nineteen years. Almost at this very time, March 1880, there was a trouble came over me that darkened my pathway. I could not understand why I should feel so different. I could see my unworthiness so plain it seemed I had no right to expect favor from any person in the world. It was my ambition to hide this trouble and go on hoping it would soon disappear, but instead of leaving it was much increased at times. It seemed I could go no longer without everybody seeing my ruined condition. It seemed I had more responsibility resting on me than any

poor boy in the world. There was the care of my mother and sisters who looked to me to help them along, no man at home but me. Another fact had developed which greatly increased my trouble.For more than one year I had been keeping company with the only lady I ever loved and well I knew she loved me in return. Our courtship to this time had been very pleasant to me not thinking very much of what the future might be, but now I could view myself as being unworthy of her respect or love. It seemed to me it would have been much better if we never had met, but here I learned that love is something that man cannot manage, but it can manage him, and after eight months of worry and trouble I was resolved what to do. I went to her and told her she was the only one for me, that she knew what my situation was at home, and if she wanted to marry me we would marry soon. She readily consented to this and we were married on the ninth of December 1880, and what I feared might mean trouble in our home by bringing her to live in the house with mother and sisters proved to be the greatest blessing we could have had. It settled me down from the rounds of single life and as my wife's help was not much needed in the house she was with me helping a great deal on the farm. Her industrious ways and the kindness she manifested to all soon made her the ideal one of the family. No one was afraid to call on her for any help she could render. About four months after we were married we went to church one day, more to take my mother than anything else. The preacher told his experience, how the Lord once brought him to see his sinful condition, how he was made to mourn and pray for deliverance, and it seemed to me that he marked out the very road I had been traveling for one year. Here is something he said that I have never forgotten, "If there is one of God's children here who is traveling this road, the time will come when they will be made to rejoice in a Saviour's love," and the thought came to me could it be that all this trouble through which I had passed was God's dealings with me to teach me the truth and then receive me as one of his blessed children? This was something I had not been made to study before. I had been made to see myself a poor, helpless sinner in the sight of God, but it had not occurred to me that it was the Lord pointing this out to me that I might know and understand the truth. I did not know this was God's highway of holiness in which he brings all of his redeemed children into his banqueting house. With this little insight into the truth of God's grace how earnestly I would pray to him if I was one of his chosen ones. Oh, that I could feel this as a truth written in my poor heart and mind, but without this blessed assurance I was left to grovel along for three long years. During this time it was my privilege to see some of God's saints unite with the Old Baptist Church, which to my mind was the church of God. During this time I read the Bible and studied to learn the truth taught in it about the salvation of God's people. I could understand it to teach that God had an elect people saved by grace, but the great trouble was it had never been given to me to feel myself in that blessed and favored number. I loved to hear the

doctrine of grace taught because I believed it was the truth, and if I ever had a call to the ministry it came right along with the call from nature to grace. Yes, I hope I was made to see the wonderful beauty of God's house, his spiritual kingdom, and it seemed if he would give me a place in it how I could rejoice to be with those good people. The fourth Sunday in October 1884 I went to the church where they met around the altar, partook of the emblems which represented the spilt blood and broken body of their Saviour, but I cannot express the sadness of my poor heart. That day I was made to realize the truth of what Paul said, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." When I got home, feeling that I would rather be alone, I went a short distance from our house to a place where I thought no one would see me, aiming there to pray once more for mercy. When I got to this place, before I had attempted to pray, in a moment it seemed the Lord was present with me and raised me up above every wave and trouble of this world. Oh, glorious moments when we can read our title clear to mansions in the skies, and bid farewell to every fear, and wipe our weeping eyes. I felt so blessed I started to the house aiming to tell them there what I had received, but before I reached the house the Lord left me to myself again and how quick my mind was changed. I thought it best not to say anything about it, my travels might come back. So I said nothing to anyone although I was satisfied I had received the blessing I had prayed for so long, and now I thought I knew what I would do—I would unite with the church and live with the people of God. Oh, what a blessed privilege given to me. It may seem strange to some that I lived out of the church four years, all the time wanting a home in it, but when the opportunity came for me to unite I could not go forward and express my feelings, and why this trouble and discomfort. There is one blessed truth that I believe the Lord aimed. I should learn and understand that salvation is of the Lord, that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, but the time did come when I felt blessed with ability to go to the church and tell what I had hoped the Lord had done for me, and the truths set forth in the doctrine of the Old Primitive Baptist Church were very dear to me, and as before stated, we often felt impressed to contend for them, but the task of preaching was too great for me. It could never be that the Lord would call one so illiterate and unqualified, as I was to preach. It was not given to me to tell my feelings to anyone about this, and after I had lived in the church three or four years we met one Saturday morning, it being our communion meeting, some one had been informed our pastor was sick and could not be there. We were disappointed and sad in getting this news. At this time a brother came in and after learning of the situation he arose an made a motion that brother John Neal serve as moderator pro tem so that we could have conference. The motion was quickly seconded and placed before the church and passed with no dissenting voice. I went forward, gave out a hymn, offered prayer and stood as moderator in the conference. Although

disappointed we all enjoyed being there and before we adjourned one brother said to the church, we are in much better condition than we feared. I make a motion that we meet this evening and engage in foot washing, brother Neal to conduct the service. We did so and it seemed they could see something in me now that they had not been given to see before. They treated me very kindly and encouraged me to try to preach which I did. They soon liberated me and later ordained me. I hope, dear Editors, in making this article so lengthy you will bear with me. Only once before in my life have I written my experience for print and that was fifty years ago. In this letter it is my desire to also give my views on the second birth and resurrection of God's people. Jesus said, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." This I understand gives the man who has been given one birth a second birth and this second birth given to God's people is that which brings them into his spiritual kingdom. Jesus said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." In the fleshly or natural birth there is only natural life given, and God said it should be taken away and man must die. We are told in God's word the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit because they are spiritually discerned. So then if only natural things can exist in natural life we must have spiritual life to understand spiritual things, and this life is given in the Spirit, not birth. It is by the first birth that we become children of our earthly parents, and the second birth is that which makes us children of God in spirit and in truth. "Being born again, not of corrupitble seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." Remember, my dearly beloved in the Lord, it is the seed (the Spirit) which we are born of that has and will forever live. The man, himself, must and will die. It is God's sentence placed upon him for the transgression of his holy law, but there is another sentence rendered to this man, that is, the resurrection from the dead, and we must meet the first before we can meet the second. "For since by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." So all the spiritual life given to God's children in this world is the life of Christ. He gave his holy and perfect life that they might be brought from under the bondage of sin and death in sin into a holy life in Christ. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." So then sin was not taken from the natural, fleshly man who was born in sin, but remember it was condemned in the flesh. It can never enter into the spiritual life of God's children "for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." So we are made to say like Paul, "with

the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." Sin when it brings us to death hath no more dominion over us, and death even is made a victory for us for in death we are brought to a peaceful rest (sleep) in Jesus until the time appointed of the Father when he, "who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Submitted to all who believe that salvation comes through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord.

JOHN NEAL

FAYETTE, Ala.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

I am sending a copy of a letter from a dear sister in Christ. I am not personally acquainted with her but I am sure she is one of the Lord's anointed. I do not think such precious things should be hidden away. If you deem it worthy of publication I would like to see it in the SIGNS. Yours in love and fellowship,

W. D. GRIFFIN

3347 Tutwiler Ave., MEMPHIS, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER, IF YOU WILL ALLOW ME THUS TO ADDRESS YOU:

It is my desire to write you though you are a stranger in the flesh. I feel to know you through the columns of our dear paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. In your article in the February number on going down to the sea in ships I humbly hope I have been given to see the works of the Lord, and your writing on the wonderful working power and never failing love of God was so sweet to me I felt I must write and tell you so. One cannot handle these precious promises to the comfort of God's little ones of themselves, but when it pleases the Lord to give the understanding of the hidden things in the deep and he guides our trembling hand while writing, wonderful things and words are written. I feel the Lord has been so good to me if I am not deceived. I was raised by Old Baptist parents and as far back as I can remember I desired to be a good child. My parents would often, after supper, get their little hymn book and sing. Between songs they would talk about the good words in them and their eyes would fill with tears. I knew they saw a beauty in them they could not show to me. I hoped the day would come when I too could understand and love them better. When I was eleven years old I was coming home from my grandfather's house, and soon after I started I began to cry. It seemed I was so happy and yet so sad. I did not know just why I was crying. The sky, trees and hills were so lovely, everything so peaceable and quiet. I cried all the way but dried my eyes so mother would not ask me why I was crying for I could not tell her as I did not know myself. I told no one about it but it is something that is a pleasant memory still, and if the Lord has truly appeared to me along life's way it began there. It was not long until those I ran with began to join some church. I thought it foolish for children to join and go right on dancing and doing as before. The time came when I began to get uneasy about my condition and could not rest any longer. I was about fourteen years old when I went up to be prayed for at a protracted meeting, but instead of helping me I got

worse. They told me all I lacked was to surrender all to Jesus and he would do the rest, but I realized I had tried to do that and no relief came. Then they told me to join the church and be baptized. I knew they did not understand my feeling at all. I talked to my mother about it, and she said if I wanted to join some church to first read the Bible and see who preached according to its teaching and my way of seeing it, and then that was where I should join. I did not find where it taught God will if you will so I did not then feel I was ready to join any church, but I could no longer be at ease. The Scriptures said, "Ye must be born again." This was something to be done for me and not by me. I was all mixed up. I would try to do the right thing but knew not how to bring about a new birth. I was so afraid it was not for me. I knew I would have to die some day. I became so burdened I wished I could change places with a dumb brute that would die and be no more, or a tree to be cut down, made into wood and burned up. One day I read where it said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled", and not may be. Oh, how glad I was to find that for I felt that must mean such as my case, and I thought I understood then, and I would have to wait God's time. I hope his time came one morning. I arose and my burden was gone. Oh, how happy I was! The birds, fields, and even the trees I had wished to exchange places with all seemed to be praising their Creator. There was nothing in the way now. I could talk to my Saviour now and he was listening. For several days his smile seemed almost visible. When I was alone I was talking, and praising him for his goodness. It seemed I could talk the rest of my days and the half could never be told. I knew what church I wanted to join but before the opportunity came I was afraid for they all looked so good to me. I was so little I could not ask for a home with them. The preaching was so plain to me. They could tell my feeling so much better than I could. I did long to be one among them. I hated for the invitation for members to be given for it seemed I could not stand to refuse and could not go. One day I thought I waked up to myself. I knew others went and enjoyed the good preaching and did not join and so could I. I could hardly wait for preaching day to come again so I could go hear them sing, preach and talk to each other as I did so love to do. Little did I know my time had come. I was unable to hide my feelings and could no longer refuse. I was not able to tell them my feelings, but was questioned and received and baptized the following month. All was well with me for awhile. I enjoyed reading the whole book of St. John and I felt my troubles were over. But alas! Many storms have come and many distresses and sore trials have befallen me along life's way. I have learned through suffering that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Having gone down to the sea (I hope) I have learned that salvation is of the Lord. His blessings come to his children as the dew falls upon the grass watering it and causing it to come forth. Just so does his word come and accomplish the thing whereunto it is sent. He leads us in ways we

know not and in paths we have not known, yea, he leadeth us beside the still waters, and maketh us to lie down in green pastures. One of my sorest trials was my becoming so cold, indifferent and unconcerned before my God. I thought I could not live. I would ask the brethren and sisters home with me from church, but in my heart I felt that if they knew me as I knew myself they would not go. (This is the mutual experience of the family of God in our association with one another. W.D.G.) This trying time lasted me for a year. I wondered if I had fallen to rise no more. I felt to be sinking in despair, like Peter on the water. How I did desire to cry unto the Lord like he did, save or I perish, but he was not there. I had searched everywhere and I could not find him. When I would try to read it was a sealed book. I could not sing and my prayers seemed like mockery. I will never forget one day while so tired and weary, I thought I would go to some place and offer a prayer again. When I got to the place something said to me, the Lord may strike you dead and I was afraid to try. My strength was all gone and I gave up. I went back to my work thinking that I was receiving my just reward. I was so rebellious and sinful the Lord had turned from me, even though I felt the sweet experiences I had enjoyed in the past must have come down from heaven, and that he would not suffer my soul to be lost in hell for his work is a perfect work as he does not change. It was he, as I hoped, that had begun the work in my heart and no one was able to make him fail, but I felt I had sinned and he would not allow me to enjoy his loving presence here any more, but would raise me up again the last day, and that was all the hope I had left. One day I was busy at my work not even thinking on these things, and all at once my heart leaped with joy, and was full of praise to him for his unchanging love and mercy to unworthy me. I felt that I could exclaim with Jonah that "Salvation is of the Lord." Your article, if I am not deceived, fit my experience so closely I felt it good to write and tell you so. Satan is always waiting to tell me I have done wrong and should not send what I have written, but I hope you will spread the mantle of charity over my imperfections and forgive all that is wrong. If what I have written is in line with the way the Lord leads his children it is all of him, "For in him we live, and move, and have our being." I wanted you to know how much your article meant to me. The dear old SIGNS is full of good reading and I hope the Lord will uphold it by the word of his power. Yours in hope of eternal life.

Mrs. LUTHER CAMPBELL

(We wish to thank Elder Griffin for forwarding to us the foregoing letter for publication in the SIGNS. We thoroughly agree with him that such articles should not be hid away, and we hope the recipients of all such letters will send them to us to be shared with our readers. R.L.D.)

MY DEAR FAMILY:

I feel as much a blank to write as I ever have. I cannot think of words that will start to express my feelings. Of myself I cannot think. I feel that I have been made to know that it is only by the

grace of God that I can act and talk even with natural sense. Of myself I cannot even do this. Mama, you expressed my feelings so well concerning Mr. O'Briant. If not mistaken I, too, love him more than I can tell. His preaching has suited my feelings as much as any I have ever heard. I do not feel that I will ever forget his words at Mr. Hill's father's funeral. They expressed my feelings so much concerning the helplessness of man. You all know what I mean for I have often spoken of what he said. His words were that this man of himself has as much power now as when he was living. How well this expresses what I feel that I have been made to know. Papa, you expressed my feelings so well. My feeling of ashamedness is so great sometimes that I am made to feel that I can never come home again. Dear family, I feel that if I could just tell you all in part what I sometimes feel in my exeperience it would do my poor soul good. Many days have passed during which I coud not even cry. As I heard Mr. Jones of Walla Walla say while I was there, there were times in his life when he tried to pray for tears but none woud come. And so it has been with me. I have felt so far away and alone from the things that I feel I have been made to love. I have tried to change this old hard and stony heart of mine; I have tried to bring back the joyful times that I feel I have been blessed to enjoy at the many good meetings that I have attended; I have tried to think of you all at home but not an enjoyable thought could I think. Dear family, how can I believe anything but that man is helpless in everything and in every way, and that it is only by the grace of God that we live, move and have our being. I thank God that it is so with me and not as I have just heard a boy say concerning runninng around with women and he is a married man. He said, "I just love living in sin." O how glad and I hope thankful I feel tonight that God has made it different with this sinner. Instead of loving the lust of this world I feel that I have been made to hate this world and worldly things, even my own life, and to love Jesus and his dear saints.

"My God, my portion and my love,
My everlasting all;
I've none but Thee in heaven above,
Or on this earthly ball."

Somehow I feel tonight that I want to come back home, and take you all in my arms and tell you how good the Lord of heaven and earth has been to me, a worm of the dust, all the days of my unprofitable life. I want to tell you that if I were blessed to tell you on and on how merciful God has been to this sinner it would only be in part. I do not believe that I will ever, while in this world, be able to express the greatness and goodness of God to me in fullness, but I feel glad that I have been made to long for that day when I hope that I will be in that number that shall be raised in the likeness of Jesus and be carried to that city whose maker and builder is God. There to be forever satisfied, singing praises to God forever and ever. I received a good card and an Easter card from you all. Enjoyed them very much. I do not feel worthy of your feelings and of your fellowship, but I feel that I can truthfully say that I love them, and that it is only by the grace of God that it is

so with us..Hope I am thankful. I want you all to know that I have enjoyed the many good letters that I have received from you, and hope that I will be blessed to continue to hear from you as the days go by. If the time comes when we do not hear from each other the God of heaven and earth who has all power, and the powers that be were ordained of him, who I feel has blessed us to meet together in bonds of love, though far apart we be, will continue to bless us as he has purposed before the foundation of the world no matter where we are or what the conditions may be. As you wrote in the Easter card, Mama, all the bombs which he purposed to burst will never disturb his almighty hand. If not mistaken I have been made to believe this to the joy of my soul yet it has been the crucifixion of the flesh. As you write, when I am blessed to feel the truth of it, I can joyfully say that the sweetness by far outweighs the bitterness. Papa, I am glad to hear that you are getting along well, that you are blessed with strength to do your work. Hope this continues. Do not think I will call you from this place but hope to call you from the point of embarkation. I will let you know about when I will call. I am sending home the rest of my letters but I am sending them in letters as I have but a few. Mama I enjoy your writing often. Would like to hear from Papa and the rest more often. Dear boys, hope this finds you all well. I am feeling better today than I did. With love to all, your unworthy son. BURCH

Sgt. Burch C. Wray,
34212182, 337th Bomb Sq.,
96th B.G., A.P.O. 3917
c/o P.M., New York

My Dear Family:

Hope this finds you all enjoying good health. I am feeling O.K. for which I hope that I am thankful. Have just received your good letter, and I cannot express the joy that was mine while reading it. It is such a wonderful blessing to a poor sinner like me to receive such good letters from home. Oh, that I will always be kept in such a way that you all, together with all other Old Baptists, also myself will not be deceived in this sinner. I also received a mighty good letter from another lady in the state of Washington. Her letter is much the same as the one I received from Mrs. Trunidge. What a wonderful blessing bestowed on me who is but dust and ashes. Dear folks, I cannot express my unworthy feelings. This lady is an Old Baptist and she believes what I hope I have been made to believe. My dear family, I must confess that this a good place to be. The other day while standing in line waiting for dinner I felt that I was blessed in my feelings to shout praises to God, and I was humming the tune to this song, "Cast down but not destroyed." These words were sweet to my soul and I was made to feel like traveling on. Yes, my dear mother, I feel that I can truthfully say that this a good place to be, and that my joys not only outweigh my sorrows, but they are a part of my joys. I thank God for every time that I have ever been made to feel cast down, for every time that I have been made to hang my head and ask God to have mercy on my poor soul, for every time that I have ever been made to groan in sorrow over my many sins,

for every sorrowful tear that I have been made to shed over my sinful and helpless condition. I thank Almighty God that I have been "Cast down but not destroyed." O Lord, thou has been so good to me all the days of my sinful and unprofitable life. Thou hast blessed me with a God fearing family, thou hast blessed me with natural food and clothing for the body of flesh, and above all, if not mistaken, blessed me with a hope in thy Son which is an anchor of my soul both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil. This God who has all power and doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and who provided food for the raven has also, if not deceived, provided food for my soul. Dear family, sometimes I feel like shouting praises, yes, let everything within me praise his holy name. I have just received more letters, a good one from you all and mighty good ones from Elder Jones, Elder Brooks, Mr. Sam Knight, and last but not least Aunt Minnie Smith. There are not words that will express my unworthy feelings in fullness. I have been made, if not mistaken, to hope and long for that day, as Mr. Hill says, which all other days were made for when I hope that I shall be raised together with the whole family of God in the likeness of King Jesus, and carried to that city whose maker and builder is God. There to be forever satisfied, singing praises forever and ever to God for his wonderful works to us worms of the dust. Mama I have a Scripture that I want you all to tell me what you think about it. It is Romans 11:28. "As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the father's sakes." And on down through the thirty-second verse. I hope that I feel and realize that we of ourselves cannot reason these things out, but I was reading this chapter the other day and I am satisfied no natural mind can understand this, and I am fearful sometimes that a natural mind is all there is to me. I feel that I want to hear what you all think of this. Of all the letters I receive there are none that I esteem above the ones I get from my dear family. I have received many that testify to the same blessed truth, and when they are thus I do not think one better than the other. Dear Haywood and Rachel I surely did miss not hearing from you today. Hope you enjoyed being at Mr. and Mrs. Pyrtle's and I am sure that you did as it is a good place to be. Haywood I am glad you are liking your job and hope you will continue to do so. Rachel I hope that all your folks are well. I love to hear from the dear boys and certainly did enjoy their letters. They were sweet to me. Sugg, Hugh and Junior, all of you write often. I enjoy so much reading all of your letters testifying that you all have been made to fear this great and merciful God. I hope to send you all a Christmas present but do not send me anything more as I have more than I can carry well now. You have already sent me more than I deserve. Mr. Jones said in in his letter he did not know of an Old Baptist Church nearer than three hundred miles. That is about the distance to Weiser, Idaho to Mrs. Trunidge's church. She said that is the only one

she knows in this state. I will send their letters home before long, I feel that you will enjoy them and also enjoy writing to them. Mama, I dreamed of Wilmos being in much sorrow last night, and I thought I felt to be in it with him. In the dream he, Ida and myself were together and Ida fell to the ground and began to draw and twist in pain. Her body was drawn out of shape and she was suffering terribly. Wilmos stooped over shedding tears of sorrow and tried to help her. As he did so I, too, stooped over to help her and began shedding tears of sorrow. I thought we were both working together trying to ease her pain. I do not know what the meaning of this is or whether there is any meaning. We know not what is in the future. I believe, although I cannot always feel it, that if we are what we hope we are our sorrows, no matter how sorrowful, are a part of our joys because at the appointed time of God we are made to rejoice and thank him for every one of them. I do not know that this is right but it is my feeling at this time. I did not hear from Papa to-day. Hope he is well. I surely enjoy his good letters and hope to hear from him soon. Will close hoping to hear from you all often. Love and best wishes to all. Your unworthy son. BURCH

Sgt. Burch C. Wray,
34212182, 337th Bomb Sq.,
96th B.G., A.P.O. 3917
c/o P.M., New York

Route 1, CAMILLUS, N. Y.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

Ever since I received the SIGNS with the announcement that you were going to publish a book on the resurrection I thought I would write to order one or two copies but kept putting it off. Yesterday our daughter, Lillian Becker, said she was going to order a copy and I told her I would send you a letter with her order. Have not forgotten the sermons you preached at the association. They were very effective. Undoubtedly just what many of us needed. For some time my mind has been directed to the Old Testament. The same God rules today that did then, and has been ever since he spoke the world into existence. I believe that Jesus was with him at the time and was given an inheritance of the people of Adam's race, sinners depraved by nature. He had to show all through the Old Testament that none of Adam's race could save themselves. They could not keep the ten commandments, all of their offerings could not cleanse from sin. Jesus had to come to earth, born of woman, to suffer, bleed, die and be raised to accomplish a salvation for those that the Father gave him and only those, none that think they can save themselves. Those that he laid down his life for will be raised and be like him. I believe as man was made after his image that he will be raised entirely as he is, see Jesus as he is and be like him. In 2 Kings, second chapter we read that Elisha cleansed the waters of Jericho by putting salt that was brought to him in a new cruise, and in the fourth chapter meal was used for cleansing the pottage. I would like to have that written on. 2 Kings, fourth chapter, verses thirty-eight to forty-two. If other subjects seem better to you or more fitting do not bother. The SIGNS are good. They are read and reread. I would have liked to send you another subscription but

I do not know of any one who would enjoy them. Will wait and see what the Lord will do. I know all will be just as he wills. He does his whole pleasure in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. He is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and he knows them that trust in him. Your sister in hope.

AGNES B. GOODRICH

1101-5th Ave., COUNCIL BLUFFS, Iowa

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

I just received current copy of the SIGNS and noticed that my subscription had expired. I am enclosing $2 for renewal. I have received much comfort at times by reading the SIGNS. In a rapidly changing world that is full of death and destruction it is refreshing to know that there are a few people yet that believe that God is an unchangeable God who does all things according to his own purpose and will, and none can say, "what doest thou?" I have been trying to preach for the Old School Baptists for twenty years or more and have many people ask me if God is love why does he allow people to do what they are doing now. My answer is God's love has nothing to do with it, or any man that has God's love in him. It is the work of the flesh and devil. Pity though it be, there are millions of God's people innocently involved in the awful conflict. Were it not that I believe that God permits such things to come upon us for some reason beyond my poor mind to understand, and that in his own time he will say, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed," I would indeed despair. We are forced to walk by faith and not by sight. May God's rich grace abound in you all. A poor sinner saved by grace if at all.

J. C. JONES

Route 2, Box 198, DINUBA, Cal.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

Would that I could feel certain that I have the right to the liberty to address you thus. Be that as it may I will assume that there will be no wrong done to tell you how I appreciate and what pleasure I get out of reading the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. In this day when all the the gods you hear of over the air, and from most every pulpit have no power or hold no office above that which their would be worshippers in their minds allow them to have, it is indeed a pleasure and a blessing to get to enjoy through the SIGNS the mutual fellowship of brethren of like mind, who have been brought to the knowledge of God. Yes, a God who is independent, sovereign king and ruler over his kingdom. The God who created, supports and will dispose of all things it pleased or pleases his sovereign will. I find it much to be thankful for, Brother Dodson, so having received much it is only right that I should show my appreciation by keeping my subscription paid up to date, thereby fulfilling my duty and obligation to you and the brethren, who like myself must receive untold blessings through our little paper the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I will enclose funds to bring my subscription up to date, and any balance apply to the aid of the SIGNS that such as enjoy its messages may continue to be benefitted. In bonds of love I hope your brother,

GEORGE A. CARLSON

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. SEPTEMBER, 1943

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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and remittances made payable to,

SIGNS OF THE TIMES
P.O. Box No. 70
Rutherford, N. J.

TO THE READERS OF THE SIGNS

With this issue, I am giving up my present position as associate editor of the SIGNS.

In two recent issues, I tried to present my views on what has most surely been believed among us, since the Apostles' days, on the subject of the resurrection of the dead and the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Since then, I have seen and read the views of the Editor and Publisher of the SIGNS in his book called the Resurrection of the Dead. I find myself entirely opposed to his views. I am also told that most of the editors since Gilbert Beebe's day have not seen these truths as I view them. It is the intention of the publisher that the pages of the SIGNS shall be open for a free expression of what he calls "the two schools of thought." I have therefore concluded that I could not honestly serve the readers of the SIGNS in the future without turning my pen against many opinions that would find a place in its columns, which, I fear, would create confusion instead of peace. Might I say in conclusion, whatever be your judgment of my course, I want to thank you all for the great pleasure it has given me to serve you for the twenty years that are past. Your appreciation has been a great comfort and strength to me, but, above man's approval, I have always desired the approbation of God. G. R.

[In this life, the destinies of men sometimes carry even the very best of friends to different ports. The expanse of the sea of life is so vast and varied that it is utterly impossible for one individual to cover the whole of it. It requires many individuals traveling in diverse ways and directions to see all that is to be seen and to tell all that is to be told. Likewise, or even more so, in the city of our God, no one man can count all the towers or mark well all the bulwarks of Mount Zion. Jesus is head over all things to the church, which is his body and which is composed of many members, no one of which can truthfully say to the other, I have no need of thee. There is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." There is one Spirit, but a diversity of operations, and the apostle Paul tells us in this fourth chapter of Ephesians that "he gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body

of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Eph. 4:11-16. We are persuaded, and rejoice in the thought, that the final destination of all who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundations of the earth were laid, is one and the same, and that nothing or all things combined will ever be able to change that in the slightest degree, regardless of what this life may bring forth.

Our life has been such as to compel us, both in and outside of the church, to be considerate of the rights and privileges of others. In our humble opinion, what in large measure is wrong with the world today is that individuals and nations have been too intolerant and inconsiderate of each other and their respective rights to live and let live. If we must err in one direction or another towards our beloved brethren, we would much prefer to be too liberal and tolerant of them, and their views than otherwise. Elder W. D. Griffin, our new Associate Editor, said in his Salutatory, August, 1943, issue, "All the ifs and ands and buts that are hurled at the church, or individual, or editor, or preacher, or paper does not change nor alter the fact that no two of us are agreed upon all the Bible teaches." Elder Hassell in Hassell's Church History, after stating that it was his belief that the Old School Baptist churches in Canada and the United States, came much nearer than any other professing Christians to the models of the apostolic and primitive churches, followed that statement by saying: "At the same time, like the apostolic and primitive churches, they neither are nor claim to be perfect, only in Christ. Like those churches, they are not yet perfectly united in all points of doctrine and practice; there being still some diversity among them in the *understanding* of the mysterious doctrinal truths of the Trinity, Predestination, the nature of Regeneration, the condition of the soul between death and the end of the present dispensation, the Resurrection of the body, and the Judgment after Death," etc. He also took occasion to stress that *"in the great central doctrine of Salvation by Grace alone, through the Electing Love of God the Father, the Redeeming love of God the Son, and the Renewing Love of God the Spirit, and in the heartfelt obligation of adorning this holy doctrine with godly lives and conversation—they are perfectly agreed."* If we can be thoroughly agreed upon these last mentioned points, as most of the SIGNS' readers undoubtedly are, we feel we should be longsuffering and forbearing toward one another on the other points.

We are very sorry, indeed, that Brother George, as we prefer to call him, feels to withdraw from the Editorial Staff of the SIGNS. We believe that he will bear us out in the statement that at no time have we placed any restrictions upon his writings. Since he states that he is "entirely opposed" to our views as expressed in the book on the Resurrection of the Dead, which apparently is the basis of his resignation, we cannot be true to ourself and our convictions and do other than stand by the views which we expressed in that book; at the same time we endeavored to be fair to others by publishing their views, including those of our dear brother. He also says that he has been "told that most of the editors since Gilbert Beebe's day have not seen these truths" as he views them. Without reviewing the record of the editors, we would like to call attention to the fact that even Elder Gilbert Beebe, the founder of the paper, was sufficiently tolerant of his own son, Elder William L. Beebe, to permit him to express his views on this subject through the columns of the SIGNS during his lifetime, which views were different from those of the father. We wish very much that our brother might feel the same toward us. With reference to the following statement in our brother's resignation: "It is the intention of the publisher that the pages of the SIGNS shall be open for a free expression of what he calls 'the two schools of thought,' " we realize that it is possible to read into the phrase "free expression" a great deal; much more, in fact, than perhaps has ever been in our mind. Our readers know full well for themselves what our attitude has been in the past, and all we wish to say to them on this point now is that they continue to judge us by what actually appears in the paper. One of the main purposes of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as we conceive it, is that it shall be a medium for the exchange of proper ideas between good brethren on this and other subjects of vital interest to the household of faith. We would suggest to the writing brethren, however, that wherever possible they avoid extremes and show a right spirit in their communications, otherwise we shall reserve the right to withhold their articles from publication in our columns. Above all, let us stick to the word of God.

To the best of our knowledge and belief, a large majority of the elders whose articles appear in Part I of our book on the Resurrection of the Dead, served the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada most acceptably, and we truly hope while Brother Ruston takes leave of the Editorial Staff of the paper, he will from time to time make such contributions to our columns as he may feel to be directed by the Lord to write. We heartily join him in the statement that we "have always desired the approbation of God." Without this we would not want to go on. R. L. D.]

PROVIDENCES OF GOD

In submitting some thoughts under the above caption, we shall make three classifications: (1) those of an earthly nature and pertaining particularly to the present war; (2) those of a spiritual nature, as recorded in the Bible, and (3) those of a personal nature which have to do with our own experiences.

In the first category, innumerable

minor incidents could be cited which are constantly involving one or more individuals. A man adrift in an open boat for eighty-three days and kept alive by rain water and flying fish which fell in his boat, realized it was the hand of Providence which sustained him. Our own Eddie Rickenbacker and his men, afloat on the vast Pacific for nearly a month, were kept alive in part by a sea gull which, as he expressed it, "flew in from nowhere" and landed on his head, which he caught and they "ate head, body and bones, and all were delicious." In relating his experiences he said, "I believe I have been saved by Divine Providence." There is a great contrast between this and that of another man whom we heard over the radio who, after recounting a number of hair-breadth escapes from death, said in substance, *fate* had been very kind to him. We could but pity the poor, blind creature for not seeing that it was the hand of Providence which had preserved him from a watery grave. A few of the major providences of God in this terrible war might be seen in (a) the Germans not following up their victory in France at Dunkerque with an invasion of the British Isles, when it is claimed upon good authority that only slight resistance could have been made; (b) upon Hitler's one time ally, Joseph Stalin, turning against him with his almost invincible hordes of Russian soldiers. The Lord's hand can be seen here as it was in the days of Cyrus, whom the Lord raised up to deliver Israel from their enemies; (c) it can be seen at Tunisia, where tens of thousands of German and Italian soldiers, apparently well equipped with all the implements of warfare, laid down their arms and surrendered; (d) General McArthur must have witnessed it in one of the great battles of the southwest Pacific, for he said, "a kind Providence delivered the enemy into our hands." Millions of our own boys will undoubtedly witness the Providences of God by the time the bells of final victory toll.

In the second or biblical group of the providences of God, we shall be able to mention comparatively few for the pages of sacred history abounds with incidents of the watchcare over and salvation by God of his people. We will mention a small number, but a great many others will very readily occur to the minds of our readers. If we do no more, however, than stir up the pure minds of our readers and cause them to think upon God's faithfulness in keeping his people, and his love in caring for them all down through the ages, it will prove profitable to them.

Our first biblical character to be introduced will be Moses. He was born at a time when Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, typical of the power of darkness or the wicked rulers of this world, had decreed that all male children of the Jews should be put to death. His parents, however, seeing that he was a goodly child were more obedient to their heavenly King than they were to Pharaoh, and they made for Moses an ark of rushes and put him afloat on the sea beneath the ever watchful eye of their God, in whom they trusted. Their faith was amply rewarded by later developments, for it was none other than the hand of Providence which caused the

weeping babe to touch the heart of Pharaoh's daughter when she came down to the water's edge to bathe, to such an extent that she gave instructions whereby he was to be brought up in her father's palace, as though he was her very own, and it was, likewise, none other than the hand of a wonder-working Providence which divined the choosing of the babe's own mother to be his nurse-maid. Moses was to grow up and be trained by the very king who sought his life for future service to God in delivering Israel from the hand which oppressed them, his love for the things of the kingdom of God was to outweigh all the riches which Egypt's king had to offer, and by faith when he was come to years, he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." We thus see the wisdom and power of God in designing and developing a leader under the very nose of the king before whom he would be unswerving in his demands that he let Israel go.

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were three in whose lives the providences of God were to be unmistakably manifested When God called Abraham, he left his kindred, his land and country, and went out not knowing whither he went, but he believed God and it was accounted unto him for righteousness. The kind hand of Providence restrained the men of Egypt from taking Sarah after Abraham, through fear, had lied in telling them that she was his sister, and not his wife. The hand of Providence was seen in providing an offering when Abraham was ready to slay his son Isaac. It was seen in the choosing of a bride for Isaac, for the trusted servant of his father said, "Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." It was seen in the decision of Rebekah when she was asked if she would go with the man. She said, "I will go." David said, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." God's providence was seen in the famine which arose following the seven years of plenty, during which Joseph, unknowingly to his brethren, was in Egypt storing up corn for their needs. What a net work of God's providences are to be seen in all that transpired concerning Joseph and his brethren, which typified something far more important and wonderful than the events of that time, remarkable as they were. The overruling hand of God's providence stood out preeminently above and beyond all that wicked men and women could do, and God brought things to pass in such mysterious ways that even king Pharaoh himself saw that there was none so wise as Joseph.

The providence of God was clearly manifested in behalf of the three Hebrew children, in whose hearts had been implanted that faith and love which moves men and women of Adam's race to serve God rather than men, regardless of what the seeming consequences may be. To the eternal praise of our God and to the lasting comfort of the saints in all ages of the world, let it be repeated again and again "Great is thy faithfulness." He has never yet failed his people. Daniel con-

tinued to look to Jerusalem and pray to his God, who heard him in the hour of need and locked the jaws of the lions that they could not harm nor molest a hair of his head. God's providence was seen in the case of his handmaiden, Ruth, who found grace and favor with Boaz to such an extent that he not only gave instructions regarding her safety, but that handfuls of purpose should be dropped for her, thus supplying the needs of herself and her mother-in-law, Naomi. It was seen in the case of Queen Esther when she was compelled to go unbidden unto the king to plead for her own and the life of her people, which hung in the balance. It was seen in the overthrow of Haman's plans in building a gallows upon which to hang Mordecai, for thereon he himself in the providence of God was made to hang. How mysterious, indeed, are the ways of Providence!

In recording the providences of God, Job cannot be passed by, for he witnessed them to such an extent that he was made to exclaim, "I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee." Having suffered the loss of all things and experiencing afflictions such as few know anything about, he saw the hand of the Lord in the land of the living and, therefore, could say, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

The providences of God are to be seen in the life of David, in raising him from the sheepcote to be king over Israel; in preserving him and giving him a son, even by Uriah's wife, for Solomon was, indeed, a link in the chain which could not be removed, as it was through this lineage that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was come into the world. Is it any wonder that the apostle should have said, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Roms. 11:33. Solomon was to build a temple, the like of which was never known and is only exceeded by that which it typified—the church of the true and living God. The providences of God were made known to his prophets, both of minor and major degree, all of whom testified before hand of the sufferings of Christ and the glory which would follow. If one could sum up all the providences of God, combined they could not compare with his sending his only begotten Son into the world to save his people from their sins. Wonder of wonders, all must fade into utter insignificance by way of comparison to this. Here God outdid anything and everything that had hitherto been known of him, and it was all for the glorifying of himself and the lifting of the name of Jesus on high. It will, indeed, require an endless eternity to sound forth the praises of him who hath loved us, and redeemed us out of every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue. This was all according to the infinite plan of our Triune God, conceived and ordered in all things and sure before the morning stars sang together or the dust of the highest hills were laid.

We now come to the third and last phase of our topic, and in speaking of the providences of God concerning ourself, it would appear as though they have only been beheld after God has passed

by. The Lord said to Moses, "Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen." Ex. 33:20-23. Like Jacob, we have known what it was to feel "all these things are against me," while being sorely tried, but when we have been enabled to get a retrospect of the entire picture or plan we could say, "It is enough." Looking back over the way we have come, we believe we can see that the hand of our God has not only preserved and kept us but that it has also guided us in the way that he would have us go. Says the poet,

> "The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
> My Father determined and wrote in his will."

He also says, "My cross and my crown are both willed by my God." Believing this, as we most surely do, we have long since learned to look for the hand of the Lord in our travels. From the very first, we have had to confess that He has led us by a way we had not known and into paths which we never would have chosen. The way in which we were taught the mystery of his works and ways in bringing us into his militant fold, we are persuaded, was according to his own purpose in grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, and although, at first, we fought with hands uplifted high against the work of the ministry we now hope we see that it was none other than the hand of Providence working where no man could hinder. At the time of our ordination we did not see the necessity for it. Elder John McConnell, the pastor of the church in New York City was apparently in good health, with the promise of many years to serve his brethren who were devoted to him, and so far as we could see there was no good reason why we should be ordained, but within six month's time the msssenger of death was sent to claim him. It was not until we were called to the pastorate of the church that we learned through his companion that he had told her on the day that we were ordained he had helped ordain his successor. We were then made to hope that we could see that God had moved in a mysterious way. We had tried very hard to leave this part of the country, but we have been made to see, we believe, that the hand of Providence had hedged us in, and we have many times since been made to thank God from the depth of our heart for casting our lot in such pleasant places and among brethren who are the salt of the earth.

Especially do we believe that it was none other than the hand of Providence which brought about the circumstances that resulted in our taking over the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. There was a chain of events which transpired at the time Mr. Gilbert Beebe was forced to give up the publication of the paper that was nothing short of amazing to us, and we could not help believing that God had raised us up to carry on and continue sending forth the paper to the brethren. We are looking to him to supply our every need, and are confident if he has called us unto this work he will enable

us to send forth that spiritual food upon which the hungry can feed, who in turn will have a mind to lend whatever support may be necessary for its continued publication. We are convinced that in the providences of God will be found adversity as well as prosperity; that there will be trials, tribulations and sorrows set over against joy and peace and happiness. We are looking for this God who hath delivered and doth deliver to yet deliver us. Many has been the time when he has made darkness light before us, when he has brought us up out of the horrible pit, placed our feet upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, and put a song of praise to him in our mouth. We wish to relate one of our most recent experiences: We had received a severe blow from an unexpected source, and for the time being we were verily stunned. We decided to walk down town for a change and some fresh air, and as we started down one of the main thoroughfares of our town, we heard the chimes of one of the local churches ringing out the tune of an old hymn which was a favorite with our father. As the hymn is not in all of our books, we want to quote it here in full:

Jesus, Saviour, pilot me
Over life's tempestuous sea;
Unknown waves before me roll,
Hiding rock and treacherous shoal;
Chart and compass came from Thee:
  Jesus, Savior, pilot me.

As a mother stills her child,
Thou canst hush the ocean wild;
Boisterous waves obey Thy will
When thou sayest to them, "Be still!"
Wonderous Sovereign of the sea,
  Jesus, Savior, pilot me.

When, at last, I near the shore,
And the fearful breakers roar
Twixt me and the peaceful rest,
Then, while leaning on Thy breast,
May I hear Thee say to me,
"Fear not: I will pilot thee!"

It just seemed as the Lord himself spoke to our fearful soul and said, "Fear not: I will pilot thee," and we were made to rejoice almost aloud on the street and say, Lord, "It is enough" and "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." With such visitations as these, we can but hold on our way. How true and comforting are the words of the apostle Paul where he says, "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

Sister GLENNA MAE WATSON PULLIAM, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. L. G. Watson, Prospect Hill, N. C., was born September 20, 1912 and departed this life June 18, 1943; making her stay on earth 30 years, 8 months and 23 days.

She was married April 20, 1935. Her husband, Pvt. James Carlton Pulliam, now in the armed forces, survives; also to mourn her loss are her dear parents, two sisters and three brothers, three of which are in the armed services—one sister and brother in the army and one brother in the navy.

On Monday after the third Sunday in July 1941, at the close of the Lower Country Line Association, Sister Glenna was received into the fellowship of the church and baptized by the unworthy writer on the following second Sunday at Wheelers Church.

She was a lovely sister with a sweet, cheerful disposition that brightened the lives of those around her. She loved the doctrine of salvation by grace, the supreme sovereignty of God, the one who "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." She knew the utter depravity of man in all his faculties, and his dependence on God for all spiritual strength and knowledge, which is only taught those who have spiritual wisdom and are dead to the doctrine of salvation by the works of man.

Sister Pulliam has paid the debt required of

all of us. We miss her. Her departure has caused a vacancy that cannot be filled, both in her home and in her church. While we are loath to give her up at such an early age, we desire to be submissive to Him, who works and none can hinder, hinders and none can work.

On Sunday afternoon, June 18th, her body was laid to rest in the Cooper Cemetery, beneath a mound of flowers contributed by her many friends, there to await the resurrection morn, when Jesus will come the second time without sin unto salvation to gather his loved ones home where sickness, sorrow, pain and death are seen and felt no more.

Humbly submitted by her unworthy pastor,
T. F. ADAMS

MRS. AGNES D. BALLARD, our sister in Christ, departed this life June 20, 1943, at the home of her son, Floyd Ballard, 730 Wallace St., Birmingham, Mich. She was born June 10, 1867, the daughter of William and Carrie Winchell at Ashton, N. Y. Her stay on earth was 76 years and 10 days. She was married to Ezra P. Ballard June 17, 1883, and to this union were born two sons and one daughter. The daughter, Orpha, passed away several years ago and Mr. Ballard in 1938. She is survived by two sons, Floyd of Birmingham, Mich., and Sidney, a private in the U. S. Army now stationed at Salt Lake City, Utah. There are eleven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren also one sister, Mrs. Effie Wolfersteig, Newton Hook, N. Y., and one brother, Stewart Winchell, Saginaw, Mich. The funeral service was conducted June 25, by Elder George Ruston, Dutton, Ontario, Canada, and the interment was in Fremont Cemetery, Nelson, Saginaw Co., Mich.

Most of sister Ballard's life was spent in New York State but she moved to Michigan in 1917. She united with the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in New York City by relation of experience Dec. 4, 1904, and was baptized on Dec. 11, 1904 by Elder John McConnell who was then pastor of the church. She was a faithful member of the church until death. She loved the truth in its purity and was highly esteemed and loved for the truth's sake, not only by her immediate brethren, but by those of like precious faith with whom she came in contact. We shall mourn the loss of our sister as a member of Ebenezer Church, but our hope is in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that through him we shall all be brought forth more than conquerors through him that loved us and gave himself for us. May the Lord comfort the bereaved ones if it be his will so to do. R.L.D.

SISTER MARIA CUDNEY FRENCH was called to her eternal home July 14, 1943. She was born in the town of Olive on February 17, 1857, making her stay on earth over eighty-six years. She was the daughter of Benjamin and Nancy Cudney. The deceased resided with Miss Clara Warden of Dallas, Pa., at the time of her death. Sister French was united in marriage to Monroe French and to this union was born two sons who passed away many years ago. For many years she resided in Centerville, Knowlton Township, New Jersey. She was received into the fellowship of the Olive and Hurley Church at Shokan, New York, and was baptized by the late Elder J. D. Hubbell August 17, 1890. She was a faithful member until her death, always attending the meetings whenever possible and manifesting a lively interest in the welfare of the church. During recent years her home was so far from the place of meeting, that she did not attend with former frequency the meetings of her church, but the Bible and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES were her companions and she enjoyed sweet meditations in reading them. She is survived by three grandchildren, Mrs. Madelin Fochring of Philadelphia; Mrs. Elizabeth E. Hsoschele of Kingston, Pa.; Mrs. Florence Sheltraw of St. Charles, Michigan; also six great grandchildren. Services were held Saturday afternoon, July 17th, 1943 in the Knowlton Presbyterian Church with the pastor, R. Paul Jassinrides officiating. Burial was in Knowlton Cemetery, N. J., by the side of her late husband, who died in 1932. Sister French was a woman of noble qualities of character, and her walk evidenced the life of one who is born of an incorruptible seed by the word of God. She will be greatly missed by her relatives and by the brethren of the church of her membership.

ORVILLE WINCHELL

MRS. IDA FRANK (SAWIN) STOUT died in Springfield, Illinois on May 26, 1943. The daughter of Elder and Mrs. John G. Sawin, she was born in Coles County, Illinois on August 14, 1863. She was married to Joab P. Stout in 1886, and the remainder of her life was spent in Sangamon County, Illinois. Four children survive her: John P. Stout, Frank L. Stout, Edith L. Stout, all of Chatham, Illinois, and Lt. George D. Stout, now stationed at Lubbock Field, Lubbock, Texas.

At an early age, Ida F. Sawin united with the

Old School Baptist Church in Coles County, and after her marriage transferred her letter to the Salem Sugar Creek Church in Sangamon County. Although this church has been inactive since the death of Elder Sawin, the last pastor, in 1932, Mrs. Stout kept the faith of her fathers. She retained always in her memory the pleasant recollections of a winter spent in Newark, Delaware, when she was a child, and her father had charge of Welch Tract church.

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word.
What more can He say than to you He hath said
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled."

(Miss) EDITH L. STOUT.

HENRY M. BERRY, son of Samuel and Mary Berry who preceded him in death, was born in Pape Co., Illinois, April 13, 1874 and departed this life October 28, 1942, making his stay on earth 68 years, 6 months and 15 days. He leaves to mourn his death his widow, Mrs. Minnie Berry, one step-daughter, Mrs. Hersley Steppy, Kansas City, Mo., one brother, L. P. Berry, Dowell, Ill. and two sisters, Mrs. Estelle Ramage, Salem, Ky. and Mrs. Elvira Harriss, Duquoin, Ill. Brother Berry had long been a firm believer in the predestination of all things and his home was an Old Baptist home. In 1939 the association was held with his home church and there this precious brother came to his friends and told them how great things the Lord had done for him. He was given a home among them and baptized the second Sunday in October. His church has lost a faithful member and the Baptists a true friend. His pastor, Elder L. P. Harriss, officiated at the funeral. His body lies in Nine Mile Cemetery, Perry Co., Ill.

"Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar
When I put out to sea.

"For though from out our bourne of time and place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar."

BRYAN MORRIS

CORRECTION

On page 214 of the September issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES appeared a portion of the obituary of MOLCOM W. SMALL, written by Sister Sarah McPhail, of Dutton, Ontario. The balance of this obituary should have been continued on the following page, but in some way it was omitted by the printer. We are very sorry, indeed, that this error occurred, and the best we can do now is to publish the remaining part of the obituary below:

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worthy citizen, true helper for the cause of Jesus Christ and its welfare. He leaves to mourn his loss his wife, three sons and one daughter. Three brothers, Melvin of Detroit, Clarence on the homestead, Samuel of San Mateo, California and one sister, Jeanette of St. Thomas, Ontario. His pastor, Elder George Ruston, preached ably to a large company of relatives, friends and neighbors in our Dunwich meeting-house. Burial was in Fairview Cemetery. Written by his aunt.

(Mrs.) SARAH McPHAIL

AUTHORIZED AGENTS

We are pleased to inform our readers that the following Ministers have very kindly consented to receive subscriptions, both NEW and Renewals, for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

As many of our subscribers do not have checking accounts and it inconveniences them to obtain Money Orders, we believe they will appreciate the privilege of subscribing through some minister who is authorized to accept their funds and remit to us.

We would like to appoint Ministers in other parts of the country to represent us, and hope they will write us for details. R. L. D.

ALABAMA

Elder Lytle Burns, Florence, Ala.
Elder F. A. Collins, Hartford, Ala.
Elder W. D. Griffin, Fayette, Ala.

KENTUCKY

Elder G. B. Bird, Canada, Ky.

MARYLAND

Elder Harold M. Bennett, Mardela Springs, Md.

OKLAHOMA

Elder W. N. Green, Box 654, Altus, Okla.

NORTH CAROLINA

Elder T. F. Adams, Willow Springs, N. C.
Elder E. L. Cobb, Wilson, N. C.
Elder M. F. Westbrook, Rt. 3, Dunn, N. C.

VIRGINIA

Elder J. E. Burgess, Rt. 1, Box 180, Martinsville, Va.
Elder Roy S. Smith, Cascade, Va.
Elder David V. Spangler, Rt. 6, Danville, Va.

PERMANENT OFFER
(until further notice)
TWO BOOKS
PREDESTINATION AND RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

Either one of these books will be given FREE with a year's subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at $2. to anyone who is not now a subscriber to the paper, or to any old subscriber who will send us a NEW subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at $2. The price of the books alone is $1. each. We only have about seventy (70) of the books on Predestination on hand, but as long as they last we shall be glad to send them out on the above basis. R. L. D.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS".

Mrs. E. D. Stevens, N. Y., $3; Mrs. F. Williams, Va., $1; Mrs. S. E. Brown, Tex., $5.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Elder W. O. Wammack wishes to announce that his address has been changed to 3122 N. Lafayette Circle, Memphis, Tenn.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Lord willing, there will be meeting in the North Berwick (Maine) meeting-house on Saturday afternoon before and 2nd Sunday, October 9th and 10th.
R. LESTER DODSON.

ASSOCIATIONAL NOTICE

Owing to government restrictions on traveling, there will be no session of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting either for this current year or for the duration of the war. It is our hope to resume these annual meetings as soon as possible after the war ends.
(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS, Pastor.
Leesburg, Virginia.

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sundays in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a.m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meeting-house, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed.
R. LESTER DODSON.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Forest Grove Church, near Parsonsburg, Wicomico Co., Maryland, Wednesday and Thursday, Oct. 20 and 21, 1943. We cordially invite sister churches, brethren, sisters and friends of other churches of our faith and order to meet with us. We especially invite our ministers and others of our faith and order, who are in good standing with their home churches, to be with us. Trains and buses will be met in Salisbury, Md., Tuesday afternoon and evening before the meeting and convey those coming to places of entertainment.
H. M. BENNETT, Pastor.
FANNIE ADKINS, Clerk.

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.
O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canada, California.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before. E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th Street, Mayfield, Ky. Those interested will be welcome.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 A. M. 2 P. M.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a. m. and 2 p. m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m. C. W. BOND, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

1315 Columbia Avenue

(PARK AVENUE HALL)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month

At 10:30 A. M.

ALL WELCOME

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10.30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Texas.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sundays in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P. M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sundays each month at 11:00 A. M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Salem Church, four miles south of Teague, Texas, meets on Saturday before the first Sunday in each month in conference.

W. A. LITTLE, Pastor.
DORA WREN, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10.30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a. m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R. F. D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

VOL. III RUTHERFORD, N. J., NOVEMBER, 1943 No 11

CORRESPONDENCE

The Scripture is an Instructor and Monitor to the Christian.

Holy Bible! book divine!
Precious treasure! thou art mine!
Mine, to teach me whence I came,
Mine, to teach me what I am.

Mine, to chide me when I rove,
Mine, to show a Saviour's love;
Mine art thou to guard my feet,
Mine to judge, condemn, acquit.

Mine, to comfort in distress,
If the Holy Spirit bless,
Mine to show by living faith
Man can triumph over death.

Mine, to tell of joys to come
And the rebel sinner's doom;
O, thou precious book divine!
Precious treasure! thou art mine.

(Mrs.) JENNIE CLIFFORD
Route 1, Hammond, W. Va.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS AND ITS READERS:

I thought with my renewal I would send you a letter and now it seems I have no subject to write on. We know the Bible is full of subjects, but when man is shut up what can he do? He is sinful and vile and void of understanding in himself, but God, the eternal God, who created all things by Jesus Christ and these things being hid in God from the children of men, and man being made subject to vanity his carnal mind is at enmity against God, not subject to God's law nor indeed can be. It is no wonder then that he is at a loss to know what to write when it comes to a Bible subject because the Bible contains the truth and the will of God. God revealed the truth unto Abel, therefore, Abel offered a lamb of the flock showing forth the true Lamb of God who then stood as the Lamb of God already slain for sin even before he created Adam out of the ground because the earth was not yet created. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth and all things were hid in God until the appointed time for them to be developed. Then he began to manifest these hidden things to his children as he did to Abel. So with Noah, even at Noah's birth, it was said he was called Noah saying this shall comfort us concerning our toil and labor of hands. Concerning the ground which the Lord had cursed because man had sinned while in the garden of Eden, it being hid from man that Jesus stood as a lamb slain for the sins of his bride, the church, the Lamb's wife. As Eve was created in Adam so Christ's bride was chosen and elected in Christ before the world was, chosen in him to be made holy and without blame before him in love. God knew what Adam would do when he put him in the garden to dress and keep it. The earthly man Adam failed, but the heavenly man Adam did not fail, he kept and dressed his garden.

God plainly told Adam that in the day

that thou shalt eat thereof thou shalt surely die, so he ate, died, sinned and fell to till the ground that he was created for. Christ came and did what he stood for as the slain Lamb to dress and keep his garden. Both of God's purposes were fulfilled. The earth was tilled by the earthly man Adam and the garden was dressed and kept by the heavenly man Adam. This was revealed at Noah's birth that he should comfort us. The us was his family in the ark, they were comforted there in being saved from death and destruction with the ungodly world. Noah's righteousness was of the Lord just like Abel's righteousness was the Lord our righteousness and all others who ever will be saved because it is "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." All men hath not faith because it was not given to them, but you my people believe because it was given to you to believe in Him like it was given to Abel and Noah and the prophets of old. Faith is the gift of God, so how can any one who reads and understands the Scriptures believe anything else. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Let us follow Jesus Christ when he was here and see what he did. Note for example, Zebedee with his two sons were in the ship and he called the two sons and said follow me. He did not call their father nor all that he came in contact with but he called whom he would. He did not choose everybody but he chose his wife. A man chooses a wife, marries her and calls her his wife yet man finds fault with Jesus for so doing. Why does he not take all the girls in the family where he gets his wife? Because he does not want them all. The one he has chosen is called by his name. It does not change the names of the other girls at all, it only leaves them just where they were. Why call God unjust then? Because they are evil and carnal and their carnal minds are at enmity against God, not subject to his law nor indeed can be. Noah was found righteous in his generation because the righteousness of Christ was imputed unto him. Christ was the only one found righteous in his generation. Noah and his family were the only ones called to enter the ark and not one failed to enter. So with Christ's generation not one of them shall ever fail to be saved. It is sure and certain the prodigal son was ransomed before he returned home because the ransomed of the Lord shall return. He was a redeemed son and not a law son. The elder shall serve the younger. Jacob have I loved, yes before he was born. Before he had done any good or evil that the election might stand. The election took place before the foundation of the world. "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." What is man anyway? He is full of corruption so why do some people feel to be so important and wise? Adam and Eve seemed to have been happy and content in the garden before they became wise, before they were influenced by the serpent. But after Eve was influenced she desired to be wise and after that sorrow and dread were on them. What comfort do we get out of it? Yours in hope of eternal life.

JAMES W. LINN

Route 3, Coleman, Texas

MR. AND MRS. F.E. SKINNER,
HOUSTON, TEXAS.

DEAR SISTER AND BROTHER:

I knew a fellow that dreamed one time he was standing before a very small crowd of peculiar, funny looking people and he held in his hand a little book like a Bible but it just had three books in it. Like Mattthew, Mark, etc. but several chapters in each book. This fellow said the

book seemed like a Bible but he did not remember the names of the books or a thing in the book, but he was trying to say something about the wonderful works of God and was reading from the first chapter of the last book in the book. Sometimes I am made to think all this world strife and confusion is the beginning of the end. I do not know, we are just human and I the least and most unworthy, but the biggest when it comes to manners and unrighteousness of my own. I just do not have any and cannot or have not found how to perform that which is good. I hope I can truthfully say the will to do is present, but I know I can say as Paul did "how to perform that which is good I find not." There are many good people on earth today who say they can do things. If so they are better than Paul, and in possession of a power that Paul did not have, and I do not believe it either. I believe such people affirm such in ignorance, and I am not guilty myself, but I hope I can say as Paul did in that "I did it ignorantly in unbelief." Paul worked at it so hard that he even cast the saints into prison, but it seems the harder he worked at it the smaller he saw himself at God's appointed time. Solomon saw himself blacker than the pots of Kedar. He saw himself in the true sense a helpless dependent sinner in the sight of God. I believe any one when he sees himself as the poor publican did cannot say anything except "God be merciful to me a sinner." Then he realizes he can do nothing about anything and that it is all done for him. God had a purpose in Paul doing as he did and also Solomon and all the rest whether Cain, Abel, Isaac, Ishmael, David, Sampson, Peter, John and every one, every human being from Adam and Eve on down to now and from now on. I know I have said I did not believe God predestinated every act of every man, but I have also said in some of my letters to you that I have said many things that were not right. I believe God has a purpose in every act of every man whether elect or non-elect, whether chosen of God or no, whether sheep or goat, good seed or tares. We know that God who cannot lie chose some and promised them eternal life in Christ before the world began. Christ, when he was on earth in speaking of the end of time, said he would separate his sheep from the goats, and I believe now there are sheep and goats on earth. But that judgment belongs to God and men had better let it alone. We are creatures subject to mistake "made subject to vanity." Vanity is unrighteousness, bigotry, hypocrisy and everything else that is against that which is right. What does that have to do with God predecreeing every act of every man, and why does he chastise his people if he predecrees every act both righteous and wicked? How could God's mercy, love and righteousness have been made known unto Paul (and all others) unless there had been need to show mercy. "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." Rom.11:32.

Again "All Israel shall be saved." "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." I am glad that *shall* is in there. In fact, take the *wills* and *shalls* out and what have you. The shalls and wills are just as positive in speaking of one subject as another. The shalls and wills of a king are his decrees to his subjects are they not? God is an all wise, infinite, supreme God and king of love, mercy and foreknowledge. He rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the

earth. None can stay his hand or say what doest thou. He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. When God says it shall or will be done or not be done it most certainly will be as he says. What has all this got to do with God decreeing every act of every man that ever was or ever will be on earth? Let us see what is written. "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked *shall* do wickedly. and the wise *shall* understand." Daniel 12:10. "He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken. Evil *shall* slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous *shall* be desolate. The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants: and *none* of them that trust in him *shall* be desolate." Psalms 34:20-22. Christ is speaking. "Verily I say unto you, All sins *shall* be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they *shall* blaspheme: But he that *shall* blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation." Mark 3:28-29. I believe these scriptures plainly teach that all men that ever were or ever will be on earth blaspheme, but all do not blaspheme against the Holy Ghost. If they do, all men are in danger of eternal damnation and I do not understand it to be so that any of those chosen and promised eternal life were ever in danger of eternal damnation. Some one might say Paul blasphemed against the Holy Ghost. Paul said he blasphemed etc. but did so in ignorance and unbelief, but I say Paul did not blaspheme against the Holy Ghost. Paul said, when it pleased God to reveal his son in me I conferred not with flesh and blood. He did not ask some one what to do. God told him what he must do and Paul did it, and that was the opposite of what he had been doing. Did he blaspheme against the Holy Ghost? "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Rom. 5:5. Read Rom. 1:16 and I Peter 1:5. I mention these to show, as I see it, that all men blaspheme. They are wicked and sinful and are made subject to vanity. They do nothing except follow after vanity, wickedness and unrighteousness until turned about as Paul was. God has a purpose in this, he saw the end from the beginning. All things were known unto him before creation, even the falling of a tree or a sparrow. Then is it not written "the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand?" Are they going to do anything except wickedness? Do you not believe that *shall* is a decree and God has a purpose in it? Was not this predecreed or predestinated? If there is a difference tell me. Are they going to do differently from what God said they would do? I say no. Will not some be purified and understand as God said? I say yes. Do they purify themselves or is it a gift? I say it is a gift and God's work and righteousness causing the creature to act through faith. Then does the scripture answer the question, why is this so with the wicked? Pharaoh was a wicked king of Egypt, even a "great dragon" as written in Ezekiel twenty-ninth chapter. In the ninth chapter of Romans we are told in speaking to Pharoah, "For this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." All this showed God's mercy and power to the glory of God as in all cases of the wicked he shows his power over their power to his glory. I believe the old dragon is still at work, even trying to make people believe he is God, but I also believe he will end as did Pharaoh. God has a purpose in the doings of the earth at present. As far as I know there may be some Pauls even now who are doing everything except the righteousness of God and I believe God has a purpose in that, and that he de-

creed or predestinated it, and that he also predestinated that at his (God's) appointed time that same one *shall* be turned about and build the things he once tore down as Paul did. All this is to show God's chosen how little they are, how helpless, how dependent and to teach them something of God's mercy and love and show forth his power. "We love him, because he first loved us." "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." If we had to work to get it that would be paying, but it is a gift and we cannot claim to work or pay. We are admonished to be not high minded but fear. "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." I have written a much longer letter than I intended to do when I started. All mistakes in it lay to me as being an imperfect creature. If anything in it is comforting or is truth it was truth before I wrote it so I desire no credit whatsoever for it. I can only say I hope, I believe. If we agree we rejoice together and both say as did the poor publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Both of you write us when you feel like it. URBANE

Hartford, Ala.

MINISTRY OF MERCY

2 Cor. 4

Paul speaks here of a specific ministry, one where mercy is in vogue. A ministry in the absence of a minister would be void, therefore, we see the essentiality of a ministry necessitating a minister. He also sounds a note of possession and reception. The former is this specific ministry, the latter mercy, assuring those who are the recipients of the above said ministry and mercy they do not faint. I, individually, feel there is no cause for faint to those who are the possessors of both this ministry and mercy, assured of the fact by personal experience that all avenues of escape having been sought and none found, but this ministry opened the door of mercy and made me cry, "Come thou fount of every blessing." I love this ministry better than I love my own life, the one and only where mercies abound. All others in this world are to function along the lines of justice, but this particular ministry to a particular people functions alone upon the principals of mercy. The constituencies of this ministry are equal to the constituent, not true of any other ministry. Heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. Rom. 8:17. This being a fact it so qualifies them of this ministry to renounce the hidden things of dishonesty. Second verse of above chapter. Before renouncing the hidden things of dishonesty, I ask where are they hid, and who hid them? If so, who save God knows where they are hid? If God hid them would you not cut a caper attempting to renounce the hidden things of dishonesty, assuming that God hid them, until God pointed out to you where he hid them. Ah!- gentle reader, if you are as numb skull as I am you then could not find them, however ambitious you might be to renounce them. Continuing to assume that God hid them he would have to lead you to them, and then give you zeal and courage seasoned with grace to make you renounce them. Note, not renounce the place where they are hid but the things which are hid. Surely, oh surely, God hid them. I spake it not to you concerning bread, (Mat. 16:11) but of the doctrine (Mat. 16:12) Yes, oh yes, the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadduces is a dishonest doctrine. It is so dishonest it misleads the believer of it. I do not endorse theft and burglary, murder, cheating and lying, but on the

other hand disdain them together with all unrighteousness of fellowman to fellowman, but I feel sure that the most outrageous and uncalled for thing in this world is the crafty walk and the deceitful handling of the word of God. That principal will walk right into the depths of your soul and steal it, and then not stop but cast it into hell. It is said to steal my purse is to steal trash, but to steal my soul is to steal my all. I feel to extol the God whom I serve in the Spirit of my mind for his mercy in this ministry for surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life. I feel further to thank him for the abundance of the revelation of his Spirit in that he revealed to me that I was, am, ever have been, and will always be, while I remain in this tabernacle, a sinner saved by the grace of God if at all. Now to the manifestation of the truth and the commendation of ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God, there is nothing further from the manifestation of the truth than a crafty walk and deceitful handling of the word of God. In other words a crafty walk and a deceitful handling of the word is evidence of unregeneration. Paul seems to teach that a manifestation of the truth is a commendation of ourselves to every man's conscience, not in the sight of every man, however, but in the sight of God, and to that I agree that the making known of the truth is most commendable, for the fact we could not make the truth known, did we not know the truth, there is freeness in the knowledge of the truth that far surpasseth the sincere seriousness of the conscience of every man, not in the sight of men of course but in the sight of God. "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32. So all in all we gather from Paul that he was teaching passiveness of the creature, and hinging activity wholly upon the fact that God is active in the premises, which he is, for he (God) is all powerful both in heaven and earth. The facts remain that we are helpless in the premises, but the absence of a crafty walk, and the absence of a deceitful handling of the word of God in order to make manifest the commendation of ourselves are evidences of the fruit of the Spirit. Trusting to be a constituent of this ministry, I beg at the feet of mercy thou wouldst keep me disrobed of craftiness and deceitfulness, and forbid that I attempt to make a commendation of my own volition and accord, but on the other hand I beg for thy Spirit to lead me and guide me in the way of all truth that I might make a right and proper and acceptable commendation in thy sight, wholly and acceptable unto thee. The singularity of this ministry and administration of mercy is it demands and commands the highest spiritual respect from all of God's people who know the spiritual benefits derived therefrom for to you it is given to know the truth but to them it is not given. Remember the knowledge of the truth is purely the gift of God without worth or merit on your part, but wholly by the mercies of God dispensed to you by this minister (Jesus) under whose ministry you are and Paul declared he was seeing that. In conclusion I trust all that are of like precious faith are seeing the same, and reaping the sweet benefits from the functionings of its perfection. A trembling sinner, yet I hope.

F. A. COLLINS

Hooker, Okla.

DEAR PUBLISHERS:

Please find herewith money-order for $3 to renew my subscription and $1 for the book "Resurrection of the Dead." I rather approve the publishing of such a book. It may tend to preserve some of the landmarks of our faith for a later date. Paul says in 2 Cor. 12:14 "Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I will seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the par-

ents, but the parents for the children." Moses is counted to have written the five books of our Bible for the generations after him. The old prophets wrote many books for the children of Israel. They were also written for our learning, admonition and instruction. Then our fathers, the apostles, laid up the many books of the gospel for the children of God in the latter day. That was their duty as they ought to do. But the children "ought not" and could not lay up such blessings for the parents, so we have our preachers and ministers now who lay up for the churches many things which the children ought not and cannot lay up for the fathers, and I would be pleased to procure the book on the resurrection that some of my children could have it to read when they desire it. I would not possess it long, but it would soon be laid up for the children. We still enjoy reading the *Signs*. With best wishes.

E. G. WEBB

Topsham, Maine

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON:

Dear brother in Christ, and when I say that and think of the meaning it stands for what an awed feeling it gives me to think a sinner like me is claiming relationship to one whom God has called to proclaim his Holy Word. It says in Romans 8:1 "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" and I say to myself do I walk after the Spirit? The older I grow it seems the less I know. I would like to feel more of God's presence with me that I might not feel so dull and such a laggard, and still I know the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin. It was for just such a sinner as I am that he died and why do I question God's word? I see people that are so satisfied with themselves and what they do but I would not want to be like them, that would be conceit to me for I know in my flesh dwelleth no good thing, and still since I have been sick I can see God has been mindful of me and I try to be grateful. This world is in such a commotion one hardly knows how to plan. The cousin that came up to Bowdoinham once to hear you preach is here at her home and asked to be remembered to you and say "she was holding firm to the faith." She was operated on a year ago and had to have both limbs taken off above the knees. She goes about in wheel chair and still so cheerful. God gives her wonderful strength to bear her misfortune. I feel it would be good to hear you, who can reach down into the depths and bring forth a message to the comfort of a poor sinner. How I wish I might see more in the Scriptures but I am not given that privilege. I believe we are told to be content with what we have for he said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." When I see others get up and tell so much I would like to do the same, but it is with stammering and loss of words to say what I would like to convey of God's goodness to me. Well, Elder Dodson, I have started three letters to you and this is a poor substitute. I wanted to say I am home now for which I am very thankful, but have to be very careful. No more putting on and taking off double windows and no more lawn mowing. It seems to me I am not of much use, but I am a bit afraid, not of the passing, but of what I might suffer. How the flesh hates to be hurt and how we dread it, while we know God will not put on our shoulders more than we can bear. I received the book and thank you but I have not received my July *"Signs."* I wondered why but I know it was for some good reason. I hope this finds you and your family all well, and I do hope I will have the privilege of hearing you preach in some future time. May our God bless and keep you and give the knowledge to rightly divide the word of truth to the honor and glory of God. Ex-

cuse all that is amiss in this letter. Love and sweet fellowship in hope of eternal life in the world beyond.

(Mrs.) RACHEL BEAL POTTER

P. O. Box 166, Media, Pa.

MY DEAR BROTHER HARWELL:

The time of year has again come around that is called Christmas, this day being observed as the day of the birth of Christ. In probably a very few cases there are some that do really observe this day in that respect, but I feel that many have no regard for the real signification. We meet and exchange words or greetings, we know what this day signifies, that is according to the reckoning of man, but there is no real historical fact that has given us the real truth that we do know the exact time of the birth of Christ. According to my understanding it was a little later in the year. But what does it matter whether we call the twenty-fifth of December, or the tenth day of January the Christ birthday, we know this, that he has come and that he will come again, that time is nothing to count with God for a day may be as a thousand years or a thousand years as a day with him. But in that day that he comes to make up his jewels, that we shall all stand before him to give an account of every deed or thought done in the body, in that day of this great gathering we shall not be concerned about what year or what day of the month or week that we were found short of meeting up to the exact measurement that had been prescribed for us, because we know that there is not a day but what we are found guilty. We are weighed in the balance and found wanting. Dear brother Harwell, when I meditate on these things I hesitate to write or talk about them. I do not feel able or capable to pass any remarks. This I know that as that dear old saint said in the ages gone by, I feel that I am the chief of sinners and that not only one day but every day. If I was weighed in the balance and to meet fair and square measure for measure in the exact dealings with my God, I would be so short that my works would not be seen, all smothered out by the ever prevailing lust of the flesh, the cares of the world and the many idle foolish things that come and go through this old body, but thanks to God that he has given us a hope through the blood of Christ that by this hope through faith we may, through this shedding of precious blood, become partakers of those heavenly things without the full requirement of giving measure for measure. I was glad that you were comforted by my last letter. I know, like anything I write or talk about, the contents were not much. Much of the time I feel, as dear old Job said, that I would like to hide if possible from the face of God. I would rather go into some secret hiding and cover my face with ashes in shame from the presence of my God, than stand up and proclaim any good that I have wrought or anything good in me. I sent a copy of your last letter to my son who is in the U.S. Army, and stationed at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. I told him to write you if he had time or go and see you if he could. I do not not know how time is with him but I think he will go to see you if he can arrange it. I understand the boys in the army are very busy. I hope that you will be comforted with that precious hope until your race is run.

Yours in the bond of true christian fellowship. HENRY TOWNSEND

Williamsville, Mo.

DEAR EDITOR:

I am sending the foregoing letter which I received a few days ago from brother Townsend. I would rather receive a Christmas present like the above letter than anything else that I can think of for he speaks my feelings so much better than I will ever be able to do. I would like to see it in your beloved paper

that others may read and be comforted so that we are not alone in our feelings when we are cast down like poor old Job was many times long ago. How different to what we so often hear around us in their boastings of how pure and holy some folks seem to feel in their self righteousness, and how much good they claim to be doing for the Lord. Like brother Townsend I feel more like hiding some place until it is all over for I have no righteousness to hide behind which often makes me feel with the poet:

"Hide me, O my Saviour! hide
Till the storm of life is past."
and
"Cover my defenceless head,
With the shadow of thy wing."

Such confessions as brother Townsend gives us sin sick people are so much help to us when we feel to be all alone. Oh, how it cheers us up in our loneliness to feel that God has a blessed people scattered over all this sin cursed world showing, as God has promised us, that he will not leave himself without a witness, and he will never leave us nor forsake us.

Please find enclosed $1 to apply on your expense in sending us your highly esteemed and beloved paper. It surely is a welcome visitor in our lonely home. Without it life would be miserable for it is all the preaching we get. I have been confined to the house and we scarcely ever have the privilege of meeting with those of like precious faith. May God long spare your life to publish the glad tidings of great joy to all lovers of God's eternal truth, especially those that are afflicted and deprived of ever hearing God's servants proclaim the gospel in person. May God help us all is my desire.

WILLIAM M. HARWELL

Sierra City, California

TO THE EBENEZER CHURCH,
NEW YORK CITY

Dear Brothers and Sisters:—I feel I must write to you once more, and if it is of the Lord I know he will direct my pen. Of myself I have not words to express the things I feel and would like to tell you about. I would like very much to be with you. I realize I am missing much. I often think of our pastor's preaching when I was with you last, and what a wonderful feast it was to me. The articles in the *Signs* are very precious to me as I believe they must be to all the scattered ones who must be fed with spiritual food. Our God says, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," and I for one can testiy that this is the truth. I have been through some hard trials in my life and I feel I have deserved them all, but God has been good and long suffering with me, and has never sent me one too many for my good. When I have felt to be a great sinner and undeserving of his notice, nearly always this comes to me "their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more," and many times this comes to me, the Lord our righteousness. Yes, our righteousness is in our Lord, not in ourselves. This is my hope, there is none good, no not one, but the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. Why? Because we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Yes, he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust. Christ our Saviour says, "No man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." This is precious to trust in, in these perilous times. I hope all are well and dwelling in peace in these war torn times. Your sister I hope.

NELLIE H. ARNOLD

919 Asheboro St., High Point, N. C.

THE WISDOM OF GOD

"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." It is plainly expressed in this scripture that some of the wrath of man is unrestrained by the Almighty God and in his wisdom this unrestrained wrath of man which God permits will come to pass

and redound to his praise and glory. To do evil that good may come is condemned by the apostle Paul, but yet for God to permit evil that he overrules for good is part of his wisdom. The question why sin ever entered the world is a mystery, but if we are going to believe the Bible we will be bound to admit that man is cursed with sin, and we know that God being all wise, perfectly holy, just and good, could have destroyed man and sin at its beginning. Having perfect foreknowledge of all things that he was about to create or make, and having a perfect foreknowledge of all their actions, even their days being numbered, he knows the names of each and all of them, and it is said that the eyes of the Lord are beholding the evil as well as the good. He knows the thoughts of the mind and the intentions of the heart of man and we do not have to tell the Lord what we are for he knows us. His purpose is designed to the best interest of his creation. We know God having all power could have created man in a state so perfect that it would have been impossible for him to have fallen, but the fact that God did not create him that way is his permitting sin to enter the world. Consider all of this and compare what we have gained by the cross of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, with what we lost in the fall of Adam and Eve. I am writing this because some have denied this doctrine, but we cannot get around it without just saying I do not believe the word of God. The apostle Paul said, "Charity (which is love) never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge it shall vanish away." It is not puffed up, there are no greater or lesser degrees in love but all one in Christ. Charity "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." God is everywhere present over the whole universe all at the same time. While we sleep God is right there watching over us, and not only us but all of his creation and there is not even a bird that falls without him. God knows and sees every move, not only of human beings but all insects and all creation. We are to have a childlike faith, and when God speaks to us in his Holy Word we are to believe what he has said if we cannot explain all about it. I am rooted and grounded in the doctrine the best I can understand it, and try to turn a deaf ear to all, except in accord with God's word. The power of God is something terrible that we cannot understand all about, but we know by his power the world, sun, moon, stars and also the fallen and holy angels were created by him and thrown out in space to fulfill the purpose for which God created them, and it is said, he is "upholding all things by the word of his power." We probably could hold up under two hundred pounds, not figuring the atmospheric pressure, but just think of all the worlds and the inhabitants thereof being held out in space by the power of God. Man can shoot a cannon and God at his will and command in a moment could create a dozen worlds like this. "He spake and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." We note God's power at the time of Jesus' crucifixion when Peter smote off the ear of a servant of the high priest. Jesus said, "Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." Notice that with all the mad fits and rages of the high priests to put Christ to death they could not do one thing but talk until the time came for the power of God to deliver him to them to be cruci-

fied, and we have gained far more in Christ Jesus than we possibly could in Adam who only brought on us death by his fall. God breathed the breath of life in Adam and he became a living soul. Adam was earthly, was made of the earth and at death goes back to the earth "for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." The first man Adam was of the earth and the second man Adam was the Lord of Glory who came direct from heaven and Christ said, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven." "I and my Father are one." "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Christ was a quickening spirit. Christ Jesus in the divine sense is without beginning of days or end of life, but for the elects sake he has taken on a body subject to death. All this shows God's power.

THOMAS W. KIMSEY

Route 1, Box 901, Auburn, Wash.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

Some dear saints of the Lord sent me five copies of the *Signs* and it seemed like a dear friend coming to see me. So many years I have had the good paper. My mother, an Old Baptist, died in 1933. Since then I have been without the paper. I am taking three Old Baptist papers on the west coast, but to me the *Signs* is the leader of them all. I am a firm believer in Predestination and how thankful I am we have a Saviour who rules and reigns in heaven and on earth. We do not have to look to man for our salvation. The earth is getting to be a seething cauldron of fire and war. If the people would look to the Bible for their guidance more, but they misconstrue the Scriptures. In 1939 I united with the Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church at Chehalis and was baptized by Elder Peters. I have been a believer of the Bible for many years, but I felt I was not fit to unite with the people of God. So many dear saints I have known have passed on to their reward. I am all alone in my small home, have passed my seventieth year and do not have very good health, but my Saviour has provided a way for me to carry on and I thank him for all my comforts and blessings. My daughter, a member of the Old Baptists, died in 1936 which left me alone. Mother and daughter came with me to this state in 1906 from New York state. I am waiting the call to come home. I was privileged to bury mother and daughter. May God's grace guide and uphold you. A sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

(Mrs.) JENNIE CLIFFORD

Phonecia, N. Y.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER SLAUSON:

I am confined to the house with a very disagreeable head cold and sore throat. Have not been able to read much on account of it. We hope you are both well and that we did not do you harm by keeping you both up so late the evening we were visiting at your home. Since pleasure driving has been taken from us we seem to hunger more for the fellowship and love of our brethren. The people of this world, whose desires are only of and for the pleasures of this world, never satisfy that which is uppermost in our hearts. Just while I am waiting for the house to warm up so that I can get up, some sweet meditations came to me, and I felt I would like to share them with you folks. Just how to begin I do not know and hope that if it is just a desire of the flesh I may not pen a word. It came to me how sweet to assemble ourselves together in love and fellowship. If there be no love there can be no fellowship and our assembling together is in vain. I believe it is one of God's commands where it reads in the Scriptures, "not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together,"

and that it is for his children, those that have been born again of that incorruptible seed by the word of God which is in Christ; because of that love, that divine love, which he has shed abroad in our hearts not for anything we have done, but because he chose to have a family set apart to call his own, and sent his Son to redeem them from their sins; otherwise they stand in this sin-cursed condition to perish for God hates sin, cannot even look upon sin, but the regenerate is given an abiding place in the cleft of that Rock which is Christ Jesus, and in him there is security and peace. In this world (natural) there are all kinds of snares to try us, and it is only by God's restraining power that we are not the world's victims. How much to be thankful for when we are enabled by his Holy Spirit to get even a glimpse of what may have been ours. Though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death he is with us, his rod and his staff comfort us. What love he has for his children, what mercy that we are not consumed by his wrath. I love to think of when we are passing through this valley of the shadow of death, and is not that our travel here on earth, death to all things we once loved, death to sin because we are no longer blind to our sinful nature but know sin and suffer for sin while we feel we are so helpless to even think a good thought or do a good deed, and while the rod of chastisement is upon us his staff is with us. They both go together. If we did not have him to lean on, his grace, his mercy, we would not endure the cup which we must drink. God has given us all this through his Son who suffered all the agony and shame for the sake of the elect. The burden was all his and he bore it alone, forsaken by all his disciples, and for a time felt forsaken by God, and was made to cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Have you not often felt to cry out from the burden of your soul those very words? I have, but nothing in comparison to what our dear Lord had to pass through for the sins of the whole family of God chosen in him before time began. We cry out for better things, but when our sins come before us those are big things, yet he endured the suffering for them. What a wonderful God we have to show us poor unworthy creatures such love and mercy. It is only by the grace of God we are what we are. Since he called us out of our sinful state and still keeps us until we have finished this world's journey, how often I feel that we need not despise the greatest sinner in this world. Our journey may soon be ended or it may be a longer one, we are all in his hands. Even the wicked cannot say to him, "What doest thou?" I hope, as sister Mary Faulkner said, I have kept the faith when my time is ended. What comfort and assurance to be able to say that. It is a nice sunshiny day. Hope to be able to be with you all Sunday and will if the Lord wills it so. My thoughts are like the author, very imperfect unless spiritually given. I have not told you anything you do not know. It is only to those of like precious faith we can open our hearts. We both have in memory some very sweet letters you have written us, and they were precious because they contained messages which were inspired by the word of God, I believe, and given to us just when we needed them. An unworthy sister if one at all. Love to you both.

NEVA BROOKS

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46 Cedar St., Kingston, N. Y.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

The scripture under consideration was the writing of the apostle Paul, and was addressed to the church of God at Corinth, or to those that were born again, to those born of the Spirit by the incorruptible seed by the Word of God. This scripture was addressed to the living, and Paul, as we all know, was one of those that was born of the Spirit or born from

above. Born of that incorruptible seed by the word of God. Thus, being in possession of such virtues he was qualified through and by the Holy Spirit to be able to write and set forth the things that he had tasted, handled and felt of the word of life. Therefore, in addressing the Corinthian brethren, he well knew and was very able to tell them of evidence or the marks that should be when he said, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." Paul was only writing what he had learned in this great school where Jesus Christ is the great teacher which teaches as no man can teach. How well Paul had learned by this teacher that he was a new creature, that in his past life he had no use for the things that he now loves. All were new to him. He has no more use for the old Jewish rites and ceremonies under the old Jewish law. "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." Gal. 6:15. So the Apostle Paul, with much boldness, was able to declare with power and demonstration of the Spirit because of the newness of life in him. It was altogether new to him that Jesus Christ died to save sinners "of whom I am chief." As he once said, he was a new creature when he was enabled to say this. At one time he was taking believers, bound, to Jerusalem to be persecuted, but not so when he could tell the Corinthian brethren, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature," for now Paul is a new creature in Christ Jesus. He that could take the life of the saints could not do it any more. Oh no, for he was a new creature, for when the stronger than he comes the strong man is bound. So it is today, he (the Lord) can take a beggar from the dung hill and set him among princes. He that did steal can steal no more for the Lord has taken him in hand. He is a new creature. The new birth brings forth new creatures. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Eph. 2:1-6. I am quoting the verses from Ephesians to bring fresh to our minds the great substance of what Paul meant when he said, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." Some great and marvelous change has taken place and none know anything about what this change is except they have passed through it. You can tell others but they cannot understand your language. How well the one who has been made a new creature can read these lines we have quoted from Ephesians and say, once I was blind but now I see. Once the desires of our mind and of our flesh was our whole pleasure. We could roll sin and the things of the world as a sweet morsel under our tongue, but alas, like the dear apostle Paul, something over which we had no control has taken place in the one in whom this great work has been wrought. They are so different from what they used to be, the things they once loved they now hate. Sin has become exceedingly sinful. This one is not the same person. No, he is surely different in all his ways and desires. He is a new creature in Christ. Yes, he has a different home than before, his home is not of this world, but in the new Jerusalem. This new creature has different relatives than before. His father, God, Christ, his elder brother and a heavenly

place to sit in together with all the redeemed of God with all of like precious faith. Surely there must be a likeness of the new man in the new creature. Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches," meaning his own. There is always a likeness or a resemblance in the natural branch which gets its life, strength and virtue from the vine. Jesus is the true spiritual vine, so by and through that relationship there will show forth in the new creature an evidence by the fruit, "for the tree is known by his fruit," and, "ye shall know them by their fruits" says the word. It is precious fruit which the tree of life sends forth from the branches that get their life and virtue from Christ, the vine. There is a controlling power which is the Holy Spirit, teaching them all things. "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me," making and showing forth a full evidence that Paul was a new creature in Christ. "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" said Paul. When writing to the Corinthian brethren Paul well knew the vanity of old things or his former life which was under the law. He had learned even though he was brought up as touching the law blameless, the feast and fast days and their custom of passover had all passed away. He had been taught that there was nothing in creature efforts that could satisyfy God's holy law, and was made to fall down, as is every poor sinner, and cry to God. He was made to know "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." So true with all the children of grace, they have to be taught that working to get salvation is vain. "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." Each and every one must learn, "It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep." "And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." "My glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." So the children of grace can say many times with Paul that "old things are passed away." Many of the children of grace verily thought in their early life that in themselves they could serve God acceptably, but like Paul when that light shone round about so much brighter than any light nature could give they have been made to cry, Lord what wilt thou have me to do. Soon then they find that "old things are passed away," As the poet said, "I cannot satisfy the law, nor hope nor comfort from it draw." The blood of bulls or goats nor the ashes of a heifer would suffice. "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Notice the world *behold.* Paul said, "All things are become new." We believe that he was endeavoring to emphasize the fact of a very important event that had taken place. What greater event takes place in this world than when a poor, lost and ruined sinner is made a new creature in Christ and all things become new. We believe that Paul wanted to impress on the minds of the Corinthian brethren that there was more to true religion than notion impressed on their minds. That there was something known and felt in the power of the resurrection from a dead state in sin to a newness of life in Christ, and impress on their minds the fact that there was a separation from the old things or the things that had been impressed on their minds in their former life, and that all things become new. Could we stop for a moment and consider the words of Paul,

"All things are become new." Surely a great event had taken place, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." There had been the ushering in of the new covenant ordered in all things and sure. God through his great abundant mercy, and the good pleasure of his will, withheld not his only Son begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth made under the law to redeem them that was under the law. He to be made sin who knew no sin that his people might be made the righteousness of God in him instead of offerings and sacrifices for sin after the carnal ordinances which could never take away sin. Thanks and glorious praise to the Most High God. There was the true sacrifice on the cross of Calvary pouring out his soul unto death for a people that deserved nothing but eternal wrath and punishment from the holy law of a righteous God. This sacrifice answering the full demands of the holy law in every jot and tittle putting the sins of his people away in the land of forgetfulness never to be remembered against them anymore. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Surely there is great adoration and praise proceeding from the tongue of one whom he has made himself known to. To such an one even the trees and things in nature seem at times to be praising God. Surely that is a time when "all things are become new." David said, "He (the Lord) brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." A new song, a song of praise, surely it is a new song when one is brought up out of this old horrible pit of darkness and mire of our Adamic self, as we see ourselves in this clay that separates us so far from a God whose ways are as far above our ways as the heavens are above the earth. Instead of one having anything to stand on he is in mire sinking farther and farther away from this God, but when through the great riches of his abundant mercy, he undertakes for such an one, and from out of this great gulf of separation such an one is brought up and his feet placed on something so solid that they can never sink, on the same rock that David was placed on which is Christ. Then there is a new song:

"If I must sing, I'll sing of grace
Which raised me from the fall,
And led me to a hiding place;
Jesus, my Lord, my all."

Surely then "All things are become new." Then one can say, "Let worldly minds the world pursue, it has no charms for me." Before it was not so, but now "All things are become new." Jesus said, "My yoke is easy." That which was a burden to us before is now easy to us. It is easy to leave the world behind. It is easy to go down into the watery grave of baptism and be buried from this world in the name of the Father, the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and be raised to walk in newness of life. Yes, "All things are become new." It is easy to love the brethren or those who have the mark in the forehead. This is something new, for before, sin could be rolled as a sweet morsel under the tongue, but now is made to hate the former life. It is a new thing for all things of our flesh to cause us pain. That true light shows that in the flesh dwells no good thing, shows that all our righteousness (of the flesh) is as filthy rags. Not only unclean and filthy, but it also will not cover our nakedness. We stand naked before him with whom we have to do. It is a new thing to know that his all seeing eye is ever over us and nothing is hid from his view. It is a new thing to find that we are at war, the flesh against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, so that when we would

do good evil is present, and that there is a chastisement for deeds done in the body. Thanks be to God who furnishes us such a strong weapon to fight with, that we are able to overcome the evil one. This weapon, the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God enables us to say at times, "I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and they staff they comfort me." This Great Captain of our salvation has gone before, he will lead us to peace. He has come and preached peace to us who were afar off and to them that were nigh for through him both have access by one Spirit to the Father. It surely is a new thing to find that we are no more strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God. Paul says, "Ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

AMASA J. SLAUSON

Wilson, N. C.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,
DEAR BROTHER:

I enclose herewith my check for $2 to pay for the renewal of the subscription to brother Hilliard Thomas. He asked me to say to you for him that he enjoyed reading the *Signs* better than any paper he had ever read. Brother Thomas is a member of the church of my membership. He was with another religious order for about twenty-five years, but about four years ago he asked a home with us, has made a very good member and is one of our deacons. I received the *Signs* one day this week and found that you had asked Elder W. D. Griffin to come on the staff as an Associate Editor and I want to approve of the selection. I am personally acquainted with Elder Griffin. He has visited our association, the Black Creek, and I heard him preach more than once and have read much of his writings. I feel that he is very able and one of the safest parts of it is I consider him very sound in the doctrine all the way through and that will make his writings very acceptable among the readers of the *Signs*. If I know anything about it, I am very much in love with sound preaching and writing for it properly teaches the children of God what they need to know, rather than being misinformed and possibly instructed along the line of conditions. The things of our God and conditions will not mix, nor will they keep peace where both are advocated. To have Elders in different parts of the country associated with the paper keeps a close connection of first preference especially where the Elder is of good report and highly esteemed by those whom he serves. Personally I wish you and the paper success as long as it continues as it has since I have known of its writings. I am feeling that it will. Yours in the bonds of the gospel of the son of God.

E. L. COBB

Route 1, Box 40, Gallion, La.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

I do not feel worthy to address you thus but I hope there is that relationship in the Lord. Enclosed you will find $2 which I am sending for the *Signs of the Times*. I have been reading a dear sister's paper for six or seven years as she passed them on to me and how they did feed my soul I hope. There are just a few in number in the church here, and our dear preacher has passed away so I do not know whether we will find one to come preach for us or not. If not the *Signs* will be all the preaching I will receive. Hoping to receive the paper soon I remain your sister if one at all.

(Mrs.) W. A. JOSEY

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

J. E. Whitney, Ga., $1; M. H. Moseley, Ala., $2; Mrs. L. F Bishop, Va., $1; I. T. McIntyre, N. Y., $3; Mr. and Mrs. S. J. Morse, N. Y., $3; Mrs. J. T. Cockrill, Va., $2; Mrs. Mae Thomas, Ill., $26.

739 12th St., S. E., Washington-3, D. C.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,
EDITOR SIGNS OF THE TIMES,

MY DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

Enclosed herewith is my check for one year's subscription to the Signs of the Times. This publication is not new to me as my father and mother were its subscribers for many years. However, its contents were not clear to me at that time, I only knew it as a part of the family. About two years ago the beauty contained in a passage of scripture found in Gen. 2:10 was impressed on my mind. I was not satisfied with just reading the scripture but made inquiries for an explanation when brother Alvis Rowe handed me a copy of the Signs to read. In that copy was the answer to my inquiry written by Elder Spangler of Danville, Va. Just why I did not subscribe at that time I do not know. Recently Chaplain Edgar West, son of the late Elder West of Indiana, gave me copies of the Signs for this year up to August. The articles written by the dear brethren and sisters in these copies is my experience and belief better than I can tell. It is my desire to subscribe now for the Signs, and should I live three score and ten or longer that I may renew over and over my subscription to feast upon the wonderful messages it contains. To me it is a sweet thought to read of renewals of the brethren and sisters, mellow with the experience of grace. As I go among the Old Baptist assemblies in this part of the country I still see the sights I saw when but a child. Just a few gathered to worship an Almighty God. My intention was just to subscribe, but somehow I do not feel like I am writing to a stranger. A brother I hope.

FRANK T. SIMPKINS

A STATEMENT

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Elder H. H. Lefferts, of Leesburg, Virginia, wants our readers to know that his views on the Second Coming of Christ have changed since he wrote the letter whch was dated "Philadelphia, Pa., Feb. 19, 1905," and which was republished in the August, 1943, issue of the Signs of the Tmes.

R.L.D.

52 East Park St., Weiser, Idaho

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

Will write a few lines to let you know that I cannot pay my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. Would not blame you not to send it any more although I surely would hate to give it up for it is all the preaching I get. I am still unable to attend church and never see a Baptist to talk with and O how lonely I feel. I have been suffering worse the last three weeks but feel a little better today. I have been told by the authority that our pensions will be raised this fall and if so I can send you some money then, but as now it is all I can do to live on what I get as everything is going higher all the time. It surely is hard to live in these perilous times, all alone and be afflicted too, but the Lord's will not mine be done. I will try to struggle on a little longer and have faith a little stronger for there will be resting by and by. I am now seventy-one years of age so it surely will not be for long. I wish you would publish this so my friends, if I have any, will know how I am. I am not able to write more, I feel that I am slowly growing weaker all the time. With love to all the household of faith and best wishes for you. Your sister I hope in Christ Jesus our Lord.

LEVICA C. PRATT

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. NOVEMBER, 1943

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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"Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

This quotation is shrouded with mystery, and is bearing relation to the Son of God from the beginning of all eternity. The corn of wheat, to our mind, is the incorruptible seed by the Word of God of which all mortality must be born before they can see the kingdom of God. We would like to follow this corn of wheat in the hand of the husbandman (God the Father) which purposed to send it (the corn of wheat) forth in the earth to bring forth unto him an hundred fold or a full crop. All that should come to pass was embraced in infinite wisdom that there was nothing old or new with him, and at the appointed time this wise husbandman sent forth his seed (his Son) into the world to do his will, to save his people from their sins, and as we follow the planting of the corn of wheat in the earth, the life that is in it manifests the life that is in it, and comes forth from the darkness in the earth into the marvelous light of the sun, and in like manner Jesus came forth from the virgin that bore him and was manifest as God in the flesh. When he had fulfilled the will of the Father (the husbandman) he became obedient unto death, but did not see corruption, and not a bone of him was broken, and he came forth triumphant over death, hell and the grave, and raising him from the dead all power was given unto him in heaven and earth that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him. All the Father hath given him were of the earth earthy, and corruptible, and this life of the corn of wheat quickens the earth earthy and corruptible and brings it forth triumphant over death, hell and the grave and makes every one like himself which would be manifest in the perfect ear of corn. Then it is ready to be presented to the husbandman as the perfect results of his planting, and every grain of the crop is like the seed planted. After we are brought from darkness to his marvelous light we are made to mourn because of our sins, and hate the deceitfulness of the flesh which is strong evidence of the quickening into life by the Son of God, and we hear the words of Jesus again, "He that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." John 12:25. This proves that by the virtues of the incorruptible seed we are given to discern between the pure and the corruptible, and made to love one and hate the other, and this discernment is felt by the sinner as long as he lives in this mortal life, and when the end of his mortal existence in the flesh comes, the mortal is dissolved in death, and there is no longer hatred in existence, and he enters into rest. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Heb. 4:9. While the apostle Paul was speaking of the rest of the child of God experimentally it is only a foretaste of the fullness that is to be manifested when mortality hath put on immortality, and corruption incorruption, and mortality is swallowed up of life. Paul wrote these

words after he had written the above. "So also is the resurrection of the dead." I Cor. 15:42. He then goes on to express the changes that shall be manifested, and then closes by saying, "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory," I Cor. 15: 54-55. This has been the preached gospel of Old School Baptists from Paul until the present time, and we are persuaded it will be contended for as long as time lasts, and we note that in sixteen hundred and thirty-three the first Particular or Predestinarian Baptist Church was formed in London, and in sixteen hundred forty-four there were seven of these churches in London that published the first articles of Predestinarian Baptist Faith. In sixteen hundred eighty-nine the ministers and messengers of above a hundred churches in England and Wales met in London for the purpose of denying Armenianism, wrote the London Confession of Faith which the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church declared in its constitution was the faith and order of her body. All inquiring after her faith can refer to the reading in the London Confession of Faith and any topic of the gospel they can come to a close conclusion of her standing. We confess we are fallible creatures and likely to err, but the fundamentals are not changed, and the worded minute of her constitution calls for the resurrection of the dead. These things have been cavilled over by the brethren, and each one has felt to have the right to express their views as brethren, but there is one thought we should be mindful of, and that is to edify the brethren and be approved unto God. Our kind, merciful, Heavenly Father has given his only begotten Son to be made sin for us, that we should be made the righteousness of God in him, and every child of God is an heir of God and joint heir with Jesus Christ through the sufferings of God's Son. As we do unto one of the least of these we do so unto Him, then what manner of men ought we to be in meekness and holy conversation, esteeming one another, and striving to edify one another in the body of Christ. We call to remembrance the experience of grace we profess to have and the work of God in our heart. That makes us believe in Jesus the Saviour of sinners, and makes us love the brethren. If we love the brethren we will take heed unto ourselves, and to the doctrine, and labor for the things that will make for peace, and all that would have tendency to confuse or gender strife we will avoid. Dear brethren, "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith."

C. W. V.

"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto eternal life: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." John 4: 34-36.

How much that we do want to mark out and direct the Almighty! How prone we are to bring him into the limits of our narrow vision! How often we do forget our own experience and delivery from sin! The Jews did not deal with the Samaritans, thinking that they were an inferior race. Our Saviour had a conversation with the woman at the well. Not having come into that degree of understanding, they thought he had gotten hungry by his long absence from food, but what a rich and heavenly manna he had to feast on that they, as yet, knew nothing about. "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." Some things were not good for them to know, but the time is at hand for them to know. What a Teacher

to teach them. Ah, how dark our understanding when the illuminating power of the Spirit is not made manifest. They thought surely some one had fed him. It needs being brought in direct contact with him to learn of and about him. No second hand work will do. The same lack of wisdom in his disciples at that time is in us now until revealed to us by him as it was to them. Although verily a man yet he had no gluttonous appetite to satisfy. "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." Here is what held him up and enabled him to bear up under the terrible things that came his way. And, dear child of God, this is the propelling power that carries you through every sad trial of life. Unless God's dear children were blessed to leave behind and forget parents, companions, lands and riches there would not be any service rendered to him, but if led by his grace, his desire becomes our desire. Things of nature lose all their significance and our meat is to follow him, but we cannot do this until blessed to do so. We cannot see what a blessed state we are in now; we cannot see that God has elect vessels in Samaria until it is given to us to see. We think times will get better after awhile. We see very little evidence of God's riches and that his children are very few. To us in the flesh it is four (in complete vogue) months until harvest, but when we have a refreshing from him he tells us that such is not the case. What a time of communion is this as he tells us this good news. He tells us to lift up our eyes and to look. Ah, how eagerly do the children of God do this. Winter, spring and summer have been so long, but now that welcome harvest is at hand and we knew it not. We could not know it sooner because we were not looking, we could not look any sooner because we did not know to do it. Now let us look a little closer: "He that reapeth receiveth wages." Not he that will reap, nothing like that to these poor disciples that have been deluded so long, but a cheerful, positive statement of truth to a character made ready for it. So long had they been eating perishable meat; so long had they been eating husks, and now the killing of the fatted calf has been made manifest. Too, I would have you notice, Jesus did not say he that reapeth will receive wages, but we have the blessed promise that every one that reapeth receives wages. If you work for a man in nature you must wait until pay day. If you are depending on any conditional God you must wait until he gets ready to pay, but not so in the kingdom of God's grace. You reap because you are commanded to reap, you receive wages because you are blessed to receive them. The harvest, the ability to reap, the wages received all come from the same source. "And gathereth fruit unto life eternal." This is a continuation of the same blessing. This gathering of fruit is not for eternal life nor for time blessings, but it is unto eternal life. This is in connection with the Saviour when he said, "By their fruits ye shall know them." They have gathered them by his grace or will in them, and have manifested or done them in the same way. This all is that the sower and reaper may rejoice together. In nature husband and wife rejoice together when the harvest is gathered in. Much more in this kingdom of grace. What is lovelier than when he and his people eat, drink and rejoice together,

W. D. G.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

Because of labor shortage, due to the war, our former Printer was compelled to discontinue doing our work. This issue, therefore, contains the work of our new Printer, and while the type is slightly smaller than heretofore, we hope our readers will soon become accustomed to it and like it just as well. One compensating feature is that it will give them

approximately fifteen per cent more reading matter. This will no doubt be pleasing to all.

From our point of view, however, we regret to say that there will be an increase in the cost of publishing the paper, approximately twenty per cent. We plan to absorb this additional cost ourself, for the time being at least. If our subscribers will make a real effort to keep their subscriptions paid up to date, when due, we believe we will be able to continue publishing the paper for $2. per year without any serious difficulty, and we earnestly hope they will co-operate with us by paying promptly when their subscriptions are due.

Our present subscribers can also help us a great deal by securing NEW subscribers for the paper, as the larger the subscription list is the smaller the per capita cost becomes. Any assistance our readers can render us along these lines will be greatly appreciated, for which we thank you in advance. R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

ELDER FLOYD RIFFE was born at North Springs, W. Va., Feb. 29, 1860. Died June 12, 1943. He was married to Armeda Blankenship March 3, 1881. To this union were born six children: Charlie T. of Riffe, Wash., Jessie L. of Vashon, Wash., Mrs. Vernie Schoonover of Cashmere, Wash., Mrs. Elizabeth Collins of Seattle, Wash., Mrs. Maude Schwartz and Mrs. Rosa Coleman of Riffe, Wash. These six children are all living. Also twenty-six grandchildren and twenty-two great-granchildren.

In the spring of 1885 he, with his family, moved to Greenbrier, Co., W. Va. there being very suddenly and forcibly apprehended in what he has often related to me was a very wicked course of life and being convicted of sin and most freely pardoned before the court of heaven. He was greatly moved and humbled by such a wonderful display of divine grace and love. About the year 1887 he united with the Laurel Bottom Church. On Aug. 24, 1888 he was licensed to preach by that church. I have often heard him tell how he was deceived into believing he could tell to the understanding of others the wonderful things he had so recently experienced, but in a bitter experience soon learned the contemptible weakness of a mortal tongue to even begin to tell of God's wonders. On Sept. 7, 1889 he was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry by the same church. He was soon after chosen pastor of the Laurel Bottom Church and served the church for about fifty years until his health became so he could no longer perform that duty. While yet in Virginia he had the care of four churches going to his appointments on horse back. In Sept. 1893 he and his family and a colony of about sixty others which included nearly all the members of the Laurel Bottom Church at that time, moved to the state of Washington and settled near each other in Eastern Lewis County, which was but little better than a wilderness at that time. There he bought land in the rough, cleared a small tract and built a home at what later became Riffe, as he was the first postmaster there. They soon built a church house in which to hold their meetings that had been held regularly all the time. Voted to change the name of the church to Sulphur Creek and later the name was changed to Bethel, which name they still retain.

Elder Riffe was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace and grace alone from first to last and had no confidence whatever in the puny arm of man, also the Sovereignty of God over all worlds, beings, things and events. He stood firm and most ably defended the doctrine and hope of the resurrection of the dead. I first met Elder Riffe in the month of Sept., 1895 when my father with his family was moving into that country. It was on a road that was built of corduroy with the rough side up (that is they called it a road!), about one-third of the way between Elder Riffe's home and Chehalis, which was about forty miles distant and the nearest trading place at that time. My father had a large family, ten in all at that time present, and we all stayed at Elder Riffe's house for about a month until we could find a house to move into. In all my nearly forty-five years of acquaintance with him I have never met a man that was more faithful and devoted to his family, the church and community, or which suffered more persecution that he did. Which persecution to me is the strongest evidence of his stewardship. "Yea, and all that will live Godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." People came to him from far and near for help in time of sickness and distress and he was never too busy to leave his own work and sacrifice his own interests to administer to their needs in time and money too, although all he had was what he and his

devoted companion by God's grace were enabled to make by the work of their own hands. But in all this he was wonderfully blest and prospered and that scripture which says: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you" was most evidently verified in his life. He was not a strong man physically, but was given grace for his every need. Verifying again a scripture which says: "As thy days so shall thy strength be" and again "My reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." He ate his supper as usual in the last evening of his life and retired early, but when they went to call him next morning the dear Lord whom he had loved so dearly and had served so long had called him to a better home. The funeral was conducted by Elder C. W. Bond of Island City, Oregon as had been requested at the time of his wife's funeral almost three years before.

The funeral was held in the little church house where he had labored so long in the cause he loved, and his earthly remains were laid to rest in the cemetery beside his wife and near to a large number of his congregation and friends who had preceded him in death to await the trump of God when "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." A. D. HUGHETT

Little Flock church was made sad by the passing of our dear brother, JESSE LOCKE, who died at the home of his son, Victor Locke, Sweetwater, Okla. Aug. 10, 1943. He was born March 16, 1853 and died at the age of 90 years, 5 months and 25 days. He was married to Miss Alice Johnson July 20, 1882 who still survives him. To this union were born thirteen children, ten of whom survive and were present to pay their last respects to a beloved father. Funeral rites were conducted by his pastor, Elder W. N. Green, August 12, 1943 at Sweetwater, Okla. Little Flock Church extends deepest sympathy to his bereaved family in the loss of their husband and father. The church instructed the Church Clerk to send a copy of this notice to the Signs of the Times, place a copy on our church book and send a copy to his family. Done by order of the church while in conference.

W. N. GREEN, Moderator
(Mrs.) LOU KESTER, Church Clerk

AUTHORIZED AGENTS

We are pleased to inform our readers that the following Ministers have very kindly consented to receive subscriptions, both NEW and Renewals, for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

As many of our subscribers do not have checking accounts and it inconveniences them to obtain Money Orders, we believe they will appreciate the privilege of subscribing through some minister who is authorized to accept their funds and remit to us.

We would like to appoint Ministers in other parts of the country to represent us, and hope they will write us for details. R. L. D.

ALABAMA

Elder Lytle Burns, Florence, Ala.
Elder F. A. Collins, Hartford, Ala.
Elder W. D. Griffin, Fayette, Ala.

FLORIDA

Elder C. H. Byrd,
P. O. Box 86, Panama City, Fla.

KENTUCKY

Elder G. B. Bird, Canada, Ky.
Elder J. S. Hunnicutt, Webbville, Ky.

LOUISIANA

Elder E. J. Lambert,
P. O. Box 55, Lillie, La.

MARYLAND

Elder Harold M. Bennett, Mardela Springs, Md.

OKLAHOMA

Elder W. N. Green, Box 654, Altus, Okla.

NORTH CAROLINA

Elder T. F. Adams, Willow Springs, N. C.
Elder E. L. Cobb, Wilson, N. C
Elder M. F. Westbrook, Rt. 3, Dunn, N. C.

VIRGINIA

Elder J. E. Burgess, Rt. 1, Box 180, Martinsville, Va.
Elder Roy S. Smith, Cascade, Va.
Elder David V. Spangler, Rt. 6, Danville, Va.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sunday in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a.m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meeting-house, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed.

R. LESTER DODSON.

PERMANENT OFFER
(until further notice)
TWO BOOKS
PREDESTINATION AND RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

Either one of these books will be given FREE with a year's subscrpition to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at $2. to anyone who is not now a subscriber to the paper, or to any old subscriber who will send us a NEW subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at $2. The price of the books alone is $1. each. We only have about seventy (70) of the books on Predestination on hand, but as long as they last we shall be glad to send them out on the above basis. R. L. D.

BIBLE TRUTH

Is the title of a 155-page book
by ELDER LYTLE BURNS.
406 Viola Street, Florence, Ala.

Many beautiful truths are presented by him in PROSE and POETRY in this book. Please order direct from Elder Burns at $1 per copy.

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.
O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canada, California.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before.
E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th Street, Mayfield, Ky. Those interested will be welcome. O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure, we will mail them another copy free of charge.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL
BAPTIST CHURCH
in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3 rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A.M. 1:30 P.M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL
BAPTIST CHURCH
ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

C. W. BOND, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A.M.
ALL WELCOME

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Tex.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sunday in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P.M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sunday each month at 11:00 A.M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Salem Church, four miles south of Teague, Texas, meets on Saturday before the first Sunday in each month in conference.

W. A. LITTLE, Pastor.
DORA WREN, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a.m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, Pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a.m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome. C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

VOL. III RUTHERFORD, N. J., DECEMBER, 1943 No. 12

BAPTISM IS NOT REGENERATION

The sacraments are holy signs
And precious gospel seals;
They 'xhibit what the Lord designs,
And what his word reveals.

But these are not themselves the grace
Which signs and seals set forth:
The supper's not the sacrifice,
Nor water the new birth.

The sacraments were never meant
A substitute for grace;
They're not the truths they represent,
Nor must they take their place.

Sinners may publicly profess,
And signs and seals receive,
Of what they never did possess,
Or what they don't believe.

Man may baptize, but 'tis the Lord
Regenerates the heart;
None but the Spirit, by his word,
That blessing can impart.

Preserve us, Lord, from self-deceit,
From resting on a sign;
Bestow what symbols indicate,
And give us life divine.

Let none who preach the gospel hide
This solemn truth from men:
They may with water be baptiz'd,
Yet not be born again.

Reformed D. C. Psalms and Hymns, 1847
Contributed by MR. ISAAC L. KIP

CORRESPONDENCE

Williamstown, Kansas
Written by Elder L. L. Schenck

ELDER LESTER DODSON,

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:

I have been favored with one or two letters from you and have neglected to write you anything in reply, but if given grace I will now try to pen a few thoughts for your consideration, and for others of the household of faith, if you see fit to publish them. I have felt a peculiar urge to express some of my meditations and conclusions on current history and world conditions as they exist to-day. I can make no claim to a super knowledge or any extraordinary revelation of divine things, but I am a confirmed believer in the fulfillment of divine prophecies. It is recorded in the Scriptures, "In the last days perilous times shall come," and I am made to look with awe and deep concern upon world-wide conditions prevailing to-day, and am made to wonder if we are really now living in the day referred to by the unerring pen of inspiration. When we take a retrospective view of eras long past and conditions concurrent with each succeeding age, we cannot help looking with awe and admiration upon the ancient prophecies and the conditions leading up to the ultimate fulfillment of some of these already in full and complete development. It is a fact worthy to be borne in mind that every divine prediction emanates from God. The same God who in the beginning created the heavens and the earth. It was he, even this same God who said, "As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower,

and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." The Lord spake unto Abram, "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their's, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance." The fact that Abram had no seed in evidence at the time this was spoken was no barrier to the fulfillment of this, and this coupled with the fact that Abram was now a hundred years old, and Sarah his wife was ninety years old and it had ceased to be with her after the manner of women. These facts according to nature would have rendered this matter impossible of fulfillment, but with God all things are possible. His word shall not return unto him void. I shall not dwell in detail upon every incident in connection with this story, but I choose rather to call attention to the chain of subsequent events leading up to the fulfillment of that immortal declaration of God Almighty, they shall serve them four hundred years and they shall afflict them and afterward they shall come out with great substance. In process of time Isaac was born to Abraham, and Isaac begat Jacob, and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren. Jacob's name was changed to Israel, and these, his twelve sons in the order of God's economy, were known as the twelve tribes of Israel. They dwelt in the land of Canaan and there was a famine in the land. They heard that there was corn in Egypt, and Jacob sent his sons down into Egypt to buy corn. They eventually, with all their substances, came into the land of Egypt to dwell. I speak of this to show the trend of circumstances which impelled them to come into the land of Egypt for this was the very land designated in God's decree wherein they should serve an evil nation four hundred years. Every circumstance working in harmony to the fulfillment of that decree. We now find the seed of Abraham in a strange land that is not their's. For thirty years they dwelt in peace and quiet, then there arose another king who knew not Joseph. This king envied their prosperity. He put them in bondage and they were made to serve their cruel bondmasters four hundred years. Then they came out with great substance according to God's promise to Abraham. I find it convenient to speak of this to show the complete fulfillment of God's decrees and to impress upon our minds the fact that whatsoever God has decreed or declared must inevitably come to pass for his word shall not return unto him void. Every incident, every condition no matter of what significance or seemingly insignificance must and does work in harmony to the fulfillment of God's eternal purposes for his will is done on earth as it is in heaven. Hence, to take into account present world conditions, these as well as things in the past, and also things that are not yet done are all in the category of God's decrees, even the end. All things were declared from the beginning by that divine expression, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Let us notice again the expression of the apostle of Jesus Christ: "In the last days perilous times shall come." Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse. Even now the world is ablaze with the worst conflagration of all time. Wholesale murders, robberies, rapine and every crime conceivable to the human mind is being practiced. The question might be asked if God foreknew these things were coming why did he not forestall or prevent them that they come not. The same might be asked if he knew the Israelites must suffer bondage four hundred years why should he not have prevented that? The answer is quite apparent. He must

get him glory upon Pharaoh, and his name must be declared throughout all the earth. Even so in this present struggle God's glory and the good of his people is preeminent, and his eternal purposes, laid deep in divine wisdom, must and will ripen to that end. His praise must spring from every transaction. This present holacost must in some measure redound to his glory and honor, though wicked men and devils may act selfwilled and in open defiance of God it is certain they cannot act independent of him. The beast and the dragon could act only with the power that was given unto them. Power was given unto them to make war with the saints, and to overcome them, but while the saints may be overcome I am sure the captain of their salvation knows no defeat. He cannot be overcome. Look, if you will, through the folds of the first seal that was loosed of the book of God's testimony, sealed with seven seals, and you will see the captain of your salvation sitting upon a white horse going forth conquering and to conquer. His triumph is assured for the spirit of the Lord is upon him. He wields the rod of correction and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. While we look with horror upon the crimes being perpetrated against humanity and against civilization, let us look deeper into the picture and try to discover the cause. These crimes baffle description and they react involuntarily upon our human sympathies, but there is a spiritual wickedness in high places which we cannot ignore. Our God is a jealous God, and it is sad but true that humanity has arrived at that point where they seem willing to bow down to and worship anything and everything but the true and living God. God, whose word cannot return unto him void, has said, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." Then why should we marvel at this terrible catastrophe that is sweeping the earth? He has said, "I have created the waster to destroy." Whenever occasion arises, as it has many times before, for God Almighty to administer the rod of correction the means are always at his hand to do so. In ancient times when every imagination of the thoughts of the hearts of the people were only evil continually before the Lord he called a flood of waters upon the earth. This was "the waster to destroy" at that time and it did its work perfectly. All flesh was destroyed from off the face of the earth save Noah and those that were with him in the ark. At a later date he called the armies of the north under the wicked king, Nebuchadnezzar, to come against his erring nation. He razed, destroyed and carried the people into exile for seventy years. When Christ was crucified there were wicked men and devils at hand to deliver the death blow, and to inflict upon the innocent Lamb of God the suffering that was justly ours to bear. This present conflict, though terrible in every aspect, is in the category of God's decrees just as much as the cases before stated. God is at the helm. Those heartless dictators who are so menacing to the peace of civilization, even they are in God's hand, and I am persuaded they came forth at his command to execute God's purpose and vindicate the wrath of God on an idolatrous world. It has pleased God to employ the wicked as his sword as when he said, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow." His inspired servants, the prophets and apostles, were enabled to speak with precision relating to future events. They dreamed dreams, they saw visions, hence, the revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass, and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John, who bore record of the word of God and of the testimony of Jesus Christ and all things that he saw. Here are some of the things he saw and heard. "And I heard a great voice

out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth." "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." This is one of the vials of the wrath of God. Three unclean spirits like frogs. Spirits of devils working miracles. To my knowledge there never has been an era when these three unclean spirits were in evidence as they are today. Three heartless dictators. These spirits of devils all come as a thief, robbing helpless nations and peoples, ruthlessly slaying their unfortunate victims without excuse. Japan is the hotbed of Mohammedanism, hence, one of these spirits of devils issues from the mouth of the false prophet, Mahomet. He has allied himself with the beast and the dragon. All these with the devil himself, in the vision of John, were cast into the lake of fire and brimstone showing thus that they can act only with the power that was given unto them. They can do only just what God in his wisdom and purpose has decreed they shall do. We cannot always relegate these divine predictions to some other age neither past nor future. Some must of necessity come to pass in our own day, hence, the warning of our Blessed Master, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place." How sublime are these words, how profoundly essential for every christian to lay it to heart. "Stand in the holy place;" stand in the sanctuary of God; stand in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free. None can be so accounted as standing in the holy place who have turned aside to serve strange gods, and woe unto that nation, that people or that individual, who lightly regard the words of our God.

(*To be continued*)

Conflicting interpretations in the exposition of the forty-fifth and forty-sixth verses of the thirteenth chapter of Matthew have been presented from time to time in the pulpit and on the printed page. In a spirit of humility, with due respect to those who may dissent in their views, we present our views upon these verses which read as follows: "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it." It has often been erroneously presented that Jesus is the pearl of great price, and that the christian church is the one who diligently seeks and finds it, rewarded by patience and faithfulness of human effort, as the one is found for whom believers part with all that is held in the natural world. We should remember that it is Jesus, not the sinner, who takes the initiative in the wondrous work of salvation. Not until the convicted sinner realizes through the operation of the Holy Spirit, that he is lost and justly condemned, and made to hate Satan, sin, and self does he seek salvation and reverently call upon the name of the Lord. The office, or work, of the third person of the Trinity is to convict of sin, to take of the things of Jesus and show them unto the heirs of salvation, to quicken dead sinners from death in trespasses and in sins, to show unto them their heavenly inheritance and to give them an earnest of that

inheritance to guide and lead them into the way of all truth. The dead know not anything and the carnal mind is enmity against the law of God and is not subject to its law, neither indeed can be, so they that are in the flesh cannot please God. A man may be in the full enjoyment of natural health and yet know nothing of spiritual things, be utterly dead in sin in spite of his morality, good works of charity and benevolence, or his good or his knowledge of the letter of the word of Holy Writ. No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost. Christ may be regarded as a great historical character, a good man, the greatest teacher and reformer of all time, without being considered the son of God and the Saviour of sinners by his stainless birth, his sinless life, his unremitting obedience to the law of God, his ignominius death on the cross, his glorious resurrection and ascension into heaven and his continuing presence before God as the great high priest of his people after the order of Melchisedec as revealed to the subject of grace by the inworkings of God's Holy Spirit. It is, therefore, admittedly possible to the one not yet born of an incorruptible seed by the word of God to seek Jesus. Birth in nature cannot be accomplished at the will and pleasure of the one born, and a new birth by the operation of the Spirit of God is also utterly impossible. Some influence outside of, and greater than the sinner must be exerted if divine life is given. Therefore, it is written that Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost. Then the merchant man must be some one other than the poor, needy, self-condemned sinner, who is writing bitter things against himself, who is lamenting his sinful state, who realizes through his own felt sense of depravity that he cannot save himself, and that salvation is of the Lord. When Adam sinned in the garden of Eden, he did not seek the Lord, but sought to flee from his presence. The sinner has nothing to sell to the Lord, not one thing to offer him that is acceptable in his sight in the way of barter. He can offer only a broken and a contrite heart, which the Lord will not despise. And that broken heart is the result of the work of the ploughshare of the Holy Spirit breaking up the soil of self righteousness, creature effort, and legal works, as the one in spiritual distress cries from the depths of his soul, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and comes to the throne of grace a beggar poor at mercy's door. It is then that the Lord, the Holy Spirit, has found that poor sheep and delivered it. All the heirs of grace and glory are lost and ruined in the Adamic fall and found by their Lord in the glorious work of redemption. The merchant man is Jesus Christ. A merchant must have something to sell as well as something to buy. Paul in speaking to the Corinthian church says, "Ye are not your own for ye are bought with a price." We are told to glorify God in spirit and in body, for they belong to the Lord. It is then evident, if language means anything, that not only the spirits but the bodies of the children of God are embraced in this redemption, the whole creature being delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. And the price of this redemption included the blood and suffering of him who was both son of God and son of man. In Jesus dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily, as the Godman. Being son of God, he had power over death, power to take up his life after he had laid it down, power to overcome all the forces of nature, unhindered by the limitations of time, space, solidity, distance or gravitation. Being the son of man, he could die in the flesh, could suffer in his holy humanity all the penalty of all the laws trangressed by his people, endure the full wrath of God due the transgressor, also fulfill the law in his flesh, and by his death on the cross abol-

ish the handwriting of ordinances and bring the Jewish believer and Gentile believer into one body, the Church of God. Because of the unutterably horrible and filthy nature of sin and its effects upon the sinner, it required nothing less than the virtue and efficacy of the blood of the son of God to atone for sin, to extirpate it for the believer in Christ, and to make him holy in the sight of God. It required the blood of the son of God to do that which the blood of an ordinary mortal could not do. It must needs be that the Saviour of sinners must be both divine and human in his work under the law. No greater price could be conceived of than the price of the shedding of the blood of God's beloved son. It required all that the incarnation of Jesus signified to pay the great price, all that Jesus had. His passion embraced it all. He bore all the sins of all his people as though he had committed each one, and yet was without sin, only by imputation, that his righteousness by faith might be imputed unto them that believe. The price of an article is judged by what it is worth, by what is required to redeem it. So valuable is the church in the sight of Christ that he paid all he had to redeem her, to enjoy her as his very own that she might be with him in eternity in the most blessed of relationships. She is, therefore, the one pearl of great price. There is but one church, and that church under law was manifest on earth as men and women. Adam sinned in the flesh and met the penalty of his transgression in the flesh and so redemption had to come by the death of a Redeemer in the flesh. So the merchant had to be a man, and is spoken of as a merchant man. The child of God should never lose sight of the deity as well as the manhood of Christ. Without the incarnation of Christ, no sinner could be saved. The Lord Jesus greatly desired the church, the one pearl. It is written in the forty-fifth Psalm, "So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty." He who was infinitely rich in heaven in the presence of the seraphim and cherubim bowed the heavens and came down to earth and took the flesh of his redeemed in order that he might have that one pearl, his bride. He sought her and found her under the law, condemned, and without help by man. He found her in a waste howling wilderness, and he redeemed, clothed, and provided for her, and delivered her from her lost estate. In nature a pearl is formed through the suffering of the oyster in which it is found, and the church formed through the suffering of Jesus Christ, and is exalted as a diadem of glory in the crown of our Lord. Once having redeemed the church, his priceless pearl, she can never fall out of his hand, can never again come into that state where he must pay redemption's price a second time. By one offering he hath perfected forever those that are sanctified, and their salvation is one of eternal redemption because of the sufficiency of the price which he paid once for all that she might be crowned with glory and immortality.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

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113 S. 12th St., Murray, Ky.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

Hope I am not intruding to be sending a good letter for publication written by our dear sister, Cynthia Brown of Madisonville, Ky. She is a well known sister in Christ, and she gives all praises to the Lord. Her letter means so much to me in the faith, however, I do not mean what she said regarding me for I fear she must be mistaken as I feel too little and unworthy for any one to view me as she so sweetly expressed herself. If Sister Brown could view me deep within, as I do myself, she would not have written as she did. God only knows how I do long and beg to follow in the footsteps of Christ. My tears often flow because I do not live as I should. We read how Paul complained of failing to do the things he should. My experience being as it is

I feel to know dear old Paul as a brother. O, what a blessed Saviour who knew no sin, who has so freely given his life for me, who suffered and died on the cross for a poor sinner such as I. The Lord chose me as one of his, then as I was in my seventeenth year Jesus stepped in, and his light gave me the eye to see what a wretched sinner I was. To me I saw my sins as mountains crushing me to death. Brother Dodson, I hope I was crushed to death as to the love of sin. How I go moaning all the day as sister Brown said, fearing I have deceived others. How my love and sympathy goes out to the little Zaccheus, which was the chief among the publicans who sought to see Jesus. He ran before and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him as he passed by, at the same time not knowing that Jesus knew all this. Jesus looked up and saw him and said make haste and come down for today is salvation come to this house. Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sands of the sea, a remnant shall be saved. Please pardon this scribble. Remember me and mine when at the throne of grace.

(Mrs.) FANNIE H. CHESTER

DEAR SISTER FANNIE:

It has been quite a long while since I have read anything from your pen. I want to say, "Why don't you write me?" yet I think you wrote me last. I often think of you and want to write, but somehow my mind is so filled with worry or something that I just cannot write. I really think that I write just as the time comes, at least I hope so. When the butler remembered Joseph it was just at the proper time. It was when the service of Joseph was needed, and I believe it was of the Lord that the butler failed to remember Joseph. He said, "I do remember my faults this day." O, how this applies to the children of God at times when their sins rise before them as if it were mountains of folly. At times we feel as if we had made a false profession to the church and to the world. We feel as though we are ready to lay the whole thing down and try to do something to make amends to our brethren and sisters, and to our dear families for the deceiving of them, for we feel too unworthy to be called by name so precious and divine as a follower of Christ. When I get this all summed up in my mind it is then I want to talk to some of you, the household of faith, and see if there is any one like me. I feel that I could never ask any one that is more devoted to the cause of Christ, and who follows more closely in the footsteps of the Saviour than you. Your very devotion to your experience with the teachings you have had from childhood show to my mind that none but a true follower of God could express the beauty and sweetness so lovingly and meekly as you do. No one could emulate the character of God except a child of God. Their way is marked out for them. They can be mocked but it is only mockery, and can be easily detected even by the world. "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" I am glad he says that "things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." Dear sister, I have no works of my own. I hope that I have had this teaching from the hand of God. I have so often tried and failed. I hope to rejoice only in the works that he has given me to do. Christ told his disciples, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." They wanted to do something good and asked him what they could do to do the works of righteousness. This strengthens my hope for I hope that I do believe on him. This leaves Les and me very well. Purseal and Eunice are in defense work in Milwaukee, Wis. This is

a time of trouble indeed. I hope it is a time to show the strength of what His people profess. It has often been said by us, "Thy will be done." Now we are made to wonder if we have ever said it in reality. Write me Fannie when you have a mind. These are lonely days except the Lord gives comfort. With love to you, brother Chester, sister Turner and all the Baptists and friends over there.

CYNTHIA

2091 East Broadway, Vancouver, B. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

Yesterday for just a little while I found time to be lonely, but I am never, never left alone. I am always lifted up so quickly again for I have an anchor of my soul which leads me to the sweetest emotion I know. I opened your book on the resurrection and read "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature" can separate me from the love of Christ throughout all eternity. To be held in peace is wonderful, past finding out. I suppose that is the peace that passeth all understanding. My radio supplies me with beautiful hymns at 9:00-12:15 and 5:45. Sometimes I hear thoughts in harmony with my case. "There is a quiet resting place, close to the heart of God," is a hymn I heard this week. Others are "I only ask that God will take the dimness from my soul," and "It is well with my soul." I like the way all the Elders seem to say alike "if indeed I am a child of God." All the letters are so lovely as one of them says, "filled with morsels of grace." I imagine the more they have been lifted, the more they feel the total helpless condition of a human being. One letter in the *Signs* mentions the pleasant borders we sometimes have in our spiritual garden in between the dull times which reminds me of "Have you walked in the garden with Jesus, all alone with the Saviour in prayer?" I sometimes think angels really do gather around as the hymn suggests, and then "The joy we share, as we tarry there, none other can compare," and "The melody he gave to me in my heart is ringing." I have often written a letter in my mind. I should write those thoughts at once and gradually write my letter in separate parts. I suppose my small mind could not even hold the beautiful things that register there from the Old School Baptist books. I must be content to wait for sufficient grace for one day, knowing that my complete weakness makes perfect His power, and that the very thoughts that come to me are a part of a perfect plan. Does not the Bible overflow with the truth, which Mother reminded was delivered unto the saints? How well this truth is protected by having the world turn it all completely backwards! How wonderful to be able to think sometimes, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." It is awful in the true sense of the word to fall into the hands of the Lord. I hope I may be able to fill my Old School Predestinarian Library which I must cover with glass for protection. I have a very old illustrated family Bible beautifully printed. Mother's books which I prize are—many, many *Signs* carefully saved for a long period of years, a sketch of the life of Joshua S. Corder, Songs in the night and other poems by J. B. Durand, Fragments by S. H. Durand, your books on Predestination and Resurrection, an Old Baptist hymn book, more Bibles and a Church History. I read the repeated phrase in the Bible several times, "I come quickly." That is what I felt in Mother's passing. The accurately timed, swift, powerful and unspeakably sweet something, which directs our very thoughts and cuts down into this time world so accurately. Last evening I was reading again some letters in the *Signs*. I read yours about the "pleasant borders" and "precious stones" in

May 1943 issue. I found another which says people do have the peace that passeth all understanding at times. I changed the ending of a letter I wrote you because I lost my courage. I had said, why should I, of all people, be blessed with a peace which passeth all understanding? Instead of being allowed to sink down in sorrow I was left in something so assured, an anchor which will not let me go. I have been made to understand a little more why Old Baptists use the word *sweet* so often, and I seem to be so protected from loneliness. I do like the way Old Baptists know how utterly incapable a human being in the world of nature is, to think or do anything by means of his own ability. Thank you for Mother's lovely obituary and for the extra copy of the *Signs*. Please forgive so much writing. I must post this before I lose my courage when I begin to think of how I could dare to write you a letter. I shall always prize your comforting letter as long as I live although I am so unworthy of it. Humbly,

CATHERINE M. DUFFUS

(We rejoice with our sister in the precious seasons she is enjoying, and in the blessed assurance which has been given her of God's watchcare and love. There is nothing so dear and soothing to a wounded heart as the balm of Gilead. We hope she may continue, for a long time to come, to enjoy the blessedness of that peace which passeth all understanding. R.L.D.)

Box 21, Route 1, Maynardsville, Tenn.

ELDER PETER JONES,
WALLA WALLA, WASH.,
DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:

It is a great cross to me to attempt to address you or any of the dear children of God, feeling my vileness and unworthiness, still I am drawn in mind to attempt it, ever looking to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith to uphold, direct and dispose of all things. I am only a babe in Christ, if one at all, in my twentieth year in hope. In nature in my sixty-sixth year and this is my first attempt to comply with a request of any one. I notice your request in volume III, September 1943 issue of the *Signs of the Times,* views wanted on Rev. 19. As I understand it the Bible is the history of God, and is to the man of God at God's command, or God's appointed time, and is for our learning as he directs and applies it to us in TIME only. So is Revelations that John was commanded to write to the angels (ministers) of the seven golden candlesticks or churches in Asia. "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Rev. 1:5-6. "Behold, he cometh with clouds (witnesses); and every eye (in spirt and truth) shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds (of like precious faith) of the earth shall wail (cry) because of him. Even so, Amen. Verse 7. "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, which shall be hereafter (in time only)." Verse 19. In Rev. 12:1 we notice the true church. "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven (church); a woman clothed with the sun (righteousness of Jesus), and the moon (law) under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars (twelve apostles of the lamb)." In Rev. 14 is portrayed the Lamb and his company. The eighth verse describes the fall of Babylon (confusion) or anti-Christ church. The seventeenth chapter portrays the judgment of the anti-Christ woman (church) that sitteth upon many waters (peoples, nations and tongues), and "the beast (Satan) that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the founda-

tion of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is." Verse 8. My dear brother, I think "The book of life" is all the blessings and privileges of the true church. "Clothed with the sun." Rev. 12:1. In chapter eighteen is portrayed lamentations. Rejoicings of the saints. Falling of Babylon. "She saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow." Rev. 18:7. In the nineteenth chapter God is praised in heaven (church) for his judgments, marriage of the Lamb. "I heard a great voice of much people in heaven (church), saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God." "He hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, etc." "And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke (wrath of God) rose up for ever and ever." (*Timely* only). "Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both great and small." "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Chapter 19. "The marriage of the Lamb is come and his wife hath made herself ready." "Arrayed in fine linen, clean and white (pure): for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints." "Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." "These are the true sayings of God" "Worship God." "And I saw heaven (church) opened, and behold a white horse (pure); and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True (Jesus), and in righteousness he doth judge and make war." "His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven (church) followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen (righteousness of Jesus), white and clean." He hath a name written, "King of Kings, and Lord of Lords." "And I saw an angel (minister) standing in the sun (light of Jesus)." "Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God." "And I saw the beast (Satan), and the kings (rulers) of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him (Jesus) that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire (God's wrath) burning with brimstone (timely). And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, etc." The twentieth chapter continues to portray the angel (Jesus) come down from heaven and bound Satan a thousand years. The first resurrection (Jesus). "But the rest of the dead (to the doctrine) lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death has no power, etc." "It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." Now my dear brother in Christ, and dear readers of the *Signs* if this weak attempt to portray a hint of our God and his righteousness reaches you, bear in mind that Jesus is the beginning and ending of all things. I have attempted to portray the true church of Christ and the anti-Christ church and firmly believe that Jesus sits upon the throne of his glory and classifies the true church as sheep and lambs, the anti-Christ church (children) that are not blessed with a system of faith are classified as goats. Be that as it may, it is my firm conviction that every one that has a hope in Jesus will see him as he is in the heaven of heavens, and be like him, and will sing praises to him eternally beyond this vale of tears. "Now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." JOHN E. WALTON

Route 1, Slocomb, Ala.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:

I am receiving my copy of the *Signs* regularly and surely do enjoy reading it. The letters from the dear people of God from all the states in this great nation, and at sea and elsewhere surely builds one up. Just to know that God has a people everywhere to praise and believe his name. Just a word to let you know how I feel on the resurrection. I believe in the resurrection of the dead. I believe the dead will arise from the grave and that the sea will give up its dead. The north will give up and the south hold not back but all the dead shall rise, and you know what I mean by dead, the man that once breathed and stopped breathing. But I do not think there should be knocking of each other on such points for the same God that made the earth and man to dwell thereon will take care of us in death and after death, and I think all that believe on his name will be satisfied. Excuse this writing as I did not intend to write except to let you know another brother in the Lord wants to subscribe for the *Signs*. Please find enclosed $2 for one year's subscription for our beloved brother who is a great believer in one God, one faith, one baptism. I will close hoping that it will be the will of God that you can keep up your great work a long, long time. Your brother, I hope. H. T. COLLINS

Route 1, Dublin, Texas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

Please find enclosed $2 for my subscription to the *Signs*. I do not want to miss a copy. I enjoy the precious truths it sets forth so much. It is clean and instructive. I do not get to hear preaching often and have no one close to me who believes as I do so it is like a good friend. It cheers me on my lonely road. May God bless you in your good work.

(Mrs.) J. T. GILBREATH

Route 1, Box 70, Winona, Texas

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, EDITOR,

VERY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:

Please find enclosed $1 to set my subcription up six months on the dear old *Signs*. It is all the preaching and comfort that wife and I ever hear as we are twelve miles from any church and have no way to go. I would like very much if some preacher brother that has no family and has a car and would like a good home would come and spend the winter with us in the sunny climate of Texas. I surely would be very glad and am sure one would like such a home as we would do everything to make them enjoy it. Please pray for us when it goes well with you. Your humble brother. S. E. REEVES

Preston Hollow, N. Y.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

I am just sending my 1943 subscription to the *Signs*. I am sending it to the address you gave in the paper. Would have sent it before but it was so near the holidays I waited until the mails were not so full. I received the January number and enjoyed the New Year's Greeting very much. It is every word true if I know what the truth is. We must be reconciled to what it becomes our lot to bear. I know, and have had to experience, some of the sorrow of it now. I have a grandson in the army and two more of military age that will have to go perhaps before it is ended. Only God knows when and what the end will be, but when his purpose is fulfilled it will end. Only he knows when that will be. It is a great comfort to know that we have a sovereign God to reign in the heavens and in the earth beneath. Must close as I did not intend to write so much when I began. Excuse all mistakes. I am almost ninety-five years old and make many mistakes when writing. May God bless you with many, many blessings is my prayer.

(Mrs.) HATTIE B. ALGER

EDITORIAL

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

GODLY SORROW

There are two kinds of sorrow mentioned in the Bible, godly sorrow and worldly sorrow. Godly sorrow works repentance unto salvation, worldly sorrow worketh death. The nature of man is to shift responsibility, to lay on others the blame for his transgressions. We notice in the very beginning, following the transgression by the first man of God's law, he accused the woman of giving him the forbidden fruit. Eve then laid the blame on the serpent. How easy it is when one has been a violator to try to justify himself, seeking some way to shift the blame from his own shoulders. Excusing himself by seeking some excuse for himself. When one walks in the lust of the flesh and desires of the mind, and then excuses his conduct by lightly passing it by, often saying there was no harm in it or that some one led him into this trouble, then you may assuredly know this is of the devil. The devil never convinces of sin but rather tries to wrest the scriptures to suit the occasion, always justifying self, trying to make God a liar, undermining the mind by preaching half truths. A half truth is worse than no truth because the true meaning of a matter is lost sight of, setting forth just enough truth to make a lie stick. Often when the above mentioned course is followed the party excusing himself and lightly passing by his own offenses is loud in the denunciation of the faults of his brother. The Pharisee and the one with the spirit of godly sorrow do not walk together. How favored one is to be blessed with godly sorrow because it has effect. It humbles before God and man. It is brought about by the knowledge of the exceeding sinfulness of sin. The shining of the heavenly spirit in the heart causes godly sorrow; it teaches one that God's ways are equal but ours unequal; it worketh repentance unto salvation. When a child of God has been walking in forbidden paths, excusing self, laying blame on others and other like practices, and then is brought to behold himself as the chief of sinners, he is made to beg God for mercy. What an undone wretch he is. How easy it is for him to esteem his brethren better than himself. The breathing of his soul is, God have mercy on me a sinner. One thus led can easily hate his own life, abhor himself. His tears become his meat; his joys of salvation are gone; he finds himself crying for deliverance from this body of death. Prior to the effectual working of a godly sorrow one may have felt to boast of his own works, to have felt very self confident, and that though others forsake the Lord he would not, even thanking God he was not as other men are. Many lessons are taught in such experiences. Some one will say is it necessary for a christian to have such a travel? Certainly it is necessary but not pleasant. Without such one would not sensibly feel the need of God's grace; would not know how utterly unworthy he is of God's enduring mercy. In other words one would have no evidence of salvation. Believers are often left to the dictates of an evil heart, that their weakness may be discovered to

them to the end they may not trust in themselves but in God who raiseth the dead. "This a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." What a blessing it is to be led into godly sorrow, the sorrow that is the work of God, to mourn because of sin. Whether it be in regeneration, or the walk of a believer after regeneration, the result of the Spirit's work is the same. The eyes must be turned from self to Christ before repentance unto salvation is fully wrought. The goodness of God must appear. Nothing leads one into repentance more than the remembrance of what God has done for him, and how unworthy he is of the least of his mercies. The last time Joshua appeared before Israel he reminded them of their years of wandering; how God had given them lands for which they did not labor, and vineyards they did not plant. Then comes the solemn moment. "If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve." When truly led in this way the following hymn will become precious.

"O that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still!
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will.

D. V. S.

WHO IS THE AUTHOR OF SIN?

"DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

I wish you or some of the brethren would write in the *SIGNS* on WHO IS THE AUTHOR OF SIN. I know God created all things, and I know he isn't the author of sin, but who is?"

The foregoing is part of a letter from Sister Ettie Smith of San Antonio, Texas, and since we have received several inquiries of a similar nature, we feel disposed to offer some thoughts on the subject. Great is the mystery of iniquity, is a true saying. This subject, like most subjects that have to do with God's plans and purposes, is so vast and deep that it is out of the question for us to fully explore or fathom it. However, since much interest seems to revolve around it, we do not feel at liberty to withhold such thoughts as we have upon it. If God has given us any instruction at all in this direction, we hope it is in line with the declaration of the apostle John who said, "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." Let it, therefore, be clearly understood from the beginning of our remarks that we deplore any such accusation being made against our God, who is holy and of too pure eyes than even to look upon sin by way of approval, in any sense of the word whatsoever. That God did in the counsels of eternity most sovereignly and solemnly decree, according to his own infinite purposes, that sin should enter the world, we not only believe, but will affirm with the authority of the Holy Scriptures, at least as we understand them. The Psalmist said, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." Once we understand God's absolute sovereignty over all worlds, principalities and powers, be they visible or invisible, and realize that it was he who in the beginning created the heaven and earth, by the word of his power, and that "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein," we feel we are proceeding in the proper direction to accord unto him the right to do whatever seemeth good unto him, without in any way whatsoever being called to account by the very creature which he hath made. If said creature should be so presuming as to thus accuse his Creator, by what law shall he condemn him, and before what tribunal shall he be tried and his guilt pronounced? Where is the man who can ascend into the realm of the high and lofty heights of his Sovereignty and bring accusations of any kind against him? In

the State of New Jersey pottery is one of the profitable industries engaged in by its citizens, and it would be difficult to describe the great variety of colors, sizes, etc., of the vessels in some of these plants. In reviewing these things, it does not occur to us to question the right of the potter to use his own clay as he sees fit. We may not admire all of his vessels, nor understand for what purpose he has made them, but if he were to explain that they are all made to serve in their own capacity some little place of a great plan, the whole of which will bring him great honor, shall we say to him, nay? The inspired apostle makes use of a kindred similie when he asks, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" He further asks, "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." Rom. 9:22-23. In connection with these Scriptures the apostle had already asked some very pertient questions: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Verse seventeen of this same chapter says, "For the scripture saith unto Pharoah, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." This gives us a bit of insight into the mystery of God's plans and purposes, and where is there a subject of divine grace who will deny that the sojourn of Israel in the land of Egypt, the plagues which God visited upon the Egyptians, which plagues he had created in the beginning when he made the world and all things in it; his preservation of his people, Israel, during all of their stay of four hundred years, which finally culminated in a display of God's mighty power in bringing them up out of Egypt by a high and mighty hand, so that not even a dog could wag his tongue against them to bark and awaken the Egyptians to what God was doing until the Israelites were almost out of Egypt. But then, how strange did God's dealings with his people seem, that he should turn them aside and take them down by the Red Sea, where it appeared to them that they were again securely trapped and that Pharoah, now angry with his persuing army, including horses and chariots, would soon overtake them and treat them more harshly and severely than ever; but what saith Moses, the servant of the Lord, by whose authority he spake: "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to-day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace." Ex. 14:13-14. God's mighty power was displayed in behalf of his people in dividing the sea, that they should pass over dry shod, and also in destroying the Egyptians who arrogantly attempted to follow them beyond the bounds which God had fixed. God's dealings with his people in purposing that they should go down into Egypt, to be watched over and kept and finally delivered in such a miraculous way, was all for the glorifying of himself. God, therefore, had a well laid plan for his people, who were chosen in Christ before the world was, and who were in time manifested in Adam, and through his transgression and fall became involved in sin and ruin, with all of its deplorable consequences, but his plan did not fall short of delivering them from under the condemnation and death in which they found themselves in Adam, but rather it reached immeasurably beyond this, for He had covenanted with his blessed Son, back in the counsels of eter-

nity, which covenant was ordered in all things and sure, that in the fulness of time he would come and take upon himself, not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, whereby he would be made like unto his brethren and be tempted in all points, like unto them, that he might become a glorious High Priest whose feelings could be touched with their infirmities, and through suffering and the giving of his life for them, redeem them from beneath the curse which rested upon them. They were his before they fell in Adam, otherwise he could not have appeared as their Redeemer, for one cannot redeem that which he did not own. The apostle Paul says in Heb. 2:14-15, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." If there had been no devil for him to destroy, no people for him to deliver, his coming into the world as he did would have been on a foolish mission, but God can in no wise be charged with foolishness. Wisdom, yea, infinite wisdom had designed all things, and the proof of the wisdom which designed them will be seen in the fact that the ultimate end of all things will be for the glorifying of the name of our God and the lifting of the name of his blessed Son, Jesus, on high. God, in the beginning made all of the creatures that were in the world, the clean with the unclean and the ravenous and destructive as well as the inoffensive and meek, from our point of view. But, as Isaiah, says, When the lion and the lamb shall lie down together, the Lord alone will be exalted in that day. God made Adam according to the plan which wisdom had devised, and that wisdom had not divined that he should be made able to stand, but liable to fall, as is claimed by some, but he was made subject to vanity, "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." Gen. 3:6. Job said, "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent," and this serpent which "was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made," was there in the garden of Eden to tempt Eve, and Eve was not only subjected to the temptation, but yielded to it, and gave of the forbidden fruit to Adam, her husband, who ate with her, thus involving all of their posterity in sin, which is the transgression of the law, and thus sin passed upon all, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. We see here by man came sin; it was his own act and, therefore, he must suffer the terrible consequences which followed, but thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, his wisdom failed not, but is only the more clearly revealed in exceeding, by far, anything that men or devils could devise. The Psalmist says, "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." Psalm 33:6. John says "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." John 1:3. God said by the mouth of his prophet, Isaiah, "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things." Isa. 45:5-7. "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Prov. 16:4. "Behold, I have created the smith that

bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy." Isa. 54:16. We could bring forth still further evidence of this nature at this point, but the foregoing should suffice for the moment. We wish to remind our readers, in this connection, of what is written in Gen. 1:31: "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." We understand from this that all that God made was good for the purpose for which it was made, and we are persuaded that nothing was made without a purpose and that all that was made will fulfill the purpose for which it was made. It is easy for poor mortals to single out individual creatures and say they see no good in them, or to refer to some particular incident or event separate and apart from that which went before or followed after, and say it was a terrible thing, which might be one hundred per cent true taken alone, but when it is taken as a part of the great whole and we see it fitting in the place and performing the purpose for which it was made, then we can see wherein God is glorified in all that he hath purposed, and say with David, "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord: and thy saints shall bless thee." How shall the saints bless him? "They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom." What a wonderful work to be engaged in! Many incidents could be brought from the records of divine truth to show how God, who dwelleth in secret, has been pleased to withhold from mankind the glorious mystery of his works and ways, until the time appointed of him to make known the riches of his grace and to display his mighty power. We shall recite, briefly, only a few, to give our readers an idea of what we have in mind. Joseph was given a dream, and when he had told it to his brethren, their jealousy, which is said to be as cruel as the grave, was enraged to such a point that some of them sought to kill him. How strange their attitude must have seemed to Joseph, and how inconceivable to him must have been all the trials and afflictions through which he had to pass but God who had given him the dream was watching over him and upholding him by the might of his power. He was finally mourned by his dear old father as having been destroyed by some wild beast, and it required a famine in their land, with all of its attendant hardships, privations and necessities for food to lead up to the discovery which God had in store for them. What an occasion it was when the time came for him to make himself known unto them. No Egyptian was allowed to remain and witness the hallowed scene, for "there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharoah heard. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him: for they were troubled at his presence. And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life." After the death of their father, Jacob, Joseph's brethren felt sure he would hate them, but they acknowledged their guilt and prayed his forgiveness and he said unto them, "Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me: but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." And this was accompanied with a blessed assurance of something far better than they deserved, for he said: "Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you and your little ones. And he

comforted them, and spake kindly unto them." How vividly this portrayed the ignomy and shame that was heaped upon our Spiritual Joseph, of whom we purpose to speak later, who suffered and died that life, yea, eternal life might be his gift to those who might believe on his name, by the work of God, his Father, who sent him to redeem and save his people from their sins.

Another of the cases to which we wish to refer is that of David, who the Lord most graciously raised up from the sheepcote to sit as king upon the throne of Israel. To have such wonderful blessings so bountifully bestowed upon him, one might think that David should have thought only of serving and exalting the name of the God who had so signally blessed him, but it was to be made manifest that he was fashioned of the same corruptible clay as all the rest of the Adamic family, and so he turns aside to gratify the lusts of his sinful flesh. What an awful thing for one high in authority, either in a civil or ecclesiastical capacity to do! We are sometimes prone to look upon those who have been highly favored as being immune from the temptations and weaknesses of the flesh, while as a matter of fact they are often more sorely tempted than others, and but for the grace of God would fall a thousand times a day. When the prophet presented his case to him in the form of a parable, David not knowing that he was pronouncing sentence upon himself said, "As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die." "Nathan said to David, *Thou art the man.*" What an arrow this was from the bow of God, shot by his servant, Nathan! It found its mark and pierced the heart of David, and he confessed and said, "I have sinned against the Lord." God will not foolishly be charged with the sinful acts of his creatures, even though they be kings on the throne. Their sin is sure to find them out, and every knee will have to bow sooner or later and confess him Lord of all, to the glory of his grace. With some it will be to their own destruction; with others it will be to their salvation. When David was made to confess his terrible sin, and we have no doubt that it was before him day and night, thus exhonerating God from any sense of guilt or blame, we believe he became a man after God's own heart, and could see that it was nothing other than the matchless grace of God which could provide as the prophet declared, "The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die." Notwithstanding the terribleness of David's act and the confession of guilt on his part, at the same time we see the mysterious works of Providence in providing a link in the chain of his infinite purpose through the birth of Solomon by Bathsheba, who had been the wife of Uriah. As will be seen from the first chapter of Matthew, the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, one far greater than Solomon was involved here.

Finally, we come to the case of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and the treatment which he received, not only at the hands of the Gentiles, but at the hands of his own kindred in the flesh, the Jews. We are told that "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." Isaiah spake concerning him when he said, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not." Others testified before hand of his sufferings, and the glory which should follow. Jesus, himself, spake often, while here in the flesh, concerning what he was to suffer and the

purpose of it. It might all be summed up, more or less, in these sayings: When Peter drew his sword and smote the high priest's servant, Jesus said unto him, "Put up thy sword into the sheath: *the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?*" When he appeared unto those who were on their way to Emmanus, after they told him of the things which had taken place, he said unto them, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: *Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?*" How else could he be glorified, or how could he glorify his Father, except by fulfilling the purpose for which he came and finishing the work assigned unto him by the Father? Among other things, Peter said to those assembled on the day when Pentecost was fully come, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." From Acts 4:26-28 we read: "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." What shall we say to these things? Shall we acclaim the Lord as being guilty, and let the sinner go free? God forbid. Shall we ask God to at least share the blame with those who crucified his only begotten Son for not having opened their eyes to what they were doing? Paul, in writing to the church at Corinth said, "We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." It was the purpose of Almighty God that his blessed Son should be offered as a lamb, without spot or blemish, for the sins of his people, that they might be remitted and put away as far as the east is from the west, and that they might be presented unto him, holy and without blame, before him in love, and nothing that men could do must be permitted to interfere with it, but each and every creature must stand in his lot and fulfill the purpose of God in accomplishing his will. When Jesus was here, a Judas Iscariot was needed to betray him, and Jesus chose him to that end and purpose. Well do we remember Elder John G. Eubanks saying to us, "Brother Dodson, when Jesus was here, he needed a devil," and he went on to say there is still work for a devil to do in the church of our day, and there is one always at hand, but let us not forget that Jesus said to his disciples: "It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come!" They always come in a manner that places the blame and guilt clearly on the creature, and not on his Creator, and he who would dare tarnish the stainless name of our Lord by claiming that his predestination releases the sinner from his guilt, is one who needs to have the eyes of his understanding greatly enlightened to see the truth as it is in Jesus. We believe that the vast majority of sound Old School Baptists agree in large part with the following section of the London Confession of faith, on this matter: "God hath decreed in himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will,

freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever come to pass, yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin, nor hath fellowship with any therein; nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor yet is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established in which appears his wisdom in disposing all things, and power and faithfulness in accomplishing his decree."

We will here leave the subject for the consideration of our sister and other readers, hoping those whose minds have been exercised over the matter will find suitable food for thought and meditation, to the end that they may be better established, if possible, in the doctrine of God our Saviour, and glorify him in their bodies and their spirits, which are his.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Pocatalico Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, held with the Lost Creek Church, Carter County, Ky., September 10, 11 *and* 12, 1943.

"Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us," dearly beloved, it has now fallen to my lot to address you by way of a Circular Letter, and no one is more conscious of the fact than is your unworthy servant, that unless it be the will of our God to so move upon me as to make me able to write, then all my efforts to do so will be futile and vain, and will become a task to which I am unequal.

The text I have chosen as a basis for our discourse is found in the first chapter of second Timothy, verses nine and ten: "Who hath saveth us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." Brethren, to all who constitute the household of faith, I wish to say, first of all, that if there is a doctrine which I do believe with all my heart and soul, and which I am persuaded I am not alone in believing, it is the doctrine of the eternal vital unity of Christ and the church. That grace of God which saved his people is not as so many would have us believe, a thing of recent origin, not a something ushered in, after the fall of man, upon a depraved race to offer salvation to Adam and to his posterity. No, beloved, the grace of God and the redemption of his people are of eternal origin, as ancient as the purposes of an eternal, sovereign, immutable God, and I believe it to be a source of great comfort to all the true Israel of God to note that this grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Yes, given us in Christ Jesus, for we did exist in him as members of his mystical body, as the fruit in the germ, in the eternal covenant, and the eternal purposes of an all-wise God. In the eternal purposes of our God sin was made to abound toward us through Adam, and in him we were subjected to vanity, and exposed to sorrow, suffering and death. In the same eternal purposes, where sin abounded, grace was made to abound much more toward us through our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death and hath brought life and immortality to light, and has manifested it to us by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, as preached in the gospel for the comfort and consolation of the Lord's portion, which is his people, when the true gospel is preached by the power of God sent down from heaven. Notice, my brethren, "he hath brought life and immortality to light," for "he only, hath immortality dwelling in the light, which none can approach unto." Yet he manifested our

life and immortality in himself when he arose from the dead. It was there and then that he won a complete victory for his people, over death, hell and the grave. And showed us that he is our resurrection and life.

Jesus Christ was declared to be the Son of God with power. After he arose from the dead he declared that all power was given unto him, both in heaven and on earth. He alone had power to create the earth from nothing, to bring it out of chaos, and to command the light to shine out of darkness, and there is nothing too hard for him. He had power to abolish death by voluntarily giving his own life, then triumphing over death, conquering the last enemy of his people by his glorious resurrection. Hear him, as he comes forth from Joseph's new tomb, solemnly declaring, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." Before he went to the cross, and while in a state of humiliation for thirty-three years, death held dominion over him. Not because he himself was a sinner, but because he had from eternity assumed the guilt of his people and took upon himself to die for them. And though, my beloved, we are the transgressors, yet our sins have never been charged to us, for "the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all," "and he bore them in his own body on the tree." O glorious thought!

"By faith my Christ I now behold
On yonder gloomy tree.
He bleeds to put my sins away—
He died, my soul, for thee.

O see the bleeding Prince of life
On Calvary's mount expire;
Muse on the wondrous scene of love,
And reigning grace admire."

Now, beloved, it is true that through Adam sin hath reigned unto death, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shown us; it is equally true that through Jesus Christ our Lord "grace hath reigned through righteousness unto eternal life," for every one of his elect children. When on the cross he cried out, "It is finished" the redemption of all for whom he died was then accomplished. There he gave us "all things pertaining to life and godliness." Justification, repentance, faith, a godly walk and final glorification were assured us there. Then he manifested that grace which was given us in him before the world began. And *now* the poor, tired, wayworn children of God are waiting—for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies, and when finally we are called to quit the walks of life, to put off the image of the first man Adam, which is of the earth earthy, and to put on the image of the second man, which is the Lord from heaven, then we shall be qualified to sing praises to his glorious name in a land of eternal bliss for evermore.

Yours to serve,

J. S. HUNNICUTT.

J. C. HAMMOND, Moderator.

H. J. BIRD, Clerk.

The Mates Creek Primitive Baptist Association, held with the Little Hope Church, Pike County, Ky., September 3, 4 *and* 5, 1943.

According to the appointment since our last Association, it has fallen to my unworthy lot to address you in the form of a Circular Letter. I hope God will so direct my mind that I may be able to write the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. If God should so direct my mind to write, I will now call your attention to a certain Scripture in 1st Corinthians, fifteenth chapter, twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth verses. Verse 12: "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" Verse 13: "But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen." Verse 14: "And if Christ be not risen, then is our

preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." Verse 15: "Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not." Verse 16: "For if the dead rise not, then is Christ not raised." We find a Scripture recorded in the New Testament, where the Galatians stand gazing into heaven, saying, The same Jesus that you see going straightway into heaven, shall so in like manner come again. And to my mind he is coming back again to collect his jewels home, and the jewels that are under consideration are God's people, whom he came to redeem. And we find Job saying, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." And to my mind Job was speaking of the resurrection of the bodies of the saints. And I believe that after God has brought to pass the last purpose that he saw in the morning of time that will be when he will not have any more use for time here, and that will be when God will raise his people from the dead. And we find a Scripture recorded in 1st Corinthians, fifteenth chapter, forty-second and forty-third verses. Verse 42: So also is the resurrection of the dead, it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. Verse 43: It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power.

And I want to call your attention to the above Scripture, that in it he was speaking of the very same body, only changed from mortal to immortal, and that will be as soon as any of God's people will be taken to heaven and immortal glory. To ever be with the Father, the Son, and to sing around the throne for ever and ever. Where there will be no more sickness, sorrow or pain.

(Elder) E. F. HATFIELD.

OBITUARIES

ELDER T. J. EVERS was born Feb. 15, 1873 and died Dec. 20, 1942. In 1886 he married Miss Minnie Langford and to this union were born eleven children. There are living five sons and four daughters namely: Mrs. Emma Lou Givins, Claude Evers, Mrs. Evelyn Hays, Almer Evers, Barney Evers, Mrs. Ruth Wolf, Harvey Evers, Ralph Evers and Miss Lela Evers. There are seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Besides his immediate family Elder Evers is survived by two brothers and three sisters with their families and many other relatives and friends. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church in 1888 and was ordained to the full work of the ministry in 1910. In 1936 or 1937 he was elected moderator of his Association and served in that capacity until his death. He was widely known and loved by the brethren and friends in this section of the country. A poor man financially but raised a large family and served churches, conducted funerals and visited the sick as best he could for more than thirty years. He was a good preacher and one of the most humble and able gifts in prayer I have ever heard. He was recognized as being one of the most comforting speakers to the bereaved at funerals. The writer had the privilege of being with him a good deal in the ministry. He was in my ordination and we traveled together extensively. Loved for his meekness and the manifest grace of God he is certainly missed among our people. May the Lord bless and comfort all who mourn his absence. May he in his mercy comfort especially his dear loving wife and companion. For many years his membership was at the Bethel Church and he was laid to rest in Bethel Cemetery. There was a large and attentive congregation of brethren, sisters and friends as the writer together with Elders Lambert and J. L. Smith conducted the funeral. While he is greatly missed I feel that his sufferings are over and that blessed rest is his to enjoy till that glorious resurrection day arrives when these vile bodies of his people come forth in the blessed likeness of Jesus Christ our blessed Saviour and Elder Brother. Yours in hope of such a resurrection through grace.

R. W. RHODES

MRS. HARRIET LEONA BRYANT OAKLEY sweetly fell asleep in Jesus January 25,

1943, at her home in the Rock Island Community, at the age of 66 years, 1 month and 9 days. She was born December 16, 1876 in Bradley County, Arkansas.

She was married to Thomas Ruffin Oakley November 28, 1896 who preceded her in death ten years ago. To this union eleven children were born. One little daughter, Sarah Katherine, having gone on before her to be with our blessed Savior. Surviving who mourn her passing are her six sons: Vergil Oakley, Star City, Arkansas, Morris Oakley, Little Rock, Arkansas, Floyd and Clyde Oakley, Ivan, Arkansas, George Oakley who is with the U. S. Army, stationed at Camp Crowder, Missouri, and Dillard Oakley, also with the U. S. Army in North Africa, and her four daughters: Mrs. Mary Peek, Warren, Arkansas, Mrs. Eunie Graves, Mansfield, Ohio, Mrs. Hannah Archer, Hensley, Arkansas and Miss Susie Oakley, Washington. D. C., also she leaves four brothers and two sisters and 16 grandchildren. All the children, grandchildren, brothers and sisters were present at the funeral except Dillard it being impossible for him to be present at the time.

Mother united with the Primitive Baptist Church and was bpatized the fourth Sunday in August 1933, and was a faithful member until death. She loved the truth and always looked forward with joy to her church meetings. Mother led a devoted, simple and grand life rearing us children in perfect Christian faith. A model and example to all posterity.

She enjoyed very good health all her life, never grumbled or complained about hardships, but trusted and served her Master. The night she died she was stricken with a heart attack and lived about thirty minutes. Her youngest son, Clyde, who lived with her, was the only one present when the end came. She told him she was going to die and he said she raised her eyes towards Heaven and the happy expression on her face indicated that she was seeing a far more beautiful place than this. Clyde said he knew she was seeing angels and he felt the presence of them in the room as she closed her eyes and fell asleep so easily. It was so hard to give our precious Mother up but we know that God knew best. We wouldn't call her back into this sinful world if we could for we have the sweet assurance that she is at rest. We know that she can't come back to us, but we have sweet hope of meeting her in that other home.

The funeral was held at her home January 28, 1943, conducted by her pastor, Elder W. W. Taylor. Her body was laid to rest in the McDonal Cemetery beneath a veritable mountain of flowers, a fitting resting place for one so fond of flowers. Pallbearers were Reece Parham, Marcus Summers, Lloyd Lane, Will O. Hawkins, Wm. Hawkins, Hermon Scoggins, Floyd Nichols and Coyle Wells.

Written by her daughter. SUSIE OAKLEY

Sorrow entered many a heart and home when the sad news of the death of sister FANNIE MUIR at the summer home of her son, Dr. Merton Muir, August 13, in Branchport, N. Y., reached her many friends and brethren. She would have been eighty-six years old had she lived until Sept. 8 of the present year. She had been for very many years an active and faithful member of the Middletown and Andes Church of Union Grove, N. Y. Whenever her health and traveling conditions permitted, she was an unfailing attendant at the meetings of the Primitive Baptist Church. She was firmly indoctrinated in the principles of the church to which she belonged and was deeply led experimentally. She disliked controversy over points of doctrine and always stood for peace, yet in no sense compromising with error for the sake of peace. Her character was strong and true, her manner gentle and unassuming, her liberal consideration of her church and pastor in material things notworthy and unwavering. Hers is a sweet and gentle memory indeed. She was born in Andes, N. Y. in 1857. In 1880 she was united in marriage to John Muir. One son, Merton, a successful dental practitioner of Williamsport, Pa., was the fruit of this marriage, and who survives her. Sister Muir's husband died at Dumont, N. J. in 1915. Much of her married life was spent at Stamford, N. Y. and in vicinity towns. The funeral service was conducted by the writer at the home of Sister Fannie Woodin of Union Grove on Monday, Aug. 16. Interment was in the family plot in Andes Cemetery beside her husband. Sister Muir was baptized into the fellowship of the Middletown and Andes Church in 1889 by the late Elder J. D. Hubbell.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

AUTHORIZED AGENTS

We are pleased to inform our readers that the following Ministers have very kindly consented to receive subscriptions, both NEW and Renewals, for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

As many of our subscribers do not have checking accounts and it inconveniences them to obtain Money Orders, we believe they will appreciate the privilege of subscribing through some minister who is authorized to accept their funds

and remit to us.

We would like to appoint Ministers in other parts of the country to represent us, and hope they will write us for details. R. L. D.

ALABAMA

Elder Lytle Burns, Florence, Ala.
Elder F. A. Collins, Hartford, Ala.
Elder W. D. Griffin, Fayette, Ala.

FLORIDA

Elder C. H. Byrd,
P. O. Box 86, Panama City, Fla.

KENTUCKY

Elder G. B. Bird, Canada, Ky.
Elder J. S. Hunnicutt, Webbville, Ky.

LOUISIANA

Elder E. J. Lambert,
P. O. Box 55, Lillie, La.

MARYLAND

Elder Harold M. Bennett, Mardela Springs, Md.

OKLAHOMA

Elder W. N. Green, Box 654, Altus, Okla.

NORTH CAROLINA

Elder T. F. Adams, Willow Springs, N. C.
Elder E. L. Cobb, Wilson, N. C
Elder M. F. Westbrook, Rt. 3, Dunn, N. C.

VIRGINIA

Elder J. E. Burgess, Rt. 1, Box 180, Martinsville, Va.
Elder Roy S. Smith, Cascade, Va.
Elder David V. Spangler, Rt. 6, Danville, Va.

PERMANENT OFFER
(until further notice)
TWO BOOKS
PREDESTINATION AND RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

Either one of these books will be given FREE with a year's subscrpition to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at $2. to anyone who is not now a subscriber to the paper, or to any old subscriber who will send us a NEW subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at $2. The price of the books alone is $1. each. We only have about seventy (70) of the books on Predestination on hand, but as long as they last we shall be glad to send them out on the above basis. R. L. D.

P. S. A year's subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, either or both of the books, or all three, would prove a most excellent Christmas remembrance to those who do not possess them.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Elder George L. Weaver wishes to announce that his address has been changed from 421 Steele St., Frankfort, Ky., to 16116 Westview Ave., Cleveland, 20, Ohio.

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.
O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canada, California.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before.
E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th Street, Mayfield, Ky. Those interested will be welcome. O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL
BAPTIST CHURCH
in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3 rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A.M. 1:30 P.M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL
BAPTIST CHURCH
ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m., at the home of Z. M. Stanland, 1448 N. W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(MRS.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

C. W. BOND, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A.M.
ALL WELCOME

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Tex.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sunday in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P.M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sunday each month at 11:00 A.M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Salem Church, four miles south of Teague, Texas, meets on Saturday before the first Sunday in each month in conference.

W. A. LITTLE, Pastor.
DORA WREN, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a.m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, Pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a.m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome. C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 112 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JANUARY, 1944 No. 1

FEAR NOT

"Fear not"—Good tidings of joy I bring!
To you is born a Saviour;
A kindly Priest and lordly King,
They laid him in a manger.
Luke 2:10-11

"Fear not"—The Lord to Abraham said
When he desired an heir;
I am thy shield and great reward,
Now mark what I declare.
Genesis 15:1

"Fear not"—For I am with thee
He again to Isaac said;
I will multiply and bless thee,
Then what hast thou to dread?
Genesis 28:14

"Fear not"—He spoke to Jacob,
In Egypt I'll surely make
Of thee an exceeding nation,
This promise to you I state.
Genesis 46:3

"Fear not"—His servant consoled Israel,
Ye all stand still and see;
Salvation belongs to God alone,
He will show you this to-day.
Exodus 14:13

"Fear not"—He said to Joshua,
O be thou not dismayed;
In peace, in war, I'll be with thee
Do thou now what I've bade.
Joshua 8:1

"Fear not"—The gods of the Amorites
Of the land in which ye dwell;
I am thy God, yea, Israel's God,
This truth to you I tell.
Judges 6:10

"Fear not"—O land, be glad! rejoice!
The Lord will do great things;
Will fill your floors with wheat and fats,
Will send to you the rains.
Joel 2:21

"Fear not"—Ye ransomed of the Lord
His promise stands secure;
He'll bear you as on eagle's wings
And cause you to endure.
Isaiah 40:31

"Fear not"—Ye little flock of God
It is your father's pleasure,
His kingdom here to give you,
A blessed, heavenly treasure.
Luke 12:32

"Fear not"—Ye chosen and redeemed,
He arose victorious conquerer;
Though lightly was by men esteemed,
He gave himself a martyr.
Romans 8:29-30

M. W. RAULSTON,
Millington, N. J.

CORRESPONDENCE

Box 654, Altus, Okla.

This time world and the inhabitants thereof is God's. Everything in it has, is and will function according to God's will and purpose "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof." Psalms 50:10-12. And the apostle said: "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: All things were created by Him and for Him." Col. 1:16. Also we read: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy

pleasure they are and were created." Rev. 4:11. I have just passed my seventy-seventh birthday and I know my pilgrimage here on earth is drawing to an end, and, if God wills, I would like to comment a little on the above scriptures for the consideration of the *Signs of the Times* and its readers. I realize the foundation laid is too far reaching for a poor weakling to enter alone, but if God will be my guide I am not afraid of getting lost. The truth that I desire to establish is, that God cannot and will not fail in the end to accomplish the purpose for which he made this old world. The salvation of his people and his own name's honor and glory. His portion is his people. Hear the words of the prophet, "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another." Isa. 48:10-11. There are three that inhabited eternity before this old world was made, God the Father, God the Word, and the God the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. This three in one God is eternal, that means without a beginning or ending. All time things have a beginning or an ending. I understand that God the Father is a spirit, is everywhere present and nowhere absent, perfect in wisdom, knowledge and power. No such thing as past, present or future with God. Time and eternity are one present now and the Scripture tells us: "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent;" and Job said: "He is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him." I understand this to be the one called the Father, embraced in the three, one God that controls and governs both heaven and earth and all things that in them is, after the counsel of his own will and his government is unchangeable. The Psalmist said: "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." God's governments and judgments are as eternal and unchangeable as God, and I understand his righteous judgment embraces all time events, both good and bad as we term them. "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Prov. 16:4. The old true and tried servant of God said: "I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." Deut. 32:3-4. And, if God's judgments rendered in eternity for time and in purpose, then the events of time for which judgment was rendered must have been with him in eternity and in purpose. Judgment could not be rendered without something to judge. In other words, to illustrate what I mean, if God purposed and decreed from all eternity, salvation for sinners, through the second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ, in order for salvation to be sure, God must have assuredly purposed and decreed a sinner to be saved, through the first Adam, who is of the earth, earthy. Is that plain enough? I do not believe there is anything that moves in heaven or on earth or beneath the earth without a purpose and decree of Almighty God, that makes all things sure. No event could be sure without a cause, purpose and decree of that all wise and unchangeable sovereign God, by whom are all things and for whom are all things. The end of which will be the manifest salvation of those he saved in purpose and gave them grace in Christ before the world began. "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance (this lot means all of the redeemed host of God). He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye" "and

there was no strange god with him." That is the way the Lord finds his little Jacobites to-day, and, like he did Jacob, he leads them to his banqueting house and his banner over them is love and there is no strange god with them. Let me repeat again, lest you forget, if God decreed the salvation of sinners and that salvation is sure, which I believe it is, then he must have decreed a sinner to be saved. Nothing can be absolutely sure if anything connected with it is uncertain. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." Psalms 24:1. Who has the right to question the work of God, and say this or that is not right? Has not God the right to do with his, what seemeth good to him? God is perfect and cannot do wrong but, says one, the things God made do wrong. Yes, the sons of Jacob did wrong, if we are to be the judges, for through envy they sold their brother, Joseph into bondage, and this very act they meant for evil, for they were humans and mad. This very act that we say was wrong God meant for good. We sometimes take light for darkness and darkness for light, but with God there is no difference in his purposes, they are both alike, good for the purpose he desired them for. Then no wonder Paul could say; "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Rom. 8:28. There is a people that call themselves Primitive Baptists that do not believe this doctrine; they say it would implicate God in evil, but not so, "God cannot be tempted with evil" (and why) because God's work is perfect and the earth and the inhabitants thereof is fulfilling the purpose for which he made them. James 1:13. Our imperfections are embraced in the all things that work together with all other things for good in God's account. God is the author and finisher of salvation for his people for whom all things work together for good. This salvation, redemption and sanctification is of God, a free gift to those poor, helpless depraved sinners who sold themselves for naught and shall be saved without money. Isaiah 52:3. The Lord's people are a chosen people, chosen from every nation, kindred and tongue. I Chron. 16:13 and Isaiah 43:20. God gave his chosen, grace in Christ Jesus before the world began and these chosen were the sons and daughters of the earthy Adam and the children of wrath even as others, for by one man sin entered the world and death by sin. So death is passed upon all men (the just judgments of the Mighty God) for all have sinned and by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous. Romans 5:12 and 19. Now will some one please show from the word of God, how it would be possible for many to be made righteous through the obedience of one had it not been equally as sure by one man's disobedience the same many would be made sinners. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" The first man Adam was made of the dust of the ground, made subject to vanity (who made this man), he is said to be of the earth, earthy. The second Adam is the Lord from heaven, a quickening spirit. These are the two characters spoken of in the above scriptures. I understand this second Adam to be the man Christ Jesus, made of a woman, also begotten of God the Lord from heaven, a quickening spirit, a combination of heaven and earth for in him dwelt the fullness of the godhead bodily; both divine with power to lay his life down and take it again and human without sin that he might be a sacrifice for sin, a perfect mediator between the justice of God and the sins of his people. I hope to speak more of this character further down in this article although I cannot quote a scripture

nor truthfully comment on one but what this God man is either directly or indirectly embraced in it for the Scriptures say: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." II Timothy 3: 16-17. Listen to Paul: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Not out of Christ nor according to our works. Eph. 1:3. Read on down and the fifth verse of the same chapter says: "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ" and not by some other method as some people would have us believe. And God's predestination was not causitive in this adoption but love is the moving cause, yes, that eternal unchangeable love of God for his people is underneath and the foundation and moving cause and not predestination. Predestination is not an attribute of God and is not causitive in either righteousness or unrighteousness. Yes, according to the Scriptures God purposed and predestinated the crucifixion of the sinless Son of God. You know that was not to prove that predestination was causitive. No, no, but that God's people might be the beneficiaries of his obedience and his righteousness imputed to them. And, could this be sure without the wicked hands to do the dirty work and could these wicked hands be sure without the predestinated decree of God, and if it was not causitive in manifesting righteousness by the obedience of Christ, it surely was not in manifesting the wicked hands that did the wicked work, in other words God could not have known the wicked hands would have been had he not purposed and decreed it. No event of time nor the things that lead up to the fulfillment of an event can be sure without God's eternal predestinated purpose and decree. Is this Bible doctrine? Listen to the wise man, "to every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven" so at the appointed time he said: "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." Blessed thought, the hand of Almighty God is over his people, and let me say here if God's predestinated purposes were not causative in all this, then pray tell me if God predestinated the fall of the earthy Adam, which I believe he did, how could it make God the author of sin? Sin entered that the offence might abound, that is the cause and not predestination. I believe that God did from all eternity before time was born purpose and predestinate all events of time whatsoever comes to pass. I understand some events are brought into manifestation through the influence of an ordained power, as was the transgression. God purposed that sin come into the world not by the influence of his own Holy Spirit, but through the influence of an ordained power which I understand to be Satan together with the second cause, God being the first great cause of all things. As I have already stated it was absolutely necessary for a sinner, before a sinner could be saved and God is not the author of sin. God made the man subject to vanity, gave him a law, planted a garden, and put the man in to dress it and keep it and cause it to grow out of the ground, every tree that was good for food and pleasant to the eye, also the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. There was a woman come on the scene also the serpent which possesses the greatest power of any created thing, and Satan appeared at the right and appointed time and everything involved the serpent and the woman and man and the beautiful trees, the fruit that was good for food. All working together, or doing the thing

God made them for, did bring the transgression of God's law, and the same God that gave the law said the transgression of the law is sin, but the man actually transgressed the law. However, if God had not said the trangression is sin, it would not have been sin. So death is passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Now the avenue is opened up through which righteousness by the obedience of one man can flow to the heirs of promise. Paul said: "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Romans 5:17-19. We understand these two Adams', one disobedient and the other obedient, two headships, and what the head does involves the whole which is clearly seen in the scriptures quoted. Let us hear Paul again, as I understand, referring to these two characters: "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" Romans 9:21. Read that whole chapter. Yes, Jesus, our Blessed Redeemer, was made of a woman under the law to redeem them that were under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons. Gallatians 4:45. Who was it that fell under the law by the disobedience of their head? It was the sons and daughters of the first Adam was it not? Then Christ must have had a prior ownership to as many as he redeemed that they might receive the adoption of sons. We cannot redeem a thing we never owned. This surely embraced the offspring of the first Adam, the old man, the outer man, in other words the sinner, but first they must be redeemed from that fallen state, from under the curse of the law and I believe that the work of redemption will be complete in the resurrection when the sinful bodies of the saints of God will be made spiritual and fashioned like the glorified body of Jesus. I know this is true if the bodies of the saints of God were embraced in the redeeming blood of Jesus shed on Calvary, and I believe they were. What did the Psalmist mean when he said: "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." Psalms 139: 15-16. I believe this embraces the earthy or vile bodies of the saints. Hear Paul in his admonition: "Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." I Thess. 5:22-24. Surely the bodies of the children of God are not left out of the covenant, I mean this earthen vessel, which to me means the outer man. Again Paul says: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." II Cor. 5:1. Read on down embracing the fourth verse, we want to cite you to Paul again. I think we are safe when we are quoting Paul, if we make the right application. "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin: (then surely this body was embraced in the fall) but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that

dwelleth in you." Rom. 8:10-11. For further proof of this blessed and comforting truth, listen to Paul again in I Thess. 4: 13-18. "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, (dead) that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven (that is in the end of the world) with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ (that does not mean alive in the presence of the holiness of God) shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." If Paul is telling the truth then there is something in Christ that is dead. Surely it is not the spirits of God's people, then it must be their bodies. Just let me cite you to one more precious truth found in Eph. 1:10. "That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him." According to these blessed truths something in heaven that is in Christ and something on earth that is in Christ, and, to me, that means the spirits of the saints of God, at the death of this body, goes back to God who gave it, this is something in heaven that is in Christ; and the bodies of the saints of God that die because of sin remain on earth that is dead in Christ, and this is what Paul said would be gathered together in one. To me that means our vile bodies are dead, are still in the hands of the potter who is able to make it again, another vessel (a spiritual vessel), as pleased the potter to make it. This change will be made in the resurrection of the fullness of the dispensation of time. Then our spirits which are God's and our bodies which are God's will be one, my Father's children. That is the hope of this old sinner. If in this life only I have hope in Christ I am of all men most miserable. Yes, I believe he that came down from heaven to do the Father's will did a perfect job of it, and the sinners, and not something that never sinned, are the beneficiaries of that perfect work. I feel to be a sinner and my hope in Christ is all this sinner has, and I would not exchange it for the world and all that is in it. I know this article is a little lengthy but I hope God has led me to the place to stop. Your poor brother in gospel affliction hoping for a better world through grace.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN.

Murray, Ky.

EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

The Old School or Primitive Baptists held the one hundred thirtieth annual association called The Original Little River Association at Muddy Fork Church in Cerulean, Trigg Co., Ky. This church was organized prior to 1795 when a log house was built on the land of John Goodwin. Prior to that, meetings were held in his home. In 1805 a new log house was built and a deed made for the ground which was for the use of the congregation so long as they held to the doctrine of predestination and the same articles of faith then of record. If they should depart from that faith the property was to revert to the heirs of the said John Goodwin. The wooden frame building now occupied, in which this meeting was held, was built in 1835. The frame was put together with wooden pegs, and all framing timber is of hand hewn logs and poles. The ceiling and benches are made of hand sawn boards from large poplar logs. The building has been painted continuously

and kept well roofed so it is in a very good state of preservation. There has never been any division affecting doctrine or creed since the general division in 1832 when the Baptist churches of America split on the mission question, this church holding to the old doctrine of the Philadelphia and London Confession of Faith. The favorite periodical of the membership is the *Signs of the Times* which was founded in 1832 by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe and now published in Rutherford, N. J. The said John Goodwin settled this land in the year 1778. He was my great-grandfather.

T. O. TURNER.

Monroe, Ga.

DEAR ELDER VAUGHN:

You will be surprised to get these notes. Thought they might interest you since I found out that the sister Turman mentioned is your sister. While at Elder Lefferts he mentioned the name and reminded me I had heard it before. While my father (Elder James Adams) was sick or "just afflicted" he would say, he would talk in his sleep often. He prayed this prayer while asleep and I wrote it down as best I could . If I could have written shorthand could have had many things jotted down. He really mentioned most of the scriptures he had ever talked about. I wrote many of them down, but could not connect them fast enough. They made perfect sense at the time. I remember when he had this little talk at your sister's. He mentioned some of the food. I think milk of some kind was very plentiful and delicious while he was there. I am still enjoying our visit over and over. Have found a few pictures, post-cards, etc., that belonged to my father that are more interesting every time I see them. Also a book with the history of Hopewell Church and pictures of different homes there. Brother William was here at meeting yesterday and we enjoyed talking it all over. He remembered your father and the home you bought, etc. Douglas thought you were very fortunate to have it. I hope you and your dear wife are feeling well and that we did not impose on your good nature too much. Hope all your family are in good health. Your sister in hope.

SARAH PETERS

* * *

The prayer by Elder Adams while he was sleeping

"Let us offer a little prayer. Oh Lord, we want to ask thy blessing this one more time. We know you have been mindful of us these eighty years. We would ask for Jesus' sake to love us, to forgive us for all our many sins and if it can be thy will to let us live a few days longer. We put ourselves in thy hands to do with us as it seemeth good in thy sight. Show thy power that we may serve thee better than ever before. Go with this little family . . . take charge of us on this occasion, may we leave the world in peace to all mankind. We feel to know that He is sunshine. Bless each and every one of us with thy presence and help us to live and glorify thee! Lead and guide us in the good and right way so we may confess our sins before thee. We ask thee to go through this day with us and may we be enabled to show thy loving kindness, praise and sanctify thy name. In thee we shall have life, be counted one of the royal family. May it be in thy will that we be worthy of thy loving kindness, and when time shall be no more we may be carried on wings of love to that home not made with hands, eternal in the heavens that we feel is so beautiful. May we be counted worthy in that kingdom where there will be no more sin, sorrow or pain, no night or day, clothed in that robe of righteousness. Help us to live to that good day, hopeful that everything be in thee. I am glad to know who I am looking upon, who He is, so glorious to go to that place of sunshine. May it be our

happy lot to fall asleep in Jesus and when we awake be like him. We ask it all for Jesus sake. Farewell 'til we meet again. Amen."

(Continued from December Issue)

I hope I am not an alarmist, but I can but regard the present trend of events as presaging the approach of the end of time. John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, declared, "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time." Speaking of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ the beloved apostle Paul writes, "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God siteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." The falling away has already come. While the so called churches of anti-christ may boast of their great ingatherings, the true church of God is in a lamentable state. So pronounced is this falling away that in many sections of our country former places of worship are only memories now, and the man of sin, which is Satan, has surely been revealed. Satan appears in various forms. He may appear in the form of a pope, a priest, a prophet or a preacher, or he may appear as a roaring lion going to and fro in the earth seeking whom he may devour. He may be transformed into an angel of light. Only a few centuries back we see him sitting in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God when the pope reigned supreme, both religious and secular power was in his hands. A beast with seven heads and ten horns. Seven heads meaning complete authority, ten horns no doubt representing the ten commandments of the law by which he tried and convicted those who worshipped God in spirit and in truth, and not according to the law of carnal commandments. The blood of the martyred saints flowed to the horse's bridles. Let us beware lest we misinterpret these words. We cannot suppose that the blood was two feet deep in the streets which it must have been to touch the horse's bridles. The bridle is that by which the beast is governed, it holds him in check, it turns him hither and thither, hence, the blood flowed to the time there was turn in conditions. The beast was wounded in one of his heads, he was shorn of his secular power, and though he still reigns and rules over those of his own cult, he no longer has power and authority to prosecute, persecute and slay at his pleasure those who have the courage to withstand him. A legal tenet was enacted which stripped him of that authority, wounded him in one of his heads, and which tenet guaranteed the right to every one to worship God as they chose to worship. Thus John declared, "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season." A thousand years, not necessarily according to our calendar, but according to God's set time with whom one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day. The point I wish to stress is the fact that Satan must be loosed for a little season. I have thought

many times that I should shrink from trying to picture the scene that must follow when Satan is loosed. The extent of his depradations would baffle our imagination. We are far removed from the conflict overseas so our minds can faintly grasp the abomination of desolation being wrought there. By whom? By three unclean spirits like frogs. Like frogs they do not walk, they go by leaps and bounds, jumping from one nation to another, pillaging their resources, laying ruin to their properties which have been accumulated through honest toil, subjugating whole nations, slaying without excuse, and converting the residue from a liberty loving people to an imposed serfdom who now must labor under the iron heel of despotism, and yet their insatiable appetites are not satisfied. Such is the consequence when the wrath of God is poured out upon an idolatrous world. God is not mocked. He declared, "My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh." How far this awful conflict will extend we cannot tell, and what will be the final outcome is yet unpredictable, but I tremble for the security of our country. No one need deny the corrupt practices being so flagrantly practiced in our own country, socially, politically and religiously. Sacrilegion is running high; institutions of various and sundry kinds are reared up in the name of the Lord; institutions which are entirely foreign to the law of our Lord and the principles of the doctrine taught in his word; institutions having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof; formality and fashion are ruling high handed in places of so called worship; commandments of men are being taught for doctrine in lieu of the blessed testimony of Christ, and sad but true, worshipping the creature more than the Creator. Our own chief executive has his personal envoy in the vatican conferring with the pope on matters of war and peace, and not only our chief executive but many men of distinction, editors, journalists and others of high degree the world over blush not to address this man as holy father, whereas, Christ said, "Call no man your father upon the earth." Aside from these sacrilegious practices it is no hidden secret that vice and crime are on the increase. Depradations of every conceivable nature are being practiced. Shall we marvel that the wrath of God is being poured out upon the world, and that he has loosed Satan for a little season when so much is being practiced in defiance to the law of God, and so little practiced to the praise and glory of his holy name? I am persuaded this terrible holocaust will continue until God's purpose is accomplished. These three unclean spirits went "forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." The great day of his wrath. And they "gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." This word "Armageddon" occurs but once in the Bible. The Old Testament Scriptures were translated from the Hebrew language, and the nearest approach to the word "Armageddon" is Megiddon and Megiddo as recorded in Zech. 12:11, and 2 Kings 23:39 respectively. The word Ar is also a Hebrew word and the relative use of these two words would seem to justify their combination which would result in the word "Armageddon", and would denote a place of great mourning and lamentation. A place of warfare and destruction and of laying waste. The burden of Moab because in the night Ar of Moab is laid waste. Again "In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon." It would seem, therefore, that the only plausible deduction to be made in this place called "Armageddon" is a place of great distress, and seems to describe most fittingly those devastated countries over

which these three unclean spirits, like frogs, have passed leaving their slime and filth wherever they have lighted. A place where cities and countries are laid waste. Let your imagination scan the devastation wrought by these spirits of devils working miracles, and I think you are nigh to "Armageddon." View London for instance, the world metropolis now lying in ruins, and other great cities and industrial centers laid waste. If we ourselves are spared this grim picture, if we ourselves are not made to partake of the cup of God's divine wrath it is alone through the tender mercy of our covenant keeping God, and not that we can plead innocence to the sins afore pointed out. When we view the conditions as they are, it is tragic indeed, but I am persuaded God has called these devils forth to scourge an idolatrous world for a "little season," but we revel in the hope it will not be for long. Jesus said, "Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened," which shows that the whole panorama of events are subject to his command, and his elect he will keep as the apple of his eye.

"Let foes combine and friends collect,
Yet God will save his own elect."

So let us watch and pray lest we enter into temptation. "For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

(Elder) L. L. SCHENCK.

Route 2, Carbon Hill, Ala.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

Will write you a few lines in my weak way. Have been thinking of writing a long time but feel so little and unworthy to try to approach you. I have been reading the *Signs of the Times* for about one year and I think it is the greatest paper printed in the world as it has so much good preaching in it if I know the truth. It is what I have been trying to set before the people for thirteen years. I am glad I was made to know that salvation by grace is the only true doctrine that is preached to-day or ever was. I tried for a long time to preach works for life and salvation, but I did not know anything about God and godliness. I hope that in his mercy he has shown me what I was by nature and what I must be by grace, and made me to know that it was not by works of righteousness that I have done, but according to his mercy he saves by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. I was made to love the truth but I feel so weak and sinful, yet I know that he doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. I did not aim to write so much but could not help it. We would be glad if you could be with us at our association. We are but few here that contend for the doctrine of election, predestination and foreknowledge of God. May God bless you that you may keep the *Signs* going. I am old and worn out, but I do know that God works everything after the counsel of his own will. A poor sinner saved by grace.

(Elder) J. P. MONASCO.

2611 Highland Ave., Durham, N. C.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

A good friend, and brother I hope, sent me the *Signs of the Times,* the first issue was April 1943 and it really hit the nail on the head. I have wanted to express my appreciation for the great joy and comfort found in your publication, especially the article written by J. S. Hunnicutt, "Predestination and the Problem of Evil." By and through such writing as is found in the *Signs of the Times* one is made to rejoice in the sweet hope of Salvation by Grace, and realize more fully that God did purpose all things even to notice this poor and weak sinner and lifted him up from the low grounds of sorrow, and gave him something different to talk about and something sweet to think about. If I could I would just put it all down on paper for somehow I feel

that it would relieve my feelings, but I am not much at writing, and perhaps I should not try to write this, but I wanted you to know that I enjoy the truth just as much as you real Primitive Baptists do, and regardless of who writes it I know it is the work of God. In these busy, confusing times I find time to read a little and think much. Having served in the last war on the battlefront, many times where shot and shell had no respect of person, and being permitted to return home gives me something wonderful to think about. My captain and some of my buddies were killed. Each of them was better qualified to carry on than I, but the will and purpose of God had to be carried out, and to-day I find myself trying to do things, realizing that others are better qualified to do them. I have heard many fine things said of you. Your wonderful contribution to the joys and comforts of God's children is recognized and appreciated. E. C. WHITLEY

656 Gregory Ave., Clifton, N. J.
Written by Roger Knight

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:

Through the grace of God I am again able to write to you and thank you for your kind remembrance of me in sending me the *Signs* which makes me feel humble and thankful to the Lord that it has pleased him to lay in your heart the spirit and will to feed the poor through the spoken and printed word, and also work through you to show forth the richness and glory of Jesus Christ our Lord. I am still in the same place, where I sit because of my affliction and helplessness in myself, where you saw me when you honored me with your kind visit several years ago. I was made to rejoice in my Lord this morning when I beheld the glorious sunshine and all his blessings which he gives freely to such a one as I who is not worthy of the least of them, and yet he abideth faithful so that it made me think of you, in that, regardless of my failure in sending money for the payment of the *Signs* still you send it to me regularly without question or demanding payment therefore. This shows me clearly the difference between God's servants and those who serve the world for they would have removed my name from their list after the non-payment of the first issue. What a blessing all these things are to me who it has pleased the Lord to be shut up as a prisoner away from the common liberties of life, and mostly alone, and yet not alone, for it has pleased the Lord to be present with me at times, and, dear friend, I must say those times are the most precious I have had through my whole life, and can truly say when the Lord is with us even a prison becomes a palace. Please do not think I write this to attract any attention to myself for if it were possible I would hide myself completely for I know that in my flesh dwelleth no good thing, and pray the Lord that I may become completely nothing in myself, and that God the Father may cover me with the cloud of his mercy so that I may see Jesus only even as God the Father reveals him to poor lost sinners for I am persuaded that all other things besides him are as a cloud which soon passeth away. Dear friend, as I am a debtor to God and you for your kindness I am taking the only means I have to tell you for you know I am not able to come and see you in person. I am thankful that I am still able to write, and hope you will be able to make out what I am trying to say as my hands are so painful that it is not much more than a scribble and am obliged to rest every little while on account of the pain. I wrote a letter last week which was no longer than the usual and it took me just eight hours actual writing time so you can well imagine that I do not write much for although the spirit is willing the flesh is weak, but I must say that by the grace of God my condition has great-

ly improved so I am writing you at this time hoping that you will pardon my previous neglect. Knowing you as a true friend who bore with me in my affliction I shall not be careful what I write knowing that you will pardon my short comings in trying to describe how the Lord led me through these last few years since you last heard from me in 1940. When I wrote to you then I was still able to be useful in the little business we did, but even this taxed me beyond my strength as it weakened me so that the Lord laid me by with a severe sickness of pneumonia from which he raised me up in his mercy, and when allowed to sit up for an hour or so during the day I forced myself to do some things which I thought were required to be done, and in so doing neglected God's warning and had a relapse and was brought at death's door (so to speak), and was unconscious for a few days so that the doctor gave up hopes of my recovery. As all things are in God's hands and appointed by his will my time had not yet come and through experience and God's Holy Word have learned that nothing happens by chance for God in his wisdom has a plan for all of us so that his will shall be done. We read in his Holy Word that the Lord revealed to Abraham that his seed, Israel, would be in bondage in Egypt, and revealed to him to the very day when they would be delivered out of Egypt, and so it came to pass that the word of the Lord was fulfilled even to the very day. I will not say more as God's Word gives us a sure word of witness from Genesis to Revelations, so we praise the Lord that in the fullness of time God sent his Son into the world that through him we might be saved, and if we study his word we may know that the time, place and conditions were all met through the determined council of God, even to the very minute. Some would say to me what maketh thou thyself, and I humbly answer before my Lord, nothing friend, but if God in his mercy has thought it right that I should suffer awhile longer in my body, so that through me he may touch and comfort some poor soul in similar suffering, to such I could testify that the Lord never leaves us and his presence becomes dearer as he makes our bed in suffering and will not lay more upon us than we can bear. So I praise the Lord for this also for it is a blessed experience to know that although we are not saved from fire, he is present with us in the fire, and the weaker we become in self the more we become dependent on him. Please do not get the impression that suffering pain and affliction is pleasant for I still shrink from it although I have not been free from pain for more than twenty-two years, and cannot tell how many times that the cry has been "God be merciful to me" and the pain has been so severe at times that I have prayed that it may be his will that my tabernacle may be dissolved. When I look at myself I can see and feel somewhat how terrible sin is and need not to have others tell me for there is not a joint in my deformed limbs and body that does not cry out and groan under its burden, and when I feel and behold these things shall I not cry out and say, "What is man, that thou are mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" If it pleases the Lord to break down our pride and make us humble he can lead us in ways we have never thought of, and break down our will so that we must pass through the ways appointed by him. Oh, that I could be used in the Lord's will to show others how dreadful sin is, so that they would fear God and flee from evil, for the Lord will surely visit us for our sin and must chastise us, for it is good for us in that we cry out for mercy and are brought closer to him, and pray for his protecting care so that we may be delivered from the power of the evil one. I feel sorry for those who say, I will do this or I will do that for I have learned that self will is vain for the Lord tells us that,

"for without me ye can do nothing." So it is only when we pray that the Lord's will may be made known to us that we by his grace and strength do anything right. What man is able to stand in his own strength and resist the will of the evil one? Adam being perfect could not do so. I remember distinctly one evening many years ago making a promise to myself to go home early and spend my time with my loved ones only to find myself as but a toy in Satan's hands and stayed out later than the previous time. I may be weak, but I am sure that Satan is real, and the most powerful enemy to the soul of man for the Lord has revealed him to us as in Isaiah 14:12, etc. as the son of the morning and the most highly honored of God's angels, and it was his pride wherein he tried to exalt himself above the Holy God that caused his downfall so that he was cast out of heaven. The saying, "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall," is surely true, but still he is our most powerful enemy, and it behooves us not to speak lightly of him, and we should fear him for he "walketh about, seeking whom he may devour," When we consider his boldness in tempting our very Lord, the Son of God, we can see his determination to destroy the promised seed, but as in Jesus all the fullness of the Godhead dwelled, Satan was defeated, still we read that even our blessed Lord did not claim to do his own will but the will of the Father which is in heaven and answered Satan with such words as, "it is written." Blessed be the Lord God who has given us the Bible and has revealed his holy will to us so that we may know that our own will does not really exist for we read that when the Lord rebuked his enemies he said, "Ye are of your father the devil and the lusts of your father ye will do." So we know thereby that there are two powers and wills in the present world. One is the holy will of God which is almighty and most powerful from whom we receive every good and needful gift, and the other is the evil will of Satan who can but destroy and would draw all poor souls with him to destruction if permitted of God. Some people speak of a free will just as though they could take the Lord whenever they wished, but I ask how can a helpless sinner who became dead through Adam's trangression do anything to save himself? Can a corpse raise itself up? So being dead how can a sinner say I will do this or that? I believe that it is only through the resurrection power of our dear Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, that any one can receive life. As there are only two wills or powers we must be in either of them, and I am sure that the Lord's people do not desire a third power for they are in continued warfare already with the devilish lust of the flesh striving against that new life that is holy and born of God through the Son and the Holy Spirit. We have but to behold the terrible strife in the world to-day to know that Satan still has much power, and it is through the evil venom which he injected into our first parents that all this strife exists in the world, and God has sent his punishment upon us because of sin. Even to-day in all this terrible conflict we hear of the men in authority in the nations making plans for a future peace which seems to me like a doctor sitting at the bedside, of a dying man painting a picture of a glorious future for him without first trying to treat the sickness. Is God's Holy Word so little thought of that they do not know that wars will continue, and that Satan must first be cast out before there can be a lasting peace? Have they never read that since ancient times all that men have done in their own strength, and so called will, has come to nought? Why deny our blessed Lord God the honor due him, and plead that he may counsel them and give them wisdom in accordance with his Holy Word and Spirit so that they will not be made ashamed, and may return to him with

thanksgiving and prayer. By God's word we know that the earth shall surely pass away, but the time thereof we know not. We also read that when the people cried unto the Lord because of the affliction that the Lord stayed the plague, and as we are in such a state to-day we exclaim, oh! that men would fear the Lord and learn wisdom for "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." I have thought in times past that I knew something, but as I have seen all my plans broken down and destroyed I have found that I know very little and must plead daily, Lord give me wisdom so that I may do thy will, for we know what is done through thy wisdom and will shall endure so that we will not be made ashamed. So I believe there cannot be a lasting peace until the peace of God dwells in men's hearts.

(*To Be Continued*)

Route 2, Calvert City, Ky.

TO THE READERS OF THE DEAR OLD SIGNS:

I will try to write a few of my thoughts. I have had a name among the Baptists for over fifty years. I am now on my eightieth mile. Am feeble and will soon have to bid farewell to earthly things I know. I have a hope in what the blessed Jesus did for me. He came, if not deceived, to talk to me and let me know he was my Saviour by taking my sins off me and bearing them away in his own body, and giving me such a sweet evidence I was set free. So he gave me a hope in him. Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." That hope is all I have. So it is by faith we look to the promises of God. He said he was to come again to carry his bride home. So dear child of God take fresh courage. I will close with love and may God keep us all. (Elder) W. B. OVERBY.

3122 N. Lafayette Circle, Memphis, Tenn.

ELDER J. S. HUNNICUTT:

Dear Brother in hope of life eternal, if indeed one as corrupt and full of sin as myself can claim such relationship with you. I read your writing in the *Signs* on predestination, and my poor heart is made to rejoice in praise to our God as we are made to feel that he is still ruling in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. As he has declared that his people would be a willing people in the day of his power, I believe what you wrote to be the truth. Surely, dear brother, God has put this in your heart to stand on the walls of Zion, and declare unto her that her sins are pardoned, and that her God is the same all wise and all powerful Creator as when he made the world and all that is therein out of nothing by the word of his power. He hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, according as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Ephesians 3:3-4. Grace be unto you and peace from God the Father, that he may keep you in the way in these times of destruction and tribulation. We have a little church here that is contending for the doctrine you so ably spoke on, and I am their unworthy pastor, who if left to myself would have long ago fallen by the wayside, but God, who is able to make the rocks cry out in praise and the dumb ass to speak, has been merciful unto us, not for the good we have done, but when we were dead in sin and without hope he gave us hope through his abundant mercy. We try in our weak way to give him the praise and glory.

(Elder) W. O. WAMMACK.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. H. F. Hutchens, N. Y., $4; R. McGough, Ala., $5; H. Md., $2. Middleton and Wallkill Church, N. Y., $25; A Friend, $20; A Friend, Ala., $5; F. M. Shoemaker, N. Y., $2; Mrs. J. L. Pennington, Md., $3; Mrs. A. C. Holloway, Md., $4; R. R. Peters, Cal., $1; Mrs. J. D. Shafer, N. Y., $1; Ebenezer Baptist Church, N. Y., $10; Mrs. D. Deal, Mo., $1; M. E. Bailey, N. Y., $1; L. B. Dittmar, N. Y., $1; Mrs. C. M. Richardson, Va., $2.

EDITORIAL

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

NEW YEAR'S GREETING

The year 1943 was unquestionably the greatest epoch-history-making period of all time. Never before in any one year did so many momentous events occur. It shall be our purpose to call the attention of our readers to only some of the most outstanding incidents.

Things began to happen about the middle of January when the conference at Casablanca was held which resulted in an agreement to demand the "unconditional surrender" of the Axis powers. This was followed, on February 18th, by the First Lady of China, Madam Chiang Kai-shek, addressing the Congress of the United States in Washington, D. C. Through her travels and addresses in this country the people of America became better acquainted with the great needs, high aims and purposes of her people. The month of May brought a number of very important events: (1) Surrender of the last Axis forces in Tunisia, thus terminating all warfare in Africa; (2) Dissolution of the Communist Internationale (Comintern) by Russia. It is claimed that Joseph Stalin finally became convinced that men who held to some form of religious belief made better soldiers than those who did not. We believe the effect this will have upon Russia as a future nation, as well as the world at large, will be immeasurable; (3) On May 30th, the American forces completed their reconquest of the Attu Islands; (4) On May 31st, a committee of seven were named by Generals de Gaulle and Giraud in Algeria to govern the French Empire. June was apparently somewhat quiet everywhere except in the United States, as it was during that month that race riots occurred in Detroit, Mich., when twenty-nine were killed and about seven hundred injured. On July 10th the Allied forces launched their invasion of Sicily, completing their conquest on August 17th. It was in this same month, the 25th to be exact, that Mussolini resigned as Il Duce of Italy, and was succeeded by Marshal Pietro Badoglio as Premier, which was followed by the abolition of Fascism in Italy on July 28th. Coming over now to September, the first landing (British) on Italian mainland was made on the 3rd, which was followed (Sept. 9th) by Allied landing at Salerno. In the meantime, or on Sept. 8th, Italy proclaimed "unconditional surrender" to the Allies. On October 19th, U. S. Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, and British Secretary, Anthony Eden, met at Moscow with Soviet Foreign Commissar Molotov, and, with China, signed (Oct. 30th) a four-power agreement for the creation of an international organization for peace after the war. We ardently hope that whatever is necessary to be done by all of the signatory powers to put real teeth into this organization to make it function effectively will be done. The ravages of war are too costly in human values, to say nothing of the economical side of the picture, for any nation, great or small, to isolate itself from the rest of the world. We, in this country, should bear our share of the burden of rehabili-

tation and the other responsibilities involved in maintaining the world on an even keel after this terrible holocaust is over. History should not be allowed to repeat itself in this respect for another thousand years to come. There were, of course, many other important developments, including the meeting of the Presidents of the United States and Mexico which took place for the first time in history in Monterey, Mexico. There were also the Conferences at Hot Springs, Va.; Quebec, Canada; Atlantic City, N. J., and the final climax was reached with the all-important Conferences at Cairo, Egypt and Teheran, Iran where the most outstanding personalities of to-day's world gathered to consider and try to solve the most stupendous problems which ever confronted any age. The repercussions which will follow these Conferences will undoubtedly reduce the Axis powers to a status where they will not need to be feared for a long time to come, to be followed, we hope, by an era of peace and tranquility that will last for centuries.

We have spoken of the effects upon the so-called religious world the dissolution of the Comintern in Russia will have, but there are other phases of history-making religious matters. On October 4th, there assembled in New York City what was said to have been the largest gathering of its kind in the history of the world. About 75,000 people met to hear the address of Archbishop Spellman of the Roman Catholic Church, during which he asked his hearers to "pray for our Holy Father, Pope Pius XII, as he with sorrowful heart looks with appeal to his children in all the world; not that he be spared to life, for death to him in his agony of suffering would be a mercy, and a martyr's death for him would be the traditional following of the way of many who have sat in Peter's Chair." There is no denying the fact that the plight of the Pope presents a sad spectacle in these distressing times, but our main reason for referring to this is that we might in some measure clear Peter of this accusation. We are confident he would have been the very last person in the world to make claim to ever having occupied the Chair of the Pope of Rome. Shall we examine the reord for evidence on this point? When Jesus was here in the world he had an occasion to say unto Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Mat. 16:23. In Mat. 26:69-74 we have the account of Peter's denial of his Lord, as follows: "Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest. And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man. And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech betrayeth thee. Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew." These experiences occurred when he was a supposedly devout follower, and he most certainly made no pretentions to being holy, for he went out and wept bitterly. When he went to the house of Cornelius, the record is that "Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; *I myself also am a man.*" And in response to the declaration of Cornelius: "Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God. Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. The word which

God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) That word, I say, ye know, which was published through all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him." Acts 10:34-38. Peter also in that memorable discourse on the day of Pentecost said: "Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." According to the New Standard Encyclopedia, "The origin of the primacy of Rome is according to Roman tradition, to be found (1) in the part played by the apostle Peter in the New Testament records, and (2) in the alleged residence of Peter at Rome as bishop of the Christian community there." There appears to be no accurate record of Popes until about the year A. D. 150. The rock upon which Jesus told Peter he would build his church and the gates of hell would not prevail against it, was not Peter, the man of flesh and blood to whom Jesus had referred as Satan, but it was that the glorious truth which Peter had confessed to when he said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," had not been revealed unto him by or through flesh and blood, "but my Father which is in heaven." This is something that every subject of divine grace who has the witness within himself can bear testimony to. Jesus, the great head of the church, told his disciples to "call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven." Mat. 23:9. Are we not to obey God, rather than men? At the same time, should we not pity rather than criticise those whom we feel have had the knowledge of the truth withheld from them? While the very foundation of all worldly religion is human instruction, and the Catholics particularly have become so thorough and efficient in their training of the youth as to claim if a child is given to them for the first seven years of its life, it will become so thoroughly indoctrinated in what it is taught that it will never change in later life; nevertheless we are glad to believe that the true church of God, being taught of him, looks to her glorious Head, the Lord Jesus Christ, for help, rather than the Head looking to his poor, weak, helpless and needy people.

With us, there is a "Who can tell," but what God may use this great conflict to burst asunder the pall of darkness and ignorance and cause the light of his blessed truth to penetrate into the benighted minds and souls of men, that they may see more clearly the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ who once was slain is now alive for ever more, and that he is head over all things to the church, which is his body, and that all power, both in heaven and in earth, is in his hands, which hold the keys of hell and of death. If it be his will to use this terrible war in bringing this about, the price which will be paid will be none too high. Whether it be the will of the Lord to enlighten the nations of the earth, as such, in this manner we know not, but we are confident that he will use the hell-holes of war to teach individually many of his servants, who will come forth in the post-war period proclaiming what Jonah was taught in the belly of the whale that, "Salvation is of the Lord." There will also be those with hearts prepared of the Lord to receive the glad tidings of the gospel when it is preached in its purity. There may be a few among the Old School Baptists who feel we should have a sort of Pope to teach and instruct us what to say and what not to say, but we are persuaded that the vast majority of our people believe that not only is God able to keep the city of Zion, but that he will watch over and preserve her unto the day of Jesus Christ, for he neither slum-

bers nor sleeps. It is good to remember in these trying times what was written to Israel of old: "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, (Israel) who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them. Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places." Deut. 33: 26-29. Is not this the day spoken of by the Lord, where he said, "They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." Heb. 8:11. Jesus, before taking leave of his disciples, said: "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John 14:25-26. We have stressed, on different occasions, the need of searching the word of God but, important as this is, something more than this is required before there is a true understanding of what the Scriptures teach. God, by his blessed Spirit, must reveal unto us the hidden meaning of his word, and without this we cannot know the real truth.

The past year brought some changes to the *Signs of the Times*. There was some readjustment of our Editorial Staff, and while we deeply regretted our loss in one direction, we were glad of our gain in another, and we feel confident that our readers will be much pleased to note on the cover of this first issue of the paper for the New Year the name of Elder J. S. Hunnicutt, of Webbville, Ky., as still another addition to our staff. In the past we have given our Associate Editors a free hand to write, without any restrictions from us, as their minds have been led, on any and all points of doctrine. We have no disposition to change our attitude in this respect so far as the future is concerned. We only hope the Lord will guide and direct them in writing of his precious truth. On the whole, we believe our readers have been well pleased with most of the articles which appeared during 1943. Quite a number who have been reading the paper for many, many years have written us to the effect that they have never enjoyed the *Signs* more than of late. This has been very gratifying to us, and since the credit is due in large measure to those who have written and sent in good letters, we wish to thank them for their support and cooperation. We earnestly hope they will continue to write and send in articles that will be interesting and instructive, as well as edifying and comforting to the saints.

As to the future, we are both hopeful and optimistic so far as the natural world is concerned. We believe that a New World is in the making, and if we mistake not it is already suffering birth pains in its travail. We are fearful that the worst is yet to come so far as our people are concerned, for in this instance the night is most likely to be the darkest just before dawn, but a new day is surely approaching. Of necessity, there will undoubtedly come to many of us who have sons and daughters scattered over the world some very sad news before the night is spent, but we pray God's remembrance of us, in mercy, and that he will give us strength to bear whatever our cross may be. We have an infinitely wise and Almighty God to look to, by faith when he gives it to us, as our refuge and hiding place, and a very present help in

trouble. For this we should give to him eternal thanks. The world of yesterday, an hundred or even fifty years ago, was very large compared to what it is to-day, and we might say there were many worlds, but in this age and time there seems to be only one world, and we shall need to cooperate and stand together with others, who desire justice and peace, as never before. We have been glad to observe from the action of the U. S. Senate in expressing so overwhelmingly what we judge to be the will of the American people, to seek and join whole-heartedly, in company with like-minded nations, some solution for the dread problem of war. From a spiritual point of view, we are convinced there will always be the same warfare between the flesh and the spirit. They are contrary the one to the other and there will never be reconciliation between the two. The truth spoken by Paul to the Corinthian Church, when he said: 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," will forever remain the unalterable truth, and nothing will change it except a New Birth, for only a new creature availeth anything. It behooves those who have been "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" to take heed unto what the apostle writes. He says, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." While the people of God should very earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, they should do so in love. To quote Paul once more, he said: "And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity (or manifested love), I am nothing." We hope our brethren will ponder these things and as much as in them is live peaceably with all men, and especially the household of faith.

In conclusion, we would suggest to our readers, insofar as they are able to do, that they put their trust in the Lord, for they that trust in the Lord shall not be put to shame. It is also written, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." Isa. 40:31. May God give us to love and serve him, and one another, throughout the year with such ability as may be pleasing in his sight, and may he have all the praise, world without end, is our prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen. R.L.D.

INTRODUCTORY

It is customary for a member of the staff to introduce a new associate. Desiring to do this, we asked Elder Hunnicutt to tell us something about himself, and he has done such a good job of it in what follows that we have decided to step aside and let him speak for himself. We believe the manner in which he does it will be satisfactory and pleasing to our readers. We feel confident his editorials will strengthen this section of our paper, and we hope that he himself may be given to partake of that which he contributes. R.L.D.

I know it is reasonable to suppose that the readers of the *Signs* will want to know something about me, especially since my name is soon to appear in the paper as Associate Editor. First I will say that my father was of English descent and my mother was Irish. I suppose I will always be blamed for inheriting certain natural traits from both. Father came from Virginia when quite young and settled in Elliott County, Kentucky at which place I was born, near Webbville where I now reside. Both my parents were strictly Arminian in their religious views and naturally I was by

tradition in that teaching from my youth. I was brought up in a good home and was what the world called a good boy. However at the age of eighteen I became very much concerned about myself, feeling that I was a lost and ruined sinner in the sight of a great and Holy God. As I had been taught the "do and live" doctrine I naturally tried to do something to relieve my burdened soul, only to find my burdens grew heavier. After some months I was awakened to such a deep sense of guilt that my last ray of hope fled from me so far as my doing anything to help myself was concerned. I truly gave up in despair. I was lost, forever lost without God and without hope in the world. In this terrible state of mind I felt there was nothing in the world I could expect but everlasting torment which I realized was no more than I deserved. I consented to it as my just reward and due, which a Holy God would soon mete out to me. I could no longer ask God to save me, it was entirely too much for one so vile as I saw myself to be to ask of him now. I could only consent to it all as just, and beg for mercy. It was then and there I felt my burden removed, and it seemed I was lifted on high and found myself praising God for his goodness and mercy to me. Then I could believe he was merciful, even to me, I could believe my sins were pardoned. I could see it was grace, nothing but grace that brought his mercies to me. I could see it clearly then for I was a lost and helpless sinner, and all of my doing good to help myself had availed nothing. I am still contending that his grace is sufficient to save his people, and I feel confident that every one who has been shown his own unworthy lot, who has had an experience of God's grace, has also ceased from his own works (to try to save himself) as God did also from his. When I received this hope I knew nothing of Old Baptists, but there was a New School or Missionary Church near my home, and after two years I united with them only to find shortly that they did not have the doctrine I had been made to believe. They talked grace but preached works. I went along with them a few years and had begun trying to preach as I felt I must declare the goodness of God and his grace which saves his people. The New School Baptists said I would have to attend one of their schools in order to learn how to preach. This I also tried only to find it did not help me any. While attending one of their schools I learned what the Old Baptists believe from a brother who was a member with them. Why! I said, "That is just what I believe." I then left school and went and united with the Old Predestinarian Baptists. I have been trying to preach for them for several years and they seem satisfied with the doctrine I preach. I have a good wife and six children all of whom are a great help to me. They are always ready to help make a way for me to go and preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. I am now fifty-three years of age and am trusting it may please our gracious Lord to make me able to preach and write of his goodness and grace to save his people for the remaining days or years he has assigned me in this time world. Yours in hope of a glorious immortality.

(Elder) J. S. HUNNICUTT.

SALUTATORY

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS:

It is with a feeling of unworthiness that I attempt to write this, my salutatory. Having been asked by our Editor, Elder Dodson, to join the editorial staff of the *Signs of the Times,* I wish to say that at first I experienced a feeling of hesitancy in making my decision to do so from the fact that I felt too unworthy and unable to rightly fill the place of Associate Editor. After having given the matter my undivided and most prayerful thought I remembered that God's humble poor and afflicted people everywhere are in need of

the sincere milk of the word as well as strong meat that they may grow thereby. However, it is needless for me to say that I can neither write nor preach to the edifying of the Lord's people except the Holy Spirit should so guide my pen and direct my thoughts to give me a mind and ability to do so. As I am now made to feel that it is of the Lord, that the opportunity is presented to me of having a medium through which I may convey my humble thoughts to the dear people of God, I now desire to express my thankfulness to our God and to that humble servant of his, our patient Editor through whom he has now given this opportunity to me. The *Signs* is truly an Old Baptist paper and I think it should have a place in every Old Baptist home. The editorials, together with the many comforting articles on doctrine by its host of able contributors, are well worthy of our commendation. I commend it most heartily to all lovers of the truth. As an Associate Editor I feel that I shall need the prayers of the Lord's dear people for I am just a man, like all other men, and if left to myself can do nothing, but if I write being moved upon by the Spirit of our God then I shall write only such as becomes sound doctrine. I shall not attempt, at this time, to go into details relative to my views on principles of doctrine, however, I do wish to say that I believe most heartily the doctrine most generally held by the Baptists, to wit, salvation from beginning to end alone by sovereign grace, the predestination of all things whatever comes to pass, and all things that come to pass are made to work for the good of His people. I believe also in the future final resurrection of the dead both of the just and the unjust. Yes, and the just and everlasting punishment of the reprobate and the eternal happiness of the elect. Also that God had a just and righteous cause for choosing and refusing from all eternity, and all that he reveals to us relative to that cause is—it was "according to the good pleasure of his will." I am not inclined to attempt a further elucidation of these subjects at this time, to do so would require entirely too much space, and to state them merely is sufficient. However, I do hope it may please our gracious Lord to make me able to write more at length on these important subjects at some future time, and I wish to say now to our Editors and readers of the *Signs* that I hope I shall never attempt to write at all unless I feel I can do so in a spirit of love for I have only sweet fellowship for all of God's humble children who have trodden the thorny path, even though we do not see eye to eye on all questions of doctrine. I have written just as my mind has led me, and I trust I have written nothing but what the blessed Holy Spirit has placed his seal of approval upon. Submitted in love. J. S. HUNNICUTT.

PERMANENT OFFER

(until further notice)

TWO BOOKS

PREDESTINATION AND RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

Either one of these books will be given FREE with a year's subscrpition to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at $2. to anyone who is not now a subscriber to the paper, or to any old subscriber who will send us a NEW subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at $2. The price of the books alone is $1. each. We only have about seventy (70) of the books on Predestination on hand, but as long as they last we shall be glad to send them out on the above basis. R. L. D.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the *Signs of the Times* at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1; 12 copies, $2. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

OBITUARIES

ANNA M. BOND, widow of our deceased brother, Charles S. Bond, daughter of the late Edwin and Martha Williams Duffield, departed this earthly life from the home of her daughter, Mrs. William Campbell, 125 Cliveden St., Glenside, Pa., October 2, 1943 of myocarditis, an affliction of the heart. She had been ailing from heart trouble for some years. She was born July 15, 1860 near Southampton, Pa. One son, Horace Bond, lives in Florida, and another daughter, Mrs. Mary Taylor lives in Philadelphia. There are four surviving grandchildren. She was married in 1882, her husband preceding her in death in 1918. Funeral services conducted by the writer of this notice were held from the residence in Glenside. Interment in Hillside Cemetery. Mrs. Bond had requested that hymns 68 and 609, Beebe's Collection, be read at her funeral. Also that the 8th chapter of Romans be the basis of such comments as might be made at her funeral. These requests were granted. While not a member of the visible church, Mrs. Bond had for many years loved to attend the meetings of the Old School Baptist Church whenever possible for her to do so. We feel she had a hope in the mercy of God through Jesus Christ, and that she was by his grace made ready for the transformation from this earth to the Paradise of God. May the Lord comfort the sorrowing family and give them humble submission to his divine will.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS.

LILLIE MELVINIE SPARKS, daughter of F. and Rachel Elledge, was born Sept. 5, 1907 and departed this life April 28, 1943. She was married Jan. 2, 1938 to Clarence Sparks and to this union were born three children: Hubert Clarence aged four, Mildred Lillie aged three and a third child having died in infancy. Lillie never united with the visible church, but she expressed a hope to her mother who is a member of Good Hope Primitive Baptist Church, a hope of eternal life in that home not made with hands but eternal in the heavens. By their fruits ye shall know them and thus we felt like we knew Lillie by her quiet, peaceful life, loving and being loved by all who knew her. She talked with her mother of the joys she received while going about her home work singing, "Oh when shall I see Jesus, and reign with him on high." She loved her home and made everything as pleasant for her husband and children as she could. It could be well said of her, "She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness," putting forth all her strength to make her home beautiful. When God called she was summoned to a far more beautiful home in the realms of bliss. The large attendance at her funeral and the beautiful flowers all spoke volumes of her life, her friends and the respect they had for her. Her cousin, Jack Alford, a Missionary Baptist preacher, conducted the funeral services after which she was laid to rest in Good Hope Cemetery with her little babe in her arms. Could we wish them back again where trouble and sorrow are always near? Rather say, let them sleep that the waking hath no fear. Dear father, mother, husband, brothers and loved ones let us not grieve as one having no hope. Although to us it seems terrible to bear, the dear Lord knows best and he is the one that heals the broken hearts, "Behind a frowning providence he hides a smiling face." Although it is hard to say at times like this, may the Lord give us strength to say as did Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." One who loved her, her cousin. (Mrs.) MYRTLE RHOADES.

MRS. ELLA VARNES PATTERSON passed away very suddenly on October 17, 1943, at her residence, 2706 Alameda Blvd., Baltimore, Maryland. Her childhood days and part of her married life was passed in Harford Co. She was a constant attendant of Old Brick Baptist Church in Harford Co., until she moved to Baltimore, about 30 years ago, where she always attended Ebenezer Church. Mrs. Patterson was 87 years of age. She is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Sadye P. Pennington and Mrs. Elmyra P. Hendrix, both of Baltimore, Maryland, who mourn their great loss. She was a loving and devoted mother, always doing for her children. Their happiness was hers. In her passing Ebenezer Church of Baltimore has suffered a great loss. Although she never united with the church, she was a most faithful, loving and substantial friend, always filling her seat until the infirmities of age prevented her from doing so. Her sweet, happy face always smiling, was an inspiration to all and to know her was to love her. God called her home. We must bow in submission to his will. My prayer is that God will heal the torn and bleeding hearts of her dear daughters and their companions, and reconcile them to await the resurrection morn, when God shall call her sleeping dust to meet her Lord and Savior to go out from his presence no more. Written by one who loved her. MAMIE W. ROWE.

AUTHORIZED AGENTS

We are pleased to inform our readers that the following Ministers have very kindly consented to receive subscriptions, both NEW and Renewals, for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

As many of our subscribers do not have checking accounts and it inconveniences them to obtain Money Orders, we believe they will appreciate the privilege of subscribing through some minister who is authorized to accept their funds and remit to us.

We would like to appoint Ministers in other parts of the country to represent us, and hope they will write us for details. R. L. D.

ALABAMA

Elder Lytle Burns, Florence, Ala.
Elder F. A. Collins, Hartford, Ala.
Elder W. D. Griffin, Fayette, Ala.

FLORIDA

Elder C. H. Byrd,
P. O. Box 86, Panama City, Fla.

KENTUCKY

Elder G. B. Bird, Canada, Ky.
Elder J. S. Hunnicutt, Webbville, Ky.

LOUISIANA

Elder E. J. Lambert,
P. O. Box 55, Lillie, La.

MARYLAND

Elder Harold M. Bennett, Mardela Springs, Md.

OKLAHOMA

Elder W. N. Green, Box 654, Altus, Okla.

NORTH CAROLINA

Elder T. F. Adams, Willow Springs, N. C.
Elder E. L. Cobb, Wilson, N. C
Elder M. F. Westbrook, Rt. 3, Dunn, N. C.

VIRGINIA

Elder J. E. Burgess, Rt. 1, Box 180, Martinsville, Va.
Elder Roy S. Smith, Cascade, Va.
Elder David V. Spangler, Rt. 6, Danville, Va.

REQUEST

Lena Langford, 3190 S. Penn St., Englewood, Colorado, would like to meet Old School Predestinarian Baptists and will appreciate it if any in that section will communicate with her.

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.
O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canada, California.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before.
E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists invites all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren, to meet with us first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hitchins. Take graveled road to the church.
E. M. TACKETT,
J. S. HUNNICUTT, Pastors.
H. L. ROGERS, Clerk.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th Street, Mayfield, Ky. Those interested will be welcome. O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. An invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3 rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A.M. 1:30 P.M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

C. W. BOND, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A.M.
ALL WELCOME

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Tex.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sunday in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P.M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sunday each month at 11:00 A.M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Salem Church, four miles south of Teague, Texas, meets on Saturday before the first Sunday in each month in conference.

W. A. LITTLE, Pastor.
DORA WREN, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a.m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, Pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a.m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome. C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 112 RUTHERFORD, N. J., FEBRUARY, 1944 No. 2

THE LIGHT FROM THE LIFE OF CHRIST ENABLED ME TO SEE MY SINS

That which is good I cannot do,
I am a tree corrupt;
When I my sinful life review,
It is a bitter cup.

I am by nature prone to sin,
My flesh by Satan bound.
To please my God and good begin,
I never yet have found.

I truly hope that Christ found me,
Down in a sinful pit,
And shed His blood to set me free,
Caused me my sins to quit.

When His pure life came in my soul,
I saw my sins arise;
And o'er my head great troubles rolled
At last He heard my cries.

From that great pit He raised me up;
My feet placed on a stone;
He gave to me a precious cup,
And fixed my going home.

(Elder) LYTLE BURNS.

CORRESPONDENCE

Johnston City, Ill.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

Having read and carefully studied your editorial in the September *Signs of the Times* giving your exposition of 2 Peter 3:1-17, I wish, by your permission, to present for the consideration of your readers my exegesis of the same scripture language. If I correctly understand your point of view, you believe Peter's words, "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming, etc?" to refer to the last days of the Jewish, or legal dispensation, and that those scoffers were speaking of the promise of Jesus' FIRST coming, and NOT of his second coming, or PERSONAL appearing without sin unto salvation. It should be borne in mind that both the first and second epistles of Peter were written in A.D. 60; nearly thirty years AFTER the first advent of Jesus; nearly thirty years AFTER he was crucified and risen from the dead, and was, at the time Peter wrote, seated at the right hand of God. Inasmuch, as Peter used the phrase, "SHALL come in the last days scoffers, etc.," he evidently was referring to a time of their coming as FUTURE to the old, legal dispensation. For the "last days" to have been the last days of the legal dispensation, and for the "coming" mentioned by the scoffers, to have been referring to Christ's FIRST coming, Peter would needs have been writing BEFORE the FIRST coming of Jesus and referring to that as the time when scoffers "SHALL" arise saying, "Where is the promise of his (FIRST) coming?" But, we know that Peter was writing AFTER Jesus had come and after he had sat down at the right hand of God. This undoubtedly will prove that his words, "SHALL COME" were spoken of "the last days" prior to Christ's SECOND coming. and HIS PERSONAL presence again on this earth. The Bible tells us of three worlds; the world that was, the world that now is, and the world which IS TO COME. The world that was, was the ante-diluvian world, the world that now is, is the post-

diluvian world, and the world which IS TO COME, is the kingdom of God in the new heaven and the new earth which John saw, and which God has promised and which shall be fully set up in all its kingdom, power and glory at the second coming of Christ. You have the "judgment and perdition of ungodly men" taking place at the FIRST coming of Christ, which, if true, we would have to believe that the promised and appointed wrath of God to be poured out upon the wicked and finally impenitent, was poured out at the first coming of Jesus while the wicked Antediluvians were dead and before the resurrection of any of the wicked who shall die thereafter. All the Scriptures which, to my understanding, teach the destruction or ending of the present Gentile order of the world, you apply to the ending of the old legal dispensation. So you refer to the prophecy of Malachi and have the day "that shall burn as an oven" in the which the proud and all that do wickedly shall be burned up, etc. coming at the first advent of Jesus. You find the fulfillment of this prophecy, or think you do, in the ending of the Jewish dispensation at the first coming of Jesus. I am unable to find anything like that deducible from the prophet's language. The "elements" and the "heavens" mentioned by the apostle Peter are to pass away with a great noise and melt with fervent heat. Are to do so in the "day of God" for which Peter was looking and hastening unto. This scripture is being fulfilled at this very time in which we live; the day of God's wrath has already come; the political and social heavens of this present, evil Gentile world are on fire at this very hour; the present elements of this Gentile reign are now melting with fervent heat (figuratively speaking), and this present evil world is passing away with a great noise, so great indeed that it is being heard around the world. The prophet Malachi spake of the present shaking by the hand of God, the Gentile kingdoms, under the symbol of a heated oven; a day that should burn as an oven. All of these calamities now coming on in the world are the very things prophesied of as coming to pass in the last days of the Gentile world just prior to the second, personal appearing of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, when he shall raise the dead saints, change their vile bodies and fashion them like unto his own immortal, glorified body, and say unto them, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Yes, we are looking for Jesus, "and unto them that look for him shall he appear the SECOND TIME WITHOUT sin unto salvation," "ready to be revealed at the last time." The resurrection of dead men and women from death and the grave is the only hope of God's people of an incorruptible inheritance, and such blessed hope is resting on the fact of the resurrection of Jesus and his promised second coming. The resurrection of the dead and the second coming of Jesus are two of the cardinal, distinctive doctrines of the Bible and of the true church of Christ. Without them death would rob God's people of all hope of a future life and immortality. I thank God that he has stamped these blessed truths in my heart and in my Christian experience. It is my firm conviction that the second coming of my Lord is not so far in the future. The "signs" of his coming are being flashed before the very eyes of all those whose eyes are blessed to see and whose ears are blessed to hear. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." A poor sinner saved by the grace of God, and grace alone. (Elder) C. M. WEAVER.

(We would like to commend to all who write on doctrinal points of differences the admirable spirit manifested by Brother Weaver in his article. He is most certainly entitled to his point of view and we are glad to accord him the privilege of expressing it through our columns. We feel impressed to follow the

article he has written with some comment of our own for the consideration of our brother and our readers, and we earnestly hope that our remarks may be read with brotherly kindness. The Lord, whose habitation is high and lofty, condescended to speak by and through his prophet, Isaiah, to sinful Israel in the following manner: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isa. 1:18. If God, who is holy, could reason thus with sinners, surely it is not unbecoming in us, who are vile and full of sin, to reason among ourselves. When brethren of like precious faith refuse to reason together, we may be sure that something is radically wrong somewhere.

The first point we wish to call attention to in Brother Weaver's article is where he says: "It should be borne in mind that both the first and second epistles of Peter were written in A. D. 60; nearly thirty years AFTER the first advent of Jesus; nearly thirty years AFTER he was crucified and risen from the dead." He, therefore, appears to conclude from this that Peter could not have had reference in the third chapter of his second epistle to the end of the Legal Dispensation. We believe it has been a pretty generally accepted fact among our people that the Law Dispensation was not completely ended until about the year A. D. 70. If Brother Weaver is of the opinion that the Legal Dispensation ended *immediately* with the death and resurrection of Jesus, we would like to recommend for his consideration the testimony of Jesus as recorded by three of the four gospel writers—Matthew, Mark and Luke. We will quote first from Matthew 24:1-3. "And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world." Second, we will quote from Mark 13:1-4. "And as he went out of the temple, one of disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here! And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?" We wish our readers would read further the connection following both of these quotations, as lack of space forbids that we should quote too much. In the case of Luke, however, we will indulge ourself with considerable of his testimony, by quoting from the twenty-first chapter, fifth to the twenty-fourth verses, inclusive, as follows: "And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said, As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass? And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them. But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by. Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against

kingdom: and great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven. But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. And it shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: For I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. But there shall not an hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls. And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." It undoubtely required several years for all of these things to come to pass, and a more detailed account of the horror which was visited upon the Jews can be found in the works of Josephus. We need not, however, go beyond the words of Jesus to see what was under consideration.

Returning to the record of Peter, it seems perfectly clear to us that he is referring to what we choose to term the *patriarchal* period in the fifth and sixth verses of the third chapter of his second epistle, where he says: "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." Brother Weaver refers to this as the "ante-diluvian world," and the world to which Peter refers in the seventh verse of the same chapter as "the heavens and the earth which are now" (meaning to us the Legal Dispensation), Brother Weaver calls the "post-diluvian world," which as we understand him embraces both the Legal and Gospel Dispensations, since he says "the world which is to come, is the kingdom of God in the new heaven and the new earth which John saw, and which God has promised and which shall be fully set up in all its kingdom, power and glory at the second coming of Christ," which he presents as being at some future time. So far as we are aware, the Bible is silent on the "ante-diluvian" and "post-diluvian" worlds, as such, and we are seriously wondering whether he means to combine the law and gospel in the same age. To us, they are as different as night and day, and we believe most of our brethren like to hear the law kept separate from the gospel in preaching. We believe Jesus had reference to this when he said: "No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved." Mat. 9:16-17. God speaking by the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah had the Gospel Day in mind when he said he would make a new covenant with the house of Israel. See Jeremiah 31:31-34. Paul quoting the prophet (see Hebrews 8:8-

12), then adds, "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away," and continues by saying, "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." We hope we have seen an unspeakable beauty in these things, and while we would like to show them to our brethren, we realize that God must reveal them unto his people before they can see them. The "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," which Peter speaks of, as well as "a new heaven and a new earth," which John saw, Rev. 21:1, are one and the same. There had appeared unto John a great wonder in heaven: "A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." To our mind this represented the church delivered from the bondage of the law and clothed in the righteousness of Jesus, and Jesus had appeared unto her the second time, without sin unto salvation, otherwise she could not have sung as she did, *"Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night."* If there is to be another earth after this one has been destroyed, we do not know where it is referred to in the Bible. John speaks of a celestial city where "there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever," but we know of no earth beyond this one. Reverting to our article in the September *Signs,* where we spoke of the three periods of time, patriarchial, legal or prophetic and the gospel, we believe these were embraced in the ark which God commanded Noah to build. It consisted of three stories, typifying the three dispensations; the first two were dark, with but little if any true light, but the third had a window in it, and through this came that light which was typical of the gospel. Peter undoubtedly had these three worlds in mind and he kept them separate and distinct. He was writing apparently about A. D. 66, or only a short while before the final consummation of the Legal Dispensation, which we repeat took place about the year A. D. 70.

We like to believe that we are all seekers after the truth as it is in Jesus and that we want to know what the Scriptures teach. It, therefore, behooves us to search the word of God diligently, comparing scripture with scripture. It also becomes us as good brethren to consider one another to provoke unto love, presenting our own gift, if possible, to the edification of the church, which is the body of Christ. In writing upon these things we should keep in mind that among the qualifications of a bishop, or elder, are to be found these: "not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; Holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers."

We hope our remarks will be received in the spirit in which they are made.—R.L.D.)

Route 1, Hammond, W. Va.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS WITH ELDER PETER JONES:

When I saw his request in the *Signs* I thought I would not write as I had no light on the subject, but afterward this scripture came to me, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son." Mat. 22:2. In Rev. 19:9 we read, "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." Let us first notice who these are spoken of in Revelations. They are first of all blessed, and they are called, and that calling is the holy effectual

calling which penetrates into the heart for he said unto me, "These are true sayings of God," while in Matthew the call was to "them that were bidden." The law was given to the children of Israel as a nation and they were bidden to keep that law, but that law could not give life to the dead sinner, they were not that blessed seed that shall serve him. They went a different way, did not come to the wedding supper of the king's son, and even the king himself declared that not one of them shall taste my supper for they are not worthy. Notice these were not worthy, no they were not blessed with the garment of salvation and with the spirit to come. Matthew 22:9 reads, "Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage." Notice the bid to the marriage, "And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment." This address is made and is applied to the kingdom of heaven and is like to a certain king who made the supper. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away." Yes, in the militant church here on earth there was a certain man, Judas, who only was chosen to take a part in the work of the ministry, and who by transgression fell and was a castaway, the son of perdition, went to his own place. It left a vacant place which the church could not not fill by casting their lots, but the Lord supplied them with one who was blessed to fill the place of Judas. There is a difference between the kingdom of heaven, the militant church here on earth, and the invisible church of God, I mean the kingdom of God, *it* is within you. You cannot enter into the kingdom of God but you can creep into the church on earth. None of those in Matthew were worthy to taste of the supper, but in Revelations those *called* unto the marriage supper, (not just bidden or called at to come) came for (these are the true sayings of God) they were blessed to come, yes compelled. They were found in different places not just among the Jewish nation alone, but in all the nations thy seed shall be blessed. This is that holy seed, the blessed seed that shall serve him. Let us examine these scriptures in the true light. "And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her," that is the invisible church of God. They come into her by birth being born of the Spirit of God and these are the children of God. Then as I have stated, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind," while the kingdom of God is within you. There is where he writes his laws in the heart and imprints his laws in their inward parts. Let us notice this scripture which Elder Jones wanted written on going back to Rev. 19:7. "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." God works both to will and to do in her of his own good pleasure so she is already clothed in the garments of salvation, in the righteousness of Christ, her husband. In the eighth verse we read, "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." This being granted to her it is no wonder she was ready. "The marriage of the Lamb is come" all things are ready. She did not make any excuse, but like the five wise virgins was ready to enter in with the bridegroom while the door was open. None but God can open the door and none but he can shut it. Then comes in the text, "Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb" as I have already stated called with an holy effectual calling which cannot be resisted nor turned away until it completes its purpose.

Come, all things are ready, "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: She hath killed her beasts." Eat and drink O friends at my table here and in eternity, it is my supper, one feast, one supper. He that eateth and drinketh of my flesh and blood hath eternal life and is filled and shall never hunger nor thirst again. Under the law the Lord commanded the children of Israel and bade them to serve and keep his commandments, but they refused and went after other gods and other things until the kingdom was taken from them. As it was the law kingdom, which was only our schoolmaster, it waxed old like a garment ready to decay and vanish away for the new covenant to come in. The law no more written on tables of stone which Moses threw down and brake, but this new law which is the spiritual law is written in the heart. The foolish virgins were not ready and could not enter in. Note their excuse, gone to buy when the bridegroom came. The wise who were blessed with vessels and with oil in their vessels with their lamps were ready while the foolish virgins only had their lamps and their lamps were gone out. Yes, the candle of the wicked shall be put out while the lamp of the righteous is as a lamp that burneth, it goeth not out. Blessed are they who are called. The blessing comes first. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Before Jesus' crucifixion when he took the bread and wine as that supper, it was done in remembrance of him to show his death till he come again. Then he said, "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." It is there in my Father's kingdom there is a new order, not after the same order as it is here. "I am the vine, ye are the branches." It is not natural bread and wine you eat and drink there. The ordinance shadows and types you have here, but there it will be the substance itself. "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." See the marriage supper of the Lamb, his marriage is come, then the supper is ready. The types and shadows were figures and patterns of better things to come in the future. "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb," not called at them to come, but who are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. It is the Lamb of God. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." It seems to me there is a turning point in this matter after the marriage supper of the Lamb came and the last supper spoken of here. In the seventeenth verse, "Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, etc." I cannot write on this at this time so let some having light on it write. This angel was standing in the sun, the greater light which was made to rule the day, while the lesser light, the moon, was made to rule the night. This angel standing in the sun was given light to see what was going to take place, that seems to take place here in time for in eternity there is no war against Christ our Lord. I cannot say but some of that war must be now. Look at kings and mighty men falling, and being deprived of their power which was given to them, which was ordained of God for all power in heaven and in earth was ordained of God, and they, like Pilate, could do nothing except it be given to them from above. He did not have the power to release Christ nor to crucify him except it be given to him from above. How could he release Christ when he was born for that hour and for that purpose, born for that end? The issue of life and death is in the hands of the great God

Almighty. I hope I have not darkened counsel. In the multitude of counsel there is safety. Let some one else write on this scripture. I want to say to Elder Jones that he is like me in a way. I would like for some one to write their views on some points of scripture because what a small part we know of God, it is indeeed a small portion. We may think we know something when we do not for there is a way that seemeth right unto a man when his way is unto death. Like Paul, he verily thought he was right in making havoc of the church. Elder Jones if this article is published write and tell me if you get any comfort from my writing. The kingdom of heaven is like a net cast into the sea, but the kingdom of God does not gather of all kinds because it is within you. Write my laws in your heart and it shall be said of this man and that man that they were born in her, and in union it shall be said that no more the uncircumcision shall be found in her nor the hypocrite, but they are in the militant church. They creep in among the branches of the vine, but they are not of the vine and they must be purged out. They cannot stand the fire for our God is a consuming fire. It is the gold that is good that will stand the fire. Like Daniel and the Hebrew children. They stood the fire. There are some places where the kingdom of heaven is referred to as the militant church while in other places I think it is referred to as the kingdom of God so let us not get them mixed. (Elder) JAMES W. LINN.

Route 4, Box 315, Atlanta, Ga.

MR. AND MRS. W. T. CHESTER,

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER IN CHRIST:

According to God's electing grace, and the manifestation of his love and eternal mercy that he himself makes known to his chosen heirs of promise in every generation, one generation passes away and another cometh, but the mercy of the Lord endureth forever. As all the earthly children are born into the world, the same way even to the heavenly children, the elect of God, are born the same way, given the same faith and hope in the same covenant that was ordered in all things and sure although he maketh it not to grow because it was grown to start with. Every soul that has ever been saved was in that covenant that God and the Son had covenanted to save. Was saved in the mind and fixed purpose of God. That which God has done is forever done, nothing can be added to it and nothing can be taken from it, neither can it be disannulled. It shall stand forever and ever. Amen. Now I have outlined to you the all wise God that I believe in, the one that spake and it was done, commanded and it stood fast, and while I am trying to write to you two saints of the most high God, I am also praying that he will guide my thoughts aright, and that his blessed name will have all the praise, honor and glory. Like you said in your letter my eyes become so drowned in tears that I have to stop and dry them and rest before I can write again. I will now try to write a part of my experience as I promised, not knowing how I will succeed. In 1894 when I was twenty years of age just after the third Sunday in May, I was plowing cotton in what we called the back field away from our house by myself. As I looked I saw a little negro boy coming to where I was and as he came close to me he said, "Is this Mr. Will Brooks?" I said, "Yes, what do you want?" He said, "Here is a letter for you." I read it and it was from my sweetheart. She had invited me to her home that night to a dance and asked me to bring my fiddle. How delighted I was, I could almost see myself at that dance, dancing with the girl that I thought I loved. I thought I could carry out my plans, but a strong man will keep his palace till a stronger comes, and his goods are in peace, but that same day before night some unknown power took

charge of poor me. O, it seemed that I was sinking into hell and there was no way to escape. The sun was about two hours high and I felt just like I never would live to see the sun go down. When that power struck me I fell on my plow stock begging God to have mercy on me, the first time that I ever tried to pray. I was in the open field and I looked every way to see if any one saw me. Just then I thought I will go to a near by thicket and pray there if I can live to get there. I crawled through the briars and thorns into the thicket and tried to pray until almost sundown. I thought may be that mule was eating the cotton, but strange to say it had not bitten a stalk of the cotton nor moved out of its tracks. I felt at that time the mule was better than I, and that every beast of the world could be saved easier than I. I could have made a world like this just as easy as I could have gone to that dance. I could not eat any supper and I cried all night. They asked me if I was sick? I said, yes, and I was sin sick. The worst of all diseases is light compared with sin, in every part it seizes but rages most within. I traveled in this mournful condition, weeping, praying, until all my hopes were gone. I had given up my associates and they thought strange of it. They would want me to play the fiddle for them but I was made to hate that old fiddle and traded it off for a saddle so I could ride to meeting. One Sunday after the rest of the family had eaten breakfast I slipped the testament into the bib of my overalls and went to the pasture to spend the day with the cattle that I felt were better than I. My aunt had given me an old Beebe hymn book and somehow I turned to an old song that reads:

"Long time I lived in darkness,
Nor saw my dangerous state;
And when I was awakened,
I thought it was too late."

At this point I thought what a fool I am! I am going back into my own ways, but instead I grew worse and worse. I once thought I would go to a nearby railroad trestle and jump off and end all my troubles and sorrows, but that was just a thought. I could not even attempt to do it. I tried everything that I could think of to get relief, but it failed me. Another Sunday morning I went off to the swamp to die and to read the Bible, but could not read for my eyes were drowned with tears. I could not dry the tears away so I thought I would wash them away and got over the stream and tried to wash them away but could not. Finally I said to myself I am dying, and started out of the swamp to tell my uncle that I was dying and where I wanted to be buried. As I was on my way to his home in the midst of a large field of corn it seemed that the heavens were opened to me. The sun rays were taken away and the sun looked like the moon. The only time that I could ever look at the sun at noon, when it seemed before I was delivered it was as bright as ever I saw it, but God who made the sun to shine can make it not to shine if he sees fit to do so. At that time there gathered around me a flock of little speckled birds, all happy, all one size, all looked just alike and they were all over the fodder, all over ears of corn and on the ground. I was so happy in the midst of them that all troubles were clean gone forever and I sang this song:

"Then will I tell to sinners round
What a dear Saviour I have found:
I'll point to thy redeeming blood,
and say—*Behold the way to God.*

I felt sure I would never tell this to any one, but some how one Sunday morning about a year after my troubles first started, I was sitting in the woods reading the Bible and I thought hidden when along came an old hard shell deacon going to meeting. He saw me and stopped and said, "Come and go to meeting with me and Elder Chandler will tell you what you want to know about the

Bible." I could not resist and went with him, and oh how little I did feel riding up to the church with such a great man as he was. I felt like every one was looking at me. Elder Chandler preached to me that day. It was the first preaching I had ever heard, and I still believe it was the sweetest hour of all my life for he told everything that I had gone through with and what it meant. Here is where I found the church of God, and here is where I have been kept forty-eight years, and here is where I hope to be when death comes, with the church of God, the pillar and ground of the truth. In June 1895 I was received into the fellowship of the church and baptized the third Sunday in June 1895. That was another happy day for me and I began to feel impressed to talk, in fact I felt like I wanted to talk or preach the day I was baptized. When Elder Chandler was drying my face he said, "I have baptized a preacher, thank God." I wondered how he knew all that as I had never told any one of my impressions but he seemed to know my feelings and could tell them better than I have ever been able to tell them. This is a great mystery to me yet. I have been trying to preach for a number of years and trying to quit for the same length of time. Well, Sister Chester, as you said in your experience I could write on and on but must quit. Your experience is one as sweet as I have ever read in all my life and I have read a lot of them. I will say that you are a preacher's wife or a deacon's for you surely have that calling. I read your experience and then reread it and now I am reading it again before I mail it, in fact I am sorry to give it up but I must fulfill your request and return it. I do not know that your husband is a preacher or a deacon, but I do feel to know that he has a preacher's or a deacon's wife prepared by the great and good Lord. I have come to the conclusion that there is but little happiness in this life for the people of God. About the time one trouble heals another will break out and if it is not direct it is indirect. I know that I have been idolized, criticized, scandalized and slanderously reported, but none of these things have ever moved me. I am still serving four churches and I baptized two mighty lovely children last Sunday. They came out of the Missionary Baptist Church. A man and his wife named Morgan. The little woman said in her experience that her sister had said, "If you join the old hardshells I do not want to speak to you any more." All her people belong to the Missionary Baptists. I feel ashamed to offer you this poor scratching, but it is only a small portion of what I would like to write in regards to my experience with the church of God but I must stop. May the Lord bless and keep you both and as you grow older may life grow brighter and brighter. I have two mighty sweet boys in this awful war. One of them is my baby. Pray for us. Just a sinner begging for mercy.

(Elder) W. A. BROOKS.

(*Continued from January Issue*)

Returning to the subject of my sickness in the fall of 1940 when I was brought down so low with penumonia, I consider it a blessing that I lost consciousness for some time for the rheumatic condition is so that I cannot lay in one position long for my joints and body becomes too painful. In the days following I really had a trying time for being too weak to turn about in bed by myself I would bear it as long as able and then had to ask some one to turn me from side to side. I shall never forget those long days and nights, how in my feverish mind all things came before me and I could not think clearly on any one thing. Some think that on a sick bed is time enough to think about eternity and conversion and turning to the Lord, but I know that in my condition I could not have done so for I could not tell or know what day it was, and did

not know some of my friends who came to visit me, and was surprised when they told me at a later date. I clearly remember one night that I lay struggling against sleep for fear that I would not waken, but our thoughts are not God's and that is why I am able to write this to-day. Some have referred to the thief on the cross as an example of God's mercy and power to save them, but as that is the only case recorded in scripture I think that such thoughts are the height of presumption for we read also that it was only one time that our dear Lord hung upon that accursed tree. So if any one rests his hopes upon this event he would have to be this thief and the Lord must be crucified again. Please forgive if I have been irreverent in this as we know that our dear Lord's work was finished in that one offering. I only wanted to point to the foolishness of men who base their hope on this passage, and not obey the many other commandments as recorded in Holy Writ. The dear Lord gradually increased my strength so that in the course of time I was again able to resume my feeble duties, but my head and eyes were weaker than before and because of severe headaches I was obliged to procure glasses. My head ached so severely it felt as though a heavy weight was pressing it down and I could barely look out of my eyes at times which condition continued for two years until last fall it pleased the Lord to give me relief so that now I am able to think and feel better. During the spring of 1941 we received many plans to estimate on, and as this was my work it kept me busy from morning to evening for months, but owing to conditions brought on by the government war lease program the fruits of my labors were very small. My nerves gradually became weaker in trying to force things, but the more I tried the worse things became so that my nerves broke down completely and a fear came over me that I could not expel. If I could but have submitted to God's will things would have been different, but I could not for although I prayed that this condition be taken from me the Lord's time had not yet come. I can see now that it was all God's plan to loose me from all earthly things, and no one knows better than I how my flesh clung on as long as possible, but I am thankful for this also that it pleased the Lord to break my will and that his will be done. How much pain and anguish of mind we would escape if we could see God's will in all things and submit unto him and sit at his feet. We read, "Martha was cumbered about much serving," but "Mary hath chosen that good part." Surely the Lord's words are always best so that we can go forth and do things in the strength thereof. Had I thought of God's holy word I should have known for it is written, "Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." The period I went through between the spring of 1941 and the fall of 1942 is indescribable and I shudder at the thought for I was never brought so low in mind and spirit and often exclaimed! "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Although he never really forsakes us, yet when I had to pass through such darkness and despair I could not see a landmark whereby I could tell my way. O, dear friend, how terrible it must be to be forever separated from God, and if hell itself is worse (which it is) than what I felt during this time it will be unbearable, for I had no rest night or day, always that feeling of heaviness and despair. In the morning I cried, O that it was night! and in the night, O that it was day! During that time I spent much of the time reading sermons, and it pleased the Lord to let his light shine through at times, and I remember that evenings after reading

and much prayer the Lord would come and flow graciously in and I could feel his sweet presence and exclaim, O Lord, that it may be so with me on the morrow, but alas, in the morning all would be gone and I would feel as miserable as ever. My best time of the day was at bedtime and I often received a morsel at such times. As things went on without much relief I fell in a great doubt, and thought that these kind visits were but a state of mind brought on by body exercise of mind, and that it was from the evil one coming as an angel of light to deceive me. But praise the Lord, who is able to do all things, one night after having slept for an hour or so as a result of narcotics I was dreaming that I was going to a certain place and was continuously opposed by some people I knew who tried to prevent me, but there was a power with me that they could not withstand and words came to me that those who walk by faith shall live by faith and I could see and feel the power thereof so that I awoke repeating those words aloud. Dear friend, I must say that here I raised an Ebenezer to the Lord and said, dear Lord I shall never doubt thee any more, and was so full of the glory of the Lord that I determined not to fall asleep for fear of losing his precious presence and having to go back in darkness again, and so it was for in the morning it had left me. Also during this period on that September evening in 1941 when the northern lights shown forth in all their splendor such as I never had seen I was made to rejoice thinking that the Lord's coming was at hand to deliver me from this vale of tears, but the time was not yet come still I felt relieved that night. I am obliged to take some narcotic before retiring to relieve my pain so that I can get some sleep for an hour or so and then would lay tossing the balance of the night getting no rest. My head was so weak at times that things kept turning before my eyes and I thought that every day would be my last feeling that any one in my condition could not live. All love and feeling for people and things had left me so that I told different ones I had a broken heart and therefore could not live, and it was the last time they would see me. Some of them laughed and said: "O you will outlive us all for people get old with rheumatism." That is true but they did not know how I felt and I also feared that I would lose my senses and end my days in a sanatorium. I often sit thinking is this really I, who years ago was so strong that others remarked about it? Is it a wonder that I can say by experience that I am nothing? Even now I live by the grace of God on borrowed or extra time as it were, so what shall I say knowing that the Lord by touching me with one of his little fingers has laid me, who was in time past a strong man, as dust at his feet. I think the Lord still has a plan for me for by his grace I gradually regained some of my strength so that I can move somewhat better, my nerves have also been strengthened and the fear has been graciously removed. Although I have not been able to earn anything for a long time because of government restrictions on material still by his grace I have come to the place where I am able to say, dear Lord thou knowest all things about us and know our needs and whatever things thou hast decreed for us, thy will be done for I know not anything and thou knowest all things. I am but a creature in thy holy hands so let me by thy grace be subject unto thee in all things for thou art always mindful of thy subjects, and as thou beholdest the sparrow fall, dear Lord behold us in thy mercy and to thee be all power and glory forevermore. Amen. I will add that during the period of my depression I dared not write anyone even to my dear daughter who is as the apple of my eye, and has been in a foreign country for the last three years. Although she has written regularly I

could not answer and have spent days at a time trying to compose a note and could not although it was my earnest desire to do so. When by his grace I was able I did so and last Saturday we received a letter from her saying that she had received mine the first from me since she was enroute in Trinidad. She wrote, (I quote) "Please do not think me a sissy, but when I saw Papa's letter I just sat down and cried and cried, praising and thanking the Lord for his mercy in restoring him so that I may again behold his handwriting." You see that I have much to be thankful for and as by his grace I still have a few dollars I will enclose this little mite thanking you again for all your past favors. Knowing that you have access to the courts above, please remember this poor sinner and speak a word for me when you are in holy communion with the Lord at the throne of grace for I am poor and needy. Hoping that you and yours are well, and that it may please the Lord to use you mightily in the blessed work in the building of his kingdom upon this earth so that his holy word may bear much fruit, I remain humbly yours. ROGER KNIGHT.

Route 6, Danville, Va.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: If I may be permitted to address you as such. Received your card the other day and the comforting words were food to my poor hungry soul. Yes, the meeting at Malmaison was wonderful. The sermon you preached on Saturday was soul stirring to me. I love to see the brethren come in that meek and humble manner (filled with tears) as you did that day. I have really enjoyed this season as I have been to so many good meetings. I get so filled but before the next Sunday I am hungering and thirsting again. It seems like I just want to be where some of those good people are all of the time. I received the extra copy of the *Signs*. Surely appreciate your interest in sending it. Sorry I put you to the trouble as I received my regular copy the week after I met you. I enjoyed the remarks you made to my little article. I had already taken the steps you advised but nevertheless I enjoyed the good comforting remarks. May I tell you some things that happened since I wrote that. I had in mind if when those dear people read my writing they still felt I was one of them I would offer myself to the church if the Lord would give me strength. I felt there was a difference, I some how could not believe in predestination in everything, only the good things was the way I had it, still I loved them but could not believe it all. I did not want to go to them until everything was clear and I could be in full accord with them. I had asked Brother Dodd to come talk with me but some how he would not come and I am glad now he did not for the very day I went to the church he preached so wonderfully to me. His text was, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." He seemed to preach the strongest predestination I ever heard and to my surprise I found myself endorsing it all. I embraced it, I loved it. I felt all our differences had been removed. That very day some how I feel that God sent him to my house, any way he came, and he asked me to talk. I told him I had nothing to say. I had been telling him I was a missionary so he says, "you can tell me what a missionary you are." I had to admit I was not one, but I did not know if I was anything I was so blank. Everything I wanted to tell him was so suddenly taken away and he sent to me so soon I simply could not talk with him. The next week I felt I just had to write and tell him about it. One of my neighbors had preaching at her house just two weeks from that day and I feel the Lord made the way for me that I had asked so long. I could not tell them much but some how they took me in. It did not work the

way I had planned it at all, and I am glad it did not for if it had I would feel that I did it all and now I do not feel that I had anything to do with it, still some times I am made to wonder if I am one of them at all. I feel to be behind in everything, both spiritually and financially, but my prayer is that I may have some humble place among them while we sojourn here for I love them better than any people I ever met.

(Mrs.) FOSCO WILLIAMS.

DEAR ELDER DODSON
AND ASSOCIATE EDITORS:

I want to tell you how much I enjoy the paper. Outside mail from home it comes first. I cannot express in words what it means to me. I read each copy through before I stop and I save the back numbers to reread when I have a chance. My father, who has taken it since I can remember, said it was almost sacrilege to destroy a copy. I enjoyed Elder Dodson's publication "Resurrection of the Dead" very much. I did not realize so much could be said on the subject. I was glad to see that Elder W. D. Griffin is with you as an Associate Editor. I have enjoyed his letters to the paper from time to time very much indeed. May the Lord bless you in all your future undertakings. Yours in humble hope.

PFC HERMAN W. BUCKNER,
Medical Dept. U.S.A. 179th Inf.,
20827160 APO 45,
c|o Postmaster, New York.

Halcottville, N. Y.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:

Again the time for the meeting is nearing and my desire is to meet with you, but as I cannot enjoy that privilege I want you to know I am with you in mind although as I attempt to write my mind seems a blank in regard to spiritual things. How often I have been made to feel "All my times are in his hands" and I can do nothing without that grace and wisdom God gives to the children of the one who is the giver of all good. In the struggle with evil we are made to find in our experience victory and defeat. The possession of the new life is not power over sin. This we must learn before self-confidence is broken down, and we can cry "who shall deliver us from the body of this death?" Love and fellowship in the gospel to you who may meet together. Yours in gospel bonds through grace.

(Mrs.) AMY S. HEWITT.

DEAR EDITOR: Memphis, Tenn.

Enclosed please find $2 to renew my subscription to the *Signs*. I am sorry to be so long in sending it, and I do appreciate your sending it any way. It is such a comfort to me as I am in ill health and do not often get to hear the gospel of salvation by grace which is the only hope of salvation. It is no pleasure for me to listen to the so-called churches on the radio tell what they are doing for God and the salvation of the world. If I am saved at all it is by the mercy of God, and if I lift up mine eyes in hell it is just because I have never done anything and can never do anything to merit salvation. I do not belong to the Old Baptist Church for I have never felt worthy to offer myself for membership with them whom I love. I do hope I have passed from death unto life because I hope I love the brethren. I have only been taking the *Signs* for a year but I hope I can have it as long as I live. I feel that the things it contains and advocates are my meat and my drink and without it all would be lost. Yours in humble hope.

(Mrs.) EVELYN MASSERANO

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EDITORIAL

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contenious man to kindle strife. Proverbs 26:21.

These pithy proverbs are rich in nutriment and are applicable to our every day life as citizens of the world, but it is to God's people that they are written. The fact of the business is that the primary object of writing the Scriptures was that the church might be instructed and comforted. Nothing else matters. Nothing else is needed. These proverbs are not sayings that Solomon learned as a man of the world and passed on to us, although many of them are applicable and true when considered in their natural or literal place, and, no doubt, he could and did agree that they were true in some sense, even to a man of the world. Personally, I am persuaded that these proverbs are given to the church individually and collectively and that they are true in the church and that, when given spiritual sight, we may see those pictured that the proverbs measure for us. It is not for us to judge but only to measure. We are not given to judge but the ministry, especially, is given to measure what God has judged. To notice our text briefly we find a rich field to look into. God takes the simple things and instructs the simple, but confounds the wise. This wisdom that is confounded is not that from above. It is the wisdom that belongs to carnality with which all of us are filled when not purged by the Spirit. The "coals" spoken of in our text means charcoal and was used extensively in the country of the Jews. The "burning coals" are the glowing hot charcoal after it has flamed and burned out. Sometimes a great fire is started and much damage is done, but our experience teaches us that after a fire has flamed up and burned the fuel that it comes in contact with, that undisturbed, it will soon die out. In the verse preceeding our text it is said, "Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out." So where no talebearer the strife ceaseth. If we were guided in our actions towards one another by love and that wisdom from above, we could see the timely rebuke that Solomon is handing us. In our carelessness, forgetfulness, slothfulness, weakness and jealouness many fires have been started. Many flames that are started among the Lord's people are vehement (S.S. 8:6) and leave many little children of God seared by its devastating power. We so many times say things that start a fire, things that perhaps at any other time we would not think of saying. Oftimes it would soon go out, but the Lord's people have always had fuel-gatherers and talebearers among them. A little fire in itself soon goes out. It may do a little damage and I would beg the people of God to be careful that they do not start any fires. May we be given grace, love and wisdom in our dealings with one another that we carefully guard against bringing up things that will start a fire. It may be true that our brother does not eat meat, if he does not it is because he thinks it wrong. I wonder if we are guided by love when we undertake to make him eat it. It is better

to let a fire burn out when once it is started than it is to keep adding fuel to it. To keep a fire burning we must have somebody to keep bringing fuel in contact with it. If not what happens? It goes out. Moreover, it goes out by itself. The fire burns, we dread it, it is devastating, but it goes out if let alone. It is the fuel-gatherer that keeps the fire going. Some people delight in a fire. Some even start them to see the destruction. It is the same way in regard to strife. Strife and fire are close kin. Some start them, some add to them after they are started. Each party is guilty and, in natural life, subject to prosecution. It is so in the church and many times there should be an execution of the laws of Zion that her lawgiver has given her. Contending for the doctrine, order and practice of the church is necessary, but to be contentious about it is something that never is regarded very highly. We are commanded to contend earnestly but never fanatically. Those in the history of the church that have contended earnestly for the faith have been leaders in the constructive phase of the work. The contentious or fanatical leaders have been destructive. They have had several combats and won many victories, but to a poor, thirsty, hungry soul they have given many thorns, thistles and stones. They have gloried in the flames that they have caused by adding fuel, they have fed the fire, but not the children of God; they have exerted much strength and used much time to keep the strife going; they have put their construction on their brother's actions and words even though they know nothing of him or his motives; instead of trying to ease strife they feel that the future of the church has been given into their hands, and that they must keep it going in order for the church to survive. Not many fuel-gatherers live long in the memories of God's humble poor; not many reformers ever have a favorable place in the history of the church; not many that fight everything and everybody are ever known long as true soldiers of the cross. It is the quiet, peaceable, earnest soldier that proves the most capable when the going gets the roughest. He, perhaps, is not a perfect soldier; he may have some ideas that his commander-in-chief would not approve; he could be wrong about some things, but his general conduct, as a soldier, is to build up, to console, to preach Jesus as the way, the truth and the life. May God, who gives us all courage, faith and zeal, send us forth (not to start fires, not to gather fuel, but) to build up, to encourage, to console. W.D.G.

THE CHARIOT OF SOLOMON

Editorial from Signs of September, 1876

"King Solomon made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon. He made the pillars thereof of silver, the bottom thereof of gold, the covering of it of purple, the midst thereof being paved with love, for the daughters of Jerusalem. Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart."

The song from which this text is selected is called "The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's," and it abounds with a rich and ample variety of the most expressive and beautiful metaphors, which the Holy Spirit has chosen with which to illustrate the vital union and living relationship subsisting between our Lord Jesus Christ and his church, recognized by him in all the varied relationship of sister, spouse, love, dove and undefiled, and the discriminating and indissoluble love he bears to her. The union, communion and fellowship of the Beloved and the spouse are illustrated by the strongest figures that can be found in nature; a love and union stronger than death, and as lasting as eternity. King Solomon himself in many particulars is a type of Christ. As the son of David, king of Israel, as a prince of peace, as an example of unparalled wisdom, as a builder of the temple of the Lord, as sur-

passing all earthly kings and potentates in magnificent power and glory, and in sitting on the throne of David his father, and upon his kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice; in all these particulars he was an eminent type of that infinitely more glorious King whom God has set upon his holy hill of Zion. The names, Jerusalem and Zion, are applied to the organized kingdom which the God of heaven has set up; and the daughters of Zion, or Jerusalem, we take to signify the churches of the saints under the gospel dispensation, as branches of the one church and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. A chariot is a carriage or vehicle to ride in, and the chariot of a great king is expressive of magnificent splendor and princely elegance suited to the dignity of the king or potentate for whom it is provided. If it be admitted that Solomon, in our text, is a type of Jesus Christ, the King of saints, this chariot must signify the heavens on which he rides in the help of his people, and his excellency on the sky. Deut. 33:26. The Psalmist says, "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels; the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place." Psa. 68:17. And of these angels, or messengers, it is said, "Who maketh his angels spirits; and his ministers a flame of fire." Psa. 104:4, Heb. 1:7. But these, being many, are one body, and parts of the royal chariot in which he rides forth prosperously, in his majesty, with his sword upon his thigh. Psa. 45: 3-4. This chariot of king Solomon, we think, must represent the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, in her gospel organization, with all the provisions of peace and comfort which God has so abundantly provided for the daughters of Jerusalem. In this chariot all the legitimate daughters of Jerusalem shall be conveyed from their militant to their triumphant state of immortal glory. The materials of which this royal chariot is made demand special attention. King Solomon made this chariot of the wood of Lebanon. Much of the timber of which the first temple in Jerusalem was made was of the stately cedars of Lebanon, which were felled in the wilderness of their nativity, and prepared in the forest for the place in the building for which every part was respectively designed by the wise and skillful architect. Moses was commanded to make the ark of shittim wood, and to overlay it with pure gold, within and without, ect. Ex. 25:10-11. Both the temple and the ark are emblematic of the church of God, and of the choice of God in the election of his people, who should be gathered from the howling wilderness, where he found Jacob, and when fitly framed they are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the foundation and chief corner stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord. Eph. 2:20-21. The wood of which the temple, the ark and the chariot were made, were wild and unadorned with gold, in their natural state and condition, and they strikingly represent the state and condition of the subjects of God's saving grace in their natural state, as being destitute of worth or beauty as any of the trees of the forest, and as called and brought into the building they have no comeliness but that which is put upon them by him who has clothed them with the garments of salvation ,and covered them with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. Isa. 61:10. In the construction of this beautiful chariot, the wood is beautified and supported with silver pillars, made and appropriated by the builder. It is said of Wisdom, "She hath builded her house; she hath hewn out her seven pillars." Prov. 9:1. Seven is used as a perfect or complete number. In the kingdom of Christ all the supports that are required

are supplied of that precious and durable metal which God has refined for the special purpose. "And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi," etc. Mal. 3:3. The sons of Levi were typical of those who under the gospel dispensation are made kings and priests unto God. They are his ministers in the church. As it was said of James, Cephas and John, that they seemed to be pillars in the church. (Gal. 2:9) so the apostles and inspired ministers of the word are set in the church with gifts to comfort, strengthen and support all those who are of the household of God. No base metal shall be allowed in the composition of this chariot. "Behold I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord." Jer. 23:32. The bottom of this chariot is gold. The pillars of silver, as all other parts of the chariot, must rest upon the more and the most precious of all the precious metals. Gold that has been tried in the fire and most thoroughly tested, lays at the bottom of all our safety, hope and spiritual comfort. Nothing short of the pure, unalloyed, spotless and immaculate righteousness of the Son of God can suffice as a foundation to bear up the chariot of salvation. "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste." Isa. 28:16. On this firm bottom of gold the immutable and fundamental principles of eternal truth, secured by the oath and counsel of God who cannot lie, the bottom of the royal chariot is laid, and must remain forever sure and steadfast. "The covering of it was purple." Purple was anciently regarded as the most sumptuous and gorgeous color, and was worn only by the rich and aristocratic classes. Princes and highly distinguished characters were described as being clothed in purple and bedecked with gold. This may be illustrative of the beautiful garments of Jerusalem, in which she is known as the perfection of beauty. But in a still more striking sense shall we find the application, as descriptive of the precious blood of the Lamb, the purple torrent that flowed from his bleeding veins when he by his own blood made atonement for the sins of his people, and by his one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified. Thus, as the Mercy Seat covered the ark of the covenant, so has Jesus covered his people with the purple garments of his salvation, and with the robe of his perfect righteousness. What could more fitly express the perfect covering of the church of God than the garments dyed in the precious fountain of the Saviour's blood? Well may it be said then that the chariot of our King is covered with purple. One thing more in the construction of this chariot is that—The midst of it is paved with love, for the daughters of Jerusalem. A pavement, in the scriptural meaning of the word, is a floor, or place to walk, stand or rest upon. The pavement of a chariot must mean the floor of it; that on which the feet of those who occupy the chariot stand or rest. This chariot of the great king was not merely paved, or floored with love, but with special discriminating love. It was paved with love for the daughters of Jerusalem; not for the daughters of Babylon, or the daughters of the uncircumcised. None can know the sweet resting place of the daughters of Jerusalem but those who have been brought from their native Lebanon and fitted into the chariot by the hand of him who made it. All such are covered with the purple, or crimson tide of the Redeemer's blood. This love for the daughters of Jerusalem seems to have existed before the formation of the chariot; for it is spoken of as already

existing. The midst thereof being paved with love for the daughters of Jerusalem. God's love for his people has no beginning nor ending, for it is the love of God, and therefore it is as eternal as his being. "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." The midst of the chariot being paved with love, shows that the love of God is the center of attraction in the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is not for the fear of punishment, the dread of death, nor the terrors of perdition, that draws the children of God to the fold of Christ. It is by the new birth they are quickened and made spiritually alive, and love is one of the immediate and legitimate fruits of the spirit which is born of God. It is the love of God that leads the quickened heirs of promise to repentance; and it is the love God shed abroad by the Holy Ghost in their hearts that reconciles them to God, and that draws them by its tender cords to choose to suffer afflictions with the people of God, rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin. Not by the lash of Moses, nor the thunder tones of Sinai, but the melting strains of the gospel, that they are drawn to Christ as the embodiment of that love with which the midst of the chariot is paved. There is nothing attractive in this chariot to carnal professors or to graceless hypocrites. They cannot see the kingdom of God, nor know anything of the things of the spirit, for they can only be spiritually discerned. The center of attraction to them is the love of the world, the love of self, and the love of sin. The pavement of love in the chariot of our King is exclusively for the daughters of Jerusalem, and they only stand upon it. King Solomon did not wait for somebody to make him a chariot; he made it himself; it shows his perfect workmanship in every part. He did not entrust the work to other hands than his own. He made it himself, and for himself. So in the anti-type, God has said of his chosen people, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." Isa. 43-21. "For thy Maker is thine Husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called.' ' Isa. 54:5. "I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west. I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth, Even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him, yea, I have made him." Isa. 43:5-7. But there is no room in this chariot, or on this pavement, or under this covering of purple, for any of the daughters of the uncircumcised and the unclean; for the train of our Lord fills his temple; and the church is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. Isa. 6:1; Eph. 1:23. The chariot is for the daughters of Jerusalem. They shall go forth from their captivity. He shall open their prison doors, and say to the prisoners of hope, Go forth. And when he hath put forth his own sheep he shall go before them, and they shall hear his voice, and follow him. Their eyes shall behold the King in his beauty, and under his reign they shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a safe dwelling place. The daughters of Zion shall see their king in the chariot of their salvation, riding prosperously, with his bow, and with his crown. Upon his own head shall his crown flourish; for he is crowned with glory and honor. That sacred head which once was crowned with thorns, has now triumphed over all opposition, has now entered into the joy that was set before him, having endured the cross, and is now wearing the royal diadem, with which his mother crowned him, in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart. The redeemed people, who are called by grace, quickened by his Spirit, and organized as a gospel church,

the same, he says, are his mother, his sister and his brother. Matt. 12:48, Mark 3:33, Luke 8:2. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." Isa. 9. The day of his espousals, as connected with the day of the gladness of his heart, and of his coronation by his church, his mother, must, we think, refer to the time when his kingdom was set up in gospel order; for it was then that he, having suffered all that was written of him, entered into his glory. Luke 24:26 and 46. Then did he receive his kingdom, and then did he sit in the throne of his glory, and then was he recognized by his redeemed people in his kingly power, as the long predicted King that should reign in righteousness, and whose princes (apostles) should rule in judgment. See Isaiah 33:1 and Zech. 9:9. John describes his crown, as he saw it in his vision in Patmos, thus: "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman (the church, the mother) clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." Rev. 12:1. This we take to be the crown wherewith his mother crowned him, in the day when he declared his espousal to his bride, with power and great glory; when taking her by the hand he pledged himself to love and cherish her, to support and protect her, as the bone of his bones and the flesh of his flesh. Then was fulfilled the promise recorded Hosea 2:19-33, "And I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord." Sister Keever, we trust, will see that all the daughters of Jerusalem, including all her free and heaven-born children, who, as Isaac was, are children of promise, shall ride with their Lord in this royal chariot; for where their Saviour is, there shall they be also. All the royal family stand on the pavement of God's eternal, immutable, sovereign, discriminating, transforming, soul-humbling and God-exalting love, and all for whom Christ gave himself a ransom are covered with the purple covering of his atoning blood, and every trembling child, however poor, needy and helpless, shall find rest, comfort and safety in the chariot of God's salvation.

CIRCULAR LETTER

To the ministers and members of the Lower Country Line Primitive Baptist Association, convening with the Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church in Stem, Granville County, N. C. held Saturday, Sunday and Monday, July third, fourth and fifth 1943. *Greetings in the Lord.*

DEAR BRETHREN:

As I was appointed to write a circular letter to be read at this meeting I feel very frank to say I know I am not competent to write such a letter to this body of brethren which I esteem so highly for their steadfastness and their faith in Christ, which is a God-given faith. As a good many of you know, I was in the hospital quite a long time and am not very strong in body or mind, and as this is the first I have attempted I do hope and trust the Lord will guide my mind, heart and hand to write the things which edify and comfort one another. The apostle John declared in a letter to the little children, and we are also little in Christ, a little flock. As John says, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his son, Jesus Christ." I John 1:3. It is recorded that, "all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." And inasmuch as they are all taught of the Lord, he teaches them the same thing, to wit, that salvation is of the Lord. There is in the child of God that is being taught, a kinship and a love for one an-

other. Paul said, "We love him, because he first loved us," and our fellowship abounds in the oneness of the mercy of God toward us. Not long ago I was suffering great pain, being treated for kidney and bladder trouble, and the words of the poet came to me in great force, "Was it for crimes that I have done He groaned upon the tree." I thought of the great ordeal under which our Lord was undergoing and I believe a prayer went up to him, and I said in my heart, "Dear Lord, I do not ask that the pain be taken away, but give me grace to bear it," for in that way we come into the fellowship of Jesus. We suffer with him to be glorified together and the apostle Paul asked that we might know him in the fellowship of his sufferings and the power of his resurrection being made comformable unto his death. It is these things that the Lord's people love to declare that sweet fellowship may be mutually felt. I don't think a child of God when he is exercised in his right mind would want to put any of his creature efforts to the cross, but to put all the trophies and lay them at the feet of Jesus and look up and "Crown him Lord of all." Well might the poet sing, "Jesus died and paid it all. All to him we owe." If our hearts are not deceived we do love those people whose hopes are of the circumcision, who worship God in Spirit, rejoicing in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh, and our desire is to "Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown him Lord of all." If not deceived, my greatest desire is that our people, the Primitive Baptists, live in peace one with another and keep up the unity of the faith in the bond of peace. At best we are an afflicted people, but we take comfort in these words, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." 2 Cor. 4:17-18. I am aware that some things very touching and sad have come into our lives. The passing of one of our dear ministers, and the great affliction of another, together with my own and others whom we love, are touched by the hand of a kind and prudent God who never makes a mistake and is too wise to err, and we feel to repeat the language of Job, "If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." Job 14:14. Thus we see we are as a part of the drama of life and there is a fixed time to all of our days and we go at His appointed time. May we have faith given us to say with the beloved apostle, "The time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." I can but feel that I myself have walked through the valley of the shadow of death, and I was given to feel I fear no evil for Thou are with me. Dear brethren, I trust you will have the Lord's presence at your meeting and the truth of the gospel proclaimed with an unction from above, and that you are all in peace. Have written the best I could and please cast the mantle of charity over it. Humbly submitted,

(Elder) T. W. WALKER.

SPECIAL REQUEST

To readers of the Signs of the Times:

It has come to my attention and is a fact that an old soldier of the cross, Elder J. C. Sikes of Sulphur Bluff, Texas, is in dire need of hospitalization. Will you please contribute to his medical care by sending remittance to J. B. McLeod, McLeod, Texas, or Elder J. C. Sikes.

(We are sending Elder Sikes a personal contribution of $5 and hope others who have a mind to do so will contribute something for his relief. R.L.D.)

MEMORIAL

ELDER FLOYD RIFFE—Born Feb. 29, 1860. Died June 12, 1943. United with the Old School Baptist Church in 1886 in W. Va. and though this church was moved to the state of Washington in 1893 and the name changed twice he remained a member until his death. He was ordained a minister of the gospel in Sept. 1889 and served this church as pastor for almost fifty years when his health failed. He was firm in the faith and zealous to the cause of his Heavenly Father in all things.

ALSO

His wife, ARMEDA RIFFE—Born Nov. 16, 1855. Died Sept. 18, 1940. United with the Primitive Baptist Church in 1873 and in 1888 united with this church by letter where she remained a faithful, consistent member until her death. She was indeed a true minister's wife and loved by all who knew her, therefore, be it

Resolved, that whereas it has seemed good to our Lord to remove these dear ones from us, that we bow in humble submission to him who doeth all things well and may we remember their godly advice and try to live faithful to the cause of our Lord, also

Resolved that we have a copy of this memorial sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication and a copy placed on our church book. Done by order of the church in June 1943.

(Elder) J. W. PETERS, Moderator

J. W. BLANKENSHIP, Clerk.

OBITUARIES

The earthly existence of OSCAR RITTENHOUSE ended October 3, 1942 in the Glen Memorial Hospital at Glen Gardner, N. J., where he had been taken the previous day following an attack of bronchial pneumonia. Ill only a week and continuing his business routine until four days before the end, his departure was a great shock to his family as well as to the community where he was held in the highest esteem. He was the youngest son of the late William and Ida Brewer Rittenhouse, and was born on a farm near Baptisttown, N. J., August 19 1869. He came to Clinton as a young man where for the remainder of his life he was engaged in the clothing business. Both socially and in business he was regarded as a gentleman of the old school and his firmly established and practiced ideals of courtesy, fair dealing and reliability were deeply respected. He was always interested in local civic affairs, serving his town in various capacities. He was also elected to the office of Surrogate of his county. On January 3, 1893 he was married to Elizabeth Hoff of Frenchtown, N. J. and for fifty years, lacking three months, they lived an ideally happy life together.

ELIZABETH HOFF RITTENHOUSE, lonely in spirit when deprived of her husband's devoted companionship, her body gradually yielding to the ravages of disease, she too, entered, what seemed to us, the valley of the shadow of death at the Glen Gardner Memorial Hospital where she had been taken a few days previous, her decease occurring July 29, 1943, less than ten moths after his departure. She was the youngest daughter of the late Cornelius and Jane Seals Hoff and was born in Frenchtown, December 26, 1869. Elder H. C. Ker, pastor of the church of their attendance, was unable to be present at either funeral. Elder C. W. Vaughn, a neighboring pastor, kindly officiated at both. Upon the first occasion he spoke from the words recorded in the second chapter of first Corinthians, "But as it is written, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Following the services the body was carried to Frenchtown and interred in the family plot of the cemetery there. Upon the second occasion Elder Vaughn's remarks were based upon the comforting assurance of Jesus in his conversation with Martha who was sorrowing for her brother, Lazarus: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Her remains were then interred in the Frenchtown Cemetery beside those of her husband. This couple were the parents of three children, two of whom survive. A child of six years was taken from them in 1913. A son, William, married and having three children, resides in Clinton and continues his father's business there. A daughter, Janet, is a teacher in the East Orange, N. J. schools. Sorrowing with these children are a brother, Gabriel C. Rittenhouse of Paulsboro, N. J., a sister, the writer, and a brother, Cornelius Hoff of Frenchtown, N. J., and many devoted nephews and nieces, besides their many friends. The home established and maintained by these two people with its doors of hospitality always so cordially open is now but a memory, but to the many privileged to find welcome there it remains in thought a classic of graciousness, cheer, and warmhearted courtesy. One in faith, in hope and in gospel views they journeyed together all their married life, she having united with the church while he loved and served from

without. She was baptized by the late Elder Balas Bundy, October 21, 1894 and was received into the fellowship of the Kingwood Church of Locktown, N. J. Her faithful devotion to the church, her firmly established views of doctrine, her loving and graciousness of manner toward the brethren made her a reliance and an ornament to the cause. The welfare of the church was ever his concern and his joy to minister to it. They were never absent from the meetings when health permitted attendance. Their removal is a double blow from which our little church finds it hard to rally, but our faith teaches us that He who reigns is wise and good, and He will sustain and prosper us in His way and time. As we, both family and church, humbly bow in submission to our bereavement, we voice our thanksgiving for the great blessing their combined lives have been to us. Written by one who finds this new loneliness in life a severe affliction. Their sister,

WILDA RITTENHOUSE STRYKER.

MRS. LOLA M. HODGES was born July 17, 1863 and quietly and peacefully passed away at the Minden Sanitarium, Minden, La., on April 9 1943, making her stay on earth 79 years, 8 months and 23 days. She leaves two daughters, Mrs. Laura Whitehead and Mrs. Cora M. Shackelford, nieces and nephews, six grandchildren, nineteen great grandchildren and many friends to mourn her passing. Mother united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Providence, Lincoln County, Ark. and was baptized by Elder H. H. Carter July 22, 1894. She lived a faithful member until death. Her greatest earthly joy was in attending her meetings. She was unwavering in her belief of salvation by grace and grace alone, and in the absolute sovereignity of God over all time worlds and things. He was her all in all. Mother had been a widow for many years. She suffered many trials and hardships in this life, toiling incessantly with her own hands that she might provide the things her children needed and to maintain her little home as long as her strength lasted. In her last days she suffered very much but was patiently waiting the call to leave this world of sorrow. Her Bible and the SIGNS were her constant companions. How I miss her kind and sympathetic admonitions: "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord," and that he would never leave nor forsake those that trusted in his name, he is the author and finisher of our faith. I feel our loss is her eternal gain. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder H. H. Phillips, at the little churchhouse at Providence, Ark. where she loved so well to attend her meetings. Elder Phillips spoke so comfortingly to a host of relatives and friends. Her body was laid to rest at Holly Springs Cemetery just a few miles from the church-house on Sunday afternoon, April 11. The song, number 277, "A home in heaven, what a joyful thought" had been requested by her and was one of those sung at her funeral. Submitted in much sorrow, but looking forward in that blessed hope of meeting her and all the redemeed in that better land where there is no sickness, sorrow, pain or death. Her daughter,

CORA M. SHACKLEFORD.

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.
O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian **Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.**
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canada, California.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before.
E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists invites all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren, to meet with us first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hitchins. Take graveled road to the church.
E. M. TACKETT,
J. S. HUNNICUTT, Pastors.
H. L. ROGERS, Clerk.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th Street, Mayfield, Ky. Those interested will be welcome. O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3 rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A.M. 1:30 P.M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays

10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

C. W. BOND, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A.M.
ALL WELCOME

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Tex.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sunday in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P.M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sunday each month at 11:00 A.M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Salem Church, four miles south of Teague, Texas, meets on Saturday before the first Sunday in each month in conference.

W. A. LITTLE, Pastor.
DORA WREN, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a.m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, Pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a.m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome. C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

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CORRESPONDENCE

1517 N. Topeka, Wichita, Kans.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

Enclosed is a copy of an article written by Elder L. L. Schenck, Williamstown, Kans. It was read to our people and I asked his consent to send it to the *Signs* to which he assented. We should be pleased to see it published. Yours in hope. H. F. CATE.

Williamstown, Kansas.

"Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers, of the word; It seemed good unto me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus." It is not mine to make the same claim of a perfect understanding in all things as our beloved brother Luke made, and rightly too; but I hope I am given that same desire to set forth in order those things which are most surely believed among us. When I was young I had no thought that the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead would ever become an issue among the Baptists, but time has developed that very thing. Some who either by design or through ignorance have raised the question foreseen and foretold by the apostle to wit: "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" In the days of the apostles there were two men, Hymenaeus and Philetus who preached the resurrection was past already and overthrew the faith of some. I hope there will be no such tragic culmination of this current controversy now going the rounds. If I might be indulged for a few moments I would like to try by the help of the Lord, to set forth (in order) my own views on the resurrection of the dead; and I mean *"The resurrection of the dead."* That which the apostle is pleased to designate as the *first resurrection* we trust the people of God have all experienced and for that reason it seems less difficult to write upon a subject which is clearly set forth, not only in the written word but also by the witness within us. The first resurrection blended so sweetly with the doctrine of salvation by grace. As it is written "By grace ye are saved; and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ." I think the definition of the word resurrection cannot be successfully disputed. It means a raising up and in the scriptural terms it means the raising up of the dead. Thus in the first resurrection it no doubt refers to those who are dead to the law by the body of

Christ. "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead." This gracious truth also inspires us with a blessed assurance that if this same *one* who died for all be risen again, then those for whom he died are also raised up together with him. Raised up from under the curse of the law and made to sit together in heavenly places with him. "Not under the law, but under grace."

This to my mind is the first resurrection and blessed and holy are they who have part in the first resurrection, upon such the second death hath no power. We read in the scripture of the first resurrection and of the second death. Now if there be a second death there must of necessity be a first, but I don't think we are justified in saying the first and second resurrection but rather the *first* and the *last*. For Christ is indeed the resurrection and the life. He is "Alpha and Omega" "the first and the last." Now as concerning the last resurrection we have not yet experienced that. But Christ and the apostles and prophets have dealt very elaborately upon the subject. The apostle has said we believe in the resurrection of the dead both of the just and the unjust and this is one of the things most surely believed among us. The potter has power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. Then "what if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory," "not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?" This is the Lord's work and it is marvelous in our eyes. All made of one lump, all alike must die and all must be raised from the dead. Those that have done good to the resurrection of eternal life and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation. Because some were afore prepared unto glory there is no power in heaven nor in hell nor in the earth beneath can hinder one of these from entering into that glory for which they are prepared. These are the "vessels of mercy" otherwise called "earthen vessels," the natural man, the man which must die, the man which is not quickened except it die; which being quickened he is raised a spiritual body. The vessels of wrath fitted to destruction must also come forth from the grave to receive their inevitable doom for to that end they were fitted. To have it otherwise would be to frustrate the grace of God which, the apostle says, we do not do. Who would deny the adoption of God's people to which they were predestinated, the redemption of the purchased possession, or who would deny the quickening of our mortal bodies which must and will be accomplished by the same power and the same spirit that raised up Christ from the dead? Whom he raised not up if so be that the dead rise not. Yet some man will say, "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" Here the apostle interjects: "Thou fool, that which thou sowest, is not quickened, except it die: And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other *grain*." In the case under consideration it chances to be, not wheat but some other. Even our mortal bodies and God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him. The fruit springing from it is multiplied a thousand fold. None of us will contend that we sow a spiritual body but we sow a natural body and the divine record tells us it is raised a spiritual body. Let those dispute this who will. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead? Did he not form man of the dust of the ground and breathe into his nostrils the breath of life? Is it a thing incredible with you that he call

forth our sleeping dust and form it anew? Each transaction involves nothing short of a miracle but there is nothing impossible with God. It is a matter of apostolic preference that they have often referred to death as a sleep. Christ and the prophets also referred to it as the same. Then the psalmist proclaimed, when I awake in his likeness then shall I be satisfied. The apostle declared Christ was seen after his resurrection by about five hundred brethren at once of whom the greater part remain unto this present but some are fallen asleep. Upon this basis he argues the resurrection of the dead and the changing of those who are alive when that great and notable day shall come. "We shall not all asleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." And here is the change. "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality," No subtle theorizing can change the meaning of that. And when this unspeakable feat shall have been accomplished then will be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory." Where is the comfort in the thought that the saints shall enjoy no victory over death. Our Captain, having gone before, having himself died and rose again a mighty conqueror over death and the grave, this is a guarantee that every child of grace must follow him in victory or else Christ shall have died in vain. How could we point in triumph to the cross of Christ and say: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" The sting of death, even sin, was washed away in the blood of Christ, and the victory of the grave is only temporary to say the most for it. Our captor, the grave will be not only defeated but utterly destroyed, for God hath spoken it "O grave, I will be thy destruction." "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." We cannot too strongly stress the purpose of God concerning these vessels of mercy which he hath afore prepared unto glory. To say that one of these shall fail to attain unto that glory for which they were prepared, and which is also prepared for them, I say to deny this is to deny the ability of God Almighty to realize upon his eternal dedesigns, and the adoption, to wit: the redemption of our body. To deny this is to not only deny the power of God's predestination, but to preclude the realization of God's eternal purpose toward every child of promise. Being sealed with the holy spirit of promise they must be redeemed from the grave or else the promise of God is rendered quite impotent and the seal of God is proven to be no guarantee to a perfect salvation.

All the promises of God in him are yea and in him Amen unto the glory of God by us. Pause and consider some of the promises of God to us. In the Psalms it is written "Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling. But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah." This is in sweet accord with the promise of Jesus. I will raise him up again at the last day. This, again, would signify that those who come unto him have experienced the first resurrection and they now stand in a blessed anticipation of the last. How very striking is the language of the apostle. Drawing upon the storehouse of inspiration he makes this comparison: "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon and another glory of the stars: for (one) star differeth from (another) star in glory." I hope whoever may read this will not overlook the fact these two words inclosed in parenthesis are supplied words and to my mind de-

stroy the meaning of the original text. The saints of God no doubt are denominated as the stars, as for instance Job said "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Thus to contend that one saint shall differ from another saint in glory seems absurd to me for this is the promise, "We shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." I anticipate no difference among the saints in glory. If they shall be like him they will have attained absolute perfection. I do not criticize the wording of the scripture, however, the translators were not inspired but were men the same as we and it is quite possible they may have erred in some of their interpretations, but we must commend their honesty in putting all supplied words in italics. Hence to read this text omitting those supplied words we have "For star differeth from star in glory." So also is the resurrection of the dead. The star or saint on earth differs from that same star in glory. The difference is quite apparent. "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." The difference would baffle all human imagination but so is the resurrection of the dead. It is a most glorious and unspeakable transition that we hold in anticipation and it doth not yet appear what we shall be but we know that when Christ who is our life shall appear than shall we also appear with him in glory. And we have his gracious promise that he will doubtless come again with rejoicing bringing his sheaves with him. When he ascended unto his Father it is providential that his angel tarried long enough to assure us saying "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." When Christ was here in person he taught his disciples some very extraordinary lessons. "Verily, verily," said he, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." This no doubt refers to those dead to the law by the body of Christ. These have part in the first resurrection. "The hour is coming, and now is." They hear his voice—they live.

The second death hath no power over them. The blood of Christ has sealed their ultimate salvation. It was a stupendous achievement. Yet the Master says "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Here is apparent the glory of the sun and the glory of the moon. The moon, the law, has faded into obscurity while the Sun of righteousness has arisen with healing in his wings. His glory can never be dimmed and he will gather his elect from the four corners of the earth. The sea shall give up the dead that is in it, and death and hell shall deliver up the dead that were in them. Hence to conclude: "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with

the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

All hail the day, when Christ shall say
Awake! ye sleeping nation;
Come view the place where sovereign grace
First ordered your salvation.
Then will our sleeping bodies rise,
In tender love he'll sieze us;
And we shall mount the upper skies,
Safe in the arms of Jesus.

(Elder) L. L. SCHENCK

Canada, Ky.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,
MY DEAR BROTHER:

I think the enclosed letter would be of interest to many of God's humble poor, and while I do not have the consent of the writer yet I think I know that Elder Hunnicutt would not object to having his letter published in the *Signs* if in your judgment you think it worthy. Elder Hunnicutt is a brother I esteem very highly, whose manner in preaching and writing is so smooth and inoffensive, yet so pointed and clear. His is indeed one of the rare gifts of our God. He has come by the rough way and I would enjoy seeing his experience in the *Signs* at an early date, telling how the Lord has led him both into and out of Babylon. May the blessings of the Lord continue with the *Signs,* its God given Editor and Associate Editors, together with all who write for its precious columns, and even those who are made to believe and love the living truths of a living God published therein. Yours in bonds of love.

(Elder) G. B. BIRD

Webbville, Ky.

ELDER G. B. BIRD, DEAR BROTHER BIRD:

Your letter came to-day and I have read it more than once with deep interest. It gives me great pleasure to know you cherish a memory of us. I could never tell you how much we all enjoyed having you and sister Bird with us in our humble home. Also Elders Staten, Chapman, H. J. Bird, Tilly and Elder Hammonds and all the rest whom the Lord had made humble enough to put up with the fare. We enjoyed having them all and my humble prayer is that our gracious Lord may be pleased to send you all back to us again. You ask for the definition of the Greek word translated *lust* in the King James version. Well, my dear brother, the Lord forbid that I should set myself up to try to teach a man like you. I am not able for that, nevertheless, I will give you the Greek word and its original definition which you will see is about the same as given in our English dictionaries. The definition as given in Thayer's Greek Lexicon is as follows: "A desire, craving or longing for what is forbidden." Now brother Bird, I wish to make just a few statements. Not because I think you need my little, puny, frivolous thoughts, but I beg you bear with me for a few moments just once. The definition I have given here is correct, and it has been a club in the hands of the better educated Arminians from time immemorial. They are still using it and will continue to do so as long as their foolish hearts are darkened. They have ever used it to knock grace baptists and all others who ever trusted grace alone for salvation. They themselves, of course, deny that they have a lust for what is forbidden, and so they use this definition to condemn genuine old grace baptists who alone are willing to acknowledge to the truth. Now we go to the context, James, 1st chapter. To begin my remarks allow me to say, the Holy Spirit did not inspire James to write this glorious chapter just to inform us that the whole world is full of lust, as the Arminians including the soft limited or nonpredestinarian baptists would have us believe. All would know that anyway, but he wrote to tell us, God's dear children, just what we have all experienced, that we are all full of lust by nature, having a desire, craving or longing for what is forbidden. It is humiliating to acknowledge this, and no one will ever do it until given that experience of grace which brings us low

at His feet, and conquers our carnal pride and ambition. Not until the last shred of carnal hope is vanished will any one acknowledge to this truth. But in our experience (if we have had an experience) we are taught for the first time in life just what we are by nature, that we are born, not only full of lust, but also go forth speaking lies, seeking for those things for which we have a desire or craving. We have been not only shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin, but sin has been so completely finished in us that it brought forth death, and nature is still dead in us, (God's children). It is not just an enemy of God's, but "enmity (itself) against God." In God's children "the natural man receiveth not things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." So all men by nature are in a bad predicament as we learn from our own experiences and the Scriptures. James 1:12 says, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation." So if we have had a fair degree of success combatting lust, let us not gloat over it, it is only because we have been blessed of the Lord to do so or we would have failed and fallen by the way. It is certain we have received no help from nature (old Adam) to stand up under temptation, and put up a fight against sin. This is just what James says he does not want us to err about, verses 16-17. Here he tells us that all the ability we have to combat the desires, cravings or longings of our nature comes down from above, not up from beneath. God's people all know just what we got from Adam. We got his shameful, sinful, lustful, depraved image, and must carry it about for the duration of our allotted time here on earth. We got trouble as surely as the sparks go upward. We got sickness, sorrow and death, then down to dust with him. Contrast to what we got in Christ: "Predestinated us unto the adoption of children;" "Chosen us in him before the foundation of the world;" "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound;" Freely justified from all things which includes the lusts of our nature; "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." That is here and now. The weak kneed baptists say we must take care of our own time salvation, but the Bible knows nothing of any such time salvation as they refer to. There is just one salvation, and it is eternal and all of grace. Grace predestinated us, elected us, inscribed our names in His eternal book. Grace quickens our dead souls into life, gives us faith in our redeemer, gives all the repentance we have or need, gives us power to combat the lusts and sinfulness of our natures, though often allows us to fall into it for reasons best known to himself. Grace restrains sin in the lives of his children, and when not restrained he gives us the assurance that he works it for their eternal good. It is found to be one of the all things that work together for good to them that love God. Grace takes care of us in the hour of death and wafts our souls on high. As our old corruptible body is sown in dishonor with Adam, we shall be raised in glory with Christ. Having borne the image of the earthly, which certainly includes all of his (Adam's) characteristics, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly (Christ) which just as certainly includes all of his characteristics, and all because of the grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world was. Now, brother Bird, I did not think of writing so much when I began, and I do not think you need what I have written, but I just felt I wanted to say it this way. Write me any time you have a mind. I am yours in a precious hope.

(Elder) J. S. HUNNICUTT

16116 Westview Ave., Cleveland, 20, Ohio.

God is love. John 4:8

There is no other doctrine set forth in the Scriptures that brings more joy to

our hearts than the love of God. Greater, says Paul, than faith and hope. This love is everlasting, immutable and is not to be compared to natural love that changes day by day. The love of God changes not, it is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, an everlasting and eternal love. It is the love that casteth out fear, and the very foundation of the church of God. How miserable it would be to preach to a congregation where there was no love, how distasteful to the brethren to listen to a preacher who had not tasted that the Lord is gracious, one that had not been brought up out of the miry clay. While his words were correct according to the laws of english, and he dressed in a spotless robe, something would be missing for the enjoyment and comfort that they had come out to hear, a yearning for the still small voice. It is a fact that God's people love him, and there is a reason for it. He loved them and because of his love to them he gently leads them beside the still waters and makes them to lie down in green pastures. He has told them that they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my Father's hand. Brother Paul gives us the assurance in Romans 8:38-39. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to seperate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Death will seperate us from all natural ties, but death cannot take from us, and will not take away that love that he hath given us. No, not a hair of your head, for that is numbered, and because of that love your names are written in God's eternal book. Now then if God loves us we should love one another, and here is a point to take account of, the fellowship that exists between the people of God. The evidence is, we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. (Elder) GEO. L. WEAVER

Clarksville, Tenn.

DEAR BRETHREN AND EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

Our dear old family paper! What would we do without it? I do hope it is according to the will of the Master for it to continue to be published while I live and as long as God sees fit. O, how I would miss the many good sermons and experiences from our Editors and other brethren and sisters from different parts of this world of turmoil in which we are living at the present time most especially. How I did enjoy the articles written by soldiers and being converted while in service. It shows God is everywhere, on land and sea. He is able to take care of them anywhere they may be. Well, I just wanted to renew my subscription which expires in Jan. 1944 and send in an obituary of a very dear friend and Baptist to be published in the *Signs of the Times* if it meets with your approval. May God uphold you dear brethren Editors. May it be his will for it to continue on in the future as in the past. Wishing you much success in your work for the year of 1944, a poor old sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

(Mrs.) B. H. SHEARON

THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA

MY DEARLY BELOVED:

Twice recently I have used this subject in trying to preach. In my second effort, so far as I remember, I used very little of the language I used in my first effort. My mind seemed to grasp new thoughts. This subject is still on my mind and I have decided to try to write it off. If I have ever heard any minister of any denomination speak on this subject I do not remember it. If I have ever read any articles written by anyone on the subject I do not remember that. It seems that God in the fixing of all things qualified me for leadership. When other ministers are present it suits me much better to introduce the preaching. I have frequently thought of myself that I am

best qualified to introduce and provoke thoughts. As best I can remember every preacher who follows me takes up where I leave off and elaborates. It may be I may provoke some thoughts on this subject. Let some good writer come forward and tell us what this lesson really teaches, but we will draw the bow and let the arrow fall somewhere. "And he must needs go through Samaria." I believe God purposed before the foundation of the world for Christ to take this route at this particular time. I believe further that God predestinated for this woman to come there to draw water, very likely according to her usual custom. There she unexpectedly met Jesus, or Jesus met her if you please. It was a great surprise to her why he asked, "Give me to drink." It may be, it may not be, that this woman is a type of the church, or a type of the travel of the church under the law dispensation. To my mind Jacob is the outstanding type of the Lord's people. He gave the promise to Abraham, verified it in Isaac and fulfilled it in Jacob. The Lord found Jacob "in a desert land and in the waste howling wilderness, etc." In a literal desert there is neither food nor water. The wilderness is typical of sin or in nature's night. And I saw her (the church) coming up out of the wilderness leaning on the arm of her beloved. The arm signifies power. "Thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep." It seems she realized her helplessness. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." When we are fully aware of the fact that of ourselves we can do nothing all we can do is look. She then had a desire for the living water that springs up into everlasting life. It is said that the old Scriptures point to the new, and the new unfold the old. Methinks I can see here the breaking down the middle wall of partition. You have had five husbands (the five books of the law). You now have a husband that is not your husband. You are no longer under law, but under grace. Revelation must teach you, woman, that you have a husband. A natural husband is support for the wife. Grace will take care of all your wants. "Ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." This woman did not know yet that she was talking to Jesus. If I have it right it was a traditional custom of the Jews that Jerusalem was the only place to worship under the law dispensation. I do not know the meaning of this mountain unless it was the mountain of law worship. "Ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father," but free grace given the children of the Lord prepares them to worship in spirit and in truth. No longer worship tradition or law. "True worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." Note the *shall*. The word worship comes from a Greek root meaning dog. The master may chastise his dog but the dog's faithfulness to him will continue. "I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he." She left her water pot. Here seems to be with her a turning away from the former things and gloriously beholding the new. The things I once loved I now hate, etc. She could now say that this is Christ. Here comes in the office work of the third person in the Trinity—revelation. "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" These two disciples did not know it was Jesus until he revealed himself. I sometimes think if we would take up where revelation begins and leave off where it stops there would not be so much division. It is written of Philip he "began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." My beloved, let us all journey back to the morning of our experience when we left the water pot. Then return preaching Jesus. This I believe would cure all our

ills. "And he went on his way rejoicing." Did not the woman of Samaria go rejoicing, acclaiming the Christ? In love and sweet fellowship for the beloved everywhere. (Elder) C. H. BYRD

1701 Randolph Ave., Greensboro, N. C.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:

I am sending two of brother Waylon H. Chandler's letters which Burch sent home for us to read, also am sending two of Burch's letters. One which he wrote Elder G. W. Hill and one which he wrote his Dad who was away working in defense work. I have much to be thankful for and yet I cannot feel thankful except as I am thus blessed. A few years ago I was sick. When I tried to sit up I became deathly sick. Was in this condition one week, the doctor came but did me no good. I told him I did not believe he knew my condition for I felt I had passed all human aid. On Friday before the second Sunday my daughter-in-law said she had just received a letter from her parents, Elder and sister Pyrdle, saying they aimed to spend the following Saturday night with us. I got up at once and began to prepare for them, but could only be up a few minutes at a time. After they came I went into the kitchen to help Rachel prepare supper thinking I could only be up a few minutes, but sister Pyrdle and I began talking of the goodness and mercy of God and I began to realize I was feeling better and had no mind to go back to my bed. We ate supper and it seemed I had never enjoyed a meal just like this one. After supper was over we sat on the porch and sister Pyrdle said, "About two weeks ago I dreamed of being here and everything looks just as I saw it in my dream and you told me Rachel had been sick (which she had) and you told me you had been sick. You opened your dress collar and showed me your trouble. You said it was your heart." I answered her saying, "I believe I had a heavy heart." We talked until nearly midnight and to my astonishment my strength had returned. The next morning I arose and went about my work as usual, and so far as I knew with my usual strength, and yet this was too much for me to believe, and I asked sister Pyrdle if she believed it possible that the Lord would bless her to come and minister unto me and I be healed? She answered, "Yes, great is the mystery of godliness." I could hardly believe that God would remember me in such a blessed way, and if I ever was blessed to approach the throne of God with thankfulness it was the following week, with my face a flood of tears and my heart pouring forth that which the world cannot prepare. It is still a mystery to me that I, who am the least of all saints if indeed I be one, be visited in the name of Jesus and be healed. There is nothing too hard for Israel's God. Not long after this sweet experience we visited Elder Pyrdle's home, and I was telling her I felt the Lord blessed me with a thankful heart unto him and she told me of a similar experience which also was the following week after they visited us. "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" We read in Hebrews 12:11-12, "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees." How good it is to feel that all things (which come to pass) work together for good to them that love the Lord.

"What a mercy is this,
What a heaven of bliss!
How unspeakably favor'd am I!
Gather'd into the fold,
With believers enroll'd,
With believers to live and to die!

I love to meditate upon His great and wonderful works among the children of men. He alone is able and has delivered

his people in whom I trust he will yet deliver. Written in love. Unworthily.

(Mrs.) O. J. WRAY

DEAR MR. HILL:

I hope I love you and what you stand for. I hope that I love all Old School Baptists. For the last few years I have been blessed to go with our family to hear them declare the greatness of God and the nothingness of man. If I am not mistaken that has been and is the love of my life. I have never heard a man that preaches God too great or man too little. I believe when a man is blessed to preach he preaches the nothingness of man. I hope I love you people. I believe you are the church of God. I trust I am thankful that it is as well with me as it is, and that I will be blessed from time to time to ask the Lord to keep me. About a month before I left home I had a dream that has been sweet to me. In the dream I felt that I was going to leave home and was thinking of our family and how much I loved them. Then I thought of how little and weak we all were and if I am not mistaken I was blessed to feel the greatness of God. I awoke repeating these words, "Lord keep us." I hope that I will be blessed to continue to use these words and feel the meaning of them. Mr. Hill, I believe I have been blessed to love my home here, but I hope that I have also been blessed to long for that place where there is no sorrow and pain, where we can praise God forever and ever. I feel that I have been made to long for that place. I believe that I have been made to hate this life that I am living and look forward to the time when my days shall end. For the last few weeks it seems that I have been in a daze. All I can hear is cursing at this place, and when I go to bed at night it seems that I am cursing too, it rings in my ears so. I trust that I have been blessed to realize that this flesh of mine is just as mean as that of any other one, yet I hope I have been blessed with a hope in Jesus that is as pure as Jesus himself. I do not know whether I have a hope or not but I feel that God has been good to this sinner all of my life. Mr. Hill, I have felt to write you, yet I have been and still am, very fearful to try to write about anything so great, and to one that I feel has been called and blessed to preach Jesus. I hope you will have a mind to write this sinner soon. I would love to hear from you. I hope the Lord will keep me and bless me to trust in him. A sinner.

(Sgt.) BURCH C. WRAY
34212182 337th Bomb Sq
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Ft. Bragg, N. C.

DEAR BURCH:

I have returned to camp and found many changes. Facts are facts and I think the fact is that we are preparing to enter the war zone somewhere. It has really been longer than I expected yet it could be a wrong guess this time still I feel not. I enjoyed going home but felt very unworthy. As soon as I got my furlough the rest were cancelled and some that left when I did were called back. Burch, I feel there is something for me to receive or witness and I hope I am not deceived, if not it is a great blessing to go also what I receive even if it is death. Let the waves of the ocean roar, the thorns of the wilderness pierce, the bullets of the battle front hum the song of life in danger and the bombs shake the whole earth, but the God of heaven, the Lord of lords, the King of kings has declared his power and beside him there is none other. "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Though I had a little experience one year ago last July, I never dreamed that my heart could be so contented during times like these. I often feel myself crazy and know nothing therefore my hope in faith is not of the Lord. Regardless of these feelings, how-

ever, there comes a burning hope and that hope strengthens my weary body. From the things of nature do I stand steady, it seems with faith unknown, nothing do I fear. That feeling is so strong at times it makes me feel so deceived I want to cry and often do find myself with moist eyes. Tribulation worketh patience and patience experience, and my experience has revealed myself so wicked and helpless, and the power of God so great and the light shining so brightly it appears to be so much for me that I almost cry out, Lord surely I am deceived. I may be here a month or six weeks yet. I do hope I can get to go to some of the churches a few more times before I part for the duration though it looks as if they are determined to keep us in from now on. Thank God they cannot if it is his will for me to get to church rest assured I will be there. I must close for this time. Burch, I want to say more than ever before there is a burning love and friendship through fellowship, and if that love is in Christ Jesus through the Father it is worth more than life itself.

WAYLON H. CHANDLER

919 Asheboro St., High Point, N. C.

FOREORDINATION OF GOD

The scriptural term ordain, when applied to what God has predetermined to do from all eternity, is no different than the beginning and end with all the causes and effects combined being declared of God before creation. We have the words ordain, decree, predestinate and God's purpose which all mean the same thing. When he purposed he also predestinated or decreed to come to pass to fulfill his counsel and purpose. Whatever he ordained he purposed to ordain it to come to pass to fulfill his will and purpose. Some claim God's will and purpose is limited to all good things, and is mostly dependent on the will of the creature. If this was true there would be no one saved. This would destroy salvation by grace. The truth is God has, from all eternity, ordained within himself all things and events that have or ever will come to pass in the heavens above and in the earth and under the earth. All will admit that God foreknew all things and events just as they come to pass. If he foreknew a thing or an event do you suppose he formed no purpose regarding the same? Certainly he did form a purpose. "Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass." Isa. 14:24. He must have thought of all things as they are and all events as they come to pass. Will a man build or do anything without forethought and purpose? Neither did God create all things without foreknowledge and purpose. God speaking to Jeremiah says, I have ordained thee a prophet unto the nations, before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee. Jer. 1:15. In Isaiah forty-sixth chapter we find where God spoke to the prophet, and declares that the end has been declared from the beginning, and says I have spoken it and purposed it and will bring it to pass. "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." God foreknew all things and events. He purposed to create all things as they are created, and he ordained whatsoever event may or may not come to pass to fulfill his purpose. It may be a first or second cause. If it had been God's purpose for Adam and Eve to eat of the tree of life they would have eaten of it and lived forever in the garden. God had a purpose in their fall. If he should have had no purpose in their fall they would not have fallen. The devil was originally a created angel, and if God had not a purpose in his fall he would not have lost his first estate and fallen. 2 Peter 2:4. Jude. The apostle Paul says, "The powers that be are ordained of God." Well, that covers a lot of ground, does it not? The devil is called principality and powers and there are a lot of fallen angels which are called devils for out of Mary Magdalene Christ cast

out seven devils which was nothing but spirits of fallen angels. No doubt but what the devil, Adam and Eve fell of their own free will and choice, and that was in fulfilment of God's purpose and ordination. There is not a power in all the universe but what God has ordained to play his part in fulfilling his purpose. The act of the second or third cause may be wicked, but God's purpose in the act is good. Read history of Joseph, etc. In Acts 13 we read "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." "The people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsover thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Acts 4:27-28. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Acts 2: 23. All of this was ordained of God for a good purpose, but the purpose of the people was not good, therefore, they were condemned. God is the great first cause and his purpose and ordination is always good. The devil and fallen men are the second causes and their purpose in general is evil, and God rules each and all of them to fulfill his eternal purpose which he hath ordained. If this is not true then tell me how can God do anything with the fallen angels at the last day? Suppose they defeat his purpose? If they had the power and knowledge they would, but this they have not. Everything is limited in knowledge and power, but God and all things move at his appointment or command. The Bible says, "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth," and of course his will is his purpose, and his purpose is his ordination. Webster says: "Foreordain is to desire or decree beforehand or from the beginning of things. Determination, predestinating the election of some and the reprobation of others. Sometimes restricted to election to eternal life. The ordering of all things beforehand by the Creator. The eternal purpose of God." We are so governed by the counsel of God that nothing can happen but which is subject to his knowledge and decreed by his will and purpose. I will say the life, death, all the sayings, acts and events that came to pass during Christ's life on earth was ordained of God, and it took just that to fulfill the work God had ordained for him to do. What the people did in believing, receiving, stoning and crucifying their Lord was also ordained of God. Judas was ordained to betray him that the Scriptures be fulfilled, and we see God's purpose in all this. Moses' life, all of his acts in delivering the children of Israel and his death was ordained of God. Every person in all the world is ordained of God for a purpose and will fulfill that purpose, and the whole thing working together is in fulfilment of God's great eternal purpose which he hath ordained. When Christ was riding into Jerusalem on an asses colt in fulfilment of prophecies, some one said stop these from crying after you, and he said if these should hold their peace even the stones would cry out. Just the same as saying what God hath ordained must come to pass even if the stones have to cry out. The Scriptures must be fulfilled. Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, was ordained of God for God said, "For this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name be declared throughout all the earth." In other words the doctrine of God's power and foreordination is to be declared in all generations, and some are ordained to believe it, and some are ordained not to believe it as Pharaoh was. The life of the prophet, Joseph, shows a complete picture of the power and ordination of God. No wonder the apostle Paul said, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose, "being predestinated according to the purpose of him (God) who worketh, not just a part, but

all things, after the counsel of his will. There is no power but of God. There is no wisdom or knowledge except what God hath ordained. God hath created the worlds, sun, moon, stars, beasts, fowls of the air, fish of the sea, all creeping things, a host of angels both holy and fallen and man was created holy and upright, but he fell according to the purpose and ordination of God. If this is not true, how could God purpose the salvation of his bride before the foundation of the world? "Come, ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." The sea and all things are bound by the foreordination of God, and can go so far and their proud waves are stayed by God's foreordination. We, according to the ordination of God, have some liberty, but the boundary line of all liberty is and has been set by God's eternal decree or foreordination. If this is not true, how can God fulfill his purpose which he purposed in himself from all eternity? If there is any power anywhere in all the universe that is not ordained of God, and does not come under his control, that power might overthrow the purpose of God and defeat the salvation of the elect of God, but there is no such power, and all are dependent and subject to the control of the all wise God who created them, and who has the right to rule and control them according to his will and purpose. The salvation of all who will be finally saved were ordained of God to salvation, and the nonelect, not being chosen to salvation, is the same as saying they are ordained to eternal damnation of which their works will prove the same. The great judgment day of God was foreordained and will be just as he thought before the world or anything thereof was created, because he saw the end from the beginning, and the judgment was just as present to his mind then as it will be at the last day. God has no after thoughts. Man can find fault with the purpose and foreordination of God, but that does not in the least change his purpose or foreordination. In fact part of his purpose is fulfilled by people opposing it. There will be antichrists, scoffers, infidels, atheists, etc. who will deny not only the Bible doctrine but God and the Bible. We have a lot of people to-day who are honest in their doctrine and really believe they are right, and in fact they are wholly or partly infidels. If any one does not believe the doctrine of God's word, what is he but a whole or part infidel. Unbelief is infidelity. Some have been blinded that they should believe a lie and be damned. The gospel with the preacher was ordained of God before creation and shall be preached in all nations as a witness to the doctrinal truth, and he that believeth shall be saved and he that believeth not shall be damned. Salvation is of God. Damnation is ordained of God as well as eternal life. Some one will ask how can this be? We are saved by the grace of God according to his ordination and not according to our works. If some were not chosen to eternal life by the creator he must have had a good reason for it, and their lot will fall with the devil and his angels. God could have destroyed the devil and all his angels at one stroke after their fall, but he did not do it and that proves he had a purpose for them to fulfill. God could have prevented Adam and Eve from falling, but he did not do so and that proves the ordination of their fall. God could have completely destroyed Adam and Eve at their fall and peopled the earth with inhabitants who would have kept the law, but instead he worked it out through his Son, Jesus Christ, who was foreordained of God for this very purpose, and it was necessary for Adam to fall so we could be saved in Christ Jesus. In Adam all die. Jesus Christ is the head and lawgiver of the church, and without the ordination of God there would be no certainty of salvation, in fact there would be no salavation

at all. With all the gospel doctrine the doctrine of foreknowledge and foreordination is the backbone and foundation of all other Bible doctrine. The foundation of the whole Bible doctrine is built upon Christ, the chief corner stone, and the teaching of the prophets and apostles being taught by the Holy Spirit, and this has also been ordained. We do not have to find the word ordain or predestinate in the Bible every time before we can apply the word ordain to it. For an example we would read Acts 2:16. "But this is that which was spoken of by the prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams." "And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke." "And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." This is in fulfilment on the day of Pentecost of a prophecy that the Holy Spirit gave Joel, the prophet, to prophesy which was ordained of God but now has come to pass, and Peter in this chapter says, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." The doctrine of God's foreordination began before creation and extends to the great judgment day. Here is another scriptural proof of God's foreordination. "God, who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." 2 Timothy 1:9. THOS. W. KIMSEY

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37 Court St., Flemington, N. J.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

At the request of my brother, who is a new subscriber, I am enclosing $2 for a year's subscription to the *Signs*. I am taking a little space here to tell you how I have enjoyed your editorial and also "Providences of God" in the October issue. If I am not mistaken I have had experiences such as you mention regarding the beautiful hymn, "Jesus Saviour Pilot Me." It has been a guiding light to me from my childhood until the present day. There is another verse to it that reads:

"When the disciples fragile bark,
Struggles with the billows dark
On the stormy Gallilee;
Thou did'st walk upon the sea,
And when they beheld thy form
Safe they glided through the storm."

I remember the first time I heard it when I was but a child, my brother and his wife sang it. Mother told me I had sung it word for word while under an anaesthetic and not until the great God above opened my blind eyes to see the wonders of his love and mercy could I sing it with an understanding heart. Dear brother, how often we are confronted with these billows, rocks and shoals and there seems no way to escape and amid the storm his voice is heard speaking peace to our troubled soul. We at Kingwood do appreciate your coming to preach for us, surely the Lord provides for his people abundantly. With best wishes for the future success of the *Signs*, I remain your sister in hope. GERTRUDE PYATT

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

A friend, N. Y., $1; H. E. Danks, Cal., $2; A friend, Mich., $3; Mrs. S. L. Midgett, N. Y., $1; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $1; Miss S. Leedom, Pa., $3; J. W. Haynes, Cal., $1; Mrs. J. B. Hill, N. J., $2; Mrs. B. H. Shearon, Tenn., $1; A friend, Can., $1; F. Johnson, W. Va., $1; Mrs. C. E. Lawrence, Mass., $1; A. L. Blakenship, Va., $2; Mrs. J. Jefferson, Tenn., $1; Elder E. B. Ault, Tex., $5.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the water thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah. Psalm 46:1-3.

EDITORIAL

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES
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LUKE 19:10

"The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

We have had much meditation upon the above quotation, and the thought of salvation to poor sinners. We note according to the written word God held a counsel, and he has determined it shall stand. His son was appointed heir of all things, stood as a lamb slain from before the foundation of the world and his work should praise him. All that he stood for infinite wisdom recorded them in the Lamb as the price of his blood. They had not been born into the world, but were in the mind and purpose of God, and were predestinated in Christ to be of the first Adam. When God created man and placed him in the garden of Eden, he was upright before God as he was only doing the work God gave him to do. Then the conception came which was lust. "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." James 1:15. We have under consideration an abundance of wisdom and purpose in God's predestination that all his work should praise him, and when Adam transgressed God's law and became dead in trespasses and sin, all that Christ Jesus stood as a lamb slain for were in Adam not yet multiplied, and were in the transgression as much as if they had been born in Adam. So in this condition they are lost from that uprightness in the righteousness of God. They are conceived in sin, shapen in iniquity and have no soundness in them, yet they are chosen vessels unto God through Jesus Christ. These are walls about God's elect—*salvation.* This salvation cannot be brought to God's elect in any other way than through Jesus Christ. We fully realize the depravity of man, and Jesus quickeneth the dead sinner into eternal life, the sinner realizes his depravity and helpless condition which fills him with suffering for sin. He seeks rest and finds none, no refuge for an aching heart. *Lust.* The beguiling of Eve in the garden of Eden caused her to desire the forbidden fruit, or lust after it to make her wise. When she took the forbidden fruit she sinned, when she ate it death was brought upon the first Adam, and all his posterity are dead in trespasses and sin. The elect in Christ Jesus are quickened by the Son of God, and made alive which is a great mystery. The only way to arrive at a conclusion of this matter is to put the sinner on the witness stand and hear from him just what took place. I was dead but thought I was alive, was having much pleasure fulfilling my desires, or the lust of my flesh, and at an unexpected time these things were not so much desired which caused an examination of myself, and I found there was nothing good in me, that is in my flesh, which caused me to see myself in a lost and ruined condition. This quickened sinner, by a mighty power, has been raised from death in sin to life in Christ, and that which he thought to be unto life he found to be unto death. This condition will make him cry unto God to be merciful to him, a sinner, and he will rehearse the words of the apostle Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall de-

liver me from the body of this death?" Romans 7:24. While in this chasm of death he would fly away and leave everything, but the more he strives to get away he realizes the all seeing eye beholding him and he exclaims, "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." Psalms 139:1-10. The quickening spirit gives this experience to the sinner, and Jesus has called you out from among the world to serve the living God. When there comes a feeling of peace from such agony of soul the sinner knows full well that no mortal could give such rest and deliverance as he is given to realize and mercy instead of justice is given which brings him in accord with David again, "For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them." Psalms 139:13-17. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." John 6:29. We have been given to behold some of the manifestations of the work God sent his Son into the world to do, and what we have written is to bring to those that have evidences as recorded by David, and we hope are realized by our readers of the *Signs of the Times,* that Jesus came to save you, who through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. Rom. 15:4. This work is of light, and every one in which God hath given grace in Christ Jesus will receive the evidences of their inheritance in the treasure of God's grace. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. 4:6. Every one in whom the light of the knowledge of the glory of God hath shined is an inhabitant of the city of God, and Jesus declares, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." Math. 5:14. Dear reader, if you have been given light to see Jesus as your Saviour you are highly favored for no one can see him as their Saviour with the light of the natural mind, or behold him as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. All the exercises of the mind and heart of the child of God in this world are but a foretaste of the joys that shall be revealed when he is presented by Jesus to God and he says, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Math. 25:34. Then the last enemy has been destroyed, and sin hath no more dominion, for Jesus condemned sin in the flesh. We, by the power of the great shepherd of the sheep shall be saved with an everlasting salvation by the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, and the finished work of the

Son of God will be exclaimed. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" I Cor. 15:55. Dear kindred in Christ Jesus, this letter written to you through the *Signs of the Times* has not been intended to tell you of things of which you have no knowledge, but to tell you for myself, and I truly hope your minds are refreshed, of things you know and have seen. And to all to whom this may come we would invoke God's blessings upon you, and may we feel tenderly toward our foes, and should you feel that some one has wronged you forgive them and write us of your pilgrimage.

C.W.V.

PSALM 127:1

"Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."

As our text is divided into two parts we will endeavor to treat upon it in the same manner: (1) We wish to present some thoughts upon the building of the house and (2) upon the keeping of the city. In both instances we believe the church of the true and living God is under consideration. In the Scriptures are presented different similies of the church, and in this instance the figure of an house is used to typify God's building. In I Kings 6:7 the following is said concerning the temple which Solomon built: "And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building." In the fifth chapter, verse six, we read: "Now therefore command thou that they hew me cedar trees out of Lebanon; and my servants shall be with thy servants: and unto thee will I give hire for thy servants according to all that thou shalt appoint: for thou knowest that there is not among us any that can skill to hew timber like unto the Sidonians." This last quotation appears to be the message which Solomon sent to Hiram, king of Tyre. The Tyrians were friends of Israel and in type they may represent the great host of friends of the Old School Baptist Church throughout the country who, for some reason or another, are not identified with the visible church. Solomon, who in type represents our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in whose hands God delivered all power, both in heaven and in earth, in the building of the temple built it according to the wisdom which God gave him. His word was absolute and his will sovereign in all that pertained to the building of it. All of those who had any part in the matter, not only of the Israelites but also the subjects of Hiram's kingdom, were made willing in the day of God's power, and as Solomon compensated the Tyrians for their labours, even so does God in this day and time compensate or reward those who follow after the cause of truth by feeding their kids by the Shepherd's tents. As they hunger and thirst for the bread of heaven and for the pure water of the river of life, which alone can satisfy their longings, crumbs of mercy fall from the Master's table and streams flow out to those who are in desert places until their souls are fed and they can want no more. We may be assured that more than the natural ties of relatives and friends bind their hearts in christian love and fellowship for the visible church, which causes them to do as much, and in some cases more, for the cause by way of attending meetings and ministering to the needs of God's people by lending a helping hand in entertaining, where that is necessary and desirable. We only meant to touch upon this in passing.

To come back to I Kings 6:7 and 5:6 we note that "the stone was made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building." How truly and beau-

tifully this sets forth the work of God in the hearts of poor sinners, independently of the help of man. Paul in the tenth verse of the second chapter of Ephesians says: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." This workmanship consists of living, or lively stones, manifested here in the world as sons and daughters of Adam, but at the same time chosen of God and precious in his sight. This material is first prepared, or made ready, before it is brought together to be assembled in the niche or place which God in his infinite wisdom hath designed. Please note that Solomon commanded that "cedar trees out of Lebanon" be hewed, or cut down, so that they could no longer receive nourishment from the earth, or the arm of flesh. The "cedar trees of Lebanon" signify God's forest where only evergreens, or characters who have received eternal life, grow. Before these are brought into the church they have to be hewn by God's workmen, and at times no doubt he is pleased to use his gospel ministers through the preached word to bring this about, or it may be his pleasure to send forth trials and afflictions, for the smith and the coals are instruments in his hands, to fashion and consume them before they are qualified to serve wheresoever and in whatever capacity he has purposed. The workmen who were employed in the building of Solomon's temple were the most skilled obtainable, in every branch or phase of the work, and of a truth there are none today so well skilled in the preaching of the gospel as those whom God calls and qualifies. With these labourers there is no such things as "strikes" for higher wages, for all who labour in God's vineyard receive the same pay, their penny a day, whether they come in at the first or eleventh hour; they all receive grace sufficient for their needs regardless of whether they serve one year or an hundred. It is written that "the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither," and it is also said that there was "neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building." Again, let us quote from Paul's epistle to the Ephesians. He says to those who are a part and parcel of the *workmanship* which he declared to be God's, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Eph. 2:19-22. While we understand we were chosen in Christ before the world was, or that all of our names were written in the Lamb's book of life before time began, being unperfect, in these last, or gospel times, we are manifested as being the children of God and members of the mystical body of Christ. During this gospel dispensation the Lord is carrying on his work of grace and his children are being prepared and brought together by the working of his mighty power, that they might be assembled or fitly framed together unto an holy temple in the Lord. It is through the workings of his Holy Spirit that they are builded together for an habitation of the Lord. Such characters are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. No one except the chosen ones know anything of this work and they can testify that while it is in the building there is no sound of a hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron, which are implements that men use; these shall not be used in the building of the house, the church of the true and living God, where it is well known that salvation is all of grace, for the in-

habitants of Mount Zion know that nothing can be added to or taken from the perfect work of God in the house which he builds, and they know further that "Except the Lord build the house they labour in vain that build it." There may be some Marthas who feel the creature still has some chores to perform in order to share fully in the benefits of salvation, but all the Marys will be found to have ceased from their labours and to have entered into gospel rest, or in the house where all sit at the feet of their Lord, adoring and worshipping the Saviour of sinners. We like to think of Mary as typifying those who are truly prepared and set apart in a church capacity to worship God in spirit and in truth and have no confidence in the flesh. At the most we can but touch upon our subject, so we will have to pass along and content ourself by saying as did the Queen of Sheba, "The half was not told me," for Zion in all of her beauty and grandeur cannot be fully described.

We have endeavored to present in some measure our thoughts concerning the vain labour that is spent by those who attempt to aid God in his work of building his house, and we hope that there are no real Old School Baptists who disagree with what we have said, but when we come to the second part of our text, if we are to judge by the actions of some, even though they be ministers of many years standing, we are made to wonder whether they really think that God, who unquestionably builds his house alone, needs their assistance in keeping the city. We most certainly do not believe that God Almighty has delegated to any one or more individuals the task of keeping his city, or church, and any watchman, whosoever he may be, who appropriates this job unto himself will sooner or later discover that he is not sufficient for it and that he waketh but in vain. God needs no man to aid him in steadying the ark even if, as some appear to think, it is shaking. This may be at least one of the times when we who speak and write should take heed unto ourselves and unto the doctrine, lest having preached to others we ourselves become castaways. While God's ministers should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, they should do so in love and in a manner that is "apt to teach." Among the things which Paul says a bishop must not be is "no striker." A true minister of God is a servant or undershepherd of the church and should not under any circumstances undertake to laud his ideas over God's heritage. We have seen the evil, we believe, of this fact being lost sight of. While we like to see a minister, in whatever capacity he may serve, esteemed for the truth's sake, if we are not deceived we have known of cases where the minister was put upon a pedestal and to some extent at least worshipped. Such things ought not to be. When we first began to exercise our gift publicly, if we really have one, we were backward in many respects and had to be urged to stand before the people. On one occasion we were admonished by our pastor, who said in substance that we should be in subjection to the wishes of the brethren in these things, and the question has some times arisen in our mind, is the only time that a minister should be in subjection to his brethren, when he is young and inexperienced? Not so long ago one of our able ministers said, in substance in a letter to us, that the churches having ministers among their memberships should watch over them, and when they stray too far, either in word or in deed, call them to account. We are thoroughly in accord with this idea, notwithstanding so far as we know it is seldom done now-a-days. Churches in far too many instances, in our humble opinion, have been negligent and entirely too lenient concerning those of their memberships, and this may also include the lay members as well as the various gifts that

the Lord has placed in their midst. Just one saying from the mouth of Jesus will suffice to set forth our meaning. In Matthew 5:29 we find his words recorded as follows: "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." We have Scriptural authority for the brethren taking even a minister in hand and instructing him more perfectly. In Acts 18:24-28 we read: "And a certain Jew named Apollos, born, at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace: For he mightly convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ." If that was necessary and profitable concerning one as important and gifted as was Apollos, is it too much to ask of the churches to-day that they watch over for the good of the cause their members, regardless of the position they may occupy in the church? As Jesus said, if it be a right eye that offends, pluck it out and cast it from thee, if need be. How vain is man when he feels that he can aid the Lord either in the building of the church or keeping it. The Psalmist not only said, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it," but he also said, and with equal force, "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." We are convinced that do all we may and the very best we can we shall have to confess that we are unprofitable servants, and we shall be made to know by bitter experiences, perhaps, that it is only through the workings of God's Holy Spirit that we can and do mortify the deeds of the body, or flesh, and keep the old man under. We earnestly hope that we may be found to be among those referred to by Peter, "who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." If, indeed and in truth, we belong to the spiritual family of God, we are persuaded that nothing will ever be able to separate us from his love permanently. We take comfort at times in the declaration of the apostle where he said: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." The doctrine of the final preservation or perseverance of the saints by and with God, to dwell with him in eternal glory is sublime and beyond language to describe, and we should cling to it through all the shifting scenes of time and the vicissitudes of this life. We rejoice keeping of his city into the hands of mortal man. Our subject is inexhaustible and full of glory, but all we can do is to drop a few hints to the wise and leave them to be pondered over and meditated upon with such wonder, amazement and understanding as God may, according to the riches of his grace, as it is in Christ Jesus, be pleased to grant unto us, and whether it be little or much we desire that his name shall have all the praise. R.L.D.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Our dear sainted mother in Israel, Mrs. Green's own mother, known among our people as grandmother Harris departed this life Jan. 11 at 8:20 P.M. Her spirit left that body of clay and went back to God who gave it according to the Scriptures. Oh, how we mourn and yet rejoice at her passing. An obituary will follow.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN

[redacted]

dated with the Sulphur Creek Church of the same faith and order ten years ago. All the members were accepted and constituted the Sulphur Fork Church. During my pastoral care of both churches before the amalgamation and after brother Frank attended on every opportunity. His quiet manner and lovable disposition was appreciated by all. His wife was also a member of the same denomination, and their home was surely a Baptist home. I have been entertained there many times. Now that the dear Lord has taken him away from us we mourn our loss, but we do not wish him back as his trials are over and he has entered into the joy of his Lord. We bow in humble submisson to his will. May his blessing rest on the little church, the brothers and sisters, the grandchildren and the lonely widow who is left the second time alone. May the Lord be her guide through her remaining years. May he comfort the writer who was unable to attend the funeral and is writing this by request of sister Barnett, Claude Jr. and Gus. He was laid beside his children in the Turner Cemetery after a short funeral discourse by a local preacher at the Shannon Funeral Home in Shelbyville, Ky. Reconcile us all dear Lord and enable us to say, "Thy will be done."

(Elder) GEORGE L. WEAVER

Brother BENJAMIN A. WALKER was born Nov. 15, 1867 and died May 19, 1943 . He was the son of B. F. and Ann Walker of Cheatham Co., Tenn. In 1890 he was married to Mary E. Jones to which union were born several children. Two children died in infancy and his wife, Mary E. Walker died Dec. 6, 1926. In 1931 he was married to Mrs. Minnie Hord. No children were born to this union. He leaves his wife, Minnie Walker, Hopkinsville, Ky., also six children to mourn their loss. Mrs. Charlie Fox, Mrs. S. R. Webb, and Mrs. B. W. Birdwell of Nashville, Tenn. One son, J. F. Walker, Mrs. R. S. Hampton, Mrs. Smith Draughn of Louisville, Ky. One stepson, George Hord of Hopkinsville, Ky. and one brother, J. B. Walker of Nashville, Tenn. Brother Walker united with the Primitive Baptist Church when quite young and was deacon of the church for a number of years. The writer had the sweet privilege of knowing him, having been in his home many times. He was one of the firmest Baptists I have ever known, strongly believing in salvation by grace and grace alone, also in the predestination of all things. Each of the many times I was with him he always said, "I am sinful, I cannot help sinning, but I hate sin and I hate my own sinful self. Would I could be free from sin but my nature is so prone to it I cannot help it." I have never known one who entertained more Baptists than he. Always making them feel free and at home. The Baptists have sustained a great loss, but our loss we feel sure is his eternal gain. Brother Walker has been in failing health for several years being deprived of the great pleasure of meeting with those of his belief. The writer had the privilege of being in his home in company with Bro. Philips of Arkansas in the month of December 1942. We four had singing, prayer and preaching by Bro. Philips. This was the last service Bro. Walker attended. We feel now that his soul is with God who gave it, where congregations ne'er break up and sabbaths never end. The writer together with a number of Baptists attended his funeral at the home near Hopkinsville, Ky. Brother Clayton spoke comforting words to the bereaved family and a number of friends, after which the body was laid to rest in River View Cemetery, Hopkinsville, Ky. to await the resurrection morn. I wish to say to the bereaved wife and children weep not as for those who have no hope. He cannot come to you, but by God's mercy and grace you will meet him in the home where we will never say "good bye." God bless and comfort each heart broken member of the family. Written by a friend and unworthy sister in hope. NINA SHEARON

IDA MAY WINCHELL ELMENDORF was born in Olive City, N. Y., July 30, 1860, and departed this life Sept. 13, 1943 making her stay on earth 83 years, 1 month and 14 days. She was the daughter of Aaron and Susan Brown Winchell. She passed away after a long illness, in Kingston, N. Y., where she had lived for over 50 years. May 26, 1880 she was married to Alvah R. Elmendorf and to this union was born one son, Lester C. Elmendorf, who survives together with one brother, Henry Winchell, and one granddaughter and one grandson, all of Kingston, N. Y. She received a hope in God's mercy and was baptized into the fellowship of the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church the third Sunday in October 1927 by Elder George Ruston. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace and attended her church whenever her health permitted. A large number of brethren and frinds join with her relatives in mourning her loss. Her husband died a number of years ago. The funeral service was held Sept. 15 in the Carr Undertaking Parlor, conducted by Elder Arnold H. Bellows, her pastor, after which she was laid to rest in Wiltwyck Cemetery, Kingston, N. Y. Written by request. ORVILLE WINCHELL

HAZEL JANE MARKS, wife of George B. Marks, died Dec. 31, 1943 at her home, 218 North Broad St., Jersey Shore, Pa., after an eight weeks illness of chronic heart condition. She was 50 years of age and leaves a husband, one brother and three sisters to mourn her passing. She was a member of the Camal Primitive Baptist Church. Sister Hazel was sound in the faith once delivered to the saints, and had a very kind and forgiving disposition. The church will miss her as she was always in her place and had an open house for visiting members. Funeral services were held at the Undertaking Parlors near her home conducted by her pastor, Elder C. E. Benson. Interment in the Jersey Shore Cemetery. Her sister.

(Mrs.) MABEL VELEY DAVIDSEN

FILMORE ROGERS was born Nov. 6, 1860 and died Dec. 18, 1943, aged 83 years. He united with the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in Baltimore, Md., and was baptized by Elder J. T. Rowe May 1, 1900. Brother Rogers was a quiet, humble and good man. His last days were spent with his daughter, Mrs. Lenora Hoffman, 3706 Hayward Ave., Baltimore, Md., who cared for him most tenderly during his declining years. He was a nephew of the late Elder William Grafton of Harford Co., Maryland. Funeral services were conducted by Elder D. L. Topping. May the Lord bless the bereaved. ALVIS S. ROWE.

PERMANENT OFFER
(until further notice)
TWO BOOKS
PREDESTINATION AND RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

Either one of these books will be given FREE with a year's subscrpition to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at $2. to anyone who is not now a subscriber to the paper, or to any old subscriber who will send us a NEW subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at $2. The price of the books alone is $1. each. We only have about seventy (70) of the books on Predestination on hand, but as long as they last we shall be glad to send them out on the above basis. R. L. D.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the *Signs of the Times* at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1; 12 copies, $2. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

AUTHORIZED AGENTS

ALABAMA

Elder Lytle Burns, Florence, Ala.
Elder F. A. Collins, Hartford, Ala.
Elder W. D. Griffin, Fayette, Ala.

FLORIDA

Elder C. H. Byrd,
P. O. Box 86, Panama City, Fla.

GEORGIA

Elder H. O. Nash,
431 Hardendorf Ave., N. E. Atlanta, Ga.

KENTUCKY

Elder G. B. Bird, Canada, Ky.
Elder J. S. Hunnicutt, Webbville, Ky.

LOUISIANA

Elder E. J. Lambert,
P. O. Box 55, Lillie, La.

MARYLAND

Elder Harold M. Bennett, Mardela Springs, Md.

NEW JERSEY

Elder Charles W. Vaughn,
Hopewell, N. J.

NORTH CAROLINA

Elder T. F. Adams, Willow Springs, N. C.
Elder E. L. Cobb, Wilson, N. C
Elder M. F. Westbrook, Rt. 3, Dunn, N. C.

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Elder W. N. Green, Box 654, Altus, Okla.

OREGON

Elder C. W. Bond,
Island City, Oregon.

VIRGINIA

Elder J. E. Burgess, Rt. 1, Box 180, Martinsville, Va.

Elder Roy S. Smith, Cascade, Va.

Elder David V. Spangler, Rt. 6, Danville, Va.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

Will those who have notices of SPECIAL MEETINGS to be published, please send them to us six weeks prior to the month in which they are to be held? R. L. D.

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.
O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canada, California.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before.
E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists invites all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren, to meet with us first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hitchins. Take graveled road to the church.
E. M. TACKETT,
J. S. HUNNICUTT, Pastors.
H. L. ROGERS, Clerk.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. [redacted] extended to all who desire to meet with us.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday, and a cordial invitation is extended to all who wish to meet with us.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A.M. 1:30 P.M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

C. W. BOND, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A.M.
ALL WELCOME

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Tex.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sunday in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P.M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sunday each month at 11:00 A.M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Salem Church, four miles south of Teague, Texas, meets on Saturday before the first Sunday in each month in conference.

W. A. LITTLE, Pastor.
DORA WREN, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a.m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, Pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a.m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome. C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 112 RUTHERFORD, N. J., APRIL, 1944 No. 4

THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS OF A SINNER

Sometimes I think I love the Lord,
But find the flesh so weak;
So vile and full of sin I am
I'm ashamed His name to speak.

I know that I can trust Him
And cannot on self rely,
But lest He has mercy on my soul
It can but surely die.

My best resolves I only break,
And I stumble day by day;
I pray He will my burden take
And be with me all the way.

My Adamic nature please destroy,
And keep me at Thy feet;
Make me always humble Lord,
To feel Thee near, is sweet.

In troubled hours when I try to pray
'Tis then I feel so weak and vile;
My heart so torn I smite my breast,
And plead to see Him smile.

I find it so hard to do any good
Though I try with all my might;
I ask, dear Lord, for mercy on me,
When its dark, please show me the light.

Sometimes I have hopes of a home, sweet home,
When all sorrows and troubles are past;
Be with me, guide me and show me the way,
That I may reach that home at last.

(Mrs.) MINNIE GAMBRILL.

Mardela Springs, Md.

CORRESPONDENCE

208 Mountain Trust Building, Roanoke, Va.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:

Enclosed you will find a copy of the writing of Elder G. A. Reid which was published in "Landmark" in 1929. There have been many Old Baptists requesting me to have this copied and sent you to have published in the *Signs of the Times.* Now for the purpose of satisfying some Old Baptists in this community that you are not biased in publishing each one's thoughts concerning the Resurrection, will you please publish this as early as you can? Hoping that you and yours are well and enjoying all good things of the Lord. Yours in tribulation as well as in hope of eternal life. B. V. HELMS

For sometime I have been impressed to present some of my thoughts and meditations on the subject of the resurrection of the bodies of the saints and will use for a subject the 26th chapter and 19th verse of the prophet Isaiah, which reads: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."

This is a subject the brethren do not all seem to understand the same way, and I would not desire to write in a way that would lead to controversy, but simply to present my views as I understand them according to the Scriptures.

I am nearing the close of my seventieth year and as I grow older I am more impressed with the future realities that await us just beyond. "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face." How the mind searches to compre-

hend the things between the now and then, but God has failed to reveal to me, and also to you no doubt, many things we think we would like to know. But remember, we live by hope and walk by faith. It is said by the apostle Paul "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." I Cor. 15:19.

If I know anything of the doctrine of God our Saviour, I am a predestinarian Baptist, believing fully that he is a God of purpose, a God of love and mercy, who has all power; and that his eternal wisdom and foreknowledge comprehended all things from eternity, that all things were, and ever have been present and visible with him; and that nothing at any time has or ever will take place that his divine wisdom and foreknowledge had not seen and known before time, for there is nothing new or old with him. He created all things and I conclude he has a special purpose in all created things; and as he has a purpose in all his creation, he most assuredly rules it all; for he does his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth; and so overrules all things, that he causes them to work together for good to them that love him, to them who are the called, according to his purpose. So in the beginning God created heaven and the earth. Let us not lose sight of his purpose. The heaven is God's throne, the earth his footstool, the earth is the dwelling place of all God's earthly creation, the earth is where man lives and where man dies and where man is buried. Man lives of the earth, because he is of the earth, an earthly man, bearing the image of his Creator in his form or fashion. To my mind the man was passive in his creation, he took no part, asked no questions, gave no advice, he was dead, he was but clay in the hands of the potter; but God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (not life, but the breath of life) and man became a living soul.

"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning." But to proceed with the subject above quoted. We believe the prophet Isaiah was inspired of God to use the language, and as "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." It is not to the man of the world, because it is foolishness to him.

Inspiration is to the living man, one who has been quickened and made alive. The dead in trespasses and in sins are carnally minded, and "to be carnally minded is death," and the carnal mind can not discern spiritual things, neither can it know them because they are spiritually discerned.

If we have not the spirit of Christ we are none of his; but if we have the spirit of Christ, or Christ is in us the hope of glory, we have that life, or spiritual mind, by which we know, or discern spiritual things. But the children of God are not of the world; Jesus says "ye are not of the world, (even as I am not of the world,) but I have chosen you out of the world." So the redeemed family of God have their citizenship in heaven, from whence they look for the Saviour. Then they "are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people." As their citizenship is in heaven their heart is there, their treasure is there; for wheresoever the treasure is there will the heart be also, and they were waiting the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their body. We know our body is mortal, we know also the body must die, we fully realize that sin is the transgression of the law, and by the transgression of the law, the sentence of death was pronounced, for since by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead; so by the disobedience of one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned,

(not the sentence of death only) but death passed upon all men; for as in Adam all die. The entire human family all died in Adam, from Cain to the last one that ever will breathe the breath of life of Adam's posterity, dead in trespasses and in sins. There is another sentence passed upon Adam and his entire posterity, dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return. The dead in trespasses and in sins are made alive only by the hearing of the voice of the Son of God. For the hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." This is the resurrection of the corporeally dead, which we have under consideration. The creature was made subject to vanity, susceptible to sin, of the earth earthy, he was mortal, not immortal, if he had been immortal he could not have sinned, but being mortal having flesh and blood, he could not inherit the kingdom of God and having a body of flesh, which is corrupt, or corruptible, it is also said neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

Then the death, dying, the process by which the body returns to dust, as prescribed by Job takes place. "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon he earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." Job 19:25-27.

As God created the heaven for his throne; John says in Revelation 21:27, "And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." Earth is a death bed. It is a place of change, it is where all nature changes; all natural life ends here. Job further says, "If a man die, shall he live again?" Job 14:14. We answer yes, the proof is too positive to doubt: but what it is that is resurrected from the dead, is what men differ upon in their opinions; and why are we writing this article, not to try to force our views on any one; but to give our views as we see and understand them, according to the Scriptures.

The apostle Paul in 1st Corinthians 15th chapter, gives a clear and concise analysis and he speaks according to the Scriptures and affirms that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried; and that he arose again the third day; according to the Scriptures, and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve, after that he was seen of five hundred brethren at once; and the greater part of them remained, at the time of Paul's writing, after that he was seen of James, then of all the apostles; last of all says Paul he was seen of me. All eye witnesses to Jesus resurrection from the grave. Christ became the first fruit of them that slept.

Christ is the head, the church is his body, and if the first fruit be holy, the entire lump is holy, if the head be holy, so also is the body. Jesus said I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me, and this is the will of the Father which sent me, that of all he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. This raising up again has reference to the resurrection of the saints.

There must be a sacrifice for sin, sin must be put away, must be atoned for. The offerings under the law could not take away sin, the law could not give life, there must be a perfect offering, an offering without spot to God. So Christ was made a little lower than the angels by the suffering of death. He put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself, nailing them to the tree of the cross. So then Christ hath redeemed us unto God by the

blood of the everlasting covenant; which was ordered in all things and sure. No failure about it. Ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God and when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. No wonder Isaiah could say: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." I said the earth was a death bed, it is the place where man has always dwelt, the scenes enacted by man have been many and varied; but the most far reaching to my mind, was the transgression of God's law, with the penalty of death, which has involved all mankind. It was man that was created of the dust of the earth, it was man that breathed the breath of life, it was man that received the commandment to not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; it was the man that disobeyed,that sinned, it was the man that sinned that died, it is the man that dies that is buried, and if it is not the buried man that is resurrected, pray tell me what it is. Paul says if the dead rise not, then is our preaching vain, and your hope is vain, and we are yet in our sins. 1st Corinthians 15. But Paul further says, "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." And the apostle Peter says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Peter 1:3-5. It is the doctrine of the surety and undeniable resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, that begets within us a lively, or living hope, that we, though we go into the grave shall not forever remain there; but as Jesus is both the resurrection and the life; our hope is of a blessed immortality beyond the grave. The sea gives up the dead which are in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them. Rev. 20:13. What is it that is buried in the sea? What is it that goes down into the grave? Is it the body of man? Is it the spirit of man? Is it the life? Is it some principle of man without form or shape? What is it, if it is not the man that was born of flesh? Man that is born of woman, of which it is said dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return. What part of Christ was crucified, was it the body, the humanity? What rose from Joseph's tomb, if it was not the same body that Joseph of Arimathea took down from the cross, wrapped in linen and laid in the sepulchre? In what form did he appear to his disciples? In what form did he ascend into heaven, was it without the body? What did the angel say? "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:11. We also have as proof of the resurrection of the body, in connection with the crucifixion of Christ the following scripture, "And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." Mat. 27:52-53. Also read Ezekiel 37:1st to 15th inclusive. I have long believed in the resurrection of the body. This has been my hope and the doctrine I have preached for many years; and if it is not this way, I am a poor deceived mortal and if the mortal body is not changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ, (not exchanged but changed) then the doctrine of the resurrection has lost all its sweetness to me. But Paul so fully established this view,

that we feel safe in our position; for he says "the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." 1 Cor. 15:52. Changed yes, I remember no scripture that teaches or has any reference to being exchanged. Changed how? This our mortal body is sown in corruption, in dishonor, in weakness and a natural body. It, the same body is raised in incorruption, in glory, in power and a spiritual body. 1 Cor. 15: 38 to 45 inclusive. We inherit our mortal, dying, corruptible, changeable bodies, from the first man Adam and bear his image. So in the resurrection our mortal bodies are changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ the second Adam, the Lord from heaven and bear his image; for as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly: we shall see him and be like him, for we shall see him as he is. For when we awake in his likeness we shall be satisfied, blessed thought. For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality, so when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." The end will be attained for which we have been seeking and the victory will be given us by our God, for thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Humbly submitted for your consideration. (Elder) G. A. REID

Island City, Oregon.

DEAR BROTHDER DODSON:

In the December number of the *Signs* is the question of Sister Ettie Smith of Texas, "Who is the author of sin?" Your editorial reply is so complete that there should be no doubt remaining, yet when I read it, and fully agreed with it all, I seemed to have a sort of confused understanding as to the simple and direct answer to the question, and this being one at which so many Baptists stumble. If others are as dull as I am there may still be need for a shorter and simpler reply. Adam and Eve was the author of sin. Sin is the transgression of the law of God, and they were the first transgressors. God created them and placed them in the garden surrounded with everything they needed, and they were told they might eat of the fruit of all the trees of the garden except of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Of that tree they should not eat for in the day they ate of it they should surely die. God did not influence them in any way, and their necessities did not require that they do that, so the act was accomplished freely under the influence of Satan. This is the first transgression or violation of God's law, and no one can find any scriptural authority for any other conclusion than already stated. This is the short and simple answer to the question. Another question naturally follows, why did God make Adam that way? Without an attempt to answer let us take a little view of other works of creation. Why did he make the sheep and the wolves to destroy them; and the useful fowls and the skunks and hawks to prey upon them; also the fruits and vegetables and the insects to ruin them? Everything in the creation has its place, uses and also its enemy. A brother remarked recently that he understood much of the wisdom of God in his creation, but why did he make the Devil? God's purposes are so great and so high above our comprehension that we are lost in the mystery of even the little things we see about us. The shepherd carries his gun to protect his sheep, the poultryman shoots or traps the skunks, hawks or other enemies of his fowls; the gardner sprays to protect fruit and vegetables, yet he loses some. Do these persons charge their losses to God as the author of it all because he created these destructive enemies? Man in his exalted

state of human wisdom rebels at the sovereignty of God, and declares him unjust in exercising his creative right to form whatever his high and holy purposes need for their development. Especially is this true as regards the frailties of natural man, who judges his creator and justifies his own rebellious acts by replying to Him, "Why hast thou made me thus?" This great controversy seems to be exercised mostly by persons claiming to be God's elect family. It existed in the days of the apostles and is the great stumbling stone of the Baptist family today. It arises from the two-fold nature of the children of God, the carnal or natural mind, and the spiritual mind. So many cannot discern which is natural and which is spiritual. The spiritual mind alone recognizes the sovereignty of God as far as it is given to mortals to know it, but there are high and holy purposes which are secret with God and the revealed knowledge of him cannot be fully known in this life. It behooves God's children to stop where revelation has led them in experimental knowledge, and not try by natural reasoning to explain what God has not revealed. God alone must teach us to know his sovereignty and our weakness, and until that is done we stumble along in confusion. How did Peter learn the deceitfulness of his own nature, but by denying his master which he never thought was in him to do? But when the deceit of his own heart had been revealed, and with it the knowledge that the Lord really knows all things, how honestly he could confess that he loved him above all. Peter then was told to feed His sheep and lambs. Do the lambs and sheep need the same food? Paul mentions certain things, he speaks to those going on unto perfection, and to others who must have the sincere milk of the word. I believe our ministers often make a mistake in their preaching by not considering the growth in grace and knowledge of spiritual life among God's children. They are not all of the same understanding because of their difference in spiritual development. Some are babes in Christ and some fathers and mothers in Israel. To demonstrate, we would not put before a child just entering school the elements of the higher branches, but he may attain unto them in due time, and when he does they will be plainly understood. So it is with the mystery of godliness, and as it develops we understand more of the attributes of Jehovah, and can rejoice in his sovereign will, ordering and controlling all things. But even in our limited knowledge let us never dispute the plain declarations Jehovah has made concerning himself and his ministrations of justice. If natural wisdom cannot measure them out it behooves his believing children to keep silent on such mysteries until God himself shall make it plain. Recently a young minister of the Baptist family in his zeal to combat the idea that God is the author of sin, an idea imaginary in himself, when reminded that God hardened Pharoah's heart, and also that the crucifixion of Christ was performed by wicked men, carrying out what God had before determined to be done, he said, "If I believed that I would preach God the author of sin." If a minister is so ignorant that he must make God a liar (for in this he disputes God's plain declaration) in order to account for the entry of sin into the world under God's sovereign government, he had better keep silent on that point. Then if a minister is so indefinite in his dividing of the word of truth that his hearers are confused on this point, he should take heed unto himself and to the doctrine and preach such things as are for the edification of the body of Christ instead of causing the divisions we so often see among us. I desire above all things to see peace and unity among our churches, and admonish our ministers to labor to this end, laying aside the controverted theories which may be self exalting to themselves, but not edifying to hungering and thirsting children of God.

(Elder) C. W. BOND

3122 N. Lafayette Circle, Memphis, Tenn.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR FRIEND AND I HOPE BROTHER IN THE LORD:

Find enclosed $1 and a letter I wrote on some of my thoughts concerning the truth as I believe it. You can publish it if you desire and if not throw it in the waste basket. I read your paper and I am glad to say I believe you are one of the few who desires to stand firm on the doctrine, and yet you surely love peace for you are not publishing anything that would cause trouble and strife among God's humble poor as many are doing. Hope all is well with you and yours. We are still meeting in peace one with the other for which we hope to thank Israel's God. I have just returned from the West Tennessee Association. Elder R. L. Biggs is moderator and a very able man. We are few in number but our hope is in the God that is ruler in all things and saved his people in Christ before the world began, and that he works all things after the counsel of his own will for the good of them that he loves. Hope you are given the mind to visit us here in Memphis, we will be glad to hear from you on this soon. May you be blessed to continue as you have in the past for the doctrine, and know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified. Pray for us a sinner in hope.

W. O. WAMMACK

(We greatly appreciate the foregoing letter and wish to thank our brother for writing as he did. If we know our own heart, we do sincerely desire to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. At the same time we are a great lover of peace among the brethren, and see no reason why they cannot maintain their own individuality of expression and views on various points of doctrine, without incurring the ill-will of others of like precious faith. If they would show themselves to be Christ-like, they must be meek and lowly of heart. We are honestly trying to avoid publishing anything in our columns that would cause trouble and strife among God's humble poor, and it makes us happy to feel that many of our dear brethren realize and appreciate it. R.L.D.)

"And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" 1 Peter 3:13.

Harm will come to the wicked who are trusting in their own strength. Man does not live alone in this world, he is living for the thing he loves, and in nature we love that which is to the satisfaction of the fleshly man. This mind we have in nature is not subject to the things pertaining to righteousness so if we are to know what is right and just we must be given a new mind. This comes to the few who have been made ready by having been brought to the end of their own strength through the fear of harm that seems sure to come to them. This fear makes creatures willing to trust in another besides themselves who before was trusting in their own power to deliver them from all harm. So as it is written in the Scriptures, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." As you have borne the image of the earthy man who is not subject to the things of God, you must also bear the image of the heavenly man who was the Lord from heaven. We then will hear what is said about that sect which is everywhere spoken against. The Lord spoke by the mouth of the prophet saying, "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." And he said they shall not be reckoned among the nations of the earth for I have not called you because you are great in number for you are the fewest of all people. The Lord's people are followers of that which is good. Why? Because God has given them a new mind and heart, he puts his law in their hearts and writes it in their minds, and what he does is done forever. No man can add to it neither can he take from it, so surely the great God who made

the heavens and the earth and all that in them is by the word of his power is able to make man do what he desires. Man is counted before God as the small dust of the balance and a drop in the bucket, nothing, less than nothing and altogether vanity. Our righteousness is counted as filthy rags before that God who holds the waters in the hollow of his hand; comprehended the dust in a measure; weighs the hills in balances and the mountains in scales. He is rich in mercy and love for he loved his people while they were dead in trespasses and sins; sent his own son to redeem them from the law, who, when he came said that no man could come to him except the Father which sent him draw him. So then God's people are moved by fear and drawn by love which makes them followers of that which is good for there is none good except the Father which is in heaven. Who can harm God's people? I say that man cannot do anything against God, for what we count right, many times is wrong. We try to say that God is wrong to let these troubles come upon us we are facing to-day, but we are not able to see the good that will come out of it. We see through a glass darkly, but he knows all things even before they ever happen. He saw the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that had not yet been done saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." He has said that the servant is no greater than the Lord for if I have suffered you shall also suffer, so it was not given unto us to believe on his name only but also to suffer for his name's sake. He is in us the hope of glory, working both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. So if we are his we are followers of that which is good and no harm can come even though we must face the troubles of life, and in the end suffer death, but he has said he would be with his people to the end, and give sufficient grace to make us say thy will be done and not ours. May the grace of Israel's God keep you that you continue in the Lord to the end is the prayer of a poor sinner in hope of life eternal.

W. O. WAMMACK

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113 South 12th St., Murray, Ky.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

You will find enclosed a money-order for the renewal of our heavenly family paper. We do not want to fail to get a single copy. We love the dear letters and experiences it contains. Elder Dodson we are sending a letter written by our dear sister, Estelle Odom of Cambria, Ill., a very dear sister in Christ. Sister Odom died of a heart attack Nov. 21, 1943. Our tears are many, our hearts are crushed, however, we must be submissive to God's will. Will you please publish this letter for her family's sake and many others too. May God be with the dear husband, brother Martin Odom, and children. According to nature you too, brother Odom, will soon be living together again only to know each other as one in Christ. With love. (Mrs.) FANNIE H. CHESTER

Cambria, Ill.

MRS. W. T. CHESTER, MY DEAR SISTER IN PRECIOUS HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE:

I have been neglectful answering your sweet letter. We have not been well for two months. Martin awoke one morning and his right hand was completely out. He could not use knife and fork or fill his pipe and light it. Could not pick up anything with his hand. You can never know how much I cried when out of his sight, always asking God to heal his hand and make him well again. We could not drive. When we would go to the doctor some of the children or grandchildren would drive for us. He is still under the doctor's care. Has been taking two inoculations each week until last week he had only one. The doctor told him not to come for two weeks if he continued as well as now and gave him medicine to last until then. How glad we were to hear him say that. I have been taking medicine for heart and nerves, but we have been up and going all

the time for which I hope I am thankful. Our hearts are heavy over the loss of our dear sister, Belle Harriss, but our loss is her eternal gain. Brother Harriss has only preached one sermon since he lost his sweet wife. He preached at our place of worship the second Sunday. It was hard for him to preach. He looked so sad and broke down in prayer once and in his preaching a time or two. Oh, how we all missed her. She always brought his Bible in and laid it on the stand. God is calling his children home one by one. Soon we will all travel that road, not long at the longest. I lack three months traveling my three score and ten years and Martin will soon be seventy-four. God has been good to us, we are able to live by ourselves and he is driving again. We go to all of the meetings and how thankful I am we can attend them. That is all the pleasure I have in this world. Worldly things have no charm for me. Yes, I read the New Year's greeting in January number. No dear, I do not think it touched too much on natural things. You know what I believe and I cannot help what I do believe, my heart would not let me. One thing we are sure of, God still sits on his throne ruling and reigning over all. "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." "He is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Dear sister, what a wonderful Saviour, who made everything that was made. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge." I wish I could be sitting by you and talking instead of writing, I could do much better. I sometimes wonder why we have to be so far apart, but even if miles divide us we can visit with our letters. I surely do enjoy the good letters in the *Signs of the Times* and especially the ones I get from understanding you. We are having so much rain, waters are high, crops are late, but again there is God's handiwork and he knows best. He sends the rain and the sunshine and the poor puny man cannot change anything. I have heard some of the so-called preachers here say, "If you die before morning it will not be my fault you are lost." He was in protracted meeting (he thought) saving souls. Some of them were slow to go. They are to be pitied as they neither see, hear nor understand. The Scriptures speak of them, also of false teachers. Now I am closing this scribble for fear of tiring you, and asking another good letter from you. When at the throne of grace pray for this sinner saved by grace if saved at all. God bless and watch over you and yours. One who loves you. STELLA ODOM

Castle Rock, Wash.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

Again I find myself with thoughts in my mind that I desire to express, with a hope back of the thoughts that if expressed they may be of some comfort or encouragement to some hesitant or backward child of God. Looking backward I call to mind a time in my life, on the day I was baptized, when a few words, a dozen perhaps, from the right source were of invaluable comfort and encouragement to me. We were having a drought in the country where we lived at that time and were all anxiously desiring a rain. As we were starting to the river where my mother was to be baptized it began to cloud over very fast and heavy and we all feared a storm before we could return home. I said to a brother Jones and his wife standing near me that I would be glad to get rained on for the sake of a good rain even if we did get wet. Brother Jones answered back, "And wouldn't you be glad to get wet for the sake of your

Saviour? You will make no mistake if you do." Since the fear of making a mistake was what had troubled me most, his remark gave me encouragement and I was baptized that day with my mother. So many dear saints feel they are not worthy, and it is commendable for no one is worthy, not a single one of us only as Christ becomes our worthiness for us. Many worship this unworthiness, more than they worship the dear Saviour, and it becomes of too much importance to them. Many feel and rejoice that their sins are forgiven, but because their sins are so many and so great they feel that Christ and his church do not desire them. Ah, that is the way we all feel, but the church would not want one to come telling how good and worthy they were, how sure that the church would accept them. Encouragement to outside believers is sometimes frowned upon, and it has been said to saints "stay out of the church as long as you can and then when you do come you will know it is of God." This is wrong. A believer should be encouraged to do his duty, especially when we see one troubled and in doubt, and no matter how long one may stay out, and finally is baptized though it were a hundred years, he will always have some doubt whether it is of God. As long as we are in the flesh these doubts will assail us, though we never cease to hope. I know of no reason why a believer should not be baptized, but I feel I know of several why one should. The first and greatest is the command given by the Saviour to do so, and another is that he himself set the example for us to follow. He has told us to take up his cross and follow him. He has said, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Dear children, with God's help, go to your church to your sinful friends, and tell them of your hope though small it be, ask for a home with them and follow the steps of your Master into the water, be buried there as he was, and like him be raised. This will not, as some claim, assure you a place in heaven or keep you from doubting, but is an answer of a good conscience, and will bring you much peace and sweet comfort. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." A beautiful chapter in the Bible to me is the eighth chapter of the Acts, especially from the twenty-sixth verse to the end. I read it often and each time it is occasion for fresh courage, new hope, and much rejoicing. So little was required for the baptism of this man of Ethiopia, only that he believed with all his heart that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, water and Philip to administer. That was all. No one asked him if he believed this or that doctrine, or if he was good or bad, if he had any money or had none. How glad I am that no one asked me questions the day I asked for baptism now it seems to me I knew less than nothing, was of less use than nothing and there was no reason on earth why they should be willing to take me. To this day I have no excuse for a hope except that I, like the Ethiopian, did believe Jesus Christ was the Son of God, though at that time the only reason that I could give for my hope was that I loved these brethren and wanted a home with them. That is what the church is to the saints here in time, a home, refuge, a place for spiritual rest. Go to it dear friends and, God willing, help your brethren keep house, and share of the feast provided by the Father on his table which is set at intervals before his children. Hoping that if this is printed God will bless it to encourage some of his little ones. I know that I will be censored by some on trying to bring things about ahead of God's own time, but not so. I only remember what a little encouragement meant to me at one time and hoping that in God's own way and time this may comfort one of his. Use your own judgment as to publishing it. Do not let it crowd out something of real value. Unworthily in hope. EFFIE PARKE

DEAR PAPA:

Just a line tonight. I received your card to-day and am very glad to hear that you are feeling well. Hope you and Mr. Wood get a good job. Papa I want to say that I hope you will be blessed to feel that all is well. I do not believe there is any place but what is a good place when you are blessed to feel that all is well and in your feeling shout thanks to the Lord of heaven. Since I have been here at Langley Field I have been by myself. What I mean is that none of the boys here are any company for me. They talk and laugh about things that I cannot enjoy. Not that I feel that I am better than the rest of the boys, but I hope that I have been killed to things that the other boys seem to enjoy. There have been a few times since I have been in the army, if I am not mistaken, that I have been blessed to feel the presence of Jesus, the Son of God. I feel that the army was a good place for me then. I remember well the night I wrote Mr. Hill the first letter. I tried twice before to write him, but I could not put down even one word, but that night after they put the lights out I felt that I had to write him. I arose, got my pen and paper and sat down on my locker by the window, and by the light that came in the window from the outside I feel that I was blessed to write. For a little while I did not realize that I was in the army or even in this world. The boys wanted to know what I was doing trying to write in the dark, but if they had seen the tears rolling down my cheeks I expect they would have said more than they did. That was a sweet place for me. I hope you will be blessed with a good meeting at Wolf Island this week end. I hope that I will be with you in June. I hope you will have health to work and that you will get home every week. Trust Mama and the boys will be reconciled to God's will. Hope to get a letter from Mr. Hill soon. Tell Mr. Wood I hope he is well and feeling fine. Write often to your unworthy son. BURCH

Sgt. Burch C. Wray, 34212182
337th Bomb Sq.,
96th B G, APO 3917
C/o Postmaster, N. Y.

Sicily Island

DEAR BURCH:

I am very unworthy and unfit to answer such a good and perfect letter as yours of Aug. 14 just received, but inasmuch as you have requested to know how I stand or feel touching the subject of the powers and works of man, I feel it my duty to try. My dear friend, I feel that if I have an experience at all of the faith and doctrinal truth of the great divine it is by the effectual working of the power of God wrought upon me, and not by the works which I have wrought, neither by the teachings of Sunday Schools or any other mission of man which teaches their power to learn and to save souls. We find in the teachings of the Scriptures that when Christ was on the coast of Judaea, the farther side of Jordan, before going into Jerusalem, he was teaching the weakness and nothingness of man. Even the disciples were astonished and were asking among themselves, "Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible." Such teachings of manpower is nothing on earth but the tables of moneychangers, as recorded in Matthew I believe, and is a form of godliness but denying the power thereof as recorded in 2 Tim. 3:5. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Eph. 2:8-9. In Romans 13:1 the apostle Paul tells us there is no power but of God, and furthermore we are told that the very best of our righteousness is as filthy rags in the sight of God. Surely then "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that

sheweth mercy." "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Rom. 9:16-18. Our Saviour himself said, "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." So if no man knows God, how can he teach the word of God? Man cannot teach the power of God until the Lord has first revealed himself. When the Lord has revealed the Father to a sinner on earth and bids him to tell or teach what things the Lord had done and shown to him, brother there are no works taught but of God. The apostle Paul had one of the greatest experiences and was one of the greatest teachers of any of the servants of God. Did he teach the works of man, or conditions or any form of chance system? If one will prove to me by use of the Scriptures that he did, he will at the same time prove to me that my experience is of the Devil and not of the Lord, and that when stricken and brought down upon the face of the earth, when alone with the beasts of the field, I received no hope, light or understanding of the powers of the Almighty who rules all things in heaven and on earth. I have not written as I would like, but I feel and believe we will meet (which is much better) so strongly that I feel to have faith to that effect and patience to wait. May the Lord God of hosts be with us and for us all the way through these dark and trying times. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Humbly submitted in love, I hope.

PFC. WAYLON H. CHANDLER
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Hartford, Ala.

JESUS AND HIS CHURCH

I feel an urge to address by letter the believers in Jesus relative to the church, feeling assured there is no subject so vital nor so comforting. I trust I may be guided in spirit to sever relationship with earth and the cares of earth to the end I will know only Jesus and his church, which I assume at this time to be the subject based upon the text found in a portion of Matthew, chapter 16, more specifically described verse 18 which reads: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." We first notice what gave rise to the text in view, a desirous host of Pharisees and Sadducees to be shown a sign from heaven. A tempting desire, a desire that demanded gratification, if for no other reason it was, who it was. Being weighed, of course, in their own balances and calling the weight themselves, their assumption evidently was that little things like opening blinded eyes, unstopping deaf ears, cleansing leprosy and raising the dead were not sufficient proof for them in view of their being who they were. Their demands (Pharisees and Sadducees) are always great and heavy, but they are always on the other fellow. Jesus assured us (the believer) that that is their strife. They (the Pharisee and Sadducee) demand action, visible religion always in order to, and never because of. Let us see what Jesus did about that. The anxiety of Jesus was not hanging so low and heavy that day concerning the salvation of everybody in the world. No, he (Jesus) was not wanting everybody to accept him as their personal Saviour (not that day). No, instead he (Jesus) answered and said unto them the (Pharisees and Sadducees) "When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red." Note he had not told them anything more than they already knew, "And in the morning, It will be foul weather to-day for the sky is red and lowering." Again note he had not told them anything more than they already knew, but contrary to their desires proceeds to call them hypocrites. Affirms to them they are wicked and adult-

erous and not only they but their generation. Jesus admits they can discern the face of the sky then asks "can ye not discern the signs of the times?" He offered no sympathy for them, but did assure them no sign would be given except the sign of the prophet Jonas, (Jesus missed a good opportunity to exhibit some of those missionary qualities I am told that he possesses) and he left them and departed. And when his disciples were come to the other side they had forgotten to take bread. Jesus warned them "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees," "and they (his disciples) reasoned among themselves, saying, it is because we have taken no bread." Oh! how many times have we in substance done the same thing. Note the reasoning is all among themselves, reasoning that it was something they had failed to do. Jesus appears on the scene which when he perceived said unto them, "O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?" In the above we get a direct view of the importance and worth of faith without which it is impossible to please God. Then Jesus called his disciples to two separate and distinct occasions. One where there were five loaves and five thousand and twelve baskets taken up, and another where there were seven loaves and four thousand and seven baskets taken up. Then said Jesus, "How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Saducees? Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees," and until this good day it is not the material worth of this world that concerns God's church, it is the doctrine. Separate and apart from the world and its worth though we are in the world we are not of the world. "When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets." The above sayings relative to the personage of Jesus were not so bad. I will stop here to say that Jesus said of John, "Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." Who is the least? John then had to say of Jesus, "There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose." Jesus had just said not one greater than John except he who is least in the kingdom. Again I ask, who is the least? Whoever it is, is greater than John (John the Baptist). "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." A thing at hand is at finger touch. The touch of the kingdom demands and commands repentance, never fails. Repentance never brings the kingdom, but the opposite. Could a man repent and as a result of repentance cause the touch of the kingdom, the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees to-day would be true, but repentance is not a voluntary act, as it is held to be by some, but involuntary, the result of a heavenly touch, a blessed thought indeed. A great doctrine John came preaching, but Jesus gave the demonstration and proved conclusively that it brought results. For proof of the example: the woman with the issue of blood, the boy born blind, the man with the withered hand, Lazarus from the dead, Zaccheus from the tree, the Samaritan woman at the well, the man at the pool and many, many more all proving conclusively that he was the Son of God in power and great glory, but humbled himself and was made sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God

in him. Humbled himself even to death, that dastard, hateful monster that will one day claim us all (death) for a while. But thanks be to God that giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Though we did esteem him, smitten of God and afflicted by his stripes we were healed. He is the greatest though being the least, now how big are we? Nothing and less than nothing, or in other words nothing split open and both halves thrown away. "Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." The fact that Peter confessed Jesus, evidenced in the confession is the blessing. The revelations of God produced the confession. All confessions relative to the personage of Jesus must of necessity come through direct revelation, revelations from God as this one did. Flesh and blood cannot be tutored into making a true confession relative to Jesus, flesh and blood only rehearses true statements, cannot make them. No promise to the rehearsers but all the assurances are to the original confessor, not by flesh and blood but by revelation from God, and I say also unto thee that thou art Peter, as much as to say you are just a man, not any more brilliant than any of the others. God made the revelation, it was not your aptness, and upon this rock I will build my church, and so he did, and so it is, and so it will remain on the eternal rock of revelation, or in other words upon the same principle that produced the confession of the apostle Peter relative to who Jesus is, upon the same principle, which is revelation, Jesus built his church. No man can say that Jesus is the Christ except by revelation. No person can see the church except by revelation, and when I read, as I have of late, of the predicament some of the brethren would have us believe the church to-day is in, I am forced to ask this question. Brethren are you looking at the church? I also ask the believer in Jesus, when the church was first revealed to you was it not most beautiful? Is it not a fact that you saw yourself all unfit, all unholy, all unclean? Is it possible now that when you see these spots and blurs and blemishes are they in the churches? No that is not possible, you are not seeing the church, you are seeing some more of self, that is the trouble, the church remains the same. Why I even read articles written by Old Bapists the substance of which would mean that the church was standing in dire need of an old fashioned overhauling from bottom to top. Why? No, believers, the church is complete in Jesus Christ her head. Ye are the body of Christ and members in particular. Heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ and will, by reason of the fact that you are an equal heir, inherit the vast riches of God. All things are yours, ye are Christ's and Christ is God's. I would like to talk concerning the gates of hell not prevailing against the church but I fear I am too lengthy already. Would be glad to hear from all who have a mind to write me. Submitted in affection and sweet fellowship for the believer in Jesus. A trembling sinner, yet I hope.

(Elder) R. A. COLLINS

1306 Cumberland Ave., Evansvlle, Ind.

ELDER R. L. DODSON,

DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:

I intended to state to you when I sent my renewal for the *Signs* that I wanted one of the books you are having published, and would also like to have one of the books you spoke of having on hand. I have just read the *Signs* and a sweet comfort it is to read the many experiences that so much parallel my own. I do appreciate your writings and explanatory versions of the written word. The *Signs* is the most preaching I get as I am about one hundred fifty miles from my church and it is seldom that I get to go, and then I feel so steeped in unworthiness I feel I am an imposition on the brethren. I was received into the church two years last

August, but so much of the time I wonder and am in doubt fearing that I have deceived the very elect of God. It is so much pleasure to hear the dear servants of God proclaim his mercies to us for if his love is for me it was predestinated in his will before the world was. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Eph. 1:4-5. It was God's own work and I am so glad that he did not say if I would accept him as the so-called modern churches of to-day would have you believe. I know there is no good in this man of flesh that would be worthy of acceptance with God. Unworthy though I am, I hope to remain yours in hope,

W. Y. CHANDLER

(We are most appreciative of our brother's kind expressions. We are striving to serve our dear brethren in the love and fear of God, and to realize that we are succeeding in some measure affords us encouragement. One who feels his unworthiness and is fearful of having deceived the brethren is not likely to cause trouble. The late Elder John McConnell of New York City used to say that he did not worry about the man who himself was afraid he was a hypocrite. If more of us could see the hidden evils of our hearts it might be beneficial to the cause which we espouse. R.L.D.)

Gautt, Ala.

R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER:

I am enclosing $2 for a year's subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. Have read copies of it and like it so well but am not a subscriber. I know the Lord has blessed you by the comfort you have given to his children, and hope he will continue to bless you in so doing. I know all the blessings come through him for without him we can do nothing. I am living in my eighty-fifth year and see more beauty in the Lord's work than I did while a young man. Yours truly, J. S. SCOTT

Box 81, Asheboro, N. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

As my subscription to the *Signs* is past due I am enclosing money-order for $2 for which please renew it for another year. I think it the best paper I have ever read and hope to be blessed to continue reading it. I love to read the letters from God's people from the different parts of the country who come testifying of a God of love, who hath saved his people with an everlasting salvation. May the God of mercy continue to bless you to publish the *Signs*. Your unworthy brother in hope. J. N. TROGDON

Route 3, Winnsboro, Texas.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR EDITOR:

I have been a reader of the *Signs* practically all of my life as my father was a subscriber to it as far back as I can remember and I am now in my eighty-third year. I do not feel that I could do without it in my declining years. It has been through the kindness of a dear nephew that I have had the blessed privilege of reading the many good letters and editorials that contain so much rich food to the hungry soul. May the God of all power uphold and sustain each one of you is the prayer of this poor old sinner.

J. J. McLEOD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Mrs. J. H. Dunkley, N.H., $2; D. H. Bradley, Tex., $4; Mrs. K. Ragan, Tenn., $1; Mrs. E. Mathis, Ky., $2; J. A. Owen, Ala., $1; Mrs. M. C. Jameson, Tex., $1; Mrs. C. W. Hanley, Md., $1; Mrs. M. Wickham, Mo., $1; B. O. Willey, Tex., $1; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $3; Mrs. J. Clifford, Wash., $3; J. H. Miles, Fla., $1; C. D. Taylor, Okla., $1; Mrs. L. N. Henry, Miss., $2; Lost Creek Church, Ky., $4.

EDITORIAL

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PEACE

As the weather is bad to-day, snowing most of the time, I have been shut in at home. I have thought much of the conditions existing in the world to-day. In many of our homes we follow the news over the radio and the newspaper, hoping to hear something about the war, something encouraging about peace. Anxious hours, days and months are passing with us, looking forward to the time that good news will come that the war is over. I am thinking of our lovely boys, some are on this side, some have crossed the briny deep and are waiting the time to move again against the enemy. Others have been reported missing, their parents not knowing whether they are dead or alive. Still others have been reported prisoners of the enemy and others dead. My heart goes out to them and their loved ones at home. Many families broken never to be united again. I am drawn in spirit to-night to these loved ones as I write this. Many, many parents would gladly give their lives for their sons, or take their place, yet it cannot be so. Oh, how I do feel the need to enter my closet, shut the door and talk to God in secret. Some one says do not talk about the war. Why should we not talk about it? It vitally concerns our very life. Our spiritual emotions are mingled with it. Dear brethren is it not a solemn hour? Does it not behoove us as professed followers of the meek and lowly One to be careful one to ward another not to wound or offend? To love one another, not in word only, but in deed. It is no time for striving over words to no profit, but may the giver of every good and perfect gift shine upon us that we manifest, one to another, brotherly kindness. Since the beginning of the world, the peace that men have made has not been a lasting peace. After each war the people have been promised a lasting peace, but the word says there shall be wars, and it is impossible for men to prevent them. The nature of mankind must first be changed before there will be a peace forever. It is said some will cry peace, peace when there is no peace. The only peace brought about by men is more or less the overcoming of one world power by another, the enmity remains. The enemy is not reconciled unto us, only conquered. This kind of peace is not comparable with the peace that was wrought by God's only Son about nineteen hundred years ago. All had sold themselves for nought, like sheep had gone astray. It has never been in the power of men to make peace with God. God is holy they are sinful. Their carnal mind is enmity to God, not subject to his law, neither indeed can be. Under such conditions they are aliens to God, without God and without hope in the world. No matter how badly one may desire to be at peace with his God, the efforts of man cannot attain this. Before there is peace in the true sense of the word there must be complete reconciliation between the offender and the offended. So often men are heard to tell others to make peace with God. Surely they have never known the truth of the hymn, "Nothing in my hand I bring," that the law of God is

spiritual, they are carnal. God had looked and there was none to help. Help was therefore laid upon one who was mighty and able to save, God's only Son. He it is who has said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." How different this is to what men can accomplish. God was in Christ reconciling the world. All the sins of his people were laid upon Christ who is represented by the lamb led away by a fit person. What the law could not do God sent forth his own Son, made of a woman, made under the law to redeem them that were under the law. No compromise peace could be made in this case. The offense must be blotted out. Though their sins be as scarlet, they must be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they must be as wool. In the salvation of the church of God, they must be justified by his blood. Their sins must be taken away so completely that there is no spot in them as they appear in the righteousness of Christ their king. What is the cost of this peace? The blood of the Son of God. He must receive the stroke from his Father. The cup could not pass, justice must be carried out. Salvation does not come through mercy alone at the expense of justice. What a wonderful love, that, through the blood of God's Son, not only are his people redeemed, but they are saved by his life. This is the peace under consideration when Jesus said to his disciples, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Often in thinking about this peace it is associated with a calm mind, a serene feeling, and it is often that I am sure each child of God has at times known that peace that passeth understanding. A still small voice has said to them, "It is I."

"In the midst of the storm,
In the midst of the gloom,
Fear not, trembling one,
It is I."

But Jesus has reference to greater things even than this. The benefits of all his accomplishments are to be theirs. He is going away, yet he is to leave them something, his peace, that the world cannot give. What a blessing to claim part of this at times, to believe that he died for me. A worm of the dust; not worthy to be called his son; one who has trampled his mercies. Sometimes peace on earth is declared and the earth is left in a destitute condition. Homes are destroyed, lands are bare, nothing is in sight to live upon. Everything looks hopeless. There may be a war debt that will tax all efforts for many years to pay. Not so with the peace Jesus wrought. When Joseph received his brethren into Egypt he told them the best part of the country was before them, to bring their little ones down. There was to be several years yet of famine, but he had stored enough corn to last until the famine was over. Not only has Christ redeemed his people, but he clothes them with his righteousness and also feeds them. They have received double at the Lord's hand for all their sins. Nothing can interfere with their peace; he has obtained eternal redemption for them, and appears in heaven to-day in the presence of God for them; making intercession for them according to the will of God. He is the one who was dead and is alive forevermore, and because he lives his people shall live forever. To-day has been a day of musing on the years that are past with me. I looked at credentials given me when I was ordained. Four elders were in the ordination. All have passed from the world. The clerk also has passed to his reward. One church I have been endeavoring to serve, as God favored, for twenty years had nineteen members when I went there. Although there are about eighty members there now only about five of the original remain. While we may all live to be old as men reckon time; death is not far off. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men

most miserable." I can truly say with one of old, "few and evil have the days of the years of my life been." I want to live peaceably with all men, especially the household of faith. Knowing I have many failings I desire they may cast the mantle of charity over my shortcomings. May God give us grace to walk our profession with godly fear; faith to look to him for all things, casting our care upon him, and to love one another freely for Jesus sake. Amen. D.V.S.

Put shoes on his feet. Luke 15:22.

Shoes are an important part of the travelers equipment. Not many would undertake a long journey without them. Whatever our destination may be, it inevitably follows that our feet will be used extensively to get us there. Not many would be willing to undertake a hazardous journey barefooted. Yet it is true that at certain periods and under certain circumstances we would be willing to undertake things knowing that it would be hard to accomplish, but the thing to be attained is of so much more joy, peace and pleasure that it covers up and hides from view the trials that have to be endured. It is not to tell just what the prodigal son represents that this text is before us. I am sure that the vast majority of people who have an experience of grace know the many and varied things that come their way are peculiarly fitting to their own travel. To pass lightly over the journey that the prodigal took, we find him getting back home. I am a firm believer in the fact that every biblical type, illustration, symbol, parable and miracle if rightly examined under the natural reasoning of man would tend to show that salvation is unconditional. I do not mean that the natural man could understand it, because the natural man cannot understand natural things when they pertain, or are used, to teach spiritual things. This can easily be ascertained by noticing the difference in the construction of the language used in the Bible and the newspaper. So it is in this case. All men (the spiritually unlearned) put a condition in it. They often lament over the matter that the youngest did not stay at home, not knowing that he could not. They, as often, lament because more of their hearers do not come home as he did, not knowing that each prodigal does come home when starvation drives him. Starvation will not let a man do as he pleases. It was not optional at all with him, it was necessary. That necessity became so great that it made him willing to have changes wrought. Subsistence reached the stage that the conditions under which it came did not matter. Is not this your experience, brethren? Is there not such a hungering for the food of your Father that you are willing for him to have complete charge of your life? Do you not feel that anything he orders will be too good for you? This prodigal no doubt had known splendor, he had known what fancy dress had been, he knew the state of the servant, he had looked with disdain on them, but this matter of something to eat occupies his whole thought. Such a change has been wrought upon him that he sees himself a vile, condemned sinner. He knows that he is not fit to fill a son's place. He went away in riotous living, and that carries with it plenty of clothes, but as he comes back they have lost their significance. He is so anxious to get home that he is willing to be as one of the servants. Let us notice that he did not ask to lose his sonship. He acknowledges his unworthiness to be called a son, but so willing has he become that he is willing to be "as a servant." How changed he is now from being called a son to being as a servant! He knew the custom of this country in which he lived, he knew a servant went barefooted. Although he knew the privations and hardships that such a procedure would bring, he was willing to go without shoes. My precious brethren

and sisters, have you felt this? Does not the grace of God seem wonderful to you? If you have really felt this condemnation and have heard your Father say "put shoes on him" you have indeed been blessed. It was the custom in that land to put off the shoes on entering the house. It is true now, little children. No shoes are needed in the house of the Lord. They are given for the journey. How precious the sight to see the beloved of the Lord in his house without shoes. No need of them in his house, they are for the journey. Did you notice that they are shoes "put on?" Shoes are given to each of the Lord's humble poor. They are "put on" them. Solomon sang about the beauty of the shod feet of the beloved (S.S. 7:1), and may I ask what condition there is in being shod? They did not send any searching party after the prodigal, yet he was brought to the place of shoes. Could he help coming? Did he get shoes by good works? Were they placed nearby and he told to place them on his feet? Brethren I love the doctrine of God's putting on shoes. Do you? W.D.G.

MEMORIAL

Resolution of respect for Mrs. Levi Hall

Whereas, it has pleased Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, to remove from time and from our midst our precious sister, Laura Hall, born 1874 and passing away Dec. 12, 1943 at her home at Blairs, Va. therefore, be it

Resolved, that we desire to bow in humble submission to the divine will of our Master, knowing and realizing that he doeth all things well. Oh, for grace to own his hand in all our little trials.

Resolved, that in the passing of our dear sister, she will be missed in her church in which she has been a faithful member for years.

Resolved, that we extend to the bereaved family our sincere sympathy, that a copy of these resolutions be spread on the record of Malmaison Church, and that a copy be sent to the family, to Zion's Landmark and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Done by order of the church at Malmaison.

D. V. SPANGLER, Moderator
R. S. WILLIAMS, Clerk

OBITUARIES

It is with a sad heart that I undertake to write of the passing of my dear father, DAVIS BURCH, son of Geo. A. J. and Eliza Garnett Burch. He was born in Fayette Co., Iowa, March 14, 1861, and was called from this life of many trials and tribulations Dec. 23, 1943 at his home in Bellingham, Wash., to his eternal home to be forever with his blessed Saviour whom he loved more than life, and often longed for the day when his Master would call him to come home, "thou good and faithful servant." If there was ever a faithful servant he was surely one, never missing a meeting if he was able to get there, often going when he was hardly able to go, yet he would go and preach. Though the members were few in number he felt it his duty and was anxious to go, and although only two or three were gathered together the blessed Lord was in their midst. He was born in a log house near where the town of Oelwein now stands and lived there until his fourth year, when with his parents, one brother, grandparents, Steven and Elizabeth Garnett, moved to Chickasaw County on the banks of Little Cedar River, where his father and grandfather ran a grist mill, and where he grew to manhood. He has told many times where the Lord found him in a waste howling wilderness, appearing to him when a child five years old, and his life was changed, and he seemed different from the rest of his playmates. He did not realize it was God's hand leading him about until the fall of 1880 when he had a strong desire to go to Oelwein where his grandpa Burch lived and was pastor of the Otter Creek Church, where they held meeting in the schoolhouse, and went as he thought just to be with his cousins, yet he went there full of trouble. It was the first Old Baptist meeting he had ever attended, it was strange to him and seemed his life was preached to him. It hurt him terribly to think they knew what a wretch he was, but when his grandpa saw him crying he knew the cause and had him relate his experience to the church and he was gladly received. His sorrow was changed to joy but he was not baptized until in April 1881 by his grandpa, Elder James Burch, into the fellowship of the Otter Creek Church. In the fall of 1885 he went to Osborn County, Kansas, with his brother Frank in covered wagon, where his father, mother, a sister and brother had gone a month earlier by train. There he married Mollie B. Frazey, Sept. 1, 1886 who survives him. They moved to Ellis County where their children, nine in number were born. Two sons died

in infancy, Mrs. Grace F. Young passed away June 6, 1943, Mrs. Mabel L. Utley passed away in Oregon Nov. 20, 1910. Surviving are Mrs. Hattie J. Clements, Wapato, Wash., Mrs. Blanche B. Brown, Mrs. Ethel Weathersby and Roy B. Burch of Bellingham, Wash., and Ted F. Burch of San Diego, Cal. There are also surviving one brother, Frank Burch of Long Beach, Cal., twenty-seven grandchildren and twenty-seven great-grandchildren and numerous cousins, nieces and nephews. He moved his family to Sedro Wooley, Wash. in Oct. 1907 where his parents were living, then moved to Whatacome County in May 1911 where he farmed until he was no longer able to do farm work. In August 1923 he and mother moved into town where he lived his last days. He was bedfast for three and one half to four years but did not suffer much which was a great blessing. He has been such a comfort to me all my life. When I went to him with my troubles, as I often did, I most always found his advice right. Now he is gone I do miss him so much and feel so alone in the world, although I am thankful there are still a few Old Baptists I can find comfort with. Elder A. D. Hughett of Yakima, Wash. spoke words of comfort to us and hymns 275 and 488 Beebe's Collection were sung. His body was then laid to rest in Woodlawn Cemetery to await the resurrection morn when the dead in Christ shall be raised to life everlasting. Hymn 609 was sung at the graveside. Although we do miss him we could not wish him back in this world of sufferng. His devoted daughter.

(Mrs.) BLANCHE B. BROWN

Sister EFFIE MALCOLM died suddenly on November 1st, 1943, at her home in Payne's Mills, near St. Thomas, Ont. She was the daughter of the late Neil and Mary McAlpine. Though twice married, she had outlived both her husbands, and leaves to mourn her loss, by her first marriage, one son, Neil Sells of Toronto, and four daughters, Frederica Sells of St. Thomas, Mrs. Clarence Eaton of Bay City, Mich., Louise and Elizabeth Sells of Los Angeles, Calif. She also had a son by her second marriage, Archie Malcolm, now serving overseas. There are also four grandchildren, and one brother, Neil McAlpine of Lambeth, and four sisters, Mrs. W. H. Silcox of Portland, Ore., Mrs. T. H. McColl of Tilbury, Mrs. N. Graham of Byron and Mrs. E. C. Gilbert of Payne's Mills. Sister Malcolm was born March 24, 1868, making her stay here over 75 years. She had excellent qualities which endeared her to her friends, but especially we would mention the many evidences that were manifest in her that she had been with Jesus and learned of him. On more than one occasion she told the writer that hymn 1265, Beebe's Collection, expressed her mind, especially the second verse, "I love to meet among them now, before thy gracious feet to bow, though vilest of them all." She delighted in the assembly of God's people and her religion bore her spirit up under the many and great trials she had to pass through. Such was God's goodness to her, that at the end of her days she could say—"Goodness and mercy has followed me all the days of my life." She united with the Covenanted Baptist Church, October 2 1909, and was baptized by Elder H. C. Ker. She was a very faithful and exemplary member, beloved and highly esteemed by her brethren and respected by all who knew her. She was ever fearful of herself and thus showed forth the praise of Him who had called her from darkness into His most marvellous light. Her many trials, sanctified by the Spirit, brought to mind God's benefits of old. The fear of death had been taken away, and often she told her brethren she longed to depart and be forever with the Lord. Her sudden death brought sorrow to her children and her friends, but we believe it brought sudden glory to her. The writer spoke to a large company of relatives, brethren and friends who assembled to show their love and respect to the departed, and sympathy to the sorrowing. The interment was in the Frome Cemetery.

(Elder) GEORGE RUSTON

ELISHA CALVIN HOLLOWAY was born March 13, 1873 and died Dec. 3, 1942 making his stay on earth 69 years, 8 months and 20 days. He was the eldest son of J. Goldsborough and Gertrude M. Holloway of near Salisbury, Md. He was blessed with a kind, considerate disposition for those around him, ready to help if possible, where help was needed. He grew to manhood and on March 13, 1907 was married to Miss Mary C. Nottenstein making his home near Snow Hill, Md. He came to our monthly meetings and after a few years asked for a home with the church, was gladly received and baptized by Elder T. M. Poulson June 11, 1911. After a few years he moved and settled near Salisbury asking Snow Hill Church for a letter of dismissal that he might unite with the Salisbury Church. This request was granted although we were loath to part with such a useful member. He remained a highly esteemed member of Salisbury church until time was no more with him. Brother Cal. as he was familiarly called, loved the assembly of saints, loved the doctrine of God our Saviour so his seat was filled at our meetngs when able,

and sometimes seemingly when not able to be out for he was greatly afflicted during his latter years. There was no murmuring or repining from him, but he felt rather to say with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Besides his widow five children are left to mourn the loss of a kind, indulgent father namely: W. Ralph Holloway, Philadelphia, Pa., Miss Ada Holloway, Army Nurses Corps, Indiantown Gap, Pa., E. Calvin Holloway, Jr., Mrs. Grace Adkins and Miss Esther C. Holloway, Salisbury, Md. There are several grandchildren. He also leaves two sisters, Mrs. Bertha Richardson, Newport News, Va. and Mrs. Grace H. Hastings, Salisbury, Md. Both sisters are highly esteemed members of Salisbury Church. He also leaves an invalid brother, Victor Holloway, who makes his home with sister Grace and her husband. The funeral service was conducted by Elder H. M. Bennett in the Salisbury meeting house after which his body was gently borne to the family burial lot in Parson's Cemetery there to await the resurrection morn.

"Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep,
From which none ever wake to weep!"

May all who morn be enabled to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

M. E. HOLLOWAY

MARY GEORGE PIPPIN SADLER departed this life early on the morning of Dec. 19, 1943 in Mercy Hospital, Baltimore, Maryland. The immediate cause of her death was angina pectoris. She had been in declining health for several years, and for the year before her death she had been confined first to her home and later to her bed room. Born on her father's farm in Edgecombe County, N. C., near Tarboro, February 13, 1866, she lacked but a few weeks of being 78 years old. Like her father and mother, Joseph H. and Sarah E. Cherry Pippin, she was a devoted member of the Old School Baptist Church, having united with the church a very young woman, under the ministry of Elder Andrew J. Moore, pastor of Hopewell Church, Whitakers, N. C., which her father and mother aided very materially in building. Later her church membership was transferred to Ebenezer Church in Baltimore of which she was a member at the time of her death, Elder D. L. Topping being her pastor. Mrs. Sadler's early education was at the hands of personal tutors in her home and later at the Wilson Collegiate Institute, finishing at the Richmond, Va., Female Institute. Mrs. Sadler's father died a comparatively young man but her mother lived to the advanced age of 92 years. On March 30, 1892 Mrs. Sadler was married to Ryland O. Sadler, D.D.S., by Elder Andrew J. Moore. They chose Baltimore as their future home and lived happily together in that city for nearly fifty-two years. One daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Sadler Hinrichs, three grandchildren and Dr. Sadler are left to mourn the passing of this splendid, christian woman. Her faith was firm, and her hope was in the Dear One who said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Her remains were removed to Enfield, N. C., and there in the presence of a host of relatives and friends, and after a most fitting and impressive funeral service conducted by her lifelong friend, Elder Julius C. Moore of the Hopewell Church, were tenderely laid to rest in the family burying plot in Enfield Cemetery. "Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." 1 Thes. 4:14. Written by her bereaved husand.

NANCY EMELINE RUTLEDGE was born Aug. 3, 1845 and died Jan. 11, 1944. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomason Moore. In 1879 she was married to W. O. Rutledge who preceded her in death 19 years. With her family she came to Texas in 1885 and lived in Parker Co. for 55 years. Four years ago she moved with her family to Ft. Worth where she lived until death came. She is survived by three children, O. T. and O. L. Rutledge of Ft. Worth and Mrs. Dora Staggs of Guthrie, Okla. There are twenty-nine grandchildren, forty-seven great-grandchildren and six great-great-grandchildren. Her friends were numbered by her acquaintances. She received a good hope in Christ in her early life and was very much devoted to the work of the Lord. I do not have the date when she united with the church. Her husband was an able minister and very gifted in the Scriptures. He went far and near to preach the gospel with power sent down from heaven. The old Mount Zion Church held her meetings in their house for several years which was a welcome place for every one that came. After the death of Elder Rutledge the church did not meet for several years, but sister Rutledge's friends decided to give her a birthday dinner and she invited me to come and preach that day. This I did and that revived the church so that we held meetings at the old home every first Sunday in each month until she moved to Ft. Worth. We had meeings in the home there a few times, but she became so feeble in mind and body they were discontinued. One can readily see she was a true beliver in Christ. Old things of nature

had passed away with her and all things had become new. She was continually in conversation on the things of God's kingdom, talking of his glorious power in the salvation of poor, lost sinners. She was a great mother in Israel. The writer tried to speak words of comfort from 2 Cor. 5:17. The attendance was small on account of severe, bad weather. May the comforting influence of God's Holy Spirit abide with the bereaved family, and lead them in paths they have not trodden and ways they have not known; make crooked things straight for them, and enable them to feel that greater is one's death than his birth. May the good Lord bless all that mourn in Zion.

(Elder) C. Y. OSTEEN

PERMANENT OFFER
(until further notice)
TWO BOOKS
PREDESTINATION AND RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

Either one of these books will be given FREE with a year's subscrpition to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at $2. to anyone who is not now a subscriber to the paper, or to any old subscriber who will send us a NEW subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at $2. The price of the books alone is $1. each. We only have about seventy (70) of the books on Predestination on hand, but as long as they last we shall be glad to send them out on the above basis. R. L. D.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

Please watch the wrapper covers of your paper to see whether or not you are behind with your subscription to our family paper. Opposite your name appears the date to which you are paid. If you are behind and can conveniently send in what is due it will be greatly appreciated.

This is simply a REMINDER to those who have either overlooked or neglected the matter, and to all who respond to it we say in advance, thank you! R.L.D.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sundays in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a.m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meeting-house, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed.

R. LESTER DODSON.

AUTHORIZED AGENTS

ALABAMA

Elder Lytle Burns, Florence, Ala.
Elder F. A. Collins, Hartford, Ala.
Elder W. D. Griffin, Fayette, Ala.

FLORIDA

Elder **C. H. Byrd,**
P. O. Box 86, Panama City, Fla.

GEORGIA

Elder H. O. Nash,
431 Hardendorf Ave., N. E. Atlanta, Ga.

KENTUCKY

Elder G. B. Bird, Canada, Ky.
Elder J. S. Hunnicutt, Webbville, Ky.

LOUISIANA

Elder **E. J. Lambert,**
P. O. Box 55, Lillie, La.

MARYLAND

Elder **Harold M. Bennett, Mardela Springs, Md.**

NEW JERSEY

Elder Charles W. Vaughn,
Hopewell, N. J.

NORTH CAROLINA

Elder T. F. Adams, Willow Springs, N. C.
Elder E. L. Cobb, Wilson, N. C
Elder M. F. Westbrook, Rt. 3, Dunn, N. C.

OHIO

Elder Geo. L. Weaver,
16116 Westview Ave., Cleveland, 20, Ohio.

OKLAHOMA

Elder W. N. Green, Box 654, Altus, Okla.

OREGON

Elder C. W. Bond,
Island City, Oregon.

VIRGINIA

Elder J. E. Burgess, Rt. 1, Box 180, Martinsville, Va.
Elder Roy S. Smith, Cascade, Va.
Elder David V. Spangler, Rt. 6, Danville, Va.

NOTICE

Will those who have notices of SPECIAL MEETINGS to be published, please send them to us six weeks prior to the month in which they are to be held? R. L. D.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the *Signs of the Times* at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1; 12 copies, $2. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

NOTE OF THANKS

McLeod, Texas

Dear Elder Dodson:

Elder J. C. Sikes, Sulphur Bluff, Texas, wishes to acknowledge and thank his many friends who have contributed to his aid. He has returned from Abilene, Texas, where he took treatment for rheumatism and other ailment and needs a month rest. His treatment was successful. Thank you very much. J. B. McLEOD

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

1st Lt. Henry Townsend, Jr. from Media, Pa. to ASN, O-1113485, Company A 246th, Engineer Combat Battalion, APO 230. Care Postmaster, New York, N. Y.

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.
O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday at the end of old South Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
J. A. CURTIS, Clerk.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 3rd Sunday, Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
C. H. BYRD, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles South of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
B. G. KINGRY, Clerk.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
J. W. BASS, Clerk.

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday and Elder E. E. Watson on Sunday.
AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church, located 5 miles North of Hartford, Ala., holds services each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching Elders F. A. and J. J. Collins on Saturday, and Elder J. J. Collins on Sunday.
A. E. SORRELS, Clerk.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canada, California.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before.
E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists invites all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren, to meet with us first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hitchins. Take graveled road to the church.
E. M. TACKETT,
J. S. HUNNICUTT, Pastors.
H. L. ROGERS, Clerk.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th Street, Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meetinghouse, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.

Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A.M. 1:30 P.M.

To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.

All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

C. W. BOND, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A.M.
ALL WELCOME

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Tex.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sunday in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P.M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sunday each month at 11:00 A.M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Salem Church, four miles south of Teague, Texas, meets on Saturday before the first Sunday in each month in conference.

W. A. LITTLE, Pastor.
DORA WREN, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a.m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, Pastor.

(MRS.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk,
Stockdale, Texas.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month, at 11 a.m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren, and endeavor to make them feel welcome. C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 112 RUTHERFORD, N. J., MAY, 1944 No. 5

CORRESPONDENCE

721 N. Main St., Eureka, Kans.

ELDER R. LESTDER DODSON, SIGNS OF THE TIMES AND BRETHREN:

I would like to write a little to the brethren of the *Signs of the Times* if you deem it worth a place in your good paper, if not cast it aside as worthless like the writer. My subject is, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" One of the outstanding and most convincing signs of the nearness of the second coming of our Lord is to be found in a widespread departure from the faith of our forefathers, and a declension in the old time standards of morality. This is made very plain in the prophecies in the Scriptures regarding the Lord's return. Concerning the day of the Lord's second coming, Paul wrote, "That day shall not come, except there come a falling away first." 2 Thes. 2:3. Paul referred to this same development when, in writing to his associate, Timothy, he declared, "In the latter times some shall depart from the faith." 1 Tim. 4:1. Our Lord himself, when explaining to the disciples the signs which would be given as evidence of the nearness of his second coming, declared of the last days, "Iniquity shall abound." Matt. 24:12. In this same chapter verse 24 our Lord further described the developments preceding his return to the earth as follows, "There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." In fulfilment of these ancient predictions we are having to-day many evidences of a great apostasy all about us. Men have fallen away from the truth and have departed from the faith. The religion of Christ has withstood all attacks from the outside, but to-day it is being attacked from the outside and also from the inside. False leaders are undermining the loyalty of God's people. They have divided the church of Christ, they are assailing its fundamental teachings, they are leading a tremendous assault upon the very citadel of christian truth. In Christ's name they deny Christ, they deny his deity, his creatorship, his virgin birth, his divine sonship, his authority as a teacher sent from God, his fulfilment of divine predictions, his miracles, his substitutionary death, his resurrection, his ascension, his divine intercession and priesthood, and his certain coming again. As we look about us to-day we are compelled to acknowledge that the developments foretold by our Lord and Master are taking place before our very eyes, our generation is one of abounding iniquity and positive departure from the old time faith. The world

in which we live to-day is controlled by forces and influences which deny the counsel of God and defy the command of conscience. These influences have brought into being, and placed themselves in control of, all the arts and devices of the greatest machine for deceptive propaganda ever known on earth. They are employing these agencies of propaganda to appeal everywhere to the eye, ear and mind of young and old in behalf of persuasions to loose living, wrong thinking, false ideals; they utilize every color of the rainbow, every device of artistry to allure to the pagan way of life; they surround indecency, degredation, vice, and debasing, soul-destroying habits with a halo of charm and sophistication in the name of science; they advocate both alcoholism and atheism in the name of the same science; they recommend booze and cigarettes for steady nerves and cool heads in the name of health and hygiene; they urge near nudity and revolting paganism as wholesome roads to happiness; they counsel divorce and compassionate marriage under the banner of a new religion; they teach animalism; they camouflage communism as an altruistic movement to elevate the underprivileged under the guise of the more abundant life; they encourage the most flagrant greed. The sound ideas of the Bible way of life, its wholesome convictions, its pure thoughts, its high ideals, its God given truths, which are our intellectual and spiritual inheritance from our godly forefathers, are under the most devastating attack to-day. Those things which men have considered most worth living for, such as decency, truth, righteousness and religion, are now being assailed by treacherous and far-flung propaganda, which flaunts itself in all the latest and most alluring devices invented by man, and by this a sinister effort is being made to overwhelm the race by filling men's minds with artificially engendered greed, lust, license, hatred and envy. The newest inventions, instruments and agencies of high pressure, streamlined propaganda have been laid hold of and are being employed by men of evil, debased minds who have developed the capacity to use them on a world-wide scale to corrupt the whole race of men. There is a remarkable description of religious developments in the last days just preceding the return of Jesus Christ in a prediction made in the writings of Paul. These are his words, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." 2 Tim. 3:1-5. The full force and meaning of this prediction will be brought out more fully by a careful word by word analysis of this appalling catalogue of evil. It should be noticed first, however, that all these evils are to manifest themselves upon church members, professed christians. They have "a form of godliness" but deny "the power thereof." In fulfilment of these striking words, the religion of this day with many is merely a philosophical speculation upon truth connected with man's soul. With others it is the performance of relative duties; with others it consists in admiration of the Bible as a book of literary excellence; with others it is the adoption of a creed or connection with a church; with others it consists in bustle and external zeal in good works, but in nearly all lacks life—that profound intense glowing life which so marked the religion of Christ in earlier times. It also lacks simplicity and freshness, it is hollow and shallow. Here is God's own photograph of religious conditions to prevail "in the last days." *"Lovers of their own selves."* Church

members to-day profess to love God and his cause, but when God's word demands of them any self sacrifice it becomes obvious at once that they love themselves more than they love God. They place their own interests first in all their hopes and aspirations. The only cross they are willing to bear is one made of gold worn as an ornament. *"Covetous."* Men to-day are covetous. There is deep-rooted, ingrained, unprincipled covetousness; there is oppression, robbery, immorality, fraud and even murder all for gold; there is an inordinate lust for wealth and greed of gain, this is a money loving age. *"Boasters."* Wherever one goes to-day he finds a spirit of self praise, a spirit of boasting. Men boast of their skill, of their talents, of their strength, their power, their prowess, even their criminal excesses, the hearts they have broken and the virtue they have despoiled. *"Proud."* Pride of every kind is prevalent to-day. There is national pride, political pride, religious pride, pride in dress, pride of every grade and class. In no previous age have men become so devoted to pride and luxury. *"Blasphemers."* This word comes from the Greek, blasphemeo, meaning to speak evil of, to slander, to defame, to revile. In this sense blasphemy surrounds us to-day on every side. We hear it in the streets, homes, stores, factories, banks, offices, cars, parlors, on the sea, on the land and in the air. It is printed in the newspapers, magazines and books. This is an age noted for evil speaking and blasphemy. *"Disobedient to parents."* Obedient children to-day are rare. There is a breaking away from parental restrictions, a disregard of all parental authority and control, an open disobedience to parental will. This condition especially marks this age, and in this one respect there has been a vast change in the last half century. The children of our times are old in sin, knowing more iniquity at the age of fifteen than their parents know at forty. *"Unthankful."* This is an age of ingratitude. Men fail to thank God for his goodness, his mercy, his love and the blessings he sends upon them. Children fail to honor their parents or to give any return for their love and care. Men who receive favor to-day will tomorrow return evil for good. Trusts are betrayed, secrets disclosed and confidences violated by pretended friends. *"Unholy."* This is an age of religion as far as profession goes, but there is very little genuine religion, very little holiness, very little reverence, very few of the people of God possess the full powers of undefiled manhood and womanhood, very few are entirely free from the influences of debasing habits, lust and appetites. It is God's purpose that the church shall overcome the world, but to-day it looks like the world is overcoming the church as far as this time world is concerned. There are none eternally lost that Jesus came to save, but there are many that lose their usefulness to the church militant in this world. They go in the broad way that leads to destruction, live after the flesh and die to the sweet fellowship of God's saints here in this time world. *"Without natural affection."* This scripture is fulfilled to-day. Read the accounts of the murder of innocent children because they are not wanted, read the records of divorce cases, the desertions, the killing of aged parents by selfish children and then judge if this is not an age which is callous, unfeeling and without natural affection. *"Truce breakers."* This is an age when very little dependence can be placed in the pledged word of some men. Treaties between nations become mere scraps of paper when they stand in the way of cherished ambitions. This is an age of truce breaking and implacability. *"False Accusers."* False accusing certainly is a characteristic of the present time. There is a spirit of slander, calumny, detraction and false accusing abroad in the land, and it seems uncontrollable. Falsehood runs through the earth, multiplied a thousand times

by the press. In political campaigns there is too much of misrepresentation, falsehood and slander, but this is not confined to politics. *"Incontinent."* This is an age of moral corruption, adultery is common, licentiousness is prevalent, illicit love fills the newspapers with tales of affinities, soul mates and crimes of passion, divorce is increasing at an alarming rate. *"Fierce."* This is fulfilled in the calamities which nations inflict on one another in their conflicts. Should a visitor from another planet look upon the world's battlefields and behold the fire of great guns, see the mangled and broken bodies of the dead and dying, and witness the pain and misery which men deal out to one another, he would think he had lost his way and had reached hell instead of earth. There is a spirit of unforgiving, unalterable, unrelenting hatred between nations of men. *"Despisers of those that are good."* It has been characteristic of all times that the evil hate the good, but the hatred of goodness and the good is a special characteristic of the present age. *"Traitors."* This is a day when men who can be trusted under all circumstances are very rare. Trusts are accepted only to be betrayed . Even the closest friends cannot be trusted. Traitors are on every hand. *"Heady."* This is an age characterized by headstrong, reckless dispositions. A headlong, feverish rashness prevails among men everywhere. "Patience is a virtue" has long since been discarded. Caution, prudence and wisdom are obsolete virtues. Everything must go through with a rush. Great questions upon which the destiny of nations may hang are settled too often by wild tumults of popular passion. *"Highminded."* Men are haughty and self-sufficient. Youths just out of school suddenly make the astounding discovery that they know more than their elders. This spirit of conceit and self-importance also permeates professed christian people. Many will not accept the authority of God and the Bible, they place their own opinions above the plain word of God. *"Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God."* This is an age of amusement and pleasure of every description. Even the so-called churches cannot get along without periodical frolics and shows. Ordinary pleasures are no longer sufficient to meet the requirements of this age of speed. There must be something wild, unnatural, exciting and thrilling. The motion picture craze has swept all classes from their moorings and is educating the young in crime and conjugal infidelity. National peril, appalling disasters by land and sea a world cataclysm of war and even close personal afflictions do not seem to deter or restrain the people from wild orgies of exciting pleasure. Mirth and madness rule in many minds. Pleasure rules the age. "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." Not only to worldlings but to some church members does this prophecy apply. It is a description of the sins of the church militant, the sins of those who bear the name of Christ, who make a profession of christianity, but who in reality are worldings. This is an age of formalism and hypocrisy. Much of the religion of the present day is mere form, pomp and pageantry of make believe, pretense and appearance. It does not operate against corrupt human nature, it does not cure besetting sin. In these days all inward grace may be lacking, but the forms, ceremonies, confessions, observances, and tokens are outwardly adhered to. That is sufficient to-day to place and keep one's name on the church book enrolled as a follower of the lowly Nazarene. Most religion to-day is easy-minded religion, without conflict and wrestling, without self-denial and sacrifice. It is second rate religion in which there is little grandeur, little noblemindness, little elevation, little devotedness. It is a hollow religion with a fair exterior, but an aching heart, a heart unsatisfied, not at rest and with a conscience not at peace with

God. It is feeble religion, lacking the sinews and bones of hardier times—very different from the indomitable, fearless, much-enduring, storm-braving religion of apostolic and reformation days. It is uncertain religion, that is, it is not rooted in certainty and assurance in the life of a soul assured of pardon. As a result we behold bondage, heaviness, and irksomeness in the religion of the day. There is a speaking for God but it is with a faltering tongue; there is a laboring for God but it is with fettered hands; there is a moving in the way of his commandments but it is a heavy drag upon the limbs. The religion is inefficient and uninfluential. All this catalogue of sins spoken of by Paul as belonging to "the last days" we are to look for in the church, in apostate christianity, under an outer pretense of religion, and it is here these things are found. Amid the splendor of gothic piles and symbolic crosses, altars and images these sins prevail. The tide of vanity and pride rolls on side by side with tall steeples and accompanied by worldly worship. In Jesus Christ there is a redemptive energy, a divine eternal power. In him the world becomes empty, void, vain and loses its hold on the heart. This divine energy which elevates, regenerates and transforms men is to-day ignored and cast aside by the easy religionist of this age. They know nothing of the sacrifices, the furnace and flame from which the christian believer comes forth purged and made white. Their godliness is but a form. The religionists of today are perfectly at home in the externals of religion. They rejoice in pompous worship and ecclesiastical ceremonies, but in the inner life of the heart, the working of the Holy Spirit, the renewing of the mind, the beginning of eternal life in the soul, the new birth, the receiving of the word of God—in all such matters they are ignorant and blind. Their whole religious life is a round of forms. It places no restraint on unholy passions, ambitions and desires. Preachers and people in large numbers have to-day departed from the faith once delivered unto the saints in the matter of accepting the fundamentals of the gospel. It is a common thing now for preachers to deny their Lord, to deny his pre-existence, his divine incarnation, his deity, his miracle working power, the divine authority of his teaching, his substitutionary and expiatory death, his literal resurrection, his ascension, his mediatory and intercessory priesthood and the promise of his bodily, visible return, and yet those who deny these essentials of christianity still desire to be known as christians. Christianity to-day, like its divine author, is being wounded in the house of its professed friends, and in this time so marked by hypocrisy and formalism and departure from the faith God has a word for his loyal, truehearted, sincere, faithful people. They are in the midst of this apostasy, surrounded by the faithless, hearing the trumpet give an uncertain sound, and likely to be confused. To them the apostolic injunction comes, "from such turn away." To such a voice as this let us give heed. While we mark the perils of our times and learn from them that we are in "the last days," let us by the grace of Jesus pray for him to keep ourselves pure in heart and mind for without him we can do nothing. Even Jesus said without his Father he could do nothing. Let your feet be placed or planted on the rock of God, and our spiritual ears will hear only the voice of the Great Shepherd of his sheep. Follow him alone. Let us turn away from the formal, the godless, the faithless and unbelieving, and turn to the oracles of God. Turn where perchance only a few are met together in the name of Christ, but to whom the Lord says, "there am I in the midst." Clearly then one of the great signs of our Lord's return is the departure everywhere manifested to-day from the old standards of morality, faith and righteousness. Jesus spoke of this departure

from the faith when he asked, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" But this is spoken to the quickened sinner, not the dead in sin. "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned into fables." 2 Tim. 4:3-4. The last days then are to be marked by a turning away from the true gospel doctrine of Jesus. The Saviour listed the signs of his return when he said, "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Mat. 24:12. Iniquity will or shall abound in the last days among all grades of society in the world and in the church or the so-called orders of men. It will become so abundant, shall so abound, that the love which many had for God and truth will grow cold, and they will turn away their hearts and lives and mingle in the iniquity and frivolity of the worldly ones. This then is the truth of the terrible apostasy, the infidelity and the fables of the religious world to-day. These things in themselves are the most convincing evidence that we are rapidly nearing the greatest event of all times, the personal appearance of the Son of God. And in this time when it appears as if the foundations of the home, society and civilization are crumbling, and the safeguards which men have erected to restrain the evil propensities of men are being destroyed, what ought the christian pilgrim to do? The Lord answers through his servant James, "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord." James 5:7. It will not be long now before the opening skies will reveal the coming Lord. Down the pathway of the glory-gilded skies the Lord of lords will and shall come — his face shining brighter than the sun in its strength, his form clothed with glory and radiance of heavenly majesty, his voice as the sound of many waters and as the sound of the dulcimer sweet, shall be heard through the shadows of death, and the graves shall give up their dead, the keys of death and the grave hanging at his side, his head crowned (not with thorns) but with a halo above which the sun pales, his flowing robes more beautiful than the rainbow. How magnificent will be this advancing pageantry of the skies! How sublime beyond all mortal comprehension will be the Lord Jesus when he shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels. Therefore, dear brethren, be of good cheer for Jesus hath overcome all things for his sheep. I mean the Lord's people which are the sheep of his pasture. The sheep are the only ones that Jesus came into the world to save from their sins, and they all became sinners by the violation of the one man, Adam. The sheep were the only ones that went astray and the Scriptures plainly teach that "the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." Matthew and John both testify to this fact. In hope of eternal life by the imputed righteousness and shed blood of the Lamb of God which took the sins of his chosen and elect people away forever. Farewell. God bless you all.

(Elder) C. A. HUNT

Route 1, Maynardsville, Tenn.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON:

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

I have never met you in this life and perhaps never will, but for some cause known only to God I am drawn in mind to write you, not because I am something, but because I am nothing and less than nothing and vanity before Him. I have received your book "Resurrection of the Dead" and have been reading, rereading, meditating and noting with a desirious mind to know the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. I especially admire the thought to "let all have their say." I am fully persuaded without a meek, lowly and quiet spirit no man shall see the Lord. The Bible teaches, "How unsearchable

are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" No man by searching can find out God. It is by his Spirit we hope we have a hope, and we believe firmly that he hath done all things well and will manifest it at the appointed time to every one for whom he suffered and died on Calvary's cross. Paul, an apostle and servant of our Saviour, lets us know that there is a great contrast between flesh and spirit, and if we be led of the spirit we shall of the spirit reap life eternal or everlasting, but if led of the flesh we reap corruption. Let me add we have no say in the leading. Every tree which our Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up and cast into the fire (of his wrath). Let all grow until the harvest, and in the time of harvest he will send his angels (ministers) and he shall sever the wicked (children who walk after the flesh) from among the just. "There shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Some say, we shall meet and greet him, and know and see him and all our loved ones in a happy re-union beyond this vale of tears in our bodies of flesh, blood and bones, but pure, holy, sinless, immortal, undefiled. Others say, this mysterious change takes place the next moment after death or at death of this sinner and all others of his sinful children at death. Paul says, "God giveth it (neither male nor female) a body as it has pleased him, and to every seed his own body." Again Paul affirms, "For as in Adam all die, (all Adam's family) even so in Christ shall all (his family the Father gave him) be made alive." We are "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." We then will be pure, holy, undefiled, immortal and satisfied. We are a vile sinful mortal here now in hope of heaven and immortal glory, but then our body, soul and spirit will be incorruptible in vast eternity. We fail to understand that we appear in his body like it came out of Joseph's new tomb, but in his most glorious, immortal body. That celestial body Paul affirms. How or when this is to be manifest doth not yet appear. God is not waiting in the sense we are waiting for anything. He is calling time away and is manifesting all this in their order as it hath pleased him. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." When this is manifest no doubt he will set one foot upon the land and one foot upon the sea and declare by him that liveth forever and ever that time shall be no longer. Others say: "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas." My dear brother in hope, we do know:

> "Plagues and deaths around me fly;
> Till he bids, I cannot die."

We do know each day brings us a day nearer the end of this life, what ere that end may be. The poet says, "On the land, on the sea, As thy days may demand, shall thy strength ever be." Rest assured when he shall have destroyed him that had the power over death, which is the devil, all will be well. He is King of kings and Lord of lords. "It is finished." He is the blessed and only Potentate. He has put death, hell and the grave under his feet for this unworthy, vile, sinful mortal now writing to you. Why should we fear? Must bring this letter to a close hoping I have written you in love, and with kindest regards to all who may differ with me. "Now we see through a glass, darkly." We do not claim to be perfect in this earthly Adam, only in the second man Adam, the Lord from heaven, a quickening Spirit. If there is a crumb herein, and you have space and think it might comfort a little one far away, you are at

liberty to pass it on through the *Signs*. If not all is well. Yours in hope of eternal life, which God who cannot lie promised before the world began.

JOHN E. WALTON

1158 Falls Terrace, Union, N. J.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

My cup was filled to overflowing this morning as I listened to you portray the glorious truth of that beautiful hymn and its connection with Psalm 23. Praise the Lord for giving you a message when you may feel at a loss as to what you should say, a message of comfort and cheer to a poor hungry soul who is content to gather the crumbs as they fall from the Master's table. Like the poor woman, if we could only touch the hem of his garment we would be satisfied knowing that he is able to say, thy sins be forgiven, "thy faith hath made thee whole." We live by faith, without faith it is impossible to please God. Where do we get faith? It is the gift of God, "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." By faith we know that all things are possible with God, that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord. Without faith it would sometimes seem that life is not worth while in such a world of turmoil and strife, but faith gives us strength to endure the many trials and hardships along life's rugged pathway that leads to that haven of rest where faith will no longer be needed. There we shall see him face to face, and when we awake in the likeness of our blessed Redeemer we shall be satisfied. By faith we know that God created heaven and earth and all that in them is. We realize more and more every day that faith is a great blessing bestowed on us by the giver of every good and perfect gift. Faith gives us a hope of eternal life in the world beyond this vale of tears. We hope for that which cannot be seen by natural man, and with patience we earnestly wait for the time when we shall abide in heaven, there to sing praise to his blessed name forevermore. Great will be the joy when all that we have hoped for in this world will no longer be seen through a glass darkly, but will have come to pass. Then we shall see him face to face and rest in peace. The peace and joy of being born again, born of a spiritual birth in this world is so great that words cannot describe it. It can only be understood by those who have traveled the same road, therefore, the joy that awaits beyond seems too great to be comprehended by one so insignificant as I feel to be. I feel that I must tell you that the privilege of attending your church in New York City was a joy to me, and the greatest blessing I could have received when I left my christian home in West Virginia to live in New Jersey. My prayers and thanks to God can in no way express my feeling for such a bountiful blessing, it really seems too much for me. Sometimes I am made to marvel at the graciousness of our Lord and Master in directing me to come over there. If left to myself I am sure the pleasure of mingling with you and your little flock would never have been realized. In and of ourselves we can do nothing, the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. By faith, we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren; blessed assurance is given that we love the dear Redeemer because he first loved us and gave his life as a ransom for his people. What wonderful love was demonstrated when the dear Saviour gave his life on the cross that believers might have life eternal. Oh, what agony he must have suffered, yet was made to say, Father, not my will, but thine be done. Dear Lord, give us strength to say the same and not complain of our trifling troubles, which are so small when compared to the supreme sacrifice that was made to save poor helpless sinners from death, hell and the grave. Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost, they who are not sick

have no need of a physician, but the poor worms of the dust need the never failing grace of an all wise God to redeem them and bring them out of the bottomless pit, to put their feet on the solid rock and place a new song in their mouth. Whereas I was blind I now see, the deaf ears have been opened to the glorious truth of salvation alone by the grace of God. Blessed assurance by faith, that he who has begun a good work in you will complete it. You are not left alone to finish the work, but by the grace of God you are led through paths you have not known. May God give you the necessary strength to continue with the publication of the *Signs* in this New Year, and may his richest blessings continue with you at all times. Please cast the mantle of charity over these rambling thoughts, then put them in the waste basket and all will be well with this poor unworthy sinner. Saved by grace if saved at all.

ELSIE LOEFFEL

Preston Hollow, N. Y.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

I am sending the money in this letter to renew my subscription to the *Signs* which expires with the December issue. I thought to send it sooner but have not been feeling very well the last few days, but am better so I can get it ready to-day. I am almost ninety-six years old and cannot write as well as I once did so I ask you to excuse all mistakes. I do not think I will be able to write another order for the paper which I have always done myself. I hope I am prepared to die and that God will take me, but I must be reconciled until he takes me and I feel I must have the *Signs* to read. I have had them many years and have kept them, but I want to have them each year as long as I live. I pray God will give you health and strength to print them many years yet. My prayer is that you will live a long time and still be able to serve Him, and that He will bless you with all needful blessings. Sincerely yours.

HATTIE B. ALGER

(A very small percentage of the human race are spared to reach the age of our beloved sister. She has been blessed in a two-fold sense by her Heavenly Father, and we are glad that she continues to have a mind to love and serve him for all the benefits which he has bestowed upon her, both temporal and spiritual. We are truly grateful for her petitions before the throne of grace that we might be given a long life, and enabled to serve our Master. While we know not what a day may bring forth, we are firmly established in the belief that we shall live to declare all that God has purposed concerning us, and that we will live out the full measure of time which has been allotted to us. Our life is in his hand and we are persuaded that, "Not a single shaft can hit 'Till the God of love sees fit." Again, we thank our dear sister for her thought concerning us. R.L.D.).

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46 Cedar St., Kingston, N. Y.

MR. & MRS. ISAAC T. MCINTYRE,

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER IN THE LORD:

Hope you had a good and profitable meeting yesterday. I have just been reading your letter again and we both enjoyed it, also your nice card. You said in your letter that brother McIntyre awoke with the hymn 784, Beebe's Collection, on his mind. "The righteous shall hold on his way." That surely is a good hymn. That word *shall* embraces a great deal and also affords much comfort many times. Those words were spoken by Job. Sometimes we receive comfort from the experiences of Job who was a man of true God given faith, who knew what it was to suffer, yet unwavering because of that true God given faith which is the gift of God, or God given wisdom which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, or the very virtues of righteousness. Therefore, Job was able to hold on

his way, although his prosperity was changed to days of much adversity. Of this world's goods he had much in his possession and was in a position for natural pride, but there had to be a time for testing of Job. Like all of God's people there must be a time of testing. The ore as it is taken out of the ground in its natural state is not fit for use, it must pass through the fire. The dross that is mixed with the gold must be separated from it, and the only way is by fire. "I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried," so says the word of God. "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." So it was with Job but he was able to hold on his way. Why? Because he was a man of God, and the word of God says, "The righteous also *shall* hold on his way." So with this man Job, he was able to stand in the day of adversity through the loss of all his earthly possessions, but the testing was not over yet. I believe that the children of grace find it much that way, that the testing is sometimes of long duration. But, oh, brethren let us remember God's blessed promise, they *shall* come forth as gold. Job did. Let us consider the account of Job a little further. Satan thought sure that he could overcome Job. Satan said, "Put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face," so more and more testing Job must pass through. Yes, very severe testing, boils, putrefying sores, not only a few, but "from the sole of his foot unto his crown." Not only part of Job but his whole being must be affected. Satan surely did make us corrupt from the soles of our feet to the crown of our head, but when the stronger than he comes the strong man is bound. "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." Nothing but the power of a great merciful God can enable one to keep his faith through such testing and still hold on his way. Job's wife said, "Curse God, and die." Oh, what a difference from the words of Job who said, "Though he slay me, yet I will trust in him." The righteous *shall* hold on his way. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Job is a wonderful type of a poor sinner saved by grace. He received double for all that he lost. The word says that the saved sinner receives double for all of his sins. How needful in this terribly sad and sorrowful day and age it is for us always to pray and faint not. How we need this faith to be strong, for if we have this faith without wavering, our house is on a sure foundation, not the sand, but on that rock which none can move which is Christ Jesus. Not even fire could harm the three Hebrew children, not even the smell of smoke on their garments. It loosed the bands with which they were bound and so worked for their good and they were unharmed. That God given faith enabled them to say, "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us." Surely he did. The righteous *shall* hold on his way. Neither could the lions in the den open their jaws to harm God's servant, Daniel. The righteous *shall* hold on his way. Neither could the sea monster or the sea snuff out the life of Jonah. He must go to Ninevah to preach the word of God. The righteous *shall* hold on his way. So may it be God's will that our feeble knees may be strong that we may press on toward the mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus, who is the author and finisher of that blessed faith in the Son of God, that we *shall* hold on our way. We would like so much to visit at your place, and you come and see us. My wife joins me in love in the Lord. Your little unworthy brother in the Lord. AMASA J. SLAUSON

Anabel, Mo.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

I am sorry I have neglected sending in my subscription. I have no excuse but neglect. I wanted to send my sister's sub-

scription in with my own so waited to hear from her. I have never written you since I received your book on the "Resurrection." I enjoyed it. I know all Baptists cannot see nor understand all scriptures alike, but I cannot see why we should fall out with each other on small matters. The resurrection is a sweet theme to me. I cannot think we will know each other there as we know on earth, but we shall know as we are known, be as the angels of heaven. I believe I was once permitted to see a glimpse of heaven as I came up out of the water from being baptized. I seemed to leave this old earth, and floathing through the air I saw a company of white robed figures standing, all so happy, and I only began to realize I was on earth as I got to the congregation assembled on the banks of the stream where I was baptized. So when I think of heaven my mind goes back to that time. I did not see them there as sisters Mears, Bryant, etc., but all alike and my happiness was complete. I felt then I would never have any more doubts and fears, no sorrow or trouble, but as I went on I found there was plenty in this old world, but my trust in God has grown greater as the years go by. That was in 1901, and now in my sixty-eighth year I find he has been an ever present help in time of trouble, has never forsaken although I have felt at times he was clean gone forever. But no, when I call on him he ever hears and the everlasting arms are around and underneath me to sustain and bear me up on life's journey. I have been thinking I would write what I feel to be the Lord's dealings with me in bringing me from nature's darkness to a life of light. I did send it to a Baptist paper once but I have lost my copy and I want one so our children will know why their mother always esteemed the Old Baptist Church above everything on earth. We took them to church when they were small, and they continued to go with us until they went out to make homes of their own, all far away from us now. I always believed "train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." While none of them united with the church I have heard them defend the Old Baptist doctrine, and I have taken great comfort in the scripture, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." May God guide you in the publishing of the *Signs* so no confusion enters its pages for our God is a God of peace and not confusion. Pray for me that I may always be found in the path of duty. I never want to grow cold or indifferent to God's church, the Old Baptist Church. In christian love.

(Mrs.) J. R. McAFEE.

(We wish to thank sister McAfee for her letter, which we are glad to publish, not only as a matter of record for her children that they may be kept in remembrance of her faith and great esteem for the true church of God, but also for the benefit of our readers. If we have correctly appraised the spirit of her letter it savors of true love for the cause so dear to us all. The recital of her experience recalls to our mind a somewhat similar experience of our own some years ago. We were speaking in connection with the subject matter found in Luke 20:27-38 and for a moment we felt lifted up in the spirit and saw our brethren, not as male and female, but as members of the mystical body of Christ. We verily believe that we were caught up from the earth, so to speak, and that the sight which we beheld was not seen by the natural or earthly eye, but rather that it was seen by the eye of faith and that the view which we saw was an heavenly one of the church as it is in Christ Jesus. We shall long remember the occasion. R.L.D.)

State Hotel, Walla Walla, Wash.

READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

BRETHREN:

I sometimes meditate on the terms or

words that Jesus spoke, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers." John 10:7-8. I consider the thief is the serpent that beguiled the woman, Eve, in the garden as he captured and led the living souls into sin, for to break the law is sin. Here it was revealed that the serpent was a deceiver and came to steal so he was manifested before the Son of God. "For until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law." Rom. 5:13. The serpent beguiled Eve and the word of God had been spoken to her not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, yet she was beguiled, stolen or captured, and then was a sinner and lay in sin and death. Note God never told the serpent not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil so the devil is not a sinner by the transgression of the law. I consider the living souls into which God breathed the breath of life was led into captivity, and they sinned a sin that is forgiven for they never blasphemed against the Holy Ghost. They were naked, had not yet received a coat of skins, and as God's knowledge is over all things he (God) came and spoke to Adam. "Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?" (Read Genesis chapter 3). Here God gave them coats. Verse 21 reads, "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them." Surely this coat is of the pure mercy of God and his mercy endures forever, yet they were in sin, or sinners by transgression. Even in this condemned state God made coats and clothed them. Read Isaiah 52:3-6. "They that rule over them make them to howl, saith the Lord; and my name continually every day is blasphemed." I consider the false teachers are yet rebuking the truth, speaking all manner of blasphemes. Jesus said "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you." "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." As the servants of God in this our day set forth to defend the true gospel they meet temptations and rebuke. Jesus came and redeemed them that were led into captivity. They were sinners by transgression of the law. I consider the serpent blasphemed against the Holy Ghost. Such sin is not forgiven in this world nor in the world to come. "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever." Rev. 20:10. I believe the serpent is the evil spirit and a deceptive thief for God cursed him above all the beasts of the field. I have written a longer letter than I thought. I cannot consider it to get space in the paper. Do as you think best. I hope to remain in love and fellowship. Love to all the brethren.

(Elder) PETER JONES.

1008 E. Allen Ave., Ft. Worth, Texas.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:

I surely enjoy the many good articles in the *Signs*. Sometimes after reading all through the pages I go back and reread them fearing I might have missed some good thing. Surely it is meat and drink our dear Heavenly Father has prepared for his children. Brother W. N. Green's article was magnificent. It seems like I could see him preaching as I know him personally and feel like he is a dear soldier of the cross. He is such a dear, kind and gentle preacher, yet firm in his convictions. Brother Dodson I have been called to go through deep trouble. My husband died December 16. He was sick six and one half months with cancer of the stomach. Nine doctors all pronounced it the same . He was bedfast only two and one half months and suffered so much. Nothing could be done for him except to ease the suffering. He told me he felt the Lord had been good to him although he had suffered, and merciful to

him all of his life though he confessed he was a poor, justly condemned sinner. He never united with the church. It was his request that brother C. Y. Osteen speak at his funeral and brother Osteen complied with it. He often told me he believed the old, firm, predestinarian Baptists were the true followers of the Bible teachings as he saw it, yet he felt it was too sacred a thing to unite with the church unless one could live up to its requirements. We feel lonely and sad, yet we feel the Lord is good. His mercy endureth forever. Our little church here at Ft. Worth, Texas has lost a good many members the last three years including our dear, faithful pastor, Elder J. R. Hardy. We still reflect upon his service here as a gracious, fragrant flower that in substance gives us a green spot in our memory that will never fade. I surely enjoy your many editorials, also the Associate Editors' contributions. May it please the Lord to uphold you by his free grace, that you may be enabled to publish the *Signs* for many years to come for the edification of the Lord's humble poor is my humble hope. Yours in hope of life eternal. MINNIE C. JAMESON.

Box 22, Flanagan, Ill.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

Find enclosed a check for $2 for a year's subscription to the *Signs of the Times* beginning with January 1944. I have been a reader of the *Signs* for many years with the exception of this year although not a subscriber in my own name. I feel that I cannot do without it as it contains all the preaching of God's blessed word I get. May the good Lord bless you in your labors throughout the coming year is my prayer. A sister in hope.

FANNIE R. INGREY.

822 Convention St., Baton Rouge, La.

DEAR EDITORS:

I am enclosing $2 for this year's subscription to the dear *Signs of the Times* as my subscription expires this month, and I do not want to miss a copy as I enjoy reading it so much. If I know anything about what the Bible teaches this paper teaches the truth and that is what I enjoy reading. That is the most pleasure I have as I am very hard of hearing, therefore, I do not understand very much when I go to church. I have just come to this place since Christmas and do not know whether there is an Old Baptist Church here or not, but I surely hope there is. I am going to try to find it soon for it is so sweet to meet with the dear Primitive Baptists even if I cannot understand the preaching. Please send my paper to my new address as I will be at home here with my daughter for quite awhile. If I live to enjoy anything I do want my paper. Please pray for me and mine when it goes well with you. Your sister I hope. (Mrs.) J. E. SMITH.

Route 2, Box 69 E, Huntington-2, W. Va.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

Brother Dodson I am sending $2 for my renewal to the *Signs of the Times* and $1 to help you in any way you feel to use it. I would not want to do without the dear old paper. I was so glad to see Elder J. S. Hunnicutt's name in the Associate Editor's column. I think he is a wonderful gift. He visits us often. I think the *Signs of the Times* is one of the best papers that is printed. We enjoy reading it so much. Your unworthy brother in hope. FLOYD JOHNSON.

Route 2, Danville, Va.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

Please find enclosed $2 for my 1944 subscription to the *Signs*. I do not get to hear preaching often, and I have no one close to me who believes as I do. When I get the *Signs* it is like a good friend. It cheers me up when I get so low, and it opens up a lot of the Scriptures to me. I enjoyed the article you wrote on "Who is the author of sin" so very much. May God bless you in your good work and comfort you through the new year.

(Mrs.) C. W. GILES.

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. MAY, 1944

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES
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"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his."

2 Timothy 2:19

While attending the Staunton River Association in Southern Virginia last summer, we used the above words as a text. We read in connection with the words in question verses fifteen to twenty, inclusive, and as the subject matter still lingers in our mind, we shall undertake to write on it at this time. We shall by no means attempt a repetition here of what we said on that occasion for that would be utterly impossible, but we do hope to be able to present, in part at least, the substance of what we said. For the convenience of our readers and in order to have before us the language that is contained in the verses referred to, we will here quote them: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus: Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor."

Paul evidently felt it important that those who occupy high places in the church should study to shew themselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, otherwise he would not have been so careful to so instruct his son in the ministry, Timothy. He also must have felt the importance of admonishing him to "shun profane and vain babblings." Since there are some, who no doubt are guilty of this, it might be well to quote Webster on the meaning of the word "babble" as follows: "Prattle, talk childishly; murmur continuously; prate; repeat unintelligently; unmeaning or foolish talk; a confused murmur." Paul not only warns against such, but says "they will increase unto more ungodliness." Such as this would appear to be equally as bad, for Paul puts in the same category with the words of Hymenaeus and Philetus which he says "will eat as doth a canker," where they had erred concerning the resurrection by saying it "is past already: and overthrow the faith of some." But, regardless of the "babblings" of men and notwithstanding all their false doctrines, be it said to the everlasting comfort of God's elect that nothing in all the universe will ever be able to shake from their moorings those whose hope is in Christ the Lord, which hope, the apostle says, "we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

"Nevertheless," says Paul, which means everything else to the contrary notwithstanding, "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Every government or structure of any consequence must of necessity have a firm or solid foundation to rest upon, or support it, if it is to endure and withstand opposition, even the assaults of hell which are arrayed against God's children here in this evil world. It is written that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Jesus himself told his disciples that "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." On another occasion he said to them, "Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. But there shall not an hair of your head perish." Such assurances from their Lord and Master are sufficient to encourage them to hold on their way. In his sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock." This is that foundation of which it is said, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." But the apostle warns how a man should build upon it by saying, "Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved: yet so as by fire." Since the salvation of sinners rests wholly and solely upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, it is said that it "standeth sure." There is nothing weak or uncertain about it. It is not by works of righteousness which the creature can perform, but it is because of God's mercy that he saves him, and this salvation is perfect and complete in God's dear son in every sense of the word, for he declared that he finished the work which the Father gave him to do. Like all important covenants or official documents and papers of governments it is necessary that they bear a seal to show the authority that stands back of them. In this instance it is declared to be none other than the seal of the high court of heaven and the seal is *"The Lord knoweth them that are his."* God, who sat down in the counsels of eternity and chose his people in Christ, even before the foundations of the earth were laid, must have full and complete knowledge as to who they are, and where they are, and there can be no doublt or question whatsoever as to this in the minds of those who have the faintest bit of knowledge of the truth. And Paul tells us in the eighth chapter of Romans that "whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren." To make the matter unalterably certain God not only predestinated that they should be conformed to the image of his Son, but—continuing in the language of the apostle — "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Well could the apostle continue as he did, by saying, "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who

is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

We are glad that this all-important matter does not rest upon such a quicksand foundation as the creature knowing that he is the Lord's, for he is often perplexed, bewildered and confused to such extent that he knows nothing as he really ought to know it. Job said he could not find the Lord by going forward, backward, to the right or to the left; at the same time he exclaimed, "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Is it any wonder that this same character should have said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

To continue with the scripture we have quoted it says, "And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." What a solemn admonition this is. Evidently there was a needs-be for it, and probably still is to-day. We do not have to go visiting to find where it is, for it is written that "in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and earth; and some to honor and some to dishonor." This "great house" is none other than the church of God here in the world, and how sad it is to realize that every vessel in it is neither gold nor silver, but that there are some of wood and others of the earth and even "some to honor and some to dishonor." Does it not behoove each one of us to ask, Lord, is it I? The Lord's servants should most certainly take heed unto themselves, and unto the doctrine, lest having preached to others they themselves should become castaways. We may depend upon it that God will try every man's work of what sort it is, and he will try it though as by fire, and he that has used hay and stubble in the building of his work will find that it will be consumed as the chaff in the furnace, but he that has built wisely and used the proper kind of materials in building upon this foundation, which is Christ, will find that the gates of hell shall not prevail against him. How about the one whose breast is full of malice, hatred, envy, jealousy and murder in his heart toward his brother? Shall he be accepted in the presence of him "who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." John said, "we love him, because he first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also." After all we can only judge the tree by the fruit it bears. It is by their works that men shall be known, and when they are put to the test it will be seen whether they are vessels of gold and silver or vessels of wood and the earth. How sad to see vessels of dishonor in the house of God! Prevent it, prevent it, blessed God by thy rich and reigning grace, if it be thy will, so far as we are concerned, is our cry.

At the Association referred to we took occasion to affirm our unshakable belief in the resurrection of the dead, which we again wish to do here. If our hope in Christ did not reach beyond this vale of tears and assure us of dwelling for ever with him in our heavenly home on high we would most certainly, of all men be the most miserable, but we are persuaded that nothing, including death, will be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. In this connection, we have observed with much satisfaction that most of the brethren who have expressed themselves through these columns have stated that "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual

body," and with this we are in thorough accord.

We have been greatly comforted in our meditation upon the words, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his," and we earnestly hope that what we have written will be as a nail in a sure place to those who feel to be tossed about and harrassed with tormenting doubts and fears, to the end that they may be established and immovably fixed in their faith in God, and nothing will ever be able to cause them to waiver or turn aside from trusting in and worshipping the true God of spiritual Israel.

R.L.D.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

Few men, perhaps, attain to greater heights of eminence in the respect and esteem of their brethren than did the late Elders P. D. Gold of North Carolina and P. G. Lester of Virginia. It has occurred to us that our many readers in that section of the country would be interested in having their memories refreshed regarding what those two able ministers thought on the much discussed subject, the resurrection of the dead. Elder Gold enjoyed the reputation of being able to say a lot in a few words, and while his article is very brief, nevertheless it says a lot. Elder Lester was more lengthy in his explanation of the subject, and while they may not have had identical views on this particular point, they were associated together for many years in their editorial work for Zion's Landmark. We can at least learn the lesson of charity one towards another from their example. These two articles are taken from the book which we published on the subject. R.L.D.

DECAY—IMMORTALITY

Exhaustion is evidence of finiteness and failure, and is the result of the wearing away of the agencies of nature. Vegetation springs forth in luxuriousness and with promise of long life in its early growth. But towards autumn it bears marks of decay, and fades and perishes before winter. The soil in its virginity puts forth crops that show its fertility, but soon exhaustion follows unless aids are added to stimulate productiveness. However, it may be recuperated by feeding the soil with suitable fertilizers. Man, the noblest creature on earth in his formation and rank, is equally as subject to succumb to the wear and tear of labor, and the taxing of his forces to compete with nature's demands. So that emaciation and death follow. His limbs weaken, his nervous system loses its vitalizing sensitiveness, his taste fails to enjoy the youthful zest of food, his energies relax and weaken, and man soon wastes away and ceases to have pleasure in things of earth. Even that mysterious character known as a christian who, at times rises above the dull powers of mortality, and finds pasture in the Carmel heights of heavenly manna at times becomes so benumbed by the corrosions of the earth, and the wasting of disease, and the gnawing of worldly care as to faint by the way.

All such things of sorrow, decay and disappointment arrest our expectations of satisfaction in this transitory world of vanities, and furnish a ground of hope and expectation of another and enduring state of perfection—not created out of decay in this perishing state, but a resurrection where former things are done away, and all things become new—not old things made new but out of the old there springs up a new creation in which the desire of immortality dimly felt in the imperfect state as one is renewed in the spirit of his mind, as a vitalizing sense of love and divine joy warms in the soul, and kindles a flame of sacred love for things that never perish, and there appears the foundation and pillars, the frame and substance of a glorious build-

ing not made with hands, but eternal in the heavens, and its glories so entrance the soul as to persuade it of a better resurrection wherein mortality is swallowed up of life, and hope is perfected in fruition of eternal youth. (The italics are our's. R.L.D.) P. D. GOLD.

THE RESURRECTION

(The following is the last article Elder Lester ever wrote and most appropriate since a short while thereafter he answered the call to enter eternal rest.)

I have been requested to write on the subject of the resurrection of the dead. I say of the dead, none but the dead are comprehended in this subject. Some of our able brethren north of us treat upon the subject entirely as to how it is with those who are dead, and not as to how it is with the living, for the living have never entered into the state of death but they are subjects of time and are vitally affected by the things of time and not of eternity, while the entity of the dead has passed from time into eternity, therefore the real existence or entity is in eternity while the dead in their natural condition are yet in time buried here in the earth, and as such know not anything, and we do not understand in their entity they are aware of the passing events in time. Therefore, in this separated condition, we do not seem to know anything in the sense that we are dead; hence Paul says "behold I show you a mystery, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." How long is this? It is so short it is immeasurable. That is how long we do not sleep yet we do sleep, in some sense. "Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him" and they shall not be prevented by those of us who are alive and remain; and we shall be changed, resurrected and caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Our hope comprehends this blessed estate, not the grave but with the Lord in the air, in the spirit. "This mortal must put on immortality" and "this corruptible must put on incorruption" so when this shall have taken place "then shall have been brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." When does this take place? Things are brought to or come to pass in time when we shall find that we are more than conquerors over death and the grave and mortality is swallowed up of life; and we are with the Lord and so shall we ever be. One says "all my appointed time will I wait till my change come." Till the resurrection comes. That is what it means, a change. It is sown a natural body, and it is raised a spiritual body.

It is a common thought with our people that when one dies his spirit goes to God and we bury the body, but in the resurrection the spirit comes back and reunites with the body and both go to heaven together, but I do not find such scripture in the book. (The italics are our's. R.L.D.)

Our existence is a mystery and cannot be explained. I am not attempting to explain it in these thoughts but rather show that I do not know anything about it really, but as we preach the wisdom of God in a mystery so I write. I hope that the hearts of some of our readers might be comforted to some degree at least. There is a difference from the way we look at the resurrection and the way it really is. There is a difference from the way that Christ was raised up and the way his people are. He lay in the grave and saw no corruption while they are corruption itself, and his resurrection proves that the dead are raised up. When Christ died the bodies of many of the saints arose from the dead and came out of their graves after his resurrection. They arose when he died and came forth after he arose; His death was their life and his ascension was their resurrection. He was not a pattern for their resurrection but he was it. "I am the resurrection and the life. If I be lifted up I will

draw all men unto me." The substance or virtue of his entity, his divinity draws people from the grave, they hear his voice and they come forth, at the present time and in time to come. We know that we, like a corn of wheat, must fall into the ground and die else we abide alone. God has ordained it that we die and has made the act of death the swallowing up of life. In this figure we find we die as we live or as the powers of death are being enforced in us at the same time the virtues and powers of life are being wrought in us. God has set seed time and harvest time and we know these are and that they must come in their own order. The good farmer prepares the soil as fallow ground and at the proper time and manner he breaks up this fallow ground and works it down so as to create and hold the season for germination of the seed and he sows the wheat into the ground and the season, the moisture, heat and other qualities take hold upon and destroy it in a sense but he looks for a great transformation, first the blade then the stalk and finally the full ear on the stalk. Paul knowing that some fool would want to know how the dead are raised up and with what body do they appear and he refers him to sowing the wheat a thing that he knows. God is a great husbandman; he farms creation, we see or read how he prepared everything for his work. He made all manner of life to bring forth after its kind and he made man, and while he made him of the earth in common with everything else yet he was of a different substance, and he commanded him to multiply and replenish the earth. And he made a helpmeet for him whereby he should multiply. He planted him in the garden of Eden but he did not fence the garden; he did not clothe the man and his helpmeet but left them in the innocence of their nature and nakedness and the devil was in the garden, and they being susceptible of his influence he approached them in such a form and manner as to corrupt their morals, and lust which is of the devil had its conception, and he destroyed their innocence and multiplication set up and came into the family. This was God's way of multiplying without regard to his divine purpose in the election of grace. We are not to understand that the wisdom and eternal purpose of God so ran ahead as to provide the election of grace and in order to its utility so arranged to bring man into a state of sin and death as to need the election and salvation of grace. The affairs in the garden of Eden were to accomplish for which man was made to multiply and replenish the earth. The first man Adam was of the earth earthy, the second man Adam was the Lord from heaven. The things of the first man are incidental to the things of the second man, but they do not lead up to them, but those of the second man go back to those of the first man. It seems that while Christ was in the grave he went and preached to the spirits that were in prison. Salvation flowed out from the cross or from the grave of Christ, back to the former sea and forth to the hinder sea. The former subjects of grace are not made perfect without the latter. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation;" not yesterday, not tomorrow, but now. I am he that was dead and am alive and behold I live forever. We note that as the corn of wheat was dying it was living, the virtues that brought about its death brought about its life. It roots downward and springs upward and brings forth fruit. Its association is consequent upon its dying rather than upon its living and yet we live because he lives. We do not live to die but we die to live. "If we be dead with him we shall also live with him." Therefore as we die we begin to live. If man dies shall he live again? We die to the grave but we live unto God. Though our flesh be devoured yet in it we shall see God. Our friends come and spread flowers upon our grave but if we

have died in hope we do not need those flowers we know nothing of. We are not there, our entity is with God. It must be in the grave or with God. If with him we are resurrected from the grave. We come into our living entity. But in our mortal state or condition we have answered the sentence, "Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return;" and none but the poet has said that this dust shall be bidden to rise. It is a common belief among us that we shall rise from the grave. That is the best we can do with such a mystery. You ask me where we buried my mother and I can show you the stones that mark her tomb, but you ask me where she is and my faith says she is in the Paradise of God, that her conscious existence is there and in the final ending with her there will be nothing of her in the grave, for the grave shall give up its dead, death shall give up its dead. They that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and shall come forth. That must be in the sense that the dead are in the grave at the time that is and is to come, which implies a mystery. We must again refer to the corn of wheat that falls into the ground and dies. And we note that as it dies it lives and though it comes up yet it leaves its impress in the ground but it is not there. We look for it in the harvest. "Them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him" and there they are ever with the Lord in the air and so shall they ever be with the Lord. P. G. LESTER.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Mrs. M. E. Kuns, Cal., $1; Mrs. D. O. Yeisley, Wash., $1; Mrs. W. I. Stewart, Tex., $1; J. MacKenzie, Can., $9; W.Y. Chandler, Ind., $3; Mrs. A. J. Crenshaw, Okla., $2; R. A. Knight, N. J., $3; A friend, $50; Mrs. E. Smith, Tex., $1; Mrs. C. E. Tacey, N. J., $3; M. M. Absher, Ga., $2; Miss C. M. Duffus, Can., $3.

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Sister MOLLIE HARRIS, lovingly known as "Grandma," died Jan. 11, 1944 after an illness of about three weeks. Had she lived until Jan. 22 she would have been 95 years old. She leaves two sons and two daughters, a number of grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great granchildren and a host of friends to mourn her loss. Her husband, a Primitive Baptist minister, died several years ago and she made her home with her son-in-law and daughter, Elder and Mrs. W. N. Green, who cared for her so tenderly and devotedly that her life was made comfortable, pleasant and happy. She had such a sweet, sunny disposition, and had grown old so gracefully that every one who knew her loved and admired her. Funeral services were conducted at the home of Elder and Mrs. W. N. Green by Elder C. D. Varnell, and she was laid to rest in the cemetery at Hollis, Okla., by the side of her husband, Jan. 13, 1944.

Whereas, it has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst our dear sister Harris, therefore be it

Resolved, that it is the desire of the Little Flock Church that the wisdom of this Providence who has thus bereaved us, will also comfort and reconcile us all to whom the departed was near and dear, and be it further

Resolved that a copy of these resolutions be sent to the bereaved family, a copy be made a part of the church record and another sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication. Done by order of the church while in conference at Altus, Okla., Feb. 12, 1944.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN, Moderator
(Mrs.) LOU KESTER, Church Clerk

OBITUARIES

MRS. M. A. HARRIS. Surely it pleased Him who holds the keys of death to remove from earth another mother in Israel in her long hoped for reward. It has become my duty to give the readers of the *Signs of the Times* a sketch of her godly walk and inspiring life. Sister Harris, or Grandma Harris as she was commonly known among her brethren, sisters and friends, was born in Louisiana, January 22, 1849, and answered her Master's call to depart this life January 11, 1944. Her allotted time on earth lacked 11 days of being 95 years. Surely the mercies of her God accompanied her through her long stay in this world. She moved with her parents to Camden, Arkansas when but a child, and there grew to womanhood. She was married to William Overton Harris, February 6, 1868, who pre-

ceeded her in death about 26 years. To them was born six children, four girls and two boys. The first and third, Lula and Ophelia, preceded them in death. The remaining four are as follows: Mrs. W. N. Green of Altus, Okla., in whose home Grandmother Harris surrendered to her Master's call, L. F. Harris of Quanah, Texas, Mrs. Lena Hamilton, Los Angeles, Cal., and T. O. Harris of Silver City, N. Mexico. Mrs. Green and L. F. Harris were present to witness the passing of their noble mother. Besides her children she left to follow twenty grandchildren, fifty-four great-grandchildren and four great-great grandchildren, her dear kindred in Christ and a multitude of friends. Sister Harris united with the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church with her husband about the year 1889. For fifty-five years she never suffered anything of a worldly nature to interfere with her attending her church service. She was indeed a Mother in Israel. It is not my purpose in this article to unduly eulogize or speak in too high a term of humanity. But I want you to know first that I mean and believe the power that manifested her life through this now peaceful body is God. We want to thank God for her life, and the sweet consoling evidence that he was her daily companion. What a privilege and inspiration it is to me to have known and been in almost constant company with her for about 27 years, as I have been in the family that long, and she has made our home her home the greater part of that time, partially dividing the time between our home and the home of her son, L. F. Harris. Soon after her daughter and I were married she lost her husband, and what a privilege and pleasure it has been to me these 27 years to journey along, and help care for such a lovely character as I know her to have been. She was a constant possessor of patience, love and forbearance, always calm and agreeable, possessing the same sweet disposition day in and day out, always seeing the good in everybody and everything. If she saw any bad she kept that in her own bosom. We all loved her while she was here with us, we now love and cherish the memory of her life. Grandmother just had one enemy and Jesus conquered that one for her in his death. She loved her family, her friends, her brethren and her sisters and her God supremely. She enjoyed her meetings and never missed one when it was possible for her to attend. Oh, how I will miss those nods of the head when I was given liberty to comfort Zion. We had all the evidence needed that she had been with her God. She would often say she was just waiting for the Lord's time to pass by and take her away. Also would often say, "I don't know what I am left here for." When the Lord called for that spirit which he gave, the old body surrendered it without a struggle. She fell asleep in Jesus. Sweet sleep. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." We have the evidence according to the revealed testimony, that Grandmother was one of the daughters of Adam's race that the Father gave the Son before the world began. If so, she was bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, hence, died in the Lord (blessed thought). We laid that, that died back to earth, but in God's account it is blessed and in the Lord. Weep not after her sorrowing relatives and friends, but rather rejoice that her name was written in heaven. In closing this obituary let me say that God has been manifested in the life of this noble character, and a purpose of his has been fulfilled. Let us remember to thank, glorify and honor God for that, and not the old Adamic nature, that is a part of all of us, that is where she would want the honor to go and not bestowed upon her. Elder C. D. Varnell of Abilene, Texas was summoned to preach the funeral. He spoke with liberty and to the comfort of the bereaved after which she was laid by the side of her deceased husband. There those bodies will lie side by side until Jesus comes to earth again. Then their bodies will be made spiritual and caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and ever be with the Lord. May God bless Zion everywhere. Written by her pastor and son-in-law.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN.

EFFIE J. JOHNSON BOLTON was born April 30, 1861, near Muncie, Delaware Co., Indiana, the daughter of Rufus Mellett and Martha (Riggs) Johnson, and died January 10, 1944, after an illness of 7 months, at the home of a daughter, Mrs. O. G. Albertsen in Piedmont, Missouri. She married Lewis D. Bolton, March 18, 1879, near Jefferson City, Mo. Six children were born of this union, two of whom survive. Three died in childhood, and a daughter, Mrs. Beulah B. Tucker of St. Louis, where the mother made her home much of the time, died 6 weeks previously. She leaves besides the daughter, a son, Lewis M. Bolton, of Des Moines, Iowa, seven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. Burial was in the Masonic Cemetery at Des Moines, January 14, and the services were conducted by Dr. Lewis Jacobsen, Pastor of the First Baptist Church. Her family included several generations of Old School Baptist ministers. A paternal uncle, Jesse Mellett, of Virginia came to Indiana and was the first pastor of Lebanon Church in Henry County. He lived from 1775 to 1846. Her grandfather, Dr. John Foster Johnson, a physician, was a personal friend of the founder of the *Signs*, Elder Gilbert Beebe. He traveled to Associations with him and was an elder well known in the United States and Canada. A compilation of his "writings" for the *Signs* was published in book

form in 1876, and covered a period of 30 years. He lived and had charges in Indiana, New York and Kentucky. His first son, Joseph Alvah Johnson, was to quote the father, "somewhat extensively known in the United States and Canada as an Old School Baptist minister; and a younger son, Dudley George, was also an Old School Baptist minister. Mother's great-great grandfather (Catherine Mellett Johnson's grandfather) Elder Joshua Hickman, born 1766, was an early settler in West Virginia and well known over that section as a Baptist minister. In fact his wife, Josinah (Van Meter) Hickman, said meetings were held monthly in Virginia in their home for 43 years. Now Marion County, W. Va. Then it was Monongolia County, Virginia. Father died in 1911 and mother has been a widow these many years. She attended meetings whenever possible and has faithfully read the *Signs* for a great many years. She would have been 83 years of age in a few months, but God in his mercy ended her period of suffering, and the words of her dying grandmother, Catherine Johnson, could be said again.

"When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow."
"I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand."

Her daughter.

MABEL L. BOLTON ALBERTSEN.

MRS. ALICE LEANE CADE, nee Henderson, was born Dec. 29, 1867 in the State of Arkansas, and died Feb. 8, 1944. She was married to J. D. Cade Nov. 13, 1884. In July 1896 she united with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church in Wood County, Texas, and lived a faithful life, always filling her seat when not providentially hindered, until the end came when the Lord called her from her labors to reign with Him where there is no more death nor parting of friends, sickness or pain. In the passing of sister Cade the church at Hopewell has sustained a great loss, but we hope it is her eternal gain. She leaves to mourn her passing nine children, fours boys and five daughters. Mrs. A. S. Kinnemer, Mrs. W. G. Ingram, Mrs. G. W. Rushing, Mrs. J. M. Floyd of Marshall, Texas, Mrs. Winnie Ingram of Dallas, Texas. The sons are Lannie, Hubbard, Travis and Rayle who is in the U. S. Navy. One son, Noble, preceded her in death in 1895. There are twenty-two grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. The writer tried to speak words of comfort to a large concourse of relatives and friends from Rom. 15:4 after which her remains were laid in the Hopewell Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord to raise our vile bodies from the graves. W. W. SLAUGHTER

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

Please watch the wrapper coverings of your paper to see whether or not you are behind with your subscription to our family paper. Opposite your name appears the date to which you are paid. If you are behind and can conveniently send in what is due it will be greatly appreciated.

This is simply a REMINDER to those who have either overlooked or neglected the matter, and to all who respond to it we say in advance, thank you! R.L.D.

AUTHORIZED AGENTS

ALABAMA

Elder Lytle Burns, Florence, Ala.
Elder F. A. Collins, Hartford, Ala.
Elder W. D. Griffin, Fayette, Ala.

FLORIDA

Elder C. H. Byrd,
P. O. Box 86, Panama City, Fla.

GEORGIA

Elder H. O. Nash,
431 Hardendorf Ave., N. E., Atlanta, Ga.

KENTUCKY

Elder G. B. Bird, Canada, Ky.
Elder J. S. Hunnicutt, Denton, Ky.

LOUISIANA

Elder E. J. Lambert,
P. O. Box 55, Lillie, La.

MARYLAND

Elder Harold M. Bennett,
Mardela Springs, Md.

NEW JERSEY

Elder Charles W. Vaughn,
Hopewell, N. J.

NORTH CAROLINA

Elder T. F. Adams, Williow Springs, N. C.
Elder E. L. Cobb, Wilson, N. C.
Elder M. F. Westbrook, Rt. 3, Dunn, N. C.

OHIO

Elder Geo. L. Weaver,
16116 Westview Ave., Cleveland, 20, Ohio.

OKLAHOMA

Elder W. N. Green, Box 654, Altus, Okla.

OREGON

Elder C. W. Bond,
Island City, Oregon.

VIRGINIA

Elder J. E. Burgess, Rt. 1, Box 180, Martinsville, Va.
Elder Roy S. Smith, Cascade, Va.
Elder David V. Spangler, Rt. 6, Danville, Va.

NOTICE

Will those who have notices of SPECIAL MEETINGS to be published, please send them to us six weeks prior to the month in which they are to be held? R. L. D.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

Is the title of a book consisting of 172 pages and containng about thirty separate articles on the subject. It will be given FREE with a year's subscription to the *Signs of the Times* to anyone who is not now a subscriber to the paper, or to any old subscriber who will send us a NEW subscription for the *Signs of the Times* at $2 per year. The price of the book alone is $1. We regret to say that we have no more books on Predestination. R.L.D.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sundays in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a.m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meeting-house, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed. R. LESTER DODSON.

The Delaware River Association of Primitive Baptist Churches will convene for their annual meeting, the Lord willing, with the Kingwood Church at Locktown, N. J. Tuesday, May 30, 1944 at 10 A.M. Continuance of this meeting on Wednesday, May 31 will be optional with those present the first day. Our ministers, brethren and friends are cordially invited to be present with us. Those coming from points south may go by Penn R. R. direct to Frenchtown, N. J. where Mr. C. Hoff, Postmaster, will arrange for their entertainment, or a transfer to bus service may be made at Trenton, N. J. Buses leave the bus terminal at 132 Perry St., and stop regularly at the hotel in Flemington, N. J. There 'phone 313 and entertainment will be provided. Trains from New York on the L. V. R. R. will be met at Flemington on Monday P.M. and Tuesday A.M. Those coming by car the day previous should go directly to 192 Main St., Flemington where they will be provided for by the writer.

ALWILDA R. STRYKER, Church Clerk.

The Border Union Meeting of Old School Baptists is appointed for June 9, 10 and 11, 1944 to be held with the Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho. We gladly welcome visitors from other sections. Those traveling by bus or train should go direct to Weiser where friends will welcome them. Those coming by auto will find excellent highways connecting with U. S. No. 30 which extends from coast to coast and passes within two miles of Weiser. Those from the west on highway 30 pass through LaGrande, Ore. two miles from Island City, Ore. and we invite them to stop with us. Island City, Ore.

(Elder) C. W. BOND.

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday at the end of old South Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
J. A. CURTIS, Clerk.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 3rd Sunday, Panama City, Fla.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
C. H. BYRD, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles South of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
B. G. KINGRY, Clerk.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
J. W. BASS, Clerk.

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday and Elder E. E. Watson on Sunday.

AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church, located 5 miles North of Hartford, Ala., holds services each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching Elders F. A. and J. J. Collins on Saturday, and Elder J. J. Collins on Sunday.

A. E. SORRELS, Clerk.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canda, California.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before.

E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists invites all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren, to meet with us first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hitchins. Take graveled road to the church.

E. M. TACKETT,
J. S. HUNNICUTT, Pastors.
H. L. ROGERS, Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.
Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 A.M. 1:30 P.M.
To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

C. W. BOND, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A.M.
ALL WELCOME

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Tex.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sunday in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P.M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sunday each month at 11:00 A.M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Salem Church, four miles south of Teague, Texas, meets on Saturday before the first Sunday in each month in conference.

W. A. LITTLE, Pastor.
DORA WREN, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a.m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, Pastor.

(Mrs.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk.
Stockdale, Texas.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a.m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before.

A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 112 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JUNE, 1944 No. 6

CORRESPONDENCE

WILDERNESS

"For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness." Deut. 32:9, 10.

We find the word wilderness used many times in the Scriptures, and like all other scriptural writings they are invariably used figuratively, that is to convey a spiritual thought. If we fail to so read the Scriptures we fail to read them right, and fail to find that hidden meaning of the entire volume for there is even no small portion that has a literal or natural meaning. All is spiritually discerned. No private interpretation, no amount of theorizing will ever aid us or give us that spiritual insight in God's living truths. By nature we are all in a state of ignorance of the things of our God. All our God given nature with all its varying component parts, with every means of continuance and substance, as well as reproduction, every organ of our body together with every faculty of our nature fits us to live a natural life here on God's earth. That is, God gave us our natural eyes to see natural things with, so with our ears, our sense of touch as well as our natural mind. All are bounded by the elements of nature, and none can reach beyond that realm. Nature has not nor cannot change all down through the countless ages, and despite all our boasted civilization we find beneath that thin veneer of culture the same old animal savagery that has been, according to history, the portion of all men in all ages. All men everywhere in all walks of life, be they rich or poor, bond or free, literally have all these things in common. By God's nature they are all alike. Even the saints of God in nature "were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." All speak one language (religiously speaking) until God visits them with revelation. All are strictly Armenian, and are richly satisfied in all the goods of their literally conceived religion, they feel no need of anything greater than their own armor in which they trust. God has given to them by his will all these possessions in this country (condition) to which they belong. They are all building that city whose towers will reach unto heaven. But our text is talking about a different people, a chosen people, the Lord's portion. This is a peculiar people. Unto them our God appears. First in the famine in their land (desert land). This famine dries up all their springs of Armenianism, their self-righteousness all becomes as filthy rags, they are made poor and needy, they become beggars, naked and hide themselves. Because of the famine they go down into Egypt in search of corn. This is their first birth, born of the wisdom of this world, the bond woman. This is the eating

of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which makes them to know that they are naked and willing to try out any effort of the creature to get relief from their troubles, hence we see all men in all ages working untiringly on the fig leaf aprons for a covering for their nakedness. We soon find them in this waste howling wilderness. This is the confusion of their carnal mind when God comes down and there confounds their language. In this wilderness we hear their cries as the cries of the lost, we hear their mourning and sighing. Fear grips them and will not let them go, fear is their master to whom they try in vain to do service, and be it remembered, dear reader, that it was God who by his chosen servant led them into and through the wilderness. It was said of the woman (church) which John saw clothed with the sun, etc. after the Son was born, and after her child was caught up unto God and to his throne, "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there, etc." All of God's family are in this wilderness of carnality where we all are so nearly hidden by the luxurious growth and tangled mass of the theories of men, traditions, imaginations, doctrines of men and devils, formality and self righteousness that it is sometimes very difficult to distinguish between a subject of grace and one who is not. Often this woman is so covered with this growth that she might be mistaken for the beast (false church), but all of this condition is the doings of our God and is for her safety and protection when the old red dragon is wroth with the woman and goes to make war with the remnant of her seed. She is fed in this wilderness by the called of God, and I have no quarrel with those of God's servants who are blind, nor with the blind messengers which he has sent, for God has blinded their eyes for a glorious purpose even that they might preach the carnal preaching that will feed the chosen of God (the church) in the wilderness. If we could be stripped of all our traditions, false notions and opinions, and could be permitted to see God's eternal truths perfectly and fully without a veil between, and could declare them in their fullness we would not be permitted to live, Jacob's family would murder us, and most certainly these truths in their fullness would not feed the church in the wilderness. God has called and qualified men, chosen and set apart, to lead them out of this tangled condition of confusion in this waste howling doctrine of their own carnal mind that is enmity against God, but not as the world believes. They are not let out literally to stay out, but only when God is pleased to visit us with the season of rejoicing when the gospel is preached to the dry bones, after this season is over and passed away we are back into the wilderness as before, all and every one. I have no thought that even the apostles saw it all or knew it all, they had only their portion, they saw in part and knew in part as well as we, and no doubt felt that the half has never yet been told. I have no doubt, however, that some few of God's family are blessed to more nearly come out of this carnal condition of wilderness confusion than the many who are not so blessed of God to see more clearly, but as for me I do not know that I have ever had a "heavenly vision." I sometimes hope I have, and some few times I have had such sweet assurance for a few fleeting moments that all doubts were gone, but if I have ever had this "heavenly vision" I have tried to preach many, many more times without than with this vision, or the appearing of him who is our life, our preaching life as well as our hearing life. The world as well as most Old Baptists call this the wilderness of sin, and they all believe that if a man will leave off certain bad habits and quit this or that so-called evil, then they are out of this widerness, when if the poor deluded mortals could

but know it they are only the deeper in this wilderness. Certainly Saul was free from these so-called bad habits and yet he was one of the Jacobs that God found in a waste howling wilderness. The servant of God saw her and exclaimed, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" Her beloved has even been with her, is now, and shall forever remain with her and that to bless. She cannot come up from the wilderness without him, nor until she is raised up with Christ and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ. We feel confident that we have a few times witnessed that coming up from the wilderness, both in our own feelings and from the expressions of joy in the faces of those we love, when the gospel of the Son of God is preached in its spiritual power and fullness. What wondrous fullness of unspeakable joy is our portion, no mortal can tell the richness of his love, mere human language is lacking and is altogether insufficient to portray the fullness of the things of God. While I believe with all my heart that God formed the crooked serpent, I have not the slightest doubt that the crooked serpent is a sight nearer to us than I once thought, even in our churches and pulpits, and in every false notion, every false way, every imagination of the carnal mind of man, every tradition of men, indeed it is every particle of carnal preaching whenever or wherever heard. This type of preaching did not just happen to be, but is ordained of God, and has its place in the will and purpose of our God as any other thing, yes, as much as every other thing. Our God called and qualified a Moses as surely as he sent unto us his only Son, and in Moses he gave us the law, in Christ he gave us freedom from that law. Likewise the wilderness of Armenianism is in the purpose of God, and is now,to-day, just the same as it was in the days of old, and the same people in it now as then, and the same God who leads the same people in the same manner. Our God cannot change, and due to his will and the positive fixedness of all things in him, his children cannot change in their vital substance from generation to generation. If the general scheme of things could change, all things could change, then God would first have to be a changeable creature and not a God. This leading up from the wilderness is our God bringing the blind by a way that they knew not, and the leading them in paths they have not known, and the making darkness light before them, and crooked things straight, and pray tell me dearly beloved of God, can you witness with me that I am the man that in my carnal mind am so often in the waste howling wilderness, lost in the confusion of carnality until I cannot preach, pray or sing one of the Lord's songs in a strange land, that I cannot have one good thought, but let me say that which hath been is now. Jacob, the lot of his inheritance, was never lost in the sense that God did not know where he was every moment of the time, but like us he was lost only in the confusion of his own carnal mind. Now lest some might call in question my statement, or misunderstand my meaning, when I said that the Scriptures in no place have a natural or literal meaning, I wish to explain as best I can just what I do mean. There is not the slightest question in my mind but that many of the incidents referred to in the Scriptures did literally occur, and many of which have occurred times without number and just as recorded, but if this is all we can see therein then we are no better off than all the rest of mankind who are able to read the literal text. To illustrate, just what special comfort could we derive from the scripture which says, He "sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Matt. 5:45. If we could see no more than the literal fact that it does literally rain upon all alike, whether good or bad, could that literal fact in the least be hidden from any person with common

sense? Would it need the revelation of God if the same scriptures did not have a hidden spiritual meaning? Again, consider the scripture found in Psalm 127: 3-5: "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward." "Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them, etc." While in most cases a family of children is a blessing to a man and to his home and country here in nature, and with few exceptions does contribute towards making better citizens out of us all, and none would call in question the physical phase of the subject, but who could claim that the man who has children has any preeminence over the man who has none, spiritually? There is not a doubt that both these scriptures have a sublime and deep spiritual meaning on which I shall not offer an opinion here as either would require a lengthy article to explain what I hope I see in them. Again, none could doubt that the man, Christ Jesus the Lord, was born of the virgin Mary and was here on earth, but I had as soon doubt his ever being here as to doubt his being here now, or to believe that he was only here literally as a past event of history, and not be able to see more of the vital truths of God in his coming into our world. This would be evidence indeed that he has not come to us experimentally. All men profess to believe that he came, and that he is the Christ, but if a theoretical knowledge is all we have of Christ then we do not know him, nor do we understand the Scriptures which testify of him. From one humbly desiring to know more of the hidden truths of God. A poor and needy creature. (Elder) G. B. BIRD.

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628 St. Johns Place, Baltimore, Md.

MRS. J. W. DAVIE, WASHINGTON, D. C.

MY DEAR MRS. DAVIE:—Since Sunday I have thought often of you, and have rejoiced in the fact that you have a mind to come with us. Truly this is of the Lord because in the Old School Baptist Church there is nothing to attract the worldly minded. They have no rituals or ceremonies nor any other formality calculated to entertain the carnal mind. Only the plain, simple worship of a people whose trust is in the Lord of Glory, and the merits of his dear Son whose only hope is that they were embraced in that covenant which Jesus consummated when he said, "It is finished." Therefore, when one realizes their own helplessness and unfitness and by grace has been given a tender conscience, love then springs up and they wish to be associated with those of "like precious faith." All day I have been wondering why you selected me to make known your feelings and desires regarding the church and baptism. Certainly I am not worthy of any such blessed confidence, and I have great soul searchings as to whether or not I am a deceiver. Still I consider it a great blessing of the Lord that through you he did arrest my mind and cause me to think more of his goodness and mercy in this life and giving me a hope of life everlasting in a world to come. Your feelings of unworthiness and unprofitableness seem to be common to the people of God. Therefore, I would say that those feelings are your qualifications because your whole dependence is on the Lord for daily guidance and support. Old Baptists are a fearful band, so they gladly welcome those who have the same doubts and fears. As to your other problem, that of discord among the churches, I will say that from my limited knowledge of history, these things have existed more or less for centuries. They are wrong and should be done away with for Jesus prayed that they should be one, even as he and the Father are one, (John 17:20, 21.) but it only displays the weakness of human nature. However, we consider each church a sovereign organization, and, if preaching the truth, the highest on earth, not subject to any council, association or

institutions of men, but it is good when those who love the same precious truth can see eye to eye and walk together in peace. May it please our heavenly Father to so direct us. Now all the foregoing is a cross to you as it is to every other right thinking christian and causes you vexation of spirit. It seems in this life we are beset with trials and temptations on every hand. Nevertheless, we have a command from the Saviour himself who said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." Matt. 16:24. So, dear sister, I urge that you do this, take up your cross, bear it, and go to the church. You will surely find joys on the inside which are not found on the outside. I am so rejoiced for your sake that I want to be present when you unite with the church, but I doubt if I can come next third Sunday as the church in Baltimore has arranged to hold all day meeting at that time, and we always have quite a few visitors at that time, so we who are members are supposed to help entertain them. However, I am just selfish enough to be thinking of fifth Sunday in September. Perhaps the brethren could arrange to hold special meeting that day, morning or afternoon. I could come over all day in that case, but you know I am not the one to be considered in this matter. I enjoyed the meeting last Sunday immensely. It was good to see an increase in attendance. Now I have rambled along at some length and it may be that what has been written would have been better unsaid, but I had a mind to write you and I hope and pray that nothing has been done amiss. Shall be glad to have a word from you whenever you feel like writing. With christian love to you and brother Davie I am your brother I hope. ALVIS S. ROWE.

(One of our readers has sent us a copy of the Minutes of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, held with the Bethlehem Church, Prince William County, Virginia, August 17, 18 and 19, 1887, which contains the following Corresponding Circular Letter written by the late Elder E. V. White. We believe it will be of interest to many of our readers and, therefore, are republishing it. R.L.D.)

Beloved Brethren: — God has been pleased to spare many of us who have been accustomed to assemble ourselves together on occasions similar for many years. Truly goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our life. O for a heart to remember and appreciate his blessings, and to praise him for his goodness to the children of men. It is also true that some of our beloved ones have passed over and gone hence. As we are all hastening, soon to know for ourselves the reality of our hope, let us consider the solemn subject as brought to view in I Cor. 15:22, 23. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." We trust that in the consideration of these words we may receive comfort. Who but a christian can receive comfort in thinking of death? Death is the passage through which all must pass to the joys we live in the hope of. We must die to live. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Our death in Adam is in some way or in some sense a likeness of and fitly represents our resurrection unto life in Christ; for the apostle is writing upon the resurrection in all this connection, and we cannot suppose that this expression is foreign to the subject. As is the one, so is the other. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." It is clear to our mind that the apostle uses one to explain the other. He does not mean to say that all who die in Adam are raised in Christ; but as they die in Adam, even so in Christ they are made alive. It is as if he had said, if you understand how and why all die in Adam, you will understand how and why

all are made alive in Christ. That all die, we need no proof; and why, is explained by the apostle's own words. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom. 5:12. So then all men die in Adam: because, for the transgression of Adam death passed upon them. Not because of their personal sin or transgression, but because death passed upon them in Adam; and so inflexible is this law that those who never sinned were compelled to suffer its penalty. "Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's trangressions." Now, by the transgression of Adam all die. None are exempt; none are spared; none escape; the old and the young; those without law, or those with and under law; the godly and the ungodly. "All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath." Eccl. 9:2. "Even so in Christ shall all be made alive." "For if by one man's offense death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." Rom. 5:17. Not only is the gift of righteousness, which is life, made as sure through Christ as was the death made sure through Adam, but "much more" so; for it is written, "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Rom. 5:9,10. Do any question that all will die? and it is because of the transgression of one man, and that one man the progenitor of all men. All sprang from that one man, all are begotten by him, and all live the life of Adam. Not another life, but the identical life of Adam is our life, who was cursed with death. Hence death passed upon all men, for all have sinned. Not all will but have sinned. Neither can we question that in like manner and for similar reason all shall be made alive in Christ. "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son." He is careful to mention which life—"this life." As the life that was given in Adam, and is Adam's life, is the life in which he transgressed, and for which death passed upon the man, even so, in like manner, the life that was given us in Christ (according to the record), and is Christ's life, is the life that obeyed, and by which obedience the gift of eternal life came upon all that were given life in Christ; for all have obeyed. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." It was the Adamic man upon which disobedience unto death passed; even so it is the Adamic man upon which the obedience passed unto justification of life. So the Adamic man whose life is in Christ (not the Adamic life) has rendered obedience unto the law, and is justified from all things; yet has he not received the life, but the promise of it, the spirit of it. And having faith in Christ, that he in Christ satisfied the law, he lives in the hope of the life of Christ. As Paul says, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." Titus 1:2. So he has the "promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." 1 Tim. 4:8. As yet the man has not obtained this life, but shall be raised in Christ, raised in his life, made alive in Christ. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we be like him, for we shall see him as he is. "But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." Christ was first in order; afterward they that are Christ's. No

division, no difference in time, here mentioned between them that are Christ's; afterward they, all of them, at his coming. The order is between Christ and them, unless there be many comings of Christ; and as the apostle is here dwelling upon the resurrection, we can hardly believe there is more than one coming of this kind and for this purpose, that spoken of in 1 Thessalonians 4:15, 17. "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." While it is here stated that the dead in Christ shall rise first, it is also stated that those which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them; so we think the order is between Christ and them. Christ the first fruits, then they that are Christ's, the after fruits. Then will have been accomplished that which is spiritually (that is, in Christ) true now. The whole harvest will have been reaped and gathered home to glory. As is the first fruits, so will the after be; that is, they shall be like him; no longer bear the image of the earthy, but the heavenly, Christ. This precludes the idea of a flesh and blood recognition in heaven. We will not bear this image. We will not appear as we do now. Christ himself will not appear as he did on earth. We shall know him no more after the flesh but after the spirit. This is according to our experience. We know our brethren by the Spirit of Christ that dwells in them. It does not yet appear what we shall be; why then speculate about it? Who would wish to be like Adam if they could be like Christ? The words used to express our future state are far beyond finite comprehension. A spiritual body, immortal body, quickened, incorruption, life. Who can understand what these words express? How are we to understand that which they express? The truth is, it does not yet appear. There are some things said of Jesus which are not said of us. It was never said of us that our body should not see corruption, but it was said of his. There was also a grand and glorious purpose in that identical body which was put into Joseph's new tomb, and which the disciples knew when it went down into death, being raised as it was, which is not found necessary in the resurrection of any other. That which crowns with glory and honor the entire work of the blessed Redeemer was his resurrection. Should that fail, all would be loss. All his suffering, his disgrace, dishonor and death would be of no benefit or comfort to any, if his resurrection is not established. This is not true of any other one. Not simply his resurrection, but before the eyes of those who knew him must his resurrection be established, that those who knew him in the Spirit and believe their testimony may receive comfort in all their afflictions. This truth is clearly expressed in Acts 10: 39, 41. "And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead." Those who were witnesses of all things that he did, who could speak from actual knowledge, must also be able to speak from actual knowledge of his resurrection, that it was he, and not another. To confirm this, he ate and drank with them after he arose from the dead. Many things did he after his resurrection to establish the truth of it, because of the importance thereof, which

importance is not attached to the resurrection of any one else. There is no more evidence that we will be raised in this identical body, because Jesus was raised in the same body, than there is that after our resurrection we will eat fish and honeycomb, because Jesus did eat fish and honeycomb after his resurrection. But it is expressly stated that it shall not be raised this body. "That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain." The apostle uses a natural figure to illustrate. It must be true, or he would not use it. That this body shall be raised is true, but it shall not be raised this body. It shall be raised in Christ, made alive in Christ. Then shall come to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory," or mortality swallowed up of life, and for similar reasons to that for which we die in Adam. This body is not raised and then changed, but raised changed. Not that body that was sown, but a changed body. God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him; and he tells us what kind of a body pleases him. "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." What kind of a body a spiritual body is does not yet appear; but when we shall be raised in Christ's likeness, raised in him, it will appear, for we shall see him as he is. It does not appear before then, for no man knoweth the things of God but the Spirit of God. When we ourselves shall become that spiritual, then we shall know. That we shall become this spiritual, or life (we mean our body) is evidenced by this fact. "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." And thus shall he change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. There is no question then that this vile body shall be changed, that this vile body shall be raised; yet not in Adam but in Christ. Glorious message of eternal truth. How rich the grace that conforms us to the image of God's Son. We have had, we hope, a profitable meeting. Our correspondence has been about as usual. Our brethren in the ministry have come to us laden with the precious gospel of the grace of God, and we have indeed been made to feast while sitting under the droppings of the sanctuary; for all of which we desire to bow in heartfelt gratitude to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Our next annual meeting is appointed to be held with the New Valley Church, Loudon Co., Va., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in August, 1888, when and where we hope to greet you again and receive your messages of love.

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656 Gregory Ave., Clifton, N. J.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

Greetings in the Lord Jesus Christ. Just a few lines to let you know that I have received a few good letters from the dear readers of the *Signs* which gave me great joy to think that my letter was worth your notice to insert in the *Signs*. It makes me feel humble before the Lord, through whose grace it is that I am able to do anything, and to testify to his grace and his glory is my only joy for he is worthy to receive it all. One dear lady enclosed a gift for which I am very grateul, for the spirit of Him whom we love came with it so that I feel to have received another sister in the Lord. When I received this gift I knew instantly that I could not accept it to serve my flesh, for to me it was like the holy water from the fountain of life at Jerusalem. It was through your goodness in the first place that my letter was written, and through the grace of God that I could write it. As I feel sure that my kind benefactor will not mind, I shall enclose it herewith as it is the Lord's, whose I am, and I feel it too holy for my personal use and, therefore, beg that I may lay it at his blessed feet to feed some other poor, needy

soul who may be blessed to receive your valuable paper. So, therefore, as I have received the *Signs* free I shall hope that it may please the Lord who said, "Freely ye have received, freely give." Hereto I have not lacked in any good thing for which we praise the Lord who does all things well. You will notice by this letter that it is written in long hand and not in print as my hands are greatly improved which gives me great relief. Praying that the Lord may bless your labors and with christian love and best wishes, yours by divine mercy.

ROGER A. KNIGHT.

(Truly such characters as our afflicted brother in Christ must be sacredly near their Lord, and to know that the *Signs* is used by the Holy Ghost for their comfort and consolation more than justifies its publication. We know our readers will be glad to know that his condition shows an improvement. R.L.D.)

Mount Pleasant, Texas.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

I notice by the wrapper of my *Signs* it is time to renew my subscription, and I certainly do not wish to miss a single copy I am enclosing herewith my check for $3. Will you kindly send me a copy of your book on Predestination for the extra dollar? In case your supply of the book is exhausted just use the dollar as you see fit. Instead of sending the usual little donation I am giving it to Elder Sikes of Sulphur Bluff, Texas, and have sent him a check for $25. Although I am not a member of any religious organization my poor soul has enjoyed many bountiful feasts on the wonderful truths so ably and powerfully expounded by Elder Sikes,, and I dearly love him for the sake of these truths. Remember me when at a throne of grace, and may the Great Commander continue to bless you and all the little children during this time of great confusion and suffering. Yours in hope of eternal life. D. W. WHITE.

Route 2, Reidsville, N. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

I am sending you my subscription which was due December 1943. I failed to receive my December issue, also one other issue but this is not the cause of my delay in renewing promptly. My feelings have been such I did not know what to do. I received the Jannuary issue and read Elder Green's wonderful sermon. There is life, rest and peace in it to one who is weary of the things that are of no profit, to one like me. I do not know how to be thankful to God for such a wonderful message. It made me feel glad in my poor soul that God has not yet forgotten to be gracious to a people that he has loved, and that there are some yet who are given a desire and a tongue to proclaim that Jesus is yet alive and is alive forevermore, and are given to know nothing save Jesus and him crucified. I realize we all would turn away and wander after things that would be our destruction, but I am glad we are not our own keepers, and I am also glad that I believe in One that is able and will direct in the right way. I hope we will be blest to march on together in love and fellowship with one another. This reminds me of the letter Paul wrote to the Hebrews, chapter 12, verses 1 and 2. "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." Your brother I hope. R. D. SHREVE.

Route 1, Box 901, Auburn, Wash.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

As my subscription is expiring I am enclosing $5, two for the *Signs* and three you can do with as you think best. The articles are all good in the February issue which I have just received. Other people can tell my experience better than I can tell it myself. One thing I want to

do is to understand the Bible just as it is quoted and not change the wording in any way. I am all alone and am trusting in my Saviour to show me the way I should go. On the twenty-third of January the east wall of my basement caved in putting my fireplace out of commission. I thought it is all for some good purpose and I will not complain for I believe in predestination. I have two rooms I can live in and it is hard to get any one to do any work. I live on a pension. This is a beautiful day and how many times I have thought the Lord makes everything beautiful. God does not change, the Bible says He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. My hope is that I am one of His children. I am very imperfect and full of sin but I still have a hope and want to be humble. I know there is nothing I can do to save myself and that it will be by his grace and mercy. Cast the mantle of charity over this and pray for me at the throne of grace. Your little sister.

(Mrs.) JENNIE CLIFFORD.

Union City, Tenn.

DEAR BUD:

All summer long we have had a desire to visit your home, and up to now, late in the fall, have not done so. For what reason we wanted to visit you I cannot say unless it was from the fact that we love to get the crumbs that fall from the Master's table, which the Master himself enables you to so bountifully spread before our poor hungry souls. You seem to always and at all times have the very food that our poor souls hunger for and need. So I am writing you and want you to know that there is at least one who loves your company and conversation for your conversation is almost at all times in heaven, from whence cometh every good and perfect gift. Just why I love this I cannot tell only that I realize that man and all that man is, is nothing and altogether vanity, empty, sinful, natural, corrupt, devilish and does not satify my longing for something which man cannot give. Somehow it seems that the great God of heaven and earth has in some way blessed you with the very food that feeds my soul and of course that is why I love and seek your company. On my part I guess it is selfishness. Then, too, I want you to know that since brethren Wall and Womack were here, and then the Association with all its great and good preaching by the visiting preachers, and we believe with the visitation of God's spirit to enable them to so wonderfully proclaim the very things that I believe that you and I hope that I love. Then comes the October issue of the *Signs of the Times* with the wonderful letter from Mrs. Luther Campbell of Memphis, the grand letters of Burch C. Wray to his family, the grand article of Elder John Neal and his experience, then the reply of Elder Dodson to Elder Ruston's announcement of his withdrawal from the Associate Editorship of the *Signs* and then last but not least the article by brother Dodson on the "Providences of God." All these grand sermons, letters and articles have been mine to enjoy and I am yet drinking to my soul's delight from each of the aforementioned events.. It seems to me just at the right time to keep me from going down in despair. Then my soul, too, has been made glad by the addition to the church of Mrs. George King whom the Lord has, according to my mind, graciously blessed with a wonderful revelation of his truths, and made her to love those truths and obey his commands to such as she is. Also Mr. and Mrs. Todd whom I am sure the Lord added to the church. They are grand people because they have been taught of the Lord. I know that the church has been made to rejoice because the Lord has added to her such as should be saved. Now, Bud, it seems that I must try to give you some of my thoughts on the grand doctrine of the resurrection. Why I want to write

on this subject I cannot tell for I fear I know nothing about it. It may be that the book on that subject which you let me have to read caused me to think constantly on these things, and in some ways I may view the resurrection differently from what most people do, but if I do I hope and believe that such as you and all lovers of the truth will be charitable to me and my views, because I think God's grace makes us charitable one to another and does not make us compromise truth for false doctrine, but makes us overlook our brother's faults to the end that you watch over me for good. Here are some of the conclusions I have seemed to reach concerning the great subject. I think this subject or doctrine is as old as God himself, has been taught and believed by his people in all ages, in fact the resurrection is the consummation of all the purpose of God concerning the fall and salvation of his people. I use the term, his people. By that I mean his people that was given in Christ before the world began, before Adam was formed out of the dust of the ground. Some of Adam's race was given to Christ before the dust of the highest hills were laid. To this people the resurrection is a very vital doctrine, a very comforting doctrine. Please notice that this people was given in Christ before the world began. When Christ made his advent into this world he came with his people in him, and I have not found anywhere in the Bible where he has ever turned this people out of himself. Their life is hid with Christ in God, and when Christ who is their life shall appear then shall they (his people) appear with him in glory. Remember that his people has ever been with Christ and will ever be with him. There is nothing that can separate Christ and his people. "Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" which love is shed abroad in our hearts "whereby we cry, Abba, Father." When Christ came to this world he came with his people in him. He took not on himself the nature of angels but the seed of Abraham. I wish to call your attention, if the Lord wills, to the fact that Christ himself *took on himself the seed of Abraham.* Who is this Abraham? Why it is the one whom God promised that in him and his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed. Now there is no nation on this earth but what will be blessed in the seed of Abraham if the promise of God fails not. To my mind this means that Abraham's seed of all nations is God's people of all nations, and that when Christ came into this world he came with the seed of Abraham or with Abraham's seed out of all nations, and Abraham's seed in all nations is God's people in all nations and that is what Christ came into this world with instead of the nature of the angels. Oh, I am so glad that this is so. I think you, too, are glad. Going back to the subject you can see in this that Christ came with all the seed of Abraham out of all the nations of the earth. This seed to my mind is the whole family of God out of every nation under heaven. It is the whole church triumphant in Christ. Christ is in the world with his people in him the seed of Abraham, the church of God, and Christ is made the head over all things to the church which is his body. He comes preaching the resurrection of his body saying, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." Some one marveled at this saying of Christ and said, "Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?" They did not know that he was talking about the temple of God, the church of God, the seed of Abraham. They could not understand him. The hour came when Christ was to be crucified, when he was to be

nailed to the cross, when he was to go to the cross carrying the seed of Abraham, his people in every nation, his church which is his body. He carried them to the cross, he did not forsake them. No, he carried them to the cross with him. He was crucified. They drove nails into his hands and a spear in his side, that is in his flesh, but they never broke a bone in his body (his body which is the church). They never tore up the great framework of the body of Christ which is the temple of God, but his body was taken down. The temple of God was taken down from the cross and laid in Joseph's new tomb. The whole seed of Abraham was laid in Joseph's tomb, God's people of all nations was laid in that tomb, the whole church of God was buried in that tomb. Oh, what a sorrowful time now for God's people. Christ is dead and buried, we cannot see him now, he is hid from our view, our hopes are gone. We had hoped that it was he who would sit on David's throne and live forever, but now he is dead, is buried, a stone rolled on his grave and sealed, his children's hope is buried in that tomb. At the appointed time, the third day according to his own teaching, he raised that temple of which he spake saying, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." The stone, the seal, the guards and the grave itself could not keep the body of Christ in that tomb for Christ himself is the resurrection and the life. When Christ came forth from that tomb he brought with him all the seed of Abraham out of all nations under heaven; he brought all the church of God, which is his body, out of that tomb; he brought all the hope of his church, which is his body, out of that tomb, and behold Christ is alive forever more. His body, the seed of Abraham, the church has been raised from the dead and not with the dead, and it is alive forever. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." This scripture seems to teach that the hope of God's children, the church, his body, was buried in that tomb, but their hope was raised out of that tomb, hence the language of the above text. Now, Bud, this is what I believe the resurrection to be, in fact I know that this was and is and shall be the resurrection that you and I, if I should mention myself, is concerned about. Was I crucified with Christ, am I one of the seed of Abraham which Christ took on himself, am I a member of Christ's body which is the church, was I carried to Calvary's cross in Christ's body, was I buried in that tomb, was I raised from that tomb with Christ? I can only answer that I hope so. If I have part in that resurrection all things else do not matter. Dispose of this old flesh body of mine as you will and it will make no difference for there is nothing good about my flesh any way. Like Paul, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing," and like him again, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Notice Paul's desire to be delivered *from* and not *with* the body. That is my desire I think. I also believe it is your constant prayer, deliver me *from* and not *with* my body of death. Let us learn a lesson from the peach tree. Take a peach seed and plant or bury it in the ground and what do you expect. Do you expect to see that old peach stone or seed to come up again out of the ground? No, no you do not expect that, and if you do you shall be disappointed. But what do you find coming from that stone or seed? Why you see a beautiful tree. First a sprout and then as God sends his rain and his warm sun, which to my mind is

the command given to each individual plant of God's own planting to come forth and bear fruit, you see the sprout grow up into a beautiful tree. You see it in the spring time take on or show forth the resurrection, or the resurrection life, which God has given unto it. It puts on green leaves then blossoms out in beautiful colors and sends forth sweet fragrance of living green and not the smell of a dead body. No, no a thousand times no. There is nothing about this tree that looks like death, but on the contrary it is life. Full of life. The resurrected life of Christ. It is not the old body that we planted, but God has given it a body as it pleased him. Just so with us if we are his children. I must close hoping you will be charitable to me for taking up your time and probably disturbing your mind which I think or believe dwells almost constantly on the greatness of God and his goodness to such worms as I am. Please cast the mantle of charity over this and if you can condescend so low write me and come to see me. May God, the giver of every good and perfect gift, give you a gift for me.

Yours, J. H. BARNES.

(The foregoing letter was addressed to Elder J. B. Collier, Route 4, Martin, Tenn., and sent by him to us for publication in our family paper. R.L.D.)

La Grange, Ky.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON:

DEAR BROTHER:

I do not feel worthy to address you thus, but I hope this is that relationship in the Lord. Enclosed you will find $2 which I am sending for the *Signs of the Times*. I have been taking them for forty-five years and hope to take them as long as I am spared in this world and can see to read them. My only son is in this terrible war, now overseas. May it be the dear Lord's will to take care of him and give me living faith to believe he will. I want to be reconciled to the Lord's will and to my lot. Oh, for grace to trust him more.

"The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will."

I am very lonely and do enjoy the good *Signs*. It is all the preaching I have. May the God of all grace bless and comfort his poor and afflicted people. Please remember me when at the throne of grace.

Yours in hope. (Mrs.) LUCY VORIES.

Basham, Va.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

I do not feel worthy to thus address you but I hope there is that relationship in the Lord. Enclosed you will find $2 for the renewal of the *Signs of the Times*. I am very sorry I have let the time run out before I renewed it. We do not feel like we can do without it. I love to read the good articles from the dear brethren. It is my experience. If I do not believe what the *Signs* sets forth I do not believe anything. The doctrine it contains is sweet to me. I want to tell you brethren at Ebenezer Church in New York how highly we appreciate you all being so kind to our son, Marvin L. Cole. He said you all made him feel at home and he enjoyed your preaching and like you so much. He is now stationed at Langley Field, Va. I hope it is not God's will for him to go overseas and fight in those awful battles. If so I hope I will be made submissive to his will. We are so lonely without him. He was the only child we had with us. Please remember him at the throne of grace when it is well with you. I hope this awful war will soon be over. I know it will be when it is God's holy will and not before. Love and sweet fellowship in hope of eternal life in the world beyond.

(Mrs.) J. K. COLE.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Mrs. J. B. Simmons, Tex., $1; J. P. McMillian, La., $1; Mrs. J. H. Wright, Ky., $3; W. A. Speer, Ark., $2; Mrs. A. McCormick, D.C., $2; Mrs. J. S. Mace, Pa., $1.

EDITORIAL

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

REBEKAH

This girl and her history affords the Lord's people with some highlights in their own experience. It covers every step in the travel of the church. It shows that Jesus Christ came to save his people, his bride, from their sins. In our study of the matter we must not lose sight of the fact that types and shadows are not the thing itself. I have my opinion that this narrative was comforting to the spiritual-minded Jew under the law. I am just made to believe that as God opened up this girl's history to the writer that he looked forward to "that day" and rejoiced in Spirit. Faith is not bounded by time or circumstances. It overcomes all obstacles and sees the fulfillment of the thing promised. It is Abraham that sends the servant after a wife for Isaac. I know many have said this servant was the preacher. To this I cannot concur. It might have a double application and thus mean the preacher, but I do not feel that it has. I feel that the servant is the Holy Spirit. It is never sent out of the family, it is always to the kindred in Christ. Have you ever made a careful reading of his journey? What was it he prayed for? What was the outcome? What was it that motivated her to come at the precise time? Why did she begin doing just as the servant prayed for her to do? Not a single runner has been sent ahead. No missionary had been there during the summer in revival and told her what was about to take place. It surely could not be by chance, it must be that it was by appointment. Did you notice how many camels the servant took for the journey? Did you notice that she went to serving them? He that had the camels and they, were watered from the same pitcher. Brethren, has there been a time when you felt some allegiance to God but were trying to gain notice by the keeping of the law? She recognized the servant in some way, but the secret of approach to him was not only by the shed blood of Jesus, but by performing the things found in the law. See that all ten camels are watered, see that all "these things" (Math. 19;16, 22) are kept from thy youth up. After hearing the plea of the servant and his praise of God she ran to the house. I believe in being in a hurry sometimes. This was a time for quick action, as was the custom of the land. Rebekah had seen many men with camels before this, but none had ever come like this one. Have you seen such, dear reader? Perhaps you had heard of the law. Methinks you had watered camels because everybody else said it was the thing to do, but somehow this is so different. Perhaps you thought you could keep the law at the proper time, but you was not in a hurry, there was plenty of time, but instead of you hunting up the law and setting a convenient time it has been brought to you and altogether a time not expected. It has come with such force—ten whole laws in one and any one of them sufficient to produce death if broken. A camel can make a long journey without water, but once the destination is reached it must drink. The law will not bother until it reaches its destin-

ation, but ah how true it is that when it is brought to God's children it must be waited on. So Rebekah was in a hurry, she ran, she had been equipped for running. The servant had given her earrings, placing them in her ears. What a bride to be! Dear child of God is it not your hope that your ears have been thus blessed? How long, how long that we could not hear the gospel, but now the deaf ears have been unstopped. Ah, that touch of divine love. Love has come into her heart and she goes to tell some one. There is no keeping the love of God hid. It will show in many ways, by changing the mind, changing the walk and in the places we go. Sometimes in our zeal to escape false doctrine we may run too far the other way. Some have said that God does not woo his people. I believe he does. I do not think he woos at the church but completely and successfully woos her. This is the work of the Spirit. It opens ears and puts on jewelry; it tells of the riches of Isaac and the love of God placed in her heart and soul and mind causes her to respond; it produces a desire to know more about the source of such power, love and grace; it breaks down all fear of the unknown. I think I have seen the spirit of that manifested among Old Baptists. Ordinarily we find no strangers among our folks. We do not have any hesitancy in going among strangers in the flesh. They are our people and we know that we are welcome among them. This respondency in Rebekah is found in every heir of promise. When it comes to going with the man the cost is not to be considered. The glorious beauty of Isaac that has been pictured to us is a drawing power that has covered all our earthly desires and made Him the one desire of all (Hag. 2:7). The hour of going to Him arrives. It is one thing to go to Him but another as how we go. She set out on the journey not yet knowing that the camels are "unto death" (Rom. 7:10). Her experience must have been in line with the apostle's. She thought that riding camels was the way to Isaac and set out on them. Going on this journey is the fulfillment of the language of Jesus, "They shall come to me." How providential the working to bring Rebekah to Isaac. Every obstacle is overcome. The will of the church is brought into mutual agreement with the will of God. She agrees to go and I want to emphasize again and again that in the spirit of the case she is yet willing to follow and does follow Him. All the wars, floods, flames and devils combined have not hindered her when Isaac was leading; she has rendered that verdict that holds good; she will go because the love of that man causes her to go; she is not drawn to Isaac by any force other than love. I must say that the girl had to go. Such a breaking down of opposition as confronted the servant does not leave any room for us to say that she could have stayed in the land of her nativity. Now let us turn and look at Isaac. What is he about? What is his frame of mind? We find him walking and meditating in the field. A bride has been promised him, a woman near and dear to him by relationship is to be his. His father has bestowed all his riches on him and he is about to share it with her. Husband and wife! How fitting that the Scriptures say, "The bride, the Lamb's wife." He is waiting her appearance and my soul contemplates what joy it must have been to thus wait. Waiting for her was compensation enough. So many cannot speak of doing the commandments without looking for rich rewards to follow, but I tell you it is a pleasure when you are waiting for Him. To encourage the poor, wayfaring children of God let me say that His waiting for the bride is just the same with Him as with her. He (Isaac) is in the field waiting, waiting for Rebekah, his wife. May I say his wait is in perfect confidence and complacency knowing the faithfulness of the servant sent on the

journey to bring her to him. Did you notice the looking for each other? Ah, dear pilgrim have you felt this oneness that belongs to Christ and his people? Have you felt your soul fill up on his loveliness in such a way as to cause you to rejoice? Has your cup, that he has given you, run over in such a way as to cause you to fear no evil, not even the shadow of death? How uncomfortable the journey must have been? Did you not find it so? That journey brought Rebekah to the end of her riding camels. The law had her in its power and she had to look to it. I do not think the law brought her to Isaac (Christ), but I think it was her schoolmaster unto him (Gal. 3:24). The grim journey is now over and that union of love, peace and joy has come. The riches of Isaac has been bestowed on his wife. She shares everything now with him and he with her. W.D.G.

"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient." 2 Tim. 2:24.

I know of no other chapter in the whole Bible which contains more instructions to a minister than this second chapter of Paul's second letter to Timothy. Paul had a great experience, beginning at the time he was struck blind on the Damascus road, and in his experience he had been taught that the life of a minister was anything but flowery beds of ease. Had he not suffered bonds and imprisonment? Had he not been dragged before the magistrates, and five times received forty stripes save one? Had he not spent a night and a day in the deep, and had he not fought with beasts at Ephesus? All of these things were suffered by him, because, as he himself said, he was *set* for the defense of the gospel. He, like all of God's people, learned much by the things which he suffered. He was, therefore, thoroughly capable and qualified to give instructions to a young preacher. Timothy was a young man and Paul's instructions to him were timely and much needed for he, too, was to suffer persecution, in fact he was to meet all classes and kinds of people, and some even among the people of God who would "have the preeminence." Yes, and in his life experience he would come in contact with all kinds of opposers even those "that oppose themselves," and Timothy needed to know how to deal with them. Paul was instructing Timothy as a father would instruct his son, and telling him that "the servant of the Lord must not *strive;* but be *gentle* unto *all men.*" So it is easy to see from this text that a minister cannot be a bigot and have the seal of divine approval upon his preaching. As I read over again and again this glorious chapter, the thought comes to me that all Old Baptist preachers, whether they be young or old, would do well to read again and drink deep of what the great apostle here says to his own son in the faith, realizing that whatsoever was written beforehand was written for our learning. Now the very thing which made it necessary for Paul to give these divine instructions was the fact that some were guilty of those things which he says a servant of the Lord must not do. They were found "striving about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers." Some did even love the preeminence, and no doubt desired to be called big preachers, and we see and read of much of the same things going on among Old Baptists at the present time. Yes, it seems that some would set themselves up for a standard of perfection, while they demand all the rest of God's humble poor to *reach even unto them,* to see just as they see, and believe the same that they believe, and if they cannot do so then they are ready to set up bars to fellowship against them. Now brethren, these things ought not to be found among Baptists, and if such procedure is not the kind of striving that

Paul said a servant of the Lord must not do then pray tell me what it is. Whatever we make of it, it must mean just the opposite to being "gentle unto all men," and we know that the kind of strife we have just mentioned, which is now prevalent among so many Baptists, is certainly very far from being "gentle unto all men." "The servant of the Lord *must not strive* but be gentle." I am persuaded that if we, as ministers of the Lord, and stewards of the mysteries of God, were inclined to deal gently with all men, and especially those who are of the household of faith, much more would be accomplished toward reconciliation of the entire family of Baptists than is being accomplished at this time by biting and devouring one another. And there is one other thing we must not forget which is all important, as handed down by Paul to Timothy and to us. It is this: a true minister must not only "be gentle unto all men" but he *must be* "apt to teach." Do we think a preacher who seeks to gain notoriety for himself by creating discord in the churches and causing dissension among the brethren is "apt to teach" God's little children the things they need to know and desire to learn? Here our answer must be negative. We cannot instruct the Lord's children, who desire to know the truth, unless we can teach them in a spirit of love and humility. As long as we are ambitious for the leadership, and to have all others submit to us as question settlers, just so long, I fear, we are being led by the flesh and not by the Spirit. If we only had a mind to stop and consider our own shortcomings, and how terribly blind we all have been until by the Spirit of our God we were made able to see "men as trees, walking," then I think we would be in a position to be more tolerant toward our brethren who do not see just as we see on every particular point of doctrine. The Bible is the written word of God, divinely inspired, and should be our only rule of faith and practice. I am sure it was the Scriptures of the Old Testament which Paul told Timothy to study so diligently. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." It is just as necessary for Old Baptist preachers of this day to study the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments as it was in Paul's day, yet I have known some Old Baptist ministers who read the Scriptures very little, if any, and certainly did not make a study of them, and these men in their ignorance of bible teaching set up rulings of their own making contrary to the Scriptures and demanded of their churches to observe them, and barring from fellowship those who could not, calling their unscriptural man made rules *"order."* Again there have always been found among Baptists, some, who not content with the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit to enlighten our minds to understand them, but have sought to adopt a confession or to draw up a new one in order to bar from fellowship all who cannot accept it with a hearty *Amen.* Beloved, does not such an attitude on the part of Baptists have the appearance of Roman Catholicism? Do we not see in this a mark of the beast? Can we not discern in it the leopard's spots? Of all people on the earth who should have no use for a confession drawn up by fallible men it is Old Baptists. Have we not said from the very earliest of our existence as Baptists we take the word of God for our *only* rule of faith and practice? Why then should we discard it and adopt a code of man made laws to follow as our rule of faith and practice? Dearly beloved brethren, you who believe we must worship God in Spirit and have no confidence in the flesh allow me to say, the Bible, the Bible, it is the written word of God. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." God's people need no confession

drawn up by men. Why, men would demand us to change our belief as often as they change. We need only the Bible and the Holy Spirit to reveal its mysteries to us. And only God's true ministers who have been given a mind to peruse the Scriptures from cover to cover, and have had its deep mysteries unfolded to them by the Holy Spirit, and who have been made humble and loving, and "gentle unto all men," I say, only these are "apt to teach." May the Lord enlighten our minds, give us humility and make us gentle toward all men. J.S.H.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Elder J. S. Hunnicutt wishes to announce that his address has been changed from Webbville, Ky. to Denton, Ky.

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Nellie M. Palmer)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Lincoln Co., Maine, September 10, 11 *and* 12, 1943, *sendeth greetings and love in our Lord to the several churches and associations with which we correspond.*

Dear Brethren: Again the Lord has permitted us to come together to worship in his dear name. We trust we worship in spirit and in truth for he seeketh such to worship him. God is a spirit and can be worshipped in no other way so if we worship in spirit we must worship in truth. How do we know these things unless his spirit dwells within us, and how can we hope we have his spirit unless we feel some assurance of it? And what are some of the assurances? The first is love. The babe in Christ feels this love for Christ and the brethren. By this we know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. He also brings us to his banqueting house, and like Mephibosheth we sit at the King's table. He says to us, "Drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved," and we find ourselves drinking from that fountain, the streams whereof make glad the city of our God. We find a warfare within "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Gal. 5:17. Also a desire for a closer walk with God and a feeling of presumption for one so vile to kneel before him. We know the things of time and sense satisfy us no more, and we love him so much for his wonderful works to the children of men. To think and feel that he came, even to us, in all our vileness, stained with sin, black (yet comely), and cast his mantle about us, the perfect robe of righteousness. Thus we travel on sorrowful yet always rejoicing. Sorrowful over the evil which we find within. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" We rejoice in a crucified and risen Saviour who declared the work was finished. We live in this world as a part of it, yet not of it. "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world," (John 17:16.) and we find we live this truth daily. Now brethren we bid you adieu until 1944 when we hope to again greet you in love and fellowship.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS,
Moderator

SANFORD S. BARLETT,
Clerk

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Lincoln Co., Maine, September 10, 11 *and* 12, 1943 *sendeth greetings and love in our Lord to the several churches and associations with which we correspond.*

Dear Brethren: Your correspondence and

ministering brethren have been gladly received, both declaring the goodness and mercy of God who gave his only begotten Son to die on the cross as a propitiation for our sins, making us sons of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Our meeting was well attended by the Maine brethren and we all felt it was good to be there. Mr. Will King, a grandson of two deceased members of the Whitefield Church, (sisters Eleanor King and Ella Pulsifer) graciously donated the use of a large furnished house where nearly all visiting brethren spent the two nights and had breakfasts. This was sincerely appreciated by all. During the past year there has been an increase in the Maine Association. In August, sister Ruth Brock, the eldest daughter of brother Bartlett, came before the church and related a wonderful experience. She was accepted by the Whitefield Church and after lunch was baptized by Elder Croker. At the Association two previous sisters, Mrs. Mathe Glidden and Mrs. Etta Merrigold were received by the Whitefield Church upon a confession of faith. It is written Acts 2:1, "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." The meeting at Whitefield seemed like this, and the presence of the Lord filled the house as the two sisters were given liberty to relate the dealings of the Lord with them, and we were able to hear and understand in our own tongues a language taught by the working of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. The next meeting of the Maine Association will be, Providence permitting, Friday, Saturday and Sunday before the second Monday in September, 1944.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS,
Moderator

SANFORD S. BARTLETT,
Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Wheras, the Lord in his infinite wisdom and mercy has seen fit to remove from our midst our dear brother and deacon, THOMAS MADISON CARRIGAN, born Dec. 31, 1873, died 17, 1943, therefore be it

Resolved, that we bow our heads in humble submission to His holy will, praying to be reconciled and to be given grace and faith to ever look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Resolved, that Eno Church has lost a faithful member but we feel that our earthly loss is his eternal gain.

Resolved, that he will be greatly missed by all who knew him, but his life should be a shining example to us as we journey on in the hope of a better world.

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be recorded in our church book, one to the family and one to each of the following publications:

Old Faith Contender
Signs of the Times
Zion's Landmark

Done by order of conference, Eno Primitive Baptist Church, Durham, N. C., Feb. 26, 1944.

A. L. HOLLOWAY, Moderator.
T. W. WHITEFIELD, Clerk.

OBITUARIES

At the request of her dear daughter, Mrs. Edna Coulter Baker, I, with sadness of heart, here record the notice of the passing to her eternal home of our beloved sister in Christ, MRS. ANNIE HILL COULTER, widow of the late Elder B. F. Coulter, on March 10, 1944, and, with God's help, shall attempt to add a brief tribute to her revered memory. Sister Coulter was born Nov. 11, 1840 in Principio, Md. Her parents were John R. and Catherine C. Hill both of Newark, Del. On Aug. 1, 1872, she was married to Dr. B. F. Coulter of New York City. To them two daughters were given, Edna and Florence. The latter died when still a child. In 1875 Dr. Coulter and family moved to Philadelphia, Pa. April 7, 1889 sister Coulter was received and baptized by Elder Staton at Welch Tract, Del. into the fellowship of the Salem Old School Baptist Church of Philadelphia, Pa., where her husband was then a member, and of which church he later became pastor. Although most deeply grieved at the loss of her faithful and beloved companion on May 31, 1923, our precious sister was given strength to travel on uncomplainingly through the lonely years that followed. Words are inadequate to fully portray her gracious and saintly character. Sister

Coulter's entire life of over ninety years was spent in ministering to others in every possible way, always unmindful of self. She was a true "Mother in Israel." The home of Elder and sister Coulter was known far and wide for its true hospitality, and particularly as a place where those of the household of faith were most warmly welcomed at any hour of the day or night. The godly graces and manifest spiritual fruits of this ideal couple ever stand out as truly exceptional in the memories of all who were privileged to have known them. The last four weeks she was on earth, dear sister Coulter was called upon to endure terrible physical suffering, due to a heart ailment. As the attacks grew more severe, she prayed to be taken home. The night before this request was granted her she quoted the words: "Safe in the arms of Jesus." When the end came she passed away without a struggle. In the last cherished letter this writer received from this dear saint, just a few weeks ago, she penned: "I cannot be thankful enough to the dear Lord for his loving kindness and tender mercy in giving me health and strength and kindness from my loved ones. In my prayers every night I ask the dear Lord to be with me and guide me. It does come from my very heart. I feel his presence is with me, and he will direct my steps and I will walk right. He is my refuge, my strength and my salvation. I look to him for everything." So, like all the saints from of old, the nearer she came to the end of her journey here below, the brighter shone her faith. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." How truly this was manifest in her case. Besides her daughter, our dear sister, Edna C. Baker, two granddaughters, Mrs. Marion Baker McCrone and Mrs. Iva Baker Byers, and two great-grandchildren, Jean McCrone and Louis Byers survive. May it be God's will that the beloved daughter and grandchildren, together with all her many brethren and friends who cherished her so dearly, be given to feel that she is not really far removed from them. She has only passed on beyond the veil, where she is free from sorrow and pain, now basking in the sunshine of his glorious presence, experiencing the fruition of her hope to which she clung here below. We, who are left on this side of the veil, have but a short while to wait before we hope to enter into this same fullness she is now enjoying.

There, where the blessed Saviour reigns,
Her thankful voice she'll raise,
Through all the vast eternity,
In hymns of joy and praise.

Her pastor, Elder C. W. Vaughn, officiated at the funeral in Philadelphia, Pa., the evening of March 12, and at Welch Tract, Del., where on the following afternoon her dear body was laid beside that of her husband, Elder Coulter, Elder H. H. Lefferts took charge of the services. Submitted by a sorrowing one to whom for many years our sainted sister has been a precious, loyal and loving friend.

FLORENCE BEEBE BELLOWS.

The Lord God of Israel hath given rest unto his people that they may dwell in Jerusalem for ever and ever, and once more it becomes my sad duty, by request, to chronicle the death of sister STELLA ODOM, the beloved wife of brother W. M. Odom of Cambria, Ill. on Nov. 21, 1943 of a heart attack. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Moses Atwood and was born Aug. 19, 1873. At a young and tender age she was left motherless to keep house for her lonely father and to care for the younger children. A finer and sweeter girl never grew up. On March 5, 1891, W. M. Odom claimed Miss Stella Atwood as his bride. God surely joined them as one as they were so happily united. God gave to this union five children. A son, Carl Odom, and an infant daughter preceded her in death. In 1904 she moved with her family to near De Soto, Jackson Co., Ill. Here she lived until 1918 when she and brother Odom moved to Cambria, Ill. where she lived at the time of her death. Sister Odom united with the Old School Primitive Baptist Church of Christ, Aug. 8, 1920 and was baptized the following day. She leaves to mourn a devoted husband, grieving himself away. One daughter, Mrs. John Patrick of Pontiac, Ill., two sons, Bert Odom of San Francisco, Calif., and Ben Odom, of De Soto, Ill., nine grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, also two sisters, one of Marion, Ill. one of Thompsonville, Ill. and one brother, Oliver Atwood of Marion, Ill. The funeral was conducted in the home by her pastor, Elder Potter Harris. The Baptist brethren and sisters sang the hymns and presented a large wreath of flowers. The children covered their mother's casket with flowers, the grandchildren a large beautiful wreath, and flowers were presented by her kin and friends. The remains were laid to rest in Lake Creek Cemetery near Johnston City, Ill. not far from the place where she was born. Sister Odom was deeply loved by all who knew her. Her dear and only daughter said in a letter to me that her mother was to her family what the sun is to the universe, light, guidance and hope. She is heart broken and wishes to become reconciled but cannot. She said she could see her mother in her last few hours suffering so terribly and looking up to her to do something for her when all had been done that could be, and all she could do was to sit and see her suffer until the blessed Jesus took her home to live with his saints forever. Brother Odom we know your heart is crushed, leaving you sad and lonely. The love between sister Odom and myself was very deep. My

tears flow while I write the precious memories. I am not worthy to repeat the deep, sweet fellowship we often spoke of. Often in her letters to me she would say, "how can the Lord be so merciful as to save a sinner such as I feel myself to be? The blessed Jesus who knew no sin. Am I his or am I not?" I have always found sister Odom sound in the faith and firm as a rock. She lived her religion and died as she lived, trusting in God. To the children, may we so live and die and share the glories of a glorious resurrection. You will have to repair to Jesus for ease for your troubled breasts, leave your sorrows all behind, and just for a little while say, farewell mother dear. One that knew her. (Mrs.) FANNIE H. CHESTER.

LAURA OLIVIA HUTCHENS PARKER was born March 14, 1871, and fell quietly asleep in Jesus about ten o'clock in the evening of March 4, 1944. She was married to Thomas Craig Parker, December 17, 1895, and to this union were born ten children. Her beloved husband passed away thirteen years ago the 10th of last December, and three of the children died while small. The surviving children are Buell and Robus of Detroit, Mich., Prentice, Clifton, Rudy and two daughters, Miss Ruby Parker and Mrs. Amon Queen all of near Murray, Calloway Co., Ky. Sister Parker with her husband united with the Salem Church, in Calloway Co., Ky., about forty years ago. Several years ago the church was dissolved and while they never offered their letters to any other church they never ceased going to meeting. One of her daughter said that when her mother became so feeble she could no longer go to meeting she worried because that was the greatest pleasure she had. Sister Parker had the sad misfortune to fall some years ago and injure her hip and she never fully recovered from it, but, nevertheless, her injury did not keep her from her meetings. Even after her devoted husband passed on she was a sound and devoted Baptist and always prepared for the Associations and union meetings. She was held in the highest esteem by all the Baptists of this country. She and her husband raised an outstanding family of noble children. The Baptists thought so much of her and her children for their unrelenting contending for the old land marks and faith of the Primitive Baptists. Truly they have, in a sense, lost a great and faithful member, but we do not sorrow for her as for those which have no hope. Her home was always a welcome place for the Baptists and she surely did enjoy entertaining them. I will say to the children may God bless and reconcile you for I feel your loss is her great and eternal gain. She was buried March 6 on her oldest son's birthday. The writer tried in his weakness to preach her funeral at her home amid a large congregation of brethren, sisters, relatives, neighbors and friends after which she was laid beside her husband in Old Salem Church Cemetery to sleep until Jesus comes the second time without sin unto salvation, to raise his elect and chosen children from the grave in his image to be just like him, and be in his presence to shout his praise never ending in that world where there will be no wars nor sorrow, but be an eternal peace and happiness forever and ever. Oh, may God watch over us all and keep us from evil and from things strangled and from blood, and finally land all the blood washed throng safely home in that great and eternal beyond is the prayer of the unworthy writer. (Elder) O. W. PERKINS.

ELDER THOMAS J. BEVINS was born July 12, 1857, and departed this life January 15, 1941, aged 83 years, 6 months. He was the son of G. W. Bevins and Nancy Williamson Bevins. He was married to Mary Anna Morris, March 7, 1882, having spent fifty-eight years in happy wedlock before being separated by death. To this union were born four children, three sons and one daughter, Willie Bevins, Rell Bevins, George Bevins and Lillie Damron, all of Meta, Ky. He was a member and minister of the Primitive Baptist Church for many years, having been baptized into this church when quite a young man, and remained a devoted member until the day of his death. He kept the faith, attended church regularly, and performed his duties as a minister until blindness and ill health confined him to his rooms. The writer can say of him what every son would like said of his own father: he was a kind father, a worthy and loving husband and a devoted christian. He leaves to mourn their loss, his children and grandchildren, one sister, Mrs. Martha Pauly of Canada, Ky. and many neighbors and friends. To them I say weep not, our loss is his eternal gain. I verily believe he heard the glad call, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Written by his son. RELL BEVINS.

MARY ANNA MORRIS BEVINS was born Aug. 12, 1860 at Canada, Ky. and departed this life Feb. 11, 1940, making her stay on earth 79 years and 6 months. She was the daughter of Ambrose and Polly Morris. Mar. 7, 1882 she married Thomas J. Bevins and to this couple were born four children, three sons and one daughter, Lillie Damron, Rell Bevins, W. J. Bevins and George Bevins, all of Meta, Ky. She was a faithful, dutiful wife and a kind and loving mother. Receiving a hope in Christ and embracing the faith of the Old Regular Primitive Baptists she was baptized about the year 1880, and lived a devoted christian until her death.

Mother was crippled since the age of nine years and obliged to walk with crutches. However, despite this handicap, she retained a cheerful attitude toward life, having faith that God, according to his promise, would not forsake his children. Having been confined to her room several years a victim of asthma she endured untold suffering, but bore it all with patience and was submissive to the will of our dear Lord until her death. Yes, we miss dear mother, and especially do I as I feel so alone since my dear parents have passed away. I believe that our loss is her eternal gain, and at the great day of the resurrection, by the grace of eternal God, I hope to meet her. Yes, I hope to meet them both, together with my loved ones and friends who have gone on to the glory land. We are told in St. John 5:28, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice." Her body was laid to rest in the family cemetery to await the great day.

Mother is gone but not forgoten,
Never will her memory fade;
Sweetest thoughts will ever linger,
'Round the grave where she is laid.

Written by her daughter.

(Mrs.) LILLIE DAMRON.

AUGUSTUS M. HELLINGS departed this life Dec. 14 ,1943 in his eighty-second year. His parents were Edwin and Lurina Carter Hellings. He was united in marriage to Miss Olivia N. Tindall, Aug. 30, 1882 by the late Elder William J. Purrington. To this union were born five children, two boys, Edwin and Charles, and three daughters, Lurina, Lydia and Mary Louise. Sister Olivia N. Hellings and the daughter, Mary Louise, are faithful members of the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church. There are five grandchildren and five great- grandchildren, with the widow and children mentioned above, surviving to mourn their loss. He never became affiliated with any church organization, but believed the doctrine of salvation by grace. We were favored to have conversation with him a short time before he died, when much feeling was manifested and very acceptable to our understanding. After we had gone he said to sister Hellings, "Be sure to tell them to come again." Our feelings are that our loss is his eternal gain and that we should not weep for him as though he had no hope. He delighted to take sister Hellings to the Warwick and other Associations and many will recall the visits they had with him. His memory recalled such in his conversations. His funeral service was conducted by the writer and many friends and relatives were in attendance. His remains were laid to rest in the Ewing Cemetery to await the time when the grave shall give up its dead and receive the full consummation of faith and hope.

(Elder) C. W. VAUGHN.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

Please watch the wrapper coverings of your paper to see whether or not you are behind with your subscription to our family paper. Opposite your name appears the date to which you are paid. If you are behind and can conveniently send in what is due it will be greatly appreciated.

This is simply a REMINDER to those who have either overlooked or neglected the matter, and to all who respond to it we say in advance, thank you! R.L.D.

AUTHORIZED AGENTS

ALABAMA

Elder Lytle Burns, Florence, Ala.
Elder F. A. Collins, Hartford, Ala.
Elder W. D. Griffin, Fayette, Ala.

FLORIDA

Elder C. H. Byrd,
P. O. Box 86, Panama City, Fla.

GEORGIA

Elder H. O. Nash,
431 Hardendorf Ave., N. E., Atlanta, Ga.

KENTUCKY

Elder G. B. Bird, Canada, Ky.
Elder J. S. Hunnicutt, Denton, Ky.

LOUISIANA

Elder E. J. Lambert,
P. O. Box 55, Lillie, La.

MARYLAND

Elder Harold M. Bennett,
Mardela Springs, Md.

NEW JERSEY

Elder Charles W. Vaughn,
Hopewell, N. J.

NORTH CAROLINA

Elder T. F. Adams, Williow Springs, N. C.
Elder E. L. Cobb, Wilson, N. C.
Elder T. H. Edwards, Jacksonville. N. C.
Elder M. F. Westbrook, Rt. 3, Dunn, N. C.

OHIO

Elder Geo. L. Weaver,
16116 Westview Ave., Cleveland, 20, Ohio.

OKLAHOMA

Elder W. N. Green, Box 654, Altus, Okla.

OREGON

Elder C. W. Bond,
Island City, Oregon.

TEXAS

Elder L. D. Rose, Athens, Texas.

VIRGINIA

Elder J. E. Burgess, Rt. 1, Box 180, Martinsville, Va.
Elder Roy S. Smith, Cascade, Va.
Elder David V. Spangler, Rt. 6, Danville, Va.

NOTICE

Will those who have notices of SPECIAL MEETINGS to be published, please send them to us six weeks prior to the month in which they are to be held? R. L. D.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

Is the title of a book consisting of 172 pages and containng about thirty separate articles on the subject. It will be given FREE with a year's subscription to the *Signs of the Times* to anyone who is not now a subscriber to the paper, or to any old subscriber who will send us a NEW subscription for the *Signs of the Times* at $2 per year. The price of the book alone is $1. We regret to say that we have no more books on Predestination. R.L.D.

TO OUR READERS

Judging from the numerous favorable expressions of approval which are constantly being received from all over the country, we are convinced that a large number of our readers are well pleased with both the content and the manner in which the SIGNS is being published. For all of this we are truly grateful and wish to extend our cordial and sincere thanks.

As we are anxious to enlarge our field of usefulness we are going to ask that each one of our readers make a real effort during the summer and fall months to secure for us a NEW subscriber. Remember, if you have not already received a copy of our 172 page book on the Resurrection of the Dead, we will send one FREE to every one who is not now a subscriber or to every old subscriber who will send us a NEW subscription at $2 yer year.

Your combined efforts in this respect will undoubtedly bring some real tangible results for the messenger which goes out monthly containing precious messages to the poor and needy of the flock of God.

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES actually costs less than four cents per week. If you feel that it is worth many, many times the price, will you not kindly speak with those of your brethren and friends who are interested in "these things" and try to get them to subscribe to our family paper.

Please be assured of our thanks in advance.—R.L.D.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sundays in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a.m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meeting-house, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed. R. LESTER DODSON.

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday at the end of old South Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
J. A. CURTIS, Clerk.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 3rd Sunday, Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
C. H. BYRD, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles South of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
B. G. KINGRY, Clerk.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
J. W. BASS, Clerk.

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday and Elder E. E. Watson on Sunday.
AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church, located 5 miles North of Hartford, Ala., holds services each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching Elders F. A. and J. J. Collins on Saturday, and Elder J. J. Collins on Sunday.
A. E. SORRELS, Clerk.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canda, California.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before.
E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists invites all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren, to meet with us first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hitchins. Take graveled road to the church.

E. M. TACKETT,
J. S. HUNNICUTT, Pastors.
H. L. ROGERS, Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.
Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 A.M. 1:30 P.M.
To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

C. W. BOND, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1315 Columbia Avenue
(PARK AVENUE HALL)
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Meeting First Sunday in Each Month
At 10:30 A.M.
ALL WELCOME

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Tex.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sunday in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P.M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sunday each month at 11:00 A.M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Salem Church, four miles south of Teague, Texas, meets on Saturday before the first Sunday in each month in conference.

W. A. LITTLE, Pastor.
DORA WREN, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a.m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, Pastor.

(Mrs.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk.
Stockdale, Texas.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a.m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before.

A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 112 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JULY, 1944 No. 7

THE SHEEP THAT STRAYED

I was bleating on the hillside
Away out in the cold;
I had strayed far away
From the lambs of the fold.

Cold was the air and chill
No pastures green in sight;
None near to hear my cry
Or see my dreadful plight.

On the jagged rocks so cruel
My flesh was cut and torn;
Thorns and briars bound me,
'Till I was weak and worn.

Rank grew the weeds and high,
But naught was there for food;
Wild beasts at night came forth
With all their evil brood.

Sweet visions of the meadows green,
Beside the waters still,
When by my Shepherd led
I fed and drank my fill.

Come! and I cried aloud
From hunger grief and fear,
And laid me down to die
Not knowing help was near.

Then a kindly voice beside me
Fell gently on my ear;
Oh! erring wayward one
I'm with thee—do not fear.

I bought thee with a price,
And shall not let thee go;
The path that leads to death
The way of endless woe.

I'll never leave thee—nor forsake,
Mine eye was on thee still
When straying from the fold
I saw thee climb the hill.

In broad forbidden path
By winding pleasant stream,
That leads away to death
From pastures rich and green.

I saw thee nor would call thee back
'Till lesson thou shouldst learn,
To trust not thy frail self
Thy Shepherd's teaching spurn.

But walk beside the flock
Of his most tender care;
And feed in pastures green
By the living waters there.

NELLIE H. ARNOLD.

CORRESPONDENCE

(We believe the following article written by the late Elder Silas H. Durand and published in the Signs January 1, 1887 will be of special interest to our readers.—R. L. D.)

CONTROVERSY

To a certain extent there is controversy in the presentation of any religious sentiment, for all opposing sentiments are controverted by it. The truth on any subject cannot be declared without controverting every erroneous view. In the discussion of subjects by brethren there must necessarily be controversy whenever different views are entertained, as there will be on many subjects while we are in the flesh. I cannot see any harm, but often much good, in controversy, so long as those engaged in it are directed by the right spirit. It is the sharpness and bitterness of personal allusions that worry and distress the tender spiritual mind, and cause many to regard controversy among brethren with dread. It is, perhaps, in our nature to resent any opposition to sentiments that we entertain; and when not under the control of the

meek and gentle Spirit of Christ, one is very apt to think it necessary to sternly rebuke those who hold views contrary to his own. When we are in that state of mind we ought not to write, but wait till we can feel sure that a kindly and loving spirit is prompting us, before we undertake to correct what we deem to be errors in the sentiments of a brother. The apostle uses the expression, "Speaking the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15); and I think, when the Lord calls one to speak or write upon these heavenly things, he gives him the spirit of love to control him. "The love of Christ constraineth us," says the apostle. We may feel very backward about claiming for ourselves such an exalted and holy motive, yet I am sure that if we cannot have some evidence that we are speaking or writing in love, we are out of place in attempting to discuss such sacred things.

It does not seem to me necessary that one should say offensive things to or of another, in giving a different understanding of a subject from that which he has expressed, only so far as the very fact of holding and expressing a different view may itself be deemed an offense. The object of one in any controversy should not be merely to defend his own view, and sustain his character as a correct thinker and a clear and deep writer or speaker, but to present the truth that has been made precious to his soul, with a humble desire to glorify God and comfort his dear children. If it is really the truth one is contending for, the real meaning of the Holy Spirit in the portion of Scripture under contemplation, there will be more than a mere array of proof texts in presenting and confirming that truth. It will have come unto the one who is speaking of it, "Not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance;" and that power will be witnessed by those who have been taught in their experience the same truth, as they hear it from him, and the speaking of such truth will be a comfort to such, although it may be the first they have ever heard it. The "form of sound words" which we heard from the inspired writers is to be held fast, and no experience can be regarded as genuine which is not in accordance with the letter of the word. But we are to remember that it is in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus, that the Lord's people hold fast the form of sound words to their profit and comfort, and not in the carnal mind. The mere arraying of proof texts in defense of a point of doctrine is dry reading for one who is hungering and thirsting after righteousness. One who knows nothing of grace, may take great delight in bringing forward the strong and clear declarations of Scripture concerning any point of doctrine, and may exhibit great skill and zeal in defending the doctrine; but his discussions will not feed the sheep. Although he may speak or write strictly in the letter of the truth, his words will not come into the hearts of the living family of God with the comforting, trumpet sound of the gospel. I have known a number of such, and I would have to say of them what a dear brother once said to me with reference to a sermon we had just listened to, "Well, if he said anything that was not true, I was too dull to see it; but he did not speak as though he felt it, and I did not feel it." The doctrine is not merely important; it is everything; but it is doctrine that has life in it to us; doctrine that is felt in the heart, not merely held in the mind. In salvation, the doctrine and experience cannot be separated. The doctrine is the foundation; it is also the house that is built upon the foundation. But what can we know of the foundation, unless we have been favored to rest upon it? What can we know of the house, if it has never given us the comfort of its shelter and protection? The doctrine is the rock; but what is the rock to us, unless it has poured out to us the water of salvation? unless we

have been blessed to suck honey and oil out of it? If the doctrine is the honeycomb, the experience is the honey; and when the Bridegroom comes into his garden, which is his sister, his spouse, he says, "I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey." In salvation, the honey is never separated from the comb, but they are eaten together. When either is exhibited separately, it may possibly be counterfeited; but when a piece of comb filled with honey is shown us, we know it is real. When the doctrine comes to us from God, every word is filled with sweet experience of love, and peace, and joy. We do not want one merely to tell us what the Bible says. That is not necessarily preaching the gospel. An infidel can do that as well as one of the Lord's servants. But when we are before the Lord, as Cornelius and his household were, we want to hear from the Lord's servant what is commanded him of God. We want to hear the word of the Lord that has come to him, and which is in him as a fire shut up in his bones, so that he is weary with refraining, and cannot stay. "Preach the word," writes the apostle to Timothy; but that word which he is to preach, is what he has seen with his eyes ,and looked upon, and handled, of the word of life.—1 John 1-3. Preaching is more than merely giving one's views. When the gospel is preached, there is power, authority, in it; for "it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." I remember once at an association, when a dear brother who had never been there before, and whom very few present had ever heard preach, took a text that led at once into a subject upon which there were very different sentiments held by different ones present, and concerning which there had been much fruitless discussion. This brother, in the simplicity and power of true gospel preaching, went right through the controverted ground, preaching the word out of his own heart, and in humble confidence opening the Scriptures, and declaring the doctrine of Christ; and all the brethren met together at once in the truth he proclaimed so boldly, humbly, and sweetly. All with one accord said, "That is the truth." They recognized and felt the authority of the word preached, and their differences of views were for the time so far below them as to be lost sight of. His text was, 1 John 3:9, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

On the day of pentecost, the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one mind. But that one mind was the mind of Christ, the understanding of which the Son of God gives his people. That one heart was the new heart which is given them. In that divine life the saints are one. By one Spirit they are all baptized into one body. But they are as diverse in the flesh as they ever were. They all have yet a carnal mind, in which they are no more one than they were before born again. It is from this source that differences arise among the saints, bringing wars and contentions. This carnal mind strives to impose itself upon them as that mind in which all the saints are, or ought to be, one. It is because of this that the apostle more than once exhorts them to be of one mind and of the same judgment. It is not only not wrong, but it is their duty, to strive to bring all their differences of view, in regard to divine things, to the infallible test of the Scriptures, seeking in solemn humility and brotherly love to discover and hold fast only that which is truth. That which is of the flesh is easily known by many marks, if we are only made willing to acknowledge them. All the various passions and evil propensities, as anger, envy, wrath, levity, hatred, covetousness, and the like, are of the carnal mind, and that position in defense of which they are enlisted is very apt to prove the wrong one. The power of the truth and of the love of

God felt in the heart holds these fleshly propensities for the time in subjection, as the power of light causes darkness to disappear. The true weapons of our warfare are then at our service, which "are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations in our own minds, or in the reasoning of others, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into subjection every thought to the obedience of Christ."—2 Cor. 10-4. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." With this blessed privilege of access at the only source of true wisdom, it would appear that the dear saints might easily be of one mind.

In order to endeavor to be of the same mind and judgment in regard to the things of the kingdom of God, it is necessary that the saints should, as often as may be, speak one with another of these things, and not only present to each other that in which they do see alike, but that also in which their views are of any difference, in order to see if the Lord will show them which is of the flesh and which of the Spirit. This is controversy. But it really seems as though there is no need that there should be bitterness in it, or striving for the mastery, or angry, sharp or reproving words. Why should not brotherly love continue perfectly while each expresses simply and freely what he understands as the truth of the subject, setting forth such testimony as the Lord has, in his estimation, given him, and while each gives kind and careful attention to the views presented in opposition to his, ready and glad to acknowledge candidly any thing that appears well supported in those views? This is striving together for the faith of the gospel; striving to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; striving to be of one mind. It should be our anxious desire that this one mind, when we find ourselves agreed, should be the mind of Christ, rather than the mind of any one of us.

While many dear saints have been much troubled by controversy, because they fear that the asperities so liable to be indulged in by the parties disputing, will tend to interrupt brotherly kindness, and because any expressed differences among the dear saints hurt them deeply, others seems to be opposed to controversy because they are not willing that any position which they hold as correct should be disputed. Sometimes one will present his views very elaborately and positively, and then declare it as his opinion that controversy is not good, but rather detrimental to the cause; implying that the presentation of any view opposing his would be controversy. Such an one forgets that he who presents a point concerning which there is a difference of opinion among brethren, himself has began the controversy, and would be doing injustice to himself, as a fair-minded man and christian, to wish to suppress such reasons as a brother might be able to present in favor of an opposite view. If he is absolutely sure that he is in the Spirit, and therefore right, he need have no fear; for whatever could be urged against the truth, would but set it out more clearly in the minds of those in whom God has shined, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. If he should happen to be wrong, it would be good to have the error shown.

If I should venture to give any advice to an editor of a journal of truth, which I would do with great hesitation, it would be to allow candid expressions of the views of brethren of good standing in the churches to be published, but never to allow one single word expressing reproof to one for holding different views from the writer, nor one acrimonious expression or unkind personal reflection to appear. Everything calculated to give personal offense, everything that intimated a desire to have dominion over the faith of

a brother, I would have rigidly expunged. One cannot always see what manner of spirit he is of while writing, but the reader can see very clearly; and almost any one, when in his right mind, would be thankful to the editor who should with a stroke of the pen prevent him from appearing before the multitude of readers with anger, contempt, jealously, hatred, plainly expressed, as they most surely will be when they are rankling within him while he writes.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Route 3, Benton, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

Just a few lines to let you know I received the book in good order and many thanks for the same. I enjoyed your New Year's greeting in the *Signs* this January. I have read it over and over, again and again. With five sons in the army and navy—one somewhere in England, one somewhere in the South Pacific and three others in service I enjoyed your review of the year 1943, and these sons of mine just being *somewhere* I had a very bowed down heart for the Christmas holidays and the going out of the old year and into the new. Mr. Bowden asked me a few days before Christmas what I wanted for Christmas? Brother Dodson I do not know if I answered from my real heart of understanding, if indeed I do understand, but something was right there speaking out these words, "I rather have, could it be God's will, a double portion of his Spirit." I felt like I had uttered words too great for me, and days went on and instead of grace to endure I was left in the flesh without hope or seemingly without God. I began to see, without looking, these little boys of mine I had reared here, flitting over the lawn, down the lanes, cutting Christmas trees, dragging them in for the night before Christmas. I thought I had desired surely something good, but I was given only memories of other days, and I found myself begging to not remember things that were natural, but let me remember things that had substance to it—days of visitations of the Holy Spirit, if indeed I had ever had any of those visitations. So on a morning during the breakfast hour my mind was relieved of natural things and things present and this little text came to me, "By his neesings a light doth shine." I went to find my text and I was not sure that I knew what the word neesing meant. The thought came to me of an Old Testament case where the child neesed. I looked up the word and it meant sneeze, and we all know what sneeze means. The word neese is obsolete. I saw too, "His neesings," mean as I saw by reading the forty-first chapter of Job, was leviathan, and when I read on and on I hope I saw with an eye single to the real leviathan the power that holds us and the thing we rely upon let it be our works, our goodness, our integrity or whatever it may be. It is that something that we think is light until the true light of our God shines into our hearts and makes us see we have, when depending on our own righteousness, uttered things too deep for us and things we did not understand. As Job said we find this leviathan. The great power represents to me the great whore of the earth, mystery Babylon, and I mean by that the many denominations and so-called churches of our land to-day. A light goes out from them, great flames of oratory, wisdom of the world and great swelling words. They stick together, they cannot be sundered and this satanic power or worldly error, which is spiritual wickedness in high places, cannot be drawn out by a hook or cords, but only by the power of our God, who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. Job was tried by his friends when he felt they were poor comforters, but when God began to talk to him he showed him leviathan, what he was, king of all, pride, light and his eyelids are like the light of the morning. We

feel that Job saw, not only these lights of pride and worldly wisdom, but with the eye single could see the true God and without this light he could not have seen leviathan and his great neesings, or commotions, from their head and mouth where the light, pride and wisdom of which mystery Babylon claims to be full of, and we see, we hope, she represents the ones who believe the gospel that is not the gospel for there is only one and that is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Now, brother Dodson, all I have ever received was fully mine before I knew it. The visitations, the light, the hope, all were right there present, just like this text came when I least expected it, and I hope it is of God. I know it is not of man, not of pride or wisdom of this world. What a beauty that Job received twice as much as he had before when his captivity was turned. The fortieth chapter of Isaiah says, "She hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." I sometimes think of this with pleasure, that in this life after regeneration we have twice as much as we had before. We have come into full fellowship with the church of God's own right hand planting. We find houses, homes among them, mothers and fathers in Israel, brethren and sisters. We receive these with persecution, and in the world to come eternal life. So Jesus says, Mark 10:30. Pray for me a very unworthy sister in hope.

EFFIE BLAGG BOWDEN.

N. A. B. D. Station Force, Barracks "B" 148,
Camp Thomas, Davisville, R. I.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

I am sending you a letter that my wife received from cousin Henry Townsend, Sr., of Media, Pa. which I deem worthy of space in your paper if you have space to spare. It is very expressive of the fact that he has been through the same trials as many of God's people in all ages. While working he ruptured a blood vessel leading to his heart and has been confined at home. I feel that his prayers have been prayers of the Lord and that the Lord has heard his cries. I have been to see him, cousin Susie and their son, Henry, Jr. several times and they always impress me very much. They have been taught of Jesus. His wife is my cousin, Elder Eubank's daughter. Their son is a lieutenant in the army and they miss him very much as he is their only living child. I feel his letter comes from the Lord as he is in the furnace and knows much of the afflictions of life even as Job of old. I beg God's mercy to continue with him for I feel that he has been thoroughly taught of the Lord. May the Lord bless his church from the rivers to the unknown ends of the earth, and at last save in that glorious mansion not made with hands, where sin, sorrow and disappointments shall never disturb our peaceful habitation. A sinner in hope of life eternal and in gospel bonds.

(Elder) O. J. CROKER, W.T.I.C.,
U. S. Navy.

Media, Pa.

MRS. O. J. CROKER, HIRAM, GA.

My Dear Sister in the Lord:—Some time ago my wife passed over a letter she had received from you, and in this letter you said something about my past writing, that you thought I was such a good man. Oh, how the humblest of the dear Lord's children can be misled. In many places we read or see the works of others and judge them by this work, and we are made to think that they are truly God's elect or chosen people. There are in the world to-day so many that belong to the old Pharisee class that are seeking the praise of man rather than those that have a contrite heart. I hope I can clear this mistake with you. I know that there is no good in me or anything that I can do of myself, and I do not, and I hope that I never will, seek the praise of mortal man, but rather have you, and all that the

Lord has called, to ascribe to him all glory world without end. He said, "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another." If any man loves his life, he shall lose it, but if he hate his life he shall take it up again. If we seek praise of man what sayeth the scripture? "I will not give my glory unto another." "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." We read in the Scriptures how that Saul was on his way to torture the disciples of the Lord, when suddenly a light from heaven shined about him and he fell to the earth as he heard the voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" This was not the act of the creature. Man in his natural walk cannot fall unless God has first chosen him to fall for he said, I have refined thee in the furnace of affliction. He must be brought down, he must be humiliated in spirit. Christ said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." No man has ascended so high or been carried so low but what the Lord can and does direct his ways. You know when Jonah was cast into the sea he said, "I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice." It is, my dear sister, true that one can be carried down to the very slime of hell and corruption, and if they have been one of the chosen of the Lord, he will hear their cry when they are made to call upon him. If I understand correctly, not in many cases do I remember reading where the Lord chose those that were on the mountain top, but he came to seek those that were lame, blind, helpless and the sick and fallen. Before the Lord calls one to repentance he is, or must first be sick—sick of sin. He is made to seek a refuge, a hiding place. "I have refined thee, but not with silver." What price have we to offer? What can we render to God? Did he not say, "Every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof." "The beast of the field shall honor me, the dragons and the owls: because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen. This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." In conclusion I have to say that God is all and in all. He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy and none can stay his hand. In this great conflict that is raging in the world to-day, God is ever present and has a purpose in it. Some of these men will be led down through the valley of death and through the troughs of hell and sifted as the sand, but the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will sift out his own whither they go. I do not wish to think that there are not any of God's people who have fallen in this conflict for the number is great among the fallen, but if they have it was by his holy and wise providence and for his glory. The matter that concerns me most is that I may be given strength to fear God and keep his commandments, then I know all would be well with me. I hope the Lord will bless you with such earthly things as he knows you are in need of, and that you and your household shall not be tried in the furnace of affliction. When you write to Jewell give him my greetings in the Lord. Yours in hope of that glorious resurrection.

HENRY TOWNSEND, SR.

Route 2, Nauvoo, Ala.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

I have received my February issue of the *Signs of the Times* which makes the first on my second year and I surely have

enjoyed reading them. I still have every copy and expect to keep them and all the balance if they continue to be as good as the ones I have received. I have read many articles in them that was worth each many times more to me than the full year's price. I had never read one of these papers until I subscribed for it one year ago. Never realized there was such a paper published. Mr. H. M. Bowden of Carbon Hill, Ala. had been telling me about what a good paper it was for a year or over and gave me your address, but I just kept putting it off as I did not think of it being such a good paper and containing all the good preaching and experiences that I have found in it. If I could only have an experience as I have read from so many in your paper. I would give the whole world for an experience like I have read in the *Signs of the Times* if it was in my power. I am forty-three years of age and have never offered myself to any church. I have never felt fit and feel less worthy now than ever. I have no experience to tell the church, there are always mountains of wrongs and faults roll up before me which make me know I am not fit to be with them, not even as I am just associating with them. The Primitive Baptists are the only ones that preach a doctrine hard enough to touch such a wreck and hard case as I am. They are the only people that preach any comfort to me and yet I am not worthy to be in their presence to listen to them. I have wished so many times I could slip in and hide where I could see the preacher and hear and never be seen. I have often wondered why I was ever born into the world, and wished many times it could have been the good Lord's will to have taken me out of this world when I was an infant or never suffered me to have been born as I only get worse instead of getting better. The very things that I think I will not do are what I do, and the things I think I will do I do not. I am a complete stranger to myself and a complete failure. All of my deeds are against me instead of being in my favor. If I am ever saved and reach that happy home above it will not be on account of any good that I have ever done, but it will be altogether by the mercy and free, double free grace of the blessed Lord. If it was left to my works and good deeds I would never stop sinking. There would be no bottom of the pit for me. I do not feel worthy at this time to even ask the Lord for that happy home because I know, I do not deserve it, but yet I am so selfish that I am quick and ready to ask for mercy. I have no experience of grace but I do believe I love the people and the doctrine they preach and teach above all in the world. If I know anything at all about what I believe Elder W. N. Green of Altus, Okla. laid it out in the January issue. I surely would like to see him and hear him preach, and I do hope I may some time. Well, I have just written almost everything but what I intended to write, and ten times more than I meant to write. I meant a few lines to send in my subscription and a little more for you to distribute among some others. I will close hoping you will overlook it and pray for me. The following hymn fits me.

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again.

May the good Lord continue his blessings on you. From an unworthy sinner friend.

ROBERT D. McGOUGH.

(We are very glad to receive such letters as the foregoing. It is very encouraging to us in our work of trying to disseminate the truth among those who are truly taught of the Lord, to have some evidence from time to time that God is blessing our efforts. Being anxious to enlarge our field we are wondering if each one of our subscribers would speak to

some one who is not now taking the *Signs of the Times* regarding our family paper, as brother H. M. Bowden, of Carbon Hill, Ala., did to our good friend, if they would not be instrumental in making others feel towards them as he feels towards brother Bowden. We do not feel it is asking too much of our readers, if they really enjoy the *Signs,* to have them speak a good word for the paper to those of like precious faith. To all who will we thank you in advance.

If we can rightly judge the work of God's grace in the hearts of poor sinners, and we call upon those who have read the foregoing letter to bear us record, we sincerely believe that he hath sent forth his spirit into the heart of our friend and that he has beheld the glory of God as it appears in the face, or person, of Jesus Christ our Lord. Having received of the Lord's mercies, and having tasted and found that he is good and gracious beyond the deserts of sinful men, we believe an acknowledgment before men is incumbent upon him and would, therefore, strongly urge him to go home to his friends and tell them what great things the Lord has done for him, whereof he is glad. Only in obedience to the commands of God will he experience the removal of guilt and answer of a good conscience towards God that is to be found in walking acceptably before him. While he may feel that he has no experience of grace, we are confident our readers will agree with us that he has a wonderful experience, and the fact that he loves the people of God, and longs for the assemblies of the saints where the gospel is preached in its purity, is unmistakable evidence of his having passed from death unto life. May God give him strength to go forth in the performance of his duty by telling the brethren of God's dealings with his soul, that he may find that peace that passeth all understanding, is our earnest desire. R.L.D.)

Walnut Creek, California.

DEAR EDITORS:

Enclosed is money-order for two dollars to aid you in sending me the paper for another year which subscription is up in February. The Old Baptist papers I am blest to have, and the most wonderful book, the Bible, and other good articles I have to read is about all the preaching I get. I do enjoy reading the truly good articles from the true word of God. Nothing else is of any comfort to me. I have been blest with sweet visits of God's dear saints in my humble home recently, and from the depths of my heart I praise God for this blessing, he from whom all blessings flow. I am not worthy and do not merit any blessings he bestows upon me. In my many lonely hours I do get so hungry to hear the true word of God preached. It is comforting to be made to realize that God knows what is best for all his saints, and that his will at all times will be done. He knows them, knows where they are, and wherever they may be he will guide and watch over them and keep them as the apple of his eye. My greatest hope is that I am one of his little ones. So weak and poor, just a beggar with nothing to pay, yet I hope I pay him with praise from my poor heart. O to praise him more and more.

"The food our spirits want
Thy hand alone can give;
Oh! hear the prayer of faith, and grant
That we may eat and live."

May I eat and live on thy sweet manna from heaven, and may he grant this to all his dear saints scattered over this world of woe. His grace is sufficient for them all. Of all the things that I want, Jesus is my all in all. If he is not mine then I have nothing. He was a babe in the manger, holy and pure. He came down from heaven to do his work, the work which his Father had given him to do. He suffered for our sins and completed his work, the end from the beginning. He went forth with the mob who crucified him knowing what would come to pass each

moment of time. All hail the power of his mighty name, our Lord and Saviour. The only one with the all power who art all in all. May God comfort the Editors. A little one in his faith I hope.

(Mrs.) MABEL LINDSEY.

Vanleer, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

Can one so unworthy as I feel myself be permitted to address you thus? Enclosed please find $3. Two to renew my subscription to the dear old *Signs of the Times* and one to help send it to the poor of the flock. I think it is the best periodical of its kind published. I have been a subscriber for a number of years and a reader almost as long as I can remember. My father, Elder J. R. Hatcher, preserved some old copies that were published in 1880 which are in my possession now. I often get them out and read them over and find the same precious truths taught by the writers now that were taught by those dear old soldiers of the cross sixty years ago. This gives us to understand that they were each taught by the same great teacher, all "declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." He works and none can hinder, he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast, he rules in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay his hand. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Our little church has sustained a great loss by the death of our dear brother and deacon, J. H. Hatcher, who was called home on the morning of January 6, 1944 never to be with us again in our meetings. We feel the stroke deeply, but we feel sure our great loss is his eternal gain. He was a firm believer in election, predestination and the sovereignty of God. He was a faithful member, always filling his place at our meetings, but his work on earth is done and we desire to meekly submit to God's most holy will. May we all be led by his grace to trust in him in all our bereavements and afflictions. A little sister in Christ I hope.

(Mrs.) KATIE RAGAN.

Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

Find enclosed $2 to pay for the *Signs* another year. I hope I love the truth that appears in this dear paper and believe it with all the believing power I possess which is given me to believe from God the Father if indeed I believe. It seems of late years my hope grows more precious all the time. I do not mean doubts and fears have left me, no, no. I do not mean I have become able to direct my steps, have not learned how to perform that which is good, cannot have one good thought of nor by myself. I am rebellious, sinful, ungrateful and often wonder why the Lord is so good to me, and if it is all vain imagination with me. I have passed through trials, sorrows and storms of confusion that would have sunk me beneath the angry waves of despair had it not been for the precious hand of God who is able to perform the work he hath begun if indeed he hath begun that work in my heart. It began when I was a child at the age of eleven. The sweetness of that day is the same I have felt many times since, but can only enjoy these seasons when it pleases the Lord to send the Comforter and restore unto us again the joys of his salvation. The future looks dark indeed ahead of us. It causes us to tremble when left to ourselves, but we know God is able to work all things after the counsel of his own will, and also able to uphold us and give us strength for our day. Remember me and mine when at the throne of grace. Yours in hope of eternal life.

(Mrs.) LUTHER CAMPBELL.

Oaks, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

I will write a few lines in answer to your letter. I have been in very poor health for about three years having a very weak heart. The doctor told me I was liable to die most any time. I told him that did not worry me as I was begging to die day and night. I kept on working trying to keep up my natural affairs until I got almost past going and I had to give up my farm and everything. I have a son and daughter living and am now staying with my daughter. My father has been taking the *Signs* ever since I can remember, and I have enjoyed reading them since I was about twenty years old when I hope the Lord began a good work with me. I would slip the *Signs* out and read them and would be enjoying them so much I would hate to hear them call me to my meals. I have been taking them for years myself and am now seventy-five. I still enjoy them and do not remember missing a single copy that was printed. In the last number I read an article from W. A. Brooks which was as sweet to me as honey, and I was blessed to read it in the same way that he was to write it. I did not take time to dry my tears but just let them drop. I read the article by Elder Hunnicutt in the January number and I do enjoy his writings. I can say of him as I have said of Paul, I love a man whom I have never seen for the truth's sake. I have always made it a rule to pay my obligations as soon as possible and feel I must give some reason for being late with my paper. It is due to the panic of the other war, and being poor both naturally and spiritually I decided to drop the paper, but the Lord made me to consider how much I had enjoyed reading it, then he pressed on my mind to write my experience and send it in for publication. I then had more desire for education than I had ever had before that I might be able to write the brothers and sisters, but the Lord would not release me for not being able to write. I had to get some one to write for me and I could not send in my remittance without an article to go with it. I went on then as I have now, neglected to write and remit. I went to the office of a good friend but he made excuses about writing for me. I thought I would send it along and put in something extra but something said to me if you put in a hundred dollars extra that will not answer in place of the letter. Several other plans to get the letter written failed me and I got very nervous and weak. I was made to think of Moses when he viewed the promised land. I felt I had sinned away the day of grace and that there was no more mercy for me. The next Sunday I went to my uncle's and we went to the preacher's and he wrote the letter for me. I was greatly relieved. Felt like I had just made one step into a great ocean and I experienced what God tells us, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." Happy are ye if ye do my commandments. Brother Dodson bear with me in my weakness and imperfections as I am unable to write and had to dictate this to my daughter to write for me. You can publish it if you feel to do so but if not just lay it aside. Your unworthy brother I hope. E. L. HOSKINS.

Freestone, Texas.

TO THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

Please publish this. I am writing some of my views and I want more information. The church is a spiritual kingdom, an ecclesisastical court of first and last resort from which there is no appeal. Her members must be governed by her own laws, her statutes are written in the Holy Bible. Witnesses for or against any of her members must be citizens of Zion. No strangers, foreigners nor uncircumsized persons shall take part in the government thereof. No other organization has any right to interfere with her internal affairs. Jesus Christ set up the church and all other organizations are set up by men.

The foundation of the church is Jesus Christ. The stone the builders rejected has become the head of the corner, though it is in the world in one sense it is out of the world because it is not of the world, but composed of chosen material, men and women, sons and daughters of Adam's race, and it seems to me that it would be something akin to spiritual adultery to go outside of the church to get witnesses to testify against our brethren, the children of God. When God separated the sons of Adam he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel for the Lord's portion is his people. Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. So God had a typical people which set forth the idea that the antitypical people were to take up where the typical left off, and in the types there was something commanded them that was pointing to some things to do in the antitype, the church, and some things forbidden in the type that meant something to the antitype, and one thing that was forbidden was mixing and marrying with other nations. In other words, they were to be a separate people for God loved them above all people, then after he had separated them he gave them laws and ordinances that he did not give any other nation. He delivered them out of the cruel hand of their enemies; he went before them in cloudy and fiery pillars and delivered them; he went with them to the Promised Land; and in all the trouble that arose among them they used only witnesses of their own tribes. So far I am not able to find where outside evidence was authorized either in the typical church or the antitypical. I find where there were numerous outside witnesses used by the common courts of the country against God's chosen ones, but I have not found where the church has been authorized to use aliens as witnesses to testify against the brethren. These false witnesses killed Stephen, followed Paul around the compass and killed our Elder Brother, Christ Jesus. I find no place where we are to take outside evidence against the brethren, and my judgment is that if we do that kind of business it would tear up every orderly church, and it would look to me like we were asking the devil when we go to do business for God. Ahab could not get Naboth's vineyard so Jezebel got some outside witnesses and had Naboth slain and took possession or Ahab took possession of the vineyard. Brethren, let us not allow the world to witness in Zion's courts. Read the narrative of Naboth in 1 Kings 21. I want to ask some one of the Editors of the *Signs* to write on this subject. I want some information as to whether or not there is any Bible authority for the church to use outside testimony against a brother and judge him disorderly and altogether on the outside? I am your unworthy brother in gospel bonds.

W. O. BEENE.

(So far as we are aware, no authority can be adduced from the Bible that will justify the church going outside for testimony against a brother and judge him exclusively upon such testimony. Paul in his writings concerning the qualifications of a Bishop (or Elder as we call them) says, "Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil," but we have never yet heard of a church ordaining a minister purely on outside recommendations. No orderly church should accept members on the say so of outsiders. Why, then, should that kind of evidence be all-inclusive when the church finds it necessary to judge one or more of her members. To quote the great apostle once more, in writing to the Corinthian brethren, who appeared to be among the worst offenders and guilty of many departures from the proper course, he asked the following three questions: "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not

know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?" I Cor. 6:1-2. It invariably brings distress and sorrow of heart to the inhabitants of Zion when they hear of the brethren going to law over property and other earthly things, but we may rest assured that no earthly court can ever settle any of her spiritual affairs. While the people of God are in the world, they are said to be not of the world, having been chosen by Christ and separated from the world; therefore in their dealings among themselves they should not follow the practices of worldly men. We will leave the matter for some one or more of our Associate Editors to write more at length upon it, provided they have a mind to do so. R.L.D.)

Route 1, Hammond, W. Va.

DEAR EDITORS AND BRETHREN:

I will, if the Lord wills, try in my weakness to write some of my views as requested by W. D. Fooks on Math. 13:14. "And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive." This scripture has reference to the children of Israel after the flesh, who were born after the flesh and not after the Spirit, and those born after the flesh are not the children of God because if we have not the Spirit then we are none of his. Now let us notice. Abraham had two sons, Isaac was the child of God by promise. Rebekah bore Isaac two sons, Esau and Jacob, and when Jacob received the blessing from his father, Isaac, Esau mocked. He was not a child of God because he was called Edom and God said of him and his people, "They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the Lord hath indignation forever." They have ears to hear naturally and eyes to see naturally, but they cannot perceive and hear spiritual things because the carnal mind is at enmity against God, not subject to his law neither indeed can be, so you see in seeing they shall see naturally but cannot perceive spiritually. Turning to Isaiah 6:9 we read, "And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not." So God speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast and here in Matthew is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias. These being natural children they sought it by the works of the law, and they being dead in sin did not perceive and understand that the blessing came by promise. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" so man goes the hard way into death. Saul was on that way or in that way when the Lord called him, turned him about and called him and his name then was Paul, because he was a chosen vessel and he was to be a witness to bear Christ's name to the Gentiles so "blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." In Isaiah 6:12 we read, "And the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land. But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten: as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves: so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof." The heart of this people is waxed gross and their ears are dull of hearing. Then comes in the tenth part, yes, the holy seed shall be the substance thereof. Yes, blessed are your eyes and your ears and hearts, in speaking to His disciples for it is given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but unto them that are without, they are not chosen in Christ, they are not included in the promise made to Abraham nor blessed in Isaac, for in Isaac thy seed shall be called, but "when any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth

it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the wayside." This being the old stony, deceitful heart, this is he that receiveth seed by the wayside. Now we know that the wayside is not in the way, Jesus is the way to heaven. So they being near him, hear him naturally and at the time rejoice with natural gladness. They have not the root in them, no, not the root and offspring of David, the bright and morning star. No, not the star of Bethlehem to guide them for they are dull of hearing and they perceive not, but the holy seed, the blessed seed, the grain of wheat which fell into the ground and died, yea, it yields a bountiful crop because they were in the grain of corn when it fell into the ground. Like Jesus said to them on one occasion when they asked for a sign. He said, "There shall be no sign given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Now let us notice the difference between the seed that was sown and where the seed was sown. Notice the turning point—but other—not some seed but other fell into good ground. Yea, they were rooted and grounded in the truth, this being the holy seed under the gospel covenant and not the law covenant because he sent them prophets and Moses gave them the law that was God's word to them, but the law could not give them life neither could it give them a new heart, nor put them in the way that led to heaven, neither could it put them into the kingdom. So these were all without and that is why he spoke to them in parables lest they see "and should be converted, and I should heal them." His words to them were in parables, but his words to his children are in spirit and in truth. He speaks to them and it is done, he commands them and it stands fast. So to you, the holy seed, the tenth part is the substance thereof, the law and the types were the shadows and patterns of better things to come. Yes, the substance is better than the shadow for Christ is the sum and substance of all things. By the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified, but you must be justified by Christ from all things. O, the living seed. The other seed which fell into good ground for the preparation of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord. We know that God's word to the children of Israel under the law covenant was far different to them than it is under the gospel covenant. Yes, under the gospel covenant it is I will and ye shall. I will be merciful to your sins, I will be your God and ye shall be my people, and ye shall

(*To Be Continued in Next Issue*)

1820 Martin St., San Angelo, Texas.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,

DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:

Thank you for the *Signs of the Times* which I have been receiving for fourteen months, with special thanks to you for the continuation of same since my subscription expired with December 1943 issue. I enjoy reading this dear old paper which does not appear new, yet never grows old. It was read for many years by my father, mother and grandmother making it even more valuable to me. I am enclosing check for $4 to cover renewal for 1944 and for a new subscriber beginning with January issue if convenient. I would also like a copy of your book on Predestination if you have one on hand. Please pardon delay in sending remittance. I ask an interest in your prayers. An unworthy little sister, if one at all, in hope of mercy.

(Mrs.) MARTHA SEALE.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS".

Mrs. A. D. Hoyt, N. Y., $2; Mrs. L. T. Genung, N. Y., $1; Mrs. A. S. Hewitt, N. Y., $3; J N Wageonheizer, N Y., $1; S. F. Buckner, Okla., $5; L. D. Corn, N. C., $1; Mrs. D. H. Holland, Md., $1.

EDITORIAL

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ISAIAH 61:1

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound."

The prophet declares "the Spirit of the Lord is upon me," and we would like to record why Isaiah was speaking. It was because God had made him a prophet to speak as a mouthpiece, and proclaim things as present and yet to be manifested, and all things proclaimed were testifying of Jesus, and he being moved by the Holy Ghost was testifying of the predestinated purposes of God. "The Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek." If we consider the individual to whom he was to preach, it was one that was humble, submissive, of gentle and long suffering disposition, and only those upon whom the Spirit of God rests have that, for the spirit humbleth and the flesh puffeth up. God hath sent his Son to bind up the broken hearted, and when a poor creature has been made to cry unto God for mercy, it is because he is lowly and has been brought to the end of his own strength, that is, he realizes his condemnation is just, and all wisdom is fully aware of his guilt, and when Jesus is revealed as the one altogether lovely and one that can be touched with the feeling of his infirmities, it binds up his broken heart, liberty is proclaimed to his captivated soul, and the liberty and joy cannot be fully expressed. These realizations are special relations to the people of God, born of an incorruptible seed by the word of God, and no mortal can attain unto them by the wisdom of the carnal mind. The work of God in the heart of a poor sinner cannot be discerned until the Spirit of God shines upon it and manifests the workmanship. All the household of faith is God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Eph. 2:10. "He shall open and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open." Isaiah 22:22. This was the key to the house of David, and one to whom he openeth shall come in, and sup with him, and he with them. When those gates swing open of their own accord (as far as the sinner can discern) the prisoner is set free, but first we note there was singing in the prison. Paul and Silas, while in prison at midnight, prayed and sang praises unto God. and the prisoners heard them. "Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed." Acts 16:26: Here was a demonstration of the fulfillment of the prophecy by which God's servants were made free to go and preach his glorious truth to those hungering and thirsting after righteousness. It is of much comfort to one that feels the need of strength, and they like to boast of the strength of Israel's God and his power to save. Jesus, the captain of their salvation when they are put forth, goeth before them and is with them, and the Holy Spirit openeth that they behold him and are made to rejoice and point to him. The words of truth

spoken in our text are fully quoted by our Saviour. "When the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season. And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Gallilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised. To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened upon him. And he began to say unto them, this day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." Luke 4:13-21. These gracious words prove that the prophet was pointing to Jesus and Jesus acknowledged the power of the Father in him. "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." Continuing the reading of this chapter we find that those that heard him marveled at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth, "And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?" Jesus called his disciples and taught them in demonstration as he went about doing his Father's business, that they should be witnesses of him and the fulfillment of all prophecy of the Scriptures, and they have written a sufficiency for the man of God that he should be perfect and throughly furnished unto all good works. 2 Tim. 3:17. When the appointed time of God comes Jesus quickens the sinner appointed unto salvation, and he is made alive from death in sin to life in Christ, and is directed by the Spirit in the way of truth. All the wording of our text is applicable to one individual in an experience of grace and should he be called to preach the gospel he is made to suffer the afflictions thereof for Jesus' sake, and not for the sake of filthy lucre, but of a ready mind, and that individual is recognized by those who know the truth as a planting of the Lord. They bear fruit unto God and are called trees of righteousness in which God is glorified. These are great and glorious truths, and we hope that we have been given to taste of these precious fruits, and smell the fragrance of the spices that pour forth from the garden of the Lord, and have been given the ear to hear the proclamation of the gospel trumpet expressing the power of God unto salvation, and feel to say I know that it is the truth. We feel, when these are witnessed, that One greater than any we could mention or think is here, and His presence is so precious that we feel our love for him in our soul. We feel, after having a feast of these precious fruits, we are mistaken in the whole matter, and are made to walk in darkness and have no light. Then when we are granted another refreshing we feel we would never doubt as we had before, but the more we try to retain them the farther away we get. All of our afflictions seem to have been mechanical—just the acts of the creature and not of the Spirit, but this world is not rich enough to purchase the evidences of the power of God that has rested with us along our life's pilgrimage, and the opening up to our sight the beauty of the Lord God upon his people. We are passing through perilous times, men are showing their love for self and willing to sacrifice multitudes of their fellow creatures to carry out their own fleshly designs, but it seems that the whole world lieth in wickedness. To hear one of the proselites talk one would think they could save the whole world, but you

who know the power of God know they are blind and cannot see or know the captivity in which they are held. Not until the one that is stronger than he that is holding them comes and binds him and casts him out will they ever be free, but when he binds him and casts him out they will be free, and when He makes them free they are free indeed and cannot be brought into condemnation for God hath anointed Him as Prince of Peace, the Saviour of sinners. Dear readers of the *Signs of the Times* he is your Saviour, and we hope he will give you beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that you may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. C.W.V.

ECCLESIASTES 3:14-15

"I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him. That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been: and God requireth that which is past."

Sister Etta J. Norton, Rt. 1, Crewe, Virginia, has asked that we give our views through the *Signs* on the above scripture. We wish to preface such thoughts as we may offer with what Solomon said when he was made king of Israel. God appeared to him in a dream and said, "Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said, Thou hast shewed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. And now, O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?" We are given to understand that God was pleased with this desire for wisdom on the part of Solomon, which he granted and also blessed him otherwise. We are persuaded that no man, of himself, is sufficient for these things, and that he needs that wisdom which comes down from above in order to rightly interpret or divide the word of truth. In order to interpret the words or sayings of a wise man, one must of necessity be a partaker of the same wisdom, which can come from only one source, for Israel's God is one God, the same yesterday, today and for ever, and besides him there is no Savior. Our first thought is that to *"know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever,"* is wonderful knowledge, indeed. The natural man does not know this, and neither can he accept the doctrine which is set forth in the text. Only the godly wise understand what Solomon declared, and they are made to rejoice in it. Moses was in thorough accord with Solomon, for he said, "Ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect." Deut. 32:3-4. To know that "whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever," is to have an understanding of the perfect work of God: so perfect in fact that "nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it." David would say, "Selah," which means that all has been said that can be said, and that it is full and complete in every sense of the word. John was in accord with this when he wrote: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if man shall take away from the words of the book of this pro-

phecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." Rev. 22:18-19. We further understand that the sovereign, eternal God has a purpose in all that he does and he will be inquired of, feared, loved and worshipped; therefore it is said that "God doeth it, that men should fear before him." The true Christian serves the God he loves, and loves the God he knows, and when he makes himself known unto his children, which is by revelation, they will worship and adore him for his wonderful works among the children of men and they will rejoice in him, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he sent into the world to seek and to save that which was lost. The ones under consideration here are those who were chosen in Christ before ever the world was, but in time were manifested in Adam and became lost, or separated from God, through transgression, which necessitated the coming of their Redeemer to pay the redemption price and set them free.

When God is pleased to draw aside the veil and permit us to get a glimpse of that which for ages he has hid from the wise and prudent of this world and revealed unto babes, then it is we comprehend something of the infinite wisdom which drew the wondrous plan of salvation and rejoice in the fact that our God "is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." Isaiah tells us that he declared "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." Isa. 46:10-11. We would understand from this that his sovereignty extends to all creatures, clean and unclean, and over all worlds, principalities and powers, visible or invisible. Even the wicked king Nebuchadnezzar had to confess, "he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"

"The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass: and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Believing this, as we most certainly do, we must also believe that "that which hath been is now." Of a truth, known unto God are all his works from the beginning, and Jeremiah asked the question, "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" Lam. 3:37. If nothing comes to pass except that which God commanded, we must believe, and to us there is comfort in believing it, that all that is transpiring in the world to-day is according to the all-wise purpose and plan which inscrutable wisdom foresaw and designed in the counsels of eternity, and let us take courage in the fact that not only the beginning but all that intervenes even unto the *end* is ordered and sure and cannot fail. He who has purposed to try and refine us, has also purposed to save us with an everlasting salvation by and through his blessed Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Therefore, whatever storms we may have to encounter as we journey along life's highway, each step will but bring us nearer to our desired haven of eternal rest and nothing, absolutely nothing, shall ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. He "who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance," hath foreknown and determined all things, and what his eternal mind has decreed must be accomplished, and there is nothing *new* with him. There is no such thing as past and future with God, but one eternal now

and not only is it true that "that which hath been is now," but also "that which is to be hath already been." Nothing can be altered or changed in any particular whatsoever so far as God is concerned. Time is only turning the pages in God's book and bringing into manifestation, and to our view the things which God has ordered and fixed. "And God requireth that which is past." When we, as Isaiah says, "Remember the former things," and see how God's word has been fulfilled in every jot and tittle, how all that the prophets foretold concerning Christ came to pass in the finished work of Jesus while here in the world, can we any longer doubt that He is God, and there is none else; that he is God, and there is none like him? And since he brought to pass that which his holy prophets of old were moved by the Holy Spirit to write beforehand concerning his only begotten Son, will he of whom it is said, "Great is thy faithfulness," be any less faithful in bringing us forth more than conquerors, through him that loved us and gave himself for us? Surely, God requires of us the same faith and trust in him that he did in Israel of old. Let us, therefore, as much as is in us keep the first and great commandment, which is, to "love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."

Solomon, the Preacher, in the first part of the chapter containing our text says: "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heavens: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace." This is so complete and all-embracing as to permit of no omission whatever. Solomon also said, "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the sun." With him who is the I AM THAT I AM there can be nothing new, nothing different from what it always has been in his mind and purpose. He is perfect in all of his attributes, and nothing can be added to or taken from the work of his hand. We would that we might all be given to grasp and believe this. If so, we could join wholeheartedly with the Psalmist in saying, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." How truly these things set forth the sovereignty and perfection of our God. When in reality we contemplate the works of God and the purpose for which everything was made that was made, we can declare unreservedly, "All thy work shall praise thee, oh, Lord." Not only does the light or day in which they are revealed shew forth his glory, but the darkness, or night in which they are concealed "sheweth knowledge." As vegetation gets its main growth in the night time, so do the souls that trust in him behold his wonders in the deep as they go down to the sea in ships and do business in great waters.

When our finite minds are enabled to grasp even in part some of the wonderful works of God in nature, and we are made to realize that they are at best but imperfect figures, or types and shadows of that which is to come, we can but anticipate with amazement and wonder what it will be to be caught up with the Lord in the air, to behold him in his fullness and

to go out from his presence no more for ever. R.L.D.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Elder W. O. Wammack announces his address has been changed from 3122 N. Lafayette Circle, Memphis, Tenn., to Pvt. W. O. Wammack, Platoon 449, R.D.M.C.B., San Diego, 41, California.

OBITUARIES

ELDER LONNIE ALONZO MOON was born Jan. 4, 1876 near Brooksville, Blount Co., Ala., and died at Bremen, Ala., April 18, 1944, making his stay on earth 68 years, 3 months and 14 days. He married Miss Georgia Ann Shelton Nov. 14, 1897 and to this union were born seven children, five of them surviving, Homer, Leonard, Athalee, Cordes and Clydes. Also surviving are sister Moon, twenty-two grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and two brothers, Dr. G. F. Moon of Chandler, Texas and R. A. Moon of Yale, Oklahoma. He united with the Dorsey Creek Church the fourth Sunday in May 1903. One year later he was ordained to the full work of the ministry by Elders M. L. Sanders, R. Sanders, W. W. York and W. J. Morgan as presbyters. From that time until death his only theme was salvation by grace from first to last. Not only did he preach it from the pulpit, but he was a living monument of God's grace. High and low, rich and poor had a friend in him, and he was ever ready to help a needy character no matter what his creed or color. Elder Moon was gifted in many ways but I do not think he ever forgot the giver. In our section of the country he was considered as able in the pulpit as any man. He was small in stature, but when in the pulpit he was as large as any of the brethren. In God's providence Elder Moon did not do much traveling among the Old Baptists, but a few times he came as a correspondent to the Hopewell Association, and when he did come it was a time of great rejoicing. It has been our happy lot to have many visitors among us, and they always were delighted in our precious brother's personality and his rich gift in a preaching way. He was a sweet singer in Israel and when he arose to preach it was always in singing. In one sense we are sad at his passing, but yet we feel to know that our loss is his gain and that he is resting from his labors in the Lord. The Five Mile Creek Association has lost an able moderator and at this time we do not see any one to take the care of his churches. The children have lost a kind and precious father, sister Moon an affectionate husband and the county a good citizen. I would say to the grief-stricken family and to his brethren, mourn not for the dear old father in Israel. His race has been run and he is at rest. May God give you grace to be reconciled to his will. The writer, with Elder George H. Fanning, was called to his funeral, using as a text Rev. 22:14, after which his body was laid to rest in the family cemetery to wait the call of Jesus in the grand and glorious resurrection morning.

(Elder) W. D. GRIFFIN.

WILLIAM ALFRED MAY, our precious brother and deacon, was born January 17, 1869, and was taken by death January 26, 1944. He was married to Miss Alie Frances House and to this union were born nine children of which eight survive. Seven sons and one daughter as follows: Lee F., Henry, and T. G. of Dallas, Texas; J. P. and W. E. of Ellisville, Arkansas; Curtis of Fordyce, Arkansas; Homer of the U. S. Navy and Myrtle Rothwell of Chambersville, Arkansas. His wife also survives and a great number of grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Brother May united with the White Water Church of the Primitive Baptist faith near Tinsman, Arkansas on Saturday before the second Sunday in February 1901, and was baptized by Elder J. H. Draper. He remained a faithful member until the church was dissolved. He then seated membership with Pilgrims Rest Church at Fordyce, Arkansas where he remained until he departed this life. Our precious brother was blessed to serve his church as deacon for several years. He was ever found a faithful, firm believer in salvation by grace and was faithful in his duties to his church. He served his township as Justice of the Peace for several years. Brother May was widely known and highly esteemed among his brethren and friends who join his family in mourning his loss. Funeral services were conducted January 27, 1944 at the Watson Cemetery near Tinsman, Arkansas by Elder E. J. Lambert, assisted by his pastor, Elder W. W. Taylor, after which his body was laid to rest. Written by his pastor by request of the family.

(Elder) W. W. TAYLOR.

Dr. W. R. PRESLEY was born in Tate County, Miss., and moved his family, together with his father's family, to Texas settling in Bowie County near DeKalb. He began the study of medicine and practiced the remainder of his life. He passed away at Bovina, Texas Feb. 22, 1936 at the age of 79. He and mother belonged to the Old School Predestinarian Baptist ever since I can remember and were readers of the Signs for over fifty years. They were faithful and loyal to the church to the end. Father, mother, his brother, T. E. Presley, and myself were firm believers in the true and living God; the Father of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; the God that works all things after the counsel of his own

will; who declared the end from the beginning; the One that made the earth out of nothing and hung it in an empty space; the One that has all power in heaven and earth; the God of all things. T. E. Presley never offered himself to the church but was a Signs reader. The three of us believed in the resurrection of our bodies at the last trump when our Lord and Saviour will come to gather up his jewels, and the graves will be opened and these vile bodies will be changed from a natural to a spiritual body as is so clearly stated in the Bible. I wish that I were as good as my dear father and mother seemed to me to be. I understand there are none good in the flesh, but in their walk they manifested their loyalty to their God. I am so weak, poor and sinful, but by the grace of God I am what I am. My Bible and my brethren are so much comfort to me, as well as my meetings. I can hardly wait for meeting times and I would admonish all lovers of the truth, especially members of the church, not to forsake the assembling of yourselves together to talk of the goodness and mercy of our God. He promises us where two or three are gathered together he will be in their midst to own and to bless. It is all my hope. A poor sinner saved by grace if at all.

C. M. PRESLEY.

JEFFERSON D. KEE, was born in Alabama, April 16, 1861 and died December 23, 1943. He came to Texas in 1874 and married Lorena Ann Noland July 10, 1879. She was also born in Alabama, May 9, 1863 and moved to Texas in 1887. She preceded him in death, having died December 16, 1938. Her obituary appeared in the Signs of the Times of June 1940. To this union were born fourteen children, eleven of which survive as follows: Mrs. T. E. Greer, J. N. Kee, J. A. Kee, Joe Kee of Olney, Texas; Mrs. W. G. Morris, Mrs. T. E. Boen, De Leon, Texas; Mrs. J. M. Watson, Goree, Texas; T. J. Kee, Newcastle, Texas; J. R. Kee, Brownfield, Texas; S. C. Kee, Caddo, Okla.; L. R. Kee, Bridgeport, Texas. There are sixty-five grandchildren and twenty-five great-grandchildren, also one sister, Mrs. John Robinson, Lamesa, Texas and a host of friends left to mourn his death. He united with the Missionary Baptists when he was sixteen years old but found later that they were not in agreement. They said he held Primitive Baptist or Hardshell doctrine which he did since I have known him, if I know anything about the doctrine. He never united with the Primitive Baptist Church. He told me that his unworthiness kept him from going to the church and asking for a home with them. His wife was a member and the brethren always found a hearty welcome in their home. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace from first to last also predestination and election. He believed in a God who has all power in heaven and earth, who works all things after the counsel of his own will. He believed the Lord and Saviour completed the work the Father gave him to do, which was to save his people from their sins, that of all the Father gave him he should lose nothing but shall raise it up again at the last day. So I would say to all the loved ones that mourn as Paul said to the brethren in 1 Thess. 4:13-18. "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Yes, these words are comforting to the children of God that are still here in this world of trials and tribulations for Jesus has told us that in the world we shall have tribulation, but in him peace. Blessed thought that when these words of Paul have come to pass our troubles will all be over, and there will be no more sorrow, but we shall ever be with the Lord to live in his presence, and enjoy those things which no eye hath seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. Funeral services were held in the Baptist Church at Padgett, conducted by Elder S. L. Poiner. Burial was at Olney by the side of his wife. Written by request. One who loved him.

JOHN KIRKPATRICK.

Dr. THOMAS EDWARD PRESLEY was born in Coldwater, Mississippi, Jan. 7, 1870, moving to DeKalb, Texas, in 1886. He attended and graduated from the Memphis Medical School in 1896. He then moved back to DeKalb where he practiced medicine until 1902. He also practiced at Shive, Hamilton and Enid, Oklahoma. In 1917 he joined the armed forces, serving as a captain in the Medical Corps until the close of the war. He then practiced in Roswell, New Mexico, until 1917 when he moved to Clovis where he had resided since. Dr. Presley was first married to Mrs. Lizzie Peters, who preceded him in death about nine years. He is survived by four children, Mrs. Louis Falconi, of Roswell, New Mexico; Mrs. Eugene Hodge, of Tatum, Texas; C. P. Presley, of Tatum, and Kelsey Presley,

chief of police at Gallup, New Mexico. He later married Mary Etta Canthan, who also survives, also one brother, John Presley, of Mangum, Oklahoma, and a sister, Mrs. J. S. Singleton, of Dexter, New Mexico. Dr. Presley was forced to retire from active practice three months ago because of ill health. He died at St. Mary's Hospital in Roswell Jan. 6, 1944, where he had been confined for two weeks. Funeral services were held in Roswell with Dr. LeRoy Thompson, minister of the Presbyterian Church, officiating. Interment was made in South Park Cemetery in Roswell. Dr. Presley was a brother of Dr. W. R. Presley, deceased, father of Mrs. A. H. Sumerford, of Hamilton County.

MARTIN KINTNER, the son of Conrad and Phoebe Updyke Kintner, was born December 3, 1871 and departed this life February 8, 1944, making his stay on earth 72 years, 2 months and 5 days. Mr. Kintner grew to manhood in the vicinity of Pennington, N. J., and became a mechanic. Much of his work will be admired for many years. He found the maiden of his choice to be Miss Annie Vandyke of Pennington, N. J. and they were united in marriage by the late Elder Silas H. Durand of Southampton, Pa., December 13, 1894. To this union were born two children, Edgar of Hopewell, N. J. and Mrs. Marion Kintner Seidel of Trenton, N. J. and they each have two children, Richard H. and Nancy Kintner and Cynthia and Robert Seidel. All of them survive to share the great loss which we feel to share. Mr. Kintner had one infant grandson, twin to Robert Seidel who preceded him in death. Mr. Kintner was the youngest of his father's family of five children and all preceded him in death. He was kind and hospitable in his home and much esteemed by those associated with him. This was attested by the large gathering that assembled to pay tribute to his memory. The Conner Mill Works of Trenton, where he was employed for many years, expressed that it would be hard to fill his place, and the owners visited him several times during his illness and showed much concern. During the last years of his life he meditated much upon the working of God's mighty power, and often expressed his love for the preached truth of the doctrine of salvation by grace, and attended the meetings in Hopewell Old School Baptist Church. He expressed to Mrs. Kintner that he no longer enjoyed the lodge and social functions connected therewith, that his love for them had gone and spoke of severing his relations with such. His funeral services were conducted by the writer in the funeral parlors of the Blackwell Memorial Home in Pennington, after which his remains were laid to rest in his family plot in the Hopewell Old School Baptist Cemetery until the fulfillment of God's purpose in grace, and Jesus comes to make up his jewels, when all the redeemed shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall they ever be with the Lord. We have indeed lost an esteemed friend.

(Elder) C. W. VAUGHN.

We are deeply grieved to report the death of sister MARGARET MIERS of the Middleburg Church, at Park Avenue Hospital, Rochester, N. Y. April 20, 1944. She was nearly 74 years of age. Death was due to a complication of diseases from which she had suffered since Thanksgiving 1943. She was tenderly cared for during her illness most of the time by her daughter, Mrs. Howard Ellsworth, Rochester, N. Y. who ministered faithfully to her needs with loving, thoughtful care. A few days before her death sister Miers was taken to the Park Avenue Hospital in Rochester for treatment but medical science was of no avail. She was born July 15, 1870, and was united in marriage to George Miers in 1887. Five children were born of this union two of whom survive, Mrs. Howard Ellsworth, Rochester, N. Y. and Walter of Albany, N. Y. Mr. Miers died several years ago. She united with the Schoharie Church in 1901 and was baptized by the late Elder John Clark. Her church life extended over a period of forty years during which time by precept and example, by faith bearing fruit and by her walk and conversation she exemplified the life of a christian. She was generous to a fault, charitable in her opinions of others and intensely loyal to the church of her membership. Sister Miers was charitable with those who differed with her in religious matters and dearly loved the assembling together of the brethren, always faithful in their church meetings. Her home was always open to the brethren and her hospitality will long be remembered. She was a neighbor who did not live for self alone and her passing is deeply mourned. In her last days she was much comforted by hymn 668, Beebe's Collection, which was read at her funeral services. She was a noble woman in every sense of the word, and the church is poorer by her passing. The funeral services were held at White's Funeral Home, Schoharie, N. Y. April 23, conducted by the writer. Interment was in Schoharie Cemetery.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

EDITORIALS WANTED

Would like to buy Editorials (Vols. 1 and 2) by Elder Gilbert Beebe. Please write to Frank T. Simpkins, 739 12th Street, S. E., Washington (3), D. C.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The next session of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene Friday, Saturday and Second Sunday, July 7, 8 and 9, 1944 with the Church at Mt. Ararat, Pitts. Co., Va. The location is about eight (8) miles from Danville, Va. on Mt. Cross road. All lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren, are cordially invited.

W. R. DODD, Moderator
J. F. WILLIAMS, Clerk
Keeling, Va.

The Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association will be held, D. V., with the church in Reidsville, N. C. Services commencing at 11 o'clock Saturday, July 17, 1944 and continuing through Sunday and Monday following. We respectfully request our correspondence to represent with us and we will welcome visitors of our faith and order. We extend a special invitation to our Elders hoping that you may be able to visit us at this session. Excellent bus and rail facilities lead into Reidsville over leading routes. We understand the city of Reidsville has tendered one or more city high school buildings for the use of the Association.

J. W. GILLIAM, Asso. Clerk,
Route 1, Elon College, N. C.

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sundays in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a.m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meeting-house, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed. R. LESTER DODSON.

The Soldier's Creek Old School Baptist Union Meeting is appointed to be held with Zion Church, Graves Co., Ky. August 4th, 5th and 6th, 1944. This church is located in 7th Street in the city of Mayfield, Ky., in an old red brick building. Highways from all directions lead to Mayfield. Those coming by train from the North make connections with the "I. C." at Paducah, Ky., and those coming from the South will make connection with the "I.C." at Fulton, Ky. Those arriving on the 3rd should notify in advance of this date either Elder O. W. Perkins, Rt. 2, Mayfield, Ky., or Brother S. A. Cross, R.F.D., Mayfield, Ky., for conveyance.

WM. T. CHESTER, Church Clerk,
Murray, Ky.

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday at the end of old South Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
J. A. CURTIS, Clerk.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 3rd Sunday, Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
C. H. BYRD, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles South of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
B. G. KINGRY, Clerk.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
J. W. BASS, Clerk.

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday and Elder E. E. Watson on Sunday.
AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church, located 5 miles North of Hartford, Ala., holds services each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching Elders F. A. and J. J. Collins on Saturday, and Elder J. J. Collins on Sunday.
A. E. SORRELS, Clerk.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canda, California.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before.
E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists invites all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren, to meet with us first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hitchins. Take graveled road to the church.

E. M. TACKETT,
J. S. HUNNICUTT, Pastors.
H. L. ROGERS, Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.
Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 A.M. 1:30 P.M.
To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

C. W. BOND, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1626 Arch Street
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Philadelphia, Pa.

Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 A.M.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor
ALL ARE WELCOME

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Tex.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sunday in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P.M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sunday each month at 11:00 A.M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Salem Church, four miles south of Teague, Texas, meets on Saturday before the first Sunday in each month in conference.

W. A. LITTLE, Pastor.
DORA WREN, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a.m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, Pastor.

(Mrs.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk.
Stockdale, Texas.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a.m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before.

A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 112 RUTHERFORD, N. J., AUGUST, 1944 No. 8

A HYMN

Blest Jesus, didst Thou die for me?
Am I a child of grace?
And may I ever hope to see
Thy kindly smilng face?
How would my fainting soul rejoice
And lose all haunting fear,
Could I but hear Thy pard'ning voice
And feel Thy presence near!

But when I dare to look within,
I meet with sore dismay
To find a heart so prone to sin,
And gone so far astray.
Dear Lord incline my heart to pray
Then lend a list'ning ear.
Grant me that faith which drives away
All unbelieving fear.

Dear Savior, let me find in Thee
A welcome hiding place
As from God's righteous wrath I flee
To seek Thy sov'reign Grace.
I would adore that matchless grace
And worship at Thy feet
The while I plead my urgent case
Before Thy mercy seat.

In boundless mercy, gracious Lord,
"With much long suff'ring" too,
My waywardness Thou hast endured
These four-score years and two!
Do Thou my falt'ring footsteps guide
Through my remaining days;
And keep me ever at Thy side
To render thanks and praise.

Unnumbered blessings undeserved,
On me Thou hast bestowed,
My fruitless life Thou hast preserved
While on this rugged road.
I must be patient now to "wait
Until my change shall come"
When I must leave this mortal state
For my eternal home.

Then from this crumbling house of clay
To one "not made with hands"
My raptured soul would soar away
To fair celestial lands.
This precious hope my soul sustains
Mid sorrow, toil and pain,
And while this spark of hope remains,
"For me to die is gain"!

Riverside, Cal. J. W. HAYNES

CORRESPONDENCE

Johnston City, Ill.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

On this fifteenth day of February and in the fifty-fourth year of my gospel ministry I am celebrating my seventy-seventh birthday, by taking some of the time to write you again. First of all I want to sincerely thank you for your commendation of what you recognized and acknowledged to be the admirable spirit I manifested in my article appearing in the February *Signs of the Times*. I pray God that he may never allow me to be motivated by any other kind of spirit in anything I attempt to do in his name. Where such spirit abounds an exchange of views among brethren need not be, and will not be cause for stirring up trouble for the household of faith. I have read and carefully noted with interest your comments upon my article, and I am glad you expressed your point of view though differing from that of my own. I trust that you will not conclude by this letter that I am seeking a long drawn out exchange of our views, though such might happily be of profit to both of us and to others. The apostle James has given us a timely admonition saying, "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and

shall hide a multitude of sins." I concede honesty and sincerity to all my brethren though they may, as I believe, err from the truth, but if God would have it so I would rather *convert* than to *hurt*. While I have received letters from brethren in different states telling me of having read my article, and though some have requested that I continue with a fuller exposition of 2 Peter 3:1-17 I only wish to speak of a few points on which we seem not agreed. The testimony of Jesus to which you referred me and found recorded in Matthew, Mark and Luke I have again examined carefully, and it is my candid thought that all three of these writers cover substantially the same ground. The record according to Matthew shows that Jesus was prophetically forewarning his disciples of the destruction of the city of Jerusalem, and particularly the temple of which he and his disciples were speaking. The first inquiry of the disciples, as I understand, was concerning the time when their temple would be thrown down or destroyed. The next question or questions are expressed with the following language: "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" The disciples could not possibly have been making inquiry of Christ's first coming, for he had already come and was at that very hour in their presence. This being true, I have to believe those disciples had in mind the second coming of Jesus when they asked the question above quoted, and inasmuch as the question concerning the sign of his coming, and the question concerning the end of the world are joined together with the conjunction "and," I have to believe that the disciples associated in their mind the thought of the coming of Jesus and the end of the world of which they inquired as taking place at the same time, that is to say, they believed that the end of the world they were thinking and inquiring about would be when Jesus had come the second time. I have mentioned the fact that the first question the disciples asked Jesus was in reference to the destruction of the temple of which they and Jesus were speaking. As we know, the prophecy of Jesus as to that matter, was fulfilled in A.D. 70, when the Roman general, Titus, destroyed Jerusalem. And just here before passing, may I kindly insist, brother Dodson, that the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and the ending of the legal, or law dispensation, were two entirely different, unrelated events. Inasmuch as you honestly believe and teach that the legal dispensation did not end until A.D. 70, I am going to let the apostle Paul decide for both you and myself, the correctness or incorrectness of your position. Let me say first, however, that the legal dispensation was not ended until it was completely ended. Upon the great persecution of the saints at Jerusalem and other places following the martyrdom of Stephen, many of God's people went to Italy and to the city of Rome. The apostle Paul was inspired of the Lord to write "To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints," and Paul wrote the Roman epistle in A.D. 60, ten years before the destruction of Jerusalem, and in his epistle to the beloved saints in Rome, Paul wrote these words to them, "Ye are not under the law, but under grace." Rom. 6:14. If the saints in Rome were not under the law, but under grace in A D. 60, the legal dispensation was already ended at least ten years before the destruction of Jerusalem, yes, in fact earlier than that. The legal dispensation was ended when Christ became the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, and that was when he, the antitypical Lamb of God, was offered upon the cross "to give his life a ransom for many" (the elect of God). Speaking of Jesus having been sacrificed for sins, and by one offering having perfected forever all them that are sanctified, Paul, in the Hebrew letter said, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins," (Heb. 10:26),

and from the time Christ died on the cross until now, no believing Jew has ever offered one sacrifice on a Jewish altar according to the law. But let me come back to the testimony of Jesus relative to the questions his disciples asked him concerning their temple, the signs of his coming and the end of the world. Jesus did not name any exact time or date when those things inquired about by the disciples should take place, but he told them of certain things that would be, and certain conditions that would be in evidence prior to the coming of those events of which the disciples inquired. As recorded by Luke, Jesus mentioned one thing that should be, which when it was seen, the disciples were to understand and know that the desolation of Jerusalem was nigh. Said Jesus, "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh." Luke 21:20. As recorded by Matthew, Jesus went on to speak of a time of tribulation, which I have to believe began with the Jews when Jerusalem and their temple was destroyed in A.D. 70. Though the Jews had met with many reverses before; though in B.C. 170 the Syrian ruler, Antiochus Epifanes, entered Jerusalem with his army and even went into the temple and set up an altar to the idle gods of the Syrians, upon the Jewish altar in the temple and offered thereon swine's flesh; though all these indignities were heaped upon them and their sacred shrine; nothing so deeply troubled them as did the desolation of their beloved city, and the coming under the rod of God's righteous wrath and being dispersed among all the inhabitants of the earth. So I have to believe that the time of tribulation spoken of by Jesus and recorded in Matt. 24:29 is the tribulation that began with the Jewish nation in A.D. 70, and which will not end until shortly before the second coming of Christ. The words of Jesus, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" does not mean that these things would be immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem but immediately after the ending of the tribuation period of the Jews, and this period will end when God has fulfilled his promise to the Jews and gathered them back to Jerusalem and settled them again in their own land. In addition to this tribulation period that is still upon the Jews, God is now judging the Gentile nations, and so both Jew and Gentile are now passing through the great time of trouble that was prophesied as coming upon the whole world. It is my candid opinion, that God, by his providence, is now moving steadily toward the fulfillment of his promise to end the tribulations of the Jews and also toward the ending of the rule of the Gentiles. It was when Jerusalem was destroyed that it began to be trodden down of the Gentiles, and Jesus said, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled," or filled full. Jesus will end the Gentile times when he comes to sit upon the throne of his glory in the kingdom to come, or the new heaven and new earth which the beloved John saw when on the isle of Patmos. The "old world" or order of this present evil world of the Gentiles will have passed away as it is now doing before our very eyes, and then will come to pass the saying, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and

wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy (corrupt) the earth." Rev. 11:15-18. These things which John saw and heard, followed the sounding of the seventh trumpet which corresponds to the pouring out of the seventh and last vial of the wrath of God, as recorded in Rev. 17:17. The words of Jesus we have quoted from Matt. 24:29-30, and the words of John in Rev. 17:17, clearly describe, to my mind, the closing scenes of this present evil world and the "times" of the Gentiles, just preceding the second personal appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and the setting up of the everlasting kingdom of God in all its kingdom, power and glory. According to my understanding of prophetic symbols, the prophecy of Daniel, and the Revelation of Jesus Christ that was signified to John, I am persuaded to believe that God, by the present dispensation of his Providence, is now pouring out the seventh vial of his wrath upon the Gentile nations of the world, and that but little remains to be done to bring the end of the Gentile times and the second coming of our dear Lord with his benediction of everlasting peace for his people. After the pouring out of the last vial of the wrath of God, John tells us that one of the seven angels that had seven vials, talked with him and said, "Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters." John gives us his discription of the "woman" that sat upon a scarlet colored beast, having seven heads and ten horns and he says, "Upon her forehead was a name written, *mystery, babylon, the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.*" The angel tells John in verses 16-18 what shall be the doom of the power or institution symbolized by the "whore" which John saw. "And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." There has never been but one city on this earth that reigned over the kings of the earth, and that city is the city of Rome in Italy. And there has never been but one "church" power on this earth that has ridden and controlled the political power symbolized by the "woman" John saw seated upon that beast. All who are familiar with the medieval history know, that after the union of the church and state under the Roman emperors, Justin and Justinian, in the fore part of the sixth century, the Roman Catholic Church, assisted by the political power of Rome, did finally get supreme control and reigned over the kings of the earth until 1870, when the Pope and the Roman Catholic Church lost every vestige of civil authority to rule over the Roman empire, and since that time she has had no empire to rule over. In view of what is taking place in the European theatre of war in Italy, south of the city of Rome, I give it as my candid opinion that the fulfillment of what is recorded in the seventeenth chapter of Revelations is drawing nigh. The valued and venerated Benedictine Abbey that once stood on the crest of Mount Cassino is now a burning, smoldering heap caused by the bombs and shells of the Allied armed forces fighting for their lives against Hitler's mad dogs of war who had made that antiquated monastery a fortress from which they were mowing down American and British soldiers by

the hundreds. It is reported in the public press and from broadcasting stations now, that the Pope's summer palace, Castel Gandolfo near Rome is being evacuated by Italians who had taken refuge at the estate and the supposition is that Hitler's troops will make the Pope's palace another fortification from which to continue their desperate efforts to stop the Allied armies. If this place should meet with the same fate as that of the Benedictine Abbey, then the city of Rome itself may be next, unless God may have ordered it otherwise. Not knowing what is in the future, there is one thing, however, of which I wish to speak before closing this article. Regardless of when or by whom the city of Rome is burned and destroyed, God's word being true, the next most important event will be the coming of the Lord and the marriage of the Lamb. I do not know how long it will be after the destruction of Rome that the marriage of the Lamb will take place, but here is the record. After John had been shown the "woman" and had been told by the angel of her burning, John heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." Rev. 19: 6-7. Let me now confide to the readers of the *Signs of the Times,* what I am constrained to think is a possibility, namely, that Jesus may come before this global war is ended, and that his coming back to earth will end it. If this should come true there will be no man made peace, but God's peace, and by a Jew, and the name of that Jew is Jesus. Remember that "as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matt. 24: 37. I have to believe that the present days and state of this present, evil world is very much like it was in the days of Noe just before the flood, and I believe the true *Ekklesian* of God are "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Titus 2:13-14. Even so, come Lord Jesus.

(Elder) C. M. WEAVER.

(*See editorial comment*)

2500 Kentucky St., Bellingham, Wash.

DEAR ELDER HUGHETT:

Just a few thoughts that have come to me that I must put down. If they are wrong please overlook it as I am so wrong anyway. I was thinking of what you said about having a drink when I was poured full and running over. I was thinking it over or may be I was meditating, and I seemed to see in my mind a large jar setting in the sun, and it was poured full of clear cold water and ran over. You know how sometimes water will sort of sit up over the top of the vessel. To me there is nothing more beautiful than God's clear cold water. I have always fought a fight to have sufficient water for my daily use, and I hate to see it wasted even now. I do not think I ever read or heard of it in this way and if I am wrong please forgive me. Grace given by God and the Son is water, the water of life. Water is something we must have to sustain our natural bodies, and any one who knows what it means to do without it knows how precious it is. It is the only thing there is that cleanses no matter what else we might use, it is something we cannot do without and live. Sometimes if we are journeying in a far country we find it in strange places. Sometimes we have to take it polluted when we cannot get it otherwise, but we must have it. When we have been laboring hard or have had a long, hot day (and that day may be weeks or years) how past comprehension is a drink of clear cold water? It is something nothing else can supply, and I think

we have all been there sooner or later, do you not? No wonder the Saviour used it so much in his illustrations. It just came to me that, that was the last thing denied him on the cross. When he said, "I thirst" they gave him vinegar instead. Oh, my soul, if I could be counted worthy to know him. Elder Hughett is it awful that I think I see a little of this? I some how feel like you know it already and the rest of the Hardshell Baptists as well, but it only just came to me as being very sweet. If I ever read of this I do not remember it. Forgive me if I have said anything amiss. I received your letter and after writing what I have so far will try to finish it. I had to laugh when I read it. I sometimes wonder which is worse, to laugh or cry, when one feels so deeply. I do not know what you will think when you get my other letter. If I did wrong I am sorry but I cannot help it. I also cannot take it. (Things that were in a book that were too soft for her. —Elder Hughett.) It surely hurt me so, I was not hurt at you, just hurt, but I can see where it was very needful. I struggled and wandered around until yesterday afternoon. I received the book the morning before. I sat down depressed in spirit, took my Bible and prayed, if I ever did in my life, that God would show me just once and I would be satisfied. I thought I would do like the Hardshell Baptist preachers do, I will open it at random and read and may God have mercy on my soul. I read where the pharisee asked the Saviour to come and eat with him and he did. A certain woman that was a great sinner came and stood behind him and wept. The pharisee seeing it wondered and said, if he be a prophet he will know what she is and send her away, and the woman washed his feet with tears and dried them with the hairs of her head. The Saviour knowing what was in their minds said, "There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?" "And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." Read Luke 7. Once again I was poured full, I cannot help it, but I try not to rejoice too much knowing the day of rejoicing is set over against the day of adversity. Last night I awoke with the most awful dread and fear over me, it was storming hard outside and the wind was blowing fiercely. I surely believe I saw just a little of the wrath of God, may be it was because I condemned that book so, and may be it was what I fear it was. I received no relief and may never. (Written the day following my baptism). I am so weak and so upset I can hardly write. If God will be with me I will give a little more of the things that have happened to me. I want to say to whoever may doubt this that I doubt it myself, but we do not all doubt these things when they happen to such poor, weak mortals as ourselves. I have written of the first of my experience, and I believe it is God's work that these things be known, and may God direct them to be disposed of as he sees fit. I will start with where my burden of sin was removed.. Oh, what a relief it had been. It seemed there was no more condemnation for me, and then I was taken hold of in an altogether different way. It stormed one night so hard it seemed as if the earth almost trembled. I slept through some of it awakening when it was at its worst. Oh, my soul how thou didst quake and tremble, and I surely beheld God's wrath or a very small part of it, but it was immense to me. Why? Because I had been made to feel lower, yes, lower than a worm of the dust. I fought all that day and knew that I must be baptized but I just could not. Oh no, I will not I cried out! It is the wrong time of the year, the water is too cold, and I had always had such fear of the water anyway, and then there was no place. But it grew and

grew in my bosom until I could scarcely breathe, and a pain, real pain as sharp as a knife, finally entered my heart. Please remember all that time before God had mercifully dealt with me, and I believe I had fully received the Spirit of Christ, though I tremble within now when I even think it could possibly be so. I took my Bible again and was very angry with God. I opened it and read the most bitter condemnation and it fell like lead within my heart. I thoroughly believe that God made me cry within my soul; if thou be willing thou canst make me willing, what am I to cry unto thee, O God? I fought for what seemed ages to me, but I believe it was the same day, I took the Bible again and the spirit said, open and read, "O thou of little faith." I took it and read John 11:28. "And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come and calleth for thee." I could doubt no more. I walked out in the rain that night and cried aloud, but in my soul, to that minister who had administered to me in the name of Jesus Christ and finish the part he had to do, and what he did do thou quickly. I was so afraid of the cold water. O how my soul shrank within me. I received a telegram the minister would be there Saturday. I could not sleep Friday night or had not slept for some time as it were. The cold water, how awful it seemed to me. We had meeting Saturday night and I could not sing. I could not love those people who were kindness itself to me, and yet I did love them, but I was so cold. Saturday night I was as a ship without a rudder, my soul was overcome but I knew I must do this thing. Now I am only going to tell my part in this. I seemed to be an instrument in some one's hands. I would have been baptized that night if the time could have been then. I was so cold that when my husband arose Sunday morning and looked out he came and told me it was snowing I had to rejoice just a little, it seemed to be the only relief I had, but when I got up the sun was shining and it was nice. I told the minister I wanted to be baptized the first thing and not after dinner as had been planned. I said that when a man is under execution of death a reprieve is a terrible thing. I just could not stand it. I even told him it was all a mockery and I did not believe there was a God as I could not reach him. It seemed an eternity until they got ready and the time drew near. I was to be baptized in a fish pond on my sister's place. I told them, and I feel yet, that a mud puddle in the road would have been good enough for me. When I got ready I led them down to the water and I needs must walk alone. When the minister took my hand I said I cannot go in there. He calmed me I guess as I cannot remember clearly now, and I know it may soon fade any way. I believe it must have been at noon time. The minister went out into the water but I thought afterwards he did not like the looks of it. Now if I can just make my pen speak for me. When he came out I said, "I must pray," and he said allright, he would pray, and he did and I know it was good but I heard not a word of it. He took my hand and I tried to pull away from him, and at last I sank to my knees with a groan crying, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" I know thou wantest me to do this fearsome thing, but why must you have fled to the uttermost part of eternity? I was made to cry, when the Saviour died he asked for water and they gave him vinegar instead, so I must go and if thou be not in it may I not come out alive, and I was given strength to arise. There in the water was the reflection of the sun. Yes, I know that is what it was, but oh what a light, and it came toward me and said within my soul, follow thou me and I feared no more and went with a firm step and would have waded too far if the minister had not said this is far enough and constrained me. The rest

was only natural with me except that I did not mind the cold water at all. I was so cold that it felt warm to me. When I came out it was all I could do to keep from shouting aloud. Before I opened my eyes on shore I know, O God how do I know, I fear to say it for already I doubt, but I must have been filled with the Holy Ghost, but that is a secret only those who receive it can know, and they know it cannot be told by tongue or pen, and such a peace all the rest of the day. Oh, my Master I cannot tell it all here in this mortal life, but if I am ever allowed to reach that everlasting shore I believe it will take all eternity to do justice unto thee. As I was kneeling there I know that I had just a taste, though so small it sinks to nothing, of Him who hung on the cross and tasted that supreme agony. I could almost hear the angry mob surging around in the songs of the ones that were singing there. It was only a shadow but it was almost too much for a mere mortal to stand. I do not ask why I must write this, it comes from the One who has sent everything else to me, and has in loving kindness borne me through it all. Yes, now when I can see it I know his everlasting arms were underneath me all the way. Judge this as you may but remember that as ye judge so shall ye be judged. I can say from a heart that knows the fear of the Lord that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a true and living God. May he have mercy on us all. Amen. (Mrs.) MARY L. ECKARD.

Geneva, Ala.

DEAR BRETHREN:

During this week all three of my Primitive Baptist papers have come laden with spiritual blessings from a far country, and I have greatly enjoyed their contents. I have read many excellent articles from the four corners of the world if I am able to judge correctly, and also been blessed to attend some very inspiring meetings in the four churches that I try, in my feeble manner, to visit and serve regularly. During the last few weeks it has fallen to my lot to be called to officiate at many funerals, and also to see many of our fondest friends leave for active service in this cruel war. However, one bright event has come my way in the return of my youngest son from foreign service where he was blessed of that One who holds the issues of life and death—of worlds known and unknown to go on forty missions in the combat zone in Tunisia, Sicily, Corsica, France and Italy. Also twelve missions on sub patrol duty in the Mediterranean and return safely although he lost his pilot and on one mission alone his plane was punctured by one hundred bullets. Miracles occur today just as they did at Jericho, Jerusalem and Jordan. He speaks and there are none to hinder. He sits on no precarious throne nor borrows leave from any one to be. He alone is the God of the universe. Why should we quake and tremble when we know that underneath us, around us, guiding us, yes, directing us are the everlasting arms of God. Yet one has said that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Yet I feel reconciled to follow whithersoever he leadeth, knowing that he is King of kings, yes, Lords of lords, the wonderful Counselor, the everlasting Prince of Peace, the Just One. Truly he is all that we have and I know that he reigneth wisely in all things. Oh, may our trust be in him in this cruel war, in distresses, in trials, famines, perils or tribulations. Your boy and mine can return safely if kept by his power from the air, sea or land battles. Jonah had to go on his appointed journey and so do our boys. The purpose of God shall be attained and he shall glean glory from each of his plans. Let us press onward, wavering not on this gloomy journey, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. May I be with you on the celestial plains.

(Elder) J. J. COLLINS.

Newport, N. C.

DEAR BROTHER EDWARDS:

I have been under the impression to write you a few lines ever since I came home Sunday, and it is still the thought uppermost in my mind this morning although how to put the thoughts on paper in a form to be understandable I do not know. The main point is I sincerely hope you were not offended at what I said. No offense was intended, neither am I trying to prove something. I realize, brother Edwards, that you have a great deal more experience than I have, and I also hope to see the day that I do not suffer for my sins. I not only suffer for them but I know there is a time appointed unto me to pay the extreme penalty, death, for "the wages of sin is death," but glorious thought, "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 6:23. To me there is the whole answer in one verse of scripture. We suffer greatly for sin. Were we never to sin again and live many years we still have done nothing to bring ourselves into favor with God. Eternal life is a free gift through our Lord Jesus Christ. Do I believe when we get sick it is because we have sinned a certain sin? No I do not believe that applies to all cases. Little babies often suffer most and it seems like good people often are the most afflicted. Often we violate the laws of nature and it makes us sick, such as catching cold, falling and breaking our limbs and many other things, yet I believe this is all appointed to us. The worst sickness I ever had was because of my sinful nature. It was terrible and I love to think like Jacob who went halting the rest of his life after wrestling all night with the angel. It was surely a dark time to me when I was wrestling, and I love to think it was with an angel of the Lord and have felt a few times that he blessed me, and gave me a new name and put a new song in my mouth even praises to his name. Yet, brother Edwards, there have been but very few moments that I could feel freedom from the law of sin and death. I have often thought that I have never experienced the deliverance that many of you have. If I had, then I could say that sin does not make me sick, but it does make me sick and has for nine years. You would say that I would stay sick all the time. Well, I do. Heart sick, sick of sin. I just cannot do the good I want to do, and I do so many mean hateful things that I have to grieve about. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Romans 7:24. "But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Because I have not experienced complete deliverance has a few times given me to doubt my relationship with the church, but the church is often a great pleasure to me. So many times when I meet with the Lord's people I am given to escape from self a little while, and this is one of the greatest moments of peace I have, just to escape from self. I enjoyed your preaching Sunday even if I did disagree on one point. You answered a question to my consolation that had been giving me some trouble. Part of your sermon was just like you had come for the purpose of answering a question for me. Hope you and family are well and that you will be given a mind to visit us again. I so much enjoyed the day that you and your wife and brother Young and wife were here. I take Old Baptist visits as a little evidence of my acceptance with God. As I said in the beginning I hope you were not offended and I sincerely hope this letter is written in the right spirit. May the Lord bless you and family. Pray for us. In hope of deliverance,

ANNIE HIGGINS.

Jacksonville, N. C.

DEAR SISTER HIGGINS:

Just received your highly appreciated letter. So far as me being offended about you disagreeing with me I hope you have

more confidence in me than to think I would get offended at anything like that. I hope I am willing for you to have the right to believe that you can suffer for your sins. I believe we suffer because we are sinners as I told you at Newport, but for me I am yet saying that Christ is and was the only sin bearer that has been or ever will be. Not only do I believe that he (Christ) suffered for the sins of his people, but he (Christ) prayed for them saying, "Father, forgive them; for they (the church) know not what they do." So if they do not know what they do, let me ask you in love, how can they suffer for something they do not know anything about? To doubt this being true we would have to doubt the language or the Son himself for he says, "they know not what they do." I am glad you had a mind to write me and not some one else about it, so your letter is highly appreciated. Let me say I have only one thing to look to, and that is the blood of Christ that hath cleaned us from all sins. Your brother I hope in Christ.

(Elder) T. H. EDWARDS.

Phonecia, N. Y.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

I am enclosing a letter written to the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, Shokan, N. Y., by sister Flossie I. Faulkner. We feel this is a good letter and would like to share it with those of our faith, and know of no better way than through the *Signs of the Times*. We hope you and your family are well.

(Mrs.) NEVA BROOKS, Church Clerk.

Allaben, N. Y.

TO THE BRETHREN OF THE OLIVE AND HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, SHOKAN, N.Y.

DEAR BRETHREN:

My thoughts have been turning to our meeting due Sunday, and as I was very ill in October and lost much strength which I have not regained I felt I would like to send a message to my brethren. I have often felt thankful that we have an omnipresent God. No matter what our condition or place, we have a God who is always nigh and his ear is ever open unto our cry. He has told us in his word to cast all our care upon him for he careth for us, but I must confess that I am so vile and frail that I often forget him and find myself trying to plan and manage my own way. When in his providence he sends affliction it causes me to know my own weakness, and by his great mercy my thoughts turn to spiritual things and I feel he has again caused me to be clothed and in my right mind. This is the Lord's work and it is marvelous in my eyes. "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes." To my understanding it is not only in our first experience, but each time the Lord appears for he is lifting us up from the dunghill to set us among princes, even the princes of his people. To my mind this world and all it contains is a dunghill and we profess to be dead to it, but, alas, we are often entangled in it and only the Lord can order our steps aright. When he enables us to see this, we see his wisdom in affliction for when we are walking without affliction we often do not think upon his name. Our God is a jealous God and he wants us to love him better and trust him more, and trouble causes us to cry out to him who is the source of all our strength. If so be we are the children of God, our cry is a cry of faith and he who clothes the lillies will heed his children's cry. Thus we cry to him in affliction and praise him for delivering our soul out of trouble and learn that there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Saved not only with an eternal salvation, but saved from trouble and fear and the entanglements of worldly minds. Last Saturday evening there was a serious fire in our community and I could see the flames from my kitchen

window. As I watched the flames leap upward I wondered how often do I thank the Lord for a safe and comfortable home. I fear it is seldom, and how depraved is the heart of man that often thankfulness for our own blessings is caused in us by seeing the misfortunes or sufferings of others. Truly the heart of man is desperately wicked and if the Lord should mark iniquities no one would be able to stand, but the Lord is merciful and full of compassion, and he remembers that we are dust. He is the supreme ruler of the universe, and he has a right to do as it pleases him with his own for we who profess that we know him are all bought with a price, even with the blood of the precious Son of God.

Can we give thanks unto the Lord
Who see our nature vile and mean?
Only by taking salvation's cup
From Him whose blood has washed us clean.

Let us then praise him and adore
That he has stooped to worms so low;
Thank Him for blessings and much more,
He caused us here His grace to know.

One thing more and I will close. Years ago I stopped giving gifts at Christmas because the word does not tell us to celebrate the Lord's birthday, but to remember his death. Last fall sister Neva gave me a pamphlet written by Pink which expressed my own belief in regard to Christmas; but I never saw it in print or words before. He wrote that the world celebrates Christmas or Christ-mass, and it is a Romanish custom. We who endeavor to worship the Lord in spirit and in truth, are a peculiar people and are made free from the customs of the world, so I do not even intend to send any more Christmas cards, but I pray for you all that the Lord may appear for you and your cup may be filled with his goodness. His birthday (the day or the month) is not mentioned in the word, and why should we follow a heathenish custom? May the Lord, who is the source of all wisdom and blessing, be in your midst when you meet together. If the Lord sees fit to restore me to health again, I hope to meet with you, but to me death is a glorious thing. It is stepping from this world to be with the Lord. With love to you all, your sister in hope.

(Mrs.) FLOSSIE I. FAULKNER.

Fayette, Ala.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,
DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER:

I am enclosing a letter that was sent me by a dear sister that I recently baptized. May God be praised for his wonderful works to the children of men. Yours in a precious hope.

(Elder) W. D. GRIFFIN.

Millport, Ala.

WHY I AM, WHAT I AM

Why I am, what I am is a mystery indeed. However, regardless of my feeling of unworthiness and imperfection, I hope it is by the grace of God alone. I feel I have been taught this by him, the one great and divine teacher. His mysterious ways and wonderful performances have unfolded some with me, if I am not deceived, in the miraculous experiences that I have gone through. I say miraculous because there were some supernatural effects brought about by them. I shall begin with experiences with me of late, which are not by any means the first of his dealings with me in general for I feel that he has been with me throughout my life thus far, at least at times, and more especially since my teen age. About last October first my father appeared before me in a dream. We were in church. It seems there was no one else in particular present, though too, we were not alone in some sense of feeling and he said to me, it is for you to preach to-day. I told him that I did not think so for they do not have women preachers. He arose and walked out, and as he went he looked at me and said, well, it is for you to preach this one time. I heeded the command and stood beside the stand for my message. I said that I would say it if anything came to me, but I would

not pray publicly. I did not think much of this dream until a little later when other dreams and experiences came about with me. Since they have come I have concluded that it was a warning that I should tell my experiences to the church. My other dream, which was of a birth, was interpreted to me when my sister united during the Association in October. Some urged me to go then, since they saw my overflowing expression, but there seemed to be something telling me that the right one has not told me to go yet. I liked the "yet" part of it for I was as meek as a lamb, although my "self" was trying to fix it all up for me to live on the outside. At the close of the Association some of the visiting ministers seemed to marvel at my not being a member already, and said that they could not distinguish me from a member. This, along with the refreshing blessings I received during the Association and other meetings, brought to my mind several questions among which this one bore upon my mind most, am I doing my duty? I cannot stay from among them. There is just something that draws me to the front to mingle my voice with theirs, and every minister that enters the stand has my prayer for divine guidance. The story is always sweet. As a few weeks passed I was led to read more, and those questions in mind were being answered for me. Everything seemed to be pointing me to my duty. It was on the fifth Sunday in October that it appeared to my mind that I was fully persuaded to give up myself and be submissive to his will. Then my cry was, Lord what shall I tell the people? I have been a stubborn case and my story covers such a long period of years, it is so smattering and so scattering they will never accept me. This was my cry while preparing dinner and until it was finished and I walked into my room still lamenting and begging for more assurance and something to tell the people. The thought came to me to try to write down a thought or two to meditate upon to see if I really had anything to relate. When I reached for my pencil and paper I picked up two sheets, and why two sheets? They were full when my story was finished, and this story in rhyme came to me as fast as I could write it. It is as follows:

Though unworthy I feel, I'll try to relate
Some of the experiences of my estate.
When I was yet in my blooming age,
There was something within that began to rage.

I was warned of my belated condition,
And I feared there could be no remission;
The hours that lay in my rugged pathway,
Seemed to grow darkness and banish all day.

But, all of a sudden, so it seemed, one morn
There appeared a light that gave a new dawn;
The whole world was bright and rang with song,
I promised my God I'd ne'er again do wrong.

Delighted with a glimpse of this beautiful hour,
I shouted! Is it He, showing his wonderful power?
But sudden as it came, that sudden it went,
I pondered to know from whence it was sent.

As the years rolled by I would mourn and cry,
Still, like the prodigal son, on my goods rely;
But that famine came, it turned about my feet,
Back to the dear old place where we used to meet.

There I traded for just morsels of crumbs,
And to continue to live on in the slums;
But His will said, no, I'll not to that submit,
Of a better lesson I'll teach you a bit.

In the midst of my work, the teaching profession,
Began the work of this marvelous lesson.
It was on February first, in the year—32,
He lay me down with lobar pneumonia.

I lay in this condition for five long weeks
Without realizing it was the Saviour who speaks;
He guided every deed and all the medical aid,
And all the prayers and kind words that were said.

Our pastor, as he stood beside my bed one night
Spoke in hopes of giving one ray of light;
But, alas! alas! it seemed to be all in vain,
Before taking leave he was called to me again.

He, not being satisfied with all amiss,
Approached me again, saying to me this:
"Put your trust in Him, He is the one,"
There came no reply, no not one.

But deep beneath my burning brow,
Was being taught this solemn vow;
It is all in His hands, all in His hands,
No more depends upon those feeble bands.

This lesson like that of the prodigal son,
Was being well taught as all His works are done;
After all was administered and seemingly in vain
All sat around my bed to await His power again.

When the doctor announced a little air in lung space,
And the veil seemed to raise from my faded face.
Loved ones rushed from the room weeping with joy,
That a sister might live and His name employ.

I don't hire any more, but here is my estate,
I try to feed on crumbs and on His will await;
I don't say, I will if you do or if you don't,
But I'll try, the Lord being willing, is my want.

Another experience occurred with me the second Sunday in November. When our pastor walked into the stand that day and knelt for prayer, I humbly said. Lord give him a message from on high. I was longing for the story. Before he had stated his subject or even finished prayer there was something that took hold of me. If a tight cord was drawn about my heart it would not have been more binding or more painful, so it seemed. I was completely spellbound. While our pastor related Job's trials and talked on the subject it became almost unbearable with me. When he stepped out of the stand and announced an open door I thought it the appointed time for me to go, but something said, no, you cannot go now. So I sat with my hands clasped and felt as if I would scream at the top of my voice if I moved. I could not shed a tear or do anything for a spell. I feel now that I was being punished for being so stubborn. That night I could scarcely wait until I was through with supper to read the entire book of Job. I had never seen it in this light before. All the next week I felt so happy, as if I had gotten my just punishment, for something — the debt paid and all was well. Since this experience I have read practically the entire volume of Scriptures with eagerness to see what else would be opened up to my very limited understanding. I feel that if it is not through grace I know no other way, not even in part. Then I am made to sing with the poet who so beautifully portrays Psalms 27:4 in these lines:

"In Sharon's lovely rose
Immortal beauties shine;
Its sweet refreshing fragrance shows
Its origin divine.

How blooming and how fair!
O may my happy breast
This lovely rose forever wear,
And be supremely blest."

Humbly, (Mrs.) ROSA W. HUGHES.

(*Continued from July issue, Page* 158)

all be taught of the Lord. Ye shall know me from the least to the greatest. Yes. the least shall know me, like Paul, one born out of due time. He came in after Judas fell by transgression, being the son of perdition and not the son of God. He was a devil and he went to his own place. There are only two places prepared for the human race, the devil included. Prepared before the world began, one for the righteous and one for the devil and his angels, on the right hand and on the left. In them is fulfilled the saying of Esaias, the prophet, "By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive." So, dear children of God, unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but unto others it is not given. "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." Matt. 11: 25, 26. So then God is not the author of confusion, nor is he the author of sin because man sinned. Man transgressed God's holy law and sin is the transgression of the law, and the soul that sinneth it shall die. Adam sinned and died in sin, yes, you who were dead in trespasses and in sin hath he quickened and made alive. The tenth part of the children of Israel is the holy seed, the substance thereof. I have chosen you and unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but unto others it is not given, and, therefore, I speak to them in parables. My words to you are spirit and they are life, yes, eternal life. You are quickened and made alive, your eyes have been anointed with my eye salve and you come seeing the church, Christ, the brethren. You "see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for

every man." Not devils, swine, vipers nor goats, but every man, his brethren, in whom he became like unto them in partaking with them in a body of flesh, sin excepted. No angel ever became so low as to die between the two thieves. He was numbered with the transgressors, and when he was reviled he reviled not again, so in them, the children of Israel after the flesh, the sayings of Esaias are fulfilled because these people have closed their eyes and shut their ears, they are dull of hearing; wherefore, they only receive the word by the wayside, or in the old stony heart, or among the thorns where there is no root, where his word hath no place in them because they are not of my sheep. Ye go back, yes, draw back to perdition. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." I hope I have not darkened counsel, but have written in love and truth and in harmony with the Scriptures. I hope if W. D. Fooks reads this he will remember this poor, unworthy fellow I hope saved by grace and grace alone. Write and let me hear. Remember that Jesus spoke to these Israelites who were only the children of Israel after the flesh like Cain, Abel's brother. Abel was born after the Spirit and by faith he offered a lamb of the flock, a type of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, so Abel was accepted while Cain was rejected. That class Esaias spoke of as having eyes and ears which could not perceive and hear and with an old stony heart, so they could not bring forth fruit unto perfection, in hearing they understood not, for they said these are hard sayings, who can hear them. These are the ones that went back and walked no more with him, so Jesus said to them "ye are not of my sheep," "my sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me" for unto them it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but unto them who are without it is not given because God sent unto them the prophets, and Moses gave to them the law and commanded them to hearken, but they would not because they were evil and had a corrupt nature and a carnal mind. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" so the sayings of Esaias were fulfilled in them. These words he spake in parables to them, the Scriptures must be fulfilled. They are not his children because they are only born after the flesh, and they who are born after the flesh are not the children of God. These go back because his word hath no place in them, they followed him for the loaves and fishes, they understood not his words, but the righteous shall hold on his way because they are led of the Spirit and like Peter when he said, "what was I, that I could withstand God," and like another who said, "the love of Christ constraineth us." I hope you will get some comfort from this letter. Fare you all well. Yours in hope.

(Elder) JAMES W. LINN.

Moreland, Kansas.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

Enclosed find check for $2 for the *Signs*. I have been reading the December issue tonight and find in it a "Feast of Fat Things". I especially like your editorial on "The Author of Sin" and Elder Schenck's article, also Elder Bellows' exposition of Matt. 13:45-46. Such articles as these and the good letters make the *Signs* worth many times its price. Respectfully your brother I hope.

U. S. LOYD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS."

Mrs. C. Arnold, Cal., $3; C. B. Gordy, Mich., $1; Mrs. S. W. Heitmuller, Va., $2; Mrs. C. Horton, N.Y., $3; Mrs. S. T. Walker, Va., $1; Mrs. L. B. Eason, Tex., $2; Mrs. O. E. Roberts, Miss., $1; Mrs. A. Hastings, Md., $2.

EDITORIAL

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P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

AN UNGRATEFUL, DISOBEDIENT WIFE

Some time ago brother Durand, writing through the *Signs,* made use of the expression that no wife ever had been so ungrateful and so disobedient as was the church, the bride of Christ, while no wife ever had so kind, patient and loving a husband as was Christ to the church. We are giving the substance, though not the exact language, as we are quoting from memory.

Since then our mind has often recurred to this expression, which at the time, seemed to us very striking, and most sadly true. We desire now to enlarge a little upon this thought, and show how it is and how it has been true all along since the gospel age was ushered in. It was true of the immediate disciples of Jesus. Though for three years they walked and talked with him, and heard his gracious words, and saw his wonderful miracles, yet they were unbelieving and headstrong and doubtful and self-seeking often. One of them betrayed him, and one denied him, and all forsook him. Often the Savior chided them for their unbelief. They were the visible followers of Jesus on earth, but yet they were unbelieving and unmindful of his words. So little of his spirit did they manifest at times that they disputed which should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven. How unfit a bride were they for the meek and lowly Bridegroom! Yet they were his, and the object of his tenderest love and care.

We shall see how ungrateful and disobedient was the bride if we recall the record of the churches of Christ as given in the Acts, in the epistles, and in the book called Revelation. There was no church free from blemish. All needed the constant word of warning and exhortation and reproof. The church at Rome was divided and disorderly with regard to meats and days, and were inclined not to receive each other because of difference upon those things. Paul therefore wrote them with reference to these things to bear with each other. The church at Corinth was divided between men, each claiming to follow Paul or Apollos or Cephas. Some of its members had gone to law with others. One had his father's wife. Some denied the resurrection. Some had prostituted their bodies to evil, forgetting that they belonged to Christ; and as a body they had entirely perverted the Lord's Supper, and had conducted the administration of it after the pattern of a heathen feast. The apostle's testimony is that every one took before another his own supper, and one was hungry and another drunken. The churches of Galatia had given heed to Judaizing teachers, and had become perverted from the gospel of grace to the works of the law; and besides, a spirit of biting and devouring had grown up among them, against which they were expressly warned by the apostle Paul. Not to be too tedious, against all but one of the seven churches in Asia, addressed at the beginning of the book of Revelation, there were serious charges brought, coupled with the declaration that without repentance their visibility as churches should be lost. This is the rec-

ord of the first fifty years of the history of the church of Christ. Some have thought this the golden age of the church. We have not ourself thought so. But be this as it may, the record is sad enough. It proves how perverse the people of God were in the very dawn of the gospel day. It was thus shown that men had become no better in themselves than they had ever been. As the patience and forbearance of Jehovah were shown almost without limit to Israel in former ages, so now were the patience and long-suffering of the Bridegroom shown unto his spiritual Israel.

We feel like adding, still farther, that the record of the church of God in all ages has been the same. We mean not the record of the church of Rome, the mother of harlots and abominations in the earth, nor that of her Protestant daughters, but the record of the true churches of Jesus Christ. Of none of them could it be said at any time that they were perfect. Sometimes it has been one thing and sometimes another that has been wanting; but it is sure that there never has been a church perfect in her order nor in her doctrine. When we come to consider ourselves as individual members of the church of Christ, we all must confess to our coldness and luke-warmness and barrenness and ingratitude and disobedience to the One who is altogether lovely, and who is kinder than any earthly husband ever was.

Some reflections have arisen in our mind out of these considerations. First. If our heavenly Husband and King has been and is so patient and loving and forbearing, it is sure that we ought also to exhibit the like spirit toward each other. The Lord Jesus is not only our Redeemer, but he is also our pattern in all things. If each of us feels that it is true that we are so continually erring and headstrong and disobedient that it is sure that we need the patience and forbearance of the Savior more than any one else can, then surely we shall feel that we must bear and forbear and forgive until seventy times seven, if need be. If it be asked where, with the believer, does forbearance cease to be a virtue, we answer that we have never yet been able to fix the limit. If others have found the limit they have gone further than we. What solemn words are these which Jesus taught his disciples to pray, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." Did he not mean that our forgiveness should be without limit toward each other, even as was his toward us?

How ought we to be humbled beneath a sense of all his goodness and mercifulness to our unrighteousness! We not only have not deserved the least of all his blessings, but we have positively deserved his frowns and his chastisements. What can we then do but fall at his feet and confess all our sin and unbelief, and magnify his goodness toward us? It is because he is God, and does not change. that we are not consumed.

We ought also to be very slow to declare non-fellowship against a church or a brother, lest we do so toward one of the Lord's people, or a church of his planting and watering. We have long meditated upon the fact that Paul regarded the church at Rome, and the one at Corinth, and those of Galatia, as still being churches of Christ, and worthy of his fellowship, even though the grossest disorders existed among them both in faith and practice. Paul did not once intimate any loss of fellowship or confidence in them as brethren even when he rebuked them most sharply for their folly. We recall now and then an instance in which he gave direction that certain ones should be cast one side, to the end that repentance might be given them and their backslidings healed. When Paul rebuked his brethren he did it as their brother who loved them. He would not seek to cast them off, but rather to heal the wrong. In all his writing to the church at Rome, the

church at Corinth, and those in Galatia, he chided and rebuked them, but he never once intimated that if they did not mend their ways he should forsake them. In spite of all their wrong-doing he still loved them, and claimed them as his brethren.

We have long thought that it was a duty always when a brother or church goes astray to warn and to rebuke; but even though the fault should continue, it was not demanded in every case that we should cast that brother or church overboard. The expression, "Withdraw thyself from every brother that walketh disorderly," does not mean always a withdrawal of our fellowship from him, for one or two or a half-dozen offenses. If so, Paul would have at once withdrawn from the churches to whom he was writing. The word is "walketh disorderly," which means a continuance of such a course as a stated, constant thing; and neither is it every disorder that is included in this exhortation; for in the connection of these words in 2 Thessalonians it will be seen that the disorderly walk spoken of referred especially to the manner of their outward life before men. Such things as, if practiced, would bring reproach upon any man, whether a member of the church or not, were what the apostle alluded to. The apostle, while he warned and exhorted and rebuked, yet did not withdraw his fellowship from those even who had turned the Lord's supper into a drunken feast. Had he been present when they thus perverted the supper he no doubt would have withdrawn from them in the sense of refusing to partake with them in such a disorderly way.

It seems to us that forms, after all, amount to but little in such things. When we are actuated by the Spirit of Christ many things that now appear very important will appear but small, while things that now seem unimportant will appear chief. We may ourselves tithe mint, anise and cummin, and neglect the weightier mattters of the law, such as judgment and mercy. We all come short of the glory of God. Instead, therefore, of biting and devouring one another, let us strive to heal each other; and if a brother refuses to be healed, let us not imagine that it is our duty to kill him straightway. Perhaps the trouble may not be so much in him as in ourself. How important to remember the mercy and long-suffering of our Head and Husband!

(We regret to announce that our Associate Editor, Elder D. V. Spangler, has been ill and unable to send us his regular contribution for our editorial columns for this issue; however, we are glad to report that he is much improved in health. The foregoing editorial of the late Elder F. A. Chick is being republished at the special request of our Associate Editor, Elder W. D. Griffin. We believe it to be timely and that it is deserving of the serious and prayerful consideration of our good brethren. In our humble opinion there is entirely too much disposition abroad in our land to measure everybody according to our own little individual standards, and then read them either in or out of the camp of Israel. We find ourself in complete accord with what Elder Chick had to say on October 9, 1895, and join Elder Griffin in recommending it to our readers. R.L.D.)

COMMENT UPON ELDER C. M. WEAVER'S REBUTTAL

Desiring to be absolutely fair we are publishing elsewhere in this issue of our paper Elder C. M. Weaver's rebuttal to our remarks following his article in the February issue of the *Signs*. While we prefer not to prolong the discussion too far, there are a few things in his last article which we would like to comment upon.

We are glad to find, as we understand him, that we are in accord as to Matthew, Mark and Luke covering "substantially

the same ground" in their records which "shows that Jesus was prophetically forewarning his disciples of the destruction of the city of Jerusalem, and particularly the temple of which he and his disciples were speaking." As we see it, the city of Jerusalem was definitely symbolical of the legal dispensation, and the temple typified their form of worship. It was these very things which Jesus was telling his disciples would be torn down until there would not remain one stone upon another, so complete would be their destruction. In our previous remarks, Matthew, Mark and particularly Luke was quoted at some length on this point. Most certainly the following inquiry from his disciples, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and the end of the world," had to do with *when* these things should be accomplished, but they very definitely, in our opinion, did not have to do with either Jesus' first or second coming in the *flesh,* nor did "the end of the world" have any reference whatsoever to the literal destruction of this world in which we are living to-day. Brother Weaver says he is confiding to the readers of *The Signs of the Times* what he is constrained to think is a possibility, namely, "That, Jesus may come before the end of this global war is ended, and that his coming back to earth will end it." He also says that he is now seventy-seven years of age, and while according to nature he may not be expected to remain here so very much longer, we are convinced that the events of the next decade will show the fallacy of his theorizing. In less than six months time, and before we could even publish brother Weaver's letter, that part of his prognostication concerning Rome, seems to have vanished away before our very eyes, as the city has already been taken over by the Allied soldiers under more or less peaceable conditions and is no longer in the fighting zone. Whatever further coming or appearing the future may hold, our claim is that the *second coming* and *the end of the world* about which the disciples inquired took place nearly two thousand years ago, and not that they are yet to take place at some indefinite time. Realizing that a simple statement by us of these facts will not satisfy our readers, we shall endeavor to bring forth scriptural proof by citing the words of our Lord himself and his disciples, and from these there can be no appeal. In his conversation with the woman at the well, "Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; (representing the fullness of the law) and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly." He also said to her in this connection, "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father." "But the hour cometh, *and now is,* when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." He was here foretelling that these things were practically at hand. The woman at least must have believed him for she "left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" Jesus also comforted his disciples just before taking his leave into death by saying, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." He had reference to his going down into death, but set forth the fact that he could not be holden of it, and

that he would appear again in his Father's house, the gospel church, where there are many mansions, as can well be witnessed to by those who know what it means to be gathered together by the Spirit, and to sit together in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus our Lord. The prophet Isaiah, by faith, saw centuries before and inquired about this matter when he asked, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, Traveling in the greatness of his strength?" The answer was, "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save," and it was our Lord who gave it. Jesus' first appearing was in weakness, in the likeness of a man, or as a priest under the law, and as such he said concerning himself, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel," and while under the law he commanded his disciples not to go in the way of the Gentiles, but when he appeared the second time as having conquered death and hell for his people, and came up from Edom, which means earthy, and from Bozrah, which means sheepfold, where he had been in the flesh one with his people, his garments were dyed with blood, which testified to the fact that he had fulfilled his mission in coming into the world and had *finished* the work which the Father gave him to do, and was ready to return to the Father from whence he came and receive the glory which he had enjoyed with the Father before ever the world was. Therefore, being exalted King of kings and Lord of lords, he appeared "glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength." After his resurrection he commanded the seventy to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, Jew and Gentile alike. Since his kingdom, which he said was not of this world, was set up and established here on earth, nearly two thousand years ago, his people, by faith, have been beholding him in power and great glory. This required about thirty-seven years, or from the time of his death here in the flesh until about the year A.D. 70, as far as we have been able to reckon the time. In the meantime the church was being weaned away from the things of the law and was growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Even the apostle Peter was so steeped in the things of the law that it required the opening of heaven, from which descended a vessel unto him and a sheet knit at the four corners, containing all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air, before he was made to realize that the things of the law were at an end. He could, therefore, then say to Cornelius, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." Paul, the great apostle of the Gentiles, having been turned away by the Jews, could and did very properly write unto the Church at Rome, which was composed largely of Gentiles, in the year A.D. 60, assuring them that they were not "under the law, but under grace." How else could he preach the *gospel* unto the Jews, to say nothing of the Gentiles who had never at any time been under the Mosaic law, except by preaching Christ and him crucified, as the way, the truth, and the life? If Jesus had not appeared the second time, without sin unto salvation, as having fulfilled the law in every jot and tittle, how could they have known about deliverance from under the law and the bestowal of God's unmerited favor, signified by his grace through our Lord and Savior? It was by reason of Paul's having experienced these things for himself that he could admonish his son in the ministry, Timothy, in the following manner: "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and

called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. *But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel*: Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles." Suppose we quote some of the "testimony of our Lord" concerning these things. Did he not say concerning the prophesy of Isaiah (see forty-second chapter) "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Luke 4-18-19. We are told further that "he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened upon him. And he began to say unto them, *This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.*" What a momentous occasion that was for the gospel church. As he spake of the precious things of his kingdom and the fulfillment of the scriptures we are told that they "all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth." More or less of a similar though greater event is reported by this same writer in the twenty-fourth chapter when he appeared after his death and resurrection to two who were on their way to Emmaus, when we are told that he began at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself, and their eyes were opened, and they knew him. They said one to another, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" Precious brethren, those of you who know the Lord indeed and in truth, have not your hearts been made to burn within you while he has spoken with you and opened to you the scriptures? How can one preach or hear the gospel without witnessing to these things? The same disciple, Philip, whom Jesus reproved when he was here with him in the flesh for his lack of knowledge concerning him and his Father, could after the death and resurrection of our Lord, who having appeared the second time without sin unto salvation unto him, could preach JESUS from the prophet's text: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth." We may rest assured that none but those who are brought into the fellowship of his sufferings and death, and to the glory which followed, can bear witness to these things, or preach Jesus as the Saviour of sinners.

These things prove conclusively, to our mind, that life, liberty, joy, peace and happiness are experienced here in this world by those to whom Paul says Christ is now made manifest "by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." We truly hope that we will never be ashamed of this testimony. To the Corinthian brethren Paul said, "I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified," and again to the same church, Corinth, he said: "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." Personally, we believe with all our heart and soul that the words of Jesus when he said he had *finished* the work given him on earth by the Father to do, were true in every sense of the word and that there is,

therefore, now no need for him to come again the second time in a body of flesh, blood and bone to carry on or continue the work further. Let us go back and present some additional thoughts from Paul regarding the Jews and the Gentiles. In his epistle to the Ephesians, which according to the notation in our Bible was written A.D. 64, or even later than his epistle to the church at Rome to which our brother has referred, we hear him telling the church, both Jews and Gentiles, who were quickened from their former state, that "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." He goes on to speak of the Gentiles who were called the "Uncircumcision in the flesh" and who were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world and says they were made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace? When they came together by and through the meritorious work of Jesus, they could well say, "For we know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Nothing but the work of God can bring the Jew and Gentile together in true spiritual worship. There is so much along this line that we would like to present, but we must consider our space and the patience of our readers, but we must go on and speak something concerning Paul's epistle to the Hebrews, which was also written about the year A.D. 64. He explained to them in the very outset that it was the same "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days (of the legal dispensation, which was not yet fully consummated, but would soon be, about A.D. 70) spoken unto us (Jews) by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom he also made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they." If language means anything, can there be any further doubt about Jesus having appeared in power and great glory. He was declared to be in the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, etc. It was these Hebrew brethren who for ages had been worshipping under the law to whom Paul said, "And unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Does the fact that this was addressed to the Jews mean nothing to our readers? Paul was trying with all the persuasiveness he could command to have them see and understand about this "new and living way," that the old covenant had been taken away to the end and purpose that the new might be established. He would have them know there was no real efficacy in the blood which was shed on Jewish altars. It was offered only once a year as an indication of their faith in something far better which was

now at hand. The apostle could well say unto them:

"The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Surely, we need not say more. It was by this "one offering (of himself) he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified," or set apart by God and there is, therefore, nothing further for him or anyone else to do to appease the wrath of God against the sins of his people. Of a truth then, "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." If Jesus has not for centuries been upon his throne of glory in his Kingdom, ruling in righteousness, then prophesy has not been fulfilled concerning him, and two of the gospel writers at least bear record to the fact "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached." We are not familiar with "medieval history" and, therefore, will pass over that portion of brother Weaver's article, but we hope we are somewhat familiar with the things set forth in the Bible and, after all, that is our highest authority and should be the man of our counsel in things pertaining to the church of God. One of the major prophets said: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isa. 8:20.

Again, we would commend the spirit in which our brother has written and we hope, notwithstanding our zeal and enthusiasm for the truth as we see it, that we have kept within the bounds of the same brotherly spirit. We truly hope that our correspondence on this point has proved enlightening and that it will tend to cause the brethren in general to be more firmly established in the doctrine of God our Savior, to the end that we may all grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and with this we wish to write *finis*. R.L.D.

TO OUR READERS

Judging from the numerous favorable expressions of approval which are constantly being received from all over the country, we are convinced that a large number of our readers are well pleased with both the content and the manner in which the SIGNS is being published. For all of this we are truly grateful and wish to extend our cordial and sincere thanks.

As we are anxious to enlarge our field of usefulness we are going to ask that each one of our readers make a real effort during the summer and fall months to secure for us a NEW subscriber. Remember, if you have not already received a copy of our 172 page book on the Resurrection of the Dead, we will send one FREE to every one who is not now a subscriber or to every old subscriber who will send us a NEW subscription at $2 yer year.

Your combined efforts in this respect will undoubtedly bring some real tangible results for the messenger which goes out monthly containing precious messages to the poor and needy of the flock of God.

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES actually costs less than four cents per week. If you feel that it is worth many, many times the price, will you not kindly speak with those of your brethren and friends who are interested in "these things" and try to get them to subscribe to our family paper.

Please be assured of our thanks in advance.—R.L.D.

BOOKS WANTED

By W. A. Moyers, Speedwell, Tenn.
Volume No. 1 G. Beebe's Editorials
Hassel's Church History.

By L. D. Duke, Bakerton, W. Va.
Hassel's Church History
Eld. G. W. Stewart's Faith and Order of Old School Baptists.

By Milford Hall, Sr., McDowell, Ky.
Autobiography of Eld. Wilson Thompson
History of the first ten churches in Kentucky, Eld. John Taylor.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The regular annual all-day meeting will be held as usual, the Lord willing, with the Brookfield Church at Slate Hill, New York, on Friday before the 4th Sunday in August, which will be the 25th. Visiting ministers are expected and we shall be glad to welcome all who are interested.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, commencing on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in August at 10:30 A.M., War Time, and continuing two days (August 26th and 27th, 1944). To those coming by automobile, the meeting-house is located on Route 222, a short distance north of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State Line. To those interested in coming by bus, Trailways operate several runs daily, both north and south, over Route 222, Lancaster, Pa., to Conowings, Md., with service to and from Baltimore and Washington. Any person arriving during meeting hours will ask the driver to leave him or her off at the meeting-house, midway Md.-Pa. State line and Jenkins Corner. Those arriving at any other time, by either bus or auto, will go to Osbornia Farm, near Robert Fulton Birthplace, on Route 222, seven miles north of Md.-Pa. State line and about seven miles south of Quarryville, Pa., the farmhouse being one-quarter mile from the highway. Any person expecting to come by bus may write the undersigned of his or her intention to come.

Ministering brethren and brethren of our faith and church order, and friends, as well, are cordially invited to meet with us.

CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Church Clerk.
Route 2, Quarryville, Pa.

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock. C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday at the end of old South Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
J. A. CURTIS, Clerk.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 3rd Sunday, Panama City, Fla.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
C. H. BYRD, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles South of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
B. G. KINGRY, Clerk.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
J. W. BASS, Clerk.

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday and Elder E. E. Watson on Sunday.

AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church, located 5 miles North of Hartford, Ala., holds services each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching Elders F. A. and J. J. Collins on Saturday, and Elder J. J. Collins on Sunday.

A. E. SORRELS, Clerk.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canda, California.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before.

E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists invites all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren, to meet with us first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hitchins. Take graveled road to the church.

E. M. TACKETT,
J. S. HUNNICUTT, Pastors.
H. L. ROGERS, Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.
Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 A.M. 1:30 P.M.
To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

C. W. BOND, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1626 Arch Street
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Philadelphia, Pa.

Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 A.M.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor
ALL ARE WELCOME

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Tex.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sunday in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P.M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sunday each month at 11:00 A.M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Salem Church, four miles south of Teague, Texas, meets on Saturday before the first Sunday in each month in conference.

W. A. LITTLE, Pastor.
DORA WREN, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a.m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, Pastor.

(Mrs.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk.
Stockdale, Texas.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a.m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before.

A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 112 RUTHERFORD, N. J., SEPTEMBER, 1944 No. 9

CORRESPONDENCE

16116 Westview Ave., Cleveland-20, Ohio.

TO THE READERS OF OUR HOME PAPER:

In the March *Signs* Mary Cameron requests views on Matt. 22: 9-10. It does not seem the thing to speak of verses 9 and 10 without looking at the whole parable as a subject, and to take under consideration to whom the parable is addressed. First we find it to be to the Jews who were following Jesus trying to catch him in his sayings. Jesus knew they would not believe him. He begins by telling them that the kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding and they would not come. The kingdom of heaven in this parable represents to me the kingdom under the law dispensation, and Israel as a nation was the one to whom the oracles of God were given. The feast referred to represents the gospel which is indeed a feast to all those that have on a wedding garment. Under the law dispensation the servants spoke of this feast and wedding which was to come. Moses, a servant of God which typifies the law, was not allowed to come to the feast, his was to offer the sacrifice, slay the sheep and the oxen and lead the children of Israel in view of the promised land, but not take them in to the wedding feast. His eye was not dim nor his natural force abated; he spoke about the king that was giving a marriage for his son as other servants who come after him declared it to the people, but they would not hear him; then in the process of time God sent another servant in the person of John the Baptist who came from the wilderness proclaiming to the people that the kingdom of heaven is at hand, repent, my fatlings are killed, all things are ready, come to the supper, and they would not come but persecuted and put to death these servants, and "when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city." (verse 7). It was necessary that the gospel be first preached to the Jews, but seeing you count yourself unworthy of eternal life, lo I turn to the Gentiles. The law and the prophets were until John, all these things must be fulfilled, and brings us to the appointed time when the Son was born in Bethlehem, the one who was spoken of by the prophets, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6. Also, "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me." "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in

the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." The Jews rejected his saying, also rejected the sayings of the Son, saying, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and seize on his inheritance." Now we come to the place where there is to be a reckoning. It is no wonder that the king was wroth for the evil they had done to his servants. No wonder he destroyed the Jewish race and burned their city, and when all this was accomplished and the servants were killed he said, (eighth verse) "Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy." The last sacrifice had been offered, the law fulfilled in every jot and tittle, but as yet the wedding had not been furnished with guests, and no one had tasted of the supper. Now we come to the verses in question, nine and ten. "Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests." Jesus had told his disciples to go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel and this his servants did. Remember no one as yet had tasted of the feast, the gospel, and before they partook of the supper, the king himself looked over the guests and found one without a wedding garment. It would seem to me the servants had done a pretty good job, for only one was found without a wedding garment. The rest did not observe this one. I have thought that in our churches the servant has erred and the churches also. In some cases it may have gone on for years and no one detected anything, but in the parable as soon as the king saw the one without the wedding garment (grace and love) had him ejected and he did not partake of the feast (the gospel), but was turned out in outer darkness. I doubt very much if the true servants of God try to induce people to the feast, or wedding, without first inquiring into their belief, like Philip in preaching Jesus to the Ethiopian. (Acts 8:27). The eunuch had an inquiring mind, he was thirsting for righteousness, and when he asked to be baptized Philip answered him, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." I have heard from the pulpit that Philip made a christian. This I do not believe. He was a child of God before Philip met him, and for this reason he baptized him. It was not the preaching that he had preached unto him that caused him to be a son. He could not understand what Esaias meant when he spoke about being led as a lamb to the slaughter. O how often have I, in the years of my ministry, wished for a Philip to come along and tell me what is meant by this and that. It may be an inquiring mind that has asked us about this parable and if I have in any way answered the question I am glad. I have often said that we do not baptize any one to make them a christian, but because they are a christian, and I do not think there is a gospel church on earth to-day that would take in a member without first inquiring into their experience. We now come to the last verse of the parable (verse 14). "For many are called, but few are chosen." Many are called to the wedding feast, but only a few are chosen to enjoy the mysterious gospel and sit under its sound like a rushing mighty wind, "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." I would be glad if others would write on this subject. I know this is far from perfect. Teach us how to pray dear Lord and reconcile us in these trying hours. May we sit at the wedding feast and enjoy the still small voice in the church of God, the ground and pillar of the truth.

(Elder) GEORGE L. WEAVER.

Hartford, Ala.

FAITH, HOPE, CHARITY

The above three words I shall use as a text to address you in the name of the Lord. These words are found in I Cor. 13:13. To more fully get the essence of the text we will begin at the first verse of the chapter. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." From those expressions we are led into this thought, that is, the insignificance of all things else speaking in the absence of charity. Speaking in the tongues of men and of angels is great, but void of charity it is empty speaking and worthless. This is one of the reasons Old Baptists do not educate their ministers. A man can be educated to speak but you cannot teach him charity, and without charity his speech would be comfortless to God's children. Although the speaker might be a possessor of charity, the hearer being void of it the accomplishment on the part of the hearer would be worthless. So we gather up and get an insight and see the beauty and smell the fragrance of both speaker and hearer being possessors of charity. In the second verse we read, "And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." We note here the apostle embodies faith, prophecy and knowledge as important. As these three factors or principles are of importance, allow me to say here that without faith it is impossible to please God. He that cometh to God must believe that he is. Is what? Is God and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Not a rewarder of those that go to him (or say they do) with a fond expectation of being rewarded upon their arrival, but the very fact that they seek him evidences within itself they are rewarded. They seek not in order to be rewarded, but because of the fact they are rewarded they are possessors not professors. In other words you have the cash in hand before you start on the job which makes it easy to seek the Lord. Therefore, I say seek him while he may be found for this is the medium through which he is sought, and the medium through which his children are rewarded, and the only medium, and in the absence of charity all of this rewarding and seeking is void. Verse three, "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." This, my friends, is the limit. For a man to make disposition of all his goods to a worthy cause, and if given to feed the poor is not a worthy cause I do not know one, do you? But that is not all, then give his body to be burned. What more, O what more could be asked or expected? But all this sacrifice in the absence of charity is profitless. Faith is a wonderful factor, hope being an anchor of the soul (not to the soul) both sure and steadfast, "and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered." But these two prime factors, or principles, are each void within themselves in the absence of charity. Well, what of charity you ask? Read on commencing with verse four. "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. *Charity never faileth.*" Before I proceed with my elaborations upon this all important factor, or principle as you may please to call it, allow me, dear reader, to pause just here and look within and be blessed of God to search and see if I can find the least trace of charity in my own heart. Will you, as you read this, please do the same? "Charity vaunteth not itself." I find the spirit

of vaunting in my heart. "Charity envieth not." I find envy in my heart. "Charity suffereth long." I fall short here, I am lacking in patience, my endurances are weak, O so weak. "Charity seeketh not her own." I am so prone for possession, I want, I work, I wish for things of my own, have built many, many air castles and never lived in any of them, but I am still building. "Charity is not easily provoked." I am, are you? "Charity doth not behave itself unseemly." I do act so unseemly, my behaviour is far below par. "Charity thinketh no evil." I do, do you? Dear reader, my thoughts are vain and often, very often gone astray, and so on I go, but "Charity never faileth." Never is a long time, tongues fail, prophecies fail, knowledge vanisheth, talents and gifts cease, faith and hope go down into the grave with us and are no more. I hate the thought of the day when my Bible and hymn book will be laid away to be molested by me no more. They are now my constant companions. But with the blessed hope of charity that never faileth standing as a sentinel on guard while I sleep the sleep of death until the coming of my blessed Lord, then shall I awake in his likeness and be satisfied. Yes, I agree with Paul, "the greatest of these is charity," the pure love of God, it never faileth. Give me of thy love, O God, that I may all trials and tribulations meet; doubts and fears surpass; despondency restrain; gloom surmount and patiently wait and be qualified of sweet charity to say, let me die the death of the righteous, let my last end be like her. A trembling sinner, yet I hope.

(Elder) F. A. COLLINS.

Route 1, Box 21, Maynardsville, Tenn.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:

"If you wish to know of me,
What I am, or who I be;
Here I am, behold who will
Sure I am a sinner still."

"For now thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sin? My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity." Job 14: 16-17. In reviewing our bundle of *Signs* on this rainy March day I have re-read your article on Psalms 127:1. Of course we readily agree that the building of the house and keeping of the city (church) is all the work of God and no part thereof to puny man. See P 65, March 1944 *Signs*. We note views wanted on P 70 of this issue and could it be our Master's will shall attempt a hint of what we hope we see to brother W. D. Fooks in Math. 13. Matthew says, "And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow." He says, "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." He evidently does not say you all have ears to hear and it is you fault if you fail to hear. "And the disciples (His followers) came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them (law worshipers, his children in law service) in parables? He answered and said unto them, (diciples) Because it is given unto you (disciples) to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, (church) but to them it is not given." In the fifteenth verse he says, "For this people's heart (mind) is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, etc." He says, "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world (his children); the good seed are the children of the kingdom (church); but the tares (fleshly worshippers) are the children of the wicked one." "The harvest is the end of the world (law service); and the reapers are the angels (ministers)" "The tares (fleshly service) are gathered and burned in the fire (God's wrath); so shall it be in the end of this world (law service). The Son of man shall send forth his angels (ministers), and they shall gather out of his kingdom (church) all things that offend, and them which do iniquity." Now

dear children of God everywhere, it appears clear to our mind that Jesus our Saviour is contrasting between the true worship in spirit and in truth, and the false, or fleshly, worship here in his kingdom (church) here in this present evil world, and not beyond this vale of tears. Here is evidently where his wrath is kindled against his children, and it is my mind to say all attempts at worshiping him will fall to the ground and perish with its using, not prompted by his holy and righteous Spirit. "The kingdom of heaven (church) is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind" but "the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just." "There shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." It is God's way—his will not ours be done. It is our firm conviction Jesus is combating and hushing the natural mind. "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die." I Cor. 15:35-36. Now, dear children, commending you to God and the word of his Grace which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance with all them which are satisfied. In hope of eternal life which God who cannot lie promised before the world began.

JOHN E. WALTON.

2500 Kentucky St., Bellingham, Wash.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS:

I see there is a request from Mrs. J. B. White in the *Signs* for views on, "Is prayer involuntary?" While your request is to Editors, Associate Editors or minisiters and I am neither I will try to express my views on this. If I write it must be what I have received if that is possible, and if by the grace of God any one may receive of it, it will only be by his grace and through no effort of mine. I believe prayer is involuntary to the outward man. I also believe it is the spirit within that makes supplication unto God for those things that are needful for the inner man, but I believe that spirit will cry unto God day and night until its needs are supplied for the particular trial it is being led through. Would you say this is involuntary prayer? And again, did you ask that this be brought upon you? Did you ask that the spirit of Christ be born within you? From my experience you did not. Could you keep that spirit quiet within you? No, it cried unto God of its own accord, and I did not utter one word that was not forced upon me with groanings that could not be uttered. Was it voluntary or involuntary prayer that made the Son of God cry out on the cross from the agony of his soul, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Would you call that voluntary? I believe it was forced upon him. Why? Because I was there. (See her experience in baptism in August issue). The Saviour said, the Father knows what we have need of, so he gave us a form of prayer, and when we are brought to nothing and less than nothing in the dust, which represents the dead, could you make a voluntary prayer? The prayer we groan within our spirit is just the same as the form he gave us, though not in words, yet it is complete, and that is what the spirit must have, that completeness in Christ. I believe with fear and trembling that every prayer from a sin sick soul that is breathed unto God is something that had to be given it first by the giver of all good and perfect gifts before it could be accepted, and could be a sweet smelling savor unto our Lord. What about the thief on the cross, was his an involuntary prayer? Look within thyself if you feel you might be one of God's little ones, and I believe you will find the answer. The thief looked within himself and all was as black as the depths of hell and the grave, and it was an abhorrence unto him, and he was forced, my friends, to cry unto the Lord, and that cry was perfect and complete because it came from God, and

it was accepted by Christ just as much and just as complete as if he had labored all his life in his Master's vineyard. In the Lord's prayer you will find all things needful for the life of the spirit of Christ in a child of God. Worship and adoration acknowledge unto God and his will, and the finish of his work within the soul and the church on earth, and the bread of life and the groanings for mercy and charity, and love to one another, and O, my friends, can you not see it is all there? But would you utter it voluntarily? I do not know that I have answered this to the satisfaction of any one, least of all my own. If it is acceptable it is according to the will of God. I am but a poor sinner and am not fit to address the saints of God. If I have a hope all I can say is, if there had not been light and still light, how can there be so much darkness? From one of the least if one at all.

(Mrs.) MARY L. ECKARD.

Box 383, Fayette, Ala.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

Do you remember as a younger man that you knew nothing of the deep things of the doctrine? But, my dear brother, I do remember how I enjoyed the sweet experiences. Here is one of that kind. How my poor soul is made to rejoice when I hear another child crying. May God give us grace to continue on preaching the gospel of the kingdom to his little children. My admonition to this young lady is to go to her friends and tell them. The whole church is composed of people with such a confession that they are sinners and beggars. Yours in a precious hope.

(Elder) W. D. GRIFFIN.

Steens, Miss.

DEAR MR. GRIFFIN: I am writing this letter because I have gotten to the place that I must, and yet I cannot say that I want to in every sense of the word. There is only fear and shame in this sinful heart of mine as I sit here trying to find words with which to express myself. Everything is so mixed up that at times I do not know what to do nor what it is I have to do. It seems to me there is something I will have to do before there is ease to this painful and wretched soul of mine. My mind and thoughts are so shameful and sinful that I beg God at times to take them away. I have been made to realize how weak and helpless I am. At times I compare myself to a ship in a storm because I am so weak and helpless. I have heard you say that man is vanity and vanity is less than nothing. When you were saying those words my soul seemed to cringe and writhe for I saw myself for what I am. Believe me when I say that I have been made to admit to God my sinfulness and to cry out to him for relief to my tortured soul and mind, but that is not enough for I am still wretched. Something tells me that there is still a mountain to climb before there is rest I am afraid. There is something more I must tell you. I could never remember a verse or anything a preacher had read after church until you read for a text at Bethel one day the following scripture, "He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." Math. 10:39. I have never forgotten it, and it seems I never shall for it comes into my thoughts so many times. You went on to explain and it seemed so plain to me. I thought I had a wonderful life and that I was living it, but it seems now that I had nothing but sin and was living it and am still doing so. I try to get away from sinful things and the more I try I seem only to get closer. It makes me cry out to God for mercy and forgiveness. At night there is such a conflict in my mind and heart that I am made to cry out and ask God what it is that he would have me do. I think I love the Primitive Baptist people and doctrine and yet how can I love them and be ashamed of them all before the world? That is an awful and sinful thing to say and think, but I cannot help it nor can I help admitting it to

you. It seems that I am a "can't help it," as I have heard you say, or am I? At times I think I have something and in the next thought I wonder if I have. I have a hope that I am a child of God but how can I be when there is so much sin and shame in my heart. I want to ask the forgiveness of you and all the rest for to me you are all his children and I do not want to hurt you. I have asked God, or I should say that I have begged him, to take this sin, shame and bitterness out of my heart. Because of it I suffer so much and there is such fear in my heart that I do not know what is to become of me. Sometimes I feel so low and sinful that I want to crawl off and hide. I do not want to go to your church and yet I cannot stay away. I do not know whether you will understand what I have written or not, but something tells me that you *will* understand. I have wanted to write you before now but I could not, and now that I have I wish I had not. Have you ever heard from such a creature as I? To me the thought that such a creature as am is a child of God is hopeless. It seems the closer I come to the end the more wretched and doubtful I become. I thought that writing this letter would ease the pain in my heart and the sickness in my soul, but I only find that it is more. I have never felt so selfish and sinful as I do right now. I have had to write this and I have to send it although I also want to tear it up. I wonder if I ever will be able to face any of you again. The worst of sinners.

(Mrs.) BETTIE PENNINGTON.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON and precious brethren in hope of life eternal alone by the grace of Israel's God: After six weeks of training in the toughest outfit in the world I will again try to write some of my thoughts on the works of the only wise eternal God of the heavens and earth. I know that in me there is nothing but uncleanness, and I am made to feel that God would be just to cast me into an eternal hell, yet my hope is in the mercy of him who is rich in mercy and love. Many of you, who I feel to be my friends, have been wondering why I am in the Marine Corps. I was called by my board and I asked them to give me this branch of the service which they did. I feel it is my duty as a citizen of this country to defend it against an enemy who is seeking to take what freedom we have to worship our God according to our own hearts dictation. Yes, I have a selfish desire to be with my little family and the little flock of whom I was the unworthy pastor in Memphis, Tenn. just as thousands of our sons and husbands have, but it has pleased the great God of all power to bring this war on to refine his people and try them as gold is tried. There is none who can stay his hand or say to him what doest thou? I believe he can care for his people wherever they may be. It is easy to say let the Lord's will be so when all is well with us, but when we are thousands of miles from those we love and wonder if we will ever see them again it is not so easy. Dear ones, surely our hope is not in vain for the God who works *all things* together for good to them that love him is able to carry the wives and children we left behind under the shadow of his wings and keep his people from all harm. Even though they be in shell holes of the jungles or on the waves of the sea which obey his commands, continue in what you have learned knowing what is clean and pure for the Lord knoweth them that are his. Dear brethren, pray for me in my tribulation and write me when you desire. May zion abide in peace and continue sound in doctrine becoming to the saints of Israel's God. Your unworthy servant.

PVT. WILLIAM O. WAMMACK.
Platoon 449 R. D. Marine Corps Base,
San Diego—41, California.

MISS NANNIE SHELTON, DEAR SISTER IN HOPE:

I surely was pleased to receive your very nice letter. I am sure all the folks at Harmony would love to read your letter written to me for as surely as the sun does shine you and they speak the same language. I feel assured that indeed you have been taught of the same teacher, the teacher of all good things, even God, but am I an outsider? To behold goodly fruit of the same planting is royal joy, and this is joy indeed to a sinful creature such as I to be given at times a faint hope of joy that I perhaps have tasted a wee bit of that delicious fruit. If permitted I would become gluttonous. Rationing is not a new thing. Did not the Psalmist of old describe, by holy inspiration the meting of all things in due season? I think that covered all things of God's creation, natural and spiritual, but meant as a full measure of joy spiritually to the elect, but also that sure separation of nature and the holy Spirit unto the children. Are not the children true in comparing spiritual things with spiritual and knowing the dividing line of boundary of flesh and spirit? Christ sees to all their needs and supplies all for the feast seasons and the fast seasons. The well of grace is ever and forever flowing. All is ample from God, but of ourselves we have not earned one wee bit of it. If indeed I do joy in the praising of God, thanks be to Christ alone for this gift. His was the only holy sacrifice and do we not hope in him? The partaking of over abundance even in natural things tires ones taste, therefore, God has surely made the children fasters and feasters. The truly good things will not come to an end, day seasons and night seasons mature to perfection all things of God's creation. The corner stone brought to light the discerning of night and day to the elect, not that the day has dawned nor the day star risen in all their hearts, but surely will. The promises of God are sure, and are not those who have the witness within of the ever faithfulness of God the only ones who know this? Their hope is sure making steadfast their soul. There need be no fencing of God's green pastures by man as so many declare. Should we not be thankful for the seasons of fasting? But we are not, we cry only for the feasting. With all this in mind will try to console, not chastise, you for your speaking of your loneliness in this world which I hope God has given me. Yours be indeed that joyous hope of the eternal prize. Take courage, oh helpless one, and know that your fastings are not unto death, nor indeed your feastings over abundant. Thanks be unto God for all things. Give my love to all that speak the Old Baptist language and my best regards to others. Convey my hope of love to brother Dodson if I am his brother and I hope I am. Yours in hope, an unworthy brother if one at all. WALTER YOUNG.

Co. A, 30th Inf., APO 3,
Care Postmaster, New York.

2211 Fifth St., Riverside, Cal.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

Enclosed find money-order for $3 for the coming years subscription for the dear old *Signs*. I have been reading it from time to time since 1876. I have not always been a subscriber, but through the kindness of others of the Lord's people I have had much comfort and encouragement from it as it has always stood for sound doctrine and the truth as it is in Jesus as I hope I have been taught it, not by man, but by the spirit. I am now nearing my eighty-third milepost on life's rugged road, and this precious little hope in Jesus and God's boundless mercy has been my only stay in times of deep affliction and distress. I deeply enjoy all the good letters from the dear saints, and can say amen, often with tears in my eyes, to every one, especially the one from brother Layton Wingfield of Draper, N. C., and the lovely poem by sister Coons on the

front page of last September issue. I do not get to meeting very often owing to crowded traveling conditions and my own weakness, but I get great comfort at times from my Bible and hymn book (Lester and Durand's with words and music). I know of no Baptist Church here in the west that uses it any more, but most of them use various song books by different Primitive Baptist publishers which contain many songs with choruses, very harmonious, but lacking the spirit of devotion and solemnity in both words and music that I have always enjoyed so much in the past. I hear so much in late years in our churches about a so-called "time salvation" based on obedience. As I see it all salvation is by grace. Paul claimed no credit for any good he did but said, "by the grace of God I am what I am." It is grace that inclines our hearts to seek the Lord and keep his commandments. He says, "without me ye can do nothing." Find herewith some verses I composed during my recovery from a major operation which I underwent last year. They describe my state of mind as I near my journey's end. You may publish them if you see fit. I am sending one dollar extra to send the *Signs* to some needy lover of the truth.

J. W. HAYNES.

(*See poetry in August issue*)

Box 1107, Brampton, Canada.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

Am sending money-order for $4. My mother, Mrs. W. C. Young, wishes her subscription for the dear *Signs* to be renewed and addressed to me. The *Signs* have always been in our home. Mother has taken them for over fifty years and we would not want to be without them. They have been as precious as dear friends to us. Your father's correspondence was greatly enjoyed by us. It is wonderful to have a spiritual unity as well as natural. We have enjoyed your writings as well as many others in the *Signs*. You have seemed very close to us and we want you to know we appreciate the effort put forth to keep publishing the *Signs*. We are occupied with the cares of this world and like Paul "what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that I do." Mother and I have often said we would like to hear you preach again as well as some other gifted ministers from the states. We moved to this town last June, a distance of twenty-five miles from Toronto. My husband bought a drug store here. We do not know of any Old Baptists here so look forward with much pleasure to Elder Ruston's preaching and the *Signs*. We are very much blessed to have Elder Ruston preach to us about once a month in Toronto and we have had many good visits from him in our home there. The other subscription is to be sent to my brother who wishes to be a subscriber. You might send your book on the Resurrection please if you still have one available. May you be blessed in your ministry and in the publishing of the *Signs*. Mother is very weak but her mind is on spiritual things. She longs for her eternal home and to be at rest. We send our love. Sincerely yours,

(Mrs.) VERNA CARSCADDEN.

Denton, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

I am enclosing a letter I received from brother A. C. Owens, Attorney-at-Law, Wilson, N. C. I wish you would publish it in the *Signs*. I obtained his permission to publish it, and I believe it will be a blessing to many of God's humble poor who are scattered far and wide over this land of ours. I trust everything is going well with you, and may the Lord continue to supply you with grace sufficient for every need as we travel through these terrible days of trial. Yours in hope of a glorious immortality.

(Elder) J. S. HUNNICUTT.

Wilson, N. C.

MY DEAR BROTHER HUNNICUTT:

I have just finished reading and re-

reading your very excellent article in the June issue of the *Signs of the Times*. It has made such an impression upon me that I should be derelict in my duty to you should I fail to comment upon at least a part of same. Therefore, I must pause from my regular routine of the hour and say that in my humble opinion it will long be remembered as one of the outstanding articles I have seen in recent months. It demands our serious, prayerful consideration and offers us spiritual food. The taste you used in the length of the article and the fact that you worded it in plain and simple language makes it even more to be appreciated. Sometimes our writers are, as you surely know, so far above our comprehension that we are lost in mystery to understand the thought they are endeavoring to convey. Oftentimes when we read those long and deep articles, as well as many times when we hear His servants treating on his word, we feel like raising our voices to the great God above and praying to him to bless the speaker or writer to come down nearer the earth where the little lambs of God can at least grasp a small quantity of the spiritual food that they are so much in need of to tide them over these dark and dreary days that we are now going through. I am so glad that you referred to Paul's letter to Timothy. I, too, agree with you that there is no other chapter in the entire Bible that contains more valuable instructions to the children of the great I AM than the one you refer to. Especially is that true to all those who attempt to give instruction to his believing children. Oh, may the time soon come when our folk will see the need of more careful study of the word of God! If we could only be blessed to study his word more carefully and prayerfully, then surely we would more rightly divide the word and be more tolerant with all those with whom we come in contact. As you state, it is only those ministers who have been given a mind to peruse the Scriptures, and have had its deep mysteries unfolded to them by the Holy Spirit, and who have been made humble and loving and gentle unto all men, who are apt to teach. I pray that we at all times bear in mind Paul's words to Timothy wherein he says: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Oh, may we all, therefore, pray to our God to give us minds to understand that a little well said and spoken in a way that will be understood by those who have come seeking truth and spiritual food is much more profitable than a great deal spoken with no coherence whatsoever. We all realize that these are very unusual days through which we are going, but though the skies are dark and the clouds black, as you know they are, there is one thing just as true as heaven is true—the heart and soul of man are still susceptible to the human touch. There is something within the bosom of man reaching out, hungering and thirsting, begging and grasping for a little act of kindness, a little friendship and a little bit of love. The majority of us appreciate those kind deeds when we happen to be the recipient. May it be within the providence of our God to bless us to build our house just a little nearer by the side of the road where we can be a better friend to man. May he bless us to do all the good we can to every one we can while here on this earth, for we shall not pass this way again. As travelers here below, we are moving along through life, bearing in mind that this is only a one way drive, that there are no roads returning, but we have a sweet hope that the toils of this life will be nothing when we reach the end of the way. I am aware of the fact that it is very difficult indeed for us to be bright and cheerful and have a smile for every one during such an ordeal as many of us are now undergoing, but it behooves us to strive to that end and make life that much sweeter. There is a little poem that I really do love

—the author's name I cannot recall for the moment—because it sets forth the sincere desire of all true children of God; not that we will ever be able to attain it in its fullest, but it gives us a goal for which to strive. It goes something like this:

Oh, what a lot of pleasure,
Sweet smiling faces bring;
And what a lot of music,
In pleasant voices sing.
The skies may meet in sadness,
The blistering wind may blow,
But if our hearts are cheery,
There is sunshine where we go.

Something each day, a smile,
It is not much to give,
And the little gift of life,
Makes sweet the days we live.
The world has weary hearts,
That we can bless and cheer,
And a smile for every day,
Makes sunshine all the year.

I am very sincerely yours, with a little hope that some day, somewhere, sometime, the veil will be removed from our eyes and all things will be made plain to us, and that then we will understand and be satisfied. A. C. OWENS.

Route 1, Bailey, N. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

While reading your view on Hiram, King of Tyre, and his servants in your editorial in March issue, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain," my heart was filled with joy and thanksgiving to the Lord. Three or four years ago I was thinking about a certain person, and how helpful and kind she was to Primitive Baptists and that scripture was presented to my mind concerning her, identically the same as you expressed it in your writing. It was a great comfort to me to have a witness. You are the first person I have even known to express a view on that certain scripture. I also enjoyed the rest of that article. Many thanks to the Lord for the comfort and joy your writing brought to me. May the Lord bless you to write many more articles as good as that. Your sister in Christ I hope.

(Mrs.) GROVER C. COLEMAN.

167-56th St., Niagara Falls, N. Y.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

Enclosed please find money-order for my subscription to the *Signs* for another year. I do so look forward to them and should really be lost if I missed an issue. If any of our Elders are passing through the Falls on their way to Canada we shall be glad to welcome them. With best wishes for another year, very sincerely,

(Mrs.) ROSS O. GODFREY.

State Hotel, Walla Walla, Wash.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER:

I notice that it is time for me to renew my subscription so am sending $2 in this letter. I surely do not want to fail to get a single copy. I am in bad health and cannot write much yet I enjoy reading the *Signs of the Times*. I hope to remain in love and under the watchcare of the brethren. Servants of God, feed his sheep and his lambs.

(Elder) PETER JONES.

(We appreciate hearing from Elder Jones and truly hope that his health will improve. The Lord is able to restore unto him his health as well as the joys of his (God's) salvation, but whatever may be the pleasure of our Lord concerning him, we hope he will receive reconciling grace and find that as his day so shall his strength be. R.L.D.)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS".

W. R. Wallis, Miss., $8; Mrs. E. Loeffel, N. J., $3; H. W. Buckner, Okla, $5; Mrs. M. Finch, N. Y., $1; J. R. Johnson, Tenn., $1; Mrs. R. S. Craig, Va., $2 B. T. Murphy, Ark., $3.50; J. F. Lax, Ill., $2; H. R. Chester, Ky., $2; Mrs. D. H. Baker, Wash., $1; S. A. Souter, Mich., $1; A. F. Jones, Ga., $3; E. L. Gillum, Tenn., $1; Mrs. J. T. Gilbreath, Tex., $1.

EDITORIAL

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"I will go in the strength of the Lord God; I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only." Psalms 71:16.

In the Scriptures it is said that David was a man after God's own heart. "I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will." Acts 13:22. It is also said that he never turned aside from following any of the commandments of the Lord save in the matter of Uriah the Hittite, but this falling by the way was sufficient to teach him that he had neither strength nor righteousness of his own. We all know of the sad incident which left a dark stain upon the record of David's life, and of Nathan, the prophet of God, whom the Lord had sent to tell David of his great sin which he had committed. We note also the attitude of David toward the man who had done this great evil, as Nathan puts forth the parable of the poor man whose only possession was one little ewe lamb which the poor man loved as his bosom friend, etc., and also the words of the king, "As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die." But hear the words of Nathan, the prophet, *"Thou art the man."* These words brought a sense of guilt and a feeling of condemnation into the heart of David, and he was made to acknowledge his great sin, and to implore the Lord for mercy and pardon. (Psalm 51). It is noteworthy that such a sad episode has marked the history of the life, not only of David, but also many others of both the Old and New Testament times as well as in these, our days. According to the divine record, men of God who knew him experimentally and apparently strong in character have in a moments time fallen into the very depths of iniquity, and this fact should cause us no little concern, for how are we, as ministers of the Lord, to reconcile these cold facts with our doctrine of salvation for time and eternity alone by sovereign grace? And how are we to reconcile such cold facts with the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things? We are well aware that men in nature cannot comprehend the truth which Old Baptists have been made able to rejoice in so long. We also maintain that even the Lord's people are not able to understand and love these great truths until it is given to them of the Lord to do so, and because of this fact, that none of us can know the truth apart from a revelation from God, it would appear evident that the Scriptures are a sealed book to all without enlightenment from the Holy Spirit, and are full of seeming contradictions. It is an undeniable fact that all men by nature are Arminians (conditionalists) and this explains the reason why there are so many different churches (so called) in the world to-day, and so many spurious beliefs differing so widely. Men are reading the Scriptures merely as history and trying to understand them with the carnal mind which is enmity against God. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: *neither can he know them*, because they are *spiritually* discerned." Consequently we are getting no truth

from the natural mind of any man, not even from Old Baptists, and one would be compelled to say, from the variety of opinions that exist among us, that we are all more or less guilty, in some respects at least, of trying to interpret the Scriptures with the aid of carnal reasoning. How common it is to hear men discussing the Scriptures and saying, I do not see that point just as you do, when in fact he did not see it at all, and maybe neither of them could see the truth as it is in Jesus. Now beloved, this is not meant for criticism. We are simply relating the facts as to the various opinions prevalent among us, but of course on points of doctrine of minor importance, but they are with us, a variety of opinions, and for this very reason we should be both careful and considerate before condemning our brethren who cannot readily assent to our own views. However, we do love sound doctrine when speaking of the cardinal principles of our belief, and on these principles the Baptists are pretty well agreed. We know that no one ever believed with the carnal mind that God is an absolute sovereign; nor did any one ever believe with the carnal mind that whatever came to pass here in time was predestinated of God; and certainly no carnal mind ever believed that God can and does make all the evil of this world work for the good of his people. The Scriptures teach us "that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," and also that God "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." We must accept these Scriptures as divinely inspired, and unless we wish to turn Arminian and limit the "all things" here to "all good things," as many would have it, we are obliged to say that the *all things* include David's sin and all the rest of the falls which God's people have been guilty of here in this world. It is generally accepted among the Baptists, and I, too, most certainly believe, that God takes care of his own here in this life. "Kept by the power of God," and being kept by the power of God none could possibly fall into such heinous evils as David was overtaken with until God withdraws his hand which is holding them up. That God does sometimes temporarily withdraw or hide himself from his children, leaving them to themselves, is a truth we cannot ignore. When the Spirit's keeping power is withdrawn, man can do but one thing,and that is to follow the bent of his human nature which is always sinful. But the question arises why does the Lord so hide himself from his people, knowing that they have no strength at all of their own to pursue a right course, and can do nothing without him but drift with the current of evil? This question has not often been answered, and we do not have the slightest idea that our answer will be satisfactory to many, nevertheless, it has been a solace to us, and we are made to rejoice in the understanding we hope the Lord has given us concerning this deep mystery, and we trust it may be a help to some humble soul who is burdened and asking to know the truth. The Lord's people have neither strength nor righteousness of their own; neither do they have any spiritual knowledge of their own; it is too high for them, they cannot attain unto it. Since it is purely an act of sovereign grace in revealing the strength and righteousness of God to his people, so it is sovereign grace in the experience of God's people which gives to them the "light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." We must all be taught of the Lord that we have neither strength nor righteousness, and that we do not even possess a knowledge that we are entirely without strength, until shown by the Lord by being subjected to severe trials and fearful falls. David, as king and prophet of the Lord, might have imagined that he had at least a little strength, but the Lord showed him that when left to himself he was nothing more

than a worm of the dust. And so with Peter who no doubt felt he was able to carry out his boast—"I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death," but a little girl could scare him into bitter cursing and swearing and denying his Lord three times in succession. Do we still ask why does the Lord hide himself, withdraw his hand and leave his people to fall into such gross evils? Could David have said, "I will go in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only" if the Lord had not shown him that he had neither strength nor righteousness of his own by allowing him to fall into terrible sins? Could Peter have known that the Lord's people "are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" if the Lord had not shown him that he was a coward and had not sufficient strength to acknowledge the truth in the presence of a damsel? Now beloved, if we are inclined to doubt that the fall of David and Peter were in the purposes of God and among the *all things* that work together for good to them that love God, and who are the called according to his purpose, then let us ask, was it good for David and Peter for the Lord to teach them that he was their strength and righteousness? If so, then their falls must have been included among the *all things* which God purposed, and works together for good to them that love him, for it was through their falls that God taught them that they were without strength, and the Lord is still teaching his little children that they have no ability tending toward any spiritual good by leaving them to themselves occasionally that Satan may even sift them as wheat. The wheat, as we all know, needs to be sifted and cleaned before it is fit to be made into food for man's use, and in like manner the Lord's people often need to be cleansed and made free from pride and haughty spirit which goeth before a fall, in order that they may know and teach others that their strength is of the Lord. God may often leave his people amidst the evils of this world in order to do them good, and so our Lord taught us to pray—"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." It is, therefore, evident that some good must come to all of the Lord's people for all the evils which are allowed to come upon them, and, dearly beloved, let us not doubt for a moment that our gracious Lord can and does work all things for our good. This was the very doctrine that Paul was preaching when his pharisee enemies brought a false accusation against him, affirming that he preached, "Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation (the apostle said) is just." We have no other idea but that the worldly minded and carnal bigot will bring the same accusation against this article should they read it, but we are writing for the Lord's people who are inquiring for truth, and we trust the Lord may make them to rejoice with us in these revelations. Beloved, let us not condemn our brethren for their weaknesses and shortcomings, nor gloat over our strength to do big things and refrain from the evil. To do so indicates that God has already sent leanness into our souls, and we may need to be taught, as David and Peter were, that our strength is of the Lord, and that we can do good only as he works in us *both to will and to do* of his own good pleasure. J.S.H.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

This is the last verse of what is unquestionably the most universally known and quoted of all Psalms. We believe it is full of meat for the flock of God, and with the help of his Holy Spirit we hope to spread upon his table a feast of fat things—for those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness. First, we would

like to consider briefly the significance of the word *surely*. To us it means something that is absolutely certain, unfailing, infallible, firm, stable, steady; not liable to failure, loss or change; thoroughly reliable, definitely dependable, and worthy of complete confidence; holding no possibility of disappointment, deception or being found faulty in any sense of the word whatsoever.

Second, we wish to note the significance of the words *goodness* and *mercy*. In the sense used here they can emanate from but one source and that is the everlasting God, who only is good and can show real mercy to poor sinners. In this instance, they denote kindness, compassion, pity or divine clemency and unmerited favor shown; pardon, forgiveness, and the like. The Psalmist says they *"shall follow me all the days of my life."* There can be no question about it. Then he adds, "And I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." Such blessings are, indeed, unspeakable and full of glory. They not only pertain to this life, but that which is to come as well.

We would also like to consider the basis or premise of their certainty, and why it is they cannot fail or come short in any particular whatsoever. As we examine into the situation, we shall very quickly discover that the human element does not in any way enter into or contribute towards it. It rests entirely and completely upon the work of the Lord. There could be no more certain or solid foundation to build upon than this. David begins the psalm by saying, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." Here in the very beginning he establishes a most wonderful relationship—that of the shepherd and his flock, or sheep. The prophet declares, "The Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." Isa. 40:10-11. This relationship is one of complete dependence of the sheep upon their shepherd; they of necessity must look to him to supply their every need and they shall not look in vain, for he will withhold no good thing from them that love and fear his name. In the next psalm we are told something about the Lord, who he is and the might and dominion of his power. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods." This is the same Lord who David said was his shepherd and, therefore, he confidently declared, "I shall not want." Paul said, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" It is this same one who "maketh me to lie down in green pastures" who "leadeth me beside the still waters." It is not left to the whims and feelings or discretion of God's sheep as to where they shall feed and lie down, or whether they shall lie down at all, for he, the great Shepherd of the sheep, works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. He first prepares them for that which he has prepared for them, so that they are not only willing but anxious to be led and fed in the day of his power. He quickens them from the dead and makes them new, or living creatures, requiring living food, which is signified by green pastures. Green typifies life, and neither is it left as a matter of choice with them as to what they shall do, whether they shall obey or disobey, for David said, "He *maketh* me to lie down in green pastures," etc. We understand from this that he was not a free-will agent to do as he pleased, but he was made to lie down in green pastures, and neither do we believe that any violence was offered to his spiritual mind or will in so doing, for the word which God had

sent forth into his heart had prospered in the thing and had accomplished the purpose whereto God had sent it, and being weary and heavy laden his very soul leaped for joy at the thought of being able to lie down and rest in the pasture which the shepherd and bishop of his soul had in his infinite wisdom appointed for him. The people of God, having spiritual life, cannot subsist upon the doctrines which mankind formulate and proclaim, but must be fed with the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to them that believe. Goats can feed upon almost anything, but sheep are very particular about what they eat, and when they have feasted upon that which satisfies their hungry souls they are satisfied to lie down and chew over their cud. If perchance they have picked up something foreign to the truth, in chewing the cud or meditating upon what has been preached they will be seen to expunge that which might prove distasteful and indigestible. As only the truth can make them free, if they are to thrive and grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they must have the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. In order, however, to become rooted and grounded in the truth, they will have to encounter the tempest and the storms, and it will not be left to them as to whether they will go down to the sea in ships and do business in great waters or not, for David declares plainly, "He leadeth me beside the still waters." We understand *still waters* to suggest deep trials and afflictions, which try men's souls and purify them though as by fire, and then they can say, with the great apostle, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." How good it is they are not left to travel alone, for the Psalmist says, "he leadeth me beside the still waters." They have one that is mighty to save who upholds and sustains them by the word of his power. David says further, "He restoreth my soul." It is quite evident from this that he had previously experienced what it meant to be brought up out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and have his feet set upon a rock and his goings established, but now his feet had well nigh slipped and his soul fainted within him; therefore he neeeded to have his soul restored, and here again is something which the Lord, and not man, does for him. And "he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his "name's sake," says David. It was not for David's sake, or because of anything he had done or might do at some future time, but all for the glorifying of himself and the lifting of the name of Jesus on high, or in other words for his own "name's sake." This is a portion of that which makes for the certainty of the things contained in our text and, therefore, says David, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." We are glad because of the word *through* in this verse, for it plainly declares that we shall not be overcome in the valley of the shadow of death, but that we shall be brought through, or safe on the other side, and this is due to the fact that it will be by and through him that loved us and gave himself for us. How comforting to think that though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we need fear no evil, for God will be with us, and will not leave nor forsake us even on that part of the journey. With such wonderful assurance as this even his rod of correction as well as the staff of faith which he gives us to lean upon, shall comfort us. We believe we have been made to know by experience what David meant by saying *thy rod* and thy staff they com-

fort me. If we are not mightily mistaken God's rod, though it laid heavily upon us, turned to us as a testimony of the fact that God was chastising and chastening us because of the love he had for us, and we could then kiss the rod that smote us. The next thing that is said in the psalm which we are considering is, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." Let it be noted that it is not said that God destroys our enemies, or drives them out or away from us, so that we might forget them or their presence, but it is in the midst of our enemies that he prepares a table before us, with our enemies all about us. When the old wicked king said mockingly to Daniel, as he was being cast into the den of lions, "Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee," little did he realize that Daniel's God would prepare a table before him in the very presence of those devouring beasts. That night the old king could not sleep and he arose very early in the morning, and went in haste to the den of lions, and seeing that not a hair of Daniel's head had been harmed, he exclaimed, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?" In Daniel's reply he said, "My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me." The table that was prepared there in the midst of the kings of beasts for the servant of the most High God not only followed Daniel to the end of his earthly journey, but comes ringing like a clarion down through the ages of time to the present, reviving our hope and encouraging our souls to press onward and upward toward the mark of the prize of our high calling in Christ. "Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." The Lord anointed his only begotten Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is declared to be head over all things to the church, with oil, or an abundance of grace, and "like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down the beard, even Aaron's beard," which was typified by it, "that went down to the skirts of his garments," covering each and every member of the entire mystical body of Christ, which is the church of the First Born, until they are covered as with "the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for everymore." Under such efficacious influences of the Holy Spirit one's soul being flooded with a sense of God's goodness and mercy, their cup of joy overflows and they are made to praise God from whom all blessings flow. Before concluding this article we want to give expression to some thoughts which recently passed through our mind regarding the subject of *oil,* which in the Scriptures signifies grace. In scanning through our daily paper some weeks ago we saw the picture of two ducks upon some water. One looked perfectly normal and contented and was gliding over the surface of the water without any difficulty whatsoever; the other one presented one of the most forlorn and pitiful sights we almost ever saw as it was struggling with all of its might, but, nevertheless, it was gradually sinking beneath the surface of the water with nothing but the inevitable outlook of drowning in the same water which was supporting the other duck perfectly. We were attracted to the picture and was much interested in reading the explanation which was that the duck which was so forlorn and in a perishing state had had the oil extracted from its feathers and, therefore, could not remain afloat on the water. In talking about this picture to a friend who proved to be a great hunter and student of all kinds of ducks and geese he told us of a true story which occurred only a few years ago on the south coast of New Jersey. It was during a time when the waters were heavily coated

with crude oil, making them untenable for human beings. The wild geese and ducks swimming in these waters soon became so covered with this crude oil that they could not navigate and struggled ashore. Many of them were caught and washed in gasoline, which while ridding them of the crude oil at the same time had the effect of extracting from their feathers the oil which nature had supplied for their protection and safety, and when they were released they made for the water again but sank as chickens in watery graves. In meditating upon these things we had a most beautiful picture of what *grace* does for the poor sinner. We cannot imagine a sadder or more pitiful sight than God's dear children struggling to keep themselves afloat on the sea of life by their own efforts. It is all of grace, if we know anything about the truth of the matter and, therefore, as says the poet,

"If I must sing, I'll sing of grace
Which raised me from the fall,
And led me to a hiding place;
Jesus, my Lord, my all."

Another poet has said,

"Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days:
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

We hope ere our reader has reached this point he will have gotten at least a glimpse of the reason for our rejoicing in the declaration by David when he said, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." Not only shall God's goodness and mercy follow us all the days of our life here, but when the time comes for us to quit the walks of men and depart and be with Christ, which is far better, we have the same assurance, and it is based upon no other foundation than that "Salvation is of the Lord," we will "dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." Here we dwell, as it were in a tabernacle, which shall soon be taken down and crumble back to dust from whence it came, but, says the apostle, "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Our faith rejoices in the fact that after the turmoil and strife of this sin cursed world and life is over we *shall* "dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." Surely that will be enough and as those whose needs are supplied here by the great Shepherd of the sheep do not lack for any good thing in this life, we cannot entertain the thought for one moment that there shall be any lack in that "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

R.L.D.

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Pocatalico Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, held with the Lost Creek Church, Carter County, Kentucky, Sept. 10, 11 and 12, 1943.

"Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are must surely believed among us," dearly beloved, it has now fallen to my lot to address you by a Circular Letter, and no one is more concious of the fact than is your unworthy servant, that unless it be the will of our God to so move upon me as to make me able to write, then all my efforts to do so will be futile and vain, and will become a task to which I am unequal.

The text I have chosen as a basis for our discourse is found in the first chapter of second Timothy, verses nine and ten: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." Brethren, to all who constitute the household of faith, I wish to say, first of all, that if

there is a doctrine which I do believe with all my heart and soul, and which I am persuaded I am not alone in believing, it is the doctrine of the eternal vital unity of Christ and the church. That grace of God which saved his people is not as so many would have us believe, a thing of recent origin, not a something ushered in, after the fall of man, upon a depraved race to offer salvation to Adam and to his posterity. No, beloved, the grace of God and the redemption of his people are of eternal origin, as ancient as the purposes of an eternal, sovereign, immutable God, and I believe it to be a source of great comfort to all the true Israel of God to note that this grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Yes, given us in Christ Jesus, for we did exist in him as members of his mystical body, as the fruit in the germ, in the eternal covenant, and the eternal purposes of an all-wise God. In the eternal purposes of our God sin was made to abound toward us through Adam, and in him we were subjected to vanity, and exposed to sorrow, suffering and death. In the same eternal purposes, where sin abounded, grace was made to abound much more toward us through our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death and hath brought life and immortality to light, and has manifested it to us by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, as preached in the gospel for the comfort and consolation of the Lord's portion, which is his people, when the true gospel is preached by the power of God sent down from heaven. Notice, my brethren, "he hath brought life and immortality to light," for "he only, hath immortality dwelling in the light, which none can approach unto." Yet he manifested our life and immortality in himself when he arose from the dead. It was there and then that he won a complete victory for his people, over death, hell and the grave. And showed us that he is our resurrection and life.

Jesus Christ was declared to be the Son of God with power. After he arose from the dead he declared that all power was given unto him, both in heaven and on earth. He alone had power to create the earth from nothing, to bring it out of chaos, and to command the light to shine out of darkness, and there is nothing too hard for him. He had power to abolish death by voluntarily giving his own life, then triumphing over death, conquering the last enemy of his people by his glorious resurrection. Hear him, as he comes forth from Joseph's new tomb, solemnly declaring, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." Before he went to the cross, and while in a state of humiliation for thirty-three years, death held dominion over him. Not because he himself was a sinner, but because he had from eternity assumed the guilt of his people and took upon himself to die for them. And though, my beloved, we are the transgressors, yet our sins have never been charged to us, for "the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all," "and he bore them in his own body on the tree." O glorious thought!

"By faith my Christ I now behold
On yonder gloomy tree.
He bleeds to put my sins away—
He died, my soul, for thee.

O see the bleeding Prince of life
On Calvary's mount expire:
Muse on the wondrous scene of love,
And reigning grace admire."

Now, beloved, it is true that through Adam sin hath reigned unto death, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shown us; it is equally true that through Jesus Christ our Lord "grace hath reigned through righteousness unto eternal life," for every one of his elect children. When on the cross he cried out, "It is finished" the redemption of all for whom he died was then accomplished. There he gave us "all things pertaining to life and godliness." Justification, repentance, faith, a godly walk and final glorification were assured us there. Then he manifested that grace which was given us in him be-

fore the world began. And *now* the poor, tired, wayworn children of God are waiting—for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies, and when finally we are called to quit the walks of life, to put off the image of the first man Adam, which is of the earth earthy, and to put on the image of the second man, which is the Lord from heaven, then we shall be qualified to sing praises to his glorious name in a land of eternal bliss for evermore.

Yours to serve,

J. S. HUNNICUTT.

J. C. HAMMOND, Moderator.

H. J. BIRD, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Pocatalico Old School, or Primitive Baptist Association, to the several associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greetings and christian salutation in the Lord.

It is a blessed privilege to again be assembled in an associate capacity to again greet brethren and friends we seldom have opportunity of seeing, and to have heard the gospel ably proclaimed by ministering brethren who labor in the love of God, bringing glad tidings of joy and peace. We feel that we have been greatly blessed of the Lord to have been permitted to meet again on the shores of time to greet one another in the Lord, and we wish a continuance of your correspondence with us. May the God of grace bless us and keep us in love and peace for his name's sake.

Submitted in love.

J. C. HAMMOND, Moderator.

H. J. BIRD, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING CIRCULAR LETTER

Written by brother Edward K. Adsit.

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, at Shokan, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, September 15th and 16th, 1943, to the churches of which this Association is composed, sends christian greetings.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—In these days of trying times, when people are in turmoil, upset by internal and external conditions, wars and rumors of wars, strife, hunger, and the pursuit of happiness and an ever-abiding need, it all brings us to a searching. The Word of the Lord says, "Search the Scriptures" (John 5:39), and having opened the pages of the Book, we come to the passage in the eighth chapter of Matthew and the twentieth verse, which says, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."

Because of our weakness and inability to write as others, to the edification of the dear lambs of the Shepherd, we feel very unworthy, but we shall attempt, trusting all to the Lord, to direct our mind and pen of the crumbs of spiritual manna.

We think we have troubles and worries in this world of wars and strife, but, brethren, NEVER like unto the sufferings of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Just think of this, brethren, the foxes have holes to crawl into for safety and sleep in peace, the birds of the air have nests high in the branches of the trees, *but* the Son of man hath nowhere to lay his head. It makes us wonder how many times, with fear and trembling, how a just God could be so considerate of a sin-cursed people who have tried to destroy the Son of God. Why, even in his birth they tried to destroy him, and they have mocked him and rebuked him all through his life. He was betrayed and even his own doubted him. Then he was crucified, nailed to the cross, and they scourged him; and yet this same Jesus, who knew the true depth of suffering and affliction,

could say to the heavenly Father above, "Forgive them, for they know not what they do."

In Luke 2:7, it says, "And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." Think of it! The Son of God born in a manger, the humblest of all places; there was no room for him in the inn. Truly the Son of man hath nowhere to lay his head.

Then again, Joseph was told in a dream (Matthew 2:13), "Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child, to destroy him." Think of it! Made to flee, to run and hide. Then in Luke 18: 31-33, the word says, "He took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: and they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again." Here again we say the words, "The Son of man hath not where to lay his head."

Also in Luke 18:28-30, the word says, "Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all and followed thee. And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come, life everlasting."

Then Thomas, one of the twelve apostles, even doubted him, for it says in the book of John, twentieth chapter, twenty-fifth verse, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." Surely these are sufferings for Jesus to go through, but what did Jesus do? After eight days Jesus stood in the midst of his disciples (John 20:27-29), then saith he to Thomas, Peace be unto you. "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and My God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

Jesus in fulfilling the will of God was mocked by sayings such as, "He saved others; himself he cannot save."—Matt. 27:42. And, "If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself."—Luke 23:37. What trials, what sufferings; truly the Son of man hath nowhere to lay his head.

We have spoken of some of the sufferings of Jesus all through his life as it is in the Word, that, "The Son of man hath not where to lay his head." We ask you if you, too, have not had similar trials in your spiritual walk? Were you not made to flee out of this world to attain comfort from above? For some this road is long and trying, and others come another way. Were you not ever mocked by those of the world because of your belief? And how many times have you been pierced in the heart and humbled and made to go into the garden to pray for His guidance and strength to bear your cross? We have been pierced and scourged for the truth's sake many times. And cannot you say like unto what Jesus said: "Forgive them, for they know not what they do"? And lastly, but not least, have you not been through trials that you can feel something of—"The Son of man hath not where to lay his head"? We feel you have.

We in our nature, in a measure, have to be broken as he was broken, made to suffer like unto his suffering. We have to handle and taste of the things of the Word of God to be given that blessed hope and to open our hearts and minds to Him, who is all in all; who has paid the re-

demption price. We have to be made to cry out to Him, who knows all things, and then to say, "Not my will, O Lord, but thine be done." And may the love God has for his Son and our Savior be shed abroad in our hearts so that we may dwell in that love, and praise his holy name, Selah.

We have been comforted by the under-shepherds, by your correspondence, by your love and fellowship. We hope to meet with you all again at our Association here at Shokan, N. Y. Farewell then until 1944.

ORVILLE WINCHELL, Moderator.
EDWARD K. ADSIT, Clerk.

OBITUARIES

Sister M. J. NATION was born June 19, 1857 and passed from this life May 14, 1944, living on earth 86 years, 10 months and 25 days. She was united in marriage to A. J. Nation, August 28, 1873 and to them were born fifteen children, six boys and one girl surviving her as follows: Jim, Jess, Tom and Henry Nation all of California; Fred and Jasper of Altus, Okla. and Mrs. D. G. Dishman of Hedrick, Okla. Fred, Jasper and Mrs. Dishman were present to witness the passing of a noble mother. Besides her children she leaves thirty-seven grandchildren and thirty great-grandchildren to follow on. Her husband, A. J. Nation, was a Primitive Baptist preacher and preceded her in death about thirty-three years. Eight children also preceded her in death. She, with her husband, united with the Old School Baptist church soon after their marriage. She had membership with the church of her choice, the people she loved, about seventy years. Truly a noble woman has fallen. She patiently bore the burden of a minister's helpmeet and companion for about thirty-seven years, laboring with her hands to raise a large family and do the many extra things that become the duty of a minister's companion, but by the grace of God she was made able to carry on and raise a family that reflects honor upon her, and that knows the burdens and hardships of a dear mother whom they so highly respected and so dearly loved. Surely the grace of God was manifested in her noble life. I have had the pleasure and honor of being her pastor for twenty odd years, and surely have sufficient evidence to say, this sainted mother had been with God and been taught of him; and the love of God with which we love the church, the brethren and sisters, and the gospel of God our Saviour was manifested in her. She was always ready to acknowledge her faults, realizing she was not able within herself to have one good thought, but could say with one of old, "He performeth the thing that is appointed for me." Her hope was not in her own well doing but what Jesus did for her. She left that evidence that she trusted in Jesus and hoped to be among the many that were made righteous by his obedience. Sister Nation's greatest pleasure was to attend her meetings and mingle with her brethren and sisters. The last place she went to in this world was to her meeting. It was on a Friday, the first day of a three days meeting which she had been looking forward to for weeks. She seemed happy to be there but before the services were over she was taken ill and removed to her son's home. She grew worse hourly until early Sunday morning her Saviour called and no doubt she gladly gave up all to be with him where sickness, pain and sorrow can never enter. Weep not sorrowing relatives and friends, but rather rejoice that she is gone from the evil to come. Let us view her as asleep in Jesus. All the troubles of this life as we knew her are gone forever. God grant, if it can be his will, that we may view her in that sweet, peaceful rest and say, rest on precious mother you cannot be disturbed now. This is our confidence and hope. May God comfort those that mourn. Written by her pastor by request of the family.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN.

MRS. MARY VICTORIA ASHWORTH, widow of the late Benjamin W. Ashworth, Sandy Level, Va., departed this life on Friday morning, Dec. 19, 1941. She was confined to bed for only one week before her death. This was as she had often prayed, also remarked to her family on many occasions that she hoped it was God's will not to let her linger after she had become disabled to get about for she did not wish to be in the way. She said it was far better to be with the Lord. We all feel that she is with the Lord, and do not mourn for her as we would for one having no hope. She leaves the following children who have missed her so much since her passing: Laura B. Gilbert, Alice A. Davidson, Sandy Level, Va., Bessie M. McCrickard, Pen Hook, Va., Johnie B. Ashworth, Roanoke, Va., Leonard I. Ashworth, Covington, Ky., Posie W. Ashworth, Danville, Va. She also leaves thirty-two grandchildren and twenty-two great-grandchildren. Mother made her home with her oldest daughter, Mrs. Laura B. Gilbert, for about eight years preceding her death. Our sister, her good husband, Mr. Samuel I. Gilbert, and their lovely children did all they could to make her life comfortable in this world. They cared for her as though she were a child, answering to every call and contributing to every need as far as humanly possible. She was buried by the side of her husband to whom she was

so devoted during his life, fifty-four years of which they spent together. Of course we all miss mother, but when our Lord called we felt to say, bless the Lord, he has taken her home where she longed to be, there to join her beloved husband, together with God's children, to sing praises to his blessed name and forever to be with the Lord. Her greatest joy, especially during her later years, was to meet with her brethren and sisters in Christ, talking of heavenly things. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Ephesus many years ago, but her membership was at Chappell at the time of her death. She was well versed in the Scriptures, and wanted all who spoke in his wonderful name to have a "thus saith the Lord" for what they said. She was also gifted in writing. Many articles appeared over her signature in Zion's Landmark in years gone by. I believe it was only about two weeks before her death she visited Canaan Church in Pittsylvania County in order to meet with many of her friends whom she loved, and to hear Elder W. R. Dodd preach, he being one of her favorite ministers. In compliance with her request Elders W. R. Dodd, J. A. Brooks and J. F. Stegall spoke at her funeral which was attended by a large number of friends We would not forget to say that her neighbors were very kind to her in memory of her thoughtfulness of them during her stay among them. We miss mother, but she is happy with her Lord and we feel she is so much better off than we. Written by her son. POSIE W. ASHWORTH.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Lexington-Roxbury Ass'n. convenes with the Olive & Hurley O. S. Baptist Church, Shokan, N.Y., Wed. and Thur. Sept. 13 and 14, 1944. Meeting begins 10:30 a.m. Those arriving Tues. will stop at Mrs. Hazel Byrns, Ashokan Rest, for directions to places of entertainment. Those coming Wed. will go direct to meeting-house.

ORVILLE WINCHELL, Moderator.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Bowdoinham Church, Bowdoinham, Maine, Sept. 8, 9 and 10, 1944.

SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday at the end of old South Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
J. A. CURTIS, Clerk.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 3rd Sunday, Panama City, Fla.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
C. H. BYRD, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles South of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
B. G. KINGRY, Clerk.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
J. W. BASS, Clerk.

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday and Elder E. E. Watson on Sunday.

AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church, located 5 miles North of Hartford, Ala., holds services each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching Elders F. A. and J. J. Collins on Saturday, and Elder J. J. Collins on Sunday.

A. E. SORRELS, Clerk.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canda, California.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before.

E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists invites all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren, to meet with us first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hitchins. Take graveled road to the church.

E. M. TACKETT,
J. S. HUNNICUTT, Pastors.
H. L. ROGERS, Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.
Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 A.M. 1:30 P.M.
To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

C. W. BOND, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1626 Arch Street
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Philadelphia, Pa.

Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 A.M.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor
ALL ARE WELCOME

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Tex.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sunday in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P.M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sunday each month at 11:00 A.M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Salem Church, four miles south of Teague, Texas, meets on Saturday before the first Sunday in each month in conference.

W. A. LITTLE, Pastor.
DORA WREN, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a.m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, Pastor.

(Mrs.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk.
Stockdale, Texas.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a.m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before.

A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 112 RUTHERFORD, N. J., OCTOBER, 1944 No. 10

"BE STILL, AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD."

Has thy God appointed sorrow?
Are thy tears unbidden fare?
Look to Christ for He has bid us
Cast upon me all thy care.

He walked here and knew no comfort
Bruised, rejected, grief—His lot;
Came a Savior to His people
They—offended—knew Him not.

He was spurned and jeered and mocked at,
The carpenter's son, is that not he?
Can a good thing come from Nazareth?
Philip answered, "Come and see."

He was sinless, faultless, holy,
Yet He died upon a cross;
Pleased not Himself but saved His people
To present them free from dross.

Did His walk here please His Father?
Hear the words, "Beloved Son,"
Yet He needs must suffer anguish,
Be touched by pain of everyone.

He bore the sins of all His people
Sweat blood in Gethsemane;
Saying, "Father, if thou will'st it
Let this cup now pass from me."

"Not my will but thine be finished
For this, came I to this hour;
Glorify thy son that He may
Glorify Thee—Thine the power."

Soon they nailed Him, raised Him upward
On His head—of thorns a crown;
Wicked hands betrayed and slew Him
E'en the sun would not shine down.

But foreknowledge and wise counsel
All determined this should be;
So Immanuel, Christ our Saviour,
Through His death brought life to me.

Wondrous wisdom, love unmeasured
Let us then His name adore;
Still our murmuring, quiet our spirit,
May we praise him evermore.

FLOSSIE I. FAULKNER.

CORRESPONDENCE

919 Asheboro St., High Point, N. C.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, EDITOR AND BRETHREN:

From Abraham to the coming of Jesus Christ was forty-two generations. According to prophecy Jesus Christ was born of the virgin, Mary, at the appointed time of God, his Father. Joseph being warned by an angel of the Lord, while asleep, arose and took his wife. All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet saying, "Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" which is God with us. His name as was announced by the angel shall be Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins. Christ Jesus was the son of David, and spiritually Abraham saw the days of Christ and rejoiced in his day, while the chief priests were troubled. Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea. Herod was king and Jesus was born king of the kingdom of heaven. Wise men of the east came to Jerusalem seeking the king of the Jews saying we have seen his star in the east. When Herod heard this he was troubled and all Jerusalem with him. Why? Because they loved the honor of men more than the honor of God. After Herod had called the chief priests and the scribes together, and they informed

him that Christ, according to prophecy, should be born at Bethlehem of Judea, he then privately called the wise men and sent them to Bethlehem to search for the young child Jesus, and when you have found him bring me word so I can worship him, but he wanted to kill him because he was afraid he would lose his kingship, and the chief priests were afraid they would lose their places of honor. The decree of God saved his Son. The star led the wise men to the child, Jesus, who was with his mother, Mary, and they gave him gifts. Being warned of God in a dream they did not return to Herod, the king. Joseph and Mary, the mother of Jesus, were also warned of God to take the young child and his mother and flee into Egypt for Herod will seek to destroy the young child. After the death of Herod the Lord called Joseph, Mary and the child Jesus out of Egypt according to the word of the prophet saying, out of Egypt have I called my son. What is the difference in prophecy and predestination? Herod slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under trying to destroy the child Jesus who was born. This was another prophecy fulfilled, Rachel weeping for her slain children. Another prophecy was fulfilled when Joseph and Mary and Jesus went and dwelt in the city of Nazareth for he shall be called a Nazarene. John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea saying, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John was the voice of Elias, the prophet, crying in the wilderness preparing the way of the Lord Jesus Christ. "And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey." His preaching was repentance and baptism, all pointing to the coming of the Lord Jesus who will baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire and he will throughly purge his floor. John the Baptist only baptized in the river Jordan those who confessed their sins and showed evidence of repentance. His baptism was from heaven. "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." John saw this and heard it and hath born witness to the heavenly truth. "Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." This Jesus could easily have done had it been the will of the Father, "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down." "Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only

shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him." "Leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum which is upon the sea coast." This was done to fulfill a prophecy of Esaias. The Gentiles that sat in darkness saw a great light. From this time Jesus, being about thirty years old, began to preach and say, "The kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." Now Jesus begins to call his twelve apostles, and of those twelve apostles he chooses one whom he calls a devil. All the twelve apostles were given power over evil spirits and to even raise the dead in the name of Jesus Christ. Jesus went about all Galilee teaching in their synagogues and healing all manner of diseases, and his fame spread like wild fire. Great multitudes followed him from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem and beyond Jordan.

THOMAS W. KIMSEY.

Route 1, Hammond, W. Va.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

Seeing the request made for some of the brethern to help and that E. T. Loyd wants some one to write on John 10:7-8 I will endeavor to comply. "Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them." Christ, the Son of God, came into this world to do his Father's will, and then he tells them what his Father's will is. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." They are here called his sheep. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." The second and third verses of this tenth chapter read, "But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." The door is an opening space to enter into a building or a gap is an opening to enter in at, so Jesus entered into this world by an opening. Yes, his name shall be called Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins. A virgin shall have a son. See the open door here, she shall have a son and thou shalt call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins. Notice this son is the shepherd of his sheep because God's children are called sheep. David spoke of them as sheep. All that came before him were not the shepherds who own the sheep because God, the Father, gave the sheep to him and set his shepherd over them to keep them from being destroyed; he guards them by day and by night; he warns them so they know not the voice of strangers and follow not strangers, but to him the porter openeth. Yes, John was sent, he came in by the door, he was called and sent of God, the Father, to cry, yes, "the voice of him that crieth in the wilderness." He openeth the way for the sheep by opening up to them that this is the Lamb of God that stood in the mind and purpose of God as that Lamb slain for sin. Yes, he is the true shepherd of the sheep, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," the righteous world, not the whole world that lieth in wickedness like Cain whose sin lieth at his door; this sin is not taken away by this Lamb who is the shepherd of the sheep. See the type yonder on the mount where Abraham was going to slay his son, Isaac; look behind thee, the lamb was slain and prepared before the world was created; now look behind thee, see the type caught and held in the thicket by his horns and cannot get away; O see him, you let Isaac go free; here is the offering for sin in the type of the ram. All that claim to be shepherds of the sheep, but climb up some other way are thieves and robbers. The types and shadows only pointed out the way until the sub-

stance came which is Christ. He is the sum and substance of all things. Isaac was the child of promise, a type of the church, "in Isaac shall thy seed be called." Abraham was told to "lay not thine hand upon the lad." He "looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns." Instead of the lad, the ram was offered under the law until it is ready to vanish and decay in the end of the Jewish world. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel." Yes, a new covenant, the old law covenant is waxed old like a garment ready to decay. Keep the old wine in old bottles and put the new wine in new bottles. To the true shepherd the porter openeth. John was sent to the lost sheep, to open up to them the way. He was the forerunner and said "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness." I was sent to baptize you in water unto repentance, now He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire, so I cannot give you repentance but He does, and when you bring forth fruits meet for repentance then I baptize you with water showing you have repentance given to you of Him whom He was exalted to give repentance and the forgiveness of sins. John's mission was ended as a porter because he said He must increase and I must decrease. John was beheaded for telling Herod the truth. When John's disciples heard Jesus they left John and followed Christ. Then said Jesus unto them again, verily, verily I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep; yes, I am the way; I am the resurrection and the life. All the false teachers, false prophets and anti-christs before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them because my voice gives life, they that hear my voice shall live. My sheep are taught by me and they know me for my voice quickens and opens up their heart. Yes, a new heart will I give them and I will write my laws there in their heart and mind. I will imprint them and they shall be to me a people and I will be to them a God, yes, their God. John declared him to the people as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," then Christ declared that he was the true Shepherd of the sheep; that he would give his life for the sheep, and he did; and they were his sheep by gift; and they were his sheep by redemption. He bought them with his own blood; he purchased them and they are his; he putteth forth his own sheep; he goeth before them and they follow him for they know his voice; a stranger they will not follow but will flee from him for they know not the voice of strangers; he leadeth them out from the kingdom of darkness, out from bondage, out from under the law, out from their dead state into his marvelous light; when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them and they follow him because they are led by the Spirit. Jesus said unto them again, I am the door of the sheep, yes, you enter into eternal life by me for I am the door and an open door is set before you now, run that you may receive a crown laid up for you. I am the door of the sheep, I am the life of the sheep, I am the way and I am the resurrection. Then your vile body shall be changed and fashioned like unto my glorious body, and ye shall see me as I am and be made like me. When you awake in my likeness you will be satisfied. Dear Mr. Loyd, or brother Loyd, I hope that you will get comfort out of this article because there were false teachers among the Israelites in the days of Moses and the prophets but they were thieves and robbers; they fleeced the sheep instead of feeding them; they fed themselves so the sheep fled from them; cried in their distress like the Israelites did under the the oppression of Pharaoh. God opened a door in the Red Sea for the Israelites to pass through. They were saved from destruction and from cruel bondage, but Pharaoh and all his host were drowned in the Red Sea.

See God's plan of salvation by the shepherd of the sheep. He, the good Shepherd, gave his life for the sheep; He saved his sheep by the shedding of his blood which cleanseth us from all sin. When they were building the wall that king sent messengers to discourage the people, but they did not follow those messengers. They went right on with their work in building the wall. It was a time of trouble but God encouraged them and they finished the wall. Jesus Christ hath built his church. "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." All that were before me were thieves and robbers. I am the shepherd, the good shepherd, the only shepherd that owneth the sheep. There is none other that owns them. They were given to me and I own them. Others would steal them and rob me of my honor and glory if they could, but I gave my sheep wisdom and understanding and they would not follow them but flee from them, so I am the door. Yes, they enter into the sheepfold by me for I am the good shepherd. They turn not back but go on to perfection in the world to come. They shall see him, be like him and be satisfied. No divisions there, all will be as one for the shepherd and the sheep are one. They cannot be divided for they have the life of the shepherd in them, they have the mind of Christ in them, they are spiritually minded and mind the things of the spirit because they are taught of him and led by him. We are not of them that draw back, no they are thieves and robbers, they come to steal and kill so my sheep would not follow them. Those who are not my sheep they run in the way of Cain and Balaam after reward, my sheep run to obtain the crown and eternal life after death for their inheritance and treasures are in heaven. Paul followed him, yes, Paul asked. "Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest," so put him forth in the way wherein Paul must journey, not to bind and put to death those who called upon the name of the Lord, O no, but put him forth in the work of the ministry. Jesus went before him and led him to the Gentile sheep, made him, by the Holy Ghost, overseer of the flock and caused the Gentile sheep to hear him declare the true Shepherd to them. Paul said, "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." You see he led Saul out of the kingdom of darkness into his marvelous light and put him forth in the good old way. Yes, the way that God ordained for Paul to go. No more Saul, but Paul now. "I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."

JAMES W. LINN.

(When we heard the following Church Letter read we felt it would be of interest to our readers, and we hope they will enjoy it. R.L.D.)

To the sister churches composing the Delaware River Association in session with the Kingwood Church at Locktown, N. J., May 30 and 31, 1944, the Kingwood Church sends greetings:

Dearly Loved Ones: It is an occasion of deep thanksgiving for this little church and its faithful friends to welcome you again, in the capacity of an Association, to our little Kingwood home. We hesitated long over extending the invitation, but since doing so have felt confident that He who provided the desire would show us the way to attain its accomplishments. We were aware also that more than the usual difficulties would have to be overcome by you who are in attendance. May it not be that the obstacles we all have met will be the means of bringing us nearer one to another in love and sweet fellowship? We feel now that no longer shall we timidly say, "We fear this is the last time we shall have this blessed privilege," but rather let our words be, "He loved us of old, and he loveth us still." He has blessed us to meet once more, so let us spend these precious hours together praising God for his mercies, past and

present, and in giving utterance to our faith that his loving kindness will not be taken from us, and though the future may hold sorrow and gloom for these churches, still richer and deeper mercies will accompany the trials. The rod is grievous. Its lessons make perfect. As a church we have no progress to report. We stand to-day tremblingly upheld by the same unchanging strength and might that were the anchor and support of our weakness when we met with you two years ago, and what is mightier than the power of God's unchanging love? Outwardly we seem to be dwindling to non-existence, but there is the quality of the Everlasting in the love that manifests itself among us, makes us desire to meet together and leads us in paths of unity and peace, and long after we as individuals cease to exist that same love will bless His children, if not in this place—elsewhere. Once again let your prayer mingle with ours that we may be given the strength that our days may demand. For each of us trials loom, and our natures are fearful. Life's sun seems to be setting in gloom. Pray that the spirit of better cheer may be ours. Ministering brethern, whom God has sent among us for our comfort and instruction, may you find edification for your own souls in unfolding the story of God's mysterious love to sinners, as it has been revealed to you, for erring and doubting children that we are, we need to be thus reassured. This church has continued its monthly meetings, except in the winters, during the past two years, but we have been sadly deprived of the presence of our faithful pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, who is physically afflicted and unable to make his regular visits among us. Once last fall we were blessed with his presence and that day became then and there a landmark of thanksgiving in the memories of those present. We have been graciously favored with the services of other dear brethern, chiefly Elders Vaughn and Dodson, both of whom have been taught the Lord's truth and in turn bring to us the comfort of the gospel. Death has taken its toll from the ranks of our friendship and membership. Our valued friend, trustee and treasurer, who loved deeply and served so faithfully and cheerfully from without the gates, Oscar Rittenhouse, was the first taken. A few months later his wife, our beloved sister, Elizabeth Rittenhouse, followed. They seemed an essential part of our happiness and their absence from our regular meetings and this meeting causes many heart-aches among those who knew and loved them well, but the Healer is here and is teaching us to say, "Thy will, 'O God,' be done." Ministers, brethren and interested friends who are present to-day, may you not return to your homes unblessed, but carry with you the joy that you have comforted those who mourn, for your presence here has made us feel that you still remember, and we hope love us—frail weak and uninteresting creatures though we be. As once before, we quote in closing our letter these words as a parting thought.

"Children of the the heavenly King,
As you journey, sweetly sing;
Sing your Savior's worthy praise,
Glorious in his works and ways.

Ye are traveling home to God,
In the way the fathers trod;
They are happy now, and ye
Soon their happiness shall see."

ALWILDA R. STRYKER.

MY LIFE PILGRIMAGE

Both father and mother taught school before they were married. Mother united with the Old School Baptist church when she was nineteen years old, and was baptized by her father, Elder Loren P. Cole. Father was a good disciplinarian though seldom punished. We knew we had to do what he said we should. I had a realizing sense that there was a God when I was quite young and that I must be a good girl. I remember praying for strength when I was in my teens, but went along until I was thirty. It seemed

I had more to contend with than I could possibly bear then. I was troubled with such terrible fear. It would take possession of me when it seemed there was nothing to fear, but I could not throw it off and it seemed to me I could not live and endure it. I felt more and more that I was a sinner and with all I could do I could not remedy that fact. All I could say was God be merciful to me, a sinner, and dispel this fear. I often read the Bible but could see nothing in it except God's dealings with the wicked. I was reading it one night just before retiring where it speaks of Jesus walking on the water and saying to the disciples, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." Oh, I thought to be "not afraid" would mean so much. During the night I awoke with the worst fear I had yet had. It seemed I could not live and endure it, when it seemed some one stood at the foot of the bed and said, "it is I; be not afraid." The fears all left me and I never felt that fear afterwards; however, I did realize I was a sinner. The burden was there, I could not get away from that. About this time the New School Baptists were holding a revival meeting near us. One day my husband came in and said he thought we should go to the meeting and unite with that church. I demurred and told him there was no comfort for me there or anywhere else, but we went. I told them how I felt and they were sure if I united with the church all that would leave me, but it did not. One morning while reading the fifteenth chapter of John it seemed the words fairly raised up and were illuminated—"Ye are the branches." When I put the Bible down the first three verses of "Amazing grace" were given me. I had never had a hymn book but had heard hymns sung never giving them any special thought. Then I told how I had been delivered. All went well for we were to unite with that church and be baptized (I insisted on immersion) in the summer. When Elder Clark came out I had a desire to go hear him and we went. I heard my first sermon. He told it all. After that when we went to the New School Baptists it all seemed dead. I saw I never could walk with them so withdrew. The ministers and others talked with me but I dared not change. In June of the year 1902 I was received and baptized at the yearly meeting of the Middleburgh Church by Elder Clark. I have always felt to be the least among them but they have borne with me well. I do not know how it would be if they saw me as I am. Surely I am a sinner but hoping in the mercy and grace of a God who gave his Son an inheritance of Adam's race before he spoke the world into existence. My hope is in Jesus. Oh, that I could praise him more. The one great desire of my life has been to go to meeting and hear the salvation of sinners by Jesus Christ proclaimed. I have traveled miles with that object in view and to meet his dear people though I felt to be less than the least among them. For some years I have been afflicted with not being able to hear all that was said, yet I have never attended but one meeting that I did not hear a part of the sermon. Often I have heard nearly all of it and it has stayed with me for years sometimes. Through all the many shifting scenes and trying things of this life, I have been given to know I had a Savior, and that the everlasting arms were underneath. I feel that all things do work together for good to them that love the Lord, to the called according to his purpose. I know he can speak and it is done, command and it stands fast, work and none can hinder: that he keeps his people wherever he sees fit to place them: that he will not tempt them to more than they are able, but with the temptation will make a way of escape that they may be able to bear it. Over thirty years ago he told me, "I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand, Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand" and he has done it. At the

close of Elder Vaughn's editorial he asked that we write our pilgrimage so I have complied with his request. I have no complaints to make. The brothers and sisters have borne with me so well. I am sending this to you, Elder Dodson, to do with as you see fit. I do enjoy the *Signs*. Since it is not the will of God for me to attend the meetings of the Middleburgh Church or meet with the Elder and sisters it is so good to have the *Signs* to read. I see nothing in them to complain about and do thank the Lord that you are enabled to put them out so well. Yours in a precious hope.

(Mrs.) A. B. GOODRICH.

Box 703, Sharon Springs, N. Y.

2091 East Broadway, Vancouver, B. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

I enclose $5 to renew my subscription and assist in sending the paper to others. I was reading mother's Bible and it seemed so beautiful in 2 Cor. 12 where Paul was telling how he knew such a one above fourteen years ago. He was caught up into paradise and saw unspeakable things. It reminded me of hearing mother trying to tell of being comforted after her brother, Charlie, was drowned in Lake Erie. That dark summer evening, as she walked alone from the barn where my father was attending to the horse, she prayed, "Oh God, is Charlie all right?" She said some one (a presence) stood beside her quoting several lines about the ships and of all the company not one should be lost. I cannot give it accurately. She explained that it seemed like "whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell." Then I remembered about mother's mother who heard a quotation of scripture very plainly while she was alone. The last words of my grandfather before passing on were trying to tell my mother, "I cannot tell you the glory I expect to see. Ma's church (Old Baptist) is the Bible church." He was a member of the church of England. Such reminiscences remind me of how God impresses people with the truth. I bowed my head in amazed humility upon reading my letter in the *Signs,* trying to tell in my crude fashion of God's watchcare. That is a good word. I am not familiar with proper phrases. I found the most beautiful letter written by Elder Dodson to mother about fifteen years ago or more. It tells of different churches and of the Invisible Visitor having been seen in the church ordinances. Old Baptists reach so far above human personalities. I did not intend to write a letter, I am apt to say too much, but there are beautiful symbols of God's perfection which we dare not see and live, though we do catch glimpses through a glass darkly and the half can never be told. In the October 1943 issue of the *Signs* Mrs. Campbell of Memphis wrote to Elder Griffin about his beautiful letter "Going down to the sea in ships." That was the February 1943 *Signs* which mother read during her last conscious hours on this earth. It seemed good to hear about it again from so far away. Humbly,

CATHERINE M. DUFFUS.

Hooker, Okla.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

As I am sending in my dues please allow me to quote Mark 2:17. "When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." To me, in these few words, Jesus has put all of mankind in two classes twice over. They that are whole are those that feel themselves without fault before the law so need no physician. The sick feel guilty and "sin sick". Then he puts them in two classes again by saying, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." The self righteous are not called to repentance, but the sinners to whom God has given them to see their own sinfulness, so we see the Lord's people are

here mentioned as being in two different conditions or relations to their Saviour. They are sick, not whole, and sinners, not righteous. We find in his going about to do good he healed many who were sick of various diseases and lameness, deafness, dumbness and even dead in the graves. All those were hard cases that man could not cure. Like the woman of twelve years of affliction and the poor man at the pool; and the blind, also the lepers. Then we find that he called some sinners to repentance. Of course the apostles were all of that class. The woman at the well with five husbands, the woman taken in adultery and Mary with seven devils. Paul was a great sinner and also thought himself whole or righteous, so he bears both marks. Since he declared that Christ came to save sinners of whom he was chief, I feel that he was looking at his case about like the rest of us. We are chiefly concerned about our own personal case or condition, and our sins are the chief thought or worry. Religion or forgiveness is the chief concern of mortals here below. We are the chief of sinners in our mind. If we turn to Mark 2:7-12 inclusive we find the sick man with the palsy who we might consider as sick and also a sinner. Jesus asked the scribes, "Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee: or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?" Then to show that he had power here upon earth to forgive sin he says, "Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house." Here Jesus teaches us that it is just as easy for him to forgive sins as to heal the sick, and he never failed in any case where he was asked or one brought to him. He never just partly healed or tried to heal. He never called a sinner half way to repentance but all the way. He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. I see no need for me to tell the readers things that they do not know. Would rather be able to speak what they do know to be true. I still read three and sometimes four papers. I cannot say which one is the best, but I get more comfort from some copies than others, and enjoy some sermons more than others. We still have a good pastor at the church in Kingman, Kansas but I am nearly two hundred miles away. Brother Dodson I am not asking space in the paper for this. Just do as you like. Yours in Christ I try to hope.

E. G. WEBB.

1306 Cumberland Ave., Evansville, Ind.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON AND ALL THE DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:

If I have an experience, and some times I even dare hope that I have, my hope is that of a sinner saved by the grace of God if I am saved. My first impressions I received when I was eighteen years old. I was in or near Wichita, Kansas. I offered myself to the Missionary Baptists but was never accepted. I went on in my troubles for several years finally uniting with the Methodists and lived there for a short period of months. I soon found there were no crumbs for a hungry soul to feed upon there and came to feel that I was not wanted. At last I quit going to church and still I was trying to justify myself by the deeds of this man of flesh. One night in the early part of 1939, whether in a coma or awake I do not know, I thought I was traveling the road as I had been trying so long to do to receive a crown for myself for the justification of myself. Oh, the disappointment that awaited me at the end of this road I had trodden for the end was unlimited space. I could but look, I did not have the power to move forward and it seemed that some one spoke to me, "It is a beautiful road why do you not go on?" Dear saints of God, the helplessness that I felt in that moment, yet it took more to convince me, so I turned to go back, but as I turned I was stopped by a pressure to my back. Looking up I saw, as it were, a solid

cliff of granite of all colors and I was left standing on the cliff as it was to me some eighteen inches wide by possibly three to six feet long, and it slowly crumbled away. Dear saints of God, I hope, if I have a hope, that I was made to be submissive to your Savior and I hope my Savior for I hope I saw my utter helplessness in that moment and was made to cry, Lord save me. Brethren, that wall of sin that was booked to my credit was more than a poor unworthy sinner such as I could atone for, so in the darkness of the next moment I was lifted by a gentle breeze and set down in the most beautiful pasture I ever saw and was rejoicing with praise to God when my dear companion took hold of me and shook me asking, "what is the matter with you?" It seemed that no sooner conscious than something said to me, "do not tell it for it might be a mistake," but I could never forget that precious moment if I would. I knew an old Hard Shell Baptist preacher in Kentucky (that is what they call us here), Elder J. N. Darnall, and I planned to go different times but just could not as I had made fun of his preaching before. He and his wife being personal friends of my wife I made up my mind, or was given a mind, to visit them at their Association in August 1941. Going home with these dear people after meeting, conversing as in every day life, I broke down in their presence, I could not go farther. Brother Darnall and I went to meeting that night and I offered myself to the church, begging a home, and was accepted and baptized the following day it being Sunday. Still my troubles seem to bear me down at times until I can hardly bear to face the people that I regard above all other people feeling to be a reproach to them. Yet at times I cannot explain the sweetness when I am given faith to believe in the promise of God to those that love him, to those who are the called according to his purpose. Am I one of that number is the greatest mystery to me, but I know that it is by the grace of God that I am what I am. It seems at times that my life is being crushed within my breast and have no one to whom I can go so have taken the privilege to write it to you for it seems I do get relief just to write to the dear saints of God. Remember me when at the throne of grace. Unworthy though I be yet I trust in his grace.

WADE Y. CHANDLER.

Ponca City, Okla.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR SIRS:

I am enclosing $2 for the renewal of our subscription to your paper. We enjoy every word of it and always read it from cover to cover. We are not members of your church but find ourselves in complete accord with you. May the good Lord bless and keep you. Sincerely yours,

J. A. TURNER.

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449 East North St., Du Quoin, Ill.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

If I mistake not my subscription to your valuable paper expired in March. I received the April number but it is not paid for until you get this remittance. I am well pleased with the paper and what it stands for. I have read it many years. I will soon be seventy-nine years of age and I hope I can continue to take the *Signs of the Times* the few remaining years allotted to me in this low ground of sin and sorrow.

(Mrs.) JANE McNABB.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Mrs. J. Gunn, Tenn., $1; Mrs. F. Beene, Tex., $1; J. A. Johnson, Tenn., $1; Mrs. H. Ekkelkamp, Mont., $1; T. J. Brock, Ala., 25c; Eld. W. D. Griffin, Ala., 75c; A friend, $5; Mrs. E. Showalter, Wash., $2; J. K. Buckwalter, O., $1; Mrs. C. A. Parker, Ore., $1; Mrs. R. C. Wright, Tex., $1; Mrs. E. J. Clary, O., $3; Mrs. A. M. MacPhee, N. J., $1.

EDITORIAL
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JACOB

We enjoy the things that are applicable to us. Photographers tell us that few people can resist looking for themselves in a picture. This is true in a spiritual sense. "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Prov. 25:11. Our Savior has brought many lovely pictures to us by his fitly spoken words. Oft times we have dark, lonely and despairing paths to tread. Many times sin seems to overcome; our anxiety mounts up and we fear our having a part in the "first resurrection." But a word is fitly spoken and becomes a wonderful picture to us, and we begin to seek comfort therein and to look for our likeness. Jacob is a wonderful character. He alone represents the entire family of God. The guilt, deception, struggles and misgivings that he had, belong to each one of God's humble poor. "The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." Jacob was never heard to fight nor complain about the providential care of his Maker. Esau found fault with it, but not Jacob. "Portion" and "lot" is not the whole, they are part of the whole. It seems that "portion" and "lot", "Jacob" and "people" are synonyms. Now the whole was to be divided. Some of the spoil must go to the great (see Isaiah 53:12) or strong. God loved Jacob in such a wonderful way that in all eternity he had been given to the Lamb, but that is not the full extent of God's love for Jacob. The choice and the approval of Jacob was fixed, and the balance of the whole had such a limit and bound set to them that it could not interfere. After telling us that Jacob is the lot of the inheritance of the Lord we find out how he is dealt with. None will dare deny that Jacob was a rebellious sinner. As far as the practice of the two boys Esau was the better of the two. Jacob was a sinner by nature and a sinner by practice. Does that describe you, dear reader? A sinner by nature, practice, omission, commission and every other way! He found him in a desert land and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange God with him." Deut. 32:10-12. Let us notice this language, but before we notice it let us qualify the little word "us". None of Adam's folks can read this language with understanding except those the Savior mentions in Mark 4:11. Except to those that have been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, they cannot understand God's way of speaking. Those that have not been born again have only carnality to look to for ability to read. Every gift is in themselves. To them all that God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost has done is void unless they co-operate with him — and they must begin the work! But to those given to know, they do not look within for ability to do anything, they look to Jesus Christ as the Savior. In him they see the Scriptures in a new light and in a new language. Looking

into a glass causes written words to read forward instead of backward. In nature's darkness and carnality it all reads backward, but we *think* it is forward. In the glass (Jesus Christ) it reads forward and we think and wonder and are amazed that it does not read backward to and for us. To these characters they look through a glass darkly. For a long time I thought that Paul said, we looked through a dark glass, but we look through a glass darkly, yet we see all things clearly. Here is a paradox and it cannot be understood but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. 13:12; Rev. 15:2). Speaking of a paradox brings us back to Jacob. Have you noticed where the Lord found him? Have you noticed that God, the Lord from heaven, the quickening spirit, is the one performing all the work? Have you noticed that Jacob is on the receiving end of God's work? Did you notice that the order never was changed? Jacob never did get in front, but always the Lord was ahead. Unless God has reversed the order, he still leads and Jacob follows. I do not think that Jacob was dead in sin when this finding took place. It seems to me there must have been a conception ere this. The dead know not anything but those made alive see and realize that they are in a wilderness. The popular idea is that we must come out of sin and perform certain conditions (work awhile) before we become accepted by him, but the Lord found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness and in a desert land. Oh, what paradox! To inhabit two places at once and they as opposite as the poles. There comes a time to every one of God's people that they know this condition, living in a wilderness and a desert land at the same time. How long would Jacob have wandered in the wilderness before he extricated himself from it? To be hopelessly and helplessly lost produces such a confused state of mind that traveling in circles always follows. What a state of mind this produces none can tell save those who have experienced it. Have you ever noticed the children of God bringing to remembrance the way they have been led? Their memory is vivid here and they cannot fall out about it. To one who has not been in this wilderness it is an idle tale, a foreign language. A wilderness is a place where things grow in wildest confusion. Rottening vegetation, mingled with the stench of dead animals brought about by the vehement heat, produces a horrible place of existence. I must say that my experience, and I believe that of my dear kindred in Christ, is that this wilderness is boundless to us. No place of exit has ever been found to anyone of God's children. Empty, miserable comforters say it is easy to find Jesus. They preached that to Job. He was in this place too and he could not get out. Some preachers told him how pleasant things would be if he would acquaint himself with God. (Job 22:21). He gives us a clear picture of trying to get out. Oh, how my poor soul responds to the cry of this dear servant. How bitter is the complaint (23:1) of every elect vessel of mercy. Does it touch a responsive chord in your heart and soul and mind? If so, you are a blessed character in a wilderness land, enjoying the sweet voice of your Head and Husband and walking in the light of his countenance and doing his commandments. (Psalms 89:15; John 10:27; Rev. 22:14). Job exerted himself to find the Lord. He had such a burning desire to see this King in his beauty that he laments his inability to find him. He does not know how nor where to find him. Oh, how little does Jacob know! The world, in her pomp and splendor, knows so much, they know they are saved; they know they are called to do God's will: they know the way they take and know that heaven is theirs at last. But how different is the way of the "lot of his inheritance." They go, not knowing where they go; they have a visitation from heaven and they are not aware of it; they seek

him whom their soul loves and know not how nor where to find him; they desire to live right but how to do it they just do not know, and to make it worse, they cannot find out. If Job could not find him in front, can we? At one time, before coming into the wilderness, we could look forward and see him in the future. There, at a distant date of our own choice, we expected to contact him, but the scene has changed. We look forward and he is not to be found. We have nothing to bring him to us, and on and on we may still look and never shall possess power to find him. Backward there is nothing but shame and disgrace. Instead of wanting people to know what we have done for the Lord, we find sin, degradation and shame as ours. We cannot find him there. On the left he is at work but our work of sin is before us and he does not and will not pass that by, it must be removed out of the way. Again we are cut off but surely we can find him on the right! No, *no,* not that. On the right he hides from us. Once he is not there; twice we cannot see him; once he hides from us. By this time we have come to the end of our strength. This wilderness has got us completely in its power. What darkness we endure; what loud thunder echoes in the dark and hidden recesses of this exhaustless wilderness; what vile reptiles lurk in every secluded spot; what poisonous vapors arise from the muck and slime to cause us to faint away. But reader this is not all. As awful as this is to a babe in Christ it is not all. Every vestige of power must go; every single thought of self must be removed; every fruitful limb must become withered so at the same time that all of this dwelling in wilderness occurs we are in a desert land. We are not in one for awhile and then have a change of scenery, but we are in them both at the same time. How far removed is a desert land from a wilderness? And yet when Christ found Jacob he was hopelessly lost in both. In this wilderness one thing is found and in this desert there is another. In one no water at all, in the other floods; in one it looks like we have plenty of strength to sin, but in the other no strength at all for righteousness; in one dark and loathsome caves, and in the other no shade but the hot sun (law) continually beating upon us. No wonder that David had such a varied experience. Do you suppose that this modern religious world knows this? They know nothing of being an owl in the desert, or a pelican of the wilderness, but Jacob has found this out. It always causes a bitter complaint. (Psalms 102:6) Now after being found I suppose the Lord's work ends. Here (so I am told) is where man takes up the work, but not so, dear little children.

W. D. G.

Request Granted

"Sometime ago brother D. W. White, of Mount Pleasant, Texas, wrote us and added the following postscript: "I would be glad to see an article from your pen on instrumental music in the church and also on the subject of 'Infants in Hell,' as the Old Baptists have so often been accused of preaching this doctrine."

As much as in us is we like to comply with the wishes of our brethren, but we hope they realize our dependence upon a higher power than our own to bring forth those things which are profitable to the household of faith. Therefore we cannot write at will upon any subject, but must tarry until the Lord is pleased to exercise our mind and give us light, otherwise we shall be unable to feed his flock. We cannot truthfully say that we have never had any exercise of mind upon the subject of *instrumental* music in the church. On the contrary, at different times, we have given the matter very serious concern. Generally speaking, we are particularly fond of good music and as a natural art or gift we think it ranks near the top. We know of nothing, perhaps, that is more soothing, uplifting and inspiring to the average human being than music of the right kind, but we feel there is a time and place for all things

and we are persuaded that in the gospel church, among the saints, is no place for musical instruments. Many have been the times when we joined others with great delight in the homes of relatives and friends, with a piano or organ to lead us in lifting our voices in songs of praise to God, as we were made to hope, and we commend this in the highest degree to others, but we cannot give our approval to either of these instruments, or any other, in our solemn and sacred assemblies where God is worshipped only in spirit and in truth. Our main reason for objecting to the use of such instruments in our churches is that neither our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is declared to be the head over all things to the church, nor any of his immediate disciples, who established the early churches, saw fit to make use of or reference to them in any way, shape or form as being necessary in churches of the Christian era. We prefer to adhere to the pattern which they gave us, and do not feel that we should attempt to add to or take anything from that which has been laid down by them. It is no doubt true that David, the psalmist and sweet singer in Israel, employed musical instruments in the worship of his day and perhaps they were used in other times under the law, or during the legal dispensation before the gospel day, but when Jesus came and fulfilled the law in every jot and tittle, he put an end to all other sacrifices and ushered in a new and better day or order of worship. He himself said to the woman of Samaria, "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father," "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Our honest opinion is that wherever instrumental music is a part of religious worship today it is indicative of legal worshippers, those who have not yet known by experience the liberty and simplicity of the gospel. Let us say further that it is our considered opinion that these things are employed by religious organizations for the purpose, in part at least, of attracting the young and others to their gatherings, regardless of whether they have or have not been born again and have the grace of God in their hearts. There is in fact quite a spirit of rivalry in some sections of the country as to which so-called church can supply the best music, and particularly at Easter, Christmas and other special seasons of the year, are elaborate and expensive plans made for a grand display of musical talent. At such times the musical program in many instances is by far the most important part of the service and people who seldom attend church services otherwise will on such occasions be found seeking the choicest pews and highest seats in the synagogues, and will go away feeling they have paid their obligations to God for a whole year thereafter. Little, if any spiritual consideration is shown in the selection of the musician, whether he be organist or vocalist, the main object being to get the best artist at the most reasonable rate, regardless of whether he knows anything about grace or not. We have known of more or less disreputable characters, because of having excellent voices, occupying prominent places as soloists in church choirs and singing before the people Sunday after Sunday. Apparently it never occurred to those responsible for engaging them that they should possess character in addition to musical talent or other qualifications. We have a friend in New York City who has had a fine voice and for years he was in great demand by practically all kinds of religious organizations, especially at their outstanding ceremonies. Jesus said to his disciples, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the

world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." The great apostle admonished the church at Corinth in the following manner: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." 2 Cor. 6:14-18. When Israel came up out of Egypt and was delivered by the high and mighty hand of God, they brought with them trinkets of gold as friendly tokens of the Egyptians, but these things proved a curse rather than a blessing to them. It does not pay for the church of God here in this world to copy after or borrow from the religious orders of the day. If the people of God are to maintain their identity as the visible church of the first born they must stand aloof from all that pertains to worldliness in their true spiritual worship and hold fast to the principles of the doctrine of God our Saviour as enunciated by his blessed Son and his chosen apostles. In concluding our remarks on this part of our reply to brother White, we wish to repeat that we think good music is one of the greatest blessings bestowed by a divine providence upon the human race, and in some respects it typifies more nearly and strongly the things of the spirit than anything we know of, for good music is music in any and all languages, breaking through race barriers and, to a large extent, makes for unity of peoples on the face of all the earth, nevertheless, when Christ appears to his regenerated people, he becomes the chieftest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely so that they desire none besides him, and when he speaks his voice is sweeter by far than any earthly dulcimer, and then there is a melody in the heart and soul of his people that earth knows nothing about.

We will now turn to the second part of brother White's request, namely, "Infants in Hell." He says Old Baptists have been accused of preaching this doctrine. Most of the Old Baptists preachers it has been our privilege to hear have maintained that "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." So far as we have been able to learn from the reading of God's holy word he has never been pleased to make known to his people, except by faith, as to who are saved and who are lost. Personally, we have never felt it was within our province to say definitely who was or was not a child of God, whether infant or adult. We believe we have discovered in the most unexpected places those whom we felt convinced were his people, but to put our finger on one and say we knew he was saved, and another and say we knew he was lost, we have never felt to do. The apostle Paul said: "We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." We do not feel authorized, nor do we even desire to go beyond the apostle in this matter. Recently we were quite astonished to find in a Church History of considerable note the following statement: "Bible Baptists have always believed that all children who die in infancy are regenerated by the almighty grace of God and go directly home to the loving arms of Jesus; and these with the adult believers compose more than one-half of the human

race." We very seriously question the accuracy or truth of this statement and we know of no place where it is authenticated in the Bible. We are reminded of what our dear old father said to us some years before he passed on. He was telling us of a certain man who was trying to figure out the percentage of the human race that would be saved. His premise began with all children under a certain age, and well do we remember our father saying: "If that could be established as an absolute fact, would not any man be justified in murdering all of his children before they attained the age in question, even though the man himself was sent to hell." We simply cite this incident to show the absurdity of such a speculation. Dr. John Gill, famous English commentator on the Bible says: "It was indeed a controversy among the Jews whether little children of the wicked of Israel (were saved)—some affirmed, and others denied." At this point we would like to quote from Romans 9:8-18, as follows: "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son. And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Further on in this connection it is plainly declared that God has made one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor; he hath fitted the vessels of wrath to destruction, while he hath afore prepared the vessels of mercy unto glory. This doctrine cannot be accepted by the carnal, or natural mind, for it is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. In the days of old we are told that before Pharaoh finally consented to let Israel go, God had his death angel to pass over Egypt and destroy the first born in every house where blood was not found upon the lintel and the two side posts. Moses had given instruction that this be done for the children of Israel, and the death angel passed over them, but the Egyptians, who had not faith in Israel's God, the death angel entered and took the first born from the king on the throne to the lowliest peasant. We would judge from this that there was no passing over or saving from destruction the infants of the Egyptians. On another occasion, Abraham drew near the Lord and said, "Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Shall any presume to reply against God? We gladly leave all of these things in the hands of him with whom we have to do, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. We honestly believe that such accusations which are sometimes made against our

ministers are due to the fact that we do not believe in nor approve of christening or baptizing infants. When Jesus was here in the flesh he said on one occasion: "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 19:14. Christ's silence here about infant baptism certainly does not speak favorably of such practice, for he neither did nor commanded his disciples to do so. From the best information obtainable, this practice was not inaugurated until during the third or fourth centuries, and then it was instituted by idolatrous worshippers. This error has since spread out all over the earth, and Old Baptists are condemned for not participating in it, even though there is no authority for it in the Bible. The lessons which Jesus taught from this was that the characteristics of those who enter into the kingdom of heaven must be as those of little children: meek, humble, harmless, inoffensive and free from envy, strife, hatred and the like.

The record is that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." Jesus said unto Peter as spokesman for his disciples, to whom he committed the responsibility of establishing his church on earth, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." They were "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." In our humble opinion, therefore, those who desire to remain faithful should stand firmly behind the Scriptures and refuse to accept anything which they do not authorize, and at the same time earnestly contend for the things which are approved and authorized by Holy Writ. We are on solid ground when we have as our support the word of God as the man of our counsel. Since, therefore, neither instrumental music was used or advocated by Christ and his disciples, and also since neither of them practiced or advocated infant baptism, we should most certainly have nothing to do with them in our form of spiritual worship.

We realize that some mothers who perhaps have had the misfortune to lose by death their infant offspring would much prefer to have us state emphatically that they are in heaven, for naturally speaking it is most abhorrent to them to think that their little ones are lost, but is it not also distressing to all of us from a natural point of view to contemplate the absence of ourselves, most of all, but as well our loved ones, dear friends and untold millions of the human race. But Paul said, "I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsman according to the flesh," but when he saw God's plan more perfectly he could then say, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" We fear the great difficulty with many of us is that we are prone to think of these things in the light of and under the emotions and influences of earthly relations. Often we hear opinions expressed regarding infant salvation which are based upon their innocence, and with this we cannot agree. David said, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me," and we are told that we come forth from the womb speaking lies. Therefore all are guilty before a just and holy God, and we cannot agree that any can be saved on the grounds of their innocence. Jesus said, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me," and our understanding is that he was referring to all of mankind. He also said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," and

it is also written that he that entereth in by any other door is a thief and a robber. Our firm conviction is that Jesus is the only Saviour of sinners, whether by nature or practice, and that there is salvation in none other. Paul said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." We are firmly convinced that all of the elect family of God were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and we are persuaded that whatever God's will is it will be accomplished. If he designed to save all who die in infancy that is the way it will be, and nothing will be able to change it, but we do not feel that he has yet revealed this to be his plan and purpose. We are definitely settled in our own mind on one point, however, and that is that there will not be any to sing God's praise in the climes of eternal glory except those whose sins will have been washed and made white by the blood of Jesus. To say that one is not a sinner, in our opinion, is to automatically exclude them from that world of bliss which is beyond. Unless we are among that number for whom Jesus opened that fountain for sin and uncleanness and hath washed us from our sins in his own blood, we have no other basis for hoping to see him as he is and being like him.

Without divine favor we are but a poor, blind mortal at best and can know nothing as we ought to know it, but we are made to hope that God has from time to time made known unto us the riches of his grace as it appears in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and we trust that what we have written here will prove to the honor and glory of his own adorable name, and to the comfort and edification of the saints. R.L.D.

CIRCULAR LETTER

To the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Forest Grove Church, Greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year has now passed since we last met in an associated capacity. Many changes have taken place during this year. War rages over the earth. Many beloved are now on the battlefields. Others have left these mortal shores. The sword of God is over the earth. Yet there are times when each one whose trust is in him can say, He is a gracious God. In times of distress, trials, conflicts of soul and seeking the face of the Lord, certain principles of doctrine become more precious to one. I am reminded this morning of the word in Isaiah 52:7. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" How often this doctrine is heard in the gospel of the Son of God: Thy God reigneth. What a comfort to the tempest-tossed during anxious moments, to be given to know that our God is Lord of hosts, the hosts of heaven, the hosts of earth and the hosts of hell. God does not try to reign, for he spake, and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast. Even Jesus speaks of the Father as Lord of heaven, and of earth. He upholdeth all things by the word of his power, doing his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? God is a sovereign. The all-wise disposer of all events. Heaven is his throne, the earth his footstool. His dominion is from the sea to the ends of the earth; his power unlimited. Working all things according to the counsel of his own will, so that all things work together for good to them

that love him, and to his own glory. The wrath of man praises him, and the remainder he restrains.

They that rule on earth often change their minds, their plans vary from day to day. That which they purpose they are often unable to perform; they are subject to err; whatever power they have is limited, as there is no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God. Not so with the God of the whole earth. He is in one mind, and who can turn him? And what his soul desireth, that he doeth. He is the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. In the reign of this God he often slays his own people. Though he slay me, yet will I trust him, says one of old. He kills, and makes alive; wounds, and makes whole. They that trust in him shall be as Mount Zion, that can never be removed. Assurances are given them from time to time that the eternal God is their refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. The sparrow cannot fall without him, and the very hairs of our heads are all numbered.

May it be the will of God that your ministers speak as the oracles of God, walking upon the mountains; that their feet will be beautiful, publishing salvation, and the weak, helpless and trembling hear the word, Thy God reigneth.

In hope, D. V. SPANGLER.
H. M. BENNETT, Moderator.
GEORGE F. ADKINS, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Salisbury Association, to the Old School or Primitive Baptist Associations with which we correspond, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year has passed, with all its many sorrows, trials, bereavements and cares. Truly these are trying times, trying, as it were, to shake the faith of men, when the nations are at war; but our Lord is at the helm steering the boat through safe waters. Our God is even now ruling in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, "What doest thou?" He will do all his pleasure. He works his sovereign will.

We are made glad, harmony persists, not a discordant sound has been heard, every one has been happy.

Our next session has been appointed, the Lord willing, to be held at the Nassaongo Church, near Salisbury, Wicomico County, Maryland, on Wednesday and Thursday after the third Sunday of October, 1944, when and where we hope to meet your messengers again. We desire a continuance of your correspondence. May grace, peace and joy continue unto the household of faith.

H. M. BENNETT, Moderator.
GEORGE F. ADKINS. Clerk.

CIRCULAR LETTER

We, the Delaware River Association, in session with the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church, at Locktown, New Jersey, May 30th and 31st, 1944, sendeth greeting, and love in the Lord, to the several churches that compose the same, and to all the churches and Associations with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The time of the annual meeting has come to us, and our minds and hearts have been gladdened with the thoughts of meeting as an Association again, and the prompting motive is to meet with you in the love and fellowship we feel in our hearts for all of like precious faith.

Paul, writing to the Hebrews, said, "Let brotherly love continue." Heb. 13:1. Having love for our brethren, we have longed to meet with you, not with the thought by our coming together we would create brotherly love, but the continual love for the brethren, we feel in our

hearts. There being so many adversatives in our lives, to obstruct our way, we were fearful as to entertainment, and a way to get to the meeting, but our faith in our Shepherd caused us to feel, He will provide, and we feel to trust Him, and "Press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."—Phil. 3:14. And we feel, that all that are brought together, in the realities of such feeling, there will be an abundance, for our Shepherd fed about five thousand men, besides women and children, with five loaves and two small fishes. (Matthew 14:21; John 6:10.) John does not record that women and children were in the company, but the true worshippers of the Lord Jesus Christ were there, and they bore the manifestations of being as little children led by the Spirit, which we feel is the true testimony of an individual being born of an incorruptible seed, that they love the brethren, and have a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price.

We are glad to realize the zeal of our sister church (Kingwood) to invite the Delaware River Association to meet with her, and we feel it a great pleasure to be given the opportunity to accept and participate with her during this meeting, and we feel it takes just such drawing to bring God's people to his Son, and Jesus ratified this statement by saying, He that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me. (John 6:45). Jesus precedes these words by saying, "It is written in the prophets. And they shall be all taught of God," and the prophet Isaiah records, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children."—Isaiah 54:13. We hope these things abound in the hearts of all who are in attendance at this meeting, and all may hear in the tongue of the Spirit.

We are glad to assure our correspondents of the steadfastness of the churches of the Delaware River Association in the apostles' doctrine of salvation by grace, and we are fully aware that except the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain that keep it. We have nothing to boast of, that is of the flesh, for we are in fellowship with Paul's declaration, "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing."—Rom. 7:18. But we do feel the Lord has blessed us with spiritual blessings as an Association, for the ministers are favored to attend their appointments regularly, and realize much demonstration of spirit and power in their hearts. Our Association is being hedged about by immigrants from foreign lands, and mostly of other religious faiths, but the work of the Lord prevails, and some are brought out from among the world, and are constrained to go home to their friends, and tell them how great things the Lord has done, and all that have eyes to see God's kingdom are made to rejoice in Christ Jesus, for the manifestations of his work in his little ones.

Our invocation to God for this Association, and all of our correspondents, that God will keep us, and direct us and all our correspondents, that we may dwell together in the unity of the Spirit and bond of peace.

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.
M. W. RAULSTON, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Kingwood Church, Hunterdon Co., New Jersey, May 30th and 31st, 1944, to the churches composing this meeting, and to all with whom we correspond, sends christian greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We are glad to be able to report a good meeting, with favorable conditions prevailing in spite of the restrictions and difficulties incident to these times. Once again the Lord has visited us in mercy, giving us a season of reviving through the love and fellow-

ship prevailing in our midst, and through his holy unction accompanying the preached word.

The next session of this Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with our sister church at Hopewell, Mercer County, New Jersey, date of the meeting to be announced later, at which time we hope to receive your messages and messengers again.

C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator.
M. W. RAULSTON, Clerk.

MEMORIAL

Once again Little Flock Church is made to mourn for another of our beloved members, Sister M. J. NATION, who died May 14, 1944. Although almost eighty-seven years of age sister Nation was seldom absent from church services. She loved to meet with the members of Little Flock Church. Although it was sometimes inconvenient for her to attend, her place among the members was almost always filled. We all loved having her and miss her quiet, cheerful, smiling face. She, with her husband, Elder A. J. Nation, united with the Primitive Baptist church in their early years. He passed away many years ago and she has lived a long, useful and exemplary life. She is survived by six sons and one daughter to whom Little Flock Church extends heartfelt sympathy. We request that a copy of these resolutions be sent to the bereaved family, one to be made a part of our church record and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication. Done by order of the church while in conference, June 10, 1944.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN, Moderator.
(Mrs.) LOU KESTER, Church Clerk.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

We, the Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Church of Christ, as we hope, of Yellow Creek desire to leave on our church records a memorial of our dear brother and deacon of the church, J. H. HATCHER, whom the Lord has seen fit to call from the shores of time and from our midsts to his eternal home where no sorrow, pain or death can enter.

Resolved, that the church has lost a faithful and useful member, his wife a kind and loving husband, the children a kind and indulgent father and the community a good and true friend. No words can express the loss we feel in his removal from our midst, but will say to his sorrowing loved ones let us not grieve as those having no hope for we feel sure that our great loss is his eternal gain.

Resolved, that we bow in humble submission to the will of God who it is that has bereft us and can all our sorrows heal.

Resolved, that these resolutions be spread on our church book, a copy sent to the bereaved family and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication. Adopted at our our union meeting June 17, 1944.

(Elder) R. L. BIGGS. Moderator
(Sister) KATIE RAGAN, Clerk

We, the Old School Baptist Church at University St., Nashville, Tenn., feel to bow our heads in humble submission to the will of Almighty God in removing from our midst our beloved brother, J. C. WHITE. We feel that the church has sustained a great loss, and the realization that we cannot have him with us any more in our meetings spreads a mantle of mourning over us, but we should not weep for him as one that hath no hope for his faithfulness to the church gives us the assurance that our great loss is his eternal gain and would say:

"Sleep on dear brother, take thy rest,
In Jesus' arms forever blest."

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be spread on our church record book, a copy sent to his family and a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication. Written by order of the union meeting Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1944.

(Elder) R. L. BIGGS, Moderator
(Sister) KATIE RAGAN, Clerk

Brother J. S. ALDREDGE, age 78, died at his home in Sweetwater, Texas, May 1, 1944, after an extended illness. He was born in Bluntsville, Ala., March 1, 1866 and was married to Miss Margaret Jane Littleton, Oct. 23, 1887. To this union were born ten children. His widow and eight of the children survive him. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at the age of nineteen since which time he has been a faithful contender for the doctrine of salvation by grace. He lived in Odell, Texas many years and the writer of this article knew him to be honest and upright in his daily walk and he was loved and respected by his many friends there. His three sons and five daughters remain a living monument to the integrity of their father and mother. He was a deacon in Little Flock Church and will be sadly missed by that body. Little Flock Church extends heartfelt sympathy to his bereaved family and requested that a copy of these resolutions be made a part of our church record, a copy sent to his family and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication. Done by order of the church while in conference May 13, 1944. Altus, Okla.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN, Moderator
(Mrs.) LOU KESTER, Church Clerk

OBITUARIES

It becomes our painful duty to chronicle the death of our dear brother, JAMES H. HATCHER, son of Elder J. R. Hatcher and Mary Halbrook Hatcher. He was born Jan. 16, 1890 and died of a heart attack Jan. 6, 1944, making his stay on earth 54 years, lacking 10 days. He was married to Miss Mamie Lomax, Nov. 9, 1913 and to this union were born five children, one of whom died in infancy. He united with the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church on Saturday before the third Sunday in October 1936 at the Obion Association and was baptized the same day by Elder R. L. Biggs and his membership enrolled with the Yellow Creek Church, Dickson Co., Tenn., where he lived a faithful member until his death. He was ordained deacon of the church on the third Sunday in July 1941. He was rural mail carrier out of the McEwen office for a number of years and enjoyed the confidence, love and admiration of all with whom he was associated. He was a strong believer in salvation by grace and the sovereignty of God, gave all honor and glory to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and was ever ready to defend it when he had an opportunity. He leaves to mourn their great loss, his beloved wife, one son, J. Harvey Hatcher of Greenville, Miss., three daughters, Mrs. Millie Buckner and Mrs. Imogene Stringer of McEwen and Mrs. Gladys De Busk of Vanleer, Tenn.; also three brothers, Alfred Hatcher, Nashville, Tenn., Captain Ernest R. Hatcher in the service, Camp Tyson, Paris, Tenn. and L. H. Hatcher (minister) of Knoxville, Tenn.; four sisters, Mrs. Katie Ragan, Vanleer, Tenn., Mrs. Isabel Simpson, Mrs. Frances Hurt and Mrs. Mandie Greenwell, McEwen, Tenn. Funeral services were conducted at the McEwen Baptist Church by his beloved pastor, Elder R. L. Biggs, assisted by his brother, L. R. Hatcher, who spoke words of truth and comfort to a large congregation of relatives and friends who had gathered to pay their last respect to a loved one, a neighbor and friend. He was a devoted husband, a loving, tender father, a kind brother and a friend to all. He is greatly missed in his home, his community and his church, but we pray the dear Lord to give his royal presence to fill up the vacancy, and to shield his loved ones and keep them from all harm during their stay on earth. May he prepare us all to meet our loved ones where there is no sorrow, pain and death. His remains were laid to rest in the McEwen Cemetery amidst a bed of lovely flowers there to await the second coming of our Lord, when he shall gather his jewels home. May the Lord comfort all that mourn. Written by his sister. KATIE RAGAN

Deacon, J. S. ALDREDGE was born in Blunt Co., Alabama, March 1, 1866 and passed from earth to his reward at his home in Sweetwater, Texas, May 1, 1944. It took him 78 years and 2 months to fulfil God's purpose in bringing him into the world. Brother Aldredge was united in holy wedlock on Oct. 23, 1887, to Miss Jane Littleton. To this union were born ten children. Two preceded him in death. Eight still survive to share the sorrow of his lonely companion and their dear mother while she waits in this sinful world for her Master's call. The eight living are as follows: Three sons, M. M. Aldredge, Post, Texas; A. B. Aldredge, Sweetwater, Texas; John H. Aldredge, Dimmit, Texas; Mrs. J. D. Vaughn and Mrs. J. R. Chance, Sweetwater, Texas; Mrs. M. R. Burnett, Grand Prairie, Texas; Mrs. Beanie Bibb, Sacramento, Cal.; Mrs. Mance Phillips, Vernon, Texas. They were all present to witness the end and attend the last rites of a dear father. I had known brother Aldredge some twenty years and was his pastor a greater part of that time. He was strong in faith, firm in his convictions, yet mild in his contentions, granting the other fellow the right he assumed himself, but would not compromise truth for error. He was a faithful deacon having the interest of the cause of Christ at heart, gentle in his admonitions but firm; reasoning for peace and harmony in the church and had a good report of them that were without; honest in all his dealings with his fellow man, yet he would say with Paul, "How to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." I thought I could see this evidence of God's grace in him. He esteemed his brethren better than himself and was always ready to confess to them his faults. Oh, for more of such God fearing and God honoring convictions as was found in brother Aldredge. His presence and godly advice will be greatly missed in the church and his community has lost an upright and honest citizen. Let me say to the church of his membership, he is no more your deacon but let us praise God for the memory of his peaceful labor as our deacon, and I would say to his many friends the honorable life that he lived should be an inspiration to you. Surely he was a man of God. To his immediate family and loved ones wish him not back in this world again, he lived his life and is gone from the evil to come, but rather rejoice in the memory of his life as you go over it with him again and again, and in that solemn meditation you may whisper to yourselves, and cherish above all things, his kindness as father and companion and his godly walk and conversation in your presence. Probably his life may be deemed as an example of the fruits of the Spirit of that God brother Aldredge believed in and desired to worship while in this world of sin and sorrow. May God bless

all that mourn. As it was not possible for the writer of this article to attend the funeral, Elder John Shipman was summoned to conduct the service, assisted by J. M. Sibley, pastor of the First Baptist Church. His body was laid in the Sweetwater Cemetery to rest in the ground from which it was taken until Jesus comes to earth again. Then brother Aldredge will receive the full benefit wrought on the cross for sinners in this world. He could only see through a glass darkly, but then the veil will be removed and he will see his blessed Savior as he is and be like him and be satisfied. Blessed assurance, that is enough. Written by his last pastor.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN.

BOOKS WANTED

Elder W. D. Griffin, Box 383, Fayette, Ala., will greatly appreciate it if any one having the following books to dispose of will communicate with him.

The Gospel in Shadows—W. M. Miracle
Regeneration and the New Birth—W. H. Crouse
Cayce-Penick Debate
Sovereignty of God—John Rowe
Ruth the Moabitess—T. J. Bazemore
Theodosia Earnest
Mt. Carmel Church Trial
Debate on Missions—Cayce-Taylor
Practical Suggestions for Primitive Baptists—Walter Cash
Life and Labors of Wilson Thompson
Potter and Yates Debate
Labors and Travels of Lemuel Potter
Rushton's reply to Fuller
Life's Journey and Lessons By the Way—Kate Swartout
The Trials of Job—Silas H. Durand
The Dealings of God With a Laborer—B. Greenwood.
Life and Other Works of John Kershaw
Life and Other Works of Wm. Gadsby
Life and Other Works of J. C. Philpot
Spiritual Education—A. B. Brees
Conflicts of a Poor Sinner—Lee Hanks
The Two Witnesses—G. W. Stewart
History of Primitive Baptists in Texas—Newman
Orphans Travels—J. D. McElroy
Autobiography of J. H. Oliphant
What Is Faith—Crouse
The Bank of Faith, Life and Others—Huntington.
Warburton's Mercies
J. F. Johnson's Writings
Footsteps of the Flock—Boonton
Church History—Owens
History of Gower Street Chapel
Memories and Letters of J. K. Popham
Life of Watts
Led By a Way I Knew Not—R. Anna Phillips
The Measuring Rod—G. M. Thompson
Griffin's History of Mississippi Baptists
History of Virginia Baptists—R. B. Simple
History of Baptists—J. V. Kirkland
History of New England Baptists—Isaac Baccus
History of Baptists—Benedict
Resurrection—D. Bartley
Early Religious Life of D. Bartley
Mercy Deering or Faith Against Infidelity—D. Bartley
Pictures of Ministers—Walter Cash
Spiritual Law Counsel in bound volumes
Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott
History of Church—Jones
Debate on Catholicism
Pingree-Waller Debate
Hume-Stimson Debate
Campbell-Purcell Debate

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Nassaongo Old School Baptist Church, near Salisbury, Md., the Lord willing, Wednesday and Thursday after the third Sunday in October, (October 18 and 19, 1944). We wish to extend a cordial invitation to all ministering brethren and lovers of the truth.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor
M. E. FOOKS, Clerk

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday at the end of old South Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
J. A. CURTIS, Clerk.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 3rd Sunday, Panama City, Fla.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
C. H. BYRD, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles South of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
B. G. KINGRY, Clerk.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
J. W. BASS, Clerk.

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists invites all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren, to meet with us first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hitchins. Take graveled road to the church.

E. M. TACKETT,
J. S. HUNNICUTT, Pastors.
H. L. ROGERS, Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.
Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 A.M. 1:30 P.M.
To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

C. W. BOND, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1626 Arch Street
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Philadelphia, Pa.

Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 A.M.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor
ALL ARE WELCOME

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Tex.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sunday in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P.M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sunday each month at 11:00 A.M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Salem Church, four miles south of Teague, Texas, meets on Saturday before the first Sunday in each month in conference.

W. A. LITTLE, Pastor.
DORA WREN, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a.m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, Pastor.

(Mrs.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk.
Stockdale, Texas.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a.m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before.

A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 112 RUTHERFORD, N. J., NOVEMBER, 1944 No. 11

THE TEMPLE

Rugged, hardened, fighting men
Moved forward through the vale;
Determined strong to onward go,
Determined not to fail.

Ten thousand strong in numbers,
And stronger in their minds;
Their guns were polished for the kill,
Undaunted were their lines.

Suddenly, loomed straight ahead,
An Abbey on a hill;
Ten thousand men slowed down,
Ten thousand men stood still.

The orders came, "Hold fast your fire,
The church must go untouched;
To spare it is our main desire,
For we are men of such."

For sixty torrid days and nights,
A stalemate was their lot;
They fought a hard and bloody fight,
And fired a million shot.

Eight thousand of their brave men fell
Stone dead upon the field;
Eight thousand men — and they fought well
Before their fate was sealed.

How blinded man is to the truth,
Christ taught it differently;
His word is simple, ample truth,
What blundering fools are we.

He taught that houses were of men,
Where men might worship still;
But we — the temple cleansed from sin,
Was what men should not kill.

We spare a church within a value.
To harm it is a wrong;
But what about our bodies frail
Of which our God is fond?

Shall we go on — blind lead the blind?
Shall man be doomed so simple?
Blast to bits our structures fine,
But spare the Master's Temple!

S/SGT. CHARLES ELBERT BROWN
(Somewhere in Italy).

CORRESPONDENCE

McDowell, Ky.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I cannot refrain from writing to tell you how good it was and how much I appreciated Elder S. H. Durand's letter re-published in the *Signs* recently. It is very, very timely and should be re-published often, I think, to remind the brotherhood of their duty in writing as well as warn them against carnal criticism and sarcasm. It is one of the very best articles I have noticed in the *Signs* lately. I do truly hope we shall not all forget his kind words and good advice when reasoning together on the Scriptures. Of course, rebukes and reproofs are sometimes necessary when contending for the faith (but not carnal) lest the house of God grow stagnant, yet it should be done in the spirit of love and of truth at all times. We are all so carnally minded and worldly in our ways so much of the time that we need very much to be often reminded of our duty by such spirits. Alas! alas! there is very little such meekness and wisdom in our Zion today.

"The little that we know,
Which, children-like, we boast;
Will fade like glow-worms in the sun,
Or drop in ocean lost."

Today as I sat fasting and praying for the third day, viewing and "troubled about many things" that pertain to this life (I have four sons gone forth on the

field of blood) this scripture was applied with a loving power to my heart: "Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me." Isaiah 45:11. This dispelled the gloom so much that I broke my fast and began to read this scripture, and rejoice in God my Savior. The words "command ye me" shone with much brilliance and power upon my poor crippled heart as well as the words, "ask me of things to come concerning my sons." Immediately I began to think of, and to consider His eldest Son, and his finished work (and my brother I hope) Jesus Christ, and how he had taken the cup of the wine of the wrath of God, which was poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation, and with one tremendous draught of love drank damnation dry. At this moment I am happy and I am asking him of "things to come" concerning his sons, and especially "things to come" concerning his disobedient son, Milford Hall, and his one and only obedient Son, Jesus Christ. Nowhere has the love of God been manifested as it was in the person of his Son. There was no other "way." You remember how he himself in the impenetrable darkness which was a bit of the outer darkness, cried out in anguish as it came upon him in the garden, deepening into the blackness of the cross, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." As though he would say, O God, if there be any other "way" find it, nevertheless not as I will but as thou wilt. What did he do? He drank damnation dry. For whom? All nationalities of men. Now no more is the message respecting the blood of the typical lamb sent to Israel only, but the message respecting the blood of the lamb of God is sent to all nations — every creature — whether Jew or Gentile. It is plainly stated in Rev. 5:9 and 7:9 that he has already redeemed to God by his blood, *many out of and of* every kindred, tongue, nation and people. It is no longer "Go not into the way of the Gentiles" but quite the reverse, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations," yea, and every creature; whosoever believeth (whether Jew or Gentile) shall be saved. This account gives us the true cause, and points out the intended use of such universal phrases as, "Who will have all men to be saved;" and "He tasted death for every man;" and "Who is the propitiation not only for our sins (the Jews) but for the sins of the whole world" (the Gentiles). These universal phrases are calculated to abate the pride of the Jews, to encourage the despised Gentles, and by excluding none (no nationality) they give encouragement for all to come; because, though every individual person will not be saved, yet, "him (any person whether Jew or Gentile) that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." By this interpretation the above phrases are neither inconsistent with other texts, nor does our church contradict herself. Jesus forever settled the question of power to come to him when he told the proud Jews "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." So we see plainly, if we have been given light and power, that "Salvation is of the Lord," and that "Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith." Nowhere has the love of God been manifested as it was in his Son. There is no other "way." Oh no not in making of birds to sing; grass to grow and flowers to bloom has he shown supremely his love. No, ten thousands times ten thousand no!

> "God in the person of his Son,
> Hath all His mightiest works outdone.

Now, I am happy! thank God! and in great faith and love I am asking of him "things to come" concerning his sons: yea, commanding him concerning the work of his hands.

"Creation proclaims the
Great work of thy hand,
All beings and things in
The order they stand;—
Productions of chance we
Are led to deny,
'Twas made for the lifting
Of Jesus on high.

All things for his sake did
Jehovah prepare,
For of him, and to him,
And thro' him, they are;
All systems and worlds that
Revolve in the sky,
Were made for the lifting
Of Jesus on high.

So, dear brother Dodson, we see in scripture there is no power but of the loving God, and that "he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth," and the inhabitants of the earth are as grasshoppers and why should we be afraid? Let us be of good cheer, knowing that he judgeth righteously, and is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working, delighting in mercy. Let us command him concerning the work of his hands. No, I do not feel this is bold presumption, but faith of the right sort. I am asking the Father, in the name of his obedient Son, to rebuke the devourer for our sake, in remembrance of ancient faithfulness and mercy, and to heal our Zion again. Nevertheless, not as I will but as he wills. Yours by divine mercy,

MILFORD HALL, SR.

Freestone, Texas

DEAR BRETHREN AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:

Today as I am confined to my room with a slight attack of rheumatism I have a desire to write a little of what I hope is the dealing of the Lord with me, a poor sinner. I was born and raised in the state of Mississippi. My mother was a member of the Primitive Baptists, my father was a strong believer and our neighbors were of the different religious orders, mostly Methodists. We children were allowed to attend their meetings and they took quite an interest in us and gave us the usual instructions as to how to proceed in order to be saved. I went to work doing everything they told me to do. Finally they decided I had religion and wanted me to unite with them which I did at the age of fifteen. I started reading my Bible and going to Sunday school but I could not seem to harmonize even the letter of the Scriptures with the teaching of my friends so I quit them. I went on very well for a time until something seemed to say to me you are a vile sinner and this caused me to mourn. I went to secret places and tried to pray but my burden grew heavier until I became weary even of life. One bright sunny day there was not a cloud in the sky, but oh, horror of horrors, it was to my poor soul the darkest, stormiest day of my whole life. I felt that I must die that very day and that God would send me to hell. I felt that it was just, that God could not be just and save a wretch like me. I walked away from there never to return. I could not pray. I went down to the farm and stopped by an old dead tree and raised my eyes to look for the last time at the sun which was slowly sinking in the west. I saw no beauty there with my just condemnation weighing me down and the agonies of death upon me. I fell to the ground saying, Lord, thy will be done. Then my burden of sin and guilt rolled away and all the world seemed to be praising God. The leaves on the trees were praising him, the sweet little birds were singing God's praise. When I came to myself I arose and my first thought was I will tell mother, but before I got to the house this thought entered my mind, you may be deceived. Something impressed me to go tell the brethren. I spoke out loud, I cannot do it. I cannot go to old, wise and good brethren without more evidence. I would go over it time and again, night and day, but I could not have the courage to offer so I left the country. I was

not going to unite anywhere but I could not get away from God, and oh, how I suffered the rod. I felt that I would give all I had on earth if I could only be baptized, but I would only be refused if I offered myself without more testimony. I was suffering so much that I made up my mind that I would go the next day to a church of the same faith and order of the one God had directed me to in my deliverance. I got everything ready that night to go next day. I thought that they would reject me but maybe that would give me some relief. My wife knew that I was going but she did not know what for so I retired that night with everything ready. A deep sleep fell upon me and I was led in a vision or dream back to the place where I had been directed. I stood before the church-house door in my dream. I saw the brethren and sisters there and there was the form of a man in the pulpit. His clothing I thought were holy garments. He walked to the door, took me by the hand and led me to a table just in front of the stand. He sat me down at the most beautiful table I had ever seen, cloth snowy white and all the dishes and food on that table was spotless white. Then he said, here is where I told you to go so I told what little was given me and was received. After that I fully believed I would be received. I sold out, moved back, offered myself and was received by the little band I had seen in the vision. The next day I was baptized in a clear running stream. He brought me to his banqueting house where his banner over me is love. I am a poor sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

(Elder) W. O. BEENE

1516 Patterson Ave., S. W., Roanoke, Va.

TRIALS THROUGH LIFE

Written by Mrs. Maude Moran

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:

I am deeply impressed to write some of my trials through life. I have been begging and pleading with God this morning to take this burden off me, but it seems I cannot get any relief of mind. I feel to know that God is telling me to do this. I realize that without him we can do nothing. His will not ours be done. I have been impressed for quite awhile to write but have fought against it. I have been confined to my home for a number of years and not able to attend church often which is a sad thing for me. I am in a very nervous condition, but if you brethren and sisters will excuse mistakes I will try to write of what I hope have been some of the dealings of the Lord with me. I was born in Franklin County. My father was not a member of any church but believed in the Primitive Baptist doctrine. My mother was a Primitive Baptist, being quite old when she united with the church. I was made to know she had a hope, for many years how often do I remember finding her on her knees in prayer. When I was only a little tot of five or six years of age I felt to know something about it as a different feeling would come over me. We realize the Lord does speak to his little ones in infancy. My mind goes back to a time that is sweet to my memory today. I was about six years of age and in my first year of school. I had been out playing, came in the house and ate my supper. When getting ready to retire something said to me, you are going to die, you will never see the sun rise again. I did not feel to be a lost sinner, I felt very happy and was not afraid to die. I did not want any one to know this. No I must not tell my mother. I wanted to tell all the family good-bye and all the furniture. I do not think I missed a little picture on the wall. I sat up in bed and told everything good-bye in my little, still voice. Then I would feel very happy but still knowing in my little heart that I would never see the sun rise again. When morning came I would run to the door

and open it to see the little golden sunshine come in, something I never expected to see. I would watch that sunshine until it left the door and then feel as though nothing had happened. This happened for seven nights and on the eighth night it was gone. I would think about it and wish it back. It was something I was not afraid of. Mother was attending Payne Creek Church at that time. She would often take me with her and I was always ready to go. I was made to love those people. Their preaching was so sweet to me although I did not know one doctrine from another, yet I thought it the most serious place on earth. Oftentimes I would meet my little schoolmates at church but I did not want to join them, I wanted to sit by my mother. Sometimes she would leave me at home which would almost break my little heart, and I would feel as though I could not wait until another meeting day, but I must not tell mother as there seemed to be a secret. Those things are sweet to my memory today while other things I do not remember. God puts these things in our minds and stamps them in our hearts. As I grew up these things would leave me for awhile but would always return. Oftentimes when quite young I would think, why do children say such things as they do? I would feel that I must not say them, that God knows what we say and do. I would try so hard to be good. I would not talk back to my parents and tried to respect them as much as any child could. A few months before her death mother said to me, calling me by name, "You were always such a good child and you are still good." Dear brethren and sisters I have fallen far short from being good, there is nothing good in me. I have often thought if my mother could have seen me as I felt to be she could not have spoken those words. If I could only be as good as the brethren and sister look to me I would not have so many doubts and fears. I feel to be the least if one at all. In my flesh dwelleth no good thing. I was raised in the country and the only places of amusement were a few dances and parties during the fall and winter seasons. I would often attend and tried to enjoy myself, and did at the time, but when I would leave the place I would be made to think and wonder if it was right for me to be there, and a great burden would come upon me and I would promise myself I would not go again, but when the time came I would break my promise and go. I was married quite young and then my troubles became worse. There was a time in my life, I cannot give the exact date, I was crushed down with a burden. It came on me suddenly and seemed to crush me to the dust. I was unable to eat or sleep very much. I did not know what was the matter with me. I felt at times I was going to die and at other times I felt all the family was going to die. I begged the God of heaven to take this off me. My husband was away from home when this came over me. I was sure he would be brought home dead. It just seemed I could see them bringing him in as a corpse. I also thought my little children were going to die. I would look at them and think, you have but a short time to live. All I could do was to beg God for mercy and to remove this burden that was crushing me to the dust. The afternoon I was looking for my husband to come home I found myself in the back yard standing unable to move. It seemed I could not make a step. My husband came down through the yard and I did not know him. I stood there for a certain length of time, I do not know how long but I do know it was until God made me able to move. I went into the house, I was living with my mother-in-law at the time, and there was an old lady friend of hers had come to spend the night with her. I was so rejoiced knowing there would be some one with us when these bad things happen. I

just felt to know something sad was going to happen and I thought it would be that night. I went to bed but not to sleep though I must have slept some. Next morning I was feeling better. It seemed the burden had been removed. I did not know how it went and wanted to know more about it. I seemed to be feeling much better but after all I had an uneasy feeling. I felt it had only left to return again. I was made to know that God was not through with me and am made to know it at this very moment. He still is not through with me. I so often fear him and am made to beg for mercy. In the month of October 1909 a great change took place with me, in other words, a great trouble or burden. I had gotten up, cleaned my house and it seemed was feeling very well. I started to the garden, looked up at the sky as I went along and not a cloud in the sky, it was such a lovely day. The thought came to me this is October, bright blue weather, it was really beautiful to me. I went on and just as I got inside the garden something spoke to me in a still, small voice telling me I was going to die, that I would never see the trees bud in the spring. Everything turned dark and these words came to me, "Lord have mercy on me, Lord save me, please Lord help me out of this condition." I started back to the house, it seemed I almost felt my way. When I was in the house I laid down, took my Bible and tried to read. It seemed there was nothing in that book for me, still I kept trying. My baby came in my room and I hid my Bible under my pillow. I did not want my baby to see me with the book of God in my hand. I went on in this condition from October until March. It was present in my mind that March was the month of my death. My continual breathing was a prayer throughout the fall and winter months. The only thing I could say was, "Lord have mercy on me, Lord save me, without thee I can do nothing." We are made to know in these trying times we can do nothing. I would go from one room to another trying to find a place to pray, but I could not bend a knee. I would go into the closet and close the door knowing I was hid from all humanity, but the thought would come to me, God has an all seeing eye, I could not kneel. I went with a prayer on my lips the last thing at night and the first thing in the morning. I felt to be sinking down beneath God's righteous frown. I was made to see his power and man's nothingness. I felt to know I could do nothing except beg for mercy. I also knew God had an elect people and would think, am I one, which would make me fear and tremble, knowing if God cast me aside I would be lost world without end.

(To be continued)

1701 Randolph Ave., Greensboro, N. C.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,

DEAR BROTHER:

Our dear son, overseas, has asked me to remit for a year's subscription to the *Signs* for a brother in London. This is a brother Burch has met since he has been over there. He visits brother and sister Wallis often. I feel they have been taught in the school of God's grace. I am sending you three of their letters and one from brother Wayland Chandler's father which he wrote to our son. I would like to see them in the *Signs*. Do as you think best about it. I feel it is wonderful when we can be blessed to feel that God rules on land and sea and in war and peace. I feel that the battle field is a place of peace if the presence of Christ is with us. He rules all things and controls all things whether in sorrow or in joy. It is all under his mighty power for there is no power except it be ordained of God. I believe he controls all the devil's works. Feel I have written more than I should. Hope you and all are well, we are as usual. Had a letter from our son today. He is all right as far as we know. May

God continue to bless you to continue in the future as in the past. Yours in hope of eternal life.

O. J. WRAY

(We are glad to publish the letters brother Wray has sent us. Our readers have taken much interest in the letters of his son, Burch, and brother Wayland Chandler. One brother wrote us: "I read and enjoyed thoroughly the letters from Burch Wray. God has done something wonderful for that boy. I hope it is his will for him to return safely to us and that I may meet and talk to him some day."—R. L. D.)

London, England

My Dear Family: Just a few more lines tonight. Hope this finds you all enjoying good health. I am feeling well for which I hope I am thankful. Received and enjoyed three good V mails from you all today. Glad to hear all is well, but oh, dear family, I am so fearful that not only am I deceived, but that I have deceived you all. Oh for that blessed evidence that none but God can give. Dear family I do not know how or what to write you all. I felt that Junior would not be long in the insurance business. Please send money to the *Signs* to send the paper to Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Wallis in this country. Hope it will come over all right. I feel they will enjoy it. Just received the June issue and have already read it. I love to read the blessed writings of the saints of God. Love to all. Your most unworthy son.—BURCH.

Sgt. Burch C Wray, 34212182
337th B Sq., 96th B. G.,
A.P.O. 559, Care Postmaster,
New York, N. Y.

182 Atkins Road, Balham, London, S. W. 12.

My Dear Friend: I was very pleased to receive your letter and thank you for sending the copy of the *Signs of the Times* which I was interested to read. I am enclosing a book for you to read which I hope you will find interesting. Kindly return when you have finished with it. I quite understand what a burden sin is as I have at times felt its load and powerful influence, and how it would, if God permitted, sink one almost into despair. How great are the hidden evils of the heart, and coupled with Satan's temptations seem too strong to cope with. I like those words in Lamentations, chapter three. "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." It is his faithfulness and unchangeability which makes him so suitable to sinners who have been made to know and feel themselves as such. Isn't it wonderful that the Lord Jesus Christ has fulfilled the law in every respect, that sinners might be saved? There is hope in him, but we want to be made to know again and again that we are among his redeemed people. I do not know whether you know the words of the hymn writer, but I think they are good "Forgiveness 'tis a joyful sound to malefactors doomed to die." I expect you feel like I do, to need continual forgiveness. With regard to what you say about Sunday schools I agree that God alone can open sinners eyes to behold the truths in the Scriptures. There are quite a number of our churches which have no Sunday school and I must confess I am not at all happy about their usefulness. When you are able to get time off again my wife and I would feel it a favor if you would make yourself at home with us. I am sure you would feel more comfortable in staying at our home than with the Red Cross. With every good wish, Yours very sincerely,

W. E. WALLIS

182 Atkins Road, Balham, London, S. W. 12.

Dear Mrs. Wray: I feel I must write you a few lines to say how glad we are to have Burch's company, when he is on leave and comes this way. We love him

in the Lord and have had some sweet times singing your songs and ours. How good it is to find kindred spirits from far across the sea, who love the same blessed truths of the gospel and are taught by the same Spirit. Burch was here last week end with Waylon. They shared the same bed. We all retired early, that is our family, and left the two friends downstairs talking. It was good to us to be able to give them that privilege, and I hope they will feel free to come here and feel at home while they are this side of the ocean. What solemn times we are living in. We pray that it may be the Lord's gracious will to shorten tribulation's days for the sake of his dear people. He alone is able to deliver. I feel for you in having to part with your sons. I am sure you are glad that Burch is able to enjoy the preaching of the gospel. I expect he has already told you what a good time we had last Sabbath. Waylon is hoping to get leave tomorrow and, God willing, will travel up to Burch's camp. I feel so sorry for Waylon being in a fighting unit. It is so foreign to christians, is it not, to have to kill other human beings whoever they are, but our God can keep and protect him in this if it be his will. With all good wishes and christian love. Yours very sincerely,

(Mrs.) ROSE WALLIS

182 Atkins Road, Balham, London, S. W. 12.

Mrs. O. J. Wray, My Dear Friend:

How very kind of you to send us the beautiful book of hymns and tunes by Burch. We are so pleased with it, and have spent some good hours together singing and playing. Burch says that when he was at home he always kept back when friends were with you and would not join in the singing, but he does not do that here. You see his travel has done some good, he is perhaps not quite so shy now. It has done me good to hear him and Waylon sing together when we did not know your tunes. Both said they could not sing but I assure you that is wrong, and what is more I could see there was melody in their hearts to the Lord. I am afraid Waylon has gone now, we have heard nothing of him for a fortnight, not even a 'phone call or a letter. I do hope he may be preserved if it is the Lord's will, and be blessed to return to you all, especially his dear parents. We have grown quite fond of your two boys. We English people are so different to you Americans in many respects, but I feel the same good Spirit has taught us all. We are passing through trying times here, but the Lord is so good to us and we are so unworthy. We saw Burch recently and hope to see him again, if the Lord wills, in about a week or two. I expect he has told you we have a small garden, and he has cut the grass and planted seeds so you see he feels quite at home. I am sure you will be thankful when this dreadful war is over and you are able to see your son again. I pray that the dear Lord will give you patience and make you strong in his might. We often think of you, and desire the Lord's blessing to be with you all who love the same truths that we love With our united christian love, Yours very sincerely,

(Mrs.) ROSE WALLIS

Ruston, La.

Sgt. Burch C. Wray, Dear Burch:

Though a stranger in the flesh but hearing Waylon speak of you so often makes me feel like I have already met you, and after reading your good articles in the *Signs* I have a desire to try, in my feeble way, to write you, God being my strength. Waylon wrote me about you and he meeting in London and how he enjoyed it. I am so glad you could be together and I know it was a happy meeting. It is very hard for us parents back here. Waylon was my first boy to go but now I have three in the service. They

have taken them one by one and now they have them all. The youngest, E. H., took ship to go across about two weeks ago. We have not heard from him yet and do not know where he is. I am trusting in God, that is my only hope. I have had two or three letters from Mr. Wallis from over there telling me about you and Waylon visiting in his home, and how he enjoyed your visits. It made me shed tears of joy to think you had found a friend so far away that would take you in and make you feel at home. It is just wonderful. God works many wonderful mysteries and I believe is going to work many more before this awful war is over. God's people are going to be gathered together to praise his holy and wonderful name. Dear Burch, I do not believe you and Waylon are in any more danger over there than you are here. God will guard and guide you if it is his will, but it is sad for you all to be so far away and have to go through so many hardships. He is your keeper and his will must and shall be done. I truly hope it is his will that this war will soon end and that you boys can come back home where we can meet together and sing praise to his holy name. My remarks have been very scattering and I do not feel that I have written anything of interest. Will close and post this. If you see Waylon tell him "hello" for me. May the God of heaven be with you, guide and protect you wherever you may go is my humble prayer. Your unworthy friend.

ED. H. CHANDLER

Gantt, Ala.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: For some time and from some cause or other my mind has been impressed to write you, and I do not know the cause unless it is for love. I have never seen you but I love the spirit you advocate in the *Signs of the Times*. Your letters and all your correspondence are filled with joy to my soul when I hear them read. You may know that I cannot see to write or to read but I am blessed with some one to write and read for me. This letter is being written by my youngest granddaughter who will soon be sixteen years of age. I thank you for the little book you sent me treating on the resurrection of the dead. I enjoyed all of the letters and correspondence in it. I cannot say they were right neither can I say they were wrong for we all believe that which is given to us. I do believe in the resurrection of the dead, but what form we shall appear in I know not for Jesus says we do not know what we shall be. I believe we shall be like him, but I do not believe the fleshly body will be resurrected for he says, "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." Now I want to speak of love. Love is the fulfillment of the law. Jesus says, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." I do not believe any man has loved his brother in the flesh. I understand he was speaking of spiritual love for he said unto Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." I believe all children of God have to be born again before they can see spiritual things. He also said, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." I hope I may become as a little child. I feel to be in my last childhood days. In my first childhood days I had a father to look to for my earthly needs. Now I have no earthly father and am trusting in God for earthly and spiritual blessings and I feel to know he is blessing me in both. Just a few words about what Jesus said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life," and he also said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." This covers more than I can express, but will say there is noth-

ing hid from him and there is nothing that moves without his power; there is nothing made that was made without his power; he made the bitter as well as the sweet; he gets glory out of all things. He never did try to do anything and fail, it was a perfect work from start to finish He viewed it all before he fixed it. It moved when he started it and has been moving ever since just as he intended it and will continue to do so until he stops it never to start any more. That is the way I see it. This light and power covers much that I can think of but will not try to write about it. There is much at times I could speak of if I could only write my own letters. This letter seems very scattering and imperfect but I hope you will get what I am trying to explain. I want to say to you and all of your correspondents that I love the letters written in the *Signs of the Times*. I wish I could explain my thoughts as well as they do. I would like to meet with them and talk of this great power that I see manifested upon the earth. There is nothing so large or so small but that He gets glory out of it. Now, brother Dodson, I will have to close. This letter is to you only and not fit for publication as I see it. Do as you think best and it will be all right with me. May God bless you and all of your correspondents in writing of the powers of God. Your unworthy brother, if one at all.

J. S. SCOTT

(Our heart goes out in love and fellowship to our afflicted brother. He says he has had a mind to write us for some time and does not "know the cause unless it is for love." If there is a greater motivating cause on the face of this earth than that of "love" we do not know what it could be. We can but feel that he has been truly taught of God to know and love his precious truth, and although he may feel to be afflicted in a natural sense, yet God is able and we believe he already has sanctified them to the good of his own soul, and that he has been brought into a more sacred nearness to his God than otherwise might have been the case. If we know the "pure language" our brother speaks it, and he is able to express through others that which must appear very clearly to his eye of faith which we hope will never grow dim. He is truly blessed to have others to put his thoughts on paper for him, that they may be sent abroad to other souls who are often famishing in a desert land. May God's richest blessings continue to be his is our prayer.—R. L. D.)

Goshen, Ala.

EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES,
MY DEAR BROTHER:

Enclosed is a letter from Elder Brock of Covin, Ala. We are in south Alabama, however we correspond with the Hopewell Association of north Alabama and have Elders H. M. Brock, W. D. Griffin and others of north Alabama to visit us many times and they are able and sound ministers. This is a precious letter to me and I think so much of it that I want all believers to read it. If you think it worthy of space in your paper you are at liberty to publish it as I have Elder Brock's permission to do so. I have been reading your paper for many years and it is a source of great joy and comfort to me. We are in Conecuh River Association and would like so much to have you Elders and others from your part of the country to visit us. Your brother in hope.

W. A. CARTER

HYMN AND TUNE BOOKS

We now have the Durand and Lester Hymn and Tune Books in shape note only. Prices: $1:25 each or $14.50 per dozen delivered. If you or your church need books please send me your order at once. P. G. LESTER, Jr., 846 Va. Ave., Va. Hgts., Roanoke-15, Virginia.

Covin, Ala.

MR. W. A. CARTER, GOSHEN, ALA.

DEAR BROTHER CARTER:

Your good letter of the 18th was received last night and was very comforting to me coming as it did with a letter from Elder Perkins of Kentucky in which he seemed to be very much cast down. He was lamenting over the fact that his boy had just been inducted into the army, this boy being the principal help upon which he could depend made it very sad to read his lamentations. However, he expressed one ray of hope that the boy, when leaving his father, manifested his faith in God, that if it was the will of God for him to come back then he would return. How wonderful to rest upon that great foundation stone. Then again I was not in such a delightful mood myself, my wife having been carried to the hospital last Sunday night for an operation. Naturally I was somewhat cast down. However, she has gone through with the operation and the doctor says she is doing fine, but will have to remain in the hospital for twelve or fourteen days if there is no setback, longer if there should be one. Again I am shaken loose from the lofty pinnacle of self determination, and thrust down upon that solid and sure foundation of God, "the rock that is higher than I," so says David of old. You, a precious brother, come in with your good letter telling me that you do not know what you are, and that you have never been able to get over to yourself just what you do believe. If indeed a good brother, one who has studied God's word all these years; one who has traveled experimentally for so long a time; one who has on many occasions no doubt melted into tears under the mighty dew droppings from on high; one who has been lead by the still waters; one who has been made to lie down in green pastures; one whose soul has been restored; (ah, surely I am not mistaken in my judgment when I have, I hope, witnessed the evidence of these truths under my own observations) is not able to know what he is, or what he believes, then, oh Lord, how then can such a miserable wretch, whose every path leads to disappointments; whose every uprising is preceded by an horrible fall; whose outside may be washed and appear to others as clean, but inwardly all black and full of sin and degradation; whose travels and experiences have been and are still over one pitfall after another, where there are plenty of hills to climb, many deep chasms to cross over, and but very few plains, tell what he is or what he believes? For many years my meditations have been what am I or what do I believe. Yet I can only say as one of old, what am I but a dog? Then what would a dog believe? Only could he believe that out yonder somewhere is a dead carcas whose odor filled his nostrils and led him where it rested that he might eat to his fill. Yes, the odoriferous scent of the things of this world, which are the dead things, leads us poor sinners to the place where they are, and we eat a gluttonous fill of the perishable things of this world to find later, when and if it be God's will, we must, as the dog, vomit them all up. Then how dreadful is the odor and the taste left in our mouths. Like the poor dog with drooping head sneaks away to conceal himself from every living thing, so we desire to hide away from our family, our friends, our loved ones, yea even from our God, if indeed we could hide from him, but alas, we find as one of old "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me," or if we descend into the bottomless pit as poor old Jonah did behold he is there, and then we must come to the sad conclusion after having exhausted our every wits end that we must declare as another of old and cry "God be

merciful to me a sinner," "Lord: save us; we perish." You mentioned what your friend had to say about the churches being highways to heaven, and it mattered not which one you were in they lead to heaven. I have often heard that expression but never has it given any comfort to this poor wretch's soul. In Isaiah 35: 8-9 we read: "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there." There is not a highway that leads to Montgomery but that if you were in that place would lead you out of it. There is not a highway that leads to heaven that did not come from heaven. Christ no doubt is that highway here mentioned by the old prophet, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." He never came to be the way, he was the way when he came, he was the way when he was here, he is the way now. This way came down from heaven, therefore, it is a heavenly way. Now it is I in you, you in me and I in the Father. You did not go and get in the highway. No, how different, God chose you in the highway of his own dear Son. How wonderfully you were in that great and glorious way in God's mind, even when he did choose you unto salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord, so when and while you travel in this low ground of sin and sorrow or the wilderness of sin, my brother, Jesus is the highway for every one of the elect of God. It is in him that they live, move and have their being, then there are not many roads or highways that lead to heaven, but one and only one and that is Christ Jesus our Lord. He came from heaven and ascended back to heaven and is there making intercessions for you. This is the way of holiness. Jesus was holy being without sin, yet the sin bearer for every one of the sins of every one of his people. Is it not wonderful that this highway is here in this wilderness, and not only that it is here but that it is so walled in or about with the wills and shalls of the only sovereign God who has all power in heaven and in earth? It is declared that no unclean thing shall pass over it. No, my brother, every one that passes over this highway must have the imputed righteousness of Jesus as his garment of salvation. "But it shall be for those: the wayfaring men." Yes, God's dear children are wayfaring men and women, travelers just passing through this wilderness of sin. "Though fools, shall not err therein," yes, fools for Christ's sake. "No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast," false prophets, if you please, are even excluded, but it shall be for the redeemed to walk in. Oh, if indeed I could just know that I was included in that elect number who walk in that highway, then I would know that I was clean and that I was no false prophet, but rather that I was one of the redeemed of the Lord. Then no wonder that David said, "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so." He never said let me say so, but the redeemed of the Lord. Certainly I can excuse you for what you have said in the letter as requested by you for I am persuaded that the reason you said what you did say was that you just could not help it, and the reason that you could not help it was because that you cannot direct your own steps or even your own thoughts, but for the comfort of my poor soul I trust that God did direct your thoughts and govern your touch so that your stammering tongue was loosed for the comfort of God's love that was given you to a wretched and sinful creature such as I. I never thought of writing such a long conglomeration of nothing when I began to answer your

(Continued on page 260)

EDITORIAL

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"This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." John 6:29.

The time has come for me to write you again through the editorial pages of the *Signs of the Times* endeavoring to stir up your pure minds of the things of our salvation, and we must confess that we have no greater subject to write upon than the power of salvation. We are interested in the work of God and in the sons of men, and what are the evidences that we can discern them from the works of the natural creature. We note, as recorded in Genesis, the creation of all things, and how God took a rib out of man he had created and made woman for an helpmeet to man, and also how "Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: and all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." Gen. 5:22-24. This gives expression as to the work of God among the inhabitants of earth as well as in the army of heaven. Note the work of God in Abraham and how he implored God, "O that Ishmael might live before thee! And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year." Gen. 7:18-21. God's dealings with Abraham in establishing his covenant taught Abraham that God was able to do all things according to his purpose, and when God commanded him ("Take now thy son, thine only son Issac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you." Gen. 22:2-5) he rose up early in the morning to do as God had commanded though in his meditations he likely had a heavy heart and all the demonstrations God had given him were realized in his heart. His love for his son Isaac was as dear to him as his own life, yet all this could not turn him from doing the commandment of God. The demonstration of spirit and power was the constraining virtue that was in Abraham, and he went doubting nothing but feeling God was mighty to perform and do all his pleasure. Paul came with the same faith under the command of the Son of God who said to Ananias, "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I

will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." Acts 9:15-16. These two witnesses were exercised in their hearts, which moved them to do the work of God which he had purposed before the world began, and at the time it was to be manifested. The preparation in Abraham caused him to stand steadfastly in God's faith, that he could take the lad and go yonder and worship and all the commandments God had given must be filled, but his love for his son (the only son of his wife, Sarah) made it a great cross for him to bear, but the God given faith that was in his heart caused him to stagger not at the promise of God that "in Isaac shall thy seed be called," and in this declaration he felt, though he should offer his son Isaac for a burnt offering, God could bring him back with him alive in the flesh. "He believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness." Gen. 15:6. The demonstrations of God's power with Abraham gave him the faith that made him believe in the true and living God, also the demonstrations of Jesus Christ made Paul believe on him, and his going forth was of the Lord in which he could say, "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." 1 Cor. 2:1-5. These two servants of God bear the same fruit. "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all." Rom. 4:16. By these two witnesses we have proved that God is the author and finisher of the faith of every one that worships God in Spirit, and the demonstration of spirit and power must exercise the very being of the minister of the gospel before he has the liberty of soul to preach, and it is given in the same hour when it is required of God's servant to publish the glad tidings of the kingdom of God's dear Son. It is sweet to be assembled with those who worship God, and the demonstration of his power is felt, and the proclamations uttered sound praises to God, and we feel them in our hearts, and we can almost feel him embracing us in his love; hear his voice and see his smiling face. How loath we are to leave the place, where Jesus shows his smiling face. It is then we are strengthened and built up in the most holy faith. Often we would glean in the abundance of these evidences, but we must walk in the valley of Achor, and in darkness and have no light, that we must know salvation is of the Lord. We could write much of our own experiences but we feel our readers would tire of reading them, but we have fellowship for Paul when he said, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" He also said, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." This is a glorious salvation. Dear reader, are those things in your heart? Has the love for the kingdom of God, and the fellowship of the saints constrained you to go home to your friends and tell them how great things the Lord has done, and are you hoping he died for you? Our prayer is that you will be given strength to tell of some of the working of his mighty power and that he has made you believe on him whom the Father has

sent. We would appreciate having the evidences that God had worked in our loved ones, that made them take up their cross and follow Jesus in the ordinances of the church of God and the faith of Abraham, Paul and all of like precious faith be manifested. If you have these things in your heart you cannot hide it from those who have the same light shining in them. We would appreciate hearing from any of our readers, telling of their meetings and the travels of the church of God with which they are associated. This will close our writing for 1944. We truly hope some have had comfort in our writings, and we truly hope God has purposed to bless Zion and her undershepherds, that she will be as a city set on a hill, and the Lord the light thereof, and the glory round about.

C. W. V.

(Looking through the *Signs of the Times* dated Dec. 1, 1876, we read the following editorial by the founder of the paper, Elder Gilbert Beebe. It deals with a matter that is of such vital interest to every subject of divine grace that we are pleased to re-publish it. It contains truths which will forever be food to the vessel of mercy, and we are persuaded that our readers today will find them most helpful and reassuring. We earnestly hope that God will bless them to the comfort of those who read, if it be according to the good pleasure of his divine will, to the end that his adorable name shall have everlasting praise.—R. L. D.)

EVIDENCES OF A NEW BIRTH

There is no subject of more vital and thrilling interest to a poor tempest-tossed child of God than that which presents to his inquiring mind the reliable evidences of being in a quickened state. Subjected, as the children of God are, while here in the flesh, to manifold temptations from Satan, intensified by the infidelity of their own depraved nature, which questions the reality of their hope, and contests and disputes every step of the way in which they have been led by the Spirit, how often and how terribly are they perplexed to decide the all important point, Have I indeed and in truth passed from death unto life? Am I truly born again, of an incorruptible seed, by the Word of God that liveth and abideth forever? If I am truly and experimentally born again, why do I find in me so much vanity and vexation of spirit? Why do I walk through so much darkness, coldness and barrenness, and why am I beset with so many cruel doubts and fears? Why are my spiritual enjoyments so few and so far between? Why have I carnal propensities to do the things which I would not, and to leave undone the things which I would do? Why do I find in me a law, that when I would do good evil is present with me? Why am I so frequently brought into captivity to the law of sin that is in my members, and why is there still a law of sin suffered to remain in my members, if I am indeed a subject of the heavenly birth? Such serious inquiries are not unfrequent with those who entertain, at least, a trembling hope that they are born of God.

Of those who are thus tried and perplexed, there are very many who are, and long have been, deterred from making a public profession of their faith, and from walking in the ordinances of the house of God, fearing that they have not experienced what is necessary, and hoping that by waiting they may have brighter and more reliable evidences of an interest in the Redeemer. And those who are followers of the Redeemer, who have publicly confessed by their allegiance to him as their King, by obeying his commands, are by no means free from the same distressing doubts and fears. Even they, too, by the light of life from Christ their Lord, shining in and upon them, see and feel so much depravity in their earthly or flesh-

ly nature, that, although they have in their new birth received the first fruits of the Spirit, still they groan within themselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their bodies. It is consoling to know that the apostles of the Lamb, and the saints of all ages, have had the same conflict between their flesh and spirit, which settles the point affirmatively, that those who are truly born of God are subjected to all these bitter conflicts, trials and temptations. But neither from the scriptures nor our own observation have we ever found in all the race of mankind a solitary instance of these or similar trials and conflicts in any one who was not born of God. When therefore we meet with those who boast that they have become so spiritual (or sanctified, as they call it) that in soul, body and spirit, and in thought, words and deeds, they are free from all doubts and fears in regard to their acceptance with God, we unavoidably conclude that they are those who separate (or sanctify) themselves, being sensual, having not the Spirit, of whom we read, Jude 19. Dead fish float with the tide, but living fish struggle against the stream.

But our principal object in this article is to call attention to some of the scriptural evidences of a quickened state, or of having been born again.

Various and conflicting theories have been expressed by brethren as to what the new birth is, what is born again, etc.; but however much brethren may differ in theoretical speculations, we trust all will agree as to what are the evidences that we are truly born again.

The first scriptural evidence we will name is spiritual light, or perception. The Savior has said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." —John 3:3. And the apostle says, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man."—1 Cor. 2:14-15. All mankind in their natural state are in darkness, and under the power of darkness, in regard to the things of the Spirit of God; so dark that no man by searching can find out God. The things of the Spirit, God has hidden from them, because so it seemed good in his sight. But the life which is given in the new birth is light. "In him (Christ, from whom we receive spiritual life in our new birth) was life, and the life was the light of men,"—John 1:4. "Of his fullness have all we (who are born again) received, and grace for grace," He is the Sun of Righteousness, and in his light the saints have light. This light which is life can only illuminate us by the special power of God. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. 4:6. Whatsoever maketh manifest is light; and when the sinner is quickened, the first evidence of vitality is a light which manifests to him something of the purity of God, and of his holy law, and our justly condemned state as sinners. This we are made to see and feel, in a light which we never saw or felt before. And when the law has had its due effect in convincing us of our guilty, helpless and lost condition, then the same light of life, in greater refulgence, reveals or makes manifest to us the Savior of sinners as our Redeemer, who has put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself, and brought in everlasting righteousness for us, and by the quickening power of that life which is light we are made to rejoice in him, as being of God made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, and we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. This same light of life makes manifest to us the kingdom of God, and

all the things of the Spirit which we are permitted to know and enjoy. No sinner has ever enjoyed one solitary ray of this light, except by the quickening power of God. By the power of this light the scriptures are opened to our understanding. Even the quickened saints of God can see no farther in the scriptures, or in any of the things of the Spirit of God, than they are led and taught by the Spirit which is given to us in our new and heavenly birth.

If then we can see and distinguish the kingdom of God from every other religious organization on earth, we are surely born again, and manifestly the children of light.

The love of God shed abroad in our hearts is perhaps the most infallible and demonstrative evidence that we are born again. This witness is far more reliable than knowledge, zeal or benevolence. "Though I speak with the tongue of men and angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and have all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."—1 Cor. 13 1-3. If it were possible to possess all these extraordinary gifts, in the absence of the love of God they would fail to demonstrate a vital interest in the quickening power and saving grace of God; while, on the other hand, if we love God supremely, love his truth, his ordinances and his people, we are, beyond all possibility of failure, born of God. "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." — I John 4:7-11. Here we have the emphatic testimony of an inspired apostle. First, that love, the love of which we speak, is of God. "Not that we loved God," or that this distinguishing love originated with us, for it is of God; therefore it cannot possible emanate from any other source. "We love him because he first loved us." His love to us is the *cause;* our love to him is the *effect.* Secondly, this love is communicated to us who possess it by a birth. "He that loveth is born of God." It is not the mere passion of our fallen nature drawn into a new direction, for that is carnal and selfish; but this is heaven-born, and fixed immovably on things which are above. It is the special gift of God. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."—1 John 3:1. It is peculiar in its manner, as well as in its source and nature. In nature it is like its adorable author, eternal, immutable, sovereign and discriminating; and in its manner, irresistible, transforming and conforming those on whom it is bestowed to the image and likeness of the only begotten Son of God.

Neither the nature nor manner of the love of God is changed in the least when bestowed upon and dwelling in the hearts of God's children, from what it was in God before it was shed abroad manifestly in them. If we possess the love of God, we shall love the things which are approved of God; and as God has loved his people with an everlasting love, and for the great love wherewith he loved them hath quickened them together with Christ, and has loved them even as he loved his own dear and only begotten Son, whom he loved before the foundation of the world, (John

17:23-25) so we shall, if this love of God be perfected in us, love one another with a pure heart fervently. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"—1 John 4-20. The image of the invisible God is borne, at least to some extent, by those who are the recipients of his love, and who walk in his institutions. If we have no love or special regard for them in whom the fruits of his Spirit are developed, how can we love the invisible God, in whose righteousness they shine? "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death." This is a solemn declaration. If we love the brethren, we are born again—have passed from death unto life, and however poor, weak and trembling we may feel, we are certainly born of God. But whatever amount of knowledge, zeal or works we may possess, if we have not this love we abide in death.

How fearful is the blind infatuation of those who cherish the delusive hope that if they can but slip into heaven even by stealth, they could there enjoy the blessedness thereof. If now they possess not the love of God, they cannot now endure his truth, they have no love for his people, they see no beauty or excellency in his institutions, how could they, without a change of heart, be happy there? We do feel fully warranted to believe and preach that every one that could be happy in the unveiled presence of the glory of God, and in the society of holy beings, will be found among the glorified in heaven. But if we do not love God and holiness, heaven can be no place of happiness to us, even if it were possible for us to get there. God is himself the center of attraction to all the saints in glory; but if we do not partake of his love, we cannot be happy in his presence.

Now the anxious inquiry of some poor, doubting, trembling, tempted child may be, "Do I love the Lord or no? Am I his, or am I not?" Admitting the certainty that all who love God are born of God, have passed from death unto life, and shall never come into condemnation, but shall assuredly live and reign with Christ in everlasting glory, how shall I know or be satisfied that I truly love God, or that he has bestowed his love on me? We have proved by the scriptures that we have passed from death unto life if we love the brethren. Well, John says, "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous."—1 John 5:2-3. If then his commandments are not grievous, if we love them, see a beauty in them, it is because he has written his law in our hearts and shed his love abroad in us ,that we find his yoke is easy and his burden is light to us. If we love his service and delight to obey him and to honor him as our Lord and Master, by this we know that we love his children and are passed from death unto life.

Another reliable evidence of being born again is that we endure chastening. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; but if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."—Heb. 12:6-8. It is a great mistake to suppose that uninterrupted joy and comfort attend the children of God while here in the flesh, and that sore trials, temptations, persecution and buffetings are indictations of an unconverted state. The ungodly often prosper in this life, and seem to have more than heart can wish, so that their eyes stand out with fatness, while they set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth. While God's own dear

people return hither, and the waters of a full cup are wrung out to them. — Psa. 73:9-10. Could the saints always know that their sore afflictions are dealt to them in love, and as evidences of their sonship, they would indeed rejoice in tribulation, and welcome the chastening rod of their heavenly Father.

Still another comforting evidence of sonship is in being led by the Spirit of God. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit. of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."—Rom. 8:14-16. "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."—Rom. 8:9. The indwelling of the Spirit of Christ is an infallible evidence that we are born again. And if that Spirit dwells in us, its fruits will be to some extent manifested in us, which are "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance."—Gal. 4:22-23.

We might greatly extend this article, and from the rich treasury of divine inspiration recite many additional evidences which demonstrate the relationship of children in those who are born of God and are led by his Spirit; but we will now only speak of two more. "They (who deny that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh) are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error."—1 John 4:5-6. They whose religion is of the world, hear not the apostles' testimony; but all who know God have an ear to hear and heart to receive the testimony of the apostles of the Lamb of God. Jesus testified to the unbelieving Jews, "He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." And again, "But ye believe not, because ye are not my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish," etc.—John 8:47, and 10:26-28.

The other evidence which we propose to name is that all who are truly born of God, without any exception find a law in their members, warring against the law of their mind, bringing them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members, and like the holy apostle they exclaim, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"—Rom 7:23-24.

There are two classes of those whom we recognize as the children of God to whom we desire more especially to address the foregoing recital of scriptural evidences of a quickened state. In the one we would embrace those doubting, desponding christians, who write bitter things against themselves, because they feel so sensibly the depravity of their carnal nature, and find themselves coming so far short of what they desire, and of what they think all christians ought to be, that they are sometimes deterred from filling their places in the house of God and at the table of the Lord, from a deep and heartfelt sense of their unworthiness to be numbered with the children of God. We wish to say to all such that our acceptance with God is not on the ground of our own worthiness, but on being freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. It is "By grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast."—Eph. 2:8-9. The very light that reveals to you your own depravity is immortal life; and your very groanings after holiness is conclusive evidence that ye are born of God.

The other class embraces those who are bleating around, but outside the walls of

the organized church of God; who, though once slain by the law, and delivered from the burden of guilt which once they felt, are fearful that they have not yet received a sufficient amount of evidence to warrant them to take on them the yoke of Christ and walk in his ordinances. The voice of the Redeemer is not, If ye feel worthy, if ye have no doubts or fears, no sense of short coming, no longings after more holiness; but it is, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." The evidences of a quickened state we have attempted to present. Dare you say that none of them have been developed in your experience? Dare you say you do not love the Lord or his people? Do you see no beauty in the ordinances of the house of God? Is there not a longing desire to mingle with and in the fellowship of the children of God? Do you believe that your feelings are a more safe and reliable guide for you than all the scriptures recited in this article? We would not encourage those who bear none of these marks to make a profession of religion; it would do them no good, nor could it benefit the church. But those who truly love God will deeply feel their own unworthiness to be called his disciples. But the more sensibly they feel their own unworthiness, the more sensibly will they appreciate the spotless righteousness of Christ, in which alone we can be justified before God.

(Continued from page 252)

good letter, but merely to let you know that I do very much appreciate your interest in my wife's recovery. We thank you from the very depths of our heart, and beg, when directed to the throne of God in prayer, that you remember us poor needy and sinful creatures. Your brother in much tribulation.

(Elder) H. M. BROCK

OBITUARIES

WILLIAM ALNUTT STARTZMAN, eldest son of Elder William Martin and Cornelia (Bowen) Startzman, was born in Delphi, Indiana, August 25, 1878. Had he lived until August 25 he would have been 66 years of age. He came with his parents, first to Dover, Missouri, in 1886, later to Blue Springs, Missouri where the family home was established, and where he lived for about forty years engaged in the painting and paper-hanging business. His father and mother passed away a number of years ago. After the death of his father he assumed the responsibilities of a father's care of his sisters and mother. After the death of his mother he went to Enid, Okla. and engaged in business with his brother, J. N. Starzman, who, over a year ago, passed on from the cares of this life leaving Alnutt alone. After losing his brother, to whom he was much attached, he returned to Missouri locating at Pleasant Hill where he operated an antique and furniture repair shop, living a part of the time with his sister, Mrs. J. W. Taylor and family, but mostly alone. He was stricken in his room on a Monday night and not discovered until Tuesday when he was taken to the home of his sister, Mrs. Taylor. He was attended by three doctors but suffered the agonies of death and passed away Friday morning at 8:25 o'clock. His Bible was found opened at the Psalms, fourteenth and fifteenth chapters, which I read at the funeral service. Alnutt, as we all loved to call him, never made an open confession of a hope, but often talked of salvation by grace and the resurrection of the body from the grave. He often attended the Baptist meetings and seemed to be much interested in the gospel truth. He was one among my best friends and I feel assured that he was blessed with a hope of immortality and life beyond this vale of tears. He lived a moral, upright life which I never heard any one criticize, and was honest in his dealings with his fellow man. He leaves to mourn his departure, four sisters: Mrs. Elinor Wyatt, Oak Grove, Mo., Mrs. Margaret Taylor, Pleasant Hill, Mo., Mrs. Ada Thornton and Mrs. Ida Norvell, Kansas City, Mo., the last two mentioned being twins; six nieces: Mrs. W. J. Shives, Mrs. Tuel Moore, Mrs. Richard E. Moses, Mrs. Wm. P. Shields, Miss Elizabeth Taylor and Miss Frances Thornton; three nephews: Keith, Vernon and David Wyatt, all three in the service; one grandniece and three grandnephews. His body was brought to the home of his sister, Mrs. F. E. Wyatt and Mr. Wyatt, in Oak Grove where the funeral services were held Sunday at 2 o'clock. I was called and tried to comfort the be-

reaved family and friends in the promises of God, and the power of the resurrection. A large number of friends and relatives assembled at the home to offer words of sympathy and as a tribute of respect to the family which was much appreciated. His body was brought to the family burial lot at Blue Springs, Mo., and consigned to the earth to return to dust from whence it was taken, and we live in hope that when Jesus comes again it will be raised from mortality to immortality and shall see Jesus as he is. May God in his mercy comfort the family in that hope is my prayer.

(Elder) W. L. HALL

Sister CARRIE A. HORNER was born August 4, 1877 at Ord, Neb. She passed this life June 18, 1944 at the home of her son and daughter in Portland, Oregon at the age of 66 years, 10 months and 14 days. At the age of eight years she came west with her parents to Los Angeles, California, where they resided about four years, moving then to Oregon where she resided the most of her life. She became a member of the Primitive Baptist Church about the year 1897. She was married to William Garrett Horner, April 1, 1892 who preceded her in death several years. The writer does not have the date of his death. To this union were born six children four of whom are living. Her sons are Robert Horner, Sherwood, Oregon; Walter L. Horner, Portland, Oregon; Daughters are Hattie M. Stetler, Cleveland, Ohio and Willa with whom she lived in Portland. Mrs. Stetler was not present for the funeral services. The deceased children's names were Carl and Nellie. A few years ago she came to the vicinity of Weiser, Idaho, where she placed her membership with the Salem Primitive Baptist Church and here her membership remained to the time of her departure of this life. Her son purchased a farm near Weiser which he managed for a few years and then sold it and they returned to Portland, Oregon. She had been ill for some time yet death struck her unexpectedly. It was not known by seven different doctors what ailed her, but in the providence of an all-wise God it was her appointed time to depart. Our little church shall mourn the loss of this kind and affectionate sister, but we realize our loss is her eternal gain. Sister Horner was loved and cherished by all the members of the church and all others that knew her. She stood firm in the faith and doctrine of the Primitive Baptists. During the time that she lived near Weiser, Idaho she was devoted to her church and was always present at the services when it was possible. Her body, that must return to the dust from whence it came, was laid to rest June 22, 1944 in the Sweet Home Cemetery about one hundred miles south of Portland, Oregon. A short service was held at the place of interment by the writer. We extend our love and sympathy to the bereaved family and relatives of our departed sister and friend. Written by her pastor.

(Elder) E. N. FIELDS

MARCUS D. EMERSON was born July 7, 1868 and died June 19, 1944, making his stay on earth 75 years, 11 months and 12 days. He was married Nov. 11, 1894 to Miss Eula Cooper who died June 15, 1928. To this union were born five children all of them surviving him: Mrs. Eunice Johnson, Akron, Ohio, Mrs. Anna Morris, Mobile, Ala., William A. Emerson, Water Valley, Ky., Joe. E. Emerson, Wingo, Ky. and James T. Emerson, Memphis, Tenn. He also leaves a brother, Joe Emerson, Jonesborough, Ark. and a sister, Anna Newhouse, Elkville, Ill., eleven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church the third Sunday in July 1927 and was baptized by Elder T. J. Prince. He spent most of his life in Graves County, Ky. where he was born. In 1928 he became crippled and had to walk on crutches for almost ten years, yet I never heard him complain of his condition. He was cured so suddenly it seemed like a miracle and remained in good health the balance of his life and was sick only a short while before his death. In April 1937 he moved to Memphis to live with his son where I became better acquainted with him. Brother Emerson has been a great comfort to me as I would visit him often during his four years stay in Memphis. Often I would tell him why I came and he would tell me of the great God who made and upholds all things and by him all things consist. He verily believed in a sovereign God that works all things after the counsel of his own will and none can stay his hand or say unto him why doest thou. Brother Emerson was a deacon and became our leader and spokesman after the death of our pastor in 1937 and was an able contender for the truth. He always attended his meetings when possible and when called upon was always ready. In 1941 he moved back to Kentucky but would visit us often and in his talks would always make his confession. On his last visit he stated so beautifully that his hope was Jesus. I feel the church has lost a faithful member and his survivors a loving father and brother. We mourn his loss but what is our loss is his eternal gain. We find in his passing the true saying that when sin is finished it brings forth death and that he being delivered from death hath no more sorrow or trouble. His funeral service was conducted by Elder O. W. Perkins and his body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Cuba, Ky. The above is submitted in love and in the hope of a better world. May the great God comfort the bereaved ones.

H. G. BROWN

SARAH CATHERINE COPE was born April 24, 1864 ,and departed this life August 23, 1943, aged 79 years, 5 months. Born in McMennville, Tenn. to Thomas and Mary Kirby, soon after her mother's death her father with four of his younger children moved to Ft. Worth, Texas. Here she and James A. Cope were married Dec. 2, 1883. To this union two children were born, a son, Warren, who preceded his mother in death some few months, and one daughter, Mrs. Maud Landon. Seven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren survive her passing. Her father was a Methodist minister and she was reared up in this faith, but in 1896 she united with the Primitive Baptists in Ft. Worth, Texas, Elder J. H. Fisher baptizing her. She was firm in her convictions and could not be moved. She was an active member of the church, serving as clerk of the church over twenty-five years until her health began to fail some few years back. Her home was ever open to her brethren and sisters and to her friends. She was good to the poor and to the sick. It can be truthfully said of her she proved her faith by her works, she was so kind to every one. To me she seemed like a mother, always ready to instruct and yet had that quiet and humble spirit. Her husband died Oct. 31, 1925. His obituary was published in the **Signs** in 1926. Too much cannot be said of these two worthy characters. The church here at Ft. Worth, Texas will ever remember their worthy deeds. Having known sister Cope since 1897 I feel like I have lost a precious counsellor. As the church appointed me to take her place as clerk I feel her counsel will be missed as long as I live. I hope by the grace of God the dear Lord will give me a part of the good graces that were found in sister Cope. I never heard an evil word spoken against her. She is gone from the evil to come and is at rest. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." Her body was laid by the side of her late husband there to await the resurrection morn when, as she believed, these vile bodies shall be changed, fashioned like Christ's glorious body and raised a spiritual body, and so be ever with the Lord. The members of Ft. Worth Church keenly feel her loss but bow in submission to God's holy will, and extend our sympathy to her dear daughter and grandchildren who ministered to her so tenderly in her sickness. Written by the request of the church. One who loved her dearly.

MINNIE C. JAMESON

WINETTA MAY MORRIS, daughter of James W. and Delilah Vantrease was born near Galatia, Ill., May 31, 1878, and departed this life at her home in Benton, Ill., May 13, 1944. She was united in marriage to Byran Morris, May 24, 1918, with whom she lived happily until her death. At the age of seventeen she received a hope in Christ, professed her faith and united with the Primitive Baptist Church. She continued a faithful and devoted member until the end. She had been in poor health for a number of years but bore her afflictions patiently. Her husband and other loved ones did all that could be done but to no avail. Her Master said enough, and she passed quietly away to be with him. Her father, mother, two sisters, and three brothers preceded her in death. Surviving are her husband, two sisters, Mary L. Tate, Thompsonville, Ill. and Myrtle Gregory, Plainview, Ill., also many other relatives and friends sorrow at her passing. I loved and esteemed her above everything in this world and her death causes a sorrow to enter my heart which words cannot express. Jesus said, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." We believe she has a place in her Father's house and will be forever with him. May God reconcile us to his dealings with us.

BRYAN MORRIS

Sister MARY ELLEN MOFFETT, more commonly called "Aunt Ellie" died at the home of her niece, Mrs. Lillian Gibbs, Jersey Shore, Pa., March 1, 1944 after a long illness. She was born at Cammal, Pa., March 6, 1860. Sister Moffett lived only to honor and glorify her dear Saviour and was a living example for the younger members to follow. She loved the doctrine of God's predestination. She and her husband, brother Samuel Moffett, had open house for all who came to meeting. Elder C. E. Benson, pastor of Cammal Church, conducted the prayer service at the undertaking parlor as well as funeral and burial services at Cammal Old School Baptist meeting-house. Her cousin and sister.

MABEL DAVIDSEN.

GEORGE W. HANEY died at his home, Allegheny Street, Jersey Shore, Pa., April 26, 1944, aged 68 years. He was born in Cammal, Pa. and spent nearly all his life in this vicinity. Although not a member of the visible church he had a strong faith in his dear Lord and master and always attended the services when possible. He suffered a stroke five years ago and never fully recovered from it, and again was fatally stricken on April 26. He leaves a widow, two sons, one a marine in the U. S. service, and two grandchildren. Services were conducted by Elder C. E. Benson at Kelchner Funeral Home. Burial in Jersey Shore Cemetery. His sister-in-law.

MABEL DAVIDSEN.

AUTHORIZED AGENTS

ALABAMA

Elder Lytle Burns, Florence, Ala.
Elder F. A. Collins, Hartford, Ala.
Elder W. D. Griffin, Fayette, Ala.

FLORIDA

Elder C. H. Byrd
Box 86, Panama City, Fla.

NEW YORK

Elder Arnold H. Bellows,
West Hurley, New York

GEORGIA

Elder H. O. Nash,
431 Hardendorf Ave., N. E., Atlanta, Ga.

KENTUCKY

Elder G. B. Bird, Canada, Ky.
Elder J. S. Hunnicutt, Denton, Ky.

LOUISIANA

Elder E. J. Lambert,
P. O. Box 55, Lillie, La.

MARYLAND

Elder Harold M. Bennett,
Mardela Springs, Md.

NEW JERSEY

Elder Charles W. Vaughn,
Hopewell, N. J.

NORTH CAROLINA

Elder T. F. Adams, Williow Springs, N. C.
Elder E. L. Cobb, Wilson, N. C.
Elder T. H. Edwards, Jacksonville. N. C.
Elder M. F. Westbrook, Rt. 3, Dunn, N. C.

OHIO

Elder Geo. L. Weaver,
16116 Westview Ave., Cleveland, 20, Ohio.

OKLAHOMA

Elder W. N. Green, Box 654, Altus, Okla.

OREGON

Elder C. W. Bond,
Island City, Oregon.

TENNESSEE

Elder R. L. Biggs,
Rt. 6, Nashville, Tenn.

TEXAS

Elder L. D. Rose, Athens, Texas.

VIRGINIA

Elder J. E. Burgess, Rt. 1, Box 180, Martinsville, Va.
Elder Roy S. Smith, Cascade, Va.
Elder David V. Spangler, Rt. 6, Danville, Va.

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.
O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday at the end of old South Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
J. A. CURTIS, Clerk.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 3rd Sunday, Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
C. H. BYRD, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles South of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
B. G. KINGRY, Clerk.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
J. W. BASS, Clerk.

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday and Elder E. E. Watson on Sunday.
AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church, located 5 miles North of Hartford, Ala., holds services each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching Elders F. A. and J. J. Collins on Saturday, and Elder J. J. Collins on Sunday.
A. E. SORRELS, Clerk.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canda, California.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before.
E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

Pleasant Valley Church, Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc.)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator
PHEBE CATES, Clerk

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists invites all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren, to meet with us first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hitchins. Take graveled road to the church.

E. M. TACKETT,
J. S. HUNNICUTT, Pastors.
H. L. ROGERS, Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.
Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 A.M. 1:30 P.M.
To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

C. W. BOND, Pastor.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1626 Arch Street
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Philadelphia, Pa.

Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 A.M.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor
ALL ARE WELCOME

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Tex.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sunday in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P.M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sunday each month at 11:00 A.M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Salem Church, four miles south of Teague, Texas, meets on Saturday before the first Sunday in each month in conference.

W. A. LITTLE, Pastor.
DORA WREN, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a.m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, Pastor.

(Mrs.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk.
Stockdale, Texas.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a.m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before.

A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 112 RUTHERFORD, N. J., DECEMBER, 1944 No. 12

Box 103, Romney, W. Va.

THE BRIDE THE LAMB'S WIFE

"And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." Rev. 21:9-10.

DEAR CHILDREN OF GOD: This morning I feel empty handed of all messages or subjects to give expression to, therefore, I have selected this subject, trusting in Christ to bless me with a knowledge of his truth to send a comforting message for his poor little children to feast upon, and direct my mind that it may reach some who feel the need of his great protecting powers and directing hand to trust alone in him for their many blessings both natural and spiritual, and also for their eternal happiness in that city of God which I will try to picture to you. This subject was spoken by an angel of God to John, a servant of God, who had been sanctified by the Holy Spirit of God to carry out this revelation of Jesus Christ to us, and left it on record for our learning and instruction, having opened to his sight that beautiful home in heaven with all of its inhabitants. It takes all of the inhabitants of heaven to make up that beautiful city of God. If one should be lost it would not be a complete city. It takes all parts to make up a complete bride or wife, for that reason the apostle compares the children of God to a natural body in 1 Cor. 12:14-20 which reads as follows: "For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body." So, therefore, it takes every part of the spiritual body to make up the bride, the Lamb's wife. If one part was missing it would not be a complete body, and if one member could destroy itself from that body there is no certainty of any of the children of God making up that city, the bride, the Lamb's wife. If one member or even an enemy could destroy one member of that body of Christ there is no certainty of any of them being a member of that spiritual body of Christ. For that reason Christ's labor, great sufferings, death, atoning blood and resurrection would all be in vain and for naught. There would be no surety of a bride, or Lamb's wife; there would be no surety of there ever being a city of God,

a new heaven and a new earth; there would be no surety of Jesus Christ saving any one, but this is all a work of God which cannot be destroyed and is not left to any man or worldly people to carry out. God has set every member of that body in its place to please him and not to please us or any other sources of men. Each part of that body has a certain burden to bear, a certain duty to perform and is needful in its place but useless out of its place. For that reason no one can fit himself for a certain office in his kingdom, neither can one member fit another to carry out any other part which Christ has fitted him for. The foot cannot take the place of the hand nor the ear the place of the eye, it all has its proper place and is fitted for a certain purpose in the body. So every child of God is fitted by the Holy Spirit of God to carry out a certain purpose in his spiritual kingdom. Paul speaks about various gifts yet all for the same purpose and it is needful that the man of God be perfected, throughly furnished unto all good work. No two preachers can preach alike, no two gospel servants of God are given the same message to deliver at the same place and to the same people of God. No two preachers can express any subject exactly alike. For that reason it requires many different administrators to deliver the spiritual food from heaven to the comfort and encouragement of the children of God. Now I wish to express what is to me a comforting part. Paul says, "Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness." So this is the way I look at it—the smallest toe or finger is just as needful as the head, legs or body; the poorest child of God that is not able to donate anything to the cause of the church is as needful as the richest man or woman in the church and should be so considered, in fact they should be esteemed more important to the church for they may possess a great love for the cause yet unable to manifest or prove it. God knows us altogether and regards not the outside appearances but "trieth the hearts and reins." That poor member is not as highly respected by the world nor some of our preachers or high livers, yet is just as precious in the sight of the Lord as the most handsomely dressed or richest member in the church. Christ shows no partiality. I have seen much of such partiality and deceitfulness manifested, those highly esteemed members chosen for guests and lodgings and the poor slighted, then on meeting days shake hands with them and pretend to love them, but on any week day though they may be sick or afflicted or suffering from want of food no interest in them was shown or love manifested for them. Dear children of God, I have but precious little confidence in a Sunday religion with none on Monday or any other day in the week for our fruits are mostly marketed during the week. So the spiritual fruit blooms on Sundays and at meeting times and is marketed during the week, or in other words it is fruitful in the church or services of the Lord, as we serve one another of his dear children we are also serving the Lord likewise. Any charity favors we do to a worthy cause I feel to say will not be missed if done in a willing sacrifice for them. Besides I feel to say we will possess a happy conscience in the deed which renders double pay or double reward, not reaping eternal life for it but the reward of a happy conscience in this world and a dying peace with Christ on our dying beds for all of our christian labors, which will be worth more than all of this world at that time. So those that we consider least in the church are as needful as any to make up

the complete body of Christ and should be considered so and treated as such. The body of Christ is a complete body consisting of the bride, the Lamb's wife, the heirs of heaven. No power on earth can destroy a single one of them, neither can any power of other sources add a single member to that body. I have heard of physiatrics taking a piece of fowl and grafting it into the human body and it took its place, but no source can graft a part into a spiritual body for it takes a spiritual physician to do that, and Christ is the one source that can perform a spiritual operation or make a spiritual body. Therefore, the apostle Paul could say to the saints of Corinth, "Flee fornification. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body." If I understand this correctly it means, as we sin against one of the members of the body of Christ we also sin against Christ and are reproaching the whole body of Christ. It is bringing upon the body of Christ a disgrace for he says, "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." So our natural body is a temple with the spirit of God dwelling therein, and if we sin against it by committing fornications we are sinning against Christ and his dear children. Christ bought the body as well as the soul and paid the price of his life and great suffering to redeem it from sin so every sin we commit in the body, the body will suffer for some day in some way in this world. There are many different ways we can commit adultery or fornication against Christ. One cannot commit fornication against any but the one they are married to. It is not the world or ungodly that commits fornications against Christ but his bride, his wife. The world is committing blasphemy and persecutions against him, but those that have been married unto Jesus Christ, those that have been born of his Spirit, heirs of his kingdom and have buried their first husband which is the law, every time they go sporting with the world they are committing fornications against him. Christ will not divorce them as humanity does, but will chasten them and correct them with judgments for their disobedience. The apostle Paul says because you have been bought with the blood of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and belong to him both soul and body, you are a part of that temple of Christ and his spirit is now dwelling in you. For that reason we should live in a way not to bring reproach upon his cause or any of his dear children but live to the honor, praise and glory of Jesus Christ. For what he has done for us we owe it to serve him all our remaining days by shunning all evils of this world, putting our trust alone in him for all of our peace and many blessings. We are glorifying God in our bodies which are his and a happy conscience we will receive and peace of mind in the hour of death which will be emulated by others, and the Lord's name be praised after we have passed away. Another point I wish to mention is that there is no such thing as Christ buying or selling or exchanging souls or bodies with the world, and there is no such thing as his losing or denying them for he is unchangeable, the same yesterday, to-day and forever. He makes no mistakes or failures but what he does is done forever. Nothing can be added to it, nothing taken from it. (Eccl. 3:14) That purchase price was paid for all of his dear children over 1944 years ago but is now coming into fulfillment for them and will stand until every one he suffered and died for is born naturally and spiritually. The end of time will come then and not before. Christ is permitting this world to stand with all of

its evils going on until that time; then he will appear the second time without sin unto salvation to gather up his jewels and take them home with him to serve him in that beautiful city not made with hands forever and forever. Then that wedding supper will be served, and the bride will be ready to serve him, and after she has been shown her own wickedness and the goodness of Christ delivering her she is made willing to serve him with a heartfelt gratitude for it, can rejoice in his love and worship and praise his great name in no begrudging way or against her will for they will be a willing people in the day of his power. If we are so wonderfully blessed as to be among that number Christ purchased with his precious blood, what kind of lives should we live that would honor, praise and glorify his great name? What kind of lives would we prefer to be living when Christ comes to take us home to glory to praise his great name? What kind of company would we prefer to be keeping? What kind of conversation would we prefer to be engaged in? What kind of service would we prefer to be employed in? Is it not a fact we would rather be found on our knees in prayer to God for mercy for our sins? Or would we not rather be found visiting some poor, sick and afflicted one, carrying them something to relieve their sorrows or perhaps flowers to cheer their pathway? Would we like to be found harboring an unforgiving spirit, drunken on pride, styles and fashions, slighting some poor among us, cursing, liquor drinking, forging, persecuting some one for something wrong, or persecuting some one for worshipping Jesus Christ and casting them out of the church or our homes? We do not know what hour or minute the Son of God will come, therefore, we should live every day as though it were our last day. We do not know what minute we may be called to leave this world and for that reason we should be ready to meet the Bridegroom with clear consciences. We should all strive for peace, love and esteem others better than ourselves and try to imitate the poorest little lamb of the flock, be patient, kind and friendly, forgiving, peaceable and charitable as much as we can and I am sure we will not regret it. The apostle Paul says to the church at Ephesus, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Eph. 4:31-32. The same example of forgiving spirit that Christ manifested to his dear children is the example that all of his children should follow, and the same examples of love, mercy, charity, patience and peace we should practice daily. After all their persecutions and bitter hatred toward him, and putting him to grief and great suffering he held not spite, revenge or malice against them but freely forgave them and left us this example to follow in this world. Yet some are too stubborn to forgive their brother or sister once in a life time. Oh, how disobedient we all are to him! None worthy of the least of his blessings, much less the peace and forgiveness of our many sins against Christ. How should we live to glorify his great name? How should we live to receive his smiles and peace when he comes to gather up his children to praise him in heaven? May God direct us all through life to live as becometh his children? May he keep us from evil and give us that forgiving heart and patience to bear with one another, and leave behind us a monument worthy of our children, neighbors, kindred and friends to emulate. Then they can truthfully say we sorrow not as others that have not that hope of meeting us in the paradise of God.

THOS. F. LEWIS.

3713 W St., N.W., Washington-7, D.C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: It has been on my mind to write you a few lines again. I have been reviewing the past few weeks in my mind. The week before the fourth Sunday I seemed to be *hedged about,* and the prospects for my getting off that Sunday looked very dark. I thought perhaps I had done wrong in asking for a home with the church. I prayed that if this be true the Lord would hinder me from being present. When the way was opened for me to go I felt differently and could hardly wait for the fourth Sunday to come. The night before I was baptized I could not sleep, wondering again if I had decieved the Lord's people. It all seems like a pleasant dream to me now. The Lord certainly was good to us in giving us such a beautiful day. That Sunday was the happiest day of my life and one I shall never forget. It was a day I had hoped for since a child, but had wondered if it would ever come. Once again I have been shown that all things are possible with our God, and that he is no respecter of persons. I feel I did the right thing in obeying his command to "come out from among them," "take up the cross and follow me." My mind is at rest for the present at least. I am, oh, so happy and am enjoying such a wonderful peace. It is something I cannot write in words, but you who have tasted of this sweetness realize fully what I mean I am sure. I am on the "mountain top" now, but if I had not been in the valley for such a long time I could not enjoy the *mountain top.* I have a hard job keeping my mind on my work as it seems my mind is prone to wander to higher things. I thought I had been shown how much I loved the Ebenezer Church in New York City after I came to Washington, but I think now that I did not fully realize the extent of that love until the fourth Sunday. The word says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I was so glad my mother could be present as she was so pleased when I wrote her that I had asked for a home with the church. Still I thought if the Lord might be present who could ask for anything more? Indeed I felt his presence both at the water and at the church afterwards. I was so carried away with your sermon I did not realize for a time where I was, I seemed to be out of this world. I wish I could tell you in words how much your preaching means to me. I am fearful that I do not praise my Lord enough for all the mercy he has shown me. Oftentimes I cannot even pray a prayer of thankfulness. This scripture comes to my mind with comfort, "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." The 116th Psalm has seemed more beautiful to me than ever before. I feel I know something of these verses in my own heart. I had hoped that I might be able to attend the meeting this Sunday but I guess it was not meant to be as I shall have to work. I will be with you in spirit and I pray you will be given the unction of the Holy One. Pray for me when you feel so to do. Give my love to all at meeting and remember me to Mrs. Dodson. It seems now that I have not written what seemed to be on my mind to write, but please cast the mantle of charity over this poor attempt. If a sister, the least of all.

(Miss) GERTRUDE SECOR.

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237 E. Central Boulevard, Palisades Park, N. J.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: All the week I have looked forward to attending the meeting but it is not to be that way. The heat of the last few days made me sick and I have had to lie down much of the time. Having to do so has given me much time for meditation. The Lord has been good to me, much more so that I deserve. Each day since my baptism has been a

sabbath to me. Surely he teaches his people to know he is their whole dependence and I hope I am grateful for a glimpse of his glory. It has not been easy for me to speak of my belief, fearful that I might be wrong, but I have prayed that God in his own time would show me the true way. I once heard you say that "all the fitness he requires is to feel your need of him." In the March issue of the *Signs* you wrote on Psalms 127:1 and how I did enjoy reading and rereading it. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it, etc." Surely we can in no way aid God in his work of building his house. I hope this God is my God. He is my all in all and I know that without him I can do nothing. He found me in a waste howling wilderness. I know I shall still have many troublous times for on earth there is no lasting peace. How very many times I think of my dear mother and her words to me. "Daughter you will come to know God through tribulations and sorrow, but his power endureth forever and one moment in his presence will mean more than all the world to you." Again, "Daughter I do feel you are one of his," but I doubted and told her I never could expect him to accept one as sinful and unworthy as I, but I was made to think more and more about it. As a child I often had troubled thoughts, but as time passed I forgot them, still this followed me through the years. I should not take your time relating more now. When mother was in such great pain I said "God you cannot do this to my mother," and I felt very resentful. It did seem that I could not accept it, but a voice said to me, "Be still and know that I am God," and it seemed from then on I was given to think differently. Mother improved somewhat and I was given the opportunity to have some sweet meditations with her, and I have been so grateful to my Lord for those few days of understanding before she passed to the great beyond. I did not intend to write this way and please excuse my rambling words. My husband has not been well and we are leaving for a much needed rest. Going to Massachusetts this Friday and also a few days at Ashokan where I will doubtless be on the third Sunday. There is a scripture on my mind that I would be so pleased to have you speak from some time. Zech. 6; 1-9. I received a very sweet letter from Gertrude. She had expected to be here to-day but could not get away. Please pray for a very unworthy one, too unworthy for the love and fellowship of God's people.

(Mrs.) ANNA MAC PHEE.

(We are glad to share with our readers the foregoing letters from sisters Secor and Mac Phee. It was my blessed privilege to baptize them in July of this year also at the same time brother William D. Chapman. We hope brother Chapman will favor us with a letter setting forth the dealings of the Lord with his soul, and if so we are convinced that, too, will prove of special interest to our readers. Those who know sister Secor will agree that she has been deeply taught in the things of our Lord at her age. Sister Mac Phee's letter will also find sweet fellowship in the hearts of God's poor and afflicted people. Her dear mother was a great sufferer with an incurable malady for many years but bore her sufferings with fortitude and resignation. She used to write and talk with us about her daughter, expressing the firm belief that God had begun his work of grace in her heart. It is regrettable that she did not live to see her a member of her own church, but we are persuaded that she no longer lacks for the joy of salvation, having entered into the fullness of it with her Lord whom she served so devotedly while here on earth. May God give us to praise his adorable name for his wonderful works among the children of men,

and at the same time prove to the world that we are his true disciples by manifesting our love one for another, is our prayer for Christ's sake. R. L. D.)

(Continued from last issue)

There were quite a number of old people, friends of mine, passed away that fall and winter. When I would hear of a death I would go off to myself and try to pray for them. I would think I can do them no good to pray for myself. I would often try to kneel, I would try at one side of the bed and then at the other but could not bend a knee. As the months passed by my troubles became worse. When the month of March came I felt just a short while and it would all be over, but I soon began to feel better. I would think why do I not feel as I did? I prayed for it back and thought I would watch more closely and see more of how it came and went. It was pictured in my mind so plainly that March was to be the month of my death, but instead it was a month of happiness for me, but I do believe I died to the things of the world. I felt that the things of the world were not for me. I had a desire to be with the people I loved and also the ones I felt to be God's people. I would go to church and try so hard to ask a home with them but could not. Elder Asa Short was the pastor of Paynes Creek Church at the time, my home church. Many times he came to me and asked me to come up and tell them something, but I could not go. I would only shake my head and go home with a sad heart and a burden that it seemed I could not carry. I would promise myself I would go next time and the least they can do is to reject me, but when next time came it would be the same. We are made to feel and know our time is not God's time. I believe he has a time for all things. I went on in this condition for some time. After awhile it would wear off to some extent and I would not think much about it. We began moving about from place to place. There would be times we would not be near a church and could not attend, and it would seem I would forget, in other words, God would withdraw. Brethren and sisters, he does not leave nor forsake us, he always comes back and when he comes it almost makes us cry aloud and say, Lord why hast thou forsaken us so long, and we will be made to beg and plead for mercy and ask him not to forsake us again. It seemed at times I could never be with the people of God but in the meantime we moved where I could attend church and I felt then I could go and ask a home with them. I would go but could not talk to them. I would beg God to take this hard and stony heart and give me a heart of flesh. I would promise myself time and again I would go but something was holding me back. In the year of 1926 an evangelist was holding a meeting not far from my home. A friend asked me to go with her. At first I refused but she seemed to think I must go so I did. I went up for a reason unknown to me, but only known to God. I gave them my hand but not my heart. These words came to me, Lord what have I done? I just did not know what to do. I was just miserable and could not sleep. When the meeting closed the minister asked me what church I wanted my membership in. The thought came to me since I cannot have it with the people I love it does not make any difference so I told him the Methodist would do. I took my letter to the church but never entered there again. There was a little Methodist church near my home and I tried to attend for about one year. I would go at night and go to the Primitive Baptist on their meeting days. The thought came to me I should not have my name on one church book and attend another, and I promised myself I would not go to the Primitive Baptist church again, but I

could not stay away. Something was drawing me. God was telling me to go, there was nothing in the Methodist church for me but worry. I went one night and sat by a friend who was also a member. Something was telling me to go out. I spoke to this lady and told her I could not stay and I walked out never to go back. The minister visited me and begged me to come back. I told him I could not and asked them to destroy my letter which they did. I felt then I had another chance to be with the people of God. In the year 1936 I was stricken down with an illness which is holding me to-day. The thought came to me at different times during the first year of my illness, could it be God was punishing me for my disobedience, and again I was made to know I was traveling the path God intended.

"The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will."

I have had many seasons of happiness and rejoicing when all alone. I have been lying on my bed during my illness thinking about the things of God, and a sermon or a prayer would be presented to my mind which would be a great blessing to me, and I would think, am I sick or am I not? How well do I remember a time during my illness, I was very ill at that time,feeling I could not go on any longer and I felt if I could only pass out it would be a relief to me. Something told me to pray. I said, Lord I cannot pray I have tried so many times and made a complete failure, but if you will be with me I will try. Dear brethren and sisters that was one time I did pray. It seemed every word went to God. When I finished I was feeling well. I got up feeling my illness was all gone. I walked around in my room feeling so happy, thinking perhaps this will stay with me. I walked around to the window. The sun was shining in the window. It was the same little golden sunshine I saw when I was only five or six years of age. This feeling soon passed away. We cannot hold those things, they are with us for awhile and then gone. When this comes to my mind I still have a happy feeling deep down in my heart. Brother J. P. Helms visited me several times during my illness. A happy feeling would come over me when he walked into my room. I feel and know he is a man of God. When sitting by my bed one afternoon he asked me if I thought I would be better satisfied in the church than I was out? I told him I would and he told me I did not have to go to the church to unite. At that time I was unable to attend church. He also told me a few of the members would come to my home and for me to let them know if I wanted them. In about three weeks from that time I was at my daughter's home. I had her to call them for me which was Dec. 18, 1942. They came and I offered myself and tried to talk but feel I made a failure. It seemed everything was withdrawn. I felt so rejoiced to think maybe I can be with the people I love so they received me which was such a blessing to me. I so often think how could they receive such an unworthy one as I, and at other times I feel if I was called to die I would have a happy home, a home not made with hands eternal in the heavens. I was baptized April 4, 1943 by brother J. P. Helms which was the happiest day of my life. It seemed I could not wait to get into the water, a place I had so longed for, and when I came out it seemed that heaven was below, that everyone and everything was praising God. If we could only hold those things it would be heaven below, but they are with us and then gone, and we are made to wonder if it is all a mistake, but after all He does not forsake us always. He comes back. It seems my entire life has been a mass of sadness, sorrows and tribulations mixed with a little happiness. But I thank God

for every time I have been made to feel cast down: for every time I have been made to groan in sorrow over my sins: for every time I have been made to hang my head in sorrow and ask God to have mercy on my poor soul: for every sorrowful tear I have been made to shed over my sinful and helpless condition. I thank almighty God that I have been cast down but not destroyed. I feel it is good for us to be cast down and made to know our sorrows are a part of our joys, because at the appointed time of God we are made to rejoice and thank him for every one of them. The church of God is the most I have to look forward to. It is the foundation of my hope. It is sad for me that I cannot be with the brethren and sisters often since I am cast down with an illness. I know if it is God's will and at his own appointed time he can take this off me. He is the only doctor I am looking forward to. His medicine always heals, he never makes a failure and I am hoping and praying for that time. Brother Dodson we are strangers in the flesh but I feel to know we are bound by a tie, that tie that cannot be broken. I hope to hear you preach sometime in the future. At times I feel too unworthy to claim relationship with God's people, but I do know if ever I reach that eternal home it will be by the grace and mercy of God and nothing that I have done. Please pray for me when it goes well with you. I feel to need the prayers of God's people in these trying hours of illness. You can publish this if you see fit, if not cast it aside and all will be well with me. Please do not let it crowd out something of value. If I have written anything that will be any comfort to the children of God it is only by and through the all prevailing grace of an almighty God. I am not writing because I want to but because I feel that I have to. I have only sketched. Yours in hope of eternal life.

(Mrs.) MAUDE A. MORAN.
1516 Patterson Ave., S. W.,
Roanoke, Va.

Arkansas City, Ark.

DEAR ELDER R. LESTER DODSON: For some reason unknown to me I had the privilege of reading a copy of your May 1944 edition of the Signs, and am enclosing my check for which please enter my very humble name as a subscriber. I enjoy reading these precious truths and the sound doctrine portrayed by the writers of each letter. Sometimes I am made to wonder why and what it is all about. Sometimes wonder if any unworthy worm of the dust has to travel the same road and have the same experiences that I do in this low ground of sin and sorrow, never so much as able to raise my bowed head to do anything worthy of my precious Master's cause, knowing too there is nothing good in men and that we must depend wholly upon the staff and a most precious love for our very being. Then again sometimes I can find the sweetest comfort and consolation in delving into and communing with the most high God's divine presence, seems as though I can always find so much comfort I wonder why I would ever want to give it up and, being honest, make vows only to find myself so dependent and helpless. When I view the eternal plan as the precious Bible conveys it I am made to know that God's will is done, none can hinder and none can stay his noble hand. Sometimes I am so alone. Seems I seldom see any one who believes in salvation by grace or a God who works, his wonders to perform, or a God of love who loved us in trespasses and sin and gave his precious Son for us, and who died on the cross for the lost sheep of the house of Israel. I live a long way from a church of the Primi-

tive Baptist faith and seldom see any one who believes as I do. This is a much longer letter than I had thought of writing, in fact did not plan to write a letter so please pass by all the imperfections of mortal man of which I am its chief and give praise to his holy and righteous name and let praise of the Most High be forever in our poor hearts. May we sing praises to his Holy Majesty and ever know "Thy will be done." When we have spent the permitted time on earth we can claim no praise or glory to ourselves and it makes no difference to this old tabernacle of earthly clay we occupy what our lot in life may be, we are made to know that in the wind up all will be just and right, a promise is made and will stand that the God of glory will be just and truth will prevail. Please throw these rambling thoughts by. Your humble unworthy sinner and if saved at all it will be God's precious grace and favor and all the praise and glory shall be his.

BEN PARRISH.

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505 Clark St., Earlington, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I have had a desire for some time to write you, but have been putting it off feeling so little and imperfect. Do not feel like I can say anything of interest. I will be seventy-five years of age next month. As I grow older I cannot see that I get any better. I am the same old sinner begging for God's free grace. O that I could walk in his footsteps but I feel like the great apostle, when I would do good evil is present with me. I receive the *Signs* regularly and I enjoy reading the good letters and editorials. I enjoyed the letters written by you and your father so much. I am like the dear old sister who wrote recently that she was ninety-six years old and could not write as well as she used to do. As you replied, I think she is blessed to write at all at her age. I am not nearly as old as she, and I cannot write or read as well as I used to. I cannot write long at a time as I get very nervous. I enjoyed reading her good letter and many others. Dear brother, I love the doctrine the *Signs* sets forth ascribing all power and honor to our God, not claiming any merit of our own. Salvation by grace and grace alone. "Nothing in my hand I bring! Simply to thy cross I cling." How can we poor mortals claim anything in ourselves. If I am ever saved it will be by God's grace. I am in the dark most of my time. I feel sometimes the Lord has forsaken me, but I know if I am one of his children, one that he suffered and died for on the cross, he will never leave nor forsake me. Our Saviour cried to his Father, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" I love the book of Job and the Psalms. We read in the twenty-fifth chapter: "Unto thee, O, Lord, do I lift my soul. O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me." "Shew me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths." Yes, how I desire to follow my dear Saviour. I want to do his will, but I am so prone to sin. I feel I love the Lord because he first loved me. Dear brother, this is like the writer, very imperfect but I will mail it to ease my mind. May the Lord bless and spare you many more years to preach the wonderful doctrine. Pray for me a poor sinner. Your sister in hope.

ADAH CHANDLER.

Castle Rock, Wash.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR EDITORS AND BRETHREN: Some time back I sent a renewal for my subscription but felt unable to write at the time. I am not always able to attend our meetings, in fact, I seldom am and feel that I would starve spiritually if it were not for the *Signs* and other Baptist periodicals that I receive and the many beautiful letters of

encouragement and cheer I receive from the saints who live both far and near. I do consider the papers and letters both a special blessing to me in my affliction, and I hope I am thankful to my heavenly Father for what seems to me a good gift. I have selected a group of verses from the Psalms and am sending them along. I consider them much more worthy of space than anything I ever sent. You may be able to use them. Use your own judgment and it will be all right with me.

My Prayer

"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer."

"Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins."

"O keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee."

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me." "O continue thy loving kindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart."

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen."

With christian love and fellowship.

EFFIE PARKE.

Route 1, Box 70, Winona, Texas

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, VERY DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE: As I wanted to send you a dollar to set my subscription up another six months my mind was on what I had just read in the last issue about the dear loving children of God. It made me want to say just a few words to the dear brethren and sisters scattered over this war torn, confused world. It should make every heaven born child of God feel, I believe, this is all sent upon us by our dear Saviour Jesus Christ for the sins of the people, for our wickedness. It is just awful to watch the way people are going on and yet they call themselves christians. Most of them belong to some kind of a church and some are members of so-called Old School Baptist churches. Some go to all kind of movies and have their preachers to broadcast over the radio, but I do not believe any true God called Primitive Baptist preacher will broadcast God's word over those things. My Bible says, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." I think in the church or in the home is the proper place to talk of and tell the wonderful story of Jesus and his love, and, too, I believe we should employ a lot of our time writing comforting and cheering letters to one another. I know by experience I have received letters that have done my very soul good. I am crippled and cannot walk much and do not live near a church so my wife and I just sit and read the Bible and church papers. That is all the enjoyment we have. We had an old brother and sister to visit us Easter Sunday. We had not seen them in twelve years and I could never tell how it cheered me up. I want to beg one and all to please remember us poor shut in sinners, that is what I feel myself to be. We are sixty-seven years of age and while we are only twelve miles from church we have no way to go. We have reasonably good health. My wife is very active but I can hardly walk at all, but how thankful I am that it is as well with me as it is. I find in my Bible where it says God's people is a poor and afflicted people. Oh, dear readers, if I only knew I was one of his how happy I would be,

but all we can do is to live in hope and put all our faith in God. By faith the prophets of olden times went on their way; by faith Moses commanded the children of Israel to stand still and see the salvation of God; and by faith Abraham offered his son, Isaac, on the altar and I am sure that was a heart's test. O for such faith as that! When we fear evil if God be for us why should we fear what man can do? Let us all pray for more faith to fight the battle to the end, and we know of a truth it will not be for very long for some of us. Brother Dodson, please cast the mantle of charity over this and correct my mistakes, and one and all please remember wife and me when at the rich throne of God's free grace. Your little, humble brother.

S. E. REEVES.

1734 Harrison St., Paducah, Ky.

DEARLY BELOVED OF GOD: Will there ever come to pass one thing that God did not foreknow, foreordain and predestinate? If it is in accordance with the Lord's will permit a dreamer (some say it is delusions) to say a few words. If God knew all his works from the beginning (Acts 15:18) and he sends dreams (Job 33:15, 16) did he not know every dream and every vision he would send even before the dust of the hills were laid, or the first man Adam was made? He also knew every delusion he would send. (2 Thes. 2:11) Is it not to fulfill God's will that he sends dreams and visions to his people? (Eph. 1:11) Is it not God's will that he sends delusions to the devil's seed? (Gen. 3:15) "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Isaiah 14:24 By the revelations of Jesus we can find in the written testament everything God has foretold coming to pass. (Math. 24. Luke 21 and many others) The book of Revelations was not written until the year of 96—63 years after the resurrection of Jesus. When Jesus appeared unto John in the isle called Patmos (Rev. 1:9-18) to shew his servants things which must shortly come to pass, (Rev. 1:1) not already come to pass, John saw a door open in heaven and the first voice which he heard was, as it were,of a trumpet talking with him, which said, "Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter." Rev. 4:1. All the things John saw in heaven was come to pass after the year of 96. In the year 1916 I saw, in a dream, the blackest cloud I ever saw over my bed. The cloud parted and I saw the face of Jesus. The cloud came together again and for some time I felt a burden. I thought, as some say, I had been offered an opportunity and did not take it. I tried so hard to find my Lord, but that was something I could not do. Dear Jesus all my help comes from you. In the year 1932, words cannot express the sweet comfort and peace. I felt I could never suffer or sin again, but my battle had just begun. Sometimes my hope was so small I feared I could not survive the storm. Sometimes my anchor feels so steadfast it makes me feel that I can survive hell's fiercest blast. In October 1934 I had dreams and visions three nights in succession concerning the child that is recorded in Rev. 12. In September 1940 I was drugged and bound and carried to a so-called hospital for the so-called insane. The more they afflicted my body, also the bodies of the saints imprisoned there, the more the spirit that God placed in my sinful flesh cried. There was not a doctor nor an attendant strong enough to stop the cry of that spirit, neither were some of them strong enough to keep the tears from trickling down their faces at the things that spirit cried. The happiest hours of my almost half century of life were spent in that prison. My faith was made so strong

I felt sure there was nothing impossible with my God. "Faith without works is dead." James 2:20. Where does man get his faith? God gives it to man by measure. (Rom. 12:3) God knows all his work from the beginning of the world. (Acts 15:18). Why do God's people work? (Eph. 2:10) I am sending in $2 for subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. Mrs. NORA CLARK.

Island City, Oregon.

DEAR BROTHER: I am enclosing a few thoughts inspired by your comments on the second coming of Christ. This is not to take issue with your ideas or those of anyone else but my belief on that subject. If you think this of any value to the *Signs* you may publish it, but I have no ambition to put myself before the brethren except to edify. I have seven children with homes and families of their own, none of them connected in any way with any church. I am thinking of sending each of them the *Signs* as one of the best gifts I can bestow, one which sets forth the truth as I believe it and as I would rejoice for them to be confirmed in. This is a very busy season and so few laborers. I have done almost double duty this fall which accounts for my not writing you sooner. We have a little church here and would welcome a young pastor. Have a parsonage home and business surroundings suitable for an Old Baptist minister to serve us and himself as the Lord may bless us all. This is a good country and every religious order is represented, but Baptists, are not so plentiful. Pray the Lord of the harvest to send us a helper. We shall surely welcome either a Timothy or a Titus or whatever the Lord may send. I shall do what I can for the *Signs*.

In the August number of the *Signs* your comment on Elder Weaver's article has covered me in a mist of doubt concerning the brightest jewel of my hope of fifty years of christian warfare, namely—"The Second Coming of Christ." Without any desire to criticize and feeling my inability to set forth the truth in a more able manner than you and Elder Weaver have already discussed it, I feel moved to testify to the application of certain scriptures relating to this important event. You brethren differ concerning the second coming of Christ, one looking for it in the future, the other claiming it already fulfilled. My faith points to it in the future and I shall give briefly some reasons for such belief. In whatsoever comments I may make I do not take issue with the application you make of the scripture quotations given, but simply so seek out the full meaning. You apply the second coming of Christ and the end of the world to have taken place nearly two thousand years ago, about the year A. D. 70. That is an important event you set forth there, but there is still another and greater in the future. This one applies spiritually to the church, the next one will effect the whole world. When Christ said on the cross, "It is finished," and yielded up the ghost there was still a lot to be revealed and the revealing of these truths were not finished. He said before, "No man taketh it (my life) from me, but I lay it down of myself, I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." In his resurrection and appearances between that and his ascension he proved beyond a doubt that he was the same who had died and now he had taken his life again. In the various appearings there was proof of all this sufficient to convince the most skeptical, even doubting Thomas must exclaim, "My Lord and my God." His presence was sufficient to convince every one and it was not necessary for Thomas to investigate as he had declared he must in order to believe. I have never viewed these demonstrations before his saints to be in any way the second coming "without sin unto salvation." His disciples were to be witnesses of his Messiahship and

this is the finishing of his work, or rather the confirmation of it. In his death he finished the redemption price, and in his resurrection and manifestations before his ascension he sealed the truth of it for his saints in all ages to follow. Paul speaks of this revelation to him as being the same as the appearing to the other disciples but as to one born out of season, the last appearing in this manifest evidence Paul afterward states that we knew him after the flesh but henceforth we know him after the flesh no more. Referring to his finished work we are told that he now sits at the right hand of God making intercession for his saints, and he shall thus reign until the last enemy has been put under his feet, which is death, after which he shall deliver the kingdom to the Father. This brings us to consider the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust in which the just or righteous shall be raised first; all of this must be fulfilled after the last enemy, death, shall have been put under him. All these things must be at the second coming of Christ, and we cannot reconcile the meaning to be fulfilled in his appearing before his ascension. The saints are dying in every generation since then, so death still reigns and shall continue to reign until its power has been destroyed by his glorious appearing we are all looking for. When this shall take place "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." His glorious presence shall be such as to consume everything pertaining to sin, evil and unrighteousness, and in this conquering demonstration of his majesty and glory, the dread of death shall be forever banished and all his redeemed family shall be raised up and glorified together with him. This is what I am looking for and patiently waiting to realize. Paul evidently anticipated joy at such a second coming when he said, what profit to me in enduring these tribulations if the dead rise not. He looked for a crown of righteousness to be given him after the trials of this life were over, and in the resurrection he lived in hope of. Much more could be cited to confirm my faith in the second coming of Christ to be yet in the future, but let this suffice. If that precious hope is destroyed, life becomes dark and burdensome, but it is stamped on my innermost parts, and Satan and the world cannot touch it. Something assures me I shall see him when he comes the second time without sin unto salvation and my joy shall be complete, and at his right hand with all the glorified saints we shall sing the songs of redeeming grace forevermore. To his name be all the praise.

(Elder) C. W. BOND.

(We are glad to grant brother Bond the privilege of expressing his views through the columns of the *Signs*. R. L. D.)

Sulphur, Ky.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am sending money-order for the dearest of all books outside of the Bible, and I want to take it as long as I can pay for it, and as long as the Lord in his mercy gives me sight to read. My sight is failing fast. I hope it will be the Lord's will to spare you to publish the *Signs* for the benefit of its many readers. I know the Lord knows best and he will provide a way as long as there is a needs be for it. I sometimes ask myself what would we do without our dear paper, and to read such articles as Elder C. A. Hunt wrote makes it worth the price for a year. The writers are all good and I do not mean to have any favorites and would not hurt the feelings of any one, but I thought what Elder Hunt wrote was wonderful and I will likely read it over and over. I have not heard any preaching since last October so do enjoy the *Signs*. Now we are looking forward to the third Sunday in this month to having Elder George L. Weaver with us, if the Lord wills for him to come

and for the little few to go, and for us to meet together once more. May the Lord give us a hearing ear and an understanding heart, and keep us all faithful and in that strait and narrow way that leads to life. There is no way to be saved except by the free and unmerited gift of God through grace. I feel this does not merit a place in the *Signs* so cast it aside I would love to write if I had the gift many others have. The Lord did not see fit to bless me with such a gift and I believe his way is best, but I do believe he gave me the spirit of love for the doctrine of the Bible and there is no comfort anywhere else for a poor sinful mortal. There is nothing we can do of ourselves to help ourselves, at least there is nothing good that we can do. I would be glad to hear from the soldier boys whose writings appeared in the *Signs* not so long ago. May the Lord keep his people in his filial love and fear, and to all the good writers, write on. You do not know who your good messages may cheer along life's weary way. May the Lord bless our Editor and the dear writers, and when all is over

Then my happy soul doth tell,
My Jesus hath done all things well.

(Mrs.) ADDIE CHANDLER.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am in receipt of your letter informing me that you had sent for the copy of Hassell's Church History for me which you had found for sale. I want to thank you again for your trouble in obtaining this book for me. I am sure you are kept quite busy with all you have to do and feel I have imposed on your busy time. I note in your letter that you would like to appoint me as an authorized agent to secure subscriptions to the *Signs* if I am an Elder, and you ask whether or not I am an Elder, since it has been your custom to appoint only Elders as authorized agents. My understanding is that when you appoint authorized agents, that carries with it a commission and I feel that your policy and custom to appoint only Elders is right and proper. Viewed in the above definition of the term authorized agent, I think it is good and right to restrict it to Elders only. I am not an Elder. In answering that question in your letter, I feel that I desire to add that I feel myself to not only be too little, poor, weak and insufficient in spiritual knowledge and light, if I have been given any at all, for such a high, sacred and fearful calling, but on the contrary if I know anything about myself, I feel to be less than the least of the members of the little flock of God's poor and afflicted people if indeed one at all. However, if satisfactory to you it will be perfectly agreeable to me to act for you in obtaining subscribers as I happen to have occasion to do so, just to help you, the *Signs* and those that will enjoy the *Signs* when they become subscribers, without any commission. With reference to your request that I write an article for publication, will say that I hope I may be enabled to do that sometime. Elder W. D. Griffin of Fayette, Ala., was with us last spring and filled several appointments in our Association. While here he suggested that I write an article for publication in the *Signs*. I told him I did not feel to have any ability to write anything that would be worthy of publication, but I had felt, if not deceived, an urge to do so several times and that maybe sometime the Lord would enable me to do so. I have always feared that the urge I felt was of the flesh rather than the spirit. Of course, I humbly feel to believe, that unless the Lord should direct us and enable us to write something that would become sound doctrine, and in conformity with the truth from on high as it is in Christ Jesus, then it would not be of comfort to the household of faith and would not feed the sheep. I believe this applies to all that might undertake

to write concerning the unsearchable riches of God our Saviour and his righteousness, and of and concerning his love, tender mercy and grace to his poor, helpless and afflicted people. It is my humble belief that it would not redound to his honor, praise and glory, nor comfort his poor and afflicted children unless it be given unto the writer from on high by his divine revelation to write to their comfort and consolation, and to his honor, praise and glory. Sometime when I feel an urge I will try to write, and my feeling is that it will result in a failure, but even so I will be compelled to believe even that would be in accordance with the purposes of a sovereign and all powerful God that worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and that he doeth all things well. Brother Dodson, I have written you too much at length, and have taken up your time with my long rambling writing. Sometimes when talking or writing I somehow forget to stop and I constantly find myself too long drawn out. Yours in a precious hope.

W. A. SPEER.

(When we read the foregoing letter we felt particularly drawn to our brother, who is a Chancellor in a Chancery Court, that he who sits in judgment over men in earthly courts should at the same time feel so "little, poor, weak and insufficient in spiritual knowledge" as to class himself as being "less than the least of the members of the little flock of God's poor and afflicted people." We have sometimes said publicly that if the light of God's glorious truth should shine into the hearts of those who are extremely wealthy in this world's goods, it would cause them to realize that their gold and silver is but sordid dust in God's sight, and now our dear brother reminds us of the declaration of Holy Writ which says, "the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." How wonderfully blest we are if we know these things. We thank brother Speer for his letter and hope he will write again soon. R.L.D.)

Route 1, Box 901, Auburn, Wash.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I would like to write you some of the things that are uppermost in my mind this morning. The first is—I believe if we are not chosen in Christ before the world began we never will be saved. We read in the Bible where many are called but few are chosen. "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." James 5:11. "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." Heb. 12: 1-3. Paul says in Eph. 4: 1-7. "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that

ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another." Gal. 5:16-26. Well I guess I am making this letter too long. I enjoyed brother Durand's letter. It sounded just like him. I have heard him preach many times. All the articles in the *Signs* are good. They are crumbs from the Master's table.

THE POWER OF FAITH

"Faith adds new charms to earthly bliss,
And saves me from its snares;
Its aid in every duty brings,
And softens all my cares:

Extinguishes the thirst of sin,
And lights the sacred fire
Of love to God and heavenly things,
And feeds the pure desire.

The wounded conscience knows its power,
The healing balm to give;
That balm the saddest heart can cheer,
And make the dying live.

Wide it unveils celestial worlds,
Where deathless pleasures reign;
And bids me seek my portion there,
Nor bids me seek in vain:—

Shows me the precious promise, seal'd
With the Redeemer's blood;
And helps my feeble hope to rest
Upon a faithful God.

There, there unshaken, would I rest
Till this vile body dies;
And then on faith's triumphant wings,
At once to glory rise!"

Your unworthy sister in love.

(Mrs.) JENNIE CLIFFORD.

Route 1, Box 177, Lind, Wash.

DEAR BROTHER:

I will send my money for my subscription which is out this month. I do not want to miss a copy as I get so much pleasure out of it. I do not get to meeting more than twice a year and sometimes only once. I went to Island City, Ore. and we had a most enjoyable meeting. Elders Hughett, Bond and Jones were there and the preaching was wonderful. This was my first visit there. So many of the dear children of God were present and it was hard to leave. I had to travel over two hundred miles but it was worth it. I am still enjoying it as some of the texts come back to me. I think we are the most wonderfully blessed people in the world and I feel so unworthy of it all. I can recall when I first went to an Association at Loveland, Harrison Co., Iowa at eleven years of age. I thought they got more pleasure out of it than any church I had ever seen. There were many members there and Elders too but most all of them have passed away. I have an aunt, Mrs. W. M. Jones, living in Loveland whose husband was an Elder. I was back there in 1929 and heard my uncle and another preacher named Jones, also an Elder, from Gardiner, Neb., who had a wonderful gift. This is the church where my grandparents, James and Sarah Deal were members. I also had an aunt and uncle at Logan, Iowa. I have one brother living who is of our belief but has never united with the church. These are sweet memories to me. Yours in humble hope.

(Mrs.) DAISY OLSON YEISLEY.

Route 1, Box 21, Maynardsville, Tenn.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:

I notice my subscription expired with the September issue and I am enclosing $2

as I do not want to be behind or miss an issue if it is in our Master's way and will that I shall not. In as brief a way and manner as I can find words to express it, I desire to comment on each article (omitting my own) in the September issue and mention the interest and love being manifest among His children on views wanted, and meekness, fear and love expressed. First comes Elder George L. Weaver, Cleveland, O., to sister Mary Cameron, Math. 22:2-10. "The kingdom of heaven (church) is like unto a certain king which made a marriage for his son, etc." The feast (gospel) to all having on a wedding garment, (faith, hope, charity) and this all of God, and no part thereo of puny man. Hope sister Cameron is edified with Elder Weaver's views. Next comes Elder F. A. Collins, Hartford, Ala. 1 Cor. chapter 13. "Faith, hope, charity." It is a most excellent article to me and is noteworthy of careful and prayerful attention. Next comes request from sister J. B. White," "Is prayer involuntary," replied to by Mary L. Eckard, Bellingham, Wash. I believe her reply is direct from God and hope sister White is now satisfied as I am. Next comes experience from sister Bettie Pennington, Steens, Miss. sent in by Elder Griffin. Next comes Elder W. O. Wammack, a very excellent article from over the deep. Is not God in heaven, in earth and on all deep places? Next comes a very comforting letter from brother Walter Young to sister Nannie Shelton and all of us. Next comes subscription from brother J. W. Haynes to dear old *Signs* from Riverside, Cal. He has been reading them since 1876 or about one year before this vile sinner writing was born. Read his poetry. Next comes sister Verna Carscadden and her dear mother, sister W. C. Young's renewal to the *Signs* from Brampton, Can. What a glorious thought to have a hope in Jesus. Next comes brother A. C. Owens' very interesting letter from Wilson, N. C. sent in by Elder J. S. Hunnicutt. Want to say to him—go on and seek to know the Lord, and practice what you know. Hope this little hope will be renewed as the days go by. Next comes sister Grover C. Coleman's commendation on your March editorial, mentioned in our feeble attempt herein which makes us hope we have a hope. Next sister Ross O. Godfrey of her renewal and a hearty welcome to all Old Baptists especially to Elders passing through Niagara Falls enroute to Canada. Surely He will find faith upon the earth when He comes again without sin unto salvation. Next comes Elder Peter Jones' renewal to the *Signs,* State Hotel, Walla Walla, Wash. The Lord has children in every nation. Next comes contributions among which brother J. R. Johnson's of Union Church in the Powells Valley Association of which this unworthy writer is clerk, which I do not feel to be. Brother Johnson is in poor health and does not believe he will ever be so well blessed as to be able to attend another Association. He has just returned from the 1944 session. He was church clerk at Hinds Creek in father's day. Then comes the very able editorials portraying the sore trials His children undergo here in this vile world below, but with the glorious thought that Jesus has paid it all for our sins and not even the slightest stain remains. Brother Dodson this may be too long and crowd the many good articles, if so do as God hath directed and all will be right. I have a mind to write it and renew my subscription until 1945. Your unworthy brother in hope. JOHN E. WALTON.

HYMN and TUNE BOOKS

We now have the Durand and Lester Hymn and Tune Books in shape note only. Price: $1.25 each or $14.50 per dozen delivered. If you or your church needs books please send me your order at once. P. G. LESTER, JR.,
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EDITORIAL
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P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Phil. 2:12-13.

Noting a request from Elder J. J. Musgrove that someone give their views through our family paper, the *Signs,* I will endeavor to give some thoughts regarding it, hoping to be guided by that unerring Spirit. The apostle addressed this admonition to obedient people, whom he speaks of as beloved. In the first of this epistle we note the letter addressed to all the saints in Jesus Christ which are at Philippi with the bishops and deacons. The church at Philippi was commended more than one time by the writer for their obedience, but in his absence he knew there would be certain things they would have to work out for themselves, their own salvation. The salvation under consideration could not have been salvation from sin, as something dead sinners could work out, because they were obedient people. Neither could it have been what is sometimes called, conditional time salvation, if so God would only have worked in them the will, and the matter of doing would have been left to them. The church is reminded that whatever is worked out by them, it is God who worketh in them *both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* The working out of one's salvation with fear and trembling is more or less comparable to one working out a problem to find the sum. Something must be provided to work with and that something is the various experiences wrought in the life of a child of God, by the power of God, bringing them to one acknowledgment, that salvation is of the Lord. Without going into the mighty deep, being swallowed by a great fish and learning that he was beyond the help of man, Jonah would not have confessed that salvation is of the Lord. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." One may talk much of God's grace and the way of salvation, but if he has not learned this in some way except hearing others tell it, the matter will never be worked by him with fear and trembling, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation," but by revelation. The life consists not in what men behold in the outward man. The real life is in his prayer, praises, groans, sighs, hopes, fears, and trembling. "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep." It is by these things men live. No amount of listening to another tell of his weakness, his doubts and fears, his unworthiness, crying unto God for the joy of salvation, or any other christian experience, will convince one that this is all a part of salvation. He must learn these things for himself before he has that fellowship for others of like experience. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." No wonder the hymn says, " 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved." No one could have convinced the apostle Peter that he could

not walk on the water, except the Savior. His avowal that he would never forsake the Savior, though all others did was only to teach him how weak he was, yet in each new experience two things are learned—the weakness of men and the power of God. The power of God is never known until the weakness of man has been manifested. The cross and the crown are both willed by my God. That is what brings about that love and sweet fellowship among God's poor people today as in all ages of the world. The walking together in the things of God's spirit. Surely, "all thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee." It is as if the apostle is saying unto them, in my absence you will be surrounded by many adversaries; there will be temptations, without and within; many things will befall you that you never expected, temptations that you never thought would be yours. You will find out for yourselves how weak you are, yet by these things you also learn that God is the only deliverer of his people, that he knows your downsittings as well as your uprisings. All our times are in his hand. Deep calls unto deep, thy tears are thy meat. In all these things there is a working out one's salvation with fear and trembling, learning that it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure, that no flesh should glory in his presence.

> "Though storms his face obscure,
> And dangers threaten loud,
> Jehovah's covenant is sure,
> His bow is in the cloud."

This makes the children of God so dear unto one another. Often when they meet in the house of God, clasp the hand of one another in sweet fellowship, it is with that knowledge that the salvation of another has been worked out like their own, with fear and trembling. D. V. S.

MILLENNIUM

So many of God's children are disturbed at this time regarding world conditions that I desire to write a short article using that as my subject. Many Old Baptists have listened to the radio and newspaper type of preachers until they have imbibed the modern doctrine that there is to be a return of Jesus to the earth to reign here as a king for a thousand years. In connection with this is the equally fantastic doctrine that the Jews are to return to Jerusalem about this time, become Christians, and receive Jesus to rule in the flesh over them, together with the Gentiles. Let me say that I find but just one kingdom spoken of in the Scriptures. I have never believed nor do I now believe that that kingdom comes by observation. It comes alone by faith to every subject of that kingdom. The eyes of the worldling never has nor ever will see this kingdom any more than the wisdom of this world has or can understand it. When Daniel was given to see the setting up, breaking in pieces and standing forever of this kingdom, I do not have the least idea that he was speaking of a kingdom by any name that came by observation. As far as the literal fulfillment of the prophecy is concerned, there has not been a single event or era that could be referred to as such. Even the triumphant work of Jesus cannot be used as proof because his own people, the Jews, did not believe by and because of it, although they were looking for a literal, worldly king. To me, the kingdom is set up in the hearts of God's children. I do not have any way of telling who has had that work done for them. The Old Baptists have some foolish traditions about this. I have heard some say they could pick them out in a large crowd. Some have said they could tell them by their walk, and some say that they were the ugliest of all people. None of these things do I believe. Some of the homliest

people in my town are anything but Old Baptists. Some that have nice, clear cut features belong to them. I want to emphasize the fact the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ is a spiritual kingdom, and that the work done for a sinner is a work in the heart. Some greatly fear the future and what it holds, some are afraid of this thing and some of that, but there is not a thing to be afraid of now any more than the time of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Personally, I have always believed that God's children were clear of everything. Not only are their sins and iniquities covered by the blood, but everything is subject to Him now. To me, the devil has not had any power except that which was delegated to him. Apart from the power of God he would have become a nonentity. If the devil ever was able to be self-existent I am sure that he would have exercised that power on the Son of God. The riches of this world were in his hand. Did that prove effectual in harming Christ or his people? It certainly did not! I am sure that the riches of this globe are not in Satan's hands. But suppose they were, since he was in sufficient control of them to use them as a temptation to Jesus and failed, is there any room to believe that he ever could do any better? Since Christ received all of the evil treatment of Herod, Pilate, the Jews and the Gentiles and came out of the grave victorious over it all, how can anyone look for him to lose his power? Who is it to be lost to? Not to the devil, not death, not the grave, not the world. Well, let the skeptics say what they will! I just believe that Christ finished the work that he came to do. I do not think that he has any governments enlisted in furthering his kingdom. This idea that the christian (?) nations, and the anti-christian are to meet in conflict just does not ring true. Even if such a fantastic thing was taught in the Scriptures, things must have a terrible readjustment, because the world has not a single christian nation on the horizon now. But, dear brethren and sisters let us not look for any such. The kingdom of Jesus Christ is not maintained by bullets, tanks and other equipment of war. If Jesus conquered the howling mob, the cross, the grave, death, hell and every other devilish trick, was he not then and there a reigning king? Just when will he have more than all power? How can the children of God have any more than they have now? If God takes that which he hates and makes it work for the good of his children, and all of their needs are supplied according to the riches of his grace, does it not sound fantastic to suppose that his kingdom, and the heirs of that kingdom have yet a great battle to fight with such things as money, guns, tanks and aeroplanes, and there is yet an era for that kingdom and the heirs of it, to enjoy more than plenty, fullness, completeness! W. D. G.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Whereas, it was the will of our heavenly Father to remove from us by death on June 15, 1944 our beloved brother, AUBREY RAY SUIT, therefore be it

Resolved, that in the passing of this dear brother, our church has been bereft of a faithful, loving member to whom the church and its order and ordinances were a sacred trust. One who was glad to "go up into the house of the Lord."

Resolved, that we desire to bow submissively to this dispensation of God's providence whose ways are always just, and that his spirit may abide with those bereaved, be it further

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be made a part of our minutes, a copy be sent to our beloved sister Suit and family, and a copy be sent to **Zion's Landmark** and the **Signs of the Times** for publication. Done by order of the church in conference assembled, Saturday afternoon, Aug. 12, 1944.

J. H. Gooch Memorial Church, Stem, N. C.
(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER, Moderator
LAURA REED GOOCH, Church Clerk

Whereas, the Lord in his infinite wisdom and mercy has seen fit to remove from our midst, our dear brother and deacon, DE WITT ROUNDS, on Feb. 24, 1944, therefore be it

Resolved, that we bow our heads in submission

to His divine will asking that we be reconciled, and given grace and faith to ever look unto Him, the author and finisher of our faith.

Resolved that the Salisbury Church has lost a faithful member, but we feel that our loss is his gain.

Resolved, that he will be greatly missed by all who knew him, but his life should be a shining example as we journey on in the hope of a better world.

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be recorded in the church book, one to the family and one to the **Signs of the Times**. Done by order of the church, Salisbury, Md., July 29, 1944.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER, Moderator
MAUD T. LAWS, Church Clerk

Inasmuch as it has pleased Almighty God to remove from us by death our much loved and highly esteemed brother, JOHN B. MILLER, of the Welsh Tract Church in this association of churches, therefore be it

Resolved, that we render thanks to the Head of the Church, our Lord Jesus Christ, for having given to us such a precious and useful gift of service as our brother possessed, in that he served this Association for several years as clerk, ably and faithfully, and further, be it

Resolved, that we hereby extend our sympathy to the bereaved family, and also to our sister Church of Welsh Tract, and that this memorial be printed in our minutes and in the "Signs of the Times", and that a copy of same be sent to our brother Miller's family.

Done by order of the Delaware Association, August 27, 1944.

(Elder) DOUGLAS L. TOPPING, Moderator.
CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Clerk.

OBITUARIES

MISS ALTHA DRAKE was born Dec. 11, 1863, and departed this life Aug. 7, 1944 at The Primitive Baptist Home, Salisbury, Md., where she resided, making her stay on earth 80 years, 7 months and 27 days. She was a daughter of the late Enoch and Elizabeth Titus Drake. She leaves to mourn their loss one sister, Mrs. Elizabeth Conover, Hopewell, N. J., two nieces, Miss Fannie Drake, Hopewell, N. J., and Mrs. J. McKnight Williams, West Chester, Pa., many other relatives and friends together with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church. She united with the Hopewell Church Aug. 29, 1898 and was baptized by the late Elder F. A. Chick. She lived a faithful member to the end, proving the abiding faith of her Savior, that faith which is the substance of things hoped for. As a text for the sermon at her funeral she selected Psalms 23:4. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." She also selected hymn 1247 Beebe's Collection, page 211, in the Durand-Lester Hymn and Tune Book.

"When lauguor and disease invade
This trembling house of clay,
'Tis sweet to look beyond our cage,
And long to fly away."

We would ask you, dear readers, to read this entire hymn and note the sweetness of the joys of her salvation that was brought to her by the Comforter sent by her Savior. Her abiding faith was the substance of her hope which anchored her and kept her steadfastly contending for her inheritance that is reserved in heaven. Her remains were brought to Hopewell, N. J., her pastor conducting the services in the meeting-house where she had so often assembled with the church of God for worship. Her remains were laid to rest in the family burial plot to await the appointment of God through Jesus Christ, when "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

(Elder) C. W. VAUGHN

MRS. BERTHA BOGARDUS BEARD, widow of the late George H. Beard, was born March 3, 1873 and passed away August 11, 1944. Her husband passed from this life January 16, 1908. Mrs. Beard was the daughter of the late Elder Charles Bogardus, who was a minister of the gospel for forty years, and Mrs. Frances Lane Bogardus. After the death of her husband she resided with her parents and faithfully cared for them in their declining years. She is survived by her only daughter, Mrs. Victor D. Borst, Jr., of Forest Hills, N. Y., and two grandchildren, Victor D. Borst, 3rd and Evelyn Lucy Borst. She made her home with Mr. and Mrs. Borst for the past six years. After the death of her husband Mrs. Beard was engaged in many activities all of which were for the benefit of others. She was the first woman selected by Cornell University to organize and manage a Farmerette Camp for women during World War I. She was a practical nurse for many years and not only a gentle and efficient nurse for all physical needs, but helped every one she contacted with her keen, sympathetic understanding and wise counsel. When The Primitive Baptist Home was opened at Salisbury, Md., in 1929 she was selected as Matron and served faith-

fully for about two years. She retired in 1931, spending her summers thereafter at her home in Brooktondale, N. Y. and most of her winters with her daughter and son-in-law in Forest Hills. She never united with the church but was a strong believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine and attended meetings and associations whenever possible. Her health failed rapidly in the last three years and although she was always gentle and happy her one desire was to be with her Maker. We mourn for ourselves because we have lost such a perfect mother and friend, but we cannot mourn for her, believing she has entered into rest in that eternal home where there is everlasting peace and light. Elder R. Lester Dodson, pastor of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in New York City where she last attended services, being away from home, Mr. Floyd Morris, pastor of the Federated Church, Brooktondale, N. Y. and a friend of Mrs. Beard was called to officiate. Services were held at her Brooktondale home. Interment in the family plot in Green Mound Cemetery, White Church, N. Y. Written by her daughter.

ESTHER BEARD BORST.

MRS. LUCY CHILTON VORIES, our dear sister in Christ, passed from this life August 30, 1944 at her home in LaGrange, Ky., after a serious illness of about ten days. She was born October 2, 1866, the daughter of Joseph and Martha Campbell Chilton of Turners Station, Ky. In June 1894 she was married to Deacon J. J. Vories who died October 15, 1941. To this union were born three children, Mrs. Hubert K. Brown, Cincinnati, O., Harry Vories, now in the Hawaiian Islands, Miss Evelyn Vories, LaGrange, Ky. There are two grandsons. Our hearts go out in sympathy to the son, who could not be reached at the time of his mother's passing, the lonely daughter at home and the daughter and children in Cincinnati. Our sister was a lovely person, always had a smile for every one, and better still was the faith she manifested in the Lord in her last hours, asking that the Lord would give her faith and come soon to take her home. I saw her on Sunday before she passed away, and she told me she felt perfectly reconciled to the Master's will, even to her son being away. Wherever he was she knew God would take care of him. She loved the church and what it stands for, having been a member forty-five years, and her brethren will miss her and her wise counsel. We pray the good Lord to reconcile us all to his will. Our pastor, Elder George L. Weaver, was not available, so a local New School Baptist minister spoke words of comfort. She was laid to rest beside her husband in the LaGrange Cemetery. The pallbearers were Mr. Elza, Mr. George Claggett and Leslie, Ed, Jesse and Clarence Chilton. Four of them being double first cousins. How we will miss our sister, but we know our loss is her gain. May the Lord enable us all to say "Thy will be done." I was requested by the daughter of our dear departed sister to write the above, and have complied with the request though feeling unfit to do so.

(Mrs.) ADDIE CHANDLER

(This obituary was handed me with the request that I read it and send it to the "Signs" for publication. The family and brethren have my sympathy. May the Lord bless them all.

(Elder) GEORGE L. WEAVER.

REMEMBRANCES

Among the children of men, December is the outstanding month of the year for manifesting their good will. Is it not also an excellent time for the people of God to remember their kindred in Christ by sending them the **Signs of the Times**, which they will enjoy throughout the coming year? We are passing the idea on to our readers for their consideration.

Also, we would like to suggest that our readers send us, from time to time, the names and addresses of those whom they feel would be interested in subscribing to the **Signs**. We will be glad to send them sample copies of the paper in order that they may become acquainted with it.

Many of our readers well know how grateful they were to those who introduced them to the **Signs**. Now is the time for you to do your good turn by either sending the paper to a friend or at least having us send them sample copies.

We thank you in advance and wish for you all a pleasant Yuletide Season.

R. L. D.

P. S. Remember also that where $2. is sent to us for a NEW subscriber, either the one sending the subscription or the one subscribing is entitled to a book on the Resurrection of the Dead. Please specify to whom the book should be sent.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

R. R. Peters, Cal., $1; L. N. Henry, Miss., $1; G. E. Secor, N.Y., $3; Eld. R. L. Biggs, Tenn., $3; I. T. McIntyre, N.Y., $6; Mrs. E. Radford, Va., $1; A. J. Oden, Miss., $3; Mrs. J. A. Levins, Va., $5; A. L. Blankenship, Va., $2; "H," Md., $2; M. V. Thomas, Ill., $22; Mrs. B. Haan, Wash., $3 Middletown & Wallkill Church, N. Y., $25; Mrs. R. Stevens, Md., $1; A friend, N. C., $2; A friend, Ala., $3.

MEETINGS

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists invites all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren, to meet with us first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hitchins. Take graveled road to the church.

E. M. TACKETT,
J. S. HUNNICUTT, Pastors.
H. L. ROGERS, Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.
Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 A.M. 1:30 P.M.
To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Tex.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1626 Arch Street
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Philadelphia, Pa.

Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 A.M.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor
ALL ARE WELCOME

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

C. W. BOND, Pastor.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sunday in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P.M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sunday each month at 11:00 A.M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Salem Church, four miles south of Teague, Texas, meets on Saturday before the first Sunday in each month in conference.

W. A. LITTLE, Pastor.
DORA WREN, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a.m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, Pastor.

(Mrs.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk.
Stockdale, Texas.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a.m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before.

A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 113 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JANUARY, 1945 No. 1

THE WAY

Of all the work of wisdom's hand,
The Highway 'tis most great;
Extended down from heaven to land,
It spans the gulf of fate.

It is the way, a Highway too,
Paved by the Almighty King;
For both the Gentile and the Jew,
Who "amazing grace" can sing.

A signboard stands along the way
For each and every mile,
To guide the traveler day by day
In grandeur and in style.

A place of covert night and day,
Beneath the Savior's smile;
A place to worship and to pray,
A place to rest awhile.

It is a straight, a narrow street,
It is a one way lane;
You need not fear a wolf to meet
And leave you there in shame.

No vulture's eye hath ever seen,
Nor ravenous beast hath trod;
It was not paved for those unclean
But for the heirs of God.

The Holy Ghost, the Father, Son,
Met in their court of law;
Agreed in covenant, what be done,
All devils stand in awe.

This Highway tops the mountains tall,
Spans all the valleys o'er:
Rolls back the waters, large or small,
You could not ask for more.

There's some one on the way that rests
At every sign they see,
That's pointing to that city blessed;
Who can this some one be?

It must be pearls all dressed in white,
Washed by Immanuel's blood;
That on this Highway took their flight
From Egypt's rolling flood.

They're walking upward all the day
To meet their King of zest,
Who placed the signboards on the way,
A little place to rest.

Though storms may come and billows rise
Among the sons of men;
The Engineer was fully wise
And hedged the Highway in.

The underneath is solid rock
It's overlaid with gold;
Salvation for a wall doth lock
The sheep within the fold.

Springs of water here doth rise
To water every plant;
I look in wonder and surprise
That God would ever grant—

That I should look upon this scene,
Or see the Savior's smile,
That I should on this signboard lean
To rest a little while.

This Highway lights the corners dark,
Calms down the raging storm;
It straightens out the crooked mark
Of every size and form.

It's leading to a city high
Above this war torn land;
Too high for sorrow e'er to fly,
It is at God's right hand.

Immaculate Lamb, with grace and love
He for His bride came down;
Made straight the path for every dove
And wrought for her a crown.

Dear child of God, He is your Priest,
Your Counselor and your King;
A shield from every harmful beast,
He is your everything.

He leads you o'er this way in style
To God's eternal bay;
Not here you rest a little while,
But rest for aye and aye.

MAGGIE LEE HAYES

Vernon, Ala.

THE MARK OF THE BEAST

"And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God." Rev. 15:2.

For the past few months I have had a desire to express some of my thoughts upon this deep and sublime subject for the consideration of my dear brethren who read and love the *Signs* and the doctrine it sets forth. In expressing my views upon this or any other scriptural subject I want all to know that I do not lay claim to any superior knowledge of the things of my God, only the small portion that it has been his good pleasure to make known unto me by revelation, and I am some how made to know that this small portion which I hope I have been made to see and know is at best but a glimpse, just the seeing as through a glass darkly of the unbounded fulness of my God. It shall be my aim to approach this subject from several angles, as I deem it an impossibility to understand any subject of scripture unless we consider its relation to other subjects. I very humbly desire that God may direct my mind aright, that he may give me that boldness of spirit that I may speak plainly, and yet without malice to any who might oppose my views. One erroneous idea in the minds of many is that this mark is some visible, literal mark. Some even think it is to be found among the literal rulers of the nations of the earth or some political party, and by this same carnal reasoning they think Hitler is the beast spoken of in Revelations. Nothing could be farther from the facts in the case under consideration. In this connection we often hear or read from the alarmists the fanatical notion that the end of time is near, that the moral condition of the world is alarming and rapidly growing worse, so much so that God will soon visit swift destruction upon the entire world. This is arminianism in its rankest form. In my judgment there is no scriptural proof in the remotest degree to prove that this world, this literal earth, will ever be destroyed as far as substance of matter is concerned. The forms of all earthly objects, whether they be men, trees or hills are slowly but surely changing from one form to another, and all these literal wars, even the torrential rains, the freezing winters, the invigorating and growing seasons of spring and summer, the bacteria in all dead substances of both vegetable and animal matter that cause its rapid decay, the fire that burns up and consumes, is but wisdom's way of changing the form of things. God who created it all (not out of nothing as we hear some say) out of his unbounded and unwasting fulness is carrying out his wise purpose in it all every moment of time. He had all the material he needed to make everything he wanted and as he wanted it, and I am sure he wanted everything just as he made it, and just as he keeps it from time to time. I feel sure that God was satisfied with all his creation and that he is no less satisfied to-day than he was in the beginning. Even life itself is one of the many ways of changing the form of things, likewise death, as we know it, is no less changing the form of things. Certainly neither life nor death as we understand them could possibly mark either the beginning or the ending of things excepting only as to form. Now to our subject, let us briefly consider the meaning of the word beast as it is used in the Scriptures as well as other things of this earth which are so often used in our Bible, as I see it, for the sole purpose of setting forth what was in the mind of the writer of the hidden mysteries of the spiritual things of God. As an illustration of what I mean, where the children of God are called sheep none

would conclude that they are actually literal sheep and so with other names by which the children of God are described all through the Scriptures, and when they are reckoned as goats, Esau the hairy man, the old red dragon which John saw in heaven (the church), one of you is a devil and thou worm Jacob, all are but the true description of the varying conditions of the family of God all along the pathway of their experience in which our God leads them. Not only is this true of their names by which our God calls them, but it is equally true of the places or conditions they are led in by the hand of God, such as their being driven out of the garden, their going down into Egypt and their sojourn there, their travel through the wilderness at the leading of Moses, the servant of God, Jonah's going down into the belly of hell, the apostles in prison, etc., all of which is in the experience of some of the family of God both now and heretofore and will continue to be as long as God has a people on earth. Not every one of the family of God has the same talent, the same gift, and perhaps no two are led exactly alike, or experience exactly the same measure of the things of God, neither in the bitter things of life nor the joys of the spirit of God. When a baby is born into our homes do we expect it to measure up to the parents either in stature or knowledge? Do we refuse its entrance into our hearts and homes because of its limitations, or because it cannot eat meats, or speak our language, or because it cries or kicks against its mother? What would become of our schools and what use would they be should they pass a rule to enroll no one who did not measure up to the stature of the principal either in mental strength or physical fitness, and pray tell me who is wise enough to judge these things in nature? Then if we cannot do these things in nature why, oh why, try to do them in our churches? Why so much bickering over what some one believes or disbelieves? Why so little of the spirit of forbearance and tolerance among us? The word beast, worm or even devil when applied to the child of God does not mean that he or she is no longer a child of God, and to be lost in the eternal world and those who bear the mark of the beast are as much the children of God then and God loves them as fully and is caring for them as fully and surely as at any other time in their experience, and there is not the slightest doubt in my mind but that the great majority of the children of God are bearing the mark of the beast and his image. Later on in this article we desire to point out some of these marks of the beast, but right here let us notice a few things that have a bearing upon what we call *order* and *disorder*. While the chosen of God was for four hundred years in Egypt and under these taskmasters, trying vainly to render obedient service to them, who could judge God's dealings with them and say they were in disorder? Who would be so perfect that they would want to declare nonfellowship for them? When our gracious Lord speaking of his chosen, Hosea 2:14, "Therefore, behold I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her," etc., while in this or any other condition was she not the same beloved of God, the same people but in a different stage of her experience? Is not this a mark of the growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? 2 Peter 3:18. Would we reject any because, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby?" I Peter 2:2. Should we not receive them gladly because they need the care of *mother*, her love, her pity, her guidance and instruction? Should we not receive them without doubtful disputations? Should we not lay aside all malice and all guile,

and hypocrisies, and envies and all evil speakings? Even if some of the children of God become so polluted in their own filthiness and stain their garments with shame, what person among you is so pure and so much without fault that he could wish to destroy such an one, or that he is so lacking in that mother love that you could not willingly take that polluted one in your arms and wash away its filth and clothe it with the garments of loving forgiveness? What pupil in school would become angry at the teacher because of his or her superior knowledge, or call in question what the teacher says because the pupil did not already know it? When a poor trembling sinner comes faltering, and with many doubts and fears asking a home in mother's house, do we begin to question that loved one—Do you believe the Bible? (when its understanding is like all the rest of us so pitifully limited). Do you endorse that old man made document, the "London Confession of Faith?" Where in all the Scriptures do we find any authority for such proceedings?Where is there any authority in the Bible for any of our articles of faith? I am persuaded that the living and hidden truths of God can not be written on paper, never was and never will be. Is it not enough when we can behold, at least in a small measure, our own limitations and imperfections our blindness and sinful unbelief to know that, "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." Eph. 4:7. Please read on through this chapter where the servant of God, Paul, was speaking of the gifts to the church, and for the purpose of perfecting of the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Is it not clear that in Paul's day there were some at least of the children of God who did not have this perfect knowledge, and if not so why the need of the teachers sent from God? Beast then, to me, simply means antichrist, and as all know the word anti means against, and of all God's creation there is nothing with which I am acquainted that is more against Christ than our own carnal mind which is said to be enmity against God. Now let us briefly notice some of these "marks of the beast" that we find in our brethren, the children of God. It was that vicious devouring nature of the beast that caused Cain to slay his brother Abel, and be it remembered they were brothers. Cain was the one that God placed the mark upon and today when you meet with a like character you will find this fighting spirit which is the mark of the beast. So with Isaac and Ishmael, both sons of one man and both blessed of God but Ishmael was the archer, the fighter, and Paul says this is an allegory and clearly points out, "But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." Gal. 4:29. In the experience of Paul we find both conditions in the one man. Prior to his conversion he was a vile persecutor of the saints, and was bearing the mark of the beast, but like us all in this our day he was not aware of the mark. It took the work of God to remove that mark or give him the victory over the same, and he was one of the "remnant of her seed." Rev. 12:17. Here let me say again that those of the family of God who have not gotten the victory over the beast are none the less the children of God, nor does it mean to me that they are doomed for the torments of hell after this life is over. I do not find in the Scriptures where David ever sought to injure Saul, but the reverse was and is true to this day. The carnally minded, who bear the mark of the beast, are ever ready to destroy the spiritually

minded who have gotten the victory over the beast. Nothing could be more clearly portrayed than the incident concerning Cain and Abel. Cain's offering was just what he *had,* the products of the earth, the carnal mind, the theory or system of carnal or natural religion which he had harvested from the self cultivated fields of his own imagination, and the seed of the crop was already in the earth (carnal mind) before it grew. It is all the work of God, and the earth (carnal mind) cannot be blamed for bringing forth, neither can I blame them when I hear them say, "This is all I have and if you take this away from me I would have nothing left." In this they are truthfully stating what I have experienced, for at one time I had as much of the carnal notions or traditions as any other living mortal, and when, as I humbly believe, my God took this all away from me truly I had nothing left, nothing but emptiness and poverty. While Cain was said to be of that wicked one and slew his brother, and wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, (of the beast, carnality) and his brother's righteous, yet this does not mean to me that Cain was a man doomed to eternal torment in the world to come. Again we see the same truths set forth very clearly in the person of Moses who was the servant of God who was never permitted to enter into the land of promise but only to get in sight of these things, and so it is to this day; the great majority of the family of God are never blessed to get "the victory over the beast, and over his mark, and over his image," and to fully enter into the spiritual joys in that land that flows with milk and honey, and the little remnant that stands on that pure, solid foundation, " a sea of glass mingled with fire," are severely and cruelly persecuted by this majority, who have not gotten this victory over the beast, the fight still goes on and is where it has always been, in the *family,* in *heaven,* where John saw both the carnal and spiritually minded of the family. Another very vivid mark of the beast which we so often see in our churches is that spirit manifested by many of the brethren to dictate to the called servant of God, who has been called, qualified and commanded to preach the preaching that God has bidden him. They will try to tell the poor servant just what he may or may not preach, just how he may or may not apply or construe this or that scripture. Surely this is a glaring departure from the faith and order of the house of God, and would, if they had the power to carry out such a popish rule, prohibit that growth in grace, and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and would make of us all slavish servants of the beast. This old dragon was and is, wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant (not all) of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, (not the commandments of men, in or out, of the literal church) and *have* the *testimony of Jesus Christ.* This lamentable condition among us to-day is fully described in God's word. "And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." Rev. 14:17. That is you cannot preach in our pulpits unless you cease to spiritualize the Scriptures, and unless you preach what we tell you. You cannot have the right to express what you have received by the revelation of God, no exchanging of views, no buying or selling unless you are willing to receive the mark of the beast. We will retain the right to tell what we believe, but if you persist in expressing your views we will have to exclude you. And so the war goes on, but my trust is in our Captain of the hosts of Israel. He is fighting all our battles, the victory is in him. He has given me my orders and I do not fear

what man can do unto me. My life is in his hands and I am glad it is so. Truly it has been with me in my experience that coming up through great tribuation often have I been in perils, even "in perils among false brethren," but out of it all the Lord has delivered this unworthy worm for his names sake and made me willing to stand upon that pure foundation of the spiritual truths of a living God. What a wonderful foundation, "a sea of glass mingled with fire," the fire of God's everlasting love. No malice or strife there, no hatred for any one, not even our enemies, but all is love and peace, when "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." Yours in hope of immortality.

(Elder) G. B. BIRD.

(Elder T. Floyd Adams, of Willow Springs, N. C., has written most interestingly on the Book of Ruth. His article is divided into four parts or sections, and we plan to publish it in four consecutive installments in the Signs, of which the following is the first. We believe our readers will greatly enjoy this article, and we wish to thank Elder Adams for sending it to us. R.L.D.)

Meditations on THE BOOK OF RUTH

We are taught in the Scriptures that "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Rom. 15:4. Again the apostle, Paul, tells us that "The law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things." Heb. 10:1. There are only four chapters in the book of Ruth, and to my mind the four chapters beautifully portray Jesus, the church under the law and, also, the church in the gospel dispensation. There are principal characters whose names are mentioned in this book, namely: Elimelech, Naomi (his wife), Mahlon and Chilion (their sons), Orpah, Ruth, Boaz (a mighty man of wealth) and the little son of Boaz and Ruth whose name was Obed. The other characters were the reapers and maidens of Boaz. Naomi said, "I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty: why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the Lord hath testified against me?" Ruth. 1:21. Now Naomi, her husband and their two sons dwelt in Bethlehem Judah, and there was a famine in the land, and they went to the country of Moab and continued there. Is not the famine in the soul the reason a convicted sinner moves out of his former state in search of comfort and rest? After they arrived in the country of Moab, the Lord sent further afflictions on Naomi by taking her husband from her. Mahlon and Chilion "took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years." Mahlon and Chilion died; the tender cords of earthly ties were severed; gloom and despair sank deep into her soul. Her husband (the law) was dead, her two sons were dead and all her earthly possessions were gone. What a dark and gloomy picture! Dear reader, could you witness with Naomi when you came to the end of the law with no hope of heaven? I can hardly refrain from shedding tears as I contemplate the scene. But suddenly Naomi *heard* a little good news, how the Lord had visited his people in Bethlehem Judah in giving them bread. So she arose with her two daughters-in-law and resolved to make the journey back. The prodigal son said, "I will arise and go to my father." Luke 15:18. Just how far they went before Naomi introduced her subject to them, the Scriptures are silent. Would I do violence to the Scriptures if I say that they came to the border line of Bethlehem Judah and Moab? Naomi said, "Go, return each to

her mother's house—are there yet any more sons in my womb?" She brought out the impossible, and said, "for I am too old to have an husband," meaning that she was too old to bear children and that if it were possible for her to bear any more sons, Orpah and Ruth would be too old for them and her sons would be too young for Orpah and Ruth. It may appear from the words of Naomi that she had turned the cold shoulder to her daughters-in-law. Ah! but not so. She was testing the love, zeal and affection they had for her; for she well knew that unless they dearly loved her they would not be willing to face hunger and starvation. It has been said by our critics that we offer very little or no inducement for people to unite or join with us, and that we manifest but little concern for those who are on the outside of the church, but this is not true. Dear child of God, if you love us, we love you. But like Naomi, we have no worldly attractions to offer nor earthly amusements for entertainment. We would also like to know if you feel as Moses of old, "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Heb. 11:25. "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." Acts 14:22. "And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me?" At this point, Orpah kissed her mother-in-law and went back to her people, "but Ruth clave unto her." The law rolls back but the gospel moves on. The forceful expression which has found a responsive cord in the hearts of those who are born of God were uttered by Ruth, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God, my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried." Naomi "left speaking unto her." When you, dear brother or sister, see such manifestations of the love of God in the hearts of his dear saints, are you not ready to embrace them into the fellowship of the church and say to them as Laban said to Abraham's servant, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without?" Gen. 24:31. What a wonderful manifestation of the love of God, exhibited in the life of Ruth. She turned her back on her earthly parents and kindred in the country of Moab. How beautifully her life compares with the language of Jesus, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." Luke 14:26. We are not told, but we would assume that her parents could have provided her with an adequate apartment at the death of her husband and given her the earthly comforts of life, but this does not satisfy the hungry soul. She, like Naomi, was in search of that bread (Jesus) which her mother-in-law *heard* that the Lord had given to his people after the famine in Bethlehem Judah. Note, they have not as yet received this bread, but are in search of it, and Naomi has some hopes of receiving it at the hand of her near kinsman, Boaz, "a mighty man of wealth," (Jesus). Jacob *heard* that there was corn in Egypt. Ruth was a young woman and a widow also, and humanly speaking, she could have stepped out far ahead of her mother-in-law who was old and decrepit. But she seemed content to travel along with Naomi and share her sorrows through all of this long and lonely journey from the country of Moab to Bethlehem Judah. Just how far this distance is we are not told, but in the experience of the unworthy writer, it was a lonely travel of twenty-one years. At last, they reached the city. Note the change in the appearance of Naomi. The people could hardly

believe this was she. "All the city was moved about them, and they said, Is this Naomi?" But she said, "Call me not Naomi, call me Mara." The word Naomi means sweet; the word Mara means bitter. She said, "the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me." She is no more that sweet and lovable character in her own estimation. The Lord has emptied her of self-works and beauty. For she said, "I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty." Notice that she did not say, *he sent me*, but "the Lord hath *brought* me home;" like David who said, "He *brought* me to the banqueting house." Also, the man who fell among thieves was *carried* to the inn by the good Samaritan, and Abraham's servant said, "I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." Could the servant have failed to reach the house of his master's brethren, since he was in the "way?" And Jesus says, "I am the way." And Ruth and Naoim "came to Bethlehem in the beginning of the barley harvest."

(To be continued)

Steens, Miss.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:

I am sending you a letter I received from Elder W. D. Griffin last winter while I was sick which was a great comfort to me, and I desire to share it with others. Will you please publish it in the *Signs of the Times?* Brother Griffin has been our pastor for nine years and we all esteem him very highly. I also desired to write something myself but the Lord shuts as well as opens and I do not have anything on my mind to write just now that would be worthy of notice. I am one of the unfortunate ones having been blind for twenty years. That seems like a long time to be shut up in darkness, but I hope the Lord has been pleased to let me see the light of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, which is more precious to me than anything in this world for it is something the world cannot take from you. I have been a member of the dear Old Primitive Baptists for twelve years. I do not know why but for some reason they carry me along. Please remember me in your prayers. I feel to be the least if one at all. A little sister in hope.

(Mrs.) BALMA CALLAHAN.

Fayette, Ala.

MRS. BALMA CALLAHAN, STEENS, MISS.

Dear Sister Balma: We read in Matthew 11: 28-30 of a command of Jesus Christ. For some time I have been meditating on it and the exquisite beauty in those words of his to the characters under consideration. The Arminian world of all shades and variations claim that it is to the Adamic race. We do not have any desire to treat on that as we have better things to do than shoot arrows into the camps of Babylon. Some among us would say that it is addressed to all the regenerated children of God, and that they can obey it or fail as they please. We have no time for that either. Our desire is to write to you some of the beauty, grandeur and sublimity contained in these words. First I wish to stay with the scripture in our examination of this passage. If we have a mind (the mind of Christ) to look and inquire into the Scriptures we will find that many wonderful things are revealed in them. It is impossible to treat these words lightly. They cannot be set aside and something of our own substituted. The reason for this is because with Him there is not a vestige of failure. He cannot at any time fail. Men fail and most of them try to alibi out of it. Not yet have I read of him speaking as men speak. In the Scriptures and in my experience I have found that where the word of a king is there is power. My two precious boys are now nearly men in every sense of the word. At times I have

called them and they either did not hear or heed. Many things have hindered and yet hinder. Lois sometimes calls Thurman in her sleep and he two thousand miles away. Dear sister is our Savior so weak as that? Has distance, stubborness or anything else ever kept him from executing his will? No, no dear little sightless sister his will must be done in heaven and in earth. Now let us notice our text. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." This command is not given to any but those that are tired. How tired the children of God become in their efforts to keep the law! Toiling all the day and far into the night. No let down for them; no cooling shade that they might escape the scorching vengeance of the fiery sun (law); no fellow traveler to confide in and to speak often with — just work. Work that is never satisfactory, work that gets harder to perform with each task. Oh, how glad I am to write the comforting truth to you that he does not appear too soon to these wretched, footsore creatures. I just cannot help believing that in this experience God's children learn something unforgettable in the spirit of the case. This command to come to him does not gather in any tares, nor any who have not completely tried the law. We might get ambitious and enthusiastic and gather some into the church who had never known a moments labor, and who had never been heavy laden, but into that glorious kingdom of his, that is invisible to men, not one has even come to him that was not elected to come. It is so sweet and precious to rely on him as protection on the inside and outside. Not only does he effectually bring each object to him, but it has pleased him to either hide it or darken the minds of men that not one has ever come to him that did not belong to him. You remember the ark was pitched within and without. Why? Not only to protect and safely keep those within, but to keep out all danger and filth, and the door was shut to keep out those that did not have any right. Dear sister Balma, you have so much time to meditate, tell me, is it not your experience and observation that every command of Jesus is so worded that every one addressed comes and none others want to? The world carps about us not preaching a doctrine that includes everybody, but Jesus on this occasion commanded only those that were laboring and heavy laden. Is that not restrictive? Did it include you when you were a satisfied Freewill Baptist? It did not include me at any time until I was past twenty years of age. To this day I have never been able to say for sure that it has included me. I am sure of one thing, if it has ever included me, there have been long, dry, barren seasons that it did not include me. Can you give water to a man who is not thirsty? Does a well man need the services of a physician ? Does a man that is not tired need rest? Will it interest a man that does not know the weariness of being heavy laden to call him to rest? Oh, how little the world knows! These questions, if applied to natural things, would call for an emphatic nay from every university professor in the world, but when applied to spiritual things they know nothing and would say that a man can want what he does not want. To enjoy labor there must be fruit. If, for no other reason, we enjoy good, honest toil for the satisfaction we get out of laboring, but these people are those that have not been satisfied with their labors. They are people who realize that the work must be done, they are people who know they stand in jeopardy because the whole job must be done.

Not the least bit of failing, carelessness or negligence will be tolerated by the Taskmaster. Oh, the long hot seasons they have passed through, toiling, toiling, no sooner getting the fence mended in one place than many more broken gaps appear! Ah, methinks I see them hurrying when the storm clouds arise that they might harvest what they have worked for. Not only are there extremes of heat and stormy weather but there is the cold! Have you noticed how trying it is to gather kindling, provide food and shelter during the cold weather? I believe these characters have to work right on through the cold. The cold of the Lord cannot be withstood (Psalm 147:17) any more than the heat of him. Dear sister Balma, have I given a word picture of this character to you? Can you not look back (and even presently) into the mirror of your experience and find yourself? Now at the right time Jesus comes to these laboring and heavy laden people, "come" is his welcoming command. Hitherto the command has been to go do, but now it is come. How the situation changes! No second command is necessary. There are not any new tasks to be performed, there is no threat given if they do not come. None is necessary. Why? Because none will stay back, they will come because they are ready to come. Up until this voice spoke they did not know to come. There was no place to go. Every home and resting place must be made ready for the recipient, but how foolish to make the preparations and then have the guest unfitted for it. Have you ever noticed how trustful a babe is in its mothers arms? She is fitted to it and the babe to her. Have you noticed the trust and confidence and rest among the Lord's humble poor? They can endure hardness as a good soldier. Why? They have been prepared for it. Have you noticed the difference now and when we were children? Were not the seats hard? How hungry we became! Now I seldom think of eating or of discomfort. I do hope it is the preparation of the Lord. Others get tired of our service and our preculiar ways. They get tired of our conversation and I further believe they get tired of our rest. Now, I may be wrong but I believe it is God's work that makes them tired and heavy laden. It was his law and it was to be a schoolmaster to Christ. The translators made it say to bring us to Christ, but I do not think the law (work) would have ever brought a single one of these people to Christ. I do not find any life promised in the law and they did not know of this life until he spoke to them. Let us pass on and notice some more of the text. I believe I might venture to say it is a good one, but I just cannot handle it. All texts are centered in Jesus and if I have handled him at all it is so slight that I cannot get to the center but must play along the edge of the water. He tells them to take his yoke on them and to learn of him. You know we had quite a number of oxen at work when I was a boy. Not the first time did one ever take the yoke without first being "broke." Men do things and would say that unless certain things were done they could not proceed, but they rebel at God doing the same thing. It is necessary to yell and be rough sometimes in handling an ox, but the meek and lowly (he seeks that kind) he commands them to "take" the yoke. Quietly and without disturbance they do so because they love him. His commands are not grievous. They enjoy wearing this yoke, it is easy to them. It is fitted to them and they are fitted to it. My dear sister, I must close now, but in your lonely hours I would commend you to this precious One. Rest in him and no other. Here I hope to rest as he qualifies me to come to him. Naomi desired rest for Ruth. She had been sorely annoyed and tossed about, but at the proper time she was enabled to lie down at his feet (Ruth 3:14) and

to rest. May we lie here at his feet and rest. I hope to see you soon. Give my regards to all. Your poor unworthy brother in hope.

(Elder) W. D. GRIFFIN.

Athens, Texas.

DEAR ELDER DODSON, MY PRECIOUS BROTHER IN CHRIST:

I am enclosing on regularly prepared forms of the *Signs,* one new subscriber and one renewal. The latter states her paid date expired July last but had been receiving the paper right along and thanks you for continuing the paper, not allowing her to miss an issue. The new subscriber asked that you begin her subscription with the September issue as she wanted to read the two articles by Elder Hunnicutt and yourself. I wish also to commend you both for the splendid contribution. Do not suppose you meant to blend your article so perfectly with his since his appeared just preceding yours, but it appeared to be just a continuation of or further enlargement of the subject Elder Hunnicutt had so beautifully set forth. May God bless you both in this great work to continue on, I feel to hope and believe under His leadership and guidance, in the way of truth and righteousness which in the end, and even now I feel, is accounted to you for righteousness as this same faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness. This is wonderful when we feel to hope that we are moved in these things by faith, which faith is the gift of God, and knowing too, there is only one Lord, one faith and one baptism. Then if we are moved by faith in this glorious work we have the assurance that we are children of Abraham, because he is the father of all the faithful, and through him are all the nations of the earth blessed. I am, I hope, your brother in Christ; looking forward to, and trusting in his promises to the faithful in Christ Jesus, and the blessed immortality of the souls.

(Elder) L. D. ROSE.

(Such letters as the foregoing will undoubtedly be encouraging to Elder Hunnicutt as they are to us, and we greatly appreciate the sentiment expressed by Elder Rose. We are honestly endeavoring to serve our brethren to the very best of our ability and it is good to know that so many of our readers feel that we are succeeding in some measure. R.L.D.)

Canada, Ky.

DEAR BRETHREN:

By request of my kind and loving sister, Sarah E. Bolt, I will try to write my experience, or what I hope the Lord has done for me. I do not feel that it will be of much comfort to any one of God's dear children. I feel so little in the sight of God that it seems too much for me to attempt to write anything about it. Perhaps I can tell you a little of what troubled me. I always tried to live as best I could in the way of a moral life. At about the age of eighteen years the Lord took hold of me and made me see and feel how sinful I was, and what I now relate I can never forget. I love to talk about it and it never grows old. I always have to shed tears when I think about Jesus and his love, and how merciful he has been to poor sinful me. He brought me low one Sunday evening after I had returned from meeting. My sins like mountains appeared before me. Oh, what trouble I had! I thought I could not live if I did not find some relief for I could not sleep at night, nor rest in any way. I would get up and try to pray, but I could not find any relief. I would go back to my bed thinking I would not live to see another morning. I was teaching school at the time and was taken sick. I thought I would go home and stay until I got better, but I grew worse and thought I was going to die. I told my mother that I was about

gone and could not see any chance of being saved. I told her I wanted her to send for my dear uncle, a minister of the gospel. He was sent for and came, and I told him that I had no hope of myself. Oh, what trouble I had! I thought I could not bear it much longer. I then thought if God would only forgive me I never would want or ask for anything else. I thought I would give the world, if it were mine, if I could be a good christian for that was all I asked or wanted. When I thought no one would see me I would get my Bible to see if I could find any promise for me, but none could I find. Oh, my burden how heavily it pressed upon my poor heart. I would try to ask God to have mercy on me for my burden of sin grew heavier all the time until it appeared that I could not carry on my duties in the school room. I went on for some time in this condition until at last I gave up all hopes and thought I was going down to the dreadful lake. I felt I was one of the vilest sinners that ever lived. If it had been left to myself I surely would have been gone. At last I gave myself up into the hands of my dear Savior, and was willing for his will to be done. If I were lost I felt it was just, and if I were saved it was alone by the mercy of God. I left my room and went out to a shady grove, and if ever I prayed it was then. My heart was filled with love. I raised up and oh how beautiful everything appeared! My heavy burdens of guilt were gone, and I was made to praise the Lord. Oh how I wanted to tell some one about it! The scripture came to my mind, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee." Mark 5:19. I then thought I never would have any more trouble, but after a short time I began to have doubts. I thought it might be that the Lord had not had anything to do with it. I would go out by myself and pray and then the tempter would flee for awhile. This would give me some relief. I had a desire to tell the church what I thought the Lord had done for me but I could not have the courage to do so. I went for a time but did not say anything about it, I was afraid I was deceived, but I went to meeting on the fourth Saturday and Sunday in September, 1881, and when the invitation was given to those who felt like talking to the church I tried to relate what I thought the Lord had done for me, a poor, sinful worm. I received the right hand of fellowship from my dear brethren and sisters and was baptized on the fourth Sunday in October, 1881, by Elder J. W. Smith. I then thought all the work was finished and that my troubles were all over, but I have had many doubts and fears, dark and dreary seasons since then, yet I trust the Lord is able to deliver me and will give me grace to conquer. We hear Paul saying: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should boast." Eph. 2:8-9. I feel poor and unworthy, the least of all saints if a saint at all. Yet I have a little hope which I would not give for all the world. If I am saved, I feel to say I am a poor sinner saved by grace. I understand Christ died for his church only, which is the only people that are saved. Dear brethren, you may look over what I have written and if you think it worthy you may give it a place in the *Signs,* but if not cast it aside and all will be right with me.

"Salvation! Oh the name I love,
Which came from Christ, the Lord above;
Surprising wisdom, matchless grace,
That reached my low and helpless case.

When I was sinking in despair,
And filled with awful gloom and fear,
My Savior came to my relief,
He eased my pain, He bore my grief.

Immediately was I made whole,
I felt the witness in my soul;
My burdens went, I knew not where,
And gone was all my guilt and fear.

And now I want my Lord to stay,
And be in me from day to day!
And guide me in this world below.
Direct in all I speak or do.

And when the messenger shall come
May I be ready to go home;
And lean my head on Jesus' breast,
And with my dear Redeemer rest.

Your unworthy sister if one at all.

(Mrs.) MARY A. BEVINS.

Island City, Oregon

TO MY SEVEN CHILDREN, GREETINGS IN THE LORD: I know that I must soon quit these mortal scenes and go the way of all the generations before me, and you and your children will be the only witnesses that I ever lived in this world after the the little estate, the Lord blessed me to accumulate, shall have been distributed and merged into your own earthly possessions. When I think of giving up the course of life I have pursued for over three quarters of a century I am not sad but desirous that you, the pride and joy of my life, shall know a secret which has been ever present with me in all the tribulations and joys of these past years, and as I venture across the dark river of death it points *the way to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for me.* In life I tried to set an example of honesty, thrift and industry which all of you are wisely following, but these only build for you the temporal blessing of worldly independence which tribulation and age cannot ward off. First of all I commend to you the Bible, the sacred Scriptures, not as the various religious sects interpret them, but as God himself applies them to his saints. He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and holds the destiny of everything in his hands. In his Son, Jesus Christ, he has chosen all his saints to be heirs of salvation and through the power of his Holy Spirit he makes this known, and no heart is too hard for his power to penetrate and bring to repentance. The knowldge we have of him, and his mercy and grace bestowed upon us are his teaching, and not something we have thought up ourselves or that some person has taught us. The greatest falsehood of the many religious preachers and teachers of the so-called churches today, is that God is waiting, pleading and drawing mankind, but it all depends on his acceptance and choice whether he is to be an heir of salvation. That is not the God that I worship. My God speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. He rules on the throne of heaven, and his power reaches to all the ends of the earth. He doeth his will at all times and no one can stay his hand or say unto him, "What doest thou?" This has been my faith for over fifty years and your mother stands rooted and grounded in this same faith. We have walked together for fifty years rejoicing in the same truths and worshiping the same God, and we rejoice to-day that all of our children stand free of the popular heresy of the worldly religions of these times. We trust that you know something of the truth which God alone teaches his children, and that in your life duties the light of this truth may shine out to the glory of our heavenly Father and Jesus Christ who is our Redeemer and Elder Brother. I feel a desire to admonish you in many things but space will not permit. As a reminder of these desires I am ordering the *Signs of the Times,* our doctrinal church paper, sent to each of you. Your mother and I have never missed a copy of this in our home for the fifty years of our married life, and we hope you will consider it a sort of heirloom and find comfort and consolation in reading it. The Bible should be your chief counselor. Let no preacher mislead you by false interpretation or application of its teaching. The *Signs* has stood for over one

hundred years as an interpreter of its teaching, and is the safest counselor I can point you to outside of the Bible itself. I especially commend to you the teaching of the twelfth chapter of Ecclesiastes. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." Read the whole chapter which towards the close reads, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." To God I commend you in the hope of a blissful immortality, the wish and blessing of your father.

(Elder) C. W. BOND.

Covin, Ala.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

I am in receipt of a letter from sister Maggie Hayes of Vernon, Ala., containing a poem which I feel should be published in the *Signs of the Times* as it has afforded me great comfort if I know my own heart. Possibly some other brother or sister would in like manner feast upon it. I shall thank you very much for space in your paper if you judge it is worthy of print.

Your brother in bonds,

(Elder) H. M. BROCK.

(See poem on first page)

16116 Westview Ave., Cleveland-20, Ohio.

ELDER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER:

I received your letter and extra copies of the *Signs* and have mailed them out to brethren that do not take the paper. Elder J. S. Hunnicutt will visit my church, Sulphur Fork, at Campbellsburg, Ky., in October. This is the church that the late Elder John G. Eubanks had charge of for many years before he moved to Newark, Del. Then Elder P. W. Sawin had the charge for many years and twenty-five years ago they gave the charge to me. I am still their pastor but have not been able to meet with them for a year on account of the illness of my wife. Sister Weaver does not seem to improve any. This makes four years that she has been helpless and almost blind, three years since she has walked a step. The brethren are good about writing to me, and I try to answer the best I can. So we go on day by day, hoping and praying that I may be reconciled to His will and His will be done. Almost every family has some one in this terrible war and it is not yet over. Suppose Lester, Jr., is still over seas. May God give us all understanding, patience and faith, and keep us humble and at his feet. Some time he will speak peace to this troubled world and there will be peace, but until he does there will be no peace. Wish you well. Give my regards to your wife and son. I am as ever yours in hope.

(Elder) GEORGE L. WEAVER.

(Many of our readers will be interested in reading Elder Weaver's letter, and we feel confident their hearts will go out to both he and sister Weaver in their afflictions. "God's way is truly in the sea; His steps we cannot trace, nor comprehend the mystery of his unbounded grace." May we not waver, however, in our trust in him. R.L.D.)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Mrs. G. T. Franklin, Va., $1; J. A. Perdue, Va., $1; W. W. Jackson, Ga., $1; H. E. Danks, Calif., $3; Elder E. B. Ault, Tex., $6.

PLEASE REMEMBER

1—To renew your subscription promptly when due, if possible. The date on your wrapper cover will show to when you have paid.

2—That when your remittance reaches us before the 15th of the month, credit will be shown with the next issue of the paper, otherwise it cannot be shown until the second month following. This also applies to changes of address.

3—That notices of Special Meetings should be sent to us at least thirty days in advance of the month in which the meeting is to be held.

If our readers will be kind enough to observe the foregoing suggestions they will aid us very materially in getting out the paper.

R. L. D.

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. JANUARY, 1945

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NEW YEAR'S GREETING

The year which has just come to a close can well be termed "The Year of Horrors." It was quite early in the year when we learned of the indescribable torture which was inflicted upon many of our soldiers who were taken prisoners by the Japanese on Bataan and Corregidor, nearly two years before. Later we were told of the Germans bleeding Russian boys and girls to death in order to supply their own blood-banks. Then came that never-to-be-forgotten D-Day, June 6th, with some of the most harrowing and gruesome experiences that mortal man ever had to face. Literally, tens of thousands of the world's finest youths were mowed down and slaughtered as though they had been wild beasts. Following this came the atrocious account of the "death factory" in Lublin, Poland, where the Nazis outdid themselves in surpassing their own hitherto maniacal ruthlessness by concentrating thousands of civilians in camps and liquidating them in a most shameful manner. Their beastly natures still hungering for crime, they loosed their robot bomb offensive upon helpless men, women and children in London.

In the latter part of September we received a graphic report from one of the best war correspondents covering what he chose to term "10 days in Arnhem hell," which almost caused one's blood to curdle to read it. In October came the death struggle for that ancient city, Aachen, where it is claimed thirty-seven German Emperors have been crowned in past centuries, but here the Germans received in kind the treatment they have heretofore given to others. They shall most likely receive much more of the same for their future generations to read about, with profit we hope. During the month of November, for the first time in fifteen centuries, the fortress of Metz, which had been considered invulnerable by the Germans, succumbed to the Allied frontal attack.

In this brief account we have had to by-pass many bloody and notable battles in Russia, Italy, the vast Pacific and other places, all of which are terrible to contemplate. Our own son wrote from "Somewhere in Italy" on July 28th saying, "many places are so ruined by the ravages of war that it is truly pitiful. I certainly wish that the people at home could actually see just what war does, not only to the face of the earth, but to the people who survive its rush across the earth." Little did our boy know that at the very time he was writing that letter his own life-long friend had been killed in action the day before in the Southwest Pacific, some ten to fifteen thousand miles away. It was a severe blow to us for we had come to regard the young man almost as a second son in our family. (The poem in the November issue of the *Signs* was composed by the Staff Sergeant in our son's company, who sent it to us.) War's terrors are not truly felt until their blows strike home. Then we are so stunned and dazed that all we can do is to wonder and wonder and then wonder again why such things should be.

There never was a time in the history of the world when it needed wise leadership more than it does to-day. There are immense possibilties for statesmanship of the right kind, and we truly hope our own great nation will rise to the occasion and take its rightful place by measuring up fully to all that will be required of it. The Good Book says, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," and this applies to nations as well as to individuals. We truly hope that the New Year will not be far spent before there is a dawning of a new and better day for the peoples of the whole world.

Turning now to the spiritual side of our greeting, here again, we regret to say, everything throughout the year was not all that could have been desired. During the forepart of the year there appeared on the horizon of the church something which caused deep anxiety to many who hold the welfare of our beloved Zion closely to heart. We refer to the proposal that a certain Confession of Faith be published for the purpose of rallying those who favored it, and then having "those who endorse it refuse to lay hands in ordination on any one who will not verbally subscribe to it." The Editor of the paper in which this proposal was published wrote us saying that he would like to have our thoughts on the matter. We replied to the effect that we were most strongly opposed to substituting for the infallible word of God any document formulated by men regardless of how sound it might appear to be. In this connection, we would like to recommend to our readers a careful re-reading of an article written by one of our Associate Editors, Elder J. S. Hunnicutt, which appeared in the June issue of the *Signs*. After the reaction of the brethren in different parts of the country began to make itself manifest, it was evidently realized by both the author of the proposal and the publisher of the paper in which it appeared that a serious mistake had been made, for they both undertook to make amends. From a ten-point explanation by the author which appeared about the middle of the year, we quote as follows: "No confession of any man's faith is to be regarded as standard only insofar as it complies with the Scriptures." In the same issue of the paper appeared the following from the pen of the publisher: "We regret that anyone should have inferred the thought that this Confession or any other was to be used as an infallible standard." We haven't anything but praise for the two brethren in question for taking steps to rectify the damage which had been done to the cause of truth, for we have long since felt that it was a sign of greatness for a man to acknowledge his error, and we were truly glad to read their latest statements. Speaking for ourself, the present Editor of the *Signs of the Times* is very definitely set for the defense of that fundamental of our faith which is contained in the ninth article of Elder Gilbert Beebe's original prospectus of the *Signs,* which reads as follows: *"The Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God."* We stand firmly back of this, not because Elder Gilbert Beebe believed it, but because it is God's eternal truth. The Scriptures thoroughly furnish the people of God unto all good works, and we would strongly urge all of our good brethren to cling to them tenaciously. In our opinion, there has been entirely too much bickering among the Old Baptists in recent years, and there is no question but what it has been largely due to their either following tradition or man-made rules and regulations instead of strictly adhering to the word of God. For some years we have been convinced of the fact that one of the worst sources of trouble among our people has been caused by traveling or visiting min-

isters, who pry into people's affairs and then go into other sections of the country spreading trouble and magnifying differences between ministers in particular. We would not stand for one intruding into the privacy of our homes and stirring up strife among the various members of our family, and faithful brethren would do well to suggest to "trouble makers" that they go home and stay there until they know how to "take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine." Ministers causing trouble is no new thing. We find the word of the Lord was sent unto Ezekiel, saying, "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks?" Ezek. 34:2. We greatly fear that too many of our ministers are endeavoring to feed their own vanities in one way or another, and in so doing they are really scattering the flocks and driving them back into the wilderness. Let us hear Paul regarding the conditions of his day: "Now I beseech you, brethren by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye shall all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." I Cor. 1:10. The people were saying in those days, "I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ." That sounds as though it was written especially for our time. Well could Paul ask: "Is Christ divided?" He desired that no man follow him beyond that which he followed Christ. If we could but have that mind in our day our troubles would be a great deal less. Let us also consider here what Paul said to his Roman brethren: "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." Rom. 14:17-19.

Sometime ago we received a letter from one who has been an esteemed minister for over fifty years, and we wish to quote from his letter. He says, among other things, "I am burdened to see the cold and indifferent state of our churches, and the petty quarrels and divisions so often magnified by misguided ministers, and even taken up and scattered broadcast by some of our papers throughout their sphere of influence. I seek for some prevenitive to these troubles." He continued by saying, "Most of our publishers touch upon this occasionally, but such suggestions are generally viewed by others as of secret design, so they get no where. I respect you as a brother of the highest calling, and the *Signs* as a standard publication of our faith and doctrine; and knowing that only the truth will prevail, I suggest that you give us through the *Signs* your opinion of the cause of the present state of the churches and the duty of all, publishers, ministers and brethren, to restore the ideal peace, tranquility and glory of our Zion."

We are grateful for the confidence which our dear brother has imposed in us, and wish very much that we might measure up fully to the necessities of the case. At the risk of being accused of having some "secret designs" and a personal ax to grind, being both a publisher and a minister, we shall attempt to supplement what we have already said in this article with some still further thoughts and suggestions. Most of us will doubtless agree that "the cause of the present state of the church" is the utter weakness of our flesh. The flesh desires its own, and will seek to exalt and glorify itself at all times and under all circumstances and occasions, regardless of consequences, unless

it is brought into subjection by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We cannot even hope to find perfection in the flesh and must of necessity, it seems to us, experience the depths of its corruption and pollution if we are to be made to truly yearn after righteousness and true holiness. The messages which the "Alpha and Omega" commanded John to write unto the seven churches of Asia show that none of them were perfect. They also reflect, no doubt, many of the faults to be found with our present day churches, and we would do well to search the Scriptures for the purpose of determining wherein we come short. Some may be content to conclude that we are living in the Laodicean age and let it go at that, but we would beseech all such to earnestly desire of the Lord to know their true condition, that they are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked," and then buy of him "gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see." It is to all such that Jesus said, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to Him, and will sup with him, and he with me." This should encourage us to hope that even though we are cold and indifferent to the truth our Lord has not altogether forsaken us. The remedy, as much as it lies within us, may be found in fulfillment of the command to the church at Ephesus, which had left her first love, as follows: "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works." If we could return to the days of our first love, many of our difficulties would dissolve and disappear. At this point we would like to recall for our readers two personal experiences. Some twenty-odd years ago we were invited to attend a meeting which was held in the late spring of the year. There had been considerable rain and practically no plowing had been done in the country. On the first day of the meeting, which was also the first day the land permitted of plowing, we found that a brother and his wife and nine year old daughter walked a total of twenty-five miles, to meeting and back, because he had only one horse and rather than remain at home he got a neighbor to plow for him and all three walked to meeting. We shall never forget the feeling that came over us when we learned of the circumstance. This brother was certainly not in a lukewarm state . A more recent experience is that of a young lady who traveled upwards of two thousand miles, within about a month's time, to attend three one-day meetings at different times. When we made some inquiry of her about such long trips for only one-day meetings, and the attendant expenses, etc., she made light of it, notwithstanding she works for her living. This same young lady wrote us not very long ago that her mind was so completely taken up with spiritual things that she was actually fearful of neglecting her daily routine work. There are not many of us who have this kind of worry. The church at Sardis was commended for having a few names which had not defiled their garments, and we are truly thankful that there are still a few, one here and there, who continually think upon the name of the Lord and meditate upon his word day and night. We are deeply grateful to God for the fact that the churches we try to serve are in peace and were so highly favored by him during the past year. The December *Signs* sets forth in part the manifold goodness of God to us, for which we humbly desire to praise his most holy name.

The diligence with which Roman Catholics attend their meetings is something which Old School Baptists might do well

to consider and emulate. Too many of our brethren are inclined to let matters of little importance interfere with their meetings. Sometimes we fear they actually push the ox into the mire in order to have a plausible excuse to stay away from meeting. The brethren would not like it if the minister remained at home on some flimsy excuse. There may be some justification for one absenting himself from meeting where the minister spends the time that should be rightfully devoted to solemn and sacred worship in ranting and villifying some fellow minister with whom he disagrees. If the brethren, after laboring with such an one, cannot prevail upon him to refrain from such things, perhaps it would be good for his poor soul to have him go to meeting a few times and find only vacant seats before him. In most instances, we believe that God has placed gifts in the church who are able to discern between the flesh and the spirit, and when they see that a minister, even though he be the pastor, is motivated by a fleshly spirit, they should be faithful to their charge and do all within their power to discourage him in his course Perhaps they may be able to save a soul from death, his usefulness to the church, while if they shut their eyes and neglect their duty the whole body, or church, may be cast into hell fire, or the candlestick removed altogether. The world to-day is in the depth of despond and misery because of bad leadership, and the church should beware of those undershepherds who appear to have so little regard for the peace and welfare of Zion.

We do not feel that the condition of our churches on the whole is as bad as some would have us believe. From time to time we are receiving encouraging reports from various sections of our country. One brother writes as follows: "We are having some wonderful meetings with some of our churches in this association. It seems the Lord, as he has promised, is visiting Zion again. A good many little ones are coming home to their friends, asking for a home." We truly hope that God will make us mindful of the manifold blessings which we are constantly receiving from his hand, and that he will at the same time be pleased to awaken us anew to a full realization of the fact that without him we can do nothing, thereby causing us to cry mightily and fervently unto him for that peace and tranquility for which Zion daily mourns. Of a truth, there is salvation in none other than the God of spiritual Israel. We rejoice that it is written, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah." Psalm 46:1-3.

Finally, dear readers, not only for the ensuing year, but throughout all the years to come, may "the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." R.L.D.

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." Eph. 1:4:

The doctrine of the eternal, unconditional election of God's people to salvation has been a trophy of the Baptists from their very beginning. True, many others also have held this glorious old doctrine dear to their hearts during a few centuries succeeding the crucifixion of our Lord. The venerable Augustine and Calvin, though very ardent advocates of this doctrine, were by no means its au-

thor. No man is the author of this doctrine. Man has always repudiated it, heaped reproach upon its advocates and continues to do so until this day. No one in nature ever will or can receive this doctrine as truth, because the ability to comprehend it comes as a revelation from God, and God reveals nothing of a spiritual order to a man in nature, hence the necessity of being born from above in order to understand and appropriate divine truth. This doctrine of election is eternal. It was *before the foundation of the world* that God chose *his people* to salvation and immortal glory, and if they were viewed when chosen as fallen creatures by nature, they were also viewed as redeemed by sovereign grace, and according to election they were beloved for the Father's sake. They were chosen unconditionally. God did not elect his people to salavation because of any foreseen merits on their part; not because he foresaw their repentance and faith and holiness of life, for as depraved creatures in nature none could possess these graces of the Spirit until they were given them from above. Then God did not elect his people because of a foreseen repentance and faith of which he, himself, is the author and which must be wrought in them by regenerating grace. No, he did not choose them on conditions of any sort, but solely because *they were his,* and his electing love prompted him to save them. "Chosen in him," and here the idea of an eternal union between Christ and his people looms up in our minds. Note the text does not say *chosen into him,* as if they, in some way had a prior existence apart from him. No they never existed apart from him until the creation of Adam and the fall of his race, but the election of his people was anterior to our being as an Adam man, and therefore does not refer to a choice being made among the sons of Adam. They were chosen *in him,* not merely *through* him as their federal head or representative only, who stepped in as a substitute in order to avert a catastrophe, but chosen *in him* their living head, that is, they were in him when chosen, and this is to say, the union and election existed simultaneously from eternity. They were chosen, not in order to *become his people,* but because they *were his people.* Their existence in him was as the fruit in the germ, spiritually speaking, just like we all had a natural existence in Adam as the fruit of his loins. And since all of his people became totally depraved, ruined and helpless in Adam, and our union to Christ became severed temporarily on our part, though on God's behalf they were still his elect for Christ, the head of his church, assumed the guilt of the body (his own body, the church), and was made to be sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He paid the ransom price with his own blood, and bought back his own who were sold for naught. My beloved brethren, let us remember that the whole family of God is already redeemed (bought with a price), and was it not a matter of justice on the part of our heavenly Father to give to his beloved Son just what he had bought and paid for with his own blood? And does not this fact stand as a guarantee to us that the union between Christ and his people shall again become vital here in time in the Spirit's quickening of every redeemed soul for whom he paid the ransom price, and who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world? Yes, they shall be, every one of them, created anew in Christ Jesus, being born again not of corruptible seed, but of an incorruptible by the *word of God* (Christ) which liveth and abideth forever. Our heavenly Father has never at any time lost sight of his dear children, having chosen them in Christ before the foundation of the world. He

also predestinated them to the adoption of sons by Jesus Christ to himself. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" These scriptures show that the elect, in God's sight, occupy the same position and are made equal to his beloved Son, and for this cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, since they are all children of God. In conclusion I wish to say that I have merely touched on this great theme of election and eternal union. There is still plenty of room for preaching and writing on these vital subjects. May the Lord open our minds for a better understanding of divine truth. J.S.H.

OBITUARIES

NANCY JANE (BIRD) THORNTON, daughter of Creed M. and Sarah A. Bird, was born Dec. 16, 1874, in Lincoln, Co., W. Va. She departed this life, Jan. 24, 1944, aged 69 years, 1 month and 8 days. She was united in marriage to William P. Thornton, March 16, 1890. To this union were born thirteen children, four of which preceded her in death. She leaves to mourn their loss, four sons, A. O., M. F., C. A., and Roscoe Thornton; five daughters, Mrs. R. L. Meadows, Mrs. L. H. Dolin, Mrs. Frank Hill, Mrs. Ross Spurlock and Mrs. Oliver Gessell, all of St. Albans, W. Va. and vicinity. Also thirty-two granchildren, ten great-grandchildren, the church and a host of relatives and friends of whom are three brothers, Elder G. B. Bird, Elder H. J. Bird and B. B. Bird; three sisters, Mrs. T. J. Thornton, Mrs. A. O. Edwards and Mrs. T. H. Booth. Let me say to all who may read this notice that I, the writer, feel to confess my utter lack of ability to stress the many noble and fine qualities and character of one who was my own sister in the flesh, and if I, through grace, am what I have professed to be my sister in the Spirit. Sister Nancy was much my senior in age, she being next to the oldest and I being next to the youngest child of a large family. Early in life sister Nancy became concerned about her sinful condition, labored under a deep conviction of sin and was given a sweet hope in the blood and merit of Jesus as imputed to her as her only cleansing and her only Savior. Of her it can truly be said this hope in Jesus was the anchor of her soul in the many storms and trials of her pilgrim journey. Soon after she received a hope she united with and was baptized into the fellowship of the Providence Old School or Primitive Baptist Church of Lincoln Co., W. Va. She was faithful in her attendance of her church meetings so far as health and other conditions would permit. For a number of years she and her husband resided in St. Albans where her husband was engaged in the merchandise business, until he retired from business and turned it over to three of his sons. Through these latter years of her life she was many times hindered from filling her seat at the place of worship because of distance and her many bodily afflictions. She had been in failing health for a number of years, during which time she underwent a critical operation from which we almost despaired her recovery, but her whole heart was filled with love for the cause of Christ, esteeming the cross of Christ as greater treasures (riches) than the treasures of Egypt (darkness). For a number of years the unworthy writer tried to serve her as her pastor. Memory still holds sacred the many times her countenance was made to glow with love under my feeble public exercises. Many and pleasant were our talks and conversation together concerning the things of Jesus. How very often did she speak the word of encouragement to me when my spirit and feelings were so low. Her life was so adorned with the thoughtfulness and consideration of others, always spending herself in others. Verily her profession was truly adorned doing the many little things so often overlooked by a godly walk and conversation, she was so sober minded, very little inclined for foolishness or jesting. She was indeed a mother to her children and to the neighborhood in general. Her last and final siege of suffering was short in its duration, thus portraying the mercy of God for which she begged with almost her last expiring breath. She peacefully and almost without a struggle quit this life, death being the result of a dread heart malady together with other complications. All that the family doctor and loving hands could do was done but all to no avail. Her time was up and he, her God, had called his own to his embrace. We desire to bow in humble submission to his sovereign will.

"By his hand the boon was given,
He hath taken but his own."

The funeral services were conducted at the home by Elder R. C. Bell. I feel that I have never seen on a funeral occasion a greater display of flowers bespeaking of the high esteem in which she was held, after which she was placed in a vault and buried in the family plot in the Teays Hill Cemetery at St. Albans. To the husband and children and all the mourning ones we wish to say we grieve not as those who have no hope. May it be

the gracious will of our God to reconcile us all to his holy will. Written by request in love. Her brother.

(Elder) H. J. BIRD.

MRS. W. C. YOUNG, nee Carter, was born July 29, 1869, in Melbourne, Ontario and died July 25, 1944. She was married to W. C. Young, of Alvinston, April 7, 1891, and they celebrated their golden wedding in 1941. After living for a number of years in Alvinston, they moved with their family to Toronto, where they lived for thirty years. She leaves to mourn her loss, her husband, her daughter, Mrs. C. O. Carscadden, of Brampton; one son, Harry Young, of Toronto; one sister, Mrs. W. A. Jones and five grandchildren. Sister Sarah Young was a very worthy member of the Covenanted Baptist Church for about forty-five years, being the last person that the late Elder William Pollard baptized. Her home was always open for those who loved the truth, and, being deeply led, she loved to converse upon better things. Her daughter says her mother was always a lover of the truth. Her sister says she always loved her Bible, and was blessed with faith in her God even when a child. "Father, whate'er of earthly bliss," 657 in Beebe's Collection was one of her favorite hymns. also, "I asked the Lord that I might grow," 1007 in Beebe's, a favorite in her early experience, and she proved, as the hymn says, that her prayers were often answered by crosses. She was very calm and patient through her sickness. We know that her patience could only be given by the Giver of every good and perfect gift. When near the end, she remarked, "The flesh is with us until the last." She longed to go to her eternal home. Her favorite Psalm was the 107th. She loved the Psalms, and often drew comfort from them as she read. To her dear ones she would say, "We should search the Scriptures." At her funeral service Psalm 27 was read. The first verse was the last scripture she was heard to quote, saying it was on her mind and a comfort. Soon after, she went into a semi-conscious condition and lost her speech. The writer spoke from the words "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Hebrews 4:9, and the twenty-third Psalm was sung. Her remains were taken the next day to the Aylmer Cemetery, Aylmer, Ontario, and laid with kindred dust. Her memory is blessed, and we sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. Due to her desire for the assembly of the Lord's people, it was the writer's pleasure to visit Toronto, usually each month, and he ever found her an encouraging and faithful friend and sister in the Lord Jesus Christ.

While her dear family and brethren mourn her loss, it is her eternal gain, for she fell asleep in Jesus.

(Elder) GEORGE RUSTON.

On June 21, 1944, the death angel removed from life's activity and usefulness a dear friend, one of the kindest and noblest of all women, MISS ELIZABETH KIP of Neshanic, N. J., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Kip of that place. She was born May 25, 1903 and was, therefore, slightly past forty-one years of age at the time of her death. No woman ever possessed nobler qualities of character and finer traits of womanhood. Her morally stainless life, her high ideals and her keen sense and appreciation of humor impressed all who knew her. She was broad minded in her social and religious viewpoints, and her outlook on life gave her wholesome cheer. She loved flowers and her home with her parents was beautified in its surroundings by the flowers that she loved and cared for. It can truthfully be said that no woman was more thoughtful of others than she, always doing something to bring cheer and happiness to those with whom she associated. Her ministration of devoted attention to an afflicted nephew will be long remembered. Her life was jeweled with the joy of service to others. In spite of household duties and other occupations, she read widely and was well informed. Dutiful as a daughter and faithful as a friend, she exemplified a life of stainless honor, and hers is a sweet, a tender and a gracious memory. Her unselfish and beautiful life is her most enduring monument. The end came suddenly at the Trenton Hospital while she was undergoing an operation. She is survived by her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Isaac L. Kip; two brothers, Leon and William; one sister, Mrs. Harry Totten, all of Neshanic, besides several nieces and nephews. The funeral services were held Sunday, June 25, at her late home in Neshanic, conducted by her pastor, George B. Scholtin, assisted by Henry T. Holmes, a close friend of the family. Interment was in the family plot in the Neshanic Cemetery. The large attendance at the services and the rich profusion of beautiful flowers were silent tributes to the popularity of the deceased, and the high esteeem in which she was held. Her death is a personal loss to all who knew her and associated with her. To her surviving relatives much sympathy is extended.

A FRIEND.

HYMN and TUNE BOOKS

We now have the Durand and Lester Hymn and Tune Books in shape note only. Price: $1.25 each or $14.50 per dozen delivered. If you or your church need books please send me your order at once. P. G. LESTER, JR.,
846 Va. Ave., Va. Hgts., Roanoke-15, Virginia.

AUTHORIZED AGENTS

ALABAMA

Elder Lytle Burns, Florence, Ala.
Elder F. A. Collins, Hartford, Ala.
Elder W. D. Griffin, Fayette, Ala.

FLORIDA

Elder C. H. Byrd
Box 86, Panama City, Fla.

GEORGIA

Elder H. O. Nash,
431 Hardendorf Ave., N. E., Atlanta, Ga.

KENTUCKY

Elder G. B. Bird, Canada, Ky.
Elder J. S. Hunnicutt, Denton, Ky.

LOUISIANA

Elder E. J. Lambert,
P. O. Box 55, Lillie, La.

MARYLAND

Elder Harold M. Bennett,
Mardela Springs, Md.

NEW JERSEY

Elder Charles W. Vaughn,
Hopewell, N. J.

NEW YORK

Elder Arnold H. Bellows,
West Hurley, New York

NORTH CAROLINA

Elder T. F. Adams, Williow Springs, N. C.
Elder E. L. Cobb, Wilson, N. C.
Elder T. H. Edwards, Jacksonville. N. C.
Elder M. F. Westbrook, Rt. 3, Dunn, N. C.

OHIO

Elder Geo. L. Weaver,
16116 Westview Ave., Cleveland, 20, Ohio.

OKLAHOMA

Elder W. N. Green, Box 654, Altus, Okla.

OREGON

Elder C. W. Bond,
Island City, Oregon.

TENNESSEE

Elder R. L. Biggs,
Rt. 6, Nashville, Tenn.

TEXAS

Elder L. D. Rose, Athens, Texas.

VIRGINIA

Elder J. E. Burgess, Rt. 1, Box 180, Martinsville, Va.
Elder Roy S. Smith, Cascade, Va.
Elder David V. Spangler, Rt. 6, Danville, Va.

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.
O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday at the end of old South Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
J. A. CURTIS, Clerk.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday, Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
C. H. BYRD, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles South of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
B. G. KINGRY, Clerk.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.
J. W. BASS, Clerk.

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday and Elder E. E. Watson on Sunday.
AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church, located 5 miles North of Hartford, Ala., holds services each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching Elders F. A. and J. J. Collins on Saturday, and Elder J. J. Collins on Sunday.
A. E. SORRELS, Clerk.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canda, California.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before.
E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

Pleasant Valley Church, Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc.)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator
PHEBE CATES, Clerk

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists invites all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren, to meet with us first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hitchins. Take graveled road to the church.

E. M. TACKETT,
J. S. HUNNICUTT, Pastors.
H. L. ROGERS, Clerk.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.
Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 A.M. 1:30 P.M.
To all who are seeking the truth, a cordial invitation is extended to meet with us.

OLIVE & HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.
All who are seeking the truth are cordially invited.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church expects their pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, to be with them the fourth Sunday in each month. Services to be held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office, (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., to begin at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. All are welcome.

LUELLA STEVENS, Church Clerk.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor. All lovers of the truth are invited.

G. G. TURNER, Clerk, R No. 2, Amarillo, Tex.

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
1626 Arch Street
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Philadelphia, Pa.

Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 A.M.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor
ALL ARE WELCOME

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

C. W. BOND, Pastor.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sunday in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P.M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sunday each month at 11:00 A.M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) A cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth.

G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.
N. T. TATUM, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2 p.m. All lovers of truth are cordially invited.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Salem Church, four miles south of Teague, Texas, meets on Saturday before the first Sunday in each month in conference.

W. A. LITTLE, Pastor.
DORA WREN, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, invites all lovers of the truth to meet with us on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a.m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. Elder E. B. Ault, Pastor.

(Mrs.) LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk.
Stockdale, Texas.

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3032 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a.m. We are always glad to see visiting brethren and endeavor to make them feel welcome.

C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before.

A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.
J. B. JOHNSON, Clerk.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 113 RUTHERFORD, N. J., FEBRUARY, 1945 No. 2

THANKSGIVING DAY

"I thank Thee Lord, that I was born,
Born first of Adam's race;
It was Thy will that gave me form,
That gave me saving grace.

Through Adam's fall, I died in sin
Became a castaway;
It is by Christ I'm born again,
And walk the narrow way.

Thou took away my stony heart,
Caused me my sins to feel;
Thy only Son did take my part,
My broken heart to heal.

While dead in sin, I could not feel,
Nor neither could I hear;
To me Thy word did not appeal,
And Thee I did not fear.

This is the day for giving thanks;
'Tis set apart by men:
Before Thy throne we are as blanks,
'Til we are born again.

'Tis through that life, we render praise,
The life of Thy dear Son;
O may we praise Thee all our days,
For giving this loved One."

(Elder) LYTLE BURNS

Florence, Ala.

CORRESPONDENCE

HOSEA 2; 14-15

"Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt."

ELDER G. B. BIRD, DEAR BROTHER:

After some delay I will endeavor to give you such views as may present themselves to my mind, and I confess that I am very weak spiritually at this time and hope the God of Israel will bless me to speak the things he now knows is in my mind for there is not a word in our tongue but what he knows it right well, and writing on sublime subjects is like unto preaching, for we cannot make a thought nor hinder one. Now in the first part of this chapter is related the evils Israel has done which as a people may have committed to some extent in a literal way, but to me all natural things are typical, and in a spiritual sense all these things are being committed by the Lord's people today. Experimentally I find that I have gone in every evil way, making gods out of preachers and thinking if my preacher did not come we could not have a good meeting, and I sometimes think that a church out of order and those who worship with her commit whoredom when they invite men to worship with them not of our faith and practice and mingle with them who will bring in the ways of the world until we mix with their ways of prayer, singing and preaching until we have married the daughters of men and get to where it is difficult to distinguish between Israel and the world. If this is right then whoredom is rampant in this part of the country, but the Lord's chosen will be allured into the wilderness where they will discover that they are lost and sigh and mourn because they have left their first love. This wilderness is where it always was, and owl's courts are held

there and we have to be brothers to dragons and companions of owls and live on the doctrine of anti-christ, for imaginations and not revelations are preached there, but there is a door of hope in the valley of Achor (trouble and death) wherein the Lord turns from the fierceness of his wrath and anger. Joshua 7:26. If the Lord dealt with Israel according to her iniquities, after justice and not mercy, she would be forever banished from his presence, but he was her first husband (Ishi) and he set his love upon her before the world began, and absolutely predestinated everything that should befall her, and had Christ prepared as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world to take out her spots and blemishes through his death and resurrection. The wisdom of God had designed all these things and as God thought they came to pass and as he purposed they stood. It is written "For Israel slideth back as a backsliding heifer." Hosea 4:16. I think this decking herself with earrings and jewels is ornaments of this world, so I am for sound practice as much as sound doctrine, and yet it seems doctrine is what makes practice and we are commanded of the Lord to "be ye separate", and I believe in close communion and in keeping our tents clean; however I do not undertake to force my views upon any one. In the matter of this valley of Achor "there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again." I think it is God's way of manifesting his love for Israel to first let her prove all things and then hold fast to that which is good, for it was good for us that we went astray. It may be said that all these horrible things done by Israel were done by Jews only and did not entail Gentiles, but as I aforesaid all natural things are typical, and the Jew that is one inwardly, that is circumcised in heart and mind, who goes into the Master's service in the early hours of the day, and has to learn what the law is and how it works death, is afterward qualified to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. I feel this is the road of this unworthy writer who is the least of all saints. If I had not passed through the valley of Achor and been given my vineyards from thence, I would not be able to locate those that spiritually are in the same condition today, and I would not be qualified to work in the vineyard of God whereunto I am ordained. We have to get our qualifications for this work, and it is by going through them ourselves and suffering the terrible punishments, that we enter into the kingdom, and are taught in the great mysteries of the deep, that we learn to be weak with the weak and strong with the strong. According to the vineyards (or callings) do we need to be qualified, and if we were never dead the call to arise from the dead would never reach us, and if we were never lost in the wilderness and made our dwelling in the sea, God would never command his fishers to fish them or his hunters to hunt them. I whole-heartedly agree with Elder Dodson in his views pertaining to the resurrection and absolute predestination of all things, and I have an humble hope that when I have finished with this old tabernacle of clay and quit it for bright fields on high, that then all will be well with this sinner. I told the Stony Creek Association a few days ago that if I had had no part in the ressurection I did not have any hope that I ever would. I think I was the natural man and afterwards made spiritual, and that while natural, lured by the wisdom of this world, I committed in the carnal mind the things of the above mentioned scriptures, and that after I was raised from the dead and made a new creature in Christ there was no more remission of sins for me, and the penalty had to be paid this side of the grave. There is a crying son and there is a laughing son, and it would seem that the cities and vineyards of both are great, but I thank God that I was weaned from the milk, and

drawn from the breast and made to know doctrine, and because I fear God I would not for the world preach a doctrine to please the wicked kings in Israel or fall down to their music, but I long for the time when harpers harp on their harps and keep every commandment God has given. He gave them to the living and not the dead. When Israel passes the valley of Achor she dies to the love of sin, and is made alive to righteousness, and these things we cannot understand until God reveals them for "secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever." Dear brother, I have not quoted the Bible to support all I have said but you know the Scriptures and the power of God, and know whether or not there is a thus saith the Lord to all I have said. I feel to be alone in this world, and yet the Lord has been with me in various parts of the country among many Associations, and held me up and caused me to stand in face of all opposition, and my hope is that this same God will continue his blessings upon us and keep us humble and patient. No doubt after these views have passed on to you I will think of many things that I would have been glad to say here, but all has been said that God purposed, and may it in some small way comply with your request. I do not blame a brother for not giving me something he does not have, therefore, I do not raise bars to fellowship because a brother does not always preach just what I believe, but I think I have strength enough to follow a brother in the pulpit who had missed my understanding of true doctrine and say to him, "brother I do not believe half you have preached but am willing to die to give you the right to preach it." I understand God has a purpose in all things, and that if some feed on lies he will furnish his wicked spirits to be lying spirits in the mouth of him who preaches false doctrine. We need everything we have with us for God has furnished everything we have, both good and evil, and has a purpose in all things. If a prophet be deceived, I the Lord have deceived that prophet, and I have created the waster to destroy, and the wicked spirit that rested on king Saul, when in his jealous rage he was doing what he could to kill David, came from God, so everything in heaven and earth comes under the absolute sovereignty of Almighty God. I hope to see you soon, and will close this letter with the prayer in my heart, that the very elect survive all the floods of evil and follow the Lamb wheresoever he goeth, and be found clothed with immortality (Christ). Yours in the faith.

(Elder) T. J. ROBINSON

Pikeville, Ky.

Meditations on

THE BOOK OF RUTH

By Elder T. Floyd Adams

Beginning with the second chapter of Ruth, first verse, we read as follows: "And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz. And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go,my daughter." We will notice first that Ruth desires to have the full consent of her mother-in-law to go and glean in the field of Boaz. Is it not true, dear reader, that you desire to have the approbation of the church in all of your travels? Not only did she ask permission to go and glean in the field, she asked the servant of Boaz if she might glean after the reapers. This shows that she did not care to be an intruder. Having obtained permission, she gleaned from morning until evening and beat out that which she had gleaned and took it to her mother-in-law, for Naomi was only interested in the good grain. Is this not a type of the gospel field? She left the chaff and straw

behind. The church is only interested in the good grain (Jesus). It appears that Ruth had gleaned several days when Boaz made his appearance in the field and the first thing he said unto the reapers was, "The Lord be with you. And they answered him, The Lord bless thee." What is the salvation for? Boaz is acknowledging the hand of God in their temporal blessings. The Lord had withheld the first and latter rain for several years, and there was a famine in the land. But now he smiles upon them and they are favored with a bountiful crop. Is this not a true sign of the gospel church today? She will acknowledge the hand of God in her temporal blessings, as well as spiritual. How true is the type; when the rain falls, it must first come through the roots in order for the plant to grow. The Lord said, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." So the heavenly rain must first come through the root, Jesus, for he is the root and the offspring of David, and Paul said, "Thou bearest not the root, but the root thee." So all of our suffering, trials and sorrows, as well as our joys must first come through Jesus, for he was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." What a joy it must have brought to the reapers for Boaz to make his appearance in the field and give directions and instructions. Dear servant of God, do you not ofttimes feel to be at your wit's end, and do you not long for the Master to come and give you renewed evidence of your call to the ministry and supply you with words that are fitly spoken, which Solomon says are "like apples of gold in pictures of silver," that they may be for the edification of the saints and in honor and praise to our precious and heavenly Master? In verse five, we see that Boaz takes notice of Ruth, and after the servant gives him a full explanation of her coming, he says unto her, "Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens." What kind and sympathetic words from this "mighty man of wealth" (Jesus) to a poor, helpless widow and stranger. How unworthy she felt for one so high and lofty to condescend and take notice of her. Read her own words in verse ten: "Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?" In Solomon's humble petition to God in the dedication of the Holy Temple, he fervently asked the Lord to remember the stranger that "is come from a far country." Chron. 6:32. In the book of Leviticus 19:33-36 we read where the Lord made provision for strangers. If this script should catch the eye of some poor and tempestuously tossed traveler who so often feels, like the unworthy writer, a stranger, remember that our God has made ample provision for strangers. In verse nine he says, "When thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn." How favorably these words compare with the words of the Savior, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Is not this vessel a type of this old earthen vessel in which, Paul says, we have this treasure in an earthen vessel? Jesus said to the woman at the well of Samaria, the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Is not this young man, Jesus, formed in you the hope of glory? Are we not blessed at times to drink from this vessel? Sometimes when we meet for worship, other times when traveling alone? And often when we wake up in the dark hours of night and when this living water flows so sweetly into our souls, can we not witness with David of old, "My cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever?" And again we can say with the

poet, "I need not go abroad for joy, I have a feast at home." At meal time, Boaz said, come hither and eat bread. This is what Ruth and Naomi had longed for when they left the country of Moab, for Naomi said she *heard* that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread and now they were partakers of it.

Ruth eats and takes home to her mother-in-law. When the Lord so wonderfully favors us with a little of this bread, does he not also give us some to take to the church? He also said, dip thy morsel in the vinegar. While I have no special light as to the spiritual significance of the expression, "dip thy morsel in the vinegar," we do know that vinegar makes many foods more palatable. He reached her some parched corn. Would it be well to say that this corn represents Jesus? Before corn is parched, it must be brought through the fire. So Jesus was brought through the furnace of afflictions and trod the wine-press of the wrath of God alone, and of all the people there was none to help. Note, he did not say that no one was present but "there was none to help." Mine own arm hath brought salvation, and long before his crucifixion. Nebuchadnezzar saw him in the fiery furnace when he put the three Hebrew children in and heated the furnace seven times hotter than was wont to be. The king said, "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." When David's brothers were in battle against the Philistines, he had a great desire to take them some parched corn. How well we know that God's humble poor are in a great warfare today, "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh," and we so often feel that the flesh will ultimately win the victory and sink us into despair. The writer has at times all but given up. I have often said to my wife when I would start out to church, "I haven't any subject for today." There are times when I walk into the pulpit and a silent voice will say, "The brethren are ashamed of you. Your life is far below the standard for a minister of the gospel, and the reason they don't tell you to stop is because they hate to tell you so." And I must confess that at such times when I feel so depressed, tired, hungry and faint, I am unable to tell whether it is the voice of the Lord or the voice of Satan. But I am more inclined at such times to believe it is the voice of God. But, ah! when I begin to partake of this "parched corn", it seems to penetrate through my whole being and suddenly gives me such renewed courage and strength, that I can say with the apostle of old, I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes. When I have such an experience as just recorded (which are few now and far between), I can turn to Satan and say, "get thee behind me; I will never adhere to your suggestions any more." But, ah! I have to be taught this lesson over and over again. Well did the apostle say that some are ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Such has been my experience. Boaz said to the reapers, "and let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not." Boaz, in his love and affection as will be seen from the narrative, is drawn out to Ruth, and Ruth is drawn out to Boaz. He shares his wealth with her, as will be seen from the words of Naomi in verse nineteen. "And where wroughtest thou?" It wasn't that she did not know, for she had given Ruth permission to go. But Ruth had brought home so much more barley than usual through the kindness of Boaz that Naomi was anxious for her to tell the whole story, and there is no doubt in my mind that it was an interesting one. How true today, when we

see the love of God manifested in the life of the dear little saints, we know that handfuls of purpose have been scattered around in the gospel field and they are partakers, but do we not like to hear them tell their experience in their own manner and way? Naomi now introduces the subject by telling Ruth: "The man is near of kin unto us." Ruth did not know this before. What would you say? If a child of God should relate the dealings of the Lord with him and you could see that he had been wonderfully favored, as Naomi could see from the words as well as the gift from Boaz, would you not say that Jesus is near of kin to us? Naomi brings the "us" in because both of them share in the blessings alike. Then she adds, "one of our next kinsmen." Verse twenty. Notice she did not say the man is our "nearest" kinsman, but, "our next kinsman" or "near of kin to us". Boaz introduces the subject to Ruth concerning the "nearest" kinsman in the next chapter, which I hope to treat on in my next article if the Lord is willing."

(To be continued)

Freestone, Texas.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: As I approach the subject of what I hope is my call to the ministry, I do so with fear and trembling, realizing that without God's divine presence I can no more tell the true story of my call to the ministry than I can preach without his divine presence. I have learned by experience that without him we can do nothing. When I was raised from the water at the time of my baptism into the fellowship of the church there was a peace and calm that seemed to pervade my whole being but this lasted a very short time. A new trouble set up. There was a very strong impression that I would have to preach or witness God's eternal truth, and it came with force. I cried out, O Lord, I cannot. I began to plead my ignorance and tried to ask God to relieve me of this foolish impression. My feelings no one can know but one who has had the experience. Day and night I suffered. I thought that any one on earth was better qualified than I to speak in his name. I must feed the family of God and I did not have the food so I went to work to try to get rid of the impression. I tried to hide from the Old Baptists and would have dreams at night. Some times I would be speaking to a good sized audience and would forget myself and all worldly things. I was so lifted up I would be shedding tears of joy, and I could see tears of joy running down the cheeks of the people. Then in my dream I was happy, but when I awoke I was still in trouble. These dreams continued and sometimes I would be speaking with sweet liberty and all at once would be shut up in darkness, then I would waken and it seemed that I could see more clearly that I could not possibly go. I must put it from me forever. My dreams continued, my troubles grew heavier. Then one time I thought I had my trouble nearly beaten. I came to a clear pool of water, I was standing on one side of the pool and as I looked there was a man in bright clothing sitting in a pulpit on the other side. I looked down at the water and there was a narrow walk just wide enough for one person to walk across. The man was looking down at a book. He did not speak to me but it seemed there was an invisible force that drew me to him so I went slowly to where the man was sitting. He was in the stand and I standing by. He held a little book in his hand and all at once there was a little book placed in my hand just like the book he held in his hand. He began turning the leaves in his book and I turned the leaves in the book that was given me until we had turned the last leaf. There was one word at the top of each page in each book and it was written in Hebrew. I did not know what the word was but the man said to me, you have the right book, go ahead, and later it was shown to me that the book was the Bible and the Hebrew word was Jesus.

Then I was commanded to preach Jesus but I could not, I was too weak too unworthy. Surely there must be some good in a minister of the gospel but none in me. So I fought on and in a vision I was called to the army and was taken prisoner with two others. Our clothes were very poor, they were not creditable. We were sitting there waiting to see what the outcome would be thinking we were going to be executed. Three men came in dressed exactly alike in uniform. They carried the two men, who were prisoners with me, out and executed them. I did not see the executions but my impression was that they were executed. The three with the bright clothing on returned to the prison where I was alone. I was seemingly perfectly reconciled and asked them if they were going to execute me, when one of them spoke, saying, no, we are going to send you back to feed that family, haven't you a family of twelve? I answered yes. The one on my right laid his right hand on my right shoulder and said, make this man witness. The one in the center raised his right hand. I was passive, my right hand went up without any effort on my part, the one in the center administered the oath, the third sanctioned it.I then looked at myself and I was clothed in the same garments that they were, the righteousness of Jesus Christ whom I was to preach. My impression in the vision was the trinity in the Godhead —Father, Son and Holy Ghost. It was the Holy Ghost that laid his hand on me, Jesus Christ administered the oath, the great God sanctioned the work. I still did not want to go, but went away still in trouble until one Friday night in my trouble I went to the old church and they had a resting place for me, more beautiful than any earthly resting place. I got on it and it seemed to me that I had the sweetest rest that I had in my life. The next morning I arose with a desire to go, even run, to the old church and be God's little anything. I went to the church, the pastor was not there. They called on me to talk. I made a feeble effort. What I said was almost nothing but it gave me the sweetest rest that I had had in many long years. I have been trying to declare God's counsel ever since, but I am just as passive in God's hand today as I was at the very beginning. Your unworthy brother in gospel bonds.

(Elder) W. O. BEENE

"WHAT SHALL I DO, LORD?" "SLEEP ON NOW AND TAKE YOUR REST."

After Christ and his disciples had partaken of their last supper together, and while he was visualizing the cross with himself as the victim hanging thereon they moved on unto a place called Gethsemane, and there he told his disciples that his soul was exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death, and he asked them to tarry there and watch. Judas was at this time out conniving with his enemies to sell his Master for thirty pieces of silver. Christ went a little farther off from them and fell on his face and prayed, saying, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." And when he returneth he findeth them asleep and he said unto Peter, "What, could ye not watch with me one hour?" And he repeateth this performance for the second and third time, and when he returned the third time they were still asleep. He then spoke words that should, and somehow I do believe, reach deep into the hearts of all true children of God. He said unto them, "Sleep on now and take your rest." Oh, I am wondering if we too are not sleeping today when we should be awake. Here then were his own followers so neglectful of their duties to their Lord that they would not heed what was perhaps their Master's last request before shedding his blood for them. Acts, chapter twenty-two, gives us a beautiful lesson bearing on the same thought. Paul

was going about over the country persecuting unto death, and delivering into prison both men and women, and doing many things contrary to the teachings of God. He was at this particular time on his way to Jerusalem to get those who were bound and bring them to be punished, but something happened. He says, as he neared Damascus about noon, "Suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecuteth." Therefore, nothing that Paul had been doing or was doing at the present time had brought him in favor with his God, because he had surely been engaging in the things contrary to God's command. But immediately after Paul received the light of salvation by the grace, mercy and love of God, he crys out in no uncertain terms, making inquiry as to his duty to his God, hence, listen to this question, "What shall I do Lord?" Oh, isn't that the experience of his believing children today? They, too, are desirous to learn what their duties are toward their church and fellowmen. Just before Christ died on the cross his own followers were having controversies concerning some of their old traditions. So Christ saw the necessity of taking some of them away upon the mount from the confusion and strife that was then raging among his people, and was transfigured before them, that is, he did the things necessary for them to see him in an entirely different light from the way they had previously been seeing him. Hence, we find all through the Bible where God is teaching his people things to do and things not to do. Not, however, in order for them to obtain the light, but because they have already received the light that shines from above. Is it not true then that God has already taught us that if we engage in wrong acts, or fail to do what is so clearly our duty, we surely suffer here in this present life? And the greatest tragedy of all is that the household of faith suffers on account of our misdeeds. Oh, how weak we poor sinners are unless we are blessed by Him to see the light that shines from heaven. I feel quite assured that so long as this old world stands there will always remain a large number who believe in salvation by the grace, mercy and love of God. But there is one thing that is so obviously true that we can behold it with our natural eyes and feel the effects within our own souls, and that is this: In many sections of our country today there exists a coolness, slackness and unconcerned attitude on our part, and these things are causing a drifting backward and dying away of some of our churches. Does it not then become my duty to look around about me endeavoring to locate the cause for such? And when God blesses me to stop, think and pray for a moment, I then discover the cause to be right within my own bosom. First, we find ourselves late in reaching the church, and sometimes we see the ministers coming in, anywhere from fifteen to thirty minutes late. Second, we begin to deliver very hard blows to other denominations without any retaliation whatsoever. Third, we find ourselves spending a great portion of our time discussing the various scriptures, and oftentimes in a heated manner. In some cases we go so far as to resent it from the pulpits in the presence of the congregation. I, of course, claim that our God has revealed to me my interpretation. You, of course, claim the same revelation, but have an entirely different interpretation. Hence, it makes us wonder if it is not difficult to harmonize the word of God in such a way as to believe that he would reveal to me one meaning and to you another, without giving us patience, love and tolerance, sufficient to bear with each other, for surely many of such scriptures I fear never have or ever will be

clearly understood this side of the great beyond. When we, therefore, see this drifting away and coolness and the dying of some churches, we ask, what is the trouble? Surely, we have only to pause for a moment to find the answer. Oh, I sometimes wonder if our God is not at this time withholding his sustaining grace from us for a spell, in order to teach us how sinful and weak we are without his guiding hand to direct us along the way. It may yet be necessary for him to do by us as he did by some of the apostles of old, take us out on the mount, and there be transfigured before us, so that we too may behold him in his true light. While I am contemplating upon these things, there seems to be a prayer in my heart, going out as I believe, reaching the throne of mercy that our God will, in some way, bless us with a sufficiency of his grace, so that we may from this hour henceforth and forever refrain from any further ill will, criticism or bitter words toward our fellowman on account of our different viewpoints on the hidden mysteries of God. If we really believe what we claim to believe, then is it not true that we are the last ones on earth to criticize our brethren? May we realize that there are many lambs of God on the outside of this our earthly church, who are reaching out, hungering, grasping and thirsting for a little spiritual food and a place to rest their tired and weary souls? And it is often the case they find the way within our doors seeking that which cometh from above. If they find us cool toward each other, surely it makes a bad impression on their minds and they do not return, they are left out in the cold. So may our God bless us to strive and struggle on, using what intellect he has already given us to accomplish higher, nobler and greater achievements for this our earthly church. May we cry out with Paul and ask, "What shall I do, Lord?" Grant our Father that we may awake from our slumber before we, too, hear the words, "Sleep on now and take your rest." We ask these things in the name of the One in whose face is the light of thy glory, who won his throne by his cross of shame and rose from his tomb to reign forever in the hearts of men.

A. C. OWENS

Wilson, N. C.

Route 1, Martin, Tenn.

VERY DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

I am sending you a letter from brother W. O. Wammack who is now on an island in the south Pacific. Our brother sent this letter to me to be read at the Bethel Association which closed Sunday, October 1. After reading it, several suggested that I send it to you for publication in the dear old *Signs* if space permits. We esteem brother Wammack as an able gift. May our great Mediator uphold and give you strength to continue the publication of the *Signs*. Your unworthy brother if one at all.

J. E. JONES

To the brethren composing the Soldier Creek and the original Obion and Bethel Associations, Dear and Precious Friends: It is indeed in sorrow I try to write you a few lines as I realize I cannot attend your meetings and meet you face to face, and hear you sing the songs of Zion, even praise to Israel's God who is rich in mercy and love. I am now on a small island in the Pacific Ocean, bound by the law to serve our country in this great conflict between the works of man's hand, to the end that we might continue free to meet and worship God according to the dictates of our own heart. Brethren there is nothing more comforting to me, who feels to be less than the least of God's anointed (if indeed I be one at all) than to feel that surely he who created all things and is ruling them by his own power, has a few people in these days of distress who are blessed to meet in peace to praise and adore his most holy name. Dear ones, I am so prone to sin I

fear to take the name of Israel's God on my lips, yet within the valley of doubts and fears when everything seems to be against me, I am made to rejoice in the hope of life eternal in the world where we will not be separated from our loved ones to live in fear and anxiety, but all will be peace and joy forever. As Job spoke in holy writ "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble," so the servant is no greater than his master for he suffered as no man suffered, yet he bore it all that his people might be free from the law of death. He went away but when he left he made this promise that the Comforter would come which is the Holy Spirit dwelling in the hearts and minds of his people. So then it is a small thing for him, who holds the waters in the palm of his hand, and hung the earth on nothing, to consider the works of man's hand. May his spirit be in your midst while gathered together, and when you go to your homes again facing the burdens of life, that you not become entangled in the affairs of this world but rather help bear one another's burdens in love and fellowship. Hold up the hands of the preaching brethren that they might continue to preach the glad tidings of great joy to the glory of God the Father. I speak this without the permission of my brethren, yet I believe with one accord I can speak for the Mississippi River Association that we desire your fellowship, to have your visiting ministers visit us to feed the flock during my absence from them. Finally brethren, remember us in your prayers. Remaining your unworthy servant.

(Elder) W. O. WAMMACK

2500 Kentucky St., Bellingham, Wash.

DEAR ELDER HUGHETT: I would like to write you regarding some scripture I have been reading and wondering about. I will try to write a few things about what I believe I see, or have been given to see, in the fourth chapter of Daniel, if it is God's will for me to do so. It has been on my mind for a long time. In the first place, though I may be wrong, I believe Nebuchadnezzer was a child of God. This may seem strange to some, but if the language in the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth verses is not that of a child of God I am greatly mistaken. He was the king of Babylon, had persecuted the Israelites, taken them into captivity, tried to make them worship his idols and had slain many of them, but I cannot help but believe that he, nevertheless, was a child of God. Of course I may be mistaken in that, but he saw that vision. It was of a mighty tree and it reached unto heaven, the beasts were under it and the fowls lodged in its branches. I believe I stood as a tree once, I reached heaven, I knew God, and the pleasant things of this earth came to me and were welcomed into my branches, my thoughts and my ways of seeing things, and the beasts lodged under those branches. Indeed they did all the low things of my existence, all the evil things I did lodged there and all my evil thoughts, and I thought that because they were under my branches, my beliefs and my good deeds before the world and before man, that they were lodged there and unknown to God, or perhaps they were lodged there and that was their home. I want to fully describe that tree if God is willing. He allowed it to grow or he planted and nourished it with his own sunshine, and the things that he so mercifully supplies us with here in this world. Then he, God, sent an angel or we can say he did it himself, or it was the work of the Holy Ghost, I think they are all the same, you may use the expression you wish, anyway that tree was cut down. Was it with a single stroke? It could have been or it might have many of them, like the chips from a woodman's axe. The tree was cut down, all the branches came down, all the birds were gone and the beasts. Well, if Christ died for me they were gone too, and the Master bound me

around with a band of iron and brass. That was to be very sure there was not a chance of that old growth springing forth. Yes, cut down into the tender grass of the field and wet with the dew of heaven. Can anyone tell me where dew comes from? It comes silently, there are no clouds, there does not seem to be anything as far as we can see. So it is when we have been cut down and bound around with that band. The Spirit comes from somewhere we know not where, but all at once, or it may be over a lifetime before we know it, but it is there and where did it come from? So the stump and the roots were there, that is all we can see and have left, the deep dark things of our earthly being. But they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots, so there is still of the flesh left to us, we are not taken out of this world, nor are we kept from doing those things we would not, nor are we allowed to do those things we would, but there is a band around that stump, one of iron and of brass. We know that the ten commandments given to man are unbreakable as far as man is concerned, that is, we cannot get away from them, not while here on earth, and, therefore, they are of iron, as an iron band. And the services we try to do, how low they are, they are just as base as brass. Just as base a metal, though if we work hard enough in rubbing and shining them they have an appearance of gold, but just leave off rubbing and see how soon they turn green. That band is placed around us, it encircles us and we cannot get away, and our portion is with the beasts of the field. I do not think any child of God, or any one who feels to be the chief of sinners need ask what that means. We are cut down and left dormant, yes even bound roundabout so we cannot grow. Why are we left thus? Until seven times have passed over thee. Yes, all things lead to and hinge upon this, that is why we are cut down. When God created the earth and all things therein, he labored, or worked (if we may say he worked) seven days and rested upon the seventh day. It was his rest, it was the finishing up of his (God's) work. In other words please consider that in him and of him are all things, both here and hereafter. Everything that was or is or ever will be was created in those seven times. What had not taken place yet was there in the infinite mind of that almighty and all powerful Creator. So that seven times was perfection itself, and what is that perfection? It is the Son of the true and living God, and the salvation of his people both in time and in eternity. So when we are hewn down, stroke by stroke, and the seven times have passed over us, we are made to confess as that king of old: "All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Yea all his works are truth and his ways judgment. I will close knowing this is very poorly written, and it may all be wrong. If so it is only my error. I surely hope I have a hope in a merciful Savior, because the rest of the world does not mean much. I remain sincerely, I hope, in bonds of christian fellowship.

(Mrs.) MARY L. ECKARD

Sierra City, California.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR PASTOR AND BROTHER:

I am sending you this which I have written for the *Signs* if you consider it suitable. I surely do not wish to be one who "darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge." I know I am not capable of judging. Rev. 9:13-15 reads: "And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the

four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men." I have been alone a large part of my time for a number of years, or since this war commenced, and have read and re-read Revelation, and especially these verses, and it has seemed to me they relate to this global war. I have wondered many times about the four angels which were loosed, and when I read the New Year's greeting in the *Signs* of January 1944 I saw what I believed to be the solution. They were bound until a certain time, the time which God had set for them to be loosed to slay the third part of men—four great powers, the United States, Great Britain, Russia and China. This war has spread over the whole world. All people have and are suffering from it, and it looks like these four great powers would take the third part of men from the earth before they have their terrible slaughter finished. These things must come before the end, "but woe unto him, through whom they come!" It is the evil in man which prompts him to go out and kill. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." The man of sin must be revealed before the end comes, and is he not being revealed in his most dreadful form? Cruel and horrible as never before. I think it is generally believed that we are living in the sounding of the sixth angel, and following the sounding is surely the description of a great war including the aeroplanes. One who has lived near an aerodrome and heard the sound of many aeroplanes at once can easily imagine the sound of many horses and chariots running to battle. (Rev. 9:9) "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared." Rev.16:12. "And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe." Rev. 14:15-18 "And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." Rev. 10:5-7. "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." Rev. 11:15. "And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done." Rev. 16:17. This war has spread a pall of darkness and confusion over this whole world, but let us have hope that the seventh angel will soon sound, and that the bright and morning star, our blessed Savior, will arise out of the darkness of this dreadful night to bring a peace of his own making which will be everlasting. My prayer is that the church, his people, will dwell together in peace and unity, and in

the faith which their Lord once delivered to them. He is the righteousness of his people. In themselves they are weak, but he says, "My strength is made perfect in weakness," and "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." When he died on the cross he paid the debt of all who believe in him. We read in Isaiah, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." He says, "All the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." So let us trust in him through all. Trusting I hope.

(Mrs.) NELLIE H. ARNOLD.

1601 S. Main St., Hope, Ark.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Just thought I would write you a few lines regarding my subscription. I have not failed yet though I am a poor widow and feel unworthy of the family paper, but I do not see how I could live in this old sinful world without the dear old *Signs of the Times*. I do love to read the good letters from God's people from the different parts of the country who come testifying of a God of love, who has saved his people with an everlasting salvation. I am enclosing a letter I would like to see in our family paper if you deem it worthy a place. Please send it back to me as I like to keep such good letters. May the God of mercy continue to bless you to publish the *Signs* is the prayer of this poor old sinner, saved by the grace of God if saved at all. Your unworthy sister in hope.

(Mrs.) J. K. KENNEDY

Hampton, Ark.

DEAR SISTER KENNEDY: I received your good letter and was glad to hear from you. Dessie Mae had just written you. We planned to go to meeting at Rehobeth yeterday but the buses were snow-bound and we did not get to go. We have not been since last third Sunday and I am very anxious to attend again. Sister Kennedy, I will be very glad to send in your remittance to the *Signs of the Times* for you and I will do it as soon as I can get to it. I have been so busy lately that I have not had time for any corresponding. I like my work very well but I have to work night and day and then it seems I never catch up. I am teaching science, but the trouble is that when I am preparing for class I am thinking of the only true *Scientist,* "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times, the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." It was he who fixed the earth, stars, sun, moon, and everything else so that all things move precisely in their predestined paths. The minds and environment of all human beings, as well as animals, are so fixed that everything, act and thought, comes into reality just as God has fixed it. He has so arranged all this so that everything works together for good to those whom God has chosen in Christ before the foundation of the earth. I am teaching arithmetic, but the trouble is that when I am preparing for the next class I am thinking of how God enabled his little children to *add* to their faith, virtue, and to virtue, knowledge, etc., etc. I think of Paul's words that were addressed to Timothy when he said: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly *dividing* the word of truth." I think of how that God will *multiply* the peace and grace of his children. I think of how that he will *take away* their sins, and will remember no more their transgressions. I am teaching typing, but the trouble is when I am preparing for an assignment I am thinking of the *types* and shadows of the Old Testament. I think of the *Typist* who makes no *typographical errors,* but who reveals the true meaning of these *types* to his servants whom he has qualified and

sent out for the purpose of making plain these things to his children. I am teaching *bookkeeping,* but the trouble is when I am preparing for the next class, I am thinking of a *partnership* of Christ and the church where all the *assets* are in Christ Jesus and the *liabilities* are in the people but the liabilities all sink into oblivion through the *proprietorship* of God, the Father; Christ, the Son; the Holy Ghost; dissolved into the church. We have no merits to list as *assets.* All we have is *debts* which were well disposed of when Jesus' obedience of the law was *credited* to our *account.* I am teaching history, but the trouble is, when I am preparing for the next lesson, I am thinking of the *history* of the world and church. I think of Adam, the first man, of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Noah, David, Solomon, the flood, the old covenant, the new covenant, *Jesus,* the great *Ambassador* from the *Father.* I am also made to meditate upon the terrible chaotic condition of this sinful, warring world. Were it not for the confidence I have in the Upholder and Disposer of all things, I feel that I would sink by the wayside. I am made to be comforted with the thought that God controls every bullet, bomb, cannon and all destroyers. He controls all generals, kings, governors and presidents, as well as, each and every soldier, marine, sailor, wave, waac, and even the hairs of the heads of each and every one who is engaged in this terrible and awful war. I believe God has a grand and noble purpose in each and every battle, and that he will take care of all his children and nothing can befall them beyond his determinate counsel. I believe God's people will be brought closer to their Maker, and be made to depend entirely upon him for all things. I believe the nations will all be made to bow to His Majesty. Now, sister Kennedy, I realize that I have written far more than I felt that I could when I started, but I hope that you have not been too wearied reading this. I realize that it is very imperfect, but I hope you will at least forgive me for relieving my mind. It is late now so I will let Dessie Mae finish the letter. Let me say, however, that it is always a pleasure to read a letter from you.

(Elder) E. J. LAMBERT.

Box 185, Weslaco, Texas.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON, if one so unworthy as I feel to be should be allowed to address you as brother: While attending a meeting at Dallas, Texas last week, some five hundred miles from here, two of the Lord's little ones asked me to send in their subscriptions for the *Signs of the Times.* I have been reading the *Signs* for about forty-eight years, and still look forward to its coming. O, how the Lord has blessed it all these years, to hold up for an Almighty God, an all wise God, and a God that purposed all things and has power to bring them all to pass. Yes, dear brother, he never tries anything to see if it will work, there are no doubts in his mind. It is one eternal now with him. The same to-day, yesterday and forever. The Prince of Peace, the mighty God. He is the first cause of all causes and everything bows in submission to his will, and at the right time in order to bring about his decrees and purposes. When he begins a good work in your heart he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. I remember back when I was just a boy, how I would hide the *Signs* in my shirt and slip off to the woods on Sunday and read it, trying to find some comfort for my poor soul, and when I would get home with my eyes red from crying, my father would scold me for staying in the river too long. I would take the scolding and not tell him I had not been near the river. Sometimes I hope when reading those experiences back there I could shed tears for joy for God's little ones when they would tell about the Lord speaking peace to their

troubled souls. I longed for some bright evidence like theirs, and am still hoping for more and more evidence all the time. We are never satisfied. The Lord works in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform, and sometimes we get a blesssing from the least expected source. Some time back I was going to my appointment two hundred fifty miles from home, and as I drove along the highway I got into a depressed condition of doubts and fears that it was all a mistake, my going so far to meeting. It seemed that I ought to stay at home. I was just fooling the people, an old hypocrite and it was all of the flesh. While in this condition I was tempted several times to turn back and not go on. O, if I had just the least bit of evidence from heaven that God was in the matter it would be alright. Meeting passed off as usual, and as we left the church a friend got into the car with me. As we drove up in front of the home of his mother-in-law he put his arm around me and began crying, saying, he did not know why he kept going to these Old Baptist meetings, that the Lord showed him over 30 years ago his place was in hell. Then he said last week while he was plowing in the field he said to himself, why did Eugene bring all those good people and come to my place before the meeting? Then he said a voice spoke to him saying, he did not do it, he was sent. Then I broke down and cried for that was the unexpected comfort I was longing for, just to know I was sent and that it was not of myself. That did my poor soul so much good, and ever since it is a sweet memory to think about. How blue I was and on the same trip so wonderously blessed through a friend that did not even belong to the church. Last September will be a long remembered month with me. I baptized two into the church here and two into the church at Stockdale and attended an Association about eight hundred miles from home. All was peace and harmony. Brothers and sisters were there from Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas. Surely the Lord has a remnant yet in this part of the world that is declaring for the same old doctrine that Jesus set forth some two thousand years ago. These are perilous times and transportation is a serious problem, but if any of the readers of the *Signs* are coming south for the winter we want them to come see us. We are only five miles from the Mexican border in the center of the Rio Grande Valley. A poor dependent sinner, saved by grace if saved at all. (Elder) E. B. AULT.

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338 N. Quincy Ave., Kansas City, Mo.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: If I am not deemed too unworthy to address one of God's little ones. I am sending you my change of address to use if you still deem me worthy of your dear family paper. I do, if I know myself endorse almost everything I read in it, and do thank you for your kindness in sending it to a poor old sinner such as I, so long without pay. I am getting old and the good Old Baptist papers I get contain almost all the preaching I get any more. Again I am thanking you for your past kindness, and I hope the Lord will bless you to keep on with the good paper. As ever.

(Mrs.) BETTIE WHITE.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

R. C. Wood, N. C., $2; T. R. Starr, Md., $3; J. H. Smith, Sr., Tex., $1; J. F. Lax, Ill., $2; Mrs. C. M. Richardson, Va., $2; Mrs. V. Machesney, Kan., $3; Mrs. M. J. Ege, N. J., $3; Mrs. C. Twilley, Md., $2; A friend, N. C., $5; E. M. Werner, N. J., $3; Mr. and Mrs. J. Bratten, Md., $2; H. A. Giles, Va., $3; E. E. Cates, Kans., $1; D. Deal, Mo., $3; A friend, $25.

PREDESTINATION BOOKS WANTED

We would like to obtain one dozen if the Predestination books published by us in 1926. We will either exchange our book on the Resurrection or pay 75 cents each for the first twelve books sent to us. Will those willing to part with their Predestination books please communicate with us promptly? R. L. D.

EDITORIAL

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"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart." Gen. 6:5-6

Sister Fannie Chester sent in a request for views on the above scripture. It has been turned over to me to write on if I feel to do so. A request to write is the same to me as one to preach. When I am requested to do either, usually an impression follows to comply with it. May the God of grace enable us to look into it and behold what is there for the family of God. I do not hope to satisfy carnal professors in venturing out into this scripture which has baffled and mystified many of the Lord's humble poor. This one thing we must acquiesce to in the matter. This is part of the scripture that was given by inspiration. It is just as necessary to us as any of the balance. It is just as full of nutriment to the family of God as any, when the searchlight of truth is turned upon it. We must remember that the turning of light upon truth is not ours to do but God's to give. Much has been written on this text of scripture. Quite a bit of it is speculation and I cannot help but wonder why it should cause so much wonder and excitement. Many times God is said to have repented. Why should that cause confusion? If God promised to penalize for disobedience would it be a change in him to turn away from the rebellious culprit or to continue to put up with his rebellion? Let us look at the matter in this way. God made everything before the man. Everything in the garden was put there for him with one exception. God commanded Adam not to eat of that tree. He told him what the result would be. Death followed and man plunged into all manner of sin and degredation. God saw all this—that every imagination of the thoughts of the heart was evil continually. Suppose he had not turned from this creature? Where would it put him? Inasmuch, as he promised to turn from him if he violated his commandment, I do not see how the eternal, unchangeable God could have done otherwise than turn away from having made such a wretch as man. God is unchangeable, in fact he cannot change. I do not think any grace taught child of God believes that God ever did anything in time that he did not determine to do in eternity. In all of his governing of his people we find many things that we cannot fathom nor understand. we cannot understand God as a great being like unto man. Yet the Scriptures refer to his hands, feet, mind, heart, eyes and other characteristics that belong only to men. I repeat that we all know God is a spirit and that he is not in some bodily form like unto men. Why do we not undertake to explain *away* these dark and mysterious things also? If we know that he cannot change we also know that he has not hands and feet as we do. It seems that in his government of Israel that men are inspired to write of him as having several characteristics similar

to men. Unless we are given faith to take this view of him we are to run into difficulties inexplainable to us at every reading of the Scriptures. God's repenting covers a lot of ground. Not only does he promise to repent of the evil that he thought to do unto Israel but he promises to repent of the good that he thought to do to them. (Jer. 18:8-10). On one occasion the Lord became wearied with repenting. If we were to undertake to explain mysteries here is one place to start. (Jer. 15:6). God had promised what he was going to do if they did thus and so but his mercy was extended like a river and his wrath was not turned loose upon them. But here he has gotten tired of repenting! Grown weary with promising! Grown weary of failing to carry out what the law demanded! Now God is grieved at things coming to pass! I do not feel to be able to explain this. In fact I do not think there is any explanation for what God does. It has been recorded by inspiration that God repented of having made man on earth. To be perfectly candid and frank I do not think we have any right to attempt to explain such a thing if our intention is to explain that he did not repent of having made man on the earth. To attempt to put an interpretation on God's own words is something I cannot do nor do I care to do. God has said that he was grieved at his heart. Well, let us rest here. If he said he was grieved then he was grieved. If he was grieved with a certain generation for forty years then was he delighted with them? (Heb. 3:10-17) I think God's grief in this instance is synonymous with his displeasure in other places. In conclusion let me assure you, dear sister Fannie, and all of the dear children of God, that he has not in any sense nor any degree swerved one iota from his determination. His government over us changes but the change is *in us* and not *in him*. We desire to thank and adore his precious name for the changes in governing us and for the fact that in himself there is no change, no turning, no variation. W. D. G.

THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED

"Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." Mat. 13:31-32.

We have been asked to give our views on this parable. In addition to being referred to by Matthew, it is also referred to by Mark (4:30) and Luke (13:18). This parable undoubtedly has to do with the house or church of God. We think it was spoken of in type by the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel in the following language: "Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing? Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the Lord; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work: for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts: According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not. For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts." Haggai 2:3-9. The prophet Zechariah also had a

view of this when he was shown "a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof: And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof." Zech. 4:2-3. When he asked what these things meant, he was told, "This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it. Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you. For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerrubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth." Zech. 4:6-10. Zerubbabel is said to have been the head of the tribe of Judah at the time of the return from the Babylonish captivity, who God, by his spirit, raised up to build the house of the Lord which was in Jerusalem. As such he typifies Christ, who left the climes of eternal glory and came down into these low grounds of sorrow to set up his kingdom among the children of men and to deliver them who were under the bondage of sin and death, and make them lively or living stones in his building. When Jesus came into the world and began to establish his church he chose only twelve disciples, and one of them, Judas Iscariot, was a devil or had a devil in him. This was indeed a small beginning, particularly when we consider how unpopular it was among the peoples of the world. Even his own race, the Jews, were against him and did not receive him as a nation, but we are told that as many as "received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." We are not left in the dark to surmise or guess as to how or why they believed on him, for we are distinctly told that it was not by being born of blood, "nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." There can be no question about this matter for God first tells us in his holy word how it is not, and then he tells us how it is. In his preaching to his disciples, Jesus said unto them, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." If indeed the kingdom of God is ours, we should be willing for others to have this world and all that pertains to it. While the original group chosen by Jesus was small and despised, and the most of them were to be killed because of the doctrine they would preach, nevertheless the truth, though crushed at times to the ground, would rise again and be increased a thousand fold. Solomon had uttered a wise proverb when he said, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth," and this was to be made known more and more as time passed. How very true that was as applied to the church in her early history. The more the disciples were persecuted and scattered the more the truth was spread, for wherever they went, instead of keeping silent they cried aloud almost from the housetop, proclaiming the truth as it is in Jesus. He, forseeing and foreknowing the hardships and discouragements they would encounter, nevertheless knowing that he would be with them and prosper them, for had he not promised to be with them all the way, even to the end of the world, encouraged them with this parable. He never chose the line of least resistance, but invariably assumed the most difficult roles by doing those things which were impossible with men; therefore he took the mustard seed, which is said to be the smallest of all

seeds, to typify the beginning of his kingdom or church here in the world, but we are told that when it is grown, it is the greatest among the herbs, and if it is the greatest there can be none as great or that can compare with it, and the birds of the air come and lodge in its branches. God sets up his kingdom in the hearts of his people, and he breaks in pieces all other kingdoms. He puts his laws in their minds, and writes them in their hearts and, therefore, he becomes their God and they are his people ,and neither will they bow down to or worship any other gods but the true God. The government of the church is upon the shoulders of her glorious Head, and he has established ordinances which are to be observed in order that she may be kept aloof from all others, for she is the fairest among women and there is none like her, and to her he is as the apple tree of the trees of the wood, or the fruitful tree, the one that bore the kind of fruit that was necessary for her salvation. Yea, he is the chiefest among ten thousand, the altogether lovely one to her, so much so that she desires no other, in heaven or in earth. She is also established "upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Jesus said, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Some of these mansions are love, mercy, grace, forgiveness, longsuffering, forbearance, wisdom, peace, faith, hope and many others could be named, and then there is God's foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification, glorification, power, purpose, preservation, and many other reasons why God's poor and afflicted people, when they are brought into his kingdom, can lodge there and partake of that rest which remaineth for them that love him. What an hiding place from the storm, and refuge from the tempest there is to those who abide under the shadow of the Almighty! There is nothing in this sin-cursed world that can be likened unto it.

Before concluding our remarks we would like to call special attention to the verse immediately following our text, which reads as follows: "Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavend." Not long ago we were called to task by a very able minister for having, on a previous occasion, said that leaven as it is used here was not a type of sin. He takes the position that leaven is invariably used as a type of sin, but we will ask our readers to examine this similie, which Jesus used immediately following the parable of the mustard seed, and he used it to bear out the same idea or lesson, which was to show how the kingdom of God, though it has a small beginning will develop and grow until everything else is brought in subjection and Jesus is crowned Lord of all. Isaiah was prophesying of this kingdom when he said, "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." As the meal would be unable to resist the workings of the leaven until the whole was leavened, so none can resist the will of our God, and Paul said he was "confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." The word that goes forth out of the mouth of the Lord does not return unto him void, but it accomplishes that which he pleases and it prospers in the thing whereto he sends it. Even old Nebuchadnezzar had to con-

fess that "he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Jesus would often repeat his parables, using different illustrations, by way of emphasizing the lesson he was teaching, and we are persuaded that his words in the thirty-third verse of this thirteenth chapter of Matthew convey, in substance, the very same meaning as those in the two previous verses. We cannot disassociate these two parables and make them mean the opposite to each other.

In conclusion, let us say that what applies to the church collectively applies also in large measure to the individual, since the church is composed of individuals, and by way of trying to encourage those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious and who feel that he has given them the tiniest bit of evidence to hope that he has begun a good work in them, we would urge them to nourish that hope, and we are persuaded in God's own time and way there will be a growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savious Jesus Christ. Therefore, despise not the day of small things, but trust him for his grace and "hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."—

R. L. D.

CORRESPONDING CIRCULAR LETTER

(*Written by Elder H. H. Lefferts*)

The Delaware Association of Old School Baptists, in session with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, Saturday and Sunday, August 26 and 27, 1944, to the churches composing this association, and to the churches, meetings and associations with which we correspond, sendeth greetings in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—"Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity." 2nd Peter 1:5-7. This instruction belongs to those who have obtained "like precious faith" with the apostles of Jesus Christ, through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. A tree is known by its fruits, trees of righteousness which are the planting of the Lord distinguish themselves from the unbelieving world by the fruits of the Spirit which they bear. God's election of his people is proven by his giving unto them all things which pertain to life and godliness, and as these things be in them and abound in them, they are made fruitful in the knowledge of God and of Christ, and by these things they are given assurance to themselves that their calling and election of God are sure. By these fruits, not only to themselves, but to their brethren and to all believers, they make proof of the faith that is in them. Faith is justified by works, not in the sight of or before God, but before men. Faith is not an inactive principle in the lives of true believers, but proves itself by its fruits. Works of the creature never can bring about salvation, justification or faith; but where faith is, and where salvation has been made known, the fruits of regeneration will abound. God works in his people to will and to do according to his divine pleasure, thereby they work out or make manifest the salvation that is in them, thus making proof to their own comfort and to the satisfaction of fellow-believers of their having been called and chosen of God. It is not enough only to *hear the word,* there must be a *doing of it.* The natural man may look into the glass of the gospel and get a glimpse of what the gospel tells him he is by nature: lost and ruined and undone. But, like the wayside hearer which received unprofitably the seed sown, he turns away from the

mirror and straightway forgets what manner of man he is; but not so those who have the light of the knowledge of God shining in unto them by the Holy Spirit. These carry the sentence of death in themselves that they may not trust in themselves, by sin's being condemned in them by the conviction wrought by the law of God in the hands of the spirit. Being a doer of the *word* as well as a hearer of it, means one has to be born of the Spirit, created anew in Christ Jesus. These new creatures are ordained to walk in the good works of the Spirit, which works are ordained of God for them. Therefore, if one who professes Christ is not seen walking in the works of the Spirit, what proof have we or has he, that he is a new creature? It is for this reason that Peter, by inspiration, exhorts us to add up our blessings which are given us by his divine power. For if these things are lacking, he declares us to be blind and that we have forgotten we have been purged from our old sins. The church is declared to be the bride of Christ. The bride has many wedding garments in her furnishings, bestowed on her out of the riches of her divine Husband who has redeemed her with his blood and who presents her to the Father without blemish. These bridal clothes are faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, etc. It gives us assurance that we are called and chosen of God when we are favored to see these things in us; and not only in us, but abounding in us. Wherever we are given to see these fruits in any believer, we can be convinced that such an one is a member of the bride of Christ. The natural man is not decked in this heavenly array, but the redeemed and regenerated children of God are thus clothed. Faith lays hold of the eternal, invisible things of God, it takes God at his word whether there is full understanding of godly things or not, it trusts implicitly in God where it cannot trace him, it awaits his pleasure to make his counsels known. not asking the reason why, but gladly leaving God to be his own interpreter and to make all plain and clear in his own time and way. There are thousands of true believers in these days of world upheaval, who are at rest and at peace in the midst of the storm, because their hearts and consciences have found that peace which garrisons the hearts and minds of those who are in Christ Jesus. Virtue is that heavenly grace which keeps the heart true to the heavenly lover and which enables the child of God to avoid entanglements in delusions, heresies and false religions, to be unspotted from the world. A virtuous wife is one who is faithful, true and devoted to her husband. This grace of heavenly virtue abounding in them that believe, keeps them true to him who has bought them with his own blood, having loved them from everlasting times. There follows knowledge, because it is the will of Christ, the head of the church, that his people should increase in the knowledge of his grace and of his own blessed person. By this knowledge in which they increase by the work of the Spirit within them, they become more and more enamored and ravished with the beauty and excellence of him who is the chief among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely. How appropriate that this knowledge should be followed by or accompanied with, temperance! Temperance, scripturally speaking, means self-control. Greater is he who rules his own spirit than he that takes a city, says *wisdom*. If it were not for this grace of temperance, the knowledge in which the child of God increases would make him or her puffed up with a sense, perhaps, of superiority over those not favored with such knowledge; one should then forget that the knowledge is not of ones' self but by divine unmerited favor. Temperance keeps the soul from being inflated over the abundance of revelation, much as Paul was kept humble by reason of the persisting thorn in the flesh. Then comes pati-

ence, and we cannot think of patience aside from the accompanying tribulation which works it. Patience is humble submission to the will of God no matter what his will gives or denies. Patience adjudges his will to be a right and perfect will for us at all times, patience kisses the rod that chastens knowing its strokes are in love, not in anger. And thus arises the grace of godliness which is God-likeness, the recreating of the image of God in his regenerated people, the image so grossly marred by sin in the original fall of man. The reign of faith in a true believer, with its accompanying fruits of virtue and knowledge and temperance and patience, add up to a godly life shown publicly by a godly deportment which is an assurance, surely, of such an one's having been called and chosen of God unto salvation, and to all the blessings of the world to come. But godliness without brotherly kindness and charity would be a smug phariseeism without compassion for the infirmities of ones' fellow-believers. Such a smugness is not possible with true godliness. God-likeness is essentially imbued with brotherly kindness and that charity which is the love of God manifested towards men. All true godliness has a doctrinal basis, but doctrine without the fruits of faith is sterile. We are commanded to let our light shine in order that men may see the good works of the Spirit wrought in us, that they may glorify God on our behalf. This is substantially the same as adding up our graces to find the sum of our calling and election. Unless these things be in us, and abound in our lives, we are barren and unfruitful in the knowledge of God. And Christ has warned that the unfruitful branch, his Father takes away. Is that why many of our churches today are languishing in indifference to heavenly things? Is that why laborers are not being raised up and sent into our Lord's harvest? Is that why members are not being added to the churches only sparsely here and there a few? Is that why our preaching is for the most part surface-work with no digging deep into the rich treasures of the *word?* Think on these things. Unless the Lord the Holy Spirit works in us repentance to the effectual turning of ourselves to a more devoted status toward him and his *word,* our light will go out. The gospel of the grace of God will be preached always, unto the end of the world, but it may be preached by others than ourselves, and the voices of our own churches may be silenced, and the candle of our witness removed, unless there comes into the lives of the ministry as well as into the lives of the members of the churches, a revival of the Spirit's work among us. Do we desire his work to be revived among us? Is there a prayer within us for him to revive us? If the Spirit is not breathing such a petition in us unto the Throne of Grace, such a reviving will not come. He always causes us to strongly and earnestly desire the blessings which he plans to give us; if, therefore, there is no life of prayer in us for the Zion of God, what evidence have we that he means to bless? It is not, at this time, known when and where the 1945 session of the Delaware Association will be held, we can make no plans with all things to-day so evidently impermanent as they are. Announcement of the holding of our next associational meeting will be given out later. Watch the *Signs of the Times* for such announcement. All things are in God's hand, and he will make it manifest in due time what we are to do, and where and how we are to do it. We await his divine pleasure. Should it please God that we meet next year, we shall hope to have with us then your ministers and messengers to meet with us. We trust that this present meeting in which we are now engaged has been to the glory and honor of God, to the adoration of our Lord Jesus Christ,

and that the love and fellowship of the Holy Ghost have prevailed among us; that the souls of the hearers have been edified and comforted in the gospel of God's free and sovereign grace.

(Elder) DOUGLAS L. TOPPING, Moderator.

CHARLES B. OSBORNE, Clerk.

RESOLUTION

ELDER W. O. WAMMACK, DEAR BROTHER:

The messengers from the Obion Association were present at the Bethel Association and heard the good letter read that you wrote to the Bethel, Soldier Creek and embracing our Association, the Obion. It being filled with the goodness, mercy and grace of our blessed Savior, and knowing that you remembered us though so few and poor, and our Association desiring to let you know how much we appreciated your remembering us, therefore:

Resolved, that we, the Obion Association, now in session at Beaver Dam, Henry County, Tenn., do hereby authorize the clerk of said Association to write you this letter and express to you the high esteem that we have for you as a brother and servant of the most high God. The love being made known to you by the revelation of his divine power and wisdom which is being manifest to you while you are far from us on the waters of the great deep, yet God's mercies are with you. Dear brother, it is something glorious to know that our God is present everywhere at the same time, and has promised never to forsake his children. While this awful war is raging he is at the helm controlling all things by his mighty power and will take care of his children. We miss you very much and our prayer for you is that God, who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light, and prepared you by his grace to so beautifully and ably preach the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone, will be with you and sustain you in this trying time, and bring you home to your dear family and to us, bringing with you the same glorious doctrine that you have so earnestly contended for in the past. May God's richest blessings be with you and keep you by his grace is our prayer. Done as ordered, and signed by the Association now in session at Beaver Dam, Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1944.

(Elder) PAUL POYNER, Moderator.

R. L. VEAZEY, Clerk.

MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala. holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday at the end of old South Three Notch St., Troy, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles South of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday, Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday and Elder E. E. Watson on Sunday.
AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church, located 5 miles North of Hartford, Ala., holds services each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching Elders F. A. and J. J. Collins on Saturday, and Elder J. J. Collins on Sunday.
A. E. SORRELS, Clerk.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canda, California.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before.

E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

Pleasant Valley Church, Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc.)

L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church.

E. M. TACKETT,
J. S. HUNNICUTT, Pastors.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue. Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 A.M. 1:30 P.M.

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 A.M.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

C. W. BOND, Pastor.

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.

W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets third Sunday in each month at 11:00 A. M. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house.

ELDER C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Saints Rest Church of Old School Primitive Baptists hold their regular monthly meetings on the 2nd Sunday in each month at 11:00 A.M.; Conference meetings on Saturday before 2:30 P.M.; preaching by the Pastor. Elder C. B. Teague has regular appointments on the 3rd Sunday each month at 11:00 A.M. Meeting place 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. (Bus stops two blocks away—Maple and Lucus Sts.) G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3032 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va. R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m. C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 113 RUTHERFORD,N. J., MARCH, 1945 No. 3

God's Work In Nature and Grace

I saw a flower by the way,
Rich with its sweet perfume;
I said, "Thou art O bonnie gem,
A thought of God in bloom."

I sat upon a boulder large,
Beside the way alone;
I said, "Thou art, O mossy rock,
A thought of God in stone."

I saw a gem of starry dew,
As rich as any earl
E'er wore on earth; I said, "Thou art
A thought of God in pearl."

I saw a river deep and swift,
Flow toward the restless ocean:
I said, "Thou art, O winding stream,
A thought of God in motion."

I saw the ocean's broad expanse,
The islands round about;
I said, "Thou art, O restless sea,
A thought of God spread out."

I saw a child, redeemed from sin,
I said, "I seek a place
Within thy heart because thou art
A thought of God in grace."

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.
West Hurley, N. Y.

CORRESPONDENCE

Ajlune, Wash.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

Enclosed you will find my renewal for subscription which has become delinquent by neglect. I have been an intermittent subscriber to the *Signs* since about 1891 or perhaps a year before, and I am glad to note that only a minimum of controversial matter has ever been published in its columns. At times it has seemed necessary and proper that some discussion of disputed doctrines be permitted, but even the mildest discussion often results in bitterness, and does more harm than good by opening the way for unfair criticism which may prove harmful in the end. Our Savior did not go about the land of Israel hunting heretics and opening debates with them. His mission was to seek and save those who were lost, and we must not be so weak as to believe he has failed in the slightest degree. No finishing work is needed on our part. Such efforts are a reproach to his name. True, we should not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, for our own comfort, not to finish his work of saving the lost. Much of the rest to our souls which he promised those whom he calls can be found by mutual conversations and assemblages, not that we can key up our own minds to a state of spiritual ecstacy, but our earthly problems are so numerous and similar that much help and comfort may be so found. Spiritual blessings often attend such meetings without strained efforts and howlings on spiritual subjects. I recall, with pleasure, the writings of many old time supporters of sound doctrine and practices in my early life among the Baptists. Not only the beloved founder of the *Signs*, but such able writers as S. H. Durand, F. A. Chick, H. Cox, Wm. J. Purington, E. Rittenhouse, A. B. Francis, Mary Parker, Kate Swartout and many others who contributed to the col-

umns of the *Signs*. They have passed on and left a vacancy in many homes. The *Signs* has remained very much the same in other hands. God is able to provide all necessary comforts for those who love him. It may mean trials, hardships, discomforts and persecutions, because the servant is not above his Lord, who suffered all these things, but it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness. This is a mystery to us. I have wondered how many of the relatives and fellow travelers of those writers mentioned above are still in touch with the Baptists. I am refreshed at times to see the names of those I knew in early life mentioned in your columns, some still active though often in the obituary columns. This affords comfort to us who knew them many years ago, to know that they remained loyal to sound doctrines and practices to the end. One, I may mention, impressed me strongly was an obituary of a sister Ashworth, widow of brother Ben Ashworth, written by her son, Posey. My acquaintance was rather slight, but that couple impressed me as a true sample of devotion to a cause, though I was young myself. Brother Dodson's recent mention of Elders Gold and Lester as workers in the vineyard with differences on doctrines which they composed and worked together as brothers was also worthy of some notice to me because I knew both men. His mention of the visit to the Staunton River Association almost aroused some envy on my part, because I was in touch with that section in early life. The progressive, haughty world often places us in embarrassing situations, but we have the remedy to be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves. Despised as we may be, it is nothing to be compared with the humiliation of our Elder Brother. The younger members among us suffer more from this critical attitude on the part of friends and associates than do the older ones. Let me say to the young, be of good cheer, Jesus has overcome the world. Silence in such situations is often better than hasty words or retaliatory expressions. Truth is mighty and it needs no defense or apology, wise words are not always advisable unless mixed with the harmlessness of doves. My own young life among the Baptists was seldom embarrassing, though I have listened to some very bitter criticisms. A pleasant answer, only when necessary, is more effective than a vindictive reply. A soft answer turneth away wrath. Even among ourselves the young or even older ones meet with embarrassment. This is usually because of a lack of understanding by those who suffer. I was much impressed by a statement in your columns recently from sister Parks of Castle Rock, Wash., in which she points out the feeling of hesitation in offering for membership. In reality our emphasis upon experience is often a cause for hesitation. In earlier days, an experience was over emphasized to trembling, bleating lambs around the fold. The impression often gained from our preaching and writings was in many minds magnified into the requirement of something spectacular, which is not really required or insisted upon by believing Baptists. Peace of mind seemed to envelope me but not sudden ecstacy or lifting of my burden. These things impress me more because I suffered from such embarrassment in my first years after conversion, if such indeed has ever occurred. When I finally offered for membership I really did not relate much of my exercises of mind mainly because of embarrassment. Brother J. C. Hall of Franklin County, Va., acted as moderator at the spring session of the Pig River Association, held with the Fairview Church in Bedford County, in May 1893. His gentle encouragement and questions were sufficient, but I have ever felt that I did not really relate an experience as it is generally understood among the Baptists. I certainly did not wish to exaggerate my past exercises and assur-

ances of mind so it appeared I had not told an experience at all. Truly, we should not make this a hindrance to those who humbly desire a home with us. The hesitating ones are often hard to approach, and do not really get the correct viewpoint while in this state of mind. Personally, I doubt if a clear cut experience on the part of those desiring membership is fully supported by the Scriptures. A simple expression of belief in the Savior seems to have been all required at times for baptism. Gentle handling of lambs is approved by Holy Writ. At any rate a frank discussion of such things can do no harm. We should attract the children of the Most High rather than repel them. In recent years we are frequently impressed by radio discussions and practices. While sitting in our own homes we may imbibe the philosophies, and observe the practices of many sects, some of which closely resemble sound words. I do not mention this as a regrettable display of human activity, but we are apt to get some exercises of mind based upon what we hear. Among these a very impressive feature is public prayer. Jesus admonished his disciples to enter into a closet and close the door before approaching the heavenly Father or imploring his blessings. This was such a distinctive admonition to them that I feel it is almost imperative. It appears that silence was the principal matter under discussion, rather than closet. There should not be any display of words or personality to others. It must be a sincere outpouring of soul to the kind, heavenly Father, not because he did not know your needs, but because Jesus says, "Your heavenly Father knows what ye have need of before ye ask him." With all the displays of supplication by radio and in fine edifices called churches, I am made to wonder if even public prayer in opening services or preaching is fully sustained by the Scriptures. Beautiful and flowing speech, and elegant words in beseeching tones do sound pious, anyhow the Scribes and Pharisees thought so and they came under criticism from One who not only knows propriety, but has the keys of life and death in his hands. Well, brother Dodson, I sat down to write some thoughts which I expected to present themselves to my mind, but I have wandered far from my plans. True, I have discussed some things which have become rather fixed in mind, but not inspired from above, which may mean that the whole letter is worthless and even critical, entirely unworthy a place in your columns. I have never desired to be conspicuous among the Baptists so have not indulged in writing for publication, or in personal activities to gain publicity, nor do I now wish to engage in active discussions or controversies. They are distasteful to me. I am nothing, and less than nothing, and should not vaunt myself anywhere. My letter is rather lengthy but not fully adequate to the plan I had. However, if you desire to publish it or any part of it, because you may think it profitable, you are welcome to do so. Make any needed corrections if published. I shall not feel the slightest humiliation if you pass it into the waste-basket, because I am nothing and less than nothing and do not desire publicity. I would like to say that many times I read articles in your columns with no address given. Often we would like to write to such contributors, but have no address. I wonder if this cannot be remedied. I am far removed from most of the Baptists of my childhood and early life, so the correspondence in your columns is of much interest to me. I wonder if you get plenty of such correspondence to fill your paper. I am not worthy to even help out, but this is submitted only on your better judgment with not the slightest desire to crowd out better matter. Yours in hope of God's continued blessings.

E. D. OVERSTREET.

Meditations on

THE BOOK OF RUTH

By Elder T. Floyd Adams

After the barley harvest and wheat harvest had been completed, Naomi proceeded to give Ruth further instructions as will be seen in the third chapter and first four verses. She again reminds her of the fact that Boaz is "our kindred", and in as much as the barley harvest has been completed, the "winnowing" is to take place that night in the threshing floor. Now, dear reader, do you not remember something about this threshing in the night time in your experience? You may have said, while standing in the field (or under the law) and the wind and storms beating upon you, "Oh, Lord, this is dreadful; I cannot bear any more," but at last we come through the threshing machine, then winnowed. Through this process, the precious is taken from the vile or the wheat is taken from the chaff. We have an example of this in Peter's denial of his Master the night the Savior was crucified. He went out and wept bitterly, and the Lord turned and looked upon Peter and said, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." He did not say that Peter's self-confidence would not fail, but "I have prayed for thee, that thy *faith* fail not." Peter had said before, "Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death." How graciously did the Master say, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me." Again he said, "before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice." Now comes the test. The little damsel said, "thou art a Galilean." Poor Peter is now scared and is now put into the Lord's sifter which is a part of his threshing machine, and it is operated by Satan, in order to remove in Peter his self-confidence from faith, hope and charity, which always remain in the sieve. There "abideth faith, hope, charity, these three." Peter must learn again not to trust in self and must learn also the truth of what Jesus said, "without me ye can do nothing." How often we have to be brought through this experience! So Naomi said to Ruth, "Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor." According to her instructions, she went down to the threshing floor. "When Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn." Ruth came softly and uncovered his feet and lay down. What a striking figure! Mary sat at the feet of Jesus and heard his words. She washed his feet and wiped them with the hairs (her glory) of her head. Is this not the feeling of every humble sinner to lie at the feet of Jesus and hear his gracious words as Ruth heard them from the lips of this "mighty man of wealth", Boaz? She now desires more of his loving kindness. This, she signifies by saying, "spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid." Now she relates to him what Naomi has acquainted her with before, "for thou art a near kinsman." Boaz tells her that she is a virtuous woman and he assigns the reason as being that she followed "not young men, whether poor or rich." Solomon said, "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all." Prov. 31:29. The eye of Boaz is fastened upon Ruth. His heart and affection go out to her as if to say, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." Cant. 4:7. Boaz now replies to Ruth regarding her kinship to him, and he introduces the subject by saying, "Now it is true that I am thy near kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I." I ask the patience of my readers while I endeavor to explain, by the help of God, this wonderful mystery. To my mind, this "nearest" kinsman does not apply to our nearest kin in earthly ties, but the first right in matrimony is invested in the elder by reason of God's law which was

given to Moses as will be seen by the words of Laban to Jacob: "It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn. Fulfill her week, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years." Now Leah was tender eyed (or nearsighted). Is she not a type of the law? While "Rachel was beautiful and well favored," and to my mind is a type of the gospel. Paul said, "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another." Paul did not say that the law was dead, but "ye also are become dead to the law." He expresses it in this way to show that the law has no power to give eternal life and happiness, for he goes on and says further that if there had been a law given that could have given life, verily, righteousness should have been by the law. Now after we have learned by our own experience that the law is a failure, and having come to the end, we are now prepared to receive the following words: "Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me), to do thy will, O God." Heb. 10:7. "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." Now when the day dawns, Ruth takes the six measures of barley which she received at the hand of Boaz and hurriedly goes back to her mother-in-law and tells her how graciously, kindly and wonderfully she has been favored at the hand of this "mighty man". Let us take special notice that in all her gleanings and gifts, she always went home and shared her blessings with her mother-in-law. How beautifully this agrees with the language of our Master, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee." As we read the eighteenth verse, again, our minds are attracted by the wonderful words of Naomi, "Sit still my daughter." Is it not good to sit still sometimes and see what the Lord will do? Moses said to the children of Israel, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." Naomi said also, "For the man will not be in rest, until we have finished the thing this day." As proof of this statement, Boaz went up to the gate of Bethlehem Judah in search of this nearest kinsman and he "came by". He did not call his name, but said, "Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here." While it is on my mind, I would like to again reiterate as previously stated in a former article that Naomi is a type of the church under the law dispensation, and all the instruction that she was giving to Ruth was making her better acquainted and bringing her to Boaz. The law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. These words do not signify that you can come to Christ, but they simply mean that you have completed your school under the law and are now prepared for the reception of Christ. Just as a schoolboy, when he finishes the grammar grades, is ready for high school. As Laban said to Jacob, "Fulfill her week" (Leah, the law), then it was legal according to the law of Moses for him to take Rachel also. Let it be fully understood that the nearer kinsman, Boaz, does not have a legal right to marry Ruth until he obtains it from the court of Israel. This he proceeded to do by taking "ten men of the elders of the city" of Bethlehem Judah, also "all the people that were in the gate" to bear testimony to all that was said between him and the nearest kinsman. The ten elders of the city, to my mind, represent the ten commandments of the law, while those that were in the gate represent the gospel. Remember, dear reader, that both sides must hear all the evidence and be witnesses to every word and to the whole transaction that is made between Boaz and the nearest kinsman. It takes two witnesses in court to establish a thing beyond a reasonable doubt. So it takes the law and the gospel to establish the fact that Jesus proved his right as the legal possessor of

his bride. How beautifully this agrees with the inspired prophet of old: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20. Boaz said unto the kinsman, "Naomi that is come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land, which was our brother Elimelech's." He also acquainted him with the fact that he, the nearest kinsman (or law), has the first right to redeem it. So the nearest kinsman said, "I will redeem it." Then said Boaz, "What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the *dead,* to raise up the name of the *dead* upon his inheritance." Who can this *dead* signify except dead sinners? "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and in sin." So through this marriage of Boaz and Ruth, the name of Mahlon was raised up. As the type, so is the reality. Through this conception of Jesus and the church, these dead sinners are raised up. I now return to the nearest kinsman. When Boaz explained the full requirements and the things that were necessary to be done in order to obtain this field, the nearest kinsman said, "I cannot redeem it." "Redeem thou my right to thyself." This expression is positive proof and a full acknowledgement that he is a failure. And he further proves this by taking off his shoe. How agreeable are the words of the apostle, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh." Now Paul did not say the law was weak, but it was "weak through the flesh," for he said that, "the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin." But not so with Jesus, nothwithstanding the fact that "It behooved him to be made like unto his brethren." "Yet without sin" there was no weakness in him. He met the requirements of God's just and holy law, satisfied its full demands and kept it to a jot or tittle."

(*To Be Continued*)

Brampton, Canada

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

Please find enclosed my subscription for the following year. I am also enclosing a letter sent to me and my dear mother last February by Elder Ruston. His letters and visits were a great comfort to us during the past years. I felt this letter should be shared with others and would like to see it published in the *Signs,* hoping it may comfort others as it did us. Sincerely yours,

(Mrs.) VERNA CARSCADDEN.

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

DEAR VERNA AND SISTER YOUNG:

As I promised a letter, particularly for your mother, I desire to attend to it at once, hoping that the Lord will bless me to write those things that shall be most to your comfort and edification. I came back from Toronto with a pleasant and comfortable feeling that we had been favored with a good day, and with a pleasant visit with all the friends. When people are of one mind, it is felt as they unite in worshipping Almighty God. There is also at such times a remembrance of those, who not present in body, are present in spirit, as Paul, who said, "For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ." I know that you, sister Young, were with us in spirit on Sunday in Toronto. Quite a number told me that they had enjoyed the day, for which I was glad. Verna said in her letter that you had realized for a long time that your mind was weakening from day to day, which made me think of Paul in 2 Cor. 5, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." And he says, "In this we groan," and in another place he says, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now," so we must not be surprised if we groan

within ourselves. Read at your leisure number 237 in Gadsby's hymn book, also 239 and 241 which show clearly that "a sinner may repent and sing, rejoice and be ashamed." There are a number of professors today who seem never to be in trouble but are happy all the time. They, I fear, are in a carnal security which shows they are still in the flesh, and while they are pleased with themselves, it is written, "they that are in the flesh cannot please God." A rejoicing that is praiseworthy is a rejoicing with trembling, that is, a rejoicing in tribulation, which is represented by the scriptural expression, "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling." Dear sister Young, you are much in my mind and I would have liked to come visit you over the week end, but remembering how weak you are I felt it would perhaps be better to write a few lines to you, but what would my writing be worth if the blessed and HOLY Spirit, the Comforter, does not help my infirmities. I am so much of the flesh, nothing but a poor, vile sinner who feels truly, that "to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." In your weakness and helplessness, dear sister, you can say, "Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away," it is your soul that needs food, and what a wonderful provider is our God. He satisfieth the *longing* soul and I hope you can say with Nan Kennedy when she was going home, "Bless the Lord, O my soud: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." Thus, when the Lord gives a poor hungering soul a crumb of mercy or a sweet morsel, like honey from the rock, 'tis then they can mount up with wings of faith and love. The result of such help is a genuine rejoicing which is a rejoicing in Christ Jesus and having no confidence in the flesh. My dear sister's death in England on Dec. 28, came to me with sadness for she always kept up a correspondence with me, and she wrote often on better things. Her last letter to me written Nov. 15, 1943, was no exception. In it she told of hearing a man preach from "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see," and it was so blest to her soul that it seemed she had had a "dead lift" and for seven days after the sweetness and savor of the *good things* had not left her. Later on in the letter she said, "I have in my life spent far too much thought on the vanities and pleasures of time and sense, but now I seem to see everything differently, things of the earth are receding and growing less in estimation. I know I have to leave them all and I do not know how soon. I have thought many times of the words on our sister Ann's tablet, 'Live mindful of death'." How short life really is when we take a glance backwards. But eternity, tremendous sound, oh to be found in Him, then all will be well. I have thought of grandmother Ruston in her last moments. She put out her hands and said, "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly." No wonder father writing her death card wrote:

"A sinner saved by Jesus' blood,
A ransomed soul caught up to God.
This earth, it was not worth her stay;
For angels took her soul away.

The Bible was her great delight,
She read therein both day and night.
Its truths did ease her weary mind,
She found that God was good and kind."

As I read and write this my heart is softened at God's goodness and I remember that you, dear sister Young, can say, "Weary of earth, myself and sin, dear Jesus set me free," and just as my dear, lovely sister, Tilly, has gone home, so the Lord will take you home to himself in

glory, and it will not be for a day, a month or a year but for *ever* and *ever*. May I, a poor unworthy sinner, be prepared, when my few days are spent, to leave this body of corruption and join the blessed throng who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. I guess my pen has run away with me. My love to all of you, and our sympathy to you, dear sister, in your weakness and pain. In hope of a heavenly country I remain, Your brother in Christ.

(Elder) GEORGE RUSTON.

Frisco City, Ala.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,

DEAR FRIEND AND I HOPE BROTHER:

I failed to get the July *Signs* which must have been lost in the mails. Enclosed find twenty-five cents for which please send me a copy for I love the *Signs* too well to miss a copy if I can help it. I just want to say this to you, I am a poor starved sinner but I find much comfort in reading the *Signs* and my Bible as I hope. I so long to be one of the little flock. It is hard to have such a desire to go to the church and so little evidence that it would be right to ask them to accept such as I. From my earliest recollections I have been waiting and longing to have sufficient evidence that such a step would be right. All I have is love for the Old Baptists. Even when too small to understand the difference between them and other denominations any insult to them was a stab in my heart. If I have been born again I cannot tell when or why. I have always felt, as I do now, that I am a sinner, but trusting in the grace of God. If I am saved it will be by grace and grace alone. My grandfather, David Nordon, I think was taking the *Signs* back in the fifties. My mother was a great lover of the paper. Neither of them were members of the church. I have been reading the *Signs* forty-six years but do not think I will have the privilege much longer for my sun is sinking fast, it seems almost down, but still I am in very good health and able to do light work. I was seventy-six the sixth day of last February. I do love to read your good letters and many others, in fact all that comes out in the *Signs*. I have tried but failed to get a new subscriber so that I might have one of your books. I hope I may get one yet. When you read this just lay it aside as it is not worth anything, but I could not feel satisfied until I wrote you. May God have mercy on us all. Your friend until death.

A. J. DOGGETTE.

Written by W. A. Speer
Box 315, El Dorado, Ark.

DEAR BROTHER GRIFFIN: It seems to me that ever since you were here with us last spring and asked me to write an article for publication in the *Signs,* I have for some reason been unable to dismiss it from my mind, and have had a constant desire to try to do so, at the same time I have been fearful that the desire I have had was of the flesh rather than of the spirit. Unless I am enabled and given from on high by the Holy Spirit to write, it would not be worth anything to the true believer. Unless my writing is directed by and is of the Lord, I verily believe, it would not become sound doctrine and neither would it be any food to the household of faith. I cannot truthfully say that anything I may write is of the Lord but to the contrary, it seems to me, that I should not try to write in his name because of the very good reason, as it appears to me, I am too weak, insufficient and unenlightened in spiritual knowledge, understanding and ability, if in deed and in truth, I have been given any at all, to write of and concerning Christ Jesus and his righteousness, but I find myself also utterly unable to refuse to try. This situation of finding myself being unable to refuse to try causes me to remark, as I go along in my attempt to write, that my daily experience

for a long, long time has brought me to a realization of the fact that I am unable of my own self, will and natural choice, to do the things I want to do or to refrain from the many thoughts and things I daily do, think and say, that I despise in myself and do not want to do, think and say, and would not do so if I could help it. It seems to me that this situation is in harmony with and accords with what is found in Jeremiah 10:23, that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." And this always seems to be so much contrary to the natural mind and natural wishes that it brings about something that seems like a confusion in one's mind and keeps him much of the time in turmoil of mind and there seems to be a warfare going on most of the time that we are unable to do anything about, or at least that is the way it is with me so much of the time. I wonder if it is so with you and others? When I think and meditate about this state of affairs with one's helpless self, I have often felt to hope that I was comforted and consoled by the apostle Paul's statement in Galations 5:17, when he said: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." I verily believe that this confusion, unrest and turmoil of mind, and the warfare that goes on is found only in those that have been wrought upon by God and have been regenerated and born anew, and, therefore, have been born of the Spirit and have been made a dual character. Hence being a dual character; that is, having a natural mind and natural desires and a spiritual mind and spiritual desires, brings about this warfare. Unless one was a dual character there would be no warfare. So, I verily believe, those in this state I have referred to of being in turmoil and realizing they are unable to direct their steps are the poor, weak, afflicted people of God, and all this is evidence of their having been born of the Spirit and of their being in a gracious state and is, therefore, evidence that gives those in that condition hope. And those, it seems to me, that find themselves in this condition get consolation and comfort from the language of the apostle Paul, who evidently was experiencing this state of warfare brought about by being a dual character, when he said: "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." Romans 7:22, 23. O, how we do mourn and groan daily, and how little we understand, if anything at all, about these things, and how utterly impossible it is with us to take hold upon any comfort and consolation and do any feasting until and unless it is given us, and until we are led and enabled to feast thereon, but when we are made to feel to hope that we do indeed feast, how grand it is to be enabled to feel the consolation and comfort of these scriptures. And after all I have often felt to be given to think and believe, that the Scriptures are in reality testimony. If one who has been born of the Spirit, and has been therefore given light and understanding, reads the testimony and is enabled from on high to have an understanding of what it means, or even a little glimpse of light, and finds it seems in accordance with his experience, and if he has been given the witness in himself, then that testimony is comforting to that sort of character. Bearing on the remark I made of the Scriptures being testimony unto the child of God, the Saviour said: "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me." John 5:39. The Scriptures, nor the searching of them, do not give eternal life, but they give testimony of the anointed One who gives eternal life to his people and he, therefore, says: "And they are they which

testify of me." Therefore, testimony to the child of God — to the character who has the witness in himself. And this character who has the witness in himself is not just any and every person who may believe, or is willing to believe, of himself or will of his own volition and own will decide to believe, or that may of himself become willing to believe in order to get the witness in himself and get eternal life. I verily believe these characters are the people that were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began and they are believers; they are those that already have been given by the Holy Spirit to believe. Therefore, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." 1 John 5:10. In the present tense — already hath the witness — already believes. Not because of any thing he has done to acquire that witness in himself but because he has been born of the Spirit. And he has been given that witness of the truth within himself and therefore already has it, and that sort of character feasts upon the testimony of others relating a like condition to his and it is food to his poor troubled soul. His trouble is because of a dual character and because he has been shown, by spiritual birth and from on high, his sinful and undone condition, his total depravity and his inability of himself to do anything about it, and he is made to know that he must wait upon the appointed time of the Lord to lift him out of the valley and set him upon high places. Dear Brother Griffin and all the household of faith reading this, have you ever thought of these same things and felt the way about the things I am trying, in my poor, weak and insufficient way to mention something about. How grand this Old Primitive Baptist doctrine is and how it feeds the poor and afflicted child of grace. For it has always seemed to me to be the doctrine that sets forth the feelings and experiences of the child of grace and no other does. I verily believe, therefore, that the Primitive Baptist is the church of Jesus Christ and that the doctrine contended for by this denomination is the faith that was once delivered unto the saints. And furthermore this is the only denomination that I know anything about that is preaching this doctrine in this country today or that has ever preached it since I can remember. Ever since I can remember I have been hearing this doctrine contended for by the Old Baptists and they do, and have, faithfully contended for it, in spite of all reproach, ever since I have been hearing it and can remember. I have been hearing it, at least with a natural ear, as far back as I can remember. Sometimes I feel to hope that maybe by, through and of a just, merciful and sovereign God and by his grace and not because of any merit in me, I have been given to hear it with an ear other than a natural ear. I hope I have. I feel confident of one thing: that is, that this is the true doctrine of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I cannot say that I am embraced in it, but feel fully persuaded with all the powers of my mind that it embraces all the hope the poor, weak and afflicted child of God has in this world, this world that is today so full of so many so-called doctrines and faiths. There are so many lo heres and lo theres in the world today, but the comforting thought to the child of grace is, that notwithstanding a lo here! and a lo there! the Saviour said: "Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Luke 17:21. It is not the children of God that says "Lo, here! and lo there!" It is those that are not the children of God, in my humble view. The kingdom of God is within whom? I verily believe in God's chosen ones. The ones that were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. These chosen people which I am alluding to, I believe, are the people the apostle Paul was talking about in 2 Timothy 1:8-

10: "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

(*To be continued*)

DEAR ELDER DODSON:

I do not know what person but I hope I know whom I have to thank for the June issue of the *Signs*. I have not received the issues from August 1943 to May 1944 but the June issue was very welcome to me. I have not attended any Old Baptist meetings since February in 1943 at Harmony Church, Russell Creek, W. Va. I searched for them while in Blanding, Florida. Met a gentleman in St. Augustine, Florida who seemed sound in truth, if I know the truth, but I had no opportunity to attend any of their meetings although I was invited. I also searched for them in Arkansas while I was at Camp Robinson. Saw an address, time and location in a newspaper and attended but was disappointed. They said some things that I was glad to hear, indeed, some Old Baptist language I believe of the sureness of the church in Christ and confessed their weakness also, but seemed too open in their invitations, leaning a little to free will. Also their hope seemed filled up, it seemed like the sure knowledge of the Arminians. Hope that is accomplished is no more hope. Of course I did not feel right from the beginning but you know the expression of a drowning man clutching at a straw. I could not shake the hand of fellowship with them. I also felt guilty as though I might cause disunity among them which I did not want to do. I hope you understand my position. Of course man is not justified by man but by Christ alone. I hope I am not seeking sympathy but only setting forth what I feel. I dreamed last night of going into an Arminian meeting place in search of rest. I seemed out of place there also. Guess I can be called old fashioned in many respects, especially concerning those of my first Old Baptist contacts at Harmony. They have seemed my standards of the true and only way and I have not seemed to want to accept anything more or less. It seems I have accepted willingly all they offer and without any misgivings whatsoever, but I have felt so many times unworthy of taking the gifts, also like a deceiver. It is good that "cursed is the ground for thy sake." "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee." Thanks be to God the law that decreed death has not prevented Christ. The Old Baptists hope not in man for the just arising, they are the ones that know good and evil and whether we call it good or evil the purposes of God will surely be accomplished. The sin is of us, the righteousness of God, therefore, there will be reigning death from Adam until the last decree. I was once a mighty builder of the towers of Babylon, and once set forth as a true example of the doing of good unto Arminianism, and of the flesh still the same I suppose, but I hope not of the spirit and that God be praised by me in all things for he is surely the Creator and upholder of all things, and "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose". "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted?" Some do of course but that will never be so of the whole for it is salted of God. I will never leave nor forsake thee saith the Lord. The thorns and thistles are the making for purgings. Consider the flesh alone for a

figure. Have we not all in the picking of berries sought paths free of the thorns of the berry bush to gather the fruit that is good? Even so in traveling from one place to another for do we not seek a life of ease without a struggle? God has decreed that we shall not have smooth traveling in flesh or in Spirit "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." There is indeed a continual warfare. I hope that I am one of those that believe God predestinated all things. I also hope that I believe that the forever and ever peace comes not in this life of carnality. The jewels will be polished to final perfection in the day that all things of the flesh are no more, but who except God alone knows that day or season? I would not comfort anyone by saying I knew the date for some would not be quite ready, some would have to begin preparations altogether and some would doubt, but we know that the sure preparedness is not in the realm of man. The acceptance of death by Christ is surely the steadfast witness that all men are condemned to death. The translation of Enoch was surely a witness in figure that Christ could not die. I was once the one that tried to tie spiritual happenings on to certain time elements (dates of men). I suppose I am still guilty of these very things, but the forever, now that I only hear the Old Baptists preach, should fill up my wanted space, and the everywhere present and nowhere absent should surely be my comfort in hearing them proclaim these truths. I truly believe that these wonderful sayings are of God even as all the others they proclaim. I have written several letters of justification on my part to them. It is natural for men to justify one another to be proven right in their own eyes (we do the same), but I hope that the Old Baptists praise only God alone for I am counted among that number by them. Man is indeed those Roman soldiers who accept the bribe to speak untruths. I had better close this rambling letter. Hope I have not written anything untrue. Give my very best wishes to sister Shelton. Hope she is still rejoicing in the Lord. Yours in hope.

Pfc. WALTER L. YOUNG.
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New York, N. Y.

State Hotel, Walla Walla, Wash.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS:

I am old and cannot get out to meeting. I am able to read the Baptist papers and enjoy their contents. I do not consider that I am competent to write or even to claim the privilege of saying brother. I often-times feel that I am the least one if I am of the family. I hope the comments of the brethren are food to me. The servants of God are commanded to feed the sheep and lambs, that is, to feed them that are born of the Spirit, the inner man. When the heirs of God are born they need food, and Jesus said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Who so eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." John 6:53-54. I read where God made man in his image after our likeness and let them have dominion over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. Here is a great liberty and a great mystery. Read James 3:7 which says, "For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind;" yet there are so many of the brutes that seek to kill and destroy. Even a snake will bite a man or an animal, and yet God gave man dominion over them. Man has petted and tamed them from an insect to an elephant. Now read James 3:8. "But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." Man, even in the image and likeness of God, could not tame the beasts that would, even in nature, seek to take the life of a man. Here is another

item to consider. The tongue is far different. No man can tame the tongue and it is full of deadly poison. I consider the serpents tongue is the evil tongue that the living souls met in the garden. They were naked, and none had yet eaten of richness. When God came in the garden he said, "Where art thou?" "Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?" Here is God's enemy that sowed tares. The man could not tame the serpent's tongue. Here the Lord God cursed him above every beast of the field and said, "Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." Here is the only power that can stop the tongue that beguiled the saints or children of God. Read Gen. 3:21-22. "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them." I consider they are covered or wrapped with God's power. "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." I consider when sinners are converted they are shown the Son of God as their Elder Brother, and are given knowledge of the true doctrine. As men of God they can tame the false teachers and set them out on their bellies for the false teachers are of the tares, and the ones that are clothed with God's power can tame all that come to deceive and set up false doctrine. The servant of God sets at his table, eating, drinking and judging. "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Pardon mistakes. I hope to remain in union and fellowship.

(Elder) PETER JONES.

Topsham, Maine

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:

This is my third attempt to write you. Each time I feel so empty of spiritual life. I still have the joy of a wonderful Association last fall. It was surely food for a hungry soul like mine. I never tire of hearing God's wonderful salvation preached in all its purity. *Evidence of a new birth* in the November *Signs* was a comfort to this poor sinner where it said: "Why do I find in me so much vanity and vexation of spirit? Why do I walk through so much darkness, coldness and barrenness, and why am I beset with so many cruel doubts and fears? Why have I carnal propensities to do the things which I would not?" I think I have myself well in hand when off I go into that awful uncharitable way, all my good points are gone and I am worse than before. Why is there a law of sin that is in my members and suffered to remain? I remember the day of my baptism, how free I felt from sin and it lasted for weeks until I thought all my sins are gone and I will sin no more, but when I found that sin was still there and I had a fight to make, it was hard and I have at times felt and said, "why was I ever born?" If God sees me as I see myself I feel that I am lost, but it says, "Happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty, for he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole." I know I often have to be chastised and it is good for me for if I was not and without it, it is said, "then are ye bastards, and not sons." Being alone so much I have much time to examine myself, and I find nothing in me to merit any esteem from my Maker, and still I find he has been thoughtful of me all of these more than three score years and ten. We have not had any meetings since the Association. I did not get to the North Berwick meeting. Was sorry but it was not to be. Hope this finds you and your family well, and God's blessings to yo and yours. With much christian love and fellowship.

(Mrs.) RACHEL C. POTTER.

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630 Sherwood Road, N. E., Atlanta, Ga.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON, if a poor worm such as I should presume to claim kin with you and the household of faith: I must write you a few lines. I do not know how many times I have made the attempt in the last two months. I write today and read it over tomorrow and find so many mistakes and it sounds so weak and senseless I tear it up instead of mailing it. David said in his prayer, "Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O Lord." Oh! how often have the sins and follies of my youth loomed up before me and how often have I resolved that such will not occur again. Surely as I grow older these loathsome thoughts and deeds will pass and I will find peace and quiet in my old age. Today is my sixty-fourth birthday and I find I am just about as good or free from my youthful sins as in years past. I opened the book this beautiful Sunday morning and it so happened (?) I find myself reading the 7th chapter of Romans. I do not know whether I have had any experience of grace or not, certainly I have not had such as Paul had, but he wrote my experience in this 7th chapter, and in the last two verses he edifies me with these words, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Yes, but how about me, am I in Christ? In the 14th chapter of John, Christ talking to his disciples who seemed to be troubled (it appears to me that the world is not troubled in this day with the same trouble that troubled the disciples but somehow I feel that I have that same trouble) said, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you." I turned on the radio just now and heard a preacher of one of the big churches in Atlanta pleading to the people to make up their minds and decide at this very moment whose side they will fight on — God's or the Devil's. He compared it to America being on God's side and Germany on the Devil's, and said it was just as easy for them to decide which side they wanted to fight on. If that is the case what a pity those poor Germans did not decide to be born in America. Those preachers do not seem to be troubled with the same trouble that troubled Christ's disciples. Dear brother Dodson please cast the mantle of charity over my weakness and pardon my errors. What I really wanted to do was to send this check to continue my *Signs* for another year, subscribe for my sister and $1 to aid in sending the paper to some one else. Your humble servant,

W. W. JACKSON.

Bassett, Va.

DEAR ELDER DODSON AND MUCH LOVED BROTHER FOR CHRIST'S SAKE:

I am sending in my dues that should have been sent long before now. $2 for the past year and $2 more for 1945. Also $1 to use as you think best. I am really sorry this has been postponed as it has for I surely enjoy the *Signs of the Times* more than I can express. I especially liked the editorials of Oct. 1944. Elder W. D. Griffin on Jacob and yours about music in churches and concerning infants. I feel you were both directed by the Lord of Hosts. I often wish I had a gift for writing but I have not. Just thankful I have a mind to enjoy the good articles I read. I realize from whence the understanding comes. From one who loves the *Signs* and its writers. In hope,

(Mrs.) G. T. FRANKLIN.

2502 Grand Ave., Huntington Park, Calif.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER:

I am enclosing two dollars to be used on my subscription. I am two or three months behind and am very sorry, please forgive me. The *Signs* is a very old and dear friend and comforter to me, also an instructor and guide. I hope I appreciate the kindness of those who take time and thought to write for its pages. In these days of increasing turmoil and strife, heartaches and tears it is a comfort to read and to draw our little minds from the cares of the day. I do hope and pray the Lord will watch over all who touch its pages in any way. I am your sister I hope.

(Mrs.) ETTA DONLAVY.

Merryville, La.

DEAR EDITORS AND PUBLISHER:

I am in arrears for the *Signs*. Please find money-order for 1943 and 1944, the balance to help the paper. I enjoy reading after the able writers and hope to endorse most of them. We can only see as we are given understanding, therefore, I do not fall out with those whose views do not agree with mine. I heartily endorse Elder L. L. Schenck's article and also Elder Dodson's views on Ps. 127:1. My health has been very poor but I am better now. With best regards and best wishes for the *Signs* and its staff. Your unworthy brother I hope.

J. PAUL McMILLIAN.

Cedar Hill, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Enclosed you will find check for $2 for which amount please renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. I never get to hear any real preaching, and the dear old paper is a great comfort to me in these trying times. I have three sons in the service and I lean heavily on the Lord. I hope I am your sister in Christ.

(Mrs.) L. B. HANELINE.

811 University St., Mineola, Texas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am enclosing $2 for renewal of our subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. I am sorry I have neglected to send it in sooner but there are so many things to torture our minds these days. I sometimes wonder how we have reason and judgment enough to carry on our daily tasks. We, too, are anxiously following the news and hoping to hear something that might be some encouragement, but we will have to wait until it pleases our heavenly Father to speak peace to the troubled waters. It is my desire to heed the admonition "be still, and know that I am God." We enjoy reading the *Signs* and appreciate your sending it after the time had expired. With best wishes to you and all the other good writers, and all who enjoy reading the paper.

(Mrs.) J. B. WHITE.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

D. H. Bradley, Tex., $4; C. W. Williams, Ill., $1; Mrs. M. E. Holloway, Md., $4; A friend, N. Y., $1; Mrs. M. C. Jameson, Tex., $2; J. N. Wageonheiser, N. Y., $1; F. H. Richardson, Ia., $23; Mrs. M. J. Disharoon, Del., $3; C. Willard Dodson, Va., $6; Mrs. J. Clifford, Wash., $1; Mrs. R. B. Shortridge, Ill., $10; Miss C. M. Duffus, B. C., $3; Miss Sara Leedom, Pa., $3; J. W. Black, Can., $1; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $1; Mrs. J. Jefferson, Tenn., $1; Mrs. B. H. Shearon, Tenn., $1; W. S. Alexander, Ark., $1; Mrs. L. R. Elgin, D. C., $1; A friend, N. Y., $1; F. Johnson, W. Va., $1; P. H. Hearne, Del. $1; A friend, Mich., $3; Mrs. C. W. Anthony, N. C., $1; Mrs. Sallie Vinson, N. C., $1; Mrs. D. O. Yeisley, Wash., $1.

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2—That when your remittance reaches us before the 15th of the month, credit will be shown with the next issue of the paper, otherwise it cannot be shown until the second month following. This also applies to changes of address.

3—That notices of Special Meetings should be sent to us at least thirty days in advance of the month in which the meeting is to be held.

If our readers will be kind enough to observe the foregoing suggestions they will aid us very materially in getting out the paper.

R. L. D.

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. MARCH, 1945

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P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

"Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones. And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God." Zech. 13:7-9.

The inspired word recorded by the prophet, brings to mind the words of Jesus when he said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." John 5:39. And when the inspiration was given to the prophet, the sword that was to rise up against the Son of God, when the time came for him to suffer for the sheep of God of which his Son was the keeper and their shepherd, he stood for them from before the foundation of the world, and all the captivity that should befall them. God the Father held his Son responsible, and he must redeem them from all iniquity, and his soul must be made sorrowful unto death. He had a baptism to be baptized with that should accomplish the deliverance of the sheep of God's pasture. "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how I am straitened till it be accomplished!" Luke 12:50. To our mind these words embrace bearing the cross for the transgression of the sheep from the time he entered the world until the time came for him to suffer on the cross and die for them, for it was on the cross he cried out, "It is finished," which to our mind was the sword that had been prepared to slay the Lamb that should take away the sin of the world. Jesus was bearing the cross all the time he was on earth in the flesh, for he was realizing the work his Father gave him to do, and at the age of twelve years he openly manifested his wisdom and demonstrated to the wisdom of the world the infinite wisdom that was in him and such wisdom they had never contacted before. This is the man that is my fellow for I was ever with the Father as one brought up with him, "and without him was not anything made that was made." John 1:3. When Jesus was smitten for the sins of his people, his disciples were so overthrown in their feelings they did not know what to do for wicked men had taken and crucified the Lord of glory, and all their hopes of inhabiting the kingdom of Jesus Christ were overthrown. They had nowhere to go and all their time was spent in mourning until the end of the third day Jesus rose from the dead, and thereby begat them unto their lively hope, and we have the gladness of the heart of the apostle Peter. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." I Peter 1:3. "I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." The prophet expressed the power of God that should be manifested to the apostles on the day of Pentecost, and to all of like precious faith which embraces every poor sinner that is quickened by the spirit, that has had

all their strength taken which was once thought could bring salvation from sin and make them heirs of God. What wonderful change is brought when the poor sinner feels he has no strength and is lifted up, it would seem soul, body and spirit, for then he is no longer suffering the weakness felt in his flesh, his mind is exercised and understanding is given, so the glory of God is beyond description. The wonderful sermon preached by the apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost was felt, seen and understood by all that heard him, and no doubt they felt the hand of God that raised Jesus (their Lord and Master) from the dead. He was alive and in heaven with God, at his right hand to intercede for them. We hope his hand has been turned upon us. God's little ones realize the cutting off of the two parts which we feel are the wisdom of this world or the carnal mind, and the acts of the mortal creature for justification before God. The third part, the soul or the spirit, shall be left therein, "and I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried." We note the pronoun them which gives a plural number that shall be refined and tried as silver and gold. This would give the carnal mind to surmise that it was expressing that the third part of the people of this world was what was under consideration. We would call attention to the words of divine truth which testifies, "They shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God." Referring to the third part, the soul of every sinner that shall be saved must be born again before he has any knowledge of God or godliness, and when the quickening power of God is demonstrated in the heart the two parts are cut off and the spirit is alive, and made to live by the faith of the Son of God. They shall all be taught of the Lord, so every one has the same life, faith and hope. If there is one in a multitude that has that virtue, Jesus knows of it, and no other one in the multitude could percieve it. All such call on his name and he hears them. He answers their cry which is the cry of the destitute. The prophet says, "I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God." The prophet, by the Holy Ghost, was constrained to express the words contained in our subject which should be manifest in the people of God all through the gospel day. Everyone that is taught of God says, "The Lord is my God." Dear reader, it is sweet to feel these things in this day of sorrow and feel the Lord is our God and has provided for all things, and will bring his people off more than conquerors, triumphant over death, hell and the grave, and as long as we have such realizations in our hearts we will call on his name (Jesus) and all his name signifies. He will do for them for they are his people. "The Lord is my God." We often tremble when we have nothing to bring to his bride to decorate her with jewels or bear some sweet message from him direct to her which would make her glad and rejoice in his love. We know without him we can do nothing, which is a positive declaration, "the Lord is my God" for he can give and take away, and he can bestow or withhold which makes him all in all. We humbly hope what we have written will find an amen in the hearts of the readers of the *Signs of the Times*, for we believe those who support and read the *Signs* are the true believers of the Lord Jesus Christ, and we should not be deceived, they are our kinsman in Christ Jesus and have truly felt the words of the prophet which we have quoted to you. Dear brethren, if you have felt the suffering of sin, and have been made to testify truly, salvation is of the Lord, you know there is no other way, truth or life but Christ Jesus and by this you declare, "the Lord is my God." It is very easy to speak the truth when we are ex-

ercised by the SPIRIT, but hard to talk about it without the SPIRIT. As we are ushered into this New Year we feel a deep solemnity in our hearts for the whole world, and such suffering and bloodshed as has never been recorded in history, and the great sorrow that is being felt in the hearts of the human race for the torture and sufferings of their loved ones, but our God says, "Be still, and know that I am God." Psalms 46:10. May God comfort all that mourn and teach them by his Spirit that they may feel he heard their cry, and he will say, "It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God."

C. W. V.

ASSOCIATIONS

We have been asked by one of our readers to present our views through the *Signs of the Times* on the above subject. As far as we know the actual word is not to be found in the Bible. That does not necessarily mean, however, that the Scriptures oppose God's children meeting together in sacred assemblies for the purpose of worshipping him in Spirit and in truth. On the contrary, we are strongly admonished along these lines. The apostle Paul used the following language in his epistle to the Hebrews: "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised); And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." Heb. 10:23-25.

The Scriptures do not specify how often we should meet, although we have just learned of the fact that there are some Old Baptists who insist that according to Revelation 22:2 the church should not hold meetings oftener than once a month. In our opinion this is in no wise intended to be interpreted to mean any such thing. Like the ordinances of the church, there are no definite number of times fixed for their observance. In writing to the church at Corinth, Paul interpreted the Saviour's intent as follows: "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." I Cor. 11:23-25. It is not so much the frequency in which this ordinance is observed as it is the spirit or manner in which it is observed. Whenever it is engaged in, if we have not the Saviour in remembrance, we are not rightly discerning its significance. We would apply this same line of reasoning to our coming together for holy worship. Regardless of whether it is only one church or a collective group of churches coming together, if the main purpose is not to praise the Lord and to exalt the name of his blessed Son, Jesus, they will be little profited. But when they are gathered together by God's Holy Spirit and can sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh, then will they feel that it is good to be there. We are confident that many of our good brethren join us in wishing that the business part of our Associations could be reduced to a minimum in order that more time might be devoted to the spiritual side. In years past we have attended Associations which were composed of so many churches and there was so much business that those who were sent as delegates actually got to hear but very little of the preaching. In some instances the most unfortunate part of the matter is that the Association as a body appears at least to want to delegate unto itself authority which it does

not possess, that of settling certain church troubles or dictating to the churches how to conduct their own affairs. We have felt it a most wonderful privilege to visit large Associations, where we met good brethren from various parts of the country and heard the different preaching gifts which God has called, qualified and sent forth to proclaim the gospel of his blessed Son. On some occasions we experienced that inexpressible joy which we were assured at the time was a foretaste of heaven itself and there still lingers with us fond memories of the past. On the other hand we have attended Associations where certain Elders and other brethren were assembled in small groups, plotting and planning either how to elect a certain man as Moderator or to prevent some other man from being chosen; or perhaps some minister had preached something, somewhere, sometime, that some one or more did not agree with and they wanted to depose him, or have him excluded. It has made us sick at heart to witness such things and we could but feel that such Associations were a curse and not a blessing to the cause. David said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Herman, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." Psalm 133. When Associations are properly conducted we feel they have a wonderful place among us, otherwise they had better not be held. We have felt that in a multitude of counsel there is wisdom and that where Associations act in an advisory capacity only they are an excellent thing. There is a proverb which reads: "Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety." Prov. 11:14. Where Associations have lent themselves to lording it over the churches, some have either withdrawn from or refused to affiliate with them. There is nothing compulsory about churches combining themselves into organizations called Associations, and we repeat it should be done solely for the purpose of glorifying God and for the comfort and edification of the saints. Only those who are agreed in the first place should so associate themselves together, and once organized they have the perfect right to reject the petition of any church for membership with them, or once in they have the right to refuse to walk with and to withdraw from any church or churches who they feel do not conduct themselves properly. The people of God as individuals, as well as collective groups as in churches, should endeavor to maintain the faith and order of God's house as set forth in the Scriptures. The fact that a certain church does not affiliate herself with some associational body should not necessarily mitigate against her standing in any way, for that is her privilege.

From time to time we hear a great deal said about church sovereignty, and sometimes we fear this is carried too far. Not long ago we heard the following definition of *sovereignty*: "The untrammeled right to take whatever action may be decided upon under any circumstances regardless of the effect of such action." This kind of sovereignty in our estimation applies only to God. The sovereignty even of a nation or state does not carry with it the right to ride roughshod over peoples of other nations and states, for they, too, enjoy certain inalienable God-given rights, and these things should be kept in mind. No church should construe its sovereignty to mean a grant of liberty to do anything and everything she might choose, regardless of consequences to other churches and the cause of truth. There are certain bounds of limitations which should be subscribed to for the

good of all, and often-times conditions circumscribe what those bounds should be. A man in an open field may be at liberty to swing his arms ad libitum, but in a crowded room he is restricted. Where one exercises his liberty to the point that it encroaches upon the rights and liberties of others, he is heading for trouble. Churches should be considerate of each others welfare. The various churches as we view them are in reality all branches of the same true vine, and if they are to bear fruit to the honor and glory of God they will manifest humility and meekness, and thus prove they possess the mind of Christ, their Head. There is in truth but one body, but many members, and they have nothing of their own to glory in. When they glory it should all be of the Lord. We frequently meditate upon the unity of Christ and his people and we can think of no more beautiful type to portray or set forth their oneness than is presented in the words of Jesus as recorded by John: "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." John 15:5. This same Jesus also said: "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." We like to think of the Old Baptist churches throughout the country as being compacted together so that they are exemplified by the human body, which is fearfully and wonderfully made with many members. There is no member so small or insignificant, or so far removed from the head but what its unity with the head is maintained at all times. When the least member, so to speak, is hurt or finds itself in distress, instantly the head has knowledge of it and dispatches some one or more of the other members of the body to administer relief and all is not well until each and every member is restored to its proper place and state. There is such unity and love and fellowship among the saints of God and they are so vitally connected in heart and purpose, that when one sorrows or mourns a gloom is cast upon all, while if there is cause for joy and gladness all rejoice together. What a wonderful evidence this is to us that we are in truth the children of God. If we are begotten of God we will love his people, and we should not mistreat and do injury to those who are near and dear to us. Read the testimony of the King of kings as set forth in Matthew 25:31-46 concerning his loved ones, and remember that whatsoever we do unto one of his little ones is done unto him, whether it be good or bad, and woe be unto us if we offend one of his little ones. It would be better for us that a millstone were hanged about our neck and we cast into the depth of the sea than that we should wound the Lord's anointed. We truly hope that we know something about that tie that binds our hearts in Christian love and have experienced the fact that the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above. If in our associations one with another we can keep in remembrance these things, we shall do well. We will close by quoting the last verse of Hymn 631, Beebe's Collection:

"O may his meekness be my guide,
The pattern I pursue;
How can I bear revenge or pride,
With Jesus in my view?"

R. L. D.

CORRESPONDING CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by sister Flossie I. Faulkner)

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Shokan, Ulster Co., N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, September 13th and 14th, 1944, *sends christian greetings to all with whom we correspond, and to all who love the truth and hope in the mercy of God.*

DEAR BRETHREN AND KINDRED IN CHRIST: — We have been spared by the mercy of a covenant-keeping God to again meet as an association, and the writer was appointed by vote of our last association to write the Circular Letter for this year. I will make the attempt, trusting to the God of all wisdom to direct my mind, and feeling my own weakness and inability to write anything worthy of consideration to the household of faith, unless directed by the Lord's Spirit.

Each time this duty has come to mind the words have come to me, "But the mercy of God is from everlasting to everlasting." I hope to touch just a bit upon that, but fearfully, for to me it is a vast sea. No man by searching can find out God, for he hath mercy upon whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. What an unmerited favor if we feel that he has opened our eyes to spiritual things so that we can say, "I was once blind, but now I see." We are all the children of wrath, even as others, and could never put ourselves in position to gain mercy or favor of God, for by Adam's transgression we are all dead in trespasses and sins from our natural birth. But the wind bloweth where it listeth, and when in the Lord's time we are taught by his Spirit that we are vile transgressors before a holy God, it is then we are brought into fellowship with Peter when the Lord said to him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." It is the mercy of God which was stored up in Christ from before the foundation of the world, which is being manifested to us at such a time, although it may be a very dark time to us and we understand it not then.

It is written in Isaiah 65:9: "And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it." Again the mercy and unmerited favor of God, for his elect are his even when they know him not but are made manifest in time. They are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. He who is God of all the earth hath chosen a people for himself from everlasting and given his beloved Son as a propitiation for their sins, that he might be their wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. Man was not formed when the Lord declared, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." "It is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Is this not the mercy of God from everlasting? And the words under consideration declare it is to everlasting.

When the Lord and Savior of sinners was here in the flesh and knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, he told his disciples, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." John when on the isle of Patmos saw a great multitude which no man could number of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stand before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands, and they cried with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb." These who cry, "Salvation is of the Lord," are the ones who received *mercy* and their mouths are filled with his praise. They have been elected to this salvation and have the promise that where He is, there they may be also. The Word declares that He who is their Savior and salvation hath neither beginning of days nor end of life. Surely this is to everlasting. If it is his will, may the Lord enable us all to realize that his mercy is from everlasting to everlasting.

These few feeble remarks are offered to you for your consideration and if there is anything amiss cast it aside. May we who profess that we know such a God,

bow in submission to his divine Providence, acknowledge his superior wisdom and still our tongues from murmuring at Omnipotence, for he is God, and there is none else, and he will do all his pleasure. May he give us all a mind to worship and adore him for his wonderful *mercy* to the children of men.

We have welcomed your messengers and believe that God's called ministers have dispensed of the riches of his kingdom. We desire a continuance of your correspondence, and pray God to continue to shed his love abroad in our hearts that his name may have all the praise.

Arrangements for the next Association will be published in the *Signs of the Times*.

Finally, dear brethren, farewell.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
EDWARD K. ADSIT, Clerk.

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Whereas, it has pleased God to remove by death our beloved brother in Christ, BEN EVANS, deacon of Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church, therefor be it

Resolved, that in the death of brother Evans the church at Malmaison feels her loss deeply. He was a great blessing to the church of God, being favored with a kind and gentle disposition and a wisdom from above that enabled him to be of much comfort to his church. Truly he was a lovely man and filled the office of deacon well. He was ever ready to defend the doctrine of God our Savior with sincerity, yet without striving. His family, church and community will miss him greatly.

Resolved, that we desire to bow humbly in submission before Him, who doeth all things well, believing the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be His name.

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be sent the bereaved family, a copy to the **Signs of the Times** and a copy to be spread upon our minutes. Done by order of Malmaison Church, Pittsylvania County, Virginia, Saturday before the first Sunday in November, 1944.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER, Moderator.

OBITUARIES

LIEUTENANT JAMES WALLACE BLACK, dearly beloved eldest son of James W. and Annie Louise McColl Black of Winnipeg, Manitoba, was born in London, Ontario, April 15, 1920, and was killed in action at Torres cross roads near Rome, Italy, May 30, 1944. He was married at St. Thomas, Ontario, July 13, 1942 to Dorothy Mary Eckton of Winnipeg, by Elder George Ruston of Dutton. In October 1942, while home on leave, he was suddenly called from us back to duty and immediately proceeded to England, and in July 1943 on to the war zones of North Africa, Sicily and Italy. Having been injured while on the Ortona front in eastern Italy in November 1943 he was sent to a hospital at Naples for three months, later rejoining the armored corps on the western Italian front, going through some of the most severe fighting without hurt. On May 30, five days after their hardest battle of the Melfa River, while leading his squadron of tanks toward Rome, his tank suffered a direct hit and Lt. Black and six men, entire occupants of the tank, were killed instantly. According to word received from many, including the Colonel of his regiment (the Lord Streatheona's), a great gloom was cast over all for Jimmie was loved and respected by every one of his men, and the other officers, as kind and sympathetic, and a well trained and efficient officer. He was buried with his companions in the corner of a little country church yard near where he fell, while the members of his regiment sorrowfully attended. After this awful conflict is over his mortal body will be moved to a final resting place to be selected by our government. While we mourn for our son that we shall see his face no more, we are made to realize how short is the span of man's life, and to know that Jimmie had lived a very full life in his short twenty-four years on this earth. Before going overseas Jimmie requested the army chaplain to baptize him, not into any church denomination, but as he said, confessing his faith in the living God and Jesus Christ his Son. Thus he went away to the war confident that the Lord was with him and no matter what was in store for him, all was well, let God's will be done. After witnessing the horrors and atrocities of modern warfare, he wrote just before the end, that a wonderful peace had come to him over all this, and that if he were not spared to return to us he would go in sure and certain hope of the resurrection, so we feel confident that he fell asleep in the love and safe-keeping of his Savior. Jimmie was a student at Manitoba University and a member of the Officer's Training Corps before enlisting in the Overseas

Army, and was active in sport, musical and literary affairs. Besides his wife and small daughter, Dorothy Anne, and his mother and father, he is survived by two brothers, and two sisters: Gilbert Duncan, Muriel Elisabeth and William Theodore all at home, and Mrs. George Snowdon, Bield, Manitoba. He was a great grandson of Elder William L. Beebe and great-great-grandson of Elder Gilbert Beebe, founder of the "Signs of the Times". May God have all the glory and praise. His father.

JAMES W. BLACK.

MRS. FRANCES PALMER HART died at her home in Needmore, Pa., December 29, 1944. Mrs. Hart was a daughter of Thomas R. and Maria (Morgret) Palmer. She was born Feb. 15, 1860 and was the eldest of a family of six. Her husband W. Frank Hart died a number of years ago. She was the mother of three children, Mrs. Esta Cunningham, Hagerstown, Md., Prof. Floyd T. Hart, West Chester, Pa., and Mrs. Katharine Park, Washington, D. C. There are seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild. The following brothers and sisters, Mrs. J. C. Mellott, Dr. J. J. Palmer, Needmore, Pa., Prof. B. N.. Palmer, Portage, Pa., Mrs. J. W. Lake, Paris, Ill., survive. (Mrs. Harriet Dixon, deceased). Mrs. Hart was a devoted member of the Primitive Baptist Church. Her home was widely known among the church people for a place of entertainment and hospitality. Not only was it known to church people but to neighbors and young folks the home of "Frances" Hart was a synonym for hospitality and friendly gatherings. Her father was veteran of the Union Army during the Civil War. She related that she had a faint recollection of his return home at the close of the war and she did not know him. Early in life she imbibed the spirit of patriotism of a true American and she did not complain when her son enlisted in World War I. When the Teacher's Summer Normal Schools were held at Needmore, her home was a gathering place for students, and many of Fulton's former teachers carry a friendship and high regard through the intervening years. Mrs. Hart's sympathy for the poor and unfortunate was demonstrated by her gifts, contributions and acts of kindness. Her devotion to her family, to her church, her patriotism, her support of the public schools, her ministering to the poor and unfortunate are virtues of character that filled a long and useful life. Elder T. W. Alderton, her pastor, officiated at her funeral, using for his text, Matthew 26:6. Sent for publication by brother,

JEFF C. MELLOTT.

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each 1st Sunday, 11:00 a. m. and Saturday before.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday.
AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles South of Dotha, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before 11 a. m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Mt. Gilead Primitve Baptist Church, located 5 miles North of Hartford, Ala., holds services each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching Elders F. A. and J. J. Collins on Saturday, and Elder J. J. Collins on Sunday.
A. E. SORRELS, Clerk.

Hopewell Church, Ozark, Ala., meets each 4th Sunday, 11 a. m. J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Beulah Primitve Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday at the end of Old South Three Notch St., Troy, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canda, California.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday, Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before.
E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

Pleasant Valley Church, Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc.)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. E. M. TACKETT,
J. S. HUNNICUTT, Pastors.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY
Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue. Take elevator to second floor.
11.00 a. m. 1:30 p. m.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.
(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.
C. W. BOND, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 a. m.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.
W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. G. E. Rushing, co-pastor.
C. B. TEAGUE, Pastor.

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets third Sunday in each month at 11:00 a. m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house.
ELDER C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Danville Primitve Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before. Bradley Road, Danville, Va.
W. R. DODD, Pastor.

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meet each first Sunday 11 a.m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3032 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va. R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.
R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m. C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 113 RUTHERFORD, N. J., APRIL, 1945 No. 4

Covin, Alabama

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,
DEAR ELDER AND EDITOR:

I am in receipt of a letter from Elder W. N. Green of Altus, Oklahoma, in which he uses a scripture as a text that I used but recently. I find that his views upon this text coincides with my understanding so very much that it has been a great source of comfort to me, and I hope and believe that it would be good news to many of the family circle who read the *Signs of the Times*. I am, therefore, with the consent of Elder Green, enclosing the letter for your consideration for publication. Providence arranged or appointed a place and time for the meeting of Elder Green and myself last fall. I certainly did endorse his preaching, also witnessed the fact of the endorsement of the doctrine he advocated by many very good and dear brethren. I have just received my December issue of the *Signs* and enjoyed the articles contained therein very much. I humbly hope that the great God of heaven and earth, who doeth all things well, may continue to bless the Editor and his Associates with the leadership of his spirit, which I trust and believe has ever directed the publication of this family paper. One man may pass from the scene of action, soon be almost forgotten, but the same God who directed him directs another to carry on, and thanks be to his adorable name it being by the same spirit in the one as the other, God's humble and poor children are enabled to feast upon the fruits of that spirit in every generation. I am enclosing $2 for my renewal, asking that you extend my subscription accordingly. Yours very unworthily,

(Elder) H. M. BROCK.

Written by Elder W. N. Green

ELDER AND MRS. H. M. BROCK,
COVIN, ALA.

Our Dear Brother and Sister in the Lord, we hope: We received your good letter and will assure you it was read with interest and great pleasure. It makes our hearts glad when we reflect, and go over again the happy place that God had appointed for us to meet. I am glad and appreciate that appointment, for I hope that our souls have been knit together in that love of God that can never be destroyed. Your manner and gift of preaching was very edifying and comforting to my poor hungry soul, and I hope the same God has appointed another meeting place where we can sit together in an heavenly place, and stand together in that sacred place where man's ability is taken away and no one, save the true minister of God has any right. My suffering has been greater than I can tell, but I am thankful to say I am much improved and hope to be back to my usual health as soon as God wills it so. Brother Brock I am housed in and expect to be the greater

part of the winter. If I should take a scriptural text and write upon it, as the Lord may direct, I hope you will not think it imprudent on my part, desiring that God direct my mind and pen. I desire that the rest of my days on earth be filled up with the glorious things of a sovereign God and his unchangeable promises to the fallen sons and daughters of Adam's race. The scripture that I desire to quote is found in Ecclesiastes 3:14-15 which read as follows: "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever." (That means, to me, that God retains in his being, past, present, and future, without the slightest deviation in any event.) The latter part of this verse establishes that fact, for it says, "Nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him." Then, the things of heaven and earth and beneath the earth must stand as God hath fixed them, and the reason seems to be that men should fear before him. Yes, our God is the God that created all things by the mighty power of his word. Nothing to falter or be changed, but everything shall stand as God has fixed it. He is the first great cause of all things. I believe you understand that the world does not fear God, but there is a people that does fear God. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." "Serve the Lord with fear!" "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man," and that fear comes through the knowledge of the wondrous God that has said, "I am God, and there is none else; I am God and there is none like me." Oh, wondrous power that gave being to everything in heaven, in earth, in the sea and in all deep places. He made all things and by him all things consist. Yes, and men do fear before God. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever." Oh, wondrous assurance of the mighty works of a mighty God! "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Oh, what a field to look over when God is pleased to open up to our feeble minds just a glimpse of his power and the unchangeableness of his will. A world made by him and for him. Nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it, then, it must stand unchanged, and to my mind, that embraces an unbreakable chain of events, embracing in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, and the earth was without form and void, and the darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. Oh, wondrous invisible God! Who was there to oversee or help out in this great undertaking? He just did it by himself, and it is the same heaven and earth that exist today. God said, "Let there be light: and there was light." That was not just a suggestion, but a command. "And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night." Both stand today just like God said in the beginning. Travel on down to the end of the first chapter of Genesis. You will find these embracing what God hath done, and I see the things of today revolving back to the things that God did in the beginning. Yes, I am fully convinced that the events of all time are the fruits, or in evidence of the things, that God did in the beginning. The last verse of the first chapter of Genesis reads: "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." Following this statement up with the first verse of the second chapter, he, God, said, "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." Can there be anything taken from or added to what God hath done? I will ask again, who was present and with whom did God take counsel? Who told him to declare the end from the beginning, and

from ancient times the things that are not yet done? Can there be anything taken from or added to the things God has declared? Now let us look at the 4th and 5th verses in the second chapter. "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth (does that mean all of them or just a part) when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, and every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew." In this we see the mighty power, wisdom and knowledge of God. Where did the manifestation of these things originate? Who planted the seed from which the first ones sprang up, and where did the seed come from? Where did the first beast of the field, or fowls of the air, or fishes of the sea get their start? We must stop and say, God, O wondrous God, from whom everything first obtained its first existence, and the way for the continuance or further existence of everything that has a being or life was decreed or fixed by the God of our text and it shall stand forever. Oh, says one, there have been many changes since the early morning of time. Yes, but every change was embraced in his will and wisdom, and was in the beginning with all things, and must stand forever. Let us illustrate how we see it, taking one generation of the heavens and the earth, namely, the fowl generation or creation. The first one existed in the will and purpose of God before it was brought into manifestation, and if he, God, is all wise and perfect in knowledge, he just as surely knew in purpose how many would be the offspring of the first one or ones before even the world was made. Not only this, but in his perfection was a place fixed in purpose for the manifestation of the numbered offspring of the fowl family. No bird has ever been hatched from a nest built in the wrong tree. Is this the truth? Do the Scriptures of divine truth warrant such doctrine? If this is the truth in this case it is also in all others. If it is not the truth, God is not all wise and is not perfect in knowledge. If my text is the truth, and God is the first great cause of all things, and by him all things consist, then I am not afraid of getting God in trouble by ascribing greatness to his holy and matchless name. Let me now repeat my text: "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him." The next verse reads: "That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past." To me this text of scripture is full. The first manifested event of time had already been in God's account, according to God's will and purpose. Let me try to illustrate. Each moment of time is full of events, the world over, that the unchangeable God purposed and decreed would be manifested in time. Then, each moment of time that is past has manifested its allotted events. Then every moment, as they pass, we can say that which has been, is now. Then for the moments to come it is said, that which is to be hath already been, and God requireth that which is past, then we are assured there will be no missing links in the chain of events that God willed, purposed and decreed for time. Surely that which has been and that which is to be, fulfills all time, and, I believe, that every event was in his holy presence in purpose, embracing a holy cause, before the world was made. Paul said, "We know that all things work together for good (to all of Adam's race? No.) to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Precious assurance. I can add that to the list of what God has done that shall be for ever. Here is what God said, through the prophet, "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." I know the world wags its head at such scripture, but that

is just more evidence that they are for God's people. To me it is proof that God has a purpose for everything that exists in the world. God did not create evil because it was evil in purpose, but because it is good for the purpose for which he created it.

(To be continued)

Meditations on
THE BOOK OF RUTH

After dwelling at some length in my previous article upon the "Nearest Kinsman" and "Near Kinsman" we will pass on to the marriage of Boaz and Ruth. "So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife" and when he went in unto her, the Lord gave her conception, and she bare a son. The joy and happiness that came to Naomi and Ruth by the birth of this little son, will never be fully expressed by mortal tongues. Let us go back just a little and review the scene when they left the country of Moab. They were destitute of this world's goods, husbands dead, sons dead and all their earthly possessions gone. Only one little ray of hope, she heard that the Lord had visited his people in Bethlehem Judah in giving them bread. What a long and lonely journey this must have been. Can you not, dear reader, trace out some of the landmarks in your experience? How fitting are the words of the poet:

"Perhaps he may admit my plea,
Perhaps will hear my prayer;
But if I perish, I will pray,
And perish only there.

I can but perish if I go;
I am resolved to try;
For if I stay away I know
I must forever die."

At last the dayspring from on high has visited them. A little son is born. Who can this little son typify but Christ formed in you the hope of glory? His name is Obed; Obed, means serving and how beautifully this agrees with the life of Jesus, who "took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." Phil. 2:7. Our mind is also led to the language of the prophet of old who said, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace-" Isaiah 9:6. Who are the people that will call his name Wonderful? Are they not the ones unto whom this child is born? Surely, they will call his name Wonderful. Is it not a great wonder of wonders to you, that this meek and lowly Jesus would condescend from his high and lofty state of heaven and take up his abode in you? Surely, you will call his name Wonderful. How wonderful are the words of Mary. "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior." Luke 1:46-47. "He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent away empty." Luke 1:53. Is it not true that the same one unto whom this child is born, is the same one that this son is given? His name shall be called Counsellor. Dear child of God, have you not learned the truth of the prophet of old, "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord." And Jesus himself refers to this prophecy and says, "It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God." John 6:45. Notice the number of names he has: "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Is there any peace outside of Jesus? "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." John 14:27. How agreeable are the words of Simeon of old. "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in *peace,* according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Luke 2:29-30. Is it not true that we find *peace* every time we are enabled by the spirit of God to embrace this little son (Jesus)? It is then we can behold him in his beauty and holi

ness. We will now return to the law, which Paul says is "a shadow of good things to come." Remember, dear reader, that a *shadow* is not the reality of anything, but if you will follow it you will come to the substance. May I again quote the words in the fourth chapter and 13th verse, "So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife." How beautifully Ruth portrays the church in the gospel dispensation. She is now married to another, this "near kinsman", "a mighty man of wealth". *Even Boaz.* This little son is born, who is the legal heir of all this vast estate that his father possessed in Bethlehem Judah, which I believe is a faint type of heaven, and all that he purchased in the country of Moab which is a type of the earth. So this Son, Jesus, became heir to all that his Father possessed. Heaven is his throne, the earth his footstool and the cattle upon a thousand hills are his. When this little son was born, the women of the city invoked their blessings upon him, "that his name may be famous in Israel." Can we conceive of any name that will compare with the name of Jesus, except the church? "And this is his name whereby he shall be called, *the Lord our righteousness.*" "And this is the name whereby she shall be called, *the Lord our righteousness.*" Inasmuch as the bride takes the name of the bridegroom, just so the church takes the name of her husband. And inasmuch as Naomi and Ruth looked to his son, Obed, for their natural sustenance, do we not look to Jesus for the joy of our salvation? How true are the words of Peter, "For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. And the apostle Paul in his epistle to the Philippian brethren said, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name," (Phil. 2:9) that in all we do in word or deed, do in the name of Jesus. The women of the city also said to Naomi, "And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life." To find the true meaning of these words, we will only look back in our experience and see that we are not restored back to our former state, for that was a life of toil and labor, as we have before pointed out in the life of Naomi, in her journey from the country of Moab to Bethlehem Judah. But she is now a partaker of that bread on which she has bestowed no labor. See how this word restore compares with the experience of David. "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." David did not ask for salvation, but he wanted the joy of it again. He, Obed, shall be a "nourisher of thine old age." That is, Naomi and Ruth have the full assurance that this little son will unquestionably, out of the abundance of his vast amount of wealth, supply them with all the necessities and comforts of life. What a consoling thought, notwithstanding the fact that she is old and decrepit and going down the steps of old age, she has something to look forward to. This little son will care for me. "Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom." May I repeat the words? "And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age." How beautifully this son typifies the son of God, and listen to his own words: "(For the Lord thy God is a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them." Deut. 4:31. She has now ceased from her labors and entered into rest. How does this compare with your experience, when Jesus Christ was formed in you the hope of glory, and spake peace to your troubled soul in a feeling sense in words and said, thy sins which are many are all forgiven thee, go and sin no more? Now you are no more under the law, but under grace, for the law of the spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus has made you free from the law of sin and death. In bringing this to a close, may I quote the language of the apostle Paul, "For he hath said, I will

never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Heb. 13:5. Again Paul said, "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Phil. 4:19. The apostle did not say he shall supply all your *needs,* but he shall supply all your *need.* When we are clothed and in our right mind, how fully we realize that we *need* Him every moment and every hour.

(Elder) T. FLOYD ADAMS.
Willow Springs, N. C.

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed , not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. 2:12-13.

I have been solicited to give my views on the above scripture that it might appear in the *Signs of the Times.* This scripture has been interpreted in such a way as to cause much confusion and contention among us, but I am, in giving my views, offering nothing that I think to be infallible and with no thought to engender strife, but offering you only my opinion, which I believe to be true. We have heard that the creature was passive in regeneration and active in obedience, but I must say, no, to this declaration, and affirm that the creature is passive under all circumstances to perform any of the things demanded of him, that is right or righteous; so when the expression is used that we work out what God has worked in, cannot be true for we are helpless and dependent upon Jesus at all times for all things. This has been and is now true, and this truth cannot be assailed successfully. But now to the scripture; that the apostle Paul established the church at Philippi in person is, I think, generally accepted, and he continued to remain with them for sometime and baptized these people himself, or someone that was with him, and declared the doctrine of God our Savior to them, and they were established in the doctrine of grace fully; and Paul also set up the order of God's house, not only as to the doctrine, but order and discipline — in other words, what to do and what not to do. Read Phil. 2:1-2-5, and see the apostle's instructions to the church, not as to one individual, but to all the church, so that fellowship might continue. See chapter 1, verse 1, that the church in its entirety was being addressed as he here includes laymen, deacons and bishops; and from verse 5, chapter 2, to the 12th verse, we can all agree that here we see Jesus being declared the captain of our salvation and the head of the church. Then after the apostle Paul departed from Philippi and these brethren that constituted the church in its entirety, he writes this letter to the church in its entirety, and begins the 12th verse by saying, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed;"—note the word "ye" was used instead of you — again the whole church. This does not say that the church has obeyed Paul, but had obeyed those things that the apostle had declared, him being inspired by the Holy Ghost; and this church not only obeyed in Paul's presence, "not as in my presence only" but had been more careful in his absence, for when Paul was with them, they, no doubt depended on his advice to a great degree; but after his departure, they were more careful in who they received into the church; more careful to maintain the order and discipline that they had received at the hands of Paul; and although, all of this was known by the apostle, as he had heard from them, and this church had been mindful of Paul's natural needs, and had been faithful in ministering to these matters, so now comes this, "work out your own salvation". To my mind, in all scripture that is written, nowhere is there any clearer authority for church sovereignty than this. Don't consult this man, or that set of men — don't ask the Association, but attend to your own affairs; the church

alone has the right to say who can come in and who must go out; the only one to say what is order or what is disorder, — but in attending to this, "work out your own salvation." How is this to be done? This is the way the apostle says, "with fear and trembling" — not in a boisterous manner, not because the pastor says so, not because the deacons may say so, not because you have the authority on your side, but "of one mind". Chapter 2, second verse, — attending to all things in meekness and in reverence to our Master, and fearful of doing or saying something that will cause the fellowship to be disturbed, "for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." We see here just why the church has lived through the ages, we see here why it lives and who keeps the church; it was not the apostle Paul who built the church at Philippi, but God, who through Christ, worked in the hearts of all these men and women to come in fear and trembling, and were received and baptized in his great name, into the fellowship of the saints. Now then, how are these things maintained? Do we have to look out and get us a popular preacher, or get us a lot of active deacons and let them tell us what to do, and let them dictate the course and us follow? No, "it is God which worketh in you" in the midst of the church — gives the church the preacher and the deacons, and has never made a failure or a mistake, works in the heart of each member of the church. "Worketh in you," not telling you what you ought to do, but must do, not that he has given us the will, and you must perform the do, but has put a burden on this church, and they must do. Now can the church act in such a way as to cause God to act? No, you can perform all your ritualistic services, make all the efforts you can, but we are told here that God does his good pleasure. The good pleasure of God is enough for us, without it what can be done. In this we live and grow and maintain the good old way. Now brethren, if you can find in your hearts to receive this, do so; if you cannot, I can assure you that I grant you that right, but this is true to me. It may be badly presented but truth will remain. Consider this and may the Lord keep us in fellowship with one another.

(Elder) J. P. HELMS.

Vinton, Va.

(In Ephesians 4:11-16 we read, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." What an infinite variety of gifts God has placed in the church, which is his body. Of a truth, there is one body, but many members, and no two identically alike, but all are for the glorifying of God and the lifting of the name of Jesus on high. We believe brother Helms has rightly divided this portion of the word and that our readers will be edified thereby. Paul in writing to his Philippian brethren said, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Wherever we find the mind of Christ, the head, in the body, the church, we may be assured she will not be taking her troubles to Associations or elsewhere for ajudication, but will in

meekness and humility seek to know the mind of her Lord and keep house accordingly. Sound doctrine and good order are both very much needed in the house of God today. R. L. D.)

(Continued from March issue)

By W. A. Speer

I am aware that the world and the so-called churches of the world today preach a doctrine contrary to this and they claim that the gospel is to everybody; to the whole world, and that any one may or may not believe according to his own free will and notion about the matter; that it is left to him whether he will accept Christ and eternal life; that Christ has died for every one and has done all he can for the salvation of souls and that it is up to each person of his own volition to accept or reject him. So far as I have known during my recollection all denominations believe and preach this to the world, the alien sinner — the unregenerate — except the Old Baptists. The Old Baptists preach an opposite doctrine to that and they preach to the believer. The true believer is the only character that can hear the true gospel in a spiritual sense and he is the only one that has spiritual light and understanding. This scripture does not say, as the worldly preachers claim, that the gospel brings life and immortality to every body or to any body. It does not say that it brings or will bring or that it is offered to every one that will accept it or for that matter to any one at all. But on the contrary it says: "hath brought life and immortality to *light* through the gospel". Not brought about, but brought to light. It is clear that life and immortality is brought to light and is brought to light to some body and it is equally clear that it is not offered to some body or to any body at all. It is not offered but brought to *light*. To bring something to light, it seems to me, there must first be something to bring to light. This life and immortality was already in existence for a people and my understanding is that this scripture means that the fact of it is brought to light to them — made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Who is it that life and immortality is brought to light to? These same people, I believe, who in the previous verse was referred to as being saved and called with an holy calling. It is not brought to light to any other or others, if I have any true understanding of the meaning of the language used. There would be no point in bringing something to light to some one or to any one that could not see. It would not be life and immortality to any other or others than those that were saved and called with an holy calling. It would be foolishness to all others. "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." You will note, it is not the power of God to all that will or may accept him of their own volition, etc., but "which are saved". I believe that refers to a specific people and the gospel brings life and immortality to *light* to those that were saved and called with an holy calling before the world began and none of them are to be saved now or at any time in the future and their salvation is not conditioned, in any manner, upon their self willingness or their own volition to accept it, and as I have already said those that are not saved and called cannot see it, hear it or understand the true gospel. They cannot hear his words. The Saviour said: "Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word." "He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." John 8:43 and 47. Will any others hear? Can any others hear? My answer must be no. No, as the answer, is in accordance with the entire teaching of the Scriptures as I feel to understand them, if I have any understanding in spirit and in truth, and if I know anything about my-

self and my own experience and what I have always been compelled to feel and believe, my view accords with the answer being no. Job asks the question: "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" Job 11:7. I am aware that I do not find where Job answering that question used just the specific word, no, but I am of the view that what he said thereafter in no uncertain and unmistakable terms amounts to his answer being, no. Among other things, Job set forth in the same chapter such statements as show that the answer must be, no. For he says: "It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?" Job 11:8. No the alien sinner cannot find out about God. He cannot of himself attain unto life and godliness. He is helpless to do anything about it if I know and understand anything about the teaching of the Scriptures and my own experience and what I feel to hope I believe. I am unable to escape the belief, ever since I have believed anything, that God has a chosen people; a specific people that he set his love and mercy upon and I verily believe that this is the people Paul had reference to that he had saved and called with an holy calling and not according to their works but according to his own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ Jesus, and not by their now hearing the gospel preached and deciding to accept salvation and not reject it. According to the apostle this choice was made by God and before the world began. Therefore the individual could not and did not have any part in it. These preachers that go about preaching a so-called salvation to the unregenerate and telling them that all they have to do to be saved is of their own volition, to humble themselves and accept Christ as their saviour are, in my humble view, teaching and preaching in direct conflict not only with the above scripture but with all the scriptural teaching that I know anything about. Not long ago, in a discussion of the plan of salvation with a young Missionary Baptist preacher, after I had told him that I believed that God has a chosen people and that they were the ones the gospel was brought to light to and to none others, and that no others could hear or understand it and that no person could of himself acquire a spiritual understanding and spiritual birth, nor spiritual light and knowledge; (all of which seemed astounding to him) he said he believed that salvation was to every one and that the only condition in, and the only requisite for, every one to have eternal life was to humble himself and accept Christ as his Saviour. I am sure he believed that regardless of there being no scriptural authority for it and I am also of the view that he cannot help believing that way and that it is perfectly natural for every one to believe that way unless he is endowed from on high to believe in spirit and in truth. They will tell you that any natural man, alien sinner and every person in the whole world can believe of their own free will and choice in the face of the above scripture in Timothy and in the face of many, many other scriptural truths to the same effect. Their teaching is in direct opposition to the specific statement in Acts 13: 48, "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed." I must believe, therefore, that only those that were ordained to eternal life will believe; that those that were ordained to eternal life are all that believe or have ever believed or that will ever believe. They are the only people that hear the gospel; they are the only people that are enabled to hear and that are enabled to believe, and furthermore they are also unable not to believe. When the appointed time comes they are just as certain to come and just as certain to believe as anything can be. I believe they are the same people that

was spoken of in Deut. 32:9; "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." Yes the Lord's portion is his people and they constitute all of the Lord's people and there is not one of them going to be lost and neither will there be any added thereto by any man or any set of men nor any human agency. I do not believe that any of them will fail to come to Christ. I do not be- that any of them who were ordained to eternal life will fail to believe. The Saviour said; "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me;" and in the same verse he gives the further consoling and comforting promise: "and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Will they not all come? Yes. Will any fail? No. Will he cast any out? No. If we believe the testimony we must say the above answers are correct. Can any others come than these? If so, we have no testimony that says so that I know of. These the Saviour is talking about that shall come and that he will not cast out, I believe, are those that is the Lord's portion and are the same people that were ordained to eternal life and therefore they believe; not of their own volition but believe because they are his chosen people and because they were ordained to eternal life and enabled to believe. They are the same people that were saved and called with an holy calling; not according to their works, no, but according to grace and purpose. Not called now by some preacher or some so-called gospel or some self-decision to accept it, but according to the scripture that choice was not only not made now and not by the individual's own will or decision, but it was made according to grace and purpose and the time it was made was before the world began.

(To be continued)

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113 S. 12th St., Murray, Ky.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: The last month of the old year brings many different thoughts, and I imagine the most sorrow and grief of any year the world has ever passed through. Then, too, some have experienced some happiness they would not change for the whole world. The December issue of our family paper has arrived loaded with glad tidings. Sweet messages from the dear saints of God. To me there could not be one with sweeter messages than the November issue of the *Signs*. Let me say just here you will find enclosed money-order to pay for the paper for the coming year 1945. It is our wish not to miss a single copy while we continue in this life. Time after time we have been feeling so low down in the valley when the postman would come by and leave our family paper at the door, and so soon I would be reading some dear saints experience and my poor heart would be raised up, rejoicing in the blessed, sweet messages from on high. Brother Dodson, this morning while all alone I want to talk to some one, and it looks as though I am taking it out on you, the one that is too busy to listen. O, if I could only be assured that I am one of the little chosen vessels of God. I have read and re-read the article in the December *Signs* written by brother Thomas F. Lewis, entitled "The Bride the Lamb's Wife", and enjoyed it very much. If I could only live as he said, "What kind of lives would we want to be living when Christ comes to take us home to glory." Yes, as we read in the Scriptures, we do not know what hour or minute the Son of God will come. Therefore, we should live every day as though it were our last day. Brother Dodson, who can do that? I must confess I fall very short in living as I should. So often I am found examining myself, and am made to go down in tears begging the Lord for mercy. Then right here is when I rejoice in dear old Paul's experience. I must say since reading the November *Signs* I have wished I was able in a spiritual sense to write to the two dear overseas soldier brethren, Wayland Chandler and Burch Wray. We

rejoice to read of their meeting with brother and sister Wallace of England. O, how wonderful to know that God is everywhere, and to feel the gospel we love does not have to be sent overseas by man and money. However, we understand the little gods are quite busy in securing money to send the missionaries across the sea to save those that are lost unless they have a Bible before them. However, if I understand the gospel of Matthew "not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." Does not the Lord say, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" And then does not the Lord say unto them, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Now since writing this I feel ashamed to send it to one so superior to myself. May it be God's will when you are in prayer to remember this poor, unworthy one. Neither Mr. Chester nor myself are very well. He has some cold and the light stroke I had last July seemed to wreck my nerves. A poor sinner in hope of heaven. We hope you and family are well.

(Mrs.) FANNIE H. CHESTER.

"WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?"

Luke 10:29

For some reason I feel to drop a few lines upon those words that were asked hundreds of years before I was born into this world. I used to think it was the one that lived nearest to me, a natural man or woman, but I hope the Lord blessed me to see differently. Some years ago when feeling condemned of sin I looked to every source in the earth I believe for relief. My earthly parents would have helped me if they could but they could not. At the age of sixteen after feeling for two years that hell would be my doom when I died, I remember very well the night, I turned my head over on my pillow, feeling I was lost and that torment was my home and the God of mercy blessed me to say in my heart — it is just. In a moment a voice seemed to speak in the bed with me saying, Jesus thou son of David have mercy on me. I feel safe in saying I saw the Lord high upon his throne. I feel he came to me and said, all thy sins which are many are all forgiven for the blood of Christ hath cleansed us from all sin. Then it seemed I could say "His train filled the temple." I felt my soul was made free and I loved the things that He loved. I have a little hope that the good Samaritan came where I *was* and took me with his own *power* and carried me to the *inn* and paid all that I owed. This it seems would be enough for any poor, condemned sinner, but I want you just to think one moment, if the Lord will bless you to do so, of the promise he left with you for you to live on the rest of your life and if you owe any more I will pay that when I come again. Let me ask one question in love. What did he leave for you and me to do about this? I am confident free salvation is the only doctrine that has ever reached any poor sinners case, and this is what it takes to make free salvation to me, and now "Who is my neighbor?" He is coming again with power and glory and I am satisfied with the Scriptures when I am blessed to see and feel the truth of them in regard to his coming again. The graves shall give up their dead and the saying shall come to pass, "O grave, where is thy victory?" I feel to say in love to the household of faith that our victory is already won and by our Neighbor. Those for whom Christ died he paid all they owed. He will gather them all together from all parts of the world into that glorious city, Heaven. Then they can sing with the poet as they never sang before — "When I can read my title clear to mansions in the skies." I feel that my letter is almost too long, but I just want to say this to the beloved, your tears and sorrows will all be over.

This is a glorious hope to me tonight as I am blessed to feel my weakness and unworthiness. I am trusting I hope in One that has paid all I owe and is "my neighbor". Your unworthy brother if one at all.

(Elder) T. H. EDWARDS.

Jacksonville, N. C.

Rout 1, Hammond, W. Va.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS:

If the Lord wills I will, in my weak and poor way, write some on the great plan of salvation. When God told Moses, his servant, to command the children of national Israel to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord which he was going to show them, they were also commanded to hold their peace, to be still, cease their crying, be quiet for I promised to bring you out of the land of bondage. I have said of you that you should be evil entreated for four hundred years, then I will judge that nation, and I will visit you and bring you out with a mighty hand because I do make a difference between you and other nations, and I am going to show them what I do for not a dog even shall move its tongue against any of the children of Israel. I will open a way for Israel, my servant, to go through the Red Sea, and I will harden Pharaoh's heart and he will pursue them and then I will overthrow the horse and rider into the sea and bring Israel out safe on the other side. I will show them my salvation and get me honor upon Pharaoh, because it was my purpose that Joseph was sold by his brethren down into Egypt so that I could bring them out, because I have shown Abraham that his seed should be evil entreated four hundred years. My salvation is free for them for the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head for he beguiled Eve in the garden and she did eat of the tree which I commanded Adam not to eat and told him in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. Yes, in the day, not in the night, but in the day that thou eatest thereof (Adam) thou shalt surely die. So he ate and did die as the Lord had said, died in sin and he must be quickened and made alive before he is fit for heaven. Then he must have a change of heart, or a new heart given him in the new birth, the vile body is changed in the resurrection, then he is a fit subject for heaven where God's throne is. Stand still children of Israel and see my salvation. I will be with thee, O be not dismayed. I will show thee my glory, that I love thee above all the nations of the earth. Yes, Jacob have I loved and Jacob shall be called Israel. Esau have I hated and his name was called Edom, the people whom the indignation is against forever. So my salvation is for Israel and not for Edom whom I have hated and my salvation is forever against. No salvation, no forgiveness, no atonement for them. They are the unbelievers who shall not enter into my rest for the work was finished from the foundation of the world. Jesus stood as a lamb slain, yes, slain for the sins of my people who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be made holy and without blame before him in love. I will show Israel my salvation and his salvation is the Lord Jesus Christ because Simeon, in the temple, said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation." The Lord is our salvation and our hope and we are saved by hope. In the Acts of the apostles we read that a certain damsel said, "These men are the servants of the most high God, which show us the way of salvation," when they were declaring Jesus the Son of God. You see then, we must have eyes to see with before we can see his salvation which is Jesus Christ, and we hear the apostle saying, "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste

death for every man." Yes, for every man. Not vipers, goats, swine nor dogs but every man unto the sons of men do I call. Jesus was the Son of Man as well as the Son of God, so every living man whom the Lord quickened into life, Christ the first fruits then those that are his, they shall see him and behold him. They are his children given to him in the covenant of grace. Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for them, let them be Jew or Gentile for as many as were ordained to eternal life, no more no less, and this eternal life is in his Son, so he that hath the Son hath eternal life. Then salvation is for those who were chosen in him before the world began, called with an holy calling and that not according to their own works, but according to his own will, so he determined and wrote in his will the heirs of salvation and willed to them his inheritance. It is theirs and it is given to them to know the mysteries of his kingdom but unto others it is not given. They cannot understand these things because Jesus thanked his heavenly Father for hiding these things from the wise and prudent and revealing them unto babes because it seemed good in his sight to do this, so then salvation is of the Lord and none can turn him. Salvation is the gift of God. He gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life. Not for them to believe in him in order to receive eternal life, but he that already is a believer in him that he, the believer, should not perish. The believer is in a safe condition for he hath eternal life and cannot perish, so it is a great plan of salvation, it is eternal for this eternal life is in his Son and he is their life, "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." This salvation is so great that it took the price of the very blood of Jesus Christ to purchase the church, and as John said, "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Nothing was more costly than the salvation of God bought with the blood of the Lamb of God. No wonder that John, the forerunner of Christ, cried out when Jesus came "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," not this present evil world, the righteous world, when God gave Beersheba and Sheba for national Israel and men's lives for their ransom to preserve them here in time for the jewel that was in the field. The world bought the field for the devils that were in it, so it is no wonder that he bought the jewel with his own blood, because the jewel was of great price and his love so great and strong for the jewel that he even laid down his life for the church that he might wash her and cleanse her for himself, a companion. It is meet that we should make merry, and be glad; and to rejoice over her who was lost but now is found, who was dead but is now alive. The father had two sons, the elder, and the younger who was the prodigal son who represents the church, while the elder represents the legal church under the law. The elder was always with him, not lost nor dead for he was serving, "the elder shall serve the younger". By the law he was his father's son, while the younger, the prodigal, was his son in or by grace for he got his portion by the law and wasted it, and now he gets his portion by grace while the elder had his father's living and no other portion remained for him. So we have life everlasting in the world to come besides the things we get here in this natural life. We have houses, friends, wives children and then besides we have eternal life and a home in heaven above after death, given to us through Jesus Christ. It is not the way of the rich young man who came running and kneeling at the feet of Jesus saying, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" We cannot inherit eternal life in that way, we inherit it because we are heirs

and it comes by the will of God our Father. Jesus did not tell him what to do to inherit life but said, "Go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me." This gave him a different feeling; he went away sorrowful for he had great possessions. The thing most needful was to follow Jesus and he lacked the will to do that for it is God's work to will and to do of his own good pleasure. Mary was not lacking because she sat at Jesus' feet, she chose the good part. Yes, she followed Jesus' instructions and it could not be taken away from her by the possession of worldly goods or self-righteousness. No doubt the rich, young man thought Jesus would give him credit and not cause him to become poor. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." Jesus' disciples did not go away from following him so in the end they shall be perfect because they had eternal life given to them which they never did anything to inherit. God gave them their inheritance in his will, they being his heirs and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. It is the work of God that ye believe on him, and it is also the work of God that ye follow him, and that ye do sell all that ye have and give to the poor. How needy we are, would we not gladly sell what we have and give to the poor if it be only a cup of cold water. We must forsake all or we cannot be his disciple, Our own bread and our own apparel will not entitle us to inherit eternal life with all we do; that is only our duty and we are still unprofitable servants. We have only done our duty. Come follow me. My sheep follow me but you go away because ye are not of my sheep and my word hath no place in you. How rich those seven women are who have their own bread and their own apparel to wear. The seven women represent all others outside of Christ's bride, his wife. She is the only one of her mother. She is the king's daughter dressed in fine needlework, in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, clothed and clean. Yours in hope of eternal life.

(Elder) JAMES W. LINN.

Route 5, Union City, Tenn.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Find enclosed check to pay my past due subscription also to renew my subscription for one more year, the balance you may use in any way you see fit. I trust that you will pardon my delay in sending in my renewal. I had thought that I would not take the paper any longer, but I let you send it so long that I owe you almost one year's subscription now, and, too, I do not see how I can get along without the *Signs*. I want to say to you that the *Signs* is one paper that is consistently sound, always the same. Each issue filled with the eternal truth of God. Not one sound article and the next article filled with Arminianism, but each issue and each article in each issue full of the revealed truth of God. I read some other Baptist papers and they have some very fine, sound articles in them and I enjoy them very much, but they also have some doctrine in them that I cannot take nor understand. In fact they sound like conditionalism to me. The *Signs* always comes laden with the grand old doctrine of salvation by grace for time and eternity. I especially enjoyed the January issue. The article by Elder G. B. Bird on "The Mark of the Beast"; the continued article by Elder Adams on "The Book of Ruth", is rich; Elder W. D. Griffin's letter to Mrs. Callahan is full of the grace of God, and I am sure that the word of God was in Elder Griffin's heart as fire shut up in his bones, he became weary and could not keep from writing Mrs. Callahan that very rich, sweet letter; and I enjoyed it very much; the letter by Elder Bond to his children is rich with spiritual food; Elder Weaver's letter touched me, and may God keep him as the apple of

his eye; I enjoyed your "New Year's Greeting"; also Elder Hunnicutt's article, he is most surely blessed with a great revelation enabling him to comfort and feed God's poor and afflicted children. So, Elder Dodson, I hope that you and all the above mentioned Elders, together with all other contributors to the *Signs* may be spared many more years and be enabled by the grace and love of God to continue to comfort and strengthen the weak of the flock with the same comfort wherewith you yourselves are comforted of God, and by so doing I hope that I, through the *Signs,* may steal away and feed on the fragments or crumbs that have not been consumed by some one else. Must close.

J. W. BARNES.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Mrs. R. Miller, N. Y., $1; J. W. Barnes, Tenn., $2; E. R. West, W. Va., $1; Eld. R. L. Biggs, Tenn., $1; Eld. W. D. Griffin, Ala., $1; J. J. Davis, Ark., $1; Mrs. L. Campbell, Tenn., $1; Mrs. M. Lindsey, Cal., $1; Mrs. L. C. Shafer, N. Y., $1; Mrs. C. W. Hanley, Md., $2; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $3; Mrs. C. E. Tacey, N. J., $3; R. McGough, Ala., $6; A friend, Can., $1; Mrs. E. Mathis, Ky., $2; J. R. Davie, Ky., $1; Mrs. L. N. Henry, Miss., $1.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Elder W. D. Griffin, from Box 383, Fayette, Ala., to Box 4, Covin, Ala.

Elder W. O. Beene, from Freestone, Texas, to 1005 Vincent St., Houston, 9, Texas.

Elder John Neal, from Ewing, Ill., to 125 Warren St., Anna, Ill.

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Elder W. D. Griffin, Box 4, Covin, Ala., would like to obtain the following back numbers of the "Signs of the Times". He will pay a fair price and all shipping expenses.

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We will furnish extra copies of the "Signs of the Times" at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1.00; 12 copies, $2.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

GLAD TIDINGS

We know our readers will be glad to learn brother Waylon Chandler is back in this country. We have late word from him from a hospital in Florida. He was wounded twice in foreign lands for which he is receiving medical treatment. We hope to publish a letter from him later. R. L. D.

EDITORIAL

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P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

CHURCH AND STATE

There is a move on foot throughout the land today to have the Bible taught in the public schools. At first glance most every one would agree that it would be a very good thing, but let us examine the matter further and see whether or not it would be a good thing to do. Those who are today appearing before the school boards of our land, seeking the consent of these boards for the teaching of the Bible in the schools, claim there will be no connection between church and state, because the teachers will be paid with money subscribed and collected b various denominations, and not with funds appropriated by the state. Let us see if in such a practice there will be no such connection, also why Old School Baptists, and others as well, will do well to oppose these moves. In this part of the country the ones who are seeking to have the Bible taught by a teacher paid with funds collected by various denominations are asking the state authorities to pass on the qualifications of the teacher, decide what hours of the day shall be set aside for such teaching, and what part of the building shall be used for it. If this is not connecting church and state what is it? First — religious orders pay the teacher. Second — the state authorities pass on the qualifications. Third — the state decides as to the time and place of teaching. In the beginning it looks like a very innocent thing, but where will it lead to is the question? Little things often lead to big ones and it is from such matters that religious freedom is lost. The Baptist church in this country has not only believed in religious toleration, but religious freedom. I might say here that the Missionary Baptists of our town are actively opposing this move which is commendable. The next objection to such a practice is this — there are minorities among us who do not even use our Bible, the Jews and a number of others. Is it not unfair to them? If the students who do not take part in or receive such instruction are idle part time, will not the state be paying some one as an instructor in other subjects at a time when part of the class is not even being taught? Is this not using public funds for sectarianism, if not directly then indirectly? There is a great difference between reading the Bible in school and teaching the Bible, teaching the people to know God or teaching religion in any sense. Men cannot do that. Jesus said on one occasion, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." His kingdom is not of this world, and never while he was upon the earth did he seek the aid of man or the organizations of men for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, and the world by wisdom knew not God. When the question was asked who men thought Jesus was and Peter said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," "Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." The apostle Paul was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, taught the law, the legal covenant, taught according to the

perfect manner of the law of the fathers and was zealous toward God, yet knew nothing about the Lord Jesus Christ until overtaken on his way to Damascus. After this experience his doctrine was, "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." My objection to the practices mentioned above is not because I know that religion cannot be taught, or one cannot be taught to know God, whom to know is life eternal, but it is against an alliance between church and state. I recommend reading the Bible to all men. It is the word of God, the infallible word. The attempt to teach men to know God in the public schools is a different thing. America has been wonderfully blessed of God for lo these many years to have a separation of church and state, and it is cause for alarm when we see things like this coming. How many times when we enter the house of God in these days do we pause to think of what wonderful blessings we have in America to worship under our own vine. Few nations of the earth can be compared to ours in this way. I do not want it said that David Spangler does not believe in the reading of the Bible. Surely I do, there is no book comparable to it. It is God's word. It contains the only perfect code of laws ever written. We should read it in the home, accept its teachings in preference to any traditions of men, but when it comes to any organization of men having any theory of religion taught in the public schools of our land, to the exclusion of others, it is wrong. Our beloved sons are giving their lives for freedom abroad, shall we not guard our own zealously at home, that where the stars and stripes wave it may speak of a land of perfect religious freedom for all alike.

D. V. S.

ACTS 24:14-15

"But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."

This Scripture is deserving of our most earnest consideration, and in an effort to find the correct interpretation, we know of no better source of information than the Scriptures themselves. Let us, therefore, search them diligently, in the hope of bringing forth that which is embraced in the text. In I Peter 3:18-20 there is a scripture which is somewhat similar and which we believe has a bearing upon the text. It reads: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the *just for the unjust,* that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometimes were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water." We do not understand the non-elect to be under consideration here, and neither do we understand the non-elect to be under consideration in the text. Christ was the *just one* who suffered for the sins of his people who are the *unjust ones* referred to. The purpose for which he suffered was that "he might bring us (the unjust ones) to God," and the *us* here embraces every member of his mystical body which was chosen in him before the foundation of the world, among every kindred, tribe and tongue, whether they were manifested in the flesh before or after Christ came into the world. It was for his very own, no more and no less, that he was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.

In the narrative which precedes our text, we find that it was Ananias, the high priest, who descended with the elders, and with a certain orator named Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul. It should be noted that those who were accusing the apostle were both under and representatives of the law and, therefore, the apostle was answering them in kind, or according to the law. When the apostle was permitted to speak for himself he said unto the governor, "Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself: Because that thou mayest understand, that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship. And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city: Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me. But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, *believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.*" Having denied the charges made against him of disputing with any man and raising up the people, he freely confesses to being guilty of the charge of worshipping God in a manner which they called heresy, but at the same time he contended that he was worshipping the God of his fathers, who were under the law, and that he "believed all things which are written in the law and in the prophets;" that he had hope toward God, which those who were under the law also allowed, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just (Jesus) and unjust (his people) because Jesus' object in coming into the world was to redeem and deliver his people from under the curse and bondage of the law. Did not the law foreshadow and the prophets testify before hand concerning the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that would follow his resurrection? Therefore putting himself under the law, the apostle spake in the future tense, and being of the same faith of his fathers — Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and others, who verily believed the Messiah would come some day to liberate the captive and set the prisoner free, Paul believed these things so firmly and contended for them so earnestly that he was soon to become a martyr for the sake of them. The whole of the legal age, comprising centuries of time, proved unmistakably and conclusively that there was not a single individual among the sons of men who was just or who could keep the law, therefore the term *just* could in no sense of the word be applied to Israel under the law; they were all *unjust* and were justly condemned by the law, which was proven by the law on every count, for in its scales they were all weighed and continually found to be wanting, and there was not a single solitary soul who was able to measure up to the requirements of the law until Jesus came. He honored and magnified the justice of it by fulfilling it in every jot and tittle, and by giving his life as a ransom for those who were held in its clutches and bondage, he became their Redeemer, and presented them unto God, his Father, without spot, wrinkle or any such thing.

The apostle Paul had a very unusual ancestry, and he took occasion to remind his Philippian brethren that "If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law a Pharisee." He frequently resorted to his standing under the law. It was the Pharisees who professed to believing in the resurrection of the dead, and the apostle put himself in their class under the law, but not under grace. The Sad-

ducees were likewise given to quoting Moses when they felt it would serve their purpose, so they said to Jesus: "Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother: Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh. And last of all the woman died also. Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? For they all had her. Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." In declaring that he "believed all things which are written in the law and in the prophets," Paul was at the same time declaring that he had faith in and believed that which God by his own mouth had spoken concerning Abraham, Isaac and Jacob being alive, through Jesus Christ our Lord and, therefore, it was not an incredible thing for him to believe in the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust, for by faith he was enabled to see Jesus as the resurrection and the life of his people. David had spoken concerning Jesus when he said: "Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." Peter tells us specifically in the second chapter of Acts of the Apostles that David spake concerning Jesus, whom they had crucified, but who could not be holden of death.

Do we need to call attention to the punctuation of the language of our text? The fourteenth verse ends with a colon, which shows that the things which followed in the fifteenth verse were a part of what had gone before. In other words, those who worshipped under the law, which kept them in bondage and under the sentence of death, had hope toward God that when the Messiah came, they would have life and liberty through the gospel. Unless we are in total ignorance of the true significance of the testimony of all the prophets, in substance, it was to hold out hope and the word of promise until the Lord would rend the heavens, and come down, that the mountains might flow down at his presence. Isaiah went on to say, "For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him." When the Watchmen were inquired of to tell of the night, they could all unite in saying, "joy cometh in the morning." Paul was only confirming all of this in his epistle to his son in the ministry, Timothy, when he said: "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, *But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel*: Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles." 2 Tim. 1:8-11. The prophet Zechariah had said in the day of his coming, "There shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." It was also this same prophet who had declared, "It shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea." This bears testimony to the fact

that there was but one true offering to be made for sin for all time; only one lamb and that the blessed Lamb of God, whose precious blood alone would suffice or be efficacious in forever putting away sin, not only for those of his people who should follow him in the world but for those who preceded or came into the world before he did. Truly, there is but one Saviour of sinners. There is no discord between this and the two witnesses, the Old and the New Testament Scriptures, one looking forward and the other looking backward, but both testifying to the one fact that Jesus is the only true and genuine substance of all ages of the world for any hope of salvation by his people, regardless of who they are or when they graced the scene of action here in this life.

We are not yet through supplying proof of what we have been trying to present, which while it may seem conclusive to us there may still remain a question in the mind of some one or more of our readers. We will ask that they kindly accompany us over to the twenty-sixth chapter of the Book of Acts. Here we find that Paul's case had apparently been appealed from the governor's jurisdiction to that of the king, which seems to attest its great importance. When the apostle was permitted to speak for himself, with dignity and eloquence, he said: "I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews: Especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently. My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee. *And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews.*" Acts 26:2-7. He was undoubtedly a great master of language, and to our mind he shows clearly that he was putting himself in the same class with the fathers, who were under the law and who hopefully looked forward toward a brighter and better day, and having this hope in him, is it any wonder that he should have asked, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" When one has unfeigned faith in God he staggers at nothing, but believes that all things are possible with him with whom we have to do. Paul followed up his testimony before the king by giving a reason of the hope that was within him and told of his wonderful conversion as he went on his mad journey to Damascus, planning to imprison the saints, but shall we let him tell it: "At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient

unto the heavenly vision: But showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance." Beneath the power of such reasoning is it any wonder that king Agrippa should have said to Paul, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian?" Paul had summed up his case and presented the causes for which the Jews caught him in the temple, and went about to kill him, but he was not yet through, for he was destined to continue fighting the good fight of faith, which he did by saying, "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, *saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentles."* If he was not endeavoring here to show clearly and unmistakably that he stood with the fathers and that he was an eye witness to the things which Moses and the prophets had declared would come to pass, we have to confess we have no understanding of what he was talking about. If our readers will indulge us further, we will try to show more conclusively than ever, if possible, the correctness of our interpretation, and we shall call upon the great apostle himself, than whom there could be no more authoritative witness as to what he actually meant, to substantiate what we have here presented. In I Cor. 9:19-22, the following are purported to be his own words: "For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; *to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;* To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ.) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." If anything could be more definite or plainer we do not know how it could be expressed in words.

With reference to what Paul said in Acts 26:23, we do not understand him to mean that Christ was the first to rise literally from the dead. The record shows that Jesus himself raised Jarius' daughter (Mat. 9:18; Mark 5:22; Luke 8:41); also that he raised Lazarus, who had been dead for four days and buried with a stone over the sepulcher. All scripture having been inspired by the Spirit of God, there is complete harmony and accord and, therefore, no contradiction, when rightly understood. Paul was quoting Moses and the prophets and what he undoubtedly meant, in our humble opinion, was that Jesus was the first to rise from under the death of the law, that he was the first to be able to keep or fulfill the demands of the law, after which the law could have no further demand upon him. The balance of the verse we believe bears this out for it says, "and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles." It was only after he had fulfilled the law in every jot and tittle that the Scriptures were truly illuminated. Not until after his death and resurrection could the Jews understand fully what the prophets had written about, or the Gentiles were brought in and made fellow-citizens with the household of faith. The burden of Paul's epistle to the Hebrews was to get them to turn from the things of the law, under which God had spoken unto the fathers by the prophets, at sundry times and in divers manners, to the *new and living way* which was brought forth when God spake by his Son, whom he had appointed heir of all things, and by whom also he made the worlds.

What we have written here we verily believe to have been revealed to us by the God of heaven, and feeling that we are accountable to him, we desire to rightly divide the word of truth, earnestly desiring to present it in love, being firmly convinced that if God gives us something for the flock, the sheep of his pasture will feed upon it. We intend no offense whatever to any of our readers, but neither have we any apology for what we have written. We believe it to be the truth, and if there be any who cannot accept our point of view, we are sorry and if they can we are glad. We cannot remain faithful to the God we love and try to serve and at the same time try to please men. We must speak the truth whether they hear or forbear. We are persuaded that if we present that which God bids us, it will be as seed sown in good ground and in due time it will bring forth fruit to the honor of his name, for the word which proceeds forth out of his mouth does not return unto him void, but accomplishes that which he pleases and it prospers in the thing whereto he sends it. Our main purpose in this life, if we know or own heart, is to glorify God and to exalt the name of his blessed Son, Jesus.

R. L. D.

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Whereas, it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove by death our dearly beloved and highly esteemed sister, M. E. BROWNING, from our midst, therefore be it

Resolved, that Little Flock Church has suffered a great loss in her passing. Sister Browning served her church both faithfully and well for many years as church clerk, and her home served as a meeting place for the church for several years. Her hospitality and untiring efforts to make those visiting in her home welcome and comfortable will always be remembered by her many dear friends, and be it also

Resolved, that Little Flock Church extend sympathy to her three children, her husband having preceded her in death, and that a copy of these resolutions be sent to the bereaved family, a copy be made part of our church record, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication. Done by order of the church while in conference at Altus, Okla., Dec. 9, 1944.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN, Moderator.
(Mrs.) LOU KESTER, Church Clerk.

OBITUARIES

MRS. ISABEL HATCHER SIMPSON, a native of Humphreys Co., Tenn. was born May 6, 1885 and departed this life Dec. 18, 1944, making her stay on earth 59 years, 7 months and 12 days. She was married to Alva D. Simpson, Dec. 10, 1905 and to this union were born nine children. She leaves to mourn their loss, her dear husband, sons, Orville of Memphis, Tenn.; Truman of Nashville, Tenn.; Carlester, Ernest T., David and Randall of the U. S. Army; daughters, Mrs. Eunice Greenwell, McEwen, Tenn.; Miss Ruth Simpson, Nashville, Tenn. and Miss Reva Simpson at home, seven grandchildren also three brothers, Alfred Hatcher, Nashville, Tenn.; Capt. Ernest Hatcher of the U. S. Army and L. R. Hatcher, Minister, Knoxville, Tenn. There are also three sisters, Mrs. Katie Ragan, Vanleer, Tenn.; Mrs. Frances Hurt, and Mrs. Maudie Greenwell, both of McEwen, Tenn.; a host of other relatives and friends. She professed a hope in Christ and united with the Yellow Creek Church of Old School Baptists on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1936, and lived a faithful member of the same until the Lord called her home.. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace and the sovereignty of God, and delighted in attending the meetings whenever it was possible for her to do so. She was a devoted wife, a tender, loving mother and a precious sister. She will be greatly missed in her home, in her community and in her church. Funeral services were conducted at the Methodist Church near her home by her beloved pastor, Elder R. L. Biggs, assisted by her brother, L. H. Hatcher, who spoke words of comfort to the sorrowing family, relatives and friends. Her body was conveyed to the family cemetery and laid to rest to await the resurrection morn when, as she believed, these vile bodies shall be changed like unto Christ's glorious body and be raised a spiritual body and so be ever with the Lord. The church keenly feels her loss but must bow in humble submission to God's most holy will, and extends our deepest sympathy to the bereaved family and especially to the dear son, David, who was overseas and could not be home at her passing. Truly our loss is great but we feel sure our loss is her eternal gain. May the Lord's richest blessings rest and abide with the bereaved family and comfort all that mourn. Written by her sister.

KATIE RAGAN.

MRS. MAUDE E. BOWDEN was born October 1, 1878 and died Jan. 17, 1945, making her stay on earth 66 years, 3 months and 16 days. She was the widow of Elder J. B. Bowden who passed on over three years ago. Many will remember what a sweet writer he was. She leaves to mourn her loss three daughters, one son, some grandchildren and a sister, Mrs. Martha Minmo of California. With the exception of a few days in the hospital just before death, she lived with her daughter, Mrs. Ruby Nichols, Devine, Texas; the other daughters are Mrs. Grace Ivy, Vernon, Texas; and Mrs. Iva Willis, Charlott, Texas. The son, G. G. Bowden is in California. Mrs. Bowden never united with the visible church but had a bright experience and we all expected she would unite some day, but she felt her unworthiness so deeply she just stayed out. After Elder Bowden died she regretted very much that she did not unite with him while he was living. She gradually grieved herself to death after he died. During this period the writer tried to comfort her all he could but nothing seemed to do much good. She was a faithful companion and always tried to do what was right. She would insist on our singing when we would visit them and in her latter days insist that I preach. She is now taking that blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep. Her faith was strong in God who works all things after his own counsel, "and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." She was laid to rest by the side of her husband at Stockdale, Texas, Jan. 18, 1945, where the writer tried to speak a few words of comfort to her children, grandchildren and friends.

(Elder) E. B. AULT.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Delaware River Association of Primitive Baptist Churches will convene, the Lord willing, with the Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J., on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June and continue three days, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Services starting at 10 a. m. on Wednesday, May 30. Our ministers, brethren and friends are cordially invited to be present with us at that time. The ministering brethren will receive no further communcation of this meeting. There are trains from New York and Philadelphia stopping at Hopewell, and buses leave the Perry St. terminal in Trenton for Hopewell every other hour, on the odd hour. ELVIRA CONNER, Church Clerk.

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sunday in each month, beginning with April through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meeting-house, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Salem Old School Baptist Church of Philadelphia, Pa, in Grand Fraternity Hall, 1626 Arch St., Philadelphia on Thursday and Friday, May 24 and 25, 1945. Ministers of our faith and order and all others interested in the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. T. C. KOCH.

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each 1st Sunday, 11:00 a. m. and Saturday before.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday.
AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles South of Dotha, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before 11 a. m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Mt. Gilead Primitve Baptist Church, located 5 miles North of Hartford, Ala., holds services each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching Elders F. A. and J. J. Collins on Saturday, and Elder J. J. Collins on Sunday.
A. E. SORRELS, Clerk.

Hopewell Church, Ozark, Ala., meets each 4th Sunday, 11 a. m. J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Beulah Primitve Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday at the end of Old South Three Notch St., Troy, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Pleasant Valley Church, Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc.)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. E. M. TACKETT,
J. S. HUNNICUTT, Pastors.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY
Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue. Take elevator to second floor.
11.00 a. m. 1:30 p. m.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.
(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.
C. W. BOND, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 a. m.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.
W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. G. E. Rushing, co-pastor.
C. B. TEAGUE, Pastor.

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets third Sunday in each month at 11:00 a. m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house.
ELDER C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Danville Primitve Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before. Bradley Road, Danville, Va.
W. R. DODD, Pastor.

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meet each first Sunday 11 a.m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3032 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va. R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.
R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m. C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 113 RUTHERFORD, N. J., MAY 1945 No. 5

THE LOVE OF MARY FOR JESUS

A woman there came while Jesus was at meat,
And with her tears she washed His feet;
With the hair of her head His feet she dried,
While she kissed and anointed them besides.

The Pharisee host could not understand
Such devotion at the woman's hand,
For she, a sinner, was known to be,
So he said in his mind—no prophet is He.

If He were a prophet He would know
What manner of woman touched Him so;
No word he spoke as this he did decide,
Yet Jesus knew his thoughts and thus replied.

A certain creditor had two debtors,
Which would love Him the better
When forgiven their debts, the small or the great?
They were each one in poverty's state.

Then it was plain to the Pharisee host
That the most forgiven would love the most;
This woman's many sins were all forgiven,
And to show her love, she had striven.

She was born again of God's free grace
Before her good works did take place;
Her eyes were opened to the vileness of sin,
And she went to the sinner's Friend.

Dear Lord! may we humbly at Thy feet,
Find peace and joy in Thee complete;
And hear Thy voice say, "Go in peace,"
Our praise to Thee will never cease.

We, too, are debtors and cannot pay,
Yet it pleased God to have it this way;
The sins of His elect on Christ were laid,
And with His blood He fully paid.

All of the chosen to Him were known
Before He left His shining throne;
And all to Him of His Father given
Will safely reach their home in Heaven.

C. W. WILLIAMS

Route 1, Dundas, Ill.

"The book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Rev. 13:8.

In writing I hope I may be guided by the Holy Spirit to express to the readers of the *Signs* the truth as revealed to me according to my convictions. For some time, as you know, I have not written for publication, and until recently have not had any impression to do so, but at the request of the Editor as well as many others, also because of a great desire to give vent to my feelings, I have tonight started this article on a subject concerning the greatest book of which history has any record—"The Book of Life." As my undertaking is of such magnitude I trust the God of wisdom and prudence will lead my mind to relief, even though I know that I must consider brevity and therefore, in this article can but hint at the fullness. Solomon spoke of a book of books. One said, The book of books which is Solomon's. We speak of the much talked of Bible as the book of books, but *the book of life* to me is of more importance. In the great mind of God, before the world began, there was a clear comprehension and knowledge of all things from everlasting to everlasting. There has been no new thing with him. We must recognize this fact or else minimize or limit the Holy One. In God's eternal mind he knew his people before the world began, chose them in his Son, Jesus Christ, ordained them to

eternal life, gave them grace sufficient in Christ, loved them, gave them an inheritance, and with the indelibility of his own hand wrote their names in "The book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." "Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever," so there is not a power on earth nor in hell that can erase one name from the book, nor one in heaven which can do it. It is done forever. When God made man he made him *subject* to vanity, not vanity itself, he made him to be a sinner, but he did not make him sin, and in this man were all whose names were written in *the book of life* as well as the ones whose names were not written there, awaiting the development of things which brought about their materialization into being, all of which came to pass according as God had purposed it should, that his grace which he had in store for those whose names are written in the book of life, should not have been stored in vain, but render perfect praise to himself. Those whose names are writtten in that book are the Lord's portion, the elect lady and the church invisible and triumphant whose God is the Lord, notwithstanding by nature they are "the children of wrath, even as others," whose names are not written in the book and so far as we can see, by nature, there is no difference in them, but not so with God. He has always made a difference in them. He loves the one and hates the other, he has chosen the one and rejected the other. These two are clearly set forth in the Scriptures, first by Cain and Abel. Cain represents those whose names are not written in the book of life; Abel represents those whose names are written in the book of life. Isaac and Ishmael are likewise typical of the two, also Jacob and Esau and many others are types of the two peoples. God bestows special favor upon those whose names are written in the book of life. He cares for them and is jealous for them and guards them, reveals to them his mercies, delivers them from the power of darkness to his marvelous light, and keeps them by his power that none of them whose name is written in this book can blaspheme the Holy Ghost, for if they could do that they would not be saved, because Jesus said that was not forgiven in this world nor in the world to come, neither can they *receive the mark of the beast* nor worship him because the Scriptures declare that all whose names were not written in the book did do these things such as receiving the mark of the beast, worshipping his image, etc. God's love for his children is far too great, the sacrifice much too satisfying to divine justice, and the law too perfectly fulfilled for any of God's people to utterly perish for he has inscribed their name in his book—"The book of life of the Lamb"—ordained before the world and manifested him in the latter days for us who by him do believe in God who raised him up from the dead and gave him glory, that all whose names are written in the book should be brought up through great tribulations to enjoy all the fullness of heaven, which if they could wander after the beast or recieve his mark or blaspheme the Holy Ghost they could not enter into heaven because the evidence is too plain in the word of God to that effect. I am thankful that there are some things mean and bad—evil things—that men cannot do even if it is their nature to do these things, and if you and I have not done the things that the wicked do, and prosper for a season by doing, it is because God has kept us from those things, because it is in our nature to do them, and when God blesses us it is not because we are better than other people but because it is his will to write our names in the book of life and to leave off writing the others. When we can witness the effectual work of his spirit we are satisfied with his choice and can say he does all things well, and we know if

our name is written in *the book of life* we need not worry over the mark of the beast nor any other condemnation for there is nothing can condemn those who the law of the spirit of life has made free. We are told that no weapon formed against them shall prosper and every tongue which shall rise against them in judgment they shall condemn. They are made sure for he is their surety. God keeps the book, he knows every name therein. He also keeps those whose names are written in the book so perfectly that even when false brethren arise against them they are put to silence by their own shame and are made to know that he who diggeth a pit for his brother shall fall therein himself. Oh! how sweet is the blessed hope that God, before I drew my breath, wrote my name in that great *book of life*. It means that no matter how hard my lot here; no matter how distressing the wars and troubles may be over the land in our day; no matter how many times our earthly homes may be broken by separation of loved ones and from kindred; regardless of how many heartaches and pains we are called upon to bear or how deep in poverty (worldly) or despair we may go; we have an inheritance, a will made to us by our Father, who never changes, who has our names written in a book, who shall give us, at the end, all the fullness of heaven. Those whose names are not written in this book shall never know the joys of the Lord, but they shall do wickedly, blaspheme, receive the mark of the beast and die in their sins. On the resurrection day our King shall come back to earth without sin unto salvation; he shall raise the dead bodies of his people, they who are dead, were corrupt, but shall come forth in incorruption; they who died in weakness shall be raised in power in the likeness of Jesus. These are they whose names were written in "The book of life of the Lamb," but woe unto those whose names are not written in the book, who have done wickedly, slain, shed innocent blood, blasphemed, lied, worshipped the beast, received his mark and have not known the Lord of Glory for they shall be cast into a lake which burns with fire and brimstone forever. This is their portion, while the people chosen of God and whose names are written in "The book of life of the Lamb" shall come in to the joys of the Lord, being made a joint heir and an heir of Jesus and a partner of his throne, equal in honor and glory with him and rejoice evermore. No more corrupt, no more sinful but changed from natural to spiritual when raised from the dead by the power of God, and all because God loved them and wrote their names in the great "book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Yours in hope.

(Elder) ROY S. SMITH.

Cascade, Va.

(Continued from April issue).

Holy writ tells us, "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." and "the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand." The act of the wicked is not a righteous act upon the part of the wicked, but a wicked act, but in God's account it is numbered with the good. Every event of time is good in God's account. That is the reason God cannot be tempted with evil. It is not evil to God for he meant every evil act from any source for good. Yet that is not an excuse for the evil doer to go free for an evil motive prompted the act, and that justice of God is meted out for each wicked act. The wicked doer meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. All this can be added to what God has done. They also can be numbered with all the things that work together for good to them that love God. God is good, merciful, holy and righteous, and whatsoever he does is right. One of old hath said of God: "He is the Rock, his work is

perfect: for all his ways are judgment: A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." Oh, if my tongue was the pen of a ready writer. When I am permitted to see so many wonders of a wonderful God, I want to tell it to the understanding of all the world. Yet I know, if indeed I was ever taught to know God as the only true and living God, I was not taught it by man, and he that has taught is able to teach whomsoever he will. I have a few more testimonies of what God hath done, from the word of God, before I close this letter, if you will indeed bear with me. I read of a contract or covenant which was ordered in all things and sure. Oh blessed hope that is based upon the assurance of the fulfillment of that covenant, for it was the three in one God in council before the world was made agreed upon the plan, also the same three in one God that perfected the plan in the world for which it was planned, and if the plan embraced salvation for a certain number of the fallen race of Adam, or we might say, for all the fallen race, for God's people are the only ones of the race that have anything to fall from, for they were in purpose, and now are, according to promise, the beneficiaries of that grace that was given them in Christ before the world began. The people of God had a grace standing in Christ, which was a gift of God, and Paul said, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." All this comes under the head of my text and it shall be forever. These people are also members of the body of Christ. It is said, they are bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. The body of Christ is said to be the church and his people are members of his body. We read this in the word of truth, "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." Oh, the security of the salvation of God's children. Yes, it is the work of God. The contract says it is "ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." No, there cannot be one added, nor one taken away from that number. God fixed it and it will be forever. I believe that every event that God decreed for time is compulsory upon the part of the thing that is to perform the event. The doer of the event may not understand it is compulsory upon his part, because he does the thing willingly. Should one event fail to materialize, although the will of the creature being exercised, it would dethrone God and destroy the certainty of any of his works, but not so, whatsover God doeth shall be forever. Listen to what John saw, "And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, (I believe John saw all the redeemed host of God and they had obtained the victory through Christ.) stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God,, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." It seems I cannot find a place to stop. Just bear with me a little longer. Jesus came into this world, not of his own accord, but God sent him. Jesus said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing." Hear him again, "For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak." Jesus said, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man

cometh unto the Father but by me." "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." Jesus, through the Father, has conquered death, hell and the grave. When John fell as a dead man Jesus laid his hand upon him, and raised him up, and said. "Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death." Yes he holds them in accord with the will of God and will until the last one of God's children has been brought into the fold. Then, there is no danger of any dying before their time, nor living too long. Neither can any break into hell, for Jesus is holding the keys, according to the will of God. The sweet singer of Israel said, (and I believe the statement is referring to Jesus) "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there." Dear brother, we know if justice was meted out to us, hell would be our portion, but blessed be his holy name. Wherever his bride, the church of the living God made her bed, by reasón of transgression, Jesus must go there and put on her his own righteous robe. She had no power to redeem herself. Jesus redeemed her from that horrible pit, placed her feet upon a rock, established her goings. Yes, presented her to the Father robed in his own righteousness. Today that church stands in the presence of the holiness of God, acquitted for every sin through his own imputed righteousness. Now let me quote my text, "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him." And now, in my weak stammering way, I have pictured the God that "doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" My only hope is for an imputed righteousness through Jesus Christ, our Lord. May God bless you and yours, and when at a throne of grace remember mourning Zion everywhere. Your poor brother, saved by grace if saved at all.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN

Box 654, Altus, Okla.

Route 1, St. Albans, W. Va.

ELDER G. B. BIRD, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: The words of the poet

"Self righteous souls on works rely,
And boast their moral dignity:
But if I lisp a song of praise,
Each note shall echo grace, free grace."

These words have been on my mind much of the time today especially in the forenoon. Please read the hymn number 201 Goble's and note the third verse. While going about my many cares this morning portions or fragments of this hymn and thoughts of you interchangeably were my portion. I know not how to put into words my feelings and thoughts. I have been so very low in straits many, knowing not which way to turn, hedged in, buffeted, cast down, maybe I read some articles wrong, written by my brethren, maybe I do not understand some of their expressions, but as for me I do not nor cannot place much credence in the ability of the creature to perform, that is, I do not think I can watch except only when my gracious Lord clothes me in the spirit of watchfulness, I cannot pray except only when he breathes within by his spirit. However, I believe to his own chosen ones all these sacred injunctions are living commands when breathed within by his spirit (not optional with the individual whether they do or do not obey). To me there is no obedience but of him, neither does our inability to perform exonerate the creature, but to the contrary it causes us to cry, our lean-

ness, our leanness, and does paint us dust and ashes before him. The traditional tracing of belief among Old Baptists that by persistent and continual effort we may accomplish the matter, keep our skirts clean, weed out, cull out, build up the church, strengthen her cords of our own effort is to me strictly Arminian. I do not believe there is the indispensable man in the church of God (human I mean) on whom the well being of the cause is hinged. The very truth that God in his infinite wisdom calls from time the ablest, the most gifted of his servants as seemeth good unto him and when he wills, and continues to perpetuate his cause by raising up of his own choice others whom he has made to be recipients of his grace, seems to me to be proof positive that the cause is his, the work is his and must prevail, and the whole in its minute entirety is contingent upon him, the Lord, Master, King of kings and Lord of lords. As an example I will quote two portions which have been mine to mediate upon much of late, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak," and again "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations." Is it not a fact that the weak are apt, yea prone to feel strong as Goliath? And is not this one of the manifest infirmities? And on the other hand is not the strong sure to feel himself to be very weak? And is not this feeling a blessing from the Holy One which enables him to bear the infirmities of the weak? I do not know why I have hinted along like this to you in a field which may be strange to you, except it be to unload it off my mind hoping you may understand. At our last meeting at Huntington I tried to use language strange to me as a text, and the trend or lead of mind as to the application equally strange to me, but I do feel at that time I was not presenting the views of others, since to my knowledge I never heard any one present their views, and as I quote in brief, I would be glad for you if you have a mind to comment on the latter clause of the quotation as this portion is where I felt the exercise of mind. Here is the text, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." This language is found in Psalms and in Matthew. I cannot answer your good letters, I am too little, but I hope you can understand I do appreciate them, and I want you to always feel free to express yourself freely to me. I hope you and yours are much better than when I heard from you last. We are very well. In love and hope.

(Elder) H. J. BIRD.

(Continued from April issue)

I have often been given, it seems to me, to meditate upon the fact that these folk that are today claiming they can accept Christ and be saved, and these preachers that are preaching to the world, the alien sinner and the unregenerate that he can do so, do this in the face of the scripture that the choice was made before this day and time and before their day and time and was before the world began when they were not there and most certainly did not have anything to do with it, and also in the face of the scriptural fact set forth therein that it was according to grace and purpose instead of their good works. If it were by good works, they have none, because in the third chapter of Romans the apostle says: "There is none righteous, no, not one;" "there is none that doeth good, no, not one;" "for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." If they could do good works — which they cannot — it would not avail anything, for the apostle says: "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." Also, "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Romans 8:8. But the comfort, the consolation and the hope of this people that is the Lord's portion is that in Romans 3:24, Paul

says: "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." And in Romans 8:5-10, "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." And also this people is given to cease from their own labors and rest on the consolation and comfort in Romans 10:4, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." And again I desire to call attention that the term "to every one that believeth" is not in any sense every one that may believe, or may accept Christ of his own accord and become a believer or in any manner of himself, but it is also in the present tense, "believeth". And I verily believe that these which believeth here under consideration are the same people already referred to that were ordained to eternal life, and the same people that were called with an holy calling before the world began, and are the same people that were mentioned when it was said the Lord's portion is his people, and these are the people that all the Father giveth me shall come to me and these are the people that I have already said, every one of them will come and every one of them will believe and none will be lost. The Saviour was speaking, I verily believe, about these same people when he said: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." John 10:27-29. They appear to be absolutely safe and secure. The Saviour's words are that no man is able to pluck them out of his hand and neither is any man able to pluck them out of his Father's hand, nor shall they ever perish. No wonder Old Baptists say that not one of them will be lost. They are secure in two hands. They cannot, according to the words of the blessed Saviour, be plucked out by any man. Did you notice that they are in both the hand of the Saviour, the Son, and God, the Father? Is it not of great comfort to the poor, weak, afflicted, helpless child of grace? Would you want, even if you could do so, any better testimony or any better protection for the chosen people? I must say right here that my trouble has never been with this doctrine nor with these scriptural truths; this doctrine and these truths, seem to be clear and beyond doubt and self-evident, but my trouble is with myself. I cannot say that I am embraced in it. All I have is a hope, and I have heard many of the brethren say, many times, it was all they had. This hope is, with me a great deal of the time, very slender, it seems, and sometimes as if though nearly gone, but we are told in Hebrews 6:19, "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." This hope is all I have and we are told it is both sure and steadfast and I believe it is even though at times I fear it is entirely gone. Do you ever feel that way about it? These people I am trying to set forth have this hope; it has been given unto them; they did not acquire or get it themselves. With all their doubts, fears, trials and tribulations they have so much comforting scripture — testimony in Holy Writ to comfort their troubled souls but to call attention to much of it would make this article too long. I do want to say, how-

ever, that God most certainly knows them that are his and this is, it seems to me, most comforting to these people I am referring to; these that are the Lord's portion; that were ordained to eternal life, for in 2 Timothy 2:19 we find that it says: "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his." Do you have any doubt about this? No, there is no room for doubt there, but the doubt is about yourself. If you have the same experience that I do, the doubt is as to whether I am one of them. These same people I have been trying to write about, I believe, are the same people under consideration in Luke 12:32 when the Savior said: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Some scripture in the Old Testament, I believe, also refers to these same people and also shows they are a little flock. "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God; the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any other people; for ye were the fewest of all people." Deut. 7:6-7. These people are a little flock compared with other people and the world as a whole but they are no doubt large collectively. This little flock which is God's people sounds just like describing Old Baptists. Other churches have large flocks and large memberships and they boast thereof, but these people the Lord has set his love upon and chosen are the fewest of all people. When you think of all other denominations it is undisputed that the Old Baptists are the fewest of all people. I desire to further say, then I will bring this to a close shortly, that John saw these same people, "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." Rev. 7:9. "These are they which came out of great tribulation." Rev. 7:14. The text says, "but be thou partaker of the afflictions, etc." Yes, they are an afflicted people. "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." Isaiah 48:10. I desire to add that even though I feel that I have been blessed beyond my deserts in a worldly way and have done fairly well in a moral way, I must confess that I feel to have been made to realize that by nature I am a sinner and that I have no power of myself to lift myself from the curse of the law under which I was born. For "in me, (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." I feel to hope I have been taught from on high that I am wholly dependent at all times and under all circumstances and for all things, both in time and eternity, upon an all wise, all powerful, just, merciful and sovereign God that worketh all things after the counsel of his own will and doeth all things well. I feel to hope that I have been given to love the doctrine of predestination, foreordination, effectual calling, the total depravity of man and his inability to extricate himself from his fallen state by or through his own self-effort, self-righteousness or of his own volition in any manner and salvation by election of grace and grace alone. I love a doctrine that takes self and all human agency out of it altogether and that gives all the praise, honor and glory to God and, therefore, ascribes greatness unto God and not man and leaves the man power out of it. And this Old Baptist doctrine is all I have ever known anything about that does so. Brother Griffin, I started out to try to write, not knowing anything to write or what I would write and now, it seems to me, that I have written too much such as it is. I am afraid it will not do to publish but I feel that I want to leave that

with you and will trust you to look it over carefully and if it is not in accordance with that which becomes sound doctrine cast it aside. When you are at the throne of grace remember me, a poor sinner saved by grace and grace alone if saved at all. Yours in a precious hope.

W. A. SPEER.

Box 315, El Dorado, Ark.

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5 Shaw St., Sanford, Me.

DEAR BROTHER BELLOWS: Ever since your visit with us in North Berwick it has been on my mind to write you expressing the comfort and pleasure I derived from your preaching and conversation. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" To hear the truth proclaimed in all its purity is bread to the hungry and water to those who thirst. In days of old they "did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." He only is our Rock and our salvation. At our last monthly meeting I think we all in one accord expressed the comfort and enjoyment we felt from your visit. You came to us in that sweet humble spirit so becoming to one of God's ministers, proclaiming the sacred truth. How good it is that our minds are stirred up by way of remembrance. I feel when God opens our ears and hearts to hear and know the precious gospel sound, that God is surely in our midst, and our coming together is to the edification of his dear name. We are told by the prophet Malachi, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." They too, partook of that hidden manna. A white stone was given them in which was engraved a new name which no one knew except those to whom it was given. Those little ones faithful in Him who overcame are his jewels. It seems as if there is no end to God's promises given to his chosen people that are redeemed by his blood. How sweetly Cowper expresses the power of that cleansing flood.

"Dear, dying Lamb! thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransom'd church of God
Be saved, to sin no more."

Often do I feel my sinful heart so prone to depart from this wonderful Friend, yet I feel that he knows I am weak and powerless without the support of his arm. Though his face may be hidden at times and the way rough and dreary, yet I know that his love and mercy changes not. Often that hope of faith that we trust we have seems so small, yet perhaps then is when it is dearest and nearest, a something we cannot express, a desire, a hidden prayer when none but God is near. Hope, the anchor of the soul sure and steadfast, which entereth into the veil whither Jesus, our high priest has entered. For so many of us to attend three meetings this year to hear you and brother Dodson preach was a rare privilege. Being with and entertaining the brethren from sister churches was also a pleasure. Fragments of some sermons still remain in my mind — the sweet story of Ruth, who was so highly favored to glean among the sheaves; those cities of refuge; the temptation of Christ by Satan; our Lord's baptism by John and the grace and beauty of the church set forth in Sol. 4:16. My thoughts have rambled on much too long. With kind remembrance to sister Bellows. Yours in hope.

LYDIA K. NASON.

Island City, Oregon.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: If you think the following thoughts will be for the edification of your readers they are at your disposal. I subscribe for and read several Old School Baptist papers, and often see articles published that tend more toward strife and divisions than for edifi-

cation, and wonder how called ministers of the gospel can put forth such articles and what they hope to gain by so doing. To me it seems a spirit of pride and self exaltation which is the mover in all such things for surely the spiritual temple God is building does not need any such props by puny man to sustain it. Then to, these articles are on subjects about which the writers do not and cannot know the scope and depth of as God maintains in his sovereign wisdom as it is revealed in developing his eternal purposes. Such theories advocated and carried to extremes cause all the strife and divisions in the elect family of God, and I for one would like to see you editors of our church papers use such articles very sparingly. One recently going the rounds is opposition to your and other views contained in your book on "The Resurrection of the Dead". One seemingly very prominent Elder has given out several columns of very logically arrived at reasons why in the resurrection his very flesh, bones and the same eyes he sees with now, will be in the resurrected body he will then have but changed to spiritual. He fails to explain how this spiritual change will be made or how this spiritual body will appear, but he is confident it will contain the very same natural elements that now exists in his natural body. He is ready to denounce all persons who do not believe his doctrine as non-resurrectionists, and he advocates this as a test of fellowship and soundness of doctrine. This is but one of many ideas on this deep and hidden mystery which no one knows but God himself who has ordained that it shall be, and he will bring it about in his own way and time when he shall call his saints from the sleeping dust and glorify them forever at his right hand. Then all his saints shall be glorified together with Christ, shall be like him and be satisfied. These ideas different ones set forth now will have nothing to do with the reality that shall be revealed in the resurrection. They all shall come forth from death clothed with a glorious immortality, and the worldly wisdom they boasted so much of here will have died with them and be lost forever. I think you have done a wise act in setting forth the various views, and *they are simply views,* the truth of the mystery remains the same hidden secret with God it has always been. The one central thought all those writers agree upon is that there is to be a resurrection of the dead and any one believing this should not be judged by others believing the same but differing in their understanding as to how it shall be. Let there be no division or controversies on this mystery of godliness. Another doctrinal point carried to extremes is that of predestination of all things both good and evil and some want to prefix "absolute" to it so it will stand "absolute predestination of all things both good and evil". This is not a scriptural quotation and we have no right to use it as such. To predestinate any undertaking is to plan or purpose it similar to that of an architect. It is said that the architect of the great Eiffel Tower in Paris was so complete in his plans that every part was made and fitted for its purpose beforehand and not even a screw or bolt was lacking or left over. Just so it is with every undertaking which wise architects manage in man's affairs. Who that has even a limited knowledge of God's wisdom and sovereignty would attribute to him faculties and foresight or foreknowledge less than man exercises in his works? In all the creation God had a plan and purpose and all things were made according to this and there has been no disappointment in any part of it as God determined it should be, but when man from his low plane of knowledge and wisdom tries to reason out the great mysteries of God's creation and to judge them from his standpoint he is overcome by the immensity of them and should stop

in shame and remember God's declaration, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Man's scope of knowledge is limited so that it is impossible for him to understand or explain the deep and hidden wisdom by which God governs everything. Then it is beyond the possibility for the natural mind of man to know anything of spiritual wisdom, that is only known by the revelation which God himself gives, so that none of the saints can boast of the spiritual wisdom he has, nor should he upbraid a brother if he fails to have as much or the same spiritual understanding as he has. The doctrine of predestination is not a theory fixing the course of all events in the future, but an experimental exercise in the minds of the saints discerning God's purposes in acts of men as he brings them to pass. There is just one way for every event and none but God knows what that is until it has transpired, and no wise man will say that God did not know the cause of it. Yours in hope,

(Elder) C. W. BOND.

(Elder Bond is an esteemed Old School Baptist minister of more than fifty years experience, and he is well known to the readers of the *Signs of the Times*. We commend the fore going article by him to our readers as being worthy of their careful and prayerful consideration. The spirit which he manifests speaks for itself. There can be no doubt but that he has the welfare of Zion at heart and longs for her peace and prosperity. Wisdom has not changed with age. The test which the wise king used centuries ago is as good and true today as it was then. Two women were both claiming the live son as their own, and to prove which of the two was the real and true mother, the king said, "Bring me a sword. And they brought a sword before the king. And the king said. Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other. Then spake the woman whose the living child was unto the king, for her bowels yearned upon her son, and she said, O my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it. Then the king answered and said, Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it; she is the mother thereof. And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they feared the king: for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him, to do judgment." I Kings 3:24:28. Wherever we see the desire to divide or to kill the living child, we may be sure that it proceeds from the flesh and not of the spirit. Like, Elder Bond, we have been made to wonder how truly called and qualified men of God could so far depart from the teaching of the Saviour to advocate the severance of the bonds of love that unites his people together here in this sin-cursed world. It is perfectly true that there are differences of opinion prevailing among us, but if the love of God is being shed abroad in our hearts, we will not be going after our brother with a sword. We have endeavored to labor earnestly and diligently in the past to get our brethren to search the Scriptures and to cling to them. Let us also remember that "secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever." We hope brother Bond's letter will profit us all.—R. L. D.)

Route 2, Fayetteville, Ga.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Enclosed find $2 for subscription to the *Signs*. I seldom send an appeal to our papers for help, but here is a case that I think one would be within scriptural rights in asking help for. After you read I leave it to your judgment as to mentioning it in the *Signs*. Brother Jesse W. Banks, about sixty-five years of age has traveled a hard road most of his married life. Has

had a lot of sickness and hospital expenses. His oldest son, forty-four years of age, suffered since a young man with rheumatism, and is now drawn, twisted, stiff, except one arm, and blind. He has to be cared for like a baby and still suffers. Brother Banks had to stay with him so much he could not cultivate much of a crop and is not through harvesting. He sold one bale of cotton and had another about ready to gin when his barn burned a few days ago while he was away from home, with the cotton and part of the feed that was gathered. Perhaps you will think this is a poor community, and careless brethren that do not help him. Labor is so scarce most every one has to do just what he can and let the balance of work go undone. My help is in the army and I cannot hire any work done. Many people, myself included, are not through harvesting, and I barely keep enough wood to make fires, having an extra family to assist, but with all this I do donate a mite once in awhile to brother Banks. May the Lord bless you and give you of the Spirit to pray for us. Yours in hope,

GEORGE W. JACKSON.

(Any one who has a mind to do so may send their donation to brother Jackson. —R. L. D.)

Dundas, Ill., Route 1.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am enclosing check to pay for my subscription to the *Signs of the Times* for what I am behind and a year ahead. I enjoy reading the good letters very much. I am not situated where I can go to church very much, and about all the preaching I get is through the pages of the *Signs of the Times*. There is a subject I would like to say a few words about, the impotent man found in the fifth chapter of the gospel according to John. We find that a great multitude of impotent folk, the blind, withered and halt lay in the five porches to the pool of Bethesda waiting for the troubling of the water, "For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had." All of these folk were impotent, or without strength. The blind could not see the troubling of the water, the withered and halt could not get into the pool because of weakness, so all of them were unable to get into the pool. To me these five porches represent the five books of the law, and these impotent folk could not fulfill the law any more than you and I can do so. They had been under the law all their lives, the man spoken of in the fifth verse had an infirmity thirty and eight years which I understand to be his age. The name of the pool, Bethesda, means house of mercy, and this impotent man was unable in his own strength to enter into the pool, or into the house of mercy and be made whole. When Jesus asked him if he would be made whole he admitted his inability to get into the pool alone or in his own strength. Jesus saith unto him, rise take up thy bed and walk and immediately the man was made whole. Notice this ,that he was first made whole, then he took up his bed and walked. He did not walk to be made whole, but because of the fact that he was made whole he did walk. He took up his bed and walked, and on the same day was the sabbath. His bed represents his former state of weakness, he did not need it now but he was carrying it with him. This is like you and me when we first became deeply concerned about our eternal destiny. We were walking and carrying our bed with us, and like this man we did not know who had healed us, we only knew we felt justly condemned for our sins, and we felt heavily burdened, and our prayer was continually for mercy and pardon. The Jews told this man that was made whole that it was unlawful to carry his bed on the sabbath day, and he answered and

said, he that made me whole, the same said unto me "take up thy bed and walk". That is the way it is with us, when the quickening spirit of God quickens us to spiritual life we invariably take up our bed and walk, yes, carrying that burden and searching for relief, not knowing that we are already made whole for it is that spiritual life in us that is showing us what vile and sinful creatures we are. Then in the Lord's own time and way he revealed himself to us and our souls were flooded with joy unspeakable, and every doubt and fear was gone completely and all nature seemed to join us in praising God for his wondrous love and mercy. The whole world takes on a new beauty and glory, and all to the praise and glory of God. We find where Jesus revealed himself to the man that was made whole and said — behold thou art made whole. What wonderful words to one that had been afflicted thirty-eight years. What wonderful words of comfort to one that has seen himself as a hell deserving wretch to be told he is made whole, his sins are all forgiven and that all his debts to divine justice have been paid by Jesus Christ as his own personal Savior, who bled and died on Calvary's cross to redeem us and present us holy and without blame before God. We also see election here in the case of the man made whole for there was a multitude of impotent folk there and we have no record of any being healed except the one man. He was no better according to nature than the others, yet it pleased God to choose him to eternal life through Jesus Christ for he was chosen according to the foreknowledge of God and predestinated unto eternal life. These are some of my thoughts on this subject and I hope some of the good writers will go more thoroughly into the subject. This man did not go find Jesus (see John 5:14) and no doubt he was searching for him and making inquiries, but he went to the temple, or the place of worship, and Jesus findeth him there. I am sending you a poem that I wrote while meditating on the love of Mary, who washed our Savior's feet with her tears, found in Luke 7:36-50. Lay it aside if you do not consider it worth the space. Yours in hope of eternal life.

C .W. WILLIAMS.

(See poetry on first page)

Mount Pleasant, Texas.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Please use the enclosed check to extend my subscription to the *Signs*, and permit me to say I am most grateful that you were impressed to print the requested article on instrumental music and the condemnation of infants. However, I was made to feel unworthy that so much space which might have been precious food to some poor, worthy child of God should have been devoted to a poor worm like me, undeserving as I know myself to be. Surely the Lord has richly blessed you and through you he is richly blessing his remnant scattered over the face of the earth. May you long continue in the grace of the Almighty King. Unworthily yours,

D. W. WHITE.

Flanagan, Ill.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Enclosed find $2 for subscription to the *Signs* for another year. I have enjoyed the *Signs* so much the past year, and feel that I cannot get along without it as it contains all the precious preaching of God's word I get. May the Lord bless you in your labors as Editor and minister throughout the coming year is my prayer. A sister I hope though the least of all.

FANNIE R. INGREY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Mrs. E. Smith, Tex., $1; Mrs. D. P. Farmer, Md., $1; Memory of J .F. Hall, Me., $4; J. F. Davis, La., $2; Mrs. H. D. Hewitt, N. Y., $3; Mrs. G. M. Beebe, N. Y., $10; Mrs. C. M. Shackelford, La., $1; Mrs. J. Clifford, Wash., $1; Walter and Willa Horner, Ore., $5; Mrs. E. E. Nelson, Tex., $1; M. Cunningham, Ky., $3; J. S. Mace, Pa., $1.

EDITORIAL

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YES, GOD TRULY IS SOVEREIGN

A few days ago a friend handed me a little four page pamphlet called "The Baptist Examiner" in which the editor had a brief article devoted exclusively to vilifying Old Baptists, berating them, and accusing them of heresies untold for their position on the doctrine of the Sovereignty of God. The editor of this pamphlet poses as a believer in the Sovereignty of God himself, but is he? Hear him speak: "Hardshells are heretical on this great bible doctrine in that they preach only a half truth — the very heart of the bible teaching on the Sovereignty of God is that he *must* be obeyed in all things. Hardshellism is heretical, fatally heretical, on the doctrine of the Sovereignty of God because they cut the heart out of the great commission and *willfully* and *wickedly disobey* Christ's sovereign command to preach the gospel to every creature." This article took me somewhat by surprise, for I was made to wonder why we poor old, helpless, insignificant "hardshells" could ever have been worthy to receive even the attention of this great (?) man, who came so nearly boasting of believing so implicitly in the Sovereignty of God. It is not so much my intention to pen an answer to the vilifying article of the accuser of our brethren, my only desire is to write briefly on this subject for the consideration of Old Baptists, and for the comfort of all who sincerely love the truth as given by divine inspiration in the word of God. First, let me ask of you, one and all, what would you think of a sovereign trying so hard to have his will done and failing? And what would you think of a sovereign commanding his subjects to do a thing and just cannot get them to obey at all? Would such an one be a sovereign? Or would he be just like we Old Baptists, desiring to do things and to have things done and failing sadly? The author of our article, in which he accuses us of so many heresies, seems to think God has found the "hardshells" very hard to deal with. Such an one only betrays a great ignorance of the subject under consideration, and a pitiful ignorance of the faith of Old Baptists as well. Yes, Old Baptists, more than all people, do most assuredly believe that God is the only great and absolute sovereign, the creator and upholder of all things, visible and invisible, both in heaven and on earth, and that, "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Our God never *tries* to do a thing, he is such a sovereign that he only speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. In truth he hath already done whatsoever it hath pleased him. He consults no one, neither is he dependent on any one, does nothing of necessity, but does all things freely of his own sovereign will, and in him all creatures live, move and have their being. Even the wind and the waves were made to obey his will when he was pleased to speak "peace be still". He holdeth the lightning in his fist and commands it at his pleasure. Moreover, "He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth

upon nothing." And shall not he who is able to do all these things be able to cause that even "Old Hardshells" shall do his will? I fear that our antagonists are not so much concerned about us doing the will of God as they are to have us do their own wills. I feel sure that if it was the will of God for us to establish mission-boards in various places to hire men to preach, he could certainly have us do so for there is nothing too hard for him. I also believe if we used such methods to induce men to preach we would have plenty of applicants for the job, and probably some to spare, but our sovereign God never calls too many preachers. Neither does he have too few at any time but just enough at all times. He never has any trouble getting them to preach either for he has a *whale college* to train them in, and in this college it does not take a four years course to qualify one to preach, sometimes three days and nights are sufficient, and when one gets through this college he does not wait to be employed to preach by a board or any other organization and you do not have to stipulate a salary for him. No, he is simply going to preach and you need not doubt it for one moment for our Sovereign knows just how to make him willing to do it. And when this man thus qualified goes out to preach with the spirit and power of God sent down from heaven, just so certainly he preaches the gospel, not the law. He brings to God's little children a message of comfort and love and heavenly bliss. He tells them what the Lord has done for them, not what they must do for him. He tells them as depraved creatures by nature, that all the righteousness they ever had or ever will have is not their own but the imputed righteousness of Christ. He simply preaches the gospel, when he preaches at all, not the law. The law tells unbelievers what they *should* do but confers no ability to do it. The gospel tells believers what the Lord *hath done for them* and continues to do *in* them. The unbeliever glories in what he is doing for the Lord and is demanding of others to do. The believer glories in what the Lord hath done for him. The unbeliever preaches that his god wills to save every one but cannot. The believer preaches that his God willed to save his elect and he saved them, that his God is a sovereign, that he doeth his will always and there is nothing too hard for him. The Lord's preacher that has been taught and qualified of the Lord, when preaching in the Spirit of God, never tells his congregation that the Lord is trying to get them to do a thing and they will not obey, for he has been taught that his God is truly a sovereign, and it would be crossing his doctrine to say that he is unable to have his subjects do his will. It would also be inconsistent with the doctrine of sovereignty to say that God is demanding a thing of his creatures as if they have strength of their own to meet demands. Such preaching of commands and demand is as far distant from the gospel of Christ as heaven is above the earth. It is law, nothing but law, which never did comfort a child of God and never will. There is much of it being preached nowadays, far more than in the days of our Lord when he warned his followers that "Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him." No, a sovereign God makes no demands whatsoever of his subjects, but instead works both faith and obedience in them, and they are not ignorant of his workings. God himself is "the author and finisher of our faith". He hath given us "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" and what more do we need? The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus which hath made us free from the law of sin and death certainly does not authorize a preacher to make demands of God's people, and bind heavy burdens upon them which he himself will not touch with so much as his little finger. It is the human spirit oper-

ating under law that does such things, a spirit of ambition and greed, but if we have not the Spirit of Christ we are none of his. Each and every regenerate soul certainly does have the Spirit of Christ, and this same Spirit teaches him just what the will of the Lord is concerning him, and such heaven born souls needeth not that any *man* should teach them concerning the will of their Father for God alone can reveal his will to such as have life spiritually. The Bible is truly the inspired word of God, but even God's children cannot understand it except as the Holy Spirit is pleased to reveal it. This is why every preacher (so called) instructed by men, preach a yea and nay gospel (or rather law), and instead of preaching that God is a sovereign and able to do his own will and to have it done, they make him a servant and have him bowing to the majesty and supremacy of man's supposedly free and lordly will. There are many rude and unscriptural expressions made by preachers (?) in these modern times, and such words as are used in these expressions are never found in the vocabularies of God's true children taught of the Spirit, such as — "God wants to save but you will not let him," "God is *trying* to do this or that," "God *demands* obedience but you will not obey." What! a sovereign God wants to do things and cannot? Wants to make alive and cannot because the dead man is unwilling? Wants his subjects to obey and just cannot get them to do so? Then such a God truly is to be pitied for his weakness and incapabilities, but I could not call such an one a Sovereign. I am persuaded the Lord's children are not so easily duped into this sort of belief. "It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God," and every one so taught of God knows the truth concerning his salvation and his duty, and this truth has made him free. Free from the laws demands, free from its condemnation, yea, entirely free from the law of sin and death, for Jesus Christ who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, hath forever put an end to its condemning power. It was an act of sovereignty on the part of the Son of God to so honor the law, meeting all of its just demands which none of his people were ever able to do. True, the Jews received it by the disposition of angels, but did not and could not keep it. God gave it to a chosen people who were on trial under it for a period of many centuries just to show his spiritual children that there is nothing to be gained from the law except the *knowledge of sin and condemnation.* Right now may I say in passing, that we Old Baptists too, may be guilty of preaching a little law once in awhile. We seem to forget sometimes that our God is a sovereign, working all things after the counsel of his own will, and we are prone to forget the fact that he never slumbers nor sleeps; we may act as if we thought he is not alert, and we may feel to take the reins in our own hands, consequently we do the wrong thing. This is always when our Sovereign is pleased to allow the human in us to become dominant, and when he does this it is a good sign he is just about to teach us something that we need to know more fully, or to be reminded of, and that something is — that we are nothing, yea, less than nothing and vanity, and that he is our all and in all, a great Sovereign having no necessity whatever, but capable of working in us true humility, faith and good works and a super-abounding love for the brotherhood. He never works jealousy in us, nor hatred, nor ambition for leadership. Never causes us to try to be dominant over our brethren, nor to lord it over God's heritage. No, all these things are already in us, and if the Lord leaves us to ourselves for awhile they are sure to show up, and when such things are present with us we may be sure God has left us to ourselves. Only when he is working

in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure, only when we are humbled and made to feel his presence do we fully recognize his sovereignty. Only at such times can we preach a full and pure gospel. All other times we are prone to find ourselves preaching fragments of law, setting up standards for our brethren, the churches and associations, demanding of them to conform to our wishes. We too often forget that "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Jesus Christ came into the world as the anointed one "to preach good tidings unto the meek;" "to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim *liberty* to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound," and "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." So let us not try to bind God's little ones with law, neither that of Moses, nor one of our own make. I trust it may please our heavenly Father to make us more liberal, more tolerant, more loving toward each other, and he can do it if he so wills for our God truly is sovereign.

J. S. H.

The Hand Writing On The Wall

"In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote." Daniel 5:5.

Sister Hannah Robinson, who is a member of the Middletown and Walkill Church, Middletown, N. Y., has asked that we write on "The hand writing on the wall", and while we do not feel equal to the task at this time, we will nevertheless undertake to express some thoughts upon the subject at hand. Almost ever since we could remember we recall hearing the expression used to indicate that some radical change was in the making which would result in the complete overthrow or destruction of whatever was being referred to. While we hope this might be truly applied to the Axis powers at this time, we are not disposed to enter that field or to enlarge upon it on this occasion. Rather, we shall undertake to make the application in a manner that will bring comforting assurances to the children of God in their wilderness journey here below. Paul said, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." The book of Daniel was no exception to this rule and we will do well to keep these things in mind.

We wonder if it would be claiming too much to say that in this instance the great and infinite God was making use of a Babylonish king to typify his work of grace in the hearts of his people in bringing them from utter darkness into the glorious light and liberty of the gospel of his blessed Son. Our state of complacency and satisfaction in nature, can well be likened unto that of Belshazzar, who gave a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and the desecration of the sacred vessels of the house of God by him and his wives and his concubines drinking wine out of them, and at the same time praising gods of gold, of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone. Let each one examine his own case and see if it was any better than that of this wicked, old king. What a mercy that God should condescend to teach him of his works and ways, which are past finding out. God deals with some of his people quickly, as in this case, where it is said that "In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote." In John's record of the gospel he tells us that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth," and all down through the ages God was pleased to appear in the like-

ness or form of a man in some way or another, in order that mankind might comprehend something of his matchless glory. In this instance it was in the likeness of a man's hand, showing the workings of God's mighty power, that arrested the king's attention, and it wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace, so there was to be no doubt whatsoever that he would see it. Up to this time the king's palace was in peace and all was well, but when the king saw the hand that wrote, his countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another. We are persuaded that this description applies only too well to their own case for them to mistake what it meant. Is it any wonder that "the king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers." Although he was perfectly willing to pay well for assistance, by clothing the one who would interpret the meaning of the writing with scarlet, and putting a chain of gold about his neck, and exalting him to the third ruler of his kingdom, he must be made to realize that the whole of Babylon is utterly incapable of rendering any aid whatsoever. What terrible disappointment there was to find that in the worst trouble of his lifetime his wise men could be of no help to him. In his great extremity the queen appears and reminds him that in his father's day there was a captive of Israel in Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom who had understanding and wisdom, "interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts;" these were found in Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. He was sent for and questioned, and was then told of the failure of the king's wise men to interpret the writing. The king also offered to pay Daniel well for his services, but Daniel said, "Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation." He begins by reminding him how the most high God had blessed his father, king Nebuchadnezzar, by giving him "a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour: and for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down. But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him: And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will." Notwithstanding Belshazzar knew all this, he had not humbled his heart but lifted up himself against the Lord of heaven. How rebellious he was, but was he any more so than many of us? How slow we all have been to learn, and how stubborn have been our wills. Despite all of the goodness and mercy of God of which we have heard and experienced, nevertheless we have gone on our way indulging in all kinds of sin until God had so hedged us about that we were absolutely compelled to stand still and see his salvation. The hand had written, "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN". What could it all mean, and could there be any hope left? How the interpretation was longed for and sought after. Like the Ethiopian eunuch required some one to make him understand what he read, so there was anxious waiting, all the time hoping against hope. The interpreter begins by saying "God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it." Yea, then we began to understand that all our times are in God's

hand, and all events at his command, and that all shall come and end, as shall please our heavenly Friend. The old heavens and the old earth must pass away and, behold, all things must become new, and all things in this new heaven and new earth will be seen to be of God. After hope has sprung up in the heart of a poor sinner, he may feel that he will do something by way of bettering his condition and showing gratitude to his Lord, but ere long he will know the meaning of TEKEL, "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." Line upon line and precept upon precept, he is taught the utter depravity of the old man, until his kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians, according to whose law the decree of the king was unchangeable. This same prophet in interpreting the dream of Nebuchadnezzar had said, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."

How infinite is our God, who is glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders. Those whom he calls and qualifies and sends forth to interpret the dreams of his people, give evidence of this mysterious calling by first telling the dream and then giving the interpretation thereof, and in this way the hearer hath the witness in himself that the servant is sent of God. It is wonderful beyond words to describe when God sends his servant our way and he is blessed to take of the secret things of our innermost soul and first describe so minutely our thoughts while upon our bed at night, or in darkness, when we were sorely troubled and knew not what to do, when we were at our wit's end, bewildered and confused and without any hope of recovery, and we are told by God's messenger that instead of signifying death, it is the promise of life, for the dead know not their miserable and wretched condition. Little by little the scene changes and ere long we find that lo and behold we are in the chariots of Ammi-nadib, and we are filled with adoration and praise to God for the unspeakable gift of his Son, Jesus, who is the Saviour of sinners, of whom we feel to be the chief.

As a dear brother used to say, we have only sketched along over the subject matter, but truly hope that it has not been in vain and that our readers will discover that they have gleaned something out of the field of their spiritual Boaz, and will have a portion to take home to those of like precious faith, where God is worshipped in spirit and in truth.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTER

Written by Elder H. J. Bird

The Pocatalico Old School, or Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with Sarah Church, Boone County, West Virginia, to the several churches of which she is composed, and to the several associations and meetings with whom we correspond sendeth greetings and christian salutation in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN: Once again, according to the appointment of my brethren at the last session of our Association, I venture in the attempt of writing what is commonly known as a Circular Letter, humbly hoping it, too, is by divine appointment, to the all-glorious end, that it be the good pleasure of His will to guide my pen, and from his unwasting fulness to so graciously supply that vital substance (that which I am utterly lacking in), for of a truth without him (Christ) I can do nothing. I wish to call your attention to Psalm 8:5: "For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with

glory and honor." Again in Hebrews 2:9: "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor: that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." Now, dear brethren, in our feeble endeavor to notice these Scriptures it is, and shall be, our only aim and desire to fearlessly and impartially before men extol the name of Jesus above every name, and as we humbly hope in honesty of conscience before God try to set forth some of our own honest convictions of soul, in the things we are made to believe to be the truths of God, humbly hoping that by reason of experience that we have tasted and handled some of these gracious truths of God. For this *Jesus,* is all we have, our only hope of life here, and our only hope of life and immortality beyond this vale of tears. Oh that it were his will to bless us with a fruitful mind. That of him we might, as it were, be blessed with the pen of a ready writer so that we be mutually comforted together in these things. In our views of the Scriptures referred to we behold the condescension of our Lord. "For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels." "He took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." In our mind, it is here clearly portrayed that as the glorious and gracious sin-bearer of his people, "travelling in the greatness of his strength," he came clothed in a body like unto his brethren, with sin excepted, as the one perfect offering that forever put away sin. As the sacrifice without blemish and without spot, in which body he (Jesus) bare the sins of many, tasted death for every man. (Every man) all that the Father loved in him. (Every man) all that the Father chose in him. All (every man) that he, *Jesus,* in covenant agreement (which covenant agreement was entered into before the world began) agreed to die for, agreed to redeem from all iniquity, cleanse, purify, wash and make white in his own blood, bore their sins in his own body on the tree of the cross, and put them away by the sacrifice of himself, bore their sins into a land of forgetfulness, to be remembered against them no more forever. This unspeakable love of God, on which is hinged the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, in every sense of his coming. He being made a little lower than the *angels,* signifying that the nature of angels, which nature he had with the glory of the Father before the world began, would not fit him for the death of the cross, therefore in his matchless love, in his pity methinks by faith we hear him say when he cometh into the world, sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me. Thus in his coming, in his life, in his death, in his resurrection, in his glorious ascension to the throne of God, the redemption of poor, lost, undone sinners, his chosen people, stood complete in him. The Just dying for the unjust. He died that we might live. He dyed his garments in blood, trod the winepress alone, and of the people there was none to help. So we see in him the redemption, justification and final glorification of all the children of God. He is now exalted a Prince and a Savior, crowned with glory and honor, an ever-living High Priest, an Intercessor interceding for the saints according to the will of God. How wondrous is his love, his ways past finding out. How little a portion is known of him. Dear brethren, how benighted is our vision of heavenly things. Oh how the veil of flesh obscures our vision. Here at best all we know, see, hear or preach, is in part; not in its glorious fullness, measured to us by the loving hand of a kind and merciful God. Just enough for each of us is meted out to us while in the *wilderness,* a sufficiency to keep us every one from famishing in the *desert.* Dear brethren, our hope grounded in Jesus, and in him only, that through and in his grace, some sweet day when that which is perfect is come, that then,

that which is in part shall be done away. This is the ultimate of our hope. This is what we are hoping for; yea, waiting for, in humble expectation and hope of his coming when in his glory and power he gathers to him the purchase of his blood.

There we shall meet and be complete,
And long together dwell,
While not one thought that we shall part,
Shall in our bosom swell.

Oh, for the abundance of his grace, that we fall not out with each other by the way, but have charity for all, looking over one another for good and not for evil. Oh that it be his gracious will to deliver his children from the spirit of backbiting and devouring one another, that he graciously clothe his children with tolerance and forbearance, which virtues are of the graces of his kingdom. For with all of us the time is short, when he that shall come will come quickly, even so amen. Grace, mercy and truth be unto you. Submitted in love.

(Elder) J. C. HAMMOND,
Moderator.
(Elder) H. J. BIRD, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Pocatalico Old School, or Primitive Baptist Association, to the several associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greetings and christian salutation in the Lord.

Dear Brethren: Through the mercy and abounding goodness of our God we have been spared, though we be altogether unprofitable, and blessed to meet once more in an Association, where we have been blessed to meet and greet a goodly number of messengers from our sister Associations as they have come to us blessed of God to proclaim the finished work of Jesus. This has indeed been a gracious season, a time of love. We desire a continuation of our correspondence with you. May it be the holy will of our God to keep us at each other's feet, that we may in love serve one another. May this grace, mercy and truth be unto all the Israel of God. Amen.

(Elder) J. C. HAMMOND, Moderator.
(Elder) H. J. BIRD, Clerk.

OBITUARIES

MRS. EMMA (TAYLOR) WEBB was born April 4, 1864 and passed away December 6, 1944. Born in Franklin County, Illinois, she was married to Moses Neal Webb, March 9, 1882. Nine children were born to this union all of whom are living and were at her beside at the time of her death. They are Mrs. Evelyn Hughes, Wenatchee, Wash., Owen Webb, Yakima, Wash., Mrs. Edith Sater, Tacoma, Wash., Harold Webb, Seattle, Wash., Calvin and Arval Webb, Mrs. Lilliam Jones and Mrs. Beatrice Ovist all of Weiser, Idaho, and Mrs. Reba Bubb, Huntington, Oregon. She also leaves thirty grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren. One son-in-law and five grandsons are in the U. S. Service. In 1905 her family moved from Illinois to Idaho, settling on a farm near Weiser on Mans Creek in 1907. They made this their home until 1919 when sister Webb with her husband and the younger children left the farm and moved into Weiser where they have since resided. Her husband was called by death Sept. 25, 1928 and since that time she maintained her home assisted by some of her children who lived near and sometimes with her. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church in 1886 at the age of 22, and was an active and faithful member for the remainder of 58 years of life. As a personal tribute to the memory of sister Webb and her husband I will state that they were among the first Baptists I found in Idaho, and my acquaintance with them dates back over twenty-five years. Brother Webb counseled with me concerning the duty of church membership and at his request I baptized him. Soon after he was chosen deacon and I assisted in the ordination in which sister Webb was included as a deacon's wife. In all their church duties they served faithfully and when brother Webb was called by death I was called to minister at his funeral. I never heard sister Webb complain of her trials or her lot in life, but was always ready with words of comfort and counsel for those who needed them. She was indeed a model of christian character and let the light of her faith shine out to the praise and glory of her Redeemer. When the gospel was preached her countenance confirmed its approval, and without this evidence as a witness from her the minister might well doubt the soundness of his statements. In any matters of business or doctrine before the church, in which some doubt existed, her judgment decided it. We might say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant" for we believe she will receive this from her Redeemer with the added welcome, "Enter thou into the joy of thy lord." We comfort the

children and their families by pointing them to the faith of their father and mother. The God they worshipped is able to bring you conqueror through lifes trials and at last to crown you with glory at his right hand. Written by request of the family.

(Elder) C. W. BOND.

DANIEL ANDREW JACKSON ADAMS, son of John and Phoebe Adams was born January 4, 1864 near Wellington, Mo., and passed away at the home of his oldest daughter, Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Alumbaugh, near Oak Grove, Mo., January 20, 1945. He was married to Miss Eva Glover, February 24, 1889. He is survived by two daughters, Mrs. J. B. Alumbaugh, Oak Grove, Mo., Mrs. S. W. Pollard, Lawrence, Kansas, ten grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren and one sister Mrs. Marian Corn, Harrisonville, Mo. He united with Big Sniabar Church of Primitive Baptists, near Wellington, Mo., Nov. 11, 1883 and was ordained deacon the second Saturday in July 1895. Big Sniabar Church came in a body and united with Little Blue Church and became known as Little Blue and Sniabar Church in the Mt. Zion Association. He served as moderator of the Association for a number of years, as long as he was able. He was a very resolute man, when once he had set his mind to do any one thing he was not easily persuaded to do otherwise, yet he was gentle and kind to those with whom he differed. He and his wife would travel far and near to attend the Associations, and they were much esteemed for their meek and pious walk, and godly conversation. I became acquainted with brother Adams in November 1907, and since then we have been much associated together in attending the church meetings. He would take me in his car a distance of thirty-five miles to Little Flock Church and bring me home again, would also come and spend the day with me and my family. Truly, I think he was the best friend I ever had. He served as rural mail carrier out of Odessa, Mo., twenty-one years. I visited him a few days before he passed away, and when I remarked that he had been so good to me, he said, "Don't speak of anything good that I ever did," and these were the last words I heard him speak. His funeral was held in the Missionary Baptist church-house in Odessa, Monday, Jan. 22, conducted by myself to a house well filled with his relatives, neighbors and friends. After which his body was laid away beside that of his wife in the cemetery at Odessa, Mo., to await the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in the power of the resurrection, when we believe that his mortal body will be raised an immortal body, and he will see Jesus as he is, be like him and be satisfied. May the God of love and mercy comfort the children and all those that mourn in the hope of the resurrection is my prayer.

(Elder) W. L. HALL.

MRS. MARCIA MARIA ALLEN was born March 27, 1858, and died November 25, 1944 at the home of her son Roscoe Allen, Mt. Hope Road, North Berwick, Maine, where she was born and always resided. January 1, 1879 she married Perkins J. Allen of Wells. She is survived by her son, Roscoe Allen, a daughter, Mrs. Rose M. Hobbs, five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. She was the daughter of the late Reuben and Ada Clark Chadburn. Sister Allen was a faithful member of the Old School Baptist Church of Oak Woods, North Berwick, being baptized Sept. 2, 1894 by her pastor, the late Elder Frederick W. Keene. She had a gentle, genial, soft spoken and unassuming disposition, and was much esteemed by those who knew her. Her gift for writing was rare, the undersigned has read many sweet letters written by her to her pastor and church friends. She was very hospitable and her home was always a welcome place for all. Her loved ones have lost a kind and loving mother, always ready to help when she could. Her son and family cared for her tenderly during her last illness which was short, suffering only from weakness. The dear sister has gone to that home where God shall wipe all tears from our eyes, where sorrow and death are no more. There is no night there for the Lord God is their light. The lovely flowers were a token of the high esteem in which she was held. Funeral services were conducted at the Hurd Funeral Home, Mr. John L. Quigg officiating. Interment in Oakdale Cemetery at Sanford.

(Mrs.) LYDIA KEENE NASON.

J. A. WILSON was born June 14, 1872 and died January 22, 1945. His wife who was Lina B. Shelby preceded him in death April 9, 1937. He is survived by one daughter, Delcie Giddings, Santa Rosa, N. M.; two sons, Cleo Wilson, Yuma, Ariz., and Walter Wilson, El Paso, Texas. There are also four grandchildren.

W. E. WILSON.

AUTHORIZED AGENTS

ALABAMA

Elder Lytle Burns, Florence, Ala.
Elder F. A. Collins, Hartford, Ala.
Elder W. D. Griffin, Box 4, Covin, Ala.

ARKANSAS

Elder E. J. Lambert, Box 745, Hampton, Ark.

CALIFORNIA

Elder T. D. Walker, Apt. 14,
4632 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood 27, Calif.

FLORIDA

Elder C. H. Byrd, Box 86, Panama City, Fla.

GEORGIA

Elder H. O. Nash, 431 Hardendorf Ave., N. E. Atlanta, Ga.

Elder W. A. Brooks, Rt. 1, Auburn, Ga.

KENTUCKY

Elder G. B. Bird, Canada, Ky.

Elder J. S. Hunnicutt, Denton, Ky.

MARYLAND

Elder Harold M. Bennett, Mardela Springs, Md.

NEW JERSEY

Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

NEW YORK

Elder Arnold H. Bellows, West Hurley, N. Y.

NORTH CAROLINA

Elder T. F. Adams, Willow Springs, N. C.

Elder E. L. Cobb, Wilson, N. C.

Elder R. B. Denson, Rt. 2, Rocky Mount, N. C.

Elder T. H. Edwards, Jacksonville. N. C.

Elder M. F. Westbrook, Rt. 3, Dunn, N. C.

OHIO

Elder Geo. L. Weaver, 16116 Westview Ave., Cleveland 20, Ohio.

OKLAHOMA

Elder W. N. Green, Box 654, Altus, Okla.

OREGON

Elder C. W. Bond, Island City, Ore.

TENNESSEE

Elder R. L. Biggs, Rt. 6, Nashville, Tenn.

TEXAS

Elder W. O. Beene, 1005 Vincent St., Houston 9, Texas.

Elder L. D. Rose, Athens, Texas.

VIRGINIA

Elder J. E. Burgess, Rt. 1, Box 180, Martinsville, Va.

Elder Roy S. Smith, Cascade, Va.

Elder David V. Spangler, Rt. 6, Danville, Va.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Delaware River Association of Primitive Baptist Churches will convene, the Lord willing, with the Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J., on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June and continue three days, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Services starting at 10 a. m. on Wednesday, May 30. Our ministers, brethren and friends are cordially invited to be present with us at that time. The ministering brethren will receive no further communcation of this meeting. There are trains from New York and Philadelphia stopping at Hopewell, and buses leave the Perry St. terminal in Trenton for Hopewell every other hour, on the odd hour. ELVIRA CONNER, Church Clerk.

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sunday in each month, beginning with April through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meeting-house, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Salem Old School Baptist Church of Philadelphia, Pa, in Grand Fraternity Hall, 1626 Arch St., Philadelphia on Thursday and Friday, May 24 and 25, 1945. Ministers of our faith and order and all others interested in the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. T. C. KOCH.

The three days union meeting of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Churches of eastern Washington, eastern Oregon and Idaho, will meet June 15, 16, 17, 1945 with Mizpah Church, at the home of brother Ernest Attebery, four and one half miles southwest of Dayton, Washington. Those driving take the first road turning to the right after passing State Park. Those going by bus stop at Lon Station and 'phone 21 F 2 from a house nearby and they will be met and taken to the place of meeting.

(Elder) PETER JONES, Pastor
ELLEN COLWELL, Clerk

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each 1st Sunday, 11:00 a. m. and Saturday before.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday.
AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles South of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before, ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before 11 a. m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Mt. Gilead Primitve Baptist Church, located 5 miles North of Hartford, Ala., holds services each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching Elders F. A. and J. J. Collins on Saturday, and Elder J. J. Collins on Sunday.
A. E. SORRELS, Clerk.

Hopewell Church, Ozark, Ala., meets each 4th Sunday, 11 a. m. J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Pleasant Valley Church, Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc.)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. E. M. TACKETT,
J. S. HUNNICUTT, Pastors.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY
Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue. Take elevator to second floor.
11.00 a. m. 1:30 p. m.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.
(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.
C. W. BOND, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 a. m.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.
W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. G. E. Rushing, co-pastor.
C. B. TEAGUE, Pastor.

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets third Sunday in each month at 11:00 a. m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house.
ELDER C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Danville Primitve Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before. Bradley Road, Danville, Va.
W. R. DODD, Pastor.

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meet each first Sunday 11 a.m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3032 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va. R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.
R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m. C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 113 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JUNE, 1945 No. 6

CORRESPONDENCE

Draper, N. C.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, Dear Brother in Hope: For some reason known unto God I desire to write a letter for publication in the *Signs of the Times* if you deem it worthy, if not throw it aside and all will be well just the same. To begin, you who read this, cast the mantle of charity over me and my writings also for I am only a poor sinner by nature and practice to whom God has seen fit to give a hope of eternal life by that grace treasured up in Christ before the world began. Not in payment for anything I have ever done or can ever perform, but according to the good pleasure of his will. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Eph. 2:8-9. To me this is a living truth, vitally believed, firmly stood for, for to me in simple words, the word grace means mercy by the will of God bestowed upon poor sinners through Jesus Christ according as he hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world and that God is the cause in himself. Surely there is nothing good in me or any other man, woman or child of Adam's race in any generation that would cause God to be merciful. I have heard much concerning the free will of man. I would like to ask a simple question. When has man's will ever been free? One of the old writers declared, David I believe it was, that "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies." To me, this is the state we are all born in with the exception of Jesus Christ and John the Baptist. Born in a state of death in trespasses and sins, the sin of Adam our earthly head, being transmitted on down to us through the preceding generations. In such a state as this is man's will free? Or is it not under the control and influence of Satan instead? But this is by the will of God though for he is, has been and forever will be sovereign ruler over all things, times, worlds, places and events, visible and invisible, seen or unseen, principalities or powers, kingdoms or dominions including the devil. He is not only the ruler but also the creator. In the beginning, after the creation, he looked down, saw all of his creation and declared it was good and very good. This, to me, does not necessarily mean good in a spiritual sense, but good to fulfill the purpose of God for which they were created. In my experience I found my will was to do evil, and though I willed it freely, my will was under the influence of Satan, but still I say this was by the will of God. So then

is man in this state the possessor of a will of his own? To me, simply no, for after I was quickened into the knowledge that I was a vile sinner I earnestly tried to do better, tried to quit sinning tried to break away from the desire to sin, but the more I tried the worse I did. By experience I know I had no free will, and after being delivered from this awful state of sin and condemnation on Aug. 4, 1939, my will has been to serve God, but I find "I was then devoid of will, as now I am of power." "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Amen, brother Paul for that is my experience also. I want you all to know what I believe and cannot help standing for, and I believe what I do by the grace of God, that he is a sovereign God, a sovereign Creator, a sovereign Ruler. There is nothing made that he did not make, nothing lives or exists without him or contrary to his will. He foreknew his people and predestinated them unto eternal life; in his mind and purpose the remedy was prepared before the serpent bit, by grace being treasured up in Christ Jesus before the world began for the complete salvation of his people; that Jesus stood a lamb slain (in the mind and purpose of God) before the world began, thus I said the remedy was prepared before the serpent bit; that Jesus came into this world by the will of God, lived, suffered and died by the same will. He came at God's time, died the same way, arose the same way. He wrought out the salvation of his people and is now seated at the right hand of God in heaven eternal, making intercession for his saints by the will of God until the last day, and that day he is coming back again to gather together those he saved, calling them from among the dead, and those who are naturally alive shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and together with his chosen ones who arose from the dead shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air and forever be with the Lord. This is my hope brethren, what I live by and for, and hope and trust to die by and in. By the grace of God these words are true. Let none who read this think I do not love my family. I do and provide for them the best I can, but what would life be worth if this world is all we would ever have? Truly, if this was all it would have been much better to have never been born. It matters not the kind of companion you have (and mine is one of the best) you can never be satisfied in this world after receiving a hope in Christ, except a few short moments at a time while rejoicing in Christ. I will make public now something I have kept for some time secret to the sons of men. From time to time I have a heavy burden to travel and preach. Have put up many excuses, feel unfit, unqualified, too poor in natural goods, wondering many times in God's name how would my family live if I had to go? I am a poor laborer, working for my daily bread. I have been attempting to preach since the second Sunday in March 1940, but I fear the time is coming when I will have to turn my back on my family, perhaps weeks at a time, and go and preach. If I do this it will be with a bleeding heart for I love my family dearly. I dread it, I feel death would be a pleasure instead, and my cry is O God be merciful, spare me if it be thy will. God alone is able to make me feel submissive. Brethren, I desire to say unto you in all parts of the world be faithful, much as in you is. You know by experience that the doctrine of salvation by grace alone is the truth, and that the only way you can believe this doctrine is by divine revelation. You are standing on a firm and sure foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone. Press on, fight on, be faithful, and deacons and brethren see to the

temporal welfare of your ministers that prove by their preaching that God has called them. They have to go and preach, necessity is laid upon them. There are no volunteers in this true, called army. Let me tell you, God being my witness, that you cannot hire an Old Baptist to preach, nor you cannot hire one to quit. Our discharge only comes at death. Farewell my beloved people, pilgrims of Zion, chosen of God, strangers to and in the world, wayfarers, poor wanderers in the wastelands of this world. I know not how many of you I will meet in this world, but to you all who have this hope, if I never see you in this world, by the grace of God, I hope we will meet some day up yonder where Jesus is. In spirit I say to you with outstretched hand and heart as I told an old sister Short at an Association several years ago up in Floyd County in the mountains of Virginia, "If on earth I behold your face and form no more, by the grace of God I hope to meet you on heaven's bright shining shore, where sickness and sorrow, pain and death, shall be forever o'er" in that blessed land where Jesus is, where, "The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Farewell. Humbly your little brother in hope of life eternal.

(Elder) LAYTON WINGFIELD.

THE TWO THIEVES

For a long time it has been a question in my mind why two thieves were crucified with Christ. I have never heard any ministers or laymen give a reason why except occasionally the mere mention that Christ was crucified between two thieves, and that one railed on him (Christ) and the other begged. A few nights ago after retiring, this subject arrested my mind and cost me quite a bit of sleep. As I rolled and meditated it occurred to my mind that most assuredly these two thieves are representative characters. Matthew and Mark call them thieves; Luke says malefactors; John uses neither. We note that Luke has the most to say. "And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man has done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Luke 23:39-43. I believe one is a true representative of the law dispensation, or the church under the law. The true representative of the law feels no need of Christ. He trusts in his own works or self righteousness. I think we see the same figure in Luke 15-25. "Now his elder son was in the field." The field signifies a place to work. The music, dancing, etc., made him angry. He had served many years and had never received a kid to make merry with his friends. As he felt, he had never transgressed the commandment. I once read of some great evangelist who said that when he got to heaven if his entrance should be questioned he would tell God that he rightly belonged there because he had kept the commandment. What an awful condition any poor fellow is in who pins his faith to the law for salvation! The other thief felt justly condemned. This is very characteristic of the child of grace. The poor fellow with the Pharisee could only smite his breast and say, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The significance of this is, my trouble is in my breast. My dearly beloved, does not this come home to us all? "Remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." "To-day shalt thou be with me in

paradise." As we see it, the crucifixion of Christ was the closing of the law dispensation and the ushering in of the grace dispensation. How oft do we poor mortals cry, *remember me.* I believe the paradise is the rest that comes to the heir of promise in the gospel dispensation. At the feast of the passover Jesus knew his hour was come, that he should depart out of this world unto the Father. After supper and after he washed their feet he spoke of scripture fulfillment saying, "He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me." He was troubled in spirit and said "that one of you shall betray me." The scripture is not direct but we would read between the lines that these disciples were also very much troubled. And now let not your hearts be troubled because there are many mansions in my Father's house (in my Father's church). We feel that we have recently been a witness and felt to experience some of these mansions. At our recent Association held here with our church we had Elders Oscar Broom and E. C. Jones from North Carolina. Their preaching together with our home ministers was one continuous concordant link from beginning to end. They preached Jesus and him crucified; they preached salvation by grace. I want you to know dearly beloved brethren, they did not preach any of this time condition salvation. It was salvation by grace all the way from the cradle to the grave and merging into eternity, if this is the right way to express it. The house (church) was full of the odor of Mary's ointment. John 12:3. As one of old expressed, it was good to be there. It was indeed a refreshing season. We were happy in attendance of the Mill Branch Association at Tabor City, N. C. We met Elder Broom again together with about twenty-five other ministers. We are vain enough to wish we had enough wisdom with the gift of writing to paint a true picture of this meeting. The committee on preaching made twenty-one assignments. Not a single discordant note was sounded. We almost felt like saying my soul had had enough. We were gone on this trip seventeen days and attended two Associations and one two days fifth Sunday meeting. I wish I could mention the other two but we cannot be so lengthy. We wish we could mention the name of every minister, but we say God bless them. They were so much better to this chief of sinners than he deserved. We think of them so often, their memory is sweet. May we say as much for the laity. If we never leave home again we feel we can go to sleep in death still breathing the blessed perfume of the sweet fellowship manifested in these meetings. "I go to prepare a place for you" (to the cross of calvary). "I will come again" (in the gospel dispensation). Jesus was talking to his disciples on this occasion, and it was a very short while before his crucifixion. He comes again in the gospel dispensation in the invisible personage of the Holy Spirit. Prophecy foretold that all this should come to pass. We invite the reader to read the entire fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, taking special notice of the last verse. We have written at snatched intervals and our mind has been wont to elaborate on several points as we have come along, and we still want to go further but we must be brief that those who know so much and can write so much better than this poor sinner may have preference. We trust we have said enough that the reader may get our view or as we understand it. One thief represents the closing of one dispensation; the other represents the beginning of a new and better day, that day in which all the Lord's people shall be taught of the Lord. Malachi was the last prophetic star to twinkle in the law dispensation. Me thinks he was looking over the hill of vision into the grace dispensation when he said, "Ye shall go

forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." We think Peter was looking in the same direction when he said, "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever." 2 Peter 3:18. May we close with this thought "But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." In sweet fellowship with my beloved everywhere.

(Elder) C. H. BYRD.

Route 2, Box 89
Panama City, Florida

Castle Rock, Wash.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:

Enclosed you will find a letter written to me about this time last year by a very precious, humble sister. I prize it among my treasures and would like to see it in the *Signs* if it meets your approval. When I asked her consent to send it to you, she replied by saying that if she refused she believed it would be of the flesh, and also said that the Editors had wisdom from God and would know if it was wrong to publish it. I am leaving the decision with you. I never read it without a feeling of unworthiness, and desiring that it would please God to give me as great a faith and trust as she sets forth. My health is some improved and I have been blessed to attend our meetings for the last three months, and for this blessing I was very grateful. We have only a few members and some are like myself not physically able to get out. Others are too feeble and aged. At times it is discouraging but each time I feel discouraged the promise made by our Lord, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" comes to my mind and I am comforted. Blessed be God who knows all things and left those words of promise for us in these days, knowing ahead of time that we should need the comfort of them. At the top of column one, page nineteen of the January *Signs* where it reads, "Too many of our brethren are inclined to let matters of little importance interfere with their meetings" was truth to me, and would bear repeating in every New Year's Greeting. May God in his mercy, guide us in all that we may say and do. Unworthily,

EFFIE PARK.

Star Route, Naches, Wash.

DEAR SISTER PARKE: Elder Hughett has shared your good letters with us for a long time and we have deeply sympathized with you because of your physical disability. I have never felt worthy or able to write you, but Sunday when we met at my folks' home for our regular meeting and I read your letter I longed to write you. You said something about your experience that is true of mine too, but I have always been afraid to say anything about it. At the time I united with the church I had felt no terrible burden of sin. Perhaps I had better begin at the beginning if I know where that is. Ever since I can remember I have loved and respected the Baptists and enjoyed hearing them talk. I can remember many times at church that I was so touched by the sermon I would cry but did not know the reason. When I was seven I read a large book of bible stories. I have always enjoyed reading so I read this over and over, and then I would go out into the woods and pray long prayers and feel very righteous and happy. When I was twelve we moved to another place where we were not with the Baptists quite so much as before and I was at an age to become interested in worldly things. When I was fifteen we moved to California. It was just like a fairyland to us children. Everything so new, different and exciting, so many places to go and so many things to see. We were not in touch with any Baptists at all there, and nothing happened to bring

thoughts of God or religion to my mind. In about a year I became troubled about a lot of things concerning scripture and the salvation of my soul. I asked Papa and Mama a lot of questions and they answered them as best they could, but I was not satisfied. Their answers seemed so unreasonable and impossible. The folks found out about some Baptists meeting in Claremont at a home, and one Sunday we went there on the train. It was late when we arrived and all the seats were taken. Some one placed a chair for me right in front of the preacher. There was no one there we had ever seen before. I do not have the slightest idea what he preached about, but I know he answered all the questions that had been in my heart, and it was all so beautiful and so plain. He talked to me after the meeting because I had cried for joy most of the time he was preaching. That evening after the rest of the family was in bed I had to talk to some one so went on my knees in front of Mama and we cried and rejoiced together. I still had no intention of uniting with the church, at least not until I was old and gray. The preacher we heard was also pastor of a church in Los Angeles so when their meeting day came we went there. All the people there were strangers to us also. The songs and preaching seemed more beautiful to me than ever and when they were standing and singing the closing hymn I was crying and saying, "No, I am not going" over and over, and Mama was saying, "Of course not, you do not have to go," and all the time I was fighting to get out into the aisle and up to the front. I do not know what I said but I remember when they accepted me into the church I glanced toward an open door and it seemed the entire world had turned to gold. It was the same all the way home—everything was covered with a golden mist. School was not out yet so I had to keep going. During the next month I often laid my head down on my desk so I could shut out the world and dream of my new found happiness. I was baptized two weeks after uniting, just a few days after my seventeenth birthday. I was so happy and loved all those people so much. An old lady said, "You think you will always be happy now don't you dear?" Of course I felt I would never have any more trouble. A few months later we moved here to Washington. For one reason or another I did not attend the church regularly, but when I did I always enjoyed it so much, but I did not have any terrible trials and I was most of the time in a lukewarm state and not very much troubled about it either. I was married when I was twenty and became very much wrapped up in my husband, my home and our plans. I still enjoyed the sermons (the few that I was privileged to hear) so much and I never felt at ease in this world. It seems strange that any one could be at such a standstill as I was, as far as christian experience is concerned. In 1930 my troubles began to come and many times during the next two years I spent hours on the floor begging for mercy. In 1934 when I first met you I was begging God to take me because it seemed I could stand no more, and yet that was only the beginning. God can and does give us strength to endure what we must. I used to think it would be easy to be good when I became older, but I grow worse all the time. I am constantly afraid some of my brethren will by chance learn how wicked I am and can no longer fellowship me. I love them more all the time and feel at ease nowhere but at church. I think I can see how all the awful things that have happened to me have been for my good, and I believe my faith has been built up so I can trust God to take care of me always. But even that faith can leave me at any moment if he is not there to supply it. I can do nothing without him.

Daily, even with ordinary household tasks, I must ask his help. Many times when I have had to do work I was not physically able to do he has been my strength and has seen me through. He has made me reconciled and even to rejoice in things I thought I could not endure. In all things that come to pass I can see his guiding hand. If he were not the all powerful and all wise God that he is I would be afraid to go on living in such a world as this. Maybe I have said a lot of foolish things but I wanted you to know how reassured I was after reading that letter of yours. I have a great respect for you, I mean I believe you know the Lord, and if some of your experience is like mine, perhaps there is some hope for me too. I hope you are feeling better and will soon be able to be up again. May God's grace sustain you. Your unworthy sister.

(Mrs.) BEATRICE HAAN.

Route 3, Benton, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Surely there was a handful of purpose dropped for this weak sinner in your New Year's Greeting in January *Signs*. I could go with you in your reviewing the war situation, then I, too, hope I could go with you in viewing the coldness of Zion and seeing the cause of it—the weakness of the flesh, knowing as we do the flesh seeks its own, and when we can, we pile up for ourselves a little natural rest. But, Brother Dodson, do we not over and over hear, "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest: because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction." Micah 2:10. Then can we not see this which pleases nature is polluted, would destroy us were we not called away from the rest we have in that place to know the rest that belongs to the children of God. We also have this hope, God does not let us enjoy our carnal rests. He has a rest, a sabbath of rest for the children of light, and we hope we are children of light because of the holy calling of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. That word Lord—how much it means, something a power over you, lording over you and you the servant of that Lord. Therefore, we hope he is our Lord, our Master, our Savior. I was so glad you further stated in your "Greetings" you were receiving encouraging letters and reports from other churches that they, as well as the churches you serve, were in peace. Do we not know this one thing, the true church, the bride, is the only living thing in the world to-day? She is the salt of the earth, and she sorrows not as others who have no hope. Even in this terrible conflict now raging, we, who have hope, are stayed on our Lord, waiting to see the furtherance of the gospel. The workings of all things together for us whom we hope, with our all, that we love Him. Because it was his will, yes, all around this poor worm are those leaning on that power that raised Jesus from the dead, and brought him forth conqueror over death and the grave. One dear sister in our church is very low with a disease non-curable, yet she strengthens our feeble knees. She is so dependent on her God for mercy that she makes us, who are able to be about our own affairs, ashamed and weak indeed. A text given me a few days ago has been and is yet a great comfort. "The ear trieth words." I was shown so many things. How we try the sermons in our hearing to see if they preach save the child or if they say divide it. When we read writings by able men we try the words penned there to see if they are sound doctrine as we hope we have so learned Christ Jesus who is the way, the truth and the life. On our last meeting day, our pastor, Elder J. T. Henson, arose with his Bible, opened it and started to read his text, and about that time another text was given him and for over an hour he stood as a voice. His tongue

was lapping the water of life. It will be a day remembered by all of us present for a long time. Then for us to say God has withdrawn himself, no, he still allures his bride and brings her into the wilderness and speaks comfortably unto her, (Hosea 2:14) and a few of us yet go long journeys to meet with those of like precious faith, our bodies very uncomfortable, but looking for that comfort that satisfies the inner man. As our old house of clay decays the inner man is renewed day by day. I would like to add this and then I will close. Last August was our union meeting and we had Elders Griffin, Brock, Biggs, Brooks, Lowry, Cunningham besides our home ministers. We had a three days union meeting with preaching at night at our homes, and on Saturday afternoon Elder Griffin and his associates and others who were at our home visited with an elderly brother of our church who is not able to go from home to services. Elder Griffin preached there on his front porch a very, very able sermon. Text—"Good measure, pressed down," etc. He very ably fed the flock gathered there, then preached at our home that night to a crowd that could not go the eighteen miles to the union services. These things, these scenes, these feasts are living things. They live on and on. Not polluted, in them we can rest, assured God was in the matter, feeding, leading, alluring. One outstanding instance—Elder Griffin was to preach Sunday afternoon at the union meeting around two o'clock. Before his time came or he had been called upon something had been telling me he had a long, long journey home and would he not be concerned over the trip home and fail, but there was no journey before him when God made him stand. The journey was heavenward and it was pleasing for the ear to try his words. They were words of inspiration and food to the weary soul. Thus we know in hope and in spirit that there is an unseen power working among and with the children of men, making them alive to the mercy and goodness, truth and soberness of the God of power and God of the whole earth. With these few scattering remarks I desire to wish you and yours well for the year 1945, and may God be praised is my wish.

(Mrs.) EFFIE BOWDEN.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am enclosing a letter written to me while I was at Camp Thomas, Davisville, R. I., from sister Minerva Dunlap. I think it is worthy the consideration of the readers of the *Signs*, and that if you have space you will give it to the dear sister's letter. She expresses her belief very thoroughly in the doctrine as well as her experience. I received by mail from sister Nason, Sanford, Me., the Aug., Sept. and Oct. copies of the *Signs*, then I subscribed and received the Nov. copy. I have enjoyed all that I have read. The editorials were good. Elder J. S. Hunnicutt explained thoroughly about David I thought, and many of God's people rejoice to know the truth even if it hurts them. I also enjoyed the second editorial by you. I think you were both blessed by God's spirit and it was food to my hungry soul here on the Islands. May God bless his church and people from the rivers to the known end of the earth. Your brother, I hope, in gospel bonds.

(Elder) O. J. CROKER.

70th Naval Con. Bat.
Care Fleet P. O.
San Francisco, Cal.

Bowdoinham, Me.

DEAR BROTHER CROKER: I am taking this opportunity to tell you that I am grateful to God that I was able to be at sister Palmer's on Sunday to hear his name praised and his honor and glory testified to. I have a hope that I know something, too, of his goodness and mercy and how my heart rejoices when another comes and tells of the same God that I know, whose power when experienced by

a poor mortal makes him feel as nothing and less than nothing, puts a new song into his mouth, even praise unto his name. Indeed, it is a great secret order, as you said, only a few words and we recognize a brother or a sister. We know that their eyes have been opened and made to see, their ears made to hear. Before, we were as dead stones, but when we were brought out into his marvelous light, then we became as new creatures. Desire for the old things passes away. One of our greatest joys then is to hear others who have experienced these things tell of the way God has led them. You told of your experience in the boiler room. My heart was made to rejoice for I have seen his glory shine from the sky and the trees, when the power of his presence made me feel that I must fall on my face before him, that I could never stand in his presence or take one step without offending. You said he is the same God as of old, working miracles. I can testify to that for I have felt and seen them. Twice in my experience I have see a great light like a ball of fire, shining towards me, bringing such a sense of his power and mercy that I thought I should die if it was not removed. I have felt his presence more than once bringing knowledge of my absolute depravity before him, of the utter foolishness of the learning and knowledge of this world. I was shown then that we can do nothing of ourselves, that he is so far above and beyond our understanding that we can know nothing unless he reveals it to us. How different from the teachings of the world. I was reading to-day of the experience of Lt. Whittaker of Rickenbacker's party. He was rowing his raft through a squall and against the current towards a reef after twenty-one days of starvation. He said he was so weak he could not bend a pin, but the oars were bending against the waves and he reached the reef. He said: "There were other hands than mine on those oars." You may have read it, they knelt down and gave thanks to God as soon as they were on shore, the story goes on to say. His miracles are still going on and will continue to the end. I thought Sunday how beautiful your custom of kneeling in prayer before a service. I thought then what a power it takes to make a man. naturally proud and dressed in the uniform of service to his country, willing to come so far to speak to a handful of people he had never met and to kneel in reverence and humility to worship something greater than his country. Surely we are drawn by the power of God, we are made willing in his day and when he leads us and draws us we go with joy unspeakable. O, that I could always walk in a way that would redound to his honor and glory, but I cannot. I do just the things I should not and forget and have to be shown again. We heard Sunday the truth we love, we were comforted to know that God does not sleep, that he is still working miracles in the hearts of men and that he will do all his will in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. I was glad that you gave him all the glory and the honor. He is still raising up his witnesses, writing his law in their hearts and putting his word in their mouths that they may instruct, strengthen and comfort his people. Thank God for his unspeakable gift. Your sister I hope though not worthy.

(Miss) MINERVA F. DUNLAP.

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919 Asheboro St., High Point, N. C.

ELDER R. L. DODSON: I am enclosing a letter I found in my desk. I am not sure when it was written but when I saw it I thought it should have been sent to the *Signs*. It seems not to be connected as I would wish, but if you find it in accord with scripture truth you can publish it or any portion of it or cast it aside. I want to say that I fully and honestly believe that the Lord blessed Elder T. J. Robinson to so wonderfully express the

sovereignty of God who rules all things after his own counsel in the Signs of February 15, 1945.

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." 2 Cor. 5:19-20. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." I Cor. 3:11-15. "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Acts 2:21. "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." 2 Cor. 5:11. "Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart." 2 Cor. 3:3. "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain." I Cor. 15:1-2. If the grace of God worketh through the man to build upon the solid foundation which is Jesus Christ, his work will stand the fire, but if the spirit of the devil gets into him he is building then of wood, hay, stubble, of materials that the fire will consume, but he himself, if a child of grace, shall be saved by the skin of the teeth. Every man is judged by his works and punished or rewarded accordingly, yet faith and works evidence of salvation which is a free gift of God. A sinner can be saved by the grace of God under the ministry or without the ministry for God works when and at the time that pleases him and none can hinder or add to. The apostle states that Jesus Christ is the foundation and he calls the work of God (our works). We can, if the Lord does the building, build on the foundation of materials that will not burn in fire, or we can build of materials as wood, hay, stubble, that will burn in fire if the Lord permits. He says every man's work shall be tried by fire and if any man's work shall burn, he suffers loss. God was in Christ reconciling his people unto himself and he hath by his Spirit committed unto the apostles the word of reconciliation, therefore, the apostle Paul says, "We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." 2 Cor. 5:20. The apostle means they are, and not only they, but all true preachers are the objects through which the grace of God worketh according to the will and purpose of God. Elder W. O. Wammack brought out some of the beauties of the mysteries of godliness. The whole of all the writers seemed to me to be blessed of the Lord to do a work which is of the Lord, and not after the Adamic man, but after the spiritual man, Christ Jesus. All are of the generation of Adam by nature. Only those whom God has purposed and chosen in Christ are the generation of Christ Jesus, and when they are made a new creature in Christ or born of the Spirit, then they are partakers of spiritual things or follow after the things in heaven. Elder C. W. Bond on "Who is the author of sin" so beautifully described this mystery of God and I thought after I had read all the good articles in the *Signs* the Lord had wonder-

fully blessed the Editor and all the writers. Eve was the author of sin and God did not influence them in any way. The act was freely under the influence of Satan. God fulfills his determinate will in heaven and in earth, and holds man accountable for all his sins, except those who are freed by the life and death of Christ who bore our sins on the cross. When a man is freed his condemnation is removed. At times I am very much encouraged by the Spirit, I hope, and at other times I am very much discouraged, and almost doubt the whole thing, but there are some rays of hope and I never have doubted God, neither has my faith ever failed to embrace him as the all and in all who worketh all things according to his own will and counsel. After I read the *Signs* yesterday I wanted to write to all and try to express my appreciation for the many good spiritual thoughts in the *Signs* which is food for the troubled soul of man, food for the inner man. Yours in Christ I hope.

THOS. W. KIMSEY.

Geneva, Ala.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I very much appreciated your recent invitation to write an article for the *Signs of the Times*. I have just returned from the funeral of a very dear friend at my home church where I tried to speak in his memory, using as a theme "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." It is most wonderful indeed to be embraced in that number whom Jesus left the shining courts of glory and came into this low ground of sorrow, suffered, bled and died that each of them might be purified. Truly, I believe that he made no mistake. He redeemed each of them, made them spotless by the shedding of his precious blood—the only offering that could have fulfilled the mandates of a just and holy law, and will assemble them around his matchless throne in the final consummation of all things. Most assuredly the Father, Son and Holy Spirit entered into a royal agreement in the annals of eternity when as yet nothing existed save these three and all things were embraced in them as the very essence of unity. That was indeed a perfect meeting, where each member filled his position well and wisely, and performed each duty without a single error. The Father represented the power and by and through him were all things created, and without him was not anything made that was made. Truly he is the master Architect, the perfect Designer and the successful Executor of each and every thing. What a perfect One! High and exalted, grand and glorious, wonderful in all his ways. May each of us be reconciled to his will. The second person in the trinity was none other than the Son who loved his people with an everlasting love. He made a full and complete atonement for every one of those embraced in that number that Peter says were "elect according to the foreknowledge of God." Indeed they are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people chosen in him to show forth his praise. They shall persevere and never fall. This is the same number that John saw coming up out of great tribulation, having washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, and the same number that Ezekiel saw in the valley of dry bones, and the same number that were as numberless as the stars of the sky or the sands of the seashore. Yes, the same number that made up the glorified throng of all ages and the same host that John saw coming down from heaven, each one prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. You want to be in that number, do you not? Most certainly you will be if you had a part in the first resurrection. I like to think of this as the hidden wisdom revealed only to babes in Christ, and whose worth cannot be compared with natural things. Truly it is far more

valuable than all the diamonds of Kimberley, all the gold of Ophir, all the rubies of the Indies and all the cattle of ten thousand hills. What a priceless possession is this hidden wisdom made known unto every child of the heavenly King. These children come from every race, kindred and tongue, from the east and from the west, yes, from the north and the south. These make up the redeemed of all ages, and there beneath and around the dazzling throne of God we shall see each of the patriarchs, all the prophets, every apostle and all the saints of all ages. Do you not want to be in that number that shall sit down with Jacob and Paul, Isaac and Enoch and Jeremiah and John? These are those embraced in the first resurrection; these are those purchased with the blood of the immaculate Lamb of God; these are those that are arrayed in white, and these are those that shall have a right to the tree of life, and shall enter in through the gates into that city that Abraham looked for that had foundations whose builder and maker is God. It is enough for us to know that when we shall see him we shall be like him and be satisfied. Oh, dear brethren, may we be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

(Elder) J. J. COLLINS.

Route 1, Box 266, Dothan, Ala.

Dear Brother Dodson:

I know I have been negligent in sending in my subscription for the *Signs of the Times*, but I am grateful to you for continuing to send it. I am enclosing $4 for which post my subscription up for two years from the date on which it expired. Dear brother Dodson, I feel too little to even try to express my self in regard to the Scriptures or how they corroborate with what I hope to be my experience, but after having read so many good articles from you and others which I greatly enjoyed I have an impression (from what source I do not know) to try in my weak way to give you just a few thoughts that are in my mind. Our God, the God whom Abraham, Isaac and Jacob together with all the patriarchs and apostles trusted, is a God of purpose and has been ever since he has been God, (if any one knows how long that has been). He did not wait until the time for him to bring this earth, or world, into existence to plan for its use to him, it being already determined by him to have a people created in his Son, a people that were to inherit eternal glory, in other words be a bride for his Son. In the mind and purpose of Almighty God these people were already conformed to the image of his Son. When his Son laid aside his crown of glory to come to the earth he did it for the sake of his own bride. She was already his for having been created in him unto good works which God before ordained that she should walk in them. The apostle Paul commanded Timothy to "study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." The word of truth is not anything more or less than the Son of God. He is spoken of as the word also the way, the truth and the life. We find him first being possessed of the Lord in the beginning of his way before his works of old. He says, "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." He goes on to tell when the various things were done he was there and says he was "rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." Then next we see him as he was conceived of the virgin Mary. Next is his birth in Bethlehem where he was when the wise men, being directed by his star, found him. Outside of his contending with or sitting in the midst of doctors in the temple, we see him coming down to Nazareth with Joseph and his mother, Mary, and he was sub-

ject to them, that is, he was obedient in every respect to their wishes. We next see him as he came to John to be baptized of him in the river Jordan. Then we see him as he rises from the water and the Spirit like unto a dove lighting upon him and a voice from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." We see him as he goes about choosing his disciples. Choosing some who were traitors to their own people (the Jews) sitting at the seat of custom, some who were just ordinary fishermen and one that should betray him. Then we see him as he taught his disciples on the mount, also as he went about all Judea preaching and healing all kinds of diseases, opening the eyes of the blind and raising the dead. We see him as he told his disciples, "Let not your heart be troubled," etc. We then see him as he prayed to his Father, "the hour is come." He meant by that, the hour unto which he was born into this sin smitten world to take the sins of his bride upon himself, and he made the perfect offering, the only offering that could satisfy divine justice. Then we see him as he ate the passover with his disciples and directly telling Judas "That thou doest, do quickly." We next see him as he prayed the Father saying, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." We then see him as he was seized by the multitude and carried before the grand council or Sanhedrin to see if they could find anything in the way of evidence that they could produce before the Roman court since it was out of their jurisdiction to sentence any one to death. We see him before Pilate where he was given that mock trial and the sentence of death pronounced against him. We see him being carried to Calvary bearing his own cross. We see him being nailed to the cross and hanging there stripped of all his earthly possessions (his clothes) see him in the agony of death. There are several thoughts that came into my mind I would like to mention here but am afraid I am being too lengthy. We next see him as he was conveyed to the tomb, there to lie for three days and nights. Then we see him as he arose triumphant over death, hell and the grave. We see him as he makes his appearance to his disciples and after being seen of them for forty days we see him as he makes his ascension back to the Father. He is now seated at the right hand of the Father making intercession for those for whom he died. As and when the purpose of God is to be fulfilled to one of his loved ones in that of making his love known to one of them, he reveals himself to them the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely. He carries them to the banqueting house where his banner over them is love, he makes them to know that he is all and in all to them, he keeps them by his power, leads them gently beside the still waters. Then they are made to give thanks unto the Father who has made them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, who has redeemed us from the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son. Then when we have all the sufferings, sorrows and conflicts that have been ordained of God for us to bear, this old vile body of ours goes back to dust from whence it came, there to await that great and glad day when, in our mind's eye, we again see him "descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." I hope to be able to truthfully say with Paul, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." As I have already written much more than I intended when I began I will close. You may publish if you deem worthy. Your unworthy brother if one at all.

(Elder) J. A. TEW.

EDITORIAL

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

IF I MAY BUT TOUCH HIS CLOTHES

Matt. 9:20; Mark 5:25; Luke 8:43

This episode in the ministry of Jesus is interesting for meditation. Let us approach the scene and gaze in wonder and admiration at the lowly Nazarene as his disciples hover 'round him and the multitude stand in awe at such as the world had never been blessed with prior to this time. He is going from place to place preaching the gospel of the kingdom. With their diseases, trials and troubles the people come to him. Have you ever noticed the condition of those that come? They are not people that are able to do things for themselves, but rather they are people that have exhausted their power and they come to him because there is nowhere else to go. Just such a case is this woman that we desire to notice. In the first place she is a certain woman. In the kingdom of which Jesus is the King nothing is done in a haphazard way. Not the least detail is left to chance, but rather all things have order and precision to them. Just any woman of the multitude would not do, but it must be that one whose heart has been searched and displayed to her. Her disease was a dreadful malady and is worthy of comparison to sin, that dreaded devastating disease that Adam's children are all partakers of in its worst form. It had gotten such a hold on her that she had sought a remedy. Had she just looked for one a little while? Had she given just part of her worldly goods to stay the terrible flow? No sir! this poor woman had been hunting and looking for twelve long years. She had suffered many things from many physicians. So it is to every child of God when sin revives (Rom. 7:9) and starts that flow. We begin to try to stop it. After we have tried and tried and tried we find that we are unable to cope with it. If this is not a "can't-help-it" I wonder what kind of language it would take to describe one. We can well understand how we would go to this clinic and to that hospital; to this physician and to that specialist if we were suffering from some such malady. Nature would force us to do just that. There is not a condition in the world that this matter is hinged on. Some of our people get scared to death of a little too much doctrine and long and yearn and plead for our preachers to preach a little more experience and a little less doctrine. Very well, may God give me grace to write experience. Let us look close at this woman and her experience. Do you suppose she volunteered to take this disease? No sir! this woman did not (and is not) a volunteer. She found out one day that she had a terrible malady. Oh, what pain, misery and discomfort it caused her. Tell me that it will not cause a person to move, and in the same breath I will tell you that the movement of the Spirit in showing sin to a child of God will not cause movement because the Savior used this woman to teach us our travel in the spiritual kingdom. After she had spent all she had did she still have something left? Oh, how destitute and helpless the Lord's people become in trying to arrest sin! Now brethren this is experience and if it is not the hardest kind of a doctrine I con-

fess that I do not know it. She spent all she had. How descriptive of God's people, not allowed to keep back a thing. If a thing is kept back then she was not a fit subject of salvation (see Mark 12:44; Luke 15:14). But I am glad that she spent her living; that she was not improved; that she was getting worse. If this is not a helpless, destitute, undone woman I know not the use of words to convey ideas. This is all I have been preaching. This is all I care to preach. I just hope that God will always bless and keep me to declare to my precious kindred that salvation is of the Lord. If preaching abases the creature and exalts the Lord I love it, and when blessed to that end I enjoy it. Now this woman is ready for the manifestation of Jesus' healing power to her. She is in the crowd at this particular time. If she had been in a crowd around the Savior earlier she would not have been a fit subject of salvation. She would not have had all her living spent, but the glorious set time to visit Zion has come. Here is Jesus being shown to her. Here he is in his garments; here he is in his glorious apparel and traveling in his strength, mighty to save (Isa. 63:1). She is drawn to him, faith is given her and she has a desire to touch his clothes. That faith is moving faith. This woman did not have the conditional brand of faith, in fact the Scriptures do not mention that kind, but nevertheless we hear much about it and that among people that profess to be the church. At long last she reaches him and touches his clothes. Jesus felt it as he feels all the movements of his dear, little children. At that moment she was healed. The flow of blood stopped! What is more she felt it. Oh, my dear readers, how did you feel when you came in touch with him? Sin was stopped, brought to a standstill, held in abeyance, but let us linger a little longer. Let us draw nearer for this man is going to speak. Remember that Peter, that bold apostle is there as well as all the others. The Savior feeling the touch asks, "Who touched my clothes?" Brethren is that to find out who touched him? Did Jesus not know everything that went on around him? If he could read their minds and know all their thoughts surely he knew the movement of the multitude. To me this woman is the church. It is represented here by this woman. He is talking to her, he is asking her the question. He knew Peter could not tell him. Just listen to his meek explanation. Oh how weak are all of our explanations unless the Spirit leads. But again, who touched me? Ah, little one, has he asked you that soul-searching question? He knows and she knows. Peter (preachers) knew nothing about it. How wonderful the union between Christ and his church. Often-times they are in communication and those closest by nominal ties know nothing about it. She knows that her every movement has been under the closest scrutiny. She has nothing to hide because she realizes her insignificance. Notice her approach. Is there anything suggestive in it? Does your mind look back to that set time when the Lord asked you, who touched me? She comes fearing and trembling and falls down before him and tells him all the truth. My precious readers, I trust I am comforted as I write these lines to you. What a scene we have beheld! It was in some degree of fear that we looked on, but now our souls leap up, and we have found our own experience being unfolded before our eyes and now we are indeed glad. The church is always glad to hear another come to her and tell her all the truth. If nothing depended on Jesus after having been healed she acted the hypocrite in coming to him, fearing and trembling, falling down before him and telling all the truth. For me I believe she told him how gracious he had been in healing her, but I am not content with that, I believe she, at that time, realized her helplessness for the future as well as the past. The disease

came on her unexpectedly. It might come again unless he keeps her healed. She told him all the truth. The church is telling all the truth now and will forever.

W. D. G.

THE RESURRECTION

(Before publishing our article in the April issue of the "Signs" we submitted it to Elder Hunnicutt. He has written his views on this important subject in the form of a letter to us, and we welcome the opportunity of presenting them to our readers. It is reassuring to have good brethren manifest the spirit he does, and we are sure our readers will follow what he has to say with deep interest. R. L. D.)

Denton, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Will try to answer yours of a few days ago. I was very sorry indeed to hear of you and Mrs. Dodson having had the "flu" and hope by this time you are both much improved. In regard to the article you sent, I believe all that you and Elder Bird (whom I dearly love) and many other good brethren say about the resurrection. It is all true of the Lord's people from their regeneration to their death. There was truly a raising up in their regeneration, and many raisings up or liftings up throughout their earthly lives, and a raising up of their spirits from their bodies at death, at which time their spirits return to God, and dwell with Christ in a state of conscious bliss and happiness, and while this state of bliss is not the fulness of their reward, yet it is *far better* than being at home in the flesh. Phil. 1:23. In this eternal labyrinth those redeemed spirits are not waiting for anything; there can be no waiting in eternity. Waiting implies time and they did the waiting here in time. Yes, to me this is all true, but that final reward promised is "the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body," in which we are now waiting and groaning. Notice the body comes into the family of God by adoption, not by birth, and we have already received the spirit of adoption which enables us to cry Abba, Father. We received that spirit in regeneration. But this all is to show that the body does not come into the family by birth. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." As long as it is in this world it is fallen still, it is depraved still, it is still in a wretched condition here in this life. Such is the state of the children of God here. Consequently that part of the divine sentence which had reference to our natural lives must yet be executed, "thou shalt surely die." The redemption of Christ truly bought us back, body and soul, but that redemption does not prohibit divine justice from delivering up that which was sold for naught, and so God's people still have the sentence of death in them, and that divine sentence keeps ringing in my ears from day to day. "Thou shalt surely die." "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." The body must return to corruption, to the dust from whence it came, for that part of the divine sentence is irrevocable, but the body as well as the soul was redeemed by Christ and it must inevitably be brought back from the tomb, that is its redemption. Now that the dead bodies of both saint and sinner are to be raised finally, no one should dispute. Paul believed and taught it, "that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, (bodies for regenerate souls are not dead, and it is the dead which are to be raised) both of the just (elect) and unjust" (reprobate). Acts 24:15. Again, Paul in making his defence before Agrippa declared himself happy that he was allowed to speak for himself saying, "And now I stand and am judged for *the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers*: (the promise of a final resurrection) Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" Acts 26:6-8. Paul here simply says he was arraigned before king

Agrippa to bear testimony in defence of his hope fo a final resurrection. *Final,* because he was *still hoping* for it. He had not realized this hope yet, it was still *hope* which had not given place to sight. Though he had been regenerated sometime before this on the Damascus road, yet the resurrection he patiently waited in hope of was still in the distant future, proving conclusively that it was his body that he hoped would be raised. Again this great apostle says that this hope of a final resurrection is "the earnest expectation of the creature" (creation). Rom. 8:19 and verse 21 says, "Because the creature *itself also* shall be delivered (set free, at liberty) from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." The words *"itself"* and *"also"* clearly show that it is the body in addition to the soul that is redeemed and shall be delivered from death and the grave, and both scriptures show the hope generally expressed by the Lord's people in the earliest and best days of the Christian era, to be—that the bodies of believers were to be raised from the dead finally, glorified and taken back to heaven, body and soul, by that same Spirit of Adoption by which we cry "Abba Father." Paul continues his argument "God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power." I Cor. 6:14. It is impossible for any one to be a believer in Christ without believing that God hath raised him from the dead, and we know the raising of our Lord from the dead refers to his body coming forth from Joseph's new tomb, and it is evident from the passage just mentioned where Paul says, he "will raise up us also," that he means there is to be a resurrection of *our bodies* after the same manner that Christ's body arose. "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: *Christ the first fruits: afterward* they that are Christ's *at his coming."* I Cor. 15:21-23. "Christ the first fruits" in this passage means simply that his body was the first to arise from the dead, and shows clearly what kind of death and resurrection Paul was talking about. Since it was Christ's body that died and went into the grave and arose out of the grave, it evidences the fact that in this particular passage Paul is talking about the physical death, or death of the body of the Lord's people, and of the resurrection of that same body. Scriptures could be multiplied to show that there shall be a resurrection of the dead (not the living), but I trust these will be sufficient to serve our purpose. I have avoided the use of many passages of scripture over which there has been so much wrangling and dispute, and have sought to establish my viewpoints from passages hitherto used little but not abused. Now since we agree that there shall be a future, final resurrection of the bodies of all men I suppose we shall be expectd to answer the questions of fools concerning it. "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die." I Cor: 15:35-36. The quickening refers to making alive the body in the resurrection, since it is the death of the body that is meant in "that which thou sowest." "And that which thou sowest thou sowest not that body that shall be." It is not the same in kind or character. It was of the nature and character of Adam. It will be of the nature and character of Christ when raised. No it is not identical with the body that was sown for it has been changed from what it *was* when sown, to what it is when raised. Changed from corruption to incorruption, changed from dishonor to glory, changed from weakness to power, in a word it is changed from a natural body to a spiritual body, but is a body mark

you. Spiritual in its very nature for the Lord has made it truly spiritual like unto his own glorious body, and the redeemed spirit has again claimed it. No more groaning to be heard forever from that spirit, no earnest desires to be rid of that body for now the creature itself is delivered. It is a part of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glorious grace. I fail to see how it could be to the praise of his glorious grace should death, the last enemy be triumphant. It shall not be, thanks be to God. It is no more possible for the bodies of the children of God to be holden of death than it was for the body of our Lord to be holden of it. They shall come forth, every one of them, at the appearing of our Lord, at the last trump, when every eye shall see him as he is. We are bearing about the very image of Adam here in this tabernacle, but "as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the the image of the heavenly. The change which is to be wrought upon these mortal bodies will be inexpressibly great, as great as changing that which is corrupt, dishonorable, weak and natural into that which is incorruptible, glorious, powerful and spiritual. It is as great as changing our bodies from that of Adam's sin cursed and sin scarred tabernacle to that of Christ's most glorious body, shining with radiant and resplendent beauty. No preacher nor preachers have a scriptural right to minimize on the importance of this change. Again our apostle says, "Behold, I shew you a mystery." He did not say I will explain to you a mystery, no, but he is going to show us a mystery, and here it is—"We shall not *all* sleep, but *we shall all be changed,* in a *moment,* in the *twinkling of an eye.*" The resurrection itself is no mystery. "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" It is perfectly easy to believe that he who wrought in Christ to raise him from the dead can and does work mightily in us by that same power to cause us to believe this glorious teaching that we shall also be raised in his likeness and there is no mystery surrounding this whatever. The mystery is in the change, how he will do it in the twinkling of an eye, and how a spiritual body will appear. This is exactly what I do not know. Neither does any other man know, and it is absurd for any one to conjecture and dispute about it. John said, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be," and Paul did not attempt to explain this mystery, therefore, it remains a mystery. Enough, however, is said to cause us, who are in earnest expectation, to *wait* for the *manifestation* of the sons of God, and "we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him." Do we wish for more? Is not this enough to satisfy our longings and comfort our groaning souls? Can we not be patient and wait with him one hour? Why should the Lord's people fall out and quarrel and fight, and bite and devour one another over such issues? I feel confident, brother Dodson, that if the resurrection be as you say it is, when we attain it, I shall rejoice as much as you, and if it be as I say, then you shall rejoice as much as I. There were some among the Corinthian brethren who thought about as the Sadducees did on the question, they did not believe in any resurrection at all. "How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" Yet it was enough for Paul to rebuke them with all longsuffering and doctrine, but he did not raise trouble nor advise the churches to withdraw the hand of fellowship from them. He worked for peace and did not sow the seeds of discord among the churches. Not a word is said about such action on his part. Of course there were no associations after the modern sort in Paul's day to be a source of strife, and it would be a blessing to the Lord's true churches if there were none in these days unless they can

be carried on quite differently to the way some are being carried on is the humble opinion of this unworthy writer. Now, brother Dodson, what I have written herein, is for you and all those who may be concerned. I prefer that you publish it just as I have written from first to last, and at the earliest date possible. It will not only show how I stand on the resurrection question, but I trust it will show also how I stand toward my brethren who differ with me on this subject and many others. I have no thought of convincing you that I am right in my views and you are wrong. I am fully aware if my views be not of God they will amount to nothing, and the same fate is decreed against yours if they be not of God. Neither of our views shall need any clubbing or flailing from the brotherhood. God himself will take care of this matter sovereignly. I am for peace first, last and always, and we shall not need to sacrifice a great principle of truth in order to have it. It seems to me if I could only keep myself straight I would be doing well, much better than I have been able to do to my satisfaction up until now. I hope you feel free to offer any criticisms you feel like on my scattering thoughts here. You will not offend me in the least. I have nothing but friendship and fellowship for every true God called minister in the ranks of the Baptists, and for the whole family of God, and from what I have learned of you, I think you feel the same toward all. Yours in bonds of fellowship.—J. S. H.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

We get letters from our readers at times which indicate they feel everything that appears in the *Signs* should bear the full and unqualified endorsement of the Editor. This is most certainly not the case. The world in which we live would become very small and insignificant, indeed, if it was run according to the ideas of any one mere man, and a religious paper confined to only one man's line of thought would soon become extinct. We much prefer to take a broad, liberal, tolerant and charitable attitude toward our brethren, granting them the same rights and privileges that we ourself enjoy. We often think of the *Signs* for the spiritually minded in the light of a table spread for a great host of people. If we were literally feeding thousands of people, we would find it necessary, or certainly desirable to have a variety of food and wholesome desserts if every one's appetite and need was to be satisfied. However much any one individual might like a certain food, it would be unwise to insist upon every one else eating only that, palatable as it might be. Some people are so constituted that it would be harmful to them, while others would enjoy and thrive upon it. We do not expect each one of our readers to approve and enjoy every individual article which is published, but we do hope that on the whole they will find sufficient wholesome food to satisfy their spiritual hunger. Occasionally, it is necessary to take medicine for our physical needs. We are confident, in the long run, it is profitable to us and the cause we espouse to have our pure minds stirred up, so that we are made to search the Scriptures of divine truth more diligently to see for ourselves what is real truth.

During the past year there have been several instances where good brethren have presented views which were not acceptable to some, and this has brought forth views from others which while different, so long as the proper spirit is shown, has been profitable to the household of faith. In this way some who have been dormant and indifferent have been aroused and they are in a far healthier state spiritually than if they had read the same thing in the same old way. There exists a great diversity of gifts in the church, and they are all for the edifying of the body of Christ, when motivated by

the Holy Spirit, and they are entitled to be heard.

It might be well worth while for the individual who feels nothing should appear in the *Signs* which he would not sanction to ask himself the question, how many of the brethren would agree with and fully endorse all of his ideas about various scriptures and points of doctrine. If he insists upon complete agreement in all things, most likely he will soon discover that he himself does not know everything. In the days of the apostles there were differences of opinions among them, and they were often at variance with each other. Apollos, "an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus," and some were so attracted to him that they began to say, I am of Apollos. Others said they were of Paul, the greatest of all the apostles. How easy it is to follow men, particularly when they are outstanding personages. There were still others who said they were of Cephas, and some actually claimed to be of Christ. The apostle reproved them by saying, "For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." I Cor. 3:4-6. It would seem as though we have gotten a long way beyond them in this day and time. Now we hear of brethren declaring non-fellowship for each other on the least provocation; excluding one another because they cannot agree and exclaiming "I will not allow Elder Blank to come in *my* pulpit." We are made to wonder whose house they think the church of God is. While we should be faithful undershepherds, the apostles who founded the different churches did not set any such examples as we see to-day. We are but stewards of that which God has entrusted to our care, and it is unbecoming in us to lord anything over his heritage. To all those who thus indulge themselves, we would commend the language of the apostle Paul to Timothy: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." Also, Paul said, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway." Our brethren would do well to consider the admonition given to the church at Philippi by the great apostle, when he said: "Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

We are in favor of "freedom of expression", *within reason,* and of using it for the comfort, instruction, edification and upbuilding of Zion in her most holy faith. We deplore the use of our high calling as servants of God as though it was something to which we have attained and that it belongs to and for the benefit of the individual. Rather should we consider ourselves only as custodians of that which God has given us in the House of Mercy, and endeavor to conduct ourselves in a manner that will do credit and honor to Him "who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

We feel we owe it to our readers to let them know where we stand and how we feel with regard to what is published in the *Signs*. We are aware of the fact that we cannot please everybody, but we are honestly endeavoring to do that which is right and best for the cause, as we see it, and we humbly crave the prayers of the saints of God, that he may give us wisdom and so soften our heart with a sense of his redeeming love, that we may stand in our lot and give such an account of our stewardship that we

can truly say, when that eventful day comes to lay down our pen for the last time, and our voice shall be silenced in death so that it shall be heard no more, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTER

Mates Creek District Old Regular Baptist Association, held with the Williamson Church, Mingo Co., W. Va., Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1944.

As it has fallen to my very unworthy lot to write this Circular Letter, and it has been a dread for me for the past eleven months, so my mind is upon the predestination of God. I believe that he predestinated all things before we had a being in this world. Some will say that God predestinated all good things and that he had nothing to do with the evil, but we will take Job 26:13,14: "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?" Psalms 33:6-8: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap; he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him." We find the Scripture in Proverbs 26:10, saying, "The great God that formed all things both rewardeth the fool, and rewardeth transgressors," so I believe it was all predestinated of God. Even we will take the gods of the earth that are going on to-day preaching the doctrine of men and devils. The Scriptures say there will be false teachers and false prophets among us, so if we did not have these people the Scriptures would not be fulfilled and God's word would fail. But Job 23:13, says, "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." So he does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. So I believe that he is now bringing things to light which he saw and declared and also purposed in the six days of his labor, and I do not believe that there will ever be anything come to pass that he has not seen and purposed. He even purposed that there would be a choice between the two first born in the world, so he made the choice himself, so I want to say that we will meet with everything that he has purposed for us. We may say, let it be good or bad with us, but it is all good with God. So as time rolls along we are waiting in humble hope for the redemption of these mortal bodies, so he has purposed time to stand long enough to bring to light every thing. But we live in hope that when the last purpose is fulfilled there is a better home awaiting in the blessed far beyond, where there will be no giving of hand nor parting of friends.

A few more things I want to mention. Isaiah 40:10-12: "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance." So I believe that every special blessing was measured out and stored up

in Christ before the world was for them which believeth, and not to the whole world. But the other family never has received any of these special blessings, but they will receive that which is meted and measured out to them, for God knew what was in man before he formed him. We will now prove this by another Scripture. We will take Job 11:9-16: "The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea. If he cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him? For he knoweth vain men; he seeth wickedness also; will he not then consider it? For vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt. If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands toward him; if iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles. For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be steadfast, and shalt not fear; because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away."

Dear brethren and friends, there are many things I would love to mention about the things I have been made to forget as the waters that have passed away. I feel that I have only hinted on these hidden mysteries, but the Scripture says a hint to the wise is sufficient. Dear brethren and friends, this is written by a poor sinner, if saved at all, saved by grace, and grace alone.

JESSE WOODS.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Whereas, we, the Primitive Baptist Church of Malmaison, desire to leave on the records of the church a memorial to our dear brother and Elder, C. T. Evans, whom the Lord has seen fit to call from our midst to his eternal home, therefore be it.

Resolved, that the church has lost a faithful member and Elder, one who will be missed among God's people, and the children a devoted and kind father, but we feel not to mourn, believing our loss is his eternal gain.

Resolved, that we bow in humble submission to the will of God who does all things right and can every sorrow heal.

Resolved, that these resolutions be spread on our church book and copies sent to the **Signs of the Times** and to the family.

ALSO

Whereas, it has been the will of God to remove from our midst by death our dear sister, Lou King Fitz, we hope to bow in humble submission to the will of him who doeth all things well.

Resolved, that we deeply sympathize with the family and relatives of the deceased.

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be spread on our church book and copies sent to the **Signs of the Times** and to the family of the deceased.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER, Moderator
R. S. WILLIAMS, Clerk

OBITUARIES

Sister PHEBE LOUISA (BEEBE) MACDONALD, widow of the late James C. Macdonald, died at her home in Ridgetown, Ontario, June 29, 1944 in her ninety-second year. She was a daughter of the late Elder William L. Beebe by his first wife, and was born in the state of Georgia, July 3, 1852. Her marriage to James C. Macdonald took place in Middletown, N. Y., August 2, 1876, the ceremony being performed by her grandfather, Elder Gilbert Beebe. They resided in Duart, Ontario until 1892, when they moved to Ridgetown, Ontario where her husband became custom collector, which office he filled until he was ninety years of age. He passed away on his ninety-fourth birthday, August 26, 1922. She leaves to mourn her loss, one sister, Mrs. Florence Beebe Bellows of West Hurley, N. Y.; two daughters, Mary E. O'Neill, Ridgetown and Kate B. Dawson, Windsor, Ontario; three sons, John William and J. Atwood, Ridgetown, Ontario and Charles A., Montreal, Quebec. She had in all nine children, four dying in infancy. She also leaves eighteen grandchildren, twenty-two great-grandchildren and nine great-great-grandchildren. For many years sister Macdonald was a member of the Beulah Old School Baptist Church, Brooke, Ontario, both she and her husband being baptized by her father, Elder William L. Beebe. During past years she attended, whenever possible, the Duart Church which was but a few miles from her home, where she enjoyed the love and fellowship that prevailed. She was an humble believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and of a meek and quiet spirit. She was gifted with a bright, intelligent mind, possessing a wonderful strength of character, and was well endowed with the proverbial southern hospitality. She had her own home and delighted to have visitors, especially those of like precious faith. To old age her mind was clear and her faculties unusually good. She was blessed with

the loving-kindness and attention of devoted children to the end, and during the last few years of her life she was cheered by the loving care of her daughter, Mrs. O'Neill. She was firm in her convictions, yet tolerant and sympathetic to others. She died, as she had lived, humbly hoping in Jesus, and we believe that she fell asleep in him to awake in his likeness, when the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and trump of God. The writer officiated at her funeral service at her late home, the interment being in the Duart Cemetery.

(Elder) GEORGE RUSTON

JAMES BUTLER WHITAKER was born near West Point, Georgia, in Harris County, April 6, 1854. Departed this life December 17, 1944, making his age 90 years, 8 months, and 11 days.

He was married to Miss Mary Jane Cook on December 19, 1872, to which union were born four children, three of whom survive him: Mrs. H. D. Nelson, Linden, Texas, with whom he spent his last years on this earth; Mrs. J. E. Hicks, Commerce, Texas and Mrs. H. L. Crow, Bentonville, Arkansas. James Henry, the youngest died in infancy. His wife died February 13, 1894.

On January 7, 1897, he was married to Mrs. Fannie Alsabrook Stanford. To this union four children were born, two of whom survive. Ernest, the oldest, died at one year and 10 months and the youngest, Mrs. Clyde Whinnery, died April 29, 1932, only nine days before her mother passed away. The two surviving are James Lester Whitaker of Nara Visa, New Mexico and Mrs. Max Lowry of Albuquerque, New Mexico; also 11 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren besides one of the two step-daughters he reared.

Father, with his family, moved from Harris County to Heard County, Georgia late in the year 1876. It was here he and his first wife received a precious hope in Christ and united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Hope Well and were Baptised by Elder Kidd. He was a strong believer in predestination, dearly loved the old Baptists where he found them. He read the **Signs of the Times** for many years. His sight was failing him so he asked me to read the Book of Joshua to him which I finished just before he passed away. He was seriously ill for only twenty-four hours.

In 1885 he moved his family to Hughes Springs, Cass County, Texas. After that he never lived near the church of his membership but it was always a joy to him and mother to attend as often as possible.

April 1, 1907, he and his last family moved to Quay County, New Mexico, homesteaded land and went into cattle raising which worked many hardships on them but they were finally overcome.

Funeral services were held at the home of his daughter in Linden, Texas, conducted by Elder T. A. Wall, after which his body was laid to rest in Hughes Springs Cemetery by the side of his first wife to await the resurrection morn.

We weep not as those who have no hope for we believe he is at rest forever.

Written by his daughter, (Mrs.) H. D. NELSON

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The three days union meeting of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Churches of eastern Washington, eastern Oregon and Idaho, will meet June 15, 16, 17, 1945 with Mizpah Church, at the home of brother Ernest Attebery, four and one half miles southwest of Dayton, Washington. Those driving take the first road turning to the right after passing State Park. Those going by bus stop at Lon Station and 'phone 21 F 2 from a house nearby and they will be met and taken to the place of meeting.

(Elder) PETER JONES, Pastor
ELLEN COLWELL, Clerk

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sunday in each month, beginning with April through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meeting-house, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Canaan Primitive Baptist Church located about 18 miles west of Danville, Va., beginning Friday, July 6, 1945 and continuing the two days following. Ministers of our faith and order and all others interested in the truth are cordially invited. For further information write either:

(Elder) W. R. DODD, Mod., Dry Fork, Va.
J. F. WILLIAMS, Clerk, Keeling, Va.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Mrs. M. E. Kuhns, Cal., $1; Mrs. M. Thomas, Ill., $16; Mrs. J. B. Simmons, Tex., $2; T. O. Turner, Ky., $1; Mrs. J. H. Wright, Ky., $3; Mrs. J. Clifford, Wash., $1; Mrs. L. T. Genung, N. Y., $1; Mrs. S. Hutchens, Ill., $6; Pfc. W. L. Young, Overseas, $10; I. H. Evans, Md., $2; Mrs. M. J. Dean, N. J., $1; W. Y. Chandler, Ind., $3.

ERRATA

Elder James W. Linn informs us two corrections should be made in his article in the April issue of the *Signs*. 1—The sentence beginning with the nineteenth line, column two, page 84, should read: "So my salvation is for Israel and not for Edom whom I have hated, and my *indignation* is forever against them." 2—The sentence beginning in the thirteenth line, column two, page 85, should read in part, "He bought the field for the jewel that was in it, so it was no wonder he bought the field for the jewel for the jewel was of great price," etc. We very much regret these mistakes and hope this will rectify them.

R. L. D.

Pleasant Valley Church, Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc.)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. E. M. TACKETT,
J. S. HUNNICUTT, Pastors.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY
Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue. Take elevator to second floor.
11.00 a. m. 1:30 p. m.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.
(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.
C. W. BOND, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 a. m.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.
W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. G. E. Rushing, co-pastor.
C. B. TEAGUE, Pastor.

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets third Sunday in each month at 11:00 a. m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Danville Primitve Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before. Bradley Road, Danville, Va.
W. R. DODD, Pastor.

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meet each first Sunday 11 a.m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3032 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va. R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.
R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m. C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

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MY SONG IN THE NIGHT

If I could sing a song of love,
'Twould be to that great God above;
Who saved me by His Grace.
Who gave His son to be crucified,
To redeem the church, His bride;
To Him be all the praise.

If I am given a prayer of faith,
It is that I may feel in death
That He abides with me.
Bearing me to my heavenly home,
To sing with saints around His throne
Throughout eternity.

If I could keep in mind always
His mercies that have filled my days,
I'd never more be sad.
But when His presence is withdrawn,
And I am left to stand alone
Hidden is the hope I had.

Lord make me by faith to go,
Singing in this world below,
Trusting all to Thee.
Believing, regardless of war and strife,
That goodness and mercy all of my life
Shall follow me.

Then lead me as a little child,
To Thy divine will reconciled,
Keep me from presumptuous sins.
When in Thy love trials are given,
Make them stepping stones to heaven
And Thine be the glory forever. Amen.

(Mrs.) DAISY BAKER.

Naches, Wash.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Written by Elder R. W. Rhodes, Lillie, La.)

DEAR BROTHER DODSON, AND ALL THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH: Since it has been so long that I have not written an article for publication, I thought it proper that I should make some statement. I have been very busy for several years, and I still am, but several have asked me many times in the last two years to write more. I feel very unworthy and also incapable to pen my thoughts and meditations upon God, his church and the teachings of his holy word, but realizing, as I trust, that we as well as all things else are in his high, lofty and sovereign hand to be disposed of in this or any other sense as he wills. This being so I hope he will guide me aright, and enable me to write and present the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, giving his inspired and written word as proof for the things I shall say if it be his will. May I also state here (and I hope it is from a true and contrite heart) that if I am left to myself and the fleshly mind to express that which is not the truth, that he will forgive me and keep his sheep from following the voice of strangers. The great subject on which I desire to write is based upon Rev. 17:11. "And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition." Please, dear reader, read all the references given. What is this great beast? Why is he called the eighth? And how and why is it that it is said of him that he is of the seven? Who are the seven that he is of, and why is he called the eighth and of the seven? These are all very important to this subject. What do we understand is taught by this

scripture? Do we think for a moment that Christ's angel is revealing to John some natural, literal beast or vermin? No, I have never heard or read of any one so considering such a thing. To say the least there is no doubt in my mind that this language is very highly symbolical and is pointing out something far more significant than a literal beast or vermin. (I bring this out to prevent any one from making an accusation that we are literalizing this great beast.) The tenth verse seems to me to make it very plain that this beast is seven distinct kingdoms, ruling over all nations in their respective times. John tells us that five of these kings had fallen at that time of Rev. 17:10. He also said in the same verse one king was (that is the sixth king) in existence at that very moment. So we have it from the pure word of inspiration that God revealed to John that five of the seven heads or kings had already ruled and gone down, and that the sixth was ruling at that time. That seems very reasonable to me and scriptural. So the sixth king or head was ruling in John's time. At this point I want to call the reader's attention to one fact in connection with this great subject. If you will note Rev. 17:3 it shows the connection from one of these kings or heads to the other, in fact that this same woman or false church rode upon all seven of these kings. In other words when one king would dethrone another, Satan with all falsity continued in the saddle, being supported by each king or head with its wasting and destroying of God's holy saints, prophets, apostles or even our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ himself. Read Acts 3:16-18. These were the acts of the children of Israel through their rulers. The king over them being the sixth kingdom that John said in Rev. 17:10 *was ruling at that time*. This one very outstanding fact seems to me to furnish a perfect key to the right interpretation to this great mystery. Who was king then at that time? Read Matt. 2:3 and you will not have to guess at it. It was king Herod. Read also Matt. 2:16. Now to make sure that Herod and the Roman Empire is connected with this great combination of kingdoms and powers that is described in our text read Rev. 12:1-6. Was not Herod and the Roman Empire ready to devour Jesus as soon as he was born? (Matt. 2:16) Yes. Then which one of the seven kingdoms did John have reference to in Rev. 17:10 when he said, "one is?" Was it not most certainly the Roman Empire or the sixth kingdom? Daniel speaks of this same thing in the form of a great image in Dan. 2:32-35. He only speaks of these kingdoms, *gold, silver, brass, iron, iron and clay*. You can consider them yourself or maybe I had better call them by the parts of the body of this image. *Head, breast, arms, belly, thighs* and *legs* (not leg, but legs; two separate members of the same body). Also feet (two separate feet) all of which constitute the image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. In this interpretation given to Daniel, he mentions the toes of the feet which is the extreme farthest member from the head or the first king. Now one might say, what is the interpretation of the toes? John in Rev. 17:12 speaks of ten horns which have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive power as kings. One hour with the beast and these ten are to have one mind and shall give their power and strength to the beast. Rev. 17:13. Now let us notice what John says about the seventh head or king. He said at that time "five are fallen, and one is, and the other (or seventh) is not yet come: and when he (the seventh) cometh, he must continue a short space." To arrive at who the seventh head or king was, we want to notice one or two scriptures that connect the two together. Read Rev. 12:2. You note this is the rise of the real and last of the seven heads or kings, and it is said the dragon, which I have already shown to be the pagan Roman Empire under

Herod, the king, who stood ready to kill Jesus as soon as he was born, was the sixth of these heads. Notice this sixth king gave his power to the beast which was exactly what happened between pagan Rome and papal Rome. Not only that but this verse also shows that the sixth head or king gave the beast his seat. Where did the Roman Empire have its seat of government and authority at that time? It is a well known fact that it was Rome, Italy. Where is the seat of papal Rome today and where has it been all this time? Except for a short time when he got his head wounded unto death, at Rome, Italy. Speaking of this seventh and last king John says that he saw one of these heads wounded unto death, but he also saw its deadly wound healed and all the world wondered after the beast. In dealing further with the scriptural connection between the sixth and seventh heads or kings, Paul says in 2 Thess. 2:1-8 which shows in the seventh verse by the words "letteth" and "let" (which means in the original to hinder) that the power and influence of the sixth head or king was hindering at that time and that Wicked was to be revealed when the hindrance was taken out of the way. Dear reader, read these references and study this great subject. It portrays very conclusively where we are now concerning these things. Now we want to deal with the connections between the seventh and eighth and see who he is. I want to say that it is not so clear in the light of John's description of the rise of the second beast which comes up out of the earth with two horns like a lamb but spake as a dragon. Rev. 13:11. But regardless of any uncertainty, John only saw this beast coming up and in the end he saw this beast supporting the beast who had the wound with the sword and did live. "The beast that was, and is not, and yet is." Rev. 17:8 last clause. I feel sure that the seventh head or king to wit, papal Rome, was in full power and domination until he was wounded as unto death with the sword; since then he is not, as he was, in complete power, but yet he is in great unseen power even in all nations. Now in the eighth verse of Rev. 17 we find this "was, and is not, and yet is" beast, described as ascending out of the bottomless pit. Well, it stands to reason that he has not always been in this pit. One might say what pit? My idea is that he was cast down into the bottomless pit of political oblivion, so to speak, and he is now ascending out of that same pit which also accounts for the healing of his deadly wound, Rev. 13:3, at which time all the world is to wander after him. The question may arise, are you speaking of the big seven headed, ten horned beast or the beast that John saw coming up out of the earth? I am speaking of the seventh king or head, papal Rome, because the second beast that John saw coming up with two horns seems to fade out of the picture when it succeeds in causing them who dwell on the earth to worship the first beast John saw or the seventh king or head. He also had power to cause them who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast that had the wound with the sword and did live. (Rev. 13:12-15) Read these scriptures. So whatever the second or two horned beast is, he only seems to restore and heal the big seven headed and ten horned beast who is to make war with the saints and overcome and kill them. Rev. 13:7. Read also the seventeenth verse. The extensiveness of the power, dominion and greatness of this monster demon is expressed in Rev. 13:7, and this is after he has his wound and after his wound is healed. So we know a power that used to reign supreme, that was cast down almost one thousand years ago has been bobbing up and down in the bottomless pit ever since, and is my reason for feeling sure that he has not yet been restored to full power. This beast and the kings of the earth are to make war with the Lamb and the

Lamb shall overcome him. (Rev. 17:14) Now one might ask me when this will be? If you will read 2 Thess. 2:8 he is to be destroyed at the Lord's coming. Not cast down but destroyed. Destroyed in that lake of fire and brimstone, Rev. 19:20. If you will notice this beast has three likenesses as described in Rev. 13:2, like a leopard, a bear and like a lion. Now in these three vicious likenesses I think they are describing the three phases of spiritual wickednesses who are signified in my mind by John in Rev. 16:13. He said he saw three unclean spirits proceed out of the mouth of the dragon. In my opinion pagan Rome out of the mouth of the beast, papal Rome, and out of the mouth of the false prophet my idea is the Episcopacy is one horn of this two horned beast that John saw, and Protestantism is the other. So the last phase or the restored and final phase of Rome in my mind will be Episcopalian and Protestant Rome — both together. I want to comment a little on the language where it is said he is the eighth and is of the seven. Episcopalianism and Protestantism came out of Rome during the period of what is called the Reformation. That was all Rome lost at that time, and that is all she would have to gain now to be completely restored. Do we see any signs of this thing ever being accomplished? Yes. There is an International Council held every year for the purpose of bringing this about. In my opinion this is not far ahead when it will be an accomplished fact. Read Rev. 18:2. You will see in the end every unclean and hateful bird and every foul spirit is to be in Babylon's cage. I think this cage is already set and I believe every so-called church or denomination who bites at anything like the Federal Council of Churches or World Alliance or League of Churches is in Babylon's cage. We see a great plea for unity of churches and union of inter-denominations now — Protestants, Catholics, Episcopalians and Jews. All alike as well as many who call themselves Baptist and Christian. Pardon this digression and let us deal with several other things concerning this wonderful, powerful and most vicious beast. He has seven heads, ten horns and ten crowns on his horns. He gets one head wounded and a two horned beast that came out from him when he was wounded arises to power and restores him; enforces an image to the beast; causes all men both small and great, rich and poor to receive a mark in their right hand or their forehead. Now I think this mark will be of such a nature and significance as to clearly indicate loyalty, devotion and worship to the beast. It will be harnessed with such legal power or authority that those whose names are written in the book of life, or those who are kept from worshipping him, his image or receiving his mark will be completely ostracized from any public or private enterprise, labor or profession. If that is not the essence of what this teaches I am the worst deceived mortal on this point I know of. As to whether that mark will be literal and individual and visible in the literal hands and forehead I cannot say, but my idea is that it will, in this verse is mentioned almost everything which would seem literal. Let us name some of them. It says, "He causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark." He does not stop there but tells where they receive this mark. Not only this but this beast has a number, and the individual must have either the worship of the beast, the image, the mark or the number of his name. He must have one or all of these or he cannot buy or sell. In other words he is all harnessed up to force himself on all whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life. Rev. 13:8. But thanks to his holy and blessed name all the redeemed are safe and secure in the hand of that Good Shepherd of the sheep who has declared "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Heb. 13:5. "I am with

you alway, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28:20. Not only that but he says in another place "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Isa. 54:17. So to further prove that the children of God are safe and secure under their ever blessed and glorious Redeemer, High Priest and King, Jesus says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37. Not only are they safe in his care, but in my humble opinion as Noah and his family were shut in the ark, (Gen. 7:16) so are these of the children of God who live and remain alive till his second and ever blessed coming, and every one else was shut out at the same time.

(To be continued)

"I will extend peace to her like a river."
Isaiah 66:12

First let us see something about a river, for example, let us take one we have read something about, the one Jeremiah was encountered with. A river must have a source from which it flows, the head. The water runs heedlessly down the channel it has made by the constant flow, never consulting the ground upon which it flows. It steadily rolls on until it has reached the mighty sea, the fountain head of all water. Then it is drawn into the elements by the great power of the sun, and it is sent down again upon the earth to make it put forth and bud. Yet, it has not consulted that upon which it falls. It has power to bring life and immortality to light, and so it makes its way back into the channel and keeps flowing. Thus we see it is an unbroken chain. "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." The man with the line brought Jeremiah a thousand cubits into the river, and it was ankle deep; another thousand and it was to the knees; three thousand and it was to the loins, but when he measured four thousand cubits it was a river that could not be passed over for the waters were risen. "And it shall come to pass, that everything that liveth, which moveth, withersoever the rivers shall come, shall live." "But the miry places thereof and the marishes thereof shall not be healed." By this river "shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit (in the singular) according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine." The medicine is in the hand of the One that said, "They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick." I will have mercy and not sacrifice for "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." To them that are not whole and are suffering in their sins, he hath said, "I will extend peace to her like a river." We have seen the flowing of the river and we have seen the overflowing of the river, both natural and spiritual. It is "as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud." What is the purpose? "That it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." It shall give spiritual seed to the sower and bread to the eater. This being true, "who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." This river cannot be spanned by men. All the inventions of man can never build a way to stop the flow of this river, because God has said it could not be passed over. God

holds the water in his hand and disperses it as is necessary, and no man can block the hand of God. The miry places and the marshes shall not be healed, but all that liveth whithersoever this river shall come shall live. Is it not wonderful to some times think God hath given you to taste of this new fruit for the gift of God is eternal life. Every child of God is led, as Jeremiah was, eastward toward the rising of the sun. The opposite is west, the night, where the moon gives light. Here are those that would devour your peace, but this river cannot be passed over by all the efforts of man. God gives peace to her like a river. Jesus can cross because he walks upon the water, and when Jesus walks with you, dear child of God, you are walking too. Every heaven born child of God who is led from nature's darkness into the marvelous light of God, first sees his standing which is ankle deep. Being led on by the spirit of God he feels that his feeble knees are weak through fasting and smote together and has need of strength and much pain is in all loins. The river has risen and overflowed and made glad the heart for he sees Jesus there leading him to the brink. What joy it was to Jeremiah when he saw the same One that led him into the river he could not cross was holding him to the shore. Peace has been extended like a river. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Peace on earth good will to man is flowing like a river that no man can pass over. The whole world is now talking of bringing in an everlasting peace from natural disturbances. Peace from wars, rumors of wars, and pestilences would be mighty good but that is not the peace the Savior is speaking of. If we had all the peace of the world and had not the hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began, we would be of all men most miserable. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven. Yea, the Lord shall give that which is good; and our land shall yield her increase. Righteousness shall go before him; and shall set us in the way of his steps." "I will extend peace to her like a river." "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." The reason is plain, Christ and his body is inseparable, not a bone of his body shall be broken. We hear so many people today saying, "It is only the good things that are working together for good to them that love God." If we had never experienced any of the insurrections of this life how could we know the sweetness of that peace that is extended like a river? We speak of the things that are offensive to us as being evil. Joseph told his brothers they meant it for evil but God meant it for good. "Who hath known the mind of the Lord?" These things are the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him," for he hath extended peace to her like a river. "A pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." "A river, the streams whereof shall make

glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High."

She stands aloof from worldly lure,
A city old and quaint;
A beautiful building built secure,
The body is not faint.

Though lions roar she does not quiver,
Nor quake at devil's snare;
Peace unto her, flows like a river
For Jesus is her care.

(Mrs.) MAGGIE LEE HAYES.

Vernon, Ala.

Star Route, Naches, Wash.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: For several days I have fought against sending you the enclosed thoughts on prayer because I was ashamed of bringing myself to your attention again. I know from past experience that after this is mailed I will have many panicky moments when I will ask myself, "What have you done now?" But I feel I have to send them because I am afraid not to. Believe me when I say it would hurt me far less if you destroy them than if something should be published in the *Signs* that should not be there. If you decide to use them and want to wait a year or two that is alright too. I do not know the way the Lord is leading me but I know I cannot find words to express the beautiful things he is showing me. Of course I am having my moments of doubts and fears too, but he graciously appears to me again soon. I do not know what the future holds for me but hope that when I am again surrounded by gross darkness I can look back to this blessed season and have my hope renewed.

PRAYER

What is prayer? Even one who has often been blessed with the spirit of prayer cannot find words to express what it means to him. The poet says, "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire unuttered or expressed." How can we tell whether it is the soul's sincere desire or the desire of the natural mind? Sometimes our prayers come to us word by word and we are so wonderfully blessed in uttering them they bring tears of joy to our eyes and our hearts overflow with praise and thanksgiving that is inexpressible. This is indeed the prayer of faith when we can ask, nothing wavering. Our answer is with us as we pray. The world says prayer changes things, but it does not change God or his plan for he is unchangeable and has ordained beforehand the very prayer we pray. If it changes anything it is us because we enjoy such sweet peace afterward. We cannot of ourselves plan to pray at a certain time in order to obtain this peace. This is a gift of God and it is handed to us whenever God sees fit to do so. There is the prayer of the sin burdened soul who repeats over and over "God be merciful to me a sinner." This is the prayer that often seems to rise no higher than our heads and we see no beauty in it, but God hears these prayers and they are as sweet as incense. There are prayers of thanksgiving for spiritual blessings that we pray when we are made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Then we can say, "My cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." And then we pray for deliverance of our natural bodies from danger. How often we witness a miraculous escape from what seemed a sure death. These are things the world can often see and marvel at, but how little they know of our deliverance from spiritual dangers which to us seems to be a far greater miracle. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." It seems these groanings which cannot be uttered are with us most of our conscious moments, especially when we feel to be in deep darkness. Even then

our life is a constant prayer. Is there a time when we are not praying? There is the prayer of faith for the sick. We know that all our earthly remedies and physicians are nothing but tools in the hand of God. Many can testify that while they knelt by the bed of a dying loved one they were not even allowed to pray that that loved one might be spared because it was not God's will to do so. They have been brought to the place where they must say, Thy will be done. Oh Lord make me reconciled to thy will. Many others can remember the prayer of faith that brought its answer with it even as they prayed. We pray for our loved ones, both for their temporal and their eternal security. Oh, what praying goes on all over the world today! And all the prayers of faith will be answered. Sometimes God sweetly blesses us to pray for those who despitefully use and persecute us. Surely we know when we pray this prayer that it is of the Lord. No natural man would want these enemies to escape punishment. When God in his goodness and mercy can show us that all of these things are for our good, then we can have nothing but pity in our hearts for the one whom God has used to teach us. We have been made to realize through much suffering that the flesh is weak, and when we are so wonderfully blessed by visitations from the Lord we are inclined to be puffed up and think these good things are of ourselves. But when pride is with us there surely must come a fall, and what a terrible fall until finally we learn to beg God to keep us humble lest we become exalted above measure. Then we are given a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet us. Again we pray for the removal of this and are sometimes blessed to hear God's answer, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." There comes a time when we must pray for strength, even to do the smallest everyday task. Surely we can do nothing without him. We pray for a ready answer to make when our enemies taunt us with the fact that our hope is so small while they are filled and rejoicing in a fleshy knowledge that all the things we hope for are actually theirs. We learn not to pray, Lord remove this cross, but God give me grace and strength to bear my cross. Sometimes it is many years later when we can see the answer to some of our prayers. We had almost given up hope that God had heard us, but when the answer is brought to light we can see the Lord was graciously carrying out his plan for us all the time and that plan was far more wonderful and complete than we had hoped to receive. When he tears down our dearest ideal from the throne where we have placed it, then again we find ourselves at the throne of grace begging for consolation in our anguish. His answer to us then is to enable us to say again, "Not my will but Thine." We beg God to keep us humble, knowing while we ask that it will mean more losses and crosses, but yet we are constrained to ask this knowing that God will provide with the cross strength to bear it. Our loved ones sometimes ask us to remember them when at the throne of grace and sometimes we have a sweet desire to do so we feel surely it is of the Lord. We pray for food and raiment, in faith, believing that God careth for us, and we ask for wisdom from him who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not. We like to meditate on the beauty of the prayer offered by our ministering brethren when we are gathered together for worship. Those prayers are as beautiful as the sermons which follow and draw us close together until we feel we are kneeling in one body before the Lord's throne. Surely the half cannot be told about prayer, and as long as any of God's saints are on earth their prayers shall ascend up to God as the sweet odor from the smoke of incense.

BEATRICE HAAN.

Alba, Texas

DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE IN THE LORD: I desire, if the Lord wills, to write a few lines on what I believe the Scriptures teach on infant salvation. While I do not feel able to write anything that would be interesting to God's children unless the dear Lord guides me, to my mind there is nothing plainer in the dear old Bible than the salvation o the infant. He did not save them becaus they were not sinners for we read that he came not to call the righteous but sinners. By nature they are sinners. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom. 5:12. So we all sinned in the federal head for our life was in Adam and became corrupted, and the life of every human being came down through Adam, and the mind that came from that life is carnal. Rom. 8:7 reads, "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." So in order for the infant to be saved it must be a sinner. David said in Psalms 51:5, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." We see the works of the carnal mind in the very conception of David, but let us look now to the conception of Jesus. In this we find no evil for Jesus was conceived, not to satisfy any carnal lust, and Jesus' life came down from heaven. Here is a life pure and holy so this conception was without sin and I am sure that everywhere we find Jesus on earth he had a people. So he was carried in his mother's womb nine months and I am persuaded the reason was to save them that die there. John leaped in his mother's womb three months before he was born, showing that God can cause even an unborn babe to rejoice in him. Our God is all wise and has a purpose in all things that he does, and no place in the Scriptures can we find where any child died in infancy who was not a child of God. David said in Psalms 58:3, "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies," but we cannot find any of that class who died in infancy. When Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed we cannot prove that they all went to hell, any more than we could prove all that died in the flood went to hell. When Jesus was born, Joseph, being warned in a dream, took the child and fled into Egypt. Then was the scripture fulfilled that out of Egypt have I called my son. Herod had all the children killed from two years old and under. Then the scripture in Matt. 2:17-18 was fulfilled. "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not." Notice not a child of Leah in the lot. Now read Job 3:11-13. Surely he believed in the salvation of the infant. Jesus said in Matt. 19:14, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." We read in John 6:44, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Surely if they cannot come unless Jesus draws them he will raise them up at the last day. Now I wish to go to John in Revelations where he speaks of the beast, which to my mind represents the false doctrines and false teachers, and bear in mind that the little infant does not wander after or worship this beast. Please read Rev. 13. I will quote the eighth verse, "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." So if a little infant die we know that it has not worshipped the beast, then we can say of a surety its name is written in the book of life. So if we are saved we

must be saved like the infant, and I must say here that every infant that dies from conception to birth will be saved for our Jesus went the full time from conception to birth and saved them that die there. No wonder Job said, "Why died I not from the womb?" "Then had I been at rest." I do not believe that Esau could have died while he was an infant, nor any one else who is of the non-elect. We are as helpless in the hands of God as an infant, and in order for one to be saved we must be born again, and must be saved by the merits of Jesus. It seems to me that the little babes were the first to be slain because of Jesus. Dear ones, if the little baby is lost what would become of me? There is much we could say in evidence of the salvation of the baby but time and space will not permit. I do not desire to be a fanatic or a critic, but if you could establish that an infant is lost then you would almost get my hope. May we reason together in love. Your brother in a sweet hope.

(Elder) J. S. ROBBINS.

(We are glad Elder Robbins agrees with us that *infants* are *sinners,* but we cannot follow his line of reasoning from there on. He quotes Revelation 13:8, "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him (the beast), whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," and then makes the statement, "If a little infant die we know that it has not worshipped the beast." How can he reconcile this with Psalm 58:3, which he quotes: "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies."

(We agree with Elder Robbins where he says that the conception of Jesus was without sin, but here again we cannot concur in some of his conclusions which follow. For instance, he says Jesus "was carried in his mother's womb nine months" and he is persuaded that "the reason was to save them that die there." Further on he says, "I must say here that every infant that dies from conception to birth will be saved for our Jesus went the full time from conception to birth and saved them that die there." If this is logical and true, since Jesus is purported to have lived to be about thirty-three years of age, why is it not equally logical and true that *all* who die under the age of thirty-three likewise are saved. To reason thus would bring us to conclude that there is no hope at all for the untold millions who live beyond this age, as Jesus was not with them in that stage of their existence. This will never do.

(We quote brother Robbins again: "No place in the Scriptures can we find where any child died in infancy who was not a child of God." We would like to ask, where in the Bible is there a single scripture which states specifically that any particular one who died in infancy was a child of God.

(With reference to the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham inquired of the Lord, "Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?" Gen. 18:23. The Lord assured him he would not destroy the city for the sake of ten righteous (Gen. 18:32). The angels, apparently by force, (Gen. 19:16) brought Lot, his wife and their two daughters and set them without the city, and we are told that "The Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven; And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, *and all the inhabitants of the cities*, and that which grew upon the ground." Gen. 19:24-25. If we correctly comprehend the meaning of language this would certainly seem to include those of all ages and sexes, both adults and infants, all of whom were evidently destroyed. It has been our understanding also that when the death angel entered every house of the Egyptians and took the life of their first-born (many of whom were undoubtedly in infancy) that it was indicative of their destruction,

since the passing over of Israel meant her salvation.

(We do not believe that Job 3:11-13 has any reference whatever to the salvation of all who die in infancy. We hope our readers will examine carefully what is said in the third chapter of Job. Following the questions asked in the eleventh and twelfth verses, beginning with the thirteenth verse Job says: "For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept: then had I been at rest, with kings and counsellors of the earth, which built desolate places for themselves; Or with princes that had gold, who filled their houses with silver: Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been; as infants which never saw light." Please note that only a comma separates the thirteenth verse from the fourteenth, which shows that Job puts those who die in infancy in the same category with kings, counsellors, princes, etc., "which built desolate places for themselves", who died in their time. What he had under consideration is the relief that death gives from the trials, afflictions and sufferings of this life, for he plainly says in the seventeenth verse "There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest." Many of our readers, no doubt, have seen the time when they wished they had never been born or had died in infancy, as they then would have been saved from what they were having to undergo.

(When Jesus said, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven," in our opinion he was not referring to little children who die entering into the climes of eternal glory, but rather that he had reference to his church which was to be established here in this world, and the characteristics which his followers should exemplify.

(The great apostle says, "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." He also says we walk by faith, not by sight, and we would strongly urge our good brethren not to deviate from the record or to go beyond the apostle. The doctrine of *knowing* that all of any class of human beings, as such, are saved, in our opinion, is one that we, as sound Old School Baptists, should refuse to accept. We cannot improve upon the record of divine truth, and we again quote it: "We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" God forbid that we should presume to say that a single infant is lost or that the most wicked man who ever lived shall not be saved. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his," and there we have to leave it.—R. L. D.)

Route 6, Nashville, Tenn.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,

DEAR BROTHER:

Find enclosed $3 for which to renew my subscription for the *Signs* and $1 to use as you think best. Also an obituary of Sister Simpson which I hope you will publish in the *Signs* and a letter which she wrote me in 1936 just after she was baptized. I feel it is a good letter and might be of comfort to some of God's humble poor. If you find it to meet your approval please publish it. In affliction,

(Elder) R. L. BIGGS.

McEwen, Tenn.

ELDER R. L. BIGGS, DEAR AND PRECIOUS BROTHER IN CHRIST I HOPE:

I want to try and write you a few lines, but if the hand of God does not guide me it will be like everything else I have tried to do, a failure. Dear brother, I have been called "sister Simpson" for thirty years and it did not seem to mean anything to me until you called me that on Saturday night and asked me where I wanted my membership to be. It fell on my heart

like a blessing and made me feel that I would never have to walk alone again for I feel that I have a wonderful kinship with the people of God. I want to tell you a few things that I wanted to tell Saturday but could not. When I was a child I dreamed the world was coming to an end and that I was alone and knew I would be lost. After I awoke I studied about it and all through my childhood I would remember my dream. I would try to pray and try to be good. I would slip off upstairs and read the Bible but it always seemed that I was alone and no one understood me. I went on in that way until I was twenty-one years old. It seemed like the older I grew the more sinful I was, and the more I tried to do good the worse I felt. I felt that I was lost and there was no hope for me. I united with the Methodist church and thought I would get relief, but oh what a mistake I made. I never was satisfied. The longer I stayed the greater was my burden and I asked for a letter which they refused to give me. Then I asked that my name be taken off the church book and they would not do that. Brother Biggs, I felt I could not live if my name was not taken off. I did not know whether I was doing right or not, but I got the church book and marked my name off. I do not feel that it was wrong for me to do that, but right or wrong I felt better, but oh I think I went as low as any one could go and live. I felt that no one understood me. I felt alone and I could do nothing but cry to God for mercy. It went on in this way for some time when all at once my burden was lifted and I could see the glory of God shining around me, and I felt that God for Christ's sake had pardoned my sins. I felt that I wanted to unite with the Baptist church, but felt that I was not worthy. I have always loved them and wanted to be in the church with them, but oh how little I felt when I would be with them. They had always been so sweet to me. At the Union Meeting at sister Beulah's it seemed like I could not stay away, and after I left I felt like I would never have another opportunity. I was the same at the Association last year, but last Saturday it seemed like I had a different feeling. I wanted to go so badly and while they were singing that good old song I was made to say, "Lord, thy will be done." I could feel his power drawing me, but I did not feel like they would receive me. Brother Biggs, I had lost all hope of ever having another happy hour, but when those dear saints of God gave me the right hand of fellowship and received me as one of them it was unspeakable joy to me. I believe I left a burden in dear old Yellow Creek that will never bother me again, that awful burden of being alone. I know I will have to go through many dark places, but praise the Lord my dear Savior and my dear brethren and sisters will go with me. I cannot tell you just what this means to me, but I feel that you can understand. Dear brother I did not think I would write so much and I did not write what I meant to do but I will quit. Give my regards to sister Biggs and those dear children. Write me sometime when you feel like it. Your little sister in hope.

(Mrs.) ISABEL SIMPSON.

Naches, Wash.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES,

DEAR BRETHREN: For a long time I have had a desire to try to express my appreciation for the good letters and articles in the *Signs*. There are so many familiar names it makes me want to write to them all, and I know of no better way than through your paper. I was looking through the January 1944 number and was interested in the letter from T. O. Turner of Murray, Ky., relating the history of Muddy Fork Church in Trigg County. We lived in Graves County, Ky., until 1917 when we moved West. I united with the church at South Mt. Zion in

1904 when I was twenty-two years old. I have never felt worthy to be numbered with the Old Baptists but never regretted my step. Many of the members of those days are gone. Elder Jack Luther, the moderator, his wife and two daughters and most or maybe all who were members then are long since dead. Many pleasant associations are remembered with those members from sister churches. The most outstanding being the preaching of Elder John Perkins. Coming back to the present I want to mention how much I enjoyed the Circular Letter in the February Signs. Many times having been wondering and puzzling about certain scriptures I have found the answer in the *Signs*. I have never seen anything in the *Signs* that was not good and to the edifying of the saints. It seems the editorials and articles are especially good of late. If I can enjoy those things it is a gift of God for we know we have nothing we did not receive. I hope to be able to read the *Signs* the remaining years of my life. May it always uphold that which makes for peace. The Lord has been so merciful to me lately it makes me wonder if he is preparing me for some great trial. Last night when I lay down as I thought to sleep, my heart was so full I just had to give expression to my feelings. A prolonged, oh, escaped my lips and my husband thinking I was in pain was most sympathetic. The lines I am enclosing were started five days ago and while I could not sleep at night I arose and finished them at one A. M. Do what you think best with this, I am willing to risk your judgment. I am just a poor unworthy sinner. May the Lord be with you to publish the truth. Unworthily,

(Mrs.) DAISY BAKER.

(See poetry on first page)

Ryde, Calif.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I have long waited and hoped for a certain dwelling place where I could have a standing address that I might subscribe for the *Signs of the Times*. My father of Houston, Texas, R. P. Bynum, has received the *Signs* from my childhood, but I am like Israel of old a stranger and without a country or a certain dwelling place. We have a son and daughter-in-law who have given us blessed evidence they are accounted as the little lambs who also love the sincere milk of the word of truth. I am subscribing for the *Signs* to be sent to their address and I will in that way be able to read them as we try to have meeting near Stockton once a month. We do not have a constituted church up there but hope the Lord may see fit soon to cause all to act to perform his will to organize a little church. Realizing my great weakness and unworthiness and that I am the only one to try to speak comfort it leaves me seemingly without any right of authority to try to encourage the little few, but as much as in me is I hope I do love to encourage the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone and not by works of righteousness which we have done. For some unknown cause I have come to love the doctrine of grace salvation, and those who hold it, as the only salvation which is of the Lord and not man, and the Old Predestinarian Baptists are the only ones I have ever known who can practice what they preach. I do believe in good works and the system of good works and the Lord as all in all without any mixture of man's works in it for he is the first and the last, the beginning and the end. To me, *all* just means no more, and if no more by works of righteousness of man then it is all of him, the Christ, who bled, suffered and died upon the cross, and he is the same who came forth from the grave. By that one offering he hath forever put away sin. For this cause he came to do thy will O God and to fulfill the purpose of the Father to make sure or rather to prove the sure promises of the Father to Israel, his sheep. He did it all while as yet there

was none to help. So, dear brother, if I have a hope it is in the resurrection of the body of that blessed Savior. We hear him declaring "I am the resurrection, and the life." "I am the way, the truth, and the life." There is no other way whereby man might be saved but through his death, burial and resurrection. They *shall* be saved. Not maybe if man will open up and let him by any condition of man for it is founded upon the sure foundation of God. All of man's works are uncertain, but God's are certain, sure, unchangeable and never failing. He does not lack for anything and is able to supply all things of his own free will and at his appointed time. It is all in his hands and having all power in heaven and earth he can withhold from whomsoever he wills; he is able to give even to the satisfying of his soul; he chose them in his Son in the ancients of eternity; in time he calls them each and every one in his own order. If this is true, and I believe it is, then is it any mystery why man cannot direct his own steps to walk in so great and marvelous light? To be sure if we believe in such light we still have no power, and for this cause we are compelled to do the Lord's bidding in exact accord and in obedience to his commands. Inasmuch as he commanded, let him that believeth not make haste but wait upon the Lord. If I could do when I got ready, as the Arminians do, I might turn on the light before the Lord was ready and in doing that the Lord would have to wait upon the man. I have thought for a long time to try to write you, strange as it may seem, and if there is no good or comfort in this it may at least give you cause to judge whether I am His or not. I feel I may have made haste in doing this. I have no excuses to make for God, but as for myself I beg to be excused for all my failings. I can write or tell something I can see or think of and I cannot see if I am in darkness without a light. Dear brother, pray to your God and mine, I hope, that he may give light to my soul that I may be enabled by his grace to walk in his ways of truth; that I may be made to walk in the sure paths of David without stumbling; that I may live a life of joy and peace among the Old Baptists while here in this prison below. Not that I desire any praise whatsoever, but that he may receive more praise, glory and honor, the one to whom it all belongs. O for grace to praise him more. Praise him all ye saints both great and small. He is your God, praise his name and shout aloud. Cry it from the housetops, he is yours and you are his, the work is finished, rejoice in the joys of his salvation. May he ever remain my joy and comfort, my rod and staff. In love for the truth. Yours unworthily,

(Elder) SETH BYNUM.

Route 1, Newport, N. C.

Dear Brother Dodson:

You will find enclosed check to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. I like the paper as there is so much good reading in it. The writers seem to fear the Lord and write in love and praise to him who loves them for Jesus' sake. May the Lord lead you and uphold his sacred cause in Christ for his dear children's sake. Yours in hope.

(Elder) W. W. ROBERTS

Dacula, Ga.

Dear Brother Dodson:

Enclosed please find $2 for which renew my subscription for another year. I enjoy the paper more than I can say. So many times I feel so depressed I can hardly go and reading the good articles in the *Signs* helps my feelings and gives me new thoughts for another day. May you continue in the good work you are now doing. A sister in hope.

(Miss) PEARL GOWER

EDITORIAL

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant." — Psalm 25:14.

We know of no other scripture that contains so much meaning, and is of such vital importance to the child of God. David speaks with much assurance as to the dwelling place of the secret of the Lord, and he also declares that, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Psalm 91:1. We hope we have some feeling relative to the secret of the Lord, and being fearful of his wrath being poured out against us. The secret of the Lord was in the beginning with God, and some of the revealed things of God as recorded in the Bible are his love, predestination, election and the calling of the saints to glory through grace given in Christ Jesus, his Son. Strange as it may seem to the carnal mind, no one has learned this secret through tradition, or the keeping of the commandments of men, but "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and the secret of the Lord is revealed to the one fearing the Lord. It is God that is working in him both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and the demonstration of spirit and power manifested makes every one fear him, but instead of his wrath he shows mercy which reveals the secret of the Lord toward a poor sinner. We recall the parable of the prodigal son spoken by Jesus to the scribes and Pharisees. All the time of his life the love of his father was a secret in the heart of his father until all his substance was wasted; then he remembered his father's house with its abundance of everything necessary, but his unworthiness was realized which brought him to repentance, but the secret of his father's love did not fail which caused him to kill the fatted calf, put on him the best robe, a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet. The father treasured the secret of his love for his son all the time of his waywardness from him. Those that have the secret of the Lord shall rest or abide under the shadow of the Almighty, and he will shew them his covenant. God made his covenant with Abraham and fulfilled that covenant in the flesh; those that were exercised by the Spirit of God realized his power over their mortal flesh, but this is not the covenant David is referring to for he was led by the Spirit of God. We believe the covenant ordered in all things and sure is the covenant that is shown to those that fear the Lord. "This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Jer. 31:33-34. "Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I

write them; And their sins and inquities will I remember no more." Heb. 10:15-17. We quote from the apostle Paul as he continues in this chapter, "Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised); And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." We have given you the quotation of Paul's exhortation to the brethren recorded in the tenth chapter of Hebrews. This exhortation is to those that fear God and have within their inward parts God's covenant, and all of like precious faith expect the fruit the spirit will manifest, and see them as Paul contending that they, by the blood of Jesus, enter into the holiest of holy. How sweet it is to meet with such precious ones, and hear them tell of the revelation of God to them when they were so cast down, with no one to pity or hand to help, and when the riches of God's grace was opened to them they could see him pure, holy and undefiled, which caused them to exclaim, oh! I am so vile and unworthy to come into his presence, but Jesus says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matt. 11:28-29. Those that fear God have in abundance hearts filled with groanings.

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
  Unuttered or expressed;
The motion of a hidden fire,
  That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
  The falling of a tear;
The upward glancing of an eye,
  When none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of speech
  That infant lips can try;
Prayer the sublimest strains that reach
  The Majesty on high.

Prayer is the christian's vital breath,
  The christian's vital air;
The watchword at the gate of death;
  He enters heaven with prayer.

The last words in the above hymn says, "He enters heaven with prayer." According to the Scriptures we are made to question for the prayer of the saint has been answered, and he is filled with praise and caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, to ever be with the Lord. Then the fulness of the secret of the Lord will be revealed. As we write unto the household of faith expressing words of truth, we question whether these wonderful things are for a poor sinner like the writer, and it is while viewing these glorious things we feel they are for a sinner like we feel to be, but we feel assured they belong to the child of God whose home is in heaven. We have had demonstrations proving that the salvation of a sinner is by grace and grace alone, and by the revelation of God through Christ Jesus and the Holy Ghost the gospel is preached and the flock of God fed and built up. It is written "that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." Rom. 15:4. The scriptures cannot give life, but being born again and passing through tribulation which worketh patience, and the spirit taking of the things of God written in the scriptures and showing them unto us, we have hope in the mercy of God, and the secret of the Lord is opened to every one that is taught of God. According to the measure of the grace of God given, they are made to live in the church of God militant, or in this time state, and

fill the place in a living body, the bride of Christ, the pillar and ground of the truth. We truly hope every one reading these lines will examine themselves as to whether they are in the faith, and are obedient unto the commandments given to them in their heart to follow in the ordinances of the church of God as you feel one who is Christlike should walk. To us, who have made a profession before men and to the church of God, all the epistles are directed as much as if we had lived in the church to which it was written at the time it was written, and we should not put them off, saying they were for others and not for us. We have a secret in our own hearts of the sufferings for sin in ourselves but God knoweth our hearts. Submitted in love.

—C. W. V.

(Re-published by request)

ROMANS 7:2-3; I CORINTHIANS 5

DEAR ELDER DODSON:—Will you please give your views through the *Signs of the Times* on Romans 7:2-3; also 1st Corinthians, fifth chapter?

From a reader of the *Signs*, and one who is earnestly seeking the truth.

While the above request comes to us unsigned, it appears to have all the earmarks of being honest and sincere, and we will, therefore, undertake to state our views, notwithstanding our realization of the fact that some of our readers will disagree with us. If the Lord has called and qualified us to go in and out before the flock, there must be something required of us more than to voice the opinions of other men or to remain silent when we are aware of views different from our own.

For the benefit of our readers we will quote the second and third verses of the seventh chapter of Romans: "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man." While we are convinced that this concerns chiefly the church and her glorious Head, we, at the same time, are satisfied that it has a literal application, and we will first consider our subject from the latter angle. We cannot condemn too strongly loose living on the part of members of an Old School Baptist church. The people of God are referred to in the Scriptures as being the "salt of the earth", but the Savior said, "If the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under the foot of men." — Matt. 5:13. This matter was of sufficient importance for Jesus to give forthwith another simile, which he did by saying, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick: and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." — Matt. 5:14-16. Of all people on the face of the earth, Old Baptists should live honorable and circumspect lives, in every sense of the word, so far as it is humanly possible to do. The marriage relationship is unquestionably the most sacred of all earthly relationships and it should be kept inviolate. Human beings, however, are weak, and from time to time situations arise which definitely call for relief. A careful reading of the fifth chapter of first Corinthians will show clearly what we mean. The Corinthians were apparently as incestuous as any people could possibly be, and the apostle shows conclusively that some of the things which

they were guilty of were not to be condoned by the church. He urged them to "purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump". He says, "I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." — I Cor. 5:9-13. Jesus said, *"Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery"* —Matt. 19:9. Certainly, no one could ask for any higher authority on this or any other matter than the Head of the church, but we have heard the point raised that Jesus was here addressing the Pharisees, and not his disciples. The very next verse, however, shows conclusively that his disciples were present and continued the discussion with him. Neither does the language used by Jesus permit of any discrimination, for he said, "Whosoever shall put away his wife," etc. If this does not cover the entire field, we do not know what manner of speech he could have used that would. If we turn to Matthew 5:32, where Jesus was addressing his disciples only, and no one else, we find in substance the very same language. He said to his disciples, "But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, *saving for the cause of fornication,* causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." Dr. John Gill, of England, regarded by some as the most outstanding commentator of all time, places a comma after the word "divorced" in the above quotation, which to our mind clarifies the meaning somewhat. Whether we so divide it or not, the meaning is, unquestionably, that whosoever shall marry her that is put away, or divorced, saving for any other cause than that stated, which is fornication, committeth adultery. The gospel writers (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) did not always use the same language in quoting the Savior, and with reference to this matter we find that Mark only says, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery." — Mark 10:11-12. On this occasion Jesus had also been addressing the Pharisees, but his disciples, "in the house", the record reads, "Asked him again of the same matter." We find another instance of the gospel writers not agreeing exactly: in the case of the two thieves which were crucified with Jesus. In Matthew 27:44, it says, "The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth." In Mark 15:32, the record is, "Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him." In Luke 23:39-40, we find a different account. It says, "And *one* of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering, rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we received the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss." We believe that all accounts were true and correct: that in the beginning, both railed on him until there was a change of heart in one, when he confessed his own guilt and declared that Jesus had done nothing amiss. With

regard to the divorce and remarriage question there are two statements by Matthew having the same meaning, according to our interpretation, while Mark did not quote Jesus as fully as Matthew did. If Jesus said more on one occasion than he did on another, or was more fully quoted by one than another, we are certainly justified in accepting the full and complete statement in preference to the one where he did not dwell upon the subject at the same length, or where he was quoted only in part. May we ask that our readers examine for themselves very carefully both Matthew 5:32, and 19:9, and see if they do not mean the same thing. According to our understanding, then this is the one and only Bible ground upon which a man can put away his wife and marry again without committing adultery. The sin of fornication, in our mind, is a sin unto death. If the law of the land was built upon and confined to this principle there would be far fewer divorces in the country. The laws of many states are unquestionably too loosely drawn in this respect, and while divorces may be granted on various and sundry grounds, leaving the parties free to marry again under such laws, the Lord's people are under a higher law than that of the land, and they should obey God rather than man. We repeat that the only ground which we believe warrants a man putting away his wife, or the wife her husband, is that of fornication. Nothing else, however grievous and hard to be borne, is justified by the Scriptures, in our opinion. Where there is guilt for this cause, the innocent party can have the marriage tie annulled and be free to marry again, without being guilty of adultery. We cannot conceive of a more horrible existence than for a virtuous woman to be tied to a licentious husband, who persists in living a lewd life with another woman, or vice versa. Under the law such an one was actually stoned, or put to death, according to Leviticus 20:10, which reads as follows: "And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death." If this was carried out to the letter under the gospel, and the guilty ones were literally put to death, there could be no question as to the right of the innocent, living survivor, whether husband or wife, being free to marry again. In the gospel church, however, they are not actually put to death corporally, but such a sin is deserving of death, or separation, and if the guilty party is put away and accounted dead by the innocent party and the church, the latter is freed from the former and at liberty to marry again without committing adultery.

In our text, the apostle undoubtedly had under consideration mainly Christ and his church. He said, "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?" He then went on to show that the woman is only bound to the law of her husband so long as he liveth, but that if her husband be dead, she is free from that law, and is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Paul was writing to the gospel church at Rome, which was composed of both Jews and Gentiles, and he would have them (the Jews especially) understand that Moses, who typified the law, was dead; that all of the obligations of the church to the law had been met and satisfied by Christ, and that henceforth she owed all of her allegiance to him. When Jesus talked with the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well, he had a definite purpose in saying to her, "Go, call thy husband, and come hither." She answered, and said, "I have no husband." Jesus then said to her, "Thou hast well said, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands: and he whom thou

now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly." — John 4:16-18. Here is an illustration, in part at least, of what we have heretofore tried to set forth. He whom she then had was evidently still alive corporally, but there is also a sense in which he was evidently dead to her, else Jesus would not have said to her he "is not thy husband." Her five husbands no doubt represented the five books of the law, or the fullness thereof, but she had now reached the place where she could no longer receive any comfort or draw any consolation from the law, and being dead to the law, she was a fit subject of gospel address and was free to be married to another, even Christ. The apostle emphasized this in the verse next following our text, by saying, "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." The Scripture is a thorough furnisher unto God's children as to how they should live in this evil world. There is nothing wrong with the Scripture, but the difficulty is the inability of the creature to measure up to the standard set. It is in this very chapter that Paul stresses the weakness of the flesh. He says, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do." He further enlarges upon this by saying, "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." — Rom. 7:21-25. How corrupt and loathsome, indeed, is "the body of this death." Well did the apostle ask, who shall deliver us from it, and he gave the only possible answer to the question by pointing out our escape through our Lord Jesus Christ. How diligent we should be then in all things pertaining to the cause of our Lord, "who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." There is a grave responsibility devolving upon those who have separated themselves from the world by uniting with the true church. How extremely careful, then, they should be to avoid even the appearance of evil and to refrain from spiritual adultery of all kinds, by not affiliating with or partaking of the things of Mystery Babylon. Of one thing we are definitely sure and certain, and that is if they are kept from such things, it will be by the grace of God, and not of themselves, lest any man should boast. It is only through the Spirit that we can mortify the deeds of the body. John wrote, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." — 1 John 2:1. What a wonderful gospel is that which we have to proclaim, declaring as it does that the vilest of the vile may come and find forgiveness with God, by and through our Savior, Jesus Christ, and though one may so live as to be deprived of the love and fellowship of the church here in this wicked world, yet our heavenly Husband is merciful and faithful and will not put away his bride in eternity.

Submitted in love for the consideration of the household of faith.

R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

LILLIAN AUGUSTA UPDIKE DRAKE, widow of the late Eugene P. Drake of Ewing, N. J., was born July 21, 1864 and departed this life August 1, 1944, making her stay on earth 80 years and 10 days. She was the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Archibald Updike of Pennington, N. J., and was married to Eugene P. Drake, November 26, 1884, who preceeded her in death on November 15, 1925. To this union were born two children, Mrs. Lillian Drake Stires, Pennington, N. J. and Eugene Drake, New Brunswick, N. J. She was a woman of rare qualities as a mother, wife and friend which endeared her to all who were blessed to have her acquaintance. She and her husband were brought up strict Presbyterians, but sometime after their marriage, her mother-in-law, Mrs. Drake, was exercised by the spirit and was drawn to the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell by the power that makes one deny themselves and follow Jesus which she did, and was baptized by the late Elder William J. Purington, then pastor of the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church much against the feelings of her husband and family. By the same power her son, Eugene, and daughter, Mrs. Ira Blackwell, were brought to the membership of the Hopewell Church. Her husband never united with the church at Hopewell but died in the faith. His experience about his wife and children was related to me by him a short time before he died, how he hated Elder Purington as at that time he thought he had broken up his relations in the Presbyterian Church, but to his surprise his heart was drawn to reverence the God his wife was made to serve and he was always ready to take her to meetings as long as she lived. I asked him if he did not feel to unite with the church at Hopewell and his reply was, "I love that truth but it is too late." The writer officiated at his funeral. Mrs. Drake, the subject of this obituary had a similar experience to that of her father-in-law, but never murmured about her husband leaving the Presbyterians. She went with him and was a devoted wife and mother and took care of her father-in-law in his last days. She loved the truth of salvation by grace and would often express, "I enjoyed the preaching." The experience of our friends gives us strength to press on for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, ever looking unto him who is the author and finisher of our faith. "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." May God comfort all that mourn and feel our loss is her eternal gain. Her funeral was conducted by the writer, after which her remains were laid to rest in the Pennington Cemetery to await the time when the graves shall give up their dead, when the redeemed of the whole earth shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall they ever be with the Lord.

(Elder) CHARLES W. VAUGHN

It is with sorrowful heart that we note the passing of sister ADDIE LIVINGSTON, formerly of Cobleskill, N. Y. who died at The Primitive Baptist Home in Salisbury, Md., March 2, 1945 after a lingering illness of several months. Her maiden name was Addie Borthwick. She was the daughter of Nathaniel and Roxana C. Borthwick and was born January 17, 1858 at Rensselaerville, N. Y. In 1879 she was united in marriage to Wesley Cook of Middleburg and to them were born two sons, Omer B. Cook, Santa Barbara, California and William Cook of Cobleskill, N. Y. Her husband died in 1891. In 1912 she married James Livingston of Cobleskill where they resided until his death on May 15, 1933. In the fall of 1933 our sister moved to The Primitive Baptist Home in Salisbury, Md. where she resided until her death. She is survived by her two sons, William and Omer Cook and six grandchildren: Ruth E. Cook, Albany, N. Y., M. Esther Cook, Washington, D. C., Velna, Clayton, Harold and Helen of Santa Barbara, Cal. Also surviving are several great-grandchildren and a stepdaughter, Mrs. Charles E. Michel, Cobleskill, N. Y. and several nieces and nephews. Sister Livingston was a school teacher in her younger days at which profession she was deservedly successful. In early life, Oct. 1877, she united with the Midleburg Old School Baptist Church and was one of its most devoted and faithful members. For thirty-nine years she served as clerk of this church. By precept and example she exemplified the christian. Her daily walk evidenced the fact she walked not after the flesh but after the spirit. She was a true mother in Israel. For many years she and her husband opened their home for Old Baptist meetings, and never in any home were brethren of her faith, or friends of the cause, more warmly welcomed. She was unstintedly generous to her pastor and her church in material things, and her advice was always welcomed. She was charitable in her viewpoints yet never yielding on points of docrtine. Her humility was equaled only by her piety, and she was greatly beloved. When she went to the Baptist Home she made new friends to whom she endeared herself as in her former days among the scenes of her early life. She will be greatly missed by her family and relatives, by her friends and those of her faith. A long, useful and noble life came to a close with the passing of sister Livingston. Her body was brought to Cobleskill where funeral services were conducted at the Mereness Funeral Home by the writer. Interment in the Schoharie Cemetery.

Also

The friends and brethren of the Old School Baptist churches of the Lexington-Roxbury Association mourn the loss by death of a good friend, WILLIAM DEWITT MAYES, who passed away March 8, at his home in Halcottsville after a lingering illness extending over several months, but assuming a serious nature only a few weeks before his death. He is survived by his widow, sister Ida Mayes, who proved to him a most loyal and capable helpmeet during their married life of over sixty years. Mr. Mayes was nearly eighty-three years old at the time of his death. He was a man noted for his honesty and industry, his hospitality and helpfulness wherever he made his home. His integrity was unquestioned and his pleasant manner appealed to all. While not a member of the Old School Baptist church, he was its faithful friend and was very often at its meetings, and welcomed to his home all members and friends of that faith. He was a man much liked and he will be sadly missed by all with whom he associated. He was born at Bushnellville, N. Y. on August 11, 1862. He spent over fifty years of his life in the locality where he died. In 1884 he married Miss Ida Travis of Roxbury, N. Y. who tenderly ministered to him in his declining years. He followed the occupation of farming during most of his long, active and useful life. About six years ago he and his wife moved to Halcottsville where they lived until the time of his death. He is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Morton German, Ilion, N. Y. and Mrs. George Streeter of Halcott. The community is the loser by the passing of such a man as William Mayes, who will be long remembered for his many splendid qualities of character. The funeral services were held at Halcottsville and were conducted by the writer. Interment in the Yellow Church Cemetery below Roxbury.

Also

The Clovesville Old School Baptist Church is made poorer by the passing of one of its most beloved and useful members, sister EMMA (MORSE) DAVIS, who died at her home near Halcottsville, March 5, 1945 at the age of 77 years. She was a daughter of the late J. Abner and Mary (Owen) Morse of Halcottsville. Sister Davis had been ill for a long time with a complication of diseases which toward the last was aggravated by a heart disorder. For the past seventeen years she made her home with her daughter and husband, Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Bussy. Among the immediate surviving relatives are three daughters, Mrs. Elmer Bussy, Halcottsville, N. Y., Mrs. Melvin E. Hull, Ithaca, N. Y. and Mrs. Benjamin Conklin, Shavertown, N. Y.; three sons, Thomas, Willard, and Floyd Davis all of Shavertown, N. Y.; also one sister, Mrs. Sanford J. Morse, Halcottsville, N. Y. Sister Davis was a woman of unassuming ways, devoted in her family and faithful to her meetings, often inconveniencing herself to meet with those of her faith. As a wife, mother and friend hers was an example well worthy of emulation. She was clerk of the church of her membership for a long time and spared neither time nor effort to look after the temporal needs of the church. She never shirked any responsibility either in church or home. Her husband, Henry Davis, died in 1906. Sister Davis possessed a strong christian character, was unmoved in her determination to do what was right, and her stability of mind, her influence in the home and community were felt by all that admired good citizenship and a noble and splendid example. We are grieved to note the passing of one so justly esteemed and useful, and can only bow in submission to the will of Him who makes no mistakes. To her surviving relatives much sympathy is extended. She had been a member of the church about sixty years. The funeral services in charge of the writer were conducted at Halcottsville and the interment was in the cemetery at Kelly Corners.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

MRS. NETTIE L. RANDALL, daughter of the late Daniel H. and Rhoda A. Libbey Toothaker, and granddaughter of deacon Ivory A. and Mary Butler Libby, was born in Berwick, Me. Feb. 10, 1875, and died Aug. 5, 1944. On May 28, 1895 she married brother Noah W. Randall who died Feb. 20, 1929. Sister Nettie was a worthy member of the Oak Woods Baptist Church, North Berwick, Me., being baptized by Elder Keene, Oct. 9, 1898. Her husband united Aug. 12, 1894. As long as her husband lived they were very constant and faithful to their church, often driving the long distance in stormy weather and over bad roads. When sister Nettie was able to attend meetings she always was so cordial and pleased to meet and talk with the brethren and friends, desiring that they come to see her as it was hard for her to see them. She is survived by four children, Agnes M. Randall, Ruth M. Randall and Mrs. William E. Bates all of Berwick and Eugene W. Randall of Rochester, N. H., also one grandchild, Roger Bates. (Mrs.) LYDIA KEENE NASON.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS".

A. S. Roberson, N. C., $1; W. E. Branche, Calif., $2; Mrs. C. B. Gordy, Mich., $1; F. Jonhson, W. Va., $1; A friend, N. Y., $1; Mrs. J. B. Hill, N. J., $2; Mrs. J. C. Whidden, Fla., $2.50; Mrs. N. Arnold, Calif., $3.

TO OUR READERS

Judging from the numerable favorable expressions of approval which are constantly being received from all over the country, we are convinced that a large number of our readers are well pleased with both the content and the manner in which the SIGNS is being published. For all of this we are truly grateful and wish to extend our cordial and sincere thanks.

As we are anxious to enlarge our field of usefulness we are going to ask that each one of our readers make a real effort during the summer and fall months to secure for us a NEW subscriber. Remember, if you have not already received a copy of our 172 page book on the Resurrection of the Dead, we will send one FREE to every one who is not now a subscriber or to every old subscriber who will send us a NEW subscription at $2 per year.

Your combined efforts in this respect will undoubtedly bring some real tangible results for the messenger which goes out monthly containing precious messages to the poor and needy of the flock of God.

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES actually costs less than four cents per week. If you feel that it is worth many, many times the price, will you not kindly speak with those of your brethren and friends who are interested in "these things" and try to get them to subscribe to our family paper.

Please be assured of our thanks in advance.

R.L.D.

BOOK WANTED

Any one having AMARGEDDEN by Baldwin for sale or to loan, please communicate with F. A. AMSBERRY, 138 S. Everett St., Glendale, Cal.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the *Signs of the Times* at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1; 12 copies, $2. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Canaan Primitive Baptist Church located about 18 miles west of Danville, Va., beginning Friday, July 6, 1945 and continuing the two days following. Ministers of our faith and order and all others interested in the truth are cordially invited. For further information write either:

(Elder) W. R. DODD, Mod., Dry Fork, Va.
J. F. WILLIAMS, Clerk, Keeling, Va.

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sunday in each month, beginning with April through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meeting-house, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed.

R. LESTER DODSON.

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each 1st Sunday, 11:00 a. m. and Saturday before.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday.
AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before, ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a. m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopewell Church, Ozark Ala., meets each 4th Sunday, 11 a. m. J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Beulah Primitve Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canda, California.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday, north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before.
E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

Pleasant Valley Church, Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc.)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. E. M. TACKETT,
J. S. HUNNICUTT, Pastors.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY
Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue. Take elevator to second floor.
11.00 a. m. 1:30 p. m.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.
(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.
C. W. BOND, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 a. m.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.
W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. G. E. Rushing, co-pastor.
C. B. TEAGUE, Pastor.

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets third Sunday in each month at 11:00 a. m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Old School Baptist meetings are held every fourth Sunday at Civic Club, 1419 N. Shepherd St., Houston, Texas. Preaching by Elder W. O. Beene.
(Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Danville Primitve Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before. Bradley Road, Danville, Va.
W. R. DODD, Pastor.

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meet each first Sunday 11 a.m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3032 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va. R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.
R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m. C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

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LIGHT AND TRUTH

"O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles."—Psalms 43:3.

LIGHT and TRUTH are the prerequisites of one who worships God in spirit and in truth. Neither this LIGHT nor TRUTH is among the characteristics composing the natural man as born of a woman. This LIGHT and TRUTH is foolishness to natural reasoning for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him." This LIGHT and TRUTH cannot be acquired by study because in the same verse just quoted the scripture says: "neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Then it behooves God's people to look to another source — other than themselves — for LIGHT or TRUTH. Then they are made to pray to God for both LIGHT and TRUTH. Both the LIGHT and TRUTH must be present at the same time in order that the saint of God be enabled to joyfully praise God in sincerity. "Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God, my God." Psalms 43:4. The TRUTH is foolishness to the natural man and unless accompanied by the LIGHT cannot be appreciated. The truth is that God determined "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying. My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Unless this LIGHT accompanies this TRUTH to show us our inability and that it lieth not in man to direct his steps and that all things work together for good to them who love God we cannot realize his sovereignty nor appreciate this TRUTH. The truth is God chose his people in Christ before the foundation of the world; that his people are the elect according to the foreknowledge of God. As John puts it "ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Unless we are in possession of the LIGHT that reveals our inability to choose good things and that we naturally take darkness for light and light for darkness we cannot believe or appreciate this TRUTH. The truth is that "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Eph. 2:8-9. Until we are enlightened to the fact that the carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, and with men it is impossible; but with God all things are possible, we cannot believe this TRUTH. Our seeming ability vanishes

when the LIGHT manifests the gross darkness of our reasoning abilities. We are made to realize that God begins this work in us. Unless we are shown in our experience that we are not able to perform it after God has begun it in us we would be as the foolish Galatians. "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" Yes it is needful that we undergo experiences as Paul, "to will is present with me: but how to perform that which is good I find not," before we can realize the TRUTH that "it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Peter was in possession of the will to stand by Jesus Christ; yea, to go with him even to prison and in death, though he be slain, yet it was necessary that he go through the sad experience of denying Christ — cursing and swearing — in order to convert him that it took more than the will to enable him to confess Jesus Christ. Peter learned that God must enable him with the Spirit and truth in each experience before he could truly worship Jesus. The fact that he knew him was not sufficient in this trial. It takes such experiences as these to enlighten and convert the individual to the TRUTH that he cannot of himself do anything that is good in any part of the journey of the saint of God, and to bring about the confidence thus; "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Then he is convinced that salvation, in any phase, is solely by grace. The TRUTH is clearly expressed in the scriptures thus: "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isaiah 55:11. The scriptures pointedly teach that the prerequisite for entrance into the kingdom of God is a radical transformation wrought by the spirit of God himself. And since this work on the soul is sovereign and supernatural, it may be granted or withheld according to the good pleasure of God. Consequently salvation to whomsoever it may be granted is entirely of grace. The born-again person comes to see that Jesus is in reality "the author and finisher of our faith." Heb. 12:2. When Jesus said: "Lazarus, come forth," a mighty power went with the command and gave effect to it. Lazarus probably was not conscious of any other than his own power working in him, but when he was enlightened to the situation he undoubtedly saw that he had been called into life wholly by divine power. God's power was primary — his was secondary and would never have been exerted except in response to the divine. The truth is as Paul teaches; that believers are not under law, but under grace. "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Romans 6:14. Sin cannot cause their down fall for they are under a system of grace and are not treated according to their deserts. "And if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace." Romans 11:6. "Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression." Romans 4:15. "For without the law, sin was dead." Romans 7:8. That is, where the law is abolished sin can no longer subject the person to punishment. "Ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ." Romans 7:4. The one who attempts to earn even the smallest part of his salvation by works becomes "a debtor to do the whole law." (That is to render perfect obedience in his own strength and thus earn salvation) Gal. 5:3. When God sees fit to chastise his children by temporarily withdrawing his Holy Spirit or his providential mercies — or his LIGHT and TRUTH — the poor child of God is corrected and converted from any trust or confidence in himself and will again be praying to God (not to himself) for both LIGHT and

TRUTH. This is the TRUTH as proclaimed in the scriptures but LIGHT must accompany this TRUTH before it can be believed or appreciated. Jesus said: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." John 14:6. If you contend that you are any part of that way you deny the words of Jesus. "The Spirit of truth, — will guide you into all truth," (John 16:13) and will enable you to realize that Jesus is the TRUTH. Yes, Jesus is the life. When the divine operation of God's Holy Spirit is inactive the individual is dead as far as ability to do good is concerned. My experience harmonizes with Paul's experience when he said: "I die daily." We are made to realize that God must work in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure before we can walk godly in this present world. When God sends forth His LIGHT it manifests man's righteousness as filthy rags in God's sight. Thus this life in and of ourselves that we have had confidence in has been worked OUT as God works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. The farmer works in his crop and thus works out the obnoxious weeds and everything else that hinders his crop. Man's confidence in his own righteousness or anything of himself that he depends upon for salvation, whether in time or for eternity, must be worked OUT or abolished. The truth is, that we do not reach perfection in this present life; that evil is mixed with all we do, and that the children of God must be delivered (in the future) out of this bondage of corruption into the glorious liberties of the children of God. Unless this LIGHT shines into our hearts and makes us to see our vile nature, the filthiness of our own righteousness and the imperfection of all our deeds, we cannot realize this TRUTH. We are mortal creatures hoping some day to be raised as immortal. We are corruptible desiring to be clothed with incorruption. We are natural and yet carnal but we have hopes of being made spiritual. The natural blood runs through our veins now which inspires our fleshy lusts, but we trust in some wonderful way that the Spirit of eternal life will replace the natural blood we now possess when we become residents of that Eternal City not made with hands.

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PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS

By Elder A. D. Hughett
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The ten virgins are a type of the saints. The numbers ten and five do not mean any particular number of persons, but are used as symbols only. The five foolish are a type of our carnal nature in the flesh, the five wise of our spiritual nature in Christ. Each one of us have the two with us all of the time, and one or the other is always manifest and predominates outwardly accordingly as God works in us to will and to do. The lamps are a type of the light by which we go forth on our heavenly journey. When left to the flesh we go forth in the light of carnal reason, but when in the spirit by faith and in the light of God's countenance. (Psalms 89:15) Jesus is "the door of the sheep," and it is always open to us when we are going forth in faith and in the light of the spirit; but always shut when we in our foolishness try to walk in the flesh or to approach unto God by works. I will try to show by the Scriptures why I believe the above to be true. First of all there are three things in the first verse of Matt. 25 to which I wish to give particular attention. First, the word "THEN" which shows that the parable is in consideration of what has just been said in what has gone before in chapter 24 and especially the last ten verses of that chapter. Next, "THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN" which is the subject under consideration, and which I understand to be the church

of Jesus Christ as set up here on earth and governed by the Lord Jesus, and is wholly and exclusively composed of the members of his body, in other words the saints, the children of God only. This parable is for and in consideration of them only. The answer to every person or condition mentioned in this parable will be found in the everyday experience of the members of Christ's body. I understand the Lord Jesus to affirm that in the conditions he has just described in the last ten verses of chapter 24, when they exist, then the kingdom of heaven is like what he, in a far more highly symbolized and gospelized form, sets forth in this parable. Next let us consider the term "VIRGINS". In the natural sense or type a virgin is usually an unmarried woman that has preserved her chastity. This is true in the antitype in that the saints are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." 1 Peter 1:5. "That we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Eph. 1:4. "Holy and unblamable and unreprovable in his sight." Col. 1:22. Ten virgins: five were wise and five were foolish. Ten is a symbol of divine perfection in the Scriptures, and five is always a symbol of the law. The law as it was administered by Moses brought forth death, but the same law in the person of Jesus Christ brought life to all that were under it. The five foolish virgins are a symbol of the saints or servants of God seeking justification by the works of the law, or of human efforts in the absence of their Lord. The five wise virgins are a symbol of the same persons when they go forth in faith and the wisdom of their Lord, having his presence with them, for he has told us that "without me ye can do nothing." Let us go back to chapter 24 and note some of the conditions in the kingdom of heaven to which the parable is likened. In verse 45 it reads, "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?" This is the gospel minister, or I believe any servant or member of Christ's body going forth in the wisdom and strength of their master. "Blessed is that servant, whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken," etc. I think we are all guilty of this when we find fault with our brethren, and especially when we feel that they are slack concerning some duty, and accuse them of being so and urge them as if their work depended on our efforts. I have had this happen to me and I know it hurts. Paul says, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand." Rom. 14:4. We may disagree with some brother on some point of doctrine, and proceed to set up our own views as a standard, and because he does not see as we do we may use abusive language, and accuse him of being an unbeliever or something else of that kind. This is all the work of the flesh, and when we are guilty of such as this we are saying in our heart "My lord delayeth his coming" and we thus smite our fellow servants. In John 3-27 we read, "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven," and in 1 Cor. 4:7 "And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" So what right have we to censure those that do not see or do as we do? In the majority of cases the fault finder is in the wrong for he manifests an unchristian spirit, and that of itself testifies he is in the flesh, and his lord has not yet come, therefore a foolish virgin, yet if we judge him we place ourselves in the same position. Jesus said,

"Judge not, that ye be not judged," and "wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself," then again to Matt. 24: 49 "and to eat and drink with the drunken." This is the work of the flesh of which we are all guilty at times, and I often fear it is with me most of the time, but the Lord does not suffer us to continue long in error, but corrects us in his own good time. This correction is what I understand to be meant in the next two verses. Sometimes it may be very mild but sufficient, at other times it may be very severe. I have felt it many times and have felt to be a hypocrite, and that weeping and gnashing of teeth is something I think all of God's saints are acquainted with. How prone we all are to want to saddle all such scripture as this that testifies against us on to those outside the fold, or kingdom, but no, Jesus goes on to say, "THEN shall the KINGDOM OF HEAVEN be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them; But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut." It will be impossible for me to cover all the doctrine I think I can see in these few short verses, in as short a letter as this will have to be. It must be borne in mind that Jesus is using a natural illustration here to portray a spiritual condition in the church, that exists naturally, which is likened to the foolish virgins; and this is true when we go forth in the light of this world, the wisdom of the natural man, and we can do no other way in the absence of that wisdom from above. Still we go, as is shown when the cry was made that the bridegroom cometh; then ALL those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. Yes, we are just as active in the absence of our Lord, and often more so than when he is present with us. We read and study, trim our lamps, but I feel I can truthfully say that what we acquire of ourselves alone is sure to be wrong. The only way it is possible for us to think right is in that wisdom and strength that comes from above. When we have that wisdom we are likened to the wise virgins that took oil in their vessels with their lamps. It does not say that the foolish virgins had vessels. The saints are often referred to in the Scriptures as vessels, vessels of mercy, vessels of gold and silver, but this does not apply to the flesh or the outer man, but to that inner or spiritual man, and being "led by the Spirit of God." Rom. 8:14. They go forth, having mercy and grace, and the light of the Holy Spirit; they go in WITH the bridegroom to the marriage. This marriage is continuous and in this respect is not like the natural marriage. The marriage ceremony of Christ and his bride has been going on for over nineteen hundred years, and will continue to go on until the last individual member of his mystical body has been brought in. Jesus comes and goes. He speaks of his coming in the forepart of the 24th chapter, and in the parable of the talents which immediately follows this parable, and is directly connected with it by the word "FOR" in the 14th verse; he tells of his going away, "as a man traveling into a far country." It would take volumes to do justice to this subject of the marriage of Christ and his glorious bride.

(*To be continued*)

(*Continued from July issue*
By Elder R. W. Rhodes

It is the opinion of some of our brethren that the children of God, or some of them, receive the mark of the beast and his image, but if you will read Rev. 14:9-11 you will see that all who receive this mark are tormented forever and ever in the fire and brimstone, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever and they have no rest day or night who worship the beast and his image and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. If this holy, inspired word is true, and I believe it is, may God help us to realize that his children are kept in the hour of judgment and perdition of ungodly men, the same as Noah and his family were in the days of the flood. That is why Jesus says in Matt. 24:37 "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." One more thought concerning his mark. It is said in Rev. 13:18, that is of the number of a man, so the mark must at least signify his name. It is something significant of his name and of your devotion and pledge to him. That cannot be denied scripturally. I talked to a brother once and I have seen the writings of some who think it to be the carnal mind. If that was so Paul had it in that he said, "The law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin." Rom. 7:14. I think Paul told the truth for himself and all the children of God, but I do not think there is even a hint in all the Bible that this is the mark of the beast. If so every one on earth now or that has ever been has had the mark of the beast. According to John's description, if being carnal is the mark of the beast, the victims only have it in one hand or just their forehead, and it only keeps them able to buy and sell here, but according to Rev. 14:9-11 would suffer the everlasting punishment of torment with fire and brimstone. According to this theory of carnality, or being carnal, being the mark of the beast (and all those who are carnal have the mark of beast) then it will prove conclusively and scripturally that every individual who has ever lived on earth will be tormented with fire and brimstone forever and ever. Paul said, "I am carnal." Then if, as Paul says, he is carnal, are we better or is there any one who is not carnal? Do any of you, dear chilchildren of God, feel to be better than the great apostle Paul who said he was carnal? Remember, dear reader, if Paul was carnal, he had, according to this theory, the mark of the beast and will, according to the revelation of Jesus Christ, suffer the torment of fire and brimstone, and so will you unless you are better than Paul. I do not believe any heaven-born child of God could feel above the holy apostle Paul. If they do feel better than Paul I believe it is a fair example of Phariseeism. Luke 18:10-15 states conclusively that the man who feels above the poor publican is a Pharisee and Jesus said in Luke 18:14 "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other." It is a very dangerous position for one to feel so exalted above one of God's humble servants, as the apostle Paul was. I do not believe you, dear child of God, feel to be above the very least of God's little ones. Instead of us having any scriptural ground to feel this way we are told to esteem others better than ourselves. Phil. 2:3. Now you may well ask me the question, how then will the child of God be preserved from receiving the mark of the beast, or from worshipping him, his image or his number, and how is it that those who are not the children of God, receive his mark, worship his image and him and receive his number? I believe I can answer that very scripturally by referring you to 2 Thess. Read this whole chapter and particularly the eleventh verse which shows that God sends them a strong delusion that they should believe a lie; that they might all be damned who believe not the truth. So if they are sent a strong delusion it will

be no trouble for them to believe that this beast (which is a man) is God, and worship him as such. That is why I think that God has designed and purposed to make manifest his judgment for it is said in Rev. 13:8 "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Again in the twelfth verse the same thing is related in essence. Rev. 20:15 says, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Read these references. Then, dear child of God, if all whose names are not written in this book shall worship the beast, and if all those whose names were not written there, were cast into the lake of fire, it seems to me this mark will be that that signifies they are to be cast into hell, and on the other hand those who have not the mark but instead the seal of the living God. Read Rev. 7:3-10. The wicked will have the mark of the beast, labelling them for destruction which is consummated in Rev. chapters 17-19. Read them. All those who have the seal of the living God are delivered, even every one who shall be found written in the book. Dan. 12:1. My reason for dealing so extensively on this phase of the subject is because if the position that the children of God do receive the mark, image, name or number of the beast be true, it is most emphatically shown that they will be tormented forever and ever. I do not believe even those brethern who advocate such, really believe any of God's children will ever be banished to hell forever and ever as is so emphatically declared in references already given. In the time when God delivered Israel out of Egypt the token of the blood of the paschal Lamb was the token and none except Israelites had it, and when God's destroying angel came upon Egypt all whose door post was not sprinkled by the Lamb's blood was to lose their first born which I believe was figurative of this time of the great judgment of God that is approaching. God's people will have their hearts sprinkled with the symbolical blood of Christ which secures them from all sins, and not only this but they are sealed by the Holy Spirit and in their foreheads as a manifest token of their preservation unto his heavenly kingdom. The non-regenerate or non-elect will be marked, not only by not being sprinkled with the blood of Christ, but that cursed sign and mark of the beast, his image and his number. They shall not escape, not one single one of them, because strong, mighty, glorious and righteous is that blessed Lord who will judge both the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom. 2 Tim. 4:1. He will receive into life everlasting those who have done good (by the leadership of his spirit) unto the resurrection of life (John 5:29), and will assign those that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation. I want to notice the mystery of this great beast from another angle. Rev. 17:3 reveals the whole scene of the beast, and of the woman that sits on him. "So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns." I think the simplest and most scriptural solution of this woman is the false church (not churches because she is one). In the first verse of this chapter she is called the great whore that sitteth upon many waters, or peoples. There are seven kings or heads in this great mystery who rule one after another in their respective times. These kings or heads, emperors, rulers or dictators differ in many ways, no doubt, as expressed in Dan. 7:3. Read also the twenty-third verse which shows conclusively that the kingdoms differ in their respective manners of government, but the woman who sits on each of them is spoken of always in the singular. One woman, the whore, the great whore, the harlot, the mother of harlots. Rev. 17:5.

I think the only way there is any connection between these kings or heads is through this woman who sits on each of them. She is always the same in spirit. She might make some little changes in her dress and appearance in her methods to deceive the nations or kingdoms, as did Jezebel of old, who is also mentioned in Rev. 2:20 which I believe clearly indicates that even though she was a literal woman, she typified the great false church that rides upon the power and support of all nations. She has been called by many different names at different times or even at the same time, yet that is very scripturally characteristic of her because she has been called by different names all along through time. Yet she is the same mystery Babylon, the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth. Through her filthiness, deception and fornications all nations are deceived, and through this deception, filthiness and fornication she forces herself upon all nations. Rev. 18:3-6. Read also the twenty-third verse which plainly shows that her scope of operation in her filthiness, degradation, deception and fornication is effective and successful over all nations. Can you conceive, dear reader, in your mind the description and combination of this woman sitting upon all nations? Even though as I feel and as I have tried to set forth in this article proven by Rev. 17:5 of these kings or heads, they had already had their dominion and were gone at the time John wrote this book. One of them was on his throne at the time, and one was not yet come, and also the rise of the two horned beast which brings about the healing of the head of the seventh king. John saw her sitting upon all of them, riding their power, causing death and destruction, misery and suffering, persecution and martyrdom to God's holy saints through the power and execution of these kings and their combination of kingdoms. Let us shortly review some of the effects of her work of persecution, death and destruction. Take the children of Israel in Egypt under Pharaoh. Exodus, chapters 1-4. Daniel in the lion's den. Dan. 3:10-28. Jeremiah, Isaiah, David, Sampson and all the prophets, patriarchs, apostles, our Lord Jesus Christ and all his saints, ministers and churches. People down to the present time and she is still in the saddle of political power to some extent, and that power of political influence is growing very rapidly to the extent that she, the false church, the whore, that woman that is the beast or king rider is clamoring for her influence at the peace table if and when it comes. She is trying and will succeed in finally uniting all her forces in one direction, that it will completely heal the wound of the seventh head of this mighty seven headed, ten horned beast who, according to Rev. 17:14, will make war against the Lamb, blessed Savior, who it is said shall overcome him. If you will note in the thirteenth chapter of Rev. he is the first to make war with the saints and overcome them, but thanks to God's holy and blessed name he is going to overcome the beast and is going to judge and avenge the blood of his saints upon this great whore whose sins will reach to heaven under the restored or healed seventh head or king. In a brief way I have tried to express my views as to the connection of the great beast, who is only one beast with seven different heads, and the one woman who sits on him which, I feel, is false and political or worldly religion. Now who is this woman of whom I am speaking? Read Rev. 17:18 which says, "And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." Who is the so-called church today that has such a long and bloody record of reigning over the kings of the earth? You very well know it is the mother of harlots and her daughters to wit, Roman Catholic and both the Episcopalian and Protestant that came out of Rome and that will go back and support and

heal the wound of the seventh head, and its amalgamation with the combination of the two horned beast will constitute what is said in Rev. 17:11 to be the eighth head or king and he is of seven. Why? Because he came out of the Roman church, creating the deep and long-lasting wound, which I believe began to be inflicted at the fall of Rome under the conquest of ancient kings who were subjects of the Papacy. I have heard the seven heads alleged to typify the literal seat of the Pope at Rome, Italy which I think to be wrong, because I feel that Rome is literally and scripturally described to be the seat of the beast. Rev. 16:10. It has been the seat of the governing authority for persecution and destruction of both pagan and papal Rome, and I think it will continue to be even after the complete restoration or healing of his wound. Rev. 13:1-3.

(*To be continued*)

Linthicum Heights, Md.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am enclosing a letter from sister Holloway, telling of the way in which she has been led. This will be of interest to those who love sister Martha, and feel that she has been taught of the Lord. I have her permission to share this letter with the Lord's people. We had such a pleasant visit from brother Waylon Chandler and his brother, Lavonne. They attended our meeting at Rock Springs. It was a great privilege to hear brother Chandler speak of the goodness of God to him. Your sister,

(Mrs.) ELIZABETH TOPPING.

Newark, Md.

DEAR SISTER TOPPING: I will write you a few lines at least. I think of you and Elder Topping often and of your request that I write you some of my experience through life. Almost as far back as I can remember I was deeply impressed in regard to heavenly and divine things. I wanted to be a christian but how to perform that which was good I knew not. I dared not ask any one, not even my mother, for I wanted no one to know my mind was running in that direction. It must be kept a secret, but I resolved to watch my every word and step and surely I would become good. My mother often read the Bible and I wanted to read it too, but I thought only christians should read and handle that holy book. Sometimes my mother would lay the Bible on the table open and I would walk near enough to the book to read but dared not touch it with my hands. The time came when I felt compelled to go to the Bible for help and instruction but read it secretly. It seemed mine was a desparate case and none must know of my deplorable condition, but I would make every effort to extricate myself for I believed I could. Time told or showed me I was an utter failure. I was led on through deep distress and sorrow until my fifteenth year when I found, alas, do all I could that I could nothing do. I gave up in despair, feeling justly condemned to everlasting punishment, when these words came sweetly to my soul, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." What heavenly joy those words gave me! Oh, the wondrous height of that holy delight none but Zion's children know. Now I wanted to tell to sinners 'round, what a dear Savior I had found by following him in the ordinance of baptism and uniting with the Old School Baptist Church for I had no doubt they were the Lord's people. But the thought came with force, can I live as one professing godliness, being so young, not yet sixteen years of age? No young people were in the church where my father and mother were members and I had no thought of uniting elsewhere. Could the members have any confidence in a school-girl like me? I wanted to go every meeting day but something held me back. There was always a longing

to go home to my friends and tell them what great things the Lord had done for me. The words, "Let not conscience make you linger, nor of fitness fondly dream; All the fitness He requireth is to feel your need of Him," and none felt that more than I, so on Feb. 18, 1882 I asked for a home with the church with much fear and trembling. I was received and baptized the same day by dear old Elder E. Rittenhouse, then pastor of the church. He gave me much encouragement, assuring me if I would offer to the church I would not be turned away. How sweet and precious was that greeting, "Sister Martha," and to this day that comes nearer to me than sister Holloway. On Dec. 10, 1884 I was married and settled near Snow Hill so asked the Little Creek Church for a letter that I might cast my lot with the little band at Snow Hill, which was granted. That was nearly sixty years ago and if I am still "in the way" truly I can say,

"He near my soul has always stood,
His loving-kindness, O how good!"

Sister dear, I hope you can follow what I have written. The love and fellowship of the saints means more to me than I can express. Archie joins me in love to you and Elder Topping. We hope you will visit us in the near future. Your sister,

(Mrs.) MARTHA E. HOLLOWAY.

Route 7, Box 795-A, Bessemer, Ala.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I intended writing a few lines to you and the lovers of the *Signs of the Times* when I sent in our renewal, but I was not given a mind to write then and do not feel that I am now. I would like to tell all the little ones, if I could, what great things the Lord hath done for me. We have been taking the *Signs* a little over a year and enjoy it so much. May He continue blessing you and the Associate Editors in sending the food and drink through it to all of like precious faith and hope. My grandfather, John R. Wilson, took the paper for years and surely loved its doctrine. When only a child I remember slipping them from his book-case and going off to myself to read them. I loved the experiences in them but did not want any one to know it. My husband and I were baptized the fourth Sunday in December by Elder W. D. Griffin, our beloved pastor. Ercy united with the church a month before and I was blessed to be led with him at the water-side. What joy and peace we experienced there, and during seasons since that can only be understood by the little ones who have been led there. I felt then, there could be no more worries or troubles here. Knowing the promise, "In the world ye shall have tribulation" I was soon to realize they were still here, but the little seasons He visits with us are so sweet and uplifting it seems the most bitter trial will be easy to face. If left to ourselves what weak, helpless mortals we would be. I feel too unworthy to claim a hope in His mercy and a place among the dear sisters and brethren, yet if it was not for that little ray of hope that is given me, and the love I feel for them and the doctrine of an all-wise, all-powerful and unchangeable God, who foreknew all things, whose counsel shall stand and whose pleasure will be done there would be nothing here to rest upon. They are all gifts of his love, not because we tried to believe or tried not to believe, but when given the light we desired nothing else. Paul said, "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what has thou that thou didst not receive?" Enclosed is a letter from my aunt which was food to us, and we would like to have others read it as we feel it would be manna to them also. Do as you think best, brother Dodson, and it will be all right. I fear I have taken up too much space and if so cast mine aside for something worth while. May it please the Lord to bless you to publish the *Signs* for years to come. The least child if one at all.

(Mrs.) RUTH REDMAN.

(Such letters as the foregoing and the one which follows we believe are greatly enjoyed by our readers. We thank both sisters for their contributions. How refreshing it is to have our burdened hearts and minds lifted from the perishable things of this world and fixed upon things which are divine and eternal. Sometimes we can soar above on the wings of His love, and touch those strings which are, indeed, heavenly and sublime. May God, by his matchless grace, give us more and more to rise above the sordid things of men, such as malice, envy, jealousy, hatred and the like, causing us to covet the best gifts and to revel in those things which make for peace, that his love may abound and be shed abroad in our hearts is our desire.—R. L. D.)

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110 La Rose St., East Point, Ga.

DEAREST ERCY AND RUTH: I have worried quite a bit because I have not written you a line in reply to your sweet letter (that I longed for), because I felt like you would think I did not appreciate your writing me all about your joy and happiness in going to the church. I have been rejoicing ever since I heard Ercy had united and you hoped to go (or be carried with him). You know these precious truths have a way of getting around to those of like precious faith, although we always try to keep them to ourselves. So often we have no one to talk with and feel too unworthy to claim even a little part in so great a plan of salvation, and feel so unfit to try to tell of His love, mercy and grace that he so wonderfully showers upon us even when we are unaware of it. It was such a joy and comfort to me to know he had led you both to his church and people — to the highest seat you can ever occupy in this world of sin and sorrow. When I was not quite grown Elder Jordan was preaching a wonderful sermon at Shiloh about the high and exalted position God's humble poor was placed in and said, "Brethren, you would have to go down hill if you could leave your position and go to the president's chair." That impressed me greatly and the more the blessed truth was revealed to me, the more I could see what he meant, "And though the world may think it strange, they would not with it exchange." No, a thousand times no, not for worlds and worlds like this. I have had many heartaches and troubles in this world, and have many, many times seemed on the verge of despair, hope most gone, and, seemingly, not a friend on earth, but that blessed little hope of such sweet assurance, that what God had done for me was forever done, without change, alteration, or even a shadow of turning, and is just as sure as God himself, has always come to my relief in darkest hours and gently soothed the sorest trial. Oh, the power of his love and mercy, and may we have faith to trust in One who changes not! To be able to trust and rest in him who is able to destroy both soul and body, and hope that he saved you and called you out of all the traps and snares of an ever changing and unfriendly world, taking you up out of such an horrible pit and placing your feet upon a Rock that is immovable, putting a new song in your mouth and establishing your goings is the most wonderful, gracious feeling a poor, helpless being will ever experience in this world. Paul said, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable," but it reaches beyond this vale of tears and enters into that within the veil where Jesus the forerunner has already entered. His people are satisfied just feasting with one another on the blessed truths of his wonderful works (for he works and none can hinder and hinders and none can work), and hoping and longing for the time when they shall see him as he is and be like him and satisfied. Ye are a garden walled around (not if you will, but) with the wills and shalls of his blessed truth. A peculiar people, a holy nation, a royal

priesthood. It is all too great, too wonderful and such a sweet mystery, that such a plan of salvation was fixed by God's eternal love for poor finite creatures to rejoice in and live on here, being called out of darkness (and what darkness!) into the marvelous light and liberty of his dear Son who died that we might have life and have it more abundantly. The half has never yet been told, and the more we behold of the sweet mystery of it all, the greater the mystery is! It is in him and him alone that we live, move and have our being. Bill read your letter and cried all the time. It does me good to see him enjoy the truth. I have always known my inability to teach my children the way, and my only hope is, I know God knows where they are and in his time and way will lead them to his banqueting house and that his banner over them will be love. I did not know — in fact never know — what I would write and I always leave something out. I want to come and go with you to meeting sometime. Give my love to brethren Brock and Griffin and their wives. Write again. In love and hope, Your aunt.

(Mrs.) ESTA IVEY.

1306 Cumberland Ave., Evansville 15, Ind.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR ELDER and I hope brother in Christ: I received the April *Signs* this A. M. and have read with gladness the sweet messages of love that the brethren have set forth in writing, and I rejoice in the truth they have set forth for if I know anything or if I have had any experience it is all by the power of God. He works in us both to will and to do according to the purpose he had in us in the beginning before ever time was, for it is (not going to be) just one eternal now with God. He said, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." "I am God, and there is none else." I think Elder Green has given as perfect an understanding in regard to the power of God as is possible. It is indeed a blessed privilege to read after men that are inspired of God to write a message so sweet to the lost sheep of Israel's God. I have also greatly enjoyed Elder Adams' messages in regard to the book of Ruth. Having met brother Adams in Alabama and heard him preach the same doctrine he set forth in his writing makes me sure that he and all those who set forth that doctrine are the called witnesses of the all wise omnipotent God. O the beauties of the gift of God that shines forth in their faces as they stand before a congregation of God's saints and speak of the wonders of his grace and the multitude of his mercies to those who have transgressed his laws, and are dead according to the law of nature, but are given a hope of that spiritual life through faith. I say how beautiful they are compared to poor unworthy me. I only intended to drop you a line and renew my subscription, but I could not restrain my mind or hand so it seems. I am not my own keeper, but I hope I am one of those who are kept by the power of God. Dear Elder, as our pastor, Elder J. N. Darnall, has voiced a desire that he would like the brethren and especially the ministering brethren visit with us, and as our clerk is in ill health I am taking the liberty to invite all who are in order and would like to come to visit our Association, the original Little River Association of the order of Predestinarian Baptists. We believe in the absolute power of Almighty God. Association to be held with the Dry Creek Church, near Codiz, Ky., beginning on Friday before the fourth Sunday in August and continuing three days. Excuse mistakes as my nerves at times are very bad. Enclosed find money-order for a year's subscription and use the rest as you deem wise. I am sorry I have neglected to renew as I do not want to miss one copy. Yours unworthily,

W. Y. CHANDLER.

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. AUGUST, 1945

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"From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I."—Psalms 61:1.

As the time approaches for an editorial to our family paper the thought usually is, what shall we write about. What can we say that would edify and comfort God's humble poor. In casting about in our mind for a subject, different scriptures come to mind, but as a rule we feel incompetent or destitute of the Spirits leading about it, so it is laid aside. By past experience we have certainly learned that the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. Only as the word is applied by the operation of God's Spirit is there comfort. It is God that giveth the increase. With the hour at hand to take our pen and begin this article, with a deep felt sense of weakness, this scripture is presented. "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I." One of the peculiar marks of the grace of God is the desire to be led of God. Often the hymn is precious to them.

"O that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still!
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will!"

There is a cause for this desire, and it springs out of the knowledge that they are weak but he is mighty. The more one learns of self, self-righteousness, the snares of the devil, mistaken zeal for knowledge and the various workings of the flesh, he learns that no carnal reasoning can be accepted as the interpretation of God's will and word. We may have all these things within us without knowing they are there. It is indeed a blessing to know the depravity of one's own heart, to have the searchlight of God's spirit turned upon them. Then and then only will we be as the prophet of old, saying, "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed." It is truly when at the end of the earth that we cry unto our God. The woman who had an issue of blood for many years, and spent all her living among doctors receiving no benefit, was only being prepared to look unto Jesus for virtue. The end of the earth with her was when her living was gone, when all earthly help had failed, when she realized she was spending her money for that which satisfieth not. Only then did she have faith, when she had reached the end of her own strength. She approached the Savior in the throng that was about him, believing that if she could but touch the hem of his garment she would be made whole. She did not want to be seen, but just to touch his garment. In him she saw virtue, grace, mercy. What a contrast to her former practice of looking to doctors for a cure. Only the faith that purifies the heart and overcomes the world draws us unto him. There is no beauty in him while we spend our money among doctors (looking to men). Jesus knew it when she touched him. He knows the need of every one of his people regardless of how little they may feel to be, and unworthy of his mercies. His ear is not heavy that he cannot hear the cries of his people; his eye is watching them by day and by night; he has promised to never leave nor forsake them, yet it is only when their

hearts are overwhelmed, and they know they are at the ends of the earth that they ask to be led to the rock that is higher than they. Jesus is the rock of our salvation. It is to him that his people desire to be led. He is the rock smitten in the wilderness out of which flowed water. When Moses desired to see the face of the Lord, he was told that no man could see his face and live. God did provide that Moses should see him in the clift of the rock (Christ), and when God put him in the clift of the rock and caused his goodness to pass before him, he could see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, in the place of refuge God provided for him. It is no wonder that pilgrims here below, often feeling that this world is not their home, that they are wayfaring strangers surrounded with sorrows, temptations and cares, desire to be led to the rock that is higher than they. To them, thus led, he is the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, and they say, "Lord! let me see thy beauteous face! It yields a heaven below." Ours must be a better rock than the rock of human learning, organizations, human reasoning and all the devices of a carnal mind. It must be the revealed knowledge of Christ, the Son of the living God. His blood and righteousness is the only hope of pilgrims and strangers on earth, for they seek a city, a house not made with hands whose builder and maker is God. Their rock is not our rock, neither is there any rock like our God. They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, that shall never be moved. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so is the Lord round about his people forever. These things are verily true, and those whose trust is in him shall never be confounded. Yet, as sinners in the flesh, often full of unbelief, mourning the absence of God's power manifest in their lives, with days of adversity, loved ones taken suddenly, things they cannot understand, such will be crying unto him, "lead me to the rock that is higher than I." Lead me to where I can rejoice in thy salvation, rest under the shadow of thy wing, be reconciled to the things I do not understand, to stand still and know that thou art God. These things are higher than I. We find ourself, fretful, impatient, with a longing that cannot be described by mortal tongue. As we look back over the twenty odd years since we first came into the church, and remember the sweet fellowship we have enjoyed with God's people (unworthy though we be), and remember the sore trials we have had, what heart searchings there have been at times when there was a question as to whether we were right in certain things, and there have been at other times the words sweetly spoken, this is the way, walk ye in it. Though such things at times causes the loss of those we formerly thought were our friends, such things will lead us to ask God humbly to lead us to that fountain of living waters, to behold the blood and to cast our cares upon him. We had rather be the servant of Christ than of men, and to please him rather than men for if we seek to please men we cease to be the servant of Christ. If we are led to this rock it will be through trials, persecutions, sorrows, heartaches, longings for holiness, tears and many other experiences. They that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. If there is no persecution in the life of one, there is little evidence of the work of God's grace. If one is persecuted for unrighteousness he has no right or ground for rejoicing. I believe those who are thus led will not trust their own wisdom, but will be seeking the leading and teaching of him who makes no mistakes, and the order of the church of God will be as precious to them as the doctrine, because they cannot be separated. They will take the word of God as their counsel, yet knowing that to judge any matter rightly they must be led by the unerring spirit.

—D. V. S.

CALLED

Sometimes my mind is led in meditation to the calling of men to preach. With all my misgivings, doubts, fear, unfitness and leanness yet I think that I know that there is no calling to compare with being called of God to preach. There is a sense in which I would be sorry to hear my brethren voice an impression to preach, but in a wonderful way it is the grandest confession that we could hear from them. I have said that all men are called to preach, some by one thing, some by another, but those called of God are so differently called that it would be worthwhile to notice the difference. Preaching to all, may I say except Old Baptists, is a profession to be taken up and laid aside at will. The preaching of this world is like that. Anybody can learn how to preach their doctrine and can quit when the reason confronts them. That is what they say about it. If a young man came to me and wanted advice on entering the ministry I would have no hesitancy in telling him to go ahead. What else could we tell them? If they have religion you cannot get it out of them. Let them have the whole thing! But that handful of miserable half-wit, Primitive Baptist preachers! What about them? *Not one of them has ever decided* to be an Old Baptist preacher. If, and when, impressed by the Spirit to preach, they all decide that they *cannot* preach. Strange (to carnality) that learning does not change the viewpoint. The most learned man among us today will confess that I did not get it from man but from God. Those the Savior called around him were usually poor and unlearned. Fishermen, by the most people, are held in ill repute. Why? I do not think it is by just merely a whim of the mind. This is divine arrangement. Suppose fishermen had been in the cream of society, the elite of the day? Peter was given to boast of his ability. If he had had a high and noble natural calling he surely would have boasted, but the Savior called him from the net to the ministry. Sometimes a noble, mighty, wise man after the flesh is called. Paul did not say that none were called at all, but not many. The world and the fulness thereof belongs to God, and if it is in keeping with his will to call a well educated man, it does not take any more effort nor any different tactics than with the poorest of the flock. This world takes into consideration a man's personality, looks, learning and everything else that would insure success, but generally speaking God does not do that. Instead of calling that kind he calls a man from the net, plow or shop. God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise. I think we have this verified on the day of Pentecost and other occasions. It amazes college professors that an Old School Baptist preacher can speak an hour extemporaneously. Where does it come from? From above, where every gift comes from in the spiritual field. Not only has God chosen the foolish but the weak as well. He just will not fit into the modern ministry, but a man of that kind that has the wisdom of God given him can stand up and give the church a good gospel sermon. God has not only chosen the foolish and weak but base things and despised things, and that is not all he has chosen things that *are not* to bring to naught things that are. Ponder with us on that for a little while. God choosing things that *are* can easily be understood, but choosing that which is *not* is something mysterious. I do not understand it, I am at a loss to explain it, but I desire to believe it and, if my experience is that of a gospel minister, I have *felt* it. This choosing of things that are not is still more of a mystery when we come to the purpose of it. It is to bring to naught things that are. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Rom. 11:33. None can tell why God does

this, none can tell how. No need to be searching as to why a little foolish, weak, base, despised (and even one that is not) minister can turn the world upside down (Acts 17:6), but look a little closer at your calling brethren! My mind keeps turning to that. *Something that is not* bringing to *naught that which is!* Explain it I cannot, experience it I hope I have. Many years ago I was impressed with preaching but I could not do it. I thought I had it hid and I was resolved to never reproach the church by going behind the sacred desk, but a certain day came and I was at a place of meeting. A man was preaching who never had been looked upon by some as anything but a fool, but I left there completely overcome in tears. I was the something, he the *not* but it was I that was brought to naught. I love the old man today because I know that God chose him to bring me to see how completely I was *not*. Let me notice again that God did not choose these men and make them foolish, weak, base, despised and *not*, but that he chose that kind. Everyone of them feels all this as their experience. They know what they are! They live with a man who is all this!

—W. D. G.

PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS

"Dear Brother Dodson: I believe the Bible teaches predestination of all things, but we have a people calling themselves Primitive Baptists who do not preach it. Please tell me why when you feel like it." This was sent in by brother T. J. Bailey, Route 1, Box 345A., Pine Bluff, Ark. While we make no pretensions to being able to answer such questions, we have a mind to pen some thoughts on the subject of predestination. In this connection, we might also state that we have received from a young brother in Tennessee a long list of questions which he says some "so-called Baptists" have put to him. We will take one as a fair sample of the questions presented. He quotes Jesus as saying (Matt. 12:50) "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister and mother," and then makes the following deduction: "If wicked and profane men and devils do the will of the Father, then they are all brother, and sister, and mother to the Lord Jesus, are they not?" This question alone is sufficient to show all real lovers of the truth how hopelessly ignorant they are of both the letter and the Spirit of the word of God, and it would, therefore, be an utter waste of time to undertake to reason with such. We shall, however, attempt to make some observations for the benefit of the two brethren who have written us and others of our readers who may be interested. John said, "I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth." 1 John 2:21. It is useless and absurd to try to tell a dead man anything. He has absolutely no capacity of comprehension and the reason God's servants write and preach the truth is because there are living characters who need to be fed and instructed in the way of righteousness. We are well aware of the fact that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Paul says also that "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8:7. Jude in writing to those who are "preserved in Jesus Christ, and called," said, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and

our Lord Jesus Christ." The "so-called Baptists" propounding the questions were evidently not aware of the fact that God in the counsels of eternity had verily ordained them to this very condemnation, but in the same counsel this same God determined to raise up others who would "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Since the question, "If wicked and profane men and devils do the will of the Father" has been asked, we will go to the one and only infallible record for the answer: 1—"Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Acts 2:22-23. 2—"The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Acts 4:26-23. 3—If we turn to that portion of the word which is hated, perhaps, above all others by conditionalists, the eighth chapter of Romans, there we will find another divinely inspired declaration for our questioner. The record is "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all," and then it is added, "how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Thus we see that the just and holy God, who is of too pure eyes than even to look upon sin, did in fulfillment of his own inscrutible purpose himself deliver up his only begotten Son, that he might thereby freely give us (his people) all things. It is on behalf of these same ones that Paul says, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." He then sets forth the reason why *we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose,* which is: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." What can be said to these things? "If God be for us, who can be against us?" We know this is hard doctrine for some to have to take, but they cannot change the record of God's eternal truth. Pilate could not change the title which he wrote, and put on the cross: JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS, for it was the truth, and God required of him that he say to his petitioner, "What I have written I have written," meaning that it absolutely could not be altered or changed in any way shape or form. In answer to Pilate's question, "Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?" Jesus answered, while here in the flesh, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." Jesus had also said to Judas Iscariot, who was a devil, "That thou doest, do quickly." That wicked and profane men and devils are subject to the will of the Father has been well established from the record of Holy Writ we do not believe any reasonable person can deny.

God who in the beginning created the heavens and the earth, is most certainly still doing his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. He made all things according to his plan of infinite wisdom. He made the lion, the tiger, the wolf and the bear, and gave them their

own individual natures, and he also made the inoffensive little lamb and gave him his nature. One might well ask, why haven't all the little helpless creatures of the earth long since been destroyed? The one answer is that God is still in his holy hill, and that according to his own wise decree not a sparrow shall fall without him. In God's own time and way he restrains the violent natures of his creatures and even causes the lion to lie down with the lamb, and nothing in all his holy mountain is disturbed, and God alone is exalted in that day. When Jesus was here in the flesh there were those who had eyes and could not see, and ears and could not hear, and hearts and could not understand, and that is why men of today set about to write so many questions like the ones referred to. They are only showing that they have not the mind of Jesus, and they are manifesting what they are by the fruit they bear. Jesus taught his disciples to judge the tree by the fruit it bears, and there is no better method for determining what a man is than by what he says and does. We rejoice that God has determined before hand the bounds of the wicked, beyond which they cannot go. Before Isaac was born God had said to Abraham, "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their's, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance." Gen. 15:13-14. It is also written, "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." Rom. 9:17. Most certainly those who have been brought up out of Egypt will not deny the wonder-working power of God, but rather will join in singing, The Lord hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath he cast into the sea, etc. It might be well to ponder briefly all that was involved in Israel's stay in Egypt for four hundred years. God gave Joseph a dream which incited envy and hatred in the hearts of his brethren, and they determined upon doing away with him. But this was the same God who had fixed the times and seasons, the years of plenty and the years of famine, and in due season Israel of necessity had to send to Egypt for corn. What a mercy that God's wisdom had devised a plan of their salvation and that Joseph had been sent on ahead to save much people alive. The fact that his brethren intended evil against Joseph did not thwart the purposes of God, but they only fulfilled their part in the matter, for God had meant it for good. How wonderfully this typified centuries in advance, God's purposes and plan of sending his only begotten Son into the world to save his people from their sins.

God raised up his servant Job and so blessed him that he was the greatest man of the east, but Job himself said of this same God, "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent." Job 26:13. The record shows that God had set him up as a mark to be shot at, and he had to encounter three conditionalists also, but he waived them aside, for they could not come to where he dwelt, and told them that they were all miserable comforters. How true are his words to God's afflicted saints today. Those who preach conditionalism and limited predestination have to stand afar off, they cannot come near the truth, to comfort the people of God, but, like Job, God's servants are given a mind to pray for them, that God might enlighten them, if it be his will. Jesus prayed for those who crucified him, saying, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." How merciful he must be, that he by whom all things were made, and without him was not anything made that was made, should

have to suffer such ignominy and shame at the hands of the creatures which he made. Jesus himself asked, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" The cup which the Father gave him contained everything that was embraced in that covenant ordered in all things and sure. The prophet could well ask, "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" Lam. 3:37. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Isa. 14:24, and in Isa. 45:7, "I form the light, and create darkness:" "I the Lord do all these things." How could we appreciate the light if we knew nothing about darkness, and how could we properly evaluate the good if we knew nothing of evil.

The wisdom of God who created the universe is seen in the sun, moon, stars and planets, which continue to perform their functions with clock-like precision. Many of them are not visible to the naked eye, but it is useless to deny their being when by means of a strong telescope they can be brought within perfect vision. The fact that some cannot comprehend the truth is no evidence whatever that it does not exist. It is there as clear as the noonday sun to those who have eyes to see it. To walk among the tall structures of New York City and at the same time say there are no architects and builders is worse than foolish. It is only the fool who hath said in his heart, There is no God. The Psalmist exclaimed, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard." All of these things are but parts of the works of him who said, "I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." What a great pity that there are those who will deny, distort and try to wrest the Scriptures from their proper meaning and, like the Arminians, resort to dissecting them, using what will serve only their purpose, such as "Choose you this day whom ye will serve," as though the creature could elect to serve God or the Devil, whomsoever might best suit the individual whim. Such deception will not work for the people of God. In the forty-fifth verse of the twelfth chapter of Matthew will be seen a description of him who goeth "and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first." Against this there is set over in the fiftieth verse those who have it in their hearts to serve God in sincerity and in truth by following Jesus in the ordinances of the church which he established.

In answer to our brother's question, Why all who claim to be Old School Baptists do not believe "predestination of all things," we only need to say that God has not so purposed or predestinated that they should. In the case of Gideon and his army, in the days of old, less than one per cent of the total number of Israel were chosen to compose the army which was to fight the battle and win the victory. God gave as his reason for reducing the number from thirty-four thousand and over to only three hundred, that with so many Israel would vaunt herself and claim some credit for the victory, and this could never be for God is a jealous God and will not divide his honor or glory with another. He must have all that is his just due and for this reason he has chosen a "little flock" here in this world to give his kingdom to, and it is declared that they shall shew forth his praise.

We are mindful of the fact that some excellent brethren do not agree fully on

this point of doctrine, and be it far from us to use it as a wedge to divide them. The late Elder P. G. Lester once likened that river "the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God" unto *predestination.* He illustrated it by saying there are those who like to stand on the bank of this river; there are those who like to paddle in it and get only their feet wet; there are others who like to go out knee deep, then to the waist and armpits, and still others who like to swim out in the mighty deep of this wonderful river. He concluded by saying that it illy became those who could not swim to forbid those who could from going out into the deep water, and at the same time he warned against dragging a brother who could not swim out into the deep water and drowning him. This illustration presents the matter very satisfactorily according to our way of thinking. We have never favored making *predestination* a test of fellowship. We are persuaded that one needs be taught it of the Lord in order to become established in the doctrine, and we would strongly recommend that patience, tolerance and forbearance be shown one to another on this point. As a rule where there has been trouble over it, we believe it has usually come from those who do not accept the doctrine of the predestination of all things, and they have declared against it and opposed those who believe and contend for it. We would desire to humbly caution them against raising bars of fellowship against us for contending for the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty over all worlds, principalities and powers, be they visible or invisible, for this truth is so dear to the hearts of a great many of God's people that they will utterly refuse to relinquish their right to this belief, regardless of what the consequences may be. In a few instances we have heard of those who profess to believe what we preach using the doctrine of the predestination of all things as a cloak for their sins, and indulging in all manner of evil. We cannot command language strong enough to condemn as fully as we would like this sort of thing. We read in God's blessed word that "the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and wordly lust, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."—R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTER

(*Written by sister Nellie M. Palmer*)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Bowdoinham Church, Bowdoinham, Sagadahoc Co., Maine, Sept. 8, 9, *and* 10, 1944, *sendeth greetings and love in our Lord to the several churches and associations with which we correspond.*

DEAR BRETHREN: Sometimes a word presents itself with special comfort, so with our limited ability we will speak of the word *predestination,* how beautiful, how sublime and what do we see in it. It bridges the chasm between the infinite, the Holy One and poor sinful man. It gives us hope of better things to come. All down through the ages it has been the only way for man to become one of the elect of God, to be chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, to be holy and without blame before him in love, to be able, as Mephibosheth, to be brought to the King's table, there to eat bread always. The word *predestination* is like apples of gold in pictures of silver, showing us the purity and beauty of the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure. Gold tried by fire (the most severe test) yet remaining the same, unchangeable even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God and beside thee there is no Saviour. Apples representing fruit good to feed upon. We feed upon

the word. Jeremiah said, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts." Jer. 15:16. "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons," thus we are fed from the fruit of this wonderful tree, and this altogether lovely One is our Savior, the dear Lamb of God who was led like a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb so he opened not his mouth. (Isa. 53:7). This wonderful tree not only affords us food and drink, but protects us from foes within and without. Our worst foes are found within, daily and hourly the battle within goes on, and but for the grace of God there would be no standing before them. It also bears us up giving strength in times of trials. Underneath are the everlasting arms, a covert into which we run and find peace of soul. This blessed Jesus — the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. What rest can there be in conditionalism? None, there is no rest outside of the finished work of Christ. He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. (Rom. 10:4) All else is constant striving and one who has been brought to see the weakness of the flesh knows "No good in creatures can be found, but may be found in Thee." What sweet rest is given to the children of our God. This love of Jesus, what it is, None but his loved ones know, "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them." Deut. 33:26-27. This is the God we adore, in whom is all our trust founded on *predestination.* "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us." Rom. 8:29-31.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS,
Moderator.

SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Bowdoinham Church, Bowdoinham, Maine, Sept. 8, 9, *and* 10, 1944, *sendeth greetings and love in our Lord to the several churches and associations with which we correspond.*

DEAR BRETHREN: Again through the providence of our covenant keeping God we have been able to meet in an Association, and how thankful we should be that he, in his infinite wisdom, has deemed it right to spare us from the terrible destruction from which other nations of the world are suffering. Why has it been his will to so favor us? Your correspondence has been gladly received, testifying that there is no falling away from the truth, but instead a meeting together in heavenly places where pure minds are stirred up by way of remembrance. How wonderful it is that in all times God has provided his people a sanctuary where they can sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and be filled with the light of his presence. Your ministering brethren, Elders Dodson and Bellows came to us laden with the fruits of the Spirit of Him whom to know is life eternal. Those present could truly say with the Psalmist, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Psalms 23:5-6. The Lord said to Jeremiah, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love:

therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Jer. 31:3. We understand this was said to Jeremiah, meaning all Israel. As Noah of old beheld the bow in the cloud over the ark as a token of the covenant, that no more should the waters become a flood to destroy all flesh upon the earth; as Israel was led out of Egypt by a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night (here God shows his love for Israel in being present both day and night); so we in our day in a war torn world look for a sign of his love and care. How often in our journey through life, when the way becomes dark and hope seems almost gone, either by visible sign from without or by the workings of the Holy Spirit within, we receive the sign that the everlasting arms are underneath, and for us as for Israel the sea divides and the way is made smooth. Then we are carried above earthly trials with the assurance "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Our meeting was well attended. Sunday morning before service there was a baptism when one united with the Gardiner Church. The Lord willing the next meeting of this Association will be held with the Whitefield Church, Sept. 7, 8 and 9, 1945. Notice will be published in the *Signs of the Times*.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS,
Moderator.
SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

OBITUARIES

C. HENRY BYRNSIDE, our beloved brother in Christ, was born into this earthly existence March 8, 1876 of Baptist parents, and a native of West Virginia. He departed this life Jan. 31, 1945, aged 68 years, 10 months and 23 days. He was united in marriage to Ada F. Bird, April 16, 1899. She preceded him in death, departing this life May 9, 1918. He leaves to mourn their loss four children, Virgil L. and Oscar J. Byrnside of Hurricane, W. Va., Mrs. Bessie Sloan, St. Albans, W. Va., and Mrs. Gladys Sowards, Hurricane, W. Va. Another son, Sgt. Delmer C. Byrnside, was killed in action while serving his country in the armed forces in Germany, Feb. 8, 1945. Brother Byrnside was convicted of sin and given a hope in the Redeemer's blood in his early married life, but through a felt sense of his own unworthiness he never asked for a home in the church until the summer of 1942, when he came before the church and so sweetly related his experience of grace (which hope he had carried so many years), and midst many tears of rejoicing by the brethren, he was received into the Providence Church of Lincoln County, W. Va. It was my happy privilege to baptize him into the full fellowship of the church July 17, 1942. He lived a devoted and faithful member of the Old School Baptist church the remainder of his life, esteeming the cause of Christ so highly. He was stricken with paralysis (the entire left side of his body being paralyzed) but was only left to suffer a few short months of agonizing pain until the Lord was pleased to call him from his suffering and pain to joy unending and perpetual in the Lord, as we feel to believe that for him to die was gain. Brother Henry led an industrious and useful life. In his early manhood he taught several years in the public schools of his state; he operated successfully a large farm in this vicinity, and as a farmer he was a leader; he served his community in two public offices of trust, first being elected to the office of Justice of the Peace in his district, serving the people honestly, and later in life he was elected as a member of the County Court of his county where he served efficiently. In all his actions through life he was tempered by honest convictions, and a desire for right. Many and sincere were his friends in every walk of life. He was truly a plain man, never polished with vain pride. To me, who was his brother-in-law after the ties of the flesh, and who tried to serve as his pastor in the church (notwithstanding his voice was broken and shattered) he expressed, while visiting him, his resignation to his Master's will, and spoke of the felt nearness of his Savior, and of his unwavering faith in his belief in God. While he was expressing the felt sense of the nearness of his God, and his comforting and steadfast belief in him (God), as being that which held him up as his mortal powers failed, men present who differed with him in religious belief were brought to tears. Much could be said of his virtues but space forbids. In conclusion I wish to say he was a neighbor in the neighborhood, a kind parent, a good husband, a brother indeed to his brethren and his home was ever open to entertain them. I was called to conduct his funeral but was down sick at the time and

unable to attend. The services were conducted by a Missionary Baptist, after which his mortal remains were laid to rest in the family burying ground on my home place by the side of his wife. He leaves besides his children, ten grandchildren, one brother, M. A. Byrnside, Madison, W. Va., one sister, Elizabeth Smith, Galipolis, Ohio, the church where he will be sadly missed and his absence keenly felt. I, personally, shall miss him greatly, but we grieve not as those who have no hope, we hope in the resurrection of the dead. May the Lord reconcile us all to his will. Written by request.

(Elder) H. J. BIRD.

Deacon JAMES ISAAC FOSTER, son of H. F. and Selina H. Foster was born in Lamas Co., Ala., Nov. 17, 1869, and departed this life at his home in Rising Star, Texas, Feb. 17, 1945. He is survived by his wife, Lizzie Kilgore Foster, three sons and one daughter. One son died in infancy. The children are Claude H. of Orlando, Fla., Cpl. Calvin E. of the 439th A.A.A., somewhere in Europe, Lt. Travis E. of the 555th Bomb Squad, 9th Air Force in Belgium, and Mrs. W. A. Parsons, Rising Star, Texas, also two grandchildren. He came to Texas when a young man and united with Salem Primitive Baptist Church in Limestone Co. in 1895 and was baptized by the late Elder J. L. Lindsey. He moved to Brown Co. in 1908 and was married to Miss Lizzie Kilgore the same year. Brother Foster was a close Bible student and knew and loved the doctrine advocated by the "Signs of the Times". He had been a subscriber for more than fifty years. We feel the Lord has called him home from the evil to come and that our loss is his eternal gain. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Funeral services were held in the home conducted by Elder A. L. White, Dublin, Texas.

(Elder) C. M. HAYGOOD.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The regular annual all-day meeting will be held as usual at Slate Hill, N. Y., in the Brookfield meetinghouse, on Friday, August 24th, 1945.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will be held with the First and Second Roxbury Churches at the Old School Baptist meeting-house in Halcottville, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 12 and 13, 1945. The Association will convene at 10 o'clock a. m. on Wednesday. Provision has been made for the entertainment of all present, and an invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us and partake of our hospitality. Those coming by train, bus or auto to Halcottville on Tuesday before the meeting will go to either the home of Mrs. Prudence O'Connor Hinkley or Walter Harrington where provision will be made for their entertainment. Those coming on Wednesday will go directly to the meeting-house. Ministering brethren of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.

The Fellowship Association will convene with Fellowship Church on Friday before and including the second Sunday in Sept. 1945. Fellowship Church is located 7 miles northeast of Gladewater, Texas.

(Elder) W. O. BEENE.

The South Ouachita (Wash-i-taw) Primitive Baptist Association will convene with Union Church on Friday before the fourth Sunday in Sept. 1945. The location is three miles northwest of Haile, La. and five miles east of Marion, La.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES, Moderator.

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each 1st Sunday, 11:00 a. m. and Saturday before.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday.

AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before, ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a. m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopewell Church, Ozark Ala., meets each 4th Sunday, 11 a. m. J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Pleasant Valley Church, Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc.)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. E. M. TACKETT,
J. S. HUNNICUTT, Pastors.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY
Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue. Take elevator to second floor.
11.00 a. m. 1:30 p. m.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.
(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.
C. W. BOND, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 a. m.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.
W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. G. E. Rushing, co-pastor.
C. B. TEAGUE, Pastor.

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets third Sunday in each month at 11:00 a. m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Old School Baptist meetings are held every fourth Sunday at Civic Club, 1419 N. Shepherd St., Houston, Texas. Preaching by Elder W. O. Beene.
(Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Danville Primitve Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before. Bradley Road, Danville, Va.
W. R. DODD, Pastor.

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meet each first Sunday 11 a.m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3032 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va. R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.
R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m. C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

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406 Viola St., Florence, Ala.

To the Saints Scattered Abroad:

I have been requested to write an article giving my travels in the ministry for fifty years. On Saturday before the third Sunday in February 1895 I made my first attempt to speak to the Lord's people in public. I received a hope in Christ on Nov. 8, 1885, and united with the church in May 1886. The church soon ordained me to the office of deacon which office I felt unworthy to fill. Later they decided I had a gift for the ministry, but I rebelled and fought the impression for nine years. While I refused to speak publicly I would contend for what I believed to be the truth to everyone whom I met, and some would say, "I believe Burns is going crazy, he will not talk about anything but the Bible." Finally the burden became so great, the joys of my salvation were taken from me. I then could see what Paul meant when he said, "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel." As one translation reads, "I cannot help doing it, I am ruined if I do not preach." Paul says again, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" It seems that in the government of the world, God's children all have their adversaries. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." 1 Peter 5:8. When God gives his children over to their enemies or adversaries and they are forced to do the things they hate, it is the greatest punishment they could bear. "When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." Prov. 16:7. When God put Adam and Eve in the garden, the law he gave them was commandatory. They were told just what the result would be if they ate the forbidden fruit. If the law had been prohibitory they would not have fallen. It was said of Christ "A bone of him shall not be broken." When Adam and Eve were driven from the garden they were alienated from God, legally transferred to Satan, "To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey." In order to show the real condition of man in his fallen condition, we will compare it with our state law, thou shalt not kill or thou shalt not steal. When this law is broken the subject is tried and convicted. It is the object of the state to make this subject work to punish him for his crime and use the supervision, direction and limitations of the work done in the prison; likewise God

in his infinite widsom has declared the end from the beginning what he would do through the instrumentality of the wicked, causing the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder he restrains. "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee." Jer. 2:19. I have preached in eleven states on tours, two or three months before returning. I have never asked any one for a cent of money to enable me to preach. I believe in God's word it says, "A man's gift maketh room for him." I have traveled under the direction of that great missionary board established on the mountains of Gallilee with all power behind it. God made the ravens to feed Elijah, he can cause the world to feed his ministers. The year I began to preach there was a new doctrine brought in among the churches. This was in 1895. There were bars of non-fellowship raised against it. I have before me a copy of the declaration as follows: "Whereas, the ministers of the Phillice Association are teaching heresies that sinners are not taught to know or believe in Christ in regeneration by a direct revelation of the Spirit of God; but through the written or preached word only; and that God has made it the duty of the churches to send ministers to teach his children to know or believe in Christ. (The above statement limits the Holy One of Israel. "They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord. "Heb. 8:11.) Second — That in regeneration God gives all his children the ability to obey all the commands of his kingdom, and it is left discretionary with them to obey or disobey regardless of influences, hence they frequently assert that the blessings and enjoyments of salvation in time depends upon our obedience, and that God wills the obedience of all his children and works in them to that end, but often fails to get them to obey. (Brethren I have not space to comment on the above but read it and compare it with your experience) Third - They frequently denounce the course of our fathers in preaching the strong meat of the gospel saying, that such preaching is calculated to starve the churches to death, and if we had the right kind of preaching we might have larger churches and more general influence. Fourth - They also charge us of being opposed to good works. (We contend that good works are a fruit of the Spirit) Sixth - We are reliably informed that Predestination is the base of contention or the point of difference between us and them. This is not the truth. (Predestination is not the base of difference but the things above mentioned). Seventh-Therefore, we the churches of the Bethel Association while in union capacity at Cane Creek Church, Obin County, Tennessee, convened on Friday before the fourth Sunday in July 1895, do hereby declare non-fellowship for the Phillice Association for the heresies above named. Elder K. W. Myatt, Moderator. W. J. Phillips, Clerk."

A great many of the ministers who put up bars against the above doctrine are now preaching it. About the time those preaching the above heresies began to put up bars, I attended an Association as a visitor. I had preached in this Association for twenty years and was well acquainted with the moderator. He came to me at noon Saturday and asked me to come to where the meeting was being held. He said there was a preacher there had informed the brethren that I was an Absoluter and they were debating about preaching me. I went as requested, roll called, a quorum present. The moderator asked me to come forward and make my defense which I did. I walked in the stand with Hassell's History in my hands. I first told them that I was preaching the same doctrine that I had preached in that Association for twenty years, and that I had the black and white to show that the Baptists always preached that doctrine.

I turned to page 942 in Hassell's History and read: "As these views of Elder Beebe are in general substantially the same as those expressed in the third chapter of the old Philadelphia and London confessions of faith, I believe and I think that all Bible Baptists believe that God is the all-mighty, all-wise and all-holy sovereign of the universe. That he could have prevented the entrance of sin into the world, that he perfectly foreknew the fall and all the wickedness of man, that he had a purpose worthy of himself, however inscrutable to us in regard to the entrance of sin as well as regards to all things else; that by his supreme power and decree he restricts all the rage and malice of wicked men and devils to do no more nor less than what he will overrule for the good of his people and his own glory." God has limited the works of the devil. The devil cannot do one thing beyond God's determinate counsel. Predestination is the unchangable purpose of an unchangable God. When I had made my defense the Association voted for me to preach, and the congregation heartily endorsed my position. This may be the last article I shall ever write as I am feeble and will be eighty-seven in next May. In conclusion will say that I am a poor helpless sinner, depending alone on God's promise to save me.

"We now O Lord make this request
When we shall come to die;
That we may on Thy promise rest,
And on Thy oath rely."

(Elder) LYTLE BURNS.

(In a recent issue of the *Signs* we referred to Elder C. W. Bond of Island City, Oregon as an esteemed minister of over fifty years of experience. We now discover that he has a half century yokefellow in the person of Elder Lytle Burns. Such gifts are among God's greatest blessings to the church here in time. We are satisified that those who have been truly taught of God, have in all ages of the world been in substantial agreement with the doctrine here presented by Elder Burns, and we are thankful to say that we can and do endorse it wholeheartedly. R.L.D.)

(*Continued from August issue*)

In Rev. 19:6-9 we read, "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. (This is the voice of all the saints in all time). Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready (by faith). And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God." This marriage began to take place when the disciples had the right to ask, and also to do things in his name. "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name." John 16:-24. Jesus told the woman at the well "For thou hast had five husbands; (the law) and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband." John 4:18. She had Christ in that covenant relationship which existed in eternity, but she had not yet taken his name, and could not until he had redeemed her from the sentence of death; washed her in his own precious blood from every stain of sin and clothed her in that glorious robe of righteousness. "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." Rev. 19:8. Until all this was accomplished she was not worthy to take his name. This woman was a figure of the church under the law covenant. Now let us have a look at a woman under the new covenant after it was set in order, a woman that was a figure of the church both under the law and the gospel. On the morning of the resurrection she appeared before his tomb, and she was the

same woman out of whom Jesus had cast seven devils. This is a complete number and means all the devils (or sin) there is. It was the same woman of whom Jesus said: "Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; FOR SHE LOVED MUCH: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." Luke 7:47. But now after her Lord had risen from the tomb, and after the other disciples who had witnessed the empty tomb had left, she still lingered there, she could not leave, her heart was buried there, but she stood without at the sepulcher weeping. When Jesus appeared to her she did not know him until he manifested himself to her. Then she called him Master. And "Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." John 20:17. So Mary Magdalene was the first to the tomb and the last one to leave, the first to witness the resurrection and the glory of the gospel kingdom. While there was nothing done in the name of Jesus until after the day of Pentecost, yet I believe she entered into that joy and glory of the gospel kingdom WITH Jesus as she stood there before the tomb. She stood there spotless, and free from every taint of sin, for the work of atonement and redemption was completed when Jesus bowed his head and said "It is finished." I have tried to describe here what I call a gospel feast, sometimes called a gospel supper or marriage in the scripture. I regard every gospel sermon as a marriage ceremony, and the celebrating of the nuptials of the marriage of Christ and his glorious bride, arrayed in spotless robes of righteousness and coming into all the wealth of her glorified husband. Just like Rebekah inherited jointly with Isaac all of the wealth of Isaac's father, Abraham. Abraham's servant told Rebekah's folks that Abraham had become great, that the Lord had greatly blessed him, and his master had a son to whom he had given all he had. In John 16:15 Jesus said, "All things that the Father hath are mine." Paul said, "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Col. 2:9. "And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." John 1:16. Much as I dislike to I must leave this and go on with the parable. "And the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us." How many, many times my friend have you gone down on your knees before your maker and implored him to make you acceptable before him in your own person? How often have you striven to enter in, not WITH Christ and clothed in his righteousness, but by your own works, the works of the law. That has been the cry of God's saints in all the history of the church. Yes, "Lord, Lord open to us." Cain offered of the fruits of the ground but his offering was rejected. Abraham pleaded with God: "O that Ishmael might live before thee." (Gen. 17:18.) but was rejected. Esau (a type of the flesh) sought the blessing of his father, Isaac, but was rejected. To show how foolish the flesh can be: when Esau saw that it pleased his mother, Rebekah, when Jacob took a wife of his mother's kindred, he went and took a wife of the daughters of Ishmael, or should I say his Canaanite wives displeased Isaac. Moses (a type of law) pleaded with God to let him go over Jordan and see that goodly mountain and Lebanon, "but (he says) the Lord was wroth with me for your sakes, and would not hear me: and the Lord said unto me, Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter." Deut. 3:26. If Moses could have entered the land of promise, which was a type of the gospel church, that would have meant that the law would not end at that spiritual Jordan, the death of Christ, but would still be in force, but Christ is the end of the law to them that believe. Not only, the law as

pertaining to the ten commandments, but the ceremonial law and all that pertained to the whole Jewish economy. Jesus told the Jews, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Matt. 23:18. In the forepart of the 24th chapter when the disciples came to him to show him the buildings of the temple, Jesus said unto them, "See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." This prophecy was fulfilled in A.D. 70 when Titus came with his army and destroyed literal Jerusalem. As literal Jerusalem was a type of, I believe, what Jesus in our parable calls the kingdom of heaven, this prophecy must have a spiritual as well as a literal fulfillment or else a type ceases to be a type. Titus could destroy the literal but not the spiritual Jerusalem or legalism. That was to be the work of Paul and Peter, James and John. Some Baptists believe that the parables were spoken against the Jews, and I believe that is right as far as they are concerned as the type of the true church, but they were for the enlightenment of the antitype, or the true Israel of God in the gospel church. In the thirty-fourth verse of this 24th chapter Jesus says, "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." No doubt many of the disciples saw the spiritual fulfillment of the entire prophecy in this chapter, and the whole of the 25th chapter seems to be devoted to the spiritual fulfillment of the prophecies in the previous chapter as it is found in the experience of each individual member of the church, or "the kingdom of heaven." In the last verse of this parable where Jesus says, "Verily I say unto you, I know you not" he knows them not in the flesh, he knows them only in Christ. I must close before this letter becomes too long. Reading it over I find I have made many mistakes and left out many things that it seems should have been written, but that only goes to show that I am of the flesh and that my light is out much of the time for I would not make any mistakes if I was always in the light. I believe that is what is meant when those foolish virgins asked the wise to give them of their oil. We would rather be in the light all the time but that is not God's way. If there were no dark clouds or mists there would never be any rainbow, which is a token or evidence of God's promise. It is only against the background of all our many human imperfections that the light of God's light, life, grace, love and mercy can be made manifest to us. Therefore God has a wise purpose in it all, and herein lies the truth of the answer the wise virgins gave to the foolish ones when they said, "Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you." We see the same truth in the answer, in the parable of the wheat and the tares: "Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them." We might sum this all up in the saying, where there is no cross there is no crown. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." 2 Tim. 2:12. "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." Acts 14:22. I have given just a few examples here of how I understand we are to find the answer to all the parables in our experience. All the teachings of Jesus and the writings of the apostles, I believe, are to be understood in the same way.

(Elder) A. D. HUGHETT.

"And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Matt. 6:28-29.

In these beautiful words of our Saviour, spoken while he was about his earthly ministry under the law, much is presented in figurative language for the comfort of

the Lord's little ones, the flock of his pasture. In the Scriptures the heirs of grace and glory are sometimes represented as stars, sometimes as sheep, sometimes as trees or as wheat or as jewels, but here the figure of a lily is used. No one type would or could answer all purposes to set forth the church of Jesus Christ or his relation to it. But in the scripture under consideration the lilies are employed to present in Oriental imagery the people who are saved through faith, by grace and that not of themselves. In Hosea it is written, "He (Israel) shall grow as the lily and cast forth his roots as Lebanon." In another place Jesus is prophetically set forth as the lily of the valley. There is a relationship between the lily and the lilies. One is presented in the singular number and the other in the plural. That leads us to consider Christ and the church. We are to consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. The lilies fitly typify the family of believers. The lilies grow in the field. We are told elsewhere in Matthew that the field is the world. The child of God is in the world, but he is not of the world. His natural life is maintained by and through the operation of natural forces about him, which to a certain extent he can direct and control, but his spiritual life is from above and without his control. Christ is born in him the hope of glory. A power outside of himself must operate within him if he is to receive spiritual life with its blessings and privileges. So the natural lily in the field cannot grow of itself by its own will and power. A power outside of the lily must give it life and cause its growth. The seed must be planted in the earth and take root. Life is manifested in the soil of the earth by the germination of the seed. It must take root downward to grow upward and be instrumental in its own propagation. The external forces of heat and cold, of light and moisture must operate upon the tiny seed before it appears above the soil. The seed does nothing of itself more than to respond to those forces that cause its growth. It has nothing to do with its germinator or with its growth. It does not bring itself into being. The child of God has nothing to do with his own birth or being and cannot grow of himself. It requires the power of the Holy Spirit to quicken into spiritual life the sinner dead in trespasses and sins. From the natural sun comes all light, heat, and energy in a natural sense. So from the Sun of righteousness, Jesus Christ, comes all spiritual light, heat and energy. The lily grows towards the natural light, and so the child of God looks towards Jesus and grows in the grace and in the knowledge of him. The lily must have its seasons of darkness and cold, and so does the child of God. It must be borne in mind that in types and figures, the type must fall short of the antitype, just as the pattern cannot be the actual thing it represents any more than a picture of a person can be the person himself. The lily does not toil and spin in nature nor do any work to accentuate or retard its growth. The child of God is not saved by his works and does not toil or spin the robe of righteousness that he wears. This spotless robe of righteousness was wrought by Jesus and placed upon him. The best robe was given to the prodigal son who returned to the father, and so the righteousness of Christ is a seamless robe wrought by the person, work, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Works do not produce grace in a subject of God's grace, but grace produces works. The life that is implanted in the lily causes it by the operation of external forces to bear pollen seeds and so propagate itself. Consider how the lilies grow, how they miltiply. There are little pollen seeds that grow on the stamens of the lily. These tiny seeds must be carried to the stigma or female part of the flower in order for fertilization to eventuate. The wind is often a medium in the fertilization of a flower, and there is a

spiritual meaning implied here. Jesus said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." The work of the Spirit is here compared to wind in its operation. The wind is irresistible and so is the spirit of God. The natural wind takes pollen from one part of the flower to another and so the natural flower is fertilized. So the irresistible and invisible spirit of God working in the heart of a sinner quickens that one from a state of dead in sin to life in Christ and makes him dead to his former state. The child of God under conviction does not know at the time from whence come his experiences, his brokenness of heart, his contrite spirit, his sorrow for his sins, and his repentance, and he cannot tell where that very experience is taking him. So there is an analogy between the wind working naturally in the life of a lily and the spirit of God working in the generation of a poor sinner justly condemned by a holy law. Again light is necessary for the growth of the natural lily, and every ray of light has three parts, a light ray, a heat ray and a fruit ray. There is but one ray, but three parts. All parts of the rays are needful for the growth of the plant and all must operate together. The sweetness of the fruit is caused by the fruit ray working in harmony with the other two rays. May not these three parts of one ray of light represent the Trinity, for God is the light of the world, and Christ is the light of his people, and God shines in the sinner's heart by the Holy Ghost and the fruits of the spirit are made manifest in the life of the new-born sinner. The work of salvation is the work of the triune God, therefore the growth of the natural lily typifies the growth of the spiritual lily with whom the glory of Solomon cannot be compared. The birth of Christ was the work of Trinity, for God sent his son into the world and he was conceived by the Holy Ghost. The death of Jesus was the work of the Trinity because the Father gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. Jesus also suffered himself through the Holy Spirit without spot and without blemish as a sacrifice to the Father. The resurrection was also the work of the Trinity, for God raised up his son from the dead, and Jesus also raised himself, and he was also raised by the spirit of holiness. Therefore as light in nature is necessary for the lily, spiritual light representing all that the Trinity involves is necessary for the salvation of every child of God. It is light that produces the different colors seen in the lilies according to the nature of the flower. All the various gifts of a spiritual nature possessed by the individual members of the church are but diverse operations of the same spirit, for the work of the Holy Spirit is dependent upon and connected with the work of the other two persons of the Trinity. Truly it is the work of God that one believes in Jesus savingly. All colors blended together make white. So all the attributes and perfections of holiness in the person of Jesus Christ center around the great white throne. How true is the statement that fine linen pure and white represents the righteousness of the saints. The spiritual lilies after growing in this time state shall not cease to bloom while eternal ages roll.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

West Hurley, N. Y.

(*Continued from August issue*)

I will admit I have thought until recently that the literal city of Rome would be destroyed, and that the papal literal seat of government would be moved, but it looks now as if it will stay where it is. The last above reference seems to me to indicate it. Thus the description of the woman who has ridden and who will ride

upon all kingdoms, nations and languages,which is described as being drunken with the blood of the saints, and of the martyrs of Jesus. In the eighteenth chapter, through the righteous judgment of God, she is rewarded double according to her works. Think of how much torment and sorrow she must suffer, being drunk with the blood of his saints. Read also Rev. 18:24 which shows she is guilty of the blood of prophets and saints and all that were slain upon the earth. Read also Matt. 23:25 which shows that Jesus was talking to a people that are described all through Rev. as the whore, a woman upon a beast, riding all the kingdoms and nations to the death and destruction of many of God's saints and prophets. Her day and hour will come and so will the day of the last head or king of this beast come, because it is clearly shown that the beast against him (Christ) that sat on the horse and against his army, and the beast was taken and with him the false prophet, and these were both cast alive into a lake of fire burning with fire and brimstone. Rev. 19:19-20. Dear reader, this is at the very time of the great resurrection of both the just and the unjust, but the beast and the false prophet are to be cast alive into this lake of fire. Not only this, but some of God's saints are to survive alive until his (Christ's) second coming. Read Thess. 4: 16-17. All of God's saints and prophets and apostles are commanded to rejoice over her, signifying their resurrection from their tombs in which they have lain dormant and dead since they were killed and persecuted to death. This is very clear, scriptural and experimental to my mind. If you will note previous to this in Rev. 6: 9-11 that John saw the souls of them that were slain (not the bodies) and they were crying and pleading for God to do exactly what he does do in Rev. 19:10-20. This same woman and beast under their different heads had slain them, and their souls were crying for the righteous judgment that is shown in Rev. 19:19-20 and that all things else will most assuredly be fulfilled in their time. John was commanded to "write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter," Rev. 1-19, so John wrote of the heads or kings that had been, and of the one that was then and of the one that has to come and get his head wounded unto death, and be cast into the bottomless pit and stay there a thousand years after which he was to ascend out of that pit and that by the strength and power of the two horned beast who caused this deadly wound to be healed. John also was commanded in the fourth chapter to come up to an open door in heaven and to be shown things which must come hereafter. Rev. 4:1. None of the things John was shown will fail; all of them are certain and sure and altogether steadfast and immovable, and will come in their respective times and places as God has decreed and purposed, predestinated, foreordained or appointed. So then the enforcement and establishment of every phase of this beast is as sure as God is sure, and he and this old woman on his back cannot do any more than God pleases as is expressed in Job 38:11. "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further." So the mark of the beast, whatever it is, will be received in the right hand or forehead of those who will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the angels and the Lamb forever and ever. Not one will fail, neither will one speak of this mark (in the singular) to be on any of God's children. This is a particular mark and it is significant of worship and devotion to the beast or his image or to the number of his name. These two separate positions of God's people and those who are not, as clearly defined in the reception of the beast's mark, or the worship of him, or his image or the reception of his number; and the preservation of his children from these things is as clearly shown in this thing

as in any other scriptural discrimination in all the book. For example, read Matt. 24:31 to the end of the chapter. Jesus is speaking of this very time and circumstance when he said, "Before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand." Right hand of his protection, of his grace, power, love, mercy, and tender compassion. The sheep are set on his right hand, not that they set themselves. He says in the tenth chapter of John, "No man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." If you will notice Jesus tells them the things they have done that are good. Not in and of themselves but without him they could not have given meat, drink, clothing, shelter, entertainment and company to the children of God. Paul says, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Phil 4:13. So they do the good works which God before ordained that they should walk in, (Eph. 2:10) and he leads and constrains them and enables them to do so as Paul says, and he strengtheneth them to not worship the beast, nor to receive his mark, nor his image, nor to receive his number. Those who were set on his left hand (Matt. 24:-31 to end of chapter) are to depart into the everlasting fire prepared for them. Left hand signifies no strengthening of them by his Spirit to walk in good works which God did not ordain them to walk in, but on the other hand the apostle Peter explains their status where he said in 1 Peter 2:8, "being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed." Every one of them will receive the mark, will worship the beast, will worship his image and receive his number, and they will depart into the fire that is prepared for them. When Jesus tells them they have not done anything good, they are surprised and say, when did we fail to do good? The children of God are also surprised when he tells them they have done these good things, and they say, Lord when have we done these good things? So receiving the beast, his mark, image and number makes manifest that they are for whom this fire is prepared for the devil and his angels. The shedding of Jesus' blood for the sins of God's people, and God's grace given them in him before the world began, entitles them to this protection and their only worthiness of it is in Jesus and his blood which was not shed for the remission of any one's sins except those whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life. Rev. 17-8 and Rev. 13-8. In the language of the blessed Saviour let me say, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Luke 12:-32. Oh how my heart longs for that blessed assurance that God alone can give, that I am one of the little flock. How hungry and thirsty we do get for a little morsel from his bountiful table which is often set before God's people as David says, "in the presence of mine enemies" (sins) Psalms 23:5. We are not worthy to escape the mark of the beast, his image or his number, but God is faithful who has promised it, and will send his angels and seal his servants in their forehead. Rev. 7:3-15. You can see the difference between the mark of the beast and the seal of the living God. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." 2 Tim. 2:19. So God's servants are sealed in their foreheads, and those who are not God's are sent a strong delusion. 2 Thes. 2:11-12. Read also the thirteenth verse which shows the prevailing love, mercy and choice of God to his people, and the verse above that shows that those who are not in the covenant of his mercy will be sent this strong delusion which I think is to believe this beast or king is God and worship him as such. Dear brethern, this is such a deep and extensive subject I never could finish if the Lord would give me strength, there are so many angles to

it, but I hope these things are true, and I believe in the main they are. I want to humbly acknowledge that I am very imperfect as Daniel said, "There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets" and caused Daniel and John to write these things. May he enable us to look to and trust him to enable us to understand these things. May God bless all the household of faith and enable us to live humbly and at each other's feet, confessing our faults one to another. May he enable us to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. I would love to have a letter from any one who either enjoys this article or may desire to criticize it. Yours in hope and mercy.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes.

Lillie, La.

Carthage, N. C

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Enclosed you will please find check to cover our subscription up to now and extend it for awhile longer. We could hardly do without it as we get much comfort from its pages. We truly feel the need of comforting words at this time for we have been notified that one of our sons was killed in action over France, June 22, 1944. He was a bombadier on a B-24 Liberator. He was first reported as missing and later that he was killed. We are broken in spirit, not knowing what to think or to believe. We know that God works all things well and his ways are so high above ours, but it is so hard to be reconciled to this. If I only knew how and where to turn to get more comfort and peace of mind in this matter. I feel to be lost or that God has hid his face from me and I am left alone in a very dark wilderness. Please do not print this in the *Signs,* I only wanted to ask you, brother Dodson, to pray for me if you can be blessed to do so for I feel very low in spirit and wonder if I have ever been born again. I had thought I had a hope but I am filled with such doubt and fear that I am often made to wonder who or what I am. I have often thought of writing my experience and sending it to the *Signs,* but I have not felt to do so lately. Very sincerely,

(Mrs.) R. LEE COMER.

November 2, 1944.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Several times I hav tried to write and tell you how much I appreciate your comforting letter, but each time the words seemed so little and worthless, so much like I feel myself to be. Still I have a desire to write and say that although I do not feel completely reconciled to the death of our son, I can say that I am not so bitter and rebellious as I seemed to be for awhile. I know it was wicked but fear I am unable to keep my feelings always under control. I know that God does not owe me anything and that he does all things well. I have been so confused, so bitter in my feelings that I have greatly felt the need of comforting words from a spiritual source, and I am made to wonder why more of our ministers do not visit us in our distress, yet I know that if I do need these things God is able to supply them, is able to send the Comforter. Elder D. R. Pyrtle spent the night with us about two weeks ago. I feel like the Lord sent him. It was very comforting to listen to and talk with him. You asked that I give you my permission to publish the letter I sent you a few weeks ago. If you feel it worthy a place in so wonderful a paper you have my consent. Your unworthy sister in hope if one at all.

(Mrs.) R. LEE COMER.

(The foregoing letters portray what we believe are the true and sincere yearnings of a broken and contrite heart before God, and it is declared in his blessed word that these he will not despise. We are confident they will be of comfort to others who have passed through similiar trials.

We can only comfort one another with the same comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Perhaps our ministers need to be admonished to "visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction" and to keep themselves unspotted from the world. We are glad that God was pleased to send one of his servants to pour the balm of Gilead upon the wounds of our sister. We truly hope that our God, who is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us," will keep in remembrance those whose hearts have been crushd by the terrors of this awful war, and that he will grant them faith sufficient to look beyond the transitory clouds of this life, laying hold upon the hope which is set before us, "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." R. L. D.)

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: For some time my desire has been to write you, but somehow I have felt too corrupt and full of sin to make the attempt. As I look over the great mountains that lay between me and the Pacific Ocean I believe I can say of a truth that my heart is yearning for my homeland and my family, which sometimes seems to be more than I can bear. It would be of little comfort for me to write on the natural sufferings which are common among children of men in these days of distress, so with the guidance of Israel's God, in whom we live, move and have our being, will try to tell some of the wonderful works which were completed alone by the power of Him who "weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance;" "He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing;" Yes, he makes a way for the lighting in the clouds and provideth meat for the beasts of the forest; he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast; he is before all things and by him all things consist and none can say to him, what doest thou? All nations are counted before him as nothing and altogether vanity. No wonder it makes a poor worm of the dust tremble with fear when he feels the working of such mighty power in his corrupt and sinful heart, so that the cry goes out for mercy and forgiveness for our sins. God created all things that exist and set the bounds of their habitation so that the least insect and the greatest mammal that ever lived must and will do as he directs them. How much more shall he be pleased to direct the steps of man who was created in his own image. He sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to redeem those he loved from under the curse of the law which had said, whosoever sinneth shall die. Christ suffered and died to pay the debt we owed, if indeed I am to be counted among the number. Yes, he suffered as no man has or ever will suffer, because his life was perfect, and those that killed him could find no fault in him. Before Christ went to glory he promised to send the Comforter who was to dwell in the hearts of his people, even though he said, the servant is no greater than his master, as I have suffered so you shall also suffer. Yes, dear brother, many times were it not for that sweet hope given in Christ before the world was, we would not have the faith to say, let not my will be done, but thine. O how hard it is to say let the will of God be done when engulfed with trials and temptation, burdened with the tribulations of this life. Our selfish desire is to have our own way to make life more pleasant, yet we try and see that we cannot change even one hair on our heads from the natural color, so why try to do greater things. Dear Brother Dodson, if you should have the time write

me, and when at the throne of grace remember this unworthy sinner. May God bless you with grace sufficient to continue preaching and publishing the glad tidings of great joy in declaring his wonderful works. Yours in hope of eternal life.

(Elder) W. O. WAMMACK.

Pfc. W. O. Wammack,
Navy Unit No. 61,
M C A S., Fire Dep't.,
C/o Fleet P. O.,
San Francisco, Cal.

(We were very glad to receive the foregoing letter from Elder Wammack. Judging from his address he is somewhere out in the vast Pacific with thousands of miles of water, land and mountains separating us, but we rejoice in the thought that he is not far from the tender care of our omnipresent God (everywhere present) as well as omnipotent, or almighty in power to perform whatsoever he please. We truly hope that our dear brother may have his compensating moments for all his privations and trials, and that God may visit him with an outpouring of his Holy Spirit, whereby he can rejoice in spirit and give glory to God. We are confident that many of our readers and the brethren will be glad to get this message from Elder Wammack, and may God watch over and keep him, if it be his will, is our prayer. R. L. D.)

1706 Grace St., Lynchburg, Va.

Miss GERTRUDE SECOR,

DEAR SISTER: I have just read a dear letter from you written in December issue of the *Signs of the Times*. I enjoyed it so much and it was so experimental to me in my first love. I often try to live these days over again and do at times. Like John, we have to be shown these things again. This is such a great and glorious doctrine we love, dear sister, and the divine love we have for each other is so different from the world. "Ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world." The world loveth its own. whosoever loveth God is born of God. Are not these precious thoughts to us who hope we have been redeemed by the precious blood of his Son? My parents were Baptists. My father was an Elder and pastor of one church thirty-three years. He died in April 1943 at the age of ninety two, and died preaching this glorious doctrine. His last words, when they turned him over for comfort, were "I am nearly gone but I've got to die to see God." Dear sister, he could not save me, but I trust he convicted me and showed me what a poor sinner I was. I had to mourn four years, and then four more years before I was made willing to offer to the church forty three years ago. I have had many a sad thing in life to bear. My dear husband was killed eight years ago. I have four sons and three of them are in this great conflict. Two sons-in-law and eleven nephews are in it too. Some months ago my heart seemed to give out and the doctor put me in bed. This is being written on my knee, but I read by Bible more and our Baptist papers. I am more humble and realize his "grace is sufficient for thee." If it is his will I will get up again. Excuse this lengthy letter, I only meant to say a few words. Your sister I hope.

(Mrs.) J. W. KNOWLES.

Route 1, Snohomish, Wash.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am enclosing $2 for another year's subscription to the *Signs of the Times* and $2 to do with as you think is best needed. The publishing of this soul refreshing paper is surely for a good purpose and according to God's plan as it is filled with the same doctrine, truth and experiences as it has been these last many years. I know God has all power and is ruling all things, and the different beliefs do not and will not change his plan one iota. Why then must I live in this awful fear, whether this or that that I am doing is right until it

seems I have no peace at all, and all I live on is that sweet hope which no man can take from me. "The friends that most cheer me on life's rugged road, are the friends of my Master, the children of God." From them I get my lasting comfort and reading the *Signs* is like visiting with them. It is indeed food to the hungry soul. An unworthy sister if one at all.

(Mrs.) BLANCHE B. BROWN.

Monroe, La.

DEAR EDITORS: You will find enclosed $4 for the continuance of the *Signs of the Times*. I may be in arrears with my subscription and if I am it is purely neglect. I feel so ashamed and so unappreciative when I notice on the paper that I am behind with my subscription. The years come and go so quickly these days with so much on my mind, and so much sorrow and grief in the world I neglect so many things that I ought to do. I have been a subscriber only for a few years but I used to borrow it from others and found it such a comfort and food to my soul. It is meat and drink to all those who are contending for the faith. I know I am not worthy to be among those, or to even partake of the many good articles in the *Signs*. I promise to be prompt in sending in my subscription, God willing, I feel and know that we should not delay.

(Mrs.) W. H. COOK.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

B. B. Barton, N. Mex., $1; Mrs. W. A. Horton, N. Y., $3; Mrs. C. E. Lawrence, Mass., $1; Mrs. J. Clifford, Wash., $5; Mrs. J. C. Florence, Ga., $1; J. A. Johnson, Tenn., $1; Mrs. A. Hastings, Md., $2; Mrs. E. Loeffel, N. J., $3; Mr. and Mrs. C. Parker, Ky., $14; Mrs. L. B. Eason, Tex., $1; J. K. Buckwalter, O., $1; Mrs. J. Clifford, Wash., $1; Elder P. Jones, Wash., $2; Mrs. M. C. Jameson, Tex., $2; Mrs. D. H. Baker, Wash., $3; Mrs. A. V. Krewatel, Md., $1; Mrs. A. D. Hoyt, N. Y., $1; Mrs. R. G. Brown, Wash., $2; A. F. Jones, Ga., $3; J. J. Vaughn, Tenn., $1; Miss G. Secor, N. Y., $3; Mrs. E. Showalter, Wash., $1.

PLEASE REMEMBER

1—To renew your subscription promptly when due, if possible. The date on your wrapper cover will show to when you have paid.

2—That when your remittance reaches us before the 15th of the month, credit will be shown with the next issue of the paper, otherwise it cannot be shown until the second month following. This also applies to changes of address.

3—That notices of Special Meetings should be sent to us at least thirty days in advance of the month in which the meeting is to be held.

If our readers will be kind enough to observe the foregoing suggestions they will aid us very materially in getting out the paper.

R. L. D.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the *Signs of the Times* at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1; 12 copies, $2. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

NOTE OF THANKS

Brother Jesse W. Banks wishes to express his thanks to all who so kindly contributed funds to aid him in his distress. He is very grateful to all.
GEO. W. JACKSON, Route 2, Fayetteville, Ga.

MAINE MEETINGS

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, Sept. 7, 8 and 9, 1945. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk

The Lord willing, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, will be with the church at Oak Woods, North Berwick, Me., Saturday p.m. and Sunday Oct. 6th and 7th, 1945.

(Mrs.) ALICE M. HALL

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

Is the title of a book consisting of 172 pages and containing about thirty separate articles on the subject. It will be given FREE with a year's subscription to the *Signs of the Times* to anyone who is not now a subscriber to the paper, or to any old subscriber who will send us a NEW subscription for the *Signs of the Times at* $2 per year. The price of the book alone is $1. We regret to say that we have no more books on Predestination.

R.L.D.

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. SEPTEMBER, 1945

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P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

PREACH THE WORD

"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.." 2 Timothy 4:12.

We have a mind to present some thoughts on the above subject and will first call attention to several places in the Old Testament scriptures where we believe the word was preached in type and shadow: 1—When Abraham went up into the mountain to the place of which God had told him, he built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac, his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son, and the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, saying, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son." Thus we see, in type, God delivering up his only begotten Son as a perfect offering for the sins of his people, in order that they might be free from the law of sin and death. 2—Perhaps, there is no more perfect or beautiful type of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in all of the Old Testament than that presented by Joseph, who was illtreated and sold by his brethren into Egypt. Jacob in foretelling what should befall him, said: "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall: The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and halted him: But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob." While he was maligned, hated and caused to suffer all manner of evil, nevertheless God was with him and his own words to his brethren were, "As for you, ye thought evil against me: but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." The full meaning of this was manifested when Jesus came into the world, suffering ignominy and shame at the hands of his brethren according to the flesh, the Jews. By the shedding of his blood he broke down the middle wall of partition which separated between them and the Gentiles, thus making peace for his children among all nations, kindreds, tribes and tongues. 3—David all through the Psalms was testifying before hand of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that would follow. The identical words of David as recorded in the twenty-second Psalm, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me," were heard to fall from the lips of our blessed Lord as he hung on Calvary's cross, between two thieves, just before he expired and gave up the ghost. But this was not all, for David had likewise testified in behalf of his Lord when he said: "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me

the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Psalm 16:10-11. The Sweet Singer in Israel preached the word in such a great variety of ways as to bring comfort and consolation to more mourning souls than almost any of the Old Testament writers. The twenty-third Psalm is a gem of unexcelled beauty which will glitter with luster more and more until the perfect day. 4—The prophet Isaiah was preaching the word when he said: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Is it any wonder that God spake by and through him, saying, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." 5—Daniel foretold of the coming of the Lord when he said: "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." He also preached the word beautifully when he exclaimed, "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." Dan. 12:1. 6—Jonah was taught so wonderfully to preach the word that we frequently hear it said that all true gospel preachers have to go to his college—the belly of hell—for only there are they made to know of a truth that "Salvation is of the Lord." Jesus himself saw fit to cite the experience of Jonah in answering the Pharisees who said to him, "Master, we would see a sign from thee." "But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Matt. 12:38-40. 7—Malachi, the last of the prophetic lights, was preaching the word when he foretold the utter destruction of that legal dispensation and the ushering in of that better day which had been pointed to by all who had preceded him. He said, "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings, and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." Mal. 4:1-2. We are convinced that not only those who preach the word, but also those who hear it and receive it with joy, are made to partake of these things with the saints of old.

Having presented testimony from those who spake in olden times as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, we now wish to turn to the New Testament, where we shall find that the seals of the book which had been closed for so many years were to be loosed by the Lion of the tribe of Juda, that his people might know of a certainty that the Sun of righteousness had arisen with healing in his wings. Our Glorious Head of Grace was the first to preach the word. We are told that he read from the prophecy of Esaias, where it was written: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to

preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Closing the book he sat down. "And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bear him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth." Following his death and resurrection he joined two on their way to Emmaus and asked them, "What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?" After all of their explanations and the other things which they had to say, he said unto them, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." Should we wonder that they said one to another, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" In the first chapter of Revelation John gives us a wonderful description of him as he appeared in his kingdom, in the midst of the seven candlesticks. We suggest that our readers turn to it and study it for themselves. John said when he saw him, he fell at his feet as dead, but he laid his right hand upon him, saying, "Fear not: I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

While Jesus was here in the flesh his disciples were witnesses to many of the miracles which were wrought by him, such as converting the water into wine, healing the leper, giving sight to the blind, raising the dead, and innumerable other things, which were no doubt manifested to the natural eye, but we are also told that Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him. And he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them." He said to Nathaniel, "Thou shalt see greater things than these." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." John quotes Jesus as saying, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." We have sometimes felt that among these *greater works* which his disciples would do is the preaching of the gospel of peace by and through the sufferings, death and resurrection of our Lord. Witness the experience of those on the day when "Pentecost was fully come." We read that "suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." We are told that "the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled." It was on this memorable occasion that

the apostle Peter said, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." This same apostle preached the word to Cornelius and his household as well as on other occasions.

In Paul's letter to the Galatians he tells them that he was "an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)" and further on in this chapter he said: "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." After reminding them briefly of his conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, in which he profited above many of his equals, being more zealous of the traditions of the fathers, and persecuted the church of God beyond measure, nevertheless he says, "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again into Damascus." In writing to his Corinthian brethren he said, "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." He was strongly drawn toward Timothy, who was his son in the ministry, because of the unfeigned (not counterfeit, but real, sincere) faith that was in him, and the fact that he was fast approaching the end of his earthly career lends great solemnity to the charge contained in our text. He had just previously declared that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works," and then he continues by saying, "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." For one to be called of God to preach the gospel of his only begotten Son is by far the highest calling that mortal man ever engaged in. Moses was told to take the shoes off of his feet for the place whereon he stood was holy ground. If we could only be kept in remembrance of this fact we would undoubtedly be found at the feet of the meek and lowly One. We should remember that our Lord Jesus Christ is the judge of the quick (living), and be careful how we conduct ourselves towards our be-

loved brethren, remembering that inasmuch as we do it unto one of the least of his we do it unto him. Likewise we should not forget that He is also the judge of the dead, or those who know him not and, therefore, it is not becoming of us to ridicule and arraign them for not believing the truth as we have been given to know it. If we are different from them, it is God who has made us to differ, and we have not whereof to boast in and of ourselves, but rather should we spend our days in giving thanks to God for the unspeakable gift of his blessed Son, in causing us to know him whom to know is life eternal. When Jesus was here in the flesh he said to one: "Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead." When Jesus appears in his kingdom the word is preached, and the word is also heard by those who have an ear to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. His servants are commanded to be "instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." One cannot do these things of himself, but has to be endued with power from on high, and then it is he can walk about Zion and behold her towers and mark well her bulwarks.

We hope we know something of the way of life as it is in Christ Jesus, but we are continually falling so far short of what we should be and do that we have to cry, "my leanness, my leanness." If we know our own heart, when we come to stand as His mouthpiece before his people, we do earnestly desire to *preach the word,* but we have to come as a blank in his hand, to be filled out as seemeth good unto him, and when we are enabled to honor his great and adorable name we desire that all within us might praise him from whom all blessings flow. If we might be suffered a word of exhortation to our brethren in the ministry it would be, in all meekness and humility, to *preach the word.* We will close by quoting the language of the poet as found in Hymn 359, Beebe's Collection, as follows:

"I AM," saith Christ, "the Way:"
Now, if we credit him,
All other paths must lead astray,
How fair soe'er they seem.

"I AM," saith Christ, "The Truth;"
Then all that lacks this test,
Proceed it from an angel's mouth,
Is but a lie at best.

"I AM," saith Christ, "the Life:"
Let this be seen by faith;
It follows, without further strife,
That all besides is death.

If what those words aver,
The Holy Ghost apply,
The simplest Christian shall not err,
Nor be deceived, nor die.

R. L. D.

ADOPTION

(Re-published by request)

We were not a little surprised to read, "And the individual soul, as the leading responsible element, comes to the regeneration first, and passes the vail of the flesh, and is risen with Christ from the dead, and enters into the kingdom of heaven, while as yet the body is behind. But it is impossible for it to be made perfect till the third day, or born again in time; it is admitted into the militant kingdom upon the principle of adoption, but still is imperfect." . . . "And as said, because of this imperfection, and to preserve the organism where the soul or heart has entered the spiritual kingdom, the body is admitted upon the principle of adoption." If we understand sister R. Anna Phillips, there is a radical difference in our views on the subject of Adoption. She holds that the soul and heart of believers have followed Christ in the regeneration, and the body has not . . . cannot in this life, or until after death; but that the body without regeneration is received into the kingdom by adoption. What is the body of a man without a soul? If it be a man, it cannot see the kingdom of God except it be born again. John 3:3. Not even by adoption. If water baptism were a birth, still it is said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The assertion that baptism in

water initiates the man into the kingdom, is what we charge the Campbellites with preaching; but not only a being born of water, but also of the Spirit, is indispensibly required for an entrance into the kingdom of God. See John 3:5. Jesus gives an explanation to Nicodemus, when he says, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Was ever a man born of the flesh without a soul? Can any one be a man without a soul? As we understand the scriptures, all that a man can be physically or mentally, with all the elements of his Adamic nature, is born of the flesh, and is called flesh; and all his elementary or component parts of body, soul and spirit constitute him only a natural man, and flesh. None of these elementary parts are made spiritual by the new birth, which is of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. That the soul and heart of man have followed Christ in regeneration, and that the other elements of our fleshly nature are adopted, and have entered the kingdom by baptism, is a strange doctrine to those who adhere to the testimony of that book which positively declares that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." 1 Cor. 15:50. If there is a passage of scripture that speaks of a man without a heart and soul, or of any fractional part of a man that is regenerated and born of God, leaving some other part of that same man in an unregenerate state, and brought into the kingdom of God by adoption, our research of the scriptures for three score years and ten has not enabled us to find it. The man (not the part or parts of a man) who is born again, while here in the flesh, has two antagonistic elements in his one person. They are designated in the scriptures, flesh and spirit, old man and new man, outer man and inner man; and the flesh, the old and outer man, is born of the flesh, of corruptible seed, and is like its earthly progenitor, of the earth, earthy. It is corruptible, depraved and mortal, and in it dwells no good thing. It is called grass, and with all its godliness shall be cut down, and as dust, it shall to dust return. The spirit, which is born of God, and dwells in all the saints, is of God, created in righteousness and true holiness. It is pure and holy, being born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, and it cannot sin, because it is born of God. It is a free gift. It is not a revision of the old, carnal nature, but it is the divine nature which the saints receive in their new and spiritual birth. These two elements or natures are as distinct as are the sources from which they emanate; and as antagonistic as light and darkness, truth and error, purity and sin. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." They are contrary one to the other, so that those who possess them both cannot do the things they would. We are more disposed to pity than to censure those who profess christianity, and are still ignorant of the indwelling of these two conflicting elements, the one of which is of the earth, earthy, and the other of him who is the Lord from heaven. The question is sometimes urged, If the foregoing views are correct, what is done for the Adamic man? If we mistake not, the scriptures clearly testify to us what is and what is not done for the Adamic man. While the word, as also our experience, show that the Adamic nature subsequently to as well as previously to the new birth is mortal, corruptible, depraved and warring against the heaven-born life which is given us, and will continue to war against the spirit until our change shall come, still by the new, spiritual life given us in the new birth, the recipients of it are sealed unto the day of redemption, and to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will; but this adoption has not yet come. The spirit of adoption is given,

whereby we cry, Abba, Father. That which is already born of God need not to be adopted, as sister Phillips admits, for it is by birth manifested in the relationship of a son; but adoption applies to that which is taken from another family, and brought into the family by adoption. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit; it never did belong to any other family, for it is born of God, and never was defiled with sin; it is born of incorruptible seed . . . was never corrupted . . . being born of God; it was not purchased, redeemed nor adopted. But that which pertains to our earthly nature, as the children of the earthly Adam, including soul, body and spirit, and all that constitutes us men and women, all that sinned, all that was under the law, all that was redeemed and bought with a price, all the "purchased possession" of our Lord Jesus Christ, are in our earthly nature aliens to God, strangers and foreigners, and requiring adoption. The apostle Paul testifies that the saints at Ephesus and the faithful in Christ Jesus were "predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." "That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ," &c. Eph. 1:5, 10. And in verse 13 he says to them, "After that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until redemption of the purchased possession." The purchased possession of Christ must be that which he redeemed from the earth and bought with a price; but not that life which was with the Father, and was preserved in Christ Jesus, and which is hid with Christ in God. All spiritual blessings were given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world; they were not purchased for Christ was not purchased, and our spiritual life was and is in him: but in our earthly persons we were sinners, sold under sin, and bought with the precious blood of Christ. The purchased possession of Christ is that for which he paid a ransom price. These were predestinated to the adoption of children. Therefore, "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Gal. 4:4-5. Our spiritual life was given us in Christ our spiritual Head, as chosen in him before the foundation of the world; but our earthly life was given us in the earthly Adam, and in him we had sinned, and required redemption, to effect which Christ was made under the law by being made of a woman. He was not under the law until he was made flesh and dwelt among us, neither was the spiritual, incorruptible seed which was preserved in him under the law; therefore to purchase and to possess his people which had sinned in Adam, he must need be made under the law by taking on him the seed of Abraham. And now because ye are sons in Christ in his eternal Sonship, our alienated Adamic persons must be redeemed and purchased, and the seal of the Spirit, as the seal of the eternal life and immortality of Christ, is set upon us. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." This Spirit of the Son of God is sent forth, and we receive it when we are born again of incorruptible seed by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever, and by it we are sealed unto the day of redemption; that is, to the final deliverance from mortality. And this spirit which we receive in our spiritual birth seals the body, soul and spirit with the infallible evidence that God will, hereafter, change these vile bodies, and fashion them like Christ's glorious, resurrected body. "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath annointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and

given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." 2 Cor. 1:21,22. This sealing is "the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Eph. 4:30. And it is called the spirit of promise. Eph. 1:13. And it is also called the spirit of adoption. Gal. 4:5, and Rom. 8:15. The spirit of adoption is received when we are born of the Spirit, and by it the promise of our final adoption is made infallibly certain to all who are thus sealed; but the apostle says that "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have received the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, *waiting for the adoption,* to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Rom. 8:22,25. If when we were born again of incorruptible seed our bodies were adopted into the family or kingdom of God, or if when we were baptized and received into the fellowship of the saints our bodies were adopted, what is it that Paul says we are waiting for? Did we not receive the first fruits of the Spirit in our new birth? Had we ever received any fruits of the Spirit of God before we were born of the Spirit? We think not. Well, "We who have received the first fruits of the Spirit," Paul and the saints at Rome included, were still groaning within themselves, waiting for something. What was it they waited for, if the bodies were already received into the kingdom by adoption? And if it were possible to get them into the kingdom even by adoption, they could find for them no inheritance there. "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall all be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." 1 Cor. 15:50,54. This is what the saints are waiting for, and will continue to groan within themselves, waiting for this change, for this adoption; and like the psalmist they can each, who have received the spirit of adoption, say, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." Psalm 17:15. This is the adoption to which they are sealed by the spirit of adoption, which they have already received. "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead (not adopted) because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Rom. 8:10,11. The Spirit of him that raised up Christ is the spirit of adoption sealing those who have received it unto the day redemption, not to an adoption past, but to that which is to come; therefore with Job we may say, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." Job. 14:14.

GILBERT BEEBE.

September 15, 1876.

OBITUARIES

Brother JOHN LEONARD HASTINGS was born in Sussex Co., Delaware near the town of Delmar, March 2, 1868, and departed this life May 6, 1944, making his stay on earth 76 years, 2 months and 4 days. He was the son of Cowell and Sarah Hastings, the fourth son of a family of eight children. He passed away after a long illness at his home in Delmar, Delaware. He was married to Miss Nannie Hastings from the state of Virginia, Dec. 24, 1890, and to this union two sons were born, Vaughn Archaules and Earl Windsor. They, with their

mother, three grandchildren and two sisters survive to mourn the loss of a devoted husband, father, grandfather and brother. He reecived a hope in God's mercy and was baptized by Elder E. Rittenhouse, December 18, 1887 and remained sound in the faith until the end. He was a kind husband and loving father and is greatly missed by all who knew him. After brother Hastings united with the Little Creek Church he was a very useful member, being clerk and deacon for several years and often conducted meetings in the absence of the pastor. He was a carpenter by trade and built Broad Creek meeting-house, rebuilt Little Creek and remodeled the meeting-house in Delmar. He was ever found a faithful, firm believer in salvation by grace and was faithful to his duties to his church. He was a very good singer and always led the singing in the meetings. He has been greatly missed in our assembling together for worship. We feel to say that our loss is his eternal gain and may we all be reconciled to God's will. Brother Hastings believed in God's "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." We feel safe in saying the he rested in this thought, realizing that whatever God does is right. Many relatives and friends attended his funeral service which was conducted by the writer. His remains were laid to rest in the burying ground at Little Creek where he always attended meetings when physically able. May the grace of God be richly ministered to the family is the desire of the writer.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT.

Deacon J. W. B. ROBERSON was born Sept. 15, 1863, and after loving hands had done all for him that they knew he quietly fell asleep in Jesus, as we hope, March 27, 1945, making his stay on earth 82 years, 6 months and 12 days. He was married Nov. 25, 1886 to Miss Mary Parker Wallace and to this union eleven children were born, nine of them survive him. A daughter, Cascile, died at the age of two years, and Elzy Roberson was in overseas duty in World War I which broke his health and caused his death June 24, 1924. His aged and sad widow survives him and the surviving children are: Mrs. Nettie Edwards and Mrs. Rena Oliver of Marian, La., Miss Pearl (living at home with her mother), Sherman, Furman and Ben Roberson of Linville, La., Leonard Roberson, Bastrop, La., Mrs. Edna Sparks, Spencer, La., and Rufus Roberson, of Haile, La. He is also survived by twenty-seven grandchildren, two great grand-children and two brothers, S. L. Roberson, Haile, La. and T. L. Roberson, Monroe, La. Brother Roberson united with the Union Primitive Baptist Church near his home, the second Saturday in September, 1911 and was highly appreciated among them. As the scriptures set forth in Paul's letter to Timothy, he had a good report even among them that are without. About the year 1917 the brethren of his church discerned that the Lord had given him a very active and useful gift as deacon in which he very ably and faithfully served as long as he was able to do so. He has traveled far and near among the churches, aiding the great cause for which he stood so firmly and faithfully to the end. Having served his church as best I could for almost thirty years I cannot speak too highly of him. I have observed his faithfulness in attendance, liberality in service and unlimited hospitality, including his dear companion and family. Their home was indeed a welcome home for their friends and especially for Old Baptists. His walk, conversation and devotion denoted that he was truly a man of God, having great love for his brethren and a great love for reading the Bible. He was blessed with a deep understanding of the Scriptures and a very quiet and peaceful disposition and loving manner. This caused brethren in other Associations and even in foreign states to know, love and respect him deeply. I had traveled quite extensively with him in several states and often brethren and sisters who met him and his dear family inquire of him and express their warm appreciation for him. Truly to know him was to love him. From the abundant evidence of his deep and enthusiastic love, fellowship and hospitality, I feel very confident that his soul has been taken home to God who gave it, and his body awaits the second and glorious coming of our Savoir, when it, together with all the bodies of His saints who sleep in the dust and in the depth of the sea, and those who remain alive until his coming, will be changed from mortal to immortal, from natural to spiritual bodies like that of Jesus Christ when he came from Joseph's new tomb at the resurrection. Then he will ascend into that glorious mansion which God has prepared for his people. (He most assuredly did believe this precious and grand doctrine). To his dear family I will say you have lost a good husband and father. To his community I say you have lost a good and useful neighbor and friend, a good citizen indeed is gone. To the churches you have lost a jewel indeed, but all our loss I feel is not worthy to be compared with the bliss and joy of that peaceful rest in the blissful presence of our Savior in paradise. May God enable us to look away from self and look to him for comfort and guidance. He was buried in Liberty Church Cemetery near his home, the burial being attended by a host of his friends, brethren and sisters, his family and relatives, with great evidence of his being highly appreciated. There were many and beautiful floral offerings, and the presence of a great throng of saddened people showed their love and respect for him. Elder E. J. Lambert, the unworthy writer,

together with Mr. W. C. Smith, a Missionary Baptist minister spoke at the funeral services. May God bless and comfort the bereaved is my desire. Written by his poor, cast down pastor who greatly misses him. Yours in hope of a better resurrection.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES.

God in his wisdom and mercy saw fit to take unto himself one of our beloved members, MARY E. VORIES, daughter of William and Frances Montfort Turner. She was born Dec. 30, 1866 and died March 25, 1945. She had been married to Dr. W. L. Vories fifty-four years. She united with Old Sulphur Fork Church at Campbellsburg, Ky. the fourth Saturday in October, 1901 and was baptized by Elder J. G. Eubanks, living a faithful and consistent member to the end. She had been sick for some months and was terribly afflicted with palsy but bore her afflictions with christian fortitude never complaining. Her last words were, "O Lord have mercy on me." Such a good way to go home. Having no children, the husband is left sad and lonely. May the Lord reconcile us all to his most holy will.

(Mrs.) ADDIE CHANDLER.

ANNOUNCEMENT

We, the Primitive or Predestinarian Baptists of Hopewell Church, announce with deep sorrow the death of one of our members, brother J. D. Hatchett, June 6, 1945. He was 83 years old. An obituary will follow.

Mangum, Okla. R. L. BUCKNER, Church Clerk.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will be held with the First and Second Roxbury Churches at the Old School Baptist meeting-house in Halcottville, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 12 and 13, 1945. The Association will convene at 10 o'clock a. m. on Wednesday. Provision has been made for the entertainment of all present, and an invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth to meet with us and partake of our hospitality. Those coming by train, bus or auto to Halcottville on Tuesday before the meeting will go to either the home of Mrs. Prudence O'Connor Hinkley or Walter Harrington where provision will be made for their entertainment. Those coming on Wednesday will go directly to the meeting-house. Ministering brethren of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.

The Fellowship Association will convene with Fellowship Church on Friday before and including the second Sunday in Sept. 1945. Fellowship Church is located 7 miles northeast of Gladewater, Texas.

(Elder) W. O. BEENE.

The South Ouachita (Wash-i-taw) Primitive Baptist Association will convene with Union Church on Friday before the fourth Sunday in Sept. 1945. The location is three miles northwest of Haile, La. and five miles east of Marion, La.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES, Moderator.

The Soldier Creek Association is appointed to be held with Zion Church, Mayfield Graves Co., Ky., October 12, 13 and 14, 1945. The meeting-house of old red brick is located on 7th St. in Mayfield. Highways from all directions lead to Mayfield. Those coming by train from the north make connection with the I. C. R. R. at Paducah, Ky. Those coming from the south will make connection with the I.C. R.R. at Fulton Ky. Those arriving early may notify Elder O. W. Perkins in advance of this date, Route 2, Mayfield, Ky. or brother S. A. Crass, Route 6, Mayfield, Ky. for conveyance, or to my address as given below. WM. T. CHESTER, Church Clerk., 113 S. 12th St., Murray, Ky.

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each 1st Sunday, 11:00 a. m. and Saturday before.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday.

AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before, ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a. m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopewell Church, Ozark Ala., meets each 4th Sunday, 11 a. m. J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Pleasant Valley Church, Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc.)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. E. M. TACKETT,
J. S. HUNNICUTT, Pastors.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY
Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue. Take elevator to second floor.
11.00 a. m. 1:30 p. m.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.
(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.
C. W. BOND, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 a. m.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.
W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. G. E. Rushing, co-pastor.
C. B. TEAGUE, Pastor.

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets third Sunday in each month at 11:00 a. m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Old School Baptist meetings are held every fourth Sunday at Civic Club, 1419 N. Shepherd St., Houston, Texas. Preaching by Elder W. O. Beene.
(Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Danville Primitve Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before. Bradley Road, Danville, Va.
W. R. DODD, Pastor.

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meet each first Sunday 11 a.m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3032 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va. R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.
R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m. C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 113 RUTHERFORD, N. J., OCTOBER, 1945. No. 10

EXPERIENCE

To old and young, I pray draw near,
Listen awhile and you shall hear
How both sin and Satan aimed,
To land my soul among the damned.

No age at all, like all human kind,
Was born in sin both dead and blind;
And as my days advanced I grew
The more debased and formed for woe.

The crimes I mostly did commit,
Were what you do, and plead for yet;
Those heinous sins called civil mirth,
God threatens with his dreadful wrath.

I many times to church would go,
My person and clothes to show;
But of my soul I took no thought
Though Jesus had it dearly bought.

Full seventeen years around did roll
Before I thought of my poor soul;
And, Oh! I shudder when I think
How near I stood upon the brink.

At length I heard a Baptist preach,
His words my guilty heart did reach;
You must, he said, be born again
If ever heaven you do obtain.

To keep the law then I was bent,
But found I failed in every point;
The law appeared so pure and true,
Not one good duty could I do.

In silent watches of the night,
I'd go in secret where I might
Upon my knees pour out my grief,
And pray to God for some relief.

Friend sinner said, "Don't be so dull
Come go with me to yonder ball;
We will dress up gay and fine,
And make you heir of all that's mine."

My friend that will never do
It only will augment my woe;
Can I expect bliss to obtain
By adding sin to sin again?

Well, if you are resolved to turn
And after silly babbles run,
None of my portion you shall have,
It to some others I will give.

Be it so; I'll seek the Lord
Encouraged by His holy word;
He can all my wants supply,
In Him I'll trust, to Him I'll cry.

And in my great extremity
When sad and helpless I'd reply,
I thought I heard a small, still voice
Which made my mourning soul rejoice.

Then to my view did One appear,
All mangled with both whip and spear;
He said, "Rise up and follow Me,
I died to set lost sinners free."

Immediately my soul did rise
On wings of faith toward the skies;
All earthly things I counted dross
And gloried in my Saviour's cross.

Now brought to see that Christ himself,
Has saved my soul from sin and death,
I'll follow Him though much despised;
At his command I'll be baptized.

I'm not ashamed to own my Lord,
According to His sacred word
I value no one's scoff nor frown,
I hope to wear the starry crown.

Come! you that know His works and ways
Let's join to sing His sacred praise;
But I must try to praise Him best,
I've run so deep in debt to grace.

Now nearing the age of sixty-three
My soul to save I could not do.
I hope I'm of the chosen race
And fully satisfied with God's grace.

I soon shall pass the veil of death,
In His arms I'll lose my breath;
And then my happy soul shall tell
My Jesus has done all things well.

113 S. 12th St. FANNIE H. CHESTER.
Murray, Ky.

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15.

The above quotation is a direct command (sometimes called a commission by some) from Jesus to his disciples. I have heard so much said, and read so much which has been written on the above, until it is with a degree of reluctancy that I even attempt to write on the subject as much as I have the impression. I understand, which of course is clear, that Jesus gave this command after he rose from the tomb and appeared to the eleven as they sat at meat. It is truly a vital command though issued by him who was fresh from the tomb. I want to feel and do feel that that fact, if possible, makes it more vital. It most certainly evidences the life and immortality of the command, coming from him who hath proven conclusively that the monster death (our last enemy) hath no power to hold him, but from thence on alive for-ever-more commands his eleven, "Go ye into all the world." Evidently Jesus was not commanding go into every nook and corner of this earth. The vitality of this commandment demanded action and exactness on the part of the eleven. Jesus evidently had qualified them to learn as he taught (without which all men are blanks to-day), and they understood exactly what was embodied in the command from him, but the query through the years since, hath been and is now, what world? By some it is held Jesus meant the Jewish world; by some it is held he meant the Gentile world; by some it is held he meant China, etc. on all of which I have no criticism to offer as through the years past I have noted. Of this command it seems to have been a case of freelancing, which of course is as it should have been otherwise it would not have been. I am aware of this fact, only the truth will give lasting comfort for there are those elements of freedom in the knowledge of the truth, and none can know the truth of the teachings of Jesus of their own volition and accord. All must wait for a direct revelation from him. My frailty now stands before me in heaps as I ponder these words, hast Thou revealed to me the word? The world has so many significances that probably gives rise to the various applications of the text, but I feel when Jesus used the word *world* here his purpose was singular for this reason: the gospel was to be preached, the gospel being the power of God unto salvation or unto deliverance, must accomplish the purpose of delivering by the righteous revelation of God from faith to faith for the just shall live by faith, as we walk by faith not by sight, then I am led to feel each individual lives in his or her own little world, and to these chosen of God were the eleven commanded to go and preach the gospel. Each individual is molested, and I might say comforted, from time to time with an innumerable number of creatures both great and small, all of which are foreign and strange on their part relative to the gospel. It is mysterious that nothing will eradicate these creatures out of each one's individual world except the gospel which is the power of God, but the gospel has and will continue to do it in every kindred, nation and tongue. Thus we see the essentiality in preaching nothing but the unadulterated gospel or power of God. No wonder then Paul avers "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." Of these creatures I will name a few for the benefit of the reader: doubt, fear, bruised and broken vows, self will, vain thoughts, evil imaginations, self righteousness and many more, all of which the gospel or the power of God eradicates. No man can see God in faith, hope and love with his heart, mind and soul beclouded with the above creatures and probably millions more of the same like family, but by the eradication of them with the gospel or power of God a

person is eliminated from even trying to believe. He *believes*, not in order to be baptized, but in view of the fact he is baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire, for our God is a consuming fire, the fire having consumed all the creatures both great and small in each one's own little world yet they themselves are saved as by fire. Then we see fire saves as well as destroys. Jesus is not referring here to another kind of salvation, but only one of the elements in the great salvation of God that was purposed in Jesus in eternity in covenant stipulation before the rivers abounded with water, and when as yet there was no compass set upon the deep. Certain signs shall follow them that believe. There is no better way to ascertain a believer than to observe the sign following, but how prone we are to fathom out the future, and a great many times endeavor to lay out the steps ahead for the brother, and then abuse him because he did not walk according to our pattern, and when he does not we are quick to say he is not a believer, even go so far as to say he is not my brother. What of the signs following the believer? In the name of Jesus they shall cast out devils; cast them out of where? Why out of their own little world. The devil in some one else's world has never bothered you, has it? A belief in Jesus, *note in Jesus,* gives the believer a clear, calm sea, a land upon whose blissful shore there falls no shadow, rests no stain. New tongues is another beautiful asset of the believer. Not the outlandish kind, but the kind that is new. New because of being renewed daily by Jesus who never grows old; new in that of ascribing all honor, glory, might and dominion to God for having saved with an everlasting salvation such a wretch as I. They shall take up serpents, that is, they shall deal with principles that are opposite, and teach, proving conclusively that they are not the righteous perfected principles of the house of God, but instead are venom to the perfected cause of Jesus. Fearlessly they drink deep of the cup of deadly poison only to prove that it will not kill, to say nothing of making alive, all to show both life and death in the power and authority of Jesus. I voluntarily offered myself once into the hands of one of those high pressure soul savers. He said he could not do me any good because I did not believe. To that I replied, the reason your work would be ineffective in me is because I do believe, and may I say here to all believers in Jesus, press on, be not afraid, and of those you contact that are afflicted with like afflictions as you were be not slothful in laying your hands upon them, that is, to administer unto them the experimental touch that so beautifully blends from heart to heart or from faith to faith as it is written, and note the speedy recovery. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" "So then after the Lord had spoken to them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God" as evidence of a complete execution of the sovereign will of God. Relative to all of those constituting the body of Jesus, ye are the body of Christ and members in particular. So they went forth and preached everywhere, that is, they went into all the mandates and tenants of the law of Moses, the ites and isms of men, and preached Jesus, the way, the truth and the life (not alone) the Lord working with them. I work and my Father works hitherto. The preparation of the heart, together with the answer of the tongue in man is of the Lord. There is always a confirmation of the word and signs following when the gospel is preached. (Just opposite to those which are of the contrary part, as the confirmation and signs for the need of the gospel are always ahead of the gospel, and men are going to hell every day for the lack of the gospel ark.) Yes, in every little world where the gospel is preached a sign is erected in the heart, mind and soul of the

subject in whose world it is preached with the seal and signature of the confirmation of the Lord. That follows wherever they go as an evidence and token of a good hope of life, immortality and light beyond this vale of sorrow, and with vigor and elasticity we press on with no uncertain step. We press on toward the mark of the prize of the high calling as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Submitted in love and sweet fellowship to all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. A trembling sinner, yet I hope.

(Elder) F. A. COLLINS.

THE GREAT SHEPHERD

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant."
Heb. 13:20

Seemingly it would be impossible for me to write anything regarding the above text that would do justice to His greatness, and by nature am sure I cannot write anything that would be of any comfort or consolation to God's humble poor and afflicted (yet blessed) people unless given the inspiration, and am guided by his Holy Spirit to see his marvelous light, otherwise all my writing would be as a sounding brass or a tinkling symbol or salt that has lost its savour and would be as nothingness before his Majesty. We may take all the wisdom of this world and all the beautiful words that can be said, and they cannot compare to his greatness, the great Shepherd's love for his flock. He is their everlasting, the Alpha and Omega, from before the world even existed, down to our very day and on throughout all eternity. He will be their power, caring for them and watching without ceasing over their every need, their Prince of Peace, their consoling Comforter in times of trouble. I do hope and pray that this humble worm of the dust may be given such truths as may be of comfort to the very souls of this great Shepherd's flock which you, dear readers, can find recorded in John's gospel 10:1-15. There we find the blessed Savior Jesus talking directly to his beloved, calling them sheep and declaring there is no way only by me. That he is the door and the life, calling his own by name and they, the sheep, will hear his voice and will follow him. So we see why the Lord of hosts refers to his own precious jewels as sheep and why his great love was made manifest by the shedding of his precious blood for his beloved (the church or his bride) sheep. Listen to this, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice; and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice." Please read all of this chapter and you will clearly see who the great Shepherd was talking to. It was the ones called, ordained and predestinated to be the heirs and joint heirs with Christ the Lord, even before the highest hills were laid or the creature was even formed or made. Therefore it cannot be anything on the part of man that can be done to become a sheep in the household of the great Shepherd. A lamb does not have to reach the age of accountability to be a sheep, he is a sheep to start with, so the wisdom of the combined world should disregard all belief about reaching a certain age before you can reject or accept Christ as your Savior. I am persuaded the Lord of Glory did not have to come to this low ground of sin and the pain of this earth in the form of man, suffer and die on the cruel cross for the salvation of the saints of glory, or to save his precious jewels, his sheep or his bride (the church) for they were

already saved and in the covenant of grace. But for the cause of one man (Adam), sin, condemnation and death was passed upon all the inhabitants of the earth including the children of promise, and by the disobedient act of man the great Shepherd had to take upon himself the mantle of nature, suffer persecution and pay the redemption price on the cruel cross so that his bride, the church, would be pure, without spot or blemish, and be as pure and holy as the Groom, so at his appointed time he could call his sheep (his bride) and they would be united in that everlasting bliss in glory to praise and honor the Father, where sin, sorrow and tribulation cannot enter in. Oh! blest are those who know the voice of the great Shepherd and feast in his green pastures, going in and out at his appointed time. Brother Dodson, in this tabernacle of unworthiness, if my poor heart deceives me not, I find flowing from the everlasting peace, the milk and honey from the pen of your editorials and sound doctrine by the writers in the *Signs of the Times*, rendering everlasting peace and comfort to the dear saints who constitute the sheep of the household of Israel's God. It was declared, I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac and the prophets from everlasting to everlasting, saying I am their God and they shall be my people from the least to the greatest. I am the Lord, I change not, so all his promises will stand regardless of time. So by faith we are led to believe that there is a peculiar people from every nation, kindred and tongue who does hear his voice and humbly heeds his call amid all this confusing turmoil, conflict and strife in the world to-day, ever rendering praise to his greatness. In concluding these rambling thoughts will say we find no greater pleasure on this earth than mixing and mingling with the peculiar people (Primitive Baptists) who hear that small sweet voice, and who believe and worship a God of everlasting love, wisdom and power; one who is able to lay down his life for his love, also take it up again; who believes in his everlasting covenant of grace bestowed on the unmerited efforts of mankind, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Eph. 2:8-9. Our God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins.

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again.

When I experience call to mind,
My understanding is so blind,
All feeling sense seems to be gone,
Which makes me fear that I am wrong.

My nature is so prone to sin,
Which makes my duty so unclean,
That when I count up all the cost,
Without free grace, I know I'm lost."

I could not refrain from copying a part of this beautiful hymn which seems so fitting to my unworthy and sinful condition. Brother Dodson, this is not sent you for publication unless you see fit and think it sound, for I certainly do not want to pollute the words of the heavenly host, neither do I want to be the cause of any of the great Shepherd's host having anything but the truth. Not for once would I want anything in the *Signs of the Times* that was not in accordance with Holy Writ and to the comfort of the saints of the most high God. If there are any errors please pass them by as the imperfections of mortal, sinful man of which I know I am chief. If I have written anything that will be of any comfort to any of God's humble poor how very proud it would make this old carnal nature of mine, yet on the other hand I would know that within dwelleth no good thing and if there is any comfort it must come from on high where all praise and glory justly belong, and where the Shepherd and the sheep must unite in eternal glory to praise

Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Yours unworthily saved, if at all, by grace.

BEN PARRISH.

Arkansas City, Ark.

(Written by (Mrs.) W. H. Cannon)
Route 1, Box 60, Newport, N. C.)

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: For some reason unknown to me I have been very much impressed to write you since receiving your good paper for a year now. I have read all of them again and again as there are so many good letters written on the pages between the folder of your paper. They contain so much good food for this poor worm of the dust, each one expressing my feelings much better than I am able to do it myself. All the writers are strangers to me in the flesh but I hope we know each other in spirit and in truth. All of them mentioned their experiences more or less in some way and I will have to write likewise for without what little hope and experience I have I would write but little. I was raised in the country in a very good community I think, and my home was near South West Church, the church I hope I love and have from childhood until now, and I hope that same love will continue through my remaining years let them be long or short. My mother was a member of that church and I was taught to attend church regularly with her. I was her only daughter, therefore we were closely entwined together, especially in going to church for I went as regularly as she did. My father was not a member but their beliefs were the same, and on his death bed I believe he saw and knew the truth from just a few words he expressed to mother not many hours before he passed away. As I grew up I continued to attend church with mother. I really enjoyed it but kept that to myself. My memory goes back many years ago, and I can view that beautiful picture of her and so many others, that have gone on to the far beyond, sitting around, each one in their place feasting from that food that was delivered to them from God and the Lamb, drinking it in as fast as it was delivered. I hope it is that same food that has been handed down from time to time to we poor worms of the dust, but still I feel unworthy to receive many of the crumbs that fall from the Master's table. The picture at the communion service and feet washing is still plain to me now. They looked so humble as they proceeded with it, singing songs of praise while gathered together for that purpose, they all seemed like one. I was also allowed to visit other churches of different orders if I desired and did go some when there was no meeting at home. I really cannot say that I enjoyed attending them so much, but I did not want to appear selfish and wanted to go around with my young friends some and most of them preferred to attend other churches rather than the Primitive Baptist. Why, I do not know unless what was said showed more of the world's tastes for earthly pleasure. I was often asked if I enjoyed what had been said, and I would always say "not much." Some would speak as though a grand sermon had been delivered, but I could not see it that way and feel the same way to-day. I would not argue with my friends as I felt too unworthy and knew that I did not know enough about the word of God to rightly divide it. Time passed and at eighteen I began to get ready to teach school. Father was getting old and very afflicted so that he could not work much and mother, a younger brother and myself had to work to take care of the household. It was in 1910 when I began my work, being the first time I had ever left my parents to stay very long at a time. Knowing our situation I felt it my duty to work and assist all I could to take care of the home as well as myself. I well remember the day I left to resume my teaching. Where I had to go was some twenty-five miles or more away. I had not been in the neighborhood long before people gathered to the little one room schoolhouse to have an old time sing as they

called it. I was invited so went to listen, and while doing so I found that their belief compared with mine. Before they adjourned I learned they were a little band that had separated from the original church for some reason and had formed a little band of their own. I enjoyed my work and stay in that neighborhood and spent many happy moments sitting around the fireside at night singing those good old songs with them until late bedtime. My work passed along very pleasantly that winter and I returned home to stay with my parents during the vacation. Some time in May I had a dream and it is just as plain in my mind to-day as it was then, thirty-four years ago. Some time after I retired an angel appeared at my bedside and said she was the mother from heaven and had come to take me home. She took me in her arms and carried me into the room where my parents lay sleeping, woke them and talked to them. Told them not to worry about me, that no harm would ever befall me. Then she arose and flew away. When I awoke it seemed that just for a few moments I had the happiest feeling to sweep over this poor, vile body, but it did not last long. I do not know how long I lay there meditating about it and wondering what it meant for me. Those words that she repeated have been a great consolation all through these many years as I love to think of them. Days and months passed and I wanted to tell mother about it but kept silent as the lack of courage kept me from parting my lips about dreams of that kind, but when I came in contact with any one whom I heard speaking about such I listened intently, hoping to hear something said that would solve my case and ease my troubled mind, but did not want them to know I was listening for fear they might question me. In October 1911 the White Oak Association convened with the church at South West, my home church. I attended every day, heard every sermon delivered, and listened with care to what was said, hoping some one would interpret my dream not knowing what they had done. The last sermon preached was delivered by brother Jimmy Johnson. I will never forget the first remarks he made, "Well, brethren you have received the food as cake and pie, and now the corn-bread has come last," but it was good corn-bread to me. While he was preaching the great Interpreter came, and a voice spoke to me so plainly, saying the church is your home and you must go. If some one had passed and struck me a hard blow I would not have hurt any worse for the time being. It seemed like those words were piercing through my heart and cutting it to pieces. Though I sat there until he finished, I was glad to get away before some one might see me and make an inquiry. I just walked away from the whole congregation for a few minutes and soon went home where I could be to myself. I went on and on mentioning nothing to any one, but continually asking God for mercy and to help me bear up to the great burdensome feeling that I had, take away this stony heart of mine and make me willing to be God's anything and give me that faith that enabled God's children to take courage and go forth and be willing to tell what great things the Lord had done for them. I could not go as I felt too unfit to unite with the church, yet it was my greatest desire to be with them if I would or could be accepted.

(*To be continued*)

Hooker, Okla.

Editors and Readers of the Signs of the Times: I have a question to ask. What do we offer? I mean what do the Lord's chosen people offer to God for their salvation? We are told that God gave his only begotten Son as a sacrifice for the sins of his people, but God did not offer his Son to any one, he was given. We are told that Christ offered himself to God. The Father prepared the body of Jesus Christ for an offering unto himself,

and God was well pleased with the Son and so accepted his offering. Jesus Christ was not offered to man or even unto the Church of God as an atonement for sin, but was given as a sacrifice unto God for the sins of his people. We had nothing to offer so Christ died for us as Paul says, "the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Are we told that Adam and Eve offered sacrifice? It seems they tried when they sewed the fig leaves together. God removed those and gave them coats of skin. Remember these coats were given and put upon them, yes even to fit, no guess work. And did not these coats of skin picture and point out the robe of Christ's righteousness which they and all of the redeemed should wear? And we are told that they never wore out. If not then they always had this covering by which they could look to Christ and his righteousness for salvation to come. Cain and Abel offered of such as they each one had, but by faith Abel a more acceptable sacrifice than that of Cain. Abraham was told to offer his son, Isaac. Remember this son was a very peculiar and precious gift to Abraham and Sarah, but this son was given and now must be offered. Yes, our blessings are given to us and then must be offered back to God. The ram in the bush held by his horns was given to Abraham and must be offered in place of Isaac. The Jews offered sacrifices for over twelve hundred years of such as was given them under the law of Moses. Those old scriptures and offerings all testified of Christ and the salvation of his church. Then comes the sacrifice of Christ by his own offering which his own Father prepared for him. This was and is the antitype or substance of (that which stands under) all legal offerings for sin. It seems the Gentile nations did not offer types and shadows of Christ while the Jews did. The Gentiles offered and served gods of their own making or such things as they chose to fall before. Do we now have Jews and Gentiles? Under the gospel Paul says he is not a Jew who is a Jew outwardly, but he is a Jew who is a Jew inwardly, circumcised in heart. So we are left to believe that all now who are not born of the Spirit are Gentiles, and that all gospel Jews are born of the Spirit or circumcised in heart. Those worship God in Spirit and in truth. They all have the one offering to look to for salvation, which is Christ the Lord, and since he is given to them and they to him they can, by faith, offer a pure and holy offering unto God for their sins. Men can only offer what they have, but if we have Christ we have all things. We do not offer our self-righteousness, but ask mercy through Christ for our sins as the publican did. We do not look to the rugged cross, but to the punishment, the suffering and opposition which Christ bore on the rugged cross for us, and we are told to offer the fruits of our lives. Where do we get those fruits? Out of or from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. Christ told his disciples that no man cometh to the Father but by him. Also that no man cometh unto the Son except the Father which sent me draw him. All of this seems to make it plain that the Lord's people have nothing to offer for sin but Christ the Son of the living God who suffered on the rugged cross. "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling." He that hath not the Son hath not life. They cannot offer him but only offer what they have, their own works which are filthy rags. Perhaps I should stop this, but there was Noah who was a preacher of righteousness. He was a preacher of God's own righteousness, and not his own. He was given animals in the ark to offer up to God. They were put in the ark for that purpose. As the Lord's people are all made kings and priests unto God, what offering as priests can they give back to God but Christ Jesus who was given unto them? I will close here for some one to better answer the question, "What do we offer?" E. G. WEBB.

(In response to the question asked by brother Webb, "What do we offer?" we are in thorough accord with him that there is nothing that we can offer as a sacrifice for sin, but we are reminded of the language used by the apostle Paul in his epistle to the church at Rome where he said, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Paul also wrote to the Hebrews saying, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." If we are what we profess to be we believe we will desire to give thanks unto God and to praise his great and blessed name. The psalmist asked, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" and then declared "I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord." The best we can do is to offer thanksgiving and praise to God for the manifold blessings which he so bountifully bestows upon us, and this can only be done when he gives us of his blessed Spirit. Brother Webb informs us that he is approaching the age of eighty-five and has been much alone of late years. We thank him for his contribution and pray that our heavenly Father may richly bless him all the remaining days of his sojourn here below. If others have a mind to answer this question more fully, brother Webb will appreciate it. R. L. D.)

HAVE YOU HEARD THE CALL, FOLLOW ME? IF SO, THEN FOLLOW HIM.

Thinking perhaps it might be of interest to some, I have a desire to set forth at least some of the fundamental principles of the christian religion, and I shall, of course, base my opinion on the teachings of the Bible as I understand the same to teach, together with my own experiences if indeed I have any. We find through the Scriptures, even from the beginning of time, that God has a people. We are unable to tell just who they are except by their deeds and way of living while here in this present world, which is, after all, the only mark of identification left on record whereby we may be able to identify them. God designated such people as his sheep. They were lost out in a dark and cold world, with no shepherd to guide, protect and care for them. The old prophets away back in days gone by began to prophesy that a Savior was coming to redeem them, and a little later on he entered into the world: the announcement being made by the angels singing that glorious old hymn to the shepherds, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." He made his entrance on a silent night, when all was calm and all was bright. There was the Holy Infant so tender and mild. He was sleeping in heavenly peace. He came into this world for a specific purpose, it being to save his people — not only for eternity — but from the wickedness of this present world. He never did, nor will he ever call them or cause them to hear his voice, "follow me," and then leave them just as they were before. He makes an entirely different character out of the subjects of his grace: to all those whom he chooses to call. Now the question arises, why are some made to hear his voice and others are not? That question never has nor ever will be satisfactorily answered this side of the great beyond. No, that will have to

wait until the mist that dims our present knowledge shall be dissolved by the blazing sunlight of eternal day. There are some, of course, who apparently understand all these deep mysteries, but for me, give me faith and hope. It is true there are times when we feel like rising to the heights in our praise and adoration to our God and exclaim like one of old, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," but in a short while you feel to be so far, far away from him until it appears he is gone forever. So then we must conclude that we are only living on faith and hope, but thank God for that happy hope.

When Christ was about thirty years of age he went to the river Jordan to be baptized by John, after which he spent a few years teaching his disciples things to do and the things not to do. By and by he was then carried to the cross where he made the supreme sacrifice for all those whom his Father had given him. He was carried to the newly made tomb where a heavy stone was sealed around the entrance so that his body could not be removed. Soon afterwards the earth began to tremble and shake and he became our risen Lord. After approximately forty days from the resurrection he led his disciples out a short distance from Jerusalem and gave the promise there that the Holy Ghost should remain and comfort his disciples and also would be in his church. Hence, we find from this lesson that the Holy Spirit is to-day operating within the hearts of men, women, boys and girls, causing them to feel something burning within their breasts, and causing them to see their lost and ruined condition, and they are made to cry unto the Master, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Then it is that they begin to hear the voice coming from above, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." You then lose all love for the things you used to love and you begin to love the things you used to hate. Yes, you feel like saying, "Let worldly minds the world pursue, it has no charms for me. Once I admired its trifles too, but grace has set me free." To all those who have had similar experiences let me say this; your Christ is coming again, and before him shall be gathered all nations of the earth, the righteous and the unrighteous, and he shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth his sheep from his goats, and he shall set the sheep on his right hand but the goats on the left. And the King shall say unto them on his right hand, "Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me." Then shall the righteous answer him saying, Lord, when saw we thee under such awful conditions? "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." But to those on his left hand he will say, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." If, therefore, there be any passages of scripture that are plain and understandable, it is certainly the above. They are scriptures that must not and cannot be taken away from their clear meaning. If we undertake to mystify such plain teachings of God, there is a woe placed upon us. I verily believe the greatest joy coming to the human heart is when you are blessed to render service to others who are in need, to love and be loved is all we have left. Try it, won't you? To all those who have such experiences as I have endeavored to relate, let me say this: Some day you will be carried away on the

wings of a Saviors' love, where the troubles of this wicked world will bother you no more. No, we will not have to say good-bye to our soldier to see him no more, nor to our loved ones who are so rapidly passing on into the great beyond. There will be no more sorrow, no more pain, no more heartache, nor more death, but all will be peace and joy forever and we will forever be with the Lord. May God, therefore, bless us to think on these things and give us grace sufficient to live a life of service, for surely we will not pass this way but once, there are no roads returning. There are many about us today who are sick and in prison; they are naked and standing alone before the great white throne of God with their hearts bleeding on account of sorrow that has come into their homes. Is there not something we can do to lighten their burden? Yes, there is something the true child of God does do. He remembers that God's word teaches him for inasmuch as ye have done these things unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me, and he is looking forward to hearing the Master's voice, enter thou into the joys of our Lord. May he bless us all to be more tolerant in our views, and put in practice more of the principles of pure christianity; the things that really mean something worth while, while here in this present world. This is my prayer for Christ's sake. Amen. A. C. OWENS.

827-47th Place, Birmingham, Ala.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Ever since receiving the January issue of the *Signs* I have felt impressed to write to you, but realizing my unworthiness and my incapability of writing anything of value I have put it off, but as the impression lingers I have decided to make the effort. I think the whole of the January number was unusually good, and especially do I wish to thank and commend you for your timely editorial on the cause of trouble in our churches. Having had some real experience as to the trouble visiting preachers can and do cause, it struck a responsive chord in my heart, and after reading and rereading it several times I just feel that I want to say amen to what you said. A few years ago a traveling minister, whom we had every reason to believe to be in good standing with the churches, came to our city and we all opened our hearts and homes to him. He took up his abode with us and stayed for a year or more, just visiting around among the churches, and for our pains we had our little church torn all to pieces. The peace and fellowship which we had so much enjoyed was all torn up and it took years to overcome this feeling instilled within the hearts of some of our members. In short, he tried to make the whole church over after a pattern of his own. I am not objecting to traveling ministers as a whole for we have had some lovely brethren visit us whom we enjoyed, and felt to profit by their preaching. I feel that you will be interested to know that our little church is thriving and growing under the leadership of our much esteemed pastor, Elder W. D. Griffin. We have a lovely band of brethren and sisters who, without an exception, look forward to our meeting days as the one bright spot on our otherwise dark horizon. We all with one accord meet together with no other motive but an eye single to the glory of God and the joy of meeting each other. We have had several additions recently of young people which makes us rejoice in the fact that He will not leave himself without a witness. I feel that you will rejoice with us as we are all members of the same body, and one member cannot suffer without affecting the whole body, and when one member has cause to rejoice, likewise the whole body rejoices with them. Oh! how sweet is this love and fellowship between the Lord's people. How we should prize it above all earthly possessions for it is not earthly but cometh from above. The world did not give

it and neither can it take it away. If there ever was a time more than another when the church should thank and praise the Lord for his goodness and mercy it is in these dark and trying days, when it seems, in fact it is sure, we have no other source to look to, but the one that said, "no weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper." We know that at the present time the outlook is gloomy, but of whom shall we be afraid? Every worldly denomination may unite as one brotherhood and think to usher in the millenium, and the "big three" as they call themselves may meet in conference and plan for a world peace, but God's people can rest in the sweet assurance that the Great Three who met in council before the world was ever spoken into existence have the plans already made and there is no shadow of doubt but they will come to pass according to the divine will of our heavenly Father. When we are enabled by an eye of faith to look beyond the trials and cares of this world with all of its heartbreaking scenes which our natural minds cannot fathom, and are made to trust in his promises and can rely on the hope that is given us that all of these (however horrible they may appear to our feeble understanding) are included in the all things that work together for good, then we can be still and know that he is God and hath delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver and we trust he will yet deliver. I am so thankful for the *Signs of the Times* and the spirit in which it is conducted. May the Lord continue his mercies to you and the Associate Editors and all the good writers is my prayer.

EFFIE EDWARDS.

We wish to thank our sister for her lovely letter. We are glad to have her bear witness to the truth as set forth in our New Year's Greeting. The good news she reports will cause the hearts of our readers to rejoice. To know that God is continuing his work of grace in the hearts of poor sinners and adding to the visible church such as he will own and have to be saved doctrinally, is cause for gratitude and thankfulness to him. This is the kind of news we like to send forth throughout the land. Her encouraging words regarding the *Signs* are also very much appreciated. R. L. D.)

Route 1, Box 111, Evington, Va.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am sending an article written by my son which I feel is the truth and would be glad to see it published in the *Signs* if you have space for it. Your brother I hope,

N. W. DOSS.

I am writing a few thoughts that are bearing on my mind just as they come to my mind. It is the language of the wise man, Solomon, when he was speaking concerning an all-wise God. One that spake and it was done, commanded and it stood fast saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." In the third chapter of Eccl. verse fifteen it reads, "That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past." I have been told that the meaning of this scripture is, that what has been brought to pass in the world is past, and has to come to pass again, but I do not see it that way. As I understand it the God of heaven put these words in the wise man's mouth with such power behind it he could not hold them but spake them. At God's time and way, which he saw with his all-seeing eye when he looked down through the chambers of eternity before the world was, all things were naked before his eyes, everything that has been, that is now and the things that are to come from the rising of the sun until the going down of the same, and from the rivers to the end of the earth. To my mind comes all things from the smallest thing on earth to the largest thing in the sea. This God is not man but a God of power, and when he looked down through time that was to

come according to his will and purpose, he saw naked before his eyes all things he had thought. His power is above all, over all, in all and controls all. This is the power which this great God looked with when he saw these things which were to come. There is no power on earth, in heaven or in any other place that can hinder or delay the things which God saw before he laid the foundation of the world. The scripture says he made the world and hung it on nothing, and what is holding this world up is nothing other than the power of this great, all-wise and all-powerful God which is from everlasting to everlasting. I believe the life of all men was naked before his eyes. "All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the Lord weigheth the spirits." Prov. 16-2. "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Prov. 16-4. I believe the Lord saw the ways of all men before he created Adam from the dust. I believe our race is laid before us, both the elect and the non-elect and I wish to be understood in what I believe concerning these things. We all have a nature and God gave it to us, and the nature of man is after the things of the world. All men have this nature both the elect and the non-elect. Some have a better nature than others which was also given by God. This is all the non-elect ever have or will ever know anything about, but God's humble poor, which is the elect, after being born again have another principle which is of Jesus Christ and God gave them that. The principle of man is all alike in any sense. I see it as the rivers of water which start on the mountain and run down hill with their own nature. This is the nature God gave the waters. God has a purpose in the waters running down hill for he made an ocean for them to run into. All water runs down hill with its own power but it takes a forcing power to make it run up hill. All men, both the elect and the non-elect are after the things that will perish with its using, such things as silver, gold and pleasures of the world. This is the nature that God gave man and he had a purpose in doing this for he put the pleasures here and put the people here to do them. The whole Adamic race is following after things of this kind with its own nature and the power of man which God gave man, and God had a purpose in doing this. God had a choice among his people which he made in himself and he calls them out at his time and with his power which turns them about and makes them hate the things they once loved and love the things they once hated. They no longer care for the things of the world. When God calls one of his choice out of the world he is bound to go for he has fulfilled the space that God has allotted to him in the world. There is no place among the worldly people for them for they have come to the path which God made for them. They are led in another path which is unto life everlasting, led by the hand of God and kept by his power, no longer trusting in man but trusting in God. God has a purpose in his beloved ones walking in the path of darkness for when they are brought in the light they feel the need of a Savior. If they had never walked in darkness, after the things of the world what purpose would God have had in sending his Son into this troublesome world to suffer, bleed and die? Jesus not only knew how much of the debt he was to pay for his people to set them free, but I believe he knew every evil thought any of his beloved ones would have. He came to this earth to be hung on the cross and redeem his people. He redeemed them, paid the whole price, leaving nothing for them to pay. It took his whole life to pay the cost that was against them. Nothing was lacking, nothing left over which proves to me that God had a purpose in the care of his people and their thoughts, for he sent his Son prepared to exactly pay the debt for his chosen people alone, leaving the non-elect

just where they were, fulfilling the purpose of God, preparing themselves for the eternal destruction which God prepared for them before the world began, and had it not been for the grace of God we would have been following after them. God had a purpose in making this choice. He had a place just the right size for those he hated. He made a difference in his people on earth by putting laws in their minds and writing them in their hearts which leads them in ways they never knew. The difference is made by the hand of God through his blessed Son, Jesus Christ, who has been merciful to us by doing the things for us which we could not do for ourselves. He did it willingly because he loved this people. He laid down his life for them and rose for them because he loved them. This blessed people do not have to go anywhere except where our blessed Jesus has already gone, and he has opened a perfect way for all of his loved ones, and this same Jesus is coming again and bring the spirits of all of his beloved ones that sleep. It matters not how we may depart this life, when he comes again he will come with great power intrusted in him, and call with the power which will open the graves or go to the bottom of the deep, and the power of his word will bring the same body up that went down, leaving all weakness and shortcoming in the earth. It goes down in weakness and it will be raised in power; it goes down in dishonor and it will be raised in honor. It will not be as some say only the spirit or the form of something. I will not have that for it is no good to me, but I have an humble hope in my breast that God gave me that my body will come forth in the likeness of my blessed Savior which died. I hope for me and I am looking for my mother to come in his likeness. I am looking for my two sons which God called from their mother's arms. I am not looking to see my mother in her body of weakness and old age, neither do I look for my two sons to come forth infants like they went down, but I want to see all my loved ones the same size and all looking alike. I want to be raised in the likeness of Jesus and satisfied. What more could anyone ask for? I do not wish for any more and this is my hope, and all I could wish for in the world to come is to be satisfied and be forever with Him in a world of happi- that has no end. An humble brother in hope and eternal life.

ALBERT A. DOSS.

El Dorado, Ark.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: "The Way" written by sister Maggie Lee Hayes in January issue was so true and comforting to my poor soul that I must say, amen. She has a wonderful gift. I hope to see more of her poems in the *Signs of the Times*. I am sending my renewal for the paper as I do not want to miss a single copy. I do so much enjoy reading the good articles from our dear people scattered over this fair land of ours. I have been a member of the Predestinarian Primitive Baptists for many years. Their love and fellowship means more than all this world to me. Their doctrine is true to live by and the only one to die in. This song tells my experience:

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see."

May God bless you to carry on in 1945. Your unworthy sister,

(Mrs. MARTHA MURPHY.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

S. F. Buckner, Okla., $1; Sgt. J. F. Simpson, Overseas, $1; Mrs. B. Haan, Wash., $5; Mrs. D. S. Fox, N. J., $2; Mrs. M. V. Sizemore, Ill., $2; Mrs. A. M. Hall, Me., $1.

EDITORIAL

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THE RISEN CHRIST

There is no room for quibbling about there being a resurrection of the dead. Opinions we have about when it is and how it is, but we have no right in the world to an opinion about there being a resurrection of the dead. Soon we are to go the way of all the earth. Erelong the enemy death shall come our way. The world of God's children are interested in the matter. It is not something to be dealt with in a light manner, and brushed aside. It is claiming our attention because it concerns us in a weightier way than ever before. Our loved ones are being killed in every manner known to modern warfare. We have seen them come into this material world as human beings, and grow into manhood and womanhood. They — themselves, human beings, flesh and blood folks—are near and dear to us. Our hope is that they are in that glorious number chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began. In every person there is a hope of seeing again those that have gone before. To those that have tasted of the graciousness of God that hope is of more concern than to others. It is a hope made alive by the presence of a living being. On this we desire to treat and to give our reason for the hope that is in us. (1 Peter 3:15) Some hopes are good ones, some not so good. Some hopes are based on creature effort, some on God's work. Some hope that they are not deceived in what God has done, others hope they will hold out to the end. Now what is our hope? Often-times we have talked it over with you, but let us go over the ground once again. Salvation is the theme of the people of God. The angel confirmed Joseph in his fear. Jesus shall save his people from their sins. I want to affirm and stand in the face of all opposition that his salvation is not for spirits, but that it is for people. I do not know of any people but the kind that roams this earth. If there is any inspired description of people that would lead us to think that the people in bible days are any different than they were in the morning of time or down to now I certainly am not aware of it. In the kindest way I want to affirm that the object of all the sufferings of Christ was the salvation of sinners. My hope of heaven and immortality bids me reject every doctrine that is not centered around that thought. There is not (and I believe that all my writing bears me out) a thing else to preach. There is not any middle ground to occupy. Spirits did not have any promise of salvation. People did. I hope that none believe any less than this, but believe what brethren may, here is where I desire to stand. Moreover, I have never expressed myself on the new birth. I know that two and probably more outstanding thoughts prevail among our people. I know that good, spiritual-minded brethren have been on each side. Generally speaking, our people have differed on it in a brotherly manner. I am glad of that and I do hope that I may express myself so clearly and emphatically that none will ever call in question where I stand. At the same time I do hope to express my views in such a manner, that even though they are rejected, that I will be looked over and watched after by the

brethren. This theme of salvation was ever in purpose. (2 Tim. 1:9) It is manifested in time. We have a direct declaration of it from heaven. (Matt. 1:21) It concerns people, men and women. To come into that kingdom concerns people, men and women. There is not a vestige of proof that any thing but men and women was meant by the angel. If that is not what is meant, why did he say people? It was one of the same kind of people that came to the Savior. If Nichodemus was not a man what was he? Was it not a man that Jesus had under consideration? Was it not a man he was talking to? If there had been two hundred, could it not have been said a crowd of people came? And is it not people that are to be saved? To me, Jesus told him that people, men and women, such as you are, Nichodemus, are the object of my coming to earth. To get into my kingdom ye must be born again. Had he been born once? To be sure he had. He had been born into this material world. That made one birth, that was one time. Now to get into my kingdom you must be born again. Up until now it (salvation) has to do with people, men and women. I am not given to brevity but here is where I desire to stay. The Savior said men, the angel said people, the Savior said sinners. This cannot be explained. Nothing needs explanation that is self-explanatory. It is men and women that are saved by the blood of Jesus. It is men and women that are born again. Now we come to the resurrection of the dead. These men and women that were saved by the blood of Jesus, and that were born into his kingdom, die. No way for them to escape death. Brethren, at this time I believe it was just such characters as you and me that were under consideration by the angel. I believe it was the same kind (as though there was any other kind) being addressed by the Savior when he was talking to Nichodemus. It is the same characters, the same kind, flesh and blood, that are dead. We speak of them as dead men or women, before this we have referred to them as saved men and women or as that man or woman is born of the Spirit. Will the dead arise? The best answer I know to that is that they have. This cannot be evaded, this cannot be compromised, an opinion cannot be had about this. If the plain, simple, inspired writing of the Bible does not mean that Christ arose, what does it mean? Inspiration said he did, but let us suppose that the account of his resurrection does not mean that he rose. Very well, now just to which of us *uninspired* fellows is to be entrusted the job of telling *what* it does mean? Personally I believe that Jesus rose from the tomb. I think it fair and brotherly to tell you while on this particular phase of the subject that it was a flesh, blood, bone body that rose. It had, while pulsating with life, gotten weary, (John 4:6) my body does the same. It had gotten hungry (Mark 11:12) mine does the same. He got thirsty on the cross, (John 19:28) I am sure I would have too. He died as we must die. We know that the children of God must all die, a natural, corporeal death. We did not partake of flesh and blood because he did, but he partook of both in order to become like unto us. Would it not be the most fantastic work palmed off on the children of God if Christ became like them, (that is, was a partaker of flesh and blood) his fleshly body rise and theirs be forever and forever consigned to the power of the grave? This may be true but if it is I have not so learned Christ, but I desire to wait patiently and if I am wrong may God teach me right, and in the meantime teach me forbearance towards those that differ. If this taking of flesh and blood does not mean anything perhaps it does not mean anything to be a partaker of divine nature. If I lose the one am I not in danger of losing the other, and thus becoming a nonentity? Upon what foundation can we rest? If we are partakers of both flesh and blood and of the divine nature, and

we are to lose the one how do we know we would not lose the other? What purpose was served in Jesus taking flesh and blood? Was it not in some grand and glorious way connected with the salvation of the children of God? In what way? *In the salvation of the children of God.* Primarily his coming in the flesh was for the destruction of death and the power of death and him that had that power (Heb. 2:14) while like them he overcame. No matter how low we get we shall overcome. *Any place, thing, event or condition* that *ever* comes against the children of God was met by Jesus Christ. Perhaps some would say if he met it and overcame it why must we follow? It is so good to follow when the way is open and clear, and our Leader has become the way, but we could never have gone forward alone. Going alone and meeting the things Christ endured and suffered for us would have been puishment for us, but *following* is not a punishment but a blessing. Do the dead rise? Christ rose, was he dead? Now the next question has the kernel of the whole thing in it. Do flesh and blood bodies die? They do. Then the dead rise. Progress in material things is to be desired, but brethren I cannot go beyond this. I may be wrong, yes, but if wrong about this, wrong about all. Sinners are the beneficiaries of salvation. He came, lived, died and arose for them. Then the dead do rise. What is wrong, brethren, with that? I must stand on this, it is my experience. This is what I hope I learned on the plains of southeast Missouri more than twenty years ago. I was alone and away from all big preachers. Up until this time I had not known the least thing and I did not care *anything* about Old Baptists. I was reared by them and among them but I had as well been anywhere else for the good it did me. By the grace of God I have been brought thus far in his kingdom if in it at all. By his providence I have been preserved thus far. I have no apology to make for contending for salvation by grace. In purpose chosen before the world, manifested in time as men and women, salvation saves them in body, soul and spirit. Soon, soon I shall be called away. Brethren, my hope is that my body, that sits here at my desk will rise. I have felt that some *want* to think I have changed, but I have not in the least. I believe that Christ rose from the dead, that he is now at the right hand of the Majesty on high. In connection with the dead rising I must say that I believe in the second coming of Christ. As with the resurrection I believe it too to be in the future. Let us listen to Paul, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." In the same manner and degree that we believe Jesus rose *even so* do we believe God will bring them that sleep with him. Somebody is going to be alive when he comes. Their being alive will not prevent those that sleep. In some way, beyond my power of description, they have gone on, else how could he bring them with him? In this the dead shall rise first. In some way the child of God does not die. Here is ample evidence that in some sense they go on to God at death. The evidence is just as strong that he or she has been consigned to the grave. At the second coming they are to be brought from heaven *and are to rise from the grave.* How long between the rising of the dead and we that are alive being changed I do not know. I do know that it is to be. We that are alive will be changed. I must say it is us, the men and women, children of God that are to be changed. The two groups (those that have died and those still alive) shall be caught up together to meet the Lord. Those that died will then be complete, those still living shall be complete. All shall be together and with the Lord. This is what the apostle commands us to comfort one another with. W. D. G.

WHY DARKNESS BEFORE LIGHT

A great variety of questions and numerous requests find their way to the Editor's desk, and it is not always easy to answer or comply with them. In attempting to answer the foregoing question sent in by brother W. J. Kimbro, of Woodward, Iowa, we shall undertake to show that this is the order in which God has planned it, and his purpose in so doing evidently was to cause us to properly evaluate things in this world of sin and sorrow. God has in his infinite and allwise purpose set one thing over against another. Therefore we have the negative versus the positive, darkness and light, death and life, evil and good, cold and heat, adversity and prosperity, sorrow and happiness, hate and love. We could continue with many such examples, but these should suffice for our readers to understand our trend of thought. Jesus said, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." The reason the world was praying and yearning for peace was because it had been experiencing the horrors and hell of war, which were the very opposite of peace. With regard to the natural creation we read in the record of divine truth that "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep." The secret of God's creation was hid in the bosom of darkness. It was concealed from all mankind, so Job could not answer God when he asked him where he was when the foundations of the earth were laid. It should also be remembered that "Secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children." After God created the heaven and the earth, had darkness remained utter confusion would have prevailed, but in order that his wisdom and power might be made manifest he said, "Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night." Light revealed that which God had created or made. It is in the darkness of the womb that the great mystery of conception and formation of life takes place, but the birth brings into outward manifestation that which God created in darkness. It is in the bosom of death, so to speak, that nature germinates and life springs forth into being. David said, "night unto night showeth knowledge," but it is the day that uttereth speech and declares that "There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." John said, "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." The Psalmist declared "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom." When we are given to see the handywork of his hand we can in truth proclaim that it all declares the glory of God. God not only created the heaven and the earth, but he made all things that in them is, for we are told that "all things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." Therefore "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." We may sometimes undertake to classify and separate what seems to us the good from the bad, but we read that when God had finished his work of creation he "saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." We understand this to mean that everything that he had made was good for the purpose for which he made it and, therefore, we firmly believe that the ultimate end of all things will be to glorify

God and to lift the name of Jesus on high. Both the Old and the New Testament writers agree in substance "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. 2:-10-11. Of necessity this must be true, otherwise God's sovereignty would become a farce, and Jesus, his Son, would no longer be, Lord of lords, and King of kings. The words of the prophet Isaiah must forever remain true, for it was God who was speaking by and through him when he said: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it. I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." Again we quote him: "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things." The Lord also said by the mouth of this same prophet, "Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy." The very next verse, however, gives comforting assurance to the hearts of true Israel, for it declares that "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shall condemn." God is indeed the refuge and strength, and a very present help in trouble to his people.

The great artist who first paints a dark background for the portrait which he attempts to make as realistic as life itself, must have a touch of the Divine who first created Adam who by transgression became the man of sin, which has encompassed the world in darkness with all manner of evil, but who also at the same time determined to display in the person of his Son the embodiment of all that is righteous, holy and good. The first man is declared to be of the earth, earthy; while the second man is the Lord from heaven. From a spiritual point of view, the first man is without form and void and darkness covers the face of the deep, for we are told that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." In writing to the church at Rome, Paul told them "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." And he concludes by saying, "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." This man of flesh is so completely in darkness that it is said, "the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." He cannot see or have any perception at all of the kingdom of God until he is born of the Spirit and thereby is made a new creature in Christ Jesus, and becomes a partaker of the divine nature. We read "in him (the Word) was life; and the life was the light of men," and this is the "true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." It is written "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." While this may apply in a special sense to the Gentile nations, we believe it is particularly applicable, experimentally, to every one of God's children who are quickened by his

mighty power and made to walk in newness of life. When they begin to tell of the dealings of the Lord with them, it is like it was with Jacob, who said, "He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness: he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." Peter in writing to "the strangers scattered throughout" various points, who were the "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father," told them among other things that they were "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." If we have ever been blest to sing "Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!) That saved a wretch like me" It was because we felt God had wrought a wondrous change in us and had opened our blind eyes and made us to see that salvation was not by works of righteousness which we could do, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." It was to such characters as these to whom Paul wrote, saying, "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." He goes on to say, "But we have this treasure (and what a wonderful treasure it is) in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." He says further for our comfort and consolation, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." These are wonderful things to us, and we believe they point the way of life as it is in Christ Jesus. At this point we feel to quote Hymn 1296, Beebe's Collection:

"A child of Jehovah, a subject of grace,
I'm of the seed royal—a dignified race;
An heir of salvation, redeemed with blood,
I'll own my relation, my Father is God!

He loved me of old, and he loveth me still;
Before the creation he gave me by will,
A portion worth more than the Indies of gold,
Which cannot be wasted, nor mortgaged, nor sold.

He gave me a Surety, a covenant Head,
To live in my name, and to die in my stead;
He gave me a righteousness wholly divine,
And viewed all the merits of Jesus as mine.

He gave a Preceptor infallibly wise,
And treasures of grace to be sent in supplies;
Yea, all that I ask for, my Father hath given
To help me on earth, and to crown me in heaven.

He gave me a will to accept what he gave,
Though I was averse to his purpose to save;
He wrote in his will my repentance and faith,
And all my enjoyments for life and for death.

My trials and sorrows, my conflicts and cares,
The spirit of pray'r and the answer of pray'rs,
The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will.

My cross and my crown are both will'd by my God,
He swore to his will, and then sealed it with blood;
'Tis proved by the Spirit the witness within,
'Tis mine to inherit, I'll glory begin."

Many, many years ago when our eyes had been opened to see God's glorious truth, we had presented to us a booklet containing a sermon by the late J. C. Philpot, of London, England, under the caption of "Winter Afore Harvest," and we shall long remember what a feast of fat things it was to our hungry soul. We had passed through the coldness of winter, with all of its privations and discomforts, but the heavens appeared to open and, lo, the winter was past, the rain was over and gone. The flowers appeared on the earth: the time of the singing of birds had come, and we were enabled to rejoice with joy exceeding and

full of glory to God and to praise him for his wonderful works to the children of men.

It was not by chance that the Legal (dark) Dispensation came first, but rather according to divine appointment. The law came by Moses and its object was to manifest the awfulness of sin. It was a plumb to show how crooked and perverse human nature was. In its scales humanity was to be weighed and found wanting and there was none that did good according to its standards. Therefore when "the Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God," He found that "they are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one," Paul says, "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." He goes on to say further, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." The law condemned; it showed the necessity for Christ to come, and John tells us that "of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Never was such a picture presented as that of God manifest in the flesh. There was no efficacy in the blood which for centuries was offered under the law; it only had a shadow of good things to come. Those sacrifices could never put away sin, but they pointed to Christ, of whom it is said, "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." The law is our schoolmaster unto Christ, and what a wonderful and blessed privilege it is to know him whom to know is life eternal. Only by a new birth can this be brought about, for Jesus said to Nichodemus, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." If we know nothing of the slavery and fear of sin, neither shall we know anything of the freedom and joy that is found only in Christ. If we are not deceived, we know something of that darkness which is of the flesh, which is full of envy, strife and jealousy, which in turn is said to be as cruel as the grave. John said, "If we say that we have fellowship with him (Jesus Christ), and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." He also says, "Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth. He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes." I John 2: 7-11. If the light that is in us be darkness, behold how great is that darkness. How sad it is to see the true light obscured by the darkness of men, to see good brethren yield to the whims of the flesh. Perhaps when they are converted from the error of their way they will see the true Light in all of his effulgent glory and beauty and will be ashamed of their ways. It is said that men

love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil, and while we cannot understand the whys and wherefores, it is enough for us to be still and know that he is God, "For the scripture saith unto Pharoah, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." Rom. 9:17. If the ultimate end of all darkness and evil is to glorify God in its destruction, whose holy and divine presence will illuminate the eternal city and whose righteousness will cover the earth, it will be enough, and may God be praised, both now and forevermore, world without end. Amen. R. L. D.

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, it has pleased our heavenly Father to call home our faithful and beloved deacon and treasurer, brother S. F. SEABOLT, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that in the death of brother Seabolt the church has lost a most faithful defender of the doctrine of God our Savior. He was ever ready to do anything for the church, and his home was ever open to the Baptists. He was indeed a true deacon and fulfilled his duties as deacon and treasurer faithfully. He is greatly missed by his church and friends.

RESOLVED, that we bow in humble submission to God's will, believing he doeth all things well.

RESOLVED, that a copy of these resolutions be sent to the bereaved family, a copy be spread upon our church book and a copy sent to the *Signs*. Done by order of Saints Rest Church on Saturday before the first Sunday in May, 1945.

(Elder) C. B. TEAGUE, Moderator
(Mrs.) J. R. HARDY, Clerk

OBITUARIES

MRS. SARAH JANE BRUCE was born in Webster Co., Ky. Aug. 3. 1864, and the Lord having served his purpose with her on earth called her home to himself Nov. 29, 1944. She was married to Marquis A. Dorris, May 25, 1880. To that union were born four children. After the death of brother Dorris she was married in 1897 to brother Richard Bruce. To this union were born three children. Surviving sister Bruce are four children: Mrs. Annie Smith, Providence, Ky., Mrs. Dellie Bruce, Madisonville, Ky., Mrs. Ray Huett, Los Angeles, Cal., Mr. Parkins Bruce, Pontiac, Mich., also twenty-seven grandchildren and a number of great-grandchildren. Her death came at her home on Barrett St., Providence, Ky. All was done for her that human hands could do in this life when her Master called "child come home" to enjoy the realities of a home prepared for his children where trouble, sickness and death will be no more. She was a consistent member of the Primitive Baptist Church, Providence, Ky., filling her seat when possible. Her pastor was called to speak words of comfort to the sorrowing loved ones, after which her remains were laid to rest in her family grave yard to await the morn of the resurrection. Written by her pastor. (Elder) W. T. CLAYTON.

S. F. SEABOLT was born March 15, 1886 in Cherokee Co., Ga., and departed this life April 29, 1945 in Dallas, Texas. He was first married to Miss Virginia Pifer and to this union were born three children, One died in infancy and two daughters survive him, Mrs. Sam Peacock, Clebourne, Texas and Mrs. Clay Ward, Kansas City, Mo., there are also three grandchildren. His wife predeceased him April 29, 1941. He united with Saints Rest Church in Dallas, Texas, in May, 1939. For many years he was a member of the Missionary Church but became dissatisfied with their doctrine and practice, and having a sweet experience of grace he sought and found a home with the dear old Baptists and was baptized by the late Elder J. R. Hardy. Later he was united in marriage to Mrs. Anna Roberts who was also a member of Saints Rest Church. In the passing of brother Seabolt the church has lost a great pillar. He was a man of high character, strict integrity and an humble christian gentleman. He was faithful to every trust imposed in him, a man of more than ordinary intelligence and well informed in the scriptures both as to doctrine and practice. He was always ready to assist the church in any way his services were needed. His home was truly an Old Baptist home and he was loved by all who knew him. He will be missed by his many friends, the little band of Baptists where he was known, his children and grand children but most of all by his lonely companion. He was a kind and indulgent father, a loving and dutiful husband. Elders C. B. Teague and O. C. Lee spoke words of comfort to the bereaved and then his body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Heath, Texas, to await the coming of our blessed Master to gather his jewels home. There was a large congregation present and many floral offerings which showed the esteem in which he was held. May the Lord comfort the mourners

and help us to emulate his example. Written by request and by one who loved him for the truth's sake. (Elder) W. O. BEENE.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Soldier Creek Association is appointed to be held with Zion Church, Mayfield Graves Co., Ky., October 12, 13 and 14, 1945. The meeting-house of old red brick is located on 7th St. in Mayfield. Highways from all directions lead to Mayfield. Those coming by train from the north make connection with the I. C. R. R. at Paducah, Ky. Those coming from the south will make connection with the I.C. R.R. at Fulton Ky. Those arriving early may notify Elder O. W. Perkins in advance of this date, Route 2, Mayfield, Ky. or brother S. A. Crass, Route 6, Mayfield, Ky. for conveyance, or to my address as given below. WM. T. CHESTER, Church Clerk., 113 S. 12th St., Murray, Ky.

An all-day meeting is scheduled to be held with the New Vernon Church, Howells, N. Y., on Friday, October 12, 1945. A cordial welcome awaits all. R. LESTER DODSON.

The Western Association of Primitive Baptist faith and order will convene with the Hopewell Church, Dale Co., Alabama, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 19, 20, 21, 1945. It is located five miles west of Ozark, Ala. on the A.C.L.R.R. All primitive Baptist ministers, brethren and sisters are invited to be with us. Elder J. J. Collins, Geneva, Ala. is pastor of Hopewell Church, and G. M. Taylor, Route 1, Ariton, Ala. Church Clerk.

(Elder) F. A. COLLINS, Moderator
(Elder) J. J. COLLINS, Clerk

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Indiantown Church at Powellville, Md. on October 24 and 25, 1945. A cordial invitation is extended to lovers of the truth and to ministers of our faith and order who are in the habit of meeting with us. Those coming by rail or bus will be met in Salisbury on Tuesday afternoon before the meeting. Those who can conveniently do so will please notify George F. Adkins, Pittsville, Md., as to what train or bus they will arrive on. GEORGE F. ADKINS, Church Clerk.

PLEASE REMEMBER

1—To renew your subscription promptly when due, if possible. The date on your wrapper cover will show to when you have paid.

2—That when your remittance reaches us before the 15th of the month, credit will be shown with the next issue of the paper, otherwise it cannot be shown until the second month following. This also applies to changes of address.

3—That notices of Special Meetings should be sent to us at least thirty days in advance of the month in which the meeting is to be held.

If our readers will be kind enough to observe the foregoing suggestions they will aid us very materially in getting out the paper.

R. L. D.

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each 1st Sunday, 11:00 a. m. and Saturday before.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday.
AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before, ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a. m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopewell Church, Ozark Ala., meets each 4th Sunday, 11 a. m. J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Beulah Primitve Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canda, California.

Pleasant Valley Church, Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc.)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. E. M. TACKETT,
J. S. HUNNICUTT, Pastors.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY
Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue. Take elevator to second floor.
11.00 a. m. 1:30 p. m.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.
(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.
C. W. BOND, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 a. m.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.
W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. G. E. Rushing, co-pastor.
C. B. TEAGUE, Pastor.

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets third Sunday in each month at 11:00 a. m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Old School Baptist meetings are held every fourth Sunday at Civic Club, 1419 N. Shepherd St., Houston, Texas. Preaching by Elder W. O. Beene.
(Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Danville Primitve Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before. Bradley Road, Danville, Va.
W. R. DODD, Pastor.

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meet each first Sunday 11 a.m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3032 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va. R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.
R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m. C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 113 RUTHERFORD, N. J., NOVEMBER, 1945. No. 11

A TRIBUTE TO ELDER LYTLE BURNS

How beautiful are the feet of they
  Who preach a peaceful theme;
Who bring glad tidings that won't decay
  That's neither myth nor dream.

A soldier of the cross each day,
  A watchman for the tower;
A hunter for the sheep that stray,
  A subject of God's power.

You've been a gift we'll ne'er forget
  From God's almighty hand;
You have a great example set,
  Your prestige is most grand.

My father spoke of your renown,
  Both natural and above;
You both were yoked and both were bound
  By God's eternal love.

We children three, that yet exist
  Praise God for such an one;
It is God's will that you persist
  Your noble race to run.

It was God's will that you should speak
  In Jesus' holy name,
Hold up the banner for the weak,
  The wounded, sick and lame.

You've served God's fold for fifty years
  In prayer and in song;
You've gone in woe and love and fears,
  Lest you might teach them wrong.

But never so did God allow
  The tempter to delude,
But kept you safe from then 'til now
  To feed His holy food.

You've marked your years to eighty-seven
  In joy and in woe;
There is a blissful home called heaven
  Where such true servants go.

Christ Jesus stands an open door,
  God calls you by His grace
To stay with Him forever more
  When you have won your race.

In nineteen hundred forty-five
  The thirteenth day of May,
To eighty-seven you arrive
  And may you longer stay.

May, fourteenth in forty-five
  I have a birthday too;
I will to fifty-two arrive
  And hope I'm one God foreknew.

When at the throne of God you bow,
  Your voice in anthems raise;
I beg just now, if you allow,
  Remember Maggie Lee Hayes.

MAGGIE LEE HAYES

Vernon, Ala.

CORRESPONDENCE

"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart."
Gen. 6:5-6.

I have been, for some reason, greatly impressed to write upon the above scripture, and that my mind might be relieved from this burden, I am making the attempt. I trust the impression is through the influence of the Spirit of God, and not the influence of Satan. My objective will be to reason from a scriptural standpoint that the Deity, the Supreme Power, the Authority over all things, whatsoever comes to pass, is not the character mentioned in the text — it repented him that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart — if I under-

stand what the word repentance, red, or repent implies or means.

In the Trinity there are three personalities in one Godhead — the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. They sometimes are called the three-in-one God. We want to deal first with the Father, and we will designate the Father, God over all. Jesus Christ, the Son, the second person in the Trinity said: "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all." John 10:29. "And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Col. 1:17. I understand God the Father is the first cause of all things, perfect in wisdom, perfect in knowledge and possesses all power. The inspired word of God warrants that statement. Now let us reason according to the testimony of inspiration. The first person in the Trinity, God the Father, is a spirit and eternal, also spiritually speaking, and in that spiritual Godhead existed perfection, all time and eternity, with every event of time, present in purpose, and not only so, but the cause, purpose and effect was also in that Holy Presence, in purpose. No present nor future in God's account, but one eternal *now*. No event of time that was embraced in that Holy Spiritual Trinity can fail, for it was as though it had already been, in God's account. God made the heaven and the earth and all things therein, made them for himself or to glorify him or for his own glory. I believe that everything, both great and small, both good and bad, as we term them, are doing just that — glorifying God. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." Rev. 4:11 "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." Gen. 1:31. Did that embrace the character of our text, that it repented God he had made good for the purpose they fulfilled? "Thus the heavens and earth were finished, and all the host of them." Gen. 2:1. That, to me, means finished in God's account or purpose, but surely will be manifested in time, according to purpose. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." "This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" Isaiah 14:24-26-27. Surely that eternal spiritual Godhead was not turned back nor disappointed in any of his purposes, "And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them." "Thus saith the Lord, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself." Isaiah 44:7 and 24. I am establishing by the inspired word of God, beyond a doubt, that God is a sovereign: "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." Isaiah 45.7. "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Prov. 16:4. "For I am the Lord, I change not: therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Mal. 3:6. "For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also. The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land." Psalms 95:3-5. "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it?" Numbers 23:19. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil,

neither tempteth he any man." James 1:13.

Let me say here, that I believe, as I understand God's word to teach, that this world in every phase is functioning according to the purpose of God, the eternal Father. There never has nor ever will be an evil thought or act committed in this world, but what was meant for good in God's purpose in thought or act. God cannot be tempted with evil, because the evil act of the creature was meant for good — good in God's account, and the evil spirit never influences one evil act that God had not meant for good. "Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee." Psalms 139:12.

Yes all things work together for good to them that love God. Surely nothing can work against them that love God (who fixed it that way), the same one who made all things for his own glory. Blessed thought, to me, the same eternal Father is on the throne now, this moment, and nothing has slipped or, gone wrong. I cannot conceive of the idea of the eternal Father being grieved or repenting in the manifestation of an event he ordered for good, unless there can be a grief that does not mean grief in our language, or a repentance that means pleasure. This eternal Father, the first person in the Godhead, has a will, according to the inspired word of God, and everything that is visible or invisible moves according to his will. (hear the inspired word) "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Daniel 4:35. "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Eph. 1:11. It seems to me this quotation is full of meaning. If inspired testimony of God is true, then the world cannot produce against his (God's) *will.* It seems we have brought sufficient testimonies that the first person in the Trinity, or Godhead, the eternal Father, cannot grieve nor repent and hold the throne — *God over all.*

Now let us look at the second person, or second character, in the Trinity, or Godhead, the Word. The Son is equal in spirit with the Father. We see this second person spoken of many times in the prophets, in types and shadows as though he was, yet he was not, only in the type. Let us mention just a few. "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good." Isaiah 7:14-15. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6. "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven." I Cor. 15:45 and 47. Yes a man from heaven, made like unto his brethren, had a heart, hands and feet. "For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined *before* to be done." Acts 4:28. Yes the counsel of God. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus." Matt. 1:21. "Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God." Heb. 10:5 and 7. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the word was God.

And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." John 1:1 and 14. Now we have a God-man in the world, said to be verily God and verily man, both divine and human, and thou shalt call his name Jesus. That is a command of God, the Father. "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:11. This is the manifestation of the statement made by the inspired prophet, behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son "and she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swadling clothes, and laid him in a manger." Luke 2:7. Yes a man child is born, begotten of God, made of a woman, made under the law, numbered with the transgressors. "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of his people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." Heb. 2:16-18. "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are yet without sin." Heb. 4:15. Yes the man Christ Jesus, the son of God, the Son, the first-born of the virgin Mary, God manifested in the flesh — had a heart, hands, and feet, in fact was a human being like you and me, subject to the things in this world that you and I are subject to, yet without sin. God, the Father, was with him, yea, in him. "For in him (the man Christ Jesus) dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Col. 2:9. Although he was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," (Isaiah 53:3). "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin." Isaiah 53:10. Oh listen to this God-man "as he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." Heb. 5:6-8. "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." Isaiah 63:9. Read Prov. 8:22 down embracing the 31st verse. Paul said, "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness: But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." That means, to me, that Jesus, the Son, was in that eternal spiritual Godhead, equal with the Father, yet the second person in the Trinity. Read again the first eight verses of the first chapter of John. There could be much more said, many more evidences brought that the Lord God, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, the first-born of the virgin Mary, the God man, possessed a heart, hands, and feet, was grieved at his heart, did repent. Oh! wonderful God of mercy, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let me say here that the grief and repentance spoken of in our text belongs to the God-man and not the God Father. In other words, it was the human that had a heart, that grieved, and the human that suffered, that repented, and not the Spirit of God, the eternal Father.

I feel that I have brought sufficient proofs from the inspiried word of God, to prove my objective that the great, invisible, heavenly Father over all things, perfect in wisdom and knowledge, possesses all power, works all things after the counsel of his own will, never has nor ever will grieve or repent, because of his own works. Some one may say it

was not his works, but man's that grieved him and made him to repent. If so, then he made the man wrong, for he made *man* for himself. Right now this is no mystery to me. I feel to hope that the spirit of that great God has directed my mind and held my pen. This is not written for controversy, but I hope to edify the body of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Church.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN

Box 654, Altus, Okla.

Geneva, Ala.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I notice that my subscription to the *Signs* has expired, therefore I am attaching herewith the necessary amount for an extension for another year. I have read it many years and dearly love the principles it upholds. I do not believe that minor differences should lead to bars of fellowship being put against an individual or group who may be just as good Baptists as the antagonistic element. I think that there has been too much of that in the past. I do believe in upholding firmly the cardinal principles ever upheld by Predestinarian Baptists in all ages. I believe that we should contend earnestly for the same fundamental doctrine Jesus taught his disciples, and walk in the same paths trod by his apostles as much as within us is possible, as a whole.

I was blessed during the last year to attend many good meetings and rejoice with the dear saints in several sections of the country. I was greatly comforted in meeting staunch believers everywhere and hearing some of the most able gifts in our land. I can still hear, in spiritual imagination, the jingling of the pomegranates, and feel the flowing of the holy oil. Truly I wish that others might be made to feel the very pressure of Him who holds the issues of life and death, of worlds known and unknown in their journey here below. Most assuredly I would like to spread the glorious message far and wide, in a war torn world, of salvation by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves, but I know that at his appointed time he will reveal unto his children everything that he would have them know. What a perfect One he is? Great and marvelous, upright in all his characteristics, perfect in wisdom, undying in love, matchless in mercy, longsufferring in justice, prevailing in everything. Yes, there is nothing for us to do but "be still and know that I am God." That is true of all races, kindreds and tongues. Be still and know, wait patiently, rejoice evermore, trust in him, follow whither-so-ever he leadeth. He alone is the Master Architect, he alone speaks and all comply, he alone teaches a perfect knowledge — a hidden wisdom, he alone speaks unto this man — come and he cometh, he alone sits on no precarious throne nor borrows leave to be, he alone brought my son through the terrible battles in the air over Tunisia, Pantelleria, Palermo, Sicily, Rome, Marseille, Naples and Geneva in fifty-two missions in the air-corps, he alone brought my son-in-law through two years of naval warfare in the South Seas. He holds in his hand the destiny of every boy in fox-holes, beneath the sea and in the air. Without him we are nothing. He leads me gently beside the still waters, he restores my soul, in him is my trust, my hope, my all. May he ever guide you in that perfect way that leads unto the Celestial Plains.

I was blessed to attend the Associations in this section of Alabama and Florida, beginning with the Patsaliga at Gethsemane Church, Brantley, Ala., on the fourth Sunday, Friday and Saturday before in September 1944. Here unity and peace abounded, and we were blessed by able preaching and spiritual manifstations. The following Sunday I attended the Ebenezer Association near Greenville, Ala., the home of Elders E. D. Gafford and J. C. Wilson who contend most earnestly for the same faith delivered to the apostles. On the second Sunday in Oc-

tober I attended Elder J. W. McLeod's Association, the Conecuh, which is the oldest Association in South Alabama. Here again the very windows of heaven were opened wide and glory shone abundantly around. On the third Sunday in October our home Association, the Western Primitive, convened at Salem Church in Panama City, Fla., on the Gulf Coast, and here again we were wonderfully blessed by having such ministers speak in demonstration of the spirit and of power as Elders E. C. Jones and Oscar Broom of North Carolina, J. C. Ward and H. H. Chance of Florida, J. J. Richards and J. W. McLeod of Alabama. Elder F. A. Collins of Hartford, Ala., serves as Moderator of this Association, while the writer serves as Clerk. On the fourth Sunday in October I was blessed to attend the Clay Bank Association at Florala, Ala. This is the largest orderly Association of our faith in Alabama, and is presided over by Elder J. W. Thomas. Again we had visitors from far and wide and peace and unity prevailed. Each minister spoke ably and comfortably to languising Zion, and all seemed to enjoy the heavenly manna from a far country. All these Associations are in active correspondence with the Chipola and Mt. Enon in Florida and receive visitors from other Associations of our faith and order, especially the Yellow River of Ga., Hopewell of Ala., and Bear Creek of North Carolina. At the last session of the Western Primitive a motion was made and passed to open up correspondence with the Bear Creek Association of N. C., and Elders F. A. and J. J. Collins were sent as delegates to the session which convened in May 1945. Deacon J. A. Davidson attended the Conecuh Association last October at Union Springs for perhaps the one hundredth consecutive session. He had been vitally interested in it throughout his life and took an active part in the business session. Shortly after the Association his annual reunion was held at which he celebrated his one hundredth birthday. However, a few days later his summons came and he fell asleep peacefully to awake in the dawn of the glorious resurrection, where all believers from every race, kindred and tongue shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, all the partiarchs, each of the prophets, every apostle and all the saints of all ages, and rejoice ever-more in that clime where perfection ever abides.

(Elder) J. J. COLLINS

LEAVENED AND UNLEAVENED BREAD

I do not see how I can attempt to write on the above subject but if God wills it and it is of grace then God be praised, if not it will be of no avail. Perhaps no one else is worried about it but I am. I would like to say a few words first about bread itself. We all know one is raised and the other is not raised, or one that works and one that does not. This might give a wrong impression but let us stray a little farther, God willing. The Lord God told the Israelites to partake of unleavened bread on the day of the passover. The angel of the Lord passed through the land and slew all except those that had the blood marked on the door. We know, do we not, that this was a type or figure of Christ. His was the blood that was sprinkled on the door. On what door? The door of that straight and narrow way; the door of death or of life if you please. The door into the holiest of holies that his people might stand there with him and partake of his life and him, or be presented before God without spot or blemish, in other words, himself. "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." It was to commemorate the leading out of the children of Israel from the land of Egypt, and if you are a child of God can you deny that that was unleavened bread? Were you working then? No, a thousand times no, not if you were dead in trespasses and sins, and if it is of God

then no more of works. You were dead when he led you out of the land of bondage. You say how could you be dead and he led you? With man this is impossible but with God all things are possible and so far as you naturally were concerned you were dead. Christ said, "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees." The Pharisees had just asked him for a sign. A sign of what? A sign showing that he was the Son of God, a sign from heaven. He rebuked them saying, "When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red," and also about the day being foul and then told them, "Ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times? A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas." No, they could not read the signs of the times, but if you are a child of God, or a great sinner before your Maker you can read them, they point to death, hell and the grave, and there you are bound under the law, under the doctrine of the Sadducees and Pharisees. They believed that because they had kept the law to the letter or believed in their hearts thy had, and that Abraham was their father, and that they were of the blood line of Jews, that they were children of God. Oh! here we have the leavened bread. Yes it had been works and worked out by themselves in their own conceit. Here His disciples reasoned among themselves and picked up the first morsel that came their way, that he spoke concerning that they had no bread. That is the way we all are. No matter how many times we have been fed, no matter how many times we are led to the banquet table when we are looking for and hungering for spiritual food, we just cannot see how we can ever have it again. The first thing that comes is of material things and we say how can He feed us, we did not bring anything, we have nothing. No, we are not working, not even to feed our own hungry spirit. We cannot even do this, it must be of God and therefore it is unleavened bread because there are no works there, it is the bread of sincerity and truth. So he chides us, "O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves?" Yes, why? What good does it do? If it is unleavened it will not work, it cannot, we cannot bring it to pass. No wonder we are so fearful, and because we are unleavened there is not even any remembrance of the things that have taken place. How we were brought up out of the land of Egypt; how the angel of death passed over us; how we have been cared for in all manner of means, yea, fed and clothed. Yes we are even heirs and joint heirs with our Elder Brother and Friend, and he gave all that we might have all, but because there is no leaven in us we know not these things, but when Christ comes in, or the spirit of Christ, it bears witness and we know. It was for the church that Christ came into this world, and for her he did all things well for the man is not of the woman but the woman is of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman but the woman for the man. Then it says, "all things are of God." I wonder if this is the unleavened bread. "For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life I found to be unto death." Yea, sin slew me, therefore I can work no more. "To be carnally minded is death," so therefore we have to eat unleavened bread to have life, because if we are not dead in Christ we cannot be alive in him. "They that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." So if we are dead there is no working is there? Indeed not. No all has been

done, it has been done by Christ the first fruits of the dead. If we are his body it has been done for us and there is no more working. No it is the gift of God and not of works lest any man should boast. Then was that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. No the law was just and good and was not made death unto me, but sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. Yes, purge out that old leaven and right here it is purged out, "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened." You are not of works lest any man should boast. "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." If we could work it would be leavened and not unleavened. "For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." It is done, it is finished. "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." Christ asked his disciples, "But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say unto thee, That thou are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Here is the unleavened bread. Not flesh and blood, not anything we can do, but Christ's Father and I hope our Father, the just, the all-wise God. It is revealed unto us that he is the Christ, the Son of the living God, a true God from everlasting to everlasting. He foreknew, predestinated, justified and glorified all of God's elect in Christ Jesus our Elder Brother and Friend. God calls them his elect and to be elected is to be chosen or picked out. No wonder we say, oh, we cannot be one of his, how can we be? But we cannot be of ourselves for he says, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." How can we reply against God? He says he will choose and pick them out, "I will call them my people, which were not my people." If it is not found by faith, (the unleavened bread of life that works not and that we have not unless it is given us) then we have not eternal life for we cannot have it by the works of the law for that is the leavened bread. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" I cannot see how I could or can be one of his little ones, so perhaps I am wrong in all things. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord." So, dear God, as I believe you have shown me a little of thy great and marvelous truth, if by grace I can write it perhaps I will be just a little thankful. "As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." Rom. 9:33. It is a fearful thing to try to write of the Son of the Almighty God. I fear I should not try so if I am wrong hold no one to blame but myself. If leavened bread works we were leavened while we were under the law. There has to be a positive and a negative for there to be controversy; there has to be flint and steel before there can be a spark; there has to be evil and good before there can be leavening. You see they are what clash and makes a working. Have you not felt it in yourself? Has not that leavened bread mounted and mounted until it filled your whole bosom? Surely it did with me. Yes, I was full of sin and it clashed with the law that was just and good and it fought and struggled and overcame me. It took occasion through the law and slew me. Did that make law sin? God forbid, but I was carnal, sold under sin. I was of the earth earthy and could not please God, therefore I had to die, that leaven had to be taken out, and so long as I was carnal I was leavened.

I was trying to do the works of the law and I could not for there were two natures at work within me as Paul says, "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me." Yes, I find that law within me yet, the same as always. Christ prayed to the Father not to take us out of the world but to keep us from the world. As all things are possible with God he has chosen a way that I might be bought with a price; that through his grace and goodness not a single one can be lost, but will be preserved in Christ Jesus. He purged out the old leaven or the lump of leavened bread. He does not put new wine in old vessels. No, it must be new. A new heaven and a new earth for the old have passed away. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? Because he that is dead is freed from sin. We are empty and ready for the new lump, and I say of a truth it is unleavened bread, the bread that has come down from heaven, the bread of sincerity and truth, the bread of life if you please. Why is it unleavened? It is hard to write of Him, the altogether lovely, without a spot or blemish, the Lamb that stood slain from before the foundation of the world. First I would say, what is righteousness? Pause my soul and wonder. His righteousness is ours according to holy writ. Abraham's faith was counted unto him for righteousness, so what is it? I believe I have been shown it is a state of being. Christ was righteous, even as the Father, therefore he could and did carry that law in his own precious body. He was that law, it was fulfilled in him. There was no controversy there, no clashing. Can you not see, he is the bread of life, perfect in all things? "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." He was God made flesh to dwell among men. "He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment." Psalms 72:2. We know he does not judge us with our own righteousness because we have none, but thanks be to God he does it with his own righteousness. I will ask you, according to holy writ, was there sin in Christ? He bore our sins in his body but he did not partake of them, that is he did no sin himself. If he had done the least of it he could not have fulfilled the law; he could not have been the perfect sacrifice, and therefore could not have saved his people from their sins. God said he was well pleased with his Son. "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou king of saints." "Be still, and know that I am God." Now may I take up my former train of thought. There is or was no controversy between Christ and the law. There was no working there, no leaven. Do you not see or am I blind? If so I am glad for it makes my Master surely the master of death, hell and the grave and all things. By and through him I know of a truth that this is right for the spirit within bears witness to it and I am overcome. I hope others can see it by the eye of faith. Faith in Christ the altogether lovely One.

(Mrs.) MARY L. ECKARD

Ferndale, Wash.

Island City, Ore.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: As I am sending some subscriptions for the *Signs*, I feel to contribute a few thoughts for publication if it meets your approval. I especially wish to commend the two editorial articles in June issue written by Elder Hunnicutt and yourself. These set forth with such strength and honesty the individual independence of faith in matters under consideration that all our editors would do well to follow this example instead of the usual way of measuring their brethren's soundness and fellowship by their own imperfect standard. God is our judge and his word in the Scriptures, as he gives us to understand it, measures our faith, and no other per-

son has any right to dispute it. This is the religious liberty and freedom of conscience so dear to us Baptist people, that we rejoice to see it upheld by our ministers and publications, giving all allegiance and praise to the One Sovereign Giver of all blessings. We returned the 17th from our Union Meeting held near Dayton, Wash., at the home of brother and sister Ernest Attebery. All four of the churches were represented, also there were members and visitors from other places, and a very pleasant series of meetings lasting three days was enjoyed by us. Most of the congregation was well up in years and have been faithful members of the church for many years, some over fifty years and all came long distances. As we looked over this little assembly of God's saints we were made to remark that not many more meetings of this kind will be attended by these faithful ones. We feel to admonish our younger friends who have been blessed to know the joy of the salvation of our God to take up their cross of church membership and help with the duties of the same. This brother and sister who entertained us, while past middle age, united with the church one year ago. There are many others on the outside the church would gladly welcome, who would be just as useful and would receive the joy which goes with faithful service and church fellowship. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." Let us encourage our young people to come with us and honor the faith so precious to us. They are the children who must soon carry the burdens we must lay down. Jesus says, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

(Elder) C. W. BOND

Luverne, Ala.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Enclosed find $2 to extend my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. I enjoy reading it so much. I have just been taking it six months and it is a great comfort to my soul to read and reread the good letters and experiences of God's dear children. I can remember back when just a child how I did enjoy hearing the Old Baptists talk and discuss the Bible. Of course I did not understand what it meant, but somehow this conversation appealed to me.

My father and mother were both Primitive Baptists and father was a preacher. I was born and raised in that kind of a cradle. I can remember when just a small child as the preachers would be preaching I could not keep from crying. I do not know why it affected me that way but it is just as fresh in my mind today as if it had been yesterday. As I grew up I began to drift away and after my marriage I united with the Missionary Baptists. I thought they were all right but still I would go to the "Hardshell" meetings as some people call us. After going with them for seventeen years I became dissatisfied. They seemed cold and distant, the love for one another was not manifest among them as it seemed to be with the Primitive Baptists. Still I could not believe in the predestination of all things and came to the conclusion that I was just lost. The other members of my church would say they were saved, they were saved on a certain night or day at a big revival meeting, but I could not say that for I never had any such feelings, and I do not believe any of God's chosen people have ever felt that way. I kept on trying to convince myself that the Missionary Baptists were right. May be they did believe they were saved, but I would read where Paul said we have a hope of something unseen (a glorious hope beyond this veil of tears). I would meditate on this scripture and would think, well, I am just a lost sinner, that God does not

even know me. I would go back to the Primitive meetings, I had love for them and I could not get away from it. No matter how hard I tried it seemed there was something drawing me to them. I always believed in the Lord's supper and washing the saint's feet, but I just went on and on in this condition until it pleased God to at last show me what I was and how helpless I was and that there was nothing I could do without his help. I felt like an owl or a pelican in a wilderness or desert land with no way of escape. But, my dear brother in Christ, I hope that it pleased God to show me things, his unlimited power and that no man can stay his hand or ask, "What doest thou?" If I believe anything today it is in the foreknowledge and predestination of an all-wise God for he created all things in six days and finished and rested on the seventh, and there has never been one thing added to or taken from his finished work. I tried for five long years to offer myself to the Primitive Baptist church but just could not. I felt and almost knew that they would not receive me, felt like they were too good a people for such a worm as I. I still loved them better than anything and would try to get away and not study about it, but there was something drawing me all the time and I could not think what it could be, but O, my God, the power of him. How sweet and assuring is the thought of the power of God in my heart and soul today. This horrible war has taken my youngest boy, but I trust in God for his help and mercy for his will be done and not ours. I pray God to help me to be reconciled to his will in all things.

I will try to get back to my subject. The Primitive Baptists had a fifth Sunday meeting at Rutledge, the church I am a member of now, and Elder Brock from north Alabama was there and preached both Saturday and Sunday. His text Sunday morning was from the fourth chapter of Revelations and it filled my soul to the overflowing point. I was never so happy in my life before, and I did not think I could leave the place without offering myself to the church, but the doors were not open on that occasion. The regular meeting time was just two weeks off and if I ever prayed to God in my life it was in those two weeks. Saturday morning came and I made up my mind, or the Lord did for me, and I offered myself to the church and was received and baptized on Sunday following by Elder Ed. Gafford. I was very happy, feeling that the Lord had dealt with me in his mysterious ways of dealing with his people. I trust that I am one of his. There are times that we all have doubts and fears I believe. Sometimes God will withdraw his helping hand and we are left alone, and become discouraged and despondent, but he always comes back if our faith is sure and stedfast. I will bring this to a close as my writing is bad and my subjects scattered. If I am ever saved it will be by the grace of God and faith in Jesus Christ that has been given me by the indwelling spirit. I have a hope. Yours in bonds of love and friendship.

(Mrs.) J. J. McNEAL

(Continued from October issue)

I kept on teaching year after year but still attended church as much as possible. Sometimes when I would be hearing classes my mind would be taken off my work and placed on heavenly and divine things. All this time no one knew my feelings but God as I was ashamed to express them to any one. Sometime during the year 1914 I had another dream. I was home then and my mother was still living. It was worrying my mind so much that I gathered up courage to tell her about it, hoping she would or could give me light on it as I still felt to be in the dark. After I told her my story she said, "maybe it will all work out good for you some time." This is the dream — I found myself placed on a church ground about

twenty-two miles from home. I saw several members that belonged to that church. Some I knew and some I did not. I tried to leave the ground but could not as a rope was drawn around me. I tried and tried but could not escape. All at once the rope disappeared but the members had formed a ring about me and asked me not to leave, but to stay with them, that I was too good a woman to be sent away not knowing where I might go. Presently all separated and I heard a voice somewhere. I looked and saw a man I did not know but he called to me to go to him. He was standing beside two receptacles filled with something. When I got to him he said, "drink ye and you drink the blood of Jesus Christ: drink ye and ye drink life everlasting to your poor soul." What I drank from the first glass was red as blood and the second one clear as crystal. I still went on waiting for more assurance that I was really a fit subject for the church. By this time my burden was getting heavy and almost more than I was able to carry, but remembering these words, that God in loving mercy and kindness makes his people able to bear all suffering, would be with them in the sixth hour and would not forsake them in the seventh, my mind would be soothed for a short duration, but it would not be long before that troubled feeling was back again both day and night. My lips were still sealed from uttering words concerning my troubles for fear I might say something amiss and would be brought to shame. I still went to church, stayed on the ground until church called, then I was ready to go in, and found myself going in many times by myself if my young friends did not want to go with me. Why I did this I do not know unless it was to see if I could gather a crumb of that spiritual food that would ease a poor troubled mind like mine. Sometimes I thought it was all said for me, but I would not let it be known to God's dear children, yet I loved them above all earthly joys and felt that I had seen the church in all its beauty. Sometime during the last part of the year 1916 I was still teaching and boarding with a family who belonged to the church of God. One night a few of the members gathered at the home and began to talk. I only listened but what they had to say did not mean much to me. When I retired that night I hope I asked God in a silent prayer, if it was his will to do so, to please show me the right way before dawn and this is the way it was shown to me in a dream. I found myself in my home church, started walking down the aisle to the west that leads to the back. When I got to the door I saw the most people but there was a division. The largest part of them were in the northwest corner. Some I knew and some I did not, but what I knew belonged to the different denominations, and as soon as they saw me they began to beckon me to go to them. I tried to go to them but I could not take a step. It seemed as if I were helpless. I stood there for a few minutes, then directly I heard a voice speak to the right. I looked and saw a small body of people gathered and in the midst was the deacon of my home church. He asked me to try and come that way if I could. I started and my feet felt light as a feather while walking those few steps. After going to them I remember no more. From then until now I have never doubted the way, but fear that I am not fit to walk therein. The great highway as I see it, and if I am fit it is by divine grace for if I am saved it is by grace alone and nothing good that I have done. In October of 1916 the Association convened with the church at Cypress Creek. I went to the home of Elder Isaac and sister Jones to help prepare for it. We had company there four nights and I enjoyed it all. On Monday night, not having so much work to do before retiring, I had time to sit around and listen and talk some too. One word brought on

another and before I knew what I was saying I was relating some of what I have penned to you. I went forth and was received in fellowship by what few members were there from the different churches and Associations. For some reason unknown to me just a few days before going to that Association I was taken sick and after I came home also. The day I was baptized I got up out of bed and went to the church but it was near by. That sickness has always been a mystery to me and I often think of it. Brother Sam McMillian preached at the church that day and after service we went to the water and I was baptized by Elder Isaac Jones on October 25, 1916. In February 1920 I married and quit teaching. To say the least I have had pleasure and trouble as well. I have lost many of my loved ones, have worked hard to be a frail woman as I was deemed to be, and still do not feel so well and strong, but God has been merciful to me all my sojourn here, and has made me able to bear all my troubles and is still remembering me and keeping me here for some purpose. I never have had the privilege of attending my meetings as I wished but have had to be contented and reconciled let it come as it would, but sometimes I find it hard to do. My husband was not a member of any church when we were married. He first united with the Free Wills, then later the Primitives. My two older half-sisters and he were baptized the same day, October 1922, by Elder R. W. Gurganus. We are two little shutins now most of the time as he had a stroke last June but can get about some now. His sickness has made him an entirely different person and sometimes I gaze upon him in perfect amazement and wonder why it all had to happen, but know God is able to change him in the twinkling of an eye and will do so at his own good pleasure. We have two grown girls that take care of us and are such a blessing to us. A married daughter helps also. We have one boy twelve going to school. My health is very good and I hope the Lord will bless me to keep able and give me strength to do my work and wait on my husband until he is able to care for himself. Perhaps I had better close for fear my letter becomes too lengthy. I do not want to write anything that is not in accord with the true word of God and that God's people do not approve of. You may publish this, if you think it worthy of space, in our dear paper, if not cast it aside and I will not be offended whatsoever. If any one has a mind to write me I would be glad to hear from them. It might cheer up some of the lonesome hours that I have now. I enjoy letters from any one and especially God's dear children who have a hope in Christ Jesus our Lord and have that blessed assurance that they may be heirs and joint heirs of his kingdom. Remember us in your prayers is the desire of a little sister if indeed one at all. Am sending my renewal to your paper as I enjoy it so much and hope I will not miss a copy. Hope to be able to take it as long as I live. It is much company for me in this trying hour. In bonds of love.

(Mrs.) W. H. CANNON

Riffe, Lewis Co., Wash.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON,

DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:

I have thought for some time I would write a few lines to the readers of the *Signs of the Times*. I often find comfort reading articles published therein. There is a Baptist church at Riffe, Lewis Co., Washington. The pastor's name is Elder J. W. Peters who is around eighty-seven years of age and in failing health. We would like to have some young minister move within the bounds of the church, and perhaps some young minister may read this that would like to move to this part of God's country. There are enough Primitive Baptist members in these parts to have a nice audience if they could all

be present for services, but they are not all faithful, in fact some do not seem to know just when the church meets and need to be told about meeting time. That is enough to discourage the pastor and I would like to say to those who neglect their meetings that you make your pastor sad and you should try to meet with your church at the regular times for meeting. "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." Heb. 10:25. "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Gal. 6:9. The word faint to my mind will apply to the brother or sister who forsakes the church and becomes lifeless to the welfare of the church. I would call your attention to different scriptures bearing upon the word fainted. It is sad when members neglect the church. I realize that in referring to his sheep Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." John 10:27-29. Let me call your attention to Job who was a perfect and upright man, and although he was perfect and upright, yet the Lord gave Satan the right to afflict Job in many ways, but the devil could not take his life, neither could he afflict Job until God gave his consent. Job had a hard time after being afflicted with sore boils so that he took a potsherd and scraped himself, and that was not all, his wife wanted him to curse God and die. Job said, "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh." So there must have been some foolish women in Job's day. I think those foolish women have always been against the true church and Job knew that and that was why he said what he did to his wife. Continuing he said to her, "What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Job's grief was so great that his three friends who came to comfort him would not speak to him for seven days and nights and they wept for Job. I would like to say to any Baptist minister who is in good standing among the Baptists if you are looking for a home among Old School Baptists and will write me I will try to answer your letters and we welcome Baptist members. Our meeting-house is at Riffe, Lewis Co., Wash. The house was built about the year 1895 and the Baptists have met there each month during that time. They hold a three days meeting each year at the meeting-house commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in August. Please correct any mistakes if you publish this, and if I am your brother it is by the works of Jesus as he gives his people eternal life. May God bless you and all his.

ISAAC F. COLEMAN.

(This sounds to us like a Macedonian cry to come and help the brethren in the state of Washington, and if any one or more of our readers who are ministers hears it and are interested sufficiently they should write to brother Coleman. Judging from his letter he seems to be very much alive and in a good healthy state of mind spiritually. We wish more of the brethren felt as he does. R. L. D.)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

R. R. Peters, Calif., $1; B. Parrish, Ark., $4; Mrs. J. Clifford, Wash., $1; Mrs. S. Hutchens, N. Y., $5; Mrs. S. E. Brown, Tex., $8; T. R. Starr, Md., $3.

BOOKS WANTED

Hassell's Church History and Predestination by R. L. Dodson. Communicate with Mr. Ben Parrish, Standard Esso Station, Arkansas City, Ark.

EDITORIAL

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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"These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee." Titus 2:15

These words give us much concern and to get the root of the matter we must read the verses preceding. After the exhortations contained in the first chapter Paul commands Titus to "speak thou the things which become sound doctrine," giving as his reason "That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things." He includes the young women, young men and servants also "That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

We have given you the above that you may consider the things Paul was commanding Titus to speak and exhort among the saints, as become sound doctrine, and we feel Paul was realizing the grace of God in the Gentiles, for as we read the Scriptures Jews and Gentiles embraced the entire population of the world, and the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to Gentiles as well as Jews.

The reason Paul was thus commanding Titus was because a dispensation of the gospel was committed to him, and he was ordained the first bishop of the church of the Cretians. Paul was acting his convictions as he declared, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified," and all the epistles containing exhortations were given from his heart as the grace of God given unto him required. Elders of Old School Baptist faith have been giving exhortations in their sermons as they were exercised, not that they could bring sons and daughters of Adam's race into the kingdom of God thereby, but that those professing to love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity would live becomingly. Some have gone into these things and have called it gospel time salvation which has become a stumbling block to many, and brought division and distress among the brethren, and we feel exhortation is often omitted where it is necessary. We feel it is right to exhort those who love the truth that they should live as becometh the gospel, our reason for this decision being that our Savior exhorted John the Baptist and said, "For thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." Then John the Baptist baptized Jesus, "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matt. 3:16-17.

Those that receive exhortation have the spirit of the Lord in their hearts, and in obedience the heavens are opened, and an answer of a good conscience is received. Brethren should not strive about these things for in strife we are not edifying or exhorting after godliness. We are commanded to "Lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." We feel the need of exhortation as well as the rod for it seems just that we should be chastised. Those that can receive the exhortation of the gospel are those who know the joyful sound, walk in the light of his countenance and rest under the shadow of the Almighty.

We humbly trust that we have felt the rest in the presence of the Almighty that belongs to the household of faith, but when we begin to establish ourselves we come short and are made to cry out, O Lord, help our infirmities. These things cause us to tremble at his word. For us to try to act with our bodies, things that becometh righteousness we have condemnation in our hearts (for we know it would be of the flesh and not of the Spirit), and worship God which beareth witness with our spirit that without faith it is impossible to please God; and for us to tell you brethren how to worship God we would have to positively declare that salvation is of the Lord, that "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." But, says one, the Spirit teaches us "That denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." To be soberly in this matter would be clear thinking upon his name and all that God testified it signified.

The language expressed would prove the prophecy, "Then they that feared the Lord spoke often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not." Mal. 3:16-18.

If we hope in the mercy of God the spirit will make manifest, and we are given to discern between that which is of the flesh and that which is of the spirit, and we would say to those who have hope, think upon these things; be faithful to your convictions as to whether you are worshipping God or the works of righteousness you can do. If you have no where to lay your head to rest you are suffering for rest and He said, come unto me and I will give you rest. Submitted in love.—C. W. V.

TALK IT OVER WITH GOD

The above words were flashed into our mind at a time when we were greatly disturbed and perplexed over a certain situation. While pondering over it we were made to realize that God's children all down through the ages of time have been confronted with what seemed to them to be momentous problems, which compelled them to take them to the Lord in prayer. When Abraham was "ninety years old and nine" Almighty God appeared unto him and talked with him, saying, "My covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be called Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an

everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee." Gen. 17:4-7. Wherever God's people have been made fruitful of good works, they have been purged of their own righteousness and their faith has been tried and purified, though as by fire. Paul tells us that "whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." Before God changed Abram's name he had said to him, "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their's, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance." Gen. 15:13-14. And when Moses went down into Egypt, God commanded him to say unto Pharoah, "For now will I stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth. And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." Ex. 9:15-16. We see from this that the course of Israel's life was determined upon and laid out in all of its details, even before Isaac was born, but the consummation of all things, even the opposition of Pharoah, was to end in honor and great glory to Israel's God. At the time Moses was born, Pharoah had given instructions to the mid-wives to kill all male children of the Hebrews at the time of birth, but his parents seeing that he was a goodly child "talked it over with God" and in a most miraculous way, not only was Moses spared but was brought up under the roof of the very king who had sought his life. During his earthly career of approximately one hundred and twenty years, he had many an occasion to "talk it over with God," and at the end he could say as God's mouthpiece, "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: Because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." Deut. 32:1-4. Israel's sojourn in Egypt, her deliverance at the Red Sea, and her wanderings in the wilderness was a portrayal, in type, of the experience of the Lord's people in this age of the world. Nothwithstanding we may have been delivered from the power of darkness, we are prone to go astray, often worshipping idolatry until the waters are made so bitter that we have to cry unto the Lord, and then we are shown the way of life as it is in Christ Jesus. When our burdens are almost unbearable, what a mercy it is that God does not forsake us altogether.

When Goliath, who was the champion of the Philistines of Gath, came out and challenged the hosts of Israel, all of her brave men were filled with fear and trembling, but the shepherd's lad, David, having witnessed the works of God asked, "who is this uncircumsized Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" With the staff of faith to lean upon, and with the word of God in his sling, he was well prepared to march forth to victory. Like David, we have often felt how strange and mysterious have been the dealings of the Lord with us, and how truly we have asked, "Is there not a cause?" We believe there is always a cause and we have tried to look for the guiding hand of Him who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. We are often reminded of the talk the prophet Jeremiah had with God, when he said, "Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child," but the Lord said unto him, "Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I have commanded

thee thou shalt speak." God also had said to him, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." How utterly helpless we mortal creatures are! By bitter experience we have learned what some of our old ministers had in mind when they said they had been trying to preach and trying to quit for forty years, or more. Many are the times when of necessity we are made to cry unto the Lord to hold us up, and give us strength sufficient for our day.

Job out of the depths of adversity and afflictions talked it over with God and could say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." On another occasion, after having searched diligently for the Lord, going forward and backward, to the left and the right, in his bewilderment he confessed, "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Again, we hear him saying, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." This old servant of God was given as a bulwark to the faith of his people in all ages of the world.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, having been taught of God were prepared to say to king, Nebuchadnezzer, "we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." And although king Darius had signed a decree, which was according to the law of the Medes and Persians, and could not be changed or altered, whereby no one was to worship any other god than his, nevertheless it is said, "Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house: and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." It is through such channels as these that the faith of God's elect has been handed down to us, and if we are to be followers worthy of his name, we must expect to have to stand in our lot and defend his cause, if needs be, with our own life's blood.

In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," and according to Luke he "being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground," he talked it over with God, saying, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." David, portraying before hand the sufferings of Christ had exclaimed, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" If we are taught in the same manner as was John we, too, will be able to say, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." The poor publican was talking it over with God when he said, "God be merciful to me a sinner." When a man sick of the palsy was brought to Jesus, he said, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." The thief on the cross said unto Jesus, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom," and Jesus replied, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

The Lord's people all down through the centuries since the days of Jesus Christ and the apostles have been talking it over with God, and being encompassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses we should take courage and thank God that we have been accounted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake. Peter said, "Humble yourselves therefore under the

mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him: for he careth for you." How good it is to be assured that the Lord cares for us. If we are not terribly deceived, we believe we can truthfully say that the Lord has walked with us, and talked with us, and told us that we were his very own. Well do we recall an experience at an Association where something unpleasant had occurred and we had to speak. It seemed to stand before the people was more than we could endure and we walked up the road to talk it over with God. He spoke to us and said, "Fear not, I am with thee; O be not dismayed! I, I am thy God, and will still give thee aid, I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand, Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand." We shall never forget the relief that was to our heavily burdened and sin-distressed soul. The blessed word of God is full of precious promises to those who find themselves weary and heavy laden, and we will do well to go there often in search of that which can prove to be a nail in a sure place, that we may lay hold upon the hope that is set before us, ever looking unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith. We feel confident our brethren and sisters know what it means to talk it over with God. They do not necessarily have to quit their work and go to some meeting-house, but it can be in the field behind the plow, or in the kitchen over the cook stove, at home and abroad, on the land and on the sea, wherever our lot has been cast, there the eye of our God will be upon us and his ear ever harkening to our feeble cry. May we say to you whoever you are, and wherever you may be, trust in the Lord, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. Commit your case unto him for he is able to solve any problem; there is nothing too hard for the Lord — nothing impossible with him. The following verse of a hymn suggests itself here:

Have we trials and temptations,
Is there trouble any where?
What a privilege to carry,
Everything to God in prayer.

The sacredness of communing with God in prayer is something which only heaven born souls can appreciate and understand, and while they may feel they know not how to pray, they are taught to know that

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Unuttered or express'd;
The motion of a hidden fire,
That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear;
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.

The words at the head of this editorial came into our mind with such force and sweetness that we wanted to express to our readers some of our thoughts concerning them, and we send them forth, with God's blessings, we hope. —R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

HOLDRIDGE HENRY SMITH, our beloved brother in Christ was born in Taswell, Va., Aug. 25, 1861, and departed this life April 4, 1945, aged 83 years, 7 months and 10 days. He was united in marriage to Emily Jane Bird, Dec. 31, 1885. To this union were born eleven children. Six preceded him in death. He leaves to mourn, his widow, sister Emily; two sons, J. J. and T. O. Smith; three daughters, Mrs. Lurecy Plumley, Mrs. Mary Phillips and Mrs. Ellen Brightwell all of Charleston, W. Va. and vicinity; twenty-three grandchildren; eighteen great-grandchildren; four sisters, Mrs. Almeda Edwards, Mrs. Sarah Stanley, Mrs. Ellen Gerowsky, and Mrs. Irene Sidener; two brothers, Joseph and Madison B. Smith and many dear relatives and friends. Brother Smith united with the Primitive Baptist Church on Saturday of the August meeting and was baptized on Sunday which was the fourth Sunday in August 1885. He was faithful in the attendance of his church meetings when physically able to be present, often going on foot many weary miles (as an old man) in order to fill his seat. His home was ever open to entertain his brethren. His convictions were deep as to the doctrine and order of

the house of the Lord. He possessed many characteristics and virtues which space would forbid me to mention here. For the past several years the unworthy writer of this sketch has tried in weakness to serve the church of his membership (the Providence Church of Lincoln County, W. Va.) as pastor. I found brother Smith not only a faithful brother in his attendance of church meetings, but I found in him that fatherly counsel and that marked interest in the welfare and well being of Zion. His hope was the blood and righteousness of Christ. Many were the precious hours I spent with him and great was my joy as I would hear him relate his experience as a wayfarer and pilgrim in his pilgrimage here below. He had been in failing health for a number of years having had a critical heart ailment. As a result of the condition of his heart he was subjected many times to falling off his feet with critical spells in which he would in a great measure be unconscious of his surroundings. He was naturally industrious and energetic and these spells seemed to hold no fear for him. His last illness was short. He was attacked with one of those critical spells and fell in the room of his home in which he sustained a hemorrhage or blood clot of the brain cell. His family took him to the hospital where all was done for him that was humanly possible to do but his days were numbered. He came to the end of his earthly existence as a well ripened shock of harvest grain, peacefully and quietly quitting the ways and walks of men. He died in the full triumph of a living faith in Christ. Elder J. C. Hammond and myself were called to conduct his funeral which was conducted in the home, where the earnest desire was present in us to proclaim the finished work of Jesus, that doctrine which had been the meat and drink of brother Smith while he lived here. On this funeral occasion as I looked on the quiet, peaceful features of the mortal remains of brother Smith I was made to feel that for him to die was gain. This was as balm to my bleeding and torn heart. Burial was in the Teays Hill Cemetery at St. Albans, W. Va. May the Lord comfort the bereaved and reconcile us all to his will. Written by request.

(Elder) H. J. BIRD.

Death has removed from us our precious brother, J. D. HATCHETT, who was born Nov. 15, 1861, and died June 6, 1945, making his stay on earth 83 years, 6 months and 21 days. He was united in marriage to Lura May Williamson, Dec. 13, 1881. To his union were born nine children. Seven of them, six boys and one girl have families of their own which reflect an honor on their father. I must commend the one with whom he made his home especially — his daughter-in-law, sister Annie Hatchett. No one could have been more attentive and administered to his necessities more than she did, so patient and good to him in his last days. May God reward her for every good deed done for him. Three boys were present when the end came to him whom they honored and so tenderly cared for in his declining years. Two children died in infancy. His companion preceded him in death many years. He never married again but brought those children with whom he spent the balance of his life up to manhood and womanhood. He had twenty-nine grandchildren and twenty-six great-grandchildren. He loved his family. Six of the seven children living were present for the last rites, one boy arriving too late for the services. A large congregation of relatives and friends looked on while the dormant body was laid in the ground from which it was taken, there to await that appointed time when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Precious assurance, it's something that is dead that will rise, and the Scriptures say, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." Brother Hatchett's hope was that his body was the Lords. The writer of this obituary was brother Hatchett's pastor for many years, and we have spent many pleasant hours together talking of the wondrous things of God, and wondering if it could be possible that poor sinful creatures, as we felt ourselves to be, could have been embraced in that covenant that was ordered in all things and sure. He was a staunch believer in a sovereign God and that salvation for both time and eternity was of the Lord. Many times I have heard him say, "If this is not the truth, then I am lost. I have nothing of myself to offer." Since I have known him, his happiest hours were when he was in company with those he thought was the true church, the children of God. He was always ready, when he was able, to accompany me wherever I went, let it be far or near. He was known among the Old Baptists in different states. He united with the Predestinarian Church in Limestone, Ala., in August 1905 and we feel he was worthy of that home when the end came. I was ill and could not attend his funeral which made us all sad for it was his request, but we must be still and know that he is God. Brother W. D. Hughes was called and spoke for a short while to the comfort of the bereaved. There are many good things, as we call them, that I could say about him, which we believe were the fruits of the Spirit of his God, and if he could be here and witness this writing, he would say, "Brother Green, don't give me credit for one good thought but charge all the evil and sinful deeds to me."

His only hope was in these words of the man Christ Jesus when he hung on the cross — "It is finished." I do not want to make this sketch of this precious brother too lengthy but would like to tell the readers of an experience he had which has been a great comfort to me, and a very bright spot in his experience. He lived some forty miles from my home church but very often attended our meetings. At the time of this experience, for some reason, he could not attend but had a great desire to meet with us, and about eleven o'clock he took his hymn book and sat down in a porch swing and began to hum, probably on his favorite hymn. Without his knowledge or thought the world and knowledge of where he was, was taken away from him and he was placed in our solemn assembly at Altus, Okla., some forty miles from where he was. He said it was a heavenly place such as he had never witnessed before. He saw me before the brethren and sisters, my hands lifted toward heaven, delivering the sweet message of comfort and consolation to the little lambs of God that had assembled there to be fed. When he related this experience to me he wept for joy and said, "Brother Green, I never saw you any plainer," and he so much desired to have that experience one more time. Let me say to the mourning relatives, brethren and sisters in the Lord, this experience is enough to look for him among the happy spirits that dwell in safety with God, and at his time (God's time) he will unite spirit, soul and body in one and fashion it like the glorified body of our risen Christ. That was the hope of him that fell asleep in Jesus, June 6, 1945. May God's mercies be continued upon all of us who believe on his name. Written by one that loved him for Jesus' sake. His pastor,

(Elder) W. N. GREEN

Our beloved sister in Christ, EMMA FERRIS, passed away the latter part of March 1945. Sister Ferris was born May 6, 1860. She was the youngest child of Joshua and Susanna Butler. When quite young she left Fairfax, Co., Va., and moved to Washington, D. C., where she spent the remainder of her days. She was married March 17, 1877 to John R. Ferris and to them were born six children, two preceding her in death. Two daughters and two sons are left to mourn their mother's departure. Sister Ferris was baptized over thirty years ago into the fellowship of the then Shiloh Church of Washington, D. C., by the late Elder J. T. Rowe and lived a faithful and devoted member until stricken with poor health ten years ago She had a charming personality and seemed to bring a heavenly influence into the meetings when she was present. It truly could be said of her, "She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness." While she had not been able to meet with her brethren in Christ for several years, she was always found faithful to the charge committed to her trust and it was with aching hearts that we forever put her away from again assembling with us in worshipping the God she loved and adored in her sojourn on earth. Nothing gave her more pleasure than to meet with those of like precious faith. When the writer was called to officiate at her funeral he was reminded of the words of Martha to her sister when she said, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee." Truly a mother in Israel has been taken from us, but we sorrow not as those who have no hope for we are confident that sister Ferris is sweetly resting in the paradise of God, and when the appointed hour shall come she will awake in a glorified form with her blessed Savior. She had no fear of approaching death and died the death of the righteous, telling her faithful daughter, Lillian, a few months before passing away that she was dying and there was no trace of fear on her countenance. She was a devoted wife, loving mother, a sincere friend, faithful to her church and pastor. Her pastor tried to speak at the home 638 A St., S. E., Washington, D. C., on April 2nd to the comfort of her sorrowing children, other relatives and friends who had gathered to pay their respects to one whose life had been filled with many useful deeds. May the Lord comfort those who mourn, and especially may God's richest blessings rest and abide upon the daughter, Lillian, who gave herself unreservedly to the care of her mother for so many years. Nothing that human hands could do was left undone in ministering to her mother's needs. After services in the home the body was taken to the Congressional Cemetery, there to await the call of the blessed Master, when it shall be raised in his likeness.

Also

Sister IDA SHOCKLEY QUINN was born Oct. 19, 1869 and died Oct. 21, 1944. Her parents were Hettie A. and Burton West. Sister Quinn was baptized into the fellowship of the Baltimore Church by the late Elder J. T. Rowe about thirty-five years ago. Her first husband was Uriah Shockley and to them were born two children. After brother Shockley's death she moved to Frederick, Md., where her two children were educated. Later she was married to Mr. Quinn who preceded sister Quinn in death. She was a Baptist of the Old School. We have never known any love to excel that of our sister for her church. It was her meat and her drink to be with those of like precious faith. She had many afflictions but bore them with fortitude. She was deeply devoted to her children who grew up to be a credit to her and to their many friends. Sister Quinn was a spiritually minded person — she never seemed to tire of speaking of the goodness and

mercy of God. She was stricken with bronchial pneumonia on Oct. 14 and died a week later at Franklin Square Hospital, Baltimore, Md. We called to see her on Friday, the day before she passed away. She was then conscious and was constantly pleading for the Lord to take her home, which he did on the following morning in the full triumph of faith. She was buried at Snow Hill, Md., services being conducted in the meeting-house there by the writer, where many relatives and friends gathered to pay their last respects. The text used was the 23rd Psalm. Sister Quinn leaves to mourn her departure one son, Uriah Shockley; three grandchildren and three sisters: Mrs. Charles Gordy, Mrs. Ernest West, Mrs. Raymond Parsons, together with her church, her pastor and a host of friends.

Also

BERTHA SHOCKLEY, daughter of sister Quinn, who lived with her mother to whom she was very much devoted, was buried at Snow Hill, Md., on March 16, 1945 after a week's illness. Bertha showed great interest in entertaining her mother's Baptist friends. Just before she passed away she said to her brother, "This is the happiest day of my life." The shock of her mother's death seemed to be too much for her to bear. We feel that the Lord does all things well for she was left entirely alone, and we trust that it is well with her soul.

(Elder) D. L. TOPPING

MRS. CHRISTENA FLORENCE (CAMPBELL) McTAGGART, wife of the late John McTaggart who passed away 22 years ago, and my last remaining sister of four sisters, passed away in her sleep Feb. 15, 1945 in her 75th year. She was a daughter of the late Malcolm and Janet (McColl) Campbell and granddaughter of the late Elder Thomas McColl. She and her husband lived at Appin where he kept a hardware store before going to London in 1916. Their home in Appin as in London was an open door to their many friends. While in Appin it was her delight (as she said) to entertain their kindred and friends at the time of the June meeting, and in London the same spirit of devotion and sacrifice was shown in their interest and the entertainment of Baptist friends. A few years after her husband left her lonely she became active in Red-Cross and interstate work, also was for a time president of Women's Liberal Association, and on the auxilairy trust board of Victoria Hospital. She enjoyed the arduous task for a time, but as failing health and a heart condition was apparent, even though alluring, it seemed evident that a warfare and its curse was being felt within her poor soul. Satan is fair and tragic in his logical reasonings. We all have need to beware of his fair and false allurements. While attending Duart meeting last October she heard a sermon by Elder Westbrook on Joseph and his brethren, also one by our dear pastor as wonderful, and she felt to go home and alone think and feed on it. It was as sweet music to me to hear the dear sister pen it in a letter to a dear friend. I felt the Lord was acquainting her of her souls need of the bread of heaven, his body which is meat indeed and his blood which is drink indeed. In December of last year a very dear cousin, Dr. T. H. McColl took suddenly ill from overwork and passed away within a week. It was a great sorrow to sister. He would warn her to be careful. Man proposes but God disposes and the appointed time was on the wing that laid her with the dead. My comfort is as assurance of her safety in Jesus, of her never dying soul living on in the paradise of God to await the second coming of the Lord from heaven to raise the dead, change and fashion it like unto his glorious body. She remarked to a niece that they would find her dead sometime which we did, lying on her bed without even a struggle. She leaves to mourn, one brother, S. D. Campbell of London; one sister, Mrs. Sarah McPhail; a number of nephews and nieces. Funeral service was conducted in the funeral home in London, and a short service was held in Ekfrid meeting-house. Burial in adjoining cemetery beside her husband. Her pastor, Elder George Ruston, took for a text (by request) Psalms 46:10. "Be still, and know that I am God." Written by her sister,

(Mrs.) SARAH McPHAIL

ARTHUR ROUNDS, our brother in Christ and a deacon of the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, passed away from this earthly life at the home of Mrs. Louise Johnson, his niece, at Newark, Del., July 23, 1945 after a brief illness. He was taken with cold five days before his death which was followed by pneumonia and a severe heart attack. He fell asleep quietly and painlessly the morning of Monday, July 23. He is survived by his wife, our sister Lucy Rounds, and by one brother and one sister: brother Henry Rounds and sister Della Pusey both members of the church at Salisbury, Md. Arthur Rounds and Lucy Meredith were married in February, forty-eight years ago. Brother Arthur was baptized by the late Elder William Grafton about forty-nine years ago into the membership of the Welsh Tract Church. He has been a loving, faithful and devoted member of the church. We shall all miss him sorely, especially shall I who was his pastor, but we know these separations must come, this earth is not our abiding place, and we much desire the presence of the Spirit of God to be feelingly with us that we may be completely resigned and reconciled to his will whatever is in his will for us, whether it be joy or sorrow. May the Lord comfort our dear sister Lucy. In a letter just received from her she says,

"He seems to be right here. I find myself wanting to tell him something or to ask him some question." Services were held from the home of Mrs. Johnson who is daughter of the late Elder Joseph Staton, a former pastor of the Welsh Tract Church. Interment of the mortal tabernacle of our brother was in the Welsh Tract Burying Ground, there to await the summons from on high at the coming of the Lord from heaven the second time without sin unto salvation. (Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS

AUTHORIZED AGENTS

ALABAMA

Elder Lytle Burns, Florence, Ala.
Elder F. A. Collins, Hartford, Ala.
Elder W. D. Griffin, Box 4, Covin, Ala.

ARKANSAS

Elder E. J. Lambert, Box 745, Hampton, Ark.

CALIFORNIA

Elder T. D. Walker, Apt. 14,
4632 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood 27, Calif.

FLORIDA

Elder C. H. Byrd, Box 86, Panama City, Fla.

GEORGIA

Elder H. O. Nash, 431 Hardendorf Ave., N. E
Atlanta, Ga.

KENTUCKY

Elder G. B. Bird, Canada, Ky.
Elder J. S. Hunnicutt, Denton, Ky.

MARYLAND

Elder Harold M. Bennett, Mardela Springs, Md.

NEW JERSEY

Elder Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.

NEW YORK

Elder Arnold H. Bellows, West Hurley, N. Y.

NORTH CAROLINA

Elder T. F. Adams, Willow Springs, N. C.
Elder E. L. Cobb, Wilson, N. C.
Elder R. B. Denson, Rt. 2, Rocky Mount, N. C.
Elder T. H. Edwards, Jacksonville. N. C.
Elder M. F. Westbrook, Rt. 3, Dunn, N. C.

OHIO

Elder Geo. L. Weaver, 16116 Westview Ave.,
Cleveland 20, Ohio.

OKLAHOMA

Elder W. N. Green, Box 654, Altus, Okla.

OREGON

Elder C. W. Bond, Island City, Ore.

TENNESSEE

Elder R. L. Biggs, Rt. 6, Nashville, Tenn.

TEXAS

Elder W. O. Beene, 1005 Vincent St.,
Houston 9, Texas.
Elder L. D. Rose, Athens, Texas.

VIRGINIA

Elder J. E. Burgess, Rt. 1, Box 180, Martinsville, Va.
Elder Roy S. Smith, Cascade, Va.
Elder David V. Spangler, Rt. 6, Danville, Va.

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each 1st Sunday, 11:00 a. m. and Saturday before.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday.
AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before, ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala. Elder H. Matt Brock, co-pastor, preaches on Sunday at 11 o'clock.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a. m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopewell Church, Ozark Ala., meets each 4th Sunday, 11 a. m. J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock, C.S.W.T. Meeting place at Vine Street at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Beulah Primitve Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canda, California.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday, north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before.
E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

Pleasant Valley Church, Kingman, Kansas, meets **each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc.)**
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. E. M. TACKETT,
J. S. HUNNICUTT, Pastors.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY
Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue. Take elevator to second floor.
11.00 a. m. 1:30 p. m.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.
(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.
C. W. BOND, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 a. m.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.
W. O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. G. E. Rushing, co-pastor.
C. B. TEAGUE, Pastor.

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets third Sunday in each month at 11:00 a. m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Old School Baptist meetings are held every fourth Sunday at Civic Club, 1419 N. Shepherd St., Houston, Texas. Preaching by Elder W. O. Beene.
(Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Danville Primitve Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before. Bradley Road, Danville, Va.
W. R. DODD, Pastor.

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meet each first Sunday 11 a.m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3032 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va. R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.
R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m. C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 113 RUTHERFORD, N. J., DECEMBER, 1945. No. 12

CORRESPONDENCE

Box 315, El Dorado, Arkansas.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: If not deceived, I feel a desire to write an article for publication and I do humbly hope that it is for no other purpose than for the comfort and consolation of the household of faith and to the praise, honor and glory of God our Saviour. If it is of myself it will not be so, but if of the Lord it will be to the comfort of his humble poor and will be to his honor and glory. I am doubtful that my writing will be worth anything to the afflicted people of God but nevertheless I feel constrained to write, even though I do so with doubt in myself and with fear and trembling.

It seems that I want to express some thoughts on 1 Peter 2:3-9, with special attention called to the 9th verse. "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." This scripture has many times, it seems to me, exercised my mind. I have often read it and meditated thereon, and with much joy and feasting it seems to me. I hope it has been with a feeling of joy and feasting given from on high. This, I verily believe, describes a definite and a specific people, and the same people are in a very similar way referred to in Deut. 7:6, when Moses said, "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth." It is my thought that these verses of scripture in the Old and New Testaments refer to and concern a certain definite people and both quotations allude to and have under consideration the same special and peculiar people, and it is also my thought and my understanding, if indeed and in truth a poor, weak, insufficient and helpless creature such as I am, can have any true understanding of and concerning spiritual light and knowledge at all, that these under consideration constitute all of the children of God, and embraces all of them from beginning to end; that is, each one that has been, is now, and that ever will be, and are those collectively that John saw as they will be hereafter when he said: "And after this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." Rev. 7:9.

These people it is clear to me are described in such way as to show forth their special and peculiar characteristics. They are different from and above all other people on the face of the earth, and yet

they feel so little, humble, weak and unworthy. They are not only a special people; a peculiar people; a royal priesthood etc., but they are a chosen generation, and the everlasting covenant the Lord has made concerning them is in all things ordered and sure. Hence God's people are a chosen people and were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began and they were chosen, not according to their works, but according to grace and purpose. (2 Tim. 1:9) They were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world that they should be holy and without blame before him in love and they were predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his own will. (Eph. 1:4-5). These are the people whose righteousness is Christ. He is their strength, their sufficiency and their all in all. They have no strength, sufficiency and righteousness of themselves to offer, but we find in the verses preceding the ninth verse of this chapter reference to their blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, being disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious. Precious to these chosen people, special and peculiar people, (Sounds just like describing Old Baptists) and they are lively stones, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. How comforting this all is to the child of grace — God's poor and afflicted that are made to feel dependent for all things and at all times upon a holy, righteous and sovereign God. These lively stones are not such by their own good works, their own efforts and their free will as the worldly preachers contend, teach and preach. They preach that any one and every one can become as lively stones by accepting Christ. These people under consideration — these special and peculiar people — have been made as lively stones by the blood of the Lamb. "For thous wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation." Rev. 5:9. It was not according to anything good they have done but through the love, mercy and grace of God and according to grace and purpose, they were saved and called with an holy calling before the world began. (2 Tim. 2:9). Therefore, they are lively stones: not having made themselves so, for none can make themselves so, but they are lively stones — already lively stones— and are therefore, indeed and in truth, according to my understanding, as lively stones they are built up a spiritual house — an holy priesthood — to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God by Jesus Christ. These characters under consideration are enabled to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God because Jesus Christ dwells in them and he is their righteousness, strength and all in all to offer up spiritual sacrifices. "Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious." You notice, it is unto them that *believe* that he is precious. These that believe are not any and every one of the Adamic family that of their own free will may believe or that may become a believer by his own efforts as the worldly and popular religious denominations teach and preach, but I verily believe those that are ordained to eternal life are these that believe, (Acts 13:48) and to these he is precious. It is the chosen generation, the royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people that he is precious to. As I have already said: these are the children of God — his chosen people. This seems very clear to me and I believe with all the powers of my mind that these are all that will have a home in glory and all that are the saved. Notwithstanding this being so clear, it seems the majority of the people believe, and all denominations I know of, except the Old Baptists, preach that salvation is to each and every one of the Adamic family provided he accepts Christ and they

claim that acceptance is left to each one's own free will and choice and that each one has the power to accept or reject him. They even go so far as to say that Christ wants them all to accept him but many won't do it. That kind of assertions have never been any comfort to me. I have been made to know, I hope from on high, that I have no such power. If it were left to me to accept Christ, and I had the power to do so, I certainly would exercise that power. Just here, that remark reminds me that the blessed Saviour himself said: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." John 15:16. I must believe that these chosen people of God embraces all his elect and they are not only all of them but they were ordained to eternal life, every one of them.

There is another people and they, in my humble belief, are all the remainder of the Adamic family other than the people of God, and they are also referred to in this same chapter. To them he is not precious, because as to them it is said: "But unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient:" They are not embraced in the chosen generation and they, therefore, are the disobedient, and to them he is not precious. The worldly, so called religious, view is that they are disobedient on account of their failure to accept Christ and thereby get obedient and get saved, and they contend that each one could of his own free will do so, but this scripture says, "whereunto also they were appointed." It seems clear to me that this and many more Scriptures clearly establish that there are two classes of people. One the children of God — those chosen in Christ before the world began, and those that were not.

It is my understanding that throughout the Scriptures we find the Adamic family divided into two classes of people. They are referred to and described in many different ways, so to speak, in the Scriptures. One is entirely the opposite to the other. One is a people that is the seed of Abraham and heirs according to the promise, and the other class is the children of the flesh. This distinction appears between Ishmael and Isaac; Esau and Jacob; the children of the bondmaid and the free woman, therefore, those of the bondwoman were born after the flesh; but those of the freewoman were by promise. (Gal. 4:22-23). I verily believe that they are divided into the true believers, and the unbelievers; the saved, and those that are not saved; the children of God, and those that are not the children of God. Contrary to the popular, so-called religious beliefs of the worldly churches that teach and proclaim that it is according to their own free will and choice whether they are in the saved class or not; or as they commonly put it; that they may by their own volition and free will get themselves into; it is my understanding that they are exactly where they were ordained and appointed. All this was decreed before the foundation of the world and all those that are saved are those that were ordained to eternal life. All this was by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of an all-wise and sovereign God before the world began, and all is coming to pass exactly according to appointment. All things, in my humble belief, were foreknown and therefore, stand sure, by a triune, sovereign, all-wise and righteous God that worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. (Eph. 1:11). "Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it." "That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God re-

quireth that which is past." Eccl. 3:14-15. I believe God possesses all power and ruleth all things according to his own will in heaven, the earth, the sea and in all deep places, and there is none that can stay his hand. "And he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Dan. 4:35. I have never found any scriptual authority that teaches that those that were not ordained to eternal life can do anything to get it. Neither do those that were ordained to eternal life have anything to do to get it; "because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." 2. Thess. 2:13. To these he is precious but to the other class a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. How comforting and consoling all this grand old doctrine is and this scripture is to the child of grace — lively stones — built up a spiritual house.

There is no trouble with me about this being the truth. It seems very clear to me, but my trouble is with myself, whether I am embraced in it or not. I cannot say that I am. I wonder if it is not the same with you my dear reader? A hope is all I have, but that hope is comforting. I wouldn't exchange it — even if I could — for all this chance doctrine, that is preached by the world, nor for any and all worldly things. Paul says it is: "An anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast." (Heb. 6:19). This Old Baptist doctrine is comforting to me, if I know myself, and I verily believe it is in accordance with the faith once delivered to the saints. To the chosen—to them which believe he is precious, but not to the others — to them which be disobedient, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed. But to them which believe and to whom he is precious I verily believe, they are they who he hath called out of darkness into his marvellous light.

I better bring this to a close. If it is not in accordance with that which becomes sound doctrine cast it aside. When you are at the throne of grace remember me a poor sinner saved by grace and grace alone, if saved at all. Yours in a precious hope.

W. A. SPEER.

Hooker, Okla.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I want to ask your views on Heb. 2:15. "And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." All of this chapter seems to be telling of Christ's mission to earth, and his work of salvation which was promised and also given to all of his people, but I seem to have so little evidence of any inheritance in Christ that it is hard to see where my claim comes in.

Of late years this verse has caused me to wonder what death — the first or second death. I think the second causes me more fear. So many writers tell of dreams, visions and outspoken promises, and of what they call new birth, while we know that except ye be born again ye cannot see the kingdom of heaven. Truly I have no particular time or place when my acceptance was assured to me of God or Christ. This fifteenth verse points out the class for whom Christ died. I feel to have a desire to be comforted with the Scriptures wherewith you are comforted of God. This fear of death is said to be all their lifetime, while so many speak of being relieved of that fear. I do not understand so am asking you or others to explain. Yours in some kind of hope.

E. G. WEBB.

(As the fourteenth and fifteenth verses of the second chapter of Hebrews are inseparably linked together, before we undertake to offer any suggestions for brother Webb's consideration, we wish to quote both of these verses: "Forasmuch

then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." We believe the language in the fourteenth verse shows unmistakably clear that the children under consideration are those whom God foreknew in love and chose in Christ before the world was, whom he also predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son. As these children partook of flesh and blood, in order that Jesus might suffer in their stead he likewise partook of the same. And as he suffered and endured the pangs of death "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil," so must we partake of his sufferings if we are to have fellowship and part with him. Jesus verily was man, as well as verily God, and in the garden of Gethsemane "being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground," he cried out, saying, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." It was the Father's will that all he had given him should be saved with an everlasting salvation, and this could only be done by his giving himself as an offering which would perfect for ever them that are sanctified, or set apart by the workings of God's Holy Spirit. Since Jesus as a man of flesh and blood shrank from the pangs of death, it is not strange that we should do likewise. The flesh loves its own and does not wish to be crucified or die, but the warfare between the flesh and the spirit shall endure so long as mortal life shall last, and only through death will there be a full and final discharge. Our hope is that we shall be brought forth more than conquerors over death through Him that loved us and gave himself for us. Sometimes severe suffering or longevity brings one to the point where they not only are willing to die, but where they actually welcome death in order to be released from the trials of this life, but the vast majority of us love this life and wish to remain here as long as God so wills. How wonderfully blest we are to have faith to believe that *death* shall not be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Here is where this wonderful gift comes to our rescue, for it lays hold upon the hope set before us, "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." It is only through him and the meritorious work which he performed -that we shall be delivered from the body of this death. Brother Webb says there has been no time or place where his acceptance was assured to him of God or Christ. We presume he means he has no such evidence as was given to John the Baptist or the apostle Paul, and in this we will have to agree with him, as God's work of grace in our heart, if indeed there has been such, has been of a gradual nature. However, we have taken great comfort at times from the declaration which says, "we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," and we are sure that brother Webb will have to confess with great joy to being guilty of this. We have endeavored to set forth some of the things which have been of comfort to us, and we would like to comfort our brother with the same comfort wherewith we ourself have been comforted of God. If some one else feels to write to our brother or on the subject contained in his letter we feel certain it will be greatly appreciated by him. — R. L. D.)

1158 Falls Terrace, Union, N. J.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: It would be impossible to express my appreciation of being able to go to the Association with you yesterday. I tried, in my weak way, to give thanks to the giver of every good and perfect gift after returning home, as it is only by and through the goodness and mercy of our blessed Redeemer that we are permitted to be present at such gatherings, where a crumb of mercy falling from the Master's table spreads a ray of hope in our poor sinful hearts.

It was such a beautiful day, praise God for giving us the beautiful sunshine. It is all in his hands, not one ray of sunshine can fall across our path unless he wills it so. How thankful we should be for the knowledge that he is ruler over the entire universe, that all things are in his hands, having been predestinated by him and are being brought to pass at his own appointed time. Today I feel like shouting his praise from the housetop for the many blessings received from his bountiful hands. The trees, birds and flowers show forth his glorious work all around us. I certainly felt the promise "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," was being fulfilled when you spoke at the Association. Others expressed the same feeling during the day when they spoke of the comfort they received from your message. How thankful we should be at all times for the blessed privilege of being able to sit under the sound of your voice, knowing that any comfort we receive has been given to us from above. "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." It does our souls good to meditate on the many blessings we receive, and a meeting such as we attended yesterday makes us more conscious of our manifold blessings, and helps us to realize "how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," bound together by the common cord of love.

Dear Lord, I will praise thee at all times if given the strength. Praise thee for thou comfortest me when in distress and anguish, when all other helpers fail and there is no place where comfort can be found to compare in any way with the peace that passeth all understanding when it is spoken by thee. God is my salvation, he is my refuge and strength, in him will I trust and not be afraid. This we can declare with the utmost sincerity if we have the ear to hear and the heart to understand what the Spirit saith to those of like precious faith whose eyes have been opened to the beauty of his holiness. "The Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he is also become my salvation." Much comfort and beauty is contained in the above — my strength, my song and my salvation — what more could we desire than the hope that we are included in the above.

He is my all in all, my redeemer, guardian, guide and friend, the one altogether lovely, the first, last and always, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, over and above all things. There is salvation in none other except by and through the atoning blood of our blessed Redeemer. "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." Sometimes our cup is so empty and dry, at other times it is filled to overflowing with water from the wells of salvation. It is then we have been given to drink from the fountain that never runs dry, the river of the water of life that quenches our thirst and satisfies our longing for food and drink; we have been told that, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." "And in that day shall ye say, Praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted." In what day? In the day that we are born anew of that incorruptible seed that liveth and abideth forever. We are given an understanding of things in a new world, old things have passed away, behold a

new day has dawned in our life, we have passed from death unto life; this is a day of rejoicing for the wonderful things he has done for us. His name is exalted above all other names. How can we call upon his name? In and of ourselves we cannot, we are too weak and unworthy. We can only say, "Lord, save us: we perish," yet with his everlasting arms underneath we are made to call upon his name. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." We are now in his hands and are molded as the potter molds the clay. The shalls and wills of Jehovah "standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." "Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth." Again we cannot sing unless we are given the song of praise from above. What shall we sing? Sing his praise for the excellent things he hath done in saving his people from death, hell and the grave; redeeming them with an everlasting salvation; putting a new song in their mouth, a song of praise, love, submissiveness and obedience to his holy and divine will. Father, thy will be done in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. He has a people in every nation, kindred, tongue and tribe, and none is able to pluck them out of his hand.

We are made to cry out and shout aloud when the great Redeemer is in our midst, when he sheds his love abroad in our hearts. Though our songs of joy are not always heard and shared by those around us, deep in our hearts there is a feeling of solemnity which words cannot express; nevertheless he knows our thoughts which are not expressed, they cannot be hid from him at any time. In spite of the fact I had promised myself I would not attempt any writing of a spiritual nature again, I find myself trying to convey some thoughts to you which I had after returning from the Delaware River Association. Hope you will be charitable and find it in your heart to forgive anything that has been said amiss, and if anything I have written is not consistent with his holy and divine will as revealed in the scripture, I beg of you to cast the mantle of charity over it all. If it has not been revealed by a higher power than man, it is of no value to anyone and should be cast into the waste basket. Remember me in your prayers as one whose hope the Lord is, and one who shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness, dear Lord, regardless of when or how that day may come. Is it not enough to know that a home has been prepared in heaven for those that love the Lord because he first loved us? In bonds of christian love.

(Mrs.) ELSIE LOEFFEL.

GLAD TIDINGS

Some of our readers inform us they like to hear about good meetings. We feel confident all of them will be glad to read the following quotations from a letter received from the capable and greatly esteemed Moderator of the Lower Country Line Association in North Carolina. It is a real pleasure to publish such things from our good brethren and we hope they will freely pass them on to us.

Since brother Long's letter was received we are happy to report the baptism of sister Emma Secor who, with her mother and sister Gertrude (the last mentioned having been baptized in July 1944) attended the above Association, traveling in all about twelve hundred miles to do so. Their paternal grandmother is a profound lover of the truth. Being ninety-four years of age and her sight not being good she delights to have Emma and Gertrude read the Bible and *Signs* to her. The late father of sisters, Gertrude and Emma, was a member of the militant church. Sister Gertrude had a letter in the *Signs* of December 1944, and we are herewith publishing two letters we received from sister Emma before her baptism and one since. We be-

lieve our readers will agree with us that they show she has been deeply taught of the Lord for one of such tender years.

The Ebenezer Church in New York City is joined by her sister churches in these parts in thanksgiving and praise to Almighty God for the great blessings which he has been pleased to bestow upon us.—R. L. D.

I thought we had a real good Association for which I hope to be thankful, as the Lord has blessed us these many years to live in peace, one with another. We had a very large crowd although the weather was very warm. There were thirty-one preachers present and I thought they were all blessed to preach well. We had nine to preach Monday morning, taking about two hours and I do not think I ever heard any sweeter preaching. At the close of the service seven came forward and united with the different churches in the Association. It seemed everybody was rejoicing and much love was manifested.

We had a wonderful meeting last fourth Sunday at old Flat River Church which I think you visited at one time at our Association. Elder Martin is the Pastor. I am sure you have met him. He is the son of the late M. B. Martin. He is now living in Roxboro and we are delighted to have him here with us.

In reference to the meeting at Flat River, he baptized seven fourth Sunday morning before the largest congregation I have ever seen witness a baptizing. I am satisfied there was as many as one thousand people present. It was a beautiful place for baptizing. The ground is situated so that everybody could see. After the baptizing we had all day services at the church. There were nine preachers with a large crowd present. I am sure more than half the people did not get inside the house. You can see the Lord is wonderfully blessing us, for which I hope to have a thankful heart. Yours in fellowship,

Route 1, Roxboro, N. C. F. D. LONG.

Ashokan, N. Y.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: It has been my intention to write you for some time. Will you please send my *Signs* to Ashokan instead of Kingston as I am at home now. I have been reading this month's *Signs* and find it very good. Enjoyed Elder Ruston's letter very much. I take the paper with me on the bus to work, then read whenever I have a chance. There is so much food in the *Signs* for those who are hungering and thirsting.

I want you to know that it is a great privilege to be with the church in New York. I come as an empty vessel, hungering and thirsting, and I am happy to say I have always been filled and given comfort. How wonderful it is to know that Jesus died for our sins, to think that God gave his only begotten Son for us. It brings tears to my eyes to think of his everlasting mercy and love for us. I feel so unworthy of his love and the comfort I receive for I know I am a vile sinner. I have been very much troubled of late and found much comfort and hope in the Bible. How good it is to know that "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." We have much to be thankful for and many blessings which I fear I am not thankful enough for.

I fear I have been lengthy and know this is not worth your consideration, but my pen just seems to run away with me once I get started. I am looking forward to hearing you Easter Sunday.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I have had a mind to write you for some time and would start and never finish.

I have been sorely troubled in my mind for quite awhile now, and how rebellious I have been. Once I did not have a desire to read His word or to hear it preached. Now I am hungering and thirsting for it. I was in a deep dark wilderness and he

came and drew me out. He seemed to say, I am the way, follow me. I looked to see if it was in the Scriptures and did not find it, but found "I am the way, the truth, and the life." I was deaf and my ears were opened to his word.

All the time these things were going on I was rebelling, I was not going to have it that way. I was going to be as others I knew; going my way, following worldly pleasures, but deep down I derived no pleasure from those pursuits and my heart was sore distressed. Then I realized fully "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." I found a hymn which I feel expresses my feelings better than I can. It is so dear to me that I must write it in full.

"Let worldly minds the world pursue,
It has no charms for me;
Once I admired its trifles too,
But grace has set me free.

Its pleasures now no longer please,
No more content afford;
Far from my heart be joys like these,
Since I have known the Lord.

As by the light of opening day
The stars are all concealed,
So earthly objects fade away
When Jesus is revealed.

Creatures no more divide my choice,
I bid them all depart;
His name, and love, and gracious voice,
Have fixed my roving heart.

Now, Lord, I would be thine alone,
And wholly live to thee;
But may I hope that thou wilt own
A worthless worm like me?

Yes, though of sinners I'm the worst,
I cannot doubt thy will;
For if thou had'st not chose me first,
I had refused thee still."

I have been made to feel my wickedness and unworthiness many, many times. I have nothing to offer, I am nothing and less than nothing. "Nothing in my hand I bring! Simply to thy cross I cling." I dearly love the members of the church and feel a strong tie to them.

I will close, realizing I have been very lengthy. If I have said anything amiss please cast the mantle of charity over it and realize the weakness of the writer.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I have just been reading one of your letters. They have been such a comfort and help to me, more than I can ever hope to express.

Ever since the first Sunday (the day she asked for a home with the church) I have been rejoicing and feasting on the Lord's love. The fourth Sunday (the day of her baptism) was a day I had hoped for yet rebelled against. I had the course of my life charted and resented any interference. I found it increasingly hard to kick against the pricks. Now I am completely happy and at peace. I know that in this world I will have tribulations for the Word says, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." I believe these tribulations and the times we are in the valley make our moments on the mountain top sweeter. I have been made to realize the things of this world are vain. Once I was fully enjoying myself with the worldly things, but now I have no more desire for them. I enjoyed the preaching so much Sunday, both yours and brother Slauson's, and am still feasting upon it. I wished that it might go on and on. I have rambled on more than I intended. I hope that you will cast the mantle of charity over my poor attempt. If indeed a sister the very least of all.

(Miss) EMMA L. SECOR.

Start, La.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I hope you will not be deceived by my calling you brother, and also for the following article that I have written for I am not a member of any church. I have loved the Baptist doctrine as far back as I can remember, and if I have any hope I have had it from childhood. My people have been Primitive Baptists as far back as I know any-

thing about them, so I may be one that is believing by tradition.

The main reason I have written this is, if you still have any of the books on Predestination I wish you would send me one. I wish if you could have the mind to do so, that you would write an article for the *Signs* on the twenty-first chapter of Revelations. You will understand what I mean after you have read what I have written. I do not want you to think I am trying to present anything that is worthy of notice for you will be the only one that will read this, and I feel sure with your understanding you will bear with me in my weakness and blindness. All I want is to know and understand the truth.

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea." Rev. 21.1.

I would like to write a few things I see about this new Jerusalem, the Lamb's wife. The passing of the first heaven and the first earth was the law and the prophets and there was no more sea. All the demands of the law were kept and fulfilled by Christ himself, redeeming you from the law which could never give life. The new heaven and the new earth is the ushering in of the gospel dispensation of time which was witnessed by the twelve apostles, which are the inspired writers of the New Testament. Let us look at this new Jerusalem as John saw it when he was in the spirit for I think that is the only way any one has ever seen it, with a spiritual mind as it pleases the Lord and Master to reveal it to him.

Notice first that it is descending out of heaven from God. It seems to me that this city is not one that we have to look for when we depart this life or that we have to depart this life before we can view it. If this is the case let us look into it further. "Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." Rev. 21:11. It seems to me what John is teaching in this verse is, that it is one of the precious sights the child of God can look upon in this life to view with the eye of faith the church that Christ built upon the rock of Revelation, and is made to know that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Concerning the walls of this city, the church, he gave some time and space to the foundation of the walls, and in them he saw the twelve apostles names and the foundation was garnished with twelve different manners of precious stones.

Taking into consideration the relation and likeness of other scriptures, Christ and the apostles would take natural subjects to manifest the spiritual, as the apostle takes the bare grain as the likeness of the resurrection, or as Christ likens the wind to the second birth, etc., so John says in the eleventh verse "and her light was like unto a stone most precious." If John, being the servant of God, compared the light of the church, her foundations, walls, gates and streets to the likeness of precious stones and gold like unto clear glass it must have been a precious sight indeed to look upon.

Let us consider what the wall around a city is for. It is for the defense of the city, and a foundation is to hold anything up whether it be a house or a wall to a city. If the foundation crumbles, the house or the wall crumbles. We might say in our time that the men of our armed forces is the foundation to the wall of defense of our nation, our machines and guns being the wall, anyway we understand what a natural wall and foundation is. Haven't you heard the servants of God examine the walls and foundation of the church, always referring you to the apostles for proof as they set up the doctrine of predestination, election, choice, etc.? Can't you see the names of the apostles in the foundation as he refers you to their inspired writing for proof? Then as light is given him to tell you of

the sureness and stedfastness of this foundation, what other words could you find to express the likeness of it except all manner of precious stones and gold, having gates of pearl. Then as it is revealed to you by the foolishness of preaching, and you are carried through these gates that are like unto pearls, you are made to know that the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the light and the temple therein, rejoicing to know the carnal mind cannot penetrate these walls of defense; that they are only viewed by the revelation of the Holy Ghost, and nothing unclean or that defileth can enter. If the carnal mind tries to penetrate these walls it only adds to or takes away and gets no farther than the lake of fire, where the false prophet is, which is to be in darkness concerning the truth. Yours in hope.

E. W. PACE.

(The foregoing letter and views speak for themselves. Normally we would not take the liberty of publishing such things without first obtaining permission from the writer, but we feel so strongly convinced of the fact that Mr. Pace is our brother in Christ and that he has been shown things which are hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes, that we believe his main reason for objecting would be his felt sense of unworthiness. This in reality is for him rather than against him, and we are persuaded that one who has been given to see things as he sees them will not feel hurt towards us for publishing them. We are heartily in accord with what he says about the first heavens and the new heavens as representing law and gospel. In fact we so much approve of his thoughts in their entirety that we shall not attempt to enlarge upon them. Receiving such exprssions from one who says he is not a member of any church makes us feel that he has been hiding his light under a bushel. We would strongly urge him to come out and be separate from the world and put on the whole armor of God by professing before men what wondrous works have been wrought in him.—R. L. D.)

1315 N. Fuller Ave., Hollywood 46, Calif.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am sending my subscription renewal for the *Signs of the Times*. I enjoy your paper so much as I love to read the experiences of the brothers and sisters you publish. I especially enjoyed your last "New Years Greeting" and your treatment of the disagreements between churches and among the brethren of individual churches. I feel we do not follow the teachings of Christ closely enough, for we seem many times to drift so far from Christ and follow the minister instead of Christ's teachings.

In John 14:27 we read, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." His peace, his wonderful peace he freely gives to us, that we should love one another and bear one another's burdens, and dwell in harmony in that perfect peace which he has given us. I feel that we should forgive one another and follow his teachings more closely. If my brother can forgive me, I certainly ought to be able to forgive him. Let us try to see our own faults and sins, and look deeply into our own hearts and see how vile we really are. Then let us try to live and love one another as Christ admonished us to do, so that we may enjoy to the fullest that peace which he gave to us, then all of the churches and all of the brethren may dwell together in perfect love and harmony. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." John 14:15. May the Lord forgive my sins and help me to live in peace with my brethren is my prayer. Yours in hope of that perfect peace which he hath given his people.

F. B. JORDAN

1706 Grace St., Lynchburg, Va.

ELDER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: I think I am due some on your paper I take, the *Signs of the Times,* and am enclosing it. I have been confined to my room and bed seven weeks with a heart ailment and have enjoyed my Baptist literature so much, especially the article on "The Mark of the Beast" by Elder G. B. Bird. It was so comforting and deep too, but I hope I am able sometimes to take strong meat. I love the sincere milk of the word. Often in my present illness I have felt just a crumb from the Master's table would make me happy. I so much enjoyed your "New Year's Greeting", so comforting. I, too, had to see all three of my dear sons leave two years ago for the navy and army and two of them were wounded. On a vessel that was sunk on "D" day my son and ninety-five others were the only survivors of a crew of one thousand. He is in the states recovering. The other one was in a bomber crash and writes me from England, "Mother do keep up your prayers, surely they have kept us together this long." Seven years ago today I saw my husband die from a railroad accident. His last words were "the Lord be with me". The night before he was killed he had a beautiful vision and told it to me that forenoon. Brother Stegall who preached his funeral said the beautiful green field he was cast into in his dream was only heaven. Brother Dodson I heard you preach one time two years ago and enjoyed it, but it is glorious to me to hear you or any stranger that comes from a far country preaching that sweet doctrine that I was made to love in 1904 and it has no uncertain sound. Brother J. F. Spangler (brother David's father) married and baptized me. He was the first one to ever preach to me after I felt the scales had fallen from my eyes. His text I will remember always although he is now with the redeemed of the Lord I am satisfied. Pardon this lengthy letter, I only meant to send in my dues. With love to the dear writers and those who read this paper. Unworthily,

(Mrs.) J. W. KNOWLES.

Castle Rock, Wash.

DEAR ELDER BOND: Your letter came today and I was glad to hear from you again. Sorry to hear you were not so strong any more, yet it was good and comforting to have you say the things you did about death. I want to tell you that during these two long years of affliction I have just been through that. Our dear Lord has been ever near me, and always the greater the suffering the nearer he came. In my very worst times, two that remain clear in my mind, when it seemed I was too far gone to ever return, he was there, so near, so sufficient, so comforting that I wanted it to remain so. One time I sent my husband home so that I could sink back again into the presence of the greater Comforter. This happened and was repeated often enough that all fear of death that I ever had has disappeared. If this was God's purpose in my long sickness — to teach me that he was ever with me even in the valley of death, then in humble gratitude I thank him for my suffering. It is such a comfort to feel the assurance that I know he will be, and I seem unable to doubt it any more. I have read your last in the *Signs,* the letter to your seven children, and I felt to say what a priceless legacy. I know that part if not all the seven will treasure it as long as they live. I have some of my father's (Elder E. T. Atteberry) writings that no amount of money could buy. It would be a comfort to have you consider me a reliable judge of spiritual things if I did not know my own ignorance so well. It seems I get the literal and spiritual meanings of so much of the scripture mixed. Some way I have always felt that all scripture had both, but I so often question what it is. It is a great burden to me as I think about it so much. We

have a literal birth and a spiritual one, a literal life and a spiritual one, also a home of each kind, and when I hear some one deny the resurrection I wonder if they get the resurrection and the spiritual birth mixed, or is it my own inability to understand. I shall look forward to seeing your writing in the *Signs*. I have been blessed to be at all the meetings since last September, and how I am made to thank my Lord for so great a privilege. We had such a good meeting in January. Elder Peters preached such a sweet sermon. Took no text but just used the words "It is the Lord" and it was wonderful. It made me sure, if I never had been sure before, that the Lord was all, and all was the **Lord.**

We had Elder Hughett and brother Cameron with us at Chehalis and we surely had two able sermons. We had a larger congregation than usual, about twenty-two or twenty-three though only three members of the church. It was the time set to re-elect a pastor, moderator and clerk and hardly enough to do it, and three members able to be there within from three to eight miles. This grieves me but it seems I can do nothing about it. The dear Lord knows about it I know, and in his hands it must rest but I cannot get it off my mind. I have a strong impression to be there if able myself, and most of the time whether I am able or not, and it is a constant desire with me to see others come too.

Dear old sister Estep is bedfast now continually and does not ever hope to be up again. We plan to visit her on the second Sunday if God so wills it. If only her husband and I are there we can at least sing some of her favorite hymns for her. Gas is so limited we do not hope for many to be there. Will close by thanking you for your letter. Every time I write to a Baptist I should not be surprised if I did not get an answer, I am not worthy. I send my regards and love to sister Bond. With hope in Christ.

(Mrs.) EFFIE PARKE.

110 S. Peach St., Du Quoin, Ill.

The Editors, Associate Editors, all Readers of the *Signs of the Times* and Lovers of the Truth: I have just finished reading the June issue of the *Signs of the Times* and was so fed and refreshed by the many good articles in this issue that I was caused with one of old to say, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

I seldom write anything for publication, and I have several reasons for not doing so; First — I am too poor and too weak, and too destitute of food to feed the flock of God over which the Holy Ghost hath made us overseers; Second — There are so many in the household of faith whose writing I love to read and I would not wish to crowd it out; and too, I feel that God's children could feast upon the writings of others while they would famish upon mine. O, that our God would give me the spirit of wisdom and understanding that I might rightly divide the word of truth, that I keep him as the apple of my eye, high and lifted up; the mighty God, Wonderful, Counsellor, everlasting Father and Prince of Peace.

I still have enough pride of the flesh in me to feel at least gratified (but I hope not boastful) when I find others who agree with me upon the cardinal principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ as recorded in the sacred Scriptures. I was blessed with this privilege when I read Elder Hunnicutt's article. O, what a pleasure it is for a poor pilgrim who is traveling alone to sit down by the wayside and listen through distant lands, and to hear the voice of one who has been taught in the schools of God's regenerating grace speak the things that become sound doctrine. It is like a gentle rain on a summer garden. If there is any one who differs with me they may feel at perfect liberty to say so for I have learned long since that there are very few who believe the Scriptures as I do. They might be right and I might be wrong, but there

is one sure thing, we can't both be right and both be different.

Just what is the subject of salvation: the subject of the new birth and the subject of the resurrection of the dead; and are they all one and the same thing? Are they living, visible, tangible beings, and are they mortal or immortal? For the answers to these all-important questions, we can only pray for the guidance of a sovereign and immutable God.

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20. The subject of salvation, as I read the book, is the "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." Rom. 8:17. I would think surely there are none who would deny that Paul was the subject of salvation, and Paul says that he was "a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God." Rom. 1:1. Paul, as I read the record, was just a man born of a fleshly mother at Tarsus in Cilicia of Benjamanite parents about the beginning of the first century, a Pharisee in faith and a tent maker by trade. Phil. 3:5, Acts 18:3. He studied law with Gamaliel at Jerusalem, persecuted the early christians, and was converted near Damascus while on his road to the High Priest for letters of authority to bind those whom he found and bring them to Jerusalem. As he journeyed he came near Damascus and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven, and he fell to the earth and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Acts 9:1-4.

Now what I want to know from those who preach funerals of men whom they say are not dead, was it the Paul who persecuted the church of God, the Paul who sought the High Priest for letters of authority, the Paul who saw a great light from heaven shine about him, and the Paul who fell to the ground and heard a voice, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" is this the subject of salvation; or was it the so-called inner man that we hear so much about? In Paul's letter to the Roman brethren, Rom. 8:21, he tells us that, "the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God," and in the 23rd verse he further says, "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Does this sound like it is the inside invisible something and yet nothing that is the subject of salvation?

Paul also says, Rom. 8:11, "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." It seems to me that this is the answer to all the inner man doctrine in the world; but I would also have you tell me how we would go about it to baptize this inner man, and if the man that you see, the flesh and bone man, is not the child of the living God and the subject of God's regenerating grace, then I want you to go with me to Jordan's rolling tide, and I want to point you to what I thought was two men standing in that stream, one I thought and still think was John, the Baptist, and the other one Jesus Christ. Matt. 3:13-17. I want to know this, if the so-called inner man is the subject of salvation and the man that you see has no part in this glorious work of redemption, then how could the baptism of Jesus Christ be a valid baptism? And if this baptism is invalid and it symbolizes the resurrection of the dead, how can you validate the resurrection of the dead, since John, whom we saw, baptized Christ? I know there are many good and conscientious Old Baptists who differ with me on this, but until my God gives me a different understanding of the teachings of the Scriptures I shall be-

lieve it was the same Paul who persecuted the church of the living God who was the subject of the new birth. (I really never thought that a spirit needed any regeneration, new birth, or baptism and I never could understand just how a spirit would go about it to wash the disciples feet.) I believe with all my being that these vile bodies of ours will be raised in the morning of the resurrection, in an immortalized state, however, this body that was sown in corruption will be raised in incorruption, this body that was sown in weakness will be raised in power, and when this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

I know that the scope of this subject is infinitely too broad to cover in one article and I humbly hope and trust that I have not given cause for offense, but rather that some poor pilgrim who is bowed down with sorrow and affliction over the decayed state of our beloved Zion may gather a crumb to strengthen him in the faith of God's elect.

In sweet fellowship with all the objects of God's redeeming love, and the happy recipients of his grace who were eternally and unconditionally chosen in Christ before the world began, and who will eventually be safely housed with him in glory without the loss of one. A sinner saved by grave.

(Elder) L. P. HARRISS.

6915 Laredo St., Houston 10, Texas.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: It is time for me to send in my renewal for the dear old *Signs* so you will find a money-order enclosed.

For some time I have wondered why a place of worship has not been located here in this city. At last it seems it has pleased our heavenly Father to grant a few of his wandering flock the privilege of assembling as he has commanded them. Just a simple shelter to try to worship One who came to this earth in a simple way, born in a manger of poor parents, but who were rich in the mercies of God.

All the architecture of the great temples, decorated with many works of art and material comforts are all outward display of a fleshly worship, but in God's word we learn his temple is within us and all the beauties of that temple have its works of art in the heart which are defined as brotherly love, forgiveness, forbearance, and all goodness and charity in all its varied forms.

Our hearts are made glad to have a meeting place and our prayers are that God in his mercy will see fit to let all those of like faith find comfort in listening to the shepherd that he has sent here, Elder W. O. Beene. If I am one of His little ones it is only through his mercy and by his grace, and nothing I have done or can do. (John I:13) I feel less than nothing and feel the need of being fed with spiritual food, if so be I am one that can understand it. Your little sister in hope of eternal life if one at all.

(Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

S. E. Reeves, formerly of Winona, Texas, has changed his address to Route 1, Hawkins, Texas, and would like his correspondents to address him there.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

J. W. Haynes, Calif., $1; Mrs. J. Clifford, Wash., $1; M. A. Shanklin, Tenn., $1; Mrs. D. Holloway, Md., $2; Mrs. L. F. Bishop, Va., $1; Mrs. R. MacPhee, N. J., $3; B V. Helms, Va., $1; Mrs. L. M. Lowe, Del., $1.

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EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. DECEMBER, 1945

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

"And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." 1 Kings 17:24.

We feel impressed to offer some thoughts on this chapter of first Kings, laying stress particularly upon the text. If our readers will first read the chapter it may be helpful to them in better understanding our exposition of it. We are confident that these Old Testament scriptures have their counterpart and fulfillment in the experience of the Gospel Church, and in order to bring out our thoughts we shall divide them into three sections or parts:

1—We will first comment upon verses one to seven inclusive. Our thought is that Elijah, the prophet, here typifies God's truly called and qualified ministers, who are made mouthpieces for his people, in their experience before they are inducted into the fellowship of the militant church. The message of the Lord to the titular head of Israel, who at that time was king Ahab and who was in captivity because of sin, was that there would be no dew or rain "but according to my word." The Lord commanded his prophet to hide himself by the brook Cherith which was before Jordan for a season. How suitable to the needs of God's children before they pass over Jordan is this *hiding* themselves in some gorge, for that is the meaning of Cherith. There they remain until all the brooks of nature dry up, but in the meantime God remembers them and at his command they are fed and sustained by the food which ravens take to them. Ravens are unclean birds and in our opinion typify here the ministry of the religious world. We wish to make the observation here that Elijah was not fed with ravens food, but that at God's command they carried him "bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening." God's sovereignty extends over all creatures and they must do his bidding, or will, even though they are not aware of it. We verily believe, if our own experience counts for anything, that there are innumerable numbers of God's people on the other side of Jordan, outside of the pales of the visible church, many of them never having even heard of the Old School Baptist church, who are being fed by the ravens. Some of them may never be given to see the true church as it has been established here on earth, apart from all earthly organizations, but this does not mean that they have no knowledge or understanding of the truth. We have often said that there are far more of the Lord's people who are on the outside than are on the inside of the Gospel Church, for many are called, but few are chosen, and we are persuaded that none will cross over Jordan by asking a home and following their Lord in baptism until all the streams of nature are completely dried. When their souls are made to famish for thirst and they find themselves in a dry place where no water is, of necessity they will cry unto the Lord to undertake for them and to lead them to the Rock of all Ages which has never failed to follow Israel and supply her needs. God has declared that he would not leave himself without witnesses and, therefore, some are made willing in the day of his power

to cross over Jordan and find rest, comfort and consolation in the land which flows with milk and honey.

2—Beginning with the eighth verse we are told that the word of the Lord came unto Elijah telling him what to do and where to go. God's servants all need to be instructed and directed in the way of righteousness, and they have to abide his set time. The Lord said to Elijah, "Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee," so he crosses over Jordan and goes to Zarephath. Luke tells us that there were many widows in Israel in those days, "But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta." This confirms our feeling that there are many of the Lord's people who never have the gospel preached to them in its purity and fulness. Sarepta represents, according to our understanding, the true visible church of God here in the world. She is a type of the New Jerusalem, of whom we purpose to say more later on. The record is that Elijah "arose and went to Zarephath, and when he came to the gate of the city behold, a widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand. And she said, As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die. And Elijah said unto her, Fear not: go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain on the earth. And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days. And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah." If we know anything about the experience of God's servants and their call to preach the gospel, they are sustained by the church. Had we not had good brethren to comfort and encourage us when we were under an exercise of mind over having to preach the gospel of the Son of God, we cannot imagine what would have become of us. Of a truth we have and still do find our brethren to possess a sympathetic and understanding heart. Not long ago one of our good friends on the other side of Jordan said to us that when she attended meeting she invariably had a prayer in her heart that God would give utterance to the speaker and a hearing ear to the listener. To know that our hearers are being kept constantly reminded of the source of all spiritual help, and that they are making prayers and supplications in our behalf does sustain us in the warfare that we are continually being called upon to wage as a minister of God, but let us not lose sight of the fact that the widow of Zarephath had nothing of her own to give the prophet, but felt she was at the end of her row, and without help from some other quarter she and her son would have to give up the ghost and die. Please note, however, that notwithstanding she had so little she was commanded to first make a little cake for the prophet. The command of Jesus to his people under the gospel yoke is to "seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." How beautifully illustrative of the experience of those who walk by faith is this narrative of the widow of Zarephath who must first give of what little she had by ministering to the Lord's anointed, only to find that the meal in the barrel wasted

not, and neither did the oil in the cruse fail. The hand of the Lord was seen by all "and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days." If we could but be given faith sufficient to commit our way unto the Lord, we would realize that there is that scattereth, and yet increaseth, and that God who moves in a mysterious way will supply the needs of his people, and will never leave nor forsake them.

3—On this side of Jordan we find the New Jerusalem, the mother of us all, including our Elder Brother, who was the beginning of this new creation. Beginning with the seventeenth verse, we are told that this woman's son "fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him." Here Christ, the sin bearer and sufferer for his people, is presented as having laid down his life for them. The way of life is through death, and when we are passing this way it does seem as though all is against us, for our sins are called to our remembrance, but in the hope that is given us we have an anchor of the soul which is both sure and stedfast, and we are made to cast all of our care upon him, believing that he careth for us. The prophet took her son up into a loft, "and laid him upon his own bed. And he cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son? And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again. And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth." In this gospel dispensation God is known in the Trinity, or in his three-oneness, and God's people are, therefore, baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Here are to be found those who know the significance of death, burial and resurrection, and these things are made manifest "up into a loft" or in an upper room, where the things of the Spirit are witnessed to. Here God's servants are made to see something of the great mystery of godliness, and by the gift which God gives them they are enabled, through the mystery of preaching the Word, to bring Christ down alive out of the loft or from on high unto the people, who by reason of having been born of the Spirit themselves, can witness to the mysteries of God. This preaching of Christ the way, the truth, and the life; of knowing nothing but Christ and him crucified and risen again is the very essence of all gospel preaching, and when one is made to know that the gospel is the power of God, unto salvation to them that believe, he is not ashamed of it, but is made to rejoice in it with joy that is inexpressable and full of glory.

"And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." When the gospel is preached in demonstration of the Spirit and with power sent down from above, those that hear have the witness within themselves that it is the gospel, and that the one from whose heart it proceeds, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, has been called and qualified of God to proclaim it. Old School Baptists should be most careful in ordaining their preachers and not lay hands upon one who does not give unmistakable evidence of having been called of God to preach, and the very best evidence that he can give is, not some impression which he may feel to have had to preach, but that he actually preaches the gospel. Unless they can say regarding the one to be ordained as the widow of Sarepta did concerning Elias, "Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy

mouth is truth," they should refrain from loosing him to let him go out among other churches, for they may be sure that nothing but trouble and confusion will be the result. No man can preach except he be sent by God and also by this same standard should our preachers of today be judged, regardless of how long they may have been speaking in the name of the Lord. Unless their walk and talk shows that they have been with and learned of Jesus, they should not be given Godspeed, and if they are sowing seeds of discord and causing trouble among the churches, faithful brethren should let them know that they have not their approval in following such a course. God has given us the scales in which his servants and his people shall be weighed and measured. Let his servants be the first to make use of them, lest having preached to others they themselves become castaways. We desire that God's blessings may rest upon and abide with us all.—R. L. D.

Close of Vol. No. 113

This issue closes Vol. No. 113 of the *Signs of the Times*. God, who has bestowed his favor upon this publication for so many decades, was pleased to continue to bless it during 1945. We believe many of the excellent articles which appeared during the year were the result of the work of God's Holy Spirit in the hearts of his people, and we wish to express our sincere thanks to those who contributed for the part they played in adding one more successful year to the already long record. We have some good articles on hand for the coming year and would suggest to our readers that they remember their brethren, friends and loved ones by sending them the *Signs*, which will carry glad tidings to them every month of the coming New Year. We are anxious to enlarge our circle of readers, and will still send FREE a copy of our 172 page book, containing articles by twenty authors, other than our own, on the subject of the Resurrection of the Dead, to any NEW subscriber for a year at $2. Any old subscriber can have a copy FREE by sending us a NEW subscriber at the same price. If the book alone is desired the price is $1.

R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

JAMES A. CAPLES was born near Tuscaloosa, Tuscaloosa Co., Ala., May 19, 1885, and departed this life Aug. 9, 1945, making his stay on earth 60 years, 2 months and 21 days. He was married to Miss Viola Rabun, March 31, 1907. To this union was born one son. He is survived by his dear companion and son, Luther; one brother, two sisters, one half brother and step-mother; also a number of other relatives who have the very deepest sympathy of many beloved brethren, sisters and friends. It is not my privilege to remember the exact date when brother Caples received a hope of heaven by reason of the new birth, but ten years ago the second Sunday in last June he was baptized by Elder S. J. Norris into the fellowship of Old Nazareth Church of the Primitive faith and order. He was well established in the doctrine of God, and the hope of the resurrection of the dead. Not only did he express his faith in word, but in connection with the apostle James he proved his faith by his works. He had a very tender feeling for the poor and needy, so much so that it has been said if people were saved by or upon the merits of charity or moral deeds his reward is great. It is the writer's privilege to state that brother Caples did not believe salvation to be based on the merits of good morals or charity, but alone the gift of God. We are told in the Scriptures, "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." It was the grace of God freely imparted to him that made him walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he was called. He was an ordained deacon of Nazareth Church and we cannot find words to express how we miss him, his loyalty was so great to the cause, but may we all be led by grace divine to feel that our loss of him is his eternal gain in that upper and better kingdom, where no sad good-byes are heard and no sorrows are known. Let us say with the writer of old, weep not as those that have no hope for "if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." The writer conducted the funeral services in his home, 18 Caplewood Terrace, Tuscaloosa, Ala., after which the body was laid to rest in the Williamson Cemetery, Northport, Ala., to sleep the sleep of death, awaiting the adoption, to wit, the redempion of these our bodies, when the promise of Jesus is

verified. When Jesus shall step off the meditorial throne without sin unto salvation to gather up his jewels. Then shall the graves give up the dead and the seas shall give up their dead. The Lord "will say to the north, Give up; and the south. Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth." "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." May the dear Lord bless and keep his dear kindred here on earth, and be with them in the seventh trouble, which is death, is my prayer.

(Elder) THOMAS McQUEEN.

Sister HANNAH ROBINSON was born Aug. 21, 1857 at Howells, N. Y. and passed away July 1, 1945 at St. Francis Hospital, Poughkeepsie, N. Y. She was a daughter of George W. and Lavina (Horton) Corwin of Otisville, N. Y. and was married to Dr. William B. Robinson in the New School Baptist Church in Middletown, N. Y. She saw four generations in her immediate family. Four children were born to her, three preceding her in death, and Mrs. Willebud Lockwood of Poughkeepsie, with whom she made her home, surviving. There are four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. A great-great grandchild, darling little Betty Pyff, passed away last September. Sister Hannah and her two elder sisters were reared in the New School Baptist Church, but sister Editha Corwin and Mary Howell left that body and united with the Old School. Sister Hannah, a few years later, related an experience of grace and also united and was baptized by Elder H. C. Ker in 1902. Her life was a tempestuous one and she saw many fiery trials, but bore them with such fortitude as only one could that cast their burden on the Lord for she well knew her God ruled "in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" It can be truly said of her, she loved the assembly of the saints, and was faithful in writing to her brethren when she knew she could not meet with them. She was ill only thirty-six hours. She had had pneumonia and a very weak heart proved fatal. She read her "Signs" on Friday, arose Saturday morning, came down stairs and sat on the porch reading her Bible most of the day. At five p.m. the change came. Unable to procure a nurse her physician advised taking her to the hospital. Conscious to the end she passed away at 6 p.m. next day. She knew the traveling conditions and requested her family not to send for her pastor, Elder R. Lester Dodson, so her remains were taken to Middletown and a short service was held at Burnett's Funeral Home there. Mr. Hunter read the 23rd Psalm, "Crossing the Bar" and "Abide with Me". Her remains were taken to New Vernon and interred beside her husband. We of the Middletown and Walkill Church feel our loss, but then,

"It is not death to die—
To leave this weary road,
And, 'midst the brotherhood on high,
To be at home with God.

Jesus, thou Prince of Life!
Thy chosen cannot die;
Like thee, they conquer in the strife
To reign with thee on high."

Written by request by one who loved her.

(Miss) MINNIE E. HYATT.

MRS. MARTHA HASSELTINA COURTNEY, nee Hayes, our dear sister in the Lord and sainted mother in Israel, after a long siege of illness fell asleep in Jesus at the age of 82. She was born in Farmersville, La., and was united in marriage to J. E. Courtney, March 16, 1881. To this union were born twelve children, three of which preceded her in death. Seven of her surviving children, two girls and five boys, were present for the rites. One own daughter of Louisiana and one step-son of California could not attend. In addition to her own children she helped to raise three step-sons who lover her as their own mother. Her husband, J. E. Courtney, preceded her in death some thirty-six years. Sister Courtney was a helpmate indeed to her husband, and a mother indeed to her children, not discerning any difference in her own and the three step-sons. One brother also survives her, W. E. Hays, Marion, La. She had membership with the Old School Baptists for fifty years or more. She was firmly established in that faith which is a gift of God — salvation by grace and grace alone. The writer of this sketch was her pastor for a number of years. At her passing from this earth her membership was with the Little Flock Church at Altus, Okla. She was loved by all that really knew her and she leaves a godly love and fellowship in the hearts of her brethren and sisters which is a sweet memory we all cherish. I, as her pastor, visited her many times in her illness and she looked forward to those visits, hoping for a morsel of spiritual food and expressed thankfulness to her God for his remembrance of a poor sinner like she felt to be. Surely a noble and sainted woman has answered her Lord's call to come and dwell in that holy place to await that great day when her dead body that died in the Lord would be brought forth and fashioned like the glorified body of her Lord, and that will be the end of her hope as she expressed many times. Dear sorrowing family and friends look away from the death of the body and the tomb and the sorrows of this world, and see her in company with her Lord in that day when her tomb will be empty

as his was save the grave clothes. May God bless all that truly mourn is our prayer. Written by request of the family by her pastor.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN.

GEORGE H. MYERS of Flemington, N. J., departed this life at the home of his daughter in Woodbridge, N. J., June 25, 1945 at the age of 76. His health had not been the best for the past year or so and he was at his daughter's home for a rest. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Ida Harker Myers to whom he was married Dec. 25, 1890; three daughters, Mrs. Ethel Rhodes, Mrs. Norman Jones and Mrs. James Stuart; one son, Charles W. Myers; six grandchildren; two sisters, Mrs. Edward Pyatt and Mrs. Martha Dean; one brother, Charles Myers. Mr. Myers was not a member of the Old School Baptist Church, but to me his love for it manifested what was in him, and if I know anything concerning the love of God it is that love that was shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost which was given unto him. I first met him at the Kingwood Church where he shed forth the evidence of one who had received the light of the knowledge of the glory of God and realized the nothingness of man, and by this, he as well as others born of the spirit, stood as a witness of the truth in Christ Jesus our Lord, praising God from whom all blessings come. He was given to know that this same Lord was his refuge, rock and salvation and that whatsoever he did was right. He confessed this truth to his brother about a week before he left us. He said, "I know the time is short, but I am not afraid, whatever is, is right." By this he set forth the God given faith that was in him. He was a very good singer and the Kingwood Church will miss him in this respect as well as his presence at their meetings in worshiping the true and living God. The one that has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, and as such are being fulfilled may we all be given to say as a dear friend, George W. Myers, said, "whatever is, is right." His funeral was conducted by the writer at Flemington, N. J. and the interment was in the Rosemont Cemetery.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT.

MRS. MARY SUSAN MOTLEY WINGFIELD of Snow Creek, Franklin County, Virginia died in Henry County Memorial Hospital from a cerebral hemorrhage July 2, 1945. She was 72 years of age.

Mrs. Wingfield was the daughter of the late John Fontaine Motley and Nannie Martin Motley of Pittsylvania County, and was the last surviving member of her immediate family. She was a great-great-granddaughter of Colonel Joseph Martin, for whom Martinsville is named. In January 1892 she married Tazewell T. Wingfield and came to Franklin County where she spent the remainder of her life at the 132 years old ancestral Wingfield home near Snow Creek. Her husband died in 1920, leaving her and eleven children, eight of whom survive. They are: Dr. Marshall Wingfield, Memphis, Tenn.; Mrs. Nannie Eggleston, Franklin County; Mrs. B. G. Craig, Portsmouth, Virginia; William P. Wingfield, Franklin County; the Rev. Richard L. Wingfield, Newport News, Virginia; Mrs. Benedict DeAngelo, Oneonta, N. Y.; Miss Mary M. Wingfield, Franklin County; and Mrs. Robert L. Urban, Cambridge, Mass. Of her thirty-five grandchildren all were present at her funeral except five soldier grandsons serving overseas. She is also survived by eight great-grandchildren.

In early life she united with the Camp Branch Primitive Baptist Church and was one of its most devoted, faithful members. Through her entire life she exemplified the christian in every respect, fulfilling the prophecy, "Her children arise up and call her blessed." Her every act and word evidenced that she walked according to the Spirit, not after the flesh.

Her home was always open not only to brethren of her faith for meetings and at all times, but the stranger was ever freely welcomed. While she believed firmly the doctrine she had accepted, she was tolerant toward those of all faiths and charitable in viewing all shortcomings of others. She lived the teaching of the Master . . . "to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."

As a testimony to her charity and humility, her acquaintances of all faiths and her kinsmen, as they had gathered in her home during her lifetime, made a loving, innumerable assemblage at her funeral and grave, representing forty-five communities and six states.

The funeral services were conducted by Elders David Spangler of Danville and James Stegall of Penhook, Virginia.

In the mountain quiet of her bridal homeland her body awaits the glorification of the just and faithful, and remains, while those who love her live, a spot of anchor and hope.

HER CHILDREN.

ELDER J. R. PERRY was born Sept. 3, 1861 and departed this life Aug. 6, 1945. He married Miss Emily Rountree, Sept. 1, 1884, who preceded him in death March 21, 1943. To this union were born five children: three boys, Tom of Cash, Texas, Walter and Loyd of Greenville, Texas; two daughters, Mrs. Lizzie Hillhouse of Kerens, Texas and Mrs. Florence Russell, Florenceville, Texas; eighteen grandchildren, twenty-three great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild. I do not know the exact date that he united with the Primitive Baptist Church but it was in early manhood. He was ordained to the ministry in 1901 and preached the dear old doctrine he loved, salva-

tion by grace. In all his ministry he would not accept anything from his brethren, he was financially able to bear his own expenses and joyfully did so. He loved his dear old church and was always ready to help his brethren who were in need, and when needed he gave gladly and freely to the church. He loved the old doctrine and order of the church, and earnestly contended for the old landmarks. His brethren and sisters loved him for the truths sake. He will be missed by all who knew him. At the time of his death he was living with his son, Walter and his devoted family. Everything was done that loving hands could do, but the end of his allotted time had come and God called him home, so dear family weep not for him. The writer, together with Elder J. W. Jenkins, tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved ones and the large crowd at Mt. Zion Church after which the body was laid to rest in Money Cemetery to await the coming of the Lord. Then his sleeping dust will come forth in the likeness of the Son of God, and he will be able to praise God forever and ever. May God comfort the bereaved ones and reconcile them to his will that they may say in spirit, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." May God bless us and keep us by his Spirit. Written by one who loved him dearly for the truths sake.

(Elder) J. S. ROBBINS.

MRS. GLENNA MELLOTT, wife of Albert Mellott near Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa., departed this earthly life August 6, 1945 at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Culler, McConnellsburg, Pa., after a serious illness due to an incurable heart condition. She was taken ill at our May meeting at Sideling Hill the first Sunday in May and had to leave the meeting. For many years she has faithfully attended the meetings of the Old School Baptist Church and believed the doctrine of that body of people, though she never united with them. She was born July 29, 1881, a daughter of the late Elder Ahimaaz Mellott and his wife Catherine. She is survived by two brothers: Walker Mellott near Needmore, Pa., and Chick Mellott of Shippensburg, Pa., named for the late Elder F. A. Chick. She was married forty-nine years ago to Albert Mellott who survives her, together with four sons and two daughters: Lewis Mellott, Needmore, Pa., Mrs. Abbie Tritle, Mercersburg, Pa., John Mellott, McConnelsburg, Pa., Blair Mellott and Ranken Mellott, near Needmore, Pa., and Mrs. Sylvia Culler, McConnelsburg, Pa. There are thirty-two grandchildren and some great-grandchildren. My wife and I called to see her a week before the end came, and at her request had prayer with her while there. She spoke freely of her faith in God and of her precious hope in the finished and perfect work of the Lord Jesus Christ. She confessed her regret at not having been baptized, saying she had long desired to have that ordinance administered to her but had been hindered in the matter, and hoped the Lord would not hold her disobedience against her. She gave directions as to her funeral only a short time before the end came, selecting the kind of casket she wanted, named her pallbearers, picked out where the grave was to be dug, chose the hymns she wanted sung at her funeral and the text from which she wanted me to speak, Matt. 20:7-18. All her wishes were carried out. Services were held in the meeting-house at Sideling Hill and burial in the graveyard there. The cause of Christ has lost a faithful friend for the truth's sake. May the Lord comfort the mourning family and reconcile the bereaved husband to his righteous will.

ALSO

MRS. PHOEBE HOOD fell sweetly asleep in Jesus while a patient in the hospital at Brunswick, Md., August 1, 1945. She was stricken with this final illness the fourth Sunday in July, caused by embolisms in the blood stream. She was a daughter of William Hite Hough and his wife Hannah. Sister Hannah Hough, sister Phoebe's mother, was a member of the New Valley Old School Baptist Church, Loudon Co., Va. Sister Phoebe was born Feb. 25, 1867. She was baptized by the late Elder E. V. White into membership with the New Valley Church Sept. 20, 1896 of which church she lived a faithful member to the time of her passing from us. She was married Sept. 12, 1916 to E. Marion Hood who survives her. She is survived by one sister, Mrs. Carrie Rodrick, who is a member of New Valley Church. She leaves some nieces, nephews, great-nieces, two great nephews, cousins and other family connections to mourn her departure. May the Lord in grace and mercy reconcile Mr. Hood, sister Carrie and all the family to his sovereign will. The Lord knows in infinite wisdom all the days of our sojourn here below. When he calls each of us shall answer him, but we must each of us await all the days of our appointed time until our change come. As her pastor, I have lost a faithful sister in the fellowship of the truth as it is in Christ, but the bond of christian unity is not dissolved by the death of the body. The separation is only for a little while, until that blessed time when all the redeemed shall meet to part no more, in the presence of our glorious Redeemer in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for-ever-more. Her home was in Paeonian Springs, Va. where the funeral services were held Aug. 4. Portions of the 90th and 139th Psalms were used and hymn 15, Beebe's Collection was read. Interment in the Friends' Burying Ground at Waterford, Va. where her mortality rests until that glorious morning of the resurrection when mortality shall be swallowed up of life at the coming of the Lord from heaven.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS.

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Elder E. L. Cobb, Wilson, N. C.
Elder R. B. Denson, Rt. 2, Rocky Mount, N. C.
Elder T. H. Edwards, Jacksonville. N. C.
Elder M. F. Westbrook, Rt. 3, Dunn, N. C.

OHIO

Elder Geo. L. Weaver, 16116 Westview Ave.,
Cleveland 20, Ohio.

OKLAHOMA

Elder W. N. Green, Box 654, Altus, Okla.

OREGON

Elder C. W. Bond, Island City, Ore.

TENNESSEE

Elder R. L. Biggs, Rt. 6, Nashville, Tenn.

TEXAS

Elder W. O. Beene, 1005 Vincent St.,
Houston 9, Texas.
Elder L. D. Rose, Athens, Texas.

VIRGINIA

Elder J. E. Burgess, Rt. 1, Box 180, Martinsville, Va.
Elder Roy S. Smith, Cascade, Va.
Elder David V. Spangler, Rt. 6, Danville, Va.

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each 1st Sunday, 11:00 a. m. and Saturday before.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday.
AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a. m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopewell Church, Ozark Ala., meets each 4th Sunday, 11 a. m. J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock. Meeting place at Alder St. at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, 11 a. m. Elders J. J. Collins and J. S. Bass, Pastors.
J. J. COLLINS

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Beulah Primitve Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canda, California.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday, north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before.

E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

Pleasant Valley Church, Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc.)

L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue. Take elevator to second floor.
11.00 a. m. 1:30 p. m.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

C. W. BOND, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 a. m.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor

fourth Sunday at Civic Club, 1419 N. Shepherd St., Houston, Texas. Preaching by Elder W. O. Beene.

(Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Danville Primitve Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before. Bradley Road, Danville, Va.

W. R. DODD, Pastor.

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meet each first Sunday 11 a.m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3032 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va. R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m. C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 114 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JANUARY, 1946 No. 1

"Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."
—Psalms 116: 7.

Sometimes, when we are called upon to bear a sorrow
We have not met before upon our way,
We shrink and falter or our faith forgetting,
God's promised strength according to our way.

A sparrow cannot fall without our Father,
He numbers all the hairs our heads adorn;
And can He then His children, sad and lonely,
Forget them as they daily cry and mourn?

Has He no pity or no oil of healing
To ease their hearts and soothe the wounds they bear?
Will they forever cry and find no mercy
To bind them up or bid them, Christ will care?

Oh! no our God has streams of mercy flowing,
Stored up in Christ before the world began;
If they but turn from idols of their choosing
And look to Him, the dread, the Great I Am.

For He's a jealous God, His word proclaims it,
He wants His children's undivided love;
He will not share His glory with another
However human heart's affections move.

And so He sends a death or disillusion
To things we here so often highly prize,
That we might sink beneath the cross or turning,
Look up and beg and heavenward send our cries.

Swift as an eagle to her young returning
He spreads His wings to keep them, lest they fall;
They feel His strength and on His bosom leaning
Prove once again that God is all in all.

We're all poor, weak and sinful mortal creatures,
We righteousness have none, nor strength to pray,
Unless Thou givest us in fullest measure
Thy grace to seek Thy face and daily say:

Keep me O Lord, among Thy children walking
That shame may never reach Thy courts through me;
Our strength is endless when in this confiding,
I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Our rest here then will be a daily sabbath,
Our walk here beautiful for all to see;
The perfume from the house of God arising
Will be acceptable and honor Thee.

FLOSSIE I. FAULKNER.
Allaben, N. Y.

CORRESPONDENCE

"All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."—Romans 8:28.

This is a scriptural quotation which is often hard to understand. I remember a conversation, when I was a boy, of one man consoling another who was passing through some trying ordeal, that "all things work together for good." "Yes," said the afflicted man, "but did you ever notice how that was limited in its application?" Neither of these men were Baptists, and I was not at that time. It has been over sixty years but it is as fresh in my memory as if it were yesterday. The whole question sets forth a precious truth, but part of it is very misleading and of doubtful application.

Does any one who has been led to know the wonderful dispensations of the God of heaven have doubts as to the final results of the events transpiring in their lives? Every part fills a place and the whole of it makes up the complete purpose of God that their lives must fill in

the development of his eternal purposes.

Good and evil are two opposing forces and they are always operating influences in the lives of us poor mortals, and more broadly speaking operating in everything; but concerning our faith and spiritual relation to God we shall try to show the scriptural application of it. In the transgression man died to all previous relations to God, yet lived on in his natural faculties separated from God by sin; being "dead in trespasses and sins", and without ability to produce any works of righteousness, and even without mind or desire to do so, really dead to all such needs or attainments. God in his wisdom ordained a better and higher calling for a family of redeemed saints out of this lost and sinful generation, and this too, even before man had fallen under this condemnation; but it was made known to man after his transgression and that has been the hope of the saints in every generation since. This redemption was made by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and is revealed to all the heirs of promise by their being quickened into a new life by the Spirit of God. "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." This is also the new birth. This is done by the sovereign grace of God and independent of any act of the creature in whom it is wrought. When the gospel is proclaimed in its strength and purity there are usually two classes of hearers, one to whom it is good news, supplying to them the evidences of a spiritual life and a quickened conscience; and the other hearing it with indifference and as foolishness. In the first class are the quickened saints, in the second are those still dead in trespasses and sins not yet having the mind or life to receive it. We cannot tell how or when this quickening takes place. The scripture says, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." We do not even know ourselves when this change is wrought in us, but afterward we are seeking the things of the divine life, while before we were unconcerned about such things. It is still a greater mystery to know just who the saints of God are. The self-righteous ministers of the religious world today are continually judging, commending and condemning the lives and activities of their fellow men, yet they know nothing about who the children of God are. God alone knows them that are his. Would any of the zealous religious teachers of this day have judged the dying thief who asked to be remembered in the heavenly kingdom, one of the redeemed family of God? Or when Saul of Tarsus was consenting and assisting in the stoning of Stephen? Where is the man who could have pointed him out to be a chosen vessel unto God to carry the very gospel he was then trying to destroy to the Gentiles and to endure all the trials and persecutions he afterward endured and rejoiced in? These are two noted instances where the saving grace of God wrought his life in quickening powers so effectively where all the powers of evil were so arrayed against it. Now when we have ministers pleading with sinners to give their hearts to God and accept the salvation of Jesus Christ, we are sure they are thinking of a different God than the one Paul knew, and the offered salvation is not the salvation wrought on Calvary's cross, and the Christ they are pleading for is not the one who said before his ascension, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." "Lo, I am with you always." We hope these scattering remarks will convey our understanding of the two classes of the scripture quoted at the beginning, namely: those who love God and are the called according to his purpose, and those not thus called and are dead in trespasses and sins, but still subject to the work of

grace which in God's time may be wrought in them.

Now coming more particularly to the application of the subject we shall try to give scripture proof that it applies to God's called and chosen people; outside of that it is often hard to apply the dispensations of God in a way to call it good from their standpoint, unless it is God's purpose in the manifest destruction we see to grant repentance unto life at the last moment of their existence. This is a sovereign attribute of God which is hidden and we need not try to search it out.

The "all things" is every act and event both good and evil, favorable and unfavorable, transpiring in the lives of God's saints. It is easy for people generally to believe that all good things work for their good, but the evil comes of the Devil and must be resisted or they stand to lose in the warfare. This is all made plain in the book of Job. When the sons of God came together to present themselves, Satan came also. This shows the Devil, or Satan, must show allegiance to God although different to the other worshippers. God talked with them there concerning the righteousness of Job, that there was none like him in all the earth, a righteous man who feared God and eschewed evil. Satan answered that Job did not fear God for naught for God had surrounded him with all things necessary for his peace and comfort, and if that was taken away Job would curse God to his face. God answered this by giving into Satan's hands all Job's possessions but he could not harm him bodily. We read of how thoroughly Satan carried out his commission, taking everything, even Job's servants and children. When he was informed of all these losses, one after the other in quick succession, he exclaimed, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." A second time the sons of God came together to present themselves and Satan again was with them. Read carefully the conversation at that time between God and Satan. In that conversation Satan ascribed his failure to be in not having done enough to Job and that if his body was touched he would curse God; to this God replied by giving to Satan Job's bodily faculties, his health and everything except he could not take Job's life. It will do any trembling or doubting child of God good to read this account of Job's afflictions while under the supreme test Satan made to overthrow Job's integrity and faith in God. Even when his wife, who here represents the ties of this fleshly existence, told him to curse God and die, Job replied, "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" In all these trials Job sinned not. Even Job's comforters found the cause of his afflictions to be his unrighteousness. How many such comforters today are ready to judge God's chastened and afflicted saints the same way? But when they have endured the chastening as a good soldier, and the "Well done, good and faithful servant," "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," shall commend them, like Job they receive double for all their former losses.

All the mysteries of this subject can never be told and we shall not try to extend the discussion further than to point briefly to some of the great truths set forth in the trials and afflictions of Job. First and foremost is the absolute sovereignty of God in controlling all things. Even Satan, the greatest adversary of righteousness, must present himself before the great Majesty along with the righteous, and receive his commissions of activity according to the decrees and purposes of Jehovah. And when a certain commission is given he is limited to that authority and cannot vary the least bit in fulfilling it all. Note the first commission to try Job, then note also the

second, both just as God permitted. This is so different from the general idea, that God is waiting to see what Satan and man will do before he decides his plans for meeting the results. It is universally believed that God has overruling power which he exercises to develop his external purposes, but it is the wisdom and foreknowledge of God being exercised with his ruling power which exalts him in his supremacy and which his saints are glad to ascribe unto him.

We cannot conceive of any anxiety existing in the mind of God as to what Satan would do to Job. His word had set the bounds of activity in each case and Satan could not change it. Christ said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," if so where is the possibility of the least of the saints being plucked out of his hand by the cunningness of Satan? Does not this insure complete redemption, and that all things must work together for their good? Another truth set forth here is the power by which Job endured these supreme tests. If God is for us who can be against us? The faith which God gives is a binding tie which shall never be broken. That is the victory by which we shall overcome the world. This is not the sort of faith which the religious teachers of our day admonish us to exercise, which may be educated in us or produced by some man made activity. That sort of faith is dead faith and is no more lasting than the means by which it is produced. That faith which is the gift of God is a living faith, and there is no power which can destroy it. This is shown by the tests Satan made on Job, and was continued by Job's comforters in admonishing him in the various things he was thought at fault in which they were sure was the cause of Job's afflictions. Satan showed the spirit of modern religion when he said, "Doth Job fear God for naught?" Job's comforters had much of this, and it is everywhere in the world the standard by which men judge the relationship between God and man. The afflicted ones are always thought to be out of harmony with God, yet we are told if we be without chastisement we are bastards and not sons for he chasteneth every son and daughter he receiveth. Great is the mystery of godliness, who can know it? The foregoing comments set forth precious truths to me. During my life I have passed through many trials and have been given many seasons of rejoicing, and as I now look back over it all there seems to have been a need for everything. Often certain courses I took seemed soon after to be mistakes, but later proved to be the beginning of a new and better course of action, and they all have worked together to develop my life and hope what it is. If I am one of the called and chosen of God, an heir to eternal glory, which these evidences confirm more and more as I approach the end of life's journey, I must say that all things in my life have worked together for my good, and the Lord has led me all the way. Even though Satan may have wrought in those great trials, God limited his temptations to what I was given strength to endure.

You tried and troubled saints, remember your God knows your weakness and your needs, and has promised that his grace will be sufficient at all times. Let us give him all the praise. Yours in tribulation and hope.

(Elder) C. W. BOND.

Island City, Oregon.

Hartford, Ala.

Much is being said relative to the falling away, and if, as is being written, it is believed I am sure the believer of such writings is at a low ebb. May I offer a few words to such an one in hope of comforting those that are at a low ebb by reason of such belief? It is my feeling and trust the *Signs* welcomes crumbs of comfort to its pages. In Hebrews 6:1 I find Paul laboring to prove, and does

prove, a perfected work of God in the church. When I say church I mean the church of God, the Bride, the Lamb's wife, the pillar and ground of the truth. Paul does not mean to discard the principles of the doctrine of Christ when he says, "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection," but rather to affirm the security of the principles of the doctrine of Christ that they are so thoroughly established in the church. By that I mean in the hearts, souls and minds of the constituents that compose the church of God, and that they (the constituents) are so thoroughly established in the principles of the doctrine of Christ, and by reason of same are qualified to be taught and capable of learning that the principles of the doctrine of Christ is a perfected work of God, wrought in their hearts, souls and minds alone of God. Such an one will never fall away. Much of this falling away (or should I say all) is gendered in the minds of preachers who fail to see a house full of folks when they go. They might have some personal motive in view, although Jesus was not so much concerned about having a large concourse of people when he taught them things of spiritual worth as is proven by his sermons in the mount when none but he and his disciples were there, but they were all there. I feel this ballyhoo concerning falling away is laying the mud sill deep into the foundation of dead works, and is no evidence at all of repentance and is altogether faithless toward God. So let us move on to the doctrine of baptism, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment as recorded in second and third verses, and this will we do if God permit. So with a permit from God I will travel on unafraid, without which I know I am an intruder and legally liable to be shot, for if there is a premise that is protected against intruders it is in the church of God. I fear there is lawlessness lurking around the church of God, seeking to obtain a permit even by the vilest means. A forger must be an expert. I think through the years I have observed a few of them strolling through the premises of God. Are these the ones telling the children these scary bedtime stories, bidding them goodnight, warning them to sleep tight or they will awake on tomorrow like others fallen away? If they are, and they must be for it is beyond my comprehension to comprehend that a man in the premises, feeling an interest in the premises by reason of the goodness of God, having given him a legal permit (not a forged one) to travel in the premises with no fear of being shot would put out such a bogus report. So it must be those that are traveling under a bogus permit, and evidently they are afraid. The only folks I ever heard say the hardshells would all be gone soon were denominational folks, and I have heard that since I was a child, but at the age of seven, now fifty years ago, I knew it was false, and through these past fifty years I have drawn much comfort from the assuring thought they will abide forever, and live with God eternally. So children be not afraid, you cannot fall. God is above you, underneath you, on every side of you, behind and before you, even in you and you in him all by the purpose and choice of God, and his electing grace takes care of all of your obedience, being elected unto obedience. Fortunate you are unto whom God hath granted a permit even to be baptized in his name with the Holy Ghost and fire, and to feel the touch as tenderly from him as the laying on of the most loving hand. Even mother's hand is not to be compared with the touch of the effectual results obtained when God first laid his hand on me and cooled my frenzied brow. Now fourth, fifth and sixth verses. I elaborate and conclude it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made par-

takers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away to renew them again unto repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh and put him to an open shame. If it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance which Paul says it is, and by faith I believe it, it is impossible for them to fall away, and by experience I believe of those who have tasted (seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling) the above senses might deceive, the taste never. Those who have never tasted (or better put, have no taste) are probably the ones, children, telling you about this great falling away. But I say to you, walking in the premises with a legal permit from God, with and in great fear and trembling by reason of my unworthiness, to be in the sacred premises of God and have in my possession such a liberal permit from God, you are safe in Jesus Christ and will never fall unless God and all the holy angels crumble which they will not do. "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Children, be of good courage, press on. I know whom I have believed and am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, and I trust you, with me, have committed all that you have and are, or ever expect to be, and if you have committed all to God may I have the pleasure of hearing from you, wherever you are. If you have committed some and handling some yourself do not write me. If you are trying to keep from falling do not write me for evidently if you are trying to keep from falling you are trying to hold on. In that case do not write me.

(Elder) F. A. COLLINS.

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656 Gregory Ave., Clifton, N. J.

DEAR BROTHER IN THE GLORIOUS HOPE OF OUR SOON COMING LORD AND SAVIOR:

This month's issue of the *Signs* we found to be very good, full of light and good things which, as the day, calls us to duty. As a word spoken in season is good, we deem it a great privilege to commend you on your good paper for it gives light to our darkened soul as a light upon our path.

In connection with the word *good* we would first call attention that the word good suggests the virtue of our greater and supreme good, namely God. If we can lose ourselves in this thought as being only a zero or nothing, our good is not in us but in God, then our good is not found in us but in God. If this light be in us it is good for "God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day." Gen. 1:3-5. We, who by grace, that have a hope of being children of the *day* rejoice in the *light* for it is of God who has called it into being. As this portion of scripture is known of all who have received light in being the A, B, C in their being taught of the Lord, we deem it appropriate at this time when the world has come through the era of a dark night of war into a new day of deliverance from the power of darkness and evil. All this of course is but as a shadow of the greater day and light to come in the Lord.

We all know that a shadow comes because of the light, and that the shadow is not a substance, but if our eyes have been opened to look beyond the shadow in following its course it leads us to the real source and meaning thereof. So the one is given to draw our view away from the darkness to Him who stands and walks in the fullness of the light of God; to cast a mantle as a shadow over us so that we may dwell under the shadow of his wings, hidden in him as the Rock for we cannot look into his fullness, and can but view his hinder parts. Paul above

most viewed a greater portion of this glorious light, but he was stricken blind although it shown on him but for a moment.

As the thought of the above quoted scripture is given in order that we may behold Him who is the light of the world, the light also reveals the darkness to us. If we did not have the light of day in nature we would not know that our night is dark. It is also to be noted that God *did not* call the darkness good, but "God saw the light, that it was good." Darkness was, as we read in verse two, "And darkness *was* upon the face of the deep."

This, dear brother, is what we feel every child of Adam to be before the first day when "God said, Let there be light." This we feel was the state of all of us. Darkness covered our souls and we apprehended it not, but when "God said, Let there be light," there was light, and to this only has God respect, not to the person but to the light for it was good and there is no one good but God. How humbling! nothing in us but all in him, and only by this can we enter into Jerusalem. As soon as this first day comes there is a dividing or division in our lives. The darkness is divided from the light for these two can have no communion with each other. Formerly they were one, with the darkness being under bondage and will of the evil one. These two diverse beings as darkness and light are given us so that as two we may see the power of evil and the power of God. This warfare has been from the beginning between the evil one and God's dear Son. Therefore, when the light comes into a soul, a struggling as warfare commences; a division of mind and thought. Many a dear born-again child of God becoming confused by these two natures within struggling for supremacy, have cried out with Rebecca, "If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the Lord." Gen. 25:22. Is or has this been your experience, dear child and chosen bride of the Son? Be assured by God's word in creation and in grace that you are a member of the new creation as it is in Christ Jesus. Surely you have said, if and again if, but the Lord said the elder shall serve the younger. Jacob as the younger is the third in promise, the fruitful one as the type of the Spirit and church. But you may say I had looked for light and beheld darkness. Bless God for it for it is the light of a new life that reveals the darkness to you. It is God's holy way and plan for all of his children. Although God only saw the light which still is the same, the darkness is permitted to share part of the day. Therefore, your darkness is not accounted as the new or part of the day, but as a full being in two natures you are only called the children of the *day* for the darkness and night are not remembered before God. The new and spiritual man longs to have it to be continually light, and when darkness comes as the night, after its first day as time of light and rejoicing in the Lord, the soul cries out in anguish, "Woe is me! for I am undone." As we by grace have had this experience we can say, be of good cheer for the morning cometh and also the day.

As we pass through this night restless and sleepless (for such a soul cannot sleep when the Lord has hidden himself) I say as we are waiting and watching, the Day Star appears with healing in its wings. Hope and joy is received for we know that our Beloved cometh. Then we can say with the bride, "The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills," S. S. 2:8, and again as the light of the Son appears to the soul, "Behold he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, shewing himself through the lattice." S. S. 2:9. As it was three days (a fullness in the Lord) before the greater light came as on the fourth day, our days as time all have their night. O how a soul becomes strengthened after

the second and third nights of darkness. Yes we must decrease but He increases, experience worketh hope, etc. Such an one has learned that the Lord is faithful and receives faith from his fullness to fully trust in him, knowing that the morning follows the night. All this shall remain so until we by grace come unto the fourth day as the greater and fullness of God in eternity. Here we receive faith and light as in the first days, darkly, but then we shall, by grace, see Him face to face and dwell in the fullness of his light and eternal day, "for there shall be no night there."

Our thoughts also dwelt upon the wonderful revelation regarding a soul and child of light in the parable of the tares and the wheat which is really a part hereof. For this time we will end, hoping that little of self may be seen herein, for of ourself we are but darkness and know that no good thing dwelleth in us. Thanking you dearly for your kind visit to me, and that I may have a continued share in your prayers, we hope that we may see you again soon. May the Lord bless you and yours and that you may bear much fruit in your work of love we remain, unworthily yours,

ROGER KNIGHT.

Route 1, Dundas, Ill.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: There is a subject that I feel the Lord has impressed on my mind and I wish to pass on to you my thoughts on it. You may publish my feeble attempt at writing or not, just as you wish. I feel unfitted and unqualified to handle the matter, but feeling the Lord has directed my mind along this line I will do the best I can, knowing full well that if I am left alone I will fail and any failure I make is all my own. If it pleases God to help me, and I am enabled to bring out the truth as it is in Christ Jesus then all the praise will be unto God.

I have never read an article or heard a sermon preached on this text, and to me it is as rich in meaning, and as sweet and comforting as it can be. It is the same sweet story of Jesus that we find all through the Bible in both the Old and New Testaments, and is in perfect harmony with all the blessed gospel of salvation by grace. In it we find the purposes of God to save his chosen and elect people, his spiritual Israel, with an everlasting salvation, not according to the will of man or the will of the flesh, but according to the will and purposes of God. This is always exalting to him and humbling to the recipients of divine favor. We know if he dealt with us according to our sins we would be forever lost, but all praise and glory be to his matchless name, his plans were all made in eternity. The unfolding of events in this time world is but the fulfillment of his purposes, and the housing of his chosen ones in immortal glory when this time world is over will be because of his love, faithfulness and unchangeable purposes. Not because of any faithfulness of our own so far as human flesh is concerned, but he works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

We find in the Old Testament where the Lord is showing one of his old prophets some things that were to come to pass and be fulfilled in the fullness of time, and this occurred between two very great events. The first one was the giving of the law to Moses, and the second and greater event was the coming into the world of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This old prophet's name was Amos, and we find in the book of Amos 7:7-8 these words: "Thus he shewed me: and, behold, the Lord stood upon a wall made by a plumbline, with a plumbline in his hand. And the Lord said unto me, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, a plumbline. Then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumbline in the midst of my people Israel: I will not again pass by them any more." I would like to write

briefly on some of the points in this text and give my understanding of what they mean, and they come in their order — first the plumbline, then the wall made by the plumbline, the Lord setting a plumbline in the midst of his people Israel, and last the promise of the Lord that he would not again pass by them any more. It will be necessary to just touch briefly on each one of these points so as to keep this letter from being too long. Amos starts off by saying, "Thus he shewed me," and in our way of speaking it is the same as if he had said, like this he showed me. Then he tells us that "Behold, the Lord stood upon a wall made by a plumbline, with a plumbline in his hand," and the Lord asked Amos this question, "Amos, what seest thou?" Let us take notice that while the Lord was showing these things to Amos he also gave him the understanding to know the importance of these things in their relation as one to the other. He did see both the wall and the plumbline that made the wall, and he knew that the plumbline that made the wall was of more importance than the wall that was made by it. He answered and said a plumbline, and in proof that he gave the right answer the Lord said, "I will set a plumbline in the midst of my people Israel." We see that the plumbline is the main thing under consideration, so now to find out just what the plumbline is or what it represents we must find a parallel or something similar. We know what a plumbline is and its usage among men. It is an instrument used for the purpose of erecting walls, flag poles or anything that is to be perpendicular or straight up and down, to set them true on every side. If there is the least variation in a wall or other article it will bear away from the plumbline at some point, but if it is true the plumbline will prove it to be so for the plumbline hangs exactly true. Then we can say that the plumbline is perfect, it is a measure of perfection. Where can we find something perfect that is symbolized by the plumbline? The only answer is Jesus Christ the Son of the living God. He is perfect in all his ways and no guile was found in his mouth. He was tempted in all ways even as we are yet he did not sin. Yes, Jesus is that plumbline of perfection. Amos said the Lord had a plumbline in his hand, and this means to me that the plumbline, Jesus, was in the power of God and doing God's will. Jesus says of himself that he came not into the world to do his own will, but the will of his Father that sent him. What was his Father's will? "That of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." He finished his work, and when he said on the cross "it is finished", he had fulfilled all of his Father's will, and purchased salvation for all the Father had given him. We find where the Lord speaking through his prophet Isaiah says, "Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet." He is speaking here of Jesus for all judgment was given to him, and all the righteousness we will ever have is the imputed righteousness of Jesus for we have not a particle of our own. Jesus made this wonderful wall mentioned in our text, and even as he is perfect, so is this wall perfect in every particular. It being made, means that it was completed with nothing lacking, and no work for any one to finish, nothing can be added to it or anything taken away. What is this wall and what does it represent? Let us go back again to Isaiah where the Lord says, "In that day (the day of Jesus Christ) shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks," and in another place he says, "Thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise." Yes, Jesus made this wonderful wall of salvation, and he made it by the appointment of his Father, for all the Father had given him, and it is

a strong city, so strong that none of the devices of men or devils can ever surmount its bulwarks or lay waste its walls. "Thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise," and sometimes the Lord permits us to go in and out of those gates in praise of him, and we find green pasture, and he leadeth us by the side of the still waters and all earthly troubles are forgotten. We are filled to overflowing with a feeling sense of his goodness and mercy, and at such times we are made to cry out with the psalmist, David, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name." The Lord told Amos he would set a plumbline in the midst of his people Israel, and this he did when Jesus was born in the midst of his chosen people, Israel, at Bethlehem of Judea. There is another sense in which he set his plumbline, Jesus, in the midst of his chosen people, spiritual Israel, and that is in their hearts. They are strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man that Christ may dwell in their hearts by faith; they are rooted and grounded in love; they are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that they should walk in them. Hereby know we that we dwell in him and he in us because he hath given us of his Spirit. The last point in this text where the Lord said he would not again pass by them (his chosen people) any more, seems quite plain to me. When the Lord has set his plumbline, Jesus, in your heart, and has quickened you, who were dead in trespasses and in sins, into spiritual life, and has made you alive in Christ, he has taken up his abode in your heart and dwells in you, and he will not again pass by you any more. You are made to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God. These are some of the thoughts of this poor sinner who is the least of all saints if one at all. I would like to ask the prayers of God's children, that he may give me a mind for the meditation of his word and a heart to understand. If I know myself this is my heart's desire above all things. I would also like for any one who wishes, to write to me. I have not been able to go to church or hear any preaching in many months, and a letter from some of God's children would be like good news from a far country. May the Lord bless and keep you all in his loving care is the prayer of your unworthy brother.

C. W. WILLIAMS.

Topsham, Maine.

DEAR SISTER PALMER: Instead of a Christmas card which only says: "A Merry Christmas and Happy New Year" I will try and tell what Christmas means to me. A hope of eternal life and I hope I have faith like the leper. He knew the Lord could make him clean, and when he asked him "Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man." Can we tell how we were cleansed? No, but we know when we hear a brother try to tell of the works of Christ in our sinful soul. What a glorious light shineth forth when one is given liberty to tell of the wonderful works to the children of men. I have prayed long and earnestly to be given that liberty but it does not come. I seem chained and who can break that chain? No one but the Father in heaven. We have no control over those things though the churches of the world say we do. The Bible says: "He shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open," so why deny his holy word. I have asked, all my twenty-five years in the church, to be taught to pray, and when I get to my knees all I can bring to mind is "God be merciful to me a sinner" and none but God knows what a sinner I am, and I am glad for he says: "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and

iniquities will I remember no more." Paul was given a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him lest he be exalted above measure, and when he asked to have it taken from him what did Christ say? "My grace is sufficient for thee." How many times I have come to the end, to repeat those words of Christ, and we are taught all his sayings are true. Some of my prayers are just groanings and tears, no words come. I feel an awe before his throne of grace and then I have peaceful moments that come and go as the wind. It is so quick and leaves such a peaceful feeling and I often wonder if heaven is like that, it seems a glimpse of heaven within me. Those are only fleeting moments but they are worth the world to me. I feel it is an assurance that it is not of myself, something beyond, something to do with my Maker.

I am alone here among these worldly churches which think it strange I do not go among them. They say "I should think you would want to go to church?" I do, but I want Christ in all his purity preached, that he has all power in heaven and in earth. If a doubt comes to me, and I confess sometimes I say I am right, He removes all doubt when he says: "Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein." Jesus' own blood was given for our sins which was a perfect sacrifice. I must close, hoping what I have written does not conflict with Old School Baptist doctrine. I want to see eye to eye with my brethren. I am nicely situated and the Lord is mindful of me for which I hope I am thankful. At times I do not feel so well but I can get around, keep my fires and get my meals. I should have a lot of time to read the good book, but I ask myself why, when I love the word and what it stands for to me. The Spirit is willing but the flesh is weak, and do I know it? A war between them and when I think I am doing pretty well I fall lower than before. Well, sister, a good Christmas and many wishes for a good New Year to you and Forris. Love to you both and God bless you and yours is the prayer of a sinner saved by grace if saved at all. Sweet fellowship. RACHEL POTTER.

2091 East Broadway, Vancouver, B. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I enclose $5 to help the *Signs* and renew my subscription if it is time for that. What a power there is in the Bible when one is drawn and allowed to read it! How willing and contrite people are when confronted with God's power. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." I have been reading about Gideon and how carefully he was shown that it was all of God to set Israel free. Was not Paul blinded with the glory of the light, and how many there are who fall to the ground before his angels? "Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not." "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." Jacob did see such glory. What an endless vista of truth! I like to think how completely this truth is protected from the world. The work is accomplished so quietly, deftly and swiftly without warning. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." What manner of person ought I to be, when any moment in time he might call and require my soul? I can see how many writers in the *Signs* could just continue on and on with this inexhaustible theme of grace flowing in with understanding. "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings."

Mr. McKenzie in the northwest corner of Saskatchewan called on me with a wonderful story of experience. He had watched mother's name in the *Signs* for

over seventeen years. He was in search of comfort in Zion and could find no information in the *Signs* about churches in Canada. I directed him to all the churches I knew. I was so inadequate and unworthy of his conversation. He wanted to hear about experience in grace. I would try to write to him if I could remember the name of his town which he told me several times. I wish that I could have directed him to people who could write to him comfortably about experience. A very old lady (Mrs. McTavish I think) had lent him "Songs in the Night" by Elder S. H. Durand's brother because she understood what was happening to him. I thought he was coming to Vancouver again but he never did. I suppose one could not stand any more than the grace which comes each day. What careful watch care! I remember reading about David, praying a prayer which he found in his heart, and Solomon's prayer after his house was built. Two thoughts which have impressed me are that God has no pleasure in one who draws back. I must always be ready to give a reason for my hope and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." I must live in the world but not of it, and touch not, taste not, handle not the unclean thing (churches of the world). "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." "I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."

(Miss) CATHERINE M. DUFFUS.

Route 1, Bangor, Ala.

TO THE PILGRIMS SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THE UNIVERSE — DEARLY BELOVED OF THE LORD: I have a desire to write not knowing whether it is a desire of the flesh or not, judge ye. I have had a desire to tells the folks that I hope I love, the ones that I believe to be the true children of Christ, a little of what I believe if I know what I believe. I believe in a God that has all power both in heaven and earth, "and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" One that spoke from all eternity the things that surely must come to pass. He spoke those things that were to come to pass before anything was created. He saw all those things as they are and as they will come unto the end of all things. That is the kind of God that I hope in my weakness and unworthiness I try to serve. If it is not that kind of God I have no hope. It is that kind of God that found me down at the bottom of the mountain, down in the mire without strength even to raise my feeble voice and cry, Lord help or I perish. I was not even able to look up, only look down in the bottomless pit where there was only agony and suffering. I could cry but my cries could not be heard. I was in this condition for a long time so it seemed to me. I had gone my limit, I could not stand it any longer, something had to be done, and I was weak, too near the end to do anything. I was way off in the field by myself when I gave up and fell to the ground. I was there a space of time, I do not know how long I was out, I do not remember what happened but I do know when I came to myself I was shouting and praising God in the highest, and all the birds and flowers, corn and trees, and even the old mule seemed to be praising the Most High. Then and there is where my trouble began. I thought when I got to the house I would tell mother and father what had happened to me and that the Lord had been gracious to me, but when I started to the house this thought came into my mind—they would not believe it and would make fun of me and call me a hypocrite so I kept it to myself for many years. After some years it seemed that I would get away from this

and dismiss it from my mind, but the more I tried to forget it the more it preyed on my mind and it seemed to me if I could unite with some church I would get rid of my burden so I went on some years asking myself if I offered myself for membership what would I tell and I was in a quandary. The longer I waited the more I wanted to unite with the church and so it came to pass on the third Sunday in November 1922. I found myself at the mercy of the church, asking for a home among them and to my surprise they received me but was not baptized until the next May. I have tried in my weak way to live as close as in me is to the teaching of the Scriptures.

Dear brethren, if I am worthy to say brother or sister, I feel so little that it almost makes me shudder to address one of God's little ones as brother or sister. You can be the judge as to whether this rambling letter is worthy of publication. If not lay it aside and I will esteem you just the same. I have been reading the *Signs of the Times* for some time and enjoy it so much. I think it one of the soundest publications I have ever read. Submitted in bonds of love. Your little brother in hope of eternal life.

B. F. LAKE.

Box 1, Route 67, Lucedale, Miss.

Elder R. Lester Dodson, Dear Editor and very dear brethren, I hope, in hope of heaven and immortal glory: I have been reading your good paper and can say I feel to hope these dear writers express the truth or I do not know anything of the dealings of the Lord. I am not permitted to feast on the goodness of our God as I desire, but know I only receive such as is meted out to me by our God which is according to his will and purpose and was ordered in all things and sure and that before the world was. I get so low down in spirit I am made to wonder if it has all been only a dream in life. It seems so dark to the worldly creature. I wonder if I have really been born of the spirit and it causes me to think of Jesus when he said, "I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing." Then we are carried back to our first love and how we were taught and that not by man. We see why the world cannot see, hear or understand the things of our Lord. Just as we were before our Lord revealed himself to us. Then we hear his word concerning the need of his resurrection as when he said, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter (or Spirit) will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." He will take of the things of the Father and show them unto you or teach you in the things of God. Here we have an evidence to that effect. When he was here with his disciples on earth he spoke of all the things that would befall him concerning his death, resurrection and so on, and we see when Mary went down to the sepulcher and saw that he had risen or was told of his resurrection she came back and reported these things he had already told his disciples, the scripture says the "words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not." Now the question is why did they not believe? I am persuaded that they had not the Spirit in which to believe and so it is with the world. The Lord's people speak in the same manner, therefore the world cannot receive or understand. The teachings of the true Primitive Baptists are my way of understanding or thinking. I know I was reared by Primitive Baptist parents. My father, Elder T. F. Easley, defended the faith for around fifty years, and I can say I was not traditionally taught the things I believe as I was thirty-two years old when I received a hope. I united with the New School Baptists and tried to stay with them until I was taught they were not in the school

I was. I came to the place where I thought there were no people in the world who believed as I did, and I had resolved to live out in the woods with the owls, until I realized my father had been preaching the things I believed for thirty-five years and I knew it not. Dear people of God do not let the world tell you that the Lord wants people to hear and they will not, and dear ones have this in mind — the Lord knows them that are his and he teaches them the things he wants them to know. There is as much reason in a child of nature not bearing those evidences as an oak tree bearing pecans. I think of a scripture by one of the old patriarchs, "I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." My mind leads on to other scriptures but I cannot make all the subjects plain. I am poor in all things. I have written more than I thought to. I am sending $2 to pay for your good paper which I enjoy reading so much. I am the only one in this locality that believes the doctrine of the Predestinarian Baptists. A poor sinner saved by grace if saved at all. I will close asking an interest in the prayers of God's people.

E. B. EASLEY.

Route 3, Benton, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am enclosing a check for payment of a year's subscription to the *Signs of the Times* for brother Hardin Chester who asked me to do this for him. With this I would like to add a few remarks that it seems to me would cheer and encourage those who go on in hope, tremblingly go as they journey in doubts and fears, having found they have no abiding city, but are looking for that city of God.

A sister in our church spent Saturday night in our home. Sunday we started out about 11 a.m., nothing much in view, just searching and wandering. We met another sister in Christ as we hope, took her in with us and drove on to an elderly sister's home. She felt we had to stay with her. She is in her eighties, tried and true. We had not been there long until a brother in our church and his wife drove up. We all then went to see an invalid sister, Mrs. Alice Mathis, a sister to Elder J. C. Chester, deceased. When we arrived we met other Baptists of our Association and an Elder Elzo Lowery of Bethel Association. We spent the afternoon in service, prayers, singing, reading and preaching, much to our comfort and enjoyment and to the comfort of the invalid sister.

Brother Dodson this was not planned by man as none of us knew of the intention of the other, but all came together there and all of one mind, to worship God in this sainted sister's home. We knew she had only a few more days on earth to spend, still might outlive several of those present that day. She told me the songs she wanted sung at her funeral and told me her experience. This morning I thought of how all of God's children need encouragement, and it seems being gathered as we were yesterday in his name, as we hope, without planning, encouraged all of us that surely it was of God. We were encouraged to press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Brother Hardin Chester is a brother to sister Mathis and he asked me to write a little about our meeting yesterday. When we write it seems void and empty, does not express the sweet comfort and peace that was felt there around that bedside where this saintly woman lay dying and praising the God we hope we love because he first loved us. If it is not asking too much as per request of brother Chester, and if it is fitting you can publish this. May God be merciful to all who hope in him.

(Mrs.) EFFIE BOWDEN

Route 1, Carthage, N. C.

Signs Of The Times, Dear Elder Dodson:

Enclosed you will find $5 for which to pay for 1944 and 1945 subscriptions, use the balance as an aid to the *Signs* or any way you like.

I do enjoy the *Signs* so very much as I do not have the opportunity of going to church often of late, and hearing the wonderful word of God preached. When the *Signs* comes it almost seems that I am meeting with some of the Lord's dear children. So many of the writers can express my experience (if I have one) far better than I can. I am sorry that I have neglected my subscription for so long and sincerely thank you for continuing to send the paper to me. May God bless you to keep publishing the *Signs* for us hungry ones to read. An unworthy sister if one at all.

(Mrs.) C. W. ANTHONY

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I received your letter a few moments ago and was very glad to hear from you so soon. It usually takes much longer to get an answer. I am now on ship anchored at Guam. We leave here early in the morning for Tokyo, Japan. I will be so glad when we are back in the states and I along with many others may hear the Old Baptist truth preached again. It is a sweet sound to my ear. I recall when I was small that I never wanted to go to preaching. I would pout and fuss because Mother and Dad insisted that I go. Many times I would not go into the meeting-house and Mother would threaten to punish me, but the next meeting day I would stay out again. I really did not know why. Now I want to go and cannot. When I was home in June Dad preached at two churches one Sunday and I attended both services. While he did speak longer it seemed to me he only stood a few minutes. I wanted him to go on and on. It was sweet to my hungry soul. I could not hold back the tears of joy. I am thankful to God that I believe such a wonderful doctrine. How one can believe any other I do not understand. I have one more year in the navy then I hope if it is God's will I may go to the Old Baptist church every chance I have. I know I will never be worthy to be called one of them, but I do hope I may follow along with them. I am unworthy to be called a child of God, if one the least of the flock. I realize I am a poor writer, especially in connection with the Bible. I have a desire to write on and about its teachings more but I cannot. Sincerely yours,

THURMAN I. GRIFFIN.

Pho.M. 3/c
U.S.S. Intrepid (C V-11)
V-3-P c/o Fleet P.O.,
San Francisco, Calif.

Route 1, Box 901, Auburn, Wash.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I have read and reread the *Signs*. The articles are all so good, a tonic to a poor lonely soul such as I feel myself to be. As I open my Bible these words come to my attention. Matt. 23 starting at the 23rd verse and reading through the chapter. It seems to me to be describing a lot of people of the present day. I like chapter 13 of 1st Corinthians. Charity appeals to me. Read 2 Cor. 12:9-10. I am enclosing $5 to do with as you see fit. The articles in the *Signs* are worth it and more. I have no one to talk with and cannot get to meeting. The *Signs* speaks my mind to a T. It is getting dark so I will close with love to all the household of faith. Your unworthy sister,

(Mrs.) JENNIE CLIFFORD.

Route 1, Naches, Wash.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: A dear friend sent in a subscription for me a year ago. It has been such a comfort to me to read the letters each month. The only way I can show my appreciation for it is to renew my subscription at once and just tell you I wish it could come twice a month instead of just once. Sincerely,

(Mrs.) CHAS. SHANKS.

EDITORIAL

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ELDER E. J. LAMBERT ..... Box 196, Tinsman, Ark.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and remittances made payable to,

SIGNS OF THE TIMES
P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

PEACE

No more wonderful greeting could be found for a war-torn, sick and weary world than that of *peace.* On two separate occasions during the past year the whole civilized world was thrilled by such a greeting. The proclamation of final peace brought inexpressible joy to millions of homes all over the world, signifying as it did the cessation of hostilities and the safe return, sooner or later, of their loved ones; but, alas! as part of the awful price which had to be paid, many would have to come back with dismembered bodies, broken spirits and impaired minds, with only gold stars and vacant chairs to adorn the hearthstones of many a home where loved ones will never again be seen. As far as possible, those who have so much to be thankful to God for, should share the misfortunes and burdens of the less fortunate, since it was only because of his goodness and mercy that they were spared. Aside from the terrible cost in human blood and suffering, war does not pay. Economically, it is most unsound, for the total destruction and waste to even the conquering nations overwhelms them with incalcuable obligations and debts for generations, which hang like millstones about their necks. War is so futile and insane it would seem that all sensible nations would want to do everything possible to avoid it, but on the other hand some of humanity is so corrupt and greedy in its lust and search for power and wealth, it does not long refuse to trample under foot the weak and helpless if thereby it can attain its own selfish ends. It has been said, if selfishness could be eliminated from the world, we would have heaven on earth. Civilization advances at great costs to those who are sufficiently strong in character to sacrifice, if need be, their fortunes and lives in defense of principles which are akin to immortal, and we would like to see whatever benefits that are to be derived from the progress of the various sciences, inventions and discoveries resulting from the war passed on to the same humanity which has suffered and paid so dear a price because of it. The plan to hold responsible the heads of governments and rulers of nations which wage aggressive warfare, and meet out to them adequate punishment for their crimes, should prove a helpful deterrent against wars of aggression in the future. We honestly believe if nations, and labor and industry in our own country as well, would set up Courts of Arbitration for adjusting their differences, everyone would be far better off in the end. The best we can do now is to turn our genius and energies towards salvaging as much as possible out of the predicament the world is in and strive, by the help of God, to steer a course which by precept and example provoke emulation. Under the blessings and favor of Almighty God, America has become one of the greatest nations of all time in many respects, and we shall continue to indulge the hope that our leaders and statesmen may be endowed with wisdom, knowledge, understanding and courage sufficient to hold aloft the torch of liberty and religious freedom until other nations become imbued with their idealistic principles and rally around their

standard. If any man lacks wisdom, let him remember to "ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." In our opinion, one of the most compensatory factors which appears to be rising out of the ruins of this most devastating of all wars, is the overthrow and destruction of those who openly defied both God and man, and at the same time we hope it will bring liberty and freedom to millions upon millions of enslaved worshippers of idolitry. May it please God to grant, if according to his most holy and divine will, that his people in every kindred, tribe and tongue, be privileged to worship him in spirit and in truth, under their own vine and fig tree, where none shall dare molest or make afraid.

In the foregoing we have spoken in large measure of an earthly peace, following a war of only a few years duration, and which at best may not long endure, but we now wish to speak of a peace of an entirely different nature. In Holy Writ it is called "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding." From the time that Adam, in the garden of Eden, transgressed God's law, until the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, man was at war with God, and for ages it was proven conclusively that he was utterly incapable of and without the ability to keep his law or appease his divine wrath. What a mercy that God had, according to his eternal purpose and infinite wisdom in his counsel before time began, determined upon the plan and means of saving his people, and that he should in time inspire his prophets, by the operation of his Holy Spirit, to set forth in unmistakable language the method and place by which the Prince of Peace would come into the world to make reconciliation between God and man. That there could be no miscarriage of God's plan, the prophet, Isaiah, spoke of it as in the present tense when he said, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Isa. 9:6-7. Untold comfort and consolation is derived from the absolute certainty of God's plan, and there is salvation in none other. We are told that "he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Again, we read that "the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." And it was also said, "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." He who alone was able to keep God's law and fulfill it in all of its demands, in every jot and tittle, hath by his sufferings, death and resurrection, made an atonement (at-one-ment) for his people, thus restoring them to complete and perfect favor with God. At the appointed time and place that which the prophets foretold came to pass, and the account of it is beautifully set forth by Luke in his second chapter. God's providence was so overpowering that even the decree of Caesar Augustus was brought in subservience to his holy will and made to fulfill its part in bringing about the fact that Jesus was to be born in Bethlehem. According to Caesar Augustus' decree every man had to go to his own city to be taxed, and because Joseph was of the house and lineage of David he had to go up from Galilee into Judaea, unto the city which is called Bethlehem to be taxed. It was while he and Mary were there that "the days were accomplished that she should be deliv-

ered." "And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." The narrative goes on to say, "there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." God, of whom it was long ago declared, "he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand," had brought to pass one of the most supernatural events of all time. This same God discerned the thought an intent of Herod's wicked heart and caused the wise men to return to their country another way, that they should not tell him of the whereabouts of the Christ child. God has ever controlled all of the circumstances surrounding his people, and he works and none can hinder, and hinders and none can work. He so hedges them about as to compel them to cry unto him for deliverance, and then makes bare his arm and opens, if need be, the sea so that they are liberated from their bondage. Then it is they sing the song that Moses and the children of Israel sung, "He (the Lord) hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." And like the psalmist, each one can say, "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." No peace can compare with that which the sinner experiences in the forgiveness of his sins. This so fills his soul with ecstacy and delight that he almost feels to be lifted out of this world, and once he has known this peace it will never be utterly taken from him. Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." What wonderful words are these! The peace which is of the world is often of short duration, but the peace which he gives his people is an eternal peace and shall abide with them when all the things of this transitory world shall have passed away and been forgotten. No wonder our blessed Saviour followed those words by saying, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

There is still another phase of this peace which we would like to bring to the attention of our readers. If through the shed blood of the blessed Lamb of God we are at peace with Him, why should we not live peaceably with all men, and especially the household of faith? We are convinced that brethren are entirely too intolerant of each other, and that if they would talk matters over in a brotherly manner they would often come to a proper understanding. If per chance they cannot agree, let them remember the example set by Abraham when he said to Lot: "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen: for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left." Gen. 13:8-9. If we have the love of

God in our hearts we should be willing, it seems to us, for our brother to present his own view and go on his way, certainly within reasonable limitations. It is quite obvious at times that brethren do not thoroughly understand what another brother says or writes, and instead of inquiring of him to make certain, they will proceed to criticize and ofttimes will deal in personalities. Such a course is not provocative of peace and good fellowship in our ranks. It would be much better, we think, if all would stick to fundamental principles and cling to the word of God as the man of our counsel. The man who stands firmly upon that foundation and can always give a "thus saith the Lord" for the doctrine and order for which he contends, need have no fear of his acceptability with God in the end. There can be no improvement over the pattern laid down in Holy Writ by "the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." Sometimes we see great emphasis placed upon the rule laid down by our Master as recorded in Matthew 18:15-17 for dealing with a brother who trespasses against us, but the same brother who stresses this point will show an utter disregard for the rule by talking and writing to almost anyone but the brother who he claims has given offense. "Consistency, thou art a jewel," is not scripture, but it is nevertheless good to put in practice. The apostle urged Timothy to "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

We like to see brethren manifest zeal and the courage of their convictions, but at the same time we also like to see humility and meekness, accompanied by a godly fear, which are the fruits of the Spirit. Those who profess to follow our Lord and Master would do well to keep in mind the lines of the poet where he asked, "How can I bear revenge or pride, with Jesus in my view?" If our churches would be faithful with the Elders and lay members alike, by calling them to account when they overstep the proper bounds, we are persuaded it would have a wholesome effect. If trouble-makers in the church were made to realize their responsibility to the body of Christ as a whole, it might tend to curb them in their heated moments. From time to time things are said and done which have a far-reaching effect and influence for good or bad and it, therefore, pays to weigh well our words before sending them abroad over the land. While some very distressing things have been brought to our attention during the past year, on the other hand we are glad to say we have received considerable evidence of the solidarity of the love and fellowship of the brethren on the whole. There are signs which indicate that good brethren are becoming more sober-minded and mature in their deliberations and judgment, and we are very glad to see it. David said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

We know not what the New Year has in store for a single one of us, but we earnestly hope that each one will diligently strive for those things which make for peace, as God gives him to see it, forgetting not forbearance, longsuffering and charity where they are necessary. Above all, we hope that every heart will find fellowship with the poet when he penned the following lines:

O that the Lord would guide my ways,
To keep his statutes still!
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will!

This is the message with which we desire to greet our readers at the beginning of this New Year, and now may "the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleas-

ing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." R. L. D.

SALUTATORY

TO THE EDITOR, ASSOCIATE EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

Upon request of Elder Dodson, and after due consideration, I consent for my name to be added to the Editorial Staff of the *Signs of the Times*.

I realize the sacredness and responsibility of the position. I also realize my inability (of myself) to cope with the situation. Were it not for the confidence that God will control, I would not dare do this.

Many periodicals have come on the scene and vanished in the past one hundred and fourteen years, but surely Jehovah controls the *Signs* in a wonderful way. God has blessed the writers to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. They have been blessed to contend for the tenets in accord with the doctrine of God our Savior.

I have been made to believe in the sovereignty of God without limitation; the depravity of man in its full sense; the unconditional election of God's children by Jehovah; the limited atonement; the grace of God is effectual and irresistible; saints will persevere throughout this life and into eternity, solely and wholly by God's grace; and that in the resurrection this mortal shall put on immortality, this corruption shall put on incorruption, this natural body shall be raised a spiritual body in heaven to unite with the complete family of God in praising him perfectly in an endless eternity.

May I say in concluding my remarks, that it is not my purpose to read or write critically to find fault — but for edification. May each of us be blessed to edification instead of criticism. May God keep this periodical hewing close to its original prospectus and from heresy.

(Elder) E. J. LAMBERT.

Box 196, Tinsman, Ark.

HOW LONG HALT YE BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS?

"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word."—I Kings 18:21.

This text has been misinterpreted and misapplied by many worldly wise professors. Most of the people try to change this important question that Elijah asked to WHY halt ye between two opinions, and they try to make it applicable to the whole Adamic family. This question does not even favor WHY but HOW LONG halt ye between two opinions? You will find by reading the context that the question does not apply to the entire Adamic race but specially to the children of Israel. I believe Elijah knew how long they would halt between two opinions. He knew that they would halt between two opinions until God made himself manifest unto them that he was God. Then they would cease to halt between two opinions. I think that this text was for the specific purpose of showing Israel that the Lord was God; and to eradicate the other opinion that was possessing their hearts that Baal was God. Baal had 450 prophets and Elijah was the only true prophet at that time. The hearts of the children of Israel were halting between two opinions. Outwardly, Baal had 450 prophets to one of the Lord. False prophets today are about the same ratio and even the children of God, when left to themselves, wonder if there is something to their false doctrine — seeing that they have so many advocators. You will notice, in the text, that Baal's prophets were to choose between two bullocks. False prophets today make their own choice, they even advocate that the people may choose their Saviour and direct their own steps and seal their own destinies. This is a false opinion as we hear Jesus saying: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Yes, Paul wrote to the Thessalonians that "God

hath from the beginning chosen you." Peter said: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood." Paul writes to the Ephesians: "According as he hath chosen us in him." This is the opinion as rendered in the Bible, which is different from the opinion as advocated by the false prophets. Thus here are two opinions; one is opposite to the other. False opinion: You are obliged to choose God. True opinion: God hath chosen his people. This false opinion will even be in the hearts of God's people until God sees fit to burn out this false opinion by making himself manifest. Baal's 450 prophets were to have the choice of the two bullocks, the first call to their gods and the heat of the day as well as the dry wood on the altar to prove their gods. They called loud and long and even cut themselves until blood gushed forth for their gods to answer by fire. At the time of the evening sacrifice, Elijah repaired the altar by building one of twelve stones and ordered great quantities of water to be poured on the wood and around the altar so as to fill a trench. After doing this he prayed quietly to the Lord to make himself manifest and to prove to Israel that he was the Lord God and that he had turned their hearts back again. "The fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God." 1 Kings 18:38-39.

Yes, our God is a consuming fire and it burned up every trace of man's work and left nothing. The false opinion had been burned from the hearts of this people and then (not before) did they cease to halt between two opinions.

Dear child of God, have you not experienced the consuming fire of Israel's God? Have you not experienced the burning that consumed every false opinion; all of your self-righteousness; every ounce of your seeming ability — in fact — every thing, deed, or thought that you had ever trusted in in a natural way? Yes, our natural opinion is that we can direct our steps. The opinion as stated in the Bible is, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." How long will ye halt between the two opinions? Ye will halt between the two opinions until God the Lord makes himself manifest by proving to you that you cannot walk as you would. It is the opinion of the natural man that he can choose light; yet, the true opinion is that man chooses darkness rather than light. The opinion of man is that the natural man can receive the things of the Spirit and by studying and applying himself know them. This opinion is a contrast to the scripture; "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Man's opinion is, that surely, part of the way to heaven and eternal life is by the works of the creature. Yet, the opinion of the Bible is: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Peter was halting between opinions on the mountain of transfiguration when he said: "let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." I think Moses represents the law and Elias represents prophecy in that trio. Peter was halting between two opinions as to which should be given the most honor. He continued to halt between these opinions until Moses and Elias disappeared and the Lord God answered from the cloud and said: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." The false opinion of the law having any dominion over God's children was eradicated. We hear Jesus saying: "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Then it is not part by law

and part of grace but solely an unmerited favor through Jesus Christ. The opinion of some men is that they are enabled through the act of regeneration to perform or not to perform upon volition of their own will and receive blessings in this time because of their obedience and cursings because of their disobedience notwithstanding the scriptures which say: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Also, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." And many other scriptures too numerous to mention which is in contrast to this false opinion. It is the opinion of man that he can live perfect in this present life. This opinion is not in accord with apostolic experiences, therefore, it is a false opinion that must be burned out. People of God will halt between these two opinions — opinion of man and opinion of God — until the opinion of man is burned out. The opinion of the apostle is plain: "When I would do good, evil is present with me." "For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I." And "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me." Also, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

So, we are hoping and looking forward to the day when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality and this natural body shall be raised a spiritual body. Yes, we are awaiting the time when the creature shall be delivered out of the bondage of corruption unto the glorious liberties of the children of God, then we will cease from every false opinion.

(Elder) E. J. LAMBERT.

Tinsman, Ark.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Whereas, it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst our dear brother S. H. HOUK, therefore be it

Resolved, that Little Flock Church has suffered a great loss. Brother Houk served as deacon for his church for many years and was a firm believer in salvation by grace. He was an honest, upright member, loved and respected by this body of church members as well as by his many friends. He loved the church and was always present at the services if it was possible for him to attend. He passed away Sept. 28, 1945. He is survived by his companion and four children to whom our sympathy is extended.

Resolved that a copy of these resolutions be made a part of our church record, a copy sent to the bereaved family and a copy sent to the "Signs of the Times" for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference at Altus, Okla., Oct. 13, 1945.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN, Moderator.
(Mrs.)LOU KESTER, Church Clerk.

Whereas, it has been according to the pleasure and will of Almighty God to remove from the shores of time our beloved brother and deacon, LINCOLN SMITH, therefore be it

Resolved, that in the death of brother Smith the church has lost a faithful and loyal brother and deacon. His heart and love was ever with and for the church; his meekness and humility was an example to look up to; his home was a real home for the Old Baptists; his excellent qualities endeared him to all and as deacon we feel he was certainly one indeed and in truth, but we feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

Resolved, that we bow in humble submission to God's holy will.

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be sent to the bereaved family, a copy spread upon our church book and a copy sent to the "Signs of the Times" for publication. Done by order of the Olive and Hurley Church, Ashokan, N. Y., Oct. 3, 1945.

Licentiate AMASA J. SLAUSON, Moderator.
Deacon ORVILLE WINCHELL, Clerk.

OBITUARIES

Deacon LINCOLN SMITH of Ashokan, N. Y., was born April 9, 1861, and departed this life July 27, 1945. He was born in the town of Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., the son of Henry and Mary Smith, Hurley, N. Y. On Nov. 6, 1888 he was married to Sarah Simmons of Olive. To this union were born one son and two daughters, the son having died in infancy. Surviving are his widow, a member of the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, and the two daughters: Mrs. Mae Van

Patten, Ballston Spa, N. Y. and Mrs. Samuel Di Lallo, Schnectady, N. Y. Deacon Smith had been in poor health with heart trouble for about six years but bore his sickness uncomplainingly to the end. He was buried in the liquid grave of baptism by Elder George Ruston, then pastor of the Olive and Hurley Church, Ashokan, N. Y., June 17, 1917 and raised to walk in newness of life. Later the church saw in brother Smith the gift of deacon to which office he was set apart. To our understanding he well proved that he possessed the qualifications that many of us could look up to as an example of the fruits of the Spirit that he so nobly manifested throughout the remainder of his stay on earth, love, meekness, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, good judgment in the church and a father in Israel. We feel there are few of his equal in those things, showing to us what the grace of God can do for puny man.

We want to say the home of brother and sister Smith was a welcome home for the Old School Baptists for many years and few in this part of the country have fed and lodged as many brethren as they. The home will be much missed by us all. They could not attend meetings for some time on account of his illness, so after preaching services the pastor, brethren and myself were requested regularly to call at their home for scripture reading and prayer which they so much enjoyed. We feel to say that the Lord gave and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord, and that our loss is his eternal gain. Deacon Smith was a kind and loving father and husband. His devoted companion did all that was in her power for him in his illness. May God bless and comfort the bereaved is my desire.

As our pastor was away in Maine attending meeting, the unworthy writer was called to officiate at the funeral held in the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist meeting house, Ashokan, N. Y., with such as the Lord gave from Eph. 2:8. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; Not of works, lest any man should boast." His body was laid in the family plot at Woodstock, N. Y., to await the resurrection.

AMASA J. SLAUSON.

CORRECTION

In column two near the bottom of the first page in the September 1945 issue of the Signs, Elder Lytle Burns' article should read in part, as follows: "It is the object of the state to make this subject work to punish him for his crime and use the proceeds of his labor for upbuilding of the state. The state has the supervision, direction and limitations of the work done in the prison." We are glad to make this correction. Editor.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Mrs. W. A. Leitch, Can., $3; Mrs. J. Clifford, Wash., $1; J. MacKenzie, Can., $16; Mrs. A. Holloway, Md., $4; J. F. Lax, Ill., $2; Middletown & Wallkill O. S. Baptist Church, N. Y., $25; B. McLachlin, Can., $1; W. R. Wallis, Miss., $7; Mrs. Mae Thomas, Ill., $24; A. B. Yelvington, Fla., $1.

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each 1st Sunday, 11:00 a. m. and Saturday before.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday.
AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a. m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a. m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopewell Church, Ozark Ala., meets each 4th Sunday, 11 a. m. J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock. Meeting place at Alder St. at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, 11 a. m. Elders J. J. Collins and J. S. Bass, Pastors.
J. J. COLLINS

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Beulah Primitve Baptist Church meets each 4th **Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.**
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canda, California.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday, north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before.
E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

Pleasant Valley Church, Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc.)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays
10:30 A.M. 2 P.M.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY
Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue. Take elevator to second floor.
11.00 a. m. 1:30 p. m.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.
(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.
C. W. BOND, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 a. m.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. G. E. Rushing, co-pastor.
C. B. TEAGUE, Pastor.

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets third Sunday in each month at 11:00 a. m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Old School Baptist meetings are held every fourth Sunday at Civic Club, 1419 N. Shepherd St., Houston, Texas. Preaching by Elder W. O. Beene.
(Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Danville Primitve Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before. Bradley Road, Danville, Va.
W. R. DODD, Pastor.

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meet each first Sunday 11 a.m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3032 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va. R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.
R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m. C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 114 RUTHERFORD, N. J., FEBRUARY, 1946 No. 2

CHRIST — ALL IN ALL

"Let the inhabitants of the rock sing."

When christians meet for praise and prayer,
I love to mingle with them there;
It is indeed, a heavenly place
When Jesus shows His smiling face.

I love to hear His precious name;
It puts my waiting soul in frame
To hear the gospel's joyful sound,
And gives me pleasure most profound.

The promises of my dear Lord
I find in His recorded word,
Sustain my soul from day to day
And cheer me on my weary way.

I will extol Him while I live,
By faith which only He can give;
I want to sing His worthy praise,
Throughout this life's remaining days.

I long to join that blood washed throng,
In praise and everlasting song;
Before His shining throne above,
Where all is joy and peace and love.

He is my Shepherd, Priest and King,
The ancient Rock to which I cling;
The holy Dove, the spotless Lamb,
The mighty God, The great I Am.

—J. W. HAYNES.

Riverside, Calif.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE CITIES OF REFUGE

The assertion that the New Testament is concealed in the old and that the Old Testament is revealed in the new is strikingly and comfortingly true when we examine the twentieth chapter of Joshua, which is our subject for consideration in this article. This has to do with the six cities of refuge appointed by the Lord, when he spake to Moses, as recorded in the thirty-fifth chapter of Numbers, which made provision for these cities with all their spiritual significance. It was not, however, until the time of Joshua that these cities were built when the Israelites came into possession of the promised land. By reference, allusion, comparison or contrast the types and figures of the Old Testament are rich with prophetic and experimental food for the believer of the gospel dispensation. Let us examine the chapter under consideration and meditate upon the beautiful typology involved.

There were six cities of refuge known as Kedesh, Shechem, Hebron, Bezer, Ramoth and Golan, each of which applies in type to Christ as the great and sure refuge of the regenerated sinner, and secondarily relating to the church of God itself. The church is the body of Christ, and so in a spiritual sense cannot be regarded as apart from him. Each of these six cities was provided for the manslayer who had by accident and without intent slain any person. They were expressly provided for the children of Israel and for the stranger that sojourned among them. We see in the word, stranger, the foreshadowing of the Gentile believer who by spiritual circumcision in the gospel dispensation enters into the commonwealth of Israel that is spiritual, and is therefore no longer a stranger or a foreigner from the covenant of promise as

declared by Paul in Ephesians. The whole church of God is graciously provided for in type in regard to the cities of refuge by specific appointment of the Lord, who hath appointed salvation for walls and bulwarks.

We note that the Lord spake unto the children of Israel by the hand of Moses. The law with all its exactions and penalties is referred to in the expression, "the hand of Moses", for the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ that we might be justified by faith. The law as embraced in the decalogue, though holy, just and good, manifests the ugly and deadly wound of sin, while the ceremonial law as included in the sacrifices and ceremonies of the Levitical priesthood point to, but cannot apply the remedy, thus the law is a ministration of death. The law expressly provided that if the manslayer were apprehended by the avenger of blood before he could flee to and reach one of the cities of refuge, he was to be slain. But if he reached one of these cities of refuge in successful flight from the avenger of blood, he was to declare his cause in the ears of the elders of the city at the gate, who were to take the fugitive into the city unto them and give him a place that he might dwell among them, and not be surrendered unto the avenger of blood who might pursue him even unto the gate of the city. He was to stand before the congregation of the city for judgment and was to dwell therein until the death of the high priest. If he survived the high priest, he was to be allowed to return unto his own city and be free from apprehension or punishment.

With appealing force the case of one fleeing from the avenger of blood represents a poor sinner who has been apprehended by the Holy Spirit and made of a broken and a contrite heart. It is such that the Lord will not despise. By one man, Adam, death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. The whole human race sinned in Adam, yet unknowingly and unwittingly, and in that sense slew themselves and came under the sentence of death, subject to its just penalty, and without escape as far as they themselves are concerned. But provision is made for the church of God, that is all believers, through Jesus Christ who is the refuge of all who by faith lay hold upon the precious promises and flee from the wrath to come, from the avenger of blood, the inexorable and changeless judgment of a thrice holy God, for justice and judgment inhabit his throne, though mercy and truth go before his face in the refuge provided in Christ Jesus, the anti-type of each city of refuge when justice has been satisfied and judgment rendered unto God, in the sacrifice of the dear Lamb of God.

Burdened by a load of sin, tormented by a guilty conscience, and feeling the sentence of death in himself, the broken-hearted sinner, lest divine justice should strike him down because of his transgressions, flees from the wrath to come, being drawn by the invisible cords of a deathless love shed abroad in his heart by God himself. He flees for protection to the sanctuary of the anti-typical city of refuge. Satan pursue but cannot overtake the one who flees to this sanctuary. The Israelite of old did not flee to a city of refuge until he became aware that he was guilty of manslaughter. The sinner does not flee to Jesus until he has become aware of the vengeance of Almighty God for the offense of sin, treason against God, and ever on his journey experimentally, he feels that if justice had its course with him he would never know salvation.

As the church is the mystical body of Christ, there is comfort in the thought that the manslayer of old stood at the gate of the city and declared his cause into the ears of the elders of the city, who represented Israel. So he who confesses his sins before God and the church is given a place in the city, the church, the new Jerusalem that John saw com-

ing down from God out of heaven. "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." Matt. 10:32. As it was expressly provided that under the old dispensation, the manslayer who reached the city was to be guaranteed safety, so he under the new dispensation, who feels his sins and confesses them is accepted of God. Now this is important: under the law there were signs pointing to each city of refuge and each city was to be set on a hill and not more than a half day's travel from any point in the land of Israel. The church of God is like a city set on a hill, and the sign posts pointing to it are the offerings and sacrifices of the ceremonial law. No offering of a bullock, lamb, goat or pigeon could take away sin. It could point to a better sacrifice, to Jesus the Mediator of the New Testament. It requires the divine virtue of the blood of the Son of God to cleanse sin. It required all the power of the Godhead to wash away the foul guilt of sin. In Jesus dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily, therefore his blood was the blood of the son of God and had eternal efficacy so that the children of God are given eternal life.

The unregenerate sinner does not flee to the anti-typical city of refuge. He is not aware of the enormity of his offense against God or of the nature and effect of the sin that he has committed nor of the sentence of death in himself. His carnal mind is enmity against the law of God and is not subject to it and cannot be.

The church receives the sinner whose confession satisfies them and he is given a place among them. We should remark here that it is not necessary for a sinner to belong to the visible church in order to be saved, but there must be a confession before God and a thought upon his holy name.

It is stated in scripture that six is the number of man, and there were six cities of refuge provided for under the law. We must remember that every sinner saved by grace is guilty of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, for all our sins are laid on him. The nearness of a city to every part of Israel shows the nearness of the Lord Jesus to every poor and needy sinner, who realizes that the commandment has come, sin has revived, and that he has died, for it is written, "The word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart," that is, the word of faith. There, then, must be the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart before the fugitive is aware of his condition. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Safety depended not on the fugitive, but upon the city itself, in the provision for the safety of the one who sought its protection. Jesus has not only atoned for the nature of sin in the believer, but for the very sins that the believer has committed. We see this in the meaning of the sin offering and of the trespass offering.

The names of the different cities of refuge have a sweet meaning for him who flees from the wrath to come. Kedesh, one of the cities appointed, means holiness and was situated in Naphtali. Since Jesus is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, and since we are justified by his blood and by his righteousness, Kedesh has a wonderful meaning. His righteousness is imputed unto us and our sins laid on him. In resurrection life we are as holy as the son of God, but Kedesh was in Naphtali, which means wrestling. Jesus wrestled with and overcame all the powers of darkness, death, sin, hell, and the grave for us who are the called of God. Also each one in his experience wrestles with the old man, his carnal nature, and never in this time state is free from this adversary. He does not experience this wrestling until he is born again.

Another city, Shechem, mentioned as a place of refuge, means shoulder. The

government of the church is to be upon the shoulders of Christ, and is, for he is our king and he rules in the army of heaven and among the children of men. None can stay his hand. Now Shechem was in Ephraim, which means fruitfulness. Through Jesus we have the fruits of the spirit, love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, etc.

One of the six cities of refuge was Hebron, which means fellowship and friendship. In the church whether visible or invisible through Christ we come into fellowship with God. Jesus met the requirements of God's justice and satisfied the law in every jot and tittle and thus fulfilled it, becoming thereby the meeting place of God and man. He rendered obedience to God and brought salvation to man. Bezer, another city of refuge, signifies a fortification. The divine person of Christ in his sinless life, in his sufferings and death and in his resurrection, as well as by his Melchisedec priesthood, fortifies his people against all the powers of Satan and secures for them eternal redemption. A mighty fortress is our God, secure against all the powers of darkness. Ramoth was a city of refuge and denotes heights and so may point to the exaltation of Christ and his people in him. Golan, the sixth city of refuge, is said to mean joy or exultation. It was the joy of Jesus to suffer for and redeem his bride and to take her sin and her shame upon himself. The people of God "glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." They that joy in God through Christ patiently await the coming of Christ for his people, who as a body are perfected in him.

We should remark here that the manslayer of the old dispensation was to abide in the city until the death of the high priest which should be in those days, before he could leave the city in safety. The high priest represents Jesus, and after the death of Christ the believer has a freedom which gives him lawful liberty to go and come in his work and activities in the gospel dispensation, as he is in the world but not of the world. Until Jesus died, the believer under the old dispensation did not enjoy the blessings of the new, for he embraced the promises that are fulfilled in the New Testament, though he did not enter into nor receive them, even though he died in faith.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

West Hurley, N. Y.

Madisonville, Ky.

BROTHER DODSON: I awoke this morning with some scripture on my mind which is found in the forty-fifth chapter of Isaiah. It seems to me that my life has been full of darkness. I have been made to feel so ashamed of this darkness that often I have tried to hide my feelings from others, because I felt that they would think me foolish to profess that I was blind and could not remember what the preacher had said in his sermon or how he applied certain scriptures. I tried to listen and to learn from others what was meant by certain passages of scripture, but could not retain enough to get any learning, and O, how I did wish to know the truth. Again I have often thought that my way was so imperfect, that I surely would do better than I had been doing just to find myself doing worse instead of better. How disappointed I would feel when I had not mended my way, but had made it worse than ever. This sank down deep into my very being and gave me so much trouble that I often wondered if there was ever a wretch like me. Dear brother, I am still wondering. I do not seem to be any better or any more able today than when I first began. I sometimes have taken hope from this, that while I fail so completely or absolutely that my righteousness — if I have

righteousness — is in Christ; one who is able to bear my sins and imperfections.

I only wish to ask am I mistaken about this? If so I wish to be corrected and set right. When I hear one tell their travels and feel that they want to live right, and try and try again and find themselves deeper in their sins than ever before, and often their eyes are filled with tears and their way looks dark to them because they cannot do as a christian should do: it is then that something springs up in me, telling me that this is a christian's experience, and that they have no righteousness to plead. It is then that I wish to take their hand and say "my brother" or "my sister", for I feel they are traveling the same road that I travel. I have never been able to walk alone and am made to say, O, is there any one like me?

Now back to my subject, Isaiah 45. "I will go before thee — And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me." Brother Dodson, I have no fear that the children of God will fall short of what God has prepared for them. I feel that their names are written in the Lamb's book of life, and there is no failure with God. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." His promises are sure, he is plenty able to carry out what he has promised. One old prophet, Elijah, sat down by the juniper tree in the wilderness and asked for himself that he might die. "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers." He fell asleep and was touched by an angel. O what a wonder! Our times are in his hands. When we feel alone that ever watchful eye knows where we are and knows our feelings. What a blessed thought! We cannot go so far into the wilderness, neither can we go to the depths of the sea or too high in the air; whatever the circumstances are the Father knows all about it and his angels are watching over us and can give us meat and drink 'till we can go forty days and forty nights in the strength of that meat. (I Kings 19). Dear child of God, what more can we want? This is God. This is my consolation brethren and sisters. I feel that I can live by this and it also will strengthen me in death. Grace has brought me safe thus far and grace will lead me home, and it is "Amazing grace." How sweet it sounds. I realize that I am helpless and that the power of God is all that can save a wretch like me.

I am making this too lengthy but I sometimes am made to see much beauty in the righteousness of a God that builds his house and keeps his house and no man can say unto him what doest thou? Man's goings are of the Lord, therefore how can we know his way? The way of man is not in himself. We have nothing to boast of save in the Lord. If we glory in the Lord we have whereof to glory. This is a wonderful subject, too wonderful for me. David said: "it is high, I cannot attain unto it." From an unworthy sister I hope.

(Mrs.) CYNTHIA PERKINS BROWN.

3347 Tutwiler Ave., Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS: I am sorry to be late in sending payment for the *Signs of the Times*. I am adding an extra dollar to be used as you desire. I hope we will never miss getting this paper that contains so many comforting letters and editorials as long as we live. I am often made to wonder at the many blessings I receive along life's journey: such as being blessed with the sweet privilege of meeting from time to time with God's little flock who are the fewest of all people, those who believe God is the moving cause of our walking in his name (if we walk there). I hope I am not deceived in feeling I love him above all else, though

this old flesh is rebellious and very ugly indeed. If left to me to do right in order to receive blessings along the way surely I would miss them for truly the way to perform good I find not.

I greatly desire to live soberly and righteously in this present world, ever looking to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. I humbly hope the Lord has given me a sweet hope that is an anchor of the soul, and taught me many things concerning his power, love and mercy, though I am not gifted to talk or write of it which I have desired at his hand. I feel it is best as it is for God makes no mistakes. He knows what is best for us better than we, and he is not like natural parents that can be begged into letting children do things that are not good for them. For some purpose known unto God our beloved pastor, Elder W. O. Wammack is in the service of his country. It made us very sad to see him go but he felt it was his duty to do his part. Said he was no better than others to go, but we feel God had a wise purpose in his going. We are very thankful our church was not left in destitute circumstances. Brother Wammack together with his church saw the gift in brother Grady Brown to speak in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, and thus liberated him to talk when opportunity was given which he has done so beautifully. We have no doubt of his high calling. Brother R. L. Biggs visited us and when he arose to speak he said he desired to talk about Zion and why Christ dwelled there. His desire was granted for it was one of the sweetest sermons I ever heard. Oh! could we view such truths, rejoicing in it without knowledge from above. When our minds are carried above this war torn world and allowed to feast to the fulness of their soul it is food that gives them strength for days to come, but we can only enjoy the sweetness of it as long as our Lord will allow. When it begins to fade away how we do wish to keep it, but having no power of our own we must go on down the stream of time with many fears and trials yet to come. May God give us strength and courage to endure all things with patience and wait for his return is my prayer. Remember us when at the throne of grace, and may He be present with you in time of need. Yours in hope.

(Mrs.) LUTHER CAMPBELL.

Route 1, Hawkins, Texas.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON and the readers of our beloved family paper: I say our family paper, I mean all the children of God is one family, should see eye to eye and one and all speak in the same tongue. I wish to say a few words on the saving power as I see it, and as my Bible teaches me. We read in Titus 3:5, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us." We find there are two kinds of works, the righteous and the unrighteous, and the apostle says it is not by works of righteousness which we have done. If not by good works we are saved surely it is not by bad works. Then let us read in 2 Timothy 1:9, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Here the apostle tells us it was not according to our works that we are saved. Now read in Eph. 2:8-9, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Dear reader, I am so glad that the orderly Primitive Baptists believe that it is God that does the saving, and not the modern preacher. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Let us see in Luke 17:18 how we get into or receive the kingdom of God: "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the king-

dom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein." Let us see how the little child or the infant gets into the kingdom of Heaven. We know that it is nothing good that the little child has ever done. The Bible says we are by nature the children of wrath. Read in Mark 10:15, "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein," and we know that the little child does not perform any conditions nor obey any gospel, in order to get to heaven, but we have to get into heaven just like the little child. We may be eighty-five or ninety years old as the case may be. Read in Romans 11:5-6, "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace." I am so glad it is all by the grace of God. That lets the preacher out for he cannot say that any one is saved by his preaching. However, there are lots of the modern type preachers that claim to be saving souls, but I would like some of them to explain to me where they intend to house those souls that they are saving. They will not go where God's people go for Jesus said: "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that dilligently seek him." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." In I John 5:1 we read, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." I would like to know why some people call for mourners when the Bible plainly says they cannot come unless God draws them. I will now say a few words about faith. The Bible says it is the fruit of the Spirit and I believe it means the Spirit of God. Do not think I do not believe in good works for I do believe when God hath begun a good work he will perform it until the end. I believe in eternal salvation by the grace of God and he that is born of God is made good in spirit and truth, and is kept by the power of God until the last day. Whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, do also unto them; let us at all times be ready to teach and advise others to seek the old path and walk therein; pray daily to God to help us to seek the right way. May the God of heaven bless all the household of faith; watch over his children wherever they are on land or sea; keep them secure from all harm and guide them in the straight and narrow way that leads them into heaven's sweet resting place. May God's richest blessings be with you all. Please, one and all, pray for me and mine. Though unworthy, I feel to be the least of the least. A poor brother I hope.

S. E. REEVES.

(The Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church to the Old School Baptist Association in session with the churches at Whitefield, Me., Sept. 6-7-8, 1945.)

BELOVED OF GOD: The year has passed with all its changes and again it is time for our annual letter. Our little band stands the same as last year — three in number. We are bound together by the bonds of love and dwell together in love and unity with our brethren. We believe in "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Eph. 4:5-6. We are always ready to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason for the hope that is within us with fear and meekness. The hope of a true believer in Christ is a living hope because it is the finished work of the crucified and risen Savior, who sits at the right hand of the Majesty on High, having accomplished a complete salvation for all the Father had given him. That same

hope was given me twenty years ago in this church. As I look back I had a wonderful experience. God led me through deep waters but they did not overflow me. It (the hymn) says, "The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow." I felt weary and footsore, I knew what sorrow was and was acquainted with grief, I felt I had walked in the footsteps of Jesus. When Elder Dodson arose to speak he held my attention for he was talking to me and me alone. I was the only sinner in the church, but as he talked things became clearer and light began to shine through the darkness. My burden began to roll away and I felt it was good to be there. When he told how God had prepared a perfect sacrifice in his Son to take away the sins of the world ("Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." I Peter 2:24.) my sorrow turned to joy and God gave me the assurance that my sins were forgiven. He still keeps that assurance alive. When I came home everything looked so beautiful I thought I shall never sin again. I was kept in that state for awhile when one day I awoke to the fact that sin was still in my members and I had a war to fight — the flesh against the spirit. My feet have often strayed from that straight and narrow way into the byways. I have to be chastized but I know I still have a Savior who is able to save to the uttermost. Job 5:17 says: "Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty." I care not for the material things of this world when God has given me so great a salvation.

Elder Bellows has come to us and brought glad tidings of great joy. Brother Reynolds and wife opened their home for our meetings which we much appreciated. I hope I have not written anything that is not in accord with God's word.

May peace and grace abide with us through another year, may we be kept by his power, and when we are through on this earth may Christ bring us to the throne of his Majesty on high where tears and sorrow are wiped away and we may sing his praises for-ever-more.

(Mrs.) RACHEL C. POTTER.

Route 1, Chancellor, Ala.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR EDITORS: I am minded to write an article on the first verse of the one hundred and twenty-seventh Psalm. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." There was a people who compassed land and sea to make a believer, but when they had made him Christ said: "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves." But again we see those that are commonly called dry land Baptists. They are believers but fight against their duty of coming to the church. Or we see a brother called to preach and he fights this call for years. What is the result of this? It only brings much sorrow, many tears, many sleepless nights and much repentance to such an one. Why is this so? To answer that question we will go back to the text. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." To build the house the Lord has laid the foundation and "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his," and on this foundation he builds his building. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." The timbers he uses are those that know him "for this is life eternal, that they may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." We learn to know God by the things that we suffer, or to be clearer we are taught by the Holy Ghost through experience and this is the answer

to our question. To begin with we must be born of the spirit which convicts of sin. Conviction brings sorrow and tribulations. It causes us to see ourselves as we are and thus brings about repentance. Tribulations bring or work experience and through experience we are taught to know the Lord by the Holy Ghost. When we know the Lord we have patience to wait upon him for salvation or in the words of one writer to "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." To have patience we must have faith which is the gift of God, "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Then patience worketh hope which is the anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast. "Hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." This love of God so works that we are made to let our light shine before men, that others may see our good works and glorify the Father. This is not an Arminian text but great comfort for the children of the King. What is our light, but Christ, for in him is life and the life is the light of men. He is the light which so shines before men that others may see our good works, and he is also our good works. This is the name by which he shall be called "The Lord our righteousness." Line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little the building is framed by the hand of God. No other way can we know him for "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." "It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep." As ever your brother in hope.

W. A. WILLIAMS.

"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." 1 John 3:9.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: For some cause best known to God, my mind has been impressed for a time to write my views as they have been given me as to what is taught in this text. There are two reasons I will offer for this effort. The first and great cause is that I have been made to love the truths that it contains. The other is to get rid of this burden of mind.

I know of no verse in the New Testament written in plainer and more positive language than this, and it treats only on the spiritual birth and spiritual life of God's children. It is my desire that I may be able to present my views in a plain and scriptural manner. There is no question in my mind but that the same holy truths written in our text is also written in the hearts and minds of God's spiritual children. This being true they cannot sin because that blessed holy seed of which they are born remaineth in them, and for this and no other reason they cannot sin.

This we understand applies only to God's elect, regenerated and spiritual children who have been born of God. It does not present them as the children of Adam which they are, but it points to them as the ones who have been born of a better seed than that of Adam, for Adam's seed has been a corrupt seed and will be to the end of time. In the natural or Adam life given in the first birth to all people there is a mortal corrupt seed ministered to them which, as before stated, remains through our journey here.

I know there is a people that teach that God's children can so conduct themselves in a repentance for sin, that God will remove every stain of sin from their mortal bodies. Yes, I have been present where this was taught. Heard them shout praises to God when they said they received the second blessing, but this has never been the doctrine of Old Baptists. They

believe and confess, while they are the children of God, they are also the children of Adam, bear relation to his corrupt seed and the sins they commit are the fruit of this corrupt seed.

Brother Dodson what I shall present here is offered for your consideration. Of course I would be glad for you to publish it in the *Signs*. I feel the readers of the *Signs* love the truth and it is my intention, if the Lord will aid me, to offer nothing but the truth, knowing, as I think I do, that the sword of truth is an unwelcome intruder to those who are in error. I think it should be clear to all lovers of truth that the apostle was not speaking of the relation of God's people as it stands in Adam, but he was speaking of that which relates to Christ. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." This relates to God's spiritual children as they stand in him being born of him, and cannot refer to them as the sons of Adam. So then whose sons will it apply to? I say to the sons of God when they are born of God. "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate." "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called." I will ask what are they called to? I will answer, to a knowledge of the truth which knowledge was never given to a man until he is born of God, and is made heir into God's family. "Born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." I think I have made it plain that it is the natural man (the Adam sinner) that is born again, born of God, and in this birth he is given a holy life which is without sin. I cannot believe that there ever was one sin committed by reason of the spiritual birth, or the spiritual life given to a poor sinner.

Brother Dodson, this text 1 John 3:9 sets forth the truth. If what I have written is in harmony with the text it also must be truth. If you or any good brother or sister feels to point out my mistakes I humbly ask that you do so. It is only the truth that can build us up and do us good. Submitted in love to all who love the truth.

(Elder) JOHN NEAL.

210 Douglas St., Anna, Ill.

1516 Patterson Ave., S. W. Roanoke, 16, Va.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS: I kindly ask some Elder to please give their views on Matt. 23:37 through the *Signs* and will thank them a lot. Talking with a friend recently she was speaking of the boys in the service. She has two sons-in-law in the conflict and told me she had prayed all night many nights for those boys, and also said people are not praying enough for the boys in the service. She seemed to think prayer was bringing the boys home.

This is not my belief dear brethren and sisters, prayer does not change God's plan and purpose. I believe prayer is the spirit within that makes supplication unto God for those things that are needful. No, we cannot utter one word that is not forced upon us with groanings that cannot be uttered. It is something that must be given by the One that gives us all good and perfect gifts. When he speaks to us in that still, small voice and tells us to pray, then and there is when we fall down on our face and beg him for his goodness and mercy. Could we make a voluntary prayer? No, it would not escape our lips. Was it voluntary when the Son of God cried out on the cross from the agony of his soul, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Would you call that voluntary? I believe it was forced upon him. I have never prayed in my life except when it was forced upon me.

I have a son that fought twenty-seven months in Africa, Italy and Sicily. His ship was shelled off the coast of Sicily and went down but all were saved. God speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. It was not God's plan and purpose for my boy to die on the battle fields of Africa, Sicily or Anzio. I was made to be comforted with the thought

that God controls every bullet, bomb and cannon. I believe he had a grand and noble purpose in each and every battle. My son is still serving and I have two sons-in-law in service, but O how wonderful to feel and know this war is about ended. Who have we to thank? No one but the Creator. He rules on the throne of heaven and his power reaches to all the ends of the earth. What a blessing it is for mothers to know their sons are coming from the battle fields, but mother's prayer did not bring them home. It was the plan and purpose of Almighty God which was made from the foundation of the world.

I have received several letters from the brethren and sisters, and want to thank each and every one, telling them how much I appreciate their thinking of me as I am shut in and seem to be in the dark so much of the time. I would appreciate hearing from any that have a mind to write me personally or through the *Signs*. Pardon me for having made this a little lengthy. Yours sincerely I hope.

(Mrs.) MAUDE A. MORAN.

Clarksville, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: It is time for the renewal of my subscription to the *Signs* and I am sending money-order. The extra dollar you can use for the paper as you see fit. How I wish I could write as others do and send for publication. I do appreciate the good editorials written by yourself and other brethren and the wonderful experiences together with your kind remarks underneath them. It makes me long to meet them and yourself and hear you preach. I feel too unworthy to call you brother, but something in the tone of your messages is so touching and kind and in accordance with what I believe, at least what I hope I believe. The twenty-fifth of December was such a great day to me, all alone in my humble little home, yet I hope and feel Jesus surely was with me. Something spoke peace to my poor soul. Unworthy, O so unworthy I be it seemed some unseen power was present to soothe and make me thankful for each blessing. I sang some old songs of Zion such as "Am I a soldier of the cross, a follower of the Lamb?" and others. Something said to me perhaps you just imagine Jesus is present, you may not know anything about him of whom you are trying to speak. I hope he has atoned for my many sins, if not I am sure I am lost. There is nothing good I can do so it is all hope, sweet hope. Will say, as I have in the past, I do appreciate your effort in editing and publishing the paper for us poor unworthy, careworn worms of the dust. It comes laden with good sound things. Sometimes one article is worth the price, then sometimes I am so tossed about with the cares of this troublesome life it seems I fail to concentrate as I would like to do. So farewell dear Editors. May the God of heaven guide and keep you unto himself. A poor old sinner.

(Mrs.) B. H. SHEARON.

Fremont, N. C.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am enclosing a check for $5 for which please give credit on my subscription to the *Signs*. I regret having let the paper go unpaid for so long, but on account of having much business on my mind and also so much to do in these dreadful times I have been careless. The paper is of great comfort to me and I rejoice that the Lord has blessed us with such wonderful gifts as you and your Associate Editors to proclaim the blessed truth to the comfort and consolation of his people. To those who are hungering and thirsting for the blessed truth these editorials are as an oasis in a dry and thirsty land.

Many times I have been enabled to find much comfort and joy in reading articles which I feel were of the Lord, the workings of his holy and righteous spirit in the hearts of his people. I also feel very

much indebted to you for the book on the Resurrection of the Dead. I have been enabled to enjoy its contents and feast upon it so much that I have never found any room for criticism. It is truly a feast of good things to me, and the things which you and others have under consideration are too deep and mysterious for fault finding, by his called people, of each others writings. I feel that all of us have impressions, and that the Lord only reveals such a small portion of his truth that we do not understand others feelings and views many times and that we have to forbear. In my opinion whatever we think, speak or write does not in the least alter God's purpose, or change any of his plans of resurrection or salvation. These things are fixed and none can change or stay his hand. I feel that you are doing a great work and hope the Lord will continue to give you strength and forbearance to continue to write for the comfort of his people in the holy mount of Zion. Your brother in hope.

H. B. BALLANCE.

Carbon Hill, Ala.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I just want to write you a few words to let you know I enjoyed and appreciated the privilege of attending church and hearing you preach last first Sunday at Ebenezer. I wanted to remain for the afternoon service but circumstances being what they were I could not very well do so. We finished our visit in New York and started on our return trip Wednesday morning, arriving home Friday night. On our way home we came through Danville and I remembered that you said you were going to Danville.

I hope the Lord will make it possible for me to return to that part of the country when I may have more time to visit. There are so many historical places of interest to absorb ones time, not only political history but church history as well that I could find it profitable to spend considerable time.

In passing through Delaware I wondered how near I was to the Welsh Tract Church. I surely would liked to have seen that church.

I want to say that I fully agree with your comments on the text of scripture you used as a text at Ebenezer. It was good to find you contending for the same things concerning life and salvation that all sound Baptists are contending for all over the country. I heard Eld. C. M. Hood use that same text at Paducah, Kentucky, some twenty-five years ago and you both followed pretty much the same line of thought in your discourse.

It is a feast of fat things indeed to hear only Jesus and him crucified preached to a dying world. That is all that will do any one any good. It is life to the dying; strength to the weak; cheer to the faint hearted; food to the hungry; rest to the weary and above all strengthens the lonely pilgrims and wayfarers in this life to press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

When it goes well with you and you are enabled to pour out your soul in prayer and supplication to Almighty God please remember unworthy me at the throne of grace. Unworthily yours,

H. W. BOWDEN.

(We were very glad indeed to have brother Bowden worship with us in our meeting and hope he will visit us again. We are glad what he heard was in keeping with the sound doctrine which he has been accustomed to hearing.—R. L. D.)

Route 3, Box 564, Walnut Creek, Calif.

DEAR EDITORS AND BRETHREN IN THE LORD: I am enclosing $3 part of which is for my subscription and $1 to aid in sending the paper to others. I am rejoicing and meditating I hope in the dear Lord by being blessed and able to travel several miles to attend a sweet and precious meeting with the dear Old Baptists scattered here in this part of the state at the home of dear sister Miller and family near Galt, Calif. I was blessed to attend

five wonderful meetings in 1944. I cannot help but praise the Lord for all those wonderful blessings which I do not merit for I can do nothing good to merit any blessings. Oh, how I do cherish them in my heart when sent to me. How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear if indeed I am a believer in him and his wonderful word. I hope I am as none other is of any comfort to me in this world. In all my Lord's appointed ways, my journey I'll pursue: hinder me not ye much loved saints, for I must go with you. That is the way I feel. O, hinder me not. The dear Lord knows why I am removed far from the dear Old Baptists whom I love above all others in this world and love to be with, though I feel unfit. While under the sound of dear Elder Bynum's voice my eyes were blinded with tears, my cup running over with the sweet precious food of God which is to me the best tonic, flavored by the Lord alone to feed the poor weak starving heart and soul. Oh, how sweet, how sweet. Being so far from these dear people is an unsolved mystery to this poor sinner, but not unsolved to the dear Lord. All things are solved with him, by him and through him all things consist. How great are his signs, how mighty are his wonders. He moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform and who can stop him? None, no not one. I read and hear of the coldness and indifference of some who do not attend their church meetings when they are near them and able to go. I thought of that while at this wonderful meeting. How can a true saint of God (I hope I am true) decline from assembling with the dear saints to praise and honor him above all and crown him Lord of all?

I hope it is his will to bless me to attend more sweet meetings. I am in poor health but have traveled many miles to assemble with the dear saints, but was willing and made willing to bear the great tiredness and pain in body. Some are afflicted so they are not able to attend their church meetings or have other providential hindrances. I do not feel that I would be willing to miss a meeting if I could be near a church and hear the wonderful word of God proclaimed. I hope it is my food and drink. God knows if it is deep in my heart that I love to listen to the wonderful sermons preached, and to read them in my Baptist papers that I take, and the blessed book, the Bible, which is one great mighty sermon in God the all in all. I do not know why I have written as I have. I hope the Lord has been with me, I try to pray for his guidance. Cast this aside when you have read the scattered thoughts. May he comfort all his saints and guide and comfort the Editors of the dear paper. In love for the truth in the Lord and a sister I hope in him.

(Mrs.) MABEL LINDSEY.

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5 Shaw St., Sanford, Me.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: When reading the *Signs* I think of your efforts to publish it, and of your pleasant visits to Maine. I feel we have been greatly comforted by your ministry, and by the other ministering brethren as well. In the last year we have been greatly blessed by having several good sermons both in our home church and our sister churches.

My mind has been exercised by this text in Exodus 15:25, and I am enclosing just a few of my thoughts on it. It seems I have only touched on the subject. There is no end.

"And he cried unto the Lord; and the Lord shewed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them." These words have a literal meaning as well as a spiritual and experimental one. They refer to the Lord's people, Israel, who were a type of the true Israel, the elect church. The Lord had just brought them out of Egypt. There was the pillar of cloud before them, the

pillar of fire by night and they had followed this pillar to a place where they were hemmed in by the Red Sea before them (and mountains on either side). Behind them they saw Pharaoh and his hosts. The pillar moved not and they were between the pillar and the Egyptians. There seemed no avenue of escape but Moses had faith that God could deliver his people, so he cried unto God and the waters of the sea were rolled back and Israel passed through on dry land. The enemy pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea, but God caused the water to return and Pharaoh and his hosts were drowned. "Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known." Psalms 77:19.

It was a time of great rejoicing with Israel. It seemed as though they would never cease singing and praising God for his mercies toward them, but soon their joy was turned to mourning. Footsore and weary after traveling three days in the wilderness of Shur no water was found to quench their thirst, and when they did find water at Marah it was bitter. Again the Lord harkened to the prayer of Moses and showed him a tree, which when cut down and cast into it, sweetened the water. So our spiritual thirst is assuaged by that spiritual water from the Rock of our Salvation who is Christ. There is a tree, the wood of which, makes sweet our sorest afflictions.

"The cross on which the Savior died,
And conquered for his saints;
This is the tree by faith applied
Which sweetens all complaints."

We need and crave that Tree of Life, Jesus, who was hewn down, bled and died on the cross, but arose triumphant a victor over death and the grave to save his elect church.

"How bitter that cup, no heart can conceive,
Which he drank quite up that sinners might live."

Often the Lord supplies us with that pure water through his ministering servants, pouring here a little and there a little until all his plants are watered. "He that watereth shall be watered also himself." Prov. 11:25.

How pleasant it is when the Lord's ministers and their hearers are refreshed together, and can converse on the things they have spoken and heard. In writing to the Romans, Paul said, "That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed." Romans 15:32. What a mercy to know about a life made bitter by sin, but sweetened by the love of God through the suffering and obedience of his dear Son. "He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows."

"And the Lord shewed him a tree." This tree, the water of life, cannot be seen with the natural eye or felt by the natural heart, but through the revelation of God. "He made for them a statute." This statute is ours when we are delivered from the burden of sin and made to rejoice in his love and mercy. We do not forget this kindness, it is engraved in our hearts. At times our prayers, our songs, even our worship may seem dead, but we still have that sweet remembrance how the bitter waters were sweetened by the cross of Christ.

"Open thou the crystal fountain,
Whence the healing streams do flow,
Let the fiery, cloudy pillar,
Lead me all my journey through:
Strong Deliverer,
Be thou still my strength and shield."

Yours in gospel bonds.

(Mrs.) LYDIA K. NASON.

Island City, Ore.

MRS. BEATRICE HAAN, NACHES, WASH.

DEAR SISTER: My activities are limited at present to letter writing, and such a good letter deserves a prompt reply. I was especially pleased with your reference to a former admonition I had given you against magnifying your sinfulness so much among the saints of God. We are glad the Lord has taught you to know this in yourself, but we are to press on from

such dead works to the higher calling in Christ Jesus toward perfection. Paul said, "When I was a child . . . I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things." This brings us to consider the different stages of our lives, and the developments toward maturity in each, and the way they are a figure of the spiritual. We know that God has a purpose in our lives and that he is leading us to accomplish this purpose. In your childhood I suppose you and your playmates sometimes played at making mud pies, but none of you ever feasted on them, or got any pleasure out of them except for the activity of the making; and such work always left your clothing and persons more or less soiled. This to me is a figure of our first works of righteousness which we soon find are as filthy rags. That is self-righteousness but it is all we have, but there must be a spiritual quickening or birth before we can discern the better way. In the first stages of our new life our thoughts and activities continue much as they were before, but we begin to get views of the higher and better things, and we soon try to produce them; but being as children with limited wisdom and knowledge, we mix so much of the carnal with the small store of spiritual we then have, that it is a sorry product, like mud pies of the earth earthy; and if it was not for the nourishment coming from the pure foods from our homes, selected, provided and adapted to our needs we would never attain the growth of maturity.

I think many of our Baptist people magnify their sinfulness, unworthiness, etc., too much, and the power and grace by which they produce the bountiful fruits of righteousness too little. That is what God's people should magnify, and in doing so there is no danger of pride and self-righteousness taking possession of them. The more God's grace is magnified in his people the more meekness and humility will shine out in their lives.

In contrast to the figure already presented, there is another and more beautiful one we often experience. When we meet at the gospel feasts we so much desire, we find a table spread with all the dainties brought in by the different members, which is the book of remembrance that is written for them before the Lord, for those who think on his name and testify to these things to the comfort of each other. The pies at this feast are made of the choicest fruits of the trees of Paradise, and seasoned by the spices of the garden of our God. The aroma from these flow out and fill all the house with the life giving fragrance our souls so much desire and which nothing else can satisfy.

Sister, I know you can testify to these things as shown in both figures. The point I wish to emphasize is that you will no longer try to fill your humble place in the house of God by an exhibition of those dead works attendant to your infancy in spiritual life, but now try to comfort your brethren by the victories of a strong and living faith by which you are overcoming all enemies of righteousness and through which you will finally enter into the full joys of your Redeemer. In hope of the better life, I remain, yours in tribulation.

(Elder) C. W. BOND.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Mrs. R. Dundas, Calif., $1; Miss S. Leedom, Pa., $3; Mrs. M. O. Cate, Ia., $6; J. E. Barnhart, Mo., $1; B. C. Wray, N. C., $1.50; Mrs. W. M. Echols, Calif., $3; Mrs. S. L. Midgett, N. Y., $1; W. T. Smith, Tex., $1; Eld. W. D. Griffin, Ala., $1; H. N. Bumpus, Ill., $1; O. T. Riggs, Okla., $1; Mrs. H. T. Brown, Va., $3; Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Bratten, Md., $1; Mrs. C. M. Richardson, Va., $2; Mrs. N. Miller, Okla., $1; Eld. T. F. Adams, N. C., 75 cents.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

THE CLOUD LIKE A MAN'S HAND

I Kings 18:41-46

To the unregenerate eating and drinking is important, to the generation of Jesus Christ there is nothing to do but just let them alone at it. Ahab thought it amounted to a good deal and it would seem that Elijah encouraged him in it. Ahab's eating and drinking does not concern us at this time but, if heaven directs, we are interested in Elijah.

At this time I would like to ask where he got his knowledge that it was going to rain? Ahab may indulge in eating and drinking to his heart's content because it is going to rain and produce some more. How did Elijah know? The cloud had not appeared, nor the wind had not risen, yet this prophet knew that rain was coming. How? One answer and one alone will suffice. God made it known to him. But a certain amount of movement in the kingdom has been ordered. Elijah told his servant to go down to the sea. Suppose that he had not gone? But, my dear brethren, we are not able to tell what would have been, we are not dealing in suppositions but in the certainty of God. Personally, I much prefer to say that all God's children hear and obey when the unction is from above. Be that as it may, the servant went. That is the all important thing. Let us remember the length of this dry spell with its intense heat and searing of all in the place where it occurred. It is a type and it is highly figurative of the experience and travel of the Lord's humble poor. A dry time is a barren time. Oh my precious kindred, do you feel barren and destitute of fruit unto his name's honor and glory? As sure as you have been born from above you have these times. Sometimes it seems that the Lord has gone forever and forgotten his covenant. Oh, the searching and looking for relief. Go to the sea, Elijah commanded his servant. No questioning his authority but going. At first when he returned there was nothing to be seen, no relief in sight, no good news from my God, no token that he was still kept and sheltered by the Lord Almighty. Oh the times when my readers remember with me when we sought for him, but look where we would we saw nothing. Let us not rush away but tarry a little while longer. Will you listen to that? Go back until seven times, go back to the sea. Deliverance will come, it always has come, it always will come. Suffering comes but it cannot change anything for that that is committed into his hands is perfectly safe. (2 Tim. 1:12). Sometimes we get sorely discouraged and our soul becomes so dry within. No gentle rains, no distilling dew, but a continuation of the same searing dryness felt through and through. But keep going; go until you are completely exhausted; go until the world and the fullness thereof passes away; go seven times. Ah, see him as he comes back on that seventh trip. He is coming from meeting with a great King, he is walking in the light of his countenance and it is showing in his weary face. Relief is in sight. "Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand." Did you get that, weary one? Notice again that little cloud. Remember that little babe born in Bethlehem; remember that

when we first see him he is not comely, but this little cloud was like a man's hand. It had shape to it, it could be discerned as to its formation. Let us note the fact that it ariseth from the sea. Many times the sea is made synonymous with the trials and afflictions of God's people. They can do no more than the determination of God appoints to them. Here comes the cloud like unto a man's hand. This is the hand of him that controls the sea, the mighty raging deep. This cloud gives the rain, all the rain, none comes from any other source. Not only is this cloud a token of good to come from it, but it shows forth the Man of Gallilee and his ruling, providential care. This man is loved by his Father, he loved him so well that he put all things into his hands. How long had this glorious Father loved his equally glorious Son? Fearlessly we say always and always. Then whenever it was that God loved his Son, then and there, once and forever, he put all things into his hand. All of what things? Who said anything about what things? Did inspiration? No it did not. Who did say anything about what things? Well, the gainsayers have always been quite busy explaining what things. I do not know what God would do without gainsayers to keep him from getting in ridiculous positions, but they are one of the all things in his hand. They are not any bother to the church at all. Sometimes the good way gets too straight and narrow and they borrow tools and go out to build for themselves, but the church goes on and on, believing that all things are in his hand. You cannot preach (and if you did they would not receive it) to them that God created, anything but that he had a purpose in it worthy of himself. In the purpose and wisdom of God all things were in the Son's hand before those things were actually in existence in creation. If God failed to create or bring into manifestation something that he had placed in purpose in his Son's hand it certainly would have showed discord in the very outset in the Trinity. Suppose he had. Let us grant just a little here and God had, in purpose, when he first loved his Son placed all things into his hand, but in the dawning of creation he did not create or make manifest just one of those things. What discord it brings to view to even hint, what things.

The gospel is good news. Anything that does not cause joy, peace and happiness is not nor cannot be the gospel. It is not good news that God created *one* thing at random. If it is not, then it is good news to preach that everything he created was in complete harmony with his purpose, and with the all things placed in the Son's hand. It is not good news that anything God created has gone contrary to his purpose. Such as that is the worst kind of news. How dreadful to think that one thing was not under divine control. I have two (all I have) precious boys in this awful conflict of carnage and devastation. If I could be made to believe that one train, ship, man, gun, bullet or anything else was not under divine control I do not think I could rest day or night. If that is not good news then it is to declare that now, at this time, out yonder on the bloody battlefield, on the raging ing waters all things are in his hand. When the redeemed have all been brought into the fold and the disposition of all things come, then, most of all, it would not be good news that just one thing was not disposed of by him.

I hope that I have kept it before me how unworthy I am, and what a vile wretched sinner I am, but at the same time I beg my Father, my God and my Brother to enable me, while I stay here, to preach this doctrine. I am sure there is nothing wrong with it. It belongs to every poor child of God that *has* to go seven times looking for a little cloud like a man's hand. In conclusion, all this hand holds belongs to God's children. None of these *all things* are primarily for any but

the Lord's anointed. Paul tells the church that all things are yours. Oh, weary pilgrim, God has given them all to you. They belong to you, but not one of them can come to you except through and from the man's hand. Life is yours and all that life is made up of belongs to you. Death is yours; dying on the breast of Jesus belongs to you; leaving behind all these trials and afflictions is yours; the world is yours; in a sense you may never own a foot of it, even the six by three mound your body rests in may be in the potter's field, but with God it is yours; things present and things to come all belong to you; they are all in his hand.

At this time I would like to see each of you and clasp your hand and raise our lisping, stammering voice in hymns of adoration to this Hand. It is beckoning us on and upward, and everything is working in perfect harmony and consistency to bring us all home more than conquerors over it all. There, safe from raging wars and all other earthly things, we shall see Him, be like Him and be satisfied. — W. D. G.

"I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name."
—Rev. 3:8.

For some time we have been urged by a brother in Louisiana to write on the third chapter of Revelation, and especially the eighth verse. We deeply regret the delay in complying with his request, along with a number of others, but it has seemingly been impossible to meet all the demands made upon us. We plan to enlist the aid of our Associate Editors in writing on some of the many requests for views which we have on hand and hope in this way to catch up. Of late it has been more difficult for us to write than for some time, but if our brethren will bear with us, we promise to do the best we can to at least get a member of the staff to give consideration to their requests. We will also welcome the views of others than our staff on subjects which may from time to time be requested by our readers. We consider such requests as an indication of an awakened and lively interest among our family circle, and we would like to do all we can to encourage them in this respect.

To cover fully the entire chapter is a task for which we are unequal, but we will endeavor to make some observations in general as well as to concentrate particularly upon the text in question. John was commanded by the One who said he was the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, to write "what thou seest" and send it to the seven churches in Asia, and he was evidently shown things for the record says that he was "in the Spirit on the Lord's day." In order to be helpful to the household of faith, we need to be in the Spirit, or to have the Spirit working in us, and if we should then confine our writing and preaching to those things "which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life," there would be less confusion than there is and our beloved Zion would be built up and comforted in her most holy faith. There were seven churches in Asia, and some have thought they represented the fullness of the conditions and experiences of the churches in the gospel age or dispensation. In the previous, or second chapter, John had addressed his message unto the angels (pastors or undershepherds) of four of the seven churches: namely, Ephesus, Symrna, Pergamos and Thyatira, and in this third chapter which we now have under consideration he addresses the three remaining churches: namely, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea. To the church at Sardis he says, "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." It is a sad state of affairs indeed to find a church of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is at least supposed to be

alive, *dead.* John exhorted this church to watchfulness and diligence, to remember how she had heard and received the gospel and to hold it fast and repent of her sins, else the Lord would come as a thief in the night and deal with her. He takes occasion to encourage the few in the Sardis church who had not defiled their garments by saying "they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy." What a blessed thing it is to receive the approval and commendation of our Lord. It is like apples of gold in pictures of silver to behold his smiling face.

His next message is to the angel of the church at Philadelphia, and he prefaces his remarks to this church by saying, "These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." Then the verse which has been cited particularly for consideration, follows: "I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name." Of all the churches in Asia, not a single one could compare in degree of perfection with that of this church. Philadelphia signifies *brotherly love,* and this was exemplified more, by far, in this church than any of the rest. Blessed, indeed, is the church where *brotherly love* abounds. There can be no question as to who it was that said these things, nor as to what they signified. In the fifth chapter John says: "And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in the earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof."

It is quite evident that a true knowledge and understanding of the spirituality of God's blessed word is what was under consideration. God has been pleased to hide these things from the wise and prudent of this world and reveal them unto babes in Christ, and the only reason given is because it seemed good in his sight. How true it was that God knew the works of this church, as well as all the rest, whether good or bad, for he searcheth the heart and trieth the reins of all. God had greatly blessed the Philadelphia church with his love, against which there can be no law, and he declared he had set before her an open door, "and no man can shut it". The things of the gospel were, perhaps, more fully known and practiced by this church than any of the rest, and since the gospel is declared to be "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," when his servants are endowed with power from on high and are given liberty to proclaim it in demonstration of the Spirit, every heart to whom it is directed by the Holy Ghost is bound to hear it, and all the world combined cannot prevent that still small voice from penetrating and entering wheresoever God is pleased to send it. We often think of the great wonder of the radio, and how messages can be tossed about, to and fro, almost momentarily, from the four corners of the earth, but, marvelous as this is, it cannot begin to compare with God's system of communicating with his people. And there is no such thing as static or interference of any kind when the God of heaven speaks, for he "openeth, and no man shutteth." We frankly confess that we do not fully understand the significance of the phrase in our text "for thou hast a little strength", unless it is

to show that even the Philadelphia church was not perfect in every sense of the word. In answer to Paul's petition to remove the "thorn in the flesh" that was given him, God said "my strength is made perfect in weakness." We, therefore, conclude that as long as the Philadelphia church had a little strength of her own that she was not absolutely perfect. How could she be if, indeed, she was to typify the experiences of other churches in the gospel age. Nevertheless it was declared concerning her she "hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name." What a marvelous example for the churches in this age to try to follow! The inspired writer then went on to say, "Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee." What a great contrast is shown here between the true and the false. To the true he says, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, . . . and I will write upon him my new name." Then follows that refrain which is found in all of the messages, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

Having put the Philadelphia church upon the pinacle of beauty, grandeur and glory, so to speak, John in his message which follows to the Laodicean church, gives an example of just the opposite, for the charges which were brought against this church were the worst and most serious of all. As a weighty admonition to all to whom they may apply we quote the divine record in full for them to ponder over, as follows: "And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see." How infinite and sublime must be the love which God bears toward his people, for notwithstanding the terrible condition the Laodicean church was in, we hear him saying, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." By way of emphasizing again the importance of realizing to whom these things are addressed and apply, we once more quote the refrain which follows all of the messages: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

We offer the foregoing thoughts to our readers for their consideration in the hope that our heavenly Father may be pleased to bless them to their comfort and edification, and may his blessed and holy name have everlasting praise.

—R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

Sister MARY FAULKNER passed away at the Shaw's Nursing Home, Kingston, N. Y., April 12, 1945. In her death the Lexington Church of Old School Baptist faith and the community where she lived has sustained an irreparable loss. She was nearly ninety-three years old and had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for seventy-six years. Few members of a church of this faith have been affiliated with it as a member for so long a time.

Sister Faulkner was born June 16, 1852 in the town of Hardenburg, Ulster Co., N. Y., and was one of a family of ten children born to Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Banks. Here she spent her early life. Her parents were pioneers of strong character, noted for thrift, honesty and industry which qualities sister Faulkner inherited and evidenced in her long, successful and useful life. About the age of twenty-six she was united in marriage to John S. Lane of Lexington where they made their home until his death fourteen years later. In 1890 she remarried and continued to reside in Lexington until the death of her second husband, George H. Faulkner in 1920. Since that time she made her home with her son, Leon, at Allaben until about two years before her death when she entered Shaw's Nursing Home at Kingston for treatment. Both Mr. Faulkner and wife, sister Flossie I. Faulkner, ministered to her needs with devoted interest and faithful, loving care while she was in their home. Owing to her age and enfeebled condition it was decided to provide treatment for her at the nursing home mentioned, where nothing was spared that would provide for her comfort.

At the time of her death sister Faulkner was a member of the Lexington Old School Baptist Church. She was exercised early in life about things of spiritual interest, and was baptized when she was seventeen years old. She was firm in the doctrine, steadfast in the faith of her church, faithful to attend its meetings and hospitable in her home. Her counsel in church matters was for peace and unity among the brethren, and her walk with her brethren for more than three quarters of a century attested the genuineness of her faith and the strength of the hope that was hers to possess. She was the last of a family of ten children. She is survived by her son, Leon, of Allaben, N. Y. The funeral services were conducted April 15 at the Olive and Hurley meeting-house at Shokan, the writer officiating. The interment was in the Lexington Cemetery.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.

It is with sorrowful hearts we write of the death of our dear mother, MRS. OCTAVIA J. JAMISON, Calloway, Va., who departed this life June 21, 1945, making her stay on earth 88 years, 2 months and 15 days. She was the eldest daughter of the late Elder John C. and Elizabeth Harris Hall. She was born in Floyd Co., Va., April 6, 1857, and with her parents moved to Franklin Co., Va., when she was five years old. July 11, 1880 she was married to Jos. William Jamison, and to this union nine children were born: Mrs. Rosa B. Burgess, Martinsville, Va., Mrs. Jennie L. Sigmon, Mrs. Lola Gold Phillpott and Miss Irby Jamison, Roanoke, Va., Miss Curtis Jamison and Cary Taylor Jamison, Calloway, Va. Beebe, Julia Lester, and May Jamison preceded her in death. She leaves to mourn her departure, her husband, six children, twelve grandchildren, one adopted grandchild, and five great-grandchildren; two brothers, Elder Wm. L. Hall, Independence, Mo., Benjamin F. Hall, Thorpe, W. Va.; three sisters, Miss Lucy Hall and Mrs. Tempie Brown, Radford, Va., Mrs. May Hawley, Charleston, W. Va. She received a hope in God's mercy and united with the church at Pigg River, August 1903, being baptized by Elder Peter Corn. She was granted a letter five years later to unite with Little Creek Church where she remained a faithful member until the end, never missing a meeting unless providentially hindered. She was a frequent visitor to all Primitive Baptist Churches in reach. Her devoted husband provided conveyance and missed but few times attending church with her. She will be greatly missed by her loved ones and the church. She was a woman of rare qualities as a wife and mother, always giving her children good advice. She was indeed a friend to those in need, and always looked to the comfort of others which endeared her to all that knew her. Her greatest pleasure was to be with the Old Baptists and entertain the brethren, sisters and friends in her home. She loved to read her Bible and read it through several times. She also loved to read the papers published by the Primitive Baptists. Her funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder Randolph Perdue and Elder George Dyer. There were many and beautiful floral offerings, and the presence of a great throng of saddened people showed their love and respect for her. Her remains were laid to rest in the cemetery near the home. We that remain are looking for the second coming of our Savior Jesus Christ when they that are in the graves shall be resurrected to meet the Lord in the air, be like him and be satisfied. Written by

(Elder) J. E. BURGESS and WIFE.

EMILY JANE (BIRD) SMITH, our dear sister in Christ was born October 11, 1869 in Mercer Co., W. Va., a daughter of John W. and Lurecy (Mea-

dows) Bird. She departed this life July 21, 1945, aged 75 years, 9 months and 10 days. She was married to Holridge Henry Smith, Dec. 31, 1885. (Brother Smith preceded her in death only a few months. See his obituary in Nov. 1945 issue of the "Signs of the Times"). To this union were born eleven children, six of whom preceded her in death. Left to mourn are J. J. Smith, Sr., Charleston, W. Va., T. O. Smith, St. Albans, W. Va., Route 2, Mrs. Lurecy Plumley and Mrs. Mary Philips, Charleston, W. Va., and Mrs. Ellen Brightwell, St. Albans, W. Va. Besides the five children named above there are twenty-three grandchildren, eighteen great-grandchildren, one brother, Creed Bird, three sisters, Mrs. Rhoda Johnson, Mrs. Sarah McCallister, Mrs. Rosa Spurlock and many relatives and friends.

The church has sustained a great loss in the passing of this dear sister and mother in Israel. Sister Smith had been a member of the Providence Old School or Primitive Baptist Church of Lincoln Co., W. Va., for about fifty-five years. (I do not have the date that she united). Her experience of grace dated back to her youth. It would not be possible in this brief notice to stress the many good qualities of this dear sister. She led a quiet and unassuming life, spent a life of toil, never murmuring or flinching at the many cares which came to her, she was so devoted and close to her family, serving and doing with loving hands for her children as only a mother can; a kind and good wife to brother Smith; devoted to her church and beloved and esteemed by her brethren and sisters. It was indeed her joy to attend her church meetings, always faithful in her attendance when her health would permit. For a number of years she and her family had resided at Charleston, W. Va., which made a distance of many miles to the church of her membership. This distance together with her age and infirmities had hampered her attendance in the last years of her life.

Her faith and belief in God was steadfast, unmovable, rooted and grounded in the apostolic doctrine faith and practice. So often she would speak of her hope in the unmerited grace of God, through the shed blood of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. As her pastor my memory still holds in store how her countenance would lighten, and her great joy at hearing the name of Christ extolled in the preached gospel. Many chronic ills had been preying on her for years, and after the departure of her husband in April she seemed to gradually lose ground, as it were, her courage broken, her life blighted. The end came after only a short last illness where we feel and believe she was gathered to the embrace of her Redeemer God and sweetly fell asleep in Jesus in hope of that blessed immortality.

The funeral was conducted by Elder J. C. Hammond and the unworthy writer of this notice at the home, where we desired to set forth the principles of the doctrine of God our Savior in an earnest desire that God who is rich in mercy be pleased to bless and comfort the bereaved family according to his will. May he with much mercy visit with that sweet reconciliation to his will. Burial was in the Teays Hill Cemetery at St. Albans, W. Va., beside her husband: Written by request of the family.

(Elder) H. J. BIRD.

EMMA CANDIS SMITH. In the halls of glory before the earth and seas were made, before heaven and hell were created, before the sun, moon and stars had been formed and before time had flown from the bosom of God to measure the puny existence of man, God created a precious little soul and with his own everlasting fingers of love, wrote in indellible characters on living plates its lovely and adorable name, Emma Candis.

On Friday the eleventh day of September in 1891, God sent this precious little soul into the home of Joseph W. and Lidyan Davidson Caldwell to live in a feminine body. This maiden grew to be a lovely, virtuous, noble, refined and beautiful lady. When she was nineteen years of age her mother was called by death and this incident seemingly blighted the remainder of her precious life. At the age of twenty-five she was married to Wm. H. Smith. To this union were born three children: Annie Lee, Bonnie Lee and David Byron, all of whom remained single and with her to her great joy. She was the purest, truest and most lovely mother I ever knew. She was given as a guiding light to me.

On May 18, 1915 I was made to know Jesus Christ as a whole and complete Savior for a whole and complete sinner. I felt the sweet presence of the holy angels and saw the clouds, grasses and dewdrops praising God, and I heard the voice of Jesus from heaven saying, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." It was at this time that God made known to me that she was to be my wife. For almost thirty years we lived, learned and loved! I lost the world when God took her from me! She had the purest heart and most noble soul I ever knew. In the spring of 1926 she was shown the church at New Hope and was permitted to commune with Elder J. B. Murphy and cousin Nettie Smith, together with my departed grandmother, Mrs. H. M. Smith. She carried the burden of this revelation in her darling bosom for fifteen years. On Saturday evening in 1941, during the district meeting at Bethlehem, she was again overshadowed with the glory of God, and was per-

mitted to come and tell his wonderful story of love. She was baptized the following morning by the pastor, Elder J. J. Collins. I saw the glory of God shine out of her darling face, and for three days she shouted the praises of God in almost every breath. My joys were unspeakable for truly she was the most holy person I ever saw! To us it seemed we had been together always and we planned everything together. I am so glad tonight that she ruled my life in love for she was truly my queen. She went as she had always wanted to go — die suddenly — before I did and while she was yet young, her children all grown and still single. She wanted to die in summer and be buried in a vault at Bethlehem, near her father and mother, with our beloved Elder J. J. Collins to speak in her memory. I know that God in his tender mercies will bless her pure, sweet and holy soul!

Graceville, Fla. WM. H. SMITH.

JAMES MARION CATE, son of Elder Samuel Cate and Lucinda Whicker Cate, was born Oct. 26, 1854, near Moravia, Iowa, and died July 6, 1945, aged 90 years, 8 months and 10 days. He had been a life long resident of Appanoose Co., Iowa, having lived in Centerville more than forty years where he was widely known as a beekeeper. He had previously lived on his farm south of Moravia but moved to Centerville to educate his children. On Dec. 1, 1881 he was married to Amanda Ellen Turner to which union were born nine children, his wife and three children preceding him in death. On May 16, 1926 he was married to Mary Oliska Jones who survives with the following children: G. D. Cate, Peoria, Ill., Mrs. John Anderson, Plano, Iowa, Mrs. A. C. Fisher, Blakesburg, Iowa, S. R. Cate, Winfield, Kans., H. F. Cate, Wichita, Kans. and W. E. Cate, Los Angeles, Calif. He also had nine grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. His three grandsons, James Fisher, Jimmie Cate and James Cate all being in the service. He also leaves one niece, Mrs. W. E. Donovan and her family and many other relatives and friends.

In early manhood, he with his only brother, Harvey C. Cate united with the Moravia Primitive Baptist Church. They united on the same day, neither knowing the intentions of the other, and were both baptized the following day by Elder S. B. Jones. They enjoyed many years of church relationship and loved to help entertain the Associations which were held at their father's home. They were blessed with a wonderful step-mother, Jane Armstrong Cate, who cared for them from early childhood. She was a daughter of Elder Armstrong of the Baptist faith.

Our subject in his closing years was deeply interested and read much on the subject of the resurrection of the dead, and we feel that he is now enjoying the realities and is free from the trials and afflictions of this world. The funeral services were held at the Miller Funeral Home in Centerville, Iowa, Sunday, July 8, conducted by brother W. F. F. Evans. The pallbearers were Del Cate, Forest Cate, Albert Fisher, John Anderson, Ralph Boone and Dalton Roseberry (all relatives). The body was laid to rest in the family plot of the New Hope Cemetery near Moravia, there to await the resurrection. "It is not all of life to live, nor all of death to die." MARY O. CATE.

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each 1st Sunday, 11:00 a. m. and Saturday before.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday.
AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a. m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopewell Church, Ozark Ala., meets each 4th Sunday, 11 a. m. J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock. Meeting place at Alder St. at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, 11 a. m. Elders J. J. Collins and J. S. Bass, Pastors.
J. J. COLLINS

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Beulah Primitve Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canda, California.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday, north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before.
E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

Pleasant Valley Church, Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc.)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays 10:30 A.M., 2 P.M.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY
Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue. Take elevator to second floor.
11.00 a. m. 1:30 p. m.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.
(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.
C. W. BOND, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 a. m.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. G. E. Rushing, co-pastor.
C. B. TEAGUE, Pastor.

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets third Sunday in each month at 11:00 a. m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Old School Baptist meetings are held every fourth Sunday at Civic Club, 1419 N. Shepherd St., Houston, Texas. Preaching by Elder W. O. Beene.
(Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Danville Primitve Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before. Bradley Road, Danville, Va.
W. R. DODD, Pastor.

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meet each first Sunday 11 a.m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3032 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va. R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.
R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m. C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 114 RUTHERFORD, N. J. MARCH, 1946 No. 3

Our God Is Merciful. Psalms 166:5

I love to think of a God who is wise
Beyond our comprehension;
Whose depths of mercy, and riches of grace
Cannot be measured by time nor space,
Nor the wealth of the earth's dimension.

I love to worship a God of truth,
Whose promises cannot be broken;
Doing His will in earth as in heaven,
No power besides that He has given,
Fulfilling all He hath spoken.

I love to call upon a gracious God
Who hears and answers prayer;
Before we ask He knows our need,
But His love constrains us to come to His feet,
And leave our petitions there.

I love to think of a fountain of life,
Flowing from His throne like a river;
Surrounding Zion with love and peace
That she may in grace and knowledge increase,
His dwelling place, forever.

Lord of wisdom, truth and love,
How shall I show forth Thy praise?
Thou art my life, my everything,
Teach me some glorious song to sing
Of Thy mercies all my days.

—(Mrs.) DAISY BAKER

Naches, Wash.

CORRESPONDENCE

721 N. Main St., Eureka, Kans.

EDITOR OF THE SIGNS, DEARLY ESTEEMED BRETHREN: I desire to write you a letter on the following scripture, if the Lord is willing, to be published in the SIGNS if you think it worthy. Please do not crowd out good things for it. "My times are in thy hand." Psalms 31:15. What confirmation would the precious truth contained in these words derive from the personal experience of the man of God who penned them? Reviewing the past of his eventful history, he would trace the guiding and overshadowing hand of his heavenly Father in all the circumstances of the checkered and diversified scene; and as memory thus recalled the strange and momentous events of his life, with what overpowering solemnity would the convicition force itself upon his mind, that for the form and complexion of that life how little was it indebted to himself! Circumstances which chance could not originate, events which human sagacity could not foresee, and results which finite experience could not determine, would at once lift his grateful and adoring thoughts to that God of infinite foreknowledge and love, whose overruling providence had guarded with a sleepless eye each circumstance, and whose infinite goodness had guided each step with a skillful. hand. With this retrospect before him, with what intensity of feeling would the aged king exclaim, "My times are in thy hand." David felt this truth that all his interests were in God's keeping under his supreme direction—so consolatory—as life drew near its close, how much more cheering may it be to us just entering upon a new year of life, all whose history is, to our view, wisely and beneficently enshrouded in obscurity, and all whose events, from the least to the greatest are happily beyond our control.

"My times are in thy hand." Who can give us the heartfelt, soothing influence of this precious truth but the Holy Spirit by whose divine inspiration it was entered? May he now unfold and apply with his sanctifying, comforting power this portion of his own holy word to the reader's heart! The declaration that our times are in the Lord's hand implies that the future of our history is impenetrably and mysteriously veiled from our sight. We live in a world of mysteries. They meet our eye, awaken our inquiry, and baffle our investigation at every step. Nature is a vast arcanum of mysteries. Science, truth, religion, our existence, the future of our being are all mysteries, and God, who alone can explain all mysteries, is the greatest mystery of all. How little do we understand of the inexplicable wonders of a wonder-working God whose "thoughts are very deep," and whose "ways are past finding out."

To God nothing is mysterious in purpose, nothing is unfixed in forethought, nothing is unknown; in providence nothing is contingent. His glance pierces the future as vividly as it beholds the past. He knoweth the end from the beginning. All his doings are parts of a divine, eternal and harmonious plan. He may make "darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him dark waters and thick clouds of the skies," and to human vision his dispensations may appear gloomy, discrepant and confused; yet he is working "all things after the counsel of his own will," and at the brightness that is before him, his thick clouds pass, and all is transparent and harmonious to his eye. And why this obscurity thus investing all our future? Would it not be a satisfaction and a blessing, could we look back through the mystic veil, and gaze with a farseeing and undimmed eye upon "our times," yet awaiting us this side of the grave? Remembering the past you are, perhaps, ready to say, could I but have foreseen, I would have prearranged had I anticipated the result of such a step, or have known the issue of such a movement, or have safely calculated the consequences of such a measure, I might have pursued an opposite course, and have averted the evil I now deplore, and have spared me the misery I now feel. But hush this vain reasoning! God, thy God, O believer, had in wisdom, faithfulness and love hidden all the future from thy view. Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord, thy God, led thee these 40 years. How has he guided, counseled and upheld you? He has led you by a right way. In perplexity he has directed you, in sorrow he has comforted you, in slippery paths his mercy has held you up and when fallen he has raised you again. From seeming evil he has educed positive good. The mistakes you have made and the follies you have committed in the blindness of your path, and in the sinfulness of your heart, have led you to a closer acquaintance with and to a stronger confidence in God. They have opened up to you new and more glorious views of his character and his government; while in leading you closer to the feet of Jesus in self-knowledge and self-abhorrence they have unlocked to us springs of spiritual blessings, fresh, sanctifying and unspeakable.

Beloved, God has placed us in a school in which he is teaching us to lay our blind reason at his feet, to cease from our own wisdom and guidance, and lean upon and confide in him as children with a parent. The goodness of God to us, combined with a jealous regard to his own glory, constrains him to conceal the path along which he conducts us. His promise is, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." Isaiah 42:16. Could the scenes of this year's history rise in their shadowy outline before

us, or were an angel permitted to divulge a single page in the momentous volume of events just opened, how might we shrink from the revelation, and closing the book again, calmly wait until he should unfold its leaves in whose hand our times are. How unfitted we should be to discharge our duties, to sustain our responsibilities, to meet our trials, cope with our difficulties and bear with our sorrows, were they all to confront us this moment. Oh! how kindly, wisely and tenderly does our Father deal with us; and in no part of his providential dealings is his goodness more clearly seen than in veiling all our future from our ken. Let us sit down at Jesus' feet, thanking him that "the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Our times all wrapped in impenetrable mystery are yet in God's hand. The words are emphatic. Our times are not in the hands of angels or of men, still less in our own they are in the Lord's hand. It is an individual truth, "my times." We deal too timidly with our individuality—with the truth of God as individuals, with Jesus as individuals, with the covenant of grace as individuals and with our responsibilities as individuals. What, you exclaim! I, a poor worm of the dust, not worthy of his regard, too insiginificant for his notice; I, who have a heart so cold, a nature so depraved, a will so perverse, "my times?" Yes, dear ones, you may humbly adopt these words as your own and exultingly exclaim, "My times are in thy hand." How comprehensive, too, is this truth. "My times are in thy hand." Diversified as they may be, whatever the shape in which they are developed, or the complexion which they assume, attractive, repulsive, bathed with light or draped in gloom, all are there, exclusively and safely lodged in the Lord's hand. Let us specify a few of these times. Our times of prosperity are in the Lord's hand. There are no circumstances of life in which we are more sadly prone to indulge in self-complaisance than those of prosperity. Industry is enriched and perseverance rewarded; wealth increases and blessings accumulate; the heart grows fat and kicks against God; the merchant-ship returns freighted with treasure; the acres of the tiller are fruitful and his barns are filled with plenty; prosperity in some form smiles upon our path, and then alas, God is forgotten by some of us. We arrogate to ourselves the praise of our success; my hand and the might of my power hath gotten me this. But what is the language of God's word? "Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments and his statutes, which I command thee this day: Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God." Deut. 8: 11-14. But O, let us remember that all our past and all our coming prosperity, if indeed he shall so appoint it, is in the hand of God. It is his wisdom that suggests our plans; it is his power that guides every flower that blooms in our path; every smile that gladdens it; every mercy that bedews it; yea, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." Oh, for grace to recognize God in our mercies, for a heart lifted up in holy returns of love, gratitude and praise. How much sweeter will be our sweets; how much more blessed our blessings; and endeared our endearments, seeing them all dropping from the outstretched, munificent hand of a loving, gracious and bountiful Father. There are times of adversity and they, too, are in the Lord's hand. As every sunbeam that brightens, so every cloud that darkens comes from God. We are subject to great

and sudden reverses in our earthly condition. Joy is often succeeded by grief and prosperity by adversity. We are on the pinnacle today, tomorrow at its base. Oh, what a change may one event and in one moment create. A storm, a conflagration, a slight oscillation of the funds, the morning mail, the casual meeting of a friend may clothe our life in mourning, but beloved, all is from the Lord. "Affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground." Job 5:6. Sorrow cannot come until God bids it, health cannot fade, wealth cannot vanish, comfort cannot decay, friendship chill, loved ones cannot die until he in his sovereignty permits. Your time of sorrow is his appointment, the bitter cup which it may please the Lord you shall drink this year will not be mixed by human hands. In the hand of the Lord is that cup. The cloud that may lower on your path will not gather at a creature's bidding. He maketh the clouds his chariot.

Some treasure you are now pressing to your heart he may ask you to resign: some blessing you now possess he may bid you relinquish; some fond expectation you now cherish he may will you should forego; some lonely path he may design you should tread; yea, he may even bereave you of all and yet all is in his hand. a Father's hand, moving in thick darkness is shaping every event and arranging every dispensation of your life. Has sickness laid you on a bed of suffering? Has bereavement impoverished you, darkened your home? Has adversity impoverished your resources? Has change lessened your comforts? Has sorrow in one of its many forms crushed your spirit to the earth? The Lord has done it. In all that has been sent, in all that has been recalled and in all that has been withheld, his hand, noise less and unseen has moved. Ah, yes that hand of changeless love blends a sweet with every bitter, pencils a bright bow on each dark cloud, upholds each faltering step, shelters within its hollow, and guides with unerring skill his chosen people (sheep) safe to glory. Dear children of God, your afflictions, trials, crosses, losses and sorrows are all in your Father's hand, and they cannot come until sent by him. Bow that stricken heart, yield that tempest-tossed soul to his sovereign disposal, to his calm, righteous sway in the submissive spirit and language of your suffering Savior: "Not my will, but thine, be done." My times of sadness and of grief are in thy hands. Times of soul distress, spiritual darkness and conflict are in his hand. Many such are there in the experience of the true saints of God—many a hard fought battle, the fiery dart, the desperate wound, the momentary defeat in the Christian's life. Taking advantage of the spiritual mist which may hover around the mind in the time of perplexing care and of gloomy providences, the foe, with stealthy tread may rush in upon the soul like a flood, and when to this surprisal is added the suspension of the Lord's manifested presence, the veiling of his smile and the silence of his responsive voice, that is indeed a time of soul distress, but it is in the Lord's hand. No spiritual cloud shades, no mental distress depresses, no fiery dart is launched, that is not by him permitted and for which there is not a provision by him arranged. There is nothing which the Lord has taken more entirely and exclusively into his keeping than the redeemed, sanctified souls of his people for they are the sheep of his pasture, and he leads them and they do follow him said Jesus. Submitted in humbleness I hope and in love.

(Elder) C. A. HUNT

Ajlune, Wash.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am aware that my subscription awaits renewal. I frequently wonder how the saints in past ages could maintain even the semblance of organized or co-operative work and work-

ship without this means of communication. Few could read or write in the middle ages. Scribes had to be employed, probably on a fee basis, while messengers were subject to arrest and prosecution or martyrdom. Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees seem to have been permanent occupants of the temple. Probably none of them could condescend to help the persecuted saints in any way both because of the doctrine held by the saints and the fear of rulers who denied the validity of Christ's kingdom. But withal God's purpose was not thwarted. His power and wisdom prevailed in all situations, which is a comfort to us who are blessed with religious freedom in a world that is slowly relaxing the domination and cruelties of religious bigotry. Even in our land where freedom of worship has been an anchor to civilization and progress since Colonial days, there is a noticeable digression from the dogmatisms of a century ago when bitterness and doctrinal strifes were common. At that time published literature in support of opposing doctrines was highly valued and considered orthodox by many. Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" and the rehearsal of the life and martyrdom of "Theodosia Ernest" by Baptists, and "Grace Truman" by the Methodists were products of that age and stage of professed religion. The writer recalls the fading popularity of those three books in his childhood and early years.

Much of this bitterness and zeal has disappeared from cultural and social life which is a blessing rather than a matter of regret. Thus, we still have some outstanding freaks of humanity who resist law and order on the pretext of divine guidance. Calling themselves Spiritualists, they frequently evade or resist law and deny the sick and dying medical service on the fanatical pretense of divine guidance, while other cults such as Doukabours indulge in nudity of body in both daily life and worship on the false pretext of scriptural interpretations. Such fanaticisms must disappear in the face of advancing progress.

Numerous other cults with small followings appear occasionally, but by ridiculous outbursts soon discredit themselves and disappear. It seems to me that our publications may well call attention to such craziness or craftiness, though matters of this kind are usually reported by the newspapers of the present time.

Personally, I take no active part in social or church life except those generally recognized by the Primitive Baptists, but I do sometimes think that this evangelizing of society has its benefits to society as a whole. It curbs or restrains many who, through fear of eternal punishment, become exemplary citizens. In other words if the work of evangelizing were entirely discredited, sensualism and immorality would multiply and crime would increase. As an observer, I would rather be found in company of active evangelism than in company of the social devotee with his cocktails, beer and cards. Mind you I say as an observer, not a participant, though I firmly believe that religious zeal has sometimes been unwisely indulged in by some of our own people. Changing customs have sometimes been resisted to the point of ridicule. Zeal may lead to snobbery.

I offer no new rules of life or dogmas for believers. I prefer to behold the beam in my own eye. I have no desire to evangelize others when I cannot change my own way of life any more than the leopard can change his spots. The way of man is not in himself. Man deviseth his way but God directeth his steps. Let me leave the whole matter with the Lord of Glory, and with Moses "stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." Perhaps I indulge too much in sketchy remarks concerning past events or present customs. I am never satisfied with my own writings, which is not strange considering my own weakness and unworthiness, but I try not to

make blanket applications of scriptures which were directed to individuals under circumstances which do not apply to all. Peace was not the sole mission of our Savior when upon earth. He says, "I came not to send peace, but a sword," which is a rather hard text for the pussyfooting evangelist to explain.

There are so many things we do not and cannot understand that it behooves us to rest all with him who has said through his prophets that "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." The above remarks are rather sketchy and not just what I had planned, but if you wish to publish it or any part of it do so. Do not consider me in the matter. I have no ambition for notoriety, nor do I wish to cause controversey. Yours in hope.

E. D. OVERSTREET

Geneva, Ala.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I had hoped very much to meet you again somewhere in the East this year, but so far I have not been blessed with that grand privilege. However, the Lord has most abundantly blessed me in living to see the last of my children return from this cruel war with an honorable discharge. Just this week my youngest son returned safely after having been in service almost four years, and truly can I say that nothing but the power of an all-wise heavenly Father could have delivered him from the terrible conflict in which he has been engaged. Most assuredly he preserves our boys in the air, beneath the waves and on the horrible battle fields. Then, too, if it is his time he can call them home from the cannon's mouth, the mighty bomber or the submarine just the same as if they graced a bed of affliction or met a fatal accident. It makes no difference with our heavenly Master as to the means, time or place. He ruleth wisely in all things so why should we question One who is perfect, omniscient and masterful in wisdom. Before the morning stars sang together or a single atom occupied space, he decreed that a certain chosen generation should live, move and pass from the sphere of action, fitted, prepared and fully qualified to occupy well and wisely, a certain niche in God's everlasting kingdom. Then surely it makes no difference whether they are called to join that innumerable caravan from whose bourne no traveler ever has or shall ever desire to return, be it from horrible Corregidor, Guadalcanal, Okinawa, Pantelleria, Anzio, Normandy or quietly from his family and loved ones. Truly our Father doeth all things well, and one of these days may we be called to sit down with Abraham, Jeremiah, and John the Baptist around the dazzling throne of God. Then may those who have lost loved ones in this cruel and terrible war be reconciled to the dealings of him who is matchless in splendor, glorious in knowledge, long suffering in forebearance and wonderful in counsel. May you be comforted in the thought that your loved ones gave their all in the cause of justice and civilization just the same as the children of Israel in the battles in the land of Canaan. May you be comforted, guided and directed by the Immaculate One in the lonely, dreary days ahead. He dispenses freely the balm of Gilead. He alone can speak peace to your troubled soul. He alone is the great physician, com forter and consoler.

My duties have been extremely heavy lately because of the opening of my schools, however, I had looked forward to attending the Yellow River Association in Atlanta today, but as the time to leave came my health was such that I was unable to make the trip so I have spent the day in reading the dear old *Signs*. To me this has been one of the most wonderful of days. A gentle, balmy breeze, the melodious singing of our native birds, the autumnal tinge on the leaves, the deep

blue sky banked here and there with soft billowy clouds, all lend enchantment, grace and grandeur to this earth as God's footstool, a fitting scene whereon one may enjoy, feast and meditate upon the glorious blessings, revelations and counselings of One who is all-wise in not a part but all things. In this attitude truly I have enjoyed the able writings of Elders, Bellows, Spangler, Dodson, Rhodes, Griffin, Lambert, Chandler, Weaver, Vaughn and so many, many others, together with so many comforting and inspiring experiences in letters from lay members everywhere.

It seems to me the *Signs* for July, August and September have been most inspiring in every way. The editorials truly were edifying and soul cheering and especially good on admonition. Just now it seems to me that brethren are too prone to put up bars of fellowship against minor principles upon which all cannot agree. May we be more reconciled to the providential dealings of the Lord, remembering that he reveals unto us the things that he would have us know, and that some may have much more of this revealing wisdom than others. Some may be inspired to climb to the mountain tops and glean wisdom from the satellites and planetoids, while just as sincere believers and lay members may be deep down in the valleys and miry clay, sifting out the rubies, pearls and diamonds. Some may rejoice in the sincere milk of the word, while others may feast upon the fundamental principles of the predestination, justification and final perseverance. Let us cry aloud unto Jerusalem that her warfare is accomplished, her strife over. Let us look unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. Without him we are nothing, he speaks and it is done. Truly glorious and wonderful is he in all characteristics. Let us press forward to the mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. Let us esteem others better than ourselves. In the words of Elder J. P. Helms at the recent session of the Pigg River Association at Martinsville, Va.—let brotherly love abound more and more. Remember how sincere, loving, faithful and persevering were our pioneers in the faith. Remember our persecutions in the catacombs, in the rugged hills and dales. Remember the Welch brethren, remember our foreparents contending earnestly for the faith under the gravest difficulties. Let us think of the good, old time religion of the fathers. May peace and unity abound everywhere in Zion. Would be glad to receive a minute of all orderly Primitive Baptist Associations. Yours in bonds.

(Elder) J. J. COLLINS

YE ARE THE SALT OF THE EARTH

Several months ago sister Ercell Hand, Route 2, Jasper, Ala. asked me to write on "salt," and I have waited to try to get the unction.

I desire to begin by telling a little experience. There once lived in Claybank Asociation one Elder J. A. J. Mitchel. He was familiarly called "brother Jack," or "uncle Jack." He was the type of minister who did not travel much, but did nearly all of his preaching close to his home. Baptists and friends of Baptists loved him. He was kept busy even on fifth Sundays, and was in great demand for funerals. But brother Jack must run his race, the time for him to go the way of all men must close in. He lingered quite awhile in his afflictions and had to be hospitalized. I am sorry I do not know how many times. His brethren and friends administered to him. He lacked nothing for material things, his hospitalization was all paid, and he was so grateful. This is some of the good works Old Baptists believe in and will do when the opportunity presents itself. The last time we heard brother Jack preach, his text was the first few verses of the first chapter of John. Jack Mitchell was a good man and a good citizen. I knew him thirty

years or longer. He was my friend as true as the needle to the pole. I never heard aught against him. Surely we who live after him can rise up and call him blessed. While I was in Hot Springs last summer I dreamed I made an appointment for brother Jack. In my dream he came and preached a short but sweet sermon and then vanished. While waking or may be still in my dream—I do not remember—I had a feeling in my heart and soul to acclaim that Jack Mitchel was the salt of the earth.

That week end I went down to Fordyce to be with Elder J. T. Everett at one of his churches in a union communion meeting. He used this for a text on Saturday. I was appointed to speak first on Sunday and used the hymn "Cast down but not destroyed." Elder Everett lead it to a tune I had never heard. His voice was very clear above all others and so mellow I thought it perfectly seasoned with the sweet spirit of the Master. The mellowness of his voice and the melody of that song kept thrilling my heart and soul. I feel like using the Holiness expression "Praise the Lord." In many respects that meeting was sweet to me. I have a longing in my heart and soul to see Elder Everett and the other Old Baptists in that section again. I would like so much to mention the other ministers I met in the three meetings I attended. I may do that some other time.

Will now try to get to the text. On this occasion Jesus withdrew himself from the multitudes. Note multitudes in the plural. When he was set his disciples came unto him. Is it not true, dear child of grace, that you so often want to get away from the rush and noise of wordly things and be alone with Jesus? (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) Everything out of the way for Jesus and the woman of Samaria to commune together. It occurs to my mind here that these disciples typify the church. "A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." Natural salt, if you please my beloved, first appears in its crude form. It is dug out of mines in the form of hard stone. It may be Lot's wife has a connection here. Is it not a fact the church has always looked back experimentally from behind her Lord trusting him to lead the way? In this connection we do not seem to have much light but it may provoke a thought that some one may write on. Lot's wife looked from behind him and she became a pillar of salt. (Gen. 19:26) In the twenty-sixth chapter of Job we read of parts of his ways. The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? The church is called the pillar and ground of the truth. (1 Tim. 3:15) It upholds the oracles of God as a literal pillar and edifice Wisdom hath hewn out her seven pillars. The word seven denotes completeness or perfection. "For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar." So much for pillar, we will now try to get back to salt. One use of literal salt is to season. "And every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt." Lev. 2:13. Without the seasoning of salt all our efforts to worship and serve our Lord are naught. "And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, thou wast not salted at all," Ezek. 16:4, the helpless condition of the Jews till God pitied them. To sweeten the water of the fountain of Jerico, Elisha, to make them fit to drink, cast salt in there, saying, "there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land." It occurs to my mind that here we have a beautiful figure. Water or waters in the Bible means people. The blessed old church is called out from among the peoples of the earth. When God salts the old church it is no more barren, but fruitful henceforth and forever. By forever we mean never ending. "Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt." Col. 4:6. Blessed indeed is he whom God

hath endowed with such wisdom. With the ancient is wisdom seasoned with salt. Solomon did not pray for riches, but for wisdom that his speech might be seasoned with salt. We invite the reader to go with us now to Mark 9:49. After the Master speaks his allegories he says, "For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt." What is the Master talking about? We will offer such as we have. Our God is a consuming fire. We may look at an object that looks like gold, the chemist can give it what we call the acid test to prove if it is pure gold. When the Master Chemist, Jesus, gives his children the acid test they come forth as pure gold. Go buy of me gold tried in the fire. If not mistaken the more you burn gold the brighter it becomes. Dear child of grace, how often have you felt God's fire? The poor publican stood afar off—in his feelings—smote his breast and cried to God, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." I think the significance of this is that his trouble was in his breast. Many are the times we have gone along the roadside, the street, etc. with a burning in our bosom. We trust it was God's doings. "Every one shall be salted with fire." I wish I could explain this just like I see and feel it, but the anchor of our hope holds fast to the sweet assurance of having been salted with fire. If not mistaken something has been experienced and felt. "Every sacrifice shall be salted with salt." Note the word *shall,* no way of escape. "True worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him." Jesus is the great salt gourd. Unless he salts the sacrifice it is impossible to please the Father. This is just a hint and for the sake of brevity we will pass on. "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." Note his savour. Jesus is the savour of the salt. His people are the salt. Without me ye can do nothing. How oft have I felt myself to be fit only for the junk, so low down that it seemed Jesus, the savour, was clean gone forever. We are comforted with an expression of Elder Floyd Adams at our Association this year that we cannot get so low but Jesus is a little lower. Though the Lord's people ofttimes lose the savour of Jesus, and feel he is clean gone forever, he always gets back in time, they do not rot or decay but are preserved by the power of God. I have ofttimes felt myself rotting to the bone, but on the return of Jesus a little savour puts shouting in my soul. There can be no falling from grace, the savour must have the salt and the salt must have the savour. Jesus must have his people and his people must have him. I would like to continue but must close. Dear sister Hand, I trust I have given you a hint. Will write on the other subjects you mention as soon as I have more time and can feel the unction.

To those beloved in south Arkansas, Georgia, North Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia, whom I met on my recent visits, I say I love you and think of you so often. My going among you was such a burden to you and seemingly to me so unprofitable to you that I do not understand why the Lord let me do it. You lavished me with your hospitality and sweet fellowship. Your odor of Mary's ointment keeps my house full. You lavished me beyond my expectation and in my feelings more than I was worthy with your material things. I am hungry to see you again. I wish I could mention every name, and may I ask that each one of you take this as a personal message. May I close with this expression that seemingly in my feelings I meant nothing to you but you meant all to me. "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee." I went home to you and you did the telling.

(Elder) C. H. BYRD
Route 2, Box 89,
Panama City, Fla.

101 Center St., Salisbury, Md.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER

I do not feel worthy to address you thus, but I hope there is that relationship in the Lord. Enclosed you will find $2 for renewal of the *Signs of the Times*. I am very sorry I have been so slow in sending it in, but have been very poorly of late and as I am past my seventy-second year and very nervous due to an illness one year ago had thought I would give up the *Signs* but it seemed I could not; there is so much in them that is so comforting. I love to read the experiences of these dear ones of like precious faith. They can tell mine better than I, if indeed I have one at all. The doctrine the *Signs* contains and the things it sets forth are very sweet to me. I believe God has all power both in heaven and earth, that he rules and reigns and none can stay his hand. He has a time and a purpose for all things, and all things that come to pass both good and bad are willed by him and is for our good for it is said, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," and I hope I am one. This is a great comfort to me for I have my sorrows. I also feel that the Lord has been with me, surely his goodness and mercy has followed me all my days. These words in Hymn 1033 Beebe's Collection often come into my mind,

"Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

I must bring this letter to a close. Hoping that what you see amiss you will please correct. I am your little sister I hope, though feel to be the least.

(Mrs.) OCTAVIA DIXON

The Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church sends greetings to our sister churches in this Association—the Lexington and Roxbury.

We have been looking forward to this meeting. As our numbers grow fewer owing to one after another of our beloved brethren being called from earth to their heavenly home, it seems we, who are left, are made to feel the more that we need the fellowship and companionship of each other. We desire not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together. We hope we have found these assemblies profitable as did the saints of old—those who feared the Lord and spake often one to another. The Word adds that "a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." It is a wonderful privilege for the children of God to be thus employed. It not only gives them joy while mingling together and hearing the gospel's sweet tidings and tasting of the heavenly manna; but they go away strengthened after partaking of the rest and refreshment of these oases. Strengthened to press on again in their wilderness journey for those in Zion go from strength to strength. Often along our pilgrim way it seems our strength is ebbing so fast that soon we will have none left, but just at the point when we feel to sink in helpless despair, when our last feeble cry of Lord save, I perish, is uttered, then our heavenly guide appears as our support. He renews our strength and we are enabled to press on a step farther in this race which he, himself, has set before us. Sometimes this strength is sent direct from the Fountain Head; then again it is conveyed through other channels: from a message penned by a saint long since fallen asleep, or from a word spoken by a dear understanding brother or sister. But from whatever source, it proves to be just the necessary support we need at the time for the great Provider knows what we are in need of always, before we ask. In order for us poor weak worms to be taught from whence cometh our strength, he apportions it from day to day. We are not given the whole strength at the begin-

ning of the race, nor do we know in what way or when it will be given. If so we would have no need to call upon him constantly along the way. It is his will that we should be made to feel our utter dependence upon him at all times.

So we go from strength, to strength ofttimes moving slowly and painfully along thorny paths of afflictions and trials; then again experiencing a ray of light along the way which enables us to leap with joy for the moment. That God's mercy, grace and strength which thus far has never failed may continue on to our journey's end, is the prayer of this little band of pilgrims who desire that his glorious name be extolled above all others forever and ever.

It is with sadness that we must record the death of our dear and faithful brother (deacon) Lincoln Smith. He was ill for a number of years, but uncomplainingly he bore his affliction, always looking and hoping for a better life to come, which we believe he has now attained, and for which those who are left to mourn his loss still continue to hope.

As a church, we are blessed now in having two preaching services each month. Our pastor, Elder Bellows, is with us the third Sunday in each month, and on the first Sundays our licentiate brother, Amasa Slauson, is usually with us to conduct the meetings. We sometimes wonder if we are truly appreciative of this great privilege of being permitted to meet together thus frequently, and to hear the gospel proclaimed in its sweetness and purity. Surely it is a privilege for which many isolated brethren yearn, and it is a blessing that should be gratefully acknowledged by the recipients thereof.

The Olive and Hurley Church requests that the next Association meet with us at Shokan, N. Y. if God so wills. The time of meeting will be published in the *Signs*.

(Mrs.) FLORENCE B. BELLOWS

Box 93, Marshall, Saskatchewan

DEAR ELDER DODSON: For a long time I have thought of writing you, and would not be now only for the fact that I am deep in the valley. I do not seem to have any goodness left in me, and as I try to write you my hope seems nearly gone with the billows rushing in from every side. My eyes are wet with tears but I am afraid it is not true repentance like once I knew. I have but limited education so kindly bear with me.

It is just eighteen years this month since I received my first lesson in a school not made with hands. Once I tried to write my experience before in a letter to Elder J. B. Bowden. I did not get a direct answer as to whether he received it or not as he died about two months after I wrote. He wrote a letter to the *Signs* shortly before he died that was published after his death, saying he was so weak he could only write a few lines at a time. You will understand just why I wrote before I am through telling you of the road I have traveled. I was born in Nova Scotia and raised a Presbyterian. I was taught or learned, when I was a small boy, that there were two places after death and that if I was good I went to the one. Well, I was anything but good. I went to Sunday School and used to get into all kinds of mischief. I learned bad habits with ease. I remember one day while in a fit of temper swearing at my own mother, never realizing at the time what an awful sin I had committed. However, later on in life I apologized with tears in my eyes and she forgave me gladly. Yet in spite of all my corrupt nature I had serious thoughts about death, (and still do) and how it would be with me when I came to cross the river. I came to Saskatchewan when I was nineteen and some of the things I did the less said about them the better as I cannot recall the past. When I was twenty-five years of age I was up in court on a small offense I had committed. The magistrate said some things to

me that made me mad, and the next day while talking it over with an elderly lady where I was staying I said, "the curse of Christ be on him." She said, "Oh, Joseph don't say that," yet it did not seem to humble me much if any. Some two or three years after that I remember I was out in the field cutting grain and the thought came to me, seeing God knows everything he knows right now whether I will dwell with him throughout eternity or not. That was fixed in my mind. During the Spring of 1927 a certain man named Taylor called at my farm selling a big book on how to study the Bible. I had a Bible in the house that my mother gave me when I first left home so I thought if I purchased this book it will help me study it. I had remembered hearing our old Presbyterian minister back in Nova Scotia saying that he knew a man one time that fought against the grace of God all his life. How is that for blindness on the part of a preacher? I purchased the book, it laid somewhere in the house until the following September. We were having a lot of rain and snow, and with very little outside work to do I started to study and help save myself. The book would quote a passage of scripture and then give the answer. I got along fine until I came to where it says in the Bible, "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Matt. 12:31-32. Here my trouble started. I read it over and over again and each time I seemed to feel worse. Each day my former hope grew dimmer. When the horses would come up to the well for water they seemed better than I. I went on this way for about ten days and could eat but very little. One Sunday evening I went back to this same old lady who found fault with me for swearing some five years before. She was an Old School Baptist. I told of my trouble and how I cursed the magistrate. She said God would forgive me. I said, "no, I am afraid he won't," and I wept bitter tears. Her daughter, who is of the same faith, spoke up, saying, "of course you will be forgiven." I did feel a slight ray of hope but was by no means satisfied. I stayed there for the night and in the morning when I was leaving, the elderly lady gave me a little book to read. It was written by one of the Durand brothers. I think it was called "Songs in the Night and other poems," and also a brief sketch of his life. She gave me another little book written by a man named McColl in Ontario. "God with us" was the name of it. I read McColl's first and it did help me but I was not satisfied. I read Durand's book in the evening. The sketch of his life told about when he died. After reading it I went to bed and something wonderful took place within my chest, convincing me that my sins were forgiven. I thought is this real, am I really forgiven? It came to me a second time and just convinced me through, I seemed to float as it were. I wanted to die right then, depart and go to heaven because I knew my sins were all forgiven. My dear mother and father were alive then, but I wanted to go and leave all behind but to my disappointment I could not go. I was very happy the next day but in about a month my burdens started to return. I fought it off as best I could. realizing I had been forgiven, but each day I grew worse until my wonderful deliverance seemed like the faintest ray of light. I remember one evening when I was cast down and could not keep from weeping I thought all I had to do was to read Durand's book again, but I found no great deliverance this time. I went back to this same old lady one evening, but never said a word about my trouble. When I

was leaving I asked if she had any *Signs of the Times* she could let me have, and to my surprise she had three all wrapped in a little bundle for me to take. I found one letter in them that described what I had gone through so well that my burden left me, but it was not a great deliverance like my first. About a year and a half afterwards I strayed badly and I felt a great conviction reigning within me. I begged for deliverance and my burden more or less gradually wore away. I went on for several years doing lots of things that I should not have done. Sometimes I would be worried and I would read a letter in the *Signs* that would help me. I wanted my great burden back different times, I did not care how hard He would send it as long as it was evidence.

Well, it finally did come back. In the December issue 1938 of the *Signs* there was a letter written by Mary Ellison. I haven't the letter before me but it is in the house somewhere. She said, "if we sin willfully after we come to a knowledge of the truth there remaineth no more sacrifice, and also let us never never dare to sin on account of predestination." This caused me to have a very sleepless night. I went to see this same old lady the next evening and told her of my trouble, and how God had forgiven me of my sins in the past. She said it was a good sign to be troubled, that she often spent sleepless nights, and as she talked my burden left me. About two weeks later a great burden came on me by degrees. It was nothing I had read on this occasion. I felt it was sent from on high. Day after day it seemed hard for me to walk and I used to think of Him who walked to the cross. The following morning when I awoke my burden was completely gone and I was very happy. I was so happy I did not care whether I did my daily work or not. I might add also that I do not care whether I do my work or not when I am cast down.

Now I will come to my next trial which to me was about the strangest of all. About two weeks later I made arrangements with a grain shipper to sell a car of seed oats. After making the bargain I went to see him and asked if it would be all right if I put in half a car load and another farmer the other half. He said, "yes, but the whole car will have to be sold in your name." Oats were cheap at that time and I thought if I held back half the car I might get a better price later on. I brought him a sample of the other man's oats. He looked at them and said, "all right they will do" so we started to haul them to the elevator. The first few loads of the other man's oats were not too bad but they kept getting worse. The elevator agent told him to quit hauling, that his oats were not good enough for seed and paid him for what he hauled in my name. He telephoned me asking if I was coming in that afternoon. I said I was coming in with a load. He said, "I want you to sign those papers as I paid the other farmer in cash and if the inspector should call the elevator agent would get in bad." I came into town with my load and was standing in the elevator when I felt a quick jerk in my chest and a power within my chest said, "if you sign that statement you are forever lost." It was not an audible voice but it came with such power there was no mistake about it. I went into the office and asked if there was any way of fixing this up? He said, "no, I mailed the tickets to the grain company." I asked if he could not fix it up so the other farmer's oats will be in his name? He said, "what will the company think?" I said, "all right I will sign it" which I did. I had a ray of hope left that God would forgive me as he had done on previous occasions. I went outside and the awfulness of what I had done seemed to dawn upon me. That was on a Thursday evening. I did not sleep all night and the next day, Friday, I intended going to a hockey tournament, but instead I went and told the man I intended

going with that I was not feeling well. I truly was not and earth had no medicine to heal me. On the way to this man's place two young men gave me a ride. They seemed very happy and were talking all the way while I was so burdened I could hardly lift my head. That night I read different copies of the *Signs* until midnight. I went to bed but no sleep for me. The next day, Saturday, I went to town with a load of grain. I can still remember quite well how badly I felt. I took a can of milk with me for a friend and as I was delivering it it seemed I could not go much further. I came back and went into the store where I bought my groceries and told the storekeeper I was in awful trouble in spirit. I cried and he took me into a little room and laid me on the floor. I wept and said, "I am lost forever." He said, "get away man, all you have to do is say to Jesus here am I and Jesus will save you." I told him I had been in great trouble on previous occasions and it was followed by sweetness, but I felt that he did not understand. I did feel some better after my weeping and stopped on my way home and ate some food. At home I was doing up the evening chores and hoped it was God's hand that was leading me. I felt better and went into the house and started reading the *Signs*. I read on and on finally coming to a letter written by J. B. Bowden in 1938. When I came to where it said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath (in the past time) blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ," shows conclusively that all our spiritual blessings are and were deposited in Jesus before the world was manifested, and in time are given to his little ones by revelation. At that moment the Great Messenger came and poured forgiveness into my heart. I heard no voice, I saw no vision, neither did I ask for any. I looked at my watch and it was exactly midnight, and oh I sat so still because I figured it would soon leave me. Is not this the peace that passeth understanding? I went to bed with my soul restored and after I went to bed there was a real bold feeling came over me that anything I did did not matter. I must say right now that that is the only time I felt that way. I realize a great responsibility is mine, but I have made such a poor job of it. I have promised God on my knees that I would not commit a certain sin only to find myself doing it. As I said in the beginning of this letter I am deep in the valley on account of my sins and it is very hard on my flesh. I can eat and sleep but very little.

Dear Mr. Dodson, will you kindly pray for me. Right now it seems as though only a message from on high will do. I tried reading the Bible yesterday and certain parts seemed to convict me, but nothing will ever drown out my experience. It seems all would be well with me if I was not such a vile sinner. I visited an Old School Baptist lady out in Vancouver a year ago. She seemed good and pure compared with me. If it is not asking too much I would like a little letter in reply. I have about decided to take a long trip this winter. Do not be surprised if you see me. Kindly excuse this poor writing as I sort of tremble. It is not that I am old in years. Enclosed you will find money-order to pay up what is owing on my paper and the balance is to be used to aid in sending the paper to those unable to pay for it. Perhaps some reader will get a message such as I did while reading the late Mr. Bowden's letters. Before closing I want to say that if I am saved it will be by grace.

Sincerely yours,
JOSEPH MACKENZIE

Route 1, Box 228, Chico, California.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I received your card and am sorry I haven't written you a word. I felt that I could say nothing that would be of interest to a child of the most high God. Yes, dear friend, I get

the *Signs of the Times* regularly. I truly appreciate your kindness in sending it to me. I still read it but my eyes are very bad so I may not read many more. I truly enjoy the letters. The *Signs* and my Bible are all I have. I do not know any of your faith and I will say I dislike the churches I have been in for they preach what they can do to save souls, and as for me there is nothing I can do, neither do I think there is anything any one else can do to save their own soul or the souls of others. I write to three of the members of your church. They have been writing to me since you published my letter in February 1943. I almost feel that I know them and how different from the ones I really do know. My life has been a lonely one. The letters I get somewhat relieves the loneliness. There are people all around me but they are no company for me. I cannot talk to them neither do I care to hear them talk. Having never heard a sermon I am ignorant in many ways, but I know salvation is of the Lord. I believe in the predestination of all things and in an all powerful, all seeing and all wise God. I thank you for sending me the dear family paper, and if I do not write a word once a year you may know I am either blind or have passed out of this old world. From an old sinner saved I hope by the grace of God.

MARION S. BROOKS.

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46 Cedar St., Kingston, N. Y.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: As the time is at hand to renew my subscription to the *Signs* am writing you and enclosing the $2.00 for another year. The papers are such a comfort to me and I look forward to their coming. Amasa and I both enjoyed your article in November issue so much. I said to him, "that article alone is worth the whole price of a year's subscription," and he agreed with me, and the December issue is so very good all the way through. I did rejoice so with sister Elsie Loeffel's writing. It seemed I was right with her at that meeting for I have been right there when receiving a gospel message at times. I have been lifted up and filled with praise and thanksgiving to our heavenly Father for the manifold blessings he has bestowed upon me, unworthy as I am. It just seemed she could not praise and extol his great name enough. There is a scripture that reads, "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious." How true that is. Dear sister Emma Secor's letters were just glorious. It caused us to rejoice so much while reading them and was so very glad you published them. We also enjoyed the editorial. Hope you and your family are well. Uunworthily your sister in hope of eternal life.

(Mrs.) ELIZABETH SLAUSON

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88 Brown St., Johnson City, N. Y.

TO THE SIGNS OF TIMES: Enclosed find $1.00 for which please send the Signs another six months as I do not feel I can do without the paper. It is all the preaching I get. I do not know another Baptist in this city and have no one to talk with that believes as I do or agrees with me on spiritual things. I am past ninety years of age and do not expect to be here much longer. hope I am one for whom Christ shed his precious blood.

(Mrs.) ANNA ROE

MARRIAGES

By Elder Arnold H. Bellows at West Hurley, N. Y., July 14, 1945, Howard Henderson and Miss Marian Mead of Margaretville, N. Y.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE SIGNS

Mrs. D. Deal, Mo., $3.; Mrs. R. Moore, La., $1.; Mrs. E. M. Werner, N. J. $3.; J. Zeh, N. Y., $1.; Mrs. R. B. Shortridge, Ill., $10; Mrs. A. W. Ray, N. C., $1.; Mrs. M. J. Disharoon, Del., $1.; A. S. Roberson, N. C., $1; Miss C. M. Duffus, B. C., $5; Mrs. H. E. Danks, Cal., $2; D. H. Bradley, Tex., $4; Mrs. M. J. Ege, N. J. $3; Mrs. P. I. Froude, Mich., $3; Mrs. B. H. Shearon, Tenn., $1; Mrs. M. C. Little, Tex., $1; J. MacKenzie, B. C., $20; S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $1.; Mrs. R. MacPhee, N. J. $5.; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $3; A friend, Ala., $5; Eld. A. D. Hughett, Wash., $2.50; Mrs. E. H. West, N. Y. $3.

EDITORIAL

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL CONFESS

"That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." Isa. 45:23. "For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." Rom. 14:11. "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. 2: 10-11.

Our dear brother, William Echols, requested the Editor to write on the above subject, and he has asked our views if we felt to write on it. We are giving our exercise of mind to the readers hoping it may be of comfort to them.

We would first consider the recording by the prophet commencing with the nineteenth verse, "I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: I the the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right. Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations; they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save. Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the Lord? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Savior; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word has gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." The prophet being inspired by the Holy Ghost, spoke to Israel as God, declaring the eternal purpose of God in the salvation of his people. In the beginning God created all things by the word of his power, and predestinated that all his work should glorify his Son. In everything God created, the breath of life is the process by which organic development assimilates all substances that will increase its growth and development to the purpose for which it was created. We see in every herb yielding seed, the way in which the breath of life will be taken into it, that the oxygen of the air will be taken into its body by which the gaseous conditions are counteracted that life should continue, and growth manifested. This we observe in both the flora and fauna of all the earth, and when they have fulfilled their purpose for which they were created God closes the passage of the breath of life and they die. This is universal of the expression that "every knee shall bow" and the yielding to the power of God confesses God's sovereignty. From a natural standpoint we would conclude that our text meant that every human being would bow the knee and confess God. We acknowledge, all must die and become as water spilt upon the ground, that cannot be gathered up, which is God's decree upon all flesh. We note the prophet speaks of a people that had no knowledge, that set up the wood of their graven image and pray unto a god that cannot save. These are they who are carnally minded

and are not quickened by the Son of God and made new creatures in Christ Jesus. We have given the natural thoughts of the perceptions of life and death that we are given to behold in nature.

We come now to a people God elected in Christ Jesus to salvation from before the foundation of the earth, and according to the expression of the apostle Paul to the church at Rome, "For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." This embraces every land, kindred, tongue and nation, and Paul wrote to the church of the Philippians "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Every one of the elect of God in Christ Jesus, whose names were written, in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, will be quickened by the Spirit, and must live in Jesus Christ and confess that he is Lord to the glory of God the Father. They compose the bride of Christ and will be brought off more than conquerors through Jesus Christ, and Jesus will say, "To the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth." The daughters are represented as the weaker vessel that he will bring from the end of the earth, so as thy day thy strength shall be, and Jesus is the strength of every saint and will aid you from on high.

When a sinner is quickened by the Son of God he is humbled in the flesh, and made to confess he is a sinner, and by the demonstration of the Spirit and power of God he will confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father, for there is nothing good in him, and in everything he does sin is mixed with it, and for him to glorify himself is impossible. The word, every, in our subject signifies each one or in all places, so we feel, dear brother, the scriptures we have quoted will give you evidence that the prophet was embracing the people of God out of every land, kindred, tongue and nation under heaven that were quickened by the Son of God, and raised to walk with him in newness of life. The child of God suffers because he is a sinner in the flesh, but God hath subjected the same in hope through Jesus Christ, and when we pass from this world our bodies die, but the spirit returns to God who gave it. The body must return to dust, and he will change our vile bodies that they shall be like his own glorious body when Jesus comes to make up his jewels. He will come with the trump of God and the archangel, and the earnest of our spirit is looking for him to take us to himself in heaven. As sure as we have been made to bow the knee in a true repentence we are children of God, led by the Spirit, and we believe with all our hearts that the apostle Paul was a servant of God by the grace of God given him in Christ Jesus. The proof of his apostleship was given to Ananias which declared Paul to be a chosen vessel unto him, and I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. Paul, having hope in Jesus, said it would be far better for him to depart, and when his time came he declared, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." 2 Tim. 4:7-8. Paul had not received the fulness of the spirit in this life, but he pressed for the high calling in Christ Jesus, and spake comfortingly to the "brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with

him.For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thes. 4: 13-17. Paul was put forth to do the will of God, but the grace of God was with him. Jesus went before him and prepared the way by which the work was perfect, and when the time came for Paul to depart he could say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." When these words are repeated we must also quote Paul's confession, "By the grace of God I am what I am." —C. W. V.

"Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face." Psalms 89:14

There are no scales more accurate or exacting than the scales of divine justice, and all who have been weighed in them have been found wanting. God has said, "Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place."

When God made the universe he prescribed certain fixed and inexorable laws to govern and control every creature and things, and notwithstanding it has been in existence thousands upon thousands of years, it has not been necessary for God to alter or change any thing one iota. His wisdom which comprehended all things before they were brought into existence was inscrutible and perfect, and while creatures and time things change so far as we are concerned, God is eternally the same, yesterday, to-day and forever, and with him there is neither variableness nor a shadow of turning. Were it not for God's inexorable laws, scientists would not have a solid foundation upon which to make their calculations, and they would never come out of the maze of confusion in which they often find themselves, but with the certainty and definiteness of God's laws they are making many marvelous discoveries and working out numerous and ingenious inventions.

Little by little and at incalculable cost the nations of the earth are learning by bitter experiences that justice is so fundamental a requisite for the good of all that it cannot be ignored or tampered with without some very serious eventual repercussions. There are times when justice may seemingly lie dormant for many, many years, and the wicked to all outward appearances may seem to prosper as the green bay tree by the water's edge, nevertheless, while the mills of justice may grind slowly, grind they most surely will, and in God's own time and way truth will be brought to light, when the precious will find acceptance with him, but the vile will utterly be destroyed. It is far from the Lord to slay the righteous with the wicked, or that the righteous should be as the wicked and, therefore, it was asked by one of old, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" The Psalmist said, "The Lord shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment. And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness. The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble." Psalms 9:7-9. We may be assured at all times that our God neither slumbers nor sleeps, and it has been written by divine insipiration, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." We are hopeful that nations are discovering that their own best interests, in the long run, will best be served by dealing justly with all mankind. We are aware that some few nations, like many of the individuals of

which they are composed, are corrupt to the core and will have to undergo a new birth before they can be respected and esteemed by any standard of decency. We are optomistic so far as the long term future is concerned, but developments along this line will undoubtedly be slow. The Lord is able to turn the hearts of wicked kings, as he doth the river, whithersoever he will.

Justice and judgment are the habitation of God's throne also so far as the individual is concerned, for we are told that God will try every man's work of what sort it is. God is declared to be a consuming fire and it will be found to be "a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." When we learn of the awful things that men do, all because of the lust for greed, for money, for power, for honor so-called by some of mankind, or to satisfy some sinful desire of their own, regardless of the terrible consequences the success of their ill-gotten gains may bring to others, possibly innocent and helpless victims, we are made to hang our head in shame and contempt for such despicable characters. There are those who, while their own flesh and blood was being sacrificed on the field of battle, have not hesitated to stoop to any depth for wordly gain, all of which reminds us of a scriptural quotation that "the love of money is the root of all evil." At this point we were interrupted by Mrs. Dodson to go into an adjoining town on a certain mission, and finding ourself near one of the elect of God who has been badly afflicted for many years, we called to see him. In a few minutes after we entered his room he was relating some of the dealings of the Lord with him, and told of how he had used practically all his earthly possessions in order to make good certain obligations in which a partner of long standing had involved him. While this was a great cross to him, he had found great joy and peace in having a conscience void of offense to his fellow-man and his God. Since then there have been occasions when he really needed small sums of money, and the ways in which his needs have been supplied made him weep for joy in trying to tell about them. He cited one instance when he needed $100 and had no idea what he would do, but some one had sent a certain man a check for that amount and told him to see that some deserving person was benefitted by it and, lo and behold the check was endorsed to his order and sent to him. We could but contrast such a man with others we read and know about, and when we rejoined Mrs. Dodson in the car to come home we could but remark upon the good effect it had upon our very soul to come in contact with a man who lives so near to his God as this man does. We can but wonder what will be the lot of some when the day of reckoning comes and our Lord will come with his fan in his hand to thoroughly purge his floor, garnering his wheat into his storehouse, but burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire. We have no doubt that there will be those who will fly to the mountains, but the mountains will cry out, you can't hide here. David asked, "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." When God searches our hearts we are made to know that he is acquainted with all our ways, and that not even our thoughts can be withholden from him.

While the words "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne" seemed to have a particular bearing upon our mind, when we looked them up, we found some other precious words connected with them in the same verse, which are: "Mercy and truth shall go before thy face." What wonderful beauty there is in

these words! Without the truth of them no poor sinner would ever be able to appear before his God in peace. We are reminded of our own experience many years ago, when we did not see how God could be just and at the same time save such a hell-deserving sinner as we knew ourself to be. For a considerable length of time we were in great distress of mind and soul because we could see no way of the ungodly ever being justified before a just and holy God, such as we saw our God to be. It seemed as though we were cut off forever, without hope and without God in the world. No wonder Paul could say, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" We are truly glad for what follows these words of the apostle: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

We believe we were given a view of the blessed Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world and were shown that "Mercy and truth shall go before thy face." By faith we saw that mercy and justice were blended together in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and that all of our iniquities were laid upon him, and by his stripes we are healed. What a blessed peace enveloped our soul when we could behold him as "the way, the truth, and the life." Then we could not see how God could be just and condemn a single one of his elect who were justified by the sufferings death and resurrection of his blessed Son. Our text does not say that mercy and truth may go before his face, but the text emphatically declares they *"shall go before thy face."* How beautiful are the words of the poet where he said,

"What a mercy is this,
What a heaven of bliss!
How unspeakably favored am I!
Gathered into the fold,
With believers enrolled,
With believers to live and to die!"

Without Jesus Christ, in whose face the word says the glory of God appears, to stand before the great white throne and intercede with his Father, who is of too pure eyes than to look upon sin, to plead our cause for us, we would still be without hope and without God in the world; but when it is Jesus that is seen instead of us, even though we feel to be the very chief of sinners, we can lay hold upon the hope that is set before us, and run with patience the race that is set before us, ever looking unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith. We can then clutch to our bosoms that hope which is said to be as "an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

The throne of God is symbolic of his power, might and dominion, where he who created the heaven and the earth and all that in them is rules and reigns supremely. Independently of him there is no power, for the powers that be are ordained of God, and he is still doing his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. Again, we quote the poet, this time as saying,

"Life, death, and hell, and worlds unknown,
Hang on his firm decree;
He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be,
Chained to his throne, a volume lies,
With all the fates of men,
With every angel's form and size,
Drawn by the eternal pen.
His providence unfolds the book
And makes his counsels shine,
Each opening leaf, and ev'ry stroke;
Fulfils some deep design."

To those who by faith are enabled to comprehend this God and his wondrous works, we would desire to remind them of Paul's language to his Galatian brethren, where he said: "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the

Spirit reap life everlasting." May God give us to so live that others may see our good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven.

—R. L. D.

ORDINATIONS

According to the call sent out by Cool Springs Church, Opp, Ala., asking for the ordination of A. F. ANDERSON, the following met and organized a presbytery with Elder Ivey Watson, pastor of the church, serving as moderator of the presbytery and examining the mouthpiece of the church upon the qualifications of brother Anderson as contained in Paul's letter to Timothy. Whereupon Elder J. J. Collins questioned brother Anderson upon the articles of faith of the Claybank Association which were handed down from the Conecuh River Association of Ala., Kehukee of North Carolina and Philadelphia of Pa. direct from Welsh Tract Church and the Welsh Baptists. Elder J. J. Richards conducted the ordination prayer and Elder F. A. Collins delivered the charge to Elder Anderson. The above being done at Cool Springs Church on Saturday Dec. 1, 1945.

(Elder) J. J. COLLINS

Pursuant to request of Good Hope Church, Rehobeth Church called for a presbytery to meet on above date to proceed in the ordination of brother W. A. SPEER to the officeship of Elder. Whereupon, Elder R. W. Rhodes called upon Elder John Lee Smith to introduce with hymn and prayer and brother W. A. Speer to preach followed by Elder W. W. Taylor.

The church and presbytery reconvened at 2:00 p. m. and did proceed in the ordination of brother W. A. Speer as follows:

1. After introductory remarks by Elder Rhodes the following Elders and Deacons composed themselves into a presbytery: Elders, R. W. Rhodes, E. J. Lambert, W. W. Taylor and John Lee Smith; Deacons, S. J. Slaughter, T. J. Smith, Silas Hill, Joe A. Spiers, Ross Watson and G. F. Murphy.

2. The presbytery organized itself by electing Elder R. W. Rhodes, Moderator and Elder E. J. Lambert, Clerk.

3. Deacon G. F. Murphy was appointed spokesman for the church who presented brother Speer to the presbytery.

4. After due examination as to deportment, qualifications and gracious state of God's gift in the ministry of brother Speer to the complete satisfaction of the presbytery, that God has ordained him to this officeship of Elder, we did proceed in prayer worded by Elder E. J. Lambert and the laying on the hands of the presbytery.

5. Whereupon Elder Rhodes delivered the charge to Elder Speer.

6. The right hand of fellowship was extended by each member to Elder Speer; also members of Rehobeth Church, brethren and friends.

7. We, the members of the presbytery, commend Elder Speer to all orderly and orthodox Baptists as being sound in doctrine; careful in his deportment; and as humble and conscientious in the display of God's gift of the ministry in him.

8. Minutes were read and adopted.

9. Adjourned in order with prayer by Elder W. W. Taylor.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES, Moderator
(Elder) E. J. LAMBERT, Clerk

OBITUARIES

THOMAS BOGART NEWBERRY was born June 25, 1861, in Stewart Co., Tenn., near Cumberland City, and passed away at the home of his daughter, Mrs. T. Q. Poyner, Oct. 11, 1945 at 1 p.m., aged 84 years, 3 months and 16 days. He was married to Virginia Ellonora Patterson, Feb. 1, 1880. To this union were born ten children, six boys and four girls. His wife, four boys and one girl preceded him in death, his loving companion passing away July 30, 1934. He leaves to mourn his passing, three girls, Mrs. J. E. Myatt, Route 4, Martin, Tenn., Mrs. T. Q. Poyner, Route 4, Martin, Tenn., Mrs. J. W. Barnes, Route 5, Union City, Tenn.; two boys, Joel Reed Newberry, Chicago, Ill., L. A.

Newberry, U. S. N., Winter Harbor, Me.; five grandchildren, two boys and three girls; seven great-grandchildren, four boys and three girls and a host of relatives and friends. Papa, as we called him, embraced a hope in Christ in early manhood and united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Little Flock, August 1894, and was baptized with his wife by Elder J. P. Jenkins into the fellowship of Little Flock Church. He remained a faithful member until the division over Conditional Time Salvation came up. Then he went to Richland Baptist Church, though few in number yet strong in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace for time and eternity, which doctrine Papa loved and lived on until his death. Very soon after he united with the church his brethren recognized the gift God gave him and they ordained him deacon, which office he filled fully and faithfully because God directed his steps.

In 1907 he moved to West Tennessee and settled in Obion Co., near Cane Creek Church which he soon united with by a letter which Richland Church gave him. He remained a faithful member of this church until God called him home. He loved his church and his brethren and went far and near to be with them. Their sorrows were his sorrows and their joys his joy. He lived with his brethren and died with them. During his last days on earth his brethren and his God were all he cared to talk about. He believed in the God of the whole earth that doeth all things well and does his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. He believed that all the sorrows God's children have to pass through here are for their good and God's glory, and all the blessings or joys they have are unmerited favor and altogether the gift of God. He saw the perfections of God and the imperfections of man. He loved his family as well as any father loves his children but he loved his Lord more. He could see our imperfection, our weakness and our proneness to evil, at the same time he could see the perfection of a perfect God. He was made to realize that if ever we were perfect it would be alone the independent act of a sovereign God that does all things well. This is where Papa got his comfort while he lived, this is where he fell in death and there could be no better place to fall than into the arms of a loving, perfect God. His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder E. C. Lowery, Elder John Hinson and Elder Wade Perkins, after which his mortal remains were laid beneath the sod from which it was taken, there to await the appointment of a perfect God that does all things well, Written by his imperfect son-in-law.

J. W. BARNES.

HENRY CLAY BRINSON was born at Athens, Texas, June 10, 1880, and departed this life September 2, 1945 at Jacksonville, Texas. He was united in marriage with Annie Gaynes of Athens, Jan. 22, 1902 who survives him. They moved to Rising Star in 1908 where they lived for thirty-five years and reared their family of six children all of them surviving their father. They are: Mrs. McClanahan, Brownwood, Texas, C. E. Brinson, Overton, Texas, Mrs. Hinkle, Abilene, Texas, Mrs. J. C. Cornelus, Houston, Texas, J. R. Brinson, Abilene, Texas and Albert Brinson, Coast Guard, Pensacola, Fla. There are also twelve grandchildren and three great-grandchildren besides a host of other relatives and friends. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church in 1916 and was baptized by Elder Kinsel. He was faithful to his church and his God until his passing at the age of 65 years, 2 months and 22 days. Macedonia Church has suffered a great loss. He and his wife were always at meeting and a great help to the church. The writer was called to speak words of comfort to the bereaved family, using as a text 1 Cor. 15:19. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." I tried to speak of the great frution of that hope beyond this vale of tears which Peter said shall be revealed in the last time. Our brother knew the time was near at hand and gave evidence that all was well with him, that this great hope grew stronger the nearer the end came. May God bless those that mourn for they shall be comforted. Written by his pastor.

(Elder) C. Y. OSTEEN.

On October 29, 1945 the Lord called another dear soul, Mrs. LOU JACKSON, to heaven to await her reward on that great resurrection morning. This dear mother was, before marriage, Miss Lou Vaughn. She was born June 17, 1875 making her age at death 70 years, 4 months and 12 days. In 1894 she was married to George Washington Jackson who preceded her in death 27 years. To this union were born seven children, four girls and three boys: Mrs. Bessie Parrish of Sidonia, Mrs. Vida Bird of Alamo community, Hugh Jackson, Chicago, Ill., George Jackson, Union City, Tenn., Harmon and Cecil who made their home with their mother and Annie who preceded her mother in death twenty-one years ago.There are also one stepson, Cleveland of Sidonia, thirteen grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, two sisters, two half-brothers, one half-sister and a host of friends who enjoyed the hospitality of her home life. Dear old Cane Creek Church will miss her so very much as she has served it since 1910. To be loving, friendly and helpful were outstanding characteristics of her life and her life was beautiful. Her death resembl-

ed October leaves, bright in color but having done their duty they are leaving the trees.

Sister Jackson did her duty here on earth and is ready to make that heavenly home more complete for loved ones. Her death was a shock to all but the Lord knew best and has fulfilled his purpose. Sister Jackson was a true and strong Old Baptist. Her home was always open to them and her dear children always did all in their power to make the Baptists welcome when in their homes. I have been in her home numerous times and have tried to preach there many times. The late Elder J. W. Kerley had a standing appointment at her home every fourth Saturday night in July which he filled for upwards of forty years. The dear old Elder and sister Jackson have fallen asleep in Jesus, there to rest until Jesus comes the second time to gather his children from the four corners of the earth to be in his image, be like him and see him as he is.

I will say to the members of the church of which she was a member weep not for we feel she is at rest, and to her heart broken children may God reconcile you that your great loss is her great gain. Elder E. C. Lowery and I were called to conduct her funeral in the presence of a large crowd of sorrowing relatives and friends. May God give us all grace for every day and trial, and when we have finished our course as she has may we fall asleep as she has. Yours in hope of the resurrection.

(Elder) O. W. PERKINS

SIGNS WANTED

1838 to 1853 inclusive; 1857 to 1863 inclusive; 1868 to 1869 inclusive; 1873 to 1881 inclusive; 1888; 1890; 1900, May 1, June 1, Sept. 15; 1907, April 15; 1909, Sept. 1, Dec. 1 and 15; 1910, June 15; 1911, Sept. 1; 1914, Mar. 15; 1923, May 1 and Apr. 1.

Please, may I have your assistance in locating and securing these Signs. I want to get them for the Old Baptists in the days to come. I am still offering a good price and shipping charges. To those that have helped I certainly want to express my appreciation. (Elder) W. D. GRIFFIN.

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each 1st Sunday, 11:00 a. m. and Saturday before.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday.
AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a. m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopewell Church, Ozark Ala., meets each 4th Sunday, 11 a. m. J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock. Meeting place at Alder St. at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, 11 a. m. Elders J. J. Collins and J. S. Bass, Pastors.
J. J. COLLINS

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Beulah Primitve Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canda, California.

Bethel Church near Stockton, Cal. meets first and third Sundays in each month and Saturday nights before. For further information write SETH BYNUM, R 3, Box 800 G, Stockton, Cal. or LEONA TUTTLE, 1940 N. Center St., Stockton, Cal.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st **Sunday, north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.**
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets the second Sunday and Saturday before.
E. N. FIELDS, Pastor.

Pleasant Valley Church, Kingman, Kansas, meets **each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc.)**
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. C. H. EVANS, Pastor

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a. m. in the meeting-house. Pastor in regular attendance except first Sundays. C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays 10:30 A.M., 2 P.M.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY
Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue. Take elevator to second floor.
11.00 a. m. 1:30 p. m.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.
(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.
C. W. BOND, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 a. m.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor
C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.
W O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. G. E. Rushing, co-pastor.
C. B. TEAGUE, Pastor.

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets third Sunday in each month at 11:00 a. m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Old School Baptist meetings are held every fourth Sunday at Civic Club, 1419 N. Shepherd St., Houston, Texas. Preaching by Elder W. O. Beene.
(Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Danville Primitve Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before. Bradley Road, Danville, Va.
W. R. DODD, Pastor.

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meet each first Sunday 11 a.m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3032 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va. R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.
R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m. C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 114 RUTHERFORD, N. J. APRIL, 1946 No. 4

THE DECEITFUL HEART

I have a heart, O what a heart!
That's filled with murder, lust and pride;
That seeks vain-glory and applause,
And every evil thing beside.

It claims the homage of the world
And grieves if honors be denied;
And oft are imprecations hurled
Against these things that chain its pride.

It lusts for mines of silver, gold,
And feasts upon the sordid sight;
And loathes to quit its hateful hold
Of riches brought within its might.

To gratify its large desire
It many false ways doth invent;
And in the farthest ends of earth
I often find its errands sent.

Sometimes to good I feel inclined,
Or hope at least it is the case:
But soon I feel a wandering mind,
And legions soon possess the place.

A heart I have, O what a heart!
Bow down to it, ye saints of God!
'Twould be your judge (blasphemous thought!)
And rule you with both rod and sword.

Let wordlings boast with righteous face,
And vainly purge themselves from sin;
They cannot understand my case,
Nor to my captive soul come in.

Let brethren err in word or deed,
Can I condemn them for their sin
While my own ways deserve my heed,
With such a heart I have within?

Lord haste the time when I no more
Shall feel the plague of heart within;
But on yon happy, happy shore
Drink everlasting pleasures in.

THOMAS COLE,

Submitted by (Mrs.) George Bishop,
Walkers, Ont., Canada

CORRESPONDENCE

Route 1, Hammond, W. Va.

DEAR CHILDREN OF THE TRUE AND LIVING GOD, THE LORD JESUS CHRIST: I hope to write the truth for I hope I have been called to feed the sheep and the lambs of God, as I once, yea twice, heard the voice saying, feed my sheep, feed my lambs. Be careful in what you do; feed the sheep with doctrine and the lambs with the sincere milk of the word, preach experience with the strong meat and that will feed both lambs and sheep. Now, as I have stated, I hope to write the truth, and my text will be found in Heb. 7:3. "Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually." Let us consider this scripture and notice how it reads: made a priest, yes like unto the Son of God, the apostle here states how great this man was. This scripture has been on my mind both day and night and seems to me to say, you consider this and that it means you now consider it. How great was this man who met Abram and blessed him and he then was called Abraham instead of Abram, and this man was called Melchizedec and when he met Abram he brought forth bread and wine. First let us consider Mary, the virgin, when she conceived by the Holy Ghost she brought forth a son, her first-born, and he was called a man.

Yes a man child and a man of sorrow, and this man Melchizedec was made like unto the Son of God, and Jesus, the man of sorrow, was the Son of God as well as the son of man. Let us see what the apostle John said about this man. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among men. In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. Let us consider how great he was that you may know that the son of man hath power on earth to forgive sin. Yes, and to open the eyes of the blind and to raise the dead. Consider this man Melchizedec how great he was, who brought forth bread and wine, and then he blessed Abraham for he was made like unto the Son of God, a priest, and Jesus Christ is a priest forever after the order of Melchizedec. One after the order of the Son of God, a priest continually and liveth for-ever-more. See their order and their likeness and then consider that God, the Father, said to his Son; "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." The image is not the substance but the image of the substance. Yes, and then after our likeness, so the earthy man was created and made, then God breathed in his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul. As we have borne the image of the earthy so shall we bear the image of the heavenly. The first man Adam was of the earth, earthy, the second man Adam was from heaven, heavenly. So Melchizedec brought forth bread and wine here on earth and blessed Abraham, so the Son of God brought forth the true bread of life, he trod the winepress alone and of the people there was none to help him. See the wine on the lees well refined. Yes, God giveth you the true bread from heaven for my body is the true bread and my blood ye shall drink and live forever, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us at the right hand of God. Then in the resurrection we shall awake in his likeness. In regeneration we have his image, before regeneration we have the image of the earthly man, and in regeneration we have the image of the heavenly. In the resurrection we have his likeness. Our vile body which is the image shall be changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body. God the Father said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," and he said again that Jesus stood as a lamb slain, and the Son of God said a body thou hast prepared me. Yes, in offering and burnt offerings thou hast no pleasure in them. It is written "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God." A body thou hast prepared me. So God, the Father, was in that body and the body was called a man, and Christ truly was a man and that was the body prepared. See him as a lamb of God, see him as a body slain, see him in the body reconciling the world unto himself. Not imputing their sins, the sins of his people unto them, but imputing their sins unto Christ, the body that God prepared it. A fit man, yes, a body called man, made himself a priest to himself for he could not swear by a greater, for he is God the Father, God the greater of all and the most high God. He is like unto the Son of God in their Godhead for he is God the Father and the Son of God is equal with him in their Godhead. So this body was prepared and called man, like unto the Son of God for God the Father and God the Son are just alike in their Godhead. God being to himself a priest, he then being the very king of righteousness was reconciling the world, yes, the elect world unto himself for there was none greater so he swore to himself. That Christ the son of man was made after the same order, a priest, and God the Father was called by many names: the Lord thy God; the Lord God Almighty; Jehovah and Melchizedec. I firmly believe because he hath neither a father nor mother, nor a beginning or ending of life, but a priest to himself imputing their

sins unto himself as well as his Son after his order, it is an eternal order, ordered in all things well because he created all things by Jesus Christ and hid them in God. Yes, in the Godhead for Jesus said my Father is greater than all. So without all contradiction the lesser were blessed by the better and the Son said, why call me good there is none good but One and that is my Father alone. So the better was only one who is better for God's people like our father Abraham are as one, no better about them, none good, none righteous, no not one, and their righteousness is only imputed to them by God for he alone is the very king of this righteousness and he imputes it unto Abraham and all his seed for he is not the author of confusion, but he alone is the author of peace for he is the king of peace himself.

All churches located in different places are the church of God. Jesus said, "Upon this rock I will build my church." He is the Rock in a weary land. Yes, in a weary land and there is no land as weary as the children of God. O land of rest for thee I sigh, the Canaan land, the promised land. God, the Father, blessed Abram and called him Abraham. The greater, the better, blessed the lesser without all contradiction for Jesus, the Son of God said, my Father is greater than all, my Father is the only good one, the only righteous one, the king of righteousness, the king of Salem, the king of peace without descent. We are the descendants of Adam. This is not after the law of Moses, nor after the order of Levi, but after the order of an endless life. This is God's secret will, written in Christ and sealed, yes, in the book of life. Jesus is the tree of life, the Lamb's book sealed and hid, and none can break the seal nor open the book to read. Christ, the Lamb, did not spring from Levi, nor after the order of Aaron, but from the eternal order of God, the Father, who hath no beginning of days nor ending of life. Christ himself said, I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it up again. No man can take it from me, I am alive for-ever-more. I ever live to make intercession for them at the right hand of God. There I sat until God put all things under my feet, even Levi paid tithes to him. Our tithes are in Spirit, the fruits of the Spirit. In me thy fruit is found. The Spirit makes intercession for us. Christ is the sum and substance of all things. He is the heavenly, the bread of life he brought forth with him, and he being made a priest he offered up his own body, yes, the body God prepared being verily God and verily man. God manifested in the flesh, being equal with God, in the Godhead. Dear children of God let us consider the greatness of this body, this man and the priesthood, God reconciling us unto himself. As there were none greater than himself he confirmed it with an oath. Let us draw near to God and let our hope be stayed on him. I feel so much better after considering the greatness of this man, the body God prepared, and we, in the resurrection, shall be like him and be satisfied.

Let us turn to Daniel 3:25 and see what Nebuchadnezzar said about man. "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." See, the fourth man is superior, he is like the Son of God. Melchizedec was made like unto the Son of God, superior to Abraham and blessed him. See those three men were cast into the fire but the fourth was not cast in. How great the fourth man was, he had power over the fire like the Son of God as well as the son of man. God was there, yes, the most high God, for our God is a consuming fire himself. He did not consume the three men who were cast into the fiery furnace, but consumed their bands and loosed them. Melchizedec loosed Abram and blessed him and he is now called Abraham instead of Abram, a new name

which the Lord, thy God shall give you. He is the king of righteousness, the king of peace. God, the Father, the most high God, the better one blessed the lesser without all contradiction. Who of all Adam's race is greater or better than Abraham, our father. In him was all of God's seed blessed for he was called the father of the faithful. When the Lamb of God stood as the body slain there were but three: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. There were no more for God created and made all things for himself, and for his own glory created he them by Jesus Christ and hid them in God, the better, the only good one of all. He is the most high God, higher than the heavens, being a priest to himself, and then coming in the body to reconcile the righteous world unto himself because there were none greater than he, he swore by himself that his son was made a priest forever after Melchizedec who was called man, being verily God and verily man.

Who can deny this, a body prepared free from sin; a body that saw no corruption; a body that was made fit for a sacrifice. Yes, a body called man; a body suitable to bear our sin for he himself bore our sins in his own body, a body God himself prepared. Yes, a body that could suffer, bleed and die for man, the creature, harmless, undefiled and blameless, which God was well pleased with. In creation man was made after God, the Father, God the Son, their own image and their own likeness as the heavenly man for we know we are not God but the children of God. As we have our picture taken and it looks like us, we know that it is not us in substance but our image. We are the substance from which the picture was taken. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost, these three are one, they themselves being the substance are the Godhead, and all things else were created and made, for by him all things consist. The body was prepared, man created and made Christ as a priest. If those shadows and types be glorious what must the substance be when we awake in his likeness and be like him. We will then be satisfied and not until then. It is glorious to behold. Job said: "And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." It will be Job himself and not another. It will be Job's flesh, yet changed from corruption to incorruption. Sin wiped out of the flesh. May God prepare us to meet him there in his glory.

(Elder) JAMES W. LINN

THE HANDIWORK OF GOD

I cannot get these words off my mind. If my neighbors were to come in now I could not talk to them unless I repeated these words.

I am impressed to write something about my trip to the Yellow River Association in Atlanta, Ga. Sept. 21 to 23 in connection with the above subject. Elder H. M. Brock, Covin, Ala., the Moderator of the Hopewell Association shared his car with Elder Pennington, Sulligent, Ala., the Moderator of the Buttahatchie Association, brother Bowden, Carbon Hill, Ala., sister Della Johnson, Fayette, Ala., sister Ercelle Hand, Jasper, Ala. and the unworthy one who is trying to write. We met at Elder Brock's and left there at twelve o'clock Thursday night, reaching Atlanta by meeting time. After listening to the introductory discourse sent by Almighty God through the person of Elder Nash, Moderator of the Yellow River Association, tired as we were we felt refreshed as if we had slept on a downy bed all night and had risen from a banquet table, which indeed I believe we had. The puzzle in my mind is should I say we? We met Elder Broom here from North Carolina, Elder Byrd from Florida and many other noble brothers, sis-

ters and friends whom I shall never forget. I had met Elder Broom several times before and felt I knew Elder Byrd by pen. We spent Friday night in the home of brother and sister Jackson. The hospitality shown us there far exceeded that of the Pharisees. It was beyond all doubt a mutual hospitality that flows from the hearts of God's children. Early Saturday morning we went to the Cyclarama in Grant Park to see the world famous panorama painting of the Battle of Atlanta. The painting measures fifty feet in height, four hundred feet in circumference and weighs eighteen thousand pounds. It was painted by three German artists in 1885 and 1886. The landscape looking in any direction from the viewers platform covers a radius of twenty-five or thirty miles, though only twelve feet from the viewers platform to the outside wall either way one looks. It is so real and unmistakably true that one familiar with Atlanta may point out many individual places. I saw many people in tears as they looked upon the scene where their own flesh and blood had gone down in battle.

The site of the little stone meeting-house where the Association was held is in the painting. On this spot stood a small brick building which was badly wrecked. Very near this site was a man who had been shot down, but had his eyes lifted toward heaven and his right hand raised far above his body, signifying to me that still small voice had spoken, "Peace be still." I do not know what the artist had in mind when he painted this picture near this spot, but God knows what it was for.

We were back at the meeting-house by preaching time and heard wonderful preaching by *our* preachers on the subject, "You who are troubled rest with us."

"It is a rest that God doth send
To every troubled heart;
And when he plods to journey's end,
He never shall depart."

There was good preaching in the afternoon by others. We spent Saturday night in the home of sister Esta Ivy and son. After finishing the needful part that goes to sustain this natural body, we all gathered in the living room and sang songs. Sister Ivy's wonderful voice spellbound me until I could not try to sing. As I sat gazing into her sacred looking face I could see the handiwork of God far more perfect than that of the painting I have spoken of. A handiwork that will not deteriorate nor be destroyed even by the great power of the atomic bomb. All powers that be are ordained of God and he most assuredly controls them. I cannot leave off speaking of the son's voice and countenance, it was a-kin to his mother's. Brother and sister Glore were there with helping hands and others whom I learned to love but can not recall their names. Sunday morning we drove to Stone Mountain. On the side we drove up to it is one mile high, and as perpendicular as an erect tree it seemed to me, and a solid rock. Here is where U. D. C. sponsored the carvings of the Civil War Generals. Although it is not finished it was a sight to me. I judge they are carved about half way up the mountain. It looks impossible for a man to cling to a solid rock, half a mile high and carve the image of those men on horses going to battle.

"Not one tool by man can pry,
Beyond God's holy will;
He must on God for strength rely,
Wisdom, art and skill."

The carving was not finished because of a misunderstanding between the "Daughters" and the sculptor. This wonderful work by man is crumbling off. I hope "I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True," "and his name is called The Word of God." No misunderstanding in the council of this making, no crumbling away in this masterpiece; but an ever living substantial

Elder Brother who sat upon all purity, and fought the enemy of God's children, and came out victorious over death, hell and the grave with no power spent, for he had all power both in heaven and in earth and no one could say, "what doest thou," Jehovah? It was a finished work. From under those rocks was water seeping out clear as a crystal which made a stream I would call a creek. The bed of this stream was covered with pebbles that could be seen as clearly as though there was no water over them. They seemed to be resting in the pure river of life that is pure as crystal. The fountain head of this water was as a spring shut up a fountain sealed for we had no idea where it was. All we could see was just the flowing of it from the rock over the pebbles. This is the great handiwork of God. I hope "He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." At that moment I felt to say O God may I be renewed daily and momentarily by that pure water of life, and may my defenseless head ever be covered with the shadow of thy wing. We returned to the meeting-house by preaching time and were permitted to sit under the dew droppings of Almighty God again. God, by his wonderful working power in all things, brought us safely home to our loved ones. This is the handiwork of God. Seeing these natural things which are the handiwork of God in creation, and hearing the tongues of God's servants speak so sweetly of the divine handiwork of God was a wonderful blending to me. They pointed out to us how the subjects of God's grace are being refreshed and renewed daily by the fountain that was opened up to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. If David's cup had just been full, he alone would have been fed, but thanks be unto God, David's cup runneth over and the inhabitants of Jerusalem could feast too. This is the handiwork of God.

"He carved a mansion bright and fair
Upon a solid Rock.
Engraved the name of every heir
Of Jesus' little flock.

And to the mind he did impart
A painting all His own;
He wrote a law within the heart,
'Twas He and He alone.

Oh, what a blessing 'tis from God
For sinners such as I,
To lean upon the Living Rod,
And drink when they are dry."

(Mrs.) MAGGIE LEE HAYES

Vernon, Ala.

Route 1, Box 23, Castor, La.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am sending my renewal subscription to the *Signs* and enclosing my husband's experience for publication if you think it worthy of space in your paper. I have enjoyed it very much and thought there may be others who would be comforted by reading it. It was written in January of 1944 I believe. An unworthy sister in hope, if one at all.

(Mrs.) J. D. WHITE

Experience of J. D. White

It was in the summer of 1928 that seemingly my props began to be pushed from under me, that is, the plans and ambitions that I had been building up for so long, and thought I could carry out by myself, I began to realize I could not and that there was another power other than man. I began to have trouble and things were beginning to look dark to me. I had to quit a good job that I had been working at for a long time, and then my wife was taken seriously ill and had to stay in bed for about eight months. I had our cooking to do and to wait on her. I had for a long time, ever since I was a small lad, gone through with a form of prayer for things I wanted, but now I was forced to do more of this as my needs seemed so much greater, and I began to feel the need of mercy instead of the things of this world. However, this I am trying to describe was only a beginning. I have always been considered serious

minded since I was twelve or thirteen years of age, and I began to think of joining the church, which I thought I would do at some very public meeting where I would be with a popular crowd and be seen of many. I wanted it to be with a people that were in the upper class. I had joined the Masonic Order and I felt this had raised me considerably higher than the ordinary man. The way was presented for me to attend an Old Baptist Association. I can describe this meeting best by writing what I told my sister coming back from the meeting. I remember the very spot, driving on the road back home, where, using my hand in a gesture and bringing it down on the steering wheel of my car I said, "Lennie, I have always, or for a long time, thought that a person to unite with a church (or go into this sort of work as it is called by so many) should have a change of some sort, and I believe I can see that these people have it." (I did not know it had them.) I went home well satisfied with that part. What hurt me was, I did not believe I would ever see this manifested in the upper class or popular crowd I still wanted to be with. There was though, I believe from then on, a desire within me to be one of those Old Baptists, but I had very little hope as I saw no way. Here was something I could not get. Money that I had made with my hands could not buy it. Though these people were friendly and kind, I saw no evidence, and I felt they made no effort to help such an one as I to get in where they were. Then there was an awful thought that should I get into the joy I saw them manifest just what partaking with them would do to me. I would be a disgrace among my worldly, popular friends, but I began to tell my wife they were the church and to try to uphold them in every way. There was and had been on my part a great effort to do good, and thinking as yet it was by works of the flesh I tried very hard. I began reading the Bible and thought it like a school book to be learned from the first part in order to understand the last. I would not even look over in the New Testament and I had a time trying to understand anything over in the front. One night I had a dream that was very impressive. My grandparents were Old Baptists. Grandfather was a preacher but they had died about a year before in 1927. I dreamed I was lying in grandmother's kitchen with my face toward the floor and a book was in my hand that I thought was the Bible. Grandmother said to me very distinctly, "Mark 10" and may have repeated this the third time but I am not sure about that. In many dreams I have had since then, when I would be caused to cry for mercy, each time that I can remember I would repeat the third time. I told my wife about the dream, and she having read the New Testament said, I would find a book over there by Mark and as it had ten chapters I concluded she meant the 10th chapter when she said Mark 10.. I read the 10th chapter and found to my sorrow I was just like the man who was told "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor," and on down about the parable "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God" where I so desired to be. I felt certain here was a case identical with mine. I thought about selling all I had and going about giving to the poor people, but on second thought I found I could not do that and went on thinking of myself as lost, it seemed it had been shown to me very plainly. I never thought of any one ever having been along where I was with the exception of the man in Mark 10. I then began to be in such misery and so concerned about my condition that in the evening I would wish for morning and when morning came I would wish for evening—at night I would wish for day

and at day I would wish for night. After about three months I dreamed I was in a very low state and on low ground in a swamp near where I lived. I was down on the ground and there were words came out of my mouth that I felt were from my heart. They were "Lord I can stand it no longer." I felt I had not a friend on earth. Immediately after I was caused to utter these words I was standing up as though I had been picked up and was caused to look up. There was a small opening in the leaves of the trees in the swamp and I saw a dove coming down out of the sky. It came straight to me and lit on my head. There was a little flutter and it seemed the dove changed into something like a rubber sack that enclosed me from my head to my feet and seemed to seal up so I could hardly breathe. I then said, "how sweet is Jesus" and woke up. I was then about twenty-five years old and had never had an experience of this kind. I began to feel some better especially after a few weeks. I kept looking and thinking about Mark 10 and found where this later dream had been similar to Mark 1:10. Then I felt hers was a prophecy of what was to come. However, I feel I can see now how it was working for good to me, that I was at first led to believe that she meant the 10th chapter for at that time Mark 1:10 could have been no comfort to me even if I had read it.

I had not been to their meeting any more and began now to want to hear a Primitive preacher preach. I thought if I could just hear one sermon it would be enough for a long time, but I did not want any of my friends to know I had gone to one of these Hardshell meetings, as they called them, so I planned and wife and I went to a distant church where we were not known and where it would not become known that we went. I was disappointed however, for the preacher did not come and there was no preaching so by the next Sunday I had another plan. We would go visit my uncle who went to these meetings and was a member of them. I said to myself we could say we went to visit him and that he wanted to go to meeting (I knew it was their meeting day) then nobody would know it was the meeting I wanted to attend. The preacher came and the sermon was a comfort to me, and I can still remember how good it was to look at Elder G. T. R. Baker who was then about eighty years of age. His sermon was about Joseph, his dreams, etc. I enjoyed it so well I did not seem to care what people thought or would say about us attending. My main concern was, could I be one of them? I now felt that I had a little evidence that I was, but was not satisfied. I wanted more and kept thinking if a little sheep had been lost and starved as long as I had, even if there was a possibility of his being carried into the flock he would look so much smaller and poorer he would not look well even though they did accept him. We did not miss any Sunday meetings from then on until wife and I both became members as we hope of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church. I felt like during this period which was four or five months that if I could know I was one of them I would unite. Finally Elder Baker said something that pretty well satisfied me for the time being. I think it must have been, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Anyway when I went away from that meeting I felt like now I could go ahead and offer myself and feel all right about it, but I had to learn again that I could not even do that. Though my plans were all made I just could not rise up to go and came away from the next meeting with a very strong impression as though the Lord had spoken to me, *you cannot join of yourself,* meaning to me that when the Lord's time came I would join and no sooner. I felt, however, the time could not be long for it did not

seem I could live if I were not carried in. I did not know that Primitive Baptists ever made any provision or had any form of admitting one to their church as I had never been to their Saturday meetings when they had conference. I thought I would have to rise up and tell them in a blunt way that I wanted to unite. No one had ever told me this but I had heard my grandmother speak of other denominations way of getting members and knew it was true, so got the impression that Hardshells never asked or gave opportunity for one to unite with them. I had been asking God, in my mind, to take me in at the next meeting time and to make it easy. I decided or was caused to go this particular time on Saturday, taking my wife and sister with me, and was very thankful that the conference seemed to have been gone into just to make it easy for me. They all seemed to be praying in their heart for me, and after I had asked them for water to moisten my mouth, which seemed dry like cotton, I told them I did not know whether I would be able to say anything or not. I said other things but these first have always been remembered best by me for after I sat down old brother Norman said the first few words satisfied him and they received me.

I do not feel I am able to write these things as I hope they are. This is only the end of a chapter so to speak. I believe these lessons teaching us that God is God and we ourselves can do nothing must be learned over and over. However, I do not have the gift of explaining, but what I have written of my actual travel, if indeed it be travel, I have written without hesitating, realizing though it be not correct as to grammar, it is written the only way I could write, having to leave out some of the things especially of what wife and I talked about during this period. To have put it all in I feel would have made it too long. I cannot say or write about these things to my satisfaction but seem only to touch upon them.

Route 1, Maynardsville, Tenn.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS: As my sixty-eighth birthday draws near I am minded to write you, hoping it is not to be seen of men nor for personal aggrandizement or money, but because of the money (faith in Jesus). I understand all things are of God (no bad things with him) and he is God in heaven, in earth and in all deep places, and is before all things and by him all things consist. I also understand the Bible to be his word given us at his command and is for our instruction as he purposed from all eternity in himself, and is applied to us here in time only. After time is no more we (his children) will be conformed to his glorious image, be like him and see him as he is. For some cause best known to him, I am minded to give my views under heading of the Last Judgment, Matt. 25:31. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, (beauty and grandeur) and all the holy angels (ministers) with him, then shall he sit upon the throne (seat of power) of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: (his children only) and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom (church, not eternal heaven) prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Dear readers, you will notice the King continues by telling the righteous how they had ministered. "Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty and gave thee drink? etc. Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done

it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them (his children) on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting (timely) fire, (his displeasure, torment, etc.)". "Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick in prison, and did not minister unto thee?" "And these shall go away into everlasting (continuous timely) punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." Verse 46. Many may regard this to be after time and not in contrast in the church here in time as I am contending in my weakness and unworthiness which I am now fully persuaded to believe. Our Master is contrasting between the true worship and the false worship here in time. He says, "He will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat (true worship) into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff (false fleshly worship) with unquenchable fire." (his wrath). Again, dear reader, he says, "Think not I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father," etc. etc. Let me say here he hath done all things well. Nothing shall be added thereto or taken therefrom. He doeth it that men should fear before him. The poet says, "Am I his or am I not?" Let me console those the King hath set on his left hand. The storm will soon be o'er. Time will be no longer. If our acts here are considered in his sight I sincerely doubt if we are crowned with a crown of righteousness, much less a single one of us adding a star thereunto. This can never be. Not a one will ever be lost in the glory world that Jesus remembered on Calvary and the Father gave him 'ere time began. Some may say, there were no children for Jesus to save them before time. He says, "I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." Again he says, "He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant forever: holy and reverend is his name."

Must close now and give consideration to space in the highly prized family paper that has stood the storms and tempest for over one hundred years. Not one of us are perfect in this life. Our perfection is in him and him alone. With all due respect and kindest regards to all who may be given a mind different from me, I close with love to all. Yours in hope of immortality.

JOHN E. WALTON

223½ So. 10th St., Mt. Vernon, Ill.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER:

You will find enclosed money-order for $2 to renew my subscription for the *Signs*. I am sorry I have neglected sending it sooner but my husband has been sick. He was taken down with pleurisy and pneumonia Oct. 21 and is just able to be up and walk a little in the house. This kept me quite busy most of the time.

I do enjoy reading the *Signs* and do not want to miss them. I have had a desire to write you for some time although I feel myself too unworthy to attempt it. If I could only tell something that would be a comfort to any one, or could tell some of the things I love so well that come to my mind. It seems I have never been gifted to do that. As I look back over my unprofitable life I see the good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not that I do. I believe in salvation by grace and the one Supreme Ruler in heaven and in earth, and there is none other but God. He is all-wise and I believe God predestinated all things to be fulfilled at his own appointed time and purpose before the foundation of the world. He has all power both in heaven and hell, he speaks and it is steadfast and none can stay his hand. His presence is everywhere at the same time. This world is so very wicked but I believe God has a purpose in that. He says, "I make peace,

and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." Bless his righteous and divine will. Without his love and tender mercy I would give up in despair. "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." Sometimes I find myself so out of the way and how I feast on some of the good writings in the *Signs* and wish I could write sweet tidings as others do. Elder Dodson I want to tell you I surely do enjoy reading your good articles. I read and reread them over and over.

I will say concerning myself I united with the Regular Primitive Baptist Rock Spring Church near Simpson, Johnson Co., Ill., Dec. 23, 1922 where I still have my membership. The old church was founded in 1830 and I hope we are still proclaiming the same faith as when the church was founded—salvation by grace and the sovereignty of God. I have written a longer letter than I intended to for my first attempt to write. I feel to be a very poor writer, but I have a hope of the world beyond this vale of tears where I may dwell with Jesus, be as he is and meet with all of God's children around that great throne where there will be peace forever. Pardon all errors. A very unworthy sister, the least of all if one at all.

(Mrs.) S. S. KERLEY

Benton, Ky.

ELDER DAVID V. SPANGLER, DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD: I would like to tell you what a sermon opened up to my understanding as I read your highly appreciated editorial in last August's number of the *Signs*. When I read "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee" that was as far as I could go for the light of the truth sprang up before me, the knowledge of how we as poor creatures would never cry unto him until we had gone to the end of all earthly strength of our own. Then we cry to him to be delivered from this vain world of sin, and then, and not before then want a drink from that fountain of water that will indeed satisfy and content us for awhile. I could not read farther on until I had seen all it pleased the Lord to show me of the earthly tabernacle, of the earthly walk here, of man and how the Lord does know to strip and rob us of all strength of our own. Then we cry, then we beg and we mourn. We cry because we have no strength to go to him, we beg because something seems to tell us there is power in God to help, we mourn because we feel too little for that God of strength to stoop to such as we are. We mourn our sinful and hateful state of being all along through time after we once view ourselves as nothing and less. We continue examining ourselves, finding nothing in us but all in God. We are hedged about as Job was and made to see how unprofitable we are and how strong God is. "The Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me." Ezekiel saw the likeness of four living creatures and they had the likeness of a man. We hope to have the likeness of the man Christ Jesus who was verily man and also God in the flesh. How we do desire to be in that likeness, knowing that our flesh profiteth us nothing. We have come to the ends of the earth, we have cried unto him. Oh! has he heard that cry and made us gird up our loins and stand as men, or as a man? We cannot answer as a man until God has commanded us to speak, and he will never command us to speak to him until we have come (been brought) to the end of our earth. Then to him we owe it all. To him then we are living creatures and can give him all praise and honor that the Father deserves. We, I hope I am of that number, then are among those who know not the end of their strength, are as the apple tree among the trees of the wood, a tree bearing fruit in the midst of trees that

have not fruit. Then this scripture comes and I wonder do I see in it what there is in it? "Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I am sick of love." Brother Spangler I seem to see a child growing in grace, begging to have knowledge which it is said he will give. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." We want more knowledge of our hope being a hope that is hope. We cry, "Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples" which are fruits. What then? We have been looking for fruits of the Spirit. Wondering has he worked in us patience, kindness, meekness, joy, peace and love which are the fruits of the Spirit. Has he stayed us, settled us, clothed us, given us peace within our turbulent breasts? Is that the time we want more knowledge? Sick of the love or filled with the love which is the sincere milk of the word that all babes in Christ need for growth, but they must also have the meat for strength. I did afterward, after I had seen the kingdom as I hope. No man can see the kingdom unless he is born again. We must be born again and we cannot enter into the kingdom and view its greatness unless born of water and of the Spirit which to me means one thing—made alive in Christ, made a new creature, made to drink of the water of life and made to view as a man the fruits of the Spirit, born of water and Spirit. I hope this does not tire you. Yours in hope.

(Mrs.) EFFIE BOWDEN

Route 1, Clinton, N. C.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: After a long delay I will write you just a little if I can. My hand and arms are so bad I cannot write much as you can see. I have not stood on my feet in five years so just sit in my chair, for some purpose I know not what. I can only say I guess it is right. You ask me to let you hear from me whether I like the *Signs of the Times?* I wish I could explain fully how I like it and why. If I could feel like that it would be enough for me, it means so much to me.

When all get off to church and I stay at home most of the time, I do go sometimes, I can sit and read your paper. It is such as the world knows not of. I have just read an article by one signing his name, R. L. D., I do not know him, yet I feel like I do. He made such wonderful points along the way and brought so much to light. It means much to me to read after such men as he and others that I have enjoyed so well. I hope God will bless you and yours to carry on the good work of his very own. Yes, this paper is your work through the God of heaven as I feel it.

Brother Dodson when I began to write I felt that I could not, but have reached this point and my mind seems to lead me on. It comes to mind concerning works. Yes, I believe in works but not to inherit eternal life. I will mention Eph. 2 down to the 11th verse. There is a lot of works in this but God is doing it all until you are saved by his grace, not of works lest any man should boast. All of this comes to his people, it is all of him and not of ourselves. Then "we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Yes, work out your own salvation, but we have none until God gives it to us.

You will find money-order enclosed to advance my subscription and I will try not to delay again. I want your paper to keep coming to me as long as I can see. May God bless you and yours that you may be able to carry on this great work that means so much to the Lord's people here and there over this land. Will close hoping you will be able to read this. It is the best I can do. One who sometimes feels afar off.

C. J. DAVIS

Box 884, Berkley, W. Va.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: It has been my mind for some time to send my subscription for another year. It seems like it was April when I subscribed for the paper. The Scriptures tell us not to be slothful and it seems I am very slack sometimes concerning these things, but I hope that when I am mindful that it is of the Lord. It is my humble desire to follow that lowly and meek One who took, as it were, our sins and bore them in his own body on the tree to a land of forgetfulness. My lot seems to be like Simon Peter, that if I am blessed at all to follow, that the following is at a great distance. As he followed him to the cross it seems to me that he followed at a distance, but he (Simon Peter) did not fulfill his word, nor could he for it was not possible for him (Jesus) to be in need of any mans help to fulfill that which his Father sent him to do. The prophecy had already spoken concerning him, that he looked and there was none to help. Yes, he trod the winepress alone, and of the people there was none to help so his own arm (power) brought salvation to him. He is the nail that was fastened in a sure place, and if at any time we or any other people think that without this perfect One (Jesus) we can do something, we surely and truly fail to hang all the glory on this nail. No, I cannot see in this covenant any galley with oars, no tough rowing; the power of God moves, is moving and will keep moving the ship for his mercy endureth forever.

Hope all is well with you and family. Remember me to Elder and sister Vaughn. My best regards also to the church everywhere. Remember this unworthy one at the throne of his mercy. Yours in him.

WILLIAM E. BRANCHE

Colquitt, Ga.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD I HUMBLY HOPE: I am sending you $2 to keep my name on your list for the *Signs of the Times*. I do not want to miss a copy as it is the only paper I know that is holding strictly to the Bible doctrine. I indorse it 100 per cent because its contents fill my poor hungry soul to the brim. I am seventy-eight years old and have been serving Old Baptists as best I could for over forty years. My home church is the only one in this section that is holding to the doctrine the *Signs* teaches. I trust it will please the Lord to keep you established in the faith of the Son of God to feed the little flock that Jesus purchased with his own blood. Though I have never seen your face in this world I feel like some sweet day we will meet in the glory world where there will be no more heartaches. A poor sinner saved by the mercies and grace of a holy God.

(Elder) H. A. WADE.

THE LATE ELDER H. C. KER

It is with deep regret we announce the passing of Elder H. C. Ker of Delmar, Del. on February 27th. He was well and favorably known by many of our readers, and was an able minister of our faith for nearly fifty years. Undoubtedly a suitable obituary will appear soon.

R. LESTER DODSON

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Mrs. G. E. Jones, Ia., $3; F. Johnson, W. Va., $1; Mrs. M. Lindsey, Cal., $1; R. D. McGough, Ala., $3; C. A. Groves, Tex., $1; Mrs. S. Vinson, N. C., $1; Mrs. C. E. Tacey, N. J., $3; J. A. Perdue, Va., $1; Mrs. K. Ragan, Tenn., $1; Afriend, Can., $1; Mr. and Mrs. G. T. Jones, Del., $5; Mr. and Mrs. J. Jefferson, Tenn., $1; Mrs. D. Yeisley, Wash., $1; Mrs. E. C. Redman, Ga., $2; Miss V M. Jones, N. Y. $1; Mrs. A. Chandler, Ky., $1; Mrs. E. McHaffie, Tenn., $1; Mrs. S. L. Hutchens, N. Y., $8; Mrs. C. D. Jones, Ida., $1; H. F. Cate, Kans., $2; J. Kirkpatrick, Tex., $1; Mrs. M. Finch, N. Y. $1; A friend, $5; Mrs. L. N. Henry, Miss., $1; Eld. E. B. Ault, Tex., $3.

EDITORIAL

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

"I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH"

Matt. 16:18

Several years ago I heard a minister use this scripture for a text. He stated that Christ had come into the world to lay the foundation for his church. That he had lived, died and rose from the dead to make it possible for his church to be built. After his ascension the work of building was left to others to carry on. In substance he stated that the building of the church was now left to men. His remarks were so inconsistent with his text that I felt a desire to follow him and tell the people they had not heard the truth. It was in a church not of our faith. The most of those present highly endorsed his sermon and commented about what an excellent sermon it was. Later on I spoke where a number of the same people were present and used the same text. I preached that the work of Jesus was a perfect work that he was satisfied with; that the work of building his church would be carried on effectually until the last vessel of mercy, chosen in him before the foundation of the world, was granted repentance, regenerated, preserved by his grace and resurrected in his likeness. At the close of the service several of the same people that had endorsed the former sermon, came to me and stated they had enjoyed the service very much, showing that there was no discerning of difference in doctrine between the two sermons. Surely that is true to-day in the world: little concern is shown in any doctrine by the professing world to-day.

When one makes a statement that he is going to perform some task, or complete any work, the next question to be considered is whether he is able to carry on this work to completion. To complete any work one must have the knowledge to do the work, the materials to work with and the power to carry on the work to completion.

Let us examine and see if Jesus had that power. All power was given to him both in heaven and earth. This was over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as God had given him. John 17. Not any more nor less. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." The winds and the sea obeyed him, he could rebuke the winds and there would be a calm. Through his mighty power those that were born blind could see, the dead were raised, lepers were cleansed, the lame walked and all manner of diseases were healed. Nothing required any effort on his part, he spake with authority. The power of him was so complete that even the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field, together with the fishes were controlled by him. The cock crowed at the very time it was to remind Peter of the word of the Lord, and the same number of times he said it would crow. When his disciples were instructed to cast their hook into the sea and take the money from the mouth of the fish caught, the fish was there, and the ass he instructed them to bring for his journey was found where he told them to look for it. Not only does he have the power to save lost and ruined sinners to build his church, but it was his pleasure to do

so. There was a joy before him in carrying on this work. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God, showing a finished work. Salvation was not wrought grudgingly by our Lord for it was his Father's good pleasure to give his people the kingdom. The love he had for his bride caused him to save them, and having loved them he loved them to the end.

The work was satisfactory to him. Jesus did not die and return to heaven with any question in his mind as to the effectualness of his work. Isaiah, the prophet, could view this work by faith and leave us the prophecy, "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied," also "He shall not fail nor be discouraged."

The prophets in their day beheld the work of Jesus as a finished work and spake of it, though it was yet to be fulfilled, as if it had actually taken place. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Isaiah 9:6-7.

The promise from God to Joseph, by an angel, before his birth was that he shall save his people from their sins. Every promise of the Old Testament was verily the same. To-day every note of the gospel of Jesus speaks of a finished salvation. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." This salvation reaches the vessels of mercy, "according as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." In his own language in John Jesus says, " I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." In the same chapter, John 6, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," yet, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." So the church of God is built up for a habitation of God through the Spirit. None can come to Jesus except they be drawn by the Father. All that the Father giveth him shall come to him, and none of them that come shall in any wise be cast out. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Not only does God build the house, the church, but the same power that builds the house, keeps the city. Jesus, in his last hours on earth, in communication with his Father realized that his hour had come, the hour determined in eternity that he would die, yet it was with that knowledge that he had finished the work he came into the world to do, to save his people from their sins. Surely this is a God-honoring doctrine. If the work of salvation depended, partly on the sinner and partly on the Lord there is a possibility that all men might reject him, heaven be empty and all his suffering in vain. Let us remember that all his works shall praise him, and his saints shall bless him, "Having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." The church of God is not built up-

on Peter or any other man. Jesus says, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." The knowledge of Jesus as the savior of sinners was a revealed matter. "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," Why? Because it is of faith that might be by grace, to the end the promise is sure to all who seed.

D. V. S.

REVELATION 17: 8--13.

Sister Vera Hukill, Rt. 4, Grand Saline, Texas has asked for our views on the above portion of scripture. Our first impulse was to ask one of our Associate Editors to write on it, but a desire seemed to spring up in our heart that God might be pleased to give us some light upon what is contained in this chapter. While our sister asked for information only on the latter part of the chapter, as that appears to be the interpreation of what goes before, and is followed by an account of the triumph of the Lamb, who is here declared to be "Lord of lords, and King of kings," we shall attempt to first state the case and then give the interpretation thereof.

John says there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with him, saying, "Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters." In the fifteenth verse we are told that "The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." They undoubtedly represent all of the peoples of the earth except those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. John then goes on to say that with this woman, "the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication." The kings of the earth evidently signify the powers that be, or those who rule and have great authority in high places; they have been made drunk with the wine (stimulation and influence) of her fornication. John tells us that he was "carried away in the spirit into the wilderness" and there he saw a "woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." This would appear to be particularly descriptive of the church at Rome, and what a description it is! Each one of the names given her is full of meaning. "MYSTERY" as applied to iniquity is second only in greatness to that which is applied to Godliness, neither of which can be fathomed by the finite mind of mankind. "BABYLON THE GREAT" undoubtedly is typical of utter darkness, and great indeed is that darkness which the church of Rome wields over her subjects. Much of what is preached by her priests is clothed in the language of an unknown tongue so far as her masses are concerned, and the power of her influence is no doubt due to the fact she so thoroughly indoctrinates her subjects in their youth that when they grow up they will not depart from it, and her power over them is further strengthened by the fact that in many instances they are forbidden to even read the word of God for themselves, for fear they will not interpret it according to her tenets and teachings. She also enjoins upon them the worshipping of idols of gold, silver, brass, and wood, the images of the virgin Mary and other saints, all of which they seem to have a blind zeal for, and the tentacles of her power are reaching out and influencing the four

corners of earth to such an extent that she must be reckoned with by kings and rulers and potentates of all the nations on the face of the earth.

The last name given to this woman is "THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." What more could be said of her! She is not only the mother of all who are not spiritually virtuous and true, but John said, "And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." This is confirmed by profane history, which shows that her record has often been written with blood, and we greatly fear her history will be repeated if she is permitted to regain the ascendency of civil power sufficiently to enforce her will upon others. We truly hope that this day will never come, but there is every indication to those who will observe what is going on that no effort is being spared by those in authority at Rome to propagate her doctrines and spread them all over the world. Our own land is one of her fertile fields, where they are approximately twenty-five millions strong, and we are persuaded that no stone will be left unturned in an effort to advance their cause and purposes. In December, 1945, four new Cardinals were appointed in the United States, one of whom it is reported is to be groomed for a future Pope. Through its system of unequaled education and its accumulation of financial wealth it has long since become, by far, the most outstanding, ingenious and powerful of all earthly organizations, and it is to-day taking advantage of every conceivable means to advance and enlarge its borders by the use of the radio, movies, press, and many other devices little thought of by the unsuspecting public. If we question the effectiveness of keeping ever before the people at large their cause, let us recall from the pages of sacred history the scheme which Jacob had in his mind when he bargained with Laban for his hire. He agreed to remove all the he goats that were ringstraked, and all the she goats that were speckled, and all the brown among the sheep, which before had been very inferior and poor of quality, and to accept only the ringstraked, speckled, spotted, etc., for his wage in the future. Little did Laban suspect what the final result would prove to be. Jacob then took rods of green poplar, and of the hazel and chestnut tree; and pilled white strakes in them, and made the white appear which was in the rods. "And he set the rods which he had pilled before the flocks in the gutters in the watering troughs when the flocks came to drink." "And the flocks conceived before the rods, and brought forth cattle ringstraked, speckled and spotted." This shows us the effects of the power of suggestion, and we may rest assured that we are marching on to the time when the subjects of Rome, by her ingenius methods, will outnumber all of the rest of the so-called religious orders combined. We have inside information to the effect that Rome is preparing to spend untold millions of dollars to regain her position in Germany, Poland and other countries where she lost ground because of the war. We are told that in the United States alone she has ten thousand students for the order which requires thirteen to fifteen years to educate them sufficiently for their purposes, and that they have already begun to build additional colleges to accomodate their needs. If we did not have implicit faith in our God, who sits upon his eternal throne, to continue to do his will, world without end, we would be greatly disturbed, but this same God in the days long ago inspired the Psalmist to leave on record for our comfort and consolation the following words: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof

roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah."

In the eighteenth verse of this chapter it is recorded that the woman which John saw was "that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." The influence which the church at Rome has over the peoples and nations of the earth to-day is almost inconceivable. This appears to have been shown to John by the angel nearly two thousand years ago. He said to John, "Wherefore didst thou marvel?" and then went on to tell John something of the great mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carried her, which had the seven heads and ten horns. A detailed description of these is given by the angel in the eighth to the thirteenth verses inclusive: "The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast." Rev. 17:8-13. Some of this language may sound strange and we can only offer such thoughts as we have on it. As we see it, the beast of antichrist is here pictured in his fulness and completeness, during both the legal and gospel dispensations. Both the seven heads and ten horns are said to be kings, which represent powers which have and will rule the civilized world in all ages, both before and after the coming of Christ. Five of those kings or powers, representative of the legal period, have fallen and are no more. During the period which intervened from the coming of our Lord in the flesh until the papal system was established, which we understand was about the third or fourth century, antichrist was very much in the world, and there will, perhaps, come a time when the protestant organizations will have their combined head, who will rule for a short season or space of time, but particular reference is made to "the beast that was, and is not, and yet is," who is also said to be "the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition." There is a peculiar sense, it seems to us, in which this description is applicable to papal Rome. Once she ruled the Roman Empire in a civil way, but she was later deprived of this authority, nevertheless she continued to wield her ecclesiastical powers and at the same time she now exercises authority over Vatican City, so that it can truly be said of her "she was, and is not, and yet is." She was not only one of the seven (a perfect number and embracing all of the ecclesiastical powers opposing our Lord) but at the same time she was the eighth or one of the civil powers as well. We are told that the ten kings "which have received no kingdom as yet" (representing the ecclesiastical heads of all other religious organizations) receive power as kings one hour with the beast, or for a short period of time comparatively speaking. Nevertheless, it is declared they all "have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast." At the same time we are told in the sixteenth verse that "these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the

words of God shall be fulfilled." It seems to us that we see here something of the transcendant beauty of God's inscrutible wisdom in having a people who are not reckoned among the nations of the earth, but who rather are despised and looked down upon by the religious world and who, because of God's great love and enduring mercy, shall be preserved and kept while two great opposing forces shall be arrayed against themselves. It is amazingly inexpressible and full of glory to realize how God has so wonderfully planned to have witnesses who will not lie, despite all that there is here in this wicked world to oppose them. Should we not all exclaim, "Hosannah, in the highest:" "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." What safety and security there is underneath the shadow of the all-protecting wing of the Almighty! We do not mean to infer by what we have been saying that the people of God shall not often be disturbed and greatly perplexed, distressed and even persecuted, but the life of the church of God is safe for all time to come, for it was hid with Christ in God before the eternal ages began to roll, and since God is greater than all, none shall ever be able to pluck them out of our heavenly Father's hand. How comforting to have the assurance that the eternal God is our refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. While all who oppose righteousness have one mind, and shall unite in giving their power to the beast and "shall make war with the Lamb," we have blessed assurance that the Lamb shall prevail and overcome them, "for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." It is wonderful to contemplate the many glorious and precious promises contained in Holy Writ where it so plainly sets forth that the Lord's portion is his people, that he will defend and protect them at all cost, and that no weapon that is formed against them shall prosper. One of old said, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord."

In the world we have one thing set over against another. Therefore we have darkness and light, evil and good, hate and love, false and true, and we can but draw a contrast between the woman we have been writing about and the one spoken of in the twelfth chapter of Revelation. There the record is, "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered." This woman typifies the New Jerusalem, and her first born was none other than our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Pages and pages could be devoted to describing her but the half would never be told. This is the woman that was given two wings of a great eagle (we think faith and hope is implied here) "that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent," or indefinitely. Truly, she can say, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want."

While we have spoken quite plainly, we would not desire to be judged by any as being intolerant or vindictive, for such a thing is farthest from our thought. We, above all others, if we know our own heart, desire that liberty and freedom of conscience be the privilege of every man, woman and child to worship God as they see fit. The right to worship God under our own vine and fig tree is a priceless heritage. It has been purchased and is being retained at an infinitely great price, but it is well worth whatever it may cost and we want it safeguarded and preserved down through the ages which are to come. We are persuaded, however, that the sacred truths of the gospel cannot be taught by man, and in support of this we have the record of divine truth

which says "they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." The prophet foretold what should take place in this gospel age when he said, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." We are, therefore, strongly opposed to any compulsion on the part of our fellow citizens to force what is called *religious training in our public schools or elsewhere.* We believe firmly in living decent and honorable lives and in bringing up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, as far as it is humanly possible to do, but when it comes to giving them understanding of the truth as it is in Jesus we are firmly convinced that this is beyond the province of any man. Paul in writing to the Corinthians said "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. 2:14. On the other hand, God is not circumscribed or bound in any way whatsoever and is able to teach the infant in his mother's womb, as he did John the Baptist, and cause him to leap for joy, and neither is any one ever too old to be taught by the Lord. Therefore we must insist that everyone should be fully persuaded in his own mind with regard to these matters. We advocate a careful and prayerful study of the literal word of God, the Holy Bible, by all, believing as we do that what is termed as *higher education* is incomplete without a literal knowledge of the written word of God, and if our educational authorities would confine their teaching to the letter of the word, we would have no objection, but there is such a great temptation on the part of those who teach the letter of the word to inject their own individual ideas and theories of the spiritual import of the Bible into any instruction that might be undertaken that we are fearful of what the final result might be. Apropo to what has just been said, we have before us the New York Times of February 9th, from which we shall take the liberty of quoting briefly. In connection with some of the changes which have been made by the Committee of Biblical Scholars, in their translations forming what will be known as the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, which Committee was composed of men representing some of our most outstanding Universities and Theological Seminaries, in a very prominent place on the first page of the paper it says, "The new version differs markedly in form and content from the familiar King James Version, although the translators say that none of the changes affects any major doctrine of the Christian faith." From the quotations which we will make our readers can draw their own conclusion as to how seriously the changes affect what would seem to us very major portions of doctrine. First, it is said, "The final verse of the Lord's Prayer, 'For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.' is eliminated from the text of the sixth chapter of Matthew, and placed in a footnote, apparently on the ground that the manuscript authority for it is doubtful. 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men,' (Luke 2:14) becomes 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased,' with the older version in a footnote. The 'mote that is in thy brother's eye' becomes a 'speck' in the new translation; the Widow's 'mite' is rendered as a copper coin; the 'savour' of the salt becomes its 'taste'; in the account of Jesus' death the phrase 'gave up the ghost' becomes 'gave up His spirit,' and the injunction, Mark 16:16, 'he that believeth not shall be damned,' becomes 'he who does not believe will be con-

demned." Second, under the caption *Three Passages Shifted,* the Times account says: "Three longer and very important passages have been taken bodily out of the revised text and given only as a note in italics, this on the ground that manuscript authority is something less than adequate. The first of the italicized passages is the final ascription in the Lord's Prayer: 'For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.' Matthew 6:13." This indicates that they would deprive God of his kingdom and power and glory. If such a thing could be done, what would there be left? Paul said, "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." 1 Cor. 3: 18-19. If *higher learning* is going to give us such sugar-coated pills as these and then try to palliate our spiritual sensibilities by saying they are not major parts of the Christian's religion, may it please God to deliver us from all such. Here again, however, we take great comfort in the knowledge that our God is sovereign over all and has fixed the bounds of every creature. His wisdom and purpose has embraced all of the organizations of men, and beyond the bounds which he has fixed they cannot go, and ultimately every knee shall be made to bow and confess that he is Lord of all, God, blessed, forevermore.

We have good friends among the various faiths and orders about us, and rather than offend them unnecesarily we would give our very life if thereby we could open their eyes to the truth. We know we cannot do this and realizing our accountability to God, when our views on the Holy Scriptures are requested we must, as we see it, present the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, whether men hear or forbear, to the end that the name of our God only shall be praised. —R. L. D.

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Whereas, God saw fit to take from us one of our oldest and most highly esteemed members, therefore be it

Resolved, that the following obituary be incorporated in a resolution of respect by New Hope Church: MARY ELIZABETH LEWIS RATELIFF was born Dec. 12, 1869, and was married to J. G. Rateliff Dec. 22, 1886. Thirteen children were born to this union. She became a member of this church (New Hope Primitive Baptist of Christ, near Hope, Arkansas) the first Sunday in August 1913, and was baptized by Elder J. H. Daniels. She died Nov. 19, 1944. Funeral was conducted by Elder E. J. Lambert. She is survived by her husband, brother J. G. Rateliff, and ten children. She was loyal to her husband, family, church and friends, and was loved and respected by all who knew her. Be it further

Resolved, that we bow in humble submission to God's will, and that a copy of this be spread on our church record, a copy be given brother J. G. Rateliff, and a copy be mailed to *Signs of the Times* for publication. This ordered in regular conference of New Hope Church.

(Elder) E. J. LAMBERT, Moderator
W. S. GORDON, Church Clerk

JAMES RUFUS JOHNSON of Union County, Tenn. was born Nov. 5, 1874, and died Dec. 10, 1945. In 1903 he married Miss Lucy Carroll of Union Co., Tenn., and to this union were born seven children of which six survive. S. A. Johnson, Harley, Halsey and Conrad of Andersonville, Tenn., Ralph of Oak Ridge, Tenn., and Mrs. Clara Butcher of Heishell, Tenn. Also one sister, Mrs. Ellen Myers, of Knoxville, Tenn. and seven grandchildren. Brother Johnson professed faith in Christ many years ago and united with the church at Hinds Creek. He was clerk of this church for many years until it became extinct about 1915. He then united with the same people at Union Church in the Powell's Valley Association of Primitive Baptists and lived and died in this faith. Sister Johnson preceded him in death in 1922. Brother Johnson was stricken with asthma and bore his suffering with a view that "My Jesus hath done all things well." He was a firm believer in a sovereign God in all things.

We sorrow not as those that have no hope, believing our loss will be his eternal gain. The church has lost a faithful member, the family a dear father and the circle of friends a dear friend. May God comfort all who mourn. Written and compiled by a brother by special request.

JOHN E. WALTON

OBITUARIES

Mrs. SALLIE SHAFFER, highly esteemed and beloved sister of Mt. Pleasant Church, Graves Co., Ky. fell asleep in the Lord, June 27, 1945. She was born July 4, 1886, and was married April 24, 1907 to Emmit E. Shaffer. To this union three children were born, Mrs. Robbie Bearden, Mrs. Alma Richards and Garland Shaffer. She leaves her broken hearted husband, six grandchildren, one sister, one brother and a host of relatives and friends. She united with the Old School Baptist Church in Sept. 1915, and if a dear sister could be called a pillar in the church she could. Your unworthy brother, who is writing this was the moderator of that church twenty years, and the home of this dear sister and her husband was open at all times to those of like precious faith. I spent many happy moments in their home. Oh, how she will be missed at the church and around the family home, but God knows best and what-ever he does is ever best.

Elder Paul Poyner, her present moderator, conducted her funeral service. Sister Sallie was conscious to the end, but reconciled to go and died in her dear companions arms. She was laid to rest in the family plot to await the resurrection morn. The last time I saw her she asked me to sing her favorite song which I did. (Prepare me gracious God to stand before thy face.) She then said, "I hope to see Jesus, be like him and be as he is. Then I will be satisfied." Peace to her memory.

"Behold the pilgrim as she lies
With glory in her view;
To heaven she lifts her longing eyes,
And bids the world adieu."

Written by request by one who dearly loved her as a sister and mother of Israel.

(Elder) C. O. KERLEY

The church at Newport, N. C. desires to express its feeling of sadness at the loss of our dear sister, LULU I. GARNER, who was born July 28, 1875, and died Oct. 19, 1945, making her stay on earth 70 years, 2 months and 21 days. She was married to brother A. A. Garner July 1, 1891. She leaves to mourn their loss her husband and eight children: Mrs. Charlie Gould of Newport, W. L. Garner of New Bern, Mrs. Barney Garner of New Bern, Mrs. John Lockey of Morehead City with whom she made her home, Mrs. George Simmons of Rehms, Freddie Garner of New Bern, Mrs. Leslie Saunders of Morehead City and Sam Garner of Newport. She also leaves two brothers and three sisters: Brother I. S. Garner of Newport, sister E. F. Pollard, Jacksonville, sister I. F. Prescott, Wilmington, sister Lona Bell, Newport, brother Lloyd Garner, Newport and a host of other relatives and friends.

She united with the church May 31, 1913 and was baptized the next day by Elder Isaac Jones, living a faithful and devoted member until death, always filling her seat unless providentially hindered. She enjoyed visiting among the churches, and so much enjoyed having the brethren and sisters visit in her home.

Her funeral was conducted at the graveside in the David B. Garner Cemetery at Newport by her pastor, Elder R. W. Gurganus, assisted by Elders E. F. Pollard and Elder L. L. Yapp. Her body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the resurrection. We shall ever cherish her memory as near and dear to us. We shall miss sister Garner, even though we believe our loss is her eternal gain. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Therefore, be it

Resolved, that the church at Newport has lost a faithful member, her companion a loving wife and her children a devoted mother. We extend our love and sympathy to the bereaved ones, trust-in that the God of all grace may comfort and sustain them in every trial.

Resolved, that we bow in humble submission to God who doeth all things well.

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be recorded on our church book, one sent to the family and one to each of the following for publication, Zion's Landmark, Old Faith Contender and Signs of the Times.

Done by order of the church in conference, Saturday, Dec. 15, 1945.

(Elder) R. W. GURGANUS, Moderator

Committee:

Brother W. R. Mann, Clerk
Sister Lona Bell
Sister Annie Higgins

Sister ROSA L. TILGHMAN MORRIS was born July 24, 1856, and departed this life March 25, 1945 at her home in Salisbury, Md. She lived to a useful, ripe old age, 88 years, 8 months and one day and was only confined to her bed one week, but had been failing in health for more than a year. She was survived by three children, eight grandchildren, and ten great-grandchildren.

She united with the Nassaongo Church June 29, 1897 and was baptized by the late Elder T. M. Poulson. After the death of her husband, Deacon Robert Morris, in 1913 she moved her membership to the Salisbury Church, being dis-

missed by letter from the Nassaongo Church Sept. 26, 1915. Her funeral was held at the Hill and Johnson Funeral Home, March 27, 1945, conducted by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler of Danville, Va. who spoke comfortingly to the family and the many friends, relatives and members who were gathered to pay their last tribute to such a wonderful mother, faithful member, a tried and true friend. She was a bulwark of faithfulness and honesty, one to whom we looked for guidance and counsel. We of the church shall surely miss her smiling face as she was always present at meetings unless she was sick.

May the Lord comfort and sustain her bereaved family and give us all reconciling grace to his divine will.

(Mrs.) Maud T. Laws, Church Clerk.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Southhampton Old School Baptist Church, Southampton, Pa., Tuesday and Wednesday, May 28 and 29, 1946. Services will commence at 10 a. m. Tuesday. Our ministers, brethren and friends are cordially invited. Trains will be met at Southhampton Monday p. m. and Tuesday a. m. Those arriving by automobile go directly to the meetinghouse or to my home adjacent thereto.

CASPER G. FETTER, Church Clerk

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sundays in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y. at 10:30 a.m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed. R. LESTER DODSON

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each 1st Sunday, 11:00 a. m. and Saturday before.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday.
AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a. m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopewell Church, Ozark Ala., meets each 4th Sunday, 11 a. m. J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock. Meeting place at Alder St. at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, 11 a. m. Elders J. J. Collins and J. S. Bass, Pastors.
J. J. COLLINS

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Beulah Primitve Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canda, California.

Bethel Church near Stockton, Cal. meets first and third Sundays in each month and Saturday nights before. For further information write SETH BYNUM, R 3, Box 800 G, Stockton, Cal. or LEONA TUTTLE, 1940 N. Center St., Stockton, Cal.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st **Sunday, north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.**
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets every second Sunday at 5th and E. Park St.

B. O. JEFFREYS, Pastor
Weiser, Idaho

Pleasant Valley Church, Kingman, Kansas, meets **each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc.)**
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. C. H. EVANS, Pastor

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a. m. in the meeting-house. Pastor in regular attendance except first Sundays. C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays 10:30 A.M., 2 P.M.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY
Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue. Take elevator to second floor.
11.00 a. m. 1:30 p. m.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.
(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.
C. W. BOND, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 a. m.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor
C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.
W O. WAMMACK, Pastor.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. G. E. Rushing, co-pastor.
C. B. TEAGUE, Pastor.

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets third Sunday in each month at 11:00 a. m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Old School Baptist meetings are held every fourth Sunday at Civic Club, 1419 N. Shepherd St., Houston, Texas. Preaching by Elder W. O. Beene.
(Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dilworth Ranch school house. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Danville Primitve Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before. Bradley Road, Danville, Va.
W. R. DODD, Pastor.

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meet each first Sunday 11 a.m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3032 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va. R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.
R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m. C. M. FISHER.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 114 RUTHERFORD, N. J., MAY, 1946 No. 5

GOD'S EVERLASTING LOVE

When the moon in all its glory
Cast its brilliance o'er the earth;
Then I thought of Jesus, Savior,
And about His humble birth.

Soon I saw Him in a manger,
Glory shining all around;
By a heavenly host surrounded,
Shouting, glory to His name!

Then I saw Him, meek and lowly
Walk the earth in grief and shame;
All to save poor, wretched sinners,
Who will ever praise His name.

Next He bows inside a garden,
Sweat, like drops of blood run down;
All the earth about Him silent
As he kneels upon the ground.

As He prays in solem anguish
For the cup to pass away,
Yet He knows that he must drink it
To prepare the glorious way.

Then upon the scene most softly
Came an angel, dressed in white;
Touched Him gently, said, "Look upward,
Soon the darkness will be light."

Then the scenes of darkness changes,
Darkness breaks, the light appears;
Heaven opens to receive Him,
Never more to bow in tears.

Now the Son of God in glory,
Dressed in robes as white as snow;
All his triumph over Satan
Fills the place of His abode.

He appears in heaven for sinners
Who were purchased with His blood;
All His intercession for them
Is because His life was love.

Then dear God may all His suffering,
Guide me on the heavenly road;
May I never, never murmur
As I think about my God.

Though my soul is oft in sorrow,
Soon these things shall pass away;
Sickness, sin and all my trials
Will be o'er in that great day.

Then my garments will be spotless
As I gaze upon His face;
I shall need the moon, no never
For the sun will take its place.

Soon His children all shall meet Him,
May His love be all their guide;
May His grace and tender mercy
Land them all on heaven's side.

Danville, Va. (Elder) D. V. SPANGLER

CORRESPONDENCE

THE DYING THIEVES

We are told in the Scriptures that Christ was crucified between two thieves, and in this fulfilled the scripture that, "He was numbered with the transgressors." His death brought redemption to all his people, also fulfilling the scripture, "With his stripes we are healed." In all the generations since that time in the preaching of the gospel, man has tried, more or less, to make this great sacrifice in its effects available to all who will accept it. Can any of God's saints who have tasted of his judgments, and also felt his extended mercy in bringing them into the joys of a blessed hope of immortality, have so low regard for his

attributes; and the redemption wrought by the crucifixion of Christ to have accomplished merely a condition by which an offer could be made dependent entirely on the acceptance of any one? It is not in the province of the wisdom of any intelligent person to make so great sacrifice without some assurance of certain results. The God of heaven is as far above man in his works and ways as the heavens are above the earth. When one attempts to judge his ways by human standards he will not be worshipping the God of heaven. God had a purpose in sending his Son into the world, and Christ fulfilled this purpose in his death on the cross; and declared this purpose to be the redemption of his people, "that of all which he (the Father) hath given me I should lose nothing." Who are to make up this great elect family is known only to God and his Son, "Having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Christ said, "By their fruits ye shall know them." God knows them before they produce their fruits of righteousness, or we might more properly say, he foreknew them from the beginning, and in his time they are manifested by being born of the Spirit and begin to produce the works of righteousness. It is impossible for persons who are not thus born again to produce fruits of righteousness, and likewise those born again produce these fruits even beyond their consciousness that they are doing so. One of the best demonstrations of this truth is found in the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. In the midst of his murderous journey to Damascus the Lord spoke unto him. He at once asked, "Who art thou, Lord?" Here is evidence that when the Lord speaks, he is sure to be heard, although it may be to a rebellious sinner, a dead Lazarus or even to the winds and waves of the sea. How different is this to the commonly accepted exhortations we hear, warning dead sinners to heed his pleadings and open the door of their hearts before he turns and leaves them to their doom. Such exhortations do not honor and exalt the name and power of our Lord and Master. When the answer came to Saul that it was Jesus, he answered, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" With the word of Jesus goes life and life produces activity. The first evidence of this is belief or faith, and faith is the gift of God and is the evidence by which we believe. I often wonder where a man's faith stands in the sight of God, who is continually admonishing dead sinners to just believe in Christ and his salvation will be theirs. In the absence of evidence it is impossible to believe anything. How foolish it is to lower the standard and application of the word of God below the level of ordinary truth as applied to natural things, in order to place salvation and eternal life in the reach of every person. Such the religious teachers of the world are doing; but the ministers of truth should not fail to honor and exalt their high calling by exposing such low and God-dishonoring doctrine. This is done by preaching the evidences the work of grace produces in the hearts of sinful men. John the Baptist did not receive the Pharisees and Sadducees unto his baptism of repentance but asked, who had warned them to flee the wrath to come; and they must bring forth fruits meet for repentance. They were not deceiving God by their confessions and outward show of righteousness, neither do the self-righteous of this generation. When the work of grace is being exercised in the heart of a sinner it produces these fruits, and they are different from fruits produced by any other means. They are lasting in their effects and continue to grow into the full fruition of the Christian's hope which is an anchor of the soul and entereth into that within the veil. These are mysteries hidden from the wisdom of this world, but are made plain to the heirs of salvation and interpreted by the Scriptures.

One of the simplest and best of these illustrations is the prayers of the two dying thieves. At the crucifixion there was a vast crowd; some weeping followers of Christ, the simple and curious of the population, the soldiers and revilers, performing their willing parts in bringing to death the hated Son of God, all working willingly and to the limit of their ability to produce the very thing which God had determined before to be done. Every insult and reproach that could be brought to a dying man was here produced to the humiliation of Jesus Christ. The Scriptures say that the two thieves also reviled him as recorded by Mark, but Luke gives the most complete account. One of them railed on him and said, "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." The other rebuked him and said, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss." Then to Christ, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." These two men were at that time suffering physical pain that is impossible to be imagined suspended on the cross from nails driven through hands and feet, and thus suffering this torture until it should be relieved by the sure death at the end, lasting more than three hours. We can be assured that men in such condemnation and suffering will pray and seek out any source of relief possible. Such they did and their prayers are left on record for the saints of God to prove the vital link in the chain of salvation. Both of these men were equally guilty before the law, both were suffering the same condemnation, both knew that there could be no escape except that Christ could procure it, and we must conclude that both prayed with all the earnestness in their power. The prayer of the first was for temporal relief, prompted by physical suffering without any knowledge of the divinity of Jesus, and with no remorse for the wicked deeds of his previous life, and that too, based on the doubtful assumption that, "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." If earnestness makes prayers effective we have it here. Faith is also required in order to pray acceptably and that is lacking here. "If thou be Christ" shows this: his petition was based on an assumed fact, or a sort of hearsay information, the truth of which he had no personal knowledge. This interprets for us the results of all religious activity that is continually set forth by the zealous teachers in offering salvation to every person upon the condition that they accept it. The godly sorrow which worketh repentance is not produced voluntarily in the human heart. The conviction of sin, or the knowledge by which one knows and feels their sinfulness is God's work, and cannot be produced by human means, education or persuasion. Neither can the earnestness by which persons may be aroused to desire anything outside of the work of grace be effective.

Now let us consider the prayer of the second. For some reason hidden from mortal wisdom there was a great difference in these two men. This one felt the burden of guilt for all his former deeds of wrong to the extent that he confessed the justice of his sufferings. In his reproof he said, we are in the same condemnation and justly, but this man hath done nothing amiss. This also shows that he recognized in Christ, complete innocence, and the divinity into a kingdom beyond this life, and knowing this he asked to be remembered in this kingdom Christ was coming into. Then follows the sweetest assurance that mortal man can ever receive in the midst of his most destructive tribulations, and facing sure death; "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Some call this a sort of death bed confession, and acceptance of the salvation wrought by Christ, and generally accompanied by a warning that it is a

dangerous thing to wait until the dying hour to repent and make peace with God. No one who knows the judgements of God, and has tasted the precious gift of his grace and mercy will advise any one to wait, for these are evidences that salvation has come unto them, fulfilling to them the scripture, "Behold, now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation." Be obedient to this heavenly vision and seek to know more of the truth which shall make you free from all carnal knowledge and superstition on which false religion is based. The difference between these two dying men was the new life born in the second that was not in the first. We believe that both acted and petitioned from the best impulses they knew and there was no deceit in either request Once when these two characters were presented in a gospel discourse, a minister of the conditional doctrine commenting afterward said the first thief could have prayed as good a prayer as the second and received as good an answer if he would, that one was as good as the other, and they freely chose to act as they did. Reader, what do you think of such a statement? It appears to us that this minister knew nothing of the effects of the discriminating grace of God or the new birth, and did not discern the truth of Christ's statement that, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him," or, "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing."

In the death of these two thieves the sovereignty of God and the election of grace is plainly set forth.* The lives of both had been passed in wickedness. We see the evidence of the work of grace in the one who asked to be remembered in Christ's kingdom, while the other does not show any knowledge of such a kingdom. God in his sovereignty chooses one and makes witness of him to testify to this new and quickened life in him that had been hidden from him all through his wicked acts before; the other was left as he was, in nature's ignorance and darkness. The common religious spirit is prone to judge these two, that one was saved and the other lost. None of God's saints have any authority to so judge, nor can any minister of religious truths judge who is of God's elect family and who is not. We often hear in funeral discourses the dead either commended for good acts as children of God, or if wicked, condemned as lost and their lives made examples of warning toward better living. We believe it is the duty of all good people both by example and precept to strive for honest and upright living among our associates, but while doing this let us not get so exalted and self-righteous that we condemn any one to eternal punishment because of their wicked lives. God is the judge, he is also the giver of life, and no heart is too wicked or hard for his glorious light to penetrate, and when it shines in this human depravity and darkness it is a quickening into life for his exalting praise. Let no one think that the thief that did not pray the prayer of faith at that time is among the lost. The one that did pray acceptably may not have known of the blessing he asked an hour before, and the sovereign power which revealed this to him could also in an instant reveal the same to the one who did not know it at that time.

These things are written for our learning and to prove that salvation is of the Lord, and that no time, place or condition is beyond the reach of his exalted power and wisdom. I recall an incident of my early life illustrative of man's exalted wickedness rebelling against the powers of God. An old man of our community noted for his infidelity and outspoken stand against all religious sentiment and belief in God or a Supreme Be-

ing, denying that such existed and with all the strength and the profanity at his command permitted, he seemed to take pride in magnifying his opposition to the existence of a God; yet this man in his dealings with his fellowman was as reliable and honest as could be found anywhere. On one occasion during an electric storm when the lightning flashed and the keen and rending thunders seemed bent on the destruction of everything, this man stood up against it with all his profanity, cursing every flash and assuming such opposition in this powerful demonstration of the forces of nature, that all company present near him hurried away, fearing the wrath of God would be visited upon him. He boasted that there was no God and seemed to delight in these strong demonstrations of his infidelity as a sort of derision to those who did believe. He lived to a ripe old age and came down to his death with a short but painful sickness. One night while enduring the severe suffering he cried out "O Lord have mercy," then realizing what he said, he added, "what a fool I was to say that." We relate this incident to illustrate the folly of man when he delights to stand opposed to the wisdom and works of God; also to show that the soul in its anguish will cry for mercy, while the natural mind remains unconvinced. We believe this was a prayer which any mortal must utter under the power of God. Such was the prayer of the publican who smote on his breast and said, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Can any one say that this man with a lifetime of boasted wickedness was too hard for the salvation of God, or that God would not be exalted more in his salvation than in those more self-righteous? A thief is one who takes and uses the property of another without his consent or compensation. In this sense all mankind are thieves before God, in that they appropriate the riches of his providence to their use without thankfulness or recognizing them as blessings from the divine hand; and often in the abundance of such blessings do not even know the source of them, but discern as a matter of fact that they have attained them by their own efforts. This man-produced religion is no less of this variety than are crops and other ordinary wealth. We have known farmers who have been blessed with abundant wheat crops, but when it was made difficult to harvest, being tangled by a storm, would curse such a crop. Is not that stealing from the Bountiful Giver, the thanksgiving due him, and profaning his name because he did not cast it as an easy gift into their unthankful possession? Thus the spirit of the prayer of the first thief is demonstrated in the workings of the ordinary affairs of life, and his request is that of all unregenerate mankind. There is another and more blessed spirit shown in the second thief, and that typifies the elect family of God; the way they existed in nature being the same as that of the first, that is, before they were made alive to the new and better relationship to God, at that time being "the children of wrath, even as others." Now God's judgements are made known to them and they confess, "If my soul were sent to hell, His righteous law approves it well." And as they face a sure and just death on this terrible cross with feet nailed to it, which represents God's justice, so they cannot go to a more secure place; and hands made fast by the same thus preventing all available works of relief, in agony of soul they see by a divine light one hanging by their side in the same condemnation, but for the sins of others; willingly becoming the sacrifice to atone for all his elect people. I have often looked on this blessed character from my own cross of anguish, and felt his redeeming grace and divine light shining through my darkness, revealing his kingdom, and above all my

sorrows, past sins and present helplessness, desiring to be remembered there; and I have received the blessed assurance that I shall be there with him in the paradise of God. Dear dying saints of God, this atonement is made for you, his promise cannot fail, his endless life secures it. You have an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away reserved in heaven for you, where Jesus our Redeemer and Elder Brother has entered for us. Mansions of glory are prepared there, and he has promised to come again and receive us unto himself, that where he is, we may be also. And there is a crown of righteousness which is laid up for us, and beautiful robes of righteousness which he wrought by his own death, which shall adorn all his saints throughout an endless eternity. The faith which is the gift of God reveals these things to his elect children and all the praise is due him. Like Paul we can be assured that the trials and afflictions of this present life cannot be compared with the glories which shall be bestowed upon us in that kingdom which is ahead. As we have suffered with him we shall also reign with him. "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

(Elder) C. W. BOND

"JUDGE NOT, THAT YE BE NOT JUDGED"

From the earliest times that I recall, this scripture has held me in the deepest awe, and I have often wondered if others of God's little ones regarded it as I do. The language is that of Jesus and was used by him in the greatest sermon ever delivered on earth—a sermon in which the Immaculate Lamb of God took his disciples away from the transitory things of this world up into a mountain, notice it is up into a mountain, and that when he was set or placed in a peculiar attitude his disciples came unto him. Remember he was set in that particular position and that it was none other than Jesus himself and that only disciples came to him. No one else, a thousand times no, only disciples that came to him and he taught them—just disciples remember—saying, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." Can disciples be judged? Evidently so or Jesus would not have admonished his disciples in that greatest of all sermons not to judge. Does he have disciples to-day and are they guilty of judging? If so where? Far be it from us to judge the intents and acts of our brethren. Most truly none of us on earth are perfect. Up yonder we shall be heirs and joint heirs with Jesus around the dazzling throne of God, but here we have our crosses to bear, our criticisms to undergo. Will it not be joy, marvelous joy, when we shall lay our armor by and lie down to pleasant dreams? Too often I fear brethren see in their ideas tiny motes in the eyes of others and utterly fail to observe the beam in their own eye. I would to God that we might have a forgiving spirit to discern the acts and intents of our brethren. May we think constantly of Jesus' admonition to his disciples. When troubles arise, as they surely will, may we remember that Jesus said, "Love thy neighbor as thyself," and may we remember whom he said our neighbor was. Truly I believe that we should bear one anothers burdens and so fulfill the royal law. Let us constantly look to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. Without Jesus I am nothing. Truly he guides me through the deep waters; most assuredly I am kept as the apple of his eye; I am nothing but a failure all the while; stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples of gold in pictures of silver; lead me to the banqueting house; prepare me for the wonderful balm of Gilead; be my guide, my help, my all and may he share this wondrous love with all the household of faith. Yes, Jesus is everything, then judgment begins at the house of God and is truly

spiritual. If my people judge they will judge righteously. Are they doing that to-day? Are they judging righteously when we see so many big ones trampling down the little saints, scattering the sheep? Remember they only scatter the sheep and the hireling fleeth. The wolf catcheth them and scattereth the sheep. Is the wolf talented for his job? Is he one of the stars held in the hand of Jesus? I certainly do not think so. Jesus says through Jeremiah, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Does Jesus have a people in every race, kindred and tongue? Will he gather them together even after the hireling has fled? Is the hireling one of the stars held in the hand of Jesus? Who would dare say so? If neither the wolf nor the hireling is one of the stars held in Jesus' precious hand, most certainly we have many false prophets who are gone out into the world seeking whom they may devour, but rest assured, dear brethren, they will not catch one of the sheep Jesus cares for. He goeth before them and no stranger will they follow. I know my sheep and am known of mine. Greater love hath no man than this that he lay down his life for the sheep. Jesus did this—a perfect love, a marvelous love. John says, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." That will be joy untold to see Jesus and be like him. That is life eternal, to know Jesus and be satisfied. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." If you know Jesus you have life eternal. I hope, dear friend, that you do.If you know Jesus you are one of those who can judge righteously. You are one of those that Jesus was addressing when he said, "If my people judge they will judge righteously." You are one of his disciples. You are one of those unto whom the welcome plaudit will surely come: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." You are one of those whom John saw coming up out of great tribulation, having washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb; you are one of those whom the same writer saw as a constituent member of the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven; you are a possessor of the hidden wisdom revealed unto every babe in Christ. You then shall be capable of judging righteously; you then shall be prepared to say, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come."

Truly brother, without his revealing love we cannot judge his people. We cannot know spiritual things. This wondrous love caused me, five years ago, to accept the pastoral care of a church that had not had services for some twenty years, and labor lovingly with them and, thank God, labor peacefully. During all these years peace has prevailed. This same love, three years ago, caused me to accept the pastoral care of another small church, and to see many improvements made upon its building and wondrous peace to prevail in all our deliberations there. Again, a year ago, for the same cause I accepted a call to another church which was dilapidated and having no service. Since that time a new building has been erected and in all three churches true fellowship exists, harmony abides and regular meetings are held. Although all these churches are among the smallest in the country, I am content to dwell in the tents of peace, and rest safe and secure in the arms of Jesus. We can say with David "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the

still waters. He restoreth my soul." Surely he is all there is. Yes, brethren, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." May we be blessed to walk in the paths of peace. May we have our little meetings with the Lord present, and may we be permitted to meet and mingle with the saints from every race, kindred and tongue. Let brotherly love continue, abide in peace, pray without ceasing, watch over each other for good. Remove not the ancient landmarks, follow after charity and desire spiritual gifts. Grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. "Judge not, that ye be not judged." Yours in bonds.

(Elder) J. J. COLLINS

Geneva, Ala.

ORDER and DISORDER CHURCH SOVEREIGNTY

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." 1 Cor. 13:13. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." 1 Cor. 12:27. Please read the entire chapters, 12 and 13, of 1 Cor. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Isa. 9: 6-7. "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Mat. 16:18-19. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Psalms 127:1. The above quotations of scriptures are adequate to establish the origin, building, keeping, safety and government of the church of God; but in order that I be more fully understood, let me here say that the Scriptures authorize the humble, childlike acknowledgement, that Christ Jesus the Lord is the glorious husband and head of the church, which is his body, the fulness of him who filleth all in all.

Now as to the subject before me, let me here say that I realize it is a subject that in itself is inexhaustible. A subject on which able pens have been wielded through the ages past, in an humble endeavor to bring forth the light of divine truth on the matter; a subject in the which, without divine guidance, without divine revelation all our best efforts would be in vain. We now confess our human frailty and weakness, our utter insignificance, our helplessness and our entire dependence on Israel's God, on him whose thunders shake creation. He who bids the planets roll, around him are ten thousand angels, and his scepter sways the whole. And, too, I wish to say that I do not feel to be any authority on the subject at hand; neither do I wish to present my views for the sake or desire for argument, or to intrude or encroach upon the premises of others, but for some cause I have felt the burden or weight of desire to present some of my weak views or meditations, first on what the church is, her sovereignty, government, etc.

It seems perfectly evident to me from my own feeble searching of the Scriptures, and from what my God has given me to taste by divine revelation, that the church of God is portrayed in the Scrip-

tures in various types, figures, and may we say pen pictures, both relative to her state as we might express it, her militant state or her state of existence in time and finally her glorified state as the church triumphant. It is hardly necessary to say here, that to us the Scriptures abound with holy authority that the church is builded upon the Rock (Christ or experimental revelation or living faith in Christ) which alone is wrought of God in the hearts of his trembling and undeserving children, and is the direct work of the Holy Spirit of God, without and independent of creature help; hence this, the church, being builded upon this eternal Rock of Ages is the direct work of the Master Builder, even Jesus. We believe, according to the Scriptures, that the church in time is made up of baptized believers, baptized upon a profession of faith in Christ; and the church now in this dark and cloudy day has been so miraculously preserved by her husband and head until it can yet be said of her that her line or chain of existence dates back to the days of Christ and the apostles in a direct line of existence. Enough has been said to establish my position on this point, although perhaps I have only made this point in the letter.

Now I wish to notice very hurriedly some scriptural figures of the church in time, clothed in humanity, or that is, with the visible marks of sin and imperfection. The first one to ask you to ponder is that figure of Eve and her susceptibility to hearken to the beguiling of the serpent. (Gen. 3:13) Then go with me to Isaac's wife, Rebekah. Notice she took a veil and covered herself when she saw Isaac in the field at eventide; the veil portraying the veil of the flesh (imperfections in the flesh). (Gen. 24: 62-65). Again notice with me the wife of Job, how that she recommended the remedy to end the suffering of Job, all of which when viewed in the light of divine revelation, is a beautiful figure of the church encumbered with the flesh. Again in Ezekial 16:1-14 you find the church portrayed in filth, polluted in her own blood, her birth and nativity described. Remember the Samaritan woman at the well, connected with the saying of Jesus, it needs be that I go through Samaria; the woman brought before Jesus, taken in the very act of adultery; the Lord's parables of the kingdom of heaven (the church); the ten virgins, five wise and five foolish; of the cleansing of the ten lepers, only one of which returned to give glory to God. Space forbids me to mention more of the gracious figures of the Lord's chosen people in their time state, neither could I venture to take up any given one of which I have here mentioned to endeavor to express what I humbly hope that through grace I have been given to view as to their beauty and true application. I have mentioned the above figures and parables with a desire to set forth in truth, the fact that the only perfection the church has is in Christ, her ever living Head. Outside of him all is confusion, all is corruption, all is guilt, all is sin. Truly the church in her standing in Christ is presented as all fair as in Solomon's Songs: again as having the moon under her feet (the law), clothed with the sun (the perfection and righteousness of Christ), a crown of twelve stars upon her head (the testimony of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. So as to her standing in Christ there is no fault in her, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." As to the constituted, visible, (yet hidden) church in time, in her militant state of existence, we view her as the remnant according to the election of grace, as being made up of many or several organized bodies of baptized believers, and each group or body is sovereign or independent in so far as to its own internal affairs, freely allowing that this sovereignty is positively subservient

to (in all cases) with the rule and law (which law is a law of love, a law with charity in it) of her blessed lawgiver, husband and head, the blessed King of Saints. This sovereignty of the organized body, or church, could never be interpreted in the face of the scripture, as ever affording license to trample under unhallowed feet, the rule of the New Testament. A church body that violates the rule of the New Testament does not do so in lieu of her sovereignty, but in utter disregard of her sovereignty, and is clearly manifesting that she is in a decadent state of existence, diseased, and is but manifesting that she is carnal sold under sin, and that she has left her first love; and unless God who is rich in mercy brings again the spirit of repentance, and purges off the dross, her candlestick will utterly be removed and there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Just a little more in relation to the government of the church of God. We believe personally that the government is upon his (Jesus) shoulder, and, too, that he, Jesus, is the judge of the quick and dead (dead in carnal security). So then we must affirm that all true and genuine order in the house of God must be wrought by the Spirit of God, for truly there is no other sense wherein the rule of the New Testament could possibly be applied. Just shortly before Jesus was offered as the sin bearing victim on Golgotha's rugged brow, bearing the sins of all the chosen race in his own body, putting away all the vast magnitude of their sins by the sacrifice of himself, he said to his own, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another." So then whatever difficulty arises in the church of God, true genuine gospel order must of necessity be the fruit of love. It is not optional with an individual member, or an organized church body, as to whether they heed the rule of the New Testament, without the love of God shed abroad in their hearts that brings them to a sense of their own guilt, and thus brings them to a common level with the offender, and in its wake roots out all that holier than thou spirit, makes them realize they are ten thousand talents in debt and not a farthing to pay. In this way and this only could the rule of the New Testament be heeded for the spirit is the only source of charity and love. Otherwise all such would be exacting to the last mite; like the servant with his fellow-servant (brother) in the Lord's parable set forth. No doubt, until the Lord's gracious return, that all such exacting ones would loudly be hailing their cruel work as gospel order. I believe all unbiased readers will readily agree that all the people of God are vile sinners in their standing in Adam, and as flesh they have a carnal or fleshly mind, which mind is death; and, too, this element or nature in them is enmity against God, not subject to his law (rule) neither indeed can be. So then with this mind (carnal) there could be no such thing as adhering to the rule of the New Testament. Without doubt many times in church difficulty it is this fleshly element and nature in the one reckoned as the offender, that brings the offence, and in the one offended the same element is aroused and he in turn is made mad and seeks vengeance and retaliation. Is this course order? I believe according to the Scriptures that in the flesh the children of God are fallible, and hence are not just liable to err but sure to err, except only as they are led of him who is meek and lowly of heart. I cannot feel to believe that a church body made up of such characters as I have humbly tried to describe in the foregoing is in themselves infallible, any more so than one individual is, nor is it any more of an impossibility for a church body to err than it is for an individual member to do so. We believe that true gospel order is the fruit of love, that is, a manifest desire to save the erring one, and on the other hand about

as clear a manifestation of gross disorder is a manifest desire to kill or destroy the offending one on the slightest pretext. I fear, alas, the latter named is more often what we have and see that is loudly hailed as good order. Neither do I believe the well being of the church of God is vested in the strong or self appointed, would be leaders. The strong and the weak are all clay in the hands of the Lord. In my humble opinion there is no greater delusion among us than for any poor earthworm to presume that the church is dependent upon any one individual for her well being. God will perpetuate his cause despite all the evil forces turned loose against her.

Truly this is a dark and cloudy day, but let me say here that not one of us will strengthen one of the cords of the church of God, nor shall we by any supposed virtue of ours hold her in the storm. Her safety, keeping, well being and government is in Christ. He will scourge and purge as he sees fit for his fan (the wicked) is in his hand. He will avenge his saints. Oh! how our heart does bleed for the slain in Israel, but he, Jesus, will come and will not tarry. He heareth the cry of the oppressed and downtrodden of his people, and unto you that fear his name shall he appear the glorious sun of righteousness with healing in his wings. I have only hinted along, here and there. Any one of the scriptures or subjects mentioned are full of substance until the half could never be told. I have written the above thoughts I hope in love for the cause of Christ. Much more could be said to edification. From one confessing that I only see, know and prophesy in part, and the part I see as through a glass darkly. In tribulation and in hope.

(Elder) H. J. BIRD.

305 W. Highland Ave., Sierra Madre, Cal.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am enclosing a good letter from brother J. W. Haynes. His letters mean so much to me and I have found much comfort in reading them when I am lonely and cast down. Being in poor health and not able to get out to preaching I appreciate these good letters from these true and tried saints of God as I sincerely believe brother Haynes to be. I feel that others would enjoy this good letter and would like to share it with them. Hope they will find the comfort in reading it that I did. Most humbly your sister in hope.

(Mrs.) M. E. KUNS

DEAR SISTER KUNS: I feel impressed this fine morning to add another sheet to this lengthy communication which I neglected to send on its way. I am so slow in trying to compose a readable letter and slower still in speech. It is so seldom that I feel in the mood for writing anything on such an important and sacred a subject as the christian religion. That good old hymn written before you or even I were born tells my daily experience exactly. You know it I am sure.

"Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought,)
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

Also the apostle Paul, in the seventh chapter of the wonderful letter to the church at Rome, sets forth what I believe to be the experience of every heaven-born child of God. Can we poor, weak, fallible mortals wonder at the daily conflicts which beset us, when such an able teacher as he, was tormented with the same temptations and conflicts that we have, even after his miraculous conversion and the bright manifestation of God's favor? He wrote these things on purpose for the comfort and encouragement of God's little ones in the battle of life I believe. Speaking of the warfare which he said he found in his members, reminds

me of the Shulamite, Solomon's Song 6:13. "Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies." I cannot find the name Shulamite anywhere else in the Scriptures, or any other description of the character, but to my mind and my experience, it seems to fit one who has been taught of the Lord. I think the two armies in the same person or character, suggests warfare: "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh," and the adominition is "return, that we may look upon thee." Return means to come back to a place where we have been previously. Come back from your wandering in doubt and despair, and feed again upon the precious promises of your blessed Lord and Master, and that those who "have obtained like precious faith," may look upon you and rejoice with you. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Isaiah 55:7. Do we not find some wickedness in our hearts at times? I do, I am sorry to say! Can we return to a place where we have never been? Surely that cannot apply to the wicked who shall finally be destroyed forever! "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. 11:28. Resting in such a comforting assurance, "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin (unbelief) which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." May heavens richest blessings be yours. Yours in the hope of a blessed immortality.

J. W. HAYNES

Route 3, Box 19, La Junta, Col.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR ELDER AND EDITOR:

I am sending my subscription which is past due. I was sick for a couple of months, my dear companion was taken and I have neglected all my correspondence, but many thanks to you I have not missed a single copy of the dear old *Signs of the Times* which always comes with good tidings of great joy. It has seemed unusually good. I so enjoyed the book of Ruth written by Elder Adams. The *Signs* is all the preaching I get, and now I am alone and no one close of our belief. My husband was a strong believer in a God who has all power both in heaven and earth, and rules all things after counsel of his own will. He united with the Bethel Church at Lamar, Col. and he and I were baptized in July 1908 by my father, Elder William C. Perdue. After father passed on, our little church too passed away, so I feel like I am alone, but I know that my Redeemer liveth and he has left so many sweet promises to those that are his and put their trust in him. If we are the ones he shed his precious blood for he will take care of us here and land us safely with him in glory. I am so often in the valley I cannot see how one like me could be included in that blessed promise, but I would not take ten thousand worlds like this for my little hope. I am past seventy-two and my husband was nearly eighty. We lived together almost fifty-four years and I have only pleasant memories of our long life together. He was so kind and patient. Before he passed away he said he had no hatred in his heart for any one, not even our enemies in this awful war. He felt so sorry for them not to realize what they were doing it worried him.

The closest church I know of to me is Kingman, Kans. Elder L. L. Schenck is Moderator. I have heard him preach and I like his writings very much. "Who is my neighbor" was a very good and time-

ly piece by Elder T. H. Edwards. It seems like in these times our neighbor, as well as our maker, is being forgotten. Elder Linn's article in last April number was well worth the subscription for a year. Brother R. L. Davis' pen seems to have been silent now for quite awhile. May the dear heavenly Father stir up the minds of those old writers to their duty. The preaching our Savior preached while here on earth needs to be revived. Let us come teaching a whole and complete Savior, one who has all power and is still on his throne. Remember a poor sinner saved, if at all, by an all merciful Father, and remember me at the throne of grace.

(Mrs.) CHARLES H. (PERDUE) SHOEMAKER

Laurel, Del.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Enclosed find my renewal for subscription to the *Signs of the Times* and $1. to aid in sending the paper to the less fortunate. I wish to say that for three years I have thoroughly enjoyed reading the *Signs*. It is food to my soul and passes away many lonely moments when I am deprived of going to meeting to hear the word of God proclaimed. I would rather go there than any other place on earth. May God pour out his blessings on all the work that is being carried on for his cause. Your sister in Jesus Christ.

(Mrs.) LENA M. LOWE

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Mrs. J. Clifford, Wash., $3; T. O. Turner, Ky., $1; Eld. C. W. Bond, Ore., $5; Mrs. H. D. Hewitt, N. Y, $3; J. Plunket, Ky., $1; Mrs. G. M. Beebe, N. Y., $10; P. H. Hearne, Del., $1; Mrs. W. T. Braswell, Ga., $1; Mrs. R. S. Craig, Va., $1; J. S. Mace, Pa., $1; Mrs. F. O. Pierce, N. J., $1; Mrs. F. E. Wyatt, Mo., $1; Mrs. J. B. Simmons, Tex., $3; Mrs. B. E. Hanley, Md., $3; C. S. Dodson, Tex., $1

3347 Tutwiler Ave., Memphis, Tenn

DEAR BROTHER DODSON, if through the love of God I have indeed a right to address you thus: I am sending another subscriber for our dear paper. It does me a lot of good that I am enabled to do this.

If it is not asking too much, if sometime you are given a mind will you write on the parable of the talents that were given. To one he gave one talent, to another five and to another ten. I looked for the scripture but as my Bible does not have all the index I could not locate it. It seems it is one scripture the Arminian world has to themselves. I know or feel to know it does not mean freewillism for there is no contradiction in the Bible. Should you not have a mind to write on that all will be well. May God bless you with his loving presence to enjoy sweet meditation and joy in hope of salvation, and good work in putting out the *Signs* to the honor and glory of God and to the comfort of his children who are scattered over the globe.

(Mrs.) LUTHER CAMPBELL

(See editorial in this issue. Editor).

Loganville, Ga.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am sending you $2 and my thanks for *Signs of the Times* another year. Its pages are filled with satisfying food to the poor wayfaring pilgrims as they journey through this life. Although I feel too unworthy, too unfit to be one in that number I would beg a seat at the foot of the table for a few crumbs, the Lord willing. "Not my will, but Thine be done." May he grant you strength, and be your guiding light that you may live long to continue this good paper. In love and hope.

(Mrs.) ELA WATSON

EDITORIAL

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

> Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: 2 Peter 1:10

This language is addressed "to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ." It is not addressed to any other than the children of God. None can receive these sayings save the called and elected. Those who are the called and elected were so solely because of the righteousness of God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Let us now proceed in our meditations to make our calling and election sure by using the same formula advocated by Peter in this same scripture. I have termed this formula a lesson in Spiritual Mathematics.

First, he says; "add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 1:5-8 All these that we are to add must be of the same denomination and we must be in possession of them before we can add them. If we can determine the source of faith then we must conclude that these other things are from the same source in order to be of the same denomination. "By grace are ye saved through *faith*; and that not of yourselves: it (faith) is the gift of God." Faith is the gift of God, so all these other things we are to add must be gifts of God. If the virtue and these other things be good they must be gifts of God. James says; "Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." So all these are good—thus gifts of God, and we must be in possession of each of them before we can add them. So, in this problem of Spiritual Mathematics, it does not concern any works of righteousness that we may perform but our pure minds being stirred up by way of remembrance of these wonderful gifts that God hath bestowed upon us. When we are so enabled by the Spirit to study to show ourselves (as being) approved unto God: we make our calling and election so sure in our minds that we are enabled to rejoice and not fall into despair. In working out our own salvation by recalling all the things that we have experienced we fear and tremble. We wonder has God been so gracious unto us as to work in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Now in solving this problem for our own consolation we must now consider: do we have faith in God and Jesus Christ as our Saviour? If we find that we have any trust or confidence in ourselves for any part of salvation, to such extent we are void of faith in Jesus Christ but if we find that our experience teaches us that we must be saved solely upon the merits of Jesus and have no confidence in ourselves then we may conclude that we are in possession of faith.

Next, let us consider virtue. We fear and tremble now because in our flesh we can find no good thing. We are but sinners, vile and needy. Sin is mixed with all we do. We are comforted with this thought, surely it takes virtue to reveal to us our sinfulness. Were it not for this virtue we would be righteous in our own eyes. Surely, then, God hath given to us this virtue. This pure heart or virtue enables us to see ourselves as we are. It enables us to behold that sin is mixed with all we do. We see that in us (that is in our flesh) dwells no good thing.

Next, we are glad to add knowledge. His children grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. God has taught us through experience more and more of our depravity and dependence upon grace and more and more of the meritorious, complete work that Jesus has performed, is performing and will perform for God's chosen. Surely knowledge may be added in the meditations of the pure mind concerning our experience.

Next, we are to add temperance. Have our experience and belief tempered our actions? Have we not been restrained in some degree from thinking and acting as we have thought and acted heretofore? Are we not more sane minded in our estimation of others as well as ourselves? Have we not been restrained from trusting in ourselves? This peculiar experience has tempered our actions and even our associates and ideals are not the same. Now we see temperance added to the list in our meditations.

Next on the list is patience. Paul said; "We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;" Through much tribulation we have learned to patiently wait upon the Lord. We have been taught by that great teacher that we are depraved and have no ability to lift ourselves from this condition but God has been so merciful unto us that when we were deepest in despair he has reached us many times. These experiences have wrought in us a degree of patience. We now see that God has blessed us with patience.

"And to patience godliness," God has been so gracious to us and has blessed us in so many ways. There is such vast difference between us and God. No comparison, but what a contrast! We are incapable; God is all powerful. We are foolish; God is all wise. We are sinful; God is all Holy. We are creatures of time; God is eternal. We are finite; God is infinite. We are mortal; God is immortal. It is with reverential fear and amazement that we are made to bow to the shalls and wills of Jehovah and trust through Jesus Christ the God-man that his abundant mercy may even reach us. May we not add godliness to the list being possessed with this reverential awe and fear?

To godliness, brotherly kindness. Once my earthly father, who was an ordained Minister in another religious organization, accompanied me to a Primitive Baptist Church. While we were enroute home I noticed tears trickling down his cheeks as he said; "I would to God that the brotherly love you people have one for another was practiced by us." I asked him why he made such a remark, and he said; "Everyone can see that you folks love one another, the lovely smile, the warm hand clasp and the smiling countenance on your face shows that you really love one another. In our church, there is confusion, strife and pride displayed in a big way."

Even the heathen can say, "the Lord hath done great things for them." They can see the brotherly love that exists between brethren. When a brother rejoices, the brethren rejoice with him. When a brother mourns, the brethren mourn with him. Surely brotherly kindness may be added to our characteristics.

"To brotherly kindness, charity." Do we possess charity, which is love? We love God because he first loved us. We love the brethren with that godly love. This love is not akin to natural love. The same love God loves us with goes back and loves God and goes out and loves the brethren. We can not be so selfish as to retain this love but it is efficacious—reciprocates — it loves God and the brethren and enables us to do good to all mankind, especially to the household of faith.

Now, we have worked out our own salvation with fear and trembling. We have added each of the gifts that God has so graciously blessed us with. We have made our calling and election sure by the Spirit stirring up our pure minds by way of remembrance of the things that we have experienced. We will not fall in despair because our minds have been gladdened and we are made to rejoice over our experience that God has so graciously blessed us to enjoy. Now we praise his holy name for his goodness to the children of men. E.J.L.

THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

We have been asked to give our views on the parable of the talents as set forth in Matthew 25:14-30 inclusive.We are aware of the fact that opinions on this parable differ widely, and while we make no claim to having any special light on it, such thoughts as we have we are inclined to submit for the consideration of our readers. In the first part of this chapter will be found the parable of the ten virgins, which is another parable upon which many conflicting opinions have been presented. We wish it clearly understood that we prefer not to be drawn into any controversey on either one of these subjects. We simply plan to state our own views, as best we can, and let others do likewise. In the outset we wish to note that it is *the kingdom of heaven* which is under consideration in both instances, and we would like to have that thought kept constantly in mind. The first parable, to us, would seem to deal with God's people, both under the law and under grace. The five foolish virgins, as we see it, represent the church under the law, whose services were not nor will they ever be acceptable to God. Like Martha, they believe that there are still many things required of the creature in order to obtain salvation. The five wise virgins represent the church under grace, or the gospel church, and the oil which they had in their lamps was significant of the grace of God in the hearts of his people. These, like Mary, have ceased from their labors and are resting in the finished work of their Lord and Redeemer. They have been made ready for the bridegroom when he cometh. The foolish virgins having no oil in their lamps, or grace in their hearts, were not ready for the bridegroom and Jesus, therefore, said unto them, "I know you not." He would not own them as his very own as long as they were in bondage to the law. We have heard it said that they were the non-elect, but we do not believe that *the kingdom of heaven* is composed of both the elect and non-elect, and we repeat that it is the kingdom of heaven which is under consideration. God is not pleased to accept his people according to their works under the law, for it is plainly declared that it is "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Eph. 2:8-9 Those who worship God acceptably must, therefore, worship him in spirit and in truth and have no confidence in the flesh. They must have on the wedding garment, or the righteousness of Christ, and they are delighted to be called by his name, "The Lord our Righteousness." We would also call attention to the fact that all ten were virgins. Like the ten lepers that were cleansed, they do not all return

to give glory to God before men here in this world, nevertheless their names are written in the Lamb's book of life and they shall unquestionably join that innumerable company in singing his endless praise in that world which is above and beyond this earthly ball. According to our understanding only a remnant of God's people make up the militant church, but in due time, which will be God's time they will all be made to know and confess him whom to know is life eternal. Moses said to Pharoah that not an hoof of all that pertained to Israel should be left in Egypt, and we are persuaded that not a single one for whom Christ shed his precious blood will be left to remain forever under the condemnation of the law. The work of grace is being carried on daily by the Holy Ghost and many who are still in bondage to the law are being made to groan beneath the awful burden of their sins, and what a relief it is when they can hear the voice of their Beloved bidding them to come unto him and find rest for their weary souls. Only when they are made to see that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life, can they forsake all else and follow him.

We now wish to pass on to the parable of the talents. As the parable of the virgins portrayed the church, we believe that the parable of the talents portray the various gifts which God is pleased to raise up to serve the mystical members of the body of Christ, and particularly the ministering gifts. All have not the same gift, neither have they it in the same measure, for there is a diversity both in the gifts and in their quality. Paul said "he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." The word of God is a thorough furnisher unto every good work, but, alas! how few of those who profess to love his name actually consecrate their lives to his service. When Jesus set up his church here in the world he also called servants and sent them forth to work in his vineyard and commanded them to feed the flock which he had purchased with his own precious blood. He is still calling men of his own choosing and sending them forth as sheep among wolves, and they have to preach the preaching which he bids them. They are by no means of equal stature in knowledge and understanding, and neither has any man anything spiritual which he did not receive, and we are told that it is expected of a man according to that which he hath, and not according to that which he hath not. We believe it is the duty of the servants of God to study to show themselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, and they should at all times be mindful of what the apostle Paul wrote to his Corinthian brethren, where he said, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." 1 Cor. 13:1-2. Our ministers should search the Scriptures carefully and prayerfully, comparing scripture

with scripture, to see if what they preach and teach is the truth as it is in Jesus. They will find that the Scriptures themselves are their own best interpreters, and we would all do well not to advocate anything that is not supported by the word of God. The prophet Isaiah said, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isa. 8:20 How diligently we should all try to be in searching to know what is the mind of the Spirit in our speaking and writing! If we will only go to the Scriptures we will find that they describe the kind of man God calls to serve him, and the kind of life one will live when he is under the guiding influences of the Holy Spirit. Again, we wish to revert to the language of the prophet Isaiah where he said, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth." This was confirmed by Paul when he wrote to the church at Rome, saying, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." We realize full well that we poor creatures of time, after we have done all and the best we can, will have to confess that we are still unprofitable servants, but we do love to see our brethren endeavoring to keep under this old vile body and present it, as much as in them is, as a living sacrifice upon the altar of God's service. There is no reason why we should not do all within our power to serve God as acceptably as we can. The great apostle said to Timothy, "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." It is a solemn thing, indeed, to speak in the name of our Lord, and we should as far as possible come with clean hands and a pure heart. We should take heed unto ourselves and unto the doctrine, lest having preached to others we should ourselves become castaways. No man ever lived who was, of himself, sufficient for these things, but Paul said, "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." We can but believe that there is a growth, a development, or increase in one's gift where he is faithful in doing with all his might whatsoever his hands find to do in the service of his Lord. He who forsakes father, mother, wife, children—the dearest things in this life—for the sake of Christ shall receive his reward. His love for God and his cause must be first and foremost in his heart and soul and mind, else he will be found to be trying to serve two masters, and this he cannot do successfully. Neither can he serve God acceptably for filthy lucre's sake, or for the praise that is to be found among men, for he cannot please men and at the same time be a true servant of God. It is he who will lose his own life for the sake of Christ who will find it in the kingdom of our God. When one is made to be fruitful in the things of the Spirit, his talents will be found to increase and there will be rejoicing in the Lord. This may be evidenced by many souls being brought into the militant fold, where there is more rejoicing over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine just persons that needeth no repentance, or it may be seen in the peace of God which passeth understanding and his love which knoweth no bounds, in the church or churches where the undershepherd labors; also this prosperity or in-

crease in talents may appear in the soundness of doctrine which is preached, upon which the sheep of God can feed, and the high standard of good order which is maintained in the deliberations of the flock. On the other hand, we believe there is such a thing as a man burying his talent, or gift, in the earth. He may become so entangled with the affairs of this life, and the riches of this world as to be led away and neglect the duties of his high and holy calling, even forsaking the assembly of the saints by not attending his regularly appointed meetings. We are convinced that one can become so indifferent towards spiritual things until he will find himself lukewarm, which is a terrible state to be in, or even worse, he may so conduct himself as to bring reproach, shame and disgrace upon himself and all that he holds dear, including his Master's cause. Jesus said in his memorable sermon on the mount, "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under the foot of men." We have known of several instances where those whom we verily believed to be the servants of God, through giving themselves over to the lusts of the flesh or in seeking after the beggarly elements of this world lost their usefulness to the church, and even had to be cut off and excluded from the love and fellowship of their beloved brethren. In other words they buried their talent in the earth and were cast forth into outer darkness where there was weeping and gnashing of teeth, and thus was fulfilled the words of our Lord where he said: "For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." God is said to be a consuming fire, and we believe there is a terrible woe which awaits those who walk after the flesh, by living disorderly and indulging in those things that dishonor him who at so great a price has called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. It is written, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." Every one to be sure, will need to commit himself and all that he hath unto the only wise God who only is "able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy," and to him we desire that glory, majesty, dominion and power, be ascribed, both now and forever. Amen.

Frankly, it had not occured to us that this parable could be construed as favoring Arminians or free-will-ism. If any one of God's servants are enabled to serve him acceptably it is because of the life of the vine being manifested in the branch, and all boasting is done away with. Paul, speaking as we understand of his work as an apostle, said, "By the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." We have often said that if we think a good thought, or perform a good deed, it is due to the life of the vine in the branch. On the other hand, without God's restraining grace there is no limit to which we will not go, for we are as prone to do evil as the sparks are to fly upward. Therefore, there is no middle ground upon which we can stand. If the tree is made good the fruit will be good, but if the tree is left in its natural state, the fruit will be bad. We will serve either God or the mammon of unrighteousness, and the choice is not left with us. Joshua told

those to whom it seemed evil to serve the Lord, to choose between false gods, but he said as for him and his house they would serve the Lord. God had given them the *will* to serve him.

R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

Deacon SAMUEL HENDERSON HOUK was born July 29, 1858, and died at his home in Snyder, Okla., Sept. 28, 1945 making his stay on earth 87 years, 1 month and 29 days. A monument of God's mercy brother Houk was born in Missouri and came to Texas with his parents when he was five years of age. He spent the latter part of his life in Okla. He was married to Miss Amanda Mahala Simmons July 23, 1882. Their allotment together was a little more than 63 years. To them were born nine children, five of them preceded him in death. The four to follow on are two sons, R. H. Houk, Carnegie, Okla. and W. L. Houk, Oklahoma City, Okla., and two daughters, Mrs. Robbie Boyd, Snyder, Okla. and Mrs. Nottie Hammons, Ringling, Okla. The four children and one in-law were present to witness the passing of a dear father, also his faithful companion stood by his bedside and looked on while God removed him from her. Precious thought, what God does is right and the same God that took him, gave her grace to say farewell to a true and loving husband, O why do we not rejoice to see them go? The scripture tells us that glorious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints, but this natural or earthly tie is so close we are made to mourn.

He and his wife united with the Primitive Baptist Church known as Mt. Zion Church, near Cash, Texas, on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in June 1887, making his time as a member in good standing 59 years and 3 months. He served as deacon about 36 years the last part of his life.

Brother Houk was a member of the Presbytery that loosed my hand and said, go preach the gospel of God wherever in his providence he sees fit to send you, and from that day I have been his pastor until the end came. and I was by his bed when he breathed the last breath. I could look into that face and say, sleep on brother Houk: you have finished your course, you have been a faithful servant, you have filled the office of deacon well and always had at heart the welfare of the church and its pastor.

While he was yet rational, he called all the family to his bed, one by one, and told them the end was near, that he must go, and said what he had hoped for would soon be a reality and that he did love his children so much. He told them of his desires and wishes for them in the future which will be a sweet memory of him to them as long as they live. He also had his last sweet talk with his companion, telling her how true and faithful she had been, and when he was through talking with them all he clapped his hands and said, "Fare-you-well, I am going home. Blessed Jesus, he has come for me, there he is, don't you see him?" What more evidence could we desire than these last words that fell from his lips.

The funeral services were conducted by myself and the remains laid to rest in the Fairlawn Cemetery at Snyder, Okla. Weep not for him but rather rejoice that his name is written in heaven. He fell asleep in Jesus. Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord. Yes, that dead body is the Lord's now if it ever was. Paul says, "Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." Written by his pastor.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN

BURTON V. OSBORN departed this life on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 22, 1945. He was hit by an automobile and instantly killed while crossing the street in New York City where he lived. He was born June 29, 1894 at Ashokan, N. Y. and leaves to mourn his loss, his father, Deacon Hewitt Osborn and Mrs. Hewitt Osborn, his stepmother of Athens, N. Y. His father is a Deacon of the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church of Ashokan, N. Y. Also surviving are two brothers, Floyd of Syracuse, N. Y, and Scott, a lawyer, of New Jersey and one sister, Mrs. William Mc Cormick of Middletown, N. Y.

Mr. Osborn gave evidence of the knowledge of the gospel truth when real young in expressing that he believed the religion that his father professed to be the truth. When he was young the Hymn 571, Beebe's Collection was known as his favorite. He would often repeat the words:

"Ah Lord! ah Lord, what have I done?
What will become of me!
What shall I say, what shall I do,
Or whither shall I flee?"

and would sing the whole hymn. This showed us that he had some knowledge of the state of man as he stood in Adam as we know that none can know this except their blind eyes have been made to see.

The funeral was held at the Lasher Funeral Parlors at Woodstock, N. Y. Interment in the

Woodstock Cemetery. Services were conducted by a Lutheran minister from Woodstock as no Baptist minister was available at that time.

A. J. SLAUSON

MATTIE WILSON, the subject of this sketch, was a native of Alabama and had lived a devoted life to her husband, Reuben Wilson, who was one of the leading exponents of sacred music in the deep South. He was president for many years of conventions in the Sacred Harp, an immortal song book, and an active merchant and county officer in Houston Co., Ala. He passed on in June 1943 and the companion was left to mourn the passing of this great and good man for two and one half years. On Dec. 22, she peacefully slept at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Vera Weeks, near Geneva, Ala. The master called and she answered peacefully as one who lies down to pleasant dreams. They are survived by Almer Wilson, Samson, Ala., Mrs. Vera Weeks, Geneva, Ala., James and Horace Wilson, Newton, Ala., Duncan Wilson, Daleville, Ala., Roscoe and Tom Wilson and Mrs. Leila Wilkinson, Dothan, Ala., also many grandchildren and several great grandchildren.

The services were conducted by Elder J. J. Collins at Goodwater Church, Wicksburg, Ala., Sunday, Dec. 23, in the presence of many relatives and a great host of friends at the same church and cemetery where Elder Collins had conducted the services for her husband. No more appropriate theme could have been selected than "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys." Truly her life was devoted to the cause of Jesus and sacred singing. Peace be to the memories of these believers.

(Elder) J. J. COLLINS

Mrs. J. W. ADKINS was born in Henry Co., Va., Feb. 3, 1875, and died Sept. 7, 1944 at the age of 69 years. At the time of her death she was living at Draper, N. C.

Sister Adkins first united with Leatherwood Church, near Martinsville, Va. nearly fifty years ago. She later moved her membership to Draper, N. C. and still later to Dan River Church in Rockingham Co., N. C. where she remained a devoted member until death. It was my lot to serve as her pastor for about fifteen years. She was truly devoted to her church and home, bearing about in her body the marks of the Lord Jesus Christ. She suffered much in her last days, but through the reigning grace of God was enabled to bear her sufferings with patience, looking forward to the time when she was to be freed from all these things. Surely her church and loved ones have lost one long to be remembered by us, yet she has left evidence that she has departed to be with the Lord which is far better for her.

Her husband preceded her to the grave several years ago. She was the mother of a number of children, thirteen of them surviving her. They were very devoted to her, doing everything possible for her during her stay here. Her funeral was conducted by the writer and Elder R. S. Smith from the home. Interment was in the cemetery near Draper, N. C.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER

DAVID PRESTON FARMER, son of Wm. A. and Nancy L. Farmer, was born April 13, 1876, in Johnson Co., Tenn., and passed away Oct. 23, 1944 at his home near Rising Sun, Md., aged 68 years.

Mr. Farmer was twice married. His first wife being Miss Celia V. Pyme who died March 10, 1922. To this union were born seven children, one dying in infancy, one, Onie, at the age of 32 years. The surviving children by this marriage are, Elmer, Russel and Mrs. Leata Farmer of Philadelphia, Everett of Bay View, Md., and Mrs. Lorraine Huber of Oxford, Pa. His second marriage was to Mrs. Ida E. Bryant, Feb. 3, 1927. To this union was born one son, David P. Farmer, Jr. Three brothers, Asa, Stacy and William and two sisters, Mrs. Bina Taylor and Mrs. Verna Taylor and four step-children survive. The last named being Kendell Bryant, Mrs. Alean Carter, Mrs. Jean Benjamin and Hatfield Bryant.

Mr. Farmer united with the Methodist Church when he was 16 years old but found no comfort in their doctrine and felt to be an outcast until 1932 when he heard his first Baptist sermon and thereafter he was a regular attendant of the Rock Springs Church. When he was taken ill he sent for me and related a beautiful experience of grace, expressing his regret that he had never offered himself to the church, and was fearful that he had passed up the last opportunity which proved to be true. While he lived about three years after this he was never able to go through the ordinance of baptism. We visited in his home quite often and he always manifested a meek and humble spirit, and at one time said he had waited too long for baptism. While we are confident that all his walk was ordered of the Lord, yet, what a great comfort it would have been to his sorrowing widow and to the Rock Springs Church and pastor if he might have been blessed to follow his Savior into the liquid grave.

He was a devoted husband and father and a true friend. He was held in high esteem by all of his acquaintances. We have lost a faithful one

from our midst. The Rock Springs Church and pastor extend their profound sympathy to all who mourn, and especially to our dear sister, his widow, who so faithfully gave herself for his comfort.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at a funeral parlor in Rising Sun, Md.. where many relatives and friends gathered to pay their last respects, after which the body was laid to rest in the family burial ground, there to await the summons from on high.

The following lines were composed by his widow:

"He was so much afflicted,
Always patient, kind and true;
He is with the angels now,
Far above the sky of blue."

Written by request. (Elder) D. L. TOPPING

CRYSTAL WATERS BRYANT, son of Eugene M. and Ida E. Bryant was born in Floyd Co., Va., May 16, 1906, and passed away Aug. 16, 1944, making his stay on earth 38 years and 3 months. He was married to Elea Brown, Dec. 8, 1924, and to this union were born seven children, one dying in infancy. Those surviving are Charles, Naomi, Ernest, Crystal Jr., James and Vernon. He also leaves a mother, our sister Mrs. David P. Farmer; two sisters, Mrs. Alene Carter and Mrs. Jean Benjamin of North East, Md.; two brothers Kendell of Port Deposit, Md. and Hatfield in the U. S. Navy and one half brother, David P. Farmer, Jr.

Crystal had been a faithful attendant of the Rock Springs Church for many years, and while we never talked with him about his soul's salvation, he had from time to time spoken to his mother of how he had enjoyed the service. We feel confident that he was a recipient of God's love and mercy for "by their fruits ye shall know them," and it was of the fruit that he bore to the cause of Christ that all of us of Rock Springs were affectionately attached to him. Crystal had many trials but he bore them all without a murmer. During his last illness we visited him in the hospital, and though he was suffering intensely, his countenance was lighted from the effects of the grace of God which was working in his soul. His children show the traits of the high character which their father possessed. While it is sad for these dear children to be bereft of a loving and faithful father, yet for him we feel it is better to depart and be with his Lord whom he loved.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at Aiken Chapel and burial was in Asbury Church Cemetery. The following lines were written by his mother.

"He was faithful, oh, so faithful,
From his cradle to his grave;
He is with the angels now,
Where no farewell tears are shed."

May the Lord fill the vacancy which he himself has wrought. Written by request.

(Elder) D. L. TOPPING

SPECIAL NOTICE

The churches of the North West will gladly welcome Baptist families to settle here. Ministers specially needed. This is a good country, pleasant climate, with all the opportunities needed to build happy and prosperous homes, and develop the lives of the rising generations.

We need energetic and progressive minded people. Any one interested may write to Elder C. W. BOND, Island City, Oregon for further information.

TO OUR READERS

Judging from the numerable favorable expressions of approval which are constantly being received from all over the country, we are convinced that a large number of our readers are well pleased with both the content and the manner in which the SIGNS is being published. For all of this we are truly grateful and wish to extend our cordial and sincere thanks.

As we are anxious to enlarge our field of usefulness we are going to ask that each one of our readers make a real effort during the summer and fall months to secure for us a NEW subscriber. Remember, if you have not already received a copy of our 172 page book on the Resurrection of the Dead, we will send one FREE to every one who is not now a subscriber or to every old subscriber who will send us a NEW subscription at $2 per year.

Your combined efforts in this respect will undoubtedly bring some real tangible results for the messenger which goes out monthly containing precious messages to the poor and needy of the flock of God.

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES actually costs less than four cents per week. If you feel that it is worth many, many times the price, will you not kindly speak with those of your brethren and friends who are interested in "these things" and try to get them to subscribe to our family paper.

Please be assured of our thanks in advance.

R.L.D.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the *Signs of the Times* at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1; 12 copies, $2. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Welch Tract Church, Newark, Del., on the third Saturday and Sunday, May 18 and 19, 1946.

(Mrs.) LIDIE D. RITTENHOUSE

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Southampton Old School Baptist Church, Southampton, Pa., Tuesday and Wednesday, May 28 and 29, 1946. Services will commence at 10 a. m. Tuesday. Our ministers, brethren and friends are cordially invited. Trains will be met at Southampton Monday p. m. and Tuesday a. m. Those arriving by automobile go directly to the meetinghouse or to my home adjacent thereto.

CASPER G. FETTER, Church Clerk

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sundays in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y. at 10:30 a.m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed. R. LESTER DODSON

The Primitive Baptist churches of the Border Union of eastern Wash., Ore. and Idaho will meet with Pleasant Grove Church of Yakima, Wash., June 14, 15 and 16, 1946. The meetings will be held this year at Naches, Wash., located 15 miles N. W. of Yakima, on U. S. highway 410. Ask for directions at Naches post office, or phone Naches 493.

Eld. A. D. Hughett, Mod.
Beatrice Haan, C. C.

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each 1st Sunday, 11:00 a. m. and Saturday before.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday.
AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala.

Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a. m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopewell Church, Ozark Ala., meets each 4th Sunday, 11 a. m. J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock. Meeting place at Alder St. at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, 11 a. m. Elders J. J. Collins and J. S. Bass, Pastors.
J. J. COLLINS

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Beulah Primitve Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.
W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canda, California.

Bethel Church near Stockton, Cal. meets first and third Sundays in each month and Saturday nights before. For further information write SETH BYNUM, R 3, Box 800 G, Stockton, Cal. or LEONA TUTTLE, 1940 N. Center St., Stockton, Cal.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday, north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets every second Sunday at 5th and E. Park St.
B. O. JEFFREYS, Pastor
Weiser, Idaho

Pleasant Valley Church, Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc.)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carter Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. C. H. EVANS, Pastor

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.
D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a. m. in the meeting-house. Pastor in regular attendance except first Sundays. C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays 10:30 A.M., 2 P.M.

The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY
Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue. Take elevator to second floor.
11.00 a. m. 1:30 p. m.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium, room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.
(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.
C. W. BOND, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 a. m.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor
C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.
E. H. LANIER, Clerk

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. G. E. Rushing, co-pastor. C. B. TEAGUE, Pastor.

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets third Sunday in each month at 11:00 a. m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Old School Baptist meetings are held every fourth Sunday at Civic Club, 1419 N. Shepherd St., Houston, Texas. Preaching by Elder W. O. Beene.
(Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the first Sunday in each month at 10:30 a.m. in the Dr. Wood church-house.
E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Danville Primitve Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before. Bradley Road, Danville, Va.
W. R. DODD, Pastor.

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meet each first Sunday 11 a.m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3032 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va. R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.
R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U.S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m. C. M. FISHER.

Bethel Old School Baptist Church, Riffe, Wash. meets every third Sunday, 11 a.m. in the meeting house. I. F. COLEMAN, Mod.
ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk, Riffe, Wash.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va. U.S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 114 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JUNE, 1946 No. 6

TRUSTING IN THE LORD

O Lord, to Thee I come for rest,
Relieve, O Lord, my trembling breast;
What will I do, O Wise and Just,
May I in Thee put all my trust?

My way, O Lord, seems dark with fear,
But Thou art God, and Thou art near;
O Lord, my troubled mind relieve,
O gracious Lord, my soul receive.

When I must die and go from here,
O may I feel Thy presence near;
And may we meet beyond the sea,
Our dear Redeemer's face to see.

Where we will be prepared to sing,
O Lord of lords and King of kings.
Where all our song and praise will blend
In that bright home that has no end.

B. G. BIRD.

Huntington, W. Va.

CORRESPONDENCE

Williamstown, Kansas.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST, if I may address you thus: I have been intending for some time to drop you a line but have deferred it until now. My delay has been principally on account of my leanness, and partly due to my mere neglect of duty to which I fear I am too much inclined. As I take up my pen this morning I feel no more prepared to write or speak anything comforting or profitable to the household of faith than I have heretofore.

In a recent number of the *Signs* I noticed in your editorial you dwelt somewhat on the latter part of first Kings, 17th chapter. My mind has been exercised somewhat on this chapter, and had thought some of trying to drop a thought concerning it, more particularly on the fore part of the chapter. If I should offer a thought in connection with this scripture I trust you will not conclude that I was dissatisfied with your able comments. Elijah, the prophet, declared unto Ahab saying, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." The apostle James tells us it was a period of about three years and six months. A long time to go without rain. Such a condition would naturally reduce the earth to a desert land. "And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there." The circumstances surrounding this affair were not accidental, but all in harmony with God's eternal purpose. This desert land conforms ideally with the place where the Lord found Jacob, and where in fact he finds all of his children. In a desert land and waste howling wilderness. This no doubt represents the legal dispensation through which all of national Israel traveled before they reached the promised land as it is shown that Moses led the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law to the back side of the desert. God's spiritual children must and do pass through this desert land, these dry places, seeking rest and finding none there. Elijah

must in this instance serve as a type of the children of God. He must dwell by the brook Cherith which is before Jordan. I think there are no exceptions to this rule amongst the people of God. They all must dwell in this desolate place before Jordan, or before they cross over Jordan. It was Joshua who led the people across Jordan into the promised land, hence their wanderings and their dwelling place up to that time was before Jordan. From then on it was after Jordan or after they had crossed over Jordan. So here we find this man of God dwelling in this desolate place. He drinks of the brook Cherith. The Lord commanded the ravens to feed him. They were obedient to the command of God and brought him bread and flesh in the morning and bread and flesh in the evening which seems to further carry the thought that God's people "before Jordan" are nourished entirely by the carnal commandments of the law. In process of time the brook dried up, and we might say simultaneous with this the ravens ceased to provide food. It is time now for the prophet to move out of this place, just as every child of grace experiences that sweet deliverance from the law to the gospel. The Lord spoke unto Elijah saying, "Arise, get thee to Zarepath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee."

The scene seems to change here and we see in Elijah a perfect type of our Lord Jesus Christ. When he came to the gate of the city, behold the widow woman was there gathering sticks. Naturally one would shrink and falter and yield to discouragement at so gloomy a prospect of being sustained in a place like this, but the prophet Isaiah records this of our blessed Lord, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law." This man of God was not sent to a rich character, but to this poor poverty stricken woman. No better type could be furnished to represent the church of God when Christ came into the world to save his people from their sins. View this woman for a moment. She is a widow now, she had a husband but he is dead. The church of God once confided in the law as her husband, but the law is dead to her now and she is dead to the law by the body of Christ. She is left destitute in a starving condition, and the man of God finds her gathering sticks. How futile her efforts and the same applies to every poor beggar at the throne of grace. Every one can bear witness to the feeling of despair when you were striving with all your might to sustain yourself by your own works. When you had laid on the last stick, so to speak, and still saw nothing but starvation and death staring you in the face, and this would have been the lot of this woman had not the Lord at this juncture sent a deliverer. The church of God was like this and every member in particular. He comes to your aid when all your own efforts have proved fruitless.

We should notice, the man of God did not ask the woman nor consult her in any way as to whether or not she was willing to receive him into her house. Christ is often represented as knocking at the sinner's heart pleading for admittance. God had directed the prophet to this woman, and God had commanded the woman to sustain him, and thus the result could not have been otherwise for it was the work of God who makes no errors nor failures. When the fulness of the time was come God sent for his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. Sad indeed would be conditions if God Almighty must consult the sinner in the matter of his redemption and salvation; whether he is willing to be redeemed; whether or not he is willing to be saved; whether he is willing to accept Christ as

his Savior. With those who are brought down to the verge of starvation, as this poor woman was, it is no longer a question with them whether they are willing to accept Christ, but the great question is, am I accepted of him? The prophet found her gathering sticks. He called to her and said, "Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink." She did not hesitate to accommodate him in this, but as she was going to fetch the water he called to her again and said, "Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand." Is it a fact that many of us stumble at the word here? She was quick to respond to the first command. She could bring the water no doubt without much effort, but this next will require a sacrifice. She begins to make excuses. How many of us today can plead innocent to this failing? As long as the road is smooth it is pleasant to serve our Master, but if it requires a sacrifice on our part we too often falter in our duties.

This woman confessed her poverty as do all the poor of the flock saying, "As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruise: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die." Then spake the prophet those cheering words so often spoken to the trembling saints of God — "Fear not." The angels spoke these same words to the poor shepherds as they kept their flocks by night. Jesus also calmed the fears of his disciples when they were tossed on the boisterous waves. So the prophet said to the woman, "Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first." This was not an impudent demand on the part of the prophet, but I think it shows clearly our duties to our Master should be first and not secondary. Jesus gave just such a command to his disciples. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." She was gathering two sticks. Does it not picture a child of grace seeking to justify himself in the sight of God by his own works, and on the other hand striving to sustain his natural life by his own labors, forgetting that if God be not pleased to bless his labors his efforts are in vain? This woman was richer than she knew. This handful of meal and the little oil in the cruise representing the grace of God in our vessel. This was all she had but it was sufficient. The barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruise of oil fail till the day the Lord sent rain upon the earth. God's grace will never fail you, dear child of God, although it may seem very small in your vessel it is enough to sustain you with your great Benefactor many days.

Brother Dodson, it seems to be a failing with me to always leave the best part untold. I realize I have done a bungling job of this, and there is much more that might be added but I must close lest I tax your patience. Do with this scribble as your better judgment may dictate. I am, I hope yours in fellowship.

(Elder) L. L. SCHENCK.

Route 3, Box 800 G, Stockton, Cal.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST OUR LORD: I hope it is my good pleasure that I am sending you Elder Hughett's letter, which you will see was addressed to sister Tuttle to be read at our little church at last Sunday's meeting. It was the good pleasure of us all to feast upon the contents therein. Indeed, it was news from a far country if I am not deceived. We feel its value cannot be weighed with silver and gold of this world. We are trusting and hoping to see brother Hughett soon. It always makes all within me rejoice to have those of like precious faith visit, mix and mingle with us, and especially those who

have been taught of the Lord and preach what the Lord has taught them by divine revelation and experiences; those who know how to behave themselves in the house of the Lord. As I see it there are many among us who are not careful how they handle God's word, and often bring much confusion and discontent to others, but I reckon it is necessary that these offences come even as it is written. However, this does not lessen our duty to fight on, suffer on, endure on, fight the good fight, always of course with the Lord as our commander and chief. Bless his holy name that he has given me a desire to stand still and not make haste as we see some do, but wait upon the Lord to give me his sweet and wonderful admonitions. May the Lord continue to bless you, our precious brother, and continue to go before you in the future as in the past. We love your kind and gentle spirit. It is sweet evidence to us that the Lord your God is leading you gently along, and his loving kindness O how strong.

How wonderful it is to have a hope, believing Jesus to be the author and finisher of our faith, and to believe when he begins a good work in one he never leaves them to go alone, but with his all-seeing eye he watches over them and knows every step that they must tread and the station they must fill. Yes, indeed, it was before the creation determined and wrote in his will. I know not why I have written this way but just started and for the same cause I could not stop. I have so many dear friends scattered about and would love to meet them all face to face, if I could say no more than a glad "hello" and a sad "good-bye", but this world is too big for me to be at all places at all times. Not so with God for he fills all places, high and low, great and small, to him all things were known. Time is not reckoned with him, it is all finished and past with him and he requireth that which is past. Time only reveals to us what is done, not what is going to be done but is in the past. Dear brother, I have no desire to take up any more of your precious time so will say if herein is any comfort no need to tell you to whom the praise is due. Just take out the good, if any, and cast the rest to the wind for destruction. Yours in love for the truth.

(Elder) SETH BYNUM.

PARABLE OF THE GREAT SUPPER.

Luke 14:16-24

In a symbolical way this parable presents the marriage supper of the Lamb, and is, therefore, called a great supper—none could be greater. In the calling and bringing in of the guests is presented the unfolding of the christian's experience in being brought from a state in nature to a state of life in Christ, and a saving knowledge of the Son of God. What appears to be a number of persons bidden, is not a number of different persons, but the same individual all the way through, as he passes through the different stages on his journey to the supper to which he is bidden.

First I want to notice what goes before in the fifteenth verse, "And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God;" so I would say that being blessed to eat bread in the kingdom of God, is the subject under consideration in the whole of this parable. "Then said he unto him, a certain man made a great supper, and bade many: And he sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready." It is the Father that is giving this great supper at the marriage of his Son, Jesus. He sends forth his Holy Spirit, his servant, and the spirit says, *come,* but as is shown throughout the holy Scriptures, they don't, won't nor can come of themselves,

so they are symbolized as persons making excuses. We know that this is true with all of God's saints, they all travel the same road, but we only follow the experience of one here, for the experience of one is the experience of all. "And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused." He must *needs* go and see it, bear that needs in mind as we proceed. In many places in the scripture a piece of ground is called a field, it is a place where food is grown, and it would not be supposed that any one would buy a piece of ground except he intended to make that use of it. He is in need of food I believe can be safely said, so here is evidence of life, the power of that word, *come,* is in evidence. It is the word of the Son of God, that they that hear shall live. That word, *come,* attends the entire journey of all God's saints, and it is effectual because it is the word of him that speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. I am going to say that finally there are two fields or pieces of ground that this traveler must *needs* see. First he must needs see his own flesh and the powers of his own nature, and in his search for food to satisfy his hungering in that new life he is now experiencing for the first time, he must see that it is wholly unfit to produce the required food; and having the holy law of God written in his heart to guide him in his inspection of this ground, he observes that in its present condition it is fallow; and there are stony places there; tares have been sown; there are many thorns and thistles; and what soil there is is not only in a fallow state but if it ever is broken up it will form large clods that will need to be broken up before a seed can find a place to take root and grow; and with these observations he is ready for the next step. All that have traveled this way, know only too well that the first thing a poor convicted sinner does at this stage of his journey is to flee to the law.

Before I go on with his next step, I want to say something about that other piece of ground that finally he is going to needs see, before he comes to that great supper. That ground is the ground out of which the Lord God made to grow every tree that is good for food, and pleasant to the sight, and it is in a garden that the Lord planted eastward in Eden; so we will call it garden ground, and it is the only ground that we have any record of in holy writ, where food is grown or can be grown that will sustain the life of one of God's little children. It is called holy ground whereon, if a man stand he must remove the shoes from off his feet, and it is also called the ground and pillar of the truth, and this ground is the body of flesh of the only begotten Son of God. It was in this garden (the church here in the world) that he met his bride that is being married to him at this great supper.

Now let us compare these two pieces of ground, and we may be able to comprehend the great task that this poor traveler has before him before he can satisfy his hunger. Many will be the disappointments, he must make great sacrifices, in a word he must give up everything that is near and dear to him in this world; yea, he must suffer and struggle until he is poor, maimed, halt and blind for it is marked out distances ahead along the road directly in the path he must travel, that the like ones are the only ones that ever survive the great journey, and they are so overcome by the hardness of the way, that the servant must bring them all the way, and then some, for they find they have been going in the wrong direction and are further away than before they started. Now we

will go back to where we left this poor straggler.

"And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused." Five in the Scriptures is always a symbol of the law, and oxen were used to plow with in olden times. Elisha plowed with twelve yoke of oxen, and it is said he was with the twelfth. An account of this is found in 1 Kings 19. It was when Elijah was returning from the back side of the desert when he "found Elisha, the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him. And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee. And he said unto him, Go back again: for what have I done to thee? And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat. Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him." In that he ran after Elijah, that is a type of fleshly zeal. We read of a man who came running to Jesus, and he was sent back to the law, his schoolmaster, and he also must make a great sacrifice, he was told to sell all he had and give to the poor, and in substance that is what Elisha did. The oxen and the instruments, which were wood, were types of the work of the flesh, which all the hosts of Israel, typified by the twelve, must sacrifice. Elisha also gave to the poor, for he gave to the people, and they undoubtedly were poor. This is the case with this man that bought those five yoke of oxen, a type of works under the law, so in reality it is his works that must be proved, and he will find he must leave his plowing as Elisha did his. Nevertheless that piece of ground will be plowed just the same for, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Zion shall be plowed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest." Jer. 26:18. I do not understand this plowing is collectively, but each individual is plowed in his own time. As it is written, "Judah shall plow, and Jacob shall break his clods. Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you." Hosea 10:11-12. We are told to plough, for it says break up your fallow ground, but here is where the proving of the oxen comes in, for the Lord told the Israelites to keep the law, but afterwards what does he say? "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to *prove* thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live. Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell these forty years. Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee." Deut. 8:2-5. Yes, "Judah shall plough." Judah was one of the princely tribe, and represents the work of the spirit here, and it is the same spirit that is called a servant in our parable, who was told to say, *come*: and afterwards he was told to go out into the streets and lanes of the city and bring them in, and that is what he is doing. It is not a pleasant thing to be plowed by the Lord, we all know that. Jeremiah complained greatly about it. He said, "Then said I, Ah, Lord God! surely thou

hast greatly deceived this people and Jerusalem, saying, Ye shall have peace; whereas the sword reacheth unto the soul." Jer. 4:10.

(To be continued)

Box 570, Teague, Texas.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: I hope through the atoning blood of Jesus: Although it has not been my privilege to meet you in the flesh, I hope that I have known you for many years in the spirit, through the many blessed truths that you have ever advocated in the dear old *Signs*. I have been a reader of the paper since my early childhood as my dear old father was a subscriber as long ago as I can remember and I am now nearly eighty-five years old. I am happy to say that the same blessed truths that were taught then are the same truths that are advocated by the many dear writers in the *Signs* today. Salvation by grace and grace alone without any worth or merit on our part. A full and complete Savior, a sovereign God who was before all things, created all things, placed them, set their bounds and gave them their power. Each and everything will fulfill the purpose for which he made it. I did not intend to write so much but only to ask you to change my address. Your most unworthy brother if one at all.

J. J.McLEOD.

Topsham, Me.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER:

I have had you in mind for a long time. When I read your article in the February *Signs* I thought you sounded tired, and felt you were giving perhaps more of yourself than was good for your health. Then the thought came to me, Christ gave his all for his people and he would give you strength to go forward and I hope it will be a long time yet. I will never forget Sept. 1925 when you gave me the message and I gave God the glory, but it is with awe I think of God's servants. Their cross must be heavy, although Christ said, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and there are many that walk in his footsteps. When I see others of a different creed, and they seem so happy and think they are doing so much for the Lord, I do not forget my experience when the light shone out of darkness and it was made known I could do nothing of myself. It was all in his hands and I rested in his word. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you," and he will do all things, I have proved him. Sometimes it is dark and I get low down, but the light has never gone out, it rises and shines all the brighter. I hope the Lord wills that I again hear you proclaim his salvation for you have a very dear place in this heart of mine.

I have been very well this winter for which I hope I am thankful. I heard a man say over the radio that "we should work to cleanse ourselves from all sins." When I looked within I thought it would be hard for me to do that, and if I was not given a faith that kept me I would get confused. "Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace." Hope this finds you and your family as well as common, and that God gives you comfort and strength to go on in your ministry and that he will sustain you. God bless you and yours. With much love and sweet fellowship.

(Mrs.) RACHEL POTTER.

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425 E. Southern Heights, Louisville, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Here I am again to tell you my mind has been so deeply impressed to write something for the readers of the dear *Signs* if you deem it is worth space. I do not want to crowd out better matter. I have tried to get rid of the impression, but it seems I cannot

so make the attempt. If I am enabled to write anything to comfort one of God's little ones I am glad to write. There is so much trouble and distress in the world. I am so imperfect, so prone to sin, sometimes I fear I'm not born again. If it were not for my Baptist papers I do not know what I would do as I have not seen an Old Baptist to talk to for many months. I study about the ones I read of being sick and in trouble over the loss of their loved ones. My heart goes out to Elder George Weaver and family. May God watch over them and comfort them in their trials is my desire. I am getting old, now seventy-six, and cannot see to write very well, but I do love to tell the story of unseen things above, of Jesus and his glory, of Jesus and his love. Many times I lay awake at night and meditate on the sweet promises of God our Savior. My mind has been on the twenty-third Psalm. "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." Is it not sweet to feel he is our shepherd? We know nothing can harm us if he loves and cares for us. We know we are safe from harm if he watches over us. I know according to nature my days are few on this earth, but I have a hope to meet Him and be like Him and that will be enough for this poor sinner saved by grace if ever saved. Pray for me when at a throne of grace. Here is a hymn that suits me.

"Grace! 'tis a charming sound!
Harmonious to the ear:
Heaven with the echo shall resound,
And all the saints shall hear.

Grace first ordained the way
To save rebellious man,
And all the steps that grace display,
Which drew the wondrous plan!

Grace first inscribed my name
In God"s eternal book;
'Twas grace that gave me to the Lamb,
Who all my sorrows took.

Grace taught my soul to pray,
And pardoning love to know;
'Twas grace that kept me to this day,
And will not let me go.

Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days:
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

Brother Dodson, do as you see fit with this, it is like the writer very imperfect. I would be glad to receive letters from the writers for and readers of the *Signs*. I hope you will be spared many years to proclaim the glorious truth. Your little sister in hope of eternal life.

(Mrs.) ADAH CHANDLER.

Athens, Texas.

DEAR ELDER DODSON and all the precious ones in Zion who chance to read the *Signs,* our much valued paper, and especially those who have been given grace and courage to contribute the many wonderful truths in this January issue of the *Signs* which we have just finished reading. Just a few days back, and which came kindly as "Seasons Greetings", I received a little folder from Elder Lytle Burns, containing "Tribute to him" by sister Maggie Lee Hayes which also appeared in a late issue of the *Signs*. This was read and will be cherished by many, long after the final call to him removing him from this earthly abode, expressing love and admiration for such a valiant soldier of the cross, a life and service for the cause many of us would like to emulate, but it has pleased the Lord of hosts not only to bless him with apparently an abundance of grace, but to prolong his days and service among his brethren and churches.

After reading the January *Signs,* especially those referred to above "All things work together for good, etc." by Elder Bond, Ore.; the very beautiful and comforting message from Elder F. A. Collins, Ala.; the brief article from Roger Knight way up in New Jersey; The Plumbline shown to Amos the prophet by brother W. C. Williams. Ill., all go to show uniformly the workings of the

mighty God, teaching and instructing those whose hope is in Christ, to know God whom to know is eternal life. All this inspires us to feel that we would like to write personally to each one, endeavoring to express to them our very heart commendation and love for such courage and devout love manifested, but time will not permit and only through this medium can we have the sweet privilege of encouraging them on in this great and exalted theme, which indeed raises us up and make us to feel to "sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

Oh, that brethren could all dwell together and see eye to eye in this troublesome world, and just here, I feel that we do in the spirit if we could only remain in this sphere, but the flesh so dominates at times and we are found helpless to overcome only as it pleases the Lord to lift us above the earthly tide. This, however, was true of our earlier co-workers and servants- These graces are measured out to us just as we need them, should the glorious light of his countenance continue with us as we so much desire, most likely we would become exalted above that which is written, so with you, my dear brethren, we have to confess that all these things work together for good to his chosen ones. This is difficult for those to see and understand who cannot realize and see the beauty and sovereignty of God.

A few days ago a very disastrous storm struck a portion of our neighboring town, Palestine, killing several and injuring more, among them one of our very dear brethren, Sam Ray, his wife and little girl eight years of age. All were found in and near the wrecked home. The baby of the family, a little girl of five, was found some seventy-five or more yards from the others unhurt, hardly a scar on her body. The writer was called in this funeral service along with Elder Weisinger, who had been pastor of the church where brother Ray belonged. Also associated with us were Mr. Summeral, pastor of the church where the service was held, Missionary Baptist Church of Palestine, and a Mr. Townley, also pastor of one of their local churches. It appeared we all tried in our weakness to comfort the distressed ones with this line of thought: that God always does right, he never errs, his ways are perfect, the disposing of all things and creatures are in his hands, these conditions which we are prone to call tragedies, indeed try the faith of his saints, but in them all he sustains them, and instead of weakening our faith it strengthens us and causes us to rejoice that we believe in such a sovereign God, that rules all things in righteousness and to his ultimate glory.

We find also in this last issue of the *Signs* a very interesting letter from sister Effie Bowden, Benton, Ky. This is near where I was raised and personally know some of those sister Bowden mentioned in their unusual but happy meeting. This is in the bounds of the Old Soldier Creek Association, the "happy hunting ground" of my boyhood days. Yes, it was a hunting ground but not always happy. It was here where I first realized my lost condition. The surrounding country was made up of modern churches, practicing modern religion much more to our liking, as young people, than the Old Baptist churches, but some way, some how when our soul was hungry for nourishment the world knew not of, we would wander around the Old Baptist places where we would find a few crumbs. God's humble servants seemed to understand and often we felt surely he is preaching to us, surely he knows our hungering soul. At times we felt encouraged and some relief but in wondering over these things, in no way doubting the church, but was I embraced, had I any part in this wonderful theme, could I in all my folly and foolish thoughts

ever claim the right or be counted worthy a place among such an exalted body? This mind was with me, when on one occasion, thinking I was alone in the field, I was outspoken in supplication to God for mercy, for a little affirmation, some evidence of God's pardoning power, when my father, who was an Elder in the church, walked up. Of course I was embarrassed as a child would be, but he gave me a little talk, telling me he felt and hoped the Lord had begun a good work in me and that His promise was that he would carry it on until the day of Jesus Christ. He died never knowing what comfort he had brought me. I have since realized the sacredness of this little interview, what it meant to me and seemed to reach out and beyond the baffling things of this life into that realm of heavenly visions, and when wondering now, thinking over that day, I am assured that this, in a measure, was the beginning of or realization that within me had developed that hope which indeed has been and is an anchor to my soul. The livelihood of this feeling or hope has been a great shield; has kept me from danger; has moved me to love those who love the truth; has made me feel in all things pertaining to the church, let the welfare of the church be first though it crushes me; let the church of which Christ is head be ever your pride and hope along with this experience, still longing and desiring for more evidence. I could not recall at that time of ever reading the text, but it came to me as though spoken out "we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." In my weakness I thought, well, if there is any one in this world who loves the brethren, who make up this great priesthood, it is surely me, and in all my stammering attempts, this wonderful gift of love which evidently is founded in Christ, has been my theme. It passes all understanding, and in this life we only get a glimpse and share the little portion which keeps us humble, and I trust at the feet of the brethren. May the Lord, who is rich in mercy on all that call upon him, guide us on in the way of truth and righteousness, and keep us at the feet of our brethren. Yours in a precious hope.

(Elder) L. D. ROSE.

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884 - 4th St., Eldorado, Ill.

R. LESTER DODSON, Dear Elder and I hope brother in Christ if my little hope be of Him that arose again the third day: There seems a lot I want to say or inquire into concerning my afflictions and experience, which I hope is of the Lord, although I am too weak, too unlearned and too vile to take up your worthy time. I thank God that my hungry soul has feasted on the precious and comforting words written by the brethren and sisters in this dear paper over which God has set you as Editor, and my weak prayer is may he continue to uphold you and all the dear writers by his abounding strength and love.

There is one subject that the humble children of Israel seem to view differently and I would like your worthy consideration or view, or the view of any brother or sister on what this unworthy one has been taught after spending days and nights meditating and reading all the good views of brethren and sisters and my Bible on the subject of the word leaven. I will try to make this as short as possible if it be His will as I am not writing for publication or to cause controversy, but this sinner stands amazed at little glimpses he is allowed to have of God's hidden mysteries that he has hidden from the world. I wonder if, as Satan says, these are just my own imaginations, so I do not know at times whether I should present my unworthy self to that blessed Old Baptist church of

saints or not. I feel I know for a surety it is the church of the true and living God for she has every mark of her Bridegroom which no other has. O, if only I could see one hundredth part of myself being embraced in that grace covenant (as I understand the Old School Baptist doctrine to be the doctrine of Christ and his apostles) surely I would be in that rest spoken of by Paul. Excuse this weak and rambling one.

My little thought now, could it be a crumb from the Master's table? We find the word leaven used in different places. I will not take space to refer to more than two portions of scripture, and in both places it is our Lord who speaks. "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." Mat. 16:6. Now is Jesus not teaching of the doctrine and works of the Pharisees and Sadducees which is untruth or a lie? Therefore, we are made to believe this is bad leaven, even leaven of Satan, works that availeth nothing, works of man. Now with all humbleness and a prayer for His light to be turned upon another text which is sweet and comforting to a trembling child of God I hope. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." Mat. 13:33. What were Jesus' words to the ruler of the Jews: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "Let God be true, but every man a liar." Stand amazed, O finite men at his words. We will not see their meaning or truth unless he takes us aside as he did his disciples of old and expounds the meaning unto us. I hope it was his Spirit, the Holy Ghost, that has led this trembling one to this view of the leaven which is likened unto his kingdom for I cannot compare this leaven, his kingdom, his doctrine, to that of the Pharisees and Sadducees. No, this woman and this leaven to my view is the church with all her spiritual gifts; the measures of meal the whole lump of Israel; all his people are leavened in him. He being the seed of the woman, his kingdom starting out when planted here, just a small seed grows and grows, and once the leaven is started or hid in the world, it leavens all the barrel or all embraced in Him before the world began. "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

Yes, I see the leaven as Jesus, the good works, and also the leaven which is Satan, the evil works, the two seeds spoken of in Gen. 3:15. Both accomplish their leavening, or works, here in time according as God has determined and set the bounds. I would enjoy a thought from any one on this subject and criticism will not offend this unworthy one for I have a hope that the Lord of Israel hath made me commit all to him, and opened my mind and heart to crave spiritual food and learning. Some of the letters written in the *Signs* by the precious, humble children of Zion have been wet with tears that dripped from the eyes of this sinner. This seems like showing one's ignorance but O what joy and blessedness, it surpasses all the world has to offer. It is my desire and intention, if it be God's will, to be baptized at the very first opportunity. I was with the New School or those that preach a time salvation for two years, but have not been among any Baptists for the past three years except one or two meetings of Old School Baptists at Dawson Springs, Ky., Old Lick Creek Church, where I hope to be added soon. I have been reading the paper as one of my dear brethren passes it on to me. My father and I enjoy it so much I am sending $2 for 1946. Please start with the January issue. A little unworthy, trembling child of grace I hope.

JAMES H. CLARK

(The foregoing letter will undoubtedly find a ready response in the hearts of our readers. If the spirit in which it is written and the truth which it contains does not commend itself to the people of God, we fear we know very little about them. We can truly say that our heart goes out to this dear brother in Christ. He states he was neither writing for publication nor controversy, but rather to set forth in part how he has been amazed at the glimpses which God has given him of the mysteries which He has seen fit to hide from the wisdom of this world. We do not believe any of the inhabitants of Zion will doubt that God has given him a wonderful view of the true church here in this sinful world, and we truly hope his desire for baptism into the fellowship of some orderly Old School Baptist church will be fulfilled at an early date. He gives every evidence of being a fit subject for this ordinance and we are convinced he will never have a conscience void of offense towards God until he has followed his Lord and Master down into the watery grave and come forth to bear testimony before men to the things which pertain to God's blessed kingdom.

Our brother in Christ says "there is one subject that the humble children of Israel seem to view differently"—one which he has been greatly exercised over day and night, and that is *leaven*, and since he asks that we and other brethren comment upon it, we wish to make a small contribution in that direction at this time. Even though one should differ with him we do not see how they could possibly be offended at his manner or the spirit in which he writes. Speaking for ourself, we are entirely in accord with what he says about the subject. We cannot possibly see how Matthew 13:33, which he cites, can be otherwise interpreted than as representing the kingdom of heaven. As Moses and Aaron had to go three days journey in the wilderness to worship Israel's God, so must the true church make this same journey experimentally to-day. In the parable referred to the kingdom of heaven is likened unto "leaven which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." In our opinion the "three measures of meal" are highly significant. There are three dispensations: the patriarchal, the legal or prophetic, and the gospel. It requires all three of these to fill up the measure. In the patriarchal period very little of God's kingdom here in earth was in evidence. The legal dispensation portrayed in type and shadow a far more vivid picture of this kingdom, but it was not until the gospel dispensation was ushered in that the kingdom of heaven, or the true church of God really appeared here in the world in all of her beauty and grandeur, clothed with the righteousness of Christ, and adorned as a bride to meet her husband. In these three dispensations we see something of the progress of God's kingdom, which was typified by the working of leaven, until finally Mount Zion, the City of our God, appeared "beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth." The prophet Habakkuk was prophesying of this when he said, "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as waters cover the sea." Hab. 2:14. We believe our friend has just about reached this stage of his experience and, therefore, he is ready for the kingdom of heaven, or the church of the true and living God, and we would strongly recommend that he follow the inclinations of his heart and ask for a home in the church. We believe the apostle Paul knew something of this kind of leaven when he said, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." God's work never fails, but progresses and goes forward until his will and purpose is fully accomplished. As

the meal cannot resist the power of the leaven, neither can we resist the will of God concerning us, for it is declared that it is God which worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. It is wonderful, indeed, to observe the workings of God's mighty power in the hearts of poor sinners, bringing them by a way they knew not and into paths they have not and would not choose if left to themselves. They are made willing in the day of his power and when like the fruit on the tree they are ripe he gathers them into the fold, and with believers they are enrolled, and they can then join in praising God for his wonderful works among the children of men. R. L. D.)

1005 Vincent St., Houston 9, Texas.

To The Predestinarian Baptists of Texas: In making the following appeal I hope I am actuated by the spirit of grace and love for the brethren without malice. There are divisions among us (in Texas) mostly on points of order and I would like for us to get together for the purpose of adjusting these differences. I suggest that each church in the various Associations appoint a representative to meet in council at a given time and place, with the understanding that the recommendations of the Council, if agreed, be submitted to the individual churches for their approval. The churches must approve in order to make it legal and binding as the Church is the Court from which there can be no appeal. I shall be glad to hear from the various churches through their duly authorized representatives with suggestions as to time and place for such a meeting if it meets with their approval.

A sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

(Elder) W. O. BEENE.

(Ordinarily, we are not optomistic over such meetings as the one proposed, particularly where there are doctrinal differences, involving different States, but since the confusion in Texas appears to be largely because of a lack of unity on order, we see no reason why much good could not be accomplished by such a Council, and particularly if there are a goodly number of brethren who are possessed of the same mind and spirit which Elder Beene is manifesting. If the columns of the *Signs of the Times* can be used for the purpose of bringing about peace and harmony throughout Texas, to the end that our beloved brethren may be united in love and fellowship, we shall be very happy.—R. L. D.)

Lillie, La.

Elder R. Lester Dodson, Dear Brother Dodson: Will you please publish the enclosed obituary notice of brother Cain (see notice in next issue)? We are sorry this data was overlooked causing delay. I am reminded that I am delinquent with my remittance for the *Signs* which is due to sickness both of myself and my wife. I thank you for continuing to send the paper regardless of this. While I cannot in truth say I am in accord with all the sentiment I have seen expressed through the *Signs,* I do find much comforting, instructive and solid reading matter therein; hence I do not want to be without it as long as I can pay for it.

If I know my own heart I do have a fervent desire to be kept from the two following hurtful, hateful extremes. First, that of being over critical to that degree where it becomes destructive and not constructive. Second, tolerant to that extent where I would condone an erroneous doctrine or sentiment that would stultify, set aside or ignore outright those basic, fundamental principles of faith and order founded by Christ and taught by his apostles. But even should I be subjected or brought into sharp and important difference with a brother at any time, relative to those cardinal, orthodox

features of the doctrine I trust in, that I might, as in all things else, be imbued with that spirit of meekness, gentleness and kindness which would in the heat of controversy, if need be, enable me to esteem a brother better than self. I trust I am your poor, unworthy brother in gospel bonds, and in hope of the mercy of God.

(Elder) JOHN LEE SMITH.

Route 2, Jasper, Ala.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER DODSON: An old brother lives near me and visits me quite often. He reads my *Signs of the Times* every month and enjoys them very much. He is in the eighties as to age and asked me to write you how much he enjoys your paper. He says he has been trying to preach salvation by grace for sixty years. He especially enjoyed Elder Hughett's letter on the "Ten Virgins". He said he felt like revelation on the parable came to him years ago. He also enjoyed Elder Robbins article in the July issue. He thinks the good Lord has blessed you with a broad mind to handle these little different views in such a christian spirit. When he comes to bring my paper home he always comes with tears in his eyes, just full to running over. I sit down and just let him preach awhile. We spend some time telling of the wonderful working of the Spirit with his little children. I am sure there are many other little children who are old and cannot go to church as they could when they were younger. I sent a copy to an old gentleman I heard of. He subscribed for it and sent me word I had him straightened out the best he had ever been. I have never seen him but am glad for him to have the comfort of the paper in his lonely afflicted condition. I just hope that the good Lord will always keep you humble and broad minded to work for peace among the Old Baptists that his little ones can continue to feast on the spiritual food your paper contains. Most unworthily.

(Mrs.) M. G. HAND.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Mrs. M. E. Kuns, Cal., $3; Mrs. Lela Culpepper, Tex., $2; Mrs. Ella E. Nelson, Tex., $3; Mrs. W. V. Sizemore, Ill., $2; Mrs. A. MacPhee, N. Y., $3; Mrs. L. T. Genung, N. Y., $1; L. M. Stephenson, N. C., $1; H. L. Gloer, Ga., $1; E. G. Webb, Kans., $1; Elder R. L. Biggs, Tenn., $2; Mrs. W. F. Winfrey, Kans., $1; F. H. Richardson, Ia., $8; Mrs. D. W. Holland, Md., $3.

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The churches of the North West will gladly welcome Baptist families to settle here. Ministers specially needed. This is a good country, pleasant climate, with all the opportunities needed to build happy and prosperous homes, and develop the lives of the rising generations.

We need energetic and progressive minded people. Any one intersted may write to Elder C. W. BOND, Island City, Oregon for further information.

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3—That notices of Special Meetings should be sent to us at least thirty days in advance of the month in which the meeting is to be held.

If our readers will be kind enough to observe the foregoing suggestions they will aid us very materially in getting out the paper.

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EDITORIAL
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JESUS

To the dear children of God that name means more than all earthly names combined. It is the one name that has in it all the qualities of every other name. Everything that a mother, father, brother or friend might be to you, Jesus is that and all other things needed. To the man that knows him not the name means nothing. It does not have any attraction that other names do not have. This is the King. He is the creator, keeper and disposer of all things, yet he is not acknowledged by all to be the Supreme Ruler. Many say he is King but their actions betray them. They even confer with him and *think* that he rewards them for coming to him. Really and truly many think they are in touch with him because they think he is like themselves, a trader. He is measured as being just like us except we think he has what we want and that we have what he wants. Such, in a nutshell, is the foundation of all Arminian religion. It would be hard to explain which is the more important, what we have or what Jesus has. But after having, as I humbly hope, battled with that spirit in my own bosom up until now without having come off victor to the extent of getting rid of it, and seeing it manifested every day in my fellowmen, and hearing it from the work-monger's pulpit, over the radio and on the printed page, I have fully decided that what we have to offer him far outweighs what he has to offer! Just think about it! Any one of Adam's children has God and Christ and the Holy Ghost completely balked! They have done all they can! God *tried* folks on the law question, but he knew so little how hard-headed man would be that in desperation he *allowed* his Son to come down here to see what he could do. He came and did what he could and, according to what we believe in nature, he wanted us all to exert ourselves and help finish what was started. But after the plan was perfected (?) Christ and his Father were waiting to see what would take place. This work being an experiment they could only hope for the best! We *think* their plan included everybody, but it was planned for us to start something! Get up out of the mire and go to God! Dig out of the horrible pit and meet God with your achievement in your hands and praise for yourself on your lips! *Quit being lost* in the wilderness and start out and above all things do not wait for the Beloved to come down after you! Christ has eternal life for us and he *wants* to trade it to us for our works!

Under such an unscriptural doctrine I want to know who is Sovereign? I have purposely put a capital to the word. Which is helpless God or man? God will not and does not and *cannot* do anything until the man will let him do it. God has, if such be true, gotten himself into the most awful predicament that has ever been recorded! Search history, and no man has been as completely outdone and baffled as God. Man has had God on the jump ever since the morning of creation, but God has been so completely outclassed in thought and action that he is inactive now until the man makes a move!

There was a people that carried material to the smith and had them a God made (Isa. 46:6) and set him down. *He just waited. When they got ready they picked him up and moved him.* Every brand of conditionalism, in or out of the church of Jesus Christ, has that kind of a God. Is it a fact that every tongue must confess and every knee must bow? If so, what fact is to be confessed? Why is the knee to be bowed? Which was it spoken of, the creature or the creator? If God has at any time, place, or in any condition in the church or out before or after any creature's regeneration, desired anything that he did not get at that time and for whatever length of time it was, he was compelled to confess to all the angelic hosts that the creature, man, was his superior. Furthermore, whatever length of time God has been wanting or desiring *anything,* just that long he has had his knee bowed in submission to that that kept him from doing his will. This matter of confessing him and acknowledging him is of primary importance. *It was so important that it be done, that God swore to it.* What power can cause the oath of God Almighty to be broken? If all power in heaven and earth (Matt. 28:18) is given into the hands ofJesus over all flesh (John 17:2); all judgment is given into his care (John 5:22) and even evil men cannot do anything except they be given power from above: (John 19:11); how can the oath of God respecting the confession of every tongue and the bowing of every knee be nullified: (Isa. 45:23)? Every child of God has confessed that he is the Governor of Israel (Matt. 2:6). We look at Israel as they came from Egypt and they all confessed to the authority of Joseph. Not only did the Israelites but also the Egyptians had to bow to the iron rule of God. Every Jacob has had to bow to the Great Finder of the sheep. Every preacher has been compelled to confess by tongue and bow in humble submission to Jesus. Not a single one has ever failed to acknowledge him in all the way they have been led. David's experience and Paul's experience corroborates in detail. Jacob and Peter each had to acknowledge that their salvation was of the Lord. Ananias and Sapphira tried to keep from confessing the whole truth but it just could not be done. The result to them was, after all, a complete bowing to the Lord. Peter's effort to keep from it ended in a dismal failure. Not only did he have to confess to the sovereignty of Jesus, but he had to confess it before men. That is not all. His pertness, lying, profanity and conditionalism is recorded so that *all* may see it, and those thus led and exercised by the Spirit may see and avoid his mistake. Look into the lives of every Bible character and this lesson stands out. They have all confessed that they are nothing and less than nothing, and have had to bow in (not arrogant, boasting, truckling, but) sweet, humble, obedient submission to his will.

The kingdom that God set up (Daniel 2:44) was an eternal, unconditional, sovereign one. It stood forever. Every subject of it must confess to the eternalness and sovereignty of the King. It was not left to other people. Every subject must confess that it is not unto us but unto him belongs all honor and glory. This is a precious doctrine. The Son of God has come in the flesh and tasted death for every man that he might *bring* many sons to glory (Heb. 2:9-10). As far as him failing, the Scriptures are as silent as death about it, but as for bringing them in, all accounts of his contact with men in the Scriptures, he always brings them. They are willing to come. The religious world may hoot and scorn at God and Christ and the Spirit bringing them *against* their will, but that is *not* what they *know* but just what they *think.* Ah, yes their experience began in a time of love (Ezek. 16:8),and the love of God

and the Lamb was bestowed on them and gave them precious desires, and a chain was placed around their necks. Jesus began to lead them and teach them and they follow him whithersoever he leads. Their lips have been touched (Isa. 6:7) and they have been given the tongue of the learned (Isa. 50:4). In everything they acknowledge and confess him. They bow in humble submission at a throne of grace and beg him for strength to keep them. The sweetest and most amazing doctrine that ever came to any poor sinful wretch is, that not a single one has ever been turned away empty. Precious Jesus!—W. D. G.

IT CAME TO PASS

Sister Mary E. Wray of Greensboro, N. C., mother of brother Burch C. Wray, whose experiences during the war, both in this country and in England, were followed by our readers with keen interest, has asked us to write on the above words. According to Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, this expression is found almost innumerable times in the Bible, so that all we can hope to do is to call attention to but a few of the instances where it appears. One of the first and foremost thoughts which has come into our mind in connection with these words is that God is absolutely sovereign over all worlds, principalities and powers, visible and invisible, and that he works all things together so as to bring to pass whatsoever he, in his infinite wisdom, determined to be done. God spake by the prophet Isaiah, saying, "Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Isa. 14:24 Jeremiah in his Lamentations asked, "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" Many people seem to think that the Devil has about as much power as the Almighty, and that he can bring things to pass independently of God. Job said "his hand hath formed the crooked serpent," and we like to meditate upon the fact that Satan could not touch anything that belonged to Job, or afflict his person in any way, until God had given him leave. Jesus said to Pilate, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." What a comfort it must have been to our sister to realize that our God, who is infinitely above and beyond all we can possibly conceive, was watching over her precious son as he went forth into battle; that not a single bomb, bullet or anything else could hit 'till the God of love saw fit, and how happy we all are that it was God's good pleasure to bring to pass even as we see it to-day, the return of her boy to her with a much deeper sense of appreciation of God's providences and power to save unto the very uttermost. Truly, there is nothing impossible with this God, and he is deserving of endless praise for his wonderful works among the children of men.

The first instance which we wish to call attention to "It came to pass" concerns the deliverance of Israel from Egypt. In Exodus 12:40-41 we read: "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt." We see from this God had determined upon the number of years, yea, the number of days, and that it was the selfsame day that all the hosts of the Lord went out of Egypt. It was not necessary for him to deliver his people in installments or groups, for it is declared that all the hosts of the Lord went out of Egypt, and the record further declares that not even a dog could wag his tongue, or bark, to awaken the Egyptians, lest they

prevent Israel's escape. God controls the small things in this world as well as the big things, and there is no creature in all of the universe that does not pay obeisance to him. We are told in the verse following the two referred to that it was a night to be much observed unto the Lord for bringing them out from the land of Egypt, and that it was a night to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations. How typical this is of the Lord's dealings with spiritual Israel in bringing them from nature's darkness into the marvelous light of his glorious truth. Some appear to have the idea that the creature is the master of his fate, the captain of his soul, and can forsake the way of sin at some time convenient to himself, which he may choose, but we have not so learned Christ. The poet said:

> There is a period known to God
> When all his sheep, redeem'd by blood,
> Shall leave the hateful ways of sin,
> Turn to the fold, and enter in.

God has a set time to favor Zion, and when that time comes, he speaks, saying, "Let (which is a command of Jehovah) the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Isa. 55:7. This wicked one referred to here is not one of the non-elect, but rather a chosen vessel of mercy, who fell in Adam but is now brought nigh by the blood of Christ, and so he is commanded to return unto the Lord, who will have mercy upon him, and will abundantly pardon. As set forth by this same writer, or prophet, in the tenth verse of the thirty-fifth chapter, "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." All the demons in hell cannot prevent the work of the Lord, for he himself hath said the word that goeth forth out of his mouth shall not return unto him void, but it shall accomplish that which he please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto he sends it. Therefore the children of God, when they are delivered from the bondage of sin, like Israel of old at the Red Sea, they will proclaim the Lord's glorious triumph, and they will tell it to their children, and their children's children, generation after generation. As Israel commemorated God's mercy down through the ages by observing the Passover feast, so will spiritual Israel sing his praise and keep in remembrance "these things" till Jesus comes to take them home. That time also is fixed and when it comes we may be certain that it will come to pass that they shall depart to be with Christ, which is far better.

Concerning this people whom God loved and favored above all nations on the face of the earth, after having delivered them from the powers of darkness, we read in Joshua 21:43-45 that "the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which he sware to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And the Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that he sware unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass." Surely, there is no God like unto the God of Jeshurun, and neither is there any people like the people of God, for it is written, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." Deut. 33:29.

In the days of King Saul's reign, there came out a great champion from the camp of the Philistines, named, Goliath of Gath, and challenged Israel. He

was indeed a great giant and his armour seemed impenetrable. When he defied the armies of Israel it is said that Saul and all Israel were dismayed, and greatly feared, but it came to pass that God brought forth his own anointed one, even David, who said, "Is there not a cause?" He had faith to believe in the purposes of God, and he said to Saul, let no man's heart fail because of Goliath, "thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine." We need in this day and time men of God's appointing to go forth and battle with the powers of evil. This Goliath was the personification of falsehood and the enemies of God, and we should rejoice and give thanks to God for his mercy in raising up witnesses in every age of the world that will not lie, but who will declare the truth, despite all that men and devils can do. David's armour consisted in part of five smooth pebbles taken from the brook, which in our humble opinion bespoke God's word in the law, for there were five books of the law. Only one of those stones was necessary for the slaying of Goliath, and all we need in battling for the Lord to-day is a strict adherence to his blessed word. Carnal weapons will only add fuel to the flame, but when we come with a "thus saith the Lord," every opposer must turn away and admit defeat. No enemy is so seductive, nor any doctrine of mankind so plausible but what the light of God's blessed truth will reveal it in its true light. We are persuaded that God will continue to raise up men who will maintain the honor of his word, regardless of who may attempt to change or divert its true meaning. David in many respects typified Jesus, and it came to pass in the fullness of time he came into the world, not to do his own will, but the will of his Father which sent him, which was that of all he had given him, he should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. When Jesus came and suffered, bled and died for the sins of his people, and was raised again the third day for their justification, God's purpose in sending his only begotten Son into the world was made manifest, and John, speaking in behalf of his followers, said, "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." This was the Word which was made flesh and dwelt among us, which in the beginning was with God, and verily was God, by whom all things were made, and without whom was not anything made that was made. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." Notwithstanding this testimony, the world is full of so-called religionists to-day who are proclaiming that the natural man can of his own will and volition believe on the Lord. They frequently quote the twelfth verse of the first chapter of John, where it says, "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name," but they remain eternally silent about the verse which follows and which explains why and how it is they believe on his name. It plainly declares, "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." How true it is that God has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

We realize we have only touched upon the significance of the words "It Came to Pass," but our space is somewhat limited and we must begin to bring our thoughts to a conclusion. In doing so we wish to remind our readers of one more important instance, or connection where these words are found. We refer to Acts 27:44. There is set forth in this

chapter of the Acts of the Apostles some of the perils which Paul and others encountered. We believe they portray in part some of the afflictions and trials which beset us as we journey through life. Paul had advised against making that journey to Rome, but he was a prisoner and his word was little regarded at first. It was not until "neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was taken away," that they were minded to listen to him and give heed to his words, and what wonderful words they were! They are far more eloquent and awe-inspiring than anything we can pen, so we will give them to our readers as they came from him: "But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." Dear brethren and friends, we cannot refrain from speaking to you of the great courage which is manifested where there is faith, yea, unshakable faith in the Lord God of hosts. Paul wrote to the Hebrews, saying, "Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Let us, therefore, not stagger at the promise of God, for all things are possible with him with whom we have to do and, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" These are perilous times in which we are living, and like the great apostle, some of His servants often have to go bound to places where he hath appointed, and their faith will be tried though as by fire, but God will not fail them. He will surely provide for all the needs of those who stay upon their God and will preserve them from all harm in the day of evil. As "it came to pass" that not a single soul of all that company on ship making the voyage described by Paul was lost, so will it come to pass concerning us, if indeed we be the people of God. All Israel shall be saved with an everlasting salvation, and through all the turmoil and strife of this sin-cursed world we shall in the end be brought forth more than conquerors, through him that loved us and gave himself for us, and to his precious and holy name everlasting praise belongs.

While we feel we have hardly hinted at the fulness of our subject, such thoughts as have been given to us have been presented in the hope that they will be of some comfort to our inquiring sister, as well as others of our readers. With love to all of the household of faith. R. L. D.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Whereas the Lord in his infinite wisdom and mercy has seen fit to remove from our midst by death, our beloved colored brother, GEORGE W. HOLLOWAY, be it

Resolved, that we bow in humble submission to God's holy will, desiring to be reconciled and given grace to press onward toward the mark of the prize of the high calling, ever looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Resolved, that Eno Church has lost a faithful member, but we feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

Resolved, that he will be missed by all who knew him, and his humble life of service should be an inspiration to us as we journey on in hope of a better land.

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be recorded on our church record, one to the family and one to each of the following publications; **Old Faith Contender, Signs of the Times and Zion's Landmark.**

Done by order of conference of Eno Primitive Baptist Church, Durham, N. C., Jan. 26, 1946.

(Elder) L. A. HOLLOWAY, Moderator
T. W. WHITEFIELD, Clerk

A Deacon indeed and our precious brother. A. J. CRENSHAW, was born Feb. 27, 1869, and passed from earth to his reward Feb. 14, 1946. He lived on this earth 77 years less 13 days. We can truly say a noble character is removed from us, but our loss is heaven's gain. We bow our heads in submission to his holy will and say he who does all things well has called him from the evil to come. Dear bereaved relatives, brothers and sisters let us say brother Crenshaw is peacefully resting in that haven of spirits with God, and when Jesus comes to earth again that spirit will be a part for he fell asleep in Jesus. Weep not for him but rather rejoice. The record he left behind is most comforting. His life was honorable and in memory of him be it,

Resolved, that a copy of this notice be placed on our church book records, a copy be sent to our family paper, **The Signs of the Times,** and a copy be sent to his bereaved widow and children.

Done by order of Little Flock Church while in regular session of conference, March 10, 1946.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN, Moderator
(Mrs.) LOU KESTER, Church Clerk

Elder JOHN W. PETERS, was born in Missouri, March 8, 1859, lived in Missouri until 1900, then in Kansas four years. In 1904 he came to Bremerton, Wash., and later to Riffe, Wash., where he joined the Old School Baptist Church of that place by letter and was a member at the time of his death on Oct. 20, 1945 at the age of 86 years, 7 months and 12 days.

Whereas, it has pleased our heavenly Father to call from our midst, our dearly beloved brother and pastor who so faithfully served us as pastor for many years, and who came to us regularly, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and in his humble loving way speaking to us words of admonition, comfort and doctrine as long as his bodily strength would permit him to do so, he being an able minister of the gospel of Christ, believing in salvation by grace and grace alone, and in the sure promises and purposes of an all wise God who doeth all things well, therefore, be it

Resolved, that we bow in humble submission to the will of Him who doeth all things well, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. Also that we extend to his dear companion and children our deepest sympathy in their great loss, and that a copy of these resolutions be placed on our church records, and sent to the family of our brother Peters, and a copy be sent to the **Signs of the Times** and to **Old Faith Contender** for publication in each. This done and signed by order of the church, Jan. 20, 1946.

(Elder) I. F. COLEMAN, Moderator, Riffe, Wash.
ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk, Riffe, Wash.

OBITUARIES

MRS. LAURA C. SHAFER, our dear sister in Christ, ended her earthly career in Brooklyn, N. Y., on January 4th, 1946. She was born in Schoharie, N. Y., on January 24th, 1851, which made her stay on earth 94 years, 11 months and 10 days. She was married to John D. Shafer in September, 1869, and the following named children were born to this union: Benjamin L. Shafer and Clifford B. Shafer, both deceased, and Sophia M. West, who survives her. There are also three grandchildren and three great-grandchildren, all living, who are left to share their loss with her friends and brethren.

Sister Shafer was baptized by Elder Balas Bundy, Oct. 26th, 1879, and was received by letter from Schoharie Church, New York, into the fellowship of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in New York City, December 7th, 1913. We cannot speak too highly of the faithfulness of our sister in attending her meetings as long as she was physically able. We would also like to mention here particularly the faithfulness of her daughter, Mrs. West, in accompanying her mother to our meetings, without which it would have been impossible for her to have met with the saints, where she delighted to be. The writer cannot refrain also from making mention of the fact that she greatly encouraged him in his ministry, for which he will always be grateful to God. Truly, a dear saint has gone to her eternal home to be with him whom she loved, served and adored here on earth.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer on January 7th, 1946, by reading, with necessary modifications, Hymn No. 1252, Beebe's Collection; then reading the first two verses of the fortieth chapter of Isaiah, making such comment as the Lord was pleased to give, and the service was concluded by the reading of Hymn No. 1052 Beebe's Collection. Interment was in Evergreen Cemetery, Brooklyn, N. Y.

May the Lord enable us to thank him for such gifts to the church as was bestowed in the person of our sister, and cause us to emulate as far as possible her example of faithfulness to his cause, and may he also reconcile us to his will in all things, for Christ's sake, Amen. R.L.D.

MATILDA MYERLEY THOMPSON, our sister in Christ, departed this earthly life from her home, Herndon, Va., February 15, 1946. Her husband, our brother William A. Thompson, formerly Deacon of the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va. preceded her in death more than 16 years. Their eldest son Clarence died in 1922 leaving a widow and four children, Mrs. Clarence Thomp-

son now living in Shepherdstown, W. Va. Sister Thompson had not been able to attend any of our meetings since December 1944 and had been in steadily declining strength for 14 months prior to her death. She was the daughter of George and Sarah Myerley and was born in Trough Creek valley near Cassville, Pa. April 14, 1859. She was married to William A. Thompson, son of David and Mary Ellen Thompson, in 1878. Brother Thompson was born and reared near Martinsburg, W. Va. In October 1897 both of them were baptized by the late Elder E. V. White into the Mill Creek Church near Kearneysville, W. Va. They moved to Fairfax County, Va. in 1900 and established themselves on a farm near the Frying Pan Church with which body of brethren they united by letter from the Mill Creek Church. Brother Thompson served the church as Deacon faithfully and well and his judgment was found to be loving, wise and just in all matters pertaining to the faith and order of the church. Sister Thompson was a deacon's true wife, much given to hospitality, their home being ever open to the entertainment of their brethren, their hands and hearts ever ready to minister to those in need. They are survived by six children, thirteen grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. Mrs. Myrtle Gulick, Aldie, Va., Mrs. Walter Fox, Vienna, Va., Mrs. Jether Dove, Herndon, Va. and Miss Hattie Thompson, Herndon, Va., the latter not married, faithfully attended and cared for her mother all through her weakness and illness. The sons surviving are: Albert Thompson near Fairfax, Va. and Earl Thompson, who with his family occupied the home in Herndon with his mother and sister Hattie, and who also proved his devoted love in faithfully attending upon the wants of his mother and sister as well as his own wife and children in the home. Sister Thompson was never absent from the meetings when possible to be there, and I know she went many times when suffering greatly physically, probably when others in like state would have made their feelings an excuse to remain at home. She told me toward the last, that all she had was her hope of salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ and this was her one support as her days drew to a close. She longed to depart the earthly tabernacle and be at rest. All fear of the end had been removed, and she looked upon death not as a barrier to bliss but as an open door into the presence of the Lord, since Jesus had gone through death to destroy death for them that are his. Funeral services were held by the writer, her pastor for over 35 years, at her recent home in Herndon, Va. Burial in the cemetery at Herndon, the body being laid to rest to await the summons from on high at the coming of the Lord from heaven.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS

It is with sorrowful hearts that we write of the passing of our dear sister, ONIE E. STAFFORD, at the age of 77 years. She was born in Virginia and married to Mr. Bunyon Connor. They moved to Hickman, Ky. near Brownsville in their early life. To this union were born eight children: Mrs. Hattie Gray, Van Nuys, Cal., Mrs. Kate Williams, Detroit, Mich., Grover and Worder Connor, Hickman, Ky., Lacy who passed away a few weeks ago, Beulah and Angela Connor, Hopkinsville, Ky., Bunyon Connor, Arthur, Texas. After Mr. Connor's death she was married to Mr. Odell Stafford and to this union were born five children: Kenneth Stafford, Detroit, Mich., James Clyde Stafford, St. Louis, Mo., Mrs. Ruby Andrews, Muskegon, Mich., Mrs. Opal Barnett, Hickman, Ky., Billy Stafford, Memphis, Tenn. Mr. Stafford survives her, also one sister, Ollie Smith, Washington, D. C., twenty-five grandchildren, twelve great-grandchildren, and a host of friends to mourn her loss.

She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Mud Creek, Fulton Co., Ky. on the first Sunday in June 1899 and was a faithful member until death. She loved her church above all else and went far and near to meetings. She was known for her good singing voice and hospitality and to know her was to love her. She was blessed with good health until a few weeks before she died, when she became ill and was taken to Memphis to the Baptist Hospital. They were unable to help her and she returned home where she had the most of her children by her bedside. She continually grew worse until one day she called them and told them her time had come. After talking to each one she prayed and repeated the hymn "A child of Jehovah." At the close of her prayer she asked for Jesus to come and take her out of her suffering, adding "here he is" and went into a coma. She passed away in a few hours. Our loss is her eternal gain and may we well remember her walk in this life. We could say many things about her but we know she would not want to be praised for these gifts; but rather praise the Lord for his loving kindness that causes his children to love and adore him, and to love one another with that pure love that comes from God, causing them to travel many miles to meet with those whose hope and trust is in God and have learned to have no confidence in the flesh.

Our dear mother in Israel has gone to rest to wait her Master's call in that great day when the dead in Christ shall rise first and they that are yet alive shall be changed in a moment and caught up to meet him in the air. May God comfort her children and all who mourn. Written by request by two who loved her dearly.

LUCILLE and CARRIE

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Primitive Baptist churches of the Border Union of eastern Wash., Ore. and Idaho will meet with Pleasant Grove Church of Yakima, Wash., June 14, 15 and 16, 1946. The meetings will be held this year at Naches, Wash., located 15 miles N. W. of Yakima, on U. S. highway 410. Ask for directions at Naches post office, or phone Naches 493.

Eld. A. D. Hughett, Mod.
Beatrice Haan, C. C.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church in Baltimore, Md., will hold a two days meeting, June 29 and 30, 1946, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. Services begin at 11 a.m. All lovers of the truth and ministering brethren are cordiaally invited to attend.

D. L. TOPPING, Pastor.

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sundays in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y. at 10:30 a.m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meetinghouse, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed. R. LESTER DODSON

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

Beginning with the next issue we will publish notices of Regular Meetings only every three months. They will appear next in the October issue, and thereafter in January, April, etc. This plan will give more space for other reading matter which we hope will be pleasing to our readers. Notices of Special Meetings will appear as in the past. R.L.D.

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each 1st Sunday, 11:00 a.m. and Saturday before.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday.

AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala.
Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopewell Church, Ozark Ala., meets each 4th Sunday, 11 a.m. J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock. Meeting place at Alder St. at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, 11 a.m. Elders J. J. Collins and J. S. Bass, Pastors

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

Beaulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canda, California.

Bethel Church near Stockton, Cal. meets first and third Sundays in each month and Saturday nights before. For further information write SETH BYNUM, R 3, Box 800 G, Stockton, Cal. or LEONA TUTTLE, 1940 N. Center St., Stockton, Cal.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday, north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets every second Sunday at 5th and E. Park St.

B. O. JEFFREYS, Pastor
Weiser, Idaho

Pleasant Valley Church Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc)

L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carver Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. C. H. EVANS, Pastor

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before a 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St D. L. TOPPING, Pastor

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.
D. L. TOPPING Pastor

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a.m. in the meeting-house. Pastor in regular attendance except first Sundays. C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays 10:30 A.M., 2 P.M.

The Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sundays at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue. Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 a.m. 1:30 p.m.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.
(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.
C. W. BOND, Pastor

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1026 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 a.m.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor
C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.
E. H. LANIER, Clerk

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. G. E. Rushing, co-pastor, C. B. TEAGUE, Pastor.

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets third Sunday in each month at 11:00 a.m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Old School Baptist meetings are held every fourth Sunday at Civic Club, 1419 N. Shepherd St., Houston, Texas. Preaching by Elder W. O. Beene.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockade, Texas, meets the first Sunday in each month at 10:30 a.m. in the Dr. Wood church-house.

Mt. Zion Chuch, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Danville Primitive Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before Bradley Road, Danville, Va.
W. R. DODD, Pasotr.

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meet each first Sunday 11 a.m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p.m. and Sunday at 11 a.m., Fairmont Park, 3023 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va., R. B. DENSON, Pastor

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.
R. B. DENSON, Pastor

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a.m. C. M. FISHER.

Bethel Old School Baptist Church, Riffe, Wash. meets every third Sunday, 11 a.m. in the meeting house. I. F. COLEMAN, Mod.
ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk, Riffe, Wash.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va., N. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 114 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JULY, 1946 No. 7

PRAYER FOR FAITH AND GRACE

Do I love Thee gracious Lord?
Oft this searching rends my heart;
Thou who art the living word,
Bid my anxious fears depart.

Give me some tokens of Thy grace,
Thou who art the sinner's friend;
Cause me in this unequal, tedious race,
To love and trust Thee to the end.

My days are swiftly moving on
When I must faint and die;
Thy mercy Lord, when to that hour I come,
Is that for which I beg, for which I cry.

Yes, truly I'm a beggar Lord
While here on earth I stay:
Lead me to the promises of Thy word,
And grant me faith and grace I pray.

And when my race is ended here,
And I from sin and shame set free;
May I sing praises to Thee there,
For all Thy wondrous grace to me.

St. Albans, W. Va. (Elder) H. J. BIRD

CORRESPONDENCE

MEDITATIONS ON THE TEMPLE OF SOLOMON AS RECORDED IN PROVERBS

by

Elder T. Floyd Adams,
Willows Springs, N. C.

"Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: She hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table. She hath sent forth her maidens: she crieth upon the highest places of the city, Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled. Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding." Proverbs 9: 1-6.

For sometime I have had a mind to write on the scriptures at the head of this article, but as I have said many times, that if preaching or writing is profitable to the household of faith, it must first be taught in our experience by the Son of God, and then revealed or brought to our remembrance by the Holy Ghost. (John 14:28)

When some one is talking or writing about a great person we are very apt to inquire in our mind, who is this man? Where did he come from? Who was his father and mother? Where did his ancestors come from? In answer to some of the above questions, may I add that according to Holy Writ, Solomon was the son of David who was king of Israel, his mother was Eliam's daughter and the wife of Uriah the Hittite. It may be of interest to the readers to know that David had Uriah put in the forefront of the battle so that he was smitten. Then David took Uriah's wife to be his wife, and she was Solomon's mother. His grandfather was named Jesse, and his ancestors were of this notable family, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

I have regarded Solomon, in many respects, as being a type of Christ. First, he possessed more wisdom than any other man, and if my memory serves correctly, we are told that none shall come after him that is as wise as he. Second, he was a kind and gentle ruler over all

Israel, and rendered just and righteous decisions before the people. "In Gideon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, ask what I shall give thee." I Kings 3-5. Solomon prayed to God to "Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing." So the Lord did not only give him wisdom, but riches and honor also.

When I was a boy I read this scripture and I thought that it was a matter of choice for which he could ask. (Of course it was a matter of choice but not in the sense which I thought.) I had an idea that he could ask for riches, wisdom, honor or anything of his own choosing. In other words, I thought it was about like this. If I should go to town and buy several presents and say to my little girl take any one that you want, and in all probability, I would not know which one she would take before she made her selection. I also thought that I certainly would have asked for riches, then I could discharge all of my obligations and probably give a little to the poor, but make sure that I would reserve a sufficient amount for future use, and there is little doubt in my mind but that Solomon would have asked for riches had he possessed a carnal mind at the time. But ah! how different do I look at the scene now. Does God ever put the burden of prayer in your heart, before he first makes you feel the need of the thing that he purposes to give you? Can we pray for mercy before we feel the need of help? Solomon felt the need of wisdom more than anything else for he was now beginning to reign in the place of his father, David, and he was conscious of the fact that many perplexing problems would arise among the people, which would require the guiding hand of God, therefore, he said, "Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad."

Dear servants of God, have you not had the same experience that Solomon did, many times in your feeble efforts in serving as a servant among the people of God? I know that my dear wife and I have felt this to a great extent in our family circle, in the rearing of our children. Before I was married I thought I knew all about rearing children, and I had a fixed rule in my mind that I would follow which was something like this. If I ever married a wife and any children were born in our family, I would use the lash in making any corrections, but ah! how mistaken I was. May I say that if your child knows but the rod of correction laid on his or her back every time it does something wrong, you have a poorly brought up child, for I have learned by experience that it takes a great deal of patience, kindness and teaching mixed with firmness, to get the proper respect and confidence of our children, in order that they may obey from a standpoint of love rather than fear. When our boys grew up into the teen age, they would come around and say, "Father, I want your car to go to a ball game, picture show or some worldly amusement." My preference was that they be content not to go, but I began to realize that I was once a boy and I enjoyed parties and dances, and I wanted them to have reasonable privileges with other boys lest they think that their mother and I were too strict with them. But the great problem was this, when they repeated this request, which I thought was too often, shall I say yes, or shall I say no, and for fear that I was not in the frame of mind to make a proper decision, I would say, "go and ask your mother," and she would say, "go back and ask your father." We have often been brought into great straits making up our minds, and many times we said, "Oh

Lord, decide this matter for us, that we may train our children up in the way that they should go, that when they get old they will not depart from it." The same has been true in regard to our girls.

One notable circumstance which was brought before King Solomon was the case of two women who lived in the same house and each gave birth to a child about three days apart, one of the women overlaid her child and it died. About the midnight hour she laid the dead baby in the bed of the other woman and took the living child and claimed it as her own; the other woman awoke in the morning to give her child suck, and upon finding that she had been defrauded of her child she made complaint to the other woman that the living child was hers, but the other contended that the living child was hers. Inasmuch as they could not settle the matter they brought the case before the highest tribunal on earth. So Solomon heard the testimony of each, both testifying that the living child was hers. No other witnesses were present, which of course made it much harder to decide. I am sure that nothing short of divine wisdom could render a righteous verdict in this case. May I repeat again that King Solomon had prayed and said, "Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad." He said to his servant, "Bring me a sword," which they did, and the king said, "Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other. Then spake the woman whose the living child was unto the King, for her bowels yearned upon her son, and she said, O my Lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it. Then the King answered and said, Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she is the mother thereof." I Kings 3: 25-27.

This one decision was published abroad throughout the land, and the people feared him, for they saw that the hand of God was with him. The vast number of horses and chariots, and the great number of beasts that were slain each day to satisfy the hunger of those of his household, and the men servants and maid servants that were in attendance at his command, are beautiful types of the bountiful storehouse of our great Emanuel, who sits upon his throne and metes out justice and mercy to all of his poor, hungry and tempest tossed children. As Solomon was governor over all of Israel who would say that God does not govern the universe from the huge monsters down to the smallest insect. He has said in his word, "The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool." Isa. 66:1. "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine and the fulness thereof." Psalms 50: 10-12. But ah! before we can fully realize the truth of this we have to be brought down from our throne of self works and self righteousness, then we can appreciate the true value of this inspired word. When the great King Nebuchadnezzar was dismounted from his throne and was made to eat grass like oxen, "and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws," (Dan. 4:33) then he could say with a true and understanding heart that "all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he (God) doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Dan. 4:35.

I can appreciate and sympathize with our brethren when they get in a low state, and the Lord seems to hide his face. We see so many of the dear fathers

and mothers passing out and so few joining the church to fill the vacancies. We often wonder and feel that we have been remiss in our duty. Such has been my own feelings many times. When we are brought to this low ebb, and darkness enshrouds our souls it is then that satan makes his worst attacks, but when the day dawns and we are again illuminated by the Holy Spirit, the evil one flees away like the rays before the beaming sun, and as these Temanites were a great pest in the life of Job, you may be sure that they will pester you. How good it is to remember the words of the inspired apostle which was directed by the Holy Ghost, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

The eagle is a faint type of the church and I would not say that during her molting season she is entirely free from her prey, but when she feathers out she soars high above the clouds. The old prophet Elias was reduced to a low state when he made intercession to God against Israel saying, "Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal," and the apostle Paul referred to this and said, "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." Rom. 11: 3-5. Jesus said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Luke 12:32.

I will now attempt, if God is willing, to explain what I see in the scripture at the head of this article, "Wisdom hath builded her house." The house which Solomon built, was to my mind a type of the heavenly church which the Lord has or is building for he said, "And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Matt. 16:18. This house was not so large according to the dimensions, but it was an expensive one. It took one hundred fifty-three thousand and three hundred men, seven years to build it. Cedar and stone were the principle materials that were used in the construction of this building. Cedar is a highly typical material because of its long life and preserving qualities. It kept the moths out and the stones made it burglar proof which compares favorably to the language of Jesus. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal." Matt. 6: 19-20. These trees were hewn out chiefly by the servants of Hiram, from the cedars of Lebanon. Each piece of material was so minutely dressed out, "that there was neither hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was building." I Kings 6:7. As the type so is the reality when the Lord began his work, you were in the forest of nature, "and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Eph. 2:3. He first cut you down, and each stroke was indeed necessary in order to hew off the roughage, straighten you out and make you fit for the Master's use. The reader may inquire, "Have I been properly dressed out?" I have said that this is a fairly good rule by which to tell. If we are back biting, fault finding, contending about trifling things and striving about words to no profit among and with our brethren, it is good evidence that a few more knots need to be slabbed off, which God alone can do. Long before you united with the church you may have thought that there were certain members on the inside that you could not fellowship, but ah! how different when you were carried there on the wings of God's

love. There was then no thought in your mind of who can I fellowship, but the great wonder now is who can fellowship me? How good if we could always be possessed with this spirit.

Several years ago I had an appointment at a church during the week. Upon approaching the ground several brethren gathered around me and said, "Brother Adams, there is a man here that we want you to encourage to unite with the church." I said, What is his reason for staying out?" They said, "He stated that there was a member that he could not fellowship." My reply was, "You had better let him alone until God completes his work with the hewing ax." About two years later, the unworthy writer was present when this brother came pleading for a home and was happily received into the fold. It will be noticed that when these timbers were hewn out they were floated to Joppa by way of the sea. The word *sea* often when used in the Scriptures signifies trouble. We see the waves and billows as they roll to the shore. David said, "All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." Psalms 42:7. Dear child of God, have you ever felt any of these waves and billows come over you while you are floating by the way of the sea? If so, be not discouraged for our God has spoken by the mouth of his apostle and said, "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." Acts 14:22. The materials that were used in the construction of this building were not dead, rotten or decayed materials. They were sound and seasoned materials. So is the church of God. She is built out of living materials, living by the reason of Christ who lives in her. Peter said, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ," I Peter 2:5, which is in harmony with the testimony of the apostle Paul, "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, *in whom* all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." Eph. 2: 20-21.

"She hath hewn out her seven pillars." I do not claim to have any superior knowledge over my precious brethren in writing on this or any other portion of God's sacred word. Some have said "the seven pillars" represent the seven churches of Asia, but as I view the natural building of Solomon, I see the building is supported by the pillars and the pillars get their support from the rock bed underneath. Now the pillars are between the rock and the building which seems to me to more fully represent the apostles and prophets who were peculiarly fitted and hewn out to withstand the cold, chilly winds and give succor and support to the children of God by reason of the severe trials and afflictions which they were enabled by the grace of God to pass through. Would you not say that you have many times drawn comfort and peace from their sacred writings when they are applied to your experience by the Holy Ghost? When the apostle John was exiled upon the isle of Patmos, he said, "I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation." Remember that it is when you are in tribulation that he is your bosom friend. The word "seven" is often used to denote fulness. The above views which I have penned seem to me to be in harmony with the inspired writings of the apostle Paul. "And are built upon the *foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone*; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." Eph. 2: 20-21.

(To be continued)

Route 1, Box 901, Auburn, Wash.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am sending you a letter I received last month. I

think it is a wonderful letter and shows the Saviour's work among his people. The day I received it, it seemed the sun shone brighter than usual. I could not help noticing it. I would like to see the letter in the *Signs*. I do not have permission to publish it but I do not think the writer will care. I have received some wonderful letters. One thing is sure, my hope is built on nothing less, than Jesus blood and righteousness. I am so tired of sin and this weary world. I know there is nothing I can do unless my heavenly Father points the way. I must stand still. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long: we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." I will say farewell with love to the household of faith.

(Mrs.) JENNIE CLIFFORD

Route 1, Box 738, Brooks Ave., Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR FRIEND If I would be so bold as to speak as such, but I cannot help feeling any friend, or one who loves Old Baptist doctrine, is a friend of mine. I hope so. I know you are wondering who I am and why I wrote to you. I will attempt to answer question number two first. Only God knows why I had the desire to write to you and I hope he influenced me to do so. If so all is well, but if I am influenced otherwise may you recognize it at once and disregard the whole matter. As to who I am I would answer at once, I am a sinner living in hope of the coming of the Lord when he shall come with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise. Oh! what a day of rejoicing that will be when all the chosen in Christ will be gathered together to be with him; where all tears will be wiped away; no more sorrow, sin or pain; one eternity of joy and peace. If I may intrude on your time a few moments I would like to tell you something of my experience.

I am far from being a good person for I feel there is none good but God. I have many faults, I do not like them, in fact I hate them, yet I have them as they seem to be some of my can't help its, and I do feel I am a can't help it all the way. I was born July 14, 1911 of Missionary Baptist parents. I joined their church when I was nine years old with only the feeling there is a God and fear of everlasting doom. With this fear uppermost in mind during a revival of the church my parents attended I joined, was accepted and baptized. Thus was I taught in the school of men that we choose our life as we want it to be, and also choose heaven or everlasting punishment and work to obtain the high honor, but behold when God teaches us a lesson we do not forget so easily. I knew nothing of the Primitive Baptist or doctrine until I was seventeen years old, that was when I married my husband coming from a Primitive Baptist home. His father in the flesh, J. D. Newman, was in his day a Primitive Baptist preacher. After our marriage we discussed the differences in our beliefs a lot but I would not consent to attend his church. I just could not (or thought so) accept the doctrine of predestination, particularly election and special atonement, and I do not believe even now that it is left up to anyone to believe

or accept anything. God teaches and we are made to believe, therefore then, I fought this doctrine, in all truth I must say so.

When my husband's mother died in 1931 my father-in-law made his home with us. Naturally he loved to talk of his doctrine and I was so sinful I could not even bear with him. I did not even want to hear it discussed. Oh yes, the Lord knows what a sinner I am. My father-in-law lived with us seven years and died with my attitude unchanged, yet I felt a love for him and I did not even understand why I felt as I did. I would do anything for his comfort but when he commenced on his doctrine I was just long gone elsewhere. The strangest thing happened when he was on his death bed, that is just before he died. One morning he seemed as rational as could be. He had not been well for some time, being eighty-five and his mind seemed to be leaving him. So many things took hold at once concerning his health and he was forced to take his bed to leave this world. This particular morning he seemed better and called my two children to his bedside, telling them to be good children. Then he turned to me and said, "Louise, no one could make me believe you are not a child of God." I thought what a strange thing for one to say as far apart as we were in doctrine. He passed away a few days later and I think I shall never forget that expression. We laid him to rest beside his wife who had preceded him in death seven years. It was a beautiful day but I did not feel it so for when he died I almost had a nervous collapse. The funeral was held at Ripley, Tenn. about fifty-five miles from Memphis, that having been his home the greater part of his life. He married and raised his family there in the same neighborhood. There was called from Mayfield. Ky, a preacher of like faith as his to attend the services, Elder Wade Perkins. I got the shock of my life right at that funeral. When this preacher arose and spoke to the crowd, and what a crowd it was, house and yard full, this thought and conviction came to me, "Here is a man of God." Then and there was born the desire to hear what these people have to say concerning God and his purposes, but I did not go at once to hear them. When I got home we only attended the Missionary meetings once. Before my husband's Dad died I had become disinterested in the church I belonged to. I did not know what was wrong with me but when I went to church I felt like I did not get anything out of it. I did not understand the preachers sermons and I felt there was a lacking there but I knew not what. I asked my husband to take me to hear the Primitive Baptists and I would not let him rest until he agreed to do so, so in the summer of 1941 I listened to my first Primitive Baptist sermon in their church here on Shotwell Ave. in Memphis. Elder W. O. Wammack was moderator of this little church, and even though the number present is sometimes few, here is the thing found that caused my worry and I felt lacking when I attended the Missionaries. What? Charity manifested beyond the tongue. Maybe that is why I desired to write you as you mentioned that you liked charity. Ah, I do too, without it we are told we are only tinkling symbols, and, dear friend, I hope I have been taught it for when we are taught a lesson by the hand of the all wise and all powerful God we do not forget so easily. I asked the Missionaries for my letter or to take my name from their books as I was not in accord with their doctrine.

I first felt the struggling of two natures in 1942 and if you care to correspond with me I would like to tell you about this, but O if I know myself at all I hope I have been brought to believe in a God who does all his pleasure, who saw the end of everything from the beginning, purposed all events and brings them

about to the wise and just end he chose, raising up the evil for his day as Pharoah and choose his people in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blame before him in love. Now if the Bible does not teach predestination, election and special atonement I just do not understand it, yet on the other hand, dear friend, when I am made to see some of the things I do I wonder why I could claim to love Him. Why am I thus? I am such an unworthy one even of the least of his consideration, much less his mercy, and me, indeed not, I do not want justice for I know where that would land me. Oh, if I can claim a part and have a hope it most assuredly lies in the finished work of one who was obedient to the law, who who was tempted like as we are, yet without sin, who paid the supreme sacrifice for his children and it is to him we have everything to be thankful for and who would not love such an one. I have no righteousness, I own, but he is perfect righteousness and all praise, glory and honor is due him. I have not wherewith that I glory but look to him for grace for I of myself can do nothing. I feel so dependent on him for all things I receive both temporal and spiritual. I like the epistle of Paul to the Ephesians, also 8th and 9th chapter of Romans. I, too, get so much enjoyment in the reading of the *Signs of the Times*, and often when I feel so far away and blue, trying to hold on to the sweet experiences or bring them again, I am made to rejoice that I am not alone in my peculiar thoughts and ways, and indeed it is like good news from a far country. I am such an one that I do not understand so much of the Scriptures only as God has seen fit to reveal them to me, and I find myself in the position of needing his help and that continually for of myself I cannot withstand the evils of this world. Is it not a God of power that we are made to love, fear and believe in? And he has promised to never leave or forsake us though we are often blue and feel so empty and blank, but O the joy of the soul when he shows us again of these things as he did John. He sent to know of Him if he was the one, and he told the disciples to show again unto John these things, the blind see, the lame walk, etc.

Dear friend, I am afraid I have taken too much of your time and say you forgive me for that, please. I would like to correspond with you if you care that it be so, not that I feel worthy of the least of one's notice, but if I know myself at all I feel to say as Ruth, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." That is how I feel about the Old Baptist people that I have been brought to love, I hope by the great God of Israel. Why? Because I believe they love the things I hope I love, and when I am among them I feel at home. Though I do not belong to their church I hope to some day, that is, may it be God's will that it be so. With this thought in view and a hope that some day I can ask them to baptize me, that is what I long for now, I will end this letter and if ever you can feel it in your heart to do so remember an unworthy sinner, if saved at all saved by the grace of God. In love I am,

(Mrs.) LOUISE NEWMAN

(Frequently one of our readers will say, one issue of the *Signs* is worth a year's subscription, but if we are able to judge, many will feel that the foregoing letter addressed to a "Friend" is worth many times over the annual subscription price. Certain portions of it touched us so deeply that we had to pause and wipe the tears from our eyes before we could continue reading it. Her father-in-law, the dear old servant of God that he was, had discerned what was still un-

known to her, otherwise he could not have said what he did on his death bed: "Louise, no one could make me believe you are not a child of God." Like an arrow that pierces the heart of a deer, although it may continue to struggle and go deep into the wooded forest, sooner or later it will have to succumb to the wound of the archer and fall prostrate upon the ground. Truly, this arrow from God's bow aimed by his servant under the guiding influence of the Holy Spirit found its mark and accomplished the purpose of God, at whose command it was directed, for the testimony which our friend gives of the effectual working of God's mighty power in her heart and life is unmistakably clear to those who have eyes to see it. When we are blessed to witness such holy scenes we can but exclaim, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Rev. 15: 3. We do not see how a single heart which has been touched by the finger of God's infinite love can fail to burst forth into singing songs of praise and adoration to God's blessed name because of his wonderful works among the children of men, when they read such precious experiences as are set forth by our friend in her letter. We wish to thank sister Jennie Clifford for sending us this letter for publication and we are persuaded that the writer will feel to thank God for having presented so wonderfully to her kindred in the Spirit what God has wrought in her soul. She has told the Old Baptists in her letter how she feels toward them, and we are certain she will soon discover how they feel towards her if she will submit her case to the church, which will undoubtedly grant her the desire of her heart, and that is to be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. She, being in the Way (Christ), the Lord has led her to the house of her Master's brethren, and they can only rejoice and bid her "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without?" Gen. 24: 31 God, by his work of grace in the heart, has separated all such from the world, He has taken the world out of their heart, and while they are in the world, they are not of the world, for they are pilgrims journeying to a better country, and they should go home to their friends and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for them, whereof they are glad. May God's precious name have everlasting praise is our humble prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen.

R. L. D.)

(Continued from June issue)

When the Lord plows that sword reaches down into our very vitals; "For thus saith the Lord, Thy bruise is incurable, and thy wound is grievous. There is none to plead thy cause, that thou mayest be bound up: thou hast no healing medicines. All thy lovers have forgotten thee; they seek thee not; for I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one, for the multitude of thine iniquity; because thy sins were increased." Jer. 30: 12-14. This house of clay is all broken up when the Lord plows. Our power is broken up for it says, "For the Lord shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone and there is none shut up, or left." Deut. 32: 36. Our pride, our conceit, and all our ways are broken up, all our life's plans are broken up and must be sacrificed. "And Jacob shall break his clods." Jacob means experience, and it is only by a long and bitter experience that the clods of rebellion, pride, conceit and the like are broken up, that the seed, (the word of thy kingdom) may find a lodgment there. "Doth the plowman plow all day to sow? doth he open and break the clods

of his ground? When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and cast in the principal wheat and the appointed barley and the rie in their place?—This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working." Isa. 28: 24-25 and 29.

"And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." Christ is the true and only husband of the church, and that means every individual member of the church, the bride the Lamb's wife. Figuratively speaking, this man has become his own husband, he is yet laboring under the law to save himself by his own works. His power is not all gone yet, there seems to be some shut up and left, but there will not be when the Lord gets through with him. In what seems to be this same parable as recorded in Matt. 22, this same man is represented as not having a wedding garment on, it means the same as being married to a wife, for a wedding garment is the righteousness of Christ, and while we may have his righteousness doctrinally, yet experimentally we may not be married to him as long as we are laboring under the law, and it is experience that is being considered in this parable. As it was with Jacob, more clods will have to be broken if this man ever gets a taste of that great supper. "For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste my supper." I understand this to mean none of those who were yet laboring under the law. It must be remembered that this is all figurative language and none of it is to be taken literally. Jesus is not distinguishing between individuals here, but between works and grace. We notice that the only ones that eat of that supper are the ones that are brought there to eat it. There are none that can come of themselves. They all come the same way, it is by grace and grace alone, all the way. "So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind." The city here is Zion, the same city that is plowed like a field, and the lanes and streets are the experiences of those that are traveling in Zion. The Lord said he found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness, he led him about and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of his eye, and there was no strange God with him. He leads them in ways they have not known, and in paths they have not trod. He leads the blind by a way they knew not. "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert." Isa. 35: 5-6. When a poor afflicted straggler has reached this stage in his experience he can sing as of old. "And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." Isa. 12: 1-3.

Here is where the poor sinner is first made to taste of that great supper. In his own experience he is made to see the unfruitfulness of his own works, and is brought to a state of utter helplessness in himself, and then is made to taste of the grace and mercy of Christ. He can now say with Solomon, "He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." Sol. 2: 4. "And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room." I know full well that I will not be able

to find words to express what I see in these last words of the servant—"and yet there is room." This brings us to those deep experiences that only a few of the most severely tried and afflicted of God's saints can fully understand—"and yet there is room." "And the Lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste my supper." No, it is not the ones that are bidden but the ones that are brought. What is this house that filled, and what is it filled with? We are that house, "But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." Heb. 3: 6. That holding fast is not a condition, but the evidence that we are that house of God. That word *come* in the beginning of our text has the power within itself to see to it that we do hold fast, the servant is commanded to bring them and even compel them to come that the Lord's house may be filled. Filled with what? Filled with glory. "And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord. Then spake Solomon, The Lord said that he would dwell in the thick darkness." 1 Kings 10-12. Notice my friends it is the cloud that fills the house first, and it is in the thick darkness that the Lord dwells, and it is when the thick darkness is turned into light that the glory of the Lord fills the house. Let us notice also that the servant this time is not sent into the streets and lanes of the city, to them that are in the way, but to them that have gotten out of the way, to them that are out in the highways and out in the hedges, the distant and bordered places. There is a limit to which God's sheep can go, but they do very often go that limit; and it is there and only there that they are made to feel the full strength of God's strong arm; and when God in his great mercy brings us up out of a horrible pit and establishes our goings, and puts a new song in our mouths it is then that the house is filled with glory, the poor sinner is filled with the fulness of Christ.

One has said it is not when we are keeping the law that we are in the way, but when we do not keep it, for the law is a sort of hedge about us, and when we get out in the hedges and are pricked by its thorns we are driven back to Christ, for that is the only place we can find rest and peace, and thus we are compelled to come in. "And yet there is room." The only limit to that room is our limit to suffer more afflictions, and we are often given added grace and strength to suffer more to make room for more glory. We are often amazed at the faith and fortitude of those who are passing through deep trials, when they tell us they are more than willing to be afflicted for it is only there that they can have the peace and joy of a present Savior. "And yet there is room" for God seems to reserve his richest blessings for a time when we are most deserving, for often our patience gives way and our whole being is filled with rebellion, and the heart is full of cursing and bitterness. We may even feel to curse God, and lo, and behold, in the very midst of it the clouds above are parted and to our great surprise and amazement the full light and refulgent glory of God's abounding love, grace and mercy pours into our poor benighted hearts and once more the house is filled to overflowing. "And yet (even yet) there is room" for God's ways are unending, and his grace, love, mercy and power is inexhaustible, and as long as we are in this world we will continue to meet with new surprises, and then we will only have seen a very

small part of it, and we must be changed before we will be prepared to receive that glory in all its fulness.

(Elder) A. D. HUGHETT

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5 Shaw St., Sanford, Me.

DEAR BROTHER BELLOWS: Many have been my thoughts on all the good sermons we have been privileged to hear in the past year. How wonderful is the name Jehovah! How plainly and sweetly you told us of that dear name. So many beautiful attributes his name implies. He is our gracious provider who giveth peace and righteousness, who is ever with us and over us in spreading the banner of his love. "Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth." Psalms 60:4. Such blessings seem more than a poor sinner deserves, yet how often our prayer is:

"A crumb of mercy, Lord, I crave,
Unworthy to be fed
With dainties such as angels have,
Or with the children's bread."

If we are given a heart to pray, God will incline his ear for he regardeth the prayer of the destitute. Their prayer he will not despise. How often I feel we (or I) do not pray as often as we should for one another. James said, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." At times I have been made to feel (I hope) that I have been given a heart, if not words, to pray for all the people of God and for the welfare of Zion.

Few as we are here as a church I find myself looking unto the Lord continually to preserve us in the path of truth and sincerity, giving us strength to carry on our services simple and humble though they may be. To God I give thanks for sending the ministering brethren. They come clad in the whole armor of God, with the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. These servants of God have come, like Paul, preaching nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified. They speak not with the wisdom of man, but that which is revealed to them by the Holy Ghost. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." 1 Cor. 2:9-10. How often when we are assembled together we speak of the pleasure it gives us when the brethren from our sister churches are able to be with us. We appreciate their love and the encouragement they bring with them. My best wishes to you and sister Bellows. Yours in humble hope.

(Mrs.) LYDIA K. NASON.

Box 185, Weslaco, Texas.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Your letter received about a year ago asking me to write more often for the *Signs*, but I feel so unworthy and ignorant pertaining to spiritual things I am afraid I will say the wrong things, and it will not be profitable to God's little ones. The time has passed to where I should have sent my remittance for the dear old *Signs*, the paper I have enjoyed for over forty-five years. Enclosed find $5 to extend my subscription for a year and use the balance as you see fit.

In the past if I attended one Association every year or so, I felt the Lord had been very merciful to this poor, unworthy sinner. However, last year I was enabled to attend three, two in Texas and one in Arkansas. O, how sweet it is to meet with these little ones and hear the wonderful gospel proclaimed and see the love manifested one to another. My cup ran over at the Association in Arkansas. On Sunday four preachers were put up.

After hearing two of them I felt like my cup was full, that I could now go back home to the lower tip of Texas, some eight hundred miles, and rejoice for days on the feast I had received. When the third one preached, Elder Lambert, a new preacher to me, my cup ran over. I caught myself just about to shout, Oh! dear brother, if ever I have been in a heavenly place on earth I felt like I was there, but I choked my emotions and had to be contented with crying for joy. The thought came to me, quench not the Spirit, and I have wondered if I was guilty of doing that there. I wanted to shout praises to my Savior who had done so much for a poor undeserving sinner like me, to let me taste of the heavenly sweetness that seemed to be floating in the very air around us. The building would not hold all the people, there were so many ministers, and all preached that wonderful gospel, salvation by grace and manifested that meek spiritual spirit that humbles God's little ones and magnifies God's work in his children here in time. What is sweeter than the flow of tears down their dear faces when the gospel is being proclaimed? Yes, the Lord gives and he takes away, he opens and shuts and it is good for us that we have the thorn in the flesh.

This morning the radio announcer said the President would darken our white bread or lower the grade to whole wheat bread. I wanted to say that he was mistaken, it would raise the grade instead of lowering it. I have been wondering if Old Baptists are doing the right thing by using white flour in our communion. Personally I feel like we just as well use grape juice for the wine as to use white bread to represent his body. No Old Baptist that I know of will use grape juice. Why? Because it is not the fermented juice of the grape. It is not wine, it has not the spirits in it, it will not stimulate the body like wine, so wine is the right emblem of his precious blood, representing the stimulating effect of the Lord's spirit in us. White flour only has about four minerals in it and lacks the other eight minerals that have been taken away by man, so in order to have a perfect representation it should be the whole wheat flour, all the grain to represent the body without sin. It takes the whole wheat flour to have all the nourishing food in it that the Lord put in the whole grain, so why not offer the best to represent our Savior.

Back under the law they finally got so corrupt that they would offer up the sick and the lame as a sacrifice to represent the most precious offering that was to come. Was the Lord pleased with it? No, the Scriptures do not approve of it, even the governor of the land would not be pleased with that kind of sacrifice. So darkening our bread here by the President to feed the starving people in Europe may be a blessing in disguise, as the natural body needs healthy food to thrive on. So does the spiritual body need healthy spiritual food to thrive on. The spiritual man will not thrive on works and grace mixed. If it is by grace then it is no more by works.

My dear old mother-in-law, being blind and eighty-six years of age, gets so lonesome she listens to the sermons on the radio, but when they begin to say that the Lord has done all he can and it is up to you to make the decision, I see her shake that white head and saying, "Oh no, my God is not like that, he never wants for anything, he never tried to do anything, but he speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast, and whatsoever his soul desires even that he doeth, he is almighty from everlasting to everlasting." Excuse mistakes, look over my imperfections and if any of this in your judgment will do to publish you have my per-

mission. If any Old Baptists or believers ever come to this part of the country we want you to visit us. Remember a poor sinner in your prayers. Saved by grace if saved at all.

(Elder) E. B. AULT.

Route 2, Box 69 E., Huntington 2, W. Va.

Elder R. Lester Dodson, Dear Brother in hope:

I am sending in my renewal to the *Signs,* the balance for you to use as you see fit. I enjoy reading the good articles in the dear old paper. I get so much comfort from reading the experiences of God's little children. I have been blessed to hear you preach the wonderful riches of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ at Danville, Va. once. I hope it will be the Lord's will to give you a mind to visit us down here in West Virginia at Old Harmony Church. Will close hoping to see you in the near future. A brother in hope.

FLOYD JOHNSON

(We greatly appreciate the foregoing letter from brother Johnson, and thank him sincerely for his kind invitation to visit the brethren in West Virginia. In this connection we would also take this occasion to thank the brethren in various parts of the country for their invitations from time to time to visit them. If we were situated so that we could nothing would be more pleasing to us than to visit our dear brethren in the different states, but for the time being at least the way does not seem to be open. We truly hope it will not always be so, for if we know our own heart there is no joy in this world that can equal that experienced by God's servants when they are enabled to visit among the elect of God and are blessed to preach unto them Jesus. Again we say thanks to all for your kindness and may God bless you as only he can. R. L. D.)

Sidney Center, N. Y.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am enclosing a check for $3 to renew my subscription to the *Signs* which I think expired with the December issue. You may use the other dollar as you see fit. I prize the *Signs* so much that I should hate to do without it. It is the best Old Baptist paper I have ever found and I hope you may be blessed to edit it for many years to come. An unworthy sister if one at all.

(Mrs.) MAYNARD FINCH

4225 Pasadena, Detroit 4, Mich.

The Signs of the Times, Dear Sirs:

Enclosed please find $5, two of which is for my subscription to the *Signs* and the rest for whatever use you may wish to put it. Keep up the good work in publishing the *Signs.*

Respectfully yours,

(Mrs.) A. T. JONES

Route 1, Box 154, Steeds, N. C.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: We take the *Signs of the Times* and enjoy it so much. Wish it came twice instead of only once a month. When our subscription expires we want to renew. We read them over and over. There are surely good sound experiences in the paper and tell my experience better than I can. I feel unfit to be among the Old Baptists but that is all I believe and all I care to believe. If I am one of them I am the least of all. If I ever was born again it was when I was a child and I want to live a Primitive Baptist. We want to subscribe for the paper one year for one of our sons. I believe he will enjoy reading it.

GEORGE L. DAVIS

EDITORIAL

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"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forevermore." Psalms 133: 1-3.

DEAR BRETHREN: The time has come for us to write you again through the columns of the *Signs of the Times,* and we have no better thought to present to you than the language of David as quoted above. As we think of you and the quiet habitation in which you live we feel unworthy of the company and fellowship of such a fine household, and to dwell with such goodness and pleasantness is beyond description. We often question are we as mindful of each other as we should be that we give no offense, which would bring distress and trouble into the dwelling where we feel there should be peace and love. We truly hope we have felt the sweetness of the assemblage of the saints when it seemed like precious ointment had been poured upon the whole multitude, and we could say this is none other than the house of the Lord. It was good and pleasant to be there, and hear from all around, all being of one accord. This precious ointment seemed to cover the whole person, and we could truly say we love those people and our love for them is such that it cannot be described, or that they live purer lives than other people, but the life they have and the way they live brings the thought, "There my best friends my kindred dwell, There God my Savior reigns," and that which hurts them hurts us.

We know these things are not brought to us by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to God's abundant mercy bestowed upon us. The pleasant seasons of our lives are when we can in reminiscense see the beauties we have beheld among the brethren. It gives us much distress when perversions and criticisms arise among them. "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." Rom. 14: 7. The apostle plainly testifies that none of us can moderate the order of the church of God and thereby produce life, and he also continues in this theme to the end of the chapter saying in the 17th verse "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

We have called attention to the royal priesthood, that holy nation zealous of good works, and the life, daily bread, that builds up and strengthens every one that belongs to that kingdom. Jesus is their high priest and king, and every one that beholdeth the beauty of the Lord our God upon his people are given eyes to see and ears to hear. They hear Jesus call "come unto me" and every one that heareth his voice has heard and learned of the Father and are pressing unto him when his voice is heard. Jesus identifies the individual he is calling for he says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The yoke is given to every child of God, and he commands, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall

find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matt. 9: 28-30.

All our help comes from the Lord, and when we consider the pleasant places where we have rested and felt the presence of the Almighty we must have been in the shadow of the Almighty which proves, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty," and they will say, "He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust." Psalms 91: 1-2. It is very precious to note that the Lord will command the blessing, even life forevermore. We truly believe the Lord commanded to every one that will sing his praise in glory, for he is infinite and knew all that he should suffer for his people, and a complete survey of their salvation was in his mind when he said to his disciples, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14: 2-3. I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. This is the blessing he hath commanded, "life forevermore". With these thoughts we are reminded of the language of the poet, Watts:

"My God, the spring of all my joys,
The life of my delights,
The glory of my brightest days,
The comfort of my nights.

In darkest shades if he appear,
My dawning is begun;
He is my soul's sweet morning star,
And he my rising sun.

The opening heavens around me shine
With beams of sacred bliss,
While Jesus shows his heart is mine,
And whispers I am His!

My soul would leave this heavy clay
At that transporting word,
Run up with joy the shining way
To embrace my dearest Lord.

Fearless of hell and ghastly death,
I'd break through every foe;
The wings of love, and arms of faith,
Should bear me conqueror through."

The spirit of the writer of this Psalm declared Jesus to be the root and offspring, and it was the root of the matter in David by which he could express the virtues of Christ Jesus in the salvation of poor sinners. These virtues get hold of our lives and we live in them, and they are true, and all of like precious faith know them and walk together, seeing eye to eye, speaking the same thing and enjoying the blessing commanded to them. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

C. W. V.

MATTHEW 5: 23-24

"Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.'

In attempting to comply with request made for our views on the above scripture, we would like, first, to stress the important fact that the Scriptures thoroughly furnish the people of God, both as to doctrine and practice, or order, and they should, therefore, search the Scriptures diligently and take heed unto them. Some of our brethren manifest considerable zeal in adhering to certain principles enunciated by men and at the same time neglect the more weighty matters set forth in the word of God. Perhaps one of the greatest weaknesses to be found among our people is their lack of good church order, and since our text is a portion of the instruction given by Christ himself to his disciples as the proper procedure for them to follow where a brother has ought against another, we will presume to point out some of our faults and at the same time recommend certain remedies. The very best of our disciplinarians apparently know very little about good church order, the lack of which has probably caused more confusion among the brethren than differ-

ences on points of doctrine. In various sections of our country there are substantial groups who are fundamentally sound in doctrine, but the sad part about the matter is they are torn asunder because they either do not know how to keep house or they are altogether indifferent about it. We have in mind one such group involving several states, where so far as we are able to discover there is practically no doctrinal differences at all, and yet they cannot come together and worship in church fellowship. The trouble started by their upholding a minister who organized a church composed partly of excluded members, and then continuing to affiliate with and receive into their church fellowship members who have been excluded one or more times. There is no question in our mind but what many churches do not labor as they should to save a brother or sister before excluding them, which should be considered as the very last resort, but once a member has been excluded by an orderly church the only way that we know for such a member to come back into the church is through the very same door they went out. There may be instances of a church or churches departing from the faith or becoming so deeply engrossed in disorder that all orderly churches may find no other course left open but to withdraw from them. In such a case a committee could be appointed by orderly churches to investigate the facts and report back to the churches, with the result that any member of the disorderly church who was properly received, who is sound in the faith and whose conduct has been beyond reproach may be received by orderly churches upon a proper confession of faith. We would like to say in this connection that we believe in some instances in the past it has been made too difficult for erring churches, or individuals, to return to the fold.

Notwithstanding the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ very definitely and clearly, so far as we are concerned, laid down in this chapter the guiding principle with regard to divorce and remarriage, there seems to be more trouble arising in recent years over this matter than almost any other particular thing. In the thirty-second verse of this chapter Jesus is quoted as having said: "Whosoever shall put away his wife, save for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." Yet, in the face of this very explicit testimony by the Great Head of the church, from time to time we find Old Baptists changing mates, regardless of the cause. Not so many months ago we were amazed to learn that some Old Baptists are taking the position that regardless of how many wives a man may have had before he received a hope, regeneration gives him a clean slate, so to speak, and say it is perfectly proper for him to be received into the fellowship of the church, even though there may be three living women to whom he has been married, two of whom may have been divorced for reasons other than the one given by Christ. We do not believe the words of Jesus permit of such a construction. If one who has been a member of some other church organization seeks membership in an Old Baptist church and at the same time desires to retain such affiliations, we would very properly demand that he show his faith by his works and sever all such ties. If there is a situation where this is impossible, in our opinion, such a person is not a fit subject for membership in an orderly Old School Baptist church. One of the requirements which James gives us for *pure religion* is that we keep ourselves unspotted from the world. Even some of the Scribes and Pharisees of our land will not stand for an interchange of wives and husbands except upon Bible grounds. Much distress is being caused by our people treating this matter too lightly and we truly hope they will face

the issue squarely and not try to shun or modify it by countenancing almost any imaginable situation. We are aware of the fact that there are some very sad cases where marriages have not turned out as was hoped for, and while from many points of view another venture might seem more promising and desirable, unless the parties interested can keep within the bounds of the Bible, it is our considered opinion that Old Baptists should definitely refrain from all such and, if need be, endure their cross and suffer for the sake of Christ and his church, rather than yield to their fleshly desires.

Despite the fact that Jesus gave us a very clear rule for dealing with a brother who has offended us, in the following language, "moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it to the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican," frequently we go heedlessly along pursuing our own course, dealing with our brother as seemeth good unto us, regardless of the divine teaching and instruction. In some cases brethren have been excluded without being given an opportunity to be heard. Such a course is not permissible even in the *courts of law in our land,* to say nothing of the *court where mercy and grace* are supposed to abound. In all such cases the offending member should be notified to be present, if possible, and a full attendance of the church membership should be greatly desired. Where churches have erred in this respect we hope they will do what they can to rectify their mistakes.

We would like to remind our readers of the fact that our text is found in the beginning of what is commonly referred to as the Sermon on the Mount. We are told that "when he (Jesus) was set, his disciples came unto him." He had a message of the greatest moment and importance to impart unto them, and he proceeded to tell them of the blessed estate of "the poor in spirit," of those "that mourn", of "the meek", of those "which do hunger and thirst after righteousness," of "the merciful", of "the pure in heart", of "the peacemakers", of those "which are persecuted for righteousness' sake", and of those who "are reviled". He likens them unto "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world," taking occasion to explain what such terms signified, and then admonished them as follows: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." He then said of himself, "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill," and declared that "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." This showed his undeviating faithfulness to the cause. Following this he says, "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." He then continued by saying unto them, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." How we must needs take heed unto ourselves and unto the doctrine! Jesus then reminded them of that which had been said by them of old time: "Thou shalt not kill; and, whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgement: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."

Having referred to the workings of the law, he proceeded to draw a further lesson from it in the language of our text: "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." While the law was exacting, at best it was but a shadow of good things to come. If under the law when one brought his gift to the altar and remembered that his brother had ought against him, he was required to leave his gift at the altar and go and first be reconciled to his brother, and then come and offer his gift, how much more should the members of Christ's mystical body regard this sacred relationship. Jesus was careful to meet all of the requirements and customs of the law. On one occasion when he and Peter were come to Capernaum "they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee." Mat. 17: 24-27. This not only showed his sovereignty over the fish of the sea, but also showed his consideration and regard for others. The gospel church is so compact that it behooves her members to be very meticulous in observing her ordinances and in fulfilling the law of Christ. Jesus said, "whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." It should, therefore, be of the most vital concern to the Lord's people as to how they should deal with each other in endeavoring to keep the unity of the body in the bonds of peace. We knew an Elder in Virginia some years ago who construed our text to apply particularly to Ministers, and he said if he was aware of the fact that a brother had ought against him he would lay his preaching gift upon the altar and refuse to speak until he had been reconciled to his brother. It would seem to us that such a spirit was an excellent one to display and we fear it is seen far too seldom. Frequently, we see just the opposite, and from time to time men will arise who appear to crave notoriety and leadership, who will try to carry their point at all cost, regardless of the consequences to the church as a whole. Most certainly such men do not manifest the spirit of the true Shepherd, who gave his life for the sheep. And often times our good brethren seem willing to follow such men blindly, regardless as to whether they can give a "thus saith the Lord" for what they advocate or not. We cannot go wrong by clinging to the divinely inspired Scriptures as our infallible guide in both doctrine and practice, and we truly hope that each and every one will prayerfully seek guidance from on high and remember to "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein," for in so doing "ye shall find rest for your souls." Jer. 6: 16.

Let us come back to the words of Jesus for there never was and neither can there ever be a greater teacher than he who spake as never man spake, and let us remember that it was he who was declared to be head over all things to the church, which is his body. Isaiah prophesied concerning his advent into the world, saying "the government shall be

upon his shoulder," and "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." Jesus said to Peter, immediately following his declaration that he would build his church upon the rock of revelation and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Mat. 16: 19. If we are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, it does seem to us that we should give the most earnest heed to the teaching of his Holy Word and not be blown about by every wind of doctrine that can be promulgated by mankind. Let us remember that "the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God". Therefore, let us keep within the bounds of the Scriptures in all that we do and say and follow no man who deviates from them to cause confusion and strife in the fold. Let us all endeavor to refrain from agitations which disturb the peace and harmony of the church. We have known of good brethren hesitating to attend associations and meetings for fear of unpleasantness arising because of discussions by those who are out to get the better of an argument over some point. It would be better that we should so conduct ourselves as to provoke one another unto love and fellowship.

In conclusion, and in the words of the Great Apostle let us refrain from the things of the flesh, which he says are these; "Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain-glory, provoking one another, envying one another." Gal. 5: 19-26.

R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

With a deep feeling of sadness we record the death of our brother, JAMES PYATT RISLER, at his home near Locktown, N. J., March 30, 1946. He was the third child of Cyrus and Sarah Pyatt Risler, two older and one younger surviving him: Mrs. Daniel S. Fox, Clinton, N. J., Willis, Mt. Vernon, N. Y., and Cyrus in New York City. He was born Jan. 24, 1863, making his sojourn here 83 years, 2 months and 6 days.

December 31, 1884 he was united in marriage to Miss Sarah Catherine Slout at the home of brother and sister Franklin S. and Susie E. Terry, Oak Lane, Pa., by the late Elder P. G. Lester of Va. For over 61 years they lived happily together on their farm near Locktown where brother was born. He was a successful farmer, having followed that vocation the most of his life. In addition to the sister and two brothers mentioned above, he leaves to mourn his passing his sorrowing widow, who has been a member of the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church for 65 years, two children, Mrs. E. R. Suydam, Westfield, N. J., Grover C. Risler, living on the farm and having made it possible for his father to continue farming at his advanced age, and one grand daughter, Miss Catharyn Risler Suydam, Westfield, N. J.

James never made a public confession of his faith, but his widow has sweet memories of conversations with him, showing his interest in the things of God's kingdom. During his last illness of several weeks, in which he suffered intensely, he remarked to different members of the family that this was his last illness and he wanted to go. He longed for that sweet rest beyond this vale of tears.

For many years he has been afflicted with deafness, but with the aid of a hearing device in the last years of his life he was able to hear some of

the preaching of Elder C. W. Vaughn and requested that he be called to officiate at his funeral. This request was granted and by request Elder Vaughn read Hymn 1249, Beebe's Collection and spoke comfortingly from the first two lines, "O happy soul, who safely past, thy weary warfare here," also from John 5: 24. The services were largely attended and the floral tributes many and beautful, attesting to the high esteem in which he was held by his friends and neighbors after his long life in the community in which he lived. Interment in his family plot in Rosemont Cemetery, Rosemont, N. J. Written by request.

CYRUS RISLER

Mrs. JOSEPHINE WERT, widow of the late L. Wesley Wert, departed this life Feb. 3, 1946. She was born Sept. 26, 1857, making her stay on earth 88 years, 4 months and 7 days. She was united in marriage to Mr. Wert, Nov. 10, 1888, and to this union were born two sons who survive her to mourn the loss of a devoted, christian mother. Mr. I. Leigh Wert, Hopewell, N. J. (Residing at the home of his father and mother on Stony Brook Road) and Mr. Randolf Wert, Westmont, N. J. Mr. L. Wesley Wert, her husband, preceded her in death Dec. 26, 1925. He was born July 21, 1860, making his stay on earth 65 years, 5 months and 4 days. They truly were a devoted husband and wife. Sister Wert leaves her two sons, three grandsons, Donald, Earl and Robert; two sisters, Mrs. Eliza Golden and Mrs. Sarah C. Leigh; her church and many relatives and friends to mourn her loss. One grandchild and her two sisters are members of the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church.

No one will miss her more than her pastor, as she was regular in her attendance at the meetings every Sunday unless unavoidably detained, and when such faithful ones are taken from our midst after thirty-one years of association it seems our loss is irreparable, but we feel our loss is her eternal gain and we should not weep for her as though she had no hope. It was the lot of her pastor to come to her in her hour of bereavement when Mr. Wert was taken, and the text used was "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me and a stranger they will not follow." She requested the same text be used at her funeral. This was carried out by Elder R. Lester Dodson, of Rutherford, N. J. as the writer was indisposed with la grippe. Elder Dodson's services were very acceptable. We were very much grieved because we were not able to attend and pay tribute to her memory. Her remains were laid to rest in the cemetery near the meeting-house where she enjoyed the fellowship of the church for so many years.

She united with the Old School Baptist Church in Hopewell, N. J. and was baptized by the late Elder William J. Purington, and to this faith she was loyal, and it might well be said of her, with the language of the poet:

"Een down to old age, all my people shall prove
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;
And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,
Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be
borne."

She now rests from all her labors in a blessed sleep from which none ever wake until the time comes which God has appointed that his Son shall come with the trump of God, and the archangel, and the grave shall give up its dead, and those that live and remain shall not hinder those that sleep, but they shall all be changed in a moment, and the twinkling of an eye, and caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall they ever be with the Lord.

(Elder) CHARLES W. VAUGHN

It is with deep sorrow that I hand you herewith the short obituary of brother LARKIN SANDERS of Johnson City, Ill. He was the son of Larkin L. and Rapsy Sanders, and was born near Johnson City, Oct. 20, 1867. He died Jan. 25, 1946, having attained the age of 78 years, 3 months and 5 days. He spent his entire life in and near Boyd Knob School District. He was a respected citizen in his community, a good and faithful neighbor who was always willing to lend a helping hand in time of need, a loyal companion and kind father.

He was married to Anna A. Hooper in West Frankfort in 1892. To this union were born nine children, two of whom preceded their father in death. His companion and the following children survive: Mrs. Leona Sanders, Marion, Route 3; Mrs. Lillie Frick, West Frankfort, Route 2; Mrs. Pearl Leigh, Denver, Colorado; Clay and Clyde Sanders, Johnson City, Route 1; Mrs. Edna Hardlicka, Chicago and Leslie Sanders, Thompsonville, Route 1.

Mr. Sanders was one of eleven children, all of whom have passed to the great beyond except one sister, Mrs. Sarah Barham, who resides in Marion. Mrs. Barham is seventy-six years old and quite feeble. Beside his wife, children and sister he leaves twenty-one grandchildren, nine great-children and a host of relatives and friends to mourn his departure.

Brother Sanders was an earnest christian and belonged to the Primitive Baptist Church. He was one of the pillars of the Pleasant Hill Church

for many years, and his home was a shrine for Old Baptists to gather at as long he lived and still is. He just lived from one meeting or Association until the next, thinking each one was the best and possibly his last. His beloved wife stood bravely by his side until he closed his eyes in death. Since failing in health religious services were often held in his home. He was firm in his faith and loyal to his religious convictions. Brother Sanders was a firm believer in the glorious doctrine of God's infinite wisdom, his infallible foreknowledge and his unalterable decrees; the unconditional, eternal election of all of God's children unto eternal life, the final preservation of the saints unto the image of Jesus Christ.

The writer of this sketch tried with fear and much trembling to speak a few words to a large crowd of sorrowing friends and relatives in compliance with the request of the deceased while he was still able to talk, using as a text the 14th chapter of Job. O that our God would build again the waste places in Zion, and by his spirits power gather his own together and cause them again to feast upon that manna that flows from the Rock that is higher than we are. May God give us grace to bow our heads in humble submission to this sad stroke of divine providence, in removing him from our midst and give us all a renewed hope that some blessed day, when the Son of man has made the cloud his chariot, and is driven by the strong and mighty wind, when he comes with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God to gather his jewels home, that he will break the bands of death and call us from our sleeping beds of dust, fashion us like unto his glorious body, where we shall see him and be made like him.

To-day his loved ones say farewell to a man loved and honored by all who knew him.

"Dearest one, thou hast left us,
And our loss we deeply feel;
Yet again we hope to meet you,
When the day of life is fled,
And in heaven with joy
we will greet thee."

(Elder) L. P. HARRISS

JOHN W. CAIN. This meek, humble and upright saint of God departed this life Dec. 30, 1944. He had undergone a critical operation a few weeks previous, and while he apparently stood the operation well enough for one of his age and seemed for awhile well on the road to recovery, he suddenly became worse, resulting in his death, notwithstanding all that was done for him by human hands.

He was born Feb. 17, 1869 in Morehouse Parish, near the town of Bastrop, La. This was near where he spent his entire life. December 24, 1891 he was married to Dora I. Seale which union was blessed with five children. Brother Cain, with his wife, united with Concord Church near by, Aug. 13, 1922 and was baptized the following day by the late Elder T. J. Evers. He was chosen clerk by his church May 6, 1933 which duty he was blessed cheerfully and faithfully to perform until his death. He engaged in farming as a livelihood, having been born on the farm, toiling hard and earnestly throughout in order to "provide things honest in the sight of all men," as the scripture saith, and be it said that he ever found in sister Cain that inestimable bosom companion which in a natural way is man's most priceless possession.

This noble man is being greatly missed and will be for years to come by many people. In both natural and spiritual concerns he was held in high esteem for his rugged, straightforward honesty; his unswerving adherence to what he believed was right; his tireless industry; in short, for all those most excellent traits of character so becoming the saints of God, and which is, I believe, evidence of God's matchless grace in the soul.

The unworthy writer was called, in connection with Elder R. W. Rhodes, to conduct the funeral services which were held in the home on New Year's day, 1945. May our gracious and ever blessed God abundantly comfort and sustain all who mourn is the sincere prayer of the writer if not deceived. Written at the request of sister Cain.

(Elder) JOHN LEE SMITH

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP SEND THE "SIGNS" TO THE POOR OF THE FLOCK AND TO AID THE "SIGNS"

Mrs. W. White, Ky., $1; Mrs. N. M. Carney, W. Va. $3.

LLOYD'S HYMN BOOKS WANTED

Will anyone knowing where the Primitive Hymn Book by Benjamin Lloyd can be purchased, please communicate with

S. E. REEVES
Box 254, Alba, Texas

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Lower Country Line Association will convene with the Durham Church ,Saturday before the first Sunday in July, 1946 and continue three days, 6th, 7th and 8th. Eld. N. D. Teasley expected to preach introductory sermon. A. L. Holloway, Alternate. Meeting to be held at Bragtown High School, near Eno Primitive Baptist Church, just off Roxboro Highway near Durham city limits. Bus service near school, plenty of parking space. Good location for camping just across the road. A cordial invitation is extended to lovers of the truth, with special invitation to our ministering brethren.

F. D. LONG, Moderator
J. J. WHITLEY, Clerk

The regular annual two days meeting will be held at the Primitive Baptist Church, corner of Shotwell St., and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn. on second Sunday in August and Saturday before. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

E. H. LANIER, Clerk

The yearly meeting of the Rewastico Church will be held the first Sunday in August, 1946. The meeting-house is located about four miles from Mardela Springs, Md.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Me., Sept. 6, 7, and 8, 1946.

SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each 1st Sunday, 11:00 a.m. and Saturday before.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday.

AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala.
Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.

O. G. CARVER, Pastor

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopewell Church, Ozark Ala., meets each 4th Sunday, 11 a.m.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock. Meeting place at Alder St. at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, 11 a.m. Elders J. J. Collins and J. S. Bass, Pastors

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

Beaulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Seclusia Old School, or Primitive, Predestinarian Baptist Church meets, God willing, every second Sunday in the hall corner Eighth and Yale Sts., Claremont; and every fourth Sunday at 1109 N. Williams St., Compton, California.

W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor.
La Canda, California.

Bethel Church near Stockton, Cal. meets first and third Sundays in each month and Saturday nights before. For further information write SETH BYNUM, R 3, Box 800 G, Stockton, Cal. or LEONA TUTTLE, 1940 N. Center St., Stockton, Cal.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday, north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets every second Sunday at 5th and E. Park St.

B. O. JEFFREYS, Pastor
Weiser, Idaho

Pleasant Valley Church Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc)

L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carver Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church.

C. H. EVANS, Pastor

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before a 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St D. L. TOPPING, Pastor

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.
D. L. TOPPING Pastor

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a.m. in the meeting-house. Pastor in regular attendance except first Sundays. C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays 10:30 A.M., 2 P.M.

The Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY
Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sundays at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue. Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 a.m. 1:30 p.m.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.
(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.
C. W. BOND, Pastor

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1026 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting First Sunday Each Month
10:30 a.m.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor
C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.
E. H. LANIER, Clerk

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. G. E. Rushing, co-pastor, C. B. TEAGUE, Pastor.

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets third Sunday in each month at 11:00 a.m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Old School Baptist meetings are held every fourth Sunday at Civic Club, 1419 N. Shepherd St., Houston, Texas. Preaching by Elder W. O. Beene.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockade, Texas, meets the first Sunday in each month at 10:30 a.m. in the Dr. Wood church-house.

Mt. Zion Chuch, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Danville Primitive Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before Bradley Road, Danville, Va.
W. R. DODD, Pasotr.

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meet each first Sunday 11 a.m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p.m. and Sunday at 11 a.m., Fairmont Park, 3023 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va., R. B. DENSON, Pastor

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.
R. B. DENSON, Pastor

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a.m. C. M. FISHER.

Bethel Old School Baptist Church, Riffe, Wash. meets every third Sunday, 11 a.m. in the meeting house. I. F. COLEMAN, Mod.
ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk, Riffe, Wash.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va., N. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 114 RUTHERFORD, N. J., AUGUST, 1946 No. 8

THE HEAVENS DECLARE GOD'S GLORY

As dawn her crimson curtain draws aside,
While rosy morn, aroused from dewy rest,
Silvers anew tremendous ocean's tide
And crowns with gold the misty mountain's crest,
Gilding the vapors on his lawny breast—
My raptured soul with speechless wonder awed
At mingled color, shape, and sound allied,
Feels earth and sky, with beauty overflowed,
Become a vibrant lyre touched by the hand of God.

And while at night the starry legions wheel,
With crowns aflame, along the dome-shaped deep,
Their ancient ways and glories new reveal
To sentinel enchanted night, and keep
Their vigils mid the moon's majestic sweep,
Through fire-fringed clouds, with silver looped and laced,
Cradling in ample folds the morn asleep,
Perfection on the eternal canvas placed—
God's glory hangs on high, His handiwork there traced.

West Hurley, N. Y. (Elder) Arnold H. Bellows

CORRESPONDENCE

"COME AND SEE"—John 1: 46

Some time ago while walking along, the fig tree arrested our mind. We had not read this lesson in a long time, therefore, did not remember any of the characters connected with it, or the lesson taught. As soon as we could get to our Bible we read the entirety of the first chapter of John. Our mind began to meditate, what is the fig tree? This was a few days before we left home June 3, 1945 to go to Hot Springs, Ark. While at Hot Springs we attended a two days union meeting at Fordyce. We thought our mind had sufficiently meditated on the subject that we could use it in a discourse. While Elder Taylor was preaching the Lord snatched it away and gave us the woman at the well. We felt at ease in speaking and all gave us the hand of endorsement with many compliments.

We have never heard this mentioned in a sermon except a long time ago we heard a Progressive Primitive Baptist minister apply the fig tree to a disobedient child of God. We have never read anything on this subject by any of our brethren. This afternoon, Nov. 8, 1945, while sitting in the back yard taking our sun bath we dropped to sleep, and while asleep began singing—not audibly, "Oh, for a closer walk with God," and awakened singing that blessed sentiment. We felt a great thrill. It seemed our soul was full and we felt in our heart and soul seemingly as never before the great desire for that closer walk with God. "Come and see" got our mind stirred as never before. While watering the plants as the day was closing in, and the shades of night soon to hover about us, we felt the unction to write "Come and see".

We note in verse forty-three that Jesus findeth Philip. Verse forty-five reads as follows: "Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of

Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nazareth means branch. Note the three following verses: "And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee." Nathanael means gift of God.

It occurs to our mind we have here three beautiful types. First, the fig tree is the type of the church under the law. Our first parents covered their nakedness with fig leaves (Gen. 3:7). We read in Haggai 2:19 that the fig tree hath not yet brought forth. We read in Luke that the Lord of the vineyard came three years seeking fruit. I do not know the meaning of these three years unless it is significant of completeness. Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? Give me another year to fertilize it, maybe it will bear fruit. This is very significant of clinging to the law for salvation, or salvation by works. Jesus cursed the fig tree and it withered. No man shall eat fruit of thee hereafter forever. Peter called to remembrance saying, "Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away." Peter seemed to be astonished, and did not understand. He was yet steeped in the things of the law. The Master said, "Have faith in God." The mountain of law worship shall be removed.

We are now approaching a new order, or the second type in our lesson. We see in this that Philip is the type of the gospel or this new order. He began at the same scripture and preached Jesus. He went on his way rejoicing. We were blessed to attend the Yellow River Association this year in Atlanta. Elder H. C. Nash preached the introductory sermon. We do not remember his text but we do remember his theme was the old order and the new order. Right here several thoughts come into our mind, but to mention them all would make this too lengthy. We never heard a more beautiful picture of old order and new order than Elder Nash presented. We felt like saying in the language of our text, "Come and see". It is wonderful to behold the new order in which all shall be taught of the Lord. "Come and see" that salvation is by grace, we were unable to keep the law, the blood of the Lamb hath set us free.

We see in our third type that Nathanael is a subject of grace. The gospel findeth Nathanael and tells him of Jesus. He "hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." It occurs to our mind that when Jesus told Nathanael there was no guile in him, it is significant of the perfect work of redemption. How did you know me anyway? Is not this true in our experience? How could Jesus know a vile sinner like me? It seems impossible. Nathanael, be still and listen. Before the gospel called you, opened your understanding and showed you the glories of the new order, I saw you under the fig tree—under the law. I am the end of the law. Is it any wonder now that Nathanael could acclaim, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God." "Come and see." When the poor Gadarene was found with Jesus and in his right mind, no doubt he felt like saying in his heart and soul to the beloved of the Lord, "Come and see" how great things the Lord hath done for me, hath done for me what I could not do. Poor helpless me! Until now we have written the above with two sittings after supper. After we retired last night Nathanael kept hovering our mind. It was quite some time before we could relax and sleep. It occurred that maybe

Nathanael is the type of the whole church, or the entirety of the redeemed of the Lord. We desire to quote here the fiftieth and fifty-first verses: "Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig three, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." Old Jacob in his journey lay down to sleep. "And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed." This ladder is Jesus. My beloved, if you have not seen this ladder in a real vision as Jacob of old, may I say to you that when Christ was formed in you, the hope of glory, the promise is to you as Jesus said to Nathanael, heaven is open, and in your experience you can see Jesus all the way from heaven to earth. You can then acclaim that Jesus is the captain of our salvation. You feel like saying to the beloved of the Lord, "Come and see" the glory of the glories, "Come and see" the new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. The gospel heavens in the gospel earth if you please. "But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled."

We would like to elaborate further, but we will be too lengthy. We desire to digress here and mention as briefly as possible some of our recent gospel heavens. We recently attended Associations as follows: Abbott's Creek, Smith River, Pocatalico, Seven Mile, Salem and Yellow River. After returning home we attended Chipola, The Western Primitive, Conecuh River and Claybank. It was heaven below, my Redeemer to know, to be in these ten Associations. We had it in our program to attend two other Associations, but this awful arthritis we have has slowed us down. We wish we could mention in detail so many sweet experiences. We felt like saying in the language of one of old "it is enough." It seems we cannot quit until we mention Abbott's Creek, the first we attended after leaving Hot Springs. I never heard a more fitting introductory sermon which was delivered by Elder Z. F. Rhue. His words were "like apples of gold in pictures of silver." I wish I could mention others, but I must close. With a heart and soul full of love and gratitude, and sweet fellowship for the beloved everywhere I am very sincerely,

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(Continued from July issue)

"She hath killed her beasts." The provisions for one day in Solomon's household was thirty measures of fine flour, and three score measures of meal. Ten fat oxen and twenty oxen out of the pastures and an hundred sheep, besides harts and roebucks and deer and fatted fowl. I Kings 4:22-23. Was all of this portion of God's sacred word, penned just to make history and to fill up space? Indeed no. For we are told that "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." Before this meal and flour was reduced to its present state, the grain must go through the

upper and nether millstones, then kneaded together and baked in an hot oven. The blood must be drained out of the beast and fowls before they were prepared to feed the hungry of the household of Solomon. What can these beasts and fowls represent? Do they not portray in types and shadows, the suffering and death of the meek and lowly lamb of God who was delivered for our offences and was raised for our justification, and they more particularly point to the gospel day when we are blessed to sit down in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and partake of the heavenly feast. But before we are partakers of this heavenly feast, we too must be crucified with Christ (Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ") and die under God's just and holy law, and have part in his resurrection, before we can eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood.

"She hath mingled her wine." Wine is often spoken of to typify the gospel of Christ. (Songs of Solomon 7:9) The mingling of wine beautifully portrays the various gifts which God has placed in the church for the edification of the saints. "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord." 1 Cor. 12:4-5. And God has placed them in order, first the apostles then prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Eph. 4:12. One precious saint will often say, "I had rather hear Elder ..... than any other preacher I ever heard." Another one says, "I had rather hear Elder ....." What makes this difference? It is because his preaching is more suited to your experience. How discouraging it would be to the poor servants of God if all the household of faith were to center upon one servant and not one word of encouragement for the rest of us. But our God has so arranged it in his divine providence that each one shall receive his portion in due season, and get the flavor which is best suited to his or her taste.

"She hath also furnished her table." The table which Solomon set was furnished with a great variety of foods with all the necessary vitamins to supply the body with health and strength, but would you suppose that all the food was good to the taste? My answer is no. My mother, when I was a small boy, often made me eat many things that I did not enjoy so well, but she knew it was good for my body. If I could have had my way I would have begun with the desserts and ended with desserts. I have often said that the children of God remind me of a family of little children seated around a table which was filled with coarser food and a dish of ice cream in the middle, and without the guiding hand of their mother they will almost invariable start on the ice cream and end on the ice cream. Why is this? The answer is because the cream is more delicious to the taste. But the good mother says you all must eat a reasonable supply of the coarser foods, then I will serve your dessert last. It may be that she has a supply of the better tasting food, but she knows that a well balanced diet makes a healthier child. So our God never questions you and me concerning the kind of food that we shall have. If we could have our way, we would live on love, joy, peace and happiness all the time. But ah! when he sees fit he gives us sorrow, trouble and afflictions. Now you can see that all the food that is listed on the menu is not good to the taste, but is it not good for the body? David said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now I have kept thy word." Psalms 119: 67. Now affliction was not good to his taste, but through this suffering he kept God's word. Can you not

read your own experience?

"She hath sent forth her maidens." When we are invited to a banquet or feast do we not see the maidens serving the guests? No doubt, but what this was a wonderful sight for the Queen of Sheba to behold in the Temple of Solomon. Everyone serving in the place and order in which this Great King has placed them. Do you know of a more beautiful sight than to see the guests seated around and each humble servant of God handing out to the household of faith such things as the Master has supplied him with? The Lord said to Peter "Feed my lambs" and "Feed my sheep." The Lord did not tell him to convert a goat into a sheep, but the words are simply this, "Feed my lambs" and "Feed my sheep." John 21: 15-16. Through the sufferings and death of Jesus under the law all the preparation was made for the servants (or maidens) to serve in the gospel day. "For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." John 6:55.

"She crieth upon the *highest* places of the city." It will be noticed in the ninth chapter of Proverbs, fourteenth verse, that the foolish woman "sitteth at the door of her house, on a seat in the high places of the city," but the woman who possesses wisdom, "she crieth upon the highest places of the city," which is in keeping with the inspired prophet Isaiah. "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." Isaiah 35:8. What a comfort to the poor tempest tossed child of God, when the Holy Ghost applies the above words to your weary soul and you are lifted up and somtimes made to feel that you are in the *way* (Jesus). Abraham's servant said, "I being in the *way,* the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." Could he fail to reach the designated place since he was in the way? Jesus says, "I am the way." "He putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them."

"Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither." How wonderful is the teaching of the Holy Ghost, though you feel to be weak in intellect, yet by degrees this great mystery is gradually opened up to your poor souls, that Christ Jesus dies for the ungodly. Though you may feel to be a fool, you shall not err therein. We have often heard it quoted "though fools, shall not enter therein," but the scripture reads, "though fools, shall not err therein." Isaiah 35:8. The reason that you cannot err therein, is because you are in Christ Jesus. Now we are led from law to gospel, and our eyes are opened to view the heavenly scene and receive some knowledge of the fact that he (Jesus) is made to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Then we can get a glimpse of the truth of the inspired apostle, that Jesus is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

"As for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled." All of this was written for those who die under God's just and holy law, and their souls are raised up into newness of life. Then it is that the Holy Ghost reveals Jesus to them as their precious Saviour, for the inspired apostle Paul said that "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." 1 Cor. 12:3. As the veil is gradually being lifted, and we are enabled by the Holy Spirit to get a glimpse through the lattice work and view the heavenly scene beyond, we are drawn nearer to our precious Saviour and can more readily understand that this same Jesus which Philip preached to the Eunuch was first manifested to us in

the person of the Father; second, he was manifested to us in the person of the Son and third, he was manifested to us in the person of the Holy Ghost. John said, "for there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." Paul said, "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Col. 2:9. Now we can see that the Son is as old as the Father and the Father is as old as the Son, for John said, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men." John 1:1-4. This same Jesus which Philip preached to the Eunuch has many names, some of which are recorded by the prophet Isaiah. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6. The reader may inquire, how can this Jesus be both the Father and the Son? The term father means oldest, so in the first administration of the spirit in our experience, he is manifested to us in the person of the Father. The Father gives life, then arrests, convicts and condemns us through the administration of the law. Second, he (Jesus) comes to us in the person of the Son. The work of the Son is to fulfill the law and instruct his people and redeem them from under the curse of the law. Now when Jesus finished his work in the person of the Son, the Son was crucified and was resurrected the third day, and after abiding here on earth forty days he ascended to the Father. The teaching and instruction which was given to his disciples by this Son Jesus was concealed in the law and revealed by him in the person of the Holy Ghost in the gospel. Before his crucifixion he said, "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John 14: 25-26. Do we not see a manifestation of this Son Jesus exhibited in the person of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost? "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Acts 2:4. May I ask this question, has there been any change in presenting the eternal truth of God from that day until this unless we are overshadowed by the Holy Ghost and the Spirit gives us utterance? The Holy Ghost is the revealer of God's word. You may ask, what does the Holy Ghost reveal? Answer: the holy ghost reveals to the children of God the things which were spoken to them by the Son when he was under the law. When the Holy Ghost reveals these sacred truths to you, which is often done through and by his servants, you no doubt have said that I knew that, but I did not know that I did know it. Why is this? Answer: these things were taught to you in your experience by the Son as a convicted sinner under the law, and the truth of this teaching is now revealed to you in the gospel day by the Holy Ghost. Therefore, Jesus said, the Holy Ghost will "bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Many of John's disciples came to the church at Ephesus, and Paul asked them if they had received the Holy Ghost, and they answered that we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost as they had only been baptized by John with the baptism of repentance. And when they heard the words of Paul, "They were baptized in the name of the

Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them: and they spake with tongues, and prophesied." Acts 19:5-6.

In bringing my article to a close I will only mention a few thoughts in connection with the sixth verse of the ninth chapter of Proverbs: "Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding." In looking back through our past experience, as a convicted sinner, when we fled to the law for refuge, we can now see how foolish it was to try to justify ourselves by any works of righteousness which we can do, but, being poor blind mortals we could not see the folly of this work system, nor could we comprehend the truths of the inspired word which was spoken by the prophet Isaiah, "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." Isaiah 64:6. Ah! how true to our experience, we have to be dispossessed of all of our legal good, under the law, and come to the end of our wits, and see the justice of our condemnation, under God's just and holy law, before we can know the true meaning of this sacred prophecy. The apostle Paul, in giving his testimony, which was directed by the Holy Ghost written to Titus, said, "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another." Titus 3:3. What a dark, rough and rugged route we had to travel before we could see the way of *understanding*. Our souls were enshrouded with darkness, and not one little ray of light could we see. We were like the children of Israel when they were oppressd by the hand of Pharaoh in Egypt, enshrouded with a darkness which could be *felt*, which also must have been the experience of the poor publican who could not so much as lift up his head, but smote upon his breast and stood afar off. He prayed and said, "God (he could not then call him Father, I know this from my own experience) be merciful to me a sinner." The scriptures tell us that he went down justified, rather than the Pharisee, who fasted twice a week, paid tithes of all he possessed and could not see himself a sinner before God. Inasmuch as Christ was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification, we too, are crucified with him. Our souls are lifted up and the Holy Ghost reveals Jesus to us, and for the first time we are given a hope that he is our precious Saviour. May I say in my concluding remarks that this hope is so precious, that if it were possible you would not exchange it for all the gold and silver that this world affords. Now we can exclaim with the inspired apostle Paul, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Gal. 2:20. Our eyes are now opened, our deaf ears are unstopped, and our heart is now prepared to receive the true instruction, that salvation is by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves, but a gift of God. Is this not the way of understanding? Humbly submitted.

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IS IT HOPE OR A FEELING OF ASSURANCE?

"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;—Titus 1: 2"

Recently a man said to me that he had accepted Christ and got himself saved, and that ever since then he has felt sure that he is saved, and that he has a feeling of assurance of a home in heaven after this life. I understood from his conversation that he felt that he

had saved himself through his own free will and volition in the matter independent altogether of being led in any manner by the Spirit of God. That is, while being in the state of an alien sinner, a natural man, dead in trespasses and sins he had, of his own volition, decided to accept Christ in order to get salvation—spiritual life—eternal life and a feeling of assurance that heaven would be his home in the hereafter. If I correctly understood him, and I think I did, the above is an outline of what he claimed he did and his feeling of accomplishment, as he viewed it, as nearly as I can state it. I take it from what he said that he evidently considered himself unsaved before he did what he called accepting Christ. I suppose he did that, in his view, in order to get saved. Now if he is correct what do we have? Would we not have to say that if he did save himself to eternal life in that way and under such circumstances, then beyond question a dead, alien, unregenerated sinner took all those steps by being led by his own spirit and obtained spiritual life? I say this because, as I understand, there are only two spirits; the Spirit of God and the reverse—the evil spirit. Every spirit, in my view, which is not of the good spirit or the Spirit of God is obviously an evil spirit. Therefore, according to his version, if he is correct about getting himself saved, the evil spirit led him to salvation, because without the righteousness of Christ—the Spirit of God in him, man himself certainly has none other than the evil spirit. "For there is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." Eccl. 7:20.

My view is: That if he is a saved sinner, and I truly hope that he is, he was saved by grace and not of himself, and it was not according to his works but according to purpose and grace before the world began, and because he was a son before he felt himself to be in need of a Saviour, and before he took any steps and all such steps he took were because of righteousness dwelling in him and because he was a son and not in order to be one. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Romans 8:14.He further stated that he felt sorry for any person who did not have anything more than a hope. He asked whether I knew I was saved and I told him I did not know it. He then asked me why I did not know it. I answered that if I felt an assurance I would not have any hope. I believe I would be terribly miserable if I had no hope. I would not question those that disclaim having a hope in the correctness of their statement because it comes to me just here that there are people in the world in that condition for the Apostle said that there were those that were in the world "having no hope, and without God in the world:" Eph. 2:12. I do not now and have never understood that a person can have an assurance and a hope for the same thing. Your feeling must be one or the other. Paul said: "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Romans 8:24-25. This same Paul said; "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am know." 1 Cor. 13:12. This is in harmony with what he had previously said in the same chapter concerning, as I understand it, the difference in knowledge now (in this life) and hereafter (in future life) "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. (that is now) But when that which is perfect (future state—after this life) is come then that which is in part shall be done away." 1 Cor. 13:9-10. It is my understanding, with all due respect to every one's belief to the contrary, that a hope is all

the child of grace—the children of God are given to have in this life during their pilgrimage here on earth. I believe the above text is proof thereof. It also proves, as I understand, that the beloved apostle Paul had a hope instead of a feeling of assurance of eternal life. You note he said "In hope of eternal life." If a person has more than a hope, he has more than the apostle claimed. Is it not comforting and consoling to the poor little child of grace to be enabled to feast on this scripture? It will be noted that in the first verse of this chapter, Titus 1:1, it says; "Paul a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ." A servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ and yet did not claim any more than you claim. Did not make any claim of a feeling of perfect knowledge and no feeling of assurance of eternal life but hope of eternal life. I feel to hope that I have been given to feast on this testimony and comforted by this scripture. I believe this language is comforting to all that have been enabled by his Spirit and revelation to be "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." Yours in a precious hope,

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DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I desire to give briefly the reason of my hope. Like all of Adam's race I was born in sin though for about eighteen years of my life I thought I was a pretty good fellow, as good as anybody and better than some I knew. But God who is rich in mercy for the great love wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in trespasses and sins had quickened me into spiritual life without the noise of a saw or the sound of a hammer. Strange to say at this time I could not see how God could be just and justify such a sinner as I felt myself to be. I tried to pray but my entreaties seemed to gain no acceptance with that God who knows the heart and tries the reins of men. I went like a cart laden under many sheaves for some months, and while I was listening to Elder John Frost discourse from the 10th chapter of Romans, God brought to pass his mighty act, he brought to pass his strange act. The last thing I could remember brother Frost saying was, "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart." I lost sight of the watchman (the preacher), I lost sight of all earthly things. I seemed to see Jesus made a little lower than the angels—if I may say so. I saw him lead a benevolent life under the law, and I saw him fulfill it. I saw him give his back to the smiters. Yea, by his stripes I was healed and I saw him as the end of the law for righteouness, and that he had already done what I had been trying to do and failed, but he had not failed. I saw him triumph over death, hell and the grave, and the testimony was sweet to me that he showed himself alive by many infallible signs to those he had chosen before. My joy seemed full. The tears I was shedding had been tears of the bitterest despair, and now they were tears of joy. If there was any outward demonstration (in my body I mean) other than the shedding of tears I cannot recall it now. The abundant revelation seemed to be taken away, and there stood brother Frost preaching. One other thing I must mention, a still small voice in the great deep of my soul said. "Now you have obtained what you have been praying for, go and tell it to the church." About two years after that I tried to relate and did relate in part what I have written here.

If I have ever been called to set forth the unsearchable riches of Christ my call is so connected with the time I was made to rejoice in hope of the glory of God, that if one is a mistake the other is a grievous mistake. Sometimes my faith is made strong, my prospects bright, my

hope abounds and I cannot believe that He who loved me with an everlasting love will leave me at last in sorrow to sink. Destroy an anchored hope and you destroy all for I live by hope and that too by a hope not seen, and while I have had some refreshing seasons from the presence of the Lord, I travel much by night and even now I would exclaim with the patriarch Job, "Even to-day is my complaint bitter," or with the sweet singer of Israel I now say, "Turn again our captivity, O Lord," "I am shut up, and I cannot come forth," "Undertake for me." And while I write thus, with that same David I would contend that all our times are in his hand. So we are heard sometimes to sing: "Times of sickness, times of health, Times of penury and wealth:" "All must come, and last, and end, As shall please my God and friend." I must close, my harp on the willows, but we remember the saying, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Forgive all that is amiss in this and when it is well with thee remember me. In hope of mercy, I beg to remain your brother.

(Elder) T. D. WALKER

1553 W. 48th St., Los Angeles 5, Cal.

To the Household of Faith, if indeed one so full of sin and burdened with tribulations can address you thus. Tonight finds me alone in a strange city, among strangers after returning from two years in the armed forces to find my home broken up, just as thousands of others. I wonder if we accomplished anything in fighting this war? Many of your husbands, fathers and sons died, and many others are maimed and crippled both in body and mind, yet we try to unravel some of the secrets of Him who purposed that this all should happen. Man can, while drinking the sweet water of life, lift up his voice vainly trying to exalt himself as a child of God, but when we drink waters, bitter waters that are as gall, O how it does try our very being. I hate one who is always complaining, yet who is worse than I? Hours and days I spend trying to understand why it is thus with me since returning home. I tried to do as the brethren of my home church desired yet I cannot. If indeed I know myself I would not harm one who loves God for my life is not worth that. Dear ones continue in love one for the other, living just and right for you are the salt of the earth, but to you who love fame and honor, trying to set yourself up by bemeaning your fellowman, beware! You too, will drink the bitter with me. Some day when God's wrath has been appeased and he is pleased to give me to see the light, my great desire is to give my remaining days to the service of his children, yet until then, and if never, may it please him to soon take my life. I must wait. Many of you I have met in my travels here, to you I request your humble petitions to God for me, and all others who love righteousness write me a few lines, all of you wherever you are. Yes, it can happen to you, troubles of which you never dreamed. Preach brethren, serve in sincerity and in truth the cause for which you are called while your breasts are full of milk and your baskets full of fruit. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away even that which he hath given. When I consider, what is my life? One poor mortal man among billions on this earth. Why should I live to see troubles and trials? Is it for some purpose? Oh, that it would be made manifest to me! Try me, O Lord! If indeed I am thine. Refine me as the silver in the fire of thy wrath until it gives to thee glory, honor and praise forever and ever. To all who read this unworthy worm's letter, with a feeling of love toward truth and right please write me a few lines on your experience for me to read and file away for reference when the way is rough in

the valleys and deserts for this unworthy creature. Charge the mistakes in this letter to the sin that dwells in this body, and if indeed any glory give it to him in whom dwells only righteousness. Yours in hope.

(Elder) W. O. WAMMACK

(Many of our readers will undoubtedly be deeply touched by the sad plight in which our brother and yoke-fellow in the ministry finds himself. To literally offer one's self on the altar of service to preserve and maintain those things which are sacred and dear to us and then have to experience that which has come to Elder Wammack must, indeed, call for a crying unto the Lord to know the reason why? Truly, only such a soul knows its own bitterness, but God is able to provide a way for its escape. It is good to realize that God's love and mercy endureth forever and shall never know any change or variableness, and we can only pray that our brother's faith fail not. We have had to endure some very severe trials ourself, the depth of which only God has known, but he himself has been our help and thus far has led us on and supported us by his matchless grace. We truly hope that our brother may be given to stay upon his God and find that as his day or need so shall his strength be. Letters from those who have been down to the sea in ships and done business in deep waters will undoubtedly be appreciated by Elder Wammack. R. L. D.)

Castle Rock, Wash.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I should like to write a few words that might be profitable to the saints or at least a comfort to them, but as usual I find not that in mind that seems to me worthy of your time to read or space in the *Signs*.

Two things are much on my mind of late years. One is the mystery of prayer. It is so constantly in mind, a day never passes but I ask myself how can I pray, one so sinful? How can I presume to approach the blessed mercy seat? Of what use is my prayer when I believe so firmly that the great God has already ordered, arranged or predestinated all things? It cannot be to let God know any need for already he knows all things. It cannot be in hope of changing anything as I so truly know that he is God and changes not. Yet there is no comfort greater than prayer when blessed with a true spirit of prayer. Nothing gives me the comfort as knowing that my brethren are praying with me and for me. Sister Haan's letter to the *Signs* was of the utmost comfort to me. It was in the July, 1945 number and on prayer. I have heard some mention and I myself have wondered on the legality of opening our meetings with prayer, but should hestitate to suggest it being banned as I have often seen the meeting's only comfort and instruction rendered in prayer. We have in our section a man aged and feeble, yet gifted beyond description in prayer. When you have heard his prayer you feel that you have been in the divine presence of the Lord. Not that I mean to say this is of the fleshly man, but must come from above.

The other thing that rests heavily on my mind is the continued lack of interest in members as to attendance. My greatest comfort is in my church and it often seems that is my very life. I look fondly backward to a time when we had a regular Sunday and Saturday before meeting. All business was taken care of on Saturdays so that all of Sunday could be spent in worship; then two weeks later another one Sunday meeting and it was not too often. It seems to me we do not meet often enough, not even the ones who are blessed with means and strength to do so. I go backward in mind and remember the times when I let trivial matters keep me from

my meetings and now it grieves me and I have to repent of it. I often ask myself, why did I do so? The only answer I find is to accuse myself of loving the world too well and spiritual things not enough. I had not thought to write so much and have been interrupted several times. In reading it over it seems too much like myself to be of any good to any one. Am glad to be able to send the subscription, and hope I may always, as long as my term runs on earth, be able to get my Baptist papers. They are much comfort to me. In hope of eternal life.

(Mrs.) EFFIE PARKE.

Route 2, Loganville, Ga.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I have a letter from a dearly beloved one in Birmingham. I felt so unworthy of it, yet I did enjoy it so much and felt as though I had been to meeting as I feel after reading different articles in the *Signs* each month. After finishing it I said " I want to send this to brother Dodson." I wrote her and she said if it meant anything to me she would not object for any reason except her unworthiness, and she knew brother Dodson would not want to waste space on it. I knew such would not be your feeling after reading it. She and brother Edwards have both been very ill since January. She was recuperating at the time of writing. They are all so dear to us and many others far and near.

If you have space and feel as I believe you do about her letter, I would be happy for you to publish it, feeling that it would be food for many. Though unworthy I hope it is our privilege to meet you and hear you preach some day. I cannot find words to express our appreciation more and more each month for the *Signs*. It is worth so much more than the price for one month, much less twelve months. May He sustain and strengthen you to continue its publication. In love and hope.

(Mrs.). RUTH REDMAN.

(We are indebted to sister Redman for sending us the following letter from sister Edwards, also for the encouragement her letter affords in our efforts to publish the *Signs*. We can assure sister Edwards that we know of no better use to which the space in the columns of the *Signs* can be appropriated than for publishing such messages as are contained in her letter. It will undoubtedly touch a responsive chord in the hearts of our readers, and we truly hope that all may have evidence of sitting together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus and having no confidence in the flesh. We hope others may be encouraged to give a reason of the hope that is within them by relating the dealings of the Lord with them. R. L. D.).

8274 - 7th Place, Birmingham, Ala.

DEAREST RUTH AND ERCY: If I can make my hand be still enough I will try to write you a few lines. I cannot always control its movements. It is a dark and gloomy day here, in fact most of the days are dark and gloomy now. Both the elements of nature and the whole world is under a dark cloud of uncertainty. Every way we turn it seems there is unrest, troubles and distress of all kinds. An uneasy feeling pervades the atmosphere, and we cannot begin to imagine what will be the end of all the turmoil and distressing events taking place all over the universe, and naturally in our weakness we are afraid of what is coming. But then if we stop and think — of what and of whom are we afraid? Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing and not one of them falleth to the ground without your heavenly Father? Are ye not of much more value than many sparrows? O, ye of little faith! What can worldly cares, trials,

and tribulations; what can sickness and suffering, yes, even death do that is not included in the "all things" that "work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." He who said to the roaring sea, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and there shall thy proud waves be stayed," still "doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth." Then can we not trust him and leave it all in his hands? "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day." Then let us take courage and trust him for the future, knowing as we do that nothing, *absolutely* nothing, can ever take place contrary to his purpose. Whether we can see the "why" of it or not does not change his divine plan. We want a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night, but Paul says, "We walk by faith, not by sight." "Hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."

I have heard some wonderful experiences of grace, but I have never heard one that did not have doubts and fears. I sometimes think that is one of the surest evidences of our faith. I know it will do for you, my dears, but will it do for me? I think it was David who said, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." We can read and ponder over the written word and want so much to understand it, and yet it remains a hidden mystery until we are given a glimpse or even a veiled view of the word that was made flesh and dwelt among us. Then we can behold the glory of it and it is a light unto our path, and we can see things that are hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. At other times all is dark and gloomy and we can but say with John, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" Matt. 3:11. Do you feel that way my dear precious young brother and sister? I know you do for that is the experience of every wayfaring child of God. It is the world that can be sure, we only have a hope. Even that sometimes is a hope that we have a hope. Ever since I have felt to claim a hope my daily prayer has been for a closer walk with God, and that he would draw me nearer. We are told that, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered," and I am persuaded that is the way we all learn it. Some in one way, some in another. It has been my lot in this world to suffer bodily more than most people, but I am sure that if I am a child of God every pain and affliction was in mercy sent, for my blessings have so far surpassed my afflictions I would not dare claim they were meted to me according to my deserts. I prefer to believe it was according to his mercy.

How glad I am for the rest of you when you can sit together in heavenly places. How I would love to be able to go again. It is a sweet assurance to know somebody misses me. In a sweet hope.

(Mrs. EFFIE EDWARDS).

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER:

I am enclosing an article written by my wife. After reading it if you think it worthy of space in the family paper, *Signs of the Times,* would be glad, if not will not feel badly about it. She did not write it for publication, but I think it is good and am sending it to you for your consideration. We enjoy the *Signs* to the fullest. May it be God's will that it be continued. We are both old and have been sick most all winter. It is a pleasure to us when the paper is delivered. Yours in gospel bonds.

JAS. B. REID.

(We agree with brother Reid that the following letter written by his bosom

companion is good, and we thank him for sending it to us to be published and enjoyed by our circle of readers. R. L. D.)

"He that is without sin among you, let him.... ....first cast a stone at her."—John 8: 7.

There is none good, no not one. We see and hear so many saying they can live above sin. Dear people of God, I cannot say that as sin is so mixed with all I do, even the thought of foolishness is sin. When I would do good evil is present with me, and how to perform that which is good I know not. Many times I have thought I will be good to-day, I will go to-day without thinking or doing wrong, and the very next thought is sinful. Yes, evil thoughts will arise and then down I go into the gutter of despair, so ashamed I dare not look up, trembling and whispering within Lord why am I thus? Is it possible I cannot go one hour without sin? Christ told his disciples to watch with him, but it seemed that their eyes were heavy and he said unto them, "the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Dear child of God, it seems that I am willing to do my Master's bidding, but there is something within me somewhere in this mortal body that I cannot control and it gets the upper hand of me in spite of all my efforts. It is a mystery to me and O how I do hate and abhor it more than anything, yet I cannot control it. Sin makes me rage, sin makes me do many things I am sorry for having done, sin causes so many heartaches, so much suffering and never ceases to be my enemy, yet I have sinned and come short of the glory of God. The very moment I sin, I know I have sinned yet I am always following right along with it, partaking of it, drinking it down as the ox drinketh the water, and it is a sweet morsel to me at the time, but when the blessed Lord turns and looks on me, how my countenance falls, how I do want to get out of sight and weep. Yes, like poor old Peter did when he denied his blessed Lord. Then I want to get down into the very dust of humility and beg dear Jesus to forgive me, and to have mercy on me ere I die. When he shows his smiling face I can then say with David, "O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation." It seems like then I can say "I know that my redeemer liveth." When we are poor and needy we hear him say, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble," and then we can say again, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." O how glad we are when he reveals his tender love to us and causes us to sing of his glorious grace he has given us. The great King, the God of heaven and earth and of all things that be. How we do adore him when he is so good to us, a poor helpless sinner, and we are made to know that he is God and there is none other. We lift up our heads and clap our hands for joy. We are not afraid then of what man can do to us, we are not even afraid of this sin for it is put behind us. We can then say with boldness, "Get thee behind me, Satan." Yes, the Lord makes himself known to his people, he watches over them by day and by night, he is ever near them though they do not always feel his presence, but may I believe he is ever near enough to stop the tempter when he has afflicted us just enough. His precious promises are that we shall not be tempted above that we are able to bear. The Lord will strengthen his people upon the bed of languishing, he will help in trouble for vain is the help of man. So many will try to flee when trouble comes. We are not brave enough to stand of ourselves but when our King is near we are not

afraid to face Satan and all his angels. No, we fear no evil for Jesus has given us strength to go forward when we thought we could go no farther, when we get so weary we think we will fall by the wayside, then so unexpectedly he comes along and takes us up so tenderly, speaks to us so gently and kindly and says to us, "My grace is sufficient for thee." O what a glorious mystery this King of kings is. How I do love to meditate on God's love to poor, undone sinners of whom I feel to be chief, but if we confess our sins he is faithful and his promises are sure to forgive us. Yes, I will say more than that, if we be in his blessed covenant the sin that has brought us so low is already put away for he says he has cleansed us from all unrighteousness. I, for one, cannot comprehend his goodness and mercy to sinners. If we say we have not sinned we make him (God) a liar and his word is not in us. Who then can say we have not sinned? "Let God be true, but every man a liar." O, let brotherly love continue, let us not be high minded, but slow to anger. Let us love our brethren and sisters in the Lord as Jesus has loved us; let us forgive one another as we would be forgiven; let us love and pray with and for each other, that sin be taken away from us to the extent that we hold no malice against each other, and as much as in us is let us continue in the faith that was once delivered to the saints ever looking to Jesus to guide us. May we be enabled to let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father which is in heaven. We see some that scorn us and some that revile us, but Jesus said, "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you," "Ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake," "but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." We can almost see the end of this natural life according to nature, we are swiftly nearing the sunset of time and it makes me wonder in amazement, and I ask myself have I been faithful? Can I say in truth and in deed "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou are with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me?" Can I rejoice at the coming of my dear Jesus who said he would come again, or will I cry for the rocks and the mountains to fall on me and hide me from his presence? If left alone I will sin and I am afraid, but as I see the dear children of God they have nothing to fear. O that I could walk close to the Lord every day of my life. If I could keep my eyes in front of me, looking neither to the right or the left, but just keeping my eyes on Jesus, then would my heart rejoice in God and not be so constantly in fear of sin, but we cannot go through life on flowery beds of ease, we must bear our cup of suffering. If we were not afflicted, if we were not sorrowful would we be worthy of God's grace? Ought we not to be willing to suffer just a small part of what our dear Lord had to suffer for his children? We know our conflicts and sufferings are not to be compared to his suffering. Yes, he bore it all without a murmur, nor opened he his mouth when the King of Glory died for his peoples sins. We are so small that whole nations of us are counted as small dust of the balance. Can you think how small just one of us is? Yet we grumble, complain, lay charges and do everything contrary to God's holy will and yet he is watching over us with an eye that never sleeps. O, how unthankful I am. Had I justice I would long since have been cast away from God's face where there would be no hope, but, dear children of God, it is not justice I want but mercy and grace to sustain me through this low ground of sorrow. I know I am not worthy of anything good, but my prayer is Lord give me grace to go the rest of my

journey here. That is my cry when it is given me to look heavenward. All I can say is Lord be merciful to me, a sinner. If I am counted at all in the sweet covenant of God's righteous will, then this sin that I abhor so much will have no dominion over me when he calls me home to his loving embrace. Then I can smile at Satan's rage and face a frowning world. Then what a joy, what a haven of rest. I do not have words to express or even thoughts of what it will be like, but we are taught we will be like the blessed Jesus and then we will be satisfied. Will not that be enough? Then we can sing songs of triumph throughout a never ending eternity and say, "O grave! where is thy victory? O death! where is thy sting?" These are just some of my meditations. Overlook all that is amiss for I am unlearned, weak and everything but good.

(Mrs.). J. B. REID

McDowell, Ky.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR BRETHREN:

Just a few lines regarding my new book, "TWO WORLDS," just off the press. It containes only 231 pages although I was ten years writing it. I have already received comments of warm praise from coast to coast and from abroad regarding it.

A. W. Pink, Editor of "Studies in the Scriptures," Isle of Lewis, Scotland, says: "I have read it and my interest was held throughout. On the exposition of the Parable of the Prodigal Son yours is the most helpful I have ever read." A Kentucky minister, "It is a great book." An Alabama man, "I enjoyed reading it very much." A Georgia man, "When it comes to putting your feelings into words you have accomplished the impossible." Col. Eldon A. Huchinson, M. A., L. L. D., Associate Editor of the Messenger of Peace, Soldier, Minister, Educator, says, "I have read with much interest your book, 'Two Worlds.' While I may not agree with you in your position on the resurrection I shall not quarrel with you. Perhaps our difference may be due to the meaning of words. Charles H. Spurgeon once said: 'Just grant that God is omniscient and omnipotent and all the mystery of the resurrection fades away." A Denver Colorado lady, "I enjoyed reading the truth it contained. It is a fine book." A Texas lady, "I cannot read much at a time, but the more I read the worse I hate to put it down."

The price of the book is $2.50. It will also be shipped C. O. D. Send all orders to The Hobson Book Press, 52 Vanderbilt Ave., New York-17, N. Y. Yours in a hope through grace.

(Elder). MILFORD HALL, SR.

(We have read the book in question and found certain parts of it very interesting. R. L. D.).

AID FOR SENDING *"SIGNS"* TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. W. A. Horton, N. Y., $3; C. W. Williams, Ill., $1; J. F. Simpson, D. C., $1; Eld. P. Jones, Wash., $3; Mrs. J. C. Whidden, Fla., $3; Mrs. S. W. Heitmuller, Va., $2; Mrs. S. L. Hutchens, N. Y., $5; Mrs. E. D. Cooper, Va.,$3; Mrs. E. T. Showalter, Wash., $3; Miss H. H. Simpkins, D. C., $1.50; Mrs. C. E. Lawrence, Mass., $1; J. A. Johnson, Tenn., $2; J. Y. Vanhook, N. Y., $1; Mrs. H. C. Chancey,Ga., $1; Eld. L. D. Rose, Tex., $2; Mrs. A. Hastings, Md., $2.

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EDITORIAL
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THE GREATNESS OF GOD

When thinking of God as the creator, upholder and disposer of all things; who is holy, righteous and above all principalities and powers; the one who has made all things whether they be visible or invisible, thrones or dominions; all things were made by him and for him and by him all things consist: the thought arises, how much do we know of His greatness?

When Paul, during his ministry, entered the city of Athens he found the city given wholly to idolatry. The people spent their time in nothing else but telling or hearing some new thing. He found an inscription, "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD." Paul was stirred in spirit by the things he saw among the people who, we are told, sought after wisdom. This was during the early ministry of the apostle, and here we learn what kind of God he worshipped and preached. "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands." What a wonderful God to preach to the people. A God that was before all things, teaching the people that behind the things they saw there was a creative power that made it. The God they ignorantly worshipped was a living God, not worshipped with men's hands as if he needed anything, but was Lord of heaven and earth. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." How acceptable is the language, "We are the circumcision (of heart), which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Surely this describes the true people of God in every age. No scripture more truly points out the mark of believers throughout the generations. With those who worship in spirit there is a knowledge that there is a power that gives life and breath to all, the true and living God. That very creature speaks of a wonderful power that made it. From the bird that sings, to the lowest creature that crawls upon the earth, all his works praise him, and his saints bless him. All nature owns his guardian care. In him we live and move, but nobler benefits declare the wonders of his love. It is most surely those who have witnessed some of these things in an experimental sense that praise his holy name. *Though he be not far from any of us* how often the thoughts of God are as of one ten thousand miles away; whose throne is in the heavens; who deals only with nations and the greater things.

How far is this God away? Every flower that blooms; every bird that flits about in the tree tops; every creature that moves on the earth and in the sea; the plants that grow being placed by the wisdom of God at the right place to thrive and grow reminds us that there is a power unseen that made it. As we look into the starry heavens, the work of his fingers, no wonder one exclaims! "What is man, that thou are mindful of him?" "Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." He has treasured in the earth the min-

erals to take care of the needs of every generation, and as the need arises he gives some man knowledge to find the needs of the present day. Men often take the honor for such discoveries, but truly it is part of God's ways and without the knowledge given man it would be left in the earth. God has made everything for a purpose. Many things we behold man thinks are useless, but God has a use for them and they will all serve the purpose for which he made them in his own time.

How well the weakness of man is manifested to-day, when men run to and fro, hither and thither trying to take care of present day needs. Confusion reigns on every side because of man's lack of wisdom. Not so with God. He has declared the end from the beginning, the things not yet done, saying my counsel shall stand. His throne is unshaken. He has said, "Every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof." How clear is the difference between the ways of man and God set forth when God spake to Job out of a whirlwind, asking him "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth." "Who hath laid the measures thereof?"——"Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth." "Who hath divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder." "Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten the drops of dew?" The question is then asked, "Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? or who hath given understanding to the heart?" It is a great blessing to behold such a God yet brings fear and trembling. "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty." It appears to me that a knowledge of the greatness of this God causes wonder and praise. Surely each time a poor sinner gets a glimpse of him in all his works and ways they are made to feel very small. The nations are but a drop of a bucket, and are as grasshoppers before him.

Dear readers, have you had a fleeting glimpse of him? Can you worship and kneel without such knowledge? Surely not.

"A glimpse—a single glimpse of thee
Would more delight my soul
Than this vain world, with all its joys,
Could I possess the whole."

Not only is this God the creator of all things, but he understands our thoughts afar off. There is not a thought in our mind or a word on our tongue, but he understands altogether. If we make our bed in hell he is there, if we ascend into heaven he is there, if we say to the darkness cover me, the light and the darkness are alike unto him. His ways are not our ways, neither his thoughts our thoughts. His ways are as high above ours as the heavens are above the earth. It is those who have been down to the sea in ships, and done business in great waters, that have seen the greatness of God and his wonders in the deep. A knowledge of him causes adoration and praise to his holy name. Surely it is the sheep of his pasture who behold him as high and lifted up. Each one says, when they thus see him in his holiness and power, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." It is not always that God's chosen people behold their God, but they must see him as Lord of lords and King of kings to worship at his throne of grace. There is no substitute for this knowledge in the worship of him. When one has wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way with no city to dwell in, and their soul has fainted

within them; then they cried unto the Lord and he brought them to their desired haven, the place where his ruling power is made known in the heart. Then they say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name." D. V. S.

"The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest."—Luke 10:2

For centuries before these words were spoken by our Lord, Moses in the law and the prophets had written concerning his coming into the world, in the fulness of times, to be manifested in the flesh and suffer according to the will of God for the sins of his people, who had been chosen in him before the foundations of the earth were laid. Harvest time is when the fruits of one's labors are reaped. It is the time of fulfillment of the plans and purposes of him who determined to do all that is necessary in order to bring about that which is so greatly desired. Some of our agriculturists know what is involved by way of hard and arduous labor in hewing down a forest, removing the stumps and stones, and preparing the soil for the seeds which are to be planted. There is also much work to be done by the husbandman by way of cultivation before he can rightly expect to be rewarded for his labors.

The purpose of the law was that it was to be a schoolmaster unto Christ, and in manifesting as it did all down through the ages the inability of the creature to meet its demands, the necessity of looking to another, even unto Christ to bring in that righteousness which is not of the law but of grace had now arrived. In the previous chapter Luke records the occasion of Jesus taking three witnesses (Peter James and John) up into a mountain with him and "behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias; who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." Peter suggested the making of three tabernacles in memory of the event: one for Jesus, one for Moses and one for Elias, but we are told that he knew not what he said, for the truth of the matter was Moses and Elias had filled up the measure of their days, and the time was at hand for him whom they had portrayed in type and shadow to appear, and he was to be preeminently above and beyond all others. They were overshadowed by a cloud and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my beloved Son: hear him." And when the cloud was gone they saw no one but Jesus. Jesus had just said to his disciples, "there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God." This showed how near at hand his harvest time was. He had already given his twelve disciples power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases, and sent them forth to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick, and he also gave them specific instructions regarding their travels. They were to "take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats a piece," and they were told how to act towards those who received them, as well as those who received them not. They were so thoroughly instructed and supplied that they had to confess when they returned that they lacked nothing. He also manifested to them by a living example what takes place when the gospel is preached in demonstration of the Spirit and with power from heaven by taking the five loaves and two fishes and feeding about five thousand men, with a basket of fragments for each of the twelve tribes of Israel left over. Surely those who were fed must have realized the fulfillment of the law and feasted upon the things of the gospel which are prepared for those who love the Lord and keep his com-

mandments. As further evidence of the fact that the time of his harvest was at hand, we read in verse one of chapter ten that he "appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come." It would have been worse than foolish for them to have gone into places where Jesus was not to appear, but being the man of wisdom that he was who sat down in the counsels of eternity and figured out all of the cost of redeeming his people, he not only knew who his sheep were, but also knew that they would hear his voice and would follow him when he called unto them. "Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest." We read that as many as about three thousand souls were added unto the church in one day. This showed conclusively that Jesus knew whereof he spake when he said, "The harvest truly is great." It is written in the Proverbs that "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord," and he who was able to discern the thought of man and the intent of his heart had no need for any one to tell him when the time of his harvest would be. Had he not sent forth his word into the hearts of men which made them cry, "Abba, Father?" He knew they would be willing in the day of his power to forsake the way of unrighteousness and to enter into the gates of the city of the New Jerusalem. In that day and time, which was the beginning of the setting up of the gospel churches only a few labourers had been called, and the need for others was very apparent, but by way of emphasizing the insufficiency of the labourers he directed them to "pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest." It would not suffice for them to undertake this work on their own account, for the harvest is the Lord's and he must of necessity send forth the labourers into his harvest. We greatly fear that with the passing of nearly two thousand years and the modernistic trend of everything that the true significance of these things has grown dim in the estimation of those who are promulgating their own ideas about them. There are those who seem to feel they could have come into the vineyard earlier and by so doing reaped for themselves a much larger crop of good things, which they claim to have lost by not applying their lives to the Master's cause when they were young. God forbid that we should say anything to the disparagement of a single solitary soul, be they old or young in years, which would delay one moment their entering into the service or joy of their Lord, but we are writing at this time regarding the harvest and we would not be doing justice to our subject if we failed to warn against gathering in the crops before they are ripe. If the fruit or grain is not thoroughly ready for the harvest it not only is not as good as it otherwise would be, but it is more likely to spoil and do great damage to others in the process. We have just had occasion to travel through a section of the country where there were great fields of golden wheat. Some of it appeared to be bent over with age and to the inexperienced eye it might seem as though the farmer was neglecting his duty by not harvesting his wheat, but we are sure that his judgement is backed by many years of experience and that he is quite certain of the proper time to cast in his sickle. The labourers on the farm just do not go out into the wheat fields some bright morning and begin harvesting the wheat without instructions from the man in authority, and here we would like to emphasize the fact that our text specifically instructs those under consideration to *pray the Lord of*

the harvest to send forth labourers. Men have absolutely no authority for taking this honor unto themselves by rushing into this harvest without being sent by the Lord of the harvest. Peter once thought that he was prepared to forsake all others and follow his Lord into prison and even unto death, but Jesus knew that he must needs learn by bitter experience his own weakness and utter depravity before he could feed the lambs and sheep of his fold. Therefore he said unto him, "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat." Many of God's truly called servants have to be sifted as wheat before they are truly fit for their Master's use. It was good that Jesus told Peter he had prayed for him, that his faith fail not. Until he had sunk into the lowest hell, so to speak, where he was made to weep bitterly, did he realize that the compassion of his Lord never failed, and not until then was he told by Jesus to feed his sheep and feed his lambs. He was therefore taught that salvation in time was of the Lord, hence in addressing his general epistle to "the strangers scattered throughout" and the "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through santification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," concerning that inheritance which is incorrupt, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, that it was reserved in heaven for those "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." Jesus also said unto Peter following his denial of him, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not." John 21:18. Peter and all the elect of God must needs be taught the lesson of the prophet Jeremiah when he said: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Some of our modern day ministers appear to be of the opinion that it is within them to choose their times and seasons and that it is not at all necessary for them to go to Jonah's college in order to be qualified to preach, but we are persuaded that they will not preach "Salvation is of the Lord" until they have gone down into the belly of hell, where there is no eye to pity and no arm to save, or deliver, except that of God. Then and then only will they pay that which they will have been made to vow. The salvation or deliverance which Jonah experienced was in time and of the Lord, and altogether unconditional. It is claimed by some that "eternal salvation and common salvation must be dealt with separately because eternal is by grace and grace alone, and common is by works. In other words, eternal salvation is God's work, and common salvation is man's work." If this be true there is something radically wrong with us. We know by experience, we hope, that God is able to cause whomsoever he will to go down to the sea in ships, and do business in great waters, to see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep, but until he does deep will not call unto deep "at the noise of thy waterspouts" as "all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." This is a way that no man will choose when left to himself, and it is in keeping with inspired testimony, for the Lord speaking by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah said, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." This the true servant of God can witness to without reservation and is made to rejoice in it. We know enough about human nature, however, to know that it is susceptible to the

reasoning of Satan, who is ever ready to sow tares among the wheat, and when this is done it will have to be allowed to grow until the time of harvest, when our Lord will come with his "fan in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." We fear there are some among those known as Primitive Baptists who feel they can be of assistance to the Lord in adding to the militant church such as he would own and have to be saved doctrinally, but we would humbly caution them to beware lest they bring forth Ishmaelites who may plague the true Isreal of our God for many years to come. It is much better to watch and pray to the Lord of harvest to carry on his work of grace in the heart of poor sinners to perfection. When the fruit or grain is truly ready for the harvest there is not much likelihood of its spoiling or bringing reproach and shame upon the cause of our Master.

Some of the foregoing lines were written while we sat looking out over the broad expanse of the Atlantic Ocean, watching the tide ebb and flow, and the thought occured to us that as there is a fixed time for the tide to go out and a fixed time for the tide to come in, which it does year in and year out, and without any assistance whatsoever from puny man, and neither can he hinder it, so there is a fixed time for everything under the sun. The Psalmist said, "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favor her, yea, the set time, is come." The preacher said "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven," and there must, therefore, be a time to sow and a time to reap, all appointed by God, for it is written "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." And according to the parable presented in the twentieth chapter of Matthew it would seem that the labourers who were hired and sent forth into the vineyard, all received their penny per day. Those who worked all day received no more than those who went in at the third, the sixth, the ninth and the eleventh hours of the day—they were all paid the same—no more and no less. It is, therefore, all of grace, and not by works of righteousness which we can do, and the God of all grace shall have all the praise.

R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

BESSIE STATON JARMON, wife of our brother, Deacon Charles H. Jarmon of the Welsh Tract Church, departed this earthly life at Memorial Hospital, Wilmington, Del., December 29th, 1945. She was born at Snow Hill, Md., May 20, 1875, daughter of the late Elder Joseph Staton, former pastor of Welsh Tract Church, and Louisa Tilghman Staton. She was married March 21, 1894 to Charles H. Jarmon son of George W. and Sarah Ann Jarmon who lived at Berlin, Md., and were members of the church at Indiantown, Md. To this union were born six children, one son, Leland, died Aug. 12, 1916. Those surviving are Rees S. Jarmon of Newark, Del., Louis Jarmon of Goldsboro, N. C., Mrs. William Holloway of Snow Hill, Md., Mrs. Helen L. McGraw and Mrs. Edwin Shakespeare of Newark, Del. In addition there are living six grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Mrs. Louise S. Johnson of Newark, Del., a half-sister, is the only member of Elder Jos. Staton's immediate family now left. While Bessie never felt she could unite with us in the membership of the church, she was devoted to the interests of the church and was always ready and willing to do what she could for the aid and comfort in entertaining those who came to the meetings, and desired to see the meetings kept up and the cause maintained. Judging from her life and actions, we can say she was a lover of those who loved the truth as it is in Jesus. The Word says: "He that loveth is born of God." She had been subject to recurring heart attacks for a long while, this last seizure occurring as she was preparing for the homecoming of the children and their families at Christmas time. At her funeral, we read Proverbs 31st chapter, verses 10 to 31, setting forth the principles of a vir-

tuous woman. It seemed so fitting in this instance. She was a truly faithful wife, a devoted mother and a constant friend. My wife and I have for 18 years and more shared the hospitality of her home and the kindly and friendly ministrations of her hand and heart. To say we miss her, does not begin to express our loss. Our dear brother Jarmon is sad and lonely but is richly blessed in his children who do all humanly possible for his comfort. May the Lord reconcile our brother and the family, together with us all, to his holy and righteous will.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS

DORA I. CAIN. This humble saint of God was born in Morehouse Parish, La., October 4, 1875, and died March 4, 1946, making her sojourn here exactly 70 years and 5 months. She is survived by three children: Roy H. Cain, Dallas, Tex., Mrs. Homer Walker, Dumas, Ark. and Lynton Cain, Bastrop, La. Four brothers and one sister: Willie, Frank and Freeman of Jackson, Miss., Zander Seale, Meriden, Miss. and Mrs. Lula Orr, Oak Grove, La. She was married to John W. Cain, Dec. 24, 1891 and on Aug. 13, 1922 she and her husband united with Concord Church and were baptized the following day by Elder T. J. Evers.

Sister Cain was a person possessing a great measure of faith in her blessed Savior. She was firm and staunch in the glorious principles of the gospel and well rooted and grounded in the truth. She was a great sufferer for quite a few years prior to her death, being afflicted with arthritis and attendant complications, during the last 14 months of her life was almost a constant invalid. Through it all she seemed to have been the happy recipient of God's unspeakable mercy, enabling her to bear her pains and sufferings with great fortitude. During this latter period she made her home with her noble son, Lynton and his good wife, and their two splendid young daughters in Bastrop, La. Sister Cain told me herself that she could have received no more tender, tireless and watchful care anywhere on earth than this son and his family rendered to her. She stated outright that Ima, the daughter-in-law, was as good to her as any daughter could possibly be to a real mother.

Elder R. W. Rhodes was called in connection with the writer to conduct the funeral services which were held at the local cemetery about one and one half miles from the old home, after which her mortal body was consigned back to mother earth from whence it was taken, by the side of her late husband there to await the glorious resurrection morn. May God in his almighty love and mercy comfort and sustain all who mourn her loss, believing as we do that our loss is her eternal gain. Written by request of Lynton Cain.

(Elder) JOHN LEE SMITH

SAM BENNIE was born Jan. 8, 1902. He was united in marriage to Lula Mae Skeeve in June 1926. To this union were born four children, two boys and two girls: Sam, Jr., James Dalton, Mary Sue and Jerry Ann. Four of this lovely family met tragic deaths. James Dalton died from severe burns when he was twenty-two months old. Sam Bennie, his wife Lula Mae, and Mary Sue aged nine years were killed by a tornado which completely destroyed their home in Palestine, Texas, Jan. 4, 1946. Sam, Jr., and little Jerry Ann survive.

His mother was left a widow when Sam was about thirteen years old. There were four other children, three of them younger and the responsibility of rearing them fell on Sam and his mother. It was wonderful how well he performed his duty in this respect. He won the respect and friendship of all who knew him. He worked for the Railroad Company, beginning at the age of sixteen until his passing away. He was faithful to every trust. He received a hope and united with the Primitive Baptists about 1927 and at the time of his death was a member of Old Salem Church. He was a good citizen and loving and dutiful husband and father. The communty has lost a good citizen, the church a faithful member and the mother a dutiful son. He was the writer's stepson and I loved him as my own son. May the Lord help us to emulate his noble life and reconcile us to his will. Written by his pastor.

(Elder) W. O. BEENE

ELLA HERNDON YOUNG died at her home in Lawrenceburg, Ky., Jan. 5, 1946. She was the oldest daughter of Alvin G. and Mildred Catlett Herndon and her whole life was spent near her birthplace. It is requested by her kindred that I write a suitable obituary as I have been connected in church and family relationship for over fifty years, and in doing this I will submit a notation she left herself of important events of her life.

"I was born July 9, 1867. Joined Little Flock Church when twenty-one years old. Baptized by Elder P. G. Lester, believing in the doctrine of Predestination and that salvation is of the Lord, Attended church as long as was able to go. Have been an invalid thirty-six years. Am of the same faith, and found the Lord to be my greatest physician. I have suffered much physical pain, but the faith and love He has blessed me with gives me patience to wait his appointed time. He gives me sweet seasons of rejoicing which keeps off that fear of eternal punishment I once had, also brightens my hope of eternal life."

What more could be said to leave assurance of the blessed inheritance that we are told is reserved in heaven for the saints of God? We

are informed that in the moments of relief from intense suffering in her last days she remarked, "I suffer much but all is bright ahead," and she anxiously awaited the relief of death. She leaves four brothers and five sisters, having homes far apart and in four different states, yet in the midst of her afflictions she kept up correspondence with them and welcomed them to her home in their visits. Her home was always open for her church people when she could no longer meet with them at the church. She would have meetings at her home and these were a source of much comfort to her. Many Baptists during the past fifty years may recall her christian fellowship for them.

Much more could be said of the worthy character of this faithful sister, but we do not consider obituaries for the purpose of praising the virtues of the dead, but rather to exalt and magnify the goodness of our God in making the blessings of his love shine out in the lives of his saints. When we see the foundation of the earthly house of our mortal existence begin to crumble, it is so sweet to lean upon this strong hand which is underneath, and to realize that we have another house not made with hands eternal in the heavens, and we desire to be clothed with this house.

Our sister in her life of afflictions so confidently looked for this. May the brothers and sisters she left, all find this firm support in the midst of the trials of life, and this supreme comfort in death. Elder C. F. Ratcliff of Florence, Ky. was called to minister at the funeral services, and interment was in the Lawrenceburg Cemetery, Jan. 7, 1946.

(Elder) C. W. BOND

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Whereas, it has been the will of God to remove by death our dear sister, GEORGIA ERWIN, we hope to bow in humble submission to the will of him who doeth all things well, therefore be it

Resolved, that we, the members of Hopewell Church, Mangum, Okla., deeply sympathize with the bereaved family and relatives of the deceased.

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be sent to the bereaved family, a copy put on our church record and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication. Done by order of the church while in conference, Feb. 17, 1946.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN, Moderator
R. L. BUCKNER, Church Clerk

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The yearly meeting of the Rewastico Church will be held the first Sunday in August, 1946. The meeting-house is located about four miles from Mardela Springs, Md.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT

The regular annual two days meeting will be held at the Primitive Baptist Church, corner of Shotwell St., and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn. on second Sunday in August and Saturday before. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

E. H. LANIER, Clerk

The annual all-day meeting of the Brookfield Church will be held at Slate Hill, N. Y., on Friday, August 23rd. All lovers of the truth will be welcomed.

R. LESTER DODSON

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Me., Sept. 6, 7, and 8, 1946.

SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk

The Pocatalico Old Baptist Association will be held with the Harmony Church in Huntington, W. Va., Sept. 6th, 7th and 8th, 1946. We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Right fork of Russell Creek, 1066 Cedar Crest Drive.

FLOYD JOHNSON

The Lexington-Roxbury Association is appointed to convene with the Olive and Hurley Church at Shokan, N. Y., Sept. 11 and 12, 1946. Meeting opens at 10 o'clock D. S. T. On Sept. 13 the ordination of Licentiate Amasa J. Slauson is appointed to take place if God so wills.

Friends coming Tuesday evening before the Association will please go to Winchell's store in Shokan where they will be directed to places of entertainment.

(Mrs.) FRED BROOKS, Church Clerk

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sunday in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y. at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y. in the meetinghouse, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed.

R. LESTER DODSON

CORRECTION

In some unaccountable way the name of Elder C. Y. Osteen has appeared as "Pastor" in connection with notice of meeting of "Old School Baptist meetings are held every fourth Sunday at Civic Club, 1419 N. Shepherd St., Houston, Texas. Preaching by Elder W. O. Beene." This notice should have been signed by (Mrs.) Irene Wisenbaker, and not "C. Y. Osteen, Pastor," at it appears. We extremely regret this error.

R. LESTER DODSON

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 114 RUTHERFORD, N. J., SEPTEMBER, 1946 No. 9

"Come brethren and sisters and hear me relate,
And I will inform you of my present estate:
Though oft I have called sweet Jesus my own,
I now feel dejected, like one left alone.

How backward in duty, how lifeless I be,
The smiles of my Savior, how seldom I see;
I scarcely in Zion can raise a sweet song—
My harp on the willow now seems to be hung.

I know prayer's a duty I owe to the Lord,
It is enjoined on me in His holy word;
But when I attempt it I've no heart to pray,
My thoughts are so wandering and often astray.

When I read the Scriptures instruction to gain
'Tis but a small portion that I can retain;
They seem so mysterious, so dark to my view,
I can't understand them as I wish to do.

In all my performance how short I do fall,
I'm pining, I languish and barren withal;
I seem like a tree that encumbers the ground,
The leaves make appearance but no fruit is found

My moments are lonesome, small comfort I find,
Dark clouds hover o'er me and darken my mind;
The cold dreary winter with tempests do blow,
I'm chilled with the cold and in darkness I go."

(Elder) WILLIAM THOMPSON

Submitted by
(Elder) C. A. HUNT

CORRESPONDENCE

721 N. Main St., Eureka, Kansas

ELDER R. L. DODSON AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES: I feel somewhat impressed to write you if our esteemed brother and Editor feels like it would be profitable and a comfort to the saints of "The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace", but I desire not to withhold good matter for this.

My text will be found in John 16:32. "And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me." Christ having prophesied that his disciples should be scattered and leave him alone, we have the comfort he had amidst the affliction of solitude and dereliction of men. This he expresses negatively: "yet I am not alone," that is, absolutely. Though left by you yet I am not quite destitute of company. He also expresses it positively, giving both the reason why he was not alone, and the account of that blessed company he had, "because the Father is with me." Our Lord Jesus knew that in all his sufferings he would have the constant presence, and powerful assistance of his heavenly Father. In this matter, our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious head of the body, the church, exemplified, in his own case, the case, and condition of his people when they are brought to suffering, solitary, desolate and deserted circumstances; they are not so very desolate and solitary as men are ready to judge; for though they be left alone, yet they are not alone while God is present with them. Such is the mystical and spiritual union between Christ and his people, which are the sheep of his pasture, seeing he and they are denominated one in I Cor. 12:12. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ." Therefore, I consider Christ here speaking as a public person, even the public head and representative of his people; and consequently what was said by the glorious head in his sufferings and lonely circumstances is appli-

cable to, and may be said by, every member of Christ in whatever afflicted, lonely or solitary circumstances they are. "I am not alone, because the Father is with me." The doctrine, therefore, that I would discourse upon as the Lord shall enable me for opening of this text is as follows: That as it was the comfort of Christ personally in his lonely sufferings, so it is the comfort of Christ's mystical body, the church, in all their trials and desolating circumstances to have it to say, "I am not alone, because the Father is with me." How often has your unworthy servant, meaning myself, felt so lonely at times, as if I had not a friend in the world, but Jesus was near even if I did not feel his presence when the storm was at its height, and the waves were so high. That still small voice spoke, the storm abated, the sea became calm and once more I was made to rejoice with joy unspeakable. Sometimes on Mount Pisgah's height, then down in the valley, more times in the valley in late years, but our times are all in the Lord's hand. Those dear hands will bear each one of his children safely home, the place the dear Savior went to prepare for them. Therefore, my Father's children "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" for Jesus has declared, "I have overcome the world," for all the seed, which are the seed the promise was made to, and they were and are all sinners by the violation of one man. But getting back to our text, God's presence with Christ was enough to him, and his presence with us shall be enough to us. No man is alone who has the presence of God with him. Let us then observe the special comfort included in the presence of God, as represented by the first person of the glorious trinity, namely, God the Father, or how this made for the comfort of Christ in his sufferings, and how it makes for his people's in their trials. First how it made for the comfort of Christ in his sufferings to have the presence of God, as he is God the Father, "the Father is with me."

In order to understand this let it be considered that the Father, out of Christ's mouth, when he was in this world implies some things relating (1) to Christ's frame towards God, and also (2) some things with respect to the Father's demeanor toward Christ. First some things relating to Christ's frame towards God are: that Christ was under an humble acknowledgement of God's superiority over him. Christ, as touching his divine nature was equal with the Father for "being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Phil. 2:6. But as touching his manhood and mediatorial offices, he was inferior to his Father, as his servant, hence he says elsewhere "my Father is greater than I." Our Lord here humbly acknowledges that the Father is his superior, yet under obligations to bear his charges. The word "Father" here implies Christ's deep sense of God's affection to him. The sense of this strengthened him to act for his father in his younger years. When his parents missed him, and sought him sorrowing, he said "How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Luke 2:49. And this sense of God's affection to him he maintained to the last, and he expresses it, John 17:24, "Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." The word "Father" here implies Christ's owning his obligations unto duty of a son and servant, who was also sure that God would not fail to act the part of a Father by giving his presence and assistance. "I am not alone, because the Father is with me." It implies Christ's dependence upon God and his self-insufficiency as man; that is, Christ did not think that he could subsist or persist and hold out of himself. Though his human nature subsisted in his divine person, yet without the Godhead, which is one and the same in each person there-

of, he knew he could not go through with his work; and knowing the unity of the Godhead he could well say, as God the Son, "I am not alone;" Yet as the Son incarnate, he expresses his dependence upon the three-one God here denominated by the person of the Father. "I am not alone, because the Father is with me," and here ineffable comfort and support is enclosed and comprehended in this dependence of Christ upon the Father. Second, the word Father out of Christ's mouth, implies, on the other hand, some things with respect to the Father's demeanor towards Christ. It implies how God the Father was endeared unto him, even as his dear Son; his servant, whom he upheld; his elect in whom his soul delighted and his beloved Son in whom he was well pleased. Here is comfort. Father implies a determinate and inviolable purpose in God to promote and advance Christ as his Son and heir, and to confer eminence and dignity upon him. God is here looked upon, by Christ, as the God that must advance him and exalt him, however, he is now abashed, humbled and thrown down; hence Christ does no sooner fill his mouth with the name Father (John 7), but his heart is full of joy, of hope and expectation of God's advancing and glorifying him; Father. "glorify thy Son", and in verse five, "O Father, glorify thou me." Here then was ground for comfort. Father imports friendship and friendly dealings that he expects from God when earthly friends were leaving him, and cruel enemies surrounding him; many bulls compassing him about; strong bulls of Bashan besetting him. When they were tearing to pieces and bringing him down, the Father was a friend to bear him up. They were potent enemies but here was an omnipotent friend at hand. The Father by way of eminence imports not only the nearest relation to Christ, but the highest help, the most honorable and glorious assistance. The Father, who stands obliged to help me, might Christ say, not only as he is my Father, but as he is the Father eminently; even the Father of mercies; the Father of lights; the Father of Spirits; the Father of eternity. The Father of mercies cannot be cruel or untender to me: the Father of lights cannot leave me in darkness; the Father of spirits cannot leave my soul in hell; the Father of eternity cannot but make the death of his eternal Son to be the door of eternal life. Thus we have seen how it made for the comfort of Christ, in his sufferings, to have the presence of God as he is God the Father.

Let us consider, secondly, how it makes for the comfort of his people, (the sheep) that the Father is with them; or that they have the presence of God as represented and denominated by the first person of the glorious trinity, the Father? I shall try to show you that this view is comfortable in several respects. It is comfortable as it imports the kindliest enjoyment of God's presence, namely, the Father of Christ and a near relation of ours in him. We cannot conceive of God as our Father without conceiving him to be first the Father of Christ who is his eternal Son, our Lord and Redeemer, and as our Father in him who calls us brethren, and is not ashamed to do so, (Heb. 2:11) only he must be owned to be the older brother and the first-born among many brethren. Oh! what joy and comfort results from this view of our having one and the same Father with Christ, and his being our God and Father in him and who says, "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." It is comfortable as it imports the highest enjoyment of God's presence; it is the top enjoyment to have the Father with us, though our enjoyment of God does begin with the enjoyment of the Father first, for we come to Christ; yet it ends or lands in the Father, through Christ, the way to the Father, (John 14:6.) who being the first

person of the glorious trinity in the order of subsistence, it speaks out the most high, honorable and glorious enjoyment. Then does the soul indeed dwell on high as it said in Isaiah 33:16. It is comfortable as it imports the fullest enjoyment of God's presence. A God cannot be a father without a son, so it imports communion with the Father and the Son. "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ," I John 1:3, and as the Spirit naturally proceeds from the Father and the Son so it imports also communion with the Father and the Son by the Spirit; and consequently that plurality of the divine presence our Lord speaks of in John 14:23, "We will come unto him, and make our abode with him;" it is comfortable as it imports the surest enjoyment of the divine presence. We may enjoy benefits from God and yet not enjoy himself; we may have common influences and gifts of the Spirit and yet be castaways. Yea, the disciples of Christ may see and enjoy him, and yet not be sure they enjoy the Father's presence and favor; nor can they reckon the enjoyment of Christ's sure work unless they have the Father manifested to them as appears from Philip's words to Christ, John 14:8. "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us," intimating that while their faith looked only to Christ, as man present with them, they were still uncertain and unsatisfied. Therefore, as Christ pointed out their duty of looking so to him as to see the Father in him, so it is remarkable, I think, in this chapter where our text says, that after Christ spake so much to them of the Father, then they began to say, (verse 30) now we are sure, now we believe. It is sure enjoyment of God to see the Father in the Son, or to see that God is well pleased in him. Without this, our faith itself does not assure us of freedom from the Father's wrath, but viewing the Father in Jesus is sure work. It is comfortable as it imports the clearest enjoyment of God, yea both clear in itself and clearing the mind and conscience. Our Lord's doctrine here in the context concerning the Father, made the disciples say, (verse 29) "Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb."

Notwithstanding all that Christ had said of himself and of the Holy Ghost, whom he was to send, yet their minds were in the mist, as it were, till they heard him speak more directly and distinctly of the Father; and then, though they were too confident of their faith as appears by the check that Christ here gives them, yet they profess they were further illuminated than before, "Lo, now speakest thou plainly." Indeed the mind is clear when it views the Father in Christ, for then we see Christ truly and clearly when we see God the Father in Jesus. The conscience also is cleared when it views the Father in Christ, and comes to the Father in the Son for then it is justified in the court of the last resort. "It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?" Rom. 8:33-34. It is comfortable as it imports the steadiest enjoyment of God; for, having the Father with us, and our fellowship with the Father, we can win no farther in our motion. While we believe in Christ we are on the way to the Father, John 14:6, "I am the way," but when we come to the Father, and the Father with us, we are just at the end of our way, the end of our faith, the end of our journey, as it were, and are fixed in the center of rest. When you come to ordinances must you rest there? No, you come to Christ in them as the church said, "It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth." Solomon's Songs 3:4. Well, but when you come to Christ as the way, you rest there? Nay, you must go a little farther and come to God in him, or the Father by him. "Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God." I Peter 1:21. A

man never stands firm and steady till then. It is comfortable as it imports the most needful enjoyment of God, or such a divine presence as answers all needs of the soul and all the defects of a lonely case. Why! the heavenly Father being present they enjoy all the privileges of these who are the children of such a Father. Do they need divine pity? The Father is with them for this end. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." Do they need divine sympathy? The Father is with them for that end. "In all their affliction he was afflicted." "He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye." Do they need provision? The Father is with them to provide for his children. Do they need instruction? This is a father's work and for this end the Father is with them to teach them to profit, and guide them with his eye. Do they need kindly chastisement? This is a father's work; and as a father chastiseth his children whom he loveth, and then backs the chastisements with embracements; see how God the Father does both "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke." There is chastisement. Jer. 31:18. Verse 20 reads: "Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord." There is the embracement. Whatever they need of divine fatherly care to be taken about them, his being with them as the Father answereth and supplies all their needs according to his riches and glory by Christ Jesus. It is comfortable as it imports the sweetest enjoyment of God's presence, for when the Father is with them they drink at the fountain head where the water is sweetest as it said. God the Father who is the fountain of the trinity in respect of the priority of order in subsistence, he is the fountain of living waters; the fountain head of our salvation and consolation, and however sweet the streams are yet it is sweetest drinking at the fountain. By enjoying the fountain we enjoy all that can issue from it, and hence the enjoyment of God in Christ is never sweeter than when the heart leaps out at the mouth with an Abba, Father. Rom. 8:15. Then may the soul well say, "I am not alone, because the Father is with me." Thus you see the special comfort included in the presence of God, as represented by the first person, the Father with me, the next general head is to offer some grounds and reasons why God was thus present with Christ and why he is present with the people, especially in their sufferings and lonely circumstances. Why was God the Father with Christ in his work of doing and suffering? The Father was with him because he was his Son, and as he was his son he had a necessary, natural right to his presence for "he and his Father are one." As he is his sent servant, his sent ambassador he had a necessary federal right to his presence by virtue of the convenant God the Father made with him. "I have made a covenant with my chosen." Psalms 89:3. Hence he says, "He that sent me is with me." The Father was with him because he did always what was pleasing to him. "He that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him." John 8:29. He was a son and servant that never did a thing displeasing to his Father. Nay he never did an action but what was pleasing to his Father; the Father was with him because he loved him from everlasting, being the son of his bosom, his only begotten Son full of grace and truth, and his eternal delight. "I was daily his delight," Prov. 8:30, and therefore he says of him, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth." Isaiah 42:1. The Father was with him because he loved a company, a world of

sinners elect, sheep of his pasture, elect according to the foreknowledge of God; for whose sake he sent him on the errand of their eternal redemption. "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Heb. 9:12. Thus they, the sheep, are the elect of God, he obtained eternal redemption for them because they could not obtain by obedience to any law that was given; for if they could have obtained it by obedience to the law that God gave Moses on Sinai, then there would have been no need for Jesus to be sent to redeem sinners from under the holy law of God; but it was binding on Christ to come and keep that law for them, because they could not keep it. Jesus was ordained from the foundation of the world by the eternal Father to save sinners from their sins and he finished it. Let us, my Father's children, praise and serve him faithfully for what he has done for us. This poetry suits my feelings at this time.

(*See poetry on first page*)

(Elder) C. A. HUNT

Redwood, Va.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD I HOPE: I am enclosing check for $5 two of which are to be applied on my subscription and the balance as a contribution. In the past I have taken different religious Primitive Baptist papers and I believe the *Signs* is the best I have ever read. I read the *Signs* over and over and find so many rich articles that I feel are well seasoned with grace which is of that faith that was once delivered to the saints of God, which is God's heritage chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began. Yes, chosen in the everlasting covenant of God's grace which liveth and abideth forever. All things work together for their good. Yes beloved, all things are theirs, even their chastisements, persecutions, griefs and sorrows (which are many with this poor mortal), as well as their uprisings of love, joy, peace and praising the Lord for his goodness and mercy. I believe all my joys and sorrows are my meat and my drink. Sometimes this poor, vile, sinful creature goes cast down in sorrow and grief for days, weeks and months and almost gives up in despair with mournings, sighings and groanings, Lord save or I perish, but at some unexpected time my conscience and feelings are melted into tenderness and tears of joy praising my great and glorious Redeemer. Sometimes I feel to know that our redeemer liveth. These are some of my ups and downs. Are they yours? If so I have fellowship for you. If God be for us who can be against us. He is our all in all things and we are nothing, yea, less than nothing in the sight of God. But who are the called according to God's purpose? He (God) is our surety in all things. Oh! the grandeur and glorious magnificence there is in our God when he sooths our sorrows, heals our wounds and drives away our fears: when we are made in humbleness and tenderness to shrink as babes, it is then that we hope we know something about the great riches, love and tender mercies of our dear Lord, and how dependent we are upon him for all things which he has promised to supply in due season. He is not slack concerning his promises; the powers that be are ordained of God; he is a positive surety for all of his people; he is God and changes not. I believe all that Christ died to redeem are just as secure as God is sure. I would as soon believe that God would fail to be God as to believe that any of his little ones would perish. Christ is the way, and his little ones (his elect bride) are in the way, they in Christ and Christ in them; Christ in the Father and the Father in him. Beloved, that is the most perfect union in relationship. It cannot be broken, it is securely bound together by the strong cords of God's love. This is a glorious union, with all of its magnificent beauties; it has no equal,

there is nothing to compare with it, it will last through all ages of eternity. I am persuaded that all of the opposing powers of hell can never break, separate or crumble this union in any manner, it cannot be dissolved.

What a sweet consolation for the poor little fainting, doubting child of God to be the recipient and beneficiary of God's glorious kingdom that is prepared for the people of God, for them that love him. It is by the imputed righteousness of Christ that his people are brought into the regenerated knowledge of him, an operation in the heart which only God can perform, therefore, "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." He says, "I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them." He establishes their goings, and puts a new song in their mouths, even praise unto God. It is then they are subjects of his grace and his redeeming love. Those that have been taught of, and kept and led by the Lord are worthy subjects to be God's humble poor. If I know anything about such they feel so little and unworthy to be esteemed with such honor. The formal religionists say we are heretics and very strange and peculiar. They say we are always wanting to talk about the scriptures and religion and there is truth in that, but if formalities and externals are all they can produce, with some of them it will last as long as they last, but if we are fools for Christ's sake we are more that conquerors through him that loved us. If we truly are the circumcision of the Lord Jesus Christ, we are lone pilgrims here in this low ground of sin and sorrow with no continual abiding place, just passing through this vale of tears with no returning. We are seeking a city to come, whose maker and builder is God, eternal in the heavens. That heavenly prospect is prepared for Zion's little ones, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Oh! glorious thought for those that that rich treasure is prepared for, the dear kindred in the Lord, to possess that glorious kingdom of eternal glory, the New Jerusalem, that blest abode, the city of our God. Beloved, these things are most precious to me. They are jewels of great worth and value, they have no equal or comparison, without this, life would be worthless to me. In sighing, so often do I say, my brethren, O my brethren.

I am nearly sixty-six years of age and not much able to work of late, but I hope I have been more confirmed in the faith that was once delivered unto the saints of God. I attend good meetings and associations. Sometimes shed tears of joy looking upon them singing and preaching the glorious gospel of glad tidings of great joy, and taking the parting hand of sweet fellowship to perhaps meet no more in this time world. At times they look to me so sainted and lovely I could not refrain from saying, surely they are the people of God, and sometimes I do not doubt it. I feel to be the doubtful one, not worthy of such high esteem. I cannot write about these sacred things just as my brethren do, but I hope I have been given faith to believe in line with them. When I began this I only thought to write about my dues to the *Signs* and the companionship the paper is to me. I begin to look for it several days before it is due, and often the first thing I sit down and read it through before quitting. Many times one good article is suited to my feelings and is worth the whole year's dues. The *Signs* is a welcome visitor in my home.

My mind and feelings just seemed to lead me on until I have written all this. Brother Dodson I have never written for publication before and it is with fear and trembling that I offer this. Please look over it carefully and if it does not come up to your requirements cast it aside and all will be well. I hope it is the good

Lord's will and purpose to maintain the *Signs* in the future as in the past. I feel unworthy but would appreciate it if some of these little ones would write to me. To the saints scattered abroad may the dear Lord keep them in humble submission to his divine will that they may walk circumspectly in the ways of peace and righteousness. A sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

J. A. PERDUE

Riffe, Wash.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON: After reading your admonition to Mr. E. W. Pace my mind has been impressed to write you and you can do as you like with the few thoughts expressed by me. On page 275, Vol 113, Dec. 1945 it reads as follows: "We would strongly urge him to come out and be separate from the world and put on the whole armor of God by professing before men what wondrous works have been wrought in him." I just wanted to say to you that such admonition is the best I have read, and it finds a lodging place in my mind to the extent I believe you have given him the best that could have been given, and I am hoping it will stir him to the extent that he will put the light that is in him on the candle stick so all the church can see the light. (Matt. 5:15) No doubt what you have admonished this brother to do will sink deep in his mind and others will rejoice to know you have done the right thing as that will be like giving to one of God's little ones a cup of cold water to drink in Jesus' name (Mark 9:41). The brother in Christ not being a member of the church needs the admonition of those like yourself to encourage him. He might be like the one who said, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?" This inquirer could see God's ways so high above his own ways, he wanted to know more even where his flock rested at noon, and so it is with the children of God, they inquire of him whom their soul loveth. Have you not been inquiring of Him whom your soul loveth, wanting to know more? When God called Moses, Moses made excuses but all the excuses he could make did not keep Moses from going. God had raised him (Moses) up for that same thing he was calling him to do. "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven," and the time had come for Moses to play his part in the pages of history so Pharoah could learn and know something about God's power, and yet he (Pharoah) would and must forget until he was destroyed in the Red Sea. All of those plagues that were brought on Pharoah were not only good to teach him but Israel was learning. They, too, could see the working of God as the time was drawing near when Israel must leave Egypt. (Acts 7:7) It took a great drought to cause Israel to go to Egypt, but something must cause Jacob to go to Egypt, they went to Egypt in order to live. We are in this world in order to live a natural life, and God will, in his own time and way, take all of his children out of this world, for he has a place for them that is better than this. When I started this I did not intend to write as I have so if you feel to put it in the waste basket it will be all right with me. As ever your brother.

ISAAC F. COLEMAN

Route 1, Box 34, Ewing, Ill.

ELDER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: I want to thank you for your kindness in sending me the October issue of the *Signs* for I get comfort out of them all. Of course more in some than others. In the October issue I see an article by E. G. Webb, Hooker, Okla., also your reply which all sounds like Old Baptists to me. Also on the first page of this issue there is as much experimental truth written by sis-

ter Chester as I ever saw on one sheet of paper. The editorial by Elder W. D. Griffin I think points out the plain truth on the subject of the second birth. Again I was comforted to read in the December issue the article by Elder L. P. Harriss, setting forth the same truths. I would be pleased to see more of this kind of writing in the *Signs of the Times*. I have wondered why these able writers do not write more on this subject.

Here I want to introduce E. G. Webb again as he appears in the December issue, where he asks your views on Heb. 2:15 which reads, "And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." I have read brother Webb's statement as to where his fears seem to center, also your views in answering his request. You both ask if any one feels to add anything on the subject to do so. When I first read this I thought I had nothing to add for it seemed I had no light on the text, and of course without that I could do nothing to help. There is another fact that made this more interesting to me. E. G. Webb is a cousin of mine and I hope he does not think hard if I tell you. Yes, as boys we grew up together, went to the same school and were the best of friends up to manhood. When he married, or shortly after, he made his home in Kansas. This was about sixty years ago. The part of the state in which he settled was a lonely desert and it seemed to be a comfort to him to keep up correspondence with me, and I am sure it has been comforting to me. While we have found we differ on one or two points, on the doctrine of election, predestination and salvation by grace we see no difference.

While studying the text without any light, as I said before, some thoughts came to me and I was given to see something in it I had not seen before. Since I feel they were divinely given I feel a desire to offer at least some of them viewing the text as I now do. It seems one on which columns could be written, but the most I could hope to do is to point out some of the sacred truths contained in it. There are three words we will try to consider closely—life, death and fear. There can be no doubt as to what death is. We all know it is extinction of life and it is spoken of in the Bible so many times and in so many different ways it is only our desire here to point out the elect people of God as being the people, the only people, who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage. As we view the problem we see life given to man first, then death follows soon. Adam was the first man to have life. He was, as we see it, given a life of peace and innocency. It knew no fear, no trouble, his Creator had a place prepared for him. It had to be a perfect place for it was prepared by God. God even made him a wife from one of his own ribs and gave her to him for a helpmeet (wife). She was also perfect and without fear. We learn by reading that God gave them a law, telling them they should not eat of the fruit of one tree in the garden, neither should they touch it "for in the the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Then came the one who had the power of death and dealt them a blow of death. He had to beguile Eve by telling her a lie to accomplish it, but that did not hurt him for he was a liar and the father of lies. Yes, he said to Eve thou shalt not die and God doth know that when thou eatest thereof thou shalt become wise. So the devil, through his deception and subtility used his power to bring death,and when Eve ate of the forbidden fruit and gave to her husband and he did eat, they died to that peaceful and innocent life, and what were the serious troubles that followed that death? The one we want to speak of here is the trouble of fear, for it is given to the poor little helpless child of God all through lifetime. I hope I am one made to share in it for if I have never been

brought to death and suffering in Christ I can never reign with him.

Let us go back to the time brother Webb and I were young. We are old now. He is eighty-five and I am close to it. From my own knowledge I can say he was a good boy, obedient to his parents. When he grew to manhood he had a character that stood before his friends unblemished. I am glad I can say this for him, and I feel sure I have said no more for him than he can say for me, but we have seen that death came soon after life, even if it is a good innocent life. So it was with me right in the midst of pleasure in natural life at the age of nineteen years a sudden death came to it. Life is dear even if it is this old natural life, we cling to it as long as we can, and death brings fear. When Adam heard the Lord's voice he said, "I was afraid because I was naked," death brought true wisdom to Adam which he did not have before death. In speaking of spiritual life and its blessings brother Webb says so many have dreams and good evidences given them of new birth as they call it, which he was never blessed with, and he is made to wonder where he stands. Brother Dodson says all the evidence he has of being a child of God came in a gradual way, not all at once. I like that plan for it is God's plan. He said, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." If the truth of these words had never been given to me in an experience of God's grace, written in my heart and mind, I would have no use for them, it would be no comfort to me. It has long been my feeling that I was made to hear the voice of God when he sent it that I be born of his Spirit, and that was the new life given which wounded and ruined the life of the flesh, but it was one year before I was ever given to see the truth of it. It all came in a way I had not known. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The second birth is given at God's own time, and strength and light are given to see his kingdom, but a little more about God leading his children. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." In our common way we only speak of two births, one natural, the second spiritual, but Jesus plainly said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Then as I see it, the second birth only enables God's children to see the kingdom of God and causes them to love it. Why do they love God's kingdom? Because they have been made to see the members of it washed and cleansed by the blood of Jesus, and the poor, little trembling children of God give no credit to the birth through which they can view the kingdom. What they desire and pray for, is that perfect washing and cleansing which will, with their brethren, enable them to read their titles clear to mansions in the skies. In God's own way and his appointed time this blessing is bestowed on all his spiritual children, which gives them a heavenly rejoicing in him. Well do I remember the day when this rejoicing was given to me although it came after three long years in praying for it, and let me say through these years death seemed to bring my worst troubles and fears. In what way did death come in? I was dead to the blessing that I most desired and prayed for. Brother Webb spoke of the fear of death and asks what or which death is it? He seems to fear the second most which, if I get his meaning, means the final destiny of the wicked, the first death meaning the natural or corporeal death. Remember I am just giving my views as they have been given to me. I can only view death as the father and mother of desolation, destruction and fear. Death was first caused by the subtile influence of the devil himself, yet in

the wisdom of God it was only fulfilling his decrees and death has been given from that day to this. It is a terror to life, it brings fear, but blessed be the name of the Lord who created all things, he had with him in eternity the antidote, the remedy to destroy sin and death and he who had the power of death which is the devil. I need not tell you what this remedy was for every child of God who has been given to see Jesus as their Savior knows better than I can tell them. If what I have written is the truth and brings comfort to any one who may read it, the Lord be praised for it. Written in love to all who hold a like precious faith in Christ.

(Elder) JOHN NEAL

2416 - 39th Ave. N., Birmingham 7, Ala.

DEAR CHILDREN OF GOD: I have often thought I would write to the *Signs,* but what to write I know not, no more than Abraham knew when he came up out of the land of the Chaldeans. This I know, that if the Lord does not lead and direct my mind I cannot write because my life is in the hand of an all wise, all powerful and an all ruling God. A God who saw the end from the beginning saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." If he had the power to lay the plan of salvation, he had the power to carry it out, and the first thing a child of God has to learn is that all things are of God. After reading and studying on the goodness of God I find in the Bible where he made a choice, saying, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." "(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth.)" He said to king Pharaoh "For this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." We have a class of people in the world who believe that the God of heaven predestinated all the good things for the children of God, and brethren I believe that as strong as they do, and inasmuch as I believe that God predestinated all the good things for the children of God, I believe that he never made anything but what he made something right incessant to it. He said through the mouth of the prophet Isaiah "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." He said to Moses "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."

Mercy is something that pertaineth to God, he chastises them whom he loves. "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." This love that Jeremiah spoke of was an everlasting love that God had for his bride in the morning of time. God so loved his bride that he sent his Son down in the low grounds of sin and sorrow to redeem his bride from under the law of sin and death. He clothed her with the robe of righteousness and now she stands pure and undefiled in the presence of the Lord. Now brethren, why did he love his bride? The psalmist David said for this cause, and this cause was according to the eternal purpose that he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. He had a perfect right to choose his bride just as I had a right to choose mine for as in Adam we all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. Brethren this little word *all* represents as much in one place as it does in another. Every one of God's children who died in Adam will be made alive in Jesus Christ in the morning of the resurrection, when he comes back to redeem his bride. I hope I am one of those that John saw come up out of great tribulation. My whole heart's desire is for the true church, that she may ever be as a tree that is planted by the rivers of water, that her leaves may not

wither and that she may bloom forth and be as the rose of sharon and the lily of the valley. Brethren pray for me. Your brother in hope.

JULIUS COPELAND

Route 1, Merryville, La.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I think your article in February *Signs* is so fitting to every heaven born soul. O the barrenness and coldness of this old sinner. How often have we, like Elijah's servant, sought but saw no relief. After exhausting our strength we are made to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. The race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong but to God who sheweth mercy. I am sending remittance for the *Signs* for another year. Have been taking it for over twenty-five years and get much comfort from its pages. I also admire your stand in refusing to participate in controversies. In my judgment it is perfectly right for brethren to exchange views, but it is the wrong spirit that tries to force others to go our way. "Cry aloud, spare not." Isaiah 58:1. It is not the expounding of sound doctrine that causes confusion, but the exercise of the evil spirit that cannot receive it that makes the noise.

Of late my mind has been dwelling on the new birth. Whether prompted by the flesh or from on high I cannot tell, but I am sure the household of faith can tell. "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" I Cor. 6:3. The Savior told Nichodemus "Exept a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." John 3: 5-6. Nichodemus marvelled at his saying, just as many of us are doing to-day. If any one disagrees with my views I do not feel harsh toward them, I might be wrong. We only understand spiritual things by the teachings of the Spirit, it is not in our power to grasp the Spirit of God. All rational people know that we will not be born of the flesh the second time, so we must conclude that we are dealing with spiritual matters. "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" In our imagination we can see the Holy Ghost as something that is very illuminating. We are creatures of circumstances, God controls the circumstances. If the fleshly temple is filled with the Spirit of God it may be compared to the old grease gourd, the contents will be seen on the outside but the old gourd is the same; so a man filled with the Holy Ghost has a different walk and talk but the old flesh is the same. "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." Psalms 32:8. I firmly believe our destiny was fixed before we were born, and we are sure to go accordingly. If we walk in disobedience we receive the rod. Chastisement is evidence of heirship, "but if ye be without chastisement,whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." Heb. 12:8. "My spirit shall not always strive with man," so when his Spirit is withholden this old flesh drops back into the mire. I am sure you can call to mind, brethren in whom you had great confidence. You have heard them relate their experience of grace and you listened in tears because they could tell your own experience, but to-day that brother has departed and his conduct is a disgrace to the church. So if God changed the old man, something changed him back. We do not believe this vile body is any more fit for immortal glory after regeneration than it was before. When we have fulfilled our allotted time here, then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit to God who gave it, but in the resurrection it will be raised a spiritual body. "All flesh shall perish together and man shall return again unto dust." Job 34:15. The

child of grace is a twofold being. "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." Rom. 7:25. "A strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." Luke 11:21-22. Paul evidently had his old nature left when he prayed that the thorn in the flesh be removed. His answer, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Had he not had his carnal nature there would have been no thorn. We hear brethren crying for peace. If it were God's will I am sure it would be. He knows what is best for us. Too many of us want peace on our own terms. We want to remove the mote from our brother's eye, but beholdest not the beam in our own eyes. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." Gal. 5:22-23.

Dear Brother, I did not start to write such a lengthy letter. Please cast the mantle of charity over me. If I have written anything of comfort and you see fit, pass it on to others and God will have the glory. Your unworthy brother in hope.

J. PAUL McMILLIAN

(In the forepart of brother McMillian's letter he is undoubtedly referring to the editorial written by Elder Griffin on "The cloud like a man's hand." Be that as it may we are glad that our brother enjoys reading our family paper. R. L. D.

Dunbar, W. Va.,

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am enclosing the obituaries of my father and mother which I would like to have published in the *Signs of the Times* if you have space for them. My father has taken the *Signs* ever since I can remember. I would really like to know the exact number of years but I failed to ask him and now it is too late so I have no way of knowing.

He and mother were firm believers of the doctrine as set forth by your paper and the absolute Predestinarian Baptist. This being the selfsame doctrine as was taught by Christ and his apostles is my belief I hope. My father's subscription expires with this month's issue. You may cancel it and continue to send your paper in my name as I have written it on the enclosed subscription blank. I am sending you $5: Two is for my subscription and the balance to be used for those who are not able to pay for it. A very unworthy sister if one at all.

(Mrs.) NANNA M. CARNEY

(See obituaries in this issue)

Walnut Creek, Cal.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I realize it is time to renew my subscription for another year, and am enclosing a money-order for my subscription and a little to aid in the publication. In the year just ended I feel I have been blessed beyond measure for the poor sinner I feel myself to be. I hope I praise the dear Lord for blessing me to attend all the appointed meetings in Bethel Church which was organized in March 1944, near Stockton, Cal. It is small but all are faithful in attending the meetings when not hindered. How I do glory in the meetings, having been isolated from the Old Baptists for a long time. It almost seems too good to be true that I am nearer them now. The Lord works and none can hinder, and it is his will that this lovely band of Old Baptists and dear friends of the Baptists have located in this part of the state. May it be his will to bless this dear little church he has planted here, and keep the candle stick burning. May he bless our dear pastor, Elder Seth Bynum, and also his helpmate, Elder W. L. Slusher, whom the Lord has led to be among us, if indeed I am one of the "us" in him, I hope

I am. I feel the dear Lord has been in our midst for I do not believe those assembled in his name could enjoy the wonderful meetings if he was not among them.

May the dear Lord bless you and the Associate Editors in your labor to publish the paper. A little one in his faith I hope.

(Mrs.) MABEL LINDSEY

Star Route, Naches, Wash.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: About this time every month I begin to count the days until I can reasonably expect the *Signs* to arrive. There are four of us in this neighborhood who read it and discuss it even over the 'phone if we cannot get together. Last year when the March number came so late we were worried. One evening when we had almost given up hope of getting it, my mother 'phoned to say she had received hers from the post office and that I could expect mine in the morning mail. I always want to sit down after reading it and write to several of the writers to tell them that is my experience, or that they have written something very comforting to me. I agree with sister Slauson, who says in her letter in the March number that she enjoyed your article on talking it over with God. I read that four times the day the *Signs* came, not to mention the many times I have read it since. Elder Hunt's article in this month's number is just what I needed at this time. I have been telling myself these past months that I had nothing to worry about because my times are in the Lord's hands, but Elder Hunt tells it so much more beautifully. May God direct you in your labor of love. A little sister I hope.

(Mrs.) BEATRICE HAAN

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330 White Oak Drive, Minden, La.

TO THE EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES: Enclosed please find $2. for my subscription for another year. It has been a great comfort to me, and if I know my own heart and am not deceived, I do believe the wonderful doctrine set forth in the *Signs*. May the all sovereign God bless and enable you to carry on many years in publishing the *Signs*. I am just a poor wretched and undone sinner, groping in darkness the most of the time. My plea continually is Lord be merciful to me, a sinner. Yet my little hope seems so sweet to me at times because He is the great God of heaven and earth. The giver of every good and perfect gift, my all in all forevermore.

CORA M. SHACKELFORD

2211 - 5th St., Riverside, Cal.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am sending you $2 to renew my subscription to the *Signs* for this year. I cannot afford to be without it as I cannot get to meeting with our people very often, and I am too old to enjoy feeding on *husks*. The *Signs* and my Bible and hymn book are a source of great comfort to me. As I near my journey's end the sweeter the prospect, the dearer the little hope of freedom from sin and sorrow and pain. Going to meeting with my brethren is like going to heaven in my case in more than one sense. I cannot go by my own will or power, but I *hope* by the grace of God to be taken there.

May you and your Associate Editors be spared for many more years to defend the glorious doctrine of God our Savior, is the prayer of a sinner who loves the truth as it is in Jesus though ever so unworthy. Yours in the bonds of brotherly love and christian fellowship.

J. W. HAYNES

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. E. Loeffel, N. J., $3; Mrs. A. D. Hoyt, N. Y., $2; T. Russel, Tex., $1; Mrs. L. R. Elgin, D. C., $2; A friend, Okla., $2; A. B. Jestice, Del., $1; Mrs. A. Smith, Ind., $1; G. G. Turner, Tex., $1; L. B. Eason, Tex., $1; J. B. Barron, N. C., $6; Mrs. G. T. Franklin, Va., $1; Mrs. J. C. Florence, Ga., $1; H. H. Townsend, Sr., Pa., $3; A. F. Jones, Ga., $3; Miss G. Secor, N. Y., $3; B. McLachlin, Can., $1.

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. SEPTEMBER, 1946

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P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

HOPE

For some reason I am impressed to write a short article on the subject of HOPE. I desire to use Romans 8:24-25 as a scriptural basis of reasoning. "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."

Before treating directly on this subject, permit me to state that I believe the Holy Scriptures are to the children of God who have been born of the Spirit of God. Restating in other words—the Bible can be received only by those of God's children who have been born of the Spirit of God. When Paul speaks using the present tense of a verb it is experienced in time by those who have experienced this call to be saints. When he speaks using future tense it is yet to be experienced. When Jesus said, "Blessed ARE they that mourn: for they SHALL BE comforted;" I think he meant that God's children are mourners in this present world after they have received this pure heart, but shall be completely comforted after their sojourn here in time.

According to Webster, hope is a "desired expectation." According to Paul, the things you have experienced is not a hope but a reality. Hope looks to the future. We do not hope for that we are experiencing, but these experiences enliven within us a hope for something that is yet future. Paul reasons that we have the first fruits of the Spirit in this present life. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. All these proceed from the new heart that God has given his children. We yet bear about the body of this death. This pure heart enables us to see the vileness of our sin polluted bodies. This pure heart reveals to us our awful condition and makes us to cry unto the God of heaven for deliverance from this sinful state. Although we are in possession of the first fruits of the Spirit, the creature itself is yet in the bondage of corruption. It is yet natural and thus subject to sin and death. We expect deliverance from the bondage of corruption solely upon the merits of Jesus in accordance to God's amazing grace. We desire this deliverance because the new God-given heart has made us to hate sin and love holiness.

Paul said, "The body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." This is our state of being if Christ dwells in us. The creature that sins is the body of death that the child of God bears about in this present world. These sins cause the child of God to groan within himself waiting the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. This will be realized when "the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." The word "also" in the above scripture means in addition to that that has already been experienced by us, to wit, the change of heart. Those who are in possession of God's Spirit are new creatures in Christ but have not realized the redemption of the bodies. He comforts us with this grand hope—"But if the Spirit

of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead SHALL also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." A quickened mortal body would be immortalized, thus would never die. I do not think God's children experience this immortalization of the body in this present time. This promise inspires us to patiently wait this grand change. Paul did not expect it in this life as he said, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." So this hope goes beyond this life. He anticipates this change when he says, "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Death and the grave are things that we cannot converse with triumphantly until the grave has given up its victim, to wit, this body of death. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him." This is the reasoning of John and should suffice for us. "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." Psalms 17:15. I am not concerned over the question of whether we will know each other there, or any speculation concerning things yet to be experienced beyond that that is written. My only concern is—Will I be among the number to enjoy eternal life wherever and whatever it is?

May God grant that we who have this hope implanted in us be enabled, by his grace, to dwell together here in time, in sweet communion and fellowship with and for each other. May he grant us the spirit of forbearance and humility. May he enable us to strive for peace and edification instead of strife and destruction.

E. J. L.

JONAH 3: 10

"And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not."

"I am renewing my request for your exegesis (if you are given a mind) of Jonah 3: 10. I am firmly established on the immutability of our God, and the fixedness of his purposes, and irrevocable decrees, but have never been able to understand or harmonize this text. I wrote to two prominent Elders and Editors of Old School Baptist papers, who were in agreement with me on the doctrine, and they wrote some lengthy editorials, but they were not satisfying to me. They were filled with good reasoning, and I could not offer anything better; but still the meaning of this text is vague to me. I hope it may be His will to enlighten and enable you to present the true interpretation, which would be edifying and instructive to many of your readers."

(Signed) CHAS. F. NICKELS

Brother Nickels first wrote us in September, 1945, for our views on the foregoing text, but unable to comply with his request at that time, we asked our Associate Editors to write on it. As nothing has yet appeared from any one of them, we will undertake to write on it ourself. If the Lord be pleased to give us the true interpretation, we hope it will be satisfying to brother Nickles, as well as edifying and instructive to our readers.

We do not wish to write other than in keeping with God's blessed word and, therefore, we must affirm, very definitely, our unshakable belief in the *immutability* of our God. By the mouth of his own inspired prophet, Malachi, he himself declared, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Mal. 3:6. Job said, "He is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." Job 23:13. The apostle James' testimony is that with him there "is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Jas. 1-17. We glory in the fact that in his plans and purposes God is unchangeably the same, yesterday, to-day and forever, and that as he has thought so shall it come to pass. He spoke and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast. And

neither shall his word return unto him void, but it shall accomplish that which he please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto he sends it. The infiniteness of God is absolutely incomprehensible to our finite minds. Who can grasp for instance, the fulness of the Trinity, the Three-in-One God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost? There is no difference in the age of the Father and the Son, for they are one. They are both without beginning of days or end of years. There is a difference, as we understand it, in which God has been pleased to manifest himself. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" and all of their fulness. He was, therefore, known as the Creator, by whom all things were made, and without whom was not anything made that was made, and Paul tells us that "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." When God appeared in the person of his Son it was for the purpose of manifesting his great love for his people, and after the death and resurrection of Christ, God appeared in the form or person of the Holy Ghost, to comfort those who were chosen in Christ before the foundations of the earth were laid. We believe the key—*the manner in which God manifests himself*—will help unlock the mystery to our present problem. God is so capacitated that he can both love and hate but not the same thing. He said, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Rom. 9:13 Being a God that changeth not, he has always hated the works of the flesh, which Esau typified, and this attitude of his towards the flesh will continue. "So then, (says Paul) they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Rom. 8:8. On the other hand, and glory be to his holy name that it is true, neither will his attitude towards those whom he loves, who are *new creatures* in Christ Jesus - typified by Jacob - ever change, for he has loved them with an everlasting love and, therefore, with loving kindness he draws them and they willingly run after him. God verily hates sin, but he loves the sinner. "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." John tells us that "the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." The law was our schoolmaster unto Christ. It was given to teach God's children their own weaknesses and imperfections. Their inability to keep it was conclusively proven. The Psalmist said, "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Psalm 14:2-3. Jeremiah said "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Jer. 17:19. Men had hardly begun to multiply and replenish the earth before we hear God saying, "My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." Gen. 6:3 We see from this that God had determined upon a fixed time, one hundred and twenty years, for his spirit to strive with man, after which he would lift his restraining hand and when that was done we see what followed: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth

me that I have made them." Gen. 6:5-7. It has been declared by God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." God foresaw the wickedness of man, and being of too pure eyes than to even look upon sin, purposed in himself to manifest his wrath by destroying the wicked and he was glorified in this as well as in the salvation of his people. Paul in his epistle to the Romans asked the question, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." Rom. 9: 21-23. God's eternal purpose embraced the destruction of all except "Noah who found grace in the eyes of the Lord," and when the set time had come the floods came and all were destroyed except those whom God was pleased to save in the ark. We understand one meaning of the word "repent" is to turn away from and this is what God did when he withdrew his spirit from man. The word of God expressly forbids our construing this to mean that God was sorry for something he had done, for in Numbers 23:19 we read, "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"

We would like now to consider Jonah and Nineveh. All down through the ages there were types and shadows of good things to come. We believe that Jonah is a type of God's ministering servant in the gospel dispensation. It was necessary, first, for God to uncover to him the wickedness of his own vile heart and at the same time he had to be given to see God's sovereignty over the sea, as well as over the dry land. He clearly manifested his own opposition to God's way by trying to "flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord." He paid his fare and went down into the ship "and was fast asleep." "But the Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken." The tempest was so violent that the sea could not rest until it had received its victim. Lots were cast and we may be sure that God was the disposer thereof, and when it fell on Jonah he readily confessed his guilt and told the mariners to cast him overboard into the sea. Little did he know of the great fish which God had prepared to receive him and carry him on his journey. We are told that "Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly, and said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me." The Lord's people do not cry unto him except by reason of their affliction, and when they do he always hears them. Jonah had to be cast into the deep and we hear him saying, "all thy billows and thy waves passed over me." He must needs go down to the bottom of the mountains, but God brought up his life from corruption, and in due time we hear him saying, "I will pay that that I have vowed. *Salvation is of the Lord.*" This was what he had to know before he could preach the preaching that God had bid him to that great and wicked city. Nineveh, as we see it, represents the gospel church as she stands in nature. She is corrupt throughout and there is no soundness in her at all, for all flesh is as grass and is the source of nothing good. Isaiah describes her as follows: "From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds and bruises, and putrifying sores: they

have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment." Isa. 1:6. But the faithful servant of God must be obedient to his command. He must, "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." Isa. 58:1. Jonah, therefore, began to enter into the city, crying, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." The forty days time appears to be of great significance, for the flood was "forty days upon the earth;" Jesus fasted forty days and forty nights, and following his resurrection "he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." Acts 1:3 God's word, which is quick and powerful, or full of power, is always effective, to the pulling down of strongholds, "So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them. For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water: But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands." We see from this that there was a true repentance in their hearts, for they turned from their evil way, and thus was the city of wickedness overthrown. God had not bid Jonah to preach that the city would be destroyed, but that it would be *overthrown,* and so the word of God did not return unto him void, but did accomplish that which he pleased, and it prospered in the thing whereto he sent it. The change was wrought in the hearts of the Ninevites, for it was they who turned from their evil way. There was a "Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?" with them. We believe this experience is very close to the hearts of all of God's children. First, they must all be made to feel God's fierce wrath or anger against sin. They must experience something of the terror of the fire, lightnings and thunder of Mount Sinai, as a smoking furnace, before they can come with true appreciation to Mount Zion in her solemnities, with all of the beauty and peace and quietude for which she is famous.

Paul was enlarging upon this in his epistle to the Hebrews when he said, "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." Heb. 12:18-24. God's justice in condemning sin must be realized before his mercy can be appreciated. We would like to speak from personal experience here: We came to the place where we did not see how a holy God could be

just and not banish us from his presence forever, but it was there that Jesus, the Savior of sinners, was revealed unto us, and we were given to behold how justice and mercy met together in him. God's wrath was not meted out against us because his justice was satisfied for by the sufferings and death of Him who stood in our stead and satisfied the law in every jot and tittle. The prophet Isaiah said, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." The vengeance of God fell upon his only begotten Son, whose sufferings, death and resurrection, together with his exaltation at the right hand of the Majesty on high give ample evidence of the acceptability of his finished work with the Father. This was but the fulfillment of God's plan in the beginning so that the imputing of our sins unto Jesus and his righteousness unto us was not an after thought with God, but it was a manifestation of his infinite wisdom and his great love which he had for his people before time began. God, therefore, does not deal with his people according to their deserts in nature, else they would be without hope and without God in the world, but he deals with them according to the riches of his matchless grace as it was stored up in Jesus. When we are given to understand something of God's plan of salvation, we see more and more of how all things have been ordained for his own glory and for the lifting of the name of Jesus on high. God had a purpose in the first Adam, who was to transgress His law and bring sin and death upon all of his posterity, but this was but one side of the picture. The other side is that God had already provided a remedy for sin by and through the atoning blood of his blessed Son, and for the everlasting comfort of the saints the poet has written the following lines:

> Dear, dying Lamb! thy precious blood
> Shall never lose its power,
> Till all the ransom'd church of God
> Be saved, to sin no more.

God, because of the work of his Son, turned from the evil (destruction) that was due to his people on their own account, and made his goodness and mercy known through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He gives his people a godly repentance for sin and then it is the wicked forsakes his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and they return unto the Lord, who abundantly pardons. Thus is salvation by grace, and grace alone, magnified, and the preaching of Christ and him crucified becomes to them that believe, by the workings of His mighty power, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. When these things are brought home to God's people as was the case on the day when Pentecost was fully come when Peter preached so wonderfully and proclaimed in the end, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ," "they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" He replied, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

We wish to conclude our remarks by repeating our belief that Jonah typifies God's ministering servants in

this age. Notwithstanding all that he was taught in the whale's belly, he was still very rebellious and upbraided the Lord for being "a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil" that was justly due the Ninevites as they stood apart from Christ. And because things did not work out as Jonah himself would have had them, he became so angry that he besought the Lord to take away his life. What foolish creatures men are! If some of them cannot have their way they say life is not worth while. The Lord taught Jonah a further lesson by preparing a gourd that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief, but then he prepared a worm to smite the gourd that it should wither. "And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live." We believe that many of God's truly called servants know something about this kind of an experience. "And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death." It is hard indeed to rid the human system of the spirit of self-justification. "Then said the Lord, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for which thou hast not labored, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night; And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?" How glad we are that God through the meritorious work of his blessed Son designed the way for justice and mercy to meet together to the honor and glory of his own adorable name, and that he is "longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." We trust the foregoing will be of some satisfaction to our brother and those who read.

R. L. D.

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, Sept. 7, 8, and 9, 1945, sends greetings to the associations and churches with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN: Another year has passed and Almighty God has made us able to meet again in an Association. Your ministering brethren have come to us laden with the fruit of the Holy Spirit, preaching the omnipotence of God and Jesus as our salvation. Your messengers and correspondence have been received with gladness and we pray for their continuance. When we, with our many infirmities, consider all the blessings God has bestowed upon us we ask as did the Psalmist, What is man that thou art mindful of him? or the Son of man, that thou visitest him? By his holy will he has made us to have dominion over the works of his hand. He has crowned us with glory and honor. By his grace he has made us his children and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth.

Our meeting was well attended. Harmony prevailed among us and we all felt it was good to be there. The Lord willing, the next meeting of our Association will be held with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Me., Sept. 6, 7 and 8, 1946.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk

CIRCULAR LETTER

(*Written by sister Nellie Palmer*)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Whitefield Church, Lincoln Co., Maine, Sept. 7, 8, *and* 9, 1945, *sendeth greetings and love in our Lord to the several churches and associations with which we correspond.*

DEAR BRETHREN: As the time for our Association draws near we are forcibly reminded of our insufficiency to write a letter to our brethren scattered abroad, and oftentimes feel to wish some one more gifted than ourself would do it, then when completely empty some words are given us. It seems each year we are reminded of God's remembrance of us, and the promise "Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." Psalms 89:33. Thus in our weakness and inability we prove his promises. The words which came to us may be found in Job 9:2, "How should a man be just with God?" Man who at his best is nothing, less than nothing and vanity, yet we are told, "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of Glory: for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them." 1 Samuel 2:8. So we have proof that this great God who made the universe was mindful of the ones whom he had formed in his own image from the dust of the earth, and it was in his infinite purpose to raise him from his low estate, and lift him as a beggar (we are all beggars at mercy's door) from the dunghill, contaminated by sin, an outcast from our fellow creatures, to set us among princes, ("And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father." Rev. 1:6) and to make them inherit the throne of glory.

Yes, dear ones, we are made to inherit the thone of glory. No *ifs* about it for he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. "The pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them." So we find ourselves taken from that low estate and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, where we go in and out to find pasture, where we behold things that the law of language is unable to express, and we are brought low when given to behold him whom we have pierced. Oh! the height and the depth of the mercies bestowed upon us poor worms of the dust. David said, "But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people." Psalms 22:6. We are brought in close touch with our brother, David, and made to feel we have less strength than a worm, we cannot even crawl; but must stand still and see the salvation of our Lord which he has promised to those who fear him, or even think upon his name. The depth of his love and mercy, who can fathom it? When we are but given a glimpse of this wonderful love our hearts are overwhelmed, and our eyes overrun with tears of gratitude. Then it is we wonder why these glorious things have been given to us? Yet having the assurance within our own breast we can but feel that he, the great God of heaven and earth, has looked upon us in mercy through the sacrifice of his dear Son. "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth." Acts 8:32-33. These things are too wonderful for puny man to fathom, and his eyes must needs be anointed with heavenly eyesalve to even get a glimpse, but the glimpses are won-

derful. They are our life, our all. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee," and now farewell for 1945.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk

MEMORIAL

Whereas, during the past year and since we last met in an associate capacity, ELDER H. C. KER has been removed by death from his labors as Minister of the Gospel, and as pastor of churches in our sister Associations, Salisbury and Delaware River and

Whereas, our departed brother Ker for many years visited us, faithfully declaring the gospel of grace in our midst, and inasmuch as we have long esteemed our brother as one of God's able and precious gifts to his church, therefore be it,

Resolved, that we do, in christian love and fellowship, extend to our sister Associations of Salisbury and Delaware River our deepest sympathy in the love of such a minister and pastor in whom we, with them, have been blessed with a gift from Christ through the Holy Spirit to his churches. Further be it,

Resolved, that we of the Delaware Association extend assurance of our love and sympathy to our sister, Gertrude Ker, beloved wife and companion of our departed brother, H. C. Ker. Be it,

Resolved, that this memorial be spread upon the minutes of this Association, that a copy be sent to sister Ker, and that it be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Done by order of the Delaware Association in session with the Welsh Tract Church, Sunday May 19, 1946.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator
H. H. TOWNSEND, SR., Clerk

RESOLUTION

Inasmuch as it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst our dear sister, MATTIE PURDY, be it

Resolved that Little Flock Church (of which she was a member) be submissive to the will of God, and we do hereby extend our most sincere and heartfelt sympathy to her bereaved family.

Resolved that a copy of this memorial be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication, a copy be made a part of our church records, and a copy sent to her sorrowing family.

Done by order of Little Flock Church while in conference at Altus, Okla., May 11, 1946.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN, Moderator
(Mrs.) LOU KESTER, Clerk

OBITUARIES

J. EVERETT MELTON was born June 19, 1860 at Poca, W. Va. the son of Elder William A. and Lucinda Melton, and died Jan. 14, 1946, aged 85 years, 6 months and 25 days. He was married June 17, 1891 to Margaret June Bailey. To this union were born five children two of which died in infancy. Those surviving are Mrs. Nanna Carney, Dunbar, W. Va., Mrs. Edith Sommer, Southside, W. Va., Charles B., Huntington, W. Va. and a foster son, James L., Gallipolis, Ohio.

Father was not a member of the visible church but was a strong believer in the doctrine as set forth by the Old Primitive Baptists. His home was always open to those of like faith, and during Associations and other meetings he cared for visiting ministers, brethren and sisters as much as any member. He loved to visit with the pastor and members of our home church, and have them visit in his home, sitting well into the night talking Christ a crucified and risen Lord and an all sufficient Savior. He was faithful in attendance and gave financial assistance at all times. Some time before his death he talked to my sister and me, telling us that he had received that hope which was an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast and that he could say with Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all of them also that love his appearing."

Since Mother's death eight years ago, Dad has lived with my sister and me, spending the time about equally between us. He passed into that last rest at the home of my sister, Mrs. Edith Sommer. Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. C. Hammond, Jan. 16, 1946 in the Missionary Baptist church-house at Poca, W. Va. after which he was laid to rest by the side of Mother in the family cemetery there.

Also Mother, MARGARET BAILEY MELTON, was born April 18, 1866 at Rocky Fork, W. Va., the daughter of Bushrod and Elizabeth Bailey. She departed this life April 5, 1938 at the age of 71 years, 11 months and 18 days. Mother, like Dad, was a firm believer in the Old Primitive Baptist doctrine, faithful in attendance and her home was always open to those of like precious faith although she was not a member of the church.

Mother died sudenly from a heart attack. I went to see her the day she died and I will never forget how she looked at me with such a wonderful expression, and smiling through tears said, "Oh, you should have come yesterday. Ed. was here and we had preaching all day." Ed. Melton, a

nephew to whom she was referring, talks so wonderfully on the Scriptures though he is not a minister. I came home that evening at six o'clock and at eight she was stricken with a heart attack and succumbed within a few seconds. I do hope that I have been made to realize that God's ways can never be anything but perfect beyond any description or comparison. The statistics in Father's obituary of marriage and children are the same for Mother as neither of them ever married but the one time. Mother's funeral was conducted by Elder J. C. Hammond, assisted by Elder Harvey Bird, at the Poca Missionary Baptist church-house, April 7, 1938. Interment in the family cemetery there. Written by a daughter who loved them too much.

(Mrs.) NANNA M. CARNEY

DANIEL C. HART, son of the late Benjamin and Rachel Hart was born Nov. 19, 1861 and departed this life March 11, 1946, making his stay on earth 84 years, 3 months and 22 days. He was united in marriage to Miss Rachel Sutphin, daughter of the late James T. and Mary H. Sutphen, Dec. 15, 1886 by the late Elder William J. Purington, pastor of the Hopewell Church at that time. To this union were born three sons and one daughter: Mrs. S. H. Hixson, Benjamin and W. Curlis Hart, Pennington, N. J., James T. Hart died in infancy. Mrs. Hixson had one daughter who lives with her father. Her mother, Mrs. Hixson, preceded her father, Mr. Hart, in death.

The family as described are the fruits of one of the prominent families of the Pennington community in New Jersey. The widow, two sons, several grandchildren and one great-grandchild are left to mourn for a devoted husband, father and grandfather. Mr. Hart was of rare personality. The writer knew him for over thirty years and never heard an unkind expression uttered against him. He was faithful in attending meeting with his wife, driving his car until he had past his four score years. His hearing failed so he could not hear very much of the meeting, but shortly before he passed away, while calling on him and sister Hart, we asked him to tell us of his exercises. He replied that he could not, but confessed to having realizations he would never forget which were often in his meditations. A large gathering of friends and relatives attended the services which were conducted by the writer, which attested to the high esteem in which he was held in the community in which he had been a life long resident. His remains were laid to rest in the family plot in the cemetery which partly surrounds the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church where he ardently supported the truth he loved. We should not weep for him as though he had no hope, for we feel he now rests from all his labors in that blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep. May God comfort all that mourn.

(Elder) CHARLES W. VAUGHN

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Me., Sept. 6, 7, and 8, 1946.

SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk

The Pocatalico Old Baptist Association will be held with the Harmony Church in Huntington, W. Va., Sept. 6th, 7th and 8th, 1946. We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Right fork of Russell Creek, 1066 Cedar Crest Drive.

FLOYD JOHNSON

The Lexington-Roxbury Association is appointed to convene with the Olive and Hurley Church at Shokan, N. Y., Sept. 11 and 12, 1946. Meeting opens at 10 o'clock D. S. T. On Sept. 13 the ordination of Licentiate Amasa J. Slauson is appointed to take place if God so wills.

Friends coming Tuesday evening before the Association will please go to Winchell's store in Shokan where they will be directed to places of entertainment.

(Mrs.) FRED BROOKS, Church Clerk

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, after a lapse of five years due to war conditions, is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church near Aldie, Loudoun County, Va., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday October 16th, 17th and 18th, 1946. Ministers and brethren who are in fellowship with us, and all who are lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ our Lord, are affectionately invited to meet with us. The place of meeting is located on Highway Route 50. Greyhound buses from Washington, D. C. to Roanoke, Va. pass the grounds. Those coming Tuesday either by private auto or by bus or train will come to Leesburg, Va. Those coming Wednesday will go directly to the place of meeting. For further information write to the address affixed to this notice.

(Mrs.) DAVID FARNIE, Church Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sunday in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y. at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y. in the meetinghouse, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed.

R. LESTER DODSON

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the *Signs of the Times* at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1; 12 copies, $2. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 114 RUTHERFORD, N. J., OCTOBER, 1946 No. 10

THANKSGIVING

Lord, I am glad for the great gift of living,
Glad for Thy days of sun and of rain;
Grateful for joy with endless thanksgiving,
Grateful for laughter and grateful for pain.

Lord, I am glad for young April's wonder,
Glad for the fulness of long summer days;
And now when the Spring and my heart are asunder,
Lord, I give thanks for the dark Autumn days.

Sun, moon and blossom, O Lord, I remember,
The dream of the Spring and its joy I recall;
But now in the silence and pain of November,
Lord, I give thanks to Thee, giver of all.

Hopewell, N. J. (The late Elder) F. A. CHICK

CORRESPONDENCE

Re-published by request
Matthew 13:33; Luke 13:21

BROTHER BEEBE: Please give your views on the parable of the leaven hid in three measures of meal. What are the three measures? Why not four, or six? Yours in hope of eternal life, W. A. WATSON.

Van Buren, Ohio, March 23, 1879

REPLY

Our views on the same parable have also been solicited by an inquirer after truth at New Lexington, Ohio.

When the disciples asked Jesus concerning the parables in which he so frequently spake to the people, "he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to others in parables; that seeing, they might not see, and hearing, they might not understand." Luke 8:10. From this explanation we learn not only the sovereignty of God, in hiding the mysteries of the kingdom of God from the wise and prudent of this world, but also that a knowledge of them is a special gift of God. No man by the exercise of his mental powers or deep researches can possibly attain a knowledge of spiritual things. No man can see the kingdom of God except he be born again; it is just as impossible as for a man to see the things of this world without first being born of the flesh. After our natural birth of the flesh, we required the gift of light and instruction to develop the mental powers with which we were endued by the Creator, to enable us to understand the mysteries of the natural world. So also, those who are born again, of incorruptible seed, are dependent on the teaching of the Holy Spirit to reveal to their faith the deep mysteries which God has hidden from all who are not born of the Spirit. Hence we are expressly told in the scriptures, that even "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of

the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty! and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." 1 Cor. 1: 18, 19, 26-31.

The total ignorance of the mysteries of the kingdom of God, which holds in chains of darkness all who are not born and taught of God, however far they may have advanced in what the world regards as the science of theology, is not a condition which God had not power to avert if it had been his sovereign pleasure, for he hath hidden these things from them because so it seemed good in his sight; and our adorable Redeemer rejoiced in spirit, and thanked the Father, Lord of heaven, and earth, because it was even so. Luke 10:21.

Among the many parables, which for this cause were spoken by our Lord, we have the one now proposed for our consideration, in which the kingdom of God is likened unto leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

The kingdom of God, here compared to leaven, we think is the kingdom as chosen of God in Christ as her spiritual Head, and as sanctified by God the Father, before the foundation of the world, preserved in Christ Jesus, and ultimately called with a holy calling according to God's own purpose and grace, which was given to the chosen subjects of it in Christ Jesus before the world began. Three elements, or constituent parts, are necessary to constitute a kingdom; a king, subjects, and laws. All these are found in Christ. He is expressly called God's King, whom he has set upon his holy hill in Zion. Psalm 2:6. All the spiritual subjects of this kingdom were chosen in him before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4,) and the law of God was in his heart, Psalm 11:8. All the component elements of the kingdom of God were in Christ, as the Mediatorial Head of his body, the church, from everlasting; hence, Christ could say, "My kingdom is not of this world." It was prepared for the saints from the foundation of the world. Matt. 25:34. It was appointed unto Christ by the Father, and unto the members of Christ by the Son. Luke 22:29.

This kingdom of God, as a purely spiritual kingdom, was so embodied in Christ, that when he came in the flesh it was said to the Jews, "The kingdom of God is come unto you." Matt. 12:28.

Without adducing further testimony to sustain our position, that the kingdom of God, as a spiriutal kingdom, existed in Christ, as the Mediatorial Head of the church, from everlasting, in vital union with him as their head and life before any of the subjects of it had a fleshly existence in the earthly Adam, and before either Christ the Head or any of his spiritual members were made flesh, or had become partakers of flesh and blood, yea, before Adam's dust was fashioned into man, we will pass on to consider the strikingly appropriate similitude of the parable.

This spiritual kingdom was with Christ from the ancients of eternity, and was like leaven, designed of God to be put into three measures of meal, until all the meal should be leavened, or be by its assimilating power perfectly conformed to the nature and likeness of the original leaven. The apostle says of those who are the called according to the purpose of God, that "Whom he

did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren." Rom. 8:29.

As leaven has the power to diffuse itself into all the meal in which it is hidden, and by fermentation impart its nature to the meal, until the meal in which it is hidden itself becomes of the nature of leaven, so the life and immortality of the church of God, which was given her in Christ Jesus, as the seminal head and spiritual progenitor of all her members, with all spiritual blessings ever to be developed in the kingdom of God in time or in eternity, were treasured up and embodied in him before they were manifested in any of the fallen sons of men. In him all this fullness dwelt, and of his fullness all the vessels of his mercy are the happy recipients; and as the meal receives the leaven, and is subjected to its transforming power, so they receive Christ Jesus as their resurrection and their spiritual, immortal and eternal life. As the power to leaven the meal is all contained in the original leaven, so all the power to quicken and transform the redeemed people of God was and is embodied in our Lord Jesus Christ.

The three measures of meal, in the parable, we believe represent the chosen people of God, which are redeemed from all the kindreds of mankind by the blood of Christ. The definite measurement is according to the election of grace, and the three measures signify to us the definite and exact quantity redeemed of those who were of the three dispensations, which make up the fullness of the times, in the which all shall be called by grace, quickened by the Spirit, born of the incorruptible seed, and leavened and conformed to the likeness of him by whose power and grace they are made meet to participate in the inheritance of the saints in light.

The chosen and redeemed people of God, embracing all whom God has ordained to eternal life, are figuratively called the seed of Abraham; and if we are Christ's, then are we Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise. This seed of Abraham Christ took on him when he was made flesh and dwelt among them; and as their spiritual life, he was hidden in them from the days of Abel, and he bear them, and carried them all the days of old. So, as the leaven in the parable was hidden in the meal, even so this mystery hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints, to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you the hope of glory. Col. 1:26-27. As the power of the leaven is sure to conform all the meal in which it is hidden, so the spirit of life in Christ Jesus our Lord is beyond the possibility of failure sure to permeate all the chosen people of our God, and to conform them to the likeness of the Son of God. If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Jagoe, St., Madisonville, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I have an experience written by my grandfather, Daniel Brown, which I would be glad to see republished in the *Signs of the Times* if it meets with your approval. It was published in the "Gospel News" March 1, 1903 by Elder J. M. Perkins. Grandfather's family was of the first settlers of Hopkins Co. and settled in what is known as Browntown in the western part of Kentucky.

I heard him talk at the church which he joined when very old, and said that he had wasted his life. Then I resolved

that I would unite as soon as I could make them a useful member; I thought the church needed good, useful, young members like me, but alas, how sad was my mistake. Later I hope he has shown me that it was best for me to be led about in the wilderness and instructed. This took forty years before he led me to the church where they believe that it takes the grace of God, rather than the works of man, to save a sinner like me. I often wonder why these Old Grace Baptists could receive me into their fellowship, and show so much tender care and love to a wretch like me and bear with me so tenderly. Brother Dodson do as you think best with this and all is well. Your brother in hope.

LESLIE A. BROWN.

EXPERIENCE

Elder J. M. Perkins, DEAR BROTHER:

I am in very bad health, am seventy-seven years old and cannot expect to stay here much longer according to nature. I study a great deal about my condition; I would write something about my experience, although I feel so unworthy and it seems to me it differs from everybody else's. I feel that I have been mistaken; I fear I have never had the proper change. I want to write my ups and downs—most of the time downs.

When I was young my father and mother belonged to the Old Grace Baptist at Providence. I would go sometimes but did not know what they preached and did not care. I thought when I grew older I would get religion and join some popular church that was up to date and go all the gaits I knew. My father and mother were good people, but I thought they had made a mistake in joining the church they had. I went on in this way for several years, yet the time came when I got alarmed about my condition and viewed myself as one of the worst sinners on earth. I thought the time had been that I could have gotten religion, but the time had past and hell was my portion. I could not rest day or night; when the family would get to sleep I would go out of the house and look at the moon and stars, it looked like everything condemned me. I thought I would go up back of my orchard where it was grown up and try to pray to the Lord to spare my life awhile longer, but when I got there I was afraid to kneel down; I believed that God would kill me if I got down there. I went to the farm and everything looked like it was shrouded in mourning, I went back to the orchard; I thought I would die and knelt down, but could not pray. I never expected to see the light of another day; I thought I would go to the house and tell them that I was going to die, but before I got there I considered and was afraid it would make them uneasy. So I went on in this condition for some time, almost giving up all hope. One day I walked out on the farm and that trouble all seemed to be gone. I thought it was the brightest day I ever saw; the sun shone brighter than I ever saw it before. I thought perhaps the great God had pardoned my many sins. I started to the house for I wanted to tell what the Lord had done for me and I never expected to sin another time. I did not get half way there until I thought it was all imagination. I went to Providence Church where my father and mother belonged and I thought they were the happiest people I ever saw in my life, and such preaching I had never heard. I then believed that it was the church of God and I still believe that. How I wanted to join the church and be baptized, if I was clear of sin as I thought they were. I went on so for many a long year. I still went to hear them preach, wishing I could be good enough to belong to them. The Civil

War came on and I joined the Rebel Army. I found myself still a sinner, as bad if not worse than I ever was. I heard a man say that there was no more danger in the army than anywhere else and I believed it. The great God created all things and there is no other power that controls but God. I came back from the army and still went to hear the Old Baptists preach, believing they were the church of God. I went on for several years, hoping God would take away my sins so that I could join the Old Baptists.

At length I had a favorite son who was thrown from a wagon and died in a few days; he was forty-two years old, a man with a family and I believe he was a child of God. Brother Ben Clark came up there and said, "I wish Davis had been baptized for it would have satisfied him." I said, "did he want to be baptized?" He said, "yes and that he had gone to church several times to join and his heart would fail him." After brother Ben left I got to studying about it and wished he had been baptized, and these words came to me with power, you had better be studying about your own case; you have not been baptized and he is in a better fix than you are. I then walked the yard, my wife was getting supper, I do not remember whether I ate my supper or not. I fell on the bed and tried to pray to God that if I ever had a change of heart and it could be shown to me any way, I wanted to go and join the church and be baptized if they would receive me. Right at that time I thought I saw the sun shine as beautiful as I ever saw it although it was after night. I made another vow to God that if he would spare my life till another meeting I would go and be baptized if they would receive me. The next morning brother Ben came back and I asked him if he would come and go with me to the church. I told him what I wanted to do if it was God's will. He said he would. He said he liked to hear me talk so, and started for home. He had not been gone half an hour until I would have given fifty dollars if I had not told him anything about it. I thought it was all imagination and nothing in it, so I did not know what to do. I had made a solemn vow to God that I would go. So brother Ben came and I went to Flat Creek Church; they received me and Brother Ben baptized me and that is all I know about it, but I feared I was doing wrong; I did not believe they knew I was still a sinner. I had hopes that if I had had a change I would have had no sins about me. One thing I know and that is that God has a people whom he determined to save. He chose them back in eternity and laid their sins on Jesus his only begotten Son. Jesus came and redeemed them with his precious blood, and will present them holy and without blame before his Father in love. They tell me that they are going about to help Jesus to save sinners. That job was all completed nearly two thousand years ago. Jesus came and bowed his head and said it was finished. God certainly had a great purpose in his creation and I do not believe that man or devil has ever disappointed or affected one of his purposes. He certainly had a great purpose when he created the heavens and the earth. We see he created the sun and it gave light for the day, and it warms the earth and causes it to bud and bring forth vegetation and food. He placed the moon and stars in the firmament to govern the light at night.

Speaking of the Old Covenant, it carried out the very purpose he intended it for. He never promised eternal life in it, but if they would be obedient children they would eat the fat of the land. God said, "They continued not

in my covenant, and I regarded them not." Again saith the Lord, "I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." I am here to tell them when they say, come up and know the Lord, they are not God's people, for God says his people shall not say that. But that is not all they say. They say if you will be good boys God will be merciful to you and pour down blessings upon you. God never said any such thing, but right to the reverse. He said, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." So they have it all wrong. The priest went to the first tabernacle to make an offering for his own sins and the sins of his people, which could never take away their sins; it was pointing to the great sin-bearer that would take away their sins. The high priest went into the inner court, which is called the holiest of holies, once a year and that not without blood; it was death to go in without blood; he takes a basin of blood and goes in once a year and sprinkles blood on the tabernacle and vessels. There was a veil between the high priest and congregation, so when he went in the people saw him not until he came out. I believe it is typifying the blood of Jesus. In due time Jesus came; he was raised up on the cross; the earth quaked, the rocks rent, the veil of the tabernacle rent in twain from top to bottom, the sun refused to shine for three dreadful hours, and while the whole creation was shaking he bowed his head and said, "It is finished." They tell me that all of that was to give sinners a chance. If that be so hell is my portion, for the chances were all dead against me. There are only two chances spoken of in the Scriptures. The man that went from Jerusalem to Jerico and fell among thieves and they stripped him and bruised him and left him half dead (just like all of God's people are left) and by chance a Levite went down that way and came to where he was. He looked on him and passed by on the other side. Then by chance a priest went down that way and when he came there, he looked on him and passed by on the other side. A good Samaritan journeying down that way saw him and had compassion on him (and I believe that signifies Jesus), he bound up his wounds, poured in oil and wine (yes, he poured grace in his heart), and took him to the inn and said, take care of the man and when I come again I will repay it all. Yes, and so will Jesus do when he takes him to that everlasting kingdom.

Brother Perkins I do not believe the Arminian world ever studies about the character of that great God who created the heavens and the earth. He who placed the earth in space and holds it by his mighty power; who said let there be light and there was light; who said to the raging storm, "Peace, be still" and there was a great calm. He created the mighty ocean and gave it its boundary and said it could come so far but no farther. When the Hebrew children were cast into the fiery furnace made

seven times hotter than it need be, he delivered them without the smell of fire on their garments. When Daniel was cast into the den of lions, God protected him and they did him no harm. He told Jonah to go to Nineveh and preach his gospel and I suppose he thought he was a cant-help-it. He boarded a vessel and there was a great fish prepared which swallowed Jonah and he wallowed around in the ocean three days and nights; then he said, salvation is of the Lord. (That is where it is in time or eternity. I know of only one salvation and that is of the Lord.) Then God delivered him. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Psalms 110:3. He made Jonah willing and he did go.

I am writing a little too lengthy although I hardly know where to stop. I would like to say something about how and when God's people are saved, and when they might look for Jesus. The angel said Mary should bring forth a son and she should call his name Jesus for he should save his people from their sins. When Jesus came he said he came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him; and this is the will; "Of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." He bowed his head on the cross and said, "It is finished" and he was going to that everlasting kingdom to prepare a place to take his children to. He will come again; he has been coming for nearly two thousand years in the Spirit's power to see his bride whom he loved and died for. His coming will be visible, for the angel said so when he ascended. A cloud received him out of their sight. They were trying to get one more sight of him when the angel appeared and said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:11. I can tell you when you may look for him; when the angel appears and puts one foot on the land and the other on the sea and swears by him that liveth forever that there shall be time no longer: then you will see Jesus coming in the cloud of his glory, and his mighty angels with him, to take you home to that everlasting kingdom; to walk the streets of the new Jerusalem; to sing praises to his everlasting name.

Brother Perkins, I believe if it is my happy lot to get there I can sing:

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

I am like the Queen of Sheba was when she went to Solomon's temple. She said the half had not been told her. I do believe that the half has not been told about that everlasting kingdom. Well brother Perkins do as you please with this scribbling and all will be well, and when you go to a throne of grace remember your unworthy brother if one at all.

DANIEL BROWN.

Route 1, Dundas, Ill.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON and Readers of the *Signs of the Times*: If I may be permitted a little space, there are some things in my mind that I would like to write about, hoping that it may be of comfort to some of God's humble poor that have been made to feel their poverty in the sight of Almighty God; that have been made to cry out, as did the poor publican when he smote himself upon the breast and said, "God be merciful to me a sinner." It is to such as these that all the sweet promises in the Bible are given in both the Old and New Testaments, and it is to bring some of these things to your attention that

I am attempting to write. Although I am poor and unlearned, I feel that the Lord who is rich and merciful has exercised and directed my mind in the meditation of some of these things.

Let us first read Isaiah 55:1. We find there that the Lord is speaking through this old prophet to a certain particular and specified people when he says, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Every one that thirsteth is not leaving out a single solitary one that does so thirst, neither does it include one that does not thirst. The word "Ho" the first word of this text means wait, stop or give attention, and is addressed only to the thirsty, and they are sweetly told "come ye to the waters." You will notice that it is not water but waters, and in this we see an abundant never ending supply, and as often as you go there will always be water abundantly for your thirsty soul. King Solomon said, "As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country," and in order for any news to be good from a far country you must have some interest in that far country, otherwise the news will not be good news; but if you do have a great interest in that far country, and you are waiting, longing and hoping for good news from there, when it comes how it makes you rejoice and it is like cold water to a thirsty soul. The far country from which this good news comes in this text is from heaven for the Lord says to you "come ye to the waters." How fitting it is to us when he says, "And he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat." This surely fits our case exactly, for we have been made to know we have no money and are poverty stricken of all good and righteousness, and have nothing to offer for ourselves in any manner, but he tells us "Come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." And just what is this wine and milk? It is the wine of joy and the milk of nourishment and comfort, and it is purposed and designed only for the thirsty and hungry little child of God. No one else has the appetite for it, nor the preparation of the heart to enjoy it, but these thirsty and hungry little ones are blessed for Jesus says, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." They are blessed first in that, that they do so hunger and thirst after righteousness for this is an evidence that they have spiritual life, and having spiritual life is a blessed state, and again they are blessed for they shall be filled. When we are made to feel our destitute condition, and made to realize that there is nothing good about us, and that we are utterly lacking of all righteousness, and made to feel that we are justly condemned in the sight of a just and holy God: it is then we are made to hunger and thirst after righteousness which is only in Jesus Christ, and we have his positive word for it, that if we do so hunger and thirst we shall be filled, and this means that we shall be clothed with his righteousness. His righteousness being imputed to us we shall, therefore, be justified before God and stand holy and without blame in his sight.

In the courts of law in our land and country, a guilty person may be acquitted, but the process of law does not and cannot justify the breaking of the law; as that would destroy the law; but if you are clothed with the righteousness of Christ you are thereby justified in the the sight of God. In another place Jesus said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink," and here again *thirst* is the only qualification needed. A dead man does not thirst, neither can

one that is dead in trespasses and in sins have a spiritual thirst, but a spiritual thirst is an evidence of spiritual life. In another place, this time in Revelation, Jesus said, "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely," and please notice this word "freely." It not only means free without money and without price, but he gives freely an abundant supply for all your needs, and not only this but God dwells with you and has taken up his abode in your heart. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." We find that "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise," but we can be "confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

Let me say just a few more words and I will stop as I do not want to take up too much space. We see here that instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier (which is full of thorns and vines of entanglement) shall come up the myrtle tree, which is one of the most beautiful of trees, and is a solid mass of beautiful flowers in the spring time, a joy and delight to behold. So instead of the thorn and the brier shall come up fruit and beauty where only hurtful things were before. Thorns and briers here represent our state in nature, for the apostle Paul says this about them, "But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned." And instead of the thorns and briers shall come up the fir and the myrtle tree, and this shall be unto the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off. This fruit and beauty all comes from the Lord. "Ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." May it please the Lord to comfort all that mourn. These few words are written by the least of God's little ones if one at all. C. W. WILLIAMS.

DEAR FATHER: Glad to hear you are feeling better and that you are staying with Singleton and Lottie at this time. I hope you will be completely well soon and can get out for some enjoyment.

Maebelle writes me quite often and tries to convert me, but I do not mind even though I am inclined to believe in predestination as you do. Probably a more truthful statement would be, I do not know what I believe. I bought a New Testament and intend to read it from time to time. The trouble with me is I spend too much time reading books written by heathens, that is, novels and so forth. Even though I like to read them I am beginning to realize they are not fit to read. Although not a professor of religion I realize the things I have gone through with overseas, and not only I but millions of others would never have returned safe and sound if there had not been a higher power than man. I am thankful to believe we have a God who has all power both in heaven and in earth, and does according to his will with the angels

of heaven and the peoples of the earth. I do not claim to be good and do need God's help to lead me in the way of righteousness. Your son.

(Master Sgt.) HENRY G. KIMSEY.
ASN 6376009, Sq. A, 313th Base Unit,
Box 1422, AAB, Greenville, S. C.

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919 Asheboro St., High Point, N. C.

DEAR GRADY: I have written so much to Maebelle trying to get her straightened out in her belief until I am mentally tired and worried. She even wrote me that I had not been born again, and she thought she must set in to get me saved. I wrote her that she did not have to worry about me or anyone else being saved for the Lord would take care of that and save all that he purposed to save before they were born, or before the world was created. They are the elect of God and all of them will believe and be saved in due time. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called (by the Spirit): and whom he called, them he also justified" (by the grace of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord). Romans 8:29-30. We are saved by the life and death of Christ who is our righteousness and our all and in all. We have no righteousness except the Lord gives it to us, and that is not for our good works or because of them, but because he purposed to eternally save the elect who were chosen in Christ before the world began.

The reason God saves any one is because he chose them to salvation before they were born the first time, even before he created the angles or anything else, and it all works according to his purpose which he purposed in himself from all eternity. There is nothing we can do to eternally save any one. We can help them after they are born the second time, but not before they are dead in trespasses and in sin, and have no spark of spiritual life until God quickens them into spiritual life by the Holy Spirit. Then he gives them faith and repentance which is evidence of their salvation.

I want everybody saved but I am not God, and it is a waste of time to talk to a dead man, and try to get him to believe, and repent and do good works. Unless Christ quickens him into life, he will never believe or repent of his sins. Being quickened into life is the same as being born again. I hope you are well and doing well. I am looking for you soon. Your father.

THOMAS W. KIMSEY

Allaben, N. Y.

DEAR SISTER GERTRUDE SECOR: I received your letter and lovely card when I was in the hospital and I hope I am thankful to our God for the expressions of love and fellowship of God's people. We, who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, believe that the Word tells us we are chosen in the furnace of affliction and we *shall* suffer tribulation. These things are part of the *shalls* and *wills* of an omnipotent God, and though we *shall* walk through them we have a guide who has promised to be with us even unto death. I truly believe the Lord upholds those who put their trust in him and I can witness that he was to me a present help in time of trouble. For days before the operation and afterward I felt to be under the shadow of the Almighty, and I truly felt that to depart and be with Christ would be far better, nevertheless I felt to be submissive to his will for me. Leon and others feared for me because I have a heart condition, but I believe I will live all

the days of my appointed time. One of our hymns reads:

"Though plagues and death around me fly,
Till he commands I cannot die."
"And by his saints it stands confessed
That what he does is ever best."

He is omnipotent and has promised "that *all* things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I have a hope that I am included in that number, but we are all so weak and finite that we lose sight of his ruling at times and that is when Satan tempts us to despair; but he has promised "he shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." There is a promise to lay hold on for every condition in traveling through this wilderness world, and may God give us grace to look to him in all things. Many times I believe tribulation is for our teaching, and he alone teaches to profit, there is none that teaches like him. I thank you for your thought of me and will be pleased to hear from you at any time. With much love and hoping the Lord will bless both you and sister Emma. Your sister in hope.

(Mrs.) FLOSSIE I. FAULKNER.

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108 S. 12th St., Murray, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER: We are enclosing a precious letter from sister Campbell of Memphis, Tenn. We would like to see it in print as we feel others would enjoy reading it too. O how we enjoy reading the experiences of the dear saints of God. The dear *Signs of the Times* pages are wonderful to read and we would hate to know we were refused to read them. May God guide you on in being its Editor, and the Associates also. Please remember me and mine in your prayers.

(Mrs.) FANNIE H. CHESTER.

3347 Tutweiler Ave., Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR SISTER CHESTER: Was glad Luther got to see you all at Mayfield. They enjoyed their visit with you very much. Would loved to have been there but I was not numbered to be with the dear ones to be there that day or I would have been. I never feel worthy the sweet privilege of meeting the dear brethren from time to time at home, and much more so to take up room in a car to go farther; but I am made thankful many times that I have been given to love them and do hope it is with that pure love that is put into our hearts from on high. One of old was told, "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." I sometimes think I have not seen and wonder why I believe, so I began to meditate and go over my life as best I can. I go back to when I was a child. I had not felt to be a bad child for it was always my aim and desire to obey and love my parents. I felt it was right and that God knew all things we did, but felt no condemnation in my heart. I always loved to hear father and mother sing and would notice them talking between songs of the sweetness of something I could not see, and wondered if the time would ever come when I could understand. I remember in my childish way, while swinging in an old hammock in the yard, I would talk to the Lord about sending me a little baby sister so at last she came. I was almost ten years old, but when I was told about her and saw her I thought of my prayer and felt she was sent to me. Until this day she is more precious to me than just a sister, and she manifests the same unending love for me which we have often discussed, believing we have been blessed from God with a special love if that is rightly put. We desire at his hand that nothing

will ever wound that love that we do not claim as an act of ourselves, but a gift from whom all blessings flow.

At the age of eleven or twelve I was coming home from my grandfather's house and immediately after starting on my way the whole earth was more beautiful than I had ever seen it. The trees, bushes, hills and the brook were seemingly praising their Creator. I felt a drawing upward and looked into the sky above me. The birds were singing so sweetly. I was weeping, it seemed for joy and for sadness. O how good it seemed to weep. I soon reached home, which was about a mile, and dried my eyes for fear mother would ask me why I was crying and I could not tell her. Time went on and I seemed to forget all about this, but there came a time when I was about fifteen years old that I became uneasy and wanted to be saved, but found I could not do anything to help. After trying the mourners bench and everything they would suggest I only felt worse. They said I was all right if I would join the church but I was spared going into that. My brother came for me and would not stay for night meeting or I would have united as it was the close of a week of meetings. In a few days my mother told me when one desired to unite with the church they should read the Bible, and the one who preached according to the way they believed the Bible taught was where they should unite. I soon learned it did not teach as they preached and I had no experience of grace. The first scripture that meant anything to me was, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." The word shall comforted me for I felt surely I was hungry and thirsty and so I felt willing to wait, for it said they *shall* be filled. It seemed time was heavy on my heart, I was becoming distressed, even wished I could exchange places with a dumb brute and die and be no more; or even a tree cut into wood and burned, it seemed they were better in God's sight than I. One morning I arose and my burden was gone, my heart was light and happy, I felt there was nothing to be afraid of; it seemed the Lord was smiling on me and heard every word I would say; my happiest moments were when I was alone for I did not feel to be alone. This lasted several days, life did not have any burdens any more, but soon I found the brightness and sweetness was not felt; the way seemed all mixed up. My friends in the Missionary church, with whom I had spent so many pleasant times, did not seem to understand me. I felt I would rather hide my feelings than lose their friendship. I played the organ at church and they seemed to want me to play for them more than ever, but the pleasure lessened to me until I could no longer play for them. I tried to continue going to the meetings and mix with them, but as time went on I was forced to realize I was not one of them any longer. I then began to desire to unite with the Primitive Baptist church where my dear parents had belonged for a long time, but could not feel worthy. I enjoyed their preaching and could not keep the tears hidden especially when the invitation was given for new members. One day at home I thought how foolish I had acted in feeling so burdened over the matter for there were several older than I that went regularly and enjoyed the preaching and loved them as I did and had never united. I could hardly wait until meeting day came as I had come to my senses. I thought I would no longer worry over the matter, and that was the day I felt to fall in the door of the church. I was not able to talk and tell them why I desired a home with them, but could not keep from weeping and told a sister I wanted to unite

with the church, and to my surprise I was received. O how peaceful and calm I felt for several days, but many doubts and fears came into my heart before a month rolled by. It was then I was to be baptized. I was so fearful I might be doing awfully wrong by going into the watery grave where Jesus had gone, setting an example for his followers. I felt if I was hindered on that day I would take it as proof that I was one that should not go through with that ordinance and would not set another day, but thanks be to the dear Lord for allowing me to go down into the watery grave as our blessed Lord did and commanded his followers to do.

I still feel unworthy to be numbered with his dear people, but as Ruth said, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go: and whither thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried." I still have many doubts and fears that are grievous and sometimes all things seem to be against me, but bless his Holy Name, I hope I am not deceived in the sweet moments I still have that I believe are sent in due time as God wills. I have never learned yet one tiny thing I can do to receive a blessing, but I hope I have enjoyed many blessings at his hand, and believe his children will receive every blessing God has in store for them; and also believe they will learn many things by the things they suffer. I do not believe we can avoid chastisement by being obedient, for "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." Hope I have not wearied you and beg you to overlook all mistakes. Yours in hope of eternal life. (Mrs.) LUTHER CAMPBELL.

715 - 8th St., West Durham, N. C.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, Dear Brother in Christ I hope: I have waited longer than I intended to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times,* and have no excuse except neglect. I want to thank you for continuing my paper, if you had discontinued it it would have been my own fault. The paper is good and I really enjoy its contents. One article is often worth the yearly subscription price if it could be so valued, but the comfort of reading the experience of others of like precious faith is far above the dollar value to me.

I am wishing you grace and strength to carry on as long as it is the Lord's will for you to send out messages of comfort to the children of the Heavenly King, and may his Spirit abide with you in your work for the comfort of others. Yours in Christian fellowship.

(Mrs.) A. W. RAY.

Farmerville, La.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, Dear Brother: I have been delinquent with my remittance for the *Signs.* Am sorry I waited so long due to neglect. I enclose check for $6 my past dues and for 1947. If the price has gone up you may write me and I will send the balance. I enjoy reading the *Signs* very much. Thank you for sending it without pay. Will try to be more careful about remitting. Again I thank you. A sister I hope.

(Mrs.) EULA HALL.

(We are grateful for such letters as the foregoing. We are well aware of the fact that commercial magazines have increased their subscription price very materially, and they also do not continue to send them beyond the date for which the subscription is paid, but we are not publishing the *Signs* for commercial purposes and do not wish to follow such methods. Frequently those who are away behind with their subscriptions

write in and say they had expected us to stop the paper when their time was up, but often they tell us that they are glad we continued to send the paper. It has been a long established custom of the publisher of the *Signs* not to stop the paper unless specifically requested to do so. Where the paper is not appreciated or desired we hope the reader will do us the courtesy of requesting that it be discontinued, but we are anxious to retain every one of our subscribers, if possible, and trust they will continue to co-operate with us in carrying on this work. We need the assistance and encouragement their support affords. R.L.D.)

Route 1, Dupont, Ind.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Please change my address as indicated. I have missed one or two copies. I surely do like to read your paper. So many people tell my experience if I have any. Sometimes I think I have not had much but I do believe the Old Baptists are right. I have tried to believe something else and if it was left to me I would, but I cannot do that. The Lord works all things and does all things well. He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. If I was a free-willer I might change it but he says I am God and I change not. "Fear not, thou worm Jacob." "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." You do not have to work for it for it is not by works but by grace. He says he will open up fountains in the desert and springs in the valley, even the parched places shall become pools of water. "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." So we have the consolation that if God be for us who can be against us, for nothing is able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. I think of the old hymn:

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again.

I seldom find a heart to pray,
So many things come in my way;
Thus filled with doubts, I ask to know—
Come, tell me, is it thus with you?"

I am just a weary traveler longing for better things to come for if we have hope in this life only we are of all men most miserable, but we hope to go beyond that. Yours in hope of eternal life. C. T. PYLES.

1305 Glendale Ave., Durham, N. C.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, Gentlemen: I am enclosing M.O. for $5 to pay for the *Signs of the Times* for 1946 and 1947. Please accept the extra dollar to aid the paper as you deem best. Have been a reader of the paper for twenty years, and am thankful for God's blessing enabling such men as you, as well as the many good writers, to carry on the work of his high calling, spreading the good news and bringing glad tidings to the humble poor of this world. Please pardon me for being a little late with my renewal. Thanking you for your kindness and efficient service I am a friend. L. M. STEPHENSON.

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EDITORIAL
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Matthew 12: 29; Luke 11: 21-23

God's people are weak, they are also strong. Their weakness is in the Spirit, they are strong in the flesh. They are a paradoxical complex. Nothing can be stronger than he that can change things, that is man's outlook but it belongs only to God. No creature has the scriptural prerogative to claim that. They *are* doing it. It is a strong individual that *thinks* he *can* change things. The Lord reckoned natural men and women as strong. We do not mean by this that the Lord thought of them as having power, but that they *thought* they did. Is that true? That is true of all the children of Adam in their natural state. There has never been any more totalitarian power than a man that did not have to do anything that he did do; that could choose heaven or hell, Jesus Christ or the Devil.

This strong man has a palace, it is a gorgeous construction. Just why would anybody live in a hut when he had an inexhaustable source of material to select from? They tell me we can have what we want to have. The Arminian preachers in Job's day told him what to do to have peace with God and great good from him (Job 22:21). It did not do him any good. Don't you see that they lived in a royal palace; they recognized nor knew no doctrine but conditionalism; their goods were in peace, they kept them in peace. Job's goods were all spoiled. Why the difference? Is there any explanation? To find a natural explanation is easy, but to find a scriptual or experimental explanation to one of the stripe of Job's comforters it cannot be done. This palace of the strong man had doors and windows wherever needed, he can go and come as he pleases. No need at all for him to ever be shut up and unable to come forth; no need for him to ever have any winding stairs (Ezek. 41: 7), but for everything to be on a level and he able to mount above any obstacle, and to leap any hurdle that might come against his palace. The windows would be placed in the best position so as to have full benefit of all light to see out; inside he would have great artificial lights so there would never be any darkness; he would have command of them in such a perfect way that light would be so common to him that he would think his neighbors, brethren and friends could have such a dwelling if they had done as he. This strong man has a perpetual fountain in his palace; there is not any going out in desert lands and water giving out; there is no falling into pits, becoming a captive and thirsting for water; neither is there any panting for the water of life, because inside his palace water is to be had for the taking. Too, this palace is protected from storms, rains, tempests and cold, it is a complete shelter from every molesting thing, everything that ever comes against this man is under his control. To be sure God *would* destroy his palace if he disobeyed, but he is not going to do that. *He can do it* but he will not because he can obey.

In this palace it follows that there

are many priceless gems and works of art. The keeper is a rich man, he has acquainted himself with God and great gain has been his reward. God needs him in his kingdom—in fact the perpetuation of the kingdom and the promulgation of the news of the kingdom is dependent upon him. He can do all this. Everything depends on him. God has done all he can to save the race, and he is equal to the task before him. Now God needing all this and the man having an inexhaustible supply, he has thus traded what he has to God for the many gorgeous goods that are in this palace. These goods are kept in peace. This strong man has the palace, he has the goods and he is armed. In perfect complacency and satisfaction he goes his way, He has everything and is in no danger of losing it because he *can* keep right on in favor with God.

Dear reader, this is a picture of us all in nature, but let us look at the other side. He has gone on his way not knowing that there was a stronger One, but this One reckoneth not with men as to the time of their acknowledging him as King, so he comes upon the strong man. The first thing he does is to disarm him. How does Jesus Christ disarm a sinner? Does he use carnal weapons? No sir, never that! A sinner overcome is a helpless sinner, but being overcome is not all. The armor that he had placed so much confidence and trust in is taken away. What was the armor? Was it grace, mercy, love? The echo sounds into every wayfaring heart. No, a thousand times no. What did he trust in? His trust was in self and that alone. God was not active and he had not been since Christ rose from the dead. Salvation in time and eternity depended on his own action, but now the Creator has come upon the creature; the stronger upon the strong; the high and exalted Ruler of heaven and earth has moved upon the low and abased and undone of earth. Behold how he deals with him. Foolish people with dangerous weapons must be handled carefuly. Just think! What if God had let us do as we thought in saving souls (Mat. 21:15)? What if he had let us go on thinking that our way was unto life (Rom. 8:6)? Conditionalism in the hands of sinners is dangerous to them, that is, dear reader, to live and die a strong man is evidence that we are not one that Jesus atoned for, so he overcomes this strong man that can do as he pleases (John 19:10); that can and has done many wonderful works (Mat. 7:22); that has lived in his palatial home of plenty, looking with disdain on the poor. God overcomes! That is absolute. Not a case has ever been chalked up as a failure. Heaven does not afford a record book of the failures of God, and the only one of any kind on earth is of the accomplishments of God and the failures of men (see Gen. to Rev.).

Dear child of God do you not take courage that God has, as you hope, disarmed you? It is repetition but let us ask again and again what arms has he taken from us? It is nothing more nor less than the idea that we have ability. Ability is strength and God takes that away from us. In the two steps so far God has been the actor. Man has been passive or inactive. Each step has found man entirely or absolutely helpless. Preaching that kind of absolutism will not drive people from the church that have any interest in it. But the stronger One proceeds step by step to the subjugation of this man. 3—He binds him. We never read of the bonds being removed. God does not do things to undo them. I want to hasten to say that I do not understand that this man is bound so that he has no more movement. I do not mean any such. I do not want it said of me that

I believe God's children are inactive. I do not do it. God has called servants to serve him and they do. Men are active in the kingdom, but this step is an important one. This being bound works two ways. I believe, or trust that I believe, in both of them. Bound in such a way that they never, never can again go back to the hog wallow of sin and live in the enjoyment; bound in such a way that he is no longer able to do as he pleases; he has lost the use of his strength; his palace is no longer fit to live in—in short this binding keeps him from the service of the Devil and binds him over to the service of God. 4—This stronger one has completely and absolutely brought the strong one into subjugation. God did not take sin out of him; he did not take his strength away from him; he did not take his goods away from him, but he spoiled them. Somehow, dear reader, it seems to me impossible for a child of God to ever trust in his own works. All, all his goods are spoiled. Every good thing that he formerly trusted in is in a state of ruin. Brethren, spoiled things commonly have a strong odor of carrion about them. I do not see how any one can ever have any more confidence in their own works. Those goods are spoiled. The putrefaction does not get less; the smell does not ever approach perfume; there in our own being we live with them and they stay right on, keeping us reminded that we are sinners of the deepest dye, and that the best days we have we carry the sentence of death in us. I believe Paul was touching this when he wrote that vital message to the church at Rome. "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." I have never heard that quoted in support of conditionalism. Imagine that! Mortify the deeds of your own body! Cause a gangrenous condition to come about in your own loved fleshly works! Never! No sir, dear child of God, the strong, holy One has overcome, broken your trust in yourself, bound you and spoiled your goods. They stay that way. Spoiled goods cannot save a spoiled man, but Jesus saves.

W. D. G.

Understanding is a wellspring of life unto him that hath it: but the instruction of fools is folly. Prov. 16: 22.

Sometime ago, at one of our meetings, we read the first twenty-two verses of this chapter of Proverbs, and commented upon several of the verses, including the twenty-second, but we did not feel that we exhausted, by any means, the content of this verse. In fact, ever since speaking on the subject, we have felt dissatisfied over not having covered it more fully than we did. We discovered long ago, however, that it is utterly impossible to say all the good things at one time on any text. The fact is we cannot even begin to tell them unless we are led of the Spirit so to do. Solomon, in the outset of this chapter said, "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." We are akin to Solomon in wisdom if we know this. As only the seed which fell into good ground brought forth a copious fruit, so must the heart of man be prepared to receive the word of God, if it is to profit him. Neither are we left to conjecture regarding the source from whence this preparation comes, for it is plainly declared to be "from the Lord." Jesus said, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." He also said in this connection, "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit." Jesus was confirming what Solomon said and what all true believers know to be true that "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in

himself." Not only is the preparation of the heart in man from the Lord, but likewise "the answer of the tongue." God's truly qualified ministers can vouch for this, for unless the Lord fills the mouth as well as prepare the heart the gospel will not be preached in demonstration of the Spirit and with power sent down from heaven. We are well aware of the fact that most so-called ministers spend years of study in colleges and Theological Seminaries in order to prepare, or write out their sermons, and this is no doubt proper and necessary for them to satisfy the needs and desires of those to whom they preach, but the sheep of God's pasture have to be fed with living food, or that bread which comes down from heaven. When Jesus was here in the world, he said, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." Mat. 10:16-20. When God's true servants have the unction of the Holy One, they do not have to pick and choose in advance of meeting time words to express what is in their hearts, but God gives them suitable words to say and often they seem like apples of gold in pictures of silver. Sometimes they feel to be caught up to the third heaven, as it were, where they are shown things which are unspeakable and full of glory. There is such a fulness in these Proverbs that we cannot linger too long here, but must pass on to the one at the head of this article, else we will come far short of presenting much that should be said regarding the text. It seems to us this evening that volumes could be written regarding the one word *"understanding."* One of the great difficulties in the world, which is so sad, is that there is so little of it. Many so-called great conferences have been and will yet continue to be held in various parts of the world by outstanding statesmen for the purpose of finding out what they can about each other's plans and purposes in life. If a thorough *understanding* can be arrived at we have no doubt they will find out that they have much in common, but the lack of understanding foments strife and contention, which often ends in warfare. Understanding has many phases and there are divergent angles which might beckon us to go far afield of what is embraced in our text. One authority says, "Right *understanding* consists in the perception of the visible or probable agreement or disagreement of ideas." We shall now, however, endeavor to stress particularly what we understand is meant by it in our text. Undoubtedly, it has to do with the things of the Spirit. Many of us, we hope, are desiring and yearning after a true understanding of God's dealings with us. We often find ourselves so bewildered and perplexed that we actually are made to wonder if indeed and in truth a work of grace has been wrought in our hearts. Like John when he was shut up in prison and could not come forth, we are made to inquire, "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another." Perhaps, worse still, some of us are like the woman at Jacob's well, where she had to go day after day to draw water for her daily needs under the law. She had to be taught by the great Master Teacher that the hour had come when they were to no longer worship in the

mount or at Jerusalem, but they were to "worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him." Jesus told the woman that whosoever drinketh of the water from Jacob's well would thirst again, which she well knew, but then he said to her, "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." The woman evidently perceiving who he was replied, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." When this poor woman had received *understanding* she "left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" We need to be turned from the law and all creature works, with all of their entanglements, and look to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Our text says, "Understanding is a wellspring of life unto him that hath it." What a beautiful figure this is! When we realize that it is a *wellspring of life* to him that hath it, we see how all-important it is, and we are made to search for evidence to see if we are one "that hath it." The expression, *wellspring of life* indicates a living, moving, rising, power. It means that the grace of God, which bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto us, and that we are spiritually alive, and live and move and have our continual being in the great and infinite God. It means that the eternal and all-wise God has made himself known unto us, that he has taken up his abode in our hearts, for we have felt the power of his resurrection and have been raised up to walk in newness of life, and know full well that no goodness in creatures can be found, but is to be found only in the Lord. The great apostle said, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Col. 3:1-4. Jesus also said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." If we know God and have a true understanding of his plan of salvation, it is because we are embraced in his everlasting covenant of love, wherewith he loved us and chose us in his blessed Son, Jesus Christ, even before the foundation of the world. He has, therefore, given of himself to us and we have immortality and life and it springs up in us and causes our breast to swell and glow with love. We hope our readers will by this time have had some burning within, some reviving of hope, some longing for the things of God, and if so it is because of the wellspring of life in you, and the fact that you have some yearning for spiritual things is conclusive proof that you have understanding of him that is true and in whom all fulness dwells.

What a contrast there is between the first part of our text and the latter part, which says, "but the instruction of fools is folly." There is no understanding of life in the instruction of fools, but it is all folly. It is the fool who says in his heart, there is no God. Sometimes a poor sinner takes consolation from the fact that he knows what is not the truth. He may often question whether or not he really knows the truth, but if that which is false is presented he is ready to rise up against it, for he knows that "the instruction of fools is folly." The true believer feels that he knows there is a God.

In conclusion, we wish very much that understanding could prevail among the household of faith throughout our land and country. It would be a good thing for the brethren to covet and seek after it, rather than to glory in ignorance and often be finding fault and criticising some brother who may not in every particular measure up to their own individual standard. We may at times feel that we are at variance with some good brother and the breach may seem to widen, but when we come to know him better and really understand him and what he actualy believes and means to contend for, we will discover that we are not far apart. Thus understanding becomes a savor of life unto life. Is it too much to hope for a better understanding between those who stand upon the walls of our beloved Zion, the undershepherds of God's flock, who are at least supposed to have their welfare at heart? R.L.D.

OBITUARIES

By the request of our dear sister in Christ, Gertrude Ker, I am sending the obituary of her late husband, ELDER H. CLAUDE KER, son of Dr. Samuel and Louisa Davis Ker. He was born Dec. 1, 1860 and passed away Feb. 27, 1946.

Elder Ker was given a hope in Christ and was baptized into the fellowship of Little Creek Church by Elder A. B. Francis, May 20, 1894. Some years later he manifested a precious gift to proclaim salvation by the grace of God alone. The churches soon recognized his gift and he was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, Nov. 17, 1897 at Delmar, Del. On May 26, 1886 he was married to Emma J. Marvel and to this union were born two children, Louisa Ker Remley and Stuart. Stuart passed away in 1917. Elder Ker's first wife died May 25, 1914. On March 22, 1916 he was married to Mrs. Lena Roth of East Orange, N. J. who passed away June 22, 1916. On May 16, 1917 he was married to Miss Gertrude Walters of Pocomoke City, Md.

Elder Ker was called, in 1898, to serve the Middletown and New Vernon Churches and later on to the Warwick Church which he served for several years. In 1921 he was called to Delmar and for about twenty-five years he served the following churches, Little Creek, Rewastico and Delmar. Later on he was called to serve Snow Hill and Broad Creek Churches. On Nov. 13, 1921 he was called to serve Southampton Church, Southampton, Pa. Owing to ill health he resigned from this church on February 25, 1943. September 9, 1923 he was called to the Kingwood Church, Locktown, N. J. where he remained pastor until his death. He was also pastor of Woburn Church in Mass. for many years. For many years he was Editor of the Signs of the Times, associated with Elders F. A. Chick and H. H. Lefferts.

Elder Ker was deeply gifted in expounding the word of God. I have heard him on the doctrine of predestination when I felt that no mortal man could excel him in declaring the all soverign power of God. He was widely known in many parts of the United States and Canada where in former years, he often visited the churches. He was much beloved by the churches he served and they feel their loss deeply. It was our privilege to visit him many times during his illness and we never heard him make one complaint regarding his sufferings which were great at times.

He made arrangements for his funeral many years before his death, requesting the ministers of the Eastern Associations to act as pall bearers and to take part in the services. The following ministers were present and took part in the last rites—Elders H. H. Lefferts, C. W. Vaughn, R. Lester Dodson, Arnold H. Bellows, Harold M. Bennett and the writer. Services were conducted in the meeting-house at Delmar after which his remains were taken to Snow Hill Cemetery adjoining the meeting-house where he served the church for so many years, there to await the summons from on high.

Our sympathy goes out to all who mourn and especially to the bereaved widow, who so faithfully cared for him through his many years of illness. The Lord has thus far sustained her in her sorrow and we feel confident that he will be her lasting support as long as her life shall endure. Elder Ker is survived by his widow and one daughter, Louisa Remley; one granddaughter, Emily Remley Lindgren; one grandson, Robert Remley; and one great-granddaughter, Patricia Ker Remley. A great one in Israel has fallen. By one who loved him.

(Elder) D. L. TOPPING

Mrs. OLIVE STAPLES BILLINGS, widow of the late Albert Billings, died Jan. 11, 1946 in her home at Oak Woods, North Berwick, Me. She was born Jan. 4, 1866, the daughter of Peter and Harriet Applebee Staples. She is survived by a son, Clarence and his wife, Rosa; a step-daughter, Mrs. Nelson Bailey of Wiscasset, Me., and several neph-

ews and nieces. Her husband preceded her in death in 1925.

Sister Billings was a member of the Old School Baptist Church of Oak Woods, being baptized Sept. 4, 1913 by her pastor, the late Elder Frederick W. Keene, and remained a devoted member until her death. She was a very cheerful, sociable woman, and always so pleased to meet her friends and brethren. It afforded her much pleasure when our ministers and visiting brethren came to see her. How often have I heard her say, "I live their visits over many times, and it cheers and comforts me that they feel I am worthy of their love and fellowship."

During her illness she was tenderly cared for by her son and his wife. The latter had a pleasant, patient way of knowing what was for their mother's comfort and diversion. Her loved ones feel the vacancy in the home, but know their loss is her eternal gain, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." 2 Cor. 5: 1. The beautiful flowers were an emblem of the high regard in which she was held. Funeral services were conducted by Mr. Menifield of North Berwick. Interment in the family lot on the homestead.

(Mrs.) LYDIA KEENE NASON

It has become my duty once again to write the obtuary of another one of our members, sister MATTIE PURDY, nee Ritchey. She was born in Texas, Feb. 22, 1872, and passed away at her home near Tipton, Okla., April 16, 1946. Her stay in this world was 74 years, 1 month and 24 days. On July 12, 1896 she was married to J. A. Purdy. To this couple were born five children, one having preceded her in death. Her husband and four children survive her, two sons and two daughters. Mrs. Pearl Bills, Hanford, Cal., Guy Purdy, and W. B. Purdy both of Orange, Texas and Mrs. Mila Alkive, Montogomery Creek, Cal. Three of the four living children were present for the last rites.

Sister Purdy united with the Old School Baptist Church in the year 1888. She was ready at any time to defend that doctrine. She was strong in the faith of her God when the end came. After eleven years of confinement to her bed she fell asleep in Jesus. She was the most patient character I ever knew, surely God was her support and strength. She never turned herself in bed or fed herself during this long period of illness, with all this she never lost patience nor faith in God. A wonderful manifestation of God's amazing mercies and grace. He alone knows her sufferings. In the dark hours of midnight she would be heard humming those sweet spiritual songs of Zion, no doubt in sweet communion with Jesus. During her long siege of illness I kept in touch with the family. and many times during this period I would visit her and try to preach to her Jesus, the way, the the truth and the life. Oh! how she would enjoy those seasons. Feasting in meditation until I would come again, and when wife and I would enter the room, she would smile and say, "I am all right I guess." Surely she was possessed with the meek and humble spirit of Jesus. Toward the end of her suffering she grew weak in body, but not in mind. When wife and I would visit her she would select the hymns she loved and we would sing them. I was her pastor for thirty years. Her suffering, patience and faith has been a great inspiration to me. When I was called to speak over that dead body I used the words of Jesus to Martha. He said, "I am the resurrection, and the life." Jesus also said to her, "Thy brother shall rise again." I tried to comfort the family, and others who had a hope in Jesus, that truly the body that had ceased from suffering died in the Lord would rise again. Dear bereaved family and relatives weep not after her, she has ceased from suffering and gone from the evil to come. Died in the Lord, she will rise again "for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." May God comfort those that do mourn.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN

Mr. JOE JONES of Mansfield, Texas was born Aug 18, 1889, and died March 6, 1946, living in this world 57 years. Joe, as we called him, was married to Miss Ola Presley, (I do not have the date) and to this union were born three children, one boy and two girls. They, with his widow, survive him. I personally knew Mr. Jones for many years as an honest, honorable citizen. He was not a member of the militant church, but was a strong believer in one God over all, and salvation by grace without works of the creature. He was always ready to defend the doctrine of God our Saviour. I believe he was blessed with the knowledge of the spiritual import of the word of God. I have seen his cup run over under the sound of the gospel of God our Saviour. That was an evidence that his name was written in that book(not books), and that he was made able to eat of the flesh and drink of the blood of the Son of man. These evidences are sweet memories and bind our souls together in one mediator, the man Christ Jesus.

I would say to the bereaved family weep not after him nor wish him back for the evidence is that he fell asleep in Jesus. Sweetly sleep Joe, for the testimony is when you awake you will be in His likeness and be satisfied. Sweet promise. Written by request of his father-in-law, J. C. Presley.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN

It becomes my sad duty to write an obituary of MRS. RANDOLPH PERDUE, wife of Elder Randolph Perdue, Rocky Mount, Virginia. She was seventy years of age, and daughter of J. H. and Sallie Ann Bennett of Glade Hill, Virginia. We were united in marriage in 1916 and lived happily together for nearly thirty years. She was afflicted with high blood pressure for about twenty years, and on April 17, 1946, she had a heavy brain hemorrhage and never survived the stroke, but passed away the next day about four o'clock.

Her sudden passing was a great shock to me and her many friends and relatives. She was a member of the Christian Church, having joined them when a young girl, but for a number of years she quit attending her church and was a regular attendant of the Primitive Baptist and enjoyed the preaching. She often told me that she believed the Primitive Baptist doctrine and loved to hear them preach. I am satisfied that she had a hope that the Lord had pardoned her sins and she was ready to obey the heavenly call. I feel that her soul is now at rest with Him who redeemed it and purified it by the washing of regeneration and the Holy Spirit.

She leaves to mourn her passing a broken-hearted husband, a nephew or foster son, Doctor J. R. Perdue of Miami Beach, Florida, and three brothers, A. A. Bennett, Noblesville, Indiana, J. B. Bennett, Glade Hill, Virginia, and B. A. Bennett of Rocky Mount, Virginia, and a host of relatives too numerous to mention. The funeral service was conducted at the home on Claiborne Avenue, Rocky Mount, Virginia, by Elder D. P. Helms of Bassett, Virginia, assisted by Mr. J. T. Meadows of the Christian Church. The services were very impressive and consoling to the family. Her body was laid to rest in the High Street Cemetery to await the resurrection call. And He who said, let there be light and there was light, will say in the resurrection morn, let the dead arise, and the dead will arise. Written by her husband, who was devoted to her and will ever cherish her memory.

(Elder) RANDOLPH PERDUE

Community Mourns Sudden Passing In Her Home

Surrounded by hundreds of her friends relatives and neighborly acquaintances, MRS. ANNIE CREIGHTON BENNETT PERDUE, wife of Elder Randolph Perdue, was laid to rest in High Street Cemetery Sunday afternoon, April 21, 1946, following impressive services held at her late home on Claiborne Avenue with Elder D. P. Helms of the Primitive Baptist Church, and Mr. J. T. Meadows, of the Rocky Mount Christian Church, officiating.

A mountain of beautiful floral tributes surrounded the casket in the Perdue home where her legion of friends called to pay their last respects. Mrs. Perdue, always a lover of flowers and things beautiful, was laid to rest with a blanket of white roses, gardenias, easter lilies, carnations and orchids, the final tribute of her son, Dr. J. Randolph Perdue and wife of Miami, Florida, who came to Rocky Mount by plane.

Mrs. Perdue was 70 years of age and was one of the most highly esteemed women of the county. Her gracious and kindly interest in every one whom she met made her a host of friends. Her death came suddenly and as a shock to the entire community. While not being of the most rugged health for a number of years, she had been able to enjoy the company of her friends and had recently returned with Elder Perdue from a five-week sojourn with her son and his family in Florida.

Pallbearers were Elliott Perdue, Clyde Perdue, James Bennett, Sidney Bennett, Warren Holland and Gordon Bennett. Besides her husband and son, she is survived by three brothers, A. A. Bennett, Noblesville, Indiana, J. B. Bennett, Glade Hill and Alphonso Bennett of Rocky Mount. (County News Post, Rocky Mount, Va.)

MRS. LELIA STEADMAN UTTERBACK, our sister in Christ, answered the home call April 17, 1946 at the home of her son Benjamin Utterback, Falls Church, Va. She was born May 9, 1855, daughter of Thomas P. and Mildred A. Hereford, and was baptized by the late Elder J. N. Badger May 24, 1896 into the membership of the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun County, Va. One son, Warren G., died several years ago. She is survived by two sons: Reuben of New Jersey, Benjamin of Falls Church, Va., also there are four grandchildren living. She was steadfast in her belief in salvation by free, sovereign, unmerited grace alone, and in her faith in absolute predestination of all things. She always attended the meetings of the church regularly until failing health and feebleness of age prevented her. The funeral was held from the Pearson Funeral Home at Falls Church, Va. conducted by the writer. Interment in the burying-ground at Mt. Zion. Having known her for over 35 years, I have had many letters from her during that time, all bespeaking her love of the brethren and her deep, abiding interest in the cause of her Redeemer, Jesus Christ. May we bow our heads in acknowledging the holy and righteous will of God, in that he has taken to dwell with him in the house not made with hands, one whom he redeemed from death and destruction by his own precious blood.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, after a lapse of five years due to war conditions, is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church near Aldie, Loudoun County, Va., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday October 16th, 17th and 18th, 1946. Ministers and brethren who are in fellowship with us, and all who are lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ our Lord, are affectionately invited to meet with us. The place of meeting is located on Highway Route 50. Greyhound buses from Washington, D. C. to Roanoke, Va. pass the grounds. Those coming Tuesday either by private auto or by bus or train will come to Leesburg, Va. Those coming Wednesday will go directly to the place of meeting. For further information write to the address affixed to this notice.

(Mrs.) DAVID FARNIE, Church Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, held with the Little Creek Church, will convene in Delmar, Del. on Wednesday and Thursday after the third Sunday in October, 23rd and 24th, 1946. All ministers of our faith are invited to be with us.

RYDA E. WEST, Church Clerk

Hopewell Association (Alabama) convenes with the Harmony Church on Friday, Oct. 18,1946 and continues three days embracing the third Sunday. Meeting house is near Belk,, Ala. ten miles S. W. of Fayette on R. R. and Highway. Those coming Thursday night inquire for either of the undersigned at Fayette, or if on train come to Covin.

(Elder) H. M. BROCK, Moderator
(Elder) W. D. GRIFFIN, Clerk

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each 1st Sunday, 11:00 a.m. and Saturday before.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday.
AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala.
Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor

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Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopewell Church, Ozark Ala., meets each 4th Sunday, 11 a.m. J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock. Meeting place at Alder St. at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, 11 a. m. Elders J. J. Collins and J. S. Bass, Pastors.
J. J. COLLINS

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Seclusia Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church meets every fourth Sunday at 2 p. m., Route 3, Box 800G, Stockton, Cal.
W. L. SLUSHER, Moderator

Bethel Church near Stockton, Cal. meets first and third Sundays in each month and Saturday nights before. For further information write SETH BYNUM, R 3, Box 800 G, Stockton, Cal. or LEONA TUTTLE, 1940 N. Center St., Stockton, Cal.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday, north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets every second Sunday at 5th and E. Park St.

B. O. JEFFREYS, Pastor
Weiser, Idaho

Pleasant Valley Church Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carver Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. C. H. EVANS, Pastor

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The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before a 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS,Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.
D. L. TOPPING Pastor

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a.m. in the meeting-house. Pastor in regular attendance except first Sundays. C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays 10:30 a. m., 2 p. m.

The Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY
Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sundays at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue. Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 a.m. 1:30 p.m.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.
(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.
C. W. BOND, Pastor

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelhia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting first Sunday, each month
10:30 a.m.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor
C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.
E. H. LANIER, Clerk

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. C. B. Teague, co-pastor, G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets third Sunday in each month at 11:00 a.m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Old School Baptist meetings are held every fourth Sunday at Civic Club, 1419 N. Shepherd St., Houston, Texas. Preaching by Elder W. O. Beene.
(Mrs.) IRENE. WISENBAKER

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockade, Texas, meets the first Sunday in each month at 10:30 a.m. in the Dr. Wood church-house.
E. B. AULT, Pastor

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Danville Primitive Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before Bradley Road, Danville, Va.
W. R. DODD, Pastor

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meets each first Sunday 11 a.m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p.m. and Sunday at 11 a.m., Fairmont Park, 3023 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va., R. B. DENSON, Pastor

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.
R. B. DENSON, Pastor

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a.m. C. M. FISHER.

Bethel Old School Baptist Church, Riffe, Wash. meets every third Sunday, 11 a.m. in the meeting house. I. F. COLEMAN, Mod.
ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk, Riffe, Wash.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church, Yakima, Washington, R.F.D. No. 8, meets the third Sunday and Saturday before. A. D. HUGHET, Pastor

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va., N. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 114 RUTHERFORD, N. J. NOVEMBER, 1946 No. 11

THE GOSPEL STORY

This wonderful plan of salvation
Was stamped in His sayings during the crucifixion;
There the seven complete statements were made,
And by Him the beautiful scene was laid.

"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."
Oh! was it a prayer for me and for you?
If He died for our sins while drinking the dross
We are the ones who nailed Him to the cross.

This sincere prayer by the most Holy One.
As it was spoken was most surely done;
All involuntary prayer was by Him sent,
And always answered just as He mean't.

"Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."
Thus He spoke to the one who was being crucified;
This one realized that His crucufixion was just.
Also, he was blessed to know that Jesus was the Christ.

When a penitential child like this crucified One,
Sees his condition bewildered and undone,
He begs to be remembered by the chosen Christ.
And to him, when remembered, it is a paradise.

"Woman, behold thy son! Behold thy mother!"
He addressed the Holy Spirit, St. John and others;
Mother wisdom or Holy Spirit of truth,
Has ever since abode to comfort the just.

"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?
Was his fourth cry, while bearing the penalty;
His dear little ones are forced to utter this prayer
When they come to feel they too were there.

When God forsook and withdrew his Holy Spirit,
He extended mercy and made grace doctrine the truth.
God's cry through Him was perfect and complete,
His children realize this when brought to the mercy seat.

The sweet relationship of God and Christ
Broken by the forsaken state, brought—"I thirst."
Yes, He drank the bitter cup of strife
That we might drink of that fountain of life.
When upon this earth he had fulfilled his mission,
Completed law and prophecy, he cried, "It is finished."
Therefore satisfying justice, not of thee,
But with the will of Him that sent me.

With returning feeling of affectionate kin,
He addressed Jehovah as Father again;
"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit,"
Ending the everlasting story with merit.

This established Him author and finisher of our faith,
And showed the plan to be solely and surely by grace;
God's elect being blameless, and justice satisfied,
It was all based on Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

Millport, Ala. (Mrs.) ROSA W. HUGHES

CORRESPONDENCE

Roxboro, N. C.

DEAR BROTHER HAWKINS: I feel glad that at last I have found a brother who has traveled the same rugged road I have and thank God for it. I enjoyed our talk to-day. One statement you made stands out, "God pity the poor woman who is married to a man that has to preach." Brother Hawkins that is true beyond all possible doubt for it means much suffering for her, but let me say right here that the church and this calling is all that is able to cause me to leave home and go. The Old Primitive Baptists are the only people on earth that I love greatly enough to cause me to turn my back upon my family and go be with the church. Elder Roy M. Flinchum of Draper, N. C. told me of his father, Elder Billy Flinchum, who was a preacher years ago, that when old brother Flinchum would be sitting in his buggy ready to go to the churches

he served, his wife and children would gather around him crying as though grieving for the dead.

If you remember, somewhere in the Old Testament it tells of the enemies of Israel who took away the ark of the covenant from Israel in battle, and God began slaying this enemy by the hundreds, the result being they became frightened and agreed to put this ark on a cart, and take cattle with calves, fasten the calves up in stalls, hitch the cattle to the cart on which the ark was, and if it was God's will for Israel to have the ark back these cattle would carry it though it meant going away from their calves. This was done, the cattle went toward the camp of the Israelites, looking back and lowing but going forward just the same. See the type here of the poor burdened preacher? Cattle, beast of burden, patient, typifying a servant of God turning away from natural ties of love, going among the camps of Israel, the churches, bearing the ark, the ark of the new covenant of grace, ordered in all things and sure. See the picture represented? I am sure you do.

Brother Hawkins I have thought of that last supper of Jesus and his disciples held in an upper room, or chamber, typifying that to-day when we feast together with Him we must be lifted up in Spirit above the perishable, vain and dying things of this world. Judas being present also, shows forth the camp-followers, unbelievers, among us to-day who profess but do not possess. The enemy (Satan) came by night and sowed tares among the wheat. See? I am often fearful that I am one of the tares. Are you not? But when Jesus told them that one among that number seated there should betray him, *each one* became fearful and doubtful of himself asking, "Lord, is it I?" Oh! to think we have the same experience today, knowing the Scriptures of truth declare that *the* church is built and founded on a sure foundation, the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone. And to think our experience harmonizes with theirs! Surely we must be children of the same heavenly Father as they, taught by the same mighty Teacher in the same school, the school of divine grace. Taught by Jesus by divine revelation, by his Spirit, to know the meaning of these things by experience. (Often have I said the Scriptures are written in two places—the Book and the hearts of God's people.) Surely I say then, that regardless of the fiery darts of Satan, the doubts and fears hurled through the channel of the natural mind, when we are shut up in the prison of nature's darkness, regardless of casuality, regardless of all *casual reasoning, still* we *must* be children of God. Else how *could* those old writers tell our experience so plainly when they told theirs? Sometimes our faith is active to the extent that: "We can our fierce accuser face, And tell him Christ has died." Again we feel that no one cares for us, that we do not have a friend on earth, nor one in heaven, alone and forsaken. Wonder how Jesus felt in the garden of Gethsemane? And when he was taken by the multitude to be crucified all his disciples forsook him and fled? Do you not think we have to *experience* these things in a faint measure, and suffer *with* him in order to have fellowship *for* him? I feel we do for it is not only given us to reign with him hereafter, but to suffer with him here by appointment or predestination of God. I am absolutely certain of this being true for the Scriptures declare that, "I have chosen thee (not on flowery beds of ease, but) in the furnace of affliction." Again Jesus said, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in

me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation." Words that contain our whole life's experience after being "quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sin." Eph. 2:1.

Through all these various experiences runs the golden thread of hope. Many times feeling cast down, but not destroyed; as poor, yet rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things; nothing in or of self, it is all in Christ, as afflicted, tossed with tempest. Through all these things our hope holds us secure, and we feel bound to say with the poet sometimes: " 'Tis grace has kept me to this day, and will not let me go." Many times when pressed down, we find:

> "From every stormy wind that blows,
> From every swelling tide of woes,
> There is a calm, a sure retreat—
> 'Tis found beneath the mercy seat."

I have heard it said that Abraham Lincoln once said, "I have often been driven to my knees by the knowledge I had no where else to go." Is not that our experience sometimes? Oh! how we *would* live, were it possible! Live obedient to the inward teachings which the Spirit doth reveal. Sweet, indeed, would it be then, but where then could this scripture be written in our hearts by experience; "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other," and the result, therefore, (for that reason then) "ye cannot do the things that ye would." Many years ago a poet penned these lines, I believe, by divine inspiration. See if your heart says, Amen.

> " 'Tis seldom I can ever see
> Myself as I would wish to be;
> What I desire (live holy), I can't attain;
> From what I hate (sin) I can't refrain."

Oh! what gracious words are these written in the song, "I am a stranger here below," by hands now long gone back to dust, yet to prove it was written by divine inspiration these words are vitally alive in the poor, storm-tossed lives of the little children of God today. Just as true, just as much our experience to-day as it was to the poor soul who wrote it, whose Spirit no doubt is resting in the Paradise of God to-day. The lines quoted above even describe the life and experience of the apostle Paul for did he not experience it according to his own inspired writings when he said, "What I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that I do*** ***For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not," and this warfare raged so fiercely Paul was made to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death." Then he plainly told the name of his deliverer, the Lord.

Somewhere in the Scriptures we find they "were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Then we know that the apostle Paul was one of God's heaven-born children, and plainly declaring *the* church is built and founded on (the doctrine and experience of) the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone. Do we not have the right to hope we also are his little children, for our experience is harmoniously in accord and agreement with theirs? It seems plain then, that despite all the powers of hell united; despite all of our doubts and fears we must be children of God. How often would we gladly reach back down the span of hundreds of years, and take the right hand of fellowship with those old writers who wrote the Scriptures, in tears, in love, in gratitude to God for so plainly penning our experience hundreds of years before we ever even saw the light of day on earth. Sometimes it becomes so plain it almost cries our name aloud, as in these few words

in Isaiah 54: "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted." Dear child of God, does this not describe you? It matters not how fierce the warfare, the doubts and fears. So then we travel on in hope, marching with bowed heads, bleeding hearts, broken spirits and tear dimmed eyes, but marching just the same through this low valley of sorrows, beneath the blood-stained banner of the Lord Jesus Christ, pressing ever onward and upward towards the mark of the prize of the high calling as it is in Jesus, away from this world of anguish and pain up to that bright celestial city that lieth foursquare, whose builder and maker is God. Amen. Bearing the armor of God, the breastplate of faith, the shield of righteousness of our Lord Jesus imputed to us, traveling not in our own strength but in His, being "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." So we cannot fail to arrive at our final destination, being, we humbly hope and trust heaven eternal. Oh, for ten thousand tongues and voices to praise such a God as this for so glorious a hope, so wondrous a salvation!

"Jesus, my All, to heaven is gone,
He whom I fix my hopes upon!
His track I see, and I'll pursue
The narrow way, till him I view."

Humbly your brother in hope.
(Elder) LAYTON WINGFIELD.

Route 1, Hammond, W. Va.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS: I will try to write you all another letter if the good Lord wills, but I have no subject yet to write on and what must I do. How can I write without a subject? Well, the Lord God carried Ezekiel out and set him down in the valley full of dry bones. I was not thinking of this scripture when I said, "what shall I write on," it just came to me and I put my thoughts on paper. It is true he was carried out and set down in the valley full of dry bones, and they were very dry. God said to Ezekiel, "Son of man, can these bones live?" These bones were the whole house of Israel and that took Ezekiel in. The house of Israel was once called Jacob, and Jacob have I loved. He had a brother by nature and his name was Esau. Were not Esau and Jacob brothers? Yes, but Jacob was loved and Esau hated. Why? Because God purposed to save a people already given to his beloved Son. Yes, they are chosen in him, elected from all other people. The election is already over, the choice made before the earth was created. Solomon says, (Prov. 8) "Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." I (God) created the heaven and the earth the first day, it was mine and my delight and my Son was in the habitable part of it. Jacob whom I loved and named Israel is the habitable part of the earth. Man was created out of the dust of the ground and is of the earth earthy. He was called man and Adam was his name. This man Adam was male and female in their creation and their name was Adam, one flesh one blood, and they brought forth Cain and Abel. Notice the habitable part of his earth, his part was Abel and not Cain because he inhabited Abel and put his law in him, that is the same law for Abel brought forth the firstlings of his flock, a lamb that pointed to the Lamb of God who in God's purpose was slain from the foundation of the world. This law is written in the heart. It is the law of love, called a spiritual law. Adam and Eve sinned in breaking the law given to Adam and he was driven out of the garden of Eden to till the ground which

he was created for. God said there is not a man to till the ground so it is all in harmony with God's purpose, his decree, foreknowledge and plan of salvation. As I have purposed so shall it be for I will do all my pleasure. It is my Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. It is my Father's good pleasure to hide these things from the wise and prudent and reveal them unto babes because it seemed good in his sight.

So the Lord said unto Ezekiel, can these bones live? Ezekiel did not say, yes, if only they will accept to live. He was no lo here or lo there, nor was he one of those that claims to know for he said, "O Lord God, thou knowest." Then he told him what he must do; "Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord." I will put life in them, these dry bones are the whole house of Israel, and Israel is my household of faith. I am their life and as I live so shall they live. Yes, see them shaking, like Jacob see them trembling. He put life in them, breath, flesh and sinews, all that was needful. As I have purposed and ordered it, that is my way of bringing my people and they shall know that I am the Lord thy God. I have all power in heaven and earth and none can stay my hand. All I have to do is to speak and it is done, command and it stands fast. I fail not, I will and ye shall. I will be your God, and ye shall be my people, thus saith the Lord thy God. His name shall be called Emmanuel and also called Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins; and called Emmanuel, God with us, for the Word was God and the Word was made flesh and dwelt with us. God with them, the house of Israel, who once was Jacob whom God loved with an everlasting love, while he hated Esau whose name was called Edom. God's indignation was against the Edomites, and nothing can change that for what the Lord hath done is done forever.

The son of man sowed the good seed, yes, the wheat, but while men slept his enemy, the devil, sowed the tares and sowed the tares among the wheat. It is no wonder that God hath cried out "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Then they began to discern the tares and the wheat both together in the field and wondered how they were there together, but Jesus explained it to them why the tares were with the wheat for the devil sowed them and went his way, the way to destruction for his head was bruised and his works were destroyed. So all things work together for good to them that love God, for God first loved us and his love caused us to love him, yes caused Jacob and Israel to love God. So now listen, dear little children of God scattered abroad upon the face of the earth, He will gather his outcasts from all nations into one fold for there is but one Shepherd, and then there will be one fold, and they shall be no more reckoned among the nations for they are my sheep and I know them and they shall know me because my sheep shall hear my voice. Well do I remember when I heard his voice. It was so penetrating it entered in and said, be careful for what you do or rather in what you do, "Feed my lambs ***Feed my sheep," and I know nothing will feed them but the bread of life which comes from heaven—the broken body and shed blood of Jesus Christ which cleanseth us from all sin. It gives life to the dead sinner and causes him to love God and his people, for they are the house of Israel after the Spirit, being born again by the Spirit operating in them. It carried Ezekiel out and set him down there in the valley, there to prophesy what God intended for him to

do, and say like Jonah he was to preach the preaching God bid him. Jonah was carried over into Nineveh in the whale's belly. Yes, went to Nineveh the route that God had ordained and prepared for him in the whale's belly, for God prepared the fish and sent the storm just at the right time to meet the whale and the ship. No failure in the sign of Christ's death, burial and resurrection. It is a perfect work. The whale obeyed God's command, brought Jonah over to Nineveh from the raging sea and storm, placed him on dry land and he began to preach what God bid him and they (the Ninevites) listened and heard him and turned to God. O, house of Israel I will save thee because I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and with loving kindness have I drawn thee. Jonah must go and preach the preaching that God commanded him for he giveth repentance to the whole house of faith, the whole house of Israel who are the children of God by the new birth, being born again of the Spirit for these are the children of God and the rest are the tares. "Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the Lord of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down." He shall serve Jacob, but Jacob got the birthright and the spiritual blessing so Jacob have I loved. They were ordained to eternal life. Yes, the whole house of Israel were, whether Jew or Gentile for other sheep I have which are not of this fold (the Jewish fold). They being of the Gentile fold yet my other sheep I also must bring them for there is one shepherd and one fold. They are called by my name, yes, and I have called them all my sheep. They are sheep not goats, not tares but my sheep. Now let them grow together in the field (the world) and at the harvest they shall be separated. What is the chaff to the wheat? The chaff protects the wheat until the wheat is matured, then the chaff is fanned away, the wheat put in the garner. It need not be protected any longer by the chaff. God knows best and all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called to Jacob's seed, yes, to Israel's house, the household of faith. Yours in the hope of the resurrection.

(Elder) JAMES LINN.

Route 2, Chewelah, Wash.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS: I would like to write to you in Christian fellowship if it is God's will. The ones I would like to write to and address, if you ever read this, are the ones who are poor in this world's goods and feel to be poor in spirit also, those who are in the depths of despair, who question themselves again and again, "Am I his or am I not?" Do I have a hope? Can it be possible that I am one of that number that have washed their robes and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb? How can I be one of his? If I go to the law it justly condemns me for it is a just and holy law. If I try to do what I think is just and right, I am made to realize I have been thinking wrong. Surely a God of wisdom and justice will not stand for such as I approaching the mercy seat. If I think I can search and find him I find him not. If I cry aloud in the night there is no answer. Most of the time the Scriptures are a sealed book to me. Are these the thoughts that are in your heart? Is God so far away he cannot hear your cry? Do you feel like you are cast down and utterly forsaken? Can you add a thousand things to these complaints and yet you know you have no reason to complain, and it is not against the Almighty God that you complain, even though there are times you are bitter against him? I believe if this is

your lot you are indeed poor in spirit.

One who was meek and lowly said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." You are blessed in these very things that are a blot to you, for it is these things that make you as a peculiar people. I believe that this is the cross we must bear in this world. It is the one that teaches us patience and all the virtues that are the fruits of the spirit. I sometimes wonder if we ever possess these fruits of the spirit, or if we are only taught what they are and who they belong to. I have been a member of the Primitive Baptist church about a year and I can see no reason yet why I should be among them. I feel to be so much less than they all are. I surely hope I am never allowed to be a blot upon the name of the church, and yet I feel if all knew me as I know myself I would not be allowed to remain among them. I believe as they do, I cannot believe any other, and I would like to tell a little incident that happened to me just a few days ago. I had tried so hard to walk as I thought a Christian should, and I felt like I might be succeeding at least a little, when one day I became very angry over just a very little thing and I swore bitterly and well, (I will say and I believe you know what I mean) cut an awful shine. My heart was so black and vile. How could one be like that? One who dares even hope they might be a child of God. But oh, I was bitter and then I thought, well this settles it. This shows I am a child of the devil, and I will never be happy again or ever feel as if God has spoken to me. I thought now I can be one of the world. I never felt like I was one of them before, but God had put me where I belonged and I could run with the goats. So my thoughts ran on as I worked and I was so cast down. Suddenly I stood aghast and stopped my work for I was singing an old hymn and my heart and soul were at peace. It was as if a flood of cool water was flowing over me. I knew such peace. What did I do? What would you have done my brother or sister? Yes, I stood still and knew that it was the Lord. It was not peace from my good works, nor peace from a good conscience, though I have felt at times as if I had done what was right and felt good over it. But this was something different. Can you understand? It was not from what I had done, it was not from carnal man or his doings. Before God this is true and it has happened to me many times.

I tell you one and all, the Lord knows the hearts of his people and he can look out over the world and see all kinds of good works. Is this what he is looking for in his people? I wonder. No I believe he is still seeking those who will worship him in spirit and in truth, and we have to learn through our own bitter experience that our own good works are a stumbling block before us, or maybe I should say mine are at least. Did you ever notice how, when the Savior will turn to his sheep at the last days and call them blessed, and tell them they had fed him and clothed him and taken him in, how they wondered when they had done this? And he told them when they did it to the least of one of his it was to him also. And then the surprising thing, when he told the rest of the world, that is the goats, that they had not done these things, they wanted to know when they had not done them? Can you understand this? "O ye of little faith." How can we have faith unless it be given us. How can we work out our own salvation? It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. When the church was set up it was on this very foundation. The Savior asked Peter who he believed he, the Savior,

was, and Peter answered to him, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," and the Savior said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Many think it was Peter that was the rock, but I believe it was this rock, that flesh and blood had not revealed it unto him but God which art in heaven. (You are right my sister. R.L.D.)

If there is anything of works in it, it is dependent on the will of man and becomes as shifting sand, as straw that shall be consumed in the fire. Indeed if God be for us who can be against us? We see things melt before our very eyes. The world is in such a turmoil and being washed in blood, but can we, dare we say it is not according to the will of God? I may perish before it is all over, but if he will let me know that he has a care for me and is watching over me I can say "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." for he is my way, my life, my all. He is my only hope. Hope is like a star, it is there but I cannot reach it, and when clouds come between us I cannot see it, neither can I move those clouds until the God of love sees fit. I fear I have made this too long. My only desire is to cheer a lonely traveler along the way, and I know one cannot do that unless it is God's will. I am glad it is so. May we be made to pray, "Not my will, but thine, be done." In Christian love, one of the least if one at all.

(Mrs.) MARY L. ECKARD.

(The foregoing letter is a very unusual one we think, for one only a year old in the church. God is able to teach volumes in a brief time. We are satisfied that many lonely travelers along the way will be cheered by our sister's letter. May God bless it to the comfort of our readers. R.L.D.)

Millport, Ala.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I enjoy reading your paper very much. One of your Associate Editors, Brother Griffin, who is also my pastor baptized me. He and brother Brock expressed my conviction better than I could. They also told me what my future walks of life would be. I find them true, oh, so true have I found their words to be. This evidence alone is encouraging to me. I have been reading some of the back numbers of the *Signs,* and among them I read an article of brother Lambert's on the seven sayings of Christ while on the cross. I saw so much beauty in this article that I cannot find words to express myself as I felt. As I went about my work these sayings with rhythm would rise up in my mind, just as a song will sometimes do and cannot be gotten rid of until we sing it. I proceeded to write some of them and by feeble effort I have a story though it is as imperfect as the writer. I am not satisfied without showing it to some one. Can that some one be you? I am sending it along with this letter. I feel sure that you will not let it be published if it is not true in every respect. If you cast it into the waste basket it will be all right with me. It has been sung off of my mind. I hope to hear from you, also to be remembered in prayer. The least if one at all. (Mrs.) ROSA W. HUGHES.

(See story on first page)

2091 East Broadway, Vancouver, B. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I enclose $5 to help others unless my subscription is due. I am copying a letter I started a long time ago. I have been in heaven on earth for three days in Riffe, Wash. Like Jacob we all discovered that God

was in that place, when Christ led those Elders into deep waters. If you could only have heard them pray with such child-like approach, "Oh Lord Jesus" and worship at his feet. I remember my deceased mother's remarks about sitting under the sound of the preaching. Its flowing power went ringing through the pure spirit of our minds with healing joy. Where can I find words to convey this melting holy power? Everyone was drawn into unity, which resounded to the glory of God.

That dear aged saint, Elder Peters, pastor of the church, led all the meetings in the amazing strength of his personal Savior, in spite of unbearable pain and physical disability. They carried his rocking chair, but he had a way of arriving on his feet and then preached in a strong voice with such sweet unction and power that one wondered how much of a foretaste of glory he must have had. He said that in five months of illness he had learned more of the grace of God through experience, than in all the rest of his life. But oh! when he went down on his knees, his pleading prayers were not of this world. He said that in answer to people's questions, he had stated the last part of one's life was the most beautiful, because of approaching glory. At the last service Elder Peters asked to say goodbye to us. He shook each person's hand while we sang. After the last verse he preached continuously until he walked around to all the rest of the people. We did not want him to stop because of the glory we saw in his countenance. Then we found ourselves outside standing in groups, all of one mind in the spirit, talking of these sacred truths. Serious illness had not hindered several people from being present for communion and thanking God for his healing. Their faith was beautiful to behold.

Elder Coleman preached so comfortably to us and welcomed Elder Huggett of Yakima who was blessed to declare many beautiful deep truths which he saw in the scripture. At the last service brother Cameron arrived from Seattle and preached the same glorious truth. Again like Jacob we wished that we could erect a monument at this place and never forget those lovely, kind, sincere, humble saints. Humbly,

(Miss) CATHERINE M. DUFFUS.

Clifton, N. J.

DEAR BROTHER AND KINDRED IN THE LORD JESUS: The following scripture quotation has in times past confused me, and having (what we believe) light from the Lord upon this scripture, I feel led to write on it and through grace submit same to you. If it seems good to you, use it, as it may enlighten others even as this poor mortal has received it. Do as you are led for I know there are others more able and worthy who deserve first place for the least must serve the greater. "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." 1 Cor. 5:5.

To bring out our thought upon the origin of death we desire to refer back to the time in God's holy order when God had created the first being, namely: "O Lucifer, son of the morning." Isa. 14:12. As Adam in the natural Eden, he was the first in Eden the garden of God. "Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God." Ezek. 28:13. From verse 13 to 15 follows the description of his beauty. "Thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee."

In this world we (who have by grace been given eyes to see) see all things as

shadows and patterns of the greater, even as Moses received the pattern in the Mount to unveil the Greater, the Son of God in his heavenly realm and sanctuary. We believe this Eden and garden of God here referred to, to be the heavenly and spiritual realm where Lucifer, the first created being, was the "anointed cherub (angel) that covereth" as we read in the 14th verse. Both "Eden" and the "son of the morning" suggests the first—even as Adam was the first created human being. To bring out our thought more clearly please bear with us in leading up to our point. We believe that the heavens were created first as is written, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Gen. 1:1. Notice heaven first. Again, whereas all revelation and scripture came to us through Abraham and his seed, we also liken Abraham as a type of the first, namely: the Father.

Before the son of promise came as a type of the Lord, the Son of man and Son of God, Abraham had a head steward over all his goods. He was not the heir but a servant in his household set over all his goods. As a human, or created being, he was before Isaac, but according to God's Word and decree the promise was to Isaac, the son and heir of all his father's goods. Even so he as type revealed our blessed Lord, God's Son, he was the Word and eternal Son of God in Spirit, but as created Son of man it is written, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, (for they alone were insufficient to save man) but a body hast thou prepared me." Heb. 10:5. This was not to inherit that which was already his, being God's Son by virtue of the Godhead, but in order to redeem the earth and a lost people who according to law were no longer his people, having sold themselves unto sin. Angels were not created to become sons and never can be born as children. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Heb. 1:14. The Lord did not come to redeem angels but sons unto God. Nevertheless those who abode faithfully shall have their reward and receive their own glory as appointed by him. In contrast thereto those angels who fell with their created head receive as their reward everlasting separation, pain, suffering, darkness and death. All these according to God's sovereign will are being kept in store until the fulness of time, until all the elect of God have come forth out of this evil world, and the church, the body of Christ, is complete. It is written, "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, (the present) by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." 2 Peter 3:7.

According to God's Word, the first and highest exalted angel and his followers rebelled against God and were cast out of heaven to the distress of the nations. That is the time when death entered the world. The word death suggests devil and evil and the word satan sin. He is pain, he is suffering, he is death being its head and author of it. Being created as ruler and head over all God's household servants and goods, he at first was like (in type) Eliezer of Damascus, steward of Abraham's household, Gen. 15:2-4) and he still holds that office in unrighteousness, although his power over the soul and spirit is broken and lost to him, he still retains power on this earth over evil and death until the day of judgment when all death, devils and darkness are forever removed and cast into hell. As he was cast out of heaven, he and all those who follow him here on earth shall also in due time be cast out of the earth and there shall be "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness,"

"and there shall be no night there." But until God's appointed time of grace, evil still retains in measure power over all flesh, for he has power over the body to destroy the body as death dwells in all Adam's seed. We feel that this is sufficient to bring out what death is, namely: the devil.

Death has reigned since Adam for in Adam all die. Since sin entered, man is subject to death being born in trespasses and sin. Each birth is a death and each cradle becomes a bier. So deep has man fallen that he is utterly and hopelessly lost because death (evil) dwells in him at birth. The terribleness and hopelessness of it is appalling. There is no escape from this great enemy, and no hope for the flesh for satan and evil have invested the whole being in that death comes to all men. He is the fallen angel and unrighteous steward, has dominion over all flesh "for all have sinned." In Adam we became subject to death, death and devils becoming our masters and accusers before God. But, we add the word but, to insert as a rebuttal God's decree and will, that a people, a remnant, should come forth out of death for we all were dead in trespasses and sin. Even as Sampson brought forth honey out of the dead carcass of a lion, even so does God bring forth the better honey out of the Rock, Christ Jesus, who was both the Lion of Judea in death and Sampson, the Nazarene of God, the slayer of the evil in his own body on the tree. Surely a paradox, a man slaying himself to bring forth seed to the sower and bread to the eater. Only the Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son, could destroy death in himself. Man as human can or could never destroy death in himself for he was and is subject to it, but God sending the promise of his Son, all those who died in faith before his coming in the flesh, and his dying and arising in their place and stead were also kept in store to become the first fruits of those that slept.

The Lord Jesus Christ is really the first and the all in all. On the first glorious Easter morning when he broke the bands and chains of death to bruise the serpents head, removing the deadly sting,many saints were delivered by virtue of his power and work. The Lord became the Son of man, the first fruit unto God, and by his resurrection the graves were opened and the saints arose in spirit, the Lord taking them with him as the first fruits and sheaf into heaven. When we consider the terribleness of taking away the sting of death, we stand in awe of what the Lord as sinless, human Son of man had to suffer for the elect of God. Death as the devil, is the most awesome and terrible thing. It all means the opposite being from God, who is the life, the light and all that is holy. Death means everlasting separation from God, and we in Adam were sold unto sin (satan), becoming the slaves and willful tools of the evil (devil), and becoming fit only to be cast out into everlasting burning. In becoming his servants in Adam, we lost our right to sonship for we became servants unto sin which can feed us on nothing but husks and dead things —even swine's food. This is all a dark and dismal picture, nevertheless true, but as the day is one in two parts, this is only the half of it as darkness without the light of day. To dwell on the one and leave the other untold is not the whole of it for in the fulness of time God sent forth his Son to become sin (evil) for us in our place and stead in order to destroy the power thereof. Truly, who can fully understand the depth, the breadth and the height of God's love? To think the Lord must *become the all in all* even in sin is for us unfathomable. Light we can see for

he is the light of the world, but darkness and death had no place in him. Still he became such in order to deliver us from him who had the power over death. God the Son could not enter into darkness, for he is God and darkness must flee away before him as the shadows before the noonday sun, but as the Son of man in his human body he became "the Lamb of God!" "slain from the foundation of the world." He as the Lamb was slain, and, as Abraham the Father, found a subsitute who could die, in order that the Son in Spirit who could not die might live on for God hath found a ransom for our sin offering. Great is the mystery and holiness of God for "*a* body hast thou prepared me" so saith inspiration. That pure, holy and sinless body had to go forth into darkness of the darkest night that ever came into the world. There in the garden he wrestled alone and all had forsaken him. God the Father could not enter into the darkness or death, neither could God as the Son of God, or God the Holy Ghost for God cannot dwell in or with darkness, for when God the Son comes again in his godly mystery and glory all evil and sin shall be burned up for God is too holy to behold sin and he is a consuming fire.

Here we see the Son of man become as the servant, yea the fallen servant to wrestle with the fear of death in that he was heard in that he feared. God's holy wrath came down in all its fulness upon him for the sins of his people. When they led him forth from the garden as the Lamb of God, caught in the darkness and thistles of our sins he said, "but this is your hour, and the power of darkness." Luke 22:53. In all this the Lord was the perfect Lamb of God becoming subject to death in our place in order that he may enter into spiritual warfare for us to destroy the power of death. He entered into darkness to die, looking forward to the glory of his bride, the church, for he loved her with an everlasting love. He gladly gave his life for her to redeem the church, his bride, to enter into everlasting glory and communion together. He paid the full penalty of sin in his own and died unto death. Satan and evil had done all they could do and as accusers could not bring any further charges against him for when one dies all debts are paid and cancelled under the law. But that was not all he died for, death and the devil could not hold him there. He broke the iron bands of death and arose, death having no dominion over him. He alone was victorious over death and the grave.

Yes, dear saint of God, he also is the Lion of the tribe of Judea, died, and as the dead Lion he yielded a better honey, and as Sampson carried away the gates of hell so that his beloved could go freely in and out from under bondage to receive the first fruits of his perfect work in the Spirit. Therefore, think it not strange that the body must die to become fruitful unto God for the body and flesh we now have cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven. Only one, namely, the Son of God and Son of man could do that, but even he as our forerunner and Lord had to die in the body. He was and is the true heir of all things and beings, but in order to share his glory with us must first make at-onement for us with God, himself also being very God. Amen.

As he died unto sin once, even so must our bodies die before we can enter into glory with him. Therefore, as long as this present earth abides in sin (satan) and until the coming of the Lord in great power and glory, death (evil) shall dwell in our sinful flesh for he was created and appointed as the head steward to rule over the servants, for in the flesh we became his subjects, therefore our bodies are subjct to death, but

praise the Lord, the soul which is the life in the flesh, can and is by grace delivered here in this present body and world from bondage of sin in and through the Lord, and where the soul shall be the body shall follow in its new and glorious state even to become as the Lord's glorious body. Whereas the natural body is enmity against the will of God, because the old man is the man of sin, so death reigns in our flesh, but the soul and spirit, having received the resurrection power through a new life and birth in Christ Jesus, God's Son, cannot die being a child and Son of God. Therefore we by grace may quote Matt. 10:28. "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." The above words spoken by the Lord to his people, also in the letter to Corinth are inspired words and the word of God to the church. Some had fallen very low so God in his mercy takes them out of the world by giving their bodies over to death. "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." 1 Cor. 5:5. We feel that this feeble attempt explains the above last quoted verse. With Christian love and best wishes I remain your unworthy brother in Him. ROGER A. KNIGHT.

Route 2, Nauvoo, Ala.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR ELDER: I want to write a few lines and send a little mite to aid in sending the *Signs* to others. After reading the letter in the July issue written by Mrs. Louise Newman, Memphis, Tenn. I had this desire to aid those who are probably less fortunate than myself but are much better than myself. The first thing I did after reading that article was to turn to see how much had been contributed, and it made me feel badly when I saw it after reading such a sweet letter of experience. I would give this whole world and ten thousand more just like it if it were in my power to have such an experience. Speaking of the value of such it would be like a poor ignorant being as myself trying to value the whole world naturally—trying to value that one letter. I could not even commence to think of the limit of its value. All I could say would be, to make it plain and easily understood, it is priceless. If there has ever been a poor, sinful heart visited by the God of high heaven, in my poor mind, this is one of them. I am so glad that the good Lord gave the other lady, Mrs. Clifford, a mind and desire to send you this letter for publication, otherwise I would never have had the pleasure of reading it. This applies to many other letters also, but the same God that gave her this sweet experience is the same God that directed that letter to your paper for such unworthy, wretched sinners as I am to have the pleasure of reading. This God that Mrs. Newman spoke of is the only God that has power to save such as I. Any other God than this all powerful God she spoke of could not reach my case though it be his will. But the One she was speaking of is not limited. He has all power both in heaven and earth, and he is the God I hope I trust and believe in. From the life I live it looks like I think or believe I have more power than this God, or I would live a better life. I wish I could live a better life than I do. I am so prone to sin, I fear so much, O Lord, that I am not born again. As Mr. Davis wrote in the July issue if I was ever born again it must have been when I was a child, and if so I do not live it. So farewell, and if I am not asking too much when you are blessed with the spirit of prayer remember this unworthy one. A sinner friend.

ROBERT D. McGOUGH.

P.S. Elder, you spoke of having to stop reading this letter to wipe away tears. I just cannot begin to tell you or any one how I did feel when I was reading it, but I do know there was a part of the time that I could hardly see the paper at all for tears, and I could not help it. I believe all that believe Old Baptist doctrine and love Old Baptists would shed tears when reading that letter. If I know my heart at all, I believe I love the Primitive Baptist doctrine and people above all in this world, although I do not belong to them or any others and never have. I feel less fit now than ever before to offer myself, but I do hope to live the remainder of my life among them and be buried with them. Mrs. Newman wrote so much like I hope I believe and want to feel and be.

Please pardon me for all of this scribbling. I am enclosing $10 hoping this will get the paper to some poor, worthy ones. R.D.McG.

(We felt quite certain that the letter of Mrs. Louise Newman, published in the July issue of our family paper, would touch the heart of many of our readers, and we are glad that it brought forth the foregoing excellent letter from Mr. Robert D. McGough. The two of them appear to have a great deal in common and we truly hope they will both be given strength to go home to their friends and tell them what great things the Lord has done for them. We are persuaded that such experiences show that they rightfully belong in the militant church, and the visible church needs to have such characters enrolled among them. As we are made to witness the passing from the shores of time those who have been faithful members of the church for many, many years, we can but wonder why others in whose hearts the love of God has been shed abroad, do not take up their cross and follow their Lord and Master in the ordinance of baptism. Jesus told his disciples that they were "the salt of the earth," and it does seem to us that the world in which we live to-day needs very much the savouring influence of all who have been truly taught of the Lord. Jesus also said to his disciples, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Having felt the efficacy of the cleansing blood of the blessed Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world, our friends should turn unto their brethren and give glory and honor unto God. R. L. D.)

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: I have been impressed for some time to write you a letter. I must make the effort so that my mind may be relieved.

First of all I want to thank you for printing the articles in that wonderful October 1945 issue of the *Signs of the Times*. In my opinion it is one of the best issues, from cover to cover, that I have ever read. It is filled with the sweet spirit of Christ, and his love to poor, sinful creatures as I feel myself to be. I have read and re-read it, feeding upon the sweet spiritual food contained therein. Your editorial, "Why Darkness Before Light," is a marvelous piece. It explains so beautifully the wonderful purposes and plans of God, the *why* and *how* these plans have been made manifest at the right time—the appointed time. I enjoy all your writings on the subjects of Election and Predestination. They fill my poor heart with that hidden manna that comes down from above, and is dispensed to God's little ones through his faithful servants. I feel that you are wonderfully blessed in the understanding of that sweet doctrine which is so precious to me.

In his editorial, "The Risen Christ," Elder Griffin has expressed my feelings and hopes far better than I could express them myself. He has expresssd his position plainly, with which I agree. He has shown love and charity for those who may not share his opinion, which I hope I have for them.

Brother Dodson I want to commend you for your sweet spirit of charity toward those who may not see things as

you do. "Faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Much has been said about our faith in God. It would take volumes to contain the sweet experiences of grace which have been written, expressing that precious hope in Christ, that has been received by poor, sinful creatures here below, yet little has been said or written about the greatest of the three—charity. It is only mentioned in the New Testament. Many think of it only as almsgiving; others think of it as love; but to me it is the application to our lives of our faith in God, and our hope in Christ. It is the manifestation to those about us, that we possess the other two. It is the spirit of love, one to another, which binds God's children together, and keeps them ever at the feet of their brethren, anxious to serve and not dictate to them. It is the essence of Christianity without which we cannot live, yet why has it been so neglected? Paul explained it in 1 Cor. 13. He said, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." Surely charity is important.

CHARITY

The foregoing is a portion of a letter we received from a sister in Texas. It shows that she feels the subject of *charity* has been neglected. We agree that but little, comparatively speaking, has been said on this all-important and inexhaustible subject. While attending the Lower Country Line Association near Durham, N. C. in the early part of July we used the words she quotes: "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity," as a text. We dwelt more on faith and hope than we did on charity, partly perhaps because we did not wish to trespass upon the time of those who were to follow us in speaking. We stated at the outset of our remarks that we were going to talk about the three greatest things in all the world to the spiritually minded, which we designated as faith, hope and charity. We tried to show among other things that since the days of Abraham, faith, hope and charity had abided with the people of God, and how glad we are that this is still true to-day. Without them how could we endure the burdens and crosses of this life. Faith and hope pertain only to this life, but when this pilgrimage journey ends, faith shall become sight, for we shall then see Him as he is and be like him, and shall be satisfied; and that which we have hoped for here we shall come into possession of, but charity, or love, which we have a little foretaste of here, shall have hardly begun, for it will still abide with us and continue on and on in a never ending eternity. We have thought of charity as the manifested love of God. God was not content to only proclaim his love for his people, but he actually manifested it in the gift of his only begotten Son, who came into this world of sin and sorrow and suffered ignomy and shame in order that he might ransom and redeem from the powers of Satan those who were given him in the counsels of eternity. Through their transgression in Adam they became involved in sin and ruin and were of themselves entirely incapable of extricating themselves from so horrible a pit, but according to that covenant ordered in all things, and sure, in the fulness of times God rent the heavens and came down in the person of his Son, destroyed him that had the power of death, and delivered them who through fear of death

were all their lifetime subject to bondage. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends," is the testimony of Jesus, and he also said, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." In laying down his life for his people, he met the demands of the law in every jot and title, and he took up his life again that he might justify them and present them unto his Father without spot wrinkle or any such thing; therefore there is none who can lay anything to their charge or condemn them before God, for the apostle says, "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Having conquered death, and having destroyed him that had the power of death, death is no more a frightful foe, and in declaring that he was persuaded that *nothing* shall ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, Paul puts *death* at the head of the list of those things which are all-embracing. This is why *charity* is the greatest of all. It will endure when all time things shall have been swept away and forgotten. As the poet has well said,

"When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise,
Than when we first begun."

If God's manifested love for us was so great as to bring forth from the climes of eternal glory his blessed Son, to suffer and die in our stead, what ought to be the attitude of the recipients of all of God's benefits as a token of their gratitude and appreciation to him? It is easy to profess by word of mouth our love for God and his people, but many of us fall far short when it comes to putting our words into practice. Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." The acid test is beautifully set forth in the thirteenth chapter of I Corrinthians, where Paul states in these words: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." He then proceeds to tell us what charity (manifested love) really is. He says, "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth."

The children of the heavenly King should manifest their love one for another, and this embraces, in our opinion, administering to the carnal needs of our brethren where they are without the necessities of this life. The beloved apostle, John, says, "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." Be it said to the shame of some of us that we close our eyes and turn away from the poor and needy of the flock, so far as the things of this world are concerned. Have any of us anything that we did not receive? "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world

and they that dwell therein." Whatsoever then we may possess even of this world's goods has been entrusted to us by an all-merciful God, and in reality it is not ours, but his, and we should be good stewards and use it as unto the Lord. We agree that we should not confuse the meaning of natural charity with the love of God, but this does not say that we should not be practical about the things of God. Let the fruit of the tree show that it is a good tree. We should not be backward in showing our faith by our works. Some of our brethren seem to be fearful of laying stress on living what we profess, for fear of being criticized about believing in creature works. The apostle James said, "Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." Let us not be hearers only, but let us also be doers of the things which pertain to God and his kingdom, that others may see our good works and glorify our Father which is in heaven. R.L.D.

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520 East 7th St., Tucson, Ariz.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I have been reading the *Signs* for several years. A dear sister would pass them on to me, but since my husband died and I had to move to Tucson I decided I would subscribe for it myself and now it seems I cannot do without it. I find my experience in some of the articles better than I can tell it myself. How I do enjoy reading the paper. I am so hungry to hear some of the Old Baptists preach like I used to hear. I have inquired all around me but can hear of none here. I just live in the past and how lonely I get since my dear companion passed away. I ask God to give me sufficient grace to go on trusting in him and him alone for he is my all in all.

I read the good letters in the *Signs* and meditate on them. I am not permitted to feast on the goodness of our God as I desire, but I know I only receive such as is meted out to me by our God which is according to his will and purpose, and was ordered in all things and sure and that before the world was. It is getting dark so I will close with love to all the household of faith. Your unworthy sister.

(Mrs.) BARBEE COOPWOOD

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304 Montgomery St., Gilmer, Texas

DEAR ELDER DODSON and Associates: I am sorry I have waited so long to send my remittance, but have been sick and we lost our mother the 4th of April. I have other sick ones in the family but am thankful to the Lord I can write again so sending a few lines to you. I do enjoy reading the *Signs* so much. Three of your staff I have never seen but I know brother Lambert and surely do like to hear him preach. He and his wife have stayed at our house and when we have the Association again I hope he will be with us. Brother Wall is our pastor and has been for fifteen years. I am fond of singing although I have not been able to do much of it for the last fourteen years, but I love to hear the rest sing and see them sing with the spirit. I have had one sister, one brother and two sisters-in-law unite in the last three years. My father was a deacon and now the baby of the family is a deacon. I was happy that I could witness that. I am enclosing check for $5. When it is well with you think of me in your prayers. Your little sister I hope. (Mrs.) J. W. FREE.

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EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. NOVEMBER, 1946

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

DEAR READERS: To write for the comfort and welfare of Zion is a great task, for in viewing these matters we are reminded of the language of the apostles, and knowing our own imperfections we shrink from the task, but we hope to be directed by the spirit of humility and love that our words may be seasoned by refreshing from on high.

In writing to Timothy, second epistle, first chapter, thirteenth verse Paul says, "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." We take from Paul's language that we should be mindful of our expressions, and formulate sentences to express the faith of the house of God, which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, but with patience we wait for it, and we have faith given us by the Lord Jesus Christ. Now let us note how we are given faith. First the sinner must be quickened by the Son of God. Quickened means made alive from the dead which is the death in trespasses and sin that man became enthralled in by the transgression of God's law given to Adam, "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen. 2:17. When the sinner is quickened he manifests life, not more action of the first Adam, but the life of the second Adam which is mysterious to the first Adam, and he cannot understand just the condition he is in. A great burden of sin and condemnation is resting upon him, and he flees to one thing and another until all have failed. Then comes the final cry, God me merciful to me, a sinner. It is then that, He that quickened and has been leading this poor sinner about and showed him all the weakness of the flesh, comes with power, and delivers him from this suffering for sin, woe and condemnation, and gives peace to his soul. After one has passed through these conditions what would be expected to come from his heart? The answer, Salvation is of the Lord, and this individual does not feel that in his flesh dwells any good thing, and all his righteousness is as filthy rags so he has nothing to do or think of himself that would merit esteem or glorify God.

Now one will ask, how then can they come to the church and be baptized? We must examine this thought and give expressions in the form of sound words in faith and love. The sinner has faith wrought in him by the power of God revealed, and he knows without Him he cannot have any righteousness in him, so he cannot hold up works of righteousness and is made to look unto the Lord from whence all his strength must come, and he is exercised in his heart which cries out, Lord keep me! direct my steps! That love is for all of like teaching, which is the love for the brethren. That love for the brethren will constrain him to desire their association and that they have fellowship one for the other because they are of the same spirit This bringing together is the loving kindness of the Lord Jesus drawing them, and this child of God does not feel he, as a creature, has duties to per-

form in the church of God to glorify God, but just the opposite, that felt sense of unworthiness of the least of the riches of the house of God. The Spirit will not leave him in that wilderness, but draws him in the way to the house of God, where he will testify of his love to the brethren, and also acquaint them of his unworthiness, and what wondrous love has been shed abroad in his heart, that he could ask God to bless his enemies. This same Spirit that has brought him to the church and made him confess that salvation is of the Lord teaches him, "that denying ungodliness and wordly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." So it is "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord." Zech. 4:6.

If these things be in our hearts and we are moved by the power of love for the brethren to visit them, and associate with them in sweet fellowship, we can say, "By the grace of God I am what I am," and when our Elders begin telling the sinner he has duties to perform unto the Lord he is not using words of sound speech or as Paul wrote to Titus, "Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine." Titus 2:1.

Brethren, you note we have spoken of the child of God having duties to perform unto the Lord. Let us examine this matter and see if it is words that will hold good in the form of sound words. We know for us to say to one professing to have a hope; go and relate your feelings and experience to the church, and through our exhortation he goes, performs the act in a physical way and is received by the church and is baptized, and he has no answer of a good conscience given, and feels condemned he would have less confidence in our teachings than before. On the other hand we contact one that feels constrained to go to the church, and tell the brethren how great things the Lord has done, this one is directed by the Spirit, while the other one would be looking upon the acts of the creature as serving the Lord and to give him the answer of a good conscience. That which is born of the flesh is flesh. The difference between the two characters, to our understanding is, that one is laboring and is heavy laden, and the other is just waiting for a better hope, and not concerned about church association, and would rather live with the world than come to the church.

We feel to say to all our readers let us take heed unto ourselves, and our faith and love. Do we find these things were brought to us by obeying exhortations of brethren to unite with the church and be baptized? Are we resting with satisfaction in these things, and have we attained unto the desires of our hearts, caught at the substance and only caught the shadow? On the other hand if one is constrained in his heart to tell of the love of God bestowed upon him, he will come pleading his unworthiness and glorifying God, and all his life he will express his unprofitableness and feel to be only an unprofitable servant. We feel the apostle had these feelings when he said, "In me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" All the words uttered by man called prayer has no intercession to God unless the Spirit of Christ Jesus is interceding in their hearts and glorifying God, and constraining them to thus speak. The gospel is preached by the precious indwelling of the power of God from above in the heart by which the mouth speaketh. Paul endorsed this thought when he said, "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of

man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." 1 Cor. 2: 4-5. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." 1 John 3:1. How was it bestowed? By our doing those things which are spoken of in the New Testament, to those constrained by the love of God, or by having those things pointed out to us as a duty we owed to the Lord. If they were an act of the sinner's duty it is of the flesh and cannot attain unto the righteousness of God. If enacted by the constraining power of the love of God it is a righteous act, and is becoming of all such to fulfill those things which the Holy Ghost hath revealed to them. All that truly love the church of God will have a desire in their hearts for peace and welfare, and not a snare would they cast in the way of one of God's little ones, but they are willing to comfort and encourage them in the truth. We will close with this admonition: May we hold fast the form of sound words, which we have received through the inspired word of truth as given by the apostles, and not think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think. Submitted in love. C.W.V.

"I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys." S. S. 2:1.

Many deep and fathomless mysteries are in the Book. Things that are hard to be understood (2 Peter 3:16) are found from the first to the last. I suppose that if it was not for the influence the flesh has in our judgments we would see clearly, but we have that to contend with from the days of our youth (Eccl. 12:1) even down to old age (Deut. 28:50). This being true we have much writing and preaching that must be given the scriptural test before it is fit for nutriment to the church (1 John 4:1; Gal. 1:8). This is why things are a mystery to us and will continue to be as long as time lasts. A rose and a lily are not alike. One of them grows in one place and the other in a different kind of place. We must remember that this is one person talking. The marks of the rose and the marks of the lily belong to them. Some have ascribed this beautiful language to the church. With this thought I cannot concur. The church does not say such sublime things about herself. The Son of God has the right to speak thus of himself, and also to speak with such endearing terms to his bride, but for her to take such liberty—never! When she speaks concerning herself it is an acknowledgment of her many shortcomings. (S.S. 1:6; Mat. 3:14; Mat. 26:75; Rom. 7:15-25).

"I am the rose of Sharon." This is spoken by the Head of the church, and the only one in and of the church that has the prerogative to say, "I am." Not any such foolish expressions as "I want to be," or even that "I will be," but this speaker has the power and right to speak of future things as already so, and of things and times of the past, present and future as taking place now. If this had been the church speaking she would not, and, moreover, could not have taken unto herself the authority belonging only to her Beloved. A rose is a flower of great beauty and is known over the country of Sharon. Not that He is *a* rose, but *the* rose. There is only one Savior. There is only one name that has power to save, (Isa. 43:11; 46:21; Acts 4:12) and he was, and is, and evermore shall be the only one that saves. (Heb. 13:8). Sharon is a country of plains and the word means that. Jesus is the plain that his brethren must come to. Things are not in common when some are on the mountain and some in the valley, but it is here on this Plain (Sharon) that the Lord's people all find him as

everything they need. (Act 2:44-47). It is here that people of every nationality in the world can meet together, and feel at home. What a lovely flower! What a calm, easy resting place! On this plain with the sweet fragrance of this Rose all wars cease; it is here that divisions never come; it is on this common level that fault-finding, backbiting, bickering and strife does not come; it is here and here alone, that the rich and poor, bond and free, young and old, high and low meet in peace and prosperity in a church capacity. It was on this plain (Isa. 40:4) surrounded by salvation (Isa. 26:1; 60:18) with the Rose of Sharon in her midst (Psalms 46:5), that the church came through the Civil War in 1861-65. Although it may seem a digression, let me say here, that there is not a place on this globe that can have said about it what can be said, both from a scriptural and a profane historical standpoint, about the Old Baptists. The late Civil War did not divide them. The Missionary Baptists, Methodist and Presbyterians did divide. They were not an equal, North and South; they did not esteem each other better than self; they did not have all things in common. But look at the church. There was not a Northern and Southern Primitive Baptist body. When our brethren from down South were in the Northern prisons they were ministered to by our brethren up there, and it was the same with our Northern brethren in the South. You young readers remember this and you old ones take new courage.

On the plain of Sharon where fruit abounds, the rose has become the plant of renown. Only on this plain does Christ have all pre-eminence; only on this plain are the inhabitants in complete unity, seeing each other as better than self. "I am the lily of the valleys." Only one lily and many valleys. This word "valleys" means a different place. People talk about conditional salvation, but how absurd to speak of volunteering to enter a difficult place! Yet the children of God must go there. It is a blighting thought to think that the time must come when we must go into the valleys. We so much dread the going down because we have been over the route going up. Going up we have heard the rich, strong voice of the Shepherd as he led and called us onward and upward, but when we could no longer see to follow him we soon were on the hazardous, circuitous route down and we felt that we did not have any guiding hand and voice. There is not any stopping going up or down. We must go all the way up in deliverance; our baptism in water and in tribulations is down into the water and completely submerged in the trials and afflictions of the Christian's life; our dying in Adam was all the way down into death but up by the resurrecting power of Jesus Christ. Dear readers, we must go all the way down into these valleys. How dark and cheerless they seem; how our memory goes back to former days when our zeal was likely and we were so interested in talking of the blessed One; ah, how black and rolling the tempest-laden clouds; what despair and gloom seized our tortured souls; ah, dear pilgrim, how dark and foreboding the caverns of evil we found there. The questioning and the groaning of our soul was for another glimpse of light, but the dark, heavy clouds had darkened the sun so that we could scarcely hope for it again. We had sunk so low that we wondered how that we ever had hoped in the Lord. In such an extremity and in our anxiety and ordeal of soul we began to see again ourselves. Are we the person that has gone before the church of Jesus Christ and asked for a home? Are we the one that has

set in the assembly of the saints? Ah, what a deceiver we have found ourselves to be. In this dismal, low and gloomy valley the waters of destruction come. How we struggle to keep going but we cannot. Hope seems to be going. David, along with all of God's children, knew all this. "Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me." Psalms 69:1-2. Paul experienced dying daily as does all the family of God. (1 Cor. 15: 31; 2 Cor. 4:10-12). "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Psalms 116:15. Many times we refer to the corporeal death when we speak of this scripture, but I think it is applicable to this daily dying. If so, then this is a precious sight to him who is the lily of the valleys. Remember, dear reader, that salvation is of the Lord. It is here in these valleys, shut in by mountains of sin and dark clouds overhead, that we get to the ends of the earth. It is here that Jesus, the lily of the valleys, comes up from out of the mire and flooding waters to rescue every perishing lamb. We were not looking for him in a place like this; we had been taught by men that he was God of the light places; they had taught us that he came to them that sought him; some had told us that our condition was because of our conduct, but every idea and opinion and doctrine of men must be drowned in these surging waters; all powers of mortal man must be brought under subjection, and he must come to the end of his resources—to the end of all the earth. There, out of ground that he thought could not produce, the lily comes up; he finds that not only is God the God of the light, but that he is the ruler in the dark (Psalms 139:12); he finds that he cannot go to Christ, but that Christ comes to the poor, lost and ruined sinner; that the dark clouds were not dark at all, but only his vision was bad. (1 Cor. 13-12). What a precious sight to see the coming up of this lily. What a sight for the dear children of God to behold this beautiful lily in its purity, innocence and glory. The mind is unable to express the adoration and praise due this glorious One, but the time of singing has come because he has left the ninety and nine and gone into the mountains seeking the poor sinner that has become lost there. (Mat. 18:12). He takes him out of the horrible place of mire and places him on a rock, establishes his goings, giving him a new song. W.D.G.

ORDINATION PROCEEDINGS
APRIL 14, 1946
Brother H. GRADY BROWN, Candidate

The Presbytery was composed as follows: Elder O. W. Perkins of the Soldier Creek Association, Mayfield, Ky., Moderator. Deacons: L. C. Campbell, W. A. Anderson and E. H. Lanier. Said E. H. Lanier was chosen as spokesman for Brother Brown. The Presbytery then entered into the ordination of Brother Brown as Elder in the Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church at Memphis, Tenn. by the laying on of hands and prayer.

After the required questions were answered the Presbytery proceeded to ordain Brother Brown. Ordination prayer by Elder O. W. Perkins and laying on of hands by the Presbytery. Elder Perkins gave the charge to the candidate, thus ordaining Brother H. Grady Brown to the full work of the ministry of the Primitive Baptist Church of Christ upon the doctrine of unlimited predestination, unconditional foreknowledge, unconditional election, unconditional salvation for both time and eternity and the final preservation

of the saints of God through grace in Jesus Christ, and should he cease to preach the above cardinal doctrine his credentials become null and void.

(Elder) O. W. PERKINS, Moderator.
E. H. LANIER, Clerk.

MARRIAGES

By Elder Arnold H. Bellows at Indian Lake, N. Y., June 4, 1946, Desmond Campbell and Miss Gladice Woodward of Indian Lake.

By Elder Arnold H. Bellows at Kingston, N. Y., August 3, 1946, Edwin H. Kittle and Miss Grace B. Slauson, Kingston, N. Y.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

We, the members of the Glenwood Park Church, Bluefield, W. Va., resolve to say we bow in humble submission to the GREAT I AM in his removing from our midst our precious brother A. C. WHITE by death, and we express our heartfelt sympathy to his widow, sister White, and children in the loss of a good husband and father. The church has lost a good member. Be it further

Resolved, that we send a copy of these resolutions to *Old Faith Contender*, and the *Signs of the Times*, also to sister White and a copy be spread on our minutes. Done by order of the church while in session.

(Elder S. J. PRIDDY, Moderator.
L. B. HYLTON, Clerk.

OBITUARIES

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write of the passing of my dear husband, JAMES FLOYD WILLIAMS. He was born near Dry Fork, Va. June 5, 1883, and died April 26, 1946, which made his stay here nearly 63 years.

He was married to the writer, Mattie Butcher, April 29, 1914, and to this union were born eight children. One died in infancy leaving five boys and two girls surviving also one grandchild.

We united with the church at Malmaison in July, 1914 and were baptized together on the morning of the first Sunday. He loved his church and was never absent unless providentially hindered, always taking great pleasure in entertaining the Baptists in our home. His health had been bad for several years but he bore his suffering patiently and kept it from me most of the time. He told me some time before he was taken to the hospital that he had asked the Lord to spare him until our boys came home, which they did, and if it was the Lord's will for him to go it was all right. All was done that physicians, nurses and loved ones could do. I believe God's time had come for him to go and I truly believe it was a happy exchange for him. I believe he has gone to that home above prepared for the people of God. He took great pleasure in providing for the comforts and pleasures of his family, and was a devoted and faithful husband and father.

The funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, and Elders Raymond Payne and W. R. Dodd. All spoke beautifully of the doctrine of our Lord and Savior which he loved and contended for. His burial was in the cemetery here at home. I am left to mourn my loss, but ere long I, too, will have to pass on to the great beyond. May I be given grace to sustain me in every trial and trouble. May the God of mercy give me that spirit of reconciliation to his divine will and enable me to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Written by his sorrowing widow.

MATTIE B. WILLIAMS

Deacon L. B. PARKER, son of Nathaniel and Mary Parker, was born May 23, 1865, and died Dec. 27, 1945, making his stay on earth 80 years, 7 months and 4 days. He was married to Miss Ada Henslee, Jan. 28, 1884, and to this union were born ten children, three dying in infancy. Those living are Mrs. Matrona Evans, Miss Ethel Parker, Mavelo, Smith, Domes, Larry and Olis Parker. There are fifteen grandchildren and seven great-grand children.

Brother Bruce, as he was called, joined the Primitive Baptist Church in the summer of 1915. He was ordained deacon July 22, 1922 which place he filled well. He was a strong believer in the predestination of all things. His home was a home for the Baptists at all times, and he was a good and kind husband and father and a good citizen. The unworthy writer tried to speak to the comfort of the bereaved family and friends, after which he was laid to rest in the family graveyard to wait the morning of the great day when the graves can hold our bodies no longer, but those that sleep in the graves shall rise first, then afterward those that remain shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. May the riches of God's grace be

with his beloved companion, and with all of his children and friends is my prayer.

(Elder) J. N. DARNELL

Mrs. ALICE LEANNA MATHIS, daughter of William and Martha Chester deceased, departed this life March 28, 1945 at the age of 85 years, 3 months. She was married to J. D. Mathis, Feb. 24, 1881 and to this union seven children were born, five of them now living. Two daughters, Mrs. Flora Darnell, Croft, Fulton Co., Ky., Mrs. Grace Lyles, of Marshall Co., Ky.; three sons, Luther of Mich. and Willie and Otha of Marshall Co., Ky.

Mrs. Mathis was a sister of the late Elder J. C. Chester of Brewers, Ky. She has two brothers now living, Harding and T. S. Chester. Three sisters, Emma Lou Mathis, who was baptized the same day she was, Lucy Perry and Dora Washam of Kentucky.

Sister Alice professed a hope in Christ in Oct. 1878 and was baptized into the full fellowship of the Soldier Creek Church, May 11, 1879 by the late Elder John Perkins of Mayfield, Ky. She was a devoted church member, never missing her monthly meetings, her associations, union meetings and also attending regularly for years the associations with whom the Soldier Creek Association corresponded. She was ever ready to defend the truth as it is in Jesus, leaning on him for repose, hoping in him for all her needs for time and eternity, believing in the predestination of all things whatsoever comes to pass, the foreknowledge and election of God and Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, being the only mediator between God and man.

The church has lost a devoted member. Her seat is now vacant at the old church and we miss her going in and out before us. A very dear mother in Israel indeed was she. Her funeral was held at the Soldier Creek Church, Elder O. W. Perkins and the moderator of said church, J. T. Henson officiating. The service was more like our meeting days with a visiting Elder present, both partaking and taking all the time they wanted to set forth salvation by grace, both seeming to have the unction from on high. All was carried out just as our dear sister would have it be and to the praise of God's grace. The Soldier Creek Church bows in humble submission to the will of Him who doeth all things well after the counsel of his own will, remembering so well her faithfulness and her enjoyment in the Lord, and her desire to depart and be with her Lord which was far better than living here begging daily at his throne for mercy through her many sufferings. We would say to the bereaved family, she fell asleep in Jesus to awake in his likeness and be ever with her Lord.

EFFIE BOWDEN

The church at old Kelly's Creek in Lincoln County, Tennessee, desires to express its feeling of sadness at the loss of our dear brother, DAVID Y. LEONARD.

Elder Leonard did not know his exact age as he was placed on a ship after the death of his mother to go live with relatives in Tenn. At a point between Fort Smith and Ozark the boat was fired on by Federal soldiers and sunk. All the passengers were rescued and the Leonard children, with the exception of D. Y., were placed on another boat and continued on their journey. He was three or four years old when this happened. He was saved by some person unknown and the child's identity was unknown. Instead of beng placed aboard the boat with the other children he was taken by a party living nearby. Their names are also unknown. A Johnson man and his wife came by and asked for the child. He went by the name of Johnson until he was fifty-one years old. He was 85 years of age when he departed this life for a better one we believe. He had been in failing health for several years.

He united with the Primitive Baptists in May 1891 at Oak Grove Church, in Marion County, Tennessee. He was ordained as a minister of the Primitive Baptist Church. The presbytery by whom he was ordained being composed of Elders G. P. Moffett, D. T. Devlin and Peter Anderson. He preached two or three years before he was ordained to the ministry. At the age of seventeen he was married to Miss Angeline Leadford who was sixteen years of age, the date being June 30, 1878. She died Nov. 18, 1929. On October 16, 1931 he was married to a lady named Jones. Besides his widow he is survived by four daughters and one son who mourn his passing, namely: Mrs. Tennie McNeal, Mrs. Frances Campbell, Mrs. Lou Vasser, Mrs. Johnnie McNeal and Milton Johnson. His funeral was conducted by our pastor, Elder R. M. Hawkins, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. R. L. McNeal. Be it,

Resolved, that the church at Kelly's Creek has lost a faithful member, his companion a loving husband and his children a devoted father. We extend our love and sympathy to the bereaved ones, trusting that the God of all grace may comfort and sustain them in every trial.

Resolved, that we bow in humble submission to God who doeth all things well.

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be recorded on our church book, one to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and one to OLD FAITH CONTENDER for publication.

(Elder) R. M. HAWKINS, Moderator
REANER REECE, Church Clerk
JULIA HAWKINS
CORA LEONARD
JENNIE HOLEMAN

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 114 RUTHERFORD, N. J., DECEMBER, 1946 No. 12

O Lord, if I could come to Thee,
And feel Thy mercy is for me,
I would rejoice to love Thee more
When on that bright and shining shore.

Suffer me not to go astray,
But keep me in the narrow way;
My little strength is almost gone,
I know not how to carry on.

I find I know not how to pray,
But teach me Lord from day to day
That I may look to Thee alone
For mercy in Thy blessed Son.

May Thy rich grace instil my heart
To feel how strong and great Thou art;
And when the time rolls on apace,
Grant to me, Lord, Thy saving grace.

I know that I am growing old,
But may I have Thy story told
Of Jesus and His dying love,
And sing Thy praises up above?

Give me that faith to trust in Thee,
That I may ever conscious be
Of my dependence in Thy power,
To keep me in the trying hour.

And when this parting soul of mine,
Shall enter in the house of Thine
To dwell with Jesus evermore,
Then grief and sorrow will be o'er.

Then I shall know as I am known,
When all the heirs around the throne,
Shall, Lord, forever be with Thee
In glorious immortality.

The heavens declared the glory of God,
And all creation obeyed His word;
The sun and moon did shine so bright,
And all the stars did blend in light.

In wonder and in mystery,
They all show forth His Deity;
God is above this earth so high
His glory shines beyond the sky.

Thy power and glory is not known,
And only little to us is shown;
I fain would quit this mortal frame
And wholly trust in Jesus' name.

Let all things else become as dross,
And let me view Him on the cross;
That I may touch His bleeding side
And feel, as Thomas, for me He died.

(Elder) T. W. WALKER.

Gibsonville N. C.

Route 1, Plad, Mo.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: In looking over some old papers I found this article on mercy written by my departed husband. It sets forth so sweetly his hope, and, too, I believe he is now enjoying that home he so longed for, but always felt his unworthiness of that Mercy. If you deem it worth a place in our family paper I would be glad to have it republished. May you be blessed with health, strength and an insight to the sacred word to write and speak to the comfort of Zion. Unworthily,

(Mrs.) J. R. HARDY.

MERCY

In treating this subject I do not hope to develop any new thoughts, for the weakest child of grace has experienced more of the abundant mercy of God than the ablest will ever be able to express in this world. I only hope to bring to your remembrance the things you have been made acquainted with.

Mercy is one of the attributes of Jehovah, and should we owe a greater debt of gratitude and praise to one of God's divine perfection than to another, it would certainly be due to mercy, but we should adore them all alike-perfect and holy. Mercy is defined as "That benevolence, mildness or tenderness of heart which a person disposes to overlook injuries, or to treat an offender better than he deserves." (Webster) Then we may say mercy is the disposition of God to treat his creatures better than they deserve. This was God's disposition "when there were no depths," "when there were no fountains abounding with water," "while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world." Yes, this was his disposition "in the beginning of his way before his works of old." As evidence of this truth we have only to observe a few of the stipulations of that council of peace which was declared should be between them both. The Rock of Israel (Jesus) said to David, "Although my house (church) be not so with God; yet he (God) hath made with me (Christ) an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." (2 Samuel 23:5) This was the covenant between the Father and Son before any covenant had been made with God's house or people. If there was no mercy in it when it was made, then there is none in it yet, for he made it not to grow, but if there was mercy in it, then why say some that there would have been no mercy even until now had not man become a sinner. But the truth is that the covenant was an expression of that mercy which God eternally possessed. Yea, it is a part of himself without which he would not be God. Paul says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ. According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." (Eph. 1:3-4.) Again, "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you unto salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." (Thes. 2:13) All this is only God's mercy. What does it say? God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. Yes, from the beginning. We don't know when that was, but Wisdom says it was before his works of old. (Prov. 8:22) We were not only made choice of back there, but all the spiritual blessings for time and eternity were given to us in Christ at the same time. These bequests were made through the abundant mercy of our God before you and I, dear child of grace, had an existence only in the purpose of Jehovah.

Mercy, that disposition of God to treat his creatures better than they deserve, could never have disclosed its glorious merits unto man, had there been no guilt. There is no mercy for the righteous—they need none. So long as man does not feel guilty he sees no need for mercy, but let him realize his exceeding sinful condition, how soon he begins to beg for mercy, nothing else is so desirable, nothing else will meet his needs. Man, before transgres-

sion, was not a subject of mercy, but after transgression mercy is his only hope. It is the only remedy that can meet the demands of his case. Bear in mind that the mercy we receive during our pilgrimage through this world, was not originated for us after we become contaminated in sin, but it was treasured in Christ before the foundation of the world, which in fact indicates that we are traveling a purposed road.

Next we come to consider the manifestations of that mercy to the heirs of promise. In a general way, God's mercy extends itself to all his creatures of earth; for they have all been affected by sin. So we may be led to contemplate the mercy of God in all his creation. Inspiration informs us that all things are ours, and we are Christ's, and Christ is God's. The warm sunshine, the refreshing showers, the balmy breezes, the wooded forests, the grassy plains, the fragrant flowers, in short nature with all her luxury and beauty, are but the expressions of the abundant mercy of a wise and loving God. All his creatures are partakers alike of these mercies, and they are alike unworthy of the least of them. But the special mercy of spiritual life, spiritual blessings, and the grace of the spirits attending that life are reserved for his covenant children.

God, the Father in mercy, laid the plan for the complete redemption and justification of his chosen people; God the son in mercy, fulfilled the demands of justice and procured that purposed redemption and justification for the objects of his love and his choice; and God, the Holy Ghost in mercy makes manifest to them the exceeding riches of his grace in their complete salvation. How unspeakably great and precious is infinite mercy!

When we were quickened into divine life, our sinful heart disclosed to us its exceeding corrupt and polluted state; it was revealed to be a fountain of iniquity, from which gushed evil thoughts, malice, envy, all manner of guile and evil speaking, jealousy and hatred in such profusion that our mortal frames did quake and tremble under its great burden of condemnation, and our voice was lifted to God in supplication; and in the anguish of our spirit we plead for that mercy which alone could meet the demands of our extreme condition. Without hope of relief, without patience to wait for it, we could only cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" while the awful truthfulness of the prophet's language, "I am undone," forced itself into every prayer and every thought. When the thickest darkness overshadowed me, when enveloped in densest clouds of night, when enshrouded in the gloom of death, when all joys of earth were fled, and no heavenly comfort given, then I cried with bowed down head, "Oh, grant mercy, Lord, from heaven!"

At the moment least expected,
That this burden e'er should cease,
Mercy came by, love directed,
Gave my burdened soul release.

Then I thought to say with David, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." My thoughts were on things divine. I felt that my treasure was in heaven, and my affections were centered there; my mourning was turned into joy, and I was given for the garment of mourning the spirit of praise.

For this, O Mercy, Thy praises we sing,
Thy glories we dare not compare;
To heaven's blessed portals Thy trophies we'll bring,
And sing of Thy wonders eternally there.

Now we are subjects of the spiritual kingdom, and under the covenant of mercy, "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness and their sins and their

iniquities will I remember no more," is the verbiage of God's promise to Israel under this new covenant, which he had said he would make with them. Mercy is our constant companion by night and by day, when the rod of correction is laid upon us, the staff of mercy comforts us, and leads us back in the path of righteousness. Thus are all the subjects of God's love gathered with his tender mercies, and led like a flock and kept as the apple of his eye. This mercy rejoiceth against judgment in that all they who were judged guilty and had their guilt put away by Jesus, have received mercy, even the "sure mercies of David," which brings to us every spiritual blessing, which conquered death, won the victory over the grave, and will finally bring us into that heavenly Jerusalem, to dwell forever in praise to the glorious mercy of an infinitely Holy God.

(The late Elder) J. R. HARDY.

Route 2, Elgin, Okla.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am sending my check for the *Signs of the Times* for the balance of this year and another year. Very sorry I did not send it before. Thanks for sending it on. I am enclosing a letter written by Elder W. S. Bourland (deceased) to my sister Mrs. Walton Skinner (also deceased). I should be pleased to see it published in the *Signs of the Times* as others might enjoy reading it as much as I have. Yours in hope,

F. E. SKINNER.

MRS. WALTON SKINNER,
FLETCHER, OKLA.

MY DEAR SISTER IN PRECIOUS HOPE OF IMMORTALITY: You will please pardon delay but hitherto have had no mind to write for fear of error, knowing well my weakness. Your request was for my views upon the fallen angels, who kept not their first estate. "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was there place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, (the church) Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death." Rev. 12:7-11. Thus we see that old arch fiend and enemy of God and man was overcome and driven out, he and his angels (or seed), out of legal heaven, worldly sanctuary. It is written in the ten commandments, thou shalt not kill, steal, covet, commit adultery, etc., etc., yet we see, according to the record, that old devil that Jesus Christ chose to be one of his apostles was a murderer from the beginning, and a liar and the father of it, and yet he was to a jot and tittle filling the purpose God had in him. Here is his first estate in the visibly organized and constituted church of Jesus Christ on earth from which he fell; being a murderer from the beginning, and a liar and the father of it, he was cast out of the visible heaven (the church) into the earth, he and his angels, (seed) yet while his spiritual seed in the person of Judas Iscariot was wickedly lying on our blessed Lord to his condemnation and crucifixion, he was ignorantly carrying out the will and purpose of God Almighty. We read in inspiration that both Herod (a figure of the devil) and men of Israel and the Gentiles "were gathered together, for

to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." From this we see his work as an apostle as well nigh complete; before this we hear Jesus telling him, it is written, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Hence he and his seed of evil doers must serve God, but through fear and not love. His part of service in earth was that of a murderer, liar and deceiver—lying to and deceiving our mother in the garden, thereby bringing death in trespasses and sins to her and all her seed; but the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the mighty valiant Captain of our salvation, was sent by God the Father to destroy the works of the devil, and behold, he came conquering and to conquer, destroying the works of the devil; undeceiving the elect of God; redeeming them from the curse of the law unto God by the sacrificial offering of his holy, righteous blood upon Calvary's cross unto an inheritance which is eternal life. Those thus redeemed were given to Christ by the Father in covenant before the foundation of the world. Their names were written in the Lamb's book of life by the Father, and they were born not of corruptible but of an incorruptible seed by the word of God which lives and abides forever. They (the children of promise) were made heirs of God and joint heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ, and now that they, the heirs of the kingdom, have been adopted into the heavenly family by the merits of Jesus blood we hear the apostle saying, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." So the blessed Son of God, King, High Priest, Mediator, Husband, Redeemer—all in all to his bride (the church)—bore her sins in his own body; carried them all the days of old and put them away by the sacrifice of himself, thereby setting her free from the demands of a broken and violated law; clothing her with a beautiful blood bought robe of righteousness which Jesus wrought when his blessed side was pierced, and a fountain opened up for sin and uncleanness, declaring it is finished. He being the lawful head of the bride (church) could act for her; she, being ten thousand talents in debt without one farthing with which to pay, was held captive in chains of darkness by the Devil at his will without God and without hope in the world; dead to God and godliness, but alive to sin and folly; drinking sin down greedily as the ox doth the water; but God! according to his eternal purpose, which he purposed in himself before the foundation of the world, wrought mightily when he raised Jesus from the dead and we hear the Son saying, "I am he that liveth, and was dead," "because I live, ye shall live also." Inspiration tells us it is impossible for God to lie, then "If God be for us (note the us) who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us," according to the will of God, then with our Elder Brother saying, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." I will be with thee in six troubles and not forsake thee in seven, then, dear child

of God, strive to "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." These are the riches of that inheritance of all the faithful in our blessed Redeemer, who shall vie around that heavenly throne with all the blood washed throng, singing praise to his blessed name saying, not unto us oh Lord! but unto thy holy name, be honor, glory, power, majesty and dominion for ever and ever. But Satan who is a wicked lying spirit, he and his angels, seed, (spiritual seed) who loveth and maketh a lie will go to their own habitation, a place prepared for the Devil and his angels. We read, in the beginning God created the heavens (in plural) and earth, things visible and invisible, and without him there was not anything made that was made. Then the place prepared for the Devil and his angels was a part of his work, as much also as was the formation of that old serpent, which is the Devil. (Rev. 12:9—Job 26:13) Then if indeed, according to those texts, he was formed by the hand of God for his own purpose and glory, and told by the Son of God it was written he should both worship and serve him, (Matt. 4:10) how dare I say—as some of our two seed brethren in the flesh—Satan is eternal, self existent, co-equal with God and not subordinate to Jehovah in any sense? According to Daniel Parker—"Two seed doctrine in the flesh"—He, the Devil, a lying spirit has power on earth to beget actual, personal, living beings which, if true, would make Satan, in creative power, equal with God. In such case each—God and the Devil—could beget their own children, angels and soldiers and prepare for a great battle with uncertainty as to whom should finally be victorious, but since Satan emanated from the plastic hand of God, and by disobedience fell and lost his first estate and was driven out of heaven (legal heaven), into the earth, he and his angels and their place was not found any more in heaven. If not why not? He, like Adam, had fallen from his steadfastness, he sinned because there was no righteousness in him. It is written in the law, "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." Adam fell, being imperfect, was not able to keep a perfect law. Satan fell because no truth cometh of a lie, hence could not tell the truth, he being a liar and the father of it. He and his seed must go to their own place (not to that city of eternal felicity, where God and his Son reign in righteousness, and the redeemed host of the lost sheep of the house of Israel join in everlasting ascription of praise to his blessed name for his unbounded mercies and goodness to them while dead in sin) the place prepared for the Devil and his angels will as certainly as God is God be occupied by them. We shall be understood to believe these fallen angels fell under the ceremonial law in the worldly sanctuary, having right in common with all the rest of Abraham's carnal seed of which they were not dispossessed until the breaking up of that dispensation, at which time Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem Judea; a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Israel which should make manifest those who worshipped God in Spirit and those who worshipped him not; of which Satan and his angels were proud, boastful, speaking great and swelling words of men's wisdom. So when Jesus came as a refiner's fire to purge out the dross, Satan and his abominable seed were cast out into the earth, neither has their place been found any more in heaven. "Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever," but we see that old serpent and his prolific brood in wonderful profusion in the earth, going up and down, to and fro in the earth, seeking whom he may devour. Pouring into the carnal thirsty souls the personal venom of his

lying deceptive nature, and if it were possible he would deceive the very elect of God; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, the war has been waged, the battle fought, victory for Christ and his seed won, his children set free. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Freed from bondage, darkness and fear into the marvelous light and liberty of God's dear Son, feet taken out of the pit of death and placed upon a rock, a new song put in their mouths even praises to God's holy name. Praise not for what they did for the Lord, but what the Lord did for them. Ye hath given me the back and not the face. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain," but to the evil doers, who shall come up and say, Lord we have prophesied in thy name, cast out devils in thy name and have done many wonderful works in thy name, the the Lord shall say unto them, depart ye workers of iniquity I never knew you. They were known unto God as the generation of Adam which was of the earth earthy, but not known as the generation of Jesus Christ which was accounted unto the Lord for a seed which shall serve him. He that hath not the spirit of Christ is none of his, this generation of vipers who is of their father the Devil, who maketh and loveth a lie. If the Ethiopian can change his skin or the leopard his spots, then they who are accustomed to do evil may turn and do well. A corrupt tree cannot bear good fruit, neither can a bitter fountain send forth pure water, everything shall bring forth after its own kind. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." God's children who are begotten and born of him are spiritual children and partake of the nature of their parent; so also are Satan's children like unto their father and progenitor, vile wicked and deceptive, having the same nature as their parent, hating love, mercy and justice and seeking always the overthrow and destruction of the kingdom of the Son of God, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." 2 Tim. 2:19. "Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered? But thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children." Isa. 49: 24-25. Now that our God is the God of the whole earth, who works his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say unto him, Jehovah what doest thou, who also holds the keys of death and hell; he is in one mind and none can turn him and whatever his soul desireth, even that he doeth. He sent his only Son into a sincursed earth vested with all power in heaven and in earth; that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him. (John 17:2). Then we have this omnipotent Son, Lord of lords and King of kings saying, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." So, dear sister, our great High Priest, the Shepherd of the Sheep hath by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified; then indeed if we are of that circumcision that worship God in spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh, let us strive to "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." May the goodness, mercies and blessings of our

God attend our way while we yet journey toward the end of our earthly pilgrimage, and by the grace of God may be enabled to say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness," "and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." Submitted in weakness. My wife joins me in love to you and all the dear saints at Fletcher, Okla. In hope of eternal life.

(The late Elder) W. S. BOURLAND.

Castor, La.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am sending you a letter I received from a very dear friend and sister in hope. I would like to see it pusblished in the *Signs* as I feel it contains much truth, and expresses so clearly the experience and travel of mind of the true child of grace. I hope you will find space in the paper and have a mind to publish it. An unworthy sister if one at all.

(Mrs.) J. D. WHITE.

DEAR GLADYS AND FAMILY: I may worry you writing so often but I have so much time to just sit here and think, and often it is of the dear Baptists and the things they believe, and when I think of them I want to talk with them so much. I will just worry everyone with letters I guess.

The other morning I was writing to a Baptist and was telling them of you and your visit, and how much I enjoyed it and my mind stayed on you all the rest of the day. It made me want to see you so very much and when I got home there was a letter from you. Just a word from folks I love gives me such a lift. Gladys, I went to hear the *other side* Sunday. I get so hungry to hear what I believe and they do preach nearer to it than any one else here. But every time in conclusion he admonishes them to be obedient for therein lies their blessings; that they, in return for His great love bestowed upon them, should obey and do all they can toward doing the things that are pleasing to God. He said that many of the children of Israel did not get to enter into the land of promise that flowed with milk and honey, because of their disobedience. While he was saying this my mind was racing away. What he said was true of the children of Israel and Moses, but that was back under Moses' law when they were promised blessings if they obeyed the law. But Christ became the end of that law and he said I will make a new covenant, not like the old law which they did break, but it will be this way,"I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them." "And they shall be my people, and I will be their God." I am sure you know that scripture better than I, but they will not be under law but under grace. He promises them (his children) eternal life, and says they are kept by the power of God ready to be revealed, etc., but the blessings all seem to be in the past tense. "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee," and one writer speaks of God who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness," and it seems we are already blessed, not waiting to obey in order to receive them. I do not fall out with him for admonishing them to do the very best they can, urging them not to forsake the assembling of themselves together in their Savior's name, having love and fellowship one for the other. I think the apostles did the same and rebuked and reproved them but not promising them they will receive a blessing for it—for the doing of one's duty. They speak of blessings as if they might be of material things here upon earth or joy and hap-

piness. The person whom Jesus dwells within is a blessed character and that person will receive all he needs, all the blessings appointed unto him, though I think according to Christ's preaching we receive blessings and are surely not aware of them. For "Blessed are the poor in spirit," "Blessed are they that mourn," "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst, etc." I mourn many times because of my sins and am very unhappy, and I cannot realize that it is a blessing. I do feel to hunger and thirst for righteousness, and indeed I am poor in spirit and my natural mind cannot see the blessing in such things only when I hope I am given a glimpse of understanding. Over and over I beg for knowledge and understanding and do not get it so I ponder things in doubt and fear knowing that God said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." It makes me sad and blue to go to church here. It makes me want to be with my own people so much more. Oh! what a sweet memory your visit is to me as I meditate on conversations we had.

Gladys, I have a very weak and foolish mind, and if I have any faith it is very little for I am always doubting. Do you ever wonder if when we pass on we will be able to view our life left behind, and wish we had listened to the cry of the universal doctrine that you must help bring in the lost souls to God—helped in the harvesting work while it was yet day? Do you ever wonder if we could be like the virgins who had no oil in their lamps when the bridegroom came, or like the man the master gave one talent and in fear went and buried it instead of adding to it as the others did? People almost think you are a heathen or an infidel if you do not believe every one has a chance to be saved. They think God could not be so unfair as to not give every one a chance. But to me their chance system is just as unfair as they think predestination is for if all have a chance and some just won't give in and accept Christ then what? Is he to blame? He was born with the mind he has and not consulted in the matter. They say some are just so hard hearted and stubborn minded they refuse to accept Christ. Why would they reach out and accept something they do not want or love? The carnal mind is not subject to the laws of God. It loves the things of darkness rather than light. Then a person has to have a new mind, a new birth born of the spirit and truly that is the work of God. I just do not know why I worry about things as I do. I tried to do as the other people, I joined them and tried to feel one of them, I even tried to teach a class of little children about Jesus. I found myself doing the things God said he would do. It seemed I was going against the teachings of the Bible altogether and I was miserable. Now I know I am with a group of people who believe as I do, yet they are so much better than I am, so strong and steadfast in their views, and here am I, so weak and prone to sin. It seems some days every word I utter is a lie, and the poison of asps is under my tongue and there is no soundness in me, and I feel afraid to trust God to work things out. I feel there is something for me to do and when I do some small thing that might seem good a voice seems to whisper, "You did it for gain, you think they will return it by favoring you sometime," and often it is that way. You do not see folks very eager to help some poor wretch who does not have a thing, but more often we strive to favor those we know would do the same for us.

So it seems there is nothing for me but to just struggle along, hoping and

praying that God has a purpose in my being this way and will help me by his power, and cause me to do the things that are pleasing to him and keep me from doing the things I should not and give me grace to trust him. Wasn't it Sarah, Abraham's wife, who did not have enough faith to believe God would send them a son and gave her husband to her handmaiden in order for him to raise up a son? But God had a purpose in things working out as they did, so all man can do or cannot do does not hinder God's work for he works and none can hinder and he hinders and none can work.

You may be ashamed of me after reading this, but these are my thoughts and I have always wanted to never, never deceive my brothers and sisters in the church into thinking well of me. I am just like I am no matter how much I hate myself. I guess that is the reason it is so comforting to hear one I do feel is a child of God talk along the same line I believe. It strengthens my hope and lifts me up a little from the darkness of doubts and fears. I pour out my heart to my sister. It seems sometimes if I could not write or talk of these things I would be desperate. There are times when these things are my meat and my drink. There are other times, more numerous, when they are far away and I find no joy in thinking of them. Would it not be wonderful if one could live near their church and have a mind to go every Sunday, and meet with those of like faith and hear the gospel preached. But so many crosses—live so far from church, pastors getting scarce, members scarce too, ties of nature pulling you constantly away. I know you are wondering when I am going to close. I am hoping you will have a mind to overlook my faults and weakness in writing thus. Over and over I try to pray that if I am not worshipping God as I should, and am groping in darkness and unbelief that he will enlighten me and give me knowledge as to the right way to serve him. I hope I am worthy of being your sister in hope of eternal life. If I am it is through the love and mercy of our Lord. Love to you all. LUCILLE.

(Mrs.) EDWARD YOUNG.

807 Pope St., Memphis, Tenn.

Route 1, Grand Saline, Texas

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: Have been longing to write and try in my weak way to tell you and all the Editors and readers of the *Signs of the Times* how I do love them, but from a sense of unworthiness have put it off and now I am just as blank as ever. I have read the *Signs* from my childhood. My father took them from the first issue. He was born in 1805. The split between the Old Baptists and the Missionaries came in 1832. He was always a Deacon since I can remember. He passed on to his reward in 1882. He was a particular friend of Elder Gilbert Beebe, the founder of the paper, often writing his views on certain portions of the Scriptures as the dear Lord opened his understanding. I am nearing my 90th mile post and it would give me much joy to read some of those writings. You have been so kind to send me the paper free so long. My only son departed this life Aug. 27, 1945 leaving me alone. My home is broken up and I have to live anywhere the dear Lord sees fit to send me. I have no choice for he "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." If I could only tell you how I look forward to the coming of the *Signs* and enjoy all its contents. Oh, if I had the pen of a ready writer and could express my thoughts as some can, but alas, I cannot.

I am in this sin cursed world alone, nowhere to lay my head, and yet I am not alone. The all-wise and merciful God who does his will in heaven and earth and none can stay his hand changes not, therefore, ye sons of Jacob are not consumed, and I will add neither will the daughters of Abraham be consumed. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." Isaiah 4:31. I know this scripture for I have experienced it.

Just a few words in conclusion to what I have tried to write. There seems to be such a difference in the ways of the old Primitive Baptists now than when I first united with them. They loved each other, all members of one body, Christ's body. When one was hurt, all were hurt. They bore one another's burdens. I can remember my dear old father getting up in the dead hours of night and my dear mother would say, "What is the matter?" He would tell her, "brother So and So is in trouble and I cannot rest, I must go to him," and he never rested until he went. Now it is not that way, they have become so careless, craving and grasping after the things of this life. "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Oh, if I only was as sure I am one of them as I am sure the Old Baptist church is the true church that Jesus Christ set up on this earth I would be happy. This scripture confirms my hope, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I surely know that I love every one of them that honestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. May God bless you in your labor of love. A sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

(Mrs,) F. LODEN.

1670 Gaither St., Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON AND ALL OF THE STAFF: I regret letting my subcription run over, but owing to moving and sickness in my family I have done so. I am enclosing check to bring it up to date and for another year. I surely enjoy the paper and get lots of good preaching out of it. May the Lord bless you and all concerned in its publication. It is worth a lot to me. I feel most of my time too unworthy to even think of His dear name. I know "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." Pray for me a sinner.

HERBERT R. PRINCE.

Route 1, Box 79, Shaw, Miss.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I have desired to write to the dear old *Signs of the Times* a long time, but a feeling of unworthiness and lack of something worth while to write has prevented. I feel the same now but know if it is the Lord's will he is able to guide my pen to tell you of some of his dealings with me. The question is if I am not one of God's little ones, why do I love his people and why my chief concern to meet with them and listen to the preached word? I cannot remember when I did not love them. When a child they won my affection and I hope held my soul fast. If I am not mistaken I have many times been fed with the bread from heaven which he alone can give to his ministers to break for us. His people alone can receive it and it is precious to them. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." "For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." The preaching of this world does not satisfy them, it is as dry husks only fit for the swine to eat; we can only look to our Father's house where there

is plenty for all who have need, and have their eyes open to see their destruction .Let us have courage to hope on and trust in him who doeth all things well. We sinful worms make many mistakes, but God who is rich in mercy never makes one.

I would like to say to Elder F. A. Collins, who wrote so beautifully on the "Falling Away," I hope I have tasted and handled where God said, Children be of good cheer, or courage, press on. "I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." I know he is able to keep me from falling if I am his by grace. I am poor and needy but have a little hope I am rich in mercy—that is all I crave. Brother Dodson if you see a little crumb in this stammering babble you may put it in the *Signs*. If not cast it away. I hope a sister in Christ.

OLIVE E. ROBERTS.

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506 N. 7th St., Hiawatha, Kans.

ELDER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: I do not get to meeting often and oh, how I enjoy reading the good articles in your paper. There is no one living around me that believes as I do that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps;" that salvation is of the Lord and we live our life as a tale that is told. My neighbors think it strange I do not go to their church or any church in this town there being fourteen. I have been to several but they all believe about the same, that God will save you if you will do your part, but you have to meet him half way and if you are not saved it is your own fault. I cannot do anything good. I have tried out my good works and found them to be as filthy rags. If I am saved it will be by God's mercy and nothing I have done. I feel to be the least if one at all. I hate sin yet it is mixed with all I do, and how to perform that which is good I know not. As the poet says:

> "'Tis a point I long to know,
> (Oft it causes anxious thought,)
> Do I love the Lord or know?
> Am I his, or am I not?"

I dreamed the other night I was at an Old Baptist meeting. I thought oh, how I love these people. I felt the love for them that passeth all understanding. Then I wondered if I could be one of God's people, when these words were given me—"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." My mother took the *Signs* when I was a little child. I have a couple of old copies. I did not intend to write so much, only to let you know I enjoy your good paper, and may it be God's will that you continue to write for a long time.

(Mrs.) LILLIE FRIDELL.

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425 E. Southern Heights, Louisville, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: As I am alone this beautiful Sabbath morning I will write you a few lines. My husband and daughter have gone to Sunday School and church. They belong to the First Baptist Church. I went with them when I was able but I have been sick five months. Was real bad for awhile and I suppose those who saw me thought I would never get up. I felt like I was dying and oh, how happy I was. It seemed there was not one thing in my way. I wanted to go, if it had been the good Lord's will how glad I would have been. I do not want to complain, I want to be submissive to the Lord's will for I know he is just and right and does all things well. I have five children and a lot of friends and they are all so good to me for which I feel thankful. When one is old and shut in and I cannot see to read very well, it is then a lonesome life to live. I never get to see a Primitive Baptist, the peo-

ple I love. It would seem in a city like this there would be enough to have meetings.

Brother Dodson, I have had some tell me they loved one church as well as another. It may be wrong in me but I can tell the world I do not. I believe there are good and bad in all churches, but the Primitive Baptists preach the doctrine I love, salvation by grace, not claiming any merit of their own. The *Signs* and other Baptist papers is the only preaching I get. I received a wonderful letter from Elder Griffin, Associate Editor, and how I did enjoy it. If I could receive a lot of letters like his how it would cheer me up. The First Baptist pastor comes to see me right often. I told him about receiving brother Griffin's letter, and that I guessed he had read a letter from me in the *Signs* was why he wrote me. He asked to read my letter and said there was only one thing wrong with it, I had one *if* where it ought not to be. This is where I said, "A poor sinner saved by grace if ever saved." He said that sounded as if I doubted Him. He says, "You don't do you?". I told him, "No sir! I don't." I said, "you know you are saved, don't you?" He said, "yes." The next time he came I told him I thought perhaps he would not come any more as I had talked so much.

Brother Dodson I agree with you about Mrs. Louise Newman's letter being so wonderful. There are so many good letters in the *Signs*. I like the Editorials so much and I want to tell you you are doing a wonderful job publishing. May you be spared many years to carry on the good work. I know you are a very busy man. Pardon me if I have worried you. I would appreciate a letter from you if you have time. Your little sister in hope of eternal life.

(Mrs.) ADAH CHANDLER.

Castle Rock, Wash.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:

It is time to send in my subscription and I will send a few lines with it. What I write will not be of much worth, but the subscription price is necessary to help keep up the production of the paper. I do not want to do without it, and desire to pay for it as long as I have means.

In March of this year I was blessed to have Elder Hughett visit with us in our home for a few days, and then to go with him for a visit to Elder and sister Coleman at Riffe, Wash. At some time during our visit something was said about the parable of the laborers in the vineyards recorded in the twentieth chapter of Matthew. I have had some comforting thoughts on it after reading it several times. I think of the one who was hired late in the day and labored only a few hours after the hot mid-day hours were over, and yet received as much as the one who began early and labored all through the long hot hours. They each received their penny, just what they had agreed upon, but they were of the human race and as is our nature they complained.

Do I see a likeness to our spiritual life in this? Do I not see some children of God whose trial of conviction and condemnation last over a period of years, sometimes the greater part of a long lifetime, before the Lord speaks peace to them? Then some others like myself who scarcely experience the conviction and condemnation at all, for it is a fact that I have never shed one tear over my sins. I know I am a sinner and I certainly see all my dear kindred in Christ as better than myself, and often long to be like them, but have never been made to suffer on account of my sins and unworthiness, yet in the appointed time we each get our penny—eternal life. But as the Master explained to them so it is with us, we are his

vessels and has he not the right to do as he chooses with us? In my own case I often think that the Lord has seen fit to send me physical suffering rather than spiritual for it seems I have had a double portion, if not even more. Yet even if this were true, I do not want it otherwise for I am sometimes thankful that he cares enough to even send pain and suffering.

This fact that I have not done a lot of spiritual suffering many times causes me to wonder if I am a child of God. I have been a member of the Baptist church for forty-three years, and when I cannot see things like other good Baptists do, it makes me wonder if I am fit to belong to them or not, but they have given me a good home all this time. I will close this scattered writing now by asking you to overlook my mistakes. Unworthily.

(Mrs.) EFFIE PARKE.

Relfs Bluff, Ark.

DEAR BROTHER AND EDITOR: I should have sent in my subscription before now but have been waiting for the "singing of birds," hoping against hope that I might have something cheerful to write, but it seems the longer I wait the darker the day. I would have to say at least, that if I know anything of the truth as set forth by the work of God's eternal truth, that the Editor and Associate Editors set forth that truth. When God's truth is preached either by lips or pen it gives God all honor, and nothing short of that does this old sinner any good. I tramped that way that seemed right to a man and it has brought me nothing but confusion and death. It has taught me, if I have been taught anything, that God is God, the GREAT I AM, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end; who by himself drew the great plan of redemption for his chosen and set his love over them in his Son before the world began, and sent his Son as fulfillment of his plan to make manifest his love for the children. Then Paul could freely say the work was finished from the foundation of the world.

I must not weary you with a long letter. Suffice it to say that we enjoy all the Editor's writing together with all the writers. We were so glad to see the article written by our yoke-fellow, Elder L. P. Harriss of Illinois who set forth to our understanding just what we believe. To us Elder Harriss has a great gift and is so humble. We were glad also to see the name of Elder E. J. Lambert added to the Associate Editors, he is a good preacher and truly humble brother.

The family paper is a great comfort to my wife as she is left alone so much for I spend most every week end among those that are left here in this part that will not divide the child or keep back part of the price, but give God all honor and praise. Yours in hope of eternal life. (Elder) H. H. PHILLIPS.

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101 Center St., Salisbury, Md.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: It is time for me to send my remittance for the *Signs of the Times*. I do enjoy reading them so much that I do not want to miss a single copy. I look forward each month with great pleasure in knowing we will have another copy if the Lord is willing. If possible it seems they get better all the time, or they just grow dearer to me perhaps. I love the doctrine they contain and it is a great comfort to me to read the different letters from the dear little ones of like precious faith.

(Mrs.) OCTAVIA F. DIXON.

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EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. DECEMBER, 1946

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Psalms 133: 1.

What a great blessing God has given his people in ages past to have a dwelling place (spiritually). To have a place where we are told his name shall be there. Under the law Israel was promised a place, when they had passed over Jordan, where they would bring all their burnt-offerings, tithes, sacrifices and choice vows. How merciful was God to them, that after their wanderings in the wilderness, hungering and thirsting, they were to reach a place where his name would be there; where he was to manifest to them his goodness in giving them a place to dwell; a place where they could gather and offer their sacrifices to him as one people. Israel was promised that this was to be a place of rejoicing; one where their services were to be in the name of their God, because he caused his name to dwell there—God's appointed place. They were commanded not to offer these sacrifices in every place they saw, but in the place where God would appoint. It is well for us to remember these things; to be mindful of his word that the pearls are not to be cast before swine; not to be running to and fro following strange gods; offering with every one who says Lord, Lord, but with those who see eye to eye and speak the same things; whose God is a living God, Lord of heaven and earth; to offer in God's dwelling place where his mercies are recounted.

As one looks back over their pilgrimage here, they are often made to say, surely the Lord's mercy endures forever. Then they mention his loving kindness, then they confess to one another that they are poor sinners but God has been gracious. His name dwells there which means there is where his power and grace is made manifest. His word commands them to have no other God before them, it is his dwelling place, he is a jealous God, he does not give his glory to another. When these are fully revealed by faith in the soul, and each so drawn, then they dwell together in unity. These Israelites were a type of the church of God, whom God had set his love upon, the fewest of all people who were looking for a city whose builder and maker is God. Though they have been transgressors of his law, rebellious, stiffnecked, hardhearted, murmurers, complainers and often unmindful of his tender mercies yet he forsakes them not. He lovingly manifests from time to time that he is their God. Nothing causes a poor sinner to desire to dwell in the house of the Lord more than the knowledge of his goodness, forbearance and enduring love for them. Though these things were under the law they had a shadow of good things to come; they pointed to the spiritual dwelling places in the gospel where they would offer their vows, praises, supplications and the fruits of their lips unto Him who is before all things and by whom all things consist. The blessed things of the gospel were pointed to, where his people would sit down in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

All things that are pleasant are not good, neither are all things that are good, pleasant. People might dwell together in the same house as a family and yet have no unity among themselves. Sometimes there is striving over words to no profit, things that amount to very little; they fail to see alike, their differences are magnified; each one is seeking his own and not the things of another; little things cause them to be bitter toward one another. Though this condition exists among only part of the household, it causes pain to the other occupants of the family; bitterness springs up because each is judging another and magnifying the faults of others, not considering himself. The only time there is a dwelling together in unity of God's humble poor, when things are both good and pleasant, is when their eyes are beholding the King in his beauty (the Lord Jesus as our only salvation); when by faith we know we have nothing except that which we have received; when one feels sensibly his own unworthiness, not of God's love to him, but the love and fellowship of his brethren. Then nothing is like the beauty of Zion, the joy of the whole earth. They look upon her, a quiet habitation, a cord of which shall never be broken, a stake of which shall never be removed. Then are they glad when it is said, "Let us go into the house of the Lord." Why? Because his name is there. Then they can sing:

"'Mid scenes of confusion and creature complaints,
How sweet to my soul is communion with saints!
To find at the banquet of mercy there's room,
And feel in the presence of Jesus at home."

I cannot close this without mentioning some of the things that effect unity of these beloved people, and in doing so it is not to point the finger at others, but to say, may God give us all grace to consider. Where there is the spirit of self justification, backbiting, envying, striving over words of no profit; when disorderly walks are passed by lightly (calling it forgiveness when no repentance has been manifested for the deed); when men become followers of men rather than God, worshipping the creature more than the Creator; if the rule of men is esteemed above the word of God; when there is a failing to withdraw from every one that walks disorderly as the word of God commands; jealousy; failing to take heed to ourselves and to the doctrine, continuing in them, thereby saving ourselves and them that hear us; some saying they are of Paul, others of Apollos or of Cephas and others of Christ, no real dwelling together only as these clouds pass away and we see no man save Jesus only.

On the other hand we are told that "greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." If you find in your poor heart the hating of your own life (the fleshly life), the longing for something better, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, looking for the dwelling together in unity, surely we know something of it and are made to desire for that which will enable us to be "giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." Dear reader, does your heart long for this good and pleasant dwelling place where there is unity; where God's grace flows like the ointment on Aaron's beard that went down to the

skirts of his garment, that you may glorify God in your body and spirit which are his?

This will be the last paper for this year. I cannot say to you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, but may our dear Savior be our guide. Grant that his Spirit may set our affections on things that are above, that we may walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, knowing no man after the flesh, but determined to know nothing among men save Jesus Christ and him crucified. D. V. S.

SPIRITLAL BAPTISM

We have a request from one who says he is "no denominationalist" to write on the above heading. He wants to know "what is the necessary baptism," and states that his mother "was an Old Baptist by faith and order" and that his father "was of the same belief, not being in order or belonging under literal water baptism." He also states that his father was uneducated, but that his mother read to him. He then asks that we open up to him the Holy Scriptures, the saving power for his father and his mother. While our friend may not be a member of the visible church, his letter indicates that he has some knowledge and understanding of the truth, and as he specifically says he is not seeking a carnal argument, but wants "a sermon on baptism" as it may also be of help to others, we are disposed to give favorable consideration to his request and hope the Lord will direct our pen. It should be clearly understood by all who read, that neither we nor any other mortal man is now, ever has been or ever will be able to "open up the Holy Scriptures and make known their saving power" to the children of men. The Lord alone is able to do these things, and wherever there is any evidence of the opening up of the Holy Scriptures and their saving power felt in the heart, it gives unmistakable proof of the fact that God has begun his work of grace in a poor sinner's heart, and let him take courage and be assured that God will perform, or carry it on till the day of Jesus Christ. Jesus said to one, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." According to our understanding *spiritual baptism,* or baptism by the Holy Ghost is essentially the all-important thing; without it nothing else will avail any thing. John the Baptist in his preaching in the wilderness of Judaea not only said to those who came to him, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," but he also said to them, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Mat. 3:11-12. We believe this being baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire will utterly consume, or destroy, all the hope a poor sinner ever had for salvation by creature works, and until this has been thoroughly accomplished he is not a fit subject for water baptism into the true church of God. The church should never cease to require of one desiring to be numbered with her that they "bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." According to the apostle Peter those in whose hearts the Lord God has been sanctified should "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear," and wherever this cannot be done, water baptism, which is the door through which one enters into the fellowship of the church, should be closed to them. We are persuaded that the one who has

been baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire will have no confidence in the works of sinful flesh as a means for gaining entrance into the presence of Him who is holy and undefiled, for he will be taught that it is all of his grace. This baptism will kill the creature to all trust in any righteousness of his own that he may have ever had, which will be made to appear as filthy rags, and will open his eyes to the absolute need of the true righteousness of Christ, with which he will have to be clothed if he is ever to appear with God in glory. When he becomes possessed of this knowledge he will be a new creature in Christ Jesus, old things will have passed away, and all things will have become new, and he will see that all the work which brought about this change, from beginning to end, was of God, and therefore he will desire to praise God from whom all blessings flow. Baptism by water typifies death, burial and resurrection. If one is not dead to sin by the body of Christ, he is not ready for burial. The law of our land forbids burying people alive, and one should not be buried in the liquid grave as a follower of our Lord until it is clearly evident that he hates sin with a perfect hatred, and that he loves righteousness. The law of our land further requires that one shall be buried a certain depth in order to constitute burial, and the church should likewise be certain of sufficient water for one to go down into it and come up out of it, else he has not been baptized in like manner as his Lord. Sprinkling is no more adequate for this purpose than it would be to sprinkle sand or dirt in the face of a corpse and call it burial. Not only does baptism signify death and burial, but it also shows a coming forth into new life, wherewith we should show forth the praises of him who loved us and gave himself for us. Paul in his writing to the church at Colosse said unto them, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."

While we believe that it is absolutely essential for all who receive water baptism at the hand of a proper administrator to have first been baptized by the Holy Ghost and with fire, by no means do we believe that water baptism is essential to eternal salvation. Peter after speaking of the sufferings of Christ for our sins and the quickening by the Spirit, says, "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." For some reason, we know not why, it appears that only a remnant, or small percentage, of the Lord's people are manifestly separated from the world by uniting with the church, and while we cannot understand why so many, like our friend's father, remain outside the pales of the visible church, we are persuaded that their eternal salvation is as certain and sure as those who walk through the fires and persecutions of this world, because of their affiliation with the visible church. We are persuaded that every one who is baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire is a member of the mystical body of Christ, and in due time they will all be glad to acknowledge that "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through you all, and in you all." There are many so-called faiths in the world to-day, but there is only one true faith, and that is the faith of God's elect, and it matters not whether one is a member of the Old

School Baptists, or any other denomination, or no denomination or order of any kind whatsoever, if his name was written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundations of the earth were laid, he will most certainly sing God's praise in that world which will have no end, and Christ will be his song. We like to meditate upon the scripture which says: "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." There can be no question whatsoever but that the Lord knows them that are his, and he will save them with an everlasting salvation. It is also said, however, in this connection: "And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." We are indeed glad that eternal salvation does not depend upon one uniting with the visible church. In the days of our Lord's earthly sojourn ten lepers were cleansed by him, but only one returned to glorify God. The percentage of those who come out from the world to-day and acknowledge before men what God has wrought for their souls is undoubtedly small, comparatively speaking, but nevertheless not a single one of those for whom Christ shed his precious blood will ever fail to reach the climes of eternal glory. We would like to encourage as much as possible those who by grace divine have been enabled to know Jesus in the pardon of their sins to put on the whole armour of God, by asking a home with the church, to be baptized into the fellowship of the visible church and walk in newness of life, believing as we do that it is the only haven of rest for poor sinners in this sin polluted world, but the Scriptures speak of children who came to the birth and had not sufficient strength to be born, so the matter has to be left in the hands of the Lord. They are, however, safe in the everlasting arms of Jesus, regardless of whether they ever enjoy the fellowship of the saints in a church relation or not, and nothing shall ever be able to pluck them out of the hands of their great Shepherd. In our judgment, therefore, in that life which is beyond they will enjoy the same heavenly bliss and there will be no difference. Before leaving this part of our subject we would like to lay stress upon the words: "And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." The Scriptures abound with admonitions to right living on the part of those who profess a hope in God's mercy, and those who have been called to the high and holy calling of feeding the flock of God, whether by mouth or pen, or both, should not become so enwrapped with presenting some one or more points of doctrine as to neglect stressing what Jesus said to his disciples: "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Again, "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under the foot of men." And Paul said, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." There should be no place in the Old Baptist church for a man or woman who will take refuge behind the cloak of predestination for the evil they commit, and those who attempt it should not be countenanced by sound and orderly brethren. Membership in an Old School Baptist church should carry with it a code of the highest possible standard of honor and right living to those without as well as to those within the fold,

otherwise the cause of Christ will suffer untold shame and disgrace.

Concerning himself, our friend says, "As I understand, Christ paid the debt for me, and it doesn't subject me to go under the law to pay for it myself." He also says, "If Christ did not abolish in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace, I don't know how I can do it." We are in accord with him in these statements, which should resolve into the fact that his only hope of salvation is in Jesus Christ and his righteousness. The record says, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Also, Paul says, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." John said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." We have no desire to present to poor sinners any other way of salvation than by, and through and in Jesus Christ. Jesus himself said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." The prophet Isaiah truly foretold of him when he said, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Poets have joined others in trying to tell of the wonders of his love, and what he means to those who have hope in his mercy, as the following lines will show —

"Sweetest note in seraph song,
Sweetest name on mortal tongue:
Sweetest carol ever sung
Jesus, blessed Jesus."

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It sooths his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.
It makes the wounded spirit whole,
And calms the troubled breast;
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary rest."

Alas, how feeble are the efforts of mortals to render adequate praise to his great and adorable name. The "fairest among women" in answer to the question, "What is thy beloved more than another beloved," replied, "He is the chiefest among ten thousand,***yea, he is altogether lovely." The Psalmist said, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."

These precious and blessed truths can only be witnessed to by those who have received the gift of the Holy Ghost, and if our reader is one who hopes he can by faith lay claim to having some knowledge and understanding of these glorious things, he knows something of spiritual baptism. R. L. D.

CLOSE OF VOLUME NO. 114

This issue closes another volume of our family paper. During the year, according to his abundant mercy, God has most graciously bestowed upon us his manifold blessings. The January number carried the name of Elder E. J. Lambert, of Tinsman, Arkansas as a new addition to our Editorial Staff, and we have every reason to believe that his writings have proven both satisfying and edifying to our readers. They, also, have co-operated liberally by both writing and sending to us many excellent articles for publication, and for this we wish to express our sincere thanks and gratitude. We are deeply indebted to our Associate Editors and all others who have contributed in any way in making the paper the success it is. We have endeavored to improve our paper by making more space available for sound reading matter, by getting the paper out promptly, in good condition, and in various other ways.

We are sorry to say that as of July 1st, due to increased cost of labor, difficulties in obtaining paper, etc., our printer found it necessary to raise his price for getting out the paper by a little over $300.00 per year. There are several ways in which this cost can be absorbed: (1) We could raise the subscription price to $2.50 per year, but we are loath to accept this suggestion from some of our good friends and well-wishers; (2) If all our present subscribers would renew their subscriptions promptly when due, it would go a long way towards solving our problem. We hope those who are in arrears, of which there is a goodly number, will take note of this and bring their subscriptions up to date. We are confident that the vast majority of our subscribers can easily pay for their paper, but if those who cannot will be good enough to drop us a card we shall be glad to continue sending them the paper until they can conveniently pay for it. (3) Another way of solving our problem is to increase our permanent subscription list. Our readers can aid us materially in this respect by suggesting to their brethren and friends who would enjoy reading the paper that they subscribe for it. We particularly wish to remind our ministering brethren of the fact that we shall be glad to allow them $1.00 for each new annual subscription they send us. Those who subscribe through you will not only thank you for having the paper sent to them, but at the same time they will be glad to assist their pastors and ministering brethren in this manner.

As long as they last, we shall be glad to send FREE to any new subscriber, or to any old subscriber who will send us a new subscription at $2. per year, one of our books on the Resurrection of the Dead. This book contains a valuable collection of articles on this subject.

The fund for indigent readers has been very well remembered during the year, and we wish to thank all who have contributed to it. This fund has been most helpful to us in carrying on our work.

We are hopeful of maintaining the high standard enjoyed by the *Signs,* and would again suggest that in no way can our readers remember their brethren and friends that will be more appreciated, if they love the truth, than by sending them our family paper for one year.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Delaware River Association of Old School, or Primitive Baptists, in session with the Southampton Old School Baptist Church, at Southampton, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, May 28th and 29th, 1946, *sendeth greeting and love in the Lord to the several churches and associations with which she corresponds.*

DEAR BRETHREN:—The time has come that God has granted us the pleasure to write and assure you of our continued love and friendship.

We sincerely hope, we have written in our hearts exhortation, by the demonstration of the spirit and power, how we ought to behave in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. (1 Timothy 3. 15.) Members of the church of God are all taught of God, which proves their heirship in the kingdom of God's dear Son, and have love for the brethren, and they receive the things that are given by the Son of God, for he that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me, and he that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. Every one receiveth the spirit of adoption whereby they cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. (Rom. 8. 15, 16.) If we be children of God, we love the church of

God, and this tie of love for the brethren can never be severed, for it is the love of God, and God's love is eternal.

We often are given meditation as to how we ought to behave in the church of God, which brings us to the exhortations of the apostles, and the classifications of the gifts in the church, which are Pastors, Deacons, Deacons' wives, and lay members, and a sufficiency is written for order and doctrine. The Pastor of the church bears the tidings of the Husbandman to His bride, and to go in and out before her, telling of the coming of the Bridegroom. The Deacon was set apart by the apostles to serve the church in daily ministration, that the ministry should not be neglected in daily ministration of the gospel, that the ministry should have relief from seeing after those who should have the necessary benefits of life, but in no way are they given power over the church, or Pastor, and for the qualifications required by the church of God we refer you to 1st Timothy 3. 8-13. These are worthy of our sincere meditation, and in the services rendered take heed to ourselves and to the doctrine, and in so doing we will save ourselves and them that hear us. Often we hear, "I can't enjoy his preaching." Our dear brother or sister, as the case might be, do we not do well to examine ourselves, as to what manner of man we are? for we do know that God is love, and should we be passed from death unto life we love the brethren. Yes, the answer says, I can't love that man, but he that loveth is born of God. Have we been made to love our enemies? and are we hungering and thirsting after righteousness? Then we are ready to hear the truth sent of God to feed His flock, and you are filled with praise.

As an Association we feel to stand upon the foundation that God laid, which can never be moved, which has been plainly set forth in the London Confession of Faith, and republished, and known as the Philadelphia Confession of Faith, and we can truly say the churches of this Association are united in the faith of God's elect, and we delight to hear the gospel sound, and we esteem our Pastors in the gospel of truth, and all of like precious truth we are glad to have you visit us, and give us that which you have tasted and handled of the word of life.

We, in closing, feel for the welfare of ourselves and all our correspondence, may we take heed to ourselves and to the doctrine, and be given to know how weak we are. Our prayer is that we may be kept by God's almighty power, in faith and love.

Received and adopted by the Association.

H. H. LEFFERTS, Mod.
M. W. RAULSTON, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Southampton Church, Southamption, Pennsylvania, May 28th and 29th, 1946, to her sister associations with which she corresponds, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We desire to report that we feel it has been a wonderful and blessed privilege to have been enabled by the Lord to have entertained the Association this year. Harmony and peace have prevailed throughout the meeting, for which we hope we are thankful. We are pleased to have your messengers with us, and to receive your correspondence. We have been blessed with a goodly number of ministering brethren to preach for us, and they have come to us declaring the things of God, preaching Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Our next session is appointed to be held next year with the Kingwood

Church, Locktown, New Jersey, at the regular time, May 29th and 30th, 1947, or as may be published in the *"Signs of the Times,"*

H. H. LEFFERTS, Mod.
M. W. RAULSTON, Clerk.

MEMORIAL

WHEREAS, God in his inscrutable wisdom has removed from the scenes of mortal existence our beloved brother, pastor and friend, Elder H. C. Ker, and

WHEREAS, this, the Delaware River Association of Primitive Baptist churches, feels deeply bereft in the loss of this esteemed member who has served so faithfully and acceptably as undershepherd among its people for a period of twenty-three years, whose outstanding gift in instruction in the Word, whose wise counsel in walk and practice, and whose kindly interest in our individual welfare have been the source of comfort and joy to us, be it

RESOLVED, that with hearts bowed in submission to God's holy will we do express our belief that our loss is our brother's eternal gain, and give voice to our gratitude for the rich blessing his long and useful life has been to us, and be it

RESOLVED, that this tribute to the memory we so love and cherish be written in the Minutes of this Association meeting, that a copy of it be sent with our deep condolences to his devoted companion, sister Gertrude W. Ker, who now sorrows in loneliness, and that a copy of it be published in the *"Signs of the Times,"* the paper upon which our departed brother ably served as editor for many years.

Written by order of this Association convening with the Southampton Church at Southampton, Pennsylvania, May 28th and 29th, 1946.

H. H, LEFFERTS, Moderator.
M. W. RAULSTON, Clerk.

OBITUARIES

MRS. JOHN L. COLLINS. At this moment two weeks ago the funeral of that person who was dearest and best on earth to me was being held at Mt. Gilead Church near Hartford, Ala. where she had united with the church more than forty-nine years ago. One of the very earliest memories was that of seeing my mother unite with the church, and I am glad to this date that I was permitted to view that sacred event as a very tiny child, and remember it so clearly and distinctly. Nothing on earth is so noble and inspiring as a Christian's experience, and I am fully confident that my mother had that type of experience, to relate to the church as she went before them on that beautiful March day in 1897, and related what the Lord had done for her and gladly followed him in baptism on the next day when that glorious rite was administered to her by her pastor, Elder J. W. Collins. Her husband lingered without the fold for thirteen years more, but he, too, was brought in in June 1910 and soon chosen as a clerk and later as deacon of the church, both positions which he filled in this quiet manner for which both he and mother were ever noted. It was truly their desire to care for the saints, and just eight days before her death mother inquired about the welfare of the saints and wanted her home made ready for them as she was always noted for her hospitality to the church and its lovers.

She was born Oct. 16, 1871 in Houston Co., Ala., and later moved to Dale Co., and thence to Geneva Co., Ala. where she married John L. Collins, Jan. 15, 1891. She was the daughter of C. J. and Julia Stewart who were sturdy Scotch settlers of this section of Alabama. To this union were born, J. J. Collins of Geneva, Ala., Mrs. A. M. Byrd who died about twenty years ago after having been a Primitive Baptist for several years; Charles T. and John F. Collins of Route 2, Newton, Ala., and Mrs. C. H. Reeves of Wicksburg, Ala.

It was ever her delight with that of father to care for her children in every way possible and they labored untiringly that we might secure an education and be morally well trained. They were pioneer citizens of this section and helped clear the forests, build roads and schools and develop model communities.

Mother had been in failing health for several years and often stated that she desired to go home but hated to leave us. It was my custom to always see her before leaving for a long trip, so when it came time for me to leave on June 28 for Baltimore to attend services at Ebenezer Church and from there to Buffalo to the National Educa-

tion Association, and thence back to Durham, N. C. to the Lower Country Line Association I went by to see mother and never shall I forget how she looked after me as I left, but I was blessed to return and find her in fairly good health.

During her last illness a mockingbird sang constantly day and night, but at her passing his voice, too, became silent and it seemed to the writer that all nature awaited her Maker's nod. She fell asleep in Jesus on the afternoon of July 26, 1946, and funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder F. A. Collins, at 2 P. M., July 27, with interment in Mt. Gilead Cemetery. Active pallbearers were A. L. Byrd, Norman A. Collins, Kenneth F Collins, W. J. Sammons and Forrest Thomley. She leaves the children mentioned above, her husband, John L. Collins, seventeen grandchildren, fourteen great-grandchildren, one brother J. W. Stewart, Hartford, Ala., and two sisters, Mrs. D. T. Fulton, Blakeley, Ga. and Mrs. Fannie S. Williams, Dothan, Ala. to mourn her departure. Most truly I have an angel mother guiding me on in the long way I must tread alone. Her son.

(Elder) J. J. COLLINS

GRACE MAY PARROTT was born December 22, 1882, four miles southwest of Prentice, Ill., and departed this life July 11, 1945, making her age 62 years, 7 months and 18 days. She was the daughter of Samuel and Mellvina Stiltz Parrott who preceded her in death. She lived her entire life in the community in which she was born, and proved a kind and helpful neighbor and friend to all who knew her. She leaves to mourn her departure one brother, John W. Parrott, several other relatives and a host of friends.

JOHN W. PARROTT

Our sister in Christ, MRS. ALICE ANTOINETTE (WITHERS) MURPHY, departed this earthly life at the Doctor's Hospital in Washington, D. C., August 22, 1946 after an illness of a month's duration, although she had not been in good health for quite awhile previous to her being taken to the hospital. She was a daughter of S. Melville Withers and Antoinette Morehead Withers, both of Fauquier County, Virginia, and was born May 23, 1887 at New Baltimore, Va. She came to Fairfax County to live in 1906 and was married to Joseph W. Murphy October 27, 1908. They have four sons: Carroll, Withers, Milton and Ralph Murphy. There are three grandchildren. The following sisters and brothers are living: Mrs. Bettie Sabin, Silver Springs, Md., Mary Schana and Edith Beard of Washington, D. C., Mrs. Ella Tucker who so faithfully and lovingly attended our sister Alice all the time she was in the hospital, J. Shelton Withers of Scranton, Pa., Elbert Withers of Norfolk, Va., Presley W. Withers of Richmond, Va. and Jesse Withers of Washington, D. C. Sister Alice was baptized into membership with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Sunday May 12, 1946 and a happy day it was for her. On Saturday before her baptism she talked very freely of her experience, to the assembled church. She had for many years been a follower of the brethren and a lover of the truth; and while she was not spared to live with us very long after coming into the church, yet her walk and life for years has been a blessing to us all. Her home was always open to receive hospitably all Old School Baptists who came her way. Many have been the times that I have been the recipient of the love and kindness pervading her home. The home is sad and lonely without her, and our hearts go out in sympathy to the bereft husband and sons and all the family. As for the church, we have sustained a great loss in her passing, but we have good assurance for her that it is far better for her to depart and be with Christ. Her whole talk in the hospital, whenever I visited her there, was on the love and mercy and goodness of God. Funeral services were held in the meeting-house at Frying Pan Saturday morning August 24th. Brother Spindle, our deacon, before the services suggested to me the use of Psalm 116, verse 15, as a text which I endeavored to comment on at the time. Mr. Joseph Murphy her husband requested the use of the hymn: "How Firm a Foundation", which we sang. Interment in the cemetery at Fairfax, Va. Only God the Spirit can heal the wounds which He makes. May He blessedly grant sincere reconciliation to the divine will, on the part of all who truly mourn.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS

BOOKS

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 115 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JANUARY, 1947 No. 1

GRACE IS ENOUGH

It is enough God's grace to know,
Adverse winds can round me blow;
Sweep me from my feeble feet
His grace can raise me, Oh! how sweet.

Set my feet so frail and weak,
By fountains flowing from the mercy seat;
There is healing in those waters pure,
His loving mercy makes it sure.

It is enough, His grace to know,
Gracious gift to us below;
Nothing in my hands to bring,
Praises to my heavenly King.

Grace and grace alone my plea,
Nothing more to bring to Thee;
Naked, hide me from Thy face,
'Til I know that saving grace.

Oh, saving grace! it is a garment white
That can hide my sins from sight;
Fill my heart with grateful praise,
Hosannas with my voice I'll raise.

Can I know a life beyond this earthly woe,
A life everlasting, if I know
My Lord and Savior's saving grace
And wake to see His smiling face?

JOSEPHINE DRAKE HAVILAND

CORRESPONDENCE

STAKES OF TRUTH

"Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords therof be broken." Isaiah 33: 20.

The above scripture has been on my mind for quite some time, and I hope I have been blessed to see some of the beauty contained therein, and have on several occasions tried to speak upon the subject in my humble way; I hope to the comfort of God's humble poor, and to the praise, honor, and glory of his matchless name. As several have requested me to write upon this subject, (if I ever had a mind to) I now make this feeble attempt, trusting God to endow me with wisdom from on high, and enable me to write such as will redound to his name's honor and glory, and bring comfort and joy to his dear children.

When this scripture was first presented to my mind, it was in the wee hours of the morning, when all in the house were asleep except me, I had not been asleep; it seemed a voice spoke to me saying: "Not one of the STAKES thereof shall ever be removed," and I was blessed to see the beauty of the truth therein as I had never before. I can't remember having ever heard anyone use this for a subject, but the comfort and joy I received therefrom I hope and feel was given me by the Lord. The next morning I looked up the scripture to get the full text, and it has ever since been enlarging in my mind until I feel entirely lost in its immensity and beauty.

Here are a few of the STAKES of TRUTH as I hope they were revealed unto me. First, what is a stake used for? To secure something, to establish a corner, to outline a boundary, a guide post, etc. and I could view a complete row of STAKES surrounding Zion the city of our solemnities, the church on earth, not only marking the boundaries of that city that is set upon a hill that cannot be hid, but also outlining on both sides, as it were, that straight and narrow *way* that no vulture's eye has seen, no lion's whelp has ever trod there-

on, that highway, that *holy way* that leads to that Celestial City, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, making that *way* so plain that a wayfaring man, though he be a fool should not err therein; not only that, also outlining and encompassing the heavens themselves. Oh, these wonderful STAKES of truth, points of doctrine, the WILLS and SHALLS of Jehovah, are so strong that not one of them shall ever be removed. On one side of that *way* are the WILLS, on the other, the SHALLS of our God, and as we read his Word we find it is I WILL, and you SHALL, and the promise is borne between the two as a staff.

When we are blessed to survey these wonderful STAKES, we are reminded of a surveyor going out to survey. Before he can locate the boundaries of a certain place or possession, he must be equipped with or possess two important things, to wit: a surveyor's instrument, and the original deed. Let us consider for a moment this surveyor's instrument, which to my mind is figurative of, and applicable to the Christian's experience; the deed being the Word of God, that liveth and abideth forever, the witness within bearing testimony of the same; with it we locate first the chief Corner-stone, Jesus Christ, as our personal Saviour in the pardon of our sins, from whence all truths and blessings flow, then as we set up our surveying instrument, (our experience) upon this solid Rock, this chief Corner-stone, we are brought to think upon the construction of the instrument itself viz: first, there are three legs bound together as one unit called a tripod. that supports the instrument, which in a mystical sense represents the three-in-one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the very foundation of our experience. Now to the instrument itself, consisting also of three most important parts. to wit: a telescope, a compass, and a level. The telescope representing the eye of FAITH to bring into focus things that cannot be seen with the natural eye:

"It sets time past in present view,
Brings distant propects home,
Of things a thousand years ago,
Or thousand years to come.

The want of sight she well supplies;
She makes the pearly gates appear;
Far into distant worlds she pries,
And brings eternal glories near."

With it we are blessed to survey and locate these wonderful STAKES of truth that are around about Jerusalem as the Lord round about his people and to rejoice in them. The compass which is hope, is ever pointing to that magnetic pole, that bright and Morning Star, enabling us to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Last, but not least, the level, which is charity, the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, keeps us from sinking too low in the slough of despondency, neither allowing us to rise to too dangerous heights, but keeps us on an even keel, on the level with our brethren. Without this level the instrument would be worthless. So without charity we are nothing.

Now a few thoughts in regard to the cords that SHALL never be broken. Are we not drawn by the cords of His love, causing us to walk that straight and narrow way that leads to life everlasting? Is it not God's eternal love that binds together all these STAKES into one complete unit or plan of salvation? I am fully persuaded it is. These STAKES and CORDS form not only a boundary but also a protection, a barricade that is the bounds of Satan. I had realized for a long time, that Satan was limited and could go no farther than God's will permitted him, but I did not know the limit of his bounds. Now I am blessed to see that these STAKES are his bounds, and he may throw his whole Satanic forces against them, but not one of

them shall ever be removed, nor the cords thereof broken. What a glorious comforting thought, what a blessed state of security Zion rests in, none shall pluck them out of His hands, but He shall raise them up in the last day. Our needs are all provided for and supplied, and we are told to "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on." "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them." "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." These wonderful illustrations are proof of God's love for his people.

"Fenced in by Jehovah's SHALLS and WILLS,
Firm as the everlasting hills."

Now to enumerate a few more of these beautiful STAKES of truth as we locate and view them through our telescope (eye of faith). Let us turn first to the past, and we see righteous Abel through faith making a more excellent offering to God than Cain, by offering the firstling of his flock, and the fat thereof, a most beautiful type or figure of the Son of God who stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Looking back even further, we see Adam in the garden of Eden, being not deceived, partaking of the forbidden fruit, going down under the curse of the law of sin and death. Why? Because of his great love for Eve, that he might claim her his bride, for she was bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, and he loved her as his own flesh, and Adam could not have remained in that upright position as when placed in the garden, since Eve had sinned, and claim her his bride, but had to go down to where she was.

So did the second Adam, Jesus Christ, leave his high courts of glory and come down to these low climes of sorrow, to suffer, bleed and die that he might redeem his bride, the church, he took upon himself the likeness of sinful flesh, that he might condemn sin in the flesh, by the shedding of his precious blood whereby we are cleansed, fulfilling the law to every jot and tittle, satisfying the demands thereof, he being the end of the law of righteousness to every one that believeth, did redeem his bride from under the law, and present her unto his Father without spot or wrinkle or blemish of any kind.

In the law, was shown forth by types and shadows, the good things that were to come, but there was fault found with the law or first covenant, in that it did not make the comers thereunto perfect, but did serve as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. Finding fault with the old covenant, the prophet, Jeremiah, 31:31-34, declared: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I WILL make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this SHALL be the covenant that I WILL make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I WILL put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and WILL be their God, and they SHALL be my people. And they SHALL teach no more every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for they SHALL all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I WILL forgive their iniquity,

and I WILL remember their sin no more."

I have quoted at length to call your attention to the numerous WILLS and SHALLS contained therein, and if you dear reader will refer to the eighth chapter of Hebrews, you will find the fulfilment of this prophecy on record, reading almost word for word. Oh, those glorious STAKES of truth. Why did the law enter? "That the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

You may take any ONE of these STAKES of truth and it is a big text within itself and they have enlarged so much, that to me, this scripture has become the text of texts, and if I were to live an hundred years and talk it the remainder of my days, the half would not yet be told.

Looking again through our telescope, we see Daniel in the lion's den, cast therein by the king's decree to be destroyed, but God meant it otherwise; to make his power known, God locked the jaws of the lions, and the king of beasts had to cast his crown at his feet in acknowledgment of Daniel's God.

Again we look, and we see Jonah in captivity, in the belly of the whale, and after being there three days and nights, we hear him declaring he would pay that he vowed, "Salvation is of the Lord." In so doing he preached the Word, which is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, which does many wonderful things, to the throwing open of prison doors and setting the captive free, and in this case, that whale could hold him no longer, but according to the eternal purpose of God, he vomited him upon dry land, then was Jonah qualified to deliver God's message.

How wonderful do "ALL things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," and these ALL things include the little as well as the big, the evil as well as the good. He maketh the wrath of man to praise him, the remainder he restraineth.

Once more we look, and see three Hebrew children cast into the fiery furnace heated seven times hotter than was wont to be heated, because they would not bow to the image of Baal, according to the king's decree, but the king himself declared that he saw not only three but four, and one was like unto the Son of God, and instead of them being destroyed as they thought, they were delivered out of the furnace without even so much as the smell of fire upon their garments. So fire, the king of the chemical kingdom, the most destructive thing in nature known to man, had to bow, so to speak, to the almighty power of Israel's God: another wonderful STAKE.

For the sake of space, I am going to omit the mention of quite a number of these stakes, and take up again at the crucifixion, when Christ declared "It is finished," He had done the WILL of the Father which sent him, and when he rose a triumphant conqueror over death, hell and the grave and ascended back to his Father from whence he came, the last STAKE was driven, thereby making a complete circuit, a complete unit, a complete salvation for those whose names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life from the foundation of the world.

As time goes on we see the unfolding of God's wonderful plan and the fulfilment of his eternal purpose to such precision that it staggers the imagination and comprehension of man. To prove the certainty of this God said: "As I have thought, so SHALL it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so SHALL it stand." Amen.

The scope included within these stakes of truth, bound together with the cords of His eternal love is as immense as the heavens themselves, and yet small enough to be incorporated in a poor sinner's heart where the kingdom of heaven has been set up, and the love of God shed abroad, Satan having been cast out into the earth, where he roams up and down seeking whom he may devour. Yes, this animated earth, causing the poor sinner to cry out, and declare as Paul did; When I would do good evil is present with me, and how to perform that which is good I find not; hence the constant warfare going on within our members, the flesh against the spirit, no wonder the great apostle said; "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But glory be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, he who is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption: of him, through him and to him are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

When we are blessed to turn our telescope toward the future and view the promised land, that Holy City, whose maker and builder is God, our spirits long to quit this old tenement of clay, to leave this earthly tabernacle of flesh, and be with our blessed Saviour, being raised in his likeness, to see him as he is and be satisfied to sing his praises forevermore, and it will be enough. Humbly submitted in love.

T. W. WHITEFIELD.

Box 1543, Durham, N. C.

The Lord is my shepherd;
I shall not want.
Psalm 23:1.

192 Main St., Flemington, N. J.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: It seems to me now that I consented rather too promptly to your request to send you the enclosed copy of our Church Letter. As I reread it I find it so filled with personalities and items of local interest in our Association that I fear it would fail to interest, much less be desirable material for, the readers of the *Signs*. I am, however, trusting entirely to your judgment. If you decide against its use I shall fully understand, or if you use it I shall be humbly pleased to serve our family paper in even this small way. I received the two missing copies which you so promptly mailed me and I have greatly enjoyed reading them. Everything was good but some of the letters have filled me with an unspeakable yearning to be able to express those secret, sacred, innermost longings of the soul with the clarity and sweetness that the writers for our paper do, but I have to be reticent. I can scarcely trust my own veracity. The thing I would say to-day might mock me tomorrow as a string of meaningless and insincere words. Often I long to unburden a guilty conscience and try to make you understand how unlike I am to a child of grace as you see one, but always I must keep quiet for I cannot express it. Then, too, I think I prefer being the hypocrite to the utter outcast I must become if you knew me as I am.

One thing I know is that I desire the love and fellowship of the children of God. I enjoyed your preaching last Sunday very much. I thought you were going to explain the difference in meaning between formed and created. Sometime perhaps you will. As always.

(Mrs.) ALWILDA R. STRYKER.

To the churches composing the Delaware River Association of Primitive Baptist Churches in session with our sister church at Southampton, Pa., May 28 and 29, 1946. The Kingwood Church sends it annual greetings. Dearly loved Ones: Through the mercy and loving kindness of our God, who verily is all in all, we, the Kingwood Church, have been spared to communicate with you again according to the custom established by our fathers.

It is a sacred pleasure to be able in this way to voice our assurance of the continuation of our love and fellowship for our sister churches. Although this expression comes from real poverty of spirit and utter barrenness of mind, our hearts bid us acknowledge the blessing of the love bestowed upon us. If bereft of it the bow of hope and promise would completely vanish from our sky and the darkness and loneliness left become impenetrable and unbearable.

It is written, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Through the many years of our history we have been richly blessed as an Association by the bond of fellowship which has existed among our churches. Kingwood's prayer is that it may ever continue.

We are happy that the Southampton Church has again bid us come. We well know the joy she feels in being able to welcome us, and we would have her aware that we in turn, appreciate the effort that she must expend in the entertainment of the Association. May the blessing of God attend this effort.

As creatures we wish that we might report that since our meeting together last year we have enjoyed a period of growth and general improvement. God has willed otherwise for us. We remain little changed except for the added infirmities that another year has brought, and from the blows that have continued to fall upon us which we sorrow and lament. Our beloved pastor, Elder H. C. Ker, who served us faithfully and acceptably for more than twenty-two years has been called to enter the eternal and glorious inheritance of the saints. We mourn for those departed times when the words from his lips stirred the depths of our souls, but we are thankful for the joy and the comfort that his instruction and guidance have given us. As we stand at the gap, remembering the mercies of the past and looking forward to the hidden future, we realize that God's will with us has not yet been fully manifested, and though we shrink and falter we must still go on as a church organization. Our needs during the recent years when feebleness and illness deprived us of our pastor's regular visits were provided for amply and graciously. Elders Vaughn and Dodson, neighboring ministers, have given freely of their time and strength to serve us. They continue to do this now and come bringing us the comfort of their gifts in explaining the Word—a blessing for which we are deeply grateful. We still meet by regular appointment once a month from April through November on the second Sunday afternoon of the month. Besides the loss of our pastor our membership has suffered also. Sister Georgianna Rake of Trenton, N. J. was called to her rest within the present month. Obstacles including ill-health, bereavement, distance and lack of travel facilities kept this aged sister away from our regular meetings, but we have the assurance her love for the truth did not lessen during these trials. In addition our congregation has been sorrowfully visited by the loss of two of its ablest and staunchest friends. They were known to many of you—Mr. George H. Myers, our sweet singer, and Mr. James P. Risler, our faithful but afflicted friend and supporter. They were two of those devoted lovers of the truth who

strangely to us remained without the gates. We sorrow for all of these and we see no way of filling the vacancies. At times our erring lips have said, "Let us now give up." Truly we are "cast down but not destroyed." Our support in this hour of feebleness is the knowledge that no manifestation of God's love is ever imperfect or failing, and as that anchor of our souls—his unchanging love for us—cannot be removed we know that, even now, all is well. We come again asking your prayers that we may be given judgment to carry on the affairs of our church in an orderly manner, strength to act upon and defend such judgment, and the charity which will lead us to desire only the welfare of Zion.

If God continues our lives, and if otherwise his providence permits, the Kingwood Church invites this Association to hold its next annual session with them at their church home in Locktown, N. J., May 29 and 30, 1947. A notice confirming this invitation will be published in the *Signs* previous to that date.

We close our letter with the hope that those of our group who are able will attend this year's meeting, to which we look forward as a season of refreshment to our souls. May God's servants come and preach only the comforts of the gospel—those precious promises to condemned sinners emanating from the supreme sacrifice of our dying, and glorious victory of our risen Savior. With such truths proclaimed the memory of this meeting will become to those blessed to hear as the strains of heavenly music that linger in the soul.

Kingwood's closing prayer for herself and sister churches is from the words of a personal prayer found in our hymnal:

"Abide with me! fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens, Lord, with me abide!
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me."

(Mrs.) ALWILDA R. STRYKER.

3347 Tutwiler, Ave., Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I have read and reread your article on the talents and enjoyed it very much. I humbly hope I was given understanding to read it in the same light it was written, though sometimes I feel very foolish when I claim such things. Have had some beautiful thoughts along the line which I hoped to be able to write you, but when I find the time to do so I do not have the mind. At times I wonder why it is so. While on my way to work mornings it seems it would be so easy to write. Most beautiful words flow through my mind and fill my soul with love and admiration until it is all I can do to keep silent. It seems it would be well to shout it from the housetops, the whole creation is most beautiful. One morning I thought, as I looked around me, this earth is the planting of God, how perfect it is and from year to year it breaks forth in buds unfolding into bloom. The grass, weeds and beautiful trees, shrubs and everything we see comes up out of the earth at God's command. Years and years ago when the earth was bare God said let the earth bring forth and to this day the seeds have not run out. There is no way for man to make seed. Of all the seeds we have and have experimented with, improved, etc, man has to have a seed that God made to start with. We might find new ones, things that we do not know what they are or what they are good for but we cannot start to make a seed.

I received a letter from a brother Neal in Illinois also on the talents which I appreciated very much. I do not feel worthy of such kindness and consideration, but God only knows how much I love to hear from those whose trust is in the Lord. So many are going about to establish their own righteousness with perfect satisfaction and ease and everything going well with them

seemingly. When we are shut up in prison and have no light we wonder very seriously if we are just poor ignorant people without foundation. Yea, there are times when all things seem to be against us. We even blush when asked what church we attend, and what we believe in, and why do we not want the children to go to Sunday School, etc.? Then there are times when we feel we would be glad if some one would ask these questions. When we think we could tell them so much if put to the test we would most assuredly find we had nothing of our own to fight with. When God is in the matter and gives us words of utterance then it is so easy, so it is not us at all, but of God who said, "Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say."

I feel so much better about the servant that hid his talent. The way I looked at it before was that the servant with the hidden talent was lost, but I hope I have seen that God can take away the one talent he had and give it to another who had more serving ability and still save the servant, for the saving power for every one of God's children is in the Lord. If it is not saying too much I feel I experienced for a long time what it might be for the one talent to be taken away. I became so cold and indifferent it seemed all I had ever held dear had faded and gone; the way of life seemed to grow harder with no hope of relief; my heart was so cold and lifeless; church privileges held no charm for me for I found no comfort there. I was thoroughly convinced all I had had been taken from me yet my earliest love for heavenly things I could not forget. I felt the Lord had become so displeased with me he had taken all good things from me, but for his own name's sake he would raise me up again the last day. I fully believed I would have to grope in that awful darkness the rest of my days, and that it would be better if he would hasten the time and let me rest, but thanks to his adorable name he hastened the day of rest and let me live and help take care of my family and made me love again. Yes he, I hope, was shaping me as he would have me be as the potter does the clay. I only wish I could be as submissive in his hands as the clay in the potter's hands. It is easy enough, seemingly, for us to say all things are working for our good some way known unto God if everything is going well with us, but when the pressure is on us we learn of ourselves we have no faith and wonder if we have any part in salvation at all.

I must bring this to a close. I know your time is all taken up but I wanted you to know your article was of great comfort to me, God opening up my understanding I hope. It all comes from the Lord, both the desire for understanding and the understanding, and the sweetest of all is love. We feel it coming down from heaven and flowing through our very souls and on to God's children. The same sweet feeling for both great and small when we hear them speak honor to our God and have no confidence in the flesh.

May God be with you and all who are in any way helping to keep our family paper going out in all parts of the world, carrying the many good letters and editorials to the comfort of untold numbers, and to the honor of our Lord who doeth all things well. Remember me and mine when allowed to pray. Unworthily yours.

(Mrs.) LUTHER CAMPBELL

Route 1, Naches, Wash.

DEAR ONES IN THE HOPE IN CHRIST JESUS: I have thought for a month or two I would write you a few lines and mail a small check as I did not get to put in my mite while you were out visiting all of us, and I did so appreciate your grand sermons. Would love to have heard all of them, but I am so thankful for all the goodness the Lord has seen fit to send my way that I do not want to complain in any way at any time. I know how very selfish I am.

The way I was reminded of you this morning was through a cousin of my late husband. I had told her what wonderful reading I got from the *Signs* so I am sending her the last March issue. They have all been so comforting to me it was hard to choose one. I am so happy to have met you folks and hope to meet you again. Sincerely,

(Mrs.) CHAS. D. SHANKS

(The foregoing letter was received by Elder Vaughn after his visit to the brethren in the Northwest. We are glad to have the opportunity to publish it. R. L. D.)

Penhook, Va.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Please find enclosed $2 for my subscription to the *Signs*. I do not want to miss a copy. I enjoy the precious truths so much. I seldom get to hear preaching, and have no one to talk with who believes as I do, so the *Signs* is like a good friend, cheering me on my lonely road. May God bless you in your good work. A sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

(Mrs.) W. T. POTTER

Wheatland, Ind.

ELDER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: Please send the *Signs* for another year. I am sorry to have been slow in remitting but it was just neglect. I am enclosing an extra dollar to use for some unpaid subscription. I love to read the *Signs* and usually sit down and read it through before I lay it aside. I am not a member of the church that I love, but have been made to feel it is above the other churches which I have attended. Once one has been given the sight to see, other preaching falls short. One can hear sermons many times but never is grace preached. Many good things are said at times but the glory is never given to Christ our advocate, nor is the fulness preached. I am not privileged to live near a Primitive Baptist Church and am very often made to feel I am a queer person and not setting a good example as a Christian because I do not send my children to Sunday School. I have been told recently that my hopes of a better world are not very reassuring, but I find sweet comfort and help in Paul's words to the Philippians 1:28. My father and mother were Baptists. He is still living and we have many enjoyable hours reading and talking. He very often quotes, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Psalms 110:3. We have both been told it is not in the Bible. Thank you for the courtesy of sending the paper. Pray for us that God will lead us in a sweeter knowledge of his word. Yours very sincerely,

(Mrs.) ARTHUR SMITH

Report of meeting at High Point, N. C.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES AND BRETHREN: The High Point Primitive Predestinarian Baptist Church met May 19, 1946 for the purpose of preaching and communion. There were five preachers present and a large congregation. The preaching was done by Christ Jesus we hope through the following Elders. Visiting brethren from Winston-Salem, Burlington and other places were invited to take part in the services.

First was prayer by Elder Obryant, the pastor, that the will of the Lord be done. Second, Elder Wright of Winston-

Salem, N. C. preached. Subject lesson—Mark, 14th chapter. The woman poured ointment on the head of Jesus Christ as a good work and a memorial. God declared the end from the beginning saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" and his saints shall praise him. Christ Jesus is and was from all eternity the holy sacrifice of God to take away the sins of his chosen people, who were chosen in Christ before the world began. The children of God are spiritually adopted in Christ Jesus and they are his before they are born the first time. The purpose of God is the same as saying the thing is sure to come to pass if God purposed it to come to pass for this reason seeing there is no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God. There cannot any power arise to defeat God's purpose, therefore it is sure to come to pass. The inner or spiritual man has to be renewed from time to time as the Lord sees fit to work in and through the person saved by the grace of God and it is the work of God. He quickeneth whom he will, Christ is the judge of the quick and the dead. You are saved entirely by the grace of God and all the good works done by any one is the work of grace done by the Lord through the person, therefore it is the work of God. Grace, faith and repentance are all measured out to us according to the will and purpose of God, and is all from first to last a gift of God that no flesh should boast in his presence. Ephesians second chapter.

Christ came not to do his own will but the will of the Father who sent him for a purpose. Faith and repentance are evidences of salvation and are gifts of God as all other graces are. The grace of good works is a gift of God. Sometimes I am made to believe his power has been manifest to me, then I rejoice in spirit and in the hope of heaven and immortal glory which awaits all the heirs of promise. We are saved by the life and death of Christ Jesus on the cross. I love the doctrine of grace of Christ Jesus and live in hope of heaven. I had doubts when I united with the church and still do, but if we could only know that we are the elect of God then we could rest assured that when the last breath leaves us we could go to our eternal home prepared for us by God himself. We are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ Jesus. I loved the Christian doctrine and the church of God and wanted to be with them, but I did not feel worthy or fit to be with so good a people. I begged God to show me the true church and he showed me the Old Baptist church. I have been a member about forty years.

Third, Elder Tucker of High Point, N. C. came second, saying I love the doctrine of predestination, the doctrine of grace and the doctrine of election. I was a Sunday School teacher when I united with the Old Baptist church. They all looked alike to me. There were no big I's and little U's. I loved them and the doctrine they taught. It seemed to me while at one of the Baptist meetings something picked me up and set me before the church and they accepted me. When we are saved I believe we are all like the apostle Paul— down with scales on our eyes, and we do not get up until the Lord lifts us up and the scales fall from our eyes and we can see things differently. The apostle Paul said, I am a prisoner of Jesus Christ. Before he was arrested and saved by the grace of Christ Jesus, all the religion he had was natural religion, and at that time he had letters of authority from the chief priests to arrest and place in prison all who believed in Jesus Christ, and before he could accomplish his purpose God arrested him and fulfilled His purpose in him. It is the purpose of God that overrules all other purposes. The apostle in telling of his conversation

said, "Suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And I answered, Who art thou, Lord?" "And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." The Lord told him to arise from his fallen condition, yet being blind, and go to Damascus and it shall be told thee what thou must do, not what thou may do but what thou must do for thou art a chosen vessel to carry the gospel to kings, priests and to the gentiles. He was chosen to salvation and to the office of a preacher before the world was created, and God is carrying out his purpose in him. He had not done anything good to cause the Lord to save him, but it was according to God's electing love, and God's purpose that the apostle Paul was saved and that is the cause that any one is saved. It is denied all through the Bible that we are saved by good works, neither is there anything in the person that causes God to save him, but God does all things according to his own counsel and purpose which he purposed in himself from all eternity. This is not an exact quotation of the preachers sermons for I cannot write all of it down. I have left out many points made by them and have added some according to my knowledge and belief, and I think the whole will harmonize with the teaching of God's word and the faith of the preachers.

Paul found a thorn in his flesh and he sought the Lord thrice to remove it for it was a hindrance to him, or at least he thought it was, and the Lord answered him, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." The apostle Paul said, "But by the grace of God I am what I am." "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." He says I find two laws in my members; one the law of eternal life, the other the law of sin and death which works in my flesh, and what I would do I do not, and what I would not that I do. The quickening life of Christ worketh in the soul, or inner man, for he that is born of God doth not commit sin for his seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin. The inner man, the portion of man that is born of the Spirit, is holy and free from sin and remains in that state in all eternity. The fleshly body is a lump of earth and returns to the earth. All but the first pair are born of a woman and born in sin and it is sin that kills the natural body. Sin dwelleth in the saved and the unsaved and that was the reason the apostle said. "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me (the inner man) from the body of this death?" or from this sin cursed and deathly body of mine. I groan within myself desiring to depart out of this old sinful body and be present with the Lord. "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Then will come to pass the saying, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" We have the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. The meeting then adjourned for dinner.

It was not the ringing of church bells that called the people back after dinner, but singing the good old songs. It was not the sound of instrumental music, but the natural voices of men and women singing the praises of God. Fourth, Elder Obryant next came forth to address the people. His text was, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Eph. 2:1. I cannot say all that he said neither can I of the others. In his explanation he said he hoped that this was a God given text, and that it was in his heart and mind,

but he did not know that he would be able to bring out the beauty of the text. He went back to Adam and Eve and showed their helplessness. Said he wanted to draw a picture of them down and then raised up in Christ Jesus. There was no spark of righteousness in Adam and Eve, the natural headship of the human family. When they fell in sin and under the law of condemnation all his offspring fell in him their natural head. Every man, woman and child in all ages and in all the world are born in sin of the same nature as their federal head, Adam. The sin of Adam in them is enough to eternally condemn them, but as soon as they are come to the years of accountability they begin to rebel against God and commit the same or worse sins than Adam did. The human race is down and so low down that none can help himself or come out from under the yoke of condemnation which the law has placed over him. The penalty was death. The day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die or be cut off from God. The spotless sacrifice, counsel and purpose of God long before Adam and Eve fell under the law. As Adam was the headship of the natural family, Christ Jesus, the second Adam, was and is headship of all the spiritual family. Christ paid the price of the law which was death of the natural body when he died on the cross. All the natural family was in Adam, their headship, and fell when he fell. All the spiritual family was in Christ Jesus and rose in a spiritual sense when he arose from the dead. Grace was given us in Christ before the world began. "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven." It was a spiritual existence.

There are many more things I would like to write about but I better close. Next in order was the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, breaking of bread and wine, and washing of the saint's feet. Elder Tucker and Elder Rhodes with deacons, Payne and Hatchings and others took part in this service. Then they sang a song, shook hands and went out. I have written it to the best of my knowledge and belief and kept in line with the preachers as best I could. May the Lord add his blessing. In hope of eternal life.

THOMAS W. KIMSEY
919 Asheboro St., High Point, N. C.

A Trip To The Northwest

From July 14 to August 12, 1946 my wife and I visited among the Old School Baptists in the states of Washington, Oregon and Idaho. Elder A. D. Hughett, pastor of the Old School Baptist church at Naches, Wash. called a special meeting at the home of brother Roy E. Crooks and his aged mother, sister Crooks who is unable to get out to attend meetings, in Goldendale, Wash. on Sunday, July 14, that we might meet, become acquainted and learn of the times and places of meetings. The next meeting was Sunday July 21, which was held at Naches, Wash. in the western part of the Yakima Valley at the home of sister Beatrice Haan. After meeting, dinner which was brought by the congregation from their homes, was served and the time was spent visiting until time to go to our places of entertainment for the night. Quite a number were present at this meeting, a day enjoyed by all present. All lovers of the truth visiting these parts would find a warm welcome with those present at this meeting.

Saturday, July 27, Elder A. D. Hughett, brother Roy E. Crooks and I left Goldendale, Wash. for the home of Elder J. F. Coleman, a distance of about 200 miles at Riffe, Wash. where we spent the night. Sunday morning, July 28, we with Elder Coleman and family, and sister Beatrice Haan and brother J. F. Simpson, who joined us at Naches, started on a journey to brother C. M.

Fisher's home at Raymond, West Port Beach, Wash. There we met with Elder L. F. Adkins of Pe Ell, Wash. pastor of that church. Elder Adkins introduced the services also introducing me with these words, "We have with us to-day Elder Charles W. Vaughn, an Associate Editor of our paper, the *Signs of the Times,* who we are glad to welcome in our midst. His writings in the *Signs* have preceded his visit and we are glad to welcome and invite him to come forward and preach for us, to be followed by Elder A. D. Hughett." Remarks followed by Elder Adkins, Elder Coleman and others. After dismissal, luncheon was served to all present and some time was spent in visiting. We then returned to the home of Elder and sister Coleman where we spent the night. Next morning we bid adieu to Elder Coleman and family and started on our return home to Naches, Yakima and Goldendale, Wash. which was a great oasis we were given to refresh in through the blessings of Almighty God bestowed upon Elder A. D. Hughett. Before we parted at the end of this visit plans were laid, if the Lord so willed, that we would leave our homes again August 10 for Island City, Ore. to visit Elder C. W. Bond and the church at his place, and at Weiser, Idaho where Elder Jeffreys is pastor of Salem Church.

July 30, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Lear and daughter Charlann, sister Vaughn and I left the Lear home in Goldendale for one week of sightseeing during Mr. Lear's vacation. We went down the Columbia River and with great admiration scanned the wonderful chasms and high walls of rock that form the walls on both sides of this wonderful river of blue crystal water; also noting the volumes of water coming into the Columbia, viz, Klickatat, Big White Salmon and Little White Salmon Rivers, all entering before we reached the Bonneville Dam across the Columbia where the locks are for boats coming up the Columbia River east of the Cascade Mountains. Here we saw the fish ladder where the fish from the lower Columbia pass the great Bonneville Dam for the upper waters of the Columbia River and its tributaries. The fish coming up this ladder into the upper waters are all counted, the highest number up to that time for one day was 51,000.

We then went to the great Kaiser ship building plant and had a view of it and the immensity of its capacity from the highway, then on to Portland and to Seaside Heights on the shore of the Pacific Ocean where we spent the night. Next morning after visiting friends and viewing the sights there on the Pacific shore we left for Seattle, passing through many towns and the city of Tacoma we reached our destination at the home of Capt. and Mrs. Norman Martinson where we made our headquarters from Wednesday evening until Monday morning, Aug. 5, when we started out for Goldendale by way of Mt. Rainer, Schnook Pass and Yakima Valley, reaching Goldendale about 5 P.M. Pacific Time. The beauty and grandeur of the scenery we saw will never be forgotten. We owe much gratitude to Capt. and Mrs. Martinson for the hospitality and kindness which they bestowed upon us, making effort to take us to various places of interest. We spent one afternoon with the daughter of the late Attorney P. L. Pendleton, a niece of Mrs. Vaughn, having dinner with her and her husband.

Saturday, Aug. 10, brother Roy E. Crooks and I left Goldendale for Toppinish, Wash, in the Yakima Valley to join Elder A. D. Hughett for the trip to Island City, Oregon to visit Elder C. W. Bond and the brethren in that section. From there we went to Weiser, Idaho to visit the Salem Old School

Baptist Church at an all day meeting on Sunday, 116 miles from Island City to Weiser, returning to Island City to spend the night, 232 miles in attending this service plus the distance traveled the previous day which was about 200 miles. The distance next day to return to Goldendale was about 150 miles making the trip in all about 582 miles. We had a very pleasant visit with brethren, sisters and friends. We arrived in Goldendale Monday, August 12 at 12:30 Pacific Standard Time which closed a very precious visit with brethren and sisters of like precious faith which will be long remembered, also the pleasant visits to the homes of many we knew before meeting them in Washington. With great pleasure we visited with sister Vaughn's two brothers, George P. and John W. Pendleton, whose homes are in Yakima Valley, and Mrs. William Moorehead, a sister, at Goldendale, Wash. This all contributed to make our visit pleasant and show kindness to us. May God's blessings rest upon them.

(Elder) C. W. VAUGHN.

Belen, N. M.

R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IF ONE SO UNWORTHY AS I COULD CALL YOU BROTHER: I am not a member of the church, but I think I believe the doctrine set forth as strong as any one, but I cannot express it in words. We received the *Signs* for August and could hardly lay it down until we read it all. There are so many good letters in this month's issue. Yours and all we enjoyed so much. If any of you should be passing through Belen, N.M., please look us up. We would be so glad to welcome you in our humble home. With humble hope from a sister saved by grace if saved at all.

(Mrs.) P. B. CORLEY.

2210 Knox St., Durham, N. C.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER:

For a little more than a year I have been receiving your fine paper, and I wish to say I do not see how I did without it for so many years. It had not been the will of the God of heaven and earth to arrange for one so low as I to learn about the dear old *Signs of the Times*. If I know my heart at all I surely appreciate not only the paper, but better still the Editor and the dear ones that write for publication. For some time now I have felt a moving or impression, I trust, to write a word or so for your consideration, but what to write I am at a loss to know, unless it might be a portion of what I feel to hope has been the dealing of Israel's God with and concerning this poor sinner. I cannot possibly say that it has come about through earthly ties or flesh and blood, for with the exception of one dear cousin I have to stand alone in this place. I have an uncle and a cousin who are Missionary Baptist preachers so you see what I am faced with, but I trust it has all worked together for my good. I also followed that trade or profession for three years, and I feel now to my shame. I am sure I persecuted the church, but one day about six years ago I attended a funeral conducted by Elder Lex Chandler of Person Co., N. C., now deceased, and God through him preached the glorious gospel of the Son of God to me if I am not a poor, deceived mortal.

About six or eight months prior to that I was awakened from slumber by a voice so full that it sounded all through my being, saying, "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" I wish to say that this worm of the dust spent many miserable months and days until the above mentioned funeral, which place was so illuminated that I cannot believe the light that shone around Paul was any brighter than the light

that I was blessed to behold on that day. Before my awakening from that slumber I was very full of good works that I thought I could do, yes I was mighty full of boasting. But as Naomi, I believe said, "I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty." Yes, I was so full that I could not possibly have been an hungered, but my hope is that it pleased Almighty God in and through the mercy of his dear Son to empty me of that fulness until the bones stuck out instead and then I was forced to hunger. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Dear brother, I still feel so empty and lean most of the time, but I feel sometimes that he blesses me to not only be filled but he overflows my cup as I trust was the case in this past Saturday and Sunday at old Surl Church at our union meeting, and if I could preach at all now I would rather preach the truth free than to preach a lie for pay. May I say in conclusion that I trust it pleased the voice of my awakening to carry me to dear old Eno Church in the Lower Country Line about five years ago. I trust to meet you and hear you preach some day. Yours unworthily.

GEORGE H. CARRINGTON.

NOTICE TO ALL OLD BAPTISTS

I have collected many thousand books, pamphlets, periodicals, minutes, papers and other historical documents. I am conducting a Library Service to all Baptists. Any information needed I will search out and make a copy for you free.

I am anxious to make this a real service, and if you will, please help me by sending me your old minutes, papers, books and other documents. I am especially interested at this time in old things about the church in the New England states. (Elder) W. D. GRIFFIN

Fernbank, Ala.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am enclosing a check for $4. Use $2 for renewing my subscription and the other as you think best. I do enjoy reading the good letters. Surely did enjoy Mrs. Louise Newman's letter in the July issue. It is wonderful how the Lord works with his people, and it is a perfect work. He came to do the work that his Father gave him to do and I believe that he finished it, which gives his people a free salvation. Let us give all honor and glory to his great and good name. A sinner saved by grace if it be.

H. F. WALDON.

Monroe, La.

DEAR EDITORS: You will find enclosed $4 for the continuance of the *Signs of the Times*. I may be in arrears with my subscription and if I am it is purely neglect. I feel so ashamed and so unappreciative when I notice on the paper that I am behind with my subscription. The years come and go so quickly these days with so much on my mind, and so much sorrow and grief in the world I neglect so many things that I ought to do. I have been a subscriber only for a few years but I used to borrow it from others and found it such a comfort and food to my soul. It is meat and drink to all those who are contending for the faith. I know I am not worthy to be among those, or to even partake of the many good articles in the *Signs*. I promise to be prompt in sending in my subscription, God willing, I feel and know that we should not delay.

(Mrs.) W. H. COOK.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. R. M. Blair, La., $1; A friend, Ct., $3; Mrs. R. H. Palmer, Ala., $6; Mrs. V. Pate, Tex., $1; Mrs. J. W. Culpepper, Tex., $1; W. W. Jackson, Ga., $1; Mrs. L. F. Maxim, N. Y., $1; Eld. W. A. Little, Tex., $1; Mrs. C. D. Shanks, Wash., $1; Mrs. M. Thompson, Tex., $3; Mrs. S. Duclos, Can., $1; Mrs. J. Clifford, Wash., $1; Eld. W. B. Valentine, La., $1; G. E. Davis, Ala., $1.

EDITORIAL

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NEW YEAR'S GREETING

For several years past we have prefaced our New Year's Greeting with somewhat of a resume of world events. It is our mind at this time to leave this field of comment for those far better qualified than ourself to explore. We shall, therefore, enter immediately upon the consideration of those things which we believe are of vital interest to our readers. As a starting point we will quote for a text the sixteenth verse of the sixth chapter of Jeremiah:

> "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein."

As those who are endeavoring to maintain a strict adherence to the principles of doctrine and order of the church as originally built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, we most certainly could not do better, as we stand upon the threshold of this New Year, than to firmly resolve that whatsoever we shall hereafter teach, preach and accept shall have the unqualified support of a "Thus saith the Lord." The Psalmist said, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." Therefore we, as his humble and faithful followers, should strive at all times and at all costs to maintain the honor of his cause and thus fulfill his word. The phrase, "Thus saith the Lord" is to be found a very considerable number of times in Holy Writ and volumes could be written upon it, but at this time we only wish to stress and emphasize the fact that the things contained in our text have no less an authority for them than the Lord himself, and it behooves us to give them our most diligent and earnest heed.

Daniel in prophesying of earthly rulers and kings said, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." The Lord's portion is his people and he has and always will care for them and give them whatever instruction may be necessary to guide and direct in the way they should go. They should therefore search the Scriptures and follow their teaching, rather than be led away from the paths of truth by uninspired men and false teachers. They should also beware of the false teaching of God's servants who, while they may preach the gospel does not guarantee that *all* that they preach is the gospel. How true and applicable to this modernistic world is the language of our text! We are most certainly standing in the ways, plural, of men, and there are innumerable lo-heres and lo-theres, but we should go not after them. We should try them and test them out, "and see" what they are and where they will lead to if we follow them. God has given us the plumb line in his precious word by which they can be measured and weighed, and all that we read and hear

should be subjected to this standard, regardless of the source from whence it may come, in order to determine its genuineness. Isaiah said, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Paul said, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." How we need to ponder the full meaning and significance of this as it applies to doctrine, to the ordinances of God's house, to the order and practice of reproving, correcting and instructing in righteousness, to the end that all things which pertains to the church of God may be done decently and in order and to the glory of his precious name.

Some of the fundamental points of doctrine for which the *Signs* has contended might be enumerated in the following order: (1) The sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfection of the Three-in-One God; (2) His purpose and predestination in all things; (3) His eternal and unconditional election; (4) The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man; (5) That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only; (6) The sovereign and irresistible work of the Holy Spirit in regenerating and quickening the elect of God; (7) The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace; (8) The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment; (9) That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers—that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament, and that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saint of God; (10) That there is no connection between the Church and the State. If any of these are brought into question, we should accept and abide by whatever the word of God says about them.

With regard to the ordinances of the church, such as baptism, the Lord's Supper, the setting apart of Elders and Deacons to the work which the Spirit has assigned them, the greeting of one another with an holy kiss, the washing of the saints feet, etc. should we not seek to know and follow the mind of the Spirit in all of these ordinances? Personally, we do not wish to sit in judgment or decide these matters for others, except that we want to see the Old School Baptist church kept as free from creature works and the ways of men, as possible. We do not feel that we should undertake to settle any differences by the use of carnal weapons and warfare, but wherever there is error or falsehood, like David, we should come in the name and strength of the Lord, leaning upon the staff of faith and employing only a "Thus saith the Lord," or the word of God, which was signified by the five smooth pebbles David took from the brook. Only by faith in God and through the proper use of his holy word can we even hope to triumph over those who oppose his glorious truth. And wherever reproof, rebuke, correction or instruction in righteousness is necessary, let us remember that the Scriptures thoroughly furnish the man of God unto every good work. Therefore, as we stand in the ways, and see, may God give us to ask him to show us the old paths, and where is the good way, that we may walk therein. In our searching of the Scriptures, if we are to understand them aright, God must shed forth his light upon them and reveal unto us their hidden meaning, otherwise we will not be able to find the old paths or the good way to walk in them. Israel of old often went a crooked way, for she was a stiffnecked and rebellious people, but God in his own inimitable way and time made crooked things straight, often by the use of great trials and afflictions and

suffering on the part of his people. We can profit a great deal by searching out God's dealings with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the household of faith down through the ages. Both the Old and the New Testament scriptures testify of Jesus, and if we want to know "where is the good way," we should inquire of those who by God's own testimony were inspired to write, and we may be sure that invariably their arrows will point to the one and only "good way." It should be noted that the singular tense is used here. This very definitely means that there is but one true way of salvation from sin, and that is by and through the atoning blood of the blessed Lamb of God, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus. Where this way is found and walked in, and our text admonishes us to "walk therein," there is life and joy and peace in the Holy Ghost. There can be no rest or peace for the soul except in a walk, or life in Christ Jesus, who is the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. God who in the counsels of eternity chose his people and gave them life in this way, has determined that they shall be exercised in it. In his dealings with them, in due time, they are made to labor and find themselves heavy laden with the burdens of sin, and when their load becomes so heavy and unbearable as to sink them into utter despair, they are made to hear his voice saying unto them, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

How wonderful it would be if, as some seem to think, we could keep ourselves in the fear and love of God. In all sincerity we would ask, is there a single one among our readers who would not wish to live closer and closer to God day by day, but why is it they often find themselves mourning and groaning because of sin? Is it not because they cannot do the things they would, and the things they would not they do? They are thus made to know, of a truth, that no good thing dwells in their flesh. Like the great apostle, they can truly say they delight in the law of God after the inward man, but by bitter experience they discover another law in their members, which wars against their mind and brings them into captivity to the law which is in their members. Such an experience causes them to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" There is only one way of escape and that is by and through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Our text also says that Israel replied to God, saying, "We will not walk therein." In our meditations upon God's dealings with Israel in Egypt, where he watched over and kept them as the apple of his eye and finally delivered them in so miraculous a manner at the Red Sea, we have sometimes wondered how they could have been so unmindful of his goodness and mercy to them all the days of their life as to require Aaron to make them a golden calf to worship before Moses could even come down from the mount of God. We are ready to accuse them of being ungrateful to the extreme. But, how about ourselves? Are we any better than they? Are we not all like sheep, prone to go astray and search for false gods? Here again, we find that through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, we have hope, for while the record shows that although God often uses the rod to correct his people for their stiffneckedness and rebellion, at the same time he has been merciful and longsuffering, not willing that any should perish. When

left to ourselves we are as prone to err as the sparks are to fly upward, and if we are not kept, day by day, by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, we most certainly will fall by the wayside. We are made to feel continually that it is by the grace of God, that we are what we are so far as our service to him is concerned, and we are made to desire to render unto him undivided praise, not only in this world, but in that which is to come.

According to nature we realize full well that we have not the will or desire even to follow in the precepts of our Lord, or to keep his commandments, but we are made to hope that by reason of a new birth we do hunger and thirst after righteousness, and that in due time we shall be filled and have all of our soul's yearnings satisfied in Christ Jesus. That will not be, however, until we shall see him as he is and be like him—then we shall praise him, world without end.

In the meantime, if it be his will, may God grant grace sufficient throughout both the New Year and all the years that are to come that will enable us to bear the kind of fruit that will prove that the tree has been made good, and may he constantly watch over and keep us from all harm and danger, and finally bring us forth more than conquerors over death, through him that loved us and gave himself for us, to the honor and glory of his own name and the praise of his matchless grace. Amen.

R.L.D.

SPECIAL NOTICE

The churches of the North West will gladly welcome Baptist families to settle here. Ministers specially needed. This is a good country, pleasant climate, with all the opportunities needed to build happy and prosperous homes, and develop the lives of the rising generations.

We need energetic and progressive minded people. Any one interested may write to Elder C. W. BOND, Island City, Oregon for further information.

Why Do Children Of God Suffer

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." 2 Tim. 2:12.

It is evident in all the experiences of the children of God as recorded in the Bible, that they all suffered in many ways. It is also evident in the experiences related by God's children in this age that suffering is yet common. They are all experimentally acquainted with grief, temptations, persecutions, tribulations and all manner of suffering. Job was afflicted in body and had all earthly possessions taken from him. All the Israelites suffered under Egyptian bondage. David was sorely oppressed and conscious of his great sins. Paul was beaten with many stripes and was made to exclaim, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Yes this suffering is necessary, but why?

We do not suffer in order to merit a home in heaven, because Jesus fulfilled the law to a jot and tittle before us. Therefore, it is solely upon his merits that we shall inhabit that place prepared for his saints in after life. He has merited our salvation in heaven by his obedience.

We do not suffer in order to merit blessings in time for these were included in the "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" that was given to us by the Father through the merits of Jesus. These blessings that we enjoy in time are not merited by us as Paul says, "By grace are ye saved (in time) through faith; and that (faith) not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should boast."

We do not suffer to satisfy justice; nor to merit any blessing in time; nor to gain a home in heaven. We suffer because it was appointed unto us to suffer, God appointed to us this suffering just as he appointed Paul to suffer as an apostle, a preacher and teacher

of the Gentiles. (1 Tim. 1:11-12). In 1st Thessalonians 3:3 we read, "That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto." So then, this suffering comes by the appointment of God. It was also appointed unto Jesus to suffer and as it was necessary for him to have suffered so it is necessary that we suffer. Paul reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered. (Acts 17:3). It was not only necessary that Jesus suffer because of our sins, but it was also necessary in order to learn obedience. Paul wrote to the Hebrews concerning Jesus, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." Heb. 5:8 So Jesus was taught obedience through suffering. We learn obedience by the things we suffer.

Paul told the Philippian brethren, "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Phil. 1:29. Even the suffering of God's children is a gift. It is a valuable gift for it teaches obedience. We are made obedient through suffering. Paul did not preach the gospel for filthy lucre's sake nor for any glory for he said, "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" 1 Cor. 9:16. The sufferings that Paul experienced drove him to obedience. God is a perfect teacher and will make his children obedient as it is said in Psalms 110:3 "Thy people SHALL BE WILLING in the day of thy power."

How could we have believed that Jesus was the Christ had we never suffered? It took the suffering of trials, heartaches, disappointments, vexation of our natural spirits, and failures in all our undertakings to teach us that we were not capable of saving ourselves and to make us to cry to some power other than ourselves to save us. Thus, by this suffering God taught us faith. How could we believe in an all-wise sovereign God had we not suffered so many disappointments to teach us that we are at best but vanity and foolish, and to teach us that "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps?" By these experiences God teaches us that there is a power that is sovereign and worketh all things after the counsel of his own will and no power is able to withstand him.

It takes the sufferings that we experience to teach us daily that we are nothing—yea, less than nothing and vanity. This suffering is necessary to keep us humble and dependent upon the grace of God. This suffering makes us to be constant in prayer to the God of Israel for his mercies. We cry unto him daily for his continued mercies, realizing that we do not merit anything but his hot wrath. If justice was meted out to us according to that we deserve, hell would be our doom.

Now we are comforted with this thought, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." Oh, blessed thought! Paul reckoned in his letter to the Roman brethren, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Rom. 8:18. Now we experience sufferings; then, we shall experience glory. Now we experience death; then, we shall experience life. Now we experience sin; then, we shall experience holiness. Now we experience foolishness; then, we shall experience wisdom. Now we experience hope; then, we shall experience reality.

No other people suffer as the children of God suffer. No other people has experienced that pure heart that teaches that the best of man's righteousness is but filthy rags in God's sight. No other

people are convinced that without him we can do nothing. Other people conclude that they have some power vested in them upon the volition of their own will. They think that they can, at least, accept or reject. We would be of the same opinion were it not for the sufferings that we experience that teaches us otherwise. This lesson is learned through suffering. May God be praised for blessing us with suffering to keep us humble and submissive to his will and at each others feet. E.J.L.

ORDINATION

Opened the service with singing hymn 68 (Beebe's collection).

Elder Arnold H. Bellows was chosen moderator, and Deacon Edward K. Adsit, clerk.

By request of the Olive and Hurley Church of the Lexington-Roxbury Association the following Elders of the same faith and order met with her this day, September 13, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred forty-six (1946), and formed a Presbytery of the following names: Elders George Ruston, Dutton, Ontario, Canada; R. Lester Dodson, Rutherford, N. J.; Charles W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J.; W. J. Berry, Elon College, N. C.; Arnold H. Bellows, West Hurley, N. Y.; H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va.; D. L. Topping, Linthicum Heights, Baltimore, Md.; J. D. Wood, Baltimore, Md.; J. P. Helms, Vinton, Va.; E. C. Jones, Varina, N. C., and a council of the following brethren from the churches and associations as indicated:

First Roxbury—Sisters Virtue Ballard, Stella Walker, Cenia Harrington, Blanch Peet.

Second Roxbury—Brother Tracy Redmond, sisters Prudence Hinkley, Ida Mayes.

Middletown and Andes—Sister Fannie Wooden.

Olive and Hurley—Deacons Orville Winchell, Hewitt Osborn, Edward K. Adsit, brothers Fred Brooks, Arnold Redmond, sisters Florence B. Bellows, Neva Brooks, Flossie I. Faulkner, Elizabeth Slauson, Sarah Smith, Eva L. Winchell, Edna Redmond.

Middleburg—Deacon Isaac McIntyre, sisters Margaret McIntyre, Luella Stevens, Laura Golding, Agnes Goodrich, Luella Ditmar, Mertie E. Bailey.

Clovesville—Sister Lidie Morse.

Ebenezer (Baltimore, Md.)—Deacon Quincy A. Gladding, sister Alice Gladding.

Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada—Sisters Sarah McPhail, Margaret Wilton.

Delaware River Ass'n—Sisters Anna Vaughn, Anna Kintner.

Middletown and Wallkill—Brother W. D. Chapman.

Ebenezer (New York)—Sisters Emma Secor, Anna MacPhee, Gertrude Secor, Ethel M. Werner.

Virginia Corresponding—Deacon Harvey J. White.

Pigg River Ass'n—Sisters Virginia Wood, Elzie Wilson.

Upper Country Line Ass'n—Sister Mabel Berry.

For the purpose of considering the propriety of ordaining brother AMASA J. SLAUSON, a licentiate of the Olive and Hurley Church, to the full work of the gospel ministry, the candidate, Licentiate Amasa J. Slauson, a member of the Olive and Hurley Church, was then presented before the Presbytery for ordination to the full work of the gospel ministry.

After a thorough examination in which the candidate, Licentiate Amasa J. Slauson was requested to relate his Christian experience, call to the ministry, views on scripture doctrine and gospel order, and the Articles of Faith and church covenant were read and contended for, it was unanimously agreed to proceed with his ordination which was done in the following order:

Elder George Ruston preached the ordination sermon from the first epistle of Paul, the apostle, to Timothy, fourth chapter, sixteenth verse.

Laying on of hands by all the Presbytery, with prayer by Elder Charles W. Vaughn.

The charge was given by Elder H. H. Lefferts followed by the right hand of fellowship by the Elders, Deacons, the Council and then the whole church.

Hymn 612 (Beebe's collection) was sung, and benediction by the candidate, Elder Amasa J. Slauson.

The meeting was very solemn and deeply felt by all.

We, as a church, request that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and OLD FAITH CONTENDER be furnished with copies for publication.

MEMORIAL

Again it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from Little Flock Church our beloved sister, CATHERINE BOURLAND, who passed away Aug. 18, 1946 at her home in Vernon, Texas.

She was a devoted wife and mother, and loved her church which she attended as often as was possible. She was loved and respected by all who knew her and Little Flock Church feels her loss very deeply. She leaves a husband, son and four daughters to mourn her loss and to them we extend deepest sympathy.

Resolved, that a copy of this notice be made a part of our church record, a copy sent to the bereaved family and a copy be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference at Altus, Okla., Sept. 7, 1946.

W. N. GREEN, Mod.; LOU KESTER, Clerk

It is with deep sorrow that we record the passing of sister NELLIE M. PALMER of Randolph, Me., who died August 2, 1946 at the Gardiner Hospital, Gardiner, Me., after an illness of many weeks duration.

Sister Palmer was born March 12, 1870 at Pittson, Me., and was, therefore, past her 76th year when the final summons came. She was a woman of strong intellect, possessed a keen and discerning mind and was much interested in educational pursuits in her young life, having taught several terms of school very successfully. The influences of her life and teaching was reflected in the lives of her pupils.

On October 12, 1895 she related to the Whitefield Old School Baptist Church some of the dealings of the Lord with her, and was baptized the next day by the late Elder Frederick W. Keene then of North Berwick, Me. The same year she was united in marriage to Arthur B. Palmer of Brunswick, Me. who died in 1942. To this union was born one son, Forris W. Palmer, who survives.

Mr. and Mrs. Palmer resided at Pittsfield, Me until 1918 when they moved to Randolph where they spent the remainder of their lives. Sister Palmer enjoyed excellent health until last winter. Owing to the infirmities of age and a general physical breakdown she entered the Gardiner Hospital about ten days before her death hoping that medical skill might afford some relief, but the best obtainable professional skill was of no avail.

She was an outstanding character in the church of God, a true ornament of grace, faithful to her meetings and exemplifying by precept and example the faith she possessed. She was generous to her church and pastor in material things, and the hospitality of her home will be long remembered. She was gifted to express herself upon spiritual matters in speech and writing, and for several years wrote the Circular Letter for the Maine Association. She was identified with the church of her membership almost fifty-one years, during which time she endeared herself to her brethren by her zeal for the cause of Christ; by her interest in their welfare and her willingness to serve; and by those noble qualities that evidence the fruits of the faith of God's elect. She will be sadly missed in her home, in her church and in the community where she resided. The funeral services were conducted by the writer at White's Funeral Home in Gardiner the following Monday afternoon. Interment in the cemetery at Whitefield.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

Sister LAVINIA HENSON HAYNES departed this life March 26, 1945 at the age of 84. Sister Haynes had been a widow for several years. She was the sister of Elder John T. Henson, pastor of the Soldier Creek Church and Moderator of the Soldier Creek Association. She leaves a daughter, Mrs. Will Trimble, in whose home she lived her last days, and a step-son, Dr. Haynes of Benton, Ky.

She was a member of the Primitive Baptist church, professing a hope in Christ as her Savior and uniting with the church at Rough Creek, Marshall Co., Ky. in the early eighties. She was baptized by Elder W. D. Poyner. This church-house was burned a few years ago and she, with others, came to the old Soldier Creek Church for their home with the church there. She lived a devoted member to her church, believing in the strength and wisdom of her Savior, Jesus Christ the Lord, and having no confidence in the flesh. Her sufferings the last few months of her life were very severe, yet she was uncomplaining to the end. Her funeral service was conducted by Elder O. W. Perkins of Mayfield, Ky. A large gathering of friends, relatives, brethren and sisters in the Lord attended the last rites paid to this dear sister.

We feel our loss in sister "Viny", as she was called among us, is her eternal gain and it is better for her to depart and be with the Lord than to remain in the world of sickness, pain and death. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." She is resting from her sufferings in her quiet, silent grave, waiting for that welcome plaudit, child come home to rest for aye.

EFFIE BOWDEN

Mrs. FANNIE (TUTTLE) SHELTON fell asleep in Christ, April 4, 1946 at the advanced age of 90 years, 4 months and 28 days, having been born in Alabama Nov. 6, 1855. She was a daughter of the late Thomas and Dollie Ann Tuttle and moved to Texas with her parents while only a small child.

She was united in marriage to the late J. E. Shelton, Sept. 2, 1875. To this union were born seven boys and three girls. Her husband and four boys preceded her in death. The surviving children are Mrs. J. W. Free, Mrs. Lizzie Pettis, Charlie, Leonard and David Shelton all of Gilmer, Texas, and Mrs. C. G. Westerman, Hendie, Texas. She also leaves one sister, Mrs. M. J. Reed, Nocona, Texas, sixteen grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, and a host of nieces and nephews. She was a loving mother, a devoted wife and a faithful friend.

She united with the Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church at East Mountain, Upshur Co., Texas in 1890 and with her husband was baptized by the late Elder H. B. Jones and lived a faithful member

until death. The greatest pleasure of her life was attending her meetings, reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and looking after the welfare of the brethren and sisters. Though handicapped in the last few years of her life by blindness she was seldom from her service until her last illness. It was indeed an inspiration to us to see our sister come into our little congregation. We feel that the church has lost a dear mother in Israel but we realize that our loss is her gain. The writer, who was her pastor for seventeen years, was unable to attend her funeral. Elder S. C. Davenport, Mineola, Texas conducted the services, using as a text 2 Timothy 4:7. She was laid to rest in the East Mountain Cemetery to await the resurrection morning. Written by her pastor.

(Elder) T. A. WALL

BOOKS

SHOWERS OF RAIN

Forty pages, size 6 x 9, containing Christian Experience and twenty-five poems by Mrs. Flossie I. Faulkner, Allaben, N. Y. Price $1. Send orders direct or to *Signs*.

TWO WORLDS

This interesting book of 231 pages, by Elder Milford Hall, Sr., McDowell, Ky., can be obtained by sending $1.50 direct to him.

RHODES - WEST DEBATE

This book of 250 pages is now ready for delivery. Price $2.00. Send all orders to

ELDER R. W. RHODES
Lillie, La.

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each 1st Sunday, 11:00 a.m. and Saturday before.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday.
AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala.
Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopewell Church, Ozark Ala., meets each 4th Sunday, 11 a.m. J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock. Meeting place at Alder St. at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, 11 a. m. Elders J. J. Collins and J. S. Bass, Pastors.
J. J. COLLINS

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Seclusia Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church meets every fourth Sunday at 2 p. m., Route 3, Box 800G, Stockton, Cal.
W. L. SLUSHER, Moderator

Bethel Church near Stockton, Cal. meets first and third Sundays in each month and Saturday nights before. For further information write SETH BYNUM, Rt. 3, Box 800G, Stockton. Cal.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday, north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets every second Sunday at 5th and E. Park St.
B. O. JEFFREYS, Pastor
Weiser, Idaho

Pleasant Valley Church Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carver Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. C. H. EVANS, Pastor

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before a 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.
D. L. TOPPING Pastor

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a.m. in the meeting-house. Pastor in regular attendance except first Sundays. C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays 11:00 a. m., 2 p. m.

The Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY
Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sundays at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue. Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 a.m. 1:30 p.m.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.
(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.
C. W. BOND, Pastor

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelhia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting first Sunday, each month
10:30 a.m.
Take Elevator to 3rd Floor
C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.
E. H. LANIER, Clerk

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

The Old Orderly Mt. Zion (Cash) Predestinarian Baptist Church meets on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in each month, at the home of Bro. J. J. Darnell, Campbell, Texas.
W. A. LITTLE, Moderator
Sister SIMMONS, Clerk

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. C. B. Teague, co-pastor, G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets third Sunday in each month at 11:00 a.m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Old School Baptist meetings are held every fourth Sunday at Civic Club, 1419 N. Shepherd St., Houston, Texas. Preaching by Elder W. O. Beene.
(Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dr. Wood church-house. Those interested write Mrs. Lela Culpepper, Stockdale, Texas. E. B. AULT, Pastor

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Danville Primitive Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before Bradley Road, Danville, Va.
W. R. DODD, Pastor

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meets each first Sunday 11 a.m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p.m. and Sunday at 11 a.m., Fairmont Park, 3023 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va., R. B. DENSON, Pastor

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.
R. B. DENSON, Pastor

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a.m. C. M. FISHER.

Bethel Old School Baptist Church, Riffe, Wash. meets every third Sunday, 11 a.m. in the meeting house. I. F. COLEMAN, Mod.
ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk, Riffe, Wash.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church near Yakima, Washington, meets at 11 a. m. each third Sunday by appointment at the home of one of the members living at Naches, Wash. A. D. HUGHETT, Pastor
BEATRICE HAAN, Clerk
Star Route, Naches, Wash.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va., N. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 115 RUTHERFORD, N. J., FEBRUARY, 1947 No. 2

CORRESPONDENCE

Written by Elder A. D. Hughett,
Route 4, Yakima, Wash.

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17.

First let us ask what is the water of life? The Lord says he is the fountain of living waters. Jer. 2:13 also 17:13. So if God is the fountain of living waters, the water of life must spring from him. We read, "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." Rev. 22:1. Jesus Christ gives that water, for he says: "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." Rev. 21:6.

Jesus is the water of life, for he says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." John 6:57. "For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." John 6:55. The fathers "did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." 1 Cor. 10:3-4. "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.)" John 7:37-39. This should be sufficient to show that Jesus is the water of life. Whosoever will, may take of the water of life freely. But who is it that so wills? "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Ps 110:3. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. 2:13. So it is God's people that are willing. It is God's people that thirst for the water of life, and must have it to maintain that life that God has given to them. And their thirsting for that water of life is evident that they are the children of God. They do not take it to make them children, but they must have it to live because they are children. There are no others that need it or even want it. Jesus told the unbelieving Jews, "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." John 5:40. And when he told them, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you," and also told them "No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." John 6:65-66. But when Jesus asked the little few, the little flock, the twelve "Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." John 6:67-69. But why did they believe and why were they so sure of this? Jesus gives the answer: "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in

heaven." Mat. 16:17. But why did not the others likewise believe? Jesus also tells us that: "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." John 10:26. "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved." John 3:18-20. "What then? Israel hath not obtained that he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it and the rest were blinded (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day." Rom. 11:7-8. But why did God do that? Jesus tells us: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." Mat. 11:25-26. "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Rom. 9:16.

No, it is those who are born of God, and have spiritual life dwelling in them that need the water of life and are, therefore, made to be willing by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the heart. "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:13. That is the only way they can become children of God, that is, to be born children. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. 2:14. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." 1 Cor. 2:11-12. So if the natural man cannot know or receive the things of the spirit of God, how can he be willing to take the water of life, for that is spiritual. No he must first become a child of God by being born of God. "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God." Rom. 9:8. A man must be born of God before he can receive or even desire the things of God "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Rom. 8:7-9. But how does a man have that Spirit of Christ in him? The good book tells us, here it is: "For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Ezk. 36:24-27. We find some similar language in the book of Jeremiah. "And their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them; and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me: for who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto

me? saith the Lord." Jer. 30.21. Yes who is it that engages his own heart to approach unto God? I have often wondered about that myself, and now we find that God himself wants to know. I am afraid that is a question that cannot be answered for it says: "There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes." Rom. 3:11-18. Most surely that "Whosoever will" does not include such characters as this. And it is evident that nothing but the power of God can change them and make them willing, or change them to where they will even need the water of life. That water of life is free to all that thirst for it, it is heavens free bounty, it is called the "free gift" in Rom. 5:14. It cannot be bought for man has nothing of equal value to give in exchange for it. Just as well try to buy the love of God, for God gives it to those he loves, and because of his love for his children. Solomon says: "If a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned." S. S. 8:7. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Isa. 55:1. The water of life is free because God is giving it to his children. Does Jesus not say the children are free? "Then are the children free." Mat. 17:26. Do we charge our children for their keep? Yes the spirit says come. This is a living command, and carries within itself everything that is necessary to bring even a dead sinner to Christ. "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." John 6:63. "For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." Ps. 33:9. "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isa. 55:10-11. This being true they will surely come. Jesus says they shall come. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37. They come because the Father draws them. "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Jer. 31:3. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." John 6:44-45.

But how and by what means do they come? It is my purpose to try to answer that question with such ability as it may please God to give me. I believe it has been abundantly shown by the above scripture quotation that, in coming to God, the creature is wholly passive, for in all the promises and declarations of truth quoted above relative to the coming of a sinner to God in a state of life and true holiness, there is nothing

whatever requested or demanded of the dead sinner, and it states plainly that the will to come of the live sinner is given to him by God himself, and that God works that will in him, "It is God that works in you to will and to do."

It appears from Holy Writ that the first step in bringing a dead sinner to God is for God himself to come to where a sinner is, and in all that the sinner is, otherwise God would not be coming all the way to the sinner. It is stated by the apostle Paul in Eph. 4:8-9 "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?" In the 15th verse of the 139th Psalm it says, "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." But how did God effect this great condescension? In John 1:1 it says: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the word was God," and in the 14th verse it says, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." Yes, wonder of wonders; God himself made flesh and taking unto himself all our death and sins, the sentence of death and our just condemnation under the law. ("And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." And it was thus that God descended into the lower (or lowest) parts of the earth, for who can be lower than one who was created in the image and likeness of God, to violate to the fullest extent all the laws of both heaven and earth. He is as much lower than he who has only violated or could violate the laws of earth, as the laws of heaven are higher than those of the earth. Yet God's descension must be just that great "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." Heb. 2:16-17, Yes, "For he (God) hath made him (Jesus) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. 5:21. Yes, "That we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (Jesus).

(To be continued)

Route 1, Box 266, Dothan, Ala.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: It is my desire to write a few lines on the ten virgins, trusting that my mind will be directed by the Holy Spirit that Jesus told his disciples he would send.

Beginning with the first verse of the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew Jesus begins like this, "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut." This kingdom referred to here is not the kingdom of his Father where the righteous shall shine forth as the sun, but the kingdom that John the Baptist was talking about when he said, "Repent ye:

for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." John also asserted, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.********And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

The five wise virgins referred to in this text are a portion of those that have been baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. The text says, "They that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut." The reason they were ready is because they were wise. Wise with that wisdom that only God can give, that wisdom that hath builded her house, hewn her seven pillars, killed her beasts, mingled her wine and also furnished her table. (Prov. 9:1-2). The five foolish virgins were numbered among those that were not prepared. It was not through any fault of theirs. They were virgins as surely as the five wise were. They (the foolish virgins) represent that company that have to depend on buying for themselves, those that God did not predestinate to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will.

I feel that I could write much more on the above, but will bring this to a close by saying, may the Lord ever keep us humble and at the feet of our brethren is my sincere desire. Your unworthy brother if a brother at all.

(Elder) J. A. TEW.

Route 3, Box 800G, Stockton, Cal.

DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE: It seems good that I write you a few lines this morning. God being my all in all it is my desire to tell you I glory with you in your tribulations. Yes, when I say tribulations I mean tribulations the world knows nothing about. My good reason to believe they cannot know about these great tribulations is because they have never tasted of the (both) fruits of the tree of good and evil; they have never died to sin, but are alive to sin and dead to Christ because they worship the law by their own good works; they have eaten or partaken of the evil fruit of the flesh in the first Adam, and the flesh man's days are but few and evil. In Gen. 3:3 we read, "But the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." Is it not when a poor sinner is quickened inwardly that he has become a partaker of both the fruits of good and evil? Is it not manifested in every heart after they have eaten or partaken of the natural then afterward the spiritual that he begins to die daily? He becomes ashamed for no other cause than because he has been given the light, and by this he received knowledge, knowing both good and evil. He has become wise realizing his sins are naked before his God and becomes ashamed as did Adam. Yes, now he becomes dead to sin and alive to Christ for sin can have no more dominion over them for the life we now live in the flesh we live by the faith of Jesus Christ who is our life. So in Adam all die and in Christ all are made alive, and for this cause alone can any ever become wise knowing good and evil and good from evil. So having eaten both of the fruits of the tree of good and evil we then become as the wise and know how to separate, to discern between good and evil, so in our very experiences it seems a separating of the wheat and tares takes place even here in time. Yes, it is the old man put

off with his deeds; at regeneration he is bound by the stronger new man, the second Adam the Lord from heaven, a quickening spirit, and he no longer feels a desire to be left to go after his own way as before while he was yet even as the child of wrath, but rather he is glad in his heart that he has been given a precious hope of better things to come. It is after he is given a hope that he has eaten of Jesus' flesh and drank of his blood; that he begins to hate the sin he once loved and loves righteousness now which he once hated. It appears to me every child of God in this time world represents the tree of knowledge of both good and evil, the two fruits manifested in one tree. Eating I understand means partaking and never in this life do I believe one becomes wise knowing good and evil, or good from evil, until they have become partakers of both fruits. Every tree shall bring forth fruits after its kind. Never in this life can I believe this old corruptible tree can bring forth any of the fruits of God, but must remain natural and evil all the days of his life and continue to bring forth corruptible fruit. He can only sow to the flesh and reap corruption for he that is of the earth cares only for earthly things. Yes, and must return to dust from whence he came. If he is the one that is born again (as some claim) then how could he sin for he that is born of God cannot sin for his sin remaineth in him. If he is born of God then he is of God, then why bring any charge against him for any disorderly act he may commit? Who can bring any charge against God's elect? Who is it that is a transgressor if it is not the old man of sin, the flesh man? Then why do some so willingly claim the flesh born of the spirit and then turn to bring this brother before the law, even before the unjust in some cases which sounds ridiculous to me because as I see it, it is very contrary to scriptural teaching. Since some claim it is the flesh that is regenerated and renewed by the Holy Ghost, then to believe that and then bring such a brother before the church to try him for an evil act only means they are bringing a charge against a holy and perfect man which is as much as to bring charge against the God of heaven. But not so my brethren, I see two men, one the first, natural, evil, he is the transgressor, and the one that violates the laws. He is the only one that I may prepare my charges against. If he is born again, the second time, he is the same as his Lord God, he that is born of God cannot sin. But this false idea would mean that Christ is a sinner for they are all equal with him. It is I in you, the Lord. You knew him once after the flesh, but now after the spirit. God is a Spirit and plainly declares that which is born of the Spirit is spirit not flesh. No flesh shall glory in his sight but we must and will worship him in Spirit. Certainly the body is the temple, the house for God to dwell in. The children being partakers of flesh and blood, Christ came in like manner and partook of the same, but he declares plainly after he had offered up his earthly body for the fulfilling of the law, finished the commands of the law in death, for thou shalt surely die, he was the word made flesh and the whole law was fulfilled in this one word. So this word that was made flesh died because of sin not for any other. By this one offering he hath forever put away sin and there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin. In this we are glad to hope we knew him after the flesh under the law of sin, but since he has taken the law away, nailing it to the cross, this is where we desire to know him after the flesh. You knew him once, just once, under the law where we see him as fulfilling all the promises of the Father that were promised to Israel under the law in the

flesh. He was made sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. We knew him once, that is enough, after the flesh, for this cause came I into the world, kept the law in all points which no other man could ever do, so this body he put off because of sin. Henceforth you must know him only after the Spirit for flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom. Yes, the kingdom is within you. While here in time we hope we are gathered together in heavenly places in Christ. Christ is in heaven now, then if Christ be in you are you not entered into that kingdom already? If the outward man has been born of the Spirit then is he not spiritual? If so why does he yet care for the things of the earth? He would be one man with no warfare to fight. Why is the flesh still contrary with the Spirit — flesh against the Spirit and Spirit against the flesh? If this be true let us forget and say there is no need for any law or order for if you be under grace then you are no more under the law. Never can I believe, neither do I care to believe such broad contradictions to scripture facts. Certainly whatever it is that is born again is the very thing that worships God. Never by my experiences can I believe my outward man can worship God, neither can I believe any good thing dwells in my flesh. Neither do I believe flesh and blood can enter into that holy kingdom, but the one that is born of the Spirit has already entered into that kingdom, even now and for eternity, for He gives at the new birth eternal life and they shall never die. But this I know the fleshly man must die, he must continue to live in sin for he is a sinful man in a sinful kingdom and is of this kingdom. It is well proven all his works must bring forth and show forth his only ability and desire is to do evil. All his days upon earth, all his work proves he can only bring forth corruptible fruits after his own seed; but the sons of God are not of this world, neither of this kingdom even as this was not Christ's kingdom. Therefore, let us, by the will of God, put off this old man with his deeds instead of trying to put him on and slip him in to the worshipping of God by trying to make him holy, giving him or allowing him a right to enter into that kingdom by giving him a new man's birth which he in this world never can receive. There were two in the beginning, the visible and the invisible. There are two separate kingdoms, one for this world, one for the world to come. Each man to serve the kingdom he is fitted for. One to destruction and all his works, the other to life eternal never to be destroyed, never to be defiled by the filth of blood and corruption. That precious body is too precious to be touched by carnality any more. Before his death the church did touch him with all their evil deeds, but after his resurrection his command to the woman was, "Touch me not." No carnal hands or works can ever be laid to his charge any more to bring him down to crucify him afresh. Oh, blessed thought of his promises, even though it does not yet appear what we shall be, he gives us a hope that he will fashion us like unto his glorious body and be like him which is too good for this wretched sinner. It is certain we will only possess one life there and for this cause there is no need for flesh and blood to enter therein. It will not and cannot for his word is truth and he declared it could not and that word shall stand against all men's. It is always by the Spirit in the Spirit that we enter into his kingdom. The Spirit maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God, and not according to the will of the creature. The creature was made subject to vanity, not subject to righteousness. This old creature is held in check or in subjec-

tion when bound by the new man, the stronger man. Some misuse the word change, taking it from the resurrection and placing it at the new birth. This is how they get the flesh man born, they mix part of the resurrection up to prove their point, and if we be no wiser than they we may be easily mis-led in this to our own destruction. I certainly believe in a holy man and the one that is born of the Spirit is holy, therefore, I must judge from the inward hidden man of the heart if I am to see righteous fruits, but why not just as well judge by outward appearance if old nature is sanctified? The apostle was one that had all evidence. He had received the new birth so why did he say, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing?" Why would he delight in the fruits after the inward man and condemn all the work of the outward? Why did he set up the two if there is only one? There are two types manifested from Genesis to Revelations, it takes two to manifest the cross. I believe in the very first two, Cain and Abel, brothers, the elder and the younger, there was a cross set up between them. It proves the same cross between Christ and his brethren. It was Christ's own brethren who slew him by the works of their own wicked hands, but who maketh thee to differ one from another? It is proven certain, God in his own good pleasure created us as vessels of wrath in nature and by nature we are all children of wrath. Have we not experienced a portion of his wrath upon our fleshly vessels? Have we not in our many trials been made to feel at times his wrath was restrained? Some seem to want to take part of the multiplied Adams and prove part as the children of wrath and the other part and show them as the elect or the vessels prepared unto glory. As I see it they that are in the flesh cannot please God and by nature were all children of wrath. Only preachers make a difference in these things. God made one vessel unto dishonor; The first Adam and all his generation are the same material by nature. That nature abides with all until the return to dust from whence they came. Another vessel of the same lump of clay he made unto honor and he, Christ, was the only one of his kind. His flesh body did not see corruption; his flesh body did not multiply flesh children as Adam's. It was a vessel of honor made like unto sinful flesh but without sin, he is honorable, made of the same lump of clay, his Father was God. If we be what we hope to be we have two Father's, one of the earth, one of heaven, but Christ has only one Father and, therefore, he could not sin for he was begotten of the Father, his seed remained in him, therefore a holy seed shall serve us. We know him now after the Spirit because the Spirit begets in its likeness even as the flesh begets flesh. There are two different and distinct lives manifested in the children of God. Each is of different worlds or kingdoms. Yours in tribulation.

(Elder) SETH BYNUM

Benton, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: You will find enclosed a minute of the Soldier Creek Association held with the church in Mayfield, Ky., Oct. 1945. We were blessed with an audience of earnest listeners each day and we preached the visiting Elders in our homes at night, our homes overflowing with those who were being fed at these feasts of fat things. It is our custom to have three or four sermons at the meeting-house each day, then return home, feed our visitors and spend the evening singing and with preaching by ministers that go home with us.

The first afternoon Elders R. W. Rhodes and J. L. Smith from Lillie, La., and H. M. Brock from Covin, Ala., were our guests, together with some two dozen others visiting in our Association. The singing was enjoyed by this lovely band of God's elect. After they sang several hymns they sang this verse, it is the last verse in one of the hymns.

"Here let the weary rest
Who love the Savior's name;
Though with no sweet enjoyment blest,
This covenant stands the same."

Brother Dodson, a thousand thoughts revolved through my mind. Then I spoke to the Elders saying, "Children that verse contains enough to preach from the whole of this night." The ones who labor find rest, and this covenant, this new covenant, sealed with blood. Well it happened just as my thousand thoughts had been rushing to and fro in my mind. Brother Rhodes rose and took as a text "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden." What beauty he did set forth to that man who is toiling, rowing and fishing all the night through. Yes, there is a rest for him when he sees by the light of the Son, what good works he really has done. Yea, nothing in his hand he brings. Brother Brock followed him with this text, "Sealed it with blood." He had not slept in twenty-four hours, but his delivery was that of a man who had been made a fisher of men. He gave such a beautiful talk about that Son who had enough blood for all the heirs of promise. Not one drop was wasted or spilled in vain, but all the elect were sealed with this blood.

Brother Dodson, this very evening service in my home taught we who hope this, that there is a difference in saying, "Peace on earth, good will to men," and feeling peace that floods your very soul. A difference in singing, merely singing, "Bread of heaven," and being able to feel your hungry soul being filled with that which satiates your entire being. Blessed manna, blessed bread, blessed meat to feed the lambs and sheep. Space will not permit to tell of the sermon on absolute Predestination of all things by Elder Smith, a subject always interesting to those, who we hope have been proved to know we love the Lord with our whole heart and soul, (Deut. 13:3) and have no confidence in other gods or the works of our own hands, wisdom of our own learning or things coming to pass because of neglect, carelessness or chance, but are made to trust where we cannot see by the effectual work of an all-wise, ever present God. Brother Biggs of Nashville, Tenn., brother Darnell of Cadiz, Ky. and brother C. O. Kerley of Illinois preached the unsearchable riches of God in our home Saturday night to some who never get out to services. Surely God has not ceased to gather his children together and feed them and they revive and cease to droop and pine for a little season. Surely we who have hope in Jesus can see the many inventions of men. Their instruments they fashion, they seek out many inventions whereby they lay in wait to deceive and carry off after their works. We hope we, with Jeremiah, have seen the rod of the almond tree; have seen the seething pot; known something of the rod of correction and the staff to lean upon; and know what it is to be baptized with fire and still can go on with the little few who do believe that God is able of stones to raise up children unto Abraham; will never be left without a witness and will never give his praise to another, but will at all times and as long as mortals live have praise of men working in them a desire to sing God's praises, his honor and glory world without end. In hope.

(Mrs.) EFFIE BOWDEN.

Vega, N. Y.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER, if one so little and unworthy might address one of the Father's chosen ones. You will remember I spoke to you about reprinting one of the good old experiences of a truly father in Israel. I believe there is sometimes a good lesson learned from one of those old experiences. When you gave out your text and it began with "For we are strangers before thee, etc." a portion of this experience came to me so forcibly where it reads, "You are no more a stranger nor a foreigner, but a fellow-citizen with the saints, and of the household of God." But I do feel to be a stranger here below, and what I am it is hard to know. Oft it causes anxious thought. Do I love the Lord or no, am I his or am I not?

One thing I do know there is a little hope that I would not give up if I could, but I am so often made to cry to the Lord for mercy as did the poor publican who stood afar off. I sometimes look back to an experience of several years ago when in deep trouble of mind hymn 809 Beebe's Collection came to me. The first verse reads:

"Where must a weary sinner go,
But to the sinner's friend?
He only can relieve my woe,
And bid my sorrows end."

A good many times since, that whole hymn has been of such comfort to me, also the Psalm, "My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is." I believe it was you spoke of a time when you heard the words, Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee. Very well I remember the time and place when I heard those words, and it was the darkest time I ever saw. The sun was shining very bright but it was midnight in my soul and I could not believe they were spoken to me. Then the words came to me, Blessed assurance, peace be thine, and then I was made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. I have had many doubts and fears since that time, and often wish I could see in myself what I see in my dear brethren, but the Scriptures tell us, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

Brother Dodson, I am not writing this for publication, but to ask you to please republish the experience of my father-in-law, brother William Ballard. I will appreciate it very much and I believe it will be read with comfort to some poor child of God, although it was written long ago. Very unworthy a little sister if one.

(Mrs.) VIRTUE BALLARD

Roxbury, N. Y.
Dec. 9, 1859.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE: (If one so unworthy may address you), I have had it impressed on my mind for some time to write you a few lines to let you know what I sometimes hope the Lord has done for my poor soul. On Sunday, the 13th day of last February, as I was returning from meeting, I believe the Lord showed me my situation. Something seemed to say to me, What a sinner you are! It seemed to me that I was the worst sinner in the world, and all the sins that I had ever committed seemed to be presented before me. I saw that I had sinned against a holy and just God, and that with a high hand. I felt so much shocked that I did not know what to do, nor where to go. I went home and went to the barn to do up my chores, but did not feel as though I could set myself at work. I was continually thinking of my past life. While doing my work, these words came as forcibly to my mind as though some one had spoken them to me—"Search the scriptures." I went to the house and got the Bible, and began to read, but the more I read the worse I felt, if possible. So it passed on for some days, and I

could not get rid of my burden. I concluded to read the New Testament through, and see if I could find anything to afford any satisfaction to my troubled soul; but I could find no comfort. I read the precious promises to the children of God, but all seemed to condemn me. By this time my wife discovered that something was the matter with me, although I had tried to conceal the state of my mind as much as possible. The Bible seemed to haunt me; it was almost the first thing in my hands in the morning and the last at night. One day while threshing in the barn, these words, "Wo to the wicked for it shall be ill with them," came with such force to my mind, that it seemed to me I must sink into the earth. No tongue can express what were my thoughts and feelings at that time. When I would lie down at night, everything that I had ever done seemed to be sin, and all was presented before me. My wife kept asking me what was the matter, and I finally told her that it seemed to me I was one of the greatest sinners in the world. She asked me if I thought I was not going to live long. I told her it seemed to me that I could not die until the Lord should see fit to take me away. On the last Sunday in February I went to hear Eld. I. Hewitt preach; and when I went in I tried to hide my feelings; but it seemed to me that all eyes were upon me. I hoped that he would say something to comfort me; but there was no comfort for me there. I returned home feeling no better; I did not want to see anybody. I thought I would try to pray and ask the Lord to have mercy on me, and I went to the barn to seek some secret place, but it seemed to me that the eye of the Almighty God was fixed on me, and that if I attempted to pray I should be sunk down to endless perdition. I went back, trembling for fear the earth would open and swallow me up. My mind would be wandering so that I would hardly know what I was about. I thought the Lord would be just in sending me to hell, but my cry was, God, be merciful to me a sinner.

One day, in about the middle of March, while in the Sugar Bush, I stood meditating on my past life, and my distress seemed more than I could endure, when these words came forcibly to my mind, You are no more a stranger nor a foreigner, but a fellow-citizen with the saints, and of the household of God. My burden was gone, and I felt like a new creature. Everything looked differently to me, and I felt as though I could go on my way rejoicing. I was brought to see that, if ever saved, I shall truly be a sinner saved by grace, and grace alone. "For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." I thought then I could tell my friends how the Lord saves sinners. But dark clouds soon came over my mind, and what I had experienced seemed to be only imagination. Then I thought I would tell no one; for it seemed to me they would laugh at me, and say it was only my foolish thoughts. But meetings were constantly on my mind, and passages of scripture were continually passing through my mind; and it pleased the Lord to drive the dark cloud from my mind, and then again I could sing and praise his holy name. And when I would forget myself, I felt as though I could claim some of the gracious promises of the gospel as applicable to me. I then had some desire to attend the church meeting, and see if I could hear any one tell of having such feeling as I had. And when I heard them it seemed that every one told more or less of what I had felt. My mind was then led to unite with the church, and be baptized; but when I returned home I got to thinking of my

past life and conduct, and I feared that I should bring a reproach upon the cause, and I concluded to say nothing to the church. But these words followed me, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls." These words were all the time in my mind. One day I went into the house and took down the Bible and opened it and read, and before I had read the chapter through I came to these words, "He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." That seemed to do me some good. I thought if the Lord had not begun a good work in my heart, why would these words keep running through my mind? I then concluded I would go to the next church meeting, and if I continued to feel as I had sometimes before, I would tell the church some of my exercises, and it seemed as though I could hardly wait until the day came. I accordingly went, and after the members had got through, the Elder said if there were any who wished to say anything to the church, or relate their exercises, there was an opportunity. My grandfather, who was a member, asked me if I did not think it would be a comfort to my mind to relate the exercises of my mind. I told him I believed not; but at the same time it was so impressed upon my mind that it did not seem as though I could leave the meeting house. I went home, and thought I must be deceived, or I would have improved the opportunity. On the second Saturday in June, Elder Hewitt preached, and after the second preaching gave an opportunity for any one who wanted to relate their exercises to the church; and he asked me if I wished to relate some of my exercises. I made him no answer. He said I was among my friends; but I felt as though I had not a friend in the world. My tongue seemed to fail me, so that I could not speak, and as I was prevented from speaking, I felt as though I should sink through the floor. As I left at that time I felt as though I would have given the world if I had stayed at home.

On the last Saturday in July, it pleased the Lord to direct my mind to the church-meeting again, and it was a good meeting. I told the church some of my exercises, and was received; and on the next day myself and one other candidate were baptized. O, what beauty I saw in my Savior when I came up out of the water. It looked as though everything was praising the Lord. How lovely the little flock of Jesus appeared to me. And I thought to myself, What a blessed and delightful privilege it is to follow the footsteps of the blessed Savior. I could then sing,

"I'm not ashamed to own my Lord,
Or to defend his cause;
Maintain the honor of this word,
The glory of his cross."

Yours, in hope of eternal life.

WM. BALLARD

1306 Cumberland Ave., Evansville 15, Ind

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE: Will try to write you a few lines to let you know that I do appreciate your sending the paper even though I have neglected to renew my subscription. I did not mean to do so. Our times are in God's hands and we are not given at all times to do as we would like to do. God works and none can hinder, speaks and it is done. Not so with poor feeble man for it seems to me that man is the most dependent creature on earth. David said, "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry." Ps: 40:1. Dear brother, that is my hope and if it be true that it is so, the prayer came down before it ever ascended, for to my way of understanding there has not been, nor can there ever be, anything ascending unto

God except it first descend even as Christ Jesus did, even so prayer. I tried for twenty-seven years to work out my salvation until I was forced, at the end of the road so to speak, made to see how impossible it was to retrace the life I had lived and how utterly impossible it was to work the righteousness of Christ. When I reached the end of my journey in the works of the flesh, where there was nothing behind me but a wall of sin, and nothing before me but unlimited space where there was no scaffold to work on, I hope it was there I was made to utter the prayer of the publican, and my hope is that he brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, set my foot upon a rock and established my goings. "In the world ye shall have tribulation."

Dear brother, I thought when I was baptized I would be satisfied, but alas, the weight of troubles that await us is known only to God. I love the brethren and it is a grand and glorious privilege when I can go hear them if they would only let me sit and listen; but it is not so and I fear that I may be wrong in going, if I could but know, for I cannot feel in myself what I can see in those dear servants of a just and holy God for I feel them to be just that. I have no desire to conceal the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord, but I fear that I may not be called as God's mouthpiece and am troubled almost continually. My work wears me down and my sleep is almost a continual nightmare. Oh, my soul! If it be possible and not asking too much, pray for this poor, weak, unworthy sinner for I feel to say with Paul I am the chief of sinners. How could there be one so low down and unworthy as I am. "Forsake me not, O Lord: O my God, be not far from me. Make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation." I only intended to thank you and renew my subscription, but oh, my soul is heavy and my heart is sore, and I am weary over the things of this life that I cannot understand. I know that God will have his way for whatsoever his soul desireth even that he doeth. I am a poor creature of want so will close. Do as you see fit but never crowd out better matter for this. For the enclosed renew my subscription and use the rest as you see fit.

Unworthy, yet I hope.

WADE Y. CHANDLER

(While reading the foregoing good letter, our heart was made to go out to our dear brother in his feeling of desperation, because of his inadequacy to bear the burdens placed upon him. Only God can give wisdom and strength sufficient to enable him to bear his cross and fulfill that which is required of him, and our prayer is that God will sustain him by his grace and power and fill his heart with an abundance of those things which he will have to declare for the glory of God and the comfort of his people. The poet has well said,

"Thy way, O God! is in the sea,
Thy paths I cannot trace;
Nor comprehend the mystery
Of thy unbounded grace."

R. L. D.)

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5 Shaw St., Sanford, Me.

DEAR BROTHER BELLOWS: How pleasant it is when friends and brethren meet, and though they may say but little of the way they have come we know that they have heard the joyful sound of the gospel trumpet, proclaiming free grace and pardoning love through redemption by his love. This wonderful atonement, that God in his love made ours, is something that we cannot comprehend unless we have drank of that same cup of bitterness that our Lord partook of. Only by the grace of God can we say as his disciples did, "We are able" in answer to the question Jesus put to them, "Are ye able to drink of

the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." Isa. 63:9.

So to-day God's watchful care is ever over his chosen people, upholding them through many sore trials, causing the light of his face to shine upon them when in deep distress of mind or body. Earthly friends though kind cannot assuage this heartfelt pain.

"There is a friend that sticketh fast,
And keeps his love from first to last,
And Jesus is his name."

The elect church is but a remnant of the peoples of this vast universe, but in Deut. 7:7 it says: "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people; But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers." Yet this remnant God blessed, causing the seed of Abraham to multiply and become as the stars of the heaven and the sands of the seashore. Truly the Lord is a faithful God, keeping his solemn pledge with them whom he hath delivered out of the bondage of sin, and who love him and keep his commandments. The blessings of the fulfillment by obedience to God's commands is sweet indeed to the poor afflicted soul who hath leaned on Jesus for repose.

"When through the deep waters I call thee
to go,
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow;
For I will be with thee thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress."

There is a sweet recompense in keeping all the commandments of the church. The ordinance of baptism, the partaking of the Lord's supper, the assembling of ourselves together and the fellowship of the brethren are all the pleasures of the sinner who hopes he has been saved by grace.

"I love thy kingdom Lord
The house of thy abode;
The church our blest Redeemer saved
With his own precious blood."

(Mrs.) LYDIA R. NASON

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241 Jagoe St., Madisonville, Ky.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: The time has come for the renewal of our subscription to our paper the *Signs of the Times*, and in sending it I wish to express our gratefulness to you for your labor and patience in this great work. I hope you may be enabled by the Higher Power to carry it on for many, many years that the dear people of God may have the pleasure of communication with each other in a spiritual way. It is a grand privilege to read of the Lord's dealings with his people, those leaning on his staff. I repeat how great to have a thing so rich and powerful to lean upon. We lean upon him only when we have no strength of our own. We view the woman who could do nothing but fall down at the Savior's feet with fear and trembling, confessing that she was the one that had touched his garment. Oh, this confession that these poor, trembling children have to make before that God who deserves that sinful man comes to him in sackcloth and ashes confessing their sins. This is a time never to be forgotten with his children, when they are led through forbidden paths and cared for, only to be shown their own weakness, and shown that it is God who takes them on his own shoulder and brings them back to the fold; back to where they first realized they had sinned against God; had touched the garment of one so sacred and their sins were known to him. Again and again they have to fall before his face and confess their weakness and are made to praise him who is their strength.

This poor woman had nothing to

plead of her own works; neither did the prodigal son, but fell before his father's face and begged to be a servant. There is a beauty in this humbleness. The elder son saw no beauty but plead self righteousness all these years and had received nothing—not so much as a kid to make merry with his friends. The law never satisfies, both are sons.

A great field is in view. I believe there are many of God's children who are laboring in vain for the blessing of the prodigal son that never receive so much as a kid that they may have rejoicing with their Friend. They have never come to themselves, never been brought to see that, though they have spent all they possess, and have sold themselves to feed swine, and made to view their Father's house with plenty, and made to see their unworthiness (even to be called a son) and are yet professing their good works, even as Paul, believing that they can do many things; yet it has never been given them to view themselves as being unworthy to be called a son of God. "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." Unworthily.

(Mrs.) CYNTHIA PERKINS BROWN

Naches, Wash.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES: Enclosed is the price of another year's subscription to our dear family paper. Use the balance as you deem best.

There were only a few of us to prepare for our union meeting here last month. There are ten members in our church here and three live so far away they are not with us often. We rented the Grange Hall to hold our meeting in, then began to have doubts and fears as to where our crowd was coming from. Elder Bond wrote from Island City, saying he would not be physically able to attend. He came, however, and preached to our comfort and edification. Many came that we dared not hope could be here. There were forty-five finally. Elder Jeffreys came from Weiser, Idaho. Elder Hughett's daughter came from Montana and was here during the entire meeting, also sister Duffus from Vancouver, B. C. No doubt many made sacrifices to be here but were surely rewarded beyond measure. Elder J. F. Coleman and sister Coleman of Riffe, Wash. could not come on account of his illness. Elder Peter Jones was not well enough to attend.

We feel that we were blessed indeed and can give God all the praise. We have enjoyed the letters, articles and editorials so much. They have been especially good during the past year. We would hate to do without the paper. I am thankful to have eyes given me to read it, and a heart to love and understand it. May God be with you in this work. Humbly,

(Mrs.) DAISY BAKER

Topsham, Maine

ELDER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: I have been reading one of your articles in the *Signs* and it was good and comforting to me. I feel like writing a little, not that I can write things of much interest to you, but we have both traveled the same way and we know "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." I have been listening to the radio but there is little satisfaction in it for at times I disagree with them. The speaker said, "Give your heart to God and all will be well. Christ will never force his way in, and whosoever calls upon his name shall be saved." How easy they make it. Then if one does and finds the way hard what happens? If you are not called of God what do you have to sustain you? You are nothing of yourself. One never gives of their own accord, you must feel the

need before you ask for help. I know what it is to go down in the depth of woe and find no help until the confession. "Salvation is of the Lord." I have been there and I know what it is to cry out Lord save or I perish. It was a hard way but out of that way came a promise of life everlasting to those that believe. Who can tell of those things except those who have been called by God. When that still small voice calls "This is the way, walk ye in it" we cannot resist it. I know I am unworthy of his love and mercy. How often one feels they would like to show their thankfulness but it is not in me. God knows my heart and knows there is no good in it, that it "is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

I would love to be this day where I could hear you preach the unsearchable riches of Christ as I know you can. I was reading some of the letters you have written me and I never wrote you in vain. There was always comfort in your letters. That does not mean that I want you to answer them all for I realize you have much to do, but just let me in my poor way write to you. When we feel condemnation of sin, helpless, forsaken and without hope in this world, even sometimes without our God, sin seems overwhelming before deliverance comes, and we feel sometimes to cry as Jesus did, "My God, my God, why hast thou fosaken me?" How sweet to feel that Jesus is touched with our infirmities. May the Lord keep us in unity and peace. I was sorry to hear of the passing of Elder Ker. It seems I have not written as I wanted. I am never satisfied with my letters and hope I have said nothing out of order. If so please put me right.

May God be ever mindful of you, giving you strength to fight the good fight and keep the faith. I know he will as he has befit me. My feet have often strayed but he brings me back to the fold and his banner over me is love. God bless you and family. Love and sweet fellowship.

(Mrs.) RACHEL POTTER

Route 1, Sims, N. C.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I certainly have enjoyed your articles of late in the *Signs,* and Elder C. A. Hunt's article on "My times are in God's hand" was as comforting to me as anything can be. I also thought Mr. James H. Clark's article on "Leaven" was good. May God bless you and others to write more articles as good as you have written. Your sister in fellowship with God I trust.

(Mrs.) GROVER C. COLEMAN.

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406 Viola St., Florence, Ala.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Enclosed find currency for which send me extra copies of the June 1946 issue of the *Signs.* I wish to thank Elder L. D. Rose of Athens, Texas for his comforting remarks regarding my ministry. I had the privilege and extreme pleasure of preaching with this dear brother at the Sulphur Fork Association in 1932. I shall ever remember the great feast we had at that meeting. I will close by asking the dear saints to remember me in your prayers, who feels to be the chief of sinners and less than the least of all saints.

(Elder) LYTLE BURNS.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

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EDITORIAL

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

"In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Eph. 1: 11.

To write on this particular passage of scripture is to cut out a part of one continuous sentence. To my mind that is where isms are born, that is why and from where we have so many wranglings. It is not intended as a rebuke to the inquirers, but only to show how impossible it is to take part of a sentence or scripture and tell the full meaning.

In this chapter the children of God are described as being blessed with all spiritual blessings. These are not hinged on conditions, but are as unconditional and according (even as, like) as he has chosen us in him. At the same time and in the same way we were predestinated unto the adoption of Jesus. That came by Jesus Christ, freely, and like unto the choice that made us heirs. It was and is to the praise of his grace. In that grace he has made us accepted in the beloved. In him we have redemption through his shed blood, according (by) to the riches of his grace. Not apart from nor at a later date, but at the same time and out of the same good pleasure of his will we had the mystery of his will made known to us. This was all done that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.

Now to the text. It is a great text for poor bankrupt sinners to contemplate. Just now let me ask you to get your Book and read what has gone before. Take note, as you read, what the Lord has done. Linger on in sweet meditation (Ps. 104:34) at who is the beneficiary of all this. Too, may the Spirit of God give you to see that you did not have any part in the whole thing. God does not withhold anything from that gloriously bedecked woman, who is the bride of his only begotten. (Ps. 84:11). What has gone before is alright. We, if indeed we know him, have so much from the goodness, grace and providence of God. It all flows out from the eternal purpose of an all-wise God. Thus the promise or the condition of God's children in the text. This is not something that they must earn. The subject matter is not changed. It is not a change from what God does to what the creature can do. It does not say, as we often hear from our neighbors, that God has done all he *can* do and that the balance is up to us. No, not that! Our gospel is consolation, comfort, food, rest, peace, good news. Works and grace cannot be mixed in order to harmonize a thing. There would not be harmony in preaching part of it by God, the Creator, who is holy and righteous in every conception of him, and part by the creature, who is unholy and sinful in every sense. But this is a part of the whole that God has done. This is the work of the Great High Priest, who is a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle that God pitched and not man. (Heb. 8:2). This "pitching" of the tabernacle means that God joined it together systematically (Eph. 4:16; Col. 2:19); u-

nited them into a glorious body without spot, wrinkle or any such thing, (John 10:16; Isa. 33:20; Job 14:5) and fixed it in such a way that everything comes to pass for the carrying on to completion of the work of God. (Isa. 46:10; Acts 17:26). It is my desire that every child of God notice that little word, *also*. It has a world of meaning in it. It is the blessed assurance that there are yet grander and better things in store for the elect family. Everything (and it is plenty, enough) has come from God. But this new delight "also" comes from him. It is in him "also" that we have obtained an inheritance. It is not by anything that we have done, or can do, or ought to have done. In that case the word "also" would be equivocal and ambiguous, and having the conception of God that I hope to have. I do not believe that he would use bad or doubtful language. But let us go on to perfection, (2 Cor. 13:9; Heb. 6:1) and there is not any outside of Christ. (1 Peter 5:10). This is obtained in him. Now some say we must do something to get into him and his kingdom, and then continue to stay there, but these do err in vision (Isa. 28:7), and in faith (1 Tim. 6:10), and in knowledge (Mat. 22:29). But we, if possessors and not professors, have the proper vision (Ezk. 12:24, the faith that overcomes (Num. 13:30), and our knowledge of him is that a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. (Mat. 7:18). Thus we, as our hopes lead us to believe, are contending for the things that make for peace. This inheritance is not like one of this world. Nothing ungodly has had anything to do with it. It is a godly inheritance and brought about by godly works, which works are those of Jesus Christ, culminated in his resurrection. (1 Peter 1:3). This inheritance is a gift. (Acts 20:32). From that standpoint it cannot be lost, forsaken, given away, nor sold. If conditions had anything to do with it I am sure that the inheritance of every child of God would be jeopardized with danger and contaminated with sin. It is a blessed thing to have the witness within that this is so, that nothing can separate us from the love of God, (Rom. 8:39) and that this gift to us is as lasting as God himself. (Rom. 11:29). Those that think money or works, or any such thing, has a part in this inheritance have, to say the least of it, a corruptible inheritance waiting for them. Those that are dependent, ruined, undone, bankrupt (and the knowledge of all those things from Christ), have an inheritance that is incorruptible. That little prefix "in" has the God of heaven to make it sure. It cannot any more be corrupted than God can cease to be. It is also undefiled. It is for the same reason we cannot touch it by human hands, but our handling of the precious promises must be by the hands of Jesus Christ. In that way we have all of the good things of the inheritance now in this low vale of sin without any liability of defiling it. It does not fade away. It would fade away if we had to accomplish certain deeds. It would fade away if we had to preserve it—in fact heaven was the place for its reservation and Jesus is the preservation.

"Happy souls approach the table,
Taste the soul reviving food;
Nothing half so sweet and pleasant,
As the Savior's flesh and blood.
It is finished,
Christ has borne the heavy load."

But all of this finished work of God in the inheritance, would have been useless and fruitless had we poor sin-burdened pilgrims not been kept by his power. In purpose before time and in manifestation in time, we received this inheritance, being (at the same time) predestinated according (in like manner)

to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. I tell you this is a good doctrine.It does my pour soul good to contemplate such surety. God is not a fatalist. He has not inevitably and irrespectively decreed the fate of all things and left for some other estate or dwelling place to watch, as a cruel tyrant, what he, in his dictatorial powers has fixed. No, that is not our God. Some say it is and loudly berate us for such a doctrine, but our God gave us an inheritance in Jesus Christ, predestinating us according to the purpose (not one of the purposes, but *the* purpose, signifying that God alone can purpose) of him that worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

Dear reader, may God favor you with an unction from on high to see the sublimity of the little words "also" and "after". It was necessary that the council be held. A denial of that is a denial of the Bible. (Prov. 15:22). When a council is held, purposes are not disappointed. None among us will say that God is disappointed. To say so is to say that God lied. In such a grand doctrine let us press onward and upward towards that prize of the mark of the high calling which is in Christ Jesus, having God in our midst, (Ps. 46:5) keeping us from being moved, keeping us with a hand that never fails, working those things alone that came into his council room when he was in council. Thus you will never have a stone for bread or a serpent for a fish; no bad thing shall ever come upon thee; no surprising or unarranged for event shall come your way. But you shall come into the world and from the cradle to the grave enjoy the loving watchcare of your God who works all things "after the counsel of his own will."

W. D. G.

JOHN 3:8

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

This chapter records the Saviour's teaching upon the necessity of regeneration. It is one of the most important phases of gospel truth. The first manifested generation here in this world was that of the natural man, Adam. "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." The divine record also says that "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven." According to nature, we are all of the Adamic generation, and as water cannot rise above its fountain head, neither can any of Adam's race rise above or aspire for anything which does not pertain to this world. We had no knowledge or understanding of earthly things until we were born of this Adamic generation, and by this birth we partook of all that Adam's sinful nature was heir to. In becoming a member of his generation, we were wholly and entirely passive in the hands of our Creator, and without any right or power whatsoever to choose who our earthly parents would be. If our skin is white instead of yellow or black, it is God who hath made us to differ, and we have nothing whereof to boast. And the fact that our skin may be white in no sense of the word implies that we are any better in God's sight than the yellow or black man. It is written, "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to

dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring." Acts 17:24-28. As we stand in nature, we are corrupt, full of sin. Paul said, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Nature never changes. The tree being corrupt, the fruit will always be corrupt. Jesus said in connection with our text, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," and therefore he added, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." We understand him to teach that that which is born of the flesh, remains flesh and does not change even after regeneration, or the new birth. Paul bore out this conclusion when he said, "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." It is this warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that we cannot do the thing we would, which made the Apostle cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Let it be noted that the Apostle was saying these things after his regeneration, and not before, and lest some may want to claim to have power to live a holy and righteous life here, after regeneration, we would also call attention to the fact that this same Apostle testified that the life that he lived as an apostle was by the grace of God. He makes it clear in his epistle to the Corinthians where he says, "But by the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." He summed up the whole matter in his letter to the Ephesians when he said, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Salvation is, therefore, all of grace, that it should not be by works, to the end that he that glorieth will have to glory in the Lord, and that his name only should have all the praise.

Jesus selected no mean or insignificant man to give this instruction to, for Nicodemus was not only a Pharisee, but he was also a "ruler of the Jews." Apparently he felt his own importance and was either too busy or too proud to come to Jesus except "by night." As a Pharisee under the law he no doubt felt himself to be as good as any and better than many, but some mysterious power over which he had no control evidently caused him to seek Jesus. It is quite apparent that he had some knowledge of Jesus, for he said, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." He discerned that Jesus possessed supernatural powers and he frankly confessed it. An honest confession is said to be good for the soul. Jesus thereupon answered and said unto him, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." On quite a different occasion. Jesus said to Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world: if

my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight," etc. It is a wonderful thing to have even a little knowledge of Jesus and his kingdom, and it seems to us that what Jesus was doing here was driving home the point to Nicodemus that he could have no knowledge of him and his mysterious power whatsoever except by a new birth, or regeneration. The knowledge which he had of Jesus being a "teacher come from God," was not received through his study of the law as a Pharisee, and neither was it obtained through the traditions of his forefathers, the Jews. "For the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of non-effect: Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were." The knowledge of who Jesus is can come in no other way than by a new birth. Peter said, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." There can be no perception of Jesus and his kingdom except by a new birth. We hear much said about receiving Jesus and making a complete surrender of one's heart to him, as though this was something that the natural creature can do, whereas there is very little said by the so-called religious world as to how and why he is received. It is true that the word declares "as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name," as is frequently quoted, but it is also true that the word declares and in conjunction with what has just been quoted how they come to receive him and how they believe on his name, for it says, "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Again, it is written, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." In these matters which are so vital to the welfare of the true church, we need not only the truth, but we need the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. We need to hear again and again the words of Jesus, where he said, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." In John 6:44 we find this language: "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." In the thirty-seventh verse of the same chapter we read, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." We quote these scriptures for the comfort of the Lord's people, that they may once more be reminded of their safety and security in the Lord Jesus.

The question which arose in the mind of Nicodemus was, "How can a man be born when he is old?" Life is, indeed, a great mystery, and it is manifested by birth. It is declared that Adam was the figure of him that was to come, and as in the Adamic family there has to be conception and development before birth, so in this heavenly or spiritual family there likewise has to be a holy conception and development before there is a new birth. Jesus who is the

husband must come in unto his bride in that most sacred of all relationships, and when he does a holy conception takes place and a new creature is formed. The soul or life which hitherto had been capacitated only for this world now has imparted to it another life, something which is divine, and mortality becomes clothed upon with that which is immortal and cannot die. The soul, or man, is therefore regenerated, or born again, born of the Spirit, and just as certain as the sun shines it will partake of the nature and life of Him who begat it, and it will hunger and thirst after righteousness. The strong man who was armed and kept his palace, and his goods in peace, is made to realize that a stronger than he comes upon him, and overcomes him, and he taketh away from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. How truly does the work of God's grace in the heart cause one to inquire of the Lord. Like Rebekah of old, they want to know, "If it be so, why am I thus?" The Lord answered her by saying, "Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger." Here is a beautiful type of the new creature. As the Lord Jesus Christ possessed both human and divine nature, so do the members of his mystical body, and we may be assured of the fact that like the man who had been afflicted thirty and eight years was told to arise, take up his bed and walk, we will as long as we remain in this life have to continue struggling with the flesh and the Spirit, the old man and the new man, but we are glad that it was written "the elder shall serve the younger," and herein do we take courage and hope for better things when this mortal life shall cease. This new creature lives in a world of hopes and fears, of joys and sorrows, sometimes up and sometimes down, but he will ever be striving toward the mark of the prize of his high calling in Christ and ever looking unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of his faith. Being born of God, he will love righteousness and true holiness and will hate sin with a perfect hatred, but he will never be able to live as he would desire in this life, for he cannot rid himself of the old man and his lusts. He will always have to confess as did Paul, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

All of the children of God, no doubt, are anxious to know how their change took place and what brought it about, and by what means they are enabled to show forth the praises of him that loved them and gave himself for them. We believe that the answers to these questions are found in the words of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to Nicodemus: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell from whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." To begin with, we know that no human agency has anything to do with either the blowing of the wind or its not blowing. The prophet declared that God holds the wind in the hollow of his fist, and from time to time we are made to realize how irresistible it is when God opens his fist and sends it forth. The scriptures portray the wind as being typical of the Holy Spirit, which overcomes and demolishes all of the strongholds of sin in the human heart, for God works and none can hinder, and there is no match for him, for he doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or need ask,

What or why doest thou? As the force of the wind is heard and felt, and yet cannot be seen, and neither is it known from whence it cometh or whither it goeth, so are the effects of the Holy Spirit experienced and witnessed to by the children of God; they cannot perceive how they were regenerated or born again, but at the same time they know full well there has been a change of some kind wrought in them. They still know what it is to feel the piercing north wind and to long for the blowing of the warm south wind, that the sweet odors of the precious fruits of God's blessed Spirit may reach even unto them. They realize they cannot produce these things in and of themselves and thereby they are taught that it is all of His grace. Having witnessed the effects of these things in their own and the hearts of others, God's blessed word teaches and instructs them in this new way of life, and they are made to know that they are powerless to bring them about, but have to wait upon the Lord, and to his gracious promise flee. It is only when he is pleased to pour out his spirit upon them will they have a fruitful season or be able to come into his banquetting house with his banner of love over them. What blessed evidences do we have of his saving grace when we are by faith enabled to bask in the sunshine of his love, and meet together in his name and realize that he feeds his flock like a shepherd.

When many of God's little ones come into the visible fold they feel to know but little of some points of doctrine, but we are persuaded that each and every one who is born of the Spirit can testify to the sovereign and irresistible power of the Holy Spirit which has brought them from nature's darkness into the marvelous light of God's blessed truth, whereby they are made to love God and those who are begotten of him. They all have these things in common, and there can be no exception, since the apostle says, "so is *every one* that is born of the Spirit." Another inspired writer said, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." The wind not only blew in the beginning of creation, but has continued to blow all down through the ages of time, and we are still enjoying its gentle and refreshing breezes as we pen these lines. Therefore the children of God are made to know that as they had no part in bringing about the new birth, neither have they any control over the Spirit, whereby they can induce or influence it in any way to continue the blessings of God upon the household of faith. In and of ourselves we can neither obtain nor retain the Spirit. God of his own free will and accord began his work of grace in our hearts and he must of necessity continue it, else it will utterly fail. We are grateful to him for the assurance his word affords that he will perform it till the day of Jesus Christ. How dependent we are upon the Lord in all that pertains to spiritual things! Unless he pours out his Spirit upon us we cannot read or write, speak or hear, sing or pray, with understanding. We shudder at the very thought of his Spirit being withheld from us, for our souls yearn and pant after God as the hart panteth after the water brooks. What a refreshing season there is when we come together for public worship and can feel that God by his blessed Spirit has gathered us together and enables us to sit together in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh.

R. L. D.

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Old School Baptist Maine Conference assembled at the Oak Woods Church in North Berwick, Maine, Sept. 28 and 29, 1946, to the associations and churches with which we correspond by messengers or ministering brethren or by letter.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN; It has been the pleasure of our God to again permit us to assemble at this our annual meeting, where we may meet and mingle with our brethren from sister churches in Maine, and the ministering brethren who have come laden with the sweetest gospel truth that is in our Lord Jesus Christ. In addressing you it is with a sacred pleasure because of the unity of faith in which we hope we are one people, the household of God. This hope that we are numbered among them that the Lord has blessed is beyond all earthly joys. We feel to thank the Lord for the desire manifested by brethren and friends from other churches to meet with us, and coming with their hearts filled with devotion for all that love the appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Your ministers, brethren and messages of love have been highly esteemed, and we desire the continuance of the same.

In North Berwick the visible church is small, but we have striven to meet as a church for many years and hope and trust that "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Mat. 18:20. "He will regard the prayers of the destitute, and not despise their prayer." Psalms 102:17. In recent years we have been privileged to hear preaching by Elders Topping, Lefferts, Vaughn, Dodson, Ruston, Croker, Bellows and Wood. They all have witness of that salvation by grace and have come in that humble spirit so becoming to those who have felt the need of the atoning blood of the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Heb. 12:2. May God establish our hearts in Jesus and make us rejoice in his salvation.

(Elder) R. LESTER DODSON, Moderator
(Mrs.) ALICE M. HALL, Clerk

OBITUARIES

ARNEY W. DALTON died in a Roanoke, Va. hospital at the age of 44. He lived but 11 days after being stricken and his death was a great shock to his relatives and many friends and neighbors. He leaves to mourn their loss his widow and four children, an aged mother, sister and brothers. He bore his illness with Christian patience, all being done for him that could be done to stay the mighty hand of death. Although it was hard to give him up God's call had come which had to be obeyed and he doeth right in all things.

He was a lover of the truth as preached by the Primitive Baptists and was looked upon as one among them although he never united with the church. He lived an exemplary life and was always so kind to old people. We feel that he has entered into that rest that remaineth to the people of God. Our sympathy goes out to his sorrowing widow and children whom he loved and cherished so much. May the Lord bind their broken hearts and cause them, with his many friends to imitate his walk in this life.

He selected a minister to speak at his funeral service and called for him to come to his bedside while sick. He also selected his burial place in the Old Baptist Cemetery where his body was buried to await the coming of Jesus to raise it and put on immortality. Jesus bore the pangs of death, that we might live, and entered into rest. It is the only way to endless joy yet we dread to enter there. Just a few short years of evil when we hope to reach the happy place where divided friends shall meet to part no more.

(Mrs.) B. O. HUDSON

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'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 115 RUTHERFORD, N. J., MARCH, 1947 No. 3

THE OLD, OLD STORY

Have you ever heard the story,
In the Bible it is told,
How the blessed King of Glory
Came to earth in days of old?

How he came to save His people
From their sins, the story goes;
And to ransom His disciples
From the world and all its woes?

Have you ever heard the story
Of the sufferings of Christ,
And the glory that should follow
When our Lord was sacrificed?

With His garments dyed and gory
When he bowed His head and died?
Have you ever heard the story
Of a Savior crucified?

Have you ever heard the story
How they laid Him in the tomb,
How He burst death's bars asunder
And ascended from its gloom?

Have you ever heard the story
Of the victory He won,
As He rose from earth to glory
When His mission here was done?

Have you ever heard the story
Of a Savior and His love,
Bringing many sons to glory
Have you ever felt that love?

Bringing many sons to glory,
How I love that blessed theme;
Have you ever heard the story?
Praise! oh, praise His holy name.

(Response)

Yes, I think I heard the story
When a lad of tender years;
When it pleased the Lord of Glory
To wipe away my tears.

And I think I heard the angel
When He came to me by night;
As I lay upon my pillow
And it filled me with delight.

For His form was robed in glory,
And His words were few and sweet,
As He told to me the story
Of a Savior good and great.

Lo, thy sins are all forgiven
Were the only words he said;
Then he flew away to heaven,
Yea, the blessed scene had fled.

But it was a wondrous story
Comprehended in that line,
All the attributes of glory
Were vouchsafed to me and mine.

And it filled my heart with wonder,
And I never can forget;
And I often sit and ponder
For it lingers with me yet.

Nearly forty years have drifted
Since that vision came to me,
But my burden has been lifted,
And my spirit now is free.

For the blessed words were spoken
And the story sweetly told;
And the tidings gently broken
To a sinner, lost and cold.

I should love to tell the story,
But alas. I cannot speak;
Yea, my pencil seems to falter,
And I find I'm very weak.

It is not for man to utter
Words unspeakable as these.
We can only seem to mutter,
And our efforts cannot please.

But that Angel robed in glory
He has borne the tidings sweet;
He has told the blessed story
Which no mortal can repeat.

For that Angel (it was Jesus),
He has paid His sacred vow;
He has died to save His people,
And is crowned with glory now.

Williamstown, Kans. (Elder) L. L. SCHENCK

CORRESPONDENCE

"For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer." Heb. 8:3.

Paul has broadly elaborated here as he had previously, and as he continues to do in the following chapters of Hebrews on the ordination and office work of Christ Jesus, the great High Priest of all the family of God, those of the household of faith.

We know from the letter of the Scriptures, that under the former dispensations there were priests, some of the family and some of the tribe. These priests were ordained by God, set apart, to minister in the office of the priest. The ordination of one to serve in a priestly capacity laid certain obligations of duty upon him who was thus ordained or set apart. The principal of these duties was to offer gifts and sacrifices for the sins of the people as well as for his own sins. The ordination of a man to the priesthood made manifest the high esteem in which he was held; the confidence reposed in him acknowledged his ability to teach; his power of judgment of the things to be offered bespoke his knowledge of the law, and certified him as one of power and influence religiously and in some instances wielding great influence governmentally in the land in which he lived. These priests, under the former dispensation, were sinful men, offering gifts and sacrifices brought by sinful men, therefore were sinful offerings and could never take away sin. Though the foregoing is true these priests and sacrificial offerings were no doubt ordained of God, not to take away sin but to point to and typify the High Priest and offering of perfection itself, which could and did forever put away the sins of the whole family of God. The High Priest pointed to being, and is without a shadow of doubt, Christ Jesus our Lord, and the offering he made was no less than himself.

This High Priest, Christ Jesus, was an High Priest after the order of Melchisedec who was a priest of the family. Christ Jesus being after the order of Melchisedec, who far exceeded the Levitical priesthood typically at least, dispensed righteousness and peace and far more exceeded in his priesthood Melchisedec, for not typically did he dispense righteousness and peace, but actually he did, does and will dispense all righteousness and peace of the entire family of God that they have, do now possess or will everlastingly enjoy in the realms of ultimate glory. This High Priest, Christ Jesus of the family of God, occupies the very loftiest pinnacle and most holy of holies so that it is said of him or his priesthood he is an High Priest of good things to come, prophetically called the Lord our Righteousness. He is our peace. In his divinity he had, manifestatively, nothing to offer, yet Paul says, "Wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer." Divinity being so far above, and we in our sins so far below, we poor sinners could never have scaled to the heights of divinity that we might bring to him a gift or sacrifice for him to offer for our sins; and even had it been possible that we could have scaled the heights of divinity itself, being polluted in our sins we could never have brought an offering except a sinful offering, hence our sins could never have been remitted. Neither could our great High Priest have offered what we could bring for he is above all sins. Even though he was without sin, had he offered a sinful offering, perfection would have been destroyed and we left in our sins to everlastingly perish.

Ah brethren, what wonderful love and

grace was here manifested to we poor sinful wretches of the dust, unworthy though we were, and are, and ever will be as long as we journey in this old fleshly tabernacle of clay in total depravity; yet this love and grace, inasmuch as we could not go to him and carry an offering for our sins, broke through the bars of our depravity and came to us in the person of the incarnate Son of God where we lay in our pollution of sins, helpless if you please to do what? To clothe himself with humanity itself. Here he acquired that of which Paul said, "Wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer." What did he clothe himself with? With our nature, became bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, taking his blood from his mother, Mary, he was possessor of the very life that was before condemned to die. Of one blood made he all nations of men, the blood is the life. Hence in coming to us he assumed this fleshly body of life, that he might have to offer for the sins of his people the very flesh and body and life that God in his justice had decreed should die. Hence we see in him the life and blood of the whole family of God Almighty, and when he went to the cross of calvary and there poured out his blood, had he never possessed this life or blood, he could never have satisfied divine justice and so demanded. Is it not comforting to know that no man had power to take his life, but that he had power to lay it down of himself and power to take it up again. Divinity clothed him with that life, divinity laid it down and divinty took it up again. Graciously did the Father answer his prayer, "O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was," when in the resurrection from the grave he came forth and ascended back to the Father, where he is seated on the throne at his right hand, ever making intercession for us.

Inasmuch as he redeemed us by the sacrifice of himself, therefore he made a special atonement for every one of the elect or chosen of God represented in him, having risen again he justified all of the same people. Now in the holiest of holies with the marks and blood stains witnessing for all whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world, their names being engraved in the palms of his hands, how shall he not freely give us all things. How great is this High Priest, who looked not to us for the gifts or sacrifices, but rather gave and yet gives all to us. Inasmuch as he ever liveth I take comfort in the fact that for every one for whom he died, to all for whom he rose again, he in due time according to the Father's will does through his blessed Spirit reveal himself and gives repentence, prayer, songs of praise and adoration. Yea, he brings the child forth, feeds him upon the sincere milk of the word, the strong meat of the doctrine through the gospel, all of which are spiritual sacrifices and offerings, gifts of him to the children. Oh my brethren and sisters, what a feast when he prepares the table, furnishes the food and gathers the children around the table upon which, through the Spirit, we behold this same Jesus as our meat and drink. How unworthy we feel to be in the King's palace dressed in these filthy garments of flesh, but thanks be to Almighty God who never looks upon his children except through the glorious righteousness of his dear Son.

Elder Dodson, after you have passed judgment on the above, if you think it worthy of space in your paper, you have my consent to publish it, if not then cast it into the waste basket always remembering me in your prayers as a poor sinner saved by grace if saved at all. Sincerely, (Elder) H. M. BROCK

(Continued from February issue)

May I say that this is where we take our first step in being drawn to God? For if he was made to be sin by coming to where we were, are we not brought to him by being made righteous? Yet it was not in his being made sin that we were made righteous, neither did his glory consist in his humiliation. But may I say that he must come all the way to where we were, that he might take a firm hold on us, to lead us out, and draw us all the way to himself? Yes, he came into death itself, the same death that we were in, and we were dead in trespasses and in sins. But it was our death, sins, and trespasses that he came into and not his by transgression, but it was our flesh that he came into, it was Adamic flesh to the fullest degree, and it was the body of the church, every individual member of which there now may be millions yet unborn into this world. It was not this death by which he was glorified, but it was by this death that he came to us, and it was by his death on the cross that he returned to the Father, the state of being he was in before he came into the world. Here is where he ascended up on high when he died on the cross, for when he made complete atonement for the sins of his people, he being one with them in that covenant or marriage relationship which existed from eternity, he as well as the whole body was *free* from the sentence of death and condemnation. Here, as I see it, is where he ascended back to heaven where he was before he came down from heaven. That ascending and descending did not consist in respect of distance as we mortals move from one place to another, but it was a moving from one state of being to another. Here is where our coming to God comes in, it is like as if when one cuts the cord that holds an inflated balloon, and the balloon being freed from the earth, it ascends immediately to what we call the visible heavens, and if we are in or with that balloon we likewise go up with it. So likewise when all the earthly ties that held Christ and his bride here on this earth were severed by his death on the cross, we all being with and in him, we all went up together. Does it not say: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up *together,* and made us sit *together* in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Eph. 2:4-6. Paul explains this more fully in Romans 6:5-11 thus, "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Let us read again, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will *draw* all (elect) men unto me." John 12:31-32.

There seems to be scarcely any limit to what could be written here, but I did not start out to write a book, so will leave this part, hoping I have written enough to make it clear the way I see it. But bear with me if I ask how much any mortal had to do with coming to God as is declared in the texts I have

quoted above. But the coming is not complete, I have only told of God's work in bringing the dead sinner from a state of death (nature) to a state of life and righteousness, and true holiness in the sight of God, and that was the chief glory of Christ, and it was all the work of Christ; but now listen to him pray the Father to glorify him, and when we say him that means his whole body, the church, consisting of each individual member, in all their ignorance and dead state that they feel themselves to be in here in the world, wherein being made alive by the operation of the spirit working in them, yet ignorant of God's righteousness, and of God's ways they go about to establish their own. Time and time again in the Old Testament it is reiterated that they are a rebellious and stiffnecked people. So Jesus prays, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." John 17:4-5. Jesus was glorified in his own person and I believe he entered into that glory through his death, but what about each individual member of his body here on earth? when do they enter into it? Read on down my friend in that wonderful prayer, and you will discover that the remainder of that prayer of prayers is devoted to and is of those which he declares the Father has given to him, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me," "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." Verse 24. Now let me ask what it means to be with Jesus where he is and to behold his glory. Notice carefuly he is praying for those that are in the world. Some may want to ask how they can be in the world, and yet be where he is and behold his glory. To that I will answer, they can be with him in a knowledge of what has been done for them and in them. They can be with him in righteousness, in life and true holiness. Isn't that where Jesus is? And would they have to be there to behold his glory, if his glory consists in giving these virtues to them? They can also be with him and behold his glory in their (Father and Son) coming to him as stated in John 14:23. "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." This coming mentioned here is not a coming to them in death as before, but a coming to them in life, and all things that pertain to life and godliness, and the giving to them a knowledge of it. So here we have a second coming of Christ to us, and also as before in his coming we are brought to him. As he has said, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:2-3. So here again we find ourselves being drawn to him in his presence by his coming to us where we are. "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Yes, Jesus went away to prepare a place for us here in this cold unfriendly world, and then he says, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you," and then, "Because I live, ye shall live also." So we have a place here on earth where Jesus and his Father comes to us, and make their abode with us, and there with them we drink of the wells of salvation, and of that river we read about, "The streams whereof shall make glad

the city of God." What better place could a poor mortal ask for than that? This is the place we come to, where we take the water of life so freely, that is mentioned in our text. We can only drink that water in the presence of Jesus and wherever Jesus is, if he is where we are, that is the place he has prepared for us. A beautiful figure of this place is found in the book of Exodus 25:22. "And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel." That mercy seat was to be put above the ark, but for a more complete description of that ark I will refer to the Scriptures. The ark was made of shittim wood (the flesh here), and covered all with gold (purity), there is not metal like unto it. And upon the corners were rings, wedding rings, through which the staves went by which it was carried in this world; by which He was made to come to His bride here. All things that were needful were there, the place for the burnt offering, the flesh hooks, and everything is perfect in Jesus Christ. He is the *living ark* of the covenant. The tables of the law were within, tables of stone, dead in themselves, but in him they had to be; and were carried and fulfilled for all the hosts of Israel. Does it not say he has made us priests through him to God? Then if priests we can enter in to kneel before him and pour out our prayers; burnt offerings, and this they must be my friend, burnt flesh. And the light was over the ark by night and the cloud by day so that the Israelites could know he was over them and guiding them.

Now I have tried to show why they come, how they come and where they come to, and now just one more quotation; We have described the type, now I must give a fuller description of the antitype, or the place itself. See Heb. 12. "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more." "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." "Wherefore we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire."

I do not want to stop here and leave the impression on the mind of any one that this coming is something that takes place over night. I believe all that have ever come to that place can say that it is a long and rugged path leading to it. There are many hills and deep valleys to go over, and it is a wilderness journey, and the waters there are bitter, but we find we have to drink those bitter waters many many times. We hunger and thirst as we pass over the dry and burning sands, and we are often in rebellion against the hardships of the way. We would go our own way if we were not hedged in on every side, but the wilderness way is God's way and it is a sure way as I have tried to show, and it is the best way for it is written that destruction and misery are in our ways as I have quoted above. So the bit-

terness must be in us and not the water for we are dry and barren ground. Does it not say that Jesus was as a root out of dry ground? and he was made of a woman which is flesh so no wonder we are dry. But it was in that same wilderness that they ate of that heavenly manna and drank of the spiritual Rock, and the Lord says, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground." Isa. 44:3. It is here in the desert that we are made willing to God's ways, and the ones that suffer the hardships of the desert are the ones that have the "whosoever will" that is in our text. They are made willing by the power of God, and not by anything that the flesh can do. "It *is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Rom. 9:16. That is why God even made the desert he led his people through, because there it is utterly impossible for them to live at their own hands, but all must come direct from God to them. Their drink came from the Rock where it was smitten by Moses (the law), so the law itself must smite the Rock of eternal ages, and there today is where we get the water of life we are writing about. Their daily food came down from heaven, except when they murmured for meat to eat God sent flocks of quails to them, and it is written in the Psalms that God granted their request but sent leanness to their souls. Their raiment waxed not old neither did their feet swell, but I must quote it all: "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments, or no. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live. Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years. Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee." Deut. 8:2-5.

(Elder) A. D. HUGHETT

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I passed through all this when a small child in my mother's home. I heard Elder Vail tell my mother his experience, how awful he felt it was to be such a sinner, and there was no hope for him. As I grew older I thought I never wanted to feel like he did. Thirty years passed by and I was made to say, God be merciful to me. I felt no one could ever lift me out of the state I was in. I had to have an operation and how I prayed to God to spare me to my family and he did. I had another operation a year after that, and God was more than kind to me and made me see that without him I could do nothing for myself. I bid good-bye to all of my people, who moved from New York state at the time of my marriage. I did not meet my parents for fourteen years and in the meantime I had a baby boy which made us very happy. In the baby's life of a little over two years I always felt he was to be taken from me. He was taken sick one Sunday night and passed away Monday towards night, choking to death with croup. The morning he died I arose early to wash, and as I went to the well for water these words came to me so plainly, "The Lord has given you your baby and the Lord will take him away." I went into the bedroom as my husband was there with the baby. I said to my husband, "Is baby all right?" He said, "Yes." I said, "Husband, baby is going

to die," and I told him what I had heard and he said, "Sate you are just nervous that is all." As I washed the clothes the tears rolled down, I felt surely he would die. When I went in to get the breakfast the baby ran to me in his little bare feet and this I saw so very plainly—he was covered all over with a thin white veil. My husband still thought it was my nerves as I had nervous attacks for over twenty years. The baby passed away that evening. That scene has never left me, he died the second of July and was buried on the fourth. The funeral was held in the Methodist church-house. The minister was a New School Baptist. I was not a member of any church, my nerves were so bad I have no recollection of seeing my baby laid away. I came home but did not realize my baby was gone, I could not even cry. The last night baby was dead I got up at four o'clock and went up stairs where he lay. I wanted to take one last look by myself. I stood looking at him, he was so sweet and peaceful looking. It seemed my dear mother was beside me. I thought that as she had buried five I could part with one. Then I was made to see it was all right.

My nerves were bad all summer, and the doctor told my husband to send me away for a rest. I went to visit the neighbors of my childhood days, went to the Secor's, the home of my father in Olive where I was born, and to a dear old couple called Aunt Mi and Uncle Johnathan Winchell, both Old School Baptists. That same evening the dear old man read a chapter in the Bible, made a prayer and we all went to bed. I was so happy to be in that home. I went to sleep and slept until three o'clock. As I awoke the room was aglow with a bright light. I was not afraid and again I saw my baby all in pure white. I called Aunt Mi and told her. She said, "Never fear, I feel your baby went well." As time went it seemed I must unite with the church. For eighteen years I tried to be a Methodist. I attended protracted meetings for two weeks, read my Bible and prayed for God to show me what to do. He did, I was made to see I was not where I wanted to be. The minister, Mr. Quick, asked me to join the mourners bench. I could not stir, I never went to the meetings again. He came to my house and said, "Dear sister, you are one of God's people. Here is a ladder, one side is earth, the other is heaven; you just need a little boosting, all you need is to come." I said to him, "I have no belief but I know God will do the boosting, not man." I told him, "I would be willing, with God's power." Then he was angry and said, "You are one of those Hard Shells and will be lost." I thought what was a Hard Shell? It worried me a lot and later I found out. I am glad I am one and feel it is all as God meant it to be. I was in much trouble about my sins for a number of years. As the years went by I went to hear Elder Vail preach and what I said to the church I never knew, but I was accepted and later was baptized by Elder Ruston. I saw many sad days over my sinful nature, yet through the years I had many sweet things shown to me of God's love and mercy.

I had two operations within a year. My husband was working away from home and I kept all cares to myself, but was made to say many times, God be merciful to me, a sinner. After 18 years in one home we moved to Ashokan, our second home. We lived fifty-six years together and many times God has shown his goodness to me in our home I had a very kind husband and feel it was one of God's blessings to me. When I was baptized I went into the water so happy. These words were with me,

"When waves of trouble round me roll,
My soul is not dismayed;
I hear a voice I know full well,
'Tis I, be not afraid."

I wanted to sing it but refrained because I thought people would think I was not in my right mind. The recollection of my baptism has always been a sweet memory. I have seen many dark hours since then and have also had many sweet ones. I was baptized June 16, 1916 and one year later, June 17, 1917 my husband was baptized, also by Elder Ruston. He was baptized at the site of his birth then called Temples Pond. Oh, how I was made to rejoice when he went into the water. I feel he was much better than I. We had many happy days together. God was so kind to us and I give him all the praise for without him we can do nothing. I need your prayers always. The years passed after I was in the church and I had a serious trouble with my back, sat for three months in a large chair day and night and never thought to walk again. My dear husband cared for me kindly through it all. One night I was in dreadful pain and prayed if it was God's will to let me get better and I recovered. One night hymns and scriptures came to me which I had never read. I was made to see God's goodness and loving-kindness to me all these years. I give him and him alone all the praise. An unworthy sister if one at all.

Now I will add a little more. It is 1946 and I am seventy-six years old. I feel God is very kind to me in giving me two dear children who respect and love me. My dear husband was taken from me one year ago, July 27, 1945. I feel he is at rest and my prayer is that I may be at rest as I think he is when my time comes. He was eighty-four years old and was very sick the last seven years of his life. Until then he was in very good health.

(Mrs.) SARAH SMITH

Route 1, Dundas, Ill.

MRS. MAUDE A. MORAN, DEAR SISTER MORAN: I enjoyed very much reading your good letter in the *Signs of the Times*. The views you so sweetly expressed give all the praise and glory to God. I believe you have indeed been taught of the Lord to know and understand these things which are hid from the wise and prudent of this world. When you asked for some Elder to give their views through the *Signs of the Times* on Mat. 23:37 that left me out as I am not an Elder, but when you said any one that had a mind to do so could write you personally I think the latter did include me for I do feel as though I would like to give you my views on the text you mentioned for your consideration. If you find it is not according to sound doctrine cast it aside for I, too, only want the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. I believe the above text is in perfect harmony with all the blessed gospel if we only have the understanding to see it.

First I would like to say that Jesus Christ was both God and man. As God he is the second person of the triune God which consists of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost, and these three are one, without beginning of time or ending of days. Jesus was with the Father before time began, and all the subjects of mercy were chosen in him by God the Father in the covenant of redemption before time began. As a man of flesh and blood Jesus was born of the virgin Mary. He as a man was human in every sense of the word even as we are human. He could hunger and thirst and feel pain and sorrow, and as a man of flesh and blood he had pity and compassion for other human beings as such. God was his Father and he was not under the law as we poor mortals until he filled all the law and it passed away. The

point I want to bring out is this, that Jesus as a man did have pity and tender compassion for others, and this is clearly seen in the case of the death of Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha. Jesus was away when Lazarus died, and on the return of Jesus, when Mary met Jesus weeping and there were many Jews with her also weeping, Jesus wept. I believe he wept as a man in pity and tender compassion. He, as God, knew Lazarus would come forth from the dead at his command, and Lazarus who had been dead four days rose from the dead and came forth from the grave bound hand and foot with grave clothes when Jesus commanded him to do so.

Now to get back to your text I believe that when Jesus was mourning over Jerusalem it was as a man and not as King of kings and Lord of lords for he, as the Son of God or God in the flesh, had all power and he quickened whom he would. The wind and the storm tossed seas were still at his command. But as a man, dear sister, he mourned over the state of affairs in Jerusalem. This is what I believe about it and you can take it for what it is worth to you if nothing at all. If we were to take the position that Jesus could not have done anything about Jerusalem at all, we would thereby deny his divinity and power. The Arminian world does take that position and try to prove that the Lord has done all he can, and that the eternal destiny of all men is in their own hands. But we, Old Baptists, have not so learned Christ. The apostle Paul tells us that if we could be justified by the deeds of the law, that Christ has died in vain, and Jesus says, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." There is no need for me to go on into the wonders and the beauty of the eternal purposes of God, the election and predestination, and the final preservation of all of God's chosen ones for you thoroughly understand these things I feel sure.

I hope that as you have read my views, you have done so with a charitable mind, remembering that the writer in and of himself is less than nothing. I heartily agree with your views on prayer. All the words in the world cannot make a prayer. A prayer, if I understand it and may be I do not, but I believe real prayer is the sincere desire of the heart, either spoken or not, that has been given the felt need and the spirit of prayer by the Lord. Prayer is as much a part of God's purposes as the blessing he gives. I am writing too much so will stop. Your brother in a precious hope. C. W. WILLIAMS

Box 1033, Kinwood, Texas

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, RUTHERFORD, N. J.: By your permission, if you see fit and deem it worthy of space, I would like to give a few thoughts on my experience and observation of twelve years among the Arminians of to-day and their appeal to the sinner to accept Jesus Christ and be saved. I gained the B. M. A. wing of the Missionary Baptists twelve years ago, and have watched them and all other branches of Arminian churches and I find them all alike, preaching a two way salvation which denies salvation by grace through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. I shall be plain and treat them and their Arminian doctrine as my understanding of the Scriptures treats them.

First, they teach that all children born into the world are pure and holy, and will go to heaven if they die provided they have not reached the age of accountability which they set at twelve years old. Jesus could not be the infant child's Savior as he only came to save the lost. Let us analyze this theory and see if it will hold good. The stream of humanity was contaminated at the

fountain head, and cannot of itself rise above the fountain head which was Adam. He was of the earth, earthy, made of the dust of the earth. God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life by which he became a living soul. This I understand to be nothing more or less than the inflation of his lungs with the same air that we breathe, which set in motion each and every part of his natural body. This body was put in the garden and placed under a law, which if violated would let sin and death into the world. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom. 5:12. All having sinned, all are sinners until that sin is removed or forgiven by the reigning grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let us analyze this being born pure. In Romans 3:12 it says, "They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable." The objector says they are not born so but go and become thus at a certain age after birth, so their position is that some have gone, others are going and others will go. Do you see that smacks of ignorance? Our text says all are gone, "they are together become unprofitable," the same form of the verb again which shows the act of becoming unprofitable as complete, right where our nature sinned against the author of our existence. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8:7. "Unto the pure all things are pure." Titus 1:15. So it is impossible for this pure child to become a sinner as unto the pure (or saved child) all things are pure, but he is not pure as the fountain head is not pure, "but even their mind and conscience is defiled." Can a clean thing, a little child, be brought out of an unclean, an alien sinner? Is sin hereditary? "What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of woman, that he should be righteous?" Job 15:14. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" Job 14:4. "Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward." Job 5:7. Again "How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?" Job 25:4. Do these texts lend any sympathy to the thought of infantile purity? The man who would, in the face of all this testimony, has made but little advancement beyond his original condition at birth.

Sin is the home of all born in the world, and they love their home until God shines in their heart to give them a noble life and higher conception of the things of his kingdom. They are just as unconscious of the blessing and joys of the kingdom as the wild ass's colt is of the shelter of the barn yard, so the sinner must be tamed before he will love his master and his kingdom; and like the Gadarine who is as wild and wretched, must have a vision of Jesus in love and power to put him in his right mind to love and serve the Lord. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

They appeal to the alien sinner to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and by so doing they will experience the new birth. If this were true, it seems to me that the act of the sinner in accepting Jesus Christ as his personal Savior would bring a sinner salvation by his own works, as he is the one to do the accepting or rejecting. Let us try the sinner and see what good works he can perform in accepting Jesus as his personal Savior. What is the condition of an alien sinner? To find out we will give a scriptural anatomy of him. We read in Romans 3:13-18,

"Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes." But says one, you have not tried his heart, mind and conscience which is the seat of his service. Very well, "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." Eccl. 8:11. Again, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: Who can know it?" "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Gen. 6:5. Could language be stronger, the heart is deceitful above all things. Now to the mind. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8:7. If a sinner can accept their preaching it proves that their preaching is not a thing of the Spirit. "The natural (unsaved) man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." If an alien sinner can hear and understand their preaching, does it not prove that their preaching is not a thing of the Spirit? Therefore they are not scriptural, and is not the church of Jesus Christ set up in the world as his visible kingdom? They claim that their preaching is a thing of the Spirit, and of God, therefore, an alien sinner cannot accept it and be saved on the terms of the gospel as they claim, but instead their preaching is of the world and is not a thing of the Spirit and why? Because they say alien sinners can hear them and accept their preaching.

They say that a sinner must exercise faith. Faith is sometimes spoken of as the faith of God as in Rom. 3:3. There it refers to the work of God as embraced in his immutable promise. It is by this faith and not the faith of the creature that the heart is purified. God has promised eternal life and that before the world began. Titus 1:2. This promise is to as many as the Lord shall call. Acts 2:39. Notice eternal life is that that was promised. To have eternal life is to be a child of God. To be a child of God is to be an heir of God. Rom. 8:16-17. The apostle in speaking of this heirship says, "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." Rom. 4:16. This shows how sonship, heirship or eternal life comes by faith (promise) and grace of God, and not by the alien sinner accepting what some preaching says is the gospel. Faith is a fruit of the Spirit, Gal. 5:22. If faith is a fruit of the Spirit, the sinner must have the Spirit before faith as the fruit cannot exist before the tree. If the Spirit with the sinner precedes faith, then the sinner is free before faith, for where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. The one who has the Spirit is a child of God. Rom. 8:14. If the one who has the Spirit is a child of God, and one must have the Spirit before faith it follows that one is a child of God prior to faith. Therefore, faith is not a condition in order thereto, but an evidence or proof that one is a child of God.

B. B. WALSTON

Route 1, Box 901, Auburn, Wash.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: While looking through my hymn book this morning one hymn especially appeals to me, the title "Seeking Christ."

"Jesus, Shepherd of thy people,
Lead us through this desert land;
We are weak, and poor, and feeble,
Yet we trust thy mighty hand;
Great Protector!
By thy power alone we stand!

All thy sheep shall come to Zion;
With them thou wilt never part:
Beasts of prey, nor roaring lion,
None shall pluck them from thy heart:
All thy chosen
Cost thee wounds, and blood, and smart.

In thy bosom, safely lodged,
Thine shall rest from danger free;
They shall never more be judged,
Nor shall condemnation see:
Blessed Jesus,
Let us then rejoice in thee.

Two weeks ago to-day I rode with a man, his wife and daughter from my home to Auburn. They went over the mountains on their way home. That night that man died, his wife is an invalid. How suddenly so many are taken to-day. I wanted to send you a little remembrance of my esteem and love for the *Signs* and all its writers. May God grant you faith and courage to carry on in your work of sending out the Scriptures to all poor and needy souls is my prayer.

I received the November *Signs* and read it with much love and thought for the saints in all parts of our great country. I was very happy to read your article on charity. I think it embodies a great meaning. I think we can be kind and thoughtful to all we come in contact with. Courtesy does not cost anything but may bring big rewards.

Dear brother, I hear a great many sermons over my radio. The missionaries are trying to help the Lord save souls, but I think he can save those the Father hath given him to save without their help. I was glad of sister Catherine Duffus' letter. She spoke of brother Peters. How I would liked to have been at that meeting she wrote about. I heard one young man say he was not afraid in the war for he trusted in the Savior. I feel if the Savior does not give me strength I will go down. My trust is in him although I know I am a sinner and there is nothing good in me. Love to the household of faith. Your unworthy sister.

(Mrs.) JENNIE CLIFFORD..

Athens, Texas

DEAR ELDER DODSON AND READERS OF THE SIGNS: Recently it was our good fortune to visit the Sulphur Fork Association, held with Old Union Church, near the little town of Maude, deep down in east Texas and about twenty miles off the state line between Texas and Louisiana. Only two days did we share the meeting, Saturday and Sunday, but the two days were most joyously spent, and we felt abundantly blessed to be permitted to enjoy the repast presented those two days. We failed to get the number of Elders present, but understood there were eight or ten including visiting and home Elders. Among the visiting ones was our much esteemed brother, Elder R. W. Rhodes, from Louisiana, well known among our Baptist people as a staunch defender of the doctrine and order of the church, humble, meek and submissive among his brethren, but fearless and bold in defense of those principles of doctrine and order held sacred by the church of the First Born.

It was also our happy privilege to meet with, the first time in person, Elder W. A. Speer, of El Dorado, Ark. Brother Speer is well known throughout his home district, and his name has appeared in the *Signs* and other papers, but owing to local and personal obliga-

tions around home he has not enjoyed the wider range among the brethren and churches as he most likely desires. Just here allow me to say, and I trust brother Speer will pardon me for the personal reference should he chance to read these lines, it so happens he holds the position of Distict or Circuit Judge of the Courts of his state, and while we appreciate the honor conferred by his constituency, yet it is an added burden and obligation. We found in him that spirit of humbleness, meekness and godly fear which seems to characterize the anointed gifts to the church, brushing aside those earthly, perishing and fading things of this world, and through the grace given him, he proclaims the riches of the kingdom of Christ lifting us up and above all these earthly worries to the praise of his glorious Redeemer, and to the edifying of his brethren. The preaching all appeared in harmony and according to sound words, bringing tidings of great joy in him who said, "Without me ye can do nothing."

Many of those present we would like to mention, especially the Elders, but not having a list of the names I am unable to recall them and time and space forbids. It was our good pleasure, with other brethren, to spend a night in the home of sister Bloxham of New Boston where it seemed loyalty and welcome was felt by all. Love for God and his cause seemed to permeate the atmosphere of sister Bloxham's home. I would not close this little brief report without the mention of one name who has been familiar in this Association possibly for two decades, our much esteemed brother, Elder J. C. Sikes, known by our Baptist people almost throughout the country. Owing to his physical break-down he was denied this pleasure, but may it be the Lord's will to restore his health and spare him to be with us more. I trust the brethren, preachers in particular, will avail themselves of any opportunity to visit the brethren of this Association. They are a lovely band of brethren and may the Lord continue his leadership among them to the praise of his glorious name and the comfort of his scattered people. Brother Floyd Ingram, my home neighbor who was with us at this meeting, thought it the greatest meeting he ever attended. Heavens blessing on all the household of faith is our prayer. Yours unworthily, but in hope of life beyond.

(Elder) L. D. ROSE

Route 2, Dry Prong, La.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: I was blessed to be with Oak Grove Church Saturday and Sunday just passed, and was blessed to baptize a dear sister Sunday. We surely had a lovely meeting.

This sister handed me $2 and asked me to send it to you for the *Signs*. My health is some better. We enjoy reading the *Signs*.

We pray the Lord to enable you by his grace to hold you up to carry on. Pray for us that we fail not.

(Elder) W. B. VALENTINE

(We thank brother Valentine for his nice letter and the *new* subscription. We are truly glad to hear of good meetings and additions to the visible church and wish all such members would subscribe for the *Signs*. In these perilous times members of the Old School Baptist church, both new and old, need to be fortified against the evils of the day by what God's word teaches, and we know of no better way for them to become established, rooted and grounded in the doctrine of God's elect than by searching the Scriptures. We honestly know of no better adjunct to the Bible and what it teaches than the *Signs of the Times*. You who agree with us tell others about it and have them send in their subscriptions for one year in order to become better acquainted with it. R. L. D.)

Box 146, Woodward, Iowa.

DEAR FRIENDS AND KINDRED I HOPE IN THE LORD: Enclosed find money-order for the *Signs of the Times* which is long past due. I do not know how to thank you for sending it so long without my renewal, but I want you to know how thankful I am. I am in very poor health and my wife is also in very bad health, but we are both getting old and we cannot expect too much here in this world any more. We are trying to be content as best we can with what we have. We have rounded out a full life of love and devotion and are ready at the Master's call to quit the walks of men. In fact when I feel my time is almost up a kind of thrill comes over me that I cannot express in words, although my life has been worthless and unprofitable, full of sin and temptations, yet I cannot say I have no hope. I would that I could put into words my feeling and love for the Old Baptists, but when I try to write and say something I am so empty and dull that I fear that I have lived a very unprofitable life. I have been ailing now for more than two years, my wife since last February. She was taken suddenly ill and rushed to the hospital when there seemed no hope at all for her, but through the merits of a gracious God she is still with me, although it took all our life's savings and we have no more of this world's goods to fall back on. I still try to work but sometimes it is very hard to keep going. I am very weak and nervous and can hardly write.

Will not take up any more of your time with my troubles, but wanted you to know what was the matter and that I am still in the land of the living, but not for long. God bless all of you.

W. J. KIMBRO

El Dorado, Ark.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: As it is time for renewal of my subscription I am enclosing the price, $2. I cannot think of missing one number. It comes laden with much good reading from the dear brothers and sisters of like views. Oh what pleasure it is to be able to appreciate this doctrine. To my understanding it is the only doctrine in accord with Bible teaching. This is my hope and is an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast. How encouraging to a poor child of grace. This is hoping you will be spared a long time to keep the *Signs* published. Your little sister if one at all.

(Mrs.) M. J. GODWIN

Roanoke, Va.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR ELDER: Enclosed find check for $2 to renew my subscription for another year from Feb. 1, 1947 to Feb. 1, 1948.

Brother Dodson I have enjoyed the *Signs of the Times* more for the past four months than ever before. I suppose part of the reason is that I have been confined in the hospital, and in bed for that period and must stay in for the next three to six months.

Please change my mailing address from 211 Mt. Trust Building to Route 8, Box 369, Roanoke, Va. I have closed my office and will not be able to work for some time to come. May the good Lord bless you in this coming year in all of your undertakings. Yours in much tribulation, your unworthy brother if one at all.

(Elder) B. V. HELMS

(We regret to learn of brother Helms' affliction, and hope the Lord will grant him grace sufficient for all his needs. He would undoubtedly be glad to hear from any of his brethren who have a mind to write to him. R. L. D.)

Frisco City, Ala.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: The first Sunday morning in August I was walking to Shiloh which is the only genuine church in Monroe County. It is about four miles from my home, and about one mile this side of the church-house I found a one dollar bill in the road. When I picked it up I said to myself, "If no owner comes for it I am going to send it to Elder Dodson which will make me $2 I will send him this year. It will not be much but will help some and I am going to try to send $2 each year as long as I live if the Lord will provide for me to do so." Please find enclosed the dollar which I hope will reach you safely.

Of late I have been reading some *Signs of the Times* dating back to 1898, and I cannot see any change in the writings from that time to this. I will not be here but I have wondered when God calls you who would take your place, but he will have another good man like yourself to put in your place as he has always been doing. This leaves wife and me well as usual. Hope you and family are well. I am a poor sinner and if saved it is by the grace of God. Farewell.

A. J. DOGGETTE

(We believe our readers will be interested in reading the foregoing letter for more reasons than one. It gives evidence of what is in the heart of brother Doggette, who has our heartfelt thanks. We realize, we trust, that all things are in the hands of our God, who has determined the number of days and the station we should fill in this life. After he serves his purpose with us here below, our faith is that he will raise up others to lift high his banner, as he has done in ages past. May he be pleased to grant us grace and strength sufficient for our day is our prayer. R. L. D.)

NOTICE TO ALL OLD BAPTISTS

I have collected many thousand books, pamphlets, periodicals, minutes, papers and other historical documents. I am conducting a Library Service to all Baptists. Any information needed I will search out and make a copy for you free. I am anxious to make this a real service, and if you will, please help me by sending me your old minutes, papers, books and other documents. I am especially interested at this time in old things about the church in the New England states series.

(Elder) W. D. GRIFFIN

PLEASE REMEMBER

1—To renew your subscription promptly when due, if possible. The date on your wrapper cover will show to when you have paid.

2—That when your remittance reaches us before the 10th of the month, credit will be shown with the next issue of the paper, otherwise it cannot be shown until the second month following. This also applies to changes of address.

3—That notices of Special Meetings should be sent to us at least thirty days in advance of the month in which the meeting is to be held.

If our readers will be kind enough to observe the foregoing suggestions they will aid us very materially in getting out the paper.

R. L. D.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

A friend, N. Y., $1; Mrs. A. G. Reid, N. C. $1; Mrs. C. B. Gordy, Mich., $1; Mrs. R. Dundas, Cal., $1; Mrs. D. Deal, Mo., $3; Mrs. M. Finch, N. Y., $1; Mrs. M. J. Ege, N. J., $3; J. H. Smith, Sr., Tex., $1; Mrs. C. M. Shackelford, La., $1; F. H. Richardson, Ia., $23; Mrs. R. V. Edwards, Ala., $2; J.N. Wageonheizer, N. Y., $1; Mrs. C. Twilley, Md., $1; J. R. Davis, Ky., $2; Mrs. E. E. Cates, Kans., $1; Mrs. R. B. Shortridge, Ill., $10; Mrs. H. E. Danks, Cal., $1; Mrs. J. Clifford, Wash., $10; Mrs. A. Chandler, Ky., $1; C. T. Pyles, Ky., $1; E. K. Adsit, N. Y., $1; Mrs. B. H. Shearon, Tenn,. $1; G. A. Paul, Ala., $1; A friend, Mich., $3; D. H. Bradley, Tex., $8; A friend, Can., $1; Mrs. W. Gambill, Ark., $1; Mrs. W. L. Ferguson, Va., $3; Mrs. E. M. Werner, N. J., $1; Mrs. M. J. Disharoon, Del., $3; Mrs. E. Watson, Ga., $1; J. C. Mellott, Pa., $1; Mrs. J. F. Lawson, N. C., $1.50; J. L. Turner, Tex., $1; H. A. Giles, Va., $3; Mrs. F. E. Wyatt, Mo., $1; S W. Shipway, N. Y., $1; Mrs. S. O. Wilson, Tenn., $1; Mrs. S. Vincent, N. C., $3; R. E. Crooks, Wash., $25.

EDITORIAL

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"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Psalms 19:1.

DEAR BRETHREN: We will offer a few thoughts for your consideration upon the above text which was given by the Psalmist, David. We are told by Moses that "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Gen. 1:1. In a natural sense we would begin by pointing out some of the mighty works of God in creation, and the firmament showeth his handywork. His word says, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good." Gen. 1:14-18. From a natural viewpoint we could point out many wonders that could be observed with the natural eye. Astronomers and men of science have observed many of the movements of the planets, all of which have their special orbit in which they go forth to fill the place that God purposed they should fill, which is to his glory, and at the same time they show the perfection of God in his work in the creation of all things. These things are but a shadow of the declarative glory of God and his handywork. When we are given to hear the joyful sound, and hear of the goodness and mercy of God to poor sinners, things that can be observed do not express the half that abounds in the heart.

As we write you we are brought to the time God appointed for his Son to enter into the visible body of flesh, and be born of a woman under the law to redeem his people from under the law. This wonderful event, manifested among the sons of men, was not left to poor weak worms of the dust to establish and defend that God should be glorified, but God sent his angel in the midst of heaven proclaiming the peace of God on earth, and his good will or tender mercies to poor sinners, thus the proclamation of God to the shepherds that were abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. "And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Luke 2:9-14.

It is to our satisfaction that David was embracing the glory of God that should be manifested by his Son, and the heavenly host that should pour forth his praise, for they cry glory to God in the highest. No part of the glory of God is left out, and while Jesus was in the world doing the will of his Father he declared the works that I do, I do not of myself but of my Father. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." John 5:17. "Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always." John 11:41-42. Jesus being God manifest in the flesh spake and it was done, and commanded and it stood fast. For example, at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, "there were set there six water pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the water-pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast." This was declared to be the best wine retained until the last, and by this miracle Jesus manifested his glory. (Read John 2:1-11 inclusive).

The child of God must be born of an incorruptible seed by the Word of God before he can receive the things of the Spirit, for they are foolishness unto the carnal mind which is enmity against God, not subject to his law, neither can be, but the one born of the Spirit hears and learns of the Father, and the Holy Ghost taketh of the things of God and showeth them unto us. By this knowledge we come to Jesus, and it makes us glorify God in our bodies and our spirits which are his, so it must come from the Father of lights with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of a turn. By these relations we understand the heavens declare the glory of God.

Nineteen hundred and forty-six years ago God manifested his handiwork in the midst of all the stars of the firmament, and revealed to the wise men of the east a star that represented his Son, and the Holy Ghost directed them to Bethlehem. They came from the east to Jerusalem, "Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." Matt. 2:2. "It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." John 6:45. This star shined unto the glory of God, and no other star could give the light to represent the Son of God, for he was the one to give peace to the poor sinner dead in trespasses and sin, and the tender mercies of God were manifest in his light for "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." John 1:9.

His star shined forth the royalty of the kingdom of God, that his Son, whom he had appointed heir of all things had come into the world and salvation was in no other, "For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. The natural man through the teachings and traditions of their fathers sing peace on earth and good will toward men, but to have His light to light us we can see glory, honor and salvation in Him and in no other. The Holy Ghost taketh of the things of Him and showeth them unto us which gives the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

This was a wonderful light to the wise men, that would constrain them to come to Jerusalem to worship the one whose star they had seen, and not only were they given to see the star, but it went before them till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star they rejoiced with ex-

ceeding great joy, and when they were come into the house they saw the young child with Mary, his mother, and fell down and worshipped him. (Matt. 2:9-11)

These events give us a great example of the operation of the virtues of eternal life given to the child of grace as he is led through tribulation, patience, experience and hope which anchors him in the love of God. In spirit and truth he worships God and has no confidence in the flesh. We love to see people happy and rejoicing at Christmas time at the birth of Jesus Christ, but the evidence proves that it is animation of the flesh and not of the Spirit of God shed abroad in the heart. Knowing the exercises of the carnal mind, we feel sad for those that are carnally minded, and our heart has a deep yearning for the blessings of God to give them understanding, and when we contact one that has these things in their heart, the emotions of praise lays hold upon us, and the relations between us make us feel they are our kinsman and companion, and we want to go with them, live with them and die with them.

We humbly hope the exercises we have manifested among the sons of men have been given from heaven, and the strength and understanding we have enjoyed these many years we know we did not receive of man, neither taught by man but with demonstration and power. May the peace that passeth understanding abound in your hearts, and the abundant mercies of our God rest with you, and the presence of the bridegroom of your souls be ever near during this year; and may it be the will of God to add many to the militant church that your joys be full is our desire for the Zion of our God. May it please God to stir up your pure minds that you may be refreshed in the things that you have tasted and handled of the word of life. C. W. V.

"I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." Isaiah 44:22

One of our good friends in the South has written us in part, as follows: "Quite some time ago, when greatly distressed in mind and soul, some impelling power directed me to the Bible. On opening, this scripture is the first I saw: 'I have blotted out as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.' What peace and comfort was mine, for a short time. These last few weeks the memory of that sweet assurance has comforted me. Elder Dodson, I don't know why I have been impressed to write you as I have. If not asking too much, will you write on this scripture, when you have time and a mind so to do in the *Signs*."

We feel most tenderly towards the kids encamping by the shepherd's tents, who are hungering for the sincere milk of the word, and whose bleating is heard because they need to be fed and protected from the cold north winds which penetrate to the very bone, so to speak. Oh, how they need to be clothed upon with that best and only robe of righteousness woven through the sufferings and death of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Nothing else will shield them from the all-seeing eye of a just and holy God. This same holy God first causes them to feel his righteous wrath against sin before he enables them, by faith, to find that refuge which he has provided for them in the cleft of the Rock. Then he says unto them, "Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." By way of further assurance to them he says, "Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and

blessed him, and increased him." Those whom God is pleased to call and cause to walk by faith in this unfriendly world are, indeed, like Abraham and like Sarah. They are made to forsake their earthly kindred, so far as spiritual things are concerned, and go into a land or country, or experience, which the Lord shows them. It is most certainly not a way of their own choosing, for the voice was heard behind them, turning them about, and saying, "This is the way; walk ye in it." It was even before Isaac was born that the Lord showed Abraham the stars of heaven and said unto him that as they were, without number, so would his seed be. Likewise, Sarah was barren, and so far as nature was concerned she could not be expected to bear a child, nevertheless the angel of God told her that at a set time she would bring forth a son, for the Lord had already told Abraham that "in Isaac shall thy seed be called." We are further told that Abraham staggered not at the promise of God, but that he believed God and it was accounted unto him for righteousness. The fact that he and Sarah were old and had no children was no insurmountable stumbling block in God's way, for God could bless them, and increase them, and multiply them until Israel would be as the sand by the seashore. Therefore, God's people are commanded to hearken unto him, to look unto the rock, Christ Jesus, from which they are hewn, and unto the hole of the pit from whence they are digged. or the bottomless pit of sin from whence they are delivered; to the small beginning of Abraham, and the barren condition of Sarah, and yet all nations of the earth are wonderfully blest through their seed, or the seed that came into the world through that lineage. The import of the word which the Lord spake by the prophet was, as we see when the promise was fulfilled, "For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody." Isa. 51:3. We are persuaded that God's spiritually taught are true witnesses to these things. Therefore when we hear the bleating of the lambs the uppermost desires of our heart is to point them to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

If we will but read the chapter in which our text is found, we will find that two kinds of characters are described therein, and each has his own mode of worship. The ninth to the twentieth verses, iuclusive, set forth the workings of those who make graven images and worship idol gods. It is said of them that "they are their own witnesses," but at the same time it is declared "their delectable things shall not profit." We do not recall for the moment any place in the Bible where creature works are more exhaustively explored, or more fully and completely shown to be without merit as a means of obtaining salvation than herein appears. The prophet says concerning them, "They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand." While it is true that there is the elect and the non-elect, the true worshipper, and the false worshipper, it should be observed that our text does not apply to the latter. For this reason we are under obligation to devote our time and space to tracing out the characteristics of those called of God to serve him. In the first part of this chapter we find that God is speaking to Jacob, his servant; and to Israel, whom he chose: "Thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear

not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen." Then is set forth some of the blessings the Lord would bestow upon his people, "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring. And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses." They were glad to own the Lord as their God, and to be called by the name of Jacob and Israel. This name implies a new creature, for Jacob was born of the flesh, and he was a deceiver and a supplanter. In short he was a sinner, but when the angel of the Lord wrestled with him all night and he would not let him go until he bestowed a blessing upon him, he was given a new name, even Israel, for as a prince he had, by faith, prevailed with God. From that day forth, however, he went forth halting and limping. The worldly religionist knows nothing of this halting and limping. He can travel unhampered and unfettered and feels he knows he is a Christian, and claims to be doing much for the Lord. The true born child of God, on the contrary, is like Mephibosheth; he is lame on both feet and can't walk, except in the strength of his Lord. Jacob was given a new name, even Israel, for he is now a subject of the King, having been born of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever; and he therefore hungers and thirsts after the righteousness of Christ.

We will notice from the first verse immediately preceding our text that it is this typically *new creature* to whom the Lord is speaking in the text. He says, "Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." By way of emphasizing that Jacob and Israel was his servant God repeated the declaration. He also showed conclusively how and why he was his servant, for he said: "I have formed thee." Surely, there could be no question about his being God's servant, and he was a representative character of all the Lord's people. Therefore we do well to consider and ponder carefully and prayerfully what follows, or is contained in our text. Its content, in our opinion, is so far-reaching and all-embracing that we want to impress it deeply upon the minds of our readers, and will quote it again. God said: "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." This servant, or people of the living God, had been adopted and chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundations of the earth were laid, or the dust of the highest hills were formed, and they were chosen according to the predestinated purpose of God, that they should be holy and without blame, before him in love, but when they were created in their earthly head, Adam, through his transgression of God's law, sin came in as a mighty flood and has deluged the world with every conceivable kind of evil and wickedness. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom. 5:12 God's people after Adam sinned were separated from him by wicked works and absolutely cut off from God so far as their standing in nature is concerned. Further than this, as they stand in Adam they are under the sentence of death, without God and without hope in the world, and without any power or ability of any kind whatsoever to extricate themselves from so terrible a dilemma. Had it not been for the mercy of God and for the fact that he loved his people with an everlasting love,

which he manifested in due time by sending his only begotten Son into the world to seek and to save that which was lost, they would have been banished from his presence forever.

In order to comprehend and appreciate even in some small measure how great and infinite God's love is, we need to know something of the enormity of sin and how terrible, beyond words to describe, its effects are upon the human race. A few glances about us is sufficient to convince of the truth of what the prophet, Jeremiah, said: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" But when God turns our pure eyes within and we see the iniquity of our hearts in the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into his world, then we are made to know that the half had not been told us. Great, indeed, is the mystery of iniquity! Unless we are made to realize this we cannot begin to properly evaluate the significance of God's mercy and love when he says, "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins." When we are made to ponder our own personal transgressions and sins, which are innumerable for multitude and as high as the highest mountain, we are made to wonder how they can be atoned for or put away, but when we then consider the transgressions and sins of all the elect of God from the beginning of time to the end of time, the number staggers the imagination, but when we by faith can behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world, then we can see how that all of the transgressions and sins of God's elect, throughout the ages, are blotted out as a thick cloud. We must be embraced in the new covenant and have God's law written in our inward parts and in our hearts, before we can know of God's way in grace, where man no more teaches his neighbor, nor his brother to know the Lord, for they shall all be taught of the Lord, and great is their peace, and God says concerning all such, "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Yea, they are removed from them as far as the east is from the west, and they can no longer rise up to condemn them again before God.

Until Jesus Christ came into the world and shed his precious blood, there was no remission, or putting away of sin and, therefore, God's people could not return unto him. But when Jesus by his sufferings and death paid the debt in full and there was none who could lay anything to the charge of his elect and chosen, then they were liberated and set free from the bondage of sin and death and are, therefore, commanded to "return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." They having been given to him (Jesus) by God the Father in the counsels of eternity, he and he alone could redeem them, and when he met all the law's demands by paying the price in full, they are, each and every one, free to return to him when he calls them. It is only to his chosen that he speaks—none others—and he says to them, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." The word "let" does not mean an invitation, but it is a command, and where the word of the King is there is power accompanying that word. After describing the highway that was to be cast up in the wilderness, Isaiah said, "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." None can return to the Lord except those who

were his in the beginning, those who were separated from him by reason of sin, and these alone are the ransomed of the Lord who *shall* return in the day of his power, or deliverance, and there is no question about their coming with songs and everlasting joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing is made to flee away.

The deliverance of the church, the body of Christ, from sin and death in Adam, which separated her from her Head, the Lord Jesus Christ, and her full and complete restoration was the joy that was set before him, which caused him to endure the cross and despise the shame, and this was fully accomplished when he sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. This mystical body of Christ, embraced both Jew and Gentile, or all the nations of the earth, and it is so compact and united that when God's love is shed abroad in the heart that all barriers are removed and they know they have passed from death unto life because they love the brethren. Of a truth, their transgressions and sins are all blotted out as a thick cloud, and they do return unto their Redeemer and give honor and glory to God.

It is, indeed, wonderful for the individual to experience such things as are referred to by our friend, and since the Lord's people have all things in common, we are persuaded that the angels in heaven (the church of God here on earth), will rejoice because of the peace and comfort, which passeth all understanding, that encompassed our friend. We can but desire that all such might find that sweet fellowship which is only to be realized within the bounds of the militant church, and we truly hope that any and all obstacles may be removed and that our friend will go home to her *friends* and tell them what great things the Lord has done for her, whereof she is glad. Sometimes we feel that those of us who compose the militant church need to take more earnest heed unto ourselves, by manifesting the love of God which we profess to have in our hearts, in order to show to the bleating lambs of the fold on the outside a more hearty welcome. If we know anything of their travail and feelings, they need every possible encouragement to come out from among the world and unbelievers and be separate, and there is no better way known to us for this to be done than for them to rest their case with the brethren. Not only do such characters need the love and fellowship of the church, but there is nothing in all the world that means so much to the church as to have those taught of God to come home and dwell with those of like precious faith.

R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

It is with sorrow that we hand you the obituary of Mrs. MARGARET ANN BROWN, wife of Youra Mansfield Brown of Providence, Ky. She passed away quietly at her home Oct. 27, 1946 after many months of suffering which she bore patiently, realizing that the will of God must be done. She was born April 17, 1875, daughter of John and Mary Eliza Dorris, who were members of the Predestinarian Baptist church. Left to mourn is her kind and devoted husband who stood by her for many months of sickness; one brother in California; two sons, M. F. Brown, Upland, Cal. and Y. L. Brown, Panama, Cal.; two daughters, Mrs. Mildred Norwood and Mrs. Evaline Crowell, Providence, Ky.; one daughter-in-law, Mrs. Grover Brown, and one son-in-law, C. V. Stevens, Providence, Ky. There are seventeen grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

She was never led to the altar to tell what the Lord had done for her, but, as many of God's little children have done, looked on the church as being too sacred a place for one who felt too unworthy to go there. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." A good woman has gone to rest from a life of love and devotion to her family and friends and to the church. She showed in her walk and conversa-

tion that her heart was with the Baptists, helping them in every way she could, and was always present with her dear companion to hear them tell of the things she loved. In answer to my request that she write me her experience she wrote: "I'll make an attempt to tell you. My experience is too little to be of interest to others who can tell so much, but my mind goes back to that dear old spot where I do hope the Lord was with me for awhile. I may be mistaken, but something made me feel so light, I felt like I could almost fly for a few minutes, but those feelings soon vanished. This was forty years ago and sometimes since then I feel that the Lord has visited me."

Funeral services were conducted by Elder G. D. Clark, a friend of the family. Burial in the Fox Cemetery near Providence. The church and all neighbors and friends join in sympathy to this dear family. Written by one who loved her, and will miss her kind disposition and her instruction in the church.

(Mrs.) CYNTHIA PERKINS BROWN

Mrs. FANNIE (TUTTLE) PRINCE of Martin, Tenn. quietly bid adieu to this world and all that is earthly, and entered into that rest that remaineth to the people of God, August 30, 1946 at 12:55 P. M. at the Baptist Hospital in Memphis, Tenn. She was born in Saline Co., Ill., Feb. 22, 1872 of the parentage of Harbard and Francis Tuttle. She was in her 75th year. On Nov. 4, 1894 she was united in marriage to Elder T. J. Prince, near Carbondale, Jackson Co., Ill., and to this union were born nine children of which six survive. Mrs. H. L. Collier, near Martin, Tenn., Mrs. Bernard Foley, Chicago, Ill., Harbie Prince, near Dukedom, Tenn., Elmer Prince, near Union City, Tenn., Leonard Prince and Lawrence Prince, Chicago, Ill. There are fourteen grandchildren, one great-grandson and one brother, Robert Tuttle, Carbondale, Ill., with other relatives and friends.

She had a hope in Christ and united with the Primitive Baptist Rock Spring Church in Johnson Co., Ill., and was baptized by Elder J. M. Perkins of Mayfield, Ky. in May 1906. Her membership was in Boaz Chapel Church near Fulton, Ky. at the time of her death. She loved her church and believed in salvation by grace and grace alone. She will be greatly missed by her children and friends. Her husband, Elder T. J. Prince, predeceased her in 1942. She was loved by all who knew her, was a good companion and a loving mother. She was always so kind and good to me from childhood up, and to all her own children. She often talked to me and her faith and belief in God was unmovable. She spoke to me many times of her hope in Christ and trusted in the all-wise God in all things. She was so sweet and consoling. It was her desire to depart this life and be with her Savior, telling her daughter it would be all right for her to go and for her not to worry about her.

Her funeral was held in Cain Creek Churchhouse, Obion Co., Tenn., Thursday, Aug. 22, 1946. The pallbearers were the grandsons. Amid many sorrowing brethren, sisters and friends, Elder E C. Lowry and Elder O. W. Perkins spoke words of comfort and consolation to the children and loved ones, after which her remains were laid to rest in Cain Creek Cemetery, by the side of her husband, to rest until the trump of God shall sound, and the dead in Christ shall rise first and be carried to their eternal home to dwell with Jesus and be as he is. God has called his own. Let our hearts in every woe still say—"Thy will be done."

It is with a sad and broken heart, but not as one without hope, I have tried to write this obituary of my dear "Aunt Fannie" whom I loved dearly as I also loved my own "Uncle Tom," as we called them. I hope that God may comfort her children and all who mourn and that all may be submissive to His will. Written by her niece at the request of her children and Elder O. W. Perkins.

(Mrs.) S S. KERLEY

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'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 115 RUTHERFORD, N. J. APRIL, 1947 No. 4

THANKSGIVING FOR THE CHURCH

I thank Thee O Lord, for the dear Savior's birth,
And thanks for the kingdom He set up on the earth;
Thanks for the Comforter that comes to us here,
And assures us so truly that He holds us dear.

Thanks for the sanctuary found here below,
For loving Thy kingdom, and learning to know
Of that rest that remaineth to Thy weary saints,
Who are sinful, rebellious and filled with complaints.

I thank Thee, O God, for the church I adore,
And ask of Thee Lord that I serve it more;
She is clear as the sun and as fair as the moon,
Her light far outshines the brightness of noon.

A fountain of gardens, of living waters a well,
And streams of Lebanon—hear Solomon tell
Of her graces and beauties—the kingdom of heaven
Set here by our Savior, to us freely given.

I thank Thee dear Lord, for my spiritual home,
That gave me glad welcome when I ceased to roam;
Received me and loved me, my sins did not see,
Imputed my unworthiness, Lord to Thee.

A home Thou prepared us, wherein we could meet
And take bread and wine, and wash the saint's feet;
For Thy kingdom on earth, I thank Thee O Lord,
'Tis surely recorded in Thy Holy Word.

EFFIE PARKE

Castle Rock, Wash.

CORRESPONDENCE

Route 1, Box 104, St. Albans, W. Va.

MR. BENTON D. MURPHY, MY DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE: I am mindful again and again of your request which you made some two years ago for me to try and write to you and relate by the medium of pen and paper what I hope has been the dealings of the Lord with me. I now tremblingly venture knowing that the Word says, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." 1 Peter 3:15. I hope I realize fully that I can of myself do nothing. Hence I venture with an inward breathing that the unerring Spirit might guide my pen if it be the will of my gracious heavenly Master. I have waited since your request came for a frame or feeling of mind when I would feel more equal to the undertaking, but alas I find this morning that I am still possessed with the same destitute, barren, unfruitful mind, that is most commonly mine. I am no more equal to the task this morning than I have formerly been. So I can truthfully affirm "that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong." "Not by might, nor by power (of the creature), but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

Dear brother, in trying to heed your request I desire above all things to be truthful, if I know this poor heart of mine. While I do not desire to be tedions, yet I desire to be minute enough that you might be able to judge for yourself whether or not it has been the Lord's hand with me. I wish to say in the outset that I do not even hope to

state these conditions that have been lived, that have been experienced, that have been felt within in a way that would be even said to my own satisfaction, much less to the satisfaction of my kindred in Christ.

In turning back the pages of my past life, much of which seems to be sealed and enshrouded in mystery even to my own self, the depth of which I cannot seem to penetrate. I do not expect to be able to tell you whether this or that (of the many trials and sorrows, conflicts and troubles through which I have passed) has been wrought of the Lord, this is more than I can hope to do. I leave this matter to the fair and unbiased minds and judgment of my kindred, my brethren.

I was born Aug. 22, 1899. I am the youngest living child of a large family of children. My parents were both consistent members of the Old School Baptist church. So from my earliest recollection I had thrown about me the parental love and affection of kind and generous parents, and although my parents were poor in this world's goods, they were industrious and energetic, and by the smiles of a kind Providence they were blessed to make a good living on their farm to the end that their children lacked not, neither went in want for the things of this natural life. My parents never tried to teach religion, knowing this was alone through and by the free and unmerited grace of God and through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet they were blessed both by example and word to advocate morals and honest living, their household being governed by the law of love.

Now in my early natural existence, I being encircled and enclosed by all of the above mentioned things and conditions which make for peace and happiness, my quiet, my peace and my happiness became disturbed. I cannot tell you just how old I was when this first awakening took place with me, but just a mere lad, possibly not over six or eight years of age. Neither did I then know what was wrong with me, but a great wave or cloud of insurmountable trouble settled down upon me, with an awakened consciousness of guilt and condemnation before God in such forceful might and measure that I was made to know that I was a wretch undone. Even though a child I was made to feel that hell was my portion and doom. Often-times in the most bitter trouble it would seem that my guilt was so great that even the earth was almost ready to swallow me up. I became afraid of night, of literal darkness, many times did I roll a restless bed and shed tears, yea bitter tears of sorrow and grief, feeling that I would die ere the night was over, with a full conviction that if I should die I would open my eyes in hell. So full was the force of this trouble upon me that I was soon made to know the justice of God in my condemnation.

At that time in my life I had no more thought that this was the hand of the Lord upon me, making known my dread and horrible condition, yea my lost ruined state unto me in mercy, for my good, for my correction, nay I feel sure now that could human creatures have known fully my horrible condition that they never could have persuaded me to believe that this was for my good. I felt sure that the righteous wrath of God was about to be meted out to me. This season of trouble that I have here been hinting at went on for weeks and months and years; not all the time with the same intensity. Sometimes when in company with my childhood and youthful associates I would seemingly become temporarily unconscious of my troubles, and would engage in youthful mirth, or at other times try to appear gay, or at

still other times be given to indulge in youthful sin or folly, or be given to an outbreak of temper, or do some outward act of wrong. I was very soon, after the indulgence of the above mentioned things, brought to a renewed sense of my guilt before God, only to have added groans and tears for each new outbreak. There seemed to be some force that shut me out from crying out unto God. I feel now that I then felt that God was too pure and holy to hear a wretch like me. I had not then learned that Jesus was the way of life. I felt to be forsaken of God and almost forsaken of man. Sometimes when my troubles were so great because of some new outbreak or engagement in wrong, I would go to my mother, feeling that she alone would have a measure of pity for her wayward and hell deserving son, and to her I would acknowledge my guilt, seemingly with a desire for her to tell me whether there was hope for a wretch like me. I felt, not only by nature, but by practice as well to be the worst of all God's creation. It would be impossible for human tongue to tell what awful conflicts I endured through all these years. I know now that by reason of my outward actions, (caused doubtless by my trouble) that my parents became uneasy about me, because of my troubles at night I would even be afraid for my parents to go to sleep. (I slept in the same room with them.) I would resort to the most foolish means to keep them awake, feeling that if they went to sleep that darkness would swallow me up, yea even eternal darkness. Sometimes my father, not knowing my condition, would chide me in a kind way for disturbing them from their rest. All this would only aggravate my woe. My parents I realized now watched me. Reason had almost flown. So sure was I that hell was my doom that I became afraid of literal fire. Dear readers, however foolish this may appear to be, this is as it were but pages torn from my past life, and is but the glimmering of the opening of my inmost groans, and of my inmost self. Is but the making bare and wringing out the secrets of this heart of mine.

In my early trials I was possessed with a fear of the Devil. I would have dread scenes of the horrible hideousness of his form. I did not then know that he was a chained monster, but after awhile this fear I hope was supplanted by a fear of the Lord. During this time I was often bothered with a feeling that the end of time was near at hand. I had a dream of the end of time which I will not here give space to relate. Suffice it to say that this dream is yet painted in my memory. I had many harassing dreams which only added to my pain. There are many things which I would love to relate but space forbids. Things moved on until in my fourteenth year of life (and I still a companion of trouble) my father was taken with that dread disease, typhoid fever and soon passed away in death. Oh, the dark wretched hours that were now mine, bereft of a kind father's love and indulgence, a gulf of trouble that seemed almost unbearable. I felt the sweet confidence to believe that my father was now at rest, but oh, the dark hours for me. I had, ere I sustained this great loss, been made to feel that the Old School Baptists were the people of God. I had been made to embrace the thought that God had a chosen people, but surely I was lost, my case was an outside one. My sins were so great surely there was no mercy for such as I. During these years sometimes I read the Bible but only to read condemnation to the guilty. Also during this period I started to read the Bible through only to end in confusion before I had finished my undertaking.

I too, came to the place where I thought by being a better boy that things might be better for me, so I went about to do good, making resolution after resolution only to end each and every time in utter failure. Dearly beloved, I believe I tried every inch of the ground of do good, do better, only to learn that I could nothing do. I worked myself, as it were, strictly out of timber only to fall at the feet of sovereign mercy. I do believe that if ever a poor boy tried to be a good boy that I tried, but only with each trial to feel to be worse.

Dear kindred, I now come to the place where I must say that not even now do I know whether I have ever experienced deliverance or not. If so be that I have it has been gradual with me. Although there have been many experiences of mind that I have had to pass over because of space, yet I would now desire to be honest enough to say that I cannot refer you to a certain time when I experienced the rapture of joy that so many of the dear kindred have experienced; but I truly hope that I may say that some things stand out vividly clear in my memory which I hope in the mercy of God may be a ground of hope. Once I remember this language was given with a ray of sweetness and rapture, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." This great burden which I had carried so many years gradually seemed to give way, and sweetly, yea, very sweetly I was given to hope in his mercy; I was given to read the Scriptures in a new light; I was now given to grasp his precious promises as mine; where I had hitherto read condemnation I now could read mercy, pity, pardon, forgiveness. Oh, how great is his mercy, his tender compassion, his everlasting love, plenteous in mercy, so long suffering to usward. Praise his name, O my soul: all that is within me praise his holy name. I now, after I hope I had experienced peace and pardon in Jesus blood, was filled with a great love for the Old School Baptists, and desired above everything to ask for a home among them, and to be buried with Christ in baptism. Yet, feeling unworthy, and feeling too, that should I ask for a home among such good people as I felt them to be that they could not receive me. I now feared I was deceived and feared that I had nothing to tell the church, although when the brethren told their experiences they could tell my feelings better than I could. Still I feared because my parents and many of my people were Old School Baptists that possibly I had only learned these things of them, and that after all it was not real with me. My cries, my begging now was if I am deceived undeceive me, although much of the time while the awful sense of guilt and condemnation was laid upon me (of which I have already written at considerable length) especially as the years went by, my very groans, my daily begging, (yet much of the time I was afraid to get on these knees of mine) was with the plaintive cry of the poor publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Lord save I perish. Often-times in secret pleading would I implore my God for his pity, for his mercy, but now that this burden had passed and I was given a hope in his mercy I was made to fear that this hope was not grounded. I now feared that I might be a deceiver to the people of God if I should ever ask a home with them. I carried this desire for a home with the people of God for quite a time, sometimes going to meeting with such great desire that when the door of the church was published open I could hardly stay away. In October 1918 I was united in marriage to Bessie Wade of Virginia with a feeling I would settle down in life and I then

would feel more fit to ask for a home with these good people, but alas I found to the contrary that felt sense of unfitness lingered with me and only grew worse until finally I resolved that I would never bring shame and reproach to this people by asking for a home with them. On Saturday before the fourth Sunday in July 1920 I went to old Providence Church to meeting with this very resolve in my bosom, and after preaching by the late Elder J. W. Mc Clanahan and Elder W. I. Wade the door of the church was published open and after two sisters in the flesh and one brother-in-law had gone before the church my strong resolution was forgotten, I found myself before this people trying to relate my troubles to the church. This was indeed a time of love. My wife united the following day with another dear cousin in the flesh. Accordingly the six of us on the fourth Sunday in August following were led down into the liquid grave and buried beneath the yielding wave by Elder W. I. Wade and raised to walk in newness of life. Now a lull of peace settled down upon me. I seemed to reach the place of living at ease, all seemed for awhile to go on smoothly but not for long.

O dear kindred, all unexpectedly to me I felt now that I was turned over to the tempter and led captive of Satan at his will. I passed through the most horrible condition, the most indescribable, my very inmost uprisings of mind were the basest of blasphemy, such were those evil uprisings of mind so horrible, so base, I would freely have given the world had it been mine to give, just to have been freed from this awful condition. I had never fully known before, the awful depravity of my nature. This storm was so fierce that try with all my force to resist it I could not. Many times while this fierce storm raged within I was prostrated in the very dust, with my face in the dust and made to cry Lord have mercy! Lord save I perish! O Lord, deliver me! Truly now did I know that none but Israel's God could deliver from the very belly of hell, and now by reason of mine affliction cried I unto the Lord. I can now affirm that salvation is of the Lord first last and all the time. I do know that my own strength (creature effort) was of no avail. After this fierce conflict I now felt sure I was deceived and a deceiver. So heavy now was my trouble that I often groaned aloud, and when my nephew, who worked with me in the field, would ask me what was wrong I would lie to him until through fear I was made to acknowledge to him that it was trouble, not divulging the kind of trouble. This troubled state went on until I felt sure I had never known the mercy of God. One day while in the field trying to husk corn, with this language sounding in my ears, grating my very inmost being, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" I truly felt to be the ungodly and sinner. Oh how dreadful did my lot appear as I fell beneath his frowns. I tried to toil on in this manner for some time, feeling that deserved wrath was about to be meted out to me, for oh what had I done but deceived God's people. Surely the wrath of God was my due, but thanks be to his blessed and holy name, the answer came like this, "In due time Christ died for the ungodly." I could take you to the spot where this occurred with me. I now soon became concerned about publishing the worth of Jesus, but with these impressions to try to speak in his blessed name, and testify of his goodness to the children of men so great was my surprise, knowing I was so unfit, even ignorant that I determined that this was a secret that

would die with me, not even harboring the thought that it had even entered the minds of the brethren that I had such exercises of mind. All unexpectedly to me the brethren began to question me as to whether I had been so impressed, and before I was hardly aware of it I had told of this very secret. I had many dreams that I feel have a place in my call to the ministry, if indeed I have a calling. I cannot here rehearse them, I fear this is already tedious, but I can hardly refrain from relating an experience of mind which came as a surprise to me. One night after I had retired, I feel sure I was as wide awake as I am now, all at once, unexpectedly too, for I was not even thinking about trying to preach, I saw myself before the people of God, declaring the goodness of God and felt this stammering tongue of mine loosed in the praise of my God, felt a feeling of liberty of utterance, the like of which I hope I have since felt.

The fightings against these impressions were hard until at length I was made through suffering willing to yield. The whispering had been felt within, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Why is his yoke easy, and his burden light? Even so for the Elder Brother even Jesus bears the heavy end of the yoke. My oldest daughter was now stricken, brought to death's door seemingly. I was made to feel that my gracious, heavenly Father was now visiting my rebellion with the rod of his wrath. I now was made willing to go. I was made to feel that could he in mercy spare the object of my love, and restore my child again unto me that I was willing to resign my all to his most holy hand. So at our regular church meeting in September 1929 the Providence Church granted me liberty to speak in public, and during our Association in September 1930 the hands of the Presbytery were laid upon my sinful head, your father being one of the Elders that constituted the Presbytery.

Since that time I have had many trials and straits to encounter and undergo with an occasional ray of light. I have many times proved that God is gracious, that he is plenteous in mercy. I have now tried to heed your request. I have been forced to leave much out that I would love to voice in order not to use too much space. May you be given that sweet forbearing spirit of charity to pass by all amiss, and lay all shortcomings to this sinful creature. Surely I am a living monument of his mercy. In love to all the household of faith. From the least of all if one at all.

(Elder) HARVEY J. BIRD

Route 2, Box 180, Martinsville, Va.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON. DEAR BROTHER: These communications between these servants of the most high God I believe will make good reading for our paper, if it meets with your approval. It might give we—the ministry—to examine ourselves by these ensamples.

Your brother in hope of mercy,

(Elder) J. E. BURGESS

A REVIEW

ELDER P. D. GOLD, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: Yours of the 4th came duly to hand, and afforded some satisfaction to learn you still regarded me as a brother in Christ. Yet I feel that if you could see me as I feel myself to be, you could not have fellowship for me, and yet unworthy as I feel I cannot keep from loving and fellowshipping the Baptists as the true church of Jesus Christ which he has purchased with his own precious blood.

If I know my own heart I sympathize with you and sister Gold in your afflic-

tion, yet I know that God knows and does all things for the best; and I trust and believe you both are prepared by grace to say "thine and not my will be done, O Lord." None but those who have the trial can fully enter into the sympathy of those who have the partner of their comforts and sorrows smitten down by disease. My own dear wife will never be well again in this life I fear. She is not able to stand alone and cannot walk a step without crutches, and is so reduced in flesh that she only weighs about seventy-five pounds. I carried her out to the buggy the last first Sunday, and took her up to the meeting-house about six hundred yards, where she communed with the saints and joined in washing feet probably for the last time on earth. But while her poor body is so much afflicted she is strong in the faith. Oh that I could be as much resigned to the will of the Lord as she is. Not a murmur escapes her lips; she knows in whom she has believed. You ask me how I feel about my labor in the ministry, both as to the doctrine I have preached and to the manner of my preaching it. As to the labor, I can only say it has been in great weakness and in much fear and trembling and under many and great disadvantages that I have gone. Poverty has kept me from laboring as much as I probably should have done. I have had some evidences that my labor is not altogether in vain, and sometimes I feel that I have been a failure and that I ran before I was sent, and was never called to labor in God's vineyard. As to the doctrine that I have preached I can say of a truth before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, that I would not have it altered, no, not for my right arm. I feel that I have not gone forth with a lie in my right hand. I have not a doubt about the doctrine. I would that I could have preached it with more power and more extensively when I started out in great weakness forty-four years ago lacking five days. It was with much fear and many misgivings, poor, illiterate and comparatively unknown and uncared for, yet feeling that I must go or suffer death, I started as I trust having no confidence in the flesh, relying alone upon the almighty arm of God, and now in the 68th year of my life and, as above said, in the 44th year of my ministry, I with all solemnity declare that the doctrine of grace reigning through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ has been my theme, and I have no doubt about its correctness. About eighteen months ago I was brought nigh unto death as I thought by disease, and the doctrine which I preached was clearly presented to my mind, and closely and I hope prayerfully considered, and God gave me most graciously to see that it would do, and that it was accepted by him, and of a truth if it had been his will I could gladly have laid my armor by, and it is truth and no lie. I would not have had the doctrine altered for this world. I called my dear wife to the bed and told her I am satisfied to go if it is the Lord's will, and am satisfied with the doctrine I have preached and would not have it altered. It comforts me now. I only regret that I could not have done more. Tell my brethren to stand fast in the doctrine of the sovereignty of God, salvation by grace and grace alone. I am confident, it will do to die with and will stand in judgment. As to the manner of my preaching all that have heard me are witnesses that it has been in great weakness, yet I can truthfully say with humble boldness I have preached. The praise of men I have not sought. The fear of man has not deterred me. To honor God has been my desire. I have coveted no man's gold, silver, or apparel, have never been able to put a price upon my ministry; believing it to

be of the Lord I thought it priceless. Therefore have gone trusting to God alone to open up the way for me. Brethren and friends have often without solicitation from me contributed to my temporal needs, so that I have had food and raiment. Sometimes the prospects looked gloomy, but having an industrious wife, one that loved and feared God, and with dutiful children, I have continued to this day, witnessing and testifying of the grace of God. There has been but little complaining among the brotherhood about me that has come to my ears. If any brother has spoken hard or disrespectfully of me they have never come to my face to do so, so that I with joy say, Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and I hope to dwell in the house of the Lord forever. "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple." Psalms 27:4.

I will give you a short synopsis of the doctrine I have endeavored to teach, so that you can judge of its soundness and comment on it as you may think proper. I have thought that there is but one true and living God, and that in the godhead there are three persons, the Father, the word or Son, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one in power, essence and glory. That the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testaments are the written work of God and are the only complete and unerring rule of faith and practice. That God has always pursued his infinitely wise plan in all his works and ways and that he will ever continue to do so, and that all things brought to pass by him are but the result of his holy, wise and determinate council from eternity. That Adam was created upright, but being left to the freedom of his own will he transgressed and thereby became a fallen and totally depraved creature, and all mankind with him, and that regeneration, sanctification, justification and salvation are by virtue of the birth, life, death, resurrection and mediation of Jesus Christ, and in no other way, and that all those graces of the Spirit are referable to the church of God which he has purchased with his own blood. That all the saints were predestinated unto the adoption of children, elected to eternal salvation according to the foreknowledge of God, and that they will all be called with an holy calling, and the righteousness of Christ be actually imputed to them by the effectual working of the Holy Ghost, and that none of the heirs of promise will be finally lost, and that all of the elect of God were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. That baptism by immersion upon profession of faith in the name of the Sacred Trinity, and that by one duly authorized by the church to administer ordinances is gospel baptism, and that only, and that all such persons who shall continue to walk circumspectly have a right to the Lord's supper and no others. I have taught and yet teach that the church of Christ is a body corporate, possessed of full power to govern herself, her only rule being the written word of God, and that she, the church, is therefore independent needing no boards, synods, conventions or conferences to regulate and make laws for her. That the church needs none of the modern, humanly devised institutions of men to add to her comforts, peace, prosperity or beauty, and that she would disgrace her head were she to patronize or fellowship them. Hope you will be able to read

this and understand my meanings as to what I have written. Yours in gospel bonds.

(The late Elder) J. C. HALL

REMARKS ON
ELDER J. C. HALL'S LETTER

Brother Lester writes that we should not wait till our friends die before we crown their lives with the tributes they are worthy of. I love such brethren as those of whom we can say good things in truth while they are living, and after they are dead too.

Every point in brother Hall's letter is of interest to me and many others. He has been and is now a model citizen, preacher and Christian. It is no trouble to think well of a man who has lived as he has.

He has taken heed to himself and to the doctrine, and continued in that good way. He has been blest with a prudent wife. That is so good for a preacher to have for it helps him in so many ways. Then a gospel preacher blest with good, obedient children is greatly favored. He has attended on his ministry, and not meddled with genealogies and old wives fables, or traditions and perversions of the law.

I once owned a poor pig that when food was given to the lot of hogs would, if it could, seize a bone and gnaw it while the thriving hogs would eat the better food. That pig always remained a runt and poor.

A wise and useful preacher avoids things that cause confusion and bones of contention. It is so good to see a gospel preacher possessing every qualification required, and then waiting on his ministry.

P. D. G.

Hiram, Ga.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Will write you a few lines and send a letter I received from sister Rachel Potter, Topsham, Me. I had a recent letter from her telling me of sister Nellie Palmer's passing from this life. She was mother to me while I visited the Maine Baptists. Always glad to see me and greeted me with a smile. She lived to a ripe old age. I read the Circular Letter of the 1945 session of the Association in the September *Signs* which was written by her. She was a gift to her church and the people of Maine and will be missed. Sister Nellie is better off leaving all trouble and tribulation behind. I pray that her son will be blessed to care for his wife as he did his mother, sister Nellie. Forrest was good to his mother and I hope God will bless him and his wife and make him reconciled to give her up, realizing her faith in Jesus. Truly we have lost a true mother in Israel, but our loss is her eternal gain.

Well Elder Dodson I remember our meeting at Whitefield, Me. together at the Association, a pleasant season and the meeting at North Berwick. I have many remembrances that I carry in my heart from every part of the country and even in the far off Isles of the sea. Truly the isles bespeak his handywork surrounded by the great wide sea. No wonder David could say in the nineteenth Psalm, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork." Our God is acquainted with all languages and tongues upon the face of the earth, so let the inhabitants of the rock sing for joy. Our God is the same and is present in every remote corner of the earth, on land or sea, for he hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand and all nations before him are as a drop in the bucket.

I had a nice visit at the Upper Country Line Association, spending time with Elder Berry and family, Elder Gilliam and many dear people of God. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" It is like the ointment upon the beard of Aaron that went down to the skirts of his garment. I pray that God's people will be drawn closer together in unity and in love, that every citizen will be a sovereign but none caring to wear the crown. I have not had the mind or time to write as I would have liked but I wanted to send you sister Potter's letter and if you care to publish it do so, also my letter if you have space and deem it worthy. If not lay it aside. Your brother in Christ by divine mercy and in gospel bonds.

(Elder) O. J. CROKER

Topsham, Me.

DEAR BROTHER CROKER: It is time I answered your letter which I sent to sister Minerva Dunlap to read. I usually like to read them over again before answering but will try to answer this without.

This was the day for our meeting at Gardiner. I was planning to go Saturday but I did not feel equal to it, and sister Minerva telephoned to say she would come for me and we would go up to-day. It began to cloud up and at 8:30 it was raining, so it was not to be. I turned on the radio trying to find a suitable program. The speaker would talk well for awhile, then it was up to the individual to do something. That I know is beyond me. I was born in sin. I tried once to do for myself and how far did I get? Lower and lower down I went until I cried, Lord save or I die. I was brought forth not by my works but my salvation which is of the Lord. I was at the house of a dear friend of mine last night, an old lady like myself but she is older. She said she came to the church at the age of eleven. She was at church one day and the minister said, "All that want to be Christians come forward." She said, "I wanted to go, so went." Oh Elder Croker, God called me and it was not an easy way, but he blessed me with a blessing I will never forget. I often think of these words, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." God has written things in my heart I will never forget. Sometimes when I get low in spirit I go back to where I felt his presence with me and it all comes out right. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." My friend said, "If I believed as you do I would go ahead and have all the fun I wanted." How foolish that sounds to a believer. In the Psalms it says, "Ye that love the Lord, hate evil." Sometimes I pity them. That may be wicked but did they know the Lord as I they would not say such things. I know him as a kind and loving Father. To-day they come to the church without any experience, so little wonder they get the worldly things mixed into the church. They cannot let the world go but take it with them. In 1 John 2:15 it says, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." The first chapter of John tells us about Him. I think that is a wonderful chapter. I heard father preach on the first of that once and I shall always remember how wonderful I thought it was. I have not heard preaching this winter. Had some letters from the Elders and I appreciate it. Elder Dodson had a good article in the last *Signs* which I liked. In this age if I did not know God had full control over this world I would be most miserable. I know he is at the helm. We read in James 3:16, "For

where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work," and there is enough of it now. God in his own good time will make it all right, but there will be plenty of blood shed and the innocent suffer with the guilty. They say the war is over but I cannot see it. In the second chapter of Paul to Titus are the directions of what the gospel teaches. What a difference now. Sometimes I think the people of to-day have no respect for God. I wonder sometimes they are not afraid, but who am I to talk. My heart is deceitful and I know what it says about it in Jer. 17:9. This tongue of mine, no matter how I try, when I think I have rule over it the time comes when it gets away with me. Christ says, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Sometimes I wonder can it be? and still I know it is for He said so, and it was for the sinner he gave his life. How I hate sin still it is mixed with all I do. A sinner saved by grace, a Savior who gave his all for his people. At times I feel I would hate to have my brethren know me as I am, still I am not afraid of my God. He knows my inmost soul, and I know it was for my sin that he prepared a perfect sacrifice for that sin. "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me." That fifty-first Psalm expresses my condition and I feel I know how David felt. I must close, all can never be told. If I thought I could do one thing towards my salvation I would say, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." I often think, "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." May God bless you and yours with the love and comfort wherewith he loveth his people, and give you strength to stand all things and to preach Jesus Christ and him crucified. Love to you and your family.

(Mrs.) RACHEL POTTER

INSEPARABLE COMPANIONS

Two in-laws went to a foreign land
To seek some food for beast and man;
They're not alone just hand in hand,
But four compose this little band.
The sons, not long ere they got there,
Found them each a maiden fair;
But alas, how sad, the men all died
And left alone were their three brides.

Encumbered 'round with great dismay
The in-law did not want to stay.
No sons to love, no heir to praise
She felt to sorrow all her days.
She must go home to her native land
Leaving there her little band.
She told the news to her daughters two,
Who felt, no doubt, so sad and blue.

"We, too, must go" said the daughter dear,
"We cannot part from one so near;"
"No no" she cried, "you cannot go,
I have no more sons for you to know.
With empty hands and heavy heart
My daughters, yes, oh we must part.
The road's a rough and rugged way
We'll have to travel many a day.

You'll thirst for drink and want for food,
You must stay here, now don't be rude."
"The road's too rough, yes, I'll go back"
Replied one child and took her track.
"Entreat me not to leave thee, mother,"
So sweetly and tenderly, said the other,
"For where you go I want to be,
Oh, mother, mother, I'll stay with thee.

I want to live and die with you,
I want to be buried with you too:
To live o'er yonder in your land,
To shout and sing with your band."
"I see you're going, I'll lend a hand
For the road is rough through the wilderness land."
The in-law's face shines night and day,
To guide the daughter on her way.

And o'er the rocks and cliffs they roam,
Ere long they reach their happy home.
One kinsman here the in-law spies,
And tells the daughter so she'll be wise.
The daughter goes to earn her bread,
This task she does not seem to dread.
She gleaned all day in the kinsman's field,
Nor did she know to her he'd yield.

The kinsman told the workers there,
To drop some crumbs for the maiden fair.
She slyly slipped into his bed,
Lay at the foot, not at the head.
When he awoke and found her there,
"Who art thou, oh, maiden fair?"
She told him what they call her name,
And asked his skirt to hide her shame.

"Fear not, O maiden, you are wise,
You need not to be in disguise;
A virtuous woman I know thou art,
Some day you'll not from me depart;
But go before the light appear
For fear some stranger see you here."
She went not back to the in-law's place
With empty hands and forlorn face.

Six measures of barley to her he gave
And too, we know she's not his slave.
There's one more measure lacking yet,
But that one measure she's sure to get.
From nature to grace the scene has changed,
For the in-law didn't know how things were arranged;
But asked the daughter, "who art thou?"
The gift of the barley was on her brow.

The kinsman said, "I know 'tis true,
There is one nearer kin to you;
If he will not do the kinsman's part
I'll give to you my hand and heart."
The kinsman told the nearer kin
A sale of land would soon begin.
"Our in-law sells our brother's land
Will you take the affair in hand?"

"I will redeem," the nearer said—
But the next sentence is what he'll dread.
The daughter goes with his parcel of land
I want you this to understand—
The nearer faltered at his trade,
This would mar his inheritance he was afraid.
The in-law afraid the promise not true
Bade the daughter sit still until she knew.

But as true as God, sure as the Son,
He did not disappoint this fair one;
Redeemed his love with outstanding price,
And this he did once, not twice.

The price of redemption was very dear,
But as it is paid she has nothing to fear.
I guess you can see the measure seven,
Paid by one, not eleven.

She steps forth in her wedding gown,
She is a woman of great renown;
And here she is a beautiful bride,
She has a husband in whom to confide.
She laid all her burdens at his feet,
She knows every promise he will meet.
And now they're not without an heir,
A son is born to comfort the pair.

No doubt the neighbors could just see law
And thought the in-law was its Ma.
All infants are by nature fed
For they are too weak to eat barley bread.
The in-law fed until time to wean
And then it was fed by the Redeemed.
This plan is good, 'tis a beautiful theme
For no other man had the right to redeem.

The kinsman true, the damsel fair.
Are they not a figure of the heavenly pair?
For a star shall come down from Jacob's tribe
Down through Judah to redeem His bride.
The kisman here from Judah sprang,
Along came Christ through this chain.
The Moabitis damsel sprang from Lot,
Was without promise if I mistake not.

She had to be redeemed by a Judaite
To have the inheritance of the Abrahamite.
This kisman of Jacob, what hath he done?
Smote the comers of Moab (his princely son),
He plucked the choicest flower that bloomed,
The lily will no more on it grow.
The bush has lost its radiant glow,
The lily will no more on it grow;

Cut from the bush it will have to die,
Be born again by the One on high.
The kinsman of Judah wrought a good work,
'Round the stool of "do nothing" he did not lurk.
What the kinsman did in a natural day
Jesus did in the spiritual way.
I believe the kinsman here obeyed the law
This trade was made without a flaw.

The scepter shall with Judah be,
He shall not from the law be free,
'Til the Star is born by natural birth
And fulfills the law upon the earth.
Then unto Him the cry will be
O Lord! wilt Thou remember me?
Judah's the giver of my law,
Moab's my washpot to hold the flaw.

For all uncleanness was left in that land;
Twice I remember, if you demand,
The daughter and in-law came out without spot,
But the rest were left in the seething pot.
When Israel dwelt with Moab's band
Just before going into Canaan's land;
Some got so rude and acted so bad
God killed out some they had.

The rest went on without a spot
While some were left in the seething pot.
If you ever get to heaven above,
You'll be brought through the pot of love
That came through the kinsman and Moabite,
For this is the Star that brought you light.
When this Star came from heaven to earth,
He then partook His elect's dearth;

He stood a surety for His bride
When in the Jewish court was tried;
And laid away in this earth
'Twas there He left His elect's dearth.
He came forth from the grave without spot,
And glorified His only Son,
He finished the work that He begun.

And wasn't His bride just like Lot,
Without inheritance if I mistake not?
And had to be redeemed by a Judaite
To live in the kingdom of the Abrahamite.

(Mrs.) MAGGIE LEE HAYES

Vernon, Ala.

McDowell, Kentucky

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR BRETHREN: Here is "Deacon Lee's Opinion" which I came across recently. I read it years and years ago and it caused me to do some very, very deep thinking; and I have been helped much by reading it. If appropriate and timely publish it at your convenience. Yours in Him.

(Elder) MILFORD HALL, Sr.

DEACON LEE'S OPINION

Deacon Lee, who was a kindly, silent, faithful, gracious man, was one day waited upon by a restless, ambitious, worldly church member, who was laboring to create uneasiness in the church, and especially to drive away the preacher. The deacon came in to meet his visitor who, after the usual greetings, began to lament the low state of religion, and inquire as to the reason why there had been no conversion for two or three years past.

"Now what do you think is the cause of things going dull here? Do you know?" he persisted in asking. The deacon was not ready to give his opinion, and, after a little thought, frankly answered, "No, I don't." "Do you think the churches are alive to the work before them?" "No, I don't." "Do you think the minister fully realizes the solemnity of his work?" "No, I don't." A twinkle was seen in the eyes of this troubler in Zion; and taking courage, he asked, "Do you think Mr. B——— a very extraordinary man?" "No, I don't." "Do you think his sermon 'Their eyes were holden ' anything wonderfully great?" "No, I don't." Making bold after all this encouragement in monosyllables, he asked, "Then don't you think we had better dismiss this man and 'hire' another?" The old deacon started as if shot with an arrow, and, in a tone louder than his wont, shouted, "No, I don't." "Why," cried the amazed visitor, "you agree with me in all I have said, don't you?" "No, I don't." "You talk so little, sir," replied the guest, not a little abashed, "that no one can find out what you do mean." "I talked enough once," replied the old man, rising to his feet, "for six praying Christians. Thirty years ago I got my heart humbled and my tongue bridled, and ever since that I've walked softly before God. I then made vows solemn as eternity, and don't you tempt me to break them!" The troubler was startled at the earnestness of the hitherto silent unmovable man, and said, "What happened to you thirty years ago?"

"Well, sir, I'll tell you. I was drawn into a scheme just like this of yours to uproot one of God's servants from the field in which he had planted him. In my blindness I fancied it a little thing

to remove one of the 'stars' which Jesus holds in his right hand, if thereby my ear could be tickled, and the pews filled with those who turned away from the simplicity of the Gospel. I and the men that led me—for I admit I was a dupe and a fool—flattered ourselves that we were conscientious. We groaned because there was no revival while we were gossiping about, criticizing, and crushing, instead of upholding by our efforts and our prayers, the instrument at whose hand we harshly demanded the blessings. Well, sir, he could not drag on the chariot of the gospel with a half-a-dozen of us taunting him for his weakness, while we hung as a dead weight to the wheels; so we hunted him like a deer, till, worn and bleeding, he fled into a covert to die. Then God came among us by his Spirit to show that he had blessed the labors of his dear rejected servant. Our own hearts were broken, and our wayward children converted, and I resolved at a convenient season to visit my former pastor and confess my sin, and thank him for his faithfulness to my wayward sons which, like long-buried seed, had now sprung up. But God denied me that relief, 'that he might teach me a lesson that he who toucheth one of his servants toucheth the apple of his eye.' I heard my former pastor was ill, and taking my oldest son with me, set out on a twenty-five mile ride to see him. It was evening when I arrived, and his wife, with a spirit which any woman ought to exhibit towards one who had so wronged her husband, denied me admittance to his chamber. She said—and her words were arrows to my soul—'He may be dying, and the sight of your face might add to his anguish!' 'Had it come to this,' I said to myself, 'that the man whose labors had, through Christ brought me into the fold; who had consoled my spirit in a terrible bereavement; and who had, till designing men had alienated us, been to me a brother—that this man could not die in peace with my face before him?' I confessed my sins to that meek woman, and implored her for Christ's sake to let me kneel before his dying servant, and receive his forgiveness. What did I care whether the pews by the door were rented or not?

As I entered the room of the blessed warrior, whose armor was falling from his limbs he opened his languid eyes, and said, 'Brother Lee! Brother Lee!' I bent over him, and sobbed out, 'My pastor! My pastor!' Then raising his white hand, he said in a deep impressive voice, 'Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.' He was unconscious of all around; the sight of my face had brought the last pang of earth to his troubled spirit. I kissed his brow and told him how dear he had been to me. I craved his pardon for my unfaithfulness, and promised to care for his widow and fatherless children; but his only reply, murmured as if in a troubled dream was, 'Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm!' I stayed by him all night, and at daybreak I closed his eyes. I offered his widow a house to live in the remainder of her days; but, like a heroine, she said: 'I freely forgive you; but my children, who entered deeply into their father's anguish, shall never see me so regardless of his memory as to take anything from those who caused it. He has left us all with his covenant God, and he will take care of us.'

Well, sir, those dying words sounded in my ears from that coffin and from the grave. When I slept, Christ was there in my dreams, saying 'Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm!' These words followed me until I fully realized the esteem in which Christ holds those men (and women) who have given up all for his sake, and

vowed to love them evermore for his sake, even if they are not perfect; and since that day, sir, I have talked less than before, and have supported my pastor, even if he is not a 'very extraordinary man.' My tongue shall cleave to the roof of my mouth, and my right hand forget her cunning, before I dare to put asunder what God hath joined together. When a minister's work is done in a place I believe God will show it to him. I will not join you, sir, in the scheme that brought you here. I would give all I own to recall what I did thirty years ago. Stop where you are, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you."

Goldendale, Wash.

DEAR ELDER VAUGHN: Your letter of Oct. 7 received and in reply wish to say it was deeply appreciated. I regret that my letter is so late in answer thereto.

Was very glad to hear that you were ordained of God to receive a new member for baptism and fellowship in your church. It would have pleased me very much to have been with you.

Mother and I get a lot of enjoyment out of the *Signs of the Times*. I read most of it to mother as it is getting too hard for her to do any reading—also read from the Bible.

Read brother Dodson's article "Close of Volume 114" and also the advance of the price of publication of the *Signs of the Times*. I am pleased to enclose my check for the *Signs* to be used in whatever way advisable. You can send it along when you are writing brother Dodson. I subscribed to the *Signs* in mother's name, Mrs. H. J. Crooks.

I often think of the good time we had together when you were here. I hope you will be able to come again. Hope you will kindly pardon my delay in answering your good letter, I will try and do better next time. Your brother in hope.

ROY E. CROOKS

2733 South Main St., Vernon, Texas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Again it is time for the renewal of the *Signs* so anxiously awaited each month. Each month I cannot express the joy springing up in my heart when it is delivered to my door. Some refer to it as good news from a far country. Yes, it is even better than that, it is food to the hungry and thirsty soul, a blessing bestowed upon those that so hunger and thirst after righteousness of which I hope I am one. Words seem to fail me when I try to express my feelings and fears over which I have no control. Enclosed find $5 for a renewal for one year, the balance a donation. May you be given grace and strength to long continue these sweet comforting messages of love. A sister in hope.

(Mrs.) MILDRED THOMPSON

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. A. B. Goodrich, N. Y., .50; Mrs. J. B. Rannells, W. Va., $1; R. D. McGough, Ala., $3; Mrs. E. C. McRae, Ala., $1; Mrs. H. Ekkelcamp, Wash., $1; F. Johnson, W. Va., $1; Mrs. S. L. Taylor, Pa., $3; Mrs. C. E. Tacey, N. J., $3; Mrs. E. Mathis, Ky., $2; Eld. D. V. Spangler, Va., $5; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $3; Mrs. E. H. West, N. Y., $3; H. T. Faulk, Tex., $3; A friend, Mo., $2; E. D. Overstreet, Wash., $3; C. B. Britt, Ark., $1;

EDITORIAL

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RECONCILIATION

The nature of a man is at enmity with God. The man as a creature cannot be reconciled to God, his Creator. This state of rebellion began in the garden of Eden and has continued until now, but for the grace of God, it will continue as long as man lasts. This sad state of affairs does not give man any spiritual grief until the Lord makes known unto him his fallen and ruined condition. It is true that men in nature are often-times thwarted in their purpose, but even when they are their sorrow is not the kind of sorrow that the child of God experiences in his rebellion towards God. Furthermore, men that have had their lives completely wrecked have, in the absence of God's grace, still contended that they could do better. Their satisfaction and reconciliation is not in God. It is in themselves and even if they do not accomplish what they start out to do, they still maintain that they could do it. Of course their God is of their own creation. He exists in their mind. But for the grace of God there would not be any spiritual service rendered. All the religion in the world, except the pure and undefiled kind, is serving self. Thinking so much of self, a man, in the absence of the knowledge of God and the joy in (not from) serving him, will serve his own lusts, but God made the world and all things else including man for his glory. Every provision for God being glorified in the salvation of the elect was treasured in Jesus Christ before the world or anything else was created. At the proper time in the unfolding of God's eternal love to his children it was made manifest to each of them. Every man or woman has the peace, joy and reconciliation of the natural mind until this work of grace is started by the Lord. It may be a short time or it may be nearly the whole of our lives as natural creatures, but as soon as one is made alive in Jesus Christ something begins that, try as we may, we can never get rid of.

This morning was the time for me to go to my regular appointment at Macedonia Church. By the grace and providence of God I have missed but few services there since they called for my ordination ten years ago. I hope I love them for Jesus' sake and I did so much want to go. My car is in the shop but I had arrangements made with a friend to take me. The weather yesterday was severe and I was in it attending the funeral of a strong believer and friend of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. I told my friend that if the weather continued to-day I would not go. This morning it is still rough outside and he did not come, but I am not satisfied. I have found myself filling my mouth with arguments to the Lord as to the why of things. I am ashamed of the life that I lead in this way. Day by day it is shown to me, that as a preacher, I am a failure from the first to the last. This past year I have sent out many missives to our many papers. For some reason well known to God he must have guided my pen to comfort many of the down-

cast little children of God, not only among my immediate brethren, but among all factions of our people. God has moved them to write many precious words of encouragement by telling me about their travels and what sinners they were; how far astray they were from the household of faith; what warring they felt daily in their bosoms, and how unworthy they were and unfit for membership in the church: clearly making such a case against themselves that if the church knew them as they knew themselves they could no longer fellowship them. Ah! dear precious reader, may I live with you? Your question of unfitness strikes just such accord and harmony that perhaps, unworthy though I be, we may go on together, gathering the clusters of rich things as they come from the hand of God. I do not desire to lay any claims to being worthy of comparison with the apostle Paul, yet I do feel a desire to go to my churches and to reach the countless readers among us, and that we each might be established and comforted in that mutual faith (Rom. 1:11-12) that belongs to the children of God. I think I would be lacking in gratitude to God, and in courtesy to you if I did not say I was glad to hear from you and that I appreciate your encouragement. But I also think that it would be unfaithful in me if I left you thinking that we who come to your pulpits and into your homes on the printed page, do not have the same things to confront us that you do. Sometimes I am tempted to lay my pen aside; sometimes I am ready to say that, as long as I feel as I do now, I shall preach no more; sometimes I am blessed to look back and the road is so crooked and so many times I have turned to the right and the left, that I am made to say surely I have not been called as was Aaron; sometimes I am blessed to look within and just a fleeting glance at this heart and mind make me to shudder at going among God's children again; sometimes my ways are *higher* than God's and I find I am as far from being in harmony with the Lord as can be. No one can know the heaving bosom that I have felt so many times on entering the pulpit, except those that have likewise been exercised. No one can have any patience, sympathy or fellowship for this poor undone sinner when I tell you that sometimes I feel that I preach reconciliation by Jesus Christ on Sunday and spend the balance of the week reconciled to nothing. Sometimes I am blessed, as I hope, to preach the care of God and the blessing of God to and for his children at all times and spend the other time proving that he does not!

We are unable to be thankful to God in nature, but may it be his holy will to give us thankful hearts. We cannot be reconciled except by Jesus Christ. Then may the Lord bless us to thank him and to be reconciled to whatever comes our way. W. D. G.

"Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." II Samuel 23:5.

In the first verse of this chapter it is said that "these be the last words of David," who was also declared to be "the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel." The last words of a man are usually considered to be of great importance. When a man makes his last Will and Testament, for instance, he almost without exception prefaces it by declaring that all previous wills and testaments are revoked and made null and void. This is done in order to give emphasis to and make certain of the fact that regardless of what

he may have done and said previously, it is to be disregarded entirely, and only his last disposition is to be of value and effect and regarded as final and binding. David said, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." The standard set up for those who ruled over Israel in the days of Moses was that they should be "able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness." Ex. 18:21. David had not measured up to these standards, for he had coveted Uriah's wife, and in order that he might have her he became a man of blood by sending Uriah to the front of the battle, that he might be killed. Later when David wanted to build an house for God, he was forbidden, and God said to him. "When thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom forever." This house, or temple, was reserved unto Solomon to build, and what a temple it was! The like of it was never before nor since known on earth, and when the Queen of Sheba beheld it she exclaimed, "The half was not told me." As wonderful as it was, however, it could not begin to compare with the wonder and grandeur of that spiritual workmanship of God, the true church, of which it was only a type, and which God created in Christ Jesus before the foundations of the earth were laid.

"The God of Israel" having said, "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God," David had to confess that his house, or life, was not so with God. This strikes at the very heart of the matter for all of us, for we have all come short of the glory of God and like sheep have gone astray. But let us weigh carefully David's words and see if we cannot find some basis for hope. "Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure." How wonderful to contemplate that while he had no standing before God in his own right, by and through the mercy and grace of God in his Head, (Christ Jesus), an everlasting covenant had been made which embraced all things and was absolutely sure and certain of fulfillment in every detail. As a member of the mystical body of Christ, therefore, he stood safe and secure, and there was no possibility for him to utterly fall away. He whose wisdom comprehended the end from the beginning, provided for all things whatsoever cometh to pass and, therefore, there was nothing insecure or uncertain about his infinite plan.

With the help of God we shall endeavor to trace out for our readers something more of the mysteries of Him who doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or need ask, what or why doest thou? One of God's inspired prophets, centuries before the advent of Christ into the world in the flesh, was enabled to set forth his coming and to portray in type his sufferings and death, and the glory that would follow, in the following words: "Thus saith the Lord God; I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent: In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall

dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell." Ezek. 17:22-23. As we understand it, the highest branch of the high cedar represents David as king of Israel, who sprang from the tribe of Judah, the most faithful of all the tribes of Israel and, therefore, it was the high cedar. God said he would "set it," or fix and order it so nothing would interfere or cause it to go amiss. God also said he would crop from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and would "plant it upon an high mountain, and eminent." These young twigs evidently typified the house of David, and God's plan, in the fulness of time, was to crop a tender one, which signified Jesus, who was declared to be the offspring of David, according to the flesh. God was to deliver up his only begotten Son, Jesus, to be crucified in ignomy and shame for the sins of his people. In this everlasting covenant, entered into between God the Father and God the Son, in the counsels of eternity, all things were ordered and sure. Nothing was unaccounted for or left out. The Son of God was wise and had figured out all the cost before coming into the world, and God had determined before hand not to leave his soul in hell, or to suffer his Holy One to see corruption; therefore he could not be holden of death, but would arise in splendor and power and great glory, in justification of his people. Thus was he planted "upon an high mountain and eminent." He was indeed exalted "in the mountain of the height of Israel," and it was he who brought forth boughs and bore fruit. He was truly a goodly cedar and under his shadow dwells fowl of every wing, his people in every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue. What a safe place in which to dwell. The Psalmist also said, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

Let us trace still further God's mysterious purposes in his dealings with his servant David. If we will turn to the first chapter of Matthew and read "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ," we will find that he came into the world through the lineage of David and Solomon, whom David begat of her that had been the wife of Uriah. Surely, no one will contend that so great and important an event was left to mere chance, but rather that it was determined upon and that every link in the chain was forged and welded according to the predestinated purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, that no part of the whole could fail to fulfill its part, since no chain can be any stronger than its weakest link; therefore the wisdom and power of Almighty God was at stake and nothing could come short of fulfilling all that was embraced in his purpose. As the Sovereign Creator of heaven and earth, and all that in them is, had determined before hand that the ultimate end of all things should be for his own glory, and for the lifting of the name of Jesus on high, it illy becomes any of his creatures to call in question his wisdom, or to reflect in any way whatsoever upon what he has done. Our late brethren in England declared concerning God's decree that "God hath decreed in himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever come to pass; yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin, nor hath fellowship with any therein; nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor yet is the liberty of contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established, in which appears His wisdom in disposing all things, and power and faithfulness in

accomplishing His decree." It would appear that David himself was in full accord with this for he made no attempt whatever to blame God for his sin, but confessed freely his own guilt, saying, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest." Psalm 51:4 He realized full well how vile he was, for he continued his wailing by saying, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." The experience of the Lord's people is also clearly set forth by David in the 139th Psalm, where he says, "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." With the burden of condemnation resting heavily upon him, he continues by saying, "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." We believe this language expresses the innermost feelings of those whom God has led into a right understanding of his precious truth; therefore they cannot have fellowship with those who walk in darkness and take refuge in the doctrine of predestination as a cloak for their sins. God held Adam accountable for the violation of his law, and we may rest assured that God's people will have to give account unto him for the deeds done in the body. John says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Let us, therefore, come boldly to the throne of grace, acknowledging our guilt before God, and rejoice that mercy is meted out by and through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

In conclusion, we wish to emphasize the fact that in this "everlasting covenant" all things were ordered, and sure, and nothing can take place contrary to the will of Him who declared, "Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." The faith of our fathers must needs have been tried, tested and proven, in order that it might come down to us as the unfeigned faith of God's elect, and the more it is tried in the furnace of affliction the more precious it will become to us. We see in the *all things* which were ordered, and sure, in this everlasting covenant, *predestination, election, resurrection, final preservation of the saints in glory,* and all that pertains to them. All that had anything to do with Israel's going down into Egypt, and remaining in servitude and bondage for four hundred years, was embraced in the mysterious purpose of God, but when they were brought up by an high and mighty hand and delivered at the Red Sea, God was glorified. While Joseph's brethern intended evil against him, God meant it for good and his overruling providence brought all things in subjection to him. Jesus said concerning himself, "The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born." While the prophets of old foretold the sufferings and death of Jesus, they

likewise spoke of his resurrection and the glory that should follow. If we will carefuly examine the genealogy of our Lord, according to the flesh, as recorded by Matthew, we will discover that blood of every hue flowed through his veins, which enabled him to shed that blood, or lay down his life, for Jew and Gentile alike, representing sinners in every kindred, tribe and tongue. Not a single one of his was left out, but all were embraced in that everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure. And we like to think that the God of our own little individual life has appointed all things therein, and that we shall in due time be brought forth more than conquerors, through him that loved us and gave himself for us. Therefore death nor any other creature or thing shall ever be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. David said, "for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." This is all embracing, with nothing to be added to it, and neither can anything be taken from it; it is so full and complete that there is not even anything more to be desired. It is good indeed when we can walk about Zion and see this perfection, beholding her towers and marking well her bulwarks. We can then look upon her solemnities and "thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ships pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us." All we can do is to hint at the significance of our text, and we are glad it has been said that "a word to the wise is sufficient." God's children have been made to see and feel the great mystery of these precious things, which have been hid from the wise and prudent of this world and revealed unto babes. Moses called upon heaven and earth to witness to the matchless glory of God, and then said, "ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." Paul with all his command of various languages could not put it into words, for he said, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." May we be given to see and behold that in Him all fulness dwells! R. L. D.

MARRIAGES

By Elder J. D. Wood, assisted by Elder D. L. Topping in the Baltimore meeting-house, Aug. 9, 1946, Melvin B. Gladding, son of brother and sister Q. A. Gladding, Catonsville, Md., to Mrs. Virginia Wood Dillon, daughter of Elder J. D. and sister Wood of Baltimore, Md.

By Elder D. L. Topping in the Baltimore meeting-house, Dec. 29, 1946, Eugene F. Osborne, son of brother and sister I. V. Osborne of Kirkwood, Pa., to Jennye Alyce Gladding, daughter of brother and sister Q. A. Gladding of Catonsville, Md.

OBITUARIES

Elder C. A. HUNT was born Aug. 23, 1870 at Mattoon, Ill., and departed this life Nov. 26, 1946, making his stay on earth about 76 years, 3 months and 3 days. I regret that I do not have more definite data in connection with his life and especially his Christian experience. I cannot tell when he came to Eureka, Kansas, but such data as I have reveals that he spent the greater part of his life at this place where he passed away, He suffered a heart attack but was taken to the hospital where he lingered about three weeks before death claimed him.

Brother Hunt was ordained to the full work of the ministry in Illinois, but I cannot give the date of this ordination nor can I name the Pres-

bytery who participated in it. Neither can I tell when he received a hope in Christ, but perhaps the most important part after all is the fact that he received that hope, and his orderly walk, his godly conversation, his zeal for a knowledge of the truth is all proof of the fact that he had been with Jesus and learned of him. He was well instructed in the Bible and learned from its pages that God is a Sovereign and that salvation is by grace and grace alone. This doctrine he contended for ably and fearlessly and died in triumph of the gospel he preached.

He lived rather a lonely life, being isolated from his brethren most of the time, but he had some friends in the town where he lived who were certainly loyal to him,, and who seemed determined to carry out his wishes in every detail.

Brother Hunt had told me some years ago that when he passed away he wanted me to speak on the occasion of his funeral. Accordingly his friends called me over long distance telephone. There was not a living soul in the town where he lived and died that I knew, but I was received most cordially and treated with the greatest hospitality while I was with them. I feel it is due these friends to make mention of their kindness. As far as I can learn, brother Hunt is not survived by any member of his family.

Those who may read this notice will recall an article of his in the September number of the *Signs*. His text was John 16:32. "And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me." These words apply so very appropriately to his individual case. He was alone yet not alone. In speaking at his funeral I called attention to the words of the Psalmist 89:47-48. "Remember how short my time is: wherefore hast thou made all men in vain? What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death, shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah!" After a brief service we conveyed his remains to the beautiful cemetery where we laid him down, "Alone," yet not alone, because the Father is with him, and he has promised he will be with his people even unto the end.

(Elder) L. L. SCHENCK

WINNIE L. WEAVER, our sister in Christ and beloved wife of Elder George L. Weaver, died Nov. 18, 1946 in her 73rd year. She was born in Crestline, Ohio, Jan. 1,, 1874, the daughter of David R. and Martha Dean. She had been bedfast for the last six years and suffered much but death came very suddenly as pneumonia developed and she lived only two days. She leaves to mourn her passing her husband, George L. Weaver, one daughter, Mrs. Olive W. Hall at whose home she died, one granddaughter, Mary Jane Hall, one brother, John H. Dean of Toledo, Ohio. He is the last of a family of ten children.

September 14, 1892 she was married to George L. Weaver. Early in 1895 she received a hope in her Savior and was received into the Old School Baptist church at Galion, Ohio and was baptized by Elder Benjamin Martin, pastor of the church, remaining a faithful sister who was loved by the brethren everywhere all these years. Up until six years ago she was my constant companion and helper and I miss her keenly, but after seeing her suffer so much in the flesh and hearing her express her faith in her Savior so strongly I do not wish her back. She has gone on before, I am left to battle on and may the Lord reconcile me to my lot. Her body was taken to Galion, Ohio where Elder George Ruston of Dutton, Ontario conducted the services in the Snyder Funeral Home, and then laid in the family lot in Fairview Cemetery with a good hope in Christ awaiting for the Lord himself to descend from heaven with a shout, and her poor blind eyes in this life will see him as he is and be like him and be satisfied. I ask the prayers of the brethren that I may be kept faithful. Her loving husband.

(Elder) GEORGE L. WEAVER

After an illness of paralysis which did not respond to professional skill or skillful nursing, Mrs. ELLA ESKRIDGE, died at her home in Laurel, Delaware, April 6, 1944, after being confined to her home over a year.

Mrs. Eskridge was born March 31, 1862, near Laurel, Del. where she spent all of her long and useful life of over 82 years. She was united in marriage to Mr. Turpin Eskridge and of this union two children were born, one dying in infancy and the other, Miss Mattie Eskridge of Frederick, Md. survives. Also among the surviving relatives is Miss Lena Plummer of Laurel. Mrs. Eskridge was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Hudson Plummer from whom she inherited a strong character and many of those noble virtues for which she was noted. She never united with the church, but was firmly indoctrinated with the principals of the Old School Baptist faith which she exemplified in her daily walk and work. Her life was a beautiful example of that which is noble in the duties of wife, mother, citizen, friend and neighbor. She was well known

for her hospitality to people of the Primitive Baptist faith and to their friends, and often religious services were held in her home. For her many acts of kindness and thoughtfulness of others she will be long and tenderly remembered. The funeral services were conducted by Elder H. C. Ker and interment was in the Broad Creek Cemetery by the side of her husband who passed away two years after their marriage.

Written by a friend.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Elder George L. Weaver requests that all communications for him be addressed to 1536 Eddington Road, East Cleveland—18, Ohio.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

Please watch the wrapper covers of your paper to see whether or not you are behind with your subscription to our family paper. Opposite your name appears the date to which you are paid. If you are behind and can conveniently send in what is due it will be greatly appreciated.

This is simply a REMINDER to those who have either overlooked or neglected the matter, and to all who respond to it we say in advance, thank you! R. L. D.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sunday in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y. at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y. in the meetinghouse, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:00 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed.

R. LESTER DODSON

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each 1st Sunday, 11:00 a.m. and Saturday before.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles West of Cottonwood, Ala., holds services each 4th Sunday and Saturday before. Order of preaching: Elders E. E. Watson and F. A. Collins on Saturday.
AMOS SELLERS, Clerk.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala.
Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopewell Church, Ozark Ala., meets each 4th Sunday, 11 a.m. J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock. Meeting place at Alder St. at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, 11 a. m. Elders J. J. Collins and J. S. Bass, Pastors.
J. J. COLLINS

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Seclusia Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church meets every fourth Sunday at 2 p. m., Route 3, Box 800G, Stockton, Cal.
W. L. SLUSHER, Moderator

Bethel Church near Stockton, Cal. meets first and third Sundays in each month and Saturday nights before. For further information write SETH BYNUM, Rt. 3, Box 800G, Stockton. Cal.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each 1st Sunday, north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets every second Sunday at 5th and E. Park St. B. O. JEFFREYS, Pastor, Weiser, Idaho

Pleasant Valley Church Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator, Williamstown, Kans.
(Mrs.)) E. E. CATES, Clerk, Kingman, Kans.

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carver Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. C. H. EVANS, Pastor

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before a 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.
D. L. TOPPING Pastor

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a.m. in the meeting-house. Pastor in regular attendance except first Sundays. C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays 11:00 a. m., 2 p. m.

The Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY
Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sundays at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue. Take elevator to second floor.
11:00 a.m. 1:30 p.m.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.
(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Big Spring Church, Island City, Ore., meets first and third Sundays at 2:30 p.m.
C. W. BOND, Pastor

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting first Sunday, each month
10:30 a.m.
Take Elevator to 5th Floor
C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.
E. H. LANIER, Clerk

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

The Old Orderly Mt. Zion (Cash) Predestinarian Baptist Church meets on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in each month, at the home of Bro. J. J. Darnell, Campbell, Texas.
W. A. LITTLE, Moderator
Sister SIMMONS, Clerk

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. C. B. Teague, co-pastor, G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets third Sunday in each month at 11:00 a.m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Old School Baptist meetings are held every fourth Sunday at Civic Club, 1419 N. Shepherd St., Houston, Texas. Preaching by Elder W. O. Beene.
(Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists. Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dr. Wood church-house. Those interested write Mrs. Lela Culpepper, Stockdale, Texas. E. B. AULT, Pastor

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Danville Primitive Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before Bradley Road, Danville, Va.
W. R. DODD, Pastor

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meets each first Sunday 11 a.m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p.m. and Sunday at 11 a.m., Fairmont Park, 3023 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va., R. B. DENSON, Pastor

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.
R. B. DENSON, Pastor

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a.m. C. M. FISHER.

Bethel Old School Baptist Church, Riffe, Wash. meets every third Sunday, 11 a.m. in the meeting house. I. F. COLEMAN, Mod.
ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk, Riffe, Wash.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church near Yakima, Washington, meets at 11 a. m. each second Sunday by appointment at the home of one of the members living at Naches, Wash. A. D. HUGHETT, Pastor
BEATRICE HAAN, Clerk
Star Route, Naches, Wash.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va., N. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 115 RUTHERFORD, N. J., MAY, 1947 No. 5

JUST A WHISPER AWAY

When trouble comes as troubles do,
There is one thing that I know is true;
It matters not what skeptics say,
I know that my Lord is just a whisper away.

When the tempter comes my soul to subdue,
And says, "Now this is what you can do;"
Then all of his charms cannot lead me astray,
Because my Lord is just a whisper away.

When there are decisions that must be made,
I whisper to my Lord, and he gives me aid:
For my Lord is near let come what may,
Because my Lord is just a whisper away.

When I am filled with grief and woe
Unto my Lord I humbly go;
He gives me strength and my fears allay
Because my Lord is just a whisper away.

When I am surrounded by the shades of death,
May I whisper this with my dying breath:
Dear Lord I come to Thee to stay,
Thou hast always been just a whisper away.

C. W. WILLIAMS

CORRESPONDENCE

By Elder R. W. Rhodes, Lillie, La.

DEAR AND PRECIOUS HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH, WHEREVER YOU ARE, THAT MAY HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO READ THIS IMPERFECT COMMUNICATION: I often think and muse in my poor mind about you and your welfare in the Lord, or rather your state of mind here in this low ground of sin and sorrow. I would, if the Lord willed, comfort you in stirring your pure minds in remembrance of the exceeding precious and gracious promises that have been made and left on record for your comfort, correction, instruction and for the doctrine that is all to the man of God. You are the only ones, according to holy inspiration, that have any gracious interest in these sacred and holy things in righteousness, but those who hold these things in unrighteousness (that is, those who interpret the inspired word of God in unrighteousness) instead of being comforted by them, wrest them to their own destruction as is recorded in his Holy Word. To those that I desire to write at this time it is said by Paul in Romans 15:4, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." So let us examine these sacred things and may God give us that heavenly understanding.

I know that I have neither space nor time, even if I had everything else, to go at length into any major subject, because I am rather prone to make all of my articles too long, explaining too much in detail what comes to my mind on these sacred and holy things, if indeed I have any knowledge or any part in them. I desire to be as brief and pointed, if the Lord wills, as is most profitable on this occasion.

I have been very busy all the year and particularly so for the last few months, and have not been able to keep up with my correspondence as I would like to do which seems partly the reason that I have decided to write this article. I hope it will serve to let each one that might think I have neglected answering their correspondence know that I prize the sweet communications that I get

from the Lord's people above every other earthly communication that I ever get. I have been so graciously comforted through this blessed medium very often to the overflowing of many tears of joy, and I would love, the Lord willing, to be blessed at this time to give that meat, drink, clothing and that taking in of those strangers, and that visiting of those sick ones that Jesus tells of in that parable of the sheep and goats. Matt. 25:35. That is my true desire if I know my heart.

I think the most comforting subject to the Lord's humble poor that is set forth in all his Holy Word is the grand, glorious and consoling subject of Jesus, our precious Savior and Redeemer, who is the way, the truth and the life, the only name given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved. He died and poured out his blood on the cross, thereby satisfying the just demands of the righteous and holy law, freeing all his people and perfecting them forever which is of the greatest consolation to all those that have been made to feel their sins and iniquities, because he has said through this offering and this new covenant "their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." This is great joy and comfort to all his weary pilgrims here below while they travel through this dark and thorny maze. In fact every phase of our Savior's teachings, and that of his apostles and prophets are most comforting to those that have been born of the Spirit when the Lord blesses them to so meditate and to understand them.

His resurrection from Joseph's new tomb, and ascension into heaven is most comforting indeed to me if I know my own heart, and also his and other scriptural writer's testimonies that all the dear saints of God will rise from the graves at his second coming and be with him and each other in the holy presence of God and the holy angels forever and forever, but if there were no blessed and gracious promises of his second coming, and there were no signs of that taking place then it would all be dark and slippery to my poor mind. I want to call your attention to that sacred and blessed subject of his second coming, and as to what there seems to be taking place as we go, as I think, hurriedly towards that great day when he will come and will not tarry. There can be no mistake as to such a day as this, because all the sacred promises of God through all his patriarchs, judges, and prophets as well as the apostles, the Lord himself and that of the Holy Ghost could not be complete without this great and glorious day.

I desire to call your attention to Matt. 25:1-13. "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom." I desire that you take under consideration the fact that the very first word of this great parable is THEN. No doubt in my mind that the Savior was continuing the same subject that he had been teaching all the way through the 24th chapter, that is, that of his second coming, the end of the world and the signs of the coming as his disciples are asking him about in that chapter. This is clearly indicated in the statement that THEN SHALL THE VIRGINS—that is, it will be like that at the time of his coming that he has previously spoken of in the 24th chapter. I think this is the proper way to interpret his words THEN SHALL IT BE, or it shall be like the ten virgins then.

I think the kingdom of heaven under consideration in this scripture is the church of Jesus Christ, and the five wise virgins are the true and genuine heirs of promise, a true church, because it says in another place in inspiration that Christ is made unto us wisdom,

righteousness, sanctification and redemption. I also think that the statement in Dan. 12:10 shows that the difference between the righteous and the wicked is that the wicked shall do wickedly and none of them shall understand, but the wise shall understand. So the wise are just those blessed characters who are given the oil of God's grace in their profession in his great name. I think that the profession of faith, unless it is accompanied by God's grace, is darkness instead of light which I think represented that false professor who is destitute of the grace of God; and that lamp which has not been lighted by the grace of God is sure and certain to go out, and that profession that is accompanied by the oil of God's grace is certain to burn on and on till the Bridegroom comes, and will be in the meeting when he comes, and will go in with him and the door will be shut and all false professors will be rebuked and rejected by our Savior. It is as it was in the days of Noah only Noah and his family were in the ark, they were called into it and the Lord shut the door. The Lord in this parable reiterates a statement that he made in Matt. 7:22-23 where he said, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them. I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." The five unwise are undoubtedly the wicked and false professors who without the grace of God profess, and consequently there is nothing in their profession except that light of Adamic nature, or just the burning of the wick, so to speak, which always gives a better light when it is first lighted, but the longer it burns the filthier and blacker and darker it gets until it goes out. I think that this going out of the light of false professors will be at the approach and coming of the Lord, in fact that is a plain statement of this scripture in another verse in this above reference.

It is said in the 5th verse, "While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept." I think this means that until the time comes for the approach of the blessed Savior, both the wise and the foolish will sleep and slumber, so to speak, in other words in a state of inactivity, careless and indifferent and seemingly not much looking forward to that time when he is to come. There is a set time for his coming that no man on earth nor the angels in heaven knows, but is plainly said here in this language it is to be at midnight. That is centrally between two days, the old day and the new day, but is at the darkest time when both the wise and the foolish are asleep and quiet, but when the alarm is sounded and the midnight cry is heard then will be a time when all are busy both will have trimming to do. There is no doubt in my mind that there will be an enormous trimming by the true church or the wise, and there trimming will help because their lamps have oil. Those that are the children of God will have the light and its brilliant influence all the journey through, but the foolish or unwise will not, everything they do will be done in the darkness, and this is the very worst kind of darkness, it is that kind of darkness that the foolish think is light.

(To be continued)

Cascade, Va.

DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE: I am sending a letter I wrote to brother J. W. Allen, Roxboro, N. C., or so I thought, but I desire it to be published in the *Signs* if it meets with your approval. I know I cannot deceive God, neither do I desire to deceive his people but am fearful. We do not doubt the reality of our feelings when we feel them, but *afterward.* John did not doubt Jesus being the Christ the day he baptized him but *afterward.*

"When I experience call to mind,
My understanding is so blind,
All feeling sense seems to be gone,
Which makes me fear that I am wrong."

I must say I felt some of the reality of this letter as I wrote it. Hoping you and yours are well, your little brother in hope.

(Elder) LAYTON WINGFIELD

DEAR BROTHER ALLEN: Will attempt, after so long, to answer your letter received some time ago. Do not think I have not written before now because I have anything against you for such is not the case. I just could not write until given a mind to write. The time appointed of God had to come and I had to wait for it.

While reading a book this morning "Antidote against Arminianism" (Christopher Ness, 1700) I came across my experience and yours, and every other child's experience born of God in these words of Ezekiel 36:26-31. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen. Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations." I feel so pitifully helpless and inadequate to the task at hand, it seems it is almost useless for me to try to tell what I see in this wonderful scripture. Yet, God willing, I will make the attempt, hoping he will bless my effort to the extent you and I may be comforted a little to the end that the God of our salvation may be honored and glorified. For all praise is his due, and we desire to thus ascribe it. The only things we can of a truth before God testify to are the things we have experienced. Even the court of natural law of America will not receive evidence that some one told them about. You must be an eye witness or your testimony is cast aside, and not received for it is useless. Much greater then are the courts of our God. If the written word was all we had our testimony would be no good. We believe the Scriptures were written by divine inspiration and are true because God says it is so, but we also have the witness that these things are so. Why? How? Because these same things are written in our hearts by the divine pen of experience. So then we are truly eye witnesses to the truth of these things written.

The written word of God in the Book, and the written word or living word of God in our hearts, each bear witness to the truth, the reality of the other. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." Ye are my witnesses saith God and ye shall show forth my praise. The law of nature in all men, both elect and non-elect, is to delight in serving the law of sin. This present evil world is a heaven below to the dead sinner. It satisfies him. It is all he desires or knows anything about.

Thirty six years ago I knew nothing or cared nothing for this present world, for I was not yet born. How could I know anything about how beautiful the sun rose each morning bathing the world in a golden light? What did a rainbow in the sky mean to me then? Did I have eyes to behold the beauties of its changing colors? Could I listen with delight to the song of the birds, bursting their little throats in praise to

the God of their creation? Of course not, for being unborn I had no eyes to see, no ears to hear, no heart to feel or understand. Just so then it is with God's people, let alone the others, while they are yet dead in trespasses and sin. Spiritually speaking unborn, not yet in manifest existence. Jesus said, "Ye must be born again." This must take place before one can see the kingdom of God, and it is concerning this being born again that I desire to write, and to which birth the scripture quoted applies. As I have experienced it, one time in my life I felt as good as any-body and better than some, being at that time as yet unborn of God. I had no eye to see, no ear to hear, no heart to understand my true condition for the light of God had not shone into me, but when it did shine, behold I felt as did Jeremiah. "Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone: because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." Yes, I felt to be a vile sinner, a wretch undone, the black sheep of my father's family, the blackest sinner of all God's creation. Felt to be doomed to that awful hell, that lake of fire that burns forever. I used to try to visualize what it would be like to burn forever and never, never stop. My poor mind would go round and round in a whirl saying, "there must be an end, there must be an end sometime, somewhere." My mind could not grasp the meaning of eternity. The pain, the excruciating agony, the suffering my poor tortured, twisted heart went through only God will ever know: the times when I would go off to myself, crying in helpless abandon, begging for mercy, yet feeling it was not for me, that my cries, my groans, my prayers were but hollow mockery that I was too vile and sinful for God to notice. Let no man say this was too much for a child to experience, for remember that John leaped for joy in his mother's womb being as yet unborn. God moves in all ages. The working of God's hand surpasses all reason. Casual reason is in direct opposition and contradiction to God's wisdom, but by the will of God it is fixed that way. He fixed it and what he does is done right, is done perfectly, is done forever. Men and devils may and do rant, rave and rage, but God does his will undisturbed.

I went on over the years from time to time grieving. One thing I would like to record. In those years part of the time we lived out in the country. On days that were cloudy and gloomy looking I could hear the train whistles afar off, coming in on the wind, and it would cause me to feel the sadness of death. My pain would become so great it was like a knife being stabbed into my heart and I would almost scream, for the blowing of that lonely train whistle seemed to me the mourning cry of a lost soul doomed to hell and that poor lost soul was me. Talk about being willing to be saved! O God, our experience has taught us to positively know the doctrine the world teaches is false.

After much suffering, much sinning, much grieving, trying everything I could do to gain relief I was brought to the end and gave up all for lost on the morning of August 4, 1939 when these words came into my heart in power great enough to shake the whole created world, words that were felt. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." In a moment, in a flash of time I was delivered. My grief was over. I no longer felt convicted and condemned but free, and again I must say heaven flooded into my poor soul and I was rejoicing with every little cell of my body. I felt to say with one of old, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name." I rejoiced with joy that exceeded the

deepest depths of suffering I had ever experienced. O my people, what I have written is the reason I have a hope of eternal life, the reason why I believe in the blessed doctrine of salvation by grace alone for time as well as eternity. I have had and do yet have many doubts and fears concerning my salvation. Fearful that I am deceived, hoping I am not, but despite all doubts and fears the only other change I am looking for is to be in death and the resurrection. I have something in me that makes me hate sin and love righteousness, and I must say I cannot live up to my desire. If I am not now already born again I never expect to be. I have nothing to offer God that I have ever done or can ever do. If Jesus Christ is not all of my salvation then I have none. How well do the following lines describe me now.

"'Tis seldom I can ever see
Myself as I would wish to be;
What I desire, I can't attain;
From what I hate I can't refrain."

Little children of God all over this poor world, when you are driven to your knees by the knowledge you have nowhere else to go, remember me. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them. Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and your abominations." A poor sinner saved by grace or not at all.

(Elder) LAYTON WINGFIELD

Vernonia, Oregon

EDITOR SIGNS OF THE TIMES: I wish I could tell you the reason and purpose why I am sending in this subscription for the *Signs of the Times*. I have a couple of issues that were printed in 1939. I am enclosing $2 which I suppose is the price, if not let me know. I have read a number of articles in them, views and experiences that caused me to shed tears. They told so nearly some of my experiences I loved to read them. I hope it will not be out of the way to tell you an experience I had when a boy under twenty years of age. I had serious thoughts from a child and was taught to fear God by my loving mother, but it took more than this earthly teaching. I felt I was condemned in the sight of God without hope and I began to think I was lost, but there was a power spoke to me, "you are lost already." I did not hear a voice but it was just as plain to me as though it had been spoken. My understanding was that unless the Lord had mercy on my poor soul I was lost to all eternity. I began praying and went to my mother's room. She asked, "what is the matter son?" I said, "mother I am lost." She replied, "you are under conviction and I will pray with you." We prayed and all I could see was a gaping hell for me. We started praying about ten o'clock and around two my burden left me I know not where. The next day I felt at ease but it was not long before I began to have doubts and fears. I would go to the woods and ask the Lord to teach me his will and the way of righteousness. One time his presence was so great the trees seemed to be praising his name, they seemed to be all of a glow or quiver praising God. I have had many heartaches in life and have been able, through the Spirit, many times to praise my Redeemer. I could go on and tell some of my dreams and visions but I do

not want to weary you. It is all summed up that unless you are led by the Spirit of Christ you are none of his.

I will soon be seventy-six years old and I still feel that I need the guidance of my Savior, more so now than when I was a boy. I am unable to find any Baptists of the kind I used to hear preach. We have Baptists but not the Primitives. There are lords many and gods many but unto us who are saved there is but one, and that one God is only known when he reveals himself to us through the Spirit. Thought I would write you a few lines so you would understand the reason I like to read the *Signs*. It contends for the doctrine of grace and places poor, helpless man without strength. If you feel that I have said anything regarding eternal life in Christ pray for me a poor sinner saved by grace if at all.

A. B. COUNTS

Route 1, Blevins, Ark.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am sending $5 to the *Signs of the Times*. It does not cover my subscription as you have been sending it to me free so long, but when I can I will send a little to help in carrying along our good paper. It is all the preaching I get. Those who contribute to its pages are doing so much for those who are shut away from their own faith. Oh, how I long to go again to hear the gospel preached in its purity, not to hear the kind I sometimes hear, telling poor sinners to give their hearts to God and he will save them. They fail to tell how to go about giving this wicked heart to One who "searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God," so if that heart has been touched and tendered by the love of God, and drawn by his holy will to love his appearing, that heart will then say "Abba Father" and worship a sovereign God who has all power both in heaven and earth.

I thank you so much for sending the *Signs* to a poor lonely old woman who is depending on the mercies of a gracious Savior for all needs.

(Mrs.) MINNIE HENDRIX

(We deeply appreciate the spirit of sister Hendrix's letter, and it will also undoubtedly encourage all who contribute in any way to the welfare of our family paper to continue their efforts. To realize that they have some part in giving a cup of cold water, in the name of their Lord, to those whose tongues are parched with thirst and cleaving to the roof of their mouths, should cause a spirit of thankfulness to rise up in the hearts of those who are blest so to do. Only those who are cut off from the association of their brethren and are deprived of hearing the preached word can fully know what joy it causes to have those of like precious faith come into their homes through the *Signs*. As our sister says, in this scientific age, we can hear much about what the creature can do for the Lord, but what concerns those who hunger and thirst after righteousness most is what their Lord has already done for them. The prophet Isaiah was commanded to "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." The Lord's people rejoice only in being assured that Jesus finished the work of redemption and that salvation is full and complete by and through him that loved them and gave himself for them. We thank our sister for her gracious letter and consideration. R. L. D.)

IT IS FINISHED

God sent his son, the holy child Jesus, made of a woman and made under the law, to save his people from their sins, and in so doing manifest himself as that which of God was made unto them his wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Their daysman that stands between the elect and further condemnation, the author and finisher of the Christian faith, the captain of their salvation, separating them from their sins as far as the east is from the west to be remembered against them no more forever. Such is the climax of the saying, "It is finished." This language spoken by our Savior means all to the children of God. There is no other expression spoken by any man in all the scriptures that covers as much ground as this one, "It is finished." It is the most satisfying, the most consoling, it is a hidden treasure in the breast of every child of grace. Never to rust or wear it is a morsel under his tongue that never blends to anything but sweetness that can only be refreshed with the oil of grace which is Jesus and him crucified. Such is food and manna to the hungry soul and in praise it shouts aloud, "I know that my redeemer liveth," Lord of lords and King of kings ever to be adored for his mercy endureth forever, not only in this time world but also in that which is to come. Oh, to look upon him on the rugged cross and to hear him say "It is finished." What was finished? That the salvation of his people by his death stood in him complete, that there was nothing more required on his part. But from the reading of the text it appears that in his hour of trial he had rendered unto the Father the glory due unto his name by saying, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." In so doing it not only saved his people, but it also stood them in him acquitted and clear of further condemnation, for in his resurrection he ascended to the Father assuming his proper place at his right hand to make intercession for all that were given him in covenant. Not only so but perfectly satisfied and glorified, and "What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

This brings to pass the words of the prophet, "But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation." So with every little child of grace in his or her breast rests the hope (Christ Jesus the Lord) that they are of that number that when our Lord comes again without sin unto salvation to gather his elect unto himself that we or they may hear the shout, "Come ye blessed of my Father," saying, "To the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth," and bear them away, standing them pure, holy and without blame before God in love, there evermore to sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, that no man can learn save those redeemed of the Lord. "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." For those blessings let us all praise the Lord.

(Elder) W. A. LITTLE
1008 E. Allen Ave.
Fort Worth, Texas

Robersonville, N. C.

MY DEAR ELDER DODSON: I have been a great loser of late. My dear, loving wife, my bosom friend of nearly fifty-four years duration passed away Oct. 26, after long and severe suffering and I am left alone with just one single daughter living with me. It has nearly killed me and it is hard to be reconciled. If you feel it in your heart to do so when you go to prayer, ask our merciful God to grant me his sustaining grace to be submissive to his will, and to be with me and guide me in my lonely hours. My wife and I never had membership with any earthly church, but we believed in our merciful God and we believed the doctrine preached and upheld by the following old Elders: Beebe, Durand, Chick, McConnell and also upheld by yourself and Associate Editors. Excuse me for intruding on your time, I am just so lonely. Yours very truly, A. S. ROBERSON

(See obituary in this issue)

Route 1, Kennedy, Ala.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST IF I BE ALLOWED THE PRIVILEGE TO THUS ADDRESS YOU: As I have moved from Route 1, Berry, Ala. to the above address I ask that if you feel disposed to continue the *Signs* to me that you please change the address. I realize my subscription is past due but I hope to be able to send it in the near future. I do not want to miss a copy. I cannot always enjoy every one alike, but as a whole the *Signs* sets forth the doctrine the Old Baptists have always stood for. I often wonder, am I one, I mean one that was given to Jesus before the world began, and saved by the blood of him who suffered the horrible death of the Roman cross. If indeed so, then "no weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper." The promise of Jesus to his loved ones is, "He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." Does this mean that it does not matter how far one strays from the pattern of Holy Writ they are justified? I do not so understand it. God in the wonderful counsel that is called holy in which all things were ordered and sure, declared the end from the beginning saying, "My counsel shall stand. and I will do all my pleasure." I wish to state here that God being a God of purpose, nothing occurs in time by man creature or thing that God did not have a purpose in. In his address to the people of Athens, Paul declared that God "hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." So I am fully persuaded he set everything in its place and fixed its bounds so that it fulfills God's purpose even to the proud waves of the sea, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further." Yes, the sea of time as well as the mad oceans. I most assuredly believe that according to my feeble knowledge of what the Bible sets forth, the Lord has drawn the line of distinction between true and false, order and disorder, righteousness and unrighteousness and all that could be that is not of the same nature, and it—whatever the it be—only fills the course in which God purposed, predestinated or decreed it. We are told, "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." I must say that the Devil in the very beginning of time displayed a grand purpose that God had in the power of the wicked one in deceiving his (God's) church to transgress God's holy law. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners." "Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," making room for the coming of Jesus, who came under the law to redeem them that were under the law.

So the first occurrence and every

event since was according to the purpose of God. There are more scriptural proofs to this than space will permit at this time. It was according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God that Jesus was crucified and I am sure that all other things are not and have not been by chance. But how do we know those things? Alone by revelation. Ye must be born again. This operation teaches the children of God the truth as it is in Christ, it teaches them the discipline of the church for the apostle Paul wrote the discipline and I feel our people should be willing to abide by the pattern that is laid down in Holy Writ. The Lord Jesus only had one bride. She was called in Revelations, "The bride, the Lamb's wife." Then why should his people argue, fuss, strive and devour over the old time discipline that the apostle so strictly forbids, and Jesus especially charged his disciples that from the beginning it was not so. Eve was a type of the church and she only had one husband, and he was a figure of Jesus Christ. I would like to advise all men to be not wise above that which is written. To contend for the doctrine and discipline of the Lord's house one must adhere strictly to the words of Holy Writ. As I have said before I will say again, if there is any man on earth that is qualified to prove that it is legal to hold members in the church having a plurality of wives other than save for the cause of fornication, I certainly will wait patiently for a letter or a hearing from them, otherwise the answer to their failure would be it is not Old Baptist discipline to hold them in the church.

I have a great desire to see you. I very much admire your views on the subject of adultery a few months ago as I have many of your articles. I have not written as I would like but feel my letter is growing too lengthy. I do not want to consume too much of your time, but would appreciate hearing from you. I beg to remain your poor, worthless brother in hope of the place called heaven.

(Elder) T. T. McQUEEN

Star Route, Naches, Wash.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I have just sent in my renewal for the *Signs of the Times* for another year, and also asked you to send it to a neighbor who has been reading mine and said she loved all the writers so much she wished she knew every one of them. To-day she united with our church and was baptized. A seventy year old man who has long loved the Baptists and who said he could not stay away any longer, also united and was baptized. He asked me to send in his subscription also and I am sending it now so he will not miss any more of the *Signs* than necessary. His sister is lending him some of the back numbers to read, so start his subscription with the current number.

(Mrs.) BEATRICE HAAN

(We are very glad to hear the good news contained in sister Haan's letter, and wish to thank her sincerely for her interest in our family paper. R. L. D.)

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788 Hillside Ave., Victoria, B. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Enclosed find $5 to pay for my back dues and for the following year and $1 to use as you see fit. How can I say again I am sorry I have been so tardy in remitting. I can make no excuse except neglect, my intentions are always good and the time seems to slip by so quickly. I do love the dear *Signs* and everything it stands for which is the truth as I see it. I can find comfort in nothing but the sovereign power of God. Oh, how often I hear people say, "God must have slipped up somewhere when there is so much trouble in the

world to-day. We must try ourselves to help him to put things right." I do not believe God has failed in anything, but that everything works according to his mighty will. God cannot and does not fail in anything. I cannot find that I can do anything to help make the world better. It is all in God's dear hands. I remain yours sincerely,

(Mrs.) SYD. DUCLOS

Route 1, Dundas, Ill.

MRS. MAUDE A. MORAN, DEAR SISTER MORAN: Your card received to-day and I am sorry to hear that you have been ill and hope you are much improved by now. I know from experience what it means, and what it is like to be sick and afflicted and suffer pain. We know, too, that Jesus was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," and he knows and understands all of our pain and troubles and is not unmindful of them, but is full of pity and tender compassion. I have no doubt, dear sister, but that you, like myself, have often times been made to rejoice in spirit while suffering in the flesh. On one such occasion while suffering in the flesh and, as I hope, rejoicing in the spirit, I wrote the poem below entitled "MY PORTION."

I love to think my portion is give,
From God's own hand each day that I live;
I hope I am grateful as I should be
For his loving care of sinful me.

My every need he will supply,
And when at last I am called to die,
My portion forever then shall be
To praise him through eternity.

I later composed a tune to go with the words. I believe, sister Moran, that we do receive our portion; that God has purposed for us each day of our lives; and that nothing can happen to us except as he in his wisdom and mercy has purposed for us, whether it be sickness or health, prosperity or poverty. God gives us our portion in life and of life each and every day we live, and if our lot be to suffer sickness or adversity all the explanation we should need is that "it seemed good in Thy sight." The apostle Paul tells us, "That all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." We poor mortals cannot see where grievous times work to our good, but if we love God and are the called according to his purpose then it is for our good and to the glory of God. We poor mortals can only see the present moment, but God's purposes and plans are from eternity to eternity, without a flaw or mistake anywhere down the line. He knows the ending of all things better than we can understand the present moment allowed us. We in reality do not know our own needs, but God does know them and his work is so perfect that all things work together for our good.

I remember the subject I wrote you about, yet I do not remember all that I wrote you about it. It was not written for publication but you may do as you wish with it, though I feel sure some other person could do better writing on the subject as I am so poor and unlearned, yet if I know anything at all concerning spiritual things I have not learned it from man or mankind, but from the giver of every good and perfect gift. When Jesus was mourning over Jerusalem, as I wrote you before, it was in his humanity and tender compassion. He knew, too, that the prophecy must be fulfilled and that Jerusalem would be destroyed and not one stone would be left on another: and he knew, too, that they would soon hail him—"Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

In conclusion I would like to send you a song I wrote while one of our sons was in service in the Pacific. He liked for me to write him on the

Scriptures, and in one letter to him among other things I wrote, I told him that the Lord was everywhere present and nowhere absent; and that the Lord was there as much as here at home, and that he not only knew our every thought but he knows the secret intentions of our hearts as well; I told him the Lord was near him wherever he might be and to always remember that the Lord was just a whisper away. He is a very present help in time of trouble. Later on the words. "Just a whisper away," came to mind with such force that I wrote this song. (See first page). I also have a tune for this song that came to mind in connection with the words. I do not write music and if there is any music about me it is simply the melody that the Lord has put in my heart as I do not have a musical education. If you, dear sister, can get a little comfort or consolation from these things I have written give the praise unto the Lord. Your brother in a precious hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. C. W. WILLIAMS

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5 Shaw St., Sanford, Me.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Ever since our yearly Conference at North Berwick last September it has been on my mind to tell you how much I enjoyed all our services. Many said the same, and as we prepared our midday lunch we spoke of how favored we had been with beautiful weather both days, a congregation and truly wonderful sermons. When given the ear to hear the preaching of the gospel is "as rivers of water in a dry place." Water—cool, refreshing, cleansing and restoring—is a beautiful figure of God's grace to his people, and this is only to be found in Jesus, the Fountainhead.

The world is a dry place devoid of spiritual water or food to those who feel the need of the pardoning grace and mercy of a loving Savior. Our Jesus is full of grace and truth.

"Plenteous grace with thee is found—
Grace to pardon all my sin:
Let the healing streams abound;
Make and keep me pure within:
Thou of Life the fountain art!
Freely let me take of thee!"

When God speaks through our ministers, how clear and dear are those deep mysterious truths of the Bible. We are made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. We are not aware of time, the sermon seems short, yet we feel the half has not been told of Christ's love for his chosen people, the elect church "as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

So often when cast down in spirit, it gives us a ray of hope when brethren tell of the barrenness of their hearts, yet still clinging to that small spark of hope which, when it is God's pleasure, be comes a bright fire driving away all our doubts and fears. In Christ we find a sanctuary, a covert from the tempest of sin. He bore the blasts of the holy justice of God; the fury of wrath due to our sins; the withdrawal of his Father's presence; and the smile and joy of the Father's face. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Our Jesus, the sinner's friend, knows how to minister comfort to the needy ones to whom he calls, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Your sister in gospel bonds.

(Mrs.) LYDIA R. NASON

Geneva, Ala.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS: For some time I have been engaged in conducting research work on the history of the Claybank Association of Alabama of the Primitive Baptist faith and order. I would appreciate receiving the minutes of said Association from 1845 to 1892,

and the sessions of 1899-1903-1905 together with any other sketches relating to this Association. Since I am now residing in the bounds of this historic order, I recently became a member of it and was appointed at its recent session to collect and edit all matter regarding this, the largest orderly Association adhering to the Predestinarian principles in Alabama. Hassell in his history states that it was constituted at Smyrna Church in Coffee County, Ala. with the churches at Mt. Pleasant, Bethany, Hepzibah, Smyrna, Zion's Hill and Mount Olive composing it, and the presbytery being Elders Jesse Tomlin, Daniel Dozier and Robert Warren. Said constitution occurring on Nov. 23, 1845. Its articles of faith were derived from the Conecuh River Association which in turn had been constituted in 1827, probably from the Ebenezer Association which had been cosstituted in 1827, probably from the Mud Creek Association organized in 1821, the oldest Association in Alabama.

So far as records are obtainable this organization derived its principles from the Kehukee Association of North Carolina, which in turn was constituted out of the Philadelphia Association whose oldest church was Welsh Tract still standing in Delaware. The writer having been blessed to be with some of its members on June 30, 1946 at Ebenezer Church in Baltimore, where it was his privilege to meet and hear some of the ablest ministers preach in the East. Never shall I forget the sweet fellowship of the dear saints there among whom I remember so well Elders Wood, Topping, Dodson, Vaughn, Walker, Lefferts, Bennett, brother and sister Rowe, Sisters Secor, Wood and so many, many more, and how we were so royally entertained by brother and sister Gladding and Elder and sister Wood. Truly it was a heaven below to be in such a sacred place.

According to Hassell the Welsh Tract Church was organized in Wales and held its principles inviolate through centuries there, having derived them from Southern France, Northern Italy and the church in its purity in Rome itself from the apostle Paul. There can be no question but that our order has been upheld in all ages, in persecution, in turmoil, in strife by saints who have been preserved and shall stand when all things natural are melting with fervent heat. These principles were set up by that One whom Isaiah by divine inspiration through prophecy could aver was Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Truly this just One delivered these principles to his apostles, and they, through succeeding ministers in the Primitive fold, have upheld them in mountain fastnesses, in the catacombs, on the briny deep, at the stake, in Virginia jails, under all conditions and will keep them come what may. Yes, these articles of faith upon which the Claybank Baptist Association was constituted in the wilds of the deep South in pioneer days will remain steadfast. There the believers gathered from far and near to hear the glorious gospel sound; there the frontier minister spoke with zeal and fervency; there they received this manna as God sent heavenly food and rejoiced to hear the welcome news from the heavenly portals. Modes of travel were hard indeed but Saturday as well as Sunday found crowded churches many of which were built of logs without heat on dreary winter days, but the congregation remained to hear the glad news from a far country. Would to God we had such fervency now! May there be an awakening in Zion! Most truly we know that we have the precious faith revealed to us. May we partake of it and rejoice in its dispensing. Israel had her awe inspiring season and so it seems are we. May the

trumpet sound again in Zion and may it not be an uncertain sound. May we learn to stand still and see the salvation that is surely coming.

It was evident to the beloved pioneers in the Old Claybank, and may we again love to meet and mingle with the saints. I truly believe we have evidences already on the gospel horizon of such a glorious era. Little is known of these dear saints in the early days of Claybank. Elder Jesse Tomlin, one of the presbytery that helped to constitute the Association was of Jewish parentage and lived a saintly life. Far and near he went preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ, baptizing, marrying, burying, organizing churches and speaking peace and comfort to sin-weary souls. Truly he was a saint to the pioneer of this section of the deep South. Elder Joel Pate was the first moderator of the Claybank, and others have been Elders Giles Bryan, Cary Curry, Daniel Davis, William Dismukes, A. Driskell, Joel Helms, J. J. Shields, J. A. J. Mitchell, and J. W. Thomas. So well and wisely have these Elders presided until no serious division has come to the Claybank until a short time ago. Little is known about the first of our ministers, but the evidence tends to prove that they were God fearing men who ceased not to declare the whole counsel, and to speak comfortable words unto Zion, crying aloud that her warfare is accomplished, and leading exemplary lives as a true minister should.

Elder J. J. Shields served as moderator during the time that the Claybank was perhaps the largest Association in America, and he was blessed to preside ably and wisely. He was an able orator of the pioneer era and delighted to tell jokes to illustrate his spiritual points. His wife, Matilda, his mule, Scott, and collard greens are proverbial with him. His passing was a severe loss to his people. Elder J. A. Mitchell was one of the most active ministers that ever lived. At times he was pastor of a dozen churches, spending almost all his time in attending churches throughout the week, conducting marriages and funerals and baptizing way-born sinners. He literally knew the Bible by heart and was honored by rich and poor alike. Elder J. W. Thomas has served well since the passing of Elder Mitchell, and for many years served as clerk while the latter was moderator. He is loved dearly by his people and looks well to the interest of Zion.

At present the Claybank has thirteen churches with two hundred forty members, nine Elders and one Licentiate Minister. There seems to be a ray of hope shining on beams of love for an awakening that will once again make it a beacon of light for the weary. May this illuminate Zion everywhere. Would be glad to receive the minutes of every Association. Will you not send me yours? Remember a lonely pilgrim in your prayers. (Elder) J. J. COLLINS

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622 Washington St., Quincy, Fla.

DEAR DORRIS AND LOIS: Thank you for the invitation to come and visit you and go to the Associations. I was in Chicago when the card came and have been too long in writing you after I came home. I hope the invitation will extend over into next fall and that I can come and be with you all. I also appreciated the Christmas card. I am sending a small check, part of which is to pay my over-due subscription to the *Signs of the Times*, and to extend it another year, the remainder to be used as you see fit.

I look forward eagerly to the coming of the *Signs* every month, but I have several complaints to make regarding it. First of all there is not enough of it. I get so wrapped up in the wonderful truths contained in it that I am over to

the obituaries and meeting notices much too soon. Another thing that would make for interest to me would be to see Maggie's name in it more often. The first thing I do when it comes is to look through to see if Maggie Lee Hayes' name is signed to any of the articles. Then I look for "W. D. G.," and if there is a "W. D. G." I read that. Then I read Mr. Dodson's editorial which always sounds as if it had been put there for my particular benefit and pleasure. Then I read it from cover to cover: some of the writings over and over again. Then I have a whole month to wait for another feast.

All things that are given of God, and spoken through the mouths of his prophets are good and wonderful, and are given for the benefit and sustenance of those who have been given an eye to see, an ear to hear that *still small voice*, and a heart to understand his messages, but the sermons and articles I particularly enjoy are the ones that interpret the testimonies of the writers of the Bible in the light of the every-day experiences of God's children. It is a wonderful thing to find that a passage of scripture I have heard all my life, just as so many words, contains so much in the way of assurance and comfort. I am thinking now particularly of Mr. T. W. Whitefield's light on the "Stakes of Truth" in the January issue of the *Signs of the Times*. Are not those people who have been delivered and are within the bounds of those stakes a miraculously blessed people? They make up a body that is truly a city set on a hill that cannot be hid; the branches of the True Vine, all bearing the same fruit. Christ himself said, "Ye are the salt of the earth." Is not that a broad and all inclusive statement? A preservative for the entire earth, without which it could not exist or be preserved for even a moment.

God has so blessed his children that it is hard to understand how they can be a rebellious, an idolatrous and stiff-necked people. After every deliverance from the time of Moses through that of the kings and prophets, all typifying the consummation of all deliverances—the one which our blessed Savior ended on the cross when he said, "It is finished"—the ones delivered have built their golden calves and worshipped them. It is no wonder there are adverse visitations from Divine Providence. If the rod were spared the child would be spoiled, would it not? Thank you again for your thoughtfulness of me. Love to you both and to the boys. Sincerely your friend. (Mrs.) MABEL D. BELL

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am passing this on to you. You are at liberty to read and use as you see fit. The check was to be used as I see fit. The fitness I see is to pass it on to you with the same thought she passed it to me. Do with it as you see fit after paying her subscription beyond one year. This lady is a daughter of the late Elder C. H. Davis, and a sister to our gifted and spiritually minded sister, Maggie Lee Hayes. She has never united with the church but she is highly regarded for the truth's sake. Yours in hope.

(Elder) W. D. GRIFFIN

(We wish to thank both Mrs. Bell and Elder Griffin for sending her letter and the donation to help the *Signs*. After reading her good letter we can well understand why Mrs. Bell, as Elder Griffin says, should be highly regarded for the truth's sake. It is difficult to understand why those thus taught of the Lord do not follow their Savior in the ordinance of baptism. We are persuaded it will be as God wills it. Her letter will undoubtedly afford encouragement to our readers, sister Maggie Lee Hayes, Elder Griffin and brother Whitefield, as well as to us, and we again thank her on behalf of us all. We trust sister Hayes will favor us with more of her writings. May our Lord have everlasting praise! R. L. D.)

Route 1, Delaware, Ohio

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON: The August number of the *Signs* contained a notice that my subscription expires next issue. Thank you for the notice as well as the paper. I do not want my subscription to go delinquent. I thought of the Master saying to Peter, "Go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth,thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee." Christ knew where the money was before he sent Peter. Omnipotence knew I had the $2 before the notice came. Am I a soldier of the cross, a follower of the Lamb if I do not pay you now for the Master knows I can? When he ascended on high he did not leave any debts unpaid, but paid it all. I have come to the place in the journey that I am forgetful so I had reason to thank you for the notice. According to the course of nature I do not expect I will be here many years to renew so I suggest that you cause mine to cease when I fail to renew. I may need to be stirred up a bit next year if still here. I wish you well and I would that God would put it in the mind and hearts of all true Israel wherever they may be scattered abroad to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and trust him for all that is to come. Can the children of God expect the church to prosper if they keep first the beast and take his number or name in the head or forehead and wars and all kind of schemes. Sometimes I think the time may be near that the whore and the beast and all her attributes will sink to rise no more. Then a season of rejoicing for the bride, the Lamb's wife.

When I think of an almighty, powerful God, and the grace, love, watchcare and mercy he provides; the length, breadth, height and depth of it all is too wonderful for me to comprehend, but he is able to give seasons of peace and feasting. May he bless you to have charity for taking so much of your time. I only meant to write and send my subcription for another year. Yours in hope of a better life beyond.

L. E. STEPHENS

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. S. L. Hutchens, N. Y., $5; Mrs. G. M. Beebe, N .Y., $10; Mrs. E. A. Bagwell, Ala., $2; Mrs. A. M. Hall, Me., $4; Eld. E. B. Ault, Tex., $3; Mrs. M. E. Kuns, Cal., $2; Mrs. D. Yeisley, Wash., $1; H. H. Cannon, Ga., $1; L. H. Shockley, Va., $3; J. C. Stinson, Va., $1; J. A. Owen, Ala. $3

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Kingwood Church at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J. May 29 and 30, 1947. Services will commence at 10:30 D. S. time on Thursday. Ministers and brethren of our faith and order and all interested friends are cordially invited. Since we shall make every effort to provide for your comfort while with us, we will appreciate it, where possible, if you will advise the writer in advance the time of your expected arrival. All arriving Wednesday should come first to my home at the address given below. Information, if desired, will be given you concerning the best transportation facilities for reaching Flemington, N. J.

ALWILDA R. STRYKER, Church Clerk.
192 Main St.,
Flemington, N. J.

TO OUR READERS

We regret to have to announce that we only have on hand for distribution about fifty (50) more copies of the book on the Resurrection of the Dead. We will, therefore, have to withdraw our offer to present a FREE copy of this book to those who send in *new* subscribers. The offer will remain until the supply is exhausted.

In view of the difficulty we have had in supplying the demand for the book on Predestination, we feel it is only fair to let our readers know in advance of the shortage of the books on the Resurrection. Those who want a copy FREE should send us a *new* subscriber promptly, or order the book direct for $1. R. L. D.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the *Signs of the Times* at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1; 12 copies, $2. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. .... MAY, 1947

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

CHARITY

It is alarming to me when I am given to meditate upon the strife and confusion that exists in Zion today! It is heartbreaking to find brethren trying to devour and subdue one another! It makes me shudder to note the coldness that seems prevalent in our own midst. All this perplexity of mind has made me to inquire of the Lord for an understanding of his spirit of love. May he define charity for us and make manifest that spirit in us.

Let us now consider the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians where Paul was inspired to write to the church at Corinth on this grand subject. I realize the modern usage of the word is the giving of alms, but the 3rd verse of this chapter states the possibility of bestowing all goods to feed the poor, yet be destitute of charity. I am persuaded to believe that chariy is the love of God, love of Christ, and love to saints. God loves us with a godly love. This same love is reciprocated and also includes Christ and the brethren. We love God because he first loved us. God's children do love one another. I think that Paul in the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians was blessed to treat upon the greatness of charity and its properties. He says, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal." To be enabled to speak with the tongues of men is a natural gift from God, but to be able to speak with the tongues of angels is a spiritual gift from God. Man naturally cannot learn the language of the truth as pertaining to God and the holy Scriptures. Though a man be spiritually blessed to speak fluently and eloquently of the doctrine of God our Saviour and have not charity, he is as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. If a person be blessed so that he can understand all mysteries and knowledge and have all faith both believing and doing miracles and have not charity, he is nothing. Paul does not mean that these gifts are nothing but that the man possessing these gifts is nothing, destitute of charity. If I bestow all my goods to feed the poor in order to gain the reputation of men or for the purpose of obtaining eternal life it would be no profit to me. These deeds must be motivated by love to God or to Christ or to the saints before they could be rightly considered as profitable for me.

Now let us consider the properties and characters of love as Paul was inspired to note them. "Charity suffereth long." The person blessed with charity is patient. He is slow to anger, and not hasty to revenge. He is enabled to bear much; has the grace of forbearance, and is blessed to forgive. "And is kind." He does good to all men, even to his enemies. "Charity envieth not." He that is possessed with this wonderful grace of God's love does not envy the temporal happiness of others. He rejoices when he beholds a brother is blessed with gifts both temporal and spiritual. He does not envy the happiness of others even though they are decidedly more blessed than he. Joseph's brethren were not charitable when they envied Joseph because he had a greater share in the af-

fections of their father. The charitable person does not envy one of God's children whose usefulness and success in spiritual undertakings are decidedly greater (seemingly) than his. "Charity vaunteth not itself." He does not boast of either his natural or spiritual wisdom or possessions. He does not boast of what he does as his motive is love and not for the applause of men. "Is not puffed up." He is not swelled with pride but is humble. "Doth not behave itself unseemly." He is not unbecoming in his conversation or actions and has due respect for the aged and those of authority. "Seeketh not her own." He is not seeking to promote his own selfish ambitions and desires but his care and concern is to the glory of God and to the children of the kingdom. "Is not easily provoked." He is not easily offended. "Thinketh no evil." Not that he is free from evil thoughts such as are sinful and vain, for testimonies throughout the holy scriptures affirm to the contrary. God's children are forever desiring to be delivered from these sinful thoughts that are daily experienced. But I think that this character will forgive a brother his trespasses and will not try to find some way of revenge. He thinks not upon how to *get even* with someone who has wronged him. "Rejoiceth not in iniquity". He mourns because of his own iniquities. He is grieved because of the sinfulness of professors. He is troubled when he meditates upon the profanity and immorality of the world. "But rejoiceth in the truth". He rejoices in the doctrine of God, our Saviour, he is pleased when God is praised and man is set forth as nothing, yea less than nothing. Salvation by grace is his meat and drink. "Beareth all things." He feels that all things work together for good to them who love God, even the suffering, persecution, and affliction is not in vain. He bears them without complaint, feeling that if justice was meted out they would be more intense. He does not feel that he should revenge wrong doing. "Believeth all things," Everything that exists is according to the decrees of God. All things are for the praise of God and for the perfecting of God's saints. None of the things existing is by chance. "Hopeth all things." All things yet future is predetermined so that nothing will frustrate any of the promises of God from being fulfilled. "Endureth all things." He is confident that all things are embraced in the eternal decrees of an all wise and all powerful God. He endures all the afflictions and persecutions for the elects sake and for Christs' sake. The last to be endured is death. "Charity never faileth." It may fail in the lively exercise of it. Selfishness and the cares of the world may be prevalent at times but the love of God will not permit a child of God to fall finally into perdition. Charity is everlasting. It is ever the same. Prophecies will be fulfilled then cease to be prophecy. Hope will become a reality thus cease to be hope. Faith will terminate into a reality. Charity will be charity in the beyond the same as it was before the beginning of time. Every object of God's love is just as certain for heaven and immortal glory as before time began. There is no change in the love of God for his people.

Now, I feel that the Lord has blessed us with a few sweet thoughts on the properties and characteristics of God's love as made manifest in brethren. Permit me to say, "By their fruits ye shall know them". I wish to suggest to the citizens of Zion, that you beware of imposters. Beware of those having a form of godliness but not manifesting the grace of charity. I believe the time has come to watch as well as pray. May God grant us the grace of charity and the eye of watchfulness.

E. J. L.

HEBREWS 10:26-39

One of our readers on the Pacific Coast requests our views on this portion of scripture. We recommend a perusal of this scripture by our readers, before they read our comment.

This epistle of the apostle Paul is addressed to the Jews in particular, and in beginning this chapter he reminds them that under the ceremonial law there was only a shadow of the good things to come, and that the sacrifices which they offered year by year continually could never make the comers thereunto perfect, "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." "But this man, (Christ Jesus) after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." This was in fulfillment of the covenant which the Lord said he would make with the house of Israel, when he would put his laws in their hearts and write them in their minds, "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." What a contrast this was to the law of Moses, written on tables of stone, which was broken before it was received, and which demanded payment of the debt to the last farthing and showed no mercy whatever. When the precious blood of the blessed Lamb of God was sacrificed the sin of his people was remitted, or put away, and the brethren therefore had boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. This was called the "new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." These were the things of the gospel and it was of vital importance that due diligence should be given in assembling themselves together for the worshipping of God in spirit and in truth, and for the purpose of exhorting one another, "and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." The destruction of legal Jerusalem was nigh at hand at the time Paul wrote this epistle to them, and the Jews were deeply concerned over what would take place.

From this point on we will begin to deal with the particular portion of the chapter which we have been asked to write about. The twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh verses read as follows: "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." As the ceremonial law was only a shadow of good things to come in the gospel dispensation, Paul was here emphasizing how awful it would be to sin wilfully, purposely planning and persisting in an evil course, after having received a knowledge of the truth. We believe God's people know by experience, or at least some of them, what a terrible thing it is for a brother or sister to purpose and determine to do that which is wrong, which is sometimes far-reaching in its effect, regardless of the consequences to all parties concerned. As the word says, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins," but there is "a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour

the adversaries." We are glad it does not read, which shall devour the sinner. The sinner is saved though as by fire. The Jews, to whom Paul was writing, were sufficiently conversant with the law of Moses to know that "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses," and while there is mercy and grace under the gospel, and the sinner does not die, nevertheless, as the apostle well says, "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" The apostle continues to follow along this line of reasoning by saying, "For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, the Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." We believe we have known by personal experience what an awful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God because of wilful sin, and felt the tortures of that hell known only in the furnace where the worm dieth not, and where the fire is not quenched. Because of our first hand knowledge of such an experience, we would earnestly desire, as far as it is possible for us to do, to persuade our brethren to strive to enter in at the strait gate and, by the help of God, refrain from sinning wilfully. A guilty conscience is an awful companion, one that cannot be shaken; it cannot be sent ahead and neither can it be left behind. It goes with us to bed at night, and it gets up with us in the morning, and it accompanies us wherever we may go throughout the livelong day. There is no relief, no peace, no rest until our sin has found us out and reconciliation has been made. Even the unregenerate thief or murderer is often haunted by it, day and night, until the hands of the law are laid upon him and takes him into custody and some relief is afforded through the confession of his crime. How wonderful it is that there is a throne of grace before which the people of God can fall and make their supplications, with groanings which cannot be uttered, before a just and holy God who hath provided a way for their escape.

Beginning with the thirty-second through the thirty-fourth verses of this chapter the apostle is admonishing them to "call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; Partly, whilst ye were made a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance." God's children, according to nature, are all legalists, and these things apply to them, whether they be Jew or Gentile. How truly these things apply to those who have dwelt in darkness but have seen a great light. When they were first delivered, like Israel of old when they passed through the Red Sea, they thought they would see the Egyptians, their enemies, no more forever, but they soon found they had to endure a great fight of afflictions; they realized they were the gazingstock of an unfriendly world, and they felt the reproaches and indignities which are the heritage of God's elect here in this world. It requires just such experiences as these to cause them to be compassionate towards those who are in bonds, taking joyfully the spoiling of their own goods, which they count as but dross and dung, that they may win Christ, and thus they are made to know that they have in heaven a better and

more enduring substance than anything this vain world can afford. Jesus told his disciples that in this world they would have tribulations, but he also told them to be of good cheer, for he had overcome the world. It is through much tribulation that we are to enter into the kingdom of heaven, but having put our hand to the plow we cannot turn back and must persevere and press forward, onward and upward, toward the mark of the prize of our high-calling in Christ Jesus. To all such pilgrims Paul admonished to "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." We know him in whom we have believed and are persuaded that he is able to keep that which we have committed unto him, and that nothing, neither in this world nor that which is to come, can deprive us of that joint and eternal inheritance given us in Christ Jesus the Lord. It is true that as long as we sojourn here below we shall have need of patience, or endurance, but after patience shall have done her perfect work and we by divine grace have done the will of God, having fought a good fight, having kept the faith and finished our course, we shall receive a crown of righteousness in keeping with the promise which God has made to those who love and serve him in sincerity and in truth. Our faith looks up to him and says it will be good news to hear him call, "Child, come home."

Our sister also asks that we comment upon the scripture where "Esau, afterwards sought repentance with tears and found it not." Reference to this is found in the twelfth chapter of this same epistle, sixteenth and seventeenth verses, which read as follows: "Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." Previously, in this chapter the apostle had given an exhortation to constancy in faith, patience and godliness, and cites for our consideration the great cloud of witnesses, all down through the ages, with which we are encompassed. Those who have gone before endured temptations, trials, afflictions, and the like, nevertheless they persevered and endured as good soldiers, following after peace and holiness. Esau was held up by the apostle as a "fornicator, or profane person," "who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright." On account of being the firstborn this birthright put him in a particularly favored position so far as inheriting the things of this world was concerned; however, in order to gratify his earthly desires, he relinquished his right to inherit from his father, Isaac, and sold all for a mere mess of pottage. When he realized that he had forfeited all his right to this inheritance, he diligently sought the blessing which he would have been entitled to had he not sold his birthright, but Isaac, having already bestowed his blessing upon Jacob, rejected Esau's plea, and "he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." Quite evidently his tears did not signify any sorrow for sin, but rather his grief was caused by reason of having lost his earthly possessions and his standing before men, because he was now not to be the head of his father's house when Isaac would pass to be with his God. God had already determined and declared that the elder should serve the younger and that "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated," and this decree was final and could not be rescinded. Neither was it based upon creature deeds, since it is written, "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according

to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." Esau did not seek by faith in Israel's God and he had no true godly-repentance or sorrow for his sin. Paul therefore shows a comparison of the law and the gospel, and what a contrast there is! There is as much difference between them as there is between light and darkness, between life and death, or between love and hate. The elect of God are exhorted to love one another, and they will gladly suffer the loss of all things in this life if only thereby they can find acceptance with the Father in their Beloved.

We submit the foregoing thoughts for the consideration of our sister making the request, and others of our readers, hoping that something may have been said which will stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance and cause them to give thanks to the God of their salvation.

R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

It has pleased our heavenly Father to call home our friend and brother, J. D. LANDERS, and it is with a deep feeling of sadness we record his passing. He lived on his farm eight miles west of Warren, Ark., the original home place of his birth. He was the son of the late Elder Charles and Mary Evans Landers and was born December 1861. His death occurred Dec. 11, 1946, making his sojourn on earth 85 years. He was married to Miss Louella McCone, Dec. 27, 1896 and to this union were born eight children. Four of them having preceded him in death, passing on to that happy and peaceful shore to welcome a father coming home. He leaves a sorrowing widow; one daughter, Mrs. Clara Hodges of Oakland, Cal.; three sons, Doyle of Spring Hill, La., Evans of Warren, Ark. and Leland of Little Rock, Ark., also four grandchildren and a host of friends. This was a happy family. He made no difference between his own children and his son-in-law or daughters-in-law all were the same.

He was a man of very few earthly possessions, but what a storehouse filled with things to make up character and noble manhood. A man who could be trusted, a man whose word was his bond, a man whose children can look back with pride and say well done, knowing this—father was an honest unright man among men. He suffered much physical pain in life, yet uncomplainingly bore his afflictions without a murmur, being submissive at all times to his Master's will.

He united with the Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church in 1894 and was baptized by the late Elder T. B. Little and remained a consistent member for fifty-two years. At no time did he depart from the faith and principles laid down or given to the saints. In his passing the little church loses a great soldier and pilgrim for his service to the church was of a high calling. An humble, Christian gentleman, strict in integrity, he was faithful to every trust imposed in him; a man with more than ordinary humble attitude to his brethren, yet when he was convinced he was right in things pertaining to the Scriptures, doctrine and practice he stood firm, yet ready at all times to lend a helping hand to any one who might come his way.

During the fifty-two years he was associated with the church he was firm in declaring himself for the principles rather than popularity. In troubles, trying times, divisions and dissatisfaction in his beloved associations he was firm, believing in a God of love and wisdom who rules all things after the counsel of his own holy will and purpose, relying entirely upon salvation by grace and grace alone, not of works lest any should boast. He was loved by all who knew him and his home was truly an Old Baptist home.

He was laid to rest in the Reaves Cemetery, his pastor, Elder H. H. Phillips officiating, to await his Master's call "child come home" to enjoy the realities of a home not prepared by hands for his children, where sorrow, trouble, sickness and death will be no more, to await the coming of our blessed Lord and Master to gather his jewels home. May the dear Lord comfort and console his mourners and friends, and help us to follow his example for our loss is his eternal gain. With love and respect.

(Elder) H. H. PHILLIPS
BEN PARRISH

VIOLA V. WALTON, wife of John E. Walton, died at her home, Route 1, Maynardsville, Union Co., Tenn. Dec. 28, 1946 after suffering for a little over two years with Bright's disease. She was born Oct. 12, 1880 near Luttrell, Tenn., making her stay on earth 66 years, 2 months and 16 days. She was married Sept. 1, 1901 and to this union seven children were born. Two boys and two girls preceded her in death. Surviving and to mourn her loss are her loving husband, one son,

two daughters, seven brothers, one sister, ten grandchildren and a host of friends.

She never united with the church, but manifested a great interest in going to the churches and especially the Associations whenever the opportunity presented. I feel she was a God-sent loving wife, and mother to her children. "It is God that hath bereft us, he will all our sorrows heal." "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." He will supply all our needs.

Funeral services were conducted at Cedar Ford Baptist Church, by Elder J. C. Davis, Dec. 30, at 1 P. M., after which was the interment in Luttrell Cemetery beside her father and mother as she had requested. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

"Plagues and deaths around me fly;
Till he bids, I cannot die."

Written by her loving husband and granddaughter.

JOHN E. WALTON
ERMALUE DAVIS

In memory of our departed sister, NELLIE H. ARNOLD, we desire to leave on record some of the important events of her life. She was born at Mattituck, N. Y. January 3, 1856, of the parentage of Joel C. Howell and Phoebe H. (Carter) Howell. She died October 5, 1946, after having reached the ripe age of 90 years, 9 months and 2 days. Sister Arnold was twice married. Her first husband was Willard F. Hallock, and to this union was born one son, Victor I. Hallock, of Sierra City, California. Her second husband was Corbin Arnold.

Sister Arnold was received by relation of experience and baptism into the fellowship of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in New York City, and was baptized the same day by Elder Benton Jenkins. She was very much endeared to her brethren and sisters in the Ebenezer Church, and they were loath to have her leave this part of the country eleven years ago and go to live in California. She was, however, faithful in communicating with her home church and many of her good letters have been published in the *Signs of the Times*. While it is sad to part with our dear ones, we cannot mourn for them as those who are without hope. We are persuaded our sister has departed this life to be with Christ, her Lord, which is far better.

Her son writes that his mother was very courageous and showed no signs of suffering until the very last, when she lapsed into a coma and her heart ceased. He also says her remains were sent to Chester, Conn. and interred in the family plot there. This was in accordance with her written request a short while before her death. She also requested that the one hundred third Psalm be read at the services.

Our sister loved and lived for the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, and her faithfulness to the cause will long be remembered by her kindred in Christ whose privilege it was to have known her. Written by her pastor.

(Elder) R. LESTER DODSON

It becomes my painful duty to write the obituary of one very dear to me, whose departure has been a great cross to those who love the cause of truth in the church, and to his children and his dear wife.

Our brother, CHARLEY TURNER, departed this life Aug. 23, 1945, aged 79 years, 2 months and 22 days. Interment was in Town Creek Cemetery. He married Miss Bettie A. Prillaman nearly fifty years ago and to this union four boys were born. Edgar of Dublin, Walter, John and Conrad of Sydnorsville. He lived to see all of them in happy homes except Conrad who is still with his mother. C. M. Turner was a man who was loved by all who knew him. For a number of years he was supervisor for Franklin County. He united with the church at old Town Creek on Saturday Aug. 1, 1894, and was baptized the following Sunday with his wife by Elder A. B. Philpot. He was a useful member until his death, serving as deacon for many years. He always filled his place, was good to his pastor and looked after his welfare. He saw that all visiting preachers were taken care of, he and his dear wife making a home for them.

He was very good and kind to his afflicted wife and never tired of giving her the best of attention. How she and the children will miss him, but he has paid the debt we all owe and has gone home where there are no more trials and where night is unknown, waiting to meet the redeemed loved ones on the morning of the resurrection, I was shocked to get the call to preach his funeral with Elders Randolph Perdue and George F. Dyer.

May the good Lord add his blessing to his dear wife and children. I hope his boys will never forget the doctrine their father loved so much, and that some sweet day they will meet and be complete. Written by a friend of the family.

(Elder) P. H. JOHNSON

Mrs. BETTIE PURVIS ROBERSON, wife of A. S. Roberson of Robersonville, N. C., died at her home on Railroad St., Saturday, Oct. 26, 1946. In ill health for several years, Mrs. Roberson was confined to her home and bed much of the time. Her condition became critical with a heart attack and cerebral hemorrhage on Sept. 10 and her death at the age of 74 was expected by the immediate family, her nurse and physician.

Mrs. Roberson daughter of the late James Calvin and Nancy Johnson Purvis, was born on her father's farm near Hassells, Nov. 5, 1872. She was married to A. S. Roberson, Jan. 11, 1893, and spent the greater part of her life in her home in said town. She was a devoted wife and mother and spent most of her time attending the obligations and duties to her home, husband and children whom she loved so dearly for 54 years.

Funeral services were conducted at her home on Monday afternoon at 3 o'colck by Mr. J. M. Perry, Christian Minister of Robersonville and Elder J. E. Mewborn, Primitive Baptist Minister of Snow Hill. Burial was in the family plot in the Robersonville Cemetery. The services were opened by Mr. Perry and immediately followed by a song, "Rock of Ages," by Mrs. Pattie James. Mr. Perry made a beautiful talk and his prayer invoking the blessings of God upon the bereaved husband and children, were especially inspiring. Elder Mewborn following Mr. Perry spoke beautifully concerning the provisions God had made for the salvation of man, and in asking the blessings of God upon the bereaved family. He also spoke of the first gospel sermon he ever heard understandingly which was preached by Elder George D. Roberson—brother of A. S. Roberson—44 years ago. Before closing by Elder Mewborn, Mrs. Pattie James again sang a song, "Have done my work."

Mrs. Roberson was possessed of a beautiful character and a lovely disposition, and the beautiful floral offerings showed the high esteem in which she was held by her many friends everywhere she was known.

Surviving are her husband, two daughters, Mrs. E. G. Anderson, and Miss Emily Roberson of Robersonville; three sons, T. L. Roberson of Newport News, Va., E. Ralph Roberson of Camden, Tenn., and A. S. Roberson, Jr., of the farm near Hassells. Pall bearers were George Barden, Jr., of Plymouth, Irving Smith, Claude Smith, Dennis Roberson, E. B. Anderson and Clayton Davenport, all of Robersonville.

ALVY JUDSON PARKE was born at Pullman, Wash., May 23, 1888, and died Oct. 12. 1946. He was the son of Robert Judson and Angie Tuttle Parke. He was united in marriage to Miss Effie Attebery, Nov. 14, 1906. This union was blessed with four children, two of them having died in infancy in 1910.

Jay, as we called him, was not a member of the visible church, but I do not know a Baptist who would not have given him the hand of fellowship. While he was never baptized with water we feel to know he had received the baptism of the Spirit. He was not one to express himself often on things of his own mind, but had said to me at one time, "Some talk so wonderfully of a good hope, and all I can do is to say I hope I have a hope." At another time he asked me on the way home from meeting, "Why don't I go into the church, I love them all and they all seem to love me." I could only answer, "God alone knows." Now I am made to fear I did not give him the encouragement he was seeking.

There was no member of our church here that was more faithful in attendance than he was, or that gave more freely of himself and time than he. His home was, by his own expressed wish, always open to God's people. Only in our flesh do we mourn him for we feel he has been taken from suffering and sorrow. I have been so wonderfully blessed with a sure knowledge that all is well with him spiritually since he has fallen asleep.

It is hard to give up one who we love both naturally and spiritually. Such was our happy lot for forty years. We loved the same hymns, enjoyed the same sermons and saw all doctrinal points alike. I realize what I have lost, but am thankful to the great God that I am the one to suffer this awful heart break, and that my dear one escaped it. I can, through the grace of God, sometimes approach his throne and beg for strength to endure what is his divine will for me my remaining stay on earth. He left to mourn three brothers and six sisters, his wife, one daughter, Angie Parke, one son Eldon Parke, his daughter-in-law, Elsie Parke, one granddaughter, Evelyn Parke, one grandson, Arthur Parke. They all loved him much.

Elder Coleman of Riffe, Wash., Elder Hughett of Naches, Wash., and brother Cameron of Seattle, Wash. conducted the funeral services. May God in mercy give us to see his divine hand in our affliction and bless it to our good and his own great glory. Written by his wife.

(Mrs.) EFFIE PARKE

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 115 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JUNE, 1947 No. 6

"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I John 3:14

Though change in me I can't recall,
And it I so desire;
This should not frighten me at all
Or sink me in the mire.

With most brethren a change they know,
And some can name the date;
And I would do the same, but lo!
I can't thus truly state.

This sometimes makes me sorely doubt
That I've been born again;
And Satan tries my soul to rout,
And drive to Sodom's blain.

But when I think I this do know
From death to life I've passed;
The scripture plainly teaches so,
So out I'll ne'er be cast.

For though my memory can't recall
I otherwise believed,
This surely is no proof at all
That I have been deceived.

Since John, the Baptist, ere his birth
Believed the very same;
And realized the Savior's worth
Before he heard his name.

And those who do the brethren love
Know life's to them been given;
And when the Lord comes from above
They'll have a home in heaven.

Thus armed I will the devil face,
And all my doubts and fears;
For God will save me by his grace,
And wipe away my tears.

Dedicated to my good friend and precious brother Elder W. A. Speer, and all others who have no recollection of ever believing any doctrine except salvation by grace and grace alone.

C. B. BRITT

Route 1, Box 142, El Dorado, Ark.

CORRESPONDENCE

Greenboro, N. C.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: A few nights ago I dreamed of seeing you and telling you why I had not written you before. It seemed good to meet you since we are agreed that "Man's goings are of the Lord." Prov. 20:24. I appreciate your kindness in asking me to write for the *Signs* and I hope I am thankful to Almighty God that he has given me to know that without him I can do nothing either to the glory of God or the spiritual benefit of others, but through the ability which he giveth; that in him all our strength lieth and from him all our help must come. I do not feel I have anything of my own but am absolutely dependent upon him for everything. Yet I can say with Job, "He performeth the thing that is appointed for me." Man often acts as if he was the master of his own ways, as if his goings were of himself, but God said by the prophet, "I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Yet man is not moved as a machine, unconscious of the operation and results, but is led by wisdom that cannot fail or fall short of God's purpose. He is drawn, not driven. He is moved effectually and willingly in the day of God's power. My people shall be a willing people.

His going is of the Lord who inspires the effort and secures the success. Then we can sing "Grace has led me safe thus far and grace will lead me home." God's

people are justified by faith. Faith to believe there is nothing too hard for him; faith to believe that he will withhold no good thing from us. Obedience is not a thing which we render unto him, but that which we receive of him; not which we give to him but that which he gives to us by his free mercy and by the merits of his Son. We are not able to repent aright or turn effectively unto the Lord by our own might or strength. Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him," so our going is of the Lord. We are all unclean but we are not able to cleanse ourselves, nor to make one another clean. We are all by nature children of God's wrath, but we are not able to make ourselves children of God. We are sheep that have gone astray, but we cannot of our own power come again to the sheepfold. We may plan but we have no power to bring it to pass except it is given to us from above. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

Afflictions and troubles are in the hands of God and not of Satan except so far as God puts them into his hands. The first chapter of Job proves this. Those who love and trust God would not have it otherwise. Job rejoiced that it was so. Never once did he credit the devil with his afflictions, it was the testimony of his lips that the Lord gave and the Lord took away; that the same God who gave good to man also gave evil to him. These were part of his ways that the Lord was but performing the things which he had appointed for him. Job's friends said these things were the product of his sins and proceeded from the devil, but Job said it was the Lord.

Brother Dodson I hope God may continue to teach you your goings are of the Lord; that you may continue to speak the language of Old School Baptists. To me the *Signs* is worthy of our support and I hope it may continue to be useful and of comfort to Zion. I do not feel God has blessed my labors but has rather blessed me to labor in his vineyard. God must bless you before you can serve him in any service, let it be preaching, hearing or praying. A man can receive nothing except it be given him from above. Everything is in God's hands and I am sure every one that loves and fears God is glad it is so. Come to see us at home or church. I feel we would be glad to have you. Yours in hope.

(Elder) G. W. HILL

(We sincerely thank brother Hill for his lovely letter and hope he will write again soon. R. L. D.)

Riffe, Lewis Co., Wash.

THE READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES,
DEAR BRETHREN SISTERS AND FRIENDS:

I desire to write something about *paradise* as it is referred to in three different places in the Bible. First in Luke 23:43, second, 2 Cor. 12-4, third, Rev. 2:7. I wish to say that those who have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus, and have been freed from the death that was caused by the disobedience of Adam, enjoy the paradise referred to by Jesus in Luke 23:43. The man was condemned by the law to die, but called to Jesus and said, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." There seemed to be a great change in the man who just before this had said to the other man that the sentence of death had been passed upon him, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we received the due reward of our deeds." He said it was just that they should die, but he, through the teaching of the Spirit, seemed to know that Jesus was the Christ, and said to him. "Lord, remem-

ber me when thou comest into thy kingdom." He knew that Christ would come into his kingdom. That kingdom to my mind has reference to Jesus walking in the midst of his people after they had been begotten unto a lively hope, and when Jesus died that same day the atonement was made, and the thief who was justly condemned under the law is now set free by the atonement. This condemned man was no more under the sentence of death but was free born. Born of the Spirit, set free. I am told that when a man is condemned to die and is pardoned, set free from the sentence of the court he is very happy. Only those who have had the experience know how to appreciate such deliverance. Instead of the condemned man being led to death he was led into everlasting life which is a paradise to him.

I was at church on the third Sunday of this month, that being our regular meeting time. All that morning I felt sad, nothing on my mind to tell my audience, but when the time came to commence the meeting a song was sung. By this time I felt like talking and brethren and sisters my cup ran over. It was a paradise to me to feel like God was in our little meeting and caused us to sit together in a heavenly place, a place that seemed to be as good as ever I was at.

In the narrative in 2 Corinthians the apostle Paul said. "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago,***** such an one caught up to the third heaven." Paul could not tell whether the man was in the body or not, but he said God knew. The man was caught up into paradise. To my mind he was talking with God and asking Jesus what he would have him to do. "And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." The men that Saul had with him could not speak but they, hearing the voice, seemed to know something great had happened to Saul. We read of the man caught up to the third heaven. He must have been dead in trespasses and sin and was raised out of the bottomless pit, or as David said, out of the lowest hell. Saul was so low he despised those that believed in Jesus, and had letters he obtained from the chief priest which gave Saul the right to go even to strange cities and arrest those he found calling on the name of the Lord. When he saw the light at noonday that was brighter than the sun he was raised up above the law into the third heaven. This was a sacred place. A place he had never been before and to my mind was the reason Paul could say, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

I would like now to refer to the mystery of the seven stars that were in God's right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. God was in the midst of the candlesticks and held the stars in his right hand. To my mind wherever Jesus is that place is a paradise to God's dear redeemed family as Christ is their life and has all power in heaven and in earth. Then why should we fear? Jesus said, "Fear not, little flock."

I want to say God bless you to all the readers of the *Signs*. We were very glad to have Elder Charles W. Vaughn with us. We were not afraid he would preach a false doctrine, and hope he will come again. All such are welcome to visit the Bethel Old School Baptist Church at Riffe, Lewis Co., Wash. Elder Dodson please correct all mistakes and cast the mantle of charity over my weakness. Do as you like with this. Your brother in hope.

(Elder) ISAAC F. COLEMAN

Continued from May issue
by Elder R. W. Rhodes

Read Isaiah 5:20 which to my mind explains the condition of the foolish or unwise. "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" This shows the same class that is set forth in the parable as the foolish. Read the next verse in Isaiah which is as follows, "Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight;" It is bad enough to be in darkness and be aware of that darkness, but it is most certainly almost beyond description to mention being in darkness and to think that darkness is light, so we can see that everything that the foolish do will be done in darkness, and they will think all the time that they are in the light. What good will it do them to trim their lamps? What they trim off will to them seem evil and unrighteous, but they are in no shape to discern that which is well pleasing to God.

Dear brethren and sisters, that is what the false professors have always done, they have been trimming off all the good doctrine, order and practice all the way down through the gospel age; they will not endure sound doctrine, they trim it off from their midst, they get rid of it every opportunity, and they, as Paul, think they are doing God service in trimming off those sacred things of the real and true teachings of our Lord. It says in another place, "If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Paul says in 1 Thes. 5:5-9 some very interesting things on this subject, among them, "Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." Paul is here admonishing the children of God that those who are in darkness are not in a position of light as they are, so the foolish and unwise virgins are in this class. Some of our brethren take the position that they are all the children of God, but there is no argument in favor of this position. This is very evident to my mind because none but those who are wise were ready when the bridegroom came, and none but those who are wise and took oil went in unto the marriage, and when they went in the door was shut. Do we think any of the real children of God will be shut out of that kingdom? I know we do not, and I do not think any of our people do either, regardless of their views on this parable.

Now we want to treat on the position of God's children or those who took oil in their lamps, and how different their position is to that of the unwise or foolish. The true church in order in a militant sense have oil in their lamps and they have the guidance of God's Holy Spirit; they are taught by the blessed Savior what to trim or cut off from their midst and also what to teach and keep and practice. Jesus taught them in Matt. 18:8-11 how to trim. He said, "If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off," in other words, no matter how necessary seemingly any member or person was if it offends the doctrine, order, practice or discipline, cut if off. Remember he is admonishing and teaching those who have the oil in their lamps, whose light is not going out, but whose light is trimmed often because it is necessary. It is some of those good works which God before ordained that they should walk in, and it is the same thing that is taught in Phil. 2:13 where God works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. So they have been trimming all the time along through the gospel age, and they are still trimming some here and there on this subject and on that in this section or the other. It should be remembered though that they have the light to see how to trim and what to trim off.

Now we want to see what has been trimmed off, in other words what has the church excluded from its fellowship? What doctrines have been opposed by the church from the days of our Lord and his apostles? There was trouble and divisions even in the apostle's days as is evidenced in the Corinthians and Galatians and many other places. Paul said in 2 Thes. 2:7-8 in part, "The mystery of iniquity doth already work," so you can see that there was trimming to do even in the apostle's day. Not only so but they did this trimming as is evidenced in the New Testament. In the first century after Christ there was a major trimming when the Catholic wing sprang up. In the midst of most severe and bloody persecution this trimming was done, and the ones who were cut off from the true and genuine church became dominant over the entire known world, but that made no difference they were trimmed off so far as the true church was concerned, and they are still off, and the more they trim off their lamps the less they shine and the blacker they get. It is quite different with the ones who have oil and who have light, the more filth they trim off the brighter their lamps will shine.

There have been lots of other trimmings done that I do not have time or space to mention here, but in the last one hundred and twenty-five years there have been five major trimmings. The doctrine and commandments of such men as Alexander Campbell, Andrew Fuller, the doctrine of the Seventh Day Adventist, the Free Will Baptist, the doctrine of the Kirklins and different shades and grades have been trimmed off. In fact there has been trimming by the true church, and also by the false professor as well. One has been trimming according to the light of God's grace and the Holy Spirit, the other has been trimming off the dry old wick that has never had the oil of God's grace, and those who are doing the trimming have been doing so in that terrible and dismal night and the darkness of total depravity, and in that condition the only ones they really wanted to get rid of were those who were adherents to the true doctrine, practice, discipline and order, their reason for wanting to do this is because there is no light in them. They are those who are spoken of by the prophet where he said by the spirit of God, "Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow," so in the end that is what is to become of the professor who has no oil or grace of God in his soul.

Now when the time of our Lord's coming arrives there is a description of a terrible condition here that I feel should stir us to think, if the Lord wills. It is said, as I have quoted, that while the Bridegroom tarried both the wise and foolish slumbered and slept, seemingly all asleep, seemingly all in darkness as to this subject. It seems to me that is literally so at this time, there seems to be nothing in the way of true alertness on this subject, neither are we to be surprised at this because that is the way this great Teacher and Savior said it would be. The Scriptures cannot be broken as he said when he was here, then we are not surprised at it. But does this satisfy those dear little children of God who are awakened to this great subject? No I can speak for myself, if indeed I am one of his little ones, we know that it is said that he shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation to them who look for him. Do you look for him? Are we looking for him? We may feel in our hearts that the second coming of Christ is true

and that he will come sometime, but we are not looking for him as we will be when that cry goes forth at midnight as in the sixth verse, then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. I feel there will really be more trimming done then than ever before, but the only trimming that will count or be worth anything will be that of the ones who have oil in their lamps, and that are called the wise in the parable. Their trimming will be made, in my opinion, perfect in that hour, and the trimming of those who are foolish and have no oil in that hour will not be effective in anything except that their lamps will go completely and suddenly out, and they will be made very conscious of it, so much so that they will go to the wise, to those who have oil, and ask for their oil and will confess that their lamps are gone out. It will be the first time in the gospel dispensation that the entire lights of false professors has ever gone out completely, and particularly so much so that he is made to confess it and ask for oil of the wise. But the wise have light and they go on and on to meet the Bridegroom and they will meet him, and they will go in unto the marriage of the Lamb, and it will be the climax of the hopes of the true church of Jesus Christ when her Husband comes again without sin unto salvation. By the light of God's matchless grace she, the true church, walks through this world of darkness and sorrow too and does meet the Bridegroom; and those who are in darkness, and who did not have the oil of God's grace are not ready and they do not go in. They try to do this just like the Egyptians tried to cross the Red Sea as the children of Israel did, but they failed and were drowned; so the false church will fail, her light will go out at the time that the true church is made to shine with that brightness and splendor of the glory of the coming of her Savior. (To be continued)

4632 Santa Monica, Blvd.,
Hollywood-27., Cal.

MY DEAR ELDER DODSON: May I take enough of your time to say that I read of the departure of Elder Ker and I felt sad for I had missed his writings in the *Signs*. While I never met him, that is I never saw his face in the flesh, I can and do think of him as one who was made fit for the inheritance of the saints in light, and not only so but he was brought to the fellowship of the mystery and was by grace enabled under the ministration of the Spirit to get himself a good degree, and now he has finished his course and is received, we hope and believe, by him who doeth all things well in that land that seems so far off, while we are left weeping on the shore to which he shall return no more. The apostle does not say we shall not weep, but that we sorrow not as those who have no hope. While hope we think is a compound word made up of desire and expectation it is a good hope, a hope not seen, yet associated with a God given faith, and embellished by that charity that never fails. "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." While there is a diversity of gifts, they are set in the church by that God who is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and may come to us through Jesus the one and only mediator between God and man. The gifts come from him for our good here in time. The graces of the spirit represent the attributes of God who is the same yesterday, to day and forever, and declares he will not give his glory to another.

I fear I will darken counsel by multiplying words without knowledge, so I will venture to say consider what I say and may the Lord give you understanding in all things. I am not writing to criticize harshly any brother here or there. Sometimes I think I would like to tear down some things if I knew how

to build up better things. Logically it seems plausible to me that, in a sense, anything to be made better must be good. I cannot write these things as I would like to, though I thus write. It is evident I am not a finished English scholar, and do not care, if I know my own heart, to speak or write anything to deceive or sow discord among the brethren. I sometimes wonder if in a measure I can apply Paul's statement to myself when he said, "Though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved." Again, I deserve not the least of his benefits. I think David in acknowledging that he did not deserve the least of his (the Lord's) benefits could not boast by efforts of his own that he produced the greatest benefit or gift, though he did entreat the Lord to establish the work of his hands. The same sweet singer says, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake." In another place David declares, "For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory." So I say I desire for you that which I desire for myself—grace, sufficient grace to enable me to serve him here acceptably, and to testify of the sufficiency of his grace and finish my course with joy. Should we never meet in this life, I hope through rich and reigning grace to meet you in the life to come, and say in sincerity if I am what I hope I am,

"There shall we forever be
Gazing on the Diety;
There shall we the Lamb adore,
There shall we all part no more."

You see what a letter I have written. I am conscious of the weakness and other infirmities of the flesh. The spirit is ready and willing, but the flesh is weak. On the calendar as men mark time I have passed in my earthly pilgrimage my seventy-third milestone. My eye sight is dim and with the patriarch, Jacob, in the court of Pharaoh I must say, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been." In conclusion I would like to say to younger pilgrims as I write, "Let him that is taking off the harness boast, and not him that is putting it on."

Forgive the length of this letter and anything else amiss, and let me thank you for the forbearance and love shown by you and the brethren. Not that we loved God, but he loved us and sent his Son into the world to be a propitiation (complete satisfaction) for our sins. Paul in writing to the church at Jerusalem declared, "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified," and Jude (not Iscariot) declared that those to whom he addressed his brief epistle "are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." Now I seem to see the verbosity of an old man. Forgive this also for I am sure Jude embraced and delighted in Paul's brand of doctrine also, and did not question for a moment the statement that he (Jesus) "hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the world began." That is so plain that he who runs may read, but I seem to be unable to express myself as I desire. The half has never been told and the best seems unutterable and inexpressible by any language written by pen of man. We are assured that our apostle did not preach one doctrine by word of mouth and write another in his epistles. Hence he declared that although the Corinthians admitted his letters were weighty he would know not their speech, and he seems to me to reach a climax, and although he rebuked them he did not teach otherwise when he said, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift," so I need not take time to make you think I can express what he declares is unspeakable

and inexpressible. In the best of bonds, the bonds of that charity or dying love that never fails, I am I hope your brother in the common faith.

(Elder) T. D. WALKER

Route 1, Rocky Mount, N. C.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Enclosed find money-order for $2 to pay on my subscription for the *Signs*.

For some time my mind has been on the scripture that treats on forgiveness. I understand there is only one unpardonable or unforgivable sin, and that is to sin against the Holy Ghost which is blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. On one occasion Jesus was asked "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven." I have known of a few cases where the officers in a church have excluded a member, and one made a motion that this excluded person could never be restored to the fellowship of the church. I do not think that is according to church discipline. I think this is manifesting a bad spirit for "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." That shows that we are all sinners and that we all do wrong, think wrong, speak wrong and foolish things, and have vain imaginations. It seems strange to me one cannot forgive another when he is a sinner in like manner to the one he cannot forgive. Jesus taught that we should forgive, and if we cannot forgive one another neither will our heavenly Father forgive us.

I hope the dear Lord will keep me humble and at the feet of my brethren. If I know my heart I want to live circumspectly before men that my life may be an example to the world, that they may see the manifestation of the power of God in me, and not only in me but in all his humble servants. I would love to see the ministry unified, but instead they seem to have notions of their own. Some preach the non-resurrection of the dead, some preach the resurrection of the dead. I would like to say here the Scriptures teach that Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Now what is it that sins? Is it the flesh and blood man that sins or is it something else? Brother Dodson I am afraid to write for I do not want to offend any one. May God bless his dear people everywhere. May his love and Spirit rest and abide with his little ones, and may he enable them to forgive me my many sins and may we all forgive one another. A brother I hope in gospel bonds.

(Elder) W. B. BARNES

A SISTER FROM TEXAS

(Last November we published part of a letter from "a sister from Texas" and followed it with some comment of our own on the subject of *charity*. Herewith will be found something else of deep interest from her pen. R. L. D.)

ELD. R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: I have been impressed for some time to write you again. I will do so that I may have ease of mind and rest at night as I keep composing letters to you in my mind. I am enclosing remittance for renewal to my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. It is not due yet but I fear that time may pass by unnoticed and I do not want my subscription to be in arrears. I wish to thank you and the other writers for the *Signs* for the many good articles that have been published during the past year. There are always some articles in every issue that are of especial interest to me. I have read and reread your editorial in the February issue and it has been food to my hungry soul. I have always loved that passage of scripture, and your explanation of it is in accordance with what I believe to be the truth.

I seldom hear the wind blow that I do not think of those words, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Sometimes the wind blows so hard that it will knock you down or sweep you off your feet, as did the Spirit in the case of Paul and many others. They can tell you where they were and what they were doing when they were stricken down, and every word that was spoken to them by the voice of their Master. Then again the gentle breezes are so mild you can hardly feel them, yet it is the same wind and comes from the same source. The Spirit works so gently in some individuals, especially children, that they cannot tell exactly when they first felt it, but after a period of time they realize they are different from their associates and that they love the people of God.

This last thought has been a great comfort to me. I cannot remember when I did not love the Old Baptists and did not believe their doctrine to be the truth. My sister tells me that when a small child I would say, "Wouldn't that be a pretty place to be baptized?" when I saw a beautiful stream of water on the way to some place we were going. I do not remember about it and do not remember seeing a baptismal service until I was nearly grown. She also tells me that when our oldest brother was dying we children were called to his bedside to bid him good-bye. She said that she and the other children were awe-stricken and frightened as that was their first experience with death, but that I, a child of ten years, went to the bedside, kissed my brother and calmly said, "Good-bye Perl, I'll meet you in heaven." I remember his illness and how I loved to wait on him, and that I was not afraid of him when he was dying or after death, but I do not remember anything I said.

I always loved to attend church with my parents, and help sing the sweet old hymns that we always sang at home in the evenings. I enjoyed the Old Baptists when they came to our home and loved to hear them discuss the Scriptures with our parents and others, often sitting and listening to their conversations while other children were playing outside. My schoolmates often asked me to attend their Sunday-schools. I told them "I did not care to," and when they asked me why I did not want to I replied, "They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest," so then they quit asking me to join their Sunday-schools.

At our meetings, when the hand of fellowship was extended a new member or visiting minister, or the parting-hand was taken at the close of an Association I could not keep my seat but went forward and gave them my hand, and how well I remember the first time I did not. It was at the close of an Association that mother and I attended when I was seventeen years old. I was standing with my young friends towards the back of the meeting-house when the parting hand was taken. I started to go forward as usual when a voice spoke to me saying,"You are not fit to shake the hands of those good people." I stopped short and oh how wicked and sinful I saw myself to be! How beautiful were those dear children of God as they sang and took the parting hand! I burst into tears for I felt myself too unworthy to be in their midst and wanted to slip away. I will never forget two "Mothers in Israel" who came and put their arms about me, speaking so kindly to me.

How wretched I felt! I could hardly wait until I got home and by myself. After dark I slipped out of the house and went to the orchard. I knelt down under the little pear tree and poured forth the prayer of the publican. "God be merciful to me a sinner." It seemed that all the sins I had ever committed were weighing me down, and I must have help from above as I could not get rid of them. I received some help but cannot remember the details. I realized that I was a great sinner and that when I wanted to do good evil was present with me and I could not be good like I wanted to be. Sometimes I was bothered worse than others, yet I cannot remember any great joy of deliverance as many do. However, I could hardly bear to sing the hymns of invitation like I used to do. I felt I loved the church but was a wretched sinner too unworthy to ask for a home in their midst, but at the age of nineteen I was made willing to do God's bidding in the day of his power. I shall never forget that Saturday morning of the Association which was held at the church near my sister's home. While at the windmill getting a bucket of water I promised God that if he would only take that awful burden from me I would unite with the church that day. My heart grew lighter but I was still troubled as I was not at home and did not know what to do about it. That noon I went to mother and told her that I wanted to unite with the church but did not like to then as father was not there to baptize me. She told me that did not matter as I could choose some other preacher. She kissed me and told me to go on and unite with the church if I wanted to and that I could get a letter and unite with the church at home whenever I wanted. I was relieved and felt so good during the afternoon that I decided I would put it off until another time, but when the congregation began to sing this verse:

"Must I be carried to the skies,
On flowery beds of ease;
While others fought to win the prize,
And sailed through bloody seas?"

I dropped my hymnal and took one step forward. Before I could realize where I was I was sitting before the church relating my experiences. I do not know what I told them but I was received into the church and was baptized after the close of the Association the next day, Sunday September 18, 1910. I will never forget that day. How heavy my heart felt when I was led down into the water! It was so black and sinful, but when I was raised up out of the water it was so light and free. Those black sins seemed to float down the old Des Moines river. All nature seemed to be singing praises to God and the little band of saints on the bank looked so beautiful to me. Oh, that I could live over those blissful hours I enjoyed for a short season.

"What peaceful hours I then enjoyed,
How sweet their memory still;
But they have left an aching void
The world can never fill."

Brother Dodson, I never meant to tell you all of this but your editorial just brought it out. It is good for us that our pure (spiritual) minds be stirred up occasionally by way of remembrance of God's goodness and mercy towards us. That is why I love to read all of the sweet experiences that are published in the *Signs*. I hope that more of God's children both young and old may be constrained to write them to you so that you may pass them on to the household of faith if you think they are suitable for publication. It is refreshing to our weary souls, in these trying times of strife and confusion, to know and feel

that God is still at the helm, and is still calling his little ones out of darkness into the marvelous light of his love and mercy; and that he will continue to do so until every ransomed soul of God has been born into both the natural and spiritual kingdoms. Then Gabriel will blow his trumpet and time will be no more.

I was privileged to attend two wonderful Associations last fall and I am still feasting on the memories of these wonderful feasts, and my sweet associations with the followers of Christ. To me the meeting that stands out from all of the good services of both Associations was a night meeting held at the home of a blind brother. After a sweet song service, the two beloved ministers who spoke related their Christian experiences and calls to the ministry, their dreams and tribulations they passed through before they were made willing to attempt to speak in public. Many who had known them even before they commenced preaching had never heard them relate so much of their travels. Our poor hearts were filled to overflowing and we knew what the poet felt when he wrote these words:

"How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
When those who love the Lord
In one another's peace delight,
And thus fulfill his word:

When each can feel his brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part;
When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart."

Brother Dodson, I wish to thank you for so graciously complying with my request to write on the subject of charity. I enjoyed your article very much. I liked the way you referred to me as "a sister from Texas," when you published part of my letter. If you ever see fit to publish any more of my writings please omit the address and publish as you did then "a sister from Texas." Those who know will recognize my identity and to the rest of the household of faith I wish only to be remembered as a little sister depending upon the mercies of a kind, heavenly Father for temporal as well as spiritual blessings. I do not care for publicity, nor do I desire any personal correspondence as much as I love the household of faith.

My husband is not of my faith and does not understand the sweet love and fellowship the Primitive Baptists have for each other. He used to attend my church with me but quit going because he could not stand the "hard doctrine." He does not see why I like to go only to my church when there are good people in every church. He has read some of the *Signs of the Times* but does not care for them and does not read them any more. He said that Christ came to save all that believed on him, and that all you needed to do was to accept him as your personal Savior, etc. I once told him some of my dreams and the sweet words my Savior had spoken to me. He was disturbed over it and said I was only imagining things and that in this age people did not have visions, etc. as Paul did. He told me he did not think it good for my mind for me to attend my church very often as he could always see a change in me when I came home, and that if I did not quit reading the Bible and meditating on spiritual things so much I would lose my mind. Therefore, I never discuss religious matters with him any more and we try to maintain a congenial home by talking about things on which we agree. I have charity for him and realize that he is a kind, faithful husband and that his desire is to do what he thinks is best for me. I am not complaining for I know who it is that maketh us to differ, and that if it was His will for us to see alike it would be that way, so neither of us can change

the situation, and I know from whence cometh my help. He does not care if I attend my church some times but at other times he would rather I would not, but oh if he only knew the demands my spiritual husband makes upon me at times he would not object, and could understand why I am sometimes made to leave home against his wishes in order that I might go to church and worship my God in Spirit and in truth. Only those who have had like trials can fully understand how hard that is to do and that it takes the grace of God to enable me to do it, and oh the anguish of the Spirit and the earnest prayers that are offered up to God that I may be permitted to go to worship in peace! I have received so many chastisements in (not because of) my disobedience in the past that the fear of my Lord is greater than the fear of my husband, and when God works in me *both* to *will* and to *do* of his own good pleasure I am made willing to go to my worship regardless of the consequences.

It is usually at such times that I receive the greatest of blessings in obedience, and have been made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and from a high hill view the beauties of that heavenly kingdom; but the valleys between these high hills are so deep that the sunshine is often obscured by the dark shadows, and I am made to cry out, "who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I will admit that I have been very rebellious because of my cross, and have shed many tears in the past because I could not have a Baptist home like those of my parents, two of my brothers, my precious sister and friends, but I have become more reconciled to God's will in the last few years for I realize that God knows what is best for me, and that the things that are best for me are not always the things that I like. He knows my sinful nature, my pride and my vanity, and knows what it takes to correct it. He knows how critical I used to be because some of those with a similar cross did not attend every church service. I thought they could go like I did if they wanted to. But oh how little I knew of the sorrows of others who were not blessed as I was with a Baptist home. Now I can have true sympathy for all those who have like trials. It takes experience to teach us tolerance and kindness and to make us bow our heads and say, "Not my will, but thine, be done."

"When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace, all-sufficient, shall be thy supply;
The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine."

I do not forget that it was through my husband that I was brought from my old home, and placed in the midst of so many Regular Predestinarian Baptist churches as it was his desire to settle in this part of Texas. My brethren and sisters are so charitable to me in spite of my many shortcomings. "I was a stranger, and ye took me in." They understand existing conditions and love to have me with them whenever I can attend church, and take me with them to the Associations all of which I appreciate so very much. Oh, that we could always think of that great love mingled with mercy, that our heavenly Father had for us poor and undone sinners to send his only begotten Son down to earth in order to fulfill his just and righteous law, and to ransom his lost children from under the curse of the law so that they might be with him in glory. If we could, we would be more careful how we treat his dear children, and not quibble and quarrel over things we do not understand unless God gives us the heart to understand; and not give ourselves over to envy, back-biting, strife and other things

of the flesh that mar the peace of those dear children of God. Christ said, "My peace I give unto you." Then who of us has the right to destroy it? Should not our experiences and trials here below teach us forbearance, tolerance and mercy toward others? God has given us the example of what real charity is and our Savior has told us, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Then ought not we to forget all our petty differences and have love and charity for each other? It is when we are brought down at each others feet by the grace of God, and realize our own weak, sinful natures, and that of ourselves (in the flesh) all we can do or say is but vanity and vexation of the Spirit that we forget our differences. Then the flaws and peculiarities and faults we once saw (through the flesh) in our brethren seem to melt away. We are then made to feel that we are one big family, adopted children of our heavenly Father whose banner over us is *love.* It is then we can truly say, "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

"When free from envy, scorn and pride,
Our wishes all above,
Each can his brother's failings hide,
And show a brother's love.

When love in one delightful stream,
Through every bosom flows,
And union sweet, and dear esteem,
In every action glows!

Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

Your humble "sister from Texas" in hope of a better world beyond this vale of tears.

1701 Randolph Ave., Greensboro, N. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Enclosed you will find check to renew two subscriptions and the balance you can use as you think best.

I hope I have a true desire to be thankful for the many blessings bestowed upon this sinner while in England in meeting and visiting among the dear people of God in that country. I am sending you a letter written by Mr. A. D. Alston whose address is now 604 Cawson St., Hopewell, Va. which you might like to publish. It contains what I hope I have also been made to believe and love. Your unworthy friend with love.

BURCH C. WRAY

DEAR SGT. WRAY: About the last words you spoke to me were, "Write me if you have a mind to." These words have remained fresh in my mind and I have had a desire to write, but have been waiting, hoping He might come and soften my hard heart and give me something worth while to say. Indeed I write in vain unless He guides my pen. It does seem that my thoughts have been barren since the week end I was in London, and the occasions I had to see you and many others whom I hope I love in the Spirit.

To-day at Gower St., Mr. Carr was scheduled to preach, and I think Mr. Simm said it was a special meeting of some kind. I would love to attend but since I have been away so much lately I did not even request leave. Mrs. Wallis sent me papers in which were writings from your mind and from Waylon Chandler. I can truthfully say that I enjoyed reading your articles and also other articles in the publications. I think I understand your experience described "A few times as I have sat here by my bunk writing I have been lifted up so in my feelings that I did not even realize that other boys were around me,

neither did I care, although they do not understand when they sometimes see tears of joy rolling down my cheeks." These are the experiences we love and treasure—the ones that give us faith to know that he is God and beside him there is none other. These are the experiences that carry us through the valleys when it seems that he has left us to the devil. The experiences that give us faith to trust and feel that he will come again to lift us up, faith to make us hope that he will never forsake us. You also said, "Most of my time I feel that it is all just my imagination and not the work of Christ in me." That speaks of the conflict between your carnal self and the Spirit of God in you. Read Romans 7th chapter, especially verses 14-25. Possibly you are already entirely familiar with these verses. How many times I have been made to cry, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing*****For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." There is no doubt of the realness of His face when he is present, when the tears roll down the cheeks. "It is the Spirit that beareth witness." 1 John 5:6. What God has revealed in the Word and what the blessed Spirit has revealed out of it to our hearts is inwardly known and felt to be true and no lie. Although when he withdraws from us we doubt and fear, we do have faith to feel that he will come again. That is what I have been trying to believe for the past weeks —that he will come again. You also said in speaking of Waylon, "He feels that there is something over there for him to receive or witness." Then I thought of what you told me of him and three or four others crawling forward and a shell took them on all sides but was unable to touch him. The almighty, sovereign will of God! Nothing can stay his hand, nothing can alter his purpose. There is no one to ask the reason why! If I glory in one thing more than another it must be the sovereignty of God. I love the hymns that speak of it, I rejoice in the scriptures that proclaim it. The same day, Dec. 31, 1944, that I was with you I was given to see and glory in it. I had gone down the Saturday before.

I had long had a desire to meet and hear Mr. Gosden speak. I had read his articles in the Gospel Standard. He preaches at Maidstone, beyond London 35 miles or so. I would hardly ever have business beyond London. Mr. Gosden hardly ever came over on this side of London. I thought and wondered if I could stretch a point and go on down to Maidstone and meet him. Was it right? Was it justified? There was a big question in my mind. I asked if it could be His will that I be allowed to go, but if it were not right that he would stop me. Anyway the Sunday morning found me up long before light, my driver up, my vehicle out and we were heading out of town toward that destination. We inquired the way of a car of Bobbies. Instead of telling us they said, "follow us." They escorted us all the way out of town and far on to the road. As I rode out of town I was made to think: I get my driver up early when he might have slept late; I could have gone to Gower St. instead; my driver is going but he is not interested; I am burning gas, tires, vehicle being used; I am escorted by another car using gas, tires, with three Bobbies time, etc. and it is all for just one person, me. Is it right? Then I was overwhelmed with the realization of the working of the almighty and sovereign will of God. I felt that my prayer had been answered and the way was being made so very clear. Nothing in this world could stand in the way. Just for me, unworthy as I am? Only as I fulfill a minute part of

his great sovereign will! I am one in his hand, there was a purpose in my going. His purpose, which may never be known to me, what lessons and to whom to be taught is not for me to know or inquire about. My going as a part of his will was made sure and certain, as His will, gas, tires, vehicles, drivers and Bobbies and roads are only instruments in his hand. There is no such thing as shortage or failure or "almost" or question—only surety, certainty and exactness. We went direct and though I had never been there before, we did not miss a single turn, went directly to the home of Mr. Gosden, arrived at exactly the proper time, just as he was ready to put on his hat and coat. Then we took him to direct the way to Priory Chapel. He spoke a very comforting sermon, but I must admit I did not hear all he said. I had promised that I would try to get every word and remember for I desired to hear him, but my plans and purposes were not His purposes. He so filled me on the way down that I could not receive the message of Mr. Gosden, or at least as I wanted to do. I wanted to go, I was to go, I did go, but little did I dream of the message He was to give me. I think you mentioned the hymn, "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform." I think of the second stanza:

> "Deep in unfathomable mines
> Of never-failing skill,
> He treasures up his bright designs,
> And works his sovereign will."

I had no doubt then. I *knew* he was present, I *knew* his hand was guiding my steps, but since, it seems he has withdrawn and my cry is, "Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me." Psalms 51:11. How little we can take at a time, how quickly we are empty again!

Sergeant, I am second in command at this camp which seems a fairly large General Depot with all its personnel so you know I am pretty busy, but between jobs I have thought of you so often. It is an encouragement to find one here and there, so very few in the forces, to whom it has pleased God in all his power and glory to reveal himself, to make to fall broken and bruised, contrite and humbly at his feet, and to fill with the glorious grace and understanding of his truth. May he not allow us to wander from his fold. When necessary may he not spare the rod, may he cast us into the furnace for purification for we would walk in his way and in his will. Thy kingdom come (ours destroyed), thy will be done (ours destroyed). In hope of his guidance.

A. D. ALSTON

Route 1, Warren, Ark.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Enclosed find $5 money-order to pay my subscription for two years and the rest as aid to the *Signs* any way you care to use it. I am sorry I neglected sending it for so long. I enjoy reading the many good letters so much. Thank you very much for your kindness as I have not missed a copy of the *Signs*. May the Lord bless you to keep publishing the *Signs*. An unworthy sister if one at all.

(Mrs.) WILL GAMBILL

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EDITORIAL

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Mal. 3:10

I desire to pen a few thoughts to God's children concerning this portion of scripture. To them it is profitable for a number of things, but it is not profitable to any but children. This writing, yea, all writing, as all preaching or any other exertion, does not nor cannot bring any unregenerate into the kingdom of heaven. It is absolutely an impossibility for a dead thing to act in order to have life.

Not so far from my home is a huge government hospital. It is beyond the comprehension of man to see what they have done for men. Men have had their chins, ears and noses shot away and these surgeons have built them new ones, but one thing has not been tried yet—they have not brought any dead soldiers from the battlefields. No sir, not that. All the dead men they have left behind. Those that had life about them they have done something for. The dead? well they are still dead. Not any of the dead have come to the hospital begging for aid, nor have the living tried to do a thing for the dead. Is a dead man spiritually more lifeless than a dead man physically? Some of you young people that have been led off by the fast passing, fast perishing world, that stand up to your parents and have the audacity to ridicule the Baptist doctrine need to ponder this question. No matter what this man, dead in sin, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind may do, he cannot please God. "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." Rom. 8:8. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." Jer. 13:23. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." 1 Cor. 2:14.

God's family is all born into the family or kingdom of heaven. This is the only way in. Jesus gave the rule—he alone could give an exception—but he did not. It is people that are born the first time, it is people that are born the second time. They are born the first time without any pre-birth performance. The child had nothing, absolutely and unconditionally nothing to do with its conception, embryogeny, or deliverance, nor the time, place, parents, associates or environment. This same being that came into the natural life in this helpless condition must be born again. The "again" birth is not only the same person, but it is exactly like the first except that the first is a natural, fleshly birth, the second a spiritual.

Our text is to the people of God. The Old and the New Testaments are in perfect harmony. God is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. I feel sure that he created everything and that it is all naked before him. Futhermore all his works are known unto him. He knows as much now as he did at the dawn of creation; he knows as much now as he will ever know. Surely he would not

move Malachi to preach and write a do-and-live doctrine and then send Christ into the world to nullify it. No sir, not that, but this language is addressed to the living, to those born again, to those led of the Spirit. To those led of the Spirit there is a witness-bearing by the Spirit. This leading and witness-bearing is not from the man to God. It is not that the man leads God. It is not that God gets confused and in trouble and the man comes and cheers him up. It is not that the man tells God that he is God and what he ought to do to prove it. No, not that, but it is the Spirit that bears witness to our spirits, consoles us, meets all our trials, combats all our enemies, gives us our commands and points out the way for us to go. Now another thing, this is a command, it is not an invitation. May God keep me from stumbling into the mistake of preaching that there are invitations in the gospel. Look at it again child! "Bring ye all the tithes." This nation, under the law, was robbing God. They could not keep it and in tithes and offerings they were falling far short, but in Jesus Christ they are to regain all they had lost. These tithes are to be brought by the household of faith to the storehouse that there may be meat in my house. To my mind the children of God are fulfilling the law in the person of Jesus Christ. Paying tithes is something more than putting ten cents out of every dollar into the Lord's treasury. Yet, if they paid them under the law I must believe that it has its counterpart under grace. Under the law it was a natural thing, (just like the world has now) but under grace it is a spiritual thing. (May I say like the Old Baptists preach it now.) The general run of people let the preacher do all the reading. He tells them about tithing because he is too lazy to work for a living and they only know the part he wants them to know. It was the rule, if the distance to the place of tithing was too great, to sell what you were supposed to give and to buy wine, strong drink or anything else that your soul desired. (See Deut. 14.) The modern theologian stresses giving the money, but brings down all heavenly fire and brimstone on you if you drink any wine. This should forever be evidence that their doctrine concerning tithes is at best spurious.

These tithes that God's children are to give was not, under the law, money. It was a tenth of corn, cattle, etc. They were offerings that were due from them to God. Let no one think that God's children do not have an offering to bring now. The children under the law paid them or brought them and so it is under grace. Every gift of the graces of God's Spirit are brought to the storehouse. They do not fail to do this as some may think, but each and every one of them are robbers under the law. Every one that tries or that thinks you must try is a robber. How wonderful the grace of God! How it does teach and how it does hide! Sometimes it does look like people could see. It is those that climb in that are thieves. It takes a lot of effort to climb. See how ignorant the world is. They are trying to be thieves. They do not want to be honest and go in at the door (Christ), but they want to be robbers and thieves. God's little children that he has brought away from the law do not bring the perishing things of their hands, but they bring for an offering the one perfect lamb of the fold. I do not care what gift a child of God may have his only plea is Christ and him crucified. His heart may be wrought upon to preach or to pray, or to sing or any other of the official duties that the Spirit calls, qualifies, and causes to abide in, but that Israelite, when he comes to the storehouse, will not be so

big that he feels his importance, but he will bring and plead and lean upon that perfect offering as he comes. Do you think this is conditional? Now go back to what we said about the first birth. It was an earthly, fleshly birth. Yes, but this "again" birth is like unto it except that it is spiritual. Do you know how helpless a babe is? Do you know how much faith it has in its mother? If we are children we are babes, we are helpless to look out for ourselves, but wisdom, our spiritual mother, looks out for us. It is in her that we have our conception, embryogeny, deliverance and everything else needed. She speaks to us as our mother and she has us trained that we listen. God's dear children are all brought to the place to quit paying money for tithes; to quit climbing the ladder of impossibility; to praise God for the supreme gift of Christ as our sin bearer.

No sinner's plea has ever been spurned. The bringing of kids, bullocks, gold and other law sacrifices God spurned and still does, although it is the popular doctrine and has permeated every nook and corner of the globe, been promulgated by the rich and poor, bond and free, black and white; has been received and subscribed to by all human organizations; has even gained a foothold in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, yet it does not have any mutuality and fellowship from God, nor with God, but to the sinners that he has called and commanded to come, they do come. If they have had rich gleanings in the field of Boaz they bring it to the storehouse, the church. This is the place of meat. It is meat, not only to Christ, but to his brethren to do the will of the Father. It is your Father's will that you go to him and that you come empty handed as far as you are concerned, but that your sufficiency is Christ. This world may have her upheavals of every kind; men may fail to do what they promise; governments may rise and fall and political parties come and go, but none of this changes our God. The command is still ringing into the ears of every quickened sinner to bring your tithes to my house. They all bring the same thing, Christ Jesus the Lord. Each of them feasts on the same meat, the broken, bruised body of Jesus. Not a single promise has been broken by the gracious God; not a reprimand from him for failure to bring more or better; not once has the least, most insignificant sinner failed to find proof of his loving kindness and tender mercy towards him. The windows of heaven are opened, a glorious vision is given of the abundance of God's love. As the glorious law with the Jewish nation passes away and we are left, (Ezek. 9:8) we see too much for a law-loving, holier than thou, Christ-crucifying Jew to receive, and God's more glorious dispensation of grace is displayed to us as taking in the Gentile world, as reaching the little sister without any breasts.

I hope I have written the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. I hope sister Cameron, her children and the household of faith are given gracious understanding to know that Jesus is our all and in all.

W. D. G.

"And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Rev. 22:1-2.

Our views have been requested regarding the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and we have quoted the first two verses of the twenty-second chapter of this wonderful and mysterious book called Revelation as a background for our remarks. In the first

verse John says "He shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." We wish to emphasize in the very beginning that none of God's servants have ever been able to give a true interpretation of any Scripture except it first be *shewed* to them. This book begins by saying, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass." No man, of himself, therefore, can search out and bring forth these things. The twenty-first chapter of this book contains a description of the heavenly or "holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." Rev. 21:10. Like all cities, a ruler is necessary to direct and supply the needs of living people, and in this new Jerusalem, Jesus is King of kings, and Lord of lords, and in the wisdom of God it had been determined before hand that the water for this city should (1) be pure, (2) clear as crystal and (3) it should proceed out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. The health of a people demands that the water be pure, and since this water was clear as crystal, it could be seen that there were no foreign substances or impurities in it; and in order that there be no failure of any kind whatsoever it proceeded out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. To us, this means that it came forth as the joint work of God the Father and God the Son in making a covenant, before time began, which was ordered in all things, and sure. Not only must the quality of the water be pure, and clear as crystal, but the quantity must be sufficient for all the needs of all His people in all ages of the world, hence the decree that there was to be "a pure *river* of water of life," indicating an abundance, so that no single need of any individual child would ever go unsupplied. David said, "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early." Psalm 46:4-5. The fact that this river of water of life proceeds forth from the throne of God and of the Lamb is an absolute guarantee that the thirst of every inhabitant of Zion will be assuaged. When Christ and him crucified is preached as the only way of salvation from sin, there is no confusion among those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousess, but when something else is preached, the water becomes muddy and confusion or trouble is sure to follow. The wedge of creature works, however cunningly the perpetrator may devise, cannot successfully be hidden indefinitely, and wherever it is found in the camp of Israel there is certain to be trouble, and we may rest assured that God will search Jerusalem as with candles. When we look upon the solemnities of Zion, Isaiah says, "Thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us." This declares plainly to us that salvation by works of righteousness which we can do is utterly impossible, and that nothing wherein the creature, as such, can glory in of himself shall ever enter there. All that pertains to the natural man is altogether unclean in the sight of a just and holy God and no flesh shall ever be able to glory in his presence, save only in the Lord.

In the second verse of the text it says, "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits. and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Before attempting to explain this verse we wish to draw the attention of our readers to the great contrast to this which is found in the third chapter of Genesis. There God is dealing with the natural man, for Adam as he was first created was only a natural man after he had fallen by transgression of God's law from his state of innocence and was able to know good from evil. "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." Gen. 3:22-24. We see from this (which is directly opposite to what men are saying to-day) that God determined that fallen man would under no circumstances be able "to put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever." To prevent every possibility of such a thing, after driving man out of the garden of Eden, God placed a flaming sword, which turned every way, to keep the tree of life. To say that man in his depraved state of nature can lay hold upon eternal life, or the tree of life, is to say the exact opposite of what God's word teaches, and we prefer to "Let God be true, but every man a liar."

Coming over from Genesis to Revelation, where we find God is dealing with the *new creature,* one that has been begotten again unto a lively, or living hope, by being born of the Spirit, we find an entirely different situation. In fact, it is just exactly the reverse of that which pertains to the natural man. Here we have the Spirit and the bride saying, Come. And he that heareth says, Come. And he that is athirst comes. And whosoever wills, or hath the will, is commanded to take the water of life freely. This is the new or heavenly Jerusalem and "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river" is the tree of life. Here the tree of life is all and in all. He is not only in the midst of the street of it, but on both sides of the river is the tree of life. Before Jesus came to actually suffer in the flesh, he was with national Israel under the law, in type and shadow. How very real he was to them in the Legal Dispensation can only be surmised by those who are given to see the beauty and fulness portrayed in some of the types and shadows, but when the fulness of the times had come and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, John says, "we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Since his death and resurrection, and the glory which followed in the establishment of his kingdom here in the world, in this gospel dispensation he is known, by faith, in power and great glory on this side of the river. Zechariah, prophesying of the coming of Christ, and the grace of his kingdom, said, "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be." Zech. 14:8 In other words, only by the virtue of Jesus' atoning blood could any be saved, and by this same virtue there would be salvation for all of the elect of God, not only those who lived before Christ came into

the world but those who should come after him as well. In the Acts of the Apostles we are told that "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Here in this gospel dispensation, we are enjoying, at least in part, the fruits from this tree of life, of which we shall partake to the full in that world which is beyond this vale of tears. This tree of life is said to bare twelve manner of fruits. Our inquirer referred to the quotation as "twelve kinds of fruits" The translators have given us the supplied word *manner* instead of kinds, and we prefer it. We are persuaded that all the fruit borne by the tree of life was good, immensely good and perfect in every sense of the word. There is no such thing as kinds of fruits in the sense that some were good and some were not so good, or bad and imperfect. Under the law there were twelve tribes of the children of Israel, and under the gospel or grace dispensation, there were the twelve apostles, so the gospel is suited to the needs of the children of God, however varied they may be. There is but one Spirit, but there is a great diversity of its operations. Various kinds of gifts were given to the church by her glorious Head, but they were all for the edifying of the body of Christ, which is his church, and for the lifting of the name of Jesus on high. There were no two prophets alike, no two apostles alike, and neither are there two gifts alike to-day, or even two lay members alike, for each one has his own individuality, or peculiar manner of presenting or receiving the truth, but there is only one truth—not many as the world might have us believe. Jesus is both the sum and substance of it all and, therefore, regardless of who the preacher is or what his manner of preaching may be, when Christ and him crucified is preached as the way, the truth, and the life, it will be food to some poor, hungry and famishing soul. There is no such thing as *failure* in the kingdom of God, for he works in his people both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and fruit is yielded every month, or for the entire year. There is no time when the tree of life is barren. In John 15:5 we read where Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." By virtue of the indwelling of the life of the vine in the branch, the branch is made to bring forth fruit. The Lord who spake by the prophet Isaiah saying, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat, yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price," declared by the same prophet in the very same chapter that " as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isa. 55:10-11. We have always liked the word *maketh* in the tenth verse, for it assures us that God will do all his pleasure and neither men nor devils will ever be able to hinder him in his work or thwart any of his plans and purposes. How good to feel that it is in Him that we live and move and have our continual being. When we by the workings of the Holy Spirit can lay hold upon and appropriate unto ourselves the various phases of the doctrine of God our Savior as set forth by Jesus, by the apostles and by his servants who

are called to go forth preaching the word in demonstration of the Spirit and with power sent down from heaven, does it not soothe our sorrows, heal our wounds and drive away our fears. Surely, therefore the words of Jesus, whether spoken by him or others, when applied by the Holy Spirit, comes with great healing power and comforting assurances to our broken hearts and our contrite spirits. This wonderful balm from our spiritual Gilead is sufficient to heal every sinsick soul, whatever its ailment or malady may be, for both Jew and Gentile, among God's people, or his elect in every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue. The gospel church has an experimental knowledge of these things, and such types as the true vine and the branches and the tree of life yielding her fruit every month, reveals unto us the wonder and beauty of the eternal vital union between God and his people. The things which John saw were shewn to him by the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last; therefore they could not fail of fulfillment. When these things were shown to John he was in this life, and we are persuaded that it is in this life that we are given a foretaste of these heavenly things; it is here in this life that we need to drink of the pure water of life; it is here in this life that we need to feed upon the twelve manner of fruits of the tree of life, which we continually stand in need of, or for every month in the year. It is here that the nations, those who fear God and keep his commandments, need to be healed by the doctrines of God's matchless grace, ceaseless mercy and eternal love, which changeth not. How soothing, indeed, they are when they drop sovereignly into our wounded and bleeding hearts; they mollify as the choicest ointments, and we are revived like the parched grass beneath the gentle summer showers. We cannot believe that in that world of heavenly bliss above there will be any such thing as hunger and thirst, or broken and bleeding hearts. Sorrow, suffering, sickness and death belong only to this world and life and they will be left behind when we are called to our eternal and heavenly home on high.

The same inquirer asked that we explain *atonement.* We have written at some length already, and we are convinced that those who know something of the things we have presented will also understand what *atonement* means. In brief, it means an at-one-ment with God by the finished work of our Lord and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. In Adam's transgression the elect family by reason of sin were separated from God, but by the righteousness of Christ they are presented unto God without spot, wrinkle or any such thing. Those who by nature were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world, were brought nigh by the blood of Christ and are reconciled unto God; therefore they are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God, "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

Dear reader, if the things which we have here written are of the Lord, and we are made to hope that they are, and you can bear witness to them, it is quite evident that the Lord has shewn them unto both you and ourself, and we can rejoice together and give praise unto his great and holy name. Amen.

R. L. D.

ELDER CHARLES WESLEY BOND came to the end of his pilgrimage in this world near his home at Island City, Ore., Dec. 1, 1946. He was born Sept. 10, 1869 in Anderson County, Ky. He united with the Little Flock Church there at the age of 23, and was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry about six years later. In 1895 he was married to Martha Elizabeth Herndon to which union were born seven children, four sons and three daughters. There are twenty-two grandchildren, eleven boys and eleven girls, and one great-grandchild.

In 1908 Elder Bond, wife and children moved to the state of Oregon, and since that time made their home in the vicinity of Big Spring Church in the Grand Rounde Valley. After the passing of the late Elder G. S. Mayfield he has had the pastoral care of the Big Spring Church until his death, but his labors were not confined to that church alone. During these years he has traveled and labored among all the churches of our faith here in the Northwest states.

Elder Bond was a peacemaker, and where confusion has existed among God's true worshipers he has labored in the interest of peace and reconciliation. Being gifted with a meek and quiet spirit, he had a way and manner of approaching people without giving offense, and had the confidence and respect of all the Baptists in general here and elsewhere. His passing is going to be felt deeply by all of us here as he has been a father to us so long, and it has come to the point where there is no one to take his place. Of the three or four old Elders left here some are too feeble to attend their own church meetings. We feel we have lost a wise counselor, a faithful servant, and a very able defender of the doctrine of the Bible. The able articles he has written the past few years I feel sure will be missed by the readers of our publications. Just a few days before his death he started a letter for publication, which sister Bond found, on Rev. 14:13. It was unfinished but what he had written will be incorporated in this obituary at the closing. We were all disappointed that he did not live to finish it. What he did write seems to reveal a blessed state of mind. Sister Bond told me he had on several occasions used this text in preaching.

I was greatly impressed by the love and respect manifested by Elder Bond's children and grandchildren, which I regard as a tribute and crown of honor. He came to his death in an accident. He was working with a team of horses and in some way was thrown against the implement with which he was working and injured internally. He was operated on but never regained consciousness after the operation. He was buried at Baker, Ore. where he and the family made their home for several years. An invalid daughter still lives there, and sister Bond has moved there to make her home with her. She told me she felt she could be of assistance to her daughter and that it would make it easier for her to bear her loss.

Elder Bond has labored here for several years to interest the Baptists in the building of a home for our aged ones, and also to have a place for the safe keeping of books, and records and the like that are so often left by some at their death which very often fall into careless hands and are destroyed, but he was taken before he could see any fruit from these labors.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the family and friends at the chapel, and Elder Jeffreys officiated at the grave. We used as a basis for our remarks the language of David, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." We also read the language of Paul to Timothy. 2 Timothy 4:6-8. I was strongly impressed with the feeling that if the departed had been conscious at the last he could very appropriately have used these words. I have been informed in a letter from sister Leona Tuttle of Stockton, Cal. that sister Blanche there had a dream about the time of Elder Bond's funeral in which she saw him in the midst of grape vines laden with great clusters of ripe grapes, which they interpret to mean that he is receiving the full fruit of his labors. May we all look forward in hope of that reward. May God comfort all that mourn.

(Elder) A. D. HUGHETT

His last writing for publication.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." Rev. 14:13

"This scripture has been on my mind of late, with interesting leadings to other scriptures setting consolations for the saints of God. If it may be according to the will of our God to give me light to explain some of these things as I have seen them, to his name be all the praise.

I am now an old man, can look back on more than fifty years of ministerial services, and with the end of my pilgrimage near, I view life with all its pleasures, promises and disappointments very different in many ways from what I did as I came along. Youth is full of hope and bright promises, death while ever to be expected and dreaded seems far off, and we shudder at the thought of it."

MRS. ROSETTA SEARS, our sister in Christ and wife of James Sears of Hallsburg, W. Va., died of a heart attack at 11 P. M., Monday, Jan. 27, 1947. She was born March 1, 1882, making her stay on earth 64 years, 10 months and 26 days.

She united with the West Fork Primitive Baptist Church about the year 1927, after having been given a sweet hope in Jesus as her Savior and Redeemer. It was my happy privilege to become acquainted with this dear saint of God several years ago. Truly it can be said of this dear mother in Israel that her profession was adorned with a godly walk and conversation. Jesus was her hope and grace the theme of her song.

She leaves to mourn, her beloved husband, Mr. James Sears; two daughters, Mrs. Judie Dawson, Hallsburg, W. Va., and Mrs. Euna Moss, Mineral City, Ohio; five sons, Elder Gilbert Sears, Akron, Ohio, Walter, Mineral City, Ohio, Russell, Sharon, W. Va., Dwight, Ivydale, W. Va., and Gordon, Hallsburg, W. Va.; two sisters. Mrs. Angeline Gibson, Flo, W. Va. and Mrs. Tudie Tanner. Ronda, W. Va.; two brothers, French Sears, Dink, W. Va. and Martin B. Sears, Hallsburg, W. Va.; also twenty-six grandchildren and one great-grandchild and a host of other relatives and friends.

I was called, by request of the dear deceased sister, to speak on the occasion of her funeral, assisted by Elder Lloyd Sears. I read Isaiah 32: 1-3; Matt. 1:21; John 11:23. I felt a little gracious overshadowing of the Holy Spirit of God as I tried to speak of the miracle of the saving power of Jesus to a very large concourse of loved ones and friends of the deceased. The floral offerings were beautiful thus attesting to the very high esteem in which this dear, humble sister was held in the community in which she had lived so long. She will long be missed in the neighborhood and the loss to the husband and family is great indeed. May God visit them in mercy and heal their wounds as only he can do. The West Fork Church will feel their loss very keenly. May God visit with reconciliation. Burial was in the family burying ground near the home. Because of the lack of complete data I cannot give a full sketch.

(Elder) H. J. BIRD

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Where-as God in his kind providence has seen fit to remove from among us our beloved brother and Elder, G. W. GOIN, be it first

Resolved, that we, the members of Hopewell Church, extend to his family and many friends our heartfelt sympathy, and commend them to our heavenly Father who is able to heal all their wounds, and second

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be spread on our minutes, a copy sent to the bereaved family, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times.*

Done by order of the church while in conference Jan. 19, 1947.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN, Moderator
R. L. BUCKNER, Clerk

NOTICE

Our readers will be interested in knowing that we have presented to "The Library of Congress, Washington, D. C." a complete set of the Signs of the Times (1832 to 1946 inclusive). We are also sending them the current issues and plan to furnish them with a bound volume each year in the future.

We quote herewith the Editor's announcement in the February, 1947, Quarterly Journal of Current Acquisitions, page 42, as follows:

> "A complete set of the *Signs of the Times,* the religious publication devoted to the maintenance of the 'Old School or Primitive Baptist Faith,' founded in 1832, was received as a gift from its present owner, editor, and publisher, R. Lester Dodson, 41 Addison Avenue, Rutherford, New Jersey. As Mr. Dodson states that this is the only complete set of the periodical which exists, the copy can obviously claim to be a rare item of Americana."

A quotation is also made from a letter of the "Chief Exchange and Gift Division," dated February 11, 1947, as follows:

> "You may certainly tell your readers that the file of the *Signs of the Times* which you were generous enough to give to us is now on the shelves of the Library of Congress and may be consulted here by all who are interested."

We were moved to this action by a desire to preserve for posterity these records which contain sacred truths that are much beloved by Old School Baptists, and at the same time to have them available to those who wish to consult them.

In this connection, we would also state that, with the exception of a few issues, a complete set of these historical volumes are in the main Public Library, Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street, New York City, where they may be inspected.

R. LESTER DODSON

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 115 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JULY, 1947 No. 7

"Let the inhabitants of the rock sing."
Isaiah 42:11

There is music in heaven far sweeter
Than any we mortals have known;
'Tis the voices of saints and the angels
Surrounding the Savior's bright throne.

In songs of sublime adoration,
And thanks for His soverign grace;
Which wrought our eternal salvation
Revealing His glorious grace.

He gave us our voices for singing,
Songs meant for His most worthy praise;
Sometimes a sad note we are bringing,
When trouble doth darken our days.

But Jesus will never forsake us,
Again we'll be singing His praise;
When He sends His angels to take us
To dwell with Him in endless days.

Riverside, Cal. J. W. HAYNES

CORRESPONDENCE

(We are glad to publish the following article by Elder H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg, Va., which has been sent to us by one we are convinced understands and loves the truth as it is in Jesus. We are satisfied that our readers will be happy to read after his pen again. R. L. D.)

SOLOMON'S SONG 8:1

"O that thou wert as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother! When I should find thee without, I would kiss thee; yea, I should not be despised."

"O that thou wert as my brother."

This is a desire on the part of the church, the bride, for a closer and more intimate relationship with Christ. It is the longing expressed by the elect of God all through the Old Testament for the coming of their Redeemer in the flesh, that he might become as one of themselves, incarnated in the flesh for the purpose of redeeming his people from sin and death and corruption into the kingdom of God. As our Elder Brother, Christ was born of a woman, was made under the law to redeem them that are under the law. Inasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also likewise himself took part of the same that he through death might destroy him that had the power of death and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life time subject to bondage. The eternal Son of God became Son of Man, he became a member of the human family with his people, thus manifesting himself as the Elder Brother of those he came to save. Throughout the former dispensations, this was the desire and longing on the part of those, who by faith, hoped for the coming of the Lord who, coming in the flesh, should deliver his waiting ones from the bondage of sin and corruption. This hope, Abel confessed when he offered the slain lamb in anticipation of the coming, centuries hence, of the Lamb of God who should take away the sin of the world. Likewise, Noah when he builded an ark to the saving of his house, and Abraham when he left his nativity and became a stranger and sojourner in hope of the promised Seed in whom all the families of the earth were to be blessed. Also, old Simeon, when he came into the temple and taking the Christ-child in his arms, rejoiced

thus: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people." However, the meaning in this text looks farther than the longing of the elect of God under the legal and prophetical dispensations, for the first coming of Christ when he came to accomplish redemption for his people; it also expresses the hope and longing of God's people in this present age for his second coming, at which coming his people raised from the dead completely, and glorified in the image of Christ their Head and Husband, shall go with him into the marriage supper of the Lamb to enjoy a fuller and more complete intimacy with this Elder Brother than ever has been theirs on earth, a blessed and blissful communion which shall know no end. To be sure, the saints of God enjoy through the sweet offices of the Holy Spirit, seasons of communion with this Brother of ours who occupies the throne in heaven. A veil shuts him from our sight, but then the veil shall be done away, we shall see him as he is and be like him. This is the hope that supports us under life's trials and temptations, the blessed hope that we shall behold him for ourselves and not for another. But let us pass on to the next phrase of our subject.

"That sucked the breasts of my mother"

That is, that Jesus and his people should be nourished at the same source. Primarily, the church in view in this text is the church as it was under the law, which church was then enclosed in the Jewish economy, and Jesus, himself, came as a Jew. He said: "Salvation is of the Jews" meaning that himself, the bringer of salvation, was a Jew. The Jewish church was at that time under the legal covenant, that covenant of which Moses was the mediator, he having received that legal covenant for Israel from the hand of God and having delivered it unto them. Under this covenant, not only in the letter but in the spirit of it, Christ came. Hence, the word "mother" would indicate the "covenant." But not merely so. Christ was the minister of a better covenant than that which stood in meats and drinks and holy days, although he in himself fulfilled every type and shadow pictured forth in the blood of bulls and goats which, of themselves, could not remove guilt. The law was a transcript of the revealed will of God, and this will Jesus delighted to do, it was his meat and drink. Hence, not merely the legal covenant which was the expressed will of God, but the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure which was contracted in the council of eternity with the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, was the breast from which the Son of Man drew his sustenance as well as did those he came to save. Both church and Savior are nourished at the breast of the same everlasting covenant. All the blessings which any and all believers enjoy either in time or in eternity, flow out of this everlasting covenant. The same may be said of Jesus, not as he was the eternal Son of God, but as he was our Elder Brother who took our human nature on him to come where his people were under curse and condemnation, that he might deliver them. According to that everlasting covenant, the Father promised to support the Son, to uphold him, to be his strength, to deliver him from his enemies, to not suffer him to see corruption, to show him the path of life and to prolong his days in resurrection. Hence, from this breasted everlasting covenant, every true believer draws the milk of his consolations and his hope, and so did our Elder Brother in his incarnation from the same fountain draw his sufficiency for

all he had to undergo. For while as the eternal Son of God, he needed no perfecting outside of his own perfect Diety, yet as One with his people in their trials and temptations, he needed to be succored even as they. While he was *made* perfect as the captain of our salvation, he himself needed no perfecting as regards his Godhead. But as captain, he is the forerunner for his people, and so ahead of them suffered all things for them. He was often hungry, weak, weary, sorrowful and in agony even unto death. In all these things, we see his perfect humanity sorely tried, not for himself but for his people. The secret of his human ability to stand all this, was that intimacy between the Father and the Son by which the Son drew his consolation from the will and promise of his Father according to the everlasting covenant between them entered into in the ancient of eternity.

"When I should find thee without"

That is, that word "without" means "outside." The bodies of those beasts which were made a sacrifice for sin, were burned without, or outside, the camp. "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." And there the church goes forth unto him. In her salvation, she finds him outside Judaism, outside self-help, outside any merit or strength or goodness of her own. She will never find him until she is brought without the camp unto him. Jesus came to a defunct and an apostate Judaism and led HIS OWN SHEEP out of it. He called them by name and they left all and went after him. Matthew left his tax-collecting, Peter and Andrew their boats, others left houses and lands and natural relationships and found him outside all these. No sinner ever finds the Savior on their own bed, not in the place where they have been at ease: they must pass beyond all that, then they find him. How many who read this, know this by experience? No man, of himself searching, can find out God; yet there is a blessed seeking and a knocking that does find him, to which the Lord graciously opens. No beggar yet was ever turned empty away from the door of mercy. If we come in idle curiosity, we find the door shut and barred; but if we are blessed to come with hungry hearts and longing souls, as perishing sinners, we find an open door, and Jesus is that door by which if any man enter in, he shall be saved and shall go in and out and find pasture. Dear reader, is there a crumb for you in all this? "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." The "ends of the earth" are not a matter of geography, they cannot be located on any atlas of the world. The "ends of the earth" are spiritual. These "ends" are those who have come to the end of themselves, to the end of all self-righteousness. The soul has, in despair, come to the end of a dead-end street. It had thought this to be the way of life, it now sees that way to end in death. There must be a turning around. Isaiah heard the voice behind him saying: "This is the way, walk ye in it." And, O blessed truth, Jesus is exalted at the right hand of God a Prince and Savior, to grant this repentance, this "turning around", to those who come to him by faith. For he that cometh unto him, Jesus will not cast out; and those coming to him are drawn of the Father. Verily, the church, the bride, finds her Beloved "without" or "outside" the camp of Judaism. As the offal of the slain beasts was taken outside the camp and burned, so our blessed Jesus was led forth through the north gate outside Jerusalem to be crucified, and there also his people find him as they too pass outside all that an apostate and wick-

ed and self-centered Jerusalem signified. He was counted as the offscouring of all things, as mere dung and offal; and so his people pass out to him in a kindred experience in fellowship with him. And this brings us to the next:

"I would kiss thee"

The "kiss" is significant of love, of fellowship, of holy intimacy and communion. In proportion as we are led into the fellowship of Christ's sufferings and are experimentally conformed to his death, do we "kiss" him, have fellowship with him. Above we spoke of passing outside an apostate Judaism in order to find salvation, but are we not today living within a period which witnesses an alarming decay of Christianity? Does not Christianity today stand in about the same relationship to Christ as Judaism did at his first coming? There is very much, yes very much, today in Christendom that one must be outside of if one truly desires fellowship with Christ. A defunct Judaism crucified our Lord, and an apostate Christianity would today crucify him if he were to return and submit himself to it. The word of command for us who believe is; "Be not conformed to this world". The friendship of the world worketh death. "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." Those are burning words, words such as search the hearts and minds of those professing to be followers of Christ. There is very much spiritual adultery in the lives and professions of those who hold on to the world with one hand while they try to serve God with the other. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "No man can serve two masters." God will not accept a divided or half-hearted loyalty. Ye shall love the Lord, thy God, with all thy mind and heart and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself. Christ did not come to void this commandment but to make it effectual in the lives of his people. The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. At the time of the protestant reformation, there were many who passed out of a Christ-denying God-dishonoring Roman Catholicism and stood outside all that Rome signified, in order to have sweet fellowship and communion with the God of their salvation. They found they could not stay inside Roman Catholicism and have any "kiss" of their Beloved. The word of command was given them: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." Plainly showing that there must be a going forth unto Christ outside the camp, not only of Judaism but also of Catholicism and of Protestantism, if there is to be any "kiss" or communion with him. The Laodicean church was about to be rejected by our Lord because she was altogether worldy, rich and self-sufficient, not needing anything. The bulk of Christian profession is like that to-day. I am today blessed to be acquainted with some precious and choice souls who are living outside all church affiliations because of the fact they cannot fellowship teachings and practises "inside the camp." These who are thus aloof from all they believe to be false and disloyal to Christ, do not feel themselves to be above their brethren or better than their brethren, but for conscience' sake they must dwell outside the camp or else compromise their faith which they cannot do. These "outside" cases are enjoying some sweet "kisses" and some

precious communion with their Beloved. Can we not bring this matter nearer to our own hearts? Ought we not ask ourselves if we are honest in these things? Have we left all for Christ? or do we hang on to the treasures of self and of the world, having great posessions, while yet hypocritically professing to have kept the whole law, that is to have done all that is commanded us, as his followers, to do. Are not we Old School Baptists too loath to give up secret societies and all other worldly affiliations in order to live with Christ? Are we not too prone to harbor prejudices, envy and even malice and anger, against those whom we should esteem as brethren? Are we not biting and devouring one another and thus being destroyed one of another? And dare we expect the "kiss" of our beloved unless we pass outside all this and eschew it entirely? Dear reader, we each need to examine our own hearts in these things and not seek to remove the mote from another's eye unless the beam is out of our own.

"Yea, I should not be despised"

She, the bride, cares nothing that she is despised in the eyes of men and of this present evil world, she counts that an honor for Christ's sake. But the rejoicing to which she voices here, is that she is not despised in the sight of God and of all the holy angels. Christ having come in the flesh as her Elder Brother to redeem her from all iniquity, he and she having been nourished at the breasts of the same mother-covenant, he has found her and led her into communion and fellowship outside the camp of all false profession and teaching, has brought her unto himself, having purified her unto himself as being a people zealous of good works, she is no longer a condemned sinner under the curse of a holy God, but is purified and made white in the atoning blood of Christ, hence she says: "I should not be despised." God despises her not, he accepts her in his Beloved. The angels despise her not, they rejoice each time one of her members which was lost is found. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect" Will God himself do it? No, for it is God who justifies her through the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ. "Who is he that condemneth?" Will Christ condemn her? No, for it is he that died for her and who is risen again for her justification and it is he who, at the right hand of God, now makes intercession for her. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Those things which of themselves might, if they could, separate us from him, such as tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword, all these are made to be our helpers to forward our passage from earth to heaven, so that we are more than conquerors through all these things. Those blessed words, "I shall not be despised", sing out from the lips of the Bride, the Church, welling up out of her thank-joyful heart as a paean of victory. She shall shortly tread under her feet her old arch-enemy, Satan, triumphing in Christ who hath led even captivity captive, having abolished death and brought life and immortality to our knowledge and understanding through the gospel. At the forthcoming future appearing of Christ, at the time of the resurrection of the just for which we hope, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, then shall the glorious Bride be admired in all that believe in that day. Then shall her Redeemer, her nearest of kin, the Elder Brother, vindicate her cause before an assembled universe, for she shall be seen to be perfect in his holiness without spot or blemish before God himself and in the sight of all dominions, principalities and powers. For it is written, Ephe-

sians 3:10, that unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, by means of the redeemed, justified, risen and glorified Church of God, the manifold wisdom of God is to be known in the ages to come when all things both in heaven and in earth shall be gathered together one in Christ. Indeed, the elect of God shall not be despised in that day. She shall be owned and honored in that day.

Dear brother Simpkins, I submit this to you for your reading and consideration. It is yours to dispose of as your judgment decides. I have been so long complying with your request because not until this morning did I feel I could write. Our love and fellowship in the truth, which rejoices both our hearts, is a great comfort to me. Your presence in our midst has often refreshed my spirits. May the Lord graciously be pleased to continue you and me, with all his people, in the one bundle of life in vital union with the Lord our God until the time of his coming for which we hope, and toward which we press with fervent desire to see him as he is and be like him. Yours in covenant bonds.

(Elder) HORACE H. LEFFERTS

"Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk." Gen. 49:8-12

An exposition of the above verses spoken by the dying Jacob, sixteen hundred and eighty-nine years before the birth of Christ, confirms in a most remarkable way the divine authenticity of the Scriptures and their inerrant exactitude. Their prophetic fulfilment in the New Testament stamps with ineffable impress the inspiration of the Bible. The first verse addressed to Judah assures him as the one whom his brethren shall praise, and that his hand shall be in the neck of his enemies and that his father's children shall bow down before him. Judah was the fourth son of Jacob who was favored with the privileges of the birthright, and his name means praise. Judah signifies the kingly one and from him descended after the flesh Jesus who is King of kings and Lord of lords, the true high priest of the family of God after the power of an endless life, who receives the praises of all the saints of God. Jesus is praised for his great salvation given poor and needy worms of the dust, lost in sin, under the condemnation of a holy law, and by nature without help and hope in the world, and without a knowledge of the Lord Jesus. He is praised for his matchless grace, for his mighty power, for his wondrous love for the children of men, for his work of redemption, and for all embodied in the work of the Trinity in salvation, for in him dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily. It is appropriate in this connection that it should be written: "thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies." It is the neck that joins head and body together. When the head is severed from the body, the individual is dead. When Goliath defied the armies of the living God, David went forth with a sling and a scrip containing five stones. With but one stone he felled the mighty Philistine to the ground senseless, and then with the giant's own sword he severed the head from the body at the neck. These five stones represent the five books of the law. But one stone only was necessary to fell the

giant, for by one act of disobedience all the children of Adam were made sinners and came under the curse. So by one act of obedience many were made righteous, that is all the called of Jesus Christ. On the cross Jesus overcame Satan and bruised the serpent's head, and in that sense the hand of the Lord was in the neck of all his enemies, for Christ by his death fulfilled the law and magnified it and made it honorable and removed his bride from under its curse, and overcame principalities and powers and reconciled his people unto God. He overcame all enemies and so hath put them all under his feet, though the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death, and this is manifestly accomplished in the resurrection of the church when their enemies having meted out to them their measure of everlasting punishment. The sons of Jacob are not consumed, and in that sense, spiritually speaking, his father's children bow down before him. Before Jesus every knee must bow down and every tongue confess.

There is a wealth of meaning in the expression: "Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up." In nature the lion is spoken of as the king of beasts. He is the lord of the jungle, and so Jesus is the lion of the tribe of Judah who opens the book sealed with seven seals, and gives eternal life to all them that believe. Jesus was crucified at the age of thirty-three, in the prime of physical manhood and strength. A lion's whelp denotes a young lion in the prime of its vigor, full grown and able to defend himself or make attack. When Jesus appeared on earth and brought in eternal salvation to the heirs of glory, the fullness of the time had come, and he was upheld by the mighty power of God and able to overcome all adversaries. He was a victor over death, hell, the grave, and all the powers of darkness, therefore, the figure of a lion's whelp is used to typify Jesus in this prophetic utterance. The expression, "from the prey, my son, thou art gone up", is pregnant with solemn meaning and inexhaustible sweetness. What is the prey but that which Jesus overcame? The lion in nature makes a prey of its opponent, and so all the curse of a transgressed law as regards the children of God, all the powers of darkness, all the horrors and dread of hell, all the sting of death, all the terror of the grave, all the filth, folly, and fruit of sin, all allegiance and servitude to Satan became the prey of Jesus Christ. It will require all of eternity to tell the wonders of the great salvation brought by Jesus for the redeemed ones and what is embraced in the word "prey."

It is the purpose of the Holy Spirit in inditing the author of Genesis to use the words, "my son", for Jesus was the beloved son of God, and because he is a son, believers are also sons of God. Jesus is the son of God in order that the actual ground of the sinner's adoption into the family of God should be originally founded upon sonship, upon Christ's being the eternal son of God and believers being in union with him as such. As Christ, the living Head is a son, the members of his mystical body are sons, Christ a son by nature, they as sons by adoption; Christ a son by personal subsistence in the Godhead, and his people by union with him: Christ being the son of God because of his own right, and believers by the right of his grace. By regeneration believers are led by the spirit of God and so are the sons of God. Having overcome death and broken down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile and finished the work on earth the Father gave him to do, Jesus ascended bodily into heaven and is at God's right hand,

making intercession for believers in his Melchisedec priesthood. In heaven he is represented as an old lion; and who shall rouse him up? Never again will Jesus come to earth to suffer and die on the cross; never again will he endure the contradiction of sinners; never again will he be brought before the judgment seat of man. In that sense he can not be roused up, and in that sense he is a coqueror, resting forever from his finished work on earth.

It is interesting to note that the sceptre did not entirely depart from Judah until Jesus came, for the Jews in spite of their subjection to imperial Rome were allowed to retain some power, so there was a law giver until Shiloh (Jesus) came. The word Shiloh means rest-giver or "he gives rest unto his own." Christ is the rest of his people and gives them rest, and those that do believe do enter into rest. No longer are they burdened by the exactions of a law that they can not keep, even though they are debtors to do all of it, for Jesus has kept the law for them and they keep the law in him. They were weary and heavy laden while laboring to attain salvation by their own righteousness and found in their experience that they had transgressed it all and were under its awful curse, not being able to love God with a whole heart nor their neighbors as themselves. When ministering under the law, there was a gathering of the people unto Jesus when he fed multitudes, preached the gospel and healed the sick; but in a larger sense there is the gathering of his church in this gospel dispensation, as drawn by the cords of his love and enlightened and quickened by the Holy Spirit and shown the things of Jesus, one by one comes into the gospel fold to make up that innumerable company that no man can number. This gathering will continue until the Lord comes for his church the second time without sin unto salvation.

How prophetic is the verse relative to Jesus binding his foal unto the vine and washing his garments in wine and his clothes with the blood of grapes! Jesus rode into Jerusalem upon an ass's colt before his crucifixion, and the animal was found, it may be assumed, tied by a grapevine before being loosed to supply the need of the Lord of life and glory. In his death his flesh, for garments here signify the flesh of Jesus for he came into the world born of a woman, taking the flesh of his people, clothed in their flesh, that he might bring many sons unto glory, was washed with blood. In his death he trod the winepress alone and of his people there were none with him. The wine here denotes the cup of the New Testament in his blood by which the wine of the gospel is provided for the blood-bought host of the redeemed.

In the last verse of the scripture under consideration reference is made to the eyes of Judah being red with wine and his teeth white with milk. Prophetically this applies to Jesus, for it was the holy joy of Jesus to bring in the gospel of salvation to believers. Figuratively, his eyes are represented as sparkling with joy, with the exhiliration of his holy mission. Wine used in communion should be fermented with all of the flesh of the grapes removed, and so in communion with Christ, it is not in carnal flesh actuated by carnal thoughts that the children of God commune or enjoy gospel privileges and blessings and are comforted. Wine causes joyful exhiliration used in a right sense naturally, and the spiritual meaning therefore is the joy of Christ in redeeming his bride, in keeping the covenant that was ordered in all things and sure, and doing the will of God. Milk is a perfect

food and the word of God is perfect, as Jesus was not only the Word made flesh, but he was the spoken word as well, and by his words the sinner lives. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." Jesus kept every word of the law, and the word of God applied to believers and eaten by them nourishes and sustains the inner man by which the believer is kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

(CONTINUED FROM JUNE ISSUE)

When the foolish, or those who have no oil in their lamps, ask the wise for oil they display their experience in saying not so lest there not be enough for us and you, they still feel insufficient of themselves and entirely dependent upon that sovereign God of all power, but when they asked them they advised them to go ye rather to them that sell and buy for yourselves. As much as to say, we do not have anything to sell. As much as to say there are people who pretend to have oil to sell, or to exchange for the good works and conditions you can perform, but not so with them who have oil in their lamps; not so with the wise who have been made wise by and through the light of God's Holy Spirit and by his grace and leadership. It is clearly seen that though they were made to realize that their lights had gone out, they were still foolish virgins because they went to buy the oil. Had they been wise they would have known they could not buy the oil of God's grace, so they were still foolish, and the wise were still wise. One went in with the Bridegroom, the other was shut out.

It may be considered foolish and speculative, as it has always been to some, but the question with me, if not deceived, is when and what signs are there of that approach of his glorious, grand and second coming? I do not have the time or space to do more than just hint at a few of the things that I trust have been given me, if it is not too much for such a wretch as I feel myself to be to say this. The most vivid things and signs that I think point to the nearness and approach of that day is the condition of the church in its seeming state of coldness and darkness, confusion and strife. Paul said in 2 Thes. 2:3 "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." Read also the rest of this chapter. I believe this is also being manifested as rapidly as is in accord with God's holy will. The condition of the church, the love of many evidently has waxed cold as is stated in inspiration. You will also find recorded in Rev. 6:17, "For the great day of his wrath is come." And plainer still is Rev. 11:18 which says, "And the nations were angry and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth." I feel sure of the fulfillment of one thing that is mentioned in this verse, and that is that surely and undoubtedly the nations are angry. If that is any sign of this great and notable day then we surely do have that sign.

Then, too, we have the unfailing sign of our Lord's coming in the accurate calculation recorded in both Daniel and Revelation concerning the number and description of the kings who were to reign upon this earth. Revelation 17:10 says, and I think this is most certainly the key to the whole description of this

subject, "And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space." Five of these kings which were to rule over all the world had already fallen when John wrote this book, and the sixth one was in power at that time, and Paul said that the mystery of iniquity already worked in his day. The man of sin is the seventh king who was to rule all the world, and he came into full power about or close to the second century after Christ. I think he was the man who got his head or power wounded in about the fifth century, and his head was to be completely healed, and all the world is to wonder after him and to worship him. I am thinking that his wound is not completely healed, but when all the nations get through doctoring this wounded head or the power of this king who once ruled before, then I think will be the coming of our Lord. Read Rev. 18th chapter, also 2 Thes.

There is also one more scripture that I want you to notice. It is in the 5th chapter of James, concerning capital and labor. He tells us to be patient for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. When is this? When we see the great strife between the rich man and the laborer? Yes that is right. Will you please stop and investigate this subject just a little. When in the history of this old sinful world has there ever been as much strife, confusion and trouble over such things as there is now? James admonishes the little children of God to be patient when we see these things because the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. So dear brethren may God enable us to be patient, and watch and wait for his blessed coming. Whatever the suffering is, whatever the persecution may be, oh may he give us enduring faith and lasting patience to humbly and meekly endure all things that are appointed us here in this low ground of sin and sorrow. May that light and leadership of God's anointing grace, and his blessed faith so keep us and sustain us that we may be given to walk all the journey through till we meet the blessed Bridegroom, where all suffering and sorrow will end in endless joy and everlasting happiness in his holy presence when he is to say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Oh what a sweet and glorious thought, my precious brethren and sisters, to be before him free from all sins and iniquities and completely justified. It is beyond mortal description and human conception. No wonder John was called up to that open door in heaven. (Rev. 4:1.) This was done that he might describe some of those glorious and sublime scenes for the holy inspired word of God that is written for the learning and comfort of God's people. No wonder John exclaims in Rev. 19:9, "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." They are blessed indeed, blessed in all their needs. Nothing will or ever can be against them so far as the purpose of God is concerned because it is stated in Rom. 8:28. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." All things that have ever transpired or that ever will transpire will be made to work together for their good. Yet we know there are many things that we do not understand how they could be for their good, but that is exactly the way I see it if not deceived. If that be so, dear brethren and sisters, what can take place that will be to their detriment? Everything will, does and has worked for their good. Can any final harm ever come to them? No, in no wise because all things work together for their good.

So the true and militant church here on earth and the false church, or the five wise and foolish virgins will be like unto the kingdom of heaven. They were slumbering and sleeping while the Bridegroom tarried, and before that they took their lamps, and the wise took oil and the foolish took no oil. In short, I think this parable describes both the false professor and his emptiness of profession, darkness and his utter foolishness in all the gospel age; and when he will lose all the light that he has thought he had and will be made to beg for light and will be advised that there is not enough to give him, and he is directed to go to them that sell and buy for themselves. While they went to buy the bridegroom came and went in, and the wise who took oil went in with him, and the foolish were shut out.

I believe that the militant church is described here, and it means that in spite of all that is arrayed against her she will finally be ushered into the marriage supper of the Lamb on the shores of that ever blessed and sweet land of eternal and glorious rest beyond all the floods of sin and satan, and all that the dear Lord has blessed them to gloriously triumph over. At the time that she goes in to the marriage supper of the Lamb all the entire redeemed host will hear that welcome call, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." As that old patriarch said when he saw the wagons from Egypt "it is enough" to rest in this most beautiful hope, and suffer on a short while till he descends from heaven and takes us home to that sweet land of complete and everlasting bliss, where we can more perfectly sing his worthy and glorious praise and adoration for ever and ever. Farewell in the Lord. Yours in hope.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES

Route 8, Box 639, Roanoke, Va.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Received your letter of Jan. 4, 1947 which was much comfort to me. I am still confined to the house and in bed most of the time. This is the twenty-fifth day since I have been out of the house, I had another severe heart attack but feel some better now. Some of the articles in the *Signs* are much comfort to me, and the articles you write are very interesting and food for thought. I have also received some letters from the brethren and Elders most of which are comforting, but some bring sorrow to this aching heart of mine. It appears that some of the brethren are jealous of others, and some appear to try to be pre-eminent over their brethren; if I am one of God's elect which is my hope, we are not strangers one to the other but have traveled along the same road and are brothers. Remember the apostle Peter wrote, "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." Are we not the same class of people as those whom the apostle Peter classed as "strangers scattered throughout" the country whom Peter addressed as "elect according to the knowledge of God?" If so we are strangers to the world and the world knoweth us not in the things wherein we stand. The way in which we are made to believe, the world knoweth us not for our faith and hope, yes, our life is hid with Christ in God; and according to the foreknowledge of God, we who are kept by the power of God through faith and salvation, were also created in Christ unto good works, (not trying to belittle our brethren, but) which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. This is the Lord's doing and is marvelous in our eyes, while it is not so to the world for men cannot see how faith is given to us and how we are given faith; for faith is not a pro-

duction of the flesh otherwise it would fail to justify, neither is our hope a production of the flesh for if it were of the flesh it would fail to save us. So the good works that we should walk in are the works of God. "This is the work of God that ye believe," then we walk by faith and not by sight. Faith, which is the gift of God to us, does not look beyond where we should place our every step, but is given for the way we should walk; and if we walk not according to faith it is sin for that which is not faith is sin.

It is said in God's word that boasting is excluded by the law of faith. So then self-exaltation must fall before the knowledge of the faith of God. Faith performs a good work to the humiliating of our proud nature, causing us to esteem others more than self; hope is an anchor of great assurance; the love of God shed abroad in our hearts is like a fountain of living water that never ceases to flow, and most of all its cleansing power in the washing away of our selfishness and human conceit, leaving us able to endure much of the trials and difficulties through which we must pass, while letting patience have her perfect work. For are we not proven in all these things which try us, and are to try our faith as to whether we are witnesses of God or not? So if the love of God is in our heart may we not wear the garment of beauty and praise for the kingdom of heaven's sake, and forgive one another's trespasses and live in peace.

Brother Dodson, I must close for this time. You may publish this in the *Signs* if you think it worthy of space, if not cast it aside. My prayer to God is, may it please him to give us all the spirit of humbleness and love one for another. Yours in tribulation and in hope of eternal life, a sinner.

(Elder) B. V. HELMS

Route 3, Coleman, Texas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: In addition to sending the subscription referred to brother Calk also asked me to send you the enclosed letter for your approval for publication. If you see fit these brethren and myself would like to see this letter in the *Signs*. It does us good to know that God rules all things, and his love and mercy teaches men that he is God and gives men a mind to speak or write giving him all praise and honor. The writer of this letter sets forth the kind of God I believe in. May the God of all grace endow us with wisdom to ever proclaim that it is by grace both in time and eternity that "we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." In hope of immortality.

C. U. LANDERS

205 South Liberty, Bastrop, La.

My dear brother and family: How are you these beautiful days? Fine I hope. As to us we are all in good health and able to work. Have a good job so there is nothing in that line to grumble about which we are so prone to do. Wilmon, you do not know how much good it did me to get a letter from you, even though short it was much appreciated. I am very glad you have a better job as I know you deserve and appreciate it. My work has changed some and I have been promoted since I talked with you last. We were fortunate to get a house convenient to my work. I thank God for all this for I know without his guidance I could not have had this success. People have been looking for houses or apartments as much as two or three years.

This brings us to the thought that all things work together for good to those that dearly love the Lord. I know I feel too unworthy to claim any of the riches of his great mercy, but if not wofully deceived I do hope I have a hope there. He is my meat and my

drink, my shield and buckler, my all in all. Without him I can do nothing, my strength must come from him who has all power in heaven and in earth, in the seas and all deep places. He is everywhere. He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and none can stay his hand or say unto him what doest thou? The world is his and the fulness thereof, therefore, he has a perfect and holy right to do with his vessels as he so pleases for we are nothing more than clay in the potter's hand. All are of the dust of the earth, and after Adam transgressed the law that was given him in the garden of Eden all of his posterity was condemned under the law, made sinners from the very first breath that we breathe. We are all sinners, even the breath that we breathe is sin, and he that saith that he does not sin is a liar and the truth is not in him. It behooves me to join with the poet and say, "If my soul be sent to hell, His righteous law approves it well." There is a people that is to inherit the kingdom of glory, not by any merits of their own but as a precious and holy gift according to election or purpose foreordained in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world. Here I want to say, I believe they were all inscribed there at that time just exactly as they are to be, and the exact number were there and none have been added or ever will be for God said he finished his work in six days and on the seventh he rested from all his labor. If there was to be anything added it would prove that his work was not finished. I believe that John, in the seventh chapter of Revelations beginning about the ninth verse, saw the whole kingdom of God and its fulness. I believe they were all there when he beheld a great multitude which no man can number of all kindred and nations, people and tongues standing before the throne and before the Lamb clothed in white robes and with palms in their hands. I believe they were all included there then and cried with a loud voice salvation to our Lord and to the Lamb.

A long time ago I heard a Missionary quote this. He said John saw all this at that time, but since then there have been millions and millions added to this number or multitude. I do not believe it is that way. My greatest hope is that my name is inscribed there, but I have no assurance of it. If so I think I would be the happiest person on earth, but sometimes the little hope I feel to have gets so dense and shadowed with sin that it almost fades away. If it were not for a scene or vision that took place and came upon me out there not far from where Tommie lives, I do not know sometimes how I could go on, but this is the sweetest thought of the most beautiful sight that ever mortal man could see in this world. I may, the Lord being my helper, give you some explanation of it sometime but now I must bring this to a close.

Wilmon, I do not know why I have written these scattered remarks as I have. It seems for some time since I received your letter I have had a desire to write you, but it seemed more impressed on the great mercies of God our Saviour, though you see it has hardly been mentioned. Is not this one of the markings that shows us we cannot control our thoughts? If there is a good thought in all of this it is not of me, but of God from whom every good and perfect gift is of love and cometh down from the Father above in whom there is no variableness neither shadow of a turn. Pardon all errors and mistakes as that is what I am composed of. Again I want to tell you I am glad you thought of me, not that I am worthy of such, but there is a message in it to me. With lots of love to you all.

JASPER and RUTH CALK

Route 5, Union City, Tenn.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am enclosing check for $6 to pay my past due subscription, to renew for another year and $2 to use as you see fit to use it. I am sure you will use it in sending the *Signs* to some one that does not have the privilege of hearing the gospel preached. To such an one the *Signs* is a source of much comfort. I mean the same kind of comfort and food one gets from the preached word by one of God's called and qualified ministers. The same God that moves and fills his ministers to go and feed his sheep and lambs by the preached word moves some men and women to write the same word that feeds his poor, afflicted, hungry and scattered children in this world. The word is the same written or spoken and that word is Jesus. God's ministers know nothing but Jesus and him crucified. Paul in writing to some of the churches declared, "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Remember Paul is writing now and not preaching. He is writing to those he had preached the word to, and is telling them in a letter just what he preached to them by word of mouth, and that word is Jesus written or spoken. It feeds, fills and satisfies those that hunger and thirst after righteousness for "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Filled with what? Filled with what they are hungering and thirsting for and that is righteousness and Jesus is their righteousness for he "is made into us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." This is the righteousness his children hunger and thirst after; and this is the food God himself prepared for his ministers to feed his flock; and they eat and drink and are filled by this food, this food is Jesus. Jesus himself said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." You do not eat and drink in order to get life, but you eat and drink because you already have life. Eating and drinking is an evidence that life already exists and not the cause of it. Man does not eat bread in order to obtain natural life, but to sustain natural life that he already has. The child of God does not eat the flesh of Jesus and drink his blood to obtain spiritual life, but because he already has spiritual life he hungers and thirsts for the food that sustains it, and that food is Jesus. That food is what Paul was determined to feed the church he had preached to by word of mouth and the same food he is now writing this church about. The gospel is the same whether written or spoken. I see no difference in the food the *Signs* brings. It is the same food that is sent by God himself when he sends one of his ministers to feed the flock of God. Both must and do feed the flock of Jesus. The only food that fills, thrills and satisfies one of God's little ones. It is the food that sustains that spiritual life the child of God has. It is the food they hunger and thirst after. It is the food they shall be filled with for *they shall be filled.* Your friend. J. W. BARNES

2211 - 5th St., Riverside, Cal.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Find herewith $2 to renew my subscription for another year. As long as I live I do not want to be without the dear old *Signs*. My parents and grandparents read and loved it.

I have been meditating a great deal of late on the trend of current events and world history, and have become convinced that in the light of prophecy there will never be a man-made peace on earth. We find no promise of it in

all the Scriptures. While the spokesmen of the nations in their peace conference (so called) are caviling over vetoes and technicalities, seeming to make no progress, the scientists are busy inventing more weapons, more and more destructive. War began in the first family on earth when one fourth of the population was destroyed through jealousy, one cause of all wars along with suspicion, greed, hatred and lust for power. That was murder and so is war. "Jealousy is the rage of a man." Prov. 6:34. "Jealousy is cruel as the grave." S S 8:6. It is one of Satan's many weapons to cause trouble among brethren in the church here below too. God's believing children are the objects of Satan's hatred and he ever seeks to make them the victims of his wiles, but he is one of the principalities, powers, things present or things to come which can never separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8: 38-39.) Satan is not concerned as to the wicked, he has them completely in his power and his work they will do.

In this connection the second Psalm is worthy of consideration and appears rather prophetic. Fear, suspicion, and distrust is abroad among the nations of all the earth; hence the feverish, hasty preparations for more wars of ever increasing fury and destructiveness; which bid fair to continue that great and glorious day when we shall "see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory" to send his angels to gather his elect from the four winds and from the uttermost parts of the earth. When he shall "say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth." Isa. 43:6. In Heb. 10:25 we are admonished to "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much more, as ye see the day approaching." Does not that mean that great and notable day spoken of in Rev. 10: 5-6 when the angel shall stand up upon the sea and upon the earth and swear that there should be time no longer? "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isa. 35:10. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Rev. 7:17. "And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Rev. 21:4. Your most unworthy brother in the bonds of peace and Christian fellowship.

J. W. HAYNES

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held, Providence permitting, with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster Co., Pa., commencing on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in August at 10:30 A. M. standard time, and continuing two days, Aug. 23rd and 24th. To those coming by automobile the meeting-house is located directly on Route 222, north of Conowingo, Md., and about one quarter mile north of the Md.,-Pa. state line. If there be any coming by bus please communicate with the undersigned in ample time for directions. To those who might arrive on Friday, stop at the Royce Jenkins home near the meeting-house for overnight directions.

All brethren of our faith and church order and friends as well are cordially invited to meet with us. CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Church Clerk, Route 2, Quarryville, Pa.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

J. A. Turner, Okla., $3; J. C. Whidden, Fla., $3; Eld. H. M. Bennett, Md., $5; E. C. Redman, Ala., $1; Mrs. H. McCormick, D. C., $2; Mrs. E. Smith, Tex., $2; Mrs. E. D. Cooper, Va., $3; Mrs. L. T. Genung, N. Y., $1; Miss V. M. Jones, N. Y., $3; J. M. Cox, Tenn., $1; Mrs. A. D. Hoyt, N. Y., $2; C. S. Dodson, Tex., $3; Mrs. J. Jeffares, Ga., $1.

EDITORIAL

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

"For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God." Heb. 11:10

DEAR READERS: We are hoping that God will give us the spirit to write some of the riches of God's grace connected with our feelings in this text. We note Paul testified to the Hebrews of the seeking by faith that was in Abraham, of a land of promise as in a strange country dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs of the same promise. In searching the Scriptures we find the record of the promise of God to Abraham. "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee." Gen. 17:1-5. The Lord dealing thus with Abram and changing his name to Abraham, which signifies father of many nations, is God's eternal purpose which God has predestinated should come to pass.

Abraham was much exercised in the manifestation of God's dealings with him, and no doubt in the mind of Abraham he was looking upon Ishmael to be the seed through which he should be the father of many nations; but we note by reading that God had purposed that Sarai's name should be changed and she should be called Sarah, and that he would bless her and she should bring forth a son; and when God manifested to Abraham his purpose in Sarah he laughed and said in his heart, "Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?" This was entirely contrary to nature, but God predistinated that in Isaac should Abraham's seed be called, and from Isaac we trace God's purpose on down and find it recorded that, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Rom. 9:13. "Was not Esau Jacob's brother?" saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau." Mal. 1:2-3.

These manifestations are mysterious to the carnal mind, but they work among the inhabitants of the earth that God's mysterious ways should work in man both to will and do of his good pleasure, and Abraham's experience wrought in him a faith that made him believe God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. (Rom. 4:3.) All the life of Abraham was occupied in meditation of the wonderful works of God, and in his exercises there were many structures that caused him to mark well the structure of the divine hand, the depths of their foundations and the heights of their spires which are not of this world. To our mind this is the city he looked for and one that could not be torn down, because the foundations cannot be moved, the stones thereof are

tried by the great architect and not a flaw or chasm can be found—all his work is perfect. Abraham is called the father of the faithful, "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all. (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither the deadness of Sarah's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was made strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Rom.4: 16-25.

For us to apply the expression, "the father of many nations," to the flesh, would signify that many nationalities were in the loins of Abraham, but the spiritual application gives to every one born of the same Spirit of God as was Abraham, out of every nation, kindred and tongue to be partakers of the life that was in Abraham, and they are exercised by the same faith which makes them believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, and by virtue of this life they have faith in God and worship him. God having delivered him for our offences he was raised for our justification, exalted a prince and Savior at his right hand and given all power in heaven and earth. Every one of the faith of Abraham believes on the Lord Jesus Christ and will be saved with an everlasting salvation. This to our mind is the building of that holy city whose inhabitants were of one mind and one hope. This great city God hath blessed with peace and rest. The pilgrim and stranger in the earth has no continuing city here. (Heb.13:14.)

The beauty of that city has never been displayed to mortal sight, but God hath revealed to all that are taught of him the beauty of the virgins that go forth to meet the bridegroom of their souls with their lamps burning because of the oil of grace in them, and all his servants that he sends forth to publish glad tidings are shod with the preparation of the gospel which is the power of God unto salvation to them that believe. They press for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, looking to him who is the author and finisher of their faith. The Spirit revealed to John in the isle called Patmos for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ, what the Spirit saith unto the churches, and he was commanded to write a book for the seven churches of Asia. "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband," which was the same city Abraham looked for which hath a foundation whose maker and builder is God.

The lineage of the household of faith has never been broken, which proves that underneath is the everlasting arm, and whose foundation standeth sure for the Lord knoweth them that are his,

and he calleth them by name and leadeth them out; every one that heareth the Father and learns of him cometh unto me, and none cometh unto me except my Father who hath sent me draw him. So we are constrained by the love in our hearts to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness which brings the poor sinner in a way he knew not to the banqueting house of our God He is to them God and they are his people.

Dear readers, we hope you are exercised by the same Spirit that was in Abraham and that you are looking for the new Jerusalem, that city of peace, which the word Jerusalem signifies, (possession of peace) because the emotions of your hearts pant after it. This brings us to our experiences which have been manifested to us by which we are made to hope in God's mercy given in Christ Jesus. We have no continuing city here, but his directing hand points out the way and we hear him say, "This is the way, walk ye in it." His bride has committed to her his ordinances and all his children are commanded to walk in them. But says the little one, I am unworthy! Now we are called on to justify ourselves, and as we begin searching we find we are dead in trespasses and sin. The dead know not anything and no man can say that Jesus is the Christ except by the Holy Ghost, so we are trapped and have no way to turn, which causes us to cry out, "Salvation is of the Lord." We are often cast down because we have sought and found not, and those from whom we have expected much have failed to give us comfort and the way has not been opened to us. So we must travel on to that city through tribulation which worketh patience; patience, experience and experience hope. Our faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, but we with patience wait for it. We have received the spirit of adoption, which makes us wait for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

C. W. V.

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Acts 20:28.

It is of special significance, we think, that the apostle Paul sent for the Elders of the church of Ephesus and had them come to him in person to receive this very important message. We would strongly recommend to our readers that they first study most carefully his message to them, which will be found in verses seventeen to thirty-five inclusive. In the twenty-seventh verse will be found language which has been argued over by some of the best and ablest of our brethren for many years. Paul says, "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." Some have taken the position that Paul meant he had not shunned to declare unto all (the brethren) the counsel of God, while others have insisted that he meant he had not shunned to declare unto them (the brethren) all the counsel of God. In the twentieth verse he says he "kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house." We have long since felt that the doctrine of God our Savior was as fully set forth in the first chapter of Paul's epistle to the Ephesians as any place in the entire Bible, but since having the fact particularly impressed up-

on our mind that the apostle had gone to lengths to have the Elders among the Ephesians visit him in person and receive what appears to have been his farewell message to them, the epistle which he wrote to the Ephesians in its entirety has taken on a much fuller and more profound meaning to us than we had ever dreamed of before. May we also urge our readers to study very carefully and prayerfully all of the six chapters comprising the epistle to the church of Ephesus and see if they do not agree that it comes as near containing "all the counsel of God," in all of its phases, as it would be possible to set forth. We can but believe that Paul actually meant that he had withheld nothing from them, but had declared as far as it was possible for him to do *all* the counsel of God.

In order to aid our readers in understanding our point of view, we will undertake a brief review of what, to us, is contained in the various chapters of the epistle to the Ephesians. In chapter one, after his introductions, the apostle declares that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath blessed us with *all* spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. This is a good beginning. He then sets forth election, predestination, adoption, redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, which hath abounded toward us in all wisdom in keeping with the purpose which he had in himself, to be manifested in the fulness of times, having obtained our inheritance according to the predestinated purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, that it should be to the praise of his own glory. He also says that after they heard the word of truth, which was the gospel of their salvation, they trusted in Christ and were sealed with the holy spirit of promise, "which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession," and when the apostle heard of their faith, he ceased not to give thanks, and to pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, would give unto them the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: that the eyes of their understanding might be enlightened, to the end that they might know what is the hope of his calling, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand, "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." We recall using a portion of this chapter at the funeral of one of our Deacons some years ago, and saying to his many friends, who were not Old School Baptists, that if they cared to know what his belief was they could find it set forth in this chapter.

Chapter two has to do with the quickening of God's people from their dead state in nature, and declares unto them that it is "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." It also sets forth how the Gentiles, who were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world, were brought nigh

by the blood of Christ and became "fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." In chapter three we find that the dispensation of the grace of God was made known to the apostle by revelation, which made him feel to be less than the least of all saints. Nevertheless he desired to "make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ," and is now made known to the churches the manifold wisdom of God, "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." He then expressed the hope that Christ might dwell in their hearts by faith, and that they being rooted and grounded in love, might comprehend with all the saints what is "the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." He closed this chapter with the following words: "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." In the fourth chapter there is an exhortation to unity, right living, etc., the reason being there is "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Following this he speaks of the diversity of gifts to the church, all of which are "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." This body being "fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love," they were henceforth not to walk as other Gentiles did, for they were to put off the old man with his deeds and "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." He ends this chapter by saying, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Chapter five is a continuation to right living, not only in the house of God, but with regard to the marital or home relation between husband and wife, and chapter six deals with the relationship of parents and children, and masters and servants, etc. He makes a final appeal to his brethren in this chapter to "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." He outlines most beautifully what this armour consists of, but we will leave it for our readers to examine for themselves, perhaps with more profit. How suitably he closes this chapter and the epistle with the following words: "Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen."

Our purpose in making this resume of this epistle as we have has been to show why we believe he kept nothing back from the Ephesians and the faithful in Christ Jesus, but declared unto them as far as it was possible for him to do the whole counsel of God. And like as the tribe of Judah was referred to and held up in the Old Testament as the most faithful of all the tribes of Israel and the last to survive, so in the

New Testament Paul singles out the Ephesian brethren as the ones to be the most thoroughly indoctrinated of all perhaps, and it is to them and "the faithful in Christ Jesus" that he addresses the admonition contained in our text. How we elders, if we, indeed, be among the faithful in Christ Jesus, need to take heed, first, unto ourselves, and second to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made us overseers. It does seem to us that the greater part of the troubles and distress in which the church finds herself to-day is caused by the ministry. Brethren these things ought not to be. How can we hope or expect to "feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood," when we utterly disregard and neglect those things which are so essential and necessary to the well-being of our beloved Zion, and which are so clearly set forth in God's blessed word.

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsover things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

Mrs. ELLA McCONNELL, our dear sister in Christ, was born Dec. 3, 1861, and passed away at the home of Miss Mary U. Grafton, Forest Hill Md., March 15, 1947. She enjoyed Miss Grafton's home and received loving care and attention from her. She was the widow of the late Elder John McConnell, who preceded her in death by approximately twenty-five years. They were married Oct. 5, 1882 and one daughter was born to this union. The daughter preceded both father and mother in death. Two sisters, Mrs. Ida Leedy, Brownville, Fla. and Mrs. Margaret Druley, Attica, Ind., three nephews and four nieces survive. Sister McConnell was widely and favorably known and she will be held in fond memory not only by her brethren and friends of her home church, but also in other churches of her faith in the United States and Canada.

She was baptized Oct. 4, 1891 by Elder William L. Beebe into the fellowship of the Salem Old School Baptist Church in Philadelphia, Pa. Moving to New York City, she and brother McConnell united with the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church there by letter, June 7, 1896, where she remained a faithful member until the time of her departure.

Both she and Elder McConnell were noted for their kindness and generosity, in many ways, particularly to those of the household of faith. The writer will never forget the consideration shown him by both of them when he first came to live in New York City nearly thirty-six years ago. She has also been of great encouragement and help to me in trying to serve the church as pastor for over twenty-four years. I shall always feel grateful to God for having been privileged to enjoy both her friendship and fellowship.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer in Flemington, N. J., March 18, 1947. I was informed by one who was very close to her that during her last illness she kept repeating, "I know there is a God, and that he is good." It recalled to my mind the many times over the years she requested the singing of Hymn No. 20, Beebe's Collection, which sets for the loving-kindness of God. After reading this hymn and speaking in prayer I read and commented upon verses of scripture found in 2 Cor. chapter five. "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord." We are persuaded that our Lord has taken our sister unto himself on high, where she will enjoy his pleasures forevermore, and where we, too, erelong shall hope to have the blessed privilege of dwelling with him in our heavenly home.

The service was held at the Holcomb Funeral Home, Flemington, N. J. followed by interment in the cemetery at Frenchtown, N. J. by the side of her husband and daughter.

(Elder) R. LESTER DODSON

THOMAS JEFFERSON THORNTON, our brother in Christ, was born Jan. 1, 1877, and departed this life Sept. 10, 1946, aged 69 years, 8 months and ten days. He was born and resided in W. Va., and spent an active, arduous life of labor, working efficiently with his hands to provide for those dependent upon him until his health failed him. He was a farmer for a number of years. In his latter life he went into the merchandise business.

In 1898 he was united in marriage to Rosa Oxley to which union were born six children all of whom survive. Mrs. Elva Stone, Byrnside, W. Va., Mrs. Leva Byrnside, Hurricane, W. Va., Fleet Thornton, Garrettsbend, W. Va., Elwood Thornton, Bell, W. Va., Jesse Thornton and Everett Thornton, Hurricane Route, W. Va. His first wife, a noble, good woman, weakly in health, preceded him in death many years. Dec. 11, 1918 he was united in a second marriage to my sister, Harriett (Bird) Oxley. To this union five children were born all of whom survive. Leonard, Hurricane Route, W. Va., Beauford, South Charleston, W. Va., Mrs. Edith Johnson, Byrnside, W. Va., Howard in the armed services of his country, stationed in the European theatre of occupation and Katherine at home, Byrnside, W. Va.

Brother Jeff was an humble, kind and considerate man; beloved by his many friends, a good neighbor, a kind father and husband. For a number of years before his break in health occurred he was frequently in attendance at Old Providence Church (Primitive Baptist) of Lincoln County, W. Va. where he manifested that gracious interest in the cause of Christ and gave the evidence of spiritual life, and spiritual conception of truth. It was believed by many that he would soon unite with the church but he keenly felt his unfitness. In His providence it was the manifest good pleasure of God to afflict him with paralysis. When the stroke came in such severity the family physician in attendance, and his friends and loved ones too, felt he could only survive a few hours or days at most, but God had willed differently. He laid on a bed of pain as an invalid for 4 years, 5 months and 14 days suffering pain of great degree. Yet this same God who had so severely afflicted him had also in tender compassion and pity visited him with grace, causing him to bear his great suffering in patience and in sweet resignation to the holy will of God. After he was afflicted and by his request preaching services were held at his home, at which time he related his experience of grace, and asked for a home in the church with a great desire to be baptized, but he was never physically able for the administration of the ordinance.

Brother Jeff was my brother-in-law and a member of my home church, which church I try in weakness to serve, therefore it was my privilege to visit with him at his bedside almost every church meeting time during all his long illness. Thus I was made very intimately acquainted with the great suffering he endured, and witnessed his patience and resignation, and yet his great desire to depart and be with Christ which for him was far better. Near the end of his earthly existence he was made perfectly conscious of his passing. He called his faithful wife and children around his bed and bade them adieu, talking so sweetly of the nearness and presence of Jesus, testifying that he had been with Jesus his Redeemer God. The much longed for end came very peacefully, so quietly he breathed out his last breath of life, and died in the full triumph of a living faith in Christ.

To his faithful wife, who had been his almost constant attendant, and to the loving children who had so tenderly ministered to him in his long hours of suffering, grief and mourning had come in his passing. The church, the neighborhood, together with the family has sustained a great loss, yet we grieve not as those who have no hope. As his pastor I know I shall continue to miss him as I shall see his face no more here below. He leaves, besides those already named, two brothers, W. P. Thornton, St. Albans, W. Va. and Lee Thornton of Kentucky; one half-brother, Wootson Bird, St. Albans, W. Va., one sister, Mrs. Jennie Loftus, St. Albans, W. Va., one half-sister, Mrs. Effie Allison, Nitro, W. Va., a great number of grandchildren and a host of near relatives and friends.

At his request I was called to conduct the funeral, assisted by Elder R. C. Bell. As I stood by the casket in his humble home where had been the scene of his long and weary suffering, I was filled with a sense of deep solemnity before God as I tried to preach Jesus the way, the truth and the life, using as a text John 10:28, also 11:23-26 especially the 26th verse. I felt then and there a measure of sweet reconciliation to the will of God who doeth all things well. He was laid to rest beside his first wife in the family burying ground. May God in his adorable mercy comfort the bereaved in their deep sorrow. The floral offering made a wreath beautiful to behold. Much more could be said, but for the sake of brevity I cease here. Written by request. In hope of that blessed immortality.

(Elder) H. J. BIRD

IMPORTANT NOTICE

In order to devote more space to other material we will publish the REGULAR MEETING NOTICES only twice each year — July and January.

We hope those interested will examine the notices and advise us of any inaccuracies or any changes to be made that the information may be correct.

Notices of SPECIAL MEETINGS will be published as heretofore, but as previously advised please send them at least forty days in advance of the date for publication. R. L. D.

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each 1st Sunday, 11:00 a.m. and Saturday before.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each second Sunday and Saturday before.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala.
Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Bethlehem Church, Malvern, Ala., meets second Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. A. TEW, Pastor

Hopewell Church, Ozark Ala., meets each 4th Sunday, 11 a.m. J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock. Meeting place at Alder St. at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Wright's Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets fourth Saturday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Seclusia Predestinarian Baptist Church meets 4th Sundays, 11 a.m., 9616 South Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor, Route 3, Box 800 G, Stockton, Calif.

Bethel Church near Stockton, Cal. meets first and third Sundays in each month and Saturday nights before. For further information write SETH BYNUM, Rt. 3, Box 800G, Stockton. Cal.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m., north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets every second Sunday at 5th and E. Park St. B. O. JEFFREYS, Pastor, Weiser, Idaho

Pleasant Valley Church Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator, Williamstown, Kans.
(Mrs.)) E. E. CATES, Clerk, Kingman, Kans.

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carver Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. C. H. EVANS, Pastor

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before a 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St. D. L. TOPPING, Pastor

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.
D. L. TOPPING Pastor

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a.m. in the meeting-house. Pastor in regular attendance except first Sundays. C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays 11:00 a. m., 2 p. m.

The Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every 1st and 3rd Sundays at 221 West 57th Street, Manhattan. Between Broadway and Seventh Avenue. Take elevator to second floor.

11:00 a.m. 1:30 p.m.

Dan River Church between **Danville, Va., and** Reidsville, N. C., meets each **fourth Sunday 11 a.m.** and Saturday **before.**

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Salem Old School Baptist Church

1626 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.

(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)

Meeting first Sunday, each month

10:30 a.m.

Take Elevator to 5th Floor

C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.

E. H. LANIER, Clerk

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

The Old Orderly Mt. Zion (Cash) Predestinarian Baptist Church meets on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in each month, at the home of Bro. J. J. Darnell, Campbell, Texas.

W. A. LITTLE, Moderator
Sister SIMMONS, Clerk

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 461d Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. C. B. Teague, co-pastor, G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets third Sunday in each month at 11:00 a.m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Old School Baptist meetings are held every fourth Sunday at Civic Club, 1419 N. Shepherd St., Houston, Texas. Preaching by Elder W. O. Beene.

(Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists. Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dr. Wood church-house. Those interested write Mrs. Lela Culpepper, Stockdale, Texas. E. B. AULT, Pastor

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The Old Salem Church of Old School Baptists, 4 miles south from Teague, Texas, meets the first Sunday in each month and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk J. F. BRIGGS, Pastor

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Danville Primitive Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before Bradley Road, Danville, Va.

W. R. DODD, Pastor

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meets each first Sunday 11 a.m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

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Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p.m. and Sunday at 11 a.m., Fairmont Park, 3023 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va., R. B. DENSON, Pastor

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Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a.m. C. M. FISHER.

Bethel Old School Baptist Church, Riffe, Wash. meets every third Sunday, 11 a.m. in the meeting house. I. F. COLEMAN, Mod.

ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk, Riffe, Wash.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church near Yakima, Washington, meets at 11 a. m. each second Sunday by appointment at the home of one of the members living at Naches, Wash. A. D. HUGHETT, Pastor

BEATRICE HAAN, Clerk
Star Route, Naches, Wash.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va., N. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 115 RUTHERFORD, N. J., AUGUST, 1947 No. 8

Williamstown, Kansas.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: I have just been reading the 28th chapter of Exodus and it has furnished me a train of thought on which, whether profitable or not, I have felt impressed to record some of my meditations and let those who read judge whether or not it be in line with gospel truth. I desire that my brethren judge lest I be guilty of trying to force an interpretation of these dark sayings for God is his own interpreter and we can know only as it is revealed to us.

It is written, "And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty." "A breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a broidered coat, a mitre and a girdle." Exodus 28: 3 and 4. It will be noted that these garments were for the priests exclusively and they were qualified to minister in the priest's office only as they were attired in these garments. It seems to present a beautiful likeness to Jesus, our great High Priest, for surely these articles of apparel all represent some feature of his divine attributes. These were holy garments and it will be observed that they were made of the most precious metals and costliest materials all of which are essential if it be a fit type of the garments of our Master for his was a robe of righteousness. The breastplate being the first consideration, let us notice how it applies to Christ our Lord. This breastplate was closely connected with the ephod, being bound to the ephod with cords of gold. The ephod was set with two onyx stones on which were engraved all the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, signifying that their names were borne upon the shoulders of the priests near the heart, showing the tender love of Christ for his people. And showing also that they cannot and will not be forgotten nor overlooked by the great High Priest when he comes to make atonement for his people, their names everyone being engraved and borne upon his heart and on the palms of his hands. "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." Isa. 40-11. It is indeed comforting to note the security of God's people while they are under the protectorate of the shepherd and bishop of our souls. They are being borne and being led, which alone blasts the theory that they are free agents and can go as they may please to go. God finds his people in a desert land, in a waste howling wilderness. A helpless situation indeed, but he leads them about and instructs them and keeps them as the apple of his eye. He leads them about, which is proof enough that they are not able to walk alone. The breastplate being worn in front, over the heart and bound to the ephod bearing the names of his chosen people confirms the words of our Lord, "Behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." It was a breastplate of righteousness and so was every article of this extraordinary garb. As already noted, these garments were for the priests only, which emphasizes the

fact that none were empowered to offer sacrifices or make atonement but the priests, thus pointing to the fact in the anti-type that none but Christ was able to make atonement for the sins of his people. He had no help in this work, he needed no help. Yet many in this modern age are engaged in what they call, helping the Lord to save souls. He spake by the mouth of the prophet saying, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon *me;* because the Lord hath anointed *me* to preach good tidings unto the meek," etc. No other was ever anointed for this work and no other was ever clothed with these holy garments. "He shall save his people from their sins" was written of him exclusively. These garments were for beauty and for glory. Christ could not repose in glory if his work was only half done or if his suffering had not accomplished its full design. All the names of the twelve tribes were borne upon his shoulders and thus he proclaims "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." The broidered coat, an object of beauty and an emblem, no doubt, of the vesture of our Lord for which his persecutors did cast lots. "He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood." This vesture woven throughout was without seam which must surely represent his undivided love for his people. This love was in evidence when he left the shining courts of glory and came down into these low grounds of sorrow and himself became a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. "For his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins hath quickened us together with Christ."

It is well that some token of his love should be seen in the garments he wore. Hence the broidered coat of the priests was conspicuous not only for its beauty and its novelty. Its sacredness must signify the endless devotion he has for his little ones, being without seam. No other names were engraved upon the ephod only those of Israel and none can be added later. Not one of these were omitted and none will ever be erased. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Borne upon his shoulders his people are secure, he will not let them fall. There was a mitre for his priests. "And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet. Holiness to the Lord. And thou shalt put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre; upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be." Also a crown shall be upon the mitre, thus signifying the Kingship of our Lord for he is indeed, our Prophet, Priest and King. He is the "blessed and only potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords." If we turn to the fourth chapter of Revelations, we look through the open door and see him sitting upon the throne. His likeness is like unto a jasper and sardine stone, very precious. And round about the throne were four and twenty seats and upon the seats four and twenty elders. Just enough seats to accomodate every one. There was not a vacant seat and no one seeking a seat and unable to find one, thus showing forth the whole church of God.

The twelve tribes of Israel and the church as fed and fostered by the twelve apostles of the Lamb. Twelve and twelve, four and twenty embodying every child of God in every dispensation of time. They each and every one occupy a seat around the throne, an exalted state. They have crowns of gold upon their heads like unto their Master for he has made us unto God both kings and priests. A robe also was made for the Priests. These were holy garments hence this robe was a robe of righteousness. It is worn continually by our great High Priest and like the crown of gold it is shared by every

subject of divine grace. In no other way can his people ever approach the throne of the God of heaven. Only through his righteousness for all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. There was also a girdle. This girdle is by no means of minor importance. It encircles the bodies of the priests. A beautiful emblem of sovereign grace which encircles our great High Priest. It radiates from every side. Without this girdle, this grace, how could our Lord minister in behalf of poor, lost sinners for "By grace are ye saved." It is called a curious girdle, and so it is a curious girdle. There is none other like it. It cannot be duplicated and there is no substitute for it. It is the only source of salvation. No other name under heaven given amongst men whereby we must be saved. God's people *must* be saved. Now these holy garments are all necessary when the priests go into the temple to minister in the priest's office, and briefly they point to the sufficiency of our Redeemer, signifying grace, wisdom, power, righteousness and faithfulness, and they are all incorporated in this divine expression, "I have put my spirit upon him." A holy garment indeed. Its glory and its beauty has no peer. He was indeed prepared to enter in and offer the great and final sacrifice for the sins of his people. Under the law such sacrifices must be a lamb or a ram without blemish, and these sacrifices must be offered year by year continually, they never could make the comers thereunto perfect. "But this man, (Jesus) after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." He atoned for the sins of his people, he redeemed them from under the law, he sat down on the right hand of God, not on the left hand but on the right thus signifying the complete approval of God, the Father. His work is finished, divine justice is satisfied. No man can add to nor take from the work that he has done. There is no human being can wear the garments that are absolutely essential in the work of salvation. It is not enough for one to prevail on another to say he is willing to accept Christ as their Savior for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. Whereas by the shedding of *his* blood there is *full* remission. So the efforts of man are fruitless either way. When our Lord was crucified he laid three days in the grave, not two days and not four but three days, answering to the three dispensations of time, showing of a truth that he atoned for all the sins of all his people in every dispensation of time. It must be so to make up the four and twenty that sit around the throne. There are no vacant seats there.

Brother Dodson, you may do as your better judgment may dictate with this imperfect letter. It is submitted in much weakness and fear.

(Elder) L. L. SCHENCK

Route 2, Lawrenceville, Ga.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I realize that my subscription is overdue for the *Signs of the Times*. Enclosed you will find a money-order and please excuse me for being late. I enjoy reading the *Signs* so much I do not want to be without it. The weather is getting bad and I cannot work much. For my part I would not give up the *Signs* for all the newspapers combined. The most of what the brethren write is what I hope I believe, and I did not learn it from reading the *Signs,* neither did I learn it from reading the Scriptures or from man, but I hope by revelation from God, the one who said, "Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." I under-

stand there is but one God who has all power in heaven and in the earth. He is of one mind and changeth not, the same yesterday, to-day and forever, one eternal God without a shadow of doubt. We read that he made everything that was made and without him was not anything made that was made. We read in another place "that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." So I believe everything that he made was for good, even the crooked serpent that his own hand formed.

I guess you understand how I stand, just a poor, worn out sinner saved by grace if saved at all. I cannot think anything or do anything without him. If I could use the pen myself I would like to write you my experience for forty years back, but I am so old and nervous I cannot write my own name. I am not sending this for publication but I am not ashamed for any one to know who I am or where I stand so you can do as you please with it. I enjoyed your book on the resurrection very much and thank you for sending it. Your unworthy brother in hope of eternal lfe.

(Elder) J. R. CHANDLER

1701 Randolph Ave., Greensboro, N. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Enclosed you will find another good letter that I have been asked to send to the *Signs*. The writer is the wife of Elder A. B. Barham of Haw River, N. C. I feel glad to send this as I was Mr. Alston's because I feel such wonderful experiences, when applied by the blessed Spirit of Almighty God, are sufficient to cause us to feel and realize the blessed truth that He who rules and super-rules all things after the counsel of his own blessed will is not in the least slack concerning his promises.

I just cannot help but feel that salvation is of the Lord, and that we are saved by grace through faith and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. Is it not recorded in 1 Cor. 1:4-7, "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: *So that ye come behind in no gift;* waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." I dreamed of this scripture the other night, and even in my sleep it was most joyful to feel that God's power is in no wise limited or restricted. I rejoiced in the blessed truth that God would withhold no good thing from his dear people, and that they would come behind in no gift even in the day of adversity which I believe is the gift of God also.

Elder Dodson, I cannot say I know this is the truth as it is in Christ, but I feel I can truthfully say—to me it is. I once did not believe this (could not), now I cannot believe anything else, and have no desire to do so. My hope is that I am of that blessed number for whom Christ stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. I am not uneasy about the safety of that blessed number, but I am continually uneasy, it seems, as to my lot. Am I one? May it ever be thus! May I ever feel no confidence in such doctrines that deny the blessed greatness and goodness of Almighty God to his own elect in all things. May the blessed keeping power of Almighty God abide with you and all his dear people the world over, according to his own righteous and holy will is my prayer, I trust, for God's sake. Your unworthy friend.

BURCH C. WRAY

Haw River, N. C.

DEAR BURCH: We received your nice letter to-day. I read it twice and must say I enjoyed it very much. Dad is not at home. He left yesterday to be gone for a week, filling appointments down around Newport. I wanted to go with him but had to stay home and look after our little grandson who is only ten days old.

Burch, I am glad that you enjoyed the baptism. It was wonderful to me. I think I will never be as happy again, not in this world. I do hope that you, too, can soon, very soon, come home. I have wanted to so very long—ten years I guess—but just could not. It seemed that something would hold me back and I just could not offer to the church. I have known for some time that Dad wanted me to, although we could not talk about it. That was the one subject we could not discuss. I would do any thing on earth for him if it was in my power to do so, but that I could not do. Month after month and year after year I have wanted to but could not. Dad's brother's wife who I love very much united with the church the first Sunday in June and I felt like I would die if I left the church without asking for a home with them, but again I could not. I cannot find words to express my feelings that day. I came home and just walked, nothing seemed the same any more. I felt condemned and ashamed and so very unworthy. I looked at Dad as he was sleeping and thought, O Lord, make me worthy to live with him, worthy to be known as his wife. I tried to pray but all I could say was God have mercy on me. It went on like that, on and on and I did not get any better. On Thursday before the first Sunday in July I was alone on the front porch. The electric light wires below the house were covered with birds. While watching them fly on and off but never away, I said in my heart, O Lord, if it is thy will for me to be baptized next Sunday let one little bird come in the porch. (I had never seen one near the porch.) I was looking down the road at the ones on the wires when I heard a bird chirping at the other end of the porch. I looked up and there was a little sparrow sitting on a nail. Where it came from I do not know, but it had not only come in the porch, it seemed that it called to me. I can never tell you how I felt. I cannot remember much else that happened that day. I could not tell Dad or any one. It seemed like I almost held my breath from then on until Sunday at the water.

You know Burch, there is a time and place for every thing. I had to wait my time and so will you, but like I have thought about myself so many times, if there is a time, I will not die before it comes. Mine has come and yours is yet to come, and I hope with all my heart that I can shake your hand when you come up out of the water. Yes I surely think I understand as you wrote in your letter. Give your family my love and come to see us. We would love to have you. (Mrs.) A. B. BARHAM

"For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Malachi 3:6

I have been away from home much of late and on my return found my reading and correspondence quite piled up. I have read quite a bit that seemed to have a tinge of conditionalism. It may be that I did not understand. I trust, however, the writers did not so mean it. My mind seemed to keep inquiring if anything could happen, or may be better said come to pass, against God's will. I noted that some in writing said, "God permitted," etc. If God willed to permit he could have willed not to permit. It looks to me that it is

God's will any way you fix it. My mind kept running along in this way until one night after I had retired the above text came into my mind and cost me quite a bit of sleep. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Isa. 14:24. I fear we look too much on the surface which in many instances is very dark, instead of looking underneath to see the purpose of God work out. In the face of it, or from the natural point of view, the crucifixion was the blackest and most heinous crime on record, but the purpose of God was underneath and must in the end shine out to the glory of God and redemption of his people. God purposed it before the morning of time. It must so be. Could we not then say the perpetrators of the crucifixion did the will of God?

Isaac purposed to give the blessing to Esau. If we have it right it was the law of the land in that day to give the blessing to the eldest. God purposed that the blessing should go to Jacob. The purpose of Isaac or the purpose of God must go down in defeat. It is as impossible to defeat the purpose of God as it would be for me to take this old mundane sphere in my hands and shake it. The three falsehoods Jacob told his father to get the blessing look dark, but the purpose of God was underneath. A chain is no stronger than its weakest link; a fence is no safer than its rotten rail. These three falseheads are links in the chain of predestination. They had to be. The perpetrators of the crucifixion had to do it. The Lord of hosts had sworn it and there is no higher authority than the Lord of hosts. He can swear by no other than by himself. Our mind seems to be grasping so many things until we get too lengthy, but these thoughts have just come to our mind.

The Bible abounds in the story of the failure of man. Away with what is commonly called conditional time salvation. I heard an Elder in south Georgia say, "There is only one salvation, but if there were forty they would all be of the Lord and by Grace." God stored grace in Christ Jesus and a purpose to save his people before the world began. It was not according to our works. If Adam had not failed God would have had grace which he could never use, and a purpose that could never be carried out. God knew that Adam would eat the fruit. Not only so, but he set the stage for it. The serpent was there to see that Adam disobeyed the commandment. God put the serpent there or else he slipped in without God knowing it. "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

The promise was given to Abraham, verified in Isaac, and fulfilled in Jacob. Jacob is, therefore, the outstanding type of the Lord's people. Jacob did not find the Lord but the Lord found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness. All flesh is grass. The grass cannot reach up to the cow. In Abraham, Isaac and Jacob we seem to have the type of the Trinity. God the Creator and former, Christ the Redeemer, the Holy Ghost the revealer. It was the fixed and unchangeableness of God to give his people to Christ. "But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." Acts 3:18. "I am the Lord, I change not." Then we hear Jesus saying, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." John 17:4. "And be sure your sin will find you out" was in the old order: how glorious that in the new order, "but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Rom. 5:20. Nathan said unto David, "The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die." 2

Samuel 12:13. Grace had found him out. Then we hear David saying, "Have mercy upon me, O God according to thy loving kindness." Psalms 51:1.

My dearly beloved, my hope is anchored that one bright Sunday morning in September 1894 grace found this poor sinner. It was a happy period. This thought has just come to our mind (it may or may not be right) that the sins of David are a type of the flesh, the depravity of our nature. Are we, in our flesh or wicked nature, any better than David? God hath a fixed plan and he changes not. We recently visited nine Associations. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in Unity!" "It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." Psalms 133. Without offering any comment I feel like the entire nine Associations were endowed with the sentiment of this Psalm. Again may we say that we could see manifestations that the odors of Mary's ointment kept every house full. (John 12:3). We did so much enjoy these visits to see our kinspeople. "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God! Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried." Ruth 1:16-17. We feel like applying this sentiment to ourself. It was glorious to be among the beloved of the Lord. We were happy all the time. Dearly beloved, we enjoyed your hospitality and sweet fellowship to the fullest extent. In a sweet hope.

(Elder) C. H. BYRD

Rt. 2, Box 89, Panama City, Fla.

241 Jagoe St., Madisonville, Ky.

DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD: I would love to see you and hear you talk and sing those good old songs of Zion. I wanted to have written you before now, but I hope that my times are in his hands and that my pen is guided by his omnipotent power; as well as my tongue to speak the unsearchable riches of his grace, if it be that this is my reason for writing you. I know not whether there is a God, I only know that there is a great power which is above man. Man's works are so small that he cannot make one little blade of grass to grow, even without a bloom, yet man can claim to make a heaven-born soul out of the wicked which God made for the day of evil and said, "The wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand."

We need not be surprised at this for the natural man is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. The great writer, Paul, was at one time only a natural man when he started to Damascus breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the dear saints of God who were going with bowed heads, trembling steps, tearful eyes and hopeful hearts filled with love and great esteem for the few who they expect to meet there to join in prayer, singing and praise to a God who is able to do his will in heaven and earth, and could conquer such an one as Paul, who was the chief of sinners. Paul said he was chief because he had persecuted the church of God. The people of God have all persecuted the church and are guilty. All have (as the prodigal son) spent all of our natural works and fulfilled the law to the extent that we have nothing left. We are, therefore, brought

home to our friends as a poor beggar to live with them at their feet, esteeming them better than ourselves, and gladly partaking of the crumbs that fall from the master's table. When we come to ourselves, as did this son, we fully realize that we have nothing to pay, and our Father has plenty to spare of his bounty, and we are made glad to be as a servant in the Father's house. It is not with rebuke but with loving kindness have I drawn thee. It was this great light that shined about Paul which brought him to the ground. It was the glorious light of God that stopped his breathing out threatenings and slaughter for he was not Paul any more, but Saul. He was no more of the old covenant but of the new. The old covenant was "If you will do, I will do!" the new covenant was " I will do for you!"

If God will give me ability to analyze Paul, I will say that Paul was chosen by God the Father before the world was formed, and was cared for by this same Father and was born into the world at the right time and place, and was raised up at the feet of the learned; being prepared to be brought up before kings, to give a reason for the being bound with chains and suffering all manner of persecutions, being beaten until they thought him dead. God saw fit to make the darkness very dark, and the light very light for Paul was a chosen vessel unto God to show God's light unto the Gentiles.

My own experience appears in view. I was in darkness and was miserable. My way was so dark that I had no hope of ever seeing light, and felt that my life had to be spent in darkness and sorrow. I felt that I had to tell it to some one. Just as I seemed to open my mouth to say to mother that I had no hope and had to live all my life (whether it be long or short) in this sorrowful state, just then a power and a great light came down as it were a bolt of lightning and struck this poor, miserable creature and took all my sorrow and darkness and made me free to feel no sorrow, sin or trouble. Oh, it filled me with joy and gladness and set my tongue to praise the Lord for his mercy to me. I knew no sorrow now to tell mother, but told to all around that the Lord had loved me all this time and I had not known it. I was so glad that he had cared for me when I knew it not and had not been able to care for myself, but had worried and had tried to save myself from trouble and had made such a complete failure. Oh, I was so glad.

This gladness has not lasted all these years with this worm of the dust. I have only to hope that my God is still the same, and has still led me in the paths of my life, though my way is dark except when I am brought by his power to remember that his light shines in darkness only. My hope is that he instructs his people in the wilderness where he leads them. I hope to have a letter from you soon and that you and family are well. My husband and I live with our son and his wife. We are not very strong but able to attend meetings and associations. Some here in Tennessee and some in Alabama. We have several able ministers: Elders Burns of Ala., Perkins of Mayfield, Ky., Darnell of Cadiz, Ky., Biggs of Nashville, Tenn., Henson of Brewers, Ky., Poyner of Murray, Ky. Elders from other places visit us, Griffin, Brock, Smith, Rhodes and Beene. We are always so glad to have them. In love and hope.

(Mrs.) CYNTHIA PERKINS BROWN

3509 Louisville St., El Paso, Texas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Please extend the subscription to the *Signs of the Times* for my wife and use the balance of the money enclosed for such purpose as to you seems most appropriate and useful. Only those of your readers isolated as we are know the value of the *Times* to us. We are many hundreds of miles from an orderly Primitive Baptist Church, and consequently the only preaching we get to enjoy is that coming to us monthly through your paper. Our loneliness and we trust our love for the people known as Primitive Baptists, impel us to extend to any and all of the faith who may be passing our way an invitation to make our humble home their headquarters while in this section of the country.

My reference to our being isolated and shut off from our people and churches is not to be construed as a complaint on our part. When we take an inventory of the blessings God has bestowed upon us we are made to wonder, yes, to marvel at the length, breadth and depth of God's love for sinners, and to be ashamed that we may be so unconscious of these blessings as to grumble because we do not enjoy the added blessing of hearing the gospel preached every time we would like to hear it.

Our home address is given above and can be reached by taking the Ft. Bliss street car down town and asking the motorman to let the passenger off at Louisville St.

HUBERT T. FAULK

Written by

Sister Leona Tuttle

1547 First St., Coronado, Calif.

MR. & MRS. J. B. RILEY, BELOVED FRIENDS: I was so happy to get your letter, and at the same time I received another from a brother in Bakersfield inquiring about the church there. Please write him a note. I know what it is to be away from the church, and because I have the very good excuse to send you this brother's letter, I am taking the liberty to "visit" with you again, trusting I am not boring you. I send my earnest wish for Pearl to soon be well and her jolly self again, bless her heart. You know I sized you two up rather accurately the first time I met you. I think you know I am definitely not given to flattery! (Ask sister Lindsey.) Why do you think or believe I am so far from "home?" "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life." Psalms 27:4. David was an exile living far away from Jerusalem, and his soul was filled with longing to be with the church or temple. His one great desire to live always in the atmosphere of its worship and instruction, where he might behold the "beauty of the Lord," the fellowship and divine presence, praise and to seek instruction through that fellowship. How sweet it is for brethren to dwell in unity together. Too often we are deeply grieved to find that jealousy and envy cause malicious gossip. We are taught that God directs our steps and indeed he does. He says, "This is the way, walk ye in it," and then gives the commands of duty to those in his household. Never, never can any one hide behind that declaration, the Lord directs man's steps, into willfully violating the holy sanctuary or church, because God is the law giver and above all law. The

church (militant) is a refuge (should be) sanctuary, a resting place, and I fully agree with your belief and experience that God's children are one in him. Salvation is by grace and God chooses and places the various gifts as he pleases, but even so, regardless of talent so lovingly bestowed for his own purposes, not one, whether he be highly educated or entirely unlearned (naturally), has more in God's sight than the other.

It has been my privilege and my blessing to have taught piano in some wealthy, highly educated and intellectual families. I have found some of them sweetly humble, regardless, and I have taught in homes where it was a struggle for the loving parents to make that sacrifice and I have found there the same humbleness. A vast gulf, socially, naturally and certainly financially, but the spirit was the same. So it is God who rules and is his own counsellor and there is no foundation for envy and jealousy since every son of Adam depends wholly upon God's mercy. I am going to give an illustration about the duty of church members keeping harmony in the church, and the discipline needed to keep them in line when they get *out of line,* for to me the church must be kept in peace and a resting place for the hungry, faint and poor at all times, and there is a fight to make to that end because Satan is ever ready to destroy. Now, we will take the natural lesson of the symphony orchestra! There is always a director who has seen hard training, and whose ear is trained to detect a false note! Every member of that orchestra is a musician, but even the *best* musicians get out of tune and out of line because of two reasons, carelessness and lack of understanding: carelessness first, because he or she is fully qualified by the orchestra to be a member of that body, and it is his or her duty to try to understand, and if they do not ask the director, because you may be sure the director knows where the trouble lies because he or she has made the same mistakes many times. It must be gone over and over, again and again, an eternal proposition of practice to keep and to make a beautiful harmony. Just so in the church, every member in it has been *qualified* by the church before having been received, and it is the duty of each member to ask again and again for guidance and direction from that Great Director, and to go to the pastor also. His is a very difficult place. (So is the director of an orchestra.)

Upon the director of an orchestra's shoulders rests the responsibility to keep that body in harmony. No one would listen to them play or want ever to be a part of it otherwise. Just so must the peace of the church be kept, not only as a refuge and sanctuary here in this life for the members, but that a good report without be kept as an encouragement to those who hover around the door. Have I made it clear? Then to those valiant soldiers whom God has chosen to fight for that peace, it falls their lot to detect the false notes of false doctrine preached or a member who is entirely out of tune and out of line, and it must be a battle scarred veteran because the Devil is cunning and does not intend to get caught. Thank our holy God for a supreme intelligence system to catch the enemy and the little foxes who would spoil our tender grapes and vines. Jesus came in like manner, and took upon himself all the sins (without sin himself), but he understands, just so does the pastor of a church understand. All of the New Testament is full of the commands to the members! Titus, chapters one, two and three—three of the most clearly defined—but when God gave the power

to that little band in the upper chamber on the day of Pentecost, and established the militant church, he gave the clear and everlasting duty to the members—how to keep the peace of the church. How merciful and loving he is! What a great and long suffering God!

(*To be continued*)

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506 N. 7th St., Hiawatha, Kansas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I realize my subscription is due on the *Signs*. I did not intend for it to run out and when the March paper was late I looked up my date and found it had expired. I am sending $2 as I do not want to be without it. There is so much food in it for a poor sinner like myself. It seems like the longer they come the better they are. There is no one around me in this little town that believes as I do as far as I know and I long for some one to talk to so the *Signs* is a great comfort to me. There are so many good letters. I hope we will all meet together some day and sing his praises for-ever-more. Your unworthy sister.

(Mrs.) CARL FRIDELL

(In thanking our sister for her good letter, we want to take occassion to remind our readers that we do not stop their papers when their subscriptions expire unless specifically requested to do so. From time to time subscribers who have gone way beyond their expiration dates write in saying they expected us to stop their papers when the time expired, but realizing the frailties of humanity and being convinced that many of our subscribers simply overlook or neglect sending in their subscriptions when due, we continue sending the paper. Frequently we are thanked for so doing as the vast majority of our readers anxiously await each copy and do not wish to miss getting them. In cases where it is desired to have the paper stopped please do us the courtesy to request it. R. L. D.)

Route 2, Box 253A, Paradise, Cal.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: I see it is time to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. I do enjoy the paper so much and hope I will never be without it while here in this time world. It is so much comfort to me, I look forward to its coming and read it over and over. My father, the late Elder J. H. Hammons, took the *Signs* since I was a small child. It is a sweet memory picture to see him reading it and looking so happy. I remember saying to him, "Papa, that must be sweet to you." I said, "it doesn't make sense to me. I wish I could understand it." He said, "Well, my child, if it pleases the Lord to reveal himself to you then you will understand, but there is no other way." That is such a sweet memory. Please remember me in prayers. Yours unworthily.

(Mrs.) MARY ETTA JONES

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. W. F. Winfrey, Kan,. $1; Mrs. L. J. Burton, Va., $2; Mrs.S. W. Heitmuller, Va., $2; A. L. Blankenship, Va., $2; J. B. Barron, N. C., $2; J. A. Perdue, Va., $1; Mrs. A. Hastings, Md., $2; Mrs. C. A. Houchins, Va., $1; L. C. Spikes, Ore., $1; Mrs. C. H. Horton in memory of her mother, N. Y., $10; Mrs. L. M. Godfrey, N. Y., $1; Mrs. M. J. Dean, N. J., $1.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

The EVANGELICAL LIBRARY of London, England, is now located at 78 Chiltern St., London, W. I. It is requested that all mail be sent to this address.

GEOFFREY WILLIAMS

SPECIAL NOTICE

Bethel Old School Baptist Church, Riffe, Wash., invites all Baptists of our faith and order, also all lovers of the truth, to attend our annual three days meeting beginning Friday, August 15th at 11:00 a. m.

I. F. COLEMAN, Pastor
ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk, Riffe, Wash.

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. AUGUST, 1947

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"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." I Peter 4:11.

No man taketh the honor unto himself to speak as the oracles of God, but such as were called, as was Aaron. The ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ are men called, qualified and sent of God. Jesus said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." The men that were chosen out of the world to preach the everlasting gospel of the Son of God, were men out of the average walks of life. Peter and John were spoken of as ignorant and unlearned, yet the people noted that they had been with Jesus which was the important thing.

These men going into the temple, found a man lame from his birth. Peter speaks to him, telling him to arise and walk which he did, leaping and praising God. Peter took no honor for the healing of the man, but made it plain that it was in the name of Jesus that this man was made whole. This ministry, as well as all other like experiences, was of the ability God giveth. When the gospel is preached it is with authority. It has a certain sound as the silver trumpet. Regardless of what portion of the Word we may use as a text, Jesus will be the key note if the gospel is preached.

God teaches his servants the doctrine they proclaim if they speak as the oracles of God. As ministers of these things they must first experience in their own heart the things they preach. How well is this truth set forth by the apostle John when he says, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;*****That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, (now we are reminded why it is this way) that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ." Though the ministry today has not seen the Savior with the natural eye, or handled him with their hands, yet they must see him by faith, handle him and hear him with heavenly ears if they speak to the comfort of his people. These things are revealed from faith to faith. The apostle makes it very clear that he received not these things from men, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Then his preaching was not with excellency of speech or enticing words, but in demonstration of the Spirit.

We should read and familiarize ourselves with the written word; "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished

unto all good works." It is unbecoming in any of us to say we do not need the Bible in our preaching, or we can preach as well without as with it, yet the reading alone does not qualify us to speak as the oracles of God. Though one has an understanding of the principles of the doctrine of grace, the preaching of the gospel is as the Spirit give them utterance. There must be a waiting upon the Lord for understanding of each portion of his word.

When one speaks as the oracles of God (as God has revealed the things he speaks to him personally) the works of the flesh are revealed, the heart is searched and often warmed by stirring up the pure mind by way of remembrance of the goodness of God to them as a poor sinner, unworthy of the least of his mercies. When such is the case there is no conflict between the doctrine of predestination and exhortation. THE DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION IS THE DOCTRINE OF THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH? THE ONLY DOCTRINE CONSISTENT WITH THE DOCTRINE OF ELECTION? THE EFFECTUAL CALL OF EVERY VESSEL OF GOD'S MERCY TO A KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH, THEIR PRESERVATION AND FINAL GLORIFICATION IN GOD'S OWN TIME AND WAY. To try to separate it from the preaching of the Word, which is Jesus, is not speaking as the oracles of God for the command is to preach the Word that is made flesh. As each one is led by the Spirit to believe that all things work together for good to them that love God, by reviewing their pathway, they are made to see that God has led them through many dangers, seen and unseen by them. Many times their sorrows have been turned into joy, and the hand of a loving God has been seen as their deliverer. Their own weakness has been made known to them, and they have been brought low before God's throne. The hand that has brought them through these things has taught them that God rules, heaven is his throne, the earth his footstool. Not a sparrow falls without him.

Surely this doctrine is precious to his people: That the devil's bounds are set; that life, death, hell and worlds unknown hang on his firm decree; our cross and our crown are both willed by our God; our times are in his hand, and each event at his command. Nothing is impossible with him, even the winds and sea obey him. The wrath of man praises him and the remainder he restrains. These things have to do with the salvation of his chosen people, and they comfort and strengthen them causing praises to his holy name. This doctrine, as taught them by experience, never causes them to excuse themselves in wickedness, or speak lightly of their sins; never leads them to adopt a can't help it attitude, or hide behind these things as a cloak for their sins. I am persuaded the apostle Peter could later see the purpose of God in his denial of the Savior, because it taught him his own weakness, but he wept bitterly when the suffering Savior looked at him. So do all the truly taught of God today.

So likewise the doctrine of exhortation. Does it conflict with predestination? No. Is it conditional to exhort the church of God in the things taught in his holy Word? No. The same God who has declared the end from the beginning has decreed that these things be taught to his glory and to the praise of his grace. The man that is thus led to speak these things will suffer persecution. "Yea, and all that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Jesus was persecuted because he rebuked the unrighteousness, and taught a doctrine that left no place for the

glorying of men. The servant is no greater than his master. To the humbled of God these things will eventually lead to peaceable fruits of righteousness.

For one to decide of themselves, out of a carnal mind, that many portions of the word of God are being neglected, that it is their duty to proclaim these things, it will be death in the pot. If led and directed by the Spirit, through and by the unerring love of God and his cause to proclaim these things, then no man shall set on him to hurt him. God has a set time for his work. If some of the brethren are led to speak of these things how thankful we should be. I do not feel to have this gift, if I indeed have one at all, but I desire that God will lead others to speak of these things, also myself if it is his will. So long as these are not set forth as conditions that are optional with us, they should not be lightly spoken of. May God lead us to think on these things, that the preaching of Jesus be our theme, whether it be in exhorting the brethren or speaking of his all wise decrees. It is good for us to examine ourselves whether we be in the faith or not. Try the spirits whether they be of God or men; take heed unto ourselves, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: and in so doing save ourselves, and them that hear us; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

D. V. S.

I KINGS 14:1-18.

One of our ministering brethren has asked that we give our understanding of this portion of the written word. Paul tells us that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:16. This being true, the scripture under consideration must of necessity be for the benefit of the household of faith. It will undoubtedly be helpful to our readers, and give them a better understanding of what we shall endeavor to present for their consideration, if they will turn to the fourteenth chapter of 1 Kings and carefully read the first eighteen verses. We will quote the fifth and sixth verses to use as a foundation to build on. They read as follows:

> "And the Lord said unto Ahijah, Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee for her son; for he is sick; thus and thus shalt thou say unto her: for it shall be, when she cometh in, that she shall feign herself to be another woman. And it was so, when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, that he said, Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself to be another? for I am sent to thee with heavy tidings."

Before treating particularly upon the subject matter in the fourteenth chapter, we would like to review briefly the historical background of Jeroboam, and how he came to be king over Israel. In the forty-third verse of chapter eleven of this book we are told that "Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father: and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead." A further unfolding of events is set forth in the twelfth chapter, from which we quote, as follows: "And Rehoboam went to Shechem: for all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king. And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who was yet in Egypt, heard of it, (for he was fled from the presence of king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt;) That they went and called him. And Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto Rehoboam, saying, Thy

father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee." We are fearful that this type of negotiator or bargainer is not altogether extinct in our land today. Therefore we should give all diligence to the lesson to be learned in order to profit thereby. King Rehoboam took three days to consider and answer him. In the meantime he consulted with his advisers, both old and young. He forsook the counsel of the older and wiser heads and yielded to that given by the young men of his day. As a consequence there was strife and divisions, and even bloodshed in Israel, and the king himself had to flee to Jerusalem. "So Israel rebelled against the house of David." It was under these conditions that Jeroboam was made king over Israel, and we are told that only the tribe of Judah faithfully clung to and followed the house of David, or in the old paths. Jeroboam, having won the vast majority of the Israelites, took counsel and had made and set up two calves of gold for them to worship, which made it much easier for them than having to go to Jerusalem. Alas! there are too many even to-day who want to go to heaven on flowery beds of ease, while others have to fight and sail through bloody seas. Jeroboam held his feasts like unto those in Judah, and he offered upon the altar in Bethel, "Sacrificing unto the calves that he had made: and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made." Let it be noted that these priests were those which he and not God had made. (Man made priests or ministers are no good even in our day.) At this juncture we are told that "there came a man of God out of Judah (the faithful tribe) by the word of the Lord unto Bethel: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. And he cried against the altar in the word of the Lord, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee. And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which the Lord hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out." These words of the true prophet of God displeased Jeroboam to such an extent that he put forth his hand to lay upon him, but God smote it and dried it up. After being thus afflicted, he desired the prophet to intreat the Lord to restore his withered hand, significant of his ruling power, to him again. When this was done, Jeroboam then wanted to reward the man of God who, having been instructed of the Lord said to the king, "If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place." Notwithstanding his firm resolve at first to adhere to God's word, he finally succumbed to the pleading of an old prophet, who lied to him, to turn back and partake of that which God had expressly forbidden. Because of this unfaithfulness, when God's true prophet went on his way he was met by a lion, which slew him. His carcase was not buried for a considerable time, but was left on exhibition as an example to those who passed by to see. Is it not a great warning even unto this day and time to the servant of God who is disobedient to his heavenly calling? We are told that the old prophet later repented and went after the carcase of the one slain by the lion whom he had influenced to do that which was wrong, and took him and buried him in his own grave, and mourned over him, say-

ing, "Alas, my brother!" "And it came to pass, after he had buried him, that he spake to his sons, saying, When I am dead, then bury me in the sepulchre wherein the man of God is buried; lay my bones besides his bones: For the saying which he cried by the word of the Lord against the altar in Bethel, and against all the houses of the high places which are in the cities of Samaria, shall surely come to pass." This old prophet saw the error of his way and endeavored to make amends by emphasizing that all that God had spoken against Jeroboam's wickedness should surely come to pass, but much harm had already come to Israel because of it. Notwithstanding the prophet's reaffirmation of all that the Lord had spoken against Jeroboam, it is said, "After this thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil way, but made again of the lowest of the people priests of the high places: whosoever would, he consecrated him, and he became one of the priests of the high places. (The church should be careful and ordain to the ministry only those who clearly manifest a gift to preach the gospel of the Son of God.) And this thing became sin unto the house of Jeroboam, even to cut it off, and to destroy it from off the face of the earth." We believe we have known of leaders in our time similar to Jeroboam in many respects, who have persisted in their evil courses. Jeroboam tried to get his wife to disguise herself and go to the prophet at Shiloh, a sacred place to those of pure minds, and deceive him in order to ascertain, if possible, whether or not his son and potential successor to the throne, who was ill, would recover and carry on his evil system of ruling. It does seem to us that from time to time there are clear manifestations of the fact that God is above the Devil, and here is one instance of it. Even though the eyes of Ahijah, the prophet, were set because of advanced age and he could not see, the record says that "the Lord said unto Ahijah, Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee for her son; for he is sick: thus and thus shalt thou say unto her: for it shall be when she cometh in, that she shall feign herself to be another woman." We cannot put into words our pleasure and delight over the blessed assurance this gives of the fact that our God, who discerns the thoughts and intent of even the hearts of wicked men is ever mindful of his own, to prevent the trickery and deceitfulness of Satan and all his hellish hosts from success in their attempts to circumvent the fulfillment of God's promises to his people. God will protect and shield his own from the wiles of scheming men and devils, and of this we can rest well assured. They cannot be compared to the Lord, before whom all the wisdom of this vain world is but foolishness. God had so informed the old blind prophet and prepared him against being deceived, that when he heard the sound of her feet, as she came in the door, that he said, "Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself to be another? for I am sent to thee with heavy tidings." It would be difficult for one to imagine her surprise, yea, her amazement, at this salutation by the blind prophet whom they had planned to deceive. She must have been altogether at a loss for words with which to reply, or what to say to God's prophet. She was dumbfounded and speechless, so the prophet continued by saying, "I am sent to thee with heavy tidings." The message which the prophet sent to her husband, king Jeroboam was hard and heavy indeed. Unlike the gospel to the poor and needy, it was just the opposite to glad tidings and good news. He said, "Go, tell Jeroboam, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Forasmuch as I exalted

thee from among the people, and made thee prince over my people Israel, And rent the kingdom way from the house of David, and gave it thee: and yet thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in mine eyes; But hast done evil above all that were before thee: for thou hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, to provoke me to anger, and hast cast me behind thy back." The Lord, by whose providence he became king was holding him to an account, declared he would bring evil upon his house, and would cut off from his house all male children, and him that is shut up and left in Israel, "and will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as man taketh away dung, till it be all gone." This indicated clearly that the Lord God of Israel was displeased at Jeroboam to such an extent that he was determined to tear up every vestige of his household, root and branch, so that there would be absolutely nothing left of it, and with no hope of any revival of it at any future time. The prophet went on to say, "Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat; for the Lord hath spoken it. Arise thou therefore, get thee to thine own house: and when thy feet enter into the city, the child shall die." This showed the utter contempt which God had for his acts, and we repeat that this was sad or heavy news or tidings, but we are told that the wages of sin is death, and the soul that sinneth, it shall die. God's word which declares it, shall not fail. Following this it says, "And all Israel shall mourn for him, and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam." Abijah being the one and only son of Jeroboam, and potential heir to the throne, Israel no doubt hoped that in him was the seed and promise, or hope, of better things, when his wicked father would be removed and go the way of all the earth, but the child's death put an end to all their hopes, and they were left to mourn over their condition. At such times the Lord's people may feel he has utterly cast them off and forsaken them, but they must be made to know that he is better to them than all their fears. Sometimes God removes the undershepherd of the flock, and the flock goes mourning all their days, until God makes them look unto him as the only one who can supply their needs. The word of the Lord to Israel in that sad hour was, "Moreover the Lord shall raise him up a king over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam that day: but what? even now." Israel was made to see the hand of the Lord raising up another king, of his own choosing, who would oppose and cut off the house, or destroy the modes of worship under Jeroboam. Nevertheless, it is said, "the Lord shall smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water, and he shall root up Israel out of this good land, which he gave to their fathers, and shall scatter them beyond the river, because they have made their groves (assembly places), provoking the Lord to anger." It does seem to us that there is a great deal of food for thought and meditation for the church in this age set forth in these scriptures. All are accountable unto God, and when he comes searching Jerusalem with candles, as he surely will from time to time, he will not hold any guiltless, but will judge every man according as his work shall be. There are great responsibilities devolving upon each and every member of the church, which is his body, and there

should be a taking heed unto themselves; a watching, waiting and praying for God's guidance in all things. No member is so small or insignificant that his responsibility is not felt when it is shirked. "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." Isa. 52:1. Jesus said to his disciples, "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." Mat. 5:29. It is said that God gave Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, who did sin, and who made Israel to sin. It most certainly behooves God's servants to take heed unto themselves, and also unto the doctrine, lest having preached to others they themselves become castaways; and it also behooves the flock to watch over their undershepherds, or leaders, taking heed unto the doctrine and the order of God's house lest they be led astray and become partakers of their sins. We can but feel the solemnity of these sacred things as we attempt to give the true import of this portion of the word. Until our brother asked for our views on them, we do not recall ever giving these particular words any serious consideration, but now they seem to loom up before us with such outstanding importance for the church in this age that we are at a loss for words that will bring forth their significance sufficiently to emphasize them as we would like. Of a truth, these and other scriptures were written for our learning. Paul said in his epistle to the Romans, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might hope." In a measure we feel condemned for not searching the Scriptures more diligently and for not being more familiar with the letter of the word at least, for from time to time our attention is called to such wonderful portions of the word that we either had never seen, or forgotten about as not to know that they were even in the Bible that we are made ashamed of ourself and all our ways. While realizing full well that we come far short of measuring up to the standards of an Editor of such a paper as the *Signs of the Times,* we can but feel that God is blessing us by causing our readers to ask such questions as are often presented to us concerning the precious things to be found in his storehouse, which stirs up what we hope is our pure mind and causes us to dig deep at the throne of grace for that wisdom and knowledge which will enable us to go in and out before so great a people as are the people of the living God.

We will attempt to conclude these remarks by calling attention to the seventeenth and eighteenth verses, which are the last inquired about. It says in verse seventeen that "Jeroboam's wife arose, and departed, and came to Tirzah: and when she came to the threshold of the door, the child died." This confirmed the *heavy tidings* referred to by the prophet, and everything came to pass "according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by the hand of his servant Ahijah the prophet." These sayings should tend to establish us unequivocally in the doctrine and belief of God's faithfulness in the performance and fulfilment of his word. Jesus said, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Let us all firmly resolve to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, despite all the opposition we may encounter, for if God be for us, who can be against us? We hope these thoughts

may be profitable to the saints and of some satisfaction to our yoke-fellow who made the request.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Lincoln Co., Maine, Sept 6, 7, and 8, 1946, sends greetings to the several churches and associations with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN: Another year has passed and according to our custom we address you in a circular letter. As many here know, sister Nellie Palmer was appointed to write this letter, but God in his infinite wisdom has called her from this life to the heavenly home where there is no more sorrow or pain but everlasting rest and joy with her Lord and Savior to whom she was always happy to give all honor and praise. So the task of writing the letter has fallen to less competent hands, and if we are directed to write anything to the comfort of God's people give all glory to him whom to know is life everlasting.

In the first chapter of John it is written, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.******All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.******He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." In the above there is nothing said about what man did for alone he can do nothing, but it is all from first to last what the Lord has done. No man by searching can find out God. He works in our hearts according to his will and as "the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

We believe in a revealed religion and we hope that the realities of the truth have been revealed to us by the communion of the Holy Spirit in our being. When Jesus asked of those with him, "But whom say ye that I am? Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Mat. 16:16-18. Many years before Christ's appearing in the earth he was revealed to the prophet Isaiah who said that he was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.******He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him: and with his stripes we are healed." "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant." Psalms 25:14. We are living by faith that God is a supreme sovereign and works his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. None can hinder him and none can come to Jesus except those drawn by the Father, and no man knows the Father, save the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him. We feel we are sinners, but hope grace was given in Jesus according to his electing love, predestinated purpose and that inheritance revealed in heaven. All the sweetness of fellowship and joy is but a foretaste of the pleasure that shall be revealed in us as the redeemed

of the Lord. This secret of the God's love revealed to poor sinners is but little compared to the fulness of his wisdom and knowledge.

In closing we will say this Association stands firmly in the doctrine of a revealed religion, salvation by grace, not of works lest any man should boast, absolute predestination and God's foreknowledge of all things from the beginning to the end. He is the author and finisher of our faith, the Alpha and Omega. When we are raised in his likeness we shall see him as he is and be satisfied.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS,
Moderator
SANFORD S. BARTLETT,
Clerk

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, Sept. 6, 7, and 8, 1946, sends greetings to the several churches and associations with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN: Through the kind providence of Almighty God, the Maine Old School Baptist Association has been able to meet again with the church at Whitefield. Your messengers and correspondence have been gladly received and we pray for continuance of the same.

In John 21st chapter Jesus commanded Peter to feed both his lambs and his sheep. As Peter obeyed the command in days of old, so too did our ministering brethren, Elders Arnold H. Bellows and John D. Wood who were with us. Jesus was preached as our great salvation, food that sustains the flock of God's children as nothing else can. Our pure minds were stirred up by way of remembrance as we sat down together in a heavenly place. Harmony prevailed and we felt it was good to be there.

The meeting was well attended by the Maine brethren, also a sister and friend from Baltimore and two friends from Arkansas. All were welcome. The next meeting of the Maine Association will be held, the Lord willing, Friday, Saturday and Sunday before the second Monday in September, 1947. The place will be announced by notice in the *Signs of the Times*.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS,
Moderator
SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk

OBITUARIES

JOSEPH C. STARR, our brother in Christ, passed away from this earthly life at Arlington (Va.) Hospital, March 19, 1947, aged 84 years, after being a patient there one month and having sustained two operations. Several months before his death he suffered a paralytic stroke from which he gradually rallied, but other trouble arose which made it necessary to remove him from his home in Fairfax Co., Va. to the hospital.

He was one of six children born to Marcus and Mary Mellott Starr of Fulton Co., Pa. all of whom have died except one brother, Thomas Starr of near Chestertown, Md. whose membership is with the Welsh Tract Church near Newark, Del. Brother Josie Starr's first wife was sister Bessie Starr, daughter of Samson J. and Rebecca Mellott who died several years ago. To them were born six children all of whom are now gone. There are two grandchildren from this union, Mrs. Hazel Sheehan and Harold Wible of Three Springs, Pa., also five great grandchildren. Brother Starr's second wife was our late sister, Matilda Middleton, a member of the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va. to whom he was married April 5, 1915. She died in 1929. To them were born eight children, seven of whom are living: Miss Sarah F. Starr, Leesburg, Va., Marcus Starr, near Herndon, Va., George Starr, U. S. N., Puerto Rico, Miss Mary Starr, Washington, D. C., Miss Margaret Starr, Richmond, Va., Miss Rebecca Starr, near Herndon, Va., Mrs. Russell Robertson, Washington, D. C. There are also five grandchildren from this union.

Brother Starr was baptized by me July 31, 1938 into membership with the Sideling Hill Church, Fulton Co., Pa. He had been under exercise of mind regarding baptism for several years before he was enabled through strength other than his own to take this step. He was well grounded in the faith of God's elect and was firm in his convictions not only in religion, but in other departments of life as well. He hated sham and loved sincerity and truth. His children were faithfully devoted to his welfare and comfort, and left

nothing undone conducive to his well-being. No father ever had children more devoted to him than they were. May the Lord comfort them in their sorrow and reconcile them to his will.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in Frying Pan meeting-house. Interment in Herndon Cemetery.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS

MRS. EFFIE (MacLAREN) CAREY departed this life after a short illness at her home, Palmyra, Ontario, Jan. 20, 1947, in her 86th Year. She was born Sept. 28, 1861, and lived all her life in the section of Ontario where she ended her days. She was the widow of Thomas L. Carey who died Dec. 1, 1926.

Sister Carey united with the Covenanted Baptist Church and was baptized May 28, 1903, thus making her a member of our church over 43 years. To the end of her days she was a very faithful member and an example to her brethren. In the things commended of God she walked as before him, and was ever, when possible, in her place to hear the truth preached, and it was her joy to have any who loved the truth to visit in her home. The writer often received needed encouragement from this dear sister when she would, with a few words, endorse what he had preached. She was loved and respected by all, being of a meek and quiet spirit. She will be greatly missed, especially by her dear and devoted family and sister. Her children who mourn her departure are, Mrs. Viola Hetherington, Victoria, B. C., Mrs. Marie Driver, Blenheim, Ontario, John Carey, Palmyra, Ontario, Leslie Carey, Morpeth, Ontario, Wilfred Carey, Palmyra, Ontario, Mrs. Tena Sinclair, Duart, Ontario, and Miss Effie Carey, Toronto, Ontario, also one sister Miss Tena MacLaren who resided with sister Carey. These were all very devoted to her and delighted in pleasing her and ministering to her comfort in every way.

For some time sister Carey's sight has been very dim, yet she retained her interest in her church, and her children and grandchildren of whom there were fourteen. I visited her a few days before she died, and fearing that talking would tax her strength I said, "I am going to sing for you." I began to sing the 23rd Psalm. She joined with me and sang it to the end with a lovely, strong voice which was so soon to be silent in death. We believe she is in the Paradise of God. At her funeral we sang the 23rd Psalm and the writer spoke from Rev. 7:13. "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" One more precious sister has fallen asleep in Jesus with a blessed hope that when he shall appear she will awake with his likeness and be satisfied.

(Elder) GEORGE RUSTON

JAMES EDWARD BOURLAND, son of the late Elder A. D. Bourland was born Oct. 22, 1876, and passed away Jan. 15, 1947. He was reared and lived in Tarrant Co. all of his life near Keller, Texas, but was living in Fort Worth at the time of his death. He leaves to mourn their loss his wife, Mrs. Lula Bourland, Ft. Worth; two sons, Lee and Louis, Ft. Worth; four brothers, John, Ft. Worth, Andy, Lige and Green, Vernon, Texas; also a host of other relatives and friends for he was a man liked by all who knew him.

He was a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone. He and the writer have had wonderful times together talking on the scriptures of eternal truth. He was very able in talking of these good things of God's kingdom and of his glory. I never knew a man I thought more of, and his funeral services so affected me I could hardly speak words of comfort to the bereaved family, being so over-come with emotion. The text will be found in I Cor. 15:19. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." So the hope of God's people does not stop here, it reaches beyond this vale of tears.

After the services we laid his body away in the old Bourland Cemetery to await the great resurrection day when God will descend with a shout and the dead in Christ shall be raised to life everlasting to praise his great name on high. May the great blessing of Almighty God rest on the bereaved ones.

(Elder) C. Y. OSTEEN

ELDER LOYD KEMPER SHOCKLEY was born November 14, 1866 at Hillsville, Va., and died July 20, 1946 making his stay on earth 79 years, 8 months and 6 days. He was married to Emma Allen, November 24, 1886, and to this union were born eight sons. His wife and two sons having preceded him to the grave. He joined the Primitive Baptist church August 1885. He was licensed to preach March 21, 1909 and ordained July 1910 at Pine Grove Church. He died at the home of his son Hyatt, near Hillsville, Va. The funeral services were conducted by Elder John F. Sumner at the home. Burial was in Pine Grove Cemetery at Foster Falls, Va. He leaves six sons to mourn their loss, Roscoe of Max Meadows, Va. Homer of Wythville, Va., Wyatt and Kent, Cleveland, Ohio, Vivian of Dublin, Va., and Hyatt of Hillsville, Va. Also one sister, Mrs. Lunnia Condle, Frees, Va.

Written by L. H. SHOCKLEY

With deep regret her kindred in Christ, her relatives in the flesh and her many friends noted the passing of sister ORRA HASBROUCK at her late home in the city of Kingston, N. Y., March 4, 1946, after a long illness of heart ailment associated with other troubles. She was 83 years of age.

Sister Hasbrouck's maiden name was Swarthout, and she was born at Boiceville, N. Y., Feb. 6, 1863. She was united in marriage to John Hasbrouck in Michigan in 1885, her uncle Elder Thomas Swarthout performing the ceremony. In 1889 Mr. and Mrs. Hasbrouck moved to Shokan, N. Y. where they resided until 1913 when they moved to Kingston. Mr. Hasbrouck died in 1930.

Sister Hasbrouck related the evidences of her good hope through Christ to the Olive and Hurley Church about 1911, and was baptized into the fellowship of that church by the late Elder J. B. Slauson. She was one of the most faithful and devoted of members. Her church came first in her thoughts and plans, and she always exercised sound judgment in all church matters. Her home was always open to the brethren, and her generosity to her church and pastor was one of her notable characteristics. Her heart and her hand were in all that she did in church activities, and she never failed to attend the meetings when it was humanly possible or advisable for her to do so. The promises of the gospel and the doctrine of eternally saving grace were her meat and drink in her spiritual exercises, and by precept and example she exemplified the walk of a child of God.

She is survived by an adopted daughter, Miss Sadie Van Tassell, who ministered to her with all a daughter's love and care, sparing nothing for her comfort. She is also survived by several brothers and sisters. She is sadly missed in her home, in the church and in the community. The funeral services were held in Kingston. The writer, assisted by licentiate, now Elder, Amasa J. Slauson, officiating. Interment in the Van Kleek Cemetery at Mount Temper, N. Y.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

ARCHER C. HOLLOWAY, son of the late Daniel and Margaret Holloway was born June 27, 1862, near Pittsville, Wicomico Co., Md. He passed from this life Jan. 29, 1947, at his home in Newark, Worcester Co., Md. at the age of 84. He was united in marriage, Dec. 10, 1884, to Miss Martha E. Hastings of Whitesville, Del.

He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Martha E. Holloway of Newark, Md.; two sons, William H. Holloway, Snow Hill, Md., and Chester Clay Holloway, Clearmont, Fla.; two daughters, Mrs. Benjamin Johnson, Salisbury, Md., and Mrs. Lee Warren, Berlin, Md.; one brother, John I. Holloway, Newark, Del.; two sisters, Mrs. M. F. Hastings, Delmar, Del., and Mrs. Charles Dickerson, Snow Hill, Md.

The community has lost a successful and highly esteemed citizen. He was instrumental in the organization of a fertilizer plant, the Worcester Fertilizer Co. of Snow Hill, Md., serving as its only vice president from its organization in 1913 until 1941, and president until his death; he was president of the Home Bank of Newark, Md., also serving for a time as president of the Commercial National Bank, Snow Hill, Md. One of his main interests was farming, having operated successfully for a number of years several farms near Snow Hill.

Mr. Holloway was not a member of the church, but a firm believer in the doctrine of the Old School Baptist church that salvation is of the Lord. He, with his wife, who is member and clerk of the Snow Hill Church, attended most of the meetings of the Old School Baptist churches on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. He was considerate of the material needs of the church and pastor, manifesting that as he received spiritual things from them it was no great thing that they received of his carnal things. Though not a member of the visible church, he has left evidence that he belonged to the innumerable host that no man could number, having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

The funeral service was conducted at the home, Newark, Md. on Friday, January 31, 1947 at 2 o'clock P. M. Hymn 424 in the Lester-Durand Hymn Book being his favorite it was read. "I am a stranger here below." Prayer was offered by Elder H. M. Bennett of Mardela Springs, Md., and the writer read and commented on the 13th verse of the 11th chapter of Hebrews. Interment in the Snow Hill Church Cemetery.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER

Deacon VICTOR HARTWELL LAWS was born June 22, 1873, and passed away Aug. 28, 1946, making him 73 years, 2 months and 6 days of age.

I think it could be said he always loved the truth. He always went to meetings with his parents and as far back as I can remember was ever present. He told me when he was about 19 years of age he was sitting in the balcony (of the old meeting-house) at Nassaongo looking over the congregation, and he knew they were the Lord's people and loved them. His life proved it for he always enjoyed entertaining and doing for them. It was a privilege he enjoyed as long as he lived.

He had a desire to unite with the church for years but felt his unworthiness so keenly, but on Aug. 29, 1943, he was baptized into the fellowship of the Salisbury Church at Salisbury, Md. I think I never saw anyone so happy after uniting with the church. He felt unworthy of his breth-

ren's esteem and fellowship, but oh what peace he enjoyed in being a member of the church, enjoying its privileges and cares. By unanimous vote he was chosen Deacon Oct. 30, 1943. He felt his unfitness to a very great extent and was meek and precious to his brethren and friends.

He was sick about two months, gradually getting worse and was taken to the Delaware Hospital, Wilmington, Del., in hopes that he could be benefitted but all to no avail. While there he said he longed to meet with the brethren and the hymn, 'Glorious things of thee are spoken, Zion city of our God!" was on his mind. He lived just three years after uniting with the church as he passed away on Aug 28, 1946. 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away;' blessed be the name of the Lord."

His pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, conducted the funeral service at the Law's home, speaking comfortingly to the family and the large number who congregated to pay their respects to his memory. He leaves to mourn his loss, his widow, Mrs. Maud T. Laws; two children, Mrs. Margaret Laws Engle and Victor H. Laws, Jr.; one sister, Edith Laws Wiliams; two half-brothers, James H. and Lee Laws. May the Lord bless all who mourn and comfort them and all who love his appearing is my desire. (Mrs.) MAUD T. LAWS

MRS. CHRISTINA CARPENTER, daughter of the late Elder David and Dinah Hicks deceased, was born Dec. 6, 1869, and died Feb. 24, 1947, making her stay on earth 77 years, 2 months and 18 days. She was united in marriage to Will Buckbee, Jan 28, 1890, and to this union three children were born, Okey Buckbee, Hartland W. Va.; two daughters, Osie Elswick, Dille, W. Va., and Ethel Hostetler, Uniontown, Pa. Her husband died May 8, 1909, and on April 15, 1913, she married Thomas Carpenter. To this union one son was born, Vinton Carpenter, Nallen, W. Va. Her second husband passed away a few years ago (date not available). She leaves to mourn their loss, four children, eighteen grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren; one brother, B. F. Hicks; three sisters, Rachel Methney, Rebecca and Josie Rose, together with a host of nephews, nieces and friends.

She never united with the church but was of the Old School Baptist faith which was evidenced by her request that her family have an Old Baptist minister to preach her funeral. Her sons granted her request by calling Elder Benton Carpenter to conduct the service, which was held at the home of her nephew, Huey C. Hicks at Stinson, W. Va., March 2, 1947. The remains were laid to rest in the Hicks Cemetery to await the resurrection, and the call to come forth, we hope, to be changed unto the glorious body of her Lord and Master, Jesus Christ; and to shout and sing that new song that the angels in heaven cannot sing, and to praise him through a never ending eternity which will not be too long for God's people to praise him for he is worthy. Written by her nephew. (Elder) HURSHEL HICKS

My mother, MRS. MARY JANE STUCKEY EASTERS, was born Sept. 14, 1853, in Barber Co., Ala., and died Aug. 17, 1945. Her mother died when she was 7 years old and she then lived with her mother's oldest sister, Mrs. Polly Faulk, in Alabama. At the age of 16 she married Wiley Jackson Easters, coming to Texas at the age of 19 with her husband and baby girl. They were three weeks getting to Jefferson, Texas, by steamboat. Seven children were born to them: Mrs. Sarah Owens, Ft. Worth, Texas, Leon B. Easters now deceased, Dr. W. F. Easters, Dallas, Texas. Mrs. Oma Pennock, Ft. Worth, Texas, Mrs. Maggie Simmons, Bloomburg, Texas, Mrs. Connie Hogue, Bloomburg, Texas and last, a son, died at birth.

She was a member of the Predestinarian Old Baptist faith for 50 years or more and a member of the Sulphur Fork Association. She always contended for and held strong in her faith and love for the church people of her faith and belief until her death. She was a subscriber for the **Signs of the Times** for 40 years.

My father, WILEY JACKSON EASTERS, was born in Alabama, March 30, 1833, and died Nov. 27, 1918. He served in the Civil War, being wounded twice. In his thirties he was converted, finding himself a poor, lost sinner. He began searching the Scriptures seeking to know the truth and find rest and comfort in his helpless condition. His deep sense of unworthiness kept him from asking for a home with the Old Baptists until he was 80 years old.. He then told of his great desire to be baptized in the Old Baptist faith and was received and baptized by Elder W. B. Robertson of the Beech Creek Church in the Sulphur Fork Association. He continued to grow stronger in the precious joy he had found in his Lord, and sang praises to God until his death. Their unworthy daughter of like, hope and faith.

also

My husband, JOHN B. SIMMONS, was born Sept 17, 1880, near Anderson, S. C., and died Feb. 18, 1939. He came to Texas at the age of 2 years with his father, mother, three brothers and one sister. His father was a Missionary Baptist preacher. His mother died when he was 10 years old leaving eight children and his father married again. At the age of 15 they moved to this vicinity, near Bloomburg. He was first married to Miss Jerusha Bentley at the age of 24. She lived two years and left no children at her death. After three years he was married to Miss Maggie Eas-

ters of this place and to them were born five sons; C. Ray Simmons,Texarkana, Tex., E. Drew Simmons, Bloomburg, Tex.,a banker here for 25 years, J. Fred Simmons, Radio Operator, died when nearly 19 years of age, Malcom W. Simmons, Engineer on Gulf Oil Lines, Cambridge City, Ind., David Simmons, Jamaica, N. Y.

He first united with the Missionary Baptists but after his father's death he became dissatisfied and attended the Primitive Baptist Church. He confessed his joy in the Primitive Baptist faith and desired a home in that Christian love for the brethern, being baptized by Elder W. B. Robertson in full fellowship of Beech Creek Church where he remained about 25 years until his death. One who loved him in that same beautiful hope and faith he loved, his wife.

(Mrs.) MAGGIE SIMMONS

ELIZA E. GARRET, daughter of Marshall B. and Mary Ann Garrett, was born in Jefferson County, Kansas, April 4, 1862, and died Jan. 10, 1947. She would have been 85 years of age in April this year. She was married to Jared R. Cox in 1879 and lived in Jefferson Co., Kansas, until 1902 when they came to Oklahoma. In 1922 they united with the West Union Predestinarian Baptist Church in Kansas and remained in that church until death. Her husband died April 25, 1934. They leave one daughter, Mrs. Ida M. Gable of Oklahoma City. There are seven grandchildren, Mrs. Orbin Beall, Carlton, Oregon, Leon Gable, Seattle, Wash., and Mrs. Lucille Points, Monterey Park, Cal., Jared, Kenneth and Celeste Gable and Mrs. Geraldine Buzbee, all of Oklahoma City. There are a number of great-grandchildren and several nieces and nephews.

I tried to speak a word of comfort to the relatives and friends of brother Jared R. Cox twelve years and nine months ago, also to the same relatives (except sister Gable's husband who died about seven years ago) at the funeral of sister Cox who lived in Carnegie, Okla. There were many friends to mourn their departure, but weep not dear ones as you would for those having no hope, but rather rejoice that God called them at his appointed time, through faith in his love and grace given us through Jesus Christ before the world began.

I visited in their home once a month for seven years before brother Cox died and our meetings were always so wonderful that the memories linger day and night. They both requested no flowers at their funerals, but their loved ones scattered flowers all along their pathways while they were living, which was a comfort to them both. I could say much more but I fear this is becoming too lengthy. Your humble servant.

Granite, Okla. (Elder) W. D. HUGHES.

MRS. ELLEN GREEN CANNON of Decatur, Georgia, was born February 5, 1857, and departed this life February 6, 1947, making her stay on earth ninety years and one day. Mother was married December 3, 1876 to John Thomas Cannon, who was taken November 23, 1936. They were together sixty years, and to the union was born twelve children, eleven of whom lived to attain their majority. Those who survive are Mrs. George C. Brooks, Forsyth, Georgia, Mrs. Benjamin Dixon, Atlanta, Georgia, Mrs. R. A. Byrd, Decatur, Georgia, and the following sons; Arthur, Daniel, Albert, Horace and Fred.

Mother united with the Smyrna Primitive Baptist Church in Forsyth, Georgia during the summer of 1902, and later her membership was transferred to East Atlanta Church in Atlanta, Georgia. She was always at service when health and weather permitted, and was ever willing to welcome the members into her home and care for them.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder H. O. Nash, and interment in the Forsyth, Georgia Cemetery. Although several of the children believe that salvation is of the Lord, only the writer has asked a home in the Primitive Church.

HORACE H. CANNON.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association well be held, Providence permitting, with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster Co., Pa., commencing on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in August at 10:30 A. M. standard time, and continuing two days, Aug. 23rd and 24th. To those coming by automobile the meeting-house is located directly on Route 222, north of Conowingo, Md., and about one quarter mile north of the Md.,-Pa. state line. If there be any coming by bus please communicate with the undersigned in ample time for directions. To those who might arrive on Friday, stop at the Royce Jenkins home near the meeting-house for overnight directions.

All brethren of our faith and church order and friends as well are cordially invited to meet with us. CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Church Clerk, Route 2, Quarryville, Pa.

The annual all-day meeting of the Brookfield Church and congregation will be held as usual, at Slate Hill, N. Y. Friday, August 22nd, 1947.

R. LESTER DODSON.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, Sept. 5, 6 and 7, 1947, at Bowdoinham, Me. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

SANFORD S. BARTLETT, Clerk

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 115 RUTHERFORD, N. J., SEPTEMBER, 1947 No. 9

FORGIVE AND FORGET

"When streams of unkindness as bitter as gall
Bubble up from the heart to the tongue,
And meekness is writhing in torment and thrall
By the hand of ingratitude wrung;
In the heat of injustice, unwept and unfair
While the anguish is festering yet,
None, none but an angel of God can declare
I now can forgive and forget.

But if the bad spirit is chased from the heart,
And the lips are in penitence steeped,
The wrong so repented, the wrath may depart,
Though scorn on injustice be heaped;
For the best compensation is paid for all ill,
When the cheek with contrition is wet,
And each made to feel it is possible still
Once more to forgive and forget.

To forget, it is hard for a man with a mind,
However the heart may forgive;
To blot out all perils and dangers behind,
And but for the future to live;
Then how can it be, for at every turn
Recollection the spirit will fret,
And the ashes of injury smoulder and burn,
Though we strive to forgive and forget.

O, hearken, my tongue shall the riddle unseal,
And mind shall be partners with heart;
While thee to thyself I bid conscience reveal
And show thee how evil thou art;
Remember thy follies, thy sins and thy crimes,
How vast is that infinite debt,
Yet mercy hath seven times seventy times
Been swift to forgive and forget.

Brood not on insults and injuries old
For thou art injurious too;
Count not the sum till the total is told,
For thou art unkind and untrue;
And if all thy harms are forgotten, forgiven,
Now justice with mercy is met;
O, who would not gladly take lesson from heaven
And learn to forgive and forget.

Yes, yes let a man when his enemy weeps
Be swift to receive him a friend,
For thus on his head in kindness he heaps
Hot coals to refine and amend;
And hearts that are tender more easily yearn
(As a nurse o'er her innocent pet,)
And lips that were bitter to penitence turn
And whispers, "Forgive and Forget."

Submitted by AUTHOR UNKNOWN.
Mrs. Mary Ellison, Grantville, Kans.

CORRESPONDENCE

McDowell, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: For some time I have had a desire to say something concerning the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. I do not know whether my view of it is orthodox or not, but such as I have I humbly offer.

It seems to me now is a very appropriate time to observe the moral of this awful parable, seeing mercy and truth have fallen into the street, justice standeth afar off, dishonesty reigns, equity cannot enter, and men are slaving, craving and saving, working, worrying, driving and drudging, trying to keep together all the filthy lucre of earth to the utter neglect of the poor. Instead of mercy a filthy tyranny crawls across the earth. Multitudes are seeking and crying for peace, but a few for truth without which there can be no real peace. Wherefore? Because they seek it not by faith but by the works of the law, leaving out Christ in their dealings with God. Truth now suffereth and great men bid Christ sit lower and contract himself in less bounds as if he took too much room. Now is the

time for truth when the sky is black with lies; now is the time for faith when the facts seem to belie it; now is the time for brotherhood when cruelty and coldness reigns; now is the time for love when hate reigns; now is the time for hope when men are ready for despair. When the odds are ten to one attack! Kill off the giants of fear and unbelief with truth. It is almost true that the Christian has nothing to fear but fear. The giants of fear are only imaginary—but real to the "born again" Christian. Spiritual truth makes one free when seen and felt. Spiritual truth ends spiritual servitude. Think of no other way to peace and truth but the Jesus way of salvation: faith in his oath, covenant and his blood. Be of good cheer! Remember the covenant, do no more! As Abraham believed God, and that was just as good as if he had had the most perfect righteousness, so shall it be for us if we swing off on the promises of God.

Because the sinless Savior died,
My soul is counted free;
For God, the just, is satisfied,
To look on him and pardon me.

Calvary's wonders let us trace,
Justice magnified in grace!
Mark those purple streams and say:
There my sins were washed away.

Oh, give me, Lord, thy righteousness
To be my peace and wedding dress!
My sores it heals, my rags it hides,
And makes me dutiful besides.

This is confessedly the most awful parable of the Savior. To me the moral is very obvious. It warns against unbelief, covetousness, the deceitfulness and the misuse of riches, plainly showing there shall be no mercy shown to any who die in unbelief, having shown no mercy to any. Then, too, it is equally plain and certain from this parable that now is the only time (not hereafter) that human beings can repent, seeing we go to our long home the moment we depart out of these moving tents of clay. (Job 4:19; 10:11). There is no intermediate state apart from heaven and hell where disembodied souls are to be further sacrificed and purified after death. No, there is no such place even hinted at in this parable. Roman Catholics believe this and say by their masses they do not believe the sacrifice of the Lord himself is a satisfactory atonement for sin. It is a wonderful parable if we only take the time and trouble to search out the moral, or lesson, taught in it.

Undoubtedly our good Lord spoke this parable plainly on purpose to warn us against such an heresy. To say there is an intermediate state somewhere between hell and heaven for departed souls after death to be further purified and refined is equivalent to saying, we are only partly or half saved when these earthly tabernacles sink into the sod. In this parable, as in many others, two individuals are brought forth in contrast and the contrast is sustained throughout. It begins in time and is carried out into the future state. The whole is so graphic and forcible that it appears like the language of narration and not of a parable. Some expositors have regarded it as a real history, but whether the passage is historical or parabolical the moral is the same. It cannot for a moment be supposed that Jesus would use any embellishments even in a parable, that would leave any impression on an honest mind inconsistent with truth. It should be noticed that the rich man is not punished for being rich, (but for his misuse of those riches) nor the poor man rewarded for being poor. Riches are no crime, neither is poverty a virtue. The different conditions of human life are an ordinance of God, intended to bind us all together in mutual dependence, by exercising us in

the various charities of life, and riches are to be regarded as one of the many talents for the use of which an account must be given. It is true, at the same time however, that there is, generally speaking, more danger to the soul from riches than from poverty. (People go to the Devil with full pockets but never turn to God until hunger hits them.) As riches afford the means of indulging that natural love of ease and sensual pleasure, which the Christian should ever be striving against, it is too commonly found that the rich give way to the temptation, and instead of considering themselves God's stewards for the poor, bound to labor in useful and charitable works, they are too apt to live for themselves as if there was nothing for them to think of but how to enjoy themselves most in present pleasures. *Pride and idleness* too often go along with *fulness of bread,* and the heart accustomed to indulge its worldly and carnal lusts becomes hardened in selfishness and sensuality.

The parable warns us (that if we have eyes that have been taught to see, and ears that have been taught to hear) that this sort of life ends in misery. It shows that although a man keep from flagrant sin, no more is wanted to bring him to perdition than that he should live in carnal ease and selfish indulgence, seeking the *good things* in this life, and forgetting the poor, treating them at least with as much indifference as the dogs under his table. We should frequently meditate on the insight which is here afforded us of the world to come. The great truth is plainly intimated that there are only two, not three, conditions hereafter, and between the two a great gulf is fixed so there is no way of passing from the one condition to the other, in other words there is no room for repentance in the grave, seeing that the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a portion or reward forever in anything that is done under the sun for, "Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him." God's work is perfect, and all his ways are judgment.

The reply to the rich man's entreaty is remarkable, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded (believe), though one rose from the dead." People are too apt to think that if they actually saw an angel from heaven, or a departed friend from the dead, they would be moved to a livelier faith than they at present have and a deeper repentance, but what could such a visitor tell us that we know not now? It is not want of testimony which keeps us from living a godly life, but want of heart for such a life. We know the main truths which it concerns us to be informed of with as much certainity as if one had risen from the dead to tell us of them. An impression might indeed be made on us by such a visitor from the unseen world, but impressions of that kind soon wear off and after a time we should begin to doubt whether our senses might not have been deceived as to the reality of what we believed in on their testimony. When Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha, rose from the dead, we do not find the Jews in general persuaded to forsake their sins, nor yet when our Lord himself rose again. The fact is we have abundant proof that these solemn truths are certain. We want only a heart taught and awakened by the Holy Spirit to turn from evil ways to a serious and holy life. Such a heart God alone can give us, and he will not turn away from our prayers if we truly call upon him to create in us a clean heart and renew a right spirit within us. The case of Lazarus affords a ground of consolation amidst the

various sorrows of life. The soul of this poor man, who had been led by God's grace to seek the true riches "was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." If our trials have the effect upon us which they are intended to produce God will soon take us where sorrow and sighing are known no more forever. Oh time, run, run, run and hasten the marriage day! Oh, that men would sound his high praise.

Brother Dodson, if for any reason you do not feel to publish this poor view of mine it will be perfectly satisfactory with me to return it. Yours in a good hope through grace.

(Elder) MILFORD HALL, Sr.

Route 1, Berry, Ala.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: I am somewhat behind with the renewal of my subscription for our most loved and appreciated paper. I beg forgiveness, having no excuse to offer but negligence, however I wish to thank you for your courtesy and kindness.

I thought perhaps I would have a mind to write a few words of exhortation to my brethren, but I find I cannot prepare myself for of myself I can do nothing. I find in this I am not alone for Christ himself acknowledged the same. Since the green tree confesses this if the dry tree would be respectable it would necessarily have to do likewise. I find myself so often out of the way I tremble at the thought of taking His blessed name on my sin-cursed lips, still there is something amidst all this that causes me to hope and pray to the One whom I feel to know liveth and abideth forever. I feel to know from conditions and signs of the times that it is not so long until we will see the brightness of His coming without sin unto salvation. Some might say, well, what is he coming for? He is coming for his jewels which he has purchased with his own blood and dear was the cost, too precious to lose one of them, washed too clean to allow the unclean to mix with them, for they are purged, as it were, by fire so that there will be no dross.

Can you conceive, dear friends, what a beauty, what a glorious sight it will be when we shall awake in his likeness, with all tears wiped from our eyes and shall know no more sorrow? All this beautiful white throng washed whiter than snow in his own blood that cleanseth us who are as filthy rags. We who are conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity, going forth speaking lies in hypocrisy. Would or could any rational mind claim any honor for good deeds seeing we are of such description? We find in Romans, third chapter, a slight description given where He begins by telling us what we are. "Their throat is an open sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips," etc. Dear friend, can you imagine the odor of an open sepulcher, or can you think of a more subtle poison than a serpent? I cannot, and lo this is the predicament we are all in by nature. This is where our federal head fell to, and God declared that all shall bear seed after their kind. If you do not think so suppose we examine the matter. We plant and harvest the kind we plant; we graft and get the kind we graft; if you leave the stub you grafted undisturbed, it will grow and you will see two kinds of fruit on the same stub, each having fruit after its kind, so here we will notice the nurseryman. We are called trees (the elect are) of righteousness, and when He withdraws the glory of his salvation then we are left in the dark and straightway we are aware we have born fruit according to the flesh and not according to his righteousness.

I do not want to be worrisome to

any one, but I would like to request that in a time like this that the brotherhood as a whole be watchful, read and not stop there, but study lest we should let slip some of our identity either in doctrine or practice for Satan is like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. "There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Would like to write more but for fear of taking valuable space will close asking the love and fellowship of all to a poor sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

J. E. NORRIS

Route 1, Grand Saline, Texas.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: I feel too vile and sinful to thus address you. Every day since receiving the February number of the *Signs* I have longed to write you and try in my weak way to tell you how much comfort your views on John 3:8 has been to me. In all my life of over 90 years I never heard any one give their views on that scripture, and since reading your article it does seem to be an answer to one's hope that is born of the Spirit. Oh, if I could only tell you how much that scripture means to me, but the half has never been told. When I was bound down under a burden of sin and condemnation for months and years; trying all my good works even going to the mourner's bench; begging night and day with all my carnal prayers (for it was all I had) which was enmity against God; I asked all my friends to pray for me. They would tell me to accept Christ which I could not do. One day while sitting alone at home my heart it seemed was bleeding, tears flowing and I said, O God I have sinned against the Holy Ghost for which there is no forgiveness in this world nor the world to come. Oh, do have mercy on me for I feel hell is my doom. All at once there came as a mighty rushing wind which filled the whole house where I was sitting. While I was listening and wondering where it came from these words came as plainly as if some one had spoken them, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." I then felt so light and my burden was gone for a short time. I cannot tell it but I was singing the old hymn:

"O how happy are they,
Who their Savior obey,
And whose treasures are laid up above!
Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love.

That sweet comfort was mine
When the favor divine
I first found in the blood of the Lamb:
When my heart first believed,
O what joy I received!
What a heaven in Jesus' name!"

When my sister came in I told her my troubles were all over, that I had found Jesus and he was all I would need. She said you will have many doubts, fears, temptations and trials. The half has not been told, if I am spared I will tell you more. I want to thank each and every one of you. I am enclosing a sweet letter which I received from a dear brother who lives in Redwood, Va. A stranger in the flesh but I hope a dear brother in Christ Jesus. I feel it was an answer to my prayer. Sometime last month I got down to where Mephibosheth was. It seemed as if I could not live if the dear Lord did not send some of my brethren or a message from them, so when it was handed to me I fell upon my knees in thankfulness to God and said it is an answer to my feeble prayer. In con-

clusion I want to tell you, dear brother Dodson, and all the Associate Editors and all that write for the dear old *Signs* which I love and have read nearly all the time since I was a child, you cannot know how near you all feel to me and how thankful I do feel that I am blest with eyes to read it, and the beauty of it all is that you still send this pure old Hardshell Doctrine that our sweet Jesus set forth and he has blessed us with Elders to carry it on as the founder of the *Signs* did, Elder Gilbert Beebe. The *Signs* is all the preaching I get to hear now. After reading this use your judgement. If it is not sound doctrine destroy it. A sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

(Mrs.) FRANK LODEN

Redwood, Va.

MRS. F. LODEN, DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD: I read your article in the December 1946 *Signs of the Times*. It was a good and precious letter and I have read it over many times. Ever since I read your worthy and soul-cheering letter I have desired to write you if the Lord wills, feeling you are so worthy and I so unworthy. Dear sainted and tried sister we are not personally acquainted, and are perhaps one thousand miles apart, but I truly hope we are united in God's Holy Spirit, a tie that can never be broken. We confess that we are poor, condemned sinners (of whom I feel to be chief) and if ever saved it is by grace and grace alone. When one is truly condemned in sin such is the only one that ever feels to be a sinner, or has ever known what sin is. Where sin abounds, grace does much more abound. I believe they are the ones that are preserved in Christ Jesus and called. He is mighty to save all for whom Christ died to redeem. I believe their redemption is just as sure as God is sure. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Dear sister, according to holy writ, in my understanding, all who God chose in his eternal covenant of grace are sealed therein with Christ's precious blood to stay and cannot get out, and all who are out to stay and cannot get in. We do not know who are in nor who are out. God only knows. What gives this vile, sinful wretch so much trouble, grief and sorrow is, am I in God's eternal arrangements or am I not? Much of the time I feel so doubtful, I feel that I do not truly believe anything, but I hope that I have a hope that reaches beyond the grave. My own short comings give me much trouble in this life. Is it thus with you? I believe all of our uprisings and downsittings are our meat and our drink. If so we are blest in both. If we are the circumcision of the Lord Jesus Christ (I humbly hope we are), we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" We are persuaded that all the opposing powers of hell can never frustrate God's purposes. He loved his people with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness has he drawn them.

You mentioned nearing your 90th mile post. You have been wonderfully blest to a good ripe age, there are but few who surpass you. I hope and trust that you are reconciled that God's will be done, not ours. I am 67 years old. If not deceived as we grow older we grow in grace and the knowledge of the truth, and become more confirmed in the faith and doctrine that was once delivered to the saints. We care less for the things of this world, also for what the world does and says about us. The ites and isms are always plucking at God's saints, but "fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," which will be the richest inheritance

that ever has been possessed. If we are of the royalty of God we have a rich Father, who always has and always will gently lead us along. He fought our battle, conquered the enemy and gained the victory when our dear Savior hung on the cross and said, "It is finished." There was nothing left undone. He arose victorious conqueror over death, hell and the grave, which made perfect completeness for his dear children. There is nothing in this world or eternity that ever has or will disturb the eternal peace and happiness of God's dear children. Oh, happy day, oh, joyful hour, when freed from earth my soul shall tower beyond the reach of Satan's power. These lines of the poem are well suited to my feelings.

Dear sister, it is heart rending to hear you speak of your unfortunate condition in this life; of being alone and nowhere to lay your head. Such is bitter to the carnal nature. I hope great will be your reward in heaven. It is said our dear Savior had no where to lay his head. I do not believe any of his followers will ever go beneath him in hardships, sorrow, suffering and cruel treatment. Our Jesus went before us and many sorrows bore, and we who follow after can never meet with more. The fruits of these things that we so much love, cherish, speak of and meditate on are fruits that never rust, canker nor decay. They have been tried in the fire, in the den of lions and at the cruel stakes of persecution. These fruits are preserved in Christ Jesus for safe keeping throughout all ages of eternity. Continually to some measure we find ourselves pondering over things pertaining to eternal life, even back to childhood, trying to gather fragments of evidence to embrace and strengthen our hope. Sometimes our hope seems so weak and faint we doubt whether we have been born again; we have many sighs and groanings which cannot be uttered: we become in a state of death, but we have to wait upon the Lord. At his appointed time he begets us again unto a lively hope, a new life of prosperity, the clouds have passed away, the sun shines bright again. Then we can go on our way rejoicing, truly believing that our glorious redeemer liveth; then we can say surely the Lord has been merciful to our unrighteousness, has kept us all the days of our life and has led us in paths that we have not known. Sometimes we feel to say, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters" which I believe is a crumb from our Master's bountiful table, which is the life, joy, peace and happiness of all his dear children even to the known ends of the earth.

Dear sister, you say the love of the brethren is the confirmation of your hope. If I know my poor heart I wholeheartedly agree with you. I love them too and cannot help it. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I believe I dearly love my brethren, they are the ones I long the most to see and be with oftentimes in an associational capacity. I look upon their sainted faces while taking the parting hand perhaps to meet no more in this life, and say within myself surely they are the people of God and I truly believe they are. I do not doubt that God-blessed doctrine that the Primitive Baptists preach. I truly believe it is the true apostolic doctrine which comes from the eternal God in heaven and never has nor ever will be assailed by any other. Religionists say that we are so strange and peculiar. We hope our peculiarness is of the Lord. "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people." The world calls us by many different names such as iron-

sides, hard-shells, even heretics and fools. We hope we are fools for Christ's sake, if so we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. There is no people like this people that is saved by the Lord. They are his by choice, purpose and redemption. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" All of hell's defeat never has, can or will pluck even one of them out of his hand. The powers that be are ordained of God. These things are better felt than told, but this unworthy rebel does love to hint at these things. I truly hope that I have a legal interest in this glorious theme.

I hope what I have written you may be sound and in line with the true apostolic faith and doctrine, and after reading it if you think it is good for publication you have my consent to send it to the *Signs,* but if you are doubtful I am not urgent. I take the *Signs* and I think most every thing in it is good and true. I would be sorry to see anything in it that is faulty. The paper is my constant companion. I would be glad to meet and talk with you. I believe we could talk and rejoice together about things that never grow old. Write me of your churches and pastors. I am a member of the Pigg River Association. It is mostly in Franklin Co., Va. We have about twenty-five churches consisting of about eight hundred members with eighteen or twenty pastors. My name has been with this little flock nearly twenty eight years. I wish to live with them, die with them, be buried and resurrected with them. Is that your desire? The church of my membership is about one and one quarter miles from me. My pastor is Elder P. L. Plybon. If not deceived there are many things we know but cannot express, we can only hint at them. The greatness of them is what we cannot tell. If I never hear from you again may our last days be our brightest ones, and may we pass away in the triumph of faith. May the Lord keep his dear children in the bonds of peace and love. If a saint at all the least of all.

J. A. PERDUE

(*Continued from Aug. issue*)

Now of course we believe the true and real invisible church of the living God is the church he loved so much that he went down with her and arose victorious with her, regardless of creed, color or race! The true militant church of the living God we believe to be that speckled bird, that poor and afflicted people he says he has left in the midst of thee, some to be tried and persecuted more than others. "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Titus 2:14. Not works of righteousness which we have done at all; not in order to get to heaven, but because the good works here mentioned is the duty of the church member. We believe the true militant church to be the Regular Predestinarian Baptist or Primitive Baptist Church. See what love, what mercy, what pity! We are told to make sure the calling of our election—note how it is worded—it is the calling (duty) not God's eternal election or purposes. They stand in all things ordered and sure; it passeth understanding. It is he who by his Spirit is pleased to shed abroad the love of God in the heart. That quickening of the heart is God's loving kindness to the poor, lost and undone sinner. Thus it is by means of God's reconciling us to himself that we obtain proof of his everlasting good will toward us. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." 1 John 3:14. How could one love the

brethren without feeling that invisible bond of love of that merciful and loving Savior? "Although my house be not so with God." Here we have David in his last days feeling more and more his own failures, and failure to grow in grace. He reviews the Lord's goodness and dwells upon the amazing grace which lifted him from the dunghill and made him to sit in heavenly places. David is sorely grieved about the spiritual condition of those near and dear to him, yet he found unspeakable comfort that God had made with him an everlasting covenant in all things ordered and sure. From the dunghill was David raised up on high from the humblest of Saul's subjects to be ruler over all Israel and exalted to the throne. David sorrowed over his sins and those of his household meaning twofold, his natural family and the church. Several grievous and scandalous events had occurred because of his own misconduct, and he meditates upon the lowness of his estate, his being lifted up, and his joy is almost too much at the Lord's kindness and loving mercy! So it is in the travel of God's children. However we may be discouraged and distressed we are given that faithful promise of his that he has given an everlasting covenant in all things ordered and sure; though we may go all the remainder of our years, softly, in the bitterness of our souls for having been such vile sinners. How can we express his glory and worth? "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" Psalms 8:3-4. The poor sinner who is shown his lost condition cries, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Psalms 51:10. "Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth." Psalms 71:9. The best human experience has its roots in pain and disciplined in the school of hardships. It is the fierce flame of the blast furnace that transforms iron into steel; the chisel of the sculptors falling blow on blow that changes the rough block of marble into a perfect stone for the temple; and out of the depths of such an experience we turn to the God of heaven who alone and only can deliver! And it is his purpose to make us wait until his accepted time, but in the depths we can enter into the fellowship with David and Paul and with our Lord and Savior. We cry, O Lord have mercy upon me and his answer, "He will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee." "Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." In all the sorrows that encompass us, his arm is outstretched still! Then it is we can say we thank thee for the victory of Jesus over sin and death. Mercy and truth must meet together, the earth and heaven shall meet (Christ and his church), and the stone which the builders disallowed has become head of the corner. "The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the Lord is upon many waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty." Then how beautiful is the church. "A garden enclosed, is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." S S 4:12. "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God. Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." 2 Cor. 1:20-22. May he be pleased to lift us up in quietness and in confidence to rest in the church, to be still and to know he is God for, "weeping may endure for a night, but

joy cometh in the morning." Psalms 30:5. "Sing unto the Lord a new song, and praise him from the end of the earth." What a symphony! There are days when earth and sky seem to shout for joy, clean air, bright sunshine, green hills where the trees of the woods rejoice; valleys covered over with corn; singing waters on the way to the sea; but there are some sombre tones too, like the bass viol and the kettle-drum. These help to make up the symphony as does God's thunder-roaring seas and winds! All of it God's own symphony, natural and spiritual. "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name." Psalms 103:1. "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people." Psalms 116:12-14.

Let me encourage all four of you to come into the church. You have manifested that life given of God; a child is a child before it is born and that work was done away back in the annals of eternity my dear ones! "Take up the cross, and follow me." "Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live." Those are not invitations, they are commands. I know you feel very unworthy and that is as it should be, and all the more evidence why you would be and are acceptable to our little church there, for not one of us are worthy to wash your feet. It would be such an encouragement to the beloved and precious pastor and his associate, Elders Bynum and Slusher, and to all of us. We have no worldly entertainments to offer you but God's symphony of love and the sweet concert of his praise. Oh no, none of us are worthy and who amongst the children of God dares to say they have never followed a course of folly since he or she was made alive to their lost condition? The same evil tendencies are in this old Adamic nature. David allowed his heart to be lifted up over the strengthening and extension of his kingdom and by the great success thereof, but David fell and so have we all; then it is that we are made truly humble when we are shown our true state; when we are brought to that place of self-loathing and self-distrust; then it is with us as with the poor publican and with Jonah. One said, "God be merciful to me a sinner," the other said. "I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord." We are all guilty of God-dishonoring acts of folly and madness and only until every one of us are shown our utterly helpless condition do we truly seek after him. We are inclined to get up in a tree as did Zacchaeus and look down upon our brethren, but oh how quickly we are brought down out of that tree to the Savior's feet for mercy. David's heart smote him and how glad that eminent servant of God was to cry not to be allowed to be judged by man but to let the merciful God of heaven mete out the punishment instead.

And so I say to the four of you a gracious God will prepare you, and I am sure he has already done so, to stand before his face. Would be so happy to have you all come to the refuge and sanctuary of the little Bethel Church there, go down into baptism of water, for you are already baptized of the Spirit and washed in His blood, and arise in the full beloved followship in the true church of the living God. Gentleness and power is Jesus, full of pity, compassion, love and grace. "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds. He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names." "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork."

A great Italian scientist was once

asked what he would like to teach and he replied, "the study of the stars, for one has learned nothing unless he has learned to wonder!" The sense of amazement in the presence of God's universe is expressed in the Psalms of that same David who traveled such a diversified road, was guilty of everything in the book and yet healed. Longfellow wrote (he was a Baptist in belief):

"And Nature, the old nurse, took
The child upon her knee,
Saying: 'Here is a story-book
Thy Father has written for thee."

"Come, wander with me," She said,
"Into regions yet untrod;
And read what is still unread
In the manuscripts of God."

And we have our beloved hymn:

"God asks no reason why He is,
Nor gives a cause to man;
He's of Himself and by Himself
Has drawn salvation's plan.

Nor one of all creation's parts
Nor all the increase they bear,
But what stood fixed in God's account
As present with Him there.

Some here, some there, some high, some low.
With all their works and light,
In hills or dales, in air or seas,
In days or gloomy nights.

And God surveyed His plan complete,
And formed its parts alright;
Not one too many or too few
For naught eludes His sight."

I wish I could tell it all, but I cannot nor can anyone. I hope to come and visit the church before too long, and will be happy to accept your invitation to rest with you while there. It is a long tedious trip from San Diego to Stockton and my lungs are very weak and I cough a lot. Please read this letter to the Riley brothers and sister Patton. Do not forget to write to the brother in Bakersfield. He will love you too when he finds how lovely all of you are. I can never forget how sweet and kind you have been to me and mine. My love to the church as a whole and especially to sister Mabel Lindsey. Even in the household of faith we carry some in our hearts and some, I am grieved to say, we must carry on our shoulders, but we are all one and not one more favored in God's sight and love than the other. He gives the gifts and talents as he chooses and is his own counsellor. All glory, praise and honor to him. Johnnie has provided or arranged a beautiful place for me to live. More than I expected but he wants it that way and to please him I will humor him for awhile. He and his wife are so kind and helpful to me. Thanks from the depths of my heart for everything and my love to all. God bless and keep you all. Humbly in hope of a sweet eternal rest.

(Mrs.) LEONA TUTTLE
1547-1st St., Coronado, Calif.

Box 661, Arkadelphia, Ark.

R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: I received your letter several days ago but have neglected writing to you. Your paper came a few days later. I like that new song I find on the first page. "It is enough God's grace to know." I have a desire if it be the Lord's will to write you on the subject of two words: first "The Word," second the word "World." "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Heb. 4:12. I do not think any preacher (or any body) should call the Scriptures the Word for the word "Word" mentioned above is the same as spoken of in St. John. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Notice the Word here three times begins with a

capital W. The Word here means Christ, the Son of God. "The same was in the beginning with God." Let us refer back to Genesis 1:26. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Now was not this "us" mentioned here Jesus Christ, the Son of God? Some will say, no for Jesus Christ had not been born into the world, but does not the Scriptures read that Christ stood as a Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world? "The same was in the beginning with God." Let us read some more from John 1: 10-13. "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

How come that some believed, and some did not? Those that believed something had been done for them, they had been born again, born of the Spirit of the Holy Ghost. Christ speaking to his disciples says, Ye are saved already if ye believe on me whom the Lord has sent. What caused them to believe? The grace of God was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. (2 Tim. 1) "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power." Eph.1:19. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1:20-21. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." 1 Peter 1:23. "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." John 14:10. "Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand." Acts 4:4. "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you." 2 Thes. 3:1 "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine." 1 Tim. 5:17. "And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word." Acts 4:29. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." James 1:18. "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls." James 1:21. "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Eph. 6:17. "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." 1 John 5:7.

At our last Association one of our preachers spoke from this text, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." Much more could be said on this subject about the Word of God, and its power and effect. If I should keep on writing until this time tomorrow, half would not be told—no, not one tenth.

I now attempt to write some on the word *world*. The world is the people on earth. Many people say there is but one world of people on earth and that of the Adamic family, (but the Adamic family according to the Scriptures became divided into two worlds) and that they all have the same chance to be saved; that Christ died for all their

sins, and they will quote you the scripture from John where it says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This scripture does not include all of the Adamic family, but the world that he gave his only begotten Son, Christ, for: He died for his people and all that Christ died for will be saved. "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." John 17:9. "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." Rom. 9:22. The vessels of wrath fitted to destruction is bound to be the world of the non-elect, and is not the world Christ prayed for, and not the world that he died for. "They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them." 1 John 4:5. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." 1 John 4:9-10. We could not love God except he first loved us; for the Scriptures say; "the friendship of the world is enmity with God." James 4:4. (This must be the non-elect world, who Christ knew would not believe.) That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. I think I understand that this means, "which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," is the world of God's elect that was given unto him that he died for, and that their names are found in the Lamb's book of life. He was in the world, and the world was made by him and the world knew him not. If this letter will not crowd out something better and you want to publish it you may do so. Your brother in hope of eternal life.

F. L. COX

Route 3, Benton, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am enclosing money-order for a copy of the January issue for a relative of one whose obituary appears in that issue. I am also giving my copy of that issue to another one of the relatives. When I think I will give a copy away, within that same copy springs up something so dear to me it seems like separating from a living thing to part with it.

In your greetings you bring out such solemn experiences that we who have to live by hope do have here in time. Your thoughts on the children of Israel having Aaron to make the golden calf for them to worship before Moses could come back to them and then the reply. Brother Dodson, are we better than they? No, we are not better than they, but God is not willing that any should perish; then it is his will to keep those for whom he gave the Son and for whom the Son died and made a full and complete atonement. No, we are like them. I like George H. Carrington's article. Those are very precious experiences of mine too where he says he feels empty and lean, but then at times he feels full and is blessed in that his cup is overflowing. I experience times when I see so much in a text the preacher takes that I go on and on ahead of the preacher and forget him for the many things that are unfolding to me and connecting in a grand and wonderful way. Then I meditate, why did I come here to-day, I was not hungry, I proved I was full for I could not listen to the beautiful truths presented to me. The only answer I know is, I had to be in this place just where I was and the preacher had to quote the text before this wonderful discourse

could unfold to me. Sometimes I wish I knew the meaning of scriptures that others ask me about, as well or as plainly as I can sometimes see the fulness of a text some preachers have quoted in my hearing.

One sister asks what is the beast in Luke 10, and what is meant by half dead? If you are ever so lead, brother Dodson, write your views on the two texts. I never have heard our preachers preach on this parable. If it is a parable Jesus gave it to prove to the lawyer who was neighbor to the man who fell among thieves. Haven't we, when we first hoped in Jesus as our Savior, had the like experience? Were we not among thieves and robbers? The Arminian or religious world, according to their theory, rob God and climb up some other way, and when they are talking it does not comfort us, it is not our experience. The good Samaritan, Jesus, is the only one who can pour in the oil and give us drink, care for us and anoint our wounds. That, we received in finding out we were sinners. Have we ever had life enough to know where he is and where we can find him? Can we go yet to him, can we so walk yet that we obtain blessings by that orderly christlike walk? No, as you said about the Israelites, are we better now than they were then? Can we go or come, can we skip and leap over hills and vales unless he carries us with his power? Oh, where is faith? Some say that if we had faith as much as a grain of mustard seed we really could get things that worry us out of our way, but in our fleshly walk we find no faith but are trusting, we hope, in the faith of Jesus Christ. May God bless the truth to the saving of our souls.

(Mrs.) EFFIE BOWDEN

(*See editorial in this issue.*)

Newport, N. C.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: It is time to renew my subscription for the dear paper that I love so much and gain strength by reading. It makes my hope brighter, yet at times I feel what I have is small as a grain of mustard seed and not sufficient to keep me, then the mind of this poor sinful creature changes and it seems sufficient to keep me if I were called to die. I do not get to meeting often these days so the reading of the *Signs of the Times* is a great source of comfort to me, and as so many others say, I look forward to the day of its coming. It is meat and drink to this poor hungering and thirsting creature here on earth that feels so unworthy of the crumbs that fall from the Master's table.

My mind is not in a mood for writing as I have been sick most all winter, but thanks to the Lord I am improving from three attacks of erysipelas. The last one was more like blood poisoning. I hope I am thankful that it is as well with me as it is. My husband and I are two shut-ins. He still needs the care of some one and I am thankful I am better and able to wait on him and not he on me. I pray each day for reconciliation and hope to be spared by the God of love who knoweth the hearts of all men, and may he make me willing and able to care for my husband as long as he is afflicted and needs my care. Sometimes I hope I can stay with him if nothing more. As I said we have been two shut-ins for nearly three years. Notwithstanding my sickness I have had other troubles and heartaches too. We thought our only grandchild, a little boy of five years, had infantile paralysis. Not knowing how severely he would be stricken my nerves were unstrung for a few days, but the doctors found he had only a mild case and was soon home again. Only God knows how my heart rejoiced when he came to my

home from the hospital, and I could embrace him and see the little limbs active again. My nerves had become a little quiet when another daughter of mine lost her baby. I knew it was much better off than we, for in the Word he says, weep at the coming in and rejoice at the going out, but we are all weak vessels and do not do that. Then at last the greatest shock and sad heartache came when the same daughter lost her husband on February 14th. He was on the main highway going to work when a man ran into him from an intersection leading to the highway. The truck was overturned and he was badly hurt, living only a few hours. Now our home is broken up, and will never be the same, but all we can do is look to Jesus our Savior and praise his holy name. He did not believe as we do but that does not say he was not one of God's elect.

We know God takes his jewels,
Let's hope that he was one;
But it was such a heartache
That God's will must be done.

I hope he's sweetly resting,
There with the angels of light;
God plucks the tender buds,
They make His mansion bright.

Carelessness causes sad heartaches and there is nothing we can do but look to the Lord for reconciliation and know and feel that we have hope as a people who want to have sweet fellowship with God. Satan has his range but to my mind God is in such matters and is able to save if it is his will and his own good pleasure. It is hard to see it that way but we are only kept here by his kind providence and then are snatched away so quickly when death calls us from this tabernacle of trouble. Did not intend to make this letter so long. Please pray for me and mine although I do not feel worthy of the prayers of God's dear children. Hope he spares you for a long time to come, to spread the good news to all the family of God. May God bless you one and all is my prayer for Christ's sake. In sweet fellowship.

(Mrs.) W. H. CANNON

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288 A. Prospect Ave., Long Beach 3, Cal.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I want to thank you for the book you sent me on the Resurrection of the Dead which I have read through. I have always thought it was a spiritual body that was raised. Was it Paul that said, "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." I do not have the gift of expressing myself as some do, but I was given a hope over fifty years ago that the Lord had forgiven my many sins and I have had some sweet assurances along the way, while at times I wonder if I know anything about the good things as I should. "Great is the mystery of godliness," God manifest in the flesh. My greatest concern is am I his or am I not. I want to love him more and serve him better. Would be glad if you ever come to California to meet you and hear you preach. Thanks again for the book and may the good Lord keep us all in his fear and favor. Your sister in hope.

(Mrs.) RACHEL DUNDAS

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. L. B. Eason, Tex. $1; Mrs. W. White, Ky., $3; J. A. Johnson, Tenn., $3; J. F. Simpson, Ill., $1; Mrs. J. Clifford, Wash., $5; Mrs. F. Brooks, N. Y., $1; J. Y. Vanhook, N. Y., $1; Mrs. A. S. Meyer, N. Y. in memory of her father, S. W. Shipway, $25; Mrs. M. E. Holloway, Md., $1; Eld. W. D. Griffin, Ala., $1; C. H. McMakin, Tex., $1; H. A. Young, Can., $1; Mrs. W. Goodrich, N. Y., $2; Mrs. B. Johnson, Ala., $1; Mrs. N. M. Carney, W. Va., $3; Mrs. E. Loeffel, N. J., $3.

EDITORIAL

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ROMANS 9: 13-18

"As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and on whom he will he hardeneth."

It is the doctrine contained in this scripture that is most encouraging to God's dear children. For the belief of it they have received (not the riches, applause or popularity of this world, but) the persecution, sneers and defamation of all those not experimentally acquainted with it. Every attempt has been made by *learning* to alleviate the force, power and finality of the doctrine set forth here. I hope I realize how little I know, and I hope if I have been called and qualified for the ministry of Jesus Christ, that I be kept humble and with a God-given knowledge that everything I have received belongs to my kindred in Christ, and that I be kept ready to talk and write to them about the things of Jesus Christ. To that end I am taking up this passage of scripture that has been sent in by a young brother that came to the church when I was present.

I want to make it plain that I do not expect to remove the difficulties of the natural mind to this nor any other scripture. That is not the purpose of the ministry of Jesus Christ. In presenting what I see in it I would like to go back a little. In the narrative about the conception and birth of these two children I want to notice responsibility. Was there any on the children before their conception? How foolish and absurd! That, that is not conceived could not have anything to do with its conception! We, Old Baptists, probably do not have much of the wisdom of men but we have more sense than that! This "purpose of God according to election" was not after birth. If God had *wanted* them to have a *chance*, or had he been going to say that salvation depends on the act of the creature, then he *would* have waited to see which one was best suited to serve the other. But this purpose of his was that election might stand (not according to our environment, society, training, choice or works, but) of him that calleth. This is a fixed thing. It was fixed while they were *yet* unborn. It was fixed before they had done any kind of work. It was done then that not any should claim works as a basis for salvation. If the younger got to serving the elder what would it prove? It certainly would prove God a liar. Brethren, the church of Jesus Christ is satisfied. Christ was satisfied with the choice of his Father. He saw the travail of his soul and he was satisfied that he had redeemed the elect. His Father was pleased at his baptism and in the price paid on Calvary. Why

should the church not be satisfied? She being the bride, cannot be less than satisfied. Others, not having a husband and wanting one of their own choosing, are not satisfied, and of course want to unfix what God has fixed.

What shall we say then? Notice that little pronoun "we." Be sure to keep in mind when you read, that God, nor Christ, nor the Holy Ghost has ever, at any time, afforded any comfort, consolation or promise to all of Adam's race. It is to *them, those, we* and *us*. Please keep that in mind, because, let us remember, that it is us talking. Paul did not say, what shall I say, nor what shall you say, nor what shall the world say. Is not that putting a limit as to who says anything? You that feel doubtful and fearful let me tell you something. Paul places himself in the same class that you are in. It is every child of God in a spiritual sense, but in a special and particular way I want to stress and emphasize the fact that the church of Jesus Christ, known by name in this age and part of the world as Primitive Baptists, are the only order of people that does not charge God with unrighteousness. *What shall we say?* Shall we say that God is unrighteous to love one and hate the other? God forbid.

Dear reader, I want you to notice that God has moved Paul to write you that he forbids you doing that. Do not the Old Baptists believe in election in Christ before the world began? That makes them the church. Look at the other way. *It is a good thing to look both ways.* You need to know both ends of this thing. You are going to know that the Old Baptists are not charging God with unrighteousness, but you also know that everybody else is doing so, and please notice the why. It is forbidden that Old Baptists, or the church, do it, but the other crowd has not even been forbidden to do so. We have no business being harsh with them because God *has not* forbidden them doing it. "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." This is in keeping with the doctrine of the church. They are preaching mercy, they desire the mercy of God, they realize its paramount importance in their salvation. Did you ever stop to think that the Pharisee did not ask for mercy and the publican did? Then let us look further. "So then it (salvation) is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." I am glad that it is so. There is where my home is and there my hope is anchored. That does me good, that is talking about the church, about God's children, but I want you to notice that this is to and about the church. They cannot be saved by *getting* a will; they cannot be saved by running or doing something; nothing but the mercy of God has ever done a sinner any good. "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." The Primitive Baptists are fairly well agreed about these passages of scripture until we get to this part of it. How awful our quarreling over this part. How good it is to look back over our historical documents and see the peace and tranquility that abounded for a number of years after the division over missions or conditionalism in being elected! That peace and tranquility flowed among our people from Black Rock for a goodly number of years. Then we began to quibble about predestination, and one of the main bones of contention has been about God rais-

ing up Pharaoh, hardening him and those that he does not have mercy on. What a mark history is going to leave on somebody! The church is given an express command to mark them that cause divisions. (Romans 16:17.) It did not say mark them that have different opinions, *but them that cause division.* How careful we should be to contend for what is written here. It does seem enough for God so say he raised the wicked king up. It does look like we could live in peace about what God says. If God did raise the king up to show his power then what question is to be asked? Suppose some one says, well if that is so, then so and so, is so. Just think of that! The next verse after our text, that the writer takes up those that cavil about what he has been writing. You cannot stop the natural mind from finding fault with what God has said. When we, (not the world, not ungodly men but) the church, the redeemed of God begin finding fault with what God said it is condemnation to us. Who is condemned, the child of God that declares, as the trust of his faith, that God raised up Pharaoh to show his power in him, hardening him and those that he does not have mercy on, or the child of God that says, if God does that he is unrighteous, unjust or the author of sin?

W. D. G.

LUKE 10:25-37

By way of commenting upon the points inquired about by sister Effie Bowden, whose letter appears elsewhere in this issue, we first wish to call attention to the fact that previously in this chapter Jesus had unquestionably been treating upon the things of the gospel kingdom. The seventy whom he sent forth were sent "two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come." He said, "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest." They were sent forth as "lambs among wolves" and were told to "Carry neither purse nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way." Into whatsoever house they entered they were first to say, "Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again." Likewise, "Into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you; notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." We believe these things truly symbolize the gospel age. Gospel ministers cannot reach or enter the heart unless the son of peace is there. On the other hand, if God has prepared the heart to receive the preached word, every house or city, or heart, they approach will open to them and intreat them to "Come in and tarry with us."

We are told that the seventy returned with joy, saying "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." Jesus then said to them, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." Some claim that Satan originated in heaven as one of the angels of God, but sinned and was cast into hell. We know of no good authority for such a conclusion. We do not believe that he ever was in the heavens of eternal glory. Jesus himself said "he was a murderer from the beginning." Our understanding is that what Jesus was referring to here was the legal heaven, and if we will go over to the twelfth chapter of Revelation we will find what Jesus had reference to very clearly set forth. Beginning with the seventh and through the tenth verses we read as

follows: "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night." As a result of that wonderful victory of the Lamb over the dragon, "there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." This woman typified the delivery of the gospel church by her glorious Head from under the clutches of the law, and Satan was cast out or fell from the legal heavens as lightning, with great rapidity, and thereafter he was without power to destroy or accuse the brethren before their Lord. Jesus then went on to say to the seventy, "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you." But he followed this by saying, "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you: but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." My dear brethren, whoever you are and wherever you may be, rejoice not alone in your gifts, however great and wonderful they may be, "but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." We are told that in that hour our Lord rejoiced in spirit, and said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." Jesus then told his disciples privately, "Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them." Our purpose in this preamble before treating directly upon that portion of the chapter particularly referred to by sister Bowden has been to definitely establish the evangelical background which precedes the temptation of Jesus by the lawyer. It is said, "And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus replied by asking him, "What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." Little did he realize that his case would of necessity have to be decided against him because of his own testimony, for it had been conclusively proven that no mere man could do what he himself admitted the law required. Nevertheless, lawyer like, he tried to make out a good case for himself by asking further. "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus answered this question in the form of a parable, and his answer was so complete that it could not be gain-said. He cited the case where "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead." Jerusalem symbolizes, in our opinion, a sinless or holy state, while Jericho is the embodiment of sinfulness or wickedness. This wickedness was manifested by what the thieves did to the man. God's children stood perfect in Christ Jesus as they were chosen

in him before the foundation of the world, but when they were manifested in Adam, by his transgression of God's law, they fell into the bottomless pit of sin, so to speak, and while God's righteous law is just and good and holy, no human being since the fall of Adam has ever been able to keep it. What could, therefore, be done for this man who went down from Jerusalem, that sinless state, to Jericho, a veritable hell? What a pitiable condition he was in after the thieves had stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, leaving him half dead? He had broken the moral law of commandments, and the ceremonial law could provide no offering or sacrifice, the blood of which could purge his soul of its guilt. Therefore neither the priest nor the Levite, both of whom were representatives of the law, could do him any good, but had to pass by on the other side, or the law side. The law can show no mercy, but must demand payment of the debt; punishment must be meted out, and if death is the penalty for the crime committed, the law requires that the sinner must die. Only mercy and grace, which means unmerited favor, can be of any help or assistance whatever to one in such an awful dilemma, and this does not come by chance, but according to the plan which infinite wisdom devised before the world began. The lawyer with all of his knowledge, could not comprehend or understand the true meaning of the word *neighbor*. He perhaps felt it had to do with a fellow-law-traveler, or one who had things in common with himself, but such characters could have no pity or compassion upon one whose very soul had been made bare and naked before a just and holy God, and who knows that he is justly condemned and deserving of being cast into hell.

When we consider the condition of the child of God as he stood in Adam after the fall, we get a very good picture of what it means to be half dead. Stripped of his raiment and wounded nigh unto death he was naked and exposed to the fiery wrath of Sinai's law. The sentence of death rested heavily upon him. Had it not been for "a certain Samaritan", as he journeyed (or came that way on purpose) there could have been no hope for him. This certain Samaritan, however, "when he saw him he had compassion on him." He did not pass him by, but went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. How sympathetic and understanding he was of the poor man's needs! He did not have to send away for anything but had all that was necessary with him to administer effectively to his particular case. Knowing the inability of the man to even walk he "set him on his own beast." This was undoubtedly a beast of burden, provided for carrying the man to the inn. It shows our Lord knows that we are without any strength of our own. There is certainly no room for creature works to creep in here, and the fact he "brought him to an inn" showed the man was completely exhausted and required rest. He had ceased from his labors and entered into the rest of his Lord, who "took care of him." How this encourages every poor sin-weary soul to cast his care upon the Lord, who careth for him. We then read that "On the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." Jesus, by his sufferings and death for his people, paid not only for their sins before regeneration, but also for all their sins after they receive a knowledge of the truth and experience forgiveness by him who sitteth on the great white throne. It seems to us he

is showing here most conclusively that he paid the entire debt for all time, and that under no circumstances whatsoever is the man, or the sinner, ever to be called upon for payment of any part of it. This good Samaritan forsook the climes of eternal glory and came down into this sin cursed world, taking upon himself not the nature of the angels, but the seed of Abraham, and was made like unto his brethren in all things, sin excepted, that he might suffer in their stead and fulfil the demands of the law against them in every jot and title. He came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost; the Great Physician knows every saint's peculiar case and he whose command the wind and the sea had to obey, has never failed to heal all manner of diseases. He, indeed, was *neighbor* to the poor and afflicted man, to the justly condemned, and to the weak and helpless. After having ministered to him he placed "him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him." For such love as this, let hills and dale their lasting silence break, and sing His everlasting praise.

Just before Jesus went down into death, which he could not be holden of, he said to his disciples: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." How good to realize that the Captain of our salvation went down into death and came forth victoriously, thus robbing it of its sting for his people, and we are persuaded that when the time comes for us to quit the walks of men, we shall walk through the valley of the shadow of death, fearing no evil, for He will be present to pilot us across that great unknown divide, from whence no traveler has yet returned to describe to us. It is good to feel then that Jesus has paid all the debt, all to Him we owe; Sin had left a crimson stain, He washed it white as snow. Jesus then asked the lawyer, "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among thieves?" The answer could only be what it was: "He that showed mercy on him."

How wonderfully this emphasizes the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone. It is no wonder that immediately following this Jesus should have rebuked Martha for being "cumbered with much serving" and commended Mary for having chosen that "good part, which shall not be taken away from her." Mary had ceased from her labors and had entered into the house, and sat at the feet of her Lord and Master. In these two characters we have the church typified both under the law and under grace, and we truly hope and pray that the Lord may enable us to choose that good part, which shall never be taken away from us.

R. L. D.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

The Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Church called New Hope, near Dawson Springs, Ky. sends resolutions of respect for three of her beloved members who passed away during the last year.

Brother FRANK McGREGOR was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. He lived to a ripe old age, was a modest and useful member and esteemed highly among the brethren. After his death his wife soon passed away.

Sister CORDIE CLARK, aged 88, of Madisonville, Ky. She raised a large family and was of a cheerful disposition. During the life of her husband, Deacon Beverly Clark, her home was a home for the Baptists. Both of them stood firm in

the doctrine. She is greatly missed by her dear children as well as by her church.

Brother BURNELL DORRIS of Providence, Ky. was a much beloved brother. He did not unite with the church until he was old fearing he was not fit, but was brought to realize that his fitness was of the Lord, related a good experience and was accepted with much rejoicing. He leaves two children, Ramon and Clev to mourn their loss. His wife, Verna, preceded him to the grave. He was a firm believer and a good citizen.

Done by order of conference Saturday before the third Sunday in April 1947.

MONA McGREGOR.

HARRIOTT E. (STOCKTON) TEAGUE was born August 18, 1869 in Davie Co., N. C., and died April 5, 1947, aged 77 years, 7 months and 18 days. She was married to W. L. Teague, Jan. 1, 1891. To this union four sons and one daughter were born: Ira L. Teague, Paul S. Teague and Mrs. R. K. Mendenhall of Winston-Salem, N. C., Russel R. Teague, Fayetteville, N. C. and Percy L. Teague of Morehead City, N. C., all with the husband survive, also five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

"Mother Teague," as she was familiarly called in her last years, was a good and faithful wife, mother, mother-in-law, grandmother, neighbor and friend. Two brothers survive, W. T. Stockton, Winston-Salem, R.F.D., and Eugene E. Stockton, Copley, Ohio. She also left many other relatives and friends who will miss her but no one doubts that our loss is to her an eternal gain. In her early womanhood she united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Saints Delight and later became one of the charter members of the Broad Street Primitive Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, N. C., where she was a faithful attendant as long as she was able to attend its services.

While it grieves her husband, children and friends to know that all ties that bound her to her loved ones here are broken, never to be reunited in this life, yet we weep not for her as for those who had no hope in the promises and mercy of God. Though long an invalid, she never lost hope in the reality of life beyond, and was quite often heard to quote, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." During her long illness she kept unusually well posted, by reading and by radio on all current, local and national events. She retained an interest in the welfare of all until near the end of her earthly existence.

With reverence to the God she loved, her body was placed in the family plot in Saints Delight Cemetery and her spirit committed to Him who is able to keep her from falling, and to present her faultless before the presence of His glory, majesty, dominion and power for-ever and ever. The large attendance and the many beautiful floral tributes spoke, in silent language, the high regard in which she was held. A short service was held from the home and concluded in Saints Delight Church, by her pastor, by whom this short notice is written.

(Elder) O. J. DENNY.

God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to remove from our midst brother ARTHUR JONES of Macon, Ga. He was born near Macon, Ga., Oct. 26, 1861, and died April 28, 1947. He would have been 86 years old in October. He was married to Miss Martha Hightower and to this union were born six children: one son, C. H. Jones, and five daughters, Reba, Mary, Matibel, Gertrude and Frances. His first wife died in 1918 and he was later married to Miss Ella Barfield. He united with the Absolute Predestinarian Church near Mount Vernon, Texas and was baptized by his brother, the late Elder H. B. Jones. He moved his membership later to the East Atlanta Church in Atlanta, Ga. where it remained until his death at his home in Atlanta, Ga. He had been a reader of the Signs of the Times for perhaps forty years. He believed steadfastly in the doctrine as contended for by the writers of the Signs.

Brother Jones was an amiable brother and deacon, serving well in the church to which he was so much devoted, and was present at his meetings when health and circumstances permitted. In his later years his hearing was not good enough to hear the voice of the writer when he spoke, but he enjoyed the association of the brethren. He must have felt as David when he said, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord." God saw fit to take from him the natural breath on April 28, 1947 that the Spirit which was infused into his soul might return to God who gave it. It therefore became our duty to return the body to the earth from which it came. This we did on the 29th of April 1947. May God remember and visit his widow, and all who survive him in the person of his Spirit.

(Elder) H. O. NASH.

ELVIRA HILL CONNER, daughter of the late Charles B. and Permelia Titus Hill, was born August 13, 1870, and departed this life March 30, 1947, making her stay on earth 76 years, 7 months and 17 days. She was three times married and her last husband was the late George M. Conner of Hopewell, N. J. She leaves one son, Lynton W. of Hopewell, N. J., four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Also six stepchildren, eleven step-grandchildren and two stepgreat-grandchildren and to all she was true and devoted.

She united with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church and was baptized Nov. 21, 1896 by the late Elder F. A. Chick. Sister Conner was faithful to the doctrine and order of the church, and it was her delight to serve her brethren and manifest the kindness she felt in her heart. For several years, when there were duties to be performed by the members of the church, she was appointed to act as chairman of the committee by the church. She was clerk of the church for the past eleven years and the records and minutes kept by her were most accurate in every detail. She was the last of her father's family to be taken from this world, and for all that survive her they will have lost a faithful friend and the church a devout member, but we feel our loss is her eternal gain, and may it be the will of Almighty God to comfort all that mourn.

Her funeral services were conducted by the writer in the meeting-house at Hopewell, N. J. where she had met with those assembled to worship God in the faith once delivered to the saints for fifty-one years, after which her remains were laid to rest in the Highland Cemetery by the side of her first husband, Mr. M. F. Perrine, whose name she bore for many years. She now rests from all her labors in a blessed sleep until her Savior comes to make up his jewels and she be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall she ever be with the Lord.

It was the lot of the writer to be her pastor for over thirty-two years, and no one will miss her more than I, except her step granddaughter. Charlotte Cornell, who was her last companion in life. May God's special favor rest upon her.

(Elder) C. W. VAUGHN.

SHIRLEY ANN HAAN was born in Yakima, Wash. June 29, 1931, and was crushed to death by an overturned army command car on her way to a picnic April 11, 1947. Her stay on earth was 15 years, 9 months and 13 days. She leaves to mourn her passing her parents Bernard and Beatrice Haan of Naches, Wash., and her grandparents Mr. and Mrs. John Haan of Yakima, Wash., and Mr. and Mrs. D. H. Baker of Naches, Wash., together with other relatives. The only other child in the family was a sister, Carol Louise, who died in 1934 at the age of 4 months.

I feel that I would like to write of my visit with the Baptists at Naches at the time this tragedy occured. This was one of greatest pleasures of my life and one of the deepest experiences I ever had. On my arrival at Yakima, Wash. Sister Haan met me at the station and took me to her lovely home, and with the kindness that was shown me I felt at home, although of such kindness I felt unworthy. Meeting with the Baptists here was a great pleasure to me. Arrangements were made to have meeting at sister Susie Shanks' home. At this meeting sister Mabel Schleesmayer of Lebanon, Ore., asked for a home with the Baptists here and was received for baptism. On Sunday we had meeting at sister Haan's home. Elder Hughett was with us as this date was set because sister Catherine Duffus of Vancouver, B. C. was visiting the Baptists here. I enjoyed meeting her so much. She is a dear sister in Christ. All of us enjoyed this meeting very much. We seemed to be under the banner of that great love and sitting in heavenly places. Brother and sister Colwell and sister Markham from the church at Touchet, Wash. were able to be with us also.

Arrangements were made to baptize sister Mabel on Friday, April 11. Just before leaving to go to the water sister Susie Shanks was ready to be baptized also. When I discovered this my heart was filled with joy beyond expression. We went to the Naches river a short distance away. As I went in to test for depth and beheld the beauty of that clear stream my heart was filled with praise and words cannot express the glorious things I saw. I went in with sister Mabel first and when the clear water covered her face a pleasant and calm look was there, and I saw the same look on sister Susie's face. It seemed that all was well and there were many expressions of love and fellowship.

While we were rejoicing and seemed to be lifted so high the light of righteousness shone all around. Then about 5 P. M. the sad news of brother and sister Haan's daughter being hurt brought the pall of darkness over us. We were made to weep and mourn when the final news of her death came. I was chosen to officiate at the funeral services at Yakima, Wash. on April 14. I was glad to do this because of the love I had for her. I wanted to speak of what I saw in her bright eyes which to me was a manifest expression of the love of God in her heart. I could see that bud bloom out

in heaven as a bright flower never to fade. With love for the welfare of all concerned.
Weiser, Idaho. (Elder) B. O. JEFFREY.

IN MEMORY OF SHIRLEY ANN HAAN

The April day was calm and fair,
With only a few clouds here and there:
Birds in the green trees by the river
Sang praises to their bountiful giver.
Like a benediction, the sunlight came
Down on a band of saints who sang
By the water's edge; while earth and sky
Witnessed blessings from the Father on high.

Gay and carefree youth was near;
With never a thought of pain or fear,
Yet, ere the April day was spent,
Many the hearts that were sad and rent;
For an angel came at the appointed hour,
And took from us our sweetest flower.
Blithely, gaily, she stepped through the door,
Leaving this world for a fairer shore.

While saints sang praises to God in heaven
Her sweet spirit to His care was given.
Oh! was it not meet that a beautiful flower
Should be transplanted in a happy hour?
No blight of frost had marred the bloom
Of the lovely form consigned to the tomb.
In a bower of beauty our darling lay
As we bid her a long farewell that day.

We saw through tears our friends file past
To look on her sweet face their last;
While angels bade us look away
To where her spirit dwells today;
To Him, who is our strength, our all;
To Him, who marks the sparrow's fall;
To Him, who knows no pain or death;
That all earthly life is but a fleeting breath,
And death is the door through which we go,
Leaving our sorrows here below.

While waiting here we sadly mourn
The loss of that dear one in our home.
Her bright, dark eyes and happy smile
Made daily cares all seem worthwhile.
As sadly we rise to meet each day,
Lord give us grace that we may say
Thy will, not ours, dear Lord be done;
We know from sorrow our darling is gone.

Though wars may come, this old earth roll,
They'll not disturb her peaceful soul.
Years may come and years may go
Bringing to each his share of woe;
As peacefully, dreamlessly here she lies,
Till the God of creation bids her rise.
And we shall meet to sing His praise
In our home in heaven through endless days.

Her grandmother (Mrs.) D. H. BAKER.

EUGENE CLIFTON ROSS was born May 19, 1867 in Pamlico Co., N. C. and departed this life March 4, 1947 at the home of his eldest daughter in Arlington, Va., making his stay on earth just less than 80 years. His wife Sudie Mary preceded him in death four years and a few weeks.

Brother Ross was a first cousin of Elder J. T. Rowe late of Baltimore, and a grandson of Elder Riley Ross of North Carolina. He united with the Primitive Baptist church while a young man, and has ever held steadfast to the doctrine of salvation by grace alone of our heavenly Father's foreknowledge and election of his children, having chosen them in his blessed Son before time was, and justified them by the precious blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ on Calvary's rugged cross.

In his younger life brother Ross was connected with the public schools in Pamlico Co., North Carolina, and also Recorder of Deeds in the same county. In 1918 he came to Washington, D. C., entering the U. S. General Accounting Office from which he retired about ten years ago. He and his faithful wife raised a family of six children to become an honor to their parents and to the communities in which they live. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

(Mrs.) ETHEL D. COOPER.

SPECIAL MEETING

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the First and Second Churches of Roxbury at Halcottville Old School Baptist meeting-house in Halcottville, N. Y., Wed. and Thur., Sept. 17 and 18, 1947. Services will begin at 10:30 D. S. T. Wed. morning. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and ministers of our faith and order, and to our other friends to meet with us. Those coming to Halcottville Tuesday evening before the meeting will go to the homes of Mrs. Prudence Hinkley or Walter Harrington in that village where arrangements will be made for their entertainment. Those arriving Wed. morning will go directly to the meeting-house.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 115 RUTHERFORD, N. J., OCTOBER, 1947 No. 10

Before the earth had shape or form
God chose his church so fair;
In Jesus Christ his elect Son
It blameless shall appear.

In types and shadows 'tis foretold
By prophets, priests and kings;
The story sweet, they do repeat,
How God foreknew all things.

The wrath of man shall praise thee, Lord,
The remainder of wrath he'll restrain;
Render to God which to him is due,
Singing his adorable name.

From the wise and prudent these things
are hid,
Unto babes hast it been revealed;
Rejoice that your names are written
in heaven,
By the spirit of promise they're sealed.

The law was given by Moses,
Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ;
Know ye not that ye are not your own
For ye are bought with a price.

Thou sayest that I am a King,
To this end was I born,
And for this cause came into the world,
The Lord is my strength and song.

In him we live, move and have our being,
God's church thus triumphantly shines;
In the covenant love of this merciful God
Not one shall be left behind.

From Joseph to David to Jesus,
Through ages his love made known;
What a joyous delight in the hope that
we might,
Share the bliss of that heavenly home.

His, claim no merit in themselves,
But come to Christ for all:
As to obedience are they blessed,
Down at his feet they fall.

Looking to that joyful day, when he
Shall descend with a shout from above.
To carry his church to be with him there,
In that eternal city of love.

(Mrs.) LOUISE NEWMAN
1030 Bruce St., Memphis 4, Tenn.

CORRESPONDENCE

"The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts."

Haggai 2:9

This verse of Haggai spoken by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, from the literal standpoint, is a comparison of two conspicuous temples of old testament history, the one builded by Solomon at the direction of the Lord, and the other the rebuilt temple completed by Herod and destroyed by Titus when Jerusalem was taken and the Jews dispersed. But the spiritual import of this Scripture is far deeper and more involved in meaning. One might wonder how the temple that was erected over the ruins of that splendid edifice erected by Solomon and demolished by Nebuchadnezzar could have a greater glory. The Solomonic temple was the most beautiful of all the ancient world, immense amounts of gold being lavished in the materials used in its construction and in the vessels that adorned it. The size of the vessels of worship used in its service can not fail to impress the reader with their grandeur and magnificence. If there is a glory in the

type, much greater is the glory in the antitype, the true church to which this temple pointed. The stones of this wonderful building were hewn, shaped and fitted in the quarries where found, far distant from Mount Moriah, and were transported with much difficulty to the temple site where they were raised by means of wooden instruments, so that no sound of axe, hammer, or metal tool was heard in its construction. So there is no sound of any human instrument heard in the erection of the church of the living God, which is composed of living stones and forms the most glorious and beautiful structure in earth or in heaven. The Holy Ghost is its inhabitant and it is adorned with believing Jews and Gentiles of every nation and tribe under the sun, and it reaches even to the bosom of God himself.

But as glorious as was King Solomon's temple it did not have the glory of the rebuilt temple, which, while larger, lacked the richness of Solomon's temple, but possessed a greater glory because the presence of Jesus Christ graced its precincts. Our Saviour never walked in Solomon's temple, never honored it with his holy presence, while he often visited the rebuilt temple, or latter house, as we read in John's gospel how he walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. So in this sense the rebuilt temple, or house, had a greater glory than the one that preceded it.

But there is a deeper meaning to the scripture under consideration. Both of these temples symbolize the church of God which is the true house of God, and the latter house in the sense that it belongs to the gospel dispensation and is graced by the indwelling presence of the Lord the Holy Spirit. The Lord dwells in his people and walks in them and is their life, hope and teacher, and every child of God is the dwelling place of the most high God. For the church the son of God paid the highest price that can be conceived by men or angels, his own life, his blood, his suffering, his death on the cross, his endurance of the curse, counting it all a joy for his precious bride whose shame and sin he took upon himself as though they were his very own. The worth of an article is what one is willing to pay for it, who recognizes its value, and so believers are bought with a price and should glorify God in their bodies and spirits which are his. The Lord dwells in them, sanctifying them by his word which is truth, as the Holy Spirit applies it to their hearts and consciences. Through that spirit the children of God are conformed to his image, hear the word and rejoice in it with joy unspeakable and full of glory, possess a good hope through grace, receive an earnest of that incorruptible inheritance reserved in heaven for them, and present their bodies as acceptable sacrifices unto God. In this church there is a glory that temples built by hands did not possess. So in that sense the glory of this latter house, the house not built with hands eternal in the heavens, has a glory that old testament temples never knew.

There was a glory in the temple worship of the law dispensation in that all the sacrifices pointed to Christ and prefigured his work of atonement. The animal brought for the sin offering typified Christ, for this sacrifice was for the nature of sin, not for actual sins committed by the transgressor. All men are born into this world with a sinful nature and so because of this nature commit sin, and this nature must be atoned for before the believer can have the nature of Christ in him as the hope of glory. The sin offering in the

ceremonial worship was killed, burned, and buried, even to the dung, the complete work of Jesus in putting away sin being beautifully represented in this service. But sin could not be actually put away by any offering that man could bring; it could only point to a better and more efficient sacrifice. The trespass offering was for the sins of nature, for sins actually committed, and there was a glory in this service in that restitution and more were typified in one fifth of the value of the sacrifice being added, showing that Jesus in putting away the trespasses of his people adds that which they did not possess originally, that is eternal life. The heirs of grace and glory can never again come under the condemnation of that law from which Christ has made them free. There was a typical glory in the ministration of the high priest in the holy place when he attended to the lights upon the golden candlestick with its seven branches all made of one piece, typifying the church with its one faith, one baptism, and one Lord, but there is a greater glory in the true church which is one in Christ Jesus, receives from him the oil of grace and the light that shines before men to glorify the Father which is in heaven. As the offerings under the law could not take away sin, they could not give peace to the soul nor purge the conscience, but in the latter house, the church, the blood of Christ purges from all sin and gives that peace which passes all understanding.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

Route 1, Hammond, W. Va.

DEAR BRETHREN, SISTERS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS: I will try to write you some of my views on the scriptures and God's way in saving man, yes, poor helpless sinners. In the first place Jesus Christ stood as a lamb slain, yes, as it were, slain. Oh, see God's eternal purpose in that Lamb as it was slain. It is no wonder John, the forerunner of Christ, cried out and said, "Behold the Lamb of God." John was a witness of Jesus and he testified what this Lamb was to do. Yes, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Then Jesus testified on the cross, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do," and the angels testified what that work was, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." So by these witnesses it is established for Jesus did take away the sin of the world. Not this evil, present, ungodly world because Jesus said of them "they have no cloke for their sin," and if ye die in your sins where I am therefore ye cannot come. So it is the elect world, the righteous world, chosen and given to Christ. He bore our sins in his own body and put them away forever, he did take away the sin of the world just as John testified of him. John said, "We are of God," speaking of God's children, then he said, "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." Yes, the whole ungodly world lieth in wickedness, and as I have stated, have no cloke for their sins.

God gave the children of Israel the law by Moses, but truth and grace came by Jesus Christ. Keep this in your minds so we will rightly divide the word of truth. The law is our schoolmaster, truth and grace through Christ saves the sinner, yes, the blood cleanseth us from all sin. See the slain Lamb that took our sins away, bore them himself in his own body on the cross. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that appears to man teaches him how to live, yes, soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world. Why? Because he is a good and faith-

ful servant. Who made him to be a good and faithful servant? Paul told who made him to be what he was, converted, saved from his sins. He said, "By the grace of God I am what I am." Then the grace of God taught him how to live and what to deny, he denied ungodliness after the grace of God appeared to him.

Now let us reason between law and grace. The law condemns us because we are guilty, because we transgressed and broke the law, the law shows no mercy and we are justly condemned, but listen and learn what this says. Christ by whom came grace and truth will have mercy and not sacrifice. "I am meek and lowly in heart." I came to have mercy upon the sinner; I am the end of those sacrifices; the body was prepared for it; I will take away your sins once and forever; I came to fulfill the law and it shall be taken away; like an old garment it is ready to decay; grace will cause you to do and walk in the good works which God hath before ordained you to walk in. Paul proved what he was. Yes, "By the grace of God I am what I am." There are two kinds of servants, law servants and grace servants. The law servant hath the law but hath not grace. All the children of Israel were under the law and were called outwardly to keep it, but none of them kept it, none of them were righteous, no not one; but God's elected children also had grace. Like Caleb and Joshua they had another spirit to lead them, and they said we are able to go up and possess the land because our God will fight our battles for us. They were good and faithful servants, and they occupied and gained while those fearful ones only had the law and were discouraged in heart, children who were only born after the flesh and they were cut off. Why? Because of unbelief. It is the believer who escapes for Christ is his refuge. Grace makes men to be good and faithful. The law cannot because if there had been a law given to give life then verily righteousness would have been by the law, but the law could not do that, it condemns instead of justifying the sinner. So it was needful for the grace covenant for Christ justifies us from all things. Law servants bury their talent in the earth if one alone, but where there is more than one they occupy and gain, grow in grace. You know you must first be in grace, grace causes growth. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Grace is never taken away, the law was taken away. The kingdom taken away, the inwardly law given to that nation that did yield fruit, the nation of Jesus Christ, for they are good and faithful servants because the tree at first was made good. No change in the law talented man, he went his way burying what he had, and one writer said, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." So he said here is thine own, I kept it laid up. It is thine, take it for thou art an austere man. You reap where you have not strawed. Grace never taught him how to live because Jesus said, "Thou wicked and slothful servant." It is grace and love that makes men good and faithful, faith being the fruit of the Spirit, it is the gift of God for it is given you to believe on him, so he that believeth is born of God. He hath the gift of faith, he walks by faith in the good works which he was before ordained to walk in. Judas was only given the part he acted and then the apostleship of the work of the ministry was taken from him. Paul, the chosen one in Christ,

fulfilled his place. As I said, there are two kinds of servants—good and faithful, wicked and slothful. They serve and fill their places until all things are fulfilled that must be fulfilled then cometh the end, but the end is not yet for there were two classes of the children of Israel—the fleshly class and the spiritual Israel. The fleshy class was full of corruption, the spiritual class was cleansed by the blood of the Lamb. They differ then in their ways and manners. The one class does mind the things of the spirit, the other minds the things of the flesh; the one talented man was wicked and slothful, the others called good and faithful by the Lord and they were his servants. Pharoah was raised up for the purpose he filled and God's power was shown in him, yes, declared throughout the earth.

Oh may God, dear brother Dodson, keep you and me in peace and love with all of God's children. I love to see the spirit of love manifested in our writings and in our preaching, and show that we are actuated and prompted by the true spirit. If any one differs from me let us reason together in love, not to gain the victory but let the truth be set forth in order.

I have been sick for about a month, almost past being up, and have seen a hard time, yet I justly deserve it for I am a sinner still, yes a vile sinner, but I hope a sinner saved by the grace of God alone. I hope I do not want to murmur or complain. I hate my life on account of my sinful flesh for in the flesh there dwells no good thing. See the two classes of people and servants going forth, as they claim, serving God, but let us keep in mind Cain and Abel were brothers and they made their offering unto God. Cain with his offering was rejected because he was a wicked servant. He offered the fruits of the ground, no blood in his offering, but Abel was first made a good servant and was accepted. His offering was a type of that slain Lamb that took away sin so his offering was far more excellent than Cain's. He became angry and slew Abel, his brother, because Abel was righteous and Cain was wicked. Grace did not dwell in him, but grace ruled and controlled Abel and he was fruitful until death. He walked worthy of his vocation and his blood, yet after he was slain still cried unto God, while with Cain sin lieth at his door not forgiven.

(Elder) JAMES W. LINN

3347 Tutwiler Ave., Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am sending you a letter which to me is good and others have suggested that it be sent to you. The desire is present with me to write of the wonderfulness of our God, but I am indeed weak and ignorant and fully realize it is impossible to do so at just any time. Sometimes I hope I am given to see such beauty that I immediately begin to write to some one in my mind, but most of these letters are never put on paper as they are gone by the time I get to a place where writing can be done. I often wonder why it is so, why such beautiful words flow through my mind and get away, but they bring tears of rejoicing to my eyes. God knows and he does all things well. Glory be to his great and good name.

(Mrs.) LUTHER CAMPBELL

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER CAMPBELL WHO ARE WITH THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH: It seems for some cause my mind is drawn to the little band in Memphis, and what I will write I know not, but I have the desire to answer your last sweet letter if no more than to say your letters with old dates I have reread to find they cheer my drooping mind. Your article in our last

Signs is so rich. Oh, how sweet to look beyond this life of trials, sorrow and disappointments to the city whose builder and maker is God; yet the weary traveler has to stay here his appointed days, hours and moments filled with fears and doubts, remaining in the valley until it pleases the Lord to show us again, the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

Dear ones I feel glad there is a poor and afflicted people which is made to feel the need of Jesus. I only hope it pleased the Father who sent his Son to redeem a wretch like me, also raised him for my justification and yet lives to bless me with his love, and lives to plead my cause above. No love so great as the love of Jesus. He is still at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for his saints. He is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. When we are carried away of our own lust, seeking to please the flesh, not feeling the need of Jesus; trampling the love and mercies of God under our feet; like you said, in this condition we would blush if we were asked what church we attend; but when the love of Jesus, just his look, oh! does it not cause weeping bitterly, and we are made to repeat with a godly sorrow, is there not a cause? I hope I love the Lord because he first loved me. Are we not passive in his hands at all times? The chastening rod is just as necessary as the staff. David said, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Without the rod there would be no need of the staff. Elder Lambert's article in the last *Signs* is wonderful. Why do children of God suffer? We hear a kind of doctrine preached all over our land and to truthfully speak it all brings forth death. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Puny man has to be clothed, and in his right mind, with the love and mercy of God's mighty power if we are ever acceptable in the sight of God. We cannot have faith, cannot be obedient. Are you not so glad to feel the suffering of God's little ones is a gift when you are brought to the banqueting house and his banner over you is love? Can you put your trust in any safer one than Jesus when it pleases the Lord to make his little ones trust in him? I do not know (the Lord of glory came to this low ground of sorrow to suffer, bleed and die) that I was washed in his redeeming blood, but I hope it pleased him to give me a hope by which also we have access by faith into his grace, wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. "And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed: because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." It is all a gift of God's love. There is nothing able to separate one of his children from God's love. Paul said, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Are not these the afflicted and poor people that have learned obedience by the things which they suffer?

You asked me in your last letter if I had ever heard brother Lambert. Yes, several years ago we met him at brother Kerley's, and I remember him telling his experience. It gives me courage sometimes when I hear such experiences,

that may be the Lord was in the matter when I go back many times in memory of the way I have had to come. I remember his text at Cane Creek, Psalms 137: 2-4. Dear sister, when you feel so shut up so long that you feel to beg the Lord to "restore unto me the joy of thy salvation," do the joys of rejoicing in times past comfort you? Many things take place that we forget but these things are fresh in memory as if only yesterday.

We had a precious letter from brother Brown, speaking of his weakness in such an humble way. Surely it was as a cup of cold water to Earl and me. He wrote us that brother Veazey was in the hospital again. He is grounded in the faith that is not wavering, being enabled by the grace of God to counsel the weak. I humbly hope my trust is in the same God that is able to give strength in weakness. His name shall be declared among the nations and there will be a remnant according to election, trusting in that God who said, I am God and I change not. A God whose word is "quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow; and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." No place that he is not there, he is in all deep places even watching over his children, keeping them as the apple of his eye. There is no end to the precious truths though I might be as Job. The Lord said, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?" What could be any more fearful than to fall into the hands of the living God. Hope you can forgive all errors, and when you have to bow in humble submission, feeling the need of Jesus, remember this weak unworthy worm of the dust.

(Mrs.) ASENITH JONES

Martin, Tenn.

Springwood, Va.

DEAR CATHERINE: We were glad to receive your letter and enjoyed it. You asked my views on Gal. 6:2, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." There must first be a burden before we can bear it. The overtaking of a fault must be felt in the heart that it become a burden, then we bear it by showing love, respect and fellowship for that one when he confesses his fault, and directing him to Christ who is able to give that exceeding and eternal weight of glory. That weight is exceeding, therefore, must be above everything else. It is also eternal weight so there is a weight in glory as well as a burden in sorrow. This weight in glory is too deep for me to comment on. The burden we bear I think is what you wanted to hear about. As good an example of that is this I think of now; one of the deacons of County Line Church, before I united, went over in Franklin County one cold day. Some one gave him a drink of whiskey. He sat down by a hot fire and it made him drunk. It was where no one of County Line Church would ever have heard of it, but the overtaking was in his heart. It became burdensome and he went before the church the next meeting and told the church what he had done. The church bore his burden, so when one member becomes burdened the whole church feels it. It is no burden for one to say "if" I have done anything wrong I ask forgiveness and there is no burden for us to bear. The devil can make that kind of confession, but the devil cannot make a confession of things not seen. That the very essence of it enters one's being, that begets fellowship, and I think that love we feel for that one is fulfilling the law of Christ as his kingdom is a kingdom of love.

There are temporal burdens such as lacking the necessities of life which we

should supply. That is a duty laid on us but anyone can do that and often does. This is only a glimpse that I see in this but I cannot write more about it. I hope to be in Roanoke Saturday and Sunday. Yours in hope.

M. A. THOMAS

Route 3, Benton, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER BYRD: I have been intending to write you since we heard from you, but I do not get around to all that I plan to do. We go to meeting at some church every Sunday, and usually something is said that gives me a lead of mind that I follow for a few days. There is the necessary work around to do so all in all I am here and there.

This morning I had a desire to write for publication, then another thought came if I would write at all I better write Brother Byrd if nothing more than to acknowledge his letter. So here I am and if my mind is not kept in truth there will be no truth written, henceforth I write hoping to know the truth. I have been seeing so much the past few years in flesh and blood and after the flesh. "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:12. Also this text, "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." So when I wrote the word henceforth my mind began to run again, Brother Byrd, on these things that I have mentioned here. We see and know as we see it come to pass that the churches of modern religion induct their sons and daughters into these churches by their will, when they are old enough to know anything about their teaching them of Christ Jesus the Lord, and they have trained their own blood children in these things after the flesh. By the flesh I mean, their own acts, own works, own teachings, hence it is after man. So then these who have a knowledge of Christ from this view and this wisdom of men only have a flesh and blood view of him. They know him but after the flesh. Does this view, this knowledge, this wisdom regenerate? Does it cause people to see the kingdom? Does it cause one to inherit the kingdom? "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." I do not believe this inheriting the kingdom means going into death, and going or being carried to heaven. I believe we are made through regeneration (born again) to see the kingdom, what is in that kingdom and who is the kingdom and what His reigning power is in His kingdom. When we view it with the wisdom of God and not of man, we see all men clearly. We see those who believe with their wisdom, works and desires they can attain unto spiritual things knowing nothing better. They try and they work and we see great swelling institutions called churches which is "mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots." They proclaim a gospel that is not the gospel of God. So it is their blood or kin that they are interested in perhaps first, then their fleshly desires go out to all the *lost* and they work out a salvation whereby all can, if they will, be saved. "What hath God wrought!" Who wrought out the righteous robe? So after God works he calls and as his work was effectual so also in his calling. It is with power and this power of God is the gospel. "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation." Then when one is worked upon he is a new creature, and he, this one who is worked upon and born of God, knows Christ no more

after the flesh, but that knowledge after the flesh has passed away and something new has come in. "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." 2 Cor. 5:16. Then that man inherits the kingdom and sees it with an eye of faith—all is new. He sees who is King and he sees the beauty of the work of God and not man's work. Although man seeks out many inventions to get them in, this man born of the Spirit and with an eye single can now read the first chapter of John and get comfort in the thought that it is not of blood, nor of the flesh, nor of the will of man but of God. He is now declaring this truth, believing this truth and would like to tell every one he meets just how it is, but when he stops to think about his own condition before he knew it was not of flesh and blood that he entered into the knowledge of it then he sees the kingdom, the work of the three one God. He sees it is no use for man to encompass land and sea to make a proselyte. No, it is all of God, by him, to him and for him. Before this wonderful knowledge was given him by putting it in his mind and heart he could not declare it was of God. He thought as many do, the world over, that man could have faith, could believe and could trust. He was made alive, a new creature, a new mind, a new heart, a new understanding that is all of God, not after the flesh, not after wisdom of flesh. He hopes when he is turned around to view all of this that he is born again. No, he is not sure. It is not knowledge, it is a hope in the knowledge that this that is done for him was of God, was of power. It came as lightning, it struck him dead, the death stroke that makes alive.

Ah, if we had known anything about what time, what hour this something was coming to take away all of our goods, our good works and deeds we would have watched, surely we would have watched and may be we could have seen where it came from and where it went, but the good man of the house does not know what time the thief will come, or he would be awake and not let him enter. One thing about God's elect they are not awake until he wakes them when it pleases him. "Stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please." It will be his good pleasure for them to see the kingdom and inherit and behold its strength, high towers, walls and bulwarks. Brother Byrd, we believe he gave us evidences of him as our hope. He in us and we in him. He in the Father and the Father in him. Then we could walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh. We desire to see the effects of the Spirit's guiding and not what we learn after the flesh. Then there is no more condemnation to them that walk after the flesh but after the Spirit. We are after the Spirit, we want to see the signs of work done by the three one God and not work done by the will of man or flesh and blood but God's work. We know Christ no more after the flesh nor after the fashion we once knew him in our fleshly wisdom, but in another way we have so learned him and the way we have so learned him is—"Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." Those heirs that inherit this kingdom will be those given the Son in the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, and those heirs will be "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruuptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

When Jesus left this earth he went to prepare a place for some one to be with him, not after death but here, he comes again and again and knocks and the Spirit of him that dwells in us

opens to him and he comes in and sups with us and we with him. These places, these sittings are our places, our mansions he prepared for us by his going away and coming again and again. Then it is in these lone feasts Satan is cast out of these heavenly feasts and they are heaven to us, foretastes of heaven. We then are enjoying the reigning power of our King in his kingdom, Satan bound. Oh yes, Satan will be loosed, certainly he will be loosed, but he is always bound when we are enjoying a love feast with Christ in these heavenly places. Jesus reigns. Our preachers when called do not say flesh and blood taught us. No, but hear Jesus telling Peter, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Did Paul have to ask any one about his preaching? A precious line of thought these things are to me. "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Farewell in the Lord. In hope.

(Mrs.) EFFIE BOWDEN

Box 168, Lubbock, Texas.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR FRIEND: I hand you herewith my check for the renewal of my subscription and the balance to be used in any way that seems best to you. If not deceived, the *Signs* sets forth the truth as I understand and believe it. If one such as I may express an opinion it is in accordance with a "thus saith the Lord." Sincerely your friend.

DURWOOD H. BRADLEY

Route 2, Jasper, Ala.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: I have a mind to write but now I have started what shall I write? I rode into town this morning on a crowded bus. Somehow my mind was on something other than the people on that bus. I was carried back to the time the children of Israel were in the wilderness and were bitten by the serpents. Moses raised a brass serpent and whosoever looked upon this brass serpent lived. I had thought of this beautiful figure many times but I think it never appeared so plain as it did this morning. I could see the poor little child of God in the wilderness, suffering all the pangs of sin, not knowing how to turn or where to go. When the remedy is shown us it is the Saviour in the form of man as he hung on the cross between heaven and earth. There is no such mineral as brass but it is a composition of copper and zinc. There has never been any man like Christ. He was both God and man. He hung between heaven and earth, between law and grace, between justice and mercy. He has always been between the Father and his people, his righteousness has even been their righteousness, their sins were on him. The little child of God who feels he is a sinner alway turns his eyes to Calvary, there is his hope for redemption, and I believe all who look shall live. When we go the full length of our strength, try out the last particle of our own righteousness we have to acknowledge we are all undone. Our nature hates to admit it but we learn, like Jonah, that salvation is of the Lord.

Brother Dodson, if you should have a mind and feel that you have light on the subject, write an ariticle on David and Jonathan, their unusual strong friendship. According to nature it would seem Jonathan would have disliked David because he was the son

of the king, and according to custom he should have been the next king, but still he loved David as his own soul. Saul disliked David but because of the things David did he promised him his daughter. Who is Jonathan a figure of? Those three arrows, what are they? He surely must have been a figure of something but I cannot think of him clearly as the church under the law. He seems more like John, he was son of a priest, the last link in the chain to the real priest, which was Jesus Christ. Please, if you can see any spiritual meaning here I would so love to read it for somehow my mind dwells on it and I feel there is a most beautiful picture.

I am sending $2 to renew my subscription to the *Signs*. I could not do without it now it seems, especially when the weather is bad and I am alone so much of the time. May the good Lord bless you and the good writers to continue the good work you are doing in comforting God's little ones. Unworthily,

(Mrs.) M. G. HAND

(See editorial in this issue)

Ajlune, Wash.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Again I am reminded of my duty to support our family publications as a means of communication, one with all, that we may know of each others welfare and those in sympathy with us. My renewal is enclosed. I sometimes feel that there may be an additional duty besides keeping up our subscriptions. An exchange of communications is to be considered by others than the Editors else it would not in reality be a family paper. Doubtless many feel some anxiety on this subject and pass it by with the thought of unworthiness, but I am not sure that this feeling should lead us into slothfulness or indifference, else I should remain silent in all situations. To know our worthiness would be much the same as to feel a perfection which does not find a home in the hearts of those who have been born again. It would exclude hope which is an anchor to the soul. It is the function of the Editors to select the most suitable articles for publication, and thus give us food in variety rather than sameness or repetitions which can hardly be refreshing to the wayfarer in his search for comfort and crumbs from the Father's table. We should not feel slighted if our offerings are not used at once, or if unused, because others may have been first in line or variety. Let us bring our offerings with the sincere hope that something better is in readiness. This is true charity or self denial.

Knowing that my heart is corrupt, I cannot expect my offerings to be good because a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. How to perform that which is good I find not, but what I hate that I do; therefore I should deny myself and prefer others. Such feelings seem rather depressing except that they are marks of identification, which give the very hope which anchors the wayfarers courage to continue his wanderings even where there is no continuing city, but a looking for one to come whose maker and builder is God. I would encourage others whose paths may seem thorny to be strong, sincere and content in whatsoever state they may find themselves. It seems that the time is here when, very many, perhaps a large majority of the heirs of promise are worshipping in isolation, and not a few in confusion, because of spiritual matters, not because God is not able to provide more pleasant surroundings, but because this way has pleased him, yea, this is the way, walk ye in it. If we are to reign with our Savior, we must also suffer with him. The servant

is not above his master. Isolations and discomforts have been the inheritance of saints in all ages, yea, and a man's enemies shall be they of his own household.

How happily we are situated in a country of religious freedom and personal privilege both in social and family life, while most other nations are hampered by restrictions and persecutions. Why should our communications be other than outpourings of joy and gratitude to our heavenly Father, whose ways are past findings out and his purposes are known only as they unfold to our vision. Our sufferings are for our good, though not a part or parcel of the redemption price, which idea seems to prevail in the minds of many. Even when we are tried in the fire of adversity and come forth as gold our sufferings are not credited to us in any sense as an adjunct to redemption. These trials and refinements are for our good in the earthly warfare which is going on in our individual or collective existence. Any offering or suggestion of offering to complete our redemption is a denial of the sufficiency and completeness of the blood and sufferings of our Elder Brother who paid the full debt for us, and made us heirs and joint heirs with him in glory. We should be happy and await his coming with patience and courage anchored in hope.

Regarding our travels and trials in this present world, I have in all the years past observed that many seem to think that repentance is a mourning for sins past and is an essential part of our redemption. As I see it this is erroneous. The word repentance does not imply regrets for present or past conduct or even thoughts, but the most important meaning in the word is that it implies a change. This change must be for the better for our regrets mean we want to do better, and there the Christian warfare begins and enriches us with an experience of grace. This warfare continues but the victory is ours through Jesus who died for us. Sorrow is not a part of any sacrifice for sin, but only an evidence of regrets for sin, error or misfortune. Let those who base hope on human suffering, reconsider. Give me Jesus and if you persist in the belief of human efficiency or the merit of human suffering just beware. Any laws we may conjure to aid in redemption are based on wizardry. When the twelve were called to follow Jesus in his ministry, no mention is made of a period of mourning or repentance. They gladly followed him in his earthly ministry. Yours in hope.

E. D. OVERSTREET

223½ S. 10th St., Mt. Vernon, Ill.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I received my January *Signs* and have enjoyed reading them. I get so much comfort from them when I am home alone. Your New Years Greeting I have read over and over. I have never been gifted to write good tidings or given the understanding of the Scriptures. My Bible is a sealed book to me. Oh, how my heart aches at times for a better understanding, and then I think God has given me all he wants me to know and I should not murmur which I try not to do. I am thankful for all the good things I feel that God has done for me. So much of the time I feel that I am not worthy, and grieve and wonder am I his or am I not. I sometimes hope that I have been made to know God, for I have been made to call to him in my distresses when his tender mercies were so sweet to me. He is my all in all. He is God and there is none besides him.

May God bless you and all the Associate Editors of the *Signs* that you may be able to keep the good paper

published. I did not intend to write so much. Remember me when you pray for I feel I need the prayers of all the dear Baptists. An unworthy sister, if saved it is by grace and grace alone.

(Mrs.) S. S. KERLEY

Route 1, Eagleville, Tenn.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, GENTLEMEN: For the five dollar bill enclosed kindly renew my subscription to the *Signs* for twelve months, using the remainder as you may deem best. My subscription expired with the June issue. I have much enjoyed reading this periodical and pass it along for others to share this enjoyment. Sincerely,

JOSEPH A. JOHNSON

(We again wish to thank all who are considerate enough to aid the *Signs*. Due to the shortage and consequent increased cost of paper, it is becoming constantly more difficult to publish our family paper, but God has been good in putting it in the hearts of our brethren and friends to remember the *Signs* and help us carry on the work we are doing. For such blessings we humbly desire to express our deep gratitude to the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

We regret to say that a considerable number of our subscribers are behind with their subscriptions. In many cases this may be due either to an oversight or neglect, and we will very much appreciate it if our readers will examine the dates on their wrapping covers, and if they are behind and can send us all or at least a portion of what is due it will be a great help.

As we continue sending the paper for sometime after the subscription expires, unless notified to stop it, wherever it is not desired, we will appreciate being notified promptly to discontinue sending it. We are doing our best to make the paper really worth while to our readers and we will appreciate your co-operation. We would like to extend our personal thanks to each and every one who is aiding us in any way for what we are doing to maintain and advance the interests of our family paper.

R. LESTER DODSON)

Longhurst, N. C.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR EDITOR: Enclosed you will find $3, two of which to renew my subscription and the other one to use as you see fit in aiding the *Signs*. I feel that I could not get along without this good old paper. I read and re-read the experiences of the dear saints, and would give the world and the fulness thereof if I could feel as they do. It seems as though I can see their dear faces and wish I could shake their hands. They are not strangers, I am the stranger.

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

The most of my time I stay so low, cast down, poor and naked. I possess nothing. As Job said, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Brother Dodson if you ever have a mind please remember me when at the throne of mercy.

"A crumb of mercy, Lord, I crave,
Unworthy to be fed
With dainties such as angels have,
Or with the children's bread.

The least if one at all.

(Mrs.) L. M. PULLIAM

205 S. Liberty St., Bastrop, La.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, EDITOR, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST JESUS: I think you are doing a wonderful work, publishing such a remarkable paper that so beautifully sets forth the scripture that was once delivered to the saints in Christ Jesus. It is meat to the whole household of faith. It so beautifully outlines and sets forth the stakes and boundry of that strait and narrow path that leads to life everlasting, the path that no vulture's eye has ever seen and no lion's whelp has ever trod. There is nothing there for a vulture, there is no dead thing to be cleaned up. As to the lion there are no beasts of prey that go this way, nothing to be destroyed. All that follow this road are the humble, the poor, the meek and lowly, none but the saints of that great and magnificent God. This path is ever watched over and protected by that wonderful and unlimited love from on high in whom there is no variableness neither a shadow of a turn. I feel to trust that is the same protection for this gospel paper. That is what makes it so comforting and offers so much to God's humble few, the household of faith.

Excuse me for making these few remarks and may the God of heaven keep you and sustain you in all your efforts which seem to me so wonderful. Yours in hope of better things to come.

J. H. CALK

Route 2, Vernon, Ala.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: I am sending herewith check to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. I want to thank you for being so kind and patient with me in not stopping the paper for I love the Christian spirit manifest in its columns, and the doctrine set forth in it. I hope I will never miss a copy as long as I live. Am very sorry I could not do better but my reason for the delay is I am afflicted with rheumatism and in my 84th year. I cannot work and have no income otherwise which puts me in straitened circumstances, but I am thankful to the Lord that he has blessed me at this late date to renew.

I pray the Lord to bless you and uphold you to keep the *Signs* going with good old doctrine of salvation by grace through the atoning merits of a crucified Redeemer and nothing else. May the Lord bless all the writers that contribute to the *Signs*. Yours unworthily in the hope of eternal life,

(Elder) B. E. CUNNINGHAM

(We will be glad to send the paper free from now on. R.L.D.)

ANNOUNCEMENT

We regret to state that our supply of books on the Resurrection of the Dead is about exhausted. Therefore, we will have to withdraw our offer to to send one of these books FREE for each **new** subscriber at $2, or to supply the books alone at $1.

We are, however, glad to announce that we have made arrangements whereby we will send FREE to each **new** subscriber, or to an old subscriber who will send in a **new** subscription at $2, a copy of SHOWERS OF RAIN. This is a 40 page booklet containing the Christian experience and 25 poems by our late sister, Flossie I. Faulkner. If the book alone is desired we will send single copies for 50c; six copies for $2.50, or 12 copies for $4.50, providing they all go to the same address.

Some of these poems have been published in the **Signs** and many of our readers know they are good. The book will make an interesting addition to any library or collection of books. We hope each reader will obtain a copy as outlined above. R. L. D.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

J. MacKenzie, Saskatchewan, $16; Mrs. E. E. Nelson, Texas, $1; Mrs. M. J. Goodwin, Ark., $1; Mrs. L. R. Elgin, D. C., $3; W. R. Wallis, Miss., $8; Mrs. C. D. Shanks, Wash., $1; Miss G. Secor, N. Y., $3.

EDITORIAL

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

"The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth." Eccl. 12:10.

It is my purpose to address this article especially to God's called and qualified ministers. May the God of heaven be pleased to so direct my mind and pen that his purpose may be served in this attempt. May the words written be God-honoring and "words easy to be understood." I trust that God will be pleased to bless the reader with an understanding heart to rightly understand the thoughts that I desire to convey in this attempt. I am persuaded that misunderstandings among God's people have prompted some divisions, strifes and confusions. Some confusions in the church have been the result of strife over words of none effect. Isaiah prophesied of a time when those "that make man an offender for word" are cut off. (Isa. 29:21) Solomon says, "A word spoken in due season, how good it is." Prov. 15:23. Considering the many divisions in the churches of this country that hold to the same principles of doctrine; I am convinced that a treatise on this subject would be in "due season." We read in Prov. 15:26, "The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord: but the words of the pure are pleasant words." I believe God gives his people a pure heart that seeks to praise, honor and adore him: and to comfort, console and edify one another. This pure heart enables them to see themselves so vile and sinful that they esteem one another so highly that it is not their desire to offend. I believe those who are meek and humble and inspired by the spirit of God are gifted to use pleasant and acceptable words even in rebuke. I do not think, however, that words that are not upright and true are to be used in order that they be acceptable and pleasant words to the hearer.

We quote from Isaiah 50:4, "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary:****'he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned." This prophecy especially concerns Jesus, but I believe that the same spirit of God has the same effect upon God's called ministers. God blesses his ministers with the tongue of the learned to comfort and edify the wearied. The Psalmist prayed, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee." Psalms 51:12-13. When it pleases God to restore the joy of that salvation to one of his ministers, and blesses him with light of thought and liberty of speech; the result is that the minister is blessed to teach sinners God's ways. God's way of being merciful to their unrighteousness and his way of saving sinners by the merits of Jesus Christ, solely unmerited by the sinner, is comforting and edifying to such sinners that God pleases to waken his ear to hear. The result of the opera-

tion of God's spirit upon the ministers and the hearers is the conversion of sinners. According to Paul's letter to Timothy a qualification of a minister is "apt to teach." I think it is just as certain that some one learns as it is that some one preaches. I do not think words inspired by the spirit are spoken in vain but they find good ground in some heart that God has prepared. God's children are converted day by day thus growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I believe God's called ministers are blessed to comfort, console and edify. It is their desire to do this rather than to establish some peculiar point in theology of their own conviction that is not believed by the brethren. Their desire is, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer." Their desire is to please the Lord, not to offend any one. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "Except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air." 1 Cor. 14:9. If we use words that the meaning of the terms is controversial among the brethren I would consider them not easy to be understood.

Many times expressions are misunderstood among brethren because of difference of opinion concerning particular definitions of words used in these expressions. It behooves us to refrain from using expressions that tend to cause controversy among brethren. It is our desire to heed Paul's instructions to Timothy to wit: "Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker." 2 Timothy 2: 14-17. Paul gives an illustration in the next verse of an expression of vain and profane babbling thus, "the resurrection is past already." Expressions as follows are misunderstood, thus misleading among the brethren; "God is the author of sin," "God *predestinated* sin and wickedness," "We will *know* each other there," "This *same body* will be raised from the dead," "I believe in *eternal children,*" and "The *creature* is not changed in the new birth." Difference of opinions on the words, "author," "predestinated," "know," "same body," "eternal children" and "creature" make these expressions and many others not easy to be understood. "Foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." 2 Timothy 2:23-25. I think the traits of patience, gentleness and meekness are made manifest in God's called ministers. I have received more comfort from wrong expressions in the spirit of meekness than right expressions that are motivated by a haughty spirit. Before we accuse brethren of departing from the doctrine let us first be convinced that we understand their position, and that their position is decidedly contrary to the words that are upright and words of truth.

In meditating upon the aforestated thoughts we are mindful to pray to God that he bless us not to know anything among God's people save Jesus Christ and him crucified. As Peter said to Christ at one time, "Thou hast the words of eternal life." His words were,

"I am the way, the truth, and the life." So when we are blessed to speak words of truth, we are blessed to preach Jesus as our Savior. We trust that he speaks these words to us when we are troubled which results in sweet consolation and confidence in God who saves to the uttermost by his amazing grace.

E. J. L.

DAVID AND JONATHAN

Sister M. G. Hand, Rt. 2, Jasper, Ala., asks that we write on David and Jonathan. In her letter making the requests, which appears in this number of the *Signs,* she also makes some beautiful comment upon the meditation which she had in a crowded bus concerning the travels of the children of Israel in the wilderness, when they were bitten by fiery serpents, and the Lord commanded Moses to make a fiery serpent, "and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." We feel this subject has a tie-in with the one we have been asked to write upon and we would first like to offer some thoughts in connection with it. We will begin by relating an actual experience which we had many years ago. We filled an appointment to speak at our father's church, where we united in 1908, and quite a few of our relatives and friends came out to the meeting. After speaking from the text, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," one of our feminine cousins, who had been a great worker in the Missionary Church, approached us and said in substance. "Lester, you know, whosoever of the children of Israel, in the wilderness, that would look upon the serpent of brass lived." She was applying it to the free-will action of the creature. We replied by saying we could not accept that generalization of the matter and told her if she would consult her Bible, she would find that the correct reading is: "And it shall come to pass that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live." Num. 21:8. There is no free-agency involved in this. One had to be bitten by the fiery serpent first, and then he would in due time, for the word *when* implies that he definitely will look, and he *shall* live, not may live. While all of the Adamic race are sinners, only those who are bitten and who feel the poisonous venom of the serpent of sin encompassing them as a great octopus, from whose tentacles there is absolutely no escape, will look to Jesus. The whole need not a physician. Only such characters as experience the exceeding sinfulness of sin have any occasion of being seriously concerned about being delivered from the power of Satan. John quotes Jesus as having said: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." The Son of man *must* be lifted up, and in this gospel age he is preached as the way, the truth, and the life, and there is salvation in none other. This same writer said, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." He that knew no sin was made sin for us, that we through him might be made the righteousness of God. The "whosoever believeth in him" is one who knows that it is the work of God that we believe on him whom he hath sent. None can look upon or behold

the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world, except by faith, and faith is the gift of God. Our sister has written beautifully about this subject, so we will pass on to the matter of David and Jonathan.

Sister Hand says, "If we should have a mind and feel that we have light on the subject," she would like for us to write an article on David and Jonathan and their unusual strong friendship. She then says that "according to nature it would seem that Jonathan would have disliked David, because he was the son of the king, and according to custom he should have been the next king. But still he loved David as his own soul. Saul disliked David, but because of the things David did, he promised him his daughter." She then asks, "Who is Jonathan a figure of? Those three arrows, what were they?" The subject under consideration is dealt with more extensively in the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth chapters of First Samuel, and it might be well for our readers to read those chapters by way of refreshing their memories on the subject matter. It occurs to us that the first verse of the eighteenth chapter might suffice for a text. It reads as follows:

> "And it came to pass, when he had made and end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul."

David had just come from the slaughter of the Philistine (that great Goliath who had caused king Saul's best soldiers to tremble with fear), and king Saul had delegated his son, "Abner, the captain of the host," to inquire and find out about the stripling David. He was brought before Saul, who questioned him as to whose son he was, etc. Jonathan being a son of Saul was present and heard David give an account of himself and the dealings of the Lord with him while he watched over the flock and enabled him to deliver a lamb from the paw of the lion, and the paw of the bear. It was out of this experience that he gained sufficient confidence and faith in Israel's God to go forth to a victorious battle with Goliath. Our text says, "when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." To us, this sets forth most beautifully what takes place when the Lord's anointed ones get together and tell of his dealings with them. We like very much the expression, "the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David." The experiences of the Lord's people are so interwoven that when one relates his experience of grace it embraces the experience of every heaven born soul, and they feel inseparably bound together. We wish to emphasize that "Jonathan loved him as his own soul." It is claimed that the strongest love that nature knows anything about is that of a woman towards the child she bears, but the love which existed between Jonathan and David was stronger than that of a woman. God established that fact when he spoke by the mouth of the prophet, Isaiah, and asked, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." Words cannot fully express such love. It requires actions. Therefore the Lord so directs and overrules all things so as to magnify his own power and glory as when he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life. In order that this love between Jonathan and David should be thoroughly, and shall we say gloriously manifested, the

very opposite of love had to play its part. Therefore, jealousy, which is as cruel as the grave, sprang up in Saul's heart towards David. After David had slain Goliath, the women cried, Saul had slain his thousands, but David his ten thousands. Thereafter Saul determined to either slay David himself, which he tried unsuccessfully to do, or to have others slay him, which also failed. He scolded his own daughter, who he had given to David to be his wife, for permitting him to escape capture by the men sent to take him to Saul to be killed. Saul then hated David with a perfect hatred, but God was for him, and how wonderfully did God provide by various ways and means for the safety of his life. Only his watchcare over his darling Son, Jesus, when Herod was seeking his life, appears to have exceeded it. Yes, sister Hand, there is a tie which is stronger than anything known in nature. It is that love which brought Jonathan and David into a covenant relationship extending beyond the powers of this world and shall endure forever. It caused Jonathan to seek the safety of David to the point of endangering his own life, for Saul threw a javelin at him when he learned of the friendship and fellowship which existed between him and David. Jonathan who hitherto had been an intercessor for David with his father then became convinced of his father's eternal wrath and vengeance towards David, and had already planned with David the manner in which he would advise him of his father's attitude towards him, and whether he would have to flee or not. They had agreed that Jonathan would shoot three arrows, which may be of considerable significance, at the stone Ezel. This was how David was to know about the matter: If Jonathan said, "Behold, the arrows are on this side of thee, take them; then come thou; for there is peace to thee, and no hurt; as the Lord liveth. But if I say thus unto the young man, Behold, the arrows are beyond thee; go thy way: for the Lord hath sent thee away." When the morning was come Jonathan went into the field at the time appointed and shot the arrows: "And when the lad was come to the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried after the lad, and said, Is not the arrow beyond thee? And Jonathan cried after the lad, Make speed, haste, stay not. And Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows, and came to his master. But the lad knew not anything: only Jonathan and David knew the matter." I Saml. 20:37-39. It is written, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant." How true this is of spiritual things. Those who know not the Lord can have no understanding of the matter, but those who have been born of the Spirit of God, know the meaning of the language when they hear it spoken. Our conclusion is that Jonathan as intercessor for David was a type of Christ, and that the love which existed between them was but typical of that which existed between the Lord Jesus Christ and his people. He was a Friend who sticketh even closer than a brother, and not even death shall ever be able to separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Ofttimes in our church relation we discover to our sorrow that where there are fleshly ties among the members, they will cling together and neglect to do that which should be done for the best interests of the church, but where such is the case, sooner or later it will be seen that those who sowed to the flesh did of the flesh reap corruption. How good it is to see faithful brethren standing up for the

doctrine and the order of the house, even where it involves the exclusion of a bosom companion, or a son or daughter. We have sometimes remarked in this connection, that while blood is thicker than water, the love of God is stronger and more binding than the blood of flesh. As further evidence of Jonathan's being a type of Christ, he was slain by the Philistines, or his enemies, and when David came to be king, he inquired, "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake." Anything less than the love of God would not cause a man to shew kindness to the house of one who had been such an arch enemy as Saul had been to David. We could go on and on, and never tell the half of it. The arrows were undoubtedly diviner's arrows, showing the will of God. In other words, the lot was cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof was of the Lord. The blessed word of God is full of evidence to the effect that no weapon formed against his anointed ones shall prosper or accomplish the designs of those who make them. May we, by faith, commit our life and our all into his care and keeping, being assured that if God be for us, nothing can effectively be against us.

R. L. D.

CONSTITUTION OF CHURCH AT HOUSTON, TEXAS

This is to certify that we, the Presbytery, whose names are hereto subscribed, and by the authority of the churches to which we belong, have on this 22nd day of June, 1947, constituted a church with eight members.

The name of the church is Shepherd Flock located at 1419 Shepherd St., Houston, Texas.

When duly organized the stand was occupied by Elder Ben B. Walston followed by Elder E. B. Ault, closed by Elder W. O. Beene. The church thus being organized sat in conference. Elder W. O. Beene was chosen Pastor and Elder Ben B. Walston, Clerk.

The Presbytery: Elder E. B. Ault, Moderator; Elder Ben B. Walston, Clerk; Elder E. B. Ault, Deacon A. A. Chambers of Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas; Elder Ben B. Walston of Saints Rest Church, Dallas, Texas; Elder W. O. Beene and Elder J. F. Briggs of Salem Church, Freestone, Texas. Done by order of the church.

Elder W. O. BEENE, Mod.
1005 Vincent St., Houston, Tex.
Elder BEN B. WALSTON, Clerk
Kinwod, Tex.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Whereas, an all wise and merciful God had removed by death our beloved brother, J. A. DUNSON be it

Resolved, that in the passing of brother Dunson, Little Flock Church feels keenly her loss. He was a long standing member, well grounded in the faith, faithful and attentive to his church, and was always in his place with his brethren when physically able. He was a good singer and well beloved by all who knew him. His wife preceded him in death and he leaves a family of children who are a living monument to the integrity of their father and mother.

Resolved, that Little Flock Church sends heartfelt sympathy to his bereaved family.

Resolved that a copy of these resolutions be spread on our church records, a copy sent to the family and another copy be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference May 10, 1947 at Altus, Okla.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN, Moderator
(Mrs.) LOU KESTER, Church Clerk

OBITUARIES

MRS. FLORENCE PIPER SAWYER was born March 5, 1861 in Barstow County, Ga., and passed away May 30, 1947. She is survived by three sons, J. I. and S. E. Piper of Heath, Texas and E. M. Piper of Dallas, Texas; one sister Mrs. Emma Allen, Atlanta, Ga.; twenty-four grandchildren, thirty-two great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren. She was married to William Alexander Piper in 1878 and to this union were born ten children. They came to Texas in 1888 and settled near Heath where they made their home until they moved to Dallas, Texas in 1919. She was preceded in death by Mr. Piper, Jan. 2, 1927. Later she was married to J. D. Sawyer who passed away in 1938.

She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, having united when young, and lived a life devoted to the church, always being at meeting when it was possible for her to attend. She was familiarly known as "Mother Sawyer," and was loved by all who knew her. It can truly be said

she was a mother in Israel. She was faithful in every walk in life and her many good deeds will long be remembered. Her children and kindred have reason to be proud of her noble life which is worthy of emulation by all of us and will live on and on in the hearts of her many friends.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved ones and a very large concourse of friends, using this text, "I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." Elder Rose spoke in prayer and Elder Watson dismissed with prayer. Her casket was banked with flowers and her body was interred in the cemetery near Heath, June 1.

(Elder) W. O. BEENE

In-as-much as it has pleased God in his infinite wisdom to take from our midst our beloved brother, W. DURAND FOOKS, it is with a deep feeling of sadness we record his passing. He lived on his farm five miles from Salisbury for thirty-eight years.

He was the son of William and Elizabeth Dryden Fooks, and was born Sept. 15, 1867, making his sojourn on earth 79 years, 2 months and 10 days. He was married to Mary Estelle Hitch, May 7, 1895, and to this union were born five children, two dying in infancy and a daughter died July 18, 1946 preceding his death a little more than four months. He leaves to mourn their loss a widow and two children, William D. Fooks, Pungoleague, Va. and Mrs. Vera F. Leonard, Salisbury, Md., also three grandchildren and a host of friends.

He was a devoted father and a loving husband and was much loved by his family. He suffered much physical pain during the two last years of his life but bore his afflictions with patience. He united with the Nassaongo Church Oct. 26, 1924 and was baptized by Elder J. C. Mellott. He remained a consistent member, never departing from the faith and was a firm believer in the truth. He loved his pastor very dearly and the assembling together of the church. Passing away Nov. 25, 1946, Elder D. L. Topping of Linthicum Heights, Md. conducted the funeral service, using as a text the twenty-third Psalm. Interment in the Parson's Cemetery in Salisbury, Md.

(Mrs.) DURAND FOOKS

JOHN L. COLLINS, the subject of this sketch, was born Sept. 22, 1868, in what is now Geneva County, a few weeks before its formation on Route 2, Newton, Ala. He was the son of the late Elder J. W. Collins, who for twenty-three years was Moderator of the Western Primitive Baptist Association, and for thirty-five years Pastor of Mt. Gilead Church, and at various times Pastor of several other churches.

As a young man, John F. Collins, was active in clearing the forests, building roads, establishing schools and opening up Alabama generally as a frontiersman. In June 1910 he went before Mt. Gilead Church and related the dealings of the Lord with him, and on the third Sunday morning of that month was baptized by his father on, as he often expressed it, one of the most beautiful days he ever saw. In a short time he was chosen church clerk, and soon thereafter Deacon of Mt. Gilead Church, both positions of which he filled in that quiet, humble manner for which he was noted. It was said that he missed only one conference of his church in twenty-four years, and that he missed only two or three communion meetings at Mt. Gilead in seventy-nine years.

He was married to Alma Stewart, a native of what is now Houston County, Ala., Jan. 15, 1891, and to this union were born J. J. Collins, Geneva, Ala., Mrs. M. A. Byrd, who preceded her father in death twenty years, Charles T. and John F. Collins, Newton, Ala. and Mrs. C. H. Reeves, Wicksburg, Ala. They taught their children well and wisely in moral things and gave them the advantages of a natural education. They worked energetically in life and set the best of examples in everything for others to emulate, and left a priceless heritage for their children and were most devoted to each other. John L. Collins had only one brother who was active as an early teacher in Ala., but he did have a half-brother, Joshua W. Collins and half-sister, Mrs. C. J. Sammons, who survive him and who loved him most sincerely, and did everything possible for him, with their mother, Mrs. C. E. Collins, who also survives. It was truly a most loving family whose ties have now been broken. Mrs. John L. Collins was called to her eternal home on July 26, 1946 and from thence on father had little interest in this life, constantly saying that he wanted to be with his most loving companion in the sweet beyond. Although the last weeks of his natural life were spent in intense pain, his faith remained unshaken in the Lord and he kept an active interest in his church. Just a few hours before his passing, Elder R. K. Blackshear preached at his bedside and he greatly enjoyed it. Just a few moments before his death he looked so appealingly at the writer and related his deep love and affection, and said he was ready and passed so quietly and peacefully to the Celestial Plains. How can I live without him and mother, but one of these days I hope to join them where sad partings never come. Father left us just after midnight May 12, 1947, and as the evening shadows lengthened funeral services were conducted most tenderly and affectionately by his pastor, Elder F. A. Collins, Hartford, Ala., and Elder R. K. Blackshear, Edison, Ga. with Holman Funeral Home in charge of arrangements. Both father and mother were placed beneath a mound of wonderously beautiful flowers. Pall bearers for

each were Norman A. and Kenneth Collins, J. T. and A. L. Byrd, W. J. Sammons and Forrest Thornley.

Father would have been 79 years of age in September and is survived by seventeen grandchildren and sixteen great-grandchildren. How sweetly he lies sleeping beside mother in Mt. Gilead Cemetery. Written by his son.

(Elder) J. J. COLLINS

MRS. MAE BEDSOLE, widow of the late J. W. Bedsole, of Malvern, Ala. passed peacefully away April 27, 1947 after a lingering illness at Marianna. Fla. at the home of a brother. She lived a quiet, peaceable life and for many years was an active member of Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church where funeral services were conducted by Elder J. J. Collins on April 29, 1947 with Ward-Wilson Funeral Home in charge. She was a real mother in Israel and is survived by many relatives and a large host of friends.

Also

J. M. JORDAN, Deacon of Mt. Carmel Primitive Baptist Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., died peacefully May 17, 1947 after a short illness. He had been a member of that church about forty years, and a Deacon for perhaps thirty-five years. He was one of the finest characters I ever knew and filled his duties as a Deacon ably and well. He was 69 years of age and is survived by his widow and two daughters, Mrs. Roy Underwood, Samson, Ala., and Mrs. D. E. Mason, Bellwood, Ala. Two sons, C. E. Jordan, Geneva, Ala. and W. D. Jordan. Coffee Springs, Ala. Three brothers, J. R. W. Jordan, Winter Garden, Fla., Alex. Jordan, Westville, Fla. and Ceba Jordan, Tennille, Ala. There are sixteen grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. J. Collins at Eden Baptist Church, May 17, 1947 with Searcy Funeral Home in charge.

Also

R. S. SORRELLS, a true father in Israel, died peacefully after a lingering illness at the home of his son, Cephas, Route 2, Hartford, Ala. June 11, 1947. He was the second Deacon to be called to his eternal home within a month from Mt. Gilead Church and the third Deacon of a Primitive Baptist Church whose funeral the writer has attended within the same period of time.

Brother Sorrells was a real patriarch and firm believer in the principles of the Primitive Baptist Church. He united with Mt. Gilead Church in September 1910, and was baptized by the late Elder J. W. Collins. Soon thereafter he was ordained as Deacon which position he filled ably and well. He is survived by his wife who is just five days younger than her husband, both being 84 years of age last November and having been married 65 years they leave quite a record. Sister Sorrell is truly a mother in Israel and sadly misses her husband. Their sons are E. R., Frank, A. E. R. L., and Cephas all of Hartford, Ala. They have about forty grandchildren and seventy-seven great-grandchildren. Funeral services were conducted by Elders F. A. and J. J. Collins at Mt. Gilead Church with Holman Funeral Home in charge June 12, 1947 with an immense throng present and many beautiful floral offerings.

(Elder) J. J. COLLINS

MRS. PHOEBE HASTINGS LAYFIELD, a sister in Christ, was born Aug. 29, 1861, and was taken from this world Dec. 31, 1943, making her 82 years, 4 months and 2 days old. She was the widow of James Robert Layfield to whom she was married in 1887 and to which union were born three children, Johnny, Winder, and William who survive her. There were also seventeen grandchildren. She was baptized by Elder E. Rittenhouse, being received in the Little Creek Church where she remained a faithful member until Oct. 9, 1909 at which time she was received in Forrest Grove Church by letter. She was greatly loved by the brethren and sisters for the truth's sake. Her husband was taken from this life April 21, 1934 which was about nine years before her departure. She was living with her son, Winder, near Parsonsburg, Md. when God took her home. The funeral service was conducted by the writer in the Forrest Grove meeting-house and her body laid away in the cemetery near the meeting-house.

Also

MRS. AUGUSTA HASTINGS BYRD, a sister in hope, was born July 12, 1871 and departed this life Oct. 22, 1945, making her stay on earth 74 years, 3 months and 10 days. She was the daughter of Caldwell and Sarah Hastings. She was three times married and a very good and faithful wife to each of her husbands. There were no children.

She came to the Little Creek Old School Baptist Church looking for a home and was baptized by Elder A. B. Francis, the third Sunday in November 1892, and remained a believer in salvation by grace to the end which came while residing in Salisbury. Sister Byrd was a very faithful member in the church and ready at all times to make sacrifices for the benefit of others, manifesting her love for the brethren and sisters who also loved her. Funeral service was conducted by the writer in the Little Creek meeting-house and her body placed in the adjoining burying-ground.

Also

MRS. ROWENA BETHARD, a sister in hope of eternal life through the shedding of the blood of the Lamb of God without spot or blemish, passed from this life Feb. 17, 1947. She was born Jan. 27, 1870, the daughter of George and Catherine Brittingham near Berlin, Md. She was married to E. M. Bethard, Dec. 24, 1890, who departed this life

Oct. 22, 1929. She leaves four children, Beulah B. Powell, Maude B. Adkins, E. Dean Bethard and Lloyd W. Bethard; eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Also one sister, Louisa Warren, 88 years of age.

Sister Bethard was baptized in Sept. 1900 by Elder Thomas Poulson and received in the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church. She was loved by the church and is greatly missed by us all, yet we feel to say God's will, not ours, be done. At the time of her death her home was in Pittsville, Md., but during her illness she stayed with her daughter, Beulah, in Powellville, Md. where she passed away. In this home the writer conducted her funeral services and her body was laid away in the Parson's Cemetery, Salisbury, Md.

Also

GEORGE F. ADKINS, a brother in Christ, passed from this life April 21, 1947. He was the son of James and Catherine Adkins, and was born April 17, 1883, making his stay on earth 64 years and 4 days. He was married by Elder A. B. Francis, Jan. 4, 1905 to Laura A. Adkins who survives him with eight children; Gladys, Luvicia, Catherine, Elizabeth, Emma, James, William and George F. Jr., also nine grandchildren.

He was baptized Oct. 9, 1913 by Elder A. B. Francis, becoming a member of Indiantown Old School Baptist Church and later appointed deacon and clerk. The church has felt her loss very much. He served as clerk of the Salisbury Association for several years, and also served as President and Trustee of the Primitive Baptist Home in Salisbury for some time.

He suffered a paralytic stroke and was afflicted a long time, but at all times he was very patient. His devoted wife and children were very faithful and did all they could for his comfort. We have missed him very much but feel to say, our loss is his eternal gain. His funeral service was conducted by the writer in the Indiantown meeting-house and his body placed in the Forrest Grove burying-ground.

(Elder) HAROLD M. BENNETT

MRS. OCTAVIA FRANCES DIXON was born Oct. 21, 1872 near Salisbury, Md., and fell asleep in the Lord, May 13, 1947. She was the daughter of Isaac Warner and Martha Tilghman Sirman. She was married to William Henry Dixon July 29, 1889 and to this union were born five children, one son Bryan, dying at the age of eight years. Surviving are Sarah Martha Clark, Claymont, Del., William W., Carroll L. and Roscoe P. Dixon all of Salisbury, Md. There are eleven grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Sister Dixon came before the church at Salisbury and was received for membership in the Nassaongo Church, being baptized by her pastor, the third Sunday in Nov. 1943. When she came before the church she requested the use of hymn 275 in the Lester-Durand hymn book as God had given her to know the assurance of the last two lines of the hymn, "For while in him confiding I cannot but rejoice." God laid a heavy burden upon her heart to go to the church and no one ever manifested more love and devotion to their church than did she. Her regular attendance and her interest in spiritual things were evidence that her affections had been set on things above. Her funeral was conducted by the writer, her pastor, in the Old School Baptist meeting-house, Salisbury, Md., reading as a text, Rev. 7:14. The church, home and friends have lost a faithful, loving and devoted one, yet we desire to say, Thy will be done. Prepared by order of Nassaongo Church.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER

MRS. LAURA B. SKED, widow of the late Charles Howard Sked of Pennington, N. J. She was the daughter of the late Simson VanDyke, and the youngest of a large family all of which preceded her in death. Mrs. Sked lived to the ripe age of 88 years. She leaves one son, Mr. William J. P. Sked, in whose home she resided and had all the comforts of life that means and faithful children could bestow until God took her from time; also four daughters, Mrs. Ruth Blackwell, Mrs. Ethel Ashton, Mrs. Eva Ewing all of Hopewell and Mrs. Bessie Harris of West Sunbury, Pa. All were faithful to their mother. She leaves fifteen grandchildren and fifteen great-grandchildren together with a host of relatives and friends to mourn their loss. She was a good, faithful wife and mother, a lover of hospitality and peace among friends and neighbors.

She loved the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith, and that not of herself for it was the gift of God. She was a very close friend to sister Vaughn, and she with her husband made several trips to Canada to attend the meeting of the Covenanted Baptist Church from which they often expressed they received much comfort.

She passed away Feb. 13, 1947 and her funeral services were conducted Feb. 16 in the home of her son, by the writer, where a great number of friends and relatives had assembled to pay tribute to her memory. Her remains were laid to rest by the side of her husband in the Hopewell Old School Baptist Cemetery to await the time when the grave shall give up its dead, and by the power of the eternal God be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall she ever be with the Lord. We should not weep for her as though she had no hope. May God comfort all that mourn.

(Elder) C. W. VAUGHN

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The one hundred and eighty-second session of the Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association will be held with the Church of Norfolk, Va., the first Sunday, Saturday before and Monday after in October.

Elder A. B. Denson was appointed to preach the introductory sermon and Elder R. B. Denson to be his alternate.

The meeting will be held at the Willard High School Auditorium, located on Cottage Toll Road 3400 block. Those coming by bus or train can upon arrival in Norfolk go to City Hall and take Willard Park bus direct to Willard High School.

Those coming by car can follow Granby St. to 26th, turn East there and continue to Cottage Toll Road, then turn left and go two blocks to the school. For further information, write Elder R. B. Denson, Rocky Mount, N. C.

ELDER A. B. DENSON, Moderator
ELDER B. S. COWAN, Clerk

An all-day meeting will be held at New Veron, N. Y., on October 13th. A business meeting will also be held for the election of Trustees, and any other business which may properly be brought up for consideration.

R. LESTER DODSON

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Va., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday October 15, 16, and 17, 1947. Ministers of the gospel and other brethren of our faith and order and lovers of the truth of God as in Christ Jesus our Lord are invited to meet with us. The meeting-house is located 8 miles north of Leesburg and 4 miles from Point of Rocks, Md., a half mile from the village of Lucketts which is on Highway Route 15. Those coming Tuesday, the 14th, either by bus or private conveyance will come to Leesburg and inquire for Elder Lefferts. Greyhound buses leave 12th & New York Ave., Washington, D. C. A local train leaves Rosslyn, Va. near the end of Key Bridge at 1:55 and 6:05 p. m. Any persons arriving in Leesburg on late night buses will go directly to the Leesburg Inn near the courthouse where arrangements are being made to care for them. Those coming Wednesday by bus to Leesburg too late to be met by us, will find taxi service near the bus stop. Those coming Wednesday by private conveyance will go directly to the meeting-house. For further information, write

MISS MARTHA W. HOWSER,

Purcellville, Va. Asst. Church Clerk.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Snow Hill Church, Snow Hill, Md., on Wednesday and Thursday, October 22 and 23, 1947. Services will commence at 11 A. M. Standard Time.

Ministers, brethren and friends of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us. Any one desiring further information please communicate with Dr. Lee W. Warren, Berlin, Md. or Mrs. Daniel Holloway, Berlin, Md.

IDA G. HOLLOWAY, Asst. Church Clerk

TO ALL CORRESPONDENTS AND TO WHOM CONCERNED:

The Buttahatchie and Hopewell Associations agreed in their respective annual session last year, to come together this year in a joint session. Inasmuch, as some dissatisfaction was expressed in some churches, in each body, it was deemed best to give each church the opportunity, while in her regular conference, to speak her mind in regard to the two bodies coming together and being one Association. Each church has now spoken and every church in both Associations has voted to continue as two bodies.

In view of this fact, we are sending these notices to our papers, asking that they be given space by the first issue of the papers in October.

The Buttahatchie Association will be held with New Prospect Church, near Sulligent, Alabama, beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1947.

The Hopewell Association will be held with the Little Hope Church, ten miles west of Fayette, Ala., beginning Friday before the third Sunday in October, 1947.

In bonds. J. R. PENNINGTON, Moderator
Buttahatchie Association
H. M. BROCK, Moderator
Hopewell Association

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the *Signs of the Times* at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1; 12 copies, $2. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 115 RUTHERFORD, N. J., NOVEMBER, 1947 No. 11

WHISPERING FAITH

Life has its joys and its sorrows,
It has its bitter and sweet;
Ofttimes our hopes for tomorrow,
Are dashed to-day at our feet.
But, though we meet disappointments,
And though we fail in our quest,
Faith whispers, "Don't be discouraged;
God means it all for the best."

Today our sky may be darkened,
When lowering clouds appear;
We wait and hope for the sunshine
Of tomorrow to bring us cheer.
Today's sunset may be hidden,
By the haze that bulk in the west,
Faith whispers, "Don't be discouraged;
God means it all for the best."

Sometimes we are made to feel lonely,
Sometimes we are troubled and sad,
Because of death having taken
Some precious loved one we had.
We weep and mourn as we miss them,
And sorrow invades our breast;
Faith whispers, "Don't be discouraged;
God means it all for the best."

When we are sorely afflicted,
And our body is racked with pain,
We suffer and wait and wonder
Whether we shall be well again.
While we find it hard not to murmur,
Not to make complaint and protest;
Faith whispers, "Don't be discouraged;
God means it all for the best."

'Tis thus, we travel our journey
Along life's wearisome way;
We have our sunshine and shadow,
Our joy and sorrow each day.
We weep and rejoice and keep hoping
For the longed for heavenly rest,
As faith continues to whisper,
"God means it all for the best."

(Elder) CHAS. M. WEAVER
Johnson City, Ill.

CORRESPONDENCE

Revelation and the Seven Seals Opened

In attempting to set forth some of my views on Revelation and my understanding of the Scriptures, I view this book to cover a period of the church, or kingdom of God, set up by the God of heaven himself as prophesied and interpreted by Daniel 2:44. "But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever." Dan. 7:18. The king who is to reign over this kingdom was prophesied of by the prophets. This kingdom has a daughter who is to rejoice and is commanded to rejoice at the coming of the king. "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." Zach. 9:9: Was this prophecy fulfilled? Yes. "Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass." Matt. 21:5. And they rejoiced and sang, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest." Luke 19:38.

After a period of ninety-six years had passed, one of the witnesses had been deported from his homeland to the Isle of Patmos and wrote, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God

gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw." Rev. 1:1-2. Notice in verse 9 that John was in the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and "was in the Isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." In verse 10 he declared it was the Lord's day and he addressed his message to the seven churches of Asia, a people that was being reckoned with by the Lord and viewed as seven candlesticks with one in their midst like the Son of man. Each of these seven churches, or candlesticks, had a star and the star was in the Lord's hand. Notice it is to the seven churches that this book is written, hence we find the seven symbols are carried out throughout the book. It is to the seven churches called candlesticks, that the seven stars, or seven angels, are making known what is in the book that is sealed with seven seals, and none but the Son of man was worthy to take the book and loose the seals thereof. "In the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." And they sang with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive (seven different things) power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." Rev. 5-12. In verse fourteen there were four beasts said, Amen. We must notice these four beasts as they play an important part in the opening of the first four seals that are to be opened; each one being so distinct from the other that John gave as a description of them that one was like a lion, one like a calf, one had the face of a man and one like a flying eagle; each of them was described as having eyes before and behind, and as each having six wings about him. John declared, "And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see." This lion type beast had roared like thunder but spoke with a voice that John understood. Come and see, see what? "A white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer." Notice he had a bow, the Holy Spirit, and a crown was given him, a crown of thorns, and the flesh for the suffering of death on the cross. I view this one that sat on the white horse as being Christ Jesus, the Son of Mary that was born in Bethlehem. It was he who conquered sin, death and the grave by his death, burial, resurrection and ascension to his Father. All power and authority was put under him.

"And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see." John did not hear the noise like thunder from the second beast, but the scene was different in its appearance in that it was a red horse, and power was given to him to take peace from the earth, and there was given unto him a great sword. I view the rider to be Satan, the devil, manifested by spiritual wickedness, and it was by this power and sword that peace was taken from the earth, and it was manifested through Herod who had the children of Bethlehem killed. Matt. 2:16-18. "And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand." I view this rider as being Pon-

tius Pilate who held the law power in his hand over the province of Jerusalem, and it was the spirit of wickedness manifest under and by him, when Christ was crucified, hence the red horse, the symbol of shed blood, and the black horse a symbol of death in the crucifiction of Jesus Christ.

"And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was death." Hence I view this rider to be a combination of power and was manifested by Malcarias, the general of Pontius Pilate's army, in that he placed the governor's seal on the tomb when Christ was buried, and the guards placed around the sepulcher in order to prevent the resurrection of the crucified body of the Son of Mary, as paleness denotes powerless or physical weakness, and they were fighting against the power of God in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Matt. 27:65 and 28:4-16. I view the four beasts to represent the four gospel writers: the lion represents Matthew; the calf, Mark; the beast with the face of a man, Luke; the eagle, John. If you will notice the writing of Luke he seems to reason the gospel different from the other two writers and John is different from the other three. He goes back to the beginning of time and brings forward the more essential points of doctrine that the others leave out. I will give a few important points namely: the conversation of Christ with Nicodemus, John 3:3; 6:29-39; 13:1-15; 17:1-26; 20:24-29. I could give many more. I view the four beasts to be embodied in one man, the true gospel minister, the one that has been regenerated and born of the Holy Spirit, called and qualified of God as was Aaron. He is as brave as a lion, he does not fear Satan and all the imps of hell; he is a burden bearer, he carries a load laden with many sheaves of the gospel; he is a man with a man face, he appeals to human reason to bear his message to the heart and mind of his hearers; he is a flying eagle, when filled with the Holy Spirit, he can soar away into the deep mysteries of God's unbounding love and tender mercy to his children that obey him.

We will now look to the opening of the fifth seal. "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held." So we look to the Acts, the fifth book of the New Testament. In it we find that Peter in his gospel sermons related the different martyrs of the saints and also the martyr of Stephen. Acts 7:54-60. I must notice another point before I go farther: the four beasts spoken of first in Rev. 4:6 had eyes before and behind which proves my view as to the four writers, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. They were born and lived under the law dispensation, and they lived and wrote under the gospel of Christ. They saw the worship under the law and they saw and worshipped under Christ, the gospel dispensation. Hence they saw before and behind and each of them had six wings about him. Adding six four times we have twenty-four which represents the twenty-four elders that were around and about the throne, which I understand to be the true witnesses under the law dispensation. They were full of eyes within, hence they only saw and worshipped under the law and had died in the faith of a coming Christ, and spoke of him as though he was present with them in the flesh. Isaiah 7:14 and 9:6. This was seven hundred and forty-two years before the birth of Christ. Then Zach. 9:9 which was four hundred and eighty-

seven years before Christ rode into Jerusalem on the colt the foal of an ass.

I will now pass on to the sixth seal, hoping that it will not be necessary to set forth every detail that takes place under the opening of this seal, but will give enough to show that what I contend is the true interpretation of the opening of the seven seals of which the book was sealed. "I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake;*****And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth." I view this to be the writing of the apostle Paul embracing his conversion for he was a chosen vessel of God to bare his name unto the Gentiles. Acts 9:1-35. Therefore in the conversion of Saul it was as an earthquake to the Pharisees. Their hope of stopping this new doctrine was blighted; the sun that once shone so brightly through Saul and his persecution of the saints was darkened as though it was covered with sackcloth and ashes; their heavenly stars had fallen, so I view all the writing of the apostle Paul to come under this seal which makes up the sixth composition of the New Testament. Some will say, wait a minute Walston, what are you going to do about the other four writers? Look with me to the seventh chapter of Rev. "I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth." Notice this was all under the opening of the sixth seal so I view these four angels to be James, Peter, John, and Jude which completes the other four writers of the New Testament.

Now we must look to the eighth chapter for the opening of the seventh seal. "There was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour." God had turned his back on his Son that was now nailed to the cross. "Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Matt. 27:46. John saw seven angels which stood before God, and they began their work, and when the fifth angel sounded and he saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth. This time the star is in the singular making it more personal as it relates to the conversion of Saul. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit. I do not understand this pit to relate to hell, but to the doctrine of God and Jesus Christ his Son through his eternal power by the gospel and the New Testament that is given to us by his revelation to his witnesses namely: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts and Paul—thirteen letters; James and Peter—two letters; John—three letters and Jude and the Revelation of Jesus Christ unto his servant, John on the Isle of Patmos, which completes the New Testament that was sealed with the seven seals. Christ Jesus came into the world and set up his kingdom, the church, and gave to her laws by which she is to be governed, and the doctrine of salvation by grace to comfort and edify his children while they sojurn here on this earth of sin and sorrow until he comes again to gather his children home to an eternal rest in heaven where all the redeemed will be gathered around the throne that John saw and heard one saying, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of death and hell."

The seven angels which had the seven trumpets they were to sound I understand to cover the law and the gospel dispensations. I shall only notice the gospel dispensation, so look with me to the ninth chapter. "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth." In the fourth verse we see this great doctrine was

to hurt only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads, and in the thirteenth verse we read that the sixth angel sounded. Notice what John saw in chapter 10:1; "And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was at it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire." This I understand to be the great gospel truths set forth by Paul which no writer so ably sets forth. Notice, my friends, that it is under the sounding of the seventh angel that we are now living, for when the seventh angel begins to sound a different scene takes place. "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." It was in the days of the voices, when they began to sound, that the mysteries of God are to be finished. "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." Rev. 11:15. Verse seventeen reads, "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned." God has no longer left the matter in the hands of his prophets, but has sent his Son into the world and has taken possession of this world, and has set judgment by which the world is judged of judgment and righteousness.

In chapter twelve John viewed this kingdom as a woman clothed with all the beauty with which she was to be honored by the Spirit of Righteousness. He calls her a great wonder. In verse three there appeared another wonder, so different that he described it as a dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns. I view this woman as a figure of the church or kingdom, and the dragon as the false church, or kingdom of antichrist, spiritual wickedness with its amalgamation of powers to deceive or devour the child of the woman. So Christ was led into the wilderness and there tempted of the Devil. "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels." We hear him in this battle in Matt. 4:6-9. "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down.*****Jesus said unto him, it is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, all these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Matthew calls it a mountain, I view it as the place where this war is taking place as referred to in Rev. 7:9. Michael and his angels fought and prevailed, and the old serpent called the Devil, and Satan was cast out into the earth. Then in Matt 4:10 "Jesus saith unto him, get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God." This great battle is also recorded in Luke 4:5-7. Michael has ever been God's warrior. It was he that warned Joseph in his dreams against Herod; spiritual wickedness in high places, the mountain; listen to the devil who said unto him, all this power will I give thee and the glory of them for it is delivered unto me; listen to his boasting, what a high exalted pleasure it was to Satan, exalted so high that John refers to it as heaven and it was to Satan. This is the place where this war took place and Satan was cast down. See Luke 4:8. "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee

behind me, Satan." Here he went down in his second and greatest defeat; the first when Herod failed to kill the child Jesus and second when Satan ceased to employ his agents, taking the generalship in his own hands and met defeat at the hand of the Lord himself, and was cast down by being ordered to get behind me Satan. Surely this was a blow that was least expected by Satan. "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night." Rev. 12:10. Again I call your attention to Rev. 13:1. "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns." Here is the picture of the false church set up by Satan called the dragon, and they are making war with the saints to overcome them. Verse eight, "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." And John beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. Here I view that antichrist is prevailing in the earth, and His church is so lamb-like, that if it were possible they would deceive the very elect. They even work miracles, causing the lame to walk and unstopping the deaf ears. They have their prophets or preachers and they have power to give life to the beast; they have caused both rich and poor to receive a mark in their right hand and in their forehead. Then John viewed them again in Rev. 16:13. "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come up out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles." "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not her plagues." "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches." Rev. 22:1 and 16.

Just as I have stated, I view this book, that was sealed with seven seals, to be nothing more or less than the New Testament which declares Jesus to be the root and offspring of David. Remember that John had viewed all these things under the marking of the symbol of seven from first to last, and it was the seven spirits which was before his throne and from Jesus Christ who is the faithful witness. I hope you will study these scriptures and that the Holy Spirit may guide you as I hope it has me in attempting to set forth some of my views of Revelation.

(Elder) BEN B. WALSTON
Kinwood, Texas

Union City, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am taking the liberty to report what to me was one of the best meetings I have ever had the privilege to attend. It was held at Cane Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Obion Co., Tenn., beginning on Friday, July 26, and continuing three days, it being the annual communion meeting of this church. At the June meeting, which was the fourth Saturday and Sunday in June, two precious brothers came forward and were received into the fellowship of the church. Brother Milton King, a young man about 24 years of age, who gave abundant evidence of a work of grace in his heart was gladly received, then

his dear old Dad, brother Dillard King, came and asked for a home and was received with joy and gladness by the brethren and sisters.

The church called for the ordination of brother Ruby Harrison to the full work of the ministry, and set the time for his ordination to be at the annual three days communion meeting held Fri., Sat. and Sun., July 26-28, 1947. The ordination was on the 27th when a Presbytery was organized with the following Elders and Deacons: Elders John Henson, Benton, Ky., Wade Perkins, Mayfield, Ky., Paul Poyner, Murray, Ky., E. C. Lowery, Fulton, Ky., H. G. Brown, Memphis, Tenn., Deacons, W. A. Bowden, Benton, Ky., Luther Campbell, Memphis, Tenn., T. N. Todd, Cottage Grove, Tenn., A. H. Summers, Murray, Ky., Tee Hicks, Pilot Oak, Ky., T. D. Neighbors, Fulton, Ky., Burch Moon, Fulton, Ky., J. B. Collier, Martin, Tenn., Tommy Chester, Brewers, Ky. Thus organized the Presbytery proceeded in the regular orderly way with the ordination, and brother Harrison was set apart to the full work of the ministry.

Before going too far I want to say on Friday night at preaching in the home of brother and sister Earl Jones, a precious sister, Mrs. Sophia Price, came forward telling what great things the Lord had done for her and wanted a home with the church which was gladly granted, thus making three dear souls to be baptized into the fellowship of dear old Cane Creek Church.

On Saturday after brother Harrison was ordained, and after lunch served at the church, the brethren and sisters drove to the baptismal waters, which was Cane Creek, and there these three humble children of God were buried beneath the liquid wave by Elder Harrison and indeed it was a burial for Elder Harrison really buried them, and oh to think he had just this day been ordained. However, the work was as complete as though a veteran of many years had performed in this capacity. To me this is some evidence that God has laid this work on Elder Harrison and enabled him to administer this ordinance as well as to preach the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ. Brother Dodson, I do believe God has to do both for his ministers, but enough about that.

The preaching at this meeting by the preachers mentioned at the top of this letter was a unit. Jesus Christ and him crucified, salvation by grace for time and eternity. They seemed rooted and grounded in these precious truths and spoke the truth in love. There was a goodly number of visitors from other churches with us and this made us glad. We had the privilege of having some of them in our home, and it was a great pleasure to us though we are not worthy that such as they should come under our roof, but we surely did appreciate having each one of them. We hope that the great God wills that they come our way again, and that he would make our sinful self again to rejoice in his love. I want to say to all of you dear people that if you can and will, visit us again in our home and Cane Creek Church for there are some of the lovliest people there, made so by the God of love, and I know that the Church joins me in this invitation to you. It might be that some of the brethren have already sent you a report of this meeting, and if so cast this aside and publish their letter as it would be better than this, but if not please publish this as I want my friends to know that we want them to come again. We feel that God has been merciful to us poor sinful creatures and that he has blessed Cane Creek Church with these three precious souls and our

very near and dear brother Harrison. If I could pray my prayer would be gracious God keep them near thee. Keep us all, lead us all in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Amen.

J. W. BARNES

(We are glad, indeed, to publish such good news as is contained in the foregoing letter. Wherever this is read our brethren will rejoice with their kindred in Christ in Tennessee that the Lord has poured his spirit upon them. We hope and pray it may be his good pleasure to so touch the hearts of others as to cause them to enter into the fold, and with believers enrolled, to live and to die. "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." R. L. D.)

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233 Monroe St., Camden, Ark.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, VERY DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF HEAVEN AFTER DEATH: I have had the pleasure of reading the *Signs of the Times* as far back as I have been able to read anything; and if I have an understanding, its writers have been given to understand and set forth the word of truth; and its Editors have tried to avoid and leave out controversies, which if published in our religious papers always breed strife. I do so much enjoy reading the experiences of our precious kindred in Christ, giving reason for their hope, that precious "anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." This precious Jesus and great high priest we understand is the mediator who sits at the right hand of the majesty of the Father in the heavens. Jesus said when he would go away he would send another comforter which is the Holy Ghost, which promise he has been, is now and will ever fulfill.

In my declining days my greatest and most longing desire is to see and feel the sweet influence of the workings of this sweet and most powerful love in my soul while I remain on the earth. In these days of terror surely we should be, and I believe we are being, warned by this great Mediator of the second coming of our blessed Master who shall again come to gather his children from the four winds of the earth. The greatest desire of my soul is, O Lord give me of thy holy spirit that living faith to look unto him whence cometh my strength, and when the time shall come, that will not be long, when I shall meet the great monster, death, may I find it has lost its sting and the grave its victory. May I really find some of the realities of the things I have been hoping and trying to pray for so many years. Oh, may the power of his loving influence through the operation of this great Comforter, the Holy Ghost, lead us safely on in the path of his righteousness in the way of all truth is the prayer of one of the least of all if one at all.

(Elder) J. T. EVERITT

Brantley-2, Ala.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Enclosed find $2 for which extend my subscription another year. I am sorry for the delay but it is due to sickness in my family and death in my brother's family. I do not want to miss a single copy for there is so much comfort and satisfaction in each and every one of them. So many good letters and experiences of God's dear people. Sometimes I feel so little and so unworthy of God's love and mercy until it seems that my soul will almost sink within me, but I love the Old Primitive Baptists beyond measure and always have,

but sometimes it seems that God has withdrawn his hand and I am just left surrounded in darkness and do not know which way to turn. I cannot read with any understanding and feel that I am not one of the chosen ones of God, but when that spirit returns I am so happy I can shout his praises on high! What a great assurance it is to feel the presence of the Lord, it makes me rejoice evermore in him that died upon the cross for the sins of his people.

I lived seventeen years among the Arminians of the world. To-day I do not know why I did this for there was no love for one another manifested among them. Everything was cold and distant. They do not preach the gospel of Jesus but money and more money and that multiplied. I felt and almost knew the good old Primitive Baptists would not receive me, but I stood it just as long as I could. That spirit that dwells in my heart teaches me beyond a doubt that God has a purpose in all things. The story of Joseph being sold in Egypt was purposed in His determinate council with the Son before the world was. He was sent there to save many people alive, but he was badly treated on account of a foolish woman and put in prison but he had faith in God; he withstood the temptation and bore all the blame.

Brother Dodson, your text in the March issue, Psalms 19:1, is so inspiring and so much food for those that love the Lord. How wonderful it is for the Spirit of God to dwell in the hearts of his servants to feed and administer this food of salvation by grace. Sister Hayes poetry on the book of Ruth is such a beautiful picture, a symbol typifying Jesus and his bride, the church; and "Deacon Lee's Opinion" was good and timely.

Well I am going too far with this, taking up your time that would be used for something more important, but it seems I am just full and running over and must talk to some one who I believe is a chosen vessel. I cannot write very well. I will soon be seventy years of age and my nerves are bad, but I wanted to send in my thanks and congratulations to all the correspondents for the good old *Signs* as I enjoy the paper so much. I do not get to my church often now since moving from Luverne, Ala.

I sent a request about a year ago for you or some brother to give their views on 2 Thess. 2:1-3. I have not seen it yet and would still be glad if some one would write on that portion of scripture. May the Lord ever bless you and spare you many more years to send out the glad tidings of good news to God's humble poor. Your sister in hope of the loving mercy of an all wise God.

(Mrs.) J. J. McNEAL

(*See editorial in this issue.*)

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408 N. Naches Ave., Yakima, Wash.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Just a few lines to let you know I received the January *Signs*. I have also received the book, "The Resurrection of the Dead." It was read through in a short time and what a wonderful description of the children of God passing from this old sinful world. I do not see how any one, after reading it through, can believe any other way. I hear people say when you are dead you are a long time dead. No doubt it will be that way with some, but if there was some of Christ's blood shed for me I will not be dead but will have passed from death unto life. When I am called to leave this house of clay I live in here some will say, "she is dead." Yes, I am dead to them as they will never know me in the heaven above as some

say they will know their loved ones who have gone on before, and will be able to pick them out from others as they will still look and be just the same there as when they left here. I cannot see it that way. I know when my last husband passed away he said, "I am in a new world, everything is new to me." And so it was with me too, dear brother, I went with him until the spirit left the house of clay. Some sweet day I will finish the journey.

"I'm not ashamed to own my Lord,
Or to defend his cause,
Maintain the honor of his word,
The glory of his cross.

Jesus, my God, I know his name,
His name is all my trust,
Nor will he put my soul to shame,
Nor let my hope be lost.

Firm as his throne his promise stands,
And he can well secure
What I've committed to his hands
Till the decisive hour.

Then will he own my worthless name
Before his Father's face,
And in the New Jerusalem
Appoint my soul a place."

Dear brother, my Savior taught me, when a small child, to love him and to love the dear saints. I remember so clearly a dear old brother with white hair, and how to me the glory shown from his face. This was old brother Beckman who lived so close to our home town, Nevada, Mo. He was to me one of the most precious human beings I ever saw. I would sit and gaze at his sweet face and pray I would some day be like him. He was so sweet, kind and gentle.

When I grew older I never changed. I would much rather be with the dear Old Baptists than to be out playing with children my age. I memorized many of the dear old songs when a very small child and I never forget them. One was a favorite, O! for a closer walk with God. The hymn that I quoted above in this letter was sung at the meeting after my husband united with the church nearly fifty years ago. Elder J. T. Barnes was preaching on Friday evening at my uncle George Lee's home in Nevada, Mo., and my husband went forward and told Bro. Barnes he had said enough, he had told his experience better than he could tell it. So, dear brother, after reading your precious book that hymn came to my mind, "I'm not ashamed to own my Lord, Or to defend his cause." I wonder so many times, "Am I his or am I not." If I am not his why do I love him so, and why do I love the dear brethren as I do? Yes, sin is mixed with all I do. I thought when I started this letter it would be just a few lines about the *Signs* and the book. God bless you and all concerned. Your sister in hope.

(Mrs.) LILLIE BLYSTONE

Route 1, Wheelersburg, Ohio.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF ETERNAL SUBSTANCE: It is with great pleasure and appreciation I thank you for your kindness in obtaining that book on Predestination for me. I am grateful that you kept me in remembrance as I have longed to get one of these books. I think no one believes in predestination stronger than I.

I do not have much education as you can well see, but I have a belief within as strong as some highly educated and more than those that cannot believe grace doctrine. I do not believe grace and works will mix any more than oil and water will mix so it must be grace and grace alone—no other way. I attended church Sunday and heard some of that hard doctrine preached which the world says is dangerous, but it is the only doc-

trine that melts this heart of mine. I could see the love of God manifested in them from breast to breast and how they loved one another. I think they were in another place for the time being for it was a foretaste of heaven to them and to me. I was picking up crumbs that fell from the Master's table, and it was good to be there for it was in a land of plenty.

I enjoy sound doctrine and they call me a dry land Baptist. I tell them David had some soldiers that tarried behind fearful and faint hearted, but they got as much spoils as those who went to the front of the battle. So you can see I believe the Lord has chosen some valiant soldiers like yourself who can go out to battle even if there are lions and barking dogs in the way. They believe Jesus will make way for their escape. I believe the Lord has appeared to you in dreams and visions in manifesting himself to you as he has to all the called of Israel. I do not think we are strangers to each other, just strangers to Babylon and all her daughters. I know you are a busy man but still I would like to hear from you. Respectfully,

WILLIAM SPARKS

"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."
Isaiah 40:11.

Here is a text I think must have the experience of every child of grace in it. You will notice this was God's voice to the prophet Isaiah, and, therefore, is just as sure as God himself. There are three *shalls* in it. First, "He shall feed his flock." Just who is this "He?" We think it is Christ. In all of God's Word it is *I will* and *ye shall,* and in our text Christ was no exception. What he was to do was backed by the shalls of God and Christ, his only begotten Son. If the Son and what he had to do was secured by the shalls of God how could any of his work fail in its purpose? I am glad of this for it makes us know that if we are one of that flock we are secure from everything. The flock under consideration here is the chosen people, the ones the Father gave to Christ before the world was, the ones he came on earth to and did die for. This food he feeds them comes to us when he sees fit to shed his Spirit abroad in our hearts, "because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Gal. 4:6. We see we are sons before this happens. After this happens we are aware of a hungering and thirsting after something; we have come to fully realize we are sinners; we are ungodly and must, if we get justice, go to an eternal hell, but we do not cry for justice, we cry for mercy. Here is where some food comes. The Savior reveals himself as your Savior. It seems like the world has been renewed for you. Why? Because you have had your first food and first glimpse of the Shepherd. You think of the scripture that says, "I am the good shepherd***** and I lay down my life for the sheep." We see him having everything we need: strength where we were weak, love for hatred, mercy instead of justice, light for darkness, smoothness for roughness, straight paths for crooked ones, etc. In other words we find the opposite from nature. This new food is meat and drink indeed. We come to wonder what manner of man is this that gave a rebel such as I so much; how could I have gotten so great a blessing? We know it is not for anything we have done. Let us read John 3:16. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." That, dear child

of grace, is how it came, because of the love he had for his elect that were chosen before the world was; that is how you got the food and Shepherd.

Now we see those arms in the *wills* and *shalls* of God. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall beat off from the channel of the river into the stream of Egypt, and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel." So this gathering must be. When you received your experience you were taught of the Lord and saw Christ as your Shepherd; saw him as the one you must follow and must eat what he gives you. He made you love him and the food because it was all that you wanted. When you meet one that has the same experience, and the same love that was given you, then you both speak the same language and see eye to eye. So the love is what has drawn us together. We cannot help being drawn together any more than Christ could help coming into the world. It was secured by the *shalls* of God.

"And carry them in his bosom." We see this to mean a haven or place of safety; a place of love and tender care and in his very heart. He is our strength. We have been stripped of our strength, been brought to the end of all self support and made to lean on the breast of Christ and to depend on him for all sufficiency in everything; we have become lame and cannot walk; when we would some one always steps before us and we cannot get into the pool, so then he must carry us in his bosom.

"And shall gently lead those that are with young." We think this one of the most beautiful thoughts that has ever been penned. The prophet could not have written anything better. Shall gently lead. Yes, the Shepherd starts to feed the lambs and carry them in his bosom until they become pregnant with the Spirit and filled with the Holy Ghost. They have Christ in them the hope of glory. We have noticed in nature how the mother changes in body and temperament. She becomes kinder and loses in her sureness; she stumbles when she tries to walk; she tires easily at her work; she is not as beautiful to the eyes of the world as she was; she just is not the same. Dear brother, just let your mind run and see the many things in this that is sweet to the child of grace. A few words about this leading. The Savior said, "And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." John 10: 4-5. You see why they will follow him. Yes, our whole experience is in this one text. We see the flock is people chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Eph. 1:4-5. Many more scriptures identify these people. We also find some of the things he has done for them. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" Romans 8:29-31. So in our dependency on the blessed Son of God we find him our Shepherd. Where he leads we follow. Because he is our

all he has made us love him and all our food (spiritual food) must come from him. When we get into the valley of doubt he comes to our rescue with more evidence that he has called us and this is food indeed. As he sees fit we are gathered together and made to sit in heavenly places and worship God in Spirit and in truth. Sometimes we have this to do when we are alone. When he sees fit to place a prayer in our hearts before we call he has already heard us. As we get older we find we stumble more, our strength fails more, our sinful condition gets worse instead of better. I find that when I am blessed to enjoy the fruits of the Spirit, if indeed I ever have, I can see I still do not know anything, yet I have a desire to learn more about my Savior even though I am not worthy to even be with the Lord's people. Just a hope in the Lord should suffice, but we must hunger and thirst after righteousness so we can be filled. All this comes from the Lord at his own appointed time. I must answer with Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am." I hope these scattered remarks are the truth and in accordance with the experience of a child of grace. They are imperfect as is the writer. Pray for this unworthy brother.

EARL WILSON

Route 3, Box 370, Rayville, La.

Salisbury, Md.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: It is time for me to renew my subscription for the dear *Signs of the Times* which I love dearly. I feel to be blessed far above what I deserve to have the price of the *Signs* for another year. What have we that we have not received? "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." I enjoy reading all the precious editorials and the sweet experiences of the Lord's little children. If not deceived they tell my thoughts and feelings much better than I can. I am enclosing check for $3. Two for the *Signs* and one to use as you like. Unworthily.

(Mrs.) CARL TWILLEY

The PRIMITIVE BAPTIST LIBRARY, Elon College, N. C. was established to collect and preserve sound grace books, old church histories, records, minutes, papers, etc., and other data of value to the Primitive Baptists and the household of faith; to bind and classify this material for the accessibility of the public by loan or reference. Send for list of books now available for loan. Your assistance will be appreciated in—helping complete the files of The Signs of The Times issued prior to 1900, Landmarks, Messengers, and others, Association minutes, etc. The Library Trustees are now receiving funds to construct a suitable building.

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COMMITTEE OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

Elder J. P. Helms, Chairman, Vinton, Va.

(We are glad to give space in the **Signs** to the foregoing notice, and hope those of our readers who are sympathetic with the project will respond as they may feel impressed to do. R. L. D.)

BOOKS

Elder R. W. Rhodes, Lillie, La., will be glad to send his latest books (Rhodes-West debate, and Jones-Rhodes debate) to the same address for $3. If the books are desired separately, the price is $2 each. Some of our readers are finding these books very interesting. R. L. D.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the *Signs of the Times* at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1; 12 copies, $2. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

EDITORIAL

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"And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God."
Acts 8:18-21.

Simon saw the natural acts of the apostles, and the results to the natural creature, which caused him to desire the same virtue that he might give to such as he might lay hands on; and to be honest he was willing to give his earnings, or earthly possessions, to obtain such power, not knowing the gift of God which gives a correct analysis of all that are carnally minded. We believe there are men and women that are morally upright and would compensate for everything they would obtain from others, but this does not justify the ungodly sinner before God. Peter said unto him, "Thy money perish with thee because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money."

Dear reader, any way one might perceive they could use money to obtain righteousness is of the carnal mind which is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. The gift of God is eternal life, and eternal life is given to all the sheep which belong to the Son of God and they shall never perish.

Our mind has been exercised as to the value of the gift of God to poor sinners. We note heaven is God's throne and earth is his footstool and all that pertains to man is of the earth earthy, so we find nothing in measure of value to compare with the gift of him who sits in heaven which is God's throne. We cannot compare any part of a footstool to the one whose feet resteth upon it. We find by reading the writings of the apostles that there is nothing in the flesh to merit esteem which makes it clear that no flesh shall glory in his presence. The gift of God is pure and requires a value that would be equal to justify the merit of the gift. God gave poor sinners grace in Christ Jesus by his will which sets forth his decree before the world began.

According to his determinate counsel, at the appointed time, God's decree must be in execution, and he had appointed his Son to fulfill all his will; and inspiration was given the prophet, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Isaiah 7:14. This was the price that was to be paid for the purchased gift of God for poor sinners. There is no price to compare with the price paid for the redemption of the people of God, and this is the only way that a poor sinner can be just with God. Jesus Christ is the price of the redemption of every sinner that will sing the praise of God in glory, and it takes all those, whose names were written in the

book of life of the Lamb from before the foundation of the world, for Jesus to present to his Father to be the number for which the price was given.

We will consider the working of God's mighty power in paying the redemption price, and we find the record of his acts, as the man Christ Jesus, recorded by his disciples, and also the declaration by which he worked, and these declarations agree with the prophets writings which assures us that Jesus was the Son of God. It was God's law that was violated, and it was the law God gave to man, the creature he had made from the dust of the ground, and his transgressions involved all of Adam's posterity which embraced the elect of God in Christ Jesus, to be the heirs of salvation, or the bride of Christ, which would make her heir of God and joint heir with the Son of God; the penalty the offence required was death, and by these relations there was none that could pay the price to redeem her but the Son of God which brings in the just for the unjust. "He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law." Isaiah 42:4. This declaration by the prophet is in direct accord with the word of God, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isaiah 55:11.

We are given an example of those who worship God and those who are carnally minded. The two characters are Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, and Simon. Peter was called to be an apostle and was given to discern between that which is born of the flesh and that which is born of the spirit, which gave the answer to Simon, "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money." Simon could not see farther than the life that was in him which caused him to offer the treasures of the carnal mind, and "to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8:6-7.

As we examine ourselves we are very much carnally minded, and will have our new moons and many traditions and will feel that unless we have had certain things manifested in our meetings we are not satisfied. We do believe in having order in the house of God, and so conduct ourselves as becometh the gospel of Jesus Christ, and these things are not to be purchased with money nor by keeping up certain traditions. We love to behold the unity of the spirit manifested in the attitude of brethren and sisters by greeting each other in the love of the truth, but for us to fix it in our minds that there must be certain demonstrations before our fellowship and love has been manifested, we are in the same spirit as was Simon, for we are taking the animations of the flesh to give us, as we would have it, satisfaction in what we would call spiritual worship.

Dear reader, we are easily drawn away and enticed by our lust. Peter was an apostle of Jesus Christ, and was given the spirit to discern that Simon's heart was not right in the sight of God. He was a man of like infirmities according to the flesh for it was he that cursed and swore that he knew not the Son of God. All these experiences taught Peter that salvation was of the Lord and the gift of God could not be purchased with money;

that all that are taught of the Lord will confess the way by which they have been brought; and all they have was given to them and they have nothing whereof to boast. They (God's children) will begin by saying, I was in great tribulation, I turned to the right and to the left, sought rest and found none which brought me to the end of my own strength. These tribulations absorbed all my strength and I could do nothing, which brought me to the place that the Lord commanded, "Be still, and know that I am God." Psalms 46:10. They are taught that "Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Rom. 5:3-5.

The riches of God's grace are not purchased with money, and for one to trust in the strength of the riches of this world, his heart is not right in the sight of God. For one to take the oversight of the flock of God for filthy lucre his heart is not right in the sight of God, and that church will not prosper for the gift of the Holy Ghost will not be upon him to enable him to preach the gospel in demonstration and power. Wherever God's gift is sent that servant will come with fear and trembling and God will bless his services to his people in whatever way it is his will to direct. Sometimes the defence of his church is his purpose and he will send the one he has qualified to fill the measure as he did by qualifying the apostle Paul. All the life of Paul, God was giving him qualifications in the flesh, that when they were subdued he would no longer be Saul but Paul, and know God's gift to a poor sinner which was by grace. C. W. V.

II THESSALONIANS 2:1-3

"Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man, deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition."

We regret that we have been so long complying with the request of sister McNeal for views on this portion of the written word. We have to plead our inability in many ways, and although we are kept very busy most of the time, we have long since realized that we need more than time to correctly interpret the Scriptures. There are, doubtless, differences of opinion on this subject; however we hope all will be mindful of the testimony of the apostle Peter where he said "no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." In the third verse of the first chapter of this second epistle to the Thessalonians, Paul said, "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth." We wish this might truly be said of the brethren at all times and under all circumstances, but this is more than we can expect. The Lord has wisely provided a diversity of gifts for the instruction and edification of the body of Christ, which is his church, and if we know our own heart we honestly desire to stand in our lot and speak whatsoever God hath commanded that we should say, being assured that he will also provide that as our day so shall our strength be.

In the outset of the text, the great apostle, on behalf of himself, Silvanus and Timotheus is beseeching the breth-

ren "by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him," that they be faithful and continue stedfastly in the truth. Jesus being the head over all things to the church, and having the pre-eminence in all things, the apostle could not base his appeal upon a higher or loftier plane than for the sake of Jesus. He continues beseeching them in these words: "That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand." Again, we wish to revert to the first chapter of this second epistle, wherein the apostle, after saying he thanked God always for them went on to say, "So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer: Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day." He not only commends them for their faithfulness in the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, but assures them of their ultimate rest and peace when the Lord shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels. At the same time he firmly declares that God will take vengeance on them that know him not, and who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by punishing them with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power. Paul had presented a firm and solid foundation for them to build their hopes upon and, therefore, he said unto them, "be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand." Most likely it was in that day somewhat like it is in our day. We are being told over the radio, from pulpits and through the press, constantly, that the Lord is liable to come down out of the clouds in a bodily form any day and set up his kingdom here on the earth. Very recently one definitely assured us that this would take place not later than during the year 1954. If we understand the apostle Paul, however, he is warning us against all so-called prophesies, whether by spirit, by word or by letter, "that the day of Christ is at hand," and admonishing us to be not soon shaken in mind, or to be troubled. We should not be followers of men and be blown about by their various winds of doctrine, but rather we should stand firm for the things which are taught in the Scriptures. There are many scriptures which could be brought to bear on this point, but we will only cite the following: "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." I Thes. 5:2.

In the third verse of our text the apostle continues his plea for them to stand firm by urging them to "Let no man deceive you by any means." We have already referred to some of the devices of man to deceive the people of God about this matter, but we cannot find language as strong or as all-

embracing as those words of the Apostle, which we emphasize by repeating in italics: *"Let no man deceive you by any means."* The importance of that command or entreaty is followed by the declaration, "for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." Sometime ago we used the ark which God caused Noah to build as a basis for a talk, and it seemed to us that we saw great beauty in it as a type of salvation for the church in all three dispensations. So far as we are concerned there are only three dispensations of time; they represent a fulness or completeness of all time, and when this gospel dispensation ends we are persuaded time shall be no more. But we want to say more about the ark. It was composed of three stories. The first two were dark and in our opinion represented the patriarchal and legal dispensations. Only the third story contained a window, near the top, which was, we think, figurative of the fact that the light, or understanding of gospel truth would not be manifested until the Son of righteousness would arise with healing in his wings. It was not until after the death and resurrection of our Lord that the disciples were given to see and understand those things which prophets and kings had long sought but did not find. We believe a study of the patriarchal and legal heavens and their passing will shed light upon the meaning of our text. Before the flood wickedness became so rampant it is said "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Gen. 6:5. Yet, in all the years in the which the ark was in building, thought by some to be upwards of five hundred years, no one gave any heed to Noah's preaching of the necessity for righteousness, so the flood came upon them unexpectedly, or as a thief in the night. There was but one door in the side of the ark, which sets forth the fact that salvation is in none other for all ages of the world than by and through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, which is the door of entrance into life eternal.

When the disciples came to Jesus for to shew him the buildings of the temple, as recorded in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, Jesus said unto them, "See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." They sought him further, privately, saying, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Jesus went into considerable detail in answering them. First, he cautioned them to take heed that no man deceive them, and said many would come in his name, claiming to be the Christ, but they were to go not after them. Second, he told them they would hear of wars, and rumors of wars: "see that ye be not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet." He continued by saying "nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these things are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake." He did not stop there, but declared that "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world (to Jew and Gentile) for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." The legal dispensation did not end until the gospel of the blessed Son of God was preached in demonstration of the Spirit

and with power sent down from heaven, to both Jew and Gentile and then the end of that dispensation came. But before it was finally consummated all the things to which Jesus referred had to be fulfilled, for he himself declared, "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." He likened the close of that dispensation unto the previous one in saying, "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." It is perfectly clear to us that he was referring to the end of the Jewish economy, or legal dispensation, and the importance of these things were attested to by others among the apostles. Peter came forth in the final chapter of his second epistle and confirmed the things which Jesus had said. Peter began by saying he desired to stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance, "That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." We might do well to recall to the mind of our reader that a period of perhaps four hundred years, or more, had intervened between the days of the last prophet and the coming of Jesus in the flesh. This might, indeed, be termed a time of total darkness, when there was not even a single star in the legal heavens to reflect the light of our Lord, and they were truly scoffing and walking after their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers (prophets) fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." Peter goes on to say, "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." It seems so plain to us that Peter was referring to the world before the flood, which stood in the water and out of the water until it was overflowed and perished, which was followed by the law age, which had not at that time ended, that it is difficult for us to understand why all do not see it that way. While scoffers were making light of his long delayed coming, Peter was consoling his brethren by saying unto them, "Beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." Then he assured them that "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." He repeated that the day of the Lord would come as a thief in the night, but showed forth the complete end and destruction of that Jewish age as did Jesus, in declaring that "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned

up." The truth of all he foretold was clearly borne out by the complete disappearance of that age, which he foresaw, for he said, "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?" Let us pause here and get a glimpse of what he saw ahead, for he continued by saying, "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." If righteousness does not dwell in the gospel heavens we are in complete ignorance of the truth, but the very name by which the church was to be called in this gospel age was "The Lord our righteousness." Jesus had said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." John, the beloved disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ was among the generation to which Jesus referred in saying it would not pass until all those things were fulfilled, and in the year A. D. 96 he is believed to have written Revelation, in which he said, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea," or law. We have gone to considerable length to show how the first two dispensations passed away, with the terrible things which accompanied them, as we believe they are indicative of the passing of the gospel dispensation. Our text says the day of the Lord shall not come "except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." We shall not presume to say when these things will come to pass. If, as many of us believe, the Gentiles must first fully be brought in, and this is to be followed by the Lord revealing himself unto the Jews and bringing them into a knowledge of his blessed truth, it cannot be foretold how long the Lord may be pleased to take to fully accomplish his purpose in this respect. We are persuaded, however, that unless he is pleased to restrain the power of antichrist the church at Rome will rapidly spread out all over the world like an enormous octopus, bringing all nations under her control and requiring each and every one to bear the mark of the beast. This power, we believe, is spoken of in the verse immediately following the text, in these words: "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." Perilous days, indeed, will undoubtedly accompany the passing of this dispensation, when time shall be no more, but as the passing of each era has been in pain as a woman in travail, it bringeth forth something better, and the change which will be brought about when the Lord shall have gathered his elect from the four corners of the earth and will have no further need of its existence, it will be a glorious change for his people to be called up higher to forever dwell with him above. We believe God's people experience these things individually for themselves, and as Moses and Aaron had to make three days journey into the wilderness before they could worship the Lord, each one of us have to make this same journey. Our state in nature is a dark one, indeed, for we are dead to all knowledge of spiritual things, but when the Lord is pleased to say, "Let there be light" and his light illuminates our souls, we undertake to meet the demands of the law by the works of our hands, until we are plunged into the bottomless pit and our own clothes abhor us; then we cry for mercy and God brings

us up out of the horrible pit of sin, and places our feet upon a rock, establishing our goings, and puts a new song in our mouths, even praises unto his most holy name. Then we can join the apostle Paul in saying, "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation." While our departure from this life may be accompanied by sorrow and suffering, we are persuaded that it will mean a release from all that is distressing and hateful, for we shall be ushered into the presence of the Holy One, whom we shall see as he is and be like him, and be satisfied. This will be a most glorious change, and it will be enough, with nothing lacking to supply perfect and eternal bliss, and God shall be praised, world without end. Amen.

R. L. D.

MEMORIAL

Whereas, it has pleased God in his holiness to remove from this life our dear and much esteemed sister and mother in Israel, MRS. FLORENCE VIRGINIA (SEAY) (PIPER) SAWYER, bringing sorrow and sadness to our hearts—for we shall see her face no more in this life, nor hear her voice again—but we sorrow not as those that have no hope for we believe that God has removed her from a world of trouble into a land of delight, never more to suffer pain or sorrow so that our great loss is her eternal gain. Therefore, be it

Resolved, that we bow in submission to God's will, believing "that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," and that when Christ shall return to this earth all those who sleep in Christ will God bring with him.

Sister Sawyer was a firm believer in the doctrines of God our Savior, and was ever ready and did contribute freely to the support of the church. The Primitive Baptist people always received a welcome in her home and others were never turned away. She lived to the age of 86 years, the Lord calling her home May 30, 1947. She leaves a goodly number of sorrowing children, grandchildren and many other relatives who have sustained a great loss, and the concourse of people at her funeral attest the fact that her friends were many. To all these we extend heartfelt sympathy for the loss to the church is great. Be it

Resolved, that we send a copy of these resolutions to the sorrowing family, and to the **Signs of the Times** for publication, and a copy written in our church records. Done by order of Saints Rest Church at Dallas, Texas in regular conference July 5, 1947.

(Elder) C. B. TEAGUE, Co-pastor and Clerk

MEMORIAL

In as much as it has pleased Almighty God in his divine wisdom to remove from our midst by death, our dearly beloved brother and Pastor, Elder J. R. DENNISON, it becomes the solemn duty of this, the Mt. Olive Church, to offer this resolution.

Our brother was a member of this church (54) fifty-four years, being at all times a faithful follower of the Lamb, serving the church as Pastor (18) years. He was a gifted gospel minister always declaring and defending the truth as it is in the Lord Jesus Christ, directing and instructing in the way of truth and righteousness. He loved peace and a strict adherence to duty and so led his church as long as God gave him physical strength and power. He was humble and quiet in his service in the ministry, an emblem of the true love and spirit of God that dwelt within his heart and soul. Therefore, be it

Resolved, that we as a church have lost a dearly beloved Pastor, and we believe our loss to be his eternal gain, that while we miss his smiling face, his tender hand clasp, his words of truth, the memory of him shall continue to live within our hearts and souls, and to the will of our heavenly Father we are submissive. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Be it also

Resolved, that a copy of this memorial be spread upon our records, and a copy sent to the bereaved family to whom we extend our heartfelt sympathy in their and our loss. Also that copy be sent to the **Signs of the Times** and **Old Faith Contender** for publication.

Done by order of the church this 21st day of June 1947.

(Elder) J. S. MURPHY, Moderator protem
(Mrs.) GERTRUDE B. CROSS, Clerk

OBITUARIES

The Olive and Hurley Church at Shokan, N. Y., and the entire surrounding community are made the poorer by the passing of brother WALTER BOGART, who departed this life June 20, 1947 at the Ricker Nursing Home in Kingston, N. Y. after a long illness. He was 77 years old, having been born May 31, 1870. He was born and spent all of his long and useful life in the town of Olive. For thirty-four years he was in the employ of the New York City Board of Water Supply, thirty-two years of which he served as inspector, looking after the sanitary conditions surrounding the reservoir in his district. His ability, faithfulness and efficiency were recognized by his employers who held him in high esteem. He was widely known and highly regarded for his many splendid qualities.

Brother Bogart was married three times, his first wife being Miss Della Secor. Two children were born to them, Marshall who lives in Yonkers, N. Y. and Isabelle of Portland, Me. After the death of his first wife he was united in marriage to Mary Osborn and two children were born to this union, Chester who died three years ago, and Mrs. Ralph Snyder of Kingston. Death having removed his second wife he married Mrs. Ella (Swarthout) Perry in 1916 who survives him. Also among the other survivors are two sisters, Mrs. Orville Winchell and Mrs. Irene Stevens of Kingston; three brothers, Jacob Bogart, Newport, R. I., Joseph and Bergil, Allagerville, N. Y.; also four stepchildren, Mrs. Lottie May, New York City, Mrs. Raymond Markle, Detroit, Mich,; Mrs. Nelson Hyatt, Pleasantville, N. Y. and Mrs. Henry Wesley, Norwalk, Conn.

He was a man of quiet, unassuming ways, always dependable as a neighbor, citizen, and friend, and will be greatly missed by his brethren in the church and by the community. He was baptized by Elder George Ruston when he united with the Olive and Hurley Church in 1917. He lived his religion, and his walk exemplified the precepts of his faith. For three years before his death he was stricken with blindness, and in all, five operations were performed in an attempt to restore his sight, but they proved unsuccessful. He bore his affliction without complaint and calmly awaited the manifestation of the Lord's will. He retired from active life a few years before his death. He loved the assembly of the saints and was faithful to his meetings when circumstances permitted.

The funeral services were conducted at the Olive and Hurley meeting-house, Shokan, N. Y. June 23, the writer officiating, assisted by Elder Amasa J. Slauson of Kingston. Interment in the Winchell Cemetery at Ashokan. To the surviving widow and other relatives much sympathy is extended.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

It is with a sad heart that we record the passing of our highly esteemed friend, SAMUEL WRIGHT SHIPWAY. He was born in New York City on August 9, 1878, and died of a heart attack on June 3, 1947, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Alice S. Meyer in Massapequa, N. Y. He was therefore slightly under 69 years of age. He was the son of Benjamin and Catherine (Baylis) Shipway. He was married on May 25, 1905, to Ethel May Hutcheson. His widow, one daughter, Mrs. Alice S. Meyer, one granddaughter, Catherine Alice Meyer, two brothers, Remsen H. Shipway, of Lynbrook, N. Y., and George W. Shipway, of Queens Village, N. Y., and a sister, Mrs. Grace Kirkwood, also of Queens Village, N. Y. survive him.

For about thirty-five years Mr. Shipway was engaged in the Marine Insurance business in New York City. Because of ill health he retired about fifteen years ago. He attended Old School Baptists meetings in New York City for forty or more years and during the last twenty-five years he has attended our Associational meetings at different places. At the time of his death he was President of the Board of Trustees of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in New York City. While not a member of the visible church, he gave abundant evidence of having been deeply taught of God. The Lord gave him an unusual insight into the spiritual meaning of the Scriptures, and the souls of many have been refreshed by his conversation. On different occasions we have sought his counsel and advice in connection with our work on the Signs of the Times, and his judgment has proven most valuable and helpful to us. He was a kind and faithful husband, a loving father and grandfather, a true friend and a valuable citizen. He will be greatly missed. From the evidence he left behind, however, we are persuaded that he has been called to his heavenly home above, where he shall render undivided praise to Father, Son and Holy Ghost in a world that shall never end. Therefore we do not grieve as those without hope, but desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our heavenly Father.

Funeral services were held in the evening at his late home, 108 Merrick Road, Lynbrook, N. Y., June 6, 1947, where many friends and beautiful floral designs gave evidence of the esteem in which he was held by those in the community where he had spent many of the best years of his life. Interment took place the following day in Greenfield Cemetery, Hempstead, N. Y.

May the Lord be pleased to comfort and bless as

only he can those who feel their need of him, and lead them into an understanding of his glorious truth, if it be his will, is our humble prayer for Jesus' sake.

R. L. D.

IRA B. DUDNEY, son of W. G. and Mary (Smith) Dudney was born April 9, 1874 at Amity, Pike Co., Ark. He was baptized by Elder B. L. Landers, Sept. 1897 into Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church at Emmet, Ark. December 8, 1897, he was united in marriage to Evadna Landers, daughter of the above Elder Landers. Had he lived until Dec. 8th of this year they would have celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary, but he quietly passed away in the night of March 2, 1947, leaving to mourn, his companion and five children. Mrs. Esther Tilman, Mrs. Trula Loyd, Mrs. Marie Jordan, Miss Ivad Dudney, all of Texarkana, Ark., and one son, B. L. Dudney, Betham, Okla.

Brother Dudney had written on "The Footprints of the Flock," beginning on the first day of January this year and writing some each day up to the night he passed away, going to bed as well as usual. Beginning his subject he used this scripture, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." The last few lines of his writings gave a reason of his hope at the end of his pilgrimage which was so near at hand. We feel sure that he saw the footprints of the flock of the heavenly family, having read his writings on the subject, and was guided by the light of his heavenly Father to the end of his journey.

The writer of this article tried to comfort the bereaved family, using the subject brother Dudney had written on, at the home in Texarkana and at the cemetery at New Hope Primitive Baptist Church where he was buried to await the final call which shall awake the dead and bring them forth in the resurrection to the mansions prepared for them that love God and his cause. May the God of truth, love and mercy cause us all to forsake all our earthly treasure, and follow the footprints of the flock, which flock He will guide, in whom he has begun a good work, to their journey's end. Written by request of the dear family who has shown the writer so much kindness. May God fill the absence of the companion and father in homes of these loved ones is the prayer of the writer.

(Elder) J. T. EVERITT

It is with a sorrowful heart I try to write of the death of my dear mother, MRS. MARTHA E. DRAPER, who departed this life Oct. 4, 1946, making her stay on earth 88 years, 1 month and 15 days. She was the daughter of the late Presley and Nancy Thomasson, and was born in the Reed Creek community in Henry Co., Va., Aug. 19, 1858. She spent her entire life within three miles of her birthplace. December 8, 1875 she was married to John William Draper who preceded her in death 11 years and 10 months. To this union were born seven children, Mrs. Pearly S. Brown who was killed by a truck Jan. 29, 1944, Mrs. Daisy B. Stone, Martinsville, Va., Toney, Elijah, Ernest, Erie and Ada Draper, Bassett, Va.

She leaves to mourn her departure her six children, nineteen grandchildren, thirty great-grandchildren and one sister, Mrs. Matilda Frith, Martinsville, Va. She received a hope in God's mercy and united with the church at Red Creek at the age of twenty-two where she remained a faithful member until the end, although she was not able to attend the services the last four years of her life. Her greatest pleasure was to go to preaching and be with the Old Baptists, and hear them preach and sing. In her last days she could not read much but liked for me to read to her. She had been almost helpless nearly four years, but could sit up and walk by being assisted. She was taken seriously ill on a Wednesday morning but did not want a doctor at first. Her suffering was so terrible that she seemed willing for one to come to ease the awful pain, but no relief could be obtained.

I think she knew her time had come for she said it was bad for us to stay by ourselves as we were alone when she was taken worse. She said she hated to leave us and hoped the Lord would bless us. She died on Friday morning, forty-six hours after she was taken so much worse. Funeral services were conducted at home by her pastor, Elder D. P. Helms, assisted by Elder C. E. Turner. There were many beautiful floral offerings and the presence of a great throng of people showing their love and respect for her. Her remains were laid to rest by the side of her husband in the cemetery near the house on Saturday afternoon. Written by her devoted and lonely daughter who helped to care for her in her last days.

ADA DRAPER

ELDER JOHN R. DENNISON, a resident of Braxton Co., W. Va., was born April 5, 1857, and died January 17, 1947 at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Rosa Canfield, Sutton, W. Va. The daughter and a son, William Dennison, also of Sutton, W. Va. together with a number of grandchildren survive him, his wife and a daughter preceded him in death several years ago.

Elder Dennison was received into the Mt. Olive Primitive Baptist Church, Philippi, W. Va. of the Tygarts Valley River Association, November 25, 1893, and was licensed to preach Sept. 22, 1894. Although I am unable to find the date of his

ordination I believe it to have been soon after he was licensed. He served the Association as clerk for a number of years, and was called as Pastor of the Mt. Olive Church April 21, 1928, having served the church faithfully and tenderly for nearly 19 years.

Our brother and Pastor was firm in the faith and doctrine of election and predestination as it is in the Lord Jesus Christ, and was a gifted minister of the gospel. He was kind and devoted to all. We have loved him for the truth's sake and in fellowship with his Redeemer, and we believe our loss to be his eternal gain.

Also

MRS. NANCY ELLEN (CORDER) CLEAVENGER, born in 1859, died Dec. 22, 1946, a daughter of the late John Corder and wife. She united with the Mt. Olive Primitive Baptist Church in June, 1876, and was a faithful and loving member the remainder of her life.

Also

Her sister, MRS. ESTALINE (CORDER) GALL, was born March., 1857, and died Dec. 4, 1946. She was received into the membership of the Mt. Olive Church Sept. 22, 1877 and remained faithful until death. They were devoted sisters in the flesh and truly devoted to the cause and purpose of Christ Jesus, departing this life within a few days of each other, each to enter, as we believe, that haven of rest which had been before ordained for them.

Also

MRS. FLORA (CORDER) REYNOLDS, a daughter of the late Joseph Corder and a first cousin of the above named sisters, was nearly 90 years of age and died June 22, 1947. She was received into the fellowship of the Mt. Olive Church, Sept. 22, 1887, and was a strong and faithful member even unto the day of her departure.

Thus in the course of a few months the Mt. Olive Primitive Baptist Church has lost four of its most precious members. Elder J. J. Poling officiated for the first three named. We feel that the Great Reaper has surely added four more saints to that great family above, there to live and dwell forever in peace and joy with Christ, their salvation, their all in all.

(Mrs.) GERTRUDE B. CROSS,
Clerk, Mt. Olive Church

SILVO SZEE KERLEY was born April 13, 1875 in Pope Co., Ill., and passed away at his home in Mt. Vernon, Ill., July 1, 1947, at the age of 72 years, 2 months and 18 days. He was the son of John R. and Mary M. (Roe) Kerley. He was a resident of Mt. Vernon since 1915, retiring from active business in 1936 because of ill health.

He was first married to Mary Ann Clay who preceded him in death. To this union were born two children; a son, Guy J. Kerley, survives, and a daughter, Mayme L. Kerley, passed away at the age of ten years. In 1906 he married Willie Irene Prince, who survives to mourn his passing; also surviving are three sisters, Mrs. Minnie E. Turner, Herrin, Ill., Mrs. Hifsy Watkins, Simpson, Ill. and Mrs. Mertie Doney, Cereal Springs, Ill.; also one brother, Credy Kerley. Several nieces and nephews and a host of friends and neighbors mourn his loss.

He was widely known throughout Southern Illinois. He was a strong believer in the Primitive Baptist faith and an ardent believer in the predestination of all things. Although not a member of the church, he was faithful in his belief and always attended Rock Springs Church in Johnson Co., Ill.

The body lay in state at Pulley's Funeral Home at Mt. Vernon, Ill., where his friends and loved ones paid their respects until time for the funeral services on Thursday at one o'clock at the Rock Springs Church, near Simpson, Ill. The funeral was conducted by Elder J. T. Henson, Benton, Ky. and Elder Paul Poyner, Murray, Ky., who spoke words of comfort to a large crowd of friends and relatives. We are persuaded that our Lord has taken our dear brother unto himself on high, where he will enjoy his pleasure for evermore, and where we too ere long shall hope to have the blessed privilege of dwelling with him in our heavenly home.

Brother Kerley was laid to rest in the family plot in the Kerley Cemetery to await the resurrection morn, when the dead in Christ shall rise first and dwell with Christ and be as he is. Peace to his memory, we feel he is at rest with his Savior. He experienced that pure heart that teaches that best of man's righteousness is but filthy rags in God's sight. May God bless and comfort all who mourn his passing. By request.

(Elder) C. O. KERLEY

Florence, Ala.

Three churches I have served here for 49 years have neither of them had a house in which to worship. One building known as Mt. Nebo churchhouse burned in 1879. We have recently sold the lot. The three churches are being united into one to be known as Mt. Nebo Church.

(Elder) LYTLE BURNS

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. S. T. Walker, Va., $2; R. R. Peters, Cal., $3; Mrs. P. Krewatch, Md., $1; Mrs. I. G. Holloway, Md., $4; H. F. Waldon, Ala., $1; Mrs. L. F. Bishop, Va., $1; Mrs. M. V. Thomas, Ill., $20; Mrs. W. I. Kerley, $2; Mrs. L. Newman, Tenn., $5.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 115 RUTHERFORD, N. J., DECEMBER, 1947 No. 12

MY CALL TO THE MINISTRY

Nine years ago I joined the church,
I did it in good faith;
Hoping that my poor heart was healed
I sought that heavenly place.

In Jesus' love I would rejoice,
I loved to sing His praise,
Heavenly subjects were my choice
For many happy days.

To every one with whom I met,
I would begin to tell
That Jesus Christ had paid a debt
To save poor souls from hell.

That God, the Father, made the choice,
That Jesus justifies;
The Holy Spirit makes the call
And Jesus' blood applies.

I taught my friends as best I could
This was the heavenly plan;
The sovereign God saved whom he would
Without the aid of man.

I talked along this way awhile
But made a different rule
For some would sneer and others smile
And say—"That man's a fool."

I thought of what St. Paul had said
When Christ is preached to all,
'Tis foolishness to some of them
But wisdom to the called.

I knew there was a little flock
Called ugly and despised,
Whose house was founded on a rock,
But to the world disguised.

I thought I'd only talk to them,
I knew they'd not complain,
Perchance it might some comfort bring
To my poor worried brain.

Our faithful pastor, who was old
Whose sight was very dim,
The brethren searched among the fold
For one to read his hymn.

Some time before, they talked to me
About my call to preach,
I told them then it could not be
For I'm a sinful wretch.

A brother then thus spake to me,
"Will you agree to read
The hymn for one who cannot see
In this, our time of need?"

With fearful heart and trembling tongue,
I answered—"Brother yes;"
I asked the prayers of every one
That God might give me rest.

That blessed band did then agree
That I should read the hymn,
They also gave me liberty
The gospel to proclaim.

Old satan then did come along
And whispered low to me,
"If you'll consent, it won't be long
Till I can have you free."

"There is a land that's far away,
"Tis decked with evergreens,
"If you'll consent to run away,
"I will devise the means."

He painted then the fairest scene
An artist ever made,
And wisely laid a snaring scheme
To make his hellish trade.

Though not a word to one I spoke,
My soul was in despair,
'Twas then my sleeping heart awoke,
And breathed this honest prayer.

"Oh gracious Lord deliver me,
"From satan's cruel hand,
"Do thou, Oh God, my helper be,
"For I'm a weakly man."

"Oh God, oh why did'st Thou permit
"That tempter to exist,
"And why upon my mind to print,
"A sinful scene like this."

I am so weak I cannot speak,
Oh help me gracious Lord;
"Do give me rest, I'll do my best
"To preach Thy holy word."

(Elder) LYTLE BURNS

Florence, Ala.

CORRESPONDENCE

Route 3, Box 800 G, Stockton, Cal.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: For some time I have been wishing for a good mind, a guiding spirit of revelation to write you, but I seem to feel as much in the dark as at first. I realize flesh and blood has no part in revealing the inspired word of God's rich truth, and I hope my desire and expectation is all in him we trust to be able to lead us in a way we have not thought to go. However, I seem to have so much I desire to say it may all prove only as a tangled and confused mind of no comfort or value.

Heb. 9:28 comes into my mind and may God bless and give us to see this text as it is in Jesus. "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." So it is to those that look; to those that have eyes to see: ears to hear and hearts to feel and understand. Unto us a child is born, yes, a Savior to save his people from their sins. Brother Dodson, it appears to me that some of our people are made to overlook some of the most blessed portion of this wonderful truth as it is in Christ, failing to see Christ once under the law which evidently was his first appearing in that body of flesh and blood. This is the manner in which we see him the first time, under the law. The apostles only knew him and were acquainted with him after the flesh, they knew him by outward appearance and not yet after the Spirit, the first man earthy, the second a quickening spirit, the same Jesus in the form of Spirit. He died once in the end of the world, the law world which he fulfilled all law, time and events. The works of all flesh and its end for the time appointed had come, the six work days of the week had passed and man was still found a failure. The seventh day had come which sabbath Jesus was, the day in which all the weary and heavy laden must rest from all their labors. The seven churches in Asia, six under the law time, figurative of the law days, months and years, these six were found with fault. God finding fault with the first covenant established the second, so seven days and seven churches. One day which was the sabbath day which Jesus is. This seventh in which God ended his work, ended it in Jesus in the seventh not in the sixth. So one of the seven churches which figures as Christ was holding the truth, and that same church today is the only one that is still holding the truth. So in the second time, in the gospel time, we are now living in a time not reckoned as days, months and years, for old things, time and time things, have passed away. The heaven and earth *have passed away*, all things have become new. The old law kingdom is no more, its time has ended and the God of heaven has set up already that everlasting kingdom which is not left to other people. This is the kingdom that did break in pieces all other kingdoms; this is the second kingdom in which there is nothing can enter into to defile or make ashamed for the Lord of lords has cleansed it, washed it and made it white and pure in his blood, already judged it in righteousness and calls each one of his children in their appointed time; puts

his spirit in our hearts and makes us to see no good deeds done in our bodies; gives us the spirit of repentance which is to try our works, and we hope in this fire of his spirit we are now made to see our works of hay, grass and stubble burn right before our eyes, or at least this I hope is my experience; this I hope means to me Jesus has already appeared unto me the second time without sin unto salvation.

Oh, how far we sometimes do miss when not given the perfect understanding of these glorious mysteries as they are in Jesus. It is certain Jesus was resurrected in the morning and then and there had already been brought to pass the saying, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" It was after his death that Jesus appeared unto the disciples in a building. They were gathered in that place, a building evidently made with hands, behind closed doors, which building appears to me somewhat typical of our natural body, and it is with us upon these same principles, when he comes into our hearts and reveals to us his sweet presence, that we are made to rejoice even as they knew him once under the law after the flesh, but were told, henceforth ye shall know me no more after the flesh but after the Spirit. He ascended up into high heaven, leaving commandment for them to wait just as we still have to wait. Yes, the first time of his appearing they recognized him after the flesh, God manifested in the flesh, the representative of the first Adam in the first world, first natural, then second spiritual. Are we still to wait until some far distant future time to see him without sin unto salvation? To those yet in darkness, who are not yet born again, certainly he has not yet appeared unto them the second time without sin; and those that have not yet received of the spirit of life which is Christ in you, evidently they can yet see Jesus only after the flesh; but he who is our life must appear unto us before we can appear with him in glory; and the heavens, the church here now, does show forth his glory, does praise him in spirit alone, for the natural man, the first man Adam, receiveth not the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned. The old heaven and earth has passed away. We are now, we hope, living in the second eternal time world and that by the life of Christ. I hope this means to me that I can and do see Jesus without sin unto salvation. If he is not, then he must needs be crucified afresh, but no, blessed children, let no man deceive you. Your reward—Christ your advocate is not dead, but he is alive for-ever-more. He is at the right hand of the Father making intercession for the saints and the Father always hears him, so if we be Christ's then we can rest in a sure and lively hope that the work is finished, he has judged his people in righteousness, finished the work no more to be judged. He that is condemned is condemned already, he that is justified is glorified already. You are no more under the law if Christ be in you, if no more law where is any judgment other than the one already executed. Jesus has already wrought eternal salvation. No more time reckoned with God, he is the sabbath, the seventh, the last (Christ), he is the day in which God ended all his work. Jesus is a day of rest, there is no other day in which the children of our God can find rest for their weary souls. Ye are the children of the day, one day, the first and the last, the only one of his kind. He was the first made under the law in flesh, and in him no sin was found. He is also the second and has appeared to us already the second time and our hope is we see him without sin unto salvation.

So, dear brother Dodson, if I have erred from the teaching of the blessed Scriptures I beg to be shown aright, so just take what is good and hold fast to it and let go that which proves no good. I know these are hard sayings and I may have missed the whole, but just wanted to present these few remarks for it seems good in my sight. My hearts desire is that I may present it for the good and edification of the dear saints. May God continue to bless you one and all is my prayer. Yours with many doubts and fears.

(Elder) SETH BYNUM

CORN OF WHEAT

Just before the Savior was crucified he used these words in John 12:24. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, (his chosen disciples) Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit," not corns of wheats but in the singular. Corn is used throughout the Old Testament scriptures typifying the children of God, the offspring of fleshly Abram, Joseph typifying the offspring of David, the son of Mary according to the flesh. Joseph gathering corn down in Egypt (darkness) sold there by the ten sons that required great mercy if they were ever to return to their father's house. Those were the ten sons of Leah and of the handmaidens according to the law. These were first and represented the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory and not yet into glory, but must be brought in by adoption. Jacob loved those ten sons and Leah, but he loved the two sons of Rachel, Joseph and Benjamin, more; these two representing the spiritual love, and the other ten the law covenant love. Joseph and Benjamin representing the elder and younger spiritual brother, and the ten patriarchs representing the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory; but they (the ten patriarchs) could not receive mercy until typically from their elder spiritual brother Joseph they brought their younger spiritual brother Benjamin, for Joseph says unless you bring your younger brother Benjamin ye shall see my face no more and that was final. Even so now, unless you bring your younger brother born of the incorruptible seed in the vessel of mercy born of the corruptible seed you shall see my face no more; but fear not if you be counted for that seed. That little *if* causes the writer, and has all his life, many grave doubts and fears; but if a vessel of mercy afore prepared unto glory, then I like they and all like me will return unto our spiritual father Jacob in spite of all that the powers of earth and hell can do, for the powers that be are ordained (predestinated) by the almighty God to carry out his most righteous will. As the corn of wheat (not corn and wheat), corn representing the offspring of the virgin Mary and of the seed of David according to the flesh, and the wheat the offspring of the eternal God. It was the Holy Ghost that overshadowed the virgin Mary and entered in and quickened the earthly seed in the womb of the virgin Mary, and he was the offspring of David according to the flesh. Then it was the wheat taking possession of the corn and entering in, then the corn of the wheat and the lesser is blessed of the greater. There being no lust between these two but the opposite, there could be no sin and he was called the holy son of God; but was this son verily God? Was this the eternal son of God, born not of blood or of flesh and one with the Father from everlasting? We must answer—no. The mother of this son that died was the virgin Mary as the offspring of David according to the flesh.

David the high cedar and this offspring (Jesus) is the highest branch of the high cedar and was, therefore, higher than his father David, being the Husband, High Priest and King of the Jews according to the law, and as such he died; put from him that law covenant bride, all her offices and rituals, every jot and tittle. Those who hold to one jot or tittle of that law in the worshipping of the Almighty have not yet experimentally come to the end of the law, and those who have, and bid them God speed, are partakers of their evil deeds. "God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." "Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more."

This vessel of mercy quickened in the womb of Mary by the Holy Ghost, and the offspring of David according to the flesh, was made in all points like unto his brethren yet without sin. Then in this one point only did he differ. In all other points he was just like them, not to receive mercy but to bestow mercy, and he bestowed it although to do so he drank the cup filled with your sins and my sins. Let me hope, although that hope in me at times seems clean gone forever. Yet one thing I believe, and that is, he suffered far beyond the ability of the mortal tongue of man to tell it, yet he opened not his mouth. This mortal that is holding this pen, his mouth will fly open and complain when his sufferings are but a drop compared with His. If it was not the just dying for the unjust there would be no hope for me, but it seems amidst all my trials and conflicts I continue to hope there is within this old vessel that little heavenly born child that cries Abba, Father. Then this little leaven that a woman took (the bride, the Lamb's wife) and hid in three measures of meal (corn, vessels of mercy) from the wise and prudent of this old sinful world will continue not only until this sinful lump but the whole lump be leavened. Then time will be no more.

This seems to bring my mind back to the quickening; this son quickened in the womb of Mary. Did the Holy Ghost quicken that seed into natural life? No, there was natural life in that seed from the day He blew the breath of life into our forefather Adam and he became a living soul. Did he quicken this child Jesus into eternal life? No, if so he could not have died but he did die. Could this child be verily God? What! the eternal and almighty God dead three days and three nights and this old sinful world run itself? Then how did he quicken him? Into formation and growth didn't he, and was born of flesh and blood and was a flesh and blood child? The apostle Paul says, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God," gospel or spiritual heaven. Then the eternal Son that was with the Father before the world was (grain, wheat, for every seed bringeth forth after its kind) must have entered into this earthly son (corn) for in this earthly son dwelled the Godhead bodily. Then in this earthly son dwelled the eternal God, the eternal Son, the bride the Lamb's wife, the new Jerusalem, that John saw coming down from God out of heaven. John saw her coming down not come down and then stop on the day of Pentecost. Some way I am just looking for her still coming down, as John saw her, until the last vessel of mercy has received the last incorruptible seed. I hope I am not looking for her to come up from the

devil. I haven't a doubt but the devil will try with all the power he has to devour every heaven born child as soon as it is born, but fear not the Lion of the tribe of Juda hath prevailed. It will have to suffer but never perish. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Eph. 2:1-3. Where is there a heaven born child that can stand up and say it is no longer, that is, the old Adam sinner is not now a child of wrath. God forbid that I say that this old sinner is not for I know I am, but I have a little hope that I am not now without hope even as others who have no hope, but hope God has taken away the stony heart, law covenant heart when I demanded an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth and showed revenge instead of pity upon my enemies and given a heart of flesh. Well it is still a heart of flesh and blood isn't it, and cannot enter the gospel kingdom, but he does soften that heart but how? "A new heart also will I give you, (not make the old one new) and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." God is rich in mercy, surely it is a rich mercy and great love that will take the old sinner totally depraved and carnally sold under sin. Surely it is quite a raising up to take the sinner from under the law of sin and death and quicken him together with Christ. But quickened how, into eternal life? If so how can that which is eternal die, and if it cannot die (but it does die) be resurrected and changed in the last day. Last resurrection from mortal to immortal, from natural to spiritual. If the natural man or any part of him is spiritual now, natural or mortal man embraces the whole man does it not, soul, body and spirit and the flesh and blood child? It is the bad tree and its fruit that is trying to make the corrupt tree or some part of it bring forth good fruit is it not? My Bible says it cannot be done and my experience confirms it. Make the tree good and the fruit good for a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit, neither can a good tree bring forth corrupt fruit. Then that quickening of the sinner must be into action by way of obedience, contrary to every act and deed of the sinner, and the elder old man serving the younger new man raised up together and made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

I cannot believe that the new man has to be made to sit in heavenly places for if he could he never would leave those heavenly places, and the old man never would go, but are builded together for an habitation of God through the spirit. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." We are his workmanship, not workman. Workmanship is the work of another and not of itself, it is the gift of God, the eternal workman, Christ in you, the sinner, the hope of glory and not the natural man, yet in Christ but must be brought in by adoption, corn of wheat. Corn requires much labor representing the law covenant child. It

has to be plucked and broken off from the stalk of natural Abraham. Wheat represents the gospel or spiritual child. Leave it until fully ripe and it will, by the grace of God, separate itself from the stalk without any labor whatever. Reap it before the harvest and it will wilt or shrivel, always wheat but unprofitable to the gospel church. Prove all things, hold fast to that which is good. If I cannot or have not proven by the unerring standard of truth what I have written, then I am certainly not to hold to it, and that individual that believes that he can hold only to that which is good has already erred. Farewell.

W. A. FERGUSON

Sulphur Lick Springs, Chillicothe, O., Rt. 3

EXPERIENCE AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY

Being confined at home on account of the illness of my dear companion, and feeling sad and cast down makes me have a desire to have a talk with the dear household of God. I feel that they are the dearest people on earth to me, and I hope and trust that I am related to them in spirit. If indeed I have been made a partaker of that divine nature, it is not for anything in me, or any condition performed by me, but that nature is given me as a result of the exceeding great and precious promise made to Christ. The promise was not to seeds as of many but to Christ.

The intention in writing this article is to present a few thoughts in regard to my call to the ministry. I never thought of becoming a preacher and I tried every possible way to keep from being one (if indeed I am). If I am one I am a conscript and not a volunteer. Paul tells my experience when he states that his apostleship was by the will of God, and "according to the faith of God's elect" and a prisoner of Jesus Christ. "Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel."

All of the above expressions show clearly that Paul was moved by the power of God. The American translation of the New Testament translates Paul's experience as follows, "So far as preaching the good news is concerned I cannot help doing it, I am ruined if I do not preach." God's ministers are represented in the scriptures as witnesses. In our courts a witness under the strong arm of the law, if he refuses to testify the judge orders him sent to jail. Then Jonah's experience is a criterion for all the truly called ministers of God. Jonah was not one of those fellows that could obey or let it alone. Like all of his successors, he let obedience alone until he went to the "belly of hell" and he was made willing in the day of God's power. The poor, unworthy writer fought the impression to speak in the name of the Lord for nine years, only those who have experienced it can begin to tell of the trouble and anguish of soul that the poor servant of God undergoes. During the nine years, while not willing to speak publicly to the children of God, I preached continually to the trees and every one with whom I met. Wrote many poems, and would sing them from morning till night. I soon learned that there were many people who did not enjoy such talk, it was only a stumbling block or foolishness to them. I heard it whispered "that fellow Burns is going crazy, he don't want to talk about anything but the Bible." I then ceased talking to those who manifested no interest. My church had called on me to take part in the services, I had refused on account of my unworthiness. My burden became so heavy, a brother asked me to read the hymn and offer prayer as our pastor was nearly blind

and to this I agreed. The church then in her action gave me liberty to speak wherever my impressions led me. It seemed that this was more than I could stand, like poor old Job I felt, "Even to-day is my complaint bitter: my stroke is heavier than my groaning." After the action of the church it seemed that I became more stubborn, and rebellious until all the joys of life were gone, and as said "man's extremity is God's opportunity." I became willing in the day of God's power.

I am enclosing a poem giving my experience and call to the ministry. If you think it would be comforting to our fellow laborers in God's vineyard you may publish it, and should any of my fellow prisoners feel that you can witness some of the trials as presented by this poor helpless beggar, a line from you will be appreciated.

(Elder) LYTLE BURNS

Florence, Ala.

(See poetry on first page.)

Stewart, Miss.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Enclosed find check for which send me the *Signs* for one year. A brother gave me two copies, numbers nine and twelve of the 1945 issue; and what a feast they have been to poor me. Elder Hughett's article on Rev. 9:6-9, Elder Lytle Burns travels of fifty years in the ministry, articles by Elders A. H. Bellows, R. W. Rhodes, J. R. Hardy, W. S. Bourland, yes, I will have to mention sister Young at Memphis, Tenn. I could mention all the good articles written by the dear brethren and sisters, all were good to my poor soul. Write on dear ones it is food to the humble poor. The bells you are ringing do not sound like some so-called Primitive Baptists are ringing, that there are two separate and distinct salvations. Regeneration is by grace. To say that after regeneration all our blessings depend on what we do is a doctrine that would have done back under the old covenant. False teachers are preaching this doctrine all over the South. To preach the above doctrine looks to me like a lack of knowledge and growth in grace. Where conditionalism is preached it will always divide the Baptists. I united with the dear Old Baptist church forty-two years ago and such a doctrine was not preached among us then. If all the Baptists go conditional my experience will not let me.

I have been blind for several years with cataracts. I had my eyes operated on, lost one but can now see to read for which I am thankful to the Lord. Speaking about salvation in time being by works I can look back now and see all this worked for my good. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Before I went blind I had no desire to read, running after this world's goods. After losing my eyesight how I craved to read and could not. For thirty or forty days after the operation I could not read. One day I received a typewritten letter and to my surprise I read it. I hurried to get the Bible to see if I could read, I could and rejoiced in my poor soul. I had not intended to write all this. Brother Dodson help me praise the Lord for what he has done for poor me. Your unworthy brother I hope.

J. F. JACKS

Rochester, Ill.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I was glad to receive the sweet letter you wrote when I renewed for the *Signs* last year, and have thought so many times I would like to write you, but I know you have

so many letters to read and did not want to bother you. Now my dear, precious husband has been called to his sweet home in heaven and God has left me here, but has blessed me with two precious, sweet daughters for which I do want to be thankful for they are so good and thoughtful of me. Oh, how I do miss my dear companion. We had been married for over forty-three years, but God blessed him to know that his will not ours be done. He believed like the dear Old Baptists and read the dear *Signs*. I do feel he surely was a child of God, and while sick he was praying and praising the dear, precious Lord God in heaven day and night. It made me so happy for I know God gave it to him or he would not have thought it.

How I wish I could talk to you or some of the other good preachers for I do not know whether I have a hope or not, but I hope I have if it is our dear, precious Lord's will. I am afraid I am making this too long and taking too much of your time but I have thought of so many things I wanted to write you.

I am sending check for the dear, good *Signs* again. How I do love to read and re-read the good letters. I want to thank you for sending dear Elder Murphy some money I sent you one time for he writes me about twice a year and oh how I do enjoy his good letters. If I do not renew next year you may know I am not here, and if it is God's will I want him to take me soon. I wanted to go first but it was not to be that way, and praise his holy name he knows how he wants it to be. I know that all things work together for good to them that love God and how I do hope I love him. If I do I know he loved me first. God help you to keep the good *Signs* coming each month. I feel he will bless and be with you if ever you have to give your good and sweet companion up. No one knows what it is until it comes. Unworthily yours,

(Mrs.) MAE THOMAS

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304 Church St., Martin, Tenn.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Please find enclosed $2 for another year's subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. Also a letter from a very dear couple I know, Mr. Robert Veazey and wife. I have had it for some time as you will see by the date. In it he speaks so beautifully of the wonderful works of God that I thought you might like to publish it in the *Signs* that others might enjoy reading it too.

I had the privilege of visiting them recently. I do not know why they were led to write me, unworthy as I feel, on such a wonderful subject as it is too much for me to understand; however, it is one that I have been made to ponder many times. Just to look upon nature in its beauty and everything everywhere shows that God's hand alone has made it all, and our own being to inhabit the earth here below. Yours truly,

(Mrs.) E. E. TRIBBLE

Cottage Grove, Tenn.

DEAR COUSIN ELIZABETH: You have been on my mind for some time and I have been thinking I would write you but have not felt like I could. If the Lord will only be pleased to give me an understanding mind I will try to give you a few thoughts on what I hope and believe. My mind has been centered on God's power, wisdom, foreknowledge, predestination and election and his will and purpose. I know this covers a large volume, in fact it covers the whole plan, and is too much for me to write on or even try to speak of.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. This is a work

that no man or any set of men could do, and God did it without the help of any one. He made everything that is or was made and all out of nothing, and he pronounced it all good and very good, and it all fulfills the purpose for which he made it. His foreknowledge, predestination, election, and his love, mercy and grace were all embraced in the whole matter. Now the time came for him to form man and he spoke to his Son who was in his mind and purpose, and in that sense was with him. He said let us make man, so made he man in his own image. Here is election set up, man was made from the dust of the earth. He did not take it all but selected a certain portion and made man. Why did God select the dust to make man? Why did he not just speak and let him be made? Here is the reason: that the scripture must be fulfilled which says, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." O my soul, see the wisdom of our God. After man was formed he was without life, no breath in him, just a dormant piece of clay. Who but God could give him life, that is, natural life? No human being could have done it, but see the power of our God, he "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Now something needful is to be done for God saw that it was not good for man to dwell alone, so we see him taking a rib from Adam and making him a helpmeet. He called her a woman because she was taken from man, and these two were placed in the garden which was called Eden. Here we see two perfect beings, and in the garden were all manner of fruits. God told them that of all the fruits of the trees in the garden thou mayest eat, but of the tree which is in the midst of the garden thou shalt not eat (why) because in the day thou eatest thou shalt surely die. Here was a law laid down and the penalty for violating that law was death. Yes, death from the perfect state which they were in when placed in the garden, but the serpent came in just in time, not too late, nor too soon. He spoke to the woman and told her a falsehood and she did eat and gave to her husband and he did eat.

Let us look at some more of God's predestination and foreknowledge and the manner in which he takes care of his creation. Adam and Eve were driven from the garden and the Lord clothed them with coats of skin and they were sent out that they should multiply and people the earth. This was all the work of Almighty God. In the midst of the garden was the tree of life, and when Adam and Eve were sent from the garden the Lord "placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." Man of himself has never yet been able of himself to touch or even approach that tree, for God is our life, he is our all in all and let us see how we may eat of that glorious tree. God knew every individual that would ever be born in this world from before all of his mighty works in creating and making that was and is made; all of his posterity from the beginning to the closing of time and timely things here on this earth, and unto his Son who was to be born of the virgin Mary gave he an inheritance, and this precious Son who knew no sin had to bear all the sins of his inheritance. He became the tree of life to every one that was reckoned in the covenant of redemption; he bore their sins upon the tree of the cross; His last words while dying were, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." He said, "I have finished the work

which thou gavest me to do." What was causing all this agony of the blessed Son of God? It was my sins and yours together with all those that were given him in the covenant of redemption. What a precious Savior we have to look to when we are afflicted, when in sorrow, when we feel like we haven't a friend on this earth, when we are in the dark valley sinking down with woe, when it seems to us that the sweet hope that we cherish is almost gone: then to hear the sweet words of our blessed Savior say, "It is I; be not afraid," and "My grace is sufficient for thee." Yes, this grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the worlds were framed; now we can see the glories of God and feel his blessed love, mercy and grace being shed abroad in our hearts; now we are enabled to look and see the beauties of this glorious doctrine of election, predestination, foreknowledge and purpose; and this is the reason why I love this doctrine, for when we were dead in sin, trampling the goodness and mercy of our God under our unhallowed feet, then it was that his love and mercy, his protecting care was over us. The time must come and will, that we must pass from this earthly existence and return to mother dust and this is the fulfillment of God's word "for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." These fleshly bodies must decay, but the Lord will watch over our bodies until his second coming when he comes to claim his jewels and fashion them like unto himself, and bear them away on the wings of his love to that eternal city where we will praise him forever and forever, not for what we have done but for what he has done for us. Then he will say to the Father, Father here am I and the ones thou gavest me, those that thou gavest me I have kept and none of them are lost. What a glorious Savior, one that is able to save even in the drawing of the last breath!

Cousin Elizabeth, as I said in the beginning I could not write on such a broad subject as this and have just hinted at a few thoughts. May the Lord bless and keep you by his love, mercy and grace is my prayer. Ludie is well as usual and sends love, she thinks of you often and wishes she could see you. I am feeling fairly well. Write us when you feel like it and give my love to any inquiring friends. If I should not see you again on this earth may it be my happy lot to join you in that eternal city of our God. Farewell in love and in hope of that eternal life which God promised before the worlds were formed.

R. L. VEAZEY, Sr.

Route 1, Box 79. Shaw, Miss.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am sending $2 to help pay on the dear *Signs,* all the preaching I get. I have not heard any since one year ago last September and I get so thirsty. I do not want to miss a copy of the paper. I did not get my December copy and if you have an extra one please send it to me. I want to make a book of them.

I had a dear sweet letter from an Old Baptist believer in Salisbury, Md. She said she was not a member of the church but came from Baptist parentage. Her uncles, grandfather and great-grandfather were ministers and her mother united with the church at fifteen years of age. She writes sweetly on spiritual things. I am glad God can put it in the hearts of his poor, little, tried people to write and try to comfort such as I, though so many miles apart and in a destitute place, isolated from the gospel. I love the Old Baptist church and her people more than my

life. When I read her letter I burst out singing:

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see."

If I could see heaven why yet hope for it. I must keep on hoping until my journey's end and then all is well. Yours in hope.

OLIVE E. ROBERTS

Box 2292, Roanoke, Va.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I hesitate to take your time reading the effort I feel to make to relieve my mind of the impression to write you some of my thoughts and feelings, and to tell you I do enjoy reading the *Signs of the Times*. Both the *Signs* and Old Faith Contender are welcome to me and stir my heart deeply. I do not know whether I have the right understanding of the truth as it is in Jesus or not. I have to confess I have nothing to offer any one as an approach in my effort to express my feelings, nothing in my hands to bring, no appealing manner and have done no good thing, yet I am made to believe I have been given a hope, if not deceived, and that hope is that Jesus is my Savior. I realize it is the work of God that we believe. I think Old Baptists feel and believe the total depravity of man and the greatness of our God who is alive forevermore. Sometimes I wonder if I have risen or gotten, in my estimation, above my raising and bringing up from my low estate. I am made to feel daily that I need bread and milk. It is hard to express it plainly, but what I do desire is that we might all remember how and where the Lord found us; our state and condition then and our present state and condition. "If you are a Christian you will do so and so" we hear proclaimed in various ways and times, but very little pointing out of a need. I have to remember my need because of the need, and hope I look and must continue to look unto him who has delivered and doth yet deliver. Who or what showed or told me or made me realize my condition? "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" I was not taken up, turned around and told, though you have done some wrong I am going to remember the good you have done and forgive you. No, it was far different. I was stricken down, as it were, and told and shown how awful I was in sin and am yet as far as my ability to deliver or do for my-self. I hope brother Dodson, I was granted repentance, I hope I have truly mourned, hungered and thirsted after what? Righteousness. Inas-much as I did not have any and do not yet have any, excepting my hope that is Jesus, and that he is my righteousness, and what a state I was in. I hope I have been granted forgiveness, and from whence came this? It is written (as I know you know so well, but allow me to repeat) that forgiveness and repentance was granted Israel. I cannot help but wonder why repentance is not spoken of as something vital and alive as forgiveness. Certainly it is from the same source and because of the already forgiveness in the mind and purpose of God through and in Jesus, we are brought to repentance. I feel I need to repent as much as forgive, or rather I must say more so. I feel so low and unworthy, beneath any one else, to see one repenting of their wrongs it is as nothing to reach out a forgiving hand. There are no "ifs" in it. John said, "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." Yes, I must say I hope repentance was granted me, may He grant I show forth repentance toward those I offend. To take away the needed confession of repentance takes away the true fulness and sweetness of forgive-

ness, of merciful forgiveness. That is what I felt to need, merciful forgiveness. I need it daily, hourly, or the remembrance of it, the vital feeling of it, the *life* of it, that I might confess before God and man, my sins, my shortcomings and faults. Is repentance something to be ashamed of? Why did or do I feel I need merciful forgiveness, yea, I am a guilty wretch and cannot say I am a Christian or God will you forgive? No, but I feel I was shown that I do not deserve forgiveness, but if you can feel to show mercy, forgive me! I feel the Scriptures confirm my fears, as well as strengthen my hope of a hope, that I am made to rejoice in true deliverance.

This brings me to the point of what I really meant to say of the Editorials in April *Signs,* causing me to remember Elder Jesse several years past. I had read him an experience of one of my cousins, very rich and full of repentance, and a live hope that she had been forgiven. Brother Jesse seemed to rejoice greatly and in his manner expressed his liking for that kind of experience, yes, "we want to hear the fruits of repentance" he said. For a long time I pondered over his words as I also pondered a dear old sister's words when several had united the day I united. The weather being very rough she could not attend the baptizing, but she said, "I have heard and seen the best part of it any way." I dreamed after Bro. Jesse's conversation of seeing him coming up straight and firm out of a great depth of wilderness, singing, as I thought. "How firm a foundation." I remembered that dream as I read the last *Signs.* David confessed his guilt, he greatly sorrowed because of sin. Repentance! Have I ever been turned about and repented? Yes, for the offended and offender to fellowship and enjoy the richness of God's great work there are also confessions of repentance and forgiveness. It is his work, we must come in at the door. Do I not behold Jesus here? Esau sought repentance with tears, but found no place. He was not shown, could not see himself as needing any righteousness. Thought he had that of himself. It will not do.

I received the book on the Resurrection and appreciate your sending it, but I do not know that I really understood all of it. At any rate I cannot agree with what I thought I understood in some of the writings. To me the resurrection is vital. "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." That victory is full, complete and sweet. I hope I have been in no way disrespectful. I do not wish to offend. The scripture is a source of comfort to me because of my precious hope, and when it confirms my feelings I feel to rejoice, when not, I feel I am to know my thoughts are wrong and I am cut off to mourn. When He opens up that way I can see, ah, but the way is good. May he be your comforter always. In hope of that everlasting life.

(Miss) CATHERINE A. HOUCHINS

Route 7, Box 820, Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I would like to tell you how much I have enjoyed reading the *Signs of the Times,* and what it means to this poor beggar, although I fear my weak, stammering tongue could not express what I feel in my heart to say. I hope I know what it means to become a beggar indeed, begging mercy continually that I do not deserve. Made to see my nothingness and my inability to keep myself. No, I cannot even think good thoughts, and I am brought to think, oh, what would there be for me were it not for the hope I have in the covenant love of a merciful God; how I would often despair, but thanks be to that adorable God for the precious gift of his elect Son.

Then we hope we can say our sufficiency is of God for we are not sufficient of ourselves to think or do that which is spiritually good. We just cannot claim any merit of ourselves, indeed not, for if left to ourselves we would never choose the way of holiness. Man naturally loves darkness better than he does light, and man in nature wants things made easy for him, therefore he would never choose to be one of the afflicted people, suffering on behalf of sinful self and not being able to do one good thing, yet grieving and longing to do that which is right. But oh how sweet when we are made to see that the way of man is not in himself. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Then we are made to rest for a season. When we feel these sweets slipping away (In my experience I have found I cannot hold on to them only so long as God will allow.) then we are made to see how dependent we are upon him for all things we receive.

Elder Dodson, I am sending a copy of a poem that I have written. If you think it is worthy of publication in the *Signs of the Times* you may do so. Do not crowd out better things for it as I feel it is like the writer, very imperfect. It is with fear and trembling that it is offered and upon the request of loved ones. If there is found soundness and truth therein, God be praised for the truth's sake. When it is well with you would it be asking too much of you to remember me in your prayers, and oh I hope your God is my God. Surely there is none like unto the God of Israel, that he blessed his people with leaders such as yourself and others we have read after through the *Signs*. We feel it is God working in you to will and do of his own good pleasure, and may we hope it shall continue for many more years, rich and full of good things to the comfort of the humble poor of the Lord. Submitted in love in Jesus Christ our blessed Lord.

(Mrs.) LOUISE NEWMAN

(*Poem appeared in October issue.*)

The Potteries, Chessington,
Surrey, England

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I have intended often to write you and it is hardly creditable that those intentions have been so long maturing. It has been ungracious of me after the warm hospitality I received both from you and the brethren in New York, and in this apparent discourtesy I must ask your Christian forgiveness as I have not forgotten you or them. Of the few hours we spent together I think memory is the clearest upon the pleasure I felt as we tried to make mention of His name and of what He had done for our souls in his grace. What good ground this is for poor sinners to meet upon and occupy themselves with. "When nothing in themselves they see, but Christ is all in all."

We do not wonder at Paul's counting all things but dung and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, but covet the single heart and fixed purpose bestowed on him. Many a time I have to hang my head and sigh when reading his epistles. What a shallow, superficial creature they make me feel. How truly he could say, "For me to live is Christ." Doubtless if he lived to-day he would be dubbed an enthusiast. A life of prayer, preaching and persecution, but he had seen Jesus as one born out of due time drank into his spirit and pressed toward the mark. No pleading for lawful *relaxation*—"all things edify not." If anything could be written as the source of the present decline surely it is the word of Jesus, "No man can serve two masters." I write this in no critical way of others, but as expressive of the treach-

ery of my own heart. I long to have this challenge resolved and faith victorious.

Owing to severe currency restrictions I have been unable to contribute to your paper, but opportunity now arises to see to this matter, which has troubled me some. Brother Spindle of Washington is attending to it for me. I am thankful to say my small family is well and we have been brought safely through the past bitter winter. My kind regards to Mrs. Dodson who, though I had not the pleasure of meeting her, so kindly gave you up for the Saturday afternoon we spent together. Yours sincerely,

HOWARD STOVOLD

Woodward, Iowa

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I have just finished reading the letter from "a sister in Texas" is it not wonderful? I think it is priceless and many are the tears I shed before I finished and am not ashamed of them, but hope I have rejoiced with her in the wonderful workings of His mighty power. That one article alone is worth more than riches or gold and I would that I were able to describe the joy I received in reading it. Only one other letter I think ever touched me so deeply and that was from Louise Newman, Memphis, Tenn. I think I know the difference between tears of sorrow and tears of gladness, and I really believe these were tears of joy caused by the effectual working of God's mighty power even if I cannot claim any part in it, but where can I go for help, comfort, joy or sadness but to the God of glory who gives to us as he sees fit for our good and his glory.

May God give you strength and grace to give us more of such writings as are contained in the *Signs of the Times* to cheer us on our weary way, and help lead us to the Rock that is higher than we. Oh, if we could overlook the faults of others and see them as we think we see ourselves what a different world this would be. May God bless you and all the readers of the *Signs of the Times* and cause you all to rejoice in the glory of God. May the tears of rejoicing swell up in all your eyes as they did in mine when I read that sweet epistle from "a sister in Texas." I am sure the Lord knows where she is and who she is. With devotion to the household of faith and love for all God's children I am I hope a brother saved by grace.

W. J. KIMBRO

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SPECIAL NOTICE

Beginning with the month of January, 1948 there will be held, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at 2:30 p. m. a meeting of Old School or Predestinarian Baptists for worship, third floor of Pythian Temple building, 1012 Ninth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Elder John D Wood, Minister. Those desiring to meet with us are welcome. For further information, call or write to

FRANK T. SIMPKINS,
5210 - H St.,
Dillon Park,
Washington, D. C.

EDITORIAL

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PRAYER

In visiting different parts of the country I find different practices among our people in their religious services. One is the differences in the posture of the congregation and minister during prayer. In Canada the first part of the service is prayer. The minister and the congregation stand during this service. In the northern states the ministers I have associated with usually stand in prayer while the congregation remains seated. In the South there is no set rule, some of the ministers kneel and others stand during this service.

We find in both the Old and New Testments that some knelt, others stood, and some were prostrate before the Lord during this service. When Solomon, the king, completed the temple, which was a type of the church of God, at the dedication he kneeled before the people and prayed with his hands lifted to heaven. His prayer was that God's ear would ever be open to the cries of the ones who worshipped there; that his eyes would watch them day and night. After Paul delivered a message to the Elders at Ephesus, when he was journeying to Jerusalem, after speaking to them the Word, he kneeled down and prayed with them all. Daniel, while in captivity, knelt regularly with his window open toward Jerusalem and prayed to God.

Other accounts are given of people being prostrate before the Lord while praying. When Elijah prayed for rain after a very long drought, he cast himself down upon the earth with his face between his knees. Two of the apostles give an account of the prayer of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane in his terrible agony just before his betrayal into the hands of wicked men. He is pictured as being prostrate upon the ground. He prayed so earnestly that his sweat became as great drops of blood, falling to the ground. So great was his agony that an angel from heaven appeared strengthening him. Others stood when they prayed. When Hannah asked God to give her a man child she stood, and as she prayed only her lips moved. Eli, the priest, seeing her lips moving and hearing no words decided she was drunken. Her answer was, "No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord." That prayer was just as effectual as if she had been kneeling.

There were two spoken of by the Savior who went up into the temple to pray: one a Pharisee, the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed with himself, thanking God that he was not as other men. He boasted of what he was doing, telling the Lord that he fasted every so often and that he gave tithes of all he had. He certainly prayed with himself. The publican stood afar off, he was so burdened with a sense of guilt and unworthiness that he could not so much as lift his eyes to heaven, but smote himself upon his breast, say-

ing God be merciful to me a sinner. Of the two we are told the publican went to his house justified rather than the other. Though both stood while praying, one of them had a broken heart because of sin and was bowed in spirit before the Lord. The other was filled with his own self righteousness. One class of people Jesus warned his disciples about were those who stood on the street corners and made long prayers to be seen of men; also the ones who have devoured widow's houses and made long prayers as a pretense, who liked to be greeted in the public places and receive the applause of men. The Savior's instruction to his true followers was not to follow their example, but rather to enter their closet, close the door and pray to their Father in secret, promising them they would be rewarded openly. The lesson to us is this: regardless of whether we are prostrate on the ground, kneel or stand in this service, nothing is to be done with the desire to be seen of men.

As we consider these things it is more important that our heart be bowed before the Lord, even though we be standing, than to be prostrate on the ground before the Lord with a hard and stony heart. In most instances the record shows that on most occasions when God's people prayed they either stood or knelt. The three positions seem to suit the various experiences one is called to go through. There are times when one prays, no position is agreeable to their feeling like being prostrate on the earth. They feel the earth is not low enough for them before the Lord. Their burden of heart is beyond expression in words; their hope is that the spirit itself maketh intercession for them with groanings that cannot be uttered; they are as water spilled upon the ground. Only the ones that have passed through such things know what they are. Their need as a poor sinner is so great that no one thing can be singled out from another to ask God for.

At other times the kneeling in secret is the desire of their heart. Some special request is to be made known to God. They desire to acknowledge him as their Lord and Master by bowing the knee before him while they make known their request. Then when we are in the assembly of the saints and can say "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord" how comforting at times to give thanks for all blessings; to remember those who have the rule over you; to mention the loving kindness of the Lord and pray with and for each other.

Though the apostle Paul was taught perfectly the way of salvation, yet he desired that the brethren would pray that a door of utterance would be given him to speak of the mysteries of the kingdom, and to-day his servants still feel the same way. I think it is a good rule to follow the custom of those we worship with, unless our conscience forbids. D. V. S.

"Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." Luke 14:23.

Sister Nellie Springer, East Point, Ky., in requesting our views on the above text, says a friend of hers (a Freewill Baptist) thinks this means for carnal preachers to go around and beg people to unite with the church. She then adds that she cannot believe that is what is meant. We are well aware of what freewillism says and thinks about the plan of salvation. Recently we seemed to have a vision of seeing it rolling in from the Prince of Darkness as the great waves of the mighty ocean, and we realized that we were as powerless to check it as we would be to push back the waves with our own puny hands, but the thought

came to us that if God would only be pleased to use us as just one of the grains of sand which go to make up the shore that fixes the bounds, where God has said, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?" it would be enough for us to praise him all the days of our life here below. We do earnestly hope, at times, that God has given us an understanding of and an insight into the Holy Scriptures sufficiently to enable us to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," in the face of all opposition, regardless of from whence it may come or how numerous the host may be. As God directed the smooth pebble from David's sling, and caused it to find its mark and slay Goliath, so will the word of his precious truth slay all of the falsehood of this vain world, when God sends it forth by his Spirit.

As an artist needs a background to bring out the beauty of his picture, so it is necessary to present the surrounding connections of a text, in order to bring forth its true spiritual meaning. Only by examining what precedes and bears upon our text can we hope to arrive at the truth, and we believe that it will be clearly revealed that free-willism has no place or part whatsoever in the plan of God's salvation of his people. What is under consideration and being treated upon, as we see it, is *law* and *gospel, works* and *grace, Jew* and *Gentile.* Jesus came into the world in the flesh at the end of the legal dispensation, and it was prophesied before hand that he would be rejected by the leaders of his own race, the Jews under the law. Legal Jerusalem was only a shadowy type of the New Jerusalem, which is from above and is the mother of all who are truly spiritual. Jesus was addressing legal Jerusalem when he said in the thirty-fourth verse of the previous chapter: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not." This showed what the attitude of the Pharisees and scribes (of which the Sanhedrin Court was composed), as well as the civil rulers in Jerusalem was towards Jesus. Those in both ecclesiastical and civil authority would have nothing to do with Jesus except to oppose and persecute him, as they had previously done to the true prophets, to whom Jesus referred. Let it be noted that Jesus did not say that he often would have gathered them as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings and they would not, else there might be some ground for free-willism to lift its awful head before God, but what he did say was: "how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and *ye* would not." The rulers who were the *ye* referred to forbade their people to follow Jesus and accept his teachings, but notwithstanding all of their opposition Jesus, nevertheless, did gather some from among the Jews, even though they were mostly the ignorant and unlearned—and not numbered among the high and mighty under his protecting care and make disciples of them: witness Peter, James and John, and others. Jesus followed what we have quoted by saying, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." He was here addressing the *ye* again, and was foretelling them of the utter destruction of legal Jerusalem by saying, "your house is left unto you

desolate." He was also prophesying of the time when they would see him, which was not to be until they shall say, "Blessed, is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." This probably will not be until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in and the Jews, as a nation, shall be made to acknowledge that Jesus is that Messiah which was to come, but whom they did not recognize when he came because their eyes were holden and they could not see him as their Savior.

In reviewing the chapter in which our text is found we see that Jesus had gone into the house of one of the Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, and they watched him. There was a certain man present who had the dropsy and he healed him, but Jesus knowing that the lawyers and Pharisees present were legalists asked, "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?" He then asked them, "Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day? And they could not answer him again to these things." Then he taught them meekness and humility by instructing them how they should conduct themselves when they were bidden to a wedding, not to sit down in the highest room; lest a more honorable man than thou be bidden of him, and he then be asked to take the lowest room, but rather to "sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher, etc." This was contrary to their practice. Jesus continued to stress his point by telling them when they makest a dinner or a supper, first, who not to bid and, second, who to bid. They were not to bid the elite and the rich, who could recompense them for their hospitality by reciprocating the good deed, but rather they were to call "the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind," and they would be blessed, for such could not recompense them. Apparently there was one who sat at meat with them who had some comprehension of what Jesus meant, and he spoke up and said, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." Then Jesus presented unto them the parable of the "great supper," which undoubtedly typified the feast of fat things to be enjoyed in the gospel kingdom. He related how a man sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, "Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse." This together with what follows portrays just what took place when Jesus came unto his own under the law, and they received him not. In a natural state, while under the law, no man will desire to have Jesus rule over him. The strong man keepeth his palace, and his goods are in peace until a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, and taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. Paul said, "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." In writing to the church at Rome, he also said, "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." These scriptures show conclusively that there is no basis whatever for freewillism to build upon in the kingdom of God. The excuses of the legalists showed how foolish they were: One had bought a piece of ground before he had even seen it; another had bought an yoke of oxen before he had proved them, and a third said he had married a wife "and therefore I cannot

come." When the servant reported these things to his lord he was angry and said, "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind." This shows that there were those among the Jews who were embraced in the eternal purpose of Almighty God, who would and did accept the teachings of Jesus. They were not the rulers to whom Jesus referred, but they were among the children of Jerusalem, who the rulers would have prevented from following him had it been possible. The record clearly shows that there were many Jews in the early gospel churches, but God's plan embraced the cutting off of the tame olive branch (the Jews as a nation) and grafting in the wild olive branch (the Gentiles) until their fulness shall come in.

There are some who claim that God's servants are commissioned to literally preach the gospel to every creature, Jew and Gentile, the elect and the non-elect alike. It is true, after his resurrection that Jesus said: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," but we believe this applied to the Gentiles, as prior to his death He had commanded his disciples to go not into the way of the Gentiles, but to go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. We do not believe the Scriptures will sustain the idea of a universal commission to preach the gospel to every son and daughter of Adam. Paul in writing to the Galatians said, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." We readily admit that God's servants know not who nor where the lambs and sheep are until they are manifested by the Spirit, and they can have no respect for persons in preaching the gospel, but have to go sowing their seed, hunting and fishing for those who love the truth, but we are persuaded that unless God prepares the heart to receive it, there will be no springing forth and bearing a copious fruit. God's true ministers, after they have done all they can, have to confess that they are unprofitable servants, and that God is all and in all. The heart of Lydia was opened by the Lord before she attended unto the things which were spoken by Paul in answering the Macedonian cry.

If, as Jesus said, all power was given unto him in heaven and in earth, what can hinder him from accomplishing his will and pleasure in the world? Paul asked on one occasion, who hath resisted his will? In the fulness of time it pleased God to call the Gentiles, to whom he did not commit his oracles under the law, and by quickening them from the dead state they were in bring them into his gospel fold, hence as the servant reported, after bringing in the poor, the maimed, and the halt, and the blind, from the streets and lanes of the city among the Jews, there was still room for his people among the Gentiles. Let us note specifically, however, before passing too far, that even the Jews in the streets and lanes of the city had to be *brought* in. It was not left for them to choose, or for some one else to persuade them. And now to our text: "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." This very definitely has reference to the Gentiles. They were not to be found in the streets and lanes of the city of Legal Jerusalem, for they had no part with them. They could not even associate with the Jews until Jesus came and broke down the middle wall of partition which separated between them. Under the law they were "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and stran-

gers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world." But under grace, given them in Christ Jesus before even the worlds were framed, they who "sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ," and when this gospel was preached to them in demonstration of the Spirit and with power sent down from heaven, they were made to realize that they were no more "strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built (showing that it was not by works of righteousness which they could do) upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." If this language permits of the injection of freewillism any where whatsoever we do not understand the meaning of words. The word of the Lord to Zerubbabel was, that it is, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." God's people are made willing in the day of his power. The poet said,

Jesus draws the chosen race
By his sweet, resistless grace;
Causing them to hear his call,
And before his power to fall.

From the blissful realms above,
Swift as lightning flies his love;
Draws them to his tender breast,
There they find the gospel rest.

Then how eargerly they move
In the happy paths of love:
How they glory in the Lord,
Pleased with Jesus' sacred word.

The prophet Jeremiah said, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Isaiah wrote, saying, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the tops of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." The laws of nature are set aside when God is pleased to work in a poor sinner's heart, and this is what takes place when all nations are made to flow, contrary to the law of gravitation, unto the top of the mountains where God's house is established. Mount Zion is an holy city, and therein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby, but the glorious Lord is there. This is said to be "a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken." God's promises are yea and amen in Christ Jesus, and shall never fail, and neither shall a single one of the cords of his love by which he draws his chosen race ever be broken. Freewillism cannot stand on this holy ground, and unless God by the workings of his holy Spirit quickens the dead sinner there is no basis for his hearing the gospel though it be preached in demonstration of the Spirit and with power from heaven. The dead know not anything, and to preach the gospel unto them is like casting pearls before swine. The object of preaching is not to make sinners into saints, but it is to save (doctrinally) them that believe and to feed the flock of God. Paul in writing to Timothy said, "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to

the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." We believe that God works in his people, both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and his ministers should do all within their power to encourage those wrought upon by the Spirit to acknowledge him before men, but unless they are *compelled* by the power of his word to put on the whole armour of God, it is better no doubt that they should remain where they are. In the days of the apostles, "the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved," and unless He does the adding to-day, we are afraid his house will not be filled with the right kind of people. In the days of Gideon, God turned back most of the Israelites, lest they vaunt themselves against him and say their own arm saved them. They had to be reduced to a very small company, and their earthen pitchers had to be broken before the light of faith was manifested in them, and then they marched around the city, blowing the trumpet of the ram's horn, significant of the gospel trumpet, that the victory, or salvation is only by and through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. David said, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchmen waketh but in vain." We trust these thoughts will be helpful to our sister and readers.

R. L. D.

CLOSE OF VOLUME 115

God in his tender mercy has brought us to the close of Vol. 115 of the Signs of the Times. The year 1947 has been fraught with some misgivings and vicissitudes, but the Lord has been better to us than all our fears.

First, we desire to express our deep gratitude to God for his manifold blessings, both temporal and spiritual; and, Second, we wish to thank most sincerely all who have aided us in any way in the publication of our family paper during the year. Those who have made financial contributions have been most helpful in enabling us to continue this work. With God's blessings we shall carry on.

R. L. D.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Brother H. C. ORR died at the home of his son, Joe Orr of Margaret, Texas, July 27, 1947 after a lingering illness. He was 90 years of age and is survived by two sons, Joe and Jack, five grandchildren and a number of great-grandchildren. Brother Orr was born in Tennessee. His wife preceded him in death in 1929. He was a long time member of the Primitive Baptist Church, was strong in the faith and loved to attend the meetings. He will be missed by his family, his many friends and his church. Funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Elder W. N. Green at Vernon, Texas.

Resolved, that Little Flock Church extends sympathy to his bereaved family, and requests that a copy of these resolutions be made a part of our church record, a copy sent to his family and a copy sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference at Altus, Okla., Aug. 9, 1947.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN, Moderator
(Mrs.) LOU KESTER, Church Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Whereas, God in his infinite wisdom and mercy has removed from the scenes of mortal existence our beloved brother J. W. HAYNES, and

Whereas, Macedonia Church feels deeply bereft in the loss of this esteemed member whose wise counsel in walk and practice, and whose kindly interest in our individual welfare has been a source of comfort and joy to us, be it

Resolved, that with hearts bowed in humble submission to God's holy will we do express our belief that our loss is his eternal gain, and give voice to our gratitude for the rich blessing his long and useful life has been to us, and be it

Resolved, that this tribute to his memory be written in Macedonia Church book and copies also be sent to the Signs of the Times and Old Faith Contender for publication.

Presented to the church while in conference on Saturday before the second Sunday in August, 1947.

(Elder) C. Y. OSTEEN, Moderator
N. J. SINGLETERRY, Church Clerk

OBITUARIES

L. C. KIRK was born April 1, 1861, and died August 10, 1947. He married Miss Ida Jones in 1885 and to this union were born eight children, four boys and four girls. One boy and one girl preceded in death leaving to mourn his loss his wife and six children. Clifford and Paul Kirk of California; Dewey Kirk of Florida; Mrs. M. L. Coley, Mrs. Guy Pone and Mrs. W. L. Norris of Alabama. There are thirteen grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. He was a faithful companion. He united with the Old Baptist Church while a young man and was a faithful member all his life, abounding in the faith once delivered to the saints. During his long illness and suffering he never murmured or complained of his lot, always putting his faith in a God who does all things well, and that has declared the end from the beginning, ruling in the armies of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth. He seemed ready and willing to depart this life, and longed for that beautiful home where there is no sickness, pain or death; where the ransomed of God will sing his praises ever-more. Funeral services were conducted in his home by Elder W. D. Griffin of Covin, Ala. Written by his son-in-law.

W. L. NORRIS

Death removed from life's activity and usefulness MRS. FRANCES ECKERSON STEVENS, May 24, 1947, at the home of her daugher, Mrs. Delmar Mereness, after an illness of long duration. The immediate surviving relatives are one son, Earl D. Stevens, Central Bridge, N. Y.; two daughters, Mrs. Delmar Mereness of Forest Hills, N. Y. and Mrs. Glen Springstead of Gloversville, N. Y.

Mrs. Stevens was past seventy-eight years of age. She was born April 27, 1869 at Barnerville, N. Y. and spent much of her young life near Mineral Springs in Schoharie County. She was united in marriage in 1888 to William S. Stevens who died in 1941. Most of their married life was spent in Schoharie County in agricultural pursuits. For nine years before his death Mr. Stevens conducted a farm near Central Bridge, N. Y. She never united with any church. Her honesty, industry, neighborly qualities, faithful devotion to her family, pleasant manners and appealing personality were among her notable qualities. A few years before her death she spent her summers at the home of her son, Earl, and the remainder of the year with her daughter, Mrs. Mereness, who ministered to her needs with loyal devotedness.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Mereness Funeral Home in Cobleskill on the Tuesday following her death. Interment in the Cobleskill Rural Cemetery. She will be much missed in her home and in the community.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

MRS. JENNIE HAYNES, devoted wife of J. W. Haynes, departed this life May 25, 1945 at her home near Rising Star, Texas. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Johnson and was born in Belfonte, Ala. in 1866. She was married to J. W. Haynes in 1881. They came to Texas in 1884, locating near Rising Star. They were the parents of twelve children, three of whom died in infancy, three after reaching maturity, leaving six children, thirty grandchildren, forty-nine great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.

She united with Macedonia Church by experience and baptism in 1912 and was always a faithful member, good neighbor, loyal friend and a devoted wife and mother. Brother Haynes had been confined to his bed for nine years and she had been in constant attendance until she was called to rest.

Also

MR. JOHN WILLIAM HAYNES was born in Jackson Co., Ala. Nov. 7, 1863, and died at his home near Rising Star, Tex., July 30, 1947. (see above obituary). At the age of sixteen he became so burdened by the weight of sin that he realized there was no earthly help for him. For several months he carried this burden but in the Lord's time he was given a glorious deliverance and a bright hope in a risen Savior, a hope that he lived by for all of his long useful life.

Macedonia Church was constituted in August 1885, and in September he united with the church by experience, being baptized by the pastor, Elder Lambert. For fifty years he served as church clerk until he became too ill to attend. A history of his life would be a history of Macedonia Church. Truly it could be said of him he was a father in Israel. He was on a bed of suffering for eleven years before his call came but was always patient and pleasant, always glad to welcome visitors, especially the Baptists. He never tired of talking of the things pertaining to the wonderful works of his heavenly Master.

He had requested Elders C. Y. Osteen and C. U. Landers to conduct the last rites for him, and they both spoke eloquent words of comfort and consolation after which he was laid by the side of his faithful wife in the cemetery near their home. Only a merciful God can heal the hearts made sad by his passing. This small tribute is written at his request by one who esteemed them highly for the truth's sake.

(Mrs.) LIZZIE KILGORE FOSTER

ELDER SOLON GIPSON was born in Upsur Co., Texas, 12 miles north of Gilmer, Jan. 13, 1854. He was the youngest son of Leroy and Lucereta Gipson. He was married to Miss Emily Smith of Titus Co., Tex., Jan. 9, 1873. To this union were born nine children, five sons and four daughters. Two sons and two daughters survive.

He and his wife united with the Primitive Baptist Church in Navarro Co., Texas in July 1890, and were baptized by Elder J. H. Weeks. Brother Gipson was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry at Hopewell Church, Ellis Co., Texas on the third Sunday in July 1893. The Presbytery was composed of Elders A. D. Bourland, D. D. Wright and J. H. Weeks. Credentials written by Elder Asa Howard.

In his own hand writing three years before his death he wrote the following of himself, "I have baptized twenty-five members, preached thirty funerals and married fifty couples. Preached on my 70th birthday in the old ex-Confederate Soldiers Hall in the Court House in Cleburne, Johnson Co., Texas, second Sunday in Jan. 1924. Served Trinity River Association as Moderator from 1903 to 1924."

Elder Solon Gipson was a firm believer in absolute predestination of **all things.** He died suddenly and unexpectedly at his home near Rice, Texas, Nov. 28, 1927. It is regrettable that we do not have a more complete account of his travels than we do. We were handed a small sketch of his life by our dear sister, Lula Gipson, and she requested having it sent to the Signs as he had written this little sketch and the children failed to have it attended to immediately after his death.

I met him only one time but I have often heard of him, and always heard of his zeal for the truth. My husband, Elder W. A. Little, said Elder Solon Gipson often visited in his father's home, the late Elder W. M. Little, and he was loved by all who knew him and was an able preacher. His daughter-in-law, sister Lula Gipson, who is a member of our church here in Ft. Worth, Tex. often speaks of him in such a highly estimable way that it makes me feel I, too, have known this man of God. Written by request of sister Lula Gipson.

(Mrs.) MINNIE LITTLE

With deep regret we note the passing of sister EDNA REDMOND, wife of brother Tracy Redmond of Arkville, who departed this life Friday, Aug. 1, 1947 at the Homer Folks Hospital in Oneonta where she spent a few weeks for treatment of tuberculosis.

Sister Redmond was born March 10, 1885 in Vega, N. Y. She was the younger daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Matin Ganung. In 1907 she was united in marriage to Tracy Redmond and proved to him through all their married life a most devoted and faithful helpmeet. Two children were born to this union of whom one, brother Arnold Redmond, survives. A few years of the married life of sister Redmond and husband were spent in Buffalo and Phonecia. During the recent years they resided at Arkville, N. Y. The three members of this family became exercised spiritually and were, in the course of a few years, received into the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church, following the example of Jesus in being buried in the liquid grave. They proved very worthy and faithful members. Sister Redmond united with the Olive and Hurley Church at Shokan, and one of her greatest joys was to attend the services and have the brethren visit her in her home. Her quiet dignity, unassuming ways, thoughtfulness of others and her devotion to church and home were among her many notable qualities. She was aflicted with anemia followed by pulmonary tuberculosis that refused to respond to treatment and the ministration of loving friends and brethren who did what they could to make her comfortable. She was a true wife and mother and will be sadly missed by her surviving husband and son, and by her brethren and the community where she lived.

The funeral services were held at the Yellow meeting-house below Roxbury village, the writer assisted by Elder Amasa J. Slauson having charge of the services. Interment in the cemetery at that place. (Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

ANNOUNCEMENT

We regret to state that our supply of books on the Resurrection of the Dead is about exhausted. Therefore, we will have to withdraw our offer to send one of these books FREE for each **new** subscriber at $2, or to supply the books alone at $1.

We are, however, glad to announce that we have made arrangements whereby we will send FREE to each **new** subscriber, or to an old subscriber who will send in a **new** subscription at $2, a copy of SHOWERS OF RAIN. This is a 40 page booklet containing the Christian experience and 25 poems by our late sister, Flossie I. Faulkner. If the book alone is desired we will send single copies for 50c; six copies for $2.50, or 12 copies for $4.50, providing they all go to the same address.

Some of these poems have been published in the **Signs** and many of our readers know they are good. The book will make an interesting addition to any library or collection of books. We hope each reader will obtain a copy as outlined above. R. L. D.

BOOKS

Elder R. W. Rhodes, Lillie, La., will be glad to send his latest books (Rhodes-West debate, and Jones-Rhodes debate) to the same address for $3. If the books are desired separately, the price is $2 each. Some of our readers are finding these books very interesting. R. L. D.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the *Signs of the Times* at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1; 12 copies, $2. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 116 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JANUARY, 1948 No. 1

SUBMISSION

" 'Tis hard when we are sick and poor
And they who loved us, love no more;
When riches, health, and friends are gone,
To say, O Lord thy will be done:
Yet Lord I would to thee resign,
And say, my Father's will be mine.

'Tis hard, when in our soul's distress,
All, all around is wilderness;
When herbs and quenching streams there's none,
To say, my Father's will be done;
Yet Lord, I would to thee resign,
And say, my Father's will be mine.

And yet, how light our sorrows be,
To his in dark Gethsemane;
Who drank the cup, with stifled groan,
And said, my Father's will be done:
Dear Lord, may I to thee resign,
And say, my Father's will be mine."

Submitted by (Mrs.) JENNIE CLIFFORD

CORRESPONDENCE

WHERE IS THE CHURCH?

An inspired writer has said, "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters." None who are born of God and taught by his Spirit can doubt that this figure is intended to describe the condition as well as the superior excellence of the church above the daughters. She is called the "Love, Dove, and Undefiled" of her Beloved. The figure of a lily not only describes the modest beauty of the church, but shows, according to the instructions of our Lord, that her exceeding glory, although surpassing that of the regal splendor of Solomon, is not the result of her own labor. She toils not to procure it, she spins nothing that would answer for warp or for woof; her life is derived from an invisible Root, and her head is bowed under the genial rays of the sun. But she is not only like the lily as that flower stands gracefully in the field, or among other beautiful flowers, but she is like the lily among thorns. How truly does the church of Christ answer to the figure in all its fullness of illustration! God has chosen her in a furnace of affliction, and she has ever, in her militant state, been among the rude briars and thorns. The earth, groaning under the curse of the righteous Creator, is destined to produce thorns and thistles, and while this world remains the temporary abode of the church she must encounter them. One of her most prominent sons prayed no less than three times that the thorn might be removed, but was referred to the sufficiency of the grace of God to sustain him and bear him through all the buffetings of Satan. To those who have discernment in spiritual things how admirably does the church contrast with that by which she is surrounded. All that the lily is of itself is merely grass of the field which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, but God has so clothed her as to challenge comparison with the most exalted glory of the earth. All flesh is as grass, and all goodliness thereof (that is produced by human power, or the flesh, for all that is born of the flesh, whether physical or mental, is flesh) is as the flower of the grass; the grass withereth, the flower

thereof fadeth away, but the Word of the Lord abideth forever. While the flower thereof, that is, the goodliness of the flesh, or grass, may adorn the meadow, but, in common with the grass with which it is connected, it cannot survive the dissolution of the flesh, or grass; but God so clothes it (the church) in the garments of salvation as to secure the glory as an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled and cannot fade away.

> "Defiled and loathsome as we are
> He makes us white and calls us fair;
> Adorns us with that heavenly dress,
> His graces, and his righteousness."

Consequently the church is enabled through grace to sing, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." Isaiah 61:10. She "is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold, she shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework." Psalms 45:13. All human beauty and creature excellency, compared with the church of the living God, which is the ground and pillar of the truth, is but as thorns. Zion is pronounced in the language of inspiration the perfection of beauty; it cannot, therefore, be improved. Earth has no colors, nor has creation charms to lend which would not obscure her beauty. And although her peculiar excellency appears not to the eyes of an adulterous generation, for except a man be born again he cannot see her, because the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned; still all her attractions are clearly apprehended by those unto whom the Spirit of God reveals her. To them she appears as the New Jerusalem, descending from God out of heaven adorned as a bride for her husband. She looketh forth as the morning, fair, as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. Understanding these to be some of the general characteristics of the church of God, may we not inquire, where may she be found at this day? We cannot consistently believe that Christ has no church on earth at the present day; and if he has a church now upon earth she must bear the lineaments which are drawn in the New Testament. We shall not find her at the corners of the streets, in harlot's attire, seeking for a lover; from her lips will not be heard the silly boast, "I have peace offerings with me; this day have I paid my vows." Prov. 7:14. She cannot be recognized in any other dress than the garments of salvation which her Lord has given her. The daughters spoken of, Isaiah 3; 16-26, with their haughty carriage, stretched forth necks, wanton eyes, and mincing walk, making a tinkling with their feet, with their cauls, and their round tires like the moon, their chain, and bracelets, and the mufflers, the bonnets, and the ornaments, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the ear-rings, and the rings, and nose jewels, changeable suits of apparel, mantles, and wimples, and crisping pins, glasses, fine linen, hoods, and veils, are only the thorns by which the lily of the valley is surrounded. "There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without numbers. My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bear her." S.S. 6:8-9.

In order to demonstrate the existence of the church of Christ on earth at the

present day, we must find a community of saints corresponding to the primitive pattern, of eighteen hundred years ago —a people whose only beauty consists in the comeliness which Christ has put upon them—a people saved by the Lord who is the shield of their help and the sword of their excellency, and whose enemies are found liars unto them. Deut. 33:29. A people dwelling alone and not reckoned among the nations, with no governmental patronage from the powers of the world—a kingdom that is not of this world, nor visible to the world, because they are the sons of God; the world knoweth them not because it knew him not—a poor and afflicted people trusting in the name of the Lord—a persecuted people; for if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus he shall suffer persecution. Their names shall be cast out of men, and they shall be hated of all men for Christ's name sake. They are regarded as the offscouring of all things, accused and slandered in like manner as their divine Lord and Master was; for if these things were done in the green tree they shall be repeated in the dry; if they called the Master of the house Beelzebub they will also call them of his household so.

These are only some of the outlines of the church of Christ. She is also characterized by her "one Lord, one faith, and one baptism." Her faith is as radically different from that of every other professing people on earth as her Lord and her baptism. Of her faith Jesus is the Author and Finisher; but that of all other religious bodies either originates with themselves or is derived from the doctrines, traditions, and instructions of men. But blessed is she, for flesh and blood hath not revealed these things to her, but her heavenly Father has taught her by his Holy Spirit. She is the opposite of all other sects in regard to her food, her appetite, and the source from which all her supplies are received. Others can and do eat their own bread and wear their own apparel; but she must eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus. Nothing short of the true bread which came down from heaven, that kind which Moses never gave, can satisfy her; but her neighbors, or the thorns among which she is situated, do not see why the bread that Moses gave is not good enough.

Christ's church is a peculiar people, in all respects essentially different from the religionists of this world. She comprises a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation, and shows forth the praises of him who hath called her out of darkness and translated her into the kingdom of his dear Son. The doctrine which her faith takes hold of is that which cannot possibly suit anybody else under heaven, and if there be any who have not passed from death unto life, who fancy that they can understand and love the doctrine by which the church of God is distinguished, they are deluded. As none knoweth the things of a man but the the spirit of a man that is in him, (for the spirit of man being taken away from any man but a dead and unconscious corpse remains,) neither knoweth any man the things of the Spirit but the Spirit. And unless we be born of the Spirit, and that Spirit abide in us, we are as dead to all spiritual things, as the human body is to natural life after the animal spirit has departed. It is therefore, quite as practicable to teach the tenants of the tombs the English grammar, or any science, as to teach the things of the Spirit of God to unregenerate men. The church of God, if found at all, will be found in possession of doctrine which cannot be taught by every or any man to his neighbor, saying, Know the Lord; it cannot be taught nor learned in Sabbath schools, or what are called theo-

logical schools; nor can it be derived from reading the Bible, or hearing it expounded even if Paul himself were the expounder, for the natural man cannot receive it; it is spiritually discerned. Every organized body of professors of religion who hold a doctrine which they can teach their unregenerate fellow-men is a branch of antichrist; and the nature and attainableness of their faith proves that they have not the faith of God's elect, and that their faith stands in the wisdom of men, and not in the power of God. See 1 Cor. 2:5. The primitive church acknowledged Christ as the only spiritual King, the true and only Potentate, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light which no man can attain unto. That church cannot now be identified where Christ is not so regarded: nor is he so regarded by any church, sect, or people who hold that there is spiritual life anywhere else, or that the light in which he dwelleth can be approached. To approach is to make some advance towards the object; but this no man can do, as the members of the church of Christ know right well. The true church now, as in her primitive days, depends on God to raise up, qualify, send forth, and sustain the ministers of the gospel. Those who heap to themselves as teachers, having itching ears, are not the church of Christ. To him who ascended up on high, who led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, they look for all the gifts which the church can need,—to him who reigns, being exalted a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins, and to him alone they look to bring sinners to repentance and to cause the redeemed of the Lord to return with singing to Zion with everlasting joy upon their heads. To him who opened the doors of death, and rose triumphantly from the grave, who conquered sin and hell, they look for support, comfort, deliverance and victory.

Finally, the church of our Reedemer *is the circumcision who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.*

(Elder) L. P. HARRIS

Duquoin, Ill.

Perrin, Texas

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I have a mind to write you as it is our meeting day at the church and the weather is so bad I cannot go, but my mind is at the church and it goes out to all the brethren everywhere. In this day of wars and rumors of wars men everywhere are crying peace when there is no peace, not even among our people. We hear men crying lo here and lo there instead of trying and striving for peace. We want to see how many will follow us. Oh, brethren why can't we live together in peace and enjoy one another and do as Peter said, "Brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." If brethren could do this they could see good in one another and not evil.

I was thinking this forenoon of the fortieth chapter of Isaiah and of the wonderful things he declared for the comfort of the Lord's people. "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power." In all our talking on those heavenly

things of our God we have tried to bring those glad tidings of good things of this kingdom that Daniel said should never be destroyed but shall stand forever. This kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and it is set up in God's people and they are made kings and priests unto God. So dear brethren, let us see to it that we love one another with a pure heart fervently, knowing that it takes the new birth to bring about all our obedience in the faith for Peter said, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren." Being born again this new birth must come in order for us to walk in newness of life.

I surely enjoy reading the *Signs of the Times.* It does my soul good to have those good old brethren write of God's goodness and bring those good tidings when they are up in the high mountain, raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ. Oh, what a wonderful God the Old Baptists have. He can tear down kingdoms and build them up for he does as he pleases in heaven above and in the earth beneath. May the good Lord be with our people everywhere the world over is my desire.

(Elder) C. Y. OSTEEN

223½ So. 10th St., Mt. Vernon, Ill.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON AND EDITORS: DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST I HOPE: I am sending two obituaries to publish in the dear old *Signs,* my husband's and brother J. T. Meredith's when you have the space. I am writing you with a sad and broken heart. I cannot tell you the sorrows I have gone through in the last three months. Sometimes it seems more than I can stand, but I realize and know God does all things well according to his will and purpose and none can stay his hand. It was his will to take my dear husband. He called him at the appointed time and the call had to be obeyed and leave me to mourn his passing. I do not mourn as one without hope for I feel it is my loss but his eternal gain. He is at rest in his Savior's arms where I hope to meet him around that great dazzling throne of God, where all will be peace and happiness, no sickness, sorrow or dying there where we can be with Christ and be as he is.

Elder Dodson, my husband was sick in bed three weeks and two days with heart trouble, but oh, I feel I have lots to be thankful for. He knew everything to the last, called me by my name and knew I was with him to the last breath. It was so hard to part and know I am left alone. I have one stepson who is good to me and I love him.

It was time for the Soldier Creek union meeting to be held at our home church, Rock Springs Church, beginning Friday before the first Sunday in July. My husband had talked and planned all winter for us to go down to Simpson, Ill., and help take care of the union meeting. He was so interested in it and when he was taken sick tried so hard to get well to go. He had his plans all made to take care of the meeting and when he saw he was not going to be able to go he wanted me to get some one to stay with him and for me to go and take the things. I got everything ready to go and was to start July 1 for Elder C. O. Kerley's home where we had made arrangements to stay and help with the meeting. On Sunday morning, June 29, he said to me, "Willie I am too sick for you to leave me, you will have to give it up as I want you to stay here with me. Send them word you cannot leave me." I said to him, "Kerley I am not going to leave you, brother Walter is going to take the things and go on the truck

with them and will help them down there." He looked up at me with contentment in his eyes and said, "Well." He never said any more about the meeting. He was so much worse on Tuesday morning when my brother came to get the things I would not let him go into the room for fear he would worry. They had hardly gotten out of town when my husband passed away, July 1. He had told me for us all to go on to Rock Springs Church, enjoy ourselves and treat all the people nicely, he would not get to go with us but he might get to come before the meeting was over. He said, "Willie I never wanted to go to Rock Springs Church as badly in all my life as I did this time as I felt it would be my last time, but I guess my time has been."

About two months before he was taken sick he told me if he should pass away to call Elder J. T. Henson and Elder Paul Poyner to preach his funeral which we did. He had been in failing health for the last twelve years. Never uniting with the church but was a strong believer in the Primitive Baptists and interested in helping to finance the church. He believed in an all wise God and salvation by grace and grace alone. He was well posted on the Scriptures, had a gift to remember and quote them. He enjoyed reading and writing about them and talking with his friends and was interesting to listen to. Many, many times he has preached good sermons here in our home when no one was around him. I have kept quiet in another room and listened, and he would stop when I entered the room. I wanted him to unite with the church so badly but it was not God's will. He had been given a light to feel that God's children were not all in the visible church, but the ones out of the visible church were the ones that gathered crumbs from the Master's table. He often said the saints were all in the temple. It seems the affliction he had to suffer was great, he had carried a burden for years but God had a purpose in it. He shed many tears of sorrow while going through such fiery trials. When he seemed so low in the dark, feeling his unworthiness I have been so sorry for him at times, but God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform. His ways are higher than ours and past finding out.

Elder Dodson, I have written this to you as it seems a relief to my mind. If you consider it worth the space you can publish it, if not cast it aside. Soldier Creek meeting was a grand meeting. Everything was carried out peaceably and we had wonderful preaching by Elders, J. T. Henson, Paul Poyner, W. O. Perkins and R. L. Biggs. It was all a wonderful feast. I enjoyed the glad tidings, and feel that God was in our midst. Our little church is in peace for which we are thankful. We are few in number but try to meet the first Sunday in each month. When we met the first Sunday in August, Elder C. O. Kerley, our moderator, preached a good sermon and we sang songs of praise to God's dear name. We feel to be the least of all the dear Baptists. I must not take up your time, have written more than I intended. An unworthy sister, if one the least.

(Mrs.) WILLIE IRENE KERLEY

Route 2, Chewelah, Wash.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I would like to write a few thoughts about baptism. You may do with them as you see fit, cast them aside and I will feel no offense. My reason for writing is that I have thought about it for some time and I would like a little relief. They may be too simple and childlike to be of value.

There was no baptism until John the

Baptist came as the voice of one crying in the wilderness. I believe it was like a seed all through the Old Testament. Does it not speak of the seed of Abraham? It was then the promise though lying dormant as a seed planted in the earth (and wasn't that just what it was?). All the earth lay in darkness. Even the disciples could not understand Christ must needs be crucified and rise again from the dead; they could not understand he was here on earth and among them. Why did he not set up his kingdom and carry on from there? Because that seed had to be watered before it would grow.

I have often wondered why we need to be baptized. Some have told me it is the answer of a good conscience towards God. That is good and I like it, but still why? Some say it is a visible entrance into the church, that also is good, but still I ask why? Some say we are buried with him in a watery grave to arise with him at the last day, but still why? These things are all right to me, but why cannot this be just between my God and me? No, I believe that when Christ was here on earth, walked here and bled and died, that seed that was spoken of in Abraham was immersed in water and sprang forth into life everlasting for truly he says I am the tree of life. Here is the first resurrection and all who have a part in this one need not fear the second. "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." His people are a peculiar people, poor in spirit and the things of this life. They believe different from any one else; they believe there is nothing we can do to inherit eternal life; they do not believe in works to obtain salvation yet strive hard to live upright in the sight of God and their fellow-man. It is said of Christ he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; he was numbered with the transgressors, yet he was holy and spotless; the Son of the true and living God, and yet he was baptized, he went to John and desired it. God was well pleased with what he had done. Yes, here is the shadow of that great spiritual resurrection. How can I put into words what I mean? Here the church was born, here the seed sprang forth with life and grew; here was God's word returning unto him fulfilling all things that he had purposed and decreed from the beginning of time; and I believe that seed that was planted in eternity is the spiritual body of Jesus Christ, that tree of life that grows over and out of the river of life, is surely just as alive to-day as God is, for it is his plan of salvation to a poor forsaken people. They are such a people because it is his will they should be for out of such is their spiritual growth made manifest in the flesh. So in our own experience when we come to be baptized we wonder why?

Christ said, "A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel." No, and neither does God do this. That city he is building is set on a hill and it cannot be hid, and that light is not put under the measure of man. No, not under a bushel for it cannot be measured or comprehended in our minds. They are marked and set apart for that seed must be immersed and it must grow, and it does grow though we cannot realize it. God sees all things and not one part or particle of that building will be weak or incomplete for it is of God and therefore sure.

(Mrs.) MARY L. ECKARD

Star Route, Naches, Wash.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST: I have been asked to write an account of the annual three days meeting we attended at Riffe, Wash., Aug. 15, 16, 17, so

that others may know of our welfare here in the Northwest. There were less than one hundred people present, but there was much love and rejoicing manifested. Elder I. F. Coleman is pastor of this church. Two of the sisters who usually do much of the entertaining were bedfast, but every one present was made welcome and well cared for. Sister Fannie Davis was sick at her daughter's home in Oregon. Sister Rosa Coleman was also sick, but the usual number of people were entertained in her home by one of her sisters and a granddaughter. There was preaching in her home both Friday and Saturday nights.

Sister Effie Parke, who lives sixty miles from Riffe was sick and unable to be at the meeting. Friday afternoon after services at the meeting-house Elder A. D. Hughett of Yakima and Elder Seth Bynum preached there that night.

Most of the people present had come some distance some of them being old and feeble and hardly able to be out of bed. There is, we hope, the love of God shed abroad in our hearts which draws us together, and hardships and sickness are as nothing when God strengthens us and makes a way for us to go. One man traveled nearly 2,500 miles (round trip) to be with us, although a stranger in the flesh. He had never heard an Old Baptist sermon before. The following letter tells his impressions of the meeting. His experience was published in the March 1946 *Signs*. Yours in hope of eternal life.

(Mrs.) BEATRICE HAAN

Marshall, Sask., Canada

MRS. BEATRICE HAAN, DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST: I promised some of the good brothers and sisters I would write, but you are the first and I am sure they will all understand just why I wrote you first. First of all I must say that I am somewhat bewildered since returning home. I met so many nice Old School Baptists that I fear my line of conversation deceived them. I left home seeking evidence that I was one of them, and unless badly deceived I surely found it. I think I told you how I read and re-read Elder Seth Bynum's letter and then to meet him on the bus while I had his letter with me. Surely God works in a mysterious way his wonders to perform.

The first morning we went to church, when I heard the singing outside, I realized I had found the true church, but my heart was so heavy laden I could not speak. If I am permitted to enter that wondrous city that God has prepared for those he loves, and I hear and see a band of angels singing around the throne—well then and not until then do I expect to hear sweeter singing. I may also add there will be no heavy laden hearts there.

On Saturday morning at the close of the services while they were singing "Must I be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease," I burst into tears. Sister Eckard came forward and shook my hand and I could read in her face that she, too, had traveled the same road. We are told not to quench the spirit. Well on that occasion I could not, neither did I want to. You know we like to have evidences. Although the Bible is full of admonitions as to how we should live, yet we know we have not kept them, so it is all of grace from first to last.

Again on Sunday morning I had a similar experience just before you partook of the Lord's supper when Elder Hughett said, "This is my broken body." The Holy Spirit was surely in that house. Several of the Elders offered to baptize me but I told them I did not feel good enough. I think we were baptized into that heavenly home in our

first experience whatever it was. I wanted to go and leave all behind and was disappointed because I could not go.

I am looking forward to the time when I will be selling my farm and locating near Old School Baptists so that I can attend church regularly for there my kindred dwell. It is doubtful if I will be able to come to your meeting at Touchet. However, if I do not come I will be with you in spirit. I do not remember whether I wrote you this before or not, but I believe every child of grace was given a cross to bear. In other words God sees fit to withhold a portion or part from us in order to cause us to search and inquire, "for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" Be sure to remember me to Mildred. Yours sincerely,

JOE MACKENZIE

Calion, Ark.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, EDITOR.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am enclosing an article on prayer for the editorial section of the *Signs*. You will also find money-order to cover new and renewal subscriptions for *Signs*.

I have enjoyed the fellowship of brethren over a wide territory during this past summer and fall. I have noted some minor differences in custom and expressions and some mis-understanding among brethren. However, I am glad to see brethren uniting and laying down petty theories and differences for the sake of peace in Zion. I have observed the restoration of lay-members, elders, churches and associations into the sweet fellowship of Old Baptists in general who have, for some time, been cut off from a chain of fellowship. This has impressed me to believe that God is wonderfully operating in the hearts of brethren to strive for peace. I am made happy to note a closer relationship that exists among editors and writers of our periodicals contending for salvation by God's grace.

I trust it will be our province to meet face to face next summer and have a long heart to heart chat. I was minded very seriously to attend your yearly mid-week meeting this month but was unable to do so as some members of our churches here were at the point of death and we were requested to stay close by. Elder Rhodes and I planned to attend the Kehukee Association but as we were arranging to leave the families of the sick requested us to stay close around so we attended the Sulphur Fork Association in Texas at that time.

May God's richest grace and blessings be yours to guard and direct your walk and thoughts is my prayer if I am not deceived in my desires. When at the throne of grace could you stoop low enough to remember this poor sinner in your petitions? A sinner depending solely upon God's grace for salvation in time as well as eternity.

(Elder) E. J. LAMBERT

(In addition to the foregoing personal letter by Elder Lambert, will be found an Editorial by him in this issue on the subject of *prayer*. Elder David Spangler wrote on this same subject in the December number and Elder Griffin has an article coming out in the February issue on it, and we feel quite certain that neither of the three knew that the others were writing on it. All three articles are very good and we hope our readers will read and ponder them carefully. We are confident that our readers will be particularly pleased to note from Brother Lambert's letter his conclusions, after having traveled over a wide area during 1947, that there are definite reasons for believing that the Lord is working

wondrously in the hearts of his people by bringing them into closer union and fellowship. What Brother Lambert says is borne out by our own observations, after visiting among the brethren from Maine to Virginia, and meeting brethren from various other parts of the country. We trust that our gratitude to God is deep indeed for such manifestations of his infinite love, and we are happy to know that others confirm our hopes in this matter. Ananias had heard by many of the evil done to the saints at Jerusalem by Saul, of Tarsus, but God told Ananias that "he prayeth," and he further said, "Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." Ananias went his way, and when he came into the house where he was, he put his hands on him and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost." Our God is able to bring his people together and humble them before his throne of grace, if it be his will, and cause them to seek peace and pursue it, and we truly hope that God will bless our beloved Zion as only he can. If all of us could only be brought into full fellowship with the poet, we would have much smoother sailing ahead. He said,

"My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life or breath remains;
There my best friends, my kindred dwell,
There God my Saviour reigns."

R. L. D.)

Route 3, Coleman, Texas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: The enclosed letter was handed to me by a sister and I was asked to send it to you for your consideration for publication. I understand this brother, the writer, is a member of Liberty Hill Church near Lillie, La., where Elder R. W. Rhodes is pastor. In hope of eternal life.

C. U. LANDERS

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205 S. Liberty St., Bastrop, La.

VERY DEAR SISTER: Wonder how you are feeling now, do hope you are better. I believe we are all in pretty good shape except for colds, it seems that I take cold so very often. We had all the children here for Christmas except Hazel and Don. All seemed to enjoy it very much.

The greatest gift that this world has ever received or any individual has ever received was nearly two thousand years ago, yes a child was born a Son was given. God caused his only begotten Son to be born of woman that he might be verily God and verily man, sacrificed his life on the cruel cross of Calvary, that we might have eternal life. He took on all the sins of a sin cursed world, bore them all on himself, in as much as the flesh was weak and could not satisfy the law, Christ did the thing that no mortal man could do. He paid the price, won the victory, and came out triumphant over death, hell and the grave and said, "It is finished." I do not believe there can be one thing added to this or one thing taken from it. I believe that after the third day when this angel came and rolled away the stone that barred the way to Joseph's new tomb where Christ had been buried, he ascended to heaven to the Father who sent him, and I believe he is there now at this present time sitting on the right hand of our God the Father, making intercession for all his saints. What greater gift could there ever be than this great and wonderful gift of God that we might have life everlasting. I believe that it is wholly and solely a free gift and that we have

nothing at all to do with the giving.

I know it is a common saying and belief that God gave every man an equal chance of salvation, and all you have to do is to give Christ a chance, let him come into your heart and accept him as your Savior and he will take you in. This is far from the way I understand and believe this salvation comes. They are chosen out of the furnace of affliction, they are found in a waste howling wilderness, and in a desert land. This wilderness is the awful heap and mountain of sin that we see ourselves to be in when we are found, (or when our eyes are opened to the awful sinful condition that we are in) and we go mourning with heavy hearts searching every avenue of escape, trying to get away from this lost and ruined condition. This desert land is barren, it is dry, there is no food, no comfort there. We come to the end of our strength, spend all that we have, every effort that we can imagine fails, and we are forced to fall down and beg God to have mercy upon me, a sinner. Then when it pleases God to remove this burden, and give us a little light, oh how sweet and how marvelous is that light and we are bound to praise God for everything. All this darkness is necessary in order to bring out this wonderful light so sweet and brilliant. In this we are forced to know that within us (in the flesh) dwells no good thing.

Sister, I do not know that I may be enlightened to give you even one thought of comfort on the things you mentioned. If you knew what an awful sinner and how unworthy of anything I am, surely you would say, no. Some things, or I will say the same thing, happens to different people at different times. It is not always the same and in the same exact manner, some have a deeper experience after they unite with the visible church and some before they unite. It seems to me that I am experiencing many things I probably will not have time to mention here.

Several years ago, about 1915, if I have ever seen any light it was then, and that was after about three years of the darkest darkness that it seemed to me any human being could experience. After this I thought of uniting with the church and fully intended to do so the first opportunity, but on this wise something came over me and seemed to restrain me from doing so, inasmuch as to do so I felt I would be blaspheming for I knew I was not fit to belong to this grand and wonderful body of people, and if I went on I might deceive some of the very elect of God, and I felt that of all things on earth I would rather not do that. This together with other feelings that are probably not worthy of mention followed me on until some two years ago, then I put it off as long as I could. I had thought several times when I would leave to go to church that I might offer myself and would go prepared for baptism and it would be put off, so when the time did come it was unexpected or unplanned on my part and this is the working of the Lord. It is when we are least expecting. I still do not feel myself to be equal or fit to be in this band, but I surely do appreciate a home with them and would not take anything in this world for it. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." " He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed." "For the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved forever: but

the seed of the wicked shall be cut off. The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever." Psalms 37.

It has been several days since I started this, but I had to stop so I will try to say a few more words on this subject. It seems to me some, after they have seen some light or born some fruit, turn against themselves or their better judgment; rather do evil than good; set their mind on things of this world and worldly things, forgetting the salvation of their own soul; lose respect for the truth trying to justify themselves in the things they know are wrong no matter what it costs. This is where the devil moves in and takes charge and steers the helm straight to destruction, and if they are not very careful he surely will get there. They become as a Pharisee trying to justify himself in that which he knows is wrong, laying the blame on predestination and blaming God for his unrighteous acts. I would think he would be likened to one who received seed among the thorns. They hear the word but the cares of this world choke it out and they lose respect for it (the Word) and become unfruitful. One has to bear some fruit before he can become fruitful. He is cast out into utter darkness then and everything seems to be gone for him; the world seems to turn against him, but if the seed is there the branch will spring out again. He is forced to fall down and call on the name of the Lord for his strength and to guide him out of this awful state. The devil will carry him just as far as the Lord will let him go. The Lord once said, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat." Jesus was led of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. Here he bruised his head, but we poor creatures cannot stand the wiles of the devil. If the Lord loosens us for any time at all the devil moves right in and drags us down to destruction. All of our self-righteousness has to be taken from us for it is as filthy rags in the sight of God. Peter had to learn by experience that his self-righteousness had to be taken from him, although the devil had led him to the point of denying Jesus. He cursed and swore, he knew him not, but when the Lord looked at him he remembered all the Lord had told him. We, within ourselves, are not able to fight off or withstand the wiles of nature, or the devil, and if the Lord does not strengthen and uphold us we all must fall. We suffer for righteousness sake, we learn obedience by the things that we suffer, if we suffer not with Him we have no part with Him for he says, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." I believe that all the suffering we do in this life is ordained of God that it might be for our good for it is written that "all things work together for good to them that love God." We do not know what our portion might be and how much we may have to suffer here in this world, but the one thing I do most earnestly hope and pray is that I may have all of my suffering here in this present world, and after this vail of life is over that I may wake in that morn of the resurrection and there be with Christ Jesus, and praise God the Father in fullness and completeness in that world that knows no sorrow, in that world that shall never end is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

The Lord said to Nichodemus, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth." This wind, when it blows, it is forever for the things that are done of God are forever. It may blow hard as in the case of Paul, he was completely knocked down all of a sud-

den, or it may blow just a tiny, little breeze that you hardly feel the effects thereof, but it is just as secure and certain as the hardest wind that blows and all honor and praise must be given God for everything.

I do not feel that I have given this matter justice at all, but I do hope some things have been mentioned that may offer you a little bit of food, for it is all hope with me. I do not seem to know anything, I just live in hope and hope is something we have not seen but have a foretaste of and a longing to see. I trust this finds you improving and feeling much better and I hope to see you soon.

Now may the goodness, grace and mercy of God be with you, strengthen your hope in Christ Jesus and help you to withstand your afflictions. May he comfort you and make your pillow more restful. We know not our shortcomings and how long our pilgrimage here in this low ground of sin and sorrow may be. When this journey here is over all mortal help must flee and we must lay this armor by, may we then be in perfect peace with God, and if possible with all just men, and may thou, O God, receive our souls to thyself there to await the morning of the resurrection, and this mortal shall have put on immortality and our spirits unite with a spiritual body, and may we be there on the right hand of God our Savior, consistent with the will of God is my prayer for Jesus' sake. Lots of love to you. Your brother.

JASPER H. CALK

Route 3, Box 193, Dallas, Texas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Enclosed find money-order for which please send me the *Signs of the Times* for one year beginning with the July issue if possible. I am an old lady living alone and will soon be seventy-three years old. I have no Old Baptist neighbors except my oldest son who lives next door and is such a comfort to me, so sweet and kind. I have had the sweet privilege of attending four communion meetings this summer. All had several visiting preachers who preached with power and demonstration a God that is able to do his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say what doest thou? It was my happy privilege to see three of God's little ones come home to their friends and tell what great things the Lord had done for them, and again it was my happy privilege to hear several times one of God's witnesses—a mere boy—preach with power a God that is able to do all things; and the old soldiers of the cross, how well they fed the flock with that food from on high and the crumbs from the Master's table that is always so sweet and nourishing.

I was all down and out last year in and out of the hospital until the 17th of December. I had a major operation, spent Christmas in the hospital and came home the 28th. I have gotten along fine ever since. Several doctors said I could not stand the operation and would not operate at all. This sweet boy of mine who takes care of me was so worried about it he would not consent for me to be operated on. They told him in the hospital it was the only chance for me so he sent to California for my other son and all my people. They had a consultation and agreed to leave it up to me. They all came in my room and told me what they had agreed to do. That was good news to me. I felt so happy that I was going to get rid of the pain that was sapping my life out. I believe it was shown to me that I was going to get

well and I was not afraid any more and told them that I was coming through all right and not to worry. While being wheeled down that long hall to the operating room I passed the long line of my friends, relatives and children with set grim faces and I saw a few tears trickling down. I thought what manner of woman am I to be given so much love. I had been given a light anesthetic and could not talk but tried to give each one a smile of encouragement. I was so happy for I had been shown by my Father above that he had more joys in store for me.

"Now, my remnant of days
Would I spend to his praise,
Who hath died my poor soul to redeem;
Whether many or few,
All my years are his due,
May they all be devoted to him."

Pardon me, dear brother, I did not mean to write at such length and burden you with my troubles for we all have those more or less. Yours in hope of eternal life.

(Mrs.) SALLIE NEEL LUCE

6915 Laredo St., Houston 10, Texas

DEAR ELDER DODSON, BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN JESUS CHRIST: If I am one at all it is by grace and only through his mercy, nothing I have done or can do. Find enclosed my renewal to the *Signs*. In them I find benefit and enjoyment from reading the good letters and articles of the able writers as they are given ability to write of God's mercies. We hope we are thankful for our blessings from him who cares for us, knows our every need before we ask for it and doeth all things well. God has all power and everlasting love, and none can hinder or question his plans in sending his blessings to his little ones. Sometimes it is chastisement for he chasteneth whom he loveth. It is indeed a great blessing to be chastened of or by the Lord. We are brought nearer to him and away from the world.

The privilege of hearing the preached word and the reading matter contained in the *Signs* and other papers is, I hope, precious to me when he gives me an ear to hear and a heart to understand. So little of the time do I feel his presence if at all, but I do feel to love the Old School Predestinarian Baptists far and near as their testimony is common to those who are led and enlightened of the Lord. Our heavenly Father has blessed us with meetings here in Houston which I hope we are thankful for, and now we hope to organize a church militant soon if it be his will. His judgments are unsearchable and his ways past finding out. Your unworthy sister saved by grace if at all.

(Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER

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J. R. Jackson, Ga., $1; Mrs. H. Fisher, Mich., $1; H. H. Faulk, Tex., $1; H. C. Johnson, W. Va., $3; Eld. R. L. Biggs, Tenn., $3; Mrs. L. Holloway, Md., $1; Mrs. B. Dryden, Md., $1; Mrs. T. H. McColl, Can., $3; Eld. G. L. Weaver, O., $1; Mrs. M. Miller, Pa., $1.

Big Sandy, Tenn.

DEAR EDITOR: Please find $2 enclosed for my subscription. It is good to see *Signs of the Times* has not changed any in its doctrine in over a hundred years. It is about the only thing I know of that has not changed in my time but God and truth never changes, so be it. Yours truly,

E. P. CROCKETT

EDITORIAL

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P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

NEW YEAR'S GREETING

At our associational gatherings it is thought by some that the introductory sermon should set forth some one or more points of doctrine believed by the churches composing said association. According to this line of reasoning it should be perfectly proper in greeting our readers for the New Year for us to stress a point of doctrine which we hope will serve as a theme for those who write and those who speak all through the year.

We have chosen for our text on this occasion and for the aforesaid purpose the tenth and eleventh verses of the second epistle of John, the reading of which is as follows:

> "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

In quoting the Scriptures, either verbally or in writing, it is of the utmost importance that it be done in such a manner as not to wrest them to their own destruction. A late Editor of the *Signs of the Times,* Elder H. C. Ker, used to say we could prove anything by or from the Scriptures provided we play fast and loose with them, and he would then show how we could prove that suicide was authorized by the Scriptures by quoting concerning Judas that he "went and hanged himself," and then quote Jesus where he said, "Go, and do thou likewise." No one who loves the truth will maintain that the Scriptures were intended to be used in any such manner. Our purpose in thus illustrating the point is to emphasize the need of carefully examining the Scriptures and their connections and so apply them as not to divert or change their proper meaning. The apostle Paul admonished Timothy to "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." All who speak and write would do well to take heed unto this admonition. While no man by searching can find out God, or break through the seven seals which bind the hidden meaning contained in the book called the Bible, a true understanding of which comes only through the revelation of God, we can nevertheless profit much by studying and familiarizing ourselves with the letter of the written word. Elder Spangler treated upon this point in his editorial in the August, 1947, issue of the *Signs.* His article reminded us of an incident which occurred at one of our Southern Associations during the lifetime of the late Elder Frederick W. Keene, who was outstanding in his knowledge of the Scriptures. An Elder arose before a large audience and stated that he would not take the time to look up his text in the Bible, but would quote it from memory. He then quoted the following words: "Consistency, thou art a jewel." Elder Keene who sat immediately back of said Elder said,

"Brother ———, that is not scripture and is not in the Bible." The Elder insisted, however, that it was the truth, and said he was going to preach from it regardless of the fact that it was not in the Bible. Such incidents do not lend credit to the high and holy calling of God's truly called and qualified ministers, or to the cause of truth which we profess to love, and they should be avoided.

From time to time we hear good brethren give their version or understanding of some particular point of doctrine, such as Predestination or the Resurrection, and then they will follow it up by quoting John and saying, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God Speed." In our humble opinion there is no justification for making this application indiscriminately. While John was undoubtedly in fellowship with Paul and the other apostles, who very ably explored and set forth various other points of doctrine, we do not believe that John had reference to them when he wrote these words. The subject which enveloped John's very heart and soul in writing these three epistles was that of LOVE, as we shall attempt to show more fully later. Even though the great apostle Paul covered other fields ably and more or less completely, he subordinated them all to John's point of view when he wrote the thirteenth chapter of I Corinthians. He said, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." We need not quote further in support of our conclusion.

Let us now consider particularly the subject matter contained in John's epistles. He begins his first epistle with a reference to the "Word of life," which was made flesh and dwelt among us, in whom there was a fulness of grace and truth. John was an actual eyewitness to the things to which he testified. He said "(For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.)" When God's dear children have declared unto them those things which they have heard, which they have seen with their eyes, which they have looked upon, and their hands have handled of the "Word of life," they have fellowship one with another, and there is such unity among them that they can say, with John, "and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his son Jesus Christ." Such preaching and writing gives them a fulness of joy, and when they are caught up by the Spirit they can in unison join John again in saying, "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." John continues by saying, "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Farther on John says, "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments," and "whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." He declares that "He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes." John repeatedly refers to his beloved brethren as "little children," which truly typifies, according to our way of thinking, those who

are devoid of malice, envy, strife, hatred and like such things, and if differences arise among them they are soon banished and forgotten. They are all as branches abiding in the true vine, and they bear fruit to the honor and glory of the meek and lowly One. John told them he wrote unto them not because they knew not the truth, "but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth."

The well known apostle of LOVE, ascended up into the heights of sublimity of his subject when he said, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not," and lest we should conclude that this refers only to the future, he says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." We need to be kept mindful of the fact that *now are we the sons of God,* and conduct ourselves accordingly. The future will be taken care of by Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and it should be enough for us to be assured that "we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." It is in the fourteenth verse of this third chapter of his first epistle that we find a portion of Holy Writ which is most precious to every vessel of mercy. We refer to the words, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Can we really say in truth that we know we love the brethren? There have been times in our experience when we were persuaded that we could truly say this. According to John, however, we must need do more than simply repeat his words. The balance of the same verse says, "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." Neither does he leave his subject at this point, but goes on to say, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." How we do wish and pray that God's dear people might be given to take these things to heart and verily live them. Is not this what Jesus had reference to when he said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." God in his providences provides for the testing of our love and our faithfulness to him. He may sometimes afflict his children, or withhold from them the necessities of life, to show us how cold and hardhearted and miserly we are one to another. Oh, may we, when the Son of man shall come in his glory be found on his right hand as having given meat to them who were an hungered: drink to those who thirsted: took in the stranger: clothed the naked: visited the sick and those in prison, but if so it will be all of his grace. May it please him to give us the unction of the Holy One whereby we may do with all our might whatsoever our hands find to do pertaining to his kingdom, and may we also be kept on the alert to try the spirits whether they are of God, giving no ground to those who deny that Christ has come in the flesh and finished the work of redemption for his people, remembering the words of John where he says, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of

the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." And now listen to what this same apostle says in the twentieth verse of this fourth chapter: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" In beginning the fifth chapter he says, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."

John addresses his second epistle, in which is found our text, to "the elect lady, and her children," for whom he professes an undying love. She is none other than the Gospel Church and, if indeed we are numbered among her children, this message is addressed to us, collectively and as individuals, and we should accept it in truth. John desired that grace, mercy and peace "from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love" be with her. How well suited these are to our condition and needs! He then beseeches this "elect lady and her children" that they "love one another." Then he defines love by saying, "And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it. For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist." Having thus warned them he then says "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." If we can rightly discern what the *doctrine of Christ* is it is the doctrine of *love,* and if any come unto us bringing not this doctrine, we are to receive them not into our house, and neither bid them God speed. To so receive and treat them would encourage them to continue in their course, which would also involve those who do so as partakers of their evil deeds. Paul said, "Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some of good will: The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds; But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." Phil. 1:15-18. As we understand John's teaching, however, even though one might come among us preaching the truth, if the spirit manifested is such as to engender strife, confusion and hatred among the brethren, he should not be received and bidden God speed.

As a final word, we would say that the truth should be preached in love, and where this is done we are convinced that the peaceable fruits of righteousness will follow.

We wish to greet our readers in the spirit of true love and fellowship, and in conclusion will leave with you for your consideration the words of the apostle Paul, Hebrews 10:24-25, "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

R. L. D.

...PRAYER...

One subject of vital importance to the child of God is prayer. True prayer is a sincere desire of the heart prompted by the Holy Spirit. One prays sincerely for that to be done for him that he has learned by sad experience that he cannot perform himself. When you are brought down to feel your dependence and inability and you are sinking in despair, and God reveals himself to you as being willing to save to the uttermost; you are then blessed to pray. Hypocritical prayer would be an attempt to ask God to do something for you that you feel able to perform of your own strength, or to ask for something you do not believe he will perform. I believe all true prayer inspired by the Holy Spirit is answered. The promise is, "Ask, and ye shall receive." Many times we ask in vain, but this is because our desire is prompted by a selfish spirit. We are so ignorant that we do not know the things we stand in need of, but our heavenly Father knows and the spirit itself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

When we realize our infirmities we pray God to do according to his will and to reconcile us to our lot in the matter. Sometimes tribulations are best for us even though we may feel they are against us. Afflictions are grievous to us while being experienced but afterwards yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness to God's people. Then we are made to "glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience, And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed: because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost."

I believe all the disciples of Christ pray the prayer Jesus taught his disciples to pray in full faith that every syllable will be answered. They may not utter the words but when that Spirit intercedes they desire the essence of it and are confident of it being answered.

Now let us examine this prayer. "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name." In the salutation we acknowledge him as being supreme. Those who have been blessed to believe Jesus is the Christ is born of God. That Spirit in us makes us cry "Father." What a wonderful relationship to be enabled by his Spirit to feel that we are his children. We realize his name is to be hallowed rather than ours. No one who feels to deserve any credit or praise whatsoever can pray for God's name to be praised. Yes, all things praise him. Even the wrath of man shall praise him. The things that would not be to his praise God will prevent. "Thy kingdom come." We do not pray for our kingdom, but we pray for his kingdom to come. There is a king who reigns over the subjects of a kingdom. God is king of this kingdom. He is the supreme ruler. When he speaks it is done. When he commands it stands fast.

The words that go forth out of his mouth shall not return unto him void but shall accomplish that which he pleases and prosper in the thing whereto he sends it. This King spake through his Son concerning this kingdom when he said, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." There is a kingdom of men and there is a kingdom of God. The kingdom of men is built by men and will come to naught but the sole builder of God's kingdom is the LORD and it will stand. Except the LORD build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the LORD keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain." God's people are confident that his kingdom will not fail for he is the builder and the keeper and he makes his subjects obedient. He has the power to make them willing and enables them to perform. "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." According to the scripture, "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" He "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Yes, he has declared "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." God's children are consoled with the fact that God rules over all things and the devil with all of his hosts cannot frustrate nor interfere with God's will and purpose. Those things that men and devils ordain for the ruin and destruction of that peculiar people of God, God has ordained them for the good of his people and for the ruin and destruction of men and devils.

"Give us this day our daily bread." If we feel competent to acquire this bread by the work of our own hands it would be hypocritical to ask him for it. If we felt to deserve this bread we could only ask him to reward us with it. But our feeling of unworthiness as well as our inability prompts us to ask him to GIVE us this day our daily bread. Our confidence, that he will never forsake his children but will give unto them daily the things they stand in need of, suffices us with faith to believe that he will administer unto our needs. God is not only mindful of our spiritual needs but is also mindful of our temporal needs. When treating upon the natural necessities of life Jesus said to his disciples, "But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you." Luke 12:31. God will provide his people sufficiently with the natural necessities of life as well as the Spiritual bread which is Christ and his righteousness in them.

"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." According to Luke the wording is, "And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us." God's children realize that they are transgressors of the law. They are made to exclaim, "when I would do good, evil is present with me." They realize that with the mind they "serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." We are made to acknowledge our sins. Faith and trust in the merits of Jesus Christ and in the sufficiency of the atoning blood of Jesus to pay the penalty imposed because of our sins and to satisfy justice, emboldens us to believe that God will forgive us our sins. The people of God are blessed with a forgiving heart. God has taken from us the stony heart and has given us a heart of flesh. This heart forgives a brother his trespasses. One characteristic of a child of God is to forgive. Jesus said, "Cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out

the mote that is in thy brother's eye." The fact that you can behold a mote in your brother's eye makes manifest that you have a beam in your own. If God has forgiven me of so great sins how shall I not forgive a brother his trespasses seeing that they are so little and insignificant in comparison with my sins.

"Lead us not into temptation." James says, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away from his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." God does not lead his people into temptation. It is the agreement of the man with the lustly desires of the flesh that produces sin. It is the enticement of the lust which is the temptation.

"But deliver us from evil." When we would do good evil is present with us. This causes us to desire to be delivered from evil. Because of our many infirmities we are made to cry out as Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Our trust in the efficacy of the merits of Jesus Christ enables us to thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Evil is present with us yet, but we hope some day to be delivered from it. We trust that when this mortal shall have put on immortality and when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption then we shall have been delivered from evil. When this natural body shall have been raised a Spiritual body then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" I believe it pleases God to deliver us from evil continually in this present life but the climax of that deliverance will be the resurrection.

"For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen." In closing this prayer we acknowledge that the kingdom belongs to him. We grant that he has all power to enforce his decrees concerning this kingdom. At last we think of him as eternal. He is ever the same and changes not. The subjects of his kingdom will finally abide with him forever and ever on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance where no one hungers for bread no sin shall be there; no other kingdom to contend with, and no evils to molest a life of joy, peace and happiness.

E. J. L.

OBITUARIES

JAMES T. MEREDITH was born Oct. 29, 1862 in Johnson Co., Ill. He was the son of James B. and Martha (Sharp) Meredith. He was one of a family of eleven children, all of whom preceded him in death. He was stricken on Sept. 2, 1946, and confined to his bed until 8:45 P. M., May 5, 1947 when he passed away, having attained the ripe old age of 84 years, 6 months and 6 days. He was united in holy matrimony Sept. 16, 1886 to Sarah Bella Hadden. To this union were born eight children; Twins that died in infancy, Silva, Allen, Elden, Avery and James preceded him in death. He leaves to mourn his passing, his loving companion, one daughter, Mrs. Zetta M. Stockton and husband, Marshall Stockton, Chicago, Ill., one son-in-law, husband of Silva (Meredith) Shelton, deceased, one granddaughter, Ada (Shelton) White and husband, Willis White, Simpson, Ill., one grandson, Eldon Stockton and wife, Chicago, Ill., two great-grandsons, Meredith Wells White, Simpson, Ill. and Raymond Leroy Stockton, Portsmouth, O., also a host of other relatives and neighbors.

His house was ever open to all lovers of the truth. He united with the Primitive Baptist Rock Springs Church on Saturday before the first Sunday in May, 1906, and was baptized by Elder John M. Perkins, Mayfield, Ky. He lived a faithful member until death. He was elected Deacon of Rock Springs Church July 21, 1921, and also served as clerk of same until his eyesight failed him.

The funeral of brother Meredith was held from the Primitive Baptist Rock Springs Church, one and

one half miles east of Simpson, Ill., May 8, 1947 at 1 P. M. The services were conducted by Elder W. O. Perkins, Mayfield, Ky. in the presence of a large number of friends and neighbors who came to pay their last tribute of respect to this aged citizen. The floral offerings were profuse and beautiful, showing the esteem in which Uncle Jim was held. After the funeral services the body was conveyed to the Kerley Cemetery for burial. Pall bearers were: Monroe Simmons, Chas. Shelton, Eldon Stockton, Harold Waters, C. V. Kerley and Willis White. We feel that the church has lost a dear member, but we realize our loss is his eternal gain.

Brother Meredith enjoyed reading his Bible and talking on the Scriptures with his brethren and sisters, friends and neighbors whom he always welcomed in his home. He was a faithful companion and a loving father. We hope God, in his rich mercy, will bless sister Meredith and all who mourn. Our sympathy goes out to dear sister Meredith. God's call came which had to be obeyed, and he doeth right in all things. Written by request of sister Meredith.

(Mrs.) WILLIE IRENE KERLEY,
Church Clerk

It is with a sad and lonely heart I attempt to write of the death of our kind and loving grandmother, MRS. MARY ALICE STANLEY, who departed this life January 5, 1945. She would have been 91 years old on January 24. She was the widow of Elder W. R. Stanley who died March 5, 1926. She lived with me for some time and then for seventeen years with her daughter. She leaves to mourn her loss one daughter, one daughter-in-law, nine grandchildren, thirty-three great-grandchildren, seven great-great-grandchildren and many friends besides her church.

She had been a member of the Baptist Church a long time. She, her husband and my father were baptized the same day at the Baptist church in Asheville, N. C. by Elders Gold and Ashburn in 1885. When they came to Reidsville they moved their membership to Macedonia Church. She was a devoted member and always filled her seat unless providentially hindered. She was greatly afflicted with throat and other troubles but all was done for her that loved ones could do. She bore her suffering patiently and uncomplainingly, being submissive to her Master's will. She would often say she was waiting for the call, "Child come home." She was confined to her bed for several months.

She was a good mother in Israel never speaking harmful of any one. We realize that a true and faithful mother has been called from this earthly clay to a home above. I believe she has gone to that home prepared for the children of God where sorrow, sickness and death will be no more to await the coming of our blessed Lord and Master to gather his jewels home. Her seat is now vacant at the old church where she loved to go in and out. Her body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Macedonia to wait the resurrection morn when her body will be fashioned like the dear Savior. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." We are looking to him for comfort who is the only one from whom comfort can come.

She is gone but not forgotten,
Never will her memory fade;
Sweetest thoughts will always linger
'Round the grave where she is laid.

Written by her granddaughter.

(Mrs.) J. R. SOMERS

ANNOUNCEMENT

We regret to state that our supply of books on the Resurrection of the Dead is about exhausted. Therefore, we will have to withdraw our offer to to send one of these books FREE for each **new** subscriber at $2, or to supply the books alone at $1.

We are, however, glad to announce that we have made arrangements whereby we will send FREE to each **new** subscriber, or to an old subscriber who will send in a **new** subscription at $2, a copy of SHOWERS OF RAIN. This is a 40 page booklet containing the Christian experience and 25 poems by our late sister, Flossie I. Faulkner. If the book alone is desired we will send single copies for 50c; six copies for $2.50, or 12 copies for $4.50, providing they all go to the same address.

Some of these poems have been published in the Signs and many of our readers know they are good. The book will make an interesting addition to any library or collection of books. We hope each reader will obtain a copy as outlined above. R. L. D.

BOOKS

Elder R. W. Rhodes, Lillie, La., will be glad to send his latest books (Rhodes-West debate, and Jones-Rhodes debate) to the same address for $3. If the books are desired separately, the price is $2 each. Some of our readers are finding these books very interesting. R. L. D.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the *Signs of the Times* at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1; 12 copies, $2. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m.
W. A. WILLIAMS and J. J. COLLINS, Pastors.

Ramah Church, Cottonwood, Ala., meets each third Sunday, 11 a.m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each second Sunday and Saturday before.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala.
Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Bethlehem Church, Malvern, Ala., meets each second Sunday, 11 a.m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopeful Church, Ozark, Ala., meets each fourth Saturday, 11 a.m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock. Meeting place at Alder St. at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each first Saturday, 11 a.m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each fourth Sunday, 11 a.m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Seclusia Predestinarian Baptist Church meets 4th Sundays, 11 a.m., 9616 South Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor, Route 3, Box 800 G, Stockton, Calif.

Bethel Church near Stockton, Cal. meets first and third Sundays in each month and Saturday nights before. For further information write SETH BYNUM, Rt. 3, Box 800G, Stockton. Cal.

The Old School or Predestinarian Baptists meet for worship first Sunday of each month, 2:30 p. m., third floor Pythian Temple Building, 1012 Ninth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Elder John D. Wood, Minister. For information write FRANK T. SIMPKINS, 5210 - H St., Dillon Park, Washington, D. C.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m., north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets every second Sunday at 5th and E. Park St. B. O. JEFFREYS, Pastor, Weiser, Idaho

Pleasant Valley Church Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan.. etc)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator, Williamstown, Kans.
(Mrs.)) E. E. CATES, Clerk, Kingman, Kans.

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carver Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. C. H. EVANS, Pastor

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before a 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS,Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a.m. in the meeting-house. Pastor in regular attendance except first Sundays. C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays 11:00 a. m., 2 p. m.

The Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every first and third Sundays at 143 East 35th St., Manhattan, between Lexington and Third Aves., 2nd floor, 11:00 a.m., 1:30 p m.
R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.
(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting first Sunday, each month
10:30 a.m.
Take Elevator to 5th Floor
C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.
E. H. LANIER, Clerk

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

The Old Orderly Mt. Zion (Cash) Predestinarian Baptist Church meets on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in each month, at the home of Bro. J. J. Darnell, Campbell, Texas.
W. A. LITTLE, Moderator
Sister SIMMONS, Clerk

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. C. B. Teague, co-pastor, G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets third Sunday in each month at 11:00 a.m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Shepherd Fold Church meets every fourth Sunday at Civic Club, 1419 N. Shepherd St., Houston, Texas. W. O. Beene, Pastor, Ben B. Walston, Ass't Pastor. (Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dr. Wood church-house. Those interested write Mrs. Lela Culpepper, Stockdale, Texas. E. B. AULT, Pastor

The Old Salem Church of Old School Baptists, 4 miles south from Teague, Texas, meets the first Sunday in each month and Saturday before.
MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk J. F. BRIGGS, Pastor

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway. E. B. AULT, Pastor.

Danville Primitive Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before Bradley Road, Danville, Va.
W. R. DODD, Pastor

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meets each first Sunday 11 a.m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p.m. and Sunday at 11 a.m., Fairmont Park, 3023 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va., R. B. DENSON, Pastor

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.
R. B. DENSON, Pastor

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a.m. C. M. FISHER.

Bethel Old School Baptist Church, Riffe, Wash. meets every third Sunday, 11 a.m. in the meeting house. I. F. COLEMAN, Mod.
ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk, Riffe, Wash.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church near Yakima, Washington, meets at 11 a. m. each second Sunday by appointment at the home of one of the members living at Naches, Wash. A. D. HUGHETT, Pastor
BEATRICE HAAN, Clerk
Star Route, Naches, Wash.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va., N. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 116 RUTHERFORD, N. J., FEBRUARY, 1948 No.2

CORRESPONDENCE

Experience and Call to the Ministry
by Elder W. N. Green, Altus, Okla.

DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD: I am submitting to you a sketch of my unprofitable life. If you think it worthy of consideration or notice of the dear readers you may publish it, but it will be all right if it finds its way to the waste basket for I know, if my life was before them as it is, they would have no fellowship or confidence in me.

I was born in Blunt Co., Ala., Sept. 23, 1866. My first remembrance of anything pertaining to worship I suppose was when I was about eight years old. At this time my parents lived in Tenn. within almost a stones throw of a Campbellite church, but as my father and mother were believers in the Primitive Baptist doctrine we did not attend much. Occasionally we children were allowed to go, but from hearing my parents talk I did not put very much confidence in their religion. It seems I thought there was a reality in religion, and it seemed to me a preacher was the greatest human on earth. I thought he was a good and perfect man, and I said in my heart when I become a man I am going to be a preacher. There was a Primitive Baptist church in the community also and my parents attended that church, it was located about four miles from where we lived. Very often they would walk to and from church. Very often they would bring the preacher home with them and have services at our house Saturday night. Those preachers that visited our home when I was a child live in my memory to-day. My parents never talked to us children very much about the Bible or what it taught. So as I grew up I became more and more interested in worldly things, and less interested in church affairs, but would go to the different churches for pass time and to be with my associates. Sometimes when I would hear the preacher describe heaven and hell, and how easy it was to gain heaven and shun hell, I would get interested and think I would do that and would give the matter considerable thought.

I had ignored the Old Baptists by this time and their crowds were too small only on special occasions like communion and foot-washing. I would be there at that time to make fun with the balance of the young folks, however, I always respected them for I thought they were good, old fogy people, just ignorant, but I always did enjoy those old songs.

I was a cripple from what the doctors called white swelling in one of my limbs for about ten years and I was a favorite among my associates, especially among the girls, and that made me very vain. Sometimes the thought would come, you better change your life, then it would follow, I am not going to die I will do that in plenty of time. In attending the big meetings I

very often went to the mourners bench. Not expecting to be benefitted but for different reasons; sometimes to keep the meeting running so I could take my girl, other times I would feel sorry for the preacher and the good folks so when they would sing, "I will arise and go to Jesus," I would start and then others would follow. Sometimes I would get serious about my condition, but I did not expect any change in it. These conditions just repeated themselves until I was about twenty-five years old. One night very unexpectedly I became interested in my condition. At that time I was living with my oldest brother. When I went in from work that night brother John said, "Will, Will Brooks is dead." He was a cousin of ours we had left in Tenn. It seemed it struck me like a thunderbolt. I knew in my condition I was doomed for hell. My brother's house was a two story and I slept upstairs. The rest of the family down stairs. I went up to my bed trying to pray. I undressed, laid down on the bed trying to pray but did not know how, all I could say was, "Lord forgive my sins." This impression came, is it necessary for me to get out of bed and get on my knees? The thought followed, He can forgive in one position as well as another, and at that instant an impression came, your sins are forgiven. Oh! the glory, the rejoicing, the sweetness of those moments will never be told. I lay there weeping for joy. I was impressed to go down stairs and break the news to the family, but the thought came, no, I will wait until morning and finally went off to sleep. When I awoke next morning what had taken place in the fore part of the night was on my mind but I was not so happy and sure about it as when I went to sleep. I felt more like myself and thought I might be mistaken, so I was truly glad I did not give the alarm and arouse the folks as I minded to do. I got up and went about my work as usual, pondering in my heart, is this experience a reality? I could not deny it but was afraid to accept it. My father was dead and mother was living among her married children. In about three weeks after this occurred she came to stay with us awhile. All this time I had kept this to myself, desiring with all my heart for those sweet, happy moments I had had to return. I could not experience them again, at the same time I could not deny there had been a change wrought in me in some way. My desires were different, my mind ran in a different channel, language was changed or rather disposed of. I longed now for Christian association rather than my former associates. I desired to shake hands with Christian people. I did not seem to have any choice of denomination. The Primitive Baptist was not numbered or even thought of while I was enjoying in meditation the sweet association with Christian people, but I would find myself humming on those old spiritual songs I had heard them sing, and oh they were such a consolation and comfort it seemed to me. The tears would flow down my cheeks while humming them in secret. They just came and I could not keep them back.

With these three weeks of a different life I took courage and broke the news to mother when she came. Oh! well do I remember the occasion in detail. It was after supper and she and I were in the family room alone, my sister-in-law and children were in the kitchen, my brother had gone to carry some slop to the hogs. When I told her what I thought the Lord had done for me she raised the alarm with shouts of joy and praises to God for his mercy,

and the evidence of an answer to her prayers. The family was soon assembled to learn what the commotion was all about. I sat in the corner with my face in my hands and my mouth closed. Mother related the story to them saying, "God has heard my prayers." Words can never express how I felt. I was afraid I was mistaken, and how I wished I had kept it to myself, and to make that thought more forceful to my mind when my brother turned to leave the room he said, "I guess Will is mistaken." That was what I was afraid of, I cannot tell what a chill those words brought over me, and oh how often they have re-echoed in my ears even to this present moment. How true they may be. I am yet wondering "Am I His or am I not?"

So the story goes, I set out to live a life that God would honor and that those that were about me would be proud of. I was honest and sincere in the matter, but have I complied with that resolution? No, a thousand times no. About that time I was visiting a girl friend pretty often, she, too, was very much interested in my salvation and was delighted that I had been converted. She was a member of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and I often attended with her. I remember on one occasion I took her to an Old Baptist meeting. I do not know why unless it was because of distance and out of her community, just for a trip. When we got to the meeting-house a very small crowd had gathered, mostly old folks. It was a miserable two hours for me. My mother was there, and let me say here I would give the world, if it were mine to give, if I could call back those two hours and be permitted to sit with her under the drippings of the sanctuary of her God, and feast with her upon the good word of God as I now believe she did. That was the last time I ever saw her at church. Precious mother has gone to her reward and that was the last Old Baptist meeting I attended for many years.

This girl friend afterward became my wife, and as I had no special preference as to church relation, I thought just so it is a church, one is as good as another, I united with her church the day we were married, and became very active in church affairs. My pride was encouraged and I strived for popularity and the applauds of men. This kind of a life was perpetuated for about twenty years to a great extent. I was satisfied with the life I was leading, perfectly so, so far as my relation with God was concerned, in fact that part was the least meditated upon. I loved the applause and honor from both men and women, and I am not sure that the good Lord has been pleased to take all of that desire out of me yet. Brother, how about you? While I was in such a rampage for honor from men, I could almost hear them whispering, "Isn't he a good and useful man in the community? I do not see how we could do without him." I would swell up so I would almost burst the buttons off my trousers and shirt. I must deviate here just a little. "Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook?" "Upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear. He beholdeth all high things: he is a king over all the children of pride." Surely I was under the influence of that king. I was very zealous in Sunday school, in family prayer and in keeping the Sabbath. During this ungodly career my good wife was afflicted in childbirth and lay an invalid for eleven years or until it pleased God to remove her from earth. During her illness I had a terrible time. God only knows what I went through. A poor man, with four small children to raise,

and a helpless woman to care for. Under a strain for eleven years trying to regain her health, it seemed that my life depended upon the regaining of her health so we could get back into church work again that we might raise our children right. That was my daily prayer. I do not know whether I was honest in it or not, if I was it was of the devil for I hardly even thought of God. I was just trying to evade the devil by my own works, and at the same time gaining a wonderful reputation for myself among the people. Killing two birds with one stone, but the greater of the two was that reputation I was building. During my wife's sickness I did not entirely give up my works. I would hold family prayer. I do not know why for before God I realized it was only a custom and was practiced by church people. I never felt any relief or comfort in the work or after it was done, it was all dry as shucks—just a custom. No God fearing sensation whatever. Just the suggestions of the devil, and the same influence is prevailing to-day among the work mongers of the world, and they do not know it, nor will they until the God of heaven sees fit to shine into their hearts that light to give them the knowledge of the glorious liberty of the children of God.

(*To be Continued*)

....PEACE....

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS: I feel an inclination to offer a few thoughts, whether of the spirit or of the flesh I know not—God knoweth. I hope, of course, the things I might offer would in some little way at least edify the believer in Jesus. I know so well unless I am guided by the Spirit of my blessed Lord what I might offer will be profitless, therefore, I am in a strait.

In I Peter 2:1 we read, "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings." Quite an urgent reproof is it not? To the guilty at least, and all of us from time to time are more or less guilty of one or more of the said named elements. That is, of course, probably because we are human, more so than divine. That in no way is encouraging but rather depressing to me at least. The above said named elements I feel are a handicap to every child of grace. Evidently Peter thought so, therefore, he advocated the laying aside of things. To what extent to go, in the laying aside of malice, guile, hypocrisies, envies and evil speaking, Peter leaves us in no doubt for he uses new born babes to illustrate along with their desires.

In this category Peter places the children of God, the heirs of promise, the blood bought of Jesus, on the planes of new born babes. Meditate if you will gentle reader, the absence of malice, guile, hypocrisies and evil speaking in the activity of new born babes? Now can you not see, the reality and the great benefit in laying aside these elements aforesaid mentioned? I call your attention to the desire, the sincerity of new born babes. Note their desire alone for the sincere milk. Could an heir of promise regenerated of God, having laid aside all malice, all guile, all hypocrisies, all envies and all evil speakings be content and happy with anything less than the sincere milk of the word? Indeed not, for it is the substance upon which they thrive and grow. Malice, guile, hypocrisies, envies, evil speaking have never promoted growth, neither furnished nourishment in the heart and mind and soul of a child of grace; neither do either of those promote growth, neither furnished nourishment in the heart and mind and soul of a child of grace; neither do either of

those promote growth in our churches of to-day organically speaking, but in stead destroy peace and sweet fellowship. Malice, guile, hpyocrisies, envies, evil speakings do promote dwarfishness, sickness and all manner of ungodliness among us, even stupidity, the greater part of which I attribute to the state or condition our churches are in, organically speaking, throughout the realms among us. And now what is the remedy? I have read several suggested remedies; I have listened to several orally, but for some reason the sponsors of these remedies are fearful for their own medicine. An Elder who is very precious to me remarked a few days ago like this: all seem to know that Old Baptists everywhere are sick unto death, but the fellow he was most interested in was the fellow who had the remedy.

In my opinion pitched peace conferences are not the remedy, or are they? Fasting is not the remedy, or is it? Prayer without faith is not I am sure. I have noticed some things of late in regard to the necessity of a leader. At this critical hour among us I am definitely sure we are nicely fixed up as pertaining to leadership. It is the followers where the rub comes in for Jesus is yet with us ample, able as ever to lead. If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious, then another taste of the graciousness of the Lord and another and so on have never failed and will not fail now to bring the heartfelt desired results. Remember we are a people, as a people heady, high minded, though forgetful, very much so, and have to be reminded again and again. Were I to pray, I would pray now, that all of those troubled in spirit and perplexed in mind could be given a taste, just a taste, of the graciousness of Jesus our leader and our troubles would all be over. Were that prayer answered a taste of the graciousness of Jesus is the antidote for all our ills. In our ills we act too much like men and endeavor to work out our own salvation before God has worked in. It is so easy to work out that which God hath worked in so I suggest we wait until God works in before we begin working out.

I am conscious of the situation, at least in part, that now exists among the people of God everywhere. I am human, very much so. I like to preach to a house full of folks, but I do not do so every time. Do you believe if it was the will of God that all of our houses would be full of folks every meeting time? I do. I have thought of the situation as it now exists along this line that probably we were experiencing an ingoing or low tide. A time when the waters are treacherous and the undercurrent strong, and none but old *salters* dare venture the voyage. I do know it is no time or place now, if ever it was, for malice, guile, hypocrisies, envies, evil speaking, but it is time, high time, that all take oars in hand and with an eye of faith mixed with hope wrapped in sweet charity pull and tug for peace, love and sweet fellowship, and as much as in us is lay aside all malice, guile, envies, hpyocrisies and all evil speaking, and pray and beg that our desires be alone for the sincere love of God in Christ Jesus exercised by faith in precept and example. May it be the will of God to keep us all close to the foot of the cross of our blessed Lord. (Amen. R.L.D.)

(Elder) F. A. COLLINS

Hartford, Ala.

"O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Jer. 10:23

For quite some time it has been haunting my mind to write again. I

hope I am not deceived. I have had many endorsements on my article in August *Signs*. Yesterday morning as my attendant placed me into the bath tub it struck my mind as quick as lightning, the eternal and absolute fixedness of all things. My mind kept going until I had finished the whole routine through the bath house. It seems if I could then have had my pen I could have written much better than now. Yet I might not and may not be able to write at all. If God will lead my mind along I can think of no better text than Jer. 10:23. I have my own way and manner and I have to write as it comes. I have to take life as it comes.

We hear God talking to Jeremiah, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." God did not have to wait until Jeremiah was born, grown up and tried out, to see if he would fit into his program. I take the position that all the events of time unfold or bring into manifestation that that God purposed (fixed) before the morning of time. I have heard it preached, written and boasted from my earliest recollection that God is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient. This means God hath all power, is everywhere and knoweth all things. We hear God saying, "As I have purposed, so shall it stand." On the night of the ninth of April last year (1946) my wife and I retired as usual, talked and planned our next day's activities. In about ten minutes after we ceased to talk she called for her medicine and was dead in thirty minutes. If I could have had my way I would have had it otherwise. How helpless, how helpless was poor me, how helpless! I had to take it. It was God's appointed time, already fixed and all the powers of heaven, hell and earth could not unfix it. It was not only God's appointed time for her to go, but it was the fixed way and place. How can we believe the three attributes of God mentioned above and not believe this?

Once we set some plants in the churchyard. After father had taken a look at them he told mother those plants would not shade him. He had a premonition that he must soon go the way of all the earth, and he did. It has come to my mind to mention myself. I have never had a premonition that my time was near at hand. On the other hand if I have had any premonition it is that I have quite a long time yet, but please remember it is all fixed. Not long ago I had a vision. (I do not think it was a dream.) In my vision I looked toward the West. It was the most beautiful scene my eyes ever beheld, no cloud, no sky. The elements were seemingly closed, a mixture of silver and gold, the sun was bright as silver. When I came to myself I exclaimed, "How wonderful, how wonderful!" And how wonderful is God. There is no God but the living God, our God. My hope is anchored that I can say, my God, yes, my Father. "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Proverbs 25:11. The thought came to me that the distance from the sun to the western horizon is the remainder of my journey here in this world in the ratio of twelve hours. I do not know how it will be. It is all fixed. If this be true I have fifteen or twenty years yet. But I do get so tired of my nothingness, my sinning, until I wish I could clip the cord that holds me here and go home, and as we used to sing, "Sit down and rest a little while."

As tired as I get of my sinning and as much as I wish I could quit it, I am

comforted with this thought that I will not sin any more than God is able to overrule and bring order out of chaos. "Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise." Jer. 17:14. After Nathan, the prophet, had come unto David and after grace had found him out he could acclaim, "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Psalms 51:7. David had in mind the perfect work of redemption. Jesus did not say to those disciples, clean the fish you have caught, fry them and give me some to eat. "As soon as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread." John 21:9. Peter had said before, "I will never forsake thee." Peter wanted to help the Lord, but the Master taught Peter, I am taking care of myself and you, too, Peter. Fish and bread already prepared! Who did it? The answer is Jesus. The great draught of fishes we have caught is worth nothing. This brings our mind to the thought that when we think we are helping the Lord grace shines in our soul until we can acclaim, "I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord." The neighbors and cousins gathered in to rejoice with Elizabeth. They said we will name him Zacharias after his father. Elizabeth said, "He shall be called John." It is so common after the flesh to perpetuate family names. The neighbors and kindred contended it will not do to name him John because there is not a John in the family. Somebody must settle the contention. "And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all," Luke 1:63. After the manner of the flesh we would say Zacharias had a desire to agree with Elizabeth. The truth is he was named John before the foundation of the world, before the morning of time. This is another instance of what God had fixed and cannot be unfixed. "His name is John." Already named. Before I began to write I thought of some things I thought I would write. I have written some things I did not think of until I began to write. My mind seems to snap. Time to quit.

(Elder) C. H. BYRD

Route 2, Box 89, Panama City, Fla.

Cascade, Va.

MR. LESTER CASSELL, BASSETTS, VA.

DEAR BROTHER CASSELL: It is on my mind to write you this morning, hoping this finds you all well as it leaves us reasonably so. I am continuing to improve from my operation and hope to be able to go back to work soon. I have been so used to being active, this enforced idleness has been hard to endure. I hope the most of it is in the past and I will soon be able to be on the move, working and going to visit the beautiful lady to whom God has given my heart forever, the beautiful bride of Christ, the Lamb's wife, known by us as the Old Primitive Baptist church. Many, many times has my heart bounded with joy and echoed amen to the beautiful language of the poet.

"I love thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of thine abode,
The church our blessed Redeemer saved
With his own precious blood.

I love thy church, O God,
Her walls before thee stand,
Dear as the apple of thine eye,
And graven on they hand.

For her, my tears shall fall,
For her, my prayers ascend;
To her, my cares and toils be given
'Till cares and toils shall end.

Beyond my highest (natural) joy,
I prize her heavenly ways,
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
Her hymns of love and praise."

So much of my time is spent in the prison of nature's darkness, shut up in a prison of doubts and fears. It seems like it is wrong for me to even hope that I have a hope, I fall so far short in every way it seems like all the evidence is against me. My thought so often is, if I was indeed a child of God, my manner of life would be more Christ-like, and being as I am so carnal, that is evidence that I am just a deceiver. To this I reply in Paul's language, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." I feel bound to say that is my experience. The scripture says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, *because we love the brethren.*" Brother Cassell, that love for the brethren and hatred of sin, both equal in depth and volume are two of the greatest witnesses we have that we are indeed little children of the most high God. Scripture again says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Paul speaks of some being made wise unto salvation, and I feel satisfied this is the wisdom under consideration. Now, what is the Bible definition of the fear of the Lord? Do we possess it? That is the vital question. Examine yourselves, your hearts and see, dear children for the scripture again says, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." Here is the Bible definition of the fear of the Lord—"The fear of the Lord is to hate evil." May I now say in full assurance it is true, that if we can know anything at all we *know* we do hate evil, hate sin, and groan beneath the burden it causes us to feel sometimes, when we can see and feel our falling so far short of the way we *would* live, were it possible.

"'Tis seldom I can ever see
Myself, as I would wish to be,
What I desire I can't attain —
From what I hate, I can't refrain."

So sang the poet in harmony with our hearts to-day.

Now for the other great witness, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." God is unchangeable. He teaches all his children alike in substance. Although the manner of our experience may differ a little, the substance or essence of what he teaches us is the same. Having a like experience begets fellowship one with another. Not only for those we personally know, who are yet upon the earth, but we even have fellowship with the saints, prophets and apostles of ages past. Often we find our feelings told by them in scriptures. Do not these words of Ruth to Naomi express, far as words or language can reach, our love for the church to-day? "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried." I have often said, that I feel as a young man who loves a woman with a deathless love, that I run after her, (the church) crying, you have won my heart forever.

Brother Cassell, I have been made to get out of bed a number of times in the dark and silent hours of night, fall upon my knees and beg, implore God that his mercy and love may cover and protect the church, flowing toward and into her as a boundless river, desiring her welfare above everything else on earth. I have prayed for her, preached to her in my dreams so great is my love. I cannot feel it in the same depth of intensity all the time. Some-

times my heart is so cold, stony and dead I cannot feel anything. Again this love for the church melts this cold and stony heart of mine, and it just melts and runs out, embracing the whole church as rivers of waters. Then is the time of fulfillment in measure to me of the glorious voice of my Redeemer, crying. "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land."

Yea, when he thus speaks, it is calling us forth, our affections run out toward him and his bride, and it brings peace, for a little season, to our troubled souls. Truly, the voice of the turtle (dove) signifies peace, but not for long. As the earth is made, filled with hills and valleys, so is our experience. As the seasons roll, winter and summer, so is our experience until we have gone the last long mile of the way. Then, at the end of all time and time things, when Jesus comes the last time, we hope to be received home unto himself, a glorious church, without spot, wrinkle or blemish. May this be our happy lot is my humble cry for Jesus' sake. Amen. Your little brother in Christ, I hope.

(Elder) LAYTON WINGFIELD

Route 1, Merryville, La.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE: I see from the little reminder on my paper that it is time for me to renew my subscription to the *Signs*. We have passed another milestone that has gone down in history. Some of the past may be remembered, but the future no man can know. I am short of being as fortunate as some claim. I cannot boast of any good that I have done. Like the apostle the good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do. Experience teaches me that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. This is quite different to what one can hear almost any hour of the day. They tell us that you can if you will. I had rather be a *cannot* than a *will not*. Every vessel of mercy has his pitfalls. The individual may not know why it is so, neither can he bring relief it matters not how hard he tries; but when the gentle breeze (the Holy Spirit) blows to cool his weak, hungry, scorching soul, it is then he can sing upon the mountain top. Nothing that the poor creature has done caused this blowing. Jesus compares his Spirit to the wind and my belief is that without this gentle breeze there is no obedience or rejoicing.

A few days ago I heard a man, who claims the name Primitive Baptist, say, while conducting a funeral service, that somehow he believed it was possible for a man to prolong his days on earth. To back up his belief he referred to the untimely birth spoken of in Psalms 58:8. To my mind the following scripture contradicts his belief. "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born and a time to die." Eccl. 3:1-2. I see no reason to try to contradict the above. Job says, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." Job 14:14.

I believe there was a wise purpose for the horrible war we have just gone through. We lost one of our sons and a grandson in the defense of their country. If it had not been for the war I see no way they could have been at those particular places at the exact time their lives were blown out. I know this is not popular doctrine, but I am proud that the Lord has reserved unto himself a few who believe he is

supreme over all things.
Your unworthy brother in hope.

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

J .PAUL McMILLIAN

Route 1, Box 901, Auburn, Wash.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Yesterday the *Signs* came to me and how thankful I was to get it. I get so lonely for the things I believe in. I sat down at once and read it through. Those verses, "Just a whisper away," struck a loving cord in my heart. The article on charity and all the others were a feast to my hungry soul. Nearly every day I read the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. Your article on Hebrews was good. Then the obituary of sister Parke's husband. It was he I told you I rode with and he died that night. I never saw him but the one time.

I have had so much trouble this year so far, trouble with my head, I get confused, but I thank God I have been able to carry on. I do not think people can realize what one lonely person endures unless they experience it themselves. I never knew before what it was to be in such a condition. This is a lovely day, "An anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast." Heb. 6:19.

"We travel through a barren land,
With dangers thick on every hand;
But Jesus guides us through the vale;
The christian's hope can never fail.

Huge sorrows meet us as we go,
And devils aim our overthrow;
But vile infernals can't prevail;
The christian's hope can never fail.

Sometimes we're tempted to despair,
But Jesus makes us then his care:
Though numerous foes our soul assail
The christian's hope shall never fail.

We trust upon the sacred word—
The oath and promise of our Lord;
And safely through each tempest sail:
The christian's hope shall never fail."

I hope these verses will be my guide to the end of my life. Sometimes I feel the end will not be far off for me as my strength is going. I hope some one will let you know when I am not here to receive my *Signs*. I know my neighbors would not care for it. The old couple that used to live across the highway from me are gone. He died and she went to live with her son.

The world is in a turmoil. I tried to listen Sunday morning to radio programs of some of the churches but they made me tired. They are always helping the Savior. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." Love is the one word that we should stand for. The Savior loves his children, we should give him all the glory. We are poor, imperfect mortals and without his love and protection we must surely perish. May you be spared many years to minister to the children of God. Your unworthy sister.

(Mrs.) JENNIE CLIFFORD

West Hurley, N. Y.

DEAR SISTER POTTER: Often as I think of our interesting meetings in Maine, my thoughts flow out to you in bonds of love and fellowship. I have greatly enjoyed reading your letters in the *Signs of the Times* and noting your spiritual exercises of mind as you are led along this wilderness road with its trials and deliverances, its sunshine and shadow, its darkness and light. Much as I feel unworthy to write you, I can not repress the desire to express some thoughts which I hope may be of comfort.

The priesthood of Jesus and our ap-

proach unto him through prayer is a subject that greatly interests me. The work of the high priest in old testament times was symbolical of the work of Christ in his dispensation of suffering as well as in his dispensation of glory. When the high priest under the Levitical rites offered prayer he took a live coal of fire from the brass altar where the sacrifices were offered and placed it upon the incense on the golden altar. The application of fire to the incense caused a fragrant cloud of vapor to rise and perfume the sanctuary. There could be no fragrant cloud of incense without the fire thus applied to it, and there can be no true prayer flowing out of the believer's heart unless and until God himself kindles a fire in the soul and indites a supplication. "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord." It is always a fire of God's kindling, not man's making, that causes true prayer to rise to the throne of God. In the midst of fiery trials the people of God pray more fervently. Beautifully worded utterances in prayer books, polished phrases uttered with rhetorical fervor and effect by religious professors not taught of the Lord do not constitute real prayer. It must proceed, if it is true prayer, from a heart made broken and contrite by the power and work of the Holy Spirit, and the cry of a broken heart the Lord will not despise. When one truly feels a load of guilt that burdens the conscience; when one senses the condemnation of God's holy law and experiences utter abasement of self; when one writes bitter things against himself and realizes that everlasting damnation is his rightful portion, and that God in his ineffable holiness seems afar off and there is no help in man; when one feels the very wrath of a justly offended God about to consume him; it is then that he is fit to pray and it is then that he pours out a heartfelt supplication for mercy, knowing that only grace can save him. To feel the power of sin with all its damning effects is to agonize, to cry helplessly, to cling imploringly, and with faith to persist till the blessing comes, till pardoning mercy is manifested, but this will not be until the supplicant has ceased to wrestle, but can only cling, like Jacob of old, with his natural strength to walk exhausted. It is then that the blessing comes.

Not only in deliverance from nature's darkness and the possession of a good hope is prayer a vital need, but each child of God needs a daily savior from daily sins. How prone we are to sin! The sins of hand and heart and lip and thought would cut us off from the presence of our Redeemer except for the intercession of our faithful high priest who makes intercession for us with groanings that can not be uttered. There is a woe to them that are at ease in Zion. The treacherous calm is more to be dreaded by the child of God than the roaring, raging billows of sin. It is in time of trouble that we pray, and it is then that the Lord comes experimentally near us. We read in John that immediately after supper, after the partaking of a meal that suggests his broken body, Jesus washed his disciples' feet. He rose from the table to do this, suggestive of resurrection. He took a towel of linen, signifying service, and water denoting the word and washed his disciples' feet. The basin contained a limited amount of water. The washing of regeneration is limited only to the people of God. All of us need to have our feet (our walk) washed by the word applied by the Holy Spirit to the doorposts of our consciences and hearts as we mortify the deeds of the body through the Spirit and live. And for all our backslidings and wanderings

there is a gracious restoration provided by the grace of God through repentance and prayer.

We have in heaven a faithful High Priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. The third and fourth verses of the eighth chapter of Revelation read as follows: "And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand."

This is a beautiful figure of the intercessory work of Jesus in heaven as typified by the work of the high priest of the legal dispensation in making intercession for Israel, as on the day of atonement he stood between the living and the dead, the blood representing the life of the soul before him on the mercy seat and the dead sacrifice outside the gate testifying to the penalty for sin. The high priest stood within the vail in the holy of holies which is a type of heaven itself, the vail denoting the flesh of Jesus Christ, for he entered through the vail, that is to say, his flesh, now to appear in the presence of God for us. It was the blood of the sacrifice that ceremonially cleansed from sin, but the blood of Jesus possessing the power of the Godhead actually purges the conscience and cleanses the soul. The high priest stood within the vail in the presence of the cloud, the presence of God, that dwelt between the cherubims over the mercy seat, approachable only on the day of atonement by the blood of a sacrifice. The holy of holies represents heaven where God dwells in his undimmed and fadeless glory, where Jesus intercedes with all the effectual plea of his sinless life, his atoning death, his justifying righteousness, his rising from the dead, his virtue as the Godman in satisfying the justice of God, in fulfilling for his people every divine requirement in bringing salvation to the believer and clothing him with his own spotless righteousness. Therefore he presents his bride holy and without blame before the father in love. The prayers of all believers go up unto God with the intercession of the great Mediator, the risen and glorified Christ. The shed blood of Jesus and the holy fragrance of his person give merit to our prayers. Incense is added to the prayers, not merely of some saints, but unto all the called of God. In the holy place there was a continual burning of incense, denoting that the intercession of Jesus is perpetual. On the cross Christ represented the sinner and endured the curse of God for him so that in heaven he is the believer's righteousness, advocate, and surety.

The fact that Jesus is represented as standing by the altar typifies him as our counsellor and intercessor, for in the temple service under the law the high priest always stood when engaged in prayer or in other priestly duties. Jesus is also sometimes represented as seated at the right hand of God. Here his office as judge as well as king are represented. A mediator stands, but a judge sits. How beautifully harmonious is all the word of God when rightly understood! In the temple service there was a golden altar made of incorruptible wood all overlaid with gold and around it a crown of gold. Here the divine glory, the incorruptible humanity of Jesus and his kingship are symbolized, for the crown suggests a kingdom and Jesus is the King of kings as well as the Lord of lords. May

the God of all grace be your guide, your preserver and deliverer. Your brother in covenant bonds.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

1406 Randolph Ave., Greensboro, N. C.

MRS. BEATRICE HAAN, MY DEAR AND ESTEEMED SISTER IN THE LORD: I have just re-read your last letter which I received some months ago. Each time I have read it love has filled my heart, which causes me to feel and believe that Christ washed me also in his precious blood. I have thought many times of writing you, but I always feel that writing to the saints of God is far too great a task for me to undertake; but I hope I am sometimes blessed to tell in part that the Lord has been merciful to my unrighteousness, and has blessed me to love his people with a love that causes us to be drawn together by the sweet cords of his mercy, for his mercy endureth forever.

I cannot begin to tell just how I feel for I cannot find words to express my feelings, but I do feel that all our trials, crosses, sorrows, tribulations, temptations and persecutions come to us the perfect way. We read in 2 Tim. 3:12, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." In 2 Cor. 4:7-11 we read, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." Again we read in Matt. 5:10-12, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." I Cor. 10:13.

My dear sister, I feel that I have enjoyed the delivering hand of God in trials, crosses and temptations. I believe it is just and right that the Lord's people are tempted and hated. The world hated Christ and it hates his people also. Jesus was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil; and the Lord's people are never tempted by any other than the devil; and it always proves a blessing unto those who are tempted. In this we see a beauty and are thus blessed to glory in the Lord, that all which come to pass work together for good to them that love God. I believe the devil was made for no other purpose than to fulfill the Lord's purpose in doing the very things that he does do. God made the devil and he did not make anything in vain. I do not believe Satan has any more power of himself than a dead animal; but he, like all beings, consists of just what was given him by Him who made all things, and without him there was not anything made. I believe his wisdom, purpose and predestination are perfect, and in this he caused to come to pass

(from the beginning to the end of time, and on into eternity and in hell) all things just as he saw and thought. All things that are, are for his glory and for the benefit of his children, including Satan and all his works which God purposed that he do, and he does nothing except by the power of God.

I feel persuaded that none but a child of God has ever been tempted in the manner which Christ was; and what a blessing it is to be blessed to know Satan in the sense of being a tempter. For if we know God in the pardon of our sins, we also know the devil as the father of all lies, as a tempter, as a deceiver and as everything which is contrary to the church of God. Until one is quickened into divine life, I believe there is no knowledge of Satan except by the letter, and the scripture says the letter killeth. When we are made alive to the fact that there is an all-wise God, who holds the key of life and death, then we also know there is in our flesh, Satan, that serpent called the devil; and we find the two spirits continually warring, one against the other. But we read the elder shall serve the younger, which is Christ born in us the hope of glory, and which has already gained the victory through our Lord and Savior. This victory brings the elder, which is our flesh, under subjection: (and notwithstanding our thoughts and acts which to us seem so terrible) we walk as our lot has been cast and are not disobedient to the great and eternal purpose of God.

I feel that I have only hinted at what I have tried to tell. I hope we are all blessed to look to Him who is able to guide and protect us in tribulations, temptations and persecutions. A sister I hope. (Mrs.) MARY E. WRAY

Riffe, Wash.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE IN CHRIST JESUS: After reading brother Overstreet's letter in October *Signs* I have a desire to write you a few lines. I do not have the ability to write for publication, but wish to commend you and your capable editorial staff for your faithful labors to give us such a dear messenger as the *Signs* has proved to be since I first read it, which is more than fifty-five years now. I do believe my spiritual life, if not deceived, has been made richer and more understanding by this great blessing which is given us by our dear Lord. He gives us so many precious blessings, and sometimes we seem to pass them by almost unnoticed, so now I wish to express my hearty appreciation to you and all the writers for your sincere labor of love for the cause of our God. How unspeakably great his wisdom, his love, his longsuffering, his grace, mercy and power, and how less than nothing am I, only the very least of his little ones, if one at all. Yet if I know myself I do glory in his perfection and can truly say with Cowper: "Deep in unfathomable mines of never failing skill, He treasures up his bright designs, and works his sovereign will." All along the way we see his ruling power and wonderful way of bringing to pass whatsoever he will. No trouble for him to close the mouths of the lions when his servant was cast into their den to destroy his life; no trouble for him to temper the fierce heat when his faithful children were cast into the furnace, so that not even the smell of fire was found on their garments; no trouble for him to make a fog dense enough for a London cabby to lose his way when God was preparing Cowper's mind to write one of our best loved

hymns, and one that often comforts us when we are in the depths; no trouble for him to teach a little spider to weave a web so perfect over the mouth of the cave so as to deceive wicked men and save one who had not completed his work; nor to teach the ravens how to feed his faithful prophet; nor to make the cock crow at the right time when Peter denied him.

When we see these things in which he proves his care over us in *all* things do we not take comfort and feel in our inmost heart the beautiful truths expressed in the beautiful 23rd Psalm. We feel constrained to say, "All the way my Savior leads me, cheers each winding path I tread," and when blessed with his Holy Spirit I think there is no more precious doctrine in all holy writ than that of predestination. I fail to see where there is anything hard about it. We parents who have raised children know how dear they are to us; we plan for their welfare; how we chastise them, not because it gives us pleasure, but that they shall become better men and women. Our arms are short, we cannot do what we would for them but His wisdom and power has no limit so He can say, *all things* work *together* for good to His little children. We may not understand it. but may, by his grace, afterwards see how he makes it to yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

Oh, how often the rivers of woe seem ready to engulf us in their dark muddy waters, when in that still small voice he speaks to our troubled hearts and says, "Be not afraid, it is I." If we are his we need not be afraid for David says, "If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." So there is no place we can go to hide from him, and no depths but he can bring peace even to the martyr Stephen. He could look into heaven and pray, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," and other martyrs who he gave grace sufficient to enable them to sing hymns of praise while flames consumed their natural bodies. Did he not temper the heat, though their natural bodies were consumed, the glory within was so great they felt not pain for they were given dying grace for dying hours?

Brother Dodson, this letter is becoming too long. Your time is too precious to be taken up with my weak efforts. May God in his mercy and loving kindness watch over you and all other writers, and grant that you may be enabled to write the things that will comfort and encourage His little children while here, and may nothing enter our precious family paper but the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. In Christian love, your unworthy sister.

(Mrs.) ROSA COLEMAN

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Our Associate Editor, Elder C. W. Vaughn and Sister Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J. will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on February 13, 1948. They will be at home to their friends Feb. 14 and 15. Letters and cards will be appreciated from any unable to call.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Middletown & Wallkill Church, N. Y., $25; J. H. Calk, La., $3; Mrs. S. Bailiff, Tex., $1; Mrs. G. McGuire, N. C., $3; W. G. Hutchens, N. C., $1; Mrs. R. M. Blair, La., $1; J. H. Miles, Fla., $4; W. M. Rushing, Ala., $1; R. C. Wood, N. C., $2; G. G. Turner, Tex., $1; Mrs. S. L. Hutchens, N. Y., $5; Mrs. S. L. Midgett, N. Y., $1; Mrs. B. H. Shearon, Tenn., $1; Mrs. J. W. Grimes, Ala., $1; J. F. Lax, Ill., $3; Mrs. L. M. Pulliam, N. C., $1; Eld. P. Jones, Wash., $5; Mrs. V. Machesney, Cal., $3.

EDITORIAL

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

... PRAYER ....

No subject of the Bible holds more interest than this. Perhaps we do not understand much about it. I am sure that I do not, and I realize how presumptuous it is for me to think I could teach any one how to pray. This world professes to teach that and some theologian has gone to the trouble to write a book called "God's Minute." In the book he has a short prayer for each day in the year. Not being able to pray *once* I certainly do not feel able to give you that many in advance. While I do not know that I have ever prayed, and if I have that I will ever be blessed to do so again, it does not mean that it is not a gospel subject. If it is, it certainly is profitable, under spiritual guidance, for our discussion and examination..

By way of encouragement to the dear saints I want to say to you that none of our leaders have a monopoly on prayer. Although prayer is a gift it is not one we *can* use any time men call on us to pray. If I am mistaken about it do not follow me, but I believe that any minister feels a great hesitancy in offering prayer at times.

Prayer is, after all, a close-up with God, a veritable talking face to face. When we are really and truly given to see our sins, it is enough to cause a trembling in body and spirit to ask God for anything, seeing that it is the prayer of a righteous man that avails anything. In this connection let me say that I have impressions to pray just like I trust I do to preach. At these times it is the sweetest yielding and compliance to his blessed command as it is in standing in the pulpit and preaching the doctrine of grace. Trying to pray is like trying to preach—it is mighty hard work—in fact it cannot be done. While *trying* to pray, we invariably are in the flesh and our object is selfish, begging for the things that we want. But that is not all, trying to accomplish a thing not only shows a lack of *how* but of *what* and *why*. I believe we pray as we preach and live and die, depending on the eternal fixed purposes of God. It is in faith that we come to him at all. This faith, at all times, is the substance of the things hoped for. This has never been changed and, although it moved Abel, Daniel, Jacob, Paul and all those gone before and will move every communicant that is yet to come, it is as unchangeable as God. In every step of our obedience to his commandments, it is faith that goes before, revealing the eternal perfection and sovereign purpose of God in disposing of all created things. Faith does not go before, bringing to light the unfinished things of God, as though he was a little undecided as to his rule of conduct, but it is the substance of our hope.

Now come hither little child and let us look at our hope. We do not hope that we will exercise faith to the end, but we hope that God eternally arranged for our salvation in Jesus Christ.

Our prayer is not an effort to change God, but it is because he is unchangeable. The world (that is, the ungodly world) may swerve and tauntingly tell us that if they believed everything was fixed they would not pray, we know better things than that. We know our eternal destiny is fixed and that all of our spiritual blessings are as settled and stable in the mind and purpose of God as is his choice. Furthermore, we are assured that he has given us all things pertaining to life and godliness. It is according to this knowledge that every prayer is uttered. If we must *try* to pray then we must guess as to what to pray for. Guessing, we are told is all right when it hits, but unless we ask according to his will, our will would, if permitted to pray, ask for things that would forever remove us and land us away from every providential and parental blessing. If we must try to pray (that is, if we must pray more, or oftener, or more fervently) then we must guess as to what to pray for and, on that conditional basis, we would have a right to ask *why* if it was not answered.

A prayer is not something excited in you by the wisdom of this world. Just think of the prayers (that is, words called prayers) addressed to God (as they suppose) for favor in converting the heathen. That is a conditional, selfish, carnal utterance. If it was asked according to the will of God he would certainly grant it, because God answers that kind. We sometimes are motivated in like manner in the dear old church. We get over zealous and ask God promiscuously to bring the regenerated into the church. He does not answer this kind of prayer because it is not prayer.

This is a wonderful subject, it is a blessing from God. We cannot pray unless blessed in spirit, yet the apostles commanded us to pray. We are told that we ought to pray. Now we realize that it is a gift from God. Would God give us a gift to ask that any will be done except his own? Is not all prayer a complacent acknowledgement of his will being done in heaven and in earth? Having been taught his sovereignty, and being kept by his power do we not have a desire to see and *feel* the doing of that will? W. D. G.

ISAIAH 45:7

"I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things."

A sister in Texas has asked that we present our views on this verse. The longer we live and the more we search the Scriptures, the more firmly we become convinced of the fact that the context of whatever is under consideration should be taken into account in order for the proper exegesis to be given. Whatever else may be said concerning our text, a careful reading of the chapter in which it is found should convince any one that practically every single verse savors of the sovereignty of Israel's God. It seems to us that every child of grace needs to be reminded, from time to time, of the absolute sovereignty of our God. The blessed assurance which it gives often affords comfort and consolation while making this earthly pilgrimage. "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Rev. 19:6.

In the beginning of this forty-fifty chapter of Isaiah is recorded the prophesy of one of the outstanding events of biblical history. God was foretelling of the time when Israel would be in Babylonish bondage; how he would raise up and anoint a Persian king to liberate and deliver them. This was referred to in more detail in the next

chapter where the prophet said God declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." God was to endow Cyrus with sufficient power to subdue all nations. He said he would loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut, which indicated that those who were held as captives behind their walled cities would be set free. God further said, "I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel." This showed that God would enable him to recover those things which they had taken from Israel and hidden away, and this was all to be done for Jacob, his servant's sake, and for Israel his elect, even though Cyrus had not known the Lord. God was thus to show that he doeth his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. In order that Cyrus might know that there was none like him, God declared, "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me." The end to which God had purposed this was "that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else." Now we come to our text wherein God says, "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." We can but feel that some of our brethren, perhaps for fear of impugning His honor, come short of declaring the whole counsel of God in their efforts to explain this text, and we know that we, too, shall come far short of what we would like. We would much prefer that our brethren err, if err they do, in this respect, however, rather than have them reflect in any way whatsoever upon God's holiness. We sincerely hope that no one is more zealous of scrupulously maintaining His highest honor than ourself, for we abhor and reject any and all expressions that would bring God in disrepute by accusing him of being the author of sin, or that would in any way call into question what he does. We trust we have received the same message that John received, "that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." But we hope we are equally zealous of God's sovereignty, and we do not wish to detract one iota from it. In the second verse following our text, we read. "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou?" Man may strive with his fellow man, but he should not be found to be striving with God. God said to the Psalmist, "Be still, and know that I am God." It is written, "In the beginning God created, the heaven and the earth," and we understand that all that in them is was made by God, and that without him was not anything made that was made. Paul wrote, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers:

all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Col. 1:16-17. Quoting from the same apostle's epistle to the Romans we read, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he afore prepared unto glory." Jesus said "in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor." Solomon said, "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." And in Isaiah 54:16 we find these words: "Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work: and I have created the waster to destroy." Job said, "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent," and in Genesis 3:1 we read, "Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made." God also commanded Moses to say unto Pharoah, "For now I will stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth. And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name be declared throughout all the earth." Ex. 9:15-16. All that God has ever done, or will ever do, was and will be for the glorifying of himself and the lifting of the name of Jesus, his Son, on high. Egypt and Ethiopia were truly typical of darkness, but God said to Jacob, "I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopa and Seba for thee." In view of the wonderful manifestations of God's great love and power in delivering Israel at the Red Sea, and destroying Pharoah and all his host (representative of the powers of darkness) will any dare presume to question the right of God to do whatsoever he will with his own? David said, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." Psalm 19:1-3. In creation, as well as in the experience of God's people, we believe darkness is just as important, in the purpose of God, as light. Day and night in this agree; they are both alike great God to thee. It is in the nighttime that vegetation does most of its growing, and it is in the time of darkness of the soul, while passing through the deep waters, that God's children are made to cry unto him to undertake for them, to make straight the way before them, and lead them in a plain path. We like the expression of the Psalmist where he says, "There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." This is all-embracing and plainly says that nothing can be left out or is in vain. In all of his various and numerous experiences (with whom none can compare) he was enabled to see the sovereign hand of his God preserving him, unworthy though he was of the least of God's mercies. Even in his great sin, which he by no means attributed to God, but confessed openly that it was he himself who had sinned and made his bed in hell, he discovered that he could not get away from God, for he said, "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even

there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." When the awfulness of the night had passed, and by the grace of God the glorious light of day had shown round about him, he could then see how the inscrutible wisdom of God had designed to overrule his own wickedness for his glory by raising up Solomon through this union of himself and Uriah's wife, who was to be a link in the golden chain of lineage through which his only begotten Son would enter into this sin cursed world and open a fountain for sin and for uncleanness, by the sacrifice of himself. We cannot see God's mysterious purpose in advance, for he declared that no man should see his face and live, but when he has passed by and we can behold his backparts, then we can say with John, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Adam as he was originally made, while upright and without sin, was only a natural man, and as such was not fit for the kingdom of heaven, but it was in the purpose of God that he should transgress his law by partaking of the forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, otherwise there would have been no propagation of the human race upon the earth, and neither would there have been any occasion for God's manifesting the great love for his people which was embodied in his blessed Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, all of which had been determined upon and provided for in that covenant ordered in all things and sure. The poet said, "The fall wrought the channel where mercy should run, And it was all for the lifting of Jesus on high."

The next thing said by God in our text is, "I make peace, and create evil." We know all too well that without the privations, hardships and sufferings occasioned by war, we could not in truth long for and properly evaluate peace. The word declares that there is a time for everything under the sun. There is, therefore, a time for war and a time for peace, and only those who know the terrors of sin and its awful consequences will yearn after that peace which passeth all understanding. There must first be warfare in the soul, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that we cannot do the thing we would, before there can be a longing for real peace. How amazing that one conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity should have revealed to him among the names by which our Lord should be called, "The Prince of Peace." He came into the world to suffer and die in the stead of his people that he might thereby make peace between them and their heavenly Father. Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." It is by and through him, and him alone, that we have everlasting peace with God, otherwise there could be no peace between God and man.

In addition to the words "I make peace" in our text, we also have the words, "and create evil." God being above all law, he cannot be arraigned before any court or tried by any jury, either of angels or of men. He dwelleth in the heights to which none can attain, and his ways and his thoughts are declared to be as high as the heavens are above the earth above our ways and our thoughts, and Moses once asked, Shall not the Judge of the whole earth do right? Let us discover if we can what is written concerning these

deep things. In Amos 3:6 we read, "Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people be not afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" The prophet Jeremiah in his Lamentations asked, "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" In the Acts of the Apostles is found written, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." In Romans 8:32 "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things." Again, Acts 4:26-28 we read, "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." God's blessed Son, of necessity, had to be offered as a sacrifice for sin, in order that sin might be remitted, or put away, otherwise there could have been no salvation for God's elect people, and while it was by wicked hands he was crucified and slain, we are told that the eyes of them that did it were holden and that they could not have crucified him had they known he was the Lord of glory. Jesus said concerning Judas Iscariot, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" There was work for a devil to do, and there had to be a devil to do it. God is holy, and is of too pure eyes to even look upon sin, and James declares that he cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. In the year that king Uzziah died the seraphims cried, saying, one to another, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." We simply have to confess with the poet that

> "Deep in unfathomable mines,
> Of never-failing skill,
> He treasures up his bright designs,
> And works his sovereign will."

We are aware of the fact that many of our good brethren feel that by *evil* in our text is meant adversity, trials, afflictions and the like, and we will readily agree that these things are embraced in it. When Job rebuked his wife for speaking as one of the foolish women, he then asked, "What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" We are persuaded that he had reference to God's dealings with him in depriving him of all his earthly possessions and in his being afflicted from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet, at the same time being held in derision by those who had previously been pleased to do him great honor, but in the following words he acknowledged God's absolute supremacy and right to do whatsoever he desired: "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Some have appeared to think that the Devil works independently of the Lord, and it is with this sentiment that we cannot agree. We like Job's summation of the matter, for he recognized no power but that of God, and we also like the poet where he says, "Not a single shaft can hit, 'Till the God of love sees fit." We hope that it is because of our unshakable belief in God's absolute sovereignty that we can at times adopt the saying of Paul in Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

In the seventeenth verse of the chapter in which the text is found, we find these words: "But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end." And we wish also to quote the twenty-second and twenty-third verses, as follows: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return. That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear."

"I the Lord do all these things." We have endeavored to hint at some of the wonderful things which the Lord hath done, but hint is the most that we can do, and we hope that a hint to the wise will be sufficient. When Paul comprehended something of the unbounded mystery of God in cutting off the Jews and grafting in the Gentiles, he burst forth by saying, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Can any more be said? R. L. D.

ORDINATION

Pursuant to request of Providence Church to her sister churches of Sulphur Fork Association to ordain brother S. O. TATUM to the work of the gospel ministry when assembled with Good Hope Church, October 4, 1947 did proceed as follows:

1. Providence Church requested that all ordained brethren of same faith and order form a Presbytery which was formed by electing Elder S. C. Davenport, Moderator and Elder E. J. Lambert, Clerk.

2. Deacon C. E. White was appointed spokesman for Providence Church who presented brother Tatum to the Presbytery.

3. Elder W. O. Beene questioned spokesman for church concerning qualification of brother Tatum as Elder.

4. Presbytery being satisfied of qualifications in brother Tatum did proceed to ordain by prayer by Elder R. W. Rhodes and laying on of hands by Presbytery.

5. Elder J. T. Everett delivered charge to Elder Tatum.

6. Right hand of official fellowship was given Elder Tatum by members of Presbytery.

7. Elder Tatum was presented back to Providence Church by Moderator and was received as an ordained Elder.

Other members of the Presbytery: Elders W. O. Beene, E. B. Ault, J. B. Reid, R. W. Rhodes, J. T. Everett, T. A. Wall, B. B. Walston, and Deacons L S. Hill, W. J. Bartlett, T. P. Wilson, J. B. Burkhalter, R. H. Cobb, B. T. Green, D. C. Shelton and Jake White.

(Elder) S. C. DAVENPORT, Moderator
(Elder) E. J. LAMBERT, Clerk

RESOLUTION

Whereas, it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst by death our dearly beloved brother and Pastor, ELDER GEORGE F. DYER, who has served us faithfully and well for many years past, may we, the church, bow in humble submission and say, Thy will, O God, be done.

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be spread on our church books, a copy be sent to the bereaved wife, one to the OLD FAITH CONTENDER and one to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Done by order of the church in conference, Oct. 18, 1947.

(Elder) J. P. HELMS, Moderator
SYLVANUS CARTER, Clerk

RESOLUTION

Acting by appointment of the Lexington-Roxbury Association, a committee with Elder C. W. Vaughn as chairman prepared the following resolution:

Whereas, it has pleased Almighty God to call from our midst our beloved Elder, D. L. TOPPING of the Baltimore Association, at Linthicum Heights, Md., causing our hearts to feel a great loss, but feeling that the eternal God hath done right, we bow in humble submission to His will, and be it

Resolved, that we order this resolution printed in our minutes of the Lexington-Roxbury Association, a copy sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the OLD FAITH CONTENDER and to his widow, our dear sister Bessie Topping. We pray God to comfort all who mourn our loss. Signed by the committee.

Elders

C. W. VAUGHN	ARNOLD H. BELLOWS
GEO. L. WEAVER	H. M. BENNETT
AMASA J. SLAUSON	R. LESTER DODSON
D. V. SPANGLER	JOHN D. WOOD

E. C. JONES

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Whereas, the Lord in his infinite wisdom and mercy has seen fit to remove from our midst our dear brother and deacon, VICTOR H. LAWS, on Aug. 28, 1946,

Resolved, that we bow our heads in submission to His divine will, asking that we be reconciled and to be given grace and faith to ever look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Resolved, that the Salisbury Church has lost a faithful member, but we feel our loss is his gain.

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be recorded in the church book, one to the family and one to the Signs of the Times.

Done by order of the church at Salisbury, Md., June 28, 1947.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor
MAUDE T. LAWS, Church Clerk

OBITUARIES

It has become my duty to undertake to write a short sketch relative to the passing of our dear brother in the Lord, J. A. DUNSON, also a Deacon for many years. He was born into this world in Mississippi, Aug. 15, 1860, given back to mother earth from which he was taken April 22, 1947, making his natural life on earth 86 years, 8 months and 6 days.

He was married to Mary Jane White who preceded him in death 16 years. To this union were born twelve children, nine of whom survive him. After losing his first wife by death, he married Mrs. M. E. Peden who preceded him in death four or five years.

I was brother Dunson's pastor nearly thirty years. He was always found at his post endeavoring to do what he thought the Lord had required of him. He was one of the old tried and true; his counsel was true and worthy; a man who took time for consideration before speaking; always giving God the glory. I believe I can truly say of him what Paul said of himself, for he, like Paul, was ready, prepared to be offered for the time of his departure was at hand. He had fought a good fight, he had finished his course, he had kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for him a crown of rightousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give him at that day, and not to him only but all them also that love his appearing. Oh, if I could feel that worthy, that I could make that statement when I am called to depart; it would be enough but oh, I am so vile so full of sin, I fear that I am not born again.

When young, brother Dunson lost one of his arms in a gin. He reared this large family although being deprived of the help of that arm, but I am glad to say those children reverenced their father. Those that are left to follow on stand as a living monument to his honor. At his meeting time only sickness kept him away. I suppose, next to his family, we miss him most for he was so situated that he always came on Friday and stayed until Monday. Our home was his home and oh how we miss his visits. Brother Dunson leaves behind him a record that honors his God, and will be long remembered by all that knew him. May God be thanked for this character. Written by his pastor.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN

God in his infinite wisdom saw fit to call from this pilgrimage journey our dear sister in Christ, FLOSSIE J. FAULKNER, of Allaben, N. Y. on June 14, 1947. She passed peacefully away, with a lingering heart trouble, while eating her breakfast in bed.

Sister Flossie, as she was known among her brethren, was the daughter of Addison W. and Ella T. Traphagen of Hunter, N. Y., and was born at Hunter, N. Y., December 1, 1891. She was united in marriage to Leon E. Faulkner, April 8, 1912. She leaves to mourn her loss besides her husband, two brothers, Herbert and Paul Traphagen, Hunter, N. Y. She united with the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, Nov. 1, 1925 at Shokan, N. Y. and was baptized by Elder George Ruston.

Sister Flossie composed a book of poems entitled "Showers of Rain," which also included her experience of grace. This book is now on sale through The Old Faith Contender and Signs of the Times. Each poem is taken from a scripture, and some of them were written when she was sick in bed, telling much of the travel and security of God's people in Christ, and also much of her travel. She was greatly gifted in understanding of the word of God, and also in expressing views on the scriptures. Her passing is a deeply felt loss to her brethren, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. To depart and be with Christ is far better.

The writer saw her a few days before she passed away when she said she did not want to be raised up again, but wanted rest. I have heard her say many times she thought death was a most glorious thing. She loved her church and was always at meeting when able to get there. Her theme was Jesus and his love, and she was ever ready to praise God and abase man. The word of God was the man of her counsel.

Her remains were laid to rest in the cemetery at Hunter, N. Y. to await the resurrection morn. The unworthy writer tried to speak to the comfort of the mourning friends as the Lord gave him utterance from Romans 10-4.

(Elder) AMASA J. SLAUSON

A life of marked usefulness and of devotion to husband, family, church and friends came to a close with the death of sister ACHSA BELLE DILL, wife of Charles Dill of Gardiner, Maine, who passed from this life September 22, 1947, after a long illness at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Harold H. Harriman in Farmingdale near Gardiner, Maine. The deceased was the daughter of Benjamin and Thelia Peacock, and was born June 8, 1869 at Richmond, Maine. She was, therefore, past 78 years of age.

She is survived by her husband, Charles E. Dill, Gardiner, Me., three sons, Charles H. Dill, Gardiner, Me.; J. Prescott Dill, Prentis, Me.; Earl Dill, Litchfield, Me.; six daughters, Mrs. Ralph E. Day, Machias, Me.; Mrs. Paul P. Emerson, Gardiner, Me.; Miss Anna Dill, Bound Brook, N. J.; Mrs. Walter Miller, Richmond Me.; Mrs. Warren Cates, Machias, Me.; and Mrs. Harold H. Harriman, Farmingdale, Me.

Sister Dill possessed an appealing personality which radiated cheer and thoughtfulness of others. Her exemplary life is a fitting monument to her memory. She united with the South Gardiner Old School Baptist Church in 1901, and during nearly half a century as a baptized believer her interest in the church reflected her zeal in the expression of her convictions and in ministering to her brethren and friends. She was a noble mother, a faithful wife and a sympathizing friend. She will be greatly missed by her brethren, her family and the community where she spent her long and useful life.

The funeral services were held Wednesday afternoon, September 24, at the Amesbury-White Funeral Home in Gardiner and the writer endeavored to speak words of comfort to the bereaved.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

THEODORE ADOLPHUS LAX was born October 8, 1870 and died March 29, 1947, age 76 years and 5 months. He was the son of John and Elizabeth Wade Lax and spent his entire life on the farm where he was born in Henry Co., Tenn. He was married to Tennie Ella Wilson Dec. 25, 1898 and to this union were born ten children. His wife preceded him in death in 1932. One son, Allen, also passed away in 1937. Brother Lax is survived by nine children and twenty-three grand children. Sons: John and Wade, Chicago, Ill., Stonewall and Travis, Buchanan, Tenn. Daughters: Mrs. Maggie Adams, Puryear, Tenn., Mrs. Lora Smith, Chicago, Ill., Mrs. Bedie Losel, Memphis, Tenn., Mrs. Earline Dill, Buchanan, Tenn., and Mrs. Leodie Rowlett, Paris, Tenn.

Brother Lax joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Hephzibah Church between the years of 1885 and 1890, and his name appears in the minutes of the union meeting as delegate in 1891, and every year from that time until he was too feeble to attend. He was chosen as a delegate to attend the Association and traveled extensively among the Baptists in Tenn., Ky., Ala., Ill., Ark., Miss., and Ind., and was ever faithful to his obligations. In May 1907 he was elected clerk of his church and served until his death. Brother Lax was firm in his views and strongly contended for the doctrine of salvation by grace and the absolute predestination of all things. He was a good father to his children and was ever willing to support any improvement of his community and worked faithfully for better schools and roads in his district.

The writer was called to attend his funeral and tried to comfort those that mourned by telling what brother Lax believed, why he believed and the certainty of the covenant of grace. The attendance at the funeral attested the standing of brother Lax among his neighbors. May the Lord bless all that mourn and bring us together in that place where there is no death.

(Elder) R. L. BIGGS

SPECIAL NOTICE

Beginning with the month of January, 1948 there will be held, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at 2:30 p. m. a meeting of Old School or Predestinarian Baptists for worship, third floor of Pythian Temple building, 1012 Ninth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Elder John D Wood, Minister. Those desiring to meet with us are welcome. For further information, call or write to

FRANK T. SIMPKINS,
5210 - H St.,
Dillon Park,
Washington, D. C.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Due to certain Post Office requirements in mailing the SIGNS, we find it necessary to discontinue the practice of enclosing subscription blanks just before subscription is due.

We sincerely hope our readers will closely watch the date on their wrappers and send in their renewals promptly.

R. Lester Dobson.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 116 RUTHERFORD, N. J., MARCH, 1948 No. 3

THE PATH

The path through the dark valley
We tread both night and day;
No one to hear our groans and cries,
All help seems far away.

We travel on in darkness,
No ray of light in sight;
When sin and Satan bind us
We pray to God for light.

We feel we are forever lost,
And hell must be our doom;
We pray to him for some relief,
That true and Holy One.

We feel to be a castaway,
It seems that God don't hear;
We want to walk that narrow way,
But the Holy One we fear.

We feel there is no hope for us,
O God! thy will be done;
The road that we must travel
Is that broad and lengthy one.

When we're cast down in darkness,
With sin and sorrow fear,
We want to pray in secret
When none but God is near.

When we feel we're sinking down
Not knowing help is near
We hear that still, small voice
I am with thee, do not fear.

If we can reach that heavenly home,
With God forever reign
Before we see that Holy One
We must be born again.

When the day dawns bright and clear
No darkness glooms the sky;
God whispers deep down in our heart
"Be not afraid 'Tis I."

When God reveals himself to us
Amazing grace we sing;
Then we feel we surely have
Indeed been born again.

A child of God is never lost
Only in carnal mind,
They surely will be blessed of Him
At His appointed time.

The power of love and mercy,
No sadness, sorrow, tears;
When God withdraws the comfort,
We are left in doubts and fears.

If we can reach that happy place
And be forever blessed,
Then we can see that Holy One,
With Him forever rest.

(Mrs.) MAUDE A. MORAN
1516 Patterson Ave., S. W.,
Roanoke, Va.

CORRESPONDENCE

"And of His fulness, have all we received, and grace for grace." John 1:16.

The writing of this article on the above scripture is connected with a rather peculiar circumstance. A few days ago I received a postal card postmarked Woodward, Iowa, which, besides my address and the name of the sender, contained only the above quotation from John's gospel. The writer signed his name W. J. Kimbro. It seemed evident to me that the writer had either known me personally or that he had heard of me, but he made no request that I express my views on the scripture quoted, nor gave any explanation whatever of his sending the card with just that quotation. At once I began searching my memory whether I had ever known brother Kimbro, and I remembered having met with an Old Baptist named Kimbro in my early ministry who, as I recall, was a member of one of the churches of the Bethel

Association here in southern Illinois. Although I was somewhat puzzled over the matter on reading the card, my mind seemed instinctly stirred up to write my views on the scripture quoted on the card, and now I am attempting to follow the lead of my mind feeling surely the hand of the Lord is in the matter. Trusting God from whom all my help cometh, I shall express what thoughts I may have as to the teaching of the text for the readers of the *Signs of the Times* to judge whether my understanding and interpretation of the words of John are in keeping with the inspired word of God and Christian experience.

According to the context John is speaking of Jesus, and he presents him to us as being a vessel or container that is filled with something which I shall mention in due time, and represents God's chosen and redeemed people as receiving of the fulness in Jesus, and that what they receive is grace and that they receive because of grace. The things with which Jesus is filled, and of which we receive, are mentioned in the New Testament scriptures by different writers. In the first chapter of John it is written, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same (Word) was in the beginning with God." The word "beginning" designates a particular time. John could not have meant the beginning of eternity for eternity had no beginning. Then he must have meant what we call time or measured duration for time did have a beginning. So in the beginning of time was the Word (LOGOS), and the Word (LOGOS) was God. And the Word (LOGOS) was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory as the glory of the only begotten Son of God, FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH. Grace and truth are some of the things that go to make up the fulness of Christ. God's children receive of the grace and truth that is in Jesus, and because of God's favor or grace, and there is no other fountain source of grace and truth besides Jesus, the great Vessel containing all the fulness of God, his Father. He is the fountain from which living water flows, yea, even the river, "the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God."

Israel, as it is written, forsook the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns: broken cisterns that could hold no water. Blindness in part happened unto national Israel, you know; none but those who are blinded would undertake to substitute a broken cistern of their own making for Christ, the living fountain, in whom all fulness dwells. Spiritual Israel, in their blindness, have been found doing as did national Israel, and we can trace their history by the broken cisterns they have made and had to discard some of them along the way. Yes, grace and truth, Jesus, was full of these, and it pleased the Father that in his Son, Jesus, all fulness should dwell; that is, the fulness or sufficiency of all spiritual blessings. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us (his children) with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him (Christ) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." So, the fulness of electing grace is in Jesus, and in him dwells all the fulness of the godhead bodily. God was manifest in the fleshly man, Christ Jesus, and was in him all of his divine fulness from his conception in his mother's womb. It was God, as the Logos, or Word of his (God's) power, that was in and with the man, Christ Jesus, enabling him to perform his

mighty works and the many miracles Jesus performed. Jesus acknowledged this as true when he said, I can of myself do nothing, and, my Father, he doeth the works. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Rom. 11:33.

The finite mind of man can no more sound the depth of the riches of the fulness of Christ than it can the fulness of God; for the fulness of Jesus is the fulness of God. God is manifest in the flesh of Jesus, in the fulness of all that God is; in all of his divine attributes, God, the Father, was in his Son in the fulness of divine power; in the fulness of divine love, mercy and truth, as well as divine wisdom and knowledge. No wonder the prophet of God said of Jesus, "He shall not fail." Isa. 42:4. How could the Son of God fail, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Col. 2:3. And dwelling in him was the fulness of the godhead bodily. Jesus was not an empty vessel; he was filled full of everything that pertains unto life and godliness, and that fulness is given to us poor, undeserving sinners by reason of divine power, and, the same as eternal life, it is given us in Christ Jesus our Lord, "and of his fulness, have all we received, and grace for grace." I have to believe that every one in whose behalf Jesus was filled with all the fulness of God, will surely receive every grace and every blessing that is in Jesus for them. What wonderful love and grace bestowed upon poor, sinful man, that we are on the receiving end of this wonderful ministration of God's grace in all its fulness that is in Jesus! And do you not remember, dear child of God, the time when you first experimentally received of the fulness of Christ? When he whispered sweet peace to you; when you had given up all hope and expectation of being delivered from the thraldom under the curse and condemnation of God's broken law; and as you verily believed were trying to pray your last prayer calling upon God for mercy? O, wonderful, wonderful peace; sweet peace the gift of God's love! That sweet peace was in Jesus for you, and you received it as the gracious gift of God's love and all sufficient grace. One wonderful thing about the fulness that is in Jesus is, that all his children, daily and hourly, receive and partake of his fulness, and yet he remains filled full and he is the fountain that can never be exhausted or his fulness diminished. This fact gives us the blessed assurance that he will supply all our needs out of his unwasted fulness. O how blessedly sweet and comforting to a poor wayfaring pilgrim, as he journeys on his weary way and encounters the fearful storms of life, to find in the fulness of Christ a refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Then can we sing with the spirit and with the understanding also;

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee!
Let the water and the blood,
From thy wounded side which flow'd,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r."

I shall never forget the time and place I first, experimentally, received of the fulness of my blessed Lord, and felt my sins forgiven. Just a little ragged boy, twelve years of age and fatherless; my father having died one year before. I have never been able to fully express with words, the joy and peace that came to me out of the God-prepared vessel of mercy. Day afted day have I gone back to that happy, hallowed spot, in mind, to get a few crumbs to help me on my way. Now as I wait in

the late evening of my fast receding earthly day at the age of eighty-one (almost), I feel the need of what a poor sinner receives of the fulness of Christ even more than in younger days. As our mortal powers begin to fail; so many of our kindred both in the flesh and in Christ are taken from us by death and we feel so lonely. O what would life mean to me were it not that I know that my Redeemer liveth, and with his fulness at the right hand of the Father, he is my Advocate with God and intercedes for me according to his Father's will. We may be called upon to drink from the bitter chalice of human experience, and wring out its dregs of sorrow and grief; but when the hand of divine power and mercy brings to our lips, experimentally, the God chosen and ordained vessel, full of everything we need to make life sweet, and the Spirit takes of the things that are in Jesus and sheweth them unto us, and we hear him saying, take of the water of life freely; receive of the fulness of Jesus and grace for grace. Yes, then hope revives thank God. My resurrection life is part of the fulness that is in Christ for his bride. Some sweet day I hope I shall receive that life and live again when I am, by the power of God, ransomed from the power of the grave, and redeemed from death as God has promised. Then all the fulness of Christ will fill the kingdom of God, prepared for his chosen people from the foundation of the world, and "when we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun; we've no less days to sing God's praise, than when we first begun." Throughout eternity the redeemed of the Lord will continue to receive of his undiminished fulness to the glory of God, the Father and our Savior Jesus Christ. A poor sinner. (Elder) C. M. WEAVER

(*Continued from Feb. issue.*)

I once moved into a strange community with my family. Soon found out that they had no Sunday school in the community. I set out at once to organize one. My neighbor said, "there was no use trying for they had tried different times but failed to accomplish anything." So I said, "we will make another effort. I will not live in a community where there is no Sunday school for my children to attend." He said, "all right I am for you." So I went to work, called the neighbors together, gave them a little talk and we organized a Sunday school. They made me superintendent, and that was just what I was fishing for so it moved along nicely under my management. During the reign of this Sunday school my brother that was in my first experience, who was an Old Baptist in belief, sold his farm in Texas and wrote me he was moving to Arkansas and would visit me on his way. I was delighted to have him come and spend a few weeks with me. I thought a great deal of him. I lived with him a number of years before I was married. I knew he was a better man than I was if he was an Old Baptist so I was bothered about how to manage my Sunday school while he was visiting me. I knew he would not attend nor did I want him to. He came and we enjoyed visiting together. Nothing much was said on religous subjects. I took my children and attended my Sunday school and he stayed at home. I was very careful when my neighbors would come to stay off of religious subjects. I did not want them to know that my brother believed in the Old Baptist doctrine. I was not ashamed of him but I was ashamed. of his doctrine. He spent all the fall with me. We would sometimes have a little religious spat, but I thought I would wind him up in short order, take

the glory to myself and go on. My brother did not go to Arkansas as he had planned but we both located for another year in the same community. During the time we were neighbors my dear wife passed away. Oh! great and marvelous are the ways of Him who set the ways of the events of time before time was born. Strange to say in a short time after my wife died a Predestinarian Baptist preacher came to visit my brother, and through respect to my brother and my mother's religion I went up to meet him. I heard him preaching the damnable doctrine, as I thought, to the folks before I got to the house and he did not seem to get the least excited when I got there. That man later became my father-in-law, but at that time I hated him and his doctrine with all the power that was ordained to Satan to administer to me. I told my brother if he was not so old I would whip him.

One day he and I took a stroll together to investigate some Sunday school literature, and from some cause I told him my experience when I hope the Lord appeared unto me. He looked at me and said, "Brother Green, (the first time he had ever addressed me as brother) I do not see how a man with the experience you have can hold to the rotten doctrine you do." In a few months he visited my brother again and I arranged an appointment for him at our school house for Sunday. I had not been to an Old Baptist meeting for more than twenty years. When I started to church I went to my brother's house. I asked the preacher when he opened the service if he would sing "Children of the heavenly king." He said, "I cannot sing, you can sing if you want to" so I did the best I could. I loved that old song and had since I was a child. The song was all there was to the service as far as I was concerned. This song is a great factor in my experience. On Monday following the meeting I went to the field to work. I was plowing cotton. About nine o'clock, I guess it was, I noticed myself humming this song. It seems that it passed from my mind. I plowed on for about an hour. I noticed again I was still humming that song. The same thing occurred again, then about eleven o'clock I was aroused and began to inquire, what is the matter I cannot forget this song? It kept pressing my mind until I became alarmed, and with great fear and trembling I said, "Lord, what is the matter?" Something said, go tell your experience. I said, where will I go? I stopped my team and as fast as thought could rehearse, my life pertaining to my church activities was all before me. It does not seem that I stopped to reason or consider what had taken place, but at once I began to loose my team from the plow and on my way to the house I said, "if that Old Baptist preacher is still at brother's I am going to have him baptize me." But he was gone. Oh, let me say here is where my troubles began. Surely the great apostle knew something when he said, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Yes, I was made willing to lay down all my works, in fact I was loosed from any connection whatever with any and all denominations. It seems I was freed from everything, just waiting for God to direct. While in this condition the words that came to me in the field, "go tell your experience" came again, this time with the interpretation, "go preach." I ignored it. I said, "no, it cannot mean that." I plead old age, ignorance, poverty and everything I could muster up, but the harder I would plead the tighter the impression would stick. I began to pray and try to reason with God, asking him to let this

impression pass away or give me a bright evidence. Right there in the belly of hell for weeks and months I stuck (and I may not be out yet) seeking places to hide that I might fall on my knees in secret before God to plead with him for relief some way. Often-times sending my precious children from home that I might be alone. Many times have I resorted to a cornfield between my house and brothers, there falling upon my face, vowing to God I would never get up until some kind of relief came. Did it come? No, I was forced to get up in shame and acknowledge myself defeated.

During this time of unknown suffering this Old Baptist preacher came back to visit my brother again. I did not know there was a soul on earth that knew anything of my suffering or the nature of it. I had learned that day that this preacher had come. I had put over a miserable day. My suffering was greater than I could bear. Late in the evening after my children had retired I thought I was going to die or lose my mind. Did not think I would ever see another sunrise. I had presence of mind enough that I went to the telephone and called my brother and asked him if he and the preacher would come down? He said, yes, and it seemed to give me a little relief. I took my seat in front of the door, and when they arrived after passing a few words the Old Baptist preacher said, "Brother Green, you had just as well give up, you will have to preach." Oh, how those words pierced my poor heart. My mouth was closed, I could not speak a word, but in the moonlight I could see the tears flowing down my brother's cheeks, and while the preacher talked to me these words came to me, "Get thee behind me, Satan," if it is God's will for me to preach I will do the best I can, and the load was lifted from my heart and soul, and immediately I said, "I am all right now, you can all go back home," so they did. I laid down, I do not know whether I was in a doze of sleep or not, but I saw before me a dormant man God had made and the sight was so beautiful that these words came, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." It was so glorious it seemed there was something in me that must come out. My mouth was closed, my face and jaws apparently began to swell. I arose out of bed hurriedly thinking something would burst. I rushed to the back end of the house praising God for what I had seen. How long this lasted I do not know. Some months later an opportunity presented itself and I united with the Primitive Baptist church.

On returning from the water to the church I was asked to open services which I did and the same day was licensed by the church to preach the gospel. Oh dear reader from that day to this I have been trying to preach and trying to quit. Sometimes on the mountain top but most of the time low down in the valley. Often-times vowing I will quit, but as the old prophet said, "his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forebearing, and I could not stay."

Dear children of God this is a true story of my experience. Can you fellowship my experience? I know you could not fellowship my sinful life. Do you think I am His or am I not? A word of encouragement from the least of God's children would be appreciated. "Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever, Amen." (Elder) W. N. GREEN

Route 7, Box 820, Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Enclosed you will find a letter written by James M. Cox of Memphis that I offer for your approval for publication in the *Signs*. I believe you and all that may read this will agree it is a message of truth as it so evidently seems to me to be. I hope he will not mind my saying he is my uncle by marriage, and I feel of a truth one that Jesus died for. He came forward during the two days annual meeting here in August, offered to the church Saturday night, was received and baptized Sunday morning by the much beloved Elder O. W. Perkins of Mayfield, Ky. You and all the dear children of God wherever they may be will be happy to know he has gone home to his friends telling what great things the Lord has done for him.

Uncle Jim, to most all that know him he is thus addressed, is seventy-five years of age and has the greater part of his life followed after the Old Baptists and is a strong believer in the doctrine of truth as it is in Christ Jesus. The meeting here to me was wonderful, the church being blessed to have Elder O. W. Perkins present as well as Reuben Harrison of Crane Creek Church near Martin, Tenn., and the much loved pastor of the little church, Elder H. G. Brown and many dear visitors and friends.

Dear Elder, your last letter to this poor one I hope always to keep among my dearest treasures. Only God knows how much comfort it was to me as well as all received from you. May God bless you always is my desire. Remember this little church here in your prayers, and if not asking too much if you can feel it in your heart to do so remember this poor sinner. Hoping in the mercy of a merciful God I am,

(Mrs.) LOUISE NEWMAN

938 Blythe St., Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." There seems to be two versions of this text, and I would like first to consider very briefly the more popular version. God so loved the world, meaning the entire Adamic race of mankind, that whosoever believe in him should have everlasting life. We are taught from our youth by parents, Sunday school teachers, and preachers throughout the land that there is a Christ, a Savior, and we are also taught that it is necessary to give our hearts to God, accept Christ as our personal Savior, be baptized and we shall be saved. This seems to be very reasonable and easily acceptable, and I can see no reason why all of the human race should not be saved, except possibly a few who are too stubborn to accept the Lord's pleadings, notwithstanding the Lord said that only a remnant should be saved. Then may I add—remain faithful to the Lord, attend church regularly in order to help the Lord to save lost souls, and in the end you may be housed in heaven.

Now I do not mean to criticize this plan of salvation in the least. Jesus speaking said, "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring." I believe there are good, honest, Christian people in all the many churches, however the Lord did not intend that we should all see these things in the same light. Consequently our opinions may differ to some extent.

Now we would like to consider the other version by people who practice and believe in an all wise God, the Creator and builder of all things, and who declared the end from the beginning; who created the heavens and the earth, and

the fulness thereof saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." "God so loved the world" I believe mentioned here is the world that Christ came to save and not the entire Adamic race of mankind. We find that God had an elect or chosen people before the foundation of the world, possibly thousands of years before man inhabited the earth. Why the Lord chose a part of mankind and did not accept all to be saved is known only to God, and we have no right to question him or his authority or to say unto him why doest thou. "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." John 6:38-39. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." John 15:16. You see man has no part in this choice, it is all the work of the Lord. Poor puny man is unable to control his own thoughts for one fleeting moment. Man is nothing, less than nothing and altogether vanity. What power has such a man to control his own destiny? I would like to make a little comparison. We will send a man to an orchard to gather a basket of apples. He may gather any apples that he desires, red, yellow, green or what have you, and bring them in. Now we will say to this man select from this basket any of the apples you may choose. The apples left in the basket are just like the ones chosen. They are no better or no worse than when they were all brought in. Is this man unjust because he did not choose all the apples? It does not seem so.

Man's mission in the world is to seek health and happiness and the means of sustenance. He is born in sin but the natural man does not realize that he is a sinner, and goes through life in this condition unless or until the Lord causes him to realize his condition. The spirit of the Lord is upon him. He realizes for the first time that he is a sinner and that he is in a lost and ruined condition without the helping hand of the Lord, but when the Lord is revealed to him it is then he is made to rejoice with an unspeakable joy, and it is then he can and does believe on the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ whom He has sent, as in the text. I may have been wrong in my ideas on many points on this subject, but am just following my mind and am submitting same to your judgment or criticism.

I would like to express a few thoughts of a more personal nature if permitted. I have had many questions from time to time as to my church affiliations, and must say that I do not have a membership in any church. However I am usually called "Hardshell" or Primitive Baptist by people that know me best and I am glad to accept this challenge. They have been good to me and I have a love for them that cannot be expressed in words. Distance is scarcely too great for me to go to be among them and hear them speak of the great work of the Lord. I sometimes think that perhaps I am imposing on them, occupying space among them that could be occupied by others more worthy than I. Then I think of what Ruth said, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." I have no way of knowing whether I am among those that the Lord remembered in that selection before the foundation of the world

except by that little unexplainable feeling within me that sometimes causes me to rejoice when meditating on the wonderful work of the Lord. Yet there are many times that it seems I am in a bottomless pit from whence no light can penetrate until that guiding hand lifts me out. For many years I have felt to be as one among them, and have had a desire to have a name with them, but always felt too unworthy to even ask to have a name with them.

I am leaving this little message with you to meditate on when it goes well with you. I feel that the Lord has been good to me, and has spared my life through these many years of toil and tribulations. I believe that according to nature I cannot be with you a great while, being past seventy-five years, but I have a little hope that when I am done here below that the Lord may have a place prepared for me. A friend. JAMES COX

Route 8, Box 447, Tampa 4, Fla.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I enclose money-order for $3, two of which to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times,* and the balance to use as you see fit. I enjoy the *Signs* very much and find good gospel truth in it. I want to thank you for your book on the Resurrection of the Dead and I can agree with you on your view of it for I am not looking for my old clay body to be resurrected, but it will be fashioned like unto His glorious body and all of my carnal principles will be left in the earth for they are only for this time world. I do not see anything to quarrel about over the resurrection any way for Paul, the apostle, wrote, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." If he did not know, and it was a mystery to him, I do not think we are more enlightened than he on the subject. As for the new birth, Elder Seth Bynum wrote my views, conviction and experience on it in your February 1947 issue of the *Signs.* I was so carried away with his article that I wrote him and received a nice letter from him filled with truth.

We are having some good meetings and I will say we are at peace. God is good to us and blesses us to have our meetings each month although there are only a few of us. Our small Association, the Mt. Enon, has had several splits we are sorry to say, but God had a purpose in that also. We stand for salvation by grace and grace alone. He does his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and there is no one to stay his hand. He has never wanted for anything because he is all power, the powers that be are ordained of God and he saves to the uttermost. What makes me quake and tremble is, am I one of his? I am so vile so prone to sin but yet I have a hope and as Paul said, "But by the grace of God I am what I am." I have never done anything good, I have been a vile persecutor of the faith. I was reared in the home of Old Baptists but how I used to hate it and how I did belittle it to my dear old mother and now it is all I have. My father and mother were both of that faith and I do not know why but it worried me from my youth up. I went with them to meeting and would hear the preacher speak and I could see his face shine and be illuminated by the Holy Ghost. Then I would say if I could preach like that I would not mind, but then I would go off with the devil and abuse the faith.

I tried to help the Lord, but one time he opened my eyes and I saw myself as I was and what I must be by grace. Then I begged for mercy and that is what every one of his tried ones will cry for—mercy not justice for they do not want justice, they want mercy. I left that country, that of my youth, and came down here and it was almost a year before I was made willing to go and ask the people for a home. I did not feel like they would have me, but when I saw all of my works destroyed I had nothing to lean on so I had to go and they received me for baptism. I have been with these people ever since and they have been so good to me and placed too much confidence in me. I hope God will keep me and that I will never bring disgrace on these people for they took me in out of the cold and gave me a home when I had no place to lay my head. Will close with these scattered remarks. May the God of grace keep you and yours is the prayer of the unworthy. I am sending you one of our minutes and invite you one and all to visit us.

S. D. MURPHY

1008 E. Allen Ave., Ft. Worth, Texas

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, EDITOR: Enclosed find $3 for our subscription another year and $1 for the Poor of the Flock. We want to tell you of the wonderful meeting we were permitted to attend the third Sunday in Sept. beginning the Friday before.

My husband, Elder W. A. Little, and I left home Friday morning and were met at Abilene, Texas and conveyed to the meeting-house near Lawn, Tex. The preaching was all with one accord to give praise and glory to the God of all grace. We heard twenty-four sermons in those three days. We felt like saying, "And in this mountain (church) shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people (all his elect) a feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." Our hearts leaped with joy as we heard His wonderful truths proclaimed. It seemed the day was here when the prophet had said, "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah (*or the gospel church*); We have a strong city: salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." We felt strong and that the Lord had remembered Zion and had given her a strong defense. The brethren and sisters were so strongly knit together in love and sweet fellowship.

A dear, precious brother, Elder John Shipman, was received into the full fellowship of Pilgrims Rest Church and did some able preaching, also Elder C. Y. Osteen and Elder C. U. Landers. Oh, that our people would be humbled down to confess their wrongs one to another and come in humbleness of Spirit to be reconciled one to another, and not to be backbiting and trying to bring some new invention that will divide the flock. We are commanded to "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee," but with fear we may say something not prudent, we should be careful.

We only wanted to tell you of our lovely meeting. We returned home Sunday night and found all well. My mother who is eighty-four years old and is a cripple was waiting for me at home. She fell and broke her hip three years ago and can only walk on crutches which makes it very hard for me to leave her and be gone any length of time. She lives with us. The dear Lord opened up a way for me to attend this meeting and I feel so thankful for all

his wonderful mercies, that is I hope I do. May the Lord bless Zion in bringing our people in love and sweet fellowship. We are few in number in this part of Texas, but we feel we want to be contending for the truth as it is in our dear Savior. He is the way, the truth and the life, and without him we can do nothing. Yours in hope.

(Mrs.) MINNIE C. LITTLE

1406 Randolph Ave., Greensboro, N. C.

MRS. BEATRICE HAAN, MY DEAR AND ESTEEMED SISTER IN THE LORD: Somehow I feel that you are, regardless of your trials and sorrows, reconciled to God's will. When blessed to do so, I believe that all things which come to pass, even what men call evil and wicked, are only fulfilling God's purposes. I have said that I dreaded meeting the dangers which are before me and mine, but I hope I am conscious of this truth, that when I am afraid of the tribulations which God in his mercy promised his people, I am not reconciled to his will. When we are reconciled to his blessed will we also feel reconciled to every trial and cross, remembering that God's children are chosen in a furnace of affliction. It is only when we are reconciled to his will that we can say with Paul that, "We glory in tribulations also: that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost."

The Lord alone knows what his children need. I often feel that it takes the rod always to keep me anywhere near where I should be. Sometimes I feel satisfied, and not only satisfied, but desire, if not mistaken, that he do with me and mine according to his holy and righteous will in everything and all is well. It is then I feel to confess that "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." In nature it is impossible for one to love the rod. These words are sometimes sweet to me.

"When I am made in love to bear
Affliction's needful rod;
Light, sweet and kind the strokes appear,
Through fellowship with God."

When we can see and understand that the rod is sent in mercy, in correction and in refining his chosen in Christ, we are, by the grace of God, prepared to say, "All things work together for good to them that love God." We feel a desire to thank him for the bitter as well as the sweet, because we cannot separate the "all things." They work together for good to those who are chosen in the furnace of affliction for Christ's sake. When I am blessed to believe this I am perfectly satisfied with my lot, hoping and trusting that all is well even with me, who am not worthy to claim kin with God's people, who are dearer to me than my own life or anything the world affords. May this great and awful God remember us in mercy. Your sister in hope.

(Mrs.) MARY E. WRAY

Route 4, Fayetteville, Tenn.

DEAR EDITORS, SIGNS OF THE TIMES: It has been a long time since I wrote you but now I find myself, unworthy though I am, trying to write you, thanking you for being so kind to me by sending me the *Signs* which has been enjoyed so very much. You, together with the Associate Editors, write so wonderfully of Jesus and his love toward poor sinners. That is all the preaching I have had for so long for during mother's long illness I did not leave her to go anywhere I could help. I wanted to be present to wait on her in case she needed something. Now that

God has seen fit to take her unto himself I hope I may go to church again although I am not well. I have had high blood pressure which has caused me much suffering.

I want to be submissive to the will of Him that is the way, the truth and the life. To him be all praise. I am enclosing mother's obituary and will appreciate its publication very much. Brother and I are so much alone without her. Pray for us when at a throne of God's rich grace that we may live as she would have us do and honor the God she loved. May God's richest blessings be with you. A poor girl saved by grace if at all.

(Miss) WILLIE SISCO

6915 Laredo St., Houston 10, Texas

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR ELDER DODSON: In the notice sent you for publication in the *Sign of the Times,* October issue, an error was made in the name of the church which should read Shepherd Fold instead of Shepherd Flock. Will you please make the correction and make revision in the name of the clerk. Since the church was constituted a change has been made so that Mrs. Irene Wisenbaker is permanent clerk. We would like these changes made so that when the church directory is published everything will be correct.

Elder W. O. Beene is our Pastor and Elder Ben B. Walston, Assistant Pastor. We have bought a lot to build a meeting-house on and will appreciate any help that it pleases the Lord to send us. If you see fit, please make a notice of our appeal. All contributions can be sent to Elder W. O. Beene, 1005 Vincent St., Houston, Texas.

We are few in number. Have had one addition. We will be very glad to have a building of our own as it will give us more meeting privilege. Please remember us in your prayers when it goes well with you. Your sister in bonds of love if one at all.

(Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER

Route 2, Box 124, Forest, Miss.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am enclosing $2 to extend my subscription for another year. I do not want to miss a single copy for there is so much comfort in the *Signs.* I also want to thank you for the book "Resurrection of the Dead." I have read it through and enjoyed it so much. Respectfully,

(Miss) MARTHA G. McWHORTER

---

330 White Oak Drive, Minden, La.

ELDER R. L. DODSON: It is time for me to renew my subscription to the dear *Signs.* I must say it is food and drink to me, a poor needy creature, a sinner wholly and solely dependent on the grace and mercy of an all wise, all sovereign omnipotent God. I have just finished reading Elder C. W. Vaughn's wonderful article on Acts 8: 18-21. Surely if I know my heart it is exactly what I believe or hope I do. I do not think I could believe it otherwise. I was made to rejoice and felt so glad to read the poetry written by Elder C. M. Weaver as I had the privilege of meeting him and hearing him preach many years ago. I do not want to be without the *Signs* as long as I live and can pay for it.

(Mrs.) C. SHACKELFORD

Written by
MRS. LEONA TUTTLE
3379½ - 30th St., San Diego, Cal.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

"Hark! don't you hear the turtle dove,
The token of redeeming love?
From hill to hill we hear the sound,
The neighboring valleys echo round;
O Zion hear the turtle dove,
The token of your Savior's love."

My Savior has been so close to me recently and my mind led to dwell, to

search, to study and meditate upon those deep things revealed only by and through him. I would like to share it with those of like faith. Because of circumstances beyond my control, and certainly against my wishes, I find myself far from my church (militant). Arriving in this southern city my son had provided a beautiful place for me to live, and for the past two weeks I am awakened by the call of a turtle dove nearby my window. Who can doubt that in all the diversified steps of the children of God, each step is ordained? And so, although separated in the flesh I know I am as one in spirit with you and in the hope of his mercy, and to me it is significant that the flesh cannot be reconciled to God. We must all travel through the land of Esau, and only at the final resurrection is the body joined (reconciled) to the spirit. In God's wisdom and eternal plan he orders the steps that faith might have her perfect work. Christ himself came not to do his will, but the will of the Father who sent him, and so we are taught that lesson in the garden of Gethsemane with Christ—"not my will, but thine, be done." He ordained of old the plan for salvation, and he knew and purposed that no human flesh could, of his own efforts, reach forth and live forever; that eternal life is a free gift by the mercy, love and grace of the one true and living God. He gave a law and we find in Deut. 5, "For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?" We find in Daniel the hand writing on the wall, every one weighed in the balances and found wanting, and Peter says in Acts 10, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." The Lord told Peter, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." In Colossians second chapter we learn that Jesus is the one who blotted out the handwriting of written ordinances against us and took it out of the way, nailing it to the cross. Then I would say to those who persecute their brethren read Rom. 14:4, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand."

(*Continued in next issue.*)

Laurens, Iowa

EDITOR SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR BROTHER: I am enclosing $2 for subscription to *Signs of the Times.* I have been a subscriber to this good Baptist paper for a number of years. So thankful for the Lord's watch care over me all these years. Hope you and family are well. Your sister in faith.

ANNIE E. PUTNAM

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. L. Campbell, Tenn., $1; Mrs. S. S. Kerley, Ill., $1; J. Bratten, Md., $2; Mrs. M. J. Ege, N. J., $3; A. S. Roberson, N. C., $1; J. A. Beard, Fla., $1; Mrs. C. Twilley, Md., $2; W. J. Kimbro, Ia., $1; Mrs. M. E. Holloway, Md., $3; Eld. R. L. Biggs, Tenn., $1; Mrs. H. E. Danks, Cal., $2; D. H. Bradley, Tex., $8; Mrs. S. E. Shortridge, Ill., $10; L. B. Hylton, W. Va., $1; Mrs. L. Young, Tenn., $2; Eld. L. D. Rose, Tex., $3; Mrs. C. M. Richardson, Va., $3; M. F. Dunlap, Me., $2; G. S. Weider, Va., $1; Mrs. R. S. Craig, Va., $1; E. C. Dean, Mo., $1; A friend, Mich., $3; Mrs. R. C. Wright, Tex., $1; G. A. Paul, Ala., $5; Eld. W. D. Griffin, Ala., $1; Mrs. D. Deal, Mo., $3; C. Willard Dodson, Va., $3; J. C. Beard, Tex., $1; A. B. Yelvington, Fla., $1; Mrs. D. S. Reid, N. C., $2; Mrs. M. Finch, N. Y., $1; Mrs. S. L. Taylor, Pa., $3; L. M. Stephenson, N. C., $1; Mrs. B. L. McCoy, Del., $1; Mrs. L. M. Beebe, N. Y., $10; Mrs. S. O. Wilson, Tenn., $1; Mrs. J. C. Whidden, Fla., $3; Mrs. D. Yeisley, Wash., $1.

EDITORIAL

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

"John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." John I:15-17.

John, in writing the testimonies of Jesus and God manifest in the flesh, takes up the matter from the beginning and relates what God was in the beginning, and also the relations that were in the Trinity and by whom all things were made, where life was and the life was the light of men.

We have the declaration that the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, and when the end of the law came for righteousness God sent a man whose name was John to bear witness of that light, that all men through him might believe. All men that believe are quickened by him, and it is God's work that men believe on Jesus Christ whom the Father hath sent, which embraces every kindred, tribe and tongue to as many as are called out from the world to serve the living God. I will call my sheep by name and lead them out. All we have expressed was grace given in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, to every one whose name was written in the Lamb's book of life for an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away, but is reserved in heaven; and according to that grace Jesus quickeneth them, and for that grace they are manifested in the exercise of faith and grace, for that grace is given that every one that is born of God has Christ in them and the hope of glory. "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power." Col. 2:9-10.

We note the apostle Paul said, "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge." I Cor. 1:4-5. "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath." Mat. 13:9-12. The grace of God makes the child wise unto salvation, and he hears what the Spirit saith unto the churches; the Holy Ghost takes of the things of the children of God and shows them unto the child of grace, which is the fulness of him, grace for grace. The unregenerate can only perceive with the natural or carnal mind, and from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

We believe Jesus was having direct reference to the sons of men having carnal minds and natural perceptions to behold the works manifested, but could not enter into the realities of the life that produced the power to live in them, and the apostle said, "It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities. For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me. And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." 2 Cor. 12:1-10. We believe the apostle Paul was made an ensample to the gospel ministry that God appointed to go in and out before the church of God throughout all generations; and our experiences prove to the hearts of all that are exercised by the realities of the Spirit that openeth to them, and showeth unto them the beauties and glory of God, which are not animations of the flesh, or to appear before men and be popular; but in fear and trembling the servant of God will meet with the people of God feeling to be the least of all saints if one at all; and when the time comes, and the necessity laid upon him he is driven to the task, and to his surprise a door of utterance is opened to him and he speaks from the abundance of his heart to the edification of the church of God; when the meeting is closed that servant is made to praise God from his heart, for He was a present help to him and delivered his soul from the horrors of being a castaway, and tuned his heart to sing God's praise which was embraced by the apostle John in our text —grace for grace—which was given in the fulness of God's grace in Christ Jesus.

For over fifty years we have experienced and tasted the Word of life, and often we are much encouraged to press on for the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, ever looking unto him who is the author and finisher of the Christian's faith. We feel to express to all the *Signs* family that the blessings of God rest with you all in this New Year, remembering us in your prayers.

C. W. V.

.... NOAH AND THE ARK ....

Brother J. H. Calk, Bastrop, La., has asked that we write on Noah and the Ark and what they represent; he also wants to know if the raven represents the sin of man and the dove the Spirit of God that dwelleth in his children.

We do not know whether we will be able to answer all of his questions satisfactorily or not, but such as we have, give we unto our brother and our readers in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We know of a truth that without him we can do nothing. Our understanding is that Noah was a true prophet of God and a preacher of righteousness. Paul tells us that "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house: by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Heb. 11:7. When "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually," (Gen. 6:5) he said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Gen. 6:7-8. For purposes of his own God determined to preserve a posterity on the earth after the flood had destroyed every living creature upon the earth, and this was to be brought about by the building of an ark which would keep securely all that he would command to go into it. God supervised the building of the ark and prescribed not only the plan and dimensions, but also specified the kind of material of which it was to be built, and it was to be pitched both within and without with pitch. Knowing how complete the destruction of the flood would be, the ark must be made secure in every sense of the word, so that when Noah and his three sons, and all of their wives, together with two (male and female) of every kind of living creature entered the ark, "and the Lord shut him in," there could be no question whatever but what they would be preserved safely, even though the flood waters would cover the highest peaks of the highest hills and mountains, and being pitched within and without with pitch the waters would not be able to seep in to do harm to a single one of his creatures.

The Ark was undoubtedly a type of Christ, and God's foreknowledge embracing all things, as it did, he foresaw the awful and complete destruction the floods of sin would bring upon the human family, and therefore, determined to glorify himself and lift the name of Jesus forever on high by choosing his people in Christ before even the foundations of the earth were laid. In this way they were to be preserved in Christ Jesus and kept safely in his bosom despite all that devils could do. Those who are made aware of the security that is in God's blessed Son will never cease to sing his praise and to laud it above everything that this vain world has ever known. As God made a covenant with Noah in that antediluvian age whereby he was to save him and his house, a type of God's elect people, who were to be preserved in the ark, which as before said was a type of Christ, so following the end of that age, there was to be "The Ark of the Covenant" under the law age. This sacred object was a chest of acacia wood overlaid with pure gold. A wonderful description of this ark appears in the twenty-fifth chapter of Exodus, in case our readers wish to refer to it. Here, again, it beautifully typifies Christ. While it was made of soft wood, it is claimed that it was incorruptible and would not rot, thus portraying in a most wonderful manner the humanity of our Lord, which knew no sin and saw no corruption. And the fact that this

wood was overlaid within and without with pure gold, signified that the humanity of our Lord would be clothed with his divinity. An ark or a chest is designed to contain valuable treasures. How true it is that all of our treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and the riches of God's grace, are stored up for his people in Christ Jesus. We can only hint at some of the most outstanding significations of this ark. In it was to be placed the testimony, showing that only Jesus would be able to keep the law; and on this ark, in the same identical dimensions, rested the mercy-seat, made of pure gold. This shows conclusively to us that every particle of mercy which will ever be extended to a poor sinner in this world will have for its foundation Christ Jesus the Lord. There is no other basis for mercy to rest upon, for other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

In the two ends of the mercy-seat was to be made two cherubims, and of beaten gold were they to be made. This *beaten* gold is full of significance. The cherubims were to be so placed as to be facing each other, both looking down upon the mercy-seat, which rested upon the Ark of the Covenant, and there God told Moses he would commune with him "of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel." Do not these cherubims portray in some wonderful sense the Old and the New Testament Scriptures, one looking forward and prophesying of the coming of Christ and testifying before hand his sufferings, death and resurrection, and the glory that would follow, while the other looks back and declares that he came and fulfilled in every jot and tittle all that was foretold of him, and do they not both agree that Jesus is the one and only mediator between God and man. We rejoice to know that as God looks upon his people as they are presented unto him by his Son, there is none that can lay anything to their charge, for in the complete and finished work of Jesus they stand perfect, and without spot, wrinkle or any such things, before God in love. Is it any wonder then that this Ark of the Covenant was held to be so sacred by the Israelites? And when it was captured by their enemies and taken away from them, they were in great distress and could have no peace, day or night, until it was back in their possession. We believe it beautifully represents Christ, who is the true subtance to his people here in this gospel age. When Christ, crucified and risen, is preached in demonstration of the Spirit and with power from on high, as the way, the truth, and the life, God's people are satisfied and contented, but where he is not presented as their all and in all, they are woefully disturbed and unhappy. The Ark of the Covenant while in possession of Israel's enemies was invariably a source of unending trouble among them. So much so that they would have to call a council for devising ways and means of ridding themselves of it. Likewise, when Christ is preached to-day as a complete Saviour, and the one and only means of salvation for sinners, cries of opposition go up all over Christendom against such preaching. The so-called religious world is constantly proclaiming that God has done all that he can to save the world from anguish and endless woe, and they insist that the only possible way of escape is for the creature to accept Christ as his personal Saviour, before it is too late. How sad, indeed, is the state of those who know not our Lord! Jesus said to his disciples, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many

prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them." We are indeed most wonderfully blessed when we, by faith, can see clearly that the apostles in the New Testament have supplied us with irrefutable bulwarks of evidence that Jesus finished the work of redemption, once and for all time, for his people, who were chosen in him before the world was made, and even though the world pass away, never will they be separated from him, their glorious head. This is a precious doctrine to believe and be established in.

Among the questions asked by our brother are what does the raven and the dove signify. We cannot say that we have ever been given much thought on their significance in this instance, nevertheless, it would seem that since the raven is an unclean bird, it could well represent the unregenerate or non-elect. We are told that the raven "went forth to and fro" and did not return into the ark. As it feeds upon carrion it may well have lighted upon one or more of the dead bodies floating upon the waters, from which it received its sustenance and rested its foot and, therefore, it was not necessary for it to return into the ark. On the other hand, the dove is a clean bird. It feeds upon seeds found on the ground, and since the waters had not subsided there was no place for it to rest the sole of its foot, hence of necessity it had to return not only to the ark but had to be taken into the ark. This bird typifies regenerated souls, or the elect of God, hence it is said "she returned unto him into the ark, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth: then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark." Gen. 8:9. We like this putting forth his hand, and taking hold of her, and verily pulling her in unto him into the ark. Marvellous, ideed, is it when a heaven born soul, who is weary and heavy laden with the burdens which have to be borne by a Christian in this sin cursed world, at the very time when he feels dejected and undone and can find no place to lay his head, is taken hold of by the Holy Spirit and pulled in unto Him who is an hiding place, the ark of grace. David said, "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God."

We trust what has been said will prove thought stimulating upon the glorious things which are presented to us in the gospel, and that our readers will have the blessed assurance of their final acceptance with the Father, by and through the atoning blood of his beloved Son who is the ark of salvation to all who believe on his most precious name. R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTER

Written by Elder H. H. Lefferts and adopted by the Delaware River Association May 29-30, 1947.

DEAR BRETHREN: The Lord being our helper in the way of wisdom and understanding, we shall attempt to set before you some thoughts on the subject of Christian charity. The thirteenth chapter of I Cor. is the most outstanding scripture on this subject, yet there are many texts throughout the gospels and the epistles bearing on the same. It is to be regretted that in all the versions of the New Testament since that of 1611, the word "charity" has been changed to read "love." While true charity and love are inseparably

joined, there is a distinction; and it is a distinct loss when "charity" is translated as "love" in our Bibles. Charity is love in action. It is the outflowing of love to the redeemed people of God, and of goodwill even to those not in the covenant of grace. It is very much as that river which John saw flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb, blessing all wherever it comes; and likewise as that river whose streams make glad the city of God in Psalms 46:4. It blesses him that gives and him that receives. Further, it is sad that in these days now present, the word "charity" has lost its ancient savor and has been debased to mean giving away something. The mere act of giving something to somebody is nowadays taken for charity, no matter how disinterested, cold and indifferent may be the motive of the giver. It is very possible to do much giving and yet be utterly devoid of true charity. "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." Plainly Paul believed one could possibly give away all their worldly goods in what would seem a good cause for humanity's sake, yet be without true charity altogether. Likewise, one might suffer martyrdom for some good cause, yet charity be not at all concerned in the matter. Charity is not self-seeking nor self-pleasing. It rejoices not in iniquity but in truth. It isn't suspicious, thinketh no evil. Charity cannot be given away. It enriches him who gives as well as him who receives. The giver is not made poorer by giving, but there is a stunting of one's soul in withholding. This very deeply searches all our hearts to know what spirit we are of in all association with our brethren in the church as well as in the ministry of the gospel. Charity singles out the objects that are most miserable. It "visits the widows and the fatherless" and not the rich and prosperous, but those in affliction. Charity to the poor must be done as an act of worship, out of respect to God. Pure religion in the sight of God abounds not in ceremonies but in charity which is the bond of perfectness. (Collossians 3:14.) "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." Luke 14:12-14. "To do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Heb. 13:16.

True charity is sacrifice; not a sin-offering, but a thank-offering to God. One of the chief glories in the Godhead, says one of the old Puritan writers, is the unweariedness of his love and bounty. He visits the widows and the fatherless, so should we. The spirit of our religion is forgiving. A cruel, hard heart is said by Paul to be a kind of "denying of the faith." I Tim. 5:8. "If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." We cannot do the least duty toward God unless there is some self-aim in it. This is our infirmity. We make our giving many times to be a kind of selling, and mind our own advantage in our charity. To visit the rich widows is a courtesy; to visit the poor, and that in their affliction, is charity. Charity is the "bond of perfectness." It is the tie that binds all the ministrations of the Spirit. Paul, after speaking of the various gifts dispensed by the Holy Spirit to the church

in I Cor. 12th chapter, concludes with "yet show I unto you a more excellent way," and then follows that wonderful hymn to charity in chapter thirteen. All these gifts of the Spirit are perfect gifts, yet without charity outflowing from love to God, his truth and his people, the gifts are not profitable either to the church or to the giver. Certainly they are of no merit in the sight of God without his love permeating them. Hence, charity is the living bond uniting and tying together all the perfectness of his spiritual gifts to his people, which are for the edifying of the Body of Christ. Furthermore, while faith and hope now abide with us who believe, in this present world, charity exceeds them. This is because when faith shall give place to sight at the coming of the Lord when we shall then see him as he is and be like him, and when hope shall give place to fruition at the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, charity shall not be affected thereby except to do way with partial experience of it to make way for all of its fulness, whence charity shall abide to all eternity with the redeemed of God in his holy and glorious presence where there is no further need for either faith or hope. Yet that is not all. Charity exceeds faith and hope because charity gives vigor to both even now. Faith works by love, without charity faith is not active. And hope is but speculation unless charity activates hope in a sincere and loving desire and expectation for the object of our hope, Christ Jesus the Lord. Brethren, how deeply do these things search our hearts? Let us examine ourselves whether we be in the faith. Hypocrites thrive on a bare profession but shun the light of truth which exposes their make-believe. Are we the doers of the Word or hearers only? Have we the theory of true religion only, without its practice which is faith, hope and charity? Who is a doer of the truth? Jesus says it is the one who comes to the light that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God. (John 3:21.) The doer of the truth desperately desires to know how he stands in the sight of a just and holy God, is not primarily concerned how he stands with men. The doer examines himself whether he be in the faith, whether his works are wrought in God, whether he is accepted with God in the beloved Son, whether his love is real and fervent, whether the outpouring of his love in true charity is of a self-seeking, self-pleasing sort or is a denial of self's aims and pleasures in a real desire to serve God and do all to his honor and glory. If we be doers of the truth, by his grace, then have we his approval for Jesus said: "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him to a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock." Matt. 7:24-25. But to write these things to you and if, in so doing, we are paying lip-service to the truth, we are guilty of the rankest hypocrisy in claiming such "doing" for ourselves. Surely, we are admonished to speak the truth in love to him who errs. To speak the truth in love is to do three things: first, in love to God; second, in love to his word; third, in love to his people. To qualify us to speak the truth in love to his people, there must first be a sincere, fervent love to God, then a full-hearted devotion to his truth, which together will result in dispensing the truth in love to all them that believe.

May your associational meeting this year be one in which love to God and

charity toward the household of faith and all believers, may abound to the glory and honor of God, to the upholding of his Word, and to the edification and comfort and instruction to the children of God.

(Elder) C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator
M. W. RAULSTON, Clerk

MEMORIAL

Whereas, God has by death removed our Deacon, brother George F. Adkins, from this life: Brother Adkins was clerk of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association for many years. He is sadly missed both by the Church and the Association and be it

Resolved, that we be reconciled to God's holy will. We know our loss is his eternal gain and be it

Resolved, that this tribute to the memory of our loved one be written in the minutes of this Association, that copy be sent to his devoted companion, Sister Laura A. Adkins, also a copy be published in the **Signs of the Times.**

Written by order of this Association convening with the Snow Hill Church, October 22 and 23, 1947.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER, Moderator
MAUD T. LAWS, Clerk
WILLIAM S. ADKINS, Asst. Clerk

MEMORIAL

MR. SAMUEL W. SHIPWAY, who died on June 3, 1947, had attended meetings of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in New York City for many years. He was highly esteemed by the members of the church.

At a recent meeting of the church, brother Wm. D. Chapman read the following tribute to his memory. I am sure we all mourn the passing of Mr. Shipway. The thought that we will never have him to meet with us again is saddening indeed. Mr. Shipway and I always sat side by side at our meetings and of late years, when his health was failing, we were always glad whenever he felt able to attend. As I think of him the thought comes to me, when will we meet his like again? Let us remember him as a fine Christian gentleman and an humble follower of the dear Savior. I hope and believe he has entered into the rest that remaineth to the people of God.

W. D. CHAPMAN

BOOK WANTED

Will any one having a copy of Hassell's Church History they care to part with please write

BECKIE McLACHLIN
215 Colborne St.,
London, Ont., Canada

OBITUARIES

ELDER DOUGLAS L. TOPPING departed this earthly life suddenly, due to a heart attack, in the morning of September 18, 1947 at the home of his brother-in-law, our brother, C. Walter Norman, Herndon, Va. He was born Oct. 2, 1873 near Hallwood, Va., son of James and Hetty Ann Topping. He was married in early life to Mrs. Emma F. Smith. To them was born one daughter, Mrs. Mary Jeffrey who survives. Other survivors are two grandsons and three great-grandsons. Mrs. Topping died Feb. 4, 1942. March 20, 1943 Elder Topping married sister Elizabeth Norman who sorrowfully survives him.

He was baptized in May 1899 by the late Elder J. T. Rowe into the fellowship of Ebenezer Church, Baltimore, Md. He served the church as Deacon for a time and was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry in May 1928 at the close of the session of the Baltimore Association held that year with church of his membership. After the death of Elder John G. Eubanks, July 18, 1926 he supplied the Rock Springs Church in Lancaster Co., Pa. until called to the pastorate of that church May 27, 1928. His first appointment with that church was during the absence of Elder Eubanks, the regular pastor, June 27, 1926. The last time Elder Topping was at the Rock Springs Church was during the session of the Delaware Association held with that church in August 1947. Rock Springs was the first to call for his services after his ordination, and his last visit to them was when he served as Moderator at the 1947 session of the Delaware Association held with that church.

For a number of years he served Salem Church in Philadelphia, Broad Creek Church in Delaware and Shiloh Church in Washington, D. C. In June after the death of Elder Rowe in Feb. 1936, Elder Topping was called to the pastoral care of the Ebenezer and Black Rock Churches, which together with Rock Springs, he served until the time of his being taken away from the earth. He was faithful in every relationship of life in his family, in his business or in the church. His services were not confined to the pulpit, but as well in the homes of his brethren and of those who loved the truth. He not only preached the Word but lived it in his life, walk and conversation. His deportment shed forth a goodly savor which evidenced the fact that he had been with Jesus and learned of him.

Funeral services were held in the meeting-house in Baltimore, Sept. 20, 1947. Ministers present were D. V. Spangler, R. L. Dodson. H. M. Bennett, C. W. Vaughn and J. D. Wood. Appropriate remarks were made by each of them. Elder Spangler spoke from 2 Timothy 4: 7-8. The hymn "Asleep

in Jesus" was sung. Interment in the Glen Haven Cemetery to await the appearing in glory of our Lord Jesus Christ who, at his coming, will change our vile bodies and fashion them like his own glorious body, at which time we shall see him as he is and be like him, perfectly happy and satisfied forever. What a wonderful hope for believing mortals to possess!

Elder Topping was firm and well established in all principles of the doctrine of God our Savior, preaching the truth in love to God, in love to the church of God and in love to all who believe and love the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. He was patient, but unwavering, with all who differed from him. I have myself met with a sore personal loss in the going away of our dear brother. He and I had many sweet and precious communings together in the Scriptures and in our experiences. Though weak and not well, he drove from his home to Leesburg to see me the afternoon before he died, having heard I was not well and wishing to see for himself just what was my state at that time. From our home, he and sister Topping, drove to Herndon to pass the night with brother and sister Norman and their family, and there he passed away. His going was indeed a great shock to me as it was much more to his wife, his churches and all their friends. We do not grieve for him. He had indeed finished his course, we have no doubt his departure was a glorious transformation to him. Our heart goes out in love and tender sympathy to our beloved sister Topping, to his bereft family and to the churches of his care. May the Lord grant us complete reconciliation to his holy and righteous will.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS

In loving memory of our highly esteemed brother and Deacon, WILLIAM BRANTLY HOUSTON. He was born Sept. 20, 1875, and departed this life August 25, 1947. He was the son of brother J. T. and Julia Houston of Duplin County. He united with the Primitive Baptist church at Sand Hill in Duplin Co. of the White Oak Association, Dec. 12, 1918, and was ordained Deacon the second Sunday, Dec. 13, 1925. He served his church and filled his office faithfully for twenty-nine years. His motto was "be sure you are right and stand to it." We feel that he was a Deacon indeed and knew how to handle church affairs; that he purchased to himself "a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." To know brother Houston was to love him. He was a friend and neighbor to every one in and out of the church, and was sound in the doctrine of salvation by grace.

He first married sister Octavia Kennedy who preceded him in death twenty-five years. To this union were born ten children, six daughters and four sons, W. S., Isaac E., F. H., and Ashley A. Houston; Mrs. J. B. Miller, Mrs. L. K. Kennedy, Mrs. J. A. Miller, Mrs. L. A. Robinson, Mrs. Jennie Quillen and Mrs. C. W. Johnson. He raised a family of obedient children and ruled his home well. His second wife was sister Mary Hollen Himby who was a faithful wife to him. He was confined to his bed eleven months and endured his affliction with much patience. He seemed to have the patience of Job. His burial service was conducted Aug. 26 by two ministers that he loved, Elder S. Gray and Elder L. E. Bryan at 4 p. m. at Sand Hill meeting-house. A large congregation attended his burial in the church cemetery beside his first wife, under a mound of beautiful flowers to awake on the morning of the resurrection when all the saints shall rise, and their bodies be changed and fashioned like the glorious body of Christ, to be in the presence of God at his right hand, where there are pleasures forever-more. We all loved him but we feel that Jesus loved him best.

(Elder) SYLVANUS GRAY
Box 81, Kinston, N. C.

MRS. FANNIE SISCO was born Dec. 15, 1862, and passed away May 6, 1947, aged 84 years, 4 months and 21 days. She was born in Lincoln Co., Tenn., the daughter of Edmund C. and Martha Whitsworth Walker, the youngest of a family of twelve children. She was married April 7, 1880 to John E. Sisco who preceded her in death fourteen years. To this union were born eight children: E. A. Sisco, L. J. Sisco, Mrs. Josie Tucker, Mrs. Lulu Bates, Mrs. Nannie Ross, Miss Willie Sisco, Walter A. Sisco, and Alton W. Sisco. Six of these are married and have families. Alton, the youngest child and myself, the youngest daughter, stayed with mother, taking care of her and keeping her home. We did all that loving hands could do all through her affliction and loneliness. She suffered much for over eight years, but tried to be patient and submissive to the Lord's will. At times she would say she longed for ease and wanted to go home to her blessed Savior, realizing she could never be well again.

Mother received a sweet hope when quite young, but feeling so unworthy did not unite with the church until a few years after her marriage. I do not remember the date of her baptism but will say it was God's appointed time to bring her into the fold. She so much enjoyed hearing the sweet sound of salvation alone by the grace of God. She attended her meetings as long as she could, and read the Signs for many years before she was a member of the visible church.

Besides the children there were thirty-six grand children, twenty-two great-grandchildren, several nieces and nephews, and a host of friends to mourn the loss of one near and dear to all of us, but our

loss is her eternal gain. About thirty-six hours before she passed away she called for all of her children and as we gathered around her bed she talked to each one separately, beginning with the oldest. This was a most beautiful sight. She was so happy she would clap her hands and praise the Lord, asking him to bless her children, especially the two that had stayed home with her. We were heartbroken yet we know "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

We laid her to rest May 7 in the church-yard at Old Pleasant Grove beside our dear father, who was also a member of the Primitive Baptist church for a long time. Being unable to get the minister of her choice, and some of the older children being of different faith, Alton and I yielded and Dr. John J. Milford of Huntsville, Ala. conducted the service very nicely. He spoke comfortingly to us, making it very beautiful although we were heartbroken.

Mother dear, we miss you more than tongue
can tell,
Yet God in his wisdom doeth all things well;
So with our hope and trust in the God we love,
May it be his will for us to look forward,
To being carried home to be with you in
heaven above.

Written in sorrow by her youngest daughter,
(Miss) WILLIE SISCO

MRS. ROSA V. GARRETT, our beloved sister in the Lord, departed this earthly life October 20, 1947 at her home, Leesburg, Va. She was born April 25, 1869 near Middleburg, Va. Her father was the late James A. Cox of the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun Co., Va. Her mother was Catherine Dodd. One brother, William S. Cox, died some years ago. She has one brother living, H. R. Cox of Roanoke, Va. Her only daughter Miss Catherine C. Garrett of Leesburg, Va. survives her mother. Sister Garrett was married to W. Frank Garrett October 17, 1888. He passed away in December 1919. Sister Garrett was baptized July 21, 1907 by the late Elder John G. Eubanks into membership with the New Valley Church, Loudoun Co., Va. and was a consistent and faithful member during all the 40 years of her membership in the church. For several years, she served faithfully as Church Clerk. She was a person of high integrity and noble principles as her life proved. As God works in his children to will and to do of his good pleasures, so he wrought in her and maintained her in a life and in a walk of obedience to the faith of Jesus Christ. I shall greatly miss her for she was true to all my interests and welfare as her pastor, and she will be sadly missed in the church at all our meetings for she always attended when at all able to do so. Especially will her devoted daughter, Miss Catherine Garrett, miss her mother, but we should not wish her back in this sinful world. We know that our loss is her eternal gain. The Lord has taken but his own. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away." Let us bow our hearts before him and heartily say, "Blessed be the name of the Lord." Funeral services were held from the home in Leesburg. Interment in Union Cemetery. May the Lord comfort all who truly mourn, as only he can. We may not see how we can go on with our every day life when our beloved are removed from us by death, but the Lord has promised that as our days our strength shall be. May all of us prove his word to be ever faithful in all our times of need.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS

WILLIE BRADFORD RHOADES, son of Nan and Jim Rhoades was born Sept. 23, 1875, and departed this life Aug. 31, 1947 at his home in Mt. Vernon, Texas. He was united in marriage to Bettie Evers, Feb. 2, 1903, who preceded him in death Nov. 25, 1918. To this union were born six children, five boys and one girl: Jimmie and Jack, Mt. Vernon, Texas; Bill and Sol of Good Hope Community, Fred, Winnsboro, Texas; and Mrs. Audie Williams, Mt. Vernon, Texas.

He was a firm believer in salvation by grace although he never united with the visible church. He was always the first one on the church grounds on meeting days as long as his health permitted him to go. He loved the church and admonished the brethren and sisters to keep at each others feet. He gave gladly and freely of what the Lord blessed him with of this world's goods to the cause and upbuilding of the church. His home was always a welcome place for any visiting brethren and sisters, and a warm hospitality was shown his friends. I have heard him say he could not have too many of his friends to visit him. In their talks his conversation would always turn to the blessed words in the Bible of an all wise, all powerful God who works all things according to the good pleasure of his will. He never tired of talking about the blessed truth. I feel that he was one of the blessed of the Lord and precious in his sight. We are not told that by uniting with the church you shall know them (although that is a sweet privilege), but it is said, "By their fruits ye shall know them." He wanted but little for himself and received pleasure out of giving to others. He loved little children and enjoyed giving to the unfortunate ones and the needy were always remembered by him. Could he see this writing he would say he did not deserve praise and we know all the praise is due the most high God for all things.

He was a great lover of peace and was always

working to bring it about. Many of his friends went to him for advice. I have thought this scripture well applied to him, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." He was in declining health about three years before being confined to his bed, but he never complained and was patient throughout his illness. His children and stepdaughter, Mrs. K. P. Tibbs, were with him during his illness, and they, with relatives and friends, did all that loving hands could do. He seemed ready to go when the Lord called him home and was merciful to him to the end for he said he never suffered any.

The great host of people and beautiful flowers spoke more than words of the love his relatives and friends had for him. Funeral services were conducted by Elders W. O. Beene and S. C. Davenport who spoke words of comfort to a large and attentive audience, after which he was laid to rest in Good Hope Cemetery by the side of his beloved wife. The singers were from Hopewell Church who sung the wonderful songs he had requested, namely: "O, sing to me of heaven," "How firm a foundation", "Amazing Grace", and some others. His request was that he be buried in overalls, and spoke of it to his children over twenty years before his death. While they would rather have dressed him differently they carried out his request. We say to them, his brethren and friends, let us not grieve as one having no hope, but bow our heads in humble submission to a God who never errs, and realize our loss is his eternal gain. Although it is hard to say it at a time like this, let us try to say as our blessed Savior did, "Not my will, but thine, be done."

(Mrs.) MYRTLE RHOADES

ELDER GEORGE WASHINGTON GOIN was born in Claybourne Co., Tenn., Jan. 11, 1856, and departed this life Jan. 1, 1947 at the age of 90 years, 11 months and 20 days. In 1876 he was married to Celia Odell. To this union were born three children. One child and his wife preceded him in death in 1885. In 1886 he was united in marriage to Sarah Malinda Wilder of Bell Co., Ky. To this union were born six children.

At the age of eighteen he became a member of the Primitive Baptist church, and at the age of twenty-two he entered the ministry, devoting sixty-nine years of his life to this cause. He led a straight and upright life and was much admired by all who knew him. He moved to his farm in the Roll Community in Roger Mills Co., Oklahoma in 1911 where he resided until his death. He leaves to mourn his passing, his wife and eight children. Mrs. Emma Williams, Raymond, Wash., Mrs. Charity Wallace, Tucumcari, N. Mex., Mrs. Esther Miller, Portales, N. Mex., Mrs. Mary Springer, Crawford, Okla., E. L. Goin, Crosbyton, Tex., J. W. Goin, Crawford, Okla., J. R. Goin, Riffe, Wash., B. B. Goin, Crawford, Okla., thirty-three grandchildren, forty-four great-grandchildren, five great-great-grandchildren and a host of friends. Six children were present for the funeral. Written by a member of the family.

Supplementing the above: Elder and sister Goin united with Hopewell Church, Mangum, Okla., Sunday, Oct. 15, 1939 from Little Flock Church, Roger Mills, Co., Okla., the said church having disbanded for some reason unknown to the writer. He was called as co-pastor of our church Nov. 19, 1939 with our pastor, Elder W. N. Green. Elder Goin was a most wonderful character in many respects. I once heard him give a narrative of his call to the ministry, which to me, was very interesting. The reason that I believed so strongly that it was the truth is that I do not think a man on earth could of himself have made up such a thing. Then to confirm the whole thing he followed it by preaching a sermon that came nearer taking me (so to speak) out of this world than any I had ever heard before or since.

He was past ninety years of age and I have heard him tell on several different occasions that he never struck a man in his life and that he was never struck by a man, and that he had never seen one man strike another. I thought it very remarkable. On account of the severe cold weather there was only a short funeral service. Elder W. N. Green was unable to be present on that account so a few near neighbors gathered in and sang a song, and had prayer after which his body was carried to its last resting place by wagon as the roads were impossible for cars.

R. L. BUCKNER, Church Clerk

SPECIAL NOTICE

Beginning with the month of January, 1948 there will be held, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at 2:30 p. m. a meeting of Old School or Predestinarian Baptists for worship, third floor of Pythian Temple building, 1012 Ninth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Elder John D. Wood, Minister. Those desiring to meet with us are welcome. For further information, call or write to

FRANK T. SIMPKINS
5210 - H ST.,
Dillon Park,
Washington, D. C.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Due to certain Post Office requirements in mailing the SIGNS, we find it necessary to discontinue the practice of enclosing subscription blanks just before subscription is due.

We sincerely hope our readers will closely watch the date on their wrappers and send in their renewals promptly.

R. LESTER DODSON

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 116 RUTHERFORD, N. J., APRIL, 1948 NO. 4

THE PRODIGAL SON

In the parable of the Prodigal Son, as Jesus told it, there were two lost sons, not just one, as I see it. The prodigal was flagrantly wicked, ungrateful and lost through hot passion and wild living; the other was morally obedient to his father, yet lost through selfish respectability, yes, very self-righteous, spiritually. How base and inhuman! The prodigal took his money and went into a far country, forlorn, he was a pitiable object when he came shuffling home a wreck. People go to the devil with full pockets, but they never turn to God until hunger hits them. You have to shoot many men's eyes out before they can see; you have to crack their heads before they can think; knock them down before they can stand; break their hearts before they can sing, and bankrupt them before they can be rich.

Listen to the testimony of some shining examples: David said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.*****It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." Jonah the great fish-man said, "I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord." Remember also the man, Moses, trying to argue the Lord out of sending him to bring God's chosen people out of Egypt. Then what about the great apostle Paul who persecuted and wasted the church of God saying, "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." Do you remember that Saul of Tarsus would never have been remembered had he lived the life of luxury planned for him? He had to be blinded before he could see the way to real success. He had to be scourged and fettered to become the apostle to the Gentiles. He, too, had to be sent to prison to write his immortal messages to humanity. Even our sinless Savior learned obedience through suffering.

The elder son stayed at home, prim and proper as you please, but as hard as nails and so cold that one could skate all around him. No wonder that his brother went away! Alas for the envy and coldness which the elder brother in the true self-righteous spirit of the pharisee exhibited! How base and inhuman! The real Christian cannot feel anything but joy when a sinner is brought to Christ. He is himself a sinner who has found mercy, and glad indeed is he when others find it too, but to the prodigal now. The most striking feature is the prodigal's ingratitude. Instead of being grateful for his daily bread and his shelter beneath his father's roof, he claims fortune as a right saying, "Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me." This is our spirit by nature. All men, without exception, have a fallen nature inherited from our fallen parents, and instead of being overwhelmed with a sense of God's wonder-

ful goodness, we conceive ourselves entitled to further gifts but behold the *consequence* of the conduct, *the prodigal comes to poverty.* He has at last spent all. It is well when we discover *before* death that we have spent *all,* that we have wasted our hopes and affections upon the world and have obtained no lasting satisfaction in return. But what will be the despair of those who never discover their poverty until they are removed to the place where the uttermost farthing is *required,* but not one drop of water is granted? Perhaps the prodigal in days of his revelry looked forward to the time when he should have spent all, and he may have *intended* then to enter some service that would have preserved him from want, but God defeated his design and caused a mighty famine to arise at the *very moment* when he was destitute. How easily God can disappoint the sinner (as he did me nearly thirty years ago) and blast all his devices! The thoughtless companions of his mirth remembered not the prodigal in his distress—no man gave unto him. Those who had gladly partaken of his riotous feasts forsook him in his poverty as mine did me. Accomplices in guilt are not comforters in sorrow. Can the world console the sin-sick sinner in want and in sickness? Can it receive him to glory after death? God greatly blessed the prodigal's affliction to his soul, "he came to himself." God not only designs the end, but the means to the accomplishment of that end in his infinite wisdom and power. If God promises riches the way thereto is poverty, "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." Whom he exalteth he casteth down; whom he saveth he damneth first; he bringeth no man to heaven except he send him to hell first; when he buildeth, he casteth all down first. He is no patcher, he cannot build on another man's foundation; he will not work until all be past remedy and brought into such a case that men may see how that his hand, his power, his mercy, his goodness and truth hath wrought altogether. He will let no man be partaker with him of his praise and glory.

God's word teaches that when God comes to work on the scene he sets nature aside; that when he intends to give any special blessing to his people, he first writes a sentence of death on that blessing as he did on Abraham's body and on Sarah's womb. Everything was against Abraham. His great age, natural inability to have a son, the powerful kingdoms of the Canaanites, the very absurdity of the expectation on his part acted against him. What does it all teach us? Does it not teach us that God is all powerful, and does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay his hand? It also teaches, as I see it, that Abraham *believed* the promise of God without any help from nature or man, and even in spite of all opposition of nature, of man and rank unbelief in Sarah, the church—that faith would triumph, that he would have increase—Issac's and Jacob's and Canaan, and simply because of the promise of God. Had Abraham, in the face of the promise, turned away to study science: to look into the laws of nature; to ask the opinion of some competent medical men; why, there was not a scientist in all Canaan, nor a philosopher in all Egypt but would have told him, in the face of that dead body of his, the thing cannot be, but back to the prodigal. No, He is no patcher. The weakness of God is stronger than men, and the foolishness of God is wiser than men. He does not deal with the human race by bargain but by promise. Surprising wisdom! Match-

less grace! The prodigal's first act when light dawned on his darkness was to converse with *himself*. In the midst of his distressing thoughts a ray of hope broke in. The remembrance of parental kindness raised an idea in his mind that possibly he might yet be received at the home from whence he had wandered, and at least be saved from perishing. "I will arise and go to my father." The change had come at last! And what a change! The goodness of God had led him to repentance. Couched in terms of such exquisite simplicity and power as if it was expressly framed for all heart broken penitents. Not only did he resolve to go but he *went*, went promptly too, suffering in his soul, capacitating him to obey. The kind hearted father no sooner saw his returning son, *a great way off*, than regardless of his own age and dignity, *he ran to meet him*, and instead of upbraiding him for his faults, *fell on his neck and kissed him*, giving every evidence according to the custom of the East of a cordial and welcome reception. "I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight." Note that it is after and not before the kiss of reconciliation that his honest confession finds place. The more the sinner knows and tastes of the love of God, the more he grieves ever to have sinned against the love. This is why the sinner repents and turns to God. The ray of hope breaks in and the light and love of God enter his soul *producing action*. Then follows the evidence that the prodigal is received with rejoicing. Mark the train of blessings he received. His rags were exchanged for the family costume; the best robe was put upon him; the ring of acceptance was placed on his finger—the sign, token and pledge of pardon and reconciliation which would remind him both of his wanderings and adoption. Shoes were placed on his feet to show that he was received as a son and not as a hired servant, and to serve as an emblem of fatherly and never ending love. A banquet was prepared, the tidings of the returned prodigal were soon spread abroad, and neighbors and friends were invited to share in the thrilling joy that the *dead* was *alive*, and the *lost* was *found*. What a contrast! The unconverted man began to be in want through grace, mercy and the unconditional love of God. Converted he began to be happy. What was the difference between the two sons? There was no difference as both were wicked as we shall plainly see, but their sins were of a different nature at it were. The prodigal son was no worse in heart, it seems to me, than the elder son. Both were very wicked by nature and far from God, really very dead to the light and life of God. The father's glad welcome of his *lost* son home, and his not approving of the elder son's conduct did not cause the elder son to be wicked, but it only brought forth and manifested the wickedness and visciousness of his already proud and fallen nature. Temptations and occasions put nothing into a man, but only draw out what was in him before. So evidently it was God's redeeming, discriminating and purposeful grace which caused the approval to be made between the two sons. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Rom. 9:16. Why God calls some (whom he will) of Adam's fallen race in mercy, and leaves others to reap the just reward of their evil deeds is too profound a mystery for me to explain unless it be for the honor and praise of his violated justice. Remember we have only to do with the divine testimony and not the grounds of the divine procedure, so let us beware of quarreling

with God, rejecting what we cannot understand, and trying to destroy what does not commend itself to us intellectually. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Isa. 55: 8-9. Also consider this well in connection with this parable: "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence." I Cor. 1:27-29.

To my view this parable sets forth very forcibly and plainly these truths: (1) The doctrine of redeeming grace, love and mercy to poor fallen mortals (yea, the basest of mortals) that leadeth to repentance and justification rather than a thin skinned morality which deceiveth and leadeth to death; (2) That there is no respect of persons with God, else he would have respected and chosen the elder son who was very obedient outwardly and morally to his father, even to the point of boasting of his loyalty, yet angry at his *lost* brother's good fortune. Self commendation operates against us rather than for us, "For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth." 2 Cor. 10:18. Proud human nature is never willing (until made willing) to be saved for nothing. Fallen man would have salvation as a natural right and not as a forfeited gratuity. He would earn it and claim it as a *debt,* not condescend to take it as an *alms.* Human nature is never willing to be saved for nothing—to return, a ragged prodigal, a naked pauper to the banquet house of love. (Notice the elder son pleading his merits!) Notice the wild son's, the lost son's willingness, but not until after he was tamed by the grace and providence of God!

Which crime now—open wickedness or self righteousness—was more heinous in its nature in the eyes of Him who looketh on the hearts of all men? God looketh on our hearts whilst we look on the outward appearance. Note this very closely too, "I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight," also that it is after, not before, the kiss of reconciliation that this honest confession finds place. "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." Does this not prove conclusively that that poor returning prodigal had a felt sense of his father's pardoning love, and condescending mercy in his breast before he confessed his faults so grievingly? Such faith and love in the heart is the cause of real repentance and not the results of it. Suppose on the other hand, the father had treated the prodigal surlily and coldly when he saw him coming back? Would it have produced the same effects—filial love and obedience in his son's breast? I say no, a million times no. He would have begged to his father through a slavish fear and confessed his wrongs for black policy's sake, yet that warm love towards his father would have been absent; he would have dreaded his father and shunned his company don't you think? There are sinners who are good through fear and are monsters at heart; people who give lip service and their money but who refuse to be merciful, just and kind. Now he really and truly loved him, trusted him and felt he was a good and gracious father, and wanted to be near him and obey him.

This parable shows forth with great clearness that God is the Author and Finisher of our faith, love and salvation, and that man is a piece of lifeless clay, spiritually, in his hands until God visits him with his lifegiving Spirit which not only gives life, but enables him to come to himself, giving also a great and burning desire to leave the swine's trough and return to his father's house, hoping to find some bread to spare. Yea, moreover it teaches, above all things, the need of man in his highest cultural attainments to be saved from himself, lest he through avarice and wickedness of his own heart destroy both himself and his neighbor. (Remember the elder son's anger at his lost brother's good fortune as well as the prodigal's hot passion and wild living!)

Poor Adam ruined sinners, flee to the hills of salvation! Run away from the deceitful, damnable and free-will doctrine of self sufficiency, self-righteousness, yea, self damnation. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." Isa. 45:22. Reformation is but varnished hypocrisy unless it proceeds from grace. Too many are trying to cleanse the soul of its stains with the tears of sorrow; scrubbing it with the soap of good resolves, rubbing it with the chamois of morality. Yes, too many of us, too often, like the fool, examine others but never examine ourselves. Notice this was a part of the elder son's religion, but it did not work. He has bad food who feeds on other's faults. The father knew all the time that he was never considerate, merciful, just and kind, but cold, bitter, covetous and hard. Our religion should be our steering wheel, but too many of us, too often treat it as a spare tire useful only in a "blow out."

Poor sinner, cease from thine own wisdom; lean not unto thine own understanding, beware of men! Do not forget this, if you go through life sowing criticism and sarcasm you will reap discord and enmity. Beware of self! Keep thy tongue a prisoner and your body shall go free. Nay, sunshine Christians are not safe to trust! Put your trust alone in Jesus. "Give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth." Isa. 62:7. Flee to the hills of salvation! Man is the only creation who persists in changing the order of the world. The birds, the animals, the flowers of the field have their work and their tasks and they carry them out too, but man is never satisfied, has never been since the fall. He wants to dominate and when interfered with he starts to destroy. What he cannot understand he rejects. He never takes time to give himself a good talking to. Most of the time is spent watching other people, hearing what they say and wondering what they think. He is a great watch-dog over other people. We seldom watch ourselves. Nothing, I am very sure, but the infinite pity of God in Christ Jesus is sufficient for the pathos of human life. Come! come! Lord Jesus! Save us from our selfish selves. Up! up! my heart from self and Sinai to Golgotha! Sinner this is all you need. Watch Him climb Calvary's brow! Look and live! That is all! A sinner saved by grace.

(Elder) MILFORD HALL, Sr.
McDowell, Ky.

Route 1, Box 180, El Dorado, Ark.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Enclosed find $2 to renew my subscription which is overdue. I am sorry I am behind but have neglected it, thinking of course that I would send it in a day or two. As I am a newspaper salesman and very often impress upon my readers the

necessity of paying on time, this makes mine all the more inexcusable. I would like to call to the attention of your readers, as well as those of all sound Baptist publications, that it is the subscriber who pays when due that makes it possible to publish the paper at all. Without him there would be no paper. Let us all keep this in mind and thereby lessen the burden on our publishers. (We hope our readers will remember this. R. L. D.)

Brother Dodson. I have never written anything of a religious nature for publication, and this may or may not be fit to publish—you be the judge. I know if it is not attended by an unction from on high that it not only will be worthless, but detrimental to the cause of Christ, and in that case will expect you to toss it aside. I did write a little poem, which you published, in which I tried to show those who have not, to their knowledge, had an experience of grace or a change of belief (many having believed from their youth the doctrine of salvation by grace, and thereby think perhaps it was caused by their parents believing before them that they have absorbed this belief, and that it was not due to a work of grace in the heart, therefore they doubt their faith and think those acted upon as was Paul have a much better hope than themselves) that the sure and final requirement is the love for the brethren, without this all else is vain. I would like to state that the eunuch believed that Christ was or is the Son of God, and that Phillip baptized him more readily on this testimony than Ananias did Paul. In fact he had an argument with the Almighty before he would even go to see him.

"On Christ the solid Rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand."

This in my opinion is what John meant when he said, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," that it was by love that we have knowledge of our hope, and not by great or bright experiences, dreams or visions, etc. To the extent we doubt we love the brethren, to the same extent we doubt we have passed from death unto life and for the same reason; and since I do not believe that any of us can truly say at all times that we know we love the brethren, we cannot say beyond a doubt that we have passed from death unto life, or at least I cannot; it is very often with me that I cannot find any evidence at all that I love the brethren, and agree with Satan that I hate the truth, the brethren and the Lord himself; he accusses me of this at all times,

("Save me, O God, the swelling floods
Break in upon my soul;
I sink and sorrows over my head
Like mighty waters roll.")

and when it pleases the Lord for me to turn mine eyes within, and I behold all the corruption and sin and everything except love, then I agree with him and hang my harp upon the willow and say, what a fool I was to ever think I had a hope or to base my hope upon such little evidence; surely no one but you would have ever put his trust in so little, says Satan; and if some one will tell me how, or rather show me how to avoid these afflictions I will appreciate it more than words can convey, and will be forever grateful, and will join up with those who say that you can, by obedience, avoid these chastenings, yet acknowledge that they, themselves, do not. I heard one say while preaching recently that "You can be obedient to anything God commands you to do; that he gave you power to be obedient and that the only

reason you were not was the weakness of your flesh." I agree perfectly as to the reason we are not obedient but how for this weak flesh to overcome its own weakness I find not. "O wretched man that I am!" and I stay in this deplorable, wretched condition until, as Paul put it when in a great storm at sea, all hope is gone; then the Lord returns and oh what joy! all the former evidences of grace that appeared as mole-hills while I was in bondage suddenly become mountains; and the sins that cast me down just as suddenly become mole-hills, and the rapture I experience then is so sweet that I feel I will never doubt again; that the next time I am cast into the pit it will be different; that I will remember the former deliverances of old and beard Satan in his den—NEXT TIME. What delusion!

'Tis then I look but cannot see
Christ stands between the law and me,
And realize, with sickening dread,
The law revived, we thought was dead.

Its bands seem stronger than before,
Our all we give; it asks much more,
We find we can't it satisfy,
And without hope give up to die.

'Tis then I look again and see
Christ stands between the law and me,
Once more my rapture knows no bounds,
Once more I'm healed of all my wounds.

Once more I climb to mountains height,
Once more thick clouds obscure my sight,
Once more the law claims legal prey,
Once more I sink in miry clay.

Again I rise, again I fall,
First honey taste, then bitter gall;
O tell me brother, tell me pray
Is thus your walk from day to day?

If thus it be then let me, pray,
Go with you in this narrow way;
'Though in myself no good I find
Fain would I leave this world behind.

Fain would I quit this house of clay
Where conflict rages night and day;
Fain would I soar to worlds above
Where naught there is but peace and love.

Fain would I cross bold Jordan's shore,
Where doubts and fears molest no more;
Where, when I look, I always see
Christ satisfied the law for me.

Yours in a little hope.

C. B. BRITT

(Continued from March issue.)

The church declares (militant) that she keeps herself separate from the world. Is there any evil more worldly, more grossly presumptuous or more indicitave of Satan's workshop than malicious, deliberate and poisonous gossip, done with intent to tear a brother or sister to pieces? To the church is given the law, satisfied, made just, holy and pure by a loving Savior. Those in the church know or should know the doctrine. "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things." Rom. 2:1. Paul in First Corinthians says, "Now I beseech you brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye shall all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." God is no respecter of persons, therefore, there is no foundation for jealousy and envy among the brethren. The God of heaven in his wisdom considers the natural or Adamic nature as nothing. The spirit of man, if he be quickened and called, is all beloved of Christ, one not whit more than another, and the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness. Backbiters, maliciousness, haters of God without understanding, covenant breakers—implacable unmerciful; This does not mean that man can break the ever-

lasting covenant of Christ, but that malicious and gossiping, tale bearing people in the church have violated the holy sanctuary of God just as surely as if they took a part in any other wordly affair; love, compassion, sympathy, kindness and understanding is what God gives to the church. Would we be holier than God? What a blessed privilege to belong to the true church of the living God! What a costly purchase she is—she should be a place of sweet rest, holy ground.

In the divine wisdom of God mercy is seen in judgment and the riches of grace displayed in the fact the brazen serpent was exalted conspicuously upon a pole in the very midst of the dying Israelites, placed just where they were, so in like manner did Jesus come just where the lost are and lifted up before all on the cross, a spectacle to men and angels as the great remedy provided for sin. He is also exalted on the gospel pole as the Savior, the life giving Redeemer of poor, undone, ill and hell deserving sinners. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." It is a command by God himself, and those bitten must look to the brazen serpent before they experience the sweets of healing and restoration. Life comes with the look, "Every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live." The Lord is faithful and keeps his promises. Faith never looks to Jesus in vain. Now we see it is love, mercy, grace, pity all the way from Genesis to Revelation—how he loves his church, his bride! He loved her so much he went down with her, came up highly victorious, and lifted her up with him, one with him and in him. Is Christ divided? God forbid. He has placed a vineyard in a very fruitful hill and Judah is his pleasant plant. "Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions: And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand." Ezek. 37:16-17. "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us: Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." No place for enmity, envy and jealousy in the church for he came and preached peace to you which were afar off and to them that were nigh. There is no place for any creature to feel himself above his brother. The grace and faith are of Christ only, and only by the blood of Jesus can any be saved, thus humility is the theme, compassion, love and understanding, for the militant church to live in peace. "I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?" When Jesus died on Calvary he forever put away the flesh and put on a new coat of righteousness, untouchable by flesh as he told Mary Magdalene at the tomb when he had risen. He forever washed his feet, the church, and they are no longer under the law but under grace. He has satisfied the law, then by what divine authority does malicious gossip and destructive mischief use her poison darts to destroy a brother or sister in the church? He is clothed and has clothed his church in immaculate purity and it is holy ground, a solemn place to worship and

to praise him, and the rule of discipline never should condone gossip at the meeetings or away from the service. Christ is his own interpreter and we see the rod (law) given to Aaron blossom forth into the sweet fragrance of grace. Aaron was made to wash his feet, new robes were provided for him and his sons, the oil of grace and the perfume of God's love anointed them. A sign of holiness to the Lord. What a wonderful God! His hand has laid the foundations of the earth and his right hand has spurned the heavens; "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever;" "He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved;" "In Judah is God known; his name is great in Israel;" "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast;" "Unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence. When I said, my foot slippeth; thy mercy, O Lord, held me up;" "The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of the heathen;" "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill;" "Tremble thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob;" "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints." What price, O humility! "To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men. For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior. That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Titus 3:2-7. What beauty, what love, what mercy!

The commands of the satisfied and justified law is to the church, not the world. We of ourselves cannot do good work, but after he has quickened and made alive it is his good works "for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." What are some of these works for church members? Visit or write to the sick, physically sick or soul sick; visit the widows and orphans, and we would do well to meditate upon the thought that it is not only a natural visit, but those who profess an experience of grace can really go to dwell with the ones who feel to be an orphan or widow spiritually; give generously to the needy regardless of creed (and do not broadcast it); give a kind word if nothing else to the less fortunate than yourself; never try to tear down anyone, but help them up; examine ourselves before maliciously hurting a member, and there will be less time for mischief or desire to do it. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion." What cost the pearl of great price; What beauty the church! What a privilege to drink at her fountain! "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.***** A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon." He sweetened the waters of Marah. Oh that we would prize her and watch and catch the little foxes that spoil the

vines for the vines have tender grapes. (The foxes of malicious gossip sly and deadly.) She is priceless, let us strive to keep her in peace. Oh, holy dove. His vineyard, how fair and how pleasant art thou, O love for delights? The church in peace! In bonds of love and fellowship, and in the hope of his mercy, to the saints of God. Humbly,

(Mrs.) LEONA TUTTLE

DEAR SISTER ALICE: My heart seems to be with you all this morning and I see you over at sister Allen's gathered to worship the true and living God, the young and the old, the sick and feeble ones. Those who profess the truth as it is in Jesus, (those also who are without the visible church) who through the grace of God have been able to come home to their friends and tell what great things he has done for them whereof we are glad. I wish I could be with you that we might feed together on the bread of life. There are no people like my people, no God like my God. He alone rules in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; none can stay his hand or say unto him what doest thou. When we are made to consider that this great source of life has deigned to look upon us as his children we are lost in wonder and amazement. The light had to be put into the pitchers, pitchers of clay, something that had to be broken before the light shone forth. They were to blow their trumpets and say, "The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon."

The word of truth is put into the hearts of his children to-day which is sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Many are called but few are chosen to know and feel this great truth. We can but say wonderful, one of the names applied to our great High Priest and King. This word of truth not only divides us from the world, but with the knowledge of it comes an overwhelming love for those who know and hold those precious things dear to their hearts also. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." The same light shining in the pitchers of clay. It is then we mount up on wings as eagles, run and not weary, walk and not faint. These sweet unexpected seasons come to us when we bask in the smiles of our Beloved, and we find them sweeter than the honey and the honey-comb. The earnest of the inheritance is given to us, his chosen, so we do know whereof we affirm. Some feel it is a little hope, but if we have a hope at all it is not little, the love of God to usward has implanted it within our hearts and his work is perfect.

Dear sister, I have felt to write a few lines to you all this morning. When you meet together you may read it if you deem it worthy. I am only a poor sinner, saved as I have a reason to believe, by the blood and righteousness of Christ. On the cruel cross he cried, "It is finished," the work his Father gave him to do, save his people from their sins and we have entered into that rest. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." Heb. 4:9-10. Saved by grace. There is nothing in us to merit esteem, or give our Creator delight. All love to us and the provision made when as yet there were none of us. I am so glad there are a few who can understand my language. If I were to talk it to the world they could not receive it. The Lord has been so good to us;

we have had a chance to worship under our own vine and fig tree with none to molest or make us afraid. When we consider the strife and commotion of the present time we can but ask—will it ever be so? God only knows, but one thing we do know, he will never forsake his own. Graven on the palms of his hands we are continually before him, and strength will be given us to bear all he sees fit to bring into our lives. What a wonderful helper we have, one who is able. I am so glad he has revealed himself to me, and like Mephibosheth when I feast at his table my deformities (sin) are all covered. We had such a good visit with you. Let me hear from you (when you can spare the time) if you were able to get Elder Vaughn. With love to you and all the household of faith. Your sister in hope of better things to come. NELLIE.

(Sister Alice Hall, North Berwick, Me., has requested the publication of this excellent letter from our late sister, Nellie Palmer. We are glad to grant her request. Ed.)

Box 185, Weslaco, Texas

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: Your article in the February (1947) issue on the new birth surely was food to my troubled soul. That is the kind of doctrine that gives this poor sinner that does the sinning a little hope. I know there are some of our brethren that differ on this, they cannot see how a sinner can be born again of God here in time and still be a sinner. I have wished many times that I could explain it so they could see it, but I am not God, just a poor sinner, a beggar at mercy's door. I realize the words of our precious Jesus are true, "without me ye can do nothing." Yes, that holds good after regeneration as well as before, "without me ye can do nothing."

I knew a precious Old Baptist preacher that was blessed one morning with views on the scriptures so plain to him that he thought he could show his companion just how it was, and the more he explained the madder she got which developed into the worst wrangle they had ever had. He went to the field to plow, studying over what had taken place. The thought came to him, I am trying to take God's place. Feeling so condemed he quit plowing and went to the house and apologized to his wife. Yes, sometimes it just seems so plain to his little ones that they think they can make the unregenerated see what they see, but we find it is impossible, for except ye be born again ye cannot see the kingdom. Yes, that kingdom of our blessed Lord is hid from the world.

One time a precious brother got angry with me and it was about a year before I found out the cause of his anger. A sister gave me a hint so I went to see him, and after talking awhile I asked him what he thought the whole-man doctrine was? He replied, "you ought to know, you preached it at Mount Olive a year ago. I said, "Well, what do you think it is?" He said, "It makes a person holy and sinless here in time and ready for heaven." I said, "My dear brother, you know I do not believe that." After we had talked it over we were agreed and have been very close to each other ever since. I do not use the word whole-man in my discourses, no need of that. Just to say with John, "except a man be born again" is enough and gives me hope. It was man that sinned and it was man that needed something done for him; it was man that had the first birth and it is man that needs the second birth. The second birth quickens the man and makes him alive to sin, but not free

from sin. Yes, the second birth benefits the man here in time by giving him a hope that after this life and in the resurrection he will be given a glorious spiritual body free from sin. Sin will not be condemned in that body like it is here now, but it will be free from sin.

I am hoping that our brethren everywhere will show brotherly love one for another, and not let those differences on view points of scriptures cause any trouble; where they cross each other let it be a friendly cross. If our differences do hurt let us go to our brother and carry out the scripture where it says, "Come now, and let us reason together." That applies to brethren, they can reason together, keeping in mind that "without me ye can do nothing." We cannot reason with the world or unregenerated persons, but where love flows from breast to breast there is much good to come from reasoning together.

When I was about ten years old I had an impression that we would some day have to hide out in dens and caves to worship the Lord. That has more or less stayed with me all these years, but some time back I felt I was mistaken, that it will never come in my lifetime for here I am fifty-eight years of age and will soon be coming to my life's end; we still have our liberty to worship in public, however, lately I feel the events of world affairs are pointing to the time when our liberty will be taken from us and we will once more suffer persecution.

A few years back a precious sister told me that she dreamed a dictator from Europe was over here and had the Old Baptists all lined up and was shooting them one by one. When her turn came he raised his gun and shot, her body fell over on the ground with a hole in the breast. She said, "Well life after death, here I am alive and there is my old body lying on the ground." What a wonderful dream! This sister has since gone on and while trying to speak at the funeral I could not keep from thinking of that glorious dream she had. Pages could be written along this line, it is so wonderful. Yes, the Lord's little ones have a life that the bullets cannot destroy. How blessed they are, and how precious in God's sight. Our blessed Savior had a body like ours, sin excepted, he suffered in our stead, paid the debt that we owed and set all of the little ones free; reeemed them out from under sin and condemnation; washed them whiter than snow and made them acceptable to the Father. O glorious condition that they are in, but yet a little longer we will have to go through the trials and troubles of this life. Love to all the household of faith, and remember a poor sinner in your prayers.

(Elder) E. B. AULT

Crawford, Okla.

DEAR BROTHER ELY: I will give you a sketch of my faith the best that God will enable me. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." I believe that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and that he hath a wise design in every event which he permitteth or causeth to come to pass; that each event and all transactions of men, even the vilest, are so many links in the great chain of providence by which the eternal purposes of God are connected together and drawn on to their ultimate and glorious consummation; that from eternity God drew the wondrous plan

of his government, viewed the operations and bearings of every event, and assigned each its place and usefulness. His will, purpose, decree and predestination are inseparable.

He viewed through time and declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, and this all tends to the honor and glory of the infinite, holy, eternal and unchangeable God. What he has declared must come the very way that he foresaw and purposed it should come and so divinely arranged, seeing the wicked of all worlds purposing that the wicked shall do wickedly, without forcing or infusing it in them to cause them to act, he overrules all events and acts of wicked men to the praise of his glory and the good of his people. His eye is in every place beholding the evil and the good, permitting nothing to take place that would tarnish his justice. Destruction being uncovered and hell naked before him, he stretched the north out over the empty place and hanged the earth upon nothing. Every wheel is moving in its designed direction, rolling in various ways, performing the purpose decreed, every cog meeting its place and all rendering glory to the most high, holy and infinite sovereign God.

Having willed and purposed every atom and particle of the earth, giving every creature of every kind its form and being, he feeds the fowls of the air and makes grass grow for the cattle. This is he who hath chosen a definite number of Adam's race and hath affirmed that they shall be holy and without blame before him in love, having bequeathed to them in his will all the graces that accompany their salvation, sending his Son, our adorable Redeemer, down from the shining courts to save this elect people, bearing their sins in his blessed body on the cross and putting them away forever. We hear him who cannot lie cry with a loud voice, loaded with mountains of sin for the objects of his love saying, "It is finished," going down into the heart of the earth and rising triumphant the third morn.

All the transactions of this wicked work God's hand and counsel determined should be done by wicked men, but he rose a conquering King over death, hell and the grave, and ascended back to his native heaven which fills our poor heart with comfort and my eyes flow with tears to know that our blessed Savior this moment is making intercession for us with groanings within that cannot be uttered. He has fulfilled and rendered satisfaction, but his salvation to poor sinners is still going on, and will until the last one is delivered from the kingdom of darkness and robed in that spotless robe crowned with glory and brought in sweet fellowship with God himself. This is part of my views. My heart is so full I cannot write more. Your little brother in gospel bonds, saved by grace if saved at all.

(The late Elder) G. W. GOIN

Route 3, Coleman, Texas

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: I enjoy reading the *Signs* also other Old Baptist papers I receive, though at times I may not agree with all that is printed in them, or perhaps I had better say I do not understand. This brings to my mind "Blessed are the meek." If we see ourselves sinners in the sight of God it is indeed a blessing of God through Jesus Christ our Savior. Then we are meek, the blessing comes first then meekness or obedience follows. Men would rather have obedience first, and the blessing to follow thus giving man something to do and a little honor

in this life, both of escaping chastisement and receiving a blessing. I used to believe it that way, but my experience, if I am not deceived in myself, teaches me differently.

Christ says, "Blessed are the merciful," not that you will be blessed if you will be merciful. When I see brethren or read the letters from brethren who are meek and merciful it means something to me. A man can be firm, unmovable and yet be meek, merciful and speak in love of God. I often think of the words of the apostle Peter, "Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." Surely meekness is one of the qualifications of an "ensample." One who is meek hears the voice of his Master and follows him not man, "a stranger will they not follow." One who is meek feels honored to be at his brother's feet. It is always "intreat me not to leave thee" and never you must do so and so if you want to go along with me. Meekness, showing mercy, peacemakers, to my mind are some of the qualifications of an "ensample" or example. We know our sufficiency is not of ourselves but of God. I ask myself the question, do we seek to please men or God? It is written if we seek to please men we are not the servants of God. Am I what I profess to be? Lord God of heaven and earth have mercy and give us a mind and understanding that we may both speak and act in a manner that is well pleasing in thy sight, showing kindness and mercy to those who may disagree with us, yet contending for the truth in meekness, having no man's person in admiration but ever looking to the author and finisher of our faith.

Two brethren may have different opinions on some subject, but if both are meek, charity is manifested. If one lords it over God's heritage and tries to take the church his way there will be a division. The meek, the peacemakers and examples will not follow that haughty spirit who tries to lord it over the flock. I know of myself I am nothing and less than nothing, but I hope I am one of those who are "precious in his sight."

It does me good to read letters from brethren and sisters whom I have never met that advocate the same doctrine I believe—the gospel of peace. The gospel is the power of God, and he has given us the spirit of love and a sound mind, if so we be "born again." These peculiar people are as meek as a lamb if they are His lambs. They are lovers of peace, the peace he left with his church. They have experienced that peace within them, "Christ in you the hope of glory." They will not bite and devour and lord it over others, but are willing for all men to worship as they see fit and ask only the same privilege. They love order and discipline and believe it is shown by practice, by how we act and how we live. This, in a brief way according to my understanding, sets forth what my brethren and all the churches with whom we are associated believe and contend for. I did not intend to write so much but this word *peace* was on my mind, and I most certainly believe the peace the heaven born child enjoys begins within you for, "Behold, the kingdom of God is within you." That is where the "Prince of Peace" is now reigning, exercising the creature by faith. In hope of that world to come wherein dwelleth nothing but righteousness.

(Elder) C. U. LANDERS

Mardela Springs, Md.

TO THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES: I enclose check for $2 to renew subscription for the *Signs* which has heretofore been sent to I. H. Evans, my father, and which was due in March 1947. I wish to announce his passing to the great beyond on May 20, 1947. Several months before his death he asked me to take over the renewals of the dear old paper that we have so loved and enjoyed. He was a subscriber for many years, in fact I cannot remember when its arrival around the first of the month was not an anticipated pleasure for father as well as mother who left us twelve years ago and most of the children of which there are seven.

I believe those that enjoy your precious paper are those that have tasted of the good things that God has prepared for his children; those that know they are sinners and learn it more convincingly every day they live; and that they are forever lost and utterly helpless to do a thing about it for all their self-righteousness is as filthy rags lest God has mercy on them; and only those that believe in a full and perfected, a finished salvation; that having been finished when Jesus on the wretched cross said, "It is finished." He could not have meant anything else other than the work his Father gave him to do, which was to save sinners from their sins of which I know I must be chief. Am I not right?

I surely do know that I enjoy reading the writings of those that are gifted that they can so ably write and so beautifully set forth the wonderful teachings of God our Savior. While I am not so blessed I hope I am thankful even to be permitted to go and hear God's word so ably expounded, and to be able to read, and I hope to understand, the Lord's dealings with his dear ones. I do not know why I have made this so lengthy for I did not intend to. Please excuse mistakes, and if this has been boring I feel that it was or is lovingly submitted. I humbly beg of you when at the throne of grace remember a sinner saved by grace if at all.

(Mrs.) MINNIE E. GAMBRILL

(The foregoing letter will undoubtedly heartily recommend itself to our readers. While we realize that such knowledge as is manifested by the writer was neither inherited from nor taught by her earthly parents, it is most gratifying to know that the children of Old School Baptists are being taught of the Lord to know those things which are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes. We desire to praise God for his manifold mercies to the children of men. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to our friend in the loss of her loved ones and will gladly send the *Signs* in her name. May the dear Lord lead his people forth by the right way, that they may go to a city of habitation, is our prayer for his own dear name's sake. R. L. D.)

Ingalls, Ark.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR FRIEND:

I hand you herewith my check for the renewal of my subscription. If not deceived the *Signs* sets forth the truth as I understand and believe it. If one such as I may express an opinion, it is in accordance with a thus saith the Lord. Sincerely your friend,

CHARLIE HARROD

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EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. APRIL 1948

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

.... THOUGHTS ....

I have read with much interest the editorial of Elder E. J. Lambert on prayer, in the January 1948 issue of our paper, the *Signs of the Times,* and desire to pen some thoughts also on this subject. When I handed my article to Elder Dodson for the December issue of the paper, I stated to him that I might write more on the subject later. I am looking forward to reading the article by Elder Griffin on the same subject, and hope that what I may say will not be a repetition of anything he will present, yet hoping that all the articles will be in perfect harmony, one with the other.

I have hesitated to express myself further at this time about prayer, knowing we have had several articles on the subject lately, yet I know it is an endless subject, and when we have all expressed ourselves there will be much that could still be said.

In my last article I tried to show that our posture in prayer was not the important thing; that the thing needful was to be humbled before the Lord and pray with the spirit and understanding. Now let us consider the difference in the praying of the Lord's people when first quickened by the spirit, and afterward when they are given faith to believe and Christ has appeared as their salvation. When God first touches the heart to reveal to a person a lost state in Adam and the depravity of their nature, they are as a man who has lived in darkness all his life, and has never known before what he was by nature. When this light shined on the apostle Paul he was on his way to put in prison people he would later be caused to love and fellowship, yet at that time he had neither for them, but rather hatred and malice, believing he was doing God a service in bringing them into bondage. His first movement was to fall upon the ground and say, who art thou? Suddenly blindness overtook him. He could no longer see where he was going, but was made to cry out, Lord what will you have me to do? Two things had happened to him: a light had shined about him and in him, and a voice had spoken to him.

When this voice first speaks to one, his own righteousness appears as filthy rags, and he is as one suddenly awakened to find himself surrounded by poisonous reptiles. The first movement is to save himself. To the law he flees hoping to find salvation there, believing there can be no salvation for him except by obeying its commands. Often the pages of the Old Testament are searched, hoping that he will find some ground for hope; resolutions are made only to be broken; good intentions fail to be lived up to. The word says the soul that sinneth shall die. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Every effort that is made to improve his condition only

sinks him deeper, as a man trying to extricate himself from quicksand. Down, down he goes as one without hope. God is teaching such that, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." The need of mercy appears as never before; the law is seen as holy, and the sinner carnal; sin has revived and he has died, died to hope of salvation; then he can adopt the publican's prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner;" he likewise cannot lift his eyes to heaven; mercy does not seem possible for such a one; as a criminal standing before the bar to receive the penalty of death, so he has no hope; Jesus Christ is nowhere in the picture, he has died for some one but not for him; Toplady's hymn is not for him for he has no cross to cling to; truly the language of the poet that said, "If my soul is sent to hell, thy righteous law approves it well," is made known to him, yet he prays for mercy without any grounds on which to base his hope; the smoke of Sinai appears with thunderings and threatening; he cannot approach God because the one touching the mountain is to die; the smiting of the breast is his lot.

What a blessing that God does not leave us there. "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them." What a blessed promise this is. The prayer is answered. Mercy appears in the form of Christ Jesus; faith is given to look at him; he is the chiefest among ten thousand, altogether lovely, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of his faith; the love of God for sinners appears in the blood; the soul can repeat with joy, Jesus died for me. How different is his praying now to what it has been, an intercessor has been given; a mediator, one to appear in the presence of God for him. His prayer is now in Jesus' name. The precious one now draws nigh and says, what ye ask in my name ye shall receive if ye have faith. The answer is, yea Lord, I believe thou art the one that should come. The head is now lifted from earth toward heaven. Drawn by the everlasting cords of God's love for him in Christ, one can say, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord." This is the bringing up out of the horrible pit and the miry clay, setting the feet upon a rock (Christ) and establishing the going. How drawing is this work in the heart, the praying is as a child talking to his father. The father's ear is no longer heavy because he always hears his son. Jesus is no longer one to read about. He draws nigh saying, "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." In times of trouble and distress he often gives the word to the heart, "It is I; be not afraid." No storm is too great for him to calm, no sea is too rough for him to still. Ah my friends, have you prayed to him when at times you felt he was near by, even in the room?

Such love causes one to want to live in honor to him, to adorn the profession they have made, to seek to know his will and to have his guidance and instruction.

"Oh that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still!
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will!"

The intercession is to one who maketh intercession according to the will of God, pleading his own blood as the justifying of his people. May God give us to lift our head believing our redemption is drawing nigh, and pray with the spirit and with the understanding.

D. V. S.

There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen: The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it.
Job 28: 7-8

We have a mind to present some thoughts in connection with the above Scripture for the consideration of our readers. Farther on in the chapter much is made of wisdom, and in the twelfth verse the questions are asked, "But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?" Job then proceeds to show how valuable wisdom is and how very difficult it is to obtain. He says, "Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living." He then says "The depth saith, It is not in me: and the sea saith, It is not with me. It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof. It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire. The gold and the crystal cannot equal it: and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold. No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls: for the price of wisdom is above rubies. The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold. Whence then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding?" Job then declares that "God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof," and concludes by saying, "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding." It occurs to us there are two kinds of wisdom: one is earthly, sensual and devilish, and the other is heavenly, inscrutible and divine. According to the wisdom of this world, which is one of God's gifts to humanity, mankind has sought out many ingenious and wonderful inventions and is seemingly doing the impossible. Perhaps it has never before attained such dizzy heights as in the age in which we are now living. We believe Job had reference to this earthly wisdom when he said in the beginning of this chapter, "Surely there is a vein for the silver, and a place for gold where they fine it. Iron is taken out of the earth, and brass is molten out of the stone." While man by his science can go down into the bowels of the earth and bring up the most precious of earthly things, such as silver and gold, his bounds are so fixed that he cannot ascend into the heights of heavenly wisdom and discover the things of God, for no man by searching can find out God. He dwelleth in the heighth to which none can attain. The things of God are hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. What is under consideration in our text are God's ways in dealing with his people, which are past finding out. The path which they have to tread cannot be discerned by those possessing the keenest and most far-reaching powers of vision of all earthly creatures. The eagle and the vulture of the fowl kingdom are the most famously noted for their powers of perception to sight their prey at long distances, but their eyes cannot break through or penetrate into the secret places of the Most High God. The Psalmist declares, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant." This was what Job, the servant of God, was made to know. The prophet Isaiah tells us that the way of the Lord is an highway, and it is called "The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those; the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed (of the Lord) shall walk there." It seems to us that Job, above all others, had to walk in that path, which

no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen. God, according to his wise and infinite purpose, bestowed his earthly bounty upon Job to such an extent that he was declared to be "the greatest of all the men in the east." He had a perfect number of children, and besides he had sheep, camels, oxen, she asses, and a very great household. It would seem that he had all the wealth and honor that his natural heart could desire. The most that can be said of such things, however, is that they perish with the using. Like the flowers of the field, they all soon pass away and are forgotten. Job saw it all vanish, and when he did it is said that he arose, "rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, and said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." As though this was not enough, he must suffer personal afflictions beyond anything that can be imagined by being smitten "with sore boils" from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head, but out of his extremity arose the cry of faith, the quality of which was only equalled by that of Abraham when he went forth to offer his son, Isaac, as a sacrifice unto the Lord. Hear ye him: "Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! For I know that my reedemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." He staggered not at the promise of God, but verily believed him, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness, for he lived to see the hand of the Lord in the land of the living. The record is, "So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters. And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Kerenhappuch. And in all the land were no women found so fair as the the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren." This would seem to indicate that in the kingdom of God we are all one in Christ Jesus, and are joint heirs with him in that inheritance, which is incorrupt, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

Job was also terribly taunted by his three workmonger friends (?) who came to mourn with him, but they understood not his case and had to stand afar off, for "his grief was very great." They accused him of restraining prayer before God, and propounded to him such questions as the following: "Art thou the first man that was born? or wast made before the hills? Hast thou heard the secret of the Lord? and dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself? What knowest thou, that we know not? what understandest thou, which is not in us? With us are both the grayheaded and very aged men, much elder than thy father. Are the consolations of God small with thee? is there any secret thing with thee? Why doth thine heart carry thee away? and what do thine eyes wink at, That thou turnest thy spirit against God, and lettest such words go out of thy mouth? What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?" Job answered by saying, "I have heard many such things:

miserable comforters are ye all." Again, he said, "What ye know, the same do I know also: I am not inferior unto you. Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God. But ye are forgers of lies, ye are all physicians of no value. O that ye would altogether hold your peace! and it should be your wisdom. Hear now my reasoning, and hearken to the pleading of my lips. Will ye speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him? Will ye accept his person? will ye contend for God? Is it good that he should search you out? or as one man mocketh another, do ye so mock him? He will surely reprove you, if ye do secretly accept persons." The Lord's people in this gospel dispensation are likewise taunted by workmongers with the doctrines of conditionalism and creature works, but like Job they know what others know, and even more for they are truly taught of the Lord.

Job felt to curse the day of his birth and to long for the day of death, but both of these having been appointed by the God of his life, with all that intervened, all that he could do was to stand in his lot and endure as a good soldier. God had set him up as a mark for his enemies to shoot at, and as our Saviour could not push aside the cup assigned to him, but had to drink it all, even to the very dregs, so Job had to accept what was wrung out to him. In the midst of it all, however, we hear him saying, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." On one occasion we hear him saying, "Even to-day is my complaint bitter: my stroke is heavier than my groaning. Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat! I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments. I would know the words which he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me. Will he plead against me with his great power? No; but he would put strength in me. There the righteous might dispute with him; so should I be delivered forever from my judge. Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him: But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Wonderful, indeed, was his faith. How true are the words of the aposle Paul where he said, "For we walk by faith, not by sight." It was even testified of Jesus, who was "the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." If it is to be manifested that we are the members of his mystical body we, too, shall have to look beyond the things of this transitory world and lay hold upon the hope which is set before us. At this point there comes to us the words of the poet in that wonderful hymn,

"Am I a soldier of the cross,
A follower of the Lamb?
And shall I fear to own his cause,
Or blush to speak his name?
Must I be carried to the skies,
On flowery beds of ease;
While others fought to win the prize,
And sail'd through bloody seas?
Are there no foes for me to face;
Must I not stem the flood?
Is this vile world a friend to grace,
To help me on to God?
Sure I must fight if I would reign;
Increase my courage, Lord!
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by thy word.
Thy saints, in all this glorious war,
Shall conquer though they die:
They see the triumph from afar,
And seize it with their eye.
When that illustrous day shall rise,
And all thy armies shine
In robes of victory through the skies,
The glory shall be thine."

Job was sent to be an example and a comfort to the flock of God, therefore he must partake in large measure of the afflictions of the saints in all ages of the world. He was a true witness to the sovereignty of God, and acknowledged his power to be infinite and unsearchable. God had made known unto him his wonderful works when he spoke to him out of the whirlwind, and said, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof? When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it, And brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors, And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed? Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the dayspring to know his place; That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it? It is turned as clay to the seal; and they stand as a garment. And from the wicked their light is withholden, and the high arm shall be broken." This questioning of the Lord is continued on in the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters, and finally Job answered the Lord, and said, "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further." He was overwhelmed with a realization of God's greatness, and made a frank and full confession before God when he said, "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." God showed his approval of Job and his disapproval of his three friends by directing them to take offerings to Job, to be offered up in their behalf, and said, "my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job." The Lord then turned the captivity of Job, "when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before." There was a home coming of his friends and brethren and a feast and gifts, and the Lord wonderfully blessed the latter end of Job's life. Do we need marvel that he should have said, "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen: the lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it." Truly, the wisdom of this world, as signified by the fowl and the vulture, and the strength of the creature, as signified by the lion's whelps and the fierce lion, can neither behold nor tread upon this highway of holiness whereupon the redeemed walk.

We have been made to ponder the course of our own little life, with all of its ups and downs, crosses, losses, mis-

takes, sorrows, joys and blessings, in the which there have been so many things which have been hard to understand. At times we have found ourself fenced in as with hewn stone, and there seemed no possible way of escape; we had to be still and know that he was God, and await the day of his deliverance and salvation. Life with all of its various and perplexing problems is bewildering, indeed. The way which seemeth right unto a man, the end thereof is death, but the way of God, which leadeth down into and through death, is that "path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen." The path we are travelling is most certainly one we never would have chosen ourself, had it been left to us, but we are made to hope, at times at least, that it is the way which the Lord in his infinite wisdom has appointed for us to walk in. It is good to believe that the steps that we tread, and the station we fill, our Father determined, and wrote in his will. Sometimes we can take comfort in what Paul wrote to the Corinthians, when he said: "For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

ELDER W. L. SLUSHER was born in Arkansas, June 17, 1872, and passed away Dec. 27, 1947. He was the oldest of eleven children. He united with the Primitive Baptist church at the age of seventeen, and at twenty-two he was married to Sarah Upchurch. One month later she united with the Primitive Baptist church and both were strong believers. They lived happily together for fifty-three years in Arkansas, Texas and Oklahoma until 1928 when they moved to Ontario, Cal. They lived around Claremont and La Canada until 1945 when they moved to Stockton, Cal. While living in Ontario he was ordained a minister by the Seclusia Primitive Baptist Church in the home of W. J. Berry, May 28, 1933. He loved the truth in its simplicity and purity, and was strong in the faith of Jesus and a firm believer in the extensive sovereignty of God. He lived an honorable, upright and religious life, having the confidence and esteem of those without. He was a good counselor, a kind husband and father, a good citizen and was loved by all that knew him. During the two years he lived at Stockton he was in bad health and the last three months I moved them to my home at Lindsay. Finally he had to go to the hospital at Lindsay where they operated on him Dec. 26, 1947 and he passed away the next day. I am glad he did not suffer except for weakness.

He left to mourn their loss his wife, five daughters and two sons, twenty-seven grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren and two sisters. Our love for him was great and words cannot express how we miss him. He was laid to rest in the Lindsay Cemetery until the morning of the resurrection. His daughter.

(Mrs.) NETTIE PATRICK

Our dearly esteemed brother, ANSON QUINT, died October 22, 1947, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Mabel Estes, North Berwick, Me. after a brief illness. His birthplace was North Berwick and his parents were Daniel and Laomi Quint. In 1890 he moved to Sanford where he resided eleven years, returning to North Berwick for a few years after the death of his wife, sister Olive Quint. He was engaged in masonry and farming. After his marriage to Mrs. Myra Brackett he returned to Sanford where he was active in town affairs, serving as selectman for several years and Past Master of Bauneg Beg Grange. After retiring from public office he moved to his farm, remaining there and at the home of his stepson, Eben Brackett, until after the death of sister Myra Quint. He then made his home with his daughters who kindly ministered to him until his death.

Elder Frederick Keene, late pastor of the Oak Woods Church of which our brother was a faithful member, baptized him and his wife, June 23, 1885, also his second wife, sister Myra Quint, June 8, 1913. Deacon Quint loved the doctrine of salvation by grace, through faith and that not of himself, for it is the gift of God. He was deeply concerned

in the things of the kingdom, always testifying of his belief and love for the Scriptures and the elect church of God. So many of the good old hymns, "Rock of Ages," "All hail the power of Jesus name," and "Grace 'tis a charming sound" were very precious to him. For many years he conducted our monthly meetings and his regular attendance and interest in church matters gave evidence of his love for his Savior. At all times his walk was that of a true Christian, and his home was always a welcome place for the brethren and friends. We rest in the assurance that he has gone to be with Christ which is far better.

Services were held at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Evelyn Blanchard, with her pastor, Mr. Wm. Kerschbaum, officiating. Burial was in the family plot in Bauneg Beg. Surviving are the daughters, a son Raymond and the stepson, besides several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. The lovely flowers were an evidence of the esteem in which he was held by his church, friends and community.

(Mrs.) LYDIA R. NASON

In sad remembrance I record the death of my darling sister, NANNIE M. DILLON, who departed this life Oct. 10, 1947, making her stay on earth seventy odd years. She was a dear sister in the flesh and I truly hope in the spirit. This made her nearer and dearer to me. We could talk on the mercies and goodness of God, sit together in church and heavenly places and rejoice together over what we both believed to be the dealings of the Lord with us. She had been a member of the Primitive Baptist church nearly fifty years, was sound in the faith and said many times before she was taken sick "we have to die to live." She was sick only six days, stricken with paralysis and never opened her eyes, but could talk. The writer told her to try to trust God. She replied there is nothing else to trust and seemed to be satisfied. She often said she would be glad to be laid beside her dear husband who died about four years ago.

She dearly loved the doctrine preached by the Primitive Baptists and had a great experience of grace. She had many friends and leaves four children and three sisters with broken hearts over dear Nannie who has left us here to weep. We have that hope to meet her in heaven where we will never hear that awful sound that death has stolen our dear sister away never to meet with us again. We feel the Lord has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light May God bless all who mourn for dear mother and sister, and may we meet Jesus on the great resurrection morn and be fashioned like him. That will be enough and then to sing death has lost its cruel sting. When Jesus calls we must answer. Walking around the little mound we will say, sleep on dear Nannie, we loved you dearly but Jesus loved you best. Her children did all possible but nothing could stay the icy hand of death. We hope all her children can emulate her walk and at last meet her in heaven.

Peaceful be thy silent slumber,
Peaceful in the grave so low;
Thou wilt no more join our number,
Thou no more our songs shall know.

Her broken hearted sister.

Redwood, Va. (Mrs.) B. O. HUDSON

This has been a very sad season for us in this section. Sister EDDIE WHITE of El Dorado, Ark., passed away Dec. 22, 1947 and was buried in the Rehobeth Cemetery five miles northeast of El Dorado. She leaves to mourn her loss, her husband, L. R. White of El Dorado, one daughter, Robertene White, three sisters, one brother and many other relatives and friends, brethren and sisters.

Sister White was given to demonstrate great faith and patience in her long siege of suffering. She had been a member of the Old Baptist church about eight years and we feel very keenly the loss of this precious sister. Elders E. J. Lambert and W. A. Speer assisted the writer in the funeral services Dec. 23 at 2 P. M. We truly feel that she was in possession of that sweet hope that is the anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and that enters into that within the vail where Jesus has for us entered.

Sister IDA BELL of Alexandria, La., departed this life in the hospital at Alexandria, Dec. 21, 1947, her death resulting from a comparatively short illness, leaving to mourn her loss several daughters, sons, in-laws, grandchildren and other relatives and friends. She was a member of the Old Baptist church from forty to forty-five years; she was widely known and highly appreciated, well posted and much devoted to her church and the doctrine, reading the Scriptures and other Baptist literature extensively. She was outspoken in the things she loved and a devoted church member.

The writer conducted her funeral in the Hixon Funeral Chapel in Alexandria, La. Interment in the cemetery in Pineville, Dec. 22. She will be sorely missed by her family and church people. We hope her absence may be filled by the royal presence of the Lord himself.

Brother WESLEY B. DOUGLAS of Grayson, La., departed this life Dec. 22, 1947, his death resulting from a comparatively short illness. He died in the hospital in Columbia, La. Brother Douglas was about fifty-three years old. He leaves his widow, Mrs. Aquillia Douglas, his daughter, Wilbur, and a son (I do not recall his given name), one grandchild, his aged father and mother, brothers and sisters and other near relatives.

Brother Douglas was a member of the Old Baptist church for many years and was highly respected and appreciated among them. He was very much devoted to the cause, and will be greatly missed by his family, neighbors and friends as well as the Old Baptist people generally. The writer conducted the funeral at the Old Baptist church two and one half miles southeast of Grayson, La. Interment in a cemetery near the edge of Grayson.

Also, Sister MARTHA BALLARD MURPHY, departed this life Dec. 10, 1947 after a very long and painful illness. She was 72 years of age. She leaves to mourn her loss one brother and two sisters, three daughters and four sons, a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren, nephews and nieces and other relatives and friends. Sister Murphy was a member of the Old Baptist church between forty and fifty years. She was widely known, highly respected and very much devoted to the cause. She was well read in the doctrine and faith held to and believed by our people. It was her privilege to travel quite extensively among the Primitive Baptists in a number of states which privilege she enjoyed very much. She was loved and appreciated by the brethren and sisters wherever she went. Her membership was at Rehobeth Church, where the funeral was conducted Dec. 11. The writer, together with Elder E. J. Lambert and Elder W. A. Speer, conducted the funeral services and she was laid to rest in the Rehobeth Cemetery. She will be sorely missed in her home which was with her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. O. E. Bishop in El-Dorado, as well as among her other near relatives, friends and the Old Baptists.

All of what I have here related has served to make this a sad season to me rather than one of joy and gladness that most people seem to feel at this season. One of the most serious thoughts I have relative to the many deaths among our people is, that though there seems to be quite a number who believe and love the doctrine, yet for some reason they are not becoming members of the visible church as I would love to see them do if it could be the Lord's will.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES

In loving remembrance of our precious sister FLORINE RILEY. I do not know the date of her birth nor when she united with the church. She was the daughter of Elder and Mrs. E. L. Anderson. She passed away June 4, 1947 and had lingered and suffered so much since August 1946, growing so much worse she had to be carried to the hospital in Russelville. Just a short time prior to the beginning of her illness she prepared for visitors attending the August meeting and had preaching in her much loved home Saturday night and second Sunday at the Lebanon Church six miles south of Russellville, Ky. where she was a member. Since young womanhood she was never as happy as when she was with the Baptists. The old Anderson home had for many years been a home for the "Hardshell Baptists." (Primitive Baptists). She loved to call them "Hardshells." She was a strong believer in God's sovereign grace and grace alone and was a useful and faithful member to the end. The meeting in Aug. 1946 was her last time to attend. We all hoped for her recovery as it seemed we could not do without her, but God had served his purpose with her on earth and was ready to call her to her long eternal home, where suffering and trials of this sin-cursed world will be no more.

She was a practical nurse and wore herself out trying to relieve suffering humanity. In early womanhood she was married to Tilman Riley who preceded her in death a number of years. To that union were born two sons, Milton and Edward who survive, together with one sister, Mrs. Emma Miller, Russellville, Ky., one brother, John Anderson, Detroit, Mich., and three grandchildren. The many beautiful flowers placed around her in the home proved her many friends.

Elder W. T. Clayton, her pastor, was called on to speak words of comfort to the sorrowing relatives and many friends. He beautifully commended her useful life. Her son's pastor opened the service with appropriate remarks and prayer. Beautiful hymns were sung. At the meeting-house a short while later brethren R. B. Jones and Elder L. P. Harris, DuQuoin, Ill. spoke so sweetly of her useful life all of which she was worthy. Oh, how we will miss her but all for her eternal gain. She was buried at the dear old Anderson home where she had made her home for a number of years. Written by a heart broken sister in the church.

(Mrs.) B. H. SHEARON

Two other members have also passed away in 1947 from Lebanon Church. Sister MYRTICE MALORY, April 1947, and Sister MIGNIONETTE HERNDON, June 1947. It seems the hand of death has visited us severely. May the few left, by the grace of God, continue faithful while God sees fit and has a use for the little church or band at Lebanon.—B. H. S.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Due to certain Post Office requirements in mailing the SIGNS, we find it necessary to discontinue the practice of enclosing subscription blanks just before subscription is due.

We sincerely hope our readers will closely watch the date on their wrappers and send in their renewals promptly.

R. LESTER DODSON

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 116 RUTHERFORD, N. J., MAY, 1948 No. 5

THE FOUNTAIN OF LIFE

Oft our thoughts in memory wander
To a time long, long ago,
When we were sure there was a fountain
Where the healing waters flow.

Where the healing waters flow—
Where the healing waters flow—
Power to raise a fellow sinner,
Wash and make him white as snow.

And so oft when tired and weary,
Comes this message, soft and low—
Jesus is of life the fountain,
Where the healing waters flow.

Though at times hope seems most gone,
Could I live past blessings o'er?
Are His mercies gone forever?
Will He be gracious never-more?

And it seems so little evidence,
Just a little here and there;
And I must travel backward—
But it seems I'm getting there!

Help me, though my footsteps falter
On this journey, as I go—
Ever looking to the fountain,
Whence the healing waters flow.

Time and place will soon pass swiftly,
When He calls, oh, may I go
To live forever at the fountain
Whence the healing waters flow?

Lincoln Ave., CORA B. POWELL
Salisbury, Md.

TRUE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

I would like to call the attention of the believing reader to the solemn fact that in the circles of Christendom today there exists the utmost confusion, disorganization and lack of certitude as to the criterions of true faith. It is unnecessary to review the sad atrophy of the external church, with its degeneration into multitudes of sects, remultiplying within themselves popes, councils of bishops, and unscriptural societies of all sort: these things stand as visible evidence of the perilousness of the times. Though we may be faint at heart over such things, for which our Lord gave no authority, our problem is more imminent, momentous and personal; it is indeed the crux of our whole experience as Christians in the material world; we must prayerfully seek the basis on which rest the true Christian religion.

First and foremost, as any recipient of grace will declare, the true Christian religion is wholly supernatural. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." John 4:24. This means that in no way whatever can the faith of the living God be instilled in the believer by material means. Access to heaven is not to be had through the instructions of men, or by meditating on the beauties of nature, or by handling sacred relics, or by any method whatever save the election of the unchanging God. If it were possible to gain faith from good works, or from any of the a-forementioned techniques, then faith would be open to natural access, and the words of the Mediator we have quoted above would be put to the lie: will any one who calls himself a Christian admit of this?

We cannot insist enough on the supernatural basis of our faith. To be supernatural means to be beyond nature—beyond the contingencies of physical and chemical change. "The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever." Psalms 19:9. What comfort is in these lines for the recipient of grace! Our fear (viz: our God-given faith) of the Almighty will not be one thing today and something else tomorrow; it will not be a solid fear if we have fair weather, only to pass to ashes if we fall into distress, but *on the assurance of God himself remains forever.* What is natural passes away, ergo our faith is not natural, but proceeds from a source beyond cognition.

"In the beginning, God." Gen. 1:1. How marvelous these terrible and awe-inspiring words are to the soul! There was a time when God was all alone: there was no heaven, no earth, no creation of any kind. God alone was in his essence throughout the void. Had he chosen he could have so remained, time without end, but according to the council of his *own will* (since there was none other with him) he freely decided to predestinate and consecrate the material universe of which we are a tiny and passing part. Christian reader, does not your heart leap at the contemplation of such a supreme God?

Our second criterion of the true faith brings us to the blessed truth that it is wholly unmerited: "***** which had believed through grace;" Acts 18:27, that is, God's people believe, not because they have intellectually examined the tenets of the religion and found them satisfactory, but because the unchanging One predestinated them to the glory of faith "according to the good pleasure of his will." Eph. 1:5. Such an assurance alone is sufficient to drive us to our knees in adoration, for if we are bound up in such an election, then there is no shadow of a doubt of our salvation; it is not something we shall lose if we do not contribute heavily to the clergy or bestow good works lavishly; indeed, it is contingent on none of these things but solely on the "good pleasure of his will." The good pleasure of the will of an Infinite Being, who never has and never will change; what a blessed hope we have here!

Thirdly, the true Christian religion recognizes the Mediator as the fountainhead of our redemption. "Whosoever our confession of Christ before men. him will I confess also before my Father which is in Heaven." Matt. 10:32. God incarnate here tells us that our confession in heaven depends upon our confession of Christ before men What a vastly different thing this is from the "confession" of the laymen to the priest, as is erroneously done by some! And how are we able to make this confession? The Master has previously told us in the 20th verse of the beautiful 10th chapter of Matthew: "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." Even our confession is no product of our feeble personalities, but the inspiraton of the triune God!

Space and time do not permit us here a more complete enumeration of the true tenets of Christian faith. God willing, in future copies of this magazine, the writer hopes to continue this perusal of sacred basis of belief. A word in closing, however, is imperative. No system which calls itself Christian is in any way sound which does not render all glory and honor to Almighty God *alone.* The best of human effort, the best of human personality is as transitory as dust, but there existeth One in whom there is "no variableness, neither shadow of turning." and it is to him whom we prayerfully address our petitions.

The writer hopes that these words, written in humility and unworthiness, have struck a responsive chord in your soul and caused you to render further praise to Almighty God. Yours in Christian bonds.

HENRY TOWNSEND, JR.

Edgemont, Pennsylvania.

(Recalling how much we enjoyed reading after the pen of our young brother before the war, when we were privileged to meet him at the Delaware River Association in May, 1946, we asked him to write again for the columns of our family paper. We believe that our readers will heartily agree that all such articles as the foregoing should be welcomed and published by us for the benefit of the household of faith. We thoroughly enjoyed said article, and hope that our Lord will give our young brother light and liberty in the things pertaining to His kingdom. It is indeed refreshing to read after his pen. R. L. D.)

3347 Tutwiler Ave., Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON, ASSOCIATE EDITORS AND ALL WHO LOVE OUR FAMILY PAPER, *Signs of the Times*: To love the *Signs* is to love the precious doctrine it contends for, and to love that doctrine is to love the doctrine of the Bible that God inspired men of old to write down and be kept all these years. To love the grand and glorious doctrine of the Bible is an evident fact that God himself has made you to love it, therefore, I humbly hope that is also the cause of this poor, unlearned one desiring to talk with you by letters; and that it is because of His power who has the power to take of the same lump and make one vessel to honor and one to dishonor. Yea, in His mind and purpose before ever the hills were laid, he purposed to speak this earth into existence, form man of the dust of the earth, etc., and this man and the woman God gave unto him were to multiply and replenish the earth. All this was done and all things worked together for the good of God's children: that was the object of his love. Love was and is the moving cause of all his works and ways. He has a purpose for the wicked, they are his sword for the days of evil, but they are not loose to carry on at random; they, too, are subject to the power of God; they have their bounds and cannot pass them. O, my soul, when we are given a little insight to view the perfection of our God, we are soon lost in amazement and joy, and find ourselves searching for words to express this grand and glorious truth. Why I say he makes us love this hard doctrine is because we once felt our freedom, going about in our own way seemingly, but when God's appointed time came something seemed to get in our way. We finally think we have found it and immediately begin to do something about it to put it out of our mind, but it returns. We begin to make amends to find we get worse all the time, worse and worse until we wish we did not even exist as human beings. Anything would have seemed better, standing before a great God who knew all our ways and thoughts before we had them.

The word of God says, "Ye must be born again." No possible way to know how this could be, nevertheless, "Ye must be born again." Then to arise one morning and find the burden gone and your whole being praising and shouting within us praises to our Savior who has so graciously blessed us and placed a new song in our tongue. Alas, this is to last for only a little season for there is much to be learned. We do not love the hard doctrine of the Bible then for we are babes in Christ and many things we hear our fathers and mothers in Israel say, we cannot take. We cannot understand how they could be right. This is the beginning of our learning to love this hard doctrine that the world hates so badly; they hate it in their homes, com-

panions, fathers and mothers for they have not been given to see the hidden beauties as these precious things are for a special people, a peculiar people and are hidden from the wise and prudent of this world; they cannot understand and my heart aches for them. I sometimes have been guilty of thinking, oh it is a hard doctrine and it would make me tremble and does yet when darkness hovers over me; I cannot see anything clearly, cannot feel anything; oh how miserable I do get, how ignorant and foolish I do feel yet I have not learned one little thing I can do about it. I cannot quit nor I cannot keep on, only as it comes to me, but the seasons of love, life and understanding also come to me along life's way; renews my hope and strengthens me; gives me faith to believe in God and beg him for mercy, and to be kept all through my journey here; to stand by me in death and take me in his arms and bear me away to be with him for-ever-more. This is my only hope.

Jesus stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world and came born of the virgin, Mary. Yes, looked upon by natural men, walked among them, teaching them, was crucified by wicked hands, hanged on the cross suspended between earth and heaven; bled and died to finish the work his Father gave him to do, his own words were, "It is finished." "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." How precious are these words! He rose again in spite of all the efforts of the guards and the king to make it safe, placing guards on each side. I do not believe those guards saw the resurrection of the Lord any more than the world can see and believe today until the Father who art in heaven reveals it to them. He walked with the two disciples after he arose; they saw him in the person of a man but did not see him as he was, for they thought him a stranger in the country; they had heard how they had taken and crucified their Lord. These things are spiritually discerned and not taught by man.

People are begging folks to come to their church for just one hour. They take their names, addresses and donations saying, we had a thousand Sunday and our donation was a thousand dollars. I I hear it said of a church near me that they take in a thousand dollars each Sunday. All such things to me are far from the teaching of the Bible, but according to its teaching they are all fulfilling their place in this world as well as everything else, the elephant, the ant and all other of God's creation. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." All things are here by the power of this great God that we love to talk about. I once heard Elder R. L. Biggs of Nashville, Tenn., preach from Psalms 24:1, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." It was beautiful indeed.

Enclosed find check for $3, two to pay for our subscription another year and one to use as you desire. May God in his wisdom and mighty power, love and mercy keep you and enable you each and every one to stand firm and declare the whole counsel of God. Pray for me and mine that we may be kept by the grace of God, ready to be revealed the last day. My hubsand joins me in love to you. He is also a member of the church and has served as Deacon since Aug.. 1928. I feel the Lord has bestowed a special blessing on me in having my companion of the same faith and order with me. Of such I am not worthy and often wonder why things are as well with me as they are. One thing I know, it is not for anything I have done. Sometimes

when I am made to feel that, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me besides the still waters," and his banner over me is love, I am made to exclaim! "O for a thousand tongues to sing my dear Redeemer's praise." Yours in the hope of eternal life.

(Mrs.) LUTHER CAMPBELL

CARDINAL POINTS OF DOCTRINE

All along, since I have been old enough to notice, I have heard Baptists speak of the *cardinal points of doctrine* and I must confess that I do not know what they mean. I very seriously doubt if those who so freely use this expression could actually tell what they really mean. Were we to ask a dozen different Elders from different sections for an expression of just what they consider to be the *cardinal points of doctrine* I am pretty sure they would vary. If we are to judge by what is know as *articles of faith* as we find in the several different Associations in different localities of these United States I know we would find a very great difference. Some, in fact, differ to the point that there is but little resemblance between them.

In all these many *articles of faith* that I have studied I find almost no mention in any of them of the great doctrine of LOVE. Nowhere do we hear it stated that "LOVE IS THE FULFILLING OF THE LAW," or. that "GOD IS LOVE," and we find but little if anything said about "MERCY." Are we to conclude by this that the rank and file of the masses of Baptists deem predestination of greater importance than love and mercy? Personally I am not aware that any one point of God's doctrine could possibly have any preeminence over another, or that any one point is better than all the rest. Our gracious Lord says, "I give you good doctrine," and far be it from me to say that one phase of that good doctrine is less essential than another. Nor would I wish to be guilty of judging any man upon the assumption that some one point is better than another and especially if this one point happens to be my hobby. (We all have our hobbies.) How am I to positively know that what I think about predestination or any other point is infallibly right, or that I am to be consulted as the final authority upon any subject. Certainly If I were to take this ungodly position all would know that I was wrong, that I had overstepped my bounds and was setting myself up as a god. Hardly any two preachers could agree perfectly upon every phase of predestination were they to talk at length. This is equally true of every other point of doctrine as we have all witnessed over the past several years, especially the doctrine of the resurrection. There are perhaps a greater variation of opinions upon this than any other. Yet this does not mean to me that this one point of doctrine is of more importance than the new birth, salvation by grace or any other.

As we are fully aware, there is among our ablest gifts this manifest difference of opinion. It is because NONE! NONE! on earth fully understand it all. If we are honest with ourselves, we will have to confess that we do not know it all about any one point of God's good doctrine. We only see in part at best, and because this is true why should we continually have confusion, strife and division in our church? Is it not because of our carnal-mindedness and because we are lacking in love and have not come to the knowledge of the truth in its divine fulness? Paul very clearly shows us the more excellent way; "But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I

have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." 1 Cor. 12:31 and 13:1-2.

I does seem to me that the apostle is here telling us something of vital concern which we would all do well to take to heart and ponder these things. Our great and only Teacher, Christ Jesus our Lord, has commanded us to "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." Matt.5:44. Do any of us fully comply with the teaching of Christ? I fear not.

Paul still further explains the great importance of love by saying "Faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity" (love). I am persuaded that no matter what a great speaker men may think us to be, or however much wisdom they may ascribe unto us, or how much praise they may heap upon us, yet, without love we are as nothing. Without this love of God shed abroad in our hearts we have no real evidence that we are the followers of Christ, and after all, this is to me the greatest concern of all things else on earth. And I am so absorbed in this concern that I have but little time to find fault with my brother, or call in question what he believes or does not believe. Of greater importance to me is, am I right? We should sweetly remember, while God in his great love wherewith he loves us has given us a measure of forbearance, tolerance and mercy, and at the same time he has given us much to forbear, forgive and have mercy upon. Why the need of mercy if there was nothing to forgive in those we love? Listen, "For God hath concluded them ALL in unbelief, that he might have *mercy upon all.*" Rom. 11:32. Hence we ALL need the mercy of God, and the mercy of our dear brethren as well, all our lifetime. We can never attain to that exalted plane that we cease to need both the mercy of God and the mercy of the children of God. If it were possible for us to attain to that degree of perfection (which it is not possible) we would have no company on earth, and our loneliness would be great indeed. Then, dear little children let us be glad that, while we are weak, ignorant and subject to vanity, and cannot do the things that we would, cannot live as we, from the very depth of our souls wish we could yet God loves us without end and his mercy and the loving kindness is equal to all our needs. There is no case too hard for him. Look and behold the ladder that reaches from the lowly earth unto heaven, (Gen. 28:12) and the angels of God *ascending and descending* on it. We are not all the time ascending, sometimes we are coming down and not going up. This indeed is my daily experience. Pray tell me is it thus with you. Yours in a blessed hope.

(Elder) G. B. BIRD

Canada, Ky.

Covin, Ala.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am sending a copy of a letter I received from Sister Astbury in England. She is a rich writer to the English papers and I feel that something from her pen would be acceptable to ours as she is anointed of the Lord to speak. The things of a providential nature that she speaks of were foodstuffs that I sent. I sent them because the God of Heaven has given us so much. I do not feel that it is mine, nor to withhold from his children. Yours in a blessed hope, (Elder) W. D. GFRIFFIN.

Green Mount, Barrow, Whalley,
Blackburn, Lancashire, England

DEAR FRIEND: We do sincerely feel thankful to see the Lord's goodness passing before us as is evidenced by him graciously inclining your hearts to re-

member us in these solemn days, and most especially in the spiritual tokens. We enjoyed reading the *Signs of the Times*.. God's sovereignty is most valuable for it gives his elect people a sure standing in Christ when God's Holy Spirit reveals it to their souls. God's love, power and unchangeability — an Eternal Being knowing all things. To him there is nothing new nor old. It is this wonderful eternal God who conceived the marvelous plan to save rebellious man; the glorious Trinity in unity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost work together in its accomplishment; all in perfect harmony and according to God's foreknowledge. Who can measure his mercy as one by one we sinful mortals, as born again of God's Holy Spirit, bow at his throne and confess our sin and iniquity like the publican — God be merciful to me a sinner — and, sooner or later to hear his gracious, forgiving voice saying, thy sins which are many are all forgiven you. Peace, sweet peace, through the blood of the Lamb.

Elder Burns is enabled to speak sweetly of his call to the ministry in verse form. God's blessing must surely attend the paper though not necessarily in the way expected. To us it was good reading for in these days so many are running without being sent. There is no true rest but in Christ; he alone is our Sabbath, and we enter in by faith as it is revealed to us individually, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he has saved us. We have not the least power to contribute in any way to our salvation for it is of the Lord, and that is our unspeakable mercy for we are as a corrupt tree, utterly unable and incapable of producing the least good, and God demands perfection — he requires truth in the inward parts. This is the work of the Spirit in each of his redeemed. It is mysterious to us but we are made conscious of it by its effects on our spirits as called out of nature's darkness into his marvelous light. Then we mind heavenly things- instead of earthly, being born again from above, all our blessings and needs come from the "Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

The providential supplies you sent are good and suitable to our needs. May God bless you and grant you his four fold reward. We received your parcel on Saturday, Jan. 10 (mailed about Nov. 26. W.D.G).

Though sundered far, by faith they meet,
Around one common mercy seat.

Our sincere desires for your welfare now and through eternal ages. For Christ's sake,

(Miss) E. A. ASTBURY.

Route 1, Kirksey Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON IF SUCH AS I MAY ADDRESS YOU AS BROTHER: Sister Effie Bowden is writing for publication an obituary of my wife, Lillie Chester, who was buried two months ago. She was my second wife. We lived together nine years and my first wife and I lived together forty-three years. Both died of cancer. I am now living alone in the house my father built about one hundred years ago. It has been sheltering Primitive Baptists ever since it was built. A few of the Elders entertained were J. M. Perkins, R. T. Davis, J. W. Wyatt, James W. Lynn, W. D. Griffin, J. C. Sykes, H. M. Brock and many others. Their visits have been very precious to me and I can but wonder why the gracious God would allow me to keep company with such as these. The *Signs* has been coming to this house at least seventy-five years. The February issue came recently and it was seemingly the best one of all I have read. I beg the prayers of all that may see this and if you come this way please hunt me up. I will follow this with some of my experience.

I was born Aug. 5, 1874 and raised by Primitive Baptist parents. I believe they tried hard to raise me in the right way. They would tell me to go to any church but to go in the house and behave myself. They never begged me to unite with any church, but admonished me to read and study the Bible and see what it meant to me. Most of my associates would call me a good boy and I really thought I was until I was about seventeen years of age. One night we had a company of several people. Sister Ida, who was two years older than I, had a friend named Omie Gingles and they seemed to take the lead while all were having a nice time. Suddenly something went wrong with me and I went upstairs to bed, crying most of the night. It seemed to me I was a great sinner. The next morning Miss Omie said, "What was the matter with you last night, Mr. Tommie?" I said, "Oh I am such a sinner." She said, "You are not a bad boy." I was then seventeen and I have felt to be a sinner ever since. At the age of nineteen, J. C. Chester, my brother four years my senior who was teaching school, came home the second Saturday in August and united with the church at Soldier Creek. My brother Hardin came to the field where I was working and told me. Oh how it cut me down. That was what I thought I wanted to do but did not think I was fit to unite with the church. I had never seen any one unite with the Primitive Baptist Church, but I pondered over the matter through the evening and night and next morning decided to take some extra clothes and be baptized also if I was accepted. Jimmie took his wife and I took his wife's sister. I do not know what I said or did but Jimmie and I were baptized together. That was in 1893 and now it is 1948 and I have just blundered along. It seems sinning has been the most I have done, but I know there have been many times since I was seventeen that I have craved to do something good but did not know how. When I would do good evil was present so I am bound to say if I have ever done any good it was by the grace of God.

What a wonderful thought to even meditate on, dear Savior, that it may be one like me might be carried to that great home of all the redeemed. I hope I have a hope. Brethren, I felt I might write something worth while but have failed. I am as nothing and less than nothing. Farewell in the Lord.

T. S. CHESTER

Benton, Ky.

ELDER DODSON, KIND BROTHER: I am sending by request of the family of Mrs. Florence Bean her obituary, and by the request of Brother T. S. Chester an obituary of his wife, Lillie. God took from his garden of graces these flowers. Why? Were they not his any way because of his choosing? Then if his does he not do with his own that which is good? These did not live by sight but by hope. Zechariah says, "It shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark." The light of the Son of God veiled by the flesh cannot see clearly. Sin is only condemed in the flesh, never renewed. So we have Jesus the Light, but we do not see clearly enough to say we know we are children of the Most High God, neither are we in the dark as to what light is. That text, Brother Dodson, has been a cup of cold water to this unworthy one many days; that and where it says, Put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Have we not felt within, this old man, his deeds being put down and the deeds of the true and holy child Jesus being shown us? which deeds we

desired to stand up for and proclaim above all deeds, knowing at that time what was the desire of our heart, and believing we had been stirred and worked upon and, so it is, enough is given of the light of the knowledge of Him who is Light to keep us hoping. Some might say "putting off" and "putting on" is done by the creature. Well, this I hope I know—I have felt the "putting off" and "putting on." A sister in hope. (Mrs.) EFIE BOWDEN

Pink Hill, N. C.

ELDER S. GRAY, MY DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD: I feel so unworthy sometimes that I do not know that I am right in addressing the dear old Primitive Baptist members as brothers and sisters. This morning I will try to write according to my impressions, whether it is of the Lord or not I do not know. I have been trying in my weak way to ask him to lead and guide me aright, and if it is of him that I should write to give me something that would be to his honor and praise, and would be comforting to you and also a blessing to poor me. If I could only write you such a letter as I have written in my mind since I heard you preach the second Sunday in September, I feel without a doubt you would enjoy it and I would enjoy writing, but I cannot find words to express my feelings. How much I did enjoy your sweet sermon. While you were praying I felt to be sure you knew something of what I had been passing through of late. What a blessing that there is One that does know and is able to impress it on your mind to remember to pray for just such poor little, weak ones of this world as I.

I often think of dear old Paul who felt that he was less than the least of all saints if one at all, and as you often say the older I get the less I feel both naturally and spiritually. I feel to know that no poor soul has ever been or could have been much more cast down than I have been, and my dear brother, I am that way a good portion of my time. If a few minutes of praise I enjoy they are succeeded by doubts. I often look around me and every thing is going on all right and I think why should I be like this? Why can I not go on rejoicing and wait until trouble comes, but I cannot control my feelings. If I could I would feel different and it is a good thing I cannot, as you said the other Sunday, I want to be reconciled to the good Lord's will. Within myself I cannot for I have long since learned that no good thing dwells there without the Lord.

I hope, my dear brother, the day is coming and I feel not so many years off when sin will be finished in this old body of mine, and I can close my eyes and sweetly sleep in the arms of Him who has done all things for me, and forget this world that is so full of sin and sorrow. I have been through so many troubles, trials and disappointments in this world that I never look for anything else, and when I see some one passing through the trials that I have, my sympathy goes out to them and I mourn and grieve for them, because I know how it is and how heartrending it is, but we are promised such in this life if we be the children of God. Brother Gray, as you often say, I have that little hope that I am one that I would not give for ten thousand worlds such as this. It is more precious to me than all things else, without it I would be, of all people, most miserable. While as you say, I look on others as being so much better yet I would not exchange my little hope for theirs. I have tried in my weak way to ask God to take this burden from me for I did not know

what to write to such good people but it seemed to me that the burden got worse so I have tried to write and if anything I have written is of any comfort give God the praise and not this poor sinner. I am so nervous I can scarcely hold my pen and have only hinted at what I wanted to write, but may the dear Lord continue to bless you is my desire, and as you go traveling on and feel impressed, please remember this poor unworthy one, my dear children and also my dear old father and mother who you know are getting very feeble. Your little, unworthy sister if one at all.

(Mrs.) RENA FUTRELL

Rt. 4, Salisbury, Md.

DEAR ELDER SPANGLER: I have felt a desire for a long time to write you and tell a little of what I hope has been the Lord's dealings with me from my youth up. I was born and raised on a farm in Sussex Co., Delaware, near Gumboro and lived there for a long while. My parents were Old School Baptists and very true to their church at Smith's Mills, seldom missing an appointment. Elder E. Rittenhouse was their Pastor. He lived and was Postmaster at State Road, Del. He was a very quiet and humble man, cared for no foolishness and was ever looking to the interest and welfare of his churches. He would come on Saturdays to fill his appointments and stay over night with the brethren. He frequently stayed at my father's and after supper would talk on spiritual things and sing some good old hymns. I rather enjoyed being in the room with them. He and my sister, Martha, began corresponding and I thought it strange she wanted to be writing to him, she a young girl in her teens. I soon found she was interested in the church and soon went forward at Smith's Mills, was received and baptized by Elder Rittenhouse.

Her baptism seemed to have an effect on me. I thought what a good girl she was and I what a bad boy. Yes, I was rude and full of life. When Elder Rittenhouse passed away the church called Elder A. B. Francis from near Herndon, Va. to serve them. His membership was at the Frying Pan Church. I thought him a wonderful preacher and he was. I seemed to get some comfort from him, but felt to be a condemned sinner, trying hard to be a good boy but to no effect. When Elder Francis' Association came around he, for some cause, insisted on my going. My parents consented and I went. Several ministers were present of which I knew but few. When Elder D. M. Vail was put on the stand I did not think he looked like a preacher and did not suppose he could say very much, but to my surprise he preached the best sermon at the Association. He seemed to be preaching to me and that was the first sermon I ever heard. I wanted to hear more of it but felt to be a miserable sinner before God. I returned home feeling glad I had gone to the meeting but my sins were ever before me and gave me much trouble. One night while riding my father's horse to Whitesville I was in so much trouble I did not think I could live. I was crying aloud like a child when all at once, in the twinkling of an eye, my trouble was gone and I was so happy everything around me seemed to be praising the dear Lord, even the little birds. I shall never forget the spot on the old mill-dam near where I went to school. I went on to the village happy and the people there seemed happy and glad to see me. I did not tarry long as I wanted to get home and tell my parents what a dear Savior I had found. Before I reached home something said to me, you had better keep this to yourself as you may be mistaken. I said nothing to my parents but went to bed happy. This season did not last very long, I was soon doubting again.

Soon after this I was married to Miss Nora E. Hearn near Salisbury. I soon found she was under the same conviction as I. We went regularly to and enjoyed the meetings but felt too unworthy to be with them. We stayed away as long as we could but on the third Saturday in March 1896 went before the church at Smith's Mills and tried to tell what we hoped the Lord had done for us. We were received and baptized the next day by Elder Francis. It was a happy day for us. The members all looked so dear to us when we came up out of the water. Elder Francis seemed like a father to us.

In 1933 my dear wife passed away leaving me all alone on the farm. I thought then my pleasures were all over, but in August of 1934 the dear Lord blessed me again with another good companion as you know. I feel to be a poor sinner and not worthy of such blessings. Yes, the dear Lord has been good to me all my life. I am making this letter too long but I want to say a few words about the dear old *Signs of the Times*. It comes to us regularly and we do get much comfort from its pages. The Editorials and good letters from the brethren from all parts of the United States, some of them telling my experience and exercises far better than I can. Dear Elder Dodson is a wonderful Editor and he has four good Associates to aid him with the work. Two of them I know well, the other two I have never seen with the natural eye, but sometimes when reading their Editorials I feel like taking them by the hand and saying God bless you, keep right on with the good work.

I have been taking the *Signs more* than fifty years and have never missed a copy to my knowledge. I have always been familiar with the paper as my parents took it as far back as I can remember. It was once printed in newspaper form and at the end of the year mother would collect and put them in book form for future reference. I never knew her to destroy one. I have recently reread a good letter from a dear sister in Texas. It is one of the best I have ever read. I told Grace (my wife) it was well worth the whole year's subscription. She did not sign her name just "Your humble sister from Texas." It was in the June 1947 issue. Please excuse me for having made this too long and overlook my errors. It is like the writer, very imperfect. Hope you and sister Spangler are well. We are about as usual. Grace joins in love to you both. Your little, unworthy brother in hope of life everlasting.

ANANIAS HASTINGS

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807 Pope St., Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Please renew my subscription to the *Signs* for another year, and I am sending a little extra to help send it to some one else or to use as you wish. I wish I could truthfully tell you that I am doing this with a pure and unselfish mind, but vanity and sin is so mixed with all I do that I fear even at this moment, although I sincerely want to do it, I may be doing it with the hope that the same would be done for me sometime, so you see if that be the case the motive is selfish.

I think I learned long ago that I could do nothing for which to glory in myself, and I believe I am fully aware of these facts "that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing," and of myself I can do nothing. I do hope I have been taught these things by God himself, for there was a time, while I hope I was enjoying the sweet peace of God's love in my heart as a new and precious experience, that I sincerely thought I would so live and do good unto everybody the rest of my life and

that in return I would live a life of joy and peace in Jesus love. But while I was going about doing this as best I knew, this peace and love began to fade and grow dim. I began to read my Bible, search the Scriptures, to retain the sweet feeling of God's nearness, but try as I would it grew dimmer, and what had once seemed to be perfect assurance that Jesus was mine left, and in its place was only a hope that he is.

God inspired men to leave comforting words concerning hope, "which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast," and I believe it is sure (as Jesus is) for though even this hope has seemed to grow dim sometimes, yet I have learned by experience that as far as I have come I have not lost sight of it entirely; and that for no reason at all at times I feel to be lifted to great heights by it and am made to feel I will never again doubt that this hope is "Christ in you, the hope of glory." I am always glad to receive the *Signs,* brother Dodson, with its pages of truth. It seems to draw hearts together from various places in a bond of fellowship and love, and I am so thankful that it goes to those who for different reasons do not get to go to meeting or hear preaching. I think I know how lonely and hungry one can get to hear the truth *preached,* not carefully worded or modified to please the vanity of men's minds. I once felt while listening to Elder Paul Poyner preach the sovereignty and power of God, that even if I knew I was not included in this covenant of grace I would still believe that what he was preaching was the truth as it is in Christ. Hoping we are kindred in Christ,

(Mrs.) JAMES E. YOUNG

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

We are particularly anxious to add a substantial number of **new** subscribers to our mailing list during the remaining months of 1948. We honestly feel that our readers will readily agree that the quality of reading matter which has been appearing in the **Signs** is deserving of commendation to all lovers of the truth. If this is so, many of our readers know one or more persons who would be glad to take the paper if they knew about it. Will you who do know about it be so kind as to spread the good news among your brethren and friends?

We wish to remind all of our Ministering brethren of the fact that we will be glad to allow them $1.00 for every new subscriber they secure on the annual basis. Just send us $1.00 and you keep the other $1.00 for yourselves.

We also hope that our duly authorized agents will announce at the meetings which they attend that they will be glad to receive both new and renewal subscriptions. It is a real accommodation to many of our readers to be able to hand the money for their subscriptions to some one individual in person.

Please remember that any notices of meetings and changes of address should be sent in as far in advance as possible. We usually furnish the copy to our printer sixty-days before the paper is due to be mailed out.

Also, please watch the date on your wrapper covers and renew your subscription promptly when due. The co-operation of our subscribers and their continued support of the paper will be greatly appreciated by all sharing in the responsibility of its publication.

R. LESTER DODSON

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. A. V. Pearce, Va., $2; V. K. Boyd, Ala., $1; Mrs. L. Pratt, Ida., $3; Eld. M. Hall, Sr., Ky., $2.50; F. Johnson, W. Va., $3; Mrs. A. Chandler, Ky., $1; F. H. Richardson, Ia., $18; Mrs. E. H. West, N. Y., $20; A friend, Mo., $2; P. H. Hearn, Del., $3; Mrs. W. A. Hightower, N. Y., $1; Mrs. E. Bowden, Ky., $1; Mrs. D. S. Blackwell, Ind., $1; Mrs. E. McHaffie, Tenn., $1; G. G. Turner, Tex., $1; Mrs. J. Clifford, Wash., $10; A. W. Glass, La., $1; Mrs. M. E. Kuns, Cal., $2; R. D. McGough, Ala., $10; Mrs. W. D. Fooks, Md., $1; J. C. Green, Del., $1; Mrs. C. E. Tacey, N. J., $3; T. S. Chester, Ky., $6; C. A. Groves, Tex., $1.

EDITORIAL

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A FIRM FOUNDATION

"Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars." The above scripture is found in the ninth chapter of Proverbs and if you will read the entire chapter you will find that two houses were under consideration. One house was the product of wisdom, and the other house was of the foolish woman. I think wisdom's house is figurative of the Church of Christ, and the other represents the false church. All has been done to make the Church of Christ secure and firm, but the foolish will fall by the wayside. I believe this house to be composed of all the children of God as chosen in Christ before the world began. It is not our desire to consider the house at this time, but to consider the foundation upon which this house is built. Surely the foundation is Christ Jesus and all who were chosen in him will finally be blessed to view the seven pillars or principles of the doctrine of God, our Savior. The abstract of the faith of God's elect may be summed up thus: 1. SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD. 2. TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF MAN. 3. UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION. 4. LIMITED ATONEMENT OR SPECIAL REDEMPTION. 5. IRRESISTIBLE OR EFFICACIOUS GRACE. 6. PRESERVATION OF THE SAINTS. 7. RESURRECTION OR COMPLETE IMMORTALIZATION OF THE SAINTS. I believe these phases of the doctrine are experienced in the order named. The first six are experienced here in time and the seventh is to be experienced in the beyond.

The first lesson to be revealed to the child of God is His sovereignty. We are thinking in terms of seven so we think of God as eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, holy, loving and triune. Yes, he is eternal. One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. He is of one mind. He has never learned anything new nor has he forgotten anything. Everything that has ever taken place, is taking place, or that ever will come to pass is just as present and vivid in his mind as if it were (at this very moment) taking place. Things that we experience are past, present and future with us because we are creatures of time and finite, but all things are as present with God. We wonder what the future holds for us and forget things that are past, but God being eternal sees it all as now transpiring.

The second part of the first pillar of this firm foundation is the omnipotence of God. He is all powerful. God says through the prophet, "I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass."

In the Scriptures it is said of God; "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can

stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" God spake this world into existence. He only had to say, "Let there be light: and there was light." "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." He is God "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

God is omniscient. He is wise to the extent that his knowledge embraces all things because he has decreed them and is abundantly able to bring them to pass. There is not a thought or act of man that God does not know about. "He is before all things, and by him all things consist." Though the world seems to run at random, and events huddled together in blind confusion to our finite minds, God is so wise that he knows the outcome of all causes and effects, and so governs them that he makes perfect harmony out of all those seeming jarrings and discords. He is so wise that all things praise him.

God is omnipresent. He is present at all places at the same time. He is at all times at the same place. There is no possibility of hiding from God. In him we live, move and have our being. He fills the universe.

Another characteristic of God is his eternal love. God is love. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." He loved his people even when they were dead in trespasses and in sin. This love of God is the basis of their salvation. It is the characteristic that is planted in the hearts of God's people by the Holy Spirit.

God is holy. "The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works." Psalms 145:17. There is no unrighteousness with God. He is of purer eyes than to behold evil and canst not look upon iniquity, therefore he consecrates the wicked acts of men to his own glory and praise and to the good of his chosen people.

The seventh phase of his sovereignty is that he is triune. God, the Father; God the Son; and God, the Holy Ghost. God the Father, chose his people unto salvation before the foundation of the world. God, the Son, accomplished this salvation by performing the requirements of the law, and suffered the penalty of sin and satisfied justice by shedding his precious blood on Calvary's tree for the remission of their many sins. God, the Holy Ghost, operates upon them here in time by taking from them the stony heart and giving them a heart of flesh; reveals to them the truth as it is in Christ Jesus; comforts and consoles them in this life; and will (in the resurrection) baptize them with immortalty.

Now let us consider the second pillar of this firm foundation. According to my experience, I was given a glimpse of the sovereignty of God. This was the stimuli that made manifest the fundamental truth of the TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF MAN. Job had a similar experience as recorded in Job 42:5-6, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." Isaiah speaks likewise in Isa. 6:5. "Then said I, woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." God, first, revealed himself to each of these causing them, secondly, to see their depravity. What a contrast! God is eternal; I am timely. God is all powerful; I have no ability. God is all wise; I know nothing as God knows. God is everywhere at all times; I can be no-

where at any time upon volition of my own will for I find myself a victim of circumstances over which I have no control. God loved us even when we were dead in trespasses and sin; I naturally love no one but myself. God is holy; I am unholy. God is triune in complete agreement; my natural desires war against the Spirit. I find myself totally depraved, not able to extricate myself from this terrible state. This experience agrees with Jeremiah 13:23. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." Jesus expressed this incapacity of man to recover himself from this fallen state he is in when he said as recorded in John 6:44, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." As long as the skin of the Ethiopian is black and the leopard is spotted there is no reason to expect goodness to spring from man. It is just as possible for man to do good as it is for the Ethiopian to change his skin or the leopard its spots. We must look to some other source than ourselves for anything good. We are so naturally constituted that we will trust in our own ability until God sees fit to reveal to us our true condition by his Spirit. Then we are made to "cry unto God, the most high; unto God that performeth all things for me." In this state of mind it is with pleasure and heartfelt thanks to God that we view the third pillar of this firm foundation, UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." Eph. 1:4. Paul trusted in the power and amazing grace of God as stated in his letter to Timothy, 2 Timothy 1:9, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Thus, it is not according to our works. Our finite minds would argue that surely it is according to our will even granting that it is not according to our works. The Spirit teaches us contrary to natural reasoning so let us see what Paul has to say about it in Rom. 9:11-18. "(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is NOT OF HIM THAT WILLETH, NOR OF HIM THAT RUNNETH, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy upon whom HE WILL have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Jesus said to his disciples, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." So we are unconditionally elected according to the good pleasure of God's will.

Let us further view this foundation by noting the fourth pillar or principle of truth, LIMITED ATONEMENT. God's people were chosen in Christ Jesus. Christ's life and death must have been for them only. Concerning Jesus before his birth the angel said, "And she (Mary) shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." The work of Christ was for God's people, not for the entire Adamic race. Christ said in

John 10:14-15, "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep." Christ died for the sheep, not for the goats. Christ said in his prayer to God as recorded in John 17:9, "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." Christ did not pray for the entire Adamic race. Paul tells the ministers of Ephesus in Acts 20:28, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." His blood was shed for the church, not for the world. Christ said in Matt. 20:28. "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." He gave his life for many, not for all.

The fifth pillar is that of IRRESISTIBLE OR EFFICACIOUS GRACE. The teachings of the Scriptures is such that we must say that man in his natural state is radically corrupt. He is spiritually dead and must be saved by Christ if at all. He does not desire God; therefore, must have a new disposition before he can love God. He loves sin therefore can never desire to be redeemed from it until he is wrought upon by the effectual working of God's mighty power. Jesus said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3. This inward change wrought by supernatural power is termed in the Scriptures as "Called out of darkness into his marvelous light," 1 Peter 2:9. A passing out of death into life; (John 5:24) a taking away of the heart of stone, and a giving of the heart of flesh; (Ezk. 11:19) and the subject of the change is said to be a new creature. (2 Cor. 5:17) We had nothing to do with our physical birth but received it as a sovereign gift of God; we likewise have nothing to do with our spiritual birth but receive it also as a sovereign gift. Each occurred without any exercise of our own power, and even without our consent being asked. We no more resist the latter than we did the former. Consequently, salvation to whomsoever it may be granted is entirely of grace. The ones so wrought upon are made to see "Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." Heb. 12:2. There is no such thing as a "self-made man;" the highest type man agrees with Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am." God said through the prophet Isaiah 56:11, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." When God says *repent,* you repent; when he says *come,* you come; when he says *go,* you go.

The doctrine of election and efficacious grace logically imply the certain salvation of those who receive these blessings. Therefore let us consider the sixth pillar to wit: THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS. Those who have been brought to Jesus for refuge have a firm foundation upon which to build their hope of eternal life. The iniquities of their own hearts together with all the satanic influences will never cause them to fail. The same amazing grace that has brought us thus far will lead us home. Paul said in Rom. 8:29, "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."It is an evidence that God has predestinated the recipients of these gifts to be like him in character, destiny and glory and that

he will infallibly carry out his purpose. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil. 1:6. This day of Jesus Christ will be the crowning work of immortality in the resurrection. Psalms 138:8 reads, "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O Lord, endureth forever." Paul states that "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." So God's dealing with his children are never ending, but will finally save them in Heaven without the loss of one.

In this life God's people may experience a close view of the seven fundamental principles or pillars of this firm foundation as God sees fit to reveal to them. The seventh, or that of the IMMORTALIZATION OR RESURRECTION OF THE SAINTS, is yet to be experienced in reality. Now we see as through a glass darkly but then face to face; now we know in part but then we will know as we are known. Now we look forward with deep anxiety and precious hope toward the reality of the seventh principle, THE RESURRECTION, which is to be the crowning work of salvation and is yet to be experienced actually and really by all the children of God. I desire to close this treatise by quoting 1 Cor. 15:51-58, "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, than shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But THANKS BE TO GOD, WHICH GIVETH US THE VICTORY THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the WORK OF THE LORD, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." Amen. E. J. L.

WERE THERE NOT TEN CLEANSED?
BUT WHERE ARE THE NINE?
LUKE 17:17

The record informs us that "it came to pass, as he (Jesus) went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole."

One of the most terrible of all infectious diseases is that of leprosy. Once it gets into the blood, apparently there is no cure for it. Pitiful, indeed, are those who are afflicted with it. Under the law "the leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, Unclean, unclean. All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be de-

filed; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be." Lev. 13:45-46. While there was no hope of aid or healing by earthly physicians, the fame of the Great Physician, because of the miracles which he wrought, was being spread abroad, and "there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off." Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem, and he must needs pass "through the midst of Samaria and Galilee." It is quite evident that in the "certain village" into which Jesus entered there were both Jews and Samaritans, and while the ten lepers had to be segregated, or separated and kept at a distance from all the rest, for it is said they "stood afar off," nevertheless "they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." So far as they were concerned there was help in none other but Jesus, and they realized that it would be a great condescension on his part to take any note of them in their terrible plight, but what else could they do, Therefore they cried aloud, for the record is "they lifted up their voices." Necessity was laid upon them, and being undeserving they cried for mercy. So far as we are aware, there is not a single instance in all of the Bible where Jesus turned a deaf ear to the plea of mercy. He heard their cries, "And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests." They evidently had faith to believe in him, for they obeyed his command. "And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed." The priests had nothing to do with this cleansing, for "as they went they were cleansed." There was no virtue in the priests, as such; their mission was only to pronounce the case either clean or unclean.

How truly does leprosy typify sin, and the leper the sinner! One must realize that he is altogether vile and sinful, with no soundness in him at all, before he will look to Jesus for help. Like Paul, he has to confess, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." He must be completely bankrupt so far as creature good works is concerned, and have absolutely no confidence in the flesh, before he is fit for the Master's use. It is only when he feels to be the very chief of sinners, and justly condemned before God, who is altogether righteous and holy, that he is a fit subject for mercy and grace divine.

Our main thought in writing this article is to emphasize the characteristics of the one who, "when he saw he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God." Since there is nothing in particular said about the nine who did not turn back to glorify God, as being "Samaritans" or "strangers," we are going to assume they were all Jews, and while it is true they were all lepers, because of the feeling which existed among the Jews towards the Samaritans, it would appear that the Samaritan, the blackest of them all, so to speak, was the only one who possessed sufficient gratitude to acknowledge how greatly he had been blessed. He "fell down on his face at his (Jesus') feet, giving him thanks; and he was a Samaritan." Jesus, answering, said, "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole." This poor man was truly humbled and lay prostrate at the feet of his Master, giving glory to God. We

have sometimes wondered why so few of those who by faith have experienced the efficacy of the cleansing blood of the blessed Lamb of God, return to give him thanks and to glorify God by acknowledging him before men. We are persuaded that those who do are only a small percentage, comparatively speaking, of the total number who believe that Jesus is the Saviour of sinners. Perhaps those who do are the worst of all, the vilest of the vile, or see more clearly their sinful condition before a just and holy God. They are as "this Samaritan," "this stranger." The others, like the Jews, perhaps, have not felt their vileness so keenly and have not come to the place where they must fall at the feet of their Lord and give him thanks. We know it is written, "Many are called, but few are chosen," but at the same time we can but wish that it might be the will and good pleasure of our heavenly Father to bid them come unto him, that they might have rest. Jesus told one to "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." When Jesus was here in the world, "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth." We can but feel that only those who are likewise led and humbled and have their judgment taken from them, will be made willing to leave their case to the judgment of the Church, and these shall declare the generation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We also feel that we know full well that no man, or woman, or child will chose this way when left to themselves, for this is the "path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen. The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it."

Jesus said to this "stranger," (and how well does that word describe such a character!) "Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole." Yes, he had his way to go, and he must walk it by faith. It was his faith that made him whole, his unshakable belief in the ability of his Master to only speak the word, and he would live.

Matthew, Mark and Luke give an account of another leper who came to Jesus and was healed. Matthew says, "When he (Jesus) was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed." Here, again, was seen implicit faith in the ability of Jesus to heal the most loathsome of all diseases, for he worshipped him, saying, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." The only question in the leper's mind was whether our Lord would be pleased to have compassion upon him, but whether he would or not he "worshipped him." Paul said, "without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." We are also reminded of another occasion when it was said of Jesus, that "he must needs go through Samaria." "Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water:

Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." How glad we are it is written that He did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. He came eating with publicans and sinners, and when the Pharisees were astonished at it, his reply was, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." The woman at the well needed to be taught who he was, and of his works and ways. He said unto her, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." At that time, she only knew of the water that had to be drawn from Jacob's well, but Jesus told her that, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." Jesus continued to reveal himself more and more to her, and while at first she perceived him to be a prophet, ere long she "left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" He had unfolded to her the inadequacy of the law, which she bore witness to, for while she had had five husbands, she confessed that she now had no husband, meaning thereby that she had reached the point where the law could no longer avail for her or supply her need. While her fathers had worshipped in the mountain of the law, Jesus told her that the hour cometh, "when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." How we all need to be taught this most precious truth! Among the last words to be uttered by our Lord while journeying in the flesh, were these: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou has sent." Such knowledge is wonderful, indeed! Like the leper and the woman at the well, we must go our way, and while there are countless thousands who never turn back to give thanks or to glorify God, we would like to emblazen his praise, and his honor and his glory, across the canopy of the heavens, that all of his creatures might see it, and bow before Him that sitteth on the great white throne, and adore him world without end. Gratitude towards God is a rare gem, and we earnestly hope that many of our friends among our readers will be given to turn back, and with a loud voice glorify God, rendering unto him the praise that is his just due.

WERE THERE NOT TEN CLEANSED?
BUT WHERE ARE THE NINE?

R. L. D.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Elder George L. Weaver requests that all communications for him be addressed to Route 2, Amelia, Ohio.

The Old School Baptist Maine Conference, assembled at the Oak Woods Church in North Berwick, Me, Oct. 11-12, 1947, to the associations and churches with which we correspond by ministering brethren, messengers or by letter.

DEAR BRETHREN: In again addressing you it is with a sacred pleasure, because of the unity of the faith in which we hope we are one people through the household of God. As of old we thank the Lord for his manifold blessings toward us as a church in preserving us and causing the light of his countenance to shine upon us. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." Psalms 89:15. The love and interest manifested by our sister churches is appreciated by us, and we desire a continuance of your correspondence, and hope to see your messengers at our next yearly conference which we trust, God willing, to hold at North Berwick.

At all times we are reminded of the goodness of God to us. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." James 1:17. How assuring to know that the heavenly Father changes not. We are as the waves of the sea or slender reeds driven and tossed about by the wind, but the Savior maketh the storm to cease and the waves to be still. Oh, the height and the depth of his mercy toward us!

Though few in number we have endeavored to meet in conference, each one telling of his experience along the way, reading the Scriptures, prayer and singing the good hymns written by inspired poets. In Mal. 3:16 is the promise, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."

How pleasant that the four Old School Baptist churches in Maine are near together, thus enabling some of us at least to attend the yearly meetings and other services when some ministers can be with us. We have lately been made to rejoice for a dear sister has come to the church, expressing her love and fellowship for this humble people, yet feeling her unfitness to be with those she loves for the truth's sake. May God establish our hearts in the truth as it is in Jesus and make us to rejoice in his salvation.

(Elder) R. LESTER DODSON,
Moderator
(Mrs.) ALICE M. HALL, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Whereas, it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst our much esteemed Sister, MRS. PEARL REBECCA (DUNCAN) CLARK, who passed to the great beyond, Oct. 20, 1947, having been a faithful, zealous and ardent member of the Saints Rest Church for the past fifteen years, and who has been identified with the church since she was thirteen years of age, more than fifty-one years united with the church, often speaking of her hope in the greater life, expressing her willingness to depart and be with those gone before, and be with the Lord forevermore.

She was the widow of our late Brother and Deacon Walter Lewis Clark, who preceded her in death, February 1, 1947. Therefore, be it

Resolved, that we, Saints Rest Church, trusting to be followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God, feeling that he had given this precious Sister to us these many years as a star in the elements of the church here on earth, that it was his will and pleasure to take her from us, and that we do bow in humble submission to his just and holy will. Be it further

Resolved, that the Saints Rest Church extend to her bereaved children our deep and abiding sympathy, pointing them for solace to Him only who can heal the earthly wound and bring peace to their souls. Be it further

Resolved, that copy of these resolutions be sent to the sorrowing children, also a copy be sent to our family paper, **Signs of the Times**, for publication. Done by order of the church while in conference, Sunday, November 2, 1947.

(Elder) C. B. TEAGUE, Moderator
(Elder) L. D. ROSE, Acting Clerk

Whereas, our heavenly Father has removed from the walks of life our much esteemed sister, Mrs. E. L. (POWELL) DRURY, whose presence at our meetings for the past many years was so much enjoyed, and whose faith was so strengthening to the membership, and whose absence is so much deplored we feel that we have sustained a great loss. Therefore, we record this weak memorial to express our love and respect for this much esteemed sister, and bow in humble submission to the Lord's will, believing that she is at rest and hoping to meet her in a better world.

She was a native of Alabama, coming to Comanche Co., Texas when young. She was converted in her youth and joined the Primitive Baptist church. She was a member of Antioch Church in Comanche County. She came into Saints Rest Church in Dallas, Texas, April 22, 1938 and has been a faithful member since, always at church meeting unless providentially hindered, although she lived one hundred fifty miles away. She was a strong believer in the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists and proved her faith by her work.

She passed away at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Will Kerley, Dec. 15, 1947. Her funeral was at the Comanche Funeral Home, Dec. 17, with Elder A. R. Swearengin in charge. She is survived by her estimable family of three sons and two daughters: Dayton Powell, Comanche, Tex., Bill Powell, San Francisco, Cal., J. L. Powell, McAllen, Texas, Mrs. Ivan Couch, Dallas, Tex., and Mrs. Will Kerley, Comanche, Tex., together with a host of friends who mourn her passing, and to whom we extend sincere sympathy and commend to them the grace of our God. Be it

Resolved, that we send a copy of this memorial to the bereaved family, write one in our church record and send one to the **Signs of the Times** for publication. Read and approved in Saints Rest Church conference, Sunday, Jan. 4, 1948.

(Elder) C. B. TEAGUE, Co-Pastor and Clerk

OBITUARIES

The most righteous God of love and mercy has by his wisdom seen fit to take from us our dear friend, WILLIAM H. HAMMONS, born August 24, 1893 in Ruskin, Nebraska, and died August 24, 1947, the son of Elder J. H. and Delila Hammons. From what I have heard his father, Elder Hammons, was of the Old School Baptists, a strong believer in the purpose and sovereignty of God in all things. He served churches in Nebraska and Kansas before coming to California. His obituary appeared in the Signs of the Times in 1927 written by Sister Mary Ellison. She paid great tribute to this faithful servant of God. William is survived by his dear wife, Alta, who was everything that could be expected of a wife; also four daughters, Mrs. Wilma Williams, Oakland, Calif., Mrs. Ila Shaw, Edna and Marnell of Yuba City, one son, Robert, is deceased. He also leaves five brothers and two sisters, John, Virgil and Earl of Yuba City, Pete of Los Angeles, Lee of Chico, Mrs. Carrie Burnette, Chico and Mrs. Etta Jones of Paradise, Calif. One brother, Cortie, is deceased.

Brother Will joined the Missionary Baptists some years ago but for some time before his death, he attended the Primitive Baptist Church and was not in the least backward in showing his love for the Old Baptists. Shortly before his death he requested the unworthy writer to conduct his funeral service which we tried in our weak way to do. We had learned to love Brother Will for the truth's sake. A large crowd attended the funeral at the Jarvis Funeral Home in Yuba City. After the service his body was laid to rest in the Sutter Cemetery to await the resurrection. The community has lost a useful citizen, the family a loving husband and father, and the church a faithful attendant. May the spirit of reconciliation reign in the hearts of those near and dear to him, is my prayer. One who loved him.

(Elder) T. R. JEFFERSON

JACOB ROBERT McAFEE, son of John T. and Pamelia B. McAfee, was born near Redman, Macon Co., Mo., Nov. 30, 1863, and passed away at his home in Redman, April 30, 1947, being 83 years, 7 months of age. He began blacksmithing at Redman in 1887, continued in that work, adding gas and oils to the business in 1927. About a year before he died he was unable to work. Oct. 1, 1893 he was married to Miss Susan Clella Friday and to this union five children were born. Violet Belle preceded him in death Nov. 6, 1942. Those surviving are Rodney Bryan, Hannibal, Mo., Lloyd Wilbur, and Noel Sidney, St. Louis, Mo. and Cecyl Wayne, Mason, Mo. Other survivors, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren; three

brothers, John F. of Montana, W. B. of Macon, Mo., and G. J. Atlanta, Mo.; two sisters, Mrs. Fannie Hawkins, Leonard, Mo. and Mrs. T. A. Perry, Peoria, Ill.

He never made a public profession but was a firm believer in salvation by grace and esteemed the Primitive Baptist Church as the true church, attending regularly and aiding materially. Having lived together almost fifty-four years I miss him so much, but God is a husband to the widows and his sustaining grace helps me to go on. Funeral services were held at Mt. Salem meeting-house, conducted by Elder J. Bryan Adair, assisted by Elder S. L. Pettus. Interment in a near-by cemetery.

(Mrs.) J. R. McAFEE

MRS. FLORENCE MATHIS BEAN departed **this life Jan. 6, 1948 at the Mayfield Hospital,** Mayfield, Ky. after several days of suffering and pain. Florence was the wife of the late Dr. Bean of Brewers, Ky., the mother of two girls, Mavis Lyles and Gladys Mason both of Brewers; one son, Forrest Bean of California, all of them are living. Florence professed a hope in early life but never united with the church. She was as much a member of the original Primitive Baptist Church at Soldier Creek as any member there. Her home was a home for the Baptists and she never tired or complained of how many visited with her at the same time. No one was ever turned from her door to hunt a home elsewhere. God had blessed her in basket and in store as well as teaching her that salvation was in him and not in the works of the flesh. Her daily walk was that of a tried and true saint of God; her patience was God given; her endurance was beautiful to behold. We who lived close to her feel she is not dead but just sleeping in Jesus from which none ever wake to weep.

She leaves besides her children several grandchildren, one sister, Mrs. Meta McPherson and an aged mother, Sister Emma Lou Mathis who had lived with her daughter, Florence, for the past several years. The church will miss her going in and out with them; her words of encouragement; her works of charity; her life of hope and love.

Her funeral was preached by Elder Paul Poyner of the Soldier Creek Association and Primitive Baptist faith. Her remains were laid to rest beside her husband near her old home in Brewers, Ky. We would say to the aged mother, to her family and to the household of faith weep not, she sleeps that night of rest, awaiting the call "come home," enter into that eternal place of abode where hope is lost in sight.

(Mrs.) EFFIE BOWDEN

On May 20, 1947 God called from this world of sin, sorrow and affliction our dear and beloved father, I. HAMILTON EVANS, to be with him where sickness and sorrow are not known. He was born June 15, 1868, the son of Ichabod D. and Eliza Ann Evans, near Mardela Springs, Md., making his stay on earth 79 years, 11 months and 5 days.

Father was married to Georgia Ann Horsman, daughter of John and Sally Horsman of Mardela Springs, Md., Feb. 14, 1888. Mother preceded him in death 12 years. To this union were born the following children all living: Minnie Gambrill, Victor M., Aquilla H., G. Dewey, Elderdice Evans and Emma L. Beach of Mardela Springs and Ruby Parsons of Salisbury, Md. Two children died in infancy. Grandchildren surviving are R. Allen Gambrill, Norman Lee Freeman, G. Dewey Evans, Jr., Betty Ann Elliott, also two great-grandchildren, Connie Lee Evans and Robert Freeman.

On Aug. 30, 1937 father was married to Pearl E. Hoffman of Crisfield, Md. who also survives. All feel our loss deeply but feel to bow our heads in humble submission to Him who doeth all things well and cannot err, realizing fully that our loss is his eternal gain. Indeed we feel it would be wrong to wish him to stay in his afflictions. Many times during the 11 months on his sick bed he expressed his great desire to go where pain was no more. One of his favorite hymns No. 571 in the Lester-Durand Hymn and Tune Book was beautifully read at the funeral service conducted at his late home by our friend and beloved pastor, Elder H. M. Bennett, who spoke comfortingly to the family and large gathering of family and friends.

While father was not a member of the visible church he was a strong and firm believer in the doctrine of the Old School Primitive Baptists, and contended for and upheld the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, having no confidence in self or creature works. He was always confessing himself to be a vile, wicked and wretched sinner, and helpless of himself to do anything about it, and could only say that as salvation is by grace, lest God have mercy on him he was eternally lost. His interest and thoughts were always for the welfare of the Rewastico Church that he loved so well and attended all his life. He never missed an opportunity to attend a meeting unless providentially hindered and was, we feel to know, loved and highly esteemed by the church that he had loved for the truth's sake for so many years.

The respect and esteem in which he was held was proven by the large gathering of relatives and friends, and the many beautiful floral offerings. Father was tenderly and well taken care of by his loving wife and companion, children

and in-laws. His body was placed by that of his first wife in the family burying ground near Mardela Springs, Md. Written by his loving daughter.

(Mrs.) MINNIE GAMBRILL

MRS. LILLIE MATTHEWS CHESTER, wife of Brother T. S. Chester of the Soldier Creek Church of the regular order of Primitive Baptists near Brewers, Ky., departed this life Dec. 16, 1947 after a lingering, painful illness. Lillie was one of our faith who remained on the outside of the church. She felt for years a deep hungering for the truth as it is in Jesus and having no confidence in the flesh religions of this day and time. She and her husband went to the meetings of the Primitive Baptists. Distances did not stop their goings in and out before us and they were helpful in seeing that others could go to the meetings. She also went when health was poor and her sufferings were great. Their home was a home for the Old Primitive Baptists, a place to rest, to feed and shelter these old bodies of ours, also a place where we met to sing, pray and preach. She was bedfast at our last Association and our visiting ministers, together with our dear old moderator and other Baptists visited at her bedside. She had them sing and each one talk and pray. This Jesus, whom these were determined to know and nothing else, was her meat and her drink. The Signs of the Times she carried around and studied and read each article. She often called for song in her last days of suffering and these songs were songs of truth and experience to her. It was a sad experience to her last summer when a very dear sister was baptized into the fellowship of the church and she could not go. Something seemed to say "no." Still in tears she said, I rather have hope than to stand up and say, "I know it" as some do. My hope is all I want, it is enough.

She leaves two brothers, Alex and Ronnie Matthews of Tenn., and an aged sister, Mrs. Nannie Edwards of Tenn. Also her husband who requested these lines be sent to the Signs, asking me to write them. He states, "I wish I might write something, she was such a good Baptist and loved them so much," but he added, "I feel this song this day:

Though cast down, we're not forsaken,
Though afflicted, not alone;
Thou didst give, and thou hast taken,
Blessed Lord, "Thy will be done'

She often asked me to sing, said it sounded so pretty to her."

Her funeral was preached by Elders Paul Poyner and J. H. Henson at the Soldier Creek meeting-house, and her remains laid to rest in the church cemetery. Her sufferings now have reached a close, and we would say to those who weep, the joy prepared for suffering saints will make amends for all.

(Mrs.) EFFIE BOWDEN

Brother JAMES H. LAWS was born October 14, 1856, and died May 26, 1947. He was the son of William L. and Margaret Fooks Laws and reared near Powellville, Wicomic Co., Md. On Jan. 2, 1884, Brother Laws was married to Miss Leah Catherine Jarman and to them were born eleven children. His widow and eight of the children survive him.

In June 1887 he was baptized by Elder T. M. Poulson, uniting with the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church where his membership remained until God took him from this world. He was a very faithful and loyal member and a true witness of salvation by grace. He has been greatly missed by his brethren and sisters of the same faith, as well as by his family and friends. He was highly respected by all who knew him. Funeral service was conducted by the writer at his home and his body buried in the family burying ground.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT

SPECIAL NOTICE

Beginning with the month of January, 1948 there will be held, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at 2:30 p. m. a meeting of Old School or Predestinarian Baptists for worship, second floor of Pythian Temple building, 1012 Ninth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Elder John D. Wood, Minister. Those desiring to meet with us are welcome. For further information, call or write to

FRANK T. SIMPKINS
5210 - H ST.,
Dillon Park,
Washington, D. C.

SPECIAL MEETING

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 2, 3 and 4, 1948. Services will commence at 10 a. m. Wednesday. Our ministers, brethren and friends are invited. Trains will be met at Hopewell, Tuesday p. m. Those desiring more information regarding the meeting may write Elder C. W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J. or the undersigned at the same address.

(Mrs.) LETHA A. BLACKWELL
Church Clerk

HASSELL'S CHURCH HISTORY

This book has been republished and is ready for delivery. Price $4.85. Send orders to Turner Lasseter, 919 North Highland Ave., N. E. Atlanta, Ga.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 116 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JUNE, 1948 No. 6

WHATEVER IS, IS BEST

"Sometimes when storms of troubles roll,
And waves of trial beat
With all their fury o'er my soul
They bring me to defeat;
Till comes the calm, as come it will,
And looking back I see
That 'spite of either good or ill,
Whatever is, is best for me.

Sometimes deep shadows cross my path,
Down in the valley low;
Sometimes the billows of his wrath
Above me overflow;
Till comes relief, as come it will,
And looking back I see
His rod and staff my comfort still
Whatever is, is best for me.

Sometimes my faith grows dead and cold
No hope, no sure retreat;
And like a sheep without the fold,
I faint with thirst and heat;
Till spreads the feast, as spread it will
And looking back I see
His bounty filling all my soul—
Whatever is, is best for me.

And so I'll trust Him all my days,
And take whate'er He sends,
Love, life or death; on all His ways,
My thankful soul depends;
And when He comes, as come He will
I, looking back, shall see,
From yon blest height, forever, still—
Whatever is, is best for me.

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Selected by Henry Townsend, Jr., Edgemont, Pa.

CORRESPONDENCE

A FEW THOUGHTS

Near the close of the days Jesus spent on earth he approached his Father in prayer, "And lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." John 17:1.

In this quotation we are taught the right attitude, or position, in the reality of prayer. In view of the fact Jesus lifted his eyes to heaven, he evidently beheld God in all his power and glory, majesty and dominion. I seriously doubt we pray unless our eyes are lifted to heaven, regardless of what position our body is in, notwithstanding it is almost a breach of fellowship in some sections of the country if all do not get on their knees, and especially the one audibly speaking. I often think such criterion discipline might be hypocrisy, as now it is so clearly shown and proven by thus saith the Lord in an editorial in Dec. 1947 *Signs* by Elder D. V. Spangler that the position or attitude of the body has absolutely nothing to do with the prayer offered nor of the results obtained; but it is altogether exclusively as to where our eyes are lifted, and in this respect I am lead to feel we can see just as well in one position of the body as we can in another; it is all dependent upon what we see and not upon the position or attitude the body is when we are seeing. As a matter of fact the pharisee saw himself as a strict religionist, a result of which he prayed with himself; the publican saw God, he saw streams of mercy never ceasing, he saw himself condemned before God and the great mercy seat, he saw nothing good he had ever done, he felt within his heart mercy was the only cure, being a condemned sinner before God and the great mercy seat; then we hear his prayer, "God be merciful to me a sin-

ner." He never even asked to be changed to a Christian gentleman but was content being a sinner, but signified by smiting his breast with his own sinful hand he did so much need the mercy of God. I pause to ask here, do we need more?

Ah, my friends, I am fearful that much of our praying is only a public expression of our wants instead of our needs, and I find no promises along that line. The eyes of Jesus lifted to heaven, there beholding all the glory of God. Jesus evidently felt within, the great need of that glory in order to do justice to so great a God in that of glorifying him; so his plea is, glorify thy Son, not even for the sake of the Son, but only that thy Son also may glorify thee in face of the inevitable hour. Jesus never waned in his prayer acknowledging the great gift he possessed over all flesh, along with the great authority to give eternal life to as many as God gave him; never changed the status of affairs in his heart in respect to his inability to carry on of himself, but conscious always from whence all power and blessings come, Jesus having power over all flesh. I understand Jesus here to be dealing with mankind and not with birds and beasts and creeping things of the earth. My understanding does not limit the power of Jesus no more than the misunderstanding of some one else. The fact remains he is the Son of God with power and great glory, but I am endeavoring to pay tribute where tribute is due; honor where honor is due. I feel it would be so dishonoring to Jesus for me to say God gave him power over all flesh to the grand end in view that he should give eternal life to as many as God gave him, and the next breath say, the flesh under consideration was the flesh of birds, beasts and all creeping things of the earth as well as mankind, when it is not my understanding Jesus had any such in view, but did have under consideration all fleshly motives, interests and purposes, religious or otherwise to the end they should not intervene to prohibit, aid or encourage in any way, shape, fashion or form by act or deed the giving of eternal life to as many as his Father gave him for in the gift was also included Jesus to them, "Thou gavest them me." John 17:6. I feel the very arches of heaven are decked with the agates of the prayer of the Son of God purely upon the spirit and principal of the salvation of all those for whom Jesus suffered, bled and died, culminating the eternal purpose of God. A trembling sinner.

(Elder) F. A. COLLINS

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: John was commanded to write "The things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter." Before writing these things he had to be turned to see what he was to write about. One of the writers said, "Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned." This turning signifies to me he knew nothing about this picture in the making for it was at his back, and until this time he only had eyes to look straight forward (law), knowing nothing of the wonderful working of God from before the world began. No wonder John fell to the ground at the sight of this magnificent picture. Naturally speaking, if we were to turn and see a great building completed, the making of which we knew nothing, it would be a great astonishment. John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day and could view something more wonderful than the natural eye is capable of beholding. Dear child of God, every time you are permitted to turn and see the immaculate Lamb of God and his holy angels it is the Lord's day with

you. What a glorious thing to know there is a Lord's day, so different from your dark and gloomy days. What a wonderful gift bestowed on the sons of men..

John first tells us he "was in (not on) the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." It is generally said that John's enemies being tired of hearing him preach the truth banished him there to starve and die. Regardless of how history tells us he was put there, he himself in holy divine writing tells us he was there "for the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ," and it was the Lord's day. It is true he was on a destitute island ready to starve and die so far as could be seen by natural understanding; stripped of all the wealth of this world; made ready for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ; and it was the Lord's day, a day of knowledge. "I speak to them that know the law." Rom. 7:1.

This great voice John heard behind him seems to me to be the real voice of Him who spake and it was done, commanded and it stood fast. But the scene is a vision, as he says, "One like unto the Son of man," a shadow that blanketed the household of faith until the day of Christ. In this picture he saw seven golden candlesticks, the family of God, with each a minister held in the hand of Almighty God. No more comforting words could ever penetrate the ear of the child of God, who has fallen to the ground and sees nothing but hell and death, than these, "I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death." "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death." Yea John, after your walking about Zion and viewing her towers, seeing her many shortcomings, all the dark and gloomy days for every child of God because they are continually leaving their first love, going after Jezebel, Balaam, Nicolaitanes, etc., remember I am her God and will guide her unto death, that she may live in newness of life, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." "The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honorable."

John was given language to rebuke the church for her idolatry, but every time the Spirit says hear, it is like unto this; "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna," etc. Every child of God that has been born of the Spirit knows how this overcoming comes about. Again we hear what the Spirit saith, "Come up hither and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter." Behold a throne in heaven, and he that sat upon it was like unto beautiful stones, and had the appearance round about of a rainbow in the day of rain which was the likeness of the glory of God. Round about this throne were four and twenty seats. Some one is going to quit work and be seated. I believe this to be the family of God that rests from their labor. Yes, four and twenty elders were sitting clothed in white raiment, decked with crowns of gold. Before this throne was a sea of glass which serves to show you your image and can be easily broken. Also round this throne were four beasts full

of eyes before and behind. I believe this to be the guiding spirit in all ages, from beginning to the flood, to Christ, to the end of this time world and on through death. It has no end. It is a circle round about the household of faith as complete as a wheel within a wheel. May I say the characteristics of these four beasts are *power, wisdom, justice* and *mercy*. The three in one God over all and in all. The angels of the churches first portrays the lion in power to rise; second, the calf slain for the feast by the shedding of blood, and sprinkling upon the lintels of the heart brings wisdom for the mother is bearing the ark, lowing as she goes; third, man, justice was met by the Son of man; and fourth, mercy, by the flying eagle as she "stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange God with him." When power, wisdom, justice and mercy are displayed the beasts render glory, honor and thanks to Him that sat on the throne. Then the four and twenty elders, household of faith, fall down and worship him that sat upon the throne saying, "Thou are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." "For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people," "And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace."

I have not been able to be out for several days and in these quiet shut-in hours I have been given to, I hope, enjoy some of the blessings of God. Many times in my pathway do I see the beast with seven heads and ten horns coming up out of the sea. Yes, seven heads butting towards the seven divine attributes of God always placing before me the ten commandments. As surely as I feel that I have defeated one of these there suddenly arises one nearer to me, right in this earthly body of mine, speaking as peaceably as a lamb but with the pronunciation "Siboleth." If left to myself I would be swept away as a whirlwind into the fabulous doctrines of man. I hope, to turn my course, I have been made to see the beauties of God's kingdom in the book written within and on the backside, not on the front side, but sealed from man's view, opened by the Lion of the tribe of Judah. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be," and hear that still small voice, "Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife;" that great wonder that appeared in heaven, " A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." That great city, the holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God, that lieth four square, covering the four great eras I have before mentioned; the twelve gates are pearls bearing the names of the twelve tribes of Israel; her twelve foundations are garnished with all manner of precious stones bearing the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple. This city had no need of the light of the sun or moon, no need of any natural light nor the law for the glory of God and the Lamb lighted it. The gates of it shall not be shut at all by day for there shall be no night there. NO, no dear trembling child of God never fear of going to the Savior and of its being too late and the gates closed. An open gate and an outstretched arm figurates our God and this city. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him:

and I will raise him up at the last day." "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Nor need you be worried about the sin sick soul for there shall be no more curse. The physician is there with the cure. Such beauty! No natural tongue can tell, no eye can see, no mind contain the beauties of this city whose maker and builder is God, but as the queen of Sheba said, "the half was not told me." Although she leaves her first love and gets drunk on the wine of Babylon she has only to say, "Return, return, O Shulamite." "There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number. My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her." As she hears the voice of her love she says, "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine."

God's people are always a willing people in the day of his power. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgements and his ways past finding out!" Yes, it is a secret that no one has been able to tell what they have seen and heard. When the seven thunders had uttered their voices John was about to write. It is evident he knew what was uttered or he wouldn't have started to write. God sealed those words not from John, but with him and did not allow him to write them. So it is with every child to-day when they are caught up to Paradise. They hear words unspeakable that it is not lawful for a man to utter. Child of faith, try always to keep in mind that Michael, your Elder Brother and Savior victoriously fought your battle with the dragon and his angels, and their place was found no more in heaven, "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." Therefore, He could say, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Wayfaring child, Joseph is still alive! Is it not enough? In this new heaven and earth is peace, love and happiness; without are dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. Oh, would you not love to know you were on the inside protected by the walls and bulwarks of salvation, sleeping on the downy bed of God's love, feasting at the banquet table under the banner of love?

'Tis a picture of silver with apples of gold,
Drawn by the eternal pen;
It neither can be bought nor sold,
It is given to all the kin.

(Mrs.) MAGGIE LEE HAYES

(The following scrap of correspondence, from the pen of our late venerable and dear brother, has been kindly furnished by a friend, and will be read with profit by many.—Editor.)

Wallacetown, Ont., Feb. 2, 1864

MY DEAR FRIEND:—I received yours yesterday, and was glad to hear from you. With reference to my bodily health, I may inform you that I am gradually though slowly recovering. If ever I had been of any use to the church of God in my day, I feel that my usefulness is at an end; but if further spared, my day of sinning is not past. "O, wretched man that I am"—bearing such a corrupt *body*. Often in darkness, I know not

where I am, like a mariner at sea, when neither sun, moon nor stars are seen, having to calculate by the "dead reckoning," which is an uncertain and unreliable mode of determining our situations. I know that when I started the sun shone brightly, but did not know that the days of clouds and darkness were so near, and would be so numerous. Yet so they are. I do not at all desire to measure others by my standard, for I have seen, heard and experienced too much to warrant me in doing so; neither do I wish to limit the God of Israel to any human standard, for his ways are frequently dark and mysterious to our finite comprehension, "and past finding out." "His locks are bushy and black," &c. "We have a sure word of prophecy, to which we would do well to take heed"—take it as our chart and compass in our seemingly dangerous voyage, where there are so many obstructions—infernal machines, half-tide rocks, sand-banks, &c., &c., &c. If we have *not* the skillful pilot on board, our ship shall surely be wrecked, even at the entrance to the haven; but if he is at the helm we shall be safe at last, although we be sometimes fearful and unbelieving, and may charge us often with unbelief and hardness of heart. I know it is so with me from sad experience.

When we profess religion, the scriptures must be our rule of faith and practice in every particular—"To the law and to the testimony," &c., and not to our charity. When a man, professing religion, is unable to "give a reason of the hope" that he says he has in him, saying he left his experience at home, or behind him, we may safely conclude that he has not experienced the gracious work of the Holy Spirit in his heart, but deceiveth himself. Job would know what answer the Lord would give him. David would invite all that feared the Lord to "come and hear what he had done for his soul." Jeremiah found the Word, and it was the joy and rejoicing of his heart. Ephraim could tell that he was instructed and chastised, and God had mercy on him. "The seed is the word of God," and where there is no seed there will be no fruit. "Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth," &c. Peter calls it "the incorruptible seed," &c. The prophets say, "The word of the Lord came unto me" at such a time and place. By the *word* we shall be judged, &c. True religion consists of doctrine, experience and practice. A person may have a clear head, but a dull heart. He may preach with the tongue of men and of angels, and still be without the work of saving grace in his soul. I contend that no one can prove the bible to be the book of God, but by the experience of the Spirit's work in him. 1 Cor. 12 &c.

Yours in sorrow, and yet in hope,
THOMAS McCOLL

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Thank you for the kind words expressed in appreciation of my letter which was published in the June issue. Naturally I am anxious to read the letter from my old home state which you said would be published in due time, also any others which may be published that refer to my letter. I know I cannot keep my identity from those to whom God chooses to reveal it. It is easier for me to follow the Spirit when I lay aside all the flesh that I can "for I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing."

A few years after I united with the church I felt the impression that some day I would have to write to the Baptist papers for the comfort and edification of God's chosen people. I was willing to do my Master's bidding but what must I write? I was young and had not

passed through the school of experience so necessary to God's people. I did not feel that I even had an experience of grace that would interest any one, as it was not like many I had read in the Baptist papers. After attending the Associations or other good meetings I often wrote about them and sent my letters to the Baptist papers where they were published. Those who had attended the meetings, or knew the people mentioned, said they had enjoyed the letters. After my marriage I occasionally wrote to my home church telling about the Texas Baptists, etc. Some of these letters were published in different Baptist papers. However, the older I grew the more I realized that few peple cared for my efforts. I then only wrote short letters expressing my appreciation of the writings of the *Signs* when I sent in my subscription. I wrote no more until I was moved by the Spirit to write you the letter, part of which you published in the *Signs* Nov. 1946.

If only I can write some word of comfort to God's humble poor, the little trembling children of God, that may help them along life's rugged journey, I shall feel that my life has not been lived in vain. It was that desire prompted me to write you that letter hoping some little sister might be helped in her hour of need to hold fast to that faith once delivered to the saints, regardless of her trials and sorrows along the way; and to keep pressing forward to the high calling of God, ever looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Our Master told us, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and in his compassion wept with those that wept. He commanded his followers to love and to comfort one another as they traveled through life saying, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." I have heard the still small voice of my Master in the wee hours of night speak these words to me; and I will never forget the sweet peace that came to me then for I knew that I had pleased my Lord whom I wish to serve. I thank God for the sweet comfort I have received in the past, through the effectual workings of the Spirit in the lives of his dear servants and hand maidens expressed through the medium of their friends and published in the dear old *Signs*. It is my desire to likewise help the shut-ins, the sad and lonely, and those who for any reason are deprived of the privilege of attending their church services. I know what it means to be sad and lonely, a stranger in a strange land with no loved one near me with whom I could discuss the affairs of the heart.

It was not through my own efforts for I knew not where to look, but through a copy of the *Signs of the Times* in the home of an afflicted sister that I was introduced to the Texas Baptists. I had read the *Signs* at home and I knew I was among friends but I did not get to attend any of the churches for many months. I know what it means to be kept away from my church for many months at a time. I do not know what I would have done but for the comfort I gleaned from the family paper, the encouraging personal notes of my precious sister and my beautiful dreams. I know what it means to have my heart bruised and torn because of strife and confusion in my church homes through no fault of my own. Even as a child I suffered because of church troubles, for when my parents suffered in their troubles I suffered too. I loved every one who professed to love the doctrine of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ whether inside or outside of the church. I never could understand why the people who professed to love God

and Christ most could not get along together without quarreling and hurting each other's feelings for "God is love," and "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I have belonged to three different Primitive Baptist churches, and have lived to see some in each church, whom I had loved and trusted and with whom I had communed, cast from the folds.

I know what it means to be bowed down in sorrow and grief by the hand of God to have an only child snatched from me in a few short moments; to see my fine son, a happy youth, walk whistling away from home only to return in a few hours in a casket; and to have to cry out, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Yet in a few years later we have both thanked God many times for taking our darling from the evil to come, and sparing him the horrors of war which his associates had to endure; and for sparing us the pains other parents endured during those trying years, but our hearts have bled for all who lost their valiant sons.

My heart was saddened when I read of the passing of dear Elder Bond. I never knew him in the flesh, but through the spirit have gleaned much comfort and consolation from his writings in the *Signs*. Yes, he will be missed by his fellow travelers and the household of faith who has read his writings. He was a true servant of God, a sweet peacemaker who spent the greater part of his life feeding his Master's flock and chasing away the wolves and trying to keep the rams from fighting within the fold. He has gone to his rest and has received the blessings of his Master who said, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." May God's tender mercy rest upon the bereaved and all who mourn because of his passing, and if it be in accordance with God's holy will, may he raise up other servants and send them forth into that vineyard to carry on the work which was left unfinished is my prayer for Christ's sake, Amen.

I feel to thank God from the bottom of my heart for the privilege of attending a union meeting last week end. When I told my husband I desired to attend all three days he made no objection. He ate his lunches in town on Friday and Saturday so that I might take the car and stay as long as I wished. Not caring to go to church on Sunday he spent the day in the country with his grandsons while I went to church with a friend. What a sweet peace was mine to be able to go to and from my worship without fear of criticism from my dear companion! I have always considered it a great privilege to visit this old "Mother Church," the oldest church in the state of Texas. It was here, one hundred fourteen years ago, that the little band of pilgrims, in the primeval forests surrounded by savages and wild beasts, built their house of worship and worshipped their God in spirit and in truth. Unworthy as I am I am happy to have the love and confidence of my dear old "Mother in Israel" whose grandfather led that little band of worshippers from their old home—an organized church—through the perils of an arduous journey to this haven of rest and preached to them the rest of his life, and whose father carried on the work of his father in the ministry for many years until his death. I love to meet her smiling face in this hallowed spot. I feel thankful that the same sweet doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone which has been proclaimed from the pulpit at this place down through the years was proclaimed at this meeting by the five ministers in attendance. Though the

church membership has decreased, so many of the older ones having passed away in the last few years, I was told that these were the largest congregations, during all three days, that have been at the June meetings in many years. Most of the congregation, members of other churches in the Association and of churches in three corresponding Associations, came many miles to attend these services. The interest was keen, the singing melodious and the preaching harmonious. Love and sweet peace abounded. The congregations assembled early—before nine o'clock on Saturday and Sunday—and sang God's praises from both the Sacred Harp book and the church hymnal until eleven o'clock when preaching began. Two services were held at the meeting-house on Saturday, and night services Friday and Saturday nights at the homes of the brethren. At the close of the services on Sunday the ordinance of the Lord's Supper was observed, followed by the washing of the saint's feet, "My cup runneth over." I pray God to ever keep me at the feet of my brethren and sisters that I may serve them in whatever capacity seemeth good in His sight. It is God that places the gifts in accordance with his own will in order that all honor and glory may be ascribed to his holy name.

As the parting hand was taken, a young brother presented himself before the church and asked for a home, saying he had stayed away as long as he could. He was not blessed with utterance of speech to relate his experience of grace, but simply said that he loved the brethren and the doctrine of God our Savior which had been preached and he wanted to be one of them. He was no stranger to the membership as his mother had been a member many years and he had lived in the environs of the church. After answering the questions propounded by the moderator he was received into the fellowship of the church and a candidate for baptism which will be administered to him in the near future. It was very encouraging to the older members to see so many sons and daughters of Primitive Baptists—some of whom are deceased—in attendance at this meeting. Judging from their countenances they were gleaning the crumbs that fell from their Master's table. Oh, that more of them might be given the courage and grace to take up their cross and follow their Master through evil as well as good report! Our Savior said, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." It is he with whom we are yoked and he has borne the heavy load. I feel that if they but knew the blessings they would receive in obedience, they would take their places with the old soldiers of the cross.

It was indeed gratifying to my poor soul to learn that my letter had struck a responsive chord in the hearts of my brethren and sisters here—those who know me best. All who had read it said they enjoyed it and others expressed their desire to read it. Most of them recognized my identity when they read it, though few knew anything of my early life. One visiting sister who had known me but a few years, came to me with tear dimmed eyes and threw her arms about me saying, she had appreciated my letter so much, and that she wished she could spend hours talking with me as she had borne a similar cross for many years during the lifetime of her husband, and she knew whereof I spoke. She said that when she had finished reading the letter my face was presented before her and she knew the author. I told her not to praise me, but God, for the comfort she had received. I feel that I have been doubly paid for the efforts I put forth in writing the letter by the knowledge of the

joy and comfort it has given my fellow travelers to say nothing of the rest I received in obedience.

Brother Dodson, I know you are surprised to get this letter as your letter required but a brief note in reply, but so many things kept surging through my mind day and night that I wanted to write and I could not rest until my mind was at ease. I knew the only way to get that peace was in obedience. I thank you for the corrections you made in my last letter, and will appreciate those you make in this if you desire to publish it. I hope I will not have to write you again soon, at least not until my nervous stomach gets well. It has not functioned properly since the days of that terrible disaster at Texas City, although I am many miles away from there, have not seen the ruins and did not know any one that was hurt. My heart went out in sympathy with the bereaved especially the parents whose children were lured to their death by that burning ship. May God comfort them in their sad hours is my prayer.

A few more lines to let you know that I received the sweetest peace and rest after finishing this letter that I have had in a long time, and had the best sleep last night I have had in weeks. I feel that it will not be long now before I can eat solid food.

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

Your little "Sister from Texas."

Castle Rock, Wash.

DEAR SISTER BAKER, DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD: This morning I will attempt to send you a few lines. If this barrenness of spirit and mind is not lifted, I am sure it will be a poor letter. The trials of this life sometimes seem to obscure any spiritual sense I may have or have hoped to have. I have improved much in my lame trouble but have a frequent recurrence of the other trouble, which always seems to aggravate the heart symptoms. This keeps me so weakened that as yet I am still in bed. My little niece, Erma Attebury, is with me and has been for almost three weeks. For the first time in a year I am getting really good care and until the last few days have gained much.

Dear Sister, you spoke in your letter of how you would love to administer to my needs both spiritually and bodily, and the love it expressed was a wonderful comfort. You do indeed administer to my spiritual needs in each letter that you write and in the beautiful poems you write. I read them over and over, and do so wish I knew some one to leave them to when I am through with them. Some one who would get the comfort from them that I do.

I have not seen any Baptists since sister Simpson left me a few days after you were here. The time seems long and I am often made to say in all sincerity, "Oh! land of rest, for thee I sigh." Some younger neighbors and relatives sometimes say to me that I should not live so much in the past, but look to the future. Naturally speaking at my age and with what the natural mind calls three incurable diseases, I have no future worth looking to, but oh if they knew, if they could for one moment view the future I am looking to, they would indeed be astonished. Sometimes I myself am. When I try to imagine an existence with no illness, of which I have had years and years; no grief which has rolled over me in such immensity that I wonder I live; no discomfort of any kind, but rest, sweet rest for ages upon untold ages, in the warmth and light of God's gracious presence, which our spirtuality will then be enabled to bear and delight in;

I am unable to think on it any further and must bow my head in humility and adoration that I even hope for it; that I have been blessed to have the almost sure knowledge of such an existence. Once upon a time I was often made to say, I think there is an eternal life and rest for the soul, but I have the sure witness within now that I can at times say, Yes, oh yes, I know there is a blessed, eternal rest for God's own, wherever or whatever they may be. If they are his that is all the necessary requirement. Redeemed with the blood of the precious Christ, the powerful, atoning blood! If only we may hope to be among the number for whom he shed that blood, not for anything we have ever said, done or left undone. Not by any merit of ours, not even by our desire for he must make us to desire his salvation or we never would, never could. I am waiting, not too patiently, I'm afraid, for his most welcome call, "Come home." I do desire to remain and suffer his will, all of it. But as an earthly child suffers parental chastisement, and is happy and glad when the tears are over, the last sob is sobbed and the dear parent smiles again and renews the close sweet love between them so will I be glad and more than happy when this occurs to me spiritually.

I am sorry that I did not get Sister Spikes' letter returned sooner. I was glad to get it for I haven't heard from her since she left Portland. I rejoiced to hear of their meetings with Brother Wolf, and do pray if God so wills that the little church (the late Elder Bond's church) may build up sufficiently at least, that those few dear saints may have a home to rest in from time to time. I was also glad to hear of the good meeting at Touchet and that so many were there from a distance. I am anxious to know the impressions all of you had of the young Brother Wolf.

I feel the need of the meetings so much, but of course I do not need them else God would supply them. I feel the desire to overcome my grief all of the time and instead, to turn all my thoughts to God and his glories, his mercies and goodness to me, but I find this is impossible. I am at times lifted up, but I find myself sinking back into tears and lamentings and realize that in this flesh I must suffer as flesh and be content with whatever of prayer and praise the Lord sends to me, knowing my needs and having promised to supply them. If I receive little, it is because little is required. I see but through this veil of flesh darkly, but oh praise his name, this veil was rent at one time, and thereby it was made possible for us to approach him.

Very few were at our last meeting at Chehalis, Brother Fisher wrote me. Just he and his wife, Brother and Sister Cameron, Sister Owen and Brother Cameron's daughter, Margaret, and her family. No one stayed to dinner and to visit. Brother Fisher enjoys that almost as much as the meeting, so he said he felt cheated.

Will you give my love to the saints there? I love to think of each and every one of you, and long to see you again face to face; but whether I do or not is entirely in the hands of the Almighty. I have little hopes of it, only as you are blessed and able to come to me, but we do not know what God has in store for us, and I hope to be submissive to his will in all things. I hope you are blessed with your usual health and that the Lord sees fit to bless you spiritually whether he does naturally or not. I so often meditate on the spiritual blessings we need and the natural blessings we need that must come from the same hand. How indeed we are as a vessel to hold his mercies when he desires; to

be filled with grief when he desires. How indeed he is truly the potter and we the clay; how truly it is his divine right to fill each vessel to his desire. How utterly we have no right to ask "Why?" I have been spared the trial of asking my God why he took my husband. I felt to know it was predestined to be exactly as it was. True there was a purpose, for good to his own, and for glory to God. I do not see the good, nor do I yet see the glory, but hope to in God's own time. With much love.

(Mrs.) EFFIE PARKE

Route 1, Rives, Tenn.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I have a desire to write a few lines to the *Signs*. I am not a gifted writer but have been a subscriber for a long time. The paper used to be in the home of my father and mother when I was a child. I read and reread the good letters. I truly believe these are Primitive Baptists for they are called a peculiar people. I hope I have been chosen and am one of the number. "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people." How wonderfully this emphasizes the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone. So many times I have been made to realize that the Captain of our salvation went down into death and came forth victoriously. We are persuaded that when the time comes for us to quit the walks of this life we shall walk through the valley of the shadow of death and fear no evil.

In my loneliness and dark hours of deep sorrow and grief when there seemed to be no light, I find myself trying to look both ways. I try to think the Father above with that all-seeing eye is watching me. How sweet to look beyond. I had the privilege of attending four Associations this season. Able ministers came with the words of God's mighty power, and tears flowed from eye to eye and joy from heart to heart. It showed sweet fellowship to me. How thankful I feel that we are situated in a country of religious freedom, some others have restrictions. Give God all the glory and honor, he has provided the way for our safety in this life, we have nothing to boast of in ourselves. It is a strait and narrow way to life everlasting. I picture that to be the most beautiful highway. No lion, no beast, nothing unclean will be on this path. The humble, poor and lowly saints of God are protected with a watchful eye. You and all the Associate Editors have been so faithful. May we all be kept by faith and the care and keeping of the great God above. "If God be for us, who can be against us." An unworthy sister.

(Mrs.) SOPHIA PRICE

Box 275, San Juan, Texas

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am proud to send you a new subscriber to the best paper, the *Signs of the Times*. I had hoped to send two new ones but I failed to see the dear brother. Would like to send more but health prevents me from going very much, however, I will go to our good meetings for I realize it will not be long till the meetings here on earth will be over. I have just a little hope that I will be where meetings will never end, though I do get down in the valley so low I fear that I have never tasted the good word of love. If I am deceived I know it is just and right, and my greatest desire here is that I may be submissive to God's holy and righteous will for he alone knows best for me. I have a little hope sometimes that I am made to say, Thy will, not mine be done. Sometimes I feel to believe that I am reconciled to his will and am made to rejoice in tribulations, then again I doubt.

We were able to attend three Asso-

ciations this last summer and last Saturday and Sunday were our regular meeting days. The Pastor and my husband seemed to be given unusual liberty and such wonderful things were spoken. I do not have language to express it, but will say these things are the sweetest to me this side of heaven. I am still thanking you for sending me your good paper as it is such a source af satisfaction to read it. Please forgive all amiss as I am full of faults. I hope I am yours in much tribulation.

(Mrs.) JAMES B. REID

1472 Golf Club Lane, Clarksville, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON AND ASSOCIATE EDITORS: Just a few lines in appreciation of our dear paper, *Signs of the Times*. I am seventy-five years of age and my eyes are very bad. I cannot do much reading, but still can read the *Signs*. I get great comfort from so many editorials, experiences, etc. The dear "sister from Texas" was food for my soul, also Brother Lefferts in July number if I know anything about any of it which I wonder about and doubt. I did so much enjoy and feel to say Amen to it all. Have always loved his writings and longed to hear him preach. His writings make me think of the way my dear uncle, Elder T. C. Herndon, used to preach. In my younger days he was pastor of our church, Lebanon, near Russellville. In October 1898 the Master called him home, leaving a wife and eight children and the church without a pastor. It seemed more than we could bear but we have to try to bow our heads in humble submission to God's will.

I am sending remittance for my renewal and a little extra to use as you see fit. Hope to be able to read the dear paper while I stay in this world. Dear brethren one and all, may God be ever ready to enable you to write in the future as you have in the past for the comfort of God's poor, humble and hungering little ones, afflicted and poor the world over. May God be merciful to each and all of you. Pray for a poor, sinner and lonely one, the very least of all if one at all.

(Mrs.) B. H. SHEARON

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

We are particularly anxious to add a substantial number of **new** subscribers to our mailing list during the remaining months of 1948. We honestly feel that our readers will readily agree that the quality of reading matter which has been appearing in the **Signs** is deserving of commendation to all lovers of the truth. If this is so, many of our readers know one or more persons who would be glad to take the paper if they knew about it. Will you who do know about it be so kind as to spread the good news among your brethren and friends?

We wish to remind all of our Ministering brethren of the fact that we will be glad to allow them $1.00 for every new subscriber they secure on the annual basis. Just send us $1.00 and you keep the other $1.00 for yourselves.

We also hope that our duly authorized agents will announce at the meetings which they attend that they will be glad to receive both new and renewal subscriptions. It is a real accommodation to many of our readers to be able to hand the money for their subscriptions to some one individual in person.

Please remember that any notices of meetings and changes of address should be sent in as far in advance as possible. We usually furnish the copy to our printer sixty-days before the paper is due to be mailed out.

Also, please watch the date on your wrapper covers and renew your subscription promptly when due. The co-operation of our subscribers and their continued support of the paper will be greatly appreciated by all sharing in the responsibility of its publication.

R. LESTER DODSON

Erwin, N. C.

DEAR SISTER MAE FANNIE DAVIS: I am writing you a few lines as you have been in my mind. We went to Hornet Church Sunday and enjoyed the day. I enjoyed speaking, using for my text Acts 7:22. "And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and

was mighty in words and in deeds." You can read it and probably will get just as much or more than I did. When I read it, it looked like the windows of heaven were opened to me. I went back to the birth of Moses, and I could see how the king and all the people were mystified at the child living in the face of the greatest law that could be passed by mankind to destroy all male children, yet when he grew to such a stage that he could be hid no longer he was cast out, when Pharaoh's daughter took him up and nourished him for her own son. This proves that the wrath of man shall praise him. God saw the children of Israel in the bondage of Egypt and there was a set time for them to be brought out, and the birth of Moses was in due time. It was God's purpose to raise up a law giver in the midst of all the wickedness of the land to accomplish this great purpose and to prove his power to the world. He raised up Moses in the midst of the people and proved the weakness of the king's rule, and made the child so beautiful that even Pharaoh's daughter overlooked the rule of her father. God rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, that is, no wickedness goes beyond his control. He can cause the wrath of man to praise him.

The same ruling was put into effect to destroy Jesus but it failed, and we, too, rebelled against God in our experience but it only accomplished God's purpose. Destroying the children in Moses' day was only to prove the work of God cannot be hindered. The same was proven in casting the three Hebrew children into the fiery furnace. It just proved the purpose of God cannot be overthrown. Also the same in the case of Daniel being cast into the den of lions. We know that God is unchangeable the same to-day and forever. He can protect us the same to-day as he did in the days of these prophets and in the day every effort was made to destroy Jesus. Where Jesus is the fire does not harm and the lions are harmless too. Your brother in Christ I hope.

(Elder) LUTHER M. TURNER

Route 1, Winston-Salem, N. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I mailed the *Signs* to you yesterday and hope you see fit to have your article republished. To me it is wonderful. I have read it several times, each time enjoying it more than before. To read this article no one would ever doubt your being a child of God or your call to the ministry. To know and feel these things must be worth more than all the wealth in the world. In April 1932 you wrote a wonderful article on "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God," etc. My brother, Joseph H. Gooch, Stem, N. C., who passed away in 1935 answered your April letter which is sweet to me. You will find this in the July 1932 issue. Both are wonderful to me.

I hope you are well and that the New Year may bring you much happiness. May you continue to be given strength from on high to feed the poor of the flock through the *Signs*. With every good wish to you and yours I am,

(Mrs.) ALLIE GOOCH REID

(*See Editorial column.*)

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in New York City holds services in Parkside Hotel, 18 Gramercy Park South. This is one block east of Fourth Ave. and 20th St. and is near the 18th St. Sta. of the Lexington Ave. subway. Take Elevator to Park Room, second floor. 11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. JUNE 1948

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." I Peter 2: 2-3.

I have a desire to write on this Scripture to the household of faith. I want to remember that this household is composed of little children, some of whom are not able to understand the things we see promulgated in the pulpit and on the printed page. But while this is so, I want to be explicit and declare to you that that does not give me a right to change what I write just because of the inability of any to not see. The gospel is the gospel all the time; it is Jesus Christ and him crucified, and he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. Not only is the gospel the same but the characters that it is for remain the same. As far as ability goes we never have any of our own, but all we have is just the measure of faith that is given us. We must keep in mind that this measure is not turned over to us; that dispensing grace is not the work of the children of God.

I hear a lot about not preaching so much doctrine, but rather to preach the sincere milk of the word to the babes, for they cannot understand the hard doctrine. That is right that they cannot, but I trust I am thankful to Almighty God that he will teach his doctrine to them. These babes would not have any better judgment about milk than they would meat, would they? In fact if we are out to solve the problem by our observation of natural children, then my analysis would be that more babies would gnaw on a piece of meat than would try to drink out of a cup. Now to follow up the idea of this milk, let us remember that this milk has got to be handled by the mother instead of the baby. Just imagine a tiny babe holding its own cup. If you want conditions in this sincere milk of the word, here are all of them anybody can desire. Just turn the babe loose to get its milk. Now while you have given the little one over to the task of getting its milk, will you please remember that the Gentile church does not have any breasts. What a hard doctrine. What a dry, starving, husky doctrine! And what an awful thing it is to preach a theme to little, storm-tossed, sin-smitten children of God, that mocks them into believing they can find their mother and that she is well qualified for feeding her brood! The church has not milk, bread or any other nutrition for the children. She is barren anyway and it was all done that no flesh should glory in His presence.

Three times I have seen my wife go down into the valley, giving birth to a baby boy. One of them has long since passed on and the other two are now grown and by the time this appears in print will be men of their own. My mind is enraptured with the picture coming before me of the zeal and motherly devotion that has been given to them. Did she tell the first one that he could find his own food the best way he

could? We read in the book about some one having their part in the book taken away if they add anything to the words of a certain prophecy (Rev. 22), and I do not know of a greater adding or taking away than to mock a baby by telling him to help himself. That is the nucleus of conditionalism, and we cannot avoid the dilemma it places us in to talk about the sincere milk of the word, as though we could milk it out and give it to another. If one of the family is able to preach, it is not that God has given him more than some one else. But just as sure as a man has ever preached, it is just as sure that some one has been called to listen. Each of them has been fed from that soul-lifting milk of the word. Now I want to say that there is such a thing as sincere milk of the word, but you just cannot say that it is something we can handle. The church is often spoken of as a woman in the Scriptures, but she is not equipped for nourishing children. The whole family is fed alike; every age of the church has the same appetite, the same desires, the same need. The apostle could not, and did not, claim anything except that that comes from the Spirit; the patriarch David was led and made to lie down; the "lot of the inheritance" was touched in the place that made him a cripple the balance of his life. Time and space would fail us to cite the cases of the different saints in all times that were helpless except when led by the Spirit and grace of God.

Preaching practical godliness is another favorite pastime of people that seem to fear too much strong meat. I do not know just what kind of godliness that is, anyway the Bible does not mention that kind as though you preached that kind when you wanted to preach to the babies, but that you had another brand for the old sheep. Anyway now if you were going to experiment about which were the nearest able, old soldiers of the cross or babes, to receive this "practical godliness business," do you not honestly believe that it would be better to preach it to the older ones than it would to be telling the little fellows about it? If a thing is helpless, are you going to tell it to milk out the fatness and grow? Now I do not mean that either the older children of God, or any other saint can do a thing apart from the Grace of God. No, I am not in sympathy with this idea that we are progressive in complying with the admonitions laid down in the Scriptures. If we can do better as we go along it would mean that we could get sanctified after awhile and there would not be any need for grace.

Let us read the text again. Before we do let us look back at some of the things Peter has said. We, the children of God, are born again of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which lives and abides forever. This word is the same word that was made flesh and dwelt among men. This is a spiritual birth and there is not any way under heaven to make the two births related; one being flesh, earthly, the other spiritual, heavenly; the first getting its supplies from perishing sources, the other from living, eternal. Every sinner born of this spirit, knows very little about it; he cannot tell with any degree of certainty, where it came from; he professes to know but little, if anything, about what is going to be the end of it all. I thought at one time that our inability to tell about this birth was at the time of its taking place, but the very language forbids any such interpretation. It says "so is everyone that *is* born of the spirit," and that covers the ground from the time of birth until we quit the walks of men. Now child, this word endures, it remains the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. This

birth is as lasting as the source from which it comes. But this flesh is as grass, and *all* the glory of man is as the flower of grass. The best thing about us as men is about as lasting and dependable as the grass and the bloom of it.

Now this text does not tell us to get to desiring the milk of the word. It is not a thing that we can preach (as though we could preach without the nourishment of the milk) to the little children of God, thinking that this is something the unlearned can do and understand, and that they can take hold of it better than they can the hard points of the gospel, but this is the only gospel that has ever been preached for "this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." This desire is in every heaven born soul; it is something given you in the birth, and had sin been taken out of our mortal bodies, instead of merely being condemned in the flesh, we would have never known the sorrow of warfare. There is in a wonderful sense two plants or at least two natures here, and this sincere milk of this living word causes, or makes, or produces, a growth in these new-born babes. I do not care how this is said as long as it is not a conditional growth. I do not want to strive about words nor to make any child of God an offender for a word, but I do want to, and, God being my helper I will, contend most tenaciously that salvation is of the Lord. I will not say, and certainly do not believe, that this growth is in sin. I had as soon have any other rotten or blasphemous doctrine as to have the kind that would say that this milk of the word causes the children of God to grow in sin. But they grow in grace and in a knowledge of the truth. Just as long as they grow, they grow away from self. They are grown in nature; they are grown in sin, but how little in grace they feel to be. But that desire continues for the milk, and just as long as it continues, just that long will they be nurtured by it. Just as long as they are nurtured by it, they shall be growing. When they stop growing away from self, then they get strong in self. This old plant of nature will produce all kinds of wild fruit and bitter gourds, and sometimes it has a form of sweetness, (2 Tim. 3:5) but you had better watch it for it will even deny the power it comes from, claiming that bitter and sweet comes from the same place. Growing in ability to do the things of God, and growing in sin by this milk being given us, are neither caused by the milk but we are making manifest that we came into the world grown in nature, full of sin, completely under its power and influence. May it please Almighty God to give each child his portion in due season, that there be normal, healthy growth in the kingdom. W. D. G.

(The following letter was addressed to the late Elder H. C. Ker, Editor of the Signs of the Times, on Dec. 26, 1921, following our ordination in the previous month, and was published in the Jan. 15th, 1922, issue of the paper. R. L. D.).

REPUBLISHED BY REQUEST

DEAR BROTHER KER: As there were a number of things I omitted to speak of at the time of my ordination which I desired to mention, I shall attempt to write an account of what I hope have been the dealings of the Lord with me, and shall begin by going back very early in life. When I was but eight months of age my mother was removed from the scenes of this life, but through the care of my father, grandmother and others, and later my stepmother, I was brought up through boyhood. I was considered to have possessed a very stubborn disposition, and it required many thrashings at times to straighten me out, but along with that, about the age of ten

or twelve years, as I remember, was a desire to read the Bible and Zion's Landmark, though I did not wish any one to know I was interested in such literature. On one occasion my stepmother came down to a barn where I was reading the Bible aloud, as I was wont to do, and I well remember how ashamed I was that she had caught me reading. I was also fond of lining out and trying to sing hymns which I had heard ministers line out, which I would do as I attended the cattle in the fields. Educational advantages were rather limited in that immediate section of the country at the time, and I failed to make the best of the opportunities I had. Leaving home between the ages of seventeen and eighteen, I attended a business college in Richmond, Va., for about six months, after which I began my career in the business world. I still read the Bible and the Landmark, and occasionally would get to hear an Old Baptist sermon. In my travels I came in contact with all kinds of young men, some good and others bad, and on several occasions I recall having planned to do things which would have meant more or less my destruction, and which looking back now I can but regard as God in his providences having kept me from. Surely his ways are mysterious in providence as in grace.

In the fall of 1906 I went to Wilmington, N. C. to live and there my associates, both young ladies and young men, were mostly Methodist. They held their Sunday-school classes on Sunday afternoons, and when the time came for them to go I seldom could accompany them, my desire being to go to my room, get in the closet, shut the door, fall on my knees and try to ask God to have mercy on me. On March 1st, 1907, I returned to Richmond, Va., where I was associated in business with my eldest brother. He was held in high esteem by the members of the New School Baptist Church where he was a member, and was a very active and conscientious worker, being president of one of their societies. A very short time following my return to Richmond a meeting of about two weeks duration was held at his "church," during which I was influenced to unite with them. I loved the Primitive Baptists then, but as there was no church near, and being told that I would not find any church in perfect agreement with all I believed, I cast my lot there. Instead of the satisfaction and relief I had hoped to obtain, my trouble soon broke out in a new and more deadly form than I had even known before. This time I felt to be without God and without hope in the world, with not a single friend in all the universe to whom I could turn for advice, and my cry day and night, at home, in the office and on the street, was with groanings which could not be uttered. My burden grew so heavy that I was compelled to seek relief somewhere, and though it was a great cross to me to have to tell my brother I had come to where we must part in our church affiliations, I realized I could not endure to live where I was as I was. They had put me on a committee to go out and get people interested in the "church," and this I could not do. About this time I learned of an appointment for Elder Sylvester Hassell in South Richmond, and determined that I should go to that meeting, and my prayer was that it would decide my future course; if the preaching was the kind that fed my starving soul I would ask to have my name removed from the records of the church where I was. The meeting was held in a small hall, and well do I remember the occasion. There were but few present, but I believe the Lord was there and was in the preaching and the hearing and the understand-

ing. The text was: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" John 1:29. It seemed I had never heard such words fall from mortal lips as Elder Hassell uttered that day. My heart was filled with rejoicing, and tears flowed freely down my cheeks. I was among strangers in the flesh, and would have but could not keep back the tears. This did decide the case for me, for I returned fully determined to "come out from among them." My brother, an old deacon(and a very devout and sincere man he was, too,) and the pastor of the church reasoned with me, the latter telling me that the people who believed what I professed to were few in number, old in years, would soon pass on and the church would become extinct, to which I replied: I have nothing to do with how many or how old they are; that is God's work, and he will see to it; but as for me, if I stand alone, I stand alone. It was my only foundation, and all other ground had become as sinking sand. Having taken this course, a weight which had been crushing me down was apparently lifted bodily from my shoulders, and for a time I felt much relieved. There was no longer any doubt, neither has there been since, in my mind which was the true church of God, but many doubts arose as to my fitness to be among such people as they appeared to me, and having passed through a very distressing experience and believing it was not essential to eternal salvation to have my name enrolled on the Primitive Baptist church-book, I concluded I would live outside the portals of the church, but I was to be taught "man might propose, but God would dispose; man might plan, but God would execute." I had a great desire to hear preaching and planned my vacation so as to be at the old home during association time. I left Richmond one morning in August, 1908, and went to an appointment of Elders P. D. Gold and Isaac Jones, some one hundred and forty miles away. I do not recall anything in particular about the preaching that day, but while singing the closing hymn one of the deacons arose and asked Elder Gold to announce an open door for the reception of members. When the singing resumed some unaccountable power took possession of me, and when I came to myself I was standing in front of the pulpit. All I could do was to weep, and were it not for what Elder Gold said regarding some correspondence which had passed between us, I am sure they would have had very little reason to receive me. Not long after that a church was organized in Richmond, and I took my letter there as a charter member. Some of the brethren soon began to intimate in different ways that they thought I had a gift to speak and occasionally I was asked to speak in prayer, and on one occasion to talk from any Scripture that was on my mind. I was now having trouble of another kind, and realizing my utter insufficiency in every way for such work as this, I began to draw back. About this time, whether in a dream I know not, I appeared to have gone with my stepmother to meeting, and upon entering I saw there was no minister in the stand. Several held a consultation and the lot fell on me. When I walked into the stand and faced the audience, among them was an Old Baptist minister, Elder J. E. Herndon, and this seemed to strengthen me, causing me to hope the Lord had not left me alone. Then came the opportunity to be transferred by my concern to its New York City office, and I felt this was my chance to get out of my trouble; I would go to New York among strangers, and not mention to any one anything about my impressions or the attitude of the brethren

there about my speaking. It so turned out that chance did no more for me than it did for that certain poor man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. Those who are familiar with the Ebenezer Church in New York know that on the first Sunday in each month a conference meeting is held, at which all are given an opportunity to speak their minds, and after hearing the different ones tell of their travels it was not long before I found myself trying to speak of the goodness and mercy of the Lord to me, for it did seem he had brought me by a way I knew not and into very pleasant pastures in casting my lot among such lovely people. As time passed on I was called upon on certain other occasions to say something. I was not content to keep silent, but I only got deeper in trouble when I tried to talk. What could I do? Where should I go? I endeavored to reason with the Lord, as it were, and to tell him as did Moses that I was not the man, that I was not eloquent, had a very limited education and no right undestanding of the Scriptures. I would also try to review my life before him and show him how utterly unfit I was to be one of his servants; I by no means measured up to the standard fixed by holy writ, and many times was in a state that I would rather die than live. I would go to the fourteenth floor of my office building, and something would seem to almost draw me out. On Sundays on my way to meeting I would cross a high bridge, and as I walked across I could see in my mind's eye a picture of my leaping from the top of the bridge to sudden destruction in the waters far below. Sometimes while riding on the trains to and from my work the thought would come, if there could only be a wreck and no one hurt but me, what a relief it would be to leave forever the sufferings of this world. To add fuel to the flame, conditions at my office were almost as near unbearable as they possibly could be, and while I had been able to lay aside but very little, I finally decided that I would rather sweep the streets of the city than endure longer what I was undergoing. I was cautioned not to give up a certainty for an uncertainty, as I proposed to work on a commission basis, but God has been good in his providences, and this change which conditions compelled me to make has proven one of the best in my life. During this period I was also having considerable trouble with my throat, and finally I was advised to go West, in the hope that climatic conditions would benefit me. This suggested another opportunity to run away, but again my plans came to naught. Since I was hedged about and could not flee to some unknown part I determined from time to time to quit trying to speak, and was so wrought up—on one occasion that I told our pastor, Elder McConnell, if he persisted in calling on me it would force me to remain away from meetings. But the love he and the dear brethren bore towards me, which was manifested in such various and wonderful ways at times, broke down my rebellious spirit, and a love was begotten in me which caused me to say, Lord, here am I; use me as thou seest fit. While my case seemed as hopeless to me as the valley of dry bones did to Ezekiel, I had to adopt his language and confess, "O Lord God, thou knowest," and "Thy will, not mine, be done." For many years any writing that savored of one's call to the ministry, or the obituary of a minister, had been quick to attract my attention, and seldom was any duty too urgent to prevent a suspension until I had read the article. Some have come very near to me in their writings, and as I have been given to

walk with them I have wept for joy. Occasionally one would talk to me as though he understood the yearnings of my fainting heart, and particularly did Elder H. H. Lefferts seem to read as an open book the inmost desires of my soul and tell me the things that my hearkening ears were longing to hear, on his way to the station after preaching for us in New York. I have desired above all else that the Lord would lead me in a plain path in this most solemn matter, knowing that except he build the house they that labor, labor but in vain. Sometimes I felt he gave me a message; Scriptures would fasten themselves upon my mind and would remain with me until I had tried to talk or write about them, and I began to watch the providences of God in opening a door for me to speak. There were times when I felt I had been given a text, and I looked in vain for the Lord to open the door; at other times he would open a door in a most unexpected and wonderful way; it might be through sickness, inability of a supply to come in the absence of our pastor, or some other channel. I remember especially an occasion when I was troubled about attending an association, and I believe I inquired prayerfully of the Lord concerning the matter and received the command to *go,* and as ye go, preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Upon arriving I found about twenty-nine ordained ministers present. and the committee on arrangements was troubled to know how to have all preach. I thought after all I was mistaken, and the Lord had not sent me there, yet somehow I could not doubt that the Lord had given the command to go. To my utter surprise, a few hours before the closing of the meeting a sister of long standing in the church with which the association had been convened went to the committee and urged them to arrange some way for me to speak, as she was very anxious to hear me, and this sealed the command which had seemed to come direct from God to *go,* and as ye go, preach, saying the kingdom of heaven is at hand. This was after I had been licensed by the church, and it was during this period that I hesitated to go to meetings for fear of being misunderstood.

Some very wonderful promises have been made precious to my soul from time to time, notably among them was when the news of my having been licensed by the church was conveyed to me (I was not at the meeting) by a sister who had just received the news and came over to see us (where we were spending our vacation), thinking I knew about it. I was much surprised and disturbed over the news, and as I pondered it in my heart the language of the prophet Isaiah, forty-third chapter, came in much sweetness: "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior." Again, when I was on the verge of writing the church and asking them to rescind their action in licensing me, being so terribly perplexed that day with the solving of a business problem which taxed my very wits, I sought refuge in the Scriptures that night upon reaching home, but not knowing where to turn. The Bible opened at the thirty-second Psalm, and I began reading at the top of the page not the first verse, and soon came to this language: "I will

instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." I had no thought that such words were in the Bible, and it appeared as though the very breathing desires of my soul were here being answered. The yearnings of my heart were that the Lord would instruct me and teach me and guide me, and this was the very thing he was promising to do. To be sure, it was a nail driven in a sure place, and for the time being I rested there, because it was in this great Teacher that my soul had put its confidence, knowing that all other leaders are blind, and that if the blind lead the blind both shall fall into the ditch. I cannot record the evidences some have had of their call by grace to serve the true and ever-living God, and while I long for brighter evidences and renewed tokens of his love, yet I desire to acknowledge before men that he hath not dealt with me as I have deserved, but that his goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and my desire is to dwell in the house of the Lord forever and to inquire in his holy temple. One day in the King's court is worth a thousand in the tents of wickedness. At best I can only hope to furnish a very imperfect account of the great and mysterious ways of God in dealing with the children of men, and of the infinite wisdom, the almighty power, the matchless mercy and the undying and incomprehensible love which contrived and wrought out to perfection in all its details his plan of salvation by grace. "O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it."

In conclusion, may I say that the church has proven a home indeed to me. I am satisfied that I have found my Beloved dwelling in his people, and I hope I possess the evidence of having passed from death unto life spoken of by John—love for the brethren. My life has been such as to require the forgiveness, longsuffering and forebearance of my brethren, but their love has been unchanging and their fellowship I covet. Surely, here my best friends, my kindred dwell, and here God my Savior reigns.

In hope of eternal life through Christ Jesus. R. LESTER DODSON

CIRCULAR LETTER

Circular Letter adopted by the Pocatalico Old School or Primitive Baptist Association in session with the Rock Springs Church, Elliott Co., Ky.

DEAR BRETHREN: Through the abounding mercy of God we, who are altogether undeserving, are blessed to come together in an Association, and as is our custom we wish to address you in the way of a Circular Letter, that you may know how we do, and though it be in the very weak expressions of the unworthy writer (appointed at your last session to write this epistle of love) that we might be blessed of the Lord to touch some of the cardinal points of doctrine most surely believed by us, viz: we believe the doctrine of the electing love of God; that God, before time began in the annals of eternity, chose the church and people of God in the person of his Son, and not because of some foreseen good in them for they all stood without merit before him, but freely in his triune person for so it seemed good in his sight according to his own will; (Eph. 1:4; 1 Peter 2:4 and 2:9.) that his chosen people of God fell in Adam in sin, in death, in transgression before God, hence the doctrine of the total depravity of the creature is clearly established by the Holy Scriptures, and the experience of the children of God so positively corroborate and al-

so prove their utter inability to extricate themselves from sin, death and degradation. "The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." Therefore, then all the praise be unto our God, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." 2 Tim. 1:9.

We see then the salvation, grace and calling of this people of God all treasured in Christ before the world began. We hope, brethren, we stand on apostolic ground in the belief that the justice and wrath of God the Father was satisfied in the person of God the Son in behalf of every heir of promise when Jesus Christ, the lone wonder of heaven and earth, Gods only begotten Son, on the cursed Roman tree of the cross poured out his soul unto death, shed his precious blood, the just suffering in the law room and stead of the unjust, bearing their sins in his own body on the tree of the cross, that he made complete and ample atonement for their sins, and in his life, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension he hath forever put away their sins in all their immensity and entirety never to be remembered against them no more forever; and has put every enemy under his feet, led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men. Hear Him saying, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

The doctrine of the new birth, born again, (John 3:3-7; 1 Peter 1:23) born not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible seed by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever, is necessary before one can see the kingdom of heaven, and this birth not a beginning of life but a manifesting of life, which life was hid with Christ in God, hence the man thus born is a new creature in Christ, his conversation, his walk is effectual and effectively wrought of the Holy Spirit of God. The effectual calling of the people of God in time; the preservation of the saints through grace to ultimate glory, Christ their obedience, hence good works wrought in them by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit. Finally brethren, the righteousness of the people of God (all the righteousness they have) is Christ for of him (God) are ye in Christ Jesus, which is made unto us righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

Dear brethren, space forbids that we pursue these cardinal points of our faith further than to acknowledge before the throne of our God that he is Lord of all—Lord of lords and King of kings. Our Jesus, our Savior head over all things to the church which is his body, the fulness of Him which filleth all in all. Grace, mercy and truth be unto all the Israel of our God for Jesus sake. Amen.

(Elder) J. C. HAMMOND, Moderator
(Elder) H. J. BIRD, Clerk

Corresponding Letter adopted by the Pocatalico Old School or Primitive Baptist Association in session with the Rock Springs Church, Elliott Co., Ky.

DEAR BRETHREN AND KINDRED IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST: Through the undeserved mercy of God our unprofitable lives have been spared, and according to the good pleasure of God we have indeed been blessed in our coming together in this our annual session of our Association. This has been a refreshing season, a time of love. Your messengers, able ministers of the New Testament, have come to us laden with the doctrine of God our Savior, salvation by grace through the atoning blood

of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The preaching was in power and in demonstration of the Holy Spirit of God.

We greatly desire a continuance of your correspondence. Our minutes will inform you of the time and place of our next session. May the grace of our God keep us unspotted from the world. May his love be shed abroad in the hearts of all his little children for Jesus sake. Amen.

(Elder) J. C. HAMMOND, Moderator
(Elder) H. J. BIRD, Clerk

ORGANIZATION OF AN ASSOCIATION

Four churches sent letters and messengers to Stockdale, Texas and on Friday Oct. 17, 1947 we organized a little Association, naming it Pleasant Valley. Elder W. O. Beene was elected Moderator, and Elder B. B. Walston, Clerk. The next session of the Pleasant Valley Association will meet with Mt. Zion Church, two miles north from Cash, Texas, eight miles south from Greenville, Texas in Hunt County, on Friday before the fourth Sunday in Aug. 1948, and will continue three days. We invite Predestinarian Baptists and especially ministers who have a mind to be with us. Brother Dodson, we will be glad to have you with us if you have a mind to come. Yours in a little hope.

(Elder) W. O. BEENE

OBITUARIES

EMMA ESTELLE VREDENBURG BRUNOW was born Sept. 28, 1872, and departed this life Feb. 4, 1948 at the age of 75 years, 4 months and 7 days. She was the daughter of Calvin J. and Louise Vredenburg, and was born at Lansing, Mich. and died in Chicago, Ill. On April 18, 1894 she was married to William Daniel Brunow by Elder A. J. Harkness in Chicago. To this union were born two children, William Daniel Brunow, Elsinore, Cal., and Mildred Violet Brunow Mason, Chicago, Ill. She left surviving her two children, their spouses and four grandchildren.

She was left an orphan by the death of her mother when a small child, and was raised by an aunt, Mary Anne Dyer, a member of the Primitive Baptist faith, and subscriber to the **Signs of the Times**, whose home was in Indiana. In later years she united with the Primitive Baptist Church at the Blue Grass Church, near Rensselaer, Indiana. In the late twenties, upon the formation of the Bethel Church in Chicago, as a charter member, she moved her membership there where her name remained until the church disbanded in the thirties. Although she had no church in the proximity of her home, she remained faithful to its beliefs, cherished its memories, and where opportunity afforded returned to its fold. She was a subscriber to the **Signs** for more than thirty years and found comfort and hope in its pages. Her family and friends mourn her passing and have hope in her pilgrimage to a happier home. Her remains were laid to rest in Waldheim Cemetery, Forest Park, Ill. Written by request of the family.

JOHN FRANKLIN LAX

ELDER J. F. BRIGGS was born Feb. 15, 1884 and departed this life Oct. 24, 1947. He was married three times, two companions having preceded him in death. He was married to Mrs. Maggie Edward June 5, 1947. He leaves to mourn his passing a loving companion, two children, the church and many friends. I do not have the date that he united with the Old Baptists. He was liberated to exercise in public and soon after was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry.

He was faithful until the Lord called him home; able in doctrine and discipline; contended for that grand old doctrine of election and predestination of all things. He was gentle and kind to all, a kind loving and dutiful husband and father. The church and his children will miss him but most of all his dear companion who is in great grief. I will miss him greatly as we were companions in gospel bonds. We fought the same battles, suffered the same conflicts and rejoiced together with the joy that none but God can give. Written by one that loved him for the truth's sake.

(Elder) W. O. BEENE

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

G. M. Varnes, Pa., $1; Mrs. R. H. Sanders, Ark., $1; H. L. Gloer, Ga., $4; Mrs. E. C. Redman, Ala., $2; A friend, Va., $2; Mrs. D. P. Farmer, Md., $1; Mrs. J. B. Simmons, Tex., $3; Mrs. E. Null, W. Va., $1; Mrs. L. Z. Burton, Va., $1; Mrs. J. H. Wright, Ky., $3; J. W. Carter, Ala., $4; Mrs. E. E. Nelson, Texas, $1; A friend, Can., $2; J. B. Collier, Tenn., $1; Mrs. M. L. Lucas, Ala., $2; Mrs. C. B. Gordy, Mich., $1; Mrs. E. Osborne, Tenn., $1; Eld. J. J. Collins, Ala., $1; Mrs. R. MacPhee, N. J., $8; Mrs. M. J. Jones, Del., $3; Eld. H. H. Phillips, Ark., $1; B. Evers, Ark., $2; F. O. Pierce, N. J., $4; C. L. Williams, Va., $3; Mrs. J. J. McNeal, Ala., $1; Mrs. M. V. Sizemore, Ill., $2; G. W. Dolson, Texas, $1; R. L. Davis, Kans., $5; Mrs. C. W. Hanley, Md., $1.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 116 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JULY, 1948 No. 7

CORRESPONDENCE

"Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." Psalms 50:2.

Oh, what a subject for mere man to speak about! Are we capable of explaining this sublime subject? No, man of himself is not able to even think on His name, then how can he that is less than nothing and vanity, speak of perfection, and of this Zion that is the perfection of beauty, the dwelling place or habitation of God? Only as Jesus reveals this beauty to his elect people can they know and say, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Matt. 16:16. Let us first try to understand what is meant by the word Zion. It is used in many forms throughout the Bible, referring to Mount Zion, beautiful for situation. "God is known in her palaces for refuge."

The Zion we wish to speak about is an invisible place, if we may call it a place. Our Lord takes things we see with our natural eyes and comprehend with natural faculty to represent the spiritual. Paul writes, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." Rom. 1:20. Again in Col. 1:15-17 "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." The idea that I wish to convey is, that the types and shadows shown to us by things that we know about, that our eyes behold when we behold them through the revelation of God, the spiritual is clearly seen and understood by the things that are made, and what applies to the church, Zion and Jerusalem and collectively has a part in every born heir of God for truly he is the head of the body, the church. Surely out of Zion, the perfection of beauty shines, and the kingdom of God is in you. Zion the city of our God, formed thee for his own abode. David says, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion." "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnites: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down." Isa. 33:20. "For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation." Psalms 132:13. Newton, the poet, has expressed it:

> "Glorious things of thee are spoken,
> Zion, city of our God!
> He, whose word cannot be broken,
> Form'd thee for his own abode."

Surrounded by walls of salvation, beautiful, perfect and holy, the habitation of Almighty God through the Spirit, for "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." We poor mortals can

only worship God when he illuminates our soul and the still small voice speaks within us, and by his light we see light and behold the beauty, love and power, giving us meat to eat that the world knows nothing of. Oh, "what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness." "Let Mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments. Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death." Psalms 48:11-14.

This Zion, the perfection of beauty; this Jerusalem with its walls and jewels; this church without spot or wrinkle, whose head is Jesus Christ the Lord, whose builder and maker is God; and you, my dear brethren, called, chosen and born of incorruptible seed, led about in this wilderness, not out of it but led about in it, and kept by the power of God through faith, are the ones who have been saved by his free grace and redeemed by his Son and are the ones to whom this letter is addressed.

I have tried to keep on the subject, it is dear to me. For fifty years, through much opposition, I have been called foolish and my name cast out as evil, but through it all the Lord has led me, and to him and him only do I give lasting praise. I am glad to be classed with Peter and John. They were unlearned and ignorant men but they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. I have thought many times of the three children in the fire heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated. The fire had no power over them because the Lord was with them in the fire. The Lord is with all the inhabitants of Zion and will not allow them to be tempted above what they are able to bear, but will with the temptation make a way to escape. When we are drawn away by our own lusts, and enticed, when we fall in grace, (not from grace) there is always the good samaritan to bring us back to the inn and take care of us. When Israel spoke against God and Moses, the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people: and much people of Israel died, (Numbers 26:1) the Lord also sent the remedy, a brazen serpent on a pole. Notice only those that were bitten were healed, those that were not bitten had nothing to be healed from. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so shall the Son of man be lifted up, showing to us the only cure for the bite of the serpent, also in the crucifixion of our dear Lord the only cure of sin. Jesus the Lord shines in type all through the Old Scriptures, he always was and always will be the head of the church, the Zion of God. Paul thanked God that ye were the servants of sin, and we are no better than they. We have been bitten and have looked at the cross and are healed. The evidence is we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren and are all of that same Zion out of which God is shining, the pillar and ground of the truth. It is the work of God and what he does is perfect because he does it. All of his work was established before he made the world. He has declared the end from the beginning creating all things for his pleasure, and as he has thought so shall it stand, his choice in Christ before the world was made. His judgments are just as sure as his mercy and no wonder as his church is perfect without spot or wrinkle, but holy and undefiled, chosen in Christ through that everlasting love

wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sins. Oh, what love it must be! How beautiful is Zion! O Lord show us again, reconcile us to thy will and teach us to love one another. Let us not make a brother an offender for a word, but preach the truth as it is in Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever, Amen.

(Elder) GEORGE L. WEAVER

Redwood, Va.

MRS. SALLIE HUTCHENS, DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD: I received your much appreciated letter some time ago, and read it over many times with heartfelt sympathy. It was heart-rending to hear of your sad bereavements and lonely condition. Out of these the Lord has and will deliver all of his dear children. As you said, we are strangers in the flesh but we hope the Lord has acquainted us in his Holy Spirit. If so we are no more strangers, but we hope children of God. Dear sister, ever since I read your good letter I have desired to write you, but knowing my unworthiness and inability I felt unequal to such a task, and it is with much fear and trembling that I now make the attempt. I hope the dear Lord will bless me with his unerring Spirit to write you some little word of comfort.

You mentioned the death of your dear companion, Elder H. F. Hutchens, whom I knew well. I have heard him preach many times and dearly loved to hear him. I believe he preached the glorious doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ and finished his course here in this world, and the work the Lord gave him to do. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors." I hope the Lord will reconcile you to feel and believe that those who die in the triumph of faith are far better off than we who are left here in this unfriendly world of toil and strife, which is an almost continual warfare, between the flesh and spirit, of great tribulations such as grief, sorrow, doubts and fears, and our many shortcomings which make us feel to be, as you said, forsaken, homeless and friendless here in this heathen world. We have no continual abiding place here, but just journeying through this lonely wilderness with many sad heartaches, disappointments, vexations and persecutions. I believe all of these trials are purposed and treasured up by the Lord for his dear children which is their meat and their drink, as well as the few seasons of peace they enjoy which are succeeded by pain.

You made mention of the sad condition of Zion. True it is there are splits, divisions and strife in many places among Zion's little ones. "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." "It must needs be that offences come." I believe all of these tribulations, sad heartaches and disappointments are ours by lot, will and purpose. If we live in and truly suffer these things it is evidence that we are sons of God, if we escape these things we are bastards and not sons. By experience, I feel the greater we are made to suffer in these tribulations, the dearer we love, honor, praise and glorify our God's great and eternal name, which is above every other name, just and holy is he.

"Our dear Jesus went before us
And many sorrows bore;
And we who follow after,
Can never meet with more."

"If we suffer, (with Christ) we shall

also reign with him." Dear kindred, if we, poor, little, weak worms of the dust could escape all of these trials and troubles here in this life, where would be our evidences of eternal life? "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Hope only in this life is not safe to live by nor die by. Truly according to the election of grace there is a remnant to be saved, and of this we hope to be the happy recipients. "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." They have had a sure promise in this life of having hardships such as being poverty stricken, despised, evil spoken of by the world, deemed to be the offscouring of the earth, but great will be their reward in heaven. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" All things are theirs, even his glorious, eternal kingdom. With the Lord there is no guess work about who are the beneficiaries of his glorious kingdom. They are his beloved bride, the Lamb's wife. They have been his legal heirs from the ancients of eternity by will, purpose and redemption. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?"

When Christ, our dear Redeemer, hung on the shameful cross, and died that cruel, ignominius death of a martyr and said, "It is finished," then I believe the full and complete debt of redemption was paid, satisfaction made, the royal law fulfilled and restored honorable unto the Father. It is finished and no changes are to be made. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Our poor, unworthy, stammering tongues can but slightly hint at the grandeur, love, grace and all of the magnificient beauties that the Lord has treasured up in store for those that truly love him, his precious few that have been tried by fire and refined as pure gold.

Dear sister, I have, as I truly hope, had a hope in Christ for nearly thirty years. I live in doubts and fears much of my time. There are many sad and lonely seasons which cause me many groanings which cannot be uttered. I do not get along on flowery beds of ease so much of the time as some of the arminians claim they do. Is it thus with you? Although I have some revelations and sweet meditations on heavenly prospects that seem to keep me from going into utter despair, occasionally the clouds break, the sun shines bright again and the singing birds are heard in our land. In reality we hope we live again and can go on our way rejoicing, and say with one of old, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." Then we are begotten again unto a lively hope; then we believe that we truly love the Lord with all of our heart and soul, also our dear and precious brethren and sisters above all other people; there is no other people like this people that is saved by the Lord. We love him, he is our great treasure, prophet, priest and king; he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; there is none like him; he is supreme ruler over all worlds, powers principalities and devils, if not why not? By the Lord all things consist, he is the first great cause of all causes; he works all things after the counsel of his own will; all things are at the Lord's command; he speaks and it is done; he commands and it stands fast. Dear kindred, I do not doubt the embracement of the Lord for and to his little flock (who they be), they are preserved by power divine; preserved in Christ Jesus and called; called I believe to show forth the great praise of their everlasting and eternal King, one who is without the beginning of time or end-

ing of days. He is a present help in time of need. Our eternal King is seated at the right hand of his Father, making intercession for his saints according to the will of God. They are his legal heirs to inherit and possess his glorious, eternal kingdom; they are heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ; they are in Christ and he in them, Christ in the Father and the Father in him. What a glorious and eternal relationship is this? It is so securely sealed and bound together by the strong cords of Christ's redeeming love. This is an eternal wedlock where no separation of divorcements will ever come, this marriage feast will always last. These words of the poet are suited to my feelings: "Oh, happy day when saints shall meet to part no more," the thought is sweet. The world will scoff and wag their heads at this God blessed doctrine and truth that we believe; the world will say we are fools, but if fools for Christ's sake we are glad. We are more than conquerors through him that loved us. I do not doubt these sacred and eternal truths —salvation by grace and grace alone.

Dear one, I feel to be the doubtful one. I am condemned, O lord, but thou art clear. Is it thus with you? If so we can walk together in agreement, esteeming each other better than ourselves, and so fulfill the law of Christ. How lovely, sweet and soul cheering it is when we are made in love to bear afflictions needful rod. Beloved in the Lord, these things that I have hinted at are precious truths to me. If not deceived these sacred things are truly my greatest treasure and daily meditations. Sister, as you said, I have but little else to live for except the church. Oh, if I only knew that I was truly in the embracements of God's holy church, but we must live in the bounds of our precious hope as did the dear apostle Paul. If we have any acceptance it is in and of the Lord. There is a rest that remaineth unto the people of God which we hope to be the humble recipients of. Dear kindred, as I grow older these things become more and more solemn, sacred and sincere with me. If I ever have truly served the Lord, my sincere desire is that it be his divine will and purpose that I may serve him more acceptably each day of my life even unto the end and also all of the household of faith. When time shall be no more and the final consummation of all things comes to hand; and Christ comes to gather his elect bride, his precious jewels, to be adorned in a pure and spotless robe of righteousness to meet the Lord in the air, to be ransomed home to glory to that blest abode, the new Jerusalem, the celestial city of our God whose maker and builder is God eternally in the heavens; there to love, honor, praise and glorify their great eternal redeemer God forever and ever; then will the redeemed of the Lord enjoy the full fruition of heaven, and sing the full and complete song of redemption.

I must close this unworthy scribble. It is like the writer very imperfect and full of mistakes although when we hope that we are blest to view the Canaan land, oh how we love to hint and meditate on these things. They are like a flowing fountain of everlasting love. May the Lord make us strong before we go hence and be no more. Our dear writers to the *Signs* do so wonderfully set forth and proclaim the true apostolic doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone. How I love the *Signs of the Times*. It is a welcome visitor in my house. Elder Dodson does so much plead and strive for peace and unity among the churches and the brethren. Dear sister, if I never meet you in this life may it be our heavenly Father's

will and good pleasure that we may pass away in the full triumph of faith and can say, come welcome death, I'll gladly go with thee. May the Lord bless all of his saints is my prayer. A brother in hope of immortality.

J. A. PERDUE

Written by Mrs. Louise Newman,
Route 7, Box 224, Memphis, Tenn.

ELDER W. A. SPEER, DEAR ELDER SPEER: Many times I have thought of the Hopewell Association in Alabama, attended in October this year (1947), the meeting of dear ones we have met in the past as well as those we met for the first time. It was good to see you and Brother Davis there and was a glad surprise to this poor sinner. How pleased I was made to feel to be so privileged as to have Brother Davis in our home here, and I hope he will make me glad twice and come again, although I feel so unworthy to have God's humble poor under the same roof with such a vile sinner as I. I would have been so glad to have had you with us although I know others are not so poor and unlearned as I and better able to entertain you in a way to make your visit one of enjoyment. There are times with me when I cannot even think of a line of scripture, or a thought upon the blessed truth of God, and then it is I feel to be mourning and begging "God be merciful to me a sinner." Then there are times that upon arising the sun shines so brightly, and the birds sing so sweetly without effort on my part I am made to feel a melody, and green fields of meditation open before me, time passes swiftly and my work seems light as beautiful thoughts open to me as I hope he is taking of the things of the Spirit and showing them again unto us as unto John when he sent inquiring, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?"

Dear Elder, as I told you at Hopewell Association, I do not know that I have an experience of grace, and I only hope that I am not deceived into believing that he is a gracious, merciful and forgiving God, and the love I feel for his dear ones is in line with that endless chain that comes from him, rotates too in his dear ones and ascends back to him. I have the desire to tell you about that love I hope I am made to feel, how and when it came about, and if it is in line with truth God is honored. I am but a worm. You read in the July 1946 issue a part of this experience, and it was in 1939 that my father-in-law passed away and I was made willing in the day of God's power, I hope, to hear one of these people known as Primitive Baptist and I believe God's humble poor. I do not say only they are the people of God for I believe he has a people in every nation, kindred and tongue, but some are blinded to the truth, yet they are his and will enjoy the peace of his love some day with him the same as they that are made to see the truth. What did Jesus mean when he said, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." John 10:16. I believe there are some that may never enjoy the privileges of the militant church, yet they are his and are a part of his body, the invisible church, for it takes every one for whom he died to complete his body, the fulness of him, the all in all of his people. He is the head of the church, his body, and through the head the body receives food, hears, smells and the head thinks for the body. The food is digested in the body as well as the body moves when the head speaks to it commanding it thus.

Dear Elder Speer, after my father-in-law's death the desire was how to hear these people and what they had to say concerning the truth, yet I did not know where the church was as it was moved from where it was when my father-in-law lived and attended it. My next two years were spent in every day living until one Sunday we visited my husband's cousin here in Memphis. His sister is a member of the little church here and came to visit them that Sunday also. As she and one of her brother's daughters discussed the difference in their beliefs, she, the niece of the Old Baptist being a Missionary Baptist in doctrine, and as they talked I wanted to get near the Old Baptist member, Audra Cox, for I felt she was speaking the truth. While there we asked where the church was and she gave us the directions and let me tell you when meeting day came we could not get there fast enough, so in the summer of 1941 I heard my first sermon in a Primitive Baptist Church and I came away a very shaken up creature, that was truth but oh what about me and then began the time of tears with me. I feel I tried just as hard as any poor sinner to keep the law. I am made to believe, dear Elder, not until one sees himself as a guilty sinner, standing before a just and holy God helpless, then and then only will he love the doctrine of predestination, election, and particular atonement; but the law condemns, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Ah! I could not keep the law, what a sinner was and am I. God could not be just, it seemed, to forgive such as I. The stronger had come upon the strong, binding him and my heretofore castle was being reduced to a mere hut. Dear Elder, many were the days I spent in tears and at night my face and pillows were often wet with tears as I lay sleepless.

In 1942 I felt there was a struggling of two natures. I longed to live right but I did not know how and my whole being seemed to be in conflict. I would long for meeting day and when it was over I was not satisfied. This went on until my husband thought I was losing my mind. I read my Bible, I walked, talked, begging God to grant mercy for that was all that could reach my case. I had tried to keep the law but I could not. In Jan. 1943 I had a dream. I dreamed that I was standing before the church and a voice said to me, "look and see," and as my vision was drawn beyond that church I saw a hill so green and beautiful that tongue could not describe it. On that hill was a little band of people all dressed in white from head to foot. They were the people of this little church and I knew them every one. Was not this a revelation that this is God's people? They were knelt as if in prayer or worship. Then in Feb. I had another dream, it was of a baby. I was standing at my front door looking out and I saw a baby that was placed on my door steps by whom I did not know, but a great love came into my heart for this child, and as I tried to move to bring it in I found I was as helpless as that baby, yet I longed for this child for I loved it, and as I stood there helpless that child changed before my eyes to a figure bowed and humble as a great weight or burden was upon it. It was the figure of a man as acquainted with grief or sorrow. Some months later Elder A. D. Wall came to visit the church here and spent the night in our home. I wished he could stay the rest of his life for I longed to hear him talk and talk to someone, yet my lips seemed sealed, I could not talk as I longed to.

After meeting one day I was about my daily work and the thought came to me to sing a song we had sung during the last meeting day, "Did Christ o'er sinners weep," and as I started to sing I felt a feeling come over me of being lifted up, and I went into my kitchen, the whole room seemed full of light, down on my knees I fell and sung "Amazing Grace," and it had never sounded sweeter. After this doubt came, but not with the same feeling I had before, but it seemed I feared I was only deceived and I was trying to deceive others. I felt if I was one he, the Lord, died for things would not be so with me. November 1944 I had a dream that I was on a high bridge. It was built circular in form and no rails were on it, and as I looked over the side of it to the rolling, tumbling waters they seemed to reach for me to suck me under. I was filled with fear. I tried to move and could not as I looked beyond the bridge, where it looked so calm and peaceful, to safety and as I was thus, a power as an unseen hand picked me up and placed me there where I had longed to be. When I awoke I thought upon this dream, what was it, and I longed to know what it meant. A morning or so after I was sitting on the side of my bed before arising and my gaze was drawn to the heavens, right through the housetop as if it was not there, and there standing in the clouds I beheld Him in white A light shone all around him, he was standing arms outstretched to me, not begging me to accept him as my Savior, ah no, but as the way, the truth and the life. It was as he had said, "It is I; be not afraid." I do not believe my natural eyes beheld him, but I was given to see him with the eyes of my inner understanding. I was shaken over the vision and said nothing of it as I stumbled from the room, and when I did tell my husband of it he told me I was worrying over these things too much and he feared for my mind.

All day I wondered about the vision and when I retired that night I fell asleep and dreamed I was in the little church here, sitting in the back by one of the members, Carrie Campbell, and they started to sing a song. It had the sweetest tune I ever heard in my life, and the song they were singing was the twenty-third Psalm of the Bible, "The Lord is my shepherd" etc. She turned to me, put her arms around me and we sang with the church, and as we sang each note fell in sweet accord. The next morning when I awoke and as I arose the thought came to me in that still small voice, "here is your answer." Dear Elder, that was sweet to me and now, as I felt hope that God is a God of mercy and forgiveness, but after that passed away doubt came again and I wondered if these were imaginations of a deranged mind, so I thought I will just put it all away from me. I will not have one thing to do with it. Ah, I hope the Lord was and is teaching me terrible things in righteousness now, but doubt is such a demon seeking to devour. I did not go to church for six months or more but I was a very miserable creature in this time, and I was brought to believe this was something that had me and not me it. If I make my bed in hell he is there and I begged God to allow that I be one sometimes present when his blessed truth was preached. That was far more than deserved for I deserved only hell and banishment.

(*To be continued.*)

Newport, N. C.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: I have been a subscriber to your paper, *Signs of the Times,* for several years, and am enclosing check for

another year. I enjoy reading the editorials and correspondence with the dear brothers and sisters that write so humbly of their experience in these trying times. We know Christ is our peace and he, who knew no sin, took our sins upon himself and died that we might live. He loved us when we were dead in sin, and washed our sins away in his own blood that we should meet the Father in peace, clothed in his own righteousness and not the righteousness of the law or that of our own. Our own righteousness is as filthy rags. If Christ is in us we love him and that love fulfills the law. Paul said, "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." If Christ is in us the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is alive because of righteousness. We love righteousness and hate sin but have to say we are sinners. "The good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do." Then with Paul we would say, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." While we live we know we are sinners. If we live after the flesh we shall reap corruption, but after the Spirit life and peace. We believe if Christ is in us, and we are born of the Spirit, Christ will lead us to the living fountain of water of life, and enable us to stand in this liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and not be tangled with the yoke of bondage. The poor sinner under the law was under bondage, but Christ fulfilled the law and delivered his people from its curse. We are dead to the law and the law is dead to us.

We hope our blessed Lord will bless us with all needful blessings, and guide us by his spirit to enter that rest that remains to the people of God. Dear brother, I would be glad to meet you. Hope you can come down and preach for us some time. May you be blessed in your labor of love for the Primitive Baptists. Your brother I hope in the Lord. (Elder) W. W. ROBERTS

Route 2, Box 86, Jasper, Ala.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD I HOPE: I was at the Five Mile Creek Association in Cullman Co. when a Brother Copeland came to me and said, "Are you Sister Hand from Jasper?" I said "yes." He said, "I read an article in the October *Signs* written by you." I said, "There must be some mistake, I haven't written any article worthy of space in the *Signs*." Then I remembered asking you to write your views on Jonathan and David's unusual friendship, not thinking the letter would be published. I was just looking forward to reading an article on this beautiful scripture. On reaching home my paper had come containing the editorial and I sat right down and read it through. Must say I enjoyed it very much and appreciate your writing it. I cannot hope to ever fully understand when you go into such deep waters. Naturally speaking I am afraid of deep water, but it holds a certain fascination along with the horror and some how I have a kind of longing to plunge in and explore the depths, but I cannot swim and human instinct and common sense tell me to stay out. So it is in spiritual things. I read this strange Book and sometimes feel that perhaps I understand the meaning a little. Sometimes it is all confusing. Perhaps I will awake at midnight and some scripture will be on my mind that I have not read in a long time. I will struggle with it and try to fix it, may be get up and read some and try more to get it fixed and

find it so hard. I cannot accept an interpretation that does not harmonize with God being the supreme ruler; the director of the steps of his people or the complete inability of weak human beings doing any works pleasing in his sight. We have sufficient scripture that I think I understand, and my experience in life so far teaches me beyond a doubt that this is true. This special scripture had me puzzled. The more I thought about it the farther I was from light. So many think of David at this time as a figure of Christ, but somehow I could not see it straight. As I began to read your editorial the mist began to clear. I could see David as a little shepherd watching over his Father's sheep; I could see Jonathan as a figure of that good Samaritan who took care of the poor fellow who was half dead; also the same as in Ezekiel 16:8-9. It all appeared in a different way from me trying to fix it, and I enjoyed it all the way through. I hope others who read it will enjoy it as I did for it is deep water food. I am not qualified to comprehend all the deep beauty I want to; I believe I can understand there are many hidden mysteries that we will never be able to see in this life, but when time rolls on, the lid removed and we are given eyes and understanding to behold the wonderful works of perfection, and the Savior arrayed in all his holy grandeur it will indeed be wonderful.

I enjoy all the editorials by you and the Associate Editors and all the letters. I feel so proud of the paper. Glad it is free of arguments, backbiting and debates. Such as that never accomplished anything but an uproar and confusion among our people. All have never seen every little point just alike, and we see nothing right except by divine revelation. We have nothing to boast about in ourselves and I wish these words could always be before our eyes. If you ever have a mind to come South, remember a hearty welcome awaits you in Alabama in any of the Associations. We would all be glad to see you. There are always more people at the Hopewell than any other. It is the last one in this part of the country. They come from Kentucky, Texas, Indiana, Georgia, North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Louisiana, all speaking the same language. Thanking you again for your kindness I am, I hope a little sister.

(Mrs.) M. G. HAND

Route 2, Box 101, Jasper Ala.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Enclosed find a money-order for my subscription renewal. It is a little late but I hope you will overlook that since I am sending the name of a new subscriber. I enjoy the *Signs* more than I can express. They are all good but it seemed the Feb. 1948 issue was unusual, especially your editorial and Elder Green's experience and call to preach. It disappoints me for such articles to be continued. It seems I enjoy the whole article more as I am forever searching and hoping for a little more evidence that I have an experience, yet there is something I cannot be loosed from and give up.

Elder Dodson, if you have a mind will you write on the subject of the fig tree. It is mentioned a number of times in the Bible, and I have heard some discussion on it but not to my satisfaction. Pray for this poor sinner. A sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

FANNIE R. HYATT

(As our sister says, the fig tree is frequently referred to in the Scriptures. It thrives best in warm or tropical climates, and sometimes bears two or three crops of fruit in one year.

Figs have a very high food value and are very delicious, as those of us who enjoy our California products well know, and no doubt their cultivation in olden times was quite profitable to those who grew them, enabling them to live comfortable and peaceful lives, as the following proverbial expression which was much in use among the Jews would indicate: "To sit under one's own vine and one's own fig tree." It was a terrible loss to them to have their vines and fig trees destroyed.

The fruit was more to be desired than its foliage for, notwithstanding its deeply-lobed leaves, an apron made of them was not sufficient to cover the nakedness of our first parents from the all-seeing eye of a just and holy God. We have thought of the fig tree which Jesus found in the way with "nothing thereon, but leaves only," to which he said, "Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever," as typifying the legal dispensation. While the Scribes, Pharsees, Sadducees, etc., were prodigious in their professions of religious worship, they were as barren of the true spiritual fruit as a desert land. When Jesus came into this sin-cursed world he found no one had been able to keep the law or to do his Father's will. The law, indeed, came by Moses, and for centuries it went unkept until it was kept in every jot and tittle by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. If righteousness could have come by the law, there would have been no need for Jesus to come, but the law was a school master unto Christ and proved conclusively the absolute necessity of grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ. He who is worshipped in Spirit and in truth, and who looketh on the heart, or the inward part, was not pleased with an outward profession or ostentatious display of the law. Therefore when Jesus came to the fig tree with great foliage but no fruit, he pronounced a curse upon it and it withered. After setting forth the legal destruction of Jerusalem, as is recorded in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, Jesus said to his hearers: "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all things, know that it is near, and even at the doors." Mat. 24:32-33. This parable portrayed the approaching destruction of that age.

Jesus made another reference to the fig tree which has entranced us for many years. We refer to what is recorded in John 1:45-50. Jesus knew what was in the heart of Nathanael, which explains why he said unto him, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" Nathanael on the other hand was amazed that Jesus should have addressed him after this manner. Not having met or had any dealings with the Master previously, he could but ask? "Whence knowest thou me?" Our Lord brought to his remembrance what went on in his heart when he had sought in solitude the presence of his God under the fig tree, where he no doubt poured out his heart like water on the ground in prayer to God in secret to undertake for him, to lead him in a plain path and make straight the way before him. We hope we know something of Nathanael's experience under the fig tree and it has brought him close to us in love and fellowship of the truth. Jesus replied to Nathanael, "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee." This convinced Nathanael of his omnipotence, and he said unto him, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." What a blessed assurance that was for Nathanael! All doubt was removed for the time being, since he was in the felt

presence of his Lord.

We have heard this narrative of Philip finding Nathanael and telling him of Jesus quoted in support of the claim that we can bring our brother to the Saviour, or as justifying the work of missionaries, but we believe that Jesus cut the very ground from under any such claim by saying to Nathanael, "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee." This very definitely, to our mind, bears out the fact that "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Paul in writing to his Galatian brethren said, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." We are fully persuaded that, Salvation is of the Lord, and that all the missionary work in the world will not avail anything by way of bringing a single solitary soul into that heavenly kingdom. We hope these remarks will be helpful to our sister, since she says she has heard some discussion of the subject which was not to her satisfaction. R. L. D.)

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630 Sherwood Road, N. E., Atlanta Ga.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: My brother, J. Ross Jackson, is sending $2 for the *Signs* for a year and one dollar to be used as you see fit. He is sixty-five years old which is two years younger than I, and though he is not a member nor has ever offered himself to the church I feel sure he is far more worthy than I though my name is on the church book as a member.

I love the *Signs* so much that I have been giving him mine after I read them, but as he thought that was not treating you right he wanted to pay for it. He and I have just returned from the Yellow River Association which we enjoyed very much. The preaching and singing was all good, demonstrating the consolation in Chrst, the comfort of love, the fellowship of the Spirit and the bowels of mercy, all having the same love, being of one accord and of one mind.

On the way home brother Ross talked with such conviction, such firmness in the doctrine of God our Savior, and great love for the members of the household of faith I felt an urge to ask him why he does not offer himself to the church, but instead I asked him to read the 10th chapter of the Acts and see if his case was not similar to Cornelius. Send to Joppa and get Peter. He will tell you what you ought to do. (Acts 10:47-48) "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord."

I fully realize that it is not in my province to endeavor to persuade one to unite with the church, persuade one to accept Christ and believe, unite with the church and be saved as some advocate or as the world seems to be teaching: yet I have a feeling that when one is thoroughly convinced that a loved one has received the Holy Ghost and fire, it is hard not to suggest that he offer himself to the church for there is a certain amount of rest and comfort by being permitted to sit with and call one another brother and commune and wash one another's feet.

Dear brother Dodson, I am afraid I have taken up too much of your time reading this. I started to write you and try telling you how much I enjoy the *Signs of the Times,* but as words fail me all I can say is that when I read your Editorials and the writings of

others my cup runs over, and I feel as I imagine David did when he said, "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing." I want you to know I am not looking for an answer to this letter, just throw it into the waste basket and send the paper to brother Ross at your convenience. I hope some day it will be God's will to enlighten my mind and give me understanding, or at least he will put it in my heart to truly say, *"Thy will be done."*

W. W. JACKSON

(We appreciate the spirit of the foregoing letter. Many of our readers like to retain their own papers for future reference. We are glad to learn of the good meeting referred to and truly hope brother Jackson's brother will be made willing to follow his Lord in the ordinance of baptism. Jesus said to his disciples,"If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments," and his commandments are not grievous. R. L. D.)

Route 1, Winona, Texas

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF A BETTER HOME BEYOND THIS VALE OF SIN AND SORROW: I am 77 years old and have been trying to proclaim and preach His blessed gospel for thirty years or better. I try to preach to the people a God of all power, one that is able to command and it stands fast, speaks and it is done, opens and none can shut. He says, "I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me." "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending." "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

I am glad that I can be blessed to have a name among a people that believes in that kind of a God. Our little church is small in numbers but thank God we are all of one mind and see eye to eye; all speak the same tongue and we do keep a clean house; will not tolerate or fellowship adultery in any form whatever or any one that will use the bankruptcy law or try to avoid paying their just debts as some so-called Primitive Baptists are doing yet claiming they are the orderly Baptists.

Brother Dodson, I have never had the pleasure of meeting you but I feel like we are related in the Spirit, and may God bless you to carry on the good old family paper. If not crowding out better matter please publish this in the *Signs*. Your brother in hope.

(Elder) J. F. JONES

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807 Pope St., Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR ELDER RHODES: I have been writing in mind to you for quite awhile since reading your two books on debates with Elders West and Jones. I enjoyed them very much although I was afraid to read the first one with Elder West. I am so weak I was fearful I would not be able to understand clearly and would become confused, maybe leaning to one side then the other; but I was filled with joy while reading to realize it was the hard, sound truth you so ably set forth that I hope I believe. I have lately read the Rhodes-Jones book and enjoyed it.

Brother Rhodes, the Primitive Baptists believe the things they do because they cannot help it. The force of evidence and their experience along the way they have been led will not let them believe anything else. I enjoyed very much the discussion of the preached word and who benefits by it. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. I cannot believe that any or everybody could hear the preached word of their own will and it would give them faith. I would like to try in a few words to tell you why I cannot believe it. I guess I am a

normal being, and I heard the preached word only as sound many years and it left me as void of faith as I could be. I knew and realized I could not hear and understand, and there came a time when I became worried for fear I would never be able to feel and love the things of God. I would try to concentrate on what was being preached, and of course with a natural mind I desired to go to heaven when I died; but I actually seemed to realize that my heart was untouched and that if I made any move toward any religious activity I would be a hypocrite and have to pretend to be something I was not all the rest of my life and I was not willing to do that.

Now, Brother Rhodes, I do not say this boastfully but I did not take one step that I know of toward trying to save myself. I was somehow confident that it would get me nowhere. I think I have always been fearful that God would not save me. Even as a child I would look at older people who visited in our home, my sister and parents and they looked so good and I would think to myself they were never as sinful as I am and I felt to be the black sheep of the family. This fear grew into a gnawing thing inside me as I realized I was raising children and was not a Christian. That is what I heard when I went to the various churches around us, and yet I could not make one attempt to save myself. I could not hold up my hand to be prayed for. If I am not sadly mistaken there came a time when I felt life, and I marveled at this feeling within. My heart was bursting with joy and love and I knew not why. I pondered it and wondered, what can it be? It lasted two days. The third day I noticed I was just walking from one room to another, not doing anything, just filled with amazement at this joy and love in my whole being. I walked into a room and sat down, and then it seems I thought of God and he seemed to be so close that I could reach out and touch him. His presence seemed to fill all the space in the room. The thought came to me to go to the door and look out to see if there was something changed. I did so and while standing there looking out these words came into my mind with such force that it was almost as if they were spoken to me, "The change is not out there, it is within you, you have been baptized with the Holy Spirit. Your heart has been washed in the blood of the Lamb."

Brother Rhodes, the peace that followed! The most perfect assurance that I was a saved character that stayed with me for weeks and weeks can never be told to my satisfaction. I honestly thought and believed that the rest of my life would be a new song. I did not know about the doubts and fears that would come later. I thought they were all behind. I could write on and on about this but I must not. That is why I hope to believe that if I have any faith Jesus is the author and finisher of it and not the preacher. The preached word is my food and my drink if I am not deceived. I do hope this has not wearied you.

I think of Paul the great apostle saying, "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." I wondered why he used the word foolishness, but lately I have thought that being given such revelation and seeing by the eye of faith the perfect finished work of Jesus, just as perfect as when he was a Lamb slain before the foundation of the world, the salvation of God's people, or the bride, was just as sure as if it had already been accomplished, knowing they were all chosen before the foundation of the world and God's foreknowledge in de-

claring the end from the beginning. Jesus said, "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing." Well Brother Rhodes, please forgive me. I hope we are kindred in Christ, and I hope I love the truth above all else in the world. Wish you would come our way again.

(Mrs.) LUCILLE YOUNG

DEAR BROTHER RHODES: I was grateful for your kindness in answering my letter, and as these thing were still in my mind I felt I would like to write the sequel. Of course I could not finish it for I am still living it, but it is so sweet when I can feel to see God's hand in it all; his purpose, love and power leading and guiding me though at times I feel the way has been dark, rough and winding. I feel to realize that this also is his purpose and was appointed unto me for my good. If I but reach my goal, if I but get there, see Jesus and be like him I will be just as satisfied as the person whose path was along shady lanes where the breeze was soft and gentle with no stormy winds to toss them about. God in his love, mercy and infinite wisdom knows best how to lead each one of his children.

I got my pen and paper and found I could not collect my thoughts much less get them on paper. Everything I receive, everything I have comes I hope from the great giver of all good and perfect gifts. I am indeed a dependent creature. I know not how to influence my God into blessing me with the things I desire, but I have found that I must wait and hope for these things. My thoughts were many while reading what you said about the scripture, "Without me ye can do nothing," and how well we do know that, and I believe we have a few fleeting moments of knowing that, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." To those who have tasted of his love and power it is easy to face a frowning world when blessed with his presence in their hearts. I know that modern people of many faiths do not believe in the workings of the Holy Spirit in a person's heart this day and time, but if I did not believe in it I would have no hope. I have no way of proving or knowing without a doubt that it was the Holy Spirit that revealed such glorious things to me from time to time in my life; yet I cannot help feeling that I recognize it as such each time it comes and I could tell you of them down to the tiniest details for the feeling is so impressive and the memory so sweet that I remember and enjoy such a sweet meditation regarding them. I think of the scripture, "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee."

I do not tire of hearing or talking of these truths, and sometimes it is such a comfort to feel them flowing through my mind and can write them to some one I feel sure knows and understands what I am saying or at least what I am trying to say, but when you speak of sending my letter to the *Signs* I get fearful. I turn my eyes within and what I see is in direct opposition to what I desire to be. I search my heart and feel like saying as Paul, "Behold, before God, I lie not" concerning the things I write, it came about exactly the way I told it yet I fear it is not worthy of space in such a good paper; but I get such comfort from the pens of others that I have no sound reason for not wishing you to send it to the *Signs*. I always feel that I am so little and insignificant that anything I would write would be just like me. I do hope it corres-

ponds with some one's experience. I have often wondered about it when hearing others tell theirs. At times it is so fresh in my mind and it surely seems that it would be sufficient if I were called to die; at other times it gets dim and far away so that I almost lay it by, but there is always a "bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus," and I do not believe we can lay it by. I am so glad to believe that. Paul did not write as though one could lay it by and lose it. He said it was "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast."

If God is the author and finisher of one's faith how can people think they can hold on to it by obedience or lose it by disobedience. "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." Brother Rhodes, what must you think of me as though I was trying to tell you something. I know you know all these things and so very much more, I blush to think I have written so much. The real truth is I love so much to find a letter from the Baptists in the mail box I try to write them my thoughts (poor as they are) in hopes they will find it in their hearts to write me theirs. I work eight hours a day five days a week and do not have much time to write, but I get so hungry to hear from the ones who love the truth as it is in Christ. I hope I do. Your unworthy sister if one at all.

(Mrs.) LUCILLE YOUNG

Route 1, Big Sandy, Texas

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE: I do not feel worthy to call you brother I am so little and full of sin. I have just finished reading your article in the December issue of the *Signs* and it is rich to me, and most all the other articles in it are also. I surely do enjoy reading the *Signs* and do not want to miss a copy if I can help it and be able to pay for it. Enclosed find $2 to renew my subscription for another year. My time has run over a little owing to my neglect as I have been working away from home. Will close as I do not want to take up your time. If you ever have occasion to come this way we will be very glad to have you stop off with us. Remember me as ever your little, unworthy brother in hope and bonds of love.

W. M. HARRIS

Weiser, Idaho

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I wish you would change my address to Weiser General Hospital, Weiser, Idaho, and send my *Signs* there. I am sending $3 for the "Poor of the Flock." I hope some of the Baptists will write to me. Thanks for past favors. Will try to write more some day.

(Mrs.) LEVICA PRATT

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

W. Y. Chandler, Ind., $1; Mrs. D. W. Holland, Md., $3; Mrs. R. V. Edwards, Ala., $2; A friend, Cal., $25; Mrs. L. T. Genung, N. Y., $1; H. F. Waldon, Ala., $1; C. S. Dodson, Tex., $1; Eld. L. D. Rose, Tex., $1; Miss C. M. Duffus, Can., $3; J. W. Cox, Tex., $1; B. C. Wray, N. C., $1; T. S. Chester, Ky., $1.

SPECIAL MEETING

Bethel Old School Baptist Church of Riffe, Wash. will, the Lord willing, hold her annual three days meeting, beginning Aug. 13, 1948, and continue the two days following.

(Elder) I. F. COLEMAN, Pastor
MRS. ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk
Riffe, Wash.

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. JULY 1948

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." Psalm 133.

David was beholding the root of the matter that was in him, that brought all men to a knowledge of the truth. This truth has had much thought expressed both oral and written but the half has not been told, and beholding the abundance of thought that we see embraced we venture to express ourself, hoping to stir up the pure mind of our readers and to comfort their hearts.

Paul had this unity of spirit in his heart when he stood in the midst of Mars Hill and said, "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring." Acts 17:22-28.

Those Paul was addressing were much divided, as some believed and some mocked, which proves that all men are carnally minded in the virtues of the first Adam, and are enmity against God, and are not given to see the virtues in the second Adam, because they cannot see and behold the spirit of the second Adam; and there is no unity to connect the relations of the first Adam and the second Adam for the seed of the woman was purged, and it is written that which was born of the woman "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." 1 Peter 2:22.

The unity of the flesh is the tie that binds all that are born of the first Adam, and in the perceptions of the carnal mind often the peaceful relations of friends with each other are referred to as the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ; and by their living peaceably and uprightly under the laws of the land, and doing certain acts commanded of the Spirit to the child of God they will inherit the kingdom that is not of this world which Paul was referring to, as God needed men to do these things to give eternal life. All the works of men will not bring

God under the law to accept the works of righteousness men can do, but we commend uprightness and faithfulness among all men. This is not the unity we have in mind that the brethren dwell together in that is good and pleasant; it is the unity of the Spirit of which they are born of an incorruptible seed by the will of God, and are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

In this unity the children of God walk, talk and dwell together, and there is no confusion and divisions among them, but the peace and love of God is in all their deliberations for the great Moderator is in their midst directing the step of every one; and there are none great and noble among them which is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments. We are agreed where such manifestations are in evidence it is a pleasant place to dwell.

The ties of spiritual life are the binding ties that so unite that they will not sever when they are forced to leave the place of sweet association and go to their several places of abode, for they will be continually reminiscing over the sweetness of the association and sweet fellowship enjoyed during their visit together; and all along the way each one having enjoyed such sweet seasons are made to love the brethren and long to meet with them again. They hope to be refreshed again, but often are disappointed as they are not given the spirit of rejoicing they enjoyed before, saying the meeting was not as good as before, but the truth was the same for I could not condemn by the word of God anything I heard during the meeting, and sometimes they wish they had not gone.

If we look this matter over carefully we will find for us to have stayed at home secluded, our suffering would have been much greater, for the time the meeting was in session we would have been grieving because we would have been so hungry and thirsty for the righteousness of God bestowed upon the brethren we would not have any rest or comfort, and we would point to the meeting and say, "There my best friends, my kindred dwell; there God my Savior reigns." These realizations are in the life and virtues of the heart of every one that is born of the Spirit, and they can truly say with David, "how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." This unity is in the heart of every one thus exercised, and is the evidence that God created them in Christ Jesus unto good works. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." These are the ties that bind our hearts in Christian love, and the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above, and is the dear uniting love that will not let us part. Our Savior said, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Jer. 31:3. Yes, we feel drawn to keep on in the relations and responsibilities we feel were laid upon us, which are silken cords that draw us along in all the duties of life, to serve our loved ones with natural things and feel ready to stop any time to converse with them that speak of the goodness and mercy of God to poor sinners. The language of the poet, Doddridge, is very fitting to us.

"My God, what silken cords are thine!
How soft and yet how strong!
While power, and truth, and love combine
To draw our souls along.

Thou saw'st us crushed beneath the yoke
Of Satan and of sin:
Thy hand the iron bondage broke,
Our worthless hearts to win.

The guilt of twice ten thousand sins
One moment takes away;
And grace, when first the war begins,
Secures the crowning day.

Comfort through all this vale of tears,
In rich profusion flows,
And glory of unnumbered years
Eternity bestows.

Drawn by such cords, we onward move,
Till round thy throne we meet:
And captives in the chains of love,
Embrace our Conqueror's feet."

C. W. V.

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

Twenty-five years ago this month, we became an associate editor of the *Signs of the Times*. Many changes have taken place since that time, and we have encountered many problems as we have journeyed along. We have been looking over our first editorial, which appeared in the August 15th, 1923, issue of the paper, and in the light of our experiences, the text upon which we wrote has seemed to take on renewed and greater significance than we had any idea of at that time. The text was, "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." Prov. 16:33. We pointed out that "the whole, not a part, but the entire disposing of the lot is of the Lord, and he will bring thee forth by a right way; he will lead thee in paths thou hast not known; he will make darkness light before you and crooked things straight." Little did we realize then what was in store for us during the years ahead. How truly the language of Job seems to fit our case where he said: "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee." And now we feel we can also adopt wholeheartedly his statement, "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee."

We also stressed in said editorial that "all our times are in His hands, and all events at his command; that he would make us to lie down in green pastures, and lead us beside the still waters; that we would have to be still and know that he was God, and wait on him for his salvation." We further said, "If thou art a speaker, he will fill thy mouth and loose thy stammering tongue; if a writer, he will direct thy pen; if a hearer or reader, he will open thine ears and cause them to tingle with joy at the sound of the gospel of the Son of God."

Just one more reference to said editorial and we will pass on. Before concluding what we had to say, we stated: "Many will be the time when you will be in prison, shut up and unable to come forth, hedged about with hewn stone, but God is the whole disposer of thy lot." etc. While we were writing for the consideration of the household of faith, as we now review what we said, we are made to hope that much of it concerned our own life and experience in trying to serve Him for the past quarter of a century.

While we are reminiscing, we do not feel that we can refrain from quoting here, in full, a letter we received from our dear old Dad, dated September, 1936. The two of us had a great deal in common concerning the Scriptures, and we shall long cherish the memory of a number of our talks. His letter is as follows: "Beloved Son: We have your card dated the 13th, stating you are homeward bound and are tired. When I think of the life you are now living, that you have to make long trips and speak often, I sometimes fear your health may fail, knowing while you are trying to serve your Lord and Master you are trying also to work with your hands, that you be no bur-

den to any one. But, my son, when I take the view that you are a servant of the most high God, the One who made all things and doth rule and control all things, and does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay his hand, and I believe he has both called and qualified you to go and preach the gospel to the dear children of God, oh how could I want it different? So may I say, God's will be done. I feel I know something of the needs of God's humble poor, and I know he is able to uphold and sustain you. So I bid you Godspeed, and hope he will go with you, and I believe he will. Samson could not of his own strength have done the great things he did, and neither could David have conquered the lion and the bear except by the power of our God. So, my son, if God has called and sent you to feed and comfort the scattered saints he will make you able to do his will. Oh what a blessing from heaven the gospel ministers are, and to think that God has blessed you to be in line with such dear ones as Elder Silas H. Durand, and many others who did and still are preaching the wonderful things of Jesus. Oh, I just feel to say as did old Jacob when he knew that Joseph was still alive: It is enough, and I will go and see him before I die. It is enough, and sometimes my cup is made to run over when I can see what good things our heavenly Father has in store for us. My son, I often wish I could join in the praise of God with you, and at times I can see no reason for a hope that I am a child of God, but I hope I love these things. Amen."

We came across the foregoing letter of our father recently and it seemed to touch us so deeply that we decided to share it here with our readers, being assured that those who were privileged to read and enjoy his writings will again rejoice with us and that those who have come along since his departure, will likewise feast upon the things which were so precious to him.

Having looked back upon the past and recounted some of God's benefits and blessings, we shall now endeavor to turn our face towards the future. While it is altogether unkown to us, we are persuaded that He who hath delivered, doth deliver, and in whom we trust he will yet deliver, that we can commit our all into his care and keeping, knowing that whatsoever He doeth will be for his own honor and glory and for the good of his people. In writing to the church at Philippi, Paul used the expression, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." It is true that we know not what a day may bring forth, but our faith says the future can bring with it nothing but what God will see us through, for He who clothed the lillies will clothe his people too. Moses said to Israel, of old, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." Of late, we have been urged by some of our good brethren and friends to slow down and take life easy, and we hope ere long to be able to do this, but we are mindful of the words of Jesus when he said, "the night cometh, when no man can work." We hope to be about our heavenly Father's business, and whether our days on earth be many or few, they are all His due, and we desire to devote them in service to him and his people. We cannot find words that will adequately express the gratitude of our heart for the manifold mercies and blessings which have been bestowed upon us all the days of our life, but we rejoice that it is written that God

seeth not as man seeth; man looketh on the outward, but God looketh on the inward, or the heart. We are glad that he discerns both the thought and the intent of the heart, and sometimes it is good to be brought into fellowship with Peter, when he said, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." This was said despite all of Peters weaknesses. At the time of this confession Peter had been converted from what he once thought, and because of it we believe that he strengthened his brethren even down to this very day. It was not until he had been sifted as wheat that he was told to feed the Lord's lambs and to feed his sheep. Sometimes it seems too much to even hope that we have been given to feed the flock of God, but on occasions we verily believe that we have felt in our own heart the power of his precious word, and have known of a truth that he was the potter and we the clay and that he was able to fashion us into a vessel that would be to the honor and glory of his name.

In conclusion, we would like to thank again our dear brethren and friends for the various kinds of support which they have so generously given us during the past two and a half decades, for without it we would have fallen by the wayside and been numbered among the forgotten, but God, we hope, has so wondrously wrought his work of grace in us as to give us a place in the hearts of those who love and trust him.We truly hope that he will continue to be mindful of us all and cause us to dwell together in unity and in the bonds of peace, and may his adorable name have all the praise, both now and forevermore. Amen. R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

It is with a sorrowful heart I try to write of the death of my dear mother, MRS. SARAH L. GLOER, who departed this life July 25, 1947, making her stay on earth 78 years, 11 months and 26 days. She was the daughter of the late Elder and Mrs. W. W. West and born in Putnam Co., Ga., July 29, 1868. On Jan. 27, 1889 she was married to Elbert J. Gloer who preceded her in death thirty-six years. To this union ten children were born all of whom survive, except one boy and one girl who died in infancy. She leaves to mourn her passing four daughters, Mrs. D. L. Davis, Mrs, R. G. Jacob, Atlanta, Ga., Mrs. H. T. Avary, East-Point, Ga. and Mrs. Robert E. Stanley, Savannah, Ga. Four sons; H. L. Gloer, East-Point, Ga., H. G. and R. C. Gloer, Atlanta, Ga. and W. E. Gloer, Decatur, Ga. Four brothers, two sisters, thirteen grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, a host of nieces and nephews, and other relatives and friends. All was done for her that loving hands of doctors, children, neighbors and friends could do. When Jesus called the angels took her out of her suffering and helpless condition to a better world on high where there will be no parting and sad good-bye.

In her young womanhood, mother professed a hope in Christ, August 29, 1889. She united with the High-Shoals Primitive Baptist Church Oct. 18, 1890, Pauldin Co., Dallas, Ga., where she remained a faithful member until the passing of her loving companion. She then moved her membership to Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, Fulton Co., East-Point, Ga., where her precious body was laid in its final resting place beside her father and mother to await the second coming of Jesus Christ to gather up his jewels. Elders J. R. Chandler, M. M. Morton and W. L. Allen spoke words of comfort to the bereaved family.

Although the time must surely come
When loved ones have to part;
And our bereavement now has laid
A shadow on our hearts.

Be sure that we will meet again
On that far distant shore;
Where all the grief of parting past,
The sun will shine once more.

This is my hope. Written by her son who truly loved her.

H. L. GLOER

403 Dorsey Ave., East-Point, Ga.

ANNA ELIZABETH WATLINGTON was born in Guilford Co., N. C., Jan. 31, 1866, to John Armstead and Jane Simpson Watlington, and died May 3, 1947 at Winston-Salem, N. C.

She went to work at an early age for Mrs. Hancock in Reidsville, N. C., making dresses. Later she worked in millinery and finally went to Washington, D. C. to work as a fur finisher. She went to Baltimore, Md. in 1922 continuing to work in furs until her affliction in March 1935 when she

was stricken with paralysis. During her working seasons she stayed in the home of the late Elder J. T. Rowe. Meetings were held every Sunday and she never missed the opportunity to go. Sister Anna loved Black Rock Church at Butler, Baltimore County very much and brought her membership there by letter from Gilliams Church in North Carolina where she united in young womanhood. There she was a faithful member until her affliction. Moving back to North Carolina she took her letter back to Gilliams. She was faithful, ambitious and full of life. To know her was to love her.

She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and sometimes felt her affliction was a blessing as she had time to read and meditate on the goodness and mercy of God. One time when visiting Sister Jennie Leonard at Prattsville, N. Y. they camped awhile on the side of a mountain in the Catskills, and she said it was wonderful to be away from the hustle and bustle of the world, as she expressed it, and be alone with her Maker.

Sleep on Sister Anna, we miss you, but sweet memories linger and we believe you are happy now resting in the mansions prepared by your Maker. Written by one who loved her.

(Mrs.) MAMIE W. ROWE

MRS. AMELIA CUMMINS died at Elgin, Oregon, Feb. 1, 1948 at the age of 77. She was born in 1870 at Elgin and was a member of the Primitive Baptist church there. The late Elder C. W Bond was her pastor for many years. Her husband, John W. Cummins died in 1929. She is survived by nine children; Luther and Orville of Portland Oregon, Dee of Roseburg, Oregon, Mrs. Lloyd Spikes, Mrs. Tom Williams and Mrs. Morris Sherwood of Elgin, Oregon, Mrs. Catherine Dickinson of Gold Hill, Oregon, Mrs. Myrtle Duncan of Wallowa, Oregon, and Mrs. Lela Lockhart of Oxford, Nova Scotia. One son, Guy Cummins, died last fall as the result of an accident. Also surviving is a brother, Weldon Weaver of Portland, Oregon, and twenty-four grandchildren and twenty - eight great - grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted in La Grande, Oregon, Feb. 4, 1948, interment in the cemetery at Elgin. In my weakness I tried to speak to the comfort of the bereaved. Sister Cummins was faithful and a dear sister in Christ. She was loved by all that knew her and was faithful to the end.

(Elder) B. O. JEFFREY

DAVID E. JOHNS, aged 72, prominent pioneer citizen and business man of Weiser, Idaho died at his home there, Feb. 24, 1948 of a heart attack. His passing was unexpected and a shock to his family and friends as he was believed to be in excellent health.

Mr. Johns was born in Washington County, Penn., and was married there on Christmas eve, 1896. He and Mrs. Johns came to Washington County, Idaho, in 1898, and located on a ranch on Monroe creek. They made their home there until 1921, when they moved to Weiser and he established a harness shop. A few years ago he moved his shop and enlarged his business, changing the name to Johns Leather Goods Company. His son, Earl, was associated with him in this venture, but he remained active in business until the last. He served as a member of the Weiser city council for twelve years, from 1935 to 1947.

Survivors are his wife, Alice; two daughters, Mrs. Howard Cousens of Weiser and Mrs. Frank Luhr of Caldwell, Idaho; two sons, Earl of Weiser and Bernard of Boise, Idaho; a brother, T. J. Johns of Miami, Florida, and twelve grandchildren.

Although he had never united with the Primitive Baptist church, he and his wife had been faithful in their attendance and support of the church for many years. I was called to conduct the funeral and was blessed to speak of the beauty of the passing from this life into eternity and the surety of our eternal home. I used for a text John 6:38.

(Elder) B. O. JEFFREY

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Salem Old School Baptist Church of Philadelphia, Pa., in Grand Fraternity Building, 1626 Arch St., Philadelphia, Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 28 and 29, 1948. Ministers of our faith and order and all others interested in the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

T. C. KOCH, Church Clerk

The Powell's Valley Association will meet, God willing, with the Powder Spring Gap Church at the head of Datson's Creek, Union Co., Tenn. in its 129th session, Friday before the first Saturday in Sept. 1948.

All lovers of truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

(Elder) JOHN WILDER, Mod.
Pineville, Ky.
J. E. WALTON, Clerk
Rt. 1, Maynardville, Ky.

Fellowship Association will meet on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1948 with Paron Church, about four miles northwest of Big Sandy, Texas. Those coming to Big Sandy inquire for W. M. Harris. Those coming to Gilmer call for D. C. Shelton.

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m.
W. A. WILLIAMS and J. J. COLLINS, Pastors.

Ramah Church, Cottonwood, Ala., meets each third Sunday, 11 a.m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each second Sunday and Saturday before.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala.
Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Bethlehem Church, Malvern, Ala., meets each second Sunday, 11 a.m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopeful Church, Ozark, Ala., meets each fourth Saturday, 11 a.m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock. Meeting place at Alder St. at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each first Saturday, 11 a.m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each fourth Sunday, 11 a.m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Seclusia Predestinarian Baptist Church meets 4th Sundays, 11 a.m., 9616 South Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. H. Y. BEAUCHAMP, Pastor, 137 Chestnut Ave., Long Beach, Cal.

Bethel Church near Stockton, Cal. meets first and third Sundays in each month and Saturday nights before. For further information write SETH BYNUM, Rt. 3, Box 800G, Stockton. Cal.

The Old School or Predestinarian Baptists meet for worship first Sunday of each month, 2:30 p. m., second floor Pythian Temple Building, 1012 Ninth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Elder John D. Wood, Minister. For information write FRANK T. SIMPKINS, 5210 - H St., Dillon Park, Washington, D. C.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m., north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets every second Sunday at 5th and E. Park St. B. O. JEFFREYS, Pastor, Weiser, Idaho

Pleasant Valley Church Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator, Williamstown, Kans.
(Mrs.)) E. E. CATES, Clerk, Kingman, Kans.

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carver Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. C. H. EVANS, Pastor

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before a 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a.m. in the meeting-house. Pastor in regular attendance except first Sundays. C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays 11:00 a. m., 2 p. m.

The Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every first and and third Sundays at Parkside Hotel, 18 Gramercy Park South, one block east of Fourth Ave. and 20th St., near 18th St. Sta. Lexington Ave. Subway. Take Elevator to **Park Room second floor. 11 A.M. 1:30 P.M.**

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting first Sunday, each month
10:30 a.m.
Take Elevator to 5th Floor

C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.

E. H. LANIER, Clerk

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

The Old Orderly Mt. Zion (Cash) Predestinarian Baptist Church meets on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in each month, at the home of Bro. J. J. Darnell, Campbell, Texas.

W. A. LITTLE, Moderator
Sister SIMMONS, Clerk

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. C. B. Teague, co-pastor, G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets third Sunday in each month at 11:00 a.m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Shepherd Fold Church meets every fourth Sunday at Civic Club, 1419 N. Shepherd St., Houston, Texas. W. O. Beene, Pastor, Ben B. Walston, Ass't Pastor. (Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER, Clerk.

The original Pilgrim Rest Church of Lawn Texas meets every first Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a. m.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
HOWARD EASON, Clerk

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dr. Wood church-house. Those interested write Mrs. Lela Culpepper, Stockdale, Texas. E. B. AULT, Pastor

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The Old Salem Church of Old School Baptists, 4 miles south from Teague, Texas, meets the first Sunday in each month and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 11 a. m. at the home of E. B. Ault on Progresso Highway, three and one half miles south of Weslaco.

E. B. AULT, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk
Route 1, Box 88, Mission, Tex.

Danville Primitive Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before Bradley Road, Danville, Va.

W. R. DODD, Pastor

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meets each first Sunday 11 a.m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

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Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p.m. and Sunday at 11 a.m., Fairmont Park, 3023 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va., R. B. DENSON, Pastor

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Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a.m. C. M. FISHER.

Bethel Old School Baptist Church, Riffe, Wash. meets every third Sunday, 11 a.m. in the meeting house. I. F. COLEMAN, Mod.

ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk, Riffe, Wash.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church near Yakima, Washington, meets at 11 a. m. each second Sunday by appointment at the home of one of the members living at Naches, Wash. A. D. HUGHETT, Pastor

BEATRICE HAAN, Clerk
Star Route, Naches, Wash.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va., N. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 116 RUTHERFORD, N. J. AUGUST, 1948 No.8

Kinwood, Texas

DEAR ELDER DODSON: If you deem it worthy of space in the dear old *Signs of the Times* I desire to express some views on Deut. 32:9-10. It here appears evident that Jacob is spoken of as the church of God, and the Lord's inheritance which was found in the wilderness of sin, led about and instructed. "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? I raised thee up under the apple tree: there thy mother brought thee forth: there she brought thee forth that bare thee." S.S. 8:5. The church is here spoken of and viewed as coming up hill, away from the wilderness of sin and this troublesome world, leaning on Christ, her beloved, under whom as the apple tree, her mother (the New Jerusalem which is above) brought her forth. "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." S.S. 3:2. We now see that Christ is the apple tree, under the shadow of which the church sat and lived upon his fruit through the shadowed and prophetical dispensation, and now under the gospel dispensation the Lord is bringing her up from under the law as a covenant of works. "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Jer. 31:3.

We can now understand what it is that is drawing the church up the hill way. It is evidently that everlasting lovingkindness with which her God had loved her. "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." Hosea 11:1. "And the Lord said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go. And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my firstborn: And I say unto thee let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn." Ex. 4:21-23. "When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son." Matt. 2:14-15. By these last three quotations with the former the following facts are clearly proven: First, that God loved his children while they were dead in sin. Second, that the spiritual bondage of God's church or people, under spiritual Egypt, is brought to view by spiritual Israel his son, being in bondage under Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and that God delivered them by his own power. Third, that there is such an oneness in Christ, to and with his church, that the calling of Israel out of Egypt was as the calling of Christ, and as the Lord by the prophet had said, "Out of Egypt have I called

my son," so the Savior had to go down into Egypt and be called out for the fulfillment of prophecy. It appears that Israel and Christ are both spoken of as being but one son, and that the calling or delivering his people, the church, from the power of darkness, Egyptian bondage, was the purpose of God in sending Christ, his Son, down into national Egypt where his children had been that he might deliver them out of spiritual Egypt where they are now. If we should find that Israel and Jacob are one here spoken of, whom God loved with an everlasting love, and, therefore, called him out of Egypt, led him about and instructed him and kept him as the apple of his eye, is the whole church of God, then by a strict examination of the course of the people, we should no doubt find that the church of God is or should be a strict predestinarian faith people. "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." Gen. 32:24-28.

Here it appears that in consequence of Jacob's prevailing his name was changed to that of Israel, which shows the church in her state of bondage or unmanifest situation, but when prevailing by or through Christ her head, she bare the name Israel. "Then said I, O Lord God, cease, I beseech thee: by whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small." Amos 7:5. Here the prophet besought the Lord on the part of *Jacob*, in his weak and afflicted state,which was evidently the national Israel, in the time that God was threatening her with judgment for her sins. This proves that the national Israel was sometimes called Jacob. "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt." Deut. 7:6-8. Here the Lord is speaking to and of his chosen people, showing them that there was no influencing in them, why he loved or chose them, or as a cause why he delivered them, but assigns his own love and oath as the cause. While the Lord shows his love and goodness to them as a cause why the Lord's chosen people were particular sectarian "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness." Isa. 1:27. The church is here spoken of by the term Zion (which I shall give some attention) and her redemption by judgment in her complete deliverance with the redemption of her converts being with righteousness of God, which is Christ, who hath redeemed us from the curse of the law by the sacrifice of himself.

If we, upon examination, should find that God speaks of his church in the term Zion, and that by this appellation the whole church of God, or spiritual Israel, both under the law and gospel dispensations is spoken of, we shall

then find the predestinarian doctrine established, particularly if we will observe God's purposes as he declared by himself respecting Zion. While we will find that in consequence of Zion not strictly adhering to the strict instruction as given by God she suffered severe affliction, so it is to-day. Yet the Lord has saved her at the final overthrow of her enemies who led her astray. "Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am the last." Isa. 48:12.

Here Jacob and Israel are both spoken of as the Lord's people while the Lord declares who he is. "Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together. All ye, assemble yourselves, and hear; which among them hath declared these things? The Lord hath loved him: he will do his pleasure on Babylon, and his arm shall be on the Chaldeans." Isa. 48: 12-13. Does this teach the doctrine of predestination of all things, seeing the same Lord that called Jacob and Israel will do his "pleasure on Babylon, and his arm shall be on the Chaldeans," "Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted." Isa. 49:13. The Lord is here speaking of that great display of his power in the reign of grace through the Savior which shall comfort Zion when his rich mercy is extended to the relief of his afflicted. "But Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me." Isa. 49:14. This shows it was Zion that the Lord was seeking, yet she has so little knowledge of God's purpose toward her that she was almost in despair. "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." Isa. 49:15. Here is such a striking figure to illustrate the sure standing of God's children that it seems strange that any one would believe in the doctrine of falling from grace. "Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." Isa. 49:16. The Lord here shows such strong reason why he will not, nor cannot forget Zion, that I cannot conceive of the idea of any intelligent being believing the doctrine of apostacy. Surely their eyes are blinded by the gods of this world. "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders." Isa. 49:22. The Lord here explains his determination in bringing Zion's children home that were among the Gentiles without any condition performed by them. This looks like the true standard of gospel faith maintained by the church of God. That particular sect which God has set up in the world that we know as Predestinarian Baptist, every-where (by the world) spoken against, and that the faith once delivered to the saints shall yet be the standard, therefore, we will not give it up. "And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me." Isa. 49:23. (Remember the dust was to be the serpents food.) This does not go to show that these kings and queens were to be converted to the gospel faith, but to become humble at the feet of the church by the executing judgment upon the

enemies of the church. "And all thy children shall be taught by the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." Isa. 54:13. This is the reason why the children of Zion are so particular and sound in the faith God has taught them. "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name." Isa. 52:1-2. Here is the true spirit of the gospel manifest by which the faithful ministers of the gospel are influenced, and this is the reason why they will not hold their peace. This is certainly Christ the righteousness of God secured in the covenant of grace to be declared under the gospel as being unto and upon them that believe. "In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land." Jer. 33:15.

We now see the name wherewith the church should be called, in the gospel day in the spirituality of her title, and the cause why the righteousness of God being manifest for her salvation for it must be the spiritual Judah and Jerusalem here spoken of. "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers. they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." Isa. 43:1-2. We here see that Jacob and Israel are but one people, and that the Lord claims that people for his own and shows the cause why, and declares that the waters and fire shall not destroy them; which I understand to be their trials and afflictions. Does this not prove God's predestination and grace to a special call and people, "For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life." Isa. 43:3-4. The Lord here shows the cause why he will complete the redemption of his people which he has purposed to do. "Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him." Isa. 43:7. They were created for the glory of God, they were created by him, they were created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. He distinguished Jacob as the object of his everlasting love; found him in the waste howling wilderness; set up his name there; called them by his name. O, how soul refreshing is this to the tempted lambs of God; to know that their strength is in the Lord, and to the persecuted ministers of the gospel to know that the Lord has called and sent them to gather in the scattered flock of God. If the Lord be for us, who shall be against us. But oh the glorious news and happy effect when the sweet whisper of the benefits of Christ was applied to the soul, and they by faith could say, the Lord is my salvation and righteousness.

"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they

shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn." Zech. 12:10. Now let every child of grace examine his own experience of grace, and see if this is not the way that the Lord brought them to the Savior, for here is the way the Lord, by mouth of the prophet, has said that he would bring his children, referring to the gospel day. This looks like the work of the Spirit. This is the way that old predestinarian Baptists believe it. The Lord poured on them the spirit of grace and supplication, and they mourned bitterly for the lovely Savior whom they had pierced. "And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart." Zech. 12:12. This the children of grace know by experience, the one cannot help the other, the wife cannot help the husband, nor can the husband the wife. Each one mourns his own sins apart. "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness." Zech. 13:1. Notice this fountain was not opened *in* the house of David but *to* it, and what a blessed thing indeed that these mourners of the house of David and inhabitants of Jerusalem could be cleansed from their sin and uncleanness in this fountain; but I do not think one of them would ever have come to the fountain if God had not poured upon them the spirit of grace and supplication. It was only opened to the house and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and, therefore, this spirit is only poured on them.

What do you think of it, ye saints of the Lord, would you ever have come to this fountain if the Lord by his spirit had not brought you? And do you not think that if others had seen and felt their lost condition and load of sin as you did, that they would have been humble beggars for the benefits of this fountain as well as you? "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Isa. 61:1. Thus we learn the glorious errand of Christ into the world and the benefit of the gospel of peace. The children of grace well knew that when the Lord gave them to see themselves in their own poor, lost, sinful condition, that it brought them very meek, humble and low before the Lord, broken-hearted, captive, bound with fetters too strong for them to break. O the glorious news and the happy effect, when the sweet whisper of the benefits of Christ were applied to the soul, and they by faith could say, the Lord is my salvation and righteousness. This looks like experimental religion that the Lord has wrought in the soul by his spirit, and witnessed by the Word, and just what the prophet said should be under the reign of Zion's King. Yours in the faith. (Elder) B. B. WALSTON

THE WIDOW'S MITE

"And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which makes a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury; For all they did cast in of their abundance;

but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all of her living." Mark 12:41-44.

In the exposition and experimental application of scripture rich in typical or symbolical meaning, it should be emphasized that the type is not as perfect as the anti-type, otherwise it could not serve as a type or symbol of the thing represented. Every type therefore must fall short in some respects. And this is true of the typology embraced in the scripture under consideration. The incident related here is real, literal, historical, but has a spiritual application of deep and sweet meaning to subjects of God's grace.

It is important to note that in one of the precincts of the temple at Jerusalem was a treasury consisting of several boxes or receptacles into which offerings for various purposes were dropped by those who wished to contribute for a certain purpose. This treasury may represent the repository of faith, for scripture confirms the assertion that money may represent faith in the kingdom of heaven. It is written, "A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things." As all things in the temporal walks of life that may be purchased require the expenditure of money, the medium of exchange for material things, and such unit of value must be a recognized legal tender, so in the spiritual realms it is impossible to please God unless faith is possessed by the individual, that faith which is the gift of God and the evidence of things not seen, the substance of things hoped for, and which is accounted unto the believer for righteousness. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," as Paul asserts in Romans. But true faith signifies a counterfeit, and the nearer the counterfeit is to the genuine the more dangerous and deceptive it is. Some spurious coins are so nearly like the genuine that only an expert can detect the fraud. So there is even a counterfeit faith possessed by those who have head knowledge in regard to the gospel of the Lord Jesus, having the form of Godliness but denying the power thereof, often versed in the letter of the word, but not feeling its power, not having had the atoning blood of the crucified Lamb of God sprinkled upon the doorposts of their hearts and consciences, never having tasted that the Lord is gracious. Yet these characters are often eloquent in speech fervent in their devotion to the system of works and their ideas of co-operating with God in order to obtain salvation, and are outwardly moral, being whited sepulchers without but full of dead men's bones within. These characters pass for genuine Christians among the people of the world, even though they never have confessed to the working of sin within their hearts, of having been condemned by God's holy law, of having found that within themselves there was no good thing, never writing bitter things against themselves, never confessing their inability to do one thing to merit the Creator's favor and notice. Yet they often cast in of their abundance in the way of gifts to charity, thinking that they are doing for the Lord and giving him willing co-operation to work out the salvation of their souls. They have never wrestled as Jacob of old with the angel of the Lord's presence, been deprived of all sense of creature strength, and made to cling and cry, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." These characters have a counterfeit faith: it is not acceptable to God.

Let us note in the Scriptures considered that Jesus sat over against the treasury and beheld how the people

cast in their offerings. There is much meaning in the expression "Jesus sat." This whole incident is typical of the gospel dispensation in which Jesus sits down in the Kingdom of Heaven. Stephen said that he saw heaven opened and the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of God. Again the Bible tells us that Jesus when he made one offering for sin, forever sat down at the right hand of God, and that when he comes to judge the world he will sit upon the throne of his glory. Jesus did not sit down at God's right hand until he had finished his work on earth, until sin had been put away, the law magnified, the penalty for sin with all of its hideous curse endured, and the salvation of his people assured. Before sitting down in this sense, he had risen from the dead, manifested himself to his disciples, and ascended to God. To sit down, then, denotes the work accomplished, for sitting carries with it the idea of rest. When the five thousand and the four thousand were fed by the miraculous multiplication of loaves and fishes, the people first sat down. When the mad Gadarene was cured of his plague of his legion of devils, he was found sitting, clothed and in his right mind. The church of God sits down in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and that is after their deliverance from the condemnation of the law. We feast upon heavenly food in the mountain of the Lord's holiness when we sit down in the Kingdom of Heaven, having entered into that rest that remains to the people of God; rest from the exactions of a law which man can not keep, but which Jesus kept and fulfilled. So the sitting of Jesus in the scripture under consideration typifies his sitting down upon his mediatorial throne in heaven.

Now there came a certain poor widow, who threw two mites into the treasury. The word certain here implies a character separate from the others in purpose and work, denoting a child of God possessing true faith. It is expressly stated that she was a widow. She represents the single believer as an individual or the church of God collectively, for the church is composed of individuals. The fact that she was a widow is an admission that her husband was dead. Every child of God is under law before the grace of the Lord Jesus is revealed and salvation made manifest. She, therefore, typifies one who has become dead to the law by the body of Christ that she might be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead that she might bring forth fruit unto God. "The woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband." Rom. 7:2. Here the woman is represented as having been under the law, but having become dead to it by the body of Christ, so she came as a widow in a spiritual sense. She was born under the law and had the sentence of death in her own body and was condemned by it. The law had demanded of her a holy life, requiring perfect love to God and perfect love to man, demanding that all its precepts be kept. She did not have a holy nature by birth, but was born in sin, and therefore, could not meet the requirements of God's inexorable justice. When the law demanded holiness she failed utterly, but Jesus kept that precept for her. The law required perfect love to man and love of her neighbor as herself, and she failed miserably to meet its demands, but Jesus met all requirements for her. The law pronounced death upon the transgressor, also the curse, also banishment from the holy presence of God, but Christ fulfilled all the law for her, so that it had no power over her; she

was dead to the law, and in her realization of her utter dependence upon Jesus for grace and glory she came in type in her poverty, being poor, having no works of righteousness to offer, no good deeds in the flesh to her credit, not a good resolution kept, needy in the extreme in a spiritual sense. She came because of her poverty and felt need, and she gave two mites, representing all her living, for she came by faith through grace given unto her. She had in a typical sense the two mites of faith and hope, for both of these graces of the spirit are necessary for salvation, and one goes with the other to make a single unit, the faith by which the sinner is justified.

It is written that the just shall live by faith. This is why the Savior affirmed that she had cast in all her living. Of course she gave two mites in real money, all the currency she possessed, showing that in natural things she had to trust for her next mite to meet the pressing needs of material things. And so in the life of a child of God, one learns that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps and that the believer must trust for all things. Real faith will be tried in order that its value may be proven, its worth realized. That is why the faith of the saints has been so sorely tried and yet has failed not. Jesus answered Peter that he had prayed for him that his faith fail not.

There is one concluding thought that we would present; Jesus called his disciples and spoke approvingly of her contribution to the treasury. Here is an implication of fellowship, for the disciples witnessed unto the woman's great devotion and manifestation of her faith. When one is called from the darkness of nature into the light of God's revealed truth and comes before the church, there is fellowship extended by those who have witnessed unto the same experience in being taught of the Lord. We might add also that those that were rich who had preceded her did not cast all their living into the treasury, proof that they had not been taught of the Lord, and did not possess the righteousness of true faith. In a child of God being espoused as a chaste virgin unto Christ there must be the manifestation and exercise of that faith which is legal tender in the kingdom of God.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

Dallas, Texas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: My February *Signs* came the seventh and I started reading it from the first page and read right on through until I came to the Editorial page where I found the article headed prayer and enjoyed it so much. When I saw the next article was Isaiah 45:7, "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things," I called to my son and asked him to read this sermon aloud to our little family.

Brother Dodson, I would be very ungrateful not to write and thank you and tell you how much I enjoyed this wonderful sermon. You satisfied my mind on this Scripture and it was like listening to a real sermon, a message from on high. You beautifully took up each part of this Scripture and made it as plain as it could be made to my way of thinking. I am glad God gave you a mind to write upon this text as I had never heard a sermon preached on it. I am also thankful God gave me a receptive mind to understand the message. We all enjoyed it and I will be reading and rereading it many times.

I have never thought that God was the cause of people's evil deeds. I think that is Satan's work, and I cannot believe there is a Primitive Baptist who

thinks God is the cause of the wickedness of men and women. I find in Deut. 32:4, "He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."

I have enjoyed reading the *Signs of the Times* and especially this February number. By reading these good letters I find others who have traveled over the same road as I have and their experience coincides with mine. This gives me hope to see and hear others in whom I have great confidence express my feelings better than I can myself. I want to tell you again how much I appreciate the explanation you gave of Isaiah 45:7. May God bless you in the good work you are doing and give you strength and understanding to keep sending out these good soul-cheering messages. A little sister in hope.

(Mrs.) MABEL MILLER

(*Continued from July issue.*)

We went back to church as God granted or so willed it thus, and one day I was about my work, singing a few of the old songs and the thought came to me to sing, "How firm a foundation," and as I began to sing I felt again that feeling of being lifted up, and when I came to the lines, "Fear not I am with thee," the sweetest feeling of love came over me so much that it seemed to cover me completely. Ah, I felt I was sailing on perfect skies of love. That is the best way I know to describe that feeling. When I finished the song I felt it was not I that had sung it but I had been sung to. This feeling lasted over two weeks as I was given, I hope, to rest in the peace of his love. Then again came doubt and fear that I was not only deceived, but I was trying also to deceive God's people. I was then corresponding with Carrie Campbell and the thought came, why don't you tell her, and I thought I would, I will not continue such deceitfulness. I wrote her of my thoughts and when I mailed that letter, short it was, the feeling came over me that everything was going to be all right. Do we not know or hope his grace is sufficient? A few days later I was at my washing machine and that feeling came over me again. I now felt to know and hope it was the presence of his love. I remember leaving my work and going into my front room and as I fell down on my face I cried, "Oh my Lord and my God, wash me and I shall be whiter than snow," and the still small voice answered me at once, "You are already washed." The sun shone so brightly and the birds sang so sweetly. Dear Elder, every time I have had that feeling it has come in the same way, unexpected and without effort on my part. I do not remember how I finished the wash that day.

If this is not an experience of grace I am the one deceived for God cannot be and is not deceived, and he knows why I was ever sent among the Old Baptist people, I do not. Thus far he has brought me as I am unable to travel alone. I need his help continually for I am dependent upon the great and independent God who needs no help, neither is he a God of want for he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. The world would have us believe we can of self turn about to doing good works and bring God in debt to save us, or save self, making man his own Savior thus denying Christ and eliminating mercy. I am made to believe it takes more than such to satisfy God, indeed so, for it took the altogether lovely and the chiefest among ten thousands, his dear Son, to satisfy God, and I know if he would look upon me as I stand in the flesh I could never be one of his for I am so

prone to sin, but no man is justified by the law in the sight of God it is evident for the just shall live by faith. By faith Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness, but before faith came we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ that we might be justified by faith. I hope that is my experience. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." "We are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for. But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." All I feel to have is hope. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." How do we believe? Jesus is as good an authority as any on that when he said, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." The law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Love worketh no ill to his neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. Ah, wonder of wonders that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saves us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior." I feel to know I can claim no power to be able to save self for there is no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God. Satan had to come before God before he could afflict Job which proves to me that he is subject to the power of God and can do no more than God allows. I hope I am made to believe that God chose his people in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world and they shall be holy and without blame before God in love. We all as sinners fell in Adam, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. The law binds heavy burdens, makes demands that we cannot keep, and there is no promise of life in the law only that ye shall eat of the fat of the land. Christ took on himself the likeness of sinful flesh, yet without sin, came the end of the law when he said, "It is finished;" paying the debt of his bride, caught in the law as he hung on the cross, was buried and arose the third day according to the Scriptures, and is now at the right hand of God making intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Dear Elder and I hope a dear brother in Christ, if you will allow a sinner such as I to address you thus although I am not a member of the militant church, but I hope he has given me a hope in his mercy. If this be in accordance with the truth he is honored and I cannot even give him praise, honor and glory as it already belongs to him. Failure belongs to man. As I said before I do not know that this is an experience of grace, but one thing I do feel to know, I am a sinner and a beggar of mercy. I feel to know I could never work hard enough or long enough to merit his goodness and salvation of self for the best of man's performances are as filthy rags in the sight of God. I am made to love things I once hated and hate the things I once loved. To the natural man this is indeed a strange

way for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." If I be one he came to this low ground of sin and sorrow to die for my sins, when I awake in his likeness I shall be satisfied, for I shall see him as he is. "For now we know in part, and we prophesy in part." "Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." May he give us grace to hold fast to the faith once delivered unto the saints, keeping us by his power in love; we cannot keep self. Jesus said, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Precious words!

I hope I have not written contrary to doctrine, if so the error is mine, God will not be charged with folly. I fully realize how unlearned and ignorant I am, very limited also in education as you evidently see. I repeat if these poorly written lines be in accordance with truth God is honored for "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." May he give unto us grace to ever look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. I hope I have not wearied you with such length. It takes the arminian world but a short time to tell what they do for God, but it takes a sinner such as I a long time to tell what I hope the Lord has done for me. The half could never be told. Hope you are well and will visit us some time. Love to all that love the doctrine of salvation by grace wherever they may be. In a precious hope of rest beyond the grave I am,

(Mrs.) LOUISE NEWMAN

EXPERIENCE AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY

Soon after I was twenty I began to be in trouble. I ceased to love the things I had so much enjoyed in the natural realm of life. I did not understand but I dared not reveal my troubles to a soul, not even my parents. I think I must have gone along in this awful travail two or three months. One Sunday after doing the morning chores I went into my room and locked the door. I knew I was going to die. The thought in my mind was that when they miss me they can break the door to find me. I must have remained in that awful state about two hours, then it seemed almost as quick as lightning the burden rolled away. I jumped up and shouted in inaudible language, walked out on the veranda and looked to the East. At that moment I heard my father's eight day clock strike nine. I must have stood there twenty or thirty minutes. I gazed at the sun and looked all around. I have never been so happy and do not expect to be until I am ushered into the full expectation at the final consummation. It was the brightest morning I have ever seen, not one small cloud. The birds were flitting in the old walnut tree; the old gray mule began braying. I thought all there and all things else were tuning a responsive chord to help me shout my Redeemer's praise. I do not have a Saul of Tarsus' call to the ministry. I have read so many miraculous experiences of a ministerial call till I have been made to doubt if I have a call. If indeed I have it was that bright Sunday morning at nine o'clock. These are the words, "Go tell the good news."

As far back as I can remember I

fancied myself a school teacher. Some of the neighbors and kinspeople would call me their school teacher; some would call me their preacher, some would call me both. I have always had the quality and ability of leadership. My father trusted me with the management of his farm early in life. He said I could lead his laborers better and get more work out of them than he could. I am proud of my home training, my parents were a fine pair. I had a good time in my young manhood days but I was high class. After that beautiful Sunday morning my life has been different. "Go tell the good news" has haunted me from then until now. I have lain on my bed late hours in the night, sometimes one, two and three o'clock preaching to an invisible audience. I have walked the roadside on the way to school, and in the schoolroom, when there was a break in routine, in fact everywhere preaching the gospel. One night on the front porch I forgot myself and was preaching aloud. My wife walked to the door and said, "Daddy, what in the world is the matter?" She thought I was sick. It was hard to turn her off for she vigorously contended something serious was the matter. Quite often when time to go to meeting was approaching I would begin preaching a day or two before meeting time. By the time I had arrived I had eaten it all up, but at other times the Lord would withhold until time to preach or about, then "it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness." Ezek. 3:3. This scripture comes to my mind just at this second, "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." I Cor. 9:14. Preaching is the easiest thing in the world to do; trying to preach is the hardest. When it is real preaching (the preacher gets there) no one gets more real gospel food than the minister himself. When I am really blessed to preach I keep living on it days, weeks and sometimes months. I told Elder H. T. Johnson once that I certainly did enjoy his sermon. He replied, "I did too." Elder J. W. McLeod was asked once whom he had rather hear preach. He replied, that he had rather hear John Wright McLeod than any-body else. I have had that burning in my bosom until I have tried to beg God to take it all away and let me be easy, but on the other hand my hope is anchored that it is Jesus. (Luke 24:32.) I have often said if I could preach to visible audiences as to invisible I would indeed be a great preacher, but I have to take it as it comes, it is all fixed. I wish I could stay at home with a satisfied mind but I cannot do it. When I get home I am crazy until I go again. (Jer. 20:9.) I love my kinspeople and I have to live with them as much as is possible.

Last night I dreamed I was traveling in quite a wilderness section of the country. In the journey I met quite a number of people, one was my father. I trust the significance of my heavenly Father. My brief stay with my father in the dream meant much to me in the journey. After much rambling in the wilderness every-body had disappeared but a very comely and plain little woman. I said to her, "let's stop, take stock and see where we are." We seemed to be lost. She said, "just over that mountain is Troy, we are close to it." I looked up the mountainside and gazed over. I could see the reflection of the lights, but could not see the lights. She said, "there is an all-day Sacred Harp singing near us and we will attend it." My dream vanished. "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" S.S. 8:5. The brief period with this woman was sweet indeed. I trust I have had a few brief

and sweet seasons in the blessed old blood-bought church. In secular life Troy is where I spent two very happy years in normal college. My mind went to ancient Troy. Helen was the most beautiful woman in the world. To the child of grace the church is the most beautiful institution. It towers above everything, its light cannot be hid. Helen loved Paris, the shepherd boy; she eloped with him. This caused a long and bloody war between the Greeks and Trojans. The strategy of the Greeks with the wooden horse, etc., was defeat for the Trojans. Helen was rescued and carried back to her native country. Her husband forgave her. "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Luke 23:34. It cost Jesus every drop of his blood to redeem the blessed old church. The all-day Sacred Harp singing is fleshly pleasure before we ascend the mountains into the bright and shining realm of grace, free grace. Dear child of grace, do you often get to the end of your journey in your experience? All you can do is stop and take stock. It seems impossible to go farther but Jesus returns just in time. My mind wants to go farther but I must not be lengthy. May I close with this thought, "The true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." John 4:23. (Elder) C. H. BYRD

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DEAR BROTHER DODSON: In the beginning who did God have to consult with before the dust of the highest hills was laid, yes, even before the powerful lightning ever chased through the deep blue sky? The same God is sitting on that same throne to-day as then. He did not need help then neither does he need it now. I think it would be a bigger task to make something out of nothing than to control it after it was made. I wonder then if God made as great a thing as this old globe if he hung it on conditions? God forbid. Do not bring me any conditional time salvation, neither eternal salvation by conditions. Either one destroys, or in other words denies, the foreknowledge and predestination of that great, all-wise God who is sitting on that most holy and righteous throne. I am satisfied he is able to carry on the work without help from me except such as he has predestinated and predetermined that I should do. Do not understand me to say that man does not do anything for he will do everything God has predestinated he should do. The scripture says, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." In Daniel 12:10 it reads, "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." You will notice there are two characters spoken of in that text, one of them spoken of twice, and that little word "but" divides these characters each time. I think that little word has a great and wonderful meaning; it points out the firmness of God's solvent and unconditional predestination. One of these characters is the same as the other; one of them was no more conditional than the other; that little three letter word divides the two characters. I am glad that I believe in a God that "spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast;" also who says, "I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Why did he not say man's pleasure? Because he decreed and predestinated these things before he made them, and besides man is too

small and weak. Man is described as nothing and less than nothing and altogether vanity, but the best reason of all is that he does not need man's help. I think there is no other power in heaven, earth or the bottomless pits of hell other than that of the eternal God that is sitting on that great white throne, watching with that all-seeing eye the great eternity as it rolls along. It is wonderful to have confidence and believe in God that he is able to handle old Satan without the help of man or any other creature. When we speak of God's predestination it is unlimited, but man's is limited. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord." That is enough to convince me that he is able to control all.

There is but one thing that bothers me and that is my case. Am I in the choice that God made? If I am, thanks be to God, there is no other power in heaven, earth nor the lower regions of hell that can destroy my soul, nor that love that God has for me. As I look back over my life, even my present life, it looks so dark to me that I am made to wonder if such a character as I could be included in that choice? Then I am made to doubt my case and get my Bible to read and see if I can get relief. Sometimes I can and at others I get so dark and gloomy I cannot read with understanding and just close the book and walk about. What bothers me badly is that I hear so many old people tell their experiences which are so sweet. Some can even tell just when the Savior made his appearance to them, even to the hour and I just sit with a little hope. That is all I can claim—my little hope—but I would not take ten thousand worlds like this for it! If I could tell a good experience like some do I feel that I would not have so many doubts.

Now back to God's predestination. I want my children, yes even my friends to know just what I believe although it may be contrary to their belief. I am glad they all have the same right to believe as God has predestinated for them to believe. They cannot help it. The difference between us is that I am a "can't-help-it" and know it, while they are "can't-help-its" and do not know it. So you see it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. If it is not in man's hands to direct his own steps, in whose hands is it? The Bible says it is left in God's hands, and if so do you not believe God will direct those steps to please himself, I surely do. The scripture says, "Predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," "And none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou." Those two scriptures cover the whole predestination. I am willing to trust Him without any of my help except that which he has predestinated for me to do. I will not fail to act in accordance with his predestination but not the works of man. He says, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." To stop there it would sound weak, but here is where predestination comes in, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." That abolishes man's free ability and puts it on a sound basis. Do you not see that the predestination and foreknowledge of God is the only good, sound foundation that can be found? Man's work will not stand and the reason is that it is like man—it is too weak. "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." God never makes a failure of anything but man does. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I have often thought if it was left to man what a bad delivery it

would be. I have had preachers tell me just to get on my knees and give my heart to God. I asked one preacher to tell me just what position I would have to be in to give God something that already belonged to him? I looked at him squarely and said, "Preacher, all I have is my little hope." He said, "God pity such a sinner" to which I said "thank you." He walked away as much as to say that I was bound for hell and beneath his notice. I never had a chance to talk with him again. I believe God has predestinated the evil things of this world as well as the good. You may not believe what I am writing but God knows I believe every word of it. If he did not predestinate the destiny, yes even the steps of the wicked, who did? There is no other power or powers other than that of the eternal and all-wise God to do these things. Why did he say he worked all things after the counsel of his own will and none could stay his hand? I believe he is able to handle the bitter as well as the sweet. By being able to handle the wicked things of this world he knew how and where to place his blessed children, and placed them in the hands of his Son, Jesus Christ the Savior of his people. If he has nothing to do with the wickedness of this world why did he say in I Samuel 16:16, "It shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well." Read also the 14th and 15th verses of the same chapter, Judges 9:23 and many other scriptures pointing to the fact that ours is a sovereign God. Yours in a blessed hope of eternal life.

MANCE BROWN

2211 - 5th St., Riverside, Cal.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Find herewith $2 to pay my subscription for the dear old *Signs* for another year. It cheers my lonely hours to read the good sermons and letters from the dear saints who, I am sure, have been taught of the Lord whether I have or not. I have just passed the eighty-seventh milepost in my journey through this vale of tears, feeble and crippled, confined to the house so I cannot go to church. Our church is named Friendship, having a membership of twenty-five. Our meeting place is near Fontana, Calif. Elder Leonard Moore, son of Elder J. Moore, is our pastor. We are living in sweet peace and harmony. Long may you live to keep publishing the *Signs*. I was reading it when dear old Elder Gilbert Beebe was its Editor and Publisher, and I have a book of his editorials. Most unworthily yours in the hope of a blessed rest in immortality.

J. W. HAYNES

Hopewell, Pa.

R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: I want to renew my subscription to the *Signs* as I am still here though for how long I do not know. If when my subscription expires you do not hear from me discontinue it. I am past eighty years of age and do not feel it will be long. With best wishes to you and yours and may the Lord bless and comfort you. May you continue to publish the *Signs* in the future as in the past. When you see Elder Vaughn remember me to him. It is twenty-two years since I saw him. He preached my brother Corder's funeral at the time.

(Mrs.) LIZZIE HIMES

BOOKS WANTED

Will any one having "Meditations" by Elder S. H. Durand they are willing to part with please communicate with the undersigned. Two copies are desired.

MRS. D. L. TOPPING,
Linthicum Heights
Baltimore, Md.

EDITORIAL

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

"But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled."

Matt. 26:56.

In the death of Jesus there was a fulfillment of the many things the prophets had foretold, yet the actual carrying out of these things was by men who knew nothing of the purpose of God. If they had known he was the Son of God they would not have crucified him. Wicked men came together to do whatsoever God's hand and counsel afore determined. Nothing more, nothing less.

In the words of the prophets we read, a bone of him shall not be broken. Could men break his bones? certainly not. When soldiers visited the scene of the crucifixion, they no doubt purposed to break the bones of Jesus and the two thieves that were crucified with him, as the plans were to take the bodies down from the cross. The bones of the two thieves were broken, but when they came to Jesus, they said he is dead already. Not one word of prophecy could fail. How little they knew of the purpose of Almighty God. Their bounds were set by him who is to wise to err. Not a dart of Satan can hit, but what the God of heaven sees fit. Though the bones of Jesus could not be broken, the soldiers must pierce his side, for the word had gone forth, "They shall look on him whom they have pierced." A spear pierces his side, and blood and water issue forth. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin, and the blood of Jesus, the perfect offering, prepared by God for his people must be shed. God's word has gone forth, and cannot return to him void. It must accomplish the things he has purposed, and prosper in the things he pleases.

God has made of one blood all nations, and set the bounds of their habitations, and he who has so arranged these things has determined they shall reach the bounds. The apostle Peter, on the day of Pentecost, could plainly declare that Jesus was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, taken by wicked hands, crucified and slain. Pontius Pilate and the Gentiles came together to do whatsoever God's hand and counsel afore determined. Some believe these things were by the permissive decree of God; others do not accept the doctrine of permissive decree, but rather believe the carrying out of these things was the direct decree of Almighty God. However we may look at the matter, we must admit that every circumstance connected with the death of the Lord was controlled by God himself. Both men and devils took their place in these things.

The parting of his garments was another fulfillment of scripture. They parted his garments among them, and for his vesture they did cast lots. These prophecies were actually carried out by men who knew nothing about what had been foretold. In carrying out these

things they were only doing the things they were instructed to do by those in authority over them. God's control is so universal over the world and all things therein, that not a sparrow falls to the ground without him; even the hairs of our head are all numbered.

The rulers of the day thought that all these things were in their hands. We read of one telling Jesus he had power to crucify him or to release him. The answer of the Lord was, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." At the last supper Jesus said, "He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me." It must be Judas that reaches forth his hand. The word has gone out. He is a devil, has been chosen for this very purpose. He is lost that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.

Ah, my brethren does not all this close our mouth, when we would arraign God in a court of carnal reasoning? The wrath of man shall praise God, and the remainder shall he restrain. The remainder of anything is what is left. What does not work for the good of his people, and his own glory he restrains. The wicked are made for the day of evil. Though the wicked are living out the designs of their own heart, their sins fall upon their own head as accountable creatures under a holy law, they are fulfilling the purpose of an all wise God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will; working all things together for good to them that love him, and are the called according to his purpose.

Let us now pass on to the disciples of Jesus. Before his suffering Jesus told Peter, "Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice." This man did not believe he would do such a thing. He said, "If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all." What says the Word? "Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." Could the word of Jesus fail? "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" until all is fulfilled. The apostle follows Jesus into the judgment hall. Here he warms himself by the fire, and when questioned about being one of Jesus' disciples, denies that he knows him. Can he stop there and only deny him once? No, if so the word of the Master would fail. He must be questioned by some one again, and that one was there to repeat the question. The denial cannot fall short of the number of times Jesus said it would be.

What is the difference between the wicked men who took part in these things and his own followers. Notice and see. The poor fellow, namely, Peter who thought he would not deny his Lord begins to weep bitterly when he remembers the word of the Lord. Jesus looks at him. That is the evidence he has grace. It is still the mark of grace when one weeps over sin. He did not lay his sin to God. He does not excuse himself in any way. Those who are taught in the school of grace do not try to hide behind predestination as a cloak for sin. Not one time in his ministry did he refer to this experience in a way that would charge God with sin. He could now say to the brethren, you are kept by the power of God. God's people hate sin; they hate their own life; pant for God as the hart panteth after the water-brook, and are continually made to say, God be merciful to me, a poor sinner. They eat the paschal lamb with bitter herbs. After Jacob had been led in mysterious ways for a long time, often feeling that all things were against him, as he saw the goodness of the Lord, he could witness with the

word that says, "the Lord alone did lead him."

These things do not conflict with the doctrine of exhortation, reproof, rebuke, etc., but rather confirms it. These things preached from the heart, fired with holy zeal are profitable to the church, but if any of us decide to preach these things only from the zeal of the head they fall on deaf ears. The letter kills but the spirit gives life.

There have been with us through the ages the limited predestinarians and unlimited predestinarians. I see no reason why they should not live together in peace. I have known lovely brethren who did not believe these things to the extent others did, yet they believed that all their salvation was of grace. May we all remember the language of James, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." The doctrine of predestination of all things is the doctrine of the Old School Baptist church; let no man deny this. It is a great mystery, and how careful we should all be in proclaiming these things to rightly divide the word of truth for God's attitude toward righteousness and unrighteousness is not the same. In all of it we would say:

"In thy fair book of life and grace,
O may I find my name
Recorded in some humble place,
Beneath my Lord the Lamb!"

Submitted I trust in love and the desire for the welfare of our beloved Zion.

D. V. S.

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. John 3:5.

Brother Hubert T. Faulk of El Paso, Texas, in asking for our views on the significance of the word *water* in Christ's statement to Nicodemus, also says, "This, as you know, is the basis for the argument put forth by some that baptism is essential to salvation, and without baptism there is no way to enter the kingdom of God or to come into possession of eternal life." We are aware of the contention made by a great many that water baptism is absolutely necessary in order for one to enter the climes of eternal glory when they pass from this world. We do not, however, believe that the record of divine truth as set forth in Holy Writ will sustain such an idea. It has been thought by some that this verse was largely the basis for the institution of infant baptism, now so common among Protestants and Roman Catholics alike, who have their babies christened.. They appear to think that once this is done their offspring is heavenward bound and that they are secure for eternal glory. There is another group who are very outspoken in their claim for the necessity of water baptism as a passport to eternal glory for both young and old. We have no where found the Scriptures saying that water baptism is essential to eternal salvation. Peter spoke of it as being "the answer of a good conscience toward God," but he also said it does not put away the filth of the flesh. Paul declared that "without shedding of blood is no remission" of sin, and the blood to which he referred was none other than the precious blood of the blessed Lamb of God. Not long ago we were appealed to by a sister for an explanation of Mark 16:16, which was being stressed by a certain group in proof of the fact that her mother, who had not been baptized and had passed away, was lost and condemned forever. This verse reads as follows: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." We pointed

out the fact that there was no justification for claiming that this Scripture supported any such contention as that water baptism is necessary for eternal salvation, for it does not say that he that is not baptized shall be damned, but it does say that "he that *believeth not* shall be damned." One must needs believe that Jesus is the Christ before he is eligible for water baptism. When Peter confessed that Jesus was the Christ he was told by the Master that flesh and blood had not revealed it unto him, but the Father which is in heaven. The Scriptures plainly declare that it is the work of God that we believe on Him whom he hath sent, and that no man can say in reality that Jesus is the Christ, but by the Holy Ghost. When the Ethiopian Eunuch said to Philip, "See, here is water: what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Philip answered readily by saying, "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." This is the true test, and without it water baptism amounts to nothing and should not be administered. Unless one has first been baptized "with the Holy Ghost, and with fire" he is not a fit subject for water baptism by one of God's called and qualified servants.

One of the primary purposes for which Jesus came into the world to suffer, bleed and die, and rise again, was to establish his kingdom here in the world. It has been prophesied that "a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Isa. 32:1-2. All of the prophets spoke in their own way of the coming of the Messiah. Daniel said, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." Dan. 2:44. He also declared, "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." Isaiah prophesied, saying, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." The truth of the fulfillment of these prophesies was sealed by the apostle Paul in his epistle to the Ephesians when he wrote: "Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the

dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Eph. 1:15-23. In the twelfth chapter of Revelation we have the record of the battle that "Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels.*****And the great red dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him," and the gospel church sang all hell's defeat, for John said, "I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night."

Jesus told his disciples that his kingdom was not of this world, and when he had finished the work which the Father gave him to do, he said, "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.*****I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine."

Nicodemus was a very unusual man, naturally, being a Pharisee, or student of the law (the Scriptures), and also a ruler of the Jews, but he had to be taught that none of his earthly attainments availed him anything in the sight of God. It is quite evident that he had some knowledge of Jesus, for he came to him by night, and said unto him, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." In order to make certain that such knowledge could not be attributed to any earthly source, Jesus said unto him, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Jesus was here emphasizing the necessity of the *new birth,* without which no man can see the kingdom of God. If we have been blessed to look upon the solemnities of Mount Zion, and have seen that she is "beautiful for situation" and the joy of the whole earth, it is because we have been born of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. Jesus is further stressing the point of regeneration, or the new birth, in our text, in answering Nicodemus' question, "How can a man be born when he is old?" He said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." While it is perfectly true that only through the ordinance of water baptism can one enter into the fellowship of the militant church, which is to follow the example set by Jesus, undoubtedly our text has more spiritual significance than that, and we shall endeavor to bring forth from the storehouse of inspired truth some instances where water has more than a literal meaning. When the Lord spake by the mouth of Isaiah, saying "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price," he was not referring to those who were thirsting after natural water. When the Psalmist said, "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most

High," he was talking about the river of the water of life which proceeds from beneath the throne of God and the Lamb. In conversing with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, Jesus said to her, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." He later told her, concerning the water in Jacob's well, that "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." The woman perceiving the great significance of this water, said, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." When "one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water," the fountain for sin and uncleanness was opened to the spiritual house of David, and in this fountain they are washed and made clean and presented to God the Father by his Son without spot, wrinkle or any such thing. Is it any wonder, then, that those who feel the efficacy of its cleansing power like to sing,

"There is a fountain fill'd with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
O may I there, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away.

Dear, dying Lamb! thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved to sin no more."

In the days of old God manifested his power and love for Israel when he spake to Moses, saying, "Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink. And Moses took the rod from before the Lord, as he commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also." National Israel was a type of Spiritual Israel, and we believe what the Lord did for them portrayed but dimly the significance of what was accomplished for those whom he chose in Christ before the world was, when the sword (wicked) smote his darling Son, the true Shepherd of the sheep. The water which came forth from the rock when it was smitten by God's rod in the hand of Moses, could only set forth in part the water of life which came forth from our Lord's riven side. The members of his mystical body, by faith, look unto the Rock from whence they were hewn, and to the hole of the pit from whence they were digged, and they rejoice exceedingly, not only because it assuages their spiritual thirst, but it cleanses them from all of their iniquities and they appear whiter than snow before God in love.

While we do not believe in spiritualizing away the literal meaning of the types and shadows of the Old Scriptures, at the same time we do not like to literalize too much the precious things of the New Testament. What follows in our text shows, we believe, that the *water* in our text is inseparably bound to the *Spirit,* and that without

their spiritual application no one will ever be able to enter the kingdom of God. This thought is further borne out by what Jesus said to Nicodemus in this immediate connection: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." There can be no partnership business in this matter of salvation. It is all of the Lord, from first to last, and it shall all redound to the honor of God and to the praise of his glorious grace. We hope what has been said will be helpful to our inquiring brother.

R. L. D.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Whereas, MRS. ADA PATTERSON EVERETT, wife of Elder J. T. Everett, passed from this life March 4, 1948. She bore every evidence that she was a child of God. She was a faithful wife and loving mother. The church at Antioch feels that we have lost a faithful friend. It was her many sacrifices that made it possible for Brother Everett to serve his churches, therefore be it

Resolved, that the church express sincere sympathy to Brother Everett and his children. We know the sorrow is great and hard to bear but let us not sorrow as those that have no hope. She is only asleep there to wait the glories that will be hers in the resurrection. Also may we express our thanks to God for the privilege of association with her these many years, and that he will be with us all world without end, be it further

Resolved, that a copy of this resolution be recorded in our records and a copy be sent to Brother Everett and each of his children. Also a copy be sent to the **Signs of the Times** and **Old Faith Contender** which papers she enjoyed reading very much.

J. M. PROFFITT,
Clerk of Antioch Church

Whereas, on the night of March 7, 1948 God called our dear brother, ROBERT S. WILLIAMS, from his home on earth to a place prepared for him eternal in the heavens. We believe it was a happy exchange for him. He had been blessed with good health until a short time before his death. He was born Feb., 1875, making his mortal life on earth 73 years. He united with the Primitive Church at Malmaison in 1911, and served the church as clerk for many years. He was a devoted husband and father, and a good neighbor. He was devoted to his church and loved the doctrine of salvation by grace. He will be missed by his church, family and community. We extend our heart felt sympathy to his family and sorrowing friends, be it

Resolved, that we bow in humble submission to the will of an all wise God who doeth all things well, be it further

Resolved, that copy of these resolutions be entered on our church book, a copy sent to the family, and copies be sent to the **Signs of the Times** and **Old Faith Contender.** Done by order of the church in conference fourth Saturday in March 1948.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER, Moderator
A. F. COX, Clerk

In loving memory of our dear Sister, JOSEPHINE POWELL, who died Feb. 20, 1948, and was laid to rest at Kermet, Texas. She was born Nov. 16, 1896. Sister Powell, daughter of J. A. and S. B. Faught, was married to Dave Powell, July 14, 1915, who with one son and three daughters survive her. She will be sadly missed by her family, friends and the church. Little Flock Church extends deepest sympathy to her parents, husband and children.

Resolved, that copy of these resolutions be sent to the husband, a copy made a part of our church record, and a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference March 31, 1948 at Altus, Oklahoma.

(Elder) W. N. Green, Mod.
(Mrs.) LOU KESTER, Clerk

OBITUARIES

ELDER THOMAS WEBB WALKER was born in Caswell Co., N. C., Aug. 20, 1874, and departed this life March 26, 1948; making his stay on earth 73 years, 7 months and 6 days. He was the son of James and Martha Walker. He was first married to Miss Nannie Walker in 1897. To this union was born only one child, Mrs. W. H. Willis, Gibsonville, N. C. Mrs. Walker passed away Nov. 10, 1899, and in 1906 he married again. His second wife was Miss Ethel Turner. To this union nine children were born, eight of them surviving: Mrs. Thelma Hundley, Mrs. Rosa Moore, Mrs. Mary Cousins, Mrs. Evelyn Marlow, Woodrow W. and Horace Walker all of Danville, Va., Sterling T. Walker, Clifton Forge, Va. and Hassell G. Walker, New York City.

Having received a precious hope in Jesus, Elder Walker was received into the fellowship of Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church in Caswell Co., Sept. 19, 1896 and was baptized the following day by Elder J. A. Burch. He later moved

his membership to Wolf Island Church and on Sept. 10, 1905 he was ordained to the full work of the ministry by a presbytery composed of Elders P. D. Gold, F. L. Oakley and P. W. Williard.

Elder Walker possessed little of this world's goods, but he was rich in faith, and his heart's desire was in keeping with the language of Solomon, "with all thy getting get understanding." Prov. 4:7. He fully measured up to the qualifications as recorded by the apostle Paul in the third chapter of first Timothy, vigilent, sober, given to hospitality, apt to teach, not a brawler, not covetous, not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, patient, having a good report of them which are without; following the injunction of his blessed Master in which he said, "Carry neither purse nor scrip," and I am sure he could say in the language of the servants of old, that on his return he lacked nothing. The greater part of his service was among the churches in Virginia and North Carolina. However, he frequently made visits among the northern Baptists, and I have heard many reports of how the good Lord blessed his labors of love to the comfort of their souls. His unassuming manner, meek and humble spirit, was convincing evidence that he had been crucified with Christ.

Elder Walker spent the last seven years of his life on earth with his daughter, Mrs. W. H. Willis, Gibsonville, N. C., and her tenderness, love and devotion, together with that of her husband and children towards him, cannot be estimated in dollars and cents for the writer has personal knowledge of their enduring efforts to make life a comfort for him, which was indeed a great blessing from God. Many servants of God were present at his funeral and spoke comfortingly to the bereaved family in the presence of a large audience of brethren, sisters and friends who came to pay their tribute of love for him. His body was placed in the City Cemetery beneath a mound of flowers to await the final coming of our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Phil. 3:21. Written by request of Mebane Church where his membership has been for several years. Humbly submitted.

(Elder) T. F. ADAMS

It is with sadness I record the passing of our dear brother, WILLIAM H. MORRIS of 7241 Jefferson St., Kansas City, Mo. whose decease came Feb. 17, 1948. He was born in the state of Ohio in 1872, thus at the time of his death was in his 77th year. He was a Railway Mail Clerk, retired at the expiration of 30 years of service. In 1904 he entered the Postal Branch of the government service and was employed at Iola, Kansas for two years and transferred to the Railway Mail Service in 1906. He then moved to Kansas City where he continued to live until removed by death. April 26, 1891 he was married to Malinda Belle Simpkins who departed this life July 30, 1908. To this union was born one daughter, Bertha Morris. March 29, 1911 he was united in marriage to Abbie B. Freeman Byars. To them no children were born. Those surviving are his widow of the home address, his daughter and one step-son both of Kansas City, one brother of Topeka and one sister in California.

Brother Morris united with Mt. Lebanon Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists in Kansas City, Mo. He later moved his membership to Little Flock Church near Pleasant Hill, Mo. Elder Hall served them faithfully as pastor for many years. Brother Morris served as clerk of the original Mt. Zion Association for a number of years until they ceased to meet as an Association two or three years ago. He was not a preacher and yet he was a preacher, but he resented being spoken of as such. He possessed the rare gift of going ahead in the absence of a pastor and was a wonderful help at all times. The church had considered setting him at liberty to exercise his gift among the brethren which I have no doubt they would have done at their next meeting had he survived until that time. He was a man dearly beloved by his brethren, and the church has been comforted by his labors in both a spiritual and material way. It has not been my privilege to know a more God-fearing man or one more zealous and faithful to the cause of Christ. He will be greatly missed, not only by his sorrowing widow but by his sorrowing brethren and by the writer whose privilege it was to partake of his generous hospitality many times. Often-times he has met me at the station and conveyed me to his pleasant home, where I would spend the night and we would journey together to the place of meeting near Pleasant Hill, Mo. I think I can say that next to his family no one will miss him more than I. His labors of love came to an abrupt end, his work is finished, he has fought a good fight, finished his course and kept the faith. There is now laid up for him a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give him at that day, and not to him only but to all them also who love his appearing. **Righteous Judge,** he makes no mistakes. Although it may please him to lay his hand heavily upon us at times, we shall not reply against him for he is righteous.

December 22nd the writer entered the hospital in Kansas City, Kans. Brother Morris visited me three or four times while I was there. His last visit was on Sunday before I was released the following Friday. He looked strong and vigorous

but that Sunday night he was stricken with pneumonia. When released from the hospital the following Friday I retired to the home of my daughter in Kansas City, Mo. to recuperate. Saturday morning some of the brethren, including Mrs. Morris, waited on me to bear the sad intelligence that Brother Morris had passed away the preceding night. It was hard for me to rally from the shock this gave me. It seemed to be the common wish of all that I should speak on the occasion of his funeral if indeed I felt able to speak. The funeral being set for the following Monday I told them I would try. Though only three days out of the hospital it pleased the Lord to strengthen me. I spoke to a large concourse of people assembled at the funeral home to pay their last respects to this blessed brother, neighbor and friend.

While I was lying prostrate upon my hospital bed I thought that if per-chance I might be on my way out I should like Brother Morris to conduct my last sad rites. But alas, it pleased the Lord to strike him down and raise me up for what purpose I know not.

As touching Brother Morris' Christian experience there is not one thing we can call in question, but he has ceased from his labors and his works do follow him, I pray that God may comfort his bereaved family and reconcile us all to this sad dispensation of his providence. In the language of one of old I would say, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"

(Elder) L. L. SCHENCK

SPECIAL MEETINGS

Bethel Old School Baptist Church of Riffe, Wash. will, the Lord willing, hold her annual three days meeting, beginning Aug. 13, 1948 and continue the two following days.

(Elder) I. F. COLEMAN, Pastor
(Mrs.) ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk
Riffe, Wash.

The regular all-day annual meeting will be held at Slate Hill, N. Y., Friday, August 20th, 1948, where we shall be glad to welcome all who are interested.

R. LESTER DODSON

The Predestinarian Baptist Churches of Eastern Wash., Eastern Oregon and Idaho will hold their three days union meeting with Mizpah Church in Touchet, Wash., beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in Sept. 1948.

Touchet, Wash. ELLEN COLWELL, Church Clerk

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Whitefield Church at Whitefield, Me., Sept. 10, 11 and 12, 1948 the Lord willing. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will meet with the Olive and Hurley Church, Shokan, N. Y. Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 15 and 16, 1948. Ministers and brethren of our faith and order are cordially invited to be with us, and all friends of our faith will be welcomed. Services will begin at 10:30 DST Wednesday morning Those coming Tuesday evening will stop at Brookside Lodge in Ashokan, conducted by Mrs. Hazel Byrnes unless otherwise provided for. Brookside Lodge is the second house to the left on the side road that meets the main road by the Ashokan store. Ashokan is on the Catskill Mountain Branch of the N. Y. C. R. R. The Margaretville-Kingston buses stop in Ashokan. Those coming Wednesday morning will go direct to the meeting-house.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Moderator

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the Frying Pan Church Wednesday, Thursday and Friday October 12th, 13th and 14th, 1948. All ministers and brethren of our correspondence, and others of our faith and order, and lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Those coming Tuesday in own conveyance will come to Herndon, Va. and inquire for brother Walter Norman who will direct them to homes to be cared for. Those coming by train will come to Herndon which is reached by the W. & O. D. R. R. from Rosslyn, Va. Trains leave Rosslyn at 1:55 p.m. and 6:05 p.m. The station at Rosslyn is at the Virginia end of the Key Bridge across the Potomac from Washington. Those coming into Washington by rail or bus will take electric car from Union Station or from the Bus Station at 12th & N. Y. Ave. marked "Rosslyn." There are no bus lines running to or through Herndon. For any further information, communicate with the undersigned.

G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk
914 Ninth St., N. E.,
Washington, D. C.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. J. C. Florence, Ga., $1; Mrs. M. C. De Wolfe, Ga., $1; D. O. Sloan, W. Va., $1; Mrs. J. B. Hill, N. J., $3; J. A. Perdue, Va., $1; J. A. Owen, Ala., $3; Mrs. W. A. Horton, N. Y., $10; J. F. Simpson, Ill., $1; S. D. Murphy, Fla., $1; Mrs. S. L. Hutchens, N. Y., $25.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

We understand The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will not be held in Philadelphia as per notice in July SIGNS. Please disregard that announcement.—EDITOR.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 116 RUTHERFORD, N. J., SEPTEMBER, 1948 No. 9

"O may I live the proof to see
The saints in full prosperity;
To see that bright, that glittering bride
Close seated by her Savior's side.

O may I find some humble seat,
Beneath my dear Redeemer's feet;
A servant as before I've been
And sing salvation to my King.

Farewell vain world, I'm going home,
My Savior smiles and bids me come;
Sweet angels will convey my soul
Away to the New Jerusalem.

I soon shall pass the vale of death,
And in His arms I lose my breath;
And then my happy soul shall tell
My Jesus hath done all things well.

I soon shall hear the awful sound
Awake ye nations underground!
Arise and drop your dying shroud!
And meet king Jesus in the cloud."

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Submitted by
Mrs. Addie Chandler, Sulphur, Ky.

CORRESPONDENCE

Denton, Ky.

R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: I am impressed to write some of my thoughts on the narrative of David and will use as a beginning the scripture found in I Samuel 17:29. "And David said, What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" I do not know that I shall be able to write anything that will be of interest to any one, in fact I feel at this time that I will not. The good Lord knows I feel to be a very weak and unprofitable servant, and I cannot be sure that I have ever been given any spiritual revelation of God's truth, while sometimes I seem to be given strength to hope that I have. I am so stammering in speech that I know not how to collect words to explain what I hope I do understand about God's blessed truth, but I just possess what ability it has pleased the Lord to give me, and I cannot obtain more as far as years are concerned. I am a man of mature age but as far as knowledge and ability are concerned I feel to be but a child and down at the feet of my brethren. No doubt I will make incorrect statements and possibly statements that will not be in accordance with truth but I hope if I do you will be kind enough to correct them, that is if you publish this article.

"What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" Yes there must be a cause for everything that transpires, and everything that comes to pass is linked up either in first or secondary causes, and it seems that so many of the Lord's people cannot, or are not blessed to see farther back than the secondary cause. The chain of Providence is like a great piece of machinery which is connected with cogwheels and belts so that it all works in perfect co-ordination. The inventor or designer of the machinery first planned and drew a blueprint of it, predestinated or decreed just how every portion of it would work so there would be no conflict in the movement of the whole machinery he designed, just what every part should play and

the moment that it should move. Every pulley or wheel is connected by a belt or cogwheel to another wheel which causes it to move, when the preceding wheel moves which is the secondary cause of its moving and so on through the whole machinery, all being moved by secondary causes as designed, but the first cause of the whole movement is the big engine which may be out of sight behind closed doors or in the basement. When the big engine starts its motion the portion of the machinery which is first attached to the engine starts first and it starts the next wheel attached to it and on throughout the whole machinery, all being moved by secondary causes except the first part which is attached to the engine, and the designer knows that every portion of the machinery will have to start when the engine starts as designed or decreed, unless something breaks or throws a belt; but God's work is perfect, it does not throw any belts so the material goes in this machinery a raw product and comes out a finished product. God has designed that his people go through the furnace of affliction here in this world that they be made fit subjects and meet for the Father's use.

We will go back to our subject, "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" I do not think that David was motivated by a secondary cause. God put it in his heart by his Spirit to fight and conquer this giant Philistine, who is said to have been a great giant. The Scriptures say he was six cubits and a span. I do not know just what a cubit is according to our measurements. Some writers think it is the distance from the point of the elbow to the end of the middle finger which would be about eighteen inches, other writers think he was a little more than eleven feet tall. A great giant according to nature. His name was Goliath, "And he had an helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass. And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders. And the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron: and one bearing a shield went before him. And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set your battles in array? am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us. And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day: give me a man, that we may fight together." I Samuel 17:5-10. "And the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and presented himself forty days. And Jesse said unto David his son, Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched corn, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp of thy brethren." I Samuel 17:16-17.

Before we go any farther with this narrative I want to state that I believe it is figurative of something spiritual, and that David represented our spiritual David, Christ. David is said, in the holy scriptures, to be a man after God's own heart which is not said of any other man. Is not Christ our spiritual David after God's own heart? Is he not God manifest in the flesh? "And Jesse said unto David his son, Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched corn, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp of thy brethren." Did not God send his Son down to his brethren with the bread of life? "And

David left his carriage in the hands of the keeper of the carriage, and ran into the army, and came and saluted his brethren, And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, out of the armies of the Philistines, and spake according to the same words: and David heard them. And all the men of Israel, when he saw the man fled from him, and were sore afraid." I Samuel 17:22-24. Were we not sore afraid when this great champion, Satan, appeared, and did we not feel that we were not able to fight and conquer him, and felt in our experience that we were overcome by him and gone forever? But then did not our brother come to see about us and said, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" and said I will fight him. "And the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man that has come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up: and it shall be, that the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel." I Samuel 17:25. Notice what the king is going to do for the man that conquers this champion. Did not God enrich his Son with all riches? "And all mine are thine and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them." And did he not enrich him with all power, and did he not give him his daughter to wife, and set his house free in Israel? Did not our spiritual David redeem us and set us free? Did he not take away the reproach from Israel, "And David said, What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" Yes David, there is a cause.

"And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth. And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God." I Samuel 17:33-36. The lion and the bear represent strength and power. Does not our spiritual David deliver his little lambs who are caught by the power of Satan? Did he not go after the one that was gone astray, and lay it on his own shoulder, and bring it safely back to the fold? "And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had." The five smooth stones represent to my mind the five principles of doctrine—*foreordination, predestination, election, justification* and *glorification* which embraces all of the doctrine of God our Savior. The brook is that broken river that proceeds from the throne of God, but it just took one stone to bring down this great warrior, the first one, foreordination, being foreordered by Almighty God. David stood on him and with his (Goliath's) own sword cut off his head. Did not our spiritual David put all enemies under his feet and stand on them? The apostle Paul speaks of this five point doctrine in this way in Rom. 8:29-30. "For whom He did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justfied: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." This in a chain of five links. The first

one was in eternity before time, the last one in eternity after time. This giant in tempting Israel said, if you will furnish a man to come down and fight with me, and if he kill me, we will be your servants, so he was killed by his own proposition, his head cut off with his own sword. So the Philistines lost their captain, their head, and are serving God and Israel. Yes, and that according to their own choice; but do not understand me to say that they are worshiping God in spirit and in truth. No, they are serving God in that they are fulfilling God's decree and serving in the purpose that they were made for. God also uses them for his sword to chastise his people, and to teach them obedience by the things they shall suffer by the hand of their enemies, and in this respect they are serving Israel and that by their own choice so that God is not the direct author of their evil deeds; neither does he, by his holy spirit, influence them to do evil but they are moved as they are geared in the machinery or linked in the chain of Providence, and are moved by causes and effects. Every cause has an effect and every effect makes another cause and that causes another effect and so on and on from the beginning to the end. Their will is also decreed that it runs in perfect accord with God's purpose so that they do what they do according to his own choice.

I have learned more about God and his goodness when I have been led by the carnal mind into things that were wrong and suffered his scourging and chastising rod than I have in righteous living, for God has designed that his people learn obedience by the things which they suffer. If the conditional time salvation doctrine be true, and some of our brethren seem to believe it is, then it might be possible that some escape the chastising rod by voluntary obedience, but if so they could not be the children of God, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." "But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." But our brethren, or the children of God who believe in voluntary obedience, fall into these evils as well as we who believe in the sovereignty of God over all things, and they must suffer the same chastisements for them, but we are drifting from our subject and possibly making our letter too long. It seems difficult to find a stopping place.

"What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" As this great Goliath tempted Israel for forty days, so did the spiritual Goliath tempt our spiritual David forty days. "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan;" and he (Satan) then left Christ to tempt him no more. So we, like the children of Israel, feared and thought that we were overcome by him and would hunt the dark places and flee into the mountains and plead with God to save us. In our agony of soul and distress our spiritual David came to us and said, fear not little one I have conquered your enemy, I have saved you from your lost and undone condition. Then was not your soul knit with the soul of your spiritual David, and did you not love him as your own soul as Jonathan did David? I believe Jonathan represents the Spirit as he loved David and clung to him, and remember that Jonathan was the son of the king. So when you were delivered you thought your troubles were gone forever, but when, "the women an-

swered one another as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands," Saul became jealous of David and sought to destroy him and Jonathan, and it came to pass on the morrow that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul. Dear readers, in this narrative I think Saul represents the flesh. Did you ever feel that the evil spirit had come upon you in your travels? I think I have experienced that. There was a continual warfare between Saul and David and Jonathan. Do you not, dear reader, experience this continual warfare between the spirit and the flesh?

Brother Dodson, I do not know whether I have written in accordance with truth or not, I have just followed my mind and feeling. Use your judgment about publishing it. I know not whether the Lord has given me an understanding of his truth, I sometimes fear he has not. I have passed over several things I would like to have taken up in this article but time and space would not permit. Your unworthy brother in Christ. H. L. ROGERS

McDonough, Ga.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am sending for publication a letter from Elder George Ruston that I enjoyed so much I would like others to read it. I enjoy the *Signs* and I presume there are others that cannot go to their places of worship who get consolation through the good articles contained therein. May it please God to spare you many years hence for the comfort and edification of his little children. Yours in hope. (Mrs.) HENRY ROWAN

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

DEAR SISTER ROWAN: Your card mailed Feb. 19 came to hand and we were very sorry to hear of Elder Hewett's death. We had heard that he had a bad stroke; he will be greatly missed by those who loved him amongst whom he labored in the gospel. It is sad to hear of so many of our ministers being sick. I hope Elder Nash is better and able to fill his appointments.

The prophet says, "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come." When we think of men like Elder Hewett let us consider that they are taken from the evil to come. To be forever with the Lord is far better than to remain here, especially when age and weakness comes upon us. As I lay awake last night I thought of the Covenant of Grace and then later of the Testament. The words seemed beautiful and they opened up to me this way: In a covenant there must be at least two people who shall be alive and able to perform the things upon which they engage. So in the "covenant ordered in all things and sure" the Father loved a people, the Son engaged to redeem them and the Spirit seals them. All the blessings poor sinners have here and hereafter come through their covenant head, Jesus Christ. The counsel of peace is between God and man in the person Jesus Christ our Lord. Thus through Jesus Christ, God the Father is the God of peace. (I Thess. 5:23; Heb. 13:20). And we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom we have access unto this grace (the Covenant of Grace) wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

A Testament is a will which can only be enforced after the death of the testator. Thus these covenant blessings we enjoy come to us because Jesus, the testator, has died. Nothing in that covenant comes as a condition, depending upon us, the recipients. Such were

the glorious characters that covenanted together, there was nothing left to chance. It was ordered in *all things* and sure. Jesus, our covenant head, was so mighty that he vanquished death in dying. He is the mighty God and a mighty Savior, saving unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him. Thus because he paid the price and sealed the covenant with his blood, we are sealed by the Holy Ghost to receive every covenant mercy, and every covenant reproof and rebuke necessary. In this covenant of grace the hour is coming and now is when the dead (in trespasses and sin) shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself, and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. He not only sealed the covenant with his blood, but being a perfect Redeemer death could not hold him. He arose from the dead for our justification. This justification is a part of the testament, or will, and is enjoyed by the believer by faith, which is the fruit of the Spirit which takes up its abode in the believer. So Paul says, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. 5:1.

Well dear sister, you may be away from your brethren and twenty miles from your church, but if you be a recipient of the blessings of that *covenant* and *testament,* which I believe you are, you will find it is well with you while life endures and it will be well with you when you are called to die. I do not get away from home much. I can say with one of old, "I dwell among mine own people." We still have very pleasant memories of our visit at the Yellow River Association in 1946. Love to all the brethren and friends. Your brother I hope through the grace of God. (Elder) GEORGE RUSTON

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192 Main St., Flemington, N. J.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: It seems a long time since we met last on the second Sunday in November. At that time I thought that before this I should have an opportunity to attend one of your meetings in New York, but the severe weather has kept me at home. In spite of its being difficult always to keep comfortably warm, I have fared well, indeed, for I have been in good health. To-day I have completed seventy-four years of unprofitable and sorry living, judged by human standards, but at times faith silences my almost constant repinings over my failure to do the things I should do, and the insignificant accomplishments of my many years by the realization that my pathway in life, however humiliating and disappointing it has been to me, has been decreed by the wisdom of God, and, it may be, designed to teach a proud and rebellious nature lessons in humility, and in the knowledge of its utter unworthiness to claim a part in the wonderful plan of salvation provided for sinners.

I have often felt it a necessity to try to tell you and others of our spiritual kindred with whom I have been closely associated some truths about myself which you, nor they, do not but ought to know. In periods of self investigation the conclusion I always reach is that I am a wily deceiver. This I have not designed, neither does it seem to me that Judas necessarily designed the betrayal, although it was in his nature to do it. For nearly fifty-four years I have had a name with Old Baptists and have received always the kindest consideration from them, but each year evidence becomes more convincing that I am a misfit among them, and hence a despicable creature. This does not alter the fact that what I am or do are matters

decreed for God's ultimate glory.

It is written, "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil," and "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" and again "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee." It is not for man to question his wisdom or his right. It would be futile for me to enumerate the dark places in my nature which are most disturbing to me, for I believe that you, as a child of God, are not ignorant of the depravity of human nature. What you do not know are the many ways in which my experience, if it may be called that, does not coincide with the experience of God's chosen people. Mine is made up of negative quantities. To begin with I remember the day I asked for a home in the church. I had to confess I came utterly empty handed without even having experienced the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Time has revealed much of that knowledge to me. Neither could I claim that Jesus had been revealed to me as a personal Savior. I have never been able to subscribe to any change in my views. I have not been aware of hating things I once loved, nor can I say that "Wherein I was blind, now I see." As I look back it seems it was sorrow that drove me to the church—to the one church most likely to appeal to me—the church of my father, my mother and brother.

As a child I was taken by my parents to their meetings. I also met the many Old Baptists who were frequent visitors in our home. I felt kindly toward them except when I suspected them of boasting of their ability in silencing an opponent in some religious argument—that I resented. Following the example of my companions I attended Sunday School in our little town, but always with the feeling of an outsider, and one showing disloyalty to her parent's belief. When I was sixteen years old a dearly loved brother, who surprisingly to me frequently sought me out to converse with me about his newly found joy in spiritual knowledge, suddenly died. The shock and the sorrow of that loss seemed unbearable. I still hear the words from his lips as they rang into my young ears, "I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." My brother's death ended Sunday School for me. Blow after blow then fell in quick succession. Within less than four years my father, a sister, my cousin and my companion, a close Old Baptist friend, and a young niece, all so very dear to me, were taken from earth. Life seemed nothing but sorrow and I was weary of it, so with the beautiful hymn beginning, "Does the gospel word proclaim, Rest for those who weary be" upon my lips I went to the church, and in spite of the leanness of an experience of grace I was received for the rite of baptism which was administered the next day, Oct. 21, 1894, by our dear Elder Bundy.

Since then the story is but a drab one. I cannot describe it as I would but I have always been like one on the outside looking in, and desiring to have the evidences which others enjoyed of being a subject of God's grace. I have often tasted deeply of despair but never have I known the ecstacy of joy which others know—only once before I was a member in listening to Elder Wm. L. Beebe it seemed when he was through speaking I had known what heaven was. In the light of maturer years the memory of that joy has been greatly tempered by the knowledge that one so highly emotionalized as I could listen to a favorite speaker with excited imagination and be entranced by it. I think that was the case since it was

a solitary experience. But now how is it? I realize I am nearing the close of my earthly existence. In spite of those gospel promises which I have laid claim to for myself I have a cowardly fear of the end—death, we call it. Instead of my faith growing brighter with the years I am appalled at my seasons of unbelief. (I think I have been told that unbelief is the "unpardonable sin.") My walk is so frequently a reproach and my deadness to spiritual interests a condemnation. Along with these dark thoughts and questionings I freely admit I find my greatest happiness in attending our meetings, reading the *Signs* and in the companionship of the brethren, for through all these do I hear the truth, as it is dear to me, expressed. If I am deluded by it there are times when it is my prayer that the delusion may outlast my days for it is my reliance.

I cannot close this without an acknowledgement of the many unmerited blessings and mercies which have accompanied me through an uphill road in life. My belief in the greatness and goodness of God has grown with the years, but my understanding is quite as limited as in my youth. But, alas, what I wish I could say with equal assurance is that I know I love this God and that I know he loves me. Moreover, I wish deeply that marks of grace might be evidenced in my daily life. I wish I loved to read the Bible—that Brother Dodson, is a real cross to me, and fills me with shame—and that my interests were not so strongly centered in the things of this life. Now I close this letter which for years I have wanted to write to you and which, if I have the courage to send you, I know I shall look upon as a sorry blot upon an already bad record, and as a confession, only a shadow of what it should be. It is the expression of a base ingrate, a tirade of unbelief instead of a song of sacred joy. I think God's children are bidden to "rejoice" and "be of good cheer."

After all this unprofitable writing can you feel fellowship for me? The answer undoubtedly is, "I would like to but I cannot understand you." Yours believing in the great mystery of godliness. (Mrs.) WILDA R. STRYKER

Williamstown, Kansas

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: I am enclosing the obituary of our dear brother, William H. Morris, which our brethren would like very much to have published in our family paper, if in your judgment you can give space to it. We all thought Brother Morris was greatly needed in this little community of saints, but the dear Lord saw otherwise. How fitting are the words of inspiration, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts," I pray that we all may be made willing to accept of this higher, nobler way of our blessed God, and remember with awe and admiration that "He is God." Our membership in both Kansas and Missouri is sadly small, having been depleted by death and divisions until it seems at times that it is mere folly to try to hold on, yet it is encouraging to know the few who are left are standing firm in the doctrine and order of the church of God. It seems from all accounts that our beloved Zion is languishing the world over, while the forces of Anti-Christ are making great strides, adding to their numbers by the thousands, new inventions and schemes to deceive are being brought to bear on the thoughtless, the ungodly and indifferent to have them enroll on their so

called church book, promising eternal life if they will do this or that, and abstain from this or that thus making the blood of Christ of none effect.

If there had been any other way to satisfy divine justice and pay the debt we owed, then Christ ought not to have suffered. It was not a mere experiment with God Almighty when he sent his Son into the world to be led as a lamb to the slaughter, nor did he come to *try* to save his people from their sins. To try would imply the possibility of a failure. I am inclined to the belief that God never tried to do anything, but he did it and it is written of him, "He shall not fail." I do not need tell you this because I am sure you know this and much more, so pardon me for taking up your time. Wishing God's choicest blessings to rest upon you and yours I am, as I hope, yours in hope of a blessed immortality beyond the grave. (Elder) L. L. SCHENCK

(*Obituary in August issue*)

3574 Marion St., Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Please find enclosed my check for another year's renewal to the *Signs*. I am thankful, I hope, that you have been enabled to continue this medium of truth through the troublous and trying times through which we have been passing in recent years. The paper is a monument to God's providence and sustaining care for during its 116 years existence of continual publication there have been enough obstacles and discouragements in its way to have caused the abandonment of its publication had it been God's will for that to be.

An item of encouragement is to be found in the fact that you report in the March issue voluntary gifts to the amount of $90 to enable those who are not able to pay to have the paper gratis. This is practical religion or love in action, and I am rejoiced to see more of the brethren and sisters responding to this need than was apparent in the years past.

If the Lord will, may it please him to give us grace to do his will in this respect and also to help the indigent and desitute in other needful ways for inasmuch as we do it to the least of his children, we do it unto Him. In bonds of Christian love, I hope.

H. M. BOWDEN

(We thank Brother Bowden for his nice letter, and feel as he does that the *Signs* is a monument to God's providence. Surely it is he who puts it in the hearts of his people to support the paper as they do. We thank them all for their co-operation. R. L. D.)

Route 1, Plad, Mo.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: The May issue of *Signs* came yesterday and I usually lay aside whatever I am doing and read it all. I did enjoy Brother Lambert's article so much, and as I have heard him speak several times it seemed I could see his face and hear his voice. He is now serving one or two of the churches that Mr. Hardy served, and I feel so thankful for the dear saints to have him. I also enjoyed your article Brother Dodson and I wonder many times about the nine, but we know they are where the dear Lord desires them to be, yet we feel it a mystery why they all do not come into the church. We know God rules and controls all things and it must be right.

I did not intend to take so much of your time, but I want to tell you I failed to receive the April issue of the *Signs* and may I ask for a copy. The *Signs* is about all the preaching I get and I do get so hungry to hear more about the things most dear to me. There are no sound Baptists near us. Thank you for all favors. Yours in hope.

(Mrs.) J. R. HARDY

Box 275, San Juan, Texas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I received the book, "Showers of Rain," by Flossie Faulkner and have enjoyed it so much. Should have sent you a message of thanks before this but owing to sickness have neglected it. Please believe me this book is a great comfort to me and I thank you so much for sending it, also the *Signs*. I have some poems I have been requested to send for publication but I feel too unworthy. I fear for God's people to know me or to know about me, but I am what I am and cannot be any other way. I believe I fear the living God, and if not deceived I want to be submissive to his holy and righteous will. I find myself so far below what I see in God's little ones I fear I have never known him in the free pardon of my sins. We are told in the good Book that we shall suffer persecutions and afflictions, and he says he will be with us and not forsake us. When I am made to think of the sufferings that he bore for His people, and of all the glorious and precious promises he has made to all his wayward children, I think if I just knew I was suffering for Christ's sake how different it would be. Then the thought comes, if I knew this where would my hope be? I can only hope that I have a hope.

Sometimes I get so low and troubled it causes me to go back (in mind) to the night the dear Lord was delivered into sinful hands to be crucified. How heavy his burden was when he was praying for the cup to be removed but said, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." If not deceived, I have been made to say the same in spirit, Lord, thy will not mine be done, and then I hope it is that the strengthening angel has come to me and helped me to go on, asking God to make me submissive to his will. I had rather, above all things, be submissive to his will. Yes, above all the wealth and glitter of this world let me lie passive at his feet and know no other than God. Please forgive all that is amiss. I feel this to be like the writer, very imperfect. May God bless all his people everywhere. I hope I am a little sister. In hope. (Mrs.) JAMES B. REID

(We are glad Sister Reid is enjoying "Showers of Rain" and hope others will send us a new subscriber and get a copy FREE. R. L. D.)

Ponce De Leon, Fla.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Enclosed find $2 to renew my subscription for the *Signs of the Times*. It is a feast to me, an old woman that lives a long way from the church. The Old Primitive Baptist faith is all that I can get anything out of, it is the only preaching I love and all that is food for me so I look and wait for the *Signs* every month. Some of the writers said if there was more of it, but I read it over and over and every time I get so much out of it. I wish I could write and express myself as some can but I am old and not able to do much of anything. My son sent me the *Signs* last April and I was so glad. He is a good son and we can witness together. I have a hope that I may be one of those little ones that were saved by grace. I am too weak to have any good thoughts except as God blesses me. Unworthily,

(Mrs.) SARAH D. MURPHY

Route 2, Mayfield, Ky.

ELDER DODSON, VERY DEAR BROTHER: A few lines to you although we are strangers in the flesh, yet I hope we are brothers in the spirit. I do not feel competent to write to one such as I esteem you to be. I am a poor scribe and a bad composer but I will try, the

Lord willing, to drop a few thoughts to say that I believe in a sovereign God that does his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say what doest thou. If I did not believe that it seems to me I would be the most miserable creature on earth. Jesus said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Just think, Brother Dodson, this is not the will of a man but the will of the God that made the earth by his power; established the world by his wisdom; stretched heaven by his understanding. That is the one whose will Jesus came to do, and all power in heaven and in earth was given to him. What was there to hinder him from doing the will of his Father? "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; (What hour? the hour that his Father appointed before the world began.) glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. As thou (God) hast given him (his Son) power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Will they all know him? Yes, surely. Why? Because it is God's will. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." Jesus said, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Why? not, Because "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." How many are coming to Christ, All that God gave him and no more. Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." How many are coming? All that the Father has given him shall come.

It would be ignorance to say he wanted them to come and they would not because "he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice." Why, Because he is leading them by his power and love. "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them (the sheep) out of my hand. (To me this means his power.) My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Dear Brother, I do not believe there will be one soul in heaven contrary to God's will, neither do I believe there will be one soul in hell contrary to God's will. No, no! Paul writes, "After those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." Just how many are going to know him? All those whose names were written in the will that God made and sent Jesus in the world to fulfill. When Jesus died on the cross he cried, "It is finished," and there is where our redemption took place. God in his own time and way, not too soon nor too late, makes this known to them by opening their blind eyes, unstopping their deaf ears, taking away that hard and stony heart and giving them a heart of flesh. Dear Brother, I do not doubt the doc-

trine the Old Baptists believe and preach, my fear is, am I his or am I not. If I am one of his I did nothing to become one, and if I am not one of his I cannot do anything to become one now. Solomon said, "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it." May God bless you and your efforts in feeding the flock in that dear old paper. I would love to see and hear you preach some time. Yours in bonds. (Elder) O. W. PERKINS

Route 3, Box 3130, Paradise, Calif.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am sorry to be late with my renewal for the *Signs*. Enclosed find $2 for another year. I do love to read the dear old *Signs,* and truly hope the dear Lord will bless you to carry on in the future. Oh, such able witnesses. I sit down to read my paper and usually read it through before I lay it down. I read it over and over, each time finding something new. We are blessed here with a very able minister, Elder T. R. Jefferson. I went forth begging a home with them last June (1947) and much to my surprise was accepted, and was baptized July 6. I felt so unworthy of being accepted in the house of God's elect but it seemed I could not stay out any longer. I hope I can live in such a way as to never bring trouble to the dear church, it is so much comfort to me. I have loved the brethren since I was a little child and they are the dearest people on earth to me. I know that if I am saved it is by grace and not of works. Sometimes I am down in the valley and am made to wonder, "Am I his or am I not." I feel to be such a worm of the dust and so seldom find myself on the mountain top, but oh I do want to praise his holy name. I know he is the giver of every good and perfect gift. Remember me when at a throne of grace. I do need your prayers. In hope of eternal life. MARY ETTA JONES

Route 3, Benton, Ky.

BROTHER DODSON: I hope I feasted on the article you wrote in answer to Sister McNeals request on 2 Thes. 2: 1-3. I believe we are living in the day of Christ. We have evidences that he is in some, the hope of them. This is his day. We have had three dispensations of time and Jesus Christ was the Savior in the two which went before. He has ever been the Savior, he came to set up his church and the window was in the third story, but the door was in the side, in him, in his wounded side from which both blood and water flowed. All that will be in heaven as his bride, his redeemed ones, were sealed with blood and will drink of that water of life. Zechariah says, "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem: half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea," and these living waters flowed to those who were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark," our light which we claim does not let us see clearly that we are the children of light, neither is it dark. No, we have been given evidences to claim and to console us that we are in deed and in truth the children of light. Light is Jesus Christ and truth is Him, so it is not dark. Ah! we hope we can now see by the light of the Son of God that we were once in darkness. Just as dark as the old law was dark, and just doing our will as they who were before the flood. There are three woes we have to pass through: it is woe to us to pass through the devastating things in our experiences of being lead up to the time when we hope we were delivered and did hear his voice, but we were children

of Israel, children of God, while we were being lead through these woes; these thundering sounds from the Great I Am, these darknesses felt and our works being burned with the fire which does consume our law which we builded ourselves to reach our God, and to be in his presence presenting our gifts to him and he would accept us because of our great gifts and works which we had in abundance to offer him. But all the journey and all the woes were for our good who were builders and workers, and in the end we had gathered evidence enough to claim him as our God and Jesus Christ our Savior, then we found rest in him. Ah! we sought death, but did we find it in the way we wanted it? We begged for everything to fall on us, mountains, rocks and hills. Well, we died and all those mountains wherein we rested came toppling down. Those rocks were not the Rock, those mountains were not the Mount, those hills and every green tree were not the Hill and the Tree.

We hope by the time we passed through those woes, walls to us, that in the passing through we were gaining evidences of a wonderful power over us and losing our own power. We gain sight and become blind, we die and died to one thing and to live to another. We hope we see then we have the light of the true strength of Israel—mighty to save. We see then that we surely heard the sounding of all those trumpets that did sound, even for us, and did rejoice when and in the seventh where then we were delivered and rested. Ah, what rest! It is indeed a sabbath, what a song we could sing on that sabbath day, resting in peace, wonderful peace. We had been singing in the dark of our night, of our mountains of rejoicing and places of worship and of our rocks, but this new song we sing when we enter into our rest. The sabbath of our souls is Jesus and him alone, and the power of God to lead and grant mercy and deliverance, the same power that raised Jesus from the dead.

I am not concerned about Jesus coming here to live again and set up his kingdom; he already lives here in the hearts of his children; he has a strong hold here in this world; his kingdom, when he sets it up in our hearts, tears down all other kingdoms which man could and did set up; he builds the city; he looses the captives and when he looses one he goes forth singing his praise. Yes, then we can feel, as we hope, all the things you did write for sister McNeal about that text. It is indeed now Christ's day and we are gathered together in his name, and he in our midst to own and bless us. He is in every storm we pass through, whether it be in nature or in the church, it will work for our good and for his glory. These floods, flames and storms would not come to disturb us were they not in mercy sent for our good and his glory. Yes, we see the man of sin revealed. We see him when God opens our eyes, we see him in us too, sitting there in rulership, ruling; but thanks be to God that child who has a hope that he has been lead to experience these woes and these thunderings, and has had his darkness turned to light believes with a strong belief that Jesus did overcome for him and did put all enemies under his feet. If so, then in due time he will give us power to tread all things down that does not redound to his glory and honor. In him do we have to trust we were brought there by his power.

I will add we have had a wonderful month of meeting with the saints of God, children of light because it is the day of Christ, and he gathered us together, we hope, to learn, hear and re-

joice in him and weep because of our own weakness. Our Association, Soldier Creek, was well attended and the visitors well cared for in a natural way. The ministers were able, by the strength of our God, to declare the glory and power of the three one God. We attended Old Bethel Association the three days, and we also went with Elder Darnell of Little River Association and to the Hopewell Association with whom we correspond, and did enjoy the three days and nights there in Alabama. We find there those claiming a hope in Jesus. Their conversations are about his finished work; their songs are songs of his praise; their prayers(like ours we hope) are prayers for mercy and guidance. May it please God to lead us on and on in the joys of his salvation and when he is through with us hand us down to our graves in peace with him and with all just men is our prayer if indeed we do pray and beg. For fellowship in the truth.

(Mrs.) EFFIE BOWDEN

Route 2, Box 55, Grand Ridge, Fla.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR EDITORS: Enclosed you will find $2 to renew my subscription. Have been taking it two years and felt I would like to tell you how much I enjoy it. I read and reread it and pass it on for others to share the enjoyment. I get real preaching from it. I am fifty-nine years old and have been attending the Primitive Baptist Church all my life. I have never made any confession but if I have any belief it is that. I have always felt my unworthiness too much to offer myself for membership. As the Bible says, "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." I reckon that time has not reached me yet although I was reared by Primitive Baptist parents. Please remember me in your prayers. Respectfully,

R. S. JACKSON

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Whitefield Church at Whitefield, Me., Sept. 10, 11 and 12, 1948 the Lord willing. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will meet with the Olive and Hurley Church, Shokan, N. Y. Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 15 and 16, 1948. Ministers and brethren of our faith and order are cordially invited to be with us, and all friends of our faith will be welcomed. Services will begin at 10:30 DST Wednesday morning Those coming Tuesday evening will stop at Brookside Lodge in Ashokan, conducted by Mrs. Hazel Byrnes unless otherwise provided for. Brookside Lodge is the second house to the left on the side road that meets the main road by the Ashokan store. Ashokan is on the Catskill Mountain Branch of the N. Y. C. R. R. The Margaretville-Kingston buses stop in Ashokan. Those coming Wednesday morning will go direct to the meeting-house.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Moderator

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the Frying Pan Church Wednesday, Thursday and Friday October 12th, 13th and 14th, 1948. All ministers and brethren of our correspondence, and others of our faith and order, and lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Those coming Tuesday in own conveyance will come to Herndon, Va. and inquire for brother Walter Norman who will direct them to homes to be cared for. Those coming by train will come to Herndon which is reached by the W. & O. D. R. R. from Rosslyn, Va. Trains leave Rosslyn at 1:55 p.m. and 6:05 p.m. The station at Rosslyn is at the Virginia end of the Key Bridge across the Potomac from Washington. Those coming into Washington by rail or bus will take electric car from Union Station or from the Bus Station at 12th & N. Y. Ave. marked "Rosslyn." There are no bus lines running to or through Herndon. For any further information, communicate with the undersigned.

G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk
914 Ninth St., N. E.,
Washington, D. C.

The yearly meeting of the Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church at Snow Hill, Md. will be held on the first Sunday in November instead of the fourth as has been their custom.

BY ORDER OF THE CHURCH

CORRECTION

In the obituary of Elder W. L. Slusher in the April issue it states that he passed away Dec. 27, 1947. We are advised that this should have been November 27, 1947.—EDITOR.

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. SEPTEMBER, 1948

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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and remittances made payable to,

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J

ISAIAH 2:1-4

"The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

This is the word that Isaiah received. It is not received by any except those called, as was the prophet. His calling does away with the idea that men can volunteer for the office of a bishop. This message to and for the children of Israel starts out as the work of God in calling the message-bearer, and then it is a certain word that she is to receive. After establishing the fact that the word is sent by the hand of God, we are comforted with further proof of God's unconditional work in caring for this people. It is not sent to just any kind of house, built by just any kind of builder, but it is sent to the house that the Lord builds. He does not build just anywhere, but in the top of the mountains.

How wonderful it is to contemplate the work of God in saving his chosen race from sin and degradation. It is God that chose them before the world began its day and night; bringing forth in due season. This choice was not based on any foreseen merits in the creature. Had the creature been worthy of choice, his worthiness would have abrogated the necessity of a choice. By the grace of our Lord, it is our desire to take this irrefutable position, that the creature was without merit when God beheld him in his eternal wisdom before the world was formed. Even now they are as helpless as they were when he looked on them. Thus they were chosen in a safe place, and in a place of eternal righteousness. If I know my poor heart, I am glad that he did not choose them and leave the building of a house to them. There is a laboring in the Lord, laboring in the kingdom of him that has called us out of darkness into the marvelous light, but any laboring for the purpose of building or of keeping the kingdom of heaven is vain. When the blessed Saviour declared his purpose in building a church, not a word did he say about any help. This word does not mention anything about any intermediate agency in the establishing of this house in the top of the mountains; he does not hint that the Lord is liable to need any help. I have never had any desire to ascribe honor to any man for

this wonderful work, either in the beginning of that building or the keeping of it. I hope the dear Lord has given me a desire to comfort, rebuke, reprove in this kingdom, but that not the first thing of it is to purchase blessings beyond those that the Lord procured for us in his offering of his own body on the tree of the cross.

I have not been very apt in the water, but I have found that floating is easy. Yet all that men can do is to float in smooth water. Water cannot be forced up hill without being enclosed in pipes, and this could never mean floating. But this house that is so high is easy for the children of God to get to. I do not mean that they can get there by just a little effort. I mean that the mode of travel is of the Lord and that it is such a wonderful way that they travel in perfect complacency and satisfaction. This house and this traveling is not limited to just the Old Baptists in some sense of the word, but as far as manifestation is concerned it is to them alone. It is all nations that flow unto this house, and I am persuaded that this is the people that Jesus redeemed when he ascended Calvary's hill. As they come to this church they are all just alike, and I am not very patient with the thought I have heard expressed by Old Baptists, that the German people are not worthy to eat anything we have in America. These people are cut down in the forest and each one of them is hewed and made ready by the cunning workmen. They are all floated in and it up hill. How wonderful it is as they travel the road or stream to that dear refuge of God's humble poor, how interested they are in one another and how they speak to one another about the home of the dear lambs of God. *Come and let us go to the house of God* is their greeting to one another. If this is not a good and precious thing in our lives, as children of God, what would it take to constitute a good and happy home in the Lord? Ah, dear child, do you not remember those first days when these things first became so precious to you. Not a time since then has it been any more pleasant to go to church than it was at that time. *We were glad* about our companionship, and we wanted to be with those whose minds were inquiring for the house of God. This house is made ready for Jacob and there is not a more fitting character in the Bible for our study than that of this poor pilgrim. I am not glad that I am a sinner and I doubt the propriety of saying such a thing. I am glad that the Lord came to save sinners and prepared a home for them to live in here in the world; that it was such sinners as was set forth in the life of Jacob; that it is called his house because he is the most helpless and dejected sinner the whole Book tells us about, and right at this time the only one referred to as being a worm. It is the habit of worms to cut down and destroy instead of building up. This is exactly the way with Jacob; he will not do to depend on. It is not best to depend on any man, for their judgment is not to be relied on, having nothing better than the judgment of a worm. Furthermore, how long would Jacob have been in building a house? Was he not lost in the wilderness? And was he not just as lost in the desert as he was in the wilderness? Can a lost man build? No, for he is not interested in staying there, but in getting out. Would he not be as helpless without the presence of the Lord, after being found, as he was before? Then the only building that he would ever have in this place would be one that the Founder built.

Now we come to teaching and to walking. Oh, my brethren that we could some how come to an understanding

about teaching and walking. We have spent so much time in throwing brickbats at one another about a thing that we know very little about. We cannot mention the teaching of God in an abstract way without running into somebody that calls our ideas antinomian. Well sir, it is the truth that God alone teaches. It is our main tenet of faith that all of God's children shall be taught of him. If we want to lose our identity let us imbibe the current arminian doctrine that men can climb up to God without any regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. But this teaching of the Spirit, works in his people a teaching of one another. Part of the work of the minister is to teach, but to say that he teaches by the volition of the creature, is running into something that we want to stay as far from as saying that men can, of themselves, know God. Yet when we say anything about this teaching that belongs to the ministers, then we run into another school of thought, and they are just as vehement in their denunciation of that being conditionalism as the other is of something being antinomianism. Our text is plain on the whole thing to me, and I hope if we cannot agree about its contents, that we may yet be blessed to have patience one with another. "He will teach us" and "we will walk in his paths." Is that something to spend time contending about? Isn't that consoling to you? Isn't that a wonderful God, for meditating on his glorious name ? The teaching comes from God and our walking comes out of the teaching. It is not that we are taught and then we can later walk; but we walk as we are taught to walk. He teaches us to walk, not in the old paths of sin but in his paths. Are his paths the paths of sin? No sir, and I have just as much impatience with the thought, as I do that the creature can walk without the direct and compelling influence of God's Spirit. His paths are the way he has gone and the things that he has done. Left alone Peter went fishing, and all the others went along to keep him company and to make manifest how unable they were to tread the paths of the Lord. Fishing was an old path; and it was a path that belonged to Peter—in fact while he had on his own girdle he always went in those paths, but when girdled by one mightier than he, he then went in the paths of the Lord. When left alone David could not walk in the paths of righteousness, but went right back to the paths of sin. The Lord loved David and, contrary to David's own feeling of right in the matter after he had been overtaken in his fault, he came and restored to him the joys of those days when he was walking in the right paths, and even enabled him again to walk there. I have been in the schoolroom with my little charges, trying to do that that had been enjoined on me. I never told my pupils how a thing ought to be done and expected any satisfactory results. I showed them; I taught them; I had them to do the thing for themselves. That is teaching; that is the doctrine, child, in this New Covenant promise under consideration. Did you listen at the understanding of the church under the law dispensation? "He will teach us" was the sum and substance of their doctrine. We are unable to learn anything without him. We are not able to walk without being taught to walk. Out of that teaching comes our every sermon, prayer, or anything else pertaining to the travel of the church in time. I want to be understood just here. I believe this is a promise for that future day when Jesus shall have finished the will of his Father concerning his mission in the world. It is a day that the children of Israel saw and longed for, and, while

blinded to many things, they did not see that in some measure, at least, they were in possession of the substance of that day. My reason for saying that is found in the language of the prophet when he said, "that unto us a child IS born, unto us a son IS given." This would be called a short passage in some respects, yet it covers the whole gospel dispensation. This promise is sufficient to last from the time that Jesus left until he comes again. This is the only scriptural way that the church can ever be like her Lord and Master in time. It is when she can be found walking in his precepts and examples. We hear it said sometimes that a church is a live church. True, for he is teaching them, and that teaching comes right down into their every day lives. The life that they live, they live by the faith of the Son of God, and you could not have faith in God unless he taught you to have it. Here is the simplicity of the perseverance of the saints, of the church of God. He teaches you, and you are taught. What is it that he teaches you? He teaches you to walk. Where? In paths of sin? No sir, not that, and if I was called a conditionalist every moment of my remaining days on this vain and transitory globe, I'd still say as long as breath and accompanied strength remained that the Spirit of my glorious Redeemer has not led any man to sin. But, let abuses be mine to endure, and this world and its perishing cargo be all taken away from me, yet I must ascribe unto him my every step in this kingdom, be that step preaching, praying, singing, teaching, rebuking, reproving, or any thing else pertaining to the travel of God's poor and afflicted people.

I want to hasten on to the time when the "rebuked" people shall go to the beating of their weapons into tools. I must cross somebody's opinion about this, for I know that we have people among us that believe in a future and coming millennium. I am not crossing your views to get an argument, but I want to state mine for the sake of my own brethren that made the request for me to write out what I saw in this text. We hear so much about this among the statesman of the day; that some time we will have things perfected to where we can beat all our weapons into tools, and our government sometimes scrap quite a few as a gesture towards this beautiful picture. We have not done that yet but that the time soon came when we needed those things to defend ourselves against some enemy that had not yet gotten to the millennium. It will always be like that, because it does not have a shred of reference to such a time.

After this rebuke these nations (many people) shall beat their swords into plowshares. I think the Scriptures are plain on what a blacksmith is for. They had them in the olden days. The ways of a smith have not materially changed. To do much smithing requires much heat, especially in order to do much changing of an item from one thing to another. Now I think I know that God must kindle the fire that brings this needed heat. Not only must he kindle it but he must keep it fueled and lighted. People tell me that there is not a thing for the children of God to do. I do not believe a word of it. People tell me that there is not any activity about the children of God. I do not believe a word of that fable either. I came into the world a natural man and so did all of Adam's race. We had it deeply imbedded in us that for Christ to win this world and keep it, he needed us. We have never gotten over that when the Lord called us to him, for we see that Peter thought it was necessary for him to fight with carnal

weapons. But that material sword was sheathed, and that hateful, domineering, gutting, sword of his mind must be beaten. God did not say that I am going to beat the sword into a plowshare, but he said that they shall do it. They SHALL do it. And this is experience, this is the place when the Lord begins to work in you. Now dear saints you cannot help this fire being kindled, nor can you help taking this sword in your hands and take it to the fire. You need not be afraid little one, for you remember that you have another promise about handling deadly and poisonous things. This is God at work in you and he has made you willing to this beating. Oh, how trying the day when our sword is being transformed into a tool. We have liked this sword business right well. We liked the folly of war because we got much spoils in the conflict. Now in a glorious way we are brought to the place of beating, and having been born of God and given the teaching and leadership of his Spirit, and a hope, which hope is Christ, it is in the personage of no less than the blessed Son of God that we do this beating of this sword and spear into a plowshare and a pruning hook. We are thus made to quit fighting to win anything, and put to work in a kingdom that has all things provided. The ground is good. The plants are the planting of God. The church is the place all this takes place in as far as manifestation is concerned. Here is where workmen are sent out to labor in the kingdom with the tools that we could not in ANY WAY escape having. Our work? It is plowing and pruning.

War? It is gone. Forever gone, precious thought. Not another lesson shall we ever learn. Not another time shall we ever lift up a sword again. Oh, that the Lord would keep this foolish, wandering heart of mine on the grand and eternal things of this kingdom, teaching me to walk, holding my weak and sinful hand in his, guiding, sweetly guiding, my tottering footsteps through all these changing scenes before us, enabling me by conquering, sovereign grace, to keep on approaching the consuming fire to the beating of this sword and this spear into the tools prescribed for the saints of God. Only by this sovereign grace, this kind, providential and parental care, will this poor servant, if a servant, be kept living at the feet of the dear children of God.

W. D. G.

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Gen. 49:10.

A year and a half ago this month, Sister Ernie Null of Charleston, W. Va. asked that we give our views through the *Signs* on the above verse of scripture. We regret having been so long complying with her request, but we simply cannot meet all of the demands made upon us as promptly as we would like. We keep a file of requests and would like to write them in the order they come in, but unless we have some exercise of mind or feel that we have some light on a subject, we prefer not to undertake to present views on it. We fear there are times when some of our readers, at least, feel we are in the dark when we write. We have to confess to having to walk by faith and living in the hope that God will be pleased to draw back the curtain and give us a glimpse of what a text contains.

We do not recall ever having either written or spoken on this text, and neither do we feel equal to the task before us at this time. We shall, therefore, endeavor to follow our usual rule of considering the setting of the text in the hope that the connections may throw some light upon its true mean-

ing. Judging from the latter part of the chapter, the setting appears to indicate what might be termed a death bed scene, which lends all the more weight to the importance of the occasion and the subject matter. A man's last words are usually well considered. Jacob before taking his departure had called upon all of his sons to gather themselves together in order that he might tell them what would befall them "in the last days." As what he would have to say would reach far beyond the individual life of his immediate sons, involving their posterity for many centuries to come, and embracing all of the twelve tribes of Israel, it was urgently imperative that the head of each tribe should be present in person to hear what was to be the lot of those who were to come after him. We shall here only concern ourself with the first four sons mentioned. Jacob begins with Reuben, his firstborn, to whom he refers as his "might" and the beginning of his strength, "the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power." How sad that Reuben should have turned out so badly as to be "unstable as water" and even defiled his father's bed. This must have been a great trial to his father. Next, Simeon and Levi are spoken of, and concerning them it is said "instruments of cruelty are in their habitations." Their deeds were to be such that their father desired that his soul might not come into their secret, nor his honor be united with their assemblies. Jacob said of them, "Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel."

Jacob then speaks concerning Judah, with whom our text deals in particular, saying, "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?" It seems to us that these two verses, immediately preceding our text, are interlocked with it and have an important bearing upon it. The tribe of Judah was singled out by God to be most highly favored, in that through this lineage the Messiah was to appear in the flesh. This was foretold by the Lord when he spake by the prophet Ezekiel, saying, "I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent: In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell. And all the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I the Lord have spoken and have done it." Ezek. 17:22-24. It seems perfectly clear to us that the foregoing prophesy was portraying in a most wonderful manner the coming of our Lord through the house of David, and this prophesy was vindicated by the record in the last chapter of the Bible, in the following words, "I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." Rev. 22:16. When a search was made in heaven, in earth and under the earth, for a man who could open the book sealed with seven seals, and none was found, one of the elders saith unto John, "Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." This was He of whom

it was said to Judah, "thy brethren shall praise." It was his hand which was in the neck of Israel's enemies, and by his power they were slain and overcome, and it is before Him "thy father's children shall bow down." He was, indeed, as the lion's whelp, mighty in strength, who stooped down (condescending to come down in these low grounds of sorrow) and couched as a lion, and as an old lion, conquering and destroying him who had the power of death, and hath ascended at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ever to make intercession for his people.

John gives us a wonderful description of Him in the first chapter of Revelation, and he himself spake to John, saying, "I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death." Great, indeed, was the faithfulness of Him who said concerning Judah, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." On the day when Pentecost was fully come, the apostle Peter repeated this promise, enlarging upon it, when he spake to those who were pricked in their heart, saying, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." This sceptre was an emblem of God's love for his people, and the favor he would shew them down through the vistas of time. It was confirmed in type in the days of Mordecai when "the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand." As with God's people, it was a matter of life and death with Queen Esther and her people. Mordecai had sent her a message, saying, "Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this? Then Esther bade them return Mordecai this answer, Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish." Esther was undoubtedly a type of the Church, and how true it is that her salvation is not according to the law, but according to truth and grace, which came by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Paul in stressing the necessity of that *new and living way* to his Hebrew brethren, said, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."

Moses was truly inspired of God when he wrote "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." As we look back upon the travels of Israel and see how God took them by the hand and led them out of Egypt, causing the mighty waters of the Red Sea to stand back and allow them to pass

over dry shod; then leading them for forty years through the wilderness, and finally into the promised land of Canaan, which flowed with milk and honey, how wonderfully did it appear that the sceptre, which signified God's favor, did not fail or forsake them, and neither were they to have another lawgiver, until Shiloh, the Messiah, should come. The prophet Isaiah declared that the government would be upon his shoulder, and as to his kingdom there would be no end. Paul in writing to the church at Rome said, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." If we hunger and thirst after the righteousness of Christ, we will want to search the scriptures, because they testify of Jesus, and his name is more precious than rubies to the believer. How good it is to have heavenly light upon them, whereby we are enabled to look beyond the letter and discern what the Spirit saith unto the churches! There are times, we hope, when we have that blessed assurance that "unto him shall the gathering of the people be." He is the great Shepherd of the sheep, and he who gave unto them eternal life, will never suffer a single one to be utterly lost. In these days which are trying the hearts and reins of men, it is pleasant to contemplate the doctrine of the final preservation of the saints with Him in glory. We need to feed upon that strong meat which the apostle Paul gave to his Roman brethren when he wrote, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." A few days ago we were bewildered and overwhelmed by what is going on in the world about us, and we could but wonder what it all means and where it will end, and we were reminded of the scripture which saith unto Pharoah, "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." It is only when we realize that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth that we can say, let all the earth keep silence before him. Paul said, "For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." These are, indeed, precious declarations of divine truth. We can but rejoice in that portion of our text which says, "And unto him shall the gathering of the people be." In their natural state his people have no desire for him to rule over them, and if left to themselves they would never come to him, but when they are quickened by his mighty power, the North will give up, and the South will keep not back, for his sons will come from afar, and his daughters from the ends of the earth, and they shall all sit down in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We know not when the day of the Lord cometh, but Peter has admonished us to "be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day," and he declares that "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." The words of our text have gone forth from His mouth, and they shall not return unto him void, but

they shall accomplish his will and pleasure, and will prosper in the things whereto he sends them. Jesus said, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." We are nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity, that He might be our all and in all. "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." May the Lord guide and direct us all into a right understanding of his precious truth, if it be according to his own will and purpose in grace! R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTER

Adopted by the Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Bowdoinham Church, Bowdoinham, Me., Sept. 5, 6, 7, 1947.

DEAR BRETHREN: Another year has passed, and through the loving kindness and mercy of our God we are permitted to meet again in an Association, and if it is his will we will address you by circular letter as has been our custom in years past.

We feel that this coming together in his name is a wonderful privilege, for our God who changes not has promised that where two or three are gathered together in his name he will be in their midst. We pray that those whom he has called to preach will be filled, and that those who have come to listen will be given the hearing ear. We know how dependent both are. In Jeremiah it is written, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." These are the words of God, written, we believe, to the household of faith, God's elect from Adam down to the present time, and also to generations yet unborn for he has declared "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." He answers before we call. We love him because he first loved us, and we have faith to believe that the shed blood of Jesus Christ shall never lose its power until all the ransomed sons of God are saved to sin no more.

To us who have felt the burden of sin, and have tried by all earthly means to improve our lost condition, we only find ourselves sinking deeper. When we are nearly driven to despair, lonely, helpless and ready to die, we, like Israel of old, come down to the Red Sea and, like the parting of the waters, our deliverance comes, and with it the realization of our own weakness, and the knowledge that all our help and strength comes from God, the giver of every good and perfect gift, who so loved us that he sent his only begotten Son in the likeness of sinful flesh into the world to suffer and die on the cross as an atonement for our sins. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." God's love is unchangeable, when once he loves, he loves until the end and there is nothing can separate us from that love. We read in Psalms 139:5-10, "Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high,

I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." Paul writes to the Romans, chapter 8, verses 38 and 39, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Brethren, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, and peace, and we are glad to affirm that the churches of this Association are living together in love and peace. It is our prayer that the Lord may so keep us.

(Elder) JOHN D. WOOD,
Moderator
S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Bowdoinham Church at Bowdoinham, Me., Sept. 5, 6, 7, 1947 to the several meetings and Associations with which we correspond sends greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN: We feel that we have been greatly blessed by our heavenly Father in being once more permitted to meet again in an Association. We feel that God's presence has been in our midst. Even though we are a small Association in number he has given his promise true that wherever even two or three are gathered together in his name that he will be in their midst.

Your ministering brethren, Elders Dodson and Wood, have come to us laden with the gospel of love and peace, exalting the name of Jesus above every name, and his redeeming blood the salvation of all that are his.

We are grateful for your correspondence, declaring the same truths that the Lord of heaven and earth has declared by the working of the Holy Spirit within us from ancient times to the present day, and we hope for its continuance. Sister Ida Bartlett and Brother Arthur Merrigold united with the Whitefield Church and were baptized Sunday morning.

The Lord willing, the next meeting of the Maine Association will be held Friday, Saturday and Sunday before the second Monday in Sept. 1948.

(Elder) John D. WOOD,
Moderator
S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk

MEMORIAL

ELDER DOUGLAS LEE TOPPING was a faithful, loving member of Ebenezer Church, Baltimore City, for almost half a century. He served as Deacon until his ordination to the full work of the ministry in June, 1928.

After the death of Elder Joshua T. Rowe in 1936, Elder Topping was called to the pastorate. Both as Deacon and Pastor he was untiring in his efforts to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. And too, he gave liberally of his time and means for the upkeep of the meeting-house. Indeed he loved this church more than life itself if possible.

We have suffered a great loss in his passing on Sept. 18, 1947. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Therefore we

Resolve, to bow in humble submission to the will of God.

Resolve, to place one of these resolutions on our church book, send one copy to the Signs of the Times, one to the Old Faith Contender and one to our dear Sister Topping, the bereaved widow,

Done by order of the church in conference, March 7, 1948.

QUINCY A. GLADDING, Acting Moderator
ALVIS S. ROWE, Clerk

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the *Signs of the Times* at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1; 12 copies, $2. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 116 RUTHERFORD, N. J., OCTOBER, 1948 No. 10

"The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord. Prov. 16:33.

The aged trees are falling fast,
The rose buds pass away,
The army grows, our dear ones blast,
It seems an evil day.

But the great God is ruling all,
All evil means for good;
It was His will for man to fall
By us not understood.

All things that happen are His will,
The end has been declared;
His purpose He will fulfill
Although the vessel marred.

He made a contract with his Son
To save the chosen bride;
In order that this thing be done
His Son was crucified.

The bride was chosen in the Son,
The Father made the choice,
The Son redeemed them every one
And they shall hear His voice.

As Adam died to be with Eve,
His love was strong as death;
The only cure for sins disease
Was Jesus' righteousness.

Poor mourning mother, let me speak
A word of cheer for you;
No doubt you feel cast down and weak
His promise yet is true.

(Elder) LYTLE BURNS

CORRESPONDENCE

"Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof." Psalms 48:12.

Zion, or City of David, was strongly fortified, her walls were calculated to resist a strong invading force, and her towers were ample and imposing. This city has been chosen throughout the writing of the Old and New Testament as a favorite figure of the church of God, the kingdom of our Lord, Jesus Christ. The inspired singer of Israel, in the exalted strains of his devotion as described in this Psalm, was led to contemplate more than the figure; his prophetic eye glanced down the vista of ages, and beheld with rapture the advent, the kingdom, and the glory of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

With the understanding then, that the Zion of our text is the spiritual kingdom of Christ, we will inquire, who are called upon to survey her walls, and to report the number of her towers? Qualifications of a spiritual kind are indispensable to the performance of this word. Not all the wisdom of men can supercede the necessity of the Spirit's work; for, "Except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God." John 3:3. And certainly a man, however wise, learned, or great, who cannot see, must be incompetent to tell the towers of Zion. If men by wisdom could know God, or if by education, or indefatigable research could learn the invincibility of the bulwark of the church of God, they would never venture an assault upon her; but God, in his wisdom, has hidden it from their powers of perception, that they may exhaust all their energies in fruitless warfare, for not one of her stakes shall ever be removed, nor one of her cords ever be broken. Souls that are born again, redeemed and brought with sing-

ing to Zion, alone are blessed with the privilege of *walking around Zion.*

The idea in the text of walking round Zion, is not to gratify an idle curiosity, but to prepare the peculiarly favored beholders to make their report to the generations to come, and to fill the soul with confidence in God, that he is abundantly able to keep that which they have committed to him against that day.

But let us consider what it is to walk around the Zion of our God; her location, the Psalmist has informed us is in the mountain of the holiness of God. "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. God is known in her palaces for a refuge." Can we then circumambulate her walls so as to see her strength, and tell her towers and yet remain ignorant of the "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty" in whose holiness she is immutably and eternally established?

Fearful emblems of divine majesty were displayed in giving the preceptive covenant to carnal Israel from the top of mount Sinai; but they who count the towers of Zion are not come to the mountain that might be touched. No peals of thunder shake the walls of Zion; no streaming lightnings bear God's vengeance down to those who dwell within her sacred walls. No gloom of darkness, tempest, fire nor smoke sullies the beauties of her situation.

But those who fled her gates, come to the city of the living God, to the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and the church of the First Born, which are written in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

To this mount, this heavenly vision of peace they come, because they are redeemed of the Lord, and God has said they shall come with songs and everlasting joy. The great trumpet is blown, and they shall come which are ready to perish, etc., and shall worship God at his holy mount at Jerusalem.

Nothing is more certain than that we must come to this Zion before we can walk around it; and as coming to Zion is coming to Jesus the mediator of the New Covenant, no man can come except the Father who sent Jesus into the world, draw him, and he will raise him up at the last day. But, all that the Father gave him, shall come unto him, and shall in no wise be cast out.

My dear reader, have you ever come to Zion? If you have, you know and you are willing to confess that the Father has drawn you there to Christ; and this being your happy condition, it is your privilege to take the walk proposed in the text. "Go round about her." This is no place for idleness; it is true your going around her is not to add to her strength, nor safety, for that is not necessary, nor is it possible, for—

> "Her walls are strength, and at her gates
> A guard of heavenly warriors waits;
> Nor shall her firm foundations move,
> Fixed on His counsel and His love."

But this privilege contemplates your improvement, your instruction, and your comfort, as well as your blessed employment. "Go round about her." You have not yet seen all that there is to be learned; you may have seen or had some faint view of the straight gate by which you entered the city, but have you observed the closed gate that looketh towards the East, by which the Lord God of Israel hath entered, and can you report with accuracy the dimensions of

the South, the North, and the West gates? See Ezekiel 44. To perform this delightful walk like the prophet Ezekiel, you will require to have a guide; you cannot perform it alone. But if that guide which Jesus promised, takes you in charge, he shall guide you into all truth; and then you will walk and not faint. This walk if we mistake not, will occupy the whole pilgrimage of the saints of the Lord, from the moment of their translation from darkness to light, until they behold the consummation of the glory of the church in unclouded glory and uninterrupted bliss. "Tell the towers thereof." The Lord's name is one of them, and it is invincible. At this tower, every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess. Yet it is a strong tower, into which the righteous flee and find safety; but the Psalmist uses the plural number. "Tell the towers thereof." To tell is to count. Now let us see if we can count the towers of strength and safety which God has provided for his saints. God's thoughts are but another name for his purposes or his counsel, and David has said, "If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand." Psalms 139:18. Every new covenant promise is a tower of strength to the children of God.

The spiritual bond that serves as a connecting link or neck which unites Christ the head, and Zion the body, is as the tower of David, which was builded for an armory whereon there hangs a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men. Predestination, election, effectual calling, preservation in grace to glory, resurrection and eternal glory, are well known towers to the tried saints. Often have they been chased into them by their arminian natures, and by their arminian devils too; but they have always found them impregnable. Standing in this doctrine, the darts of the enemey cease to be hurled at us; for the enemy hates the doctrine with more deadly hate than that with which he hates us, and all his arrows are wasted in vain attempts to batter down our towers, and finding them invulnerable, their poisoned arrows fall harmlessly at our feet. The idea of fortification, forts, towers, etc., clearly implies the present militant state of the church of the living God, the Holy City, whose dimensions are eighteen thousand measures, and the name of which from that day shall be, "The Lord is there." Now she has enemies to encounter, battles to fight, agogs to hew in pieces, persecutions, reproaches and sore conflicts to endure; but the God of Jeshurun rideth upon the heavens in her help, and in his excellency on the sky! The eternal God is her refuge, and underneath her are the everlasting arms. In sweet fellowship. (Elder) L. P. HARRISS

2402 Lakewood Drive, Vancouver, B. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: The sweet thought at hand is dying grace which my Father has been pleased to allow me to view as I traveled from church to church. As they begged me to stay just a little longer I was constantly reminded to take the shoes from off my feet. Brother Overstreet, a faithful member at Riffe, has twice sat up, with God's strength, preaching to us with tears of joy. Although failing, paralyzed, he scrawls letters to me with his right hand. (His *kind* family are Jehovah's witnesses.) He is strong like my little mother was before death. I enclose two letters which he wrote for his own meditation. It would comfort him if he lives to see some of it in the *Signs,* but this must be left in your, rather in God's hands. Brother Overstreet wants to know about my little mother remaining firm in the faith until her last call came.

I am copying a letter I wrote last August. I have tried to begin letters to

you before to-day which is one of thanksgiving. I was reminded of a letter in the *Signs* which said you walked in the streets and heard "Jesus Savior pilot me" from church chimes. That is what Elder Jeffreys said about three sermons which just dovetailed into each other, "Didn't they chime?" Yes those sermons were chimes from heaven. To-day I have been walking in the city with "God moves in a mysterious way" ringing through my mind. Now I realize it is the hymn which my tenant's deceased wife mentioned to me. To-day I verily believe I have viewed the strong man overcome by a stronger in her husband who is left mourning. He left my property to-day, a humble, bowed, prayerful man inquiring what my religion was. About a week before she died of a heart attack, I was held at the end of a moment of praying, for a sweet golden moment. It seemed to me that a world of golden healing power lay above me, where dwells all the power. Our sunlight would seem very thin, insipid and transparent compared to that instant of golden love. That is the nearest I can describe it.

I was trying to explain to Brother Fisher at Chehalis Church how every circle of thought around one situation can be used by God to teach each individual concerned a different impression of truth. God sees the end from the beginning. He sees the good he intends to place in his bright design. How good to know that he restrains the evil. I have been at meeting at Brother and Sister Fisher's home near Chehalis. What a sweet feast! Brother Cameron of Seattle spoke from Isaiah 51. The captive exile was released. He just led us over the Bible to specific instances where the captive exile was led to hearken unto the Lord. He ended on the theme of Joseph hearkening unto the Lord for the good of Israel. Another wonderful word is quickened. Last Sunday we dwelt upon quickened saints who hearkened unto their Lord. Then Brother Fisher spoke about instances in the Bible where every act and detail had to be just that way for God's final good purposes. The pure truth once delivered unto the saints went ringing through our minds with startling power. So we sang our song feeling in spirit, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did."

I met Old Baptists who travel long distances, driven of necessity to feast where the stone is rolled away from the well. Mother Withers tells me we must needs be sanctified and suffer enough before we can climb our Jacob's ladder and see Him face to face. I feel so small when these experienced patient saints talk to me. I can only turn to Job 42:1-6 and repent. If only he leads me into the spirit of prayer where I can pray, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Otherwise how dark! But "Fear not, thou worm Jacob." "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." Psalms 90:17. Humbly,

(Miss) CATHERINE M. DUFFUS

Ajlune, Wash.

DEAR SISTER DUFFUS: It is a pleasure to write to you in reply to your letter of Feb. 2. One of the blessings of our lives has been to associate with Bible reading people who absorb the full meaning of the scripture rather than try to put a passing construction and meaning on all of it. We do not offer any improvement to the words of inspired servants of the Most High. Satan commenced to add to God's words in the garden of Eden, and his words proved false. In addition to the pleasure mentioned above we have richly enjoyed entertaining, rather extensively, the people who share the same faith with us.

We now regret that we are not situated to offer this entertainment to people of like precious faith, but genuine gratitude for such a privilege in past years is a pleasant sensation. We look to only one source for joy and blessings as gifts, not rewards, for our own faithfulness.

Paul gives us a clear definition of the grace and gifts of God, and he finally dismisses the subject by saying, "if by grace, then it is no more of works." Well, perhaps I should say that our parents were believers of the whole unflavored words of inspiration and we have been observers among the Primitive Baptists all our lives, but this alone has not warped our understanding of the creation or purpose of the Creator. We accept the visible evidence of his great purpose and its development in the various parts of the earth from any source it may offer us the information. We believe that Jesus still sits at the right hand of the Father and ever maketh intercession for his sheep. My wife's father was a minister among the Baptists while my father was a deacon. We gratefully cherish their memory, but not to the point of worshipful admiration. God's grace placed us in this environment when we could not choose for ourselves. It is all grace for which we are grateful. We fully realize the gifts of grace in all our lives both past and present. We feel confident of continued blessings without merit of our own offering, and we pray for gifts not rewards. Jesus tells us that the Father is abundantly able to give good gifts unto them that ask him. We believe that miracles are still his if he wills to perform them. In fact I personally believe that both miracles and the fulfillment of prophecies are being developed each day, so we have good reason to feel secure in a weak and sinful race of men, only we must trust Jesus for our safety. E. D. OVERSTREET

DEAR SISTER DUFFUS: Your letter of yesterday (from Seattle) came to hand to-day and it reminds me of my own shortcomings in a busy life, but I recall that true merit is not a product of human effort in spiritual fields, so I look to the great Elder Brother to impute his own righteousness to me as one of his sheep if so I be. Your conversation led me to expect Elder Hughett to see me. I shall be so glad to talk with him if he deems me worth a visit. I regret my inability to entertain loved ones. I am so helpless and dizzy. I want to be normal but I cannot. I wish to correct the impression that Elder S. H. Durand's brother once lived near Seattle. It was his first cousin and his son. The son was there and his father visited and the two attended an Association in this community. Sorry my mind was confused but I have this correct now and would like to talk it over with some of the older members. I believe I can remind them of it not far from 1917 or 1918. With love, unworthily your brother,

E. D. OVERSTREET

1306 Cumberland Ave., Evansville 15, Ind.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN A SWEET HOPE: I have a desire to write to the dear saints abroad because I hope, if not mistaken, I love them all, and such love as I seem to have is beyond my understanding. The apostle Paul writes in Phil. 4:19, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ." Why such mercy to sinners? Because we live in hope of that promise that God that cannot lie promised in eternity. Why did he make this promise? Because of that great love wherewith he (God) loved us even when we were dead in sin (if so be that I am numbered in that—us) for God is love. What a precious promise that there is no enmity

there, but all is love for he loves his children with an everlasting love. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." God did not declare by that dear old apostle that he would supply all our wants and I am glad of that, glad that his thoughts are so much higher than our thoughts for by nature we are creatures of want, and if it were so I fear that we, as the world, would destroy that very salvation we hope to have received from the inspiriation of the Holy Spirit, and that by the mercies that are meted out to us by and through the suffering of the only begotten Son of God and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for he knows the needs of his people both natural and spiritual, and will cause all things to come to us according to his will and purpose because he is the first cause of all causes and there are no accidents with God. He speaks and it is done.

Often I am made to wonder "Am I a soldier of the cross?" and my spirit ebbs so far until I sink so deep in the pit and mire that I am made to fear that I may be mistaken and am going about trying to deceive those dear little lambs of God. I will stay away from my meetings until I cannot stay longer, but there is no joy to me in this earth, nor do I believe there can ever be again, like meeting with those dear brothers and sisters that can see and receive faith to faith alike, and bask in the sweet sunshine of God's mercies, truth and love, and meet fellowship with fellowship one for the other. Then it seems that I am lifted from the pit, my feet are cleansed from the miry clay, I am anchored on a rock and am caused to rejoice in that great and good God that is able to supply all our needs. "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." Aaron was made to wash his feet and new robes were given them, and they were anointed with the grace of God's love. Now under our new and lovely Priest oh how often we are made to wash our feet, and that perfume of his love is poured upon us and we are given new robes of his righteousness to rejoice in. Then it is I can praise God on high for his mercy to men; for what is man that God should be mindful of him. "When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O Lord, held me up." "The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of the heathen." Dear brethren, I sometimes hope that I have both seen and felt this righteousness and that it is mine for I have no righteousness of my own except it be in that blessed redeemer Christ. "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill." I feel to be a poor beggar at mercy's door.

May it be the will of God that we be gentle and meek to all men for we were sometimes foolish, disobedient and deceived; serving the lusts of the flesh and worldly pleasures and envy towards others, but after that the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by the works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that being justified by his grace we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Oh, what a wonderful thought, what love is this, O my soul! Tell me, dear brethren, can it be denied that God directs our steps and supplies all our needs according to his own purpose which he purposed in us before the world was? This is getting too lengthy so must close. Your unworthy

brother, if one, in hope.

W. Y. CHANDLER

Castle Rock, Wash.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS: If the dear Lord will guide my mind, I would like to express my appreciation to the dear saints who have recently visited me. On Friday of the three days meeting at Riffe, Wash. (1947) five of the members from the church at Naches, and Elder Bynum from California came and spent the night with me. After supper we assembled for worship. After singing, Elder Hughett offered a comforting prayer and Elder Bynum preached a good sermon.

I am at present confined again to my bed and am very lonely at times. None of the brethren live near enough to visit often so this was a season of great rejoicing to me. I find no words to adequately describe the calm, peaceful atmosphere that these dear Christian friends brought into my room. I felt at once the difference between their presence and that of my wordly friends when they call. This I felt so keenly that I spoke of it to them and said to myself many times, surely it is of the Lord. I do not try to express my mind orally very much for I have what I call an affliction which makes it almost impossible for me to express aloud my precious spiritual thought. When I lost my husband some months ago I lost my emotional control, and cannot, since that time, sing a hymn or say many words without bursting into tears. I wish it were otherwise but so it is. In time I hope it may please my heavenly Father to remove this burden, but if not I must say, so be it, for in thy sight it seemeth good. Perhaps I was saying too much or words amiss and to no profit and this was my Father's way of closing my mouth.

Now to resume what I had meant to say: On Sunday after the meeting was over at Riffe. Brother and Sister John Simpson came into my home and stayed until Wednesday morning. We had such a good visit. My dear sister administered to my nursing needs, and we all three spoke of many things near and dear to us. I truly felt to say when they were gone, the Lord has been in this place. They had two of their young children with them which added very greatly to my joy and that of my daughter.

Brethren and sisters everywhere may I in love, and I hope in true kindness, admonish you to visit your afflicted ones as often as you possibly can. To my own shame I must confess that when I was able and had means, and should have done so I often failed. I so often felt the desire but many things hindered. It proves my sinful, selfish weakness and causes me to sigh and repine my many short comings. If I could pray, if God would bless me to get his ear I should love to beg him to be ever near his afflicted one whose bed and one room is as the bounds of their habitation; whose hours are filled with the pain they must endure. Only God knows their suffering, only he can make it endurable.

I think all scripture has a spiritual meaning and that most of it has, or did have at the time of its inspiration and recording, a literal meaning. Perhaps it has both if and when God blesses us to see them, so let us who are blessed with means and health visit the sick, the widow and the orphan in their loneliness. I am sure we can find such admonition in the Scriptures. May our family paper continue to carry messages of hope and cheer to God's saints. Without my Baptist papers I would be much lonelier than I am. *Signs, Old Faith Contender* and *Zion's Witness* come each month and then they seem not enough. I read them again and

again and long for more. I am never satisfied, there is always something more I wish to know, something else I long to understand. But, dear saints of God, I look forward, with sometimes a sweet hope and sure expectation, to a time and life where I shall be satisfied. Where the dark glass I now see through will be removed, where I shall see Christ as he is, be like him and be satisfied, really satisfied.

That one word when studied upon is beyond my limited comprehension for in this life that is one condition I have never experienced. I am satisfied in a measure (always lacking) on that very interesting point of doctrine, the resurrection, though I do differ with some versions of it I have read and heard. Of course since there are different views of it I could not possibly see it as all do, but my comfort and limited satisfaction comes from the very promise that then we shall be satisfied. How, when and where the resurrection is will not trouble us there, our pains, tears and disappointments, our temporal and spiritual tribulations will be as if they had never been, and in their stead we shall have his glorious presence eternally. Oh, dear saints, what a wonderful God to grant us such sweet hope, such blessed assurance. All glory and praise be to him forever and ever.

(Mrs.) EFFIE PARKE

Route 4, Camden, Ark.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: May I commend you on the article in the *Signs* of Jan. 1948 entitled "New Years Greetings." What a wonderful subject and how ably you commented on it. John's entire epistles are surely based upon this wonderful word *love*. As I understand, the universe and all that pertains to it was founded and framed upon the love of God who is the very embodiment of love. Without love there would not be a moments peace on earth and no happiness in heaven. I feel that all the Old Baptists would do well to heed your admonition in regard to the correct quoting and application of the scripture.

The two subjects you mentioned—*predestination* and *resurrection*—to me are the most basic principals or doctrines in Holy Writ, and to deny either of them would destroy my entire belief. Yet I feel that they are (especially predestination) very delicate subjects to handle and that those old patriarchs that drafted and handed down to us the London Confession of Faith warned about the loose application of this subject. May the Lord bless you both in physical and spiritual strength to continue in the work of the Lord. Yours in Christian love. J. M. PROFFITT

Goldonna, La.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am a little late sending in my subscription but I do not want to miss a copy as it is about all the comfort I get since we lost our dearly loved Elder W. B. Valentine and also his beloved wife. I enjoy reading the letters of the brothers and sisters, also the editorials, in fact every page of it is dear to me. May God in his loving kindness and tender mercy watch over and uphold you that you may continue the publication of the *Signs* to the dear Old Baptist people. When you can feel it in your heart to pray for such as I, an interest in your prayers is desired that I might ever be found worthy to be one among God's dear little children. As ever a poor, weak, unworthy sister in hope if at all.

(Mrs.) VELIA STEWART

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507 W. Lacled St., Malden, Mo.

EDITOR DODSON: Enclosed you will find $3 for which please extend my subscription one year and use the rest as you

see fit. It is useless for me to tell you I enjoy the *Signs* beyond expression. I live here where there is no Old School Baptist church to attend. In this city there are nine so-called churches with each a rather large membership, but they believe in good works as righteousness. Ninety per cent of them attend Sunday School and church Sunday morning and to a show or ball game Sunday afternoon and back to church Sunday night. They go to work Monday morning and the things they do and say make me wonder if they have been born again, not them only but me also. I wonder if we are now living in the last days? I wonder if these are not good days compared with those of the near future?

Elder Dodson I am not a member of the Old School Baptists. I was born and raised by Missionary Baptists, but if I know myself I believe the Old Baptists are the children of God and are saved by grace, not of works. If by works many people could do more than others so would have a more glorious crown. Thanks be to God for saving grace, and his loving tender mercy for sparing such an unprofitable person as I, and giving me such a good companion and four dear children when I have been so undeserving. I only intended to write a few lines. May the great God of heaven permit you to continue to publish the *Signs* to feed God's people. A friend. E. C. DEAN

Route 1, Claude, Texas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: After reading and rereading the February *Signs* it seems if I hold my peace the very stones will cry out. Not having any particular scripture I just wish to try to express my thankfulness to you and the dear saints who have been led by the spirit of my God to write such God honoring experiences.

First Elder W. N. Green, who is my pastor. He has told me his experience several times. Brother Collins, on peace and how it is acquired. Brother Byrd, who wrote so beautifully, also his sad experience concerning his wife and her sudden passing. I could personally relate almost the same experience in the loss of my dear wife in 1923, and my heart goes out to him in sympathy. I fully concur with him in his opinion about God's set time to perform his will. There is a time to be born and a time to die, and let me say, if not deceived, I can truthfully say God doeth all things well. Since losing my dear wife I have lost two boys tragically. How Brother Wingfield's writings cheer the heart of a poor weary traveler almost fallen, whose feet seem ready to slip, ten thousand talents in debt and not a farthing to pay. Also Brother McMillian, Sister Clifford and all the others too many to name.

May God continue to bless his dear saints to have a mind to write so as such lonely beggars as I may pick up the crumbs that fall though I am not worthy to eat with them at the Master's table. May God also give you, Brother Dodson, that anointing whereby you may be blessed to keep the good news coming from a far country, for it is from a far country; even from the throne of God's mercy to poor heart broken, sin sick souls who must wait, like dear old Job, until we fulfill our days. May all who have access to the throne of grace pray for me. A sinner, if saved at all, saved by grace.

G. G. TURNER

Lynville, Ky.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Enclosed you will find check for the *Signs*. I do not see how my wife and I could get along without the *Signs*. There are so many good articles in it. The February paper

was in the mail box when they brought me from the hospital where I had been confined for a week with blood poison. The paper came at the appointed time as I believe all things do. When I would read the dear Elder's articles I could not keep the tears back.

While I was in the hospital and at my worst, two women from the Baptist Church in Mayfield came and asked the nurse if they could talk to me and she told them "yes." They gave me their names and said they were working for the Lord. They asked me if I was saved. I said, "I hope I am." They said, "We do not understand what you mean by saying hope, we know we are saved." They asked me to tell them just what I meant by hope. I said, "I am very weak but if God will give me the strength I will try to tell you about this hope. Now I hope back before time God wrote my name in his will, and I am here in this hospital with doctor and nurses doing all they can for me, but if it be God's will for me to go nothing can be done. I do not see angels and shining cities as some say they do, but I believe strongly tonight I am lying here in the hands of a just God and he has made me willing to go." They asked me to pray. I said, "I can't. I might say a prayer within myself but would it be answered? I am afraid not. Let me make prayer a little clearer. I do not believe any one ever prayed but what God answered, but I do not believe any one can pray unless God first brings you to that prayer." I told those two women I did not believe they could change the mind and purposes of God. When they left they took me by the hand and said, "We want you to stop saying hope and say, I know I am saved." Hope suits me best, if I am saved Christ did it all. I did all the sinning and Christ did all of the saving. Christ does not need any one to help him do any thing. He hath all power. In hope of eternal life.

ALBERT CASEY

Route 5, Union City, Tenn.

R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: Having been shut in all this New Year on account of sickness, not being able to work yet able to be up most of the time, my mind has drifted around from person to person, and from one thing to another. Part of the time I seem to have a mind to read the Bible and in my reading I happened to read the 7th chapter of Isaiah and the 18th and 19th verses arrested my mind. Brother Dodson, there is wonderful beauty in the language of these scriptures, in fact in the whole chapter. If not asking too much or if you have been given light on these two verses I would be so glad if you would give me and the other readers of the *Signs* your views as to what they teach. If you should not feel disposed to write on them may be some one else might. I do hope some one will be moved to express the truths contained in these verses also the whole chapter. Trusting that you and yours are well, and asking that you remember us, if you can, when you pray, I remain your very unworthy brother if a brother at all. J. W. BARNES

(See Editorial)

1158 Falls Terrace, Union, N. J.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: You made the remark in your sermon yesterday that some one had said a miracle was performed every time a sermon is preached. I think a miracle was performed yesterday when you selected hymn 291 (Beebe's Collection) for the opening of the service as I had selected that hymn earlier in the day with the intention of asking you to use it some time during the service. I had the hymn book open at that selection when you gave the

number. It was just like a voice from above answering my plea for some token of inspiration to revive the drooping of one low down in the valley, and for a few minutes I was lifted to the mountain top with tears of joy. I cannot find words to express my feelings at that time, but it was just like the morning dew or a few drops of refreshing rain on a wilted flower by the wayside on a hot summer day made to lift its face once again when all hope of life seemed gone. My faith, be it ever so small, was reassured that the Lord was in our midst and directed you in the selection of that hymn. May be I seem too overjoyed at this but it meant so much to me and was so much comfort in the thought that, "God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform," that he is ever round about us, directing every move we make, keeping a watchful eye on us at all times. Praise God for giving us grace and strength to believe that all things are in his hands. To us it seems impossible to believe anything else, yet for those who are not given eyes to see and ears to hear, we feel that they are to be pitied and not blamed as the dear Savior said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

We would still be groping in the dark and following after the things of the world had it not been for the all sufficient grace of an all wise God. We did nothing to merit such a favor, it is all in the hands of One who does all things after the counsel of his own will. We can only say with the poet:

> "Nothing in my hand I bring!
> Simply to thy cross I cling;
> Naked, come to thee for dress;
> Helpless, look to thee for grace;
> Black, I to the fountain fly;
> Wash me, Savior, or I die!"

How true are the above words. We are just as helpless as the clay in the hands of the potter who molds the vessel as he sees fit, one unto honor and another unto dishonor. Nay, but who art thou, oh, sinful man to even question why this should be as it is. The clay hath no power of its own to determine the shape or condition of the vessel when it is finished. Neither do we, we are told to "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord," and that is all we can do. We are so helpless we cannot even think a good thought; when we would do good evil is present with us, and the good that we would we cannot do, the desire may be there but evil creeps in unaware and just as we are ready to give up in despair the still small voice speaks to the tired and weary one, thus giving that reassuring faith once again that nothing is impossible with God.

Not long ago I saw a demonstration of the art of pottery. It was amazing to see the simplicity of this process as the fingers of the marker gracefully formed a beautiful vase, yet my mind was carried away to the greater magnificence of the work of the Great Potter who fashions these helpless bodies of ours into a vessel more wonderful than any vessel that human hands could make. Our vile bodies are so utterly at the mercy of the Lord who has power to fashion them like unto his glorious body if he so desires, and try as we may we could never change one single item in this marvelous plan. We are truly thankful for this we hope; if left to ourselves our finite minds could never see or comprehend the greatness of such a plan whereby the giver of every good and perfect gift condescended to come into this world of sin and sorrow to mold a vessel of mercy from these earthly bodies here below and make it fit to reign with him above. Who are we to inquire or question the right of God

to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. He has said, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." Praise his name for giving us faith to see that whatever it is his will to do is just, and by grace and grace alone we can say, "If my soul were sent to hell, thy righteous law approves it well." "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." We must stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, watching day by day as he molds the clay after his own pattern, knowing by faith alone that he doeth all things well. His watchful eye is ever round about us as we travel in this troubled world to-day.. "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid." He spreads mercy wherever he desires, regardless of anything we may do or say.

The potter's work is a beautiful illustration of how helpless we are in the hands of the Great Potter, we can rest assured that he will finish the work of righteousness and a remnant shall be saved according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge in the plan of salvation that was predestinated and planned before man was able to say he had any part in it; planned for children not yet born, having done no evil or good, but were included in the plan of election, being saved by faith and not by works which we have done. "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." There is no God besides the great giver of all power in heaven and earth. He forms the light and creates darkness; he makes a peace that passeth all understanding; none can say unto him what doest thou? He has created the earth and brought salvation to those of his own choice; he will direct them in the way they should travel; he has promised to go before, making the crooked places straight and creating in us a heart of tender mercy and love, revealing unto us the treasures of darkness and hidden riches of secret places, that we may know the Lord will call us into everlasting joys above. If we did not travel in the paths of darkness, in the way our father's trod, we would not be able to appreciate the beautiful rays of light that come piercing the darkest cloud. Thank thee Father of love, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, revealing them unto babes who yearn and long for the sincere milk of the word, not because we are worthy of such a blessing, but because it seemed good in thy sight.

Blessed are those whose ears are opened to hear the gospel. It is by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that they are brought out from among the ways of the world, brought into the fold as the shepherd seeketh the lost sheep and brings it home amid much rejoicing. Oh, how could we claim to be able to have any part in this great and marvelous work! Behold again the helplessness of the clay, a contrite and broken spirit in the hands of an all powerful God, who feeds the hungry souls and causes them to lie down in green pastures midst the rich grace of his love. He sends the refreshing rain to revive our spirits when we have sunk in the miry clay beyond the help of anything man can do or say. His arm is ever round about his people, oh the greatness of his power and love! "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein," for he has created it all and his purposes will ripen from day to day, unfolding the beautiful flower that will be found from the bud hidden deep in our hearts. Who shall enjoy these blessings? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart, washed in the Redeemer's blood given in the counsels of eternity

before time began. He shall receive all blessings from the Lord and great shall be the rejoicing in his heart when the Lord speaks peace and says, fear not, "My grace is sufficient for thee," "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." If he has given it to one, rest assured none will be able to take it away for he has promised, "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Sweeter yet is the promise that the Lord hath gone home to prepare a place for those that love him at the right hand of God, that where he dwells there you may be also. He has promised to come again and take those of his own flock home to glory, ever to bask on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance. He is the way, the truth and the life, the only way that leads unto the Father, by and through the revelation of the divine Spirit. May it be his will to mold this vessel of clay as it seemeth best in his sight, giving the praise to the giver of every good and perfect gift. When the vessel is finished may it reflect the wisdom of an all wise God, free from the sinfulness of man, fashioned like unto his glorious body, who ascended unto God on high after finishing the work in this world and now sits at the right hand of God ever making intercession for the members of his flock.

I intended to make only a few comments on the potter and the clay, but it seems my thoughts are rambling in many directions. Sometimes my cup is so full it seems I must give vent to my feelings on paper. I have so little opportunity to discuss the things dearest to my heart, and when I do try to speak of such things my tongue seems still for fear I will say something that is not consistent with His will. To-day it seems as if I could continue telling of his goodness and mercy, my heart and soul are still rejoicing from the lovely meeting of yesterday. My wish has often been that I could find words to tell you how much I enjoy my spiritual home in New York, and what a wonderful blessing it was to me to be taken in by you when I was almost a stranger to you, naturally speaking. Spiritually I feel that we were not strangers, but were drawn together by the great cords of unbreakable love. I have tried to be thankful for such a blessing, but I feel less worthy of it every day, afraid I have not been able to show my appreciation. Your sermons are so wonderful and so full of truth that I do not try to express my feeling of love and joy for such a great blessing. May the Lord continue to bless you and give you spiritual wisdom to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. I hope my presence at the meetings has helped to give you an idea of how much I enjoy and appreciate the privilege of being numbered with the church in New York. I shall never forget the first time I heard you speak. A silent prayer was on my lips as I came home that day that some day my name would be recorded on your church book as you had spoken the language I love dearly. It was wonderful to hear you tell the story hidden in my soul better than I could ever tell it myself. Great was the rejoicing in my heart the day you asked me if I would like to move my membership to New York City. I had anxiously waited for that moment, trembling within lest you should not want such as I in your midst. Thank God for giving you the insight to read the thoughts behind my outward manifestations and directing you to offer me a spiritual home. God grant me grace to live worthy of this great blessing.

"O that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still!
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will."

I must close. Please forgive anything amiss in these rambling thoughts. In bonds of love.

(Mrs.) ELSIE LOEFFEL

223½ South 10th St., Mt. Vernon, Ill.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am sending you a copy of my dear husband's experience. If you have space for it I would be glad to have it published in the *Signs* as he told me I could send it if Iwanted to do so.

I received my December issue of the *Signs* yesterday and certainly enjoyed it. I love the paper, it is a comfort to my poor heart. I feel so lonely and cast down, too unworthy to attempt to write one with the understanding you have. I enjoy all your writings so much and love to read all the good letters. They are glad tidings to my aching heart.

"In all my Lord's appointed ways,
My journey I'll pursue;
Hinder me not, ye much loved saints
For I must go with you.

And when my Savior calls me home
Still this my cry shall be,
Hinder me not; Come, welcome death,
I'll gladly go with thee."

I love the dear Old Baptists and where they go let me go. I have been blessed this fall to attend three Associations, Bethel, Soldier Creek and Obion and we had some wonderful meetings. It was so sweet to gather in heavenly places, meet all the dear Baptists and sing praises to God's adorable name. Elder Dodson, I did not intend to write and take up any of your time as I know you are burdened in keeping the dear paper going. I hope you can all be blessed to carry on with the paper. A little unworthy sister, if one, in hope of eternal life.

(Mrs.) S. S. KERLEY

Mt. Vernon, Ill.

On April 13, 1875 I was born and now have passed my seventy-third birthday, and I wish to say during the last four or five years, from some cause unknown to me, there has come on my mind a desire of which I wish to write. It is concerning things which appeared to me and as best I can remember it was in November 1892.

One evening when I was on my way home from school there appeared to me the sound of a rushing wind. I looked up to see what made this noise and I saw, as it were, a great flying horse up in the clouds. From its mouth and nostrils were gushing out fire, heat and smoke and its eyes were as balls of fire. It appeared to me that it was waiting for the appointed time to descend upon this earth, and set the earth on fire to destroy the wicked and I felt that I was one of the number. There came over me a dark cloud and I seemed to hear a voice say to me "why are you so great a sinner?" I saw how great a sinner I was and I trembled with fear, and began to weep and cry over my lost and ruined condition, my heart was filled with sorrow and pain. It appeared to me I was to die. I wanted to pray and ask for mercy but no words could I find. I felt that I was sinking down to utter destruction to be consumed by a raging fire and I could not see how I could escape such an awful death for I had lived such a life there was no mercy for a sinner like me. When I reached home I did not want any one to know about my awful condition so went on my way to the barn to take care of the stock. When I had reached about mid-way between the house and barn I paused for a

few moments and looked up to the sun which was sinking in the west behind some clouds. It seemed to me about to fail to shine and I felt I would not live to see the sun rise again. Oh! how dark that hour was to me. I was mourning and pleading for mercy and begging that I be spared to live, and if I could be spared to live to live a better life.

(*To be continued.*)

Lowland, N. C.

DEAR EDITORS AND BRETHREN: Find enclosed my renewal for the *Signs* which is now overdue two months. Please forgive me for this wrong. I enjoy many of the articles which appear from time to time. I know from experience it is hard to be fair with all concerned and at the same time do what one thinks is right. If brethren would write more about Jesus and his love toward poor sinners it would be much more comforting and consoling than about things which lead to confusion.

Jesus is the bread and staff of God's children. If we have him there is peace and life, without him we have nothing. If we have him it is because the Father has given him. He that anoints us in Jesus is God. Never has man been able to reach forth his puny hand and touch the tree of life. There is a flaming sword pointing in every direction that protects this tree of life. If I have an understanding in the matter we have to be carried to him (Jesus) by his Father. It is not as easy to become a Christian as many tell us. We have to be raised from the dead (this side of the grave if you please) and made alive in Christ Jesus by new birth. Then old things are done away and new things begin to take shape. Make us new creatures in the blessed Lamb of God.

Jesus is our Priest and King,
The only source of good;
In Gethsemane's garden he bowed
and prayed,
And on the cross our bond he stood.

While to others (there's but a few
That like to talk my way)
There are other things they have to do,
They will call again some other day.

There's a chosen few who take delight
In singing and praying and like to tell
How that Jesus snatched the brands
From the destruction of a hell.

Dear Brother, if you see anything to this that is worth while you have my consent to carry it in your paper. I again ask your forgiveness for being negligent in renewing my subscription. Yours in hope of a better world in death. W. R. LEWIS

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958 First Ave., Vernonia, Oregon

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: I hope you will excuse me for being late. I do enjoy reading the *Signs*. They seem to feed my thirsty soul. So many of the articles and experiences give me hope as I have had similar experiences. I do not get to hear any preaching that is food to me. I hope I am able to know the truth as it is in Christ and I feel it is taught in the *Signs* if I have any spiritual knowledge imparted to me. When I look around it seems there is nothing but false doctrines among the people. They are blinded to the new birth just as Nicodemus was when he went to Christ by night, and I think there are many these days like the foolish virgins, they lack the oil of grace. May God bless his believing children. Yours in hope of eternal life.

A. B. COUNTS

EDITORIAL

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> "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall hiss for the fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. And they shall come, and shall rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and upon all bushes."
>
> Isaiah 7:18-19.

Elsewhere in this issue of our paper will be found a letter from brother J. W. Barnes, Union City, Tenn., requesting our views on the above verses, as well as other parts of the chapter. Brother Barnes says, "There is wonderful beauty in the language of these Scriptures."

When we first read the verses in question, they seemed so dry and meaningless to us that we really wondered what there was in them to arrest the attention of our brother, and we wished very much he had enlarged upon the beauty he saw in them, in order to give us some inkling as to what was in his mind for our contemplation. For awhile we felt we would have to ask one of our other editors to comply with our brother's request. We finally decided to read the entire chapter in the hope that God would come to our rescue by causing a ray of light to break through the fog of our mind, and give us at least the desire to consider this portion of his blessed word. We read in the fourteenth verse God's promise of One whose name should be called Immanuel, which, being interpreted, means "God with us;" and it is with the hope that God will be with us in this undertaking that we are venturing to express some thoughts on this chapter, and particularly the two verses mentioned.

The chapter opens with dark forebodings for the tribe of Judah, referred to as "the house of David" in the second verse. What a strange picture we have presented to us! The king of the ten tribes of Israel who had departed from the way of the Lord was making a confederacy with the king of Assyria, who had always been the enemy of Israel, to join together by combining their armies and strength, to go up to Jerusalem, the most sacred of all citadels, against what remained of true worship for the purpose of making a breach between them and setting up a new king who would be subservient to them. If the true followers of our Lord did not possess unfeigned faith to look to him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all they may ask or think, what would become of them? They could but perish and go the way of all flesh. However, God does not forsake nor leave them. The Lord told his prophet Isaiah to go forth and say unto Ahaz, "Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be fainthearted for the two tails of these smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria, and of the son of Remaliah." What follows shows their efforts would not succeed, for God said "It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass?" God further declared that within the time which he had fixed (five years) Ephraim would be broken,

that it be not a people. Paul said, "If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God." We would all do well to remember these things and seek to know the mind and will of Him, who works and none can hinder, and hinders and none can work.

The Lord said unto Ahaz, "Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord." If we follow the career of Ahaz we discover how corrupt the leaders and rulers of Israel can be, but the purposes of God cannot be thwarted by either men or devils. God's prophet then spoke directly to His people, saying, "Hear ye now, O house of David; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." This prophecy showed how God, according to his matchless grace would remember his people in great mercy, by giving them a Deliverer from all of their enemies and from those who would undertake to lord it over his heritage. His people would despair, to-day if they did not have the blessed assurance that he will watch over and protect them, and provide for all of their needs. In the ninth chapter of this same prophecy is set forth more abundantly the splendor and grandeur of this glorious event. The prophet said, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." There is such an inexhaustible fulness in this that we feel that all we can do is to join the Psalmist and say, *Selah.* This wonderfully portrayed our Lord when the Word was to be made flesh and dwell among us, when his glory, yea the glory of the only begotten Son of God was to be beheld, full of grace and truth. This meant the humbling of Himself, by taking not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham; nevertheless for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, despised the shame and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Therefore he ate of butter and honey, and refused the evil and chose the good, which is so abundantly bestowed upon his people here in this gospel age. The house of David was told that before all of this should come to pass, "the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings." When the God of heaven sets up his kingdom in the hearts of his people, he breaks in pieces all other kingdoms, and he rules supremely, and his kingdom shall know no end.

Ahaz was not what he should have been, for he was full of unbelief, was rebellious and turned out to be a very wicked king. Therefore God moved the prophet to tell him in advance what would befall him and his people in the days that were to come. He reminded him of the other ten tribes of Israel, ruled over by Ephraim, since the days of their departure from the house of David, and in the language of our text God foretold the afflictions he would visit upon them. The prophet boldly and emphatically declared, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall hiss for the fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. And they shall come, and shall rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and upon all bushes." It is a terrible day, indeed, when the Lord

takes vengeance. Paul said, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Both Egypt and Assyria were enemy countries of Israel, and it appeared as though God was saying that he would call forth the plagues of Egypt, the numerousness of which was signified by the flies from the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and also for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. Israel had been bitterly stung before by the fierceness of the Assyrians, and they should have known too well the significance of this prophecy, but she has always been a stiffnecked and rebellious people. There could be no question as to the thoroughness in which their enemies would encompass them, for it is declared, "They shall come, and shall rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and upon all bushes." Lest there should be some little hope remaining for a place of refuge from their tormentors, the prophet went on to say, "The same day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired, namely, by them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria, the head, and the hair of the feet: and it shall also consume the beard." It would seem that utter destruction awaited Israel, at the hands of their enemies, not only in their immediate land, but also by those beyond the river, or other lands. God sometimes makes use of the wicked as his sword for the slaying of the rebellious among his people. He can also raise up, as he did in the case of Cyrus, a wicked king to deliver Israel from the power of their enemies. One said, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." While there is no promise in the balance of the chapter for great prosperity and an abundance, there is a precious promise to the few who, according to God's infinite mercy, are left in the land. The word declares, "It shall come to pass in that day, that a man shall nourish a young cow, and two sheep; And it shall come to pass, for the abundance of milk that they shall give he shall eat butter: for the butter and honey shall every one eat that is left in the land." Let the faithful few who follow their Lord in sincerity and in truth take courage and persevere in earnestly contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, for God has promised to be with his people, and Peter tells us that he is not slack concerning his promise. From just one young cow, and two sheep, we see that an abundance of milk was to be given, which would suffice to supply every one that was left in the land with butter. This butter was to be mingled with the honey supplied by the bees of Assyria, which formerly had stung and plagued them, but God would work all things together for their good and for his own glory, so that they could truly say with David, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Paul tells us that "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." A little farther on in the twelfth chapter of Hebrews, he says, "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." It is good when we are exercised over God's chastening of us, for when we realize that he is our Lord, and our Shepherd, then and then only can we say, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

We did not feel that we knew how or where to begin this article, for at first we could see no beauty in the text,

but now it seems we do not know where or how to stop. In meditating upon God's goodness and mercy to his rebellious people, his grace, indeed, appears amazing, and we hope we have been given a glimpse of what perhaps appeared to our brother who made the request. If we have been blessed of the Lord to present anything that may prove to be instructive to our readers, all the praise is due and should be rendered to his great and adorable name. R. L. D.

"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Romans 8:11.

How can one whose condition is described in the preceding chapter have hope and joy and comfort? If in his flesh there dwells no good thing, if his carnal mind is enmity against God, if he cannot do the things that he would, but finds a law in his members warring against the law of sin which is in his members, so that he has to cry out, O wretched man that I am; how can he walk so as to please God, and enjoy peace of mind? This question the apostle answers in this chapter, and especially in this verse. Let us briefly trace his argument. "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." He has come "in the likeness of sinful flesh" under the law, died under the curse of that law for his people, and risen again from under that death; and so by that death for sin has condemned or made an end of sin in the flesh, thus raising his people above condemnation, which "the law could not do," in that it was weak through the flesh, being able only to condemn those who have broken it. Thus they experience a hope of righteousness by faith, (Gal. 5:5) when Christ is revealed to them as their salvation; and this righteousness is that required by the law which is thus "fulfilled in them" as passive subjects of a gracious work, and not by them as active agents. They still have a vile body in which they find dwells no good thing. But the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus is experienced in their souls to be stronger than the law of sin and death which is in their members, so that it has made them free from the dominion of that hateful law, enabling them to "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." They are sometimes brought in bondage under that law, but are never again under its dominion as willing subjects. The love of Christ which is in them is stronger than the love of the world, and makes them willing and desirous to forsake the world, and deny themselves of all ungodliness and worldly lusts, which they are enabled also to do whenever that love is in exercise. "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh." Their hopes, aims and desires are there. "But they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death." The natural man is dead, that is destitute of spiritual life; but being dead, he does not recognize his condition, for "the dead know not anything at all," and to talk to him of such a state as death in sin or total depravity, is to talk what is foolishness to him. The man who has been quickened by divine life sees and feels that death in which his body and carnal mind remain; and whenever he becomes carnally minded, that is, lets his carnal mind rule him, he loses spiritual enjoyment, though he may gain some worldly benefit. "But to be spiritually minded is life and peace." When the Spirit of Christ rules our conduct, and the things of his kingdom occupy our thoughts, what peace and comfort we feel, even though in adversity. We may often

think our natural mind will direct us right, because its teachings so well suit the lusts of our vile nature. But we shall always find that it directs us away from the ways of God, away from the ways of life and peace, because it is enmity against God, and is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be. "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." How then can I please him, when I so often seem to be altogether in the flesh, and search in vain for anything that is spiritual! How often have I looked as with a special gift of searching sight over the range of my nature, my thoughts and feelings, and found it to be like a wild desert, or rather like a miry swamp full of foul vapors and noxious weeds. And then all at once some portion of the word of God would come into my mind, and bring comfort, and set my soul to singing before I was aware, and make me forget in a moment all these miserable feelings. Why is this? I have often asked. How dare I take comfort when I cannot see anything good in myself? But I can no more help it than I can help receiving the sweet and healing warmth and light of the sun when he shines. This, I think, is what the psalmist tells also of his exeprience: "In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul." The apostle tells us the mystery in the ninth verse, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Now we can sometimes gather some evidences that the Spirit of God is in us. We have seen and known some of the blessed things of Christ; but "No man knoweth the things of God, but the Spirit of God." 1 Cor. 2:11. We have felt our souls at times enabled sweetly though tremblingly to cry, Abba, Father. But it is only by the Spirit of his Son, sent forth in our hearts, that we can in faith use that endearing term.—15th verse; Gal. 4:6. We know that we love the brethren; but we are assured that he that loveth is born of God, and that God dwelleth in him.—1 John 4:7-15. And here we have the assurance by the inspired apostle that those in whom is the Spirit of God are not in the flesh. Can we not see that since we received that precious hope, our desires, our hopes, our joys are not in the flesh, that we have a Spirit that looks away from this sinful flesh, away from this vain world, and centers all its affections and hopes upon the precious things which God hath prepared for them that love.

"And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." It is by the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ that we experience the vileness of the body, and realize that in us, that is in our flesh, there dwells no good thing, that the body is dead because of sin, so that we cannot do the things that we would. "To will is present with us," because of the Spirit of Christ in us, which shows us heavenly things, and causes us to desire them; and which "is life because of righteousness," the righteousness of him who fulfilled the law, rose from the dead, and brought life and immortality to light, communicating it to us by that Spirit. "But how to perform that which is good we find not," on account of the vileness or death of the body, which is therefore felt to be a bondage of corruption. Often the humble saint inquires, "How can I do anything pleasing in the sight of a holy God? If I pray, or hear, or read, sin is mixed with all I do." I am often afraid that all I do is from a fleshly, a sinful motive. How can so sinful a being perform a holy action? How dare I take the name of a holy

God upon my sin defiled lips in prayer, or in an attempt to preach his blessed word? How dare I venture to be baptized, or to baptize one of the Lord's dear children, or take the bread and wine, or walk in any of the holy ordinances? Is it not written, "Be ye holy, for I am holy, saith the Lord?" And again ,"Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord?" And is not this body dead because of sin? The answer to all of these questions is, as I understand it, the explanation of the text. I have traced the context from the beginning of the chapter, to show why I understand the apostle to be referring to the present experience of the saints, instead of that change which is to come upon this vile body in its resurrection from mortality to immortality.

"If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you." He has spoken much of the indwelling of this Spirit, but here it is further described by an allusion to the resurrection of Jesus from the dead through its power. The name Jesus is here used, calling to our minds why he died and rose again, "to save his people from their sins." He bore all their sins. We feel each one of us only his own sins, black and heavy enough to sink us down to endless darkness, but still not such a weight as Jesus bore, for all the sins of all his people were upon him. Yet he was quickened by the Spirit, and raised up from under that terrible load, to be under its dominion no more. "Then," continues the apostle, "he who raised up Christ from the dead." Here the name Christ, or Anointed, is used, bringing to our minds the union that eternally exists between him and his people. "Shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Only when thus quickened or moved by the Spirit of the risen Savior can we perform an action that is spiritual and acceptable to God. David prays frequently that the Lord would quicken him. "My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken thou me according to thy word." "Quicken me after thy loving kindness; so shall I keep the testimonies of thy mouth." Psalms 119: 50, 88, 107. To quicken is not to change the nature of that which is quickened, but to make it alive, or to exercise it by a life already possessed. The bodies of Lazarus and the widow's son were quickened when the Savior raised them up, but they were not changed in their nature, as they shall be in the resurrection. When spiritual life is communicated to a sinner, he is said to be quickened, that is, made alive spiritually. "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." Eph. 2:1. But though we possess this spiritual life, yet these bodies are still dead because of sin, with all their powers both of thought and affection. Indeed it is only because of that spiritual life, or Christ in us, that this death is manifested. But when these mortal bodies are moved or exercised by the spiritual life, that is, quickened by it, then the action we perform is spiritual and holy. Thus in baptism, in communion one with another, in ministering to the poor, in preaching the word, and in all the duties enjoined upon the saints, when we are quickened or moved to do them by the Spirit of him who raised up Christ from the dead, the work is acceptable and pleasing to God, who has "worked in us both the will and to do of his good pleasure." Our powers of thought and feeling, which in themselves are natural, and a part of that fleshly body which is dead because of sin, are quickened by the Spirit, and thus enabled to dwell on spiritual things. We cannot always speak or even think of spiritual things. At times we can hardly speak the name of Jesus, or handle the pre-

cious word, or walk in the holy ordinances; our lips, our tongues, our hands and feet appear so vile, and we feel so cold and dead spiritually, while our thoughts can neither fly nor go to reach eternal things, but with the psalmist we have to cry, "My soul cleaveth unto the dust; quicken me according to thy word." At another time, ere we are aware, our souls make us like the chariots of Aminadib; we mount up with wings as eagles, we run in the way of our Savior's commandments and are not weary, we walk in his holy ordinances and are not faint, we handle the word with confidence and delight, while "our tongues break forth in unknown strains and sing surprising grace." Why this difference! He who raised up Christ from the dead has in his faithfulness and loving kindness quickened our mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in us. And the apostle says he shall quicken you, and thus you shall be enabled to walk in his ways, even though the body be dead because of sin; and though you experience this death daily, and feel the bondage of corruption, yet through this very experience the life also of Jesus shall be made manifest in this mortal flesh. 2 Cor. 4:11.

"Therefore, brethren," the apostle continues, "we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

I have thus in a very brief and imperfect manner given what I understand to be the meaning and application of this scripture, and I submit it to you, brother Beebe, and to the brethren, to whom also I desire to submit myself in love for Jesus' sake.

SILAS H. DURAND

(The foregoing article by the late Elder Silas H. Durand appeared in the *Signs of the Times* dated April 1, 1875. At that time Elder Gilbert Beebe was living and was Editor of the paper. In the absence of an editorial from our Associate Editor who was to contribute for this issue, we have selected this article for the consideration of our readers. R. L. D.)

CIRCULAR LETTER

To the Ministers and Messengers of the Powell's Valley Association. Greetings in the Lord: As it has fallen to my lot to write a Circular Letter for the Minutes of the Powell's Valley Association, I will try to perform that service if the Lord will guide me in spirit and in truth.

The scripture that I will try to use is "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." May I ask you is there anything that was not finished in these six days? I maintain that everything was fixed and finished by the one hand of the Supreme. I believe that every event which transpires in the daily experience of the children of God, or the wicked is but a link in the chain of events which, when manifested, will only reach to a definite or predestinated end. In His infinite wisdom He saw it all completed and finished, and each moment is a manifestation of what was in his work; we could not think that God has ever failed to secure the perfect accomplishment of his own design or purpose in anything that he has ever done.

The entrance of sin in the world was a finished work with the Lord, and every sin his people will commit was amply provided for with him. The wicked is the Lord's sword, and was asleep until the fixed time of God. They positively predicted from the days of Abel in what God spake to the prophets, and by what was signified by all the offerings which were made under the dispensation, according to the prophecy the sword awoke at his appointed time, and the Shepherd was smitten. It is a comforting thought to realize that God has set the bounds of our habitation on the earth, and death, hell and all things are naked before him, and destruction uncovered to his all seeing eye, and yet unlimited by his power and wisdom.

In the beginning of his way he bound up the waters in his thick clouds and gave to the sea his decree that the waters should not pass his commandments. He has left nothing to the vagary of chance, when he sets his throne above the heavens was it to be a place of no power? In controlling the destiny of all things in heaven, and in earth and hell we have evidence that everything was definitely fixed by him. For about six thousand years the sun, moon and stars have

with exactness filled their respective orbits, and without the variation of a second of time from their creation, made their revolutions in obedience to the decree of the Creator. Was it by chance that the heavens declared the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handi-work? No, nothing is by chance, the invisible things of earth did not come into this world by chance.

There are many things we would like to mention, but for fear we are covering too much space we will come to a close. It is very hard to express just what you believe on a few sheets of paper. I have done the best I know how, and will conclude by saying if God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on until I return to my Father's house, thou shalt be the Lord my God. Yours in hope of eternal life.

(Elder) JOHN WILDER

OBITUARIES

Again it becomes our painful duty to record the passing of a dear brother in Christ, ELDER W. L. HALL, of 808 South Park Ave., Independence, Mo. Elder Hall was born in Floyd Co., W. Va., March 25, 1859, and departed this life May 26, 1948 at his home in Independence, Mo. at the advanced age of 89 years, 2 months and 1 day. He was the second child of a family of eleven children, and the eldest son of the late Elder J. C. and Elizabeth Olive (Harris) Hall. When about three years old, his father with his family moved to Franklin Co., W. Va. where he grew to manhood.

Despite the limited advantages in the field of education in his youth he, by studious effort, acquired a common education which, with his gift of natural ability, fitted him in his mature years to fill various offices of distinction.

Sept. 4, 1879 he was united in marriage to Miss Rosa Lee Akers. I think six sons were born to this union, two of whom, Harry of 422 West 11th St., Kansas City, Mo., and Paul of the home address with their mother survive. He is also survived by three sisters, Miss Lucy Lee Hall, Mrs. May Halley and Mrs. Temperence Brown of Radford, W. Va. and one brother Benjamin F. Hall of Thorps, W. Va. There are also five grandsons and eight great-grandchildren.

Space would forbid us to follow all his activities through life, but suffice it to say he, with his wife, and wife's father and family emigrated to Franklin Co., Kansas in the fall of 1880 where he engaged in farming for a period of ten years. He then went to Missouri for three years and then back to Kansas for six years when he sold the farm he had purchased and bought a smaller tract near Blue Springs, Mo. In the year 1881 Brother Hall obtained a good hope through grace, which hope he cherished as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast. On the first Sunday in Aug. 1883 he was received into Gilead Church of Old School Baptists in Miami Co., Kansas. The first Sunday in Sept. following he rode seventeen miles on horseback to receive baptism at the hand of Elder S. P. Ramey. He was soon thereafter chosen clerk of the church and later clerk of Pilgrims Rest Association which position he held until both church and Association became extinct.

After moving to Blue Springs he and his wife united with Little Blue Church and he was soon called as Pastor of that church. I have no data concerning his ordination. He also had the pastoral care of Sniabar, Oak Grove and Little Flock Churches. Of these the first two mentioned have ceased to function, but the latter retained him as their pastor until he was removed by death and he served them faithfully for a period of about thirty years. It was my privilege to visit Brother Hall about three weeks before he passed away. He was very weak, too weak to talk much, but he did request of me that I officiate at his funeral if he should be taken before me. I told him I would if the will of God be so. The dear Lord saw fit to grant his wish and I tried in weakness to speak from the words of the apostle Peter concerning that glorious inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for all who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

I feel the loss of Brother Hall very keenly. He was a lovable brother, a father in Israel and a true yokefellow. His church, his wife and his two noble sons will miss him, but we hope and confidentally believe his spirit is now basking in that blessed inheritance that will never fade away. Truly we are going down the valley one by one. Our ranks are becoming sadly depleted. These old soldiers of the cross are being discharged from this war one by one, but how good it is to know they have not fought in vain. They are conquerors and more than conquerors through him that loved them. May the dear Lord comfort his sorrowing widow and family, and strengthen those brethren who have looked and waited Brother Hall's coming these many years, and may he reconcile us all to this sad dispensation of his providence. The dear brother's body was laid to rest in Blue Springs Cemetery. He has ceased from his labors and his works do follow him. May he rest in peace.

(Elder) L. L. SCHENCK

My sister, MRS. LAURA ANN (OSTEEN) GRIFFITH, was born in Hood Co., Texas in 1874, and passed away May 9, 1948. She moved with the family to Denton Co. not long after her birth and made her home there. After she was grown

she received a good hope through grace and united with the Old Denton Creek Church near Keller, Texas and was baptized by Elder A. D. Bourland in 1893. She lived a very devoted Christian always believing in the doctrine advocated by the **Signs of the Times** and conversed freely on the scriptures of eternal truth. She became ill in body and mind and had to be taken to a state institution, but never lost sight of the true meaning of the Bible. The last time I visited her she talked freely of her experience and hope of heaven and immortality and said she felt very low in spirit. I feel it was a great blessing that God gave her that kind of mind in her last days.

After uniting with the church she was married to Mr. Will Griffith to which union were born five girls and one boy. Her husband passed away several years ago which left her in a bad financial condition, but with my help and that of her children she got along and gave her children a good education. We feel that her passing was a great blessing for her as we have a hope that she has gone to a better world where there will be no sorrow or pain, but there is no language to describe what heaven is and what it all means to those that are heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. She was sick only a few days before passing away when with two exceptions her children were all at her bedside. She was buried at Perrin, Texas. The names of the children are Mrs. Norma Oxford and Mrs. Elsie Hardy, Ardmore, Okla., Miss Vern Griffith and Mrs. Lizzie Rogers, Fort Worth, Texas, Mrs. Rosie Hill, Borges, Texas and Mr. Vester Griffith, Odessa, Texas. She is survived by a brother, C. Y. Osteen, Perrin, Texas and a sister, Mrs. Belle Griffith, Sweet Water, Texas. May the good Lord bless all her children. Her brother,

(Elder) C. Y. OSTEEN

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. W. T. Wright, Tenn., $1; Mrs. J. W. Free, Tex., $3; Miss V. M. Jones, N. Y., $3; A. C. Morton, N. C., $1; J. R. Davie, Ky., $2; Mrs. W. White, Ky., $2; J. Rook, Pa., $1; Mrs. N. M. Carney, W. Va., $1; Mrs. J. E. Donlavy, Cal., $1; Mrs. J. T. Pickerell, Va., $1; Mrs. F. Wiles, Va., $3; Mrs. J. H. Gooch, N. C., $2; Mrs. D. Holloway, Md., $3; Eld. R. L. Biggs, Tenn., $1; R. R. Peters, Cal., $3; Mrs. D. H. Baker, Wash., $3.

Mrs. I. Wisenbaker, Tex., $1; C. R. Myers, Pa., $3; Mrs. F. Brooks, N. Y., $1; A friend, Can., $2; J. A. Johnson, Tenn., $4; J. Vaughn, Tenn., $1; C. A. Taylor, Okla., $1; J. M. Cox, Tenn., $1; Mrs. L. B. Eason, Tex., $1; J. Y. Vanhook, N. Y., $1; A. F. Pilchard, Md., $1; Mrs. A. Hastings, Md., $2; Mrs. P. Krewatch, Md., $1; L. W. Warren, Md., $1; Mrs. A. V. C. Meyer in memory of father S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $10; Mrs. A. D. Hodges, Va., $1; Mrs. E. Loeffel, N. J., $3; W. W. Jackson, Ga., $1; J. F. Jacks, Miss., $1; Eld. P. Jones, Wash., $1; Mrs. A. B. Jestice, Del., $1.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the Frying Pan Church Wednesday, Thursday and Friday October 13th, 14th and 15th, 1948. All ministers and brethren of our correspondence, and others of our faith and order, and lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Those coming Tuesday in own conveyance will come to Herndon, Va. and inquire for brother Walter Norman who will direct them to homes to be cared for. Those coming by train will come to Herndon which is reached by the W. & O. D. R. R. from Rosslyn, Va. Trains leave Rosslyn at 1:55 p.m. and 6:05 p.m. The station at Rosslyn is at the Virginia end of the Key Bridge across the Potomac from Washington. Those coming into Washington by rail or bus will take electric car from Union Station or from the Bus Station at 12th & N. Y. Ave. marked "Rosslyn." There are no bus lines running to or through Herndon. For any further information, communicate with the undersigned.

G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk
914 Ninth St., N. E.,
Washington, D. C.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Salisbury Church, Salisbury, Md., October 20 and 21, 1948. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. Those arriving on Tuesday will go directly to the meeting-house where directions will be given.

(Mrs.) MAUD T. LAWS, Church Clerk
(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

The yearly meeting of the Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church at Snow Hill, Md. will be held on the first Sunday in November instead of the fourth as has been their custom.

BY ORDER OF THE CHURCH

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the *Signs of the Times* at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, $1; 12 copies, $2. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 116 RUTHERFORD, N. J., NOVEMBER 1948 No. 11

"IN MY FLESH DWELLETH NO GOOD THING"

Guilty I fall before Thy throne,
In dust and ashes lie;
No goodness in my flesh I own,
For mercy, Lord I cry.

Canst Thou forgive a wretch like me
And bid a sinner live?
Turn Thou my eyes, Lord unto Thee,
And bid me look and live.

I am a rebel guilty, vile,
A wretch before Thy throne;
Canst Thou in mercy on me smile
Bid me Thy goodness own?

Oh, bid these stormy doubts remove,
And let me hope in Thee,
And in Thy grace, and in Thy love
Make me to steadfast be.

Raise me, O Lord, from doubts that plague
That so disdain my peace;
Those bitter doubts within me rage,
Dishonor Thy free grace.

I am so vile, so full of sin
My life of flesh I hate;
Oh, breathe that peace of soul within
The rest within Thy gates.

In Thy dear sanctuary Lord
Within Thy courts to dwell;
Among Thy saints, oh blessed Lord
And with them ever dwell.

Thou wondrous advocate with God,
My King and great High Priest,
In these low grounds Thy feet hast trod
Thou great Melchizedek.

St. Albans, W. Va. (Elder) H. J. BIRD

CORRESPONDENCE

1194 Joy Ave., Akron 6, Ohio

ELDER HARVEY J. BIRD, DEAR BROTHER BIRD: For some time I have desired to write you to let you know that I very often think of you and wonder how you and your family are. It was one year ago last month since I last saw you. That time and event will remain in my mind probably as long as I live. That was when I called at your home asking you to fulfill the request of my mother and conduct her funeral service. This you did without any excuses although your wife was not very well at the time and needed your care. Nevertheless you arranged to make the trip the same day, and how nice it was that we made the trip and returned you home that night. Had I felt capable of expressing my appreciation for the kindness that you did in extending your service to our father and family I truly would have written you before.

Have been reading the 1947 minutes of the Old Pocatalico Association and note with considerable interest that your wife is still not well. I also notice the present situation of the Association. I confess with much sorrow that it has been four years since I last met with you brethren at the Association. Sorry to note the death of Elder Tackett, also the changes made by the two other Elders of the Association. It is very evident that my excuses, if I would try to give any, would not be valid. It is about three hundred miles between me and you brethren, and I have to work six days a week here in the factory to keep my family. I have resolved to meet with you this spring or summer if I can arrange it and it is the will of

the Lord.

No doubt you have read the Editorials in the February issue of the *Signs of the Times*. How precious is the doctrine as it is set forth by Elder Dodson and Elder Griffin. To be stirred up by such good preaching makes us feel quite different at times when our mind has forgotten or become so full of carnal things. I would greatly rejoice if it would please the Great I Am to remove this Adam of mine long enough to speak something of interest and comfort to you, but unless he be pleased to put it into this heart of mine, and give me the knowledge of truth by the guiding hand of the Holy Spirit, I will remain as cold and destitute as the polar regions of the North. I feel to speak with the poet:

> "Come, holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,
> With all thy quickening powers,
> Kindle a flame of sacred love,
> In these cold hearts of ours."

If I should speak anything as I would like to I hope it would be about Jesus Christ our Savior, who came to this wicked world to do his Father's will; was to be born of the virgin Mary, (of the seed of Abraham) and to live a life of sorrow and grief; to die upon that old Roman cross; was resurrected the third day a full and complete Savior of the church. "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Eph. 1:22-23.

I will quote some scripture from the Song of Solomon, 2:2-3. "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters. As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons." I believe this lily among thorns to be the militant church (spiritually) here among all the work mongering denominations, as they have nothing sweet to feast upon and are called thorns by the Beloved. We see he speaks of his love towards daughters, (plural) more than one. His love is only for *her*, the church. "But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation." Isa. 45:17. We are speaking of spiritual Israel as there are two Israels, natural and spiritual. And this daughter, his love, so greatly mentioned through the book of Solomon's Song is the whole house of Israel, every member of that precious family, redeemed by his blood out of every kindred, tongue, people and nation.

This apple tree among the trees of the wood we believe to be Jesus among the sons, which are God's called ministers as they are qualified to know which tree bears fruit. This tree is always full of fruit whenever he is pleased to administer his fruit (love) to the church through his ministers (virgins). "Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb: honey and milk are under thy tongue." To us her lips and tongue are his ministers who speak comfortably unto Jerusalem. This honey we believe to be the sweet doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone. "And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter." Rev. 10:10. This doctrine is truly sweet as honey when the holy Scriptures are revealed by the Holy Ghost to those who have been born again, and after we have swallowed into the belly it is bitter. That is when it has become digested by our spiritual understanding and we are left alone in the flesh (carnally). "And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; And I am

come to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey." Exod. 3:7-8. Spiritually we believe that every son and daughter is brought out of Egypt into this good and large land flowing with milk and honey. This happens when one is truly born of the Spirit. They begin to feast upon milk doctrine first. Jesus commanded Peter to feed his sheep; again he said feed my lambs. We understand lamb's food to be milk from the mother sheep. Sheep will only feed upon clean food while a goat will eat even old rags. The lamb's food is the substance of the same food that the mother has eaten only it has been extracted and refined by nature's process. So to live and grow in grace and increase in the knowledge of truth, a new born babe in Christ should swallow only the doctrine as taught by his ministers after it has been refined by the Holy Ghost. Elders are able to eat and digest strong meats and should be very careful how they feed the little ones.

Now back to the honey. We believe the bee hive to be a symbol of the militant church. There are the queen bees, the drones, also the workers who gather the honey (the warriors with the stings). This queen (or boss) lays eggs and migrates the whole colony. The drones are males, they do not work. We believe the queen to be God's wisdom, the mother of us all. The drones, as they are not workers, are not fit for warfare as they have no stings. To our mind they have no place in the sweet kingdom and should be cast out. (Gal. 2:4, Jude 4.) We see the working bees to type the Lord's ministers. They are neither male nor female, so is a truly called minister when he is called upon by the Holy Spirit. He produces the honey as it pleases the blessed Lord God of Israel to measure out to his hungry children, both male and female are changed into one during this conception of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. This is called neuter. Let us emphasize, we see the little neuter bees going from one flower to another gathering the substances that make the honey. Now they go for water as this pollen they have gathered is not fit for honey until it is mixed with water; then they swallow it into their digestive organs (as we are taught by bee experts) where it becomes pure honey.

As we see God's called and qualified virgins, stars or preachers going searching from page to page, chapter to chapter throughout the Scriptures, many hours, perhaps nights while his family is asleep, they "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." After all this study and collection of beautiful things, he has to be watered from that Everlasting Fountain, Jesus the fountain of living waters before any of his work is fit for processing; then he drinks it down as good news from a far country. After all this has been expounded by the Holy Ghost it is then digested by the servant of God. Now this honey we call the doctrine of salvation by grace is passed on to the family when called upon by the Lord to "preach the word." "And the house of Israel called the name thereof Manna: and it was like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey.******And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years." Exod. 2:31-35. We believe this manna to be symbolic of the sweet gospel of Jesus Christ. "Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living

bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." John 6:49-51. There is more than one world, and this world He gave his life for truly is the church, as she is still here in a wilderness of woes. She is a speckled bird, the birds round about her are against her. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will."

Let us turn back to the Song of Solomon. We see the little dove as a symbol of Jesus and the church. In the beautiful springtime we hear the little innocent creatures cooing to each other, manifesting their love for each other. We are taught that doves only have one mate. How truly this symbolizes Jesus, the husband of the church, his love for her and not for "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." (See monogamy.) "Hast thou found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it." Prov. 25:16.

Now Brother, I hope you will not get too much of this. We will conclude by relating a sweet dream we had about ten years ago. My wife and I were given authority to work in a dairy barn. We went into the feed room to get feed for the cows as we were getting ready to milk. My wife began asking, "where is the feed for the cows?" I began showing her the several containers round about us that were full of feed. This feed was snow white and in small flakes. She asked me "what kind of feed is that?" I told her "this is dried honey, feed it to the cows as everything here is milk and honey." Even the cows were white as snow. Brother, if you think this is sound doctrine and of the Spirit you may pass it on to the *little flock,* if not just cast it aside as I do not want to offer God's little ones anything contaminated. An unworthy wretch in hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ. May his love and guiding hand direct you in the blessed work of his ministry. Amen.

(Elder) GILBERT SEARS

Route 1, Hartford, Ala.

I find in the 35th chapter of Isaiah the prophet foretelling a glorious event in respect to Jesus Christ and his people, the constituents of his church. The prophet uses descriptive words very beautifully and very meaningly if we can find a receptive place in our hearts for them. I feel a great change necessarily would have to be wrought in the heart before a subject could even conceive of the idea that a wilderness and solitary place could be places wherein a subject thus confined would be glad of such confinement, as I understand a wilderness to be a very desolate and lonely place. I also understand a solitary place to be a place of the strictest isolation and confinement. I feel that a child of grace must be isolated from all things, themselves not excepted, and dwelling in a wilderness in order to be made glad by Jesus.

Now note the impossibilty of an Adamite ever making or even desiring to make such a change in order to be with Jesus. Then we see clearly this alone is God's way for the comumnication of his children with Jesus, and the utter impossibility of a subject communing with Jesus, with earth and the cares of earth, self and selfish interests, motives, intents and purposes all mingled and entwined. "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the

Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Romans 8:8-9. The desert is an unoccupied region, a region or place pathless, neither is it moistened by the efforts of men, but the prophet avers it shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. Jesus only, is the path in this desert. "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys." S.S. 2:1. Experimentally it is Jesus who makes the desert and waste places into gardens of sweet smelling roses, causing them to blossom abundantly.

Here, my friends, is great rejoicing and melody making in our hearts, possessing the gift of the glory of Lebanon, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon beholding the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God. Such as the above adds strength to weak hands. Surely the Lord is our strength, our confirmation, our good hope, our all and in all. Ye fearful heart new courage take, the good physician is here: the blind now see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, the dumb sing, the wilderness and desert abound in water now, the parched ground as a pool; springs of water bubbling from thirsty grounds, all dragons removed; grass, reeds and rushes growing in all their splendor; nothing now to molest or make afraid for lo and behold "an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness." While there is a highway please note there is also a way. None are privileged to enjoy the highway unless they legally conform to the laws regulating the traffic upon the highway, and none conform to the traffic laws except those who have been schooled of Him who ordained the highway and predestinated the traffic laws of the way of the highway. This highway was predestinated of God for wayfaring men.

Wayfaring men are not riding in vehicles, they are foot travelers. They travel slow it is true, but the race is not to the swift. There are many illegal travelers on this highway, some riding in new models, some in old; but all riding, apparently to me, only to clutter up the highway; but thanks be to God there is a way and the wayfaring sojourner has been taught, and learned the rightful way of this way. Although the wayfarer is considered by the vehicle gang to be a fool, for not getting him a vehicle and riding in ease and style, he will not err for he will not be affrighted into making the purchase when the vehicle gang tells him there are lions and venomous beasts on that highway, for the wayfarer knows so well there are none there for they cannot go thereon and will not be found there. The wayfarer remembers so well when he sat in solitary, and too, he remembers so well when he received the good news, the ransom price for him had been paid and he was told to go home to his friends and tell how great things had been done for him. So the poor wayfarer trudges on his journey in spite of the cluttered highway with arminian vehicles, feeling to know he is conforming in precept and example to the law of the way of the highway. But why travel this way you may ask? For this reason, this is the one and only safe way for the wayfarer, and remember these people are walking they are not traveling by vehicle. They are people who have been liberated out of solitary and coming up out of the wilderness. "Who is that that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant? Behold his bed, which is Solomon's; threescore valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Israel. They all hold swords, being expert in war: every man hath his sword upon his thigh because of fear

in the night." S.S. 3:6-8.

These people fear not because of the good pleasure of their Father to give them the kingdom. Being the ransomed of the Lord they are returning, they could not return had they not once resided. This probably has some little tinge of the doctrine of eternal vital union, but if so to me the more the better for I certainly fancy that doctrine and feel that fundamentally it is the bed rock of Christ and his church. Their returning is with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, having obtained joy and gladness and all sorrow and sighing now fled. Not glad of having sat in solitary, but glad of having been released or ransomed of God from solitary.

I cannot quite catch the drift when I hear our precious brethren say they are sinners and glad of it, and then enlarge upon the expression even to the extent I feel sometimes of boasting over the fact. For quite awhile I have known that I was a sinner and much of the time felt to be chief, but at no time have I felt glad of it, but rather sad about it. I have felt glad many, many times, in view of the fact that I was a sinner, in a blessed hope that the ransom price had been paid for all my sins and transgressions, and that I would not have that to sigh and sorrow over ever again. This is what I am glad about, and I trust thankful for, as I sojourn in the way of the blessed highway which is the way of holiness, righteousness, peace and sweet fellowship for all wayfaring men wherever they may be. Affectionately in Christ.

(Elder) F. A. COLLINS

(Continued from October issue.)

My poor heart was filled with sorrow and pain, I was trying to pray, pleading for mercy. I felt that my doom was just and that I did not deserve mercy. My burden became so heavy on me that I fell down on the ground. I thought I had fallen to rise no more and lay there with my face to the ground. I was without hope in this world or in the world to come. How dark and lonely that hour was to me as I lay there waiting for the moment to come when I would pass away only to be cast into everlasting punishment. But as I lay there a great light shone over me and I seemed to hear a voice say to me "arise and see." So I rose at once, I did not see what made the great light, but I saw the light. Oh! how great and beautiful it was, what a joy before me! It seemed, as it were, a garden of great joy. The trees in the garden were in full bloom with every leaf and branch trimmed in pure gold. No tongue can tell how beautiful those trees were. It appeared that nothing could have been added to or taken away from those trees to have made them more beautiful. They were waving and bowing in great joy, praising and worshipping the Almighty God. My heavy burden of sorrow and pain over my lost and ruined condition had been removed from my mind and I was rejoicing over the blessed thought of O Lord how precious and gracious is thy great and exalted name that saved a wretched sinner like me. What a joy this was to me but how soon it all passed away. The garden and all the great things I saw in the garden, and the great light all passed from my vision. I do not know from whence they came or where they went. The joy I had seen in the great light; the thought I would never sin again soon all passed away and never have I seen the light or the trees in the garden again. For a short time I thought I would live a better life, but this all proved to be a failure with me. When I would try to live as I wished to live so many

things seemed to step in my way; then I would find myself doing worse than I had ever done before, all was a failure with me so I have been wondering from that day until this if I was not mistaken in the whole thing which I believe I saw in the garden of great joy. I wonder if I was out of my mind when I saw the great light and the trees waving and bowing in the garden of joy praising and worshipping the Almighty God. If I was out of my mind when I saw those wonderful things, what a joy this life would have been to me if I could only have stayed in that state of mind all the remaining days that I have been spared to live in this world. If I was in my right mind when I saw those wonderful things, why have I lived such a life?

I often doubt it all when I look over the road I have traveled, and the life I have lived and the life I continue to live which makes me fear and tremble. Sometimes I feel that the whole thing that I thought I had seen in the garden and the great light was a failure, but in my poor heart there still remains a hope, and it does not matter how dark the hour may be at times, or the feeling that I have no hope in the world to come, there is something that causes me to remember the day when I felt that I was in the light of a great joy, and the tears fall in streams from my eyes with a hope that Christ, the blessed Savior will come some sweet day and have mercy on me a wretched sinner, and take me to that blessed home to live with Jesus for evermore, blessed be his name. After I had seen those wonderful things I was at a great loss as to what it meant and I wondered if it meant anything to me. The thought came to me that I would not say anything about it until I understood more of its meaning, so I kept it all to myself, but from that day to this there has been a raging within me, and at times when I would be at church hearing the dear old Primitive Baptist ministers relate what the great God of mercy had done for the poor sinner, I would feel like I would smother to death if I did not tell all about the wonderful things I had seen. Then this thought came to me that I should be careful what I said for I did not understand it myself and I might be mistaken in what I wanted to tell. For many years I kept it hoping that I might understand more about it.

In 1936 I told my wife and three of my friends, then soon after I told them I wished I had not told any one and said nothing more until October 1939 when I wrote to Elder R. M. Brann telling him what I had seen and heard. When I handed him my letter I requested him to read it and return it to me which he did. Then I began to wonder why I had written the letter or told any one for I did not understand it myself and thought I would say no more, but again I wanted to write and tell of the wonderful things I have seen and heard so now I have done so. If I am not mistaken it will be fifty-four years this coming November 1946. Oh, wretched man that I am. My cup of sin is full and running over. I wish to say, that if I ever live in that great city of peace and joy, around the great throne of God beyond this vale of tears, it will be by the grace and mercy of a wonderful God and not for good things that I have ever done in this life.

S. S. KERLEY

2712 N. W. 28th St., Ft. Worth 6, Texas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Received your card thanking me for my remittance and informing me it was paid to 1-48. I was under the impression that I was paying in advance. Am certainly sorry and ashamed of this. Find enclosed

check for $2 for which please extend my subscription through the year.

We read in Psalms 139 "Thou understandest my thought afar off****** there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." I wonder if I am a victim? If so I certainly do not like it. However, be my likes and dislikes what they may, I am compelled to believe they are "being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." I am forced to believe by evidence I have received, supported by my Bible—a record of the word of God—that he made this world and everything in it for no other reason than because he desired to. (Job. 23:13.) I also will contend, which to my mind cannot be refuted, that God is an absolute sovereign who is too wise to make a mistake, and too good to be unkind, carries on his world here and every object of his creation on it under his exclusive jurisdiction, and will finally bring all things to an end, and that end he, as a wise master builder, saw from the beginning. Yes, God is an absolute sovereign and the only one to whom title can be applied. He is absolute in every way. You cannot speak of anything that has happened or come to pass here in this time world that is not exactly according to his will and purpose. David said, "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord." He is selfish. "My glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." Isa. 42:8. It seems he asks no help from any of us. Peter tells us, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." The Lord says in Psalms 50:12, "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee."

How glad I would be if I were not delinquent in so many things. I do not know that you can attribute it to my honesty that I am not a thief. I believe I might be one if I were not afraid of the consequences. I do not mean that law over at the court-house, but that Judge whose eyes are never closed, and who always metes out the reward and penalty in such a way that he never had a case reversed and sent back for a new trial. As for his people, everything that happens to them is for their good and education. All their needs shall be supplied according to his riches. He makes them willing in the day of his power; he draws them with his loving kindness; he calls them into fellowship with his dear Son; he sends the spirit of his Son into their hearts and makes them cry; the Shepherd's eyes are ever over them, and his ears open to their cries; he lays them down in green pastures, and leads them beside still waters; they fear no evil though they walk through the valley of the shadow of death; because thou art with them; thy rod and thy staff they comfort them; they lean on the staff while chastisement is applied with the rod. "Blessed is the man whom thou chasteneth, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law." Psalms 94:12.

It is possible that I am all wrong in what I am saying. If I am please bear with me until it is the Lord's will to show me the right way. At the present I just cannot believe that one must accept the Lord as their personal Savior before he can or will do the things I have mentioned above. That would be the same as accepting a birthday or Christmas present, or any gift that might please me. It would have to be an act of the natural mind, and that we read is enmity against God. However, it is proclaimed all over the country that God sent his beloved Son here to suffer and die for the sins of the world, and from there it is wholly a matter for you to decide, as a free agent, whether to accept or reject. God wants

everybody to be saved, and Christ is pleading to all of them to accept him and be saved. *God wants.* How foolish that seems to me when I think of what my Bible says about his desires, thoughts and purposes. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." Matt. 1:21. Before this Son left here he said he had completed that work. The people for whom he had done that work, I believe, is set forth very plainly in the gospel of St. Matthew 1:1. I quote, "The book of the GENERATION OF JESUS CHRIST, the son of David, the son of Abraham." I believe this is a spiritual generation, and every one included in it will find Jesus precious to their souls, claim him as their Elder Brother, their High Priest and captain of their salvation.

My dear brother, if I may claim such relationship, it is my sincere desire and prayer—when possible—that God will give you and your Associate Editors continued strength and power to proclaim the absolute sovereignty of God in all things both spiritual and natural. I do not know why I am writing to you other than because it is a pleasure and enjoyment to me. Brother Dodson, the Lord has given me many periods of enjoyment while reading your articles in our family paper, the *Signs of the Times.* Brother, is there any way to know the truth other than when you are guided by the spirit of truth? In fact if we are not of the truth will we ever know what it is? Our Captain said, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."

I am sixty-seven years old and the most of my life I have been hearing the preachers say, "If you will then God will." Their sermons were not interesting to me. "Do not resist the spirit of God, but permit it to enter your heart, and accept Christ as your Savior, and then he will accept you as his child" the preachers would say. I used to think my father was rather strict in his discipline pertaining to obedience, honesty, honor, sobriety, etc., but he was, to some extent, successful in instilling some of it into me. When certain things began to present themselves to me and command my consideration and study, and lead me along a path which I have since learned led to a foreign country, I began to seriously consider my future destiny. I would try to reason, does God bless the good, moral and upright man, and condemn the wicked, immoral and dishonest? Finally I decided that the good man, one who lived a moral and upright life in his community, looked upon as a representative citizen, belongs to a church, and applied his knowledge, skill and ability for its successful progress, contributed financially for its upkeep and did what he could to show sinners the way to the Lord, had a better chance to win the favor of God. So I united with the Missionary Baptist church and lived with them about nine years. They highly honored me with very responsible and popular offices; some of which reflected their confidence in my honesty, my counsel was sought and judgment honored. Of course all this made me feel good. Except for the last six months of these nine years things went fine with me. Sometimes I wonder if the positions I held, and the popularity I enjoyed did not contribute to my contentment. During the last six months of this nine years, well I will not go into that now for it would be difficult to find a period. However, will say this: I was made to witness, with all the natural power I could muster against it, the complete destruction of all my eight and one

half years work. Many times during these last six months I feigned sickness as a reason for not being at my post of duty. All I had been doing was condemned and destroyed and me with it. Something seemed to say: I made you for a purpose; I do all you have been trying to do for you and me; I do all the works; I gave you ears, eyes and a heart and will guide you in the exercise of them for I am God and there is none other. My mind was led into many channels of thought too numerous to recite; they were peculiar and unheard of to me. However, in all of this, it was very strongly argued with me that God was having his way in it all, and in a kind and loving way preparing me to see it his way. After traveling this far on my journey I was still stubborn and rebellious.

Will try to close out now. Suffice it to say, if not deceived, in this confused and bewildered condition, about two o'clock in the morning a voice seemed to speak to me, "Come unto me and I will give you rest; I am the great Physician who never lost a case; I put you in that horrible condition and I can lift you out; I kill and I make alive; I wounded you and I can cure you and none can deliver you out of my hand." I arose and went out into my back yard. It was a beautifully clear night. The moon and stars appeared to be outstanding in their brilliancy, and singing in complete harmony a most beautiful anthem in praise to their maker. If not deceived, it was here in my back yard that I was made to see and confess the immeasurable and unbounded perfections of Jehovah, and with it received a little hope that I was one of those peculiar people. This event of about ten minutes duration was one of the most outstanding in all my journey. This was about eleven years ago. After groping around for about another year I offered myself for membership to those who preached my experience and they suffered it. Since that time I hear, every third Sunday, some good preaching by Elders C. Y. Osteen and W. A. Little telling what God has done (not will do) for his people, and this is food and drink to my hungry soul.

Dear Brother Dodson, may it please the Lord to supply you with strength and power to continue the great work he has raised you up to do—the Editor of our great family paper. Its contents are so precious to me. Hope you will remember this old wretch when you can. A sinner saved by the unmerited favor of God if at all.

W. H. STAGGS

Route 3, Bassett, Va.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I notice my time for renewal to the *Signs of the Times* has come. I believe we are now living in the last times. The apostle Paul called it "perilous times." "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." The Old Baptists suffer persecution for believing in a God of all power, being first and last our salvation. Others say it is left to the creature to work it out. In his writings Paul says, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." This does not sound like it is left to the creature, but God worketh it. If that be true it could be nothing more nor less than God's salvation and our salvation. To know this of a surety is to have the evidence, the witness within. Christ our Savior left it to his Father's will. Sometimes we can look back in our experience and see Him when we are made to cry for God's will to be done. His people look to him for all their help and feel their need before they ask of him.

Three days after uniting with the church I was dissatisfied with myself. This was a burden to me for several days. Brother George Dyer being the pastor asked if I could keep the commandments. I answered "the best I know how." I feared I could not keep them or understand them. I had told my husband I could not be baptized with that feeling. The burden became so heavy I was almost smothering for breath. I remembered saying, "Lord have mercy. Why did I unite with the church? If it be thy will take this burden off, if not continue it." All of a sudden, it seemed in a moment I was changed to a happy state of feeling and rejoicing. The burden was gone. I then wanted to be baptized. When my husband came home Tuesday night from his work he could tell a difference as soon as he saw me and asked why I was so happy. A line of poetry came into my mind and I was singing it most of the evening. "This world is not my home." The title of the song, "Oh! land of rest." A little bird singing in the tree sounded like he was singing, "Cheer up, cheer up." I told my husband what had happened and that I wanted to be baptized. He said he had prayed to find me better. Since that time the commandments are not grievous. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother: which is the first commandment with promise." Eph. 6:1-2. I believe this means to honor them in the faith, not to those taught of men, as Paul was when persecuting the church and blaspheming, teaching the doctrine and commandments of men, thinking he was doing God's service. After he was taught of the Lord he preached the gospel of sound doctrine —Old Baptist doctrine of being saved before the foundation of the world and from it. He received it not of man neither taught it but by the revelation of Jesus Christ, that our faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

The worldly religionists say, "get ready to meet the Lord." Paul said, "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." "Let us watch and be sober." I believe he meant to watch these false teachers and not be seated with them, be ye separate for they are deceivers and cannot endure sound doctrine.

I was raised with the Primitive Baptists, my mother being one although she did not make me one. I have always loved the doctrine of God. our Saviour.

(Mrs.) MATTIE UNDERWOOD

An Exhortation To The Constancy In The Faith

"Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Jude 3.

Of all the Christian attributes, meekness is one of the most admirable. It is to be sought after, prayed for, and earnestly cultivated by the regenerated Child of Grace. The quality of meekness in a human soul is an open portal through which can be glimpsed views of the Celestial Character. The godly and the reprobate alike respect the meek; in the humble faces of God's poor children there is reflected an intangible peculiarity which is not carnal in origin or manifestation.

The meek we have had with us always. Those who fear God and obey his commandments, through the operations of the Divine Spirit in their souls, are of necessity meek. For who can survey his wealth of sins, and not be reduced to meekness? Or who can recall the blackness and depth of his temptations and shortcomings, his lack of perseverance and his enormity of transgression, and not cry in agony, Fall on

me, O ye rocks, and cover me, O ye hills: hide me from the wrath of Him who sits on the Throne! There can, indeed, be no argument for a retraction of the quality of meekness. Would that we all were endowed with this holy nature, for the meek alone taste of the comfort of God. While the meek are the most powerful example of God's sovereignty over the human will which can be observed anywhere, they are not a potent factor in the enlightenment of the unregenerated elect. God's children who still labour under their yoke of sin are not attracted to the truth by the example of the meek. They must be brought through fire and water before they are reduced to that condition where they humbly and tearfully plead for mercy from the Most High. Rather than attracting such unenlightened sons, the property of meekness repels them. There is nothing in service and lowliness of heart which seems desirable to carnality.

The spiritual regeneration of an elected soul is the most profound operation which can ever take place. When the sinner's hardness of heart has been broken down, when he has been shown his complete impotency, and when he has been made to realize the awful depth of his total depravity, he despairs of his own strength, and throws himself upon the disposition of the Lord. He is led through many and varying degrees of temptation; he is sorely chastised and despised by the world. But the *faith* of the true son of God never falters; And as God gives his elect strength to believe, so he also gives them strength to contend for that belief.

There has been a growing tendency among the Children of Grace in recent times to accept passively the denunciations of unbelievers and unenlightened elect. That the doctrines of truth should be reviled by those who do not believe or do not understand them is only natural, but it is decidedly unnatural that their advocation by enlightened believers should be neglected. It must be granted that the elect themselves are but weak and impotent creatures, incapable of successfully defending with their own strength the sacred truths which grace has revealed unto them. But it becomes the necessity of every believer to earnestly and continually pray to the Lord for aid in the advancement and encouragement of divine truth.

Enemies of the gospel of Christ have attempted to pervert its true message from earliest times. The instruments of misinterpretation and distortion have been so cunningly applied to the Scriptures that the vitiated product is made to apply to devils as well as angels: salvation is offered indiscriminately to all who will accept it; God is represented as depending for power upon the wills of his creatures; the divinity of Christ is rejected; the completeness of the blood atonement is denied; and man is hailed as summa cum potentia in the universe.

This exceedingly palatable and universal theology is acceptable to even the most confirmed of sinners, and it consequently receives the enthusiastic support of all classes of infidels. This is the religion of the world. It is accepted by the world, believed in by the world, and vigorously contended for by the world. There are many of the very elect of God who have been led astray into an acceptance of these hellish proclamations.

Opposing these principles are a very poor, small, and ridiculed group, who have learned that they are lies and inventions of the Devil through their own bitter experience. They are the enlightened elect of God; they have been baptized with fire and steel, and they know the worth of truth. Yet even among these Children of Grace, resistance to

the attacks of Satan is sadly inadequate. There has crept into their ranks a certain passiveness, a spirit of non-reaction. Where they ought to be enlisting divine support in their struggle against evil, they are instead succumbing to it. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that these elect have no power within themselves; all that they are, they owe to Jesus; all that they know, they owe to the Holy Spirit. If they are ever to overcome the Devil and his teachings, they must do it with divine aid alone.

And how is this divine aid secured? Prayer is the answer to all the saints' ills. Let the Children of Grace deliver their souls into the hands of the Invincible One; let them cry unto God for aid in vanquishing the wicked and proclaiming the truth, and He will not fail them. O brethren, trust not to carnal security! Put not your faith in man, or man's power, but let your sword be the Sword of the Lord and of Gideon, and your refuge the eternal Rock of Ages. HENRY TOWNSEND, JR.

Gantt, Ala.

DEAR MRS. YOUNG: At last I will try to answer your sweet letter as my granddaughter is here and willing to write for me again. I am late answering but you know there is a time for all things. If I could have answered each time I thought of you it would have been every day. What is this other than love? Love is something we cannot manufacture ourselves, and it is something we cannot see but feel. I have thought of giving my belief on love. There are two kinds, a fleshly love and a spiritual love and one differs from the other.

Fleshly love can be made by the creature but spiritual love must come from above, there is no connection between the two. It is by the Spirit that we know the spirit and the way we know the spirit is the way we feel. I know that I love you but it is by the spirit I understand in your writings. If we be the children of God we love one another if we never see each other, but it is by corresponding with one another. We read, "Comfort yourselves together, and edify one another" and in so doing it makes our hope strong. "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted" and the comfort comes by feeling. You ask me to write my experiences so there is probably no better time to make an attempt. I have been asked that by others but have been fearful that I might deceive.

When I was a boy in my teens I thought of dying and going to the bad place. My mother, father, brothers and sisters were church members and I wanted to be with them. I thought the church was the place for good people and I heard them say you must pray to be good so I thought I would try to pray. I would hide myself, fall on my knees and ask the Lord to have mercy on me and make me a good boy. Time and again I would do likewise but got no answer. At last I thought I would go one more time and if he did not hear me I would give it up. One day about eleven o'clock I slipped off by myself in the woods and dropped down by an oak tree begging the Lord, as I thought, the last time to have mercy on me, and at once I saw a light come around me brighter than the sun it seemed to me. All I could say was Lord have mercy on me, and I believed he was having mercy on me which made me shed tears. When I arose I looked around to see if I had been seen, and seeing no one I made my way back toward the house and the thought came what would I tell mother and father if they should ask why I had cried. I thought of going by the spring and washing and then they would not ask

me. I did that and thought now I have it hid they cannot tell. As I walked in the gate I saw father sitting near the door reading the Bible, and before I entered the door the light came again and I broke into tears. I thought what shall I say now and it came to me to ask him to pray for me. I did and he called mother into the room and told her, "Joe wants me to pray for him." We then knelt and he prayed. I do not remember his prayer as I was rejoicing and shedding tears at the time. When we got up mother said dinner was ready. Neither of them asked me a question and I was proud. Then I believed I was a fit subject to go to the church and the first chance I had I went and offered myself. The preacher took me by the hand and asked if I wanted to talk. My answer was—NO. Then he asked me the question if I believed the Lord for Christ's sake had pardoned my sins and my answer was—YES. They received me by giving me the right hand of fellowship and the next day was set for baptism. I was baptized and thought I was saved and went on thinking no more concerning it.

In a few weeks father and I were working near the place where I had seen the light, building a fence. The thought came to me you have got to die and I was miserable the rest of the day. Got to die. That thought came about the same time of day—eleven o'clock. We went to dinner and as soon as I got a chance I told mother I had to die and she asked what was the matter with me. I said, "It just came to me I had to die." She said, "Ah, do not pay any attention to that, you will not die." I believed I would and could think of nothing else. I wanted to tell my brother but he was at school. When he came that evening I met him and told him I had to die. He wanted to know why? I said, "Nothing, only I had to soon." He had nothing to give for comfort, he wanted to get it off my mind. He said, "Let us go see Willie Dunsford and go hunting tonight." I said I would go but it was not satisfying to me. I told Willie the same thing and he wanted to know why I had told him. He said, "Joe it may be conviction working on you." I said, "No, I have united with the church and been baptized." No more was said and after we finished our stay we went home. When I awoke next morning I did not think of death any more. I went along with that church in peace believing it was the true church until I was grown.

When I was twenty-three I married a widow lady belonging to the Hardshells. She and I would have arguments about our religion, I believed in mine and she in hers. I thought I knew mine was right and hers wrong. I tried to get her to quit and come to mine but that she could not do and we went on for several years. We sold our place in Talpoosa County and moved to Crenshaw County. There was no church of my denomination there. I had a desire for a church home and wrote my pastor asking him to come down as there was a good opening for a church. He answered saying he could not come and for me to pick a church I liked best and unite with them as there was not much difference. I decided I would go to the Methodist as I thought they were the next best. I attended one of their communion meetings. They took the bread and wine and dismissed. They lacked foot washing and I said I cannot live with them. Next I thought of the Missionaries and I happened to be at their communion and they did like the Methodists. I said, no I cannot live with them, I will have to go without a church home. I knew the Hardshells were wrong so I will go along doing the best I can and if it is for me to be saved I will be.

That is my first experience but there comes another. I said I would never unite with the Hardshells. I went to one of their meetings. There were two deacons to be ordained and two preachers were called to assist. The names of the preachers were Mills and Hudson. Mills preached in the morning and the hardest sermon I ever heard but I could believe it. Hudson preached in the evening and I liked his preaching, and while he was preaching I thought if I ever unite with you people I would want you to baptize me but that will never be. A few weeks after the meeting Mills and I met in imagination and we argued over his sermon. I thought I could convince him he was wrong but when we finished our talk he had convinced me I was wrong and the bright light shone around me. I said, "thank the Lord they are right, I see now I have been wrong all the time." It brought lots of rejoicing for me to see things I had never seen before. I said, "when I finish the row I am plowing I will go tell my wife." I took my mule out about eleven o'clock and was feeling good. I thought I will make her feel good by telling her, but before I got near the house that all left me and I said, "I will tell her nothing." I still had a desire to want to hear the Hardshells preach and went as often as I could and enjoyed them. The members saw there was a change in me and suggested that I unite with the church. I told them I would if I could have Mr. Hudson baptize me and they said they would have him. He sent me word to unite with the church and he would come for the baptism whenever the time was set in the week as his time was filled on our days. I offered myself the first chance and was received and Wednesday the next week following was set for the baptism and he came. My wife said, "suppose Brother Hudson is not there." I replied, "if it is ordered by the Lord he will be there, and if not some one else will be present to act." There were two to be baptized and the other member had a choice. His choice was Elder Henderson. Brother Hudson was there but Brother Henderson failed to come. After I was baptized they asked the other candidate what he wanted to do since Elder Henderson was not there. He said, "if Brother Hudson can baptize Brother Scott he can baptize me and he was ready." Brother Hudson baptized him without any trouble. He was a one armed man but I did not give that a thought. I have had no doubt since that it was ordered of the Lord, but I have had doubts of myself.

Dear Sister Young this is what my hope depends on. You can do as you please with what I have written. Let me know what you think of it. I want to tell you the first church I united with was called Bible Christian. Their practice was like the Primitive Baptists. They believed in an experience of grace and baptism. They believed in communion and washing one another's feet. They did it at night is one difference I see. Excuse all mistakes. Your brother in hope of eternal life. J. S. SCOTT

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CORRECTION

In the article of Brother H. L. Rogers second column, page 195, Sept. issue it reads: The brook is that broken river that proceeds from the throne of God. Should read: that brook or river.

Editor.

EDITORIAL

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."
Luke 2:14.

This proclamation gives the reason for glorifying God in the highest, which was the embodiment of Christ Jesus in the salvation of poor sinners and which was in God's purpose from before the foundation of the world. We hope it has been given to us to behold the abundance of His mercies for poor sinners, and with the apostle Paul we feel to be the chief of sinners, and but for the grace of God we would be numbered with the ungodly. For sinners, such as we feel to be to behold the abundance of grace given us in Jesus Christ, we are made to say that it is by grace we are what we are and then we can give glory to God in the highest. Seeing we are bought with a price: therefore we desire to glorify God in our body, and in our spirit, which are God's. I Cor. 6:20. If we had no knowledge of being redeemed from the captivity of the devil, and being turned about to serve the living God and having his directing hand guiding us, we could not glorify God for it. We know in our mortal flesh there dwells no good thing, and to have the demonstrated power of God leading, keeping and making us to realize salvation is of the Lord, we are made to glorify God in our bodies for these evidences in our daily lives, which brings forth the declaration that by the grace of God I am what I am.

On that memorable night the highest heavens were glorifying God, and by that virtue the star appeared in heaven to guide the wise men of the East to where God's only begotten Son was wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger. Luke 2:7. And before we glorify God we must have the virtues of an heavenly birth. Jesus confirmed that to Nicodemus when he said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." John 17:3. The highest in which the heavenly host was saying glory to God, we feel was God's only begotten Son, for he was as one brought up with God, and there was none equal with him, and the proclamation to glorify God in the highest would, to our mind, infer that His Son should glorify God, and we here quote the language of Jesus: "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come: glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." John 17:1-5. God has exalted

Jesus higher than the heavens, for heaven is God's throne, and Jesus is at his right hand a Prince and a Saviour, which to our mind is being glorified in the highest, and through him we were given peace with God from the just condemnation of death, which the transgression of God's holy law meted to all of Adam's posterity; by the sufferings and death of Jesus many were given peace with God, which were as many as the Lord our God shall call. Their names were all written in the Lamb's book of life from before the foundation of the world. Rev. 13:8. They are heirs of the kingdom of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ the Son of God, and their peace is the peace Jesus told his disciples he would give them, and not the peace of the world. John 14:27. These words are explanatory to the peace on earth, which was proclaimed by the heavenly host, and for a poor sinner to have a hope in Jesus is a foretaste of that eternal peace given by the Lord Jesus Christ. The good will of the eternal God to the creature He created in his own image has been manifested by the sending of his only begotten Son into the world to suffer, bleed and die for man's redemption from the condemnation of his law, and for this golden scepter we would apply the quotation, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." When we are exercised to meditate upon these things, and our hope embraces the faith to believe that all power both in heaven and in earth is given to Jesus, and he will save to the uttermost all that the Father hath given him, brings to our realization the good will of God toward men. These evidences constrain us to ascribe greatness unto our God and to feel the surety of salvation to all the elect in Christ Jesus, and we can say with the apostle Paul we are "persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Roms. 8:38-39.

According to our understanding we have called attention to these things in order to give you the meditations which it has been our lot to enjoy, and we pass them on to our readers of the *Signs of the Times,* with the sincere desire of our heart that you may glean from these few lines joy and gladness to your hearts by which you can join in the sweet chorus of the heavenly host and say, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men, for such a great salvation.

The Hymn on page 233 in Durand and Lester's hymn and tune book and No. 499 in Beebe's Collection, expresses it better than we can:

"Jesus is our great salvation;
Worthy of our best esteem!
He has saved his favorite nation;
Join to sing aloud of him!
He has saved us!
Christ alone could us redeem!

When involved in sin and ruin,
And no helper there was found,
Jesus our distress was viewing;
Grace did more than sin abound!
He has called us,
With salvation in the sound.

Let us never, Lord, forget thee;
Make us walk as children here:
We will give thee all the glory,
Of that love that brought us near:
Bid us praise thee,
And rejoice with holy fear.

Free election, known by calling,
Is a privilege divine;
Saints are kept from final falling;

All the glory, Lord, be thine:
All the glory!
All the glory, Lord, is thine!"

We feel to express our appreciation for the forbearance of our readers of the *Signs of the Times* during the year 1948, and we hope to continue with such as will be to the glory of God and the edification of the saints. We remain as ever your unworthy servant for Jesus sake. C.W.V.

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

In an attempt to make clear our understanding of this parable, for such we consider it to be, we shall quote the full account of it as it appears in the sixteenth chapter of Luke, and in order to simplify our efforts for clarification of various points we shall place the number of each verse in parenthesis as a matter of identification:

(19) "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: (20) And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate full of sores, (21) And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. (22) And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Araham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; (23) And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. (24) And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. (25) But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. (26) And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. (27) Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: (28) For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. (29) Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. (30) And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. (31) And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

We have referred to the above scripture as being a parable, and we feel we are justified in so doing. In the previous chapter we have three parables presented: the parable of the lost sheep, the piece of silver, and the prodigal son. In the chapter which we are considering, we have the parable of the unjust steward, and as we see it the account of the rich man and Lazarus is likewise a parable. If indeed it is a parable, then it is not to be interpreted according to the wisdom of this world, and neither is it to be literally understood. We believe there is a key to this parable, beginning with the sixteenth through the eighteenth verses, immediately preceding the narrative. The sixteenth verse reads, "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." Here we have the Legal and the Gospel dispensations referred to. The seventeenth verse shows how all-exacting the law is by declaring, "And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail." The eighteenth verse says, "Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery."

While a literal interpretation of this should have a wholesome effect upon society, its true significance undoubtedly concerns Christ and his church. Paul writes in a similar vein to the church at Rome, saying, "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Jesus had also (13 verse) said, "No servant can serve two masters: for he will either hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." There can be no division of one's allegiance. Jesus said the first commandment of all is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." The "fairest among women" represented by Solomon as a beautiful type of the Bride of Christ, said of her Beloved he is "the chiefest among ten thousand***yea, he is altogether lovely." The Psalmist asked, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." When the poor Samaritan woman, with whom Jesus talked at Jacob's well, confessed that although she had had five husbands, yet he whom she then had was not her husband, Jesus commended her and said unto her, "Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly." She had been married or clinging to the law in all of its fulness, but now she is dead to the law, by the knowledge of Christ, and is therefore free to be married unto him. We feel to stress the point that the devotion of the church to her husband should be absolute, and we regard spiritual adultery as a most grievous sin. The Lord presented Eve as a beautiful type of the church when he said unto her, "thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."

When the Lord first called Abraham, he said unto him, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." The Lord later made a covenant with Abraham, and renewed it with Isaac and with Jacob, and we do not believe that any one can read the Old Testament scriptures without being impressed with the fact that the Jews were manifestly God's peculiar people. In manifold ways God used them as types of better things in his kingdom to be established on earth. He also gave them inspired prophets to foretell what the future had in store for his people. God brought National Israel up out of Egypt, delivering them at the Red Sea, and he led them through the wilderness into the land of Canaan, which flowed with milk and honey. They were given kings to rule

over them, and their wise men had no equals. They had their Levitical priests to guide and instruct them in all the pomp of the ceremonial law, and for centuries their great temples were famous. However, their own prophets foretold the end of those days, and when Jesus came he told them plainly of the utter destruction of all those things by declaring that not one stone of their temple would be left remaining upon another. Jesus plead with them, saying, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how oft would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."

We do not understand that this parable is intended to apply to two particular persons, but rather that it definitely concerns the Jewish nation and the kingdom of God here in this world. We will now, without further preliminary remarks, take up some of the outstanding points in the parable. Verse nineteen says, "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day." This is an excellent description of the Jewish nation for many centuries, and the purple and fine linen denote the glory with which they felt to be clothed, with no lack apparently for anything, as the record is "they fared sumptuously every day." The twentieth verse reads, "And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate full of sores." This certain beggar characterized under the name of Lazarus was none other than Jesus himself. He was laid at their gate full of sores, symbolic of his humiliation and sufferings. They would not even permit him to be born in their inn, and he had to come into this world in a manger, and was wrapped in swaddling clothes. The prophet said before hand that he would be as a root out of dry ground to them, and they would see no comeliness in him nor desire him. Instead they continually heaped upon him ignominy and shame, and contemptuously called him Beelzebub, the prince of devils. Finally, they crucified him in the place of a murderer, placing a crown of thorns upon his sacred brow and gave him vinegar to drink. Verse twenty-one reads, "And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores." He came unto his own, but his own received him not; he trod the winepress alone and of the people there was none with him. No man gave unto him among the Jews, but we are told that the dogs came and licked his sores. We believe here is where the Gentile nations were brought into fellowship with him, and they ministered unto him by licking, or soothing his wounds. In the twenty-second and twenty-third verses we are told, "And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." It is noteworthy that the beggar died first, presenting as we see it the fulfilment of the law by the death of our Lord, who brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. He was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom, the gospel church or kingdom of God here in the world. He was the first born among many brethren. Jesus himself foretold of his departure and reappearance when he said to his disciples: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house (the gospel church)

are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." It is said, "the rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." When this Jewish economy was destroyed it meant the end of that dispensation or age, and for nearly two thousand years now the Jews have seemingly, to us at least, been without any visible evidence of God's special divine favor and mercy. They have been scattered throughout the world, lost their identity as a nation, (recently there is some semblance of the birth of a nation) and no trace of their Levitical priesthood, being persecuted and tormented and it would seem as a people that they are passing through a veritible hell indeed. Perhaps there are some among them in this day and time who are not without hope, but are having visions and seeing Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom; if so they are undoubtedly portrayed in the twenty-fourth verse, where it is said, "And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." This rich man claims Abraham as his father, and himself is presented as begging for mercy, and desiring that Lazarus, or Jesus (his Messiah) might come and dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool his tongue. Only Jesus can dip his finger in the water of life and cool the tongue that is tormented by the fiery flame of the law, which demands full payment, and there can be no release until all of the debt is paid, and only Jesus can pay it. In the twenty-fifth verse, the relationship is acknowledged, as it reads, "But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented." One's sins must need be brought to his remembrance before he truly repents, or looks away from self for comfort. The twenty-sixth verse reads, "And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence." Jesus said, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." He had just said, "I am the way, the truth and the life." No earthly creature can bridge that great gulf that is fixed between law and gospel; and truly only Jesus will be able to deliver his people among the Jews. We believe the apostle Paul saw the indescribable horror in which the Jews are in, as they are cut off from the promises of God, when he said, "For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." He had seen the tame olive branch cut off, and the wild olive branch grafted in, but he was given faith to believe that when the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, they (the Jews) would be grafted in again, and so all true Spiritual Israel shall be saved in the end. Being assured of that, Paul could well exclaim, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past

finding out!" The narrative of the rich man is continued in the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth verses, as follows: "Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment," but "Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets: let them hear them." (twenty-ninth verse.) The Jews are, indeed, in a very sad plight, and those of them who have any spiritual vision at all are, no doubt, crying unto God day and night to remember, in mercy, their father's house, the seed of Abraham after the flesh, who are to follow, lest they likewise come into that place of torment of seemingly receiving only God's wrath. Their "five brethren," indicated they were still under the law, and Jesus said to them when he was here in the flesh, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." As Abraham said, they have Moses and the prophets, and they are still under the work system of do and live, thinking they have eternal life by the works of the law, and they will have no final peace until they clearly see that they all testified of Jesus, and look only to him for salvation. The rich man continued by saying, "Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent." (thirtieth verse.) It is as hard for one under the law to repent as it is for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle. Therefore Abraham replied, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." (thirty-first verse.) So we see it is utterly impossible to convince by the reasoning powers of mankind those who are under the bondage of the law. Nothing short of the quickening power which wrought in Christ in raising him from the dead will perform the miracle. There must be a re-generation, a new birth. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." In God's own time the Jews will undoubtedly be brought into a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and then they will know what it means to rest in Abraham's bosom, or to partake of the joys that are to be found under the dispensation of grace, the church or kingdom of God here in this world. They will be made to know that it is not by works of righteousness which they can do, but that it is because of His mercy he saves them.

Experimentally speaking, we believe the only way to the joys of God's salvation is by first experiencing the tortures of that hell where one is made to feel to be without God and without hope in the world. The Psalmist said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me," before he said, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." We believe there is recognition between characters who travel this way. The one who is under conviction under the law suffers the torments of hell, feelingly cut off and doomed to eternal banishment from God's presence, and without hope of ever being accepted into the fold of God's people. The one who has experienced deliverance and has partaken of that joy which no man can take from him, realizes the blessedness of being in the kingdom of God, and while his heart may go out in deepest sympathy for the one in distress, he cannot pass back into that condition of condemnation where he was without hope, and neither can he do anything by way of delivering the soul that is being tortured. Only Jesus can do helpless sinners good, and if a word of encouragement or comfort is spoken, it must be in the name of Jesus, and all

will redound to the honor and glory of God's matchless grace. We are made to hope that we have been a witness to the things which we have here tried to present to our readers, and we trust they will be given to think on these things and if there be any praise, give it all to God. R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

MARY BARON-nee-CAMERON was born in Lancashire, England, April 11, 1872, and departed this life April 2, 1948, making her stay on earth 9 days short of 76 years. She came from England about October 1911 to join her husband in Wyoming. She moved to Cleveland, Ohio about 1919 and was baptized at the Salem Strict Baptist Church there. After that she lived in Colorado until the death of her husband. After his death she came to Seattle to be near her brother and where she could sit under the doctrine of Free and Sovereign Grace. She loved to sing the songs of Zion, and when questioned for the reason of her hope she was ever ready to give it. Though unlettered, having little education, she would show others the magazines she could read. Whenever possible they would get together at night for reading and prayer. They miss her in the brother's home as she was regular in coming when they commended themselves to their Father's care.

Her brother was making some repairs in her home when she related to him a beautiful vision of Jesus, pointing to the place where she saw him. She said he looked at her and said, "I go to prepare a place for you." She said in reply, "Where Lord?" He gave no answer but vanished. This was about two weeks previous to her passing.

We feel that our loss is her eternal gain. Services were conducted by her brother, J. W. Cameron. She leaves to mourn her passing, her brother and family in Seattle and other relatives in this country and England. Written by request.

(Mrs.) EFFIE PARKE

SISTER FERNETA JANE RUSH was born Aug. 9, 1859 and died March 4, 1948. She had been a member of Little Zion Church since May 1925. She was a sweet sister in Christ. During her later years she was afflicted and could not often meet with the church, but she was a firm believer in the true doctrine and we have the comfort of a good hope that all is well with her now. She leaves to mourn her departure her husband, one brother, nieces and nephews, besides the saints to whom she was dear. The services were conducted by Brother J. W. Cameron of Seattle, Wash. She was laid to rest at Centralia, Wash. Written by order of the church.

(Elder) L. F. ADKINS, Pastor
(Mrs.) EFFIE PARKE, Clerk

POETRY USED AT SERVICES OF SISTERS BARON AND RUSH

Sleep on, beloved, sleep and take thy rest.
Lay down thy head upon thy Saviour's breast.
We love thee well, but Jesus loves thee best.
Goodnight, Goodnight, Goodnight.

Calm is thy slumber as an infant's sleep.
But thou shalt wake no more to toil and weep:
Thine is a perfect rest, secure and deep.
Goodnight, Goodnight, Goodnight.

Until the shadows from this earth are cast;
Until He gathers in His sheaves at last;
Until the twilight gloom be overpast
Goodnight, Goodnight, Goodnight.

Only Goodnight, beloved, not farewell.
A little while and all His saints shall dwell
In hallowed union indivisible.
Goodnight, Goodnight, Goodnight.

Until we meet again before His Throne.
Cloth'd in a spotless robe He gives His Own,
Until we know even as we are known.
Goodnight, Goodnight, Goodnight.

BROTHER MICHAEL RUSH, husband of Ferneta Jane Rush was born in Lewis Co., Wash. and lived his entire life here. He was baptized without presenting himself to the church, but later on Dec. 1, 1936 he became a member of Little Zion Church at Chehalis. He died in June 1948 and was buried without the knowledge of his church, Mr. Earl Van Duren conducting the services. He was laid to rest by the side of his wife. In this we bow to the ruling of Almighty God, knowing beyond any doubt that he doeth all things well. Written by order of the church.

(Elder) L. F. ADKINS, Pastor
(Mrs.) EFFIE PARKE, Clerk

LEONIA ANNA BURNS was born in Van Zant Co., Texas, Dec. 13, 1870, and passed away Feb. 23, 1948, making her stay on earth 77 years, 2 months and 10 days. She married Hubbard Anderson Jan 16, 1890 and to this union were born three boys and one girl. Dewey, the daughter, now living at Sipe Springs, Texas, together with the help of her husband, Charlie Lewis, has been constantly with her parents caring for them for the past fourteen months until her mother's death. The boys are all deceased.

Sister Anderson's experience of grace dates back to girlhood. She united with the Primitive Baptist

Church in 1932 and lived a firm believer in its principles and doctrine until her death. She leaves to mourn her loss Brother Hubbard Anderson, daughter Dewey, one brother, one sister, many nieces and nephews and a host of friends. She was blind for a number of years before passing away. The unworthy writer held several meetings at her home during her affliction of blindness and she did enjoy the meetings.

When she passed away her daughter 'phoned me that their request was for me to come so I drove the 512 miles that day, four other Old Baptists went with me. We had to go out of the way on account of high water washing out a bridge. On one detour it looked impossible to cross that muddy creek in a car, but the Lord was with us and we made it, arriving there at 1:30 in the morning. A few days after the funeral Brother Anderson wrote me several had talked to him, saying if that was Hardshell Doctrine they were too as that was what they believed. Others said if I was ever back there they wanted to hear me again. The Lord moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform.

Weslaco, Texas (Elder) E. B. AULT

IN MEMORY OF J. FLOYD WILLIAMS WHO PASSED AWAY APRIL 26, 1946

It has been over two years since he left us,
'Twas very, very hard to say farewell;
I tried to ask the Lord to ever guide us.
And be near us where we have to dwell.

He was so patient in all his afflictions,
So kind and loving to his dear ones at home;
Words cannot express how much we shall miss him,
But we believe he is happy, never more to roam.

His vacant seat no one can ever fill,
And in God's time each one shall have to go
To that great beyond prepared according to His will,
For 'tis written in His word, he has purposed it so.

He said if 'twas God's will he was willing to go,
His prayer was answered through the return of our boys
From service which our Government called them to go,
To wage war no more, we hope, and share eternal joys.

Many hours we spent together talking of God's mercies,
How He had blessed us all through trials and pain;
And may He remember this poor worm of the dust,
'Till He shall call me to my home above to remain.

May He bless me to mingle with His people here,
To share their sorrows, burdens and grief;
And may I sing with them the songs to me so dear,
Until I shall glory in His cross and find relief.

My remaining days God alone doth know,
May I spend them in praise to His holy name;
And through all my afflictions, pain and woe,
Praise Him who is of endless fame.

Keeling, Va. (Mrs.) MATTIE B. WILLIAMS

OBITUARY

ELDER J. F. BRIGGS was born Dec. 1, 1875 and departed this life Oct. 24, 1947. He was married three times, two companions having preceded him in death. To the first union four children were born, two of them preceded him in death. Surviving are one daughter, Mrs. Dossie Loveless, Crockett, Texas and Joseph C. Briggs, eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild. He also left a faithful daughter-in-law, Mrs. Pearl Briggs, who loved him very much.

His third marriage was to Mrs. Maggie Elmore, June 5, 1947 who is left to mourn his death with the children and grandchildren. During his three weeks of illness he was very patient, never complaining and always ready to give his patient, loving wife and friends a smile and words of thanks as long as he could speak. He left many friends. He was faithful until the Lord called him home; abe in doctrine and discipline; contended for that grand old doctrine of election and predestination of all things. He was gentle and kind to all, a kind, loving and dutiful husband and father. The church and his children will miss him, but most of all his dear companion who is left in great grief. I will miss him greatly as we were companions in gospel bonds. We fought the same battles, suffered the same conflicts and rejoiced together with joy that none but God can give. At the time of his death he was pastor of the Old Salem Church, six miles east of Teague which church he loved very much. I do not have the date that he united with the Old Baptists. He was liberated to exercise in public and soon after was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry. Written by one that loved him for the truth's sake.

(Elder) W. O. BEENE

(Re-published by request to correct errors and give more details.)

The yearly meeting of the Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church at Snow Hill, Md. will be held on the first Sunday in November instead of the fourth as has been their custom.

BY ORDER OF THE CHURCH

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

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CORRESPONDENCE

Box 315, El Dorado, Ark.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am happy to have the privilege of sending you a new subscriber to the *Signs*. He wants his subscription to begin with the July issue so that he may have the full publication of the letter written by Mrs. Louise Newman of Memphis, Tenn.

Brother Dodson, I enjoyed your editorial in the July issue entitled, "TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY," and was so glad you were given a mind to quote the letter from your father. It seemed so good and pleasant for it to be shared with the readers. It is comforting to read letters and articles written by the fathers in which they have been able to expound the doctrine of God our Savior. We are reminded with great joy that this blessed truth we hope we are enabled to love and contend for at this present day and age is the same that has been loved and contended for in all ages, and a few have been taught it and contended for it out of each and every generation. It has never changed and will never change. God is unchangeable, likewise his doctrine. His truth and his divine nature shall never change. A blessed truth to hope to be enabled to believe, because of his mercy and grace in revealing the truth to his children—vessels of mercy. Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever.

We are persuaded this not only embraces the unchangeableness of the blessed Savior, but the truth as it is in him—his gospel—and everything concerning and pertaining to him and the salvation of his people, those given to him by the Father before the world began. Of the unchangeableness of the Lord the prophet said, "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." His counsel is immutable and is confirmed by his oath. Such a comfort this is to God's humble poor when they are enabled to meditate on this glorious and blessed truth, "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." That which is within the veil is the blessed Savior, the forerunner of all his dear children, those he died for, made the atonement for and redeemed. All that the Father gave him. "Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Heb. 6:20.

He is the forerunner. He is not going to enter or may enter depending upon some condition or something to be done or performed by man or any contingency, *but is entered* and entered for *us, his elect children.* And it is an entry that there is no doubt about because *he is* entered and it is an entry for them that will not fail nor cease to be, for he is "made an high priest *for ever* after the order of Melchisedec." Yes, it

is sure and stedfast. No doubt about it being forever, no doubt about it embracing all his elect children that were given him by the Father. But are we embraced therein? There is the serious question with us. Are we embraced therein? If so we are sure to live in the sunlight of his eternal love in that upper and better kingdom forever and forever. For if embraced: then the apostle in reply to the question of "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" goes on to say, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." May the God of all grace bless and keep us all in all his ways unto the coming of his everlasting kingdom is the humble prayer of your little brother in hope and in bonds.

(Elder) W. A. SPEER

Route 2, Ripley, Tenn.

EXPERIENCES

I was born in Crockitt Co., Tenn. close to Crockitt Mills, Sept. 21, 1895. My parents were Lonnie Caroll and Meddie Rice White. They moved close to Ripley, Tenn. when I was three years old. We moved to Blytheville, Ark. in the fall of 1904 and on Jan. 25, 1905 my mother died. Father moved back to Ripley in April 1905. Mother being gone I felt a great loss. I had a dear little sister and my father to love but I missed mother. I traveled on in sadness until I was thirteen years of age and then united with the Presbyterian Church in Flippen, Tenn. The next year I was sick during the months of July, Aug. and Sept. with typhoid fever.

In Nov. the deacon of my church came to see me, saying he was making up funds to buy some Christmas presents for the preacher's children. I told him I would give him some money as soon as I could, that I had been sick three months and could not work. Then he said, "get the money as soon as possible and bring it to the church." I was displeased with the matter and asked him if the Presbyterians believed in visiting the sick, that I had been sick three months and only one of them came to see me. He made some excuses and went home. I got the money and the next meeting day took it and laid it on the organ for the last time. I saw that day that I did not believe what they did. I did not mind giving the money but I did not believe their doctrine.

A few years later I told them to take my name from their book. I felt I was lost but I did not know where to go. I wanted to do something for myself. One night I dreamed I saw a ball of fire coming out of the West and it came by where I was standing. It was about five feet from the ground but did not burn anything, just moving in a straight line. I traveled along in sadness until Feb. 1911. I married J. H. Kerley, son of Elder J. W. Kerley. He preached that salvation is of the Lord, not by money, not by man. I began believing the Old Primitive Baptist doctrine. In 1938 I had another dream. I was baptized, the preacher and I being the only ones there. When I came out of the water the preacher was gone. I walked to the bank and Sister Onie E. Stafford was waiting for me. She was a true believer in Christ. I said, "Sister Stafford, the sky looked foggy a few minutes ago but now it looks clear." She said, "Yes, you follow me."

In a few months I began talking to Elder Kerley. I did not tell him about my dreams. I had told him I wanted a

home with the Old Baptists and that I believed salvation is of the Lord. He said, "Bessie I do not doubt you in the least." On Nov. 11, 1945 I asked for a home with the Old Primitive Baptist Church in Memphis, Tenn. and was baptized by Elder H. G. Brown on the fourth Sunday in May 1946. If I am saved it is by the grace of God and the Lord Jesus Christ. I want to live in the Lord's will, and when my time is over here on earth I want to sleep in his name if it is his will. I am now fifty-two years old, just traveling on. I have my dear husband with me and six living children and one grandson. Two children passed away. I close with lots of love to the household of faith. From a little sister the least of all if one at all. Saved by grace if saved at all. May God bless us all and lead us with his right arm.

(Mrs.) BESSIE KERLEY

I was born April 15, 1890, growing like other babies until I was eighteen months old. I was the tenth child and the baby of the family. At this age while the older children were playing with me they burst some peach seeds and gave me a kernel. This I could not chew and half of it went down into my windpipe. I could not cough it up and an abscess formed and burst through to the outside. I did cough it up after one year but was left with one lung.

My father was a poor man and had to work and some nights had to walk the floor and carry me. Mother said I loved my father and when they would take me to the field to see him I would cry for him to carry me while he worked. I am not wanting pity as I believe it is all due me. If Christ suffered for me I should suffer also. I could not do or have things like other boys. I would wonder why not. I think I know why now, it was not God's will. I never went to school much as when I was strong enough I had to work being the only boy at home.

Before going farther I want to say I am not ashamed of the way I was raised. The Lord was in the matter. Father was a Primitive Baptist preacher and while I do not want to boast I believe he was a big one. As to mother, there was none better. On Feb. 1, 1911 I married Bessie Lee White. Thanks be to God I have her yet and she is just as sweet to me now as then. Nov. 13, 1911 our first baby was born. She was sweet and smart as could be, growing fast until the third Sunday in Aug. 1912 when she was stricken helpless in both body and mind. Her condition remained that way all her days on earth which were thirty-two years and two days. Seven other children were born to us, six of which are living.

As a boy sometimes I would think I ought to be better and I would try to straighten up as I call it. In a little while I would see myself in worse things than ever. In Feb. 1918 I was made to believe God ruled all things. While in the field I was taken with the flu. I hated to go to the house. Something seemed to be telling me we would not all get through it. We lost one daughter.. While on my bed I saw some mighty things. I saw a church torn and blown away, and the thought came, that was not my church the right church will live forever.

In the fall of 1921 there was an Association at father's church. I was blessed to have company in my home the next week after that. I had a dream, I was told to pray and I knew not what to do. I awoke but could not pray. I went to sleep again believing if God did not have mercy on me I was lost, and the world without end. I fell asleep and the same voice said, "Do not pray until you are told to do so." I

was mixed up but I would not tell any of the good brethren though it did not leave me. The next fall I went to another Association, the Bethel, held with Cain Creek Church. On Friday night at a good old brother's house was the first time I ever heard the gospel. I did not sleep much that night. The next morning I went to the barn to help feed the stock. When I got back to the house the dear old saints were out in the yard washing and talking. I was so filled up I could not stay there and went behind the house and leaned upon a fence where they could not see me cry. In just a short time my father came out and called me. I turned around and there stood the old man the sweetest I ever saw him. He was lighting his pipe. He said, "go eat your breakfast." That was all he said. Everybody looked happy and I felt lost. I met a man there that did not belong to the church but I thought he ought to. That man stayed in my mind. His name is Earl Jones. I believe if I am a child of God or ever will be I was on April 15, 1890. If so I was chosen in Christ before the world was.

In Jan. 1924 I was sick with death staring at me until March 8th. I could see old satan on the walls of my room clawing at me. I thought of something I had read, the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh. I thought he would do his will and I did not fear death. That was not my time to go, I had not gone to the bottom. I went on down to where I wanted to die and get away from my family.

I went to hear the Primitive Baptists preach all I could. On Nov. 11, 1945 I drove up in front of our little church in Memphis, Tenn. The preacher and deacons were standing by their cars. Something said to me, "talk to them." I told the preacher that I wanted a home with them. He told me that he knew it and when they opened the doors of the church I asked for a home. They took me in and I was baptized the fourth Sunday in May 1946. On Thursday before I was baptized I dreamed that I was in a crowd of the brethren when I wanted to ask my father something. I went to him and this man I saw at Cain Creek Church was there just as he was when I saw him the first time, and my father was just like he was at that time. On Monday after I was baptized everything went dark with me. It seemed to be the worst time I ever saw, but that night everything became plain, and I wrote to Brother Brown, the preacher who baptized me. The first dream I was made to believe that Christ prayed it for me in the seventeenth chapter of John. If he does not tell any one to pray it is not a prayer.

I do not know whether this is an experience of grace or not, but if it is I do know it is not anything that I have done that brought it on. These are just part of the things I have seen in my life. If any one gets comfort from this give God the praise. I am less than nothing and do not know why God has spared me all this time any more than it has been his will. I hope I am a brother in Christ, and if saved it was grace that did it, not I, a sinner.

J. H. KERLEY

Route 1, St. Albans, W. Va.

"O that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still!
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will!"

O that my God would lead by his Holy Spirit in the strait and narrow way, into truth and righteousness; O that he would keep me from evil, evil surmisings, backbiting, jealousy, tattling, thinking or speaking evil against a brother or sister, from gendering

strife. O that my God would deliver me through the abundance of his grace from vanity, vain glory, from becoming vainly puffed up of a fleshly mind, from false zeal, from trusting in the cursed arm of flesh. O that he would bridle my tongue, that unruly evil in me, the tongue whom no man hath tamed, whom no man can tame, which tongue sets on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell. O that my God would lead me and keep me at the feet of my brethren, and at the foot of the cross of Jesus, my Immanuel. O that he would move in me by his spirit to continually esteem others better than myself and make me to always know the *beam* is in my eye and the *mote* in my brother's eye.

O that my God would bless me with tolerance, forbearance, the spirit of forgiveness, bless me with charity which covereth all and hides a multitude of faults (sins), bless me with love, (which love is the fulfilling of all law,) (against which there is no law.) Bless me with brotherly kindness, gentleness, meekness, take away my heart of stone and give me a heart of flesh. O that my God would cause me to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith I am called, that I might serve him in meekness and fear, and worship him in the beauty of holiness. O that he would make the labor of my ministry that labor of love, and so ordain in this labor a fruitful ministry to the comfort of his saints and the glory of his name.

O that I might share the love and fellowship of my kindred in Christ, (although I am altogether undeserving of their love or notice.) O that he would make me fervent in prayer, and tear each cursed idol out that dares to rival my God. O for restraining grace, for deliverance from presumptuous thoughts. O for the spirit of resignation, for reconciliation before my God, that I might stand resigned to my hard, rugged and tedious lot, that I might kiss the rod, and when the furnace I prove, that I might in my Jesus glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts whereby we cry Abba, Father. O that in my beloved I be made to be a recipient of *grace, mercy* and *truth.* And finally when the warfare is ended, when sin is finished, to awake in the likeness of my Redeemer God, to see him as he is, and be like him, and be satisfied. O blessed hope! My soul leaps forward at the thought. O blessed Savior! how great is thy grace. In love for the cause of Christ, and in hope of the mercy of God.

(Elder) H. J. BIRD

Topsham, Me.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: This A.M. I suppose you will be preaching God's word and how I would love to be where I might hear you. I have nothing of interest to write, nothing new, the same old story ever new as I have been alone all winter with no one to talk to. I always think back to you, a wonderful day back in Sept. 1925. I have been favored this winter and I hope I give thanks where thanks are due. Sometimes I am deep down in the valley but I never lose my hope or faith. I know He will come again and the peace he brings with him is blessed for he says, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." What more could we ask? Sometimes when I hear and read so much of the awful things that happen I wonder, still I know it is ordered. There are so many religious societies,

and people are striving to save people, still what crime and dishonesty goes on throughout the world. To me there is not much Christianity in this world but I do not wonder, and should I tell people what I think they would say I was not in my right mind. I have to be careful what ideas I advance. Perhaps I should not but father told me never to argue over religion. He was a good father and I never found his words untrue.

We are told about the last days, still there are those who do not believe it, and how they are striving for God. I have a friend here who has been in the church since she was twelve. She can repeat the word of God but does she understand it? She will pull it apart, I think, and asks me all manner of questions. She read me this one day, "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things," and asked me if I believed it. I said "yes," she said "I don't." I pitied her. Then last night she said, it says, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," do you believe that? I said, "yes." Then she said the foolish thing I have heard other people say, "If you believe that why don't you go and have all the good time you can, it would not make any difference?" Well, I said, "You say you have had an experience; so have I, do you feel like going out and raising a disturbance? I am glad God keeps me, I feel he has opened my eyes and has given me a hope beyond this world and will keep it to the end. It tells you of people that would deceive the very elect if it were possible." Then she said, "I should not think you would have any need for prayer." Little she must know how my prayers go out to God to keep me. I know I have no strength in myself and it strengthens my faith for I know there is nothing God cannot do. She was studying her Sabbath School lesson and wanted me to help her but I was not much help. I know I am evil and full of sin and I mourn and weep for it is against Him and him only I have sinned, and he bore the sins of all his people. Little wonder he sweat drops of blood.

I am given small books to read like, "A line a day," "The Upper Room," "The Secret Place." Well, Elder Dodson I do not need them. When I want to read I turn to my Bible and always find comfort. Does it not say, "Be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine." But who keeps me? It is not of myself I know. I had a book sent to me, "Two Worlds" by Milford Hall, Sr., I have read it and turned to read it again. The brother has suffered and I think I know something of that suffering, so that makes us brethren, does it not? Does it not say, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." I hope God holds me steadfast in the faith he gave me. Well Elder Dodson here is my letter. It is not what I would like to have written but it is what I have so please accept it with charity in your heart. Will close with a prayer for you that God will bless you in your walk of life, give you comfort as needed and open up to you the meaning of his word to his honor and glory. My love and fellowship. (Mrs.) RACHEL POTTER

KINGWOOD CHURCH LETTER
—to—
DELAWARE RIVER ASSOCIATION

DEARLY LOVED ONES: It is our desire to express gratitude to our heavenly Father for this happy privilege of addressing you, our sister churches, and of bringing to you again our annual message concerning the welfare of our church since you met with us at Locktown one

year ago. It is in love and appreciation that we greet the Hopewell Church and wish it God's blessing in the hospitality it is extending to our Association. May those labors and responsibilities which we know you have gladly assumed, in preparing for and conducting this meeting, realize for you the full measure of joy you have held in anticipation. May you find pleasure in meeting with the visiting brethren and friends, and spiritual joy and comfort in listening to the truth as it is presented in the varied aspects by those of God's messengers sent among you.

We come humbly before both the Hopewell and Southampton Churches with whom for so many years we have been united in love and close kinship, feeling that we may lay before you our joys and our sorrows, our praises and our lamentations, believing that you will hear us patiently and stand ready to give us guidance wherein you see that we err. It is a mystery that those professing the hope of being "Children of the heavenly King" should be more ready to voice their sorrows and lamentations, than their praises and thanksgiving but it is so with us, even though we have been amply shown and can aver with Jeremiah that "The Lord is good, his mercy endureth forever." We have been richly blessed in being shielded from the great dangers and visitations of woe that imperil so many in our confused and disquieted world, and have been openly kept as objects of God's care and love, receiving from his hand health to permit us to go about our duties, all necessary temporal comforts, and beyond and above these the blessing of peace among us, and, we hope, the humble desire to be kept in the way. Sinners we are, totally unfit to let fall from evil lips words pertaining to the great and holy God who reigns in majesty in the heavens and works his will in all his creatures, yet we are irresistibly drawn to, and bound by, the belief that through the amazing love and sacrifice of his beloved Son, God can look upon us as his children.

In our foolish wisdom we are wont to feel that if God would bless us with additional membership, we then should be, as a church, more worthy your esteem and fellowship, but in this we are forgetting that in God alone lies our sufficiency and strength and though in his love he denies those desires we feel to be right, still his ways are ever just, holy and perfect.

Through our lack of faith we question. We look for signs and proof that we are not deluded, saying as did Job before us, "Why, seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him not see his days?" More often do we pine in doubt than rejoice in his continuing love and watchcare. Indeed, among us the blackest of sins, unbelief, abounds. Such knowledge bows us in deep humility. Our walk before God is careless, far from what it should be; our words are vain and unbecoming. Pray for us that we may worship rather than deny him. These are some of the weaknesses we would confess to you, asking whether your fellowship can reach beyond the bounds of our perversities and still embrace us. If it can we believe that we shall have your prayers that we may become more Christlike and remember his ways to walk in them.

We continue to assemble on the second Sunday in each month at 3 P.M. during the months from April through November. Those meetings are our oases, made so by the patient and loving ministrations of two of God's faithful witnesses, Elders C. W. Vaughn, and R. L. Dodson, who, unless providentially prevented, come to us in turn. It is then as we hear them repeat the

amazing messages of truth which God gives them to bestow upon us that the clouds of doubt dispel, and in our hearts we feel to say, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." Our congregations are small but constant. As in years past our dependence rests upon those without, upon those friends who so graciously stand ready to assist us as we need, and who are so much a part of us, loving and loved for His sake.

We come amongst you hungering for that spiritual food we trust God's ministers present have been vouchsafed to give us. Gladly we have them know the appreciation we feel for the services and comfort they bring us. How truly blest we feel them to be, to be fitted and called for their exalted position. May they share in the comfort and gladness which they bring to others. We are grieved that two voices so often heard in our Associational meetings in bringing the glad tidings of eternal life for condemned sinners, have since our last session been silenced in death. We miss these brothers and mourn with all others who loved them, but in a better sense we rejoice that their cares and sorrows are ended and that for them hope has now blossomed into the full fruition of ineffable joys in the realms of eternal bliss.

As we now meet for these seasons of worship may it be God's pleasure to stir our spirits within us. May heavenly manna be provided for those who hunger; may the thirsty drink freely from the water of life; may the light of his countenance shine upon those who walk in darkness; may the needy be supplied from the riches of God's grace; may those who stand afar off be brought near; may the faith of the faltering ones be increased; and may the weary find a haven of rest, so that as later we resume our accustomed walks in life we may all do so strengthened in our belief that the Lord is, indeed, our shepherd, and we shall not want, and though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death we will fear no evil for he is with us, and may we, too, feel that his rod and his staff comfort us.

(Mrs.) ALWILDA R. STRYKER

TO MY CHILDREN: I will tell what I feel is my experience. You know I united with the Methodist Church when a child and had no use for the Primitive Baptists. One day I heard Brother Pace preach. I thought it was the best sermon I had ever heard, and it was for it was the first one I had ever heard. From that I began to see I was a lost sinner. I began to read the Bible and found things that would comfort me and also that would condemn me. One evening I laid the Bible aside feeling I was not fit to touch it, and thought I never would again. When I laid it down I saw a deep pit right at my feet as black as night. I thought that was the place for me and felt I would be cast into it. The next morning I got my hymn book thinking I would sing and may be that would drive my burdens away. The more I sang the better I felt. I looked out at some red-oak trees in the yard and they were the prettiest I had ever seen. The Bible says, "all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." It looked like they were praising God. My burden was gone. If this is not an experience I do not have one, but I hope I have a hope that I would not give for the world.

Dear children, I will try to write a little of my faith and my belief to leave here with you when I am gone. Some of you or all of you may be made to believe it some day as I was made to believe it and am glad of it. I believe

in an all wise and all powerful God. He has the power over all things in heaven and earth for he created all things, and he has said, "whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine." I believe he can and will do as he pleases with that that is his own for he said, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." He viewed through time and decreed the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done. What he has decreed must come the way he foresaw and purposed it should come. God created all things from the least to the greatest. I believe he created them for a purpose and that they are fulfilling that purpose. I believe God has an elect people and that they are those he (Christ) died for and that not one of them can be lost. Oh! if I only knew that I was one of them I would be satisfied, but I only have a sweet little hope that I would not take the world and all that is in it for. I believe God gave me the hope for he showed me that I was nothing and less than nothing. I still see that I am nothing for I can do nothing without him. He is still taking care of me, directing my steps in this sinful world. I hope he will guide me on to the end. I believe God is a sovereign who is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent, and is therefore, the first great cause of all causes. I believe he is the source of all power and the powers that be are ordained of him. I believe in the purpose of God so as to exclude all chance. I am glad that I believe in the eternal fixedness of God's purposes, that he declared the end from the beginning, the things that are not yet done saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." I will soon pass through the chilly waters of death, and if I can be made able to look to that strong God-given faith, to the God I hope I love, and be borne to that haven of rest from the troubles of life, it will be a great sinner saved by grace.

MATTIE BOYD

(*See obituary in this issue.*)

THE NECESSITY OF OUR RESURRECTION AND THE MANNER THEREOF

by

the late Elder W. L. SLUSHER

To start with I will say I believe that it is I, this old body you see walking around, that is benefitted in the resurrection. I do pray and trust, or hope I do, that God will lead and direct my poor, weak, faltering mind while I try in my weakness to say a few words on this great and grand subject. Yes, and one that is so sweet and precious to me. If you destroy the resurrection of this old body then you have destroyed my hope.

Paul wrote in Romans 8:23—"And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Yes, Paul like all the rest of God's chosen elect ones was waiting for this when his body should be changed and brought forth a spiritual body. Yes, this is what all of God's loved ones are waiting and hoping for when we will see him as he is and be like him. David said, "I shall be satisfied when I awake, with thy likeness." Again we hear Paul saying in 1 Cor. 15:12—"Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" Then is Christ not risen? The 14th verse reads, "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." In the 19th verse, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Yes, these old bodies is what Paul is talk-

ing about for he says, it is sown in weakness and raised in power, it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption, it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. I believe Paul was talking about these old bodies that we have. They are the ones that get the benefits or are benefitted in the resurrection.

I do not believe that the blessed Son of God came to redeem his own Spirit; no, he came to redeem that which was lost. The Spirit was never lost but God hath said, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." We can see it is not the Spirit that transgressed, but it was the man, Adam, and I believe that is what Christ came to redeem for he did not come to save his own Spirit, but it was that which was lost and that is I as Paul would have it when he said, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." I believe these old bodies are changed and raised to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall they ever be with the Lord. I do not believe carnality will be raised, but all will be spiritual. We see in the 37th chapter of Ezekiel where he speaks of the valley of dry bones, "they were very dry." The Lord spake unto this old servant saying, "Can these bones live?" and he said, "O Lord, God, thou knowest." Then the Lord told the old servant to prophesy so he did as he was commanded as all of God's true servants do. "There was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them." And the Lord God of Israel did breathe upon these bones as slain that they may live. Then God said to the old prophet these bones are the whole house of Israel. Yes they stood up as a great army. These are the ones whose graves the Lord is going to open. He said he was going to bring them up from their graves.

Yes, the Lord is coming the second time without sin unto salvation to gather his jewels home, that where he is they shall be also. I believe these old bodies is what he is coming back for. He has said the sea shall give up the dead that are in it. We read in John 5:28-29 "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." So it is an absolute fact both the elect and non-elect are resurrected, or brought forth from the grave or wherever they may be laid. Yes, that would be their grave. It matters not where the dead are buried, in the sea or elsewhere, that is their grave and that is what God is going to raise them from. I believe it is these old bodies that he is speaking about. These are the ones that are benefitted in the resurrection. That is what Paul was waiting for. We all groan within ourselves, waiting the adoption, to wit, the redemption of these bodies, when they shall be changed and fashioned like unto the precious body of the blessed Son of God. The Lord hath said, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death." Hosea 13:14.

Well, my Father's children, I believe that all of these old servants are talking about these old bodies. They were given the revelation to see and understand that God was fully able to raise up all the bodies that have died both of the just and the unjust, and he will divide them as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. He will say to

his sheep, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," and he will say to the goats depart from me unto everlasting fire for I never knew you. I believe God is all wise and, too, he hath all power. There is no other power outside of God. He has said there is but one power, and the powers that be are ordained of God. Then all things are his for he hath made them. All things were made by him and for him they are. They fulfill his eternal purposes to a jot, not one faileth; he fills immensity. All things are clearly seen of him, hell hath no covering. This is the God that speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." All things come about as God hath predestinated they should for he hath set their bounds and habitation so they cannot go beyond the commands of God, nor thwart his decrees for he hath said to the proud waves of the sea, thus far thou shalt come and no farther. He is God and all things obey him. He it is that kills and makes alive, he wounds and he heals. Oh, what a wonderful God he is. He controls all things, not a part but all. He is the one that made all things; without him there was nothing made that is made, and it is all to his own glory and eternal purpose. He fashioned all things before they existed, things do not have to appear for him to know it for all things are present with him, yes, known unto God are all his ways. Well could it be said, "What his soul desireth, even that he doeth." As I thought so shall it be, what I have purposed it shall come to pass, for I am God and there is none other besides me. Then well can he bring about all things as it pleases him. Yes, he is from everlasting to everlasting, the same unchangeable great I am. I believe he is the first great and grand cause of all causes, nothing could take place unless God willed it so. He hath made the wicked for the day of evil. It is said, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." I, the Lord, with my own hand have formed the crooked serpent, so I believe that God is the maker and builder, the upholder and controller, the supreme ruler and righteous disposer of all things, creatures, times and events.

He is the one and only one who could blind their eyes and harden their hearts and there was none to hinder. He can do all things, there is nothing too hard for him to do. "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Why? Because it seemeth good in his sight. Then this is the God that purposed to make the heavens and the earth and the fulness therein. Yes, he purposed to people this old earth, so he spoke and it was done. I believe this is the God that chose his people in Christ before the world was, yes, long before the dust of the highest hills was laid or the brooks abounded with water. He holds the wind in his fists, and the water he holds in the hollow of his hand. He weighs the mountains in scales and the hills in balances.

Dear ones of my Father's family, I believe he is the only eternal, sovereign God, he is over and above all things.

There is no law over him, but he himself is the law maker, hence there is no sin in what he does. Sin is the transgression of the law, so what he does is just and right, holy and good. Then this great, all wise, eternal, unchangeable, all powerful God did foresee all his elect chosen ones even before they existed, but in his wisdom they were with him. These are the ones that he so loved that he gave his darling Son to suffer and die upon the shameful tree or cross. Yes, that he should redeem them from under the law. He has said, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave." The Lord says he is going to do that and he is fully able to do it. I believe that Christ came to this low ground of sin and sorrow to save his people from their sins. Paul said, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." He did not come to save his own Spirit, but to redeem those of his chosen elect ones from under the law, that our foreparents fell under. So to me it seems that it is these old bodies of ours that are going to be benefitted in the final resurrection. We see that the Son of God was buried for our sins and rose for our justification. He was the first resurrection in fact he says, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." Then if we be one of God's chosen ones there is no power that can hinder these old bodies from being raised from the graves. God hath all power over death, hell and the grave. Both the just and the unjust are resurrected, the just to life everlasting, the unjust to everlasting shame and contempt. Paul says again, "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not?" I believe he has reference to these old natural bodies for they are all that can die. The Spirit of God never dies, then it must without a doubt be these old bodies of ours that are raised up from the grave, and changed and fashioned like unto his (Christ's) glorious body. Then is when we will see him as he is and be like him and be satisfied. If I am not deceived this is my meat and drink to hope I have a hope in the resurrection. Oh, what a glorious promise that these old bodies shall be changed and made like unto the precious body of the Son of God. That will be good enough. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," that is all the chosen, that is the all he is speaking about that shall be made alive, for he says "in Christ."

Let me say again I believe God is all wise, has all power everywhere and over all things. Then all things are ever present with him. Things do not have to appear before he can know it for he hath made all things that are visible or invisible, whether thrones or powers or principalities. The all powerful God did before ordain and predestinate all things whatsoever comes to pass. He hath set their bounds and habitation. There is nothing that can go beyond the commands of God nor thwart his decrees for he hath said, "I have purposed it, so shall it stand." I believe that God has the power to do all things, and there is nothing that he cannot do. If so he would cease to have all power, but we read in his holy word that all power in heaven and earth are in my hands so there is no power but of God and the powers that be are ordained of God. All things fulfill his eternal purpose and there is nothing that is that God did not will it so. It is all here by the divine power of Almighty God, the one that spake as never man did; the one that said, "What his soul desireth, even that he doeth."

I want to say God is all in all. He

works and none can hinder, speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. He declared "the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." So he is the controller, upholder, the supreme ruler over all worlds, creatures and events, the eternal sovereign over all good and evil. He is the one that speaks to Isaiah, telling him to comfort his people. Speak ye comfortably to the church, which is his chosen elect ones, by telling them "that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." This is what all of God's true servants are commanded to do. To feed his sheep by telling them what the Lord hath done for them, not what we can do, no but that his own arm hath brought him salvation. Yes, and tell them of the sweet promises that he hath in store for them, to wit, the resurrection of these, our bodies. Again let me quote, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." 1 Cor. 15:19.

I want to say to one and all of the dear household of faith, I mean the absolute predestinarian people, that I believe in the resurrection of these old bodies. That is my hope, if I have any, destroy that and you have destroyed my hope. In conclusion I want to say I do believe in the absolute predestination of all things, good and evil. I believe God is a God of purpose, There is not a thing, good or evil, that is here by chance. God hath before determined that they should be as they are. He hath said I am God and beside me I know of no other. Let me, an old sinner saved by grace if saved at all, beg an interest in your prayers when at a throne of God's rich grace, and, too, will all you dear brethren and sisters throw the mantle of charity over my imperfections for they are many. I realize that I have only hinted at this great and glorious subject. I am nothing and less than nothing. I do not feel worthy of the least of God's blessings, but hope I am a beggar of God's mercy. Now I will sign your little, unworthy brother if one at all in hope of the resurrection of these bodies.

Route 2, Box 273, Plant City, Fla.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I have delayed answering your letter with the hopes that I would be able to send you a remittance for subscription to the *Signs* but it looks as if I will be unable to do so at the present time. A freeze and rainy weather almost ruined our strawberry crop.

It is a blessed thought to me when I can see God's ruling hand in it all. He works all things after the counsel of his own will, "and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I feel that his purposes will ripen fast unfolding every hour; the bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower. I feel that these troubles and trials are according to his mighty counsel, and that it will work to his honor and glory. He will provide for his own, but the thing that bothers me most is whether I am his or not. Such a vile sinner I feel myself to be and can only cry to God for mercy. God be merciful to me, a sinner, is my cry. It is not for justice I ask for if justice was meted out to me I would be lost, for the thing I would that I do not, and the things I would not that I do. Sin is mixed with all I do. I de-

sire to praise God for his mercy and grace bestowed upon one such as I, and all the blessings he hath bestowed upon me. It is not by works of righteousness which I have done for man's works are all in vain and are of no avail. "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." If man performs any good works it is God's work manifested through that individual, and he gives God all the honor and glory in all things.

I hope I have been made to see these things not through or by man, but it is God that has shown me. There is no other resting place with me except in Jesus who is the author and finisher of the Christian's faith. He leads us in paths of righteousness for his name's sake, and not in paths of sin. When we walk in sinful ways it is the lusts of the flesh caused by that old serpent, the devil, who God made for a specific purpose, and I believe he is carrying out the purpose for which he was made. This does not make God the author of sin or confusion, and as for me, even though I believe in God's predestination concerning all events whatsoever come to pass, I cannot hide behind that doctrine as a cloak for my sinful acts. This doctrine and salvation by grace and grace alone is sweet to me and I cannot rejoice in any other. Grace and works cannot be mixed; if of grace then no more works, and I am convinced it is all of grace which is a gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast.

Brother Dodson, these are a few of the things I hope I believe—that God is all powerful, the powers that be are ordained of God. I know that I have not learned these things of myself, but I hope that God in his infinite wisdom and mercy has revealed himself to me as the chiefest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely.

The *Signs* has been coming to my family for many years. My father and grandfather took it before me. I can remember when only in my youth I would steal away up in the attic and read them, and it seemed even then I would rejoice in those who wrote about God's wonderful mercy and grace. He is the same God yesterday, to-day and forever and changes not. I received the *Signs* you sent me and I can say I have enjoyed reading them and have been made able to rejoice. I want to thank you very much for your kindness toward me, a sinner saved by grace if saved at all, and less than the least of the saints if one at all. I trust that the Lord will bless me to be able to send you a remittance for the *Signs* in the near future so that I can renew my subscription. I hope I can be reconciled that his will not mine be done. I have written more than I intended and this is very imperfect like the writer. May God continue his blessing to you and all the dear writers for the good Old School Baptist publication. Remember this unworthy one when at a throne of grace. Your unworthy brother I hope.

ROBERT L. MILES

Beetle, Ky.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE BEYOND THIS VALE OF TEARS: I want to thank you for sending me the *Signs of the Times* these many years. I read and reread them. Received the June copy yesterday and sat down and read it through. It contained good, sound preaching and I surely enjoyed it. The letter from the "Little Sister from Texas" was wonderful. She surely has been taught by the Lord. Also the one to Elder H. C. Ker by you which was republished by request. I would like you to write on the subject of prayer. I believe a man can pray any time, any-

where and in any position if he has the spirit of prayer and if he does not have that he cannot pray. It must come from the Power House. The Lord must put it in the heart. Jonah prayed in the belly of the whale. Put a man's eyes out and he can pray just the same. Thank you again for sending me your wonderful paper. I hope to get it as long as I live. Hope the Lord will bless you and keep you by his grace. I believe he will give us grace to help in every time of need. Yours in love.

T. H. SALYERS

(*See editorial column.*)

Mansfield, Ga.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: You no doubt think I have forgotten you but it is all my fault. I do not want to get behind with my paper but just could not get to it. I often think of you and family and think how you all took us in, in your home and at church also. I wish you would come to our home so we could repay you for your kindness. I want to tell you that I have enjoyed the *Signs* so much the last year or so, more than usual and want to have it in my home as long as I live. I have been reading it for over fifty years. When I go among my brethren I feel at home if I see the *Signs of the Times*. I am mailing you money-order for $4 as I am in the red for 1947. I hope you will overlook my short comings. Your brother in Christ I hope. WILLIAM F. ADAMS

"The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow."—Psalms 90:10.

In our youth, when we first begin to think for ourselves, we look forward to a long life of perpetual sunshine and happiness. We have our plans for the future, and in our weakness and ignorance we think as the common saying is, "Life is what you make of it." We determine in our minds to make a success of it. We see only the bright side, and we determine within ourselves to make the world a better place for having lived in it. What anticipation we have in our young days! What hopes for the future! We have not learned that we are vanity and that our life is but a vapor that appeareth for a short moment and vanisheth away, or that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" and that man in his best estate is altogether vanity.

But when we have come over what then seemed to us a long way, and the years, with their joys and sorrows, their trials and disappointments, have passed so swiftly away, and we find we have not attained unto that to which we had aspired, we feel to say, "Few and evil have the days of my life been." We begin to realize our weakness, and have learned that our boasted strength was only vanity. We are made to see that we are wholly incapable of doing any thing and cannot boast ourselves of tomorrow. Then we are made to cry, "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am." Then we can look back on the years we have traveled, and though they may be filled with sorrows and disappointments, after we have tried our strength and found it to be but weakness, we feel how short is our allotted time; how swiftly the years have gone by; we must face the fact that we are old. The vanities of this life lose their charm and our hope is "for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." We cling to the many promises that can never fail. "And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you."

How sweet, how assuring! When we see the evening shadows gather around

us, and the twilight drawing near we can rely on the promise, "He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." We have been down in deep waters and passed through fiery trials, but he has been our God and will be our guide even unto death. (Mrs.) EFFIE EDWARDS

827 - 47th Place,
Birmingham, Ala.

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604 Lexington Rd., Pleasant Hill, Mo.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON AND THE SAINTS SCATTERED ABROAD WHO MAY READ THIS: I would like if, the dear Lord will guide my pen, to write you of our wonderful meeting at Little Flock last Saturday afternoon and Sunday. (July 1948.) We have felt very keenly the loss of our dear brethren, W. H. Morris and Elder W. L. Hall who was our Pastor for over thirty years, although we know for them it is better. The Lord is still mindful of us in that Brother L. L. Schenck of Williamstown, Kans. has been able to be with us and we have chosen him Pastor. He is faithful to come, not shunning to declare the whole counsel of God. He is so gifted to take a text or subject, cover it fully and then close. Sister Mabel Lindsey of Ione, California and her husband were with us and she placed her letter with us which is the church she united with and where her parents were members. At the April meeting my sister united by relation of experience and that was sweet.

Little Flock Church was organized in July 1870 and has held regular monthly services since. It is now the only church left in the Original Mt. Zion Association, and Elder Schenck is the only minister of our faith that we know of within three hundred or more miles so we feel alone. My husband and I have gone when the only other one there was the minister, yet we were fed. It seems we are less alone now for we had a full house Sunday and a wonderful meeting. Sister Urquhart who lives in Kansas City, and whose children, all but two sons, were visiting her was requested by them to let them do something special for her on the Fourth. She told them the nicest thing would be for them to attend services at her church, Little Flock. They came in several cars, bringing their dinners as we always take dinner on Sunday. Not only her children but her grandchildren and great-grandchildren came, and when Brother Schenck began preaching you could have heard a pin drop. Lt. Commander, Oscar Urquhart, was from Panama Canal Zone, one from Omaha, Neb., two from California, two from Kansas City, one from Independence and one from here. It was a wonderful sermon we listened to.

After service we went by invitation to the home of Mr. Taylor's aunt, Mrs. J. P. Taylor across the road, which is also the home of her niece and nephew, Brother and Sister C. C. Odell. Here we spread our dinners and about fifty people were fed. It was all so lovely.

The week before we had the pleasure of having Sister Lindsey of Ione, Cal., and her husband in our home and what a wonderful visit we had. She has been in deep waters and is wonderfully gifted in deep things, and we did so enjoy talking on these subjects so close to us. I felt I wanted to tell you about it. If you publish it please make any corrections, and if you consign it to the waste basket that will be all right too. If any of your preaching brethren or you feel to visit us you will find a welcome indeed. Your unworthy sister I hope. (Mrs.) J. W. TAYLOR

(We are glad to publish the foregoing good letter, and hope any of our ministering brethren who can will visit the brethren in Missouri. R. L. D.)

EDITORIAL

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

CHURCHES and ASSOCIATIONS

In writing this article it is not my purpose to condemn the practice of holding Associations, but rather point out the danger, as I see it, of Associations exercising powers that do not belong to them. The Association is a creature of the church, formed for the purpose of communication, and the associating of God's people one with another, and when used for any other purpose only causes trouble. When conducted as the word signifies, (associate) they are truly a medium of much comfort and edification to the household of faith, but they are not a supreme court for the settlement of any local church trouble.

The Kehukee Association of North Carolina is the oldest Primitive or Old School Baptist Association in America, being formed in the year 1765. Accordto the record no Articles of Faith were adopted until the year 1777. The Rules of Decorum being adopted in the year 1782. These Rules of Decorum and Articles of Faith are practically the same to-day as when first accepted by their body, and are considered to-day as in accord with the doctrine and order of the church of God. Most of the Associations of Old School Baptists in the United States have in substance the same Articles of Faith and rules, and are generally in harmony with the practices first adopted by the Kehukee Association.

One thing I think is generally accepted by our people throughout the country, and is clearly set forth in most association Rules of Decorum, or Articles of Faith, is the sovereignty of each church in matters of discipline and practice. Our people have in most cases adhered to that practice, but wherever it has been violated or ignored only trouble has followed.

Article number thirteen in the Kehukee Association Articles of Faith reads as follows: "WE BELIEVE THAT EVERY CHURCH IS INDEPENDENT IN MATTERS OF DISCIPLINE; AND THAT ASSOCIATIONS, COUNCILS AND CONFERENCES OF SEVERAL MINISTERS OR CHURCHES, ARE NOT TO IMPOSE ON THE CHURCHES THE KEEPING, HOLDING OR MAINTAINING ANY PRINCIPLE OR PRACTICE CONTRARY TO THE CHURCH'S JUDGMENT."

A number of Associations have this rule word for word. Others in substance. No doubt our forefathers saw the danger of churches being dictated to by Associations or other bodies, or conferences, even of their own organization, and adopted this rule.

If we examine the record, and trace back the troubles that have existed among the churches in the past, most of them have come from one of three causes, namely: Associations assuming authority over churches, or allowing outside meddlers to interfere with the internal affairs of a local church, or following men when they had left the word of God either in faith or practice. Paul exhorted his brethren to follow him as far as he followed Christ.

Most Associations at some time or other have perplexing problems within her borders, and as an advisory body they are at times a blessing, because in a multitude of councillors there is safety, but they should never attempt to impose on a church a practice contrary to the church's judgment. As an independent body each church is capable of governing themselves in all matters of discipline and practice. No one except the members of a local church themselves, can know in their heart what causes a church to take action in certain cases, and for outside influences to be brought to bear on a church to try to compel them to do things contrary to their own judgment, usually leads to trouble and confusion.

I shall here mention some of the things that could lead to confusion by associational interference or outside influence. A member or minister is sometimes excluded and somebody is in sympathy with them as is usually the case where it is a minister. When a man is excluded by a church, after he has had an opportunity to appear before the church to answer whatever charge they hold against him, and he has failed to satisfy the church because his conduct, whatever it may have been has caused him to die in their fellowship, all who uphold him or follow him place themselves in the same condition as he is. They have rebelled against the church, and such conduct is plain rebellion.

No outsider can reinstate that man in the church. The matter is for the conscience of that church to settle. The question will be asked, What about a minority of a church that does not agree with the majority in such a matter? Our rule usually reads that if a minority be grieved at the action of the majority, they shall immediately let it be known, and if satisfaction cannot be obtained, it may be necessary to ask help of sister churches. For a minority to rend themselves off from the church, without making their grievances known, and staying in the church certainly places them in the same condition of the one excluded. How slow one should be in withdrawing from his church. Many things need patience, and there are some matters that only time and patience will settle, and how slow Associations should be in taking up any matter that pertains to the discipline and practice of a local church, unless they have left the doctrine and order of the church, and then their only course should be to withdraw from them.

To my understanding there are offenses that would be classed public offenses. Whatever one may do that causes a number of his brethren to lose confidence in him, such as drinking too much, dishonesty or a number of other things we might mention would be a public offense, and when one has been excluded for such no set of ministers, associations or conference has any right to try to impose on his church any practice contrary to their judgment, and to do so only causes trouble. Every trouble as far as possible should be kept localized.

We have had much published in the last few years on the doctrine of the church, and as a general rule our people seem to be agreed that all our salvation, both for time and eternity, is of the Lord. Would it not be all right for us to write some about the order of the house? Only true peace and fellowship can abound where churches are zealous of their order and discipline. Where one is a public transgressor against his brethren by his conduct in the world, he should be required to make public confession of the same, without ever trying to smuggle the mat-

ter up, and Associations should ever be mindful of the fact that they have no right to impose on a church any discipline or practice contrary to the church's judgment.

May God give us all to inquire for the good old way, and walk therein. Submitted in love and the interest of Zion I truly hope. May all these things be considered in the spirit of meekness and brotherly love, considering ourselves. D. V. S.

....PRAYER....

Three of our Associate Editors have written very ably on the subject of *prayer,* and while we do not feel that there is much that we can add to what has already been said, since brother Salyers has requested that we give our views on the subject, we will offer such thoughts as may be given to us. We agree with brother Spangler that the physical position of the body has little if any bearing upon the matter. We have scriptural authority for both standing and kneeling in presenting our petitions unto God. When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead we are told that he lifted up his eyes, and said, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I know that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me." John 11:41-42. Again, when he had finished the work assigned to him by the Father he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." John 17:1-2. In Luke we read, "And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." And we are told that he went down to his house justified, so this must have been an acceptable prayer unto God. "And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." Luke 17.12-13. We also have the case of a leper coming to him, "beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean." Mark 1:40-41. When Jesus was in Gethsemane, he said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." Mat. 26:38-39. Others have fallen on their faces upon the ground and poured out their hearts in prayer to their God and their Master..

In our section of the country it has been the custom in public worship for the minister to stand while speaking in prayer, and we follow this custom. In private homes, when asked to speak in prayer, we frequently feel to kneel. Many has been the time when we felt so overwhelmed with our burdens upon our bed at night that we have arisen from bed and knelt upon the floor with the fervent desire to commune with Him who discerneth the thought and intent of the heart; or it may have been that we felt such a deep sense of gratitude toward God for the many blessings which he continually bestows upon us, that we wanted to humble ourself in every way and give all thanks to him who supplies our daily needs. We have never felt that we had any gift in re-

turning public thanks at the table, but there have been many times while surveying God's goodness and mercy to us in giving us a good companion and comfortable home and the blessings of this life, and most of all a good hope through grace in his mercy, our cup has overflowed in praise and adoration to his most adorable name. Of a truth, He is the giver of every good and every perfect gift, and we rejoice that it is also declared of him that there is no variableness, neither a shadow of turning with him. We are persuaded thatGod looketh on the heart, the inward part, and unless this is right before him, there will be no real prayer. He, by the workings of his Holy Spirit, must indict that which is good and acceptable in his sight in the heart, otherwise he will not answer. Solomon said both the preparation of the heart and the answer of the tongue are of the Lord. We like the way the poet has it:

"Prayer is the saint's sincere desire,
Unuttered or express'd;
The motion of a hidden fire,
That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear;
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high.

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air;
The watchword at the gate of death;
He enters heaven with prayer."

We most certainly do not believe that God's eternal plans and purposes are altered or changed one iota by what men call prayer. He sometimes creates conditions which of necessity causes us to seek his face and guidance, that we may know how frail we are and be taught that he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we may ask or think. God commanded Moses to say unto Israel, of old, "Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live." Deut. 8:2-3. God controls all of the circumstances which surround and affect our lives, and he will most certainly be inquired of by us. We will be made to realize our own inability to do one good thing, or to think a good thought, and be brought down in the valley of despair and despond before we seek help at the throne of grace. The publican prayed, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and the thief on the cross cried, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Peter, when sinking in the mighty waters, cried, "Save, Lord, I perish." We have often pondered over the depth of meaning to be found in the three word prayer of the poor Syrophenician woman when she worshipped Jesus, saying, "Lord, help me." It is not pleasing to the flesh to be brought to the place where we have to cry unto the Lord to undertake for us, to make a straight path for our feet to walk in and to lead us into life everlasting. We have to be brought low before we will seek help from the Lord, and then we will know that without him we can do nothing. There have been times in our

life when it seemed that our very soul was poured out before God like water upon the dry ground, and the sacredness of those seasons when we found access to the throne of grace by and through him that maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered, can never be expressed in words. We verily believe, on a few occasions at least, we have experienced what it means to be taken by Him into his private chamber and given the kisses of his mouth, when he whispered his message of undying love to our innermost soul; and the joy and bliss that was ours on those occasions, tongue can never tell nor pen relate. It was then that we worshipped Him in spirit and in truth, if we have any understanding of the meaning of true worship. Such memories are more precious to us than all the gold of Ophir, or the choicest of rubies, which are but as sordid dust at his blessed feet. We truly hope that our readers have experienced the preciousness of these things, for one must needs handle and taste the Word of Life before they can give acceptable testimony before the great Judge of heaven and earth.

Recently, a friend has raised the point of the privilege of prayer, asserting that "prayer is one of the greatest blessings we have. By night or day, no matter where or when that privilege is ours if our heart truly desires it." Much could be said of this phase of our subject, but before one can sincerely and earnestly desire something there must be a felt need for it. In the courts of our land when one is either unable to plead his own cause or pay for counsel, the judge frequently assigns proper counsel to plead the case of the poor, unfortunate one, and we have often felt how good it is that one of the names given by Isaiah by which our Lord should be called is "Counsellor." This is the One who our heavenly Father appointed before time began to stand in our stead and make intercession for us. He is our Counsellor, Mediator, Intercessor, Husband and Friend. While men of a vile and sinful race cannot appear before the just and holy God in their own right, they are privileged to present or make known their petitions by and through his blessed Son. Jesus himself told his disciples to "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." Again, he said, "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." We are also told that our "Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him." The Psalmist said, "Thou understandest my thought afar off." Again, we quote the Psalmist, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." The apostle Paul said, "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." He truly searches and knows the hearts of his people, and is acquainted with all their ways. We are glad after Peter was converted he confessed, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." It is only by actual experience that we are made to know the true value of this Counsellor, and then we can exclaim with the Prophet that his name is also Wonderful, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. We are convinced then that he is abundantly able to plead our case successfully before his Father's throne, by

declaring that he finished the work which the Father gave him to do, and he presents us without spot or blemish before God in love. We heartily agree that it is a most blessed privilege, indeed, when we are enabled by the working of his Holy Spirit to take his holy name upon our sin polluted lips and cry, "Abba, Father." The following verses of a hymn bear upon this point:

"Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble any where?
We should never be discouraged,
Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Can we find a friend so faithful,
Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness,
Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy laden,
Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Saviour, still our refuge,
Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?
Take it to the Lord in prayer,
In His arms He'll take and shield thee,
Thou wilt find a solace there."

We are taught in God's blessed word to pray without ceasing, and since Elder Lambert opened Vol. 116 in the January issue of our family paper with an article on prayer, it is quite fitting that we should close this volume with a similar article. As we do not know how to pray as we ought, we truly hope our dear Lord will teach us both how to pray and what to pray for, all in the name and through the meritorious work of his blessed Son, Jesus Christ, to whom be honor and glory now and for evermore. Amen. R. L. D.

CLOSE OF VOLUME No. 116

With this issue of our paper we come to the end of another milestone by closing Vol. 116, and we wish to leave on record another testimony of God's goodness and mercy to us in sparing our unprofitable life and enabling us, by divine grace, to carry on the work so nobly begun over a century ago. We feel like adopting brother H. M. Bowden's language in the September issue of the *Signs,* by saying, "The paper is a monument to God's providence and sustaining care for during its 116 years of existence of continual publication there have been enough obstacles and discouragements in its way to have caused the abandonment of its publication had it been God's will for that to be," but we are thankful that God willed it otherwise.

We are truly grateful for the loyal support given us by our subscribers in various ways. Their financial support has been liberal and most helpful, which has enabled us to meet all necessary expenditures during these post-war times of high costs. We thank most sincerely all who have shared in this part of our work.

In this connection, we would also thank those who have contributed good letters and articles for the columns of our paper, and especially would we include in this group our Associate Editors, whose writings have been able and well pleasing to our readers.

Let us again remind our subscribers to watch the dates on the wrapper covers of their papers and renew promptly when their subscriptions are due. They can also help us materially by being on the alert for *new* subscribers. Many of our subscribers are advancing in years and are rapidly being called to their eternal home, and we need a considerable number of new subscribers to maintain our mailing list. At this season of the year, many of our readers can either recommend or send the paper to some brother, sister or friend who would enjoy reading it throughout the coming year. Any assistance along this line will be deeply appreciated. Please

remember the book, "Showers of Rain" by Flossie I. Faulkner is sent FREE to any one sending in a new subscriber, or to the new subscriber if sent to us direct.

With thankfulness for mercies past and with faith in an unfailing God to supply all our future needs, we say farewell to our readers for 1948.

R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

MISS MAGDALENA LEACHMAN DAVIS, lovingly known among us as "sister Lena," passed away from this present life August 27, 1948 at 1219 No. Edgewood St., Arlington, Va. She was born June 6, 1874, a daughter of Edwin and Jane Ashton Dodd Davis. Her mother was a member of Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun Co., Va. Sister Lena's membership was with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va., having been baptized there by the late Elder E. V. White the second Sunday in May 1898. She is survived by three sisters: Mrs. Minnie Thomas, Arlington, Va., Miss Ada Davis, Arlington, Va. and Mrs. Bessie Turner of Frederick, Md. There survive six nieces and two nephews. Funeral services were held at Ives' Chapel, Arlington, Va. Interment in the cemetery at Andrew Chapel. We have not had among us a more faithful member of the church, one more devoted to the cause, than sister Lena. With her, the church was first. Every other duty in life was subservient to her constancy to the kingdom of Christ. In this, she is indeed a gracious example to all of us. Despite her very weak condition, being far from well, she attended our last meeting at Frying Pan the 2nd Sunday in August although scarcely able to sit up. No matter by whom she was employed, no matter what her work might be, she always let it be understood by her employers that she required time off to attend her meetings. She wanted nothing to conflict with that privilege. She was obedient to Hebrews 10:25. Of all whom the Lord has taken from us in recent years, no one will be more missed among us than she. We have indeed a blessed hope for her that for her to die is gain. Being absent from the body, she is present with the Lord.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS

J. W. STAGGS was born Aug. 30, 1866 and departed this life April 8, 1948, making his stay on earth 81 years, 7 months and 8 days. He united with the Old Baptists about 49 years ago. His wife, Sister Lillie Staggs, preceded him in death several years ago. He mourned his great loss when she passed away, but would not call her back if he could, realizing that she was at rest with no more troubles and trials in this life. Brother Staggs leaves several children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren to mourn his passing.

The unworthy writer has enjoyed many meetings in their home, and sweet talks of our precious Savior and his mercies to poor unworthy sinners. Sister Staggs told me of their courtship before marriage. He would come for her on horseback and take her to meeting. Her folks would tease her calling her a little Hardshell. How little did they know how true this was as she was chosen by her Creator to be a companion to Brother Staggs. In his latter years he made his home with his daughter, Sister Carmine Anthony, San Antonia, Texas. When he became helpless he was placed in an Old Peoples Home and would be so glad when I would go to see him. I could not go as often as I wanted as I lived 265 miles from San Antonio.

We laid his remains to rest by the side of his companion at Stockdale, Texas to await the summons from on high to come forth in that glorious resurrection that has been prepared for all of God's little ones.

(Elder) E. B. AULT

MRS. LUCY J. MINOR, our sister in Christ, departed this life June 5, 1948 at the home of her sister Mrs. Bertha Belt, 517 E. Capitol St., Washington, D. C. She was born April 29, 1861. Her father was Louis Wright, her mother Margaret Orrison, both of Loudoun County, Va. Her mother's father, brother William Orrison, was the only surviving male member of the New Valley Old School Baptist Church at the time the late Elder E. V. White united by baptism with that church in the 70's. Immediately after that, several united with the church from time to time and there was quite a revival. Sister Minor was baptized into the membership of the New Valley Church September 17, 1928 but she had been a follower of our people many years. Her coming to the church was no momentary enthusiasm nor any temporary emotionalism, but the fruit of an abiding and constant faith which had been tested through much weakness and affliction on her part. She was wont to say that when she was baptized, she stood on the same rock on which her mother had stood at her baptism. Whether this were so literally, I cannot say, but I believe spiritually she and her mother were founded on the same Rock, Christ Jesus, and were indeed baptized with the same baptism. She is survived by three sisters: Mrs. Belt at whose home she died, Mrs. Nora Main of Middletown, Md. and Mrs. Alice Haines, Bowling Green, Va. besides nieces and nephews. She had been in failing health for a long time

preceding her departure from this world, so that her attendance at the meetings had been infrequent. Services for her were held at Lee's Funeral Chapel, Washington, D. C. Interment in Oakwood Cemetery at Falls Church, Va. Her husband, William T. Minor, died Jan. 4, 1936.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS

It becomes my sad duty to write of the passing from this life of our dear sister in Christ and mother in Israel, MRS. MATTIE (DAVIS) BOYD. She was born in Arkansas, Dec. 22, 1858, and the Lord called her home June 13, 1948 at the age of 89 years, 5 months and 21 days. She was married to A. J. Boyd Jan. 13, 1872. To this union were born ten children, seven boys and three girls. Her husband and two daughters preceded her in death. She is survived by J. E. Boyd and Mrs. Bryan Hughs, Rising Star, Texas; J. R. Boyd, Crane, Texas; G. W. Boyd, Odessa, Texas; D. A. Boyd, Maple, Texas; J. N. Boyd, Port Arthur, Texas; J. T. Boyd, Dallas, Texas; J. G. Boyd, Buckeye, New Mex.; twenty-seven grandchildren; fifty-one great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild, and a host of friends who mourn her passing.

She united with the Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by the late Elder Pace at Corinth Church, in Henderson Co., near Athens, Texas about 1904. She with her husband and family moved to Brown Co., Texas about 1911 and settled near Rising Star. They came into Macedonia Church by letter and remained devoted members until death. They were seldom absent from the meetings, enjoying the services and the company of the members very much. Sister Boyd never tired of doing what they could for the little band until failing health overtook her. She was tenderly cared for by her children in the home of her daughter, Mrs. Hughs. All was done for her that tender loving hands could do, good doctors and many friends, but the time had come and the Lord's will must be done, showing mercy in removing her from her bed of affliction to a land of delight where no sorrow and sadness can ever come. Let us not sorrow as though we had no hope, but let us look forward to the coming of our Lord, for when Christ who is our life shall appear then shall she appear with him in glory.

The writer was called to officiate at the funeral services as she had requested. We tried in our weakness to comfort the sorrowing family and their many friends, pointing them to the coming of Christ when the saints shall be raised from their graves incorruptible to ever be with their Lord, after which Elder C. Y. Osteen made an interesting and comforting talk. She was laid to rest in the Rising Star Cemetery to await the coming of the Lord.

(Elder) C. B. TEAGUE

The death of CLARENCE DONALD (TACK) MOFFETT occurred at his home near Jonesboro, La. July 23, 1948. Mr. Moffett was a life-long resident of Jackson Parish where he reared his large family. He was successfully engaged in farming operations and also served as Justice of the Peace. He had been a member of the Primitive Baptist church for the past sixty years and was Clerk of the Court.

Survivors include his widow, Mrs. Martha Moffett of Jonesboro; five daughters, Mrs. J. W. Savage and Mrs. W. H. Savage of Wyatt; Mrs. W. H. Harvey and Miss Thelma Moffett of Hodge; Mrs. Walter Pepper of Wyatt; five sons, A. P. Moffett, Quitman, Ga.; Mose Moffett, Monroe; Homer Moffett, Clarence Moffett and E. J. Moffett, all of West Monroe. Fifteen grandchildren, one great-grandchild, and two brothers, Arthur Moffett, Wyatt and Dock Moffett, of Texas, also survive.

Funeral services were held at the Springfield Church, July 25 with Mr. J. W. Buckner, Pastor of the Jonesboro Baptist Church, assisted by Mr. Harper of Jonesboro officiating. Interment was in Transport Cemetery under the direction of the Southern Funeral Home. Pallbearers were: Wayland Savage, Junior Robinson, Ira Reeves, Dennis Chappel, Cedric Crain and Pyburn Walker.

(Mrs.) W. H. HARVEY

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. C. B. Rittenhouse, Can., $4; G. C. Wren, Tex., $1; Mrs. L. Ellwanger, Va., $1; Mrs. R. C. Wright, Tex., $1; G. S. Varnes, Mich., $1; Isaac McIntyre, N. Y., $1; Mrs. M. Thomas, Ill., $20; Mrs. A. D. Hoyt, N. Y., $2; J. L. Howell, Conn., $3; Eld. J. L. Sanders, Ala., $1; J. P. Champion, Tex., $1.

PLEASE REMEMBER

1.—To renew your subscription promptly when due, if possible. The date on your wrapper cover will show to when you have paid.

2.—That when your remittance reaches us before the 10th of the month, credit will be shown with the next issue of the paper, otherwise it cannot be shown until the second month following. This also applies to changes of address.

3.—That notices of Special Meetings should be sent to us at least thirty days in advance of the month in which the meeting is to be held.

If our readers will be kind enough to observe the foregoing suggestions they will aid us very materially in getting out the paper. R. L. D.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 117 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JANUARY, 1949 No. 1

YE SHALL HAVE TRIBULATION

We stagger neath our heavy crosses,
Each one feels his own the worst;
We mourn and grieve our bitter losses,
And at times our hearts near burst.

On every hand we see around us
Heads bowed down with grief or pain.
Should these things greatly astound us?
We must suffer, rest to gain.

If we knew not pain or sorrow,
If we suffered not at all,
Would we then some glad tomorrow
Hail with joy our Father's call?

When He calls to all His treasures,
Rise my fair one and my love;
Come and share eternal pleasures
Praising God in heaven above.

Oh! call me soon my blessed master
From this cross, to claim my crown;
Speed the days and hours far faster
Till my armor I'll lay down.

Haste the day when pain is ended
When cross-bearing all shall cease;
When with Christ my spirit's blended
Eternally to rest in peace.

(Mrs.) EFFIE PARKE

Castle Rock, Wash.

CORRESPONDENCE

Lillie, La.

TO THE DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH: Dear brethren, sisters and friends, I desire, the Lord willing, to address you in that faith of God's elect if according to his holy and divine will. I was seemingly blessed to-day to speak to the church at Rehobeth from the text, Heb. 2: 10-12, which reads as follows: "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."

I am well aware that this, as well as all other of God's holy inspired word, is a very great text, and I know that I am not in any sense of the word capacitated to understand this great and glorious subject without the divine light of God's Holy Spirit. I desire that the Giver of every good and perfect gift will enable me to see, understand and write of some of the glorious doctrinal and experimental phases that are taught in this scripture.

First I will say that the stern, inflexible sovereignty of God is taught, and there is no mincing of words in it for he says, "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things." I feel that the pronoun HIM is applicable to the Father, God, the Creator. The word became, means becoming to him in his glorious and perfect character, so it was becoming to God to have all things as they are, to properly and perfectly bring out and reveal his glory, and not only so, but it also was becoming to make the captain of these many son's salvation perfect through sufferings. So with all that is connected with, and that caused and brought forth his great sufferings,

there can be no doubt that it was becoming to the revelation of his glory to have it this way. However, I feel sure that no one would think for a moment that I am trying to justify the wicked and heinous crimes committed by the betrayers and murderers that killed the Prince of Life as is set forth in the Acts of the Apostles 3:15. Jesus also said, "The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born," and there are other numerous scriptural witnesses to these things. The prophet also said, "It pleased the Lord to bruise him" so it must have been becoming to God to have it that way, or it would not have pleased him to bruise him. When the blessed Savior fell upon his meek and lowly face in that humble petition of sweat and tears and said, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," do you not feel that it would have passed, had it not become him for Jesus to suffer as the perfect captain of their salvation? Then it was becoming to God for him to suffer.

There are so many things relative to this subject that it is impossible to mention all of them for the lack of time and space. What was the cause of his sufferings? Would we not most assuredly have to say from a Bible standpoint that it was for sin that he suffered, then had there been no sin there would have been no suffering and no need for salvation, no need for that great Captain of salvation, but it became him that it be this way because he plainly and emphatically said so in this text. Some would say, well it was becoming to God that sin enter into the world, and death by sin. I am quite sure had it not been there would not have been any sin in this world. Let me ask the question, if it was not becoming for it to enter, then does it glorify God to contend that it would have been better for it not to have entered? It seems to me that this would place God in the position that he was helpless against sin's entrance into the world. Do you think, dear reader, it would become the glorious character of God to show him helpless in anything even the entrance of sin into the world or any other circumstance, thing, being or creature? Would it become God in his perfection and glory to have to say he could not have prevented sin's entrance? You might as well join the arminian and say, God wants every one to be saved, but he is helpless to do it. It would be no different to say that God was helpless in the beginning of this world than to say he is helpless now, so let us examine ourselves whether we are in the faith or not, as Paul admonished.

In order to prove that there was a purpose for the entrance of sin into this world we have only to refer you to Paul's language in Rom. 5:20, "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound." Whose purpose was it for the offence to abound? I am sure you will admit that it was God's purpose, for he was the giver of the law to Moses as well as to Adam and Eve in the garden. In Revelations 5:6 it reads, "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain," and in chapter 13, verse 8 it says, "All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." These two passages prove that Jesus actually stood in the mind and purpose of God, as he had already been slain even from the foundation of the world. What for? For sin that was to enter in through the

transgression of Adam. God's holy purpose in it did not cause Adam's sin in the immediate sense of the word, but the serpent and his beguiling influence, and the appetizing influence of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil was the moving cause of it; and Adam and Eve and all their posterity were and are held accountable for it, because they are and were guilty and will ever be except through the sufferings of the blessed Savior of sinners, the Captain of their salvation. Certainly you could not say there would have been anything if there had been no God, but because of this fact there is no room to say that God is the author of sin. We know who is the author of sin if we will read Romans 5:12, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." The disobedience of one man, not by one God. Let us not run off into arminianism and deny the truth concerning God's sovereignty in order not to be accused by them of believing that God is the author of sin. We do not believe it, neither do we teach it, but that does not keep us from being accused of it, neither did it keep the apostle Paul from being accused of it. You will note in Romans 3:8 it reads, "And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just."

I am sure that no one would accuse us of believing that God's purpose was the immediate cause of Judas Iscariot's betrayal of the Savior, but all can readily see the thirty pieces of silver as the cause, and no wonder Jesus said, "He that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." It was sin to betray the Savior and Judas was under its penalty even though it became God to have it that way as he said in this text. I am sure it was wrong and wicked on the part of Ahab's prophets to wickedly deceive Ahab by their falsehoods and lies as they prophesied victory and prosperity and caused Ahab to go into battle. (Read 1 Kings 22:23.) It must have become God to have it that way because it reads, "Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee." The Lord told the lying spirit to go forth and do this wickedness. Had it not been becoming to the revelation of God's glory to command, and use this lying spirit in this manner I am sure it would not have occurred as you will see by reading his holy inspired word. This is the doctrine that is taught and that is and has been believed by our people all the way down, even the ancient confessions of faith show this very clearly. I ask the reader to read the London, Fulton and Philadelphia confessions, as well as the Bible, and let us not vary to the right nor the left from the doctrine in all of its phases of it, the Lord willing. I do not want any one of God's dear children to be offended at me, but I feel that I must contend earnestly for the faith that was once delivered to the saints.

Pharaoh, King of Egypt, was very wicked and oppressive to the children of Israel, bitterly bound them in slavery, evilly and cruelly treated them, murdered them and destroyed their young through their midwives. In all this if we believe God's holy word and teachings we must assuredly believe that it was becoming in God to have it this way. He says in Romans 9:17, "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might

be declared throughout the earth." If it was not becoming in God to have it this way why did God command Moses to say, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go," Ex. 5:1, yet he hardened his heart so that he should not let them go. "And he hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said. And the Lord said unto Moses, Pharaoh's heart is hardened, he refuseth to let the people go." Ex. 7:13-14. If it was not becoming to God to have Pharaoh"s heart hardened, why did God harden it? Certainly no one would say that it was unbecoming to God to do this, except those that will say that he is unjust, that he is the author of sin if he does these things; let us not charge God with being unjust and the author of sin, but let us not deny his holy word in order to keep from being accused of these things.

Joseph's brethren sold him wickedly into Egypt, deceived their father, making him think his son was dead, and the evil and wicked lie of Potiphar's wife caused him to be so unjustly and wickedly cast into prison. Were not these things according to the purpose of God, and if so was it not becoming to God to have it this way? "God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance." Gen. 45:7. Do you think it was becoming to God for him to use such wicked things as these to fulfill his purpose and to save and preserve their lives in Joseph's wicked and heinous abuses by his brethren, and Potiphar's wife's lies and all the wickedness that was done? The Bible says these things were done and said. Were they becoming to God or were they unbecoming? God forbid that I should say they were unbecoming, but that it was a most glorious and blessed token of God's power, wisdom, righteousness and also of his mercy, his justice and the preservation and deliverance of his people by his miraculous power.

Everything that God has ever done in all his holy purposes is most certainly becoming to God, and he is righteous and just in manifesting his purposes either in wrath and justice, or in righteousness and mercy. Each attribute must shine in the revelation of his holy nature and character in all things, and it is all becoming to him in every detail as is shown in Rom. 9:22 where Paul asks the question on this very subject. "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." As hard as this does seem God is perfectly righteous, and it is most certainly becoming for him to have it this way. Who would rebel and say this thing is unbecoming to God in his righteous character? Those who have never known him in all his goodness and mercy; those who are born truly of God, and have been made to see their just condemnation before God. How dare they make any plea except that he is altogether righteousness and if he in justice should send their soul to hell, his righteous law approves it well. Then all things are appointed, purposed or predestinated of God, and they are becoming to him.

On the other hand I desire to call your attention to the truth as I see it. Sin is never becoming to any one from the standpoint that it is right. Certainly not, it is the transgression of God's holy law, and it would still be wrong even though there was no law. Could any one doubt that the crucifixion of the Savior was purposed, predestinated, appointed, ordained or ordered of God? From a scriptural standpoint I cannot see how any one could

deny this as it is said, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." Zech. 13:7.

This sword was commanded to awake and it did awake, and it did smite that great shepherd of the sheep. David tells us who that sword is. It is the wicked, the men of the world. Was it becoming on their part to crucify the Lord? No, in no wise, it was sin in the very deepest dye. They desired to do this wicked thing, their hearts were hardened by the brightness and glory of God made manifest in the ministry and miracles of the blessed Lord and they selfishly hated him without a cause. They wanted to do away with him because he righteously rebuked them in their wickedness, and because God gave him the Spirit without measure and they could not resist his words and doctrine; they lay in wait to deceive on every hand, they were selling sheep, oxen, doves and pigeons, and had in their employ the money changers. Jesus had made a whip of small cords and drove them out of the temple and their deepest wrath was stirred. They did not know him is cited as the reason they crucified him, or rather it is stated that had they known him they would not have crucified him. All this wickedness and sin was very treacherous and wicked on their part, and it was very unbecoming in them who did it, but I think it was all righteous, just and holy on the part of God in the righteous revelation of his wrath on such wickedness, and such sin and treachery as they carried on in his crucifixion and death. It was sin without justification on their part because they all knew that it was wrong to do these wicked things as it was the very essence of their law that they professed to know and keep, as it is said, "Thou shalt not kill." Ex. 20:13.

It was unbecoming that Judas betray the Savior for thirty pieces of silver, but God had said by inspiration that he would do it, and had even said it would be thirty pieces of silver that he would get. It also showed that Judas would hang himself and what the thirty pieces of silver would be used for. Was it not becoming to God's glory that he suffered Judas to do this wicked thing after God had showed it beforehand? Who could say that it was becoming and right on the part of Judas? Also who could say that it was unbecoming on God's part when the text we are writing from says, "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." That was what the wicked act of Judas and the crucifiers of Jesus were doing, they were bringing his suffering that God had purposed, and God was rendering his righteous judgment upon them for their wickedness.

The sufferings of Christ were for every sin that his people has or will ever commit. God's goodness and mercy was manifest towards the vessels of mercy, was being extended through his sufferings and on the other hand his wrath was being displayed upon them who were wicked, treacherous in physically wallowing their hands in the precious blood of the Savior. No wonder Paul said, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Rom. 11:33.

Then all things are for God and all things exist by him. There is no way around it. No matter what kind of a so-called theologian you might be, but

because all things are for him and by him, in some respect, as this text says, that should be no encouragement to any God fearing, God loving child of God to sin, no a thousand times no. My experience is that I have sinned so long and so much I would give everything under the shining heavens, if it were mine, if I could know that I would never sin any more. Oh, that I could know I have that new covenant in my heart the stipulations of which are, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Dear and precious brethren and sisters, it is so wonderful and glorious just to hope to reach that righteous and peaceful shore where sin and all of its horrible consequences are no more, and to be like Jesus, the great Captain of our salvation to see him as he is and to be at his precious feet: to feel his blessed and glorious presence in that bright and eternal home where all the saints of all ages will be around that great white throne of God: and where the eternal anthems of his worthy praise shall engulf all the redeemed before God and the Lamb. What a wonderful hope is this for a poor sinner to have. All this is brought about through the suffering of Christ, and it was becoming to God's glory to have it this way.

Another comment that I would like to make concerning this text is on the words BRINGING MY SONS UNTO GLORY. It is very comforting and assuring to the hope of God's children to notice the significance of this language. It does not in any way signify failure or uncertainty. Neither are we left to think, according to this language, that the sons have anything to do within and of themselves in going to glory, but this language says what God does in bringing them to glory. Then according to this language God is bringing many sons unto glory. Not that he is trying to bring them, neither is it in any way intimated that he is helping to bring them, nor that he desires to bring them, but that he is bringing them and will bring them unto glory. No help nor partnership in the matter, no agency or organization is depended upon, just what God himself does in bringing them. Another thing is that they are not brought just half way unto glory according to this language, but all the way unto glory, and God is the only one known in their bringing. No room for that doctrine and commandment of men and devils that God just helps so far and then we are dependent upon conditions the rest of the way.

I feel there is not a more comforting phase implied in this text than where it is acknowledged that all things are God's or that they are for him. Then if everything is for him, for him IN BRINGING MANY SONS UNTO GLORY, there is nothing that is against that bringing them unto glory. No wonder Paul said, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Rom. 8:28. Because all things are becoming to God in bringing the many sons unto glory Paul said again, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" God is for bringing these many sons unto glory and he is for them and nothing can be against them, but all is for their good, and all things are becoming to the glory, majesty and dominion of the God who is all powerful, eternal, all wise and who never sleeps nor slumbers, but "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Eph. 1:11. Then is it not most wonderful indeed to contemplate the glorious consequences that are expressed in these wonderful things?

Dear child of God, truly that scripture is correct where it says, "Happy

art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." Deut. 33:29. They are saved by him alone, and all things are for him and by him in bringing them unto glory. Then, dear child of God, fear not, all things are in his hands and he will do all his pleasure "in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" All things are for him in bringing many sons to glory, and all things work together for the good of these many sons. Oh that I could have that blessed assurance that I am one of those many sons that are under consideration. If I but knew then would I know that all things are for my good.

One might say, but I am such a sinner, so am I truly as Paul said, "O wretched man that I am!" but that is why Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, suffered on Calvary's cross, that poor sinners be free and that they be brought unto glory. This is the only hope that I have of entering that peaceful home of everlasting bliss and felicity. It was becoming to the glory, mercy and peace of Almighty God that Christ Jesus suffer for his people, that he cleanse them with his precious blood, that he wash them and redeem them from all iniquity. Oh, the ravishing thought and hope of being as though we had never sinned. Oh, the precious anticipation that we be like the precious Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, that the Father spoke from heaven and declared, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." I am so tired of myself in my sins. I long to be free from them. I long to see his blessed face in peace. I long for that blessed abode where no sorrow can come, no pain, sickness or death, but where that blessed love of God will swallow us up, where we will ever sing his eternal and worthy praise forever and ever around that eternal throne with all his saints of all ages. Amen. (Elder) R. W. RHODES

Naches, Wash.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: As it is time to renew my subscription to the *Signs* will pen a few lines in answer to your letter of last August. I had not forgotten but felt too weak or ignorant to reply and still do, although we did appreciate the letter very much. We were much disappointed in not getting to meet you while we were in the East. We realized all at once we were needed at home. Peaches were ripe and ready to can as soon as we reached home, the twelfth of August. Two sisters in the church helped me all of one day. On the next day, Friday, we left for the three days yearly meeting at Riffe, Wash. What a blessing it is to be enabled to meet with the saints, and sing hymns of praise and hear the sound of the gospel.

I enjoyed your experience in the June *Signs* so much, also the July editorial. I remembered reading a letter from your father to you, but did not remember anything in it except my enjoyment of it. In Elder Vaughn's editorial, writing of the unity of the saints he said, "there are none great or noble among them" which caused me to do a lot of thinking. I had felt so low and unprofitable for so long and all others seemed great and noble in comparison, and yet I know he spoke the truth. I am glad all my goodness is in Christ for it is in a safe place. If it were left to me I am sure I would lose it.

Last month I went with my daughter and another sister to Touchet. The pastor, Elder Peter Jones, was able to be out. He lives in Walla Walla and his health is so poor he does not get out often. Elder Jeffrey was there from Weiser, Idaho which gave Brother

Jones an excuse to not try to talk. We enjoyed good meetings both Saturday and Sunday. When it was time to go our separate ways, Brother Jones dismissed us with such a sweet prayer. It was really a sermon in spite of himself.

We had two additions to our church last Sunday. It seems as though the little church at Elgin, Ore. is reviving. Dear Elder Bond longed and prayed that it might and Brother Wolfe located there about the time he, Elder Bond, passed away. We have heard him preach a few times and he seems to have a wonderful gift.

I enjoy the *Signs* so much. I would like to tell all that write how much it means to me, but cannot find words to express it as I would like to. A sister in hope of eternal life.

(Mrs.) DAISY BAKER

Stem, N. C.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, RUTHERFORD, N. J., MY DEAR BROTHER DODSON: It was indeed a pleasant surprise, yesterday afternoon on my return from the Upper Country Line Association, to receive your nice letter and learn you had safely returned from a vacation that was not disappointing to you.

The meeting here, when it was our privilege to have you with us, has frequently been in my mind during the week past. Such times as that seem like refreshing oases that we come to now and then as we journey along, strengthening us and giving us courage to press on again in the toilsome pathway. But it is not *all* toilsome, for the Lord's mercies continue and they are far, so *very far* past our numbering. As I grow older his grace is more surprising, more wonderful. Frequently, there is in my feeling a "fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation," knowing that I deserve no better, and unable to understand how the Lord could continue to bless so abundantly, such a one as I. But over and over again, we are taught that it is of His mercy that we "are not consumed." And we are led to cling closer to the hope, "that after so much mercy past, can he let us sink at last?"

Elder Golden Harris spoke first yesterday and well, followed by Elder Everett of an Arkansas Association who seemed clearly in accord with the "things most surely believed among us." Elder Dodd spoke next and much to my comfort. I thought he preached as well, if not better than I ever heard him. Both his discourse and that of Elder Harris was filled with admonition and exhortation which is certainly needful. Elder Mewborn closed the morning service with an interesting sermon. He chose for his text principally the words, "things which are not." I do not recall the exact location of the words, but you will. While he did not spend much of the time on those particular words, what he said was both instructive and interesting. He seemed to lose himself in his speaking, and I feel sure stood much longer than was his intention, but it was all interesting to me. He has his own peculiar manner of speaking, but I enjoy hearing him for one reason because he is a man who is esteemed wherever he is known.

Yesterday some one (just now, I do not remember who) was speaking to me of the wonderful sermon given you to deliver at the Staunton River Association. Elder Spangler told me of it when he was here. How marvelous it is for one to be given words to speak that live, in the memory of some who hear them, on and on. And yet it is not to be wondered at when we remember that the words given the true servants of the Lord are his words, and that they "are spirit and life." That

life does not die.

I am sure when you wrote you were not expecting to be subjected to such a lengthy reply, so now I will close begging your pardon. I hope you may be led this way again, and to visit in my home. As I have repeatedly said, the fellowship of the brethren, having them in my home, attending meetings and visiting with those who love the same things that I hope are dear to me, is the greatest joy I have. When I allow myself to think of all I have had and lost, my life seems most desolate and alone, but when I am favored to turn my eyes from this and remember some of the Lord's immeasurable benefits, then I can see in a small way how very greatly I am blessed. All the gifts are His, and all come from him. Yours in fellowship I trust.

(Mrs.) LAURA R. GOOCH

1008 E. Allen Ave., Ft. Worth 3, Texas

If I live until the third day of May I will be sixty-five years old. In looking back over my life I am made to realize there is no part of it that comes up before me that I consider myself worthy of being so richly blessed. Just why the Lord has seen fit to lengthen out my thread to the present time is certainly for nothing I have done that would bring him under obligation to me. On down until about 1915 I could only see myself in the natural appearance of things. At this time I saw nothing in particular wrong with me. I thought I was as good as most boys and perhaps a little better than some. Oh yes, I was wicked and still wicked but this did not worry me much as the manner of religion that was being taught throughout the country in effect was that I could quit it any time that I might choose, and thereby renew my chance for heaven. In other words it all rested on my actions. But by the grace of God I hope I was made to see myself from the inside, Lord have mercy on my poor soul, but where will I be if the good Lord renders justice. It was not justice that I wanted, but, O Lord, be merciful to me a sinner was all I could say. It turned me around. I was made to love the things I once hated, and hate the things I once loved. Old things had passed away and all things had become new. I was made to see that the world in all of its ways, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life to be but vanity before God which is not of the Father but of the world by reason of the fact the creature was made subject to vanity. I saw myself a miserable sinner before God, unworthy of his love, mercy and tender compassion, and why should the Lord be so good to a wretch like me. Ah! but I was made to shudder at the thought. I was made to see that all I knew about myself as being a sinner to be nothing more than what my parents had taught me.

Never did I see myself a sinner until I hope the good Lord, by his grace, revealed it to me. Then plain enough could I see that sin was mixed with all I do. I could see that sin to be my element of living in this time world, and only to cease in death, "for the wages of sin is death." Some may differ but I saw my manner of life was like unto the fish, that my element of living was in sin; whereas, that of the fish their element of living to be in the waters, that is, when once the fish is lifted out of the waters (his element of living) it is soon dead. Even so it is to be with man. Once separate man from sin (his element of living) can be done only in death. I say that I could not see then as I hope sometimes to see things now. At that time I could not see that my whole being was steeped in sin, and that by nature drink down sin like an

ox drinketh down water. Paul drew the correct picture of man in his every part in the contamination of sin. Man's "throât is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood." Then well could Paul say, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." And at times we are made to cry with him, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Such seems to be the lamentation of all the little ones when once left in the valley of dry bones, but with the mind says Paul "I myself serve the law of God; but with my flesh the law of sin." In this statement Paul well portrays the warfare that exists in the bosom as the flesh warreth against the things of the Spirit, etc. So those two are contrary one to the other therefore, you cannot do as you would. So here is the great battle that is to be fought with every little child of grace, and the battle ground is to be found in their hearts. Such is that great battle of Armageddon as said to be fought in the last day in which the world is of the opinion that it is to be a real battle between man and man, and that it is to take place only in the final consumation of all things, the end of the world. But not so with the little child of grace. Their experience will not allow them to so conclude. They are soon made to realize that no one experiences this rage of battle except those for whom it is prepared. They are the ones that are to suffer its effects in this time world. If it were not for this warfare in the bosom we would have but little left to serve us as evidence that we had passed from death unto life; but realizing that our warfare is not accomplished in this time world it presents itself still as evidence of the fact that the end is not yet; and though at times so low we feel to be pressed that we can feel its crushing weight, so much so that we cry with Jonah it is better for me to die than live. We give up in despair, all is lost. We are caused as was poor old Job to look to the right but He is not there. and to the left but we cannot perceive him, but in the far distance as through a great cloud we behold him as a shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Our little hope is on the wane and we sing:

"O, once I had a glorious view
Of my redeeming Lord,
He says I'll be a God to you
And I believe his word.

But now I have a deeper stroke,
For all my joys are gone,
I've strayed, I've lost I know not how,
The light from me is withdrawn."

But thanks be unto God for he has given us a more sure word of prophecy that he will return for he says, it is needful that I go away for if I go away I will return, for as I live saith the Lord ye shall live also, that where I am ye may be also. These are glorious thoughts that our ever blessed Redeemer will never forsake us.. Will God forever cast us off? His wrath forever sworn against the people of his love, his little chosen flock. Paul says, He will never cast us off but,

"When through the deep waters I call thee
to go,
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow;
For I will be with thee thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress."

Oh, but if we could all come together in this spirit then all would be well.

These are just some of my thoughts at random. Yours in bonds.

(Elder) W. A. LITTLE

3347 Tutwiler, Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER VEAZEY: We received your precious letter a few days ago and wanted to sit right down and answer it, but the thought came to me, "I hate to impose on him so often with my letters that are so imperfect like myself." I read your letter over the telephone to Brother Brown, sister and Louise and they all promised to write you. That, I hope, afforded you much comfort. Brother Veazey, I prize your letters very highly for I know you do not feel well, and to think you will condescend to write to me, the poorest of the flock if one at all, fills my heart with joy and a feeling of gratefulness to our heavenly Father, who is so rich in mercy, and so tenderly blesses us with all spiritual blessing which was treasured up in Christ according to the will of God. Is it not a grand and glorious thought to be given a hope (even ever so small) in the finished work of God, ordered in all things and sure? Yes, he tells us there is no power visible or invisible able to separate us from this love of God for his Father is greater than all, and no power is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. So our sufferings which are so great, Brother Veazey, are in this life only and it is only a moment compared with eternity. Troubles cannot be so great nor confusion too much to hinder our blessed Lord from coming into our lives and speaking peace to our souls, and fill our cup to over-flowing with joy unspeakable, so praise his holy name to whom all praise is due.

While here in the flesh Jesus suffered as no man suffered, yea, tempted even as we, yet without sin that he be able to succor them that are tempted. "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." Heb. 2:18.

Brother Cox called me last night saying he had a card from Brother Perkins telling him he would be here Saturday night and Sunday. How we love to have God's children come to meet with us and especially preaching brethren for we know it is the work of God's will or it could not be. We feel thankful, I hope, to be remembered in the hearts of our loved ones which is a blessing direct from our heavenly Father for he says "All things work together for good to them that love him," even our disappointments, our sorrows, afflictions and troubles which are very grievous. So when we receive good things we rejoice, when the bitter we should consider. Like Job, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" I hope I have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and I also believe I have felt the rod of correction very severely, but I hope I can say with Paul, "We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Rom. 5:3-5. In all these things I hope I have been exercised thereby. "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Heb. 5:8-9. I believe the way we learn to obey him is by the things which we suffer. The prophets of old rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake, but none of these things are we able to do of our own selves, for when the hour drew near for Jesus to suffer and drink the gall of bitterness he prayed to his

Father if it was possible let this cup pass. He prayed three times but said, "nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done." He said, the spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak. Oh, does not that mean something to poor souls that wrestle with these problems? We have a will to do good but in the flesh we find no good thing. Christ being our salvation, our righteousness, sanctification and redemption knows us as we are and has made a way for our escape and that way is Jesus. We will have to contend with this old flesh as long as we dwell here. In this world ye shall have tribulations, but in me peace, and I have learned, I hope, that this is the only peace we have. Oh, how grand, glorious and precious these seasons are.

Brother Veazey, it seems so easy sometimes to believe, but there are times these things seem so far away, we wonder if there is really anything there for me, surely I have only imagined these things and foolishly claimed them to be the dealing of the Lord. So we are thus tossed to and fro, but thanks to God, the Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who laid the scheme of redemption for man before the world was made, is able to save every one of them that make up his bride, and will at the morning of the resurrection gather up his jewels without the loss of one. We are glad to be able to see such perfection in him. It gives us renewed hope that our names are written in the Lamb's book of life for ye cannot see the kingdom of God except ye be born again. We are told how this is—"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." This complys with our experience, when it is gone we cannot be sure, but he sends the Comforter to take the things of his and shows them unto us, and we feel he certainly has restored unto us the joys of his salvation. Give my love to dear Sister Veazey with my best wishes that you are both enjoying sweet meditation and blessings both in spiritual and natural needs. Yours in a sweet hope.

(Mrs.) CARRIE CAMPBELL

Route 3, Coleman, Texas

MRS. W. L. SLUSHER, LINDSAY, CAL.

OUR DEAR FRIEND AND SISTER IN HOPE IF I BE WORTHY TO CALL ANY ONE BROTHER OR SISTER: Be that as it is our God is the judge of all things, and in the final consummation of all things all men will have to abide by the decision of the righteous Judge of the whole earth. But in this life it is a pleasure and privilege to meet and be with those who we believe are the children of God. Our Master said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." By the grace and mercy of God this is bestowed upon his children in this life. They are made to sit in heavenly places in Christ, and yet this is only a foretaste of that which is to be revealed at the last time, or when the entire household of faith shall see him and be like him. "A bone of him shall not be broken." That was so, naturally speaking. They, who crucified our Lord, broke the legs of both the thieves who were also crucified, one on each side of our Savior, but they said he was dead already and did not break his legs. But as with most Scriptures this has to my mind a deeper or better meaning. Not a single member or child for whom Christ died will be missing in the heaven of immortal glory. "But now are they many members, yet but one body." It takes every one of those given the Son in the everlasting covenant before the world was to constitute the body of

Christ, and Christ said, "O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was," and again "Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." Then in the mind, purpose and power of God through Jesus Christ our Savior, the children, every one of them, are given eternal life, even though some may not be subjected in hope or even born naturally.

This to my mind leaves out all the works of man to gain eternal life or to be saved as the world says. But it is a comforting thought to me to think "By grace are ye saved." Also to think that our holy and righteous Judge will do right and judge righteously about all men even our own children. Yea, that holy and righteous Creator of all things cannot do wrong. There is no law over him nor being or power above him to give a law to him or place him under a law. He is the very essence of holiness. Everything that ever did or ever will exist he made. "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." To my mind that does not leave anything out, man, beast, creeeping things or the devil. God made them and he has a perfect right to dispose of them as he sees fit. But he "hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." This I believe to be so with those who are "born again." They are made to realize God made all things. He controls all things "for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." There is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God, also it is not of works but "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Thus they realize there is not one single thing they can do to be saved in time or eternity. Also that they cannot hinder or hurry the work of God. Yea, even breathe a breath or raise a finger except by the grace and mercy of God. We cannot add one cubit to our stature or make one hair white or one black. Even a sparrow "shall not fall on the ground without your Father." He feeds the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field, how much more ye, O ye of little faith. If I am just one of them with "little faith," I know it is a gift of God and thus all the children "of faith" are his heirs and that by the free and unmerited gift of God. And they have been promised and given eternal life in Christ Jesus, and shall be conformed to his image, see him and be like him. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Then if God does not will that any should perish, they will not perish. "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." We have been (if I can include myself) "born again," raised up and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ, but this is only a taste of the power of the world to come wherein dwelleth righteousness. We cannot begin to express the love, joy, peace and reconciliation of that joy unspeakable when we are made to sit in these heavenly places in Christ which we enjoy here in this life by the grace and mercy of our God. Then we not being able to teach men to enjoy this in this life, how much less to teach men to do something to enjoy that which is to come? Then whatsoever things we have or may receive we

receive of his hand. It is good to think of a just and righteous God who has promised his chosen a life beyond this life where they will be with him, see him and be like him.

I hope both you and yours are enjoying good health. All here are enjoying good health as far as I know except my father and mother. Mother seems to be some better and says she feels very well and is not suffering, but she can only walk a few steps and that with help. Last Monday morning father had a light stroke. The doctor told him to stay quietly in bed and eat a light diet. We were down there last night and he seemed better. That may not bother him for a long time and it may be any time, we do not know of course.. I sent Brother Slusher's letter to the *Signs* and may send more of them. You can do with my letters as you see fit. If I have ever written or spoken the truth I believe I can truthfully say I was not taught it by man. All errors which I know are many lay to my charge for I know I am not perfect, but hope I can say I am honest and desire the truth. I hope to be found not striving about words to no profit, but for peace. Last night both father and mother said, "If everybody was like old Brother Slusher there would never be any trouble in the church." That is the way we think of him now. Write us when you feel like it. In hope of life immortal.

(Elder) C. U. LANDERS and WIFE

Route 1, Toney, Ala.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Please find enclosed money to pay for the *Signs* to be sent to me awhile longer. I want to always look forward to the coming of the dear family paper. I have been reading the *Signs* for a long time. I believe that the God I hope I trust directs his humble poor to write to the comfort of his chosen ones. The article written on "Where is the church" by Elder L. P. Harriss surely is worth its space. It caused me to turn to Isaiah 53rd chapter and read, for that scripture describes the founder of the church and it also describes his children. I hope I was in the number that did not find room for Him in the inn, for to find room for him there would imply we could find room for him in our hearts and that we cannot do for the arm of the Lord is revealed to somebody, and that somebody finds that he has the beauty of God's holy Son unequalled to anything this side of heaven. Oh that chapter that is mentioned above, how it does describe our nature before spiritual life is given. Then the 54th chapter starts with "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; (No works to be offered.) break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child." (Did not perform anything to obligate God to save you, nor get in debt to you.) Oh, is he not a wonderful God? At times if I could collect my thoughts and put them on paper I might write to the comfort of Zion, but my life is so often shown me in my journey here below to be so unprofitable that it hinders me from doing what I would like to do. Here is a thought I jotted down:

O praise the Lord, his name adore,
He paid the price to Canaan's shore;
And then his children he redeemed,
He set the tune to a great theme.

How sing ye saints, your hearts be glad?
For stripes and thorns your Master had;
But triumph over death and hell,
He made your home in heaven to dwell.

Why do you doubt his marvelous love?
He intercedes your cause above;
So sing, ye saints, his name adore
Your home is on his eternal shore.

We must have the tune set and the

song started before we can sing, but when that is done, as I heard Elder W. D. Griffin say one time, their tongues could be removed and his elect would still sing. God's humble poor must be shown, before he wants to sing, that he cannot do or say any good thing of him or herself. I have taken more space than I intended. If it is not asking too much kindly remember a poor needy creature, one of God's grace cases if saved at all. REANER REECE

ORDINATION

Pursuant to call of New Hope (Sandlick) church to the ordained ministers and deacons of the sister churches in our vicinity for help in the ordination of Brother Bunyon McGregor to the work of a Deacon, at the Fifth Sunday meeting in May, did proceed as follows:

1. New Hope church requested all ordained brethren of the same faith and order to form a presbytery, which they did by electing Elder R. L. Biggs as moderator, and Elder W. D. Griffin, as clerk.

2. Deacon Sam McGregor was appointed mouthpiece for the church, and he presented Brother McGregor to the presbytery.

3. Elder R. L. Biggs examined the candidate as o his doctrinal views, ana questioned the spokesman for the church as to his scriptural qualifications.

4. Presbytery being satisfied, with the fitness of Brother McGregor proceeded to ordination by laying on of hands and prayer by Elder C. D. Clark.

5. Elder C. O. Kerley delivered the charge to the new Deacon.

6. Right hand of fellowship was given Brother and Sister McGregor after which he was turned over to the church as qualified for any official work that Deacons are instructed to do.

Elder R. L. BIGGS, Moderator
Elder W. D. GRIFFIN, Clerk
Elder G. D. CLARK
Elder C. O. KERLEY
Deacon SAM McGREGOR

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. E. A. Bagwell, Ala., $4; Eld. W. D. Griffin, Ala., $1; Eld. R. L. Biggs, Tenn., $3; Mrs. W. H. Swettman, N. Y., $1; Mrs. S. G. Harralson, Ky., $1; Mrs. W. R. Fielder, Tex., $1.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Beginning January 1, 1949, the cost of printing the Signs of the Times has more than doubled what it was when we first began its publication on January 1, 1942. Until now we have been able to absorb the additional costs experienced from time to time, but the time has now come when the subscription price of the paper will have to be increased.

Thus far we have kept the columns of our family paper free from paid advertising matter of all kinds, and it is our firm purpose to continue to do so, notwithstanding the fact that other religious publications carry it. Other publications have, apparently, long since been compelled to increase the price of their subscriptions, but we have resisted it as long as we possibly could.

Our subscribers have been both loyal and liberal in the past, as a general thing, and we sincerely hope they will appreciate the fact that we most certainly would not raise our price unless necessity demanded it. Therefore, beginning with the January 1949 issue the subscription price will be $3.00 per year, or $5.00 for two years.

If all of our subscribers who can will pay promptly, and will make a real effort to secure new subscribers for the paper, we honestly believe that before a great while we will be able to increase the size of the paper from twenty-four pages to twenty-eight pages. We are persuaded that this will be most gratifying to our readers if it can be done. We have sufficient good material on hand to justify increasing the size of the paper when the necessary funds are available.

We appeal to our Authorized Agents to become more active in their efforts for new subscribers, and we also hope that our Ministering brethren will recommend to the brethren they serve and the friends they meet that they become readers of the **Signs.** To our Agents and Ministers we will allow them $1.00 for each new subscriber for one year or more, and to our subscribers who will send us a new subscriber, or to any one who will subscribe for the paper direct, we will be glad to send them FREE a copy of "Showers of Rain" by our late sister Flossie I. Faulkner. This is a book of about forty pages, containing her experience and a fine collection of her poems.

Bespeaking the continued loyalty and support of our subscribers and friends, and hoping they will feel free to write us at all times as their minds may direct, with renewed assurances of our best efforts not only to maintain the high standard of the paper, but to improve it any and every way possible, we subscribe ourself,

Faithfully yours,
R. LESTER DODSON

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. JANUARY, 1949

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

NEW YEAR'S GREETING

In our New Year's Greeting for last year, we dwelt upon the subject of *love,* than which there is none greater. This year we feel to use the theme of *mercy* in our message of greeting to our readers. As the ordinary dictionary definition of mercy does not seem to satisfy us, we are going to search the records of divine truth for a fuller and better meaning from our point of view. Crudens Concordance says *mercy* signifies (1) "That essential perfection in God, whereby he pities and relieves the miseries of his creatures, Psalm 100:5, Tit. 3:5. (2) Grace, which flows from mercy as its fountain, Jude 2. (3) Eternal life and happiness, which is the chief fruit of mercy, 2 Tim. 1:18. (4) All the blessings and benefits, whether bodily or spiritual, which proceed from the mercy of God. Psalm 106:7."

How thankful we are that our blessed Lord has not left us destitute of his mercy and his truth, and that his mercy endureth throughout all generations. David said, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." Therefore he could pray, "Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy." We doubt if any servant of God, in any age of the world, ever experienced or expressed God's goodness and mercy in a greater variety of ways than did David. God took him from the sheep cote, where he was the least in his father's house, and exalted him as king to the throne of Israel. He was, therefore, well qualified to comfort God's little ones in all of their goings forth. He could stand on the top of the mountain and proclaim, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork." He could also descend into the depth of the valley of despair and ask, "Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah." Psalm 77:8-9. What a tower of strength the Psalmist has been to us! He foretold of mercy and truth meeting together, and of righteousness and peace kissing each other. Well do we remember the time when we felt that God could not be just and justify the ungodly, such as we knew ourself to be; and it seemed that we were utterly cut off, and were without hope and without God in the world, until as we humbly trust Jesus was revealed to us, not only as the Saviour of sinners, but as our own personal Saviour. Then we beheld the glory of God as it appears in the face, or person, of his blessed Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We saw that in him, as David said, "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

Psalm 85:10. Solomon must have had a view of this for he said, "By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil." Prov. 16:6. In order to properly esteem mercy, one must of necessity realize his guilt and condemnation before a just and holy God, and by experience learn that "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." We are, therefore, glad that it is written, "He that followeth (seeketh) after righteousness and mercy findeth life." Let us remember that it is only the living, those characters who are born again, of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever, who seek, and they *shall* find. Paul was writing to quickened characters, who had been dead in trespasses and sin; who prior thereto had walked according to the course of this world, and included himself by saying, "Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others," when he said, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Paul also wrote to Titus, saying it is "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

If we should regard any particular verses as a text for this occasion they would be the following from the first epistle of Peter:

> "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."—I Peter 1:3-5.

We do well to remember that Peter was here addressing himself to those whom he regarded as "strangers scattered throughout" various provinces, who were also the "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." None but such characters have a mind or heart to enter into what follows. They, and they alone, have it in their hearts to give thanks and glory and honor unto the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for his "abundant mercy," by which he has begotten them again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. It is truly a great mercy of God that he has made us as creatures of the earth and blessed us with all things pertaining to this life, but it is infinitely a greater mercy that he has made us *new creatures* in Christ and given us a living hope in him. This lively hope is a good hope through grace and is God's gift to us through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He is the resurrection and the life of his people, and if he be not risen from the dead, then are we still in our sins and there is no hope for us. There is, however, an abundance of irrefutable evidence in the Scriptures that Christ rose from the dead for our justification and we, therefore, must preach Christ and him crucified and risen as the only

way of salvation for poor sinners, "for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." He is the first fruits of them that slept under the condemnation of God's law, and our only hope of seeing him as he is, and being like him, is that by and through and in him we shall be brought forth more than conquerors through him that loved us and gave himself for us. This lively hope to which we have been begotten is "as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Therefore the inheritance to which we have been begotten is "incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away," but is reserved in heaven, where neither moth nor dust doth corrupt, and where thieves cannot break through and steal. The best of all earthly inheritances corrupt and fade away and are as the flower of the field which to-day is and tomorrow has gone for ever. Not so with this heavenly inheritance, which shall never see corruption and shall abide for ever and ever. How wonderful that it is declared in God's blessed word, which cannot fail, that it is reserved in heaven for those "who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." We are glad that it does not depend upon the creature, by anything that he can do, to retain or keep this inheritance, for this would leave us without hope of eternal glory, for we know that all flesh is as prone to do evil as the sparks are to fly upward. Paul said in his flesh there dwelt no good thing. What a great satisfaction it is to know that we are kept by the power of God, and not by works of any righteousness which we can do. He who had the power to create the universe, with all the myriad of worlds and creatures that is in it, has made the way of salvation for his people safe and secure, and we can truly say with the great Apostle that we are "persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall ever be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." If, indeed, we are His, we need not doubt or have any fears about not enjoying the fulness of that inheritance which was given us in Christ Jesus, for we are not only heirs of God, but we are "joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." We are glad that it reads that we are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." The fruition of faith does not stop short of salvation, which is to be made known or revealed in the last time. Therefore there is nothing in this world, or that which is to come, which will hinder the saints from their final preservation in Christ till they reach their eternal home on high.

Among the many things which Jesus pointed out in that memorable sermon on the Mount, which led up to his referring to his followers as "the salt of the earth" and as "the light of the world," is this wonderful passage: "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." Luke says "his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation." Is it asking too much for us to examine ourselves for the purpose of seeing where we stand, remembering that Jesus said, "if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men."

We feel to exhort our brethren in the language of our blessed Lord by saying unto them, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." We will include in our greeting for this time the following words of the poet:

"Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song,
The joy of my heart, and the boast of my tongue;
Thy free grace alone, from the first to the last,
Hath won my affections, and bound my soul fast.

Without thy sweet mercy I could not live here,
Sin soon would reduce me to utter despair;
But, through thy free goodness, my spirits revive,
And he that first made me, still keeps me alive.

Thy mercy is more than a match for my heart,
Which wonders to feel its own hardness depart;
Dissolv'd by thy goodness, I fall to the ground;
And weep to the praise of the mercy I found.

The door of thy mercy stands open all day
To the poor and the needy, who knock by the way;
No sinner shall ever be empty sent back,
Who comes seeking mercy for Jesus' sake.

Thy mercy in Jesus exempts me from hell;
Its glories I'll sing, and its wonders I'll tell:
'Twas Jesus my friend, when he hung on the tree,
Who opened the channel of mercy for me.

Great Father of mercies! thy goodness I own,
And the covenant love of thy crucified Son;
All praise to the Spirit, whose whisper divine,
Seals mercy and pardon and righteousness mine!"

May God, in mercy, remember all of our readers throughout the New Year, preserve them in Christ Jesus to their journey's end, and then take them to their home in glory, where they shall render unto Him undivided praise, in a world that shall never end, is our prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen. R. L. D.

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us."—1 John 1:3.

On this beginning of a new year we are mindful to meditate upon the things which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled out of the word of life. We have a desire to review the Lord's dealings with us, giving diligence to make our calling and election sure. We are writing this epistle to the household of faith beseeching you to note the waymarks along the path we have traveled. If it so be that you recognize the markers along the way as being the path you have traveled, then you have fellowship with us; if they be strange to you, then you can class us as a stranger to the household of faith.

It has been so long since we have written you that we feel some kind of explanation would be appropriate. A few months ago we were employed by a concern that required our services from eleven to seventeen hours a day for six to seven days each week. We were content to pursue this with the vain thought that at an opportune time we could again take up our communion with brethren and meditations upon the Scriptures. We held this position three months and upon its termination tried fervently for one month to renew our relationship with brethren and lay hold on the Spirit of God. It pleased God to cut us off and to make us know that our trials were in vain. When we had given up all hope and were persuaded that we had been a deceiver and that our lot was with the wicked, the Lord graciously came to our rescue, renewing our interest and relationship with him and with brethren. Prior to this wonderful renewing of the Spirit we tried many times to pray, meditate, write and sing, but it was so cold and formal that it made us shudder. As in the case of John we had to be shown again that Jesus was the Christ. Do you ever go down into the valley so low that you forget your dependence

upon the grace of God and strive in vain to deliver yourself? Are your strivings and seeming zeal ever so formal and cold that you are condemned as a hypocrite?

Now I would like to go back in my meditations, the Lord willing, and briefly state to you some of the highlights along the pathway that I have traveled. I was born Sept. 28, 1906 in Amity, Arkansas. I was brought up under the tutorship of religious parents of high moral character who taught that a home in Heaven was gained by good works done by individuals here. I was taught that I was capable of performing these good works upon my own volition. I grew up as a regular attendant in Sunday School and church, and zealously studied the Bible from my earliest recollections. I began to speak in public before I was ten years old and was given the position as Sunday School teacher in my early teens. When I was fifteen I became a member of the Kelly Division of the Missionary Baptist Church, and on the next night gave a prepared lecture on John 3:16. I was often called upon to speak in the absence of ordained ministers, and while yet in my teens was ordained to the full work of ministry in that denomination. I had a bad case of "I-itus" feeling myself to be worthy of imitation and classing myself as being the most influential speaker in that section of the country. I was very zealous in revival meetings trying to show sinners that they were treading the path that leads to hell and urging them to turn, do right and be saved.

During this period of my career I think God taught me my first lesson. An ordained minister from Hot Springs, Arkansas had been selected to conduct a revival in the community where I was teaching school. Night after night he vehemently warned sinners to flee the wrath to come. He had labored hard to move them to action but not one had come to the "mourner's bench." The night before the meeting was scheduled to close he came to me and told me that he had done all that he could do and had gotten no results, requesting me to take charge the next night and see what I could do. I agreed to do this as I saw that it was an opportunity for me to make a greater reputation. I carried my Bible and note-book with me to school the next day and on my return stopped beside a brook and outlined a sermon on the theme, "Sinners in the hands of an angry God," using as a text, "Thou shalt be cut off and that without remedy." I was anxious for the meeting to begin that night. I was blessed with oratorical eloquence to such an extent that hell was pictured so awful, and God as being so angry at their unconcernedness that when the altar call was made approximately thirty people flocked to the altar. I have never forgotten the anxious expression of fear amidst the tears on the face of the first one who extended her hand toward me at that time. Neither shall I forget the awful tones of the voice of Almighty God when he spake to me just before I took her hand in mine. This voice thundered, "Who are you, that you should invite?" My fears were made more terrible when that same voice convinced me that I was a sinner, a hypocrite and a liar. This was the first time that I had ever realized myself as a sinner. The blackest, vile person that I had thought of before seemed then to be my superior. While I was in this awful frame of mind people tried to tell me how proud I should be to be able to move the people in such a way. Their intended flowers were as thorns that condemned me more. I slipped out of the house as soon as possible and tried

to flee from that terrible condition. I tried to get myself right with God. The things that I had gloried in before were as filthy rags.. For months and months I moped about as a condemned sinner finding no comfort or consolation in anything. I finally had given up the idea of making myself right with God when it pleased him to teach me another lesson.

Circumstances over which I had no control placed me in a community far distant from my home where they had heard of me as being a preacher and had arranged for me to preach one Sunday night there. I was given this information only one hour before the service was to begin. My pleadings would not convince them that I had quit appearing before the public as a preacher. Being caught in such circumstance, I was finally persuaded that I could act the hypocrite at least one more time. I thought I could pick up one of my old themes and lecture to them, but I could not think of anything other than that I was a sinner. Up to this time I had never heard of any one posing as a preacher who would be so disgraceful as to confess himself to be a sinner. I went before a big audience unprepared, with a blank mind concerning the Scriptures. My foremost thought was that I was a sinner. I was so upset that I did not go into the form of prayer, but groaned within myself, "God be merciful to us." I have never known whether I read any scripture or not, but I was given to feast upon the power, wisdom and holiness of God. God revealed himself to me that night as having all power in heaven and earth; who spake and it was done; who commanded and it stood fast. I saw him as being so wise that he could consecrate the acts of men and devils to his own praise and glory. He appeared as being so holy that he had a wonderful and righteous purpose in everything. When I came to realize where I was that night, I closed the services, yet feasting upon the characteristics of God. I continued to enjoy these thoughts enroute home that night in my car alone. When about midway home, my thoughts were reversed from thinking upon God to thinking of myself. I saw a great gulf between God's power and my inability; God's wisdom and my foolishness; God's holiness and my sinfulness. I tried again in vain for months to span this gulf and get myself right with God. When I had given up all hope it pleased God to teach me another lesson.

Several months later I was teaching in this little town where I had this last related experience, when a member of the school board especially requested me to attend with him a Wednesday night service at the home of one, J. H. Livingstone. Elder A. D. Wall, who then lived in Arkansas, was scheduled to preach. Up to this time I had never associated with Primitive Baptists and did not know anything about them. I had heard that there was an ignorant people who lived in remote places who were called "Hardshells" whom I was taught to fear and ignore. I was informed that they justified themselves in the many devilish acts that they performed and charged all their meanness to God. I had heard that Uncle Henry Langston was a "Hardshell" and I quickly informed this man that I did not care to attend the service with him, giving him my reason. He immediately told me that he was surprised at my attitude and further added, "If I have ever heard a Primitive Baptist sermon you preached it here in this town." I told him that I would go with him for curiosity's sake as I had always wondered what I said that night, and that I had yearned for such experience

again. I went and Elder Wall was blessed to take up every question that had bothered my mind and answered it with the Bible to my entire satisfaction. Before he was through speaking that night I was blessed to view a character that I had never seen before. I saw Jesus who was very God and very man span the gulf that was between me and my God. I saw that dual character loom up before me with one foot upon the earth and the other upon the throne of God in heaven. I saw him stoop lower than the angels, yes lower than men. I saw him as he reached down into the miry slime of the slough of sin, and even reach low enough to reach vile me. I saw him as he picked me up and washed me whiter than snow with his blood, and presented me without blemish, spot or wrinkle carrying me across the gulf and presenting me in the holiest of holy in the presence of Almighty God as a fit subject for that eternal city. Such mercy and amazing grace I had never been able to behold before. I was made to cry out praises to his adorable name. I thought I had confessed Jesus as my Savior but found I had known nothing about him before. I found myself speaking in a strange language that all my former associates knew nothing about and they concluded I was crazy. I began attending Primitive Baptist church and to my great surprise found that the ministers were telling my experience and thoughts far better than I could express them.

In the year 1930 all my earthly possessions were taken from me; my first wife died; my body was afflicted and my parents turned a cold shoulder to me feeling that I had disgraced their good name. In the midst of all this, and my feeling of unworthiness, I became a member of the church that same year and was liberated to speak in the name of Christ. I was ordained in the year 1934 and married a Primitive Baptist girl whom the Lord has blessed to be a sweet companion to me. She understands my infirmities, and overlooks my many faults and patiently shares with me the heartaches and tribulations attached to the career of a minister of the gospel. I have traveled among this people in the different sections of the country and find such unity in belief that I am persuaded that all are taught by the same teacher. I am determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified. He is our salvation both for time and eternity.

God has taught me in his wonderful dealings with me the doctrine of salvation solely upon the merits of Jesus Christ to such extent that any other doctrine is strange to my ears. I believe Jesus accomplished the law to a jot and tittle, and his accomplishments were accredited to the account of the people who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. His blood covered all the sins of all God's people that they have ever committed, are committing now or ever shall commit. This is not proclaimed because of any theory advanced by any one, but because of the things that I have experienced. E. J. L.

"The foregoing editorial by Elder Lambert, we think, is well worth the subscription price of our family paper. He is not at all well and desires the prayers of his brethren. We suggest that all who can, and have a mind to do so, write to him. R. L. D."

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m.
W. A. WILLIAMS and J. J. COLLINS, Pastors.

Ramah Church, Cottonwood, Ala., meets each third Sunday, 11 a.m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each second Sunday and Saturday before.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala.
Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Bethlehem Church, Malvern, Ala., meets each second Sunday, 11 a.m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopeful Church, Ozark, Ala., meets each fourth Saturday, 11 a.m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock. Meeting place at Alder St. at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each first Saturday, 11 a.m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each fourth Sunday, 11 a.m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Seclusia Predestinarian Baptist Church meets 4th Sundays, 11 a.m., 9616 South Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. H. Y. BEAUCHAMP, Pastor, 137 Chestnut Ave., Long Beach, Cal.

Bethel Church near Stockton, Cal. meets first and third Sundays in each month and Saturday nights before. For further information write SETH BYNUM, Rt. 3, Box 800G, Stockton. Cal.

The Old School or Predestinarian Baptists meet for worship first Sunday of each month, 2:30 p. m., second floor Pythian Temple Building, 1012 Ninth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Elder John D. Wood, Minister. For information write FRANK T. SIMPKINS, 5210 - H St., Dillon Park, Washington, D. C.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m., north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets every second Sunday at 5th and E. Park St. B. O. JEFFREYS, Pastor, Weiser, Idaho

Pleasant Valley Church Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator, Williamstown, Kans.

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carver Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. C. H. EVANS, Pastor

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before a 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a.m. in the meeting-house. Pastor in regular attendance except first Sundays. C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays 11:00 a. m., 2 p. m.

The Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every first and third Sundays at Parkside Hotel, 18 Gramercy Park South, one block east of Fourth Ave. and 20th St., near 23rd St. Sta. Lexington Ave. Subway. Take Elevator to **Park Room second floor. 11 A.M. 1:30 P.M.**

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting first Sunday, each month 10:30 a.m.
Take Elevator to 5th Floor

C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.

E. H. LANIER, Clerk

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

The Old Orderly Mt. Zion (Cash) Predestinarian Baptist Church meets on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in each month, at the home of Bro. J. J. Darnell, Campbell, Texas.

W. A. LITTLE, Moderator
Sister SIMMONS, Clerk

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets first and third Sundays each month 11 a. m. 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas.

C. B. TEAGUE, Clerk, L. D. ROSE, Pastor

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets first Sunday in each month at 11:00 a.m. and Saturday at 2 p.m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

Shepherd Fold Church meets every fourth Sunday at Civic Club, 1419 N. Shepherd St., Houston, Texas. W. O. Beene, Pastor, Ben B. Walston, Ass't Pastor. (Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER, Clerk.

The original Pilgrim Rest Church of Lawn Texas meets every first Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a. m.

HOWARD EASON, Clerk
C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dr. Wood church-house. Those interested write Mrs. Lela Culpepper, Stockdale, Texas.

E. B. AULT, Pastor

The Old Salem Church of Old School Baptists, 4 miles south from Teague, Texas, meets the first Sunday in each month and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 11 a. m. at the home of E. B. Ault on Progresso Highway, three and one half miles south of Weslaco

E. B. AULT, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk
Route 1, Box 88, Mission, Tex.

Danville Primitive Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before Bradley Road, Danville, Va.

W. R. DODD, Pastor

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meets each first Sunday 11 a.m.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p.m. and Sunday at 11 a.m., Fairmont Park, 3023 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va.,

R. B. DENSON, Pastor

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Ghehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a.m.

C. M. FISHER.

Bethel Old School Baptist Church, Riffe, Wash. meets every third Sunday, 11 a.m. in the meeting house.

I. F. COLEMAN, Mod.
ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk, Riffe, Wash.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church near Yakima, Washington, meets at 11 a. m. each second Sunday by appointment at the home of one of the members living at Naches, Wash.

A. D. HUGHETT, Pastor
BEATRICE HAAN, Clerk
Star Route, Naches, Wash.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va., N. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 117 RUTHERFORD, N. J., FEBRUARY, 1949 No. 2

EXPERIENCE

The Lord has been so good to me
I shall on Him depend,
Unworthy as I feel to be
Until my journey's end.

He blessed me every night and day
Sufficient for my need;
To Him I often try to pray
To pardon all my deeds.

His presence and His tender care,
Each hour I do implore;
And mercy grant me every-where,
Both now and ever-more.

I feel His need, indeed I do
And feel my guilty shame;
I feel condemned for-ever too
For sinning against His name.

I have no room to make excuse
Or merits for to give;
I have to own up to the truth,
And beg Him while I live.

If mercy in His sight is found
Bestow on sinful me,
Before they place me in the ground,
His mercy hope to see.

My poor old heart, dear Lord, prepare
To praise Thee ever-more;
Oh take me, Saviour, over there
Across the Jordan shore.

Romney, W. Va. THOS. F. LEWIS

CORRESPONDENCE

807 Pope St., Memphis, Tenn.

MY DEAREST VERTNA: There is no use trying to put away this desire to write you of things pertaining to salvation and faith in God. There seems to be an urge or drawing inside me toward you that is irresistible, (not that I dislike it to be) but I am so afraid of worrying you by writing too much. I try to put away the thoughts that pour into my mind after reading your letters, but it is hard to put things that are so pleasant out of the mind. I love to think of God and his creation, his salvation of sinners and of the great mystery of it. John says in the 10th chapter of Revelations, he saw an angel stand on the land and the sea, and swore that there should be time no longer. And in the days of the voice of the seventh angel when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, and I think about it so much. What a great mystery is life, creation and the cause of all events, but there is within me always a reaching out for knowledge of these things; but I do not believe man will ever attain to such knowledge here except in a small measure—just what is good for him, no more. You said you believed one could make one's self grow in grace until they would not have any more doubts. I do not know what kind of doubts you meant. I believe to grow in grace and knowledge of the truth and Christ's righteousness only causes one to see more clearly their own weakness, inability to do good or keep themselves from evil and idols. They see the sin within more clearly and abhor themselves and fear and tremble, knowing what they are by nature and what they must be by grace to inherit eternal life; they glimpse Christ and his righteousness and his perfection so pure and holy. I do not believe God's children doubt

God's power to save, nor his power to rule and control all things, but their doubt is whether they really have been born of the Spirit or did they just imagine they were.

In answer to what you said about divine guidance and an inner voice, I am sending you an article in Sunday's paper by Mr. Ellis and I think it is good. How any one can disregard the workings of this Spirit in God's people I surely do not understand. I mean how can people say they do not believe in the workings of this Holy Spirit in the hearts of his people, when it was Jesus who said, except ye are born of the Spirit, ye cannot see the kingdom of God. When a child is born of its mother it is alive and that life and breath causes it to grow and function or act until death. So when one is born of that Spirit of God it is life, it acts, it functions, grows and produces faith and all the things Paul enumerates in the 5th chapter of Galatians as being fruits of the Spirit. I believe it is eternal life and when death causes this natural earthly body to go back to dust, this Spirit lives and soars upward to God who gave it; but while it is abiding in this creature, this earthen vessel, I believe it produces fruit; but this earthen vessel is still an earthen vessel and sin was not taken out of it but left in it condemned in the flesh, so in the flesh we are guilty and will always be so; but if the Spirit abides in us, if we have been born of the Spirit then we stand before God holy and without blame in love because of Jesus, God's only Son, and what he did that we might have life and a home in heaven.

Vertna, you said you believed. Just what do you believe? What I mean is, do you believe that He is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek him? Do you believe that he is the cause of a person seeking him? Surely there must be a cause! The natural mind receiveth not the things of the Spirit, and is not subject to the law of God. I do not believe the natural mind ever seeks Jesus, so if a person has that earnest desire within to be saved I believe it is evidence that there is life there. Do not understand me to mean that if I started out to-day and asked everybody I met if they wanted to be saved and they all said they did that I would believe just from that that they had eternal life. That is exactly what is going on in modern churches to-day. Is it not?. They will take them in the church and baptize them on just the statement that "I accept Christ as my personal Savior and am going to live and work for him, etc." I am sorry I said that as I have meant to try and not criticize others for what they believe—that is for them and their God, it is not for me to judge.

Vertna, what I am trying to say is that I believe God is a rewarder of them that seek him for it is he that causes the seeking; and did you ever stop to think that there is a space of time between conception and birth? There is life from the time of conception or else there would be no growth. No one remembers their natural birth and I often wonder if any one actually knows when they are born spiritually. We begin to have thoughts that are new to us, we speak of an inner voice and we feel it. I believe it guides us, we may not realize it but it does. As babies we automatically love our parents, brothers and sisters or members of our household. So I believe it is spirtually. We are automatically, or I will say spiritually, drawn to the family of God, and we love God the same way and for the same reason, because we are begotten of his Spirit, and it is he and his love that draws that that is born in

us to him. His love and power surpasses all love or powers for he is the only power, even the powers that be are ordained of him. He is the *great I am,* the beginning and the end. "I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." One writer says, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." As I have said so often I feel that man is so apt to judge the Lord by feeble sense. Sometimes I have wondered if one who had not been born again ever pondered these things at all. Jesus said, they cannot see the kingdom and he also said, "the kingdom of God is within you."

Vertna, there is no way around it, it all adds up, Jesus in you the hope of glory, the kingdom of God is within you. We read in Exodus 35:21, "And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up and every one whom his spirit made willing, etc." Did you ever follow up the word spirit? I mean look up in the concordance all the places it refers you to. I know you have read it, but read the 14th, 15th and 16th chapters of John. It seems Christ was doing the talking. See what you think of the Comforter? What and who it is, and what it was sent for, and who it is sent to. Notice Jesus' prayer in the 17th chapter. I try so hard to understand rightly what is meant, that is my greatest desire. I think, if I am not mistaken, my hope is that I have truly been born of the Holy Spirit of God. And although I believe if I have, I will receive all the knowledge necessary for me, all the faith and wisdom to keep the commandments, and that is all I need, nevertheless, I believe it pleased him to put this yearning desire within us to know more of these glorious things. He says, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."

It seems the apostles witnessed the most—the life, death, resurrection and ascension. John even baptized Jesus. I have been reading for weeks and this morning read again the stoning of Stephen, and Saul (very much an unbeliever) stood by and consented to that man of God being stoned to death. He went to the high priest desiring of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way he might bind them and bring them to Jerusalem. He had the opportunity of hearing the preached word, he probably had heard Stephen. Stephen was a man full of faith and power and was given wisdom and the spirit. The disputers were unable to resist the wisdom by which he spoke so they brought false witnesses against him. In the 7th chapter of Acts he preached such a grand and glorious sermon in the power of God from Abraham's time to Christ's crucifixion. Then they killed him. Did all that wonderful preaching make Saul believe? As he was journeying along with evil intentions it seems in his heart, something was shown to him, and after this what did Paul do? He testified of these things, what he had seen and heard there on the way to Damascus, and immediately he loved those folks he was persecuting. He was a willing character for he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and he did exactly as the Lord told him. He was sent into the midst of all kinds of danger and persecution, yet Paul is the very one who said, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," and on and on as you know without me quoting it all.

I believe all true believers believe in the working of the Holy Spirit in their every day life. I believe they are taught by that spirit. When one is born of that spirit it takes up its abode within, it abides in you as John said of the anointing, "Ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." And that truth, or spirit or anointing is Jesus for he is truth and it just will not accept or be drawn to false witnesses. The flesh will, but not that perfect Spirit of God, for Jesus said, "He will guide you into all truth." It is truth and is drawn to truth as love is drawn by love—love begets love. I never tire of trying to express what I hope to believe concerning the Holy Spirit and what its purpose is. I believe it is the reason why I have a hope in God. It is what I believe that sometimes fills me with perfect assurance that Jesus is mine. It is what causes me to loathe the sin which I know is in me, and makes me fear, tremble and repent and beg God to be merciful to my unrighteousness and lead me in the way. You asked me what I thought of it in our daily lives, so that is what I think.

About forgiving one's brother, when we take those commandments and try to live up to them literally, or apply them to every one, or think we see one who has not forgiven his brother we are surely trying to live up to the letter of the law. We read in James 2:10, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." So are you and we are all glad that Paul says, "For ye are not under the law, but under grace." So it is not by keeping the law that we inherit eternal life, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." He does not need to inquire what is in man, he made him and he knows what is in him. Paul says, "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." God knew man loved to boast of himself so he left no loophole. "Not of works, lest any man should boast." Man being made subject to vanity is indeed vain. Do we not see and know this? Is there any wonder that there is warfare within when the pure and blessed Holy Spirit takes up its abode there? It is in opposition to the sinful nature of man, but thanks to God it is the stronger. Its fruit is meekness, humbleness, gentleness, love, goodness, faith and it comes from the very fountain head of all these things, even God, and he cannot be overthrown.

Louise Newman called me a moment ago and said she was getting her work ready for the day, but her mind was so full of God's greatness, his sovereignty in all things and the wondrous plan by which all things come to pass, she just had to talk to some one about it. Vertna, does that sound like the natural mind? "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." There was a time with me when my whole desire was earthly things that perish with the using—friends, pleasures in worldly things. Now there seems to have something come in that makes these worldly things secondary, they are no longer my whole desire. They have been spoiled, I hope, by the stronger, and he bound me with his great love, the strong cords of love, yet made me free from the law of sin and death, free from the condemnation. I believe I can truthfully say with Paul, "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind." so

this law of sin and death is still with us and is warring against this and is warring against this law, or spirit of God, but Jesus has overcome the world and redeemed his children to God. No wonder Paul goes on to say, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who (whether they feel like they do or not) walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." They were "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

Vertna, I must close, do not fail to keep writing me the thoughts of your mind on these things except for just one reason, that is, if you in any way at all are tired or upset by my letters then do not write me and I will understand, and honestly I will not think hard of you, but do not stop writing me for any other reason. I am not tired of your doubts and what you call lack of understanding for I have had the same and still do for that matter. As I was talking with sister lately it does seem that I am stronger in faith than I was at one time, but I say that fearfully, realizing my weakness and where my strength lies. I Cor. 10:22 says, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." I know that if I am stronger in the faith it is because God so worked it in me for I have learned, I think, that I can do nothing of myself. Why? Because I have tried and still try. I truly believe that is his way of teaching us to look to him, pray to him, render praise to him from whom all blessings flow.

I cannot seem to quit. Vertna, your letters do not sound like lack of understanding to me. They tell me that you are doing exactly what Paul wrote in Phil. 2:12. Read the verse. You may think you are not one to whom he is speaking as he said, "Beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." When reading people's experiences, which we do believe is the working of the Holy Spirit in them, do we not see how long they have pondered these things in fear sometimes and in doubt not confessing Him in so many words, but the light that cannot be hid shone so brightly in their walk, and although they did not realize it, may be their speech betrayed them. This might look to some as though the Lord was striving and having a hard time with this person to save him, but not so to me. His word is sharper than any twoedged sword. Seek and ye shall find. As to how long any one is to seek before finding I do not know and it does not say, but you have obeyed that for I have never seen one that I felt was really seeking more than you, and seeking the truth which is him. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled," but if you are trying to find righteousness in yourself you are trying to satisfy the law. It took Christ to satisfy the law's demands, so it is his righteousness and his obedience that saved his people. We are told our own righteousness is as filthy rags in his sight, and is an abomination. So then we are saved by hope. Hope in what? Hope that Christ died for our sins and was resurrected justifying us for his own name's sake, and not for anything we might do. "Not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Man's heart devises many ways, but God directs his steps. I am "confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good

work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." I believe in his own time and way you will be led to obey every ordinance which is necessary for your life here and hereafter. Do not trust in man or man's ability to obey and keep the commandments, thereby justifying themselves and setting Christ at naught, but hope for the things we see not. Has he changed as to his way of saving souls? Is his arm shortened? Has his power diminished that he cannot draw people to him and save them as his disciples testified all through the Bible? James 1:17 says in speaking of him "with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." "The same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." He said in speaking of his new covenant what he would do and what they shall be. Paul told some one, "You hath he quickened." John speaks of the anointed that teacheth them all things. Now to-day the same is manifested. Has he changed? Do we not still hear and read of people trying to tell how they hope they have been quickened by the Spirit of Truth (Christ in them the hope of glory) which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, etc? "We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?"

Vertna, does it not all add up to Jesus, nothing but the blood of Jesus? All the works of man are vain, or from some selfish motive. Jesus' love alone has gained for us a home in glory. These words just came to me out of nowhere it seems, but they went together as I thought them, so that is what I believe. I sometimes wonder about you and I passing so many thoughts back and forth to each other, and what the purpose is. It seems my heart is so full of praise and love to God and love to you as I write you. I somehow feel strong in faith more than usual. I do not want to deceive you as to myself. I wonder about the things I write you sometimes. I earnestly believe they are true, but I am not able to always view them so plainly. I am very doubtful and fearful that though these things be true they might not be for me, yet surely I could not believe the truth if I had not been born again. If this is not the truth then I am just deceived. With love. (Mrs.) LUCILLE YOUNG

223½ S. Tenth St., Mt. Vernon, Ill.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am enclosing renewal for Sister Bella Meredith's subscription to the *Signs*. I hope she will not miss a copy as she enjoys reading it so much. When she is able to attend church she does not get so much out of the preaching on account of impaired hearing, but she loves to read. I have just returned home from visiting her a week and she told me she read and reread the *Signs*, enjoying the editorial writings and getting so much out of them. She is a very dear sister in our little church, one we all love and miss her when she is not able to attend. She is very lonely since her companion, Brother J. T. Meredith passed on. They always enjoyed having the Baptists in their home, and I can truthfully say I believe the Baptists always enjoyed being in their home. I always have.

Elder Dodson, when you have a mind to do so I would like you to write your understanding of the text in Song of Solomon 1:19. "I have compared thee O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots." I have such a desire to understand the Bible, but I am not given much understanding. Do not get much light and cannot remember when I do read so I can talk or write. I do feast on the good writings in the *Signs* and when I hear the good sermons. I attended our Soldier Creek union at Soldier Creek Church near

Brewers, Ky., and we had a wonderful meeting. All the Elders were blessed with liberty to speak. It is a heavenly place when all seem to be enjoying the wonderful feast that is spread before us and all can feast on the same food that God has prepared for us spirtually. God is love. He is God and there is none beside him. He is my salvation, my all in all, but sometimes my hope is so small I almost lay it by. My little hope and the strength that God gives me is all I have. I know his strong arm can uphold me in my weakness. I did not intend writing at this length. I hope you can be blessed to keep the dear paper going as there is much good tidings in it. An unworthy sister if one.

(Mrs.) S. S. KERLEY

(*See Editorial.*)

Route 2, Box 86, Jasper, Ala.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Several have asked me to write something for publication, but it seems I do not have anything on my mind to write at present. As it is time to renew my subscription I will write any way and if you think it would be of worth to any one you may publish it, if not it will be alright.

I was born in Gwinnett, Ga., in 1892. My mother was a Missionary Baptist, my father was not a member of any denomination, but all my life he would sometimes carry us to a Primitive Baptist church about seven miles from home. I thought those queer old people were ugly. Some of the brethren wore their hair long, down to their neck, the sisters wore their aprons and sunbonnets. I loved pretty clothes and as I grew older was very well satisfied with myself. I went to mother's church, to Sunday School and singings, in fact I thought myself and my crowd better than most any one. My father and mother had only two children and encouraged us in thinking we were above the average. I got along fine in my vanity until some time in the winter or early spring of 1910. Something seemed to go wrong, I became so troubled I could not sleep and no matter where I was or who I was with I was miserable. I did not know what was wrong but felt to be a poor, lost sinner. No matter how hard I tried I could not get rid of the awful burden and continually in my heart I was begging for mercy.

I was planning to go away to school in the fall and looked forward to this change, hoping my studies and new environments would help me forget. Some time in May there was a big uproar in the country over Haley's comet. Some people got very upset. I saw it but was not disturbed over it. It just seemed to me it was something I could not do anything about. One night mother said, "Some one said the comet"s tail will sweep the earth tonight and it will be the end of time." Something seemed to say to me and I almost said aloud, "You have been through something today more severe than a comet's tail." I cannot explain what I passed through these few months. In August a revival was being conducted at mother's church and I went. My cousins and my associates went to the mourner's bench, got saved and united with the church. I went to the mourner's bench but like the poor fellow at the pool somehow it did not reach my case. I decided my case was different from all other cases and I was forever a lost sinner.

One afternoon my father and mother were talking about the meeting and the preacher's text that day, "Virtue went out of him." I said, "Miss Carfax wanted him to say more about the virtue, and father said "I did too." I got the Bible and read the scripture but I did not understand a thing, it meant nothing to me. One woman had faith, but I was just a poor, lost sinner, for

some reason different. My case was not like other people's. I walked out on the porch humming a little song, "A sheep went out into the cold." It seemed I was in a whirl of confusion when all at once something opened up. Something seemed to say, "It was a sheep before it went astray." In my mind I could see the Savior, and saw what the sacrifice meant when he hung on Calvary; what the atonement meant to poor, little sinners like me. Somehow I felt I was included and "Amazing Grace" appeared in a new light. All the afternoon I rejoiced in my heart. I would not go to meeting that night, it seemed something had taken place that separated me from my crowd. I began to think of that little church at Ivey and begged mother to go with me. She finally agreed to go. Somehow I felt like they spoke my language, anyway I wanted to hear what they said. I wanted to talk to some one but shunned mother's preachers for they would ask me if I were saved and then go on with a lot of "how to do." I had tried their plan and I knew they would never understand the sweetness that filled my soul. Some how I felt like that little band of ugly faces at Ivey were different.

On Saturday before the third Sunday in September we went to the little church and when we drove up to the place I wondered why I had never noticed before how peaceful everything around seemed. It seemed I could see the Son in those wrinkled faces. Elder Livesy went into the stand. His text was, Abraham sending the servant for Isaac's wife, and I loved the things he said. In fact I loved that meeting and longed to ask them to let me have a home with them and tell them my hopes and doubts; to tell them I had tried the works system, had been weighed in the balance and found wanting. But my hope was that for some reason it pleased the heavenly Father to have mercy on me. I hardly knew these people but felt they were my kinsmen in the Spirit. I was afraid I could not make even them understand why a little girl hardly eighteen wanted a home with them. They seemed so superior in wisdom and experience in battling with the problems of life. I wondered would I make a mis-step some where down the line and cause them to be ashamed of me.

My mother died in Feb. 1911. This put new responsibilities on me. I stopped school and tried to take mother's place in the home and help father in the store. Time went on, I went to a meeting most every third Saturday and Sunday, read the Bible and argued with most every customer until my father thought I was losing my mind and threatened to hide the Bible but did not. One Saturday he told me I could have the horse and buggy to go to meeting, but I *must* come home when preaching was over and not stay for conference and I promised. On the way to the meeting we crossed a creek just above a mill-pond. Every time I passed that beautiful pond I wanted so much to be buried in baptism, but this time there was no thought but that I would obey father and get home early for he had to use the horse and buggy that afternoon. When preaching was over I did not want to go home. My sister was with me and was sick. She kept saying, "We must go." Finally I got in the buggy and we started home. I began choking or something, any-way it seemed I could not get my breath. I felt like the wind was blowing so awfully hard, or I was trying to swim up stream in swift waters, the farther we went the worse I got. When we had gone a half a mile or more I said, "Estelle I must go back." She said, If that is the way you feel all right." When we got to the church they were having conference

but I do not know how far in conference. I remember walking up the aisle and sitting down on the front bench. An old sister behind me whispered, "Go ahead if you want to." The next thing I remember I was sitting on the bench beside Elder Livesy and was talking but do not know what I said. There were tears in his eyes, I looked at the others and tears were in all their eyes. I was so frightened I thought, "What have I done?" Disobeyed my father and deceived these people. The church received me. Elder Livesy asked me if there was any other preacher I would rather have baptize me. I told him "no." He asked me when I would be ready? I said, "tomorrow if it suits you." So I was baptized the third Sunday in June 1914. Not in the mill-pond but another pond just below the mill-pond. I will never forget the beauty I beheld as I came from under the water.

Brother Dodson, I do not know whether this is an experience of grace, or the imagination of a silly girl, but through many dark hours in my path so far in life I have been comforted with the hope that it was the working of the Holy Spirit. My heart and sympathy goes out to the little lambs who have impressions early in life to come out from the world for they are criticized and called old fashioned; and while they are respected they are never popular, and there are many temptations. I feel like we older ones should do all we can to encourage them for I know how little and weak they feel. I still feel to be the least of all but I know the rest feel the same. I did not intend to write so much but somehow cannot quit. I hope you will excuse such a long letter. You will find enclosed check to renew my subscription. I read the *Signs* when I first became interested in spiritual things. An old sister had a lot of old copies which she let me read. It had been many years since I had read it until I received the copies you sent me. I was so glad to find it was the same as fifty years ago. Still standing for the same truth and I cannot do without it. I am so glad it is free of arguments and debates. While we may differ in some little points I feel in the real fundamental issues we are all together and should try to walk in peace and love. I have had lots of hard knocks because I was not able to see where I was due some special "salvation" because I united with the church early in life, but I know how it was, I was so overpowered I just had to and no honor is due me. I have only walked in the path laid out for me. Had I not been constrained by a higher power I would have gone the way "that seemeth right to man." May be the mistakes I have made were for my good in some way so I am (sometimes) reconciled that things are as they are. May the good Lord bless you and all the good writers to keep the paper coming full of comfort to us little weak creatures trusting in the Lord for something better than this whirl of conflict. In hope.

(Mrs.) M. G. HAND

St. Albans, W. Va.

DEAR ELDER BYRD: I have had a desire to write you since I returned from the good meeting at Harmony Church and also the two at Hopewell and Providence. I told myself I would not try as I do not feel fit to write one like you, but I find myself trying. I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed your preaching, and felt disappointed when you were not put in the stand Sunday morning. Then it rained and I was glad as I wanted to hear you again. I enjoyed the other preaching too but you got closer to my feelings. I hope I believe it is not of man but of God and that his glory has no bounds. I

have felt to rejoice and praise his holy name. He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. How glorious is the thought that he works and none can hinder. Blessed be his holy name. When I am blessed for a little season to feel his presence, and to feel that he has smiled upon one so small and unworthy as I, they are glorious moments in my life. At those times I could not ask for more but those seasons are so few and so short. Then comes the time of fear and trembling and I sink in the mire where there is no standing. I come into deep waters where the floods overflow me. There seems no mercy for one such as I. I love to go to meeting and mingle with his dear people but feel so unfit. Sometimes I hope I might have a small hope through grace and again I am afraid to hope. My burden is so heavy and has been with me so long. I do not know when I started to be troubled about myself.

When in my early teens I would go to church with my family and would want to go in and listen, but the young people of my age would not often go in so I would stay out with them and they would tease me about wanting to go in. Sometimes I could get them to sit close enough to the house that I could hear the singing which sounded beautiful to me. I would go home and cry as my heart would feel so heavy, and I would wonder why I could not shake off my trouble and be like other young people. I felt so alone I wondered what was wrong with me. Some time later when Mr. Lake and others were baptized I believe I saw the beauty and richness of God's grace and tender mercy. He seemed to be before me in his glory. The water looked so beautiful to me and I wanted to be with them shaking hands but I remained where I was. My burden seemed lighter for a short time and then I became so restless I decided to get away from home and all Old Baptist people and go to work, thinking perhaps I could forget my trouble. For some time it seemed to leave me and I felt light hearted and gay, but slowly it returned worse than before. It seemed I had forgotten my God, would surely die and my soul would be sent to hell. It seemed I could not pray and was surely lost. I was married about this time and my husband was worried about me. I was afraid to go to sleep at night and this would keep him awake. I longed to tell him my fears but felt that he would not understand.

I am now twenty-six and am still troubled. I have had no dreams like some people write of so sweetly in their experience, and if I do have one it seems so small, but sometimes when I feel I have a hope it is so precious to me, more precious than gold. I would love to have a home in the church some day but I feel too unworthy and afraid I am deceived in myself and would be a deceiver to the others. Oh that my burden might be made lighter by some assurance from above, and that I might be brought down in humbleness and be made to say, Thy will be done through my sorrows, and to praise his name for his goodness and mercy and the many blessings he sends to one so unworthy. Elder Byrd I feel I should not send this. I did not intend to write about myself when I started, but I will let it go hoping you can make allowance for one such as I. In love.

(Mrs.) GERTRUDE B. HOFFMAN

Star Route, Naches, Wash.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: The July *Signs* came to-day and I have read all of it though it has been a busy day for me. I was blessed to enjoy it too, and so many times there is no joy for me in

anything. Your reminiscent editorial brought many thoughts to my mind. If a thing is the truth when written it will always be the truth, but as you say, they take on renewed significance as the years go by. Our later experiences do not change the earlier ones, they add too and make plain, so looking backward we can see God's hand in all our travels.

I am reminded of a letter I have from Elder Ruston dated July 1933 which is one of my prized possessions. It was a comfort to me when it came in a time of great trouble, at least it seemed to me then to be great trouble. But now looking back over the years it was but a drop in the bitter cup I have had to drink since. A few years ago I came across this letter again, and rereading it in the light of my experiences every word had such a deep meaning for me. There is no doubt in my mind that it was divinely inspired as I am sure no human being could have seen into the future and known about the things that had to come to pass in my life. I, too, feel that the future holds nothing for us that has not been ordained of our God. Recently that has been the only straw I could grasp when almost submerged in a sea of troubles.

This is a lonely life that God has chosen for us. It may look to the world that we choose our way, but I know from experience I did not choose this way. But in spite of my complaining I cannot truthfully say I would have things other than they are. I hope God has given me faith to believe his way is better than mine. I have tried to choose the way I would live but cannot. Satan took me up on the mountain top and told me to look at all the riches of my world, all the things I loved with all my heart and longed for with all my being. I would gladly have chosen them and lived a life of happiness, but I learned that the love of God shed abroad in my heart was stronger than the love I had for my prized possessions. I remember hearing my grandmother say, "Love that does not rule you is not worth the name." I hope that God does rule me by his love. Please remember me to Mrs. Dodson. I have not forgotten her kind hospitality. Yours in hope.

(Mrs.) BEATRICE HAAN

Quonset Pt, R. I.
On my way to California

DEAR BROTHER DODSON AND TO THOSE LOVELY BAPTISTS OF THE EAST AND SOUTH, GREETINGS: May I extend and express my heartfelt thanks and appreciation for the beautiful courtesy shown me upon this visit to Eastern and Southern churches of Primitve Baptist. A trip I have longed for since early childhood and never realized until now. It is of God's lovingkindness and mercy I wish to write upon in his very real dealings with me I hope as an individual, his unlimited grace and his power.

This trip was so unexpectedly brought about, all barriers removed, obstacles swept aside, it has made a deep and lasting impression and I am reminded of where He tells us he makes rough ways smooth and crooked ways straight. I wish I had time and space to dwell longer upon that scripture alone. At one place in my journey coming East, I stopped over with a friend to rest and was wondering if I had acted wisely in attempting such a trip at this time. Lying in bed, waiting for my hostess to call me, the call of a turtle dove came sweet and clear upon the morning air. Since the dove, the literal dove I mean, has been with me through so many deep trials the thought has come to me this trip was not upon

my decision at all. At one point in one of Elder Dodson's discourses he emphasized the scripture, "When thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee," and so it is, He is with us. I have been brought through deep places many times and I believe this trip has been granted as a loving blessing that I might hear and see all of the sweet Baptists whom I have learned to love. Such an evidence of kindness, courtesy and respect for each other, and such hospitality and love! I must thank you again and again. I have for years held out for that one thing among Baptists —*courtesy!* I need not go into detail, but in some localities, I am grieved to say, there has been a total mis-application of the meaning of humbleness in and among Baptists. They were so afraid of works (and that too has been mis-interpreted) it has bordered upon downright rudeness and carelessness of appearance and mannerisms. Our Savior upon earth is the true pattern of gentility and courtesy. True humbleness is not a bid for carnal sympathy, but a broken and contrite heart to and before God; and that heart can be broken in a highly cultured person just as surely as in any who is less so. Rudeness and lack of courtesy can and does cause just as much confusion as differences of opinion upon doctrine, and most surely this trip East among you has proven beyond doubt that you are not only sound in the faith of salvation by God's grace alone, you are a lovely, highly cultured and courteous people. God bless you and thank you again for your kindness to me.

I have been privileged to hear such deeply gifted Elders as Dodson, Bellows, Wood, Vaughn, Jones, Weaver, Bennett, Slauson, Berry, Gilliam, Turner and Lefferts. Doctrine, experiences and practice all deeply instructive and comforting. Worshipping the one true and living God, a crucified and highly risen Savior. I am thinking of the offering Mary brought and again the dove (love) is a symbol. I heard one brother so beautifully explain that Mary was very poor and did not have anything to bring but the dove, though she held the child Jesus in her arm who was the perfect offering though she did not know it, and so she offered the dove. It was slaughtered, its feathers plucked! Just so was our Savior bereft of his natural glory and his blood shed. And are we not all poor, poverty stricken, having nothing to offer naturally, but carry in our hearts and bosoms the loving Jesus Mary had in her arms? If not deceived his spirit which dwells in us is the perfect offering; the carnal mind and creature is poverty stricken and cannot make the sacrifice, but the one perfect offering and offerer was made, and so in Him is our righteousness and he sits on the right hand of the Father as our counsel, our mediator and our judge. Standing or sitting he continually makes intercession and there is no other mediator to whom we can go! The symbols are of his love, his mercy and his power; his grace and his pity from the shores of the blue Pacific across mountain and desert, through the great agricultural belt to the shore of the gray and formidable Atlantic, the beautiful wooded New England, the magnificent scenery of the middle-Atlantic states, the rolling hills of the South all bespeak the power and wisdom of a sovereign God; and I am reminded of the poet who wrote, "To him who in the love of nature holds communion in her visible forms she speaks a various language." I see the resplendent glory of autumn color all the points of historic interest as the depth of God's wisdom and blessing.

Of all the beautiful things I have seen, one thing stands out most beau-

tiful of all. In the company of four gracious and lovely Baptists I was privileged to see a very aged sister in Pennsylvania who said she was anxious to go hence and be forever with her God to drink from the fountain of his endless pleasures and love, and asked that Elder John D. Wood offer a prayer to that effect, and such a prayer as he was given to utter! What a beautiful scene that was—this old soldier, ready, anxious to go to cross over the dark waters of the Styx, knowing and feeling of a surety she has the Master Navigator and Pilot at the helm. No danger of shipwreck because he is hers. He has gone before and so will gently lead and guide her across to his eternal home, and there, her battles over, the victory won she can rest. Believe me when I tell you of all I have seen of beauty this afternoon scene was the most beautiful.

Please remember me in your prayers. Come out to California and let me try to return some of this gracious hospitality and love. What a message of good tidings I have to take back to the Baptists there, a beloved group. So now I start my westward journey, feeling God's token of mercy, grace and love has been abundantly showered upon me. I wish I had ability to thank him but can only say with the poet:

"I own I'm guilty, own I'm vile,
But thy salvation's free;
Then in thy all abounding grace,
O Lord, remember me."

In bonds of love, humbly and sincerely,
(Mrs.) LEONA TUTTLE

.... A DREAM ....

I had a dream on the resurrection that has given me some light. I saw myself in my casket, dressed ready for burial. I thought that my friends were around me, and I had prepared this and we were expecting some one or something to come and better prepare the body. I realized that we had done all we could do and thought that whoever was coming to help had delayed their coming. About that time I heard a voice which said, "I come not to prepare this mortal body, but to change it into a crystal body." Then I looked down at my body and saw my flesh was as clear as crystal, and inside its crystal-line form were dark streaks like bones running through my body.

When I awoke I wondered what my dream meant. While pondering upon it the scripture came to me, 1 Cor. 13:12. "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." Another scripture came to me, Ezekiel 37. The Spirit led Ezekiel into the valley of dry bones. He was told to prophesy. The bones came together and had sinews and flesh. He then made breath come into the bodies. The Lord said, Ezekiel, this is the whole house of Israel. They say their hope is lost. Then this scripture came to me, they shall come to me saying, Holy, Holy art thou, Lord God Almighty.

I then turned to my Bible and read Paul's expression to the Philippians 3:20-21. "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." This gave me great comfort so I decided to have it written. (Told us by our mother, Mrs. Cynthia Perkins Brown.) P. G. BROWN

(*See obituary in this issue.*)

130 Bruce St., Memphis 4, Tenn.

DEAR EDITOR: I feel an urge to send to you some of the things I hope I have been brought to believe pertaining to the doctrine of truth as it is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Predestination—my comfort as taught in the holy Scriptures. "Fear not: for I am with thee." Isa. 43:5. "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." Prov. 16:1. There is one God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, these three are one. God is a supreme being (sovereign), unchangeable (immutable), omnipotent (all powerful), omnipresent (always present everywhere), omniscient (knowing all things), thus saying, "I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isa. 46:9-10. Therefore, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." Acts 15:18. "Yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." Isa. 46:11. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Jer. 10:23. See Eph. 1:3-23 that God has a chosen people, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will. God calls his children in his own time and way. "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." Eccl. 3:1. This calling is effectual. "Whom he did foreknow, (he chose in Christ) he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Rom. 8:29-30. This gift is rich and free, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Titus 3:5. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:8-10. All the elect (chosen) shall come to Christ and none else. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." John 6:37-39. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." John 6:44. Christ finished the work given him to do of the Father. "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." John 17:4. "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." John 18:37. "It is finished." John 19:30. Nothing is left for the elect to do or finish (whom he came to save). It was all finished (the redemption) when Jesus hung on the cross saying, "It is finished." Thus I am made to believe God knew from the beginning what he would do and what he would allow or incline others to do, that all events he purposed and leads all to the channel for the good he chose. The evil is chosen

to bring about the good he purposed. "The scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." Rom. 9:17. ("For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth.") Rom. 9:11. "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Rom. 9:13-16. "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." Rom. 9:20-23.

So I of myself can do nothing, but I hope he has shown me a little of the things hard to be understood by the world by making me to see my sinfulness, helplessness and dependence on him for all things both natural and spiritual. I have no righteousness I own, no good in my flesh is found, but the Lord is perfect righteousness and my hope lies in the finished work of him who was obedient to the law, did no wrong. He is our righteousness and oh if I know myself at all he is all I want and him I love more than all things. I need his help and that continually for I of myself cannot withstand the evils of this world. Yet he my every malady can heal. Brightest and best of the sons of the morning, dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid. "For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." It is all of the Lord and who are we to question it being so. Where as once I abhorred this doctrine, I am now made to believe and love it, and that was not left to me to do, even to believe it. I was brought, I hope, to believe it by the great God of Israel who makes no mistakes. To his chosen is said, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Jer. 31:3. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I John 3:14. "We love him because he first loved us." I John 4:19. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God." I Peter 1:18-21. Jesus said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." If guilt and sin afford a plea, then surely there's room for such as me. A guilty sinner. Submitted in love and hope.

(Mrs.) LOUISE NEWMAN

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. FEBRUARY, 1949

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

.... W O R K S ....

May I turn aside from my usual way of writing for one time? I have tried to comply with many wishes of our readers in regard to texts that they wanted me to write on. I have received this request and I do not know how to refuse. I have always hesitated in writing on requests. Not many times that I have felt that easiness in writing that I would like. It has seemed more like writing by schedule or mechanically. I am not any good at this.

Yet, as I look back over the writing that I have done, I feel no hesitancy in saying that the times of all profitable writing the Spirit has had to be my leader. As to how much, if any at all, that has been worth anything to anyone, I leave in the hands of God. I do not know that I have a ministerial gift, and if I have I do not know what it is. But I do hear them talk about my doctrinal gift. Perhaps that is my gift. If I have had that gift given me, I am glad. If along the way, I am blessed to speak of his eternal love to poor sinners to the comfort and edification of them, I am glad. In writing, as in speaking, I enjoy some degree of sweetness in setting him forth as an unchanging, eternal Being, the same, yesterday, today and forever.

Now to come to this subject. The cause of it came about in this way. I seldom have gone into a church conference and came out of it without leaving some kind of admonition with my hearers. I have not begun in the last two or three years to do that, but it has been a common practice since I was ordained to the ministry. When I have been blessed to feel and realize the excellency of the doctrine in its fullest sense, I often have admonished my brethren to continue in this good old way. I have been preaching with seldom a dry cheek in the house, and in the midst of such sweetness, I have exhorted my hearers to a continued walk in this way. I did not know for sometime after I began exercising in public that there was any objection to this. When I found it out, that has not caused me to deter from what I had been doing. I have continued to do that until to-day. In conference not long since, I exhorted the members of the church to be careful in their daily walk; to be punctual in their obligations to one another; to respect the action of the church in all her deliberations. I pointed out to them that the church said in her first rules that each member promised to look after each others welfare, to attend all conferences, to walk in such a way as to command respect for the church. After the dismission I was approached and asked to write on this subject.

I feel to make note of the fact that I have been privileged to examine several old church books. In my library I have the most of the periodicals and minutes of our people for the last hundred years. In all these there is more regard for a right walk and talk than

in these days. I feel sad when I hear our people say that the word of Primitive Baptists is not regarded as highly as in former years; that in the former days we could expect to have credit extended to one of us much more readily than now. I have lamented about such things. It has caused me many anxious moments, and I have had it said that I was softening because I admonished to a careful walk. But it does me good to find many precious articles of long ago where the writers admonished the readers to a careful walk and talk.

The words of those in our day or any day short of apostolicity are not convincing. Our man of counsel is not what this elder and that one thought and preached and wrote, save those that were chosen by the Savior. Any evidence with a ring of finality about it, must come from those. I feel a desire to rest there. I want, God being my helper, to subscribe to the same tenets of faith that they did. If I am given grace, I will die preaching this doctrine that they preached. I am at a great loss to know what our people mean when they say that our walk does not make any difference. I have yet to read that in the Book. I do find brethren, that every letter, and every chapter of those letters almost in their entirety, admonish the addressees to certain things.

Timothy was not an apostle. I have always looked on him as a young preacher that had been called in the time of the apostles. If there is any difference in his call and the call that a man receives now I have not noticed it. I do not remember seeing any account of Paul to the effect that conditions will change in the future to where it will take a different way to cope with the matter. What did he tell Timothy? There was something about preaching the Word. To-day, if a man is called of God, he is preaching under the command of the apostle. I do not mean to say that a man can take that command given Timothy and use it himself. I do say that that command must be taken by the Holy Ghost and brought into our very being—given to us with the same power that it was given to the preacher in that time. That preaching is the gospel of grace, setting Jesus forth as the Living Word that was made flesh and dwelt among us. It does not have in it conditions for the natural man to perform. It sets Him up as the standard in the kingdom of heaven—the standard of perfection. At the same time it brings forth that we have gone away from the perfect Way and that for us to get back we must be brought back. Now I want to be clearly understood that it is not being brought back and turned loose to do or not to do. I have never found the conditional doctrine of "root pig or die poor" in the Bible. But this man that Paul is writing to, is told what to preach. He is told to be instant in season, out of season; to do some rebuking, reproving, exhorting. Who is he to rebuke? Well, not unregenerates, hardly. Who (not what) is he to reprove? Is it not the same people that he was to preach the word to? Some of the stoutest churches in America at one time had what they call exhorters. They are gone over the horizon into oblivion. Were they apostolic? Well, the eminent Paul told a man to exhort with longsuffering and doctrine. Why? He says the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine.

An eminent Old Baptist preacher told me that Paul meant to tell Timothy to be instant in season, and out of season to rebuke and reprove. In other words to act one way in the spirit and another in the flesh. That would be equal to Paul writing to the spiritual man and

to the natural man. I do not believe a word of it. The rebuking, the reproof, the exhortation, was to establish them in the doctrine. It was commanded of an Old Baptist preacher. He was to do these things in the church, that the church might be sound in the doctrine. I fall short of this. I am daily having it demonstrated to me that of myself I can do nothing. If I have ever preached the truth in the power and demonstration of the Spirit, it is God, by his Spirit, doing it in me. I have headed this article "Works." I do not know that it is right to write on it. But this I wanted to make clear for the benefit of my own brethren and sisters. Too, while I was making clear to them, I wanted you and you to understand my position. The same divine Power that enables me, if it ever has, to preach, enables me to believe it. Any and all other movement in the kingdom, is from the same source. There is not any action that is independent of the Spirit in the spiritual kingdom. In no way, whether in our day or the apostles day, is the Spirit dependent on us.

Before I was connected with our family paper, I wrote one article similar to this, pointing out that the apostles admonished the brethren. I believed that then. I have not had occasion to change. The editors have advocated that from time to time. The senior editor founded the paper on that kind of a prospectus and lived up to it in his writing. I do love to see my people behaving themselves, even if I do not. I love to see my people walking circumspectly as the apostle admonished the Ephesians to do, even if I do not. I feel to caution and show the folly of conditionalism. I am perfectly persuaded in my mind that it is not true. I feel to caution and show the untruthfulness of any scheme that lays my sins at the door of the Spirit. When the prophet said the Lord wrought all our works in us, I do not believe he had any reference to our wickedness. To me safety is found here. To me it is a most blessed privilege to believe that all our righteousness is wrought in us by the Holy Ghost. I hope to be blessed while I stay here to extol him for that; to be found at all times, and places, declaring that it is God that works in us to first will and then do. While I stay here I do not want to ever lay on him the blame for my wrong doing; to charge him with being the cause of my sin; to ever be calling wrong, right.

May the Lord enable us to walk humbly in the presence of him and one another. W. D. G.

"I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots."
—Solomon's Song 1:9.

Sister S. S. Kerley of Mt. Vernon, Illinois, has requested that we give our views on the forgoing portion of scripture.

The Old Testament scriptures abound with types of many wonderful things which appear in the Gospel Dispensation. We have felt that Moses at Mount Horeb was shown one of the best types of the gospel church to be found anywhere in all of the inspired testimony. It is said that "the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed." Ex. 3:2. Well might he have said, "I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt." If there is anything in the Bible which more clearly, or more truly presents the gospel church amidst the persecutions and afflictions of this world, we do not know where it can be found.

When Abraham, in obedience to the

command of God, went up into the mount to offer Isaac, the promised seed, he was shown a very wonderful type of the offering which God, according to his infinite wisdom and eternal purpose, would make of his only begotten Son for the sins of his people. Abraham beheld behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns, and went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. (Gen. 22:13) Paul said, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things." Roms. 8:32.

The scene of Joseph's going down into Egypt in the manner that he did, portrays in a remarkable way the sufferings of our Lord when he came into this world to partake of sin and sorrow on behalf of and at the hands of his own brethren, that he might become an High Priest whose feelings could be touched with their infirmities, and by the sacrifice of himself redeem all whom God had chosen in him before the foundation of the world, presenting them without spot, wrinkle or any such thing before the Father in love. These three instances alone suffice to prove the truth of what Paul wrote to his Hebrew brethren when he said the law had a shadow of good things to come.

Turning now to our text, we will note first that it is among Solomon's writings. This book is called "The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's." We think the title was well chosen, for all that was written by those inspired of God to write, nothing can compare to this picture which Solomon portrays of the love which exists between Christ and his bride. Indeed, it presents the most wonderful theme of love that mankind knows anything about. Nothing has ever appeared in either profane or sacred history that could equal it. As we see it, there is no language of any tongue or people that is capable of describing, in its fulness, the relationship which is experienced by the church of God in the world to-day when she is brought into the sacredness of His holy and divine presence. Holy men of old wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and men will continue to write until the end of time, for God will never leave himself without witnesses, but the half can never be told of the greatness and wonder of God as he is manifested in the Trinity of his oneness. There are many illustrations used by Solomon in this book, which gives us an infinite variety of ideas as to what Christ thinks of his "fair one" and what she thinks of him, but when all has been said that can be said, at best we have only been given a glimpse of the beauty and grandeur of the love, union, communion and fellowship which binds these two together. Is it any wonder, then, that it has been written, "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." In the midst of all our heartaches and fear, our trials and tribulations in this life, we are made to rejoice many times over the blessed assurance found in Holy Writ to the effect that nothing, not even the most dreaded monster of all, *death,* will ever be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We can only present in a brief manner what could and perhaps should be said in connection with the text, and first of all it might be well to indicate what the church thinks of herself, as given to us by Solomon. In the fifth and sixth verses of this chapter her own testimony is as follows: "I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon. Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me: my mother's

children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept." Thus is set forth her blackness and uncomeliness as she sees herself, and her trials and afflictions and own shortcomings are not withheld, or covered up. It is because she sees herself in this manner and feels as she does, that she is made to inquire of him whom her soul loves, where he feeds his flock and where they rest at noon. Her Beloved beholds her in an altogether different light, for he says unto her, "If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids besides the shepherds' tents." We wish to emphasize the title he bestows upon her, "Oh thou fairest among women." There are three score queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number, but "My dove, my undefiled, is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bear her." S.S. 6:8-9. It has been said that true love is blind, and how true this appears to be in this particular instance! for in contrast to the way she appears in her own eyes, her Beloved not only calls her the "fairest among women," but he shows his matchless love and grace for her by granting the desire of her heart, in giving her instructions at to where to go, "by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids besides the shepherds' tents." Her way is a definite way, and is different from all other ways. The vulture's eye hath not seen it, and neither hath the lions whelp trodden it, signifying that it is hid from the wisdom and strength of this vain world; and while her way leads through much tribulation, and even death, the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein, and the end of that way shall be joy and peace and life everlasting.

In the chapter following our text, her Beloved represents himself to her as "The rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys," and his description of her is that she is "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters." She responds by saying, "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." Many encomiums are used throughout this book in an effort to decribe their love and admiration for each other, and it would extend this article beyond the proper length to include them all, so we will have to content ourself with only a few hints at the magnitude of our subject. In the second chapter she compares her Beloved to a "roe or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, showing himself through the lattice. My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." Just to get some glimpses of Him through the lattice, and to hear his voice, was sufficient to cause the winter to pass, and the rains to be over and gone; to fill her heart with the melody of the singing of the birds, and the flowers to appear. Her very soul was full of ecstacy and bliss over his appearing unto her and speaking whispers of love of his divine favor. Is it any wonder that she should, among many other efforts to describe him, have said, "My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand***His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely." S.S. 5:10 and 16. In the sixth chapter and elsewhere appears his description of her, and what she means to him. Among these various descriptions is to be found the one in our text, where he says, "I have compared

thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots." On first thought, one might very properly think strange of such a comparison as this being made of the bride by the Bridegroom, but when all of the facts are presented there is no reason why she should be offended. We have already spoken of the utter inadequacy of language to describe fully the things of God and his kingdom. All of the types and figures to be found in nature, when combined, are imperfect and come far short of depicting completely the height, depth and breadth of the grandeur of Zion and her Royal King. It is quite apparent that this "fair one" was by nature a daughter of Pharaoh, and as such she was an admirer of the beauty of the things of nature. We have frequently said that inspiration almost invariably takes the strongest types in nature to present spiritual things. This instance is no exception, for in presenting the particular phase of beauty which appears here, the likeness was not made to just any horse, or group of horses, but to "a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots." Pharaoh being king of Egypt, it could not be denied that he had the finest of everything, and particular care was no doubt exercised in selecting, training and grooming the horses that were to draw the chariots of the famous king. This "fair one" being a daughter, by nature, and having ridden in those chariots was thoroughly familiar with the fact that no finer horses could be found anywhere in the world, and they are referred to as "a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots." The church of God is one body, but composed of many members. In the days of old it is said that "God led the people (plural) about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red sea: and the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt." Ex. 13:18. How typical this was of God's people here in this gospel age! They are united in one bond, and they are all journeying in the same direction toward their heavenly home above. Horses denote strength, for one thing; even our gasoline motive power is appraised in the terms of horse-power. Horses also denote courage and many have stood out prominently in the battles of war, according to past history. They are beasts of burden, and endure innumerable hardships. Those whom the Lord is pleased to call out and separate from the world, and give courage and strength to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, are not ashamed of him, or the comparisons he may make of them. They are even thankful that he has accounted them worthy to suffer for his sake, and to bear the ignominy and shame of this present evil world, if only thereby they may win Christ and be found at his right hand before the Majesty on High, when their race is run and their summons comes. We know of no sight more wonderful, or beautiful, than to see the followers of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, in this sin-cursed world, struggling against principalities and powers, and terrible odds on every hand, and in humility laboring and striving to dwell together in unity and in the bonds of peace, and the sweetest of all plaudits will be when we shall have been called to quit the walks of men, to hear King Jesus say, Enter thou into the kingdom, prepared for thee from before the foundation of the world.

R. L. D.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. N. Williamson, Ky., $3; Miss F. Hodnett, Va., $1; Middletown and Walkill Church, N. Y., $25; Mrs. S. S. Kerley, Ill., $1; Mrs. L. M. Pulliam, N. C., $1; Mrs. A. C. Holloway, Md., $6; Eld. H. M. Bennett, Md., $1; Mrs. B. S. Patterson, N. C., $1; B. Parrish, Ark., $3; J. F. Lax, Ill., $3.

OBITUARIES

By request I attempt to write you of the death of MRS. LUCY MINTER, who was born Oct. 22, 1879 and died March 30, 1948. She was the daughter of Thomas and Victoria Franklin of Henry Co., Va. She was received into the fellowship of the North Fork Primitive Baptist Church about thirty-five years ago, and was baptized by Elder E. L. Blankenship. She was married to Joseph W. Minter in April 1892 and to this union eleven children were born. Her husband and ten children survive. Mrs. Posey Eanes, Mrs. Paul Wyatt, Mrs. Aubrey Wells and Mrs. Norman McGhee of Martinsville; Mrs. Boyd Minter, Mrs. Claude Horsley, Paul and Gold Minter of Draper; Tommy of Axton and Archie of the home. She leaves one brother, Henry Franklin of Fairmont, W. Va.; thirty-seven grandchildren, seventeen great-grandchildren and a host of friends.

I have been intimately acquainted with our deceased sister from her youth and feel I am not sufficient to write of the memory of the good, Christian character and the good traits and right living. She was strictly honest in all the relations of life. As a church member she was faithful, always assembling with her brethren at some church to worship her Lord when it was possible for her to do so. She was industrious and provided well for her family; was kind hearted and given to hospitality; was loved and respected not only by her church, but by all who knew her. As a wife and mother to her dear children her equal would be hard to find. I certainly say a good woman has been removed from our midst, but feel our loss is her eternal gain. We visited her often in her long sickness and she bore her afflictions with as much patience as any one I ever saw and seemed to be perfectly reconciled for God's will to be done.

Her devoted children faithfully and tenderly cared for her, doing all they could for her comfort and pleasure. She was always happy when the Baptists visited her, and always requested them to sing some of the songs of Zion, and often requested them to talk of the goodness and mercy of God and then offer prayer; said she felt the need of prayer. Her suffering was inexpressible and she knew the time had come for her departure. She requested the nurse not to give her a hypodermic until she had talked some. She called her aged husband, children and grandchildren around her and told them how she had longed and prayed for the hour of her departure, and told them not to grieve for her; admonished them how to live and asked for the hymn, "Oh land of rest" to be sung; then she told the nurse she could give her the hypodermic to help ease her suffering. She passed easily away.

Her funeral was conducted at the home by Elders Posey Ingram, David Spangler and J. E. Burgess. She was buried near the home. The floral offerings were beautiful and a host of people gathered to pay their last respects. May the Lord with mercy visit the hearts of the grieved ones and heal the wound with the ointment of love which no other but he can do. Her pastor.

(Elder) J. E. BURGESS

Never with a feeling of greater sorrow have we attempted to write an obituary than that which we experience in reporting the passing of Sister LUELLA STEVENS, a member of the Middleburg Church, who died at her home near Central Bridge, July 21, 1948, after a lingering illness of several months of what was diagnosed as cancer of the brain. All the skill of physicians at the Albany Hospital, the best local treatment possible and the loving care of her husband and family could not avail to check the ravages of the fatal disease. For some months she was totally blind due to her disease, but in all her affliction, so grievous in many ways with its natural darkness, with its suffering and pain, she never complained but with sublime faith resigned her keeping to the care of her God, and we have abundant evidence that the grace of God was made sufficient for her both for time and eternity.

Sister Stevens was born Aug. 20, 1899 in the town of Seward where she spent her early life. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Alpha Crouse who pre-deceased her several years. Soon after her graduation from the Cobleskill High School she was united in marriage to Earl Stevens and they made their home in Cobleskill for about ten years. About twenty years ago they moved to a farm near Central Bridge where she resided until her death. Four children were born to this union: Floyd of Buffalo, N. Y., Mrs. William Schermerhorn, Canajoharie, N. Y., Frances and Wanda of Central Bridge. They with Mr. Stevens survive and are the recipients of deep sympathy in their irreparable loss.

Sister Stevens was baptized into the fellowship of the Middleburg Church by Elder George Ruston and remained one of its most faithful and efficient members. She was truly a jewel of priceless worth in the house of God. Her church came first in her life and until the time of her last illness she never missed more than two meetings in all the more than twenty years that she was affiliated with the church of her membership. Her home was noted for its hospitality and for the cheer that emanated from it. No wife and mother has ever been more faithful than she; no member of a church embodying in her daily walk more fully the walk of a Christian, and no one loving more deeply the precious truth as it is in Jesus. She

was a beautiful character naturally and spiritually, and was especially gifted in writing church letters. She gave of her time and substance to the church with unstinted generosity, and the influence of her life will live in the memory of those who were associated with her.

The funeral services were held at the Mereness Funeral Home in Cobleskill, the writer endeavoring to comfort the sorrowing members of the family and their friends by using as the subject of his discourse Rev. 2:17. Interment in Cobleskill Cemetery.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

Sister OLIVIA NORRIS HELLINGS (nee TYNDALL) was born January 12, 1864, and departed this life September 5, 1948 in her 85th year. She was born, lived most of her life, and died in the same house on the Scotch Road in Ewing Township, N. J. She was the youngest child of the late Deacon William C. and Lydia (West) Tyndall. United in marriage to Augustus M. Hellings, August 20, 1883, and to this union five children were born; two sons, Edwin T. and Charles E.; three daughters, Lydia W., H. Lurena and Mary L. who survive her. Her husband preceded her into eternal rest Dec. 14, 1943.

Sister Hellings united with the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, N. J. (where her father was a member for forty-seven years), and was baptized by Elder William J. Purington, the fourth Saturday in May 1887, making her a member sixty-one years . . . a most faithful and steadfast member to the end, even though the last years of her life was hindered by paralysis. She was well grounded in the faith of God's word, her father having a gift to expound the scripture. His exhortations and prayers were well seasoned with grace, and from her early childhood he always had fireside worship and prayer, and so impressive and beautiful was it, she often said they all felt to be in the presence of the God whom he loved and served.

Sister Hellings had all the constant and diligent care that loving hands could bestow upon her by Charles, Lurena and Sister Mary, who lived home with her.

In carrying out her wishes, the writer took his text from the motto on the Tyndall's Coat of Arms: "I will trust, and not be afraid." Isaiah 12:2.

Her last prayer made before her speech was impaired by paralysis was, "May I fall asleep in Jesus as a bird flies to its shelter at even-tide, content to rest at last, trusting in the word, and not be afraid to go through the valley of the shadow of death to await Him whom to know is life eternal." This prayer seemed to have been fulfilled, for after she was fatally stricken, about five P. M., she entered into her eternal rest as peacefully as a little child, or bird going to sleep. The only outward appearance that her spirit had left its earthen vessel was the quiet beauty of her countenance.

Sister Hellings bore her afflictions with great fortitude, and we feel our loss is her eternal gain. She will be greatly missed in her home, and in the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church where she lived a true and faithful life. We should not mourn for her as though she had no hope. May the God of hope be of comfort to all who mourn, and may his blessings rest upon them, and by his strength made to feel a precious submission and reconciliation to his righteous will.

Her funeral services were held from the Blackwell Memorial Home, Pennington, N. J. Interment in the Ewing Church Cemetery near her lifetime home.

(Elder) CHARLES W. VAUGHN

MRS. CYNTHIA PERKINS BROWN, wife of L. A. Brown, Madisonville, Ky., departed this life June 6, 1948. She was 74 years old and is survived by her husband, son and daughter-in-law with whom she made her home for a number of years. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Old Stony Point in Hopkins Co., Ky., and was clerk of that church for several years until the church-house was destroyed. There were four members at the time of her death. She had never moved her membership and often said she had a home with them as long as they lived. She had a beautiful experience and loved to tell it, believing in salvation by grace and the finished work of Christ. She wrote many articles for our family paper. She worshipped with us at Old Lick Creek Church, was a good singer and attended regularly.

She firmly believed that what was, was best for His people and bore her great suffering and sickness without a murmur, but rather with a smile. She spent about ten weeks in bed at home before going to the hospital where she spent nine weeks and three days. She realized when she went to the hospital that the sun was going down for her and planned everything as though she were going on a long journey. She had a smile and a handshake for everybody and talked most of the time on the scripture. Her favorite scripture was the 23rd Psalm. She would say, "I know He is leading, He is mine." She was fortunate to have a Primitive Baptist nurse. They would sing the wonderful grace songs and the other nurses would crowd around the door with wonder.

She asked that No. 44, "It is Finished," be sung at her grave and went to sleep saying, "He is my Shepherd, He is my Shepherd." Her plans were all carried out. The Pastor of the church, Elder R. L. Biggs, preached her funeral, the scripture text

being the 23rd Psalm, the songs were sung as she requested and she seemed to be only sleeping with a smile in a bed of flowers. She was laid to rest in Lick Creek Church-yard. Precious memories, how they linger.

Written by (Mrs.) MONA McGREGOR

ALEXANDER B. RHODES was born in Georgia Sept. 25, 1856, and died Sept. 6, 1948, making his stay on earth 92 years lacking 19 days. His father moved from Georgia when he was quite small and settled in Columbia Co., Ark. Several years later he moved to Nevada Co., Ark. where father grew to manhood. He was united in marriage to Willie Dorothy Serepta Brown Aug. 19, 1877 and to this union were born twelve children. Six of them predeceased him leaving one daughter and five sons surviving. Mother passed away in the year 1940 and after her death father and a single son lived together until his death. Brother Ed did his duty faithfully in taking care of father in his declining days. The Lord blessed father with unusually good health and a strong constitution until after Jan. 1, 1948 when he became ill and gradually became weaker until his death.

Father and mother both united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Smyrna, Nevada Co. in 1902 and were faithful to attend. In my younger years I often wondered why they would get in their buggy and drive twelve miles to church every Saturday on meeting time. No matter how grassy the crops were they went to meeting. If not deceived I now understand why. Father was a firm believer in the doctrine of the Old Baptists, believing in the absolute sovereignty of God over all things, that he ruled in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and that none could stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou? He believed in one salvation both in time and eternity, and that salvation was wrought out by Jesus Christ on the cross, when he bowed his head and said, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost. While he was firm in his belief he was tolerant toward others that differed with him.

On Sunday, the day before he died, he quoted Jesus' words when Jesus was telling the disciples about the way and one of them said, "Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me?" "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Father quoted, "I am the way, the truth, and the Life," and said, "That is the gospel, that is true when Jesus is preached the way, the truth, and the life no matter how lengthy the discourse or how short, and if he is not set forth as the way, the truth, and the life it is a false way. No other name is given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved. It is only through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Father left a host of relatives and friends to mourn his death. He is gone but not forgotten. His children will miss him when they visit the old home, miss his greeting as he was always glad when we visited him. I would not call him back if I could for I feel sure his soul is at rest with God.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders J. T. Everitt and E. J. Lambert who spoke words of comfort to a large company of relatives and friends. His body was interred in the old Friendship Cemetery in Nevada Co., there to await the resurrection morn. Written by a son.

McCaskill, Ark. J. D. RHODES

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Elder J. C. Sikes has moved to Route 2, Campbell, Texas and would like his mail sent to this address.

PLEASE REMEMBER

1.—To renew your subscription promptly when due, if possible. The date on your wrapper cover will show to when you have paid.

2.—That when your remittance reaches us before the 10th of the month, credit will be shown with the next issue of the paper, otherwise it cannot be shown until the second month following. This also applies to changes of address.

3.—That notices of Special Meetings should be sent to us at least thirty days in advance of the month in which the meeting is to be held.

If our readers will be kind enough to observe the foregoing suggestions they will aid us very materially in getting out the paper. R.L.D.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 117 RUTHERFORD, N. J., MARCH, 1949 No. 3

A VISION OF THE GOODNESS OF GOD

Oh, heavenly king! Oh, gracious king!
May we your praises shout and sing;
Oh, may we trust you night and day,
And when we from your fold do roam
Oh, turn our wayward steps back home.

And let us feel that thou doeth well,
And in your loving care still dwell;
It's not asking the world for gain
To proudly glory in your name,
Because if we are left alone
We would go so far from home.

But in your own good time we know
You willingly will make us go;
For all the powers that were ordained,
Is for your glory and our gain;
It may not suit us we may so know
But where else can your children go?

For all the world to them could give
Would be to work and thou shalt live;
But could we work and could we pay
Our sins and wrongs would this outweigh;
So all our help must come from thee,
So Jesus pardon us we plea.

When you arose from your grave,
It was your church you died to save;
A glorious grave it surely was,
And sinners were the wonderful cause;
The ransomed debt, he paid it all
Because in Adam all did fall.

And all in Christ shall surely reign
When Jesus comes to earth again.
Oh, saints can you not look and see
This beautiful vision that's with me?
A lowly Lamb that is so great
That heavy burdens have no weight.

For all was laid upon his life,
He purchased the bride, his elect wife;
He paid the debt, he called her name
And unto him she gladly came;
So with the chastening rod we're made
To see the goodness of our God.

Toney, Ala. REANER REESE

CORRESPONDENCE

THE LEAST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

"Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." Matt. 11:11.

As many brethren have honestly differed as to the meaning of the above scripture, we should be careful and prayerful in our interpretation of it, bringing to our support the testimony of the word of God as to its true meaning. Some have erroneously asserted that Jesus was least in the kingdom of heaven. Upon first thought one might think so because our Savior in his earthly ministry made himself of no reputation, was despised and rejected of men, falsely condemned to die the death of a felon and was forsaken by God while he hung as a sin bearer upon the cruel cross. But who is the least in the kingdom of heaven if Jesus was not? The answer is given unequivocally by Christ himself in Matt. 5:17-19. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." Jesus did not break

a single commandment nor did he teach men so, therefore he cannot be referred to as the least in the kingdom of heaven. The reader may well inquire; how can the least in the kingdom of heaven be greather than John the Baptist?

The proper answer to this question admits of no confusion. Every child of God was born in sin and under the righteous curse of a transgressed law, having the very nature of sin dwelling in the flesh and doing the things of nature, breaking the commandments and loving the wages of unrighteousness until born of God through the quickening power of the Holy Spirit, and made to see himself a justly condemned sinner by nature without hope and without God in the world. When peace is spoken to the sin-tossed soul and he discerns in his own experience the work of the person, blood and righteousness of Jesus in atoning for sin and in reconciling him unto God, he feels to be least in the kingdom of heaven, that he has done all the sinning and Christ has done all the saving, and that if he were not saved, but sent indeed into the lowest hell, it would be but justice on the part of God.

Then well may one wonder, how can such a believer be greater than John the Baptist for John was the greatest of the prophets. Moses wrote of Christ and prophesied of him, but Moses never saw Jesus in the flesh and never during all his life entered into the kingdom of heaven. Why? Because the church of God in the kingdom of heaven was not set up until Pentecost, fifty days after the crucifixion of Christ. Jesus said that upon the rock of revelation (the revelation of Christ to man by the work of the Father through the Holy Spirit) he would build his church against which the gates of hell should not prevail. While Jesus served under the law, the church as a manifest body of believers was not set up. Jesus taught his disciples to pray for the coming of the kingdom. If it had come in its fulness while Jesus was on earth, he would not have taught his disciples so to pray. John the Baptist died under the law, though he was a saved character, but he never during his lifetime entered into the kingdom of heaven, for his tragic death occurred before Jesus died, before the church was set up on the day of Pentecost in that upper room (signifying the gospel) at Jerusalem. While on earth Elijah never entered into the kingdom of heaven nor saw Jesus in the flesh, nor did any of the prophets of the Old Testament dispensation. But to John was given a greater privilege than those Old Testament saints enjoyed, that is, of baptizing Jesus and beholding him in the flesh and seeing the dove descend and abide upon the head of Christ. He was greater in this sense than they, but still he never entered into the kingdom of heaven, for the kingdom did not come in its fulness while he lived.

The church of God may be compared to a house with two stories, the lower one representing the legal dispensation, the upper one the gospel era, all the same house, but those on the lower floor positionally beneath those in the upper story. The church of God is under law before it can be under grace. The law is our schoolmaster unto Christ, but after the faith of God has come we are no longer under a schoolmaster, but were shut up under the law until that faith came which was revealed, and which is accounted unto us for righteousness, So John, under the law, was positionally below all those that came into a knowledge of Christ during the present gospel dispensation. That does not mean nor imply that he was not a saved character. Those of

the grace dispensation are positionally higher in the house of God, dispensationally speaking, than those who lived under the law dispensation. So in that sense the least in the kingdom of heaven to-day, the one who feels himself the least of all, is positionally greater than John the Baptist, for he enjoys gospel privileges that were denied to John. While John the Baptist lived, the high priest entered the holy place of the temple and partook with the other priests of the shew bread on the golden table, also of the wine in the two golden goblets, denoting in type communion privileges of the gospel dispensation, but being typical only. Around the table was a crown of gold signifying kingship, for a crown means a king and a king means a kingdom with subjects. But under the law kingship and priesthood were two separate functions, for no king could serve as high priest too, but under grace Jesus is both king and priest. While John the Baptist lived, the kingship and the priesthood were two separate offices, and these things stood as types and shadows of the better things that came when Jesus fulfilled the law, and the kingdom of heaven came manifestly at Pentecost. Around the golden altar in the holy place, and also around the mercy seat over the ark in the holy of holies was a crown of gold, pointing to the kingship of Jesus in the kingdom of heaven into which John the Baptist was not permitted to enter. The blood of the lambs and bulls was to be offered ceremonially to denote atonement until Jesus came and by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified. John the Baptist lived while these types were employed to prefigure better things to come. The church to-day is in the gospel dispensation and so is positionally above the law age in which John the Baptist lived and died. Those in the time of John the Baptist had the shadows, but the people of God to-day have the substance, enter into the kingdom of heaven, partake of communion with Christ, approach unto his throne by prayer, and he over the mercy seat of heaven answers all true prayer, and presenting them faultless before God, keeps them by his power through faith unto salvation. Let us not be unmindful of the blessed privileges afforded us in this gospel day, and with reverence and Godly fear worship him who hath conferred such high honors upon us, and will crown us with a blessed immortality.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

Route 1, Hammond, W. Va.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES: I will write once more as I am getting old and feeble and it may be the last time I will have to write. But oh what shall I write. Here is a scripture in Rev. 20:11-12. "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them." In the first place I want to say that Jesus sits on the throne to make intercession for his people, and to him every knee shall bow and heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one of his words shall pass away until all are fulfilled, so here we are informed that the earth and the heaven flee away, and there was found no place for them. "I (John) saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea." The beginning of the 12th verse reads "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened." Yes the books were opened, not sealed. Then there was another book, a single book alone which is the book of life. The dead were judged out

of those things which were written in the books according to their works. The books contained the law of Moses, and their writers, Judges, Samuel and the others who wrote them, yes the law heaven and earth, while the other book is called the book of life. Yes, the Lamb's book of life, and they are among the living because they are born in Zion and have eternal life, and as Christ is alive for-ever-more so they are living for the second death hath no power over them, they being the children of the first resurrection, and they have been judged according to Christ's obedience, not according to their own works, but according to his righteousness, his mercy and his grace. Then their names are already written in the book of life and they are justified from the law by his grace from all things and are now justified and sanctified by Christ and freed from the law. It has vanished for Christ hath fulfilled it for them. Oh that I knew my name was written there in the Lamb's book of life, but there is a time for all things: a time for the books to be opened and a time also for the book of life to be opened and a time for it to be sealed and no man can open. John saw these things while they were opened to him so he saw the new heaven and the new earth as they were coming down from God's throne out of heaven. Those in the law heaven came out of it and the Gentile church came from God and his throne all chosen in Christ alike, and these being the elect lady are brought into one fold and one shepherd and they compose the Lamb's wife, his bride, the elect, the new Jerusalem which is from above and the mother of us all called the holy city; born anew by the Holy Ghost not of earthly seed but born of God prepared to meet her husband. Yes, adorned already the only one of her mother, the new Jerusalem which is from above, the king's daughter he prepared her, he adorned her for his bride so she is not one of the seven who wants their own bread and to wear their own apparel. They do not own him nor will he own them, he will only have his own, his portion with the strong and Jacob is his portion, the lot of his inheritance so she is his bride and he is her husband. She is made ready and is prepared and adorned for him. Yes by him, by his work, by his obedience for in the new heaven and earth dwelleth righteousness, and he was the only one that was righteous even the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us examine the 11th verse. "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them." Let us first notice this great white throne. God's throne is in the heaven of heavens where he sitteth and he is King of kings and Lord of lords. Let us notice the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, so the Lord is our hope. We see him sitting on the right hand of his Father in and on his throne. When he arose from the grave he ascended on high, yes sat until his Father shall put all things under his feet. All things must be fulfilled and the heaven and earth must flee away from the brightness of his coming. His face outshines the daylight here and we know that the sun is too glorious for our natural eye to behold. Let us consider him who sat on the great white throne, Jesus, who was made after the order of Melchisedec after an endless life for he said, I am the resurrection and the life, and as I live ye shall live also for I am alive for-ever-more so the first heaven and earth must flee away to give place for me at my coming to set on my throne. I must sit down. I prepare a place for

those that love me as I said, I go away and I will come again to gather up my jewels that I sowed in the field, the children of the kingdom. Yes, I prepared a place, a kingdom for them and it is on my right hand while the devil's kingdom is on my left hand. It was prepared for him and his angels, and there is a great gulf so fixed there can be no crossing from one place to the other, so where the tree falleth so shall it be. If the tree be evil it will fall on the left side for the tree that is evil will remain evil and its fruits will be evil. They have Moses and the prophets to hear and if they hear them not neither will they hear though one rose from the dead, and they regarded the law not their heaven. They said we have Moses for we are his disciples so they heard them not. Let us notice those here in Revelations, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened." These books that were opened contained the law that was written in them for the children of Israel after the flesh for their instruction, and these folks were dead both small and great, and they were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works so you see they got justice; but they were dead like the rich man was when in hell he lift up his eyes being in torment for under the law judgment it condemns every dead man that is under its power. I want you to all notice me closely and then notice these scriptures. "And another book (yes, another book) was opened." When God opens none can shut. Let us notice the name of the book, "the book of life." Not for the dead, oh no, but it is for the living who have life, yes eternal life for this book is called the Lamb's book of life and he liveth for-ever-more. He dieth no more, he destroyed the works of the devil and arose a living creature, a living fleshly man who saw no corruption for he was the Word of God in the beginning of God's creation and he was God, then he was made flesh. Here is where our change takes place at the resurrection at the time that was appointed, then our vile bodies shall be like his glorious body of flesh yet without sin like his body was. His body was made flesh without sin, without corruption, harmless and undefiled, and we hope to be found in the book of life, our names written there which the Lord gave, for he said, a new name will I give thee. Yes Abram's name was no more called Abram but Abraham. Jacob's name was changed to Israel. John's name is John. Jesus' name is called Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins. Yes, his name shall be called Immanuel, being interpreted, God with us, as he was manifested in the flesh. Yes, being both verily man and verily God. Look at their new names. All things become new. A new covenant, not the law covenant, not the law heaven for no righteousness was found there, none righteous, no not one; but in the new heaven and new earth dwelleth righteousness because Jesus Christ is in you the hope of glory and his righteousness has been imputed to us; his sinless body was a new body to all mankind in whom was no guile and his bride shall be like Nathaniel. In her there is no guile, she is an Israelite indeed, made so by Him who is her husband; washed and made white like him who sat on the great white throne; washed her in his own blood white as snow and as white as wool though she was like crimson, found in her blood, yes all polluted in the day of her espousal so he washed her and beautified her and clothed her in white. See her now as she is the only one of her mother whose mother is called the New Jerusalem which is above, coming down

as John saw her as the holy city, a city not forsaken because from henceforth shall be called the Lord is there, and thine fruit is found in one as you have sought it by works of the law and did not obtain it, but now you seek one and I have given you eyes to see you have found thine fruit in me because I work both to will and to do in you and you have found rest even to your souls for it is not of works but of grace. On my part you labored in vain for in me thine fruit is found. See the prodigal son. He wasted his law living but he learned of me and returned home because he was one of the ransomed of God and there he found everything needful in his father's house, not in his way of living. No he must find it in Jesus Christ the only way to God. (Elder) JAMES W. LINN

Arkansas City, Ark.

ELDER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: After reading your exerience and travels in the *Signs of the Times* with fear and trembling this poor wanderer is caused to write and merely state some of the travels, trials and tribulations of my wandering life.

I was born and raised by wonderful parents and we were one of the happiest families imaginable, being ten children, eight living to man and womanhood, four boys and four girls, two died in babyhood. I being the third child. Our home and surroundings were near Warren, Bradley Co., Arkansas on a hillside farm. Not having opportunity for an education, only three months summer school each year, then too, father being a poor farmer with very limited means could not spare us boys from the farm chores all of that time. We would have finished laying the crops by and then before school closed in summer would have to quit again and start picking cotton. No reflection here on my parents because they were wonderful, but our opportunities for the wisdom of this world was of a limited nature. We were taught that we must be good or the bad man would get us sure, and I was afraid of the devil as could be. In reality I wanted to be good and grow up to be the type of man my father was. In my estimation he was one of the finest characters I ever knew, not merely because he was my father in the flesh but from a standard of being honest, moral and upright in all his dealings with his fellowman. He tried to live the golden rule and his advice and counsel was sought by people far and near, in fact people every-where had the utmost respect for him and his opinions. He was considered a leader in our community. So this son of his really wanted to be as his father, wanted the honor and praise of people, and up until this period of my life was just as good as I could be. I went every Sunday to Methodist Sunday School as our home was in a Methodist community. Singing and every place where goodness existed I was there yet had never united with any church, thinking all the time that that was for grown people even though I had been approached many times, especially during our big protracted meetings yet just had not united at this time.

I was about sixteen years of age when my troubles first began. As stated above I had been just as good as good could be. One day on the 23rd of May 1901 to be exact from a clear sky I was shown the power and wisdom of an omnipotent God and his love and mercy which brought me down to know the helplessness of mortal man, his inability and dependable weakness! Here a little history of the cause relative to this incident in my family life I will omit as it plays no part in this narrative, but I was made to know that the greatness

of God and his omnipotence was ever present and all the goodness of my entire life was as filthy rags. Of course I had read the letter of the law (the Bible) but the letter killeth and the intercession of Christ maketh alive so I was pronounced dead in trespasses and sin. Up until this period of time in life I had never heard a Primitive Baptist preach and knew less than nothing about the church. My family being poor and needing all the help we could get I obtained a job scaling logs for one of the big sawmills at Warren, helping to keep the wolf from our family door. I loved my father, mother, brothers and sisters with all the love a natural boy could have for his family or earthly ties! On a Saturday evening about ten miles from our home, as I was coming from my work, I passed by where Elder J. H. Blythe had gathered with a few very peculiar looking people to me for service. Curiosity caused me to stop. They were singing, "Keep silence, all created things, And wait your Maker's nod; My soul stands trembling while she sings The honors of her God." I thought this was the prettiest song I had ever heard. I went inside the old run down building and took a back seat. Then they sang, "Children of the heavenly king." No instrument to make music. This, to me, was beautiful singing. Elder Blythe did not let on that he saw me, but he took my life from the cradle up to where I was as a text and preached me until I was so humiliated I hardly knew what to do, telling this peculiar people every mean thing I had ever done from my youth up to that time. If ever a mortal man wanted the rocks and the mountains to open up and swallow or fall on him I did. The next day (Sunday) was to be communion day so they announced, but when I got on my horse and started for home a determination on my part was never to again let my foot darken the doors of such a set of people, in fact I was mad to think I should have been treated so, and especially by Elder Blythe who did not know any better than to take my good life and blacken it before all those people. Oh I was so misterable. If Jonah passed any more misery in the belly of a great fish than I did that Saturday night I do not know how it could have been.

The following Sunday, not really knowing what I was doing and having not yet learned the inability of mortal man, I was on my way down to be again with this old fogy cast off set (to my way of thinking) knowing full well to see these old people wash feet would be funny. Elder Blythe again did the preaching and used for his text "O wretched man that I am," but instead of applying it to himself he again took my beautiful, good life and exposed me again to all those people and there was a big crowd too that day. When it was time for the funny part, that was when these dear humble saints of the Most High God began to wash each others feet, bowing down in humble submission and devotion to each other, showing their works by their faith, if ever my life had any goodness or one drop of pride in it it went out from me never to return, and of all sacred, humble services this was the most sacred, and oh how little I did know of God's marvelous love seeing it manifest in the flesh. This time for a surety I left that old Primitive Baptist meeting never more to return. God works in mysterious ways his wonders to perform. This was in May 1902. My wanderings kept growing worse and worse. I even quit going amongst the Methodist people of our own community but would go every opportunity to old Hardshell meeting anywhere near, even made it a point to slip off down to Louisiana to an As-

sociation that fall. Somehow I did not want any one to know I was mingling with this old peculiar set of people but I did enjoy their singing and services. I never hinted I wanted a home with them but they were the most considerate and displayed more love one for the other than any group I had ever been around.

All the time I was going through one continuous warfare. I wanted so much to be good and honored by my many associates and knowing all the time this doctrine of salvation by grace, election and predestination was a very unpopular doctrine. I was convinced by the reading of the inspired testimony of God's word, combined with revelation, was proving beyond doubt this doctrine and principal was the truth upheld by a few. "Many are called but few are chosen." Being the condemned sinner I was under the law that found me in a lost and ruined condition in a vast wilderness and no where to turn or go. About this time, I do not remember the date, I experienced a peculiar episode in my life. This experience came to me at night and from that date I cannot tell whether I was asleep or awake, seemingly I was awake. If a dream it has been indellibly stamped in my mind. This is what I saw. It seemed to be the largest crowd of people I was ever in and such a service, I had never witnessed. It was orderly and no one said a word except the speaker. The speaker was dressed in pure white. I never heard such a wonderful message telling of all the mean things ever committed. All the condemned of every crime under the sun were there and finally I was asked what to do with such characters? Of course having been good all my life, never even breaking the least commandment, my condemnation and justice for such characters was to put them to death, such should not be allowed on earth. Immediately the finger of scorn was pointed directly at me and said, "Thou art the man." Immediately the vast multitude vanished from my sight, I was left helpless and speechless. Ten thousand talents in debt and not one farthing to pay, even stripped of my coat of many colors. Here was I stripped of every ism on earth and left in that condition I do not know how many days or months, but seemingly to me it was ages. Death my only doom and hell my abode.

"Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son (natural) of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colors." This coat to me represents all the works of man and the spots of boasting different angels of goodness. This great multitude of my vision represents Joseph's brethren. They stripped him of his coat just as I was stripped of all my goodness; they took him (Joseph) and cast him into a pit just as the finger of scorn was pointed at me; they dipped the coat in blood representing the blotting out of all the works of man to an entirety. Naturally the sufferer begins searching for comfort and the same thing happened to me reading the scripture in 2 Timothy 3:15-17, "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." At this time I was cast down into the valley of dry bones. "The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and caused

me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry." Ezk. 37:1-2. How long was I left in this condition? It seemed to me ages, no food to feast upon, no water to quench a thirsting soul. Starving, yes starving for one little crumb that might fall from my Master's bountiful table, just one little bit of comfort. Pray I could not, neither could I sing praises unto his wondrous name yet I continued to go among these old fogy truth contenders, and my only alternative was to beg and plead for mercy, not for justice but unmerited mercy before a just and righteous God. Oh for a thousand tongues so I might sing songs of praise unto his greatness. "And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God," and he shall save his people Israel, "And, lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world." From my famished soul, the very depth of my being I cried out I would arise and go home to my friends, go to the household of faith and ask for my old back seat where Elder Blythe had preached my condemnation. So after many sore trials and tribulations of a poor helpless wanderer's condition I asked for a home among those old truth contenders and was received for baptism by Elder Blythe into the fellowship of the church in March 1907. Have been going in and out since wishing some day to be able to render proper praise, honor and glory to His Majesty as I ought. This, I might say, is why I am branded a Primitive Baptist. I say it is because I cannot help it. I am, if my poor, stony heart deceives me not, just as sure the doctrine, belief and principal held so sacred by these old Predestinarians is the true church or bride of the Most High, and are merely fulfilling time until all the purposes, plans and designs of God have been accomplished. "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" He is the same God who called or spoke to Abraham, the God of Israel, the same God who delivered the Israelites from under the cruel Egyptian bondage, the same who caused Paul to fall on his face and proclaim and preach his doctrine. He is the everlasting to everlasting, the first and last of life and time. He carefully watches over and cares for all his complete bride and there will not be one broken cord. So I am a Predestinarian because it was ordained that I should be. I was as powerless to be anything else as I was to be born into this natural life without saying so. I was born the natural way by parents without consulting me whether I wanted to be born or not, any-way after due course I was brought into this life so small and helpless that without the aid of some one stronger or a guiding power or instinctive nature I would have perished as all other elements. Therefore, it was ordained that I, Ben Parrish, by natural law should inherit this low ground of sin and sorrow by birth, and by the same ordination I will surely die for unto all there is a time to be born and a time to die, and of an assured fact could not have been born before my appointed time, and of a surety will not lay down this natural or carnal body until the time appointed.

The same applies to the spiritual body or ones chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. It was not by the will of the flesh but they were chosen, called and elected of the Most High and Holy God to do just according to his dictates that his purposes would stand. Even Abraham was called for a purpose, Joseph was sold into slavery for a purpose, even to bring the elect

of God's chosen. Moses, even though he tried to rebel and not do according to God's purpose and plan, was just as helpless as I was in trying to be good. So on down throughout all time all of God's little ones will be called from the least to the greatest, and each one called will be called by a new name and every one will hear and heed that call. We need only to understand this precious doctrine and when it has been manifest to us by the omnipotent God of love we too will most assuredly love it, and we are made to know that the powers of earth or hell can do no more than what our Father please. There's not a sparrow or a worm but is found in his decree; He sits on no precarious throne nor borrows leave to be. In short every-thing in relation to his purpose here and hereafter is so firmly established in the decree of God that no power can prevail against them. I must close these thoughts. It seems I cannot find a stopping place especially when we view God's chosen or predestinated people unto salvation. My greatest worry is concerning my own soul's salvation, not that I am worrying about the purpose or place. And may the God of all grace give us light, wisdom and understanding of his light from above, that in his light we may see light is our prayer in Jesus name to whom be glory, power and dominion now and forever. Amen. If a child, willed before time, elected and called after and in the plan. Yours very unworthily.

BEN PARRISH

Route 2, Box 36, Hickman, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am sending you a check for $2 for the *Signs of the Times*. I like the good articles in it. It is all the preaching I get to hear through the winter months as I cannot stand the cold weather any more being eighty-one years old. I have been reading the *Signs* for forty years and do not think I could get along without it as it sets forth the doctrine I believe.

I would like to tell you of my travels here if God will guide my mind, if not I cannot as I am a "can't help it." I tried it for seven years until God showed me what I was trying to do. Dear child I do not know whether you believe in that still small voice. I do and I can hear it yet although it has been fifty-seven years ago. I united with a church that was helping the all powerful God to save sinners. We had a big meeting going on in full blast and I was in the middle of it and was enjoying it I thought. I had company go home with me to dinner and we talked of what a meeting we were having. That night as we went back to the house a star moved from the South and right over the house it burst like a sky rocket. That little voice said; "with your works you tried to save one sinner and could not, now you are trying to save others." Dear child, I have not tried since for it seems I hear that voice all the time, and the night I heard that voice I took no part in the meeting and I think I never will for I believe when God takes things from one they are gone forever. I know God works all things after his own will both in heaven and earth and none can stay his hand.

Sometimes I meditate on his promises and seem to see his glory shining all around me. How comforting it is and I would give the world if I could tell it to God's little ones. Tell them the good things he has for them as I see it but I cannot give expression to it. My poor soul is so full of his love it seems he is standing close to me and I have looked around to see if I could see him. Forgive me for writing so much.

(Mrs.) W. G. ANDERSON

233 East 17st St., New York 3, N. Y.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I want to thank you so much for the privilege of reading the letters you sent me to read. I enjoyed them and cannot express in words how I enjoyed your reply to the letters. It was food for me, really like a sermon. This sentence you wrote, "The Lord's help is never too late, but he is forever at hand and his power is unfailing" was such a prop to me and has been such a help. I was glad to read what you wrote in connection with the 46th Psalm as this Psalm is and has been a great comfort to me many times. I shall never forget one year when mother was very ill. You can imagine what a state of mind I got myself into. I questioned why! why! The words were spoken to me, "Be still and know that I am God." I thought the voice was near me or rather coming from some one near me, but looking around I saw no one. At this same time I visited some dear brethren before visiting hours at the hospital. I picked up their Bible and when I opened it it was the 46th Psalm and the first verse that caught my eye was that verse, "Be still and know that I am God." Truly "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." We know also that "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven."

I have received much comfort recently in reading. These next stanzas have been precious to me beyond expression in words:

"My God, my keeper, thou dost never slumber,
But looking on me from thy throne above,
Dost hear my sighings, all my heart throbs number,
And watch me ever with thine eye of love.

'Tis sweet to trust thee! for when care comes pressing,
A thousand precious promises declare,
How much thou hast of comfort and of blessing,
For those who humbly cast on thee their care.

I question oft thy love with doubt's denial,
And often to vain refuges I flee;
But in the hour of suffering and of trial,
Where can I go, O God, but unto thee?"

"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I feel I know I love the Lord, whether it is the right kind of love or not I cannot say. I know I love him with all my heart and soul and feel to say with the poet:

"Do not I love thee, O my Lord?
Behold my heart and see;
And turn each cursed idol out
That dares to rival thee."

But O, Brother Dodson, when I read in the verse which says "to them who are the called according to his purpose" I can but question whether I am in that group or not. This gives me much concern. It says, "He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." This has come to me over and over again in recent days. Some one gave me a poem entitled, "Thy will, not mine." This has been a prop to me many times. One stanza reads:

"When things on which my heart is set,
Thy sovereign will denies,
If I am tempted to forget
That thou art just and wise,
Let this my joy and comfort be
That so it seemeth good to thee."

Both of your sermons Sunday stirred my mind I am glad to say and I have been feeding on the crumbs I received ever since. Once more I can say with the poet:

"A crumb of mercy, Lord, I crave,
Unworthy to be fed
With dainties such as angels have,
Or with the children's bread."

I cannot find words to express what I received from your sermon in the morning. Many scriptures came to my mind while you were speaking. One was,

"For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." I am fully aware of the fact that you do not wish the praise. I hope I look beyond the preacher and can say, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." The good Book says, "And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" I shall never forget the first time I recall reading the text you used in the afternoon. It just seemed as though the print raised right up in large letters before me. I feel I know something about this verse, "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." Truly in the beginning of the chapter where it says, "I am the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valleys," this is Jesus speaking. What a picture is presented in our minds. "As the lily among thorns, so is my beloved among the daughters. As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." As you have said many times, a shadow must be close to the object that casts the shadow. What a wonderful place to be in when we can be under His shadow, what a nearness we feel then! This brings to my mind several verses found recorded in the Psalms. One of them is, "Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice. Another that is sweet to me is, "Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings." The last one I will mention now is very familiar to you, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High *shall* abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Notice the way it reads, it does not say *might* or *perhaps,* but it says *shall abide.* I do love the *wills* and *shalls* that are set forth in the Scriptures.

I believe you mentioned the length of time it would be before our next meeting day since there are five Sundays in this month. I thought how good it is that we do not have to wait until that date to be fed. Whenever it is the Lord's will we can enjoy a Sabbath, no matter what day of the week or what hour of the day.

One day last week I opened my Bible to the Psalms and started to read. I continued until I had read twenty of them. You might say quite an assignment for one reading, but I felt the Lord was with me. I cannot describe the comfort I received and the beauty I saw in these many verses. At the time I felt I could almost write a book on them and their meaning if my mind would be so directed. There is a hymn which expresses my feeling for me very well:

"I love to steal awhile away
From every cumbering care,
And spend the hours of setting day
In humble, grateful prayer.

I love in solitude to shed
The penitential tear,
And all his promises to plead
When none but God is near.

I love to think on mercies past,
And future good implore,
And all my cares and sorrows cast
On him whom I adore.

I love by faith to take a view
Of brighter scenes of heaven;
The prospect doth my strength renew,
While here by tempest driven.

Thus, when life's toilsome day is o'er,
May its departing ray
Be calm as this impressive hour,
And lead to endless day."

I did not mean to be so lengthy. Hope I have not wearied you with my thoughts. Please cast the mantle of charity over this just considering the weakness of the writer. When at the throne of grace kindly remember this poor sinner if you feel so to do. May the Lord continue to bless you and keep you forever in his care. Yours in fellowship. GERTRUDE SECOR

2442 — 5th Ave., West, Seattle 99, Wash.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: As I have moved again, according to my doctor's request, will ask you to send my *Signs of the Times* to the above address. As I am writing for this change I feel a great desire to tell or write my experience as it has been coming over and over in my mind of late, and so much sweetness comes to me.

I was born in Cass Co. Missouri and when a small child my parents and family moved to Nevada, Mo, after selling the farm. They bought a comfortable home and we could care for the Baptists whenever they came and often had meeting there. My precious Master soon made me to love these people so much and that was when my Christian experience started. Before I was old enough to go to school I memorized a very dear hymn, "O for a closer walk with God." This grew to be a prayer to me and every day I would ask for my walk to be close with God. When I was old enough to go to school I would often find myself in my study period feasting on the sweet hymns that perhaps we had sung the night before. As time went on I became much more in love with these dear brethren and sisters and especially old brother Beckman. He seemed like an angel to me and I prayed that I might be loving and kind as he was, just as pure as he seemed to me to be. Then I began to feel that I wanted a home in the church with these dear ones, but my doubt was there would be no chance to become a member as I was only a child. I went on in this way for some time when one day a paper, to which my parents subscribed, came and I had a chance to slip it out and read it. An Elder Fisher from another state had a letter in it. I wrote him telling him of my troubles and the distress I was going through. He answered my letter at once, and as I had told him my parent's names he also wrote my father, asking if he could make an appointment for him if he came to Nevada, Mo., and told us when he would be there. My dear father soon let it be known he was coming and a three days meeting was held. I was so happy I could hardly control myself. "What a heaven below, my Redeemer to know." I never mentioned the letter I had written and the one I had received to my parents. It became my habit each time the meeting was coming to a close and the door of the church was open to any that wanted to ask for a home was welcome, I had either to leave the room or offer myself to the church as I still felt that being only a child they would not accept me. So when this great day came, the last day (Sunday) of Elder Fisher's stay there, and when the large crowd had gathered for church meeting, my father took me to a room and talked to me in a kind way. He finished by saying he would have to punish me if I left the room before the meeting was over as much as he disliked doing so. He said, "Lillie you know I have never punished you and I do not want to." When the close of the meeting came and it was announced that the door of the church was open, a hymn was given out and we began to sing. After a verse or two was sung I started to walk, I knew not where I was going but I had no control of my feet whatso-ever. Here I want to say I found out then "It is

not in man that walketh to direct his steps." My father was standing by the door by which I would have left had I done as before. I still had my song book in my hand and was singing as loud as I could when I looked at him and he shook his head at me. not to come any farther, but as I said, I had no control of my feet and I soon found out where my dear and precious Master was directing me. I found myself with Elder Fisher and dear old Brother Beckman who was sitting there looking like an angel and tears rolling down his cheeks.

I told them the trouble I was in and how I had prayed for a closer walk with God and to my surprise they took me into the fold. When my father came to me he wept like a child, and asked me to forgive him for what he had promised to do if I left the room. I was baptized in an artesian well lake in Nevada and I find there is no other church where I could feel at home like I can with the Primitive Baptists. I want to say I left out something of importance before I was accepted in the church being a little forgetful at times. There was an elderly couple, Elder Cloud and wife, who were members of our church and lived next door to us. I scarcely missed a day going over there to do anything I could for them. I dearly loved them both. He was not able any more to get down to bathe her feet and I being there said at once I would love to do it for her and would take it on myself to do it regularly. This was a joy to me and after I was accepted in the church she said to me, "Sister Lillie, our next meeting is communion time and I want you to wash my feet the first time after you have become a member.." This I did and oh what love filled my heart when we could meet and all agree.

Time went on and at the age of seventeen I was married to Charles P. Bishop in Nevada, Mo. who was a brakeman on the railroad. We were married in September and the next August 13th he was brought home a corpse and I was an expectant mother, and just three months to the day a daughter was born to me, Nov. 13th. On Dec. 26th of that year I was taken with an illness which proved to be an abscess. I could not eat any food for several months until it broke. After that I felt much better and was able to eat. The next day feeling better I called my father and mother to my bed room telling them I had not strength to sing, but would they get the hymn books and sing for me. Mother went for them and when she returned she had been crying. I asked them to sing, "When sorrows encompass me round, and many distresses I see." This was sung at my husband's funeral. They sang it and some others I asked for as well as "O for a closer walk with God." They told me they could not sing any more and later told me it was the hardest thing they could do for me as they thought I was going to be called home.

I had been ill for so long and missed those grand meetings until I was starved for that sweet food I loved so much and those songs of Zion helped me some. I was then nineteen years of age and now am seventy-two. I married again and had three step-children. When or after I married Mr. Blystone forty-eight years ago we came West. We had seven in family when we came here and had a hard time getting along after he was hurt in the mines in Wardner, Idaho. We then moved to La Grande, Ore., where I knew some Baptists that were from Missouri too. We found a house in which to live and I had to

support all the family by washing, ironing and sewing. Later my folks came out and settled in Spokane. I went to see them and to find out the prospects for work, and while there I and my little children went to my oldest brother's home for a few days and they arranged for my little baby and me to sleep on a cot in the room they and some of the children occupied. Having the baby to get ready for bed and then myself I was the last one to retire and my brother was to extinguish the light. After the room was dark and I had my baby on my arm Christ came to my bed and I could see him as plainly as if the light was on and some one else stood there. He said, "Fear not your troubles will soon be over. They are compared to the Spokane River and you are over the largest fall." Then he left or I should say, I could not see him any more. At once my brother called to me and asked what was the matter. He and his wife were also members of our church. I said nothing and he kept on asking me and said, "There was some one in the room besides us." Then I told him Christ had come to my bed and I could see him and what he said. My brother said he knew there was some one there, he could feel his presence. Well dear brother, I have written quite a long letter but this will relieve my mind some. I was down to Chehalis, Wash. last Sunday and we had a grand meeting. In Christian love.

(Mrs) LILLIE BLYSTONE

Toney, Ala.

DEAR ELDER BYRD: I hope I have a Christian's desire to write you. I will address you in a few words as to the application of you and the rest of the Elders. You are leaders of the sheep, fathers in Israel, shepherds of the flock, a comfort in times of desolate moments. I hope the dear saints will be given words of comfort to speak to you Elders more than I have ever been been given to know. I know I expect too much from an Elder. I do not do for them what I could and should do. I fall short in what I ought to do as a church member, as a mother, as a good neighbor, also as a person that professes a hope in Christ. I fall short in affirming that God is God and besides him there is no other. Be it far from any one else to live like I do, think and do ugly things which do not seem to be as an Old Baptist should. I read, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." I believe God controls and moves us as it suits him no matter how it suits us or makes us frown or feel dismayed. He still says, "It is I, be not afraid."

I hope some of the roses will be handed to you Elder by believing children while you are still present in person. We are not indebted to you because you are ministers. Oh no, but we love you because God commands his children to love one another, and he says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." I would like very much to visit among the old Baptists down that way. I pray God if it is his will to provide the way and keep my mind in that direction that I can visit Brother Palk and you dear saints some day. When you are too low to pray for yourself, could you remember us at a throne of grace? In trials and afflictions in Christ we hope to remain your brother and sister in Christ. REANER REECE

Route 1, Huntland, Tenn.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am not worthy to call you brother for you see I am nothing. I do not have a name among the dear, blessed Old Baptists. I feel

this morning I must write you. I need comfort and in sharing my feelings with God's people I feel I may find sweeter peace. My mother and father are Primitive Baptists and no kinder, sweeter people ever lived. Dear brother as I sat rocking my year old baby this morning I picked up the *Signs* my father gave me, and as I rocked I read and tears streamed from my eyes until I could scarcely follow the lines, but dear Lord they were so sweet. I was reading the letter signed "A little sister from Texas" and my heart bled. Oh, dear Primitive Baptists, I am so weak, so low, so deep in sin it seems I will never taste the sweetness of Jesus glorious love. While I was reading I burst into a song but I did not know I was really singing until I came to the words, "Do I love the Lord or no, am I his or am I not." It was then I knew I was singing, " 'Tis a point I long to know."

The dear one from Texas lost her son and said, "she thanked God for sparing her darling the horrors of war." I had three brothers to go. My youngest brother and I are very close to each other. They all came back but as it pleased our heavenly Father the youngest did not come back as he walked so beautifully away. He was crippled by a serious wound received in the last days of the war. While they were away, dear ones, I had a dreadful dream that this youngest brother was killed in action, and when they would waken me I would be praying to God. I had another beautiful dream that the world was coming to an end, everything was in complete darkness. I started singing loud and strong and a bright light shown from the sky upon me and I was very happy, rejoicing and praising God. I know I am nothing but some times I actually feel God is smiling on me. Then again I am plunged into the darkest pools of despair and know I am worthy of nothing. I will keep hoping for all I have is a hope which is the anchor of the soul, the Bible says. I will try to pray that some day God will choose me as one of his little ones; that I was chosen before the world began, and that he will show me in his wondrous way that I am of him and may feel at home with the dear old Primitive Baptists whom I love. God's will be done.

I am twenty-three years old, the youngest of ten children. I have been married two and one half years and have a year old baby. Mother and father are getting old and are in bad health all the time. They do enjoy the *Signs* so much. I know this is not worthy of publication, but if you could please send me a word of comfort or do you think I am being greatly deceived and not worthy of letters from you dear people. Gratefully yours.

(Mrs.) GILBERT LEE

Box 122, Warsaw, Mo.

DEAR EDITORS: It is certainly a shame for me to be so far behind with my subscription fee and I cannot expect your pardon for so great a neglect notwithstanding I need and desire it very much. However this was taken care of at the proper time but owing to poor health I lived here and yonder and hoped to be more permanently settled before I mailed it—alas I am sending it with a heart full of gratitude for not stopping it when due. I enjoy every article and the experiences such as your own, Elder W. N. Green and others were most edifying; also the doctrinal writers, editorials and every article that gives God all honor, power, knowledge and glory are enjoyed beyond measure. I love the company of those who believe these fundamental principles set forth in the Bible and preached and proclaimed by the Primitive Baptists. Jesus the rock of my salvation a rock

in a weary land.

How often I fled to him in years past, but to-day (naturally speaking of health conditions) I am unable to run or flee for refuge, but he is also our support so to-day I (hope) am leaning on him for my support as my staff and crutch. I have six lovely daughters to administer to my temporal needs, but also how much I need the tender love, mercy and grace of our once crucified but now risen and alive for-ever-more Redeemer and Savior to stand by in the last hours to pilot over the stormy Jordan and carry the spirit back to the Giver of all life. Then and not until then will all be well with the redeemed family for-ever-more.

Thanking you again and again for your unfeigned kindness I am a sinner trusting solely in what Jesus accomplished on the rugged cross for many sinners. (Mrs.) MILDRED C. TURNER

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632 W. Main St., Salisbury, Md.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Enclosed find check for $3. Two for renewing my subscription and one to aid the *Signs*. Very glad you have been kind enough not to let me miss a copy. I enjoy reading them so much. I have kept all the copies since 1924 and can always find something comforting in them. I look forward each month to the new ones coming with pleasure. I feel I would be at a loss without them. I have lost so many of my loved ones within the past two years and am now living alone since the death of my husband. I feel very lonely and cast down at times. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." The good letters in the *Signs* are a real comfort indeed to one who feels to cast their cares upon the Lord.

(Mrs.) MOLLIE E. FOOKS

Holly Springs, Ark.

MR. R. L. DODSON, DEAR SIR: I am enclosing check for $4 for our renewal to the *Signs of the Times*. Regret very much that we have neglected this duty. The *Signs of the Times* have been coming to this home for nearly seventy-five years and most every issue is still here. We treasure them. There have been numerous Primitive Baptists entertained in this home, and we hope to continue enjoying this pleasure with God's help. We are not church members but strong believers. Thanking you we are very truly.

MR. & MRS. C. .A. PATTERSON

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Elder R. L. Biggs, Tenn., $4; S. Bailiff, Tex., $3; J. T. Bratten, Md., $2; Mrs. J. W. Grimes, Ala., $1; Mrs. R. Moore, La., $1; W. A. Wamack, Ark., $3; Mrs. J. Clifford, Wash., $1; W. W. Jackson, Ga., $1; J. A. Brown, Fla., $1; J. H. Hinson, Cal., $3; J. A. Beard, Fla., $1; A friend, $100; R. E. Crooks, Wash., $20; Mrs. W. Bass, N. C., $1; Mrs. C. M. Richardson, Va., $3; A. S. Roberson, N. C., $1; Mrs. N. Austin, Tex., $1; W. D. Chapman, N. Y., $10; Mrs. I. L. Reilly, N. Y., $3; W. J. Johnson, Tex., $1; E. H. Lanier, Tenn., $2; A. M. Mariner, Va., $1; Mrs. W. K. Truitt, Md., $1; A friend, Ia., $10; M. J. Ege, N. J., $3; Mrs. R. B. Shortridge, Ill., $10; Miss E. R. Martin, N. J., $3; Eld. E. B. Ault, Tex., $2; J. E. Goyne, Ark., $1; J. D. Hassell, Ala., $1; Mrs. D. Deal, Mo., $3; Mrs. B. L. McCoy, Del., $1; J. H. Calk, La., $2; V. D. Borst, Jr., N. Y., $1; C. W. Edwards, Ala., $4; Mrs. C. Twilley, Md., $1; C. S. Cross, Tenn., $1; J. A. Johnson, Tenn., $5; C. Garner, N. C., $1; Mrs. S. L. Midgett, N. Y., $1; Mrs. S. L. Hutchens, N. Y., $100.

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We will furnish extra copies of the **Signs of the Times** at the following prices: 1 copy 25 cents; 3 copies 75 cents; 6 copies $1.50; 12 copies $3.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failue we will mail them another copy free of charge.

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. MARCH, 1949

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." Matt. 5:8.

We would write unto you of the riches of God's grace, with the pure heart that Jesus declares are blessed, beholding in Christ Jesus the fullness of all we write.

David says in Psalm 50:10, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." The expressions that follow are felt in our heart that we should write comfortably to the people of God, and bring to their understanding the joys of their salvation, and assure them that their warfare is accomplished and they have received of the Lord's hand double for all their sins. What a wonderful feeling to have given to a poor sinner that his sins are all forgiven, and the blessed assurance of the presence of a mighty power to save is with him, and the love He has manifested has blotted out all the righteousness you had according to the flesh, and all that we thought to be unto life, we find to be unto death. Our hearts are filled with joy and love for the things that were given unto us by the spirit of truth, and we are turned about and made to seek those things that are from above. We realize a great separation from the things we once loved, and a love for the things we once hated, and these things are not merely perceived in our minds, but they are realized in our hearts and we believe them because of the power by which they are wrought in us. We have the assurance that it is with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

After all of these things have been manifested to us, and we find our hearts are filled with the things of this world, we turn to the language of David and cry out, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." We believe it is then we see God and our hearts are purged from dead works to serve the living God, and the way of salvation as it is in Jesus Christ is beheld of God, as the only pure and living way. We hear the voice within our hearts, this is the way, walk ye in it, and the love of God in the heart constrains us to be obedient, and for us to be enticed of our flesh into disobedience we are chastised by the power of God against the sin in our mortal flesh which causes the poor sinner to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" It is then we confess our sin and beg for the mercy of God, the only one who can forgive sin, and with the confession resolve to be obedient to his commandments written in our hearts.

These commandments are written in the law of God in the hearts of all his people and they are continually in their meditation by which they speak the language of David, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the

scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." Psalm 1:1-2. We note out of this pure heart he (the sinner) is motivated to act and do the things that are commanded in God's law in his heart, which gives the working in us "both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. 2:13.

The working of God's mighty power hath purged our conscience from dead works to serve the living God, and the gift of the Holy Ghost to every one that has been purged takes of the things of God's kingdom and shows them unto us, and thereby we see God as did Paul and all the apostles. We believe Paul wrote all the epistles from the abundance of a pure heart for we note in his epistle to the Collossians he said, "I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Col. 2:1-3. We feel the above quotation in our heart when we attempt to write or speak in the name of Jesus.

As we have been blessed to read the *Signs of the Times* during the past year and examine the contents according to God's word, we feel thankful to God for the directing hand that has kept us in the faith, and exercised our heart that we should stand in the unity of the faith once delivered to the saints; that we should have the abundance of heart to write and receive of the things of the kingdom of God that he has prepared for us.

We feel that it was out of a pure heart that Elder Gilbert Beebe was moved to start the publication of the *Signs of the Times,* and the preparation of the hearts of all of like precious faith received and were drawn to the support of that medium of correspondence which has continued for 116 years. We are now starting on our pilgrimage for the duration of another year not knowing who shall survive unto the end of this volume. We feel to say unto all supporters of the *Signs* may we contribute to this, our medium of correspondence, out of a pure heart by which we may edify one another in the body of Christ.

We desire to say our dear Editor and Publisher, Elder R. Lester Dodson, has delivered to us a periodical worthy to grace the table of any of our homes, the contents of which have not been delivered in spirit to lord over God's heritage, and we feel to say well done thou faithful brother; also to say no brother has done more than he for the future comfort of the readers of the *Signs of the Times* for he has bound 116 volumes of the *Signs* which are in the Library of Congress at Washington where they can be obtained by those desiring to read them. Out of a pure heart we feel such things are done, and not for the filthy lucre of this world.

In conclusion may we implore the God of all grace to give him to behold the beauty of the Lord our God upon His people, and out of a pure heart write and speak as long as God has so purposed he shall continue, and when the end comes may he say with Paul, "I have fought a good fight.." C. W. V.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Shepherd Fold Church meets every fourth Sunday and Saturday before, in the morning, in their new building on the Little York road between Air line and Humble highways. Elder W. O. Beene, Pastor; Elder Ben B. Walston, Asst. Pastor; Mrs. Irene Wisenbaker, Clerk.

"Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the Lord fought for Israel." Joshua 10:12-14.

A good brother in the South in requesting our views on the above Scripture asks "if this has reference to the natural sun and moon and a natural battle." We are well aware of the fact that our opinion as a mere man will be of little worth to our brother and readers and we, therefore, earnestly desire to be led by the Holy Spirit to make some observations which will be in accord with divine truth. While Holy Writ records many symbolic presentations of truth, and while literal events may be only types and shadows of the true and far more reaching significance of what they convey, there are many strange and mysterious phenomena recorded in the Bible the literal truth of which we do not wish to deny. It seems to us that if we disregard the supernaturalness of events which have appeared in nature, we tear at the very foundation of the sovereignty of our God. Our faith embraces and accepts the literal fact that Abraham took his son Isaac up into the Mount, verily believing that God had required of him to offer him as a sacrifice. It also embraces and accepts as a fact that in due time Israel was to journey down into Egypt and be in bondage and servitude to Pharoah, king of Egypt, whom God raised up for that very purpose, but the scene does not end in Egypt. God's infinite wisdom in sending Joseph down into Egypt to suffer and provide for the needs of his brethren must be revealed, and his almighty power must be made manifest by delivering Israel at the Red Sea, in causing the waters thereof to divide and enabling them to pass over dry shod. Our faith also embraces and accepts as a fact that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were cast into the furnace heated seven times hot, because they refused to bow down and worship the idolatrous gods of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. Without these things God's people all down through the vistas of time would have been deprived of the blessed assurance that their God would justify and reward their faith in him. The same can be as truthfully said of Daniel in the den of lions. It was undoubtedly in the mind and purpose of God for Jonah to go to Nineveh by the route he did. Some have contended that had Jonah been obedient he would not have been cast overboard and swallowed by the whale. However, we are told that God had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah, which carried him on his way to the wicked city of Nineveh, and had Jonah not gone by the way he did, God's power in sending "out a great wind into the sea" causing a great tempest to endanger the safety of the ship would not have been made known, the mariners would not have prayed to God, and there would not have been any lot cast for God to dispose of, and Jonah would not have been cast into the sea, and the great fish which God had specifically prepared would have been there in vain; Jonah would not have been taught that "Salvation is of the Lord," and would not have preached the preaching that God had bidden him to preach to the Ninevites, and Nineveh would not have been overthrown, and God would not have been honored and glorified.

Such doctrine as that is dishonoring to God and confusing to his people and, therefore, should not be preached. Had these things not been Jesus would have been deprived of the answer he gave to the scribes and Pharisees who besought him to give them a sign. He said unto them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas; For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Mat. 12:39-40. We believe that all Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation was given by the Eternal One, who is declared to be of one mind, and none can turn him, and we cannot stand for any one altering, adding to or taking from it.

The many miracles wrought by Jesus when he was here in the flesh were for the purpose of manifesting him to be verily God as well as verily man. He converted the water into wine, raised the dead, gave sight to the blind, healed lepers, stilled the raging sea, fed the multitudes with a few loaves of bread and fishes, and many other miraculous things, that it might be known that he worked the works of God and spake as never man spake. At last he was actually crucified by wicked hands and nailed to a wooden cross and died and was placed in Joseph's new tomb, but thanks be unto God he could not be holden of death, but came forth the third day as had been foretold of him, and he is now at the right hand of the Majesty on high making intercession for us if, indeed, we be numbered among those chosen in him before the foundation of the world. By faith, we hope we accept and believe all that inspiration declared concerning him.

We do not consider the foregoing as a preamble to the subject matter of what we have been asked to treat upon, but rather would we desire to be understood as having been dealing with our subject in a most serious and vital way. Joshua was undoubtedly a type of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who, in the fulness of time, was to come into the world and engage in battle for his people, to the point of conquering and destroying him that had the power of death over them. Joshua was undoubtedly a real living character, and we can but feel that the things spoken of in this connection were likewise genuine. The Gibeonites, who were not of the children of Israel, might well typify the Gentiles, had appealed to Joshua (a type of Christ) for assistance in overcoming their enemies, who were composed of those Amoritish kingdoms represented by the five kings mentioned. In the first verse of the chapter we are told that "when Adonizedec king of Jerusalem had heard how Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it; as he had done to Jericho and her king," and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Joshua and the children of Israel, he called for a confederacy with these kings to come up and help him smite Gibeon. The Amoritish nations can well represent the enemies of spiritual Israel here in the world to-day, all of whom are well organized and banded together in their work system to destroy the true church, but Jesus, our Spiritual Joshua, hath declared that he would build his church upon the rock of revelation and the gates of hell would not prevail against it. The twelfth verse of our text says, "Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon: and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon." It is to be noted that "the Lord deliver-

ed up the Amorites before the children of Israel," and in order that the Israelites might be made witnesses to the mighty power of God, the most wonderful and surprising, and shall we say supernatural phenomenon which followed took place. When Jesus tarried and was late in reaching Martha and Mary, they said unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, our brother had not died: But Jesus said in this connection, "I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe." Had Lazarus not died, the power of God to raise the dead would not have been made known unto them. It is often God's good pleasure to move in a mysterious way his wonders to perform, in order that his children may stand in awe of him. Therefore, Joshua said, "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon." The thirteenth verse says, "And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies." Apparently these things had been prophesied of, for the question was asked, "Is not this written in the book of Jasher?" Then follows the plain declaration: "So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day." Whatever space of time this may have indicated it was sufficient for Joshua to engage these five kings with all the fighting men and paraphernalia they could produce and win a complete victory over them. The fourteenth and last verse of our text says: "And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the Lord fought for Israel." These things are undoubtedly fulfilled in the experience of the true Israel of our God here in this world, but the true substance of them was being presented in type and shadow under the law, and were undoubtedly as real and genuine as the shadows of the tree in front of our house which is being thrown upon us as we pen these lines.

The people of God can bear witness with Joshua "that there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the Lord fought for Israel," when they by faith are enabled to see that the God who made heaven and earth, and all things therein; who controls the sun, the moon, the stars and hath fixed the bounds of the sea, has condescended to those of such low estate as we to fight our battles, and to give us the victory over sin and death, by and through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Indeed, we can then say, "there was no day like that before it or after it," and we just feel like joining Moses in ascribing greatness unto our God, for he is the rock, and his work is perfect.

Our best authorities tell us that the sun is "the central body of the solar system, about which revolve the planets and from which they receive radiant energy, as light, heat," etc., all of which heavenly bodies we understand rotate upon their axes. On first thought some might conclude that if the sun stood still it would cause utter confusion among all of the other heavenly bodies, if not wreck and ruin them, but since the sun is the central body of them all, and all others receive their energy from the sun, it would appear that when the sun stood still, all others being under the influence and control of the sun, there was still harmony among the host of them, and herein is revealed the sovereign hand and eternal power of Almighty God, doing his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. What a solemn command that was to the Psalmist, when God said, "Be still, and know that I am

God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth."

We have written, as we humbly hope, in the spirit of humility and love, but with the sincere desire of the heart to declare the truth, and all for the glory of God and the lifting of the name of Jesus on high. R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

MRS. LYDIA R. NASON was born in London, Ontario, Canada, the daughter of Frederick W. and Ellen J. Keene, Feb. 26, 1877, and died Sept. 15, 1948, making her stay on earth 71 years, 6 months and 19 days. Her home for many years had been in Sanford, Maine where she passed away. She had been in constantly failing health since March. At the age of fifteen her father, Elder F. W. Keene, moved with his family to New York State where he became joint pastor with Elder John Hubbell of the Second Roxbury Church. In October 1893 the Keene's moved to North Berwick, Maine, Elder Keene having been called as Pastor of the Oak Woods Church. Here our sister was received into the church Sept. 1, 1895 and was baptized the following morning. On Jan. 27, 1897 she married David F. Nason who preceded her to his eternal home by twenty years lacking two days, the date being Sept. 17, 1928.

It can truly be said that she was one of the mainstays of the little band of intrepid believers who, against well nigh insuperable obstacles, have carried on in this ancient church which for twenty-nine years has been pastorless. A church without an under-shepherd is in a difficult position even if she has, as did Oak Woods, faithful deacons. In her letters and in her conversation our sister often voiced her love and undying loyalty to the church of the living God, and particularly to the branch of the vineyard in which she found herself. It was the prayer of her heart as of the other few remaining, "O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy." Habakuk 3:2.

She leaves to mourn her loss two daughters, Mrs. Roger A. Hoyt, Washington, D. C. and Mrs. Harry C. Dunfield, Sanford, Me.; two granddaughters, Jeanne Hoyt, and Edna Dunfield; two sisters, Mrs. M. S. Houlder, Raleigh, N. C. and Mrs. W. N. Spitler, Chicago, Ill., both of whom were able to be present at the funeral, and the entire little flock in North Berwick.

The final services were held Sept. 18, 1948 in Sanford Funeral Chapel and Cemetery. Elder Winford J. Berry, who had arrived the day before from Elon College, N. C. for the regular two day meeting of the Maine Conference, conducted the service and spoke comfortingly from 2 Cor. 5:1-10 particularly the words, "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." Many friends from the churches farther north in the Maine Association had come for the two day meeting and were present at the funeral services of this dearly loved sister so well known to them. Loved ones and friends of the departed one filled the chapel. The floral offerings were many and beautiful attesting to the very high esteem in which this dear, humble sister was held in the community in which she lived so long. She will long be missed in the neighborhood. The little flock in Oak Woods will feel their loss very keenly. May the God of all comfort be with them. Burial was beside her husband in the family lot in beautiful Memorial Cemetery.

For our comfort our God who cannot lie has declared, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." Rev. 14:13. Our sister had looked forward to meeting Elder Berry whom she had long known through correspondence and his magazine, Old Faith Contender. This wish was not granted her but we know that, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." 1 Cor. 2:9. Oh may this be brought home to our hearts that she knows that fulness of joy of which the Psalmist speaks, "At thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

(Mrs.) RUTH A. KEENE SPITLER

Whereas it has been the will of an all powerful God to again call home one of his dear children, and relieve from his sufferings one of his anointed, we hope to be bowed to the will of a most holy and perfect God in the passing away from this life to a life everlasting, our dearly beloved Brother and Deacon, G. R. SHEPARD.

He was born in Onslow County, near Jacksonville, N. C., July 21, 1886, and died Oct. 28, 1948. He united with the Primitive Baptist church at Sand Hill, Saturday before the second Sunday in Sept. 1927, and was baptized on Sunday morning by Elder E. F. Pollard.

Brother Shepard was a great sufferer from the dreaded disease, tuberculosis. It was often the pleasure of the unworthy writer to visit in the good home of Brother Shepard and talk with him concerning his hope. I was always met with a smile, yet many times it was through tears, I feel, for joy. I never heard him complain of his lot, but often expressing how good and how merciful God was to him. He was a firm believer and a great contender for the doctrine of salvation by the grace

of an all wise God. His funeral services were conducted at his home Oct. 29, 1948 by the writer, Brother Brown and Brother W. E. Hylton. I shall always miss his sweet smile and his fellowship when I visit his home. May the giver of every good and perfect gift guide his sainted wife and his dear children to carry on, and to say dear Lord thy will, not ours, be done. Submitted in love and fellowship for his dear family.

(Elder) S. T. ATKINSON, SR.

It was the will of Almighty God to call from this mortal life MISS SARAH E. VAN TASSEL of 150 Prospect St., Kingston, N. Y., a dear friend and neighbor of the brethren and friends of the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, on Oct. 27, 1947 at the Kingston Hospital. She was born April 5, 1895 at Kingston, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Van Tassel.

Sadie, as she was known by her friends, fell and broke her hip and was in the hospital for treatment when she passed away suddenly. She had been suffering from a serious heart trouble for several months. She was a woman of the finest character, loved and highly respected by all who knew her and was kindness itself. She had many friends in the Lexington-Roxbury Association. She cared for Sister Hasbrouck, a member of the Olive and Hurley Church, she being an invalid the last years of her life. Sadie had lived with her since she was eight years of age and cared for her kindly and with marvelous patience which few people have of that virtue as much as Sadie possessed.

She leaves to mourn her loss one brother, Cornelius, of Oregon, and one sister, Mrs. Catherine Dyer, Syracuse, N. Y. and several nieces and nephews. She said she saw her Lord a few weeks before she died with angels around him. At her request Elder Bellows and I spoke at the funeral, also at her request the text used was the 23rd Psalm. Her body was laid beside sister Hasbrouck and her husband whom she called father and mother. We feel that our loss is her eternal gain, and that the God of all saints is her God. Written by request.

(Elder) AMASA J. SLAUSON

HASSELL'S CHURCH HISTORY

This book has been republished and is ready for delivery. Price $4.85. Send orders to Turner Lassiter, 919 North Highland Ave., Atlanta, Ga.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Beginning January 1, 1949, the cost of printing the Signs of the Times has more than doubled what it was when we first began its publication on January 1, 1942. Until now we have been able to absorb the additional costs experienced from time to time, but the time has now come when the subscription price of the paper will have to be increased.

Thus far we have kept the columns of our family paper free from paid advertising matter of all kinds, and it is our firm purpose to continue to do so, notwithstanding the fact that other religious publications carry it. Other publications have, apparently, long since been compelled to increase the price of their subscriptions, but we have resisted it as long as we possibly could.

Our subscribers have been both loyal and liberal in the past, as a general thing, and we sincerely hope they will appreciate the fact that we most certainly would not raise our price unless necessity demanded it. Therefore, beginning with the January 1949 issue the subscription price will be $3.00 per year, or $5.00 for two years.

If all of our subscribers who can will pay promptly, and will make a real effort to secure **new** subscribers for the paper, we honestly believe that before a great while we will be able to increase the size of the paper from twenty-four pages to twenty-eight pages. We are persuaded that this will be most gratifying to our readers if it can be done. We have sufficient good material on hand to justify increasing the size of the paper when the necessary funds are available.

We appeal to our Authorized Agents to become more active in their efforts for new subscribers, and we also hope that our Ministering brethren will recommend to the brethren they serve and the friends they meet that they become readers of the **Signs.** To our Agents and Ministers we will allow them $1.00 for each new subscriber for one year or more, and to our subscribers who will send us a new subscriber, or to any one who will subscribe for the paper direct, we will be glad to send them FREE a copy of "Showers of Rain" by our late sister Flossie I. Faulkner. This is a book of about forty pages, containing her experience and a fine collection of her poems.

Bespeaking the continued loyalty and support of our subscribers and friends, and hoping they will feel free to write us at all times as their minds may direct, with renewed assurances of our best efforts not only to maintain the high standard of the paper, but to improve it any and every way possible, we subscribe ourself,

Faithfully yours,

R. LESTER DODSON

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 117 RUTHERFORD, N. J., APRIL 1949 No. 4

"WHAT IS TRUTH"

"Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?" John 18: 37-38.

Dear children of God, made to be partakers of a heavenly calling, you who are separated from the world by the baptism of suffering, called to be saints, sealed by the holy covenant of promise; ye who are circumsized in the heart by the holy and unerring spirit of God, quickened and made alive by his Spirit, and led by grace divine unto the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED: It is you I wish to address as I pen a few broken thoughts of mine on this subject, which so far as word matter is concerned is found in Pilate's question to Jesus, "What is truth?" For several days I have been confined to my bed in ill health, and upon awakening yesterday morning the words, "What is truth?" were in my mind as if fixed there with power. I humbly hope I know by experience that to deal with this subject, and to treat upon it in the light of truth, I must be led by the unerring spirit of God into the knowledge of the truth, which truth is hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes; And if so blessed it is only unto those who know the truth that I could speak and be understood, and those who know the truth do not know it because they possess some superior qualities over others. No, no, but because it seemed good in God's sight, in the light of divine revelation, to open the eyes of their understanding and to reveal his truth in them.

First I would like to say a few things relative to truth as we poor mortals speak, think, move and act one to and with another in respect to what we might term as natural or literal truth. In this relation what we might believe to be truth is our standard by which we measure the expressed statements, motives and actions of others. In this respect truth is right. It is honorable, upright, above reproach, too honorable for criticism. Truth stands out above all that is false, it cannot be overthrown. It may be trampled in the dust by unhallowed feet, it may for a time appear to be thwarted by lying tongues, by false swearing, by contradictions, by subtilty of serpentine minds, yea, it may be for a season rejected, discountenanced, but it cannot be stamped from the earth. With all its persecutions, gainsayings and everything evil minds can conjecture or array against it, it shall arise again ultimately and shine forth in its true light. Even in this sense truth is above reproach in that it only will stand the acid test of honor and equity.

However divided the opinion of men on this premise of examination of the term truth, what we really wish to pursue is "What is truth?" in a spiritual

sense in relation to God and godliness, and where, oh where can we go for authority for the answer but to the holy scriptures, and to the experience and hearts of the children of God? The holy scriptures are the only infallible rule of faith and practice, hence it is the rule that measures both ways. Measures me while it measures my brethren, and therefore, the scriptures are truth. Hear the blessed Savior saying, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." (the truth.) And again "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." John 14:6. Blessed be his holy name, how great is this truth to every quickened soul, to every heir of promise, to have Christ as he comes unto you in your experience as your personal Savior, as the chiefest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely as your ears are made to hearken and you hear the word (Jesus) behind you (yea, behind you in the unalterable and fixed purposes of Jehovah, in the everlasting love of God) saying, "This is the way, (Jesus) walk ye in it."

He comes experimentally unto his own as the way, (salvation) as the truth, (knowledge of the way) as their life which life promotes action, produces growth in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. Produces and bears fruit in them, the fruit of the spirit, which fruit is love, charity, gentleness, temperance, meekness and humility. Producing in them a godly walk and conversation, causing them to forbear one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Heb. 8:10-12. This law (Jesus) in their hearts, the hope of glory, is their truth, and this truth works experience in them, for it is thus they are tenderly and gently led to know Jesus in the pardon and forgiveness of their sins, for to know God is eternal life. This truth imparted to them by experience of the soul no thief can break through and steal. It shall abide with them while life endures, it shall be their stay when they are called to die.

As proof of the everlasting love of God to his people we read, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." John 1:14. Again in verse 17, "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Again in John 8:32, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The holy scriptures abound with heavenly authority that when Jesus Christ, the love wonder of heaven and earth, comes in, takes up his abode in the hearts of poor trembling sinners, and by the quickening process and power of his divine grace quickens them to life from their dead state in nature's night, raises them from death by the quickening power of his Holy Spirit, he Jesus Christ, is in them as life, in them as their way, in them as the truth. All the truth they will ever know is Jesus, and by reason of this treasure in earthen vessels they, the recipients of his love, have the eyes of their understanding

enlightened, knowledge and instruction is imparted to them by the operation of the Holy Spirit of God as the spirit takes the things of Jesus and opens or reveals unto them. Jesus in them is the substance of all their hope, the beginning and the end of their faith. He is head over all things to the church, his body, the fulness of him which filleth all in all. All praises unto him, how great is this truth? This truth in operation in the heart and souls of his children leads them away from the night of bondage, from the death of law servitude, legalism, away from the six days labor of the law, away from the traditional notions and ideas of men, makes them free in Christ, leads them unto the rest that remaineth unto the children of God.

It is only in lieu of the operation of this truth in the hearts of God's chosen that every false way is exposed, every idle thought is brought to light as standing arrayed against the truth. It is thus, dear saints of God, that we all are tried, are proven and are manifested as whether we be (through the abounding grace of God) branches, living branches, of the vine, Christ. "And of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace." Finally brethren we all must wait upon him for the beginning, operation and growth of this truth in us. To his name be glory, honor and praise both now and for-ever-more Amen. Submitted in love for the cause of Christ. (Elder) H. J. BIRD

Kinwood, Texas

R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: If you deem it worthy of space in the dear old *Signs,* I desire to continue my views on the beast as I see them in Revelation. It is unfortunate that King James, or the authorized version of the Bible, always translates by the same term, "beast." (Rev. 4:6-9.) There are four living beings. Power is the emblem of creation as revealing the glory of God. (Gen. 2:10; Isa. 11:12; Mat. 24:31; Luke 13:29.) They have four faces, the four have six wings and contain part of one or more of four leading animal forms, man, ox, lion and eagle; and especially represent man as the lord of the creation, contrasting in himself the highest creation of God as manifested by the universe of created life. Instead of being angels or spirits that were never embodied, they are in Revelation, emphatically distinguished from all the angels, (Rev. 4:11; 7:11.) and it is plainly set forth in Rev. 5:8-10 and 19:4-5 that the four living beings denote not only men but the same class of man as the twenty-four elders, redeemed men, men endowed with the true spiritual or eternal life who are to live with God and worship him forever.

On the other hand the beast or monster of the book of Revelation represents the everlasting enemies of God who are to be cast into the lake of eternal fire. (Rev. 19:20; 20:16.) As God has his two witnesses so satan or the dragon has his two, the first and the second beasts. (Rev. 13:1-11.) The term beast denotes man severed from God, resting on his own, physical or intellectual strength or material resources, the combination of sensual, lawless God opposing elements. (2 Peter 2:12; 1 Cor. 15:32.)

The first beast rises out of the sea, (Rev. 13:1.) or out of the bottomless pit, (Rev. 17:8.) and has seven heads and ten horns each having a crown upon it and upon his head the name of blasphemy. He has the power and authority of the dragon and makes war upon the saints and over came them, and all the world wonders after the beast and worships it except those whose names are written in the book of life and the Lamb slain from the founda-

tion of the world. (Rev. 13:1-10.) The first beast shows himself to be the direct representative of the dragon who also had seven heads and ten horns, (Rev. 12:13.) and who first in human history assumed the lowest beastly nature, that of the serpent. (Gen. 3.) The first beast represents the world power opposed to God, the seven heads implying the assumption of Godhead, (and carries in turn as the seven spirits of God Rev. 1:4.) and the ten horns implying the whole cycle of worldly opposition to the divine perfections. It is certain the last or seventh is not yet developed from the interpretation of the angel to John, that at least six of these heads have already appeared, (Rev. 17: 10.) and that the sixth was Rome which reigned over the earth while John was living, (Pagan Rome defied her empress and dominated the civilized world, and massacred the saints of God in the fourth century.) the mystery Babylon who rides upon the first beast and is drunken with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus; (Rev. 17:1-8.) the same as the little horn on the fourth beast in Dan. 7, and the man of sin, or son of perdition, described by Paul in 2 Thes. 2 is the chief and last of the false Christ, and false prophets foretold by Christ, (Mat. 24:24.) and of the antichrist foretold by John in his first epistle 2:18. He rises out of the earth, (civilized, peaceful society) and is of the earth, earthy, worshipping earthly idols, Sunday Schools, (and not the God of heaven) it is a beast of all the time notwithstanding that it has two horns like a lamb, appearing mild and innocent yet really having the spirit of the dragon. The beast, false prophets, the mystery of iniquity formed the mystery of godliness, as God manifest in Christ witnessed to by the Spirit.

The dragon personates the Father, assigning his authority to his Son, religious representative of the beast, (as the Father assigns his to his Son) while the false prophet like the Holy Ghost, speaks not for himself, but tells all men to worship the beast and confirms his testimony by miracles. The mark in the right hand and forehead implies the intellect of the beast, or the mark in the forehead shows profession, and in the hand shows work and service for the beast. The mark may be as in the sealing of the saints, not visible, but symbolical. The two horns of the earth beast represent the two phases of idolatry which corrupted the church literal and spiritual, as the woman divinely clothed with the sun, and having the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars, and persecuted by the dragon (Rev. 12.) represents the true church. So the woman humanly arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls and sitting upon the scarlet colored beast, and having upon her forehead the name, "mystery Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth," and drunken with the blood of the saints, represents the false or apostate church with her daughters, whether Roman or Protestant, not having Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom. The name Babylon, given to the head of the image of the world powers in the second chapter of Daniel, is given in Revelation to the harlot. This connects her with the fourth kingdom, Rome, the last part of the image, sitting upon seven mountains or hills, (Rev. 17:9.) and being the city which in John's time reigned over the kings of the earth (Rev. 17:18.) and also proves her to be Rome.

Babylon means confusing and well describes apostate Rome and her daughters, and the confusing noise and blood rolled garments of their many wars

upon the followers of the Lamb, the Prince of Peace. (Isa. 5:6.) But all these persecutions shall stumble and their confusion shall be everlasting. (Jer. 20:11.) The harlot is at last to be deprived of all her carnal possessions, and to be visited with the righteous and eternal judgment of God. (Rev. 18:19.) Regarding the time when all these events shall take place it is altogether uncertain. Christ told his apostles that it was not even for them to know the time or the seasons which the Father has put in his own power, (Acts 1:7.) and that the day and hour of the coming of the son of man was unknown to any man, and to the angels, and even to himself in his humanity, and known only to the Father. (Mark 13:32.) Therefore all his people are to watch, (Mat. 24:32.) that in the latter days many were to run to and fro, knowledge was to be increased, and the book of prophecy was to be sealed only to the time of the end; (Dan. 12:4.) and that as the beginning of the periods are uncertain, although we know the periods themselves, their ends are also uncertain so that Christ's words would still be true.

The destruction of satan's representative, the beast and the false prophets to whom he gave his power, throne and authority, is followed by the binding of satan a thousand years. (Rev. 20:17.) Whether the thousand years of satan's confinement in the bottomless pit mentioned six times are to be before or after the second advent of Christ does not very plainly appear from the scriptures as the Old Testament scriptures predicted the first coming of Christ, not only spiritually but literally personally and visibly. So in the most unmistakable language, do the New Testament scriptures foretell his second coming. (Acts 3:20-21; Mat. 16:27; Mark 8:38.) So the Old Testament prophecies predicting this kingdom must refer to the present dispensation of grace, and not to a future reign of Christ on earth in person among men in the flesh, and that the church is to be complete at his coming. (1 Thes. 3:13; 2 Thes. 1:10.) That Christ has in reserve for his church a period of universal expansion and of spiritual prosperity, when the spirit and character of the noble army of martyrs shall be reproduced again in the great body of God's people in a measure, (as Elias is said to have lived again in John the Baptist) and when these martyrs shall, in the general triumph of their case and in the overthrow of their enemies receive judgment over their foes and reign in the earth, while the party of satan call the rest of the dead, shall not flourish again until the thousand years be ended when it shall prevail again for a little season. The same figure, that of life from the dead, is frequently used in the scriptures to express the idea of the scriptural revival of the church. (Isa. 26:19; Ezk. 37:12-14; Rom. 11:15; Rev. 11:11.)

The scriptures both of the Old and New Testaments clearly reveal that the gospel is to exercise an influence over all of the human family which end is to be gradually brought about by the Spirit of Christ in the present dispensation. (Mat. 13:31-32; 28:19-20; Isa. 2:2-3; Zech. 9:10; Rev. 11:5.) The period of this general prevalency of the gospel will continue a thousand years, and is designated the millennium. (Rev. 20:27.) At the end of these thousand years and before the coming of Christ there will be a short season of violent conflict between the kingdoms of light and darkness. (Luke 17:26-30; 2 Peter 3:3-4; Rev. 20:7-9.) Christ's advent and the general resurrection and judgment will follow the conflict, and a new and higher order of things adopted to the resurrected bodies of the saints, (Dan. 12:

1-3; John 5:28-29; 1 Cor. 15-23; Rev. 20:11-15; Rev. 21:1.) The time, place and duration of the momentous scene has not been revealed to mortals. Christ the mediator between God and man, the Savior of sinners, he who loved and gave himself for his chosen people, embraces every truly humble soul, is to be the judged. (Mat. 25:31-32; Acts 10:42; Rom. 14:10; Phil. 2:10.) The persons to be judged are men and angels. (Eccl. 12:14; Psalm 1:4; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:12.) The saints will be there, not to have their portion assigned for that was fixed long before, (Mat. 25:34; Eph. 1:3-4; John 5:24.) but to have it confirmed forever. The books that are to be opened are: the book of the law, (Gal. 3:10.) the book of conscience, (Rom. 2:15-16.) and besides these another most precious book, the book of God's fatherly remembrance, (Mal. 3:16-18; 4:1-3.) which is the same Lamb's book of life; (Rev. 13:8; 20:12-15; 21:27.) a book containing the names of all those redeemed to God by the blood of the Lamb out of every kindred and tongue and nation. (Rev. 5:9-10; 10:5-6; 17:14.) Their names being written therein not for their works but for Christ's work in them. The saints are justified freely by God's grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, (Rom. 3:24.) or justified by faith, the gift of God, acquitted by the free mercy of God with humility, feeling their own utter unworthiness. The saints are shown to be the children of God by their divinely inspired deeds of mercy to his people. (Mat. 25:34-40.) True faith worketh by love which is the fulfilling of the law, and the proof that we have passed from death unto life, and are the justified children of God. (Gal. 5:6; 6:1; Rom. 3:24-26.) As for their sins, while they themselves can never forget them, and can never cease to be deeply grateful to him who loved them and washed them from their sins in his own blood, (Rev. 1-5) their covenant God has long since promised not only to forgive but to remember their sins no more, (Jer 31:37.) being thus freely justified by his grace in the light of the great white throne.

(Elder) B. B. WALSTON

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215 Colborne St., London, Ontario
July 28, 1948

DEAR ELDER RUSTON: I do not know whether I shall be working on Sunday or not, so thought I better write you in case I am. The journey to Hopewell was one that I shall long remember. It was most enjoyable and I feel I was greatly favored. The Hopewell Association was beautiful to me and lingers in my mind with much sweetness. I was so glad I got to New York, too, and enjoyed meeting with them on Sunday, the preaching was so good. I felt it a privilege to have been with the Secor girls so much. They are delightful girls and were most kind to me.

Ever since the Ekfrid meeting I have felt I wanted to write to you, but did not seem able to do so. I have been down to the depths and have had much anguish of soul at times. On Monday at Ekfrid I felt I just had to talk to you, and after doing so I seemed to have quite a peace of mind, but the next day and so much of the time since I have been in such distress of mind. I have felt that probably I should not have spoken to you and yet underneath it all I could not be sorry. Sometimes the thought of asking for a home in the church seems so impossible that it frightens me, and yet I feel I do not want to turn back, or look back, like Lot's wife. One morning not long ago I awakened early and read. I came across the verse which seemed sweet to me, "I will go in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of thy

righteousness, even of thine only." Truly there is no other righteousness. If only he will go with me—that seems to be my fear. I have heard of the tradition that when a bride and groom enter their home, the groom picks up his bride and carries her over the doorstep and places her in their home, but never thought much about it, but since thinking about a home in the church I have longed that He might take me in His arms and carry me over the threshold (baptism) of the church militant and place me in His home. It would be the lovliest home I could be given in this world. The constant cry of my heart for years has been that I might walk in and out among them with wisdom and understanding continuously; that I might first seek the kingdom of heaven and his righteousness. I long so much for humility and charity.

"In thy fair book of life and grace,
O may I find my name
Recorded in some humble place,
Beneath my Lord the Lamb!"

It seemed as if I had been almost rebellious about wanting to go, so much so that it worried me. I felt I should feel to say, "Thy will be done," when it came into my mind with much sweetness and comfort that Jacob, when he wrestled with the angel said, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." That is just how I feel. I hope it is the angel who is wrestling with me. If it is, all is well.

The Lobo meetings are not far distant and I hope if it is his will when the time comes I shall feel to go. Tonight I have more of a peace of mind about it. It has been sweet to me about Peter. Matt. 14:25-31. In the 22nd verse it says, Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and Jesus went up into a mountain to pray, and the ship was in the midst of the sea tossed with waves for the wind was contrary; and Jesus went unto them walking and the disciples were troubled, but Jesus said, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." Peter asked that he bid him come to him on the water and He said "Come." Peter walked on the water but when he saw the wind boisterous he was afraid and began to sink and cried to the Lord. Jesus stretched forth his hand caught him and said, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?", I hope ere long that I can look back and say, wherefore did I doubt? These words are in my mind, too, "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price."

About Christmas time, when I first felt the desire in my mind that I wanted to be baptized in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and to take of the bread and the wine instituted by Jesus himself, a feeling of such unworthiness seemed to come over me, and I felt I was barred right there and then, and I had such sadness of heart. I came across a verse in the *Signs,* "Let not conscience make you linger, nor of fitness fondly dream; All the fitness he requireth is to feel your need of Him," and it comforted me. Then again in Elder Gilbert Beebe's book I read, "He takes the fools and makes them know the mysteries of his grace; to bring aspiring wisdom low, and all its pride abase," and that greatly comforted me. But as I thought along I believe I was made to fully realize that we are but empty vessels, and if we are indeed His, we are given a new name, "The Lord our righteousness." It was wonderful to me, (I had not thought of it before) when Elder Dodson in his editorial in the May *Signs* spoke of how in His humility His judgment was taken from Him, and then you mentioned it to me again at Ekfrid, and we must leave it to the judgment

of the church. When you said I was needed in the church it frightened me. I remember Elder Floyd Adams in his article on the Book of Ruth ended in saying that He will supply all our need and that our need is Him. I remember when any of the dear old members passed away I would get panicky and think what are we going to do without all these wise people until Mrs. (Deacon) Dan Campbell passed away. I felt the same way but the thought came into my mind, "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth." These people were wise just because God gave them wisdom, and if it were his will he could give it to others. He can give or he can withhold. Solomon was wise because God said he would give him wisdom and that is the only way any of us can ever be wise, and I have not worried any more.

A few months ago, when thinking about asking for a home, the words came into my mind with power, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." I hope he has. Just before the May meeting the words came into my mind, Wait, wait on the Lord, to wait and see his purpose and plan in the matter. When I first began to think about it and felt so much—how can it be? I opened the Bible at the words, "I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there anything too hard for me?" I had to confess there was not. I have had such a wonderful time this last three or four years reading and meditating—just alone—a depth of sweetness that no one knew anything about. Several days before going to Hopewell the words were in my mind so much, "Thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly." I seemed to have the mind to go to Hopewell this year. Elder Vaughn had wanted me to go for a long time. Yet in thinking about going I had such fear and trembling—fearful that I would not be given, while there, the right frame of mind——the Spirit of Him that is so necessary in mingling with his dear people for "good."

I sincerely hope that in all these things I am not deceived or deceiving others. Wasn't it Joshua that the angel ministered to and the Devil stood by to resist him? I have thought so much about Kathryn Campbell. Her face seemed to be set right from the start. She never wanted to look back—she looked forward all the time. I seem so indefinite and full of fears. Kathryn did not have a lot so far as a long outdrawn experience was concerned, but I feel she had much. The power of God was manifest! Like Paul, "I had rather speak five words with my understanding*****than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." The day Kathryn and her mother were baptized was one of the sweetest days I ever spent. I felt a greater than Solomon was there, and Kathryn's face shown like an angel's, but we cannot all have the same experience. If only I can say with Eli, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good." I hope this letter will give you some idea of how I stand. Love to Mrs. Ruston. Sincerely,

(Miss) BECKIE McLACHLIN

August 26, 1948

DEAR ELDER RUSTON: Tonight I wish that nobody knew what is in my mind about asking for a home in the church. To be truthful I dread the Lobo meetings and just how much nobody knows. I would feel so much better going if no one knew. I fear so much I have raised false expectations—that I will not be given a mind to go at Lobo. I am sorry to be this way and to burden you with my thoughts. Surely there is nothing steadfast about me which makes me question very much whether the desire that has been in my heart is of the

Lord. Tonight my heart is very heavy about the whole thing and it is drawing near to meeting time. God's plans are never changed, and what a mercy! Without him we can do nothing and if it is not of him I would be useless and valueless—just dead wood.

For a few days after I wrote you I seemed more peaceful but was soon plunged down again. Your letter was most comforting! I was so glad to get it. Mrs. Ruston's note was sweet and I appreciated her writing me. I realize how much that promise must have meant and does mean to you, "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children," and "he is faithful that promised." Not one that he has planned to bring in will ever be left out, and each will come at his appointed time; whether I am one or not, God knows. For a long time before Christmas the words were in my mind, "The Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard," and since going through the trials this summer my mind has gone back to that. I hope it is He! One night about a week ago I was in such distress of mind. I thought I cannot go to Lobo, I just cannot. I cannot go and face it and not have the mind to go. The next morning I opened the Bible at the words, "What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out." For a few days I had peace of mind. Yes, "What a word is this!" But again tonight I am down. The good Book says, "He placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." I feel there is just such a protection around the militant church, and those and those only whom he has chosen will ever be taken there. How favored are those who are there! I have thought that so much of late. Paul says, "Let your requests be made known unto God," and that is all I can do—wait on him. It was sweet to find these words the other night.

Were it not for the seeming bits of comfort I have received along the way this summer I do not believe I could have stood it. I hope sincerely that I am not claiming something that actually does not exist, thereby deceiving myself and others. God forbid! The other night I came off duty and while preparing for bed I was crying unto the Lord, and before retiring I opened the hymn book at hymn 714, Beebe's Collection. It was so wonderful to me that I memorized it. It just seemed to be for me. I will quote it:

"Pensive, doubting, fearful heart.
Hear what Christ the Saviour says;
Every word should joy impart—
Change thy mourning into praise.
Yes, he speaks, and speaks to thee;
May he help thee to believe;
Then thou presently wilt see,
Thou hast little cause to grieve:

Fear thou not, nor be ashamed;
All thy sorrows soon shall end;
I, who heaven and earth have framed,
Am thy husband and thy friend:
I, the High and Holy One,
Israel's God, by all adored,
As thy Saviour will be known,
Thy Redeemer and thy Lord.

For a moment I withdrew,
And thy heart was filled with pain,
But my mercies I'll renew;
Thou shalt soon rejoice again:
Though I seem to hide my face,
Very soon my wrath shall cease;
'Tis but for a moment's space,
Ending in eternal peace!

Though afflicted, tempest tossed,
Comfortless awhile thou art,
Do not think thou canst be lost;
Thou art graven on my heart;
All thy wastes I will repair—
Thou shalt be rebuilt anew;
And in thee it shall appear
What the God of love can do."

I do not remember ever reading it before and it was very comforting to me. A couple of weeks ago these words, too, were very sweet, "And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers: And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." Truly I seem to have turned to the right and the left.

I have thought so much about Elder Spangler since going through this experience, remembering his article in the *Signs*. He said he wanted to preach but felt he could not and for months had such anguish of soul. Not that I would dare to compare my experience with that of a minister, but I feel I do understand in a small measure what he went through. He also said, "If there is any one who knows there is a tarrying until the Lord's time it is us." I have thought of late so many times, with hope, of the experience I had of waking up out of a sound sleep in the middle of the night four or five months ago, and simultaneously with my waking up feeling an inrushing of the power of God that filled my very being, that he was working his sovereign will in all things, not only in my life which seemed so certain in my experience, but that his plans and purposes embraced all organizations of men. What a wonderful half hour or so I spent in sweet meditation and then I dropped back to sleep again. I am sorry to still be so indefinite. I do truly hope that it is the angel who is wrestling with me and that I will be given a new name. I was reading where it says, "For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel." Truly it is in the new creature that he is glorified, there is nothing left of self. The mighty One of Israel said, "I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy sin.*****Afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city." In that excellent article of Elder Vaughn's from Zechariah, "And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; (how good that they are not only cut off, but they die—creature efforts and carnal wisdom) but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God. How good that he hears.

"The foolish, the fearful, the weak are my care,
The helpless, the hopeless, I hear their sad prayer;
I feel at my heart all thy sighs and thy groans,
For thou art most near me, my flesh and my bones;
In all thy distresses, thy head feels the pain,
Yet all are most needful, not one is in vain."

I do not know whether I am going to be able to be out to meeting Sunday or not. My patient may go home, but it is more likely that he will not be going until the middle of next week. I was sorry to have missed all the meetings this summer. Mrs. Jones was telling me that you spoke about the five porches and two pools the first Sunday and that she did not know when she had heard anything she enjoyed so much. I was sorry to have missed it. I would like very much to have that article to read on Peter to which you referred with reference to my letter.

It was wonderful when you said you were not surprised to learn from my

letter that I had been down in the depths since Ekfrid meeting, that seldom does anyone come to the place where they feel they must speak without being subjected to Satan's rage, mingled with doubts and fears. I hope I am not deceiving myself and others. Please throw the mantle of charity over this letter. It is as I stand. I shared your letters with Flo I thought they might be a comfort to her. She enjoyed them so much. Love to Mrs. Ruston. Hope she is feeling better. Sincerely,

(Miss) BECKIE McLACHLIN

September 19, 1948

DEAR ELDER RUSTON: When I came home from Lobo, and since, I have wept and sobbed with joy and thankfulness. I felt if I had to return from Lobo as I did from Ekfrid I would be broken hearted; And oh how I dreaded the Lobo meetings lest it would be just that way, but the joy, peace and happiness I experienced at Lobo and since coming home words fail to express, but how good that a hint to the wise is sufficient. God said he would open rivers in high places and it truly was a high place to me. I felt I knew something of how Simeon felt when he took the Christ child in his arms and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation." I cried unto the Lord and I feel I can say he heard my cries. Like the lepers who stood "afar off" and cried *with a loud voice* for mercy continuously, and the Lord heard them and had compassion on them and healed them. They had that loathsome, incurable disease, and well they knew that Jesus alone could heal them so they cried with a loud voice continuously.

I remember when I was a little girl coming home from school one day, mother was out. I sat in the living room alone. I seemed all closed in and hedged about. The heavens were like brass above me, when the words came, "I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron." I feel he has done that very thing. Then, too, the chapter was very precious to me. "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly." I feel indeed that the desert has blossomed as the rose. It has blossomed abundantly!

On Saturday morning I knew I was all closed up and felt oh so empty, but I could not go out. I felt I will have to go! It was as if a still small voice behind me said, "This is the way, walk ye in it." A day or so before the meeting I thought, I believe I will have to go and if I perish, I perish. Then your letter came in which you said you hoped that regardless of my frame of mind, or whatever doubts and fears prevailed that I would feel like Esther to go, and if I perish, I perish. After making my few scant remarks to the church, I felt to hang my head and await the verdict. But instead of death it was life—the golden sceptre was held out to me, and oh how wonderful to me was the joy, fellowship and love that was shown me. Instead of my distress of mind a beautiful peace possessed me. With this new joy I lost sight of the fear I had of baptism, the awful fear that He would not be with me. On Saturday afternoon you and Elder Wood spoke of your experience and it was very lovely. Sunday morning I awakened so peaceful and thoroughly enjoyed the preaching. When you announced that there was to be believers baptism after lunch my heart rejoiced that I was to be the favored one, but at lunch time for a short period I felt a little perturbed, but when I was preparing for the baptism and at the water's edge I was very

calm and composed. Yet there was a cry in my heart that He would be with me. I was so glad when you gave out the 54th paraphrase to be sung, "I'm not ashamed to own my Lord" for indeed I was so fearful for so long that He would not own me. I was oh so happy that I was having that blessed privilege. Never will I forget the picture, as we drove into the field, of the people standing on the banks waiting. The day was so beautiful, the water looked lovely and a wonderful peace seemed to permeate throughout. When I stepped into the water I was perfectly peaceful and happy. When you said to me "when the time comes I want you to give yourself up to me" I could not help smiling happily back saying, "yes." I was glad to be buried in that liquid grave—dead to all legal worship, raised, I hope, to newness of life (grace) and given a new name, "The Lord our righteousness" thus confessing it to men.

The Bible tells us believer's baptism is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but an answer of a good conscience to God, and the only good conscience I know anything about is a conscience free of self-righteousness, all carnal wisdom and creature efforts, alive unto Christ. As Elder Durand said, "When we know the Lord Jesus Christ, we no more do our own works, or speak our own words." How true! As Elder Lefferts said in his sermon at Hopewell Friday morning the first half of the 119th Psalm dwells on the law and testimonies, and then the surety (Jesus) comes in, wiping out forever all these things. "Be surety for thy servant for good."

My baptism was and is wonderful to me. For a short space of time, just before you put me under the water, my mind seemed to be taken out of this world; and how happy I was afterwards. The communion was beautifully sacred to me. When I heard you telling Deacon, Sam Campbell, that you would like it if they would have the communion after the afternoon service instead of the morning my heart leaped for joy. In the breaking of bread as you talked along so sweetly I seemed to be carried out of the world. I could say with the poet:

"O! the rapturous hight
Of that holy delight,
Which I felt in the life-giving blood!
Of my Saviour possessed,
I was perfectly blessed,
Overwhelmed with the fullness of God.

What a mercy is this,
What a heaven of bliss!
How unspeakably favored am I!
Gathered into the fold,
With believers enrolled,
With believers to live and to die!

Now, my remnant of days
Would I spend to his praise,
Who hath died my poor soul to redeem;
Whether many or few,
All my years are his due,
May they all be devoted to him."

Already I find myself longing that all those who love his appearing might have their minds stirred up and be made willing to enter in and partake of this wonderful joy, but how true are Elder Spangler's words, "There is a tarrying until the Lord delivers," and in the same article I believe he said, "A man's gift maketh room for him." He will cause his glorious voice to be heard, and he is mighty to the tearing down of strongholds.

I want you to know that you have been a great comfort to me. I am glad you have been given a love for us and a willing mind to labor among us. What a wonderful provision God has made for his people. And verily they shall be fed, He said. It was beautiful to me when you said you prayed to be given

a word in season for his weary child, and how necessary that it be in season like the two silver trumpets you spoke so beautifully about. Yes, it must be "grace for grace." It was sweet to me the way you spoke about my coming to the church as a child who had been very restless, and then taken into its mother's arms and was quiet, peaceful and happy. On the way to Hopewell you burst forth singing:

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head."

I did not say anything, but it touched me very deeply. At the time my mind was exercised about going to the church and there was such a dread surrounding me, and I thought could it be that the clouds I so much dreaded were filled with mercy and would break in blessings on my head. The day I left New York (I was much distressed in my mind) I was riding in a taxi to the Bus Station (Gertrude was with me) and the words dropped into my mind with much power and assurance, "The clouds ye so much dread are big with mercy, and shall break in blessings on your head." I surely feel they have. He is faithful who promised! Truly I feel he did carry me in his arms over the threshold and place me in his home.

I had a letter from Flo and evidently she was impressed as was I with the picture as we drove into the field. She said, "Never will I forget that picture of the people standing at the baptismal waters, waiting for the candidate, and then your baptism." She was down in the depths all through the meetings. It was not a pleasant place to be at the time, but I feel she will go back and eat honey from it. She is in good hands I feel. I was so glad to have her with me all through the meetings. She was most faithful. I do hope ere long that I shall have the joy of standing by her as she stood by me.

With reference to sending my letters to the *Signs* which I wrote you this summer, I shall leave it to your judgment. I still remember your sermon in Hopewell Thursday morning to bring your tithes to the storehouse. The next day as Elder Wood said good-bye to me he said he hoped I would remember what my Pastor said to me. I am on the mountain top now, but I know from past experience I shall have to come down but we are told, "As thy days thy strength shall be." I felt I wanted to write you a few of my thoughts and feelings while in Lobo and since coming home. I hope I haven't wearied you. I do hope so much that Mrs. Ruston is rested and sincerely pray that it will be her portion to enjoy her usual good health soon. Give her my love. Yours in precious hope.

(Miss) BECKIE McLACHLIN

(The three foregoing letters were sent to us by Elder George Ruston for publication in the **Signs.** Ed.)

Box 387, Damariscotta, Me.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Always after receiving one of your letters I have such a feeling of guilt and unworthiness for causing you the bother of answering a letter I have written so full of my own tribulations, which seems to be the only way I can tell you of the Lord's dealings with me. Still your last letter made me thankful to God that I could have a part of one of your sermons to comfort me.. As you said we are made to ponder and remember all the way the Lord leads us, and if he humbles us it is good for us. I know so well how good it is for me. It seems that is when I rejoice most when I am truly humbled. Then I can see everything so clearly and am willing to sit at His feet and marvel at all the wondrous

ways that I have been taught.

I was thinking of Association this morning. It has been a landmark for me ever since I can remember. As a child it was my very best good time for the year. So many of the older members were my "aunts and uncles" and I was quite as happy to see them and visit among them as among my own blood aunts and uncles.

But as I read one of aunt Attie Curtis' letters to Elder Beebe written in 1902 I wished I could have understood her when she was alive as well as I did the good thoughts in that old letter. Instead I was just a child who loved all those older ones because they meant so much to my family and loved everything that my family loved. I was just a good little girl who came among them. I was happy and contented then to think that every one thought that of me. I was obedient to my parents and polite to others. As I look back on those days I know that I was not puffed up over being a good girl but I just had not been shown the weakness of my nature.

I enjoyed the conference meetings because there seemed to be so much love among them but when some were overpowered with tears I used to wonder why. I could not see why any one so good as most of the members were needed to cry when they spoke of God's goodness and mercy. How well I know why now that overpowering humility that comes over me when I am shown clearly just what God has done for me. It seemed so hard at first when I had to see myself just as I was. Then my mind was such a jumble I would ask myself over and over what I had done to change from a good girl to such a weak, useless mortal as I was becoming. For a few years the Associations brought much comfort to me while the ministers were speaking because they told much that I could say yes to, but when I had to be among the members I felt so small and hypocritical to sit among them. I knew that I believed as they did but why could I not be like them. I did not understand then that I had not changed any from what I was as a girl only I had been given a spiritual glimpse of my poor mortal self. So many times now I will wonder how I did some decent thing with such a weak nature and I realize that it was all God. Some one was laughing about grandmother asking God to make it easy for her to get out of a brush pile. It did seem funny naturally, but I have known the time when I have had to ask for strength to walk across a room and would thank God with all my heart when I had done just that. The smallest deed cannot be done without Him, but what comfort it brings to know that he is behind all things because there is no small or large thing without him and he changes not.

Aunt Attie's letter and one or two others in that old *Signs,* published in 1902 did not seem old but as new as your letter written in June. They made me think of the old Associations when Aunt Attie sat in the front pew. I can see so many of them that have gone, but the beauty of it is that the same truths are coming to us still even though the years have passed and taken many with them that could vouch for the grace of God.

The thought of Association makes me lonely this year because I doubt very much if I can be there but I shall be thinking of you all. It does not seem possible that I will not be there because it was always something to look forward to and back to, and now it grows to mean more every year when the good preaching comes to us so little. I hope this finds you and yours

well and that you will be at the Association. Yours in the hope of Christ.

(Mrs.) RUTH CLARK

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379 Sinclair Ave., Atlanta, Ga.

DEAR BROTHER BYRD: One of the brethren at East Atlanta Church has handed me several editions of the *Signs of the Times* for which I thank God I am now engaged in reading. I have read yours as published in the Feb. 1948 issue. "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." I have read this letter the second time, and if I have ever had an experience of God's grace, which I hope to have had, I find such to be in complete harmony with all that you have said.

You mentioned the sudden death of your wife on April 9, 1946 after you had planned your next day's activities. On Jan. 3, 1946 my wife and I, who had lived together fifty-two years retired at 11 P.M. after turning off the radio, the President had just finished a nation-wide broadcast. We were living fifteen miles out of the city at that time and were to come in to the city the next day. When I arose at 6:30 on the morning of the 4th God had removed her spirit and left her body apparently asleep. Some of my children and grandchildren were with me when I called. Involuntarily these words poured from my heart and tongue, O Lord, thy will be done. For some months I was as a child who had lost a mother. She was not only a sweet wife but she had the characteristics of a mother. Several months after her death I was living alone. I had prayed to God and admitted my unworthiness to even mention his name, as I was too vile a sinner. Some time after midnight my wife appeared to me in a dream. She was standing on the most elevated spot in my back yard under the limbs of a large, oak tree. She called my name. "Victor keep your faith in God." I saw her clearly, her voice was natural and sweet. After calling my name she spoke but few words and vanished.

Brother Byrd, I am uneducated and ashamed of the general appearance of this letter, but I regard you as being a man of scholarly attainments and full of understanding of such poor sinners as I know myself to be. Above all else I thank God for the grace he has given you. Even my brief acquaintance with you convinces me of your charity. Your letters which I have read in the *Signs* also convince me that you are one of those whom the dear Lord Jesus Christ had in view when on the night of his crucifixion he said, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." Jesus did not say for those who will believe on me, or accept me, but for them who shall believe on me. All true Primitive Baptists have been taught of God and have experienced the truth of the words of Jeremiah. Jesus continues to send his Spirit into their hearts. He promised to send the Comforter and has not been slack concerning that promise. Our carnal mind often ponders the fact that it is now nearly two thousand years since the Lord's ascension to his Father's throne, but the Holy Spirit voids all divisions of time. A thousand years are as one day and a day as a thousand years. Time is no more with God's enlightened people, it is one eternal now. Jesus told the Jews, "Before Abraham was, I am."

Brother Byrd, pardon my ignorance and weakness. I cannot teach you for I need to be taught of such as you. I have tried to give you some of what I hope is a taste of God's graciousness to a sinner. Yours in hope of eternal life.

E. VICTOR LASSETER

Forest Hill, La.

ELDER DODSON: Find enclosed $5 to help with expenses. I feel better to put in my little mite so use it as you see fit. I have had eighty-nine birthdays. I cannot see to read the *Signs of the Times* but my daughter reads to me. I can see but very little. I surely do believe what the *Signs* sets forth. We read in Hebrews, "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." The apostle Paul says, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Now I think of a certain scripture. "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Now brethren it seems to me to work out your own salvation is to get rid of it and stay rid of it. If I am wrong will some brother please correct me. Your brother in hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Elder) J. J. MUSGROVE

Marlow, Oklahoma

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD: In writing you this evening will say the *Signs of the Times* is the best Baptist paper published, it has more sound doctrine than any other paper. We surely enjoy reading it. I read it to my father who lacks one month and five days of being 102 years old. He has been a member of the church since 1887, and his hope and faith is solid as a rock in the Baptist doctrine. He is very feeble, eyesight almost gone but health good. The most peaceable person I ever saw, gives no one an angry word.

I am enclosing remittance to have the *Signs* sent to my cousin in California. Like myself he never gets to hear preaching by the Baptists and I hope the paper will be as much joy and comfort to him as it is to us.

Some time when not crowded for time and you have a mind I still want you to give your views in the *Signs* on Romans 9:18. That is a wonderful chapter and every word Old Baptist doctrine. May the Lord bless you and yours, and keep you long on earth to comfort the poor and weak. Pray for us when it goes well with you. Your little sister in hope.

(Mrs.) FORREST JONES

(*See Editorial in this issue.*)

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Miss M. Dunlap, Me., $3; W. S. Chilton, Ky., $1; J. R. Claunch, Tex., $1; T. D. Dodson, Va., $1; Mrs. T. H. McColl, Can., $3; Mrs. L. C. Campbell, Tenn., $1; Miss G. Secor, N. Y., $1; Eld. W. A. Little, Tex., $2; G. Davis, Ala., $3; Mrs. M. Finch, N. Y., $3; S. W. Heitmuller, Va., $2; J. N. Wageonheiser, N. Y., $1; C. W. Edwards, Ala., $6; Mrs. S. L. Taylor, Pa., $2; J. C. Beard, Tex., $3; L. Setliff, Va., $1; D. H. Bradley, Tex., $8; Mrs. L. K. Foster, Tex., $5; Mrs. D. S. Reid, N. C., $3; L. C. Spikes, Ore., $1; G. S. Weider, Va., $2; Mrs. G. Duke, N. C., $2; Mrs. E. Hodgins, Can., $2; J. P. Champion, Tex., $2; Mrs. C. E. Tacey, N. J., $3; Mrs. P. I. Froude, Mich., $2; A. Mariner, Va., $7; Mrs. E. M. Werner, N. J., $2; J. L. Turner, Tex., $1; Mrs. E. H. West, N. Y., $2; Miss C. M. Duffus, B. C., $2; Eld. H. M. Bennett, Md., $3; G. M. Varnes, Pa., $2.

BOOK WANTED

The undersigned would like to buy a copy of "The Resurrection" by David Bartley. Any one having a copy to spare please communicate with Mrs. J. W. TAYLOR, 604 Lexington Road, Pleasant Hill, Mo.

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EDITORIAL

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Acts 20:28.

Paul had called all the elders of the church at Ephesus together to give them his last instructions before he took his departure to Jerusalem. He was aware that he would not see all of them again face-to-face so he was burdened of the Spirit to exhort them with spiritual instructions. He was prompted of the Spirit to warn them of the trials and persecutions that lay in store for them. He must also tell them that even some of them would rise up speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. In Acts 20:17-35 is recorded the full text of Paul's words to the elders of Ephesus in that meeting at that time. As these were appropriate words spoken to the elders of the church by Paul at that time of strife and confusion that was beginning to be made manifest in the church at that time, I believe they are just as appropriate to the elders of the church in this country at this time. This same exhortation and instruction is necessary to the elders for the welfare of Zion today. When Elders are blessed to obey these instructions Zion is not troubled. When elders take *heed* unto other elders to watch them and take a great interest in other *flocks* to dictate to them to the extent of not being mindful of their own condition nor the flock of their pastorate, Zion is troubled.

Paul said to the elders at Ephesus, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves." He said unto Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself." 1 Tim. 4:16. Just before he said this to Timothy he had enumerated some of the things Timothy was to watch concerning himself. He told Timothy, "Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." I am persuaded that elders will have plenty to occupy their minds and time to take cognizance of their walk and conversation without meddling into the affairs and critically watching the walks of others. Paul further added, "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all." I am quoting to you some of the things that daily confront me. Is my conversation Godly? Am I charitable to my fellow man? Do I manifest an humble or proud spirit? Do I believe in God's promises or do I just say I do? Do I realize the exceeding sinfulness and vileness of my sins or do I just take them for granted justifying myself because of my weakness? Do I seek those things that are pure and from above or do I mind earthly things? Do I desire to live more Godly and think more upon spiritual things or am I satisfied with my activities and thoughts as they

are? Do I read the Bible and writings of the saints of God as much as I ought or am I satisfied with the puny knowledge that I now have? Do I exhort when I feel impressed to do so or am I afraid I will be dubbed as a Conditionalist if I speak anything pertaining to duty and righteous living in this life? Do I speak the words that are well-pleasing to God or am I seeking to please men? Do I press toward the mark of the prize of the high-calling in Christ Jesus or am I content to drift along the path of least resistance? All these questions and many more come into my mind daily to condemn me which causes me to cry unto my God for his amazing grace to sustain me and keep me from falling!

Paul told Timothy to "neglect not the gift that is in thee." May I say to the elders of the church of this time that God hath wondrously blessed you with a precious gift that has been so recognized by the church that you were brought under the hands of a presbytery and ordained to the officeship of an elder as a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ. Shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness. Paul says if a man purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work. Flee also youthful lusts; but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace with them that call upon the Lord out of a pure heart. How carefully we ought to conduct ourselves as we sojourn here in this unfriendly world. This gift is sacred; our ordination is no light thing; and the confidence our brethren have in us as being vessels of honor is precious. The doctrine we are blessed to preach is God-honoring. Are our acts and conversation God-honoring? I am persuaded that if our acts and conversation in everyday living are lustful and ungodly; our preaching is hypocritical and vain. Your words from the pulpit may be in accord with the words spoken by the inspired writers and speakers, but if your life does not manifest the fruit of the Spirit, what evidence do brethren have that you have experienced the grace of God in your heart?

When brethren have so much confidence in the operation of God's Holy Spirit in your heart that they receive you into their fellowship embracing you in that precious faith; and, that confidence mounts higher to the extent of calling for your ordination as a minister of Jesus Christ; and, then you betray that confidence by ungodly conversation and lustful living how great is their grief and hurt! It were better that a millstone be hanged about your neck and you drowned in the sea than to offend these little ones! May God give us grace to neglect not the gift that is in us and to enable us by his Spirit to take heed unto ourselves. May he enable us to watch our deportment and to profit by our mistakes.

Paul further adds: "And to all the flock." One who is called to the officeship of an elder is instructed to take heed unto all the trophy of his grace. A true elder has the interest of the lambs as well as the sheep in mind. He is tender and patient in his dealings with them for fear of wounding one of the little lambs. He is just as anxious for the welfare of the insignificant and timid ones as he is of the bolder and more prominent ones. He does not devote his time and attention to just a few to the exclusion of others, but watches over the entire flock to shield each and every one of them. He is not to take heed to another outside of his jurisdiction. He is not to consider the goats to please them nor to score them, but his interest is to be confined to the

flock. I do not believe that a God-called elder has any time to waste outside of the flock *skinning goats* or petting them. May God enable us to stay within our calling being attentive to all the flock.

"OVER THE WHICH THE HOLY GHOST HATH MADE THEE OVERSEERS." Elders do not fill this place upon their own volition. They have not fitted themselves for this place by their own activities. Others have not called them into this noble position. Schools of men have not prepared them as overseers. The Holy Ghost is the agency that God has used in making them overseers of the flock. True elders are ordained by the Holy Ghost and this ordination is assented to by the laying on of the hands of a presbytery. This officeship was given you by the Holy Ghost. No man or group of men is able to ordain one to such a high position. No school or university is able to qualify one and place him in such high position. If this position is given us by virtue of the Holy Ghost what a high and exalted calling it is! I am persuaded that the position of elder in the church is much more to be coveted than that of the officeship of President of the United States. People may elect presidents but it requires the election of God for a person to serve as a true elder. How thankful we ought to be that God has chosen us to this high and exalted position to be counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake!

"TO FEED THE CHURCH OF GOD." We are not left to guess or speculate upon the purposes of elders or to the extent of their work. Paul is very specific in this. We are not to dabble with anything or anyone outside the church of God under the cloak of an elder. I think it is unbecoming for elders to use the cloak of a minister of the Lord to gain worldly gain or to pursue some political venture. They are not to preach to the world for the world will not hear them. They are not to bring sheep into the fold for that is the work of Christ. They are not to add them to the church for that is the work of the Lord. They are to feed the church of God. They are not to prepare the food for that is the work of Wisdom. Yes, they are to read and study but not to think what they shall say for it is given them by the Holy Spirit in the selfsame hour that it becomes them to speak. As all the writing of the saints, as recorded in the Bible, were addressed to God's children or the church, so all the preaching and writing of the elders should be addressed to the children of God or to the church of God. I do not believe this church of God under consideration is any organization in its entirety, that it is visible here in this world to the exclusion of all outside the visible organization; but I do believe this church to be the invisible, complete kingdom of Jesus Christ including all the children of God. I believe many members of this church are not members of any organization here upon this earth. I do not believe that all of the members of any organization here upon this earth as the organized church are members of this church that Paul had under consideration as he defines it in the remaining words of our text.

"WHICH HE HATH PURCHASED WITH HIS OWN BLOOD." All for whom Christ died are members of this church under consideration. Your efforts nor the efforts of any other ordained elder has added any one or excluded any one from this church that Christ purchased with his blood. Christ did not try to purchase the whole adamic world but he did purchase the church. God's called elders preach the efficacy of the blood of Jesus Christ in atoning for all the sins of all the members of this church. The doctrine of Christ includes limited

atonement and special redemption with efficacious grace being applied continuously to the objects of his grace until the complete and ultimate salvation shall have been experienced by each and every member of this church. What great price was paid for your redemption—my sins and your sins—if we be members of that church, caused the Holy One to suffer, bleed and die on calvary's tree that we might be freed from sin! If Christ suffered, was forsaken and died for us, is it a great thing that we should suffer persecutions here in this world? If Christ devoted his entire life to the service of others and was not even provided with a place to lay his head—as were the foxes and birds—is it a great thing that we should devote some time to the service of others, and not be blessed with some of the luxuries of this world?

May I conclude this script by stating that I have no apologies to give for the things that I have written in this epistle as I have been somewhat burdened along this line of thought. I have no person or persons in mind to profit from this other than myself. I stand condemned and guilty of treating the officeship of elder very lightly. I have been so concerned over my unconcernedness of late that I am made daily to cry to God for mercy. I have written this in the fear of God and not to please men. May God awake us from our cold state and bless us by his grace to earnestly contend for that precious faith. May he stir up our pure minds and enable us to walk and talk as we ought while we are in this earthly tabernacle of clay awaiting to be clothed upon with immortality when this life is over that we may be received into that heavenly clime where all will be perfect forever, Amen. E. J. L.

ROMANS 9:18

"Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."

In this issue of our paper will be found the request of sister Forrest Jones, Marlow, Oklahoma for our views on the above portion of scripture. If her father is living when this is published he will have passed his 102nd birthday anniversary. Very few men in this day and age live to pass the century mark, and he has also been most highly favored of the Lord to spend over sixty years of his life in the church, partaking of the joys and afflictions of spirtual Israel. We are glad that both he and his daughter have been blessed to enjoy the *Signs,* and if it is the Lord's will to spare him until this article is published, we hope it will contain something that will be of comfort to him.

Our Sister well says, this ninth chapter of Romans is "a wonderful chapter and every word Old Baptist doctrine." If there is any one phase of the doctrine of God our Savior which Old School Baptists are more thoroughly agreed upon or rejoice in over all others, we believe it is the phase which this chapter deals with: God's absolute sovereignty over all worlds, principalities and powers, both visible and invisible. This means that the powers that be are ordained of God, and are brought in complete subjection to his most holy will. Therefore the bounds of even Satan, the prince of this world, in whose hands has been given the power to afflict and distress the saints of God in all ages, have been before determined and unalterably fixed, so that he cannot with all of his deceivableness and unrighteousness destroy the life of a single child of Jehovah. The Psalmist said, "God is our refuge and strength,

a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah."

This ninth chapter of Romans sets forth how the infinitely wise, eternal and omnipotent God, who created the heavens and the earth and all that in them is, and without whom was not anything made that was made, did determine, ordain and predestinate before hand to do whatsoever he pleased among the children of men. This embraced his choosing some and rejecting others of Adam's race. The word declares, "for they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Abraham desired that God should accept Ishmael, a bondwoman's son, but instead God chose to give him, miraculously, a son by Sarah, his true wife, a promised seed, through whom all the nations of the earth would be blessed. This prophecy concerned the coming of the blessed Son of God, his miraculous conception, birth, sufferings and death, who would break down the middle wall of partition which separated between the Jew and Gentile, by the shedding of his precious blood and thus gather together in one fold his people in every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue. In the fourth chapter of Romans, Paul says, "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not made to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were."

God's choice of Jacob rather than Esau rested solely upon his sovereign right to do whatsoever he pleased with his own. The record is, ("For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her (Rebecca), The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." The question which Paul asked here may well arise in the minds of men: "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God?" Men of the world are ever ready to conclude that if the doctrine of election be true, God is unjust, but not so with the man of God. He is ever ready to say with the great Apostle, "God forbid." Paul goes on to support this contention by saying, "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." Again, he shows that it is not according to what the creature may or may not say, think or do, by declaring, "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." When God raised up Moses and sent him down into Egypt to lead the children of Israel out of the land of bondage and servitude, he said

unto him: "Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me. For I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people; that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth. For now I will stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth. And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." Ex. 9:13-16.

During Israel's sojourn in Egypt God repeatedly hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he should not let the people go, but in all of this God had a purpose worthy of himself, and when he finally delivered Israel with a high and mighty hand, by causing the waters of the Red Sea to divide and stand as walls on either side while Israel passed over dry shod, and then caused these very same waters to come together again and destroy the Egyptians, his hand was manifested in behalf of his people and they could and did then sing, The Lord hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The good news of the wonders of Israel's God in conquering kings, Gog and Magog, reached even such vile characters as Rahab, the harlot, as she dwelt upon the walls of the wicked city of Jericho and caused her to hope in the mercy of Israel's God. It also brought forth fruit by her putting a scarlet thread in the window for the children of Israel to behold all down through the ages, even to this very moment, indicating that, by faith, they have hope in the mercy of God.

It is said that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established, so here we have the apostle Paul confirming in the New Testament what God had said to Moses by declaring, "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." As we see it, when God made Adam in the beginning he made him capable of lusting after the things of this world to such a degree that he would transgress God's law and thus bring those chosen in Christ before the foundations of the earth were laid, whom God purposed to manifest in Adam, under the bondage of sin and death, but glory be to his adorable name, God's plan and purpose did not end there, but found its fulfillment in his sending his only begotten Son into the world, in the fulness of time, to redeem and restore them in God's sight and favor, as though they had never sinned, and all of this was for the glorifying of himself and the lifting of the name of Jesus on high. Our text says, "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." God's purpose in creating Adam out of the dust of the ground, so that he could not withstand the temptations of Satan, was that no flesh should be justified in his sight. No man after the flesh has ever been able to keep the law of God. The giving of the law was to manifest sin and the weaknesses of the flesh. Paul said, "I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Therefore when God drove Adam from the garden of Eden, "he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." The law condemns, cuts off, and in its scales every man, woman and child of

the human race is weighed and found wanting. The Psalmist said, "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." We believe the prophet Isaiah was describing the church of God as she stands in nature when he said, "From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment." How wonderful to contemplate the mercy of God as it appears in his Son, Jesus Christ! Notwithstanding all her corruption in nature, God said, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Let it be noted that there are no conditions placed upon her, no suggestion that if she would, he would, or anything of the sort, for God knew in advance her inability to perform anything that would be pleasing in his sight, and therefore purposed to save her with an everlasting salvation by and through the atoning blood of the blessed Lamb of God, slain as it were in the mind and purpose of God before time began. Knowing her frame, that she was but as the dust of the earth, his own arm brought salvation, and his reason was that of a God infinite in love and mercy, to the end that salvation should be altogether and entirely of grace, and that his name should have all the praise. Therefore though her sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; and though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Without such a God there could not be any hope of salvation, for it is declared by inspiration that there is salvation in none other. All of his creatures have come short of glorifying him, as they stand separate and apart from their Head, and all are made to rejoice in Christ Jesus and to have no confidence in the flesh, and thank him for our text, which says, "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." God bestows his mercy only upon those whom he willed and determined from all eternity to receive it. The late Dr. John Gill, of England, said, "God wills nothing in time, but what he willed before time; that his grace and mercy are shown only to some persons, and that the only reason for this is his sovereign will and pleasure, and not the works and merits of men; wherefore, since his grace and mercy rise out of his free good will and pleasure, and are by no means the creature's due, it most clearly follows, that God, determining to bestow his grace and mercy, and in the actual doing of it, whilst he determines to deny it, and does deny it to others, cannot possibly be chargeable with any unrighteousness."

Following our text, the apostle goes on to answer those who would find fault, by saying, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory. Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?" We know of no

language or figure of speech that more clearly describes, to our satisfaction, God's absolute and unrestricted right to do whatsoever he wills with his creatures than that employed by Paul here in the type of the "potter and the clay." We can bring no charge whatever against those who mold various kinds and descriptions of earthen vessels out of the clay, and neither has mortal man any basis for charging God with foolishness or injustice for doing whatsoever he desireth. God declared his purpose for raising up Pharaoh was that he might shew in him his power, to the end that God's name might be declared throughout all the earth. If he had the power to raise up Pharaoh, a vessel fitted to destruction, hath he not also the power and sovereign right to "make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he hath afore prepared unto glory?" According to what the holy Scriptures set forth concerning the Lord Jehovah, not a single one of all the creatures which he hath made has any right to ask, Why hast thou made me thus? or to withhold from him the honor that is his due. The great apostle also declared that "in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour." In the beginning of creation, did not God make all manner of wild beasts to roam the forest and wilderness, with their nature to devour and destroy, at the same time making other innocent creatures like the lamb, the dove and the sparrow? And is it not written that "God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good?" It was most certainly good for and will fulfil the purpose for which God made it. One of the writers said, the lion and the lamb shall lie down together, and the Lord alone will be exalted in that day. We are also told that not a sparrow shall fall without our heavenly Father. Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad that it is repeatedly and emphatically declared in Holy Writ that His mercy endureth for ever, for without it we could not live here. In conclusion, let us join Moses in ascribing greatness unto our God, for "He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."

R. L. D.

MEMORIAL

Whereas, it has pleased God to remove from this life our beloved brother in Christ, an able minister of the gospel, ELDER T. W. WALKER, we of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association desire to leave on record some expression of the love and esteem for our beloved brother. Elder Walker was a sweet and lovely character, and a faithful minister of the gospel of Christ. He preached Christ and him crucified to the enjoyment of all who were privileged to hear him, therefore be it

Resolved, that we extend to Elder Walker's family our deepest sympathy, and may the blessed Lord give you comfort and consolation, knowing that he doeth all things well.

Resolved, that a copy of this memorial be printed in our minutes, a copy sent to Mrs. Willis (a daughter with whom Elder Walker lived) and a copy to the **Signs of the Times.**

Written by order of this Association convening with the Salisbury Church, Oct. 20, 1948.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER, Moderator
(Mrs.) MAUD T. LAWS, Clerk
WILLIAM S. ADKINS, Asst. Clerk

BOOKS — FREE

The following books will be given **free** with **new** annual subscriptions to The Signs of the Times: FRAGMENTS — 353 pages of selected articles by the late Elder Silas H. Durand, with two new subscriptions; TWO WORLDS by Elder Milford Hall, Sr., of McDowell, Ky., and SHOWERS OF RAIN, containing the christian experience and poems by our late Sister Flossie I. Faulkner. Either one of the last two mentioned books will be given **free** with only one new subscription to the **Signs** at $3. per year.

We are anxious to enlarge our circle of subscribers, and are really making it worth while for our readers to assist us in this undertaking. If you do not own these books, this is your opportunity to secure them. If books alone are desired, first two mentioned $2.00 each, and the last one 50c each.

R. LESTER DODSON

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 117 RUTHERFORD, N. J., MAY, 1949 No. 5

CORRESPONDENCE

DEAR BRETHREN: In 1 Cor. chapter 3 the records disclose that Paul finds the brethren somewhat perturbed in that he finds the high hand of carnality prevalent. Owing to his great gift and spiritual talents, that so thoroughly equip him to deal rightfully with every situation, he states to the brethren that he could not speak unto them as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. He found the brethren so much perturbed they were not even in an attitude to be spoken to even as unto babes in Christ, stating he had fed them with milk and not with meat for the reason they were not, up to now, able to bear it, and Paul says neither are they yet able.

I would like to call your attention to the patience and endurance, and also the resistance of the eminent apostle in that he dealt with it all and never became ensnared himself. He, seeing they were in a state of fluctuation, instead of unsheathing his own sword patiently administered the milk of human kindness. May I say what a great lesson this teaches, and oh, often have I observed the opposite course taken among us as the people of the living God. Kindness, meekness and gentleness is always in order in the house of God, against such there is no law.

The proof of the fact that there existed carnality in the church at Corinth, or may I say among the constituents, was that there was envying and strife and divisions which are the fruits of carnality. I pause here to ask if the walks of mankind to-day are not richly seasoned with the above named elements, envying, strife and divisions? And it is all too bad when such is prevalent among the people whom God has called out of darkness into the marvelous light of his dear Son, it is clear to see that sides were being taken and leaders chosen. Paul clears that up with this question to them, hear him; "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?" Thus we see Paul credits the Lord with their belief in him and Apollos, so as ministers to-day we need not to high pressure our sermons to the extent they will produce a belief, but as ministers, peradventure the Lord will, we could only hope to comfort in some little way those whom God hath given the evidence, which evidence built up in their hearts a belief. Paul affirms he planted, Apollos watered and then states neither he that planteth, nor he that watereth is anything, but God that giveth the increase. In this I see not only God giveth the increase, but God is all and in all. The planter receives a planter's reward, the waterer receives a waterer's reward, each receiving according to his own labor, not separately but jointly for the planter and waterer are one, therefore, their reward could not be in excess of the production, and not knowing that God would give the increase must plant and water in hope,

which hope is their reward. I have watered and planted through the years past, but I have done each only in hope that the seed sown would fall upon good ground and produce a copious fruit.

Though we labor in hope it is indeed a blessed thought that we are laborers together with God, even recognized as God's husbandry, God's building. Being laborers together with God does not mean that we are helpers to God, as is termed by some, but our labors with God are hope, perseverance and faith unfeigned, and we are not laboring in vain for he is true who promised. Having been chosen as God's husbandry brings me to ask what manner of men ought we to be? I am persuaded that when the eminent apostle informed the brethren at Corinth they were God's husbandry that those words seared their consciences no little by reason of the strife, division and carnal walk of which they were so guilty.

Continuing Paul assures them they are God's building, evidently in their hearts God dwelt, being the material chosen of God for his structure, the indwelling of his Holy Spirit. Now as a wise master builder, according to the grace of God, or agreeable to the grace of God, conforming strictly to the grace of God, and complying fully with the grace of God, and to the specifications as set by the grace of God, Paul declares he laid the foundation, and where the rub comes another had builded thereon, so it is clear to see the material used in building on the foundation as laid by Paul, according to grace, was of a different sort, rather to their own liking instead of grace as carnality prevailed as is shown, and carnality stands always in opposition to grace, therefore, Paul forewarns them to regard with care how they buildeth thereon, assuring them no foundation is laid other than is laid which is Jesus Christ.

Paul makes plain the great benefit in using the right material in building on this foundation, and names six representative substances; gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble. These representative substances are emblematic. The trouble at Corinth was the brethren were in carnality, and were busy building on this foundation laid of Paul according to the grace of God, and were using wood, hay and stubble instead of gold, silver, and precious stones, a result of which confusion abounded. It always does when we inject and exert our own earthly efforts, lacking patience to wait for the finer and more lasting substance represented by the gold, silver and precious stones, a material substance which no man's hand can make, neither produce or cause to grow, but made of God and is truly durable. Paul goes so far as to say, "the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." Wood, hay and stubble do not resist fire, but rather feeds the flame and is soon obliterated. Our God is a consuming fire. Fortunate is the one who uses the right material in building on this foundation, the reward is his, the evidence to a man that the right material is used in building on this foundation is his works abide.

This thought carries my mind back many, many years even to childhood when I feebly and fearfully laid up the first piece of material on this glorious and solid foundation. Thank God I am now, and have all through the years since, enjoyed a rich return from the rich reward, and as the years slip by apparently faster than a weaver's shuttle, it seems the gains from this rich reward increase notwithstanding, through the years past, I have piled wood, hay and stubble on this same foundation and waited for declaration day only to see to my sad heart, the

fire consume it before my eyes.

By many sad experiences, I have learned that too much care cannot be exercised in examining most thoroughly every piece of material we lay down on this foundation, being the temple of God and the temple of God is holy. The Spirit of God dwelleth in you, let no man deceive himself for no man's wisdom is equal with the wisdom of God not even in comparison. The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. He taketh the wise in their own craftiness, and knows that all the wisdom of this world is only crafty, that is expert in deceiving, but God is not deceived. Further, God knows the thoughts of the wise of this world regarding him are vain, therefore, no man should glory in men whether Paul, Apollos, Cephas, or the world, life, death, things present or things to come. All are yours and ye are Christ's and Christ is God's. Submitted in love.

(Elder) F. A. COLLINS

Hartford, Ala.

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418 Monroe St., Herndon, Va.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I have just noticed the date on the wrapper of my *Signs*, I must apologize, and am sending renewal for two years. We, of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, often think of you and wish that you might visit us. My home is now at Herndon, Va.

The Lord has been good to remember us in our wayward tossings and has blessed us in love and peace. I often think of the sea, the winds, the islands of the sea, the little ships, and the bottom of the sea, and how God made and controls them all. The great boundless sea that covers more than three fourths of the earth's surface, with all of its immensity and power is the evil within me and in which I was conceived. The islands, some so very tiny, some a little larger, are sweet oases that I am enabled to find once in a while. They are firm and stable, they show their face above the sea, and I can find a little anchorage and rest there. The little ship is I, tossed to and fro, hither and yon, up and down upon the surface of the sea, if indeed, I am sustained above the surface of that great evil. The bottom of the sea belongs to God. It is fixed and firm and supports all things; it is the will, and purpose, and knowledge, and all the graces of God. It connects all of the islands and firm places of the earth. God controls these dark and deep places of the earth.

Think of the mass of the sea, of its strength and power; how its waves roll and break as if to swallow up a little ship in a moment. Man is powerless to calm the sea, or to control a single wave of it. Man is likewise powerless to stop the wind, or to ask from whence it came, or whither it goeth, or why it blows and disturbs and makes angry the massive sea. Often I have sat and watched little ships anchored at sea during a stormy day. The wind was high and the waves would toss the little vessel to and fro, up and down, sometimes standing it almost on its nose. I would think surely it will sink in spite of all; but when the storm was past, I would see the little vessel still afloat. Such is the goodness of our God; he controls the sea; he limits the winds; he sets the bounds of both. He walks upon the sea; he rides upon the storm. Yes, he has conquered sin, and put the great leviathan under his foot: but oh, how it swallows up a little vessel like me, except the Savior makes me a vessel of mercy, and sets the bounds of the sea, and says thou shalt not sink; thou art mine; I am thy strength; through me, thou canst walk upon the sea, and conquer over sin at last.

As I toss long upon the sea, always

expecting to be swallowed up by it, and to sink into the bottomless depth of sin, I am blessed to find a little island in my path, and to sail into calm waters and enjoy sweet rest in a harbor. The Holy Spirit comes with a sweet message, which enables me to sit calmly and to rest. It anchors my soul and speaks peace to all around me. Who art thou that commands the waters and the waves? Abide with me and let me find rest in thy presence. But for some reason, unknown and unreasonable to me, I find myself again a little vessel in the midst of a more angry sea than ever before. The waves are higher than ever, the fury of the storm is greater than ever before, and I have to cry again and harder than ever before, "Lord save or I perish!" As to Peter, the Lord stretches forth his mighty hand and says, "Oh thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" He brings my weak vessel into another port of rest; and gives blessed anchorage at another island.

Then I ask, Why must my faith fail? Why must I be tossed to and fro? Why must I almost sink beyond sight in the depth of the sea of sin? Why must I always doubt and fear, and over and over come to the point of denying my Savior? Then he tells me "My strength is made perfect in weakness." How could I know the power of God; how could I believe the promises of God in deed and in truth if I never had occasion to prove them? or to call on his name and to see his Salvation? It is by questions that I cannot answer; by things that I cannot understand or comprehend, that the infiniteness of God is brought before me and made manifest unto me.

Then he takes me to the bottom of the sea. He shows me that he controls the deep places of the earth, and the dark places are his. That same substance of which those islands are made is also under the sea, and is the bottom of the sea, and extends from island to island, connecting every single one of them into one single whole. There is one body, and one Spirit; one God and Father of all. He puts the sea under his foot, and sets its bounds. He covers large portions, the bottom of the sea, from our sight; such portions are dark to us and beyond our sight, reasoning, comprehension or understanding. But as it pleases him in his wisdom, He uncovers and reveals to us certain small portions, the islands, and enables us to find sweet comfort and peace and rest there to our weary souls. We see such a small and finite portion at a time, but he sees the whole and the relation of every single part. His will is in that bottom of the sea, and is always and ever underneath us to support us, even while we are lost and sinking and crying in the storm. It is the sea of sin that separates us from his feeling presence with us. Sin cannot blind his sight or comprehension. But oh how it blinds me! How dark and impenetrable it is to my weak sight! I cannot see or understand any relationship between my little experiences, but by faith, I know that they are all connected under this sea and in the deep places where he reigns. Also by faith, I know that all the experience of all his little ones of all times and ages, and of all places and stages of life in this world are connected in the deep purposes and wills of an almighty God and Savior; and that in spite of all of one's doubts, fears and tossings, in the end, the spirit of the humble soul of the little chosen vessel will sail into the heavenly port and be permanently anchored to praise him with a perfect praise throughout all eternity.

Oh Lord God and Savior, if it can be consistent with thy holy will, be thou my Captain, the Captain of my

little vessel; guide and direct me in the right channel and by the right way, that I might sail into a city of habitation and finally be anchored in thy heavenly harbor of love and understanding!

Love and sweet fellowship to you and all those little ones who walk by faith in hope ever trusting in a Savior too wise to err and too good to be unkind.

A. D. ALSTON

1158 Falls Terrace, Union, N. J.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I know you will be surprised to see my handwriting so soon again, but for some time my mind has been dwelling on the valley of dry bones as described in the thirty-seventh chapter of Ezekiel. The only way to relieve my mind is to pen some thoughts I have concerning this scripture. What I say may be worthless and void of the truth, but I have often told you my writing may be discarded and consigned to the waste basket without any ill feeling on my part except I would be sorry to have wasted your valuable time.

What a beautiful illustration is given in this chapter of the wonderful power of God, how he breathed the breath of life into the dry bones and caused them to live again. "Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live again." When he speaks it is done and when he commands it stands fast. I ask you is there anything more lifeless than dry bones? The dead sinner is in this same lifeless condition until the breath of life is given to him from above, then he lives. Again he says, "And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord." Some one may ask and ponder the question in their mind, how could dry bones be made to live? We must have faith to believe that nothing is impossible with God. Without this God given faith our finite minds cannot comprehend the mysteries, but with faith we can answer the question, "Son of man, can these bones live?" "O Lord God, thou knowest." How true this is, he knows, sees and directs all things in this world and in the heavens above. When the spirit of life is given and you are placed in your own land, (where is this land?) the land where the redeemed of the Lord shall travel in this world and be carried home to glory when life here shall be no more; they are brought into a new land; a new song is placed in their mouth singing praise unto the great Redeemer, the one who brought them out of the waste howling wilderness into a land where they shall dwell upon the mountains of Israel with one king over all.

The natural man hath not eyes to see, neither can he understand the mysteries of the kingdom of God. Right here I am made to stop and wonder if I am included in the above category, yet underneath this great cloud of doubt and despair there is a faint ray of hope which makes me believe I am traveling a path not of my own choosing, a path that human nature would not select, but a way that has been planned by the one who says, "They shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them." Can we resist the power of one whose shalls and wills must be done in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth?

I wish I might find words to portray the spiritual significance that the valley of dry bones has, and the way it has been revealed to me in the last three or four months. With your knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures I am sure you can explain it much

better than I could ever hope to do in my feeble way. We have all traveled in the valley when we were dead in trespasses and sins. We were just as helpless, hopeless and lifeless then as the dry bones until the breath of life was breathed into our nostrils, giving us new hope, new life and joy before unknown. We were then taken out of the valley into a new land upon the mountain top into one kingdom with one ruler over all. They shall have one Shepherd who shall rule over them and cause them to obey the commandments of the Father above, the giver of every good and perfect gift. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Praise the Lord for giving us wisdom and understanding to see the beauty and grandeur of such a wonderful plan of salvation; salvation alone by the grace of God. We had no more to do with it than the dry bones had in bringing themselves back to life. We are just helpless, all glory, praise and honor belongs to the one who said, "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord." We can only obey his will, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. We have no power to add or detract one single thing from the great plan of salvation and we are thankful for this inability of man, otherwise there would be no surety of salvation for any one. With the Father above guiding and directing our footsteps we are positive that not one shall be lost, they are all included in the covenant of grace made with them. "It shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore." "God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." Great are the promises to the members of Christ's kingdom and greater still shall be their reward in heaven. Oh, what joy must await in that land beyond when our meetings here are so sweet and pleasant; to me this is just a foretaste of the joy that awaits beyond this vale of tears. At times it seems we can hardly wait for meeting day once again, at other times we are sad because we are guilty of disobeying the command, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is," yet our flesh is just as prone to sin as the sparks are to fly upward. Try as we may at times we cannot think a good thought, and our minds stray to things of the world when we should be dwelling on things pertaining to the power that gives us the breath of life both natural and spiritual.

We are only human as all mankind and would still be down in the valley had not the Lord given us grace to live a new life far above anything man could conceive or plan for himself. Thanks be to his holy name for giving us an insight into the hidden mysteries of the kingdom of God which he has revealed to babes who desire the sincere milk of the word and are not satisfied with anything except the pure, unadulterated gospel of salvation, election and eternal life alone by the grace of God. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." If he knows his people and calls them by name to come out from among the world, and dwell in their own land, can one resist the call of the Lord? No, one must obey when he says, "I shall place you in your own land," we are made willing in the day of his power, glad to obey and enter into the joy that awaits when we are brought out of the valley, they

shall be cleansed and made white in the blood of the Lamb.

I feel I have only hinted at the beauty of this miracle of dry bones, but I have relieved my mind to some extent. I hope nothing has been written that is not consistent with the truth as revealed in the Scriptures. Please cast the mantle of charity over this and forgive anything that is contrary to the teaching of the Divine Ruler over all, the one who gives us strength to try to follow in the footsteps of our forefathers in the way that leads to heaven and an everlasting home in the world beyond this vale of tears. May you be given strength and wisdom to continue in your work as publisher of the *Signs* wherein is contained food for many hungry souls. May God bless you and continue to be with you at all times is the feeble prayer of one who loves those that have been brought into their own land. Unworthily, (Mrs.) ELSIE LOEFFEL

Campellsburg, Ky.

DEAR ELDER H. J. BIRD: I feel to be unworthy and unfit to call you brother, neither am I fit to write things concerning God. I have a drawing to write you and have tried several times but all ended in the fire. I have never written on the Scriptures and know nothing except what God has revealed to me, but I feel the Old Baptist church is my home.

Here are a few thoughts concerning Daniel and if God has directed my pen they are true, if not cast them aside for I am nothing and less than nothing, a worm of the dust crying for mercy. I know it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Yes, He knows all things, not even a sparrow falls to the ground without his knowledge, yea the very hairs of the head are numbered. In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar he had a dream, his spirit troubled him and he could not sleep. He wanted to know what the dream was about so called in his magicians and learned ones to interpret his dream. They said tell us this dream and they would show the interpretation, but Nebuchadnezzar could not for it had gone from him. The Chaldeans answered the king saying there is not a man upon earth that can reveal the dream, but when they knew they would be slain they went out and sought Daniel. God revealed the secrets unto Daniel in a night vision and Daniel blessed the God of heaven saying, "Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: And he changeth the times and seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding." Yes, he rules in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

This dream was revealed unto Daniel from God in heaven that Nebuchadnezzar would know in the latter days what would happen. When Daniel had revealed the dream unto the king he was very happy for he knew that Daniel was a child of God and he made him a ruler over Babylon. Then Nebuchadnezzar made a large image of gold and invited the people in to see it. "Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations and languages, That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, etc. ye fall down and worship the golden image.******And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace." But Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego would not worship the image for they were walking in the path God had directed them and it was not God's will that they should worship an image. When the king heard of this he commanded that the furnace be heated

seven times hotter than it should be heated and the three were cast into the furnace. The heat was so great that it killed others about it, but when the king looked into the furnace there were four men loose walking in the midst of the fire. The fire had not burned their clothes, neither was their hair singed. The fourth man in the furnace had the form of the Son of God and it was God. God would not let the fire burn them for it was not meant that they should be burned in the furnace, it was meant to show Nebuchadnezzar the power of God.

Nebuchadnezzar had a second dream and when Daniel revealed this dream unto him the king "was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like bird's claws." Then his understanding returned unto him and he blessed God and his kingdom was restored to him.

Daniel was then cast into the lion's den but the lions could not hurt him for God sent his angel to shut the lion's mouth, and he was not harmed for Daniel was a servant of the living God. Oh, brother Bird what a thought to be a servant of the living God and I believe you are one. You are a child of God and heaven is your home. My hope is that I am one of the chosen children of God whose name was written in that book of life before the foundation of the world. God knew then who his people were and he sent his only begotten Son into the world to die for those chosen people. He came not to save the world as some would have you believe, but he came to save those people whose names were written in that book of life. But am I one? I feel to be the one that is picking up the crumbs that fall from the Master's table. I love the Old Baptists as Ruth of old said, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried." I have made this too long. If you feel that it is the truth pass it on to the little flock, if not cast it aside for I feel low and at my Master's feet. Write me some time for we have no meetings in the winter.

Yours truly, PAUL G. CHILTON

3347 Tutwiler Ave., Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am sending a letter from a dear mother in Israel. She told me she had never written her experience but had desired to write it to me which she has done. If you count it worthy of space we would be very glad. The son she speaks of is our Pastor and we feel she is justified in her hopes of his future. We esteem him very highly. Yours in hope.

(Mrs.) LUTHER CAMPBELL

Middleton, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER CAMPBELL: I have felt a desire to write you of what I hope is the dealing of the Lord with me. In 1908 I was confined to my bed with my third child. When he was three days old it seemed that I was going to die and oh how it grieved me to think I had to leave my little children. I begged God to have mercy on me. I wanted to die and I wanted to live to raise my little children. What a merciful God! he spared my unprofitable life to raise them. I had many doubts and fears. I believe God calls his children and when he calls they come. When I was working in the field one day chopping corn, I had left my children with their grandmother, some one called me but I thought it was not a call and worked on. There came another call and

I went to the house but mother had not called me. I believe that was a holy calling. For two years I was a beggar for mercy when the Lord spoke peace to my soul. One morning when I awoke these words came to me, "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven." That was a great comfort to me but I still begged for mercy. I thought some day I would unite with the Old Baptist church. My husband told me I better stay out and I did until the time came. Brother Prince preached a wonderful sermon that day and called for members. They sang the song, "Come ye that love the Lord, and let your joys be known." I sat my baby in old Sister Crawford's lap and went but could not tell what the Lord had done for me. I was filled with tears and all I could say was I hoped the Lord had pardoned my sins. They asked me when I wanted to be baptized and I said tomorrow. That was the 10th of April 1909, the water was cold but I could not be satisfied until I was baptized. Baptism was on my mind when I would retire and the first thing in the morning. I had trouble and tribulation but it was all for my good. I would go places thinking I would get relief but the tears would flow. At sunrise I would say, oh another day of trouble for me. I commenced reading the *Signs of the Times* and got much comfort from reading the experiences of others. I think if it had not been for the *Signs* I would have put an end to myself, but thanks be to his holy name he led me through dark places, placed my feet upon a rock, put a new song in my mouth and established my goings, blessed be the name of the Lord.

I sometimes wonder why some have to be burdened so. All that believe the Old Baptist doctrine from the beginning do not have to suffer like those that are made to believe. It is all in God's purpose. It is by grace we are saved, not by the works of man. All my people are Methodists and thought I did wrong in uniting with the Old Baptists. If I had my way I never would have been one, but thanks be to His name that is what I am. I feel thankful the Lord revealed himself to my son to preach the gospel. I believe some day he will be an able preacher and I believe Brother R. L. Harrison from Cain Creek will also. May God bless you all. I hope to come again to see you.

ELLIE and ALBERT BROWN

1232 Cokey Road, Rocky Mount, N. C.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am enclosing my check to renew my subscription to the *Signs* for another year. I realize I am a little late but hope you can forgive me. I think you are putting out a very good paper and I would be glad if more of our people were reading it. The matter published in the *Signs* is sound and safe and I receive comfort from reading its contents. There are so many Primitive Baptists not established in the faith and doctrine as recorded in the Scriptures, and if they could read the *Signs* I think it would enlighten them as to the doctrine we preach and believe.

In my humble opinion you and your staff are sound and safe men and I think thoroughly qualified by the power of God to write letters of instructions for those not so well qualified to read. Those that understand the doctrine revealed to them by Almighty God are a blessed people. I mean salvation by grace. No doubt there are many good brethren and sisters in our churches if asked certain questions pertaining to the doctrine we believe could not give a correct answer. May the Lord bless you to continue in your work. Yours in hope. (Elder) A. B. DENSON

(Elder Denson is the present Modera-

tor of the Kehukee Association, which is the oldest Old School Baptist Association in America, and we wish to thank him most sincerely for his words of commendation, both for the *Signs of the Times* and our editorial staff. We are, indeed, glad that Brother Denson feels the *Signs* is helpful and instructive to those who need to be enlightened concerning the doctrine of God our Savior, and we hope our readers will do what they can to aid us in building up our subscription list. We shall be happy to send sample copies of the paper to any whose names and addresses are sent to us. R. L. D.)

Padonia Road, Cockeysville, Md.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Your preaching at Black Rock in May (1948) has given me so much to think about. If the Lord will give me strength and the mind to write a few things that have been on my mind for a long time, I hope it may be of some benefit to others as the good letters printed in the *Signs* have been such a help to me.

For a long time it seems my life has been so full of darkness and down in the valley, feeling so unworthy that I felt the Lord had forsaken me. I had nothing left but the little hope that God had given me thirty-seven years ago and at times that seemed so very small. While I still love the church, my brothers and sisters, I had drifted away to some extent. I did not pray. I do not believe we would ever pray if God did not put it in our hearts to do so. I agree with Sister Maud Moran of Roanoke, Va. on the word of prayer in her letter in the *Signs* in Feb. 1946. No, we cannot make a voluntary prayer.

My husband has been an invalid for six years, has been bedfast for five years. His mental and physical health is very poor. I tell you, my dear people, I have prayed from the depth of my heart and I hope and do believe He has answered my prayers. This is so wonderful to believe. God has been so good to me, far better than I deserve. I would so often repeat, O! God why is it? Is it something I have done? How much longer? I kept house for a family and lived with them the past four years. I could not pour out my heart to God, they would have thought I was crazy. I had this all stored inside.

Yes, Elder Dodson, God moves in mysterious ways, not as we see and think things should be. I can now see so many things to be thankful for. A home has been provided for us, not such a good one, but what difference does that make as long as the Lord is in the matter and we are happy. I am so thankful now that I can pour out my heart to God any time of the day. I hope to believe that God has put me back where I belong and is supplying our needs. He has put it in the hearts of our dear children and friends to help us, and when the right things come in the right way it is wonderful, I feel God has answered in many ways.

I want to tell you my prayer. At first I repeat the Lord's prayer, then my own feelings: I thank thee, O Father, for all the blessings thou hast bestowed upon me. I thank thee for carrying me through the day. O Lord, give me health and strength to stand up under all this, and help me to bear my troubles. O Father, remember my husband for he needs thy help O Father, and if it be thy will take him home to glory, and when his time comes be with him. If I have done things unpleasant in thy sight, look over my shortcomings and give me better understanding of all this. Keep me from the sins of this world and give me the mind to think about thee and the things pertaining to thy kingdom. Keep me humble at the feet of the brethren, esteeming others bet-

ter than myself. Dear Jesus, if it be thy will show me in some way, and give me something to cling to. I want to feel that thou art near me and to know thou hast not forsaken me. Dear Jesus, thou knoweth what I want. O Lord, have mercy on me, and make my heart pure, lead me as thou wouldest have me to go. I pray, dear Father, I am one of thine elect. O Father, remember each one of our children, make them feel to be sinners in the sight of God, let them see the beauties of heaven. Guide and direct and be with us to the end. I ask all this in the name of my dear Heavenly Father and his glorious and precious Son, Jesus. Amen.

I hope the dear people who read this can see why I am happy and rejoicing, I want the whole world to rejoice with me. The dear Father has given me health and strength to care for my husband all these years, it was not the will of God to take him away. That was not what I wanted. He was kept here for a purpose, dear people. I hope the good Lord has put it in my heart to understand it all. It was for my benefit, brought me back where I belong. All of our afflictions are for a purpose. The more afflicted my husband becomes the more earnestly I can pray. I can leave his bedside and pour out my heart to God. I have changed that prayer to "take him" and ask God, if it be his will, to leave him here for that purpose. I am willing to bear the burden as long as thou seest fit. This makes me feel God heard the prayer of poor, weak, unworthy me. I feel he is near me and has not forsaken me.

Dear brethren and sisters can you see as I have and rejoice with me? There are many things to be thankful for, I cannot tell them all. I felt I wanted to write this, it is a great relief to me. If you see fit publish this in the *Signs*. If not drop it in the waste basket and all will be well with me. From one of the least.

(Mrs.) THOMAS J. GILLESPIE

Grantville, Kansas

SIGNS OF THE TIMES: If I do not renew, when the third of one year for which I am now paying ends, discontinue my subscription for at the age of nearly ninety-two I will not need it much longer any way. I hope you may be able to continue the paper to the comfort of others. There will be others for God will not leave himself without witnesses. There will always be the seven thousand standing by as long as witnesses will be needed. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, nor will the righteous (Elder Brother) be forsaken nor his seed begging bread.

(Mrs.) MARY ELLISON

Benton, Ky.

ELDER DODSON: A few of us met at the old church, Soldier Creek Sunday, Jan. 30, 1949, and had a wonderful meeting although the weather was very cold. Our Moderator, Elder J. C. Henson and Associate Moderator, Elder Paul Poyner, were filled with the truth as it is in Jesus for us to feast upon. We were glad to be there.

The old father in Israel told of an incident which opened up to him a very sweet thought. He was cleaning off a family burying plot and in it was buried a precious daughter to him, and he said, "I was cleaning the plot for the pearl, to me, that was there," and this thought came to him, Jesus bought the field for the pearl that was in it.

This daughter, Sister Bessie Henson Myers, was a very untiring sister of like precious faith. She lived in the home of her father and mother with her own little family, Mr. Myers and two children, Roy and Nina Gene. Bessie united

with the Primitive Baptist Church at an early age and lived with evidences sealed in her heart, which evidence was that Jesus had been with her, showing to all of us that had the same hope that she was alive in Christ Jesus her Savior.

In Feb. 1948 she went down through the valley and shadow of death to give birth to her third child, little David Michael Myers. In a few minutes after inquiry about her baby, and before they could lay her babe in her arms, she passed away to be forever in peace with her Maker who had spoken that great peace to her so early in her life.

Brother Dodson, such strength was given to her father, Elder J. T. Henson, and his sainted wife that is not seen in every day life, and is not often seen with those who hope they have seen strength given to poor mourning souls here. Elder O. W. Perkins and Elder Paul Poyner came and preached her funeral and passed on to the aged parents and her immediate family the comfort that was needed and consoling. Her remains were laid to rest a stone's throw from her home. Yes, she was the pearl in this cemetery that caused this dear old man of God to dig and hoe, chop and sweat to clear away and make it a presentable plot for the onlookers. Peace be to her memory.

(Mrs.) EFFIE BOWDEN

Newberry, Mich.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: As it is time to remit for the *Signs* I wish to say if I do not remit promptly please discontinue. I am eighty-one years of age and my wife eighty so I do not expect to live much longer. I have been a silent reader of the *Signs* for about thirty-five years and must acknowledge I have been comforted many times by reading its pages. My father, E. D. Varnes, of Illinois was a subscriber for many years. He attended the eastern Associations years ago and corresponded with Elders Durand, Chick and Grafton. There are no Old School Baptists in this part of the country that I know of so the *Signs* is my only means of hearing the truth as I believe it. I sometimes hope that I have a hope. Yours truly,

G. S .VARNES

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Delaware Association is expected to meet with the Welsh Tract Church near Newark, Delaware, Saturday and Sunday, May 14 and 15, 1949. Ministers and brethren of our correspondence are invited to be with us at this meeting, and also brethren and ministers not in direct correspondence with us who are of our faith and order, and all others who love the truth as it is in our Lord Jesus Christ. Those coming Saturday morning will go direct to the meeting-house; those coming Friday night will inquire for our Deacon, Brother Charles H. Jarmon, 312 Capitol Trail, Newark, Del. who will direct them where to go. Those coming by train via Baltimore & Ohio R.R. and wishing to be met at Newark should write beforehand to Brother Jarmon or to the undersigned.

MRS. ARTHUR RITTENHOUSE, Church Clerk
Route 2, Newark, Del.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Southampton Old School Baptist Church, Southampton, Pa., Wednesday and Thursday, May 25 and 26, 1949. Services will commence at 10 a. m. Wednesday. Our ministers, brethren and friends are cordially invited. Trains will be met at Southampton, Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. Those arriving by automobile should go directly to the meeting-house or to my home adjacent thereto.

CASPER G. FETTER, Church Clerk

The date for our annual communion is the fourth Sunday in May 1949. There will be preaching all day Saturday and Sunday. Communion on Sunday at Pleasant Hope Church, 9 miles south of Atlanta, Texas. One quarter mile off Farm Highway 251. All are invited to be with us.

L. S. HILL
Route 1, Bivins, Texas

The district meeting of the First District meets the third Sunday in June 1949 and Friday and Saturday before with Prospect Church, 30 miles west of Texarkana, Tex. on U. S. Highway 67. All are invited to be with us.

L. S. HILL
Route 1, Bivins, Texas

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. MAY, 1949

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All letters for this paper should be addressed, and remittances made payable to,

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

"And with bitter herbs they shall eat it."
Exodus 12:8.

The above instructions were included in God's commandment to Moses and Aaron as part of the observance of the passover which was about to be instituted by the Lord. The entire eighth verse reads as follows: "And they shall eat the flesh in that night, (having reference to the lamb to be eaten) roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it."

In our communion service of to-day, the church does not eat of the lamb literally, or eat bitter herbs with the communion bread, yet as the lamb was a type of Christ, the Lamb of God, even so the bitter herbs, eaten by the Israelites, pointed to a spiritual condition that would be experienced in the gospel dispensation.

When Jesus took bread and brake and gave to his disciples saying, "Take, eat; this is my body;" likewise the cup gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink ye all of it," there is no record that he gave them bitter herbs to eat. Yet I am persuaded that every thing connected with the passover was pointing to better things to come. One of the things Jesus said to his followers was, "All ye shall be offended because of me this night." As we examine the travel of these chosen people, who were a type of God's church in many respects, it would seem that their trouble would have been over when they were delivered from the hand of Pharaoh, their oppressor. It was not so. The journey now was to be such that they would feel their dependence upon God as never before. How true that is to-day in the life of one of God's children. When delivered from the devil, or a land of bondage, the warfare has just begun.

These are the Lord's ways and his ways are as high above man's ways as the heavens are above the earth, and his thoughts our thoughts. Though God himself came down to deliver them, their journey from then on was to be in such a peculiar way that they were made to know that but for his guidance and preservation they would all perish by the way. Soon after crossing the Red Sea the food gave out, and the water gave out; they were murmurers and complainers against God who had been so merciful to them. Reader, do we not find it so to-day? How loth we are to forget our God; often unmindful of his goodness and mercy toward us, yet he remains faithful; he cannot deny himself.

The bitter herbs will always be with us while we sojourn here. Paul would have removed the thorn out of his flesh but it did not please God to remove it. God said to him, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Then he could say, "For when I am weak, then am I strong." In other words to say, when I have been brought low before God, and to know my own unworthiness of the least of his mercies, and made to say Christ

came to save sinners of whom I am chief. Then it is that "we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

In the life of a believer in Christ there is continually a knowledge of indwelling sin; though they have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and been given to lay hold of his blessed promises, they too must say, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing;*****For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.*****I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me." In the midst of all these experiences there is a delight in the law of God after the inward man.

Such travels often bring with them terrible groanings. No tongue can describe the feelings of God's humbled people as they wait before him, knowing they have trampled his mercies under foot, been utterly unworthy of his love and dishonored him in so many ways. Their face is in the dust, as the writer's often has, and my inward groanings have been beyond description, that I should feel as another has said, I am a sinful man. If this is not eating the lamb with bitter herbs I do not know what it is. Such things bring us into fellowship with the language, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." D. V. S.

JUDE

A sister in California desires that we explain the epistle of Jude, which she says she does not understand. She has also supplemented her original request with the following: "When you write on Jude, brother Dodson, will you bring in the obedience of God's children and exactly what it means in the deep sense. Did Paul mean that he, the man, had fought the good fight and kept the faith, or does that mean that the Spirit of Christ in Paul fought it? I mean human beings. I wish I could go deeply in the real things and not tradition. I must inquire of those deeply taught Elders or I don't learn." It will be readily agreed by all that our sister has given us a very large assignment. The most we can hope to do is to drop a few hints concerning the significance of what she inquires about.

We wish, first, to focus our thought upon Jude's epistle, and would make the observation that he esteemed his relationship to God above that to men, as he says he was a "servant of Jesus Christ" before he says that he was a brother of James. We should put first things first. Jesus said, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." Speaking after the manner of men, it is humbling to our natural pride to be classed as a *servant,* but we truly hope that there is none among our readers who is ashamed to be called the servant of Jesus Christ. To be an ambassador for Christ is the highest calling that can be bestowed upon mortal man. The gospel of the blessed Son of God is the best news that a poor sinner ever heard, and it is a proclamation of salvation to all, Jew and Gentile alike, by and through the shed blood of the Lamb of God and, therefore, it is common to all

the household of faith. Jude gave all diligence to write unto those set apart by God here in this world to bear testimony concerning him. He says it was needful for him to write and exhort them to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." God's servants in this age of the world can see how necessary it was for Jude to exhort his beloved brethren to stand fast and earnestly contend for the faith of God's elect. God's truth, which is more precious than gold or silver that perisheth to those who believe, must be tried though as by fire, and God according to his own infinitely wise and eternal purpose has determined before hand that it shall be tested in the crucible. According to Jude this was not left to chance, since he says, "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into laciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." On the other hand, God had equally determined that there should be those who, despite all that men or devils might do, would earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. We verily believe that there is a people in the world to-day whom God has sanctified, or set apart to his service, and that they are preserved in Jesus Christ, and called; to whom he will shew mercy, and peace and love will be multiplied. Such characters are forgetting the things which are behind, which pertain to the law, and are reaching forth and pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. These are they to whom Jude would say, "I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not." Only the living have knowledge of God's deliverance of his people out of the land of Egypt. To them, whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for their learning, that they through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. They are profited by having these things called to their remembrance, for they know that the way of the transgressor is hard and that destruction awaits those who believe not. We believe that there have been angels, ministering spirits, in various ages of the world, and that this present time is no exception, who kept not their first estate, but left their high and lofty habitation, or calling, and indulged in the things of the flesh, which has brought shame and disgrace upon the cause of Christ, and all such have been reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Paul, in writing to his Galatian brethren, said, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Jude by way of emphasizing the outcome of living after the flesh likened it to "Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities." There are an abundance of admonitions and instructions to the people of God in the Scriptures as to how they should live. In his epistle to Titus, Paul wrote, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that denying ungodliness and world lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this

present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Titus 2:11-14. All new creatures in Christ are well aware of the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, which makes them know they cannot do the things they would, while the things they would not are the things they do. In and of ourselves, we can do nothing, but we can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth us. Quoting Paul again, he wrote to the Corinthians, saying, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled." It seems to us we must have these things in mind if we are to correctly understand Jude when he says, "Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, the Lord rebuke thee." Satan is ever ready to resurrect the body of Moses, or claim that the law has not been fulfilled in every jot and tittle, but Paul in writing to the church at Rome asked, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." The Apostle had just asked the question, "If God be for us, who can be against us" and then declared, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?" Therefore it is God who rebukes Satan by declaring that the offering which he himself delivered up was all-sufficient for the justification of those whom he came to save. There are those, of course, who "speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves," and there is a "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core." Jude says, "These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever." We can but believe that these things apply to those who have had a knowledge of the truth but have turned aside to walk after the things of the flesh, and especially would they seem to apply to angels, or ministers who once were highly esteemed for the truth's sake, who proclaimed the unsearchable riches of Christ to the comfort of the saints but are later taken up with false doctrines and, perhaps, gratify the lusts of the flesh. Such things are, indeed, spots upon the feasts once enjoyed when they lived as becometh the profession of their faith. Such leaders no longer serve the Lord with fear and trembling, but they feed themselves by following their own courses, which is without fear; they are clouds without water, carried about of winds, showing that they have not

charity in their hearts and they bring not the doctrine of grace, which only can refresh famishing souls as the gentle rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass. Jude says, further, they are "trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots." Jesus was undoubtedly describing such characters when he said, "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men." Jude emphasizes his description of them by saying they are "Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever." We do not understand from this that a subject of grace can ever be eternally lost, but rather that one can so live as to lose his standing in the church for all time to come. How wonderful to contemplate that the Lord, through the means of his saving grace, has never left himself without true and faithful witnesses, who would cry aloud and shun not to show Israel her transgressions and the house of Jacob her sins. Enoch, who was faithful in his walk with God, prophesied of the things, which are revealed in the day that "the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. These are murmerers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage." Jude was a faithful servant and gave all diligence to put these things on record for his beloved brethren, and those who are preserved in Jesus Christ, and called, in the ages which were to follow his advent into the world. He brought forth a "thus saith the Lord" by saying, "But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit." How it behooves us all to take heed unto ourselves, and unto the doctrine, lest after having preached the gospel to others, we ourselves become castaways! We should ever be mindful of the fact that we are not our own, but that we have been purchased with a price, even the precious blood of the blessed Lamb of God. All such are admonished by these words of Jude, "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." It seems to us that the Apostle Peter had these things in mind when writing to those of "like precious faith," he said "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be

in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 1:2-8. In the testimony of these two witnesses we are told not only what to do, but how it is done, and lest there might be some question about the matter, Jude, closes his epistle with one of the most outstanding and wonderful of all benedictions to be found in Holy Writ, knowing full well that it was not in the creature himself to do these things by saying, "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." To us, this is the capstone to the entire structure.

Having endeavored to explain some of the things set forth by Jude, we will now turn our attention to trying to answer some of our sister's questions with regard to the obedience of God's children and Paul's declaration of having fought a good fight. If our experience has taught us anything it is that in our flesh there dwells no good thing. Paul said with his mind he served the law of God, but there was another law in his members warring against the law of his mind, which brought him into captivity to the law of sin which was in his members, and this terrible conflict caused him to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" He could only thank God through Jesus Christ his Lord. Paul also testified to his Hebrew brethren concerning Jesus by saying, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." In writing to his Roman brethren, this same apostle said, "We are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." He also firmly declared that all that he was as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus was by the grace of God. As a man, he had to be crucified with Christ, but he went on to say, "Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." This has been a wonderful gem of the Scriptures to us, for we hope we know something of living by faith. We believe Paul's language explains the matter much better, by far, than we can possibly do, for it seems to us that he has made it perfectly clear that he had not whereof to glory, save in the cross of Christ. For years, it has seemed clear to us that no good in creatures, as such, can be found, but like the branch, if any fruit whatsoever is borne that is to the honor and glory of God, it is because of and directly traceable to the life which is in the vine. Jesus said, "without me ye can do nothing." Sometimes we hear brethren refer to what Paul wrote to Timothy, where he said, "I have fought a good fight," as being simply the fight of faith, but to us it implies that it was a fight in which he had verily poured out his life's blood, so to speak. He fought with beasts at Ephesus, and encountered opposition of all varieties in far greater degree than any of the other Apostles, and while it was always according to the measure of the grace of God given him in Christ Jesus, at the same time it was in such a personal and individual manner as to identify him with being a member of the body of Christ, or a new creature. This expression of the apostle is found in connection with that most solemn charge to Timothy to "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, ex-

hort with all long suffering and doctrine." He goes on to say that the time would come when they would not endure sound doctrine; "but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." As a good soldier of Jesus Christ he was admonishing his son in the ministry, Timothy, what to expect as a servant of the Lord and true gospel preacher, which he was, and was telling him to "watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." If we know anything about fighting the good fight which Paul was alluding to, it has been in a real and vital way of conflict with many opposing forces; conscious at all times of our own weakness and constantly crying unto the Lord to undertake for us. The Lord did not remove the thorn which he gave Paul to buffet him, but he did say unto him, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." He could therefore well add, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." This is not the way that a man, if left to himself, will choose, for it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps in this way. One of old said, The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord. We must walk by faith, and not by sight. O dear ones, do you really know anything of fighting this good fight? Have you felt the need of the whole armour of God, and after having done all, had to stand? One who has to fight this good fight must of necessity receive new supplies of grace each day. Sometimes he wonders if he can endure to the end of the battle, whether or not he will be able to finish his course, and keep the faith, until the time of his departure is at hand. We believe these things are genuine and real to many of the people of God. The Prophet declared, "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit."

Sometimes poets express more in a few words than others can in pages, and we like especially what appears in the last two verses of Hymn 229, Beebe's Collection, which bears on the obedience of God's people:

"No goodness God foresaw in his,
But what his grace decreed to give;
No comliness in them there is
Which they did not from him receive.

Faith and repentance he bestows
On such as he designs to save;
From him their soul's obedience flows,
And he shall all the glory have."

We hope we have in some measure been given to touch upon the deep things of God; upon those things which he has been pleased to hide from the wise and prudent and reveal unto babes. If so, the only reason we can give is because it has seemed good in His sight. May the name of our Lord be exalted both now and ever more! R. L. D.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. M. L. Lucas, Ala., $4; G. W. McDuff, Tex., $2; D. W. White, Tex., $5; S. R. Pruitt, Okla., $5; J. H. Simpson, Wash., $1; F. Johnson, W. Va., $2; Mrs. L. M. Beebe, N. Y., $15; Mrs. K. Ragan, Tenn., $2; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $2; Mrs. M. A. Miller, Pa., $1; H. K. Law, Ala., $1; Mrs. D. Yeisley, Wash., $1; Mrs. H. D. Hewitt, N. Y., $3; Mrs. B. T. Jones, Ia., $10; H. W. Buckner, Cal., $1; Mrs. I. B. Jewett, N. Y., $1; F. T. Simpkins, D. C., $1; H. M. Bowden, Tenn., $1; Mrs. J. B. Simmons, Tex., $3.

RESOLUTIONS

Whereas, God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to call our Brother, B. F. BOAZ, from the walks of this life, our church deems it a privilege to prepare a resolution of respect for him to be copied in our church records, and published in our county paper and the **Signs of the Times.**

Brother Boaz was 92 years of age, a member of the Primitive Baptist Church 64 years, and ordained as a Deacon several years ago. He was the last charter member of the Mayfield, Ky. Primitive Baptist Church which was established on South 7th St. in 1890, where his membership was placed and where he attended meetings regularly, and lived and died in full fellowship with his church and all of our faith and order.

At the last meeting Brother Boaz was privileged to attend in the year 1947, this writer had the humble privilege to gird himself with a towel in the communion service and wash this beloved brother's feet, and Brother Boaz asked me to help him get on his knees as he wanted to wash my feet.

Resolved, that we bow in humble submission to Him who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. Written by W. A. Bowden by order of our church while in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in Nov. 1948.

(Elder) O. W. PERKINS, Moderator
W. L. CHESTER, Clerk

Whereas, it has pleased God in his holiness to remove from this life on Dec. 30, 1948, our dear Sister and Mother in Israel, MRS. ROSA GOSS WHEELER, bringing to our hearts sorrow and sadness. She was born near Stem, N. C., May 16, 1875, where she spent her entire life. On October 21, 1897 she was married to E. P. Wheeler, also of Stem, N. C., who preceded her in death, as also her oldest son, Graham V. Wheeler. She is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Eula Collier, Wilmington, N. C., Mrs. Lottie Parrish, Stem, N. C.; two sons, Garland L. of Oxford, Route 2, and Hazel H. of the home. Nine grandchildren, two sisters, Mrs. W. T. Roberts, Durham, N. C., Mrs. Emma Fowler, Garner, N. C.; three brothers, L. O. Goss, Stem, N. C., T. S. Goss, Varina, N. C., R. L. Goss, Durham, N. C. and a number of nieces and nephews.

Sister Wheeler first united with Camp Creek Primitive Baptist Church, later becoming a charter member of J. H. Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church, Stem, N. C., December 31, 1923, where she held her membership until death claimed her. She was a good mother, a dependable neighbor, a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace.

Funeral services were conducted by her Pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, Friday December 31, 1948. Interment took place in the family plot in the church cemetery. Be it

Resolved, that we bow submissively to the will of God, that his spirit may abide with those bereft, also

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be recorded in our minutes, a copy sent to the family and a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication. Done by order of the church in our conference Saturday, February 12, 1949.

SENIE T. DANIEL
(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER, Moderator
LAURA REED GOOCH, Clerk

OBITUARIES

AUGUSTA JANE CARTER was born Sept. 15, 1876, and died July 5, 1948, aged 71 years, 9 months and 20 days. She was married to Noah Perkins, Nov. 16, 1893 and to them were born twelve children namely: Acton, Virgin, Gladys, Warden, Alice, Lavella, Arnold, Piccola, George, Lafayette, Jettie B. and P. Z. Perkins. With the exception of Jettie B., who died in infancy, they all survive. Aunt Gus, as we always called her, raised a noble family of children, all of them are highly respected by all who know them.

Aunt Gus was one of the most humble and pleasant women I ever knew. She was a kind and sweet mother to all of her children and was loved and liked by all who knew her. To know her was to love her. She was given a hope in Christ forty years ago, but did not unite with the church until about three years ago. When she came before the church she told a beautiful experience and dated it back when she was a girl. When she concluded telling of her hope the little band of brethren and sisters were filled to overflowing with tears and she was gladly received into the fellowship of North Mt. Zion Church. The writer of this notice baptized her and one of her sons at my home about three years ago.

She was a firm Baptist, one that held the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience without wavering. She was so good to me and my family when I had so much sickness. She and her dear family came to our aid and I will never forget her and her children. The family has lost a dear, sweet mother, and the church a true member. After her death the children found she had written an outline or history of herself and her family a part of which follows: "I had a hope in Christ and united with the Primitive Baptists as my home, as my faith to my brethren and sisters in Christ." She had selected three songs in the Goble Song Book to be used at her funeral: "Oh, sing to me of heaven, when I am called to die," No. 279, "Nearer my God to Thee," No. 20, and "Let this feeble body fail," No. 194. All of them were sung at her funeral which was held at North

Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church amid a large assembly of sorrowing relatives and friends who came to pay their tribute of love and respect. She was laid away to sleep in the beautiful cemetery beside her dear husband, to wait that sweet call when Christ shall come the second time without sin unto salvation, to raise these dear children from the tomb to see him as he is and be like him, to praise him for-ever-more. The writer tried to comfort her dear children and friends at her funeral, and may God bless and reconcile all who mourn on account of her passing is the prayer of the unworthy writer.

(Elder) O. W. PERKINS

My aunt, HANNAH E. DANKS, was born May 20, 1855 at Mt. Savage, Md., a town near Cumberland, and passed away Aug. 6, 1948 at the age of 93 years, 2 months and 17 days, at Ontario, California. In 1864, while she was still a small child, the family moved to Cincinnati, Ohio and lived there or in the suburbs until 1908. At that time the family moved to our present home in Ontario, Calif.

I do not know the exact date but sometime in the early 1870's she was baptized by her father, Elder Samuel Danks, into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church called Millcreek near Mt. Healthy, Ohio. After coming to California she placed her membership in the Primitive Baptist Church at Riverside where it remained until the church was dissolved several years ago. As long as she was able she attended meeting of the Primitive Baptists at Friendship Church, Fontana, Cal. or at Liberty Church, Los Angeles. She has been a reader of the **Signs of the Times** for many years and has told me she learned her letters at her mother's knee from the cover of the Signs.

On account of age and its infirmities she has for several years longed to be called home, but was blessed in that she was not bedfast and was able to move about the house until almost the last. Elder O. F. Dearing, Pastor of Liberty Church, Los Angeles, conducted the funeral service. She was well loved and affectionately known as 'Aunt Hannah" far and wide in our community. Her niece,

ALICE M. DANKS

Suddenly and without lingering illness, as she had wished throughout her life, death came on Thursday, February 10, 1949, to my beloved aunt, EUGENIA MARIA EUBANKS. Since she had been born on August 10, 1872, the time allotted to her in this life was exactly 76 years and 6 months.

The place of her birth was near Atlanta, Georgia. She was one of the older members of the magnificent family of fourteen children of the late Elder John G. Eubanks. This number included six sons and eight daughters: James, Jesse, Perry, Hassell, Benjamin, William Beebe, Eugenia, Georgia, Susan, Dorothy, Lucy, Margaret, Ann, and Fanny. But two brothers, Perry, of Wilmington, Delaware, and Benjamin, of Newark, Delaware; and two sisters, Susan (Mrs. Henry Townsend) of Edgemont, Pennsylvania, and Dorothy, of Wilmington, Delaware, today remain. Her father, Elder Eubanks was a stalwart champion of the grand old doctrines of Primitive Christianity, and was widely known among Old School Baptist Associations throughout eastern United States and Canada.

At an early age Aunt Eugenia removed to Kentucky with her father's family. Here, at Campbellsburg in Henry County, Elder Eubanks was for a time the pastor of historic Sulphur Fork Church. In 1901 the family came to Newark, Delaware, where Elder Eubanks remained as the beloved pastor of Welsh Tract, America's oldest Baptist church, until his death in 1926. At this time, Aunt Eugenia took up residence with her sister Susan (Mrs. Henry Townsend), with whom she resided mainly until her death.

Her life was mainly spent, as the above record indicates, in the care of her parents. For a considerable time, during the declining years of her father and mother, she was the only member of the family who remained to care for her aged parents. Her life was a model of virtue; she had to endure the buffets of the world on many occasions. Her convictions of faith were strong and sure; she believed wholeheartedly in the all-sufficiency of the grace of our Lord to remove our every blemish. Her walk was in the way of the righteous, and she loved the congregation of the saints at old Welsh Tract, where she attended within a few weeks of her death. In this religious community, many are the true friends who mourned her passing.

The funeral was conducted in Philadelphia for a small family gathering by Elder John D. Wood of Baltimore. Brother Wood spoke quietly and beautifully of the model life which she had led, by the grace of God. The interment was at Welsh Tract beside the father and mother she had loved and served so long.

Although she was no person of significance as worldly standards go, it is our earnest feeling and prayer that she has entered into that blessed inheritance where thieves break not in, neither do worms destroy. She was simply an old woman who will, perhaps, not be long remembered by many, but this is not important. If our hopes are justified we shall see her again, by the rivers of life which have no end. Submitted in fear of the Lord.

HENRY TOWNSEND, JR.

The many friends and relatives of E. ROBINSON SUYDAM were shocked to learn of his sudden passing Jan. 14, 1949, at his home, 416 West Dudley Ave., Westfield, N. J. He was under the care of a physician and had been warned of possible heart attacks. He held a responsible position with the Sun Oil Co., and was preparing to drive to his office when stricken. He is survived by his widow, Hulda Risler Suydam, daughter Catharyn, one brother, Wallace S. Suydam and many other relatives.

Born near Quakertown, N. J., April 20, 1885, he was educated in the public schools and business college in N. J. and held different responsible positions in Mass., New York City, Penn. and N. J. He was not a member of the church but was generous in his services and his aid in seeing that others could attend the meetings of Kingwood Church, Locktown, N. J. where Mrs. Suydam's mother has been a member for many years.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder C. W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J. with prayer by Mr. Fred Peterson, Quakertown, N. J. at the Holcombe Funeral Home, Flemington, N. J. The unusually large gathering of friends and relatives and great number of floral offerings gave evidence of his high standing in the vicinities in which he had lived. Interment in Rosemont Cemetery, Rosemont, N. J. Written by request.

CYRUS RISLER

JOHN WESLEY HAMMONS, born April 19, 1885, in Ruskin, Nebraska, passed away January 22, 1949, making his stay on earth 63 years, 9 months and 9 days. He was the son of Elder James and Delilah Hammons. Elder Hammons served churches in Nebraska for many years before coming to California. John was married to Miss Maude Brown in Kansas in 1908, and moved to California in 1925. He is survived by his dear wife, three sons, Roscoe, John Jr., and Alfred; four daughters, Mrs. Ruth Shields, Mrs. Mabel Chrisman, Mrs. Melba Wellman, Mrs. Lexie Shackelford, all of Yuba City, Calif.; also, four brothers, Virgil and Earl of Yuba City, Lee of Butte City and Pete of Los Angeles; two sisters, Mrs. Etta Jones of Paradise and Mrs. Carrie Burnette of Chico; also six grandchildren. Two brothers, Corte and William, preceded him in death.

John never united with any church, but was a strong believer in the Old School or Predestinarian Baptist faith and was outspoken in defense of the truth. I have seen him shed tears of joy during services at New Providence Church at Olivehurst. The family was very close together, which made it hard for them to give him up, but God alone who can heal broken hearts, seemed to overshadow them with the spirit of reconciliation and caused them to realize their loss was his gain.

The funeral was held at the Ullrey Memorial Chapel in Yuba City, with a large crowd of friends and relatives in attendance. By request of the family, the writer tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved. After services his body was laid to rest in the Sutter Cemetery to await the resurrection. May it please the dear Lord to heal the wounds of his dear wife and loved ones, is my prayer.

(Elder) T. R. JEFFERSON

ELLIS ELTON CATES, son of the late R. S. and Amanda Virginia (Hess) Cates, was born Nov. 16, 1878, near Hutchinson, Kans., and departed this life Sept. 28, 1948, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Myron Gilbert of Marlow, Okla., after a lingering illness due to hemorrhage of the brain. Thus has passed from our midst a man of sterling qualities and one who was highly esteemed for the truth's sake. Although Mr. Cates could never feel to go home to his friends and tell them how great things the Lord had done for him, and had compassion for him, yet his walk in life, his love for the brethren and his undying devotion to the cause of truth speaks more perhaps than words can convey.

On Sept. 4, 1904 he was united in marriage to our dear sister, Phoebe (Crosby) Cates. To this union two children were born: Mrs. Myron Gilbert of Marlow, Okla., and Mrs. Mary Stevens of San Antonio, Texas who with his widow survive him. This home was for a long time the meeting place of the little church called Pleasant Valley of Kingman, Kans. No efforts were spared to make the brethren and friends feel at home and welcome there. Mr. Cates was noted for his zeal in contending for the doctrine of God our Saviour in which he was well established, and his knowledge of the Scriptures I have often felt dwarfed that of the poor unworthy writer.

His death marked the breaking up of the comfortable little home in Kingman which he and sister Cates had acquired through studious and honest toil, and consequently breaking up, temporarily at least, this little church which met in their home as there has not yet been found another place where she can meet for worship. I have no language to express the sorrow we all feel at his departure, and our heartfelt sympathy for dear sister Cates, the two noble daughters and all who were affected by his passing. He is also survived by two grandsons, Bobby and Gene Gilbert; two brothers, O. C. Cates of Wichita, Kans., and L. L. Cates of Kansas City, Mo., and a number of nephews and nieces.

Among the many virtues of our blessed Lord he was anointed to comfort those that mourn and to bind up the broken hearted. May it please the Lord to enable us all to look to him for comfort and consolation. The unworthy writer tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved, using as a text these words: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Reposing in this blessed hope we laid his body to rest in the beautiful cemetery at Kingman, Kans., believing that his spirit has returned to God who gave it. May the blessing of God rest upon all.

(Elder) L. L. SCHENCK

ELIZA ELLEN URQUHART, daughter of the late Zachariah and Nancy Warren, was born Sept. 2, 1867 near Grain Valley, Mo., and departed this life at her home at 2927 Brooklyn Ave., Kansas City, Mo. Sept. 15, 1948, thus making her stay on earth 81 years and 13 days. She was united in marriage May 1889 to John H. Urquhart. The marriage rites were performed by Elder R. M. Ogle, an Old School Baptist minister of Oak Grove, Mo.

After her marriage she with her husband moved to Cass Co., Mo. where their family of eleven children were reared. All of her children survive her except one son, Archie. The ten surviving are five sons and five daughters: O. G. of San Diego, Cal., J. T. of Long Beach, Cal., W. E. of Kansas City, Mo., F. E. of Independence, Mo., and O. M. of Omaha, Neb. The daughters, Mrs. Joe Hardacre, Richmond, Cal., Mrs. J. A. Lindsey, Ione, Cal., Mrs. Clint Dawson and Mrs. Marie Spencer of Kansas City, Mo., and Mrs. Al Baldwin of Pleasant Hill, Mo. There are fourteen grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren. A noble family indeed who have risen up to call her blessed. This dear old mother in Israel united with the Old School Predestinarian Baptist church called Little Blue near Grain Valley in 1885, and was baptized by the late Elder R. M. Ogle.

After her removal to Cass Co. she placed her letter in Little Flock church where she remained a devoted and highly esteemed member until she was claimed by death. This dear sister was greatly afflicted in her latter days, going about on crutches until she was finally confined to her bed in her last sickness. She suffered intensely but bore it all with patience and fortitude. Not once did her faith waver in the justice and righteousness of God. Indeed it seemed that her faith grew stronger and her hope grew brighter the nearer she approached the end. A dear sister who stood by her while her spirit was ebbing told me the last audible words she spoke were, "Salvation is of the Lord." We are persuaded none can bear this blessed testimony save those who have actually experienced it as the author of those words experienced it. Hence our hope in her future happiness is unclouded. Her love for the brethren, her devotion to the cause of her Master, her steadfastness in the doctrine of God our Saviour all serve as a divine guarantee that she has passed from death unto life.

Although she had not been able to attend her meetings for a good while, yet we miss the dear sister for she was truly a mother in Israel. Her family will miss her until the soft hand of time will eventually dull the keen edge of our grief. God has so ordered it in his providence that the acuteness of our grief cannot always endure. I would that all might look to him for he alone can comfort. This makes the third member of this little church removed by death since the beginning of this present year, 1948. The writer tried to speak a word of comfort to the bereaved living children, all of whom were present except one daughter, our sister Mabel Lindsey, who was somewhere in the South attending an Association and could not be contacted. I also sought to encourage those few remaining brethren to press on and not give up. Incidentally, since then the dear Lord has called home another faithful member of this little church, Sister Essie Odell, making four instead of three claimed by death this year. Still our Father is at the helm. May he comfort all who mourn.

(Elder) L. L. SCHENCK

In memory of ELDER WILLIAM WILLIAMS SLAUGHTER who was born in Anderson Co., Texas, Oct. 21, 1857, and died Nov. 12, 1948 aged 91 years and 22 days. He passed away at the home of a son, Tillman Slaughter, between Edgewood and Canton, Texas. He was married to Ellen Hawkins, Smith Co., Miss. in 1874. To this union twelve children were born, seven of which are now living and five of them have been school teachers. Others surviving are one sister, twenty grandchildren, twenty-two great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren. He was the grandfather of Lindley Beckworth, Congressman from the third district.

Elder Slaughter united with the Old Predestinarian Primitive Baptist church, Henderson Co., Texas at the age of thirty. He was ordained by Elder J. W. Owens, C. C. Taylor and W. F. Shelton at Old Hickory Grove Church in 1888. The dealings of God still remain a deep mystery to human wisdom. "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord."

Elder Slaughter was an able defender of salva-

tion by grace and grace alone, and the memory of this father in Israel still lives in the hearts of God's people, also the solid truths and holy principles that fell from his lips. He was a poor man in this world's goods but rich in faith. He went many times to his churches on horse back and by foot, leaving his wife and children behind, for that sacred cause of God and truth. He was Pastor of one church over fifty years. What he was as a Christian and a minister was by the grace of God and this he gladly confessed.

The writer was called to his funeral to speak a few words. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." "Well done, thou good and faithful servant:**********enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." He was laid in Edgewood Cemetery by his wife, who preceded him in death in June, 1933, to wait the call of his Saviour to change his body and fashion it like his glorious body to praise without sin and sorrow the matchless name of Father, Son and Holy Ghost forever.

(Elder) C. M. HAYGOOD

SALLY JOAN O'DELL, daughter of James and Lavada O'Dell, was born in Santa Monica, Cal. Jan. 13, 1945, and lived to be 3 years, 9 months and 18 days old. While enroute with her parents to attend the funeral of her grandmother, Mrs. C. C. O'Dell, their car was involved in a wreck near Emporia, Kansas which caused her death, and her father was injured to the extent that he was unable to attend his mother's and little daughter's funeral.

The funeral was held at the Runnenburger Funeral Home, Nov. 8, 1948, conducted by Elder Roy Barnes of Kansas City, Mo., and she was laid to rest near her grandmother in Orient Cemetery, Harrisonville, Mo. May God in his rich mercy be with our Brother O'Dell and his children and her dear aunt in their deep sorrow.

(Mrs.) J. W. TAYLOR

LAURA ESSIE O'DELL, daughter of James and Laura Raffurty, was born Feb. 5, 1884, near Greenwood, Mo., and died at her home in the Excelsior Community after a short illness, Oct. 30, 1948, at the age of 64 years, 8 months and 25 days. Her mother died when she was but a few days old, and she and her brother were taken by their father to make their home with their grandparents and aunt who reared them.

On Jan. 27, 1904 she was married to C. C. O'Dell and was his devoted companion for forty-four years. To them were born two children, James Joel O'Dell, Los Angeles, Cal. and Thelma (Mrs. Howard How), Pleasant Hill, Mo. She united with Little Flock Old School Baptist Church near Pleasant Hill, in July, 1911 and was baptized by Elder J. A. Teague.

She was afflicted with asthma many years and when unable to do her household duties spent much of her time reading her Bible, Signs of the Times and Old Faith Contender. She was devoted to her church and never missed a meeting when able to attend. I cannot tell how we will miss her. Her husband is our Deacon and her loss is great. She is the fourth member we have laid to rest this year, but we beg to be reconciled to the will of Him who can do no wrong, and to bow in humble submission to his will, knowing our loss is their gain.

Sister O'Dell is survived by her husband, the son and daughter, four grandchildren, James Joel, Jr., and Sally Joan O'Dell, Los Angeles, Cal., Mrs. Lucile Branstine and Margery How, Pleasant Hill, Mo. Also three brothers, Ora and Ellis Raffurty, Los Angeles, Cal., Phillip Raffurty and one sister, Mrs. Guy Warren, Pleasant Hill, Mo., her stepmother, Mrs. Henrietta Raffurty, Pleasant Hill, Mo., her paternal aunt of the home, Mrs. Etta Taylor and her maternal aunt, Mrs. Lillie Billings, Kansas City, Mo.

Funeral services were conducted at the Runnenburger Funeral Home in Harrisonville, Mo., Nov. 2, 1948 by Elder Roy Barnes of Kansas City, Mo., her Pastor Elder L. L. Schenck being ill and unable to be present. She was laid to rest in Orient Cemetery, Harrisonville there to await the resurrection morn. Written by request of Brother O'Dell.

(Mrs.) J. W. TAYLOR

BOOKS — FREE

The following books will be given **free** with **new** annual subscriptions to The Signs of the Times: FRAGMENTS — 353 pages of selected articles by the late Elder Silas H. Durand, with two new subscriptions; TWO WORLDS by Elder Milford Hall, Sr., of McDowell, Ky., and SHOWERS OF RAIN, containing the christian experience and poems by our late Sister Flossie I. Faulkner. Either one of the last two mentioned books will be given **free** with only one new subscription to the **Signs** at $3. per year.

We are anxious to enlarge our circle of subscribers, and are really making it worth while for our readers to assist us in this undertaking. If you do not own these books, this is your opportunity to secure them. If books alone are desired, first two mentioned $2.00 each, and the last one 50c each.

R. LESTER DODSON

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 117 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JUNE, 1949 No. 6

LIFE'S JOURNEY

When I was but a little child,
And life from care was free,
I did not know that in this world,
There would be trials for me;
But all is well and wisely put
And well I learned ere long,
That as we plod along on foot
We tramp on many a thorn.

Years roll on at rapid pace
Yet I was made to see
That by the gift of God's own grace,
There was a gift for me.
It was to me a love most grand,
That knew my wants and needs,
He gently took me by the hand
And I follow where he leads.

Now on and on to things unseen
With Jesus as my guide,
I'll safely cross the valley green
Or climb the mountain side.
Then once upon the mountain high
I gaze on depths below,
For God's own word will never die,
And I his promise know.

Then when the end is drawing near
And I must cross the tide,
The sting of death I shall not fear
With the pilot by my side;
They'll lay this mortal body down
An immortal one to wear,
Then mount to heavenly realms unknown
And dwell forever there.

Shirleysville, Pa. (Mrs.) FLORA BOOKER

CORRESPONDENCE

THE NATURE OF SIN

That quality which is formally called *sin* in Christianity is the most profoundly terrifying concept which the human intellect can form. And when any human intellect has formed a concept of sin which is ontologically correct . . . . which is the idea objectively corresponding to the real condition . . . . that intellect is necessarily reduced to a condition of incomparable fear, dejection, and despair. A true picture of sin is a true picture of the *one principle without which complete beatitude would prevail throughout the universe.*

A brief meditation upon this last statement leads us to the necessity of a thorough analysis. What is sin? Is sin a thing in itself, or is it rather the absence of a thing which ought to be? What is the purpose of God in its existence? Is it a universal principle; i. e., are all men subject to it? Has it an antidote? With some introspection, the reader will discern that he who can give a complete answer to these searching questions is he who can, simultaneously, make a full profession of Christian faith. It is to be doubted if a single such individual is found in the human state. In the realms of angels doubtless the answers are intuitively known, but human beings have but scanty intuition: we know only a few facts of divine revelation; for the rest, "we see through a glass, darkly." No professor of Christianity can allow his mind to remain wholly idle on these questions, however. Reader, will you come along with me on the search for enlightenment in these matters? Shall we go up together, in humility and hope, to the Christian Scriptures for our answer? For no matter how subtle our dialectic, no matter how rationally satisfying our mathematical deductions, no matter with

what acumen and lucidity our thoughts be formed, they amount to less than nothing save they be sanctioned by a THUS SAITH THE LORD. We deal here with matters which are capable of no demonstration with calculus or electron microscope, but which, in their labyrinthine coursings through the darkened channels of the human soul, find their full explanation in the PURE LIGHT OF GOD ALONE.

What is sin? The English word has its derivation from the Anglo-Saxon *synn,* which, with its doubled consonants, strangely carries with it a more profound aura than our modern word. In its dictionary sense it is defined simply as "a transgression of the law of God." There is substantiation for this meaning in Hosea 6:7; Isaiah 1: 19-20; Romans 10:5; Gal. 3:12. The transgression of the law of God implies that sin is therefore something which is responsible for a detraction *from that which ought to be,* namely, the keeping of the law of God. It is therefore a quality, a principle, a logical being which, when it is in a man, keeps him from the fulfillment of the moral law. It is the human being who does not keep the moral law. From another aspect, sin is therefore a condition of the human will which prevents the observance of the law of God.

Is sin a thing in itself, or is it rather the absence of a thing which ought to be? That which ought to be is the keeping of the law, but by sin the law is not kept. Therefore, sin is that which *ought not to be*: It is a negative entity, an absence of goodness. It is a thing tied up inexorably with the essence of the human ego, and finding its operative manifestation in acts of will. As Hassell so brilliantly observes in his monumental "Church History": "The first verse of Genesis tells us that God created all things; and the third chapter of Genesis implies that evil or sin originated from the ungodly exercise of creaturely free will. Sin is not an attribute of *matter,* but of *spirit.* The most holy God is not in any sense its cause or author. (Gen. 18:25; Job 15: 15; Psalm 145:17; Habak. 1:13; John 1:5:)

What is the purpose of God in the existence of sin? With the foregoing data in mind, we observe: (1) Sin is the transgression of the law of God; (2) It is not a thing in itself, but is a privation of that which ought to be, v. g., *goodness;* (3) It has its origin in the will of the human mind, and therefore, as substantiated by Scriptures, is a product of *human,* not divine, intellect. To align these data systematically, and to discover somewhat of an answer to the question opening this paragraph (... which question, Reader, I am sure you will agree is perhaps the profoundest, most solemn, most terrifying which could ever be asked . . .) we shall avail ourselves of some formal definitions of causality borrowed from the technical language of scholastic philosophy:

Material cause: that 'out of which' a thing is made;
Efficient cause: that 'by which' a thing is made;
Formal cause: that 'through which' a thing is made;
Final cause: that 'on account of which' a thing is made.

As we have discovered, sin is not anything material. Its efficient cause is evidently the human will, and its formal cause the human soul. When we come to the final cause, it is demonstrable that those things on account of which sin is committed are those things which appear, in some way, desirable to the soul committing the sin. And what a momentous conclusion have we here! A man seeks after a thing desired, and oft times that desire is a consequence of sin! Thus, through sin, we seek after

the material world and all its elements. To desire that which is material for its own sake is to act in consequence of sin. Under this aspect, sin acquires a new and completely terrifying meaning: it is not simply murder, or lust, or greed, or avarice, or mean desire, it is the *appetitive search for material reality in itself*. Reader, let us bow our heads in grief, for if this in truth be the meaning of sin, then NO MAN SAVE JESUS OF NAZARETH HAS EVER LIVED BUT HE WAS A SINNER. Bible Baptists are apt to forget this universality of sin: they, like all others, are apt to think that a man is a "sinner" only when he is a drunkard, or an unkind husband, or a conniver in business, when, in terrible reality, A MAN IS A SINNER MERELY BY BEING A NATURAL MAN: Gen. 6:5; 8:21; Job 14:4; 25:4; Psalms 14:3; 51:5; Isaiah 1:5-6; Jer. 17:9; Matt. 7:16-20; 15:19; John 3:6; Rom. 3:9-20. So in discovering to ourselves the universality of sin . . . . its presence in all men . . . . we are led at once to the purpose of God in its existence, and the antidote for its awful presence. Since all men are sinners, God has purposed that sin should abound for an important purpose: and that purpose is the PROOF TO MEN THAT PERFECT HAPPINESS CANNOT BE REACHED BY HUMAN EFFORT. For if all fall under the condition of sin, then no one can alleviate even himself, to say nothing of his fellows. Help from outside the human agency is therefore needed. If man cannot keep the moral law (. . . as indeed, if sin be universal, he cannot . . .) then but two alternatives face his species: (1) A just God will demand justice for the evil done, or (2) another must stand for men.

Now if this other stood for all men indiscriminately, then we would face the illogical consequence of a world having sinned to its good pleasure, only to go free in the end by transference of their guilt to another. Further, and far worse, under such a ridiculous supposition, the universe would be governed by a God in whom there was no constancy or dependability, a God who promulgated a moral law with the stern injunction that it was *never to be broken* only to withdraw his decision, permit men to break it, and then transfer their guilt to another. Either consequence is equally absurd, and on grounds of reason, let alone revelation, to be rejected. But the mercy of God is equal to his justice. Therefore to some he must show mercy, to others justice. The ONLY ONE WHO CAN SATISFY A DIVINE LAW IS A DIVINE BEING; ONLY GOD HIMSELF CAN FULFILL HIS OWN MERCY.

We have been led in our deliberations to the sonorous majesty of the thought that the Almighty God visited human beings, culminated his divine attribute of mercy by a single human life without blemish, climaxed by a sacrificial death which propitiated the sins of his elected ones, and left forever without excuse the sins of mankind without his grace. The nature of sin is the exemplification of the hopelessness of man without God, and the fulness of the extrinsic glory of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Sin, so empty and terrible a thing in itself, is the night which turns our minds to the dawn—the dawn of new life which is imputed to us by the God-man, Jesus of Nazareth. In the night of sin we stumble onward, like Bunyan's Christian, through the slough of despair; we handle, taste, and feel the goods of the world, but the quiet and majestic life of the spirit is without our grasp. But then, praise God, "like a thief in the night" comes the Comforter: the eyes of our soul are turned from material reality, and we enjoy little moments of transfiguration into that blessed realm where evil cannot come.

Rolling on through the ages, the privation of sin haunts the human heart. When we think sadly of its grasp upon the noble intellect of man, this creature, but little lower than angels; when we despair of our daily walk, when we falter and fail, we would do well to remember that this mystery, the greatest of all mysteries, is but as a drop of water in the ineffable tides of Divine Predestination. There is One who reigneth forever and in whom our destinies are contained as the sand in the hourglass. "I AM ALPHA AND OMEGA, THE BEGINNING AND THE END. I WILL GIVE UNTO HIM THAT IS ATHIRST OF THE FOUNTAIN OF THE WATER OF LIFE FREELY."

If there be aught in these lines which reflect the glory of the Triune God, I would join my reader in reflecting, with hushed soul, upon his incomparable name. HENRY TOWNSEND, JR.

Edgemont, Pa.

Raymond, Wash.

DEAR SISTER DUFFUS: At least I hope I am a brother in Christ. If not deceiving myself I think I have a hope which, if a hope, is very small and yet I feel that I have a strong desire, and Brother Peters once said, "a wish is father to a hope." I have had very little experience as I see it, yet at one time for a very brief instant I was given something upon which to build my hope. I hardly know how to express it yet something said to my mind, "You are one," but for this there are many, many times in which I might give up.

Before I go further I wish to express our thanks for such a wonderful letter which we received from you, it was a comfort to us to receive such a letter. Should have acknowledged receipt of it long before this. I find myself so weak and out of the way, so negligent and so busy it seems with this world's affairs that I do not the things I would and do the things I would not. Occasionally I find I have had some of the experiences which Paul tells about. This is also another hope builder to me. In connection with offering alibis, which seems to be about all I am good for, the Savior tells us that without him we can do nothing, and not only do I believe this, but have also found it to be a fact and this applies even to our breathing. So with the help of God will now acknowledge receipt of your letter, and if it is his will may be able to add a few words to this acknowledgement.

Some of our good Baptists rather recoil from the word "absolute" but you do not so I will not hesitate to use it if the occasion comes up in these few words. To my mind "predestination" covers everything, but some of God's dear children seemed unable to digest all of it and began to limit it somewhat so others took to using the word "absolute" to distinguish. I feel that we see and know only what the dear Lord sees fit to let us see and know, and as he is an all wise God and does all things perfectly, therefore, what each one of us individually sees and knows is right and proper. I also think that to some he reveals certain things and keeps us in the dark on other things, and to others he reveals things which to us are dark. I do feel that he has revealed to me some things in connection with predestination which are very clear and seem so clear to me that sometimes I wonder why others do not see it. However, much has remained in the dark to me.

At our last meeting the attendance was quite small but I felt His presence was there. I thought Brother Cameron gave a wonderful talk and it was absolute predestination all the way through. He once said he had reached the point where he could preach absolute predestination without using the word "ab-

solute" and I surely think he did that time. I realize you have a long way to travel and do not want to ask too much of you, yet we will be more than pleased for you to be present at our next meeting or any time the dear Lord opens the way for you to come. He says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." I think this is what is happening when we are so anxious to go to the places where the truth is preached, and why we do not get food or drink when listening to those that I call worldly churches. They seem to be interested in all kinds of worldly affairs. He tells us his kingdom is not of this world. While I am interested in worldly affairs and perhaps much more than I should be, yet I go to my church to worship the true and living God, and do not want my church to be interested in anything but the living God. To me he is the same God whether it be in America, Germany, India, China or wher-ever it may be, and that he rules and controls in those places as much as here, and has children in those places just as dear to him. I feel that he will govern their incomings and outgoings just as much as he does ours.

Yes, I think that highway spoken of in Isaiah is the same highway or path which the Savior tells us leads to life everlasting; that path in which there is no ravenous beast or foul bird of prey. There is no place in this path for anything unclean as the dear Lord keeps it clean and pure at all times. Like the children of Israel feasting upon the manna in the wilderness, we, his children, feast from that wonderful banqueting table, and as he gave them enough manna to keep them going, or rather what they needed, when any of them gathered more than was necessary it spoiled, so I am inclined to feel that we are given just what is needed by each of us individually at his banqueting table.

I sometimes wonder if absolute predestination is my pet theme, and perhaps I dwell on it more than I should. That design Sister Coleman spoke about, and which you mention, it seeems to me the great and glorious God has planned everything from the beginning, and to me in everything he has a purpose which includes everything from the most minute and invisible to the largest and greatest. He rules and controls all things. When Abraham was going to offer up Isaac the ram was caught in the bushes at the right time and place; when Joseph's brethren were about to slay him and were discussing it the Ishmaelites came along at the right time to buy him, hence he was not slain; the famine came at the right time which sent Jacob and his family into Egypt; Pharaoh's daughter came along at the right time to find Moses and also raise him as her son which I think was God's way of preparing him as a leader to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt. This to me is a type of the Savior leading his people out of the bondage of sin. Right here they were murmuring all the time and wondering why they had been brought out into the desert to die, and they were willing to go back into Egypt which is the natural desire of carnal man who does not come to the Lord of his own desire, but the Lord brings him just like David and Mephibosheth. David did not stand on invitations he said, "bring him," and the dear Lord says, "bring them." He sat at the King's table just like every one of the heavenly King's children. I could go on and on and mention case after case where everything was just at the right time and right place. When God declared the end from the beginning he must also have declared the happenings in between the beginning and the

end so that there would be no failure, or in other words, the end would be just as he declared it would be. What a wondrous and glorious God to do all these things, and to my mind when those who reach that eternal home, that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; when they can see in full what he has done for them, I doubt very much that they will have time for or want anything other than to continually praise his holy name.

Dear sister, I am going to touch on one point about which I am wondering how you feel that is along this same line. Our worldly churches I understand seem to believe they will meet and be met with their earthly relatives when they cross Jordan. I understand it is one of their favorite remarks at funerals and also to secure converts. Am also under the impression some Old Baptists feel the same way. However, I pretty much doubt such a condition. We might be giving them some of our attention instead of giving it all to God. At one time my mind was impressed with the thought in connection with my father and mother after they had passed away that in that world they would be my brother and sister in case we are all children of the most high, precious and ever blessed Lord and God. This is only my personal opinion and am passing it along as one of my own. I am so full of error I am asking no one to accept it only as they see it.

I have touched only on so very few of the wonderful truths. Truth is always the same and never changes, it is as immutable as God himself. What is truth to-day was truth in the beginning and will be truth in the end. There is so much to it we could talk until the end of time and yet would scarcely get started on the subject, and I should not be surprised that we will be talking about it all through eternity. Do not know whether I have said anything worth while, in fact unless the most high, eternal and ever glorious God of heaven has seen fit to be with me I have said nothing. It is like my prayers, unless he gives me a prayer I cannot pray no matter how often I try. I feel I have only one prayer and each time I try to pray it it is just a repetition, just a poor, vile sinner begging for mercy from One we know is a great and merciful God, and with a desire to extol his adorable and matchless name which is above every other name in heaven above or earth beneath.

When at a throne of grace please remember a couple of poor sinners who, if saved at all, are saved by grace through the mercies of a living God. Please throw the mantle of charity over this and may the God of heaven bless you abundantly both in this life and in the life to come. Will be more than pleased to receive a letter from you whenever you have the mind to write.

Unworthily, C. M. and MRS. FISHER

(I feel I must add my own remark that both Brother C. M. Fisher and Brother J. W. Cameron of Seatttle, Wash. were ordained as Elders the fourth Sunday in November 1948 in Elder Fisher's home, Little Zion Church, 99 Highway, Wash. What a sweet, humble service that was.

(Miss) CATHERINE M. DUFFUS.)

2206 Roscoe St., Chicago 18, Ill.

R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IF YOU WILL ALLOW ONE SO UNWORTHY AS I TO THUS ADDRESS YOU: For a long time I have wanted to write and tell you how much the dear old *Signs* has meant to me, but I am very nervous and feeble as you can see. Oh that I had the strength and knowledge to put my thoughts into words and write them. I think I can truly say I have traveled the same road with all the writers and

what a feast it is to me. You can all tell what I believe so much better than I can tell it myself. It is the only preaching I have as I am unable to get out any where, and there is no one around that believes as I do. I get lonely and long to see and meet with the people I love.

I did not think when you began sending the paper to me that I would be here this long to trouble you. My precious brother you do not seem like a stranger to me. How I wish I could see you and hear you preach I know it would be a wonderful feast to me. Sometimes I think it is wrong to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs, but how I wish I could tell you in words what a wonderful feast this poor old creature received from the crumbs that fell from my Master's table in my last paper.

I wish I could make you understand how much I thank you for sending the paper to me, a poor, feeble old sinner. If prayers can do any good I pray God's richest blessing for you and may you be able to continue sending out the good news to all who, like myself, are not able to go and hear it. I have always desired to be able to help finance the expenses of the church. How I wish I were able to send you a large donation to aid with the paper, but I can only send you the widow's mite. Will you please accept it as such from me. It is freely and thankfully given. Please forgive this badly written letter and pardon all mistakes. Very best wishes for a Happy New Year. An unworthy sister if one at all saved by the grace of God, and to him be all honor and glory for all the blessings he has bestowed on me. I close with love. If I live until Feb. 22, 1949 I will be eighty-five.

(Mrs.) SOPHIA C. TILLMAN

Route 2, Box 90, Warwick, N. Y.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I received both of your missives and needless to say I was delighted. The weather has been grand here and I was out a lot every day. The air and sunshine are like a tonic to me. My *Signs* has visited me regularly and is so full of good things to dwell on. I have been interested in Elder Lambert's article, also your views on the subject of prayer. While reading the Book I stumbled on Solomon's prayer at the dedication. I like it where he says, "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee." Also farther on "For thou didst separate them from among all the people of the earth, to be thine inheritance, as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord God." I read it over and over. It contains all we can hope for in these later days. I heard our President use some of it on the air. I especially liked Elder Lambert's article for he spoke of the words that opened my heart years gone by, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." They are great words to me and through the years it has been proven again and again, even now, that in his own mysterious way he still remembers me and I am supplied with all I need, and if I knew how to pray I would add, leave me not alone, still support and comfort me, and feed me till I want no more.

Elder Lambert's article in January *Signs* is wonderful also. I have often said, I do rejoice that our God has not left himself without witnesses on the earth, and one thing I am quite concerned about is the merging of so-called churches. We hear it so much on the air and they are so full of religion they want more in the schools. Is this

getting nearer the uniting of church and state? Dear Elder Chick went to Washington one time in our behalf.

Just fifty days from to-day I hope we will all be together again to sing Zion's songs, and to hear our God proclaimed King of kings. Sorry I have drawn this out so long, but you know how to cast the mantle of charity over it and me. Yours in hope.

(Miss) MINNIE E. HYATT

Route 1, Vildo, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON IF I WOULD BE SO BOLD AS TO CALL YOU BROTHER: I feel my old sinful flesh is the worst enemy I know anything about. I used to think when I was older I would be a better man, but I am now past seventy-two and it seems I get worse all the time.

I want to write of a circumstance Elder A. D. Wall of Arkansas told me. A long time past in October I went to Bethel Association. Brother Earl Jones told me this same story and I think Brother Wall told him.

There was an Old Baptist preacher whose name was Hathcox. While working in his crop (late summer) he became tired, warm and thirsty. This was on Wednesday about 10 o'clock. (I will refer to this same Wednesday again.) Putting his hoe on his shoulder he started to the house. He had gone but a short distance when he heard a voice say to him, "Go to Buckrange, Ark." He stopped, looked all around but saw no one. Starting again and going but a little way he heard the same voice again say, "You must go to Buckrange, Ark." He said he knew by that time where the voice came from. When he reached the house he was weeping. His wife asked him what was the matter and he told her what he had heard. She told him he could not go. He told her he had to go. She said, your clothes are all in the wash but asked him when he was going. He told her in the morning. She got his clothes ready and asked him if he had any money. He said he had forty-five cents. He started next morning early. Walking a mile or two he met one of his brethren. They talked a little and the brother asked him if he had any money. When he told him what he had the brother gave him $10. Going on to the nearest railroad station he asked the agent if Buckrange was on a railroad. He looked it up on the map and told him it was not. Then he got a U.S. map and soon found the place a way off from any railroad. He bought a ticket to the nearest point, that taking most of his $10. It was getting dark when he arrived. He was standing in front of a little store wondering where he could get a place to stay, knowing that he had but little money left. A man came out of the store, called him by his name and asked what he was looking for. He told him he did not have money to pay a hotel bill. The man pointed out a light to him, told him to go to that light, tell his wife who sent him and he would be taken care of, also that he would be home in a little while. The next morning the man told him if he had a conveyance he would take him but he would walk with him and put him on the right road. He went on and finally a wagon overtook him and he was asked to ride which he did. (This was on Friday.) Late in the day he became thirsty and asked the man if they could get some water, he replied that just a little way on they would come to a good place.

He noticed several people sitting out in the yard while they were drinking. One of the men came to him and told him he had heard him preach and that he had gone far enough. This was a group of Old Baptists assembled there to spend the night from an Association.

He told the man in the wagon he would not go any farther. Next morning they went back to the Association and this old brother being a stranger they put him up to preach first. He quoted his text and noticed a man come up on horseback. He seemed to be in a great hurry, hitched his horse, pulled some old saddle-bags off his saddle and rushed into the house. He acted so peculiarly the preacher stopped and waited until he was quietly seated. He then quoted his text again and as he did this man arose and sat down again. The preacher continued and when he finished his discourse this man went to the stand, gave the old brother his hand saying, "you are the man." He repeated it and said, "I want you to baptize me." They called the church in conference and gave him the right to talk. He said he was a Missionary Baptist preacher and was holding a revival meeting and when on his way to the meeting (this is the same Wednesday we spoke of before) about 10 o'clock his horse stopped and he looked and this same old Brother Hathcox was standing in front of his horse and quoted the same text to him that he preached from that day, and a voice said to him, "Go to Buckrange, Ark." This old brother baptized him and said the last he heard from him he was preaching Old Baptist doctrine.

Dear brother, I feel the above will be read by the household of faith with interest if you see fit to publish it. Please excuse all errors as I can hardly write at all. G. M. COLVETT

Riffe, Wash.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: How good and how pleasant it was when brethren and sisters dwelt together in unity here at Bethel Church, Riffe, Wash., August 1948 for the fifty-fourth consecutive year! It began as usual Friday before the third Sunday in August, and continued until communion on Sunday with a beautiful, quaint sacred foot-washing custom. One rejoiced greatly in Zion to see such love manifested among God's people in peace and harmony. There were visitors from Florida, North Carolina, Idaho, Oregon, British Columbia and Saskatchewan, Canada.

It was comforting to witness the harmony and shining humility of all the preaching gifts, also the manifestation of the younger gifts beginning to labor in the Master's vineyard. No doubt the prayers of the church are being answered with these gifts, which proves that the Lord will never leave himself without a witness. Such prayers from the church are kept in golden vials and constitute the sweet incense so pleasing to God.

Brother Estep humbly introduced the services with 1 John 3:1-14; "Behold, what manner of love," etc., then asked for the prayers of his brethren. Elder Jeffreys from Weiser, Idaho spoke comfortably from Deut. 32:8-14, also the text, "She (wisdom) hath also furnished her table." This was followed Friday evening by meeting at the Pastor's home. Saturday Brother Fisher from Little Zion Church, near Chehalis, introduced the services with God's "shalls and wills," then read 2 Peter, chapter 1; "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us," etc. This was followed by able, deep preaching by Elder Hughett from Pleasant Grove Church at Naches, near Yakima, his text being 2 Peter, chapter 1. As Elder Jeffreys dismissed us from the feast where wisdom had set her table, in the afternoon's liberty of preaching by the Pastor, Brother D. W. Dial from Jacksonville, Fla. rose because his cup was full to overflowing. Having just arrived at the close of the last sermon he had missed the manna of the pleasant

day, together with the quiet visit at the picnic lunch under the trees. He begged for more church, which resulted in evening service at the Pastor's home where friends sat in heavenly places in Christ. Sunday midst the joy of Zion the unction from on high flowed on without interruption as in the two previous days. After the solemn communion and foot-washing, another visitor, Brother Johnston from North Carolina expressed his thanks for such comfort.

Once more His sheep had been fed. All were "Loath to leave the place, where Jesus showed his smiling face." What a wonderful comfort at a meeting of this kind. Brother Charles Shearer from Tacoma, Wash., together with all the speakers, supplied rest in liberty of praying and preaching. Other texts were, John 10:1-4, also "Feed my sheep," "Prayer," and the beautiful communion sermon by Elder Hughett who preached so deeply about the whole spiritual communion. One can only thank the giver of all good and perfect gifts for being mindful of us once more.

"If fellowship with saints below
Is to our soul so sweet,
What heavenly comfort shall we know,
When 'round his throne we meet?"

Such was the joyful comfort of this unworthy writer. In gospel bonds.

(Elder) ISAAC F. COLEMAN
Pastor of Bethel Church, Riffe, Wash.

Route 2, Brantley, Ala.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Enclosed please find remittance for renewing my subscription and for the benefit of the good work. I should have attended to it before as it is past due. I am sorry and have no excuse to offer. It is just negligence on my part and I hope you will pardon me for the long delay. I have had in mind writing you to commend you on the article you wrote on the scripture I requested. It was very good and gave me much comfort. Your bringing in other scriptures in connection with it made it more understandable. I read it time and again and each time with more comfort. There is so much comfort in reading the letters and correspondence in the *Signs of the Times*. It is a wonderful messenger of peace and happiness to me. If I could pen my thoughts and meditations it seems I could write a volume but I am not gifted that way.

I have thought much about Nicodemus and his visit to Jesus by night, telling him that they knew he was a man from God. I believe Nicodemus had some impressions that Jesus was not just a natural man, but of course he had no evidence as he (Nicodemus) was just a natural man and could not understand the second birth. But why did he go? I believe it was God's purpose for he has a purpose in all things. This world is full of Nicodemus' to-day. They believe in Jesus naturally and are honest in their belief thinking that their good works will save them, but they are without evidence, they have no witness. It takes a witness to confirm a fact. I have traveled the same road endeavoring to save myself by my good works and self-righteousness and it is nothing but filthy rags.

Dear brothers and sisters, when we have gone just as far as we could, look back on our past lives and see nothing accomplished, and look ahead and everything is dark and gloomy, we see ourselves lost, no redemption in sight, just sinking down in sin deeper and deeper, then we are brought to our knees to pray to God for his love and mercy, not justice it is mercy we are praying for, and when it pleases God for that blessed light of Jesus to shine in our hearts, causing the scales to fall from our eyes and unstopping our deaf

ears, then we have a witness that confirms that faith we have in the crucified Savior that cannot be shaken by all the powers of this unrighteous world, a faith that will stand when the world is on fire. Nicodemus did not believe what Jesus told him. He could not believe because he was a natural man, he had no witness in his heart. It takes that witness, that regeneration and being born of the Spirit to confirm our faith and it comes from God the Father in and through Jesus Christ our Lord. He was filled with this grace, love and mercy from the beginning of time. He is a flowing fountain of the water of life, and we poor worms of the dust can drink from that fountain that never runs dry. How wonderful it is to be assured that our Redeemer liveth and is filled with the grace, love and mercy of God to supply all the children that God gave him, and to redeem them. As time rolls on they will be brought into the fold at the appointed time. Nicodemus was a man of the Pharisees, a ruler of the Jews, but still he could not believe and understand what Jesus told him; and just that way to-day you cannot make a natural man see the things of the Spirit. It is that glorious truth and grace of God that cometh from on high.

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see."

This is the sweetest song I ever heard, it just thrills my soul with joy. There is enough grace in this dear old hymn to fill all the mansions on high for Jesus said, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you." Mansions of gold prepared for the redeemed that are drinking from the flowing fountain that never will run dry, filled in the beginning according to God's will and purpose, his foreknowledge and predestination, and there is no other way under heaven that we can be saved. It is Jesus blood and he said on the cross, "It is finished," his work was finished. Some people will say the Lord has done all he can do and that it is left for the creature to accept or reject him. Jesus said, when he was here on earth, that he could not do anything of himself and how can this old sinful body of clay do one thing to save himself. Just a world of self righteous people trying to save themselves by their good works. They believe in Jesus naturally but have no evidence. I believe they are a type of Nicodemus. He professed to believe in Jesus but had no evidence as witness and it did not please God to give it to him for that was not in his will. All that are in his will will have the evidence at the appointed time and be made humble and to beg for mercy.

When the angel of the Lord appeared to Jeremiah and told him the mission he wanted him to perform, Jeremiah told him he could not, that he was just a child, and the Lord told him he knew him before he was born. What a wonderful thought and great assurance that the Lord knew his people before they were born. God makes his people do what he wants them to do in the day of his power.

I wanted to tell you about our fifth Sunday meeting held at the church of my membership. I thought it a glorious meeting. We had a large congregation and four preachers. Earthen vessels prepared before the earth was formed and filled with the Spirit and grace of God to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ unto this day. When you see tears of joy on the cheeks of Old Primitive Baptists you can feel assured that they have the witness in their hearts. I feel that all felt it was a glorious meeting. We were expecting Elder Griffin from Covin,

Ala. but he did not get here. We regretted very much that he did not. He is an able minister and I enjoy hearing him so much. Trusting in the love and mercy of God that the Lord sees fit to spare you to carry on the gospel work. A sister in hope of something better. (Mrs.) J. J. McNEAL

Neversink, N. Y.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I have had a desire to write you for some days now to tell you again how much Sister Adsit and myself have enjoyed the meetings in Middletown, both from the preached word, and the love and fellowship that prevails among the brethren there, and those that love the truth as it is in Jesus and him crucified. You mentioned at the time of leave taking that you were busy, (and I knew you were) that you might write to me through the *Signs,* and so you have when you took for your theme *mercy.* How often this poor sinner and writer has cried to God to "be merciful to me, a sinner." How many times that was my only prayer. You quoted the Psalmist where he said, "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy." When my many sins overtake me, and no one to turn to, it is the omnipotent God that gives me peace of mind and body. I have also said, "Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" and "Am I his or am I not?" I often wonder and yet he has given me a little hope which is all the hope I have, yet I doubt and fear whether my name has been written in the Lamb's book of life. O God, be merciful to me a sinner. I do know that if I am saved it is of no works of righteousness on my part, but according to his mercy he has saved me.

The experience of Elder Lambert is wonderful to me for it is of the things the child of God has handled and tasted in a measure, and again I say, am I one or am I not, God be merciful to me a sinner. I, too, have at seasons been absorbed in the world, and have been cut down to know that the Lord liveth and reigneth, and to look to him as I ought, and I might say as we ought. I. too, have tried many times to pray and meditate and even write to some of my brethren and failed miserably, and could only cry to him for mercy. I know what it is to be down in the valley, and thanks be to God I have had a moment on the mountain top.

As you know I was born and baptized (sprinkled) an Episcopalian, made to attend Sunday School regularly, and was confirmed in that faith never knowing there were such people as Old School Baptists. In the meantime I was in all the churches you might name. Methodist, Presbyterian, Catholic, (my own church was much like that) Universalist and Baptist. In the last named I worked to be saved and nearly united with the New School Baptists in an evangelistic meeting, but the Lord took hold, and as I see it now, he has directed my steps all the way. Praise his holy name. I met the Old School Baptists through my wife and they took us in. To this day I cannot see why we were accepted, such unworthy sinners as we both felt to be, and yet we were lead about by the same teacher, Jesus Christ and him crucified. You will see now that I must say again that what I read in the *Signs* in this one issue has fully paid for its price. It is, in a measure, something we have handled and tasted.

Sister Adsit and I both send our belated New Year's greetings, but none

the less sincere, to you and Mrs. Dodson, and may you both live long and prosper in His loving care. Your unworthy brother. EDWARD K. ADSIT

THE LITTLE SISTER FROM TEXAS: I am from Texas but I am not a sister. Oh that the great Master of all could see fit to lead me in his path. I have read the *Signs of the Times* for many years. Why, I do not know, but something, somehow makes me love it. If I know my heart it is next to the Bible. When I was very small a grandmother would come home with mother from Saturday meeting and stay for the night. I would pull my little chair up close to her knee and listen, as I thought, to her preach. I loved to hear her and mother talk. As I grew older I learned to read about what she would say, and I would say, "She is right, here it is." So I have drifted along sixty-one years, believing she was right.

I married when I was sixteen years and eleven months old and went along not thinking much about my condition until God saw fit to take from me my darling baby. He choked to death in my arms, and oh how helpless I felt to be, but still I thought I should have done more than I did, not realizing it is all in God's hands not mine. In 1923, having five children and expecting another my husband lost one lower limb. I thought that was all that could come to me. I did not deserve any more, but not enough. In 1924 I lost a five year old boy, my father and my brother. It seemed this was the end for me, but no, I am still here. Why, is for Him to know, not me.

I am still trying to make a living for myself and husband as the children have all flown. My youngest is twenty-five. We have a lonely time but I feel or hope I do that the great Master knows best. I do not know why I have desired to write you, but I feel you know troubles and do you think there is hope for me? There is no one here I can talk to that I think would understand my language. When I read the *Signs* I shed tears of joy and wish I could express myself as others do. So you see I am trying to wait on the Lord to lead me to his banqueting house. Where he leads me I truly want to follow. I feel if I should wake in hell I would have to say God is just. I have no experience of grace but hope I can give one at the appointed time. Pray for me. If I know my heart I love you people. Just toss this aside. I feel unworthy to write you.

A SINNER FROM TEXAS

Route 2, Chewelah, Wash.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS: Do you know it is a fearful thing to think you are addressing the children of the most high God? If ever any one knew this I believe I surely do. Why do I make the attempt? I am at a place where I cannot do otherwise. I have noticed a lot lately wherever one is speaking of trouble in the church that she is in perilous times, and I just want to offer a few words along this line, of comfort if it be God's will.

I do not doubt that there is trouble in the church and I know how it hurts us when it touches us individually or our own little group. How we long for the days of peace we once knew, but these days are for our good. It is God's own way of keeping the church humble and poor and ever at his feet. Her righteousness must be of Christ, it must be his righteousness. We are in the world and we so often go astray and need to be brought back. How often we forget who it was that grafted us into the true vine. So individually we begin to build this house of clay and straw and all manner of perishable things. Can

you deny this? I cannot and as the members are so the church is. She begins to be just a little puffed up. We have a few more members than usual, there are others taking an interest in us, our meetings are grand and we feel so secure, so full of zeal. Now surely we are kindred of Christ and cannot fall, let us push ahead, let us fight, yea we will go with thee though all the world forsake thee. But oh when darkness settles down, the wolves begin to howl. Now this member stays away, another goes to something else, some one else hurts some one's feelings. Now we find we are not in Christ, we have wandered too far in the light of day to return to the cot before night fall. We cannot feel his presence neither can we recall ever having done one good deed. We, like sheep, mill round and round, perhaps one is snatched away, or some who were not sheep now soon scatter to right and left. All these things are a fearsome experience to have to go through but go we must.

For forty days and nights the rains came and the floods descended upon the earth until it was cleansed and purged. Elijah went for forty days on what the angel gave him and the Lord told him the trip was too much for him, but go he must. Why? So that he might know through experience that his strength was not in himself.

So I believe if there is trouble in the church God has a purpose in it, and although it is hard to take yet we will have to bow our heads to the storm and may he grant us grace to say, "Thy will be done." If I be one to fall by the way I will rejoice if it be His will for I want his church to be lovely to behold, humble and cast down at the feet of her Master for only then can she reign with him in truth, grace and love. These are the things he taught and the secret things he bestows upon her to make her fit to stand with him before the great white throne. Do you think for one moment that God will fail in his plan of salvation? No, praise God, all mankind and powers we know nothing of may but not the Great I AM.

So be of good cheer oh ye of little faith for it is the valley he leads her out of. We are no better than the tried and tempted ones of old. If ye know not where he is go thy way by the footprints of the flock, and thou shalt feed thy kids beside the shepherds tents. We think we will go our own way but from time to time we are made to stop and look around us. Made to look back we find we too have been tempted, tried, fell and our hands are torn, our feet worn out and we are sick nigh unto death. Then lo and behold, the sun shines and here in this darkest of all places the blessed Lord spreads us a table in the presence of our enemies (sin and our own willfulness) and we feast here. All our strength is gone, all our goodness is gone, and we are made to lie down beside the still waters. You see the way of salvation is still. Blessed thought! Be still and know salvation is of the Lord. There is no galley with oars here for I am the way, the truth, and the life. A quiet way, a place of many waters. I beg to remain humbly a sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

(Mrs.) MARY L. ECKARD

ANNOUNCEMENT

It is with deep regret that we announce the passing of our esteemed senior Associate Editor, Elder Charles W. Vaughn, of Hopewell, N. J. on April 21st, 1949. He will be greatly missed by those whom he served, and our readers are going to miss his writings.

Also

We have been informed of the passing of Elder Jonas C. Sikes, Route 2, Campbell, Texas, on or about March 20th, last. Suitable obituaries for both of these ministering brethren will undoubtedly appear in the **Signs** within the near future.

R. LESTER DODSON

EDITORIAL

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P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

PEACE

Should we be blessed to write concerning this wonderful word it will be to that extent and degree of measurement that I have experienced peace by the Lord. There is a people spoken of in the Bible that have not known the ways of peace. Sometimes doubts and fears assail me and I cannot embrace the promise of peace that is in Jesus Christ—yea it seems that I have not known peace.

I believe that God gives, imparts and teaches knowledge to his people. This is the work of the Holy Ghost. It is a *performing* work, being begun and carried on in the lives of God's children. But knowledge is not alone; the church has a diversity of gifts given to her, and hope comes from the same source and is applied to the same child for his perfecting. These two gifts are blended or given in such measures, that we cannot despair to the extent that we do not hope in Jesus Christ and long for that sweetness that God's family enjoy when blessed with the leadership and fellowship of the Spirit, but there is one thing we must constantly be taught. Thus the two needed things for our travel in this low state are provided by Him that knows all about us. We must not become exalted and God has arranged for this by taking away knowledge and giving hope. It is a grand blessing to be blessed to hope that we have the peace of God that passes all understanding. We are so poor that we cannot say of a certainty that we have this peace, yet at times our possessions are so gloriously brought to us and our cup is made to overflow with the mercy and love of God that we rise as high as Job did in his day and are made to say that we know that our Redeemer lives. This peace cannot be bought nor traded for, neither can it be lost nor taken away from us. Job knew the tide of sorrow and misery and at that time he did not know any peace, lamenting the day that he was born and failing to find any relief or solace from the tormenting feeling of sin and iniquity that continually was in his mind.

Before the world began, even from all eternity, God had ordained that a fountain flow to his dear children in time. This fountain was for the cleansing of all sin and uncleanness from his children and for the bringing of evidences to them that they were his by gift and purchase. This is spoken of as a river and that it shall make glad the city of God. War always causes sadness and desolation to those caught in it, and the conflict that the children of God find themselves engaged in is one that they can never win the victory try though they may with all the power that they can bring to bear in the matter. It is the purpose of God that we use up our resources, being brought to see that all flesh is as grass and as the flower of the field, failing in any sense to do anything for our relief and recovery. At the end of our efforts and at a time when we expected banishment

from Him, he came as our peace. We had seen and felt all our strength go out and felt empty and barren of anything that would ever bring us into favor with the great Commander. Now when our strength was gone, completely used up, it is then that this flowing river comes into us. Peace as a river sounds comforting to our storm-tossed soul (Isa. 66:12), and we are made to ascribe greatness unto our God for his wonderful goodness to the children of men. We are made glad as it flows, and above everything else we know that salvation is the free and unmerited favor of God toward sinners.

This river of peace was not dependent on us for God to determine that it would be; it was not dependent on us when it rose in manifestation; and it is still an independent stream flowing where God sees fit to cause it to flow, and that according to his purpose which he purposed in himself before the world began. God is the giver of this peace and he does not make any mistakes and send it to one that he did not intend to receive it. When not in possession of this peace that he gives, we cannot exercise it in order to have it but it moves us into that peaceful condition that characterizes the Lord's believing children.

He spoke many precious things while here. It was necessary for every word to be spoken in order to give us the right to speak and to have every need supplied by him that effectually works all the works of his little ones in them. He did not speak of having help when he procured our peace, but rather that we would all be scattered and he left alone as far as his people assisting in their redemption. It was according to purpose that he be left alone because the Lord had already looked and saw that none could help of all the people, but while alone from them he was not alone as far as his Father was concerned. That eternal God who is the source of all perfection, wisdom, power and glory was there and, strange as it seems to the mind of men, he was glorified in the work that he brought about in the garden of Gethsemane, taking that that he eternally hated and making it work to the good of his children and redound to his name's honor and glory. People sing over the radio about the matter being settled long ago, not knowing how long ago nor who it was that so gloriously settled the question of the salvation of God's people. How any-one can think that peace or anything else can be exercised by the Lord's people is more than my mind can comprehend. Every good and perfect gift comes from God and there is not a gift that means any more to the family of God than peace. While they are not able to do anything of themselves peace is as far from them as the east is from the west. In the Mount of Calvary peace was given to the church by the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ. There has not been another payment made from that day to this. We are preaching another gospel which is not another, when we attempt to preach to a poor way-worn child that his peace from sin comes from anything that he does.

As I write to you concerning this peace I wonder does it concern me as a personal matter, and have I ever known the way of the Lord in graciously bringing me into that quietness that somehow I did so long for while in a foreign land. One thing I feel to hope and my poor heart is comforted at the thought, that one day I came to the place that turn where I would I could not find any comfort, peace or even any expectation that I ever would be any better off than at that time. The storm came up slowly; I cannot set the hour, I do not know the day. This I feel to

express that one day I was at peace and then for some reason an awful feeling came into my mind. For days I knew nothing more about it and then it came again and again until my peace was gone and life became miserable. There is a long dry journey here that I feel to pass by, and tell you of the ending of the storm. It went as it came, gradually. But only those that have passed this way can know the exquisite sweetness of the tranquility and quietness that was mine to experience. I catch myself going over in my mind these things again and again, and not long since it was my pleasure to visit Missouri and I could not resist going over the ground where I stole away to ask God to have mercy on me a poor hell-deserving sinner. But until to-day I have never felt that burden as I felt it then. Peace, reigning peace, is my only hope for any satisfaction here or hereafter. While I was given peace from my sins I was not given peace from other things and it was not long until the church of Jesus Christ was presented to me as a most glorious habitation and baptism as the way ordained for entrance into it. I was not fit for a place among them and did not want to be a reproach to them. I put it off and do not mind ascribing unto God all the praise for my being led to tarry no longer. Had it not been for the power of God, as I hope, I would still be lingering around the fold hungering for the things of the kingdom. I enjoyed being baptized and do not have any regrets to-day, except to say that I feel I have not been any benefit to the Lord's people. Yet I have not had any more desire to be baptized and want to thank his precious name for that peace. Even to begin with I had an impression to preach the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ, but now the burden came with such renewed power that there was no rest anywhere. I longed to be free from these impressions and to take my seat among the brethren and listen to the servant tell about what the Lord had done for his people. I feel that I would have done that if I could. I wanted peace it is true but I did not want to obtain it that way. There is no rest, peace or satisfaction until the Lord gives it, and his way was to lead me to the appointed place of my deliverance. Preaching became easy as peace came into my soul. The easiest thing I ever did in my life was when I was blessed to tell what a great God he is, that he does whatsoever his soul desires in heaven and earth. At times I have a feeling of unprofitableness and fain would do any thing else before preaching. Should it please the Lord to leave me here I would quit, but I do not think he ever leaves us to our own folly except to teach us something we need to know.

This peace is something he must give every time we enjoy it. There is not a conditional peace spoken of in the lids of the Bible. Each and every time we enjoy it, it must come from God, from the time he first brought us to a knowledge of the truth that a sinner cannot attain to the peace that is in Jesus Christ, to the time when he gives us dying grace, that we might die in full fellowship with what God has done, and in peace with every heir of his kingdom.

I am sorry to say that at times I am in peace or at a oneness with this perishing world, and would court her favor and applause, but God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved me when dead in trespasses and in sin does not forget his everlasting covenant. In his way and often-times at complete cross-purposes to my way of thinking I am, as I hope, made to know that he will not give his

glory to another nor his praise to graven images. This world is a cross to every child of grace, but after a while our last great conflict shall come and by his amazing power and glory he will bring us to die in the peace that was treasured in Jesus Christ before the world began. The final, eternal and most glorious display of his peace will be at that time when all the family is safely gathered into that haven of rest, at which time all of them shall be in peace forever and forever.

I have been asked why I do not write more on the things that little new born babes can eat and enjoy, and among those things was peace, joy and experience. I have hinted at some of the things in one fellow's experience, how that the Lord God from heaven delivered my soul from hell, gave me peace and a hope that has thus far been an anchor.

Since hard doctrine does not, as I am told, satisfy the little babes not yet established in grace, I will, if blessed of the Lord, write at some future date on the absorbing subject of the sincere milk of the word. W. D. G.

"Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: She hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine, she hath also furnished her table."
—Proverbs 9:1-2.

Sister R. N. Williams of Pelham, N. C. has asked that we express through the *Signs of the Times* our thoughts on this portion of scripture.

We understand that men of old were moved by the Holy Ghost to write what they did by the way of prophecy, and we are persuaded that unless we are led by this same Holy Spirit to interpret what they wrote, we shall be unable to rightly divide the word of truth. In their attempts to portray the greatness of God and to give us some few glimpses of his incomprehensibility, the prophets have employed many descriptive titles, only to conclude that he dwelleth in the heights to which none can attain, and that no man by searching can find him out. The record opens with the declaration that "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," and the first chapter of Genesis catalogues much of his creative work, but in order that none might deprive him of that which rightfully belongs to him, John says, "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." This, to be sure, is all-inclusive. In giving us the generations of the heavens and the earth in the second chapter of Genesis, Moses enlarges upon the work of creation and repeatedly uses the expression "The Lord God." He is also known as, The Lord of Hosts, the Supreme Ruler of the universe, Jehovah, the I AM THAT I AM, the Omnipotent, Omniscient and Omnipresent One, the Eternal God, the All-wise, Almighty and Everlasting God, and many other attributes are applied to him. All that we human creatures can do is to crawl around on this terrestrial ball and look unto the everlasting hills, from whence cometh our help, remembering that he hath said by his servant James, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering."

Wisdom can be spoken of in various ways and many applications can be made. In the chapter preceding the one in which the text is found, Solomon treats upon the fame, the excellence, the nature, the power, the riches and the eternity of wisdom. Paul in his epistle to the Corinthians, after setting forth the purpose of God in choosing the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of

the world to confound the things which are mighty, went on to say, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." 1 Cor. 1:30-31.

It seems to us that Solomon in our text is using *wisdom* to personify the workings of the Triune God in the Gospel Dispensation. It is here that God is manifested in the fullest sense. God the Father loved his people in the counsels of eternity with an everlasting love; God the Son, in the fulness of time, came to manifest that love, God the Holy Spirit reveals the Son as the Savior of that people chosen in him before the foundations of the world were laid. After Jesus arose from the dead, he spake unto his disciples, saying, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Mat. 28:18-20. Solomon, therefore, was setting forth the perfection of this infinite God in establishing his church here in the world and providing for her every need. First, he says, "Wisdom hath builded her house." We read in the Psalms the declaration that "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." This house which Wisdom builded is none other than the Gospel Church, and we are told that "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his," therefore there is nothing weak or uncertain about it, but all was ordered and sure. Inspiration further declares that "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." In the Acts of the Apostles it is recorded that "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." The late Joshua T. Rowe, of Baltimore, Md., used to emphasize that sinners *must be saved,* and we rejoice that God ordained the end and the means before time began. In the very outset of the book of Revelation, we are told that it was "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John." When Simon Peter confessed, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," Jesus answered and said unto him, "Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Peter said, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Paul tells us that it is "by grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." He further declares that we "are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in

the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Wisdom left nothing undone or incomplete, for it is said, "she hath hewn out her seven pillars." God is the workman and "we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." The expression, *hath hewn out,* indicates to us some of God's workings with us and in us whereby we are made vessels fit for the Master's use. The temple which Solomon built typified in some measure the church of the true and living God. The timbers which entered into the workmanship of that temple, first, had to be cut down or severed completely from all earthly dependence; by nature they were crooked and unshapely and of necessity had to be hewed and shaped so as to fit into the pattern designed by the wise masterbuilder. In and of themselves, the timbers had nothing to do with their being chosen, or the preparation for the place which they were to occupy in the building; they were all passive in the hands of the workmen and the builder, but when they came together and were assembled into the most wonderful temple of all time, and that without the sound of a hammer or a tool of any kind, it was seen that wisdom had designed all that pertained to it. Our text says that wisdom "hath hewn out her seven pillars." The record in Revelation is that John was commanded to write unto the angels of the seven churches of Asia. The number *seven* in the Bible signifies perfection, and it is thought by many that the condition and experiences of these seven churches set forth fully the various experiences which the Gospel Church here in time has to pass through and endure. John in addressing these seven churches, began by saying. "Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth." In introducing his message to the church in Sardis, he said, "These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." These "seven Spirits of God" emphasize to us the perfection of God in his dealings with his people; therefore they are as pillars or supports of the certainty of all of God's promises, which are yea and amen in Christ Jesus. There can be no failure whatsoever anywhere along the line of their travel from nature's darkness into the marvelous light of the glorious liberty of the blessed Son of God. They are first quickened by the mighty power of God, and he fulfils the prophecy of Jeremiah where he said, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." God spake by the prophet Isaiah concerning them, saying, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." The Psalmist said, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." God works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Fortified by such wonderful declarations of sacred truth, how can anyone put any confidence in the arm of flesh. It is well established by Holy Writ that all flesh is as grass, and as the flower of the field which perisheth. Not only, then, has wisdom builded her house, this city of Zion, or the New Jerusalem which came down from God out of heaven, but hath appointed her trials and afflictions, all for her good, that she might be prepared for the coming of the Bridegroom, for she awaits

patiently His appearing, but judging from our text, nothing has been neglected or overlooked which pertains to her welfare, for our text says, "She hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table." Here, great vistas appear to open and beckon us on in our contemplation of what God has done for his people. Under the Jewish economy thousands of bulls and heifers, rams and firstlings of the flock, pigeons and turtle doves, were sacrificed as offerings of one kind or another, but their blood though it flowed as rivers, could not appease the wrath of God against sin. Such offerings were only made in remembrance of sin, or to keep the people mindful of their sinfulness, and to point, as arrows, to the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who by the offering of himself perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Without the shedding of his blood there could be no remission, or putting away of sin, but John seeing him as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world could say, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." By the shedding of his own precious blood he paid the price in full and finished the work which the Father gave him to do, which was to redeem his people from every kindred, tribe and tongue and present them to God without spot, wrinkle or any such thing. Therefore, Paul could well ask, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." It is Wisdom who hath mingled her wine, which typifies the Redeemer's shed blood, and applies its cleansing efficacy to poor sinners' broken and contrite hearts, whereby they are revived and stimulated by its life-giving power. In the days of old, the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron to instruct the congregation of Israel to offer a lamb, without blemish, and to "take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it." This meant mercy and peace, yea and life itself to the occupants of the houses where it appeared, for the Death Angel seeing the blood upon the door posts passed over and did not disturb or molest those who dwelt therein. Our only hope of mercy and peace with God is based upon the shed blood of his only begotten Son.

Our text ends with the declaration that Wisdom, "hath also furnished her table." God, in the counsels of eternity, truly foresaw and provided for the needs of his chosen people here in time. Unless greatly deceived, there have been at least, a few times in our life when we were privileged to hear the gospel of the blessed Son of God preached in demonstration of the Spirit, and with power sent down from heaven, and we partook of the bounty with which God has furnished his table. Isaiah said, "In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." Dear Reader, if you can say with Solomon, "He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love," you will get some idea of what we are trying to say, otherwise it will have but little meaning to you. We must first be prepared for that which God has prepared for us. Let us remember that the text says, Wisdom hath also furnished her table. That means that none of the food shall ever go to waste, of which there is an infinite variety. Jesus said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst

after righteousness: for they shall be filled." The vessel must first be marred and be made to see its own vileness and vanity; it will be made to realize that the things of this world perish with the using thereof, and that only the things of God will endure and survive when all things else decay and pass away. The soul that is led to see and know this is a blessed character, and being alive in Christ, or a new creature, it will hunger and thirst after his righteousness, but it will lack no good thing, for the promise is sure and certain of fulfilment, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it, that "they shall be filled." When anything is full it can hold no more, and when one is given to eat of that Bread of Life which came down from heaven, whereof if a man eat he shall live, and not die, he can never be satisfied with anything less. We might ask, what are some of the characteristics of those who are blessed to partake of these things, and will then answer in part by citing them from Holy Writ. When David was king of Israel, he inquired, "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" The answer came, "Jonathan hath yet a son, which is lame on his feet." He was without strength in his feet, and being unable to walk, an invitation would have availed him nothing, but the record is that "King David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar." And when Mephibosheth came unto David, we are told that "he fell on his face, and did reverence." "And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually." The case of Mephibosheth is indicative of those who are the recipients of God's goodness and mercy for Jesus' sake, for there is nothing in them to merit esteem or to give the Creator delight. When John the Baptist sent his disciples to Jesus, saying, "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?" Jesus answered them by saying, "Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard, how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me." Come, my friends, and behold some of the characteristics of those for whom Wisdom hath furnished her table. May God enable you by his rich and reigning grace to find yourselves listed among those characters described by our blessed Savior, and if so, you will know how wonderful, indeed, it is for the poor and needy to have the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, to them that believe, preached unto them. Men may spend all of their days in schools, colleges and Theological Seminaries, and never be able to teach or to learn anything about "these things," for it has pleased our heavenly Father to hide them from the wise and prudent, and reveal them unto babes. All of God's truly called and qualified servants must be taught by him, and it is really God who feeds his flock like a shepherd. Some of our churches, at times, may get in a very low estate, and their undershepherd may be removed from their midst, and in their sad and mournful state they may feel destitute and forsaken of God, but they should remember that God alone can supply their need. He will be inquired of and sought after by his people, and he is ever faithful to reward them who diligently seek him. May he always keep and guide us that we trust only in him, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. R. L. D.

MEMORIAL

Little Flock Church feels a deep loss in the death of our dear Brother WILLIAM DAVID HUGHES, who died Dec. 25, 1948 at his home in Granite, Okla. after an extended illness. He was 77 years old.

He was born in Grason Co., Texas and moved with his parents, Elder and Mrs. J. L. Hughes, to a farm near Martha, Okla. in 1888. He was married to Miss Lena Campbell in 1896, and to this union were born five children; three boys and two girls. His wife died in 1917 and he later married Miss Maud Campbell to which union were born two boys and one girl. He is survived by his widow, eight children, thirteen grandchildren and one great-grandchild. His wife and son David, his sister, Mrs. Nina Stallings, and husband were at his bedside when the end came.

He united with the Primitive Baptist church at the age of fifty years and has been a faithful member since that time. He was baptized by Elder W. N. Green. He served Little Flock Church as clerk for a number of years, was released to speak to the church and often made short talks at our regular meetings which our members enjoyed. He was a firm believer in an all wise and omnipotent God, and was a steadfast and faithful member of the Primitive Baptist faith.

In 1921 he bought a building, moved it on a lot in Altus, Okla. and gave it to Little Flock Church where she still meets for services. He requested that Elder Green conduct his funeral services and that the 15th chapter of 1 Cor. be read. He also requested the singing of the following songs: "God moves in a mysterious way," "When he reveals his face," and "It is finished." His funeral was held Dec. 27 and his last requests were granted.

Little Flock Church wishes to extend heartfelt sympathy to his bereaved wife, children, relatives and friends. He will be sadly missed by his church which requested that a copy of this memorial be sent to his family, a copy sent to the Signs of the Times and also be made a part of our church records.

Done by order of the church while in conference at Altus, Okla., Jan. 8, 1949.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN, Moderator
(Mrs.) LOU KESTER, Clerk

OBITUARIES

MRS. FANNIE ANN GLASCOCK, our beloved sister in Christ, fell asleep in Jesus January 15, 1949 at the Iliff Nursing Home, Dunn Loring, Va. where she had been a patient for several weeks. She was born February 5, 1863 near Rectortown, Va., a daughter of Amanda M. and Samuel P. Triplett. Was married December 18, 1889 to Charles Hunton Glascock. Of this union, the living children are Bailey B. Glascock, Seattle, Wash., W. Clay Glascock, Vienna, Va., Mrs. S. J. Fillingham, Burke, Va., Mrs. Willis Dixon, Coronado, Cal., Charles M. and Miss Janie Glascock, Arlington, Va. and our sister, Mrs. Russell S. Craig of Arlington, Va. There are 8 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

I baptized sister Glascock June 20, 1909 into membership with us in the New Valley Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun Co., Va. She believed in the doctrine of free and unmerited sovereign grace, absolute predestination, unconditional personal election of the elect in Christ before the foundation of the world, the effectual calling by grace to belief and repentance of all the elect of God, and the final glorification of the saints at the second coming of the Lord from heaven to be admired in all them that believe. She was firm in her convictions and true to the faith that was in her, faithful to her church and to her family and in every relation of life. Her one desire was to have a way to get to her meetings, and she was happy when among her brethren in their homes and in the meetings. She was content with her home and with her place in life allotted to her of her heavenly Father. She was not wishing for things she had not, nor coveting what others had. She was satisfied, had a contented mind which is a continual feast to those blessed with contentment. She was buried in Flint Hill Cemetery near Oakton, Va. Funeral service conducted by the writer in Funeral Home at Vienna, Va. She rests in peace, her spirit with the Lord. The church and her children miss her sorely, especially her son Clay with whom she lived and who was devoted to his mother. May the Lord make us resigned and submissive to his holy and righteous will, our loss is surely her eternal gain.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS

MRS. ANNA CELESTA SECOR, widow of Robert Secor, or Aunt Anna which she was to me by marriage, departed this life July 5, 1948. Born in Saugerties, N. Y., Jan. 7, 1851 made her stay on earth 97 years, 5 months and 29 days. Her husband preceded her in death in 1914, they were united in marriage in 1868. Born to this union were two sons, Edwin D. M. and John James Secor. John passed away in Feb. 1938.

Aunt Anna lived on a farm most of her life at Shokan, N. Y. She was the daughter of Edwin and Lydia Quick Stewart. Besides one son, Edwin D. M. she leaves to mourn their loss five grandchildren, Mrs. Celesta McConnell of Conn., Misses Gertrude and Emma Secor, New York City, Edwin Secor, New York City, George Secor of California, also four great-grandchildren. One

grandson, George is a namesake of Elder George Ruston of Canada.

With her son Edwin and daughter-in-law, Maude, widow of her son John, she resided on the homestead farm at Shokan, N. Y. Few closer friendships ever existed between mother and daughter-in-law than in this case, where for many years each desired the welfare of the other. She was sick but a short time at the last. She was a lover of the gospel truth. Of late her eyesight hindered her from reading and she looked forward to visits home from sisters Gertrude and Emma to read the **Signs** to her. They are members of Ebenezer Church in New York City. She was a strong believer in salvation by grace, but always said she was too unworthy to unite with the church.

In her younger years she did more than her share in entertaining and furnishing food for the meetings of the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church at Ashokan, N. Y. Too much could not be said of the good principles, character and life of Aunt Anna. We believe it was the grace of God that clothed her in these beautiful garments. Funeral services were held from the Olive and Hurley Baptist Church at Ashokan, N. Y., conducted by the writer and assisted by Elder A. H. Bellows.

(Elder) AMASA J. SLAUSON

DAVID VASSER TAYLOR was born Nov. 25, 1877 in Cass Co., Texas. The Lord called him home July 21, 1948, making his stay on earth 70 years, 7 months, 26 days. He married Sybilla McLeod, May 9, 1901, and to this union thirteen children were born. He is survived by his widow and nine children, namely, Homer, Noah and Marshal of Bossier City, La., J. B. and Hanford, Shreveport, La., Otis of Whitecastle, La. Mrs. Newman Land, Gladewater, Texas., Mrs. Fred Baxter, New Orleans, La., Mrs. James Mynatt, Knoxville, Tenn.

He united with the Primitive Baptist faith and order at Pleasant Hope Church, Texas, Oct. 26, 1924. He was ordained Deacon Oct. 4, 1941 and served faithfully in that office until his death. Funeral services were conducted by Elder T. A. Wall who spoke words of comfort to a large company of relatives and friends. Interment was in Pleasant Hope Cemetery in Cass Co., there to await the resurrection morn. Written by the request of his companion. The church feels her great loss but her loss is his great gain. His yokefellow in the church.

L. S. HILL

SISTER HARRIET MATILDA ALGER of Preston Hollow, Albany County, New York died October 15, 1948. She was born April 20, 1848 at East Hill, Schoharie County, making her stay on earth one hundred years and six months. She was the seventh of nine children of Benjamin and Nancy Barthwick Brayman. She was united in marriage to Levi Alger February 15, 1871, who died April 7, 1925, making her wedded life fifty-four years. Born to this union were three daughters, Edna Alger Duntz of Hudson, New York, who followed her in death December 11, 1948 at the age of seventy-six years, Elnora Alger White, who died at the age of twenty, in 1894 and Eva Mae Alger Roney of Preston Hollow, Albany County, New York, who lives on the homestead where Sister Alger lived for fifty-five years and died there. After her husband's death she occupied rooms in the home until ninety-five years of age. Since then she lived with Eva and her family.

Sister Alger had eleven grandchildren, three preceding her in death, and one great-grandchild. One grandson, Malcolm L. Roney, lost his life in France. Sister Alger lived her whole life within a radius of twenty miles of the place where she was born. She left several nieces and nephews and a host of friends. She was the last one of nine children to go. She fell and broke her hip May 9, 1947 when she was ninety-nine years old, and was confined to her bed and chair until her death. Her daughter, Eva, and family lifted her from her bed to her chair from one to three times every day. Pneumonia was the cause of her death, being ill but a few hours. There is considerable credit due her daughter, Eva, and family for the tender care which was administered to Sister Alger in her days of affliction and need.

In her early life her time was occupied teaching school. She united with the Methodist church when young, but later in life she united with the Middleburg Primitive Baptist Church which she loved and attended as long as her strength and health permitted. Sister Alger was a meek, humble, patient soul being a good example for many of us to follow, as she bore the beautiful fruit of the Spirit which is manifested when the grace of God is present.

Her funeral was held from the Cunningham Funeral Parlors at Greenville, New York. Interment at Middleburg beside her husband to await the Resurrection Morn, when the last trump shall sound, when the earth and sea shall give up their dead. Funeral services were conducted by the writer, her Pastor, Elder A. H. Bellows, being in Maryland.

(Elder) AMASA J. SLAUSON

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 117 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JULY, 1949 No. 7

CORRESPONDENCE

Athens, Texas

DEAR ELDER DODSON AND ASSOCIATES: For some time I have had a mind to write regarding some things which appear to me vital for the consideration of the brethren generally throughout the domain of our churches. Uppermost in mind for these thoughts is Luke 14:34. "Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." Let us suggest you read the entire chapter, getting the import of those facts the writer had in mind. This being the language of Jesus himself seems to be far reaching in its significance, that indeed he meant to emphasize the needful walk in this life of the true followers of the blessed Lamb of God, materially speaking of these things in parables—Of the ambitious guest invited to the wedding, of those bidden to the supper, the king going to war, etc.

In these days of apparent falling away, how markedly that men in all walks of life so urgently seek the high places (rooms), considering themselves worthy regardless of the position they seek, taking no heed unto themselves or to the doctrine; "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind." Are there any you know of living up to this admonition? Some may say you cannot apply this literally, we would suggest rather, you do not spiritualize away its meaning. Who, indeed, is more precious than a brother, say nothing of a friend, kinsman or neighbor; these are excluded, but the poor, lame, maimed and blind why that no recompense be forthcoming? This is Christ the Lord's way and thou shalt be blessed. Some one said they had rather have to their credit in heaven the giving of a cup of cold water to a thirsty child of God than to sit in the Presidential chair of the United States.

Virtually the same lesson is taught in the parable of the supper. Always present with us are, seemingly to us, reasons or excuses which hinder in our endeavor to follow Christ and his teachings. We quote again, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple."

It seems so often and quite popular among some to ask, "Are you a Christian?" The humble, meek child of God will possibly answer, "I hope I am." Others will likely say, then you had better know and be on Christ's side. We would say if you can measure up to these standards set by Him then

you are qualified, but if you cannot, then hear the great Master's mandate, "Ye cannot be my disciple." My precious brethren none in the flesh can measure up to such a standard but, it is "Christ in you, the hope of glory" wherein is our sufficiency. The above prerequisites are found in Christ only, who died for us, redeemed us, fulfilled all these glorifying attributes of God's people, and we behold through an eye of faith Him continuously on the throne interceding for those the Father gave him, who have learned through the crucifying of the flesh that within ourselves we can do nothing, but through Christ who strengtheneth us we can perform all things.

In the text, 34th and 35th verses, I feel the Master had in view the seriousness, the usefullness, the very work and function of the church. Reference is made in Matt. 5:13, "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." If these disciples of Christ are representatives of those who should follow: (and as the blessed Master said "are the salt of the earth" and shall continue to be, and not only so, but he also says in the following verse, "Ye are the light of the world" what are we to suppose or convey from so vital statements, that the church has lost its influence in the world, the salt has lost its seasoning or its preserving effects? We must admit that such is the power and substance of salt in our common expression, the salt has lost its power to function, and indeed the light spoken of as being the light of the world naturally generates from the same source, then he declares it is thenceforth fit for nothing but to be trodden under foot of men.

Should this take place in this world, that is, the salt lose its power, the lights be removed or cease to shine, the true believers in Christ will in that day better understand the meanings of His statements. The world at large (I speak of the professing world) is becoming so involved in worldly progress, endeavoring to introduce into church activities entertainment, worldly pleasures, etc., that the true, humble, meek and devout believers in the meek and lowly Lamb of God are almost lost in the scramble. But this same Jesus whom the world hated when on earth comes with a comforting declaration to the humble and meek; Ye are not of the world, they hated me, they will also hate you.

Oh that the Lord would grant us grace enabling us to labor more for peace, bring the wandering ones, the God fearing, God honoring ones into a nearness with Him and his teachings which, indeed, are love, joy and peace. Recently it was our happy privilege to attend one of our Associations, Sulphur Fork of Texas, where we met many of the dear Elders as well as many brethren and sisters who seemed at peace one with the other, a great repast of spiritual nourishment. "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" We believe the preaching in this very pleasant assembly adorned the doctrine of God our Savior. Since God the Father hath given the Son power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to every one the Father gave him, causes us, even in these distressing times of the church, to feel that neither flesh, hell or devils can stay the hand of God. Christ declares all the Father hath given me shall come to me, and none shall pluck them out of my Father's hand. I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish. Greater

is he that is in you than he that is in the world. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth , nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom. 8:38-39. In view of such declarations, coming too from the great apostle who had the seal of Christ stamped upon his labors, gives us renewed zeal, and we trust increased faith to press toward the mark of the high calling in Christ Jesus. Yours in hope of immortality.

(Elder) L. D. ROSE

Route 1, Rives, Tenn.

DEAR ELDER DODSON AND OTHER READERS OF THE SIGNS: Enclosed find money-order for a two year subscription. Yes indeed the editorial by Elder Lambert was worth the price of the subscription. I have heard him preach. He and Elder A. D. Wall and their wives were in this section of Tenn. several years ago. An experience such as he had is something to meditate on: the wonderful working power of God to save hell deserving sinners such as I feel to be. Elder R. W. Rhodes has written so beautifully on God's sovereignty and mighty power. I so often fear I do not understand the spiritual meaning in the right way. We are tossed to and fro. The Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who laid the scheme of redemption for man before the world was made, is able to save every one of them that make up his bride, and in the resurrection gather up his jewels without the loss of one. I am so glad of such perfection which I am sometimes able to see. It gives us renewed hope that our names are written in the Lamb's book of life. Paul said, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." We get great satisfaction thinking we know that we are kept by the power of God who has all power in heaven and earth.

Another New Year. I thought many times in my young life I am going to be a much better girl than I have in the past and now passed my fifth-fifth year I grow older and worse and worse. When I think all I had in this life to make it happy is lost I seem desolate and alone, but at times I can turn my eyes from this and see the goodness and mercy of our God. All gifts are his and come from him. May the Lord in tender mercy spare your life to carry on the good work and enable you to enjoy his blessing both spiritual and natural. Your sister in hope of a better world.

(Mrs.) SOPHIA PRICE

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510 Blackburn Ave., Ashland, Ky.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR EDITOR: Allow me, if you please, to tell those who read the *Signs* how much I appreciate the fact that I am now one of the family. My first copy was September (1948) and when I sat down to have my first look at the first article, who was the author? The man who sent my subscription in, Brother H. L. Rogers, and of a truth I enjoyed reading the first article in the first copy over the signature of Bro. Rogers. Not only that, but the paper as a whole seemed to blend in harmony with the things that I have been made to know and realize that have taken place in my life since God found me in the wilderness, lost and undone. In Proverbs 8:22 it reads like this; "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old," and in the next verse, "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was."

Brother Dodson, I feel impressed to write you and if, after looking it over, there might be something that would be of profit you may carry it in your paper. I am just an eighth grader as you probably have discovered. My English is very limited, but I am not trying to pose as a seer or a monitor, just trying to write some of the things I sometimes feel God has made known unto me. Continuing from the scripture quoted above, "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth. While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him."

My dear friend and reader, is there not enough evidence in these few verses of scripture mentioned above, if there were no more in the entire Bible to correspond with them, to cause us to believe that God did, before eternity, prefix or purpose everything that has come to pass, or that ever will come to pass; in other words let us gladly and most emphatically call the whole thing PREDESTINATION, and I feel satisfied that I can truthfully say predestination of all things both the good and the evil. Why do I say this? because I believe the scriptures teach it. Just here let us reason the subject. If in eternity God, in his infinite wisdom, devised a plan to make a world is it not logical to think that he (God) did make a world that would turn out in every way just as it did? And if he had wanted it to turn out differently was not his wisdom and power sufficiently great to have made it in any other way that he might have wanted it? Just for the sake of reason let us say he wanted a world that sin could not have entered, then we could say of a truth that he erred in his creation, but not so, dear reader, I believe he wanted a world that would in every way turn out just as it did.

We read of all the things God created in the first chapter of Genesis down to the last verse, then we hear him say this; "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold it was very good." That does not sound like there was any dissatisfaction thus far does it? If all these things that are mentioned up to the creation of man were not the foreknowledge of God, then I presume it was by accident that he placed the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the garden, and accidentally formed man of the dust of the ground and put him in the garden to keep it. Also stumbled on the idea of a helpmate for man, never dreaming that the old Devil would come along and deceive mother Eve. That, my friends, is the kind of God that I am not concerned about, but the God that I feel that I serve, by his help and power, is an all wise and everywhere present God, and that his foreknowledge is as immutable as he himself is. That being the case I am convinced there is no power on earth or anywhere that can deceive him. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but God: the powers that be are ordained of God." Rom. 13:1. I fear I would be in a miserable

state without some of the higher powers, because I am of the opinion that back in eternity before time, that we as mortal beings and every other thing that is on the face of the earth was dependent upon God as to whether we would ever exist or not. Yet there are those who have time to go from place to place and just save people by the dozen without any trouble. What I cannot understand is when, where or how their dependence upon him ceased, and if that be the case, why would it have been necessary to inspire the apostle Paul to write, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers." Did not Pilate tell Jesus, "Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?" But what did Jesus say unto him, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above."

Dear reader, I believe that God himself holds in his hand the very breath and destiny of every thing that creeps, crawls, walks or talks that is in existence to-day. Here is something that is much comfort to me when I feel low in spirit, or as the old saying goes, "Down in the dumps." "Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." Hear what Nebuchadnezzar said to Daniel, "The king answered unto Daniel, and said, of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret." Oh child of God, is there not solace for your troubled heart in those words spoken through the mouth of Daniel, "What shall come to pass hereafter; and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." How could any one be so blinded as to begin to think that there was any reasonable chance whereby any of these things could possibly fail to come to pass. Here are some of the words of Daniel when the secret of the dream was revealed to him at night. "Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: And he changeth the times and seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding." I am of the opinion that all the acts that were committed had to be, such as murder, Daniel being cast into the den of lions and especially those men that accused Daniel, their children and their wives. All of this could not have been good and pleasant, naturally speaking, no doubt there was every wicked and evil intention that could be thought of among themselves, and yet none of them ever realizing that they were most certainly fulfilling the very purposes or decrees of God. All of the things leading up to the crucifixion of Christ were decidedly not good and pleasant.

Let us see what Acts 4:27-28 teaches: "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." What did they do? Acts 2:23, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Why did they do this? Did they know they were supposed to do this? Did they know they were fulfilling the scripture? Most certainly they did not! I say every wicked act or step they

committed or performed was absolutely under the influence of the Devil, yet all of it was bringing to pass "whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done," including the Devil himself if you please. One might ask how much power does the Devil possess? I believe I can best answer that by saying, just exactly as much as God intended him to have for the complete fulfillment of the scriptures. We read where he had power to cause sin to enter into the world, but not nearly enough to have any influence over Job. "But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses." Acts 3:14-15. The same chapter verses 17-19 read, "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." Yes, we find where it pleased God to bruise his Son. Why did he have to bruise him, and put him to grief? Because it was very necessary that his soul be made an offering for our sins, your sins and mine, and every one that God the Father foreknew. Yet I believe that all those people, I mean Herod and Pontius Pilate, and the people of Israel were in their own minds performing every act along the line just as though God had never intended such to be done. But we hear Jesus say when he was talking to Pilate, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world." Could they have possibly had any power against him? What did he say on that very occasion? Why have you come out against a thief with swords and with staves? Thinkest thou that I cannot pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" That is why I believe that each and every one of them had to be where they were at the appointed time and perform the very acts that they did, because it was God's purpose and by his foreknowledge alone that all this came to pass, and it was all done that you and I might be made to rejoice in fellowship with each other, wherein that bountiful love and affection shews forth when we are brought together with our brethren.

Herein, my dear friends, lies just a tiny portion of what God himself foreordained that we might be made to taste of. I have in mind the Holy City, New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, which John tells about in Revelation 21. Listen to the third and fourth verses, "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Oh, child of God, can you not rejoice exceedingly, in hope of the things wherein we feel that if a saint we have been given knowledge through Jesus Christ to some little degree of satisfaction to ourselves that we are beneficiaries to the things which God before eternity foreordained and predestinated to which we shall attain? "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give

unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." John 10:27-28. Are not all these *wills, shalls* and *musts* comforting words? such as neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. To me, kind friend, that is just as sure as God the Father himself. "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." John 15:5.

I am inclined to think, generally speaking, that most of us and most too frequently, are at times in the habit of feeling our independence of God. Perhaps I should not have said that, but with myself I am quite sure that I have been made to weep time after time in view of the fact that I have been brought down by the loving hand of the Prince of Life for so doing. Oh, how true are these words, "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform," and "Without me ye can do nothing." Many have been the times that when I was afraid, or too stubborn to venture too far down the aisle, my dear old father has come back through the crowd clasping hands with every one, and he would always say, "Son I hope the Lord will some day do for you what he has done for me." But Jan. 4, 1940 God saw fit to call him from our midst, and some two years later he saw fit to do for me what I am sure he had done for my father. Some one might have made his acquaintance, that will have time some day, perhaps if for no other reason than force of habit, to read the entire paper from cover to cover, and for that reason I will give his name, Elder Frank Kennard, for many years clerk of the Burning Spring Association of Regular Primitive Baptists. In closing I would like to say, if there should be some one who happened to have known my father I will very much appreciate at least a card from you. I will treasure it most dearly, because I am quite sure he was dearly loved and respected by all who knew him any length of time. One more little thing, if you please, after I finished reading the poetry on the first page of the Nov. issue of the *Signs* over the signature of Elder H. J. Bird, and through correspondence with Brother H. L. Rogers, I made a trip to Denton, Ky. for the express purpose of having the privilege and honor of meeting and hearing him speak, but for reasons beyond his control, I am sure, he was not blessed to be with us. However, the trip was not amiss by any means, because God made it possible for Brother C. H. Evans from Enterprise, Ky. to be with us, and blessed him to bring us a message of the Word, and I mean by that we were blessed to hear Christ and him crucified preached.

The very best of health and happiness to the Editor and the Associate Editors. Your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ.

HOMER W. KENNARD

2402 Lakewood Drive, Vancouver, B. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Enclosed find money-order to renew my subscription for a year and the balance to help in some way. There is holy ground where one must needs take off the shoes from one's feet. Who am I to be led in such sacred spots? So I abhor myself since the day I was born as in Job 42. One Saturday I rested like Jacob where the ladder led down from heaven. Our aged Brother and Sister Withers just preached to me in their home near Tacoma. We were two or three gathered together in His name. Elder Hughett says Mother Withers can preach a better sermon than he.

It was such deep waters which they explained. Early Sunday morning I left for meeting at Brother and Sister Fisher's home on 99 Highway near Chehalis. The sweet, deep unction of Brother Cameron's preaching comforted us and held us high up on that highway where Elder Adkin's sweet, humble prayer had lifted us. A mere, wicked human being like myself could scarcely bear their sincere love. With our invisible Savior there in our midst who could think other than that "the Lord is in this place." One is melted by their charity, love and spiritual attributes. I must remind these people of my black, sinful self. I wanted to tell them how ashamed I was one day as I tried to look up again to the sky from out of the midst of my sinful self. What a miracle to be confronted with continual blessings! His loving kindness is too much for mortal to face. "Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."

This little Zion Church is my nearest church. The text was Isaiah 38:14-17. "Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward: O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me. What shall I say? he hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it:" etc. Once I read a letter in the *Signs* about different Elders rising to declare texts, then preaching the inspired messages. The writer expressed the sheer joy of sitting in such heavenly places. I am now travelling home again from this quick, powerful unction. The word of the Lord is sharper than a two-edged sword. All their love and charity is fraught with power against which no law can function. I am not fit to be there. Mother Withers explained that His glorious church has been reigning as kings and priests since Pentecost. Once again he has led me to his banqueting house, to his garden where he feeds among the lilies, and where he makes his flock to rest at noon. Surely I must walk softly in the bitterness of my soul. Humbly,

(Miss) CATHERINE DUFFUS

McDowell, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Here are two passages of scripture which I have thought much upon, to wit: "If any man do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." "And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." The Arminians use these scriptures very frequently, thinking that they favor the doctrine of the free-will of fallen man. The truth of it is there could be no greater falsehood and wrestling of scripture, seeing that unregenerate man has no will to believe and be saved. (John 15:5; Eph. 2:3; John 5:40; James 4:4; John 1:13; 3:6; 1 Cor. 2:14; Psalms 119:67 and 71; James 4:5; Deut. 32:10.)

I touch not upon this subject as a champion, but to show my opinion to others. I hope it will help others as it has helped me. For many years these scriptures were hard for me to reconcile with other scriptures as they seemed to favor free-willism. Now I feel to understand them much better and have no desire to shun them. My poor view I offer after much prayer and thought upon this subject concerning the occasion and import of such language.

In reading the Bible, if you wish to understand it, always consider the times and conditions under which the people of that day were living. Yes, it will greatly help us, too, to remember that the Bible is not an English but and Oriental book, and that every custom it refers to, every figure it uses,

is Oriental, and when we attempt to reconcile these customs and figures with our English habits we make a fatal mistake.

In the Antediluvian and Patriarchal ages, the Lord Jehovah himself confined his favors to a few particular families. When he formed Israel into a commonwealth, he chose them to himself, and separated them from all other nations. To them he gave his oracles, his ordinances, and his covenants, yea, he honored and indulged them with his divine presence. In this the Israelites gloried; they appropriated this privilege to themselves and held other people at a distance, looking upon them as strangers, and without God in the world; hence, that chosen seed spares not to say, "We are thine: thou never barest rule over them; they were not called by thy name." Isa. 63:19. At the commencement of the Messiah's kingdom, the Lord purposed to change the scene, and vary the dispensation by admitting both Jews and Gentiles to an interest in the great salvation: as they were equally chargeable with sin, and equally liable to the curse, they now should stand upon a level; be equal sharers with that divine Savior, who submits to be made sin, and to be made a curse for both alike. This the Holy Ghost expressly and repeatedly promised, "He (that is, the Redeemer which is to come) shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth." Zech. 9:10.

Notwithstanding such prophecies and such promises, our Lord himself, when he entered upon his ministry, acted a discriminating part, and kept up the partition wall, in pursuance of that declaration, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." When he sent forth his disciples to preach and to teach, he gave them, also, a command to show the same partial regard, "Go ye not into the way of the Gentiles." This conduct of our Lord, both under the Old and New Testaments, confirmed the Jews in their self-flattering notion, that they were, and ever should be, a favorite nation and a peculiar people. The Gentiles, on the other hand, were no less discouraged; apprehending that as they were, so they ever should be, "Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel." But in order to convince the Jews of their mistake in claiming the blessing of Abraham to themselves; and in order to assure the poor, discarded Gentiles that they "should be fellowheirs, and of the same body," our Lord in his last charge to his apostles, alters the style of his commission, and enlarges the sphere of their several departments. It is now no longer, "Go ye not into the way of the Gentiles," but quite the reverse, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations," and "He that believeth and is baptized (whether Jew or Gentile) shall be saved." Still the Jews were hardly induced to give the right hand of fellowship to their brethren, the Gentiles for Peter cries, "Not so, Lord" with some indignation. Still the Gentiles, hardly persuaded that they should be partakers of the grace, reasoned against themselves, "The Lord hath utterly separated me from his people." Isa. 56:3. Therefore the Lord, to intercept all the desponding objections of the latter, (the Gentiles) and to bring down the high disdainful imaginations of the former, (the Jews) declares in a variety of places, that the difference no longer subsists; that Christ has thrown down the partition wall, and laid all plain, common and free. Though the giving of the law pertained to Israel only, the Lord Jesus gave himself a ransom for all people. The paschal Lamb ex-

tended its influence to the circumcision, the Lamb of God, as a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, even though it be not circumcised. And now God would have all men, whether bond or free, Jew or Gentile, Greek or Barbarian to be saved by coming unto the knowledge of faith.

This account gives us the true cause, and points out the intended use of such universal phrases as, "And let him that is athirst come," "And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely," "Who will have all men to be saved," "That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man," "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world," and "If any man do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak for myself." They are calculated to abate the pride of the Jews, to encourage the despised Gentiles, and by excluding none, they give encouragement for all nationalities to come; because, though every individual person will not be saved, yet "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." By this interpretation, the phrase (or phrases) is not inconsistent with other texts, neither does our church contradict herself.

It seems to me that all of the foregoing interpretations are the only true and logical ones, and especially of that passage of scripture, "If any man do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." For, to interpret this scripture literally, it makes the knowledge as to whether the doctrine was of God, depend upon external action, and upon exact conformity with God's will, a condition which I greatly fear no human being could ever literally fulfill in his own person. So it is very evident the true meaning is that the knowledge as to whether the doctrine was of God depended not upon external action, and exact conformity with God's will, but upon the internal disposition of the Jew or Gentile who willeth or wishes to do God's will—whosoever willeth or wishes!

Yes, this interpretation is true also in the scripture passage, "Whosoever (whether Jew or Gentile) will (desires or thirsts after the water of life) let (do not hinder him) him take of the water of life freely." (without money or price). The word *let* here means that whosoever (Jew or Gentile) will (willeth or wishes the water of life) should not be hindered by any one as Diotrephes hindered the brethren in the Primitive Church of God by not receiving them, forbidding them, and even casting them out of the church. (John 3:9-14.) Yours in Him.

(Elder(MILFORD HALL, SR.

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122 Lincoln Avenue, Salisbury, Md.

DEAR ELDER AND BROTHER BELLOWS: What a sweet privilege it is to call you Brother, yet I feel so hesitant to do so because I feel so far beneath you and indeed all the dear people of God. I felt very humble indeed when Elder Spangler first called me Sister. You are so greatly blest of God to see the hidden truth and beauty in the written word and to declare it to the comfort and edification of his flock, and so is our beloved Elder Spangler. He speaks from the depths of a great experience and so sweetly comforts and feeds us. He supplies all our needs as a true minister of the gospel. I hope I have been blest to see the Kingdom of God and his mercy and grace in the face of Jesus, our Lord, and the spotless beauty and holiness of his bride, the church—not holy in the flesh, of course, but sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water by the word, a

glorious church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, her eyes fixed on Him whom her soul loveth. Yes, she is "black but comely." That expression in scripture has been sweet to me for many years and I have seen a great beauty and grace in the church for a long time, but as I told Elder Spangler yesterday, it has been like looking through a window—I could see and admire the loveliness inside, but could not partake of its fullness. There is now a feeling of sweet communion—of being surrounded by a great wall of protective love.

I have waited a long time to ask for a home in the church—not that I hoped ever to feel any better or more worthy, but the Lord's time had not come. There had to be a certain amount of sifting and the Lord knew exactly how many strokes, how much refining fire was necessary, and when the time came, he took care of it for me. He took it entirely out of my hands—the decision was not mine. How wonderful and beyond human comprehension are the works of God! How perfectly he leads us! As I look back over the past years, how plainly I see the hand of my dear heavenly Parent, unseen at the time and unerring, guiding my course, pruning me, disciplining me, moulding me—many times in his matchless wisdom and love denying me things which I thought I wanted and needed. Sometimes the sense of loss and human loneliness has seemed so great that I felt I could not go on, yet in all these experiences, he has not left me comfortless. When the waves and billows have gone over me, he has stood by and comforted me. He could, of course, have accomplished his purpose without leading me through these experiences, but that is not his way and I'm glad it is not. "Tribulation worketh patience." By nature I am not submissive. The "old man" in me likes to have his way, to choose his path and direct his course, but the "new man" which I hope has been created within me loves to lean on him, longs to know and do his will, glories in God's sovereignty and rejoices in the doctrine of electing grace.

Elder Spangler spoke so beautifully at Snow Hill yesterday on the subject of baptism, using as a basis for his sermon, the baptism of Jesus and his subsequent temptation in the wilderness. He traced the path and walk of the Christian in his earthly pilgrimage by the divine example, and was given such sweetness and expressed thoughts that swept me away from earth into the heavenlies for a time, and ever since then I have felt to be blest with the presence of the Lord in my soul. I noted last night while reading the account in Matthew, that Jesus was "led up *of the spirit* into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." How sweet to know that when we are tempted and tried, we are led of the Spirit into that place of trial. How doubly sweet and comforting to know that although he leads us there, he does not leave us there to withstand the assaults of the tempter ourselves, but goes before and places beneath us the everlasting arm to bear us up. What a wonderful Savior he is! I feel to say "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name."

If I could only stay in this blest state, so free from the things of earth, so filled with the goodness and the mercy of the Lord, but I know I can't. I have had seasons of it before, only to find myself the next day utterly cold and lifeless, even questioning and rebelling against the dealings of the Lord with me. How wonderful it will be when we are bound to earth no more, when in his dear presence for-

ever-more, our days will be spent singing his praises and there will be no night. When there will be nothing to conflict with our communion with him. I oftimes feel as the hymn writer "I sigh from this body of sin to be free, Which hinders my joy and communion with Thee." Can it be that this glory is awaiting even me?

Elder Bellows, I do expect you think I did not appreciate your good letter as I have waited so long to answer it, but I have not been able to answer it before. It is seldom that I can write anything but empty words. I think we have to be given utterance, as indeed we have to be given anything which is at all worthwhile for what have we that we have not received? Elder Spangler said sometime ago that it is so easy to speak when we are given something to say. Neither you nor he ever seem to lack utterance and it is something I covet for I believe it is written that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. That may not be the exact quotation, but something like it. Of course, a great many of us are not given to speak the things we feel. But I do hope you will understand, Elder Bellows, and write me again whenever you feel to do so. I would love to attend your association—I have long wanted to, but I'm afraid I can't this year. I have a new job and will not get as much vacation this year as usual, and I must save one week for our association at Salisbury in October. I hope to see and have some time with you then. How we will miss dear Elder Walker! What precious times we have had, especially the Tuesday before the association last year when we spent the entire day at Sister Bertie's. Yes, Sister Bertie Dryden is very dear to me and her companionship and fellowship we have had together is immeasurable. Please give my love to your wife. I have never met her, but feel I love her just the same. In bonds of fellowship and love. MILDRED DYKES

Route 2, Martinsville, Va.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR COUSIN: Just have to beg pardon for not sending in my remittance sooner. Am enclosing check for one year's subscription and what is over use as you see fit. Have gratefully enjoyed reading some of the good articles and editorials that have come out in the *Signs of the Times*. They are as good news from a far country. Hope you will be blessed throughout the coming year to continue writing and sending out the *Signs*, the ways and paths of truth and righteousness. There are still people in this troublesome world that are hungering and thirsting after things pertaining to righteousess, and will doubtless be, as I have been, lifted and built up in my feelings, sometimes above measure. As ever your brother in the Lord.

T. D. DODSON

9428 Madison Ave., Southgate, Cal.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: It is time to renew my subscription for the paper I enjoy so much. I enclose $1 extra to use as you wish. I wish I were gifted to write as beautifully as some but I can and do love what the *Signs* interprets and the dear brethren write.

We have a lovely little church here and a pastor whom we all love for the truth's sake. Elder Dearing is a very able humble man and the members love one another which all contribute to making a real resting place from the cares of the world. Personally we have so much to thank our heavenly Master for that words fail in trying to express it, but do try to pray for more grace and guidance. I trust all is well with you and yours. I am your sister in hope.

(MRS.) ETTA DONLAVY

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. JULY, 1949

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

Northport, Alabama

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I was sorry I did not get to see more of you at the Kehukee Association at Norfolk, Va., in 1947.

I would be glad to read your views of Mat. 26:69, also 27:19, and especially the significance of the damsel in the sixty-ninth verse of the twenty-sixth chapter; also Pilate's wife in the nineteenth verse of the twenty-seventh chapter. Is there any relation between Mat. 27:3-5 and the latter part of the sixteenth verse of the fifth chapter of 1st John? Also, I would like to ask your opinion as to where in the Bible does the Law Dispensation end and the Gospel Dispensation begin. I would appreciate your writing on this anytime you feel like it either by letter or in the **Signs**. Yours in love of the truth,

JOHN D. HASSELL

We were glad of the privilege of attending the Kehukee Association in 1947, and for the opportunity it afforded in meeting Mr. Hassell and many others. We wish we were capable of answering the various questions raised by our brethren in making their requests for our views, but we are constantly being reminded of the fact that our limitations are many and great, and that we have nothing of a spiritual nature to present except that which God has been pleased to give.

The twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh chapters of Matthew are both lengthy, relating as they do in considerable detail what took place in the last moments of the earthly career of our Lord. Being fully aware that the hour for which he came into the world was close at hand, he partook of the passover, instituted his holy supper, and entered into Gethsemane, where he sweat as it were great drops of blood as he poured forth the agony of his soul in prayer to his Father. He was then betrayed by Judas-Iscariot and taken by those who "laid hold on Jesus, led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled." Among other things they falsely accused him of blasphemy, spit in his face, buffeted him and smote him with the palms of their hands. No doubt the severest blow of all however, was that received from his own beloved disciple, Peter, when he cursed and swore that he never knew him. He was then bound and turned over to Pilate, the governor, for trial, who was admonished by his wife, because of a dream she had, to "Have thou nothing to do with that just man." Pilate could find no fault in him, but the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes to demand the release of Barabbas and that Jesus be crucified in his stead. Pilate seeing that he could prevail nothing with them, took water and washed his hands before the multitudes, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it." Barabbas was then released and Jesus was taken and crucified.

We have felt to give the foregoing brief summary of some of the outstanding events in these two chapters before attempting to comply with our friend's request for views on the particular points raised by him. He asks (1) for the significance of the *damsel* in the

sixty-ninth verse of the twenty-sixth chapter, and (2) for the significance of Pilate's wife in the nineteenth verse of the twenty-seventh chapter. While we are convinced that each and every item, even to the crowing of the cock, is significant, in that it fulfilled the place and niche, however small and insignificant it may seem to us, which was designed by the great Architect and Builder in his plan of salvation, we finite creatures are not always aware of what the true significance really is. In Mark (14:66) this damsel is said to be "one of the maids of the high priest," before whom Peter was to make denial of having any knowledge of Jesus. On previous occasions Peter had been very bold to defend his Lord and to proclaim his faithfulness and loyalty, and at least one instance is recorded where he most vehemently declared, "If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise." Mark 14:31. Perhaps it was to show the utter weakness of even a great apostle when left to himself, that he was left to sink so low as to be ashamed of his Lord in the presence of a Jewish maiden, who was but a servant in the palace of the high priest. This was Peter's first denial, and was made as he "sat without the palace" of the high priest. He later went out on the porch of the same palace and made his second denial in the presence of another maid, punctuating it with an oath. We are further told that "after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for thy speech betrayeth thee. Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew." We verily believe that it was in the plan and purpose of Almighty God that Peter should deny his Lord thrice, but God's plan did not end there, for Peter must also be made to confess his love for his Savior thrice, and how glad we are he was made to say, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." He needed to be converted from his former state before he could strengthen his brethren. We rejoice to realize that despite all of our weaknesses and denials of our Lord, both by deed and word of mouth, He who discerneth the thought and intent of our heart knows that nevertheless and notwithstanding all outward manifestation to the contrary, in the very depth of our heart and soul we do love him and yearn after him. God has his own way of humbling his people before him and causing them to realize that all flesh is as grass, which perisheth.

Jesus told his disciples to ask whatsoever they would in his name, and the Father would give it them. We should thank our God every day of our lives that he has given us unfeigned faith to believe that all things are possible with him with whom we have to do.

The part which Pilate's wife played in the great drama was unquestionably of great significance. God had given her a dream which caused her to suffer many things, and because of the hold it had taken upon her, she made bold to send a message to her husband even after he had actually "set down on the judgment seat," warning him to "Have thou nothing to do with that just man." It was necessary that the innocence of Christ be well established, and here we have it attested to by Judas-Iscariot, who betrayed him; by Pilate, who sat in judgment of his case, and also by the Judge's wife.

Mr. Hassell next asks, "Is there any relation between Mat. 27:3-5 and the latter part of the sixteenth verse of the fifth chapter of 1st John." The three verses referred to in Matthew 27: 3-5 read as follows: "Then Judas,

which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself." 1st John 5:16 reads as follows: "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that ye shall pray for it." There are two entirely different types of characters under consideration in these passages of scripture. According to John (6:70-71) Jesus classified Judas as a devil, and while Matthew says concerning Judas, "when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself," it is no where recorded that he had a "godly sorrow" which "worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of." Rather was it the sorrow of the world, which worketh death. His repentance was of the same kind as was that of Esau (after selling his birthright for a mess of pottage) of whom it was written, "he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." Heb. 12:17. Wicked characters frequently have remorse of conscience following their terrible crimes, which sometimes results in their taking their own lives. We are told that "When the morning was come, all the chief priests, and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate, the governor." Judas, realizing the enormity of his crime cried out, "Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that." He found no sympathy with his own kind. They had paid him to do what he had done for them and they had no further use for him. Like criminals in our day and time, when one of their number is caught by the law, they look upon him as a weakling in genius and courage. Judas having no further need for the pieces of silver cast them down, "and departed, and went and hanged himself." What a terrible end to come to! Indeed, it would have been better for such an one never to have been born, but then how would the scriptures have been fulfilled? The latter portion of verse sixteen in chapter five of 1st John, might well be applied to such a character, for the sin of Judas was undoubtedly a sin which was unto death, and one that should not be prayed for, but it seems to us that an entirely different type of character is being referred to by John in the first part of the sixteenth verse. The church seems to be under consideration there. He says, "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death." The word *brother* signifies a close relationship, showing he is a member of the same household of faith, with one God and Father over all. What a wonderful example is laid down here by John for the church in this age of the world, in her dealings with her membership. We have experienced what it means for God to be manifested in the flesh by and through the love, mercy, longsuffering and forbearance of our brethren toward us. Let us all remember what John says, "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death." This does not mean that the church is to condone sin of every type and hue, especially where there is no bringing

forth meet for repentance, but the fact that it is said of this brother in our text "he shall ask" indicates that he has repented and turned from his sin.

The last point inquired about by Mr. Hassel is, "Where in the Bible does the Law Dispensation end and the Gospel Dispensation begin?" We do not believe it is possible to answer this literally by giving a fixed day, month or year. In the beginning of the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew we are told that "Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." He was speaking of the forthcoming destruction of the Legal Dispensation. His disciples then besought him to know when those things would come to pass, and what should be the sign of the end of the world. In his reply, Jesus indicated in considerable detail, as recorded by Matthew, Mark and Luke especially, that the change would not take place over night, but that it would require a period of years, and he mentioned specifically many of the things that would take place before the end came. He declared very definitely, however, that "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." We believe the Bible shows quite clearly that at least John lived to see the complete destruction of the Jewish economy. Like the transition of many things in our time, it is almost impossible to say just where one thing ends and another begins, but when it has been consummated there is no mistaking the fact. In our own humble opinion, the Gospel Dispensation had definitely begun "when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting." Acts 2:1-2 Peter's sermon on that memorable occasion gave further proof of the fact that the Gospel Dispensation had begun, for the record is "when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter replied by saying unto them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." This embraced not only Jews, but Gentiles as well, and the record shows that on the same day three thousand souls were added to the church visible. The fact the Gospel Dispensation had begun did not mean that the Legal Dispensation with all of its customs and traditions of centuries passed had been completely obliterated. According to the date indicated in the marginal reference this Pentecostal event took place very shortly after the death and resurrection of our Lord, whereas according to the understanding of a great many of our ministers, as well as others, the actual passing of the Legal Dispensation did not occur until about the year A.D. 70. Many of the facts concerning this are considered to be well established by profane history. The apostle Paul pretty well established the fact that Jesus came to do the will of God, which was to take away the old covenant and to establish the new, and John in his writings, it seems to us, establishes beyond the shadow of a doubt that the Gospel Dispensation was well under way before he was called to be with his

Father. We have recently called attention to the fact that when Moses died he was buried in a valley and "no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day," and that when Jesus was born there is no conclusive evidence as to the exact date. Holy Writ declares that the law came by Moses, but that grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Moses, therefore, typifies the law or Legal Dispensation, and Jesus Christ signifies the Gospel Dispensation, and as Moses was buried no man knows where, and Jesus was born no man knows when, it cannot, in our opinion, be thoroughly established by the Bible exactly when one dispensation ended and the other began, and neither can we experimentally determine beyond peradventure just when we passed from death unto life, but if we love the brethren we have unmistakable evidence of this blessed assurance. First, there must be an holy conception and development before there is the real manifestation of a new birth, and while we cannot fix the time when the Lord began his good work in us, nevertheless we are persuaded that old things have passed away and, behold, all things have become new, and we are further persuaded that all of this work is of God, and to him belongs all the praise.

We hope what we have said will, in some measure, be edifying to our friend and our readers in general, and to the honor and glory of God, whose name we desire to exalt above every name that is named. R. L. D.

(The following editorial, dated Dec. 15, 1906, by the late Elder F. A. Chick, treats upon a matter which we feel we need to be reminded of in this age. — R. L. D.)

TRUE MINISTRY

ELDER F. A. CHICK — Dear Sir and Brother:— You no doubt will be somewhat surprised to hear from me, but you will probably remember our conversation when you were in Brantford. I hardly know how to state my case to you without writing a long letter, which I have no thought of doing now. I will simply ask you a question: In the event of my asking for church membership, would the Old School Baptists ask me to be re-baptized? I am told that they would. My reason for asking this question is, that I was baptized by a brother whom I now believe to be in glory, and also I fully believe that he was a child of God when he baptized me, in the year 1884. I also believe that I was a subject of grace at that time. Why then should I be asked, as I think, to cast reflection both upon the brother and upon the name of Him in whose name I was baptized, and who has favored me by his grace? I know there are others who would be pleased to have these two questions answered, and if you should feel to answer through the **Signs** I would be pleased. I need help and I believe you are able to give it.

Yours in christian love,

FRED SIMMONS

Brantford, Ontario, Nov. 14, 1906.

The closing expression in the above letter has come to us as an appeal of a very solemn nature, and at the same time we feel deeply impressed with the knowledge of our own insufficiency to reply as we ought, yet we remember that Paul said of himself and those with him, We are not "sufficient of ourselves to think anything, as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." We have learned many times that we can only present that which seems right to our mind, while the application to the hearts of others must be of the Lord. The servants of God are all without sufficiency in themselves, but the God in whom they trust, and who has sent them forth as his ministers, is all-sufficient in himself, and sufficient for them. While feeling our own weakness we do yet feel encouraged to reply to our friend, by the remembrance that our God will supply all our need through riches of grace in Christ Jesus. We do not wonder that this matter seems a very solemn and important one to our dear friend, and are glad that it is so with him, for it is not good when any one can consider these sacred things lightly. Not only the doctrine of God

must be regarded as divine, and therefore all-important, but also the ordinances, which he has appointed and commanded to be observed at the hands of all his children, are matters not to be trifled with. They are so solemn that if indeed any one has been baptized according to the revealed will of God in all respects, that one has no right to again receive baptism at the hands of any one. None of us have any right to reject the Lord's work in the least matter. There is emphatically but one baptism, either of the Holy Ghost or water, that is in connection with the order of the kingdom of God on earth. But all dippings in water do not constitute gospel dipping; all immersions and emersions are not gospel acts; all baptisms are not gospel baptisms. We have used these three words to emphasize the facts that "dipping" is "immersion and emersion," and these three words are what make up the meaning of the word "baptism." It is important then that we know what does constitute such baptism as will be recognized in heaven as gospel baptism. John came, according to the commandment of God, baptizing. There had been many baptizings before this under all the period of old covenant history; some of the sacrifices were dipped in water; the priests and all who ministered in the sanctuary must wash the whole body often; the form of baptism was familiar to all the Jews. But all these former baptisms, or dippings, did not constitute gospel baptism, or that baptism unto repentance which John administered. This we do not need to more than call attention to. What then does constitute such baptism? This is the question in the mind of all who truly love God and who desire to follow him in all his appointed ways. It must lead to great anxiety of heart when any doubt arises in the mind of a child of God as to whether he has been really baptized acording to the gospel rule, and this anxiety does not arise from any thought that the baptism commanded of all who love God, is needful in order to regeneration, or to salvation from sin and death and hell, to righteousness and life and eternal glory. The redeemed soul will be anxious solely because a spirit of obedience is wrought in his heart, and his most earnest inquiry will be day and night before God, "What wilt thou have me to do?" The whole reason which any one who is taught of God will have for seeking to follow the Lord is expressed by the psalmist when he said, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" The Lord has done great things for me; he has shown me great mercy; he has redeemed me from death unto himself, and henceforth I am his, and I belong to him; how therefore shall I show forth these things? The first step in this road is appointed of the Lord, as well as all the steps that follow, and that first step is baptism in water. If this first step in obedience be not taken, then we are not walking in obedience, do what we may. Nothing that the believer does can be walking obediently before God when that believer has not obeyed the first commandment. From these considerations we may see, to some extent at least, how important each and every one who is led by the Spirit will feel this question to be: What constitutes baptism in the sight of God, or what will fill the measure of obedience to his commandment to be baptized? We believe that in the minds of most of our brethren everywhere, three things are needful to constitute valid baptism in the church of God. At least this is our mind, and we think also that in this we have the mind of the Spirit as revealed in the Scriptures of the New Testa-

ment. These three things are, first, a right candidate; second, a right administrator, and third, a right manner, or, as it may be called, a right mode. By this last we mean that sprinkling or rantizing, or pouring or cheoizing, will not do, but only dipping or baptizing; in fact there cannot be any modes of dipping or baptizing. Baptizing is dipping, and the other things are not modes of baptizing, they are simply sprinkling or rantizing, or pouring or cheoizing. This we need not argue any further here.

By a right candidate, we mean one who has been born again, of God, and who has come to believe in Jesus, and to hope in him as his personal Savior. If not dipped in water there has been no baptism; if not a believer in Jesus, dipping in water will not be to that one gospel baptism. All this is no doubt clear in the mind of our dear friend, and in the minds of all who are called Old School Baptists.

But the question that troubles our friend, and that, as we know, has troubled many of the Lord's dear people, and no doubt is still troubling many, is as regards the administrator. Many have said and felt sure he who administered the ordinance to them was a child of God, and preached the truth as to salvation in Christ alone; why then should not baptism administered by him be valid before God, and in his church on earth? Such souls as these, who are made to desire above all things to reverence God and his ordinances, do well to think well and carefully over this matter. We do not blame, but rather approve, their desire to be fully convinced before rejecting the work of any one whom they regard as a servant of God. But the question is this: Is it enough that one should be a child of God, or is it enough that he should hold the substance of the truth? Are there not some other qualifications needful ere he has a right to administer gospel ordinances? Must not that man be in fellowship with the church of Christ on earth? We are not desirous here of discussing the question as to what is the church on earth, but take it for granted that in this our day the Old School Baptists, as they are called in the north and west, the Primitive Baptists, as the same people are called in the south and the east, Particular Baptists, as they are called in England, are that body of people alone whom God acknowledge as his church to-day. One thing is sure, that if these are the church of God, all others are not; and if others are, they are not. Salvation by the will and choice of God, and the finished work of his Son, is so opposed to salvation by the choice and power and work of man that they who hold both cannot be one people. If one be the people of God, the others are not. This we will not further discuss. Now to return to the question, Must not the administrator of baptism be in fellowship with the church which God has established in the world if his acts can at all bear the seal of heaven? In reply we shall call attention to this one thing viz., that in all the records of the Acts of the apostles, and in all the epistles, we shall look in vain for any baptism that was not performed by one in full fellowship with the apostles and the church of Christ. In this the early church was but fulfilling the testimony of the dear Savior himself who conferred this duty and right upon his disciples alone. It will be found nowhere in all the New Testament that any work wrought by any who did not walk in fellowship with those who were called the churches of God was accepted, either with God or with the churches. Surely it would seem that this is suf-

ficient for us, and for all who desire to reverence the word of God and to fulfill his will. But as we have long believed, we have at least one instance recorded of what we call re-baptism, upon the very ground that we have named, viz., that the administrator was not a competent one. We will not repeat the narrative, but it will be found recorded in Acts 19. We will simply call attention to this fact that the mode of their baptism was right, they themselves were believers; but still the administration was faulty because of the administrator. But one thing has been a source of perplexity to very many of the Lord's children in this connection. Often it has been said and felt that in the ordinance as at first administered to believers there has been approval of a good conscience, and many souls have felt that in this act they had the approval of God. The thought has been in the minds of such ones, Surely God would not have smiled upon me had I not been walking in the way that pleased him. If God did indeed own and bless me in the deed, must not that deed have been right, and according to his will? Here many a tender heart has been tried and perplexed. In all sympathy of feeling for all such God-fearing, tender ones we desire to call attention to two or three things here. First, that the revealed word of God is to be our guide, rather than any feelings which we may have had, or which we do have. If the word of God shows us that the three things named above are essential to valid gospel baptism, and in our former baptism any one of them was wanting, then our state of feeling ought not to weigh against that testimony of the word. Our feelings must be brought to the test of the word; God really does approve only what his word commands at our hands. Many have been glad in their first baptism because they thought that in this they were receiving that ordinance which is commanded in the word; this feeling of gladness was precious to them. Any child of God must rejoice when he sincerely believes that he is following the dear Lord's commandments and example, yet in many things children of God have found that they have been mistaken. In that thing which once caused them joy and gladness they can no longer rejoice. One might claim authority to issue naturalization papers to some emigrant who desires to become a citizen in name, as he is already in heart, of this country; in receiving these papers that man would be glad perhaps with great gladness; but soon, when he seeks to exercise the rights and receives the privileges of his citizenship, the proper authority discovers that the papers were issued by one not having authority to issue them, and so he is not after all a citizen. Now he has no more gladness in these papers, because he has discovered they are valueless, yet he cannot forget the former gladness; but this gladness was a mistaken one; it was just as real and powerful in his heart as though the papers given him had possessed the value that he supposed they did. So the gladness of such as have been baptized by one unauthorized to baptize may be real, because the candidate thinks all is right, and goes forward sincerely, yet this gladness does not prove that it is right, that can only be shown by comparing all things with the word of God, and finding whether they are in harmony with that word.

One thought more occurs to our mind: Can the same door open into two different houses? Can the same baptism which is the door into the visible church, admit one into the house of God, and the same time into houses

that are not the house of God? If we believe (and we desire to say here that this is our settled conviction) that the New School Baptists, as they are called in this country, the Disciples, or Campbellites, and all other sects who practice immersion (and we have named these because they practice immersion) are not the church of Christ in the world, how can the baptism that lets one into their fold or house also be the door into the house of God? A Disciple, or a New School Baptist minister, dips one who is truly a believer, but who is mistaken as to the people where he seeks membership, and that one becomes by that act a member of one of these bodies of people; but they are not churches of Christ, and by and by this soul becomes convinced of this fact; now can the same door admit him into the house of God, we again ask?

We have tried to write as clearly as we know how. The matter is important, and ought to be well considered by all. We know from personal conversation with him that the mind and heart of our friend desires to know and do right. May God lead him and us all into the knowledge of God's will in all things, and give us grace to walk in that will. C.

OBITUARIES

MR. GARFIELD C. WEST, the son of Minos Burton and Hettye Ann West, was born Aug. 23, 1883, and departed this life Feb. 7, 1945. He was reared near Snow Hill, Md. and when he became of age was married to Ryda E. Griffin, July 22, 1903. There were born to them three children who survive, also three grandchildren. The children are Mrs. John Carrico, Salisbury, Md. who has two children, Jack and Janet; Mrs. Jerome Brown, Federalsburg, Md. who has one child, Dorothy; and Mrs. Lee Insley, Salisbury, Md.

Mr. West was not a member of the Old School Baptist church, but a very good friend. His wife was a member, also his sisters. I feel he knew something of the truth, and to my mind was always ready to uphold it. He enjoyed having the Old Baptists visit in his home and mingling with them and for this he was loved by us all.

At the time of his death he was living in Delmar, Del. where he had spent most of his married life and gained many friends. Interment in the Snow Hill Church burying ground, Snow Hill, Md.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT

MRS. RYDA E. WEST was born Nov. 13, 1885 in Worcester Co., Md., and passed away Aug. 30, 1948. Her parents were John Handy and Mary Elizabeth Griffin. Growing to womanhood she was married to Garfield C. West, July 22, 1903. They lived together forty-one years, six months and fifteen days, most of that time in Delmar, Del. On Feb. 7, 1945 God took her husband home, leaving her with three children and three grandchildren to follow later. The children are Mrs. Lee Insley and Mrs. John Carrico, Salisbury, Md., the latter having two children, Jack and Janet, and Mrs. Jerome Brown, Federalsburg, Md., who has one daughter, Dorothy.

The third Sunday in July 1934 Sister West was baptized by Elder H. C. Ker, uniting with the Little Creek Church near Delmar. She was very faithful to the church, and at the time of her death was clerk of the church. She was loved and respected by all. We feel the loss of a good and true member and desire to be submissive to the will of God, knowing it means her eternal gain.

At the time of her departure she was living with her daughter, Mrs. John Carrico. The interment was in the Snow Hill Church burying ground.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT

DUNCAN N. SAWYER was born in Monroe Co., Ala. in 1861, and died Dec. 10, 1948. He moved to Stapleton, Ala. twenty-seven years ago. He was a member of the Old School Baptist church about forty-five years. With him his church and brethren came first, then the **Signs of the Times,** but in the last days, when his hearing failed so he could not hear preaching, then the **Signs** came first. I have heard him tell some of the experiences he had read with the tears rolling down his cheeks. How he enjoyed it no one will ever know. When he was dying he held his hand up and smiled in praise to his God. He often quoted, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

I am asking the prayers of God's saints for my mother who has also been a member of the church about fifty years and is now seventy-seven years old. She had a stroke three years ago and has not walked since. Pray that she may be contented and bear her burden with patience. I am so weak and unworthy to try to write anything, so if you will please announce his death I will be thankful.

T. C. SAWYER

SISTER M. EMMA ADKINS was born in Wicomico Co., Maryland, near Salisbury, Oct. 26, 1864, and departed this life July 28, 1946. She was the daughter of the late John L. and Hannah Shockley Morris. March 7, 1883 she was married to Jacob M. Adkins and went to live on a farm near Parsonsburg, Md. where they lived together until 1922 at which time God separated them, taking her husband from this world to be at home with him. After this she and her sister, Mrs. Naomi Dryden, moved to Parsonsburg, Md.

Sister Adkins left two daughters and three sons, also eleven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren who mourn their loss because of her passing, nevertheless we all feel our loss is her eternal gain. She and her husband were baptized by Elder T. M. Poulson the first Sunday in Dec. 1888, uniting with the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church where they remained members until they departed this life. They were both substantial and faithful members and true to the doctrine of salvation by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Sister Adkins was in the home of her daughter, Mrs. A. May Perdue, near Berlin, Md. at the time of her death. She was there only a short time before she passed away. The funeral services were conducted in the Forest Grove meeting-house by her pastor, the writer, and her body laid to rest in the Forest Grove cemetery beside her husband.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT

WILLIAM HENRY CHAMPION was born at Tuscaloosa, Ala., Feb. 19, 1883, and died in Peoples Hospital, Jasper, Ala., Aug. 3, 1948, making his stay on earth 65 years, 5 months and 18 days. He first married Minenna Hitchcock of Cedartown, Ga., Oct. 16, 1902. To this union were born three children; Mrs. Weister Miller, Panama City, Fla., W. H. Champion, Jr., Panama City, Fla., Mrs. Hansel Tipton, Birmingham, Ala. His wife died July 28, 1907 and March 24, 1912 he married Rhoda Ann Beasley of Winfield, Ala. To this union five children were born; J. P. of Amarilla, Texas, J. R. of Panama City, Fla., Sgt. J. L. of Camp Campbell, Ky., Mrs. Mildred Frances Hoidwell, Birmingham, Ala. and Mrs. Juanita Ann Galloway, Birmingham, Ala. There are ten grandchildren. He has three living sisters; Mrs. Lois Dodson, Winfield, Ala., Mrs. Esther Weeks, Birmingham, Ala., and Mrs. Lizzie Franks of California. Two brothers are deceased.

He was a great lover and teacher of sacred music, being chairman of many conventions. Just before he died he attended a two days convention at Fayette, Ala. He was the last leader on the floor Sunday P. M. and looked so happy and smiling at every one. The last two songs he sang were, "Pilgrim's Farewell" and "My Long Sought Home." He was stricken two hours after singing these songs and died two days later while on a visit to Alabama.

About the year 1930 he moved to Panama City, Fla. from Birmingham, Ala. He was connected with Southern Kraft until about two years before he died of a stroke. He was elected County Commissioner and was the best we ever had. In the spring primary last year he was elected Justice of the Peace in his district.

He united with the Primitive Baptist Church in 1903 and was set apart to the full functions of the office of Deacon in 1915 by the Mt. Carmel Church, Jefferson Co., Ala. in the Fellowship Association. His father, Elder J. C. Champion, was held in high esteem as a gospel minister. Brother and Sister Champion never united with our church in Panama City but were faithful and loyal. The last Association we attended together in 1947 after Elder Gofford had preached, Brother Champion remarked, "That sermon was worth the trip, what more I get will be profit." He often told me the Lord gave him two mighty good wives. He was honest, square and straight. True as a needle to the pole. He was the idol of his family and was my friend. Every one loved him. A good man is gone. Peace to his ashes. We miss you beloved brother.

Elder Elmer Kitchen of Jasper, Ala. officiated at his funeral. Burial in Elwood Cemetery surrounded by a host of brethren and other friends. The wonderful floral offerings bespoke the high esteem in which he was held.

(Elder) C. H. BYRD

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Brother Henry H. Townsend, Sr., would like to have all correspondence addressed to him, until further notice, at Box 306, Spring City, Pa.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. J. H. Wright, Ky., $2; Mrs. M. H. Bond, Ore., $4; L. B. Hylton, W. Va., $1; F. H. Richardson, Ia., $17; Mrs. J. Clifford, Wash., $5; Eld. L. P. Harriss, Ill., $2; Eld. P. Jones, Wash., $7; R. D. McGough, Ala., $10; J. M. Windham, Miss., $3; C. W. Edwards, Ala., $3; C. S. Dodson, Tex., $2; Mrs. A. Smith, Ariz., $5; E. L. Williams, Va., $2; Mrs. D. W. Holland, Md., $1; Mrs. L. T. Genung, N. Y., $1; W. E. Beene, Tex.., $1; Mrs. W. V. Sizemore, Ill., $1; Mrs. M. J. Corley, N. M., $2; J. K. Buckwalter, O., $2; A friend, Md., $2.50; A friend, Ia., $3; Mrs. D. P. Farmer, Md., $1; Mrs. J. B. Hill, N. J., $5; J. H. Bricker, Mo., $5.

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m.
W. A. WILLIAMS and J. J. COLLINS, Pastors.

Ramah Church, Cottonwood, Ala., meets each third Sunday, 11 a.m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each second Sunday and Saturday before.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala.
Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a.m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Bethlehem Church, Malvern, Ala., meets each second Sunday, 11 a.m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopeful Church, Ozark, Ala., meets each fourth Saturday, 11 a.m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock. Meeting place at Alder St. at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each first Saturday, 11 a.m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each fourth Sunday, 11 a.m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a.m. six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Seclusia Predestinarian Baptist Church meets 4th Sundays, 11 a.m., 9616 South Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. H. Y. BEAUCHAMP, Pastor, 137 Chestnut Ave., Long Beach, Cal.

Bethel Church near Stockton, Cal. meets first and third Sundays in each month and Saturday nights before. For further information write SETH BYNUM, Rt. 3, Box 800G, Stockton. Cal.

The Old School or Predestinarian Baptists meet for worship first Sunday of each month, 2:30 p. m., second floor Pythian Temple Building, 1012 Ninth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Elder John D. Wood, Minister. For information write FRANK T. SIMPKINS, 5210 - H St., Dillon Park, Washington, D. C.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m., north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets every second Sunday at 5th and E. Park St. B. O. JEFFREYS, Pastor, Weiser, Idaho

Pleasant Valley Church Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator, Williamstown, Kans.

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carver Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. C. H. EVANS, Pastor

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before a 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a.m. in the meeting-house.

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays 11:00 a. m., 2 p. m.

The Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every first and third Sundays at Parkside Hotel, 18 Gramercy Park South, one block east of Fourth Ave. and 20th St., near 23rd St. Sta. Lexington Ave. Subway. Take Elevator to Park Room second floor. 11 A.M. 1:30 P.M.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p.m. in Municipal Auditorium room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Salem Old School Baptist Church

18th & Spring Garden Sts. Philadelphia, Pa.

(Chapel of 5th Baptist Church)

T. C. KOCH, Clerk

2764 N. Taylor St., Philadelphia, Pa.

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday night before.

E. H. LANIER, Clerk

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

The Old Orderly Mt. Zion (Cash) Predestinarian Baptist Church meets on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in each month, at the home of Bro. J. J. Darnell, Campbell, Texas.

Sister SIMMONS, Clerk

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets first and third Sundays each month 11 a. m. 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas.

C. B. TEAGUE, Clerk, L. D. ROSE, Pastor

Fort Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets first Sunday in each month at 11:00 a.m. and Saturday at 2 p.m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

Shepherd Fold Church meets every fourth Sunday and Saturday before, in the morning, on Little York Road between Air line and Humble highways, Houston, Texas. W. O. Beene, Pastor, Ben B. Walston, Asst. Pastor.

(Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER, Clerk

The original Pilgrim Rest Church of Lawn Texas meets every first Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a. m.

HOWARD EASON, Clerk

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dr. Wood church-house. Those interested write Mrs. Lela Culpepper, Stockdale, Texas.

E. B. AULT, Pastor

The Old Salem Church of Old School Baptists, 4 miles south from Teague, Texas, meets the first Sunday in each month and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 11 a. m. at the home of E. B. Ault on Progresso Highway, three and one half miles south of Weslaco.

E. B. AULT, Pastor

BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk

Route 1, Box 88, Mission, Tex.

Danville Primitive Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday night before Bradley Road, Danville, Va.

W. R. DODD, Pastor

Malmaison Church ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meets each first Sunday 11 a.m.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p.m. and Sunday at 11 a.m., Fairmont Park, 3023 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va.,

R. B. DENSON, Pastor

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a.m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a.m.

C. M. FISHER.

Bethel Old School Baptist Church, Riffe, Wash. meets every third Sunday, 11 a.m. in the meeting house.

I. F. COLEMAN, Mod.

ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk, Riffe, Wash.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church near Yakima, Washington, meets at 11 a. m. each second Sunday by appointment at the home of one of the members living at Naches, Wash.

A. D. HUGHETT, Pastor

BEATRICE HAAN, Clerk

Star Route, Naches, Wash.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 3 p.m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va., N. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 117 RUTHERFORD, N. J., AUGUST, 1949 No. 8

"The laver and his foot."—Exodus 30-28.

Having had some reflection on the above scriptural expression, I would like to record some of my meditations and conclusions. Knowing this first, that no prophesy of the scripture is of any private interpretation, I shall therefore ask that any who may chance to peruse these lines to consider first that I am only a man and am liable to err in my conclusions. And second, to compare the import of these lines with the written word of truth and if they measure up to a "Thus saith the Lord" receive them, and if not reject them.

Many things in the Old Testament are set forth as types and shadows of things to come. Wherefore Jesus said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." And again the apostle instructs us "The law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered?" Thus in effect it is said that if the blood of bulls and goats could take away sin, then Christ ought not to have suffered. And likewise if the keeping of the law of carnal commandments could have satisfied divine justice and guaranteed a just claim to eternal life then Christ ought not to have suffered. Indeed, if there had been any other way or name under heaven given amongst men whereby we must be saved, or whereby our obligations could be met, our stupendous debt cancelled and divine justice satisfied, then Christ ought not to have suffered. But there was no other way. Hence, "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." "On him almighty vengeance fell, Which must have sunk a world to hell. He bore it for his chosen race, And thus became their hiding place." "The law having a shadow of good things to come." In the law it was strictly forbidden to eat the blood with the flesh of the sacrifice for the blood thereof is the life thereof. Thus showing that one could not obtain life under the law. But turn now to the words of Jesus, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.*****For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." Here then, is the great fountain of life for it was not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin. Furthermore it is written, "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." All these testify of Christ. All these testimonies, no doubt were summed up in the omniscient mind of God long before they were recorded here, for Christ was verily foreordained before the foundation of the world but is manifested in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God who raised him from the dead and gave him glory. In view of these facts Jesus rebuked those two who journeyed down to Emmaus say-

ing, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself," or those things which testified of him. The tabernacle of the congregation that was reared by Moses in the wilderness together with the furniture and the arrangement of the same all testify of Jesus and his bride, the church. Take note of these different articles of furniture. The altar, the mercy seat, the candles, the ark of the covenant, the laver and his foot. These all bear an important and sacred place as we view them in the anti-type, the church. If one article was omitted the structure would be sadly incomplete. Also the congregation must not be overlooked for that is none other than the people of God. While all these articles are necessary and each one serving the purpose for which it was designed, it has occurred to me, "The laver and his foot" bear a most conspicuous part and this, being placed between the congregation and the altar was no accident nor the result of an haphazzard arrangement. It was by divine wisdom and an all wise purpose it was so arranged. It must be so to testify of Jesus as the cleansing power. The laver is the place of cleansing and there is no other element or power can perform this work save the blood of Christ the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world. The altar is the place of worship, the place where we bring our sacrifices. How admirably the laver is placed between the congregation and the altar so that none can approach the altar except they come first to the laver. They must be cleansed before they can worship God at his holy altar. Their sins must be washed away and made white in the blood of the lamb. Else how can they worship God in spirit and in truth. Mouth service will not do. To draw nigh unto God with the mouth and honor him with the lips while the heart is far from him incurs his righteous displeasure. If any come, as many do, saying, "We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach," such can never win the approbation of God by their fair speeches. They must needs be cleansed, their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. When this is accomplished God's people will have a different desire; their own bread and their own apparel, which is the fruit of their own labor, the fruit of the mammon of unrighteousness becomes decidely distasteful to them. Nothing but the flesh and blood of a crucified Jesus will satisfy them now for his flesh is meat indeed and his blood is drink indeed. The laver and his foot are one. They are of one piece of material and they are inseparable. As Jesus declared, "I and my Father are one." As the foot is that part that rests upon the ground it is a beautiful symbol of our blessed Lord when he trod upon this earth. Job said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." Agreeable to this prediction he did come to earth and being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself and became obedient unto death even the death of the cross. His mission was a sacred one. He came to save his people from their sins, he came to redeem them that were under the law. The price of their redemption was no more or no less than the life of our Lord the Christ. He paid it all. God accepted the sacrifice. God was the divine creditor in this case. Christ was our surety and as his people were not

able to satisfy the demands of the law it became him who was our surety to pay the debt that was justly ours. To bear the awful penalty that hung over our heads for the transgression of God's holy law. Yea, for the transgression of my people was he stricken. But when he bowed his head upon the cross and said, "It is finished" divine justice was satisfied and this is their release when he declared, "Their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more." When Jesus came to earth he did not relinquish any of his divine attributes, but coming with the spirit of the Lord God upon him he thought it not robbery to be equal with God. And coming in the likeness of sinful flesh, he is not ashamed to call them brethren. He is both God and man and the only mediator between God and man. He still maintains his place between the congregation and the altar and declares "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." His virtues remain the same and they invariably go out to every one who touches him. So "we have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities" through the full accomplishment of his mission here. He spoke to the Father in his petition saying, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." Besides the laver and his foot there was also a mercy seat provided in the tabernacle which also portrays our blessed Lord, for Christ is our mercy seat, or the seat of mercy. How many times a day are we constrained to go before him with bowed head and bended knee and smite upon our breast and say, "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

"Thy mercy my God is the theme of my song,
The joy of my heart and the boast of my tongue;
Thy free grace alone from the first to the last,
Hath won my affections and bound my soul fast."

Submitted in much weakness.

(Elder) L. L. SCHENCK

Williamstown, Kans.

ELDER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: Enclosed you will find a money-order for two years subscription to the dear old *Signs*. I received the April issue last week. I have not had time to read it all but have enjoyed what I have read, the editorials and the letters. I wish especially to express my thanks to Elder Ruston for sharing those beautiful letters from the little Canadian sister with the household of faith. I was deeply touched and fed by the simple yet eloquent language with which the sister described her inmost feelings to her friends and pastor. The doubts and fears, the heights and depths, the joys and sorrows of a wayfaring pilgrim on her journey here below. After reading the first two I particularly rejoiced in the third letter to see the workings of the Holy Spirit in her life, that her Savior and Husband had actually picked up her body and carried her over the threshold into her new home, and O the joy and peace which was hers after her entrance into her spiritual home! Would that she could always feel as she did then, but temptations, sorrows and trials will be hers as she journeys on, but what sweet memories to cheer her when skies become clouded and what close relationship she has found with those inside the fold. No wonder she prays that the Holy Spirit will guide her friends that they too may take up their crosses and follow their Master through evil as well as good report. May God's richest blessings rest upon these trembling, little lambs of God is my prayer.

My dear companion is still with me languishing upon his bed of affliction. God only knows the length of his days and the depth of his suffering from his

terrible malignancy. While it is hard for me to see him suffer, yet somehow during our close relationship the past two years, when he has been confined to the home most of the time in bed, I have learned to know and understand him better than before, and have enjoyed a sweet spiritual relationship with him. Over a year ago, although his physicians would not pronounce his condition as malignancy, he realized his condition and that he was beyond the aid of man saying, that if God desired he could heal him but not man, and he was resigned to the will of God. His faith has been steadfast. Never once have I heard him utter a cross word. His kindness and patience in the face of hard pains and suffering have endeared him to all who visit him. He will not take strong narcotics as he does not want to be insensible to his surroundings, and only takes enough codine to dull the sharpest pains, and is never free from some pain in the past few weeks.

It will soon be two years since the day I placed flowers on our graves "In memorium" that I heard a voice say, "It will not be long until you will have another one to decorate." I glanced at my husband who was leaning against a wall and my heart sank within me for he had been in ill health over a year, but I had thought he would get well as he had done with all his troubles before. I was not well at that time because of my nervous indigestion. In vain I looked about me for some one to lean on when my husband was gone. I had no children and my kindred were too far away to help me. For some months I felt I could not bear my troubles, but never revealed my feelings to my husband whom I could see steadily declining in health. Finally in desperation, because I could not get relief from my own works and had no one to help me, I cast all my cares on my Lord saying, "Not my will, but thine be done." Gradually I experienced a rest and a calm resignation to God's will; a sweet peace and trust in my Savior that he would go with me in my trials and sorrows, and that he would not forsake me in my seventh trouble. My health improved in spite of my close confinement and my care of him. I even gained back the weight I had lost and am back to my normal weight and health. People marvel at the way I have held up under the heavy strain these many months. I can but give all the praise to the Giver of every good and perfect gift for his kindness and grace toward me.

We both thank God for the kindness bestowed upon us by our neighbors and friends who come to see us daily. He is ever grateful for their visits, words of cheer and little gifts they bring him. His room has never lacked for flowers even during the winter months. We are thankful his relatives are near enough to visit him often although none have assisted in his care. We have never asked for help, but it is a great comfort to know that help is just as near me, when needed, as my telephone. People await my call day or night and will come at a moment's notice. I am glad he is still able to change positions and get some rest thereby though he cannot sit up long at a time now. I feel grateful for the relief given me from the sick room each afternoon for the past five months by a practical nurse through the courtesy of his lodge. More help has been proffered me for day and night and will be graciously accepted when needed.

My husband is always grateful for the prayers of all who really love the Lord and trust in his mercy and kindness. During his intense sufferings he can be heard to say, "Lord help me!

Lord have mercy!" Last week after my Primitive Baptist minister had sat with us a few hours through one of his bad spells, I asked him to offer a word of prayer before leaving. He did and the tears flowed freely from all our eyes, and as usual he thanked him afterwards, and rested peacefully the rest of the afternoon. On his visit this week I again mentioned prayer to the minister and he asked my husband if he wanted prayer, and he replied he always welcomed prayer from Christian people; that he realized his sufferings had been made lighter by prayer, and that he felt at times that God had heard his pleas for mercy, yet at other times he was so doubtful that he was numbered with God's children, but hoped that he was, and longed for rest and to be freed from his pains.

Dear brother, if you feel us worthy would you offer a word of prayer for us when at the throne of grace? I do not know how long he will have to suffer and I do not see how he can last many months longer as he takes so little nourishment. I pray God to give me strength to minister to his frail wasted body as long as there is breath in it, and to sustain me in the parting hour, and to uphold me that I may have calm composure and not be overcome by my emotions until he is laid in his last resting place to await the resurrection day when this vile body will be changed like unto his Master's and he is taken to that heaven above to bask in the sunshine of God's love for-ever-more. May God's richest blessings be with you and the whole household of faith. In sorrow your humble "Sister from Texas."

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111 A East Main St., Du Quoin, Ill.

Dear Brother Dodson: I am enclosing a letter from David B. Lawson, which I believe would be of interest to the readers of the **Signs** if it found space in our family paper. I have known Brother Lawson for many years, and I am sure, if I know anything about the travels of a poor pilgrim in the low valley of Lodebar, that he has traveled that same highway that many of God's children have traveled. I would be very happy to have you publish this letter for the comfort and consolation of all who may have occasion to read it. Yours in a blessed hope.

(Elder) L. P. HARRISS

GOD IS MY SALVATION

As I take up my pen tonight I shall, if it be pleasing to my Savior, write of his meaning to me. Dear God will thou ever keep me humble in thy presence and guide me in thy path of righteousness. I, a poor, needy sinner, longeth for thy love and kindness. Thou hast made me to rejoice in thy holy word; thou hast made me to see myself as I am. Yea Lord, I pray unto thy holy and righteous name to bear with me and to forgive my sins, grant unto me thy salvation and give unto me the knowledge of thy holy word that I may know for which it is written, for without thee I am nothing and less than nothing, without thee I am surely lost. A sinner here in a heathen land that cares not for its own. Dear Lord, wilt thou look down upon this poor beggar and give me thy love as thou hast given unto thy children before me. And when my day is done here in this old, sinful world may it be pleasing to thee that thou hast prepared for me a home in heaven where I shall sing praises to thee and shout glory halleluiah for ever and ever, Amen.

My dearly beloved brethren, will you bear with me while I make this statement and confess of my past. My life has been one of deceit and mischief. I am nought and cannot bear of myself a record of anything good. Mine eyes were closed unto the light of God, my heart was of stone and not of understanding. It was spoken unto me yet I heard it not for I was deaf except unto

that of the world. I was taught that which was right but I heeded not. The word of righteousness was before my eyes from the time of my birth yet I was blind—blind in sin and could see only that of the world. I have come short of the teachings of my parents whom by the grace of God have even loved me. I truly believe my mother is sanctified and that my father can bear witness of the Lord God of hosts. Then, dear brethren, have I not reason to believe that if I am not regenerated and born by the Spirit of God hell shall be my doom? I do pray, dear brethren, that my eyes shall be opened unto the light of God, and that my heart shall be turned from a stony heart to a heart of understanding; that I may be made to understand the holy word and the meaning for which it was written. Is not the word of God the foundation of salvation? "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." That is the Savior unto whom I pray for salvation. Jesus says, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." To my knowledge being baptized by water is to symbolize the change of life whereby going down into the water is being dead and buried in trespasses and in sin; then coming forth from that watery grave is the new life, the spiritual life.

Lest you have the understanding of the word of God and a spiritual mind the Scriptures will become very confusing, and that I believe would be the beginning of the Arminian doctrine. A so-called preacher is usually found to get confused in the scripture and has to stumble around and add some of his own version which is not likely to be noticed by his followers, or possibly take away a bit of the true and undefiled word of God. Yes, the Arminian is very cunning in his leadership. If it was not for that little jingle, jangle money they beg for between each song they would not be standing before a houseful of people to start with. If there is anything I hate it is a mocker to stand in a pulpit with the Holy Word of God in his filthy hands, shouting praise God and begging for money. I want to ask you, is that being a Christian? If that is what one has to do I do not want to be one. A true believer of Christ would not dare to do a thing like that. Why? Because a true God fearing believer in Christ humbles himself before his brethren in the name of God the Lord and his Savior Jesus Christ. Yea Lord, thy blessings are upon me abundantly, and wilt thou accept my soul as a token of the thanksgiving for that is all I have to offer thee?

There is coming a day when every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall utter a prayer for mercy. Some shall rejoice in His coming while others will pray for the rocks of the mountain to fall upon them and hide them from the face of God. There will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. Does it not sound horrible to an unbeliever's ear, while it is a glamorous thought to those who really believe and trust in the all wise God, the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as their Master. They know that on that day their blood will be revenged, praise his holy name. When he comes to receive his own he shall call them by name and the grave shall give up its dead and the waters likewise; even those that were burned and the ashes were blown to the four winds of the earth they likewise shall answer the roll call and be judged at the throne of judgment; and they, meaning all, shall be judged according to their works and not according to their worldly possessions; and some that think they are working for Christ

and boast of their well doing here on earth, when they reach the judgment bar Christ will say unto them, "I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity," and his judgment shall stand for it is just and holy. "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

January 31, 1942 the blessed Savior called unto himself my first-born son in whom I held delight. I can remember him as if it were only a few hours past, how he would listen as I would read to him the Scriptures of that blessed book the Holy Bible. I truly believe he bore the knowledge of the word of God, and that the true love of the Lord Jesus abided in him, for in his fretfulness the reading of the word of God would bring to his shining face a smile of comfort and satisfaction; and in the hour of his passing from this world of sin into heavenly rest and life everlasting with his master in heaven that precious smile of comfort and satisfaction shone upon his face as the glow of a candle light. My sin polluted lips parted, and these words came forth from the depths of my heart without effort of my own will, "Blessed be the name of the Lord, who hath given unto me only for a little while, a son in whom I delighted, and now it is pleasing to thee to take him unto thyself in heaven. Praise thy holy and righteous name." And in that selfsame hour the presence of the Lord God was felt by those round about in the room. The colonel in command, the sergeant in charge, the nurses and nurse's aids acknowledged one to another the feeling of the presence of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and their eyes were filled with tears.

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He makes my heart o'erflow with joy,
And drives away my storm.

Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease;
I pray that God will lead me home
To a life of joy and peace.

Dear brethren, as I write these lines, I pray that the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will forever bless each and every one who puts their trust in him, and are ever and forever feeling their unworthiness of Christ Jesus, and ever keeping themselves humble before God and his brother in Christ Jesus. In closing may I ask each and every one who reads this to pray for me that I be kept in the strait and narrow way, and ever be made to be humble and submissive to the will of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, and ever be made to sing praises to his holy name. I hope to be and hope to ever remain your brother in spirit and truth.

DAVID B. LAWSON
106 Vine St., Hot Springs, Ark.

Benton, Ky.

ELDER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE: I was made to pause while reading Mrs. Louise Newman's article in Feb. issue as she was quoting this scripture from 1 Peter, 1:18, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers." I wondered what she and others saw in this scripture, and how did they know their conversations had been changed, and what caused their conversation to be changed? and what was the tradition handed down from their fathers and who was their father? What did their fathers advocate any way? "Forasmuch

as ye know?" Who knows? and what do they know? My experience teaches me once I believed and conversed, when I conversed about my belief, that I thought some day I would be a popular religious girl, build myself up to the place where God would look down with delight at what I was doing. I felt every act I would do would be one to his great honor and I did not dwell on HIM but I dwelt on Effie as EFFIE. Well, these vain thoughts I did not receive from my father, my natural father nor my grandfather on each side of the house. They were all Primitive Baptists in the faith of Jesus Christ and believed in God's doctrine, not their doctrine. I did not know it then, I knew my own building, my own doctrine, my own works, then my vain conversation must have been from the father of all lies. Not that the devil has ever begotten one child, but his children are those whom he has fooled and are blinded with sin, and he keeps them fooled with his cunning craftiness. How long? This I believe until God in his mercy comes to the individual, calls him by his grace and gives him hope in him and in the finished work of his Son Jesus Christ. These evidences of this truth are not all alike in each individual, but are of the same God, same power, and that work in this individual changes his conversation from what he received from his father—the devil that preaches and teaches lies, where once this individual advocated works from his flesh and from his will and his blood, alive in his own blood not knowing how polluted in his own blood he was. Ezekiel 16:6 describes this man in his pollution and who it was that rescued him from his pollution. It was God, yes it was God who was pleased with no other offering than that which he chose to offer, His only begotten Son, and remember the Father had only one begotten Son, and we who hope in the inheritance will come in by adoption. When he finds himself out, this creature whom God calls away from this vain conversation, he finds himself a sinner and sees then, having his understanding opened, that his conversation had been vain, and he had been in his own pollution; and he believes surely it was God who gave him this evidence that was so effective and true, and he could not get away from the effects nor the evidence; and these evidences were sealed in his heart and by being sealed in his heart he openly told them and then he showed open evidences of the life of Christ in him. (Jer. 32:14).

Was not this person in fairly good shape to know his conversation had been changed, and he believed surely it had not been done by any change that he had been working, and he could then say surely the redemption has been wrought in me; my conversation is changed and if the blood of Christ Jesus our Lord redeemed me he will keep me, and never again will you find that creature advocating anything but God's doctrine—redemption from sin by the blood of the Lamb—and believing surely the Lord is making me to remember all the way he led me, (Deut. 8:2) and that God is, according to his word, proving this creature to know what was in the creature's heart, and to humble him before Him.

How humbling it is for a creature to come down to the knowledge that Christ Jesus did do the work of redemption, and see how polluted he was before the excellency of the knowledge of Christ was shown him. When we see the work, as we hope, that done by Christ Jesus, this knowledge is so great that it is staggering to stand with the excellency of that knowledge shining in on the dark polluted works of our will, and the flesh and blood work we did

do when we had our vain conversation after the tradition we received from our fathers. I would not say I know I have been born again, but one thing I know, I quit believing in what Effie could do to redeem herself from under sin and condemnation, and I quit talking it; and my conversation has been, when led to converse on points of doctrine, redemption, sanctification and glorification, it took Jesus, the only begotten of the Father to do a work acceptable to the Father; and I rejoice at times in this work, in fact I have nothing else to rejoice in. Yours in hope.

(Mrs.) EFFIE B. BOWDEN

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54 Park Ave., Flemington, N. J.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: After listening all day to various Christmas programs, the stories of the Savior's birth as they broadcast over the radio, I opened my Bible to Luke second chapter and read. There are some things I want to know. The 9th verse begins, "And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them; and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid." Then the 10th verse, "And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." Then the 13th verse, "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." I want to know if the first angel in the 9th verse might represent John, the disciple who went before Him, and if the multitude of the heavenly host could be the prophets of old who spoke of his coming way back there in the legal dispensation; and the 10th verse "which shall be to all people" not some but all. The way it reads would sound to some universal.

I know this letter will sound strange to you but the only way to know is to ask. In Luke 11:9 it reads, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find." So I am asking and to whom shall I turn but to those who have been taught of Him and He alone. I feel sometimes it has to be midnight darkness to behold the brightness of a star and as He came to the lowly shepherds on Judea's darkened plains so he comes to those who wait in darkness. There is not a thing we poor, weak mortals can do of ourselves to dispel the gloom but to await the star of hope, our loving Redeemer.

"Glory to God that reigns above,
That pitied us forlorn;
We join to sing our Maker's love,
For there's a Saviour born."

I have never heard a sermon preached on any one of the verses mentioned in this letter by an Old Baptist. I have no quarrel with those who worship differently, that is a freedom and liberty to each and every one on the face of the earth. The powers of evil can destroy the earth and all in it with their devilish inventions, but what of the heavens, that sun, the moon and the stars remain and no bomb however deadly can destroy God's work in the heavens. I know you are a busy man but I would like to hear from you. I will close with love to both you and Mrs. Dodson.

(Mrs.) GERTRUDE PYATT
(See Editorial.)

Robersonville, N. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am enclosing my check for $3 two of which is to pay for the book "Fragments" by Elder S. H. Durand. I read the book some years ago and enjoyed it so much I have decided I would like to read it again. The other dollar is to be applied on my subscription. As I renewed in Dec. be-

fore the price advanced I am getting my paper for less than those that renewed after Jan. 1 and I do not feel that I am entitled to it for less than others are paying.

I surely enjoy reading your paper. I have read every one that I have three times and am nearly over reading the fourth time. There is a twofold cause for me liking your paper. First, the print is good size and clear; words and lines well spaced and easy to read. It matters not how good the reading matter is if the print is fine and jumbled I cannot read it and it would be of little worth to me. Second, the reading matter, the greater part of it, is exceedingly excellent. With best wishes for you and yours. Yours very truly,

A. S. ROBERSON

Poolesville, Md.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Find enclosed my check for renewal of the *Signs of the Times* for two years. I want to thank you for sending it on even after my subscription had expired. I would miss it very much if it failed to come each month. I have been reading it for seventy years or may be a little longer as I am about eighty now, and my father was a subscriber many years before I was born. I rather think the *Signs* has been coming to our homes ever since the beginning of the paper. Your articles are good and indeed all you have of the household in the paper are good. I enjoy them all and read them over several times. I pray the good Lord will uphold you in this splendid work in giving us a medium of thoughts and expressions of the dear household of our God. With best regards from an unworthy brother.

HARVEY J. WHITE

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The regular annual meeting with the Brookfield Church and Congregation, Slate Hill, New York, is scheduled to be held as usual on Friday before the 4th Sunday, August 26th, 1949. We shall be glad to welcome our brethren and friends there at that time. R. LESTER DODSON.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Whitefield Church at Whitefield, Me., Sept. 9, 10 and 11, 1949 the Lord willing. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk.

The Fellowship Association convenes September 9, 10 and 11 with Paron Church, 3½ miles northwest of Big Sandy, Texas. DAVID C. SHELTON.

Little River Association, Dry Creek Church, Trigg County, Ky. Meets Friday before through the fourth Sunday in August.

West Tennessee Association, Friendship Church, Sumner County, Tennessee. Meets Friday before through the second Sunday in September.

Flint River Association, Bethany Church, in Alabama near Fayetteville, Tennessee. Meets Friday before through the fourth Sunday in September.

Bethel Association, Boaz Chapel, Hickman County, Ky. Meets Friday before through the first Sunday in October.

Soldier Creek Association, New Providence Church, Calloway County, Ky. Near Murray. Meets Friday before through second Sunday in October.

Obion Association, Hephzibah Church, Henry County, Tenn. Meets Friday before through the third Sunday in October.

Hopewell Association, Old Zion Church, Pickens County, Ala. 8 miles north of Gordo, Ala. Meets Friday before through the third Sunday in October.

Buttahatchie Association, Poplar Springs, 10 miles south of Vernon, Ala. in Lamar County. Meets Friday before through the second Sunday in October.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Miss V. M. Jones, N. Y., $7; L. M. Godfrey, N. Y., $2; Eld. C. H. Byrd, Fla., $1; J. F. Lax, Ill., $5; J. Y. Vanhook, N. Y., $1; A friend, Me., $5; C. R. Myers, Pa., $7; Mrs. A. M. Miller, Cal., $2; Mrs. S. Stallings, Tenn., $2; J. B. Edwards, N. C., $1; Mrs. F. Wiles, Va., $1; Mrs. W. A. Horton, N. Y., $12; J. B. Barron, N. C., $1; Mrs. E. Loeffel, N. J., $5; C. A. Taylor, Okla., $2; J. P. Breazeal, La., $5; Mrs. A. Hastings, Md., $5.

EDITORIAL

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

PREACHING

For several days I had been quietly thinking about what to write for my next editorial. I could not for the life of me manufacture a subject. Time was running out on me; our editor had reminded me twice that he liked to have an extra on hand. I kept promising myself that the next day would find me sending in something yet not knowing a thing about what to write. I had meditated on the matter at work in the office, in my flowers, and tossed the bed at night, but I was as far from having a living subject as a poor sinner could be. All of my writing has been like this. At times subjects for an article keep coming faster than I can write them for our papers. At other times I am as barren in mind as anyone could be. In conditions of mind like this I have had to wait. If I did go on and write, it was like dry husks, and my readers did not get any comfort from it. Many times it did not leave my desk except for the flames, and I have sent out things that would have been better to have gone there.

In this barren, destitute condition I went on. I was groping, reaching for something that I could lay hold on. It was always out of my reach. In the meantime it came the time for my going to Mt. Carmel Church to my regular monthly appointment. When my son came to drive me down, I left the house in a hurry and forgot my hymn book and Bible, which I seldom had done in all my ministry. I thought of myself on the way to church and berated my forgetfulness, wondering what I would do, inasmuch as I am given to reading a text. I entered the pulpit feeling at as complete a loss as any criminal could feel that was up for execution. For the most of twenty years I have been going in the pulpit and exercising in a public way among the Primitive Baptists, and I have been speaking to crowds of people all my life in one way or another. At this service I envied the little children because they did not know the deep dependence and helplessness that I felt. I thought I knew the feeling of being without a prop to lean upon; I thought, and yet think, that I had been made to know that a man cannot do nor receive anything except it be given him from above. But at this time a little child was playing in the aisle of the church and in my groans I compared my knowledge of preaching to that little child's. It did not know the first thing about it, and there I was in the presence of a congregation of people and could have made a world as easy as I could preach.

I went on in the pulpit when the hour arrived. I tried to offer a word of prayer, that is, I felt to try. Somehow, I felt some degree of fellowship for the suffering of Christ as he bore the heavy load of sin, and unless it is all foreign to what I have experienced, I felt to be drawn to the apostle when he cried out, "O wretched man that I am!

who shall deliver me from the body of this death." I wonder was there a death for me there. Was I in a strait? Surely I entered that place in the greatest need that a poor rebel could ever experience. There is a darkness more intense than the natural darkness, for you can see it, but there was a darkness that permeated my being from head to feet, that I felt. It had settled over me, coming unasked for and unsought, and had enveloped me in its clutches. I realized it but I could not even struggle to keep it off. In this frame of mind I knelt to pray. I had as little to do with what transpired in my very inner self as I had had to do with the darkness coming. But of a sudden, I found myself kneeling at the throne of grace, and around me (and I hope in me) was the most wonderful light that my eyes have ever seen. Somehow I want to believe that I spoke to my God and my Father.

When I arose from my knees I did not quote a text. This is something unusual for me, but my hope is based on this being an unusual time, brought about by the unusual act of the innocent and Holy Son of God dying that sinners might live, not only right now, and at a time when death stares them in the face, but that they might live eternally with him in glory. As well as I am able to describe it, I was like a little child cautiously taking a step at a time, not knowing what a step would bring. But while I walked (or at least I hope I did) with a slow, careful step, I walked in the light. I could see before me but I did not know just where I was going. I was powerless to keep from walking (I am having reference to my venturing forth in a preaching way), in fact, I did not have a desire to keep from talking of the goodness of God but at that time that was the only thought in my mind. I am not saying that I was in the Spirit of the Lord, but I was in some kind of spirit to the extent that that time when, as I hope, on the plains of southeast Missouri, I felt to hope that Jesus was revealed to me as the Savior of hell deserving sinners, came to me again with glory and great power. If I have ever preached Jesus it was on this occasion, and I do not have any hesitancy in saying that should it be as well with me when on that tomorrow out yonder in the future, when the Lord of the whole earth calls for me, as it was there for awhile, that death will not have any horror whatever.

I came out of the pulpit as happy as any sinner has ever been. I had gone in to it as helpless to feel a Savior's love and preach about it as a sinking sinner could be. On the way home Jesus was my theme; the power of his all-prevailing name was so uppermost in my thoughts that the affairs of this perishing world had sunk to a low level with me. In the midst of this feeling I thought of the *Signs* and the many readers, and especially did I think of the ministering gifts that the Lord had sent to feed the sheep. I wanted to write to you and talk of this great God that takes a poor wayfaring pilgrim and makes him to go forth to find and comfort the poor and afflicted of the Lord.

I must confess as far as I am concerned I do not know how to preach. I have been, as the world would say, practicing a long time. I am not any better qualified today to go forward than I was the first time. Come, dear yokefellow, and tell me is it thus with you. If it is not, you have out-traveled me in this way. It is not a profession to be mastered and to handle, but he that first called me, as I hope, still keeps me alive. Sometimes I hear it said that

we can handle our station in this service of the Lord. This I do not find myself able to do. It is true that I have fallen so far short of measuring up to the high standard that the apostle set for a servant of God, that it often causes anxious inquiry as to whether I am one or not. I am sorry that I am dull and not able to prove my stewardship better, and tell you with regret that I have not been able to show myself approved unto myself as to the kind of workman I am. Not having been approved unto myself, I certainly do not lay any claims to having been approved by the great and eternal God that made the world and the fulness thereof.

If I have been called to preach, I have my gift in a preaching way and any improvement that I am able to make on that gift that the Lord has given me, will result in me preaching myself as the author of that gift. There is not any way under heaven for me, nor you, nor any other man, to get around that. The gifts and callings of God are without repentance. If he has given a man a gift (who says he hasn't?), he has likewise given him a place to exercise that gift. That place, and the time, and the hearers, were all fixed and marked out before the world ever revolved the first round, yea, before all time. If I know what I believe, I believe this, and at the times of the refreshing of my poor sinful soul, it is my meat and my drink.

A few years ago a dear servant of God, who does not go in for our papers much, said that it seemed to him that there was a tendency on the part of those that wrote for publication to make it appear that they found out the things they knew by going to a certain place or having read what so an so had published. I hope and believe that this was a mistake on his part, not being able to understand the writer as well as the speaker. I do believe, as already stated, that the minister and the hearer, are blessed to be at all of their feeding places; that we get fed on the riches of the gospel at a certain place. From a human standpoint, it could be said that had we not gone, we would not have been fed, but the preciousness of this doctrine is that all the arrangements had been made for us to be there. It may have looked like that it would be impossible to get there; it may have even been so desperate with us that we were careless and unconcerned about going, but everything had been carefully arranged to the most minute detail before the world began for you to be there. The difficulty, or what you thought was the difficulty, was removed; the hard and stony heart was cut asunder and moved out of the way and a warm pulsating-with-life-heart was given you and you didn't want to stay at home; some poor wayfaring stranger came your way and said the right thing to make you ashamed of yourself for even thinking about not going.

The lot is cast into the lap, and I believe that I will say that the lot (of his inheritance) digged a pit and that it was a miry, horrible pit to them. This great God, manifest in the role of Strong Deliverer, was a Rock from whence each of them was hewn. At his time, and in his way, without any consultation held with them, or any act or will flowing from them, he lifted them from out of the pit of sin. He placed them in safety on that Rock. While in the pit they begged, they complained, they murmured, they worked themselves deeper and deeper into sin, and no song did they have to sing. But when this mighty Deliverer lifted them up from sin and placed them on the rock he fixed or established their

goings. How many of their goings? Well, the Prince of Life said that by their works they would be known. It seems unlikely that he would tell a method of knowing his children and leave it to guess work. Then here is the establishment of these works or goings. You can tell one of them when you come in contact with him, for they are established in their goings. If they preach every Sunday and all during the week, it all is of the Lord; if they have ever put off the old man and on the new, it is all of grace; if they have a gift of comforting the poor and needy and undone, it flows out and is a direct result of that measure of comfort given them; if they are active and zealous even unto stripes, shipwrecks and perils, they are ready to say that the life I live in the flesh, I live it by the faith of the Son of God. Why? The answer comes with power and glory, "I have put a new song in their mouth."

Thus not only will that song be sung by every God-called minister, but every child of grace will sing it at every moment of reconciliation. Every gift of the church shall flourish, for this life giving word is sure so that every sower and every bread eater is sure to have it come into his being; that it will accomplish the will of God and that it shall prosper in the recipient. W. D. G.

REPLY TO SISTER GERTRUDE PYATT WHOSE LETTER APPEARS IN THIS ISSUE

We do not wonder that Sister Pyatt was somewhat confused and bewildered after listening to all that was being said over the radio at Christmas time, regarding the birth and its significance of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Judging from what we heard, there was a great confusion of tongues and seldom, if ever, was the pure language of Canaan spoken. On one occasion Jesus asked his disciples whom men said he was, and the reply was that some said one thing, and some another, but none of them told the truth about the matter. Jesus, turning to his disciples, saith unto them, "But whom say ye that I am?" Simon Peter answered him, saying, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Having spoken the truth, Jesus said unto him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Such knowledge is wonderful, indeed, to all who possess it, and coming as it does by direct revelation from God, all boasting is done away, and those who have it are humbled and made to feel less than the least of all saints.

Great displays of various kinds are put on by the religious world and others, with many festivities surrounding and celebrating December 25th as the anniversary day of the advent of our Lord into the world, but so far as we know they cannot produce any creditable evidence to substantiate their claims. According to the record of Luke, "there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night," and these conditions would not lend themselves very readily to the winter season. Wise shepherds do not remain in the field with their flock, especially during the night, in winter months, but they do everything possible to see that their herds and flocks are well sheltered and provided for in every way, against enemies that move under the cover of darkness to harm and destroy

their flocks, and against the cold of winter's blasts. We are wondering if there is not some great significance attached to the fact that the exact-day of the birth of our Lord still remains one of those secret things which belong alone unto God. As Moses, who typified the Law, which signified death, was buried "in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Bethpeor; but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day," even so the coming of our Lord and Savior, who was the very embodiment of life and light, not realized until he arises with healing in his wings. It is written that the Law is our schoolmaster unto Christ, but in our experience we cannot tell exactly where the law ended and where grace, which comes by and through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, begins. From the time of conception to the time of birth, life is existent, but the child is not outwardly manifested and is not capacitated to express itself. Many of us are often encompassed with doubts and fears because we cannot point with certainty to the time we passed from death unto life. The testimony is, however, that our Lord cometh as a thief in the night, and we must tarry until he is revealed in power and in love.

Our sister cites certain verses which she says she particularly wants to know about. The first verse mentioned by her is the ninth, which reads as follows: "And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid." She asks if this angel signifies John the Baptist and if the multitude of heavenly host referred to in the thirteenth verse could represent the prophets of old, who foretold the coming of our Lord. We have never, personally, thought of the angel in that light, but we do not wish to deprive her of such thoughts, if they are comforting to her. We have thought of the shepherds who were abiding in the field and keeping watch over their flock as representing the prophets under the Law Dispensation, which was the time of darkness and shadows, but it seems to us that this angel signified one greater than John the Baptist, even the Holy Spirit. John recorded Jesus as saying, "when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." As we understand it, it is the work of the Holy Spirit to take of the things of Jesus and shew them unto us, so we believe it was the Holy Spirit which came upon those shepherds who were abiding in the field, and said unto them, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." This one spake with great authority, and a great change came over those who "were sore afraid," "for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy." This message filled them with inexpressible joy. And neither was this message confined to the Jews as a nation, but it reached beyond them, even unto the Gentiles, or in the language of the angel "to all people." It was Peter, himself a Jew, who preached on the day when Pentecost was fully come, when "there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven." In concluding that most memorable discourse, Peter said, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." And we are told that when they heard what Peter had preached unto them that "they were pricked in their heart, and said unto

Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter answered by saying, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." It seems perfectly clear from this that the promise embraced not only the Jews, but the Gentiles, or those who were afar off, as well. Paul in writing to the Ephesians said, "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were afar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh." Paul could, therefore, continue his message by saying, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Surely, nothing further need be said to show who were embraced under the expresson "to all people." Luke was most certainly not a Universalist and did not mean to make the application so as to embrace every member of the Adamic race, any more than was our Lord or any of the other apostles. Now that we can see that the Gentiles were brought into the fold, and there was one fold and one Shepherd, we can better understand this extraordinary event which brought forth this, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy." It was not as the world so lucidly proclaims to-day that salvation was to be offered to every son and daughter of Adam, to be accepted or rejected, according to the whims of each individual, but rather that in the city of David a Savior was born, and by way of emphasizing the true significance of what was meant, Luke explained who this SAVIOR was by saying that he was Christ the Lord. This was prophesied of by Zechariah when he said, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." The angel also declared that a virgin "shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." If we are to accept the Bible as the word of truth, we must agree that the word *Savior* means that Jesus saves, that he delivers his people from destruction. We frequently hear it said he is standing on the outside, knocking at the door of the sinner's heart, but that the key is on the inside and that the sinner must open the door before he can come in. This is most certainly not Bible truth. We have just heard quoted over the radio the following words of Jesus: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." While Jesus was likened unto a great magnet stone and its drawing power, in the very same breath the speaker said, the sinner must, of course, turn or yield himself, otherwise Jesus can-

not save him. The good tidings of great joy to the shepherds was that a Savior was born in the city of David, and we can affirm this glorious truth when by the workings of the Holy Spirit the Savior is born in the sinner's heart. When a child is born in a family he is an heir, whether he is wanted or not, and under the law he cannot be removed altogether. The tie of birth is one that cannot be broken. "And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." The whole of this record, it seems to us, shows conclusively that the natural heart does not desire Jesus. The reason he was born in a manger was "because there was no room for them in the inn." John says, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, but of God." Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." If, as the word declares, it has pleased our heavenly Father to hide these things from the wise and prudent, and reveal them unto babes, we may be assured that mortal man with all of his boasted power and knowledge is utterly unable by searching to find out God. He dwelleth in the secret place, in the heights to which none can attain, but he has condescended to make himself known unto his elect by taking up his abode in their hearts.

As the Gentile nations were prepared for the coming of the Savior through having to wait century after century, so must the sinner wait to be prepared for his coming. His people are made willing in the day of his power, and they are made to know that there is help in none other. The light of his precious truth must first penetrate into the dark recesses of their wicked hearts, and give them a true knowledge of themselves, so that they are watching and waiting, yea, longing and yearning after him to appear and deliver them out of the horrible pit of sin, and when he does appear as their Savior, suddenly there is with them the angel of God and a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will toward men." Only those who experience these things can bear witness to them, and they have the witness within themselves that they are true.

Those who hold up or preach Jesus as being too weak to save without the assistance or co-operation of the sinner, surely have never seen him high and lifted up, glorious in his apparel and travelling in the greatness of his strength, and there is no comfort or consolation in their preaching to those who have realized their lost and ruined condition. They do not see the beauty that Luke set forth in the first part of this second chapter, where he shows that even the decree of Caesar Augustus in raising money through taxation was overruled and made to work for the glory of God, in that it called for the gathering of every one into his own city to be taxed, which meant that Joseph must go up out of Galilee, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, to be taxed, for that was the place where this Savior was to be born. God's truly called servants can see that all things were working together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. The command which they have received to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every

creature, has been preceded by the declaration of Jesus that all power, both in heaven and in earth, has been given into his hand and, therefore, they are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, and the very believing itself is the work of God, according to the words of Jesus. The Lord spake by his prophet, Isaiah, saying, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." These are the good tidings of great joy which are proclaimed by those truly called and qualified by God to preach the everlasting gospel of his blessed Son. Out of his own mouth came forth the precious words to his Father, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." He had just said, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." We hope we know him by the names by which the prophet said he would be called: "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." With such knowledge, we would be ashamed to leave our home and preach Christ anywhere as a weakling, or to write of him after such manner, but rather would we proclaim from the housetop that he is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto him, and he himself declared that no man can come unto him except the Father which sent him, draw him. He further declared that all that the Father gave him shall come to him, and him that cometh to him he will in no wise cast out. These are the good tidings of great joy that we desire to sound fourth to the very ends of the earth, because we know Him in whom we have believed, and we are persuaded that He is able to keep that which we have committed into His hands.

The words in the eleventh chapter, ninth and tenth verses, to which our sister refers were addressed to the disciples by our Lord; they are to the living, and not the dead, for the dead know not anything, and we should take them to heart and be encouraged by them. They are, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." These things are addressed to living creatures, to those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, for the promise was that they shall be filled. These characters are asking, seeking and knocking at the door of God's mercy, which we are thankful to say, stands open all day and all night, and they are to persevere and cling only to the cross of Christ. Like Jacob who wrestled with the angel, they must cling tenaciously to the promises of God, for there is help in none other, and he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all they can ask or think. There is nothing too hard or impossible with him; he is able to supply their every need, the Great Physician who can heal all their diseases. This is altogether unlike and foreign to the picture presented by the religious world of Jesus being on the outside and trying to get into the sinner's heart, all of which is abhorrent to the children of the true and living God. Like our sister, however, we freely grant them every right to worship according to the dictates of

their own conscience, knowing full well that it is all of God's rich and reigning grace if our eyes have been opened to see the King in his beauty. We feel to join Joshua in saying to those who do not serve God in sincerity and in truth, "If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." We are well aware that these things cannot be taught in the schools of men, nor even by His called and qualified ministers except as he is pleased to work in them. The spiritual flock is taught of God to know that it must look beyond the watchmen who stand upon the walls of Zion.

We hope our remarks will be of some comfort to our sister and readers.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTER

Adopted by the Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the White-Church, Whitefield, Me., Sept. 10, 11, 12, 1948. Greetings to the several churches and Associations with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN: Another year has passed and through the mercy and kindness of our all wise and Almighty God we have been permitted to meet again in an Association at Whitefield.

Now, as in the years that have passed, it is our custom to address you by the so-called Circular Letter. At this time, with all our unworthiness, the task of writing this letter has fallen to us who feel ourselves to be the least of all of God's chosen ones if one at all. In the words of the poet,

"'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought),
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?

If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse
Who have never heard his name."

We feel that we have been greatly blessed to be able to meet again in an Association. There is also a feeling of sadness as we see the vacant places of those we have loved for the truth's sake for many years. Their faces we shall see no more on earth. We know they have fought the good fight and finished their course, and that our loss is their gain. May we bow in humble submission to his will. It has been written that the day of one's death is better than the day of his birth. We know that nothing happens by chance, and that all things take place according to His will who has declared "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Jesus said to Nichodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*****That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Nichodemus was a natural man, and being one these things were foolishness to him. God said, I have revealed these things to the foolish, and hid them from the wise, yet in the modern so-called churches of to-day we hear people being urged to accept Jesus as their personal Savior, and the so-called ministers talking about bringing souls to Christ. Surely one who has felt the burden of sin and tried by every earthly means to improve his lost condition only to feel himself sinking deeper and deeper until finally in

utter despair he is made to cry, O Lord help me! Save or I perish! We know of no greater grief than that suffered by the human soul in the period of travail. One who has passed through this experience realizes their own helplessness, and that not they choose the Lord, but the Lord chooses them. The Lord says, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." John 15:16: "Bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth." Isa. 43.6. Our experience teaches us that we are far away, and at the ends of the earth he appears to us as he did to David and brings us up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and places our feet upon a rock, establishes our goings, and puts a new song in our mouth even praises unto our God. (Psalms 40:2-3.)

As we had no control over our first birth, neither have we any over our second. No man hath seen God at any time, neither can any man by searching find out God. He finds us as he did Jacob in a waste howling wilderness, and leads us about and instructs us. He comes to us and leaves us as the wind that bloweth where it listeth. We hear the sound thereof, but we cannot tell from whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit. He knows all our uprisings and down-sittings. When he is absent from us we are filled with doubts and fears, and like John when he was imprisoned have to be told again of all the things he (Jesus) has done, but when he is present with us we are filled with joy unspeakable, and feel as David in the 23rd Psalm when he said, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS,
Moderator
S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Whitefield Church at Whitefield, Me., Sept. 8, 9 and 10, 1948, send greetings to our sister Associations and meetings of our correspondence.

DEAR BRETHREN: Another year has passed and through the wisdom, power and mercy of God we have the privilege of meeting again as an Association. Your messengers and correspondence have been gladly received, and we pray that they may continue through the years to come. The preaching was in accord with Christ's teachings and our Christian experience, all to the honor and glory of God.

The Maine Association is one of the smaller and weaker Associations, but we hope that we are a part of that remnant which the Lord shall gather from all parts of the earth. (Isa. 11:11-12.)

It is comforting to note that it is through the small and weak things of the world that God shows his power. As the stripling David with a small pebble from his sling slew the mighty Philistine giant, (Samuel 17:49) and Gideon's army cut down to a mere three hundred overcame the hosts of Midian, (Judges 7) so our strength is not of ourselves, but of God who doeth all things well according to his will for our good and his glory. So let us

run with patience the race set before us, remembering that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.

May we be given faith to lift up our eyes unto the hills from whence cometh our help. All our help cometh from the Lord who made heaven and earth, and who shall preserve our going out, and our coming in as in ages past and from this time forth and even for-evermore.

Our meeting was well attended and peace and harmony prevailed. It indeed seemed a sitting down together in a heavenly place. The next meeting of the Maine Association will be held with the Whitefield Church at Whitefield, Me., Sept. 9, 10 and 11, 1949, the Lord willing, when we hope to meet you all again.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Moderator
S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk

ORDINATION

At the request of Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va. for the Elders and Deacons of the sister churches of her vicinity to sit as a Presbytery and inquire into the qualifications of Brother A. D. ALSTON for the office of Deacon, and to ordain him if they thought proper, the following Elders and Deacons met at Frying Pan meeting-house the second Sunday in May 1949: Elders, H. H. Lefferts and John D. Wood; Deacons, G. C. Spindle, Harvey J. White, Isaac T. Long, C. W. Norman and G. S. Weider.

After singing, and prayer by Elder H. H. Lefferts, the Presbytery was organized by choosing Elder Lefferts as Moderator, Brother E. L. Robey, Clerk, and Brother C. A. Hylton, Assistant Clerk.

Brother Alston was presented to the Presbytery by Deacon G. C. Spindle who was spokesman for the church. Elder Wood led in questioning Brother Spindle as to Brother Alston's qualifications for the office, using the 3rd chapter of 1st Timothy in the inquiry. He also inquired as to the qualifications of Sister Alston as a Deacon's wife, as required in the same chapter. Elder Lefferts led in questioning Brother Alston as to his belief in the scriptural doctrines of predestination, election, resurrection of the dead, etc. Every answer given was entirely satisfactory to the Presbytery and they unanimously moved to proceed with the ordination. This was done by prayer and laying on of hands, the prayer being by Elder Lefferts. Elder Lefferts delivered the charge to Brother Alston and Elder Wood spoke to the church of their duties toward their Deacons. After the right hand of fellowship was given by the Presbytery to Brother and Sister Alston, Brother Alston was given back to the church as duly qualified of the Lord for such work as is required of a Deacon.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator
E. L. ROBEY, Clerk
C. A. HYLTON, Asst. Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Whereas our heavenly Father, in his infinite wisdom and mercy, has removed from this mortal existence our beloved brother in Christ Jesus, Elder C. W. VAUGHN, of Hopewell, New Jersey, and whereas this Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, assembled in conference at their Quarterly meeting at Dunwich, Ontario, May 7, 8 and 9, 1949, feels very keenly the loss of this esteemed brother, who has been coming to us to preach at least once a year for over thirty years, and whose wise counsel in walk and practice, and whose kindly interest in our individual welfare, have been a source of comfort and joy to us, therefore be it

Resolved, that with hearts bowed in humble submission to God's holy will, we do express our belief that our loss is his eternal gain, and give voice to our gratitude for the rich blessing his long and useful life has been to us, and be it

Resolved, that this tribute to his memory be written in the Covenanted Church book, a copy be sent to our dear sister, his widow, and a copy be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Signed on behalf of this church,
(Elder) GEORGE RUSTON, Moderator
(Deacon) R. P. EATON, Church Clerk
(Brother) ELDON GILBERT, Assistant Clerk

With sorrow we record the passing of our brother's widow, MRS. SARAH CATHERINE RISLER, (Known to her friends and relatives as Kate or Katie) born April 30, 1863, died April 14, 1949, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Hulda R. Suydam, 416 West Dudley Ave., Westfield, N. J. Besides her daughter she is survived by one son, Grover C. Risler, R.F.D., Stockton, N. J., and one granddaughter, Miss Catharyn R. Suydam. Her parents were Peter and Maria Strimple Slout.

With the infirmities of age her health had not been good for some months but the end came unexpectedly from a heart attack lasting only a few hours. With the exception of spending the last three winters with her daughter she had been a

lifelong resident of Hunterdon Co., N. J. Her husband, our brother James, preceded her in death three years at which time they had lived together on a farm near Locktown, N. J. 61 years.

She united with the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church at Locktown, N. J. at the age of nineteen, and was baptized by Elder A. B. Francis, March 19, 1882. For 67 years she was a faithful member, always attending the meetings, ready to entertain the brethren and serve the church in every possible way. She never wavered in her belief of salvation by grace and grace alone.

Funeral services were held at the Holcombe Funeral Home in Flemington, N. J., conducted by Elder R. Lester Dodson who, with Elder C. W. Vaughn, has been serving the Kingwood Church for some years. The 23rd Psalm was read, also hymns 1249 and 1256 Beebe's Collection, followed by remarks from Titus 2:11-14. Many beautiful floral tributes attested to the love and esteem in which she was held. Interment in Rosemont Cemetery, Rosemont, N. J. Written by request.

CYRUS RISLER

Our sister in Christ, MARY LIZZIE (CROASDALE) LEFFERTS, widow of the late Henry T. Lefferts, ceased from her earthly labors in her home in Nutley, N. J., March 7, 1949. She was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, Oct. 17, 1870 of the parentage of Amos and Mary Croasdale. She is survived by one daughter, Myrtle C. Lefferts, and one brother Stanley Croasdale both of Nutley, N. J.

Sister Lefferts was bedridden for over five years, but she possessed the faith of God's elect and bore her affliction with fortitude and patience. We can but feel that God sometimes afflicts his saints in order to teach the rest of us the lesson of patience and reconciliation to his most holy will. During her illness her daughter and sister-in-law, Sister Naomi L. Rounds, with nurses, faithfully and untiringly administered to her needs.

Prior to her marriage, Sister Lefferts united with the church at Southampton, Pa., and was baptized by the late Elder Silas H. Durand, June 8, 1890. She and Brother Lefferts were united in marriage by Elder Durand at the parsonage in Dec. 1891. The Lord blessed this union with one daughter, our Sister Myrtle.

Sister Lefferts was granted a letter by the church at Southampton, Pa., and united with the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in New York City Dec. 1, 1901 where she remained a faithful and useful member until her death. After the writer came to New York City to live he came to know and esteem her as a worthy member of the mystical body of Christ. She was truly very helpful and encouraging to us in our ministry, and we shall always be grateful to God for her kindness to us.

A brief service was held at her home on Wednesday evening, March 9 where hymns 910 and 367, Beebe's Collection and the 23rd Psalm were read by her special request, and Elder H. H. Lefferts of Leesburg, Va., brother-in-law of the deceased, commented briefly and acceptably to all from the words found in Job 14:14, "If a man die, shall he live again?" which had also been especially requested by our sister. The following day the body was taken to Somerton, Philadelphia, Pa. where, in the chapel adjoining the cemetery, the writer, after reading hymn 1052 Beebe's Collection and speaking in prayer, spoke briefly from the words, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." We felt these words were given to us especially for this occasion by the Holy Spirit, and that they were particularly applicable to our sister. We are persuaded that she has "inherited the kingdom" prepared for her from the foundation of the world, and that she is now enjoying the presence of her glorious Lord, where there are endless pleasures for-ever-more. Therefore we hope those left behind will be reconciled to the will of their heavenly Father and ever look unto him, who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that they are able to ask or think.

Elder H. H. Lefferts officiated at the grave, and interment was made in William Penn Cemetery. Written by her pastor at the request of the family.

(Elder) R. LESTER DODSON

JOHN V. WHITE was born in Georgia, Dec. 7, 1861, and died May 25, 1944. At about the age of seventeen he with his parents moved to Alabama where he married Miss Hixie Britton, Feb. 22, 1881. To this union were born nine children five of whom preceded him in death. The surviving children are Mrs. Florence Harrison of Golden, Mrs. Allie Smith of Winnsboro, Mrs. Mary Morris and Mrs. Jennie Gilbreath of Quitman all in Wood Co., Texas, also his aged companion who makes her home with her children. He moved his family to Wood Co., Texas in the fall of 1900, and settled in what is known as the Rock Hill community where they lived until their children were all grown and married then they sold out and moved to an adjoining community where he spent the remainder of his life.

Brother White joined the Primitive Baptist church at old Fishpond in Alabama in his early manhood and lived a faithful and devoted member, ever ready to lend a helping hand to the cause of the church and also anything for the upbuilding of his community. "Uncle John," as

he was familiarly known, was a man of few words but was admired for the meek and quiet spirit he possessed. Yes, the religion he professed was the religion he lived by. He had his faults but no one regretted and mourned on account of them more than he. He was firm in the faith of the Old Predestinarian Baptists and delighted in entertaining his brethren, sisters and friends. He made us all welcome in his home. In his business dealings he was dependable, always contending for what he thought was right and honest, a strict believer in discipline in church, home and school.

The dear old brother never claimed any righteousness of his own. I have often heard him say, "I am just a poor, unworthy sinner saved by grace if saved at all." His friends often speak of his wonderful understanding and his faithfulness and devotion to his wife and children. We miss him so much from our little band at Cana Church where he was always present if not providentially hindered. His funeral was conducted by his Pastor, Elder S. C. Davenport, at Cana Church where he worshipped for so many years. His body was laid to rest in the Rock Hill cemetery there to await the morning of the resurrection when it shall come forth a spiritual body to meet his Lord and reign with him forever. May the God of heaven bless and comfort his lonely wife in her sadness, and guide and keep his children in the path of righteousness for his name's sake. Written by request.

(Mrs.) S. C. DAVENPORT

Once again it becomes our sad duty to note the death of MRS. MILDRED CORA ELKINS (nee Sanders), born May 17, 1869, near Summerville, Texas, died March 7, 1949. She came to Texas with her parents in Dec. 1882, and settled near the present home site in 1883. She was married to William Jackson Elkins, Aug. 11, 1887. To this union were born four children of which two are living, John Fox, Van Court, Texas, and Noel V., Novice, Texas. There are ten grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren. Mrs. Mary E. Cates also of Novice, Texas is a niece. All these, her relatives, together with a host of friends and neighbors are left to mourn her departure.

Sister Elkins united with the Primitive Baptist church in 1884. Who baptized her the writer does not know. She lived a faithful and consistent member the rest of her life. She was a faithful and dutiful wife, a beloved mother, humble, gentle and kind to all. To know her was to love her. Let us not choose words that would add grief to grief, but rather hope to speak words of comfort. Let us not wish her back again into this world of trouble, trials and tribulations, but rather let us hope our great loss is her eternal gain, that she is stored away in her bed of clay, waiting the coming again of her Lord and Saviour the second time without sin unto salvation to gather her, together with the rest of his elect, and present to the Father, pure, holy and without blame before God in love, there to sing the eternal song of redemption that no man can learn. "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

She indeed was a mother in Israel. Her going in and out before them were only footprints to the flock in which all would do well to take note. Her manner of life before all who knew her can only be estimated by the great concourse of people that followed her remains to the family burying plot on the old homestead upon which she had lived all her married life. The writer together with Elder C. U. Landers tried to speak words of comfort over the body to and for those left behind in deep sorrow. Sister Elkins sickness was of long duration, but she bore it in and with great patience. May the Lord bless all that mourn is the prayer of an unworthy writer.

(Elder) W. A. LITTLE

MRS. MARTHA ROLLER, our beloved sister in Christ, departed this earthly life April 29, 1949 at the Eastern Star Home, 6000 New Hampshire Ave., N. E., Washington, D. C. after an illness of several weeks. She was born February 7, 1865, daughter of James B. and Hortensia E. Havener formerly of Leesburg, Va. Sister Roller is the last member of her immediate family, no nearer survivors than nieces and a nephew, also a sister-in-law Mrs. Flemings of Millville, W. Va. She and her three sisters, now deceased, were all members of the New Valley Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun Co., Va. Sister Mary Wagaman passed away Nov. 26, 1929, sister Hattie Kelly February 11, 1931, sister Sallie L. Havener May 17, 1938. Sister Roller's husband, Clayton C. Roller, died December 23, 1942 at their former home, 1611 No. 17th St., Arlington, Va. Sister Roller entered the Eastern Star Home as a resident in the latter part of 1944. Mr. Roller having been a Mason, entitled her, as his widow, to be taken care of there. She was baptized by the late Elder E. V. White into membership with the New Valley Church November 20, 1887, so had been a faithful and devoted member among the brethren for over 61 years. My last visit with her was in company with brother G. C. Spindle Sunday afternoon November 21, 1948. At that time, she was able to be up and around although she had previously been for awhile in the infirmary at the Home as a patient. She always praised the Home and the kindly care

and attention that was meted out to her there. Not having any children of her own, her husband and all the members of her family having passed away, left her sad and lonely; so that the Home was a real boon to her, a wise provision of a benign Providence for her care and comfort in these latter years. As long as she was able to do so, she faithfully attended the meetings both at New Valley and at Frying Pan. She was well indoctrinated in the truth of the scriptures and exemplified their teachings in her life. I shall greatly miss her for she was ever true to me as her pastor and took a great interest in the welfare of myself and all our children and their families. Funeral services for her were held at the Slack Funeral Home in Leesburg, Va. Interment in the Union Cemetery at Leesburg. "The memory of the just is blessed." Proverbs 10:7.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS

WILMON CALK born Jan. 2, 1904, son of the late Oliver and Martha Ann Calk of Downsville, La., died March 7, 1949, aged 45 years, 2 months and 5 days.

LUCILLE HOLDER, daughter of John L. and Elizabeth Holder of Brownville, Texas, born March 8, 1911, died March 7, 1949, aged 37 years, 11 months and 27 days.

Wilmon Calk and Lucille Holder were united in marriage in Aug. 1931. To this union were born two children, a girl and a boy. Winifred aged 16, and Carlton aged 14. Besides their two children they leave to mourn their loss his brothers, T. W., Coleman, J. H. Bastrop, La., J. D., Fort Worth, and sisters, Mrs. Beulah Anderson and Mrs. Erie Thurston, Downsville, La., Mrs. Betty Glass, Hale, La., Mrs. Martha Seals and Mrs. Arminda Beauchamp, San Angelo and Mrs. Sicily Hood, San Bernardino, Cal. Also her father, John L. Holder, Sr., San Bernardino, Cal., her brothers, John L. Jr., Brownwood, Luther, Coleman, Cecil Dallas, and one sister, Mrs. Lois Maxwell, Leuders. Nephews, nieces and a host of friends.

Wilmon Calk united with the Predestinarian Baptist Church the fourth Sunday in Nov. 1925. Lucille Holder united with the Missionary Baptist Church in 1926. Brother Wilmon and wife came to the end of their pilgrimage of this life when hit by a train at a R.R. crossing while on their way to see Sister Elkins who had been very ill for several days.

Brother Wilmon was clerk of Pilgrim Rest Church of Lawn and was faithful and efficient in his duty. A few days before his death we heard him say, "The scripture that comforts me most is, All things work together for good to them that love God," etc. Cille, as we knew her, came with Brother Wilmon to church most of the time, and when dinner was served she was there with a basket of food. From the evidence we have seen, and heard her speak we believe she was a child of the Heavenly King. Such things make us sad, but we can say with our departed brother, "All things work together for good to them that love God." God in his infinite wisdom makes no mistakes. "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." The services were conducted by Elder W. A. Little of Fort Worth and the writer. They were laid to rest side by side in the Coleman Cemetery. They are gone from the evil to come but not forgotten. Written by request of the family.

(Elder) C. U. LANDERS

ETHEL OLIVER (CALK) ROBERTS born Jan. 22, 1889, died March 2, 1949, aged 60 years, 1 month and 10 days. She was the daughter of the late Oliver and Martha Ann Calk of Downsville, La. On Oct. 1, 1916 she married J. B. Roberts and to this union were born three boys and three girls. Cary A., Midland, J. B. Jr., Coleman, Ralph L., Tacoma, Wash., Mrs. Martha Jo Cate, Novice, Mrs. Kreneta M. Cunningham, Marlow, Okla., and Mrs. Barbara N. Kunkel, Crane. Besides her husband, children and nine grandchildren, she leaves to mourn her loss four brothers and six sisters, T. W. and Wilmon, Coleman, J. H. of Bastrop, La., J. D., Fort Worth, Mrs. Beulah Anderson and Mrs. Erie Thurston, Downsville, La., Mrs. Betty Glass, Hale, La., Mrs. Martha Seals and Mrs. Arminda Beauchamp, San Angelo, Mrs. Sicley Hood, San Bernardino, Cal., also nephews, nieces and a host of friends.

Sister Roberts united with the Predestinarian Baptists in June 1938. Sister Ethel, as we knew her, believed in the predestination of an all wise, merciful God and salvation by grace and liked to talk of the doctrine of God. She was blind for several years before her death, but bore her affiction with patience, leaving us an example of kindness, patience and walking by faith. She was a member of Pilgrim Rest Church, Lawn, Texas at the time of her death.

The services were conducted by Elder J. W. Shipman, Lubbock, Texas, and the writer. She was laid to rest in the Coleman Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour when time shall be declared no more and all the saints shall come into that perfection for which they wait. They shall see Him, be like Him and be satisfied. Written by request of the family.

(Elder) C. U. LANDERS

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 117 RUTHERFORD, N. J., SEPTEMBER, 1949 No. 9

My dear Redeemer, Savior, God!
Who formed me from the earthy clod,
Breathed in my body the breath of life,
In this I fell to pride and strife.

In sin and hate, I walked the road
Till it became a heavy load.
I sought for truth both day and night,
Then Jesus Christ became my light.

I took the book and began to read,
And as I read was blessed to heed;
I saw that life was in the Son,
And that took place ere I could run.

The book I read was the apostle John,
In the fifth chapter, so I read on
Down to the verse saying, search and see
It is the Scriptures that speak of me.

Since that time new is the book
While on its pages I'm blessed to look;
I know my life is not in the letter,
Now when I read, am I the better?

Somehow I hope that God did see;
He raised me up and set me free;
In Jesus Christ the Son of God
Who formed me from the dusty sod.

Christ is the way, the truth, the cost,
If he is not then I am lost,
For I'm like water poured on the ground,
From whence, by wisdom, I first was found.

Lowland, N. C. WARDEN R. LEWIS

(The above carries my experience and I hope it may be the experience of every one that is blessed to read.—W. R. L.)

CORRESPONDENCE

Redwood, Va.

MRS. SALLIE HUTCHENS, DEAR SISTER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE IN THE LORD: I received your comforting letter which was edifying to me. I feel to believe that you and I have traveled the same road if we are not deceived. May the dear Lord bless me to write you some little word of comfort that will be edifying to your poor soul. I feel that you have a rugged road to travel also all of God's dear saints. Oh, if we only knew that we were worthy to be esteemed a saint, but unworthy though we be we must abide in that little hope the rest of our remaining days here in doubts, fears, sad heart aches, griefs, sorrows and be persecuted by the world with all manner of evil spoken against us. Amidst all of these afflictions I truly hope we are accounted worthy to suffer with patience and tender love all of these ups and downs for Christ's dear name sake. All of these afflictions are not worthy to be compared with the glory that we hope is revealed in us. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" We, the elect bride, (who they are) are more than conquerors through him that loved us. He loved his little flock with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness has he drawn them. They are his faithful few in number but most precious in his sight and memory. Dear sister, I truly believe that all Christ died to redeem are just as sure for heaven and immortal glory as God is sure. His work is a perfect work, he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast, so all of his chosen elects, without failure, will be born again in due season to inherit God's glorious eternal kingdom which was prepared for them from the foundation of the world. His glorious bride

is from the ancients of eternity, she is from everlasting to everlasting. Oh glorious thought that we hope some day to be carried to the realms of fadeless glory where there will be one sweet eternal day with all of the saints where night never comes. There will be no sorrow there, no more sad heartaches, nor parting hand, nor farewell tears to be shed; but in love, union and sweet communion to love, praise, honor and glorify our great Redeemer's glorious name. Then can the full song of redemption be sung. If we only knew that we were the happy recipients of that glorious theme, but we only live in hope while here in carnality.

Dear sister, many are the times that I feel so vile, sinful and wretched that I doubt as to whether I have a hope. It seems that I only faintly hope that I have a hope. I get so low down in poverty and sorrow at times, I feel and believe that surely I have never been born again, fearing that I have acted a hypocrite for these thirty years. I become uneasy at times and can say as did the dear apostle Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" The sin I hate that I do, the things I most desire I cannot attain unto, and so it seems that I am grasping at the shadow and missing the substance. At times my own ways become very hateful and wretched to me until I feel constrained to cry unto the Lord for relief and mercy. Our many sins and shortcomings are as it was with Paul—an incurable malady. We have not the remedy but when the Lord at his own appointed time applies his love and amazing mercy which always heals without failure he raises us up to sit together in heavenly places and puts a new song in our mouth even praises unto God. Christ is the only true physician, we have no other in whom to trust. We feel to know our dear Redeemer liveth. Then we truly believe we love Zion's little ones, our dear kindred in the Lord who are the object of Christ's redeeming love; his precious jewels who have been tried by fire (stood the test) and refined as pure gold through his spirit are pure, spotless, without blemish and undefiled. When in reality we feel these precious promises, oh how we do love and adore our dear Lord and Savior, and our dear kindred in Christ. How helpless we are to even merit one little deed in exchange for his rich, bountiful treasures that are laid up in store for his little flock. We are in total depravity, nothing to give or even offer unto the Lord that ever has been or will be acceptable. We are worthless, poverty stricken beggars in this sinful life, but we have a rich Father, who has of his own free will given unto us all things even their natural and spiritual life. He is their love, righteousness, justification, sanctification, resurrection and our glorious Redeemer and we are less than nothing. Through the merits and great suffering of our Savior when he said it was finished, that word finished means the end, it was final when he said, "It is finished;" I believe that completed the salvation of all of his heirs of promise. He sealed it with his precious blood, he had paid the full debt of redemption, satisfaction was made, the royal law fulfilled and restored honorably unto the Father.

Dear sister, if we have Christ in us the hope of glory we have all things. We have a true living sacrifice to offer for all things if we be in Christ and he in us. We have a hidden treasure, our life is hid in Christ which is a living faith. Yes faith in the Lord Jesus Christ which none but the redeemed of the Lord can ever attain unto. Living faith produces living

works. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling which salvation is a living salvation, which is, I believe, worked out through the spirit of his saints as God works in them both to will and to do of his own good pleasure, for we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, not dead works but living works, not the good works and merits of we sinful creatures, but the good works of God which always accomplishes whereunto he sends it.

Dear Sister Hutchens you say your church is your chief joy here on earth. Your dear companion, Elder H. F. Hutchens, felt, I believe, that his church and also the preaching of the glorious gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ was his greatest pleasure here in this life. If not deceived in this glorious theme I wholeheartedly agree with you the same fate is mine wherein our dear kindred dwell. These words of the poet are well suited to my feelings:

> "Oh glorious day, oh blessed hope,
> My soul leaps forward at the thought."

Dear kindred, unworthy though I be, I have never been able to use words to express the love, sweetness and greatness that I feel towards my dear redeemer God. He has been so merciful to my unrighteousness. Oh the grandeur, love and beauty that we sometimes hope we see and feel in him. Ascribe ye greatness unto our God, thou art worthy O Lord. We feel that our love is weak and faint, but our dear Christ is our sufficiency in all things. He is our glorious eternal leader and captain. Where he leads his little flock they joyfully follow.

In conclusion we are strangers in the flesh, but I truly hope the dear Lord has acquainted us in his Holy Spirit and also all of his redeemed family, and that we are fellow citizens and travelers, traveling the same road, the narrow way, the king's highway of holiness which leads to realms of eternal glory where all cause of parting is past and their social feast will ever last. A brother I hope in hope of immortality.

J. A. PERDUE

Herndon, Va.

ABRAHAM and LOT

"Now the Lord has said unto Abram, get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee." We come into this world in the body of this flesh; that is our home, it is our country, it is our father's house; and it is the place where we have found comfort and rest. We have been very proud of this body, our home, satisfied with it, and looked to it for all the protection, strength and rest that we would ever need. We fully expected to live and die in that same body, needing nothing more to make life complete, happy and comfortable. (Gen. 12:1) But the Lord said, "Get thee out." In amazement we fall, crying, Lord who art thou? We find that all of our previous comfort, security and strength has vanished; all the beauty of this old home and all its pride and ornaments are gone, and we, a new man are out and alone without strength, shelter or comfort. So Abram was sent out and led unto a land the Lord showed him. He departed as the Lord had spoken unto him, and Lot went with him, he and his wife Sarai and his substance.

Abram pitched his tent, "having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east," and called upon the name of the Lord. Bethel means "of God" while Hai means "a heap of ruin." The east is the land of the rising sun, or the beginning, and may refer to the old man

of self; while the west is the setting, that which we come unto in the evening of our long journey. So here we see Abram; on his east is the beginning. the old man of this body, the heap of ruin, Hai; on the west is that which we strive unto, the latter part, the new man of the spirit, the spiritual Bethel. On his journey, and between Hai and Bethel, Abram pitched his tent and called upon the name of the Lord. (Gen. 12:8)

"And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land." (Gen. 12:10) The new spiritual man finds himself poor and hungry, faint and cold; there comes to him a famine; he is made to cry for support and that which will sustain his very life; indeed, the famine is grievous! Abram, in this condition, seeks to leave this land of famine, and so he goes down into Egypt. We might notice that Egypt is downward, not upward. Egypt is the land of darkness, but it has the food and all that which sustains the life of the old man of this body. Now Abram sojourned into this land of darkness that he might get away from the famine which was so grievous to the body of this flesh. In the famine of the spiritual man, the fleshly man sought comfort in the land of Egypt and there "sat by the flesh pots." (Gen. 12:10. Ex. 16:3)

The Lord has said, "Get thee out***** unto a land that I will shew thee." Was this to be Egypt, a land of darkness? No the Lord would not allow him to dwell in darkness. The Lord brought Abram and Sarai into trouble in Egypt, and Pharaoh "sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had." The Lord had given Abram and Lot many cattle, stock and possessions, and when the land was not able to bear them together, there came a strife between the herdsmen. So Abram and Lot separated themselves one from the other. Lot was given the first choice of the lands. Now let us notice the choice of Lot which is indicative of his nature and the spiritual gift that he had. "Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east." Jordan signifies "going down", and the plains are always at a lower level. Lot sought the low land of less trials; Lot journeyed toward the east, toward the things of nature and self; He was seeking to produce the crops and the fruits of the earth and things earthy. He sought to dwell in the city which offered more ease and comfort to this body. The men of the city of Sodom, to which Lot came to dwell, were wicked and sinners before the Lord, and thus we find Lot dwelling in the midst of great sin. (Gen. 13)

Now Abram faced toward the west, and dwelled in the higher lands, and in the mountains, and in the rugged places he found protection between the rocks. "He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks." (Isa.33:16) The Lord blessed Abram and renewed his promise to him. Abram, in doubt, complained that he was without seed and he and his wife were of much age. Then the Lord blessed him again, changing his name to Abraham and gave him a true son, Isaac, in whom He promised to establish His covenant.

Although Lot had gone to dwell in the lowland and in the city of sin, and had turned his attention to the ease of this life and to the fruits of the earth, let us remember that he was a chosen vessel. Every true son shall be brought through the furnace of affliction, and be purified as gold. "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." (Isa.48:-10) The furnace is a place for fire, and a place of intense burning. If our

walk in this life is after the things of the flesh; if our works and our buildings in this life are made of straw and chaff, and evil idols and fleshly lustings the greater will be the burning and the hotter will be the furnace, for we may be assured that all that is not gold will be burned out. The possessions of Lot were in Sodom. Sodom was full of sin. Sodom must be brought into the furnace. So the angels came unto Lot and told him to escape for his life, he and his wife and his sons and daughters. The sons-in-law would not hear him, and while he yet pleaded and tarried, "the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city. And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand*****the Lord being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth.*****Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain." Would the Lord allow his to continually dwell in the land of sin? The time had come for Lot to be placed in the furnace of affliction for purification. His possessions were in Sodom; they were the things of this world; they must perish with Sodom; they must be burned as chaff. Lot was reluctant to leave all of his possessions; he tarried and lingered; he had to be taken by the hand and led out, he and his wife and his two daughters. He was told not to look back; not to desire again and long for those sinful idols and possessions that he must give up; he was told not to stop anywhere in the lowland plains, but to go beyond and even into the mountain. His sons-in-law would not hear him, they mocked him and remained with their possessions to be burned with Sodom. His wife was weak, and after being carried out, the Lord being merciful, she dared to turn and look back to the worldly possessions, and so was turned into a pillar of salt. She, too, was taken from Lot in the furnace of affliction. (Gen. 19)

Lot had to be forced by the hand of the Lord to go out of the city, and to leave his earthly possessions; he had to be forced to come out of the plains; he had to be made to come unto the mountains. Even as he was brought out of the city and told to flee to the mountains he pleaded, "Oh, not so, my Lord*****lest some evil take me, and I die; Behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one: Oh let me escape thither and my soul shall live." And Lot came unto the city and it was called Zoar. Now the name of Zoar means "smallness"; thus Lot came to the place of smallness and leanness and tried to dwell there. "And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountains, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar; and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters." Is not this the experience of the Christian? Do we not seek pleasures, ease and comforts in this world? Do we not dwell in the plains and in the city of plenty, and seek the fruits of the earth? Do we not hesitate and linger to leave the lusts and idols of this life? Do we not have to be taken by the hand and led, even made to go out? Even then we cry, oh Lord, leave me a little comfort, let me dwell in a little city. But soon even that must likewise be burned out. We must not dwell in leanness; we cannot serve, even in part, two masters. "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." 1 Cor. 6:19-20.

The Lord said unto Abraham, "Get thee out." The angels took Lot by the

hand and led him out, and brought him forth and set him without the city, the Lord being merciful unto him! Now may the Lord and our Savior, in his mercy and lovingkindness, take each of us by the hand and lead us out of the bondage of sin and set us without the city, even on a rock, the rock of God's salvation, and let us dwell there in the clefts of that Rock.

A. D. ALSTON

Route 1, Box 104, St. Albans, W. Va.

ELDER G. B. BIRD, DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER: I feel all my miserable human weakness, (at least in a very small part) my blindness, my leanness, my very great ingratitude toward God, my utter insignificance, my ignorance of God and godliness is just so great in my own eyes how dreadful must I appear most Holy God to thee. I am filled with self loathing, I cry by day and by night. I know that in me, that is in my flesh there dwells no good thing. Oh! that I might hear the still small voice of my beloved again before I perish by the wayside. My life is but a vapor, a span, (short in duration). All apart from Christ is death. But hark my soul! adore and wonder. Was ever love so great? Was grace ever so free? Hear the voice of the beloved, the Bridegroom of your souls. "O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, (Christ) in the secret places (hidden) of the stairs, (place of ascending going up, and place of descending going down, yea even to the bottom of the mountains) let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." (good to look upon.) Solomon's Song 2:14. Oh what tidings to the wretched, poor, destitute children of God, when the truth penetrates the dark empty void of their souls, and the promise is applied by the operation of the Holy Spirit of God in that vital living relationship (in the spirit) unto Christ the husband, and living head of the bride, the object of his eternal, unchangeable and everlasting love, which life and relationship, even death itself cannot disannul, that in this glorious, profound mystery of the wonders of his grace, and the manifest, yes personal display of this love to each and every member, whether great or small, of the body, which body is made up of many members, and he hath set every member in the body as it hath pleased him. That this, the voice of the Bride, is sweet unto the husband which voice is often filled with lamentation, with mourning, with deep contrition, as well as sometimes filled with sublime adoration and praise. Methinks prayer is one thing and praise another thing, and yet they are both a part and each unalterably fixed in this voice of the bride, which voice is sweet unto the husband. Very often some dear trembling saint of God makes the request, that is, that when all is well with me to pray for them. This it seems to me would be an utter impossibility for me; for if ever the time is when all is well with me, I would then, for that season and time, be filled with adoration and praise unto my God; and in such a blessed condition I could not think to pray, or feel the need of prayer: It is only when everything is wrong, and I am bearing the burden and cross, that I can plead at His throne, yea wrestle, weep and pray, if indeed I am ever blessed with the spirit of prayer.

But I have deviated. A thought more about the countenance of the bride. I feel and do believe that the very loveliness and beauty of her countenance is the reflection and shining of both the perfection and glory of the perfection of Christ in her, which radiates and portrays in her His divine beauty, and at-

tributes; and thus it is a glorious living truth that her countenance showing forth the reflection and image (likeness) of His divine beauty and of her blessed countenance also just as surely reflect the suffering, yea the crucifixion, death and burial as well as the resurrection and ascension of Christ? Are you not a living witness to this truth? In your ministry are you not often a living witness to the truth of her voice being sweet, and her countenance being comely? Are you not made to be partaker both of the suffering and joys of your Lord? My thoughts travel on, but I must desist. I did enjoy your articles and all your writings. Write often and freely. Yours in hope.

(Elder) H. J. BIRD

Perrin, Texas

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BRO. DODSON: I am sending Sister Lizzie Kilgore's experience for publication in the *Signs of the Times*. She is a member of Old Masadony Church at Rising Sun, Texas. Her name now is Sister Lizzie Foster, widow of Brother J. I. Foster. She has been a reader of the *Signs of the Times* many years and is certainly a strong believer in the doctrine set forth therein. Your brother I hope.

(Elder) C. Y. OSTEEN

* * * *

MR. E. T. MANER. DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST;—I have often wondered why you have requested me to write of my little hope, while it is the most precious thing in the world to me, I can not see any thing in it that would be worth your while to read. But Peter says "we should at all times be ready to give the reason of the hope within us."

I hardly know just when I first realized myself a sinner before God, at first I thought that I could quit doing wrong and that by living right would be blessed. But alas! what a woeful failure I made. I would read the Bible and would try to pray, but my every attempt seemed but mockery. I went on in this way for a long time, feeling that I was surely the basest sinner living. I would go to meeting, but never felt worthy to even be in the house where God's chosen ones were worshiping. I felt that if they knew how vile I was they never could have noticed me, and many times when one of them would speak to me I would turn my head to hide the tears that would spring to my eyes. Oh! the anguish of my soul when I realized that all my efforts were vain, I knew that it was just and right.

Finally one evening, after having spent the day bowed down with grief unspeakable, I went to my room and fell on my face across the bed, I do not know how long I remained there, I did not care whether I ever got up or not. I knew that I was a justly condemned sinner in the sight of a pure and holy God, I could not see how he could let me live any longer. It seemed that there was the most beautiful light in the room, that ever shone on earth. I arose and there was the blessed wonderful light shining around him. I covered my face with my hands and fell at his feet with a cry, of "Lord save, or I perish." Then the sweetest voice I ever heard filled the room with the most exquistite melody ever heard. And the words, "fear not child, thy sins are forgiven thee," were wafted to my troubled soul, and O! the joy, praise and thanksgiving that filled my heart; it seemed that I must shout aloud his wonderful goodness and mercy to me, the vilest of sinners. I went to the window, and such a beautiful sight! all nature seemed to be praising the Creator for his goodness and mercy in sending his glorious Son to save poor lost sinners. The moon and stars were brighter than

ever before. There was a mocking bird in the tree, by my window singing, it seemed to me, a song of love and thanksgiving.

I was far too happy to sleep; but spent most of the night in praising my Redeemer. Then came the desire to tell God's people what great things the Lord had done for me; and a longing to be baptized; but I thought that the Baptists were too good to allow one so unworthy as I felt myself to be, to live among them.

Then the tempter came and whispered, "You are deceived, you are no better than you used to be, it is all imagination any way, and you would deceive the children of the most high God, you are deluded and had much better stay where you are, and never tell anyone anything about it." Then I would go mourning and bowed down with grief until the blessed Savior would lift me up and give me another glimpse of his wonderful salvation.

I stayed away as long as I could, and when I offered myself to the church I had not the least idea that they could receive me; but it seemed that I just had to go forward that day and try to express my feelings.

Brother Maner, I have never yet seen how they could receive me as warmly as they did, for I know that I am not worthy to even receive the crumbs that fall from the Master's table.

I was so happy after I was baptized that I thought surely my troubles were over, but alas, how soon I was deceived; for doubts and fears returned with double force, for the thought came, "You have deceived the church; all of those dear good people think you are good enough to live with them, and see how vile you are."

Oh! the deep rivers of woe through which I have passed; all because of my inability to live as I think I should. It seemed bad enough to think that I had been deceived; but to think of having deceived the Baptists was, I thought, an unpardonable sin. Then would come sweet seasons of rejoicing; I would meet the brethren and sisters and enjoy their company so much, I would think surely I have "passed from death unto life because I love the brethren."

Thus it has ever been: I do not get any better; I have the same old sinful nature that I have ever had, but O how I hate sin. I would do good if I could, but, "The good that I would, that I do not, and the evil that I would not, that I do." I have a season of rejoicing; then I will be down in the valley away from the light of God's love, held a captive in doubting castle, when I can see nothing but my poor sinful self, there I remain groping and crying for light until my blessed Lord and Master leads me forth into his glorious light where all is joy and peace.

I had not thought of writing so much, but forgive me if I have wearied you; and please cast the mantle of charity over my imperfections. I fear you will draw but little comfort from this, but I humbly ask an interest in your prayers, that I may be kept humble and thankful for the unmerited blessings and tender mercies of an all wise and ever to be adored Father; that he may make me submissive at all times to his just and holy will, and that I may be permitted to ever follow in the footsteps of our blessed Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. Your unworthy sister.

LIZZIE KILGORE

Rising Star, Texas.

Haines, Oregon

EDITOR SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR BROTHER IN GOSPEL BONDS: Enclosed find a check to pay for two subscriptions to the *Signs*, the balance to aid in sending the paper to the "Poor of the

Flock." I am a little late sending it but at my time of life time passes so swiftly that I am always a little behind schedule.

I spent last summer in a hospital in California and that time does not seem to be connected with the rest of my life, it was so different from anything I had ever seen before. My daughter was being treated at the Kaiser Kabat Hospital, but after four months of this very expensive treatment, without showing much improvement, we came home and are carrying on the treatments here. At this place there were patients from every walk in life of all ages above twenty years and almost every religious faith, even one lone Old School Baptist. It was plain to see that "God is no respecter of persons." In mingling with this company of afflicted people I felt that only the power and grace of God could sustain them and keep them as cheerful and hopeful as they were. They were all in wheel chairs as my girl is, but they were rolled along cheering each other and I heard more than one remark, "If this is the way it is, this is the way it has to be." The treatment is called physical therapy, and the doctors and therapists did everything in their power to help them. More than once I wanted to say, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." The improvement was so slow as to be barely perceptible.

I owe so many letters to the dear members of our church but I hope to get them all answered in time. I am not privileged to attend our church meetings, but read the *Signs of the Times* which I have been reading since I learned to read more than half a century ago. I see no difference in the doctrine or faith now and then. I united with the church at Little Flock, Anderson Co., Ky. in Nov. 1893, and was baptized by Elder P. G. Lester. I was married to Elder C. W. Bond, March 20, 1895, and from that time I was blest to attend meetings with him two or three times each month until we moved to Oregon in 1908. Since then I have met many dear Baptists including Sister Etta Lasiter who came from Kentucky. With love and fellowship to all the household of faith. Remember me in your prayers and write me when you feel to do so, Your sister in hope of salvation by grace.

(Mrs.) MARTHA H. BOND

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235 Cavalier Blvd., Portsmouth, Va.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am writing to let you know I am receiving my paper regularly and often shed tears of joy when I read all the good letters. I have intended to write you for the last year but I am a shut-in and have been for three years. I never get to hear good preaching and your paper means so much to me. Your articles are wonderful and I hope God blesses you in all your ways as far as it is right in his sight. I feel sure that he will. I get very lonely lying here day and night alone but still I am happy in the Lord. He has been so wonderful to me and I do not deserve it.

Brother Dodson, I want to thank you for being so kind as to send me your paper for it is all I have to look forward to since I am unable to meet with the church. May the Lord bless and keep you is the prayer of your sister in bonds of love.

(Mrs.) M. S. SALMON

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320 E D, Kingman, Kans.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Enclosed find money for my renewal for the *Signs*. I want to take the paper as long as I can see to read it. My eyes are failing but I hope I can read it as long as I live. The *Signs* and my letters from our minister, Elder Schenck, is all the

preaching I get now as my Sister Cates and her sick husband have moved to Oklahoma to live with her daughter and we have no place to meet as yet. I just received my *Signs* and have read it through. I enjoyed it all and believe as does Nance Brown where he says "the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." All of his article was good. I cannot write or speak as others do, but I believe in the predestination of all things. I am the only living charter member of our church. Yours in hope of a better life. (Mrs.) ELIZA A. WINFREY

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.,

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

From our first acquaintance with the Signs of the Times, it found a warm place in our heart, and now, after more than a quarter of a century of intimate association with the paper as Associate Editor, Editor and Publisher, we have decided to incorporate it into a non-profit organization, to be controlled by a Board of seven Trustees, with power to appoint successors, which will perpetuate the publication of the paper, as far as it is humanly possible to do.

Personally, we have never desired to profit, economically, from our association with the paper, and now all funds have been transferred to the new corporation. We are also providing in our Will that all of our religious books and papers, of which there are a goodly number, shall pass to the new corporation at our death. The corporation will be properly registered in Trenton, the capitol of the State of New Jersey, as well as at Hackensack, N. J., which is the County Seat for the County of Bergen, where the business is being conducted at the present time.

Some of our subscribers have suggested that among our readers there are those who would like to make bequests for the benefit of the paper when they pass from the scenes of this life, and have inquired as to how best to arrange for it. We honestly believe there are quite a number who would like to have some part in furthering this cause. Small amounts can be left with relatives or friends in cash to be forwarded to the paper upon the demise of a reader, or specific bequests can be made through Wills, or codicils thereto, by those who desire to do so. Please state carefully in all such cases that the funds are to be left to "Signs of the Times, Inc. (Established 1832) Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause," 41 Addison Avenue, Rutherford, N. J.

We plan to segregate all funds left for this purpose into a separate account, and for the time being use only the income from such funds for current expenses. In this way it is hoped that the fund will build up over a period of years to a point where it will not only help to insure the continued publication of the paper, but whenever justified the paper may be increased in size or otherwise improved.

We have given considerable thought to this matter, and believe our readers will agree that in the long run it will be much wiser to incorporate the paper, with control vested in a Board of Trustees who are empowered to name other Trustees to take the place of any one who can no longer serve, than to allow ownership and control to be vested in an individual, regardless of who that individual may be. Through an organization of this kind, the paper really becomes more nearly in fact the property of the Old School Baptists as a whole, and we sincerely hope that our action will meet with the approval of the vast majority of our subscribers.

We will leave the matter for our readers to decide what they shall do about supporting the paper in the foregoing manner, desiring that whatever may be done shall redound to the honor and glory of our God and for the good of his people.

R. LESTER DODSON

Hurdle Mills, N. C.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: I am sending herewith a check to renew my subscription for the *Signs of the Times* because it is so much comfort to me. I am old and cannot do much except to sit around and think of the goodness of our Lord and Master. We are helpless creatures unable to do any-thing without his strength. I do not want to miss a single copy. I love the doctrine it stands for. A poor sinner.

SALLIE VINSON

EDITORIALS

RUTHERFORD, N. J. SEPTEMBER, 1949

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"The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord. All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the Lord weigheth the spirits." Prov. 16:1-2.

The natural man who is born of natural parents, who is not yet born of the Spirit, reasons that all of his own ways are clean. He is confident that his walk is more righteous than his fellowman. He is certain that he knows right from wrong, and that he is capable of choosing and pursuing the right course in this life. He glories in the idea that he can direct his own steps, prepare his own heart, and choose his own destiny. He justifies himself in every act he performs. All of his ambitions are motivated by selfish desires. He loves himself and strives to prove to his fellowman that he is superior. Any ideas contrary to these ideas are foolishness unto him and he will not receive them as truth.

The Bible contains many plain statements that are contrary to the ideas conceived by a natural man. I desire to quote just a few of these statements: "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God." (Jesus) "Are we better than they? No, in no wise." (Paul) "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Paul) "No man can come to me,except the Father which hath sent me draw him." (Jesus) "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jeremiah) "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps." (Solomon) "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." (Psalms) "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." (Christ) "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." (Paul) "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." (Paul) "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (Paul)

Considering the things that are written above, we realize the necessity of the direct operation of God's Holy Spirit in the heart of man in order for him to receive these things as true. No wonder that Jesus said, "Ye must be born again." There must be a change of heart before the natural man can receive the things of the spirit. This changed heart must further be prepared by the Lord. The Lord does not stop with just one preparation but it is a progressive work requiring several preparations. "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." We would like to consider some of these preparations.

Let us read from Ezekiel 11:19-20 concerning the first preparation of the heart in man that is done, solely, by the work of God himself. "I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and

will give them an heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God." Many years ago, I begged people to give their hearts to God. I honestly thought that each human being was in possession of a heart that was sufficient as a sacrifice and worthy of acceptance with God. I thought we were capable of doing things for him. Alas! I did not know him: neither did I know my wicked and ungodly heart that I possessed! If it were possible for a man, upon the volition of his own will, to give his heart to God, what value would it be to God, considering the wickedness of the natural heart of man? There is no scripture that intimates that the stony heart of man would be worthy of God's acceptance. God TAKES this old heart from man and GIVES him a new heart. There is heart-giving in the act of regeneration, but instead of the sinner giving his heart to God, God is giving the sinner a new heart. God is successful in this operation and has never lost a case. When we are on the operating table of God's *amazing grace,* and he is performing that wonderful operation we are in close touch with him. He is near unto us and may be found. We behold him as all powerful, all wise, and most holy. It is while we are in this position that the scripture is applicable unto us which says, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." This first preparation of the heart in man humbles him and gives him a desire for godliness.

God does not stop in his preparations for we read in Psalms 10:17, "Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart." This initial operation has awakened the creature to his unworthiness, wretchedness and inability. As a new-born babe it causes him to cry. He is crying unto the Lord to further prepare him. Let us read from Jeremiah 31:33, concerning further preparation of the new heart God has given his children: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." Paul explains to the Corinthian brethren further concerning this writing as he says, "Written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart." 2 Cor. 2:3. The creature with the new heart is not dependent upon the study of the Scriptures to know the Lord or the law of the Lord. This knowledge is indelibly impressed by the direct operation of God's Holy Spirit. The Scriptures were not written to incite us to our duty but "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and COMFORT OF THE SCRIPTURES might have hope." The scriptures, "Seek, and ye shall find," "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you," "Ask, and it shall be given you," were not written in order to exhort you to seek, ask, and knock for this is done by the Holy Spirit, but to comfort you with the thought of the results of this asking, knocking and seeking. The command, "Love one another" is written in your hearts for Paul says, "But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." 1 Thes. 4:9. We quote from Christ's sermon on the mount to his disciples according to Matt. 7:12, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." Jesus said again as recorded in Matt. 22:37-40, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with

all thy mind. This is the first and great commadment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." These are so indelibly impressed in the heart of each of God's children that "His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." Psalms 1:2. The child of God would perform it to a jot and tittle but realizes the infirmities of the flesh, and the thorn in the flesh so that he cannot do the things that he would. Paul said, "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin." This knowledge can only be experienced by those to whom it has pleased God to reveal the holiness of his law and the unholiness of man. All our righteousness appears as filthy rags when compared to the standard of that written law that has been so indelibly imprinted in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. We witness further with Paul when he said, "For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that I do not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." (Read Romans seventh chapter.)

The heart is now well prepared for another preparation which we shall consider. The failure to comply with this law causes such grief and sorrow until we are without hope. Hungering and thirsting for righteousness that we cannot perform causes our souls to faint within us. We realize that the law is just and holy and that if we offend in one point we are guilty of the whole. We are made to exclaim with Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" We have lost all confidence in ourselves and cannot any more depend upon the puny arm of flesh to save us. Christ comes to us in this distressed condition and takes up his abode in our hearts. We now quote from 2 Cor. 6:16, "As God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." This is the opportune time that Jesus says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Jesus comes to us in the day of adversity and speaks sweet peace to our troubled souls! He tells us that he has brought us out from under the dominion of the law by keeping it in our stead to a jot and tittle, and that his obedience is accredited to our account. He informs us that he took our sins upon his shoulders and that they were nailed to the cross; that our sins were charged to him; and that he satisfied justice by paying the penalty with his own blood on the cross of calvary. He has stripped us of the filthy rags of our own righteousness and clothed us with the robe of his righteousness. He intercedes to the Father for us and blesses us with his great love shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. He not only accomplished the law for us and paid the penalty for our sins; but, also gives unto us eternal life. "And this is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." 1 John 5: 11-12. We hear Jesus saying to the Father as recorded in John 17:22-23, "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."

Last December while everyone was celebrating Christmas in the customary

manner of modern frivolity I was very much concerned about the right way and right time to celebrate such an occasion. While I was so perplexed my nearest neighbor, who is clerk of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church here in this community, asked me if I knew when God's children celebrated the birth of Christ. Feeling that he had an appropriate answer I asked him to answer his own question. I want to pass his answer along to you and see if it does not fit in your experience as it did in mine. His answer was, "God's children truly celebrate Christmas when Christ is born in them." Christ is the way, the truth and the life.

Jesus told his disciples, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." He terms the Spirit of Truth as the Comforter. It soothes our troubled souls, heals our broken hearts, guides us into all truth, and glorifies Christ. This spirit dwells in us as Paul states in 1 Cor. 3:16, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" If so be that the Lord has taken from you the stony heart and has given you a new heart; has written his laws in your heart and imprinted them in your mind; and Jesus has come to your rescue as your Savior; and the Spirit of Truth, the Comforter, has taken up his abode in your heart; you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit. Your heart has been prepared to receive and be comforted by the following quotation: "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of of his." Rom. 8:9. "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption." Rom. 8:15. Space will not permit us to consider the various minute perparations of the heart in man that is from the Lord as affirmed by the Scriptures. Let us now take up briefly, "The answer of the tongue, is from the Lord."

Paul said in Rom. 10:9-11, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." God causes us to not be ashamed to own him as our Lord. We do not have to be prompted by man to confess him as our Savior for the Lord so blesses us. "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." Psalms 40:2-3. God has put this new song into the mouth of his children, and I am persuaded that they sing it. They render praise unto God for all things. They realize that it is solely by the grace of God that they are saved both in time and for eternity. "No prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1: 20-21. God has never changed in his way of dealing with his children. I believe that it is just as true now that confession is made unto salvation by the promptings of the Holy Ghost as it has ever been. I do not believe it is in the province of natural man void of the Holy Spirit to even confess with the mouth. He may make statements that favors a true confession but I am persuaded his language will betray him.

It is natural for a man to want to take some of the praise unto himself and regardless of how much he may try to imitate the speech of a child of God he will fall far short of speaking in this new tongue. In Luke 12:12 we find this statement, "For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say." God is perfect in his work and does not only prepare our hearts but also gives the answer of the tongue. He does not depend upon us to search out what we shall say in advance, but relieves us by putting the words in our mouths by the direct operation of his Spirit at the time we shall say them. I am impressed that I have experienced that very thing in speaking publicly from the pulpit. At times words flow so fluently without any labor upon my part that I feel to know that it is the work of God. I have been blessed to speak upon texts that I have not had previous meditation concerning with all ease and so true to scriptural teachings that it astonished me when I would be given to compare the things that I had said with the scriptures later. Prior to becoming affiliated with the Primitive Baptists I outlined the sermons beforehand and tried to deliver them in accordance. Now I study and outline them after they have been delivered. I trust that I have been made to believe in the effectual working of God's mighty power that is far superior to the wisdom of this world. I have only hinted at this far reaching subject but now must submit it for your consideration. May God bless it to your comfort and be pleased to further prepare our hearts and give us the answer of the tongue as it pleases him. E. J. L.

Dear Lester:

For sometime the hand of the Lord has been on my mind. I hope if the Lord wills, you will be given a mind to write on some of the following scriptures: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (Heb. 10:31). And Isaiah records these words: "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." "Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens." "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?" "All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity." What a trial my vanity is! I can see myself pictured by Isaiah from the sole of my foot even to the head there is no soundness. (Mrs.) MAMIE W. ROWE, 704 Deepdene Road, Baltimore, Md.

Some years ago we wrote an editorial for the *Signs* under the caption, "The hand of the Lord," and we have most earnestly desired to see his hand guiding and directing us by day and by night, through good and through evil report; in times of prosperity and in times of adversity. That portion of the twenty-third Psalm where David said, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me," and especially the words, *thy rod and thy staff they comfort me,* have been particularly precious to us. Paul in writing to the Hebrews said, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him; For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Therefore when the rod of his correction has rested heavily upon us, we have felt to kiss the hand that smote us and to thank him for not having left us without hope to suffer in our sins. We humbly pray that it may be seen that his hand doth rest upon us in our attempt to write upon the above portions of divine truth. There have been moments in our life when we verily believed that the unseen hand of a sovereign and gracious

God, who is of infinite love and mercy. rested upon and sustained us in the experience through which we were passing.

David in his day discovered that it was "a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," and confessed his secret sin. The Lord searched him out and made him to know that he was acquainted with all his ways, and he said, "there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me." He was made to realize that there was no hiding or fleeing from the presence of the Lord, for he said, "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." In the fifty-first Psalm we have his plea for the forgiveness of his sin. He cried, "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me." We believe it is well pleasing in God's sight for his people to confess their sins before him and to each other for, notwithstanding David's great sin, he was said to have been a man after God's own heart. Surely, the over-ruling hand of Almighty God is seen working all things together according to the counsel of his own will in bringing good out of evil, and providing in Solomon, a son of David by Bathsheba, a link in the chain of the lineage through which our blessed Lord was to come into the world. We like to mediatate upon and ponder the great mysteries and marvellous works of our God, whose judgments are unsearchable and his ways past finding out.

Our first scriptural quotation is, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." We believe this refers primarily to God's dealings with his saints here in this world. Paul had said previously in this chapter, "If we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Only those who have been so highly favored as to have been brought into his banquetting house, with his banner of love over them, and who then because of the corruptness and weakness of their own vile natures turn again and wilfully walk after the flesh, know what a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God. They discover of a truth, that God is a consuming fire. In writing to the Galatians, Paul said, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." This same apostle sets forth clearly in his epistle to the Romans that "to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." His conclusion is summed up in the eighth verse, "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." In the eleventh to the thirteenth verses of the eighth chapter of Romans he is describing the same kind of character he is referring to in the tenth chapter of Hebrews. In the eleventh verse he speaks of characters who are quickened by the same power that wrought in Christ in raising him

from the dead, and he then says to such characters, "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live, for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." We would like to emphasize here that if the deeds of the body are mortified, or kept under, it is through the workings of the Spirit, and not the workings of the flesh. The apostle had in the previous chapter made it perfectly clear that no good thing dwelt in his flesh, and this was said after he had been made a new creature in Christ Jesus. The flesh is not changed in the new birth. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." In admonishing his Galatian brethren how they should live, Paul said, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." To the Colossians he wrote, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." John the Baptist told those whom he baptized that there cometh one after him who would baptize them with the Holy Ghost, and with fire, "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn the chaff with unquenchable fire." Jesus had the church under consideration when he said, "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched." The record tells us that God has predestinated that his chosen ones shall be conformed to the image of his Son, and we are glad that Paul says it is the adversaries, and not the sinner, which shall be devoured. God had said by the mouth of the prophet Zechariah, "I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried; they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God." Zech. 13:9. The Scriptures contain many great and precious promises to the effect that nothing shall ever be able to separate God's people from his love which is in Christ Jesus. Our faith, which is more precious than gold or silver, must be tried in the crucible, to the end that it shall be proven not to stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

Our second scripture is, "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." The Psalmist said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word." Afflictions are chosen and appointed by God unto his people, and they are chosen and appointed unto affliction. In Job's bewilderment over not being able to find God by going forward or backward, or either on the left or right hand, nevertheless he possessed faith to believe, "He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Jesus told his disciples, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Paul said he gloried in tribulations for, saith he "knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy

Ghost which is given unto us." We have previously referred to the great sight which Moses saw when "the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed," as being one of the most perfect types of the church of God here in the world that can be found in the whole of Holy Writ. God's people have ever been an afflicted and poor people, but it is said, they shall trust in the name of the Lord. After the angel touched Jacob in the hollow of his thigh, it was out of joint, and he went halting all the days of his life, nevertheless he received a new name, even Israel, "for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and has prevailed." Gen. 32:28. We are persuaded that if we had no knowledge of sin's afflictions, we would have no felt need of the healing power which is to be found only in the Great Physician. Jesus said, the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. How wonderful to realize that when we have been brought down low that the Lord helps us. The Psalmist said, "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill; That he may set him with princes, even with the princes of his people." Psalm 113:7-8. We hope God's people may be given faith to see the hand of the Lord in appointing their lot, whatever it may be, and look to him for deliverance. He has a purpose in all that he does. The vessel is first marred in the potter's hand, before it is made again another vessel that will be to the honor and glory of his holy name. Let us not falter and fall by the way, but be assured that he which begins the good work in us will perform it till the day of Jesus Christ.

We believe all of the other scriptural quotations will be found in the fortieth chapter of Isaiah, which to us is one of the most wonderful chapters in the Old Testament. The glorious gospel of the blessed Son of God was being preached way back there by the prophet, even though it was not understood and fully embraced until Jesus came in the flesh and finished the work assigned to him by the Father, and until he arose from the dead and gave gifts unto men. Among these gifts was that of an understanding heart, which we receive through the workings of the Holy Spirit. We can now see that God was speaking to the gospel church when he spake by the mouth of the prophet, saying, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." It seems to us that the substance of the gospel is summed up here, for this pointed to him who "was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." We do not believe the gospel is preached unless the message to the New Jerusalem is "that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned." This is indeed comforting to her, for she then can "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." The prophet in this chapter speaks of the mighty God, whose hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and whose right hand hath spanned the heavens; who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out the heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance; before whom all nations are counted as

nothing and less than nothing and vanity. It is this God who declares that "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." If these things are not witnessed to here in the gospel church, we have no understanding of spiritual things, and neither are we a witness to the truth, but there are times when, if not deceived, we can affirm with great assurance that we "know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day," "for he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we are able to ask or even think." The prophet in this chapter also gives us a true picture of the flesh. He says that "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever." Old School Baptists everywhere should preach the doctrine contained in this chapter; they should further declare that it is God who feeds his flock like a shepherd, who gathers his lambs in his arms and gently leads those who are with young. He, and he alone, can supply the needs of the church collectively, as well as the needs of each individual member of his mystical body, and we are assured that heaven and earth shall pass away before one jot or one tittle of his word shall fail, or as the prophet declares, "the word of our God shall stand for ever." It is he who sitteth upon the circle of the earth, before whom the inhabitants of the earth are as grasshoppers, and there is none to whom he can be likened or equaled. He is the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, who fainteth not, neither is he wearied, and there is no searching of his understanding. "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength," and though the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." What a wonderful promise to the faithful in Christ Jesus, to wait upon the Lord, to seek his guidance and direction in all things, to trust in the Lord, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. The promise is their strength *shall* be renewed, they *shall* mount up with wings as eagles; they *shall* run, and not be weary, exhausted or overcome; and they *shall* walk, and not faint, or utterly fail or fall by the wayside. Truly, the Lord is good to Israel, to such as be of a pure or clean heart. May all who are struggling in the warfare, the flesh versus the Spirit, be made to know that the eternal God is their refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms! R. L. D.

MEMORIALS

Whereas, it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst by death, our beloved Brother and Pastor, ELDER CHARLES W. VAUGHN, on April 21, 1949, and

Whereas, this, the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, N. J., though bowing in humble submission to God's will, feel very deeply bereaved in the loss of our esteemed brother who served the church most faithfully and acceptably as shepherd among his flock for an unbroken period for thirty-four years, for which we, as a church, are most thankful that by his wise counsel in preaching, and fatherly interest in our welfare, the church never had cause to recede from the doctrine as found in its articles of faith. And because of this and the sincerity of his belief, and

his gift in instruction of the Word, be it

Resolved, that this tribute to his memory, which the church loves and cherishes for the rich blessing his long and useful pastorate gave them, be written and a copy sent with our heartfelt sympathy to his bereaved companion, Sister Annie E. Vaughn, in her loss which is our loss, and her loneliness which is our sorrow too, but we feel the departure of our brother is for his eternal gain, and we here express our gratitude for the rich blessing he was to the church rather than voice our continuing sorrow. Therefore, be it

Resolved, that we also send a copy of this tribute to his memory for publication in the Signs of the Times, which paper he ably served for a number of years as Associate Editor, and that said memoriam be spread upon our church records.

Written by order of the church this fifth day of June 1949 by Mary Louise Hellings.

SUSIE A. STONE, Moderator pro tem
LETHA A. BLACKWELL, Church Clerk

Whereas, it has been God's will that has brought us the loss of ELDER CHARLES W. VAUGHN in death, we have the memory of a valiant contender for the truth as taught by Christ, and yet a man who showed great tenderness toward those of inquiring mind and heart; strong in the faith of salvation by grace, of predestination and election and the sovereign will of our Lord, yet constantly expressing his feeling of humbleness in his effort to serve the chosen in Christ.

We cannot weep for our brother, Elder Vaughn, but we do, as an Association and as a friend, miss his presence and counsel. He served as Moderator of the Delaware River Association for many of its sessions, and at all times gave the best that his love for the people and his conscience dictated. Therefore be it

Resolved, that we bow in submission to the unerring will of our heavenly Father, extending sympathy to our sister, Annie Vaughn, and her family in their loss, and to our sister churches, Hopewell and Salem, whom he served as Pastor for many years. Further be it

Resolved, that this memoriam be published with our Associational minutes and in the Signs of the Times, and that copies be sent to Sister Vaughn and to Hopewell Church.

Done by order of the Delaware River Association in session with the Southampton Church, May 25 and 26, 1949.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator
CASPER G. FETTER, Clerk

OBITUARIES

ELDER CHARLES W. VAUGHN of Hopewell, N. J., beloved husband of Annie E. (Pendleton) Vaughn, passed away in their home April 21, 1949. Having been born in Willis, Va., June 5, 1876, his earthly career was almost 73 years. Besides his devoted wife, he is survived by four daughters: Mrs. Louis Spine, Somerville, N. J., Mrs. Philip Schwartz, New Brunswick, N. J., Mrs. Milton Yerkes, Laurel, Del., and Mrs. Fred Lear, Goldendale, Wash.; five grandchildren, David Schwartz, Jo-Anne and Margaret Yerkes, Charl-Anne and James W. Lear. Also surviving are one brother, George J. Vaughn, Modesto, Cal., and five sisters: Mrs. C. M. Turman, North Wales, Pa., Mrs. Y. K. Hylton, Flora, Ind., Mrs. Weldon Hylton, Willis, Va., Mrs. C. E. Shelar, Roanoke, Va., and Mrs. Lester Van Dyke, Hopewell, N. J.

Elder Vaughn united with the Little Flock Church in Floyd Co., Va. the first Sunday in November 1895 and was baptized the same day by the late Elder Amos Dickerson. He began his public speaking career the first Sunday in December 1896. In early life he was associated with Vaughn Brothers Woolen Factory. He later taught in grade school and during the summer vacation periods attended Teachers College in Willis, Va., at the same time filling appointments and attending meetings on Sundays.

Brother and Sister Vaughn were united in marriage by Elder F. P. Branscome in the home of her parents, Alexander and Mahala Thompson Pendleton, both members of the Old School Baptist Church, at Meadows of Dan, Va., Feb. 13, 1898. In the latter part of 1899 he made a trip to the west coast. While there the Hopewell Church appeared to him in a dream. We have no definite information as to when he was licensed, but he was ordained by the Little Flock Church on April 18, 1908. The Elders present were: P. G. Lester, Asa Harris, John Philips and R. M. Mabry, all of the New River Association besides Deacons and others. In March 1911 Brother and Sister Vaughn moved to Loudun Co., Va., and he made his first visit to the Hopewell Church during an Association in May 1913 when his dream came before him so vividly that he was deeply affected. This was during the lifetime of Elder F. A. Chick. He was invited to visit Hopewell Church on two other occasions, and following Elder Chick's death in March 1914 was called as Pastor, November 21, 1914. He accepted the call and moved his membership to the Hopewell Church. They moved to Hopewell April 21, 1915, during the 200th anniversary of the church. It was during the summer of that year that the present parsonage was built and Brother and Sister Vaughn have occupied it since October 8, 1915.

They spent over 51 years of happy married life together. He served the churches as an ordained Minister for about 42 years. He was Pastor of the Hopewell Church for over 34 years, and was an esteemed Associate Editor of the Signs of the Times for over 25 years. The Signs of the Times has sustained a great loss in his passing, and his writings will be greatly missed by our readers. He was highly esteemed not only by the churches in the United States, but in Canada as well, where he visited regularly over a long period of years.

In God's providence the day of his funeral was a bright and sunny one, and people came from far and near, including Canada and many of the states in the East, to give evidence of their esteem for this servant of God. The floral offerings were numerous and beautiful. The Elders present and participating in the funeral service were H. H. Lefferts, George Ruston, Arnold H. Bellows, J. D. Wood, Harold M. Bennett, A. J. Slauson and R. Lester Dodson. Elder Ruston spoke from the words in 2 Timothy 4: 6-8, which had been particularly referred to by Elder Vaughn. Interment in the Old School Baptist Cemetery adjoining the meeting-house.

We are persuaded our dear Brother fought a good fight, finished his course and kept the faith, and that he has received the crown of righteousness laid up for him by the Lord, the righteous judge, who shall in like manner give that crown, in due season, to all who love his appearing. May God comfort, as only he can, our dear sister Annie Vaughn, and all others who mourn their loss, and reconcile us all to his most holy and divine will is our prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen.

(Elder) R. LESTER DODSON

ELDER JONAS C. SIKES was born near Palmetto, Tenn., Feb. 6, 1859, and died at the home of his son at Campbell, Tex. March 20, 1949, making his earthly stay 90 years, 1 month and 14 days.

He united with the Primitive Baptists early in life, and I am told was ordained to the full work of the ministry in 1880. He visited the church of my mother's membership near Lillie, La. in 1903. He was a most wonderfully gifted and blessed minister and was blessed to travel more extensively among the Primitive Baptists in the United States than any person I ever knew, and was heartily received and appreciated everywhere among them. I have traveled with him in eleven states and enjoyed his wonderful doctrinal discourses. I think I have never met any one among the Baptists that I considered more able than he in expounding the Scriptures.

Elders Sikes and J. R. Hardy published a paper called the Advocate of Truth for years which was widely circulated in the U. S. but was finally discontinued due to failing health and finances. He also published a very deep doctrinal pamphlet entitled "Regeneration or the New Birth." I think it the most able writing on this subject that I have seen from any man in his generation. I wish it might be republished for the good and benefit of the cause he so faithfully represented until his health and age forced him to be inactive for the last five or six years. He also ably defended, wrote and publicly advocated the grand and glorious doctrine of the resurrection, predestination, election, and salvation by grace and grace alone both for time and eternity. He was most ably trained and blessed of the grace of God, and had a zeal unsurpassed by any one I ever knew and unequalled by few. He debated the issues of predestination of all things and debated against the doctrine of conditional time salvation with a man named Thompson in Tennessee. I have read part of this manuscript and am frank to say I believe it the most able defense of the doctrine on these points I have ever read. He also debated against Campbellism in several states. He was so wonderfully and brilliantly blessed in that ability that God gave him that it was marvelous to hear him defend the doctrine.

Elder Sikes was married twice. The name of his first wife I do not know but to them was born one son, W. W. Sikes, whose wife is Mrs. Pearl Sikes. He also left several grandchildren the names and addresses of which I do not know and for which I wish to apologize. I failed in my effort to get necessary data. His first wife died about twenty years ago. Later he married Mrs. Lou Ella Connarroe with whom he lived until death. She survives him together with several of her children which were his step-children.

He was blessed with great and influential ability, and continued active in the ministry much longer than any one I have had the pleasure of knowing. His health began to affect his vitality in many ways long before any one fully realized it. The writer visited him a few months ago when he was very rational at times but at others very much confused and suffering intensely. He told me he was only praying for an early and merciful death. I understand he said to some of his family a few days before his departure that he would soon be in that home he had been praying for so long. The writer was telephoned for but was away, and Elder Haygood was also called but was absent so a neighbor Missionary Baptist Minister presided at the funeral at the request of the family. May God bless and comfort all the bereaved. Yours in hope.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES

MRS. LOU ELLA SIKES (nee FLETCHER), widow of the late Elder J. C. Sikes, was born about the year 1874, and passed away May 22, 1949 at the home of her son, Lewis Connarroe, near Troup, Texas.

She was married April 7, 1889 to Silas Grant Connarroe of east central Texas and to this union twelve children were born. Eight of them predeceased her. The four boys still living are Jack, Lewis, John and Hubert Connarroe. Having been left a widow with so many young children she did heavy farm work to support herself and family, but was a loving and attendant mother.

Nov. 19, 1919 she married Elder J. C. Sikes of Texas and they lived together until his death March 20, 1949. She was seriously ill at the time of his passing away. She was a very devoted wife and mother and was blessed to wait on her greatly afflicted husband until just a few weeks before he died, staying by him day and night as long as she was able. She was a very pleasant and congenial person and was loved by all who knew her. It was her privilege to travel with her husband into several states.

Sister Sikes united with the Old Baptists several years before her last marriage and was living at that time near Mt. Alby, Texas. The Baptists loved and appreciated her. We feel sure that her eternal reward is one of that rich, everlasting and peaceful Canaan which flows with milk and honey. The writer was privileged to visit her just a few hours before her death, and in her broken and delirious manner she spoke of the glorious fact that God was our only hope. Her children and their families were very devoted to her, doing all they could for her, but the appointed time for the dissolution of this earthy house had come, and she sleeps in the narrow limits of the tomb until Jesus, who is the resurrection and the life, comes again; till he raises these vile bodies, and forms and fashions them like his glorious body. "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?" 1 Cor. 15: 54-55. What a wonderful hope is this indeed. Truly as Jesus said, they are not dead but sleepeth.

Elder S. C. Davenport of Mineola, Texas conducted the services at the church at Providence. She was laid to rest in the cemetery at Providence Primitive Baptist Church near Mt. Vernon, Texas. May God bless and comfort those who mourn her passing. She is far richer than the monarchs and kings of this earth who only possess earthly treasures; but the treasures she is interested in cannot be corrupted by moth nor rust, neither can thieves break through and steal, but are reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. Yours in a sweet hope through mercy, grace and peace that Jesus Christ gives.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES

MRS. JOSEPHINE DUFFIELD YERKES, our sister in Christ and widow of our late brother John S. Yerkes, deacon of Salem Church in the city of Philadelphia, Pa. departed her earthly home at Glenside, Pa. to be with the Lord April 19, 1949, aged 79 years, 2 months, 17 days. She was born near Southampton, Pa. Feb. 2, 1870, a daughter of Edwin M. and sister Martha A. Duffield. She was one of seven children, of whom she is the last, there having been three brothers and four sisters. December 25, 1889 she was married to our late brother, John S. Yerkes, whose mother, our sister Rebecca Slack Yerkes was for many years a member of the Southampton Baptist Church. Sister Josephine Yerkes' mother was a member of the Salem Church in Phila., Pa. December 25, 1939, brother and sister Yerkes celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary, an occasion of joy and thankfulness on the part of all who participated in the happy event. Sister Yerkes was baptized by the late Elder Silas H. Durand into the membership of the Southampton Church May 14, 1893 and was dismissed by letter to unite with the Salem Church June 13, 1908 where she faithfully assisted her husband, our brother John Yerkes, in his duties as Deacon, until his decease a few years ago. Her counsel was always wise and good, she thought matters out for herself and never came to conclusions hastily; she was calm and poised, mild and gentle in her manner but firm in her convictions when once her reasons were arrived at, though willing to weigh and consider without bias such matters as affected the order and welfare of the church, so that she was a blessing and help to brother Yerkes and her brethren in many ways. Such are greatly missed among us. Since my own coming into the church seven years after she did, she always had been a helpful and encouraging sister to me. On the 4th of July each year for several years, the friends and members of the Salem Church and from sister churches, met at their hospitable home at Mt. Airy to sing hymns and to converse together on spiritual themes. Brother and sister Yerkes were the parents of two sons and one daughter. Their daughter is Mrs. Mildred Durand Y. Hastings of Cambridge, Md. who has two children. One son, Milton Yerkes who married Elder Vaughn's daughter Beatrice and who have two daughters live near Laurel, Delaware. One son, J. Harold Yerkes, died in February, 1948 leaving a wife, Mildred W. Yerkes, and one son John Harold Yerkes, Jr. living near Lancaster, Pa. Sister Yerkes had two great-grandchildren who are the daughters

of J. Harold Yerkes, Jr. My last seeing of sister Yerkes was at her Glenside home Sunday afternoon February 27, 1949. She was just recovering from a heart attack sitting up in her room, quite calm, quite reconciled to the Divine will with no care or worry about anything, enjoying somewhat of that peace which passes all understanding. Sister Edna Baker, daughter of the late Elder B. F. Coulter, who was Pastor of the Salem Church, was with sister Yerkes during her last days on earth and witnessed many beautiful things which sister Yerkes said regarding her approaching end, such things as give us to believe she was sustained by a good hope in God's grace and that, for her, it was not death to die and be at home with God. Funeral services were held in Southampton meeting-house, conducted by the writer, April 22, 1949 after which her mortal body was laid to rest in the graveyard at that place. Truly it can be applied to her, that "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." At the time of her death, and for some years previously, she was a member of the Board of Trustees for the Old School Baptist Home Fund.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS

MRS. MARY ALICE MELLOTT fell asleep in the Lord May 19, 1949 at the home of her daughter, our sister Lucy Smith, near Warfordsburg, Pa., aged 84 years, 5 months and 20 days. She was a daughter of Eli and Rebecca Funk of Fulton Co., Pa. Three brothers and three sisters are living: John Funk of Monroe, Mich., William and Charles Funk of Ohio, Mrs. Lizzie Peck and Miss Jennie Funk of Ohio, Anna Mellott of Harrisonville, Pa. She was married in 1883 to Dennis Mellott, son of Samson and Rebecca Mellott. Brother Dennis Mellott was our deacon of the Sideling Hill Church for several years, he died Dec. 1920. Of this marriage, the following children are living: Mrs. Bertha Daniels, Needmore, Pa., Mrs. Lucy Smith, Warfordsburg, Pa., Ira Mellott, Needmore, Pa., Ralph Mellott, Needmore, Pa., Mrs. Etta Lynch, Warfordsburg, Pa., Rolla Mellott, Big Cove Tannery, Pa., Mrs. Mary Garland, Amaranth, Pa., William Mellott, Warfordsburg, Pa. All these except Mrs. Daniels and William Mellott are members of the Sideling Hill Old School Baptist Church, Fulton Co., Pa. Sister Alice was baptized by the late Elder E. V. White June 30, 1888. For over 61 years, she has lived a blameless, upright and consistently faithful life among us. She was blessed to manifest among us that meek and quiet spirit which in the sight of God is of great price. She was patient and uncomplaining in her sorrows and in her afflictions, not a murmuring word was ever heard to escape her lips: an example of true godly womanhood and motherhood. Owing to the fact that I was unable to attend her funeral as her family desired, the services were conducted by Elder J. W. Smoot of Great Cacapon, W. Va. in The Sideling Hill Baptist meeting-house, burial in the cemetery adjacent. "The righteous hath hope in his death." Let us pass the time of our sojourning here in fear awaiting the summons calling us up higher. Her pastor.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS

JAMES R. ARNN passed away at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Forrest Jones, Marlow, Okla., April 13, 1949, at the age of 102 years, 6 months, 9 days. He leaves to mourn his passing three daughters and one son: Mrs. Annie Mitchell, Chickasha, Okla., Mrs. Jennie Buchanan, Mantica, Cal., Mrs. Forrest Jones, Marlow, Okla., and Mr. Sam Arnn, Paradise, Cal., nineteen grandchildren, twenty-nine great-grandchildren besides a host of nieces, nephews and friends.

His appearance was outstanding to most old people of his age, scarcely a wrinkle in his face. He had a kidney affection for the last three weeks and for eight days pneumonia but he did not appear to suffer pain. Finally he lost power of speech and went to sleep without a sigh.

He and mother united with the Primitive Baptist church in 1887, and were baptised by Brother Newton in Arkansas. He had lost his sight but seemed reconciled to his lot and his faith was strong. He said he had been a great sinner but had a great Savior. He enjoyed your article on Romans 9:18 which I read to him. Elder Ray visited him a few days before his death, reading the 37th chapter of Ezekiel and speaking in prayer. He enjoyed this so much showing his faith was strong to the end.

On April 12 the Confederate Stamp Alliance was mailed to him from Virginia and he was made an Honorary Colonel for his service in the war but it came too late for him to know of it. During his service in the war he was without anything but parched corn to eat for seventeen days. He served his country well, and he served his Lord well to the end of life's journey. The World War Two Veterans gave him a military funeral. Elder O. V. Ray conducted the regular services in the presence of a large company of relatives and friends. The floral offerings were beautiful. His body was laid to rest in Rush Springs, Okla, by the side of his wife to await the appearing of our blessed Lord when his sleeping dust will come forth and be fashioned like the dear Lord. We are waiting our call to go and be forever with the Lord and all our loved ones, the most glorious meeting that can ever take place. Written by his heart broken daughter. (Mrs.) FORREST JONES

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Border Union of Primitive Baptist churches will meet, God willing, with Pleasant Grove Church of Yakima at the Woodmen Hall in Naches, Washington, on U. S. Highway 410, Sept. 9, 10 and 11, 1949.

(Elder) A. D. HUGHETT, Moderator
Route 1, Selah, Wash.
(Mrs.) BEATRICE HAAN, Clerk
Route 1, Naches, Wash.
'Phone Naches 3561

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will convene with the First and Second churches of Roxbury in the Old School Baptist meeting-house at Halcottville, N. Y., Wed. and Thurs., Sept. 14 and 15, 1949. Meeting will open at 10:30 D.S.T. Wed. morning. Ministers and brethren of our faith and order in good standing are invited to seats with us, and friends of our faith will be cordially welcomed. Those coming by bus or train on Tuesday will stop at Halcottville and go to the home of Mrs. Prudence Hinkley, or to the home of Walter Harrington in that village where provision will be made for their entertainment. Those coming on Wed. will go directly to the meeting-house. Halcottville is on the line of the Catskill Mountain Division of the N. Y. Central R. R., and also on the Oneonta-Margaretville bus line which connects at Margaretville with buses from Kingston.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Moderator

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to meet, the Lord willing, with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudon Co., Va., Wed., Thurs., and Fri., Oct. 12, 13, and 14, 1949. This place of meeting is located on Highway Route 50 accessible by Greyhound bus either from Washington, D. C. or from Roanoke and Winchester, Va. The bus station in Washington is at 12th St. & New York Ave. We cordially invite ministering brethren and other brethren of our faith and order, those in correspondence with us as well as others in fellowship with us to come and meet with us. All lovers of the truth are welcome. Those coming in private conveyances Tuesday before the meeting, will come either to Leesburg or to Herndon. Those coming by bus Tuesday will come to Leesburg. All coming Wednesday either by bus or private means will go directly to the meeting-house. For further information please write either to Elder Lefferts at Leesburg or to the address given below.

(Mrs.) DAVID FARNIE, Church Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Forest Grove Church, one mile south of Parsonsburg, Md., Oct. 19 and 20, 1949. All ministers of our faith and order, and all lovers of the truth are cordially invited. Those coming by car on Tuesday will go to the home of Sister Ethel Holloway, 406 E. Isabella St., Salisbury, Md. Trains and buses will be met in Salisbury, Md. Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. Anyone not met will 'phone Sister Holloway, Salisbury 22526.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT, Pastor
(Miss) FANNIE ADKINS, Clerk

The 69th session of the New Hope Association of Primitive or Predestinarian Baptist faith and order will meet with the Fort Worth Church, 1211 8th Ave. E., beginning Friday at 2 p. m. before the first Sunday in Sept. All are invited to attend our meeting.

(Elder) W. A. LITTLE
1008 E. Allen Ave.,
Fort Worth, Texas

CHANGES IN TIME OF MEETINGS

The Old School or Predestinarian Baptist meetings held at second floor Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. will, commencing in September, be held on third instead of first Sundays at 2:30 p. m.

FRANK T. SIMPKINS
5214 H St., Dillon Park,
Washington 19, D. C.

Shepherd Fold Church located between Air Line and Humble Highways, Houston, Texas are now holding meetings every first Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m.

W. O. BEENE, Pastor

An all-day meeting of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church and Congregation, will be held at New Vernon, Sullivan County, N. Y., on Saturday, September 24th, before the 4th Sunday. This meeting is being held in place of the usual Columbus Day meeting, which will not be held this year. During this meeting will be held a meeting for the election of Trustees, and other business that may properly come before it.

All members and friends are cordially invited to attend.

R. LESTER DODSON

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. A. V. Krewatch, Md., $1; A. B. Jestice, Del., $1; W. R. Wallis, Miss., $7; Mrs. A. M. Hall, Me., $5; Mrs. A. S. Meyer in memory of her father, S. W. Shipway, N. Y., $10; J. A. Johnson, Tenn., $1; Mrs. N. M. Carney, W. Va., $3; Mrs. D. H. Baker, Wash., $1.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 117 RUTHERFORD, N. J., OCTOBER, 1949 No. 10

CORRESPONDENCE

"Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour." Matt. 15: 21-28.

There are many angles to consider in the application of the above Scriptures, the interpretation of which will serve to throw light upon the reason why Jesus at first did not respond to the heartfelt appeal of the distressed woman who came to him to rescue her daughter from the power of a demon, which had possessed her. Jesus had been ministering among the Jews, those of his own, to whom he came in the flesh, and now he leaves the Jews upon a ministration of mercy to a Gentile who had not received the law and the prophets and the oracles of God, and the promises as a people in the sense that they were given to the Jews. Jesus then returned to minister to his own people, the Jews. May this not suggest, that as the gospel was first preached unto the Jews and rejected by them as a nation after which the Lord turned in mercy through the gospel unto the Gentiles until their fulness shall have been realized, that the remnant of believing Jews not yet brought into the gospel fold will in the Lord's time receive the manifestation of eternally saving grace until the whole church of God is complete, as the eleventh chapter of Romans so clearly declares.

At this present time momentous events of stupendous importance are occuring in Palestine and elsewhere in the fulfillment of prophecy as God works his holy will among the children of men. Do we not see a foreshadowing of this in the case of Saul, David, Johnathan and Mephibosheth; Saul represents natural Israel as a nation, and David a beautiful type of Christ as king over all spiritual Israel, the church of the living God. Johnathan denotes the church in this present grace age, for the soul of David was knit to the soul of Johnathan, as that of Christ is to his bride, the church. National Israel passed away before spiritual Israel was enthroned in the present kingdom of heaven, and Saul was slain before David became king and reigned over all Israel of old. Now Johnathan had a son named Mephibosheth, who was lame in both his feet and helpless, and resided in Lo-debar, a place meaning desolate, a fit figure of the Jews in the present time. But king David sent for Mephibosheth, who was of the

house of Saul (Israel after the flesh) and had him brought to his palace where he ate meat always thereafter from the king's table. While Mephibosheth may typify any child of God, there is a sense in which he serves as a double type, and so may represent any believing Jews of the gospel dispensation.

When Jesus ministered to the Canaanite woman, he returned to his own people after the flesh, which might signify that there is much yet in store for the believing Jew under the gospel. In scripture we often find, among the numerous figures employed, that a woman is used to typify a child of God as an individual, and also the church of God as a whole, which we observe in Eve, Rebekah, Rachel, Esther, Mary Magdalene and others. This Greek woman was not directly embraced in the covenant given to Israel as a nation, and yet she was given faith to receive the promises of God, and to feed upon the crumbs of prophecy that apply to the whole church of God, including believing Jew and believing Gentile.

It is interesting to note that the woman came to Jesus after he had come to the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. It is always Jesus who takes the first step through the Holy Ghost in the manifestation of salvation to the redeemed of God. It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. The Lord, the Holy Ghost must first show the poor sinner his need of him, that his condemnation is just, that he is helpless of himself, and if justice were meted out to him that the eternal wrath of a sin-hating God is his just portion, and that only grace can save him. Without revealed religion there can be no saving knowledge of Jesus. The woman suffered for her own sake and for her daughter's sake whom she so tenderly loved. In a sense the church, as our mother, suffers when one of her members is afflicted. The woman cried in anguish, earnestly, sincerely, imploringly. We see that she cried before she worshipped. There must be some manifestation of saving knowledge before one can truly worship.

The Canaanite woman came to Jesus, crying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." But Jesus answered her not a word. Why did the loving Savior appear deaf to her entreaties? Because she did not approach him in the right way. She came to him on Jewish grounds, addressing him as the son of David, which she as a Gentile had no right to do. She did not address him as the Lord of all both Jew and Gentile, but as the Lord, the son of David, in that sense implying that Jesus came to minister alone to the Jews. A resident of Canada who transgresses the law of that land has no right to come to a court in the United States for trial of his offenses and to have his case determined. Jesus came to save sinners of every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue that were given unto him by the Father before ever the world was, therefore he should be worshipped as Lord of all. To instruct the woman as to her position as a Gentile and what was embraced in his mission to save sinners, Jesus, noting that his disciples had besought him to send her away that she might not be an annoyance said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Here is a veiled and twofold meaning. Not only was Christ sent to the believers of the Jewish nation, but also to all Gentile believers, who with the Jewish church make up the entire Israel of God. The truth of her position dawned upon her in a further revelation as she realized her lost condition by nature and the saving power of Jesus. Then

she came and worshipped him saying, "Lord, help me," knowing that by faith there stood before her one who was Lord of all, and that she by nature had no more claim upon his mercy than an Israelite after the flesh. The convicted sinner must feel that there is nothing in him to merit the favor of Deity or give him the right to expect mercy. The sinner who comes to Jesus must come in the right way, must be made of a broken and a contrite heart, must come for undeserved mercy that salvation may be all of grace and the glory belong wholly to the Lord.

Jesus said, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs," that is, to give to the Gentiles that which was especially prepared for the Jews as were the provisions of the Mosaic covenant given unto Israel and received by Moses on Mount Sinai. But the woman realized that while that covenant was given unto Israel as a nation, she and other believing Gentiles had seen in Christ in the ordinances of the law and in the prophecies and promises given unto the Israelites, and that she fed upon these crumbs that had fallen from the Master's table. She had eaten of the word of God and had been nourished thereby. The comforting declarations of the word of God, the types and the shadows pointing to Christ, and the sure mercies of David are morsels of the richest food. She had read or heard of these things in whole or in part, and being made hungry for the truth she had eaten these crumbs of prophecy and promise.

The Gentiles were considered as dogs by the Jews, a term of reproach, as the law and the oracles of God were not given to the Gentiles as a nation, and the Jews considered them as no people and outside of the promises made to the Jews. In Palestine then as now, there are many small dogs that wander homeless, and in their hungry state enter the homes of Jews to eat of the crumbs and whatever other edible refuse may be obtained. The woman confessed that she was a Gentile, but that she had eaten of the crumbs of truth which the Jews had rejected in the blindness of their hearts, and saw in him the one of whom Moses in the law and the prophets had written. She no longer cried, but she worshipped. There must be some demonstration of that faith which is accounted for righteousness before the redeemed sinner can be in a worshipful attitude. The woman was in the right spirit and the spirit of God bore evidence with her spirit that she had been taught of him. Jesus assured her of the acceptability of her faith and granted her request. From that hour her daughter was made perfectly whole.

It is to be noted that Jesus cured this Gentile daughter at a distance and did not go to her in person. When Christ ministered to the Jews under the law he was present in person. Today Jesus is in Heaven at God's right hand, and does not come to the Gentiles in the person of his flesh in his ministration of mercy to them, but is manifested through the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity by faith through grace, and the same is true of every Jewish believer in this dispensation, who will be brought to a knowledge of the truth, for now there is neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female, bond nor free, but all one in Christ Jesus as the spiritual seed of Abraham.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

General Delivery, Panama City, Fla.

MY DEARLY BELOVED: This morning as I laid down to give my arthritis a little more rest it seemed to strike my mind to get up and write.

At Conecuh River Association last October in Montgomery, Ala. this text came to my mind about ten minutes before I rose to speak. "Also regard not your stuff." Gen. 45:20. I seemed to be much lifted on high and enjoyed the effort, and many others so expressed themselves. I had never used this text before and have not used it since but it seems to keep haunting my mind. Bible readers know the story of Joseph, his dreams, being sold into Egypt etc. God works ahead in everything. "And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance." Gen. 45:7. When Joseph revealed himself to his brethren there were yet five years of famine. Go bring unto me your father and the household. Do not bring any stuff for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours. Joseph placed them in the lovely land of Goshen. I will nourish your little ones. Jesus has plenty to nourish the little child of grace. Goshen is in Egypt but Egypt is not in Goshen. The church is in the world but the world is not in the church. Just bring the family down, I have plenty. Jesus has plenty for the family of God. I will not enumerate those plagues, there were eleven. The striking point is this, when the plagues were tormenting Egypt they did not bother Goshen. God drew the line of demarcation. I dare say nothing can melt our stubborn hearts quicker than the death of the first-born in the home. Moses and Aaron were called by night to get the children of Israel out. "For they said, we all be dead men." Ex. 12:33. When it was God's time to move the children of Israel it was an easy go. Not even a dog could move his tongue. When the minister is lifted on high, and his congregation is lifted up with him it is an easy go, a sweet, a glorious and happy time. The dogs of the flesh cannot move their tongues. The children of Israel journeyed to Succoth and there observed the first passover. It was a night to be much observed unto the Lord for bringing them out from the land of Egypt. The ordinance of the passover was that no stranger, no hired servant shall eat of it. Most assuredly there was a line of demarcation; God drew the line. Succoth is where Jacob made booths for his cattle.

When we observe what we commonly call the Lord's supper it is the antitype pointing back to the first passover. When the destroying angel passed over, the first-born was not taken from any house where there was blood upon the lintel and the two side posts. Here is a beautiful type of the blood of Jesus. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John 1:7. "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." Luke 22:15. It is a blessed privilege that in the grand old church we can observe this passover as a sweet token of gratitude that the blood of Jesus removed from us the penalty of death.

"Also regard not your stuff." Stuff is law works for salvation or self righteousness. I heard Elder T. Floyd Adams tell this in one of his sermons. A man came to the church boasting of the good life he had lived, and what he felt he could be worth to the church. An old deacon made a motion to table his application. He brought his stuff. A lady came trembling confessing she was a sinner. I am not worthy a place with you. You can live without me, but how can I live without you? She did not bring her stuff and was received amid

great rejoicing. The old line Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church is the only organization in the whole world whose gate is so strait and whose way is so narrow that you cannot get in with your stuff. (Matt. 7:14). Just a few can get in and travel in the happy and delightful way. The wide gate and broad way leadeth to destruction. These are God's children in this broad way. It does not mean destruction of the children, but destruction of their stuff. Many travel in this way.

As I have trod the journey to nearly seventy-five mile posts I have had many worried and trying experiences, both financially and spiritually. I have been up and I have been down. Financially I have been so down a few times until I did not know what to do or which way to go. I sob as I write these lines. With God nothing is impossible. I desire to mention here one of my spiritual dawns. It would take too much time and space to write in minute detail. Suffice it to say for a period of about ten days I was so heavy till it seemed impossible to carry my load. One night in Jan. 1934, after supper in my study, I tried to prepare myself to face my school children next day, but oh the heaviness of soul. Heavy, heavy, heavy! My wife and children slipped off to slumberland. I tried to go too but impossible. I seemed to be in a trance or something, my beloved I cannot tell you. As quick as lightning a voice (this is my hope) spoke to me and said, "God is the absolute sovereign of the universe, the beginning and the end, the first great cause of all things, and the last great end." He stripped me naked, took my old stuff clothes off, took them in the back yard, kerosened them and struck a match. He gave me a good bath and put a clean new dress on me. What was this new dress? My brethren listen, this new dress was salvation by grace all the way from the cradle to the grave and for eternity, if this is the right way to express it. Prior to this night I believed and had preached two salvations, one for time and one for eternity. The time salvation was conditioned on our good deeds, our stuff. From that night until now I have believed and preached one salvation; that the blood of Jesus atoned for every sin, not only the inherent sin in Adam, but every practical sin I have ever committed or ever will. "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God." After this night I could go to Old Chipola Church and offer myself. I did not have any stuff to take along. They received me joyfully. You will have to guess my church life prior to this until I have time to tell you. I united with the Old Baptist Church in May 1897. During all the disagreements and divisions I fought some hard battles.

On my recent return from Hot Springs I stopped with the church in Memphis, second Sunday and Saturday night before. It was a rich experience. The Lord lifted me on high, glory came down, heaven and earth kissed each other. They have a good pastor in the person of Elder H. G. Brown, Brother J. H. Kerley talked well, Brother Lanier's singing enriches my memory. They are indeed a lovely band of Baptists. They were better to this poor sinner than he deserved. I was entertained in the home of Elder Brown and his noble companion and her sister whose name I have forgotten. I feel like falling at the feet of Jesus for such an oasis in my desert journey. Love and sweet fellowship.

(Elder) C. H. BYRD

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807 Pope St., Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR BRO. AND SISTER VEASEY AND FAMILY: Sister read me your letter

over the telephone and I am so ashamed that I have not written you. If I were blessed according to what I deserved I think I would not receive many blessings. I know of nothing that gives me more pleasure than to get letters from the Baptists full of the things we all love to hear, read and talk of. I get lonely and hungry to get them, and it seems there is such a little time that my mind can meditate on these things enough to write. I am such a puzzle to myself. There are times when my mind is full of thought and I love to think of Jesus as the way, the truth and the life. My heart is full of joy and I feel like I worry people talking or writing about it, and I am afraid they think I think I know so much about it all and I often hesitate to write for that reason. Then again my mind is so blank I could not write or talk it seems if my life depended on it.

My mind of late has dwelt on my experience. In thought I have relived it and felt revived, and it seemed I could see the power of God in it all and felt comforted. There is nothing sweeter than to feel and hope the Lord has led you along and will continue to lead you in the way, working all things for your good and his glory. I have wondered so much about the sufferings of God's people. It looks like some suffer so much more than others, and it always looks as if the best people suffer the most. However, I believe they all suffer, some in mind on account of their sins, shortcomings and waywardness perhaps more than another, and others physically. We do know Jesus was made flesh, or God came in the flesh as Jesus, and suffered all these things and was tempted in all points as we that he might be a merciful high priest.

I read Brother Rhodes and Jones debate and Brother Rhodes surely did defend the doctrine and declare the power of an all wise God. Do you know I am so weak that I sometimes get to thinking maybe I actually do not believe these things, and I wonder if one could be so deceived as to what they believe; but when I hear or read words that give praise and honor to God, and the perfect work that Jesus finished—the salvation of his people—it fills me with joy; even listening to one of another faith (so to speak) on the radio, if they speak of God's power and greatness, does me good. I cannot help believing that Jesus accomplished what he came here to do. People become confused over words such as *all.* There is the sweetest woman close to Brown's Creek Church (Mrs. Earl Osborne) who writes me and I just love her letters. She is not a member of any church but her mother was a firm believer in the doctrine of grace and she is too, but yet she is trying to prove it, if you know what I mean by that. As Brother Brown once said, "as for the argument the world hates us, but we hope we live by faith in the things *unseen* or not understood by the carnal mind or the critics." She writes me scriptures which the people around her point out such as, repent and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sin, and we shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. They tell her that was the great commission given on the day of Pentecost and it is what should be preached all over the world to *everybody.* Brother Veasey, do you believe he was talking to the mockers and scoffers who said these men are full of new wine? Peter was talking to the ones that were pricked in their hearts, the ones who said, "Men and brethren what shall we do?" Surely we do the same to-day, when men and women give evidence that they are pricked in their hearts and begin ask-

ing questions as to what to do, seeking and searching after these things; And as the writer said, "God is not slack concerning his promises," etc. "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance," they want to apply that *all* to the whole human race. The writer just stated that God was *not slack* concerning his promise. He made a promise and a covenant to and with *his people* whoever they are, either a *part* or the whole human race, and I believe that promise is *sure,* and although I believe it is a *portion* and another believes it means all, the *truth stands* just as it is and is not changed and I feel thankful for it. My hope and prayer is that if I am deceived he will undeceive me for the deepest most sincere desire of my heart is to be able to worship God in the right way and be kept in the *way,* be shown the truth and have eternal life.

There is something that has been in my mind for quite awhile, in fact ever since I read Brother Rhodes book. You know the Church of Christ people believe one has to hear the *preached* word, obey, repent and be *baptized before* they are saved, they are *not* saved until they are *baptized.* Now I am not meaning to be hurtful but if I am not mistaken I think that is what they believe. That is what I gathered while reading this debate. You know the scripture so often quoted in the tenth chapter of Romans, speaking concerning preaching and "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," etc., and "how shall they hear without a preacher," etc. I do not know why but the scripture written by Paul keeps coming into my mind, and somehow to me it comes with the things I believe, "It pleased God by the *foolishness* of preaching to save them that believe." That word foolishness I studied about for days, and it just came to me that after the great revelation Paul was given in these things, the hard doctrine he preached, predestination, foreknowledge, choice election, all before the foundation of the world, that he believed so strongly in these things, and knew God's foreknowledge could not fail, and he saw such perfect wisdom in it all, and God's people or the bride saved in Christ (which John said stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world) that that was why Paul used the word *foolishness.* What do you think? I may have the wrong idea but I have wondered so much about why Paul used it in connection with as sacred an act as preaching. He was given faith to view the perfect plan, or work, just as complete, just as sure before the world began as if it were finished as the prophet, Isaiah, said, He declared the end from the beginning.

Well, Brother Veasey I am so ignorant and unlearned in these things I do not know why I ever got so bold as to write to people who I feel know so much more than I do about them, but I hope it is because I love them, and I hope you will look over my efforts and know that I am fully aware of the fact that I am nothing and less than nothing and altogether vanity. Man was made subject to vanity not willingly but by reason of Him. I often think of this, God made man subject to vanity, and I think that in that word is included pride, high mindedness and sin, but he knows exactly how to lead them in a way to bring down and keep them humble and at each other's feet so to speak.

Just one more thought and I must close. A Brother Davis from Kansas visited the church here several meetings ago and came home with sister and on over to my house before he

left. While discussing these things we believe and do not believe something was said about folks believing God predestinated all the good things but not the bad. He said, "Well, there are people who say that, but you would find it mighty hard to sell them a car without a reverse." I hope you see that as I did. May be I got more out of that remark than was in it, but I thought of it for many days and still love to think of it. It takes all to make a thing complete. It takes the reverse and the greasy, messy engine; it cannot all be plush upholstery and shiny trimmings or else it would not run, it would be no good as a car. He surely seemed to be a sound believer in sound hard doctrine, that is if I know anything about it.

Brother Veasey, I simply cannot imagine you enjoying my rambling letters, yet you speak so kindly about them that I assure you I would write you much more often if I could think on these things as I wish, but I am indeed a weak helpless creature. I have to wait for these things. I thought of this as I walked to work this morning. How blank my mind is to these things sometimes, and no matter how I yearn for it and search and try to bring these things close they remain far from me, and then unexpectedly and for no reason it seems there it is, and thoughts running through my mind that fill my heart with the sweetest joy, and love goes forth out of my heart for every one I think of, and if I had the time I would be foolish sure enough by writing, but I guess everything is fixed as Brother Croker said, just fixed that way.

I do hope you and Sister Veasey are better, and hope God reconciles you to bear the things you must bear. He has promised not to put more on us than we are able to bear. I believe you both have a reward laid up in heaven for you, a golden harp and it is strung and tuned for endless years and formed by power divine, and it will sound in God the Father's ears praise to his name and none but his. I feel sometime or rather think how good it would be for us all to kneel together in prayer and humble submission to his will in us, but do we not often push these things from us to take care of worldly cares and toils. Tell Brother Biggs when you see him we are looking forward so much to his coming to visit us. There are no words to express the deep feeling we have for him. I do not know why but I pour out my thoughts of joy or woe to him many times in my mind. Somehow it is comforting to me to talk to him that way or just to recall his countenance as he stood in the stand here one time, shining as though a light lit up his face. God, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. What a glorious thing it is to believe that. May we all be kept by the power of God ready to be revealed in the last day is my prayer tonight. Would like to see you and hear you talk. Best wishes.

(Mrs.) LUCILLE YOUNG

Route 2, Bassetts, Va.

ELDER H. J. BIRD, DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE: I feel that this hope means, dear brother in Christ. Our kinship is on a higher plane than fleshly kin. I want to write you again, trying to express some of my feelings, hoping the Lord will guide my mind and pen to the end that we may be comforted and his name be honored and glorified.

I have been given to mediate some on the way we have to travel here in this time world. We know natural food is necessary to maintain our natural lives

and bodies or life in our bodies. This food generates energy which is taken up and consumed by the movements of our bodies, thus creating or bringing about the need for more food. Dear brother, this is just a figure of the spiritual. First, necessity for food is a sure indication of life. This is an undeniable fact. Nothing wholly dead needs food. When one is born into this natural world it cries for food and has to have it. Not to give it life, but to maintain that life which God has already given it. Spiritually, when one is born again into the spiritual world it begins to cry for food.

> "The food our spirits want
> Thy hand alone can give;
> O! hear the prayer of faith, and grant
> That we may eat and live."

This food comes direct sometimes, and also through the preached word. Jesus is what and all we want or need. Not Jesus the failure of sinners, (as the world believes) but Jesus the Savior of sinners, whole and complete. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." When blessed to preach or to hear, it satisfies this longing of our soul, generates divine energy so to speak. We are satisfied for the time being. Were we to stay there the necessity for going to meeting would be removed. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose." Rom. 8:28. Herein we see the necessity then for doubts and fears. Preaching or hearing the word generates a divine energy in our soul. Doubts and fears soon consume this divine energy, and we move out again seeking more evidence that we are indeed children of God. Doubts and fears, as well as everything else, are among the "all things" quoted above. It is also a part of our chastening which proves we are sons and not bastards. I am using pretty positive language tonight, but I must try to express my feelings. Tomorrow I may be plumbing the depths in the valley of doubts and fears, but not at present.

I realize our nature is in direct opposition to the divine nature implanted in our hearts—Christ in you the hope of glory. See the cross here? "Take up the cross and follow me," not agreement but cross. Willed to each covenant child by God the Father. You must then bear it. Our nature is filled with unbelief. When shut up in nature's darkness Satan hurls these doubts and fears through the channel of our natural mind; when filled with the Spirit we are delivered from this prison, and rejoice in the sunshine of God's love for a little season. "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." In season out of season. I once heard a brother say, a sheep is unable to open the door or gate into this (or the) pasture. By necessity then we need that good Shepherd to do this for us. Jesus is the door, the entrance into this land of Judea, the land of green pastures, the land of still waters. Made to feast on the gospel, then we can rest. To lie down signifies rest. "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he restoreth my soul." Have we not already experienced this, dear fellow servant and pilgrim traveler? Feasted on the precious gospel of Jesus Christ, drank of the clear, still waters in the land of Judea, the garden of the Lord, the waters that gushed from the side of our crucified Lord and Master. Yea, it satisfies our thirst too. "In and out." The same hand that turns us in also turns us out for a little while. Not out of his kind watchcare, love, keeping and protection, but out of a felt sense

of him. But this is necessary too for we have to live naturally, as well as spiritually, and we have to be prepared by or of him for another feast, and this is his ordained way. We are here for the primary purpose of worshipping him. "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." While out we want to get back in, and find by experience that, "He shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open." "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." We show forth his praise while traveling the outside, lonely way (outside a felt sense of his presence) by being able to testify to the truth in the above quoted scriptures by experience. Things we have felt, seen, handled and tasted of the living word of life. Forward, march, then dear child we all have our doubts and fears.

"Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face."

Now to prove, God willing, that doubts and fears are a part of our chastening wielded in his hand, "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Do we delight and rejoice in our doubts and fears? No, they are indeed grievous, hard to be borne, make us miserable, but like a poor, weary traveler crossing the desert, going over burning sands, growing tired, faint and weary from one oasis (place of rest, drink, food, refreshing) to another, traveling from one point to another, (time to eternity) can't you just see the gentle hand of God in it all? This is his way of preparation. Soon we are let in again, then we rest. O, my brother, beloved in the Lord, does not the Bible plainly declare in the blest language of our Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and rigteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Were we not in his covenant relationship we could not possibly desire this heavenly drink, rest and food. How could we hunger and thirst after a thing unless we had experienced the heavenly pleasure derived therefrom before? Remember these experiences signify life. The dead know not anything. Do you think a dead man could feel anything? So then we must admit by experience the truth contained in Jesus statement they "shall go in and out, and find pasture." If we were not in him we would not know anything about the difference between in and out. In season, out of season, in Spirit (felt sense) out of Spirit. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Is not this our experience? In season, out of season. "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." If we were not in him, let me repeat, we would not know the difference between in and out. Being as we feel this is our experience, that we do know the difference, this is evidence to me that we are in him. Farewell in love. Write, pray for and come to see us. Your brother in hope.

(Elder) LAYTON WINGFIELD

Cottage Grove, Tenn.

MRS. ELIZABETH TRIBBLE, DEAR COUSIN: I have a desire, and have had for some time, to write you together with the church at Cane Creek, but I feel my unworthiness and know that if you all could see me as I see myself, a poor sinner not worthy of notice by His dear children, you would understand. Yet I love them and my desire is to be permitted, if it is the will of the Lord, to see you all once more before passing from this world of trouble, sorrow and afflictions.

Cousin Elizabeth I know if this letter is not directed, or in other words if the Lord does not give me words that I may write the truth as it is in Christ Jesus it will be a worthless message. My prayer to God is to direct my mind that I may pen a few thoughts to the precious brethren and sisters composing the dear old church of Cane Creek. The Lord has blessed you so wonderfully in the last few years, and especially in the last twelve or eighteen months by adding to the church several of his chosen children, and especially one of his chosen servants to preach the unsearchable riches of his grace and go in and out before you, that one is dear Brother Harrison. He is a kinsman in the flesh and I hope we are in the spirit, yet I am made to fear so often that I am mistaken altogether in the whole matter, and most of all that I have and am still deceiving the dear saints of the most Holy One. I am made to weep and mourn and cry unto my God and beg of him to restore unto me the joys of that salvation once more which I hope I have been made partaker of through his shed blood.

Dear saints of Cane Creek have you ever had to travel this road? Have you ever been down in the valley of despair when it seemed that that sweet hope you once had been so much comforted with and made to rejoice in a Savior's love had almost left you? Just a little spark left! Oh how we are made to beg the Lord for mercy, love and grace, and just then when in this despairing condition we hear that still sweet voice of the blessed Son of God our Savior saying, fear not, it is I, "my grace is sufficient for thee." Oh, what a sweet voice it is to his children who are traveling through this world of trials, sorrows and afflictions. Oh, that our minds may be centered upon that Rock which is Christ Jesus our Lord for he says, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." So fear not little children for he is God and besides him there is no God. He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast for I am God declaring the end from the beginning, and saying my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. These are some of the shalls and wills of our God. Oh, what a wonderful God we have full of mercy and truth. Then dear saints of Cane Creek Church look unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of your faith. When we are enabled to behold him, when in the valley of despair and hear that still sweet voice, oh how we are lifted up and made to sit in heavenly places in Christ; and when our poor tongues are enabled to lisp the sweet songs of never ending love, grace and praise to his adorable name it is a glorious time of rejoicing. My prayer to God is that I may be permitted to meet with you all once more before I pass from this world of trouble and afflictions, and behold your precious faces, the faces that I love and so often think of.

Brother Harrison, after I learned of your uniting with the church, and that the Lord had called you as one of his servants to go forward and declare the

glorious doctrine of God our Savior, oh how I wanted to see you and hear you speak in the name of your Master; and when you visited our church last year and I saw you enter the house I wanted to take you in my arms. I could see as you came up the aisle the image of Jesus in your face, and I said within myself praise the Lord for his mighty works among the children of men. Brother Harrison, if you will allow me to thus address you, the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone is a full and complete salvation, and embraces all that a poor sinful worm of the dust needs for time and eternity. It will safely house every one of the heirs that was given to Christ in the covenant of redemption. Oh that I may be in that number to join in with that heavenly host to sing praises to the King of kings and Lord of lords forever and forever in that eternal home. May God bless you together with all the dear saints of Cane Creek Church, and may he give you wisdom from on high that you may speak the truth as it is in Christ Jesus without fear of man or men, thereby edifying and building up the saints of whom God has made you a shepherd is my prayer.

If I should never meet you all again in this world I hope to meet you in that eternal home where parting will be no more. May I ask an interest in your prayers when at a throne of grace. We want you all to visit us at Walnut Fork when you can. I want you to cast the mantle of charity over this imperfect letter, and I now bid you all farewell in the Lord. Your poor and afflicted brother in the Lord I hope.

R. L. VEASEY

Burlington, Col.

When a small child I used to cry myself to sleep because I had done wrong during the day and would think I would be a good girl and never do wrong again, but the next day I would do just as wrong or even worse; it just seemed I could not be good. I went on this way for several years, then at times I would forget about it; but on the second Sunday in May, forty-one years ago to-day, my husband and I with our two little children, drove ten miles to where my father, the late Elder James B. Hardy, preached in a little school house every second Sunday. I went into that school house light hearted and happy, but oh what a heavy heart I had when I went out. When my father took his text and began preaching it seemed every word he spoke was directed to me. What a terrible sinner I felt myself to be. I felt every one in the house was looking at me and knew what a vile sinner I was and his sermon was for me. If the floor could only have opened and swallowed me. After preaching mother came and shook hands with me and said, "The Lord can take care of you too." I could not keep the tears out of my eyes at that and as soon as I could get away went out to the wagon and told my husband I wanted to go home. He wanted to know if I was not going home with some of the folks for dinner but I said, "No, I wanted to go home."

For eight years I was so burdened with sin I was afraid to lie down to sleep at night for fear I would die and go to torment. I would try to pray but could only ask the Lord to have mercy on such a terrible sinner, but felt he never heard a word I uttered. I have sat up night after night and thought I would never see daylight again, but always felt it was just if I was lost. I did not see how the Lord could save such as I. I would want to go to meeting when the second Sunday would come, but would not because I

did not want every one staring at me and thinking what a sinner I was. One night I laid down and thought I cannot live through the night. I suppose I must have fallen asleep and dreamed though it did not seem like a dream. A voice in the southeast corner of the room said, "Fear not I will take care of you." I looked from whence the voice came and the corner was so black I asked who it was; the voice said again, "I will take care of you." I asked again who it was and this time when I looked there was a light star in the corner and this time the voice said, "I am God, fear not I will take care of you." When I looked again I saw the blessed Savior and the star was a crown upon his head, and I saw him ascend. I felt a relief but the next morning something kept telling me, "That was only a dream, the Lord does not know anything about you." While I was not in such black despair I still felt I was a terrible sinner. Three years after this my father came to our home one day and told me my sister, Mrs. Sarah Enoch, was to be baptized the following Sunday and asked me to come to the meeting and the baptizing, but I felt I was not fit to see her baptized and just could not go.

About a year after sister united with the church she was at our home one day and she and my mother-in-law were talking on the scriptures. I said but little, I felt so burdened with sin and a prayer was going up from my heart for salvation when my sister got up and we walked out in the yard; she stopped, turned and said to me, "And Ticia there never was any one, not any one, that really and truly wanted to be saved but what the Lord will save." I think those were the sweetest words I ever heard spoken. Oh, what a burden was lifted from me. I wanted to shout I was so happy; it seemed the birds sang sweeter, the sun shone brighter.

I went to church the next Sunday and how dear the brethren and sisters seemed to me, and when my dear father opened the doors of the church how I longed to go but just could not do it; something told me those good people would not have you, you are not fit to be with them. From that time that was the way I would feel until six years ago in March. My mother was very sick (in fact it was about her last sickness). I was helping to care for her and she talked to me about baptism and her home beyond and said such beautiful things I felt I wanted to be baptized as our dear Savior was, but as I lived one hundred thirty-two miles from any Old School Baptist church and not much of a way to go it was over three years longer before there was a way opened for me to go to Kingman, Kans. to the church my father helped organize and where he and mother were members at the time of their death.

After preaching on Saturday before the fifth Sunday in August 1936, when the doors of the church were opened I could no more have kept from going up and offering myself than I could have gone before. I told what I have told here and was received and baptized the next day by my brother, the late Elder J. R. Hardy, of Dallas, Texas. I know if I am saved at all it is by the grace of God and not by one good deed of mine.

"'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed."

(Mrs.) MARTICIA FOX

Ladies Building, McCain, N. C.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: May I address you thus although I do not feel worthy to claim kindred in Christ to one who I feel to be so far superior to such a weak worm of the dust as I. While lying here on my bed of affliction, during the rest hours, I hope I was given the mind to write to you. Unless I am clothed in the right mind I know that I cannot write or say anything comforting or edifying to any one.

This is the second time I have come to the State Sanitorium for the tuberculosis cure, and my dear companion has also been here twice for the same cure. While here this time Brother and Sister Berry, Brother George Weaver and my only sister in the flesh visited me and I asked for a home with the Primitive Baptists, the people whom I hope I love more than any other on earth. I was received by a unanimous vote on Sunday, the next meeting, at Pleasant Grove Church where Brother Berry is Pastor. Why they received me I do not know for I do not feel worthy to be among such fine people. As Paul wrote I feel to be the chief of sinners. If I am one of God's chosen few I feel to be less than the least, but as I told a lady in my dreams if I am anything I am a Primitive Baptist. From childhood I have always felt that others were better and above me.

Brother Dodson I cannot express in words how much I enjoy the *Signs of the Times*. Before coming to the Sanitorium the nearest Primitive Baptist church was about fourteen miles from my home, and as we did not have a car I have not heard any Primitive Baptist preaching for about ten months. Being around others here who believe so far different from the way I hope I do you can partly understand how much the *Signs* and other Primitive Baptist literature means to me. I have been here almost eight months and expect to stay many months longer for it takes a long time to cure tuberculosis.

Brother Dodson I do not feel that I have written anything worth while but if you wish to use it in the *Signs* you are welcome to do so. I am not a writer, just a rambler, but if I do ever write anything of comfort to any one the Lord Jesus Christ is due all the praise, honor and glory. I am nothing and can do nothing without the help of the Lord. I hope I have been taught of the Lord to look up beyond the hills from whence all of our help comes for in him we live, move and have our being.

I must close now as I am very tired and have already made my letter too lengthy. If any one, or especially those of like precious faith, wish to write me I will be glad to hear from them, especially during my long and lonely hours of suffering. Dear brother, if I have said anything amiss please cast the mantle of charity over it. May the God of all grace keep you and yours both now and for-ever-more. Yours in hope of life eternal.

(Mrs.) E. C. VAUGHN

14852 Glenwood, Detroit 5, Mich.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I notice it is time to renew my subscription and I am enclosing a remittance as I do not want to miss a single copy. I do enjoy reading the experiences of God's little children and wish so much I could feel as they do, but all I feel to have is hope. Most of the time I feel so little and unworthy of God's love and mercy that hope has seemed to grow dim, but I do not feel that I have lost complete sight of it for at times I seem to be lifted to great heights by this same dim hope, and made to feel I will never doubt again. (Mrs.) BONNIE GLOVER

EDITORIALS

RUTHERFORD, N. J. OCTOBER, 1949

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"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."—2 Tim. 3: 16-17.

It is with some degree of misgivings and reluctance that I quote and bring to your attention this passage of scripture. For days there has been a constant weight of the text on my mind, yet there has also been some kind of fear connected with it. It may be a fear of men—what they may say and do. Yet, I hope I love the cause of Jesus Christ well enough to keep my personal opinions to myself when they are apt to cause any confusion.

There has been a day when the Scriptures were looked upon as being important. Are they regarded in the same degree to-day as heretofore? For my part I do not think so. I realize that saying that brings me into ill repute. It is a common belief to-day that we do not get worse than formerly; that nothing gets wrong with the people of God now that has not always been wrong. If the Scriptures had the weight with us that they formerly did we would not say that. Many times the New Testament writers tell us what is coming in the future among the churches. A thing that is future has not yet arrived. The evils spoken of by the sacred writers were to get worse. Then if we deny that things are to get worse, do we have the respect for the Scriptures that we should?

Some Associations in America have left off their articles of faith, but most of them do now, or have in the past, given articles of faith. The second article in nearly all minutes reads the same. "We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the word of God, and the only rule of faith and practice." Brethren, do we still believe that? Are we as zealous about the practice as we are the doctrine? Has there not been a tendency to wean the practice away from the doctrine? I ask you as candidly as I know how to be, if there has not been a tendency to receive men by their doctrine to the exclusion of their practice? I have heard it said like this: I have heard bad reports on Elder Dee, but I do not care so much about what he has done for he preaches what I believe. Was that the practice of the early churches? Did you ever read in the Book that it did not make any difference about how a man conducted himself as long as he preached the truth?

My Bible and my hymn book are in reach at the office and in the home. I do not mean that the hymn book is worthy of comparison with the Scriptures, but rather that the two are my companions. I am not what would be known as an avid reader of the Bible, but it is in easy reach at all times. Not many days that I do not scan its rich pages for comfort and consolation.

Even in secular newspaper and magazine work I keep it handy, for if I know myself I do not have any desire to write something in the secular press that that precious volume will not hold good. I have a feeling that it is the gift of God to his poor and afflicted people; that men wrote it as they were moved by (not upon) the Holy Ghost.

If it is correct to say that we use the Scriptures for doctrine, it is also correct to say that we use them for reproof and correction. If we say that the Spirit uses us or moves us in a scriptural way to preach the doctrine, then we must also say that it uses or moves us to reprove and correct. The entire Book was given by inspiration of God. Any portion of it that we understand must be given to us. If we do not have any use for the Bible except to get proof to establish what we think is the doctrine, then we do not have any use for the other three uses. We have doctrinal preachers which are a special gift to the churches, but a strong doctrinal preacher does not have any right to say that it is unscriptural to reprove, correct or instruct. All doctrine that is preached is not of God's Spirit. All reproof, correction and instruction is not of the Spirit of God, but all of any of these four items that come from this Book are just as much a part of our faith and practice as another. If not, the part that we use, and the part refused are not on an equal footing. If we have a right, or have the ability to use one, we certainly have the right and obligation to use the other.

Everything about these sacred writings is of God. They were given to the people of God. God had in mind four uses for them. They were not given to any save the child of God. We could not apply them profitably to any other, nor could any other use them. Every admonition becomes a command when applied to the child of God. The commands are not grievous, but if actuated by the Spirit, they are a joy. We want to remember that it is not Paul giving these charges to Timothy. It is God. It is God now that moves (not upon) men to charge one another. It is God that moves men to seriously take the charge. Paul did not tell Timothy that he learned the Scriptures by the volition of his own mind. These are solemn things to me. I see but little, if any, difference to a charge to a godly walk and talk in any body else, than that given a minister. A charge to a minister, if different from that the apostle gave Timothy, is not a charge. If the Scriptures are our ONLY rule of faith and practice, we must charge our ministers to-day like Paul did.

If the apostle charged Timothy to do a thing or to leave off a thing we have every right, yea, we are under the strictest command to charge our ministers now in these things. Has that got a tinge of conditionalism about it? Even if it did have, we would be charging God with foolishness to condemn it. But it does not have. After giving a description of men in the last days he turns to his own conduct. Much has been written and pulpits disgraced by the blasphemous statement that conduct does not have anything to do with the child of God and more especially the minister. It had something to do with Paul's life, and from his charge to Timothy he must have felt that it would have something to do with the young minister. Listen to the apostle: "But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yea, and all

that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." If language means anything Paul did not give any sanction to the evil in these men, but rather he condemned it. And if what he says has any meaning and use for the church to-day it means for us to condemn all wrong desire. "Thou hast known my doctrine." Yes brethren, sisters and readers, it is a wonderful thing to know that one of our fellow travellers is sound in the doctrine. We want to know this first of any man. I do not condemn it, I do not sanction it, I do not think it comes by inspiration, but let a new man come into our midst, almost invariably our first question (and in most cases that is all we want to know) is, is he sound? Paul placed as much importance on his manner of life as he did his doctrine. He told of his persecutions and trials. These were not as he brought them on him by disobedience, or neglect, or don't care. I want to, and by the grace of God I will, continue to spend and be spent to tell the family of God that every child of God has these things allotted to them. Persecutions do not come for wrong doing, but to the contrary they are a gift to the godly; trials are not sent to the disobedient, to the neglectful, to those lacking faith, but they are all measured out to those that have faith. Not a child of God that is living godly, can be taught that their persecutions came from a disobedient life. No sir, that is conditionalism, and if all, *all* the children of God that live godly have persecutions, there is not anybody in the family of God to preach it to. If it is preached at all it must not be preached to the godly.

Now the manner of life is important, but the manner of life, like the persecutions, is not of the flesh, nor of nor by chance. If his manner of life had been left to Paul, and the godly were to be allotted persecutions and afflictions, it follows, even from a standpoint of reason, that Paul would not have lived godly, seeing that the ungodly are not persecuted and afflicted. But if a poor misguided soul thinks that the life we live here in the world is of man it is yet to learn some things. The Scriptures that came by inspiration are as silent as death about that. Paul says, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Gal. 2:20. Inspiration is not teaching us a literal crucifixion, but an inward working in Paul. This inward work of the Spirit burns up the dross of all man-made work systems, and it is the source of the faith that he lives by.

This crucifixion and this faith produces our manner of life. It did Paul's and it was written that we might have comfort from it. (Rom. 15:14). This is part of the Scriptures that were written for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. After finding the persecutions and afflictions belonging to the godly; after finding that the life of Paul is an inwrought work of the Spirit, would we have a scriptural right to exhort and admonish? Let us see what Paul would say, "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou has known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

This precious Book of which I write is the only volume that has ever been

written for the child of God. Every syllable of it belongs solely to them. In and of myself I cannot keep its commands and instructions. I cannot preach a word of the doctrine as laid down in its pages unless the Spirit takes me up out of my fallen nature into the glorious liberty that belongs to the children of God. It is sealed to me until the Lion of the tribe of Judea comes and loosens the seals. At that time, whether for me or not, the children are able to go forth in grace into every command written therein. At that time they are able to preach and hear preaching; to exhort and to suffer the word of exhortation; to admonish and to receive admonition in a spirit of brotherly love; to read the Scriptures and do their biddings; in short, when the seals are loosed we loose the saints, when they are sealed and none found to open, we place our interpretation on them and woe to those that dare differ with us.

The Book is written for the man of God. But I do not want to leave a thought in the minds of believers in grace that he has turned the Book over to us to find out what it means. It is his Book and it is given to us. Not as the world gives a gift and loses interest in both giver and gift, but as God gives. At the appointed time of God the Son came and while here he taught. Before going away he said that another Comforter would be given. His work was to take the things of Christ and shew them unto the children. He is doing that. He is teaching men to know him, whom to know is eternal life. He is sending men to teach and preach, pastor and evangelize. These things are all written in the Scriptures. The church is doing them. She will continue to do them until there is no further purpose in these things. In our nature we are not improved any; as men and women we fail in many instances to do the things written in this Book; but as being led forth into the gospel field by the spirit of the gospel, we are standing in Christ Jesus. In him we are overcoming, for it is in him that we live and move and have our being. In him, and in him alone, do we learn the Scriptures and do them. We, if indeed I must use that precious language, are the children of God, he being the head and chief cornerstone. He being the head and we the body, we follow where the head leads; he being the chief cornerstone we are fitly framed into a building of God. The Book is the record of his work and his will toward us. W. D. G.

"The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation."
—Matthew 12: 42-45.

In looking over our list for views, we find two requests to write on the above portion of scripture. One is from a brother in Texas, the other from a sister in Arkansas. Both were made quite sometime ago. We are sorry for the delay in complying with these requests, but it has seemed impossible to do so before this. Even now it is with fearfulness and trembling that we approach our task.

In order to get a better prospective of our subject it will be necessary to

review briefly the inter-relating and surrounding circumstances. In the forepart of this chapter we find that Jesus had greatly incurred the displeasure of the Pharisees by (1) permitting his disciples to pluck and eat ears of corn on the sabbath day, and (2) by healing the withered hand of a man, likewise on the sabbath day. For these the Pharisees "held a council against him, how they might destroy him." Jesus also manifested his power by casting out a devil from one who was possessed with him, and by healing the blind and the dumb. These mighty works of Jesus greatly amazed the people. "But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils." Jesus answered their accusations by declaring "every city or house divided against itself shall not stand," and then said, "But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you." He then taught that all manner of sin except blasphemy against the Holy Ghost would be forgiven unto men. He also preached the necessity of making the tree good in order for the fruit to be good, and accused them of being a generation of vipers. This was more than the scribes and Pharisees could stand and they challenged him to give them a sign. Jesus answered this by saying, "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas." He then told them that "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold a greater than Jonas is here." He was contrasting the wickedness of even Nineveh to the wickedness of that generation, showing that it was mild in comparison, since the Ninevites repented and turned from their wicked ways at the preaching of but a single prophet, and he a stranger, who wrought no miracles among them, whereas there was an abundance of reasons why that generation should have repented. Jesus had wrought many miracles among them, and John the Baptist had been preaching in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." The other apostles had also labored in preaching among them, but all to no avail, for they were as impenitent as ever, if not more so. Jesus further brought to their remembrance the case of the Queen of Sheba, who he said "came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon," and he told them that she would rise up in judgment and condemn that generation. He emphasized his own, the Son of God's importance, by declaring that a greater than Solomon was there with them.

We would judge that our inquirers are particularly interested in the purport of the next three verses of our text, and we wish to say in advance of taking up each verse that in our humble opinion, the Jews and the Gentiles, or law and gospel, are under consideration. For centuries the Jewish nation had stood apart from all other nations on the face of the earth as the chosen people of God. They were peculiarly marked by Almighty God to enjoy his special favor and blessings, and this was manifestly so for ages. To them God committed his oracles and they alone in types and shadows worshipped the true and living God. But as in the days of Job, when the sons of God presented themselves before the Lord, Satan came along also, and he was that unclean spirit which dwelt in them all during the Legal Dispensation. This was unmistakably evidenced from time to time by their de-

partures from the straight and narrow way, for they wandered into forbidden paths and often became a stiff-necked and rebellious people. This continued until the final consummation of that dispensation or age, or until the Lord Jesus Christ came and through his sufferings, death and resurrection established a new era, the Gospel Dispensation. When that legal age ended, or ceased to be, the evil spirit is said to have gone out of the man, which of necessity was true, since Jesus himself had foretold the utter destruction of the temple worship age by saying that not one stone should remain upon another. When this was to be fulfilled we are told that the evil spirit "walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none." Satan undoubtedly then attacked the "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people," whom God had called to shew forth his praise. These were none other than the Gospel Church, and the Lord Jesus Christ having written his law in the heart, and put it in the inward part, the strong man was thus bound and his goods were spoiled, so the evil spirit "walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none." Satan's camping ground, in order to be fertile and productive, must be marshy or soft, and there is where grows the bull-rushes and all else that goes to make up the wilderness, which is full of confusion and the bewilderment of this vain world; therefore the evil spirit with all of his cunning and deceivableness could find no real rest, or foundation upon which to build and carry on his work in the hearts where the God of heaven had set up his kingdom. The work of God among the Gentiles is a perfect work, and the foundation upon which the Christian's hope is built is on solid or dry ground, and the child of grace will seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, so Satan is constantly met with opposition. Finding his way blocked, we are told that the evil spirit then saith, "I will return into my house from whence I came out, and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished." When the Jewish economy age was completely destroyed, it would appear as though for nearly two thousand years now they have lost all semblance of worshipping God in spirit and in truth, hence their house is said to be "empty, swept, and garnished." Paul, in writing to the church at Rome, asked the following questions concerning the seed of Abraham: "Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If my any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert graffed in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be graffed in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high minded, but fear: For if

God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee." The great apostle of the Gentiles here not only explains the purpose of God in cutting off the Jews, but also uses their experience as an admonition to the Gentiles to be faithful, lest God also not spare them.

It is said the evil spirit finding his former house "empty, swept, and garnished," then goeth "and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first." According to our understanding this is a true description of the Jewish nation since their former economy was destroyed, so far as true worship of our God is concerned. Not yet knowing Jesus as their true Messiah under the Gospel Dispensation, the evil spirit, so far as worshipping God in Spirit and in truth is concerned is meeting with little or no opposition among them, so the evil spirit is said to have taken with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there. Seven is a complete or perfect number in the Bible, so they have full sway, and in this state or condition of the Jewish nation these evil spirits are said to be more wicked than formerly, which signifies to us that the Jewish nation under the Legal Dispensation, with all of its types and shadows, came nearer to glorifying God than they are doing to-day. In other words, their present state is worse than it was before, or under the law. "Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation." We may be assured that before the Jews are graffed back into the favor of God again, their present house or state, must definitely be utterly destroyed and they must bow the knee to the God who made heaven and earth, whose only begotten Son they will have to confess as being Lord over all, God blessed for evermore. Jesus said, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Until the fulness of the Gentiles shall have come in, the Jews will undoubtedly remain without the gates of the New Jerusalem, but when the Lord shall have accomplished his purpose in them, then shall they proclaim with the great apostle, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

Perhaps some experimental application could and should be made of the foregoing scriptures to the militant church here in the world to-day. We have no doubt but that they apply in some measure to those who after having received a knowledge of the truth, and who profess to love our Lord, have turned back to the beggarly elements of the world. Jesus said concerning Judas-Iscariot, who betrayed him, that it would have been better for him had he never been born. Following our scriptural text we are told that while Jesus yet talked with the people, "behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." The lesson to be learned, it seems to us, is that he that putteth his hand to the plow should not look back. Luke

reminds us to "Remember Lot's wife." Paul said, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

The foregoing thoughts are offered to our readers in the hope that they will prove instructive, stimulating and helpful to the saints of God. R. L. D.

MEMORIAL

Again the grim reaper has removed from our midst one of our beloved members, Brother J. F. McWHORTER. He was born Dec. 16, 1858 in Tennessee but has resided in Oklahoma the past forty-two years. His wife preceded him in death fourteen years, during which time he made his home with his son Fred and wife. They always looked after his welfare and made him as comfortable as possible especially since he fell and broke his hip five years ago. He was never able to get around much after his fall and was unable to attend church the past few years. He was always at his meetings when able and was a firm believer in salvation by grace, having no confidence in the flesh. He is survived by four sons, two daughters, twenty-four grandchildren, thirty-three great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.

Brother McWhorter died at the home of his son Fred in Tipton, Okla., June 6, 1949. Funeral services were conducted by his Pastor, Elder W. N. Green. Burial in Novajoe Cemetery.

Little Flock Church, of which he was a long time member, extends heartfelt sympathy to his bereaved family and friends and to his church.

Resolved, that a copy of this memorial be sent to his family, a copy made a part of the church record and a copy sent to the Signs of the Times for publication. Done by order of Little Flock Church while in conference at Altus, Okla., June 11, 1949.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN, Moderator
(Mrs.) LOU KESTER, Church Clerk

OBITUARIES

Our dear sister in Christ, Mrs. LUCY (BIRD) JOHNSON, departed this life June 11, 1949. The end came suddenly due to a heart condition. She had been privileged to attend her home church meeting that Saturday, and was so spiritually alive during the services. After eating her evening meal with apparent enjoyment she dropped to the floor as she walked toward her bedroom. Only a murmur escaped her lips and no struggle. A number of years ago she had a paralytic stroke and had been a patient sufferer for many years, having only partially recovered. She suffered from heart, dropsy and a type of heart asthma. She bore her sufferings and bodily afflictions with such sweet resignation, seldom ever the slightest murmur — under the most excruciating pain. In her quiet going out the blessing of God was made so sweetly manifest unto her who had suffered so long.

Sister Lucy was united in marriage to James B. Johnson, Dec. 23, 1911. She leaves to mourn, her husband, Deacon James B. Johnson, one son, B. F. Johnson, three daughters, Mrs. Mildred Stanley, Mrs. Callie Higginbotham, and Mrs. Oma Kimbler. One brother B. G. Bird, eight grandchildren and a host of near relatives and friends.

She united with the Primitive Baptist church, June 12, 1938 and it was the blessed privilege of the unworthy writer to baptize her into the fellowship of the church. When the Harmony Old School or Primitive Baptist Church was constituted (East Huntington, Cabell Co., W. Va.) she went in as one of the charter members. She had a rich experience of grace. Truly it can be said of her that she lived the life of her profession. Quiet and unassuming she was blessed with a wonderful personality. All who knew her loved her. In her last years her chief joy was to attend her meetings and associations, travelling long distances to worship with the saints, although frail in health. No one enjoyed preparing for and entertaining the brethren in the home more than she. She and Brother Johnson lived near the Harmony Church since its constitution. Many of the saints can attest to the hospitality of this dear home. I have tried to serve as Pastor of this church since it was constituted and as such I know the high, sterling qualities, the humble, childlike graces of this dear saint of God. Words fail me and neither space nor time would permit me to give more than a broken, brief account of her life. She was a first cousin of mine and we were reared almost as one family, making her seem like my natural sister. Suffice it to say she lived and died in the full triumph of a living faith in God. Her devotion to the church and the worship of God was an inspiration to many, and she will be greatly missed, not only

in the church but in the home where she was a devoted wife and gracious mother and in the neighborhood in general. Born Feb. 25, 1895, the daughter of N. C. and Callie (Carpenter) Bird, her stay on earth was 55 years, 3 months and 14 days.

Funeral services were conducted in the Harmony Old School Baptist meeting-house by Elder J. C. Tilley, assisted by Elders R. C. Bell and Geo. L. Weaver. Graveside services were conducted by Elder J. C. Hammond and her pastor, the writer of this notice. The large concourse of friends in attendance and the many floral offerings pay tribute to the high esteem in which she was held by all who knew her. Her body was laid in the family burying ground in Putnam Co., W. Va. May God visit the bereaved husband and family with reconciling grace. Written by request.

(Elder) H. J. BIRD

JAMES ALLEN HAYNES, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Haynes, was born near Rising Star, Texas, Dec. 27, 1892. His parents moved to Brown Co. in 1905 where he grew to manhood, and was united in marriage to Miss Rena Shankle, Sept. 3, 1909. They were the parents of seven children. One died in infancy, four sons and two daughters have lived to bless their lives and were present at the funeral.

He professed a hope in 1918 and in 1921 he and his wife were received into Macedonia Primitive Baptist Church. He lived a life above reproach, devoting his time and strength to his duties as he saw them. He tenderly cared for his invalid father for more than two years. He had said so many times that he hoped to be taken without having to linger and suffer. On June 6, 1949 his prayers were answered as he quietly fell asleep in Jesus, a sleep from which none ever wake to weep. He left his companion, six children, ten grandchildren, one brother and four sisters to mourn their irreparable loss.

We can only trust in the One who doeth all things well to give them grace and strength to carry on without him, having this assurance that he rests from his labors. He was laid to rest in the cemetery near his beloved parents. The last sad rites were conducted by Elder C. U. Landers of Coleman and Mr. Harry Hames of Brownwood, Texas.

also

GREEN THOMAS BARTON, born March 13, 1862 in Ellis Co., Texas, and died Jan. 6, 1949 at the home of his daughter in Rising Star, Texas. He was married to Miss Ella Griffith, Sept. 7, 1885 at Athens, Texas. To this union were born nine children, three of which survive: Mrs. W. E. Chambers, and C. I. Barton, Rising Star, Tex., J. B. Barton, Tracy, Cal. Also twenty grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

He united with the Primitive Baptist church in 1926, always enjoyed going to the meetings and delighted in the association of his brethren. His companion predeceased him several years and he made his home with his daughter who always cared for him tenderly. She requests that this be published in the Signs of the Times. Elder C. U. Landers conducted his funeral at Rising Star, Tex. Jan. 7, 1949. He was laid to rest by his companion. Written by request.

(Mrs.) LIZZIE K. FOSTER

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to meet, the Lord willing, with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudon Co., Va., Wed., Thurs., and Fri., Oct. 12, 13, and 14, 1949. This place of meeting is located on Highway Route 50 accessible by Greyhound bus either from Washington, D. C. or from Roanoke and Winchester, Va. The bus station in Washington is at 12th St. & New York Ave. We cordially invite ministering brethren and other brethren of our faith and order, those in correspondence with us as well as others in fellowship with us to come and meet with us. All lovers of the truth are welcome. Those coming in private conveyances Tuesday before the meeting, will come either to Leesburg or to Herndon. Those coming by bus Tuesday will come to Leesburg. All coming Wednesday either by bus or private means will go directly to the meeting-house. For further information please write to the address given below.

(Mrs.) DAVID FARNIE, Church Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Forest Grove Church, one mile south of Parsonsburg, Md., Oct. 19 and 20, 1949. All ministers of our faith and order, and all lovers of the truth are cordially invited. Those coming by car on Tuesday will go to the home of Sister Ethel Holloway, 406 E. Isabella St., Salisbury, Md. Trains and buses will be met in Salisbury, Md. Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. Anyone not met will 'phone Sister Holloway, Salisbury 22526.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT, Pastor
(Miss) FANNIE ADKINS, Clerk

RHODES-JONES DEBATE

This book will be given FREE with each new subscription to the **Signs** at $3 per year or $5 for for two years. If book alone is desired send $1.10 direct to Elder R. W. Rhodes, Lillie, La.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.,

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

From our first acquaintance with the Signs of the Times, it found a warm place in our heart, and now, after more than a quarter of a century of intimate association with the paper as Associate Editor, Editor and Publisher, we have decided to incorporate it into a non-profit organization, to be controlled by a Board of seven Trustees, with power to appoint successors, which will perpetuate the publication of the paper, as far as it is humanly possible to do.

Personally, we have never desired to profit, economically, from our association with the paper, and now all funds have been transferred to the new corporation. We are also providing in our Will that all of our religious books and papers, of which there are a goodly number, shall pass to the new corporation at our death. The corporation will be properly registered in Trenton, the capitol of the State of New Jersey, as well as at Hackensack, N. J., which is the County Seat for the County of Bergen, where the business is being conducted at the present time.

Some of our subscribers have suggested that among our readers there are those who would like to make bequests for the benefit of the paper when they pass from the scenes of this life, and have inquired as to how best to arrange for it. We honestly believe there are quite a number who would like to have some part in furthering this cause. Small amounts can be left with relatives or friends in cash to be forwarded to the paper upon the demise of a reader, or specific bequests can be made through Wills, or codicils thereto, by those who desire to do so. Please state carefully in all such cases that the funds are to be left to "Signs of the Times, Inc. (Established 1832) Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause," 41 Addison Avenue, Rutherford, N. J.

We plan to segregate all funds left for this purpose into a separate account, and for the time being use only the income from such funds for current expenses. In this way it is hoped that the fund will build up over a period of years to a point where it will not only help to insure the continued publication of the paper, but whenever justified the paper may be increased in size or otherwise improved.

We have given considerable thought to this matter, and believe our readers will agree that in the long run it will be much wiser to incorporate the paper, with control vested in a Board of Trustees who are empowered to name other Trustees to take the place of any one who can no longer serve, than to allow ownership and control to be vested in an individual, regardless of who that individual may be. Through an organization of this kind, the paper really becomes more nearly in fact the property of the Old School Baptists as a whole, and we sincerely hope that our action will meet with the approval of the vast majority of our subscribers.

We will leave the matter for our readers to decide what they shall do about supporting the paper in the foregoing manner, desiring that whatever may be done shall redound to the honor and glory of our God and for the good of his people.

R. LESTER DODSON

PLEASE REMEMBER

1.—To renew your subscription promptly when due, if possible. The date on your wrapper cover will show to when you have paid.

2.—That when your remittance reaches us before the 10th of the month, credit will be shown with the next issue of the paper, otherwise it cannot be shown until the second month following. This also applies to changes of address.

3.—That notices of Special Meetings should be sent to us at least thirty days in advance of the month in which the meeting is to be held.

If our readers will be kind enough to observe the foregoing suggestions they will aid us very materially in getting out the paper. R.L.D.

CHANGE OF TIME

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, Ashokan, N. Y. hold meetings every first and third Sundays 11:00 a. m. and 1:30 p. m.

ANNOUNCEMENT

It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing of Elder Horace H. Lefferts, former editor of the **Signs of the Times,** at his late home in Leesburg, Virginia, in the early morning of August 18th. He was widely and favorably known, and the Lord's cause has sustained a great loss. Great is the faithfulness of Him who has supplied the needs of his people in all ages of the world, and we desire to be submissive to his will and ever look to him for guidance and strength sufficient for our day. A suitable obituary will undoubtedly appear in these colums within the near future.

R. LESTER DODSON

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 117 RUTHERFORD, N. J., NOVEMBER, 1949 No. 11

CORRESPONDENCE

Route 3, Coleman, Texas

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: At present I cannot do much but sit and read as I was operated on April 11 for perforated ulcer of the stomach. I have been reading my *Signs,* old ones and new. Many of the brethren and sisters have spoken of things concerning our present time and the present state of affairs among us, but to my mind Elder Lambert, in the April issue of the *Signs* put his finger on the trouble. His article was very much in place and I heartily agree with him. Surely he has been taught of the Lord or I am ignorant of things pertaining to God and godliness. Our Master says, "These things I command you, that ye love one another." John 15:17. That is a command of God's only begotten Son who was God manifest in the flesh, the man Christ Jesus. Has God's command about anything ever been disobeyed? Please suffer me to quote a scripture right here that it may be I know nothing about but my brethren are judges of such. Our Master speaking, "For there are some eunuchs, which which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it." Matt. 19:12.

Dear brethren and sisters, it may be that I am deceived in myself but I do not believe I am deceived in the doctrine. I am sure you agree that God has all power both in heaven and in earth, and that God in the ancients of eternity saw everything that would come to pass in time, and as it comes to pass in time it manifests what God foresaw and purposed in eternity. "What his soul desireth, even that he doeth." Then are not all things working together for good to them that love God, as the apostle said? Christ said, "for the kingdom of heaven's sake." I understand a eunuch to be a man who cannot beget children. A eunuch was put in charge of harems of ancient kings. Christ here, as I understand it, makes a comparison of the King of kings. God made everything, "yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." That does not leave anything out, if it was made God made it. God made the earth, man, all beasts, fowls and creeping things, and that includes the serpent, Satan, the dragon the devil; and God gave everything the life and power that it has as his soul desireth. As it is written, "There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." Then to my mind all these things are "working together for good to them that love God," "for the kingdom of heaven's sake." What is a eunuch except one who does the king's bidding or carries out the king's orders? Does God control the whole earth or just part of it and the devil control the rest of it? I affirm God made the devil, brought him into existence, gave him the nature he has, and the power he has as it

pleased God. "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" God tears down kingdoms, and sets up kingdoms, and sets over them the basest of men. "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister (eunuch) of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." This to my mind are those eunuchs who "are made eunuchs of men," but they are here according to God's purpose or they would not be here. God had use for a devil and all vessels of dishonor or they would not have been made. Then there are "eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs." Do you not see them all over the country, going about to save souls, win souls for Christ, and Christ called them eunuchs. Can they beget children of God? Or is that the work of the Holy Ghost? Do they not deny the power thereof? Let us remember God is over all things. He says to the proud waters of the sea "hitherto shalt thou come," and brethren they come that far and not one bit farther. When we think of the power of sin over us and in us, or the power of those who would persecute us, it does us good to think of this, "hitherto shalt thou come." "The powers that be are ordained of God," and this is working for our good if we love God, even "for the kingdom of heaven's sake." The apostle says, there are some who preach Christ through contention, supposing to add affliction to my bonds. Are they not eunuchs who made eunuchs of themselves? and there are some who preach Christ through love, "For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb." Let us notice they are eunuchs, they cannot beget children. They are to my mind to do the King's bidding. "Feed, my lambs, feed my sheep," and that because they love God and love his children. Who would deny that an all wise God in the ancients of eternity did purpose or predecree to separate the apostle Paul from his mother's womb to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ? And so it was with every true God called preacher and shall ever be. The apostle Paul was a chosen vessel unto God, chosen in him before the foundation of the world as was all those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. Yes, my brother, this embraces every one given the Son by the Father in the everlasting covenant before the world was. Some are in every nation, kindred and tongue; some may belong to various churches and organizations; and my Book says, "They are not all Israel, which are of Israel." I affirm, those who are born again are the chosen few of Israel to bear witness unto the truth, to earnestly contend for the faith. My brethren are the judges of my walk, my daily life, my speech, and God is the judge of the creature. "Many are called but few are chosen." All those given the Son are called and God predestinated that they shall be conformed to the image of his Son, but to my understanding out of all those called there are a few chosen to contend for the faith, and of those chosen God has set them in place as he has seen fit but it is the self same spirit.

Paul was a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ. Did Paul do Christ's bidding or not? Did he obey the Holy Ghost or not? Did he go to school and make a eunuch of himself? Paul went to the same school Jonah went to and was taught of the Lord and could say, I will pay my vows unto

my God, of a truth salvation is of the Lord. Brethren, did you ever get in a place where you knew you would die if God did not extend his mercy to you? If you have then you know that salvation, both for time and eternity, is of the Lord. There is salvation in none other except the man Christ Jesus, the only mediator between God and man. Twice in my fifty-four years I have faced death. For some reason God has been merciful to me. I hope I am truly thankful to him who is the giver of every good gift and every perfect gift. Christ left his command unto his church, "that ye love one another," and we love him because he first loved us. "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." Does love hurt any one? Against love there is no law. What about the unfaithful steward (eunuch) who beat his Master's servants? If the thought of that would not make a man fear and quake what would? "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." Every heaven born child fears his God, knowing his own weakness and that of himself he can do nothing, and that God is no respecter of persons, therefore he begs God for mercy. I know the Book says, "over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers," and that is speaking unto the Elders.

My dear brother, I would hate to think my own brethren of our little church have so little judgment that I need to tell them what to do about everything. I have more confidence in my brethren and sisters than that, and I hope God will spare me from thinking I have to tell them what to do. I am very imperfect and make many mistakes, but I am glad that those who see fit to let me go along with them are, I affirm, people taught of God and will deal with me in love and overlook my short comings. To my mind all those born again are the servants of Christ. Christ came as a servant and fed them. They sat at the table that the Lord prepared for them in the presence of their enemies. Is it different today? "How can they preach except they be sent?" Is the one sent greater than his Master, "Over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers to feed the flock of God?" Who sits at the table? Then to my mind the Elders are the servants of the servants of Christ. Nevertheless they themselves eat of the same shewbread, the same manna from heaven, the same oil from the flinty rock and honey from the rock. And they are told to "feed my lambs, feed my sheep," and "make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us." This a man cannot do of himself, it is against his nature, old self, but God takes men in their own craftiness, shows them how vile they are and their just condemnation. Then they will admit, "If my soul be sent to hell, Thy righteous law approves it well." He manifests his love and causes them to see his mercy has followed me all the days of my life. "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." It, Christ in you the hope of glory, produces love of God and love of the brethren. All this comes from one Shepherd who is made unto us wisdom. "The words of the wise (Christ) are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd." "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above." Christ left peace with his church even peace within you. Then why so much trouble? But Christ said, "Ye shall have tribulations." Was that scripture written in vain that says, "certain men crept in unawares?" Who is it that does the

sifting both of self and the church at his appointed time? Does God still control all things? Are we not told to first examine yourselves, take heed unto thyself? When we examine ourselves do we find we are so good and so wise that we are capable of telling the flock what they must do? Or do we find ourselves in need of mercy, and that we too are "kept by the power of God?" "O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter." This was so in the beginning of creation with the first man Adam. It is just as true now even every moment of our lives. He holds our every breath in the palm of his hand. He is even "a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." I am glad he is a merciful God. In his lovingkindness he remembers his children and has said I will not forsake thee in the sixth trouble yea, not in the seventh trouble. This is the whole duty of man, fear God and keep his commandments. We are subjected in hope that his commandments were kept for us by our Savior Jesus Christ. But we fear we might be mistaken in ourselves, and fear because we know the righteous judgment of God as it is written, but we walk by faith, not by sight, looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of our Lord and Savior. We are saved by hope. Hope is an anchor of the soul and reaches to within the vale whither the forerunner hath entered and is now sitting at the right hand of the Father making intercession for us according to the will of God. Bear with me and overlook all mistakes. If of no value cast this away. May the God of all grace and the Father of mercies keep us in that way which no vultures eye hath seen if I can include myself. If you have a mind to do so remember us when at the throne of grace. In gospel bonds. (Elder) C. U. LANDERS

Route 1, Box 23, Castor, La.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I have a desire tonight to try to write some of my experience and travel of mind in life. I have wondered if I could gather up, so to speak, all I hope I have experienced over a period of some twenty years would it sound to Old Baptists like an experience of grace. In this effort I hope I can find or be given words to express just what I have felt and hope I have seen.

My parents were Methodists, father having been sprinkled when an infant, I believe, and mother united after they were married. I attended both Methodist and Baptist until I united with the Missionary Baptists at the age of sixteen. I told the preacher the night I united that I had been saved that week during protracted meeting which was untrue, for I did not then and never have since felt to know I was saved. I lived with them nine years and never confessed that. I was perfectly satisfied I was in the right or true church for I knew nothing about Primitive Baptists at that time except that they preached infants to hell not a span long, and believed what is to be will be. I knew they washed feet which I was curious to see. One thing bothered me and that was regeneration. I knew in my heart there was no one thing or group of things I had felt or undergone that could be called being born again. This I never confessed either—just tried to keep these thoughts from my mind. I was very desirous of living a good life and doing right but never could feel satisfied. It never once occurred to me I was on the wrong track, just thought I was not trying hard enough.

The first I ever knew of Primitive

Baptists was from reading a debate in a Baptist paper I had subscribed for, "Gospel Message," I believe. I got my Bible and read in Romans about the Lord hardening Pharaoh's heart and it did not seem fair to me. When I married in 1927 my husband was not a member of any church and neither was my father-in-law, but he was a firm believer in Primitive Baptist doctrine. I well remember my attitude when the conversation came up and he spoke of some of their belief I laughed! Yes, and I honestly felt sorry for anyone who could believe that sort of thing. Oh, no! I did not and could not know I was the subject for pity.

When my husband attended an Old Baptist Association in Oct. 1929 and became interested, having been so much impressed by manifestations he witnessed among them, he began to question me, and I believe I know that never once did he say one word that should have offended me, he was only inquiring of me, but I became offended. My feelings were hurt and more than once I cried over it, but to save my life I could not defend myself or the church or doctrine I had felt so safe in all these years. I had always been quite ready with scripture but somehow there never was any passage came to mind or point of argument that I could hold up to him. He got in much trouble of mind and continued to question and talk to me for about seven months, and for awhile I can not call back what my mind was. I do not recall any suffering or trouble because of this. I know I must have completely lost confidence in myself and my trusted plan of salvation (my own ability to accept Christ as my Savior and live up to it if I just would) for I clearly remember one Sunday afternoon I was lying on the bed. My husband had been talking to me of his own feelings and had left the room. Nothing happened, no vision, voice or dream for I was awake, but seemed all at once to realize and know for a certainty that I was perfectly helpless to do one single thing towards saving myself. I do not know if I said, "Lord save or I perish," but the conviction could not have been any stronger if the Lord had put the words in my mouth. There was nothing afterwards either, no great light or brightness. I only seemed to feel a lighter heart maybe, and that is all I can tell before I offered myself to the Primitive Baptist Church. I have experienced great trouble of mind concerning this. I was not able to say anything much but was received. I have been unable to keep the fear out of my mind that maybe the brother who made the move to receive me was influenced by his natural friendship for me. I had known him for years and we had a mutual love and interest in music and singing. He was a singing teacher and I played the organ at our little country church so in spite of myself I have been greatly troubled over it.

For several years I went along not satisfied. We went to church twice a month being in reach of two churches. It seemed I had not sufficient evidence for the peace of mind the others seemed to enjoy. The preaching was good and there never has been any doubt that the Primitive was the true church, but I was not at peace. I felt, and still do, that my fears were too great for one already received into the church. In the past four or five years I have had a few experiences that have greatly strengthened me. I would like to speak briefly of them if I can. One Sunday night my husband and I were sitting on the porch in our home and he was telling me of a very strong and impressive dream that he had had several years before and had never been able

to tell it. I was not in the mood at all. Though it was an August night I was too cool to be comfortable, was sleepy and really wanted to go on to bed. (This has always been very important to me for I greatly feared the things I had felt were not the workings of the Holy Spirit, but only my natural emotions being played upon. But feeling as I did that night I was satisfied my natural emotions were not involved so there was no leading up to, so to speak.) He was speaking of being bound, and the great power that lifted him up and out of the grave in the dream when suddenly I experienced a shock as though struck by electricity and immediately became dizzy and said, "Dera I am going to faint." I did not though but started crying softly, not saying words, just crying and soon it was so loud it seemed it could easily have been heard a quarter of a mile. I felt no need for crying but it was coming from within me with great force and I had no control over it. I remember so well the three things I thought of while in this condition. First, I thought of the preacher, that when this power overshadowed him he has to preach, he has no choice and no mind to exercise a choice; then of Saul being struck down with no power to resist, but instant submissiveness; and of the woman who had only to touch the hem of Christ's garment. I feel if I had never been taught before I realized that night there was a God of all power. I had a similar experience about a year later at meeting: I became very weak and faint, breathing was difficult and I cried out though with less force and sound. Another time at meeting my joints seemed to lose all strength and I was sitting there with my head on the shoulder of the lady next to me with my eyes closed. There seemed such perfect harmony within me with what the preacher was saying, I honestly could not tell if the voice was coming from within me or the man across the room. If I slept one minute that night I did not know it, and told the preacher next day he had a perfect witness within me the night before which was a bold statement.

Along with these experiences I have had, and I hope been given, joyful meditation that has both comforted and strengthened me. One Monday morning after I had been to meeting I was feeling very low and depressed with doubts and fears and so small I was miserable. I do not know why but I picked up my Bible and turned to 1 Cor. 12th chapter not knowing what was there, and read about the necessity of all parts of the body to make a complete body. It seemed I found a perfect description of my feelings. Surely I was feeling feeble and uncomely. I was so comforted the tears flowed freely. Another time I was about my work in my kitchen, feeling troubled and in great distress of mind, meditating on my condition and especially in offering myself to the church. This scripture came to my mind, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his," and soon another, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." I cannot describe the comfort I felt as I thought on the meaning of these two passages, and have always hoped they were given to me that morning. Regardless of my fears and uncertainty if I were embraced in the number called according to his purpose with him it was a known certainty and the Lord said, "Upon this rock I will build my church," and Solomon said, "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it." Since that day I have not

been troubled over it to the extent I was before.

For several years after I was received into the Primitive church I was troubled over this question—was the love I felt for the brothers and sisters different? I knew I had loved those in the Missionary Baptist church and also had always felt a love and respect for elderly people. All the members were about the age of my parents and older when my husband and I united so this question kept presenting itself and I could never find a satisfactory answer. About the fall of 1942 or '43 we attended an Association in Arkansas and I had such a good visit with a lovely sister there about my age. My health is very poor and long trips tire me out so on Monday morning I was resting in bed and meditating on the meeting and being with dear friends again when such a warm feeling of love came over me as I had never felt before. It was so dear and precious I wanted to embrace it. That was the word I thought of and placed my arms across my breast to hold it to me. The next day we went to the funeral of a lovely old sister from our church and I met a number of my friends from the Missionary church where I used to belong and chatted with them. The preacher's wife remarked to me, "I often think of those days and wish I could call back a day." I did not feel a similar desire, and though I do not think my feelings for them had changed and I was glad to see them, there was no comparison to the love I had felt for Sister Mildred the day before, so I hope I was given to experience a love that was different.

These experiences and meditations have been a source of untold comfort and strength to me, and while I have never felt able to relate an experience of grace, I cannot help but hope I have, in a measure, been taught of the Lord; given to see through a glass darkly his loving kindness, great pity and sweet promises to his children and I hope made to feast on them. Also given to turn my eyes within and see myself as I am, very weak, foolish and vain, full of sin, my works of righteousness as filthy rags; no strength of my, own, altogether dependent on an all wise, all powerful and independent God.

(Mrs.) J. D. WHITE

"For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him. Therefore am I troubled at his presence: when I consider, I am afraid of him." Job 23:14-15.

How I do tremble when His presence seems to be with me, it seems that my bones almost come unjointed, and I feel so weak I can hardly stand on my feet. Oh, bless his holy name he is so good, so merciful and kind to save a wretch like me. I sometimes feel that I love him with all my soul, and at the same time I fear him with all my strength, "for he performeth the thing that is appointed for me." Sometimes I take much comfort in the thought that the way is marked for me, and that provisions are made for all the obstacles that I will encounter in the way. I cannot turn aside either to the right or the left, but my steps are all numbered in the way and not a hair that shall fall from my head shall be blown out of the way, but shall fall in the way. Though I stagger and stumble along, his blessed arm is underneath, and if I fall I fall in his hand, and when I am raised up it is by his love and kindness. We think every act of our life is marked in the way, while we are made to feel accountable for every evil act and thought as though our blessed God had no purpose in it and must suffer for it, and that is

fixed also in the way, and are some of the things that teach us to love and fear God. Job says, "He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." The Lord turned Job over to Satan to try him. God asked Satan, "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?" Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, "Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord. And there was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them: And the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Job 1:8-21.

We notice that Job did not worship God until everything that he had to trust in was destroyed, even his family had to be removed which was the last thing he had to give up. I feel like saying that man has to be made to worship God. The expression may not be acceptable with many of the brethren, but it is the way I feel about it and it is in accord with my travels and experiences. I was not willing to worship God until I was made so by the high power of God Almighty. My carnal mind rebelled against it, but when everything was removed that I had to cling to, nothing left to stand on, I fell to the ground and worshipped and adored his holy name. I am constrained, as the apostle Paul says, "The love of Christ constraineth us." 2 Cor. 5:14. Job says, "For I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me." Job 32:18. "And Satan answered the Lord, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to they face. And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life. So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore

boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes. Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die. But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh, What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Job 2:4-10.

What agony the dear children of God must go through with, everything they possess destroyed; even their children removed that they cannot receive comfort in their afflictions; their bodies afflicted with sore boils from the sole of the foot to the crown and scraped with a potsherd, a piece of broken pot with its sharp edges and corners; and in our misery our carnal companions, the flesh, said, "Curse God, and die!" But the spirit said, no, "thou speakest as one of the foolish." In all of this struggle we did die, but could not curse God, we died to sin, and were made alive unto righteousness. We did not understand it at the time we were going through all this trouble, if we had we could have rejoiced in it, but we did not know that our God was working it all for our good, both what we would term evil as well as what we would term good. Satan's work was appointed, his bounds were limited to God's decree and could not get any closer to us than God moved the hedge. Job's friends came to comfort him in his trouble, telling him that it was for his sins that God had brought all this trouble upon him, and that if he would turn to God and repent, God would heal him, but Job answered and said, how will I return to God? "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him." So then how can a man turn to God? Job said to them, "Miserable comforters are ye all." Yes, our wordly friends tried to comfort us in our misery by telling us if we would repent and give the preacher our hand, be baptized and be good that God would save us, but no, you are just forgers of lies that have done me no good, I have tried that, ye are miserable comforters. So your trouble increased, you thought hell was your doom.

Job cursed everything, but God, even the day he was born. "Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived. Let that day be darkness; let not God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it." Job 3:3-4. Yes, in our agony of soul, we wished that we had died an untimely death, our sun was darkened, our earth quaked, our rocks rent, our temple was rent in twain from top to bottom, and our integrity or uprightness was all gone. Then we heard the voice of the Lord out of the whirlwind and said, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" Job 38:2-7. Job could not plead his integrity or uprightness any more but said, "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth." Job 40:4. For He performeth, or bringeth to pass or in effect, the thing ap-

pointed for me. Your unworthy brother in Christ I hope. H. L. ROGERS

Box 661, Arkadelphia, Ark.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BRETHREN AND ALL THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH: I have a desire to write again, this time on the subject of TWO WORLDS. There is a righteous world of people on earth, a very few people, and there is the world of the non-elect, non believers in Christ, who I believe are all under consideration when Christ said, "Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." Why does it know him not? Is it not because they were those that had not been given to Christ, the ones Christ says he prayed not for? "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." John 12:9. "Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him:" this is the non-elect world that was not given to Christ. "But ye know him; for he dwelleth in you, and shall be in you:" this is the elect world that the Father had given him, and Christ says, "For he dwelleth with you, and shall (positive word shall) be in you." John 14:17.

This does not mean the entire Adamic family as some would have you believe, and that all creatures on earth have a chance of salvation. I do not and never have believed in a chance salvation; but I do believe in a sure salvation for all of God's chosen people, that world of people that was given to Christ; chosen in him before the foundation of the world; those whose names were inscribed in the Lamb's book of life. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." 1 John 3:1. "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." John 15:18-19. (Read John 17:9-16 inclusive.) They were not of Esau's world, the non-elect. This world mentioned above is the non-elect world of non-believers who Christ knew from the beginning would not believe for the scripture says Christ knew from the beginning who would believe on him and who would not. "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. *****But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." 1 Cor. 1:20-21-23-24. The wisdom of this world (the big world) with all its high college education knows nothing of the wisdom of God, neither can it teach or preach the gospel of God by the wisdom of men in any of the colleges where they go to learn to preach, claiming that they are saving souls from hell which cannot be done.

God's elect world that Christ came to save from their sins; his few chosen seed which were the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to whom the blessings and promises of God were given, for Christ said to his disciples, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Acts 2:39. This is rightly called

the little world, God's righteous world, all of the elect world that Christ died for. God says, my people shall be (positive word shall) the fewest of all people. God's people shall be a peculiar people. "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth." Deut. 14:2. "And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou should keep all his commandments." Deut. 26:18. "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Titus 2:14. "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." 1 Peter 2:9. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. What does it take to make a believer in Christ? Christ said to one of his disciples, you are saved already if ye believe on me whom the Lord has sent. "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power. Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places." Eph. 1:19-20.

Many so-called preachers in the world to-day try to make people believe that this world, that God so loved that he gave his only begotten Son for it, means the whole Adamic family, but how could it be so? If you say that Christ died for all creatures, all of Adam's family, then he died for some that he said he prayed not for. What about that world that hated him, and slayed him? Did he love them and die for them? "For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son. And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)*****As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Rom. 9:10-11-13. "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." Rom. 9:22-23. God's elect is chosen from Jacob's seed; but Esau's is of the non-elect. (Jacob receives a blessing from his father, Isaac.) "And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed." Gen. 27:33. Why did Jacob receive the blessing instead of Esau? Because it was God's purpose that Jacob should be blessed, for it had been promised of God that Jacob should be blessed. There are times as I go along through life when I feel I know the Lord has blessed me as poor and unworthy as I feel to be. At times, and that most of the time, I am in the dark and have doubts and fears, and yet I still have a hope that, if I could, I would not exchange for all the wealth of this big, wide, wicked world; and that is one of the greatest blessings which I feel God has given me from away back in my youth, and I know it is not for any good that I

have ever done. I have a hope that I am one of the vessels of mercy prepared unto glory. Your brother I hope.

F. L. COX

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509 - 7th Ave., San Bruno, Cal.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: It is very kind of you indeed to send the *Signs* to a sinful wretch like me when my subscription was overdue. I will have to say from my heart that I am very slothful, and if a child of grace it is certainly "by grace" for everything I do seems to condemn me. There is only one fountain that can cure a sin-sick soul and it seems to be sealed, yet it is opened unto His called at His appointed time as a well within you; living waters of faith for it is by grace through faith that ye are saved here in time and also for eternity. We do not read in the holy scriptures of two ways, but we do read of one way, Jesus Christ, the way, the truth and the life; a high and lifted up way which no vulture eye hath seen, neither hath the fierce lion trodden that way, but the redeemed shall walk there. It seems to me that I find this high way to be in some low places, notwithstanding it is then we are made to confess this highway of holiness, the lion being the king of beasts and wild by nature can and does boast of its strength and power, and of its ability to do for itself. This is the wisdom and knowledge of this world, which is foolishness with God for the natural man receiveth not the the things that be of God for they are foolishness unto him, then they are of a higher nature, being spiritual things they are spiritually discerned. So there must be and is a high and lifted up way planted in your hearts.

Daniel, no doubt in my mind, was worshipping and setting forth the true and living God, the God of all power both in heaven and earth when the decree went forth to cast into a den of lions those that would worship idols, for the very acts speak for themselves woe. We believe that every power whether visible or invisible was ordained of God from and even before the foundation of the world, and to change or make void the law or nature of that power, whatever power it is we do not make any exceptions, it would then of a truth take the one and only one power that made it and gave it the nature it has to change it at his command.

We have written of the lion and its nature and power, that the nature (ordinarily speaking) of it or them (for there was a den of them) would be to tear Daniel to pieces for he was in the den of lions all night I believe, but the God of heaven and earth had chosen to show his power before, and when they cast him into the den of lions the Lord stood by him (being the power that ordained all powers) and shut the lions' mouths. So Daniel answered the king saying, the God whom he served had closed the mouths of the lions, and I firmly believe he did with an unseen hand which no vulture eye hath seen. So the king commanded that Daniel's accusers be brought and they cast them into the den of lions, both men and women, and the lions brake their bones before they ever reached the bottom which things speak for themselves who was setting forth the God of all power, Daniel or his accusers.

We have the same power speaking for itself in the three Hebrew children who were cast into a furnace of fire heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated (they always go the limit for it is ordained of our God, also when the children of God are tried) though they went their limit the fire did not consume them. No, not a smell of fire was on their garments. I would like to

say here that those garments mentioned point to the garments of his people, the garments of salvation. They cannot be burned though they be tried by fire. Everything that God hath ordained for the good of his called shall stand the fire, it cannot be consumed for their works are wrought in God. Yours in the faith of Jesus.

ERNEST BRANCHE

Woodward, Iowa

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Enclosed find remittance for the *Signs* for two years from the time of expiration. I am delinquent I know with only neglect to offer as an excuse. I am so despondent most of the time I scarcely realize my responsibilities. I wrote you some time ago of the death of my wife, and since then my life has been an empty blank, but I have to wait and pray for the time to come when I too can be with her in paradise, and if she is not with the great Creator of the universe I do not want to go there for I never knew a more devoted wife and mother including my own. Even now I can understand better, since her death, how some of the apostles and prophets of old felt in their tribulations. Like Daniel in the lion's den; the Hebrew children in the fiery furnace; Paul and Silas on the Isle of Patmos; Abraham when he delivered up Isaac as a sacrifice; Jonah in the belly of the whale and even Christ when he was hanging on the cross. I would to God I could explain in words and thought the anguish they all went through in their adversities, and I hope I can see, as through a glass darkly, what their anguish was. I hope I have, since her death, realized some of the sweetest moments of peace that I have ever experienced when I have seen my utter helplessness in all things. What more bitter anguish is it possible for any one to experience than to sit helpless and watch the love of your life take its departure, knowing you will never be able to see them again in this time world. I feel so all alone that I do not care when my time arrives that I too can depart this life. I hope to dwell with the saints in glory, and if I am one of those whose names the God of Israel wrote in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world will that not be enough for this poor beggar at a throne of mercy?

Recently my daughter was taken to the hospital for an operation. Do not know yet what the outcome will be; night before last my house and all the contents, except what I had on, went up in flames, but I hope I can still say from the bottom of my deceitful heart "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." By the mercies of the great Jehovah I plan to attend the Old School Baptist Church at Mayfield, Ky. the first Sunday in June. Elder Wade Perkins is Pastor as you know. Perhaps you have met him. A finer man I never knew unless it was his uncle, John Perkins, who was an Old Baptist preacher when I was a boy. I fully believe Brother Wade is as sound as he was for I have heard both of them preach. If I can only get there by the help of God it will be a feast for me. Sometimes it is years between the times that I hear a sermon and you can imagine what a feast it is to me when I can get to go once in a great while. I wish you would be there if I do get to go, it is not any farther for you than for me. You cannot imagine the ecstasy of joy that I receive when I am permitted to hear from one of God's chosen few. I get lots of comfort, in fact all I get, when I receive my Old Baptist papers. They are a joy to my heart, a balm to my broken spirit. The

splendid articles in them are too good for such as I to enjoy, in fact all the mercies of a triune God that have been shown me are more than this mortal frame of mine is entitled to. Rumors of war and atom bombs, and any other calamity that man is heir to I have no fear of any longer, and to whom have I to look for removing that fear but a triune God. I surely had nothing to do with it. I hope I realize that I am just as helpless now as I was before I was born only in a material way. I cannot stop the happenings of time as they transpire, how then can I plan the life I lead? The desire is there but how to do it is in the hands of a higher power to lead and instruct. I am too unworthy to ask the well wishes of God's children, much less to ask their prayers for my deliverance, but that little hope is all I have. Ten thousand worlds and the wealth they contain I would not exchange for it and have it to look forward to.

To my beloved people all over the North, South, East and West in all ages and in all worlds I can only say, God bless you, I love you and hope to meet you in that higher and nobler habitation not made with hands eternal in the heavens, where all sorrow, pain, tears and anguish of soul will be swallowed up in victory through our Lord Jesus Christ in that world that shall never end. Amen. W. J. KIMBRO

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502 S. Broadway, Marlow, Okla.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: We received our *Signs* yesterday and to my surprise I saw you had published part of my letter. Yes, my father is still with us and when I saw your editorial on the scripture I wanted you to explain I read it all to father and Forrest which they as well as I enjoyed. We believe every word written and father said you were a wonderful writer, having a real gift to explain the scriptures. Thanks a lot for giving your time to it as we never get to attend church. The dear old *Signs* is a wonderful paper. It has such good writers and it is Old Baptist doctrine such as we used to have—no modernism—and that is what I like. We do not think father will be with us much longer. We have had the doctor four times this week. He desires to go on and be at rest. He says he has been a great sinner but has had a great Savior. Never complains unless the pain gets very bad. He is a wonderful father and we will miss him so much. He has been our constant care for eight years, that is when mother died. I know when he leaves this world his spirit will be with the Lord and all the redeemed of all ages forever. That is all we need.

I wish we lived near a church that preaches as you do. Many of the Baptists here are so weak on many things. I do not enjoy going as they are bringing in Sunday Schools, youth camps and music. I do not believe in that in an Old Baptist church. Am I right? I am making this too long so will close. Remember us in your prayers and that dear father can just go to sleep in Jesus when the time comes without a groan or sigh as dear mother did. God keep you long on this earth to preach his blessed truth to comfort the weary. Thanks again for your writing on Romans 9:18. We all enjoyed and believe it. Your unworthy sister in hope. (Mrs.) FORREST JONES

(We are grateful to the Giver of every good and every perfect gift, the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning for having spared Sister Jones' father until our editorial on the scripture requested was published, and we are thankful that he was able to en-

joy having it read to him. We truly hope the Lord will alleviate his suffering and be with him when he is called up higher.

We are very sorry to hear of churches calling themselves Old School Baptists introducing Sunday Schools, Youth Camps, Music, etc. in their services. Our Sister says she does not believe in such things for Old Baptists, and then asks us the question if she is right. Our answer is that she is absolutely right. In our humble opinion, any church that partakes of such things is most certainly not entitled to be called Old School Baptist. These things, however, were undoubtedly under consideration when the prophet Isaiah said, "And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." In the midst of such terrible departures from the truth, we need to be reminded of what the prophet said in the following verse: "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel." When we see all about us gross denials of the true doctrine and an utter disregard for proper order, and at the same time find a few who have not bowed the knee to Baal, the branch which remains faithful is indeed beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of them shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. What a mercy that God does not suffer all to turn from following after the truth! We believe the daughters of Zion are under consideration by the prophet, for he continues by saying: "And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning." How it behooves the watchmen who stand upon the walls of Zion to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, "lest that by any means," when they have preached to others, they themselves should become castaways. May the Lord uphold and sustain us by his almighty power, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

R. L. D.)

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

J. MacKenzie, Can., $15; Mrs. D. Holloway, Md., $2; R. R. Peters, Cal., $2; A friend, Mo., $2; Mrs. B. Brown, Wash., $1; Mrs. M. Pearce, Va., $3; Miss B. McLachlin, Can., $1; H. R. Prince, Tenn., $2; A friend, Ia., $10; Mrs. E. E. Cates, Kans., $1; Mrs. B. Haan, Wash., $5; Mrs. R. H. Palmer, Ala., $1; J. L. Butcher, Va., $3:50; Mrs. J. Clifford, Wash., $10; A friend, N. Y., $10; Mrs. I. L. Reilly, N. Y., $10.

AN OFFER TO "SHUT-INS"

On several occasions we have sent copies of back numbers of the **Signs of the Times** to "Shut-Ins" and they have seemed so appreciative of them that we have decided to announce publicly that we will be glad to send such as will enjoy them some back numbers without charge.

If you are a "Shut-In" or know of one who is, please send name and address. We have a considerable number of old issues on hand, and it has occurred to us that rather than have them serve no good purpose we would prefer to send them to those who cannot get out to their meetings.

R. LESTER DODSON

EDITORIALS

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"Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." Rom. 14:19.

The apostle was well qualified, both by his experience of grace, and his former life as a pharisee and strict observer of the law of Moses, to exhort the church in matters pertaining to her peace and welfare as a body. He could eat meat, classed both as clean and unclean by the law of Moses, with a good conscience. Yet he said that if eating it offended his brother he would not eat any more. A distinction was made by him when he told his brethren that if they were invited to a feast to eat what was set before them asking no questions, but if the host said it was offered in sacrifice to idols, not to eat.

In the life of this eminent apostle he was made all things to all men that he might by all means save some. There is no doubt that God had a purpose in his being brought up a strict pharisee, and then delivering him from the law into the kindom of his Son so he could answer such questions as circumcision of the flesh, eating certain meats, observing certain days, etc. God made his life a pattern of the work of grace.

The apostle begins his address of a number of epistles by saying, "Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ;" thus showing that the kind of peace he desired for them was through grace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ. How blessed we are when reading the Scriptures that these things are for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope; that we might grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord.

The right understanding of a chapter often comes with an enlightened view of the first part of the chapter. The question throughout the fourteenth chapter of Romans was the eating of meats and refraining from eating. Their peace was being affected by it. So it is said, "Him that is weak in the flesh receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations." In other words it was not the important matter whether one could eat all things or not, but rather the receiving was not to be to disputations. "For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him."

Since the days of the apostles, even in the early days of the church, certain questions have given the church trouble. In the early days it was a question about eating certain meats, observing days, and circumcision of the flesh. All going back to the law of Moses. To-day the true church is not under the law but under grace, and how well it is for us to be given to keep this in mind. We are not come to mount Sinai, but unto mount Sion, to an innumerable company of angels, to

the church of the first born. There is such a thing as being a babe in Christ, some drinking milk, others eating meat. If each one was full grown when born into the heavenly kingdom there would be no such thing as a growth in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord. The important thing to be required by the church when receiving members is that they bring forth fruits, meats because of repentance, for the fruit of the spirit is love, joy and peace in the Holy Ghost.

Following after the things that make for peace does not mean we are to compromise with false doctrines and practices. When Elijah appeared before Ahab he was accused by Ahab of being a troubler in Israel. Elijah had rebuked Ahab for setting up false idols among the people. Elijah's answer to him was, thou art the one that troubleth Israel by forsaking the way of the Lord. How true that often is; when a man contends for the right things against false ways, he is accused of being a trouble maker, when truly he is following after the things that make for peace. It is true we are commanded to withdraw from every one that walketh disorderly; to keep no company with the ones who have an ungodly walk; who walk in such a way to bring reproach upon the cause, and in so doing we are following after the things that make for peace only as we are blessed to do so in humbleness, meekness and godly fear, considering ourselves that we, too, are in the flesh.

When a brother is overtaken in a fault, they that are spiritual are the only ones qualified to restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering themselves. If we are doing things that offend our brethren that are not connected with the doctrine and order of the church, we should leave them off for we are commanded to leave them off because we should lay down our lives for one another. I knew a minister years ago who was in the habit of taking a little whiskey regularly. Some of his members felt it was wrong to so indulge in any way so he decided to leave it off entirely which he has done for many years. His conscience no doubt was clear in the matter, but it wounded his brother and there is such a thing as causing the weak brother to perish. Whatever we are doing that is serving the desires of the flesh, if it wounds our brethren's conscience, we should leave it off though our own conscience be clear. May God truly give us in our hearts to follow after the things that make for peace.

D. V. S.

"WHEREFORE BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM."

Matthew 7:20

Sometime ago we read from the fifteenth through the twentieth verses of this chapter as a basis for a talk before the brethren, but when we had finished we did not feel satisfied with what had been said, and for some reason, which we cannot explain, the impression to write on the above verse keeps coming up in our mind. If there is a needs-be that something be said to our readers concerning it, we earnestly hope and pray that God will direct our thoughts. We are told by the great apostle, Paul, that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:16. We do not believe it is possible for any man, while being motivated by the flesh to use the scriptures profitably, either for doc-

trine, reproof, correction or instruction in righteousness. Unless he is under the influence of the Holy Spirit, he will labor in vain. The scriptures are a thorough furnisher unto all good works to the man of God, and we humbly hope that what we shall be given to say will be used by the Holy Spirit to stir up the pure minds of the subjects of grace, that they may be profited thereby.

Just previous to the verses referred to, Jesus had said to his disciples, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." On one hand he was reminding them that the gateway to life is a strait and narrow, or difficult one, for that is the meaning of the word *strait,* and he declares that "few there be that find it." While the way that leadeth to destruction is broad, "and many there be which go in thereat." Those words are as true to-day as they were when Jesus spoke them. It is much easier to follow the popular way of least resistance and go with the multitudes, by proclaiming some merit and ability of the creature, either before or after regeneration, whereby he can gain favor with God by his good deeds, or incur his wrath by disobedience. Either of these, to us, savors of conditionalism. Following the words of Jesus just quoted, he warned his disciples to "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." We need to ponder and consider well even what those in sheep's clothing submit for our consideration, lest there be something which is not all that it should be. Sheep require pure, unadulterated, food and anything that contains a foreign substance will sooner or later react unfavorably upon them. Jesus told them how to judge those who came among them. He said, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." If there is any better way of judging a tree than by the fruit it bears, we have never heard of it. Jesus then emphasized this method of testing by asking, "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" It is well known to all of any intelligence that grapes are not gathered from thorns, but from vines, and that figs do not grow on a thistle bush, but on a fig tree. Having established the principle regarding where grapes and figs are gathered, Jesus continued the simile by declaring, "Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit." What is under consideration, it seems to us, is the things of the Spirit and the things of the flesh, and in case there should be any question as to either tree bearing the opposite kind of fruit, he clarifies it by saying plainly, "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." This is firmly supported by what he said to Nicodemus: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." If the brethren could clearly understand, accept and abide by these declarations of divine truth, we believe there would be much less confusion in our ranks as to just what part the creature plays in the plan of salvation, either for time or eternity. What Paul wrote to the Corinthian brethren is worthy of our most serious consideration and meditation. He said, "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath

chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." Both the prophet, Isaiah, and the apostle, Peter, established beyond peradventure of a doubt, the fact that "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field." It is as the chaff which the wind bloweth away. Jesus, therefore, continued his exposition of the subject by saying, "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire," or destroyed. Then follows our text, "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." Perhaps one of the most difficult of all lines of demarcation to establish with most people is that which exist between the flesh and the Spirit. It is next to impossible to convince the natural man that in reality he is not a free agent. According to the scriptures, "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." The Adamic man is as prone to do evil as the sparks are to fly upward, and Paul declared "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Some of our brethren will readily subscribe to this so far as the unregenerate creature is concerned, but there seems to be quite a difference of opinion regarding the *new creature.* It is claimed by some that we are passive in regeneration, but active in obedience or disobedience, and that if we obey we shall have whereof to glory, but if we disobey we shall be beaten with many stripes. Not long ago we read, from the pen of one who considers himself an Old School Baptist, the following: "I glory in the man, I don't care who he is, if he continues stedfast and unmovable." Almost immediately the language of the apostle Paul flashed into our mind, where he said, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me." This great apostle testified after being regenerated that in his flesh there dwelt no good thing and that he could not do the thing he would, and the thing he would not he did. The great conflict between the law of his mind and the law of sin, which was in his members, caused him to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death." His only possible way of escape was by and through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Jesus gave us a most wonderful example in the fifteenth chapter of John. He said, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman." The fact of there being a *true vine* presupposes to us that there is also a false vine, and if this is true concerning the vine, it follows that it must also be true so far as the branches are concerned. All are not Israel that are of Israel. In a great house there are vessels of wood, hay and stubble, as well as of gold and silver and precious metals. It is written that there be those who have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof, and Jesus said to some, ye call me Lord, Lord, but your heart is far from me. There are many who profess by word of mouth who are not doers of the word. It is the work of the Father, the husbandman, to purge and prune,

and Jesus said, "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." It would seem that the very type of the vine should prove conclusively that the branches are wholly and entirely dependent upon it for their all and in all, for if severed from the vine they wither and perish. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." Jesus continues by saying, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." This may sound to some as though the creature can act independently of the life that is in him, but we do not so understand it. The text says, "By their fruits ye shall know them," and those who abide in the vine and bring forth fruit will be seen to be a true branch, and to them Jesus said, "without me ye can do nothing," while those who do not abide in him, and do not bear fruit to the honor and glory of his name, will manifest thereby that they are not of the good tree and, therefore, will be cast forth as a branch, and men will gather them and cast them into the fire, and they shall be burned. How it behooves us to keep his commandments, that it may be seen that his love abides in us. The test by which all men shall judge and know that we are his disciples, is that we have love one for another. Jesus said to those who do this, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you." We believe that all of God's people can bear witness to the fact that they love Him because he first loved them. If left to themselves they never would choose God, or desire to serve him. It is because he has chosen them, and ordained them, that they go and bring forth fruit, and that fruit remains, or abides for ever, for what God does is done forever, and this is what proves that the branch is abiding in the vine for the fruit it bears is according to the life that is in the vine. The branch thus recognizes Jesus as head over all things to the church and whatsoever they ask of the Father is in his name, and how wonderful it is that they do not ask amiss in so doing, for whatever is asked in his name the Father gives it. We may well be assured that every man's work shall be tried, of what sort it is, and those who only profess outwardly to love and serve the Lord, will be found to be of the corrupt tree, while those who delight in the law of God after the inward man, will be proven to be of the good tree. How solemnly does the question arise in our mind as to which of these trees we are, and what shall be our end! We are persuaded that those who do not have faith, which is God's gift, cannot please him, for it is declared that without faith it is impossible to please God, and how often we find ourself desiring that He will increase our faith, that we may not stagger at any of his promises, but accept wholeheartedly all that his precious word declares. Faith is no doubt increased or developed, by and through fiery trials and the afflictions which are common to God's heritage, and sometimes our doubts and fears turn to us as a testimony that, after all, God has wrought his work of grace in our heart. We know that the fruits of the

Spirit do not grow in nature's barren soil, and it is some encouragement to even hunger and thirst after the righteousness which this vain world can not give. Over forty years of experience in the church has convinced us that in our flesh there dwells no good thing, and that all we are or can ever hope to be is by grace, and grace alone.

If we have been given to present some of God's eternal truths, they will not change with the shifting sands of time, but will abide for ever. We are persuaded that as long as the world stands there will be those who will defend such truths, for God has declared that he will not leave himself without witnesses. We would not wish to do or say anything that would discourage God's children from doing their very utmost to serve him acceptably, but when they shall have done all that they possibly can, they will still have to confess that they are unprofitable servants, and that but for the grace of God they could not even think upon his name, much less perform any act, independently of him, that will be well-pleasing in his sight. Whatever kind of fruit we bear will but be a manifestation of the life that is in us: if it be good, it will be because the tree has been made good, but if it be evil it will be because the tree is corrupt, for "By their fruits ye shall know them." R. L. D.

MEMORIAL

Little Flock Church mourns deeply the passing of our dear Sister MAUDE GREEN who passed away at her home in Winnsboro, Texas after a short illness July 8, 1949. She was born in Mississippi, May 18, 1874, and married to J. T. Green, brother to Elder W. N. Green, in Dec. 1903 who preceded her in death several years. She taught school several years prior to her marriage.

Sister Green was a faithful member of the Primitive Baptist church since she was eighteen years of age. She believed in salvation by grace and was a devoted church member. She attended the three days meeting at Altus in May before her passing away in July. She leaves to mourn her loss one son, J. T. Green, Wichita, Kans., and one daughter, Mrs. Jake Martin, Winnsboro, Texas with whom she made her home, two granddaughters, Carol Martin and Virginia Green, four stepdaughters, two stepsons, four sisters and two brothers. Funeral services were conducted by Elder E. J. Lambert, Calion, Ark.

Resolved, that Little Flock Church has lost a faithful member and wishes to extend heartfelt sympathy to her bereaved family.

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be sent to her family, a copy made a part of our church record and a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference, July 12, 1949 at Altus, Okla.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN, Moderator
(Mrs.) LOU KESTER, Clerk

OBITUARIES

It has fallen to my sad lot to record the passing of my dear wife which occurred on the night of July 10, 1949. LENORA ARMINTA SCHENCK, daughter of Gideon and Arminta Wood was born Nov. 24, 1868 in Missouri. She came with her parents to Kansas when a child and settled in Leavenworth Co. Later, while she was yet small, they moved to a farm near Williamstown, Jefferson Co. where she grew to womanhood. About the year 1892 she was united in marriage to Mr. Renick Gray. To this union one child was born, a daughter who is now Mrs. Rennie Cowan of Tacoma, Wash. Mr. Gray was claimed by death before the birth of this daughter. Mrs. Schenck then lived in widowhood for about ten years, making her home with her widowed mother and younger brother, keeping house for the family and caring for her aged mother.

July 2, 1906 she was united in marriage to Elder L. L. Schenck who also had suffered the loss of a former companion. This union was a happy one and endured for a little more than forty-three years. She proved herself faithful and true. She shared many hardships, lonely hours and days incident to a minister's wife. She was not a member of any denomination, but was devoted to the Old School Baptist cause and spared no pains to minister to the comfort of the brethren whenever they visited in our home. She loved good sound preaching but spurned the arminian theory of accepting or rejecting Christ. She frequently accompanied me to my meetings and I have often seen her in tears when Christ was preached, the way, the truth and the life. She possessed many virtues which space would forbid me to mention here. Suffice it to say that she as well as my former companion both proved them-

selves worthy and faithful handmaidens to the God we worship. Thus there have been torn from my side two loving companions, and why I am yet spared I can only answer, "Even so Father for so it seemed good in thy sight."

Her health failed some four or five years ago and from that time until the end it could be seen that her vitality was slowly but surely ebbing away. She took to her bed in April and I had her moved to a nursing home in Topeka. She was never up from the fifth of May until the tenth of July when her spirit took its flight. She is survived by her husband, Elder L. L. Schenck, and his two daughters, Mrs. Viola Allen, Kansas City, Mo. and Mrs. Lottie Stallard, Perry, Kansas, and by her own daughter, Mrs. Rennie Cowan, Tacoma, Wash., one brother, O. L. Wood, Bellingham, Wash. who is the only surviving member of a family of ten children. She has one grandson, five step-grandchildren, one step-great-grandson and a number of nephews and nieces.

The funeral service was conducted by Elder Leon Cleavenger of Excelsior, Mo. who delivered a very comforting sermon. Her body was laid to rest in the Underwood Cemetery near Williamstown, Kans. Thus I laid away the dearest idol of my heart, but "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

(Elder) L. L. SCHENCK

JAMES HENRY BRICKER was born Oct. 3, 1877 in Chesterfield, Ill., and passed away June 9, 1949 in St. Lukes Hospital, Kansas City, Mo. He was the son of David C. and Amanda L. Bricker, being the eldest of a family of six children. Etta, Lovicia, John L. and Otis preceded him in death. Oscar D. and Grover C. of Greenville, Mo. survive him.

With his parents and two small brothers he came to Mo. in 1885, settling in Cass Co. where he grew to manhood. He was employed in the Post Office Department and served in various branches of that service until he reached the age of retirement. Two months after his retirement he became ill and was taken to the hospital where he remained for some time. He improved some and was taken to the home of his brother Grover, with whom he made his home, where all was done for him that loving hands could do. He was able to get about some and attended Old Baptist meeting whenever able which was his chief delight as well as his Bible and Baptist literature. His parents were Old School Baptists and he was firm in that faith and blest with a good hope through grace, but never could quite see his way clear to take up his cross and follow his Lord in baptism. He endeared himself to all who knew him by his honesty and straightforwardness, and especially to the Baptists by his unswerving loyalty to the cause of Christ.

Although he had improved some and was released from the hospital it soon became apparent that the grim malady with which he was siezed refused to yield to medical skill and kind treatment. His condition grew worse the latter part of May and he was taken to the hospital again where he passed away after two weeks. To everything there is a reason and a time to every purpose under heaven. A time to be born and a time to die. Thus has passed from our midst a true Christian, a loving brother, a loyal friend. May the Lord comfort all who mourn.

(Elder) L. L. SCHENCK

ELDER LEWIS FRANKLIN ADKINS, our beloved Brother and Pastor, was born April 7, 1859 in Pikeville, Ky., and passed away May 1, 1949 in Pe Ell, Washington. He came to Lewis Co., Wash. in 1901. I do not know exactly when Elder Adkins first united with the Primitive Baptists but it was when he was quite young. On the third Sunday in May 1895 Brother Adkins was granted license to preach by the Regular Primitive Baptist Church called Sandlick. On the 15th of Aug. 1896 he was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry by the Sandlick Church in Letcher Co., Ky. April 30, 1904 he united with the Cowlitz River Church by relation at Riffe, Wash. His membership had at that time been with Sandlick Church of Whitesburg, Ky.

About the year 1908 he was married to Mrs. Ella Baxter of Riffe, Wash. He had been married previously to this but I have no information concerning the details. On Dec. 27, 1936 he united with Little Zion Church at Napavine, Wash. which is now located at Chehalis, Wash. Since my membership has been in Little Zion where he has been our Pastor most of the time I desire to say that seldom have I seen one who was as faithful to the welfare of the church as he was a good counselor and adviser, a true, faithful shepherd The church seemed to be his only desire, and the peacefulness of its meetings his chief joy. He had a wonderful gift of prayer. So often it seemed to me and others that he was speaking face to face with the great I Am, and his prayer was so full of comfort, praise and wisdom that at times it seemed a whole sermon. He was a thorough Moderator. At almost every meeting after having inquired for the peace of the church he quoted chapter 133 from the book of Psalms. We miss his guidance but know the Almighty God can in his own time raise up to us another as capable, and we wish to bow in humble submission and thankfulness to him.

Elder Adkins leaves as survivors three sons,

Morgan, Peter and Sam, and one daughter, Mrs. Rachel Workman all in Wash., fourteen grandchildren and fifty great-grandchildren, three brothers in Ky., one stepson, Elmer Baxter, two stepdaughters, Mrs. Pearl Nelson and Mrs. Rita O'Malley. We feel to know that our Brother is asleep in Jesus, blessed, blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep, but wake to sing eternal praises to our glorious Creator. Done by order of the church.

(Elder) C. M. FISHER, Moderator
(Mrs.) EFFIE PARKE, Clerk
(Elder) J. W. CAMERON, Asst. Moderator

JOHN KIRKPATRICK was born in Cedar Co., Mo., Feb. 9, 1868, and died Oct. 31, 1948. He moved with his family to Texas and settled in Wise Co. where he was married to Miss Annis Cooley, Dec. 16, 1888. She preceded him in death, having died Dec. 16, 1943. To this union twelve children were born, five of them living and were with him during his illness and by his bedside when death came. They are all living in Texas as follows: Mrs. Nellie Hargroves, Goree; Earl of Midland; Ira of Big Lake; Roy of San Angelo, and Bill of Kermit.

In Nov. 1889 he moved to Throckmorton Co. where he lived until 1934. He then moved to Haskell Co. near Weinert, and from there to Goree, Knox Co. in 1941 where he lived until his death. He and his wife united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Graham, Young Co., Texas in Feb. 1904, and were baptized by Elder Fisher. I heard him say they broke ice on the water for their baptism. They remained members of that church until death. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace, also predestination and election. The **Signs of the Times** was about all the preaching he had in his last days. His request was that no funeral services be held and it was granted. There were songs and prayer by Elder C. Brown of Haskell, Texas. He was a devoted husband and father, and a true and loving friend to all who knew him. Burial at Elfert, Texas by the side of his wife. Written by request. A true friend,

(Mrs.) J. M. WATSON

MRS. ETTA HUDSON was born April 24, 1874 in Graves Co., Ky., and passed away March 23, 1949. She was the daughter of Richard and Mary Tibbs. She was married to Jessa A. Baker, October 7, 1894 who died in Oct. 1924. A few years later she married Jesse Hudson who died a few years ago. She united with the Old Bethel Primitive Baptist Church in Graves Co., Ky., where her first husband's membership was, in 1923.

With the exception of a few years spent in Texas, and a year or two in Michigan her entire life was spent in Graves Co., Ky. where she had many friends. She leaves one son and his family to mourn her passing. We saw her last two years ago when she seemed to be in excellent health. We corresponded regularly and she never complained about her health until the last two letters we received. The last one was written March 13th. She said she was going to the hospital on the 14th and might never be well again. She wrote that she was ready and anxious to go to her heavenly home. The theme of all her letters was the goodness and mercy of God.

Sister Etta was blessed with a cheerful and kind disposition which endeared her to all. She was a good wife and mother and made her home a pleasant place for her family and friends. All the sick and afflicted within her reach were benefitted by her visits. She was always ready with willing hands and a cheerful word to minister to them. She lived near her son and his family who will miss her in many ways. May they be comforted by the fact that her suffering was not for long, that she was ready to go and is at rest. May the Lord be with them and reconcile them to his divine will.

(Mrs.) D. H. BAKER

RAYMOND McELLWAIN WADE was born Sept. 27, 1925, and departed this life July 27, 1949, aged 23 years, 10 months. He was the son of S. F. and Hattie Wade. Surviving are his father and mother, our brother and sister in Christ of Yawkey, W. Va., three sisters, Mrs. Beulah Chaney, Hurricane, W. Va., Mrs. Dosia McClure, Yawkey, W. Va., Mrs. Ruth Adkins, Charleston, W. Va., three brothers, Tony and Jesse, Yawkey, W. Va., Luther, Cleveland, Ohio, and a host of relatives and friends.

Brother Raymond was sickly from birth never having had normal health. Just five weeks prior to his funeral I was called to the home (together with a few brethren assembled) where, after reading some scripture and talking with the sickly brother relative to the theme of salvation in Jesus blood and righteousness, the afflicted brother related a sweet experience of grace, relating how that a band of angels had come to him and conversed with him, wherein he was given the blessed assurance that heaven was his home, and was given a sweet hope in Jesus blood. After relating this sweet experience he made it known that he desired a home in the Primitive Baptist Church and wanted to be baptized. I called the quorum of brethren present into conference and by unit vote he was received into the Providence Old School or Primitive Baptist Church (of the Pocatalico Association) as a candidate for baptism. We then moved to the little Coal River where we were blessed of God to administer the sacred

ordinance of baptism, and notwithstanding the state of ill health of Brother Raymond it has never been our privilege to lead any one into the grave of baptism who came through the ordinance any more sweetly than he. A look of joy and happiness lighted up his very countenance. He was given the needed strength, upheld by the almighty hand of God his Savior, who had given him sweet peace of soul, and who had given him the desire to follow the footsteps of his master in baptism. When we led the afflicted brother forth from the water his mother came asking for a home and asking for baptism. She related a sweet experience of how Jesus had appeared unto her in the way. She was accordingly received and baptized amidst much rejoicing. This is one day which will be long remembered by me.

Five weeks to the day from the time of his baptism I was called to attend his funeral where I tried to briefly speak to the comfort of the bereaved family and concourse of friends. The family informed me that after his baptism Brother Raymond experienced a season of sweet peace for several days, after which his mortal strength began to fail more rapidly. The end came quite suddenly. He was in a hospital in Charleston, W. Va. for treatment when the end came. He was a victim of the dread disease, heart dropsy and a culmination of other ills. Much could be said of his life and his long siege of illness, all of which he bore so patiently. The beautiful floral offerings bespoke the high esteem in which he was held by all who knew him. Interment was in the family burying ground near Yawkey in Lincoln Co., W. Va. May God visit the bereaved with a reconciling grace. Your brother in afflictions.

(Elder) H. J. BIRD

NINA F. SHEARON was born in Christian Co., Ky., Aug. 19, 1872. She was united in marriage to Burgess Shearon in 1912. He preceded her in death, having passed into the beyond in 1931. She continued to live on alone in the old home place in Clarksville, Tenn. until her death.

She united with the Lebanon Primitive Baptist Church in Logan Co. in early childhood, and remained a staunch and valuable member until her call came May 12, 1948. Sister Shearon was known and loved by Baptists in several states as she delighted to visit among the brethren in various Associations. Her home was a resting place for traveling preachers for many years past. Nothing was too exacting or tedious for her when called upon to assist in furthering the welfare of the Baptist people. Her life was above reproach. Humbleness and self sacrifice for her fellow man, and especially for her brothers and sisters in the church were some of her outstanding attributes.

Her trust in the wisdom and justice of God, the Creator, was unshakeable; her belief in salvation by the grace of God through Jesus Christ was such a sweet manifestation of the leading of the Holy Spirit in her life. Very zealous was she of good works, glorifying the triune God. She said to me a few days before she was stricken, "I hope God will see fit to keep acute suffering from me when I am called to go, for I am such a coward in the face of suffering. I fear I will further disgrace the memory of my Savior." Her prayer was granted manifestly. On May 9, 1948 she was stricken and passed into the shadow on the morning of the 12th without having regained consciousness.

She left no children, her nearest kin were a number of first cousins. The large crowd attending her funeral attested the admiration, respect and love that she was worthy of among her many friends. Her eternal gain in passing into the realms of blissful peace and rest is an irreparable loss to scores of people, especially to those of us who knew and loved her best. We would be thankful to the Creator that our lot in this life was cast in close association with her as a cousin, as a fellow citizen and as a sojourner in the same church. Written by request of her Pastor, Elder W. T. Clayton. In humblessness,

R. B. JONES, Church Clerk

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CORRESPONDENCE

Hartford, Ala.

DEAR ELDER DODSON, ASSOCIATE EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS: In Romans 8 I find the word law several times. Five I believe in the first few verses of the 8th chapter. I beg of you all forbearance, and privilege me, if the Lord will, to discuss for your consideration briefly a portion of this chapter on the account of, and in consequence of the fact there are some which are in Christ Jesus. To them which are in Christ Jesus there is now no condemnation, evidencing there must have been prior to now some condemnation even to those which are in Christ Jesus. The fact that they are now in Christ Jesus, manifestly is, that they are free from condemnation being in Christ Jesus. Regarding the question as how long they have been in Christ Jesus I would not attempt to answer, though I would say they were chosen of God in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and the election of God sealed that choice for the election was based strictly upon the foreknowledge of God through the medium of sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Therefore, I believe the obedience of a child of grace is as much the election of God, in the heart of a child of grace, as is the work of regeneration in the heart of a child of grace; and each instance there is enough, just enough, of the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ to make the elected obedience of the child of grace acceptable of God; the only kind of obedience renderable by the child of grace to God, and renderableness of the obedience is as much the election of God as is the obedience. I feel I would like to say at this point the obedience mentioned above is the only kind I have any fellowship for or in as regards myself or any one else. The opposite of this elected obedience would only be of the variety and kind that is self-willed, and instead of being sprinkled with the blood of Jesus it, at best, could only be seasoned with human emotion and human exertion which God hath willed not to accept, neither acknowledge.

Paul gives a description of the activity of these people which are in Christ Jesus, and avers their walk is not after the flesh but after the Spirit. Paul brings himself on the scene and tells us why he himself does not walk after the flesh, and not once does he credit Paul for not walking after the flesh, neither does he discredit Paul for not walking after the Spirit, but he attributes two laws: one he calls the law of the Spirit of life, and the other he calls the law of sin and death. This law of the Spirit of life Paul says is in Christ Jesus, and of this law and to this law Paul credits his freedom from the law of sin and death. He tells us where the law of the Spirit of life is, he says it is in Christ Jesus. It is clear to see then that the law of the Spirit of life is in Christ Jesus,

but Paul does not tell us where the law of sin and death is. It probably would not be too much to expect that every child of grace will experimentally, who has not already found that out for themselves, or in other words be taught experimentally by the Holy Spirit exactly what the law of sin and death is and where it is. It was truly a sad day with me when I was awakened to the fact that I had sinned in violation of all God's righteousness and had to die, and but for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus which freed me it would have been something horrible, even to the extent of unbearableness. I feel to thank God even now for his abounding mercy and his eternal providence in my behalf. Paul now brings up another law, and says, "for what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh." Here I think Paul has in mind the law of Moses, or the old shopworn ten commandments. God bless them, there was not a thing wrong held in them, but the inability of the creature to put them into effect in order to get results. However, then life and immortality could not come from the law, because there was no life in the law. Had there been a law that could have given life, then verily righteousness should have been by the law, owing to the weakness of the law of Moses through the the flesh, possessing only the ability to command, and no ability at all to create action; and owing to the rigidness of the tenants taught in the law, and the weakness of the creature to respond, being created subject to vanity, not willingly but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, God having already prepared better things for those which were in Christ Jesus, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh. I am so glad Paul did not say for righteousness condemned sin in the flesh, for had that been the case Jesus would have passed me by for I had no righteousness to offer. I possessed for righteousness only filthy rags, and I, through the years, have not gotten in any better shape in that respect, but the coming of Jesus fulfilled the righteousness of that law in us, and changed the walk entirely from that of flesh to that of the Spirit. Though "we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Cor. 10:3-5.

Fleshly minds, mind the things of the flesh; spiritual minds mind the things of the Spirit. To abide carnally minded is to abide in death; to abide spiritually minded is to abide in life and peace. The carnal mind is an enemy to God, the carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, and a law that a man is not subject to he need never expect to draw any benefit therefrom and no recognition thereto. Thus we see the whole matter redounds to this in a few words, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." In a blessed hope. (Elder) F. A. COLLINS

1194 Joy Avenue, Akron 6, Ohio

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am enclosing remittance to renew my subscription to the *Signs* for another year which has been a great blessing, also a precious fountain of good news from the Master's table, written by those who have passed from death unto life. We would love to write each one personally thanking them for their time and efforts in writing for the *Signs of the Times* which helps make it possible to carry

on the family paper. But this seems impossible for me to do, as I am slow of speech, and incapable to write. However it is my desire to comfort the Lord's people whenever possible, and that could only be when it would please Israel's God to banish my foolish thoughts, and fill up the vacancy with charity.

We have an interesting subject but unless we be given light to convey the fruit of the subject all will be futile. We find in Jeremiah 8:22. "IS THERE NO BALM IN GILEAD; IS THERE NO PHYSICIAN THERE? WHY THEN IS NOT THE HEALTH OF THE DAUGHTER OF MY PEOPLE RECOVERED?" Now we understand that there was a natural balm and a natural Gilead in Palestine at the time this scripture was written, supposedly 600 years B.C. The balm, an odoriferous resin, highly esteemed in the East for its healing virtues, was an article of commerce at that time. Gilead, a region east of Jordan, was one of the best watered and wooded in Palestine, with fine perennial streams and forests of oaks and pine. We believe this natural balm to be a symbol of that spiritual balm—CHRIST JESUS. Natural Gilead is a symbol of the true church. In examining the scriptures preceding and after this text, we see some beautiful prophecy recorded by the pen of the prophet Jeremiah. If we see right, God spake by the mouth and pen of the prophets to his people while they were living in that prophetic or legal dispensation. We believe all the old scriptures to be full of types symbolizing the coming of Jesus in the flesh, or an indicator pointing forward to that great and notable day when a SAVIOUR would be born in Bethlehem, and the government of his people would be upon his shoulder. Jesus was that great physician mentioned in our text. Again the question, why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered? Now at this time Jeremiah spake many things of bewailment concerning the people of God. How pathetic indeed it is for a poor hungry soul who has been given a little ray of heavenly light to feast upon some of the things written nearby this text. The Lord spake of the poor health of the daughter of his people. We believe this daughter to be "The Bride, the Lamb's wife." As Jesus is the Son of God and the husband of the church, also the church must be the daughter of God. Notice carefully this daughter was of his people, and had an origin out of his people, God made Adam of the earth earthy, so we understand that the whole Adamic race is God's by creation. He made all things and without him there was not anything made that was made. John 1:3. So this daughter is to our mind a spiritual kingdom, the whole household of faith. Those who have been born the second time, possessing that living faith, Jesus Christ in the heart. In Jeremiah's time this daughter, or spiritual Gilead, was being taught the law, as the law was her schoolmaster until the time of the arrival of that great physician or the Balm—Christ Jesus. God refuted his people by speaking to them telling them that their sins were black and their health could not be recovered by serving the law. "For, behold, I will send serpents, cockatrices, among you, which will not be charmed, and they shall bite you, saith the Lord." Jer. 8:17. How true this is in our day. We have so many of those scribes that are so highly qualified to teach that same law for salvation. We understand a cockatrice was a kind of serpent that possessed power to kill by a glance of its eyes. How plain it is, should a true servant of God try to live and feast with that arminian kingdom; a glance of his eyes is all that is

required to kill you, as he is as cunning as Satan himself. "How do ye say, We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us? Lo, certainly in vain made he it; the pen of the scribes is in vain." Jer. 8:8. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." John 3:14-15. Now to continue in the precious doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone, we must inscribe some more of the blessed truths spoken by the inspired writers.

Now in our time we look back 1948 years centering our thoughts upon Jesus Christ, the saviour of his people. As a great magnet attracts the surveyor's compass, how truly has been Jesus upon the cross the center of attraction throughout all ages unto that precious family that has been redeemed by his blood. When they had not a farthing to pay he gave his life upon the cross a ransom for all. As our mind goes back, before the foundation of the world, there was an all-wise God, just and holy, from everlasting to everlasting is God. God's love for this daughter was and is pure, so must she be holy and without blame before him in love; and this could only be through the demands of an eternal God, that he gave his only begotten Son a sacrifice upon the cross which was the required supreme price to pay the debt of this daughter. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isa. 1:18. Now as we are living in the gospel dispensation, we believe the health of the daughter mentioned in our text has been completely recovered, and reconciliation made to God. Also her health is maintained (in this life) by the divine visitation of the Holy Ghost—through the voice of the undershepherds—whenever she hears them proclaiming salvation by grace and grace alone. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." 2 Tim. 1:9-10.

Brother Dodson we know this is an endless story and must close. Should you desire to pass this on to the LITTLE FLOCK you have my consent, if not just cast it aside. Written by an unworthy servant if one at all. Will close by inserting the last verse of the book of John. "AND THERE ARE ALSO MANY OTHER THINGS WHICH JESUS DID, THE WHICH, IF THEY SHOULD BE WRITTEN EVERY ONE, I SUPPOSE THAT EVEN THE WORLD ITSELF COULD NOT CONTAIN THE BOOKS THAT SHOULD BE WRITTEN. AMEN."

(Elder) GILBERT SEARS

Route 5, Union City, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: A dear old mother in Israel, Sister Sophia Tillman, now living in Chicago wanted me to write a report of the July (1948) meeting at Cane Creek Church, Obion Co., Tenn. but I have not been able to do so.

Sister Tillman has been unable or providentially hindered from attending any of the meetings here, the church of her membership, for three or four years but she has never forgotten the church. At least once a year she is moved, by the love of God shed abroad in her heart, to write lovingly and tenderly expressing to the church her great love for it. How she longs to be here and

attend her meetings and again meet her brethren and sisters as they are gathered together in his name, and as they ascribe all honor, power and praise to him who gathered them together. She so much desires to again mingle her faltering, broken voice with theirs in praise to him who has kept her all these years; to him who has given her grace sufficient for all her trials, sorrows and afflictions in which she has been led thus far. In praise to him who promised her that his grace is sufficient for all the afflictions through which she must yet pass; to him who is able and does bring gladness out of distress, rejoicing out of sorrow, singing out of mourning, praise out of distress to him that causes the desert to blossom as the rose, causes it to blossom abundantly and rejoice even with joy and singing. "The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God. Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Is this not the church, my dear sister, you love so well? and the reason you do love the church so well are the above things which the Lord has done for you and the church. You cannot do else but love her. So, my dear sister, the above are the things that God caused to take place at the church at Cane Creek this meeting and all her pilgrimage through the desert in which she must pass. And now please let me beg of you and all the dear saints of the most high God, if you can please let me follow along behind you and pluck some, just a few petals from the rose, drink from the stream after you have all drank sufficiently, just a sup to cool, quench and moisten this parched soul of mine, let me walk on the edge of the grass just the edge, and rest awhile, just a little while among the reeds and rushes. And this will be too much for me but I desire it. Your brother I hope. J. W. BARNES

Box 162, Monticello, Ark.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, Dear Brother if you will allow one so unworthy as I feel myself to be to call you brother. I have been intending for some time to renew my subscription but I have neglected my duty very much on account of ill health. I have only been able to attend church three times this year so you see the *Signs of the Times* has furnished me most of the preaching I have been able to hear. I surely have feasted if I know anything about what it is to feast on the holy word of the Almighty God. I am so prone to sin

and feel so unworthy I fear to try to write or to speak of the wonderful blessings I do enjoy in reading the correspondence, editorials and experiences of the people telling of what wonderful things the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has done for them. They contribute to the *Signs of the Times,* and when I read and enjoy so much I feel that it is the blessing of the all wise and all merciful God. You just do not know brother how thankful I hope I am. I feel sure they are all taught by the same spirit with which I hope I have been taught. I cannot express the joy that filled my heart when I read the article written by Elder Silas H. Durand and was first published in the *Signs* before I was born. While reading it my heart was filled to overflowing with unspeakable joy. I have read it over several times and it remains just as sweet and comforting as when I first read it. I feel sure the same good spirit that guided Brother Durand's mind and hand to write that sermon gave you the mind to reprint it in the *Signs* of October 1948. I feel so thankful to God for his goodness to a poor wretch like I feel myself to be.

Brother Dodson I am sending in the name of a dear sister who would enjoy reading the *Signs* as well as I do. Will you put her on your list as a subscriber and please keep my paper coming. I want to get it as long as I live. A sinner saved by the blood of the blessed Son of God, the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ if saved at all.

(Mrs.) P. J. LAWSON

Box 275, San Juan, Texas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON AND ALL THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH: As I want to send you a new subscriber for our good paper, *Signs of the Times*, will send in a few meditations that I hope have come to me from the giver of all good gifts and caused me to think on things beyond this sin cursed world. What a wonderful gift is God's grace. We cannot buy it, it is a gift from God, the most wonderful Christmas gift ever given to any one. A child of God cannot live in this low ground of sorrow without it; he is given grace so that he can bear all the burdens that come his way. Grace is stored up for the lowly, meek, poor in spirit and those that fear God. Grace is for all of God's children in every kindred, tongue and nation; grace and truth come by Jesus Christ the Lord; grace was the crowning cause of our Savior coming to this sinful world to suffer, bleed and die on the rugged cross that his children should receive this free grace. Ye are saved by grace, not by works for we cannot do anything to purchase the gift of God (grace). When the poor, little, crippled child of God gets to where he is without friends (as I sometimes feel to be) then the great fountain of grace is opened up, and a sweet morsel of grace is given him by the loving kindness of a merciful God, just enough to sustain us, just enough to keep us in the way. He feeds us tenderly and as often as we need it as a mother feeds her babe. We may think we are hungry and need it before we get it, but dear kindred, God knows what is best for us and he knows when we are in need, and never refuses to supply us bountifully from his fountain of grace.

Grace covers a multitude of faults; it makes us humble, it makes us to see our brethren and sisters far better than we are, it will cause us to look on the bright side of life, it lifts us up and causes us to look beyond this low ground of sorrow, it lightens our burdens and makes us to rejoice and sing songs of praise to God who has given us grace. We beg for more grace. Oh is it not

a wonderful theme to think on? Oh, for grace to guide me, to help me on through this journey of life to a world of a life of perfect bliss and happiness. My mind cannot grasp what heaven will be, but when we are made to stop and think in our weak way we say it is right for it is not for me to know, then I should be satisfied with what I only hope I know. I do hope that some day I will understand. Grace when it is given us makes us leap for joy and sing aloud His praises. If his people were to hold their peace the Bible tells us the very stones would cry out.

Dear ones, all things have to praise Him, he has made it so, and what he has done no man nor anything can hinder or turn. He is above all, all things in heaven and earth are in his powerful hand and it must be as he has fixed it. We are counted as small dust in the balance. I, who am so little, counted as nothing, less than nothing and vanity how could I do without God's rich grace? Grace makes us to love our enemies, it makes us to pray for those that despitefully use us, it takes the stony heart away and gives us a heart of flesh, it makes us to know and understand that he is God and there is none else. Grace gives us eyes to see and ears to hear, and when the still small voice is spoken we can hear and understand clearly that he is God. Amazing grace how sweet it sounds in a believer's ear, the soothing sweet sound when it comes our way, how peaceful, how quiet. We feel we are willing then to just stand still and know that He is God.

Oh, the glorious promises Jesus has left here for his wayward children, there is no power that can take one of his little ones. If we are in the covenant he says he is in us the hope of glory, so we might as well try to dethrone God as to try to get any of his children. What a blessed thought that if I am one then some day I shall see him as he is and be satisfied. Grace leads us along the rugged road that would be impassable were it not for his wonderful grace, it brightens the dark way we have to pass through, it is a bright light to our weary souls, it is rest to our tired feet. When we see and feel the power of grace we fear no evil, our strength is renewed; it makes us forget all troubles and conflicts, and we would not exchange places with all the world. Time is swiftly passing with us here, but when God's grace leads home time will not be reckoned, it will be one eternal now. Oh glorious thought! Grace will wipe away all tears, no more heartaches, all will be peace, love and harmony with Jesus our king, our Elder Brother, who spilled his precious blood that we might have free grace. Wonderful is the great God of all grace! I only hope I am counted in God's covenant of grace.

(Mrs.) JAMES B. REID

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630 Sherwood Road, N. E., Atlanta, Ga.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: While sitting here tonight I feel obliged to write or talk to some one. There is but one reason why I am not a preacher, minister or elder, and that is because I have not been called and qualified by the power and Spirit that calls and qualifies one to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. I came home from the Spanish war in Cuba in the summer of 1899 with a burning desire for an education. I went to high school, which was a Prep. school for Mercer University, for one year and that year at school took all the money I had saved while I was in Cuba. I was almost frantic with desire to go to the University. At the end of the term the professor wrote on the blackboard that any student wishing to go to the

University could do so, all expenses paid, provided he would pledge to study for the ministry, the Mission Board either footing the bill or advancing the money. I remember that I was tempted to "steal" an education. I was sick at my stomach and my knees became too shaky and weak to hold me up. I wanted the education so badly, that the temptation was great, and I found that I could have what I most wanted by signing up, and pledging myself to study for the ministry. But I realized that neither any school nor myself could make a preacher or minister out of Bill Jackson and I did not sign. I am glad now that something kept me from signing that pledge: for now, after forty-nine years, my mind has not been changed, and I am still not educated.

Brother Dodson, I am going to bore you with some scripture that is in my mind. I will not attempt to comment on it but will scatter it along as it comes to my mind. "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Acts 13:48. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, (we feel certain that Paul was or is the apostle of Jesus Christ) says, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified," "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." God speaking by the mouth of Isaiah says, "I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure;" and again he says, "Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."

We have in our articles of faith, "We believe in one only true and living God and there is a Trinity: God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Not three Gods but one God." We believe that God, before he spoke the world into existence, thought and did purpose to come in the flesh in the person of his Son, and manifest himself to the world, and thought and purposed to come in the person of the Holy Ghost and take of the things manifested and show them to his people. "The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." We believe he ordained a people unto belief. Peter, writing to the strangers, scattered through Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace be multiplied." "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out!" So now we rejoice and have great comfort in the knowledge that there is a God and that he has a people; the question is am I one of his chosen? Am I glad and do I glorify the word of the Lord? Was I ordained to eternal life and do I believe?

I do love to read after Paul, and surely Paul is not an apostle unto the unbeliever. He did not come preaching to the unbeliever, the dead sinner. (There are two kinds of sinners in the world and they compose the whole Adamic family: the sinners who know it and beg for mercy, and those who do not know it and need no mercy.) Paul writes to the saints at Ephesus and all that call on the name of the Lord, "Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the

Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." As I understand it, that is the position of the believer. Belief is not something that we have generated, or something that we can accept or reject at will. It is a gift of God through his grace and mercy and cannot be refused, else it would not be a gift. "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others. But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.*****For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

The position of the believer is here shown, how he was in nature and how he was brought into the knowledge of God our Savior by faith. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." This belief, or faith, makes us eligible to become members of the visible church, and causes us to love the brethren. It makes our hearts glad when the dear old *Signs of the Times* comes to hand and we can read that which comes from the hearts of dear ones from all over the country. Oh the love of an everlasting God, one who speaks and it is done; who commands and it stands fast, saying surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass and as I have purposed so shall it stand. We are taken out of nature and made to sit together in heavenly places in Jesus Christ. Paul says, "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

David, that sweet singer, sings in the 100th Psalm, "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that has made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations." In the last chapter of Revelation Christ said: "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the

root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Brother Dodson, I realize that this is very scattering, but it came to me that way, and though I know I have bored you, it has relieved me, and the errors in it are of the mind not of the heart. Yours in hope that I am one of the Gentiles that was glad, and am ordained to eternal life and belief.

W. W. JACKSON

Box 654, Altus, Okla.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: In the March issue of the *Signs* I read an article headed, "THE LEAST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN." "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." Matt. 11:11. I want to write a few thoughts on this subject whether you publish it or not. I will first state some of my experience regarding it.

In my early experience in the ministry I was farming, and while plowing one day the above subject arrested my mind and I was very much concerned. The thought of the least in the kingdom of heaven being greater than John seemed to imply that John the Baptist was not in heaven or a subject of heaven. It greatly stirred my mind and as best I could I tried to find some scripture that would give John the Baptist a home in heaven. I thought if he was not a subject of heaven I knew I could not be in any sense of the word, and I would quote over and over the "least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." I gave it up but when I went home at noon for lunch, while bathing my hands and face, this thought struck me like a thunder-bolt. "Born of women." Let us read the text. "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." The John that was born of woman is the John under consideration in the text. I do not believe there will be any big I and little you in the heaven of immortal glory, but they will all be like Jesus and be satisfied. I believe this John the Baptist was nearer the type of the Lord Jesus Christ than any other human that lived. He was the baby that leaped in his mother's womb for joy when Mary the mother of Jesus spoke to his mother Elizabeth. Yes, it seems to me that John the Baptist knew his Savior before he was born a natural child. In other words he was a manifest child of God at his natural birth. We could follow John the Baptist in his life on earth, but it would take up too much space, but the blessed Son of God could truly say, "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." Surely Jesus was referring to the John that was born of woman.

I do not feel that it is necessary to write too long an article when it is plain to see that Jesus referred to the John that was born of woman when he said, "the least in the kingdom of heaven was greater than he." The natural John the Baptist that was in prison—certainly the least in the kingdom of heaven was greater than that John. There was nothing in heaven but the spirits of just men and women when Jesus made the statement, the

least in the kingdom of heaven was greater than John. John the Baptist was still living a natural man and in that state was not a subject of heaven, but when John the Baptist died the scene changed. I feel I have written sufficient to make my points clear. I am well up in years and feel sure I will not be permitted to write many more articles for our dear, old family paper. I desire the prayers of God's children that I may be reconciled to the will of our God.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN

CLOSE OF VOLUME 117

This issue of our paper completes another volume of the **Signs of the Times.** Again, we desire to acknowledge the goodness and mercy of God in preserving it as a messenger of truth to the household of faith.

We are aware of the fact that each and every article which has appeared in our columns during the year has not been altogether acceptable to each individual reader. It would have been a most unusual situation for it to have been otherwise, for there are a great variety of tastes and views among our readers. Our own writings have been no exception to this rule. We earnestly hope that whatever knowledge we possess of gospel truth came to us, not by man, nor of the will of man, but by the Holy Ghost. Therefore, we have earnestly desired to study to show ourself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, as it appeared to us, and without courting the favor or incurring the displeasure of men. We are in accord with the late, J. C. Philpot, of London, England, who wrote in his "Meditations upon the Gospel Ministry" that, while insisting upon his own right to freely and fully express his own views, at the same time he said, "We give as well as claim the right of private judgment. To refuse this is the very essence of Popery and foreign alike to our intention and spirit. We want no one to call us Master, or believe anything because we believe or assert it. All that we can do, or wish to do, is to bring forward and open to the best of our ability the word of God." To this we firmly subscribe. Our purpose in publishing the **Signs of the Times** has been to maintain it as originally designed by the founder, as a medium for the exchange and dissemination of ideas that will be honoring to God and beneficial to the household of faith. To this end and purpose we humbly desire to again rededicate our life.

In order to perpetuate, as far as it is humanly possible to do, the continuance of our family paper, during the year we formed a non-profit organization, known as the "Signs of the Times Inc., Established 1832, Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause," and henceforth it is intended that the management and control of the paper shall be vested in a Board of Trustees, empowered to choose successors, as occasion may arise. Some of our good brethren have felt it would be wiser for the control of the paper not to be vested solely in one individual person, so through the foregoing organization, we have endeavored to perpetuate the control in a Board of Trustees. This should make the paper more of an official organ for the Old School Baptist cause than heretofore, and we hope as the years pass it will also insure the full benefit of all funds which may be contributed, either during the lifetime or upon the decease of any subscriber or readers to donate or bequeath such funds as they may see fit to the cause. Inquiry has been made of us as to how funds should be left in Wills for the benefit of the SIGNS, so for the information of those who wish to so provide, we would simply say all that is necessary to do is to authorize and request one's executor to pay the amount desired to the "Signs of the Times, Inc., Established 1832, Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause." We have thus designated our corporation for the reason that another paper by the name of "The Signs of the Times" is published on the Pacific Coast, which by no means contends for the same doctrine, in order to avoid confusion and to make certain that whatever funds our readers allocate to this cause shall serve their purpose.

In conclusion, we desire to express our deep appreciation (1) to our Associate Editors for their various scriptural contributions and other assistance during the year; (2) to those who have either written directly for the paper or sent in articles for publication; and (3) last but not least, those who have not only sent in their renewal subscriptions promptly when due, but also included additional funds to aid the paper and secured one or more **new** subscribers for us. Without this kind of assistance from our subscribers we, of course, could not long continue the publication of our family paper. So we say again, thanks to you all. We earnestly hope that you will keep up the good work during the coming year. Many of our subscribers are quite old and are being constantly called from the shores of time. Therefore we need to be constantly adding **new** names to our mailing list in order to even maintain our present number of subscribers, and, of course, we want to continue going forward.

R. LESTER DODSON.

EDITORIALS

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CAIN and ABEL

One of our readers in Raleigh, N. C. has asked that we write on Cain and Abel particularly Cain; also that we include Esau. Outside of the fourth chapter of Genesis, there does not seem to be many scriptural references to Cain. However, if there was nothing more than what John said it would suffice for us to know that he was anything but a desirable character. In I John 3:11-12 we find this significant language: "For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." In the beginning of this chapter the Apostle says, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not," and he later follows this by saying, "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."

Paul tells us that "that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven." I Cor. 15:46-47. We understand from this that Adam was only a natural man, or a man of flesh, and he begat after his own kind. When Eve bare Cain she said, "I have gotten a man from the Lord," but she had been deceived before and we fear she was greatly deceived again, if she was thinking that God was the Father of Cain in the sense that he was His spiritual child. It seems to us that it was this indulgence in the gratification of their lustful desires which constituted, on the part of our foreparents, partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God had said to Adam, "for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," but the serpent said to Eve, "Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Right there in the beginning, the serpent mixed part truths with his lie, and that is what makes the doctrine of the devil so dangerous. After having partaken of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Adam and Eve most certainly did die, as God had said. Before, they were both naked, but were not ashamed. Afterwards, however, they were ashamed and sewed fig leaves together as a covering to hide their nakedness. The Lord pronounced a curse upon the serpent for

what he had done by saying, "thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." The devil is still feeding upon the lusts and corruptions of the flesh, and will always continue to do so. God also said to the serpent, there in the beginning, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." There is nothing said here about the seed of the man, Adam, as such, but as he was still only of the the earth, earthy, his seed could only be after the flesh, and since it is this seed that the devil, the strong man, takes possession of and holds captive, keeping his goods intact and his palace in peace, until the stronger man takes up his abode in the heart of his earthly creature, binding satan and spoiling his goods, our only hope is in the fulfillment of the prophecy which God had made, that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head. There can be no question but that this prophecy concerned the coming of God's only begotten Son to destroy the works of the devil. It seems to us that that is what is meant by the seed of the woman bruising the serpent's head—it means death or destruction, so that he shall have no more power over those for whom Jesus died and rose again, while the declaration that "thou shalt bruise his heel" signifies the annoyance and distress which the devil can and does give God's people here in this world. Jesus must have had these Adamic children of the flesh under consideration when he said to some when he was here in the world, "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God; this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication: we have one Father, even God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God: neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." John 8:39-44.

Cain being the first born, or first fruit, which is natural, and not spiritual, proved what he was by doing what he did. Abel, to us, represents the *new creature,* who must die to live. We see the same types in Esau and Jacob. Esau, the first born, represented the flesh, and sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, and God said he hated Esau; while Jacob, who came after Esau, represented the one who is born again, of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. This is the kind of character God loves. There are many types throughout the Scriptures which portray the flesh and the Spirit. Jesus said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." There is no changing or blending these two; they are separate and apart the one from the other. The life of one is the death of the other. Their aims and desires are just the opposite. Paul wrote to his Galatian brethren, saying, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."

The record is that Cain was a tiller

of the ground, which meant that he was satisfied with and lived upon the things which the earth brought forth; this world was his home and he had no desire for anything beyond this life. Abel was a keeper of sheep, and he brought of the firstlings of his flock an offering unto God, and God had respect unto Abel and to his offering, while Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord, but God had not respect unto Cain and to his offering. For this reason Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell, and it came to pass that when he was in the field with his brother, Abel, he rose up and slew him. Perhaps he thought this would put an end to his conflict with Abel and that he would have the world all to himself thereafter. This appears to be the reasoning of wicked men to-day when some one stands in the way of what they want to do, but let God's children take courage and stand in their lot, even though it may mean death, for the Lord God still reigns, and is doing his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. God, therefore, called Cain to account by asking him, "Where is Abel thy brother?" To which Cain replied, "I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?" But God said, "What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground." God then said, "And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth." One of the definitions of the word *vagabond* is, "Wandering; moving from place to place without any settled habitation." To the child of God whose hope is firmly fixed upon a home, eternal in the heavens whose maker and builder is God, what an awful condition to be in, "Wandering: moving from place to place without any settled habitation!" But, is not this the lot of all who know not the Lord? It was said of Esau that "he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." He was of the same family, or kinship, of Cain. Cain said, "My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me." God is better to even such characters as this than they deserve, for he placed a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him. God has a purpose even in the wicked, to use them as a sword against his people when He sees fit so to do. He raised up Pharaoh that he might magnify his power over him and that all the earth might know of his mighty power and fame. Therefore God had a purpose for Cain to fulfill and serve, so he went forth replenshing the earth with his seed, who spread out all over the earth, building great cities and engaging in every imaginable kind of earthly endeavor, and truly they have wrought out many wonderful inventions, and are to-day accomplishing the seemingly impossible. They are apparently conquering land, sea and air, and have no sense of responsibility to God. Those to whom God is pleased to reveal himself and make his wisdom known, like Solomon, can see *vanity* stamped upon all the works of their hands, while untold millions are going on from day to day blindly rejoicing in their own labors and works and giving no thought whatsoever to the source from whence all of their natural blessings must flow.

Mankind is still prone to look to its

firstborn, so to speak, to succeed them and carry on their kingdoms and thrones, especially among kings and rulers and those of so-called vast accomplishments in the world, and many of them have no regard for the cause of righteousness, but will resort to any means for the fulfillment of their plans, but we should remember that Israel's God sits on no precarious throne, nor borrows leave to be. Life, death, and hell, and worlds unknown hang on his firm decree.

"This God is the God we adore,
Our faithful unchangeable friend;
Whose love is as large as his power,
And neither knows measure nor end.

'Tis Jesus, the First and the Last,
Whose Spirit shall guide us safe home;
We'll praise him for all that is past,
And trust him for all that's to come."

We submit the foregoing thoughts for whatever worth they may be to our readers, hoping that the Lord will use them for the stirring up of your pure minds by way of remembrance, "That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Savior."

R. L. D.

THE NEW BIRTH

by

THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE

Re-published by request

"Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."—John 3:7.

At the conclusion of our article on "Regeneration," in Number 17 of the current volume, we proposed to give a more full expression in a subsequent number, on the subject of the New Birth. This we have felt inclined to do in order to correct the impression entertained by some of our readers that we have changed our views on this vitally important subject.

The very emphatic manner of our Lord's declaration to Nicodemus forbids the thought that any one of all the race of Adam can ever see the kingdom of God except he be qualified for such perfection by a spiritual birth. Our natural birth capacitates us only for a knowledge of natural things, but cannot qualify us for an understanding of things beyond the sphere of nature. If it were possible for the natural faculties and perceptive power of a natural man to be so improved by education, moral, intellectual or religious culture, as to enable him to see the kingdom of God, or comprehend, receive or know the things of the Spirit of God, our Lord would not have thus positively declared its utter impossibility. Nor would the Holy Ghost, by the inspired apostle, have corroborated the testimony, as in 1 Cor. 2:14: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." By a natural man we understand is intended a man that is born of the flesh, or an earthly man, possessing all the natural elements and properties of a man. Adam, both before and after his transgression, was a natural man. The qualifying adjective is used in a scriptural sense to distinguish a man who is made of the dust of the ground, and inspired with vitality and intelligence, from a spiritual man who is born of the Spirit. The distinction between the natural man and the spiritual is fully set forth in the two distinct headships, from whom the two distinct natures are derived. These two distinct progenitive heads are called, as such, the first and the second Adam, the one of the earth earthy, the other is the Lord from the heaven. The first was made a living soul, the second

Adam is a quickening Spirit. From the first or natural Adam emanates all our natural or earthly being; from the second Adam emanates all that spiritual, holy, heavenly and eternal life in which we are manifested as the sons or children of God. As our natural life, or natural man, or nature, descended from the earthly Adam, by natural generation, was developed by a natural birth wherein we were born of the flesh, even so our spiritual, eternal life is developed and brought into manifestation by a spiritual birth. That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. As we were totally ignorant and unconscious of all that was transpiring in this world in the development of the things of nature until we were born of the flesh, so that it could in truth be said of us, Except we were born of the flesh we could not see or know the things of nature, so it is most positively declared of all who are born of the flesh that "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." If without a natural birth we could not come into this world nor see the things of this world, must it not follow that a birth of the Spirit is an indispensable perquisite to capacitate us to either see or know the things of the kingdom which is purely a spiritual kingdom, which flesh and blood cannot inherit? Then, let us not marvel that Jesus has said, "Ye must be born again." As neither spiritual life or spiritual capacity can be born of the flesh, so neither can natural life and natural capacity be born of the Spirit. No amount of spiritual gifts can change, enlarge or perpetuate our natural man, or shield the earthly man from hunger, thirst, disease or death; neither can any development of our natural powers, either physical or mental, contribute in the smallest degree to our spiritual life, perception or enjoyment. That nature in the christian which is born of the flesh must, as well after the new birth as before, subsist on the productions of the same earth out of which our mortal bodies were fashioned, and that spiritual life or nature which is born of God must subsist on bread that cometh down from heaven, from whence that life proceeded. If spiritual consolations would sustain our earthly nature Stephen would not have died in the full and rapturous view of the opened heavens, and of his exalted Savior; and if earthly comforts could sustain our spiritual nature, no child of God would ever despond while abounding in wealth and luxury. In contemplating the gospel doctrine of the new and spiritual birth we should not confound the birth either with redemption or remission of sins. As transgressors of the divine law we could not possibly be saved from sin and wrath without redemption, but even redemption by the blood of Christ, and the forgiveness of all our sins, would not supply the place of being born again. Redemption has met the demands of eternal justice, borne the pains and penalties which are due to our transgressions and so secured for us the remission of our sins. All this was accomplished for us, if we are interested in it, many centuries ago, but still, until we were born again we could not see the kingdom of God, or feel the joys of his salvation, or know anything about the things of the Spirit of God. If it were even possible for us to put away from us all our transgressions and perfectly obey the holy law of God, that would free us from condemnation, but could by no means make us any more spiritual than we were in Adam before sin entered into the world. For we are expressly informed that the first Adam was not spiritual, but natural; but the

second Adam is spiritual. It is true, if we were not sinners we could not leave this present world, for the sting of death is sin; we could not be sinners if we were not subjects of God's government, for sin is a transgression of the law, and where there is no law there can be no transgression. Hence we are told, "The strength of sin is the law." Nothing short of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus could deliver us from the power or strength of sin but a power fully equal to that sin, and that must be equal to the law which is the strength of sin, therefore if we are saved we may well exclaim in the inspired language of the apostle, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Redemption has removed the insuperable impediment which forbade our exemption from everlasting wrath, abolished death, opened the everlasting doors which were closed upon us, and bade the everlasting gates of life and immortality be lifted up, and thus brought immortality to light through the gospel. All this belongs to our redemption, but to qualify the redeemed of the Lord to come to the heavenly Jerusalem, and see the kingdom of God, and to behold the King in his beauty, and feel the power of the resurrection of the Son of God, and to enter into his resurrection life and immortality, we must be born again. The question has been repeatedly asked and urged, What is it that must be born again, We would not dare attempt to improve on the words of our Lord: "Except a man be born again." The man that has been born of the flesh and is flesh cannot see the kingdom of God except he be born again; this is necessary, not to make him a man, nor to change him from a man to an angel, but to bestow on him a new spiritual, immortal and eternal life, which he never before had, and which he could never have without being born of the Spirit, as he had been before born of the flesh. That man who was chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and consequently before he was manifestly the subject of any birth, before he was born either of the flesh or of the Spirit. We think it will not be disputed by any intelligent christian that all the children of God were personally elected or chosen of God in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, according to Ephesians 1:4. If this be admitted, it must follow that they all had a personal identity and existence as members of the mystical body of Christ before Adam's dust was fashioned to a man, and therefore prior to their first or second birth. The developments of time have demonstrated to us that it was the purpose of God that every one of his elect should, in the fullness of the dispensation of time, be born first of the flesh, and then be born again of the Spirit. Both of these births were ordained and provided for by the wisdom and decree of God, not to give them being or identity, for these they had in Christ before the world began. By the first birth they were to be developed in their earthly and fleshly nature in common with the whole natural posterity of the earthly Adam. This first birth was necessary, that they might see and know the things of nature, for except they were born of the flesh they could never have known the things of the flesh. "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" In the stupendous mystery of the hidden counsel and purpose of God this fleshly birth and identification of God's elect with the family of mankind was indispensable to the development of the great eternal purpose which God had purposed in himself before the world

began, that in the first Adam they should all die, and in Christ they should all be made alive. If we admit that God has saved us and called us according to his purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, then we cannot consistently deny that the purpose and grace provided for our being born of the flesh, and identified with all the rest of Adam's posterity, and with them sink into death by the transgression of Adam, and be quickened from the dead, and raised up from condemnation and wrath, be washed, cleansed and purified, and freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Whether brethren can agree with us, that the absolute purpose and immutable decree of God embraced our fallen state and condition, as well as our salvation from sin, death and hell, through his dear Son, or whether they regard our fallen condition as an afterthought, occasioned by some unavoidable failure of his purpose, if it be admitted that our redemption from sin and death was predestinated, we must also and unavoidably (we think) admit the indispensable necessity for the fleshly birth of all the children of God which were from everlasting identified and personally chosen unto salvation in our Lord Jesus Christ. By our natural birth then we enter into and become a part of this world, are capacitated to see it and to sojourn in it until like an hireling we shall have fulfilled our allotted number of days; but our first, or fleshly birth, while it capacitates us for a knowledge of the things of nature, can supply us with no capacity for anything beyond bounds of this world, and hence the necessity that we should be born again in order that we may see the kingdom of God and know the things of the Spirit of God. In being born again, then, this man, who was chosen of God in Christ before the foundation of the world, and born of the flesh since the foundation of the world, must, at some period still later than his fleshly birth, be born again, or he cannot see the kingdom of God; must be born of water and of the Spirit, or he cannot inherit the kingdom of God. As our first or natural birth belongs to and results from natural generation, so our being born and belongs to and results from regeneration. The seminal life of all the posterity of Adam was created in him, in the day when they were created. So the spiritual eternal life of the generation of our Lord Jesus Christ was given and secured to all the children of God in Christ when he was given to be the head over all things to his church. The words of our Lord which we have placed at the head of this article were addressed to one who was already born of the flesh, and they are applicable to such only as are born of the flesh. A birth can only develop, or bring forth into manifestation, the same nature of which it is generated and born. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The first birth brings forth that life, flesh and nature in which we were created in the earthly Adam, but the second birth brings forth into manifestation that life, spirit and immortality which was given to us in Christ Jesus, as the second Adam, and the Lord from heaven.

Having thus briefly considered the subject doctrinally, we will now offer some remarks on the personal experience of this birth by the children of God, and point out some of the prominent evidences by which we know that we have experienced it, if indeed we are of that happy number. These evidences are discovered by comparing and contrasting the state, condition, capacities,

elements and exercises of those who are, with those of them who are not born again; as also by the peculiar exercises produced by the birth, while under the quickening operation of the Spirit in our passage from death unto life. First. Before we were born again we were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein we walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, among whom we all had our conversation, in the lusts of the flesh, and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath even as others. (Eph. 2:1-3.) In the full possession of all the elements of a carnal, depraved and sinning nature, and totally destitute of any spiritual life or knowledge. The carnal mind, which was all the mind we had, was enmity against God, our selfish depraved propensities, with every imagination of our hearts, were evil, and only evil continually. Possessing at the same time exalted views of our own imaginary virtues, and of our ability to commend ourselves to the favor of God, and to secure for ourselves an inheritance of glory by our own works. Held under chains of darkness and strong delusion, believing lies, and sporting with our own deceivings. Every ray of divine truth shut out from our mind totally incapable of receiving, appreciating or even desiring a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus; hating that truth, and hating all who love or contend for it. Condemned already, and the wrath of God abiding on us, yet boasting of our goodness, and holding that God was obliged in justice to view things as we viewed them, and to save us on such terms as we proposed. In love with sin, at enmity against holiness, at war with heaven, and in league with hell, calling light darkness, and darkness light; truth error, and error truth; and altogether ignorant of our real condition. In this wretched state we all were by nature, and nothing belonging to or emanating from our earthly birth could by any possibility comprehend or know the condition we were in. By the new birth a new life is implanted in us, and that life is light. The nature of that light is to make manifest the things which by the power of darkness had been concealed from us before. Quickened by Christ, the second Adam, who is a quickening Spirit, we are made to see and feel our sinfulness, and our lost and helpless condition. We are alarmed that we are much worse than we had ever before supposed. The law enters, and sin revives, the purity as well as the inflexible severity of the divine law appears, and the same light which reveals this also shows us the enormity of our guilt, the justice of our condemnation and the impossibility of salvation by the law. All our boasted abilities to save ourselves are withered and vain. Lost, helpless and despairing our legal hopes yield up the ghost. The commandment came, sin revived, and I died. The incorruptible seed by the word of God is deposited in our heart, and all that is felt of conviction and despair are but the legitimate consequence. The light of life now begotten in us reveals a holy God, a righteous law, and a poor guilt-stricken, helpless and despairing sinner justly sinking into everlasting perdition. All this is, however, the effect of life. All this is a struggling for deliverance. As the birth into liberty draws near the conflict becomes the more intense. "God be merciful to me a sinner," is now uttered in the most terrible earnestness, as quivering under the unsheathed flaming sword, which justice has raised to strike the decisive blow, when lo, the birth reveals the almighty Savior, who has

died for our offenses and arisen for our justification. The fiery sword was quenched in his blood. Surely he has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. Lo, now the guilt is all removed, the terror is gone, the darkness vanquished by bursting light and refulgent glory. God's method of saving sinners now appears, and the sinner is born again. This is the birth, and that which is born is spirit. It is not flesh. It is born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Being begotten and born of God, it manifests not only a new life, but a new relationship. The life which is manifested by this birth is not a revision of our Adamic life, but it is the life of the Father, by whom it is begotten; and it is the vitality of that which is born, hence in this new and heavenly birth we are made partakers of the divine nature. Christ who is our life, is formed in us, and his sonship, his heirship, his inheritance of glory and immortality is born in us, and we are one with him, even as he is one with the Father. From this heaven-born spirit flows all the fruits of the Spirit, which testify that we are born of God. As we have shown what are the works of the flesh which characterize the fleshly birth, so the new and heavenly birth is demonstrated by all the fruits of the Spirit of Christ which is given to us. Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, temperance, brotherly kindness, charity, &c., are some of the living fruits of this heaven-born child, this new man, which after God (not after Adam) is created in righteousness and true holiness. Now in the man who is born again, two natures appear. The one is born of the flesh, and is flesh, full of lust, and in opposition to holiness, warring against the Spirit, and constantly performing the works of the flesh, as described by Paul, Galatians 5:19, 20. The other is born of God, and yields the fruits of the Spirit, as described above. A conflict between the old man and the new, between that which is born of the Spirit, a love for holiness and hatred of sin, a love to God and loathing of self, a love for the truth and aversion to error, a love to the saints and desire to be in company and communion with them, an appreciation of the beauty of the ordinances of Christ, baptism and the Lord's Supper, a veneration for the order and laws of the kingdom of Christ, and a desire to walk in them, with a deep sense of our own unworthiness, an ardent desire for the peace of Jerusalem and prosperity of the church of God, with a relish for the doctrine of the gospel, and willingness to suffer reproach for defending it, these are all of them scriptural, and therefore reliable evidences that those who possess them are born of God, and heirs of immortal glory, and joint-heirs with Christ to an inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that cannot fade away. As our earthly nature which is born of the flesh is depraved and sinful, nothing pure and heavenly can proceed from it, and so that life which is born of God is pure and heavenly, no evil can proceed from it. It cannot sin, because it is born of God. The conclusion is inevitable, that all that is unholy and sinful in us is of the flesh which is born of the flesh, and all that is spiritual, pure and heavenly in us is born of God, born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. No man can therefore glory in the flesh, for in our flesh dwelleth no good thing. He that glorieth must glory in the Lord, in that which God hath done for us.

Every spiritual emotion, aspiration or thought, is of that spirit which is born of the Spirit, by which we are qualified to see the kingdom of God.

"Then give all the glory to his holy name,
To him all the glory belongs;
Be ours the high theme, still to sound
forth his fame,
And crown him in each of our songs."

Middletown, N. Y., October 15, 1868.

CORRESPONDING LETTER

We, the Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Southampton Church, to the Associations and Meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greetings:

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD: It has been our pleasure to greet your messengers and members, and have them sit together with us in the church of the living God. In this unity we have been brought together to feast on spiritual blessings. Your fellowship and your love of these edifying things of the Spirit all tend to bind us together and make us rejoice, one with another, in the Lord. The Ministers have all come in our midst laden with the riches of the gospel of Christ; preaching Him the light, the truth and life of our salvation. Like Ruth, we feel your God is our God, your people are our people and that we have a gift beyond price in our faith. We hope, if we be so favored by the mercies of God, to meet with you again next year at this Association. May God bless you, and may you rest in a blessed hope of eternal life.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS,
Moderator
CASPER G. FETTER, Clerk

CIRCULAR LETTER

Adopted by the Delaware River Association in session with Southampton Church, Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., May 25 and 26, 1949.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN: Since the last session of this Association held with our sister church of Hopewell, N. J. in 1948, our brother, Charles W. Vaughn, Pastor of Hopewell Church, has been removed from our midst to his heavenly rest in the immediate presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, his Savior and ours. Thus we are sorrowfully minded that we pass the days of our earthly pilgrimage in the midst of a scene where all is fading and fast passing away. The going of our Brother Vaughn from us brings home to our hearts the fact that the Lord's laborers are few, or so it seems to us, and we see little evidence of there being others raised up and called to the ministry, while we know our God is sufficient for all our needs, abundantly so, and that he knows what the real needs of his church are, and that he will not fail to make good his promise to supply those needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Yet the matter of the Lord's dealings with us causes us to have much examination of ourselves, much searching of our own hearts to know if our own personal delinquencies are the cause of the low state of Zion in our midst. Is there something wrong with us? Are we cherishing secret sins in our personal lives, are there faults which need to be brought forth to the light to be confessed and to be repented of before precious fellowship can be restored between us and the living Head of the church, our Lord Jesus Christ, who seems to have turned his face from us and to have withdrawn his favor from among us. "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Psalms 139:23-24. None but the godly are willing for the Lord to search their hearts and discover to them their thoughts. One of

the distinguishing marks of the elect of God is that they come to the light instead of hiding from it, they seek for reproof that they may be restored to the "way everlasting," but the wicked hate the reproofs of wisdom, shun revelation's light, and justify themselves in their own way, going about to establish their own righteousness and not submitting themselves to the righteousness of God, and when their own conscience condemns them, make excuses to justify their own conduct before the bar of an accusing conscience. The godly are not so. The grace of God makes the sinner honest with himself and with God. He cannot act the hypocrite before the judgment of Christ set up in his renewed heart and mind. He confesses the uncleanness of his heart and lip and life, throwing himself upon the mercy of God, acknowledging the justice of the Almighty and his own sinfulness, making no excuses to justify himself. On the contrary, "Though my soul were sent to hell, Thy righteous law approves it well." Very clearly does Jesus in John 3rd chapter draw the line of difference between the workers of evil and the doers of truth. "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." The condemnation of the world is today exactly the same as when the Savior was here on earth: "Light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." This condemnation which is characterized by love of darkness because their deeds cannot stand the exposure of holy light, is still to-day the outstanding mark of the present evil world. Jesus is the truth, all else is false. He is the life, all else is death. Jesus is the way, all else is wrong. Whatsoever is not the fruit of the Spirit of Truth which is the Spirit of Christ, whatsoever is not taught by him, whatsoever is not revealed by him, whatsoever is not authorized or commanded by him is a lie and a delusion. Among the last instructions of Christ to his disciples, as told us in John 16th chapter, is that the Spirit of truth, the Comforter or Holy Ghost, is the alone guide of the church into all truth, the alone authority of doctrine and practice for the church. He it is who takes the things which Jesus said and did and sets them forth to the understanding of those whom the Holy Spirit calls out from among the nations to serve him in his holy temple. This same Holy Spirit is the alone furnisher of the church with the gifts of the ministry for her edification, for her growth in the knowledge of the truth until all her members shall come to the fulness of the stature of a perfect man in Him.

The one outstanding crime of the modern religious world which claims to be Christian is the self-sufficiency, pride and man-worship which denies all claims of the Holy Spirit to be the guide and thorough furnisher unto good works. This is the one chief mark of MYSTERY BABYLON, the counterfeit church, the apostate man of sin. She is wholly able in her own estimation to carry on any program she may devise for the betterment of mankind and for the furtherance, as she claims, of the kingdom of God among men. "Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor and blind and naked." Rev: 3:17. How different is this from the attitude of the true church which at all times realizes her utter need of the teaching and guidance of the Holy Spirit in order to know and

believe and practice the truth aright. Spiritual Babylon can manufacture her own converts, prepare her own preachers, add to her own numbers, etc. The true church is wholly dependent on the Holy Spirit to add to her numbers such as should be brought in from the outside world, she is dependent on the Holy Spirit for the calling and qualification not only of her ministers, but of her deacons and of all others who are called to labor in any measure in the ranks of the true church. She can do nothing for herself but by the gracious enabling of the Spirit of God. He decks out his bride in his own beauty and puts upon her his glorious apparel. Our resources are in the heavens not in man; our strength is in him who sits on the throne of the universe working all things after the counsel of his own will. Praise the Lord, our eyes are not unto the creature for our help and maintenance, but unto Him who has risen from the dead and is exalted at the right hand of God, who has led captivity captive and given gifts unto men. It is he who has promised that the Holy Comforter shall be with us unto the end of the world and that he will never leave or forsake us. Noah had but one outlook when confined in the ark, the window was in the top of the ark, his light came from above, his outlook was upward away from the condemnation everywhere spreading its death and destruction around him. A certain king of Judah, when Jerusalem was in the midst of the enemies siege, was made to look up unto God of Israel saying, "Neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee." 2 Chron. 20:12. We, too, in this our day have the outlook of faith upward and away from ourselves and all human help, unto Him who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen or can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS,
Moderator
CASPER G. FETTER, Clerk

MEMORIAL

Inasmuch as it has been the will of our Lord and Master to remove from our midst by death our beloved Elder and Brother CHARLES W. VAUGHN who so faithfully served churches in the Delaware River Association, and

Inasmuch as our dear Brother Vaughn has been so closely associated with the brethren and ministers of our Virginia Corresponding Meeting and the Associations of our correspondence, and

Inasmuch as he, by his long, faithful and steadfast service in the ministry and among the brethren of our congregations, has so endeared himself to the hearts of us all, therefore, be it

Resolved that we extend our deep and heartfelt sympathy to our sister churches and to his widow, our beloved Sister Annie Pendleton Vaughn, and to his family, in this time of sorrow and bereavement. Their loss is likewise our loss. May all who knew and loved this Elder Brother be given faith and strength to know that our God doeth all things well; that He is too wise to err and too merciful to be unkind. Jesus has said I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you. We know not what to do, or what to say, but may our eyes be upon our God and our Savior. Our loss is his eternal gain, and his exchange of this life for that promised possession of eternal joy and love. Further, be it

Resolved that a copy of this memoriam be sent to our beloved Sister Vaughn, and that it be published in the **Signs of the Times** and **Old Faith Contender**, and that it be printed in the minutes of this meeting.

A. D. ALSTON, Moderator
G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk
ARTHUR CARTER, Asst. Clerk

MEMORIALS

The Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, while assembled together at our quarterly meeting in Lobo, Sept. 3, 4 and 5, 1949, desires to give some token of esteem and love for the memory of our beloved Brother in Christ, Elder H. H. Lefferts of Leesburg, Va., who passed away from this mortal existence quite suddenly on August 18, 1949. We were very grieved to hear it, yet we feel assured that our loss is his eternal gain.

He has been coming to us to preach at various times for more than twenty years. He came to preach the memorial service of our pastor's son, who fell to his death overseas during world war two. He was at our quarterly meeting this year in June and many thought they never heard him better. He was a wonderful exponent of the gospel, rightly dividing the word of truth, and always preaching Jesus Christ and him crucified. Not only was he a good preacher, but he had a lovely personality, and we loved to have him visit in our homes. Our sympathy is extended to the churches he so faithfully served, and to his beloved companion also to their children and families.

Resolved that this tribute to his memory be written in our church book, a copy sent to his widow, and a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication. Signed by order of the church.

(Elder) GEORGE RUSTON, Pastor
R. P. EATON, Church Clerk
ELDON GILBERT, Assistant Clerk

OBITUARIES

SISTER SARAH MALINDA GOIN was born Feb. 8, 1866, and passed away at the home of her daughter in Portales, New Mexico, Dec. 18, 1948, after a long illness. She was born in Bell Co., Ky., and married the late Elder G. W. Goin in 1885. In 1911 they moved to Roger Mills Co. in western Oklahoma. She was for many years a member of the Primitive Baptist church. Elder Goin preceded her in death in Jan. 1947.

The survivors include four daughters: Mrs. F. W. Wallace, Tucumcari, N. M., Mrs. T. G. Miller, Portales, N. M., Mrs. S. P. Springer, Crawford, Okla., Mrs. H. H. Williams, Raymond, Wash., four sons, E. L. Goin and B. B. Goin, Portales, N. M., J. W. Goin, Crawford, Okla., and J. R. Goin, Riffe, Wash.

Funeral services were held Sunday, Dec. 19, 1948 in the Silent Home Church near Roll. Mr. Bob Anderson, Pastor of Cheyenne Baptist Church officiating. Interment in Silent Home Cemetery with Scroggins Funeral Home in charge of arrangements. Written by her daughter.

(Mrs.) MARY SPRINGER

ISAAC TEN EYCK DOLSON, born at Warwick, N. Y., July 25, 1869, passed away June 22, 1949. He had been a great sufferer from arthritis for a long time and spent a great deal for relief but to no avail. The last few months he seemed to be much improved when suddenly a heart condition developed. He was taken to the hospital, treated and returned home seemingly much better. In a few weeks he suffered another attack and again returned to the hospital, but before medical assistance arrived he passed away.

Brother Isaac was next to the youngest of a family of fourteen children. Brother George W. Dolson of Poteat, Texas being the last of the family and a member of the Middletown and Wallkill Church at Middletown, N. Y. Brother Isaac had the distinction of being of a family of Old School Baptists, his mother, three sisters and four brothers being members with him. He was baptized by Elder J. M. Fenton. Two children by his first wife and four grandchildren survive. September 25, 1911 he married sister Blanche who also survives. He was a trustee of the Warwick church.

His funeral was largely attended at the Warwick meeting-house, Elder R. Lester Dodson officiating. The beautiful floral pieces attested to the esteem in which he was held by the fellow travelers in the town in which he spent his life. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace and loved the spoken word although he was no talker. We shall miss him sadly. He was laid to rest near his kin in the beautiful Warwick Cemetery.

It is not death to die—
To leave this weary load,
And, 'midst the brotherhood on high,
To be at home with God.

Written by request by his niece.

(Miss) MINNIE HYATT

MR. L. R. LANGWELL was born Dec. 15, 1876 near Jasper, Ark., and passed away May 1, 1949 at his home in Henryetta, Okla. He was united in marriage to Susan Patton, and to this union were born seven sons and one daughter. The daughter preceded him in death, leaving to mourn his departure his wife, seven sons, eighteen grandchildren, one brother and two sisters.

Brother Langwell united with the Old Baptist Church at Prague, Okla. in Sept. 1905. He was a devoted brother and the church will truly miss him. He was our song leader and church clerk. May God comfort, as only he can, our dear sister, Susan Langwell, his beloved wife, and all others who mourn their loss, and reconcile us all to his most holy will. Elder H. H. Phillips of Monticello, Ark., our Pastor, was sick and unable to conduct the funeral service, and Elder C. U. Landers of Coleman, Texas was called and presided, after which our brother was laid to rest in the cemetery at Okemah, Okla. to await the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Written by V. A. DODSON, Dustin, Okla.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 118 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JANUARY, 1950 No. 1

THEN, NOW AND FARTHER ON

Where is now the merry party
I remember long ago,
Laughing 'round the Christmas fire,
Brightened by its radiant glow.

Some are on the ocean sailing,
Some in distant lands do roam,
Some have gone to seek their fortunes
In some distant western home.

Some are gone from us forever,
That they here no longer stay,
They have sought a fairer region,
Far away, far away.

Dark and stormy is the desert
Through which pilgrims make their way;
Just beyond this vale of sorrow
Lies the field of endless day.

Farther on but how much farther,
Count the mile stones one by one;
Jesus will forsake us never,
It is better farther on.

Chipley, Fla. W. R. WHITTINGTON

CORRESPONDENCE

PREDESTINATION

by

The late Elder Jonas C. Sikes

I think it is hurtful and wrong to make a hobby of any one point of doctrine (even though it be the truth) to the exclusion of all others, yet I think we should preach a full gospel and not shun to declare the whole counsel of God. But I think it is the best, yea, the wisest and only scriptural course, when speaking of this or any other subject (and especially when we know that some of the dear saints differ from us), to be kind and gentle and meekly instruct them. It has been said that "good words do more than hard speeches." The warm sunshine on a spring morning will make the farmer pull off his overcoat, while all the blustering winds of winter will only make him draw it closer to him. If we would do like Solomon, we would seek to find out acceptable words, yet we should not go so far in that direction as to forsake the truth. He says, "The preacher sought to find out acceptable words, and that which is written is upright, even words of truth." I think this would be a wise course for all of God's ministers, and I desire to follow it.

With this much said, I now desire to say something on the subject of predestination. I desire that after my departure my friends may have my views on this all-important subject. I think that the statement in the London Confession of Faith with reference to this subject is highly correct, i.e., that "this high mystery of predestination should be handled with special prudence and care." How well I shall be able to succeed in doing this, will be left for your readers to judge.

Predestination means a previous purpose or a previous determination. Webster defines it as the "purpose of God from eternity respecting all events." I accept this as its true meaning. Yet Webster was only a man and must not be considered as infallible in divine things.

This doctrine can never be understood as long as we try to measure it by anything short of God himself. The

nearer we come to an understanding of him, what he is, and the nature of his divine attributes, the nearer we will come to a full and complete understanding of this doctrine.

1st. God is eternal. Hence, his purposes or determinations must also be eternal, if he is eternally perfect in all of his attributes. I shall not claim that his purpose is an attribute, but it is the outgrowth (to say the least of it) of wisdom. And here I would note that when I say wisdom, that I do not mean knowledge. Wisdom is one thing and knowledge is another, as you will find by consulting the 11th chapter of Romans. Wisdom in man is that natural attribute by which he is enabled to study or investigate and find out things which he would not otherwise know. Hence, when he gets to the limit of his wisdom or intellectual powers in an investigation he can go no farther; he has found out all he can know about it. But if his wisdom had been perfect, he would have seen through the whole thing at a glance the first time it was presented to his mind. Hence, his knowledge of it would have been perfect. God being eternally perfect in wisdom, has known all things. I shall not claim as to the order of time that God's wisdom is older than his knowledge, for then I would set up for a time a God of wisdom without any knowledge. But I will say that in the order of thought, wisdom is the real basis or foundation of all knowledge. Wisdom is the basic attribute of the Deity, by which he is governed in all his other attributes. Without wisdom, power would be misused, love would be without a true guide, justice and judgment could not exist, mercy would be a misnomer; in fact, chaos would reign supreme, and "God" would be a name for nothing. So then, wisdom being the foundation of all that is right, I desire upon this foundation to build my structure.

It has been suggested by some that if we could prove that the first transgression was predestinated, then the predestination of all things could be established. So to this end I shall first direct my attention. In the first place, I would ask, did not God know that if he made Adam as he did and placed him where he would be subjected to the evil influence of the serpent, that he would transgress? If not where is the perfection of his wisdom? If he did, why did he make and place him thus? Was it because he was not able to make a perfect man? One that would not yield to temptation? One that could not be corrupted? If so, where is the perfection of his power? If he did not have the power then, and has never, nor will never increase in power, will he ever be able to take a poor, fallen wretch, and make a perfect and incorruptible man out of him? I suppose, however, that all who claim to be Primitive Baptists will admit that he had both the wisdom and power to have had it different, if he had wanted it different, but this would be an admission that he did not want it different, which would be to say that he wanted it to come to pass as it did. These are self evident facts. If God wanted it to be different from the way it came to pass is it not remarkably strange that he arranged things so that he knew that it would not work out as he wanted it when he could only have thought how he wanted it to be and said let it be so and it would have been so? It is a self evident fact that needs no argument to prove it, that either the introduction of sin into the world was according to God's purpose, or else the whole covenant plan of redemption, the advent of Christ into the world, all of his righteous life, all his sufferings and

death, his resurrection and ascension are not the result of God's free and independent purpose, for it was to redeem man from the consequences of this act and its outgrowth that all of the above took place. Hence, if the transgression was not a part of God's eternal purpose then it follows that the covenant of redemption owes its existence (not to the free and independent purpose of God outside of any extraneous influence but) to the act of a man by which it was made necessary and a way opened up for it to enter. So in the order of thought it would stand thus: 1st. God determined to make a man. 2nd. He saw that man would transgress. 3rd. He devised a plan of redemption. This cuts God's purpose in two, and sets them thus: 1st. God's free and independent purpose to create man. 2nd. God's knowledge of man's independent act in transgression. 3rd. God's necessitated purpose to redeem man, influenced by what he foresaw. If we follow this stream to its end where will it empty? If God had rather sin had not entered the world then it follows that there has never been one single act, or creature, or thing, in this universe that has been as God originally would rather have had it; because, every act, creature, or thing, has been in some way affected by sin, which God had rather had never existed. Even the earth, with which every living thing has to do, was cursed because of transgression, which God would rather have had different. Not even one act of the holy Son of God was as God would rather have had it for his acts were to redeem sinners, when God had rather there had been no sinners to redeem. Nor throughout all eternity can any thing be as it would have pleased God to have had it, for it will be one eternal song and shouts from redeemed sinners praising him for their redemption, when God had rather that man had not sinned, then there would have been no redemption from sin and no shouting of praises by redeemed sinners. I shall trace this stream no farther at present, for I see from its course that it empties into the broad ocean of infidelity.

But all of the above is true and much more that might be said, if God did not purpose that sin should enter the world. It is said that God foreknew that man would sin and he THEREFORE made arrangements to meet it. But stop, my brother, this "THEREFORE" is what I object to. It says that the foreseen act of man was the cause of God making the covenant, so you see at once that if this act of man was not embraced in God's purpose then the origin of the covenant is owing partly (to say the least of it) to something outside of God, or his purpose. This branch empties into the stream which we have just left, so we will quit it. You say that God foreknew that man would sin, so say I. But I would ask upon whom did this foreseen act of man then depend? Man was not yet created, and his existence depended yet wholly upon God and the fulfillment of his purpose, and surely none can think that man's act could ever have been had there been no man to act. So then, this foreseen act of man could not have been any less dependent upon the fulfillment of God's purpose for existence than was the man by whom it was to come.

Having thus far confined myself to what seems to be self evident facts and irresistible conclusions, I will now notice some scripture on the subject. I will first call attention to Gen. 1:28. "And God blessed them and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it." Now, the word replenish means to fill up. From this it will be seen that instead

of God meaning for them to remain in the garden, he meant for them to fill up and inhabit the entire earth. To this we will add the 29th verse. "And God said, Behold I have given you every herb-bearing seed which is upon the face of ALL THE EARTH, and EVERY TREE in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed, IT SHALL BE TO YOU FOR MEAT." In the first place, we see from this, that man was intended to inhabit the entire earth, from the fact that the fruits that grow on all the face of the earth were to be for meat to him. And in the second place, we see that the fruit of every tree on earth was to be to them for meat. Some questions might arise in our minds right here. Was there any such a tree in all the earth that yielded fruit as the tree of knowledge of good and evil? If so was it to be for them for meat? If not, what does the above language mean? But I will pass this for the present.

We next call attention to Acts 17: 24-26. "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." It is clearly seen from this as well as from Genesis, that God's purpose was (not that man should remain in the garden, but) that he should dwell on all the face of the earth. This is what Paul says that he made them for. Much might be said right here, but this article is going to grow lengthy, so I must pass on. I will now call attention to Gen. 2:5. "And there was not a man to till the ground." The next verse tells of God watering the earth and making man. Now, what would we reasonably conclude from the above scripture, was God's purpose for making man. I think all reasonable men would say, "to till the ground." The other passages referred to show that God purposed that men should dwell on all the face of the earth and all of the fruits of the various trees thereof should be to them for meat, while this one shows that God purposed that man should till the ground. Some say, "O, yes, this is all true, but it is because God foresaw that man would transgress, that he purposed to scatter them on all the face of the earth and have them till the ground." But then we would be forced to admit one of two things, i.e., that this foreseen transgression was a part of God's original purpose, or else the cause of this purpose to scatter them on all the face of the earth and that they should till the ground, was outside of both God and his original purpose to make man. This again resolves itself into the absurd position which we have already noticed; 1st. That God freely and independently purposed to make man. 2nd. That he foresaw that man would not do as he wanted him to. 3rd. That God was governed in all of his other purposes concerning man, both for time and eternity, by the foreseen act of man rather than his own sovereign and independent will and choice. But I must quit this part of the subject and notice for awhile the reason why God created all things. It is said by Solomon that "The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea even the wicked for the day of evil." From this we learn that he made all things for himself. It is said in Revelations that "Thou hast made all things for thyself and for thy pleasure they are (now exist) and were created." From this we find that they were all created for his

pleasure, and they are still existing for the same purpose. In Colossians it is said, "All things were created by Him and for Him." This is enough to prove that God had a use for all that he created. Now it is admitted by all that some men come into the world sinners, they live in sin and they die in sin and go to eternal perdition. Will some one please tell me whether or not God's purpose in creating them is or will be fulfilled in them?

God's purpose in time and all created things is, I think, for the manifestation of his own glory. In other words, to manifest himself in all of his divine perfections and manifestly glorify himself in all of his attributes. Now, we read of his own eternal purpose, his immutable counsel, the counsel of his will, etc., so in the order of thought we say that God held a council in eternity. He was guided by wisdom, and consulted his own will. In this council was considered all things that he now works after the counsel of his will. As a result of that council the world was created and all things therein. Now look at this creation as it fell from the plastic hand of the creator. Is it not wonderful? Yea, marvelous? But how many of the attributes of the Deity do you see manifested in this wonderful work? Only two, wisdom and power. Wisdom to contrive this wonderful plan and power to perform it. Wisdom and power are here manifested as being infinitely great, but love, mercy, justice, wrath, and his immortal purity is yet unknown to man and must remain so as long as man remains in his state of innocence. He can love man just the same in his upright as in his fallen state, but love cannot be manifested in its fullness so as to glorify God in this attribute. "If ye love them that love you what reward have ye: do not even the Publicans the same?" So God's love could not be manifested in its fullness on them that loved him. "Peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die," so if Christ had died for a good man it would have manifested no more love than perhaps some men would have done, so then it must be true that for God's love to be manifested in its fullness man must fall from his good and upright state. Man fell, and it is said that "God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us," also, that "God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us together with Christ." Here we have his great love most gloriously manifested on fallen man. Next we come to mercy. The above text says, "But God who is rich in mercy—" Yes. He is rich in mercy, but how can mercy be bestowed on one who is not a sinner? How could the great richness of God's mercy ever have been manifested without a transgressor? But man transgressed and now God can make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory. Yet notwithstanding the greatness of God's love, and the richness of his mercy, they must have been forever unknown and unappreciated if man had not become a sinner. These two most glorious attributes, however, could not reach the case of, nor benefit, a sinner at the expense, or exclusion, of justice. Justice, in its greatness could not be manifested in a world of sinless, upright beings, but when man transgressed she laid her iron hand upon him; love nor mercy cannot reach him only through justice. Behold what unrelenting justice. Before she will swerve one jot or one tittle she will take the heir of heaven, the only Son of the Supreme Judge, who sits upon the great white throne, and slay him for the crime.

Love and mercy, guided by wisdom, offers him as a ransom. Justice, guided by wisdom, accepts him in behalf of all for whom he became surety. But God continues to show his wrath and make his power known on the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. Through all of this we can see God in his true character. His attributes are most gloriously manifested in the creation of the world and his dealings with sinners, and I feel sure that this course has been no second choice with him. Man may determine to do a thing and seeing that it will not work out as he desired it should, make some subsequent arrangements to meet and rectify in measure this foreseen, yet undesirable event. But the all glorious eternal "I AM," has never been so hard pressed as that. But this is exactly the light he must be held in by all who hold that he did not purpose that sin should exist. They must divide his purposes into two sets, anterior and posterior. His anterior purpose being his purpose to create all things, which purpose would be absolutely free from, and independent of, and in no way influenced, or hampered by, any unpleasant foreseen event, which was coming up outside of his purposes. His posterior purposes being all such as relate to man as a sinner. The covenant of redemption. The punishment of sin. In fact, all of his dealings with man as a sinner from the morn of transgression to the eve of eternity would come under the head of his posterior purposes, being made as the result of, and to meet and deal with, an unpleasant foreseen event, which was coming up outside of, and in no way attributable to, his purpose. Such a petty God may do to speculate upon, but it is not the God before whom the four and twenty elders fell down in wonder and admiration, and cast their glittering crowns before his throne, shouting, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." The man who believes that the transgression was a foreseen event not embraced in God's eternal purpose, and that the covenant was made to meet this exterior foreseen event, must admit that God has anterior and posterior purposes. And that his anterior purposes are based on an interior cause (the counsel of his will), and his posterior purposes are based on an exterior cause (an unpurposed foreseen event). We are all bound to admit that in the order of thought God's knowledge of man's transgression was based on his determination to make man, for had there been no determination to make man there would have been no knowledge that there would be a man to transgress, and if there had been no knowledge that there would be a man to transgress there would have been no covenant made to redeem man from transgression. So we are forced to either take the position that it was all from start to finish embraced in God's eternal and unchangeable purpose, or that he has anterior purposes bases upon interior causes, and posterior purposes based upon exterior causes. This latter is Arminianism straight, so you can see at a glance that I believe in the predestination of all things. I shall not try to add to the strength of this doctrine by the use of the term "Absolute," nor diminish its force by the use of the term "Permissive."

I have neither time nor inclination at present to enlarge upon this subject, for my article has grown too lengthy already. But I will say this much more, if the logic contained herein is true with reference to the first transgression, it is also true with reference to every other event of time.

This is my first, and may be my last, upon this subject, but I desired to record my views upon it before I go hence. With me it is either an Almighty God who works all things after the counsel of his will, or no God at all. I fail to find any standing room between this and atheism.

If this scribble should help any poor, halting child to a better understanding of this profoundly deep and mysterious subject I would be glad to hear from them. With love to all the household of faith I remain a poor, unworthy sinner, saved by grace if saved at all.

(The foregoing article by the late Elder Sikes is re-published by request. R. L. D.)

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215 Colborne St., London, Ont., Canada

DEAR ELDER DODSON: The March *Signs* was so good! I shed tears when I read it. When you wrote me that you had received a letter from Elder Ruston enclosing three letters of mine to him which you were publishing in the April *Signs,* I appreciated your kind thoughtfulness very much, but did not feel it was necessary to bother you with a reply. However, I do want you to know that I appreciate your publishing them. Somehow I rejoiced that they were to be published. I want to tell it! As I look back on it it is a wonderful experience to me. In a letter to me in the summer when I was weary, Elder Ruston said I would go back to it with joy. He repeated Jeremiah (Lamentations) to me, "Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me," and I can truly say, "Great is thy faithfulness."

In your letter to me after my baptism you said, "My prayer is that you will always feel that God is your refuge and strength, and a very present help in trouble." In my great joy and happiness it caused me to realize that there would be trials ahead for me. The Good Book tells us that in this world ye shall have tribulation. And how diversified are these trials. How often we have to cry out "unclean! unclean!" As I thought of it the other morning, *and felt it,* the hymn came into my mind with sweetness, "The Christian cries unclean, unclean, Even though released from guilt." The other night I was reading about the Cities of Refuge, and I noted, with interest, how three cities were built the other side of Jordan, and how they were placed so well balanced all over Palestine, a day's journey from one to the other, and it was sweet to me to think that there were as many Cities of Refuge for those outside the church as in the church. Many times over my years of experience I have had to flee to a City of Refuge from the avenger of blood, and now that I am in the church I expect I shall have to flee many times again. I came across a hymn which I do not remember having read before. It seemed so suitable.

"Why should a son redeemed with blood,
Born not of man, but born of God,
Feel an eternal war within,
'Twixt reigning grace and striving sin?

'Tis but to make him every day,
From self to Jesus turn away:
His very falls shall make him wise,
And teach him where his victory lies."

Mrs. Gilbert Lee's letter was very sweet. As I read it a scripture that was very precious to me last summer came into my mind. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also (I love that) that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of

the contrite ones." I felt the dream she had of the end of the world was the end of the legal heaven and earth to her, and the light that shone, the gospel, and that when she dreamed that her brother was killed overseas he probably was. As Gertrude quoted, "I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died."

I think the passing away of that legal heaven and earth wonderful. I used to think when I read it it meant the end of time, brushing aside the fact that Jesus said it would happen while those very people lived, as it was the only heaven and earth I knew about so felt it must be that. I understand it now and what a revelation it is. I feel I understood experimentally the destruction of that temple, not one stone left on top of another, before realizing that it actually happened as a type. And how complete was his work! I very much enjoyed Elder Bellow's article. I often wondered what that meant. He expressed it very clearly and beautifully. I remember his saying one time, "How beautifully harmonious is the word of God when rightly understood."

I was reading "Josephus' Works" the other day where Jacob journeyed up to get a wife. It was very sweet to me. On his way he had the experience of having stones for a pillow. He poured oil on them. It said he would come back and pay tithes. When he saw Rachel he loved her. He had to serve seven years and he did not know it was Leah (the law) that was with him until the dawn—"he lay with her until the dawn." Yes, it is when the light comes we see these things. He had to serve another seven years. How necessary it is that we serve this seven years (a complete time) under the law, and how necessary that we spend another seven years (a complete time) before we are given to embrace the gospel (Rachel). I used to wonder why Jacob had to serve these seven years. I feel I know now. James said, "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."

I remember one time when I was very downcast sitting in the Ekfrid meeting-house when these words came to me with much sweetness. It must be fourteen years ago, and I thought of them many times along the way. Another time comes to my mind when I was on night duty six or seven years ago. Again I was very low. My patient was sleeping. I wanted to read and I could not, the book was sealed. I made the attempt three or four times. After awhile I thought I will try once more. I opened the Bible and the words seemed to come up before me, "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." I was filled! I read on and on, and for a month I do not ever remember reading the Bible with more comfort and pleasure. In my Bible where I have this passage marked, right opposite I have the passage marked, "For he is faithful that promised." Many times I turned to it hoping. Two years ago at the May meeting Elder Topping took that very scripture for his text Sunday afternoon. It was beautiful! And whoever else it was for, I felt it was for me. Along with it he talked about Hannah, how she went year after year to the house of prayer. "Cast not away therefore your confidence."

Mr. and Mrs. Patterson's note touched me very much. "We are not church

members, but strong believers," said much I thought. I felt I knew where they were, and how they felt. I hope they will have the joy of being brought into the fold some day. You have to experience it to fully understand it. I have realized that. Since Lobo I have thought a lot about the Queen of Sheba. She heard about the wonder and beauty of the temple, but did not know just how wonderful it was until she entered it. She said the half was never told her. I had heard the members speak of the great joy, but with the Queen of Sheba I could say the half was never told me. Since Lobo I have looked back with amazement at the perfection of God's work over the many years I felt to say with the poet from the depths of my heart:

"And so I'll trust Him all my days,
And take whate'er He sends,
Love, life or death; on all His ways,
My thankful soul depends;
And when He comes, as come He will
I, looking back shall see,
From yon blest height, forever, still—
Whatever is, is best for me."

How often I have said to Sister Jennie Gillis this last couple of years, that everything I had ever hoped in, promises that I had felt, were from the Lord, time had revealed that I was mistaken and wondered if I was still hanging on to the hope of eternal life because time had not yet revealed it to me, and that when I came to my journey's end would I find that I was mistaken in that too. I feared very much at times, but in some wonderful way I can now see that the crooked things were straight, and the rough places plain, and can say from the depths of my heart that of all His good promises not one failed. You know the promise I received in the summer is wonderful to me, "And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers," etc. It seemed as if all through the years I have been waiting for something, hoping for a hope, but at Lobo and since, it did seem that my teachers were not removed into a corner any more, that my eyes can see my teachers and I could, and can say I have a good hope. One time a few weeks ago I opened the Bible at the words, "Until the time that his word came: the word of the Lord tried him," and I was made to feel that I would be tried to the last inch too, and I was, right up until they received me into the church. I remember one time when I was just a little girl hearing Elder Coulter preach from the words "Jehovah-Jireh" (the Lord sees and the Lord will provide). Right there it was as if I literally placed my whole life (both naturally and spiritually) in His hands with implicit confidence and faith, and I feel that faith has held me all down through the years, but as Elder Ruston said in a letter to me last summer "If God gives one a grain of faith that faith will and must be tried. It is not an easy path. The scripture calls it much tribulation, but faith is stronger than fear." How true!

A couple of years ago that scripture presented itself very beautifully to me where Jacob was blessing Joseph's sons, and how Joseph pressed so hard for Manasseh to get the blessing. He put him at Jacob's right hand. How we push for the flesh! But it is said that Jacob guided his hands wittingly, and crossed his hands and through a cross Ephraim is blessed. Joseph still insisted, but you are blessing Ephraim. Jacob said, "I know it, my son, I know it." Yes, he knoweth the way that we take, and when he has tried us, we shall come forth as gold. We learn to take the spoiling of

our goods joyfully, knowing that in heaven we have a better and more enduring substance. Yours in a precious hope. (Miss) BECKIE McLACHLIN

Castle Rock, Wash.

DEAR ELDER DODSON AND EDITORS: It is time for me to send in some on my subscription, and I should like to send a few thoughts that would be a comfort to the readers of the *Signs* but without God's guidance I cannot do this. Indeed, I will say that without his guidance I can do nothing. So many times I am made to think on a few small words. Some times for days the words "fear not" will be so full of comfort to me. Our dear heavenly Father left it on record many times, "fear not." In his power to see the end from the beginning he knew what fearful creatures we would be, and many times said to some one or several of his saints, "fear not." I have tried so many times to write the letter I am now writing, but have been filled with a fear or dread of saying some unbecoming or unsound thing that would prove to the brethren what I often fear I am instead of what I sometimes hope I am. But this fear has been held in check and I am told to fear not, so I find myself revealing some of my scattered meditations. Other words I often think on and find comfort in is the phrase, "Be not afraid." Do the words "fear not" and "be not afraid" convey the same meaning? "Be not afraid" hold more comfort for me than "fear not." When the poor trembling saints saw Jesus walking on the sea and were so fearful it was a spirit, how wonderful to hear him say, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." Even then Peter must try further to be certain and tried to walk on the water. Then he was truly and terribly afraid, and again was given assurance by the blessed Christ. Several times in the Scriptures we see, "Be not afraid." Blessed words! I can tell of its being given a spiritual meaning to me many times, but also it has come to me many times when I was very literally afraid of very literal things. One way it has been the greatest comfort was when I have traveled alone to and from my meetings by bus since my dear husband passed on. I have not gone alone many times, but rather than miss attending I have done so a few times. Being lame and also subject to very sudden attacks of illness, I am fearful for several days before to attempt the trip, then when the day and hour comes to go I am really afraid, terribly afraid, of what may happen along the way to cause trouble and embarrassment to strangers.

It has been many years since anything but sickness kept me from meeting with my brethren and sisters. So I try to trust in God for strength and help I may be in need of, and comes the thought, "Be not afraid." I seem to feel that all will be well for He has said, I will be with thee, I'll never forsake thee, I am thy God, be ye not afraid. Oh, what comfort to be not afraid. What comfort to know I need not be afraid! Many times I have a task, a physical task, that must be done and I do not have the strength to do it, but comes the thought I must not be afraid, my God will supply all my needs. So I go from day to day. I have learned that he is my all, my life, breath, food and strength in this time world; my joy, my glory, my being in the next world.

I so often find myself inquiring as to my existence after the article we call death. Sometimes I am fearful I was not predestinated to glory and for a short time I experience what it means to be hopeless, and then comes the sweet comforting words, "fear not."

When the final moments of life are at hand will I be afraid? Truly I think not for I hope to then hear the blessed words, "It is I; be not afraid." Oh, may it be so, not only for me but for all God's dear saints. Truly he has said, I will never forsake thee, I will be with thee even to the end of the world. It is not too much to hope for. Dear friends, it is what I hope for; that the omnipresent God is every-where; the very merciful God is truly ever merciful; the all powerful God is really all powerful. My natural mind cannot grasp it, but sometimes this all powerful God gives me the power to see and know that all these things are true of him. Then with one of old I can say,

"I know that my redeemer liveth," and I can add in my own words he is many times more than what I hope he is and I believe him to be. How humble it makes me feel when I claim him for my God, when I can call him my Father, yet how glorious to be able to do so. Only by his love and mercy can I do so for if left to myself I am sure I would never even have desired to claim his love or his mercy.

Now I must close for I have written more than I expected to do and it is rather like myself, weak and blundering. I have received the *Signs* regularly and read every copy. I hope to take it as long as I live. It and my other Baptist papers mean much to me, and often I read some article or letter through tears of thankfulness. Yours unworthily.

(Mrs.) EFFIE PARKE

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324 W. Ponce de Leon Ave., Decatur, Ga.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Have just received my June *Signs* and read the wonderful article written by you, "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: She hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table." Prov. 9:1-2. It is so beautiful to me and the way you expressed it is certainly grand and glorious. Years ago when Elder Eubanks lived in Georgia he preached such a wonderful sermon from these same words. They have lived in my mind for all these years. There is nothing more glorious to me than to hear one of God's called ministers take a scripture and bring out the true interpretation of it. May God bless you to keep writing. (Mrs.) L. D. ADAMS

Newport, N. C.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: No doubt you think I am a little careless about sending in my subscription promptly but it is all my fault. I see, hear and know of so much confusion of late that my mind has been so upset, I have become nervous and I can hardly control myself enough to write any one concerning either natural or spiritual happenings. Natural confusions do not bother my mind so much, but when confusion enters among God's little children, as some hope they are, it hurts my heart to see or hear of such if we possess the hope that we feel we have been changed from nature to grace, or called out of darkness into that marvelous light, and have that feeling to know that "we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." Then we as his little children love God because he laid down his life for us on Calvary's cross, bled, died and rose for our justfication and redemption from our sins. Why is it we cannot lay down our lives for our brethren whom we should love and esteem more highly than we do ourselves? Then let brotherly love continue among us for God is love and love hides a multitude of

faults. If ye are of God and have overcome the world, "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you." If ye are of God, "greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." So my plea to all is to love one another with an everlasting love, whereby we have been loved, having no confidence in the flesh but believing in one faith, hope and baptism; one God the Father of us all and especially to those that believe He gave his only Son that we might be one redeemed family of God to praise him for-ever-more.

The *Signs* and *Old Faith Contender* have been quite a source of comfort to me of late for I am, so to speak, a little shut in from the people I love and esteem so much. I can witness with so many as they express my feelings so well. I do not get to hear preaching often therefore my papers feed my poor soul to overflowing. In conclusion I would say that I visited our Association last fall which convened with the church at Muddy Creek. I had the pleasure of hearing Elder E. J. Lambert preach twice. I enjoyed both sermons and heard many more of the Baptists express their feelings. Said they loved and endorsed the doctrine he set forth. Think all would like to see him visit us again if he has the mind to do so. His article in the *Signs* was wonderful. Enclosed you will find money-order for my renewal. A little sister in hope of eternal life. (Mrs.) W. H. CANNON

2211 - 5th St., Riverside, Cal.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am sending $3 to pay for the good old *Signs* for 1949. I get so much comfort from all the good things that I find in its pages. I can hardly lay it down until I have read it through from cover to cover. I certainly did enjoy the very able article by Elder W. L. Slusher in the January issue. I heard him preach once here in Riverside a long time ago. I think that was before he was ordained.

Tomorrow, Jan. 19, 1949, will find me at my 88th milepost on life's rugged road; too feeble in mind and body to be of service to any one; even to write anything that would be of comfort to one of our Father's children. However. I do not feel to complain for the dear Lord has blessed me in times and ways beyond my numbering for which I know I have not been as thankful as I should in times past. In the midst of the deserved wrath he hath remembered mercy.

Long may you live to publish the truth as it is in Jesus is the prayer of your most unworthy brother in the love of truth and hope of a glorious immortality. J. W. HAYNES

Route 3, Benton, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I have attended Little River, West Tennessee and Flint River Associations. The introductory sermons were the grandest, most glorious praise to our three one God. Elder I. N. Darnell preached the introductory at Little River; Elder R. L. Biggs, West Tennessee and Elder Matt Brock at Flint River. We sometimes feel it is too good for us that it be our lot to be enabled to attend and view such fellowship, such harmony and oneness. May it be the truth that when we pass away and on through our part of the furtherance of the gospel that God will go on raising up (if what we teach and preach be true and that is our hope) those whom he chose in Christ Jesus to further this gospel—this glorious gospel.

We meet, Lord willing, with the Bethel Association this coming week end. This family whose name we are sending in for your paper is a wonderful family in the Lord and we were much pleased to present what we think the *Signs* stands for to them. In fellowship. (Mrs.) EFFIE BOWDEN

EDITORIALS

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NEW YEAR'S GREETING

In our greeting for 1948 we had the subject of *love* for our theme. In 1949 our theme was *mercy*. We have selected *grace* as our theme for this year. These three attributes portray the goodness of God more fully, perhaps, than any that could be chosen. The most the human mind can do is to become amazed with wonder in contemplation of them. For many years, we have endeavored to maintain, both from the pulpit and through the columns of the *Signs of the Times,* that the doctrine of salvation by grace, for time and eternity, is the one point above all others which distinguishes the Old School Baptist Church from every other religious organization in the world. Much has been written on this subject, but much remains to be said, and human nature being what it is, this point of doctrine cannot be emphasized too much or repeated too often.

Through the courtesy of one of our good friends, we have been privileged to read a book entitled "The Wonder of Grace," by Prof. Herman Hoeksema, and published by William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., Grand Rapids, Mich., both of whom have kindly given us permission to quote all or as much of chapter one as we wish. This chapter is based upon Ephesians 2:8, "For by grace are ye saved." The author in this chapter not only strongly emphasizes the fact that salvation is all of grace, but at the same time points out the fallacy of the contrary opinion, erroneously presented by evangelical and other so-called high ecclesiastical dignitaries. While the truth is presented in a slightly different manner from what our readers are accustomed, we believe it is the real truth, and we earnestly hope the variety in expression of presentation will make it all the more interesting reading for our family group. It furnishes unmistakable evidence to us that God is continually carrying on his work of making gracious characters of men and women of Adam's race in all walks of life, who are not ashamed to declare plainly his glorious truth, for all of which we desire to praise his most holy name. We quote below the article referred to in full, hoping that it will please our heavenly Father to use it for his own honor and glory, and for the comfort and edification of his redeemed flock, for Jesus' sake, Amen.

R. L. D.

THE IDEA OF SALVATION BY GRACE

The subject, various aspects of which are discussed in the following pages, should need no introduction to the believers in our Lord Jesus Christ. That we are saved by grace, not by works, and that, therefore, salvation is the work of God, in no wise of man, is a truth that touches upon the very heart of the gospel. "For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Eph. 2:8.

The doctrine of salvation by grace is one of those fundamental truths of the Christian faith, the true knowledge and correct understanding of which is of great importance for the Church of Christ in the world, and for the believer individually. One who errs on this point must needs have a wrong conception of all the rest of Christian doctrine, and corrupt the truth concerning God and man, concerning sin and redemption, concerning Christ and the Church. Moreover, it is a subject of great practical significance for the believer, one that never fails to arouse his interest. He realizes that it concerns his only comfort in life and death: either he is saved by grace only, or he must needs perish. Hence, he never grows weary of hearing the gospel of salvation by sovereign grace proclaimed and expounded unto him in all the riches of its implications. And as he grows in the knowledge of this truth, he will grow in the grace of the Lord Jesus.

Small wonder, then, that from the earliest period of the history of the New Testament Church this subject occupied a central place of interest. It was the theme of millions of sermons. Many a volume was written to expound and defend this truth. It is the theme of thousands of hymns. And often it was the occasion of sharp controversy. And today, one may hear of salvation by grace in sermon and song, from the pulpit and over the air, literally every day. And if, perhaps, it might seem well-nigh impossible to say anything about so thoroughly exhausted a subject that has not been said hundreds of times before, we may comfort ourselves with the thought, that it may, at least be possible to recall some very old truths in connection with our subject that are either forgotten or denied in modern times.

Our subject is, of course, rich in meaning, and presents several aspects. To say that we are saved by grace expresses the truth that salvation is of the Lord. This should be emphasized from the outset. For grace is of God, and God is free and sovereign. To be saved by grace, then, means that grace is the only source, the sole explanation, the ultimate reason and ground of our salvation, the efficient cause of all that is implied in the work of our redemption and deliverance from sin and death. We are saved by grace only, without the work or cooperation of man, or we are not saved by grace at all. Hence, one who would speak of salvation by grace, must understand that he is speaking of a divine work throughout. But all the works of God are eternal. Hence, salvation by grace has its source in eternity, and one cannot properly treat the subject of grace without considering the fundamental truth of divine and sovereign election: we are chosen by grace. For God "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." Eph. 1:3, 4. Grace is sovereign. It is divine, and, therefore, eternal. From the inscrutable depths of eternity spring all the spiritual blessings that lift us from the dark depths of sin and death into the glory of eternal life: the blessings of atonement and reconciliation, of redemption and deliverance, of regeneration and calling, of justification and sanctification, of the forgiveness of sins and the adoption unto children of God, of preservation and perseverance, of the resurrection from the dead and the final glorification. All these blessings of salvation are of pure grace, for "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Rom. 9:16. And all these various

aspects of salvation by grace demand our consideration.

However, we might do well, first of all, to consider the general question: what is salvation? This question is by no means superfluous. For, on the one hand, on our answer to this question must needs depend our conception of the part grace has in our salvation; and, on the other hand, especially in modern times, the truth concerning salvation is distorted and corrupted in more than one way. Salvation is not the same as reformation, the improvement of man and of the world; it has nothing in common with the modern notion of the building of character. This modernistic conception recognizes, indeed, that man is not what he ought to be. There is something wrong with him, and with the world he is making. Especially in our own times, now the whole imposing structure of human culture and civilization threatens to collapse, this is deeply felt. However, it is maintained that man is not inherently corrupt. He is fundamentally good. But he is in need of reform. We must apply ourselves to man's reformation, to the building of his character, as well as to the improvement of his environment. And in this noble effort we must take Jesus as our example, and turn to his teachings, especially to the sermon on the mount, for our program of reformation. If man only learns to follow in his steps, and to apply his teachings to all his life and relationships, he will be saved. He will then learn to acknowledge that, like Jesus, so he, too, is the son of God; that God is the loving Father of all, and all men are brethren. And thus he will become a good, peace loving creature, that is capable of making of the present world a kingdom of God in which righteousness shall dwell. Needless to say that in such a view of salvation there is no room for grace. Salvation is the work of proud man, not of God. And it is quite superfluous to prove that this human philosophy has nothing in common with the biblical gospel of salvation.

However, it is not only in modernistic circles that one meets with a perverted presentation of the truth of salvation. On the contrary, also they who ostensibly preach the gospel of Christ, but in the meantime present the matter of salvation as something that ultimately depends for its realization on the will of man, distort the doctrine of sovereign grace. Salvation, according to this view, is something like a present that is all prepared and that is freely and graciously offered, but which one may either refuse or accept. Or it is like a kind invitation to some party or banquet, with which one may either comply or which he may politely decline. So the sinner is offered salvation, chiefly consisting in escape from hell and entrance into heaven after this life, on condition that he will accept Christ. This salvation is all prepared for the sinner. In himself he is damned, worthy of eternal death. But Christ died for every sinner, and merited for all the forgiveness of sins, righteousness, and eternal glory. So far it is all of grace. And that the gospel is preached to sinners, and this glorious redemption is offered them freely, that, too, is of grace.

But it is at this point that salvation as a work of divine grace and power ends. For beyond the merited redemption of Christ and the offered salvation, grace is not sovereign and efficacious: it is powerless to save, and actually to deliver from the dominion of sin and death, except by the sinner's consent. If the sinner only accepts the salvation that is offered to him, if only he will say: "I accept Christ as my personal Savior," all will be well with

him, and grace can proceed; but if he is recalcitrant, and stubbornly declines the earnest invitation to be saved, grace can do nothing with him. Many a preacher does not hesitate openly and boldly to declare that God is powerless to save the sinner, unless the latter gives his consent; and that Christ can do no more than he did, unless the sinner permits him to proceed with his work of salvation. Jesus is willing to save, but his willingness must suffer shipwreck on the rock of man's contrary and refractory will. He stands at the door of the sinner's heart, and knocks, but the key of the door is on the inside, and the Savior cannot enter, unless the sinner opens the door. Hence arises that very common form of preaching that is erroneously called evangelical, and that always reaches its climax in the well-known, extremely sensational "altar call." I say erroneously, for "evangelical preaching" is preaching of the gospel, and the true gospel never presents a powerless God, or a Christ impotent to save. Since the grace of God is dependent on the choice of the sinner's will, it follows that the persuasion of human language, of the voice of the preacher, pleading and begging, may assist him to make the right choice, and induce him to let Jesus into his heart! Thus Christ is travestied!

O, to be sure, salvation is deliverance from hell and damnation. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." John 3:36. But, first of all, salvation is much more than the mere escape from punishment and hell, and a check on the bank of heaven that is to be cashed after death. It is a wonderwork of the Almighty, Who quickeneth the dead, and calleth the things that are not as if they were. Rom. 4:17. It is a work in which God becomes revealed unto us in "the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places." Eph. 1:19, 20. It is a work, no less divine, and even more glorious, than the work of creation. All that is required to make of the sinner, dead in sin, filled with enmity against God, cursing the Almighty and raising his rebellious fist in the face of the Lord of heaven and earth, walking in darkness and hating light,—to make of such a sinner a righteous and holy child of God, humbly asking what God wills that he shall do, filled with the love of God, and for ever singing his praises; and to place that sinner, thus redeemed and delivered, in living fellowship with the glorious company of all the redeemed and glorified sinners, so that they together constitute a Church, a beautiful house of God, a holy temple in the Lord, to the praise of the glory of his grace in the beloved,—all this belongs to the work, the mighty work of God that is called salvation! And, secondly, salvation by grace means that it is an exclusively divine work, absolutely free and sovereign, in which man has no part at all, and that does not in any sense depend upon the choice of man's will. Even as the work of creation is of God alone, which he accomplished without the cooperation of the creature, so the work of salvation is exclusively God's work in which man has no part whatever. Even as Adam lived and was an active creature, not in or before his being created, but by virtue of this marvellous work of God, so the sinner lives, and becomes positively active, so that he wills to be saved and embraces Christ, not in cooperation with God who saves him, but

as a result of the wonder of Grace performed upon him. Salvation by grace implies that grace is always first. True, "whosoever will may come," but the will to come is not prevenient to grace, but subsequent to it as its fruit.

Consider from what depths of darkness and death salvation delivers man, and unto what heights of life and glory it exalts him, and judge for yourselves whether at any particular stage of this marvellous work of God could be a cooperating party with God. Popularly, salvation has often been defined as that wonderwork of God whereby he delivers the sinner from the greatest evil, and makes him partaker of the highest good. But what is the greatest evil from which grace delivers the sinner? Listen to the words of Scripture in Eph. 2:1-3: "And you—who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we had our conversation in times past in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." That is the evil from which grace saves us! And what does it mean, that apart from grace, we are dead in trespasses and sins?

O, it signifies exactly what it says; that by our sins we are, by nature, just as dead unto God and righteousness, unto all good works, as the corpse in the grave is dead unto all activity of any kind. It means that, apart from grace, we are wholly incapable of doing any good, or even of thinking and willing anything that is pleasing to God. We are bound from within with unbreakable shackles of darkness and corruption. We are slaves of sin, willing slaves to be sure, but slaves withal, loving darkness rather than the light. And this spiritual-ethical death is God's own wrath upon us: the punishment for sin. For we are children of wrath from our birth, guilty and damnable because of Adam's transgression. And we can only daily increase our guilt and our damnation.

Such is our miserable plight. There is a debt we can never pay, nor do we care to pay it. There is a power of corruption from which we cannot and will not deliver ourselves. There is wrath and damnation from which we can never escape, nor do we care to, or seek to escape, for we are enemies of God, and the carnal mind is death! In that horrible depth of misery grace finds the sinner.

Do you imagine, then, that he is capable or willing to cooperate with God to his own salvation, or that any emotional and sentimental plea of a preacher will persuade him to desire and to seek salvation in Christ? I tell you nay. Before grace takes hold of that sinner and raises him from the dead, he will always refuse to accept the proffered salvation, and prefer death to life, sin to righteousness, the devil to God! He must be saved by grace as a divine wonder!

And consider, too, unto what heights of glory saves the sinner. He is made partaker of the highest good! But what is the highest good? It is eternal life! Yes; but what is eternal life? Is it a sort of carnally conceived everlasting state of bliss in a beautiful place called heaven? God forbid! O, to be sure, heaven is blessed and beautiful. But it is so principally, because God is there, and Christ is there, and the saints in Christ are there. And the blessedness of heaven consists in this that it is the house of God, and that in that house we may dwell in fellowship with the living God, a fellowship that is more

intimate than the first man Adam ever tasted, for it has its center in the incarnated word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ! To be the perfect sons of God, knowing God even as we are known, righteous as he is righteous, holy as he is holy, loving and beloved forever, seeing him face to face, and having our delight in the doing of his word, and the keeping of his precepts, loving him with all our heart and mind and soul and strength in heavenly perfection and glory,—that is the blessedness of heaven, and that is the height of glory to which grace raises us in Jesus Christ our Lord! But do you imagine that there could be any cooperation on the part of that miserable sinner we just described to reach that height of perfection? Or would you say that the sinner who is an enemy of God even longs for that perfect fellowship with God, that he that loves darkness is capable of yearning for that state of perfect and everlasting light? I tell you nay. He is saved by grace, and by grace only, as a wonderwork of him who raises the dead, and calleth the things that are not as if they were!

Saved by grace! Delivered from wrath, guilt, damnation, corruption and death,—all by grace! Clothed with righteousness, holiness, life and glory, —by grace only! Translated into light, from death into life, from shame into glory, from hell into heaven,—all by the power of God's wondrous grace! And all because of the eternal, sovereign love of Him, who chose the things that are not, to bring to nought the things that are; that no flesh should glory in His presence!

"As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange God with him." Deut. 32:11-12.

Elder Williams of Decatur, Miss. has requested views on this scripture. May God bless us with light of thought and liberty of expression to comfort God's little children with some thoughts on the wonderful care God exercises upon his own. We enter into the discussion of this scripture with a deep felt sense of inability. We fully realize our dependence upon God to *stir* us up at this time to properly meditate upon this scripture.

Jacob, who is the "lot of his inheritance" is the object of these expressions. As God dealt with Jacob, he deals with each and every one of his children. Read the context and you will find that Jacob was passive in the hands of a merciful God. It was God who found him; it was God who led him about; it was God who instructed him; it was God who kept him; and it was God who *made* him ride on the high places of the earth. Jacob could not claim any credit for anything, but must bow to God and realize that it was by God's mercies that he was so wonderfully delivered.

In this text God is likened to an eagle in some of his dealings. The kings of Assyria, Egypt and Babylon were likened unto eagles for their *power* and *dominion*. The Chaldean armies were likened unto eagles because of their swiftness. The Edomites exalted themselves and made their nests *high* as the eagles. It is said that the eagle builds its nest in high places in the tops of the rocks—in the highest rocks which no man can reach. Of course the outer part of the nest is constructed with

rough, jagged, coarse and thorny material. The innermost part is lined with smooth, soft matter that affords the eaglets a place of sweet repose. This is certainly a comfortable place of refuge until the nest is stirred up. The soft down that interlines the eagle's nest typifies the seeming righteousness of the flesh and the confidence that the unregenerated child of God has in his own cleanness and ability. He is content with himself and with his place of abode. He is at ease and does not care to venture from this sweet place of self-righteousness and carnal affections. "All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes."

As the eagle stirs up this soft nest and makes it a bed of thorns to the eaglets, so the Lord stirs up the souls of his people, and makes bare the thorn in the flesh so that their place of sweet repose becomes a miserable place of abode. When God begins his work there is a *stirring* in the soul that nothing can still, silence, quench or quell. When this begins with you you become very greatly alarmed and anxious. This anxiety becomes so miserable that you try to rid yourself of this condition by your own activity. You become just as restless as the eaglets with the same results—the thorns prick you more every turn you make. You are pricked in the heart as those spoken of in Acts 2:37. As the God of Israel stirred up the spirits of the kings of Assyria and prompted them to action, he awakens and disturbs you and causes you to become much concerned over your miserable condition.

Have you ever been awakened to the fact that you are a sinner? Have you made resolutions to better that condition? Have you tried to deliver yourself and found that all your trials availed nothing? Have you been shown that all your righteousness is as filthy rags in God's sight? Have you lost confidence in your own self? Has there been a time that your soul fainted in you and you had no hope in this world or that to come? If you can answer the above questions in the affirmative, (I am persuaded) God has stirred up your nest and has fluttered over you. You have been shaken from that nest and you are falling toward the abyss below. What a fear accompanies this fall! You have nothing to rely upon! You fear the consequences of the jagged rocks and the abyss below which surely means sudden destruction to you! I experienced this falling for many miserable months. I could see nothing before me but this blackness of darkness forever. I was afraid to live and afraid to die. I cried out in anguish of soul, "Woe is me! for I am undone!" As the eagle watches the young eaglet as it falls toward the abyss below, I trust that God was watching me. As the eagle swoops down beneath the falling eaglet, "Spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings," I feel that God so dealt with me. What a glad surprise when he came to my rescue!

The thought that God watches us and protects us before regeneration brings to mind that he was the God of Jacob. Jacob is the unregenerate name of Israel. Who is this God of Jacob? The God that gave him the blessing of the birthright though he was a junior; the God that delivered him from the murderous hand of his brother in the day of trouble; the God that protected him and manifested himself to him; his covenant God. God sometimes says, I am the God of Jacob. This means I am your God before regeneration, as well as after when you attempt to supplant me with proud free will and blunt my sovereignty with your rebellion; when you took my covenant name in a

covenant character, I am your God still.

Yes, it was a day of rejoicing when God came to your rescue to prevent you from being utterly destroyed by the jagged rocks and the abyss beneath. He rescued you on his wings of love. He whispered to you, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." He informed you that he was a merciful and gracious God. He restored your soul. Jesus informed you that he had fulfilled the law to a jot and tittle for you. He told you that he had taken your sins upon his own shoulder and had paid the penalty, satisfied justice by shedding his own blood for the remission of sins and had died in your stead. He spoke sweet peace to your soul that he had wrought out eternal salvation for you. He put a new song in your mouth that praised God and confessed Jesus as your Savior. You are resting in the sweet embrace of his love. Your soul is absorbed in this experience. You are blessed to exclaim, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." You can say with one of old, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." You feel that your worries and fears are in the past and that you will ride forever upon his wings. You can see the Father, Son and Holy Ghost enacting, determining and covenanting for, and mutually swearing each to each for the accomplishment of your salvation. Did this sweet experience continue? No, if your experience coincides with my experience, it did not continue. It was of short duration.

After the eagle rescues the young and bears them comfortably upon her wings for awhile, she tilts her wings and permits them to fall again toward the abyss below. Did God deal with you as the eagle deals with her young? While you were riding joyfully, upon his everlasting love and sweet promises, all was well with your soul. You said, my God reigneth, and "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Then, all at once, you realized that you were again falling toward destruction. The sweet embrace of that love was gone. Your former experience taught you that there was one who did rescue you, but, would he rescue again? You looked for him but you could not find him. You sincerely asked, "Will the Lord cast off forever? and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? doth his promise fail forevermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" Psalms 77:7-9. You are falling down, down, down! You yet have a faint hope that almost vanishes away. Just before you would die in despair, God rescues you again from destruction. The wings of God's mercy and love comes underneath you and raises you up, and soars high above the cares and troubles of this world, and you again rejoice because of his amazing grace that can descend low enough to prevent you from dashing your head against a stone. It is our lot to be shaken many times from the wings of God's manifest love and mercy, but he yet cares for us and carefully watches over us.

It is necessary that we be taught again and again of our infirmities and weakness in the flesh and our total dependence upon him. We are made to cry out so often to him to be merciful to our unrighteousness. We shall have tribulations and suffer trials and afflictions here in this world, and to realize that, "here have we no continuing city." These joyful experiences are not continuous but it is a mixture of joy and sorrow.

We trust that the grace of God enables us to "Press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in

Christ Jesus." Phil. 3:14. At that time when he shall take us upon his wings it will be forever. All will be joyful for-ever-more. No more trials and tribulations. No more heartaches nor fear of falling into utter destruction. When he takes us upon his wings and carries us into the Holiest of Holies where Jesus dwells we shall forever be satisfied. E. J. L.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Elder H. O. Nash, 431 Hardendorf Ave., N. E. Atlanta, Ga. has very kindly consented to serve as Associate Editor of our family paper. This is good news, indeed, for our readers.

R. LESTER DODSON

MEMORIAL

Inasmuch as it has seemed good in the sight of Almighty God to remove from our midst by death, our dearly beloved Brother and Pastor, ELDER HORACE H. LEFFERTS on the 18th day of August 1949, and

Inasmuch as we, the churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, do realize that we must bow in humble submission to the will of our Lord and Savior; and that we do feel most deeply bereaved in this loss of our dear Brother and Pastor who has so faithfully served us as an undershepherd, teacher and minister for an unbroken period of thirty-nine years; and that we do feel to praise our Lord and Savior for the wise counsel, the faithful and fatherly interests and admonitions and the unceasing efforts in ministering to our spiritual needs and comforts, and for the sincerity and earnestness of our departed Brother, and for his gift in the ministry of the Word, and his prayerful desire to be kept a true servant to the church and to his people, be it

Resolved that this memorial be written and sent with our deep and heartfelt sympathy to his bereaved companion, Mrs. Ella Adams Lefferts and to his family. Their loss and sorrow is likewise our loss and sorrow, yet we must know that this departure is his eternal inheritance of that promised possession. Thus rather than voicing our present sorrows, we would pray to be enabled to keep our eyes upon Him that has promised never to leave us or forsake us, and to offer praise for the blessings bestowed upon us through his fruitful labors. This life and these blessings will live on in the memories of all those with whom he associated. Also be it

Resolved that a copy of this memorial be sent for publication in the **Signs of the Times** and **Old Faith Contender** and that it be printed in the minutes of this meeting.

A. D. ALSTON, Moderator
G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk
ARTHUR CARTER, Asst. Clerk

OBITUARIES

MRS. NANCY ELLEN CULLEN was born May 11, 1853, and passed away May 21, 1949 in her home on North Broadway, Providence, Ky. at the age of 91 years. She was a daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Andy Curry, and widow of the late Z. B. Cullen. Born in Webster Co., she and Mr Cullen were married in Shawneetown, Ill., July 25, 1875. Eight children were born to them of which five survive. Mrs. Les Herron, Nashville, Tenn., Mrs. Ellie Melton, Mrs. Ida Bell, Mrs Everett Givens, and Clarence Cullen of Providence, Ky.

Funeral services were held at the home May 23, 1949, conducted by Elder L. P. Harriss of Du Quoin, Ill., assisted by Elder W. T. Clayton of Providence, Ky. She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church at Providence for more than fifty years. Burial in Cullen Cemetery near Providence. The following was one of her favorite songs after Mr. Cullen's death.

"My head and stay is called away,
And I am left alone;
My husband dear who was so near
Has fled away and gone.

It breaks my heart, 'tis hard to part
With one who was so kind;
Where shall I go to vent my smart,
Or ease my troubled mind?

In wisdom's ways we spent our days,
Much comfort we did find;
But he is gone, in dust he lays,
And I am left behind.

Naught can I find to ease my mind,
In things which are below;
For earthly toys but vex my joys
And aggravate my woe.

But I'll repair to Jesus, where
I'll ease my troubled breast;
To Christ above, who is my Lord,
And my eternal rest.

And O that he would send for me,
And call my spirit home,
To worlds of rest among the blest,
Where troubles never come.

Written by her daughter, (Mrs.) IDA BELL.

ELDER HORACE HOGELAND LEFFERTS of Leesburg, Va. was taken from this life on the morning of August 18, 1949. He leaves his dear wife, Mrs. Ella Adams Lefferts, and six children: William G. Lefferts, West Allis, Wis., Henry H. Lefferts, Arlington, Va., Hurst A. Lefferts, Charleston, W. Va., Mrs. Sarah L. Ramsey, Miami, Fla., Horace L. Lefferts, Wilmington, Del., and Miles S. Lefferts, Arlington, Va. There are also eight grandchildren and one sister, Mrs. Naomi L. Rounds, South Yarmouth, Mass., surviving.

Elder Lefferts was a son of the late George W. and Sarah L. Lefferts. He was born at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., April 23, 1879, making him at his death 70 years and nearly four months of age. September 24, 1903, he was married to Miss Ella Adams, daughter of the late Elder William Adams of Newton Co., Ga.

At the age of seventeen, while a student at the West Chester Normal School, where he was preparing for the profession of teaching, he received a hope in Jesus and four years later he asked for a home with the Old School Baptist Church at Southampton, Pa. His Pastor, Elder Silas H. Durand, being sick at the time, he was baptized by Elder F. A. Chick, December 16, 1900. By the same church he was licensed to preach on April 12, 1902, and was ordained on June 5, 1903. The ministers attending his ordination were Elders, E. V. White, P. D. Gold, J. T. Rowe, J. G. Eubanks, P. Y. Sawin, L. B. Hanover, G. D. Robertson, F. W. Keene, J. E. Gore, J. C. Mellott, D. M. Vail, W. W. Meredith, F. A. Chick and Silas H. Durand.

Elder Lefferts was called as Pastor of the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y. in 1905. Three years later in 1908 the churches of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting called him to serve them. After a year he accepted their call, and in 1909 became Pastor of the churches of Frying Pan and New Valley, Va. and Mill Creek, W. Va. Later he accepted calls from Mt. Zion, Va., Sidling Hill, Needmore, Trough Creek, Pa., Welch Tract, Del. and Southampton, Pa. churches.

In July 1914 Elder Lefferts became Associate Editor of the Signs of the Times with Elder H. C. Ker. He became Editor in May 1923. In July 1923 Elders R. L. Dodson, George Ruston and C. W. Vaughn became Associate Editors. Elder Lefferts served as Editor until he resigned in 1935. Up until his last year he continued faithful with his civilian employment along with his ministry. For more than fifteen years he was Deputy Treasurer of Loudon Co., Va.

Our Elder Brother stood firm and ever contended for that blessed doctrine once delivered to the saints. He preached total depravity of this flesh and salvation by grace alone; the doctrine of eternal election and final perseverance of the saints that not one shall ever be lost; and the doctrine of the resurrection of this body.

He was blessed with an unusual gift in teaching and comforting the flock. Although he was given a deep insight into the word of God and led the thoughts of his hearers into the depths of the Scriptures, his words and manner of unfolding were so simply set forth as to enable even a child to understand and to profit under his gift. He was quick to divide the Word of Truth and to correct error, yet the love received from his Savior simply radiated from his ministry. His greatest desire was that he might be made a true servant to his Lord and to his little flock with whom his life was spent. Truly his life belonged to his people and his church, and he was not satisfied unless his labors of love were among them. He taught humility in his walk in this life as well as in his words from the pulpits. In the last meeting before his death he quoted Matthew 20:27. "And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." O that we might be made as servants and as little children. How easy it would be then to accept admonitions without offense, to forgive and forget, to trust and to love, and for all human strife and contentions to pass away while we sit at our brother's feet.

Our dear Elder was spared the suffering of a long illness. Although he had suffered several heart attacks before, he preached two sermons and baptized one sister the week end before his death. Even the day before his passing was spent in visiting and comforting the sick and afflicted.

Funeral services were held at the New Valley Church in Loudon Co., Va. on Monday, August 22, 1949, where his membership was, and at the Southampton Church in Bucks Co., Pa. on August 23rd. Ministers present were Elders George Ruston, A .H. Bellows, D. V. Spangler, J. D. Wood, J. P. Helms, R. L. Dodson, W. J. Berry, J. W. Gilliam, H. M. Bennett, and G. L. Weaver. The chapter of his life and of his more than forty-seven years in the ministry and as a servant of his Lord, was opened and again closed in the Southampton Church. Interment was in the William Penn Cemetery in Bucks Co., Pa., near his parents.

Our dear Elder Brother has finished the course set for him on this earth. If we may judge, he has fought a good fight, he has kept the faith, and died in the work as a good and faithful servant. He shall be sadly missed, but by faith we know that God doeth all things well and "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." May that Holy Spirit that gave life to his heart and soul, and supported him all the way through this journey, bear him on high unto the bosom of the Father where he can praise Jehovah God eternally and in a more perfect manner is our prayer in the name of our Savior.

A. D. ALSTON

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m.
W. A. WILLIAMS and J. J. COLLINS, Pastors.

Ramah Church, Cottonwood, Ala., meets each third Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each second Sunday and Saturday before.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala
Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a. m., ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a. m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Bethlehem Church, Malvern, Ala., meets each second Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopeful Church, Ozark, Ala., meets each fourth Saturday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock Meeting place at Alder St. at the top of the hill First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each first Saturday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each fourth Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a. m., six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Seclusia Predestinarian Baptist Church meets 4th Sundays, 11 a. m., 9616 South Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. H. Y. BEAUCHAMP, Pastor, 137 Chestnut Ave., Long Beach, Cal.

Bethel Church near Stockton, Cal. meets first and third Sundays in each month and Saturday nights before. For further information write SETH BYNUM, Rt. 3, Box 800G, Stockton, Cal.

The Old School or Predestinarian Baptists meet for worship third Sunday of each month, 2:30 p. m., second floor Pythian Temple Building, 1012 Ninth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Elder John D. Wood, Minister. For information write FRANK T. SIMPKINS, 5214 - H St., Dillon Park, Washington, D. C.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m., north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets every second Sunday at 5th and E. Park St. B. O. JEFFREYS, Pastor, Weiser, Idaho.

Pleasant Valley Church Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc.)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator, Williamstown, Kans.

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carver Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. C. H. EVANS, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a.m. in the meeting-house.

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays 11:00 a. m., 1:30 p. m.

The Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every first and third Sundays at Parkside Hotel, 18 Gramercy Park South, one block east of Fourth Ave. and 20th St., near 23rd St. Sta. Lexington Ave. Subway. Take Elevator to Park Room second floor. 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M.
R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m. in Municipal Auditorium room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.
(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Salem Old School Baptist Church
18th & Spring Garden Sts. Philadelphia, Pa
(Chapel of 5th Baptist Church)
T. C. KOCH, Clerk.
2764 N. Talyor St., Philadelphia, Pa.

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before.
E. H. LANIER, Clerk.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

The Old Orderly Mt. Zion (Cash) Predestinarian Baptist Church meets on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in each month, at the home of Bro. J. J. Darnell, Campbell, Texas.
Sister SIMMONS, Clerk.

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets first and third Sundays each month 11 a. m. 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas.
C. B. TEAGUE, Clerk, L. D. ROSE, Pastor.

Forth Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets first Sunday in each month at 11:00 a. m. and Saturday at 2 p. m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Shepherd Fold Church meets each first Sunday 11 a. m., Saturday before 2:30 p. m., on Little York Highway, 4 miles north of Houston, Texas. One mile east of Highway 76.
W. O. BEENE, Pastor.

The original Pilgrim Rest Church of Lawn, Texas, meets every first Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a. m.
C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor.
HOWARD EASON, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dr. Wood church-house. Those interested write Mrs. Lela Culpepper, Stockdale, Texas.
E. B. AULT, Pastor.

The Old Salem Church of Old School Baptists, 4 miles south from Teague, Texas, meets the first Sunday in each month and Saturday before.
MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 11 a. m. at the home of E. B. Ault on Progresso Highway, three and one half miles south of Weslaco.
E. B. AULT, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk
Route 1, Box 88, Mission, Tex.

Danville Primitive Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday night before Bradley Road, Danville, Va.
W. R. DODD, Pastor.

Malmaison Church, ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meets each first Sunday 11 a. m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3023 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va. R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.
R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m. C. M. FISHER.

Bethel Old School Baptist Church, Riffe, Wash., meets every third Sunday, 11 a. m. in the meeting house.
I. F. COLEMAN, Mod.
ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk, Riffe, Wash.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church near Yakima, Washington, meets at 11 a. m. each second Sunday by appointment at the home of one of the members living at Naches, Wash.
A. D. HUGHETT, Pastor
BEATRICE HAAN, Clerk
Star Route, Naches, Wash.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 3 p. m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va., N. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

J. L. Howell, Conn., $2; Mrs. M. V. Thomas, Ill., $23; R. P. Eaton, Can., $1; Mrs. M. E. Gambrill, Md., $2; Eld. J. D. Wood, Md., $1; N. H. Akers, Va., $1; Mrs. T. H. McColl, Can., $5; Eld. H. M. Bennett, Md., $1; Middletown & Wallkill Church, N. Y., $25; Miss M. D. Addis, Pa., $2; Mrs. J. W. Jackson, N. Y., $1; I. T. McIntyre, N. Y., $2; E. K. A., N. Y., $2; R. L. Buckner, Okla., .75.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 118 RUTHERFORD, N. J. FEBRUARY, 1950 No. 2

The night is dark, the hours long,
My soul is sore depressed;
I'm weary with life's heavy load,
And long for peaceful rest.

My feet are sore, my eyes are dim,
The path is rough and narrow;
I stumble, fall, then rise again,
To grasp a new tomorrow.

I must not faint, for lo, afar
There gleams a shining light,
'Twill guide me on, and on, and on,
To where there's no more night.

(Mrs.) FLORA BOOKER

Shirlesyburg, Pa.

CORRESPONDENCE

Lillie, La.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE: I am enclosing an article on the subject of "Musical Instruments in the Church" at the request of Mr. B. D. Sledge and his sister, Mrs. Nila Edwards. There are some in their part of the country using musical instruments in the churches and calling themselves Primitive Baptists. They asked me to write an article on the subject which may be useful as I have not seen anything on this subject in the papers of late. Since the Limited or Conditionalists are traveling in this direction we should give in our papers scriptural reasons for not using them.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES

MR. B. D. SLEDGE, RINGGOLD, LA.

DEAR MR. SLEDGE: I arrived home safely Sunday evening about 8 o'clock and found all well as when I left. I was delighted to be with you all in your home and at the appointments also. I was especially delighted to see so much interest manifested. I truly hope and believe it is the will of God to restore the church there.

I promised you and your sister, Mrs. Edwards, that I would look up the scriptural data concerning instrumental music in the church. I know that almost all, except Old Line Primitive Baptists, use and think nothing about the use of such instruments in the church regardless of what the Scriptures teach on the subject.

I will say first that Jesus and his apostles did not use them, or if they did nothing is recorded in the Scriptures to that effect. If Jesus and his apostles did not advocate the use of such instruments in the church where is there any inspired justification for such practice? Jesus said in Matt. 28: 20, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." We can see from this passage the absence of any record of Jesus or his disciples using them, then if we should use them we know it would be in open violation of his commandment, and the use of them would, in my opinion, at least be something in addition to what the Scriptures teach which I think would be as great a sin as not doing the things he has commanded. Read Rev. 22:19, which shows in so many words that it is a violation to either add to or take from what inspiration

has recorded.

Let us see what the Scriptures say on this subject. I will first quote Gen. 4:21, "And his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ." If you will notice Jubal was the grandson of Cain, the murderer of his brother Abel. This would seem to me to signify that Cain and his crowd invented and used it. To me this shows, though a literal fact, the type in worship, that it was a tool invented by the generation of Cain, the murderer, and him that God had placed a great curse upon. Read the entire fourth chapter of Genesis. This all being true it is very significant, coupled with the fact that neither Jesus nor his disciples used this invention of Cain, the cursed of the Lord.

Next I will quote Job 21:12: "They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ." Read also the seventh verse of this same chapter which shows that those who do this are wicked. Read from the seventh to the twelfth verses inclusive of this chapter which, to my mind, shows that regardless of the source and invention being from a generation who is wicked and cursed they rejoice in the sound of it. Now I will quote Job 30:31, "My harp also is turned to mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep." I think Job here is showing that these instruments have become different from what they had originally been to him, but since the Lord God has laid his hand upon him it is so different, and sounded mournful and as the voice of weeping. This would preclude any prospect of there being any scriptural ground for the use of instruments of music in the true church of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as the Lord himself did not mention such a thing.

I think Abel was a figure of Jesus Christ, and if so Cain was a figure of those that crucified Christ; then instrumental music in the church to me is nothing more nor less than the evidence of spiritual wickedness from the source of a murderer, and of him who was under a curse from the righteous God of heaven. I feel sure there is every scriptural indication that such instrumental music is a mark or signal of a wicked origin, no matter what the intention of those who indulge in it is.

Now I want to quote the main scripture that is relied upon to establish scriptural authority for instrumental music. If you mention the subject to ordinary professors, there is not more than one out of one hundred but will say something about Psalm 150:4 which reads as follows, "Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs." This text is the only scripture that anyone can mention on the subject. Why do you say that, some one would ask? Because that would seem within itself to authorize it, and would if there was nothing else on the subject to the contrary, but we find that inspiration condemns David who is the author of the language in Psalm 150:4 on his inventing this wicked instrument or method of worship. In order to thoroughly prove this point I want to quote Amos 6:5. "That chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music, like David." This is sufficient to crudely explain why it is that those who are blessed with a true knowledge of the Scriptures, and who are upheld by the spirit of faithfulness, do not tolerate instrumental music in their churches.

All that I have related out of the Old Testament Scriptures is sufficient to condemn it even in Old Testament times, but the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ came and set up his church, and wrote or inspired the whole of the New

Testament without one single example or authority for the use of instrumental music in the church that he established, can leave no doubt that the Old Baptists who refuse this custom, or man made invention, are well within the bounds of scriptural authority in so doing. We also observe that Jesus renewed the use and practice of vocal music in the New Testament church which was practiced in the old church under the law as will be shown by the great songs that Moses and the children of Israel sung when they crossed the Red Sea. Read Exodus 15th chapter and then the songs of David, Solomon and others. This plainly shows that they used the vocal music then, and when the Lord established his church it is found the last night before his crucifiction that he instituted communion, foot washing and also when he was through they sung a song and went out. Matt. 26:30 and Mark 14:26 says, "And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives." This reference shows beyond any doubt that the Lord himself might have engaged in this hymn, but if he did not it is certain that he encouraged it with his countenance and presence. If there was not something wrong with istrumental music I wonder why He or His apostles did not get an organ or some other kind of instrument? It shows very clearly to me that there was something wrong with it in the sight of God. This is not the only place in the Scriptures that it is shown that David was not always countenanced as being right. In I Chron. 21:1 it shows that Satan moved David to number the children of Israel, and the same thing was very displeasing to the Lord. This being so we can readily understand that the same thing could have happened when David did this inventing or adopting the use of instrumental music. To say the least there can be no Bible authority found for their use in the light of all the arguments made in connection in this article.

I think what I have written will show thoroughly the ideas the Primitive Baptist Church have had on this subject all through the ages of the New Testament Church of Jesus Christ. Instrumental music is in many ways popular and is charming to the nature of depraved Adamic creatures, but regardless of this if Jesus and his disciples did not encourage it, and if even the teachings of the Old Testament condemned it, then may God forbid that the Old Baptists should adopt it in this dark and degraded age of the world. Our Lord is soon to come, and my desire is that we should be found clothed and adorned with the doctrine, precepts and examples of him that established the church in its beauty and peculiar garment that the world has no desire to wear.

I would like you to send this to your sister after reading it as I have forgotten her address. After she is through with it I would like to have it back for the references on the subject. I may have it published in one of the papers, the Lord willing. It might be useful as I never see anything on this subject published in the papers this day and time, neither do I hear much said about it from the pulpit.

I want to thank you all again for the interest you have shown in our being in your midst, and we want you to visit us any time you feel like it. I expect to be with you all again on the date announced at Mt. Olive on Sunday, the Lord willing. Hope the Lord may prosper our journey in your midst at that time if according to his holy will. May the Lord bless all the household of faith everywhere to the glory and praise of his high and holy name, and may his

people be comforted and built up in that most pure and holy faith is my prayer. Yours in hope of heaven and eternal glory through grace and mercy through Christ.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES

As we have a recent request for our thoughts on the foregoing subject, we wish to follow Elder Rhodes' remarks by what we had to say editorially in the October 1944 *Signs,* in response to a request from Brother D. W. White, Mount Pleasant, Texas.

As much as in us is we like to comply with the wishes of our brethren, but we hope they realize our dependence upon a higher power than our own to bring forth those things which are profitable to the household of faith. Therefore we cannot write at will upon any subject, but must tarry until the Lord is pleased to exercise our mind and give us light, otherwise we shall be unable to feed his flock. We cannot truthfully say that we have never had any exercise of mind upon the subject of instrumental music in the church. On the contrary, at different times, we have given the matter very serious concern. Generally speaking, we are particularly fond of good music and as a natural gift or art we think it ranks near the top. We know of nothing, perhaps, that is more soothing, uplifting and inspiring to the average human being than music of the right kind, but we feel there is a time and place for all things and we are persuaded that in the gospel church, among the saints, is no place for musical instruments. Many have been the times when we joined others with great delight in the homes of relatives and friends, with a piano or organ to lead us in lifting our voices in songs of praise to God, as we were made to hope, and we commend this in the highest degree to others, but we cannot give our approval to either of these instruments, or any other, in our solemn and sacred assemblies where God is worshipped only in spirit and in truth. Our main reason for objecting to the use of such instruments in our churches is that neither our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who is declared to be the head over all things to the church, nor any of his immediate disciples, who established the early churches, saw fit to make use of or reference to them in any way, shape or form as being necessary in churches of the Christian era. We prefer to adhere to the pattern which they gave us, and do not feel that we should attempt to add to or take anything from that which has been laid down by them. It is no doubt true that David, the psalmist and sweet singer in Israel, employed musical instruments in the worship of his day and perhaps they were used in other times under the law, or during the legal dispensation before the gospel day, but when Jesus came and fulfilled the law in every jot and tittle, he put an end to all other sacrifices and ushered in a new and better day or order of worship. He himself said to the woman of Samaria, "Woman believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father," "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Our honest opinion is that wherever instrumental music is a part of religious worship today it is indicative of legal worshippers, those who have not yet known by experience the liberty and simplicity of the gospel. Let us say further that it is our considered opinion that these things

are employed by religious organizations for the purpose, in part at least, of attracting the young and others to their gatherings, regardless of whether they have or have not been born again and have the grace of God in their hearts. There is in fact quite a spirit of rivalry in some sections of the country as to which so-called church can supply the best music, and particularly at Easter, Christmas and other special seasons of the year, are elaborate and expensive plans made for a grand display of musical talent. At such times the musical program in many instances is by far the most important part of the service and people who seldom attend church services otherwise will on such occasions be found seeking the choicest pews and highest seats in the synagogues, and will go away feeling they have paid their obligations to God for a whole year thereafter.

Little, if any spiritual consideration is shown in the selection of the musician, whether he be organist or vocalist, the main object being to get the best artist at the most reasonable rate, regardless of whether he knows anything about grace or not. We have known of more or less disreputable characters, because of having excellent voices, occupying prominent places as soloists in church choirs and singing before the people Sunday after Sunday. Apparently it never occurred to those responsible for engaging them that they should possess character in addition to musical talent or other qualifications. We have a friend in New York City who has had a fine voice and for years he was in great demand by practically all kinds of religious organizations, especially at their outstanding ceremonies. Jesus said to his disciples, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

The great apostle admonished the church at Corinth in the following manner: "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light and darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." 2 Cor. 6:14-18.

When Israel came up out of Egypt and was delivered by the high and mighty hand of God, they brought with them trinkets of gold as friendly tokens of the Egyptians, but these things proved a curse rather than a blessing to them. It does not pay for the church of God here in this world to copy after or borrow from the religious orders of the day. If the people of God are to maintain their identity as the visible church of the first born they must stand aloof from all that pertains to worldliness in their true spiritual worship and hold fast to the principles of the doctrine of God our Savior as enunciated by his blessed Son and his chosen apostles. In concluding our remarks on this part of our reply to Brother White, we wish to repeat that we think good music is one of the greatest blessings bestowed by a divine providence upon the human race, and in some respects it typifies more nearly and strongly the things of the spirit than anything

we know of, for good music is music in any and all languages, breaking through race barriers and, to a large extent makes for unity of peoples on the face of all the earth, nevetheless, when Christ appears to his regenerated people, he becomes the chiefest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely so that they desire none besides him, and when he speaks his voice is sweeter by far than any earthly dulcimer, and then there is a melody in the heart and soul of his people that earth knows nothing about. R. L. D.

THE CLEFTS OF THE ROCK

"O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." S. S. 2:14.

The Lord and Savior looks down upon his people, his church, his bride, his spouse, his dove, in love, compassion and pity, and comforts her with his words, "O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock!" He says to her, I know thy trials, tribulations, discomfiture and thy condition entirely: I am fully aware of thy suffering and thy persecutions, and look upon thee with love and pity, but thou must be where thou art for it is the only safe place for thee. Although thou art ugly to the world and thy voice is not heard among men, to me, thy countenance is comely and thy voice is sweet. The child, forced into the clefts of the rock and ready to give up in utter despair, hears these words from his Savior and is strengthened to go on.

The dove is pursued by birds of prey, and finds safety in the clefts or cracks in the rocks. The dove here represents his little ones on the earth and in this time state. The rock is Jesus. The rock was perfect and it was whole; then how did the cleft come about? The clefts are the sufferings of Jesus. They were made by the stroke of the law for the salvation of his people. It was the law that thrust the sword in his side and pierced him; it was the law that pierced his hands and his feet with the nail. It was the same law under which you and I stood guilty and condemned.

The law came by Moses. Twice Moses smote the rock that water might come forth, that the children of Israel might drink. The second time, when Israel was nearing the promised land, Moses spoke inadvisedly, and the Lord spake to Moses, "Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them." Moses had to die without carrying his people into the promised land though he was allowed to see that land from the mountain top. So must the law be fulfilled and pass before his people are delivered. Love cannot save or deliver. The law struck Jesus and spent all of its power against his body. The cleft was made; the cleft for the safety of all of his bride. When the law had spent all that it had, and was dead and conquered, the work of the Savior was done and his body must die, yea must be raised again that his bride might follow. Thus was the cleft made in the rock of salvation.

When He caused his goodness to pass before Moses (Num. 20:22) he put Moses in the cleft of the rock. Then as he passed he put his hand before Moses' face that he should not see his glory before it came or as it passed. Moses was held close in the cleft; he could not go to the right or the left, he could not go backward and the hand of God covered him in the front. Moses would have had room to move an arm or to take a step, or turn his head, but no, he was hedged on every side! Even

an effort to move only pressed him against the sharp edges of the rock. Nor could he move out of his state or condition for the very hand of God held him there. My brother, we are told to be still and see the salvation of God. Then as the glory of God passed, he removed his hand and allowed Moses to see his glory from the rear parts. So we are allowed to see the mercy and the protecting love of God and his blessings only after the thing is passed. Before it comes, or while it is before us and with us, we can see no good that can come out of it for his hand is before our face.

Consider the cleft. It is not a pleasant place for this flesh. It is so narrow as not to allow the slightest move on our part; and every effort that we make to move only presses our flesh against the sharp and cutting edges of the cleft. It is indeed a restricted place. It is a hard and uncomfortable place; there is no reclining there, there is no sleeping there nor is it a place of rest. In the cleft we are hedged about with the firmness of the rock. Thus it is a most unpleasant place to be, and the flesh has to be *forced* into the cleft. As it is pressed and forced in the narrow cleft, all of the false hopes, false pride and self-sufficiencies are circumcised and cut away by the sharp edges of the rock. There is not room in the cleft for any of the false hopes, idols or doctrines of the world. Jesus did not suffer for such things, nor will he have any part of them. So as we are forced into this cleft the body is crucified with the cuts and pricks that it receives. But the cleft is a safe place, and the Lord will have his in that place. Abraham dwelt in the mountains in the clefts of the rock, while Lot went to dwell in the plains and in the city of Sodom. But later in God's own proper time all of the riches (worldly goods) of Lot were burned up and destroyed with the wicked city, and Lot, by the mercy of God, escaped with his life, and went to dwell in the mountains in the clefts of the rock. Such is a safe place and God will have his in such places. The world seeks not these places, indeed the world hates such places. So His are safe from the world when they dwell there. We do not seek safety while we lay on beds of ease, while we are at rest in this body; but when we are in afflictions and when troubles beset us on every side; when we are in the furnace, or in the lion's den, or when we are helpless in the great fish. It is then we are "bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus," and it is then we find safety from the world in the cleft of the rock; it is then we are climbing the winding stairs and passing the secret places of the stairs were Jesus dwells.

Jesus knows the sufferings of this place; he has borne every affliction that any of his will ever face. He looks down and sees his dove in the cleft of the rock, and in tender love and compassion he addresses her, "O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs" I know the thoughts and pangs of thy heart, but thou art in a safe place: thou art in the clefts but the clefts of the rock, and the world cannot reach thee there, thou art protected by my strength, and thou art safe indeed. "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice." O Lord what is my countenance before thee? Are they taken away from the things of this world and the things of this life? Is my face turned toward thy kingdom? Are my hands stretched out toward thee, and do my feet step in thy direction? Am I submissive and obedient to thy will? O that I might! But thou knoweth that this flesh is strong and that there is a great conflict within

me, and that the struggle is for my life indeed. This flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh so that I cannot do the things that I would. O Lord, canst thou hear my voice? It is so weak and feeble! Wilt thou enable me to call upon thy name, and to be found seeking and crying unto thee? "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer."

Are not these words of the Lord and Master a matter of instruction and admonition to his dove and his bride? Are we not admonished to be found in the way of seeking after him, and crying unto him? And being thus admonished and instructed shall we not be made to do just that? In the 91st Psalm we read, "He shall call upon me, and I will answer him." We are brought into such a condition that we are forced through necessity to call upon him, not for trivial things, but even for our very life itself. We are forced into such narrow, confining, cutting and piercing clefts that we are made to turn our face unto him; made to show him our countenance; made to cry in despair unto him. Lift up our hearts O Lord, that we may turn our face toward thee, and our hearts and our voice unto thee!

"For sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." Shall the Lord not hear thy voice; and shall he not notice our countenance? Does your brother in the church ever notice your countenance? Does he not detect the very look on your face, and sometimes tell your troubles and experiences better than you can? Does he not hear your voice; detect either the pride or the humility as the case may be, in the very tone of your voice, and even call it to your attention before you realize your trouble yourself? Does not the contrite heart speak through the tone of your voice and the countenance of your face? Then, dear little one, if a brother with all of his imperfections and failings, can detect it, what thinkest thou of the Lord? The Lord who knoweth the very thoughts of your heart from afar off, the Lord God who chose you from the foundation of the world. Yes, the cries of his are sweet to him, and the countenance is comely for his robe of righteousness has been spread over them. The Lord sees his little ones in a redeemed state and speaks to them, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away." Arise and come away from what? Lift up thy head, thy face, thy voice and thy heart; lift them up above and away from the things of this world and this life, and show them unto the Savior and Redeemer, for they are all fair unto him. As we are enabled to obey this instruction and this admonition, even so are we lifted up to see his glory and his salvation.

The Savior speaks to his dove; and he speaks to her while she is yet in the clefts of the rock, and in the secret places of the stairs; he tells her what she *must* do, and sends her a message of love and devotion. O may we be enabled to hear his instruction, and given strength to *obediently follow* his command.

A. D. ALSTON
418 Monroe St., Herndon, Va.

Perrin, Texas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am sending in my remittance, and also a letter from Brother W. H. Staggs that I would be glad to have published in the *Signs of the Times*. Our dear Brother Staggs passed away June 30, 1949. He was a great man in Israel. He united with the Ft. Worth Church a few years ago and was baptized by the late Elder J. R. Hardy. He was a faithful mem-

ber until God called him home. The writer, assisted by Elder W. A. Little, tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved family and friends in connection with his belief. Your brother in hope. (Elder) C. Y. OSTEEN

ELDER C. Y. OSTEEN, MY DEAR BROTHER: Your letter received this A.M. So sorry to hear of your wife's misfortune. Your letter was certainly glad tidings to me, except the part telling of your wife's injury. As for my writing anything that would comfort you, I feel to be what Job said his friends were—poor physicians. However, here in this old corrupt world, on which God put a curse, things do happen to us that are very unpleasant; they are hard to endure; we wonder why it is thus with me; they bring trials and hardships; our plans and arrangements are all gone, and our wishes and desires have all come to naught. But, my dear brother, we have been made to believe in a God who controls all things both in heaven and in earth, and is too wise to make a mistake and too good to be unkind. "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?" Job 26:13-14.

Last Friday morning a neighbor of mine started to work as usual with his wife and two year old baby: they were young and very ambitious; buying a home and had great plans for the future. She drove with her husband to where he was employed and was taking the baby to her mother to keep while she was working on her job. But, alas! God had other plans for them. While enroute to her mother's home, the car seemed to swerve and hit a telephone pole, throwing her and the baby against the front of the car, killing them instantly. Poor man, his family all gone without giving him a moments notice. Calamity! Yes, it certainly was as we mortals view it, but not to Him who controls all things in heaven and in earth. Brother Cad, God has promised his people that he would not put more on them than they could bear, and with every temptation he would provide a way of escape. Looking back over my life at the trials and temptations I have had to face—which was very small compared with what many others have endured—it seems that deliverance just got there in time; had it been one second later I would have been gone completely. But we believe that our God has all the good and perfect gifts to distribute among his people, and he is never late or early in his giving to any of his children. All their needs shall be supplied according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Phil. 4:19.

My dear brother, it has been my happy privilege, many times, to sit and listen to you preach the unsearchable riches of our God, and exalt the name of the conquering Prince Immanuel with such force and power that it carried me away from the dumb and corrupt things of nature and caused my mind to dwell on better things; it made me more determined to not draw back, but to press forward; it was food to my hungry soul. So, I believe that you have an anchor, my brother, in your present unhappy condition, that the world knows nothing about. That anchor is, to my understanding, that hope which God has put in the hearts of his children. "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us. Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast." Hebrew 6: 18-19. We read in Jer. 17:7, "Blessed

is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." With our modern preachers it is the other way around. They say, if you will only trust in the Lord, and put your hope in him, then he will bless you and claim you as his child. It seems to me from what the old prophet has said, and my own personal experience—if I have one—if it don't please the Lord to bless you with some knowledge of him; show you what he is, and also show you what you are; that the very breath in your nostrils circulates strictly in keeping with his command; that he is the Lord, the God of hosts; that all the pleasure and happiness you have comes down from the Father above, and without him you can do nothing; if it don't please the Lord to bless you with some of these things, all the soul winning campaigns, prayers or sermons will never be able to raise this dead creature. It just don't come that way, does it brother?

Would love to come to see you and will if possible. I am not well, have trouble in my chest. However, I think it is improving. My wife and myself is the family at my house now. My youngest boy, Leroy, went into the army about two months ago. The other boy, John, comes to see us most every week end. Rather lonesome here, just the wife and I. Have often thought of the bird; she builds her nest, lays her eggs and then sits on them until they hatch; then she feeds them and they grow to where they are able to fly. Then they are gone in as many different directions as they are in numbers. It takes the bird only a month or so to raise her family, but it takes many years for man to bring his flock to maturity; however, it seems to me to be about the same process.

When we think of the multiplied millions of things that are going on, continually, in this world we are forced to believe that our God has a master mind, or he would forget some little part of it, and there would be a wreck that he did not foresee. But let us admit that his foolishness is far greater than all our knowledge and stand on the following thus saith the Lord, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isa. 46:10. His thoughts are as high above ours as the heavens are higher than the earth. If the God that we have been made to believe in had desired to make us his equal, we would have been. We read, Whatsoever he desireth even that he doeth. I believe every object of his creation, that has life, is just as wise as he desired to make them here in this world, and they know just as much about him spiritually as it pleases him to reveal to them and no more. If we know anything about him spiritually it is a gift from him. Faith is a gift and it comes from God. It does not come by works under the law, for the law is a curse sent on us. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Gal. 3:13.

Well, I reckon that this should be brought to a close for I do not know that I have any knowledge of what I have been trying to say. However, I believe I love you, and all that believe as I do. Of course this is foolishness to those who do not believe as we do, for they believe it is optional with them to accept or reject. But we read in John 6:44, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Well if our Captain has said that, I believe the door is closed until he gets ready to open it. He says I open and none can shut; I shut and none can open. Isa. 22:22. Yes, he opens the blind eyes; the mouth of the dumb; the

windows of heaven; the scriptures; the graves and the door of utterance. The apostle Paul asked his Ephesian brethren to pray for him, that utterance may be given him to open his mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel.

Well I'll now quit. It is my wish, and prayer when possible, that your wife will soon recover from her injury, and that it may please the Lord to give you strength and courage in your hour of need, for he is faithful who promised. Your brother, in hope of eternal life, which God who cannot lie, promised before the world began.

W. H. STAGGS

2321 Seargent, Joplin, Mo.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: It is with a shameful heart and in a confused state of mind that I write you this morning. My subscription expired in the early spring of '48 while I was in Gould, Okla. and I have neglected to renew to my own hurt.

I have been too much concerned with worldly position and pride I am afraid. I humbly believe I have been taught of the Lord and most of the time I am quite content. I have spare time now and read the Bible more. Most of the time it condemns me. The poet wrote of my state when he said: "I am so vile so prone to sin, I fear that I'm not born again." In July 1947 I offered myself to Hopewell Church, Mangum, Okla., Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. I had so very little to offer in evidence that God had done anything to or for me, but the church saw fit to accept me. Elder Green baptized my sister and me on the same day we offered to the church. I was happy in the extreme. I was even using, that the church accepted me, as an evidence that I might be one of His, but before night I was afraid I had done them a great wrong, afraid I had deceived the very saints of God. The next meeting day was the day for the Lord's Supper and the washing of feet. I felt a desire to get on my knees and wash their feet, but I felt there were none there but were too good to wash mine. If not deceived His spirit was with me and told me it was not for any good that I had done, the honor and glory was all to Christ, the Son, who paid where I was unable to pay. I did wash their feet and they washed mine and I felt satisfied about it. I knew that God was being worshipped in Spirit and in truth. The next day, as usual, I looked back afraid. Not at the whole service but at my part in it. Was I not an imposter?

The brethren tell me that I am not to feel fit save in Jesus. Hearing their experience makes me feel better for a time but I always come back to the thought they cannot know me as I am. How can they say they have been and are in the same state? My father in the flesh is a great comfort to me, or was, I now live too far away to see him often. He seems always to answer my questions just right. He always seems so right in everything and I so wrong.

I have taken up too much of your time already. If you will put a note in the *Signs* that I would like to hear from readers and Old Baptists in the Joplin, Mo. area I will appreciate it. Pray for me if you can be enlightened to do so. SHERMAN F. BUCKNER

Route 1, Box 21, Maynardsville, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am enclosing check to further my subscription to the *Signs* and that of a dear sister. I lost my wife, the pride of this vain life, in Dec. 1946. My barn burned May 2, 1948 and I was thrust in the hospital in Knoxville, Tenn. for eight days in Aug. 1948. Amid it all the Lord has been very good to me and merciful to my

unrighteousness. I feel he has put death, hell and the grave under his feet for a wretch like me.

Mother came from Halifax Co., N. C., at the age of fifteen, with her parents in 1860 and settled on the north side of Union Co. near Powell's River, now North Fork Norris Lake. Father, the late Elder Jos. C. Walton, of Union Co. and mother met and married in 1874. I was born Dec. 18, 1877. Time passed and I spent my boyhood days thinking I would live a long, long time and eventually if I had to die God would have pity and mercy for being a good boy, etc. But ah! what a mistaken idea. I spent my school days in a one room school-house. Satan's blind captive all the while. I married Sept. 1, 1901, Miss Viola Perkey, Tuttrell, Tenn. To this union seven children were born, three survive. I am left with a fourteen year old granddaughter. Father, mother and two sisters have died. I am the eldest of father's family. Time passed and in March 1923 I professed a hope in Jesus the Savior of sinners and united with the church at Powder Spring Gap at the head of Dotson's Creek, Union Co., Tenn. in the Powell's Valley Primitive Baptist Association of Tenn.

We believe in one eternal, all wise, all powerful, complete, sovereign God in all things. He makes no discrimination as to good things and bad things, but every event of time and every atom thereof honors, praises and glorifies his great name which is above every name in heaven or in earth. It has now been over twenty-five years since he was pleased to manifest his goodness and greatness to this sinner, the chief of all sinners, and to bring me down, down to death until my soul (whole life) fainted within me, and I was constrained to pray, "Lord save me." The voice said, I have put death, hell and the grave under my feet for you. Not only so but for the sins of the whole world (covenant world). I am Ruler, King and Judge, these mortal powers must fail.

"Deep harrow then, my vitals froze,
Death struck, I ceased the tide to stem,
When suddenly a star arose,
It was the star of Bethlehem."

This is a brief sketch of my unprofitable life and I must close lest I take too much space. I like the *Signs* and may they long continue to praise His name. "Now, brethren I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." In a glorious hope of eternal life beyond this vale of tears. JOHN E. WALTON

DEAR ELDER DODSON: At the request of some of the members of Liberty Church, Los Angeles, Cal. I am submitting a letter written by Sister Helen Jane Jones, 1200 N. Poinsettia Drive, Hollywood-46, Cal. received by the church during the absence of Sister Helen on a motor trip to Vancouver, British Columbia in August, 1949. I feel sure the readers of the *Signs* will enjoy such a fine spiritual letter.

MERLE WILSON, Church Clerk.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD: From a heart full of fellowship I greet you in the name of the Lord to tell you in a feeble way how much we will miss being with you this Sunday. We are seeing some of the most breath-taking scenery to be found in the whole country. I am reminded constantly on all sides of the hand of the Lord. He has created such a beautiful world and, in contrast, man defiles and destroys everything he touches. Towering trees and mountains that seem to touch the heavens really cut man down to his

true size—that of less than nothing.

In my stumbling way, I want to convey to you in writing how much you, the church, means to me. Your kindness, your love and esteem manifested toward this poor sinner have meant more to me than I can ever say. I pray the good Lord to keep me at your feet, loving you and esteeming you for the truth's sake.

On the fourth Sunday this month (August) it will be twenty-five years since I united with the precious old church, Sharon, in Iowa. Six years later mother and I left for the East Coast. The Eastern Baptists were so wonderful to us and we will always love them dearly. There was never any lack on their part, but we could not feel we would be living in the East permanently. God set our feet toward California with intervals in Indiana and Louisiana. Truly our church home here is infinitely precious to us. I have tried to thank God for our dear Pastor. His humility and his prayerful preaching mark him truly a man of God. I hope we all appreciate him and his high calling as we should.

The Lord has been so good to me all the days of my unprofitable life. His will in my life has been demonstrated to me so many times that when I am high and lifted up I wonder how I can doubt his love and merciful care. Yet when I am in the slough of darkness and despondency, which is my condition too much of the time, I am tormented by doubts and fears. He is mindful of his promises and never fails us. He does not always give us what we ask for, but he does send what we need. We always have enough for our needs, but never enough for our wants.

When our minds were changed for us about coming to California from south Louisiana where there were none of our churches we could attend, and before we were led here, I was constantly reminded during my work, at home and at play, of the scripture, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. 6:33. Month by month I see these things being added in my life, and the promises being fulfilled. I feel that scripture was given to us so forcibly by the Holy Spirit it caused both our minds to be changed. My mother was given the same scripture at the same time I was and we did not know of it until later.

Liberty Church has been a haven to me, "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Isa. 32:2. Elder Dearing, I have often prayed that you might be led to preach on that scripture some time, but perhaps my prayer was selfish. Mother and I are sending a contribution for the church. When and if the good Lord wills we will see you before too long. Pray for us, dear people. Especially speaking for myself, pray for me in extra measure, I seem to need so much charity for I have so many faults to be overlooked. Your unworthy sister if one at all. HELEN J. JONES

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Elder George L. Weaver formerly Amelia, Ohio is now located at 1902½ Marcum Terrace, Huntington, W. Va. Please address him there.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Elder James W. Linn has moved from Hammond, W. Va. to Route 16, Hopewell Road, Fairmont, W. Va. and requests that his mail be sent there.

The many friends of Elder W. N. GREEN, Altus, Okla. will be saddened to know of his passing Nov. 21, 1949. A suitable obituary will follow. Route 4, Vernon, Texas. MRS. C. M. KESTER.

EDITORIALS

RUTHERFORD, N. J. FEBRUARY, 1950

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"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. 2:12-13.

At the request of Sister Christine Hudson of the Pratt City Church, Birmingham, Ala., I am attempting to examine this passage of scripture. I do so with reluctance, because I know that much controversy has been carried on about this particular text. I feign would attempt to write with the expectation of removing controversy from the minds of the dear brethren, nor with a thought that I might heal the wounds caused by such argumentation. Since it is her request, I will, if blessed of the Lord, proceed to give such views as I have. I do not lay any claim to superiority over any one else about any portion of the written truth. The views that I will lay down are not to be looked upon as a standard for any one to follow, for I freely confess that I may be wrong about it all.

From the time that I started to read over thirty-five years ago I have been finding this question in various Old School Baptist periodicals. I have read many versions of it by different translators, and many views of the different versions by the brotherhood. I have not been able to accept all that I have read, nor, for that matter, all that I have heard from the pulpit. I have heard at least three views presented that are outstanding. Some of each one have, at times at least, left me to think that theirs was given direct from heaven or the Spirit. This cannot be true with at least two of these views, and maybe with all of them, even though I am agreed with one.

If we must cut up or leave out, misquote or change the wording of the Bible to carry our point, we cannot lay any serious claim to having our views considered by the Old Baptists. Parts of the text can be quoted and we may be found advocating strange doctrines. It seems to me that I have beheld a tendency to cut out parts of the scripture until only the word "work" was left. On the other hand, it seems to me that in order to avoid anything that would say something about "time salvation" that we have left the high and glorious meaning that the apostle had in mind. Mind you, dear brethren, I say that it seems to me that this is true. It may not have been your intention in either case to have misconstrued the Scriptures.

I want to examine the Philippian letter from the beginning down to and including the text. As we scan the first chapter we find: 1st. (verse two) Grace and peace from God to you; 2nd. (verse three) Paul thanked God upon every remembrance for them; 3rd. (verse six) Paul's confidence in God beginning and ending the work in them; 4th. (verses 9-10) That your love may abound more

and more in knowledge and in judgment, to the extent that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, and in connecnection with this let us note what the apostle Peter said. His corroboration of Paul is too good to pass. He says, to add charity to all the other things enumerated, and then he gives us a key to the whole. If we did not have these keys as we read the Scriptures we might often stumble at what is written. He says, "If these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 1:5-8) 5th. (verse 11) They were filled with fruits of righteousness (not by their own filling, but) by Jesus Christ. Paul now turns to the events with which he is surrounded and says, "I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel." The words "which happened" are supplied by translators. If such words are to be reckoned with at all in dealing with the Bible, let us, inasmuch as we do not read that the Lord has appointed any certain translator, read it as Paul used it in other places (See Rom. 8:32; Eph. 1:11; I Thes. 3:3) and say that, the things which were appointed unto me have fallen out to the furtherance of the gospel (verse 12); His bonds, as a result of these things befalling him, were manifest (verse 13); and the brethren, seeing the things befalling him according to the appointment of God, and the bonds that accompanied it all, they waxed confident and became bolder in preaching (verses 14-18); 7th. Now he comes to that place that every child of God comes sometime in his life. He acknowledges that whether we live or die that Christ is magnified in our body. In both conditions it is wonderful for him to contemplate—to know that God rules life and death to the end that he is not, nor cannot be robbed of his glory. For me to live is Christ (look at Gal. 2:20 in connection with that), but to die is gain (verses 21-28); 8th. Do not be terrified by your adversaries, for them appearing against you is evidence of their perdition (Isa.. 54.17), but to you of salvation, AND THAT OF GOD, for unto you is given in the behalf of Christ (but not in your behalf) to not only believe on him, but also to suffer (not for what you have done but) for his sake.

Now let us leave that chapter and launch out into the second in which our text is so well placed. But, in leaving it, we do not want to lose sight of what has been and is being done for the saints, not only at Philippi, but all of the Lord's humble poor. This salvation is of God. This the apostle has emphatically told us. It being of God, "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." (verses 1-2) Now we are coming to the text. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." (verse 5). What is the mind that was in Christ Jesus? Was it not a mind of obedience? Are we as a people afraid of his obedience? Must we dodge and run from the fact his people are obedient in him? Are we afraid that somebody will call us names if we say anything about God's children obeying him? Let us see. "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness

of men: And being found in fashion, as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, and to the glory of God the Father." (verses 6-11.) This is the mind that was in Christ, and it is the mind that the church at Philippi was told to let be in them. The exaltation of Christ; the giving of the name above every name; the bringing of all knees to subjection before him, and the confession of all tongues was predicated on his Father's will. There is not a scintilla of truth that the obedience of Christ, and certainly that of his little children, is separate and apart from the inwrought work of God. He, as our Redeemer, and we, as his brethren, bow in humble submission and confess in meekness of spirit that we cannot do anything without our Father. (John 5:17; 5:30; 6:38; 8:28; 15:5;) God did not exalt the Lamb for doing all this; he did not have the mind of sacrifice in order to have all this done to and for him. But at the time, or simultaneous with his having that mind, he was exalted. The text is predicated upon these self evident facts. As Christ was not exalted for having this mind, so are the children of God not exalted for having a like mind. If we could just for once realize what a great blessing it is to have a mind to obey; to have grace given for the hour of need; to have the will and the do wrought in us, we would then quit once and forever talking about being blessed for doing what is right. When we see so many that seemingly have no thought towards God and godliness; that are without God and without hope in the world; that are pursuing the ways of death, and then are given a mind, and an unction from on high, and the mind of Christ bearing witness with our mind, we thus draw back in objection to saying that we deserve a blessing for the blessing.

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." If language means anything; if the inspired commands, as written by the sacred writers, carry any weight at all, then it will be impossible to separate the word "wherefore" and the command to "work out your own salvation!" That they had been obeying, none surely will deny. That they were commanded to continue as they had been none will question. Their obedience was wrought in them in the past and is assured them for the future. This mind that they are commanded to have is the same mind that Christ had. Their working out this salvation is produced in them in the same way that Christ implored his Father to do the will of God instead of his own. It is a mind that supersedes the human or natural mind. The church is told, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." Col. 2:6, and it will be applicable in this case. Ye received Christ unconditionally did you not? Did he not come to you? Had you made a start towards him? Did you perform certain stipulations before he was received by you? No, no, dear child, none of that. There are great and grand mysteries here. That he finished the work of the salvation of the saints we know that none can deny. But here is a command to work out that salvation. It is not inconsistent. It is compatible and in perfect harmony with the will of God

concerning the children of the kingdom. It is as much the will of God for them to work out this salvation that is finished as it is for them to labor to enter into the rest that remains for the children of God. Heb. 4:9-11.

This working out of their salvation is the mind of Christ in action. I see and hear much about the children of God not being active. I just do not understand what is meant by this. I cannot find that in the Bible; it has not been my experience. In the Scriptures there is as little to support the theory that God's children are not active, as there is to support them in working for salvation. Working for a salvation, whether a timely one or eternal is to say that doing right is not enough reward or blessing. It is the same dress, perhaps with attractive colors and changes, that has been lurking close around the church since the days when Jesus trod the shores of Gallilee. To say that the children of God are not active, is to say that the inwrought righteousness of Christ is not effective in them. This church-in-action thought is not in order to something more, but it is BECAUSE OF GOD WORKING IN THEM TO WILL AND TO DO OF HIS OWN PLEASURE. When the mind of Christ is prevailing in his people they always please the Father. The pleasure that the Father has in the Son, he likewise has in his people. I am not talking about such trifling things as my fleshly mind would lead me to do; I do not have time for such a doctrine as that; I want to spend my few remaining days talking about that God who is pleased in both his Son and his people, but that that pleasure is in the righteousness of the Son and not in our filthiness.

The mind of Christ in action in his brethren brings them to making themselves of no reputation. How low in shame and ignominy he did go in working out a lasting salvation for his bride; how did he bear the jeers and taunts of his people to bring them home to God; how exquisitely precious is his treading the wine press alone for them. If his mind is in us and is abounding, or to say it another way, if we are being moved by the working of God in us to the working out of what is ours, then we are being brought to servitude in the kingdom of Jesus Christ. How desolate would be our condition should we be deprived of giving a cup of cold water in his name. Dear child of God, as you go your way by the footsteps of the flock (and Jesus is part of that flock), would it not be most miserable to never be blessed any more to follow? Ah, precious reader, how your pure minds are stirred, and how your poor heart is moved in joy and is thrilled with the peace that passeth all understanding, as you are counted worthy in his name to bear the toil through evil as well as good report, to even be blessed to be counted the offscouring of all things for his dear name's sake. (1 Cor. 4:15.) His mind led him onward and upward to the zenith of his earthly visit. He became obedient unto death, and it is worthy of note that that death was not an honorable death to receive the applause of men, but that it was in shame, even the shame of dying for sinners, of being numbered with transgressors and making his grave with the wicked.

Ah, dear sister and all that truly fear His blessed name, I am carried away in awe and wonder at the grand and glorious beauty in the text. That word "also" means so much to the whole. Not only did he become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, but his Father was exulting him also. It was a glorious thing for him to die. It was a glorious thing for him to lay down his life, but his Father also gave

him a name that is above every name. What majesty and wisdom is displayed in his dying. What things are also hidden. One thief knew it, the other did not know a thing about it. The mob knew nothing about it, for, says the apostle, "had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." I Cor. 2:8. To them a lawbreaker died, but to the humble followers a Friend died, and to his Father, his Son, as manifested in the flesh, died, and in dying "led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." Eph. 4:8. In this (but not for it) he was given a name that is above every name. It is such a name, that at the mention of it, every knee bows and every tongue confesses that he is Lord. Now there is a counterpart to this in the lives of God's children. "Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord," Isa. 54:17, and that righteousness as wrought in them and made manifest by the glorious work of the Spirit in their minds, brings this vile and wicked and ungodly world to bow to them and to confess that they are the anointed of the Lord. "Who is she that looked forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" cries Solomon as he is given to view the church. And how does this world, with their jargon of tongues, and their kneeling at all kinds of altars, save a throne of grace, to bow and confess to the superiority of the children of God? Ah, dear saints, there is the key. By their hatred of you. As you go forth in the race, running in that good old way of grace, first, last, and all the time, you shall be hated by all the world. Why? The echo comes again and again, why? Because even the devil knew, and his evil hordes know as much to-day, that you have something that they do not have. If your only conversation is the blood, the soul-cleansing blood of the Lamb, mark my words this world will lay in waiting to spy out your liberties and to cast your name out as evil. If you are enabled to work out that salvation that God works in you, it follows that your sole trust will be in what was in the mind of Christ. And every tongue will confess that you are a follower of that wine-bibber, and they will mockingly bow to you that you believe in the sovereignty of God in earth, hell and all deep places, but that your life here on earth is a life of poverty and hardship!

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." This has been so from the beginning of your experience. He has not tried to work, nor walked in the aisles of heaven wringing his hands in anxiety because you would not let him work. He has not been an idle spectator of your travel here in this world, surmising how well, or even how much better it would be, if you would work out what God had worked in. The apostle did not intimate such unstable qualities about our God. He did not leave poor hobbling sinners to rest and trust in their own strength and ability. Job did not know where to find him (Job 23), David fell into grievous sin (Ps. 51), Jonah had to learn that salvation was of the Lord (Jonah 2), Paul had to learn that, even though the will was wrought in him, he could not perform that that was good (Rom. 7), and Peter, even though he was sure to the point of boastfulness that he would never deny the Lord, had to be shown that he was nothing but a poor, vain, deluded liar (Matt. 26:75). But here is an opening for every dear child of God. It is an opening into the sweetest rest that a poor pilgrim has ever found. It gives a command. To Job it would say, He will be a light springing upwards and outwards to guide your feet; to David it

would say, I am your righteousness and by my Spirit, I will work in you all your righteousness; to Jonah it would say, that as you have been my witness heretofore you shall also be my witness in Nineveh; to Paul it would say, my grace is sufficient for you; to Peter it would say, when you are converted, strengthen thy brethren. To one and all thus the Spirit sayeth to them, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Arminians may handle that much deceitfully, making merchandise of the souls of men, but to them who are the called, both Jew and Greek, it speaks of far better news based upon a far better covenant. It speaks of the mercies of David, the sure work of the Spirit. It would not change the meaning of the matter if we were to say that the children of God, when this is brought to them in the power of the Spirit, cannot help but work out this salvation. Do you mean to write that can't-help-it-doctrine? I would write it as Paul wrote it, yes. I would not use it as a cloak for my unrighteousness, no, a thousand times no, for no writer has thus used it in the Scriptures. It has always been the same kind of enemy that would hide behind the predestination as it has that would accuse the church of it. Neither party has been blessed with the Spirit of God. But that God's little children are helpless, the Scriptures clearly teach. To those that have the mind of Christ, they, and none others, realize it. To them the Spirit declares, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Only a will to do it would leave you as helpless as Paul, but the do worked in you, has its reflection and counterpart outwardly.

W. D. G.

"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." Matt. 6:9-13.

We have been asked to give our views on what is commonly referred to as "The Lord's Prayer." To begin with, so far as we know, Old School Baptists are pretty well agreed that the real prayer of our Lord is found in the seventeenth chapter of John. Luke tells us that in response to the request of one of his disciples, who said unto him, "Lord, teach us to pray," Jesus replied by saying, "When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil." We would particularly like to have our readers note the difference between the wording of Luke's quotation and that of Matthew. Matthew quotes our Lord as having prefaced the prayer by saying, "After this manner therefore pray ye." We would like to stress the point that the manner was seemingly more important than the exact wording, which is not quoted verbatim by any of the apostles in any of their writings. Having said this, we would like further to ask our readers to turn to the sixth chapter of Matthew and read from the fifth through the eighth verses and see how Jesus taught them, first, how *not* to pray. They were particularly told not to pray as the hypocrites do: "for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward." He

then told them in the affirmative how they should pray, by saying, "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." He further emphasized how they should *not* pray by saying, "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him." We can but wonder, at times, if they are not *heathen* who are constantly using vain repetitions in repeating what they term the Lord's Prayer. Our understanding of the meaning of the word *heathen* is one who does not know the true God, whom to know is life eternal. We need not go abroad to some foreign land to find them, for there are millions of them here in our own great country. How true it is that many of them are using vain repetitions in repeating these words Sunday after Sunday, year in and year out, having no real understanding of their true significance. Let us again emphasize that it is the manner of prayer, rather than the literal saying of these words. By going back to the beginning of this memorable sermon (chapter five), we will see that Jesus was addressing his disciples. None but a real disciple can in the true sense of the word address God as his Father, for it is by the workings of the Holy Spirit that we say "Abba Father." God is the creator of all mankind, as well as all other creation, but he is not the spiritual Father of any but his chosen children. Only those who are born of the Spirit can rightfully say, "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name," meaning thereby, "Holy and reverend is his name." This appellation does not rightfully belong to any but God. The high sounding titles which church dignitaries and others apply to themselves are condemned by the word of God. Jesus said, "Call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven." Notwithstanding this, literally millions of men and women in the world to-day are required by their so-called under shepherds to call them "Father." Others freely appropriate unto themselves the appellation of "Reverend," and some go so far as to add "The Right Reverend Dr. So and So." They have no authority from the Scriptures which they profess to interpret and expound for applying any such titles to vile and corrupt humanity. They are of like passions as others, for all are made of the same corruptible clay.

By way of proceeding with our subject, we wish to call attention to the fact that Jesus was here in the flesh with his disciples when he taught them to pray, saying, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." We believe that this prayer concerned particularly the coming of the Gospel Kingdom which he and his disciples were to shortly establish here in the world, which would not take place until after his death and resurrection. Shortly thereafter we find that Jesus himself said to them: "Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." Mark 9:1. The apostles and others witnessed the coming of his kingdom in great power and glory, and all bore testimony to the things which they saw and felt. The preaching of the gospel in Paul's day was, as it must be to-day if any good is accomplished, in demonstration of the Spirit and with power sent down from heaven. We humbly

hope we have experienced in some wonderful sense the power of God's kingdom, which is not of this world, and neither is it seen except by an eye of faith. Unless we are a terribly deceived mortal, we have been quickened by the same mighty power of God which was wrought in Christ in raising him from the dead. We hope we can truthfully say, "Whereas I was blind, now I see." It is here in this life of toil and struggle that we are continually made to cry, "Give us this day our daily bread." David feared that he would some day perish by the hand of Saul, and when we are left to ourselves we are fearful that we will be overcome by our fleshly enemies. How precious are those promises which declare that, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be," and "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Such bulwarks as these are, indeed, strengthening and will hold the weak believer up in the distressing hour.

"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." In Luke it says, "Forgive us our sins," and it would appear that by the word *debts* is meant sins. God's people are said to be ten thousand talents in debt, and not having a farthing with which to pay. Therefore in order to be set free and delivered from the bondage of sin, our only hope of having the debt canceled is through forgiveness by the atoning blood of the blessed Lamb of God, who was slain before the foundation of the world, in the mind and purpose of God, that in the fulness of time he should come into the world, suffer and die and by rising again redeem and sanctify his chosen people. If we are made to feel the need of God's forgiveness towards us, should we not likewise be willing to forgive those who have wronged or are indebted to us? We fear this is often not the case. Many who have received the forgiveness of God by and through the atoning blood of Jesus, appear to be hardhearted and unforgiving towards their brethren, demanding an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. These things ought not to be. If God has forgiven us of our sins, how readily ought we to be to forgive others their trespasses against us. We hope these things will be pondered in the hearts of those of the household of faith.

We have never understood to our own personal satisfaction the meaning of the words, "And lead us not into temptation." James says, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man." On the other hand the record declares that "Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the devil." Luke 4:1-2. This, in substance, is also recorded by Matthew and Mark. We are satisfied that it was the purpose of the infinite God that his only begotten Son should, among other things, be tempted in all points, like as we in order that he might become a glorious High Priest whose feelings could be touched with our infirmities, and yet be without sin. Likewise, it must be in the purpose of Almighty God that his people must needs encounter temptation, along with other trials and tribulations, but we are definitely persuaded that James was right when he said, "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." Most assuredly, as long as we abide in this tabernacle of clay, we shall of necessity be made to pray to our God to "deliver us from evil." In the purpose of God, Pharaohs and Goliaths are raised up to confront and bedevil the Lord's people, but God will also raise up his Moses' and Davids to lead his people

out of the land of bondage and to overthrow the powers of evil. The mightiest weapon of all is the sword of his Spirit, and the devil will always inevitably have to yield when we can say in the name of Jesus, "Get thee behind me Satan." We can find no staff comparable to that of faith in God to lean upon, for he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think, and he will deliver us in due time. We shall be made to know that God is good, immensely good, and kind are all his ways, when he has passed by and we behold his backparts. One said in substance, he hath delivered, he doth deliver, and in whom we trust he will yet deliver.

The petition we are considering closes with the declaration, "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." How fitting and becoming it is in the Lord's people in their prayers and supplications unto God to acknowledge his omnipotence! Truly, it is he who has made the worlds and all that in them is; it is he who gives us our daily bread; it is only he who can forgive us of our sins and deliver us from all evil. Why not, therefore, as Moses did, ascribe greatness unto our God, for he is the Rock, and his work is perfect. It is he who has preserved us in Christ Jesus and will keep us from final falling, and at last receive us unto himself, where there are pleasures for ever more. Should we not, therefore, rightfully proclaim that the kingdom is his, the power is his, and the glory all belongs to him, and not for a day or a year, but for untold millions of years, yea, throughout never ending eternity. We are satisfied that our readers can all join us in saying to these things a hearty, Amen, and Amen. R. L. D.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Whereas, our heavenly Father, infinite in holiness and unerring in wisdom, has removed by death our beloved Brother in Christ, and our faithful and capable Pastor, ELDER HORACE H. LEFFERTS, of Leesburg, Va. and

Whereas, we the members of the Old School Baptist churches of Trough Creek, Needmore, and Sideling Hill, Pa. mindful of the irreparable loss sustained by the passing of our esteemed and efficient brother, who for thirty-nine years has come to us dispensing heavenly manna to our comfort and edification, confirming us in the doctrine of God our Savior, and strengthening us in our holy faith, making our sorrows and happiness his concern, therefore be it

Resolved, that we submissively bow to the divine decree and express our heartfelt sympathy to his beloved companion, Mrs. Ella Lefferts, and family in their loss and to our sister churches who are bereaved by the death of Elder Lefferts, who contended so earnestly and with holy boldness for the faith delivered to the saints, and shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God, and has bequeathed to us the priceless legacy of sweet and tender memories. Therefore be it further

Resolved, that we send a copy of this tribute to his memory to his bereaved companion, Mrs. Ella Lefferts, and that a copy be sent to the **Signs of the Times** of which he was chief editor for many years, and also to **Old Faith Contender** for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference October 8 and 9, 1949.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Moderator
ORIEN MELLOTT, Clerk

RESOLUTION

In memory of our brother, S. A. CROSS, who passed from this life May 28, 1949 in his 79th year, we desire to leave on record a few important events of his life as pertaining to our church. Aug. 31, 1924 he related a bright experience of grace to our brothers and sisters composing Soldier Creek Union Meeting of Old School Baptists, held with our sister church, Zion, Mayfield, Ky. He was gladly received and baptized the same day by the late Elder J. C. Chester.

We of his church ever regarded him as a true, staunch believer in the truth, as we hope we believe the truth in the Lord, not turning to the right or the left, a friend to the church. His home was a home for the Baptists and his friends. Brother Cross is missed by his church as well as by his immediate family.

Resolved, that we bow in humble submission under the mighty hand of God who doeth all things well.

Resolved that a copy of this memorial to Brother Cross be kept on our church book, a copy sent to his family, and one sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Written by W. A. Bowden by request of Zion Church, Mayfield, Ky. when in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in June 1949. Read and received by the church Saturday before the first Sunday in Aug. 1949.

(Elder) O. W. PERKINS, Moderator
W. T. CHESTER, Clerk

OBITUARIES

CHRISTOPHER MADISON TURMAN was born July 28, 1871, in Carroll County, Virginia, and was taken by death September 15, 1949. He was the son of James M. and Tabitha Gardner Turman. On April 4, 1896 he united with Little Flock Old School Baptist Church and was baptized by Elder Amos Dickerson. Soon afterwards he was liberated to speak in public and later given license to preach. In 1903 he moved his membership by letter to Harmony O. S. Baptist Church, and then in December, 1910, he moved to Loudoun County, Virginia, where he placed his letter with Mt. Zion Church and was ordained to the office of deacon. In 1944 he moved from Loudoun County, Va. to North Wales, Pa., where he attended Southamption Church, his membership remaining with Mt. Zion.

On March 22, 1891, Brother Turman was married to Miss Lillie Susannah Vaughn by Elder F. C. Reynolds. To this union eight children were born, three of which, James Elmer, Emmett Forrest and John Wilson, preceding their father in death. He leaves his widow, Sister Lillie Turman, and the following children to mourn his departure: Mrs. I. C. Warner, St. Petersburg, Fla.. Mrs. G. M. Harbert, Galax, Virginia, Doctor Christopher M. Turman, Wyncote, Pa., Miss Lillie S. Turman, Wyncote, Pa. and Mrs. W. H. Carper, Burlington, N. C.

The funeral service was held at Southampton Church, Southampton, Pa. and burial was in the church cemetery. Brother Turman was a firm believer in the electing grace of God and loved to talk of the goodness and mercy of God to sinners. The writer endeavored to speak of the same things to the large and attentive congregation which was gathered to pay their last tribute of respect. The text used was, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethern, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." etc., 1 Thes. 4:13-18. May the Lord bless those that mourn and give them grace that they may be reconciled.

(Elder) JOHN D. WOOD

ROBERTA LAMB GULICK, departed this life at a Leesburg hospital August 16, 1949. She was a daughter of the late George and Eliza Lamb, and was born near Manassas, Virginia, September 2, 1876, where she spent the early years of her life. She was a graduate of Osborne Institute, now Osborne High School, and about two years ago she attended, along with three others, the 50th Anniversary celebration of their graduation from that school. Her husband, George F. Gulick, died in 1932.

Sister Gulick joined Mt. Zion Church July 25, 1936, and was baptized by Elder H. H. Lefferts. She was a faithful member of the church and, although she often had to be carried after she suffered a stroke of paralysis, she seldom missed a meeting of the near by churches. She loved sound doctrine and her chief interest for many years was the affairs of the church and her brethern. Possessing a keen memory, Sister Gulick was often consulted for information on matters of church or family history which she observed and seldom forgot.

She is survived by one brother, John T. Lamb, New York City, and one son, George S. Gulick, Rochester, N. Y. and two grandsons, Robert and George Gulick, Rochester, N. Y. One sister preceded her in death several years ago.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at Mt. Zion Church and the interment was at Manassas, Virginia. It was a time of much sorrow for the community and brethern, for not only had they lost a beloved sister and friend, but their pastor, Elder H. H. Lefferts, who was expected to conduct the service, had passed away the morning of her funeral. May God give grace to reconcile all to His will.

(Elder) JOHN D. WOOD

DEACON ROBERT WESLEY O'NEAL of Seagraves, Texas passed away May 22, 1949, making his stay on earth 74 years, and 3 days. He was united in marriage to Maggie Currie, July 19, 1899. To this union eight children were born, seven of them still living. They were planning to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary July 19, and hoped to have all their children, grandchildren and four great-grandchildren with them, making fifty persons in all. But the Lord saw fit to take Brother O'Neal away a short time before, and to give him a home in heaven that outshines any earthly home that man can build.

Brother and Sister O'Neal united with the Primi-

tive Baptist church August 1903 and were ordained as Deacon and Deaconess July 1917. They lived south of San Antonio before moving to Seagraves, Texas and their membership was with Mt. Olive Church, Stockdale, Texas at the time of his death. Brother O'Neal was a staunch Old Baptist and was loved by all who knew him. He filled the office of Deacon well. We know that his wife will miss him greatly, but at the same time she knows he is at rest. He did not suffer long before passing away. His children and grandchildren also will miss him.

The unworthy writer once brought them two hundred fifty miles on a visit to his home in the Rio Grande Valley where they could see the orange trees with their golden fruit, and see the good things of nature, but the best of all was to hear Brother O'Neal talk of heavenly things and what the blessed Jesus had done for poor sinners. It is when the Lord spreads his wing over us and gives us of that heavenly sweetness that humbles us as little children and where love reigns supreme, that it is heaven here on earth, and I believe when we are given a short season of this kind of meetings it is just a little foretaste of better things to come after this life.

They were readers of the **Signs of the Times** about fifty years, and their parents were subscribers before them. Sister O'Neal lives at her home in Seagraves, Texas, P. O. Box 691, and will be glad to have any Old Baptist come to see her. There are children close that will look after her. May the Lord guide, direct and comfort her in her bereavement. Written by her request. Her Pastor,

(Elder) E. B. AULT.

MATTHEW WEBSTER RAULSTON of Lyons, N. J. departed this life Dec. 10, 1948. Born Jan. 7, 1884, he was the son of the late John and Florence Raulston. Besides his mother, Mrs. Florence Raulston, he is survived by one son, T. Stewart Raulston, Chattanooga, Tenn., one daughter, Mrs. John Lager, Summit, N. J., one brother and two sisters of Chattanooga, Tenn.

Brother Raulston united with the Old Sweetens Cove Baptist Church Nov. 2, 1902, and was baptized the same day. He came to New Jersey about twenty years ago to take a position as mechanical superintendent in a Veteran's Hospital and resided here since. In the spring of 1935 he heard of the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell and came to one of the services. He came regularly after that and brought his letter from his home church to Hopewell in June 1935. He was unanimously received and proved to be a devout member. In 1938 he was chosen Deacon and later was made a trustee. He drove nearly fifty miles every day of worship but it was never too far, too cold or too stormy. When Elder Vaughn would be away filling other appointments he would conduct the services which he did in a very meek and quiet way, always feeling so humble and giving all praise to God. The church feels the loss of Brother Raulston very deeply, but we feel our loss is his eternal gain.

His funeral was held from the Hopewell meeting-house, Sunday Dec. 12, 1948 at 2 P. M., conducted by Elder C. W. Vaughn then Pastor of Hopewell Church. Interment in the churchyard adjoining.

Four months after the death of Brother Raulston we buried our Pastor, Elder C. W. Vaughn. We feel to be very much alone in this world, but know it is right or it would not be so. The same hand that took them away has power to raise others in their place. May we be given strength to carry on in the same meek and quiet way, putting our faith in God alone, and in humble submission say — Thy will be done.

(Mrs. LETHA A. BLACKWELL.

BROTHER BART D. DRAPER was born May 3, 1883 and passed away Sept. 11, 1949. He was united in marriage to Miss Lula Crisco, March 11, 1902. To this union were born three sons and one daughter: David Draper, Crossit, Ark., Bert and Mrs. R. L. Beard, Kilgore, Tex., Marvin D., Longview, Tex. Also surviving are two sisters: Mrs. Bell Langford, Faber, Ark., Mrs. Carrie Jones, Malvern, Ark., one brother Will, Donaldson, Ark., two grandchildren, Mrs. Roland Witherington, Windin, La., Donald Beard, Kilgore, Tex.

This writer had the pleasure of baptizing Brother Draper and his dear companion, May 9, 1939. He leaves her to sorrow on account of his passing until she is called to her people in that blessed abode where parting is no more. Brother Draper was ordained Deacon of Massedonia Church soon after he became a member and was faithful in looking after the interest of his brethren. He was indeed a kind, tender and lovable man; meek and humble, feeling the need of the God of love and mercy to bear him up. He had been failing in health for several years, but was patient and did not murmur at his lot. He was settled and grounded in the doctrine of sovereign grace, acknowledging that all God's blessings were of his free mercy, flowing to his people for his own name's sake.

Elder E. J. Lambert and the writer tried to comfort the loved ones and many friends who gathered to pay the last tribute of respect. The remains were buried in Massedonia Cemetery to await the resurrection of the body. May God bless and keep dear Sister Draper her remaining days and fill the absence of her dear companion with his manifest presence. Written by request.

(Elder) J. T. EVERITT.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

J. L. Turner, Tex., $2; J. F. Lax, Ill., $2; Mrs. R. B. Shortridge, Ill., $10; Mrs. V. Machesney, Cal., $10.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

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CORRESPONDENCE

THE TWO SCHOOLS OF PREDESTINATION

By ELDER LYTLE BURNS
Florence, Ala.

I feel somewhat impressed to write on the above subject today. Before discussing the subject, we will define the word. Webster says: Predestination is the "Purpose of God from Eternity respecting all events." The two schools are defined as follows: Supralapsarians and Sublapsarians. Supra means before and lapsus, fall. This view is in line with Webster's definition, "The purpose of God from eternity."

God's purposes, like himself, are eternal. We will ask what are the properties of God's divine purposes or decrees. They are eternal, most wise, absolute, and unchangeable. This view is in line with the London Confession of Faith, "God hath decreed in himself from all eternity by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably all things whatsoever come to pass." The things decreed are various and many, but the act of decreeing is one eternal decision. "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Isa. 14:24.

Owing to God's infinite power and wisdom, his omnipotence and immutability, and the unity in the Trinity, it would be unreasonable to argue that God's decree regarding man's salvation, were after the fall as the Sublapsarians teach; that idea would lead us to believe that God waited to see what man would do, before he decided what he would do. This makes God's will depend on man's will, which is contrary to all Bible teaching. It was God's will to allow man to fall, by a voluntary permission. The law given Adam was not a prohibitory law, but commandatory; Adam was told what the result would be if he ate the forbidden fruit. Sin entered the world by man's transgression of the law "to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are." God was never deceived nor disappointed; this world is just as God intended it should be. There are numerous passages in the old scriptures proving that this world is just as described. Prov. 8:22-31, "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: when he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:*****Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the

habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men."

The above shows clearly that Jesus' delights were with the sons of men, that elect family, that the Father had given him, his bride, the children of promise. The Father is not willing that he should lose one of them. David, in the Psalms 139, first sets forth God's omniscience, then his omnipresence; then he describes the church, Christ's body, verse 15-16. "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."

The above shows that God's all-seeing eye beheld all the members of Christ's body, and were written in his book. This chosen material is what composed the house, "wisdom hath builded her house," in the mind and purpose of God the house was complete. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." The Father chose the material for the house; the Son purchased it. The Holy Spirit brings the material chosen by the Father and purchased by the Son, into the building. "In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." God is so infinitely perfect in his nature, that his poor depraved creatures cannot add to his perfection but only through his Son alone are we quickened into divine life and made partakers of the divine nature it is then that we please God. He alone is the source of all good and his government of the world is such, that he causes the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder he restrains. Our enemies frequently call us fatalists; the person who does not believe in the absolute sovereignty of God and that he controls and directs all events, is a fatalist.

God created all things by the word of his power "that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist;" some people teach and believe that the devil is a fallen angel; that he rebelled against God and was cast out into the earth. Go with me to Job 26:14. "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him?" Isa. 27:1 says, "In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea." See Rev. 12:9 and 20:2.

Some one may ask why did God form a crooked serpent? It is for the same reason that he raised up Pharaoh—that he might show his power in him that his name might be declared throughout all the earth. God, through Moses his mediator, delivered the last one of his chosen race from Egyptian bondage; likewise through Christ he will deliver all his chosen race from the bondage of Satan. Evidently it was God's will and purpose that sin should be in the world because he made arrangements for its cure before it came. If there had not been any sin in the world God's love and mercy would not have been manifested in forgiving it; His power and wisdom in overruling it, and his justice in punishing it. "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee." Jer. 2:19.

The London Confession of Faith,

Chapter 5, Art. 5 says, "The most wise and gracious God doth oftentimes leave for a season his own children to manifest temptations and the corruption of their own hearts, to chastise them for their former sins, or to discover unto them the hidden strength or corruption and deceitfulness of their hearts (2 Chron. 32:25, 26, 31. 2 Sam. 24:1; 2 Cor. 12:7-9) that they may be humbled, and to raise them to a more close and constant dependence for their support upon himself, and to make them more watchful against all future occasions of sin and for other just and holy ends, so that whatever befalls any of his elect is by his appointment, for his glory and their good." (Rom. 8:28).

Our enemies have charged us with Antinomianism, that we are against law. We believe in law in its proper place, but there is no law given that can give life. The Apostle asked wherefore then serveth the law, it was added because of transgression till the seed should come to whom the promise was made. "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." But the law stops our mouths and makes us all guilty before God.

I will soon be 81 years old and have been trying to preach Christ as a complete Savior for 44 years; I was almost completely blind for about one year. I had a cataract removed from my eye last November and now thank the Lord that I can again see to read and write. Brethren, these are perilous times, but our God has the situation in his hands and all will redound to his praise, glory and honor. My Christian love to all the saints throughout the land.

Stem, N. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Your very kind letter, received a few days ago, was such a pleasant surprise. It is a source of comfort to know that I am sometimes in the mind of those whom I esteem as highly as I do you, I hope for the truth's sake, and for what it has wrought in you. When I first learned of your being in Rocky Mount, my thought was, "I do wish it had been another time," for I saw no way of going, as I would not feel right to be absent from my home meeting, unless in a case of emergency. After that, I had a nice letter from Elder R. B. Denson, asking me to go down Friday and spend the night in his home with the friends and brethren he expected to be there then, and that I could return in time for Saturday afternoon meeting. It seemed he had arranged it all for me, though it was not convenient at that time for me to be away over night. You know, of course, that I believe that the Lord arranged it through him. As the years go by, more and more I learn that "All our times are in His hands, All events at His command." And this includes the smallest, as well as those we may consider more important. I felt then, and do still, that the privilege and pleasure of being there was all mine. I was sorry to rush out of the meeting, but asked Elder Denson to please explain. Reached home just about two, so had plenty of time for dinner and to get to our meeting at three.

On Friday night, before, for some reason, I was wakeful, and as I lay there in the silence of the night, my mind was filled with many and various thoughts. Some of comfort, others trashy that insisted on intruding. Among the better ones, suddenly, without any cause that I could understand, the words of that short hymn, which we call the "Long Meter Doxology," came into mind. I had not read, or heard it sung for a long time, and was surprised that it should come to me just then. Word by word it came to me, and I had never seen before the

depth of meaning, or the majesty expressed in those few words. I wondered how I could have been so blind all these years not to have seen it before. For a little while there was given me such a sweet season. Not so long after, I was busy in preparation to start to the Falls meeting. As I was alone on the way, (except the driver,) there was plenty of time to think, and I questioned *why* I was going that far just to hear some one preach, and if the Lord was in the matter, I wondered if the desire was all of the flesh, and feared that my ears might be closed to the word preached. There was such a mixture of confused questioning. But when you began to speak, I was favored to forget these annoying thoughts, and lose myself in the things preached. No doubt, I have read that chapter many times but had never understood it, as you were blessed to open it up. And when, suddenly, you referred to the words of that Doxology, and their meaning, and expressed so nearly the words and the frame of mind I had been blessed with not many hours before, you can hardly imagine my feeling. Sometimes it seems, I doubt *everything,* when all at once something comes which assures me so fully that the Lord reigns, even in the most minute things, that for a little while I *doubt nothing.*

I wish very much it were so you could be at our Association. If you have found, since I mentioned it to you, that you can, please come right on. Am sure you enjoyed your visit in the home of Elder Denson, and with the friends and brethren there. He has the gift of being a most genial host.

Remember me kindly to Mrs. Dodson, and I thank you for your thought of me, which brought me comfort. In the best of bonds, I hope I am

Yours in fellowship,

(Mrs.) LAURA REED GOOCH

Route 3, Snow Hill, N. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: It has been requested that your letter to me on the twenty-fifth Psalm be published. With your permission, since it has meant so much to me, I am willing to share it with others. I consider this letter as a part of my experience. My original question to three preachers about this Psalm was different. You were the last one I asked and you were the first one to write about it. In my other letter to you I stated that I especially appreciated your pointing out to me the 12th verse and then the 14th verse. I think His lovingkindnesses and tender mercies is what led me first to this Psalm. As a child I did not understand anything in the song, "His Loving Kindness" on page two of the Durand and Lester Hymn Book but His Lovingkindness. This winter I was very conscious of fearing and wanting to trust in the Lord, and wanting him to teach me in his ways; however, I desired so much that he forgive all my sins, that I had in a way overlooked or had not been really impressed with the 14th verse until I received your letter.

When we went to sing at Elder Kearney's home he told me that something I said to the church when I was received made him think of the 89th Psalm. He was sick and had to miss church in June, but in July he talked from this Psalm, using verses 14, 24-26 to lead up to his main subject for the day. You had shown me that He will show his covenant to those who fear him. I was grateful that Elder Kearney followed this with the thought that if His children forsake his law he would punish them, nevertheless he would not utterly take his lovingkindness from them, and he would not break the covenant he had shown them. (Verses 28-34.) Yours in gospel bonds.

(Miss) BEULAH MEWBORN

MISS BEULAH MEWBORN, MY DEAR YOUNG SISTER IN CHRIST: First, allow me to say that I was very sorry you were delayed in reaching the meeting at Elder R. B. Denson's, and I am also sorry that we did not have more time to talk over the points referred to by you in the 25th Psalm. I keep very busy, as a rule, and hence have not felt to write to you before this. I hope I may be given something that will be of interest and comfort to you concerning this Psalm.

Second, let me say to you here, as I have said publicly on previous occasions, that the Psalmist David, in my humble opinion, had a wider range of experiences than almost any other of the Old Testament writers. The Lord took him from the sheep cote and exalted him to be the king on the throne of Israel, and because of this great variety of experiences I feel he can and does visit and comfort the Lord's people in all walks of life. All of his experiences do not necessarily apply to each one alike, but I believe there is food for hungry souls, from the cradle to the grave. The 25th Psalm is thought to have been written by David following a great trial, that of the rebellion of many of his subjects, including his own son, Absalom, as the leader of the crowd. This caused David to verily lift up his soul unto God. Notwithstanding all of his difficulties he reaffirmed his trust in the Lord, and desired that He would not let him be put to shame, and neither that his enemies should be allowed to triumph over him. He earnestly desired that none who waited on the Lord and looked to him for aid should ever be put to shame. He also desired, most earnestly, that the Lord would show him his, (God's) ways, and that he would teach him his paths, and lead him into an understanding of his truth, for he realized that he was the God of his salvation, and his wish was to wait all the day upon him. I feel there is a great deal in all of this that is of vital interest to you, and I truly hope you may be led by the Spirit to glean much from these fields. This great searching of heart through which the Psalmist was being put to, undoubtedly brought to his remembrance his whole life, from his youth to that present time, and in the sixth verse you will observe that he recalled God's tender mercies and his lovingkindnesses, which had followed him all the days of his life. Having these things in mind all the more, perhaps, made him think of his sinful life, from his youth up. There were many sins of his youth that were doubtless very minor in comparison to the great sin after he became king of Israel. This latter sin stood out above all others, for God had searched his heart and made him to know that He was acquainted with all his ways. He himself had been made to know that he could not hide from God. As I said to you in Brother Denson's home, I can but feel that the sins of his youth, his transgressions and his iniquities are all expressive of the same condition, but varying in degree. His transgressions and iniquities were an enlargement upon his sinful condition, revealing to him that the heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and who can know it. It would seem that he began with the sins of his youth and then came on up through his transgressions and finally in the 11th verse he says, "For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great." This expression is in the singular and may denote what we may term the worst of all his sins, involving in effect the murder of Bath-sheba's husband, and bringing reproach and everlasting shame upon Israel. This iniquity he

himself speaks of as being great. If you will turn to the 51st Psalm you will see his pleadings with the Lord on this account. He says, "Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest." In the 12th verse he asks, "What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose." Then he goes on in the 14th verse to present what to me is a gem of sacred and glorious truth: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant." I believe you are one who truly fears, or loves the Lord, and that He already has shown you his covenant of everlasting love, wherein you were chosen in his blessed Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, even before the foundations of the earth were laid. If so, your eyes shall ever be towards the Lord, and he shall pluck your feet out of the net. God most assuredly does turn unto his people, and have mercy upon them who are a poor and afflicted people. He continued by saying, "The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of my distresses. Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins." How we do yearn for a complete cleansing from all unrighteousness, and this is to be had only in that fountain which was opened to the spiritual house of David for sin and uncleanness. When our eyes are opened to the ways of God and his holiness, we are made to mourn and groan beneath our load and burden of sin. What an affliction sin is! Only those who are truly taught of God can have a deep appreciation of its awfulness, and only such characters can truly evaluate the gloriousness of God's salvation. We can sometimes look unto the pit from whence we were digged and unto the Rock from whence we were hewn, and then we can say the Lord brought me up out of an horrible pit, etc. I hope I have been given something to say that will be comforting and edifying to you. Yours in a precious hope in Jesus.

R. LESTER DODSON

Box 315, El Dorado, Ark.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: My subscription expires with this issue just received, read and very much enjoyed. I am enclosing my check to renew for two years.

Yesterday a friend was in my office from Paragould, Ark. who is a Baptist but not of our faith and order, while here he noticed the *Signs,* and he read and was, it appeared, very much inpressed with it and especially it seemed he liked Elder L. L. Schenck's article on "The laver and his foot," Ex. 30:28, which was the principal part of the reading he had opportunity to do. Not having a chance to read much more he asked me for my copy. I wanted him to have an issue but did not want to part with mine since I have always kept all issues filed away. I promised him I would ask you to mail him a copy of the August issue, telling him that when he read all the articles I hoped he would subscribe.

Brother Dodson, I certainly did enjoy and endorse all you set forth in your editorial in the August issue on the verses in the second chapter of Luke, replying to Sister Gertrude Pyatt. Your views are in accord with what I feel to hope, believe and understand about it better than I could express my own views myself. I believe and have many times made the statement that the religious world

could not produce any evidence that Dec. 25th was the birthday of our Savior. Like you, my view is that the exact date of the birth of our Lord remains a secret. It has not been pleasing in the sight of God to reveal it to man. I also agree with you that the expression in the 10th verse "to all people" does not mean every Adamic creature, nor a mere offer to every creature, but means all God's people everywhere and from out of every nation, both Jews and Gentile. You explained all that so satisfactory to my view, and it was very comforting to me. I feel and hope the thoughts given me on this scripture coincide with your views as expressed all through your editorial. Feeling and hoping to be given to witness with an article or sermon read or heard is a comfort and consolation. Your editorial was meat and drink to me.

I have seen and talked with Brother Lambert since he had the pleasure and privilege of meeting you in person and hearing you preach. He expressed great joy about getting to see and hear you and be with you what time he was blessed to do. I hope and trust all things are well with you and may the God of all grace keep and bless you in his ways is the prayer of your little brother in a blessed hope.

(Elder) W. A. SPEER

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Timothy 3:15.

I am not in the least uneasy about the fixed work of Almighty God. He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. What more could you want than any-thing to be done and stand fast? He speaks "study" and it is done. Where is the power to prevent? Not principalities, powers, life, death, things present, things to come, height, depth, nor any other creature. Then what could mortal man do but obey God? Study, not to show that God will approve you, but shew unto thy brethren that you are approved (past tense) unto God. Search out the secret chambers of your heart, weigh your thoughts and see if they corroborate with the holy men of old who wrote as God gave them utterance. Then, if so, it is an evidence that you are a workman created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that you should walk in them. Where is the power that can withstand God? With the word of a king there is power and this word "study" is spoken by the King of kings, and Lord of lords to living creatures capable of studying and learning, not to the natural mind, but to those characters who have been made alive by the washing of regeneration.

"A workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." God is truth. He spoke in thunderous tones, the law on mount Sinai its fixed place, and not one power can move it hither or thither. The law was good and perfect and served its purpose in that day. God spake and rolled it up as a vesture and laid it away not to be administered any more. He spake and mercy and truth met together; righteousness and peace kissed each other; truth sprang out of the earth, and righteousness looked down from heaven in the person of the Son of God clothed with all power of the Godhead. The word of truth rightly divides law and gospel. The night cometh when no man can work, but thanks be unto God a dividing line comes and there begins the dawn of a new day; a new era for all things are passed away and behold all things become new.

Not many days ago I heard a man deliver an introductory discourse at an Association. In the beginning he said, "I understand full well it is not as some think, that God rains the gospel down on your head and it runs out at the mouth. I know if there is any preaching done here to-day I will have to do it or some other man. God is not going to do it for me." I read in the Bible, study to shew thyself a workman. They called themselves Primitive Baptists. I thought O, my soul have I been deceived all these years or is some one else deceived. As the sermon went on I hope I was made to study and weigh my thoughts with the writers of old and do hope I was not found wanting.

Who can deny the predestination of God in splitting the smallest atom to make the great bomb? Who can deny this splitting the great bomb to tear down the works of man? It was God's almighty power that made the lion; it was his almighty power that locked its jaws that it could not harm Daniel for he was a chosen man to rightly divide the word of truth; it was God's almighty power that unlocked the lion's jaws to destroy the enemy; it was God's almighty power that put Paul in prison; it was God's almighty power that loosed him for he was a chosen vessel to bear his name to the Gentiles to preach the gospel which is the power of God to every one that believeth.

I sometimes wonder why it is said that Primitive Baptists are sitting on the stool of do-nothing. They are the busiest people on earth for they are about their father's business, but not trying to attend to another's business. The shepherds are given a shepherd's bag full of food to feed the flock of God, and also in that bag are five smooth stones and a sling to slay Goliath, yea, power to bring down the enemy even so much that not a dog shall wag its tongue against them, but every tongue shall confess that he is God, and every knee shall bow to his power. If I could be given to go down into the deep and sweet mysteries of the absolute predestination of God in all things to satisfy my soul it would be enough for I know it is sound doctrine that will stand all the storms, subdue all powers and put to flight the devil. Not only will it do that but will preserve the truth which is so precious to God's little children in this world, and when their walk on earth is done be their shield, guide and transport into that glorious kingdom where there is perfection. How wonderful, dear children of God, when your father speaks "study." It is a power that illuminates the mind far above all natural things to look by an eye of faith into the beauties of God's holiness to behold that holy city, the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven.

David so much desired this word to be spoken to him when he said, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." He felt the Lord was gone from him and he could not weigh his thoughts for he could not reach the scale. Don't you know if he could he would have as earnestly as he was begging. In due time the Lord restores the joy of his salvation. He has promised eternal life, and he is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but all should come to repentance. Abraham staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God fully persuaded that what he has promised he is able to perform. He hath spoken and shall it not come to pass? Will the creature to whom God has spoken not obey his voice? "The

word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" Jesus said, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world." Again we hear him saying, "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." Now we can see why Paul could say, "Though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is me, if I preach not the gospel!" If Paul by studying could have preached the gospel he could have gloried in himself.

I do not know whether I have the right interpretation of this scripture or not. I do not know whether I have been given to study or not, but weigh it in the balance and if it measures up to the truth it is the predestination of God in all things that brought it about.

(Mrs.) MAGGIE LEE HAYES
Vernon, Ala.

2402 Lakewood Drive, Vancouver, B. C.

DEAR PASTOR OF EBENEZER CHURCH, NEW YORK: Having just awakened in a frame of mind which went reaching back to that sweet place of humility in the dear old church in New York I must hasten to express a few thoughts. Sleep is not even needed here in this kind of resting place. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." John 3:8. My little mother wanted to move away from Vancouver, just anywhere near an Old Baptist church. She knew full well there would be a school provided for me to teach. This reminds me of a song: "Oh for the wings, for the wings of a dove, far far away would I fly." Just before she died she was clinging to this same resting place, the sanctity of Ebenezer Church and her sweet memories there. I am not fit to approach that quiet waiting group, who listen contritely for a certain sweet sound of inspiration and comfort. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." John 10:27-28. This quiet people are adding "to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity." 2 Peter 1: 5-7. They travel ways they know not and paths past finding out.

It is now the third Sunday at Ebenezer Church and I know of no sweeter place than that humble resting place for the people of God. It is exactly the same wherever two or three are gathered together in His name, East, West, North or South. The same pure truth is proclaimed without hesitation. So like Ruth of old, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Ruth 1:16. His people will always be waiting like patient witnesses, ascribing honor and glory and all power to him as do the four and twenty elders above.

I remember one day when immersed

in the beauty of his holiness, being caught up and held praying for a sweet moment, begging our gentle Savior to take all of me. Now I read in the dear *Signs of the Times* from the pen of Brother David B. Lawson, "Yea Lord, thy blessings are upon me abundantly, and wilt thou accept my soul as a token of the thanksgiving for that is all I have to offer thee?" When we are made willing in the day of his power the rest of this world fades away into its own insignificance, away from mount Zion, the city of our God. How closely I would cling to this frame of mind! Jacob did not want the angel to leave him either until he was blessed. But alas! I must go down like Peter from the mountain where he wished to build three tabernacles. "Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." Luke 9:33.

Have you ever wakened and almost caught the sound of an angel's voice, perhaps the last lingering one ministering? "In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction." Job 33:15-16. Sister Rosa Coleman dreamed in the midst of a stroke that her deceased mother's hands were smoothing her bed so carefully. She said, "Those are my mother's hands, but what is the beautiful light under them?" The answer came, "That is your mother's love." So God is abundantly able to minister just the right comfort to each lamb. Paul says, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ." Phil. 4:19. This happy summer I have heard about the food prepared on Wisdom's table for each and every need as I worshipped in the churches in the West at Naches, Riffe and Chehalis. "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work." 2 Thes. 2:16-17. My mother left this page turned down at the corner. There is no end to this sweet story. Therefore, I shall simply pause until another day, when I find without warning that my blessed Savior has filled the loneliness for my beautiful church and parents with further meditation. "Therefore thy servant hath found in his heart to pray before thee." I Chron. 17:25. I am enjoying Isaiah 25 and 26 (3, 4, 12, 20.) I wish you could have heard Sister Beatrice Haan sing the hymn, "Hide Thou Me" as she and I rested very high up near the glacier on Mt. Ranier in rare atmosphere.

"When the world its power is wielding,
And my heart is almost yielding,
Hide me O thou Rock of Ages,
Safe in Thee."

Humbly,
(Miss) CATHERINE M. DUFFUS

1030 Bruce St., Memphis 4, Tenn.

MR. AND MRS. R. L. VEAZEY, DEAR AND PRECIOUS FRIENDS, I HOPE IN THE LORD: The cold, icy weather keeps me indoors most of the time. May be I am just getting old. The ice on the trees is very pretty although it makes them look so barren of life. It reminds me of the seasons of coldness we experience when feeling no evidence of life. Dear friends, we must have the presence of the Spirit, whether we feel it or not, that is the spirit of truth makes us to understand the written testimony of God's word, and I do not know that I understand any part of it. God does, and knowing self as I do I am made to fear that surely I am just a deceitful

wretch. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." For some time my mind has been upon the 10th chapter of Romans, verses 1-4 reading as follows: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." I have heard it said that this scripture embraces the children of God in the churches not of Primitive Baptist faith, and they are ignorant as yet of the true doctrine yet are saved. Let us see what Paul says about it, and what the holy scriptures teach concerning such as Paul spoke of. We see in the preceding chapter Paul is talking of the coming of the Gentiles. We know there is a natural Israel and a spiritual Israel as all of Abraham's children are not the children of promise. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." "They are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." In the last of the chapter Paul says, "But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." Rom. 9:31-33. Now we proceed as to who was under consideration. Jesus said to Nicodemus as he came to him *by night* "Except a man be born again, he *cannot see* the kingdom of God." Nicodemus did not understand this, and in connection with this Paul records for us, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Now back to Romans 10:2, "For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." Zeal means active interest and who is it Paul said hath not attained to the law of righteousness? "Wherefore? (or why) Because they sought it not by faith but as it were by the works of the law." How could this apply to children of God in other churches for these people are ignorant of the righteousness of God and going about to establish their own. We have a people to-day that believe in works in order to obtain salvation, thus making self their Savior. They teach the keeping of the law and there is no promise of life in the law, only ye shall eat of the fat of the land. As it is written, "Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling stone and rock of offence," and this ignorant people stumbled at this stumblingstone, and Jesus is the stumblingstone under consideration, "and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." This ignorant people surely knew nothing then and know nothing now of the grace of God, or they would not go about to establish their own righteousness in order to obtain salvation, thus denying Christ as he is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. I am made to believe that God has a people in every nation, kindred

and tongue but, dear friends, they are not ignorant of God's righteousness, the finished work of Christ, they have an experience of grace, I believe, or they would not be children of God. Paul says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any many should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained (predestinated) that we should walk in them." Eph. 2.8-10.

Grace means divine favor, a free unmerited spirit bestowed upon an unworthy creature. Is something free that which has to be worked for? An experience of grace is a heartfelt experience of divine favor. Now back to Jesus words, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The kingdom of God is within you, Christ in you the hope of glory. Now to Paul's experience and I hope mine and yours. We see Jesus said, ye must be born again. To be born again would of necessity bring about a death, but not a corporeal death. Paul says, "For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." How well I remember when I was a self satisfied creature full of (supposedly) good works. I was alive without the law then, but when the commandment came—(There was given a commandment in the garden of Eden. "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.") Now back to the verse, "When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." This is that original guilt and we felt it, we hope, when we were made to see ourselves as sinners guilty before a just and holy God. When they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, their eyes were opened and they say they were naked and sought to cover themselves. Oh, when we saw our guilt we fled to the law; we read our Bible but it only condemned us; we tried all our good works for cover but to no avail; and Paul states now, "And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, *deceived me,* and by it slew me." Is not this that original guilt felt.? "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin." Now comes the warfare. "When I would do good, evil is present with me." "For what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that I do." "Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." This warfare makes us to cry as did Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" The law is our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith, and faith makes Paul to thank God through Jesus Christ for deliverance. "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."

We see how this corresponds with the new covenant made with the house of Israel, (Spiritual Israel) when the

Lord saith, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Here is a people embraced and promised mercy to their unrighteousness. Who is it to-day that teaches saying, know the Lord? Is it not the ignorant of God's righteousness, those who have no experience of grace? For when grace shines in the heart of a guilty sinner it makes him to see his depraved, helpless condition, and knowing he has no goodness to claim of himself, he is brought to the end of the law, and made to see Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Jesus said, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he (God) hath sent." "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." John 5:39. Who testifies of him and who is ashamed of him? It is those having an experience of grace, no matter what group they are affiliated with, that testify of a finished work of redemption by Jesus as he came to save his people and finish the work the Father gave him to do. He saved all that were chosen in him before the world began. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day," and then "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Who are the ignorant that have no knowledge of Christ and his righteousness? It could not be they are saved if they never knew him as the Savior of sinners for Jesus said, "all that the Father giveth me shall come to me." I cannot believe one of those wills and shalls will ever fail.

1 John 5: 10-12 tells whether the ignorant have eternal life or not, and if they are ignorant of God's righteousness, and go about to establish their own salvation they are working in order to obtain salvation, and not because of salvation and make self their own Savior thus denying they know Jesus as the Savior of sinners. As further proof Christ said while here on the earth before he was crucified for the sins of his dear ones, "I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." John 10:7-9. In the first verse of this chapter he says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." He says also, "When he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger they will not follow, (how quickly they note discordance) but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." (Do they not recognize a road they have been brought over when others tell of the marks along the way?) How this compares to the parable in Matt. 25:31-36. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the

throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one, from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me." They shall say when did we do all these things as he said, and he shall say, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." They knew not even when they fed one of His or gave them a cup of water, but he knew it for they are created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained they shall walk in them, yet not as the goats that see and feel self righteous, and he turns to them and says, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.***** And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." Are not the goats crying have we not cast out devils in his name, and in his name done many wonderful things? Yet the sheep say, Lord when did we see thee and do these things? The flesh is prone to feel proud and would immediately rise up and boast in its selfrighteousness should it see any good it had done, (Look what I have done) as those working to gain salvation as they believe. The ignorant of to-day are those (I believe it is so) that believe if they work or do good works for God and keep the law he is in debt to save them. How different from the poor, helpless afflicted child of God. Affliction surely cripples the old natural man, and this corresponds with the experience of Paul as I have heretofore stated. Jesus said, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Matt. 6:24.

Now seeing the awful creature that I am, I am made to wonder and stand amazed that God is so gracious as he is to such a sinful wretch. If ever I did anything right in my life I cannot remember when and where it was, yet for some reason known to him he has given me a love for the doctrine of truth and his dear ones. I hope I am not deceived in this yet it surpasses my understanding as to why, and the depth of the feeling given. I am so prone to look to the things that concern one in the flesh, and I know if God ever thought upon me for good it was in mercy and love. So it is my hope that he look not upon me as I am in the tabernacle of clay, but unto his holy Son who was obedient to the law, fulfilled it to a jot and tittle, and is now at the right hand of God making intercession for the saints according to the will of God. In love of the truth and begging God's mercy I am in hope of rest beyond the grave. A guilty sinner. (Mrs.) LOUISE NEWMAN

Island City, Oregon

EDITOR SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR BROTHER IN GOSPEL BONDS: I am sending you a report of the ordination of Brother R. R. Wolfe, who is now Pastor of the Big Springs Church. Elder G. E. Mayfield was Pastor of this church for many years. After his death, Elder C. W. Bond was chosen Pastor, which place he served for a number of years. For several years he realized his

work would soon be finished, and there was no one to take his place. He wrote to Brother Wolfe, asking him to make us a visit, and if possible locate here. Brother Wolfe arrived here three days after Elder Bond was buried. He was shocked and grieved at this, but felt the Lord had sent him, and that he was needed here now more than ever, but he was only a licentiate.

The Baptists here love and fellowship him. Of cource he could not officiate as a minister until he was ordained, hence the ordination. It often occurs to me how gratified Elder Bond would be to know, and who are we to say he does not. "They may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." In fellowship and hope, your sister of like precious faith.

(Mrs.) MARTHA H. BOND

MEMORIAL

Whereas, our God has removed by death the last male member of the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., Brother Isaac T. Dolson, we desire to pay tribute to his memory. We of the Middletown and Wallkill Church, Middletown, N. Y. feel saddened by his passing as his place was always filled at the meetings. He was a lover of the truth as it is in Jesus. May the Great Judge give us grace and reconciliation to his divine will and be a widow's God to his widow, our sister Blanche, who feels her loss deeply.

W. D. CHAPMAN
(Miss) M. E. HYATT

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the **Signs of the Times** at the following prices: 1 copy 25 cents; 3 copies 75 cents; 6 copies $1.50; 12 copies $3.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

Route 1, Greenwood, Miss.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Enclosed are a few verses I composed in memory of my father, MARION A. RISO, who departed this life Nov. 11, 1942. He was a member and minister also of the dear Old Baptists, and if after reading these verses you have space and think they are worthy of printing I would be so glad to have a copy. Your sister in Christ I hope. (Mrs.) A. J. BOYETT

A precious one from us has gone,
A sweet voice we loved is still;
There's a vacant place in our hearts
That never can be filled.

The loneliness in our hearts
Seems more than we can bear;
We miss you more each day
Since God called you to his care.

God needed another angel
To worship before his throne,
So looking down from heaven
He called our loved one home.

Seven years ago you left us,
Friends may think the wound is healed,
But they little know the sorrow,
That is in our hearts concealed.

Now that he is gone to heaven,
We can only plant flowers on the grave,
Of the one we loved so much
But were powerless to save.

Sleep on dear father
And take your rest;
We loved you dearly
But God loved you best.

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EDITORIALS

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WHAT IS TRUTH

I feel to comply with your request to write something for the *Signs*. I have been asked recently why I did not write for publication. My answer was the same that I gave a sister a few years ago, who asked why I was not as ready to give my views on scripture now as I was when I first began to preach. My reply was, "that I did not know as much now as I thought I did then." I feel, however, to contribute to the columns of the *Signs* to the best of my ability.

In John 18:38, Pilate asked Jesus, "What is truth," Just previous to this statement Pilate said to Jesus, "Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.*****To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." This statement prompted Pilate to ask, "What is truth?" My sheep hear my voice, and the voice of strangers they will not hear. "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it has taught you, ye shall abide in him." Jesus said, "I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in my name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled." "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The scripture of truth is as inactive as the sword. The sword will never come into action, until some one takes it in hand and wields it. So the truth, in the letter, will never come into action until the spirit of truth takes it in hand and reveals it unto us.

Jesus is the truth, the way and the life. In the Bible is found truth in the letter. In the hearts of God's people is revealed truth. Divine truth is not known except by revelation. When Jesus was walking with his disciples after his resurrection from the dead, he was hidden to them so far as their knowledge or understanding of him was concerned. It was as necessary for him to reveal himself to them as it was to Thomas, who said, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails,

and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe."

Spiritual truth is in the hearts of God's people because the Savior said to his disciples, "I will not leave you comfortless," but would send the Comforter, which would take of the things of His and show them unto them. A large portion of the human family know truth in the letter, and can preach it in the letter, but that will never cause one to know truth in the spirit or in power. The disciples asked the Savior why he spake to them in parables, and he said it is given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom and to others it is not. Yes, it is given to you to know what a blessed gift it is to know him, whom to know is life eternal. If truth in the letter had in it any life or power, then I would be in favor of sending it into all the world. Truth in the letter has no convincing or regenerating power. When the disciples told Thomas that Jesus had risen from the dead, it did not make Thomas believe that Jesus had risen from the dead. It takes the same revelation to-day to cause one to believe as it did Thomas. When Jesus revealed his nail prints, and said, Thomas be not faithless but believing, Thomas then said, "My Lord and my God." Jesus said, if you continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed. This was not a proposition by which they would become his disciples, but it was a test of their discipleship. To continue in the old paths and not be drawn away by the lo heres and lo theres is proof that you know the truth, and that the truth has made you free from all the pleasing and enticing words of men. How blessed it is to read the word of God and feel that it is drawn out of the letter and infused into our hearts, to give us the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. I feel that we should read and study the word of God and familiarize ourselves with the letter of the word. At the same time, I know that we will never acquaint ourselves with the truth in its power by reading the word of truth.

The only time that I remember hearing Elder Eubanks preach, he told of a young boy who had been driving with his mother to church for several years, and listening to the truth preached by the same preacher. One day as they were returning home, the boy asked his mother what was wrong with the preacher, he is not preaching as he used to do? After he and his mother had talked awhile, the mother, with tears in her eyes, put her arms around him and said, "the change is not in the preacher, but the change is in my boy." This gospel did not come to him in word only, but in power.

I have heard it said that if you were honest and sincere in what you believe, you would be justified in that belief. We are not justified by our sincerity in a creed or doctrine, we are justified by faith. The people of God are not justified by what they believe in the head, but with the heart man believeth unto righteousness. Paul thought that he was doing God's service when he was persecuting the saints of God, but he was not justified because he was sincere in that act.

I once attended a meeting of another denomination and the minister used for his text I Peter, 1:2 which reads as follows: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied." I never heard a a more cogent argument on the subject of election than this man put up, but it was as dry as a bone. There

was no life or feeling in it. It is often said that man cannot learn to preach, but I beg to disagree. This man had learned to preach the truth in the letter, but I doubt if he knew anything about the Spirit of truth. This gentleman used two hymn books to convey his idea of how people are in Christ Jesus. He opened one book, placed the other inside and said, "now this is the way we are in Christ." "This book (he said) did not put itself inside the other book, but I put one in the other, and this is the way that we are in Christ Jesus." This is, of course, the truth in the letter, but when he had finished his discourse, he opened one of the hymn books and giving out a hymn said to the people, "that if there were any there who were not in Christ and wanted to be, that as we sing an opportunity is given, and just come up and give me your hand." This made me feel that he savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men. Evidently he did not know the truth that makes men free. When Jesus said everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice, he evidently meant every one that had this truth revealed to them, and knew Him who is the truth, the way, and the life. Truth does not come up out of the earth, for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. My answer to the question of Pilate is, whatever God reveals of himself, and of his will concerning us. We are not so much interested in what he has revealed to others, as we are in what he reveals to us. "When the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you." Thomas was not with these disciples at this time, but they said unto Thomas, "We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe," Yes, we want to see for ourselves and not another.

Peter said, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.*****And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount." It is what we see and feel for ourselves that does us good. There is no life in what we call the scripture of truth, except as it is taken by the living and incarnate word and truth, and made known to us. Preaching is a lot better to me if it has some seasoning in it. Paul said to the Corinthian brethren, "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*****My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

When I was about seven years of age I felt an impression to preach, and I would slip the Bible from the house and go outside to read, thinking that all I had to do was to read and commit to memory what I read, and recite it as I did my speech at school. I am afraid that we have too much of this kind of preaching to-day. I like to hear the kind of preaching that Paul said his was, in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. This kind of preaching penetrates the heart where God works. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." All other kinds of preaching is as sounding brass,

or a tinkling symbol to those who are of this truth, and heareth His voice. Paul said, "Thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."

This truth in its purity and power comes down from above. Just as the manna that came down to feed the children of Israel. When they "saw it, they said one to another, It is manna: for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat." The Lord has given his people this blessed book which is called the scriptures of truth, that they may read and feast upon them as the Spirit touches our conscience to feel them, and our hearts to believe them. The little seed that fell upon the ground, and which the children of Israel gathered and called manna, fed them and sustained them while in the wilderness. So God has given his people the written word of truth to comfort them, and to feed their souls while here upon earth. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."

May God reveal this truth to us, and sanctify his word to us, for his word is truth. I sometimes feel to say with David, "O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles." We not only want the light of God to illuminate our path, but we want the truth of God to support us as we travel the king's highway. We want the truth brought out of the letter, and ratified in our hearts with divine power and sweetness. May God keep us and support us by his truth.

H. O. N.

"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."

John 10:16.

A sister in California has asked that we give our views through the *Signs* on the above verse of scripture. As much as in us is we like to comply with the wishes of our brethren.

Since the time the Lord said to Abram, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, and unto a land that I will shew thee," he manifested in innumerable ways his love for his people among the Jews all through the law age. Particularly, would we mention his watchcare over them in Egypt and in delivering them from the land of bondage with an high and mighty hand. The Lord made a covenant with Abraham, and renewed it with Isaac, and with Jacob, wherein he promised to bless them and bring them into a land which flowed with milk and honey. His dealings and relationships with them were such that it was proclaimed that "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun" (Israel), and that "The eternal God is thy refuge; and underneath are the everlasting arms; and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them. Israel then shall dwell in safety alone. the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellence! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and

thou shalt tread upon their high places." Deut. 33:26-29.

Following the death of Moses, the Lord raised up Joshua to lead the people of Israel across Jordan into the promised land; and after the death of Joshua the Lord brought forth others to rule over and serve them, including David and Solomon, to say nothing of his prophets to teach and instruct them in the way of righteousness. During the Legal Dispensation, only the Jews had the oracles of God committed unto them, while the Gentile nations were without the gates of Jerusalem, and had little or no standing in a spiritual way. However, there was some prophecy for the Gentiles even in that for them dark age, for the Lord spake, saying, "I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God." Hosea 2:23. This unquestionably had reference to the day when Michael, the Great Prince, would stand up for his people among the Gentile nations of the world. At best, the law reflected only shadows of the good things to come, but the types thereunder were all pointing to the coming of Emmanuel, which being interpreted meant, "God with us." It seems to us that the Apostle Paul dealt most beautifully with our text in the second chapter of Ephesians, from which we quote, as follows: "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Isreal, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." Eph. 2:11-18.

Having presented the matter so clearly unto them, he then proceeded to enlarge upon this most gracious workmanship of God by saying unto his Gentile brethren, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." This was that workmanship which God had created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God had before ordained that should be walked in. And neither did the apostle leave any room for doubt as to who all the praise and all the glory belonged, for he said plainly, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." The bringing together by God into that most sacred relationship of Jew and Gentile was that which called forth that most famous declaration "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

We hope we have made it clear that

by the "other sheep," which were not of the Jewish fold, Jesus had reference to his sheep among the Gentiles. His spiritual people are scattered as salt throughout the earth among every kindred, tribe, tongue and people, and we are glad that our Lord said, "Them also I must bring." We are persuaded that none will come unto him of their own accord, for by nature they will not have him rule over them; and neither has he delegated this work to any arm of flesh, which is entirely too weak and corrupt, but it is altogether and entirely the work of the Holy Spirit and, therefore, there can be no failure in any age of the world of all his chosen ones coming to him, for he himself hath said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." We have in the chapter of our text the parable of the good shepherd who gave his life for the sheep, and in addition to Jesus saying he must bring them, he also says, "and they shall hear my voice." In the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth verses of this same chapter, we hear him saying, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." What wonderful security it is to feel that we are in Him who is one with the Father. If this, indeed, be true, then we are as certain of our heavenly home as though we were already there.

Our text continues by saying, "And there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." We like the definiteness about the things contained in our text. This Shepherd knows his sheep and calls them by name, and they follow him. He is no weakling who pleads in vain with his own, but he speaks, and it is done, he commands, and it stands fast. He says to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; Even every one that is called by his name, for he has created them for his glory; he hath formed them; yea, he hath made them, and there is none, men or devils, who can hinder him in fully accomplishing all his pleasure. God shall gather the solitary ones in families from among the Gentiles and Jews, the bond and the free, and they shall all come and sit down in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and none shall molest or make them afraid. For nearly two thousand years now, we believe, he has been gathering his lambs and his sheep among the Gentiles, and we do not know how long it will be before their fulness shall have come in, but whenever that may be, we are persuaded that he will then turn more particularly to the Jews and will graff them in again in a more sacred relationship than they have ever yet known, and then will they, in truth, confess and own him as their true spiritual Messiah. It may require thousands of years, as we count them, before this is accomplished, so we are not one of those who are prophesying the second bodily coming of Jesus any day. To-day there are almost innumerable shades and hues of Christians, so-called, many having a form of Godliness, but denying the power thereof, and all claiming to be wise about many things, but we are told in his precious word that our Lord shall come as a thief in the night, and that no man knoweth when the day of the Lord shall come. Of one thing we are convinced, and that is that time is marching rapidly on and that each day is bringing us nearer to the time when

the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever, and for-ever. God's time table, however, is not like ours, for with him one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. But when that illustrious day shall dawn, every knee shall be made to bow before King Jesus, and the Royal Diadem shall be brought forth and he shall be crowned Lord of all, God blessed for-ever-more. Then will there, indeed, be one fold and one shepherd. We earnestly hope that we are getting a little glimpse from time to time of that which is yet to come, when we are enabled by the workings of his Holy Spirit to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord, but we cannot agree with those who liken that Celestial City above to an earthly one, with many highways leading into it from all directions, rather would we see Christ as the only door by which any can enter into the fold, and his church here below as being the only one of her Mother that bare her, the New Jerusalem, and the choice one of him that loved her and gave himself for her. Even here in this topsy-turvy world God's children are given faith to see him and his church as the great apostle so wonderfully set it forth in his epistle to his Ephesian brethren, where he said, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." When we are brought to this point we are prepared to receive and accept his admonition as a prisoner of the Lord in beseeching them to "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

If consistent with his holy and divine will, may the Lord bless what has been said to the comfort and edification of his poor and afflicted people, and cause it to redound to the praise of his own glorious grace, through Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom be honor and glory, now and world without end, Amen.

R. L. D.

MEMORIALS

Whereas, it has pleased our heavenly Father in his infinite wisdom to remove by death our beloved brother and able minister in the faith of God's elect, ELDER CHARLES W. VAUGHN, since our last Association, and

Whereas, the Lexington-Roxbury Association deeply conscious of our own loss and that sustained by the other churches where he preached or served as pastor in the exercise of the gift with which Elder Vaughn was richly blessed, his faithful and able ministration during his many visits to us for more than a quarter of a century, and the warm ties of fellowship strengthened by his coming among us, and the sound principles of doctrine set forth, and the power of God demonstrated in his preaching, therefore be it

Resolved, that we send this tribute to the memory of him whom we have loved and cherished, to his surviving wife, Sister Annie Vaughn, that a copy of these resolutions be placed upon the minutes of our Association and inserted in the **Signs of the Times** of which he was an Associate Editor for many years, and also published in the **Old Faith Contender.**

Done by order of the church in conference, Wednesday and Thursday, September 14 and 15, 1949.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Moderator
EDWARD K. ADSIT, Clerk

Whereas, our infinite and Holy God, since we last met in an associate capacity, hath removed by death our beloved and gifted brother, ELDER HORACE H. LEFFERTS, who hath so often visited us in the past and declared with power, sweetness and holy boldness the unsearchable riches of Christ, feeding our souls and confirming us in our faith, we the members of the Lexington-Roxbury Association, realizing the irreparable loss that the churches of our own and other associations where he ministered have sustained, bow submissively to the will of God and express our

sympathy and sorrow to them and to the bereaved family, and be it further

Resolved, that we express this tribute to the memory of one we held so dear, whose preaching was a selah to our souls, as he brought to us things new and old as we fed upon the sweet manna of the word, and be it further

Resolved, that we send this expression of love and sorrow to his surviving widow, Mrs. Ella Lefferts, and that a copy of this resolution be published in the **Old Faith Contender** and also in the **Signs of the Times** upon the staff of which he ably served many years as Editor-in-Chief, and also that a copy be recorded in the minutes of this Association.

Done by order of the church in conference, Wednesday and Thursday, September 14 and 15, 1949.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Moderator
EDWARD K. ADSIT, Clerk

OBITUARIES

SAMUEL A. CROSS was born in Graves Co., Ky., March 4, 1870 and was called from the shores of time May 28, 1949, making his stay on earth 79 years. At the age of twenty he was married to Miss Jennie Sullivan on October 7, 1890. To that union were born eight children, three boys and five girls. At the age of 58 years she passed away Nov. 26, 1931. He later married Mrs. Annie Mangrum. She and the children survive him.

Brother Cross united with Zion Primitive Baptist Church at Mayfield, Ky., Aug. 31, 1924, and was baptized by the late Elder J. C. Chester the same day at the close of a wonderful union meeting of Soldier Creek Association. He was a very fine man, speaking after the manner of men, he was much devoted to his church and to his brethren and sisters. The church has had to give up a staunch member, and his wife and children a devoted husband and father.

Brother Cross was strong in the doctrine of predestination, election, salvation by grace and the final perseverance of the saints through grace unto life everlasting by Jesus Christ. Although it is hard for us to bid farewell to our brother, we are confident our loss is his eternal gain. We sometimes feel that death is only the door by which God's little children pass through to enter into that eternal haven of rest beyond this vale of tears.

Brother Cross and the writer walked side by side for over thirty-two years in sweet fellowship, and oh how much I miss him at our little church that he loved so well. He was always at meeting when it was possible. He leaves a dear companion behind. May God bless her and his children, reconciling them to his will in all things while here on earth.

The writer conducted the funeral service at Byrns Funeral Home, Mayfield, Ky., using for a text, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man," the every man meaning to me God's little children. There was a large congregation of sorrowing brethren, sisters and friends at the funeral, after which he was laid by his first wife in the beautiful cemetery at North Mt. Zion to await that last call from on high, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," there to see him as he is and be like him, to shout his praises forever and ever in a world that will never end. May God comfort all that mourn his passing is the prayer of the writer.

(Elder) O. W. PERKINS

MRS. SARAH ELIZABETH (Sturgis) SIRMAN was born June 25, 1850. She died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Bertie Dryden, Salisbury, Md., May 30, 1949, at the age of 98 years, 10 months and 30 days.

She was the daughter of Joshua and Mary C. Sturgis of Worcester Co., Md. She was married to John T. Sirman, Feb. 22, 1871. To this union were born seven children: J. C. Sirman, John S. Sirman, Mrs. Mary E. Shockley, Mrs. Emma Riggin, Mrs. Ruth Twilley, Mrs. Bertie Dryden and Mrs. Eleanor Sistare all of Salisbury, Md. All of them survive except John S. who died Jan. 12, 1930. Also surviving are thirteen grandchildren, twenty-eight great-grandchildren and four great-great- grandchildren.

Mrs. Sirman was blessed to live to an old age, almost 100 years, and her departure was quiet like the life she lived. She never united with the visible church yet she was as faithful as those thus favored. For a number of years before her death she was almost totally blind, but desired to attend the meetings as much as when she could see the people, never missing a service when able to attend. The weather did not prevent her from coming and she was brought to the service by her faithful daughter, Mrs. Bertie Dryden.

It was often an inspiration to the writer to see her enter the meeting-house, and see the joy it gave her in hearing the gospel and mingling with the Lord's people. She knew almost every member of the congregation by their voices and most of them had a word for her. All of her family were very devoted to her, and she had all the attention that loving hands could give. We believe she has gone to join the blood washed throng where death will never come. Her faithfulness to the house of God, her love for God's people, and her childlike faith in the God of her

hope will linger in our memories in the years to come. In the many years of my serving churches I have never known a more lovable character. Her funeral service was conducted by the writer.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER

MRS. BESSIE (MURPHY) LAKE was born June 7, 1888, and it pleased the Lord to remove from our midst our dearly beloved sister in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Nov. 25, 1949, making her stay on earth 61 years, 5 months and 18 days. She suffered a long illness of several years which developed unavoidably worse a few hours before her departure at a hospital in Huntington, W. Va. At this time we feel that she ceased from her trials and sufferings, and is at rest with the saints that have already crossed to the other side.

She is survived by her husband, John E. Lake; two stepdaughters, four stepsons; her father, Elder J. S. Murphy; four sisters namely, Mrs. Bernice Linn, Mrs. Bycie Greathouse, Mrs. Bonnie Johnson, Mrs. Beulah Weese and two brothers, B. J. Murphy and B. D. Murphy; also several nieces and nephews.

She was married three times; first to French R. Ferguson. To this marriage was born a daughter, Elvira Edna in 1910 who passed away in infancy aged nine months; also during this marriage she raised a foster son, Elwood Ferguson. This husband died in Feb. 1931. Her second husband, Zan F. Weese, died Feb. 25, 1942. He was a member of the Leading Creek Church for six years. By this marriage she raised a foster daughter, Iona Jaggie.

She was received by experience and baptism into the fellowship of the Leading Creek Primitive Baptist Church near Montrose, W. Va., July 23, 1911, making her membership nearly 39 years. She was a faithful and worthy member, and a defender of the word of God. Her most earnest desire was to attend her church and mingle with the flock that Jesus commanded his servants to feed. She was blessed with a good understanding of the truth, and traveled long distances on many occasions with her dear husband when neither of them felt physically able to make the trip, but the power and glory of God was made manifest at these times as they were made to rejoice and forget their own troubles, and were lifted up with strength by the gospel as it was preached by our Primitive Baptist preachers. I am sure many will bear with me in stating that no one ever enjoyed more than she to entertain the brethren in her home. The brethren and friends were met with a loving reception and gracious warmth; their conversations were centered upon the scriptures; many beautiful old hymns were often sung and on different occasions preaching was held. During a period while the Leading Creek Baptist meetinghouse was being rebuilt the regular church meetings were held in her home. She was outstanding in the church and her advice was always good. She lived and died upholding the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, and by the living faith of God. She will be sadly missed by those of her own immediate family, in the church and also by all who were acquainted with her both far and near.

Elder H. J. Bird conducted the funeral services, and she was laid away in the burying ground adjoining her home church near Montrose, W. Va. May the Lord grant his reconciling grace to her relatives and friends. Written by request.

V. B. LINN

JOSEPH ROOK departed this life Sept. 21, 1949. He was born Aug. 22, 1888, the son of Anselm and Minnie Rook. Oct. 29, 1913 he was married to Mabel J. Huber. To this union were born two sons, Russel and Walter. Russel has one daughter and Walter two sons. They, with the widow, Mrs. Rook, remain to mourn their loss. He lived near Southampton all his life in the same house in which he was born and died.

The church at Southampton feel it has met with a great loss in his passing. He was like a pillar on the outside of the church placed there by the Lord to help support it. He received a sweet hope in his dear Redeemer about twenty years ago, and at one time when Elder Lefferts and the writer visited him in his home he told us of a Sunday at the close of Elder Ker's sermon he had a great desire to unite with the church but was not given strength to go forward and ask for a home in the church. We have hoped many times since that he might yet be given strength to do this, but this was not to be. He loved to meet for worship with God's dear people and often when we had no preaching services at Southampton he would go over to Hopewell, N. J. to hear Elder Vaughn. Mr. Rook and the writer visited Elder Vaughn during his last sickness, and as we approached his bedside he reached out and took Mr. Rook's hand and said, "Mr. Rook I am so glad you came to see me for I dearly love you."

Mr. Rook was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Southampton Baptist Church from 1932 until his death. He was well known and greatly respected throughout this vicinity. Elder John D. Wood was called to conduct the funeral services, speaking words of comfort to the bereaved family. He was laid to rest in the Union Cemetery near Southampton until his Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God and raise him and take him home to ever be with his heavenly Father through all eternity. Written by request of the family.

CASPER G. FETTER

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 118 RUTHERFORD, N. J., APRIL, 1950 No. 4

POETRY

I stood and watched a fountain flow,
That bathed my weary soul;
It takes away my sin and guilt,
And makes me ever new.

I love His work and praise His name,
I bear His suffering too;
I watched this fountain as it flowed,
And I no work did do.

I love this fountain as it flows
That men be ever free;
I watch and gaze, and wonder if
This fountain is for me.

'Tis yours He said, behold my side,
Behold my hands and see;
This fount was ever sent for you
'Twas given for poor me.

Lowland, N. C. WORDEN LEWIS

CORRESPONDENCE

Kinwood, Texas

DEAR ELDER DODSON AND THE MANY READERS OF THE DEAR SIGNS OF THE TIMES: I desire to pen a few lines trusting that it may be worthy of space, and to the glory of God and comfort to his dear believing children. As a starting point we find in Romans 1:20 this language, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." To me this scripture penned by the apostle Paul to the Roman brethren fills or covers everything both naturally and spiritually. Permit me to say that it covers some of the great wonders revealed in two great books. One is the book of nature, contained in it is all nature; the other is the book of Revelation, the holy Bible. I can but believe, dear readers, that we cannot together consider such marvels of creation without rising from nature to nature's God for even these magnificent wonders of the starry heavens fade from view in our admiration of the divine One himself from whom they all have emanated, and by whom they are all infinitely transcended. The great privilege of his children of the knowledge to worshipping the God of the universe is without question the supreme privilege of life. The great eternal One has revealed himself to the children of men through these two great books.

We shall here speak of the book of the starry heavens. Both are the issue of the same hand; both speak to us of God. David wrote, "Thy name is near thy wondrous works declare." Happy is the man whose faith is fixed on the everlasting God revealed in his works and in his written word. "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." Let us take a celestial journey together—a sight seeing trip through story land that will carry us far across the immeasureable space and amid the host of heaven that make up God's brilliantly lighted, swiftly moving life filled universe. We shall ride on the wings of light, flying more than 186,000 miles a second, a speed so great that we could circle the earth in three seconds after leaving our starting point. There is harmony and

design everywhere in the visible and invisible universe, but harmony is not God, neither is design. Even life itself is not an object of worship nor the forms in which it is manifest. The power of a working force everywhere is evident and yet these tokens are not God. More convincing than the exact laws of nature is the God that made these laws. For harmony and design there is the great Designer, and for the universe there is the Builder. "The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." Rom. 1:20. Such widsom, power and love is revealed in the world of creation. Surely these attributes belong to God who loved us as a loving heavenly Father and his Son Jesus Christ by whom all things in heaven and earth were created. (Col. 1:16.)

From the Bible we learn that God's throne is in the heaven of heavens. The Psalmist expressed a similar truth when he wrote, "The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all." As one stands gazing into the depth of space seriously meditating, and earnestly endeavoring to comprehend the full grandeur and glory of God's great universe he can but share the emotion of David as he exclaimed, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" The words of Christ are comforting indeed as we sense anew man's painful insignificance. "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?*****Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows." How can any intelligent being stand gaping in wonderment at God's colossal universe, where millions of island like universes appear like a mighty illuminated armada cruising up and down the high seas of immensity, without experiencing in his soul a feeling of reverence and respect, a sense of fervent devotion and humility in the presence of his incomprehensible almightiness. How does God reveal himself to man? "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." 2 Tim. 3:16. Through his inspiration "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1:21. By whom was our world and also the other worlds created? "He (Christ) was in the world, and the world was made by him." John 1:10. "God hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the world." Heb. 1:-2. "For by him were all things created,*****by him (Christ) all things consist." Col. 1: 16-17. He "upholds all things by the word of his power." Heb. 1:3. by his created works which speak a universal language. "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." Rom. 1:20. "The heavens declare the glory of God.*****There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." Psalm 19:1-3. Dear children of God, when I ponder these things in my mind I feel to say with Job 40:4, "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth."

(Elder) B. B. WALSTON

Route 2, Brantley, Ala.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON, ASSOCIATE EDITORS, AND ALL KINDRED IN THE FAITH OF JESUS CHRIST, OUR BELOVED REDEEMER FROM ON HIGH: Please find the balance on my subscription. I feel that

the Lord has blessed me in many ways, but I cannot see how he has mercy on such a vile sinner as I sometimes feel to be. Still that little spark of hope remains, and what a blessed thought it is to feel and believe that we have a Mediator between God and man, the blessed Savior to make intercessions for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. My mind has been wandering back through Old Testament writings. There are some beautiful pictures and some sad ones. We find in the book of Jonah a twofold picture when he lay in the fish's belly three days and nights for his disobedience to God's command. There in that condition, no way whatever to help himself, surrounded in darkness all he could do was pray. It was God's will and purpose to make known his power, and when he prayed out of the fish's mouth the Lord spoke to the fish and then the fish vomited him up on dryland. Then he could say that salvation is of the Lord. He represented our blessed Savior lying in the heart of the earth three days and nights. Jesus spoke of Jonah concerning his resurrection. That is a beautiful picture manifesting God's power in Jonah and in Jesus Christ our Lord. The next one, the way I understand it, is the poor sinner dead in trespasses and in sin, down in the valley and in the wilderness of gloom and sorrow, his feet in the miry clay and no way to turn; he cannot find peace nor see a light, all he can do is pray to God for mercy; he cannot help himself, he is just helpless in the hands of the Lord; all he can do is pray, Lord have mercy, and when it pleases the Father of lights to reveal himself to him then he can say with Jonah, salvation is of the Lord. O God, what a wonderful thought, what manner of people ought we to be, knowing as we have been taught of the Lord his wonderful love and mercy and his wrath. Sometimes I feel to know that I have a hope beyond this vale of tears and sorrow, and then it seems that all light is gone but just a spark, enough to sustain that little hope in Jesus Christ our Lord. But God has a purpose in all things both great and small; he withdraws his hand that we may see ourselves how vile and prone to sin we are.

We come now to the book of Judges which is dealing with natural Israel on account of their disobedience to God's laws. They were subjected to wars, bloodshed, depressions, trials and tribulations for their disobedience, worshipping idol Gods and taken in with heathen religions, other people were left among them to try them out to see if they would be faithful to God and to the law. It appears to me, though I may be wrong, that the natural Israelites in the book of Judges is a picture and foreshadow of the days of spiritual Israel, our wars and bloodshed, our trials and tribulations, pain and heartaches, but he has never left us alone; his power is unknown and his riches past finding out; we are just chaff in the wind, helpless as the unborn babe. It does my heart and soul good to meditate on the mercy and power of God for he has promised never to forsake us, and that spirit in my heart testifies to it being the truth. I do not worry about the things of this world for I believe to feel to know that every-thing will come to pass in due time, according to his good will and purpose. He purposed all things and so shall they stand. The most I worry about is my soul's salvation through grace and grace alone. Sometimes I have a peace of mind, but as I mentioned above, sometimes it seems almost gone.

I went to my church at Rutled yesterday and our Pastor, Elder Gafford,

preached a most wonderful sermon on Joseph going down into Egypt, and bringing his people to the land of Goshen. What a sweet thought it is that Jesus will bring his people home to him where they will not have to buy bread for that love and mercy—salvation through grace—is free to God's redeemed people, redeemed through the blood of our blessed Savior. I feel this morning that if I could just shout his praises on high I would be perfectly happy. Blessed be the name of Jesus that knew no sin and no guile was found in his mouth.

I would like, if the Lord will guide and direct my mind, to write some about the beautiful pictures set forth in the book of Ruth, seemingly the most beautiful book in the Old Testament. Just turn from the book of Judges over to the book of Ruth. It is such a sweet peace in contrast with the book of Judges. Every-thing is peace, love, friendship and happiness. The first scene is laid in the land of Moab where Naomi is under the necessity of residing, but after the death of her husband and sons she returns to Palestine. The loyalty of Ruth, her daughter-in-law, is one of the beautiful scenes of the Bible. She accepts the God of Naomi and is kindly addressed by Boaz. "The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust." How little they knew the greatness of that reward, that she, a Moabitess, should become an ancestress of Jesus Christ. The imagination of man cannot comprehend the beauty and grandeur of that reward that is laid up in heaven for God's chosen few, that were redeemed for his pleasure through the blood of Jesus. Jesus has said, if they cannot forsake mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters you cannot be my disciple. Ruth forsook all she had—country, mother, father, brother and sister to serve the same God that Naomi served. This peaceful scene furnishes a striking contrast to the picture of war, bloodshed and devastation portrayed by the book of Judges in the midst of their wickedness and apostasy. It is refreshing to return to this scene of pity and love, to the love and mercy so plainly manifested in the picture of Naomi and Ruth. The main scene of the book is laid in Bethlehem, the birthplace of Christ, and the city of David. The story of the purchased inheritance is a picture and a foreshadow of Christ being crucified on the cross, paying the purchased price for his inheritance, all that God gave him in that covenant of grace before the world was. Then Naomi, her mother-in-law, said unto her, "My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee? And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley tonight in the threshing floor." Naomi laid all the plans carefully for Ruth, and told her just what to do and how, and not to let herself be known. When Boaz had eaten and drunk he laid himself down and Ruth went in and uncovered his feet and laid herself down.

My dear brothers and sisters and to all the household of faith, what a beautiful picture of the bride and bridegroom representing Christ and his church. It foreshadows God's humble poor coming to Jesus' feet at the foot of the cross. Ruth became the wife of Boaz who was of the tribe of Judah and to them was born Obed, the grandfather of David. Being a Moabitess she was a descendent of Lot, the ancestor of that race, and hence she was a Shemite as was Abraham. This supplies us with the historical thread as related to David and the line of the Messiah. The

book of Ruth seemingly is the most beautiful book in the Bible. It is all love and mercy, the way I understand it, it is just a picture of Jesus' love manifested for his redeemed people. Many pages could be written on this book.

We have left out many important points on account of space that would be more valuable to readers of the *Signs* than my wandering thoughts. I have turned those scriptures over and over in my mind. So many times having many sweet memories and many sad ones. Just wondering if I am one that Jesus died for. It is a sad thing to think about, knowing as we do by experience that if we were not included in that covenant of grace from God the Father through the shed blood of Christ Jesus there is no change now for there is not one thing we can do.

I am coming to a close by asking the prayers of all those that feel disposed to pray for a sinner such as I feel to be for there is nothing good in me without the help of the higher power. I sincerely enjoy all the editorials and correspondence for the *Signs of the Times* is a home comfort to me. May the Lord ever bless you, and I feel that he will for the good purpose he has in you. Remember me at the throne of grace. Your sister I hope by the grace of God. Brother Dodson, if this is not according to truth just lay it aside. I do not want anything in print that is not according to God's truth. Much love and respect for you and yours. If it is not asking too much of you I would like your views on Isaiah 65:1.

(Mrs) J. J. McNEAL

(The verse referred to by our sister reads as follows: "I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name." It is quite clear to us that this has a very special reference to the Gentiles. Under the Legal Dispensation the oracles of God were committed unto the Jews, and to them only, and the Gentiles were apparently altogether without God. They were, however, not without some prophesies concerning better days, for there are many of those. Speaking in their behalf this same prophet said the sixteenth verse of the sixty-third chapter, "Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O Lord, art our father, our redeemer; thy name is from everlasting." When Jesus came into the world he said, other sheep I have, which are not of this fold, them also I must bring, that there may be one fold and one Shepherd. He came to break down the middle wall of partition which separated between the Jew and the Gentile and of twain to make one new man. The Gentiles, according to nature, did not seek after God until he sought them out and manifested himself unto them. They, like all natural men and women, sought after the things of this world, until Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost among them. Like Jacob of old, the Gentiles and all others even unto this day, were found by Jesus in a waste-howling wilderness, but he led them about and instructed them, and until he does they will have no desire whatsoever for him. Jesus must speak, saying, "Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name," before they see any beauty in him. According to nature, we know both by experience and the Scriptures that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, for they are foolishness unto him, and neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. It has well been said, We love Him because he first loved us. In or-

der to understand this scripture, we believe we must handle and taste it as the words of life, for not until we are made to realize that we are the clay and have to be shapened by the hand of the Great Potter into a vessel that will be to the honor and glory of his name, will we truly understand the scriptures of eternal truth. Briefly, the foregoing is what we understand to be taught by the scripture in question.

R. L. D)

Route 5, Box 897, Miller Road 2, Houston, Texas

DEAR ELDER DODSON: A few days ago I received the copies of *Signs* you sent me. Please accept my sincere thanks. I cannot help expressing my gratification and comfort reading them for they contain the first preaching I have heard in a long time. Both the editorials and correspondence are a feast. I think one copy of the *Signs* is worth many times the subscription price, especially to one so isolated (as I believed until receiving the *Signs*) from the Old Baptists as I. But I am right where the Lord would have me be or else I would not be here. I am not a member of the Old Baptists but I love and believe, I hope, in the gospel they teach. I love the *Signs* too, for the precious letters and editorials therein, giving God all the glory of our salvation.

I believe in absolute predestination, God being the Creator of all things, and by him all things consist; and I believe in salvation by grace in and through the merits of a crucified Lord; that we are not saved because of any merit or goodness of ourselves, but through the merit of our beloved Redeemer who came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance; and that the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was shed on the cross for those that God chose of every nation. These he predestinated before the world was, as his chosen ones to be with him in eternity.

Oh, how much I wish that I might be worthy of a home with the dear Old Baptists, to be numbered with the children of God. I know I am not a fit subject, and realizing only too well my utter unworthiness, I have not the courage to knock at their door for admittance. How could those dear souls fellowship one so vile and full of sin as I? Weak, blind, worthless, all unholy, all unclean. Well do I remember (about fourteen years ago) when first my sins rose up like mountains before me. I saw myself as the most vile, corruptible sinner on earth. For months I could find no joy, no peace for my troubled, sin-burdened soul. I knew I could not do one thing to save myself, and I could only cry for mercy. O Lord, my God have mercy on me a poor sinner. I was so burdened with the realization of my sins that food became nauseating, my children believed me to be really ill and pleaded with me to see our doctor, but I knew that there is but one physician that can cure a sin-sick soul.

Elder Dodson, since I am an outsider (and it would take up too much of your precious time) I shall make this as brief as I well can, please forgive me for I must tell you. When it seemed I could not bear my burden of sin longer there came a little ray of hope, (if I am not deceived) blessed hope. Oh, the blessed relief! Perhaps you can imagine my joy, comfort and *sweet* peace. With thankfulness filling my heart I give God all the glory. It is only a tiny hope (if it is a hope) yet not for anything else on earth would I exchange it. Times are (many times) when again I am depressed, gloom and darkness descend upon me, all anew in my heart is a feeling

of loss and loneliness. My spirits sink lower and lower. I am blue, all undone, and I am made to cry out, O, dear Lord remember me, forsake me not! At such seasons I want to talk and read. I find much comfort in the sweet words of our precious Lord Jesus, and I go unto my Lord in Matt. 11:28-30.

The questions that trouble me most are: I know that our precious Lord Jesus Christ died upon the cross for his people, but am I one of them? What evidence do I have of a regenerated heart of a spiritual birth? Elder Dodson, I fear I have no evidence that will stand the test. It seems that about all I can think of is my sins, yet I cannot forget the many sweet, precious promises he left for his doubting, storm-tossed children cheering them along life's rugged road. I find myself wishing that I, too, might be worthy to share, if only a crumb, some of these precious promises.

Elder Dodson, I only meant to thank you for the *Signs* you so generously sent and to send in my subscription for the *Signs*. It just seemed I must have a talk with some one of the Old Baptist family. I know I have not written anything of interest. I realize only too well my poverty of spirit and ignorance of spiritual things, and pray for more light and understanding. I often pray: "Shew me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day." If I am not asking too much, please remember this poor sinner in your prayers, and may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you and the Associate Editors is the feeble prayer of just a worm of the dust.

(Mrs.) HARRIET (nee LITTLE) GRAY

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Your letter came a few days ago and I wish I could express my feelings more explicitly, but can only tell you in my simple way that your letter was encouraging, consoling, lifting up my drooping spirits, renewing my faith and hope, if indeed I have a hope. Oh, if I could only know of a certainty that I am one of God's children.

You stated in your letter that "It is difficult for me to understand why one with such an abundance of evidence of having passed from death unto life still lingers outside the Shepherd's fold." Elder Dodson, I believe that if indeed I am one of his children, to be numbered as one of the Shepherd's fold, that there is an appointed time and at that time the spirit of God will move me, give me courage and strength to ask for a home with his dear children. Do you believe or not that I am right in believing as I do about this? There have been times I believe when I might have told the church what I hope the Lord has done for me, but since I married more than forty-four years ago I have not had the opportunity of associating with or even being near, so far as I know, the Old Baptists nor near a sound church.

I believe that whatever happens in this world comes by the will of God and is for some purpose. I feel that he is good and just in all things and that every step I take is ordered of the Lord and without him I can do nothing as he said, "Without me ye can do nothing." I have learned by bitter experience that I can no more change my nature than a leopard can change his spots.

I devoured every word of your editorial. "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." It was a feast indeed for this poor old sinner, and, too, it is so beautifully illustrated, and the editorial by Elder Spangler is both

relishing and enlightening. I love reading the editorials, letters, etc. in the dear old *Signs,* they are all edifying and comforting. I am delighted with its arrival and feel almost as though I were receiving visits from members of the Old Baptist family. Having the *Signs* in the home brings memories of my beloved father, Elder Wm. Little, of his smiling blue eyes, and pleasant face (and his pipe) reading his latest *Signs.*

Elder Dodson, again I am guilty of imposing on your good nature and precious time, but it seems I must cover much space to say very little. Please pardon me and accept my sincere thanks for "Showers of Rain" which I received yesterday. I have read everything therein and enjoyed all immensely. I am surprised and humbled to know you think my recent letter worthy of publication in the *Signs.* I fear what I have in that or this will not be of interest to any one. I must close thanking you for your most encouraging letter. Remember me in your prayers and may God bless you is the feeble prayer of one who hopes of a hope in life eternal. A helpless sinner.

(Mrs.) HARRIET (nee LITTLE) GRAY

Redwood, Va.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR AND PRECIOUS BROTHER IN HOPE OF IMMORTALITY: Dear Brother, I have been a subscriber of the *Signs of the Times* for eight years. I have taken several different religious papers and in my judgment I like the *Signs* best of all. I like your theory of keeping your paper clear of advertisements. I want it with clean cut salvation by grace doctrine, and the total depravity of the works of men. I also approve of your humble way and manner of pleading and striving for peace and unity among our churches and brethren. I enjoy reading your good editorials so much, and also those of the Associate Editors of the *Signs.* I feel the corresponding letters are good too. When there is with us a great hungering and thirsting after righteousness, these sacred truths are very good to us. If we are not made hungry and thirsty we cannot eat and drink of ourselves, and so it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth but of God that showeth mercy. By the Lord all things consist.

Brother Dodson I promised you last year at the Staunton River Association that I would try to get you some new subscribers to the *Signs.* It is now time for my renewal and I will remit for two years, also I have two new subscriptions each for one year. I hope I can get more new ones soon. I hope the Lord wills that you come our way again to the Staunton and Pigg River Associations. May the Lord bless and keep in peace all of the inhabitants of Zion is my prayer. A brother in hope.

J. A. PERDUE

Lillie, La.

DEAR. ELDER DODSON : According to agreement I am enclosing an obituary for Elder W. N. Green. I may have made this too long but that seems to be my shortcoming to make anything I write too long, but I hope it will not be detrimental to the *Signs* to lose this space. Elder Green was widely and very favorably known. He was a most enthusiastic preacher among us until his health failed.

Well, Elder Dodson, the year 1949 is now history with all of its terrible perplexities and distresses, and we know not what 1950 will bring us. God alone knows and will surely bring to pass only those things which he declared from the beginning, and those things he spoke from ancient times;

"the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." There is a great and serene feeling of priceless courage and confidence in my poor bosom, that the broad and glorious doctrine of the great and sovereign God has decreed and arranged all things that has and will come to pass for the good of his people, and to the glory and eternal praise of his ever blessed and holy name. If my poor soul does not believe and rest in this doctrine then I am a greatly deceived one.

There are lots of very fearful things that are being made manifest in the great advancement of science in modern warfare, and truly it is most terrible to think of, knowing the fierce, selfish and diabolical sins of men and nations, their contention and great desire for power and domination, and knowing that they will do anything to destroy and kill one another. If I did not believe in that sovereign Ruler and Governor, Lord of lords and King of kings where would I have any hope for this life or that which is to come? I would have no hope for health, wealth or any of the actually necessary things of natural life, much less for the things of the life that is to come.

I only meant to send in the obituary of Elder Green and not to take more of your time as I have done, but hope that you can read the remarks I have made with charity and not feel obligated to reply, although I always enjoy hearing from you. May God bless, keep, sanctify and preserve us blameless unto his heavenly kingdom, together with all his covenant people is my prayer for Jesus sake. Unworthily your brother in hope of continued mercy and grace.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES

(See obituary in this issue)

Route 1, Box 104, St. Albans, W. Va.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am passing on to you two letters for your consideration and judgment. If you deem them worthy give them space in the *Signs of the Times*. I had the blessed privilege of baptizing Brother Bowman Johnson, Sister Mildred Stanley and Brother J. R. Lane the second Sunday in May (1949) into the fellowship of Harmony Church. It was a time of the manifesting of God's love. Brother Bowman and Sister Mildred are the son and daughter of Deacon J. B. Johnson of Huntington.

I am enclosing some poetry I composed relating to this baptism. You may use it as you see fit.

'Twas fixed in God's eternal mind,
Ere time on earth began below,
Where each of you should mercy find,
And each of you his grace should know.

Your parents, native place and time,
Were settled, fixed and sealed;
Jehovah's plummet, seal and line,
Your life, your all revealed.

'Twas His dear, sovereign, holy hand,
Which turned you in your way,
And led you by his tender hand,
Into the straight and narrow way.

He visited grace in your time of need,
And filled your souls with awe and love;
Led you to pastures green to feed,
He'll bring you home to heaven above.

He gave you hope in Jesus' blood,
And made you long for home;
Redeemed your souls from sin's dark flood;
He hears your every plaintive groan.

When to the church our brother Lane,
Came humbly asking for a home,
Made willing to bear the cross and shame
A servant's place to seek, he came.

Down to the water's edge we came,
All righteousness to fulfill;
Baptizing in His thrice exalted name
All who gave witness to the seal.

Our sister came and trembling stood,

Like the lame man at the pool;
Sweet evidence that the Savior's blood
Had cleansed her weary troubled soul.

We buried her beneath the wave,
The blessed ordinance sweet;
Sweet emblem of the Savior's grave,
To rise with Christ, was counted meet.

Our brother could not come just now,
But could not long refrain;
He soon must come and tell just how
He had found peace in Jesus' name.

We buried him, oh sacred sweet,
Our soul and bosom moved with love;
The blessed ordinance, our brother meet,
Numbered with friends in bonds of love.

Dear pilgrims, sore trials await you here,
But Jesus is the sinner's friend;
His presence will disperse your fear,
His love is to the end.

My soul has longed to see you come
Take your place in Zion with those you love,
The church, your shelter and your home,
Your long sought rest, the place of love.

My prayers have often been
For you and others 'round the fold,
For God, our God, to bring you in,
He promised from of old.

The church to build, and settle here,
Upon this Rock, foundation sure,
Each member chosen, planted here,
Kept by Jehovah's hand secure.

My feeble labor in the Lord
I hope has not been all in vain,
His smile doth sometimes peace afford,
I hope I have not run in vain.

My favored soul has seen the day
When I, through grace, could lead you there;
The grave of Jesus before you lay,
Buried with Him, and raised his heir.

(Elder) H. J. BIRD

Huntington, W. Va.

ELDER H. J. BIRD, DEAR UNCLE HARVEY: I have a desire tonight to write you although I do not know what I shall write. Clarice is feeling some better and the rest are as usual. I have been down and out for some time. It seems there is nothing for me but trouble. The bed seems more a place of torture than rest. Clarice tries to help me. She is so concerned over my suffering, but I am out of human reach even with my very dear companion.

For two or three weeks prior to the meeting I was made to feel or at least I felt that if I would ask the church for a home it would help my troubled mind and give me some ease. I made promises that I would do so, at the next meeting, but I have broken all those promises. All during the Saturday meeting I was thinking it would be a good time for me to go before the church there were not many there. You see I am so ashamed of myself that usually I would rather crawl under the seat than to sit upon it. But at the end I could not go, I felt that I did not belong there. I do so much desire a place among the Lord's people, but I am not fit. I know that none of Adam's race is fit within themselves, but some are made fit in Christ. My trouble is, do I have that fitness?

"'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought),
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

So much of my time I am trying to pray for the answer but I do not know how to pray. I cannot do anything worth while. Much of the time I feel that all with whom I come in contact would be better off if I had never been born.

On Sunday at the close of the meeting, during the handshake (I do so love to clasp hands with the dear saints even though I am not worthy to be in their midst) I saw a very dear soul coming my way, and I was so afraid that I wanted to run. I was afraid she would tell me to go ahead; so when I shook hands with her I was looking

in another direction. That was Mrs. Lake and if I could only see myself as I see her I would be satisfied. I can see myself as everything but what I would like to be.

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

I am hoping that Clarice will be able for us to go to the Providence meeting, but at that time I may be looking for an excuse to keep from going. There are so many things I would like to write but cannot find language to express them so will close, hoping it will be the Lord's will for us to see you the fourth Sunday. When you are before the throne of your God please pray for an unworthy sinner.

BOWMAN JOHNSON

Route 2, Box 60, Huntington, W. Va.

DEAR HARVEY: I seem to be burdened so that I cannot sleep so will write you. May be you can understand my feelings a little. You always seem so understanding and my understanding is so blind.

First I will begin with a dream I had in August 1939 just after Paul David's death. I dreamed I was sinking in quicksand, and when I awoke the thought came to me that the quicksand represented my sins. That thought troubled me for awhile, but I lost sight of that dream for a time. It would come back to my mind every so often and I would be troubled each time for awhile and then I would lose sight of it again. Of late it has been on my mind and I cannot sleep. It seems the quicksand (my sins) is closing around me until sometimes I can hardly breathe.

In December (1948) when Elders Taylor and Wingfield were so blessed to preach, and all during the singing of the hymn, "My dearest friends in bonds of love," I could hardly stay back. The words of that hymn fit my feelings so well. Then during the rest of the week I could hardly wait until the week's end so that I could ask for a home with God's little children, the Primitive Baptists. I am such a sinner and so unworthy I am afraid I might do or say something that would cause trouble and strife among God's little ones, and that I would never want to do, but O the longing within me. When I think of Christ shedding his precious blood on the cross to save his people from their sins it seems too much for such a sinner as I. I feel that if my soul was sent to hell, His righteous law approves it well. God is all righteous, he is just, his ways are perfect and I am so imperfect. I am too unworthy to even speak his precious name. I know there is no good in me, no good that I can do, and sometimes, Harvey, when I go to meeting I feel so cold and lifeless.

"I find myself out of the way,
My thoughts are often gone astray;
Like one alone I seem to be;
Oh! is there any one like me?"

I was so burdened until Saturday morning. When I arose the burden seemed to have loosened until it was almost gone. I went to meeting Saturday and Sunday and did not ask for a home. Sunday night when I retired the burden came back and I could not sleep. It has been on my mind all day and I cannot sleep tonight. I know I should not bother you with my troubles and I am so incapable of expressing my feelings that I am afraid you will only be confused. I have left out a number of things that I wanted to write about. I would not blame you if you never speak to me again after receiv-

ing this letter and knowing how low and sinful I am. I hope you and the rest of the family are feeling better than on Sunday. Hope I have not written anything that I should not have done. I am so filled with doubts that I am afraid I might. I am so dependent and weak that I have not expressed my feelings as I wanted to do. Will close now from a wretched sinner.

(Mrs.) MILDRED STANLEY

Clinton, N. C.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: It has been on my mind so long to write you, but with one delay after another I trust you will excuse me. I find I have to do as I can. I am the same old man in the chair, it seems I do not get any better. Have been in my chair ten years and the way seems weary and long at times. At times the beauty of this world is all gone from me, but one thing makes me glad, I am blest to go to church and hear the good preaching, meet the good people and better singing I never heard than we have. I read so much in your paper that I believe with all my heart. While we are many miles apart it seems like home folks and I feel we are close together.

I do not intend to write much but thoughts keep coming in about the little hope that came to me forty-seven years ago. I was just a young boy twenty-two years of age. At times I thought much about what would become of me, but could not see anything that I could do. I realized I had a soul to be saved or lost and it gave me a great deal of trouble. It seemed that hell would be my home, but it pleased the Lord, I hope, to come to me just in time. Not my time but his time. In a vision I seemed to be carried away and at the end the Master said rise and have your freedom. I was happy and seemed to be like a feather floating in the air. As I grow older this hope seems more than the whole world to me and all that is in it. May God bless you and yours. C. J. DAVIS

Gantt, Ala.

ELDER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE: I have been thinking for some time I would write you my spiritual beliefs if I can. There is a scriptural verse which says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." I do not understand this to mean who will, but he who has already. This shows me that it is not left to the creature to do, for the work is done by Jesus alone.

There are many beliefs, but only one that is right. One belief is, I understand, of the flesh and the other belief is of the spirit. God says, without the spirit ye can do nothing. He means his spirit, and if I am writing this by the spirit of the flesh it is nothing, but I hope that it is by the spirit of God which wants to prompt me to write this. It is only God's work that stands for he says, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

It appears in my mind that there are two ways and that there is only one way that is right and that way is, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it," and "Broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction and many there be which go in thereat." I believe that those who find the narrow way are the people that God chose for his Son to save. Those that are on the broad way were left out by God.

I do not believe there is anything to be added to nor taken from what God has directed to be written beforetime, which was written for our learning. What we learn we believe, and I believe that belief comes by feeling. It is not

what we see and hear, but the true sense, I believe, is feeling. Feeling is the best of all.

To the straight and narrow path God, I believe, leads us or else we could not find it. Traveling that path is slow travel for when I would do good, evil is present, and so I have to stop and wait. The Lord said, "My spirit shall not always strive with man." When he is not there, one had better stop and wait for the Lord.

These are only a few of my thoughts which are very scattering, but I hope the Lord has led me so far if no farther. I will bring this to a close by asking you to look over all mistakes and do as you please with it. I remain as ever, J. S. SCOTT

Route 4, Box 35, Willis, Va.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I have so many times wanted to write but was not able to do so. I feel so little and cast down trying to write you. I am a shut-in, having been afflicted with arthritis for eighteen years. I have not walked for eight years. Can sit up in bed and do not suffer any more. My hands are drawn so that I cannot write well. I am not writing for sympathy. It is the good Lord's work. He has blessed me in so any ways. Three years ago I was so badly off I could not be turned in bed and lay on my back for two years. Could only move one hand just a little but I felt that God was still with me.

One morning after I had spent a dreadful night they all left the room for a few minutes. I looked out of my window and said, "Lord if I cannot feel better just take me from this old world." But that was not God's will. A voice said plainly to me, "There is never a cloud so dark but that it has a silver lining." After that day I began getting better, it was slow but better. I said in my mind if the Lord would bless me I would have preaching in my home. I had Elders Landon and Golden Harris come and preach. We had a nice company and a fine meeting. When they were singing the last hymn I could not wait any longer and said, "Golden before you finish the last hymn I want to talk a little." I felt like God was by me at the bedside telling me if I did not talk it was the last chance. That is just how I felt. I was not able to be baptized that year but the second Sunday at our Association at Indian Valley these same two preachers baptized me in a chair. It was the happiest moment I ever spent.

Brother Dodson, I did not think I could hold out to write this much. If I could write I would write all of my experience. I never knew there was such a good paper as the *Signs of the Times*. One of my neighbors borrowed a copy from a sister. I asked about it and for the address so I could subscribe and that is how I found the paper I get so much pleasure from reading. I am so thankful I am blessed to write again. May the good Lord bless you always. From a sister in Christ I hope.

(Mrs.) MINNIE TURMAN

Box 1643, High Point, N. C.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Please find enclosed my remittance for subscription to the *Signs*. I am sorry I am late and thank you for sending it. I do not want to miss a copy as I enjoy the precious truths it sets forth so much. It is clean and instructive. I do not get to hear preaching often and I have no one close to me who believes as I do. It is like a good visit from some of the brothers and sisters and helps me on my lonely road. May God bless you in your good work is my prayer. Remember me when at a throne of grace.

(Mrs.) MARY C. WHEELEY

EDITORIALS

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BECAUSE I LIVE, YE SHALL LIVE ALSO.
John 14:19

While attending the Virginia Corresponding meeting last October, one of our good friends asked that we write on the words at the head of this article.

From time to time we refer to the fact that an artist, in order to clearly portray the picture that is in his mind, must first provide the clouds and shadows that are a necessary background for the proper setting of the picture which he is to paint. It seems to us in this instance that before attempting to present the beauty and grandeur contained in the words of our text, it is necessary to present something of the blackness of that night which preceded the dawning of the new day about which so many of the prophets wrote. As a starting point, it might well be said, "Because we died, he died also," before considering the words of the Savior, "Because I live, ye shall live also." It is essential that we know something of the former condition or state His people were in before we can begin to describe their latter state. In other words, we must first look unto the hole of the pit from whence we were digged, before we look unto the Rock from whence we were hewn. No one having spiritual eyes to behold the wonders of God's rich and reigning grace will attempt to minimize the wretched condition we were in before a just and holy God as we stood in our federal earthly head, Adam, after he transgressed God's law. It is no wonder that Adam and our mother Eve were ashamed and endeavored to hide from the face of Him who had so wondrously formed them of the dust of the ground and placed them in the garden of Eden, where nature was so wonderfully revealed in all her glory and the earth brought forth her fruits in such great variety and profusion. We can but believe, however, that God's predetermined plan embraced something far more wonderful and glorious than anything that Adam in his original state was capacitated to comprehend and enjoy. We are not one who believes that God made Adam able to stand but liable to fall, for had he withstood the temptation to partake of the forbidden fruit he would have frustrated God's entire plan to populate the earth and glorify himself in exalting his only begotten Son and lift the name of Jesus on high. Had Adam not fallen, heaven would have remained vacant throughout all eternity, so far as redeemed sinners are concerned, and there would have been none to sing, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests." If there had been no Egypt and no Pharaoh to hold the children of Israel in bondage and servitude, there could have been no manifestation of God's

power in delivering them by a high and mighty hand, and they could not have sung the wonderful song of deliverance, saying, "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." This was one of those experiences which the children of Israel were commanded to tell their children, and their children's children, generation after generation.

God in his wisdom purposed that one thing should be set over against its opposite, in order that his people might better comprehend and understand his greatness. If there was no darkness or night, we would not appreciate the light and the day; if there was no evil, we could not properly evaluate the good. Solomon, the preacher, said, "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; A time to weep, and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance; A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace." Eccl. 3:1-8. It seems to us that it is only by experience that God's people in this age of the world are brought into fellowship with the prophets and saints of old and can bear witness to the things testified to by them. They traveled much alone and by night, through the fires and persecutions of this vain world, but the Lord was faithful to his promises and delivered them out of their distresses. When they passed through the rivers, the waters did not overflow them; and when they walked through the fires, they were not burned, and neither did the flame kindle upon them. The reason why they were not destroyed was their God, the Holy One of Israel their Savior, was with them. This same God is watching over and preserving his people to-day and saying to them, "Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him." Isa. 43:5-7.

The law contained many types and shadows of the substance of our text, and the household of faith all down through the ages looked for its fulfilment. Prophecy concerned the advent of our Lord into the world, in the fulness of time, and holy men of old testified before hand of his sufferings, death and resurrection, and the glory that should follow. The chapter in which our text is found shows that the appointed time was close at hand. On the verge of his departure from this world as a man, Jesus counseled his disciples to let not their hearts be troubled over his going away. He assured them that he was going away to prepare a place for them and that he would come again and receive them unto himself, "that where I am, there ye may be also." We believe he had reference to going down into death, but he was assuring them in advance that he could not be holden of death, but would come forth and appear unto them in power and great glory. In the meantime he told them

that the Father would give them another Comforter, the Spirit of truth, even the Holy Ghost, whom the Father would send in his name and "he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." The first chapter of Acts records that following his death and resurrection, after showing himself alive by many infallible proofs, he commanded his apostles not to depart from Jerusalem, "but wait for the promise of the Father." He gave them the blessed assurance of these things by declaring, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts. 1:8. John in the first chapter of Revelation gives us a wonderful description of our risen Lord. He was given to see in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, and the sight was so amazing that he says he "fell at his feet as dead," but our Lord laid his right hand upon him and said, "Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

We would like to quote at this point in connection with our text the eighteenth and nineteenth verses as follows: "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also." How blessedly true it is we are not left comfortless! It is also true the world sees him no more, but his people see him by faith, and it is because he lives that they live also. This is beautifully typified in the next chapter where Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." The branches cannot die as long as they receive their life from the vine. Jesus also said to his disciples: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name. he may give it you." What a sacred and blessed privilege it is to be accounted a branch of this vine, for Jesus has declared that he is alive forevermore, and as our life is hid with Christ in God, we are safe and secure, and none shall be able to pluck us out of his hand, for the Father which gave us to him is greater than all, and none is able to pluck us out of his hand. Paul was vitally connected with this true and living vine, for he said, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." It was this same apostle who assured us that "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." We are persuaded that those who are born of the Spirit have this life abiding in them, and we truly hope that they will take comfort in the fact that because Jesus, who declared himself to be the resurrection and the life of his people, lives, they shall live also. Jesus also said, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

R. L. D.

"WHOSOEVER WILL"

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say. Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whoso-

ever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17.

This portion of the inspired record is often cited as sustaining the doctrine of the freedom of the sinner to accept or reject the grace of God; which according to that system only offers conditions of salvation which are not effective without the consent of the sinner, who must at least accept the offered favor. If this theory is sustained by even one passage of that testimony which God has given, then it is true, and all opposing doctrines are overthrown. But if it is not thus supported, then no sophistry of men can make it true. It can be of no advantage to hold any false sentiment, for it will not become true by age; nor yet can skillful argument and devoted zeal remedy its falsehood. Therefore, let the text be considered in its connection as written by the immediate direction of the Holy Spirit, and may the grace of God enable us and every reader to hear with submissive reverence what the Lord speaks; and in the discussion of this subject "Let God be true, but every man a liar."

It must not be forgotten that all this wonderful revelation which is written by John is the testimony of Jesus Christ, which is the spirit of prophecy. See Rev. 1:1; 19:10. Then it has its proper application to the body of Christ, which is his church, redeemed out of every nation; and any interpretation of its figurative language must be erroneous if it is not consistent with the plain record of divine truth in the Bible. But it will only be necessary at present to candidly consider the immediate context to see the error of the application of the expression in the text as appealing to dead sinners to "come," either to the church or to any other place. Twice in the preceding portion of this chapter the Lord announces (in verses seven and twelve) that he comes quickly. Then in verse sixteen he gives the seal of his own name, Jesus, to signify the genuineness of the message. To this the Spirit and the bride respond in the words of the text. There is always perfect harmony with the will of God in the prayer indited by the Spirit; therefore the Spirit says, "Come." There is nothing which can afford to the church (which is the bride in this text) such fullness of joy as the coming of her Lord. Hence, she always responds as here written, and repeated verse twenty, "Even so, come Lord Jesus." It is worthy of special observation that the Spirit and the bride speak with one voice in saying "Come." There is no discord, and no argument is necessary to convince the bride that his coming is desirable. In all the fervor of glowing love she responds to his word with the rapture of his holy Spirit, "Come." This is the language which peculiarly characterizes the bride, the Lamb's wife. See chapter 21:2, 9. "And let him that heareth say, Come." In this expression the Spirit and the bride agree. The liberty is freely accorded to every one that heareth, to unite in this effectual fervent prayer. Throughout this book a very special peculiarity of those addressed is stated in the fact that an ear to hear is given them, and only he that hath an ear is commanded to hear the message of the Spirit to the churches. As none can hear but such as are made alive by the quickening power of the Spirit of God, only they who are led by that Spirit are included in this expression. In a natural application this language would not include one but such as are alive, so the distinction is clearly marked in the spiritual application: none but such as hear are authorized or permitted to say, 'Come." It is God

that worketh in every one that hath an ear, not only to will, but also to do of his good pleasure. Every one who hears the voice of the Son of God, in that hearing is made alive; for he is the Lord from heaven, a quickening Spirit; and the words which Jesus speaks are Spirit and they are life. Only such as are thus made alive have that eternal life which Jesus gives to his sheep; and they alone have the will to pray for the coming of the Lord. Hence, it is evident that the Spirit of Christ dwells in any one who really desires his coming. This is in harmony also with the assurance given in Hebrews 9:28, "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." It is enjoined upon him that heareth to say, Come; and every hearer feels that all his salvation and all his desire is embraced in that prayer for the manifest coming of the Lord, because "when Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Col. 3:4. They who hear the life-giving word of God are all made thus to unite in the longing and urgent petition of the bride, the whole church of the redeemed, in praying the Lord to come. They have learned by sore experience that they cannot come to Jesus in their own strength or by their own will. Their only gleam of hope is that Jesus will come to them, as the Samaritan in the parable came to the half-dead sufferer. Luke 10:33. It would have been cruel mockery to exhort this poor man to come to a hospital which was at Jerusalem. He could not get there. But his benefactor "came where he was," and brought relief. So Jesus comes to the poor and needy and saves them when they "were yet without strength." Then when life and power have been given to the dead sinner, he has the will to unite in earnestly praying the Lord to come in the fullness of sovereign grace and evermore abide in his heart. In this expression of the text there is not only liberty given to every hearer to say, Come, but it is enjoined as the duty of all such thus to pray. If that desire is in the heart of any one, it is because he hears the voice of Jesus; and all such have received life. John 5:25.

"And let him that is athirst come." Here, again, a specific character is expressly defined, and it is precisely the same whom Jesus called in the last day of the feast of tabernacles, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." John 7:37. The thirsting is certainly a living one, for the dead do not thirst. But this direction discriminates still more closely; for there are none even of the living included in its address but such as thirst. In a literal sense it would be manifest folly to claim that any one can control thirst by his own will. How gladly would the fainting wanderer in the burning desert refrain from thirsting if he could. And it is equally impossible for one to be thirsty when he has taken a full supply of water. Just so it is only the living one who can be subject to this thirst; and the fact that he feels thirst is positive proof that he is alive. His thirsting does not give life, but only makes it manifest. This hungering and thirsting character needs not the terrors of torment to drive him to the throne of divine grace; it is the longing desire of his heart that he might have liberty to come. That permission is included in this comandment of our Lord, and the assurance of its certain fulfillment is found in the word of Jesus, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37. This is that fountain of which the Alpha and Omega says he will give

freely to him that is athirst. Rev. 21:6. It is in strict accordance with this promise that the thirsty are commanded to come; and they are brought by the almighty power of that word. While no others can even desire to come, all of his redeemed are made willing in the day of his power. They who are not athirst are not called to this fountain; but

"Poor, hungry, thirsty, fainting souls
Are freely welcome here;
Salvation like a river rolls
Abundant, free and clear.

Come, then, with all your wants and wounds,
Your every burden bring;
Here love, unchanging love, abounds,
A deep clestial spring."

"And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." It would seem needless to call attention to the particular character here described as authorized to take freely of the water of life; but many who boast of their intelligence insist that this language includes those who have not the "will" which is here specially presented as identifying those to whom the command applies. For such as have not the love of God in their hearts, there is no liberty here given to them to take of the water of life. Having only that carnal mind which is enmity against God and canot be subject to his law, they are as destitute of will as they are of power to come and freely take of this living water. Our Lord Jesus says, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." John 6:44. This one declaration settles the fact that the will of God is sovereign in the display of his amazing grace unto the salvation of sinners who were lost. Again he says to the unbelieving Jews, "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." John 5:40. The positive assertion of the enmity of the natural man against the sovereign grace of God not only proves the utter falsehood of every form of doctrine which presents the will of the sinner as the cause of his salvation but it establishes beyond the possibility of mistake the truth that every one who has the desire (or will) to take freely of the water of life is led by the Spirit of God; and all such are born of God as living children, and are joint heirs with Christ. They who have the seal of the holy Spirit of promise being the only one who have this will, it is certain that all who have this will are so sealed. If the tried and tempted child could rest in this assurance, it would lift him above the darkness of many hours of doubt; for however conscious unworthiness may involve him in fears, he cannot be deceived in his will to take freely of the water of life. Knowing his utter destitution of merit in himself, his only hope for salvation must be in that grace which is freely extended to the chief of sinners. The heart of man has never conceived of such a gracious salvation as that which is given in Christ Jesus. That conviction which causes the sinner to hunger and thirst after righteousness is the assurance that the divine blessing rests upon his broken and contrite heart; that trembling desire which longs for the water of life is the "will" by which every one is identified whose right it is to take of that water freely. All others wish to purchase their interest in that living water by their own righteousness. Only the destitute have the will to take of that water "freely." Hence there is strong consolation to the afflicted and poor people of God not only in the abundant supply of this living water, but also that in the "will" wrought in them by the grace of God they are accurately described in this text as the very people who are author-

ized to take of the water of life.

The illustration here used does not represent the offer of life to the dead, for they can have no will to authorize them to take. The figure implies that the willing character is already alive. None but the living can thirst. Then the very thirst by which the sinner is made to desire this water of life gives assurance of life already existing in the willing one. The dead have no thirst, and consequently they have not the will to take of the water of life freely. The efforts of carnal idolators to persuade or drive dead sinners to have this "will," are manifestly inconsistent with the literal figure. One who is not thirsty might say that he wants water, but that would not change the fact. So it is not true when those who trust in their own righteousness profess to thirst after this water of life. The psalmist sung of this wonderful water, "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High." Psalm 46:4. These living streams are all found in the city of God and they flow nowhere else. Therefore none but "they that do his commandments," and "they which are written in the Lamb's book of life," have access to this water, since no others enter into the city. See Rev. 21:27, 22:14. To every one of them the water of life is freely given, not offered; and they are the only people that know the voice of Jesus as the joyful sound. These living subjects of the grace of God have need of the water of life to sustain them in the weary desert of this world of sorrow; and to every one of them it is freely given. It would be useless to offer it to those who do not feel the need of it. The awfully impressive testimony of Jesus which immediately follows this text must cause deep and heart-searching self-examination in every reader who fears the Lord. If the Spirit of Christ dwells in any one, his desire is expressed in the text, both in regard to the coming of the Lord, and the welcoming of every thirsting and willing one to come to this fountain which is opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And every one is a subject of salvation who feels to respond to the announcement of the Lords' coming in the language of the Spirit and the bride, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

(Editorial from Signs of the Times June 1, 1885.)

ORDINATION

The regular union meeting was held with Pleasant Grove Church at Naches, Wash., Sept. 9, 10 and 11, 1949. All the members of the Big Spring Church of Elgin, Oregon were present, and there being a sufficient number of ministers of our faith and order present, it was decided to ordain our Pastor, Brother R. R. Wolfe to the full work of the gospel ministry.

The meeting was presided over by Elder A. D. Hughett, Pastor of Pleasant Grove Church. The Presbytery was called consisting of Elder Hughett, Moderator, Elders I F. Coleman and B. O. Jeffrey, and Deacons Marion Colwell and D. C. Davis. The ordination proceeded in the usual order, laying on of hands and prayer by Elder Coleman, the most touching and forceful I have ever heard. It was a most solemn sight to see the gray heads bowed around the dark one, silently saying, "You must take over now son, we are most through."

The memories this sight brought to me were both sad and sweet. Over fifty years ago I witnessed the ordination of my husband, the late Elder C. W. Bond and Brother D. G. Johnson at the same time. I hope and pray that the ministry of Elder Wolfe will be as long and faithful as was Elder Bond's.

At the meeting of the Big Spring Church, the first Sunday in October, Brother Lloyd Spikes united with the church and was baptized by Elder Wolfe, his first baptism. This baptism took place at the bridge in the same place where Brother Spike's mother was baptized by Elder Bond years ago. Of the many members present at that baptism only Sister Spikes and I are left. (A lot of water has gone under that bridge since then).

Elder Wolfe came to Oregon by invitation from Elder Bond and arrived here three days after Elder Bond was buried. He was shocked and grieved that he was gone, but felt he was sent here by the Lord for a purpose not known to us, and

since our little church has been livened by his ministry, we feel our prayers are answered. "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." "O man who art thou that repliest against God?" "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth," etc. There are so many scriptures I could mention, but will say as my dear husband so often said, "Lord make us reconciled to thy will in all things."

(Mrs.) MARTHA H. BOND

MEMORIALS

WHEREAS, God in his infinite wisdom and mercy has removed from the scenes of mortal existence our beloved brother and friend, ELDER HORACE H. LEFFERTS, and

WHEREAS, our departed Brother Lefferts visited us for about fifty years, preaching Christ and him crucified to the enjoyment of all who were privileged to hear him, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we bow in humble submission to God's holy will, desiring to be reconciled and given grace to press onward, ever looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, and be it further

RESOLVED, that we of the Salisbury Association extend assurance of our love and sympathy to his beloved wife, Ella A. Lefferts, and family, hoping the blessed Lord will give them all comfort and consolation, knowing that he doeth all things well, and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this memorial be printed in the minutes of our Association; that a copy be sent to Mrs. Lefferts, and that a copy be published in the **Signs of the Times** and in the **Old Faith Contender**. Written by Handy B. Truitt, Snow Hill, Md.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT, Moderator
MAUD T. LAWS, Clerk
WILLIAM S. ADKINS, Asst. Clerk

WHEREAS, since the last session of this Delaware Association held with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster Co., Pa., in 1947, and since there was no session of this body held in 1948, and since in the meantime it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from the scene of their labors in our midst, ELDER DOUGLAS L. TOPPING and ELDER CHARLES W. VAUGHN, and

WHEREAS, brother Topping served as pastor of the Rock Springs Church and brother Vaughn served as pastor of the Salem Church, both churches being in this the Delaware Association, and

WHEREAS, their death leaves a great and sorrowful vacancy in our midst which cannot be filled save by the Holy Spirit through whom these ministering gifts were given to our churches and by whose qualifications their ministry was maintained among us, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we do hereby testify to the faithfulness of these brethren as ministers of the Word and as beloved pastors among us, serving not for filthy lucre's sake but of a ready mind and from the love they had for the truth, which love they evidenced in their walk and conversation; and that we do hereby testify to their soundness in the doctrine of God our Savior and to their steadfastly upholding the order and discipline of the house of God, therefore be it further

RESOLVED, that we hereby extend our heart felt sympathy to our sister church of Hopewell, N. J., and to the Ebenezer and Black Rock churches which churches were served by these brethren, as well as to the Rock Springs and Salem churches, for this loss is not theirs alone, nor this sorrow theirs only, but is shared by all of us in this Delaware Association as well as in our sister Associations of Baltimore and the Delaware River; and that we further assure our Sister Elizabeth Topping and our Sister Annie Vaughn, widows of our dear ministering brethren, of our sincere desire unto the Lord for their comfort and reconciliation to the divine will of Him who does all things well, all things being for his glory and for our good. It is further

RESOLVED, that this memorial be spread upon our associational minutes, and copies thereof sent to our Sisters Topping and Vaughn, and copies to the **Signs** and **Old Faith Contender.**

Done by unanimous voice of the Association May 4, 1949.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator
CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Clerk

Inasmuch, as it has pleased our heavenly Father, since our last session of the Delaware Association, to remove from his earthly labor, and to take unto himself, our dear brother, ELDER T. W. WALKER, who was a regular visitor among our churches and associaton for many years and who endeared himself to our hearts by his gentle and mild manner and his zeal for the honor and praise of our God; and since his passing we miss his visits with us in our homes and in our meettings, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we express our thankfulness unto God for his gift in the ministry and that we extend unto our sister association, The Lower Country Line, our deepest sympathy in their loss, and be it further

RESOLVED, that we add our expression of sympathy to those already given unto Elder Walker's family and that this memoriam be printed in our minutes and published in the **Signs of the Times** and **Old Faith Contender.**

Done by the unanimous voice of the Association, May 14, 1949.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator
CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Clerk

Whereas, it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from this life our beloved Brother in Christ, an able minister of the gospel, ELDER C. W. VAUGHN, of the Hopewell Church in the Delaware River Association, we, the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, feel our loss keenly, he having come among us for a number of years. Elder Vaughn was a splendid man and a faithful minister of the gospel of Christ. He preached salvation by grace and grace alone to the enjoyment of all who were privileged to hear him.

Resolved, that we extend to Sister Annie Pendleton Vaughn and her family our deepest sympathy and assure them he had kept the faith and was ready to be offered.

Resolved, that we are also mindful of the loss to the churches which he served as Pastor, and pray that God will sustain and comfort them in their period of sorrow.

Resolved, that a copy of this memorial be printed in our minutes, a copy sent to Sister Vaughn, and a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times,** a paper on which our departed brother ably served as Associate Editor for so many years.

Written by order of this Association convening with the Forest Grove Church, Oct. 19 and 20, 1949.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT, Moderator
MAUD T. LAWS, Clerk
WM. S. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk

OBITUARIES

MRS. ALWILDA RITTENHOUSE STRYKER came to the end of her earthly career Nov. 24, 1949. Having been born Feb. 9, 1874 she had passed her 75th birthday anniversary. She was the youngest child of William and Ida Brewer Rittenhouse. Sept. 30, 1902 she was married to Peter Quick Stryker who preceded her in death March 22, 1912, leaving her with four small children to rear. She is survived by three daughters, Mrs. Catharine S. Darby, Mrs. Ida S. Bodine and Mrs. Elizabeth S. Schenk all of Flemington, N. J. Elinor McConnell Stryker died Nov. 29, 1929. Other surviving relatives are one brother, Gabriel C. Rittenhouse, Paulsboro, N. J., seven grandchildren and several nieces and nephews.

Before her marriage Sister Stryker taught school in Somerville, N. J., and subsequent to the death of her husband she returned to her former profession, becoming principal of the Elementary School in Flemington, retiring in 1941. The following editorial from the Hunterdon County Democrat sets forth the high esteem in which she was held in her community.

MRS. ALWILDA R. STRYKER

Hundreds of citizens of our community who came under her influence as a teacher and administrator learned with keen regret of the death of Mrs. Alwilda R. Stryker, who for 28 years taught in and served as principal of the Flemington Elementary School.

Mrs. Stryker returned to teaching in 1913, after the death of her husband left her with four small children to raise and educate. She took into the classroom an enthusiasm which was shared by those fortunate enough to be her pupils. Mrs. Stryker loved especially to teach history and civil government and she was gifted with the ability to make those subjects live and to inculcate a profound faith in America and her destiny. As principal of the Junior High School, and after its discontinuance, as principal of the Elementary School, Mrs. Stryker further advanced the cause of education. She enjoyed the loyalty of all her co-workers.

Descendant of early Hunterdon settlers of the Old School Baptist faith, Mrs. Stryker continued actively to support the ancient church of her forefathers at Locktown. It was while attending a conference of Old School Baptists in Maryland that she was stricken with the illness that caused her death. Hers was indeed an extremely busy and useful life. She suffered more adversity than the average person but went cheerfully ahead, never complaining of her lot but sharing with each succeeding generation of young people her interests and her fine Christian influence. To the daughters who mourn her loss, the community which owes so much to Mrs. Stryker extends sincere sympathy.

* * *

Sister Stryker united with the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church at Locktown, N. J. and was baptized by Elder Balas Bundy, Oct. 21, 1894. She was a faithful and useful member for over fifty-five years. She was chosen clerk of the church June 11, 1933 which position she filled with distinction until her death. In late years the church letters written by her to the Delaware River Association were regarded as classics. She will be greatly missed, not only by her loved ones and friends, but the church has seemingly sustained an irreparable loss.

We cannot refrain from quoting the following excerpts from one of her daughters. "As a mother, her love, devotion and wise guidance, not only during the childhood days of her daughters but always, was such that her death brings a severe loss to her girls." Also "she enjoyed her correspondence with church friends and was very gifted in expressing her thoughts most beautifully. At times she was troubled by disturbing thoughts, but she was humble, unfaltering in her faith, and

gained much comfort in hearing the truth and reading her Bible." This is a great heritage to have left behind. She resided with her daughter, Catharine and family from 1938 until her death.

The writer assisted by Elder H. M. Bennett of Mardela Springs, Md. conducted the services in the meeting-house at Locktown, N. J. The attendance was large and the floral offerings beautiful. Interment in the Somerville Cemetery. May the God of all grace comfort and console, as only he can, those who mourn their loss is our humble prayer.

(Elder) R. LESTER DODSON

In memory of JOHN T. BREAZEALE, born May 1, 1878 and died Oct. 28, 1949. He leaves his second wife, and four children by his first wife, also nine grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. His first wife's name was Molly McKain who died several years ago, leaving her four children as follows: Mack Breazeale and Ernest Breazeale of Bastrop, La., and Hamburg, Ark. Mrs. Ellen Chapman, Bastrop, La. and Mrs. Ruth Gibbs, Monticello, Ark. His second wife's maiden name is not known to the writer, but her given name is Grace. I only met her at the hospital. The writer has known the deceased for a number of years. He was a merchant in Bastrop and probably at Hamburg also. He was a man of prominence in business and social life, well thought of and respected.

Mr. Breazeale was a very strong believer in the doctrine and order of the Old Baptist church. He was an ardent reader and student of the Bible. He could quote it and converse on the doctrine very pointedly and convincingly. He often came to the church at Concord, near the town of Bastrop where he lived. He gave great evidence by conversation and deportment of a sweet experience of grace. He was ably inclined to denounce the pharisaical works of their supposed ability to do something in order to be saved. I feel assured there is every reason to feel he is gone to that blessed reward and inheritance of God's humble saints.

The writer visited him while in the hospital suffering intensely, and he remarked to me in the presence of others that he did not want to be rebellious and was ready and willing to go when it pleased the Lord to take him. When in Old Baptist company he was speaking of God's power, his salvation, grace, mercy, kingdom, second coming, resurrection and the doctrine in general. He loved it and seemingly lived on it. I think truly as he lived in conversation, love of God and the doctrine and God's people I feel we are justified in believing that he was embraced in that part of Rev. 14:13 where it says, "Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." If he was not alive in the Lord, and if he did not die corporally with his full trust and confidence in the Lord I am not a judge of such matters.

Dear bereaved ones, I think he is much better off than we who are still subject to disease, pain and death. He is beyond all suffering and trouble because the evidence shows that he lived and spoke of the Lord, and of his confidence in his mercy. So dear ones, may God bless you to live in and believe in that God that he honored, praised and spoke of while he was here.

The writer and a minister of the Missionary Baptist faith conducted the funeral service at a Funeral Chapel at Hamburg, Ark., in the presence of a large and attentive congregation of surviving family, relatives and friends. He was laid to rest in a most beautiful cemetery at Hamburg, Ark. to await that glorious resurrection, when all the saints of God shall rise in his ever blessed and glorious righteousness. Yours in hope through grace.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES

ELDER WILLIAM NEWTON GREEN of Altus, Oklahoma passed this mortal existence by death Nov. 21, 1949 at his home in Altus. He was born Sept. 23, 1866 and married Aug. 27, 1893 to Miss Mary Adeline Tate. To this union were born three daughters, Mrs. Ethel Champeau, Norman, Okla., Mrs. Flora Davis, Littlefield, Texas, Mrs. Willie Foster, Oklahoma City, Okla., and one son, Clarence D. Green, Oklahoma City, Okla. All of them survive him and other surviving heirs of this marriage are eleven grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren. His first wife Mary Adeline Tate preceded him in death Aug. 13, 1911, leaving him with four children to rear and care for all of which shows that he must have suffered many heartaches and pains.

Elder Green was married to Mrs. Leah Kit Ella Hobbs who survives him together with two sons of her former marriage, Orvil Hobbs, Oklahoma City, Okla., and Claude Hobbs, Denver, Col. Elder Green, his children, his surviving wife and her children were very noticeably congenial and devoted one to another, unusually so in my observation. It was difficult to tell children and stepchildren apart at the home and funeral which was a very sad one to us all.

He united with the Old Baptist Church in Oct. 1913 with a very bright experience, and also with a great calling to the ministry. He was baptized and began preaching coming out of the water. The writer as well as other brethren has heard him speak of this several times. He was very deeply and enthusiastically led, and blessed of the Lord to the edification of the Lord's people. Indeed he

was blessed to be a shining light in the doctrine of a sovereign God, an all powerful Savior and Redeemer of his people. He was loved and admired throughout his personal acquaintance among the brothers, sisters and friends of the Old Baptists. He was also blessed to write a considerable number of doctrinal and experimental articles for publication in our periodicals which met with hearty approval and endorsement by our people throughout the United States.

Elder Green was blessed to travel in several states and his ministry was enjoyed, respected and appreciated wherever he went. He has visited with several Old Baptist Associations alternately for a long time. Among them our own Association, the South Ouachita, the South Arkansas, the Sulphur Fork of Texas and a number of others. If he was absent at these meetings it was usually because of sickness. He was one of our ablest and most extensively appreciated ministers in these parts.

His health has steadily failed for several years, but he was blessed to continue active and useful in the ministry until the last. He was very devoted to his wife, children, all the family and to the churches, a very vivid and noticeable quality which deserved and received universal respect by his fellowmen, his neighbors and the people in general. He was firm in his convictions and wonderfully blessed to be a very influential and convincing speaker and writer.

The very sad hour came Monday, Nov. 21 at about four o'clock which made his stay on earth 83 years, 1 month and 28 days. I feel he was wonderfully blessed not to have lived in vain, but useful, upright, honest and to the glory of God, and to the comfort and edification of his people. To his dear loved ones I would admonish scripturally that you weep not as those who have no true hope in Jesus Christ for he is not dead, but as our blessed Savior has said, sleepeth till that bright and glorious day of the Lord shall come when he the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with that holy shout, and the trump of God shall sound. Then he shall come from that doleful tomb with the blessed and glorified millions, not with a corruptible, natural, painful, weak, sick and distressed body, but with that incorruptible, spiritual, immortal, pure and strong body, like His glorious body, to sorrow no more, but to rejoice, praise and glorify God in that eternal and blessed abode in the presence of God and the Lamb. O what a glorious hope this is for poor, sinful, vile, worms of the dust to be in possession of. It is indeed wonderful and full of glory.

Dear Sister Green and family, and the churches, I hope God will lead and strengthen you all, and keep you and lead you forth on your sad and troublesome journey in that blessed faith that God blessed him to be strong in and to preach so wonderfully and beautifully. Look to the Lord and pray to him who is able to do exceedingly and abundantly above all we think or ask. He will comfort you and provide for you. Dear Brother Green will be greatly missed, but God can and will replace him if according to his will.

The writer and Elder Clarence Turner conducted the funeral services at the funeral chapel in the city of Altus, Okla. in the presence of a very large and attentive congregation of mourning, sympathetic and devoted relatives and friends with a beautiful display of floral offerings. He was laid to rest in a most beautiful cemetery about six miles from Altus. Yours in a sweet and precious hope.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES

ANNA M. REEVES was born Oct. 23, 1855, and passed from this life July 27, 1948 in her home at Southampton, Pa. at nearly the age of 93 years. Her husband, Deacon Caswell B. Reeves, died in 1928. She was the daughter of Elias and Sarah Allen. She was married to Caswell B. Reeves in 1876. They had three children, Allen, Mary and Harold. Mary was a member of the Southampton Church and died in 1919. The two sons and several grandchildren remain to mourn the loss of a mother and grandmother who loved them dearly.

She united with the Southampton Baptist Church in 1895 and remained a faithful member until her death. She entertained in her home many of our brethren and ministers during her long life until she became very feeble and was only able to have them call on her for short visits which she dearly enjoyed, but at last the Lord took her home to rest from all weariness and the cares of this life. Her Pastor, Elder Horace H. Lefferts, conducted her funeral services in her home and spoke words of comfort to the bereaved and her friends and brethren. Her body was laid to rest in the cemetery only a few feet from the church building in which she worshiped for so many years.

CASPER G. FETTER

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. S. L. Hutchens, N. Y., $100; Mrs. P. I. Froude, Mich., $2; B. Parrish, Ark., $5; J. C. Beard, Tex., $2; Mrs. E. D. Rose in memory of Mrs. A. R. Stryker, N. J., $5; R. D. McGough, Ala., $2; J. W. McAlister, Tenn., $1; Mrs. L. Campbell, Tenn., $1; Miss G. Secor, N. Y., $1; Mrs. E. M. Werner, N. J., $2; G. A. Paul, Ala., $2; Mrs. K. Ragan, Tenn., $1; Mrs. H. D. Hewitt, N. Y., $5; W. L. Gossien, Ark., $1; Mrs. S. L. Taylor, Pa., $5; Mrs. E. H. West, N. Y., $2.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 118 RUTHERFORD, N. J., MAY 1950 No. 5

CORRESPONDENCE

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." 1 John 3:1

The Bible is a treatise upon love. It is far the most wonderful love story that history makes room for. So wonderful, so deep, so mysterious in its treating upon this all wonderful theme that those to whom it is addressed must first be wrought upon also in the same mysterious manner before such can be placed in company with this love of all loves. So great and so marvelous is this love that it can only be ascribed to that of God, and God is love. God is a spirit and seeketh such to worship him, therefore, it is a spiritual love. Behold what manner of love, (more loves than one) but this one particular love. This love is a gift and can only be given to those for whom it is prepared, to those given of his Spirit for in this love only can the Father be worshipped in spirit and in truth. This wonderful love is stronger than death, yea, it is beyond the comprehension of the natural mind. So deep in its fundamentals that it passes the love of woman. This love reigns in the Father, by it and in love he hath blessed and continues to bless his people. In and through it he also punishes his people. By, in and through it all things live, move and have their being. This is that love wherewith he loved us and saved us, that love in which there can be no separation therefrom for it is an everlasting love as old as God, and God is love and righteous in all his ways. This love, when once bestowed or shed abroad in your heart, draws you away unto yourself and causes you to rejoice in God, the Rock of your salvation with as great rejoicing as though by the same love you had been drawn among thousands. It (this love) cuts you loose from the world and all of its ties, and sets you upon a higher plane which gives unto you a new mind of thinking, a new heart of understanding foreign to the world and its ways. God is love and by it he preserves his people to show forth his praise, and it causes them to become a willing people in the day of his power. It is the sole preserver for and unto all things. In the figure of the three Hebrew children it preserved the church from the fiery furnace and Daniel from the jaws of the lions. This is still that same wonderful love. By it his saints are made to sit together in heavenly places (the churches). At the same time they are led by the springs of still waters and it makes them lie down in green pastures, and cry, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." It is this love that leads them along the King's Highway (Jesus) up into his holy mount, his banqueting house, his banner over them love and sing:

"Dear name! the Rock on which I build;
My shield and hiding place;
My never-failing treasury, filled
With boundless stores of grace."

Behold what manner of love, "That

which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life" (Jesus the way, the truth, and the life) which is that never ending love—life everlasting that reaches far above all principalities, powers, mights, thrones and dominions. "Crowned in heaven the topmost stone, and well deserves the praise." "What manner of love." A fountain, a well of living water that flows there from the river of life that never runs dry; that comes forth not with salt nor bitter, but is of that fresh water that flows from his wounded side and when one is made to drink thereof such never thirst again. It is then such a one becomes awakened from nature to grace when you were inclosed, a spring shut up a fountain sealed. But when this peculiar manner of love shines in, it is then and there you are lifted from the valley of dry bones and highly elevated in the sweet fragrance of God's love, overlooking the landscape of mount Pisgah into the happy land Canaan, a figure of that eternal place of abode where all is well. So it is sure this wonderful love ties the whole house of Israel together as one ever united family in the Lord, their understanding one, their song one, seeing eye to eye, one and the same age, speaking one and the same thing. This is that love that came down from heaven, and was made manifest in the flesh to his people. "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." And the government shall be upon his shoulder, and he shall be clothed in a vesture dipped in blood, and his name shall be called the Word of God. So this is that love, that manner of love that Paul is referring to in John 1:1. And it manifest itself as true in the Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and these bear record in heaven, and they agree in one. "And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one," that this love is Christ the Lord in you the hope of glory, "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." For "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." And this is that life in which only this all wonderful love can be manifested from one to another; and this is only felt when each are given of His spirit, and as sure as this be true these two will commune in the association of this love in the bringing of themselves together in the order required, thereby enabling them to keep house for the Lord in order and in decency. For as our ever blessed Redeemer picked up his fan and throughly purged his floor, even so will this love that passeth all understanding lead us into all truth and righteousness. This marvelous, all wonderful love is without limit, metes or bounds. So high you cannot go above it, so low you cannot go under it, so deep you cannot pass through it, so large you cannot go around it. It fills all space. It is from nowhere, yet everywhere present. It reaches unto and in the heart of every little child of grace, and causes them to rejoice in things that the world cannot receive for it is foolishness unto them; and as all others stand against it in such vileness, hatred and enmity it does not return evil for evil but rather looks down upon them in pity and in mercy. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" And though it serves his saints as a great punishment to be shut off for a

little season from this ever merciful love, which becomes unto us trouble from every side, yet we are not distressed; though we be perplexed yet we are not left in despair; though we are persecuted still we are not forsaken; and though we be cast down still we are not destroyed. "But in all things approving ourselves*****in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and possessing all things." "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us."

(Elder) W .A. LITTLE

1008 E. Allen St.,
Ft. Worth, Tex.

"We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" Psalms **137:1-4**

MY DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST: This morning I picked up my Bible and went into the living room to find something to read. As I was turning the leaves it seems Babylon arrested my mind. I found the above quoted scripture. My first thought was that fifty-one years ago the stork brought us our first baby. I lived again this period of time gone forever. As much as I believe in the absolute fixedness of all things yet I had a deep sense of regret that I had not been a better father and husband. I fell into a fit of weeping that took me about two or three hours to overcome. When this occurs I have to steal away and cry it out.

With a fast growing family and an afflicted wife from Feb. 1910 until her departure in April 1946 I had a hard financial fight. One night on my way from office when I was about one hundred yards from the house I stopped. I must have stood there thirty minutes. I gazed at the moon pretty well over in the South and seemed to be in a trance or some kind of feeling I do not know. This feeling overcame me, all that I have is slipping from under me and I am helpless as a baby to prevent it. I fought a hard fight.

I had two sons in the first world war. My oldest knew typing and shorthand, therefore, they kept him in the office. My second son was in Company H, Rainbow Division. Beloved, you who had sons over there can witness with me the awful heaviness of heart and soul. On a Saturday afternoon I went into Meridian, Miss., ate supper but could not stop in the lobby, I had to go to my room. For about ten days prior to this I was so heavy in heart and soul I could hardly drift along. I fell prostrate by my bedside and tried to pray. I cannot recall all I said but I do remember I said the following, "Oh! Lord I am not asking you to send my boy home, he is no better than any other man's son to die on the battle field; but oh Lord, if it is your holy will, give me a sign!" I rose to my feet as light as a feather, the burden all gone. I changed to my night clothes, eased into bed and sleep caught me so easy that I cannot find language to describe it. I dreamed I stood by the

water's edge in New England. My feet touched the water of the mighty Atlantic. In my dream I talked to my boy six thousand miles away. In the dream he heard my voice and I heard his as distinctly and as clearly as our voices have ever been heard in a real situation. I do not recall all we said, but I do remember he said this, "Papa, this cruel war will end some happy day, then I am coming home and again be with you, mamma, my sister and five brothers, and we will be happy again." I awoke and cannot tell you what condition I was in. I did not know where I was. I was about an hour getting myself together, then I knew I was in a hotel room in Meridian, Miss. As I lay there in bed I stretched my hands toward heaven with eyes closed, and thanked God he had given me a sign. I knew then my boy would come home. I never read another casualty list; I never looked again for a cablegram telling me the worst; I went on perfectly easy. My beloved brethren I do not know why I have been thrown into such a fit of weeping, but my hope is anchored that it is of the Lord.

If our mind will lead us along we will try to offer a few thoughts on the text. Israel was in captivity. Babylon means confusion. Rivers in the plural denotes trouble or troubles. When they remembered Zion they sat down and wept. Note, they sat down. Nothing they could do but sit and weep. The thought comes to my mind that when a poor fellow is away from home in confinement, as in war, he thinks of home, sweet home. All he can do is weep. I read of one fellow across the water saying he wished he could see Ma's old cat. When Jonah was completely closed in he prayed unto the Lord, and the Lord heard him. "Take, I beseech thee, my life from me." The willow hangs its branches down; they hanged their harps thereon. The harp is an instrument of music. In spiritual captivity there is no music in the soul; it is impossible to sing one of Zion's songs. "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." When it is this captivity with the child of grace, it is God's time to teach him his nothingness; teach him he has reached the end of the earth; teach him his rightousness is as a robe of filthy rags; teach him he must wait God's time. "Not a single shaft can hit till the God of love sees fit."

One morning I walked out from the home of a brother where I spent the night and saw two little coons in a cage going round and round, and up and down. As I stood watching them I thought of their very unhappy confinement. I had a strong temptation to open the door and let them go to yonder forest, their home, sweet home. Israel could not sing the songs of Zion because they were in a strange land. Spiritual captivity is a strange land because we feel Jesus is gone forever. The comforting thought is that when we feel Jesus is the farthest away, and has left us in a strange land he is the nearest to us. I have heard it said the darkest of the night is just before the break of day. As natural night follows day, so spiritual night follows spiritual day; it is God's doings. The night, or captivity, is as necessary as day both natural and spiritual. We must be taught again and again that all our help is from on high. Moses said, "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." He stretched his rod toward heaven. The significance of this, to our mind, is that Moses knew there was no help but from on high. Once I was planning to go to a fifth Sunday meeting. I had been in spiritual darkness for a week or ten days. It was an awful state of spiritual captivity. I doubted and dis-

believed everything. I declared I would not go. On Saturday night I thought I was a little better. I tried to find some scriptural subject, but all was dark as midnight. I forgot I had been taught, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." When the introductory sermon was being preached God gave me a subject; he opened the prison door; the poor captive was released. It was an easy go, so easy. Then we say, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning." Dear reader, finish reading the chapter. (Psalms 137)

Permit me to mention again that in my dream my boy said, "Papa this cruel war will end some happy day, and I am coming home." My life has been strange to me. I cannot understand it. I have had so many ups and downs, hithers and thithers, knocks and bumps, hills and valleys both natural and spiritual until I am getting tired and want to go home. There will be no more weeping by the rivers of Babylon. The poor fellows in the war had a longing for home, sweet home, a long time before they had orders to go. As much as I desire to go home I know I cannot go till a sovereign God gives orders. In our journey through this thorny maze, even though we are so frequently captivated, forced to sit by the rivers of Babylon, yet how blessed it is we can peep over the hills and behold mount Zion in her beauty, her glory, the blessed old church. This beauty, this glory, just a foretaste of the glory of glories in the realm of eternity .

(Elder) C. H. BYRD

Elizabeth Hotel, Box 557,
Panama City, Fla.

DEAR ELDER DODSON AND READERS OF THE SIGNS, DEARLY BELOVED: I have composed many letters to you in my mind since the death of my husband July 5, 1949, but could never get my thoughts on paper.

First I wish to state that the good Lord answered my prayers. My husband passed away peacefully. I was given strength to care for him to the end, and was sustained by the grace of God during the following days, even though I had no relatives with me. I was so thankful for God's mercy in taking him from his terrible sufferings, and from the evil to come, that I could not shed a tear for many days. For about three weeks after his passing I seemed to feel the Lord's presence with me, though alone I was not lonely as I went about trying to adjust my life to the changed conditions. Friends marveled that I kept up for they knew the severe strain I had been under for many months. I could but give God the praise for his goodness and kindness toward me as I was making the needed changes and improvements in my home, in taking over the smaller apartment so I could rent my former side of the house. Friends and relatives wanted me to have some one in the house with me so I kept working to that goal and now have the apartment rented to a nice young couple.

As time went on the Lord seemed to withdraw his constant presence from me, and I fully realized the terrible loss I had sustained. I was grief stricken, even though I knew it was for the best. I realized how deeply the heart was wounded. I missed his love and kindness, and his good advice in so many things for the husband is the head of his bride, even as Christ is the head of the church of the true and living God. But I had to go on and live to perform the tasks and fill the place that our God had foreordained that I should fill in this life. Often when my heart is bowed down with grief I go to the telephone and call a precious

sister in Christ. I always feel better after talking with her, for she too has drunk of the bitter cup and can understand.

As soon as I could after his departure, accompanied by friends, I visited his close relatives. They still regard me as a member of their family which I appreciate very deeply. It was lonely here and I did not stay home on Sundays for I knew the greatest comfort I could get was in the house of the Lord, listening to his ministers proclaim the power and mercies of a kind heavenly Father, and ascribe greatness to his holy name. For he works all things both in heaven and in earth after the council of his own will, and none can stay his hand or say, "What doest thou?" Jesus commanded his followers saying, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." I was so tired of the cares of the world by the end of the week that I left home and attended church somewhere nearly every week end. At first I went with our thoughtful minister of God and his good wife and sister-in-law, then later as my nerves grew stronger I drove my own car, not only to the nearer churches, but to those farther away following the minister's car. It was such a pleasure to me to be able to take with me my dear, precious mothers in Israel, that they, too, might enjoy these Union Meetings and Associations. I will never forget the love and kindness that was extended to me wherever I went. My heart was filled with love for God's dear children, and I drank freely from the waters of life as these gifted servants expounded the hidden mysteries and purposes of our God, rightly dividing the word of truth to the comfort and edification of his little ones who journeyed to these meetings, many coming long distances. My poor heart was fed and I came home refreshed for the next week's work. From the fourth Friday in July to the present time in Nov. I have missed church very few Sundays. I was privileged to attend all of four Union Meetings, three Associations, and several other Saturday and Sunday church services. All my life I had longed for this sweet privilege, but when young the churches were so scattered and conveyance slow that I did not get to visit them as I wanted to do. After I married and was placed in the midst of so many churches I longed to visit them, "But she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband" so I only went when forced by the power above to leave my home and companion that I might receive the spiritual food so needed to sustain my spiritual life. I feel that if I could spend the rest of my days in singing God's praise, and in giving honor to his precious name for the wonderful kindness and mercy he has shown me all the days of my life it would be such a little offering. I have found by experience that the greater the troubles and sorrows we are called to pass through, the greater is the supply of love and grace given to us to bear them. He has said, "My grace is sufficient" then why do we ever doubt or ask for more than he sees fit to send us? It is but the weakness of the flesh.

When I first realized I would soon be left the last member of my own little family I felt I could not bear it, and I could not have done it alone. Even if my relatives had been near me they could not have borne it for me. Everyone was so kind to me and extended their sympathy which helped so much, but I had to bear my burden alone. When I cast my cares on my precious Savior all the day long he gave me strength and grace to bear them. He

caused my light to so shine that all who saw it gave God the praise. They knew it was beyond the power of man to carry on as I did. I know what he has done for me in the past, and feel as the poet did as he gazed at the lone waterfowl in the sky and said:

> "He, who from zone to zone,
> Guides through the boundless sky
> thy certain flight,
> In the long way I must tread alone
> Will lead my steps aright."

I wish to acknowledge the recent letter from the *Signs,* and to thank you for your expression of sympathy for my loss. I knew you must have heard of it through my precious sister. Yes, I was thankful that my husband's attitude towards the Old School Baptists had changed during the last few years of his life. The minister whose regular, welcome visits were anticipated by him has told me since his death that he could tell a great change in my husband's attitude toward him even before he was confined to the home. My husband never had anything against the man, but had treated him with more or less indifference for many years because of the hard doctrine which he preached. I will never forget the kindness shown to us by this faithful servant of God. He not only ministered to his spiritual needs, but always brought him something he thought he might relish when he was able to take nourishment. I could but thank God while the minister knelt and prayed, "For this our brother." I realized that brotherly love flowed freely from heart to heart as the tears flowed from the eyes of my loved one. The minister said his handclasp was always firm throughout the prayers. He knew that this preacher had promised me to assist the Missionary preacher in the funeral services, but a week before his death I heard him ask this man to speak a few words at his funeral. He had asked the Missionary Baptist minister to speak at his funeral, and I feel that he wanted my preacher to know that he wanted him to help in the services. I heard him say, "I do not belong to your church, but I hope I belong to the "Big Church," The minister replied, "Where members are as the sands of the seas."

Concerning the sister who asked for my name I wish to say I still desire to withhold my identity from publication. I am not ashamed of it nor of the people with whom I associate, but at present I cannot carry on any more correspondence. I am away from all my relatives and many close friends and all complain that I do not write as often as I should. Friends sometimes call me by long distance if they do not hear from me when they think they should. I am very grateful to them for their interest in my welfare. Wherever I go my brethren and sisters express their appreciation of my writings and urge me to write oftener. When I am introduced as the little "Sister from Texas" to strangers it is a pleasure to see that they feel they already know me because of my writings. I wish to express my thanks through the *Signs* for every kind word that has been written about my writings. I feel so insignificant and humble that God has such a weak sinner as I know myself to be to try to praise his holy name, and to comfort his little ones on this journey here below. At times my heart swells with love for all of God's children, and I feel I must write some of it down, but the task is too great for me and I can only write a small part of what I feel and then my letter is too lengthy. If any care to write to me let them write their messages to the *Signs,* if they will, then all can enjoy them when they are

printed. No doubt I should send them back to the *Signs* to be published as I did the letter from "The sinner from Texas." I do not know her identity, but I feel that she has been taught of the Lord and is one of his precious little ones.

Last Saturday morning while enroute to a regular meeting with God's faithful servant and wife and sister-in-law he stopped at the home of a precious brother and sister as was their custom. Both had been sick and the brother's eyesight was greatly impaired since his illness. She told me they missed the church services so much and that all the preaching they got was through the dear old *Signs of the Times*. She looked forward to every issue and appreciated the many good articles contained therein. I felt thankful then that you had given me an opportunity to help comfort these and other shut-ins as they both had told me how much they had appreciated my writings.

You will find enclosed herein a money-order for a two year renewal subscription to the *Signs*. When I told this brother I would write to the *Signs* soon in response to your letter he asked me to send in his subscription. He had let the time pass by and the subscription was overdue, but he appreciated so much the fact that the paper was not stopped. He asked me to offer his apologies for this neglect. May God's richest blessings rest and abide with you and all of the household of faith is the prayer of your humble, Sister from Texas.

1725 E. Maryland St., Evansville, Ind.

DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE WHICH GOD, THAT CANNOT LIE, PROMISED BEFORE THE WORLD BEGAN: Is that promise good? Is it sure? If not then can God lie? Oh no, brother that is one thing that is impossible for God to do. That promise is as sure as there is a God. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." To whom was this promise given? Can we say to the elect, and answer this? Then who are they? The chosen in Christ before the world was. Then who are they? Can any man name them all? I think not, but those that are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God, and God only, knows them that are his. Have you ever met any of them? I believe I can name several of them. How do I judge them? The Book says, "By their fruits ye shall know them?" What difference is there in men, are they not all sinners? Did not God look down on all, and they had all gone out of the way? They had all gone astray, none good, no not one. All subject to do any thing under the sun but good. All vanity and vexation of spirit before the Lord.

Paul speaks of a warfare, "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." It takes two factions or more to cause a war; and man in his original, natural state is deaf, dumb, blind and dead. The law was given by Moses but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Christ Jesus came down into the world to redeem a people from under that law. Did he do it, or did he come to try? If he did, did it have any effect upon man? If so what? "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." To quicken is to make alive or change. I believe there is something that is made alive, or changed in some men and women I know. Do you ever meet those who are walking after the flesh? Also those that are walking after the Spirit? Do you meet those that show abundant proof that they love the Lord?

Why was that little flock out at church the other Saturday and Sunday? Was it for show? To show off their fine clothes or see the latest fashion? Was it for money or self gain? Why did the dear brother and sister take us home with them, show us every comfort, bring us back to the church and give us their money; why were tears of joy shed, and much love made manifest in the flesh? Why do they love one another? Thus you may know you have passed from death unto life, because you love the brethren. Dear brother, there is bound to be another man, a natural man and a spiritual man, one the reverse of the other. Here comes up the warfare Paul spoke of, "I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Was that which was good made death to you? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, worked death in you by that which is good, that sin by the commandment might become exceedingly sinful. You know the law is spiritual just and good, but you are carnal sold under sin. Then when you do that you would not you consent to the law it is good, so it is no more you that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in you.

Brother, is it your sins that bother you, that make you doubt and fear that you have never known the Lord? Are you ever made to thank God that you can step aside and see this old natural, sinful man? Are you ever made to thank God that you are a sinner? That sin is a blessing, that it keeps you humble, knowing you are not up to the standard of those you love, makes you esteem your brethren and love them? Paul, the apostle, was made to see those things and to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Paul could see his littleness and nothingness, but was made to rejoice in the law of God after the inward man, and to thank God that with the mind he served the law of God, with the flesh the law of sin. What is the great, grand and glorious answer to all this? What is the final conclusion? Here it is, and does it not make that poor hungry and thirsty soul cry out, Amen? "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." If the law of the Spirit of Christ has made you free are you not free indeed? Then why should you fear, in the words of the poet, "What more can he say, than to you he hath said, You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

Dear brother, I see a little flock that is hungering and thirsting after righteousness, that was saved and called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purposes and grace which was given them before the world was; and is told to fear not for it was the Father's good pleasure to bring them to the kingdom. Their sins and iniquities are remembered no more against them. They are no more under the law, but under grace. He has written his laws in their hearts, planted them in their minds. He will be unto them a God, and they shall be his people, making them see and believe in the sure mercies of David. God shall be their Father, and they shall be his sons. He will not withhold his mercy from them, but shall be merciful to their unrighteousness for they are washed in the blood of the Lamb, made whiter than snow, and Christ himself has gone to prepare a place for them that where

he is there they may be also. What a place that will be! We think we know what comfort is here, but what a surprise awaits them. No more sorrow; no more death; no more disappointment; no misunderstandings; no physical disabilities; no more good-byes. We shall all join round the throne of God and sing the songs of Moses, the servant of God and the Lamb. "When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun; We've no less days to sing his praise than when we first begun."

Dear brother, this is my hope my all. If I am wrong I feel I am lost, for if it is not all by the free grace and mercy of God I am out. What have I done that is worthy of that great love and devotion that I sometimes see that has been shed upon me; but thanks be to God that giveth us the victory, it is not by works of righteousness we have done, but according to his mercy he has saved us. It is sweet to see that that blessed God loved us even when we were dead in trespasses and in sin, and has quickened us together in him, and saved us by his grace. I realize my time is short here in this world; my past looks black to me, and if I am saved it is by the free grace and mercy of God. So when the doctor steps back and shakes his head that all earthly help is gone, I ask, dear Father, that I may be given grace to see those things as I see them tonight. When at a throne of grace pray for the poor, the afflicted, the sinner and you will pray for me. Your unworthy brother in a good hope. DAN L. CLARK

EXPERIENCE OF W. A. CHESTER
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ELDER J. M. PERKINS, DEAR BROTHER: I have thought several times of writing out my experience, but have never made the attempt until now, which by the help of the Lord, I will try to write in as brief a manner as I possibly can.

I was born Feb. 18, 1828, and reared by Baptist parents, and they tried to raise me to be an honest and truthful boy. I always tried to obey them. I thought that I was as good as any boy, but as I grew up to manhood, I had many serious thoughts about dying, and what would become of me. So I went on in this condition until I was in my 24th year. On the first Sunday in August some very strange feelings came on me, which I could not account for. I felt to be in a dark, gloomy frame of mind; everything seemed to have a different appearance, and I would resort to secret places to try to pray, but I could not say anything only Lord have mercy on me a poor sinner. I felt like I was ruined and lost, and without the mercy of an all wise God, was gone forever. So time passed on: sometimes my troubles were so great that I could hardly bear them, and then they would pass off to some extent. So I went on in this condition until the next June. One day I was plowing in my corn-field and there were such awful feelings come on me that I thought surely I was going to die, so I stopped my horse and looked around me, and everything seemed to have a different appearance. It looked like the leaves on the trees were draped in mourning for poor me. It seemed to me that my sins would sink me down, and that I could see a chance for everybody else to be saved but poor me. So time passed on, sometimes my troubles would be so great that I thought I would sink under them, and many times I would wet my pillow with tears. I would weep and mourn. My poor wife would ask me what was the matter with me, and I would tell her that I did not know,

I felt like I was going to die. So time passed on. Sometimes my troubles would wear off to some extent and return with more force than ever. So I continued in this condition until the 10th day of August, 1854. I thought I would get my Bible and see if I could get any comfort from reading that, but found none. So I read on the suffering and death of our blessed Savior and stopped reading, and thought what awful people they must have been to punish such a good person as he was, and I thought that if I had been there that I would have tried to relieve him, and it appeared to me that I was as guilty as they were, so it took such an effect on me that I felt that surely I would die. So I left the house and went out into the yard and fell on my face and tried to pray for the good Lord to have mercy on me, and it seemed that instead of my voice going up it would go downward and it seemed like my sins were rolling on me like mountains and were crushing me down into the very blackness of darkness, and in an instant all of my sins were taken off of me, and the loveliest light appeared to me that I ever saw, and I was made to rejoice in a Savior's love. And it appeared to me that I could see my blessed Savior sitting on his throne, surrounded by the prettiest company of people that I ever saw, all singing praises to his holy name. I felt like I never would see any more trouble, I felt like I could praise his holy name the balance of my days, but I did not remain in this frame of mind long. It was not long until doubts and fears began to rise, and that I was deceived, and I wanted my burden back. I thought that I could tell how it went and would be better satisfied about it and I would often try to pray to the Lord that if I was deceived to undeceive me.

So the thought of joining the church and being baptized soon came into my mind; I felt that I wanted to follow my Lord in all of the ordinances and commands, and I would make promises that I would go and discharge my duty, if it was my duty, but I would break them as often as I would make them, and I would try to pray to the Lord to lead and guide me and let me know what my duty was. So I went on in this way until the 10th of Aug. 1870, and I went to Old Soldier Creek church with my mother, thinking that I never would join the church for I had made promises so often and broke them that I would never try to join the church. So after services were over, the church went into conference and the invitation was given for membership, I rose from my seat and started, I thought to go out of the house, but instead of going out of the house, I was, I believe, made to go up and offer myself to the church; but it seemed like I could not tell anything when I got there, but I tried to tell what the Lord had done for me, and was received in full fellowship in the church, and was baptized the next day by our then beloved and esteemed brother, Elder T. F. Harrison, and when I came out of the water, I felt pleasant and happy. Those pleasant feelings soon passed off and I felt like I had deceived those good people. So I have passed through many sore trials and conflicts since that time. It does seem to me that if I am ever in the right way it is when I am crossing it. I feel to adopt the language of the poet, "Mixtures of joy and sorrow I daily do pass through." And also the language of the apostle, "When I would do good evil is present, so I cannot do the things that I would."

And now, inasmuch as I have given a short history of how the Lord has

brought me along up to this time, I will give a short sketch of what I believe. I believe that God is a sovereign and rules sovereignly and independently over all things, and is not dependent in any respect, for if he were dependent in the least, he could not be a sovereign. People may brag and boast of what great things they have done and are doing for the Lord, but I don't believe in any such doctrine for my Bible informs me that there is none that does good, no not one, and the apostle says that it is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saves us;" and with these Scriptures and many others, I cannot see how a child of God can believe like a great many are doing who are trying to wear the name of Primitive Baptists, unless it is fulfilling the Scriptures where it says, "That men of your own selves shall rise up speaking perverse things to draw disciples after them." I believe all of our acceptable service that we render to God is through a principle of love.

So in conclusion, I believe that all blessings that we receive here in time or eternity is for what Jesus has done for us. I believe that we are saved by grace from beginning to finish. And now may it be the will of the Lord to lead, guard and guide us through time and be with us in death, and save us in that upper and better world, there to bask in a Savior's love, there to see Jesus and be like him, and we will be satisfied, and God glorified. Amen. W. A. CHESTER

Riffe, Wash.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Our three day meeting last August was a good meeting in many ways. I enjoyed it very much. The preaching was sound as far as I know. When I saw the visitors seemed to enjoy it, I was reminded of one of God's visiting sheep in 1948, who was so overcome that he could not talk to us.

On Thursday these wandering sheep began to gather into our home, filling it with gladness as each one spoke comfortably to the other. Preaching continued from Friday until Sunday forenoon. Our hearts are always glad to see the children of God assembled. The brothers, sisters and friends who are interested in these meetings are more than welcome here. We hope to see them all next year which will be the fifty-seventh consecutive yearly three day meeting at Bethel Church, Riffe, Wash. It always begins on Friday before the third Sunday in August. "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

Rose and I would be so glad if any of you could visit us at some time. In gospel bonds.

(Elder) I. F. COLEMAN, Pastor

Redbush, Ky.

R. LESTER DODSON, OUR DEAR EDITOR, AND ALL THE ASSOCIATE EDITORS AND CONTRIBUTORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES WHOM WE HIGHLY ESTEEM IN LOVE FOR THEIR WORKS SAKE: We are convinced, at the age of sixty-one, here is one of the best religious papers published in America, not only the oldest but contains more heart truth and confession than any other. We have been privileged to read prayerfully, and we hope unprejudicedly study, and we have read many in the last forty years. Our mortal brother once said, "I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation." Psalms 119:99. Another says, "I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food." Job 23:12. Who in our modern day of science and human invention can local-

ize and testify likewise? Echo answers, who? A few months ago while reading the Sunday School lesson in an arminian paper I ran across the following quotation, "Specific prayer is usually more effective" which was destitute of spiritual food for me at this time; but yet after all probably this phrase caused us to pray more earnestly, and seek God's face and infinite wisdom with more fervency, with a greater degree of persistence and zealousness. We are convinced beyond doubt that the specific and persistent prayer of faith and wisdom (good works in heart motive in God's sight) when accompanied with a broken heart and a contrite spirit from a "poor man" in the sight of God is always acceptable, and never at any time or place, regardless of human conditions or circumstances, whether favorable or otherwise, rejected by Almighty God the Father and Potter. Amen. Oh, my brethren we know this is so from a long time, prayerful study of the word, and the real experience.

Brother Dodson, the Spirit must have directed you to write the last clause of your letter to me nearly one year ago, Jan. 1949. Here it is. "I truly hope that our dear Lord will enable you to meditate profitably upon his precious word, and that he will guide you in the way you should go, and at last land you safe on Canaan's shore." He must have heard your cry, because He has enabled us to joyfully walk and talk with him the greater portion of the time since; because it was his will and time to cause our great human suffering to somewhat cease and enable us to glory in tribulation—boasting alone in the cross of Christ. Alleluiah.

In April 1941 the Father of lights came to us in a dream, or night vision, according to his written and preserved word while we were at a very low ebb both naturally and spiritually, (at our wits end) and told us we had suffered more with his Son, Jesus, than any mortal then living on earth, His footstool. Three weeks ago the Father sent Elihu to me in same like manner, and spoke great, comforting words to us. Amen. Praise ye the Lord all ye people both small and great. Alleluiah. Read in Job, chapters 32 and 37.

In October 1912 it pleased the Lord to reveal our future profession to our grandma in this same way. This was before I had, or rather was given this divine urge to write and publish His eternal truth. (Mark 13:10.) This was two years before her last and greatest mortal promotion. She told me that the Lord had something good in future store for me. Whether naturally or spiritually, or both, he did not show her, but he made it plain to her that it meant me and no other; neither of her six sons and daughters, nor any of her other grandchildren. This warning from above, by this saintly mother in Israel at the age of sixty-five years here, has been a great comfort to us while at our many low ebbs during the last thirty-seven years. Now we are convinced that this dream meant both naturally and spiritually, for he has apparently doubled our portion as he did our afflicted brother of old, who probably suffered more or less. Who can tell? 2 Samuel 12:22. God alone and his divine only know. Now we have a little hope. (Job 42) Two mortal brothers who once despaired of their own life as we have often done in the past. O, my Lord! my Lord! For Thy great name and mercy help us to forget all this human cruelty and injustice displayed by our loved ones, and look to thee and put all our trust in thee. Amen.

Fully realizing at this age, sixty-one. and manifested divine saving grace, and justifying faith, that it cannot be

long until our prayers, apparently most earnest and numerous, which have so often been hindered here for some cause not fully made known unto us yet, will all be changed to praise, our hope which has often been dimmed by the cares and affairs of this life, will be converted into certainty, no more in pursuit and anticipation, but in the full realization and possession. Amen.

Our faith, which has some time flickered by the fiery darts and wiling arts of Satan, will be swallowed up into sight, no more to go in and out and to see and know in part, but to stay in the best of posture and to see him as he is, face to face, and to know as we are known. Alleluiah. Let all that hath breath praise God! Amen.

Our sufferings, which have been beyond human endurance for the last ten years a great portion of the time, save last year, praise God, will all be turned into glory and that forever and forever; and the cross which has been so heavy with us the greater portion of the time during our married life here of thirty-eight years save the last one, will be exchanged for the crown which will outshine the noonday sun.

Boasting alone in the cross the Lord's joy abounds in our heart tonight, apparently to the very human limit, and ever since our Father God sent Elihu to us, which is a true figure and type of Jesus Christ our all, three weeks ago with the eye and ear of faith, we can apparently see and hear the Lord's cargo coming heavily laden with all good things for us both naturally and spiritually, because we, like you and you my brother and sister, have learned obedience by the things which we have suffered. Also after so long a time we have learned to glory in tribulation because these two lessons are most vital and essential to a well rounded successful Christian life here. Amen.

O, my sinner friends or brethren, all ye who fear God and are heavy laden have the invitation of Jesus to come unto him and rest in peace which far excels the peace of this world. May it please God to create that famine in our heart, as he did in the prodigal of old, enabling us to figure up the cost in dead earnest as he did and return back to our Father's house of plenty and to spare is our closing prayer. Let us all join in and sing the praise of God (not man) in the Spirit with his grace in our heart, making melody unto the Lord and not man. Surely, O surely we can sympathize with our sister Hannah tonight, whose prayer was heard and who lent her first son unto the Lord for all his life. To God be all honor, glory and praise for enabling us and constraining us to write these nine pages tonight as he has many thousand pages during the last thirty-five years here. Written, we now hope, in faith and wisdom we believe constrained by the Spirit, and we know in love and forgiveness. Good will to all our brethren world wide.

THOMAS HARRISON McKENZIE

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

We are finding it very difficult to maintain our mailing list up to the point greatly to be desired. Our paper being over an hundred years old, we have to expect a heavy death rate among our subscribers, but we believe if our readers will be on the alert for NEW subscribers they can help us more than offset our losses.

We would again remind our Ministering brethren of our offer to pay them $1. for each NEW subscription, for one year or more, they send us. We know many of them highly endorse the Signs of the Times, and if they will but make mention of the paper in their travels among their brethren and friends, a certain amount of new subscriptions will be obtained.

To other than Ministers we are offering FREE one copy of FRAGMENTS, a very excellent book containing a large selection of articles by the late

Elder Silas H. Durand, with 2 NEW subscriptions, or either one of the following books, JONES-RHODES debate, Elder Milford Hall's TWO WORLDS, or SHOWERS OF RAIN, containing the experience and many poems by our late Sister Flossie I. Faulkner with each single subscription for one year.

On the average it costs only twenty-five cents (one quarter) each month to have this excellent paper come into your home. From now until November many of you will be attending Associations, Union and other meetings, and you will be meeting many brethren and friends who should be taking the SIGNS. If you will tell them about the paper some of them will subscribe for it, and thus you will help to enlarge our circle of readers.

R. LESTER DODSON

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Western Primitive Baptist Association now in her 73rd annual session sends greetings to her sister Associations and to all orderly Primitive Baptists everywhere.

Dear brethren: We have been wonderfully blessed during another associational year in having the gospel preached to us in its purity, and being fed the precious heavenly manna, and may peace and unity abound in Zion until Jesus comes with all the heavenly host. May your ministers continue coming in demonstration of the spirit and love. May charity and forbearance ever be our guiding stars and each of us walk in the way that becometh orderly Primitive Baptists. Many improvements in our churches at Bethlehem, Hopeful, Ramah, New Hope, and within recent years new buildings constructed at Salem, Mt. Gilead, Wright's Creek, Old Friendship, Mt. Pleasant and now Ephesus for which we are thankful.

May each of us continue to look well to the welfare of our churches both naturally and spiritually. Pray for and visit us as often as you can, and especially in our next annual session at Wright's Creek in October 1950.

Adopted while in session Oct. 15, 1949.

(Elder) F. A. COLLINS, Moderator
(Elder) J. J. COLLINS, Clerk

A FEW WORDS OF THANKS

On January 17th we entered the hospital for what we understood at the time was to be more or less of a minor operation, but instead of one operation there were two, which were followed by some complications and several set backs. All in all, we had a very difficult time, so much so that at times our life was almost despaired of. After spending nearly six weeks in the hospital, we were at home for three weeks, and then went to southern Florida for a rest and recuperation.

First and foremost of all, we desire to thank our kind and merciful heavenly Father for sparing our unprofitable life, for some purpose known to himself. We earnestly hope we may be enabled by his grace to show our deep gratitude by serving Him in sincerety and in truth.

Second, we wish to thank our many good brethren and friends, who were aware of our illness, for their prayers and many evidences of sympathy and love extended to us and our loved ones.

Last, but not least, we wish to express our most heartfelt thanks and sincere appreciation to our very able associate on the SIGNS' work for the very efficient manner in which he carried on the work alone. Aside from some correspondence requiring our personal attention, which was delayed because of our illness, we do not believe anything was neglected or suffered for attention. The fact that the paper was mailed out on the regular schedule in its usual good condition speaks volumes for his ability and faithfulness to the cause we all so much love. Again, we say, thanks.

R. LESTER DODSON

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

L. A. Perdue, Va., $3; M. E. Welch, Tex., $3; Mrs. L. M. Beebe, N. Y., $25; Mrs. D. O. Yeisley, Ore., $2; A friend, Ia., $4; J. D. Hassell, Ala., $1; Mrs. L. E. Ivey, Ga., $2.75; E. & C. Redman, Ala., $2; F. H. Richardson, Ia., $17; Mrs. M. L. Lucas, Ala., $4; Mrs. M. Finch, N. Y., $2; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $2.

SPECIAL REQUESTS

The Post Office Department will not forward second class mail. If there is the slightest change in the address the papers are returned to us and you may fail to receive your copy. If you anticipate a change of address please advise us as soon as possible and aid in getting your paper without delay.

ALSO

Please check the figures on the wrapper of your paper. They indicate the date your subscription expires. If it is in 1949 you will oblige us very much if you will renew your subscription now at $3 for one year or $5 for two years. We thank you in advance for your co-operation in these matters.

EDITORIALS

RUTHERFORD, N. J. MAY, 1950

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"The devils also believe and tremble."
James 2:19

I have tried to write for many hours, weeks and months in vain. I have become so exhausted and nervous in the many attempts, that I am thoroughly convinced that I am just as dependent upon the direct operation of God's Holy Spirit to write as I am to preach the gospel of the blessed Son of God. I am making the attempt again with fear and trembling, trusting that God will be pleased to lead my mind into a fruitful field of thought, and give me the words to comfort, console and edify God's little children.

I am now reminded of a request made by P. L. Kenly of Roanoke, Va. to write upon James 2:19 especially the last part to wit: "The devils also believe and tremble." James did not say that the devils had faith. No place in the scriptures do we find any statement that would intimate that the devils trusted in God or were in possession of faith. We are forced to admit that the devils gave assent to the fact that there is but one God, even to the acknowledging of Jesus—the Holy One of God—as we shall find when we consider certain scriptures. We would like to compare and contrast belief and faith to further clarify that expression of scripture.

Belief is the mental assent to a statement, proposition, or existing condition of things. Belief is simply an act of the understanding, but trust and faith are active moving principles of the mind. Belief does not extend beyond the assent of the mind, but trust and faith compel to action. Belief is speculative while faith and trust are operative. Belief is common to all religions, trust and faith are peculiar to those who believe in divine revelation and salvation by the grace of God. Theorists substitute belief for faith. I trust that the reader will be blessed to keep this in mind as we further meditate upon this expression of scripture.

Yes, the devils believe there is one God. They do not choose to believe this just because it is pleasing to them, but because that God exercises power over them. No man or devil can believe anything without evidence. God sets the bounds of the devil's maneuvers and they can go no farther. This is proven in the case of Job when the devil had to secure permission from God each time he chose to hurt Job. Each time the devil was told how far he could go and where he must stop. The devil was forced to believe that he was absolutely controlled by Almighty God. It could not be said of the devil that some people proclaim that he believes in God because their devil has free-will sailing and is so powerful that even though God is trying to save everybody, the devil will be victorious in getting the largest number. A devil with that kind of power could not believe in God. Remember that James says, "The devils

also believe and tremble."

I want to call your attention to the eighth chapter of the gospel according to Matt. 29, "And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" The devils were forced to recognize Jesus as the Son of God. They cried out unto him, fully aware of his power over them. Let us consider their question, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God." They had nothing indeed to do with him. They had no interest in his grace, blood or righteousness. He was no Savior and Redeemer for them. But contrary to this they realized that he had to do with them. They trembled at his presence and knew they would have to obey his all commanding voice, though terribly against their wills. They knew he had power to cast them out, "so the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine." Jesus bade them go and they went into the herd of swine. Even Jesus exercised power over the devils to the extent that his word returned not unto him void, but accomplished that which he pleased, and it prospered in the thing whereto he sent it. It was astonishing to the observers to see a character who exercised such power and authority that he could command the unclean spirits to come out of men and they would come out.

Let us now notice Acts 19:15, "And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?" Paul had been disputing daily in the school of Tyrannus for two years. During this long time both Jews and Greeks were privileged to hear the word of the Lord. God wrought special miracles by the hand of Paul in healing diseases and casting out evil spirits. This became so well known that even exorcists attempted to imitate. Some vagabond Jews, who were exorcists, attempted to imitate Paul and Jesus in casting out evil spirits. They would say to the evil spirits, "We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth." These evil spirits recognized this false claim of power as evidenced in their statement and question. "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye?" They knew that Jesus had the power to cast them out because he had done so in many instances. It was an intimate knowledge because they had heard his command and had been forced to obey him. They had come in direct contact with him in the demonstration of his power over them. They had also come in direct contact with Paul and he had commanded them to depart from individuals and they were forced to obey his command. They knew Paul to be a servant of the Lord because he was given power over them. The question, "Who are Ye?" suggests that they did not believe that these vagabond Jews were given this power over them. The evil spirits proved that their surmise was true when they that were possessed of the evil spirits pounced upon these Jews, overcame them, and were victorious over them so that these exorcists had to flee wounded and naked. I am of the opinion that those who are possessed of these evil spirits to-day may and do fight among themselves, but they are made to tremble when they come into contact with the true servants of the all powerful God. The devil is as a roaring lion, walking about, seeking whom he may devour. (1 Peter 5:8) He is made to know that some he cannot devour. Those who resist the devil are empowered to do so by Almighty God, and the consequence is that the devils flee from them. (James 4:7) It is indeed comforting and consoling to me to think that the devils are subject

to the power of God and can do no more than what my Father pleases. They must bow to him and tremble.

May we now consider the subject under discussion by James when he made this statement, "The devils also believe and tremble." He was treating upon the subject of the perfect faith. He was exposing the folly of those who boast of faith without works. He was insisting that true faith was made perfect by works. He makes the statement in James 2:17, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." Not only are works without faith dead works, but it is just as true also, that faith without works is a dead faith. The faith that is a gift of God is a living faith. It is not that works is the life of faith, but that good works is the second act necessarily flowing from the life of faith. It is not that we exercise faith by our works, but that faith exercises us unto the performing of good works. It is a vain boaster who boasts of his faith in God and by his works deny him. The faith that God gives is not dead, but produces good works. Faith is to works as cause is to effect.

James uses two characters to prove that works accompany faith. He cited the works of Abraham and of Rahab, the harlot; and asks if they were not justified by works. As you recall, Paul used these same two characters in his treatise on faith in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. He is contending that faith prompted them to do these things. Paul says that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. This substance and evidence comes only from God as a gift to his children. There are no contradictions in the writings of James and Paul concerning the subject of faith and works. We would like to examine Eph. 2 8-10, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Salvation, both for time and in eternity, is the gift of God. Through his mercy, goodness and gifts we are saved here in time. This is proved by the tense of the verb used in the expression, "By grace *are* ye saved." We are saved *through faith,* and that not of ourselves. This faith is not to be obtained through our merits. It is not as a result of any good works of ours, but it is the gift of God. It is not an offer or proposition conditional upon any acts of man, but it is the gift of God. "Not of works lest any man should boast." Boasting is excluded. No man can rightly glory in himself nor boast of his goodness. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus." God is the workman, we are his workmanship; God is the creator, we are the creatures. "Unto good works"—not by good works. It is not that good works beget faith, but faith begets good works. It is by the grace of God that we are enabled to walk godly in this present world. "Which God hath before *ordained* that we should walk in them." God said through one of his prophets, "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; as I have purposed, so shall it stand." If this be true, surely, if he ordains something it will be just that way. We find the word "ordained" as being rendered "prepared" when we consult the marginal reference. I believe God prepares his people to walk in good works by working in them. He works in them "both to will and to do of his good pleasure." The good works are just as certain as is the faith, and is as much the gift of God as is the faith. "Being confident of this very thing, that he

which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Your walk and conversation will be godly in this world. We conclude that James and Paul contended that faith and good works were characteristic of God's little children.

A child of God need not boast of his faith and love for these are made manifest in his deeds. He feels little, insignificant and unworthy, and much of the time wonders whether or not he be in possession of this faith and love. If you watch his walk and listen to his conversation, you will find him doing good deeds for his fellowman, and preferring others above himself. There is a change wrought upon one in which it has pleased God to implant this faith and love. It affects his actions and stimulates his conversation. His desires are to obey the commands of Jesus Christ, do the will of God and to praise him from whence all blessings come. Because of the infirmities of the flesh —the thorns that buffet him about lest he be exalted above measure—he is not able to do the things that he would. This forces him to be constantly in prayer to Almighty God to be merciful unto his unrighteousness and to forgive him of his sins. This character boasts not of his faith nor of his works. Paul exposed the vanity of those who boasted of their works. James called those who boasted of their faith "vain men." We see then that boasting either of faith or works would be erroneous, and do not characterize God's little children.

May God grant us this living faith and enable us by his grace to walk worthy in good works. May he bless us to give him the praise for it all. May we look forward and press toward the mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus when we shall be called from this low ground of sin and sorrow up into that heavenly realm where and when we shall perfectly praise him in that endless eternity. May he add his blessings to this writing as edifying to the household of faith. Amen.

E. J. L.

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Eccl. 12:13.

The following is a portion of the first paragraph of a letter from a sister in Texas: "Dear Brother Dodson—For some time it has been in my mind to write on the subject of Godly fear, or the fear of God so often referred to in the Bible. What is meant by the fear of God, what are the fruits of it, and who possesses it?"

Our sister writes at some length on this subject, quoting many scriptures pertaining to it, and we would like to publish her letter, but she says among her many fears is the one to have her letter appear in print. From the various scriptural references she has made we have chosen Ecclesiastes 12:13 as a basis for such comment as we may make.

Some of our English words have different meanings, and sometimes they mean just the opposite in one place to what they do in another. To illustrate what we mean we will quote the two following definitions of the word *fear*: (1) Fidelity to another; loyalty; faithfulness; (2) A painful emotion or passion excited by an expectation of evil, or the apprehension of danger." We would pause here to say that we do not believe that God's people serve him for fear of being sent to an everlasting hell, but rather they love him because he has delivered them from hell, or destruction. It will be readily agreed that there is a vast difference between the two foregoing definitions of the word

fear; therefore we must seek from the pages of Holy Writ to determine what is intended to be conveyed by the fear of God. There can certainly be no question but what the children of our heavenly King should show their fidelity, loyalty and faithfulness to him, and we will endeavor to make our answers to our sister's questions conform to the scriptures of eternal truth. She asks, "What is meant by it (the fear of God), what are the fruits of it, and who possesses it?" It would seem to us that the language of Solomon, quoted above, is pertinent and applicable to the subject. He says, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." He began the book of Ecclesiastes, consisting of twelve chapters, by stamping, "vanity of vanities; all is vanity" upon the whole of the natural creation, and especially the works of his own hands, the like of which no other human being could ever begin to equal. After having explored the realm of human endeavor, he again returns in the closing chapter of the book to his original appraisal, by way of emphasis, that "vanity of vanities*****all is vanity." Realizing as he did that vain is the help of man, whose breath is in his nostrils, he gives us the sum and substance of all that both he and others had written, or that might be written in the future, by saying: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." How all-embracing this is! There is nothing omitted or left out. Here the chapter and book comes to an end, and nothing can be added to it or taken from it. The words "Selah" or "finis" might well be written to seal the finality of the matter. "Fear God, and keep his commandments" embraces all of what might be called true religion: all the graces and fruits of the Spirit are involved here. Therefore, if we have any real love or reverence for God; if we have any faith in him and his Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, or any hope of life eternal by and through him; if we know anything of humbling ourselves in an holy contrition of heart before him and repenting in dust and ashes; any longing for mercy which endureth forever; any desire for reconciliation to his holy and divine will, in our trials and tribulations, it is because God has wrought his work of grace in our hearts. It seems to us that herein is to be found, in part at least, what is meant by the fear of God, and the fruits of it, and surely none but the subjects of his grace can know anything about or possess it. One of the inspired Apostles declared, "For we know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," which is one of the best possible evidences we could have of being one of that highly favored number, but even here we often question whether we love the brethren with a pure heart, fervently, or not. The words of the poet found in Hymn 1033, Beebe's Collection, often are presented to our mind, and we feel to quote them here for the benefit of our readers:

'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?

If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse
Who have never heard his name.

Could my heart so hard remain,
Prayer a task and burden prove,
Every trifle give me pain,
If I knew a Saviour's love?

When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark, and vain, and wild;
Fill'd with unbelief and sin,

Can I deem myself a child?

If I pray, or hear, or read,
Sin is mix'd with all I do:
You that love the Lord indeed,
Tell me, is it thus with you?

Yet I mourn my stubborn will,
Find my sin a grief and thrall:
Should I grieve for what I feel,
If I did not love at all?

Could I joy his saints to meet,
Choose the ways I once abhorr'd,
Find, at times, the promise sweet,
If I did not love the Lord?

Lord, decide the doubtful case;
Thou who art thy people's Sun,
Shine upon thy work of grace,
If it be indeed begun.

Let me love thee more and more,
If I love at all, I pray:
If I have not loved before,
Help me to begin to-day.

What a wonderful conclusion the man of wisdom (Solomon) had reached when he said, "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man!" We cannot in truth know what our real duty to God is until he has illuminated our souls with the knowledge of his glory as it appears in the face, or person, of his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Then, and not 'till then, do we feel to fall prostrate in the dust before him, desiring to know what he will have us do. We are then taught that the first and great commandment is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." And Jesus said the second is like unto it, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." We are troubled like Paul, who said, "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I." We find, as he said, a law, that when we would do good, evil is present with us, nevertheless, we hope we can truly say that we delight in the law of God after the inward man. By faith, we hope we can glory in the cross of Christ, and that the law which is in our members, warring against the law of our mind, and which brings us into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members, is what makes us cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" If we had no knowledge of our sinful condition, we would never thank God through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is only in his light that we see light. John says, "In him was life: and the life was the light of men." This is that true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, and we truly hope that it is because we have this light that we can bear witness with Solomon, when he spake concerning the things of this world, saying, "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity," and he also declared in substance that all is vexation of spirit, and there is no profit under the sun. We have an experimental knowledge of these things when we are made to know that "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." God searches the hearts of his people and they realize that he is acquainted with all their ways, and that there is no searching of his understanding. David said, "Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such

knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." Wonderful, indeed, are God's ways. His footsteps are in the sea, His path we cannot trace, nor comprehend the mystery, of his unbounded grace.

We have given such as we trust has been given to us, and we hope it is all in the name of Jesus, desiring that his name alone shall have all the glory and the praise, both now and for-evermore. Amen. R. L. D.

MEMORIALS

Little Flock Church was thrown into deep grief and mourning Nov. 21, 1949 when our beloved Pastor, Elder W. N. Green, peacefully passed away after a short illness at his home in Altus, Okla. Words are inadequate to express the sorrow caused by the passing of this saintly soldier of the cross. He was widely known and loved among the Primitive Baptists of the South, having traveled among them extensively, to whom the news of his death was sad indeed. Most of all he is missed by his home church at Altus (Little Flock Church) whom he had served so long, so faithfully and so well. At the time of his death he was serving three churches as Pastor. Amarillo, Texas, Mangum and Altus in Oklahoma. In Nov. he filled his appointment at Amarillo and Altus and was preparing to go to his appointment at Mangum when he became ill on Saturday and passed away the following Monday, very suddenly and peacefully with only his wife and daughter, Sister Willie Foster, at his bedside.

Elder Green was born Sept. 23, 1866 in Blunt Co., Ala. He was 83 years old. He is survived by his widow, one son, C. D. Green, Oklahoma City, three daughters, Mrs. Ethel Champeau, Norman, Okla., Mrs. L. B. Davis, Littlefield, Tex., and Mrs. M. R. Foster, Oklahoma City; also eleven grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren. His first marriage was to Miss Mary Adaline Tate, the mother of his children. After her death he married Mrs. Kittie Hobbs who survives him.

He united with the Primitive Baptist church at Frederick, Okla., Aug. 24, 1912, and was baptized the next day by Elder J. A. Rutledge and began preaching the same day. He was ordained to the full work of the ministry in Jan. 1915. The Presbytery consisting of Elders J. A. Campbell, J. D. Moody and L. E. Skinner, Deacons G. H. Tatum and S. H. Houk. He was a wonderful exponent of the gospel, rightly dividing the word of truth, and always preaching Jesus Christ and him crucified. He had a lovely personality and we loved to have him and his sweet and gracious wife visit us in our homes. Primitive Baptists loved to visit them in their home and always received a gracious welcome. They never seemed happier than when surrounded by their church members and friends where we were wont to go after meeting on Sundays. He was a good singer and always led the singing, never missing an appointment if physically able to go.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder R. W. Rhodes, Lillie, La., and Elder C. E. Turner, Amarillo, Tex. at the Tims Funeral Home after which his body was laid to rest in the Altus Cemetery.

RESOLVED, that this tribute to his memory be made a part of our church records, a copy be sent to his bereaved widow and a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication. Also be it

RESOLVED, that Little Flock Church extend heartfelt sympathy to his sorrowing family. Done by order of Little Flock Church while in conference Dec. 11, 1949 at Altus, Okla.

(Elder) C. E. TURNER, Moderator
(Mrs.) LOU KESTER, Church Clerk

SISTER MARY ANN SHEPHERD MARSHALL was born Feb. 27, 1862 in Pittsylvania Co., Va., and died Sept. 12, 1949, making her stay on earth 87 years. She was married to James H. Shelton, Dec. 17, 1878. To this union were born nine children, five girls and four boys. She was a member of Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church for fifty years or more. She was faithful in attendance as long as her health permitted and will be missed among us. Our sympathy goes out to her bereaved family. Her husband died in 1920.

She had been almost an invalid for several years. Her son Henry and wife, who lived with her, were faithful to care for her and give her every possible attention to make her comfortable. Be it

RESOLVED, first, that we bow in humble submission to Him who doeth his will. Second, be it

RESOLVED, that a copy of these resolutions be sent to the **Signs of the Times**, to **Zion's Landmark**,

and a copy to the family. Done by order of the church in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in Jan. 1950.

DEACON ERNEST EVANS, Acting Mod,
ALBERT H. COX, Clerk

OBITUARIES

Our Sister in Christ, MINERVA JANE (PAGE) HAMMOND, wife of Elder J. C. Hammond, departed this life Nov. 5, 1949, aged 75 years, 6 months and 3 days. She was stricken with pneumonia fever and lived less than a week after being stricken. For several weeks prior to her death she had been at the home of a son (whose wife had recently died) waiting upon and caring for the grandchildren. The doctor in attendance thought she was doing well, but at an early hour on Saturday, Nov. 5 her spirit took its flight. Her passing was quiet and without a struggle. She was able to attend preaching services at Kelly's Creek community church in Kanawha Co., W. Va., near their old home on the fifth Sunday in Oct. The next Saturday morning she quietly feel asleep in Jesus. Her husband, Elder J. C. Hammond, fills an appointment at the church named above every fifth Sunday.

She leaves to mourn, her dear husband, four sons, Howard, Delbert, Zelan and Leonard; three daughters, Mrs. Dessa Wolfenbarger, Mrs. Bessie Sigmon and Miss Lizzie Hammond; two foster daughters, Mrs. Mary Maddox, and Mrs. Elma Halstead; thirty-two grandchildren, three great-grandchildren; four brothers, Cassolow, Solomon, Grover and Bushrod Page; two sisters, Ruanna Martin and Mrs. Lucy Lewis; and many near relatives and friends. I feel my weakness very much indeed in attempting to write this notice, I do not have complete statistics at hand. However, at the request of our dear brother and fellow laborer, Elder J. C. Hammond, we will do the very best we can if the Lord wills.

She was united in marriage to J. C. Hammond, Jan. 1, 1903. Their union was blessed of the Lord, and it can truly be said of Sister Hammond that she was a faithful helpmeet, a kind and tender mother, a neighbor and mother in the neighborhood. She had a quiet, unassuming personality and was never given to speak ill of any one. The character and graces of this dear, faithful sister was evidence that she had meekly learned of Jesus who is meek and lowly of heart. Sister Hammond and her husband were baptized the same day into the fellowship of the Hopewell Old School or Primitive Baptist Church of Kanawha Co., W. Va. by the late Elder J. W. McClanahan, in Nov. 1916. Her experience and convictions were deep, and while she was not blessed to speak her convictions to so great an extent yet it was a heart matter with her. Her delight was in the assembly of the saints, in the worship of her Redeemer God. She had been afflicted for years, her condition of health and living a considerable distance from the church hindered her from filling her seat, but she was always so glad when she could be present at the meetings. In the labor of the ministry Elder Hammond was away from home much of the time. She was faithful and uncomplaining in attending the affairs of the home. Much more could be said about the service and virtues of our dear sister. The church, the neighborhood as well as the family has sustained a great loss, but we grieve not as those who have no hope. We believe that for her to die was gain.

The writer was called to conduct her funeral services in the Community church-house at Kelly's Creek, Nov. 8, reading from Job 2:10 and trying in weakness to preach salvation by grace to the sorrowing concourse of relatives, brethren and friends. The floral offerings spoke of the high esteem in which she was held. She was laid away in the family burying ground near the old home. May God comfort the bereaved family is our prayer for Jesus sake. Written by request.

(Elder) H. J. BIRD

Our dear sister in Christ, MRS. ESTELLE HOLLOWAY HASTINGS, was born near Pittsville, Md. Sept. 11, 1866, and departed this life Nov. 11, 1949 at the age of 83 years and 2 months. She was the daughter of the late Daniel and Margaret Holloway. After completing her education she taught school near Delmar, Del., and later was married to Minus F. Hastings, Dec. 26, 1888 by Elder T. M. Poulson. She united with the Little Creek Church and was baptized in Sept. 1896 by Elder A. B. Francis. There were none more faithful to the church than she and she is greatly missed. All who knew her loved her, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. Her husband passed away in 1938.

She was living in Delmar at the time of her passing and left two sons, Francis of Ferndale, Wash., and James of Nashua, N. H.; five grandchildren; also one sister, Mrs. C. L. Dickerson, Snow Hill, Md. and one brother, John L. Holloway, Newark, Md.

During her last illness her neice, Miss Essie Bratten, took care of her in accordance with her request before she became ill. Her funeral was conducted by the writer in the home of one of her dear friends, Mrs. Elizabeth Culver, Delmar, Del., and her body interred by the side of her husband in the Little Creek burying ground.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT

After an illness of several months duration of chronic myocarditis associated with complications, MRS. RUTH BEARD ADDIS, wife of H. Lester Addis of Glenside, Pa., died at their home in that place, Dec. 2, 1949. All that medical science could do, all that skillful nursing could accomplish, all that the faithful and tender ministration of her husband and sister-in-law, Miss Martha Addis, could provide were of no permanent avail and she passed peacefully away. The immediate surviving relatives and friends are her husband and sister-in-law of Glenside, Pa.; one son, Laird C. Addis of Iowa City, Ia.; a brother-in-law, Walter Addis, Salisbury, Md., and a sister-in-law, Mrs. Fred Beard, Bath, N. Y.

Mrs. Addis was a daughter of James C. and Waitie Vail Beard of New York City and was born March 15, 1886. She received the greater part of her education in New York City. She was a lady of marked intellectual ability with high ideals, and possessed a beautiful character and pleasing personality. In 1912 she was united in marriage to H. Lester Addis of which union one son was born. She was an accomplished musician and her services were often in demand. Her ambition, accomplishments and conscientious devotion to her work appealed to all with whom she came in contact and won her many friends. For a time she was an associate editor of Romance Magazine, and later held a secretarial position in the employ of Mrs. William B. Meloney who was a noted contributor to magazines and at one time editor of the Sunday magazine section of the New York Herald Tribune. After leaving the services of Mrs. Meloney she served for a time in the editorial department of the Steuben Courier of Bath, N. Y. Her virtues and noble qualities are widely known and we believe that for her to depart this earthly life is to be present with the Lord.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Southampton Old School Baptist meeting-house Dec. 5. Interment in the cemetery at that place.

ALSO

On Thursday, Jan. 5, 1950 BROTHER GEORGE ROBBERTS of Halcott, N. Y. passed away at his home there after a lingering illness. He had received hospitalization at Margaretville Hospital, but all that medical science or skillful nursing could accomplish could not check the disease that terminated in his death. He was 81 years old and had been a member of the Old School Baptist church 63 years, having united in England. He is survived by his wife; two sons, Harold of New Kingston, N. Y., and Allen of Halcott; one daughter, Mrs. Leslie Sanford, Davenport Center, N. Y.

Brother Robberts and his wife came to America in 1907 and purchased a farm in the Township of Halcott in Greene Co., N. Y. He was an industrious man, noted for his honesty, upright living and neighborly qualities. A noble husband, kind father and a useful citizen were combined in his exemplary life. He awaited his end with unshaken faith in the saving grace of his Lord.

The funeral services were held at Halcott, Jan. 8, 1950, the writer officiating. Interment in the Halcott Cemetery.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

SPECIAL MEETING

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Kingwood Church at Locktown, Hunterdon County, New Jersey, May 31 and June 1, 1950. Services will commence at 10:30 D. S. time on Wednesday. Ministers and brethren of our faith and order and all interested friends are cordially invited. All arriving Tuesday should come first to the home of Mrs. Thomas Darby, 192 Main Street, Flemington, N. J. Since we shall make every effort to provide for your comfort while with us, we will appreciate it, where possible, if you will advise the writer in advance the time of your expected arrival. Information, if desired, will be given you concerning the best transportation facilities for reaching Flemington.

47½ Park Avenue GERTRUDE PYATT
Flemington, New Jersey. Acting Church Clerk

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sundays in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y. at 10:30 a.m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meeting-house, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:00 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed. R. LESTER DODSON.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the **Signs of the Times** at the following prices: 1 copy 25 cents; 3 copies 75 cents; 6 copies $1.50; 12 copies $3.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 118 RUTHERFORD, N. J., JUNE, 1950 No. 6

CORRESPONDENCE

Denton, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I would like to give my ideas on the resurrection of the dead if it be the good Lord's will to bless me with words to express my thoughts on this most important subject. I do not have any thought of destroying the ideas of any who may disagree with me, neither do I expect to convert any one to my way of thinking. My only object is to leave on record just how I stand on this subject so my brethren and friends and my children may know what I believe in regard to the subject when I am gone. I sincerely hope that all the brethren who may disagree with me will not cease to have fellowship for me. I do not desire to impose my ideas on any one who has different views as I may be wrong, and if so I earnestly pray that God will show me and set me right. I am only human and subject to error and know I do err in many things.

As a starting point I will quote Job 14:14, "If a man die, shall he live again?" This is one of the most important subjects that ever occupied the mind of mankind from his formation since he entered into form on the earth —shall he live again after he has returned to the dust? We will, if the Lord wills, consider first some things Job says, and Job is talking about the man that is born of a woman, not about a spirit or soul or some mystical part of man, but about the man that was formed of the dust of the ground. He begins this 14th chapter by saying, "Man that is born of a woman, is of few days and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest me unto judgment with thee? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one. Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass; Turn from him, that he may rest, till he accomplish, as an hireling his day." Then Job comes to the resurrection and says, "For there is hope of a tree if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; Yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant. But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up: So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep. O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldst keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldst appoint me a set time, and remember me!" Job 14: 1-13. Then he says, "If a man die, he shall live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my

change come." Not exchange, if it is not this man that is born of a woman that is raised then it would be an exchange instead of a change. So Job goes on and says, "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." Job 19:25-27. Notice this, Job himself not something about him, but he himself should see with his own eyes. I am impressed to believe that Job arose when our blessed Lord arose from Joseph's new tomb, and saw Christ on the earth. Our blessed Savior, in speaking through Isaiah, the prophet, says, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Isa. 26: 19. If we will turn to Matt. 27:52 there we will find this prophecy fulfilled. It says, "And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." How could language be plainer? It seems to me that this scripture should be enough, even if there was nothing more said about the raising of the body of the saints in the whole Bible, for the words were spoken by the inspiration of God and I believe they mean just what they say. If language has nothing to do with the Scriptures how would we know just what any of them mean, and if any portion of holy writ is not true would the whole of them be any better? Nevertheless we will continue to consider some more of them for there is an abundance of scripture that treats on this subject. I believe the bodies of those saints came up in that resurrection as much as I believe Christ's body arose from the tomb. We would have as much reason to doubt one as the other, but we do not believe they came up a natural body as they went down, neither do we believe Christ's body was a natural body when he arose from the tomb. There seemed to be such a change in it that his apostles, who had been with him before his resurrection, did not know him when he appeared. He arose with a spiritual body which could appear among them, even into the room with the doors being shut. He appeared to his apostles after his resurrection, and demonstrated to them the resurrection of his body. "And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it and did eat before them." Luke 24:36-43.

He told them to handle him and see that it is I myself, so I firmly believe that it is I myself that will be raised from the dust, not just something about me. It was Adam, the man, that was formed of the dust of the ground that was placed in the garden of Eden; it was he that God talked with there and not a spirit; it was he that God gave the law to; it was he that violated the law; it was he that was driven out of

the garden; it was he that was alienated from God by transgression; it was he and not a spirit that the sentence of death was passed on saying, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." So he is the one that dies and not a spirit. If there is any scriptural evidence anywhere in the holy Bible that anything dies and goes into the grave but the body I have no knowledge of it. So if it is not the body that is to be raised from the grave I do not know how there would be any resurrection. What else is there to be raised? It was the man that was sentenced to return to the dust, and not just a spirit or something about him. The spirit returns to God who gave it. As the preacher says in Eccl. 12:5-7, "And desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets: Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." We see from this scripture that nothing returns to the dust, or earth, but that which was taken from the earth. That spirit or soul that breathed into man's nostrils did not come from the earth or dust, neither does it return to the dust, but to God who gave it, so then there is nothing to be brought up from the dust but the man. Remember that God called him a man after he had formed him, even before he had breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and this is the same man that Job had under consideration and says if he die shall he live again. We will answer Job by the words of the prophet which we have already quoted above, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Daniel says, "Thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Dan. 12:1-2. A resurrection means a raising up or a revival of that which has visibly perished or died, and if there is anything else but the man or body that dies I do not know what it is. The Scriptures teach throughout that it is the dead that are to be raised. It seems that in the days of the apostle Paul there were some in the church that did not believe in the resurrection of the body; they seemed to think it was a soul or spirit, or some germ of life that was resurrected, so Paul begins by saying, "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. (Is this not true indeed.) But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits;

afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." 1 Cor. 15:12-23. Notice he says that every man shall be made alive in his own order, if he fall the servant or seed of Satan he will be made alive in that same order, or if he falls clothed with the righteousness of Christ he will be made alive in that order as the preacher says, "If the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be." Eccl. 11:3.

We notice that the tree has two directions to fall, one is upward, the other is downward, in opposite directions. In the place in which it falls, whether in the place of the wicked or in the place of the righteous, in that same order it will be raised up. Paul continues in this 15th chapter of 1 Cor. saying, "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." The grain of wheat or corn which we plant in the earth does not come back the same grain that was planted, but comes up the same one changed in form or in body. So is the resurrection, it goes down a natural body, it comes up a spiritual body. It is the same natural body that went down that is made spiritual. It is like the water which Christ made wine. It does not say that he made wine out of the water, but he made the water wine; and the rib which God took from Adam made he a woman, that is he made the rib a woman, not a woman out of the rib. So as I understand it the natural body is made spiritual in the resurrection, made like Christ's glorious body. Paul says, "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Phil. 3:20-21. Notice how he says this, who shall change our vile body (not exchange it for the body of Christ as some may think) that it (notice the it meaning the vile body which he is talking about) may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, "But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." We would like to notice the "his" here. As we understand it the "his" does not mean that he will give every seed Christ's body, as some also may think, because to take it that way would conflict with many other scriptures, even the several passages we have used above. We would not want to say that he gave the seed of Satan his body. We will consider some other scripture which is used under similar terms. In Matt. 12:33 we find, in speaking of the fruit of the tree, it reads, "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit." You would not want to say that Christ's fruit was corrupt would you? So if this *his* here means the tree, the above *his* means the seed because it is used under the same terms. We will pass on to 1 Cor. 15:49, "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." An image is a likeness of a thing. We are bearing the likeness of Adam's body here, but not Adam's individual body for it passed on thousands of years ago, but when we are raised from the dead we will be raised or made in the image of the heavenly like the body of our blessed

Savior. As Paul says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." What more could we desire? Is that not enough? It is we ourselves that shall be made like him, not just something about us. So Paul continues by saying, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." No, flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom because this kingdom is spiritual, and nature will not go beyond the grave; nature and all things that pertain to nature will cease at the grave. We will be made spiritual in the resurrection, and our body adopted by the spirit of adoption. As the apostle says, "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Rom. 8:21-23. He continues in 1 Cor. 15:51-55, "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory." At this time all nature ceases, all our natural affections and knowledge will be no more. We love our children here, our father, mother, brothers, sisters and friends. Nature would love to think that they would meet them again in the heaven beyond and know them there as they know them here, but no, all natural relations cease at death. They will not be our children there, neither our father nor mother but will be all one in Christ. The question was asked of Christ regarding the seven brothers who married the same woman, whose wife would she be in the resurrection? "Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God." So do we err when we think we will know our natural friends there as we know them here. Christ continues by saying, "For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." Matt. 22:29-30. So we will all be alike there, there will be no infants, neither aged ones, no crippled ones, no deformed ones, but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection of the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. Neither can they die any more for they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. (Luke 20: 35-36) We will know only the one Father there who is the spiritual Father of us all. We will all be his spiritual children being neither male nor female, but all one in our blessed Savior. I once saw in a dream or vision the blessed Savior come in his glory. I heard the cry, the Savior cometh and the saints taken up in the cloud of his glory, and heard the angry cries of the wicked as we were taken up from the earth. It seemed that we sailed around the throne of God in

space, and all sang praises to his great name. We could only see the foundation of the throne which he sat on. We could not look upon his person because of his greatness. It was joy unspeakable. I am not able to describe the glory that I saw I am too weak. I cannot speak more. I hope I have not written anything that will be offensive to any one. It seems that my heart will melt, and my eyes wash away in tears. May God bless you all . H. L. ROGERS

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353 Dufferin Ave., London, Ont., Canada

DEAR ELDER DODSON: For some time I seem to have had an urge to write you. I trust it is of the Lord that he may give me words to praise his holy name. I especially enjoyed your editorial on "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." There was much sweetness in it for me. Yes Paul wrote, "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence.*****He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." How true after years of experience we are made to know in our flesh dwells no good thing, and that all we are and can hope to be is by grace and grace alone.

"If I must sing, I'll sing of grace
Which raised me from the fall,
And led me to a hiding place,
Jesus, my Lord, my all."

I was reading in some old *Signs* and read some articles written by Sister Bonnie Chick and Sister Ruth Keene Spitler. They were brought into the church about the time I was. I trust they have ever felt the nearness of their Lord and Savior. If once his child always his child. He will never leave or forsake us. Sometimes he hides his smiling face, but he always tenderly cares for and keeps his little children. Oh, to be kept by the power of God unto salvation.

A few months ago I was feeling depressed and forsaken, and as the sparrow alone upon the housetop, when the words came to me with power and sweetness, "A child of the King." I was made to rest and rejoice that the promise was to me. So it has been through all this wilderness journey. We get a little here and a little there, a sweet foretaste of heaven. We have no continuing city here, but we seek one to come whose builder and maker is God. As the years pass swiftly by we will soon reach our desired haven. To be with Jesus and be like him has been my hope for over forty years.

I am still a little child leaning upon my Beloved. Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to his cross I cling, and oh, so weak, I need him every hour. Keep my lips from speaking guile for I know I am as prone to sin as the sparks are to fly upward. We are told to pray without ceasing, but I find I do not know what to pray for. He knows my every need. I want charity. There seems to be a crying need within but is it of the Lord?

When I was a young member I wanted patience, not knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. Let us rejoice and be glad that we have such a wonderful

Savior. "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." When he gives us peace we shall have it, and his banner over us is love. "Father, we'll rest in thy love." Humbly before thy face I fall, Jesus, my Lord, my life, my all.

Dear Elder Dodson, may the Lord's richest blessings abound toward you and keep you, and may you feel that underneath are his everlasting arms. Yours in a precious hope.

(Miss) LOLLIE MAY CAMPBELL

Redwood, Va.

RUFUS BROWN, DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER BROWN IN A PRECIOUS HOPE OF LIFE ETERNAL BEYOND THE GRAVE: I desire to write you both a few thoughts pertaining to eternal things if the Lord wills it so, if not I cannot. I am still somewhat encouraged about the baptizing and good meeting at Cross Roads. I feel those things are a God sent blessing to us. What a sweet consolation it is to see, meet and greet those dear little lambs that God is leading out of the lonely wilderness into his true shepherd fold, where they shall not want. He leadeth them beside the still water: he maketh them to lie down in green pastures, he restoreth their souls: surely goodness and mercy has followed them all the days of their life, and they shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Christ is our surety and security, mediator and intercessor for all things if we be not deceived. We are truly in the embrace of God's everlasting covenant of grace, love and mercy. All things are ours, all things work together for our good who are the called according to God's purpose.

Dear kindred in the Lord, I hope I have a little experience in these sacred things. If so, when his dear little children are regenerated, born again, then they have been brought out of darkness (a strange land, the Egyptian bondage—in short the bottomless pits of hell) into Christ's marvelous light. In a feeling sense we have been turned right around and set in opposite directions. Christ took away their hard and stony heart and gave them a heart of flesh. His operation in their heart has made them a new creature; old things have passed away and all things have become new; he puts his laws in their heart and in their mind he will write them, which are things we hope we have felt, tasted and handled with our own hands. Things that are gracious to our soul; things that are alive forever-more which is a true and living testimony indellibly wrought or written in the heart (not the head) of Christ's little children, chosen elect bride, which was chosen in his eternal covenant of grace before the foundation of the world. His bride in a spiritual sense stands holy and without blame before God in love. To him there is perfection and beauty in her. He calls her my love, my dove. She is the choicest one of her mother; she is the only one of her that bear her. I believe this little bride is that innumerable company that John saw coming up out of great tribulation, whose robes had been washed in the blood of the Lamb, and made pure, white and clean. I believe by revelation, the revealed knowledge of God, that John saw the entire church of God in her glorified state, pure and undefiled as though she was adorned ready to meet the Lord in the air, when I believe Christ will say to her, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." These promises are to God's faithful ones.

Dear brother and sister, I do not doubt the Lord's predestinated pur-

poses in all things in both heaven and earth; his electing love and distinguishing grace. His covenant bride is rich in mercy and saving grace. He has prepared a rich hidden treasure for his lovely bride, it is too pure for any unclean thing to enter there; it is ordered in all things and sure. Dear kindred, to doubt the doctrine the Primitive Baptists stand for it seems would be to doubt all things. There is no question about this doctrine being that which the apostles taught. It is the true doctrine beyond all doubt; it has stood a true righteous test from the ancients of eternity; it will live and last forever; it has penetrated the heart of all true believers from righteous Abel on down through all ages of time for it is the doctrine of God our Savior. I am well persuaded that this vital theme never has, can or will be assailed. All of the opposing powers of hell can never frustrate God's plans, purpose or power. The powers that be are ordained of God. Dear ones, I truly believe that God in his sovereign and eternal decrees, rules and looks upon all things as though they were complete from the beginning of time. In his mind and purpose they were complete in him, fixed and finished. He is Lord of lords and King of kings. I believe God fixed and set the bounds of our habitation both by nature and by grace as the case may be, and it is final and no changes are to be made. By him all things consist so what is there that God cannot do, (lying and sin excepted) and what is there that we can do? We poor, little, weak, vile, sinful, corruptible, finite creatures of ourselves can do nothing. We try to do many things, but we find ourselves full of mistakes and failures. We are nothing, yea, less than nothing. We are no more than filthy rags. Man in his best estate is nothing but vanity. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." By God's purpose and command we were born into the world to live all of our appointed days, and then go hence and be no more. "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble." We cannot find where any good thing has ever dwelled in man since the fall of man. They are evil continually; they are as prone to evil as the sparks are to ascend upward. So it is by the power and purpose of God that we have our carnal and earthly existence, and if we have spiritual relation with God and Christ it is by his regenerating power, saving grace, love and mercy that we exist in him and are what we are. He says, "Without me ye can do nothing." If not deceived I hope I have witnessed, felt and truly experienced these things. I know I have a great experience in sin, and I truly hope, and sometimes believe, that I have an humble experience of grace which yet keeps me living in doubts, fears and hope. Many times in sadness and fear I wonder if there is a true and living God. If so why am I so barren as to feel that surely I have been deceived in all of these precious blessings that I have long hoped for. Once in a while there seems to spring up a little ray of light that causes a flaming expansion of love in my breast, that causes my heart to swell and leap for joy with unbounded praises of love, peace, joy and sweet adoration for, and to, my dear Redeemer God. Then if not deceived I truly know the joys of the Lord. Then we can say surely thou art the true and living God, and besides thee there is no other. His pardoning love, grace and mercy are my continual longings which cause me many anxious thoughts. These sacred and precious things that I have hinted at are precious truths to me. I hope you, too, believe these things are our daily meat

and drink, and our daily meditations which many times cause us to groan and sigh within ourselves, feelings that cannot be uttered. It seems to me my greatest concern is whether or not my name is written in God's eternal book of life which is the greatest of all books. All whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world, shall wonder after the beast, and I truly believe that old beast is a representation of Satan, the old devil, who is a liar and the father of lies. That old living fiend has his existence here by the plastic hand of God. His mission is to deceive, he is full of deception. I believe the old devil is the crooked serpent that God in his all wise purpose and decree did make, create or form for, or to be, the author of all confusion. I believe all manner of crookedness comes under the head of confusion. Therefore our God is so pure, holy and righteous, his jurisdiction is over all worlds, powers, principalities and dominions. He is from the highest in authority unto the lowest in subjection. Our God cannot be charged with anything less pure than righteousness. "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." God who rules the time and seasons, doubtless for the best of reasons.

My dear kindred, it seems I find no end to this glorious theme. Its existence is from eternity, a flowing fountain of love that never runs dry. Here in this weak, mortal frame we cannot conceive of the magnificent beauty, love and grandeur that our dear Lord has treasured up in his bountiful storehouse in eternal glory for his little, redeemed elect bride, the ones that truly love him and have suffered for Christ's dear name sake. In conclusion I cannot express the wondrous beauties just like my brethren can, but I truly hope that I sincerely believe in line with them. I love them and cannot help it, and I do not want to help it. May the Lord bless Zion's little ones is my prayer. A brother I hope. J. A. PERDUE

Route 5, Box 858, Visalia, Cal.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am sending M.O. for the dear old *Signs* another year. It sets forth what I believe if not deceived. I get much comfort reading the many able sermons and other articles it contains. I do not want to miss a number while I live. It was sad to hear of dear Elder Lefferts passing. I have read so many of his comforting sermons in the dear old Baptist papers. Mrs. Lefferts and family have my sympathy. I know what it is to part with our loved ones. The dear Lord knows best in all things. Our days are numbered and the bounds thereof we cannot pass. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." So many of our dear, precious loved ones have been taken from our midst, but what comfort that they yet speak to comfort and feed our hungry souls. They are not dead but sweetly sleeping in Jesus. They fought a good fight, they finished their course, and the death angel came back and took them home to their long eternal rest in blessed eternity.

I would like to have your views, or those of any one else if they are given a mind on the subject, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." It is a great joy to my soul to read of the great and wonderful mysteries and the goodness and mercy of an all powerful God. I try to pray and beg for mercy that the dear Lord will give me a heart to understand his blessed words to his little

chosen few for whom he shed his precious blood on the rugged cross, and whose names were all written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world. I hope I am one of that number. A hope is all I have and sometimes it is so small I almost lay it by, and sometimes it seems sufficient. If I were called to die it would be sweeter to me than a thousand worlds like this. This world is not my home, I long to go and be at rest I hope. I would be happy if I could write to the dear household of faith as the saints do to me. They tell what I believe and my travel better than I can, and I do not feel worthy of such sweet and wonderful blessings. I do not have much opportunity to be with the dear Old Baptists since my dear companion passed away. I read the *Signs* and other Baptist papers and shed tears of joy the world knows nothing about. I have read the *Signs* for fifty-five years, seeing it first when I met my dear husband. "Grace! 'tis a charming sound!" is a song most dear Old Baptists are familiar with. It is sweet and precious to my weary, hungry soul. When you sing it think of this lonely sinner that is saved by grace if saved at all.

Dear Elder and Associate Editors in a precious hope beyond this vale of tears, I will close these rambling thoughts. Hope you can overlook my weaknesses and many mistakes. I wish you God's richest blessings for the New Year and many more in your labor and work to keep the dear family paper coming laden with the good news. The least of all if one at all in hope of the resurrection beyond this vale of tears.

Mrs. W. L. SLUSHER

Cones Road, Route 3, Hot Springs, Ark.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE: I would like very much to put some thoughts on paper if the Master directs my mind and gives me guidance.

Brother Dodson, I get so much enjoyment from reading the *Signs*. When I took the mail from the box to-day I was overjoyed to find my paper had arrived. I straightway turned to your message bearing the heading, Matt. 7:20, "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." My dearly beloved brother in hope, it seems you must have been writing directly to me for I was given a great feast, and these tears which have dimmed my eyes are of joy. Your message has answered so many questions that I have been pondering over for some time. At times I am left in doubt, and fear the fruit which I bear is a corrupt fruit. I fear you precious children in Christ see me as a corrupt tree, or a dead branch, which is to be plucked from the vine, or tree of life, and cast into the fire to burn for an everlasting eternity. I am not gifted to speak on the Scriptures as I do so much desire, neither am I gifted in writing letters of comfort, but to read the precious letters that appear in the *Signs* is a great comfort and consolation to my hungry and weary soul.

"As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee." Was not that messenger John the Baptist? He said he was "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." "And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey; And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose."

He was speaking of that all mighty and all wise God who spoke and it was done and commanded and it stood fast. John was given the power to preach and baptize, but his power to baptize could not exceed the baptism of water, but he of whom John was speaking could and did baptize with the Holy Ghost. "And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Gallilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan, And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And immediately the spirit driveth him into the wilderness." Why after receiving the Spirit was he driven into the wilderness? Because it was pleasing to the most high Master, God the Father, that he be tempted by or of Satan for a period of forty days. "After that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Gallilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

The gospel that they, Jesus and his disciples or apostles, taught in those days was the living word of God, the almighty Father, and that same word is just as much alive to-day as it was in those days. So you see, Brother Dodson, that almighty divine Spirit, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, is my only hope of salvation. May it be pleasing to you and all other saints of God to remember me in your prayers, a poor weak worm of the dust, that I ever be kept humble and submissive to the will of the great God, and that he will give me strength and increase my courage to confess him before the sons of men, and that I may not be a stumbling block, but a live tree which bringeth forth good fruit to the harvester. In myself, it is made plain to me, I am less than nothing, and the best that I can do is as filthy rags in the sight of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I wish the best of blessings for you and all the elect family. Your little brother in hope. DAVID B. LAWSON

Route 1, Farmington, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I feel my weakness very much indeed in attempting to write you. It is by request of a very dear brother and Elder that I endeavor to give you an account of an assembling together of a few Old Baptists in the home of Brother and Sister Croft in Fulton, Ky., the fifth Sunday in January.

Elder and Mrs. O. W. Perkins, my husband and I went to Cane Creek the fourth Sunday that being their regular preaching day. Elders Perkins, Harrison and Kerley from Memphis filled the stand that day, preaching Christ and him crucified, the way, the truth and the life, and proclaiming the sovereignty of God. We enjoyed the preaching and meeting together with the Old Baptists there in the home of Brother and Sister Wiley Barnes this Sunday. In the afternoon as we came home it was suggested that we spend the next Sunday with Sister Flora Croft and Brother Croft. We wrote them on Monday we were coming the next Sunday morning. On arriving we learned the news had spread around among the Old Baptists that Elder Perkins would be there. Elders Harrison and Lowery were there also. There were brethren from most all the churches both in Bethel and Soldier's Creek Associations. About seventy or seventy-five gathered there in their home and it was a day enjoyed by all. Elders Lowery, Perkins and Harrison spoke so beautifully of the unsearchable riches of God and of

God's sovereignty. We must have heard the gospel in its purity which was enjoyed so much by this little band of people whose voices were mingled together singing hymns of praise. This was a wonderful day, all in one accord and speaking the same language.

If I am not deceived, I see a love and friendship manifest among this people, when they are assembled, that is not found among any other people. The love which comes down from above; the love with which Christ commanded his people to love one another; the love which is shed abroad in the hearts of his people; the love which is a manifestation of his work. Since he commanded his people to love one another as he has loved them, we do not marvel at this love among them or wonder why this love and friendship is manifest among them, do we? "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." This manifestation of love I see among Old Baptists is evidence to me that they are the ones he had in mind when he said, love ye one another. I cannot find any place in the testament where Christ's commands were not always obeyed, and I believe this will hold good unto the end of the world. If I understand his language, his commands were always to his people and not to the world who knoweth not the Father.

Brother Dodson, I believe this love was freely bestowed upon these people who were assembled together on this day in this home. He has said, "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." This is a wonderful work he has wrought among his people; a perfect and beautiful thing indeed; perfect because he has left no part for man to perform; a work that is finished according to his will, and his own good pleasure. I wish I could tell you that I was one of these people or belonged to this precious flock that was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, later redeemed by the precious blood our Savior shed when he went to the cross, but I cannot speak of these things with any assurance. I hope (only hope) I have evidence of this great love. If I have it has been by the tender mercies of God, the wonderful gift, bestowed upon an unworthy creature, not by my will and work, but by the will, purpose and power of him. It is a treasure I would not change for all the world with the wealth and beauty therein. I hope I have partaken of a part of the sorrows and joys that only his people know as they journey here. I do feel to have travelled a very rugged road a part of the way for the past few years, and given a hope; a love shed abroad in my heart for these people, the Primitive Baptists, and a desire to go to them and relate a few of these precious trials, tribulations, joys and times of rejoicing. There have been times I have hoped I could just fall at their feet, but I could not perform even this much. I had to wait until I was humbled down just this low (oh how sweet is this humbling) until at last the day that was appointed unto me to make this offering came. (The offering which I hope was prepared of him.) I had no work of my own to offer, nothing to boast of but give all the praise, honor and glory to my Redeemer.

This was a glorious day when he saw fit to bring me into his fold. The church has been a haven of rest to me, yet I feel so unfit and so unworthy to be assembled in this church with this people, the precious flock, for which he has called and qualified his servants

to feed. This is the church of which I believe Christ was speaking when he said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not pravail against it." What was this Rock? All the arminian world claims their church is builded on this Rock. Who has the evidence? To me the Primitive Baptists are the only ones who have the evidence of this. Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone, his people being redeemed by his blood (not by creature works and you can if you will accept him) no not to my understanding, (if I have any) but by the blood and the spirit bearing witness by divine revelation. This brings to mind a portion of scripture I have meditated on many times. "And there are three that bear witness in the earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one." 1 John 5:8. This is what it means to me: without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. These people for whom he shed his blood are redeemed. They will every one come into his kingdom without the aid of any man, God himself teaching them, putting his laws into their hearts and minds. He teaches in a way every one will understand. Then he said I go away that I may send the comforter. This comforter being the spirit of Christ born in them as a witness. These are the ones added daily to his church such as should be saved. To me the water that beareth witness is the (water) baptism that brings these children into the visible church in sweet fellowship one with another. His baptism (to fulfil all righteousness) was (to me) a pattern for his children to follow. They are the only ones he commanded to be baptized—those who believe, this being a work of God also.

If I have been redeemed by this blood, and if I have received this comforter, (the spirit of Christ being born in me) as I have stated before, I was given a desire at this time to go with the Old Baptists, to follow my Savior in baptism. Not a night's rest, not one hour's peace could I find until I could tell them these wonderful things and come into the church with them by baptism. The church is a peaceful, resting place for us here in this world. This is the water spirit and blood bearing witness. I would like very much to have the views of some one else on this scripture. I may not have the right interpretation. I have many doubts and fears all along this journey that cast many heavy shadows along my pathway, and I fear sometimes I am deceived in this hope, and fear that my friends have been deceived in me, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."

At the end of the service on this fifth Sunday in the home of Brother and Sister Croft, Elder Perkins asked me if I would write an account of the day and you see I have made a failure in doing that much. When I started to write I wondered why he had asked me when there are so many others and any could have written so much better than I. I being the very least one, the weakest one and the most unworthy one assembled in that home that day. Feeling my weakness as I do I fear I should never have had the courage to have written you as I have. As I have written this a portion of scripture has come to my mind where "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty." So a very weak member has attempted to bear tidings of a day that was a great day to us all.

Before closing I would like to say we have the blessed privilege of hearing Elder Perkins on the first Sunday and

Saturday before at Zion in Mayfield; on second Sunday at North Mt. Zion; and on fourth Sunday at Harmony, this being our home church. Here we have a *little flock* but one I hope contending for the faith once delivered to the saints; contending for and loving the doctrine Jesus Christ taught while he was here on earth; and we do feel to be very wonderfully blessed to have been sent a man called and qualified by the Most High and Supreme God, and endued with power from on high to speak of God's sovereignty and preach the gospel in its purity. Yours in hope of eternal life. (Mrs.) H. C. ADAMS

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327 S. Jackson, El Dorado, Ark.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Enclosed find $5 for two years renewal to the dear old *Signs of the Times*. I hope I can continue taking it as long as I live. No one knows the comfort I get reading the good articles it contains. May the Lord bless you and others to continue writing and proclaiming this doctrine of God our Savior. May the Lord bless the readers to read, as well as the writers to write for we all need the blessing from him to read or to write the unsearchable riches of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is of, through and by the grace of God we live, move and have our being, and are what we are. Satan has such a wonderful pleasure in me that he leads and has charge of me much of the time to the extent that I am not enabled to utter one word of praise to God's grand and glorious name.

Please excuse my manner of expression, but I hope these few thoughts are from deep down in the heart of this poor, unworthy sinner. Saved by the grace of God if saved at all. Yours in hope of eternal glory. J. J. DAVIS

Box 185, Weslaco, Tex.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Received my Jan. issue of the *Signs* and notice my subscription expired with the Dec. issue. Enclosed find $5 for a two year's renewal. I have enjoyed the articles of love, mercy and grace. Yes, love comes first. The Old Baptist church is built on love, and when brethren cease to love each other it soon goes to pieces. Love is the binding cord, and that love must be given from above. Man in his natural state cannot reach up and bring down that love that makes peace here on earth, or in these earthen vessels of ours. But O what effect it does have when God sees fit to give it to his little ones. It humbles them and makes them as little children, and what a difference there is when love reigns supreme. We only get a little foretaste of it here in this life which carries us over the rugged road that we have to travel on earth. We get so low in spirit and feel like our unprofitable life has not amounted to anything, and it is good for us that we get in these conditions for we have not suffered anything to compare with what our blessed Jesus suffered for his little ones. We were guilty and he was innocent. I wonder what the latter half of the century we are now entering into will bring? The Lord only knows, but when it comes to pass it will be just like he foresaw it before the earth was ever formed. Nothing new with God, but one eternal now with him.

(Elder) E. B. AULT

Route 1, Richlands, N. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I have desired to write to the dear old *Signs of the Times,* but a feeling of unworthiness and lack of something worth while has prevented. Still feel the same way but know if it is God's will he will direct my mind and cause me to tell of something he has worked in poor me. I am almost a shut-in as I seldom have a chance to go out especially to meet with the dear Old Baptists where I long so much to go. Waiting and hoping that the all wise God will make a way for me to go more often, it is in fear that I write this because he knows what is best for me. My husband does not belong to a church and does not care to go, but I long to go for I believe it is the church of Christ. I have one little one in the hospital now so you see I am in trouble and have seen much. there are times when I seem lifted up, when he (Christ) comes there is rejoicing in my poor soul. I am so unworthy and unfit to even speak of Him; but hope he will never leave me in despair.

Dear children of God I desire your prayers. A poor sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

(Mrs.) L. E. WATKINS

R.F.D. 1, Box A-107, Henry, Va.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD: Enclosed find remittance to renew my subscription for two years. I enjoy the paper a lot. The article in the Dec. 1949 issue on the new birth by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe is worth the price of the paper. Brother Dodson, I have a mind to write some for the *Signs* but I know within myself I can do nothing that would be accepted by the Lord or the household of faith, but if I should write anything that is any good it must come down from above by the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

"And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves." Matt. 21:12. How many of us have gone to church hoping for a crumb from the Master's table, and some of the brethren would come in and sit near us and start talking about the things of the world; some will tell about the good crops they have, some about their jobs in the factory, some one thing and some another until it seems like we will just have to get up and move before we can hear what the preacher is saying, but then a calm comes over everything and we can hear and feast on the manna from on high. I feel like that is when Jesus comes in this temple and drives out the thoughts of this world and prepares each one to worship Him in Spirit and in truth. I am not writing this to throw stones at any one for I am just as guilty as they for I cannot come to Jesus myself. He must come to me if I ever receive a blessing. It looks to me that we should respect the house of the Lord more than we do, it is a sacred place. May the Lord bless Zion everywhere is my prayer. Yours in hope of eternal life. CHARLES R. BALL

Cozad, Col.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Please excuse my neglect. I am getting old, nearing eighty, but still would hate to miss the *Signs.* I have read it sixty years or more so would surely miss it, but do not expect to be here very long. I can read but am almost too shaky to write. I am enclosing check for renewal.

(Mrs). G. C. ARMSTRONG

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. M. E. Kuns, Cal., $2; F. Phillips, Ark., $1; B. F. Preston, Ore., $2; W. B. McGregor, Ky., $2; R. L. Davis, Kans., $3.

EDITORIALS

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THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

This word cannot be strictly said of anyone or anything else. In the human economy, we have a sovereign king or a sovereign state, but these are subservient to the Maker, Keeper and Disposer of all things. That the sovereignty of God has always been denied by some that profess to be followers of him, we cannot, with the written history of mankind before us, consistently deny. That it will, by the same gainsayers, be denied until the end of time, is not doubted. In fact, they have been spoken of and warned against by many sacred writers.

The Bible was written by inspiration, (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21.) If it is ever understood, it must be by revelation. It cannot be reasoned out by human intelligence. Its wonderful truths cannot be gotten hold of by listening to the explanation of smart men. The commentaries of men of letters will not unlock the hidden mysteries of that precious volume. However, in speaking of the Book, I would not have you think that it does not mean what it says. It might be alright for a Mormon or a Campbellite to claim a new knowledge gained by digging some plates from the ground, but never for a child of God to lay any such claims. If we know anything of ANYTHING about God it has not come from the earth, but as a divine revelation from above. There has not been any discrepancy in what God inspired men to write, and what he reveals to them. The Book is in perfect harmony with the experience of God's people.

Preaching, for it to be worth anything to me, must be in corroboration with my experience. But I do not have the least desire to set up my experience as a standard for the Old Baptists to follow. If we are honest with ourselves and one another, we must readily admit that we have heard two or more brethren outspoken about every tenet of our faith. In the most of cases they always rely upon their experiences and their version of the Scriptures. Yet, we have many different ideas about these same tenets of faith. Are they all from the Lord? Does the Spirit teach one man that God has absolutely predestinated all that comes to pass, and another that he only predestinated the good, and still another that nothing is fixed, but that God acts according to the way his creatures do? This I do not believe a word of at all. Thus, what people tell me is their experience, is not a true criterion for Bible doctrine. I hope to have been made able to know the frailty of my being, and to realize that if I know anything at all, that it is just a little, and that this being true, I must not expect my brethren to take a thing just because I claim to have experienced it.

If I know anything of a grace experience, it is that God is a sovereign. I do not claim that there is more than one sovereign, anymore than I claim

that there is more than one God. My feelings and my understanding from what I hope he has taught me in experience, is that he does his will in heaven and earth. But I know that others say, whose honesty and sincerity I do not question, that God has not taught them that. This contradiction among the children of God causes me to desire to appeal to something more than their experience. At the same time, I am fully aware that it will be worth nothing, except it coincide with what my readers have seen and felt of God.

I am aware of the difficulties that present themselves to the natural mind in taking the view that God is a sovereign. I have not set myself the gigantic and impossible task of removing those difficulties from the mind of my readers. I cannot any more reconcile myself to God's way of doing things than I can make a world like this. There is not any way that this natural mind can tell how low it will go in trying to measure God by itself. In some cases it will judge him by its helplessness; in some it will judge him by its depravity; in still others it will judge him by its ignorance. In the first case, this would say that because man is a limited creature and cannot do anything, that the eternal God is likewise limited by his surroundings; in the second case, it would say that the creature man is not guilty of any sin, that he is only acted upon in sin by the God that made him, that he does have the right to say, "Why doth he yet find fault?" or, "Why hast thou made me thus?" (see Rom. 9:19-20.) This same depraved nature would, in its limited vision, behold the God that rules in heaven and earth and say, Let us do evil that good may come. In the third case, it will lay things to this sovereign Maker that he has emphatically denied doing. Only one instance will suffice to show what I am after in regard to that. Some have said that God is the author of sin, but we are told that God is not tempted. Wonderful language to a poor sinner. Nothing has ever come upon our God to cause him to change from what he eternally determined to do. He is in one mind concerning his children (and I certainly want to be understood as saying that in some way all things concern them); that whatsoever his soul desires that he does just that. The reason that God is not tempted is deeply hid in the sovereignty of God. There is not any that can tempt him to do wrong. But the same writer that said God was not tempted, also said neither tempted he any man. If both statements are true (and they are) then God is not tempted, and God does not tempt any man. Thus, the sovereignty of God is not an excuse for saying that God is the author of sin.

We, as a people claiming to be the church of Jesus Christ, sometimes find it hard to keep from reading into the Bible some of our think so ideas. If we could read about Nebuchadnezzar and see just what is declared there to him, it would remove our difficulties about the sovereign will of God. We cannot do this by the volition of our will, for all truth comes (not by searching, but) by revelation. Nevertheless, it will, under the blessing of God, be profitable to those exercised by the grace and spirit of God, to look at it again. The king had a dream. There is not a scientist, psychologist, psychiatrist, psychoanalyst, nor Arminian, that can prove that the king could have kept from having the dream. Moreover, he could not have dreamed it anymore clearly than he did. Furthermore, there is not a reader of these lines that can keep from dreaming what they dream.

And how often do we wake up and wish that we could put our dream together, but find that it is gone from us, as was the king's. The king dreamed and it was interpreted to him. It came to pass, even to his hairs growing like unto eagle feathers, and his nails like unto claws. At the end of the days of his dream, understanding returned to the king. Human reasoning may say that he could have gotten it back before the culmination of those days, but the sovereignty of our God utterly forbids any such speculation. The king praised Him whose dominion is an everlasting dominion. That word 'dominion' means in the original to rule or to have dominion. It means that in both the Old and New Testaments. It means that today in our everyday language. That was what the ancient Jewish church relied on as she traveled under the law. The apostolic church had the same assurance to console her in the days of her infancy under grace (and that is not to be construed that the church has weak and strong periods in herself considered) and she has ever traveled, and will continue to travel, under the banner of the Sovereign King Immanuel. Moreover, the king declared that his kingdom is from generation to generation. It has been true that we have had men, and even good and spiritual minded brethren, that have intimated that there has been times when this has failed to be so, but that has not been any hindrance whatsoever that the sovereign will of God has not been done, but rather it establishes the fact that no man is master of his own destiny in preaching the truth. In the fulfilment of this dream and his coming to the acknowledgment of the sovereignty of God, he sets forth the same doctrine that many other sacred writers so wonderfully set forth. All of the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing. Sad picture this would be, if a poor sinner could see this, but God has hid this from the wise and prudent. It is his good pleasure to reveal it to the babes. For all the inhabitants of the earth to have this bad reputation, is, to say the least, a bad setback to any that think they are something.

Does God do as he pleases? The king said that he did according to his will in the army of heaven. We have not had any trouble about that. We are all perfectly willing to subscribe to God doing whatever seems right to him in heaven. Isn't it strange that we have him circumscribed with our narrow human limitations and declare our brethren to be fatalists, absoluters, and that they are fixing to do some low-down meanness if they say that God's will is done at all times? From the sense of right and wrong, it is a shame for brethren to fall out about a thing that is as plain one way as another. The king declared that God did His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. I think that there is a difference in the 'in' and 'among', but it is not in the sense that his will is not fully and completely carried out in both places, and that "none (in either place) can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" See Dan. 4.

"Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?" Does that measurement stand? If so, then the eternal sovereignty of God stands. Does the meting out of the heavens still stand? If so, then the sovereignty of God still stands. Has the gigantic volcanoes, storms, and all man-made disturbances, made enough dust that the comprehension of it all in a mea-

sure, failed in any sense? If so, then the sovereignty of God does not stand. Has the weighing in of the hills and mountains stood? If so, then the sovereignty of God stands. The nations are all counted as a drop of a bucket. Is that count or reckoning still in force? If so, then God is still ruler. All nations before him are as nothing. Have they all ways, and always, been before him as nothing? Has one of them, or better still, has one individual of one of them, ever been anything before him? If so, not only has the God of Israel lied, but he has forever lost his sovereignty, for if he has ever surrendered it, to whatever it was, it then and there became sovereign. (Isa. 40).

It is a precious doctrine that God does not change. How often, how often, have we been in the valley and not a ray of comfort could we see, save that promise that he does not change. He is, and always has been, and always will be, the only constant One. Jesus, the dear Lamb of God, is spoken of as being the same yesterday, today and forever. The one-mindedness of God comforted Job in his day, and every day since that day, praises have ascended on high to the One

"Who sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be,"

but is doing his will in heaven and earth and if there are any other places in all the creation of God, there also. No new, unlooked for, or unknown thing has ever arisen to cause our God to change. The situation at all times has been in hand to where it has not been necessary to change his way of doing things. If such necessity has ever arisen, the gospel ceases to be of any comfort to a poor trembling child of God. In fact, if such has ever been the case there is not any gospel for there is not any God. Now I want to look at Joseph in Egypt. God sent him down there. No less was his going into Egypt the work of God than was the coming into the world of Jesus. Both Joseph and Jesus was appointed to make each advent. In both cases the sending was of God. In each event God was sovereignly doing his will. In each event God was glorified. That the scheming, cruel treatment of his brethren was evil we all must admit. They were not doing what they did for the glory of God, nor for Joseph's good, nor for their own. The only object they had in view was the thwarting of their dreams in having to pay obeisance to Joseph. "Ye meant it for evil" tells all that they were. That 'evil' is the same evil spoken of hundreds of times in both Testaments. It does not signify anything other than sin—the same kind that all of Adam's posterity is afflicted with. The position of the church has ever been that men have nothing in mind but sin, that what is done apart and separate from the Spirit of God is sin. At no time did the God of Israel play second best to any of the powers that be that was involved in the going into and coming out of Joseph and his brethren. Had the brethren been sovereign, as they thought, the purpose of God would have been thwarted, but he was God before the thought ever entered their mind to destroy or harm Joseph; He remained God through the whole travel, coming out victorious and bringing his people out victor over everything that Egypt signifies, and even taking the evil intentions of his people, which evil he hates, and making it redound to his name being declared throughout the earth.

In connection with this sending of Joseph into Egypt I want to leave these thoughts. I have before stated that there are difficulties involved in this grand sovereignty of God. But I do not want

to be understood as saying that God has made it difficult in the written word. It is difficult even there, as is all the work of Israel's God, to the natural man. It is difficult to harmonize the sovereignty of God and him not to be the immediate cause of sin. My natural mind cannot attain to that degree of knowledge that can keep the two thoughts separated. Yet, I feel to emphatically say that the Bible teaches from Genesis to Revelation the *absolute* and *unconditional sovereignty* of Jehovah God. Not only that, but I as strongly believe that every sinner that is born again has the essence of that truth deeply impregnated in his being in such a way that all the demons in hell will never be able to erase that truth from him. But I do not want to say that God made the devil and then stooped down in sin and took his work away from him. The sovereignty of God teaches me that he made all things that are made; that they were made by him; that he was not making them for anyone save himself; that they are all from the least crawling insect or microbe to the greatest monster that is now, or has ever been on the face of the earth, serving that purpose that he made them to serve. And I want to be understood that that includes man with all that he has ever done, said or thought about; that there was not a scintilla of chance in the garden of Eden; that in all the scenes and events and times of men since then that our God has come off victor and that he has delivered his people through every trial and affliction that ever came their way (and that the trials and afflictions were as much appointed as was the deliverance); that the devil is not self-existent, but that he is a creature of God (herein alone is God's sovereignty unimpeachable), having no power of his own, but that all of it is a delegated power to him and all his followers or children; furthermore, I want to say that he uses that power delegated to him in the nth degree, but that never, no never has he ever exceeded it by a hair's breadth, for if so, that hair's breadth, was that much breaking of the sovereign will of my heavenly Father, and thus the preaching that I trust he has enabled me to do, has all been a farce and myth and lie.

In summing up this high and lofty subject, it is not my intention to have intimated that God is the author of sin. I do not have at this time any desire to lay my crimes at the feet of Jesus, nor charge them to the work of God's Spirit. I am a sinner by nature and practice. My foreparents transgressed God's law in the garden. Sin is the transgression of the law. Thus, by their transgression, sin entered into the world, and death by sin. It is stretching the imagination and adding to the Scriptures (nominally) to say that death had passed on man before he transgressed, for we have it in no uncertain terms that by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned. This 'passing of death' on all men is universal. There has never been an exception. In this dead state man is a sinner. He cannot any more refrain from sinning than the Eithiopian can change his skin. He does not, in that state, know anything else. If he ever does anything else, it will be when he is born again. That birth is the sovereign work of God. It is after this birth, and by the impelling action of the Spirit of God, that this sinner ever quits sinning. Unless kept by the grace of God, he will not do anything but sin.

In conclusion, God teaches, sovereign-

ly, irresistibly, and in all cases effectually, his children that he is God. Every minister that God calls, preaches the grace of God, when he preaches that calling. He will, when traveling in his own strength, preach other things, but he will soon be put in harness again, for a man that God calls, cannot live on such trashy preaching as the kind that gives man any glory or credit. God does not have to make a man seek his own glory—we see that clearly manifested in the cases of Jonah, Jeremiah, Peter and Paul. Jonah thought he wouldn't go, but he did; Jeremiah thought he would quit, but he didn't; Paul thought he would go to Damascus to persecute, but he went to find out what great things he had to suffer for Christ's sake; Peter thought he could be good and obedient and follow unto death, but he found out that he was not able to do anything without grace. Thus, we will, when left to ourselves, seek the weak and beggarly elements of self and vain glory, but through the given grace of God, we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. W. D. G.

"*****A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come."
Luke 19:12-13.

A sister in Alabama, who is a good writer in her own right, has asked that we give our views on the parable of "A certain nobleman," which is recorded in Luke 19:12-28. We have quoted only the two verses above, and would suggest that our readers review the account as recorded in Holy Writ.

This parable, it seems to us, is almost if not identical in meaning to the one on the Talents (Mat. 25:14-30), about which there appears to be a considerable difference of opinion among our brethren. We would, therefore, like it understood that the views we present are only our own and are given with no desire for arousing controversy. If, indeed, we have any gift for interpreting the Scriptures, we most certainly wish it to be employed by way of comforting, instructing and edifying the body of Christ, which is his church, rather than leading them into strife and confusion.

The language in the eleventh verse of this chapter would indicate that what had preceded, or gone before, was the reason for the presentation by Jesus of this parable, and to that extent it may serve as a key to the explanation, at least in part, of the parable itself. The chapter opens by stating that "Jesus entered and passed through Jericho." His purpose in so doing is made known by the work of grace wrought in the heart of Zacchaeus, who, though rich in this world's goods, and was a chief among the publicans, nevertheless, had a sincere desire to see Jesus. Being small of physical stature and knowing he would be under a handicap among the crowds which would gather when Jesus would pass by, he manifested his desire to see Jesus by climbing up into a sycamore tree, which would enable him to get a good view of Jesus when he came that way. We like that faith which moves one to act. How astonished Zacchaeus must have been when Jesus came along that he should look and see him, and then say unto him, "Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house." It is the "little ones" who are sought out by Jesus and to whom he says, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Those who heard Jesus say these things to Zacchaeus were looking for Jesus to come and reestablish the literal throne of David, and now that

he was nigh to Jerusalem they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. By way of instructing them more perfectly concerning his kingdom, which was not of this world, he spake this parable to them. He spake concerning his church here in gospel times, which would not appear in pomp and worldly glory, nevertheless his servants would zealously labor to serve him, in humbleness of mind, to the honor and glory of his great name. Therefore he said, "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come." Undoubtedly, this certain nobleman, typified Jesus Christ himself. He who forsook the climes of eternal glory, and came down into these low grounds of sorrow to suffer and redeem those chosen in him before the foundation of the world, having finished the work on earth given him by the Father, now is to return from whence he came, to be with the Father and to share the glory he had with him before ever the world was. He came in the flesh to set up his heavenly kingdom here on earth, which he was to do before returning to his Father. In order to set up this heavenly kingdom, he called certain apostles and others to work in his vineyard, supplying them with the necessary gifts for the perfecting of the saints and the edification of his church. In the parable before us, it is said "He called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come." He had a specific and complete number of servants, and their gifts being indicated in pounds showed they were all valuable and precious. His command was alike to all, "Occupy till I come." Alas, they did not all serve him with the same faithfulness and zeal, and neither do his ministers in this gospel dispensation. It appears that there has to be exceptions, as was the case when he chose the original twelve; there was a Judas Iscariot to do the work of a devil, for in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver and precious metal, but there are also vessels of earth and of wood, and hay and stubble. In the church there is not only the wheat, but there are also tares. There are some vessels to honor and some to dishonor.

How truly does the fourteenth verse portray what the attitude of the Jews, especially, was when our Lord appeared here on the earth: "His citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us." The prophet had already declared that he would come unto his own (the Jews) but they would not receive him as their true Messiah, that he would be as a root out of dry ground to them, and that there would be no beauty or comeliness in him, that they should desire him. The Gentiles, according to nature, are no better than the Jews, for the natural man, whether Jew or Gentile, cannot receive him. But God's gifts to men are without repentance, for he who is the giver of every good and every perfect gift, is without variableness or shadow of a turn. Therefore he will hold his servants accountable, and when he comes to reckon with them they shall know among other things that God is as a consuming fire, who will gather his wheat into the garner, but will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire, and none shall escape. The parable sets forth that his servants were called unto him, "that he might know how much every man had gained by trading," and the record is that the first came, saying, "Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds." He

was commended for his faithfulness and was given authority over ten cities. Then came the second servant, saying, "Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds, And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities." Let us note in passing that neither of these two servants took credit to themselves for any gain, but each said, "thy pound hath gained." When the third servant came, however, he spoke a different kind of language: he said, "Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man; thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow." He accused his Lord falsely of being cruel, unjust and hard to please. These charges, of course, showed the spirit which was actuating this servant, and his Lord said, "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds*****For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him." The late Elder John McConnell of New York City used to say that unless faith and other gifts were exercised, instead of growing and becoming enlarged, they would shrink. He would illustrate it by saying if a man's right arm was tied rigidly to his side and not used for a long time, the man would eventually lose the complete use of the arm. There is a proverb which says, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." We hope we are not given to over-emphasizing the literalness of spiritual things, therefore we would not say that the minister who pastors and serves faithfully over one church will be made the overseer or undershepherd of ten churches, for we do not believe that this is the way he is to be compensated, but rather would we say that any evidence he may have of the approbation of his Lord and Master will be reflected, some thirty, sixty or an hundred fold, by the joy and gratitude he will experience in his own heart towards his God for his manifold mercies and blessings, and those whom he serves from time to time may be given to feel and to say concerning such an undershepherd, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" The branch, or gift, that bears no fruit will sooner or later die so far as its usefulness to the church is concerned.

This parable is closed with the following quotation: "But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me. And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem." This no doubt has some special reference to the Jews of that day, who were destroyed and their house was left unto them desolate. But, according to the Scriptures, when the fulness of the Gentiles shall have come in, he will turn his hand upon his little ones among the Jews, and they shall hear his voice and shall come forth to serve him in spirit and in truth. They shall know the power of his resurrection, shall acknowledge him as their King and their Lord, and he shall in deed and in truth reign over them, and they shall be his spiritual people. Ere long when he shall have done his will in the earth as it is in heaven, the

kingdoms of this world shall be consummated and the kingdom of our God will be supreme and he shall reign for ever and ever. In that glorious celestial city, there will be no need of the sun and moon and stars to give light, for there shall be no night there. John in Revelation says, "they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever." "There shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads." Therefore, it behooves us to serve Him with all our heart, mind and soul, as best we can here in this vain world. We may rest assured that of necessity we shall be made to continually call upon Him for strength as our day, or need, shall be, and we hope by and through the riches of his grace as it is in Christ Jesus that we shall be found to be among those who have fought a good fight, kept the faith, and finished our course in an acceptable manner to him and be ready to receive that crown of righteousness which he has laid up for those for whom it is prepared in the day of His coming. And now may the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

R. L. D.

132 North Main St., Asheboro, N. C.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR EDITORS: My mother, Mrs. Thomas Lambert, passed away about sixteen years ago, May 1934. For several years I continued her subscription to the *Signs of the Times* as a sort of memorial to my beloved mother, who with my father, had read and loved the paper as long ago as I could remember. At the time I cared little for reading the paper and rather expected to discontinue it some time in the future. However, as the years have gone by I have been taught, I hope, to love the doctrine set forth in the pages of the *Signs* and would surely miss its visits if it were stopped. If not deceived I have a faint idea of what this publication meant to my dear parents in their lifetime. I hope you may continue to publish it for many years to come. Sincerely, MASSA E. LAMBERT

SPECIAL MEETING

The Delaware Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster Co., Pa. directly on Route 222, Conowingo, Md. to Lancaster, Pa., about one eighth mile north of Md.-Pa. state line, Saturday and Sunday, July 29 and 30, 1950, commencing Saturday at 10 a. m. (It is expected Daylight Time will be in effect). Ministers and brethren of our correspondence are invited to meet with us, also ministers and brethren of our faith and order not in direct correspondence with us, as well as all other believers and lovers of truth. Any who may arrive on Friday should go to Osbornia Farm on Route 222, about seven miles north of the meeting-house, and about the same distance south of Quarryville, Pa. Any planning to come by bus should write the undersigned in ample time to be met, however, there is limited service by Trailways Bus passing over Route 222 daily. We have no train service reasonably near, but any from a distance desiring to come by train may change to bus in Baltimore, Philadelphia or Lancaster, Pa. for last part of their trip.

CHARLES B. OSBORNE, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

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CORRESPONDENCE

Box 275, San Juan, Texas

I, James B. Reid, the subject of this sketch, began my career July 24, 1871. I was born in Miss. and was nine years old when my father moved to Texas in 1880. As a small boy in Miss. mother would take us to meeting, the Primitive Baptist, she being a member of the Primitive Baptist before I can remember. Father never united with the church or any order, but was a strong believer in salvation by grace. They never taught their children any kind of religion, but did try to teach us good morals. Father being a poor man we labored hard for our sustenance.

At the age of thirteen or fourteen I began to have serious doubts about my hereafter. I had never heard a Primitive Baptist preach, in spirit of course. There were Old Baptist ministers in the country, but nothing for me. I being the oldest of seventeen children very soon father looked to me as leader. We would go to Sunday School I suppose more to be with young folks than anything else, and in my boyhood days I could see nothing good in it. Father and mother did not object to our going, neither did they compel us to go. I began to have serious thoughts concerning my future condition and I really thought, as others, that I could do something pertaining to a better life, but it seemed the more I tried the worse I got. I would go to what they called the mourner's bench. I heard others say they had gotten religion, and now, as I look back over the scene, with the most of them it seemed to last only through the summer time. The preacher would say, "give your heart to Jesus," but even in my youth I did not believe that God needed anything I could give him. I believed he was the giver and not I. I could see my doom and it was sealed and I thought it just and right. I thought how could he be so good as to save one like me; I was mourning and I did not know what to do, having made every effort possible but all in vain. Once in a while I would try to read the Bible, but I did not want any one to see me reading it. Down into the pit of sin and condemnation it seemed I had gone. I did not know how to pray, but would say, Lord be merciful to me, a vile sinner, save or I perish. I hope in July 1885 the dark clouds of gloom rolled away, and O what a dear Savior had found me in that wilderness of woe and shame. Then shone all about me the brightest light that I had ever seen. It being night and I away from home my first thought was I will go home and tell mother for I did confide in her, but before I got home something within me said, hold on now you are going to deceive your dear old mother so I did not tell her. Looking back on it it seemed mother knew there had been a change in me. I went on in this condition until I was nearly twenty-two years of age.

I married one of the fair girls of the South and we raised seven children. She was taken from me in Oct. 1918.

The Lord directed me to another dear companion. I united with the Primitive Baptists fifty-five years ago. On what little I told them they took me in, and it seemed when I came up out of the water I left something behind. I felt to be the happiest mortal in the world, I said, "now my trials are all over." Dear friends, it was then I wanted to be as good as I saw my brethren, and I had not been a member very long until something else came my way, yes, worse than the first, and that was to try and tell what great things the dear Lord had done for me and all the blessed people of God. Yes, I thought then if I could just tell it like they did I would never quit. I was so wearied I could hardly sleep at night and even lost my appetite. Could not eat and my wife would ask me what was the matter and I would tell her a falsehood, saying there was nothing wrong with me. I was then twenty-eight years old and I said, "Lord I will never preach, I said Lord I know you can kill me but you cannot make me preach." I read in the Bible where he made the dumb beast speak with man's voice and forbade the madness of the prophet. I then said, "Lord if you can make the dumb beast talk you can make a poor sinner man talk" and this coming July fifty years ago I made my first attempt before an intelligent congregation of people. I remember the first text I used on Sunday at our regular meeting. It was the language of David, "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?"

Dear friends, I got up and forgot myself for awhile, but when I came to myself I saw the people all over the house shedding tears so I said when I left the house "I'll never do that again." I thought the people were sorry for me and were pitying me and were crying. Just one month from that I was just as anxious, if not more so, to go back to the meeting again and that day they liberated me to preach against my will. Not long after that they ordained me and now I thought I knew they had made a mistake. Dear brethren, I know if the Lord don't keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain, and in my tottering condition I look back on my past and say my days have been few and evil, and we will soon have to go hence, but I do hope I can say with Paul, "I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God." Paul said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." I hope and believe I have contended for the doctrine of God our Savior. Dear friends, I have told more falsehoods about preaching than everything else put together. I would say I was through, I did not intend to go any more, but the old prophet Jeremiah said about the same thing. He said, "I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His name," but later he said, "His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with foreboding, and I could not stay." Many have been the times when I would leave my wife and children to do the work at home and I would go to my regular appointments to meet with those that I love, and try to comfort some one; but, dear friends, it was sometimes a hard go with me financially, but I have been blessed beyond my comprehension. In looking back over my past experience my blunders and my short comings it looks like I could have done better than I have, but it has been one continual blunder.

I will go back to my young ministry if I dare call it that. I got very rebellious. I was determined that I would quit trying to preach; I would leave the country and go where I was not known; I would leave these Old Baptists and forget it. I chartered a car and moved to the north plains of Texas. The first thing I knew I had met the same kind of folks spiritually that I had left. I stayed one year and came back to North Central Texas and yet I was not satisfied. I made another trip to west Texas, thinking to get away where no one would ever find me. I lost all I had except my wife and children. I drove to the little city of Childress, Tex. I walked up the street and saw two men about fifteen feet away from me talking, one of them seemed to be very highly wrought up and was a Campbellite. I walked to within six feet of them not saying anything at the time. Very soon this Campbellite said he did not want to talk to a man like that and left. I stepped up to the man that was left and asked him, "Do you believe what you were telling that man?" He said, "I most certainly do." Then I asked him, "Are there any more of your kind here?" He said, "Yes, there are a few of us scattered around. We have a church about twenty miles from here, down on Peas River." He told me his name but it is so long I have forgotten it. I told him my name and he said, "Our preacher will be here in a few minutes and I would like you to meet him." He came, we were introduced, and it was dear old Elder Harris, Elder W. N. Green's father-in-law. Elder Harris said, "Next Saturday and Sunday are our meeting days and asked me to go with him about twenty miles ride in a wagon." They had found out some way that I had tried to preach. Again the Lord had followed me. I found out that I could not hide from an all seeing God. Like Jonah I was thrown overboard, I was found out. Again I moved back to North Central Texas, and now it came to me, go preach that preaching that I bid thee. But, O Lord, I am still too ignorant and unlearned. I found the same God was ruling there, and now realized that God was everywhere present and nowhere absent, the same God yesterday, to-day and forever; "He is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." I had made two long trips to try to get out of preaching, but when I returned home the second time I said, "I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord."

Now dear friends, you that chance to read this can see just a part of my travels, and many times in my career I was like those two kines (or cows) that had the yoke upon their necks which I understand to be a yoke of duty. They left their calves at home shut up, carrying the ark along the highway which we understand is a type (or a figure) of the duty upon the new cart, and they went lowing. Yes, it is typical of the poor, old preacher mourning, and he does not know when he gets there what he is there for, but sometimes we hope that it pleases the Lord to stop the ark in Beulah Land which we sometimes understand to be the proclamation of the gospel which is glad tidings to the beloved children or God. We never know whether it is of the Lord or no, we only hope he has directed our steps and so far he has made a way for our escape. A few more days on earth to spend and all troubles and sorrows will end, and we only hope to be carried where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary will be at rest. We are now living in a house our good son-in-law built

for us on his lot in San Juan, Texas. He is so good to us, treating us like we were his own mother and father for which I hope we are thankful to the giver of every good and perfect gift. Many things have been left out but we will bid you all farewell for now. Your unworthy brother.

(Elder) JAMES B. REID

"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen. 2:17.

Note what strong language this is "thou shalt surely die." Did he eat and did he die? Yes it was a sure thing. He died the death that the Lord said he would, and that death was in sin, for you who were dead in trespasses and in sins hath he quickened and made alive. This proves that they were dead or they could not be quickened and made alive. Let us notice why they were made alive, because the Lamb of God stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, slain for sin. Yes, before sin entered into the world for sin entered into the world by man and man was not created at that time; he was created out of the dust of the ground, and a very little portion of the dust it took to make him, but there was enough taken to make man and he was created male and female both, so it took both to constitute man. God's work is a complete work for salvation is of the Lord. The Lord is our salvation for we are his chosen people. Yes, chosen in him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blame before him in love. God is love, and he is holy, so it was necessary for the Lamb of God to be slain for sin, for by man sin entered into the world and it is by the slain Lamb of God that we are saved from sin, for the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin. It was needful for Christ to come and be slain for salvation is of the Lord. Neither is there salvation in any other, and there is no other name given under heaven whereby we must be saved. Notice how strong this language is, we *must* be saved by Him. No may be about it, it *must* be for on the day that Adam ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he died, and the dead are in a helpless condition until they are quickened and made alive, then he acts from life.

Let us find out what life is. This life is not natural but spiritual, and it is the Lord Jesus Christ himself for Christ is our life, when he shall appear, ye shall also appear with him in glory. So then he is our life, and when he appears in glory we also shall be with him as Adam and Eve. They were one and when Adam was manifested she was with him, yes, in him and he was her life for He took the rib to make her, and to manifest his work it must be that way for he created Adam male and female both and she shall be called woman. This is a wonderful work, a glorious work which the Lord shall work in your day which ye shall in no wise believe though a man declare it unto you. This address is made to those unbelievers because my sheep shall hear my voice and they shall never perish. Salvation is of the Lord and God is our salvation and there is no other.

When Jesus came to the sycamore tree he commanded Zacchaeus to come down and said, "This day is salvation come to this house." Why has it come to thy house? Because thou art the son of Abraham. Yes, salvation has come to thy house for as much as thou art a son of Abraham, and the promise was made to Abraham and his seed, and I am the seed of the woman who shall bruise the serpents head and de-

stroy the works of the devil. See him in the garden beguiling Eve, that was why he (Christ) stood as a Lamb already slain. O what a glorious work this is. "I must work the works of him that sent me." I am thy salvation, I have come at the accepted time, today is the day of salvation. I am thy salvation, I have come and it will abide with you for-as-much as thou art a son of Abraham. So one salvation for time and eternity for Simeon only saw one babe in the temple and he said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation." It is not conditional on our part for when the Lord carried Ezekel out and set him down in the open valley, and showed him those dry bones, he said they represented the whole house of Israel, the household of faith, they said for our part we are cut off and our hopes are lost. Yes, by the law they were cut off and their hopes were lost, but God performed his whole work upon them and they stood upon their feet. Yes, Jesus feet must stand upon the mount of Olives for he is their life and salvation. Some claim we can so live and get blessings by our obedience when the carnal mind is at enmity against God and not subject to the law, nor indeed can be. How can they expect to please him? It is impossible. Then by one man's obedience we are made righteous, and not by the obedience of many that will not work or sin. As I have said it is not by the obedience of many but by the obedience of one man, and that man was and is Jesus Christ himself. Go ye out to meet him, yes, ye virgins, go ye out to meet him! The wise did and went in with him before the door was closed. I set before you an open door, and I have commanded you to run that you may obtain the prize, not to gain eternal life, nor perform conditions in order to get some special blessing, but to obtain the prize or crown for it lies at the end of the race. Christ Jesus obtained eternal life for you on the cross when he cried out it is finished. Back to the foolish virgins. They did not obtain. Why did they not obtain? They did not win in the race. They went off to buy oil and did not go to Jesus to buy the truth. Oh no, they went to buy oil for their lamps for they were gone out already before the wise went in, and they went in at the appointed time. Just as the bridegroom came they were ready as the bride John saw coming down from God out of heaven. Yes, prepared to meet her husband for she is the king's daughter, the only one of her mother, and she is wise and not foolish. It is the wise that shall understand, and their lamps that burneth and do not go out for the candle of the wicked shall be put out, but the wise shall understand for it is given to the little flock and hid to the wise and prudent of this world because it seemed good in the Father's sight. We have no right to say why doest this or the other, it seemed good in His sight and is good for he cannot sin nor be tempted with evil like men. It is impossible for man to run the race for the children of Israel had to stand still before they even saw God's salvation, and were commanded to hold their peace, be still and see the salvation of the Lord. Not your salvation but the salvation of the Lord. Not two salvations, but the salvation of the Lord for there is no other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved. Not may be saved but must be saved. Nor is there salvation in any other. Then let us consider how could the children of Israel go through the Red Sea until God opened the way to them. The false teachers and false prophets are like

foxes in the deserts. They do not bring up the children of God by the gaps but want to climb up some other way. The gap was opened up in the Red Sea for the children of Israel to go through, and then they were led through by the pillar of fire and cloud not by the horse and its rider, Pharaoh and his people. No not at all. Here is the salvation of the Lord, the only salvation. The wise virgins were admitted to heaven before the door was shut, so the children of God got through before the door was shut, but Pharaoh did not. See the difference between the children of God and other people for the kingdom was not prepared for any other people. Not left for any other people, but prepared for them before the foundation of the world. For those on the left hand their place was prepared for the devil and his angels, so you see there were two places prepared and the most high God knew what he was doing when he prepared them and who would occupy them, so the gulf cannot be crossed over either way, yet people will talk about free moral agents and claim that man can choose which place he wants to go when it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. God has said the steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord, and what God does is done forever. Nothing can be added to it or taken from it. Yours in hope.

(Elder) JAMES W. LINN

Hopewell Road,
Fairmont, W. Va.

Route 1, Campbellsburg, Ky.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I have been wanting to thank you for a book you sent me some time ago which I enjoyed very much. Although I did not understand it all as I should, I understood as much as the Lord would reveal to me. I am not a member of the Old Baptists but have believed in them for several years. I hope as I grow older that God will move his hand from time to time and let in more light for a sinner like me.

I would like to pen a few thoughts upon the building of Solomon's temple. "The Lord spake unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build an house unto my name." "The nethermost chamber was five cubits broad, and the middle was six cubits broad, and the third was seven cubits broad." This house was contrary to nature for the chambers got larger all the way up, but are not the things of the Lord contrary to nature? The house was built of stone; they went to the mountain to get these stones to build the temple, but they were already hewn; made ready by the Lord for the temple that Solomon should build. They were not hewn by natural hands, they were all ready before they were brought thither; they were hewn from the foundation of the world. The chief corner-stone of this temple was Jesus Christ. Yes, he is the chief corner-stone, the brace and strength of the temple; he is the shepherd over the other stones that are hewn and placed in the temple. God will watch over them. The people of the world to-day are still trying to build it with their good works, but it is already built with stones made ready before they were brought thither; and these stones are the chosen people of God. Every stone was cut to fit. In this house he made windows and narrow lights, and against the walls he built chambers round about against the walls of the house round about, both of the temple and of the oracle. The first chamber mentions no door. The only way one can get into this chamber is to be born into it. There is a door in the middle chamber, but man cannot enter it without the will of God. If he could that would be salvation by

man, but it has to be opened by the Lord or by the grace of God. That is the way it is with us, we cannot do anything of ourselves. We had no control over our first birth, neither do we have any control over the second. "There was neither hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building." It was built by the Master's hand and he needed no ax, tool or hammer. He built the world and all therein and saw the beginning and the end. God had everything fixed, then why should man think he has control over his own salvation? The second chamber had winding stairs leading into it and on out into the third chamber. Are we not traveling those winding stairs as we go through life, and are they not hard to climb? We would fall again and again if He did not gently lead us, but he is hiding in the secret part of the stairs. Yes, he is hiding there and will not let us fall. He will lift you out of the miry clay, place your feet upon a solid rock, the rock of salvation. He will put a new song in your mouth. He will do it all, man cannot do anything. We are the clay, he is the Potter having power over the clay to form it as he sees fit. Can he not make one vessel to honor and the other to dishonor? Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated, neither doing anything to cause this love or hate. One was a chosen one the other was not. The love of the Father to his chosen ones is an unchangeable love, none can pluck them out of his hand; his chosen cannot totally and finally fall away. Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Neither can hell prevail against the Father's electing love which runs parallel with eternity. He has loved his people with an everlasting love from before the foundation of the world. "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Did he not raise up Pharaoh that he might show his power in him? Then did he not harden him so that he would not let the people go? Did he not find Jacob in a waste, howling wilderness, and in a desert land these two being contrary to nature? If he finds you, or me or any one to-day it will be in that wilderness of sin. You do not look for him but he will look for you, and when that still, small voice comes to you then you have a fear and trembling. When he finds you he will not do as the Arminian says he does with Old Baptists, "grab them and drag them in." No, that is not the way, He gets hold of the heart strings and gently leads you in. Grace, at times, may seem to be lost to a child of God, but not so; once in grace always in grace. You are either in or out. The sun may be behind a cloud, yet it will regain its former luster; the trees may lose their leaves in winter yet they shall come forth in the spring; you may be in the valley to-day and on the mountain tomorrow. God does not always seem to strive with man, he may be with you to-day and yet seem so far away tomorrow, but he is there. That unseen hand is there holding you up, and without it you would surely fall. Yes, he is your all in all, yet many times he has lashed and beaten us with many stripes, but we have never learned to perform that which is good. "When I would do good, evil is present with me." "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the

flesh." It was this truth that made Paul cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death."

The only one that can deliver is Jesus who "hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up that God's elect might be saved. Yes, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" "Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Yes, even Satan has no power except what the Lord gives him. Satan had no power over Job for God had built a hedge about him, and about his house, and about what he had on every side; but the fence was let down that the devil might tempt Job. God told Satan that Job was in his hands, but to spare his life. God was telling him how far he could go and that he could go no farther. Job was tempted in many ways and was made to suffer, but he came through it all for God was with him. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen," "the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." This is the path of the just, that shining path. The redeemed walk there as they return to Zion. Though there be much sighing there is also singing, because the Lord leads them. Therefore, the righteous shall hold on his way, and though the way seems very narrow at times again it is indeed a place of broad rivers and streams to the poor saints who flow together to the goodness of the Lord; to the place where the hand of the Lord rests; where he himself feeds the flock and carries the lambs in his bosom, and leads gently the heavy laden souls; but the poor trembling sinner feels the thunder of mount Sinai in his soul which makes him fear and tremble. He felt himself sinking into the miry clay, and horrible pit of guilt and condemnation; he sighed, groaned mightily for help and the Lord heard his cry, and lifted him out of the miry clay, and set his feet upon a solid rock, and established his goings. I have made this too long but it was hard to find a stopping place. Your unworthy friend.

PAUL G. CHILTON

(While reading the foregoing letter the language of Laban to Abraham's servant, who was sent to seek a bride for Isaac, came into our mind: "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without?" We truly hope that our friend will be given to adopt the language of Abraham's servant: "Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren," and then go home to his friends and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for him, whereof he is glad. R. L. D.)

EXPERIENCE

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

I feel impressed in my feeble and stammering way to write my experience of grace, if indeed I have one, not knowing if it will benefit anyone or not. I am one, if not deceived, that believes in an all wise God. A God who is able to work all things after the counsel of his own will. I do not understand that he needs the help of poor, mortal man to accomplish the things that he designed before the world was. I do not believe there is anything that has happened or will happen that he did not design back in eternity; if I understand it the things he did design are only being fulfilled. I am one of those sinners, I hope and trust, whose name was written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world. One I hope He had under consideration when he said, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Thus I find myself crying out in dark hours of sorrow for that grace, realizing that in me there is nothing good and without him I can do nothing.

My road of travels has been no smooth one, but all we are promised is trials and afflictions, but then he tells us about that grace being sufficient. I have had short seasons of rejoicing, caught up on a hilltop so to speak, and think upon the wonderful works of our Lord and Savior to sing the songs of Zion. Then comes the time when I am in that low valley of mourning, seeing myself too sinful to even utter the name of that just and holy One. As I sit here and my mind wanders back to the time when I first obtained a hope, if such can be for one as vile as I see myself, I wonder if anyone else is like me. I saw myself in such a sinful state that it seemed no one else could be as such. I decided I was the vilest person that God ever permitted to breathe the pure air. I found myself trying to find some little something to justify me but it just was not there to be found. I wanted to talk to some one about my condition, I felt if I did not get some relief my burdened soul was doomed. I talked with others and to my amazement I found that they, too, had similar experiences and it gave me some relief.

At this time there was no Pastor at Good Hope but it seemed imperative that I hear some one preach. It was time for the Association to meet at Providence. We made plans to go and if this poor sinful creature is not deceived I feasted upon some of the glorious truths of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. One precious old brother arose to deliver his sermon and told of some of his travels, and when I noticed myself tears were streaming down my cheeks because he related some of this poor trembling soul's actual experiences. I could see the great God in heaven, his power and his glory, and O what a beautiful sight it was. I wondered if it could be possible that I am one of his little ones that we read about in his Word.

Dear children of grace, I find myself fearing daily the same thing this song suggests:

> "If I love, why am I thus?
> Why this dull and lifeless frame,
> Hardly sure can they be worse,
> Who have never heard his name."

Then this passage of scripture gave me consolation, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye

comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." When I realize that though my sins be as scarlet, He hath paid double for all, I get peace and satisfaction from such passages of scripture. I do not know whether this has been the experience of any who will read this, but when we are called to lie down in death may it be that a warfare be accomplished and be well with us all is my earnest prayer. May the grace of God be with you all. Your little sister in the hope of mercy.

(Mrs.) GERTRUDE RHOADES
Route 1, Scroggins, Tex.

Martinsville, Va.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Unworthy though I feel I have long been impressed to tell the brothers and sisters of the love and esteem I have for them, and how I have yearned to be with them. My health has been poor for over twenty years, having bronchitis and other complications. Before I quit attending church I coughed so much I felt that I disturbed others, and my condition seemed to get worse whenever I went anywhere.

In August 1946 I had pneumonia and I have been almost an invalid ever since. I have already suffered a hundred times more than I thought I could endure, and I cannot tell how much more I will have to bear. I sometimes think my lot has been harder than any others and then I think of those who have been lame or blind from birth. I have had a few short seasons to enjoy along with much trouble, but I think a few pleasures enable us to bear our burdens better.

My mother united with the Primitive Baptist church before I was born, and from my earliest recollection I had the greatest respect for them, and wished that I could be with them. When a young girl I wanted to enjoy myself like other young people but I wanted to be good, but well I know now that I never did anything good. After my health became so bad I began to be troubled. I would often ask myself what would become of me and I would try to pray for mercy not justice. About sixteen years ago I retired one night feeling very despondent. I fell asleep and dreamed that I heard the song "When I can read my title clear," and the chorus "I want to live a Christian here," etc. When I awoke I was so happy I sat up in bed awhile, then I laid down hoping that I might hear it again, but I did not. In a short time I became troubled again. I tried to pray but it did no good. I fell across my bed on my face and when I arose I was trying to sing, "How firm a foundation." The light shone around me again for awhile.

About two years ago I had coughed until I thought I was almost gone when the words "Cast down but not destroyed" came to me as plainly as I ever heard anything. I do not know whether I have an experience of grace or not, but for some reason I cannot forget those little dreams and visions. I wanted to offer myself to the church but just kept putting it off. In December Elder D. P. Helms, the pastor of Red Creek Church visited me and I related to him part of what I have written here. The second Saturday in January this year he repeated it to the church and I was received into the Red Creek Church but I have never been able to be baptized. I feel that it would be the happiest time of my life if I could be baptized, go to church, hear the preaching and singing and shake hands with the members. I think extending the right hand

of fellowship is the sweetest part of worship.

"I seldom find a heart to pray,
So many things come in my way;
Thus filled with doubts, I ask to know—
Come, tell me, is it thus with you?"

Your unworthy sister if one at all.

(Mrs.) HARRY R. STONE

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

We are finding it very difficult to maintain our mailing list up to the point greatly to be desired. Our paper being over an hundred years old, we have to expect a heavy death rate among our subscribers, but we believe if our readers will be on the alert for NEW subscribers they can help us more than offset our losses.

We would again remind our Ministering brethren of our offer to pay them $1. for each NEW subscription, for one year or more, they send us. We know many of them highly endorse the Signs of the Times, and if they will but make mention of the paper in their travels among their brethren and friends, a certain amount of new subscriptions will be obtained.

To other than Ministers we are offering FREE one copy of FRAGMENTS, a very excellent book containing a large selection of articles by the late Elder Silas H. Durand, with 2 NEW subscriptions, or either one of the following books, JONES-RHODES debate, Elder Milford Hall's TWO WORLDS, or SHOWERS OF RAIN, containing the experience and many poems by our late Sister Flossie I. Faulkner with each single subscription for one year.

On the average it costs only twenty-five cents (one quarter) each month to have this excellent paper come into your home. From now until November many of you will be attending Associations, Union and other meetings, and you will be meeting many brethren and friends who should be taking the SIGNS. If you will tell them about the paper some of them will subscribe for it, and thus you will help to enlarge our circle of readers.

R. LESTER DODSON

Box 5, Bassett, Va.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: As my subscription is expiring I am enclosing remittance for two years. I do not want to miss a single copy. I enjoy reading the good experiences. Many of the letters and correspondence are equal to hearing a good sermon. They tell my own experience better than I can myself. At times they seem to renew my feelings and cause a new love to spring up in me that makes me rejoice. May you be blessed to keep sending out the good paper for many years to come. Please throw the mantle of charity over this writing. I am old and my sight is bad. Yours in humble hope of a better world.

((Mrs.) BETTIE BRYANT

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

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This is an interesting book of 155 pages by Elder R. W. Rhodes, Lillie, La. You may obtain it for $1 direct from Elder Rhodes, or free for one new subscriber to the Signs of the Times, Inc., Box 70, Rutherford, N. J.

CHANGE OF DATE

The date of the Union Meeting in the Lost Creek Association to be held with the Liberty Grove Church (better known as Flat Woods) has been changed from the fourth to the fifth Sunday in July and Friday and Saturday before. July 28, 29 and 30, 1950. 2 miles south of Nauvoo, Ala.

DAVID HYATT

Rt. 5, Box 304, Jasper, Ala.

EDITORIALS

RUTHERFORD, N. J. JULY, 1950

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"Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us." Isa. 26:12.

I do not suppose there is anything I can say about this subject that some one has not already said, but this is true of any subject, especially the subject of works. Each time we speak or write, regardless of the subject, we say something about works of the flesh, or the works of the spirit.

This chapter seems to be a song of praise in which thanksgivings for temporal and spiritual mercies are beautifully mingled, though the latter predominate. The church expresses its gratitude for the protection vouchsafed by God to his people. God fought the battles of national Israel, and gave them deliverance from their enemies, so he fights to-day the battle of spiritual Israel. In order that a workman produce a finished product it is not only necessary that he be a good workman, but he must have good material with which to work. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." The works under consideration are not the works of the flesh, but are the works which are wrought in us. Therefore, Jesus said to Nichodemus, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." Since these works are in us and not of us, there must be some one within that is not dead to these works. This man is referred to in Luke 11:22 as the stronger which has entered the house, and set up his own order. "Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting:****he drove them all out of the temple,****and poured out the changer's money, and overthrew the tables." "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you?" The work that Jesus did in driving the moneychangers out of the temple, is a type of the work he performs when he enters our bodies.

The first thing we do when we move into an old house is to clean out all the filth and dust before we set the furniture in place; so when Jesus goes into a house he cleans out everything that is unwholesome and implants a new heart. He will not work in a dirty house. He removes all our self-righteousness, all our good works which are nothing more than filthy rags. He takes away the stony heart and gives a heart of flesh which is capable of feeling. The apostle Paul said to the Philippians, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

What are these works which God has wrought in us? The first thing he works in us is the consciousness of our guilt before the eyes of him with whom we

have to do. It is necessary to see the wound before we feel the need of the healing balm to mitigate the pain. Ephraim said, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up." All this is the work of God. Man will never feel the need of repentance, or the work of grace in his heart until he hears the sentence pronounced upon him as Hezekiah heard. When Israel came unto him, and said unto him, "Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die and not live." That which made the message so impressive to Hezekiah was that the prophet said, "thus saith the Lord." This was the message of God and the word of God to Hezekiah, and it had its effect. It wrought repentance in his heart, and he turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto God. Then there was another message sent to Hezekiah which said, "I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears,**** I will add unto thy days fifteen years." It is good to have the spirit of prayer, but how much greater it is to feel that God has heard and answered your prayer. All this God did without any change of mind, but being a good workman he knew how to work conviction in Hezekiah.

When John saw many Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism he said unto them, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." God had not worked repentance in the hearts of all these people, therefore John would not baptize them without seeing some evidence of the work of God in them. Genuine conviction of sin lies at the root of vital godliness, for the whole need not a physician, but those that that are sick. Conviction and repentance never cease in the new man that is created in righteousness and true holiness. Where there is repentance there is confession; where there is confession there is forgiveness; this is in keeping with the promise, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrigheousness." Jesus sent his disciples out to preach repentance, but he did not send them out to work repentance. He sent them out to preach the gospel, but he did not send them out to apply the gospel. This is the work of the spirit. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Acts. 5:31.

Faith is also the work of God, for without it it is impossible to please God. One might gather some kind of belief in God, and him whom he has sent by reading the Bible, or by hearing preaching, but Webster says that belief, as a rule, suggests little more than intellectual assent. Faith implies also trust or confidence; as one in whom persuasion and belief has ripened into faith. Faith cometh by hearing, that is, by understanding. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" that is, let him understand. We may, by reading the word of God, believe in it with the mind without any understanding of its teaching. With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, but the preparation of the heart is of the Lord. "And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." There is a lot of difference in historical faith, and the faith by which we are justified. Every promise of God to his people must be received by faith. Those of

the army of Gideon who lapped putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men; but all the rest of the people bowed down their knees to drink. The hand from which they lapped water represents the hand of faith by which the people of God drink of the water of life, and receive the food that God has prepared for his people.

Fear is another work of God. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and is a new covenant blessing. "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." God works in the heart, or on the inside where man cannot work. It seems to me that there are more people fearing the devil, than those who fear God. If they have any mind to do good it is just because they fear the devil, and not God. This is a slavish fear, and not the filial fear by which the people of God fear him, serve him and obey him. Those in whose heart God has worked have no fear of the devil, but love God because he has shed abroad his love in their hearts. But man is a worshipping creature, and in his nature will worship anything but God. "What profiteth the graven image that the maker thereof hath graven it; the molten image, and a teacher of lies, that the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make dumb idols?" Paul said, "We know that an idol is nothing in the world." It is just an image representing some false thing, made or used as an object of worship. Man is such a worker that he will set up some image upon which he can bestow his love and affection. "Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it." Hab. 2:19. "Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake;" that is to the dumb idol, something that has no breath in it to arise into action, that which is dead to awake, and to save. All our forms of worship, all our good deeds, and all our conversations be ever so polished that they shine as gold and silver, but mind you "every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." Many seem to rest in perfect complacency after having attended Sunday School or church, knowing nothing of the great load of dead works that rest upon their conscience. And this is not known until God works and applies the blood of Christ which will purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God. Jesus said "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works, And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." All the works that man may do before he has an experimental knowledge of the grace of God are dead works. There is no breath or life in them. His reading of the Bible is dead reading, his going to church is a dead service, and if he tries to pray when he gets there, his prayer, all his efforts to serve God are dead if his conscience has not been purged from dead works. But the mercy of God is on them that fear him from generation to generation.

The only way we know anything of the work that God has wrought in the hearts of his people, is by the manifestation of that work. I am asked why I do not preach duty and good works, how could I know what the duty of the other fellow is? God has not wrought the work and duty of some one else in

me, but has wrought our works in us. The Spirit does not use a middleman to convey its work in us, but it takes of the things of his and shows them to us. I have thought that we as individuals and also the church have misjudged the work of God and the gift of God in the hearts of some. I feel that I have seen men that would have made good deacons ruined by placing them in the pulpit. There is the gift of exhortation; this gift is often put in the pulpit to preach when it should have been left on the floor. James tells us, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." May God make us able discerners of spirits that we may not mistake his gift or misjudge his work. Many things were decided in olden times by casting lots, and the term was used to decide a controversy. As an example, the disciples were much concerned about one to take the place of Judas, and they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. They gave forth their lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles. But God never wrought the work of apostleship in Matthias for we have no evidence of that work. When the time came to fill this vacancy God did it of his own choosing. The one that was to make up the twelve apostles was on his way to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief Priest, who "saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee." Paul said, "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood."

It is obvious that this man was to make up the twelve apostles because of the work that he did. When an exhortative gift is put in the pulpit it will cause the bleating of the sheep, and the lowing of the oxen. "Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord. And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" A few years ago there was a lot of complaint about so much exhortation from the pulpit. The trouble was not with the gift, but the gift was trying to function in the wrong place. When the sheep get hungry they will let you know it, they will begin to complain that the food has no nutriment in it. After God rejected Saul from reigning over Israel, he said to Samuel, "fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Beth-lehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons." "Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel, and Samuel said unto Jesse, the Lord hath not chosen these. And Samuel said unto Jesse, are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we wlll not sit down till he come hither." And they brought

David in. "And the Lord said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he." The elders of Israel chose Saul, but God chose David. "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." God will not repent of any gift that he bestows except in the way of support. He will not support and bless one in a work for which he has not qualified him. He will not bless an exhorter who has settled as pastor to govern and feed the church for this is not his work. But he has invested in others that high ministerial gift whereby they are able to edify the church which he has purchased with his own blood. May we all seek to know what our work is and how to perform it.

The church under the legal dispensation was a type of the church under the gospel. Whatever desolations the Lord brought on the nations around her, she felt that he would ordain peace for her. The Lord had often made her to triumph over her enemies, and rendered her endeavors successful. She had indeed often been subjected to other lords, who not only enslaved her, but usurped authority over her. Because of the former blessings which had been so abundantly bestowed upon her, she felt that one day when the battle is over the Lord would give her peace. "The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace." Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." How comforting these words should be to the household of faith. I feel to conclude with the words of Paul to the Philippians, "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Phil. 4:7-8.

H. O. N.

THE SON OF DAVID

One of our readers in Maryland, who says she is not "one of the dear people," but enjoys the many good things they write, has asked that we explain, "Why Jesus was called the son of David." We think she gives excellent evidence of being one of the Lord's little ones, and we hope she will get some satisfaction out of what we may say on the subject.

Matthew begins his record of the gospel with the earthly genealogy of Christ by calling it, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." We understand this to be our Lord's lineage according to the flesh. It is in this chapter that we find the declaration of the angel to Joseph, "fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." Matt. 1:20-21. Luke gives us this account: "And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David." In the second chapter of Luke's record we find these words: "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shown round about them: and they were sore

afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." These declarations of sacred truth establish the fact, we think, that JESUS means SAVIOR. The prophets had testified before hand to the effect that God would manifest himself in the flesh. The Psalmist said, "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Therefore his own arm had to bring salvation, and there is no salvation in any other. It should be noted that in Matthew's record of the lineage of Jesus there were sinners guilty of various and sundry types of sin, including Ruth, the Moabitish woman, and Rahab, the harlot, as well as David, Solomon and others. This should encourage us to hope that the efficacy of the blood of the dear Redeemer dying Lamb will never lose its power, "Till all the ransomed church of God be saved to sin no more." The most important question of all with us is are our names written in the Lamb's Book of Life?

Under the law Jesus was portrayed in many wonderful and beautiful types and shadows. We think Joseph's being sold into Egypt by his brethren because of the evil intent of their heart is one of the outstanding portrayals. The sufferings of Christ were truly typified by Joseph, and the manner in which God unfolded his purpose in sending him ahead of his brethren and prospering him with the wisdom for the storing up for their needs, that much people should be saved alive, beautifully presents to our mind the purpose of God in sending his only begotton Son into the world to suffer, bleed and die, and rise again for the redemption and sanctification of his brethren, who according to nature were his enemies. Jesus was, indeed, the good Shepherd, who gave his life for the sheep, and he still provides for all their needs. He appeared in the fiery furnace when old king Nebuchadnezzar thought to destroy the faith of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego by having them cast into a furnace heated seven times hot. He was so astonished and amazed at what he saw that he said to his counsellors, "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." God's faithfulness towards his people never fails.

Another very picturesque type in the Bible, which we feel is apropos to our present subject, is found in Ezekiel 17: 22-23: "Thus saith the Lord God; I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent: In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell." We can think of no greater or more glorious type of our Lord than this. We understand the highest branch of the high cedar to signify David who was of the tribe of Judah, and the young twigs represented his house, and this tender one who according to the flesh was the son of David was also the Son of God, and it was he who was cropped, or

crucified and exalted at the right hand of the Majesty on high, or planted upon a mountain and eminent. This tender one brought forth boughs, and has borne fruit, and is indeed the most goodly of all cedars; and under his shadow are dwelling in the secret place of the Lord his people among all nations. Peter, on the day when Pentecost was fully come, said to those there assembled, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." Paul said, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" This was he of whom Isaiah spake, saying, "For unto us a child is born, unto is a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever." When His side was pierced and there came forth water and blood, the prophecy of Daniel that a fountain for sin and for uncleaness would be opened to the house of David was fulfilled. The prophesies contained in the Old Testament scriptures have been sealed by their fulfillment in the New Testament declarations. Jesus, himself, confounded the Pharisees by asking them, "What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then called him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions." Mat. 22:42-46. Jesus also said, "I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." Rev. 22:16. Jesus was both verily God and verily man. John said, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." Later on in the same chapter he says, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth," He was God before he was man. The record is, "When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were

with the sons of men," Prov. 8:27-31. Paul, writing to the church at Philippi, said, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in the fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Paul ,in his epistle to the Hebrews, said, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."

We particularly like the words of Jesus where he said, "I am the root and the offspring of David," as we feel they set forth a glorious truth. All that David could lay claim to in a spirtual way was because of Jesus being the root from which it all sprang. He, indeed, is the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He is the vine and we are the branches, and without him we are nothing and can do nothing. We are made to hope that we are new creatures in Christ, and if so, we too are both human and divine, and we may rest assured that nothing shall ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is in him. Paul said, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together," That inheritance is incorruptible, undefiled and shall never fade away. This is that treasure which neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and it is laid up where thieves cannot break through and steal. How glad we are that it does not depend upon us to obtain or retain it through our own efforts, but Peter said it is "reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."

We have quoted a considerable amount of scripture, and while it may well be said that quoting scripture is not preaching, nor is it necessarily explaining or expounding the word of God, we hope we have been blessed to do more than simply quote scrip-

ture. We are convinced of the fact that when the scriptures are rightly used, they are their own best interpreters, and as far as possible we like to clothe our thoughts in scriptural language. We have been dealing with the most wonderful and extraordinary event of all time: the incarnation of the Son of God, and we do not feel that we can conclude this article without quoting the great apostle, Paul, to his son in the ministry, Timothy, where he said: "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." I Tim. 3:16: Indeed, no greater mystery ever engaged the thought of mankind than this, that God was verily manifested in the flesh; he was justified in the Spirit; by faith he has been seen of angels, those whom God has called and qualified to preach him as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and this same God has sent forth his Spirit into the hearts of his people, causing them to believe on him in the pardon of their sins. Lastly, he has been received up into glory, where ere long he will call all of his redeemed ones unto himself, and they shall see him as he is, and be like him, and be satisfied. In that world that shall have no end, but shall endure on and on after all earthly thrones and kingdoms shall fall and crumble back to dust from whence they came, his loved ones shall join in songs of everlasting praise to Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and Christ shall be their song. May all glory be to his most holy and adorable name! Amen. R. L. D.

MEMORIALS

WHEREAS, it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from this life our dear sister in Christ, MRS. PRUDENCE ANNE HARRIS, of Dallas, Texas, having in his mercy and love fulfilled the sweet and comforting promise of Jesus to his disciples, If I go away, I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am there you may be also, and

WHEREAS, Sister Harris was a strong believer in the doctrine of God our Savior, and a faithful attendant at her church, showing her faith by her works and so strengthening others, which makes us feel that the church has lost a faithful member but believing it is all to her gain; that she has entered into eternal rest and will forever be with the Lord. Therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we bow in humble submission to the Lord's will who doeth all things for the best, hoping to meet her in the home above where sorrow never comes.

Mrs. Harris was born in Hopkins Co., Texas, in the year of our Lord 1869. She departed from this life Jan. 13, 1950, in Dallas, Texas at the age of 81. She was the widow of the late Elsberry Harris, who preceded her in death several years. In their early married life they moved to Wood Co., settling near Pleasant Grove. She joined the Hopewell Church of the Primitive Baptist faith on Oct. 26, 1900. She was the mother of four children, one having died in infancy. Surviving are two sons, Earl and Bryan Harris, and a daughter, Mrs. W. J. Atkins, of Dallas, Tex. There are four brothers, Lonnie, Bobbie, Tommie and Ocie Cobb; one sister, Lizzie Henson; a step-daughter, and one step-son, Wylie Harris; six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, with a host of other relatives and friends who are made sad at her demise. She spent the last years of her life in the home of her daughter, Mrs. W. J. Atkins, Dallas, Texas. She was afflicted for the last eight years or more and all was done for her that kind hands could do, but the Lord called and she must obey. She joined Saints Rest Church of Dallas, Tex., Oct. 16, 1932, and was a faithful member until the last. The writer visited her several times while in her afflictions and found her always patiently awaiting the coming of her Lord.

Elder E. J. Lambert of Scroggins, Tex. was called to conduct the funeral services which he did in a most comforting discourse. She was laid to rest in the Hopewell Cemetery to await the sounding of the trumpets, when she shall be raised a spiritual body to meet the Lord in the air and so ever be with the Lord. Be it further

RESOLVED, that we, the Saints Rest Church, extend respect and sympathy to her sorrowing kindred and friends, pointing them to the Lord for comfort, (in whom she trusted) and that we send a copy of this memorial to each of her children, one copy to be written in our church record, and a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication. Done by order of Saints Rest Church, Sunday, Mar. 5, 1950. Written by request.

(Elder) C. B. TEAGUE

Inas-much as God in his kind providence has seen fit to remove from our midst by death, Nov. 21, 1949, our beloved and highly esteemed pastor, ELDER W. N. GREEN, who so faithfully served our church for almost thirty-two years, and inasmuch as we, the members of Hopewell Church, Mangum, Okla., feel that we must bow in humble submission to the divine will of our heavenly Father, knowing and realizing that he doeth all things well, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we extend our deep and heartfelt sympathy to his dear wife and children in this time of sorrow and bereavement, and

RESOLVED, that a copy of this memorial be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication, a copy to his wife and family and a copy put in our church record. Done by order of the church April 16, 1950 while in regular conference.

(Elder) C. E. TURNER, Moderator
R. L. BUCKNER, Church clerk

OBITUARIES

MRS. GERTRUDE HEARN TRUITT of Snow Hill, Md., departed this life Sept. 6, 1949, at the age of 73 years. She was married March 20, 1895 to Mr. William K. Truitt. She is survived by her husband and three children, James W., Elijah P., and Mrs. Gertrude Mariner. One child died in infancy. Also six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Sister Truitt united by experience with the Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church in Snow Hill, Md., and was baptized by Elder B. F. Coulter, the Pastor, the second Sunday in September 1914. She was exercised about her soul's condition for about sixteen years before being brought by faith to rest in the finished work of her Savior, Jesus Christ. During these sixteen years she was very despondent at times, feeling that the wrath of God rested upon her, yet at the same time hungering and thirsting for righteousness. She looked for death, believing she was condemned before a holy God as a poor vile sinner, and while wrestling with such convictions during the night, begging God for mercy, suddenly her prayer was answered and she was filled with the praise of God. Her experience was published in the Nov. 1, 1914 issue of the Signs of the Times and will be refreshing to those interested to read it, especially those who knew her. Her life in the church was a blessing to the church. She was faithful in attending to every duty connected with her church life. She often attended services when she did not appear physically able, but the desire was to mingle in a spiritual way with the ones she loved as the dear children of God.

Her home was an open home to her beloved in Christ both by herself and her husband. Though not a member he loves to entertain the Lord's people. The church feels deeply her loss, yet we would say the Lord's will be done. Sooner or later every tie that binds us all here will be severed, yet we are not to be unmindful that it is He who makes no mistake who calls away. For such as our sister we believe it is leaving a land of sin and sorrow to be forever with the Lord.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder H. M. Bennett and the writer from the Old School Baptist Church in Snow Hill, Md. Her body was laid to rest in the cemetery adjoining the meeting-house. May the God of all grace comfort all that mourn, and the precious things manifested in her life be remembered by us in the years to come, and to Him be all the praise.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER

ELDER BERRYMAN OLIVER JEFFREY, aged 77, a resident of this community for the past 34 years, died Tuesday evening, Feb. 28, 1950 at the Weiser General Hospital, Weiser, Idaho. Mr. Jeffrey was born May 14, 1872 in Boone Co., Mo., and was married in 1893 at Lockwood, Mo. His wife, Lillian Jeffrey, died here in 1947.

A retired Weiser rancher, Mr. Jeffrey was also an ordained minister of the Primitive Baptist Church. Elder Jeffrey was ordained to the full work of the ministry the second Sunday in October 1928. The presbytery was composed of Elders J. C. Turnidge, D. E. Robinson, W. B. Hall and C. W. Bond, with Deacon D. C. Ledington acting as clerk. Elder C. W. Bond of Elgin, Ore. delivered the charge. All the Elders and Deacon who composed the presbytery are gone to their reward. Now Elder Jeffrey has answered the final call. His passing leaves us without a Pastor. The last three years of Elder Jeffrey's life he traveled among the churches. He made a trip to Missouri and several trips to the churches in Oregon and Washington. He loved to tell the story saved by grace. He always urged peace and harmony among the churches. We can only bow in submission and say, Thy will be done. We miss him greatly but feel our loss is his gain. With the help of Elder Wolf of Elgin we intend to hold meetings on the second Sunday in the month. May God comfort Elder Jeffrey's family and give us grace to carry on.

The survivors include two daughters, Mrs. Dewey Lee and Mrs. George Fliegel both of Weiser; one brother, Frank of Pleasant Hill, Mo.; seven sisters, Mrs. J. H. Blevins, Weiser, Ida., Mrs. Dee Holland, Pleasant Hill, Mo., Mrs. Arthur McArthur, Kansas City, Mo., Mrs. Mary Snodgrass, Hanna City, Iowa, Mrs. Lucy Shelton, Deer Trail, Col., Mrs. Ella Rector, Nebraska and Mrs. Rose Love, Minnesota; seven grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder R. R. Wolf of Elgin, Ore. at 2 p.m. Friday at the North-am-Jones Chapel on East Court St. Burial at Rosedale Memorial Park, near Payette.

(Mrs.) A. L. TURNIDGE

The Church at Hillsdale, Guilford Co., N. C. in conference Feb. 14, 1948, asked me to write the obituary of W. I. WITTY, our beloved brother in Christ, friend and neighbor. I feel my inability very keenly, but if the Lord wills I will try.

He was the son of Ezekiel and Martha Williams Witty, born June 8, 1853, and quietly passed away Jan. 30, 1948 after living a long and useful life of 94 years and 7 months. He was married to Miss Carrie Cummings and to this union were born ten children, nine of which survive, five boys and four girls; William of Yanceville, Robert of Summerfield, Thomas of Thomasville, Clay and Atlas of the home; Mrs. Garett Sharp, Reidsville, Mrs. John Adkins, Summerfield, Mrs. Richard Paschal, Reidsville and Miss Annie of the home.

He was a kind husband, a loving father and good neighbor. To know him was to love him. He spent all of his life on the same farm. He never united with the church but had a sweet hope in Christ. I heard him tell his experience which was an experience of grace as wonderful as I ever heard. I had the pleasure of being in his company many times and hearing him talk of the greatness of God, his loving kindness and sweet mercy. He was firm in the doctrine of the sovereignty, greatness and wisdom of Almighty God and the total depravity of men. We, the church, looked on him as a good counselor and a father in Israel. He was a sweet singer and enjoyed singing the songs of Zion. He was faithful to his church, filling his seat as long as he was able to go and was always ready to help financially. The Lord blessed him in many ways. He had a kind and good wife who preceded him in death in 1933. They raised nine noble children.

Besides being a useful man in our church he was also useful in our county. He served four years in the State Legislature, and served the county as surveyor, commissioner and as a member of the Board of Education. He also served many years on the local school board and was Justice of the Peace for years. He was confined to his home for four years, most of which he spent in bed, but bore his affliction with much patience, never complaining or murmuring. He had the best of care. I never saw children more devoted to their father. All was done for him that loving hands could do until the hour came when we believe he heard the blessed Savior call, child come home, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

His funeral was conducted at Hillsdale Primitive Baptist Church, Feb. 1, 1948 by Elders G. W. Hill, D. G. Staples and D. A. O'Briant. Interment beside his wife in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, there to await the morning of the resurrection, when we have a sweet hope of meeting him, together with all the redeemed family of God around the dazzling throne of God to praise the Father, Son and ever blessed Spirit forever. Written by one I hope loved him for Christ's sake.

S. P. KNIGHT

RESOLVED, that we, the church at Hillsdale, bow in humble submission to the will of Him who is to wise to err, and too merciful to be unkind.

RESOLVED, that we extend to the bereaved family our heartfelt sympathy.

RESOLVED, that a copy of these resolutions be spread on our church book, a copy sent to the family and one sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication. Done by order of the church at Hillsdale, Saturday night before the third Sunday in Feb. 1948.

(Elder) G. W. HILL, Mod. and Pastor
O. J. WRAY, Asst. Church Clerk

SISTER FANNIE MELISSA ADKINS departed this life Oct. 19, 1949. She was the daughter of William Sampson and Elizabeth McGee Adkins and was born on a farm between Salisbury and Powellsville, Md. July 18, 1868, where she lived her entire life. On June 10, 1894 she was baptized by Elder A. B. Francis, uniting with the Forrest Grove Church where she remained a member until God took her home. The church suffered a great loss as well as all of her relatives and friends. She lived to see her church get down to two members and one of them an invalid, but then God blessed her and the Church with an addition of three new members in 1945 and one in 1946.

Sister Fannie was never married but left several devoted nieces and nephews. At the time of her death she was living alone at the Adkin's homestead. She had lived there alone since the death of her sister, Rhona, in 1935. She was ill only a short time and seemed to be reconciled to God's will as she always was in every condition. Her funeral was held in the Forrest Grove meeting-house and her body placed in the adjoining cemetery.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT

PLEASE REMEMBER

1.—To renew your subscription promptly when due, if possible. The date on your wrapper cover will show to when you have paid.

2.—That when your remittance reaches us before the 10th of the month, credit will be shown with the next issue of the paper, otherwise it cannot be shown until the second month following. This also applies to changes of address.

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m.
W. A. WILLIAMS and J. J. COLLINS, Pastors.

Ramah Church, Cottonwood, Ala., meets each third Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each second Sunday and Saturday before.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala
Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a. m., ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a. m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Bethlehem Church, Malvern, Ala., meets each second Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopeful Church, Ozark, Ala., meets each fourth Saturday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock Meeting place at Alder St. at the top of the hill First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each first Saturday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each fourth Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a. m., six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Seclusia Predestinarian Baptist Church meets 4th Sundays, 11 a. m., 9616 South Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. H. Y. BEAUCHAMP, Pastor, 137 Chestnut Ave., Long Beach, Cal.

Bethel Church meets every third Sunday and Saturday night before at the home of L. H. Riley, 5265 Ardelle, Stockton, Cal. For information write Elder L. L. WILSON, 2627 North Tulare St., Bakersfield, Cal.

The Old School or Predestinarian Baptists meet for worship third Sunday of each month, 2:30 p. m., second floor Pythian Temple Building, 1012 Ninth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Elder John D. Wood, Minister. For information write FRANK T. SIMPKINS, Sr., 5214 Harper St., Dillon Park, Washington 19, D. C.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m., north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets every second Sunday at 5th and E. Park St.

Pleasant Valley Church Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc.)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator, Williamstown, Kans.

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carver Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. C. H. EVANS, Pastor.

New Hope Church better known as Lick Creek meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 a.m., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Ky.
R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a.m. in the meeting-house.

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays 11:00 a. m., 1:30 p. m.

The Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every first and third Sundays at Parkside Hotel, 18 Gramercy Park South, one block east of Fourth Ave. and 20th St., near 23rd St. Sta. Lexington Ave. Subway. Take Elevator to Park Room second floor. 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before.

E. H. LANIER, Clerk.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

The Old Orderly Mt. Zion (Cash) Predestinarian Baptist Church meets on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in each month, at the home of Bro. J. J. Darnell, Campbell, Texas.

Sister SIMMONS, Clerk.

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets first and third Sundays each month 11 a. m. 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas.

L. D. ROSE and W. W. TAYLOR, Pastors

Forth Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets first Sunday in each month at 11:00 a. m. and Saturday at 2 p. m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Shepherd Fold Church meets each first Sunday 11 a. m., Saturday before 2:30 p. m., on Little York Highway, 4 miles north of Houston, Texas. One mile east of Highway 76.

W. O. BEENE, Pastor.

The original Pilgrim Rest Church of Lawn, Texas, meets every first Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a. m.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor.
HOWARD EASON, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dr. Wood church-house. Those interested write Mrs. Lela Culpepper, Stockdale, Texas.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

The Old Salem Church of Old School Baptists, 4 miles south from Teague, Texas, meets the first Sunday in each month and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 11 a. m. at the home of E. B. Ault on Progresso Highway, three and one half miles south of Weslaco.

E. B. AULT, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk
Route 1, Box 88, Mission, Tex.

Danville Primitive Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday night before Bradley Road, Danville, Va.

W. R. DODD, Pastor.

Malmaison Church, ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meets each first Sunday 11 a. m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3023 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va. R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m. C. M. FISHER.

Bethel Old School Baptist Church, Riffe, Wash., meets every third Sunday, 11 a. m. in the meeting house.

I. F. COLEMAN, Mod.
ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk, Riffe, Wash.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church near Yakima, Washington, meets at 11 a. m. each second Sunday by appointment at the home of one of the members living at Naches, Wash.

A. D. HUGHETT, Pastor
BEATRICE HAAN, Clerk
Star Route, Naches, Wash.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 3 p. m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va., N. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

TO OUR READERS

After making three trips to the Hospital, where we were for a total of 63 days, and spending many weeks at home, we are glad to announce that beginning with May 29th, we were able to begin assuming some of our regular duties again. We again wish to thank our brethren and friends for their interest in our welfare.—R. L. D.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 118 RUTHERFORD, N. J., AUGUST, 1950 No. 8

POETRY

"It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." Psalms 119:71

"I went astray before I was afflicted;
I wandered thoughtlessly from paths of right;
My foot had slipped, had not Thy love prevented,
And brought my foolishness before Thy sight.

And now I thank Thee for Thy wise correction;
Not joyous once it seemed, but hard to bear,
Till Thou didst bring me to Thy wealthy places,
To find the joys Thy chastened, share.

I am not poorer for Thy fires' refining;
'Tis true Thou didst take many things away,
But much more Thou didst give, and Thine own gladness
Reigns o'er my heart with gentle, soothing sway.

Nor do I love Thee less since Thou didst chasten;
Nay, Lord, Thou knowest well I love Thee more;
My heart goes out with more intense affection,
With more exclusive longing than before.

I would not be without the lessons taught me,
E'en though I learned them in the school of pain;
Thou didst draw me, and teach Thy child to profit,
Not only for Thy glory, but my gain.

I know Thee better since Thou didst afflict me—
Know more about Thy tender sympathy,
Thy patient love, Thy faithfulness so wondrous,
Thy precious thoughts of peace and love to me.

Thou art more dear to me, my chief beloved,
My heart is glad in Thee, and satisfied,
And when I feel Thy presence, it is easy
To count as vanity, all else beside.

Dear Lord, I thank Thee for Thy wise correction,
Not joyous once it seemed, but hard to bear;
But now I know it was because Thou lovedst me,
And I bless Thee for this token of Thy care."

Kate Staines

Submitted by (Mrs.) LAURA REED GOOCH

CORRESPONDENCE

"Is any thing too hard for the Lord?"
Gen. 18:14.

Abraham was asked the above question. According to nature it could not be, but it was. We are always full of doubt and I am speaking to the people that have been born of the Spirit and have rejoiced in God our Savior. Even those that have been called to the ministry have many times been made to doubt. Yes, doubt our call by grace, also doubt our call to the ministry. Thomas doubted yet he had seen the Lord; Peter doubted and even denied the Savior; Paul was cast down and doubted, fearing, after he had preached to others, he himself might be a castaway. Persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed. O! wretched man that I am. Sarah laughed, Abraham doubted, Isaac was born, the promised seed, contrary to nature but by the power of God. Here in type, Isaac the one that it was said of, "He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Miracles are being performed every day, every hour. A miracle is a supernatural operation performed alone by the power of God. John who had been shut up in prison, hearing of the miracles that Jesus did, doubted in his mind, and, dear brethren, when we are shut up in prison we have time to think. Even though John had seen the one in question, had baptized him, heard the voice that spoke saying, "This is my

beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," Jesus did not send back the answer that I am the Christ, but shows John again the miracles that were being performed: the dead are raised, something that the world in all its power cannot do, no one can raise the dead but Almighty God; the lepers are cleansed, this baffled the science and medical profession then and now; the poor have the gospel preached unto them, this what the world calls easy and any one can learn to do it, they are liars, and any one can give their heart to God and be saved, but Jesus tells John and classes the preaching of the gospel to a supernatural source for the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to the believer; and the poor leper who came to Jesus asking help saying, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," "Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean." And he said to Lazarus, "come forth." There is nothing too hard for the Lord.

I have heard it said the day of miracles is past, but not so for every hour, every minute there are poor sinners being brought to the knowledge of the truth. This is something that man cannot do, money cannot buy, all the powers combined in the earth cannot accomplish it, it is truly a miracle. Life must precede action and God is the only giver of life. Jesus, who is truth, spoke the truth to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Here is a miracle that you, my dear readers, can vouch for in your own experience, and as the hymn writer said, "Tis mine to inherit, I'll glory begin." Ye are witnesses to these things, you have the witness within and you believe what Jesus told Nicodemus, these two witnesses establish the fact. What I say or what you say will not change the truth of God, he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and whether we like it or not he is still at the helm working out his own purpose according to his own will and purpose of his own glory. Rejoice, dear brethren, and be exceeding glad that your name is written in the book of life; be glad that he has revealed himself to you. All we know of him he has taught us, all we have he has given us, and thanks be unto God who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the only one that can give us peace, the only one that can save. We thank him for our repentance for he has granted it to us, and faith to understand his saving grace, and what he gives abides with us always, this faith, hope and charity. Charity is the greatest of these gifts Paul says. Charity is love in action and was the great self-moving cause even when we were dead in sins. It quickened us to life, raised us up together, and made us to sit in heavenly places. What a wonderful God we have! There is nothing too hard for the Lord. The Lord asks, "Is any thing too hard for the Lord?" I would say no for he is omnipotent. To Elder Dodson first, then to all who know God in truth, this is dedicated.

(Elder) GEO. L. WEAVER
2802 Marcum Terrace,
Huntington, W. Va.

"And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken."—Gen. 3:22-23.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: It is in the strength of our God (I hope) I am attempting to write on so great a subject. When requested to write this I felt oh who am I to write of the deep things

of God, but immediately faith began its work in my heart I hope, for I felt sure if it pleased God to give me a mind on this line of truth, he was able to fill my feeble mind with words to write.

It is clearly understood I believe that what we write about these things are not taught us of man for to know a thing naturally you have to see it for yourself, and when this marvelous work was being done Adam and Eve were the only people on earth. Think of what peace and contentment there must have been with them in the beautiful garden of Eden with all manner of fruit and beauty there, and they could eat of it all except of the tree of knowledge. At this time they did not fear God. (But remember Jesus stood as a lamb slain from before the foundation of the world to redeem his people from under the curse of the law.) "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." The serpent told Eve to eat of the fruit would make her wise. She ate and gave it to Adam and he did eat. Seemingly before this eating took place they had no knowledge. God revealed to Adam that Eve was taken from man, and he said she shall be called woman, and enabled Adam to name everything that God had made, but the tree of knowledge was placed in the garden to give them the knowledge of good and evil, natural knowledge to my mind. There is good and evil in our natural lives: the good is to be a good citizen, honest and square in our dealing with our fellow man, good workers, providing well for our own household, enjoying the fruit of our labors, etc; the evil is scheming, defrauding and wrongfully treating our fellow man. Is this not the knowledge received by our forefathers of the natural activities of this world, which is a type of the spiritual knowledge received in the new birth, and as God told them, in the day thou eateth thereof thou shalt surely die and they did; died to the peaceful mind they had enjoyed, and that day death passed upon all, and with God a day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day, in other words it is one eternal day with God. Since that day that Adam and Eve became wise, men have sought out many inventions. Oh, the greatness of God speaking this world into existence; forming Adam of the dust of the ground; causing a deep sleep to fall on him; taking a rib out of his side, making it a woman and presenting her to Adam as it was not good for him to dwell alone; putting them in the garden where God had placed everything that was necessary to be there. Watch all his works, how marvelous indeed. Cain and Abel were the two first sons to be born in this world. Look at the beginning of these things. Cain was a tiller of the ground, Abel was a keeper of sheep. Neither of them knew why it was so but each brought an offering of the best they had. Cain's offering was from the ground which God had cursed before Cain ever tilled it. With vain expectation Cain offered the very best he could which before God is as filthy rags, workings of Cain's hands. Abel, keeper of sheep, brought forth an offering the firstling of his flock and the fat thereof. He offered it up by faith and God had respect for him and his offering, but Cain and his offering he did not respect. Abel offered his by faith which was given him of the Lord.

Just so he hears the prayer of his little ones when he gives them the spirit of prayer, but all that is produced by our own effort falls to the ground. Oh how marvelous are the works of Almighty God. He was and is bringing all things to pass as it seems good

in his sight, or according to the determinate council of God. Time passed on. (Gen. 4:8) Cain talked with Abel, his brother, and it came to pass when they were in the field that Cain rose up against Abel and slew him, but that doctrine that is so much hated, that Abel represented, is still standing and will ever stand, and all the powers visible or invisible cannot overthrow it thanks be to God.

When God placed Adam and Eve in the garden they were not in a state of ability to grasp knowledge as to the activities of this world, how to make use of all that the Father put in this earth for their good. Just so the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit before the new birth. God placed the tree of knowledge in the garden, and the serpent was on time for his part in the matter. The command was given, the law broken and all fell into condemnation, as Adam, being not deceived but willing to go down in order to be with Eve, his wife. So Jesus stood as a lamb slain from before the foundation of the world, and at the appointed time of the Father came down, born of the virgin Mary, and took the sins of his people upon himself to conquer death, hell and the grave that where he is they shall be in eternity. The perfection of Gods' work is so great, "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." He watches over them from the beginning of time and on through eternity; he sets the bounds of their habitation and establishes their going; he is their repentance, their hope, their faith, their charity, their salvation; he is their all in all. Yea, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Our road is not an easy one, we must also suffer with him if we would reign with him in glory. He suffered as no man suffered, even cried out on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Yea, he was tempted in all points even as we, yet without sin that he should know how to succor them that were likewise tempted.

God's children are born of earthly parents and all grow up together, all nature the children of wrath even as others, but there comes a time when they begin to have trouble along the way. In the beginning of this way they find they cannot go free like their friends, something inside is telling them not to do this and that. Oh, why do I have to be different from the others we say, and we begin to strive to go along with them, but how little we know of his restraining power. We begin to find that we are peculiar and folks look at us and wonder why we are thus. We want to tell them but we cannot, neither can they understand. At last we give up, knowing we are different, but why we ourselves do not know. We strive to mend our way before God only to grow worse. We begin to beg for mercy. "Ye must be born again," but that is all a mystery to us for we know not how it could be. The first scripture that seemed to embrace me was "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." That was the sweetest *shall* I had ever known for I believed I was hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and that some day I would be filled. I humbly hope there came a time when the Bible described to me how and when that was done. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Oh, I hope I am not deceived but I have enjoyed that gentle breeze that seems to lift our souls above this old world, and the sweet meditation that gives us re-

newed strength and courage sufficient for our day. Thus the child grows in the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

I heartily endorse Elder W. D. Griffin's article on 1 Peter 2:2-3. Earthly parents have to try different foods for their babies, sometimes not being able to find the proper kind of milk lose them, but not so with our heavenly Father for he prepares the child to receive the food that is needful for it, whether it be the sincere milk of the word or the strong meat. Without the preparation of God they cannot receive either. But oh my soul, when it pleases our Lord to give us understanding, and he fills our hearts with his love the whole world looks different, and we feel we can go for days in his strength; then so soon it fades away and we, like John, ask "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" It is in these dark and trying times we learn we are not (of ourselves) able to stand. We find we have no strength and resolve to be silent on the previous things we hoped to have been ours for surely it would not have been thus with us if we were a child, but we yet have to learn we are not able to hide our emotions when filled with rejoicing for love maketh us not ashamed. So we find the blessing from the Lord has left us a cripple, but bless his holy name he also gave us a staff to lean upon and that staff is Jesus, and his grace is sufficient for us. Oh, can I claim such promises for me? I can but write the things I have felt, heard and seen when he bids me look. I must close there is no end to these things.

Brother Dodson, I am sending this for your disposal, trusting and believing you are capable of judging. May God's richest blessing be with you and all the Associate Editors to continue your good work is my humble prayer.

(Mrs.) LUTHER CAMPBELL
3347 Tutwiler Avenue,
Memphis, Tenn.

Centralia, Va.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.: I am enclosing check to renew my subscription for two years. Sorry I am behind with my renewal, but I am getting forgetful and find if I do not attend to things at once I often forget until I am reminded again.

Bro. Dodson, I am enclosing a letter from a very dear Brother and Deacon, Maj. A. D. Alston. I would like to see it published in the *Signs* if it meets your approval. I feel it is too good to lay aside as it has been so much comfort to me and I think will be of comfort to others. Your brother in hope.

G. S. WEIDER

We thank Brother Weider for sending us this good letter. R. L. D.)

Georgia Military District, Box 1736,
Atlanta, Ga.

OUR VERY DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER WEIDER: Your letter sent to us at Herndon, which I have here, is very dear to me and to us both. It is a prayer for our keeping, and particularly for my direction and keeping as a deacon in God's house, and it comes to me from a brother and father in the church. I want to keep it all my life; I want to go back and refer to it when trials and troubles seem to arise before me. You have traveled the road, and, indeed, I am only to begin. May the Lord in his mercy and compassion look down upon me and sustain me, and enable me to do whatever work he has for me to do in such a manner as will reflect all the glory to him, and in every way be acceptable to him and in his sight.

Brother Weider, I look upon the days that I was privileged to know you peo-

ple, live close to you and to visit a little with you; I recall them with sweet memory; you seemed to us as parents; you loved us, helped us, comforted us and advised us. At Hopewell we felt so much away from the Baptists—none there—yet you were a near neighbor. I do hope and pray that the Lord, in his infinite mercy, may keep and comfort your people, and the dear ones of the church there in Richmond. It does seem that as we grow older our burdens become heavier and our afflictions greater. This life is but a moment, relatively, and is so soon passed away and the eternal life is before us: what matters the things of this life that are so perishable and so soon gone. Let our eyes, our hearts and our souls be staid upon the things of his kingdom; and may we be kept submissive and obedient to his will, made willing to present this body a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable in his sight, for it is indeed by the mercy of God that we are enabled to do that. The flesh is not willing, but the spirit, strengthened by the Lord, can enable us to do it.

Carolyn and the girls are now with me here in Atlanta. They came down for about eight weeks. I was so glad to see them again. What a blessing they are to me! O if I could, I would praise my Lord and Savior for sparing us to live together, and to be a comfort one to the other. We have been blessed to have a companion that could understand spiritual things in a like manner, and to be made a great comfort to each other. Oftentimes I feel that we have to be separated in order that we not depend on each other too much, but that we be brought low and forced to call upon the Lord in our distresses. We have to travel through the valleys, else we would forget the Lord and he who saved us from our sins.

Brother Weider, you spoke of the duties that often come before the deacon. Why I had to be ordained, and straightway sent away from the church —yet not away from sister churches— I cannot know. It has been a burden to me and a cross. If I must act in any way as a servant to the church, I would want it to be, at least at first, in my home church and under the watchcare of the brethren that asked for my ordination; I would want to be corrected and guided by them, for indeed I need their guidance and their help. But the Lord did not will it that way. Why, I cannot know; maybe I will some day, maybe never. I want to be submissive and I try to be obedient, but O how hard and how I utterly and miserably fail in my efforts. Then again, the Lord sometimes softens my heart and makes me sit still in peace and in submission; but O how it has to be the Lord that does it.

I remember with pleasure your visit to us in May. There is no way for me to express what it meant to me. I hope that the visit can be repeated. If I know my heart, there is a love and a fellowship there for you that is more than a natural love; nor did I put it there or have anything to do with it; it is the Savior's love that is reflecting there; it is deeper and not to be compared with natural love. I think I love the Lord's people and the church that he sustains here on earth, and sometimes when he enables me to see that church and that people, as only he can enable us to do, I am made to long for them and to reach out, as it were to embrace them with my whole heart, crying what else in this world matters! But then I am snatched back to the realities of this life and my daily duties. We have only the earnest of the inheritance while here; we see him only as through the lattice; only as he looks in by the window; he is present, yet we cannot see

him, perceive him and embrace him. We are made to seek him and to go about the village in search of our beloved. Mary Magdalene stood at the tomb weeping, crying for him and seeking him. His very presence was with her and enabled her to seek and to cry and to pray, yet she could not perceive him; then he spoke one word, Mary, and she knew him and fell at his feet, and would have touched him; indeed would have held on to him with every effort and every bit of her strength lest she lose him again; but no, he would not let Mary touch him. To see him was enough. Mary was instructed to go to the brethren and tell them of these things. Mary was to learn that she must henceforth commune with her Savior, not by touch, but by faith. She was sent away with a duty and a message from the very Savior's presence or sight; She must walk by faith, she must know by faith that he was and is always near and strengthening for every task, and every trial and every day's demands.

The other disciples came, looked in the tomb, saw the grave clothes and the napkin all folded and in order; then they turned and went away to their own homes. Why did not Mary turn away and return to her own home? Was it not the very present strength of her Lord and Master that would not let her go away? Why did she persevere? why did she remain and cry, I cannot go! I must have my Master! I cannot live without him! I must have him! My very life depends on him. So she *wept,* and she *stooped down,* and she *turned;* it was only by his strength that she persevered until he made himself known to her. Mary was the first of all of the disciples to be shown the resurrection; the very first the see Jesus after he had come forth from the grave, conqueror over the grave and death.

I did not mean to start writing about Mary. I meant to say that I hold in my heart a deep and God given love for you, my dear brother. And I shall say that I believe it is of the same love that came from the Savior and existed in Mary's heart when she cried for her Lord and Master.

This Sunday is meeting day at your church; how I would love to walk in at the meeting with my little family! How I would love to go home with Brother and Sister Weider and talk and visit with them. May it please the Lord to enable us to commune together in his name at some time that seemeth wise in his sight. Until then may we be made a willing, submissive and obedient people in his sight. Yours in the bonds of sweet love and fellowship of Christ. DOUGLAS, CAROLYN AND THE GIRLS.

Gantt, Ala.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I want to try in my weakness to write to you a personal letter. You remember once I told you that I wanted to see you, and that I had rather see you than any man I knew of. That want is still with me. I know not whether I will ever see you in the flesh, but I believe there will be a time when we will see each other. We cannot tell how long it may be but we know the time is drawing nigh, and we hope that time will be a happy day with us, not only us but all the Lord has called. We know not whether our names were written in the Lamb's book of life but if they were then we will. We read in the scriptures where it says, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound," and sometimes I believe I know that sound for there is no other sound like it.

My mind has been meditating on love for a great while, and that comes to me in this way in the question, what is love? God is love. He is the only

true love there is and all other loves are only like love. They will fade away like the winds that blow, but this love will stand forever the same. I belonged to the church a good many years before I knew what love is, and to tell you how it came to me I read Sister Young's experience in the *Signs of the Times,* and I was made to love her. Although I had never seen her I have that same love for her. I believe that is the way God displays his love among his children. If it does not come that way it is no more than like love. Since that time I have read many experiences published by you. People that I have never met I love. It is not what we can see that we count love, but that what we feel. No one has ever seen God for he is a spirit, and by the Spirit we are made to know. I believe there are many claiming to be the children of God that say they have no experience. I believe that he brings all of his children by the same path, and they cannot be mistaken for the signboard is too plain. We know there are only two ways and only one way is right. That way we know the lion's whelp has never trod nor the vulture's eye has seen for there is nothing dead on that way. There never has been or ever will be. I have been made to wish that all the true lovers of God would publish their experience; we would then know where their foundation lay.

Dear Brother Dodson, I am an old creature who passed my ninetieth mile post in March 1949, and I feel illiterate. I cannot see to read or write and my hearing is limited. I never go to preaching on account of being unable to hear. I sit and meditate a lot on things that are a joy to me. The preaching that I get now is from the *Signs of the Times,* and I have to get that by some one reading it for me. I thank the Lord that I can always have some one to read for me, and therefore claim that the Lord has always been good to me when I knew him not. I will close by asking you to give me an answer, sweet or bitter as it may be in your mind. Your brother in hope of eternal life. J. S. SCOTT

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134 E. Prince Road, Tucson, Ariz.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR ELDER: Regarding the request contained in your good letter I am glad to report that we got together recently with about ten church members from various parts of the country who were in good standing with their home churches and the services were much enjoyed by all present. There is an organized church at Phoenix and their pastor and some members met with us.

I was distressed to notice in Old Faith Contender where you had a serious operation but was doing very well, and I hope and pray you will soon recover.

I am enclosing a letter from Elder G. B. Bird which I would like you to edit and publish in the *Signs of the Times.* I shall let you hear of our progress here from time to time, and hope to hear of your personal welfare soon. Yours in hope.

(Elder) T. J. ROBINSON

Canada, Ky.

Elder T. J. Robinson,
134 E. Prince Road, Tucson, Ariz.

BELOVED IN THE LORD: I really feel ashamed of myself for not writing you sooner, but there seems to be so many things in my way that I seldom have a mind to write any more. I assure you, dear brother, there is not a word in either of your two letters that I am not in hearty accord with, in fact I have often expressed my feelings in this manner to my dear wife. There are none of the servants of my God that I am

more fully in oneness of mind and spirit with, and few indeed that will compare with you in the high plane of wisdom and understanding. I am just trying to say that I hold you as a jewel of great price, a brother in wisdom, for are we not the children of wisdom, brought up in wisdom's way? which way is one of trouble and suffering to the flesh—the outer man—the thing that shall be destroyed, that must be destroyed in us before we can worship God in true holiness. We are told that God has "created the waster to destroy," and in my own experience I can witness truthfully that this waster is created in me to destroy that which is unholy and unclean.

Yes, dear brother, I firmly believe that Jesus was born of the virgin Mary, which birth was but the manifestation of that that eternally was or is. (I think the word *is* to be more appropriate in the eternal now of God) So also the flood, the children of Israel going down into Egypt, the tower builders, Cain and Abel with their offerings which is a vivid portrait of our offerings before the Lord today. Often when I am come to the stand I am made to know that I am Cain, that I am raised up to shame and contempt, and I am troubled until I cry, "My punishment is greater than I can bear." It is then that I am made to know that I am an "unprofitable servant." Again, at another time, I am blessed to hear the words of my Lord whispered in my soul, "Come, ye blessed of my Father." Yes, we in vital and living reality inherit something; we put on immortality and enter into the holy of holies. We cease to be a servant but become the Sons of God in the oneness of love, power and wisdom. We then, for these brief moments, witness the putting of all things under his feet; time is ended, time is no longer; in the spirit of life we witness the resurrection of the dead, not only are we then living witnesses, but we are actual partakers of it when we are raised with Christ. Those of God's children that have had this experience know that "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." The word is means in the present or now tense. Perhaps all this may seem foolish to you for you see that I have such a poor way to express what I am trying to tell.

I am deeply interested in what you tell me about the dear children of God out there where God has moved you to dwell. Write me more about them and your labors among them that I may learn what God hath wrought. There is nothing new to tell you about Mates Creek, things are about as usual with them. I think I know that I can only go to all God sends me, nor can I fail in the most minute detail to go when, where and unto whom he sends me. He works out of my sight as well as out of my reach.

I have a dear niece, Mrs. Ida Hill, who with her family lives in Phoenix, Ariz. She is a member of the Providence Church in Poca. Ass'n. I do not know her street address, but I think her husband, Frank Hill, works in the Post Office at Phoenix. I am sure they would rejoice to meet you. If interested in getting in touch with them you could write her sister. Mrs. L. H. Dolin, St. Albans, W. Va. She would be glad to aid her precious sister in getting in contact with the people she loves. I must close. Please write again and I will hope to be more prompt in replying. Yours in sweet fellowship. (Elder) G. B. BIRD

Premier, W. Va.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON: I received the January issue of the *Signs of the* Times which is about the only preaching I hear except once in a while. I am

caught somewhere in the wilderness, hunting or wearing out the Bible, trying to find comfort, or out by myself somewhere mourning and groaning to the end of my strength, Then, too, there is much peace received following the many sorrows of this world. It seems I have been cut off from my people, being prevented from going to hear the truth proclaimed for some reason. I have had only a few opportunities to sit under the gospel of Christ in the meeting-house, but was privileged to attend the Association at Davy, W. Va. last year which blessing was too much for a wretched and guilty sinner as I. Nevertheless if it please the Lord it is well with me. What grace and mercy beyond this world through hope in Christ.

The subscription blank reminds me that my subscription is due which I find it impossible to renew now, but I want to continue to read the paper and hope to be able to send in the price when the Lord wills. It seems we are a family about as poor as can be and still survive both in natural and spiritual things. I look upon my little family that is so precious to me, seeing their needs, and must say if God wills give us raiment to wear and food to eat so that I can come again to my Father's house in peace. Then shall the Lord be my God, and this stone which I have set for a pillow shall be God's house. As I read this over it seems there is a beautiful type of the knowledge of God, drawing his people to a willing mind of confessing Christ as the only sound foundation for refuge from great distress. May some one who feels the revelation of it give their views on it for a poor, naked, undone soul as I feel to be.

I am not a member of the church, but it seems the same faith and hope that they, the Primitive Baptists, have is the same experience that I have had if I have had any at all. Many times I wish to offer myself to the church, but so often see myself so unfit. When working in the field, mines or other places the spirit seems to revive me that I could well say that if I could give this testimony to them my desire would be fulfilled, but when I would I am a failure.

While clearing some new ground yesterday I sat down to think it all over and seemed to be in a trance, and had like a vision of standing before the chosen people, trying to give what I thought was a hope, which I thought was all gone, saying that in time I had tasted of salvation and it was sweet to my taste; but it did not seem reasonable for me to have it and I must take my place in the world with a very broken heart. Suddenly a voice from within that could not be held back bowed my head to the stones at my feet saying, "Salvation is of the Lord," and I rejoiced at the words.

About that time a man came along behind me up on the roadside, and threw a rock down at me and said something. I did not turn around for fear he would ask me "why cry." I have heard his testimony before trying to present an anti-Christ. He would have said if that be thy hope why not jump up and shout as those in the flesh and glorify Baal? But, my friend, when a man has been brought down to the dust of the earth, and willing to cry Abba Father, desiring to be absent in the body and present with the Lord he has already shouted praise unto his Lord, the almighty Creator of heaven and earth, the dry land and the seas. Though the thorn be in the flesh and the messenger of satan to buffet him his grace is sufficient, for by grace are ye saved; paid for with blood, sealed with the testimony of Christ. My

hope and desire is when this journey is finished, and we approach Jordan, such a river as we have never seen before where there was never a bridge, that the heir of all things shall convey us safely over to the other side flowing with milk and honey. Less than the least and very unworthy.

L. C. BRANCH

Stem, N. C.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: You have been in mind a number of times since I learned that you were ill and in a hospital. I was very glad to hear recently in a letter from Sister Ethel Werner that you were improving. I hope you are gaining steadily, and if the Lord's will may soon be restored to health.

It is not agreeable with us to be sick. I believe it was Daniel who said, "I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread." How true that is in sickness. Our taste and relish for the things we enjoy in health are taken from us; our strength is replaced by weakness; and like Job "wearisome nights are appointed" unto us. Paul has recorded a wonderful promise to the Lord's children in Corinthians, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness," and Isaiah says, "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them." Christ told his disciples to "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile," When we are sometimes led into desert places how very precious many promises become to us. Words we have read again and again, but which until then had no special meaning for us, we can claim as our own; then the desert blossoms as the rose. Today I was reading a poem some one gave me, and which has been sweet to me. It may be you already have it, but I will enclose a copy in case you have not. I believe it will express some of your experience.

I remember what dear brethren and friends you and Elder C. B. Hall were, and I felt you would be interested in this clipping from last Sunday's Greensboro paper about Sister Malone who is Sister Hall's mother. She is a most remarkable woman. One thing I would like to mention in connection with her fractured hip, which I was reliably told, was that at the time, I suppose that due to her advance age the doctors felt the only thing they could do for her was to make her as comfortable as they could. Pretty soon, as she states, her doctor was taken sick, and it was some days before he could see her again. When he did and found that the bones were in place and beginning to heal he said to her, "You have a better Physician than I am," and she replied, "I knew that all the time." She is a dear, sweet old lady.

The last copy of the *Signs* seemed better to me than usual. I much enjoyed your comments on the subject of the first letter. I must have read the same from your pen in October 1944, as you refer to it, but it had escaped me. I have not the least desire to introduce instrumental music in our church services, but all my life I have dearly loved music, (I mean real music, not the conglomeration of harsh, discordant sounds which confront us almost everywhere we turn these days) and especially in my loneliness it has been a great comfort to me. The letter of Brother Staggs, and the one of Sister Helen Jones were both good to me, too. Enclosed I am also sending a little token of my loving interest, to you. Yours in fellowship, I trust.

(Mrs.) LAURA REED GOOCH

2338 Orleans St., Bellingham, Wash.

DEAR ELDER AND BROTHER DODSON: I am enclosing my subscription for two years and please use the rest wherever you feel it is needed most. I should have sent in my subscription before this but we have been so unsettled I was waiting for a permanent address. There are no Old School Baptists here or any one I can talk with that is a comfort to me. They all believe in works we must do to be saved. One man wanted me to tell him how the Old Baptists differed from the other churches, and I tried to tell him in my weak way without getting into an argument with him. I told him Christ said, "I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." He said, "Yes, as far as he could and now the rest is up to us." How can we poor, weak mortals limit God's power when he has all the power, and all the powers that be are ordained of him. I know from my own experience if not free grace then I am lost.

About thirty years ago I was trying the do and live system, and I wondered then why I could not be as good as I thought the others were and then I was shown that it was "not of works lest any man should boast." I was soon made to see the people I was fighting so hard against were my people. My father, as I believe you know, was a firm Old School Baptist, and it is the only faith I can feel any hope in. Even now at times my faith is so little I almost lay it by, yet sometimes it is sufficient if I were called to die. When I look back through my life, see how sinful I have been and still am, I often feel I am deceiving the church. The *Signs* is surely a comfort to me here among these strangers. I feel when they do not speak my language (the scriptures as I see them) they are strangers to me. When I opened my last *Signs* tears of joy came to my eyes. I felt I was among my people again. How true these words are:

"We are a garden walled around,
Chosen and made peculiar ground;
A little spot enclosed by grace,
Out of the world's wide wilderness."

May God bless you and help you to keep up the good work you are doing as I believe that is the only "works" the scriptures speak of—as we grow in grace. As ever a little sister in hope of his mercy. (Mrs.) BLANCHE BROWN

1826 Williamson Road, Roanoke 12, Va.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: You may publish the enclosed letter in your good paper if you think it worthy of space. If not cast it aside and all will be well with me. I have been a subscriber since 1944 and the more I read your paper the better I like it. I have read so many articles I felt were worth the price of the paper. I am a shut in and do not hear preaching often so am hungering and thirsting for a crumb from the Master's table. Hope the Lord will bless you and give you strength and a mind to keep the paper going for it is a blessing to me.

I know the promise is "In the world ye shall have tribulation," but the little seasons He visits with us are so sweet it seems the most bitter trials will be easy to face. I feel too unworthy to claim a hope in his mercy, and a place among the dear brethren, yet if it was not for that little ray of hope that is given me, and the love I feel for them and the doctrine of an all wise, all powerful and unchangeable God whose counsel shall stand there would be nothing here to rest upon.

A few weeks past I was called to the home of a Deacon. A small company had gathered there for the purpose of receiving a brother in the church. I have known him and his wife for a number

of years, and have spent many happy moments talking with them. He was the most spiritual minded person I most ever knew. I felt to know his home was in the Primitive Baptist church. They gladly received him making me happy indeed and I am sure many others are. I am sure there was a burden lifted off him that will never return. I often thought I would mention the subject to him as I felt to know he was longing for a home with God's people, but the thought would come to me, who am I to invite knowing that it is God's work who has a plan, time and purpose for all things under the heavens. I feel he came home to his friends at God's time not his. His dear wife united with the church in 1948. She was one I dearly loved and not only I but all who knew her. She passed on to her eternal home in Jan. 1949. May the Lord bless and bring us together in that place where there is no death.

"Pity the nations O my God,
Constrain thy flock to come;
Send thy victorious word abroad,
And bring the stranger home."

God alone can turn our joys to sorrows, also our sorrows to joy. How well do I recall a time in my past life in the month of October. I was walking out to my garden. It was a lovely day, not a sorrow or worry on my mind. Just as I stepped inside the garden a still, small voice (deep within) spoke to me telling me I was going to die. A dark cloud fell over me. Oh, that guilt and burden that possessed my whole being. I felt to be sinking down, yes, beneath God's righteous frown. I was made to see God's power and man's nothingness, knowing if he cast me off I would be lost worlds without end. My continual breathing throughout the fall and winter months was a prayer, Lord have mercy on me, please God help me out of this condition without thee I can do nothing.

"Amazed I stood, but could not tell
Which way to shun the gates of hell,
For death and hell drew near;
I strove indeed, but strove in vain;
The sinner must be born again,
Still sounded in my ear."

Pardon me for making this too lengthy. Yours in hope of a better world. (Mrs.) MAUDE A. MORAN

Route 1, Box 199, Sulphur Springs, Tex.

DEAR EDITOR OF SIGNS OF THE TIMES: Find enclosed $3 to pay for another year's subscription for the dearly loved paper; I do enjoy it so much. It contains what I hope I believe; it is my food and my drink. I am in Dallas, Tex. at present and had the pleasure of going to meeting Sunday and hearing Elder Taylor of Arkansas preach. He preached a wonderful sermon, Christ the firm foundation. As ever a sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

(Mrs.) H. A. CHANCE

1330 Mt. Holly St., El Dorado, Ark.

DEAR ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, AND TO ALL THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH: I am sending you some of my meditation on the Scriptures. If you think it worthy of space in the *Signs of the Times* you may publish it, if not cast it in the waste basket and it will be all right with me.

My mind is on the word power. The power of God, the only true and living God who made all things that are made in heaven and earth for his own glory, for his own chosen elect people which he hath purposed to do before the foundation of the world. "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power." Eph. 1:19. It is the power of the Spirit of God in you that causes you to be-

lieve in God. There is no power but of God, and the word God means power. The word exceeding means greater than all the powers of man; greater than all other powers combined. "Having predestinated us into the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Eph. 1: 5 and 11. This was Daniel's God, the God that delivered the three Hebrew children from the fire, and I have a strong hope that this is my God. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Heb. 8:10. I have a hope that I am one that is included in this covenant which was made before the world began. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." Rom. 8:14-15. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, (This does not mean our natural Adam spirit we have in childbirth; but the Spirit of Christ, Christ in you the hope of glory.) that we are the children of God." Rom. 8:16. It takes the power of the Spirit of God to change our natural spirit of the Adam nature which is contrary to the Spirit of God. "To be spiritually minded is life and peace." Rom. 8:6. "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." Isa. 45:7. "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." Rom. 9:22.

Some will say, that makes God the author of sin; but I say, God did not sin in all that he proposed to do and did; for how could God sin against himself? Did not the only true God who made all things have a right to make everything his own way for his own purpose, known only to himself? "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he (God) yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Rom. 9:19-20. "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. (How come that it was not fixed with faith in them? I say that God had not given the Spirit of understanding to them, for it was not his purpose that they should believe. The scripture reads that Christ knew from the beginning who would believe on him. Without that exceeding greatness of his power of the Spirit was first given to them they could not believe.) There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." Heb. 4: 1-2-9-10.

While I am trying to write on the subject of the power of God, I can only write what comes to my mind first, and my words seem to be scattering, but I write this verse, "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Heb. 4:12. The word of God here does not mean the scriptures, for the scriptures are not quick and powerful and sharper than any twoedged sword. I do not find in my Bible any place where Christ or any of the apostles ever referred to the scriptures as being the word of God. "And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." John 5: 37-39. If the scriptures were the word of God, why did not Christ tell them to search the words of God? Do the scriptures testify of Christ to you when you read them: If Christ be not in you when you read them they will not, nor will you have any understanding of them; but if Christ be in you the hope of glory, then you have faith to believe them and rejoice in the truth. "I receive not honour from men, But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." John 5:41-42. All men have not faith. They must have been some of Esau's offspring, the children of the non-elect, who Christ knew would not believe. Your brother in hope of the first resurrection with the saints.

F. L. COX

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The regular annual meeting with the Brookfield Church and Congregation, Slate Hill, N. Y. is scheduled to be held as usual on Friday before the fourth Sunday, August 25, 1950. A welcome is extended to our brethren and friends at that time.

R. LESTER DODSON

The Powell's Valley Association of Predestinarian Baptists will convene, God willing, with the Church at Powder Spring Gap at the head of Dotson's Creek, Union Co., Tenn. in its 131st session, Sept. 1, 2 and 3, 1950. All lovers of truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. E. WALTON, Clerk
Rt. 1 Maynardsville, Tenn.

(Elder) JOHN WILDER, Mod.
Pineville, Ky.

The Bethel Church of Predestinarian Baptists, Riffe, Washington will hold their annual three days meeting, the Lord willing, beginning Aug. 20, 1950 and continuing the two following days. All lovers of truth are invited. For further information write.

ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk
Riffe, Wash.

The annual three days meeting of the Predestinarian Baptists will be held, the Lord willing, with Elgin Church at the old Highland school house, five miles east of Elgin on the Elgin and Joseph highway, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 1, 2 and 3, 1950.

All who can come will be welcome, and we especially desire ministers of our faith and order to be with us.

Written by request of the church.

R. R. WOLF, Pastor

The First Primitive Baptist Church at Memphis, Tenn. will, the Lord willing, hold its regular annual two days meeting on Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 12 and 13, 1950. Our little band here is all that is left of the Miss. River Association. All lovers of the truth are welcome. The church is located on the corner of Fizer Ave. and Getwell St. just south of the Kennedy General Hospital.

(Elder) H. G. BROWN, Pastor
E. H. LANIER, Clerk

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will convene with the Olive and Hurley Church at Shokan, N. Y. on Wed. and Thurs., Sept. 13 and 14, 1950. Meeting will open at 10:30 D.S.T. Wed. morning. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren and ministers of our faith and order in fellowship with us, and all friends of our faith will be heartily welcomed. Those arriving on Tuesday will go to the Brookside Lodge in Ashokan, conducted by Mrs. Hazel Byrnes, where they will be cared for. Those arriving Wed. morning will go directly to the meeting-house in Shokan. Buses connecting with bus lines to N. Y. City and Oneonta pass through Shokan and Ashokan; also Ashokan is on the Catskill Mountain Branch of the N. Y. Central R. R. For the information of strangers it may be noted that the villages of Shokan and Ashokan are connected, each having a separate post-office. The meeting-house is located in Shokan.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Elder George L. Weaver desires that his correspondents address him 2802 Marcum Terrace, Huntington, W. Va.

EDITORIALS

RUTHERFORD, N. J. AUGUST, 1950

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IDENTITY OF THE CHURCH

We have been asked by a sister in Texas to offer some thoughts on the above subject for the consideration of our readers. As we attempt to approach the subject, we are almost overwhelmed with the enormity of the field into which we are liable to find ourself. In a true and final analysis of the spiritual church we must confess that it embraces each and every member of the mystical body of Christ which, like the grains of sand by the seashore, are innumerable. We have assumed that our inquirer has reference more particularly to the militant or visible church here in the world, which is but a small remnant of that group which no man can number. Our understanding of the meaning of the word *church* is "called out," separated from the world, or as Jude says, "them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ." This implies to us that God, by the mighty workings of his power in the hearts of his people, sets them apart to serve him. God spake by the mouth of the prophet, Isaiah, saying, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." The church of God is a living body of baptized believers, and there are certain spiritual laws and principles by which she is governed. She worships the true and living God in spirit and in truth, and absolutely refuses to bow down to graven images or worship inanimate idols. Divine inspiration has employed different similes for presenting, in type, the visible church, and for the moment we shall consider it from the point of view of a building. We would say, first, that in order to clearly establish the identity of any specific edifice or structure it is necessary to furnish some descriptive marks which are peculiarly applicable to the object in question, and which are not applicable to other structures. A very important part of any building is the foundation. Unless this is solid, secure and durable, it will not withstand the assaults that will be made against it. In this respect, we could ask for no higher authority than the One who has been declared to be the head over all things to his church, which is his body, and he said to Peter, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Mat. 16:17-18. We cannot conceive of a stronger or more sure foundation for the church to rest upon here in this world than that of the revelation of God to his people. So long as he sits upon his eternal throne, doing his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and is pleased to condescend to make himself known unto those whom he foreknew and chose in Christ in the counsels of eternity, just that long will men and women of

Adam's race believe on and confess him whom to know is life eternal, despite all that men and devils can do to prevent it. The apostle Paul said to Timothy, "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." We are definitely persuaded of the fact that one of the distinguishing marks of the true church of God is her belief in his sovereignty, and another one of these marks is that God reveals himself unto each and every one of his little ones before they can have any true conception of him who hath made all things for himself, and know that he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that they may even ask or think. Since it was God who created the heaven and the earth and all that in them is, he is most certainly able to do all his pleasure, not only in heaven but in earth as well, and none can hinder him in his work or stay his hand. Paul spake concerning the church when he said, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10. He also said, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new, And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." We also like especially that scripture where Paul said, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." This declares plainly to us that God not only begins the good work in his people, but that he also will perform or perfect his purpose in them. The church, which is composed of both Jews and Gentiles, embracing every race on earth, is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." How unmistakably clear this sets forth that it is all God's work, from beginning to end. The Psalmist, many centuries before our Lord came into the world, said, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." We are, indeed, glad that we are one who, if not deceived, have been taught both by the Scriptures and our own experience that the building of the church has not been left to poor vile and puny man, but we are persuaded that God works in his people both the will and the to do of his good pleasure. We hope the prophecy of Daniel has been fulfilled in us where he said, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." God's church and kingdom are synonomous, and Jesus told his disciples that his kingdom was not of this world. We would like to emphasize the fact that God's church is composed of living characters, witnesses who will not lie, nor will they give his glory to graven images. Peter said, "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have

tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." We like the manner in which Solomon described this work of God when he said, "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars; She hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table." In other words, nothing has been overlooked or neglected by God in either establishing his house here in the world, or in providing for her every need. Isaiah foretold what would come to pass in the last days by saying "the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." She is above the earth, and the serpent with all of his deceivableness and unrighteousness is unable to do her real harm, for her life is hid with Christ in God, and when he who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory. Notwithstanding the fact that we by nature are vile and corrupt, and cannot even think a good thought, yet God draws his chosen race by his rich resistless grace, for he who loved them with an everlasting love, draws them and they come from the North and the South, the East and the West, and they all go up that highway, which is not seen by the vulture's eye nor trodden by the lion's whelp, unto Mount Zion, the Holy City of our God. She is declared to be the perfection of beauty, and God dwells in her, for it is said that out of her the perfection of beauty God hath shined. This city is also said to be "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. God is known in her palaces for a refuge," and we are told to "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby." How good and how pleasant it is when we are enabled by God's Holy Spirit to "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death." The city is also well watered, for "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the most High." In this city there is law and order, for the government is upon the shoulders of her King, and she delights in the law of her Lord, after the inward man. She is a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." The Lord has given unto her his word, which is a lamp unto her feet, and a light unto her path. It is written that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." Those who profess to be followers of our Lord should certainly search the scriptures most diligently, for they testify of Jesus and instruct

us in the way of righteousness. Jesus said to his disciples, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven (the church): and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Here, it seems to us, we are told that anything which is not according to the scriptures, whether it be doctrine, order or keeping the ordinances, should be bound, or not permitted, while that for which we have a thus saith the Lord is to be maintained and earnestly sought after. The scriptures clearly set forth that the door by which one is to enter the visible church is baptism, which means immersion in water, not something else. Baptism is significant of death, burial and resurrection; therefore in order to be eligible for it, one must first be killed to the love of sin to the works of the law as a means of salvation; he must be buried or completely separated from his former life and have a love for righteousness and true holiness. Jesus said to those who followed after him, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another." We believe this to be one of the most outstanding marks by which the true church can be identified. Where love abounds there will be the desire to walk softly and humbly before God, and a taking heed unto doctrine and to one's self, lest one of His little ones be offended. There seems to be a great turning away from the old paths to-day by many who choose to call themselves the true church, and we are referring particularly to those identified as Old School Baptists. They are introducing music, Sunday Schools, and pleading unduly it seems to us with the unregenerate to join the church. Such things, in our opinion, are gross departures from what the scriptures approve. In the days of old it is said that God added to the church such as he would own and have to be saved. We believe in encouraging to the fullest extent those who give evidence of having passed from death unto life, but at the same time we also believe in requiring that every man who seeks admittance to the church give a reason of the hope that is within him. We fear the present day trend is to let down the bars all along the line, to become careless and indifferent with regard to both doctrine and order, as well as the kind of life we live. Membership in a sound and orderly Old School Baptist church should be a badge of honor, so to speak, in our walk among men. Where one does not live an honest, upright and moral life, the light that is in him is being hid under a bushel, and we are told by our Master that it should be placed in the candle stick where all that are in the house may see. We would like to see a striving to enter in at the strait gate, to observe all things whatsoever God hath commanded, especially on the part of Old School Baptists. We would also remind our readers that when Israel of old borrowed trinkets of gold, etc., from the Egyptians and made gods of them, they brought sorrow, suffering and death upon themselves, and we would strongly urge that Old Baptists be satisfied with the things of God's house and not borrow or adopt the methods of other people. The true church in order to maintain her identity, must be kept separate from the world and all its allurements, and "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." We have often thought of the prophecy of Isaiah as being fulfilled in this day, when we see those who profess to be God's people turning away from the things of his kingdom. Isaiah said, "seven women shall

take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." A careful reading of the fourth chapter of his prophecy will show that he was talking about the daughters of Zion, and not as we frequently hear applied to other so-called religious orders. Isaiah also, however, gave us a wonderful picture of the true church by saying, "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel." How good to behold in our time those branches which are abiding in the true vine, and see them bearing forth the fruits of righteousness. It is, indeed, a beautiful sight to behold churches not only earnestly contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, but at the same time adhering to the order of the house of God and keeping his commandments by manifesting their love for one another. We have endeavored to present some of the marks by which the true church can be identified here in the world to-day. Action speaks louder than words, and unless we believe and maintain the doctrine and order of God our Savior, we have no right to make any claim to being the true church of God.

Our inquirer also desires that we give our opinion as to when the church was actually organized, whether before or after the day of Pentecost. Jesus himself most certainly set the example by being the first to be properly baptized. It was also Jesus who instituted the Lord's Supper, and it was he who, after his death and resurrection, preached the gospel to Cleopas and the one that was with him while on their way to Emmaus. According to the record in the second chapter of Acts, following Peter's pentecostal sermon, "there were added about three thousand souls" to the church, so we would judge that there must have been a body of baptized believers in existence at that time. We do not believe that the Scriptures give us more definite information on this point.

Our sister further says that she has a friend who is affiliated with another group who claims she cannot understand why we believe as we do. This is perfectly natural and normal, for no one can believe that Jesus is the Christ but by the workings of the Holy Ghost. He that believes and is baptized must have the witness within himself. Without this he simply cannot bear testimony to the things of God. When God sets up his kingdom in the heart he overthrows all other kingdoms; he writes his law in the heart and puts it in the inward part, and those who experience these things are made to turn away from all false idols and worship the true and living God in spirit and in truth, and they will have no confidence in the flesh.

We trust what we have said will be helpful to our sister and of interest to our readers. R. L. D.

Copied from "STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES." By Arthur W. Pink, Editor and Publisher, 29 Lewis St., Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, Scotland. August 1946 issue.

A THREEFOLD MARVEL

"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." Isa. 57:15. It will at once be obvious to any spiritual mind that no human pen, however gifted, could begin to do justice to such a verse as this: rather is he likely to detract from its sublimity and depreciate its grandeur in the estimation of the reader. It is one of those out-

standing declarations of Holy Writ which is stamped so unmistakably with the autograph of its Divine Author. The mind of the creature could not have invented it, for the thoughts of a fallen being would never soar to such heights, conceive of such an ineffable Object as is here presented to our view, nor have imagined such an amazing act on His part as here predicated of Him. As a whole it exhibits a threefold marvel and miracle.

First, a marvel and miracle of *Divine condescension,* namely, that of the Highest and lowest meeting together. Our estimation of the stupendous and amazing nature of this marvel will be proportioned by our concept of the greatness and majesty of the Lord God. Alas that in our day this is so little perceived, even by the majority of those who profess to be His people. So little does the modern pulpit set forth the perfections of Deity, yea so wretchedly is He caricatured, that He has good reason to say of those in the pew, "thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself" (Psalms 50:21)—feeble, fickle, compromising: unable to accomplish His purpose, swayed by the events of time, indifferent to sin. It is not too much to say that the God of Scripture is "the unknown God" of modern Christendom. The "god" of the "churches" possesses scarcely any of the attributes of the living God, but is instead, a disgusting figment of their own perverted imagination and corrupt sentiments.

"For thus saith the high and lofty One," He is the One "who hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out heaven with the span. and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?*****Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.*****All nations before Him are as nothing; and they are counted to him as nothing, and vanity. To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?" Isa. 40:12-18. Pause, my reader, carefully ponder these words, and then ask yourself, Is there not real and pressing need for me to revise, yea, radically alter my concept of this mighty and majestic Being? "Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside Me there is no God." Isa. 44:6.

The God of Scripture is "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen." 1 Tim. 6:15-16. If that were more clearly grasped by our minds and if it more powerfully influenced our hearts, we should stand in awe of such an One, and in astonishment exclaim with one of old "But will God indeed dwell on the earth?" 1 Kings 8:27. Such was the wondering exclamation of Solomon upon the completion of the temple —probably the most remarkable and imposing building ever erected by man on this earth—the placing of all its sacred vessels in their proper places, and the dedication of the whole. For Jehovah to take up His abode therein, seemed to him a thing incredible, impossible. Considering His immensity, he went on to say "Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded."

The One whom the heavens are incapable of containing cannot be circumscribed in place nor held by space,

being infinite and omnipresent. The heaven is His throne and the earth is His "footstool:" shall then the King of glory occupy that for His seat! Can such an One take up His abode in a human heart? Surely such a thing is far beyond the widest stretch of imagination. What! that He "Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven" (Psalms 113:6), should deign to tabernacle in a worm of the earth, is utterly beyond comprehension. That He who is infinite should make His home in one that is finite had never been thought of by mortal mind. That He who "inhabiteth eternity" should indwell a creature of time, what is it but indeed a marvel and miracle of condescension—one which should bow to us before Him in overwhelming wonderment and worship.

Yet Jehovah is not only the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, but "whose name is Holy:" His very nature is ineffably pure. To His immaculate eyes the heavens themselves are unclean (Job 15:15), "the stars are not pure in His sight." Job 25.5. "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." Hab. 1:13. If then it be a thing incredible for the great God to dwell on the earth, if it would be a thing incomprehensible for Him to tabernacle in a finite creature of time, even if that creature were himself sinless; what shall it be for One who is infinitely Holy to dwell within one that is fallen, corrupt and vile? That is indeed a marvel and miracle of grace —appreciated only in proportion as we apprehend *who* He is and what we are! We read that "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid" (Isa. 11:6), and that is a miracle of nature; but for the Holy One to indwell a sinner is a miracle of miracles, the transcendent marvel of grace.

Yes, it is not only a marvel of condescension that the infinite God should indwell a finite creature, but it is also a marvel of *Divine mercy* that the ineffably Holy One should take up His abode in the heart of a fallen and sinful creature. Were it not that the Word of Truth clearly and repeatedly taught this, we had not dared to affirm it, nor even imagine such a wonder for ourselves. "Though the Lord be high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly." Psalms 138:6. O that our hearts were duly affected by His peerless benignity. If they were, we should exclaim with the Psalmist "Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high, Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth! He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill; That He may set him with princes, even with the princes of His people." Psalms 113:5-8. The high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, yet "the God of all grace." 1 Peter 5:10.

"I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." That exhibits to us, third, a marvel and miracle of *Divine power*. By nature there are none of a "contrite and humble spirit." So far from it, all the fallen children of Adam are in love with sin and self. The world over, the unregenerate are intractable, impenitent, proud and self willed. It is only by the supernatural operations of Divine power that the wild are tamed, the stout-hearted made contrite, and the haughty become lowly. Above, we have said that the great God takes up His abode in a worm of the earth, yet it is not one considered as a "worm of the earth" that He does so, no, rather it is one upon whom the Lord had set His heart from before the foundation of the world; as one redeemed by Christ and

cleansed by His precious blood, as one who has been renewed by the Holy Spirit, as one who has thrown down the weapons of his warfare and surrendered to the claims of God, as one who has been made a new creature by the might of Omnipotence. Wonder and adore at this threefold marvel and miracle.

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, it has pleased Almighty God to remove from this life our beloved sister DELLA COOK, who died December 24, 1949, at the age of 81 years, we, the members of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church with her relatives and many friends, greatly mourn her passing from this life, but we of Bethel Church, where she united early in life and where she maintained her membership ever after, especially have a precious hope that she has passed to life eternal which God has promised his elect through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Sister Cook suffered the loss of three sons and her husband and was also afflicted herself during the last several years of her natural life with paralysis which rendered her almost speechless and helpless. However, she was blessed to be left one son, two daughters-in-law, three grandsons and two granddaughters who lovingly and kindly cared for her. It is precious and refreshing to remember Sister Cook as one who through a huge portion of affliction and suffering in her life steadfastly contended that God is just and right in all his ways, that salvation is by his grace. She manifested great joy in meeting with those of like faith, and in washing one another's feet as Christ so directed his followers. Therefore be it

RESOLVED, by Bethel Church in regular conference, March 18, 1950 that this resolution be spread on the church record, a copy sent to Sister Cook's son, one to the Signs of the Times and one to The Old Faith Contender for publication in said papers.

(Elder) W. A. SPEER, Moderator pro tem
BARNEY EVERS, Clerk

OBITUARIES

In memory of MRS. DOCIA WARD HUDSON, born March 8, 1878, and died March 14, 1950, making her stay on earth 72 years and 6 days. She was the daughter of John T. and Sarah Elizabeth Ward of Union Parish, La. January 7, 1897 she was married to Charles H. Hudson. To this union eight children were born: Mrs. George Miller, Mrs. James Carmack, Mrs.. Herbert Miller, June, John and Woodrow Hudson of Farmerville, La., Mrs. Clyde Harper, Spring Hill, La. and Mrs. Velma Hall, Sterlington, La. The husband and all of the children survive her. There are twenty-two grandchildren and three great-grandchildren, as well as a host of other relatives and friends and church members all of whom mourn her loss.

She united with Liberty Hill Church, Aug. 22, 1915 being baptized by the late Elder W. K. Smith. She was very faithful and greatly devoted to the church and the faith and practice of the Old Baptists. She with her husband and family made their home an Old Baptist home any time they had the privilege of entertaining them. Many brothers, sisters and friends will remember her on account of the enjoyment and hospitality received in their very pleasant home. The writer always found an outstanding welcome there on many occasions. To know her was to love and admire her as a neighbor, a good and devoted wife and mother, also as an humble, meek, plain, sound and faithful Baptist. Her husband did everything known possible for her, her children were very attentive and all was done that they knew to do, but the final hour came when she should lay down this body of pain and suffering as is set forth in Eccl. 3:1-3. She will arise in the glorified image of our Savior in that glorious and perfect day, when the blessed Lord shall come to gather his jewels and carry them home to that blessed and eternal abode.

Weep not dear precious loved ones, she is much better off than we who are still subject to the turmoils and sufferings of this sin cursed world. In the 7th chapter of the Revelations it reads: "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." I have no doubt that her sufferings are all over. In my humble opinion she bore every evidence of this, and there is a much better day in the near future when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout and the voice of the archangel, and then the graves must give up their victims, and all who hope and believe alone in Christ Jesus for justification will awake from their sleeping dust and rise and shine in the perfect image of our precious Savior. What a wonderful hope this is for poor sinners such as I feel myself to be.

The unworthy writer tried to conduct the services in the presence of a large and devoted congregation. There was great evidence of the deep grief of her devoted husband, children and friends. The floral offerings indicated that she and her family had many friends. She was buried in the Taylor Cemetery at Liberty Hill Church. May God bless all who mourn and enable you to look

to Him for comfort as he alone can do. Your poor and unworthy brother and pastor.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES

MR. JAMES JEFFERSON JACKSON, better known in his community as "Pappy Jackson," was born Feb. 2, 1872, and passed away March 25, 1950 at his home in Limbs, Ky. He was the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Jim Jackson, and brother of John and George Jackson, Mrs. Elizabeth Ridgeway, Mrs. Sally Long, Mrs. Jenny Dorth, and Mrs. Mollie Sutherland. All lived to a ripe old age and preceded him in death. Dec. 8, 1889 he married Emma Dora Simmons. To this union six children were born. He is survived by his widow and the following children: Leon and Kilmer Jackson, Mrs. Bertha Chappell, Mrs. Volena Lee, Mrs. Lizzie Simmons. One daughter, Mrs. Viola Witherington, preceded him in death. There are twenty-one grandchildren and twenty-two great-grandchildren who will greatly miss his passing. He was known far and wide as "Pappy Jackson" and "Uncle Jeff." All the children in the community loved him, and he was always wanting to do something for them and others.

Mr. Jackson was formerly a merchant, but in later years was very active in farming. He assured his children that he was prepared to die and was often seen reading his Bible and heard singing gospel hymns. He was a very strong believer in the foreknowledge of God, predestination and salvation by grace, and the final perseverance of the saints through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ unto everlasting life. He was a most honorable man in his dealings with his fellow man, and was loved by all his neighbors. This was made manifest by the large congregation attending his funeral. His grief stricken widow and one son were confined to their beds and unable to attend the services, but the other children were all present. He never united with the church but gave evidence of being a member of that invisible church, the members of which are so numerous no man can number them. He did not feel worthy of asking a home with the Old Baptists whom he loved so much.

The writer tried to comfort the family by using a text in the fortieth chapter of Isaiah, "Behold, the Lord God will come with a strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." He was laid to rest, awaiting that last sweet and final call from on high to be in the image of Christ to rejoice for ever and ever. Now may the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, comfort Sister Jackson and the children with his spirit, and reconcile them to his will is the desire and prayer of the unworthy writer.

(Elder) O. W. PERKINS

HARVEY JONES WHITE, beloved member and deacon of New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, finished his earthly course at Poolesville, Maryland, on February 28, 1950. He was born March 9, 1869 at "Stoney Castle", Montgomery County, Maryland, the son of Benjamin and Elizabeth Jones White. In November, 1893, he was married to Miss Ida Dyson, and to this union were born Dr. Byron D. White, Frederick, Maryland and Mrs. Kathryn Hayes, Cleveland, Ohio. After the death of his first wife he married Miss Nannie D. Poole and after her death was married to his surviving wife, Alethea B. White on July 25, 1929. Surviving also are two sisters and a brother, Mrs. Mary E. Claggett and Mrs. Louise W. Ball, Washington, D. C. and Mr. Benjamin White, Poolesville, Md.

Brother White united with New Valley Church July 19, 1914, and was baptized by the late Elder H. H. Lefferts. In May, 1915, he was set apart as a deacon and faithfully filled that office until his death. Brother White was deeply concerned for the welfare of the church and shortly before his death he talked with the writer on several matters pertaining to the churches. He had hoped to live to see two deacons ordained at New Valley, since he was the only surviving one, but this was not to be. His desire, however, was carried out shortly after his passing.

Having served as a County Commissioner and in the State House of Representatives, Brother White was held in high esteem by all in every walk of life. The large concourse of friends and multitude of flowers paid tribute to his memory and bespoke the feelings of all that they had lost a worthy friend. His counsel and gracious manner will surely be missed by all the brethren of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at the home, after which interment was made in Monocacy Cemetery, Beallsville, Md. May the reconciling grace of God be with Sister White and all the family, together with the brethern with whom Brother White was long associated.

(Elder) JOHN D. WOOD

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. S. W. Heitmuller, Va., $1; W. R. Wallis, Miss., $7; H. T. Faulk, Tex., $2; J. Y. Vanhook, N. Y., $1.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 118 RUTHERFORD, N. J., SEPTEMBER, 1950 No. 9

CORRESPONDENCE

5265 Ardelle Ave., Stockton, Cal.

ELDER R. L. DODSON: Dear Brother: I have long delayed writing you for no other reason than that my mind was not made up to do so. My troubles have been many, my afflictions much, all seemingly without a cause. Yet I feel to realize God has a cause for everything; directs and brings to pass every act, both good and evil, according to his own good purposes and pleasure for there is no other power to bring it about. To me it is plain to see that in the very beginning God was using the devil to bring about Adam's transgression, to cause a fall into sin and death, that salvation by grace would have its perfect way and place, through and by the blood of Jesus Christ our Lord and Master, for there is no other way whereby we might be saved. Moreover God used the same wicked hands to take this same Jesus and crucify him. If it was just by chance, as some claim, or upon conditions of man, whether these wicked acts were carried out, then would salvation have been sure? I say, no. But as I see it God used the devil's devices as a means of man being cut off by the law, just as much as he purposed salvation to come by Jesus Christ. Could salvation have come without the shedding of the blood of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? I say, no. Then would there or could there have been any shedding of the blood of the Savior without a devil to crucify him? Had the devil failed to perform these wicked acts would salvation have been sure? No, no. If it was by chance that the devil could have failed in any of these acts then let us preach salvation was by chance. But why have so many of us so called Baptists gotten so far from the truths; the truths that speak for themselves; truths that need none of man's works and opinions to prop them up in a flimsy way? Let me say here that I have not yet come to the place where I desire to shun preaching the hidden truths and mysteries of an all wise God just because there are so many whims of the natural minds that are objecting to so great truths. Now-a-days we find so many of these objectors among us we can scarcely preach a sermon of truths without being called in question or objections made because there are so many weak on different points. Should we leave off a part to please those who prove to be wise in their own conceit, or should we go ahead and preach the whole truth as revealed in God's word, showing no respecter of persons? If we believe God has revealed these things to us as truths, and then complain and say let us not preach this or that too strong, it may offend this or that one, or it may drive some little one out, or it may do this or that; if this be right then let us get a pencil and paper and sit down and figure just how much of God's revealed truths, and just what parts of it we are to preach, and just what part we are to leave off. It is an evident fact

that many of us have come to just that, but is it not much better to suffer for the truth's sake rather than to suffer for forsaking any part of the truth to please man? He that seeks to please man has ceased to be the servant of God, and we see so much of this among our people, oh so many, preaching so much hinging salvation on man's works.

When we go back to the election of God, and this took place even as yet when there was none of them, it was then and there God made choice of his people, and it certainly was not because of any good or evil that any had done that caused him to choose them for there was not any of them then born, having done any good or evil. How then, say so many among us, that God loved Jacob and hated Esau because of what Esau did? If we are going to condemn Esau to hell because he afterwards sought repentance and found it not, then let us give ourselves the same condemnation as we are all under the same. I will answer this in Esau's stead by asking any, did you find repentance by your own works, by your own seeking or did repentance find you, or was it not a gift from God and not by your own works of seeking? The ninth chapter of Romans has been and is being one of the most misused chapters in the book by our own people. It is time we should come together by sound reasoning, and for our ministers to leave off the preaching and debating about things which have not been revealed from above. I say all this in respect to God and not to man, I mean the man in error. If man is right in any-thing it is by the righteousness of God that God has given him, and that not because of any good any have done. We are all Esau's in the flesh. It is my own Esau that causes me so much trouble. These things are all written for our learning and can only be understood by actual experiences, so my admonition to any of my brethren is to be careful how we condemn others for what they preach or say lest we find ourselves in great error and later experience as some have a swift destruction of sorrow and shame upon our heads. Be slow to speak and quick to think is a wonderful example to follow.

I see this is getting somewhat scattering, but if you will bear with me I want to treat a little farther on the ninth chapter of Romans. As I see it the chapter is treating upon the doctrine of election, showing that the God of our salvation chose us all in this election; and in the eighth chapter he, before the world was, predestinated that we should be conformed to the image of his Son, and in times to come he would make known to us what are the riches of his mysteries and of his glory. I want to say with shame I have many times heard our good brethren take Jacob and Esau as a text, and use it to show that it was because of Esau's works that he failed to enter into the heavenly kingdom, and before they finished with it they would get all hinged on works and the like of man's works. The scriptures speak for themselves and the answer is there, "the election hath obtained it." We read from Genesis to Revelations that there are two generations spoken of in the scriptures: one natural, fleshly, Adamic, earthly; then the generation of Jesus Christ, a spiritual, an incorruptible, a holy chosen generation different from the first Adam, of another seed altogether, the seed of Christ and every seed after its kind. As I see it Esau is representing the first seed, Adam, man who is of the earth earthy; and Jacob, whom He loved, the representative of the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, a quickening spirit, the regen-

erated principal spiritually minded for the natural mind receiveth not, (and what a hard not,) the things of the spirit. Esau is a figure of the church under the law. How many under the law sought repentance by the law, their own works, and found it not by the law? I answer not one. If Esau had found repentance after he had sought it even in tears, do we suppose God would have then been obligated to give Esau salvation? No, the scripture does not teach such arminian doctrine.

In tracing Esau's history we find his father left him one promise, just as God left a promise to all the first church under the flesh covenant, that he would take all from under the yoke of bondage in times to come. Jacob represented the church under the gospel, and we see, later after Jacob's time to return to face his brother Esau, them brought together and embracing each other. Just as God brought those brethren under law and grace together and broke down the middle wall of partition and made peace between them, just as that sweet peace was manifested between the two brothers Jacob and Esau.

The Bible was written to be taken spiritually, and to be used as a spiritual guide to guide you in the way of all truth as it is in Christ. I am but little concerned as to what is truth in the first Adam, or as to what the first Adam believes about anything, as far as spiritual things he receiveth not such. God found fault with the first covenant just as he did the first Adam, and for this cause he took it out of the way to give place for the second. It is in our own experiences we have to have our old Adamic taken out of our way before we can love that second from heaven brother of ours, that brother Jacob, the lot of God's inheritance, so by the election of God we are heirs of salvation. "By grace are ye saved through faith;*****Not of works lest any man should boast." If God chose his people in the election, and he did, then and there were not all others left out? He that was to be condemned was condemned there and then. Remember this took place in the ancients of eternity while as yet there were none of them yet born having done any good or evil, and, let me remind all our people, if Esau was condemned as some claim he was it certainly is proven that it is not by what some of us claim it was that he was condemned, certainly not by what he did or did not do. If we profess we believe in the doctrine of election, then let us leave scripture where it rightfully belongs by confessing that the election hath obtained it. There is no such teaching that any one can send themselves to hell as some are teaching, any more than they can do good and go to heaven. I have no more sense than to believe that if a man can pay his way to hell he could just as easily pay his way out. If that is truth then the election of God is of no effect. I feel certain we have many among us who will object to our putting it this plain, but I am sure it is only those who have and are following the traditions of men, those who have in their own minds builded them a hell of their own and want to make use of it. Naturally a fellow wants to put his ideas into use. I believe in a hell but I am sure I know nothing about one except the one I have to live in. I remember a shameful remark I made a few years back when I said I would die and go to hell before I would ever try to preach any more, but little did I know at that time my lie would be proven later as truth. Not long ago it came to me while meditating upon Jonah's travels to the ministry. I can see now that is and was exactly what

Jonah had to do. He went down to the belly of hell, and let me say I believe he had to die before he was a fit subject to preach the God given truths; had to die to all self works, and then he could vow from the belly of hell that salvation was of the Lord.

Now, dear brother, I hope this will be no discouragement to you whatsoever, and I hope I have put it in a way that God's truths will be found in it all and that you will find no fault, giving God all the praise to whom praise belongeth. May God continue to guide you in all the ways of truth by spirits divine, and that he may go before you as in Israel's day and fight your many battles that I know lay just ahead of you and me and all others who dare to stand for pure truths. His promise was that ye shall suffer persecutions in this world, but bless your heart there is a better promise. After this life of sorrow and troubles we will be caught up into yonder world ever to be with the Lord and his heavenly host in a world that knows no sorrow, pain or death, but a life of eternal joy and happiness. Farewell for this time. Yours in love for the truth.

(Elder) SETH BYNUM

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"—Rom. 11:33.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Some time ago my good friend and brother Baptist, Loren Barger, of Golconda, Ill. wrote me, quoting the above scripture from the pen of the apostle Paul and remarking, "I am reading the *Signs of the Times* and get great comfort from it; and as I do not get to hear the gospel preached very often, I thought what a great feast it would be to read an article you had written in the *Signs,* using for a subject Rom. 11:33. I know every reader of this dear Old Baptist paper would share the joy and comfort with me."

At last I find a few brief moments to grant Brother Barger's request, and am now attempting, as God may give grace, to set down some of the thoughts I have in mind relative to what I understand, or at least some of the things I understand, Paul was writing about. He begins this 33rd verse with the interjection, "O"; an expression of wonder, amazement and inexpressible awe: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" By the grace of God and the revealing light of his Holy Spirit, Paul is given to catch a glimpse of some of the deep things of God, which deep things are beyond the reach of carnal perception, and are revealed to the Lord's people only by the Spirit of God that searches all things, yea, the deep things of God. (1 Cor. 2:10) This wonderful experience of the great Paul is the same blessed experience that comes to every child of God who has come to know him as he is, and is ready to confess the riches of God's wisdom and knowledge reaches to such profound, immeasurable depths that they cannot be fathomed by the wisdom of this world; and they are ready to say with David, "Thou art the God that doest wonders." As defined by Mr. Webster; Wisdom is knowledge practically applied to the best ends. Believing in God, as he is possessed with the attributes of *omnipotence* and *omnipresence,* we could not think of him applying his knowledge to any other than the best ends, because God's wisdom is perfect, infinite and all embracing, and his knowledge is all perfect, all embracing foreknowledge. God has never learned any thing because he has eternally known all things; yes, God has eternally foreknown and foreseen

all things whatsoever come to pass, and he has foreknown and foreseen all things coming to pass in just the way, and at just the time they have come to pass; and to say that the all knowing, sovereign God has no purpose in all things, whatsoever comes to pass is to deny every attribute of Deity, and leaves the ordering and governing of this world and its affairs to blind chance with nothing certain. Considering the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of the eternal, sovereign God, no wonder Paul would say, "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever, Amen."

The very immutable character of the attributes of God, successfully refutes the idea of LIMITING predestination and conditional salvation. It is my candid conviction that no one can truly believe in the foreknowledge of God as embracing all things, without having to admit that God predestinated all things. I cannot bring myself to believe that there was with God in eternity, a power or wisdom that was able to inform him of what would come to pass, and thereby give God the foreknowledge of all things that come to pass. This being true, I cannot think of any reason for God certainly foreseeing and foreknowing all things, other than that he predetermined them to be, and by his providence ordereth them to fall out according to his eternal purpose that nothing befalleth any by chance and without his providence, and as Paul in another place declares of God, "Who worketh ALL THINGS AFTER THE COUNSEL OF HIS OWN WILL." God's purpose and divine order of things—ALL things—is as fixed and immutable as God himself; for "He is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." Job 23:13. To the eye of faith, the wisdom and knowledge of our God is displayed in all the works of his hand. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." Psalms 19: 1-2. Who but the almighty, sovereign God in whom we trust, and before whose untarnished throne men and angels bow, crying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty" could hang the earth on nothing and keep it there as the ages roll on? Who but our God could hurl, as it were, from his finger tips, the countless stars with which he sowed the field of ether and stretched across the heavens the dazzling milky way like a band of sparkling gems? What joy and peace of mind; what blessed assurance the people of God experience, when the sublime character and mighty works of God engage their thoughts and the glorious revealing light of his wisdom and knowledge is flashed upon the great, melodramatic scene of his creation both in nature and in grace, and they are blessed to trust their all in his hands, knowing that he is their refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble! And to all who truly believe in and trust him, the only true God, how out of place and how foolish it seems to hear those who claim to be teaching the truth of God's word, to exhort the lost, poor, weak, finite man to LET or PERMIT God to do this and that, and represent him as being a complete, disappointed failure in the things he has purposed to do and to have done.

I heard one preacher, preach on the subject, "God's hands tied!" He said

that God wanted to do so many things but man had tied his hands; that God had failed in the very beginning of time, in that he could not get Adam to do what he wanted and expected him to do. Most every day I hear some preacher telling his audience that God is expecting people to do so and so. God never has expected any man to do any thing that he knows that man will not do; nor does God expect any man not to do any thing he knows that man will do. Every phase of Arminianism denies the sovereignty of God, brings God down to the level of finite man, and then they seem surprised at the people not manifesting more interest in their preaching. There is not one crumb of comfort in such preaching for the Lord's little ones, whom God has taught to know their weakness and littleness, and that without his help they can do nothing well pleasing in his sight.

Lest I make this article too lengthy I must soon come to a close, but before leaving off speaking, may I have a personal word with our dear old brother and yokefellow, Elder Lytle Burns, of Florence, Ala. Some years ago it was the pleasure of myself and my brethren here to have Brother Burns in our midst, when and where we enjoyed his timely messages from my pulpit, and I had him as a guest in my own humble home. I greatly enjoyed your article, dear brother, on predestination appearing in the February *Signs;* and I note that you say "I will soon be 81 years old, and have been trying to preach Christ as a complete Savior for 44 years." On the 15th day of last month (February) I celebrated my 83rd birthday which is in the 60th year of my gospel ministry. I am still pastoring my home church, whose humble servant I have been for 58 consecutive years. Back in September I baptized two into the church fellowship of our church here in Johnson City, one of them being my own daughter. I am happy to hear of the restoration of your sight and of your general good health.

Now to all who love our God and tremble at his word, let me say I love you all and may God be with you all to bless and keep you from all harm if it be his will. To Brother Barger may I say I have complied as best I could with your request, though I have only barely touched the heart of the subject matter in the text you gave me. If you can derive any benefit from my poor, imperfect effort, to God belongs all the glory, and I am sure you realize that, and will give him what is due him. In hope of eternal life which is in Jesus, and looking for his blessed second appearing, I subscribe myself a poor sinner, saved by the grace of God and that alone.

(Elder) CHARLES M. WEAVER
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Johnson City, Ill.

Damariscotta, Maine

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I have wanted to write you many times and two letters started were never finished. I hear you have been in the hospital and I do want to wish you a good recovery. I hope it has not been serious. I know that whatever you have been through you could feel the strength that comes from our Lord because he never leaves nor forsakes us. It seems strange that after hearing an Old School Baptist minister, or any brother or sister talk one is sure that whatever comes they have more than their own strength to lean on; while after some one of the world talks one feels so sorry for them in time of trouble because they are depending on human strength. God is near them just as he is near us but he has not seen fit to reveal himself to them.

Why are a few of us so blessed? I look around me and see all the worldly possessions some have and sometimes I feel a little envious, but the next minute I know that I am far richer than some of them because I have that ever present help and comfort which is all that keeps me living. The riches of material things are nothing when the tests of life comes.

I wish we could have some of the good preaching here more often to keep me more in the spirit. I cannot seem to thrive spiritually without preaching from some of you Elders. I rise above the worldly things at association time but through the rest of the year I grow dead. I never lose faith because I have to ask for help to live every day, but the wonderful rejoicing comes only when I can hear the preaching and hear the others talk. They seem to express just what I have felt and make my faith so sure. This may sound foolish to you as you know all about it in so much greater experience than I can ever know. It seems God must have shown you great things to enable you to preach some of the sermons I have listened to. Perhaps being sick has given you a chance to rest from the strain of preaching, but I hope you will not rest too long as we all want to hear you again. That is a selfish way to look at it but your gift has meant so much to many of us through the years that we all want to hear you again.

It seemed hard to know that Elders Vaughn and Topping had gone beyond our call but Elder and Sister Wood have already begun to fill the empty place there. Last year I thought the Association would be different without the well known Elders there except Elder Bellows who has kept us supplied so faithfully, but that only showed how weak my faith had been as we never had a better Association, and I then thought that God does not have imperfect work. One can surely see the work of God at our Associations as there are so few of us with rather a faltering strength behind us as far as worldly eyes can see. I am not much, if any, help to my church except that I love all the members and love to hear them talk, but my head gets confused so easily that I cannot help as I ought, and my grandmother is tied by a handicap. With two or three members from each of the three churches having to bear the heaviest part of the care the Association is held and the meetings are good. The churches of the other denominations would think we were insane to have meetings without a beautiful building, instrumental music and hot house plants creating a beautiful atmosphere, but little do they realize the spirit of fellowship that is among us making us as one. The earthly standards disappear; the well to do and those of more humble position mingle with and enjoy each other as though they had always lived the same lives and had much in common; and so they have for what do they need to have in common more than the love of our God who caused their sins to be taken away as though they had never existed. I sometimes look for my past sins and find they have been washed away. I remember them all but the guilt is gone. I wonder why? The only answer is the grace of God which seems almost unbelievable except that I have felt the power of it.

I must not tire you with more rambling. After I have written I fear it is not as a true Old Baptist should write but trust you will make allowance for my ignorance, I have but little chance to talk with Old Baptists. My health has been unusually good of late and I try to appreciate it, but I can see the more blessings one has the

more that is expected. When one has to beg for strength minute by minute, as I once had to do, I was a better follower of God, but I am thankful to him that I am allowed to be a half normal wife and mother. I am assured now that if God could improve me as much as he has he can carry me through life even though I may go down again and have to beg for courage each step.

I do hope you are improving rapidly and you and your family are well in every other way. Our home is our joy with the hand of God to guide it as we know he does. Hoping for your patience I am yours in the hope of our Lord.

(Mrs.) RUTH CLARK

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222 Lombardy St., Trenton, Tenn.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN FAITH AND FEAR OF THE LORD I HOPE: My mind of late has been considerably exercised on the fruit of the gospel spirit; by that I mean, the fruit of the spirit by which it is evidenced that there is an abiding principle of faith, hope and charity animating our life, soul and spirit. It is said that a tree is known by the fruit it bears. In Matt. 7:16 it reads, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." In verse 17 to 20 it reads, "Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.*****neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. *Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.*"

Man in nature, who has not experienced that new birth, is the corrupt tree, and although he may be a good citizen, a successful man of the world, a man of wealth both in this world's goods and social friendships, rich in prestige, influence and power, yet he is in the category of that corrupt tree that cannot bring forth good fruit and is destined to be hewn down and cast in the fire, unless it is in the will and purpose of Almighty God to vouchsafe unto him a dispensation of his grace at the good pleasure of his will.

By reason of the above references we would expect to find some evidence or fruit in the life of God's children that would mark them separate and apart from men of the world or flesh. Now just what are the distinguishing marks that manifest the difference? We all have one common origin, inasmuch as we are all the children of Adam by nature, and all are inheritors of the death sentence pronounced on Adam because of his sin; and since Adam sinned, we all sinned in him. Therefore it must be made manifest by the fruit that we bear that we are the children of God, if one is to be distinguished from the other.

"The fruit of the Spirit is *love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance*: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Gal. 5:22-24. The fruit enumerated above are not prerequisites in order to attain to the blessing of Almighty God but they are beams of his refulgent glory shining forth in the life of his children. Just as the moon beam is the reflected light of that great luminary, the sun, so is the goodness, love, meekness, faith, etc., in the life of God's children reflected from the God of love.

In contra-distinction it is appropriate to enumerate the fruit of the flesh, also, or that fruit which marks the man of the world which is, "*Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings,* and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have told you in time

past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Gal. 5:19-21.

Here, dear brother, is my conflict, for it seems to me that I bear more fruit in the latter group than the former if indeed I bear any at all in the former. Is it so with you? I feel this so heavily at times that if it were not for that little hope that burns eternal in my breast I would have no hope. When our Lord, after the supper, had laid aside his garment, and washed his disciples feet, he gave them a new commandment. He said, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John 13: 34-35. How can any one manifest his love for his brethren except by the fruit he bears? He may outwardly profess love for his church and his brethren, but if his life or his actions do not comport with his professions of love, where is the evidence of his profession? In John 14:15 he said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," and again in the 23rd verse he said, "If a man love me, he will keep my words."

In view of the foregoing scriptures, it seems to me, the child of God will be found manifesting his love for the brotherhood, and that means, he will be instant in season and out of season in attending to the things that make for peace, harmony, love, fellowship, prompt attendance at all meetings of the church, if possible to do so, and a willingness to spend and be spent for the good of the brotherhood, and to freely contribute to the upkeep of his church property. I believe that a well kept and orderly house of worship is a very good barometer of the interest of any church membership. This applies alike to both the physical properties of the church and to the order of business. "Let all things be done decently and in order."

While meditating along this line of thought my mind is directed to the 15th Psalm. David inquires, "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?" The reference here obviously is to the tabernacle in which Israel worshipped during their journey in the wilderness, and in Canaan until the temple was built by Solomon. Also, thy holy hill has reference to Mt. Zion, which also is called Mt. Moriah where David, by the direction of the prophet Gad, built an altar in the threshing floor of Araunah from whom he purchased the threshing floor and oxen for fifty pieces of silver on which he offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. This was in consequence David having numbered Israel, and as a consequence God sent a three day pestilence on Israel in which seventy thousand men died.

It is on or about this same place that the temple was built, and in this same mount that Isaac was offered, in spirit, by Abraham and therefore, to the Israelites, it was a holy hill. The tabernacle and the holy hill in this Psalm, however typify the New Jerusalem which is above. David cried, "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?" There is no doubt that David's conscience was a burning fire of remorse for his many sins. Although God declared David was a man after his own heart, David was a great sinner, having committed adultery with Bath-sheba, the wife of Uriah and had Uriah placed in the forefront of the battle to insure his death so David could have his wife. With the heavy weight of this guilt on his conscience, plus all the many sins of his life, he was brought to the brink of despair when contemplating where he

would spend enternity. I believe this place of remorse, foreboding and despair is the place that all God's people are brought at some time in their life, and are made to drink of the bitter dregs of weakness, hopelessness and despair. It is when we are weak that God performs his perfect work. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commanded his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Rom. 5.6-10.

When the import of this truth is realized by God's children it will cause them to be obedient to the exhortation recorded in James 4:7-10, wherein he says, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." There is every indication that David was humbled for the answer came to David in the second and third verses of the fifteenth Psalm, "He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor." It is manifest that the type man here described by David (who should dwell in his holy hill) was not the type of man that bore the fruit that David's life had produced. Is it not manifest here that our lives, as considered in Adam, do not and cannot bear the fruit of true holiness and righteousness demanded of Almighty God? Then that being so, where is the remedy? We are now in the position to understand what we are by nature and what we must be by grace to ever enjoy the heavenly felicity that is in store for God's little ones.

In Psalms 14:1 we find what we are by nature. "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good." In another scripture there is added, *no not one*. We have here, in few words, what man is by nature. In contra-distinction to this, it is by love, goodness and mercy of God through the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ that reconciliation was made. Therefore, it is by grace that we are saved. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Rom. 5:1-2. Inasmuch as all men have sinned and come short of the glory of God, "And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him." The salvation, righteousness and the intercessor for God's people are all embodied in the person of Jesus Christ, in whom dwelleth the fulness of the godhead bodily, who because "the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them, who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bon-

dage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." Heb. 2: 14-18.

In conclusion let me say that herein lies my hope, all my expectation that I might be of that number for whom his blood and water flowed on Calvary's cross. I am a great sinner but he is a great Savior, and since it is sinners that he came to save, my hope is that he sprinkled a portion of that blood on the doorpost of my heart, by virtue of which the destroying angel will pass over this unworthy sinner and, not only so, but over God's people every-where. If we have this hope, which is sure and steadfast, and is anchored to that within the veil, then come tribulation, peril, death, we will enter into that rest that remaineth to the people of God. May God bless his word to the edification and comfort of his people is my prayer for Christ's sake. Your unworthy brother in hope.

H. M. BOWDEN

Saragossa, Ala.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BRO. IN THE LORD I HUMBLY HOPE: The *Signs* came a few days ago which reminds me to renew my subscription. I know every one will be glad to help you enlarge the paper for I think we all agree that all that is wrong with it is that it is just too small.

Maggie Lee Hayes and I have been writing to each other expressing our views on different scriptures, one in particular Luke 9 beginning at the 12th verse. I do not know that I had or have now any light on this or any scripture, but sometimes I love to meditate. I picked up my Bible to read a little and opening at John 6 found the same subject Maggie Lee and I had been writing on. I then read what Matthew said and turned to see what Mark said in 6:39, "And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things." What a beautiful picture of the Gentile church: these disciples wanted him to send the multitude away because it was time to eat; one of the writers said, "There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes." Even they did not know how unlimited their Master's power was. Even today he is still feeding the souls of his hungry little sheep, when he sees fit to make them sit down and when he blesses those five loaves and two fishes the lad had it is a plenty; it was all they had then, it is all we have now; it was all the lad David had; it is all that was, is or ever will be needed; when he blesses and hands it to his servants, and they give it out it is sufficient for the people of God for it is the gospel, the power of God. It filled the souls of his people on the day of Pentecost. There have been times when I could feel to say with David, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over."

As I look from my window this morning the clouds are dark; the trees in my yard have no leaves; vegetation has been bitten by frost and the world looks gloomy; but across the road is a field of alfalfa; in the corner of my yard a cedar; up the road in the top of an oak hangs a bunch of mistletoe. This

reminds me that life is not gone from the earth. It is only the gloomy season; there are some things that the frosts, snows and cold winds do not affect. This is a beautiful world our Lord created for us. Even now when the oaks are bare, the grass dead, we know that at his good pleasure he will pull the sun north; we will have sunshiny days, the trees will bud, put forth new leaves, the ground will be warmed and little flowers, that man did not plant, bloom to beautify the woods. All this natural beauty is for our natural eyes, our natural enjoyment; and think of the spiritual things he has provided for our spiritual pleasure. It is perfect when we are given an eye to see. The people of God pass through these dark seasons, and sometimes cannot even see the cedar in the corner of the yard or the mistletoe in the oak. We do know there is something in the child of God that never dies, but lives on and on forever.

As I read Elder Lambert's letters tears filled my eyes, and I felt in my heart at that time surely there is a bond of kinship here. I have met Elder Lambert and heard him preach and have no doubts regarding him, but myself, I fear sometimes that I have been deceived and have deceived others as to what I am. I spend so much time in darkness; my path seems to be strewn with thorns so much, but I have seasons of rejoicing. Sometimes when I meet with the people of God I forget that I may be an imposter among them, and I too enjoy joining in singing hymns of praise and eating those two fishes and five loaves of bread. Sometimes all alone at home I feel to be lifted and am comforted with the precious promises; sometimes receive sweet letters from Maggie, Sister Edwards and others precious in the faith, and they cheer me and give me courage to press on. My health is not good I cannot get out to meeting often. I spend a lot of time writing and after I read what I have written I find it does not express my feeling and, therefore, it goes into the fire. In hope.

(Mrs.) M. G. HAND

Route 1, Box 71, Merryville, La.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR EDITOR AND PUBLISHERS: I see that it is time to renew for the good old *Signs*. Last year I had just sent in my renewal when you announced the raise in price so I am sending an extra dollar this time. The preaching that I get from your paper is about all I get. There is not a sound Primitive Baptist church near here. I will be seventy-four years of age the ninth of next month. Have had double pneumonia twice in less than three years so am not able to travel very much. I go to hear the folks around me and hope I gather a few crumbs sometimes. A few days ago I attended a meeting and thought the first man that spoke preached a good sermon, giving God all the power and glory. His successor, it seemed to me, in a rather rebuking manner said he would agree that before regeneration it was entirely the workings of God, but after that regeneration the individual has the knowledge and power to walk in obedience. Dear child of God, one whose feet have been lifted out of the miry clay and placed upon a rock; one who has been in the blackest darkness with no power to come forth; does the above witness with your experience? I dare say no. Oh, the dark hours that this old sinner has spent groaning and moaning for deliverance. Like one of old I am made to cry, "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions." Psalms 51:1. I am persuad-

ed that David wrote this after regeneration. "I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, (something that the individual had been in possession of) and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment.*****Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle." Ezek. 34: 16 and 22. No room left for man's works. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him (on whom? Jesus Christ.) the iniquity of us all." Isa. 53:6. You see Jesus Christ is the deliverer not man. God demanded Jonah to go and preach unto a certain city, but like other men he thought he would out smart God and do his own will. Had he succeeded that poor old fish might have been waiting there yet for him to come along. God's ways are not our ways. He had (in the past tense) prepared a fish to swallow Jonah. He had fixed the exact time and place for this to take place, and it worked just as God had predestinated it. After the apostle Paul was stricken down on his way to Demascus we hear him crying, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil that I would not, that I do." Jeremiah 10:23 says, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

My remarks have been very scattering, but if what I have written does not condemn the theory of man salvation, then I fail to understand the teachings of the Bible. Will repeat that I enjoy reading the *Signs* and often wish I could write something comforting to a sin sick soul. If saved at all it is by grace alone. Your brother in hope. J. PAUL McMILLIAN

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will convene with the Olive and Hurley Church at Shokan, N. Y. on Wed. and Thurs., Sept. 13 and 14, 1950. Meeting will open at 10:30 D.S.T. Wed. morning. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren and ministers of our faith and order in fellowship with us, and all friends of our faith will be heartily welcomed. Those arriving on Tuesday will go to the Brookside Lodge in Ashokan, conducted by Mrs. Hazel Byrnes, where they will be cared for. Those arriving Wed. morning will go directly to the meeting-house in Shokan. Buses connecting with bus lines to N. Y. City and Oneonta pass through Shokan and Ashokan; also Ashokan is on the Catskill Mountain Branch of the N. Y. Central R. R. For the information of strangers it may be noted that the villages of Shokan and Ashokan are connected, each having a separate post-office. The meeting-house is located in Shokan.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the New Valley Church, Loudon Co., Va., Wed., Thurs. and Fri., Oct. 11, 12 and 13, 1950. Ministers and other brethren of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us. The meeting-house is 8 miles north of Leesburg and 4 miles from Point of Rocks, Md. half a mile from Lucketts on Highway Route 15. Those coming Tues., 10th will come to Leesburg and inquire for Bruce McIntosh or call C. R. Hollandsworth. Greyhound buses leave 12th and N. Y. Ave., Washington, D. C. A local train leaves Rosslyn, Va. near the end of Key Bridge at 2:25 p. m. Those coming Wed. by bus to Leesburg too late to be met will find taxi service near bus stop. Those coming Wed. by private conveyance will go directly to the meeting-house. For further information write

M. W. HOWSER, Church Clerk
Purcellville, Va.

CHANGE OF DATES

Meetings held on second floor of Pythian Temple Building, 1012 Ninth St., N.W., Washington, D. C. formerly on third Sundays each month are now held on fifth Sundays.

FRANK T. SIMPKINS, Sr.
5214 Harper St., Dillon Park,
Washington 19, D. C.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting-house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert. For information contact QUINCY A. GLADDING, 5 Hill Top Rd., Baltimore 28, Md.

EDITORIALS

RUTHERFORD, N. J. SEPTEMBER, 1950

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"And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant."—Ezek. 20:37.

I received a request some time ago from W. A. Chandler, Jonesboro, La. to write upon the text of scripture quoted above. I undertake to do so fully aware of my inability, trusting that God will grace us with his Spirit to illuminate the mind with spiritual meditations. I have found by sad experience that I cannot command the Spirit at my will.

We desire to consider first, the people to whom this is addressed.—the "YOU" in the text. We find this addressed only to the house of Israel. God spake through the prophets in olden times to the Israelites—national Israel. These same words are now applicable to spiritual Israel, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God." Spiritual Israel is now scattered in every nation, kindred, tongue and people throughout the earth. God is not speaking to every one of Adam's race, only to the Israelites. All the scriptures, both Old and New Testaments are addressed to God's children. They are the only ones who can receive them. You will note that all letters recorded in the New Testament are written to a people of certain characteristics. There is not a command, exhortation, invitation or promise recorded in the Bible without a character description attached thereto. I feel that I would be guilty of high treason before Almighty God should I attempt to apply any of the Scriptures as addressed to all of Adam's race. So, in this treatise I want the readers to consider that the "YOU" in the text applies to all who are included in the *everlasting covenant,* all those who shall finally be saved in heaven and immortal glory. Sometimes I think it may be boresome or monotonous to those who sit under the sound of my voice, or read my writings for me to stress the fact that all Scriptures contained in the Bible are written to God's people only.

Let us notice next, the "I" in the text. As stated above it is God speaking. The One who created the heavens and the earth makes these assertions. The One who worked all things after the counsel of his own will is the author of these expressions. The One who doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth decreed these things. The One who said, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it," spake these words. He that speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast made these declarations. He has spoken it; he will also do it: he has purposed it; he will also bring it to pass!

Jehovah says, "I will cause you to pass under the rod." What does he mean by this statement? What is the rod, anyway? When I think of a rod

I am reminded of the adage "Spare the rod and spoil the child." I think of the proverb, "He that spareth his rod hateth his son." The Lord chasteneth and scourgeth every son that he receiveth according to Hebrew 12:6. When I think of a rod I think of a whip. I think that troubles, trials, temptations, afflictions, tribulations, and all things that sorely oppress God's children are the smartings of the rod. These things do not come about accidentally. They do not occur haphazardly because God causes you to pass under them. They are in your path and you cannot escape them. God has ordained them for your good and even though they are not good to you they are good for you. Some people would have you believe that trouble is solely of the devil, but I am persuaded that it is a blessing of God. He says through the Psalmist, "I will be with him in trouble." I dare say that your brightest experience immediately followed your greatest distress. According to the Psalmist, He makes the clouds his chariot. It is in the darkest hours that he appears to his people as their deliverer. We would not appreciate the bond were it not for the rod. We would not appreciate the staff were it not for the rod. David said, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." The rod beats us down to lean upon the staff, Christ Jesus. The chastening rod of Almighty God causes us to know the filthiness of our own righteousness, and how destitute we are of ability thus fitting us to call upon him. When we are given to trust in him, our past troubles then become a comfort to us for we learn that God used even these as means to bring us unto this trust in him. Paul said, "We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience experience," etc. Paul realized that these tribulations were necessary means that God used in bringing us into that hope that maketh not ashamed. The rod is not applied to us in order to punish us for our sins because Christ paid the penalty. This penalty is not against those who are encouched in the covenant for Jesus satisfied the law in our stead. The rod is applied to us in order to *make right.* It is applied to us to whip us into the right path. It beats pride out of us and makes us humble. The effect of the rod is that we learn obedience. Paul told the Hebrews that Jesus learned obedience by the things he suffered. If Jesus was taught obedience by the things he suffered is it a terrible thing that we should learn obedience the same way? Then surely it is a wonderful blessing indeed that he causes you to pass under the rod!

The last portion of the text is "I will bring you into the bond of the covenant." You will notice that our Lord said, "I will bring you into the BOND of the covenant," not into the covenant. I think all God's children were in the covenant in eternity before time. They have always been embraced and included in the covenant, having been chosen in Christ Jesus from before the foundation of the world, but they must pass under the rod before they can embrace the covenant and come into its relationship. You were chosen into the COVENANT but you must be brought into the BOND of the covenant by the power of Almighty God.

What is the BOND of the covenant? Could it be that precious hope that is experienced by you? When hungry and thirsty your soul fainted in you and you were without hope and felt hell would be your just doom, God was gracious to you, he restored your soul and spoke sweet peace to you. Could the bond be that personal stamp of mercy and grace that is imprinted in your heart? Could the bond be the

fruits of the spirit that characterizes God's children such as: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance? Could it be the *shalls* and *wills* of Jehovah that makes the covenant sure and certain to all those embraced therein?

I like to think of the *shalls* and *wills* of Jehovah. It is expressed in this covenant that "I *will* be to them a God, and they *shall* be to me a people." God says in Psalm 91, I *will* set him on high. *****He *shall* call upon me, and I *will* answer him: I *will* be with him in trouble; I *will* deliver him, and honour him. With long life *will* I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation." Jehovah promises, "I *will* put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." Space will not permit me to list the many *shalls* and *wills* of Jehovah that is now flooding my mind. Suffice it to say that there is not a single condition left for man to perform. Could the setting on high be the *bond of the covenant?* The rod brings us low and makes us to realize that we are in the miry pit sinking down, seemingly, into perdition. All our feeble attempts sink us deeper and deeper. He comes to our rescue, takes us up out of the pit and sets our feet upon the rock, Christ Jesus. Is it not a setting on high to see Jesus as our Savior? Is it not an elevation to be raised from the fellowship of this world to the fellowship of the children of God? I well remember the joy experienced by me when the church received me into their fellowship. It is indeed a high place to be graced by the Spirit to sing praises unto him, to pray to him, to meditate upon his wonderful promises to the children of men, to write and preach his wonderful doctrine of love and grace! Could the *bond of the covenant* be the full fruition of it? Could it be heaven and immortal glory that awaits you who are kept by the power of God? Could it be the final fulfillment of all the obligations and vows expressed in the covenant that will be experienced in eternity after this time world?

I am persuaded that the *bond of the covenant* is the *earnest* of the inheritance that is experienced by God's children here in time. This foretaste of his love is sweet. The experiences of these many deliverances are wonderful. The few moments spent in prayer are sacred. The joy of His fellowship is sublime. The tie that binds us together in sweet fellowship one with another is great. All his gifts are matchless. These fleeting moments of enjoyment make us yearn and look forward toward the prize of the high calling when we shall quit the walks of men and be received into the full fellowship of God and all his dear little children.

I submit these few columns over my signature to the readers of the *Signs* trusting that God will bless as he sees fit. May I add that I have been much concerned about this periodical. I feel it a high honor to be on the editorial staff because I feel that God has blessed it to the comfort of Zion for more than a century. Its writers are contending for the same things that the writers were in 1832. May God bless us to make an attempt to enlarge its circulation. God has blessed it to be the oldest and best periodical of its kind among us and I deem it worthy of our support.

Now may the grace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, the sweet communion of the Holy Spirit, be ours to grace us with a godly walk in this life, choosing our changes in this life, and making us submissive to his choice. May he comfort us across the chilly waters of death and finally receive us up into

that better clime where no sin or shame shall be is my prayer if not deceived.

E. J. L.

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"
—John 11:25-26.

Brother W. L. Gossien of Little Rock, Ark., solicits our views on the above scripture. While we are aware of the fact that all of our readers will not agree in toto with what we shall have to say, we do not feel to withhold such thoughts as we may have from our subscribers, especially when they are sought in the spirit manifested by brother Gossien.

It seems quite significant, we think, to note that it was Martha whom Jesus was addressing in the language of our text. Luke tells us that "Martha was cumbered about much serving," and complained to Jesus, saying, "Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me." Jesus came to separate the *law* from the *gospel,* or to fulfill the *law* and establish the *gospel.* Martha was still entangled with the *law* and its requirements. Therefore she needed to be taught and instructed more thoroughly and perfectly just who Jesus was, and the purpose of his coming, before she was to be qualified to sit with her sister, Mary, who had ceased from her labors and had entered into the house and was sitting at the feet of her Lord, hearing and receiving his word. Mary who typified the *gospel* church, having been brought out from under the *law* could no longer serve there-under even with her sister, Martha. There is a tie which is stronger than those of the flesh. To Martha, the resurrection was something in the far distant future, or "at the last day," but the reply of Jesus was, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." By way of emphasis, we repeat that Jesus came to put an end to the *legal dispensation* and to set up his kingdom, or the *gospel dispensation* which, while in the world, is not of the world. The gospel proclaims the acceptable year of the Lord: it is the day of his power, when the dead are raised up, the deaf hear, the blind see, the lame walk, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. When Jesus arose from the dead, we are told that all power both in heaven and in earth, was given into his hands therefore in this *gospel dispensation* he is known as the I AM, the King of kings, and Lord of lords. He said of himself, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Rev. 1:18. We believe this is what he had reference to while he was yet with his disciples when he said unto them, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John saw him in the midst of the seven candlesticks, or churches. Paul, in writing to his Corinthian brethren, declared boldly, "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." In our humble opinion, the apostle here did not mean that Jesus was the first to rise from a corporeal death, for the

record in connection with our text plainly shows that during his lifetime, he raised Lazarus from the dead. Paul was speaking, according to our understanding, concerning them that slept under the condemnation of the law. The sentence of death rested upon all, from the fall of Adam to the coming of our Lord, and not a single one had ever been able to keep the law or deliver himself from under its bondage. When Jesus came and fulfilled the law, satisfying its demands in every jot and tittle, he delivered from its bonds all that were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Therefore he became the first fruits, or the first to rise above the law, and thus he became the deliverer of his people. Paul in addressing his Hebrew brethren said, "Foreasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." This same apostle in writing to the church at Rome said: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Christ is presented throughout the scriptures, in substance, as being head over all things to the church, which is his body, and we cannot conceive of any kind of relationship or fellowship existing between a *living head* and a *dead body*. Therefore those who worship him in Spirit and in truth must, necessarily, be quickened by the same mighty power which wrought in Christ in raising him from the dead, in order that the members of his body also be alive with him; to them he is their resurrection and their life. In connection with the vital union of Christ and the church, we sometimes like to sing the following hymn from Beebe's Collection:

"'Twixt Jesus and the chosen race,
Subsists a bond of sovereign grace,
That hell, with its infernal train,
Shall ne'er dissolve, or rend in twain.

This sacred bond shall never break,
Though earth should to her centre shake;
Rest, doubting saint, assured of this,
For God has pledged his holiness.

He swore but once, the deed was done,
'Twas settled by the great Three One;
Christ was appointed to redeem
All that the Father loved in him.

Hail sacred union, firm and strong!
How great the grace, how sweet the song!
That worms of earth should ever be
One with incarnate deity!

One in the tomb, one when he rose,
One when he triumphed o'er his foes,
One when in heaven he took his seat,
While seraphs sung all hell's defeat.

This sacred tie forbids their fears,
For all he is, or has, is theirs;
With him their head, they stand or fall,
Their life, their surety, and their all."

If we are one who has been born again of that incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, and made a new creature in Christ Jesus, we are persuaded that though we were dead (in our natural state before having been quickened and made alive in Christ), we shall live as long as he lives. The record is that we are not only heirs, but that we are

joint-heirs with Christ; therefore our inheritance is certain and sure and nothing can ever deprive us of it, so long as our God sits upon his eternal throne. We realize that the experience of these things here in time is as Paul says, "every man in his own order."

Our brother says that he is especially concerned about the twenty-sixth verse, which reads as follows: "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" We understand from reading some recent editions of certain Old School Baptists papers that the claim is being made that the children of God do not now nor will they possess eternal life until their bodies are raised in the general resurrection at the last day. This we cannot subscribe to, and since our text has to do with this point, we will endeavor to support our view by evidence brought forth from the divinely inspired record of Holy Writ. All other evidence must be regarded as irrelevant and immaterial. Jesus himself said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." John 17:3. In John 5:24 we read, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." Also, in John 6:47 we read, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." If these were all the scriptures we could produce they should suffice, since his word cannot fail. However, we feel to submit further evidence on this point: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." John 3:14-15. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." John 10:27-28. Paul in writing to Timothy admonished him to "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." I Tim. 6:12. To deny that we are in possession of eternal life here in this time state is to undermine the very foundation of our hope. Jesus said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This being born again is how we become members of the family of God. John said, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Peter said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively (living) hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." John 3:36. If we do not have eternal life here, how can we hunger and thirst after the righteousness of Christ and the things of God's kingdom? We have been made to hope that we have had a foretaste of those things which are heavenly and divine, that we have seen through a glass darkly here those things which shall be revealed in all their splendor and glory hereafter. Paul must have had some comprehension of these things, otherwise he would not have desired to depart and be with Christ, which he said was far better; he could not have com-

pared "our earthly house of this tabernacle" which shall be dissolved, with that "building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." At funerals and in obituaries, we often hear and read such expressions as the departed having gone to be with their Lord. This is a comforting thought to us. Not long ago we were called to conduct the funeral of a dear sister in Christ, and we verily believe the words spoken by our Lord, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," were given to us to speak from. We felt assured that our dear one was at that very moment in the presence of her Lord, enjoying the pleasures which are at his right hand and shall last forevermore. We believe that all of the Lord's little ones have often been made to rejoice over Paul's declaration to the church at Rome where he asked the question, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Then by way of answering his own question, first he speaks of tribulations, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril and sword, all of which pertain to the sufferings of this life. He does not stop here, however, but after saying, "in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us," he then declares, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." How well this ties in with and confirms our text: "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." John said, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." We have just come across the following comment on this passage by a former Editor of the *Signs of the Times,* which we believe will be of interest to our readers: "Christ was the first born from the dead, the first to rise from the dead to die no more. The resurrection of Christ is, therefore, the first resurrection. Those who have part in this resurrection are those who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and for whom he died and rose from the dead. These are risen with Christ and cannot die any more, because he has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Those for whom Christ died cannot die, they have everlasting life. The second death, the death of the mortal body, has no power over them, for while their mortal bodies do die and return to dust, the spirit, or life, cannot die. He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die, but hath everlasting life. When the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, they shall be clothed upon with that building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Two different houses, but the same child of God that now lives in this earthly house shall also dwell in that other house not made with hands, the building of God."

The last part of our text is in the form of a question which Jesus put to Martha, "Believest thou this?" We can but feel that those who, like Martha, did not understand or believe these things, are still under the influences of the *law,* or *legal dispensation.* We humbly hope that we are among those, like Mary, who have ceased from their labors and are sitting at the feet of their Lord and Master, hearing and receiving, and believing his word. To all such, he is their resurrection and life, their all and in all; the chiefest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely, and there is none in heaven or in earth

they desire beside him. May his glorious name be exalted and praised among the children of men above every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that world which is to come! Amen. R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Whitefield Church at Whitefield, Me., Sept. 9, 10, 11, 1949 sends greetings in the Lord to our sister Associations and meetings of our correspondence.

DEAR BRETHREN: In accordance with our custom, as in years that have passed, we address you by the so-called circular letter, and if it be God's will we will give you the reason for the hope within us that we have been called from nature's darkness into His marvelous light, making us sons of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. Also, if God so wills, we will mention some of the dealings of the Lord with his elect family whom he has chosen as his own before the world was, for it is written that God so loved the world (meaning his elect or chosen ones) that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.

The natural or carnal man, before he has been wrought upon by the Holy Spirit, goes his way satisfied with his way of living, believing himself, as long as he stays within the law of the land, to be as good as he needs to be, enjoying life and the vanities of the world, thinking himself to be the master of his fate, and if he ever thinks of God or of going to heaven when he dies, he believes that if he lives a good moral life, and this he believes he is able to do, he thinks he merits salvation. (works)

However, there comes a time when he begins to see little faults in himself, and as time goes on he sees the little faults or sins growing larger and larger, and more and more of them come to his attention. He resolves in his own strength to correct these errors only to feel himself growing worse, and worse until he is driven to utter despair. He feels himself sinking into a horrible pit, hedged about on every side without God or hope in the world, and he is made, in his anguish, to cry, God, help I perish. Then it is that the Lord appears to him and the still small voice whispers to him saying, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." His burden is lifted and he is filled with that peace that passeth understanding. He is made to say with the Psalmist, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Surely those who have passed through similar experiences to the above know that their salvation is of the Lord, and that their hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness and can say in the words of the poet:

"Nothing in my hand I bring!
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly:
Wash me, Savior, or I die!"

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you for a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." 1 Peter 3:15. So our hope is given us not for any merit of our own, or for works lest any man should boast, but by God's electing love, "according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ:*****who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice." Then the apostle speaks of us being in heaviness for a season, if need be, through manifold temptations: "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you."

Although at these times of heaviness, spoken of above, we do not lose our hope, but we do feel to mourn because of our depraved natures, and we do hunger for his appearing, but we are comforted because it is written, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Matt. 5:4 and 6.

We realize our unworthiness and inability to write on such a subject, but we hope the mantle of charity will be thrown over all errors and lack of understanding for it says, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." 2 Peter 1:20. In closing we wish to state that this Association stands firm in the doctrine of God's absolute predestination of all things; a revealed religion; salvation by grace, looking to the time when we shall awake in his likeness, and see him as he is and be satisfied.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS,
Moderator
S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Whitefield Church at Whitefield, Me., Sept. 9, 10, 11, 1949 sends greetings in the Lord to our sister Associations and meetings of our correspondence.

DEAR BRETHREN: Your correspondence has been received with gladness, and your ministers, Elders A. H. Bellows, J. D. Wood and E. C. Jones, came to us preaching the gospel, giving all honor and glory to God and his Son, Jesus Christ, the only name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Peace and harmony prevailed and we were made to behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.

We hope the next meeting of the Maine Association will be held, the Lord willing, Friday, Saturday and Sunday before the second Monday in Sept. 1950. We hope to have a notice giving the place of meeting in the *Signs of the Times.*

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS,
Moderator S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS

The West Fork Church, while in session April 8, 1950, delegated the undersigned moderator to write a resolution of respect to our dear sister and kindred in Christ, REBECCA ROSE, who departed this life April 3, 1950 at the age of 74 years.

WHEREAS, it has pleased Almighty God to call her from among us to her reward which has ever been reserved for her, and all the redeemed family of God. She was a member of the church for many years, and was sound in the doctrine preached by the Primitive Baptists and surely believed by us. Due to ill health she was prevented from attending church the last five years. She was a daughter of the late Elder Daniel Hicks, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that a copy of this memorial be spread upon our minutes, making it a part of the same, and a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times, and the Old Faith Contender for publication. Done by order of the church.

HURSHEL HICKS, Moderator

WHEREAS, our heavenly Father, in his infinite wisdom, has removed from the scenes of this life our beloved brother and deacon, HARVEY JONES WHITE, and

WHEREAS, we have long recognized and appreciated the value of our dear brother as a wise counselor and conscientious leader among us, and

WHEREAS, we shall long cherish his memory for his keen interest and gracious manner in serving as our deacon, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that we give thanks to our God, who is the giver of every gift to the church, that he was pleased to give our Brother White to us, and that we bow in humble submission to his will in removing him from us, and be it

RESOLVED, that we, the members and friends of New Valley Church, extend our deepest sympathy to the bereaved widow, Sister Alethea White, and to all the surviving family, and we pray that the Lord will grant them necessary grace to reconcile and sustain them in their great loss, and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this memorial be placed in our minutes, a copy given to Sister White, and that it be published in the Signs of the Times and the Old Faith Contender. Done by the unanimous voice of the church this 1st day of April, 1950.

JOHN D. WOOD, Moderator
MARTHA W. HOWSER, Clerk

WHEREAS, in the infinite wisdom of our God, there has been removed from the shores of time three of our ministering brethren, Elders, D. L. TOPPING, C. W. VAUGHN and H. H. LEFFERTS with whose presence in our Association during the past years we have been blessed, and whom we highly esteemed as servants of the Most High God.

THEREFORE, we, the Maine Association, desire to go on record as follows:

FIRST, we would bow in humble submission to the will of our God and say, Thou doest all things right.

SECOND, we feel to thank our God for the gift of these brethren unto the brotherhood in Christ and for the comfort we have derived in their fellowship, and from their preaching the gospel of the Son of God.

THIRD, we desire to extend our sympathy to the bereaved families of these brethren. It is therefore

RESOLVED, that this resolution be spread on our minutes and be published in the **Signs of the Times**, and a copy sent to the families of each.

Done by unanimous vote of the Association this 10th day of Sept. 1949.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Moderator
S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk

OBITUARIES

MRS. IDA SMITH was born in Union Parish, La., March 25, 1876, and departed this life Nov. 27, 1949, making her sojourn here 73 years, 8 months and 2 days. Before her marriage to my oldest brother, J. H. Smith, Sr., she was Miss Ida Dettenheim. To this union five children were born, all of whom survive: Odell, Myrtle (Mrs. Ray Veles), Mary (Mrs. Lyle Berkley), Philip and James.

Jim and Ida with their five children, some of them quite small, moved from Union Parish, La. to La Porte, Texas more than thirty years ago, making that their permanent residence. With the exception of Myrtle, who lives in a near by town, all the children live in La Porte.

Ida had many noble traits of character—her exemplary life of honesty, industry, straight-forwardness, plain, modest, unassuming manner of life, utter faithfulness to her husband and family, and last but not least her unquestioned virtue. These, to mention no other, were some of those happy qualities that ever characterize true womanhood the world over, and every one of them is an inestimable blessing bestowed by none other than our heavenly Father. However, it must be noted that important as all these things may be they certainly sink into insignificance when compared with those higher and nobler graces which are the product of the Spirit of God in the soul here, quickening it out of a state of death in trespasses and sin, into a state of life and holiness in Christ Jesus. Happy, thrice happy are the souls of all those thus wrought upon by the Spirit of

the living God! Giving them a proper knowledge of sin and of self, and that true wisdom from above which disdains every evil way and thought; and carries with it an eye single to the good of others here, and to the glory of the adorable Redeemer here and hereafter.

Judging from what I trust I have seen and felt in Ida, (my kind, noble sister-in-law) her utter loathing of self and of sin, her belief in and entire dependence upon the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for life and for righteousness, her ardent love for the dear old Bible, (blessed volume divine) I feel that I have been enabled to gather indisputable proof, how comforting the thought, that she was an heir of God and joint heir with Jesus Christ. Her mortal body was laid to rest in the local cemetery in La Porte to await the all glorious resurrection morn. The local Methodist minister and the unworthy writer conducted her funeral services in the Methodist meeting-house, she having united with the Methodists at a very early age. God be thanked for the unspeakable riches of his wondrous grace. Written by the request of my dear old brother Jim and all the children.

(Elder) JOHN LEE SMITH

In memory of ELLA J. JONES who passed away at the writer's home Jan. 8, 1950. She was born in 1872 at Melbourne, Ont., and married the late Wm. A. Jones in 1898. They lived at Mayfair near the Ekfrid meeting-house after their marriage, later moved to Staffordville and then to Tillsonburg. Aunt Ella had been a faithful member of the Covenanted Baptist Church for a long time. Visitors to their home were always welcome. They loved to entertain the church people and looked forward to the visits of the ministers, their wives and friends.

Uncle Will preceded my aunt in death leaving her very lonely. They had no family, but had relatives and friends who loved them dearly. Auntie sold her home and from that time until her death unselfishly tried to make the path easier for others. She and her husband never wanted to burden others and we feel they were repaid in that respect for their unfailing kindness to others.

Aunt Ella loved the scriptures and the preaching, and after the death of her husband it was her desire to live and die among her church friends. We know she looked to God for comfort, and we felt our helplessness to know what was best for her here but God saw fit to take her to himself.

A copy of a part of a sermon was sent to me recently on "The blessedness of those who die in the Lord." It was comforting. They rest from their labors, freed forever from the sorrows, afflictions and toils of life. I believe it may be said of such as die in the Lord that their works do follow them. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth." Should we not remember the prayers, exhortations and reproofs of our loved ones that "being dead yet speaketh."

Aunt Ella suffered a weak spell, and a few days later had a stroke and was in an unconscious condition until her departure. Her funeral service was held in London and our dear pastor, Elder Ruston, spoke comfortingly from Psalms 127: 1-2. "For so he giveth his beloved sleep," as he said the dear sister just seemed to sleep away. The twenty-third Psalm was used and the hymn, "God moves in a mysterious way" was mentioned as one of Auntie's favorities, and I have also heard her repeat the hymn, "My times of sorrow and of joy," especially the verse,

"What is the world with all its store?
'Tis but a bitter sweet;
When I attempt to pluck the rose,
A prickly thorn I meet."

Her remains were taken to the Aylesmer Cemetery, Aylesmer, Ont. The church, her remaining relatives and friends will miss her but we feel it is her eternal gain to be forever with the Lord. Written by her niece.

(Mrs.) VERNA CARSCADDEN

MR. CHARLIE MASON of Atlantic, N. C., our dear friend and brother in Christ we hope, was born in 1882, and passed away June 7, 1950. He was a wholesale fish dealer. He is survived by his wife, sister Alice Mason; three children, Mrs. Ervin Morris, and Loyd Mason of Atlantic, Mrs. Ray Hughlen, Tampa, Fla.; six grandchildren, two great-grandchildren; two brothers, Elmer and Joseph Mason of Atlantic.

He was a man of high standing with the church at Atlantic, of which I am Pastor, and with the people of this community. To know Mr. Mason was to love him. He had a wonderful personality. He loved the Primitive Baptist church at Atlantic, of which his wife is a member, and was a great help to the church. Not only the church but his friends as well will miss him.

His funeral service was held from the home June 9, conducted by the writer. He was laid to rest in the Atlantic Cemetery under a mound of beautiful flowers to await the morning of the resurrection when all the saints shall rise and their bodies fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ.

(Elder) SYLVANUS GRAY

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

C. W. Edwards, Ala., $10; C. R. Myers, Pa., $2; Mrs G. T. Franklin, Va., $1; A friend, Ia., $5; J. A. Johnson, Tenn., $1.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 118 RUTHERFORD, N. J., OCTOBER, 1950 No. 10

CORRESPONDENCE

Box 386, Canyon, Texas

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INCORPORATED.

Dear Brother Dodson, if one so sinful as I may address you as brother. I have a desire to write some of my experience but have put it off from time to time, feeling it would, if published, crowd out something of more interest to the readers of the *Signs*.

I am failing in health and have been in the hospital six times with four operations in three years, and the last operation the doctor said, "you have a cancer." This operation was a year ago and I feel I will soon need to have another. I am in my sixty-seventh year. I was born in Tate Co., Miss. I came with my parents to Texas when I was a small boy. At my earliest remembrance I liked to hear my mother read the *Signs of the Times,* and did like to go to church and hear the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone preached by some of God's able ministers such as Elders J. C. Sikes, C. T. Nance, J. R. Hardy and many others. My father moved from Miss. to Bowie Co., Texas when I was about four years old, then to Gatesville, Texas in Caryell Co. when I was about seven. Elder C. T. Nance was the preacher there. We moved twice more and when I was fourteen we came to Ohio, Texas. Father got me a job working on the farm for a brother Hedgepeth. I stayed with this lovely family seven years and then married Beulah Farman.

As far as I can remember I loved the preaching and wanted to go every opportunity. Brother Abb Koen was the preacher at Sardis Church where father and mother were members, as well as Brother Hedgepeth and most of his children. Father built a new home at Ohio, Hamilton Co., Texas when I was about sixteen years old. When I was thirteen we lived at Pidcoke in Caryell Co., Texas where my parents went to church at Hilsdale. A Brother Chambers was the preacher. At three different meetings I saw a beautiful golden light that filled the whole house, and the faces of the people shone so bright to me. Every time we went to church mother would watch me as I wept, and when the door of the church was opened I would leave the house. I was afraid I would offer myself to the church, and I knew those God-loving and God-fearing people would not have me. I had heard mother read in the *Signs* where some brother or sister had found themselves up with the preacher trying to tell what God had done for them and I did not want that to happen to me. I did not think they would receive a child, and I knew if they could see me as I felt they would not want my name on the church book.

Now back to Ohio where father built the new house. Sardis Church was a large church and a large membership. Brother Abb Koen was the pastor. I wanted to go every time I could. About that time a Brother Broom came preaching through the country and was at

Sardis for their regular meeting, then he was going to Hilsdale where Brother Chambers was pastor. I wanted to go so father said—go. We went to several places with Brother Broom. I loved the brethren, and I loved the gospel if not deceived. Many times before, father had told me any time I wanted to go to church he would take me even when I was thirteen and fourteen years old. When I was seventeen I dreamed or saw a vision. I thought I was sleeping in a room off an ell porch. Something wakened me and the room was filled with the same soft, golden light I had seen before. I got up and went to the door. This golden light was everywhere, so bright yet so soft. When I got to the door, a brother younger than I was lying on his face with his head to the wall, and was using his arms and legs as though he was swimming. I said to him, "Fear not, it is Jesus." He was groaning. I had not seen anything but the golden light. There was a large oak tree that stood in the ell of this porch and I walked out in the yard and looked up to my left. There was Jesus as plain as I will ever see him. He was in a small cloud. I could just see his head and shoulders. Then I turned and looked at a windmill; steel from the ground up, but it was pure gold. When I looked the wheel was turning very slowly, but not a sound was to be heard. I ran to the northeast corner of the yard and around a buggy shed and got an uncle by the hand and led him out to show him Jesus, but when we would see the cloud Jesus was gone. I pointed to the golden windmill and said, "this is for us to pattern after," then I awoke and wondered what this meant. The third night after this dream I dreamed again. I saw an angel standing at the corner of my bed in the room. It was a wonderful sight to behold. I threw the cover back and arose to my feet to go to the angel but it disappeared. I awoke and wondered what it meant. Then I dreamed the third night again the third dream. I was flying through the heavens, and I looked back toward the earth, a fear came over me and a voice said, "Look up and not down, you are going to heaven." Again I awoke and wondered what this meant to me—a poor sinner. The brother that was lying on the porch as though he was swimming and was groaning, about ten years later died in my arms, and as he was struggling for breath said to me, "this is the end of your dream where I saw him as though he was swimming on father's porch."

At this time father and our family had moved to O'Brian in Haskell Co., Texas. The death of this brother ended that part of the dream. Both father and mother were strong believers. He was a preacher and was widely known as Dr. W. R. Presley and passed on in 1936. Mother also passed on in 1932. I feel she and father are with the Lord. As long as I can remember their home was a gathering place for the Predestinarian Baptists. When the division came in 1900 father and mother were of the seven or eight that stood for predestination and election. There has been a falling away in the church and will be until time ends. About five years ago I dreamed I was in my car, traveling it seemed, and I came to a desert, sandy country, then to a dry water course and the sand was deep in it. This stream ran by the side of a high mountain and the road went up the side of this steep mountain. I looked up and said to myself, "afraid my car cannot make it up to the top, but I must try it." I got about half way to the top of the mountain and my car stopped. I looked back and was afraid. The road was so straight and narrow

and so steep, but I let my car back to the bottom, then backed off a distance so I could get a run on the long road up the side of the mountain. I made the run and just got on top as my car stopped. Everything up there was so beautiful and green, below it was burned up and sandy. I got out of the car, the grass was tall and green, the country up there was a beautiful place, cows and horses were fat, and while I stood admiring the beauty a little white lamb appeared a few feet from me and was looking at me. I said to the lamb, "I love you," and the lamb said, "I know you do." A beautiful white lounge chair appeared to me. I said to the lamb, "Come sit here," and I awoke.

For many years I put off going to the church until the Lord's time came. It was in November 1938 or 1939 at Altus, Okla. Elder W. N. Green was the pastor. The church received me on Saturday and Brother Green baptized me that afternoon, and since that time I have attended all the meetings I could at three churches, Amarillo, Texas, where my membership is, the first Sunday of each month, Altus, Okla. the second Sunday, and Mangum, Okla. the third Sunday.

Now what I believe. I believe in one true and living Lord God, and this God works all things after the council of his own will. He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast, every thought of man's was with God before man was formed of the ground. This man of dirt cannot please God, he must be changed and no power on earth can change his nature, it is the work of God. Read the first twelve verses of the third chapter of John and see what Jesus told Nicodemus; then read the twenty-seventh verse of the same chapter. In nature this fleshly man cannot please God, he must be born again, not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible. Read Genesis, chapter twenty-five, beginning with the twenty-first verse and see the two seeds again. Romans ninth chapter beginning with the ninth verse and including the twenty-fourth. Now read all the eight chapters of Romans and see the two men. "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit." Rom. 8:5. "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Rom .8:8. It seems the above is enough to show the elect and non-elect. Now turn to Ephesians and read the first chapter, see God's predestination and election; read the second chapter, see how they are changed from natural to spiritual.

God is a sovereign God and works all things after his own will. "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." Exodus 9:16. This was God speaking of Pharaoh, the wicked king of Egypt. God told Moses, go tell Pharaoh to let my people go, but I will harden Pharaoh's heart so he will not let them go until God's appointed time. Seven times God hardened Pharaoh's heart so he would not let the children go, but the eighth time (which to me represents the resurrection of the spiritual deliverance of Israel) Pharaoh let them go. God hardened Pharaoh so that he followed the Hebrews of Israel even into the Red Sea where God drowned all the host of Pharaoh. The apostle Paul said that all that was written aforetime was written for our learning. What do we get from that statement? It means to me that God does with every creature as he did with Pharaoh. To me Joseph was a type of Christ and when Jacob, their father, had died Joseph's brethren went to make a covenant or agree-

ment with him, "And Joseph said unto them, Fear not, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good." Gen. 50:19-30. Peter preached and said, "Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:*****Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Acts 2:14 and 22-23. Then read Acts 4:7-8. Now to the poor, hungry soul that is looking and longing for that life beyond the grave, that immortal life: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." So there is not a spot or wrinkle against any of God's chosen ones. Jesus Christ came to this low ground of sin and lived the life that God required. If it had been left for mortal man to live none would have been saved, but Christ bore all the sins of his people all the days of old; they were never left to man to keep; Christ stood as a lamb slain before the foundation of the world for his people; their life was hidden in Christ before the foundation of the earth was laid. I do not believe there will be a soul saved that did not have a standing in Christ before time was. Our life was hidden in Christ before time was. "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." John 6:39. I so often hear people say you must make the choice. Some say, "Choose ye, whom ye will serve," but the scripture says, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit." John 15:16. The world says you must repent in order to have eternal life, but we read, "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Rom. 11:29. So you do not repent in order to obtain life, but because of life; the life comes without repentance. Without life we could not repent.

This is getting lengthy so, dearly beloved, read and remember Matt. 1:21. This is what God told Joseph through the Holy Ghost, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." The three "shalls" in the verse are positive. The world says the first two "shalls" came to pass, but the third depends on the sinner. Beloved, if you love God there is not the slightest chance for you to fail to be with your Lord. No, it is positive and as sure as our Lord came to earth, suffered and died. Oh, but was my name written in the Book of Life before the world was? That is my hope and faith. Now my hope goes beyond the grave. I believe that after time ends all of God's people will be changed from fleshly bodies to spiritual bodies. Read the words of Jesus, John 5:28-29, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Read the eighth chapter of Romans and notice especially the last three verses. Time would fail me to give all the proof of the steadfastness of the elect, the ones chosen in Christ before time was, so no timely thing can interfere with their redemption, resurrection

and immortal glory. I meditate most of my time on these things. I have almost worn out my Bible reading it. I believe if all the reading of the Bible I have done was put together I would have read it through two hundred fifty times. It is my meat and drink. Now to all that love God may his blessings be yours. C. M. PRESLEY

"It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in."—Isaiah 40:22.

Brother Dodson and all the household of faith, is it not a wonderful thought that our blessed Savior created the earth for we poor worms and grasshoppers to dwell in? and the heavens in which he shall call us home into where we shall spend eternity? I have often been made to wonder why our blessed Master created this earth, populated it with these teeming millions and millions of us lowly grasshoppers and worms of the dust? Then my mind turns to Romans 11:33 in which Paul says, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" and again in verse 36, "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

Brother Dodson, sometimes it is hard for us to see into and through the marvelous works of God, but we must not, we cannot question God's work, for the arminians and his chosen ones were both (the sheep and the goats) placed together here on earth and he will separate them on the day of judgment. We must not ask him why for he said, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," though there will be many on the judgment day who will try to convince God that they should be saved for their good works saying, "Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works," Those are the ones who are trying to establish their own righteousness; and are trying to organize the whole world into their own camp to follow blindly after conditional salvation.

Not long ago I heard a preacher pleading for lost souls to come to the altar and be saved saying, "this is the Lord speaking through me, and Jesus is standing with outstretched arms tenderly pleading with you to come today and be saved for today is the day of salvation. Now sinner friend what are you going to do with Jesus? are you going to accept him or are you going to reject him, he is doing everything in his power to save you and it is entirely up to you to accept or reject him." O my soul! can this be the same God who created heaven and earth and all that in them is? Is this the same God that of him, and through him, and to him are all things to whom be glory for ever? Is this the same God who, when he bowed his head and gave up the ghost on the cross of calvary said, "It is finished?" Is this the same God of whom Paul said, "Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling?" or is this the God of the wicked world who must patiently wait until all of us grasshoppers and worms of the dust have died and returned to the dust to be brought before the judgment bar to see whether or not we have accepted or rejected him? What a helpless God who must wait, not knowing what we are going to do until after we have done it. Then there are those who fall from grace; he must wait until death claims them to see if they will accept him again and be saved.

Does it not seem strange that the

religious world, with the Bible before their eyes, will tell you that Christ died for the sins of the whole world? and that it is God's will that all would be saved, yet nearly all of them will tell you that his will shall never be done, thereby placing the stamp of failure on the all wise, holy and omnipotent God, and placing him entirely upon creature dependence. Can we put our trust in a God who cannot accomplish or carry out his will? If he fail in this he might fail in all other things, and if he fail in any of these things he would not be God, and died in vain on the cross, and our hope of eternal salvation is vain. Thanks be to God he has a remnant of people even to this day for Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." So our true and trustful Savior has said that he would not fail, and we who have that small hope are assured by his holy word that he will not fail. No, he has never failed, and brother, he will never fail. Sometimes we are left down in the valley when it seems as though our little flame of hope is almost gone, and we are made to wonder, when it seems that all the world and even God has turned against us, and we ask ourselves are we not mistaken, or were we deceived? Then we remember the words of Paul in his letter to the Corinthians when he said, "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me," and for this thing Paul besought the Lord thrice, that he might depart from him, and the Lord said unto him, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

Dear brother, is it not wonderful, that while we are being tossed about on the wild, raging seas, facing the sore trials and temptations of this sin cursed world, and being buffetted about by the messenger of Satan, that we can look to him whose grace is sufficient for us throughout all of this life's trials, troubles and tribulations, and it will be sufficient to raise us from the dead and bring us into that heavenly kingdom where we will meet all of the saints, and dwell in peace and glory forever throughout eternity. He has said he will do it and he shall not fail and in him I will put my trust.

Dear household of faith, let us rejoice in the hope and in the love of God which was shed abroad in our hearts by the one and only living God, who recorded our names in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world, where it will be kept until the book shall be opened by the Lamb of God; and the names of his people whom he hath called out of darkness into his marvelous light shall be drawn out, and they shall be set in that glorious kingdom which he hath before prepared for us. Jesus said, "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled." He said he would do it, and when he bowed his head on the cross of calvary and gave up the ghost with the never to be forgotten words "it is finished," then it was finished, praise his holy name, and he did not fail.

Brother Dodson, just a word about the dear old family paper, the *Signs of the Times,* before I close. I have been reading it about one year, and before that I did not know there was such a paper printed. When I discovered that Sister Olive Floyd had been taking it for many years I got papers from her

as far back as 1913. You see there is always a little flock to hear the word of God. I know that all of its readers feel the same as I do about the *Signs*. May God give you strength, courage and good health to enable you to carry on and continue to send forth the gospel to those (his sheep) who hunger and thirst after righteousness. I am a very poor writer, in fact I feel there is nothing good in me, just a weak miserable worm of the dust, but sometimes when I feel God's spirit I am made to do things which I feel I cannot within myself do. At this time I felt I must write you and if there is anything you feel the household of faith might care for you may use it as you see fit. Your brother in Christ I hope.

LOREN BARGER

Route 1, Galconda, Ill.

Route 1, Elora, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: It is time for me to renew my subscription for the *Signs of the Times*. What a wonderful paper it is! I get so much comfort from reading it. If I am one of God's elect I feel to be the least of all. How well I remember the time when Christ spoke comfort to my weary soul. I felt such a heavy burden and was made to feel and realize what a vile sinner I was. I would try to pray for God to have mercy on me but could not utter a word. People told me to just accept the Lord and all would be well but that was not my case, I felt the Lord had to accept me. One night when I retired I felt such a heavy load on me I could not sleep. I tried to pray for the Lord to have mercy on me, feeling I could not live much longer. About two o'clock in the morning I spoke the words, Lord have mercy on me or I perish, and there was the brightest light shown all over the room, brighter than the noonday sun. I hope the Lord spoke comfort to my weary soul. I was very happy, shouting praise to my dear Lord. I thought the next morning I would tell everybody what the Lord had done for me but my mouth was closed from telling any one.

Brother Dodson, for several years I wanted to unite with the Old Baptist church but felt too unworthy to ask a home with them, but on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in May 1948 I did ask for a home and was accepted. I still feel unworthy to have a home with God's dear saints and oh what a sweet home it is. These are some of the things I hope the Lord has done for me but the half has not been told. Your brother in Christ I hope.

R. O. SIMMONS

405½ East Pike St., Seattle 22, Wash.

DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE: Just a few lines this time. I have had my seventy-third birthday and received enough money to send for the *Signs* for this year. It will be a very sweet birthday present for me as it will pay me up to next January. Thanks for sending the paper I do get so much good out of it and the Old Faith Contender. I received the latter Monday and read the notice about you being in the hospital. I do hope by the grace of God you will soon be able to be home and your health be much better.

Elder C. M. Fisher, our Pastor, has been ill with a bad heart attack. He could not stand long to preach at our last meeting. How I wish the good Lord would send more young preachers to be ready to take the places of these aged Elders. Elder Cameron in our church is in poor health too, and Elder I. F. Coleman of Riffe, Wash. is an aged Elder and health not good, but our all wise God knows best and does all things after the counsel of his own will. How precious he has been to me

the last few years, I have felt his presence so many times. Before our last meeting, fourth Sunday in Feb., I could feel him taking me through the deep waters and through the fiery furnace to purify my sinful body so I would be fit to meet with some of his chosen ones here below. On Saturday night we sat in Elder Fisher's home singing those sweet hymns, I was filled to overflowing. When we started to sing "How Firm a Foundation" and came to those two verses I had been through I could hardly sing for I had witnessed this just a few days before. Pray for me. Your sister in Christ.

(Mrs.) LILLIE BLYSTONE

Shirleysburg, Pa.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I have been wanting to write you for six months or more. First, I noticed last June the improvement in the paper used in the dear old *Signs of the Times* which seemed to make reading easier. Then I want to humbly thank you for seeing fit to put in the good paper the little poem I had written so long ago. How I do love the letters and writings from the dear Old Baptist people. Some of them I read again and again. Last evening I received my *Signs of the Times* for February, and again I saw the little poem I sent you last spring. No credit to me, but I truly believe that a great and merciful God does gives us these little thoughts and passages out of his bountiful supply of good things, else how could we go on. How I wish I could write and keep the many lovely thoughts that flash out like sunshine from behind the clouds, and then are gone just as quickly as they came.

I especially enjoyed in this February issue "The Clefts of the Rock." It was just what I needed, and it made me feel so thankful and humble. I also liked very much your views on the use of instrumental music in the church. I have often wondered about that very thing. So many churches have young folks come in and play several pieces on a Sunday night, when the same persons had played music for a dance the night before. One can only say, like the Master, God (Father) forgive them for they know not what they do.

I get so lonely for a good talk with the dear humble saints of the Lord. I am sorry to say that most of our church folks here do not speak the language and I feel all out of place when with them. I do not care to take any part in their church activities, and I know they think I am careless or uninterested in the things of the church here. I find no comfort there and like the song—I think, Where can I go but to the Lord. Praise his dear name, I can go to him in spirit any time, any where, but I love to be alone with him. I like to shut my eyes to the world and step within the vale of his presence in the world of thought. But there is so much to hinder, and the duties of this worldly life take so much of my time. How I long for that sweet land of rest, when I shall lay my armor by and dwell with Christ at home. I would appreciate your prayers, and maybe a word of encouragement if you will be so obliging. Please excuse all mistakes and God forgive me if I have said anything wrong. I am enclosing several little things I have written. I wonder if others are ever as doubting and feel so lowly as I so many times do? May the dear Lord be with you always in the good work you are doing through him. Amen. Your hopeful but humble sister. (Mrs.) FLORA BOOKER

Last fall while sitting in church one beautiful Sunday morning, listening to the minister expounding on the sins of the world—drinking, smoking, dancing, and all such of which we all see and

know too much—my mind wandered to other things. Outside the window I could see a massive oak tree. Sturdy strong branches laden with lovely leaves fluttering in the autumn sunshine. I thought how marvelous the works of the Lord; how like God it seemed, shedding beauty, shelter from the storms; rest for the weary traveler underneath its branches; even food for the little squirrels to store away for winter. How wise is God who made it so, placed it there that the world might see and enjoy that beauty and splendor. Then I thought of the mighty roots down under the ground, in the darkness of the earth, hidden away from the sight of man; the smaller roots and the tiny tendrils reaching out into the soil, drawing moisture and nutrition from the ground, sucking life from beneath the sod that those branches might flourish and bring forth strength and beauty. No one ever paused to admire the roots or marvel at the life giving sap that continually coursed upward into that tree. All unseen by the world, but so vitally important to the life of the oak. God using the unseen to glorify that which is seen. He has placed many, many roots down into the dark places of this world, and as he will that they shall ,they are reaching out drawing life from within the deep places, (the holy word) feeding on the Holy Spirit, nourising the tree (or life) which in turn radiates beauty of soul, glorifying God which he has so purposed in the very beginning.

Dear Elder Dodson, shame on me, I forgot I was sitting in church, but God gave me a more beautiful sermon through that old oak tree than I had heard from the pulpit (sorry to say) for many Sundays. Do you not think that a divine Savior can and does work in mysterious ways, his wonders to perform even in the lowly, humble, little, unnoticed roots, The light of his countenance penetrates even into the bowels of the earth (the dark places) which he also made for he made the earth and everything therein. He will not forsake his own. Oh how I hope that I am one of his, and that his guiding hand will lead me all the way. If there is any good in these lines pass it on to the household of faith. Written by a sister in the hope of that life beyond the vale.

(Mrs.) FLORA BOOKER

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313 E. Barrett St., Tyler, Texas

DEAR BROTHER LAMBERT: I will, God willing, write you hoping you and your wife are well and enjoying the goodness and mercy of God. As for wife and me we should feel thankful to the Giver of all good although I almost have the flu.

Regarding my refusing to open service at Good Hope Church last meeting day, I did not feel that it would have been expedient for I am a man of unclean lips. I am ignorant, cannot speak; sinful, I cannot be reconciled to the thought that God in his goodness and wisdom would choose one as sinful and unclean as I know myself to be to speak of his glory, of the unsearchable riches of Christ to the comfort of Zion. Yet our ways are not God's ways, our thoughts are not his thoughts, for he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" "All things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist," There was not anything created nor made without him; all things are subject unto him; he is the disposer of all things. He chose his people in Christ before the

foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. He manifests this in them and makes it known in this time world by quickening them by his spirit while they are dead in sins; makes known unto them his goodness, love and mercy, that it is not by works of righteousness which they have done, but according to his mercy he has saved them; that it is by grace and not of themselves that he has raised them up and established their goings. He puts a new song in their mouth, even praises unto the Lamb. "Tongue cannot express the sweet comfort and peace of a soul in its earliest love." They wonder and adore until he hides his smiling face, witholds his tender mercy so that they see themselves again. Now their sins appear exceeding sinful, they see them as never before; their sins have a new meaning to them; they wonder if anything can blot them out; they feel their case is hopeless, they try to cry for mercy but it seems there is none, death and destruction seems the only way; (But God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform.) they are strangers in a strange land; they are working out their own salvation with fear and trembling, not according to their own will and satisfaction for it is God working in them both to will and do of his good pleasure. They are a mystery unto themselves, the good they would they do not, the evil they would not that they do; they have a desire to do good but how to perform it they find not. In their mixture of joy and sorrow they are made to cry out, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" They are taught that it is not according to their own works, for their works are evil, but that it is by the grace, love and mercy of God that they are saved; so they grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him; they are given the assurance that he is their righteousness, their sanctification, their redemption; he is their all, in him they live, move and have their being.

Paul tells us in the 12th chapter of Romans, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice" unto God. A living sacrifice, because they have been quickened by the Spirit and made alive; holy, because they were chosen in him (Christ) before the foundation of the world that they should be holy, called with a holy calling; acceptable, because it is to the praise and to the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the beloved.

I believe at the time appointed, and by the goodness and mercy of the Father they will present their bodies all prepared, qualified and fit to fill the place prepared for them in the church. I believe a man should not go forward until he can go nowhere else, or as long as he can keep from it for I believe Jonah got there at just the right time. I believe the church should announce that if there is any one present desiring to speak now is the time, and by the manifestation of some brother that he has such desire, the church should consider whether the spirit be of God or of a natural desire.

My brother, I may be deceived in all my thoughts and if so I do not want to deceive my brethren. This is a fearful thought. "Stand ye in the ways." "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord," I hope is my desire. Write me when you feel like it, and pray when you have the mind in the Spirit, that God will lead, guide and direct me in the

way of all truth. Your brother in Christ I hope. J. H. HAMRICK

"And Jesus said, Who touched me?"
—Luke 8:45.

I have given considerable thought to the above language of our blessed Lord, and have at times been made to wonder if I have ever been blessed to touch even the hem of his garment. This woman had faith to believe that if she could just touch his clothes she would be made whole. She was sore afflicted with an issue of blood, and had spent all of her living with physicians, doctors of the law, but only to grow worse; so, "When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I may but touch his clothes, I shall be whole."

Dear reader, is not this your experience when you had exhausted all your means, tried all the works of your own hands, took all the medicine the doctor of self-righteousness could give you and it did you no good, but your condition only seemed to grow worse and worse, you gave up to die. Then you heard of this blessed Jesus and something within told you if you could only get close enough to him to touch his clothes you would be made whole. "And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague. And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?" (Read Mark 5:25-31.) His disciples no doubt thought it strange why he would say "who touched me" when the multitude was pressing him on every side; why he would think just one had touched him, but no, this touch of the afflicted and suffering woman was deeper than just his material clothes. The apostle Paul says, "For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Heb. 4:15. "And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me." Luke 8:46. Yea, this poor, sin sick, afflicted and dying woman was the only one that touched him; all his virtue and life's blood went out for her because she is my love, my dove, my undefiled; she is the choice one of of her that bare her. Our neighbor's wife may be sick and dying near us, which may not give us much concern, but let that loving bride of ours become sick, suffering and dying then it is quite different. She is the one that touches our heart strings, and the natural love may be great enough that we would be willing to give our natural life if we knew it would make her whole; but how much greater is the love of our blessed Savior for his bride which is boundless and everlasting. "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Jer. 31.3. For this reason have I drawn thee, it is because my love is everlasting. But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth.

Dear reader, have you not experienced this fear and trembling, and falling before him, telling him the whole truth; that you are wretched, that you are helpless, and wholly dependent on him, praising and adoring his holy name for his goodness, his kindness, his forgiveness in saving our lives. No doubt the multitude thought it strange indeed that he should say "who touched me" when they were pressing him from every side,

yet he said, in effect, that only one touched him. We have preached the gospel, have won souls to thee, have cast out devils in thy name and have done many wonderful works in thy name, has not all this touched thee? No, none touch him except those that are drawn by the Father, and those that are thus drawn he will in no wise cast out. They are sealed with a seal that cannot be broken, and their names are written in the palm of his hand by the indelible blood of his blessed Son and cannot be erased. He keeps them as the apple of his eye which is the most tender organ of the body. Our blessed Lord said, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word. That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband." Eph. 5:25-33. The apostle says this is a great mystery, and indeed it is in nature, but he says, "I speak concerning Christ and the church." Notice he says, "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones," and Christ says, I in you, and you in me, and I in the Father and the Father in me. I and the Father are one. How firmly they are all compacted in one body, not one member could be destroyed without destroying the whole unity, the whole godhead.

The apostle takes up the subject of husband and wife, by way of comparison or illustration, to set forth the connection between Christ and the church, his bride. Notice what the apostle says again in the last verse of the above chapter, "Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband;" not committing fornication with the harlots of the world, the daughters of Babylon, the worldly religionists, but ever looking unto our blessed heavenly Father who is the author and finisher of our faith if so be we have such. This glorious church, or bride, which he said he would present unto himself without spot or blemish, was, according to the holy scriptures, created in him before the foundation of the world or before the world was, and therefore in a spiritual sense is as old as he. Adam is said, in the scriptures, to be the figure of him that was to come. "And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Eve was just as old as Adam for she was created in him when he was created. They being a figure of Christ and the church must have been in like manner, so this is the one that touched him; this is the bride that touched his clothes of righteousness and brought virtue out of him; that healed her and clothed her nakedness with his own clothing of righteousness.

John says, "I,*****was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus

Christ." "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." Rev. 12:1. She was clothed with the righteousness of the blessed Son of God, and the moon under her feet, the law, with the reflected light of the sun for she was redeemed from under its curse and condemnation; and upon her head a crown of twelve stars; she was crowned with the doctrine of the twelve apostles of the lamb; she has but one husband and owes all her allegiance to Him. The apostle Paul says, "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." 2 Cor. 11:2. "I have likened the daughter of Zion to a comely and delicate woman," (Jer. 6:2.) and thou art the one and only one that touched me and brought virtue out of me.

Dear brethren, I submit this to your judgment. If it is not according to scriptural truth do not publish it. I have written with much fear, realizing my weakness and ignorance, and fear it is like myself, very imperfect. I know of a surety that if God has not blessed me in the writing it will be of no value to his dear saints. Any doctrine that does not ascribe all honor, glory and praise to God cannot be true, but the doctrine ascribing all honor, glory and praise for all things both in heaven and earth ascribe him an absolute sovereign over all his creation, and cannot be wrong for the knowledge of this doctrine cannot come from human nature, nor from any human machinery. As our blessed Savior said to Peter, "flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Your unworthy brother in Christ I hope.

H. L. ROGERS

Denton, Ky.

223½ South 10th St., Mount Vernon, Ill.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I wish to thank you for filling my request with an editorial in the *Signs*. It was wonderful and I read it over several times. I got so much light as to the love of the church. When I had read the paper and laid it down this dear old hymn came to my mind and I had to sit down and sing it:

"I love thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of thine abode;
The church our blest Redeemer saved
With his own precious blood.
I love thy church, O God,
Her walls before thee stand,
Dear as the apple of thine eye,
And graven on thy hand.

For her my tears shall fall,
For her my prayers ascend,
To her my cares and toils be given
Till cares and toils shall end.
Beyond my highest joy
I prize her heavenly ways;
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
Her hymns of love and praise.

Jesus, thou friend divine,
Our Savior and our King,
Thy hand, from every snare and foe,
Shall great deliverance bring.
Sure as thy truth shall last,
To Zion shall be given
The brightest glories earth can yield,
And brighter bliss of heaven."

Oh no, Elder Dodson, I, like you, do not believe that God will ever leave himself without witnesses, nor that the half can ever be told of the beauties or of the great wonders of God. He is a wonderful God. The head of the body, the church, who is the beginning of all things. His ways are higher than ours and past finding out; his great mysteries are too deep for my understanding, but I hope there is a little token of the oneness of mind and feeling existing between us that may strengthen my little hope that I may be blessed in that redeemed family that Jesus died

on the cross to redeem; that we may enter into the joys of his kingdom at the right hand of his Majesty on high. I am made to study and ponder of the greatness of God, of his wisdom, of the wonderful plan of salvation he laid down to save his people from their sins. It seems I see myself so black within, I am made to weep and cry and wonder if I can deem myself a child of God, if I have ever been born again. I doubt and fear, become so low in spirit and cast down in darkness I almost give up in despair; then it seems God's strong arm lifts me up and my little hope is renewed and I am made to sing praises to his adorable name. The sweetest of all names is Jesus. He has bought us with his precious blood, a ransom provided to bring us to God, and I hope to reign with him in glory, be as he is and be satisfied.

If my pen is not directed the same as God directs my steps I cannot direct it. I find my mind blank and I cannot help it as I can do nothing of myself. The things I would I do not. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins." Jer. 17:9-10. He knows our mind, gives us our thought, without his help we can do nothing. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Isa. 14:24. If it is his purpose and will for us to hear, see and understand, he gives us an ear to hear and a heart to understand; he gives us our portion in measures as he sees fit. As you can see mine has been given in a very small measure, but if so his ways are just and what he does is right. I am depending on him for all I am or have. I am helpless and very poor, but if he will cheer me on my way and guide my doubting footsteps, be my strength and stay, my precious Jesus is all I want or need. I am glad I have been made to see my sinfulness and helplessness, and brought down to cry unto Abba, Father.

Elder Dodson I only intended to let you know I enjoyed your editorial. I have also enjoyed all the good letters and editor's writings. I think the dear *Signs* is a wonderful paper, and hope you can be blessed to carry it on. It is really a great message to me. When the *Signs* comes I lay everything aside until I have read it. I enjoy it and feast on the good writings. My writing is like myself very unprofitable. A little sister if one. In hope of eternal life.

(Mrs.) S. S.KERLEY

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227 -- 19th St., Dunbar, W. Va.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: For some time I have felt impressed to write what I hope has been the Lord's way with me, but have hesitated since I fear others might not find it interesting reading. It means so much to me as it gives me the little hope which is so precious to me, even though it seems so small. At times I am only made to hope that I have a hope. I enjoy reading the experiences of others in the *Signs*. It seems they describe my goings in and coming out better than I can myself.

If I know my mind I believe I have always loved the Old Baptists. My parents home was always open to them and many visited there frequently. When a child I used to sit around in some inconspicuous place listening to them talk on the scriptures. After I learned to read I would slip the *Signs of the Times* out and read the experiences which I found written in them. For some reason I did not want any one to see me read them, perhaps because I generally shed tears. About this time I began to have short seasons of worry over my own sinful self. I would often

slip off and cry and try to pray which was only to ask God to have mercy on my poor, wicked, weak self. This continued off and on until I had been married quite some time, then I began to realize in truth that I was a lost, undone sinner. I would often steal off to myself and try to pray; I would awaken from sleep and cry and try to pray. The Bible became just so much jumbled type to me. I talked to my sister who is a member of the Missionary Baptist church. She would tell me I was letting the devil get the upper hand of me. I tried uniting with her church—just anything for relief—but this made me feel as if I had committed a terrible crime. One night while on my bed I was pondering this Missionary idea when I suddenly had the urge to read my Bible. I arose, picked up the book and opened it. The first scripture that appeared to me, as if it covered the whole page, was, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." This ended all my connection with the Missionary Baptists.

I continued on several years in this awful state. I got to the place where I was afraid to say the word Jesus. I felt one so wicked as I should not repeat this sweet, sacred word. During this time I had a very sweet dream which has remained with me as vividly today as when I dreamed it. I dreamed the world was coming to an end. Mother and I were standing on the porch of our old home, clasped in each others arms so very frightened. Suddenly, out of the terrible confusion and darkness, a great light shone from the sky, and the blessed Savior appeared with outstretched arms and said, "Fear not, I have come for you." This seemed to give me peace for a short while, then my troubles came back with more force than ever. I had a burning desire to unite with the Primitive Baptist church, and many times at meetings when they announced the open door I desired to go forward but was held back. On the first Sunday in July 1939 I went home to the church and was baptized the first Saturday in August of that year by Elder J. C. Hammond. I never knew why I went to the church that Sunday, but the first thing I knew I was up there trying to tell what the gracious Lord had done for me. I felt so terribly unworthy and still do. The song, "I am a stranger here below, And what I am 'tis hard to know," seems to fit my case so well. However, I would not exchange this little hope within my breast for the world.

(Mrs.) NANNA M. CARNEY

Arrangements have been made for the printing of another edition of the Durand-Lester Hymn Books providing we get orders in advance for the most of them. One thousand must be printed at one time. Send orders at once to

F. D. LONG
Box 496, Roxboro, N. C.

Black Rock Church meets every second Sunday at 11 a. m., Butler, Md. on Falls Road about 20 miles North of Baltimore.

J. D. WOOD, Pastor

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md. meets every 3rd Sunday 11:00 A.M., in stone church at 210 E. Madison St. near Calvert St. For information contact Quincy A. Gladding, 5 Hill Top Road, Baltimore 2, Md. Phone Cato. 5317.

An all-day meeting of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church will be held at New Vernon, Sullivan Co., N. Y. on Saturday, Oct. 14th. All members and friends are cordially invited. Lunch will be served to all who attend the same as was done last year.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

A. C. Morton, N. C., $1; Eld. O. W. Perkins, Ky., $2; S. Buckner, Mo., $1; J. A. Owen, Ala., $2; Miss G. Secor, N. Y., $5; Eld. P. Jones, Wash., $7.

EDITORIALS

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"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."—Rom. 6:23.

This text is the culmination of the greatest dissertation on sin, which unatoned for, would forever ruin the whole of the Adamic race, and righteousness, which, by the life of Christ, and its imputation to them, forever frees all the children of the promise from the devastation thus wrought through Adam. This Arminian world has a lot to say about the first part of the text, but very little about the latter part. Could we take a Scriptural examination of false doctrine we would find that that would be all that could be expected of them. They cannot preach that salvation that is of the Lord; for in nature, as well, and even more so in the spirit, none of us can do anything that we do not know anything about. It is a plain declaration, but profusely borne out in the Scriptures, that this world is not preaching salvation at all. But to the contrary they are preaching a doctrine that would forever be the eternal death-knell of (not as they accuse us, a few, but) all the human family.

I do not have a desire to pass lightly by the first part. I would not be faithful to the charge given me, if I glossed over or sidetracked some portion of the truth because of its somberness, and I feel that I would be just as unfaithful if I tried to alleviate the guilt of the man by placing sin as coming from the same fountain as the eternal life. If sin came from the Lord Jesus Christ through the man, then Christ got the wages for sin. I cannot find anything to lead me to think that the Lord ever paid himself for what he did while here in the world. But if God is the author of sin, then he paid wages to himself, and although he is reckoned as being the source of all life, we would find that he paid off in death to himself.

There is such a thing as getting paid for what you do. Unless we have been more fortunate than the most of our fellowmen, we all are interested in our wages. When pay day comes around the most of us feel different about it to other days. The Lord told Adam what to do. I may be mistaken, but I do not believe that any reward was offered to him for doing what the Lord said do. But when he told him *not* to do something, he (God) told Adam what his wages would be. This payoff was not to be for doing something good, but it carried an inflexible promise of pay if he did something wrong. When our foreparents sinned in the garden of Eden, the payment was immediately then and there put into effect. It was not to be a prolonged payment, but went into effect that day. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom. 5:12. This man Adam is thus credited with sin, and death by sinning. The death passed upon all men, in that all

sinned. Although it was a long, long time before God gave the law to Moses, it did not prevent death from reigning from Adam right on down the centuries until the giving of it.

The sin was one man, Adam. He did not need any help or influence from God. He did not wait until there was a world full of people to help him. It was a one man affair that brought wages to all men. The gift of eternal life, which Paul calls the grace of God and the gift by grace (Rom. 5:15), is by the one man, Jesus Christ. He did not need any help, nor would all the influence of all men been worth anything in the redemption price. One was to bring the wages, death; one was to bring the gift, eternal life. This condemnation is passed upon all men. It is now in effect on all living men, and it is so far reaching, so inclusive and exclusive and conclusively fixed, and its bounds so illimitably set that each and every offspring of Adam is born under that condemnation, death.

This text has sin and righteousness, death and eternal life, set in array before us. They are not set before us for us to take our choice. The choice is not ours. The election to eternal life was made in Christ before the world ever was, and Adam, the first created man, brought death upon all his posterity. We often hear our Arminian friends talking to the unregenerate about getting ready to die, or preparing to die. They are too late at getting ready to die. Adam brought death to us all in the beginning, and out of, and as a direct result of, that death in trespasses and in sin, flows the natural or corporeal death of this body. If I may be allowed to say it this way, there is a sense in which Adam's doing wrong brought a triple death. It brought us all to a state of separation from God; this separation or death is complete. There is not anything about a man, any man, that this death has not had a deathly effect. The Ephesian brethren were reckoned as being dead before they were quickened into life. Then these wages of sin included our natural dying. As the first is universal, having dominated through the abounding of sin, to bring all to this first state of death, so, also, is it with the second. We all must go the way of the earth and lay this body down. All the claims of false religionists to the contrary notwithstanding, these wages have been collected by all the human family so far. It would be the height of absurdity to claim that the stream could change its course at this late day and bring forth one in the future that was not contaminated with sin and condemnation. And, nominally, these wages brought eternal death. I am not trying to separate and divide this death that sin brought, in all these steps, it is death: it is a separation from something else.

Now let us look at the gift of God. The gift is opposite to the wages. It is from our creator to us. The gift does not cover or remove the wages from all that collected them. The gift does not run parallel with the wages. By one man's offence all died, it is true, but the gift is restricted to those that receive an abundance of grace. In Adam all of his people died, but in Christ all of his people are made alive. The world makes the gift of God applicable to all that died in Adam, but the church of Jesus Christ preaches the gift of God to all the elect of God.

Let us remember that the gift of God is without repentance. (Rom. 11:29). The literal meaning of this word repentance is that God is not concerned about changing. This was settled in the council held in eternity. God gave the gift in promise and verified it in time. There cannot be any change in the gift

of God. Our God does not bestow this gift today and take it away tomorrow. In that eternal choice and bestowal of eternal life, it was not based upon what a man could do. All that transpired in the garden, and from then until now, was naked and open before this Eternal Giver. The fall of man, as well as all the consequences of that fall, being in the eternal mind and purpose of the Giver, he laid help on one that was with him; one that could not be bought with any price of wages; one that would not be caught in the grip of death; one that would not be discouraged when his soul was made an offering for sin; one that was willing to lay aside his coat of glory, resting assured that when the gift of eternal life and perfection had been wrought out for bestowal on his bride, that His Father would glorify him with the glory that he had before the world was.

Dear child of God, here is that doctrine that the little ones rejoice in. The gift of God to them holds their enraptured attention. One of the first texts that I enjoyed speaking to my brethren about, when I first began speaking in a public way, is found in Paul's letter to Titus: In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began. I sometimes hope that I am still hoping in that promise. I feel sometimes that my life is varied so much that I do not show any stableness at all. I seem at times to be near enough to embrace this promise and call it my own, and then again, if I am persuaded at all, I am afar off from them all, and must confess that I am a stranger and pilgrim on the earth. But the dear Savior declared that his sheep hear his voice, and that they know him, and that they do follow him. He further declares to them that "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

This gift of God is first manifested by his quickening them into divine or eternal life (2 Pet. I:4). This manifestation of this gift is through Jesus Christ. He ministers that life to whomsoever he will. He came to do that ministering. That giving of this eternal life was not entrusted to any fallen creatures that were in the throes of this wage-bought death. No sir, not that. He came from his Father to do his Father's will. That will was, and is, and will be through all the surging tides of time, that not the least of all the given of God to his Son should fail to receive that gift of eternal life. He did not come a participant in that death that sin brought. He was not dead in sin, but came into the world alive unto righteousness. He was subjected to the law, but being equal to the law, he lived it for all the ones entrusted to him. Being God manifested in the flesh, he became obedient unto death. This gift of God is through or by way of Christ. He subjected himself to death, that through him—through his having died—they might live forever. This gift lasts and lasts. It is from the Lord, and by way of the Lord, to his own. He gives this gift with no intention—not even concerned about—taking it away from them. He did not give it to them to keep—never, oh no, poor stumbling sinner. But he gave it to you to keep you; to keep you ready to be delivered up for any persecution that is allotted you here in the world; to keep you ready by supplies of grace for any duties in the kingdom; to keep you ready for the call of instant or lingering death of this mortal body; to keep you from the evil of this present world. And dear brethren, it will do just that.

While in the power of this wage-bought death, there is not any desire to render unto God for all his benefits;

there is not any ability to really and truly serve God; there is not a meditation of the heart but what is downward (serving for more wages). But when this gift of eternal life is given to the heirs of promise, they cannot lose this gift; they cannot become negligent and have it taken away; they cannot sin and thus sell it for wages. But it is there to stay and to be finished; to prosper and to grow; to be your anchor to hold you in place and to lift you up to the mountain top. In conclusion, this gift of eternal life is followed up with more of the same quality gifts. They are the same quality; they are from the same source; they are through the same medium; they are to the same poor sinful character; they have the same effect. Rom. 8:32; 2 Pet. 1:3; 2 Pet. 1:8.

W. D. G.

"Because they have forsaken me, and have estranged this place, and, have burned incense in it unto other gods, whom neither they nor their fathers have known, nor the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with the blood of innocents; They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind; Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that this place shall no more be called Tophet, nor The valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of slaughter."

—Jer. 19:4-6.

A subscriber in Roanoke, Va. has asked that we give our explanation, or understanding, of the fifth verse of the nineteenth chapter of Jeremiah. We have quoted the fourth and sixth verses also, believing they will throw some light on the fifth verse.

Not all scripture is soothing or placating to Israel, for there are times when she needs to be chastised and rebuked. We wish to emphasize this by quoting the great apostle, who said "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:16. Let us not, therefore, shun those scriptures which reprove, rebuke and instruct us, and which may seemingly be against us, but remember that whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. Also, it is said, "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." David said, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." We like that scripture which says, "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

We have no doubt that God's dealings with Israel of old as a nation was in many respects typical of his dealings with spiritual Israel here in this gospel dispensation. The church here in this age passes through different stages of experience and needs to be taught, corrected and instructed in righteousness. This is clearly attested to by the various messages to the seven churches of Asia. None is perfect while here in the flesh. At the time the propet Jeremiah was raised up, Israel was in a particularly deplorable and corrupt state, or condition, and the burden of his prophecy seems to have dealt with God's cutting off or casting away of his people among the Jews. (There are times when the good husbandman must needs prune his vineyard.) The first few verses of this chapter shows that under the type of breaking a potter's vessel is forshadowed the desolation of the Jews for their sins. Jeremiah's prophecy, therefore, was

not to be such as would popularize him with the people, because the word which he was to proclaim unto them would often penetrate deep down into their conscience and cut as a sharp sword. He keenly felt and earnestly pleaded his insufficiency before God for the task before him, by saying, "Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child." God answered by saying, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." The Lord also said unto him, "Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak." We believe these declarations of God apply to those of his servants whom he calls and qualifies and sends forth to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to-day. Our ministers in this age should endeavor, asmuchas in them is, to be faithful to their high and holy calling, and have the courage to stand in their lot and fearlessly declare whatsoever God has commanded. Let us remember that he said to Jeremiah, "Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord." It was this prophet who told Israel, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Isaiah had well described their condition in the following language: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment." This was a terrible indictment, indeed, for the Lord to bring against his people, but how true, nevertheless! The Lord commanded Jeremiah to say on his behalf, "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls," but they replied by defying God and saying, "We will not walk therein." Instead of giving heed to the words of the prophet, they said, "Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor the counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words." Thereupon Jeremiah appealed to the Lord his God by saying, "Give heed to me, O Lord, and hearken to the voice of them that contend with me. Shall evil be recompensed for good? for they have digged a pit for my soul. Remember that I stood before thee to speak good for them, and to turn away thy wrath from them. Therefore deliver up their children to the famine, and pour their blood by the force of the sword; and let their wives be bereaved of their children, and be widows; and let their men be put to death; let their young men be slain by the sword in battle." It is good, indeed, when God's servants can trust him sufficiently to stand at their posts and firmly declare whatsoever he hath commanded. The opposition may at times be strong and the odds seemingly overwhelmingly against them, but there are times when they can

cut off. And they also if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be graffed into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." How we need to study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth! In looking about us we find individuals and churches calling themselves Old School Baptists who are doing what seems to us to be the most outlandish things imaginable, both as to doctrine and order. We are often amazed and ask ourself the question, how can they with the written word of God before them, and the love of God in their hearts, depart so far into forbidden paths. While we are not very much given to pointing out the faults and shortcomings of our brethren, we do advocate most strongly that those who profess to be followers of the meek and lowly Jesus should earnestly strive not to bring reproach and shame upon his cause. It truly behooves the ministering brethren, particularly, to take heed both unto themselves and unto the doctrine, lest having preached to others they themselves become castaways. Let us be assured that God cannot be deceived nor mocked, "for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" and that he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption.

In conclusion, we repeat that the things which have been written of old by men inspired of God, were written for our benefit and learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. We should, therefore, search the scriptures constantly, diligently and prayerfully, in the hope of being more perfectly instructed in the way of God and his righteousness.

We trust something has been said which will be used by the Holy Spirit to stir up the pure minds of our readers, causing them to strive to live according to the profession which they have made, and that they may be built up in their most holy faith. Realizing that we have not been purchased with such corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of the blessed Lamb of God, may we endeavor with all our might to glorify God in our bodies, as well as our spirits, both of which are God's. R. L .D.

OBITUARIES

The death angel removed from life's activity and usefulness Sister ALICE M. HALL, June 12, 1950 at her home at North Berwick, Me. Her illness was brief, being confined to her bed about one week. She was 80 years old. She is survived by one brother, Alfred Ford, Springvale, Me., and a large number of nieces and nephews.

Sister Hall was born in 1870 and educated in the schools in the community where she resided. In 1911 she was united in marriage to Joseph Hall to whom she proved a loyal, capable and faithful helpmeet until his death in 1933. She was much exercised in mind spiritually and in 1883 united with the Oak Woods Church, near North Berwick, and was baptized by the late Elder Quint. During her long church life of sixty-seven years she manifested the fruits of the Spirit in her upright walk, her godly conversation, her faithfulness to her meetings, and showed her zeal for Zion by contributing liberally in a material way, not only to the church of her membership, but for the support of other meetings of her faith. She was a woman of many noble qualities, and the purity of her life is an invisible monument to her memory. She often went far from home to attend the meetings of the Primitive Baptist church and firmly believed in the doctrine of salvation by grace, the effectual preservation of the saints, and the resurrection of the body changed

say with Jeremiah, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts."

Coming now more particularly to our text we see, from the fourth and fifth verses especially, some of the things of which Israel was guilty. Among their offenses they forsook the Lord their God, they estranged their sacred places of worship by burning incense in it unto other gods, whom neither they nor their fathers had known, "nor the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with the blood of innocents." Worse, still, they had also built the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, which God commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into his mind. These high places of Baal were undoubtedly the idolatrous temples in which they worshipped their images, wherein were to be found the altars upon which they offered their sacrifices. Isarel went to the absurdly cruel and barbarous extremes of burning their own sons with fire as burnt offerings unto Baal, which was a terrible thing to do. They could hardly have conceived of a greater mockery before their God than this. We know from observation in our own and other lands to-day that it is absolutely unbelievable what some human beings will do after they have thoroughly imbibed certain devilish doctrines. Apparently, they lose all sense of reason and loyalty to everything under the sun, and give themselves over freely and wholely to the influences and machinations of their masters. Some of the things which have been uncovered in our own fair and wonderful country have been unbelievably shocking, and, alas! all the corruption is not in the outside world. The flesh of national Israel was full of it in Jeremiah's day, and the flesh of spiritual Israel is full of it in this our day. The flesh of those who are born of God is not changed, but remains vile, and it can only be kept under by the grace of God which is given unto us. God commanded the prophet to say unto them, "Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that this place shall no more be called Tophet, nor The valley of the son of Hinnom, but The valley of slaughter." According to Smith's Bible Dictionary, Tophet was once "The royal music-grove, where Solomon's singers, with voice and instrument, regaled the king, the court, and the city; when it became the temple of Baal, the high place of Moloch, resounding with the cries of burning infants; then (in symbol) the place where there is the wailing and gnashing of teeth. Once prepared for Israel's king, as one of his choicest villas; then degraded and defiled," etc. The comment is made, "Strange contrast between Tophet's first and last!" What a description is given us here by the prophet when the Lord would pour out his wrath upon them, that he would change that place from Tophet, meaning musical-grove, to "The valley of slaughter!" While our God is merciful and longsuffering, he will eventually take vengeance on his enemies and on all who oppose him, "And he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." The apostle Paul, in the eleventh chapter of Romans, presents to the Gentile church one of the strongest admonitions to be found in the Bible, it seems to us, where he says, "For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be

into a glorious and immortal body when Christ comes for his church.

Her home was noted for its hospitality and the warm welcome extended to neighbors, friends and to those of her faith. During her last illness she was tenderly cared for by Mr. and Mrs. Forrest Hanscom, who had made their home with her for the last eight years, and who ministered to her with as much devotion and affection as if they were her own children. The funeral services were conducted by the writer at her late home. Interment was in the Berwick Cemetery. The floral tributes reflected, by their beauty and profusion, the love and esteem in which she was held.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

SISTER ELLA WILSON COBB was born July 25, 1884 in Alabama, and died Dec. 25, 1949, making her stay on earth 65 years, and 5 months. She moved from Alabama to Texas at the age of two and spent the rest of her life in that state. She was married to Robert H. Cobb, Oct. 1, 1899. To this union were born five children, two girls and three boys. She united with the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church in 1910. As long as her health permitted she was faithful in attendance. She leaves to mourn her death her husband, two sons, Wiley and Vernest; one daughter, Mrs. Annie Mae McElyea; five sisters, one brother, ten grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. Two children preceded her in death, Mrs. Clyster McKinney in 1930 and Virgil Cobb in 1948.

A Letter from Mother

Children dear come lay me away,
And write your Dad a letter;
Tell him how we used to pray,
But now my prayers have ended.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Pastor of the Church, officiated at the last rites at the Hopewell Baptist meeting-house. Interment in Hopewell Cemetery.

R. H. COBB

ELDER CHARLES DENSMORE was born Nov. 24, 1869, and departed this life April 18, 1950, making his stay here 80 years and almost 5 months. He was married to Lucy Collins in 1897 and to this union five children were born. His wife and three daughters, Mrs. Bessie Wilburn, Lou and Molly preceded him in death. He leaves to mourn their loss, two daughters, Mrs. Sarah Thompson and Mrs. Eva Howell; two half-brothers, T. C. and Dave Densmore; six grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

He was an ordained minister of the Primitive Baptist faith for about fifty-six years, a sound and faithful Old Baptist until death. He lived the doctrine he preached. He will be missed not only by his children and kindred, but by friends and more especially his brethren. His church loved him beyond expression. A large company attended his funeral service at his home church, Liberty Grove.

The unworthy writer, who has tried to serve as his moderator for nearly three years was called to conduct the service together with Elders H. M. Brock, A. T. Randolph and W. C. Barnes. Many good hymns were sung, and after the preaching of salvation by grace of a sovereign God his body was laid beneath the sod to await the glorious resurrection morn. Written by request of the church.

((Elder) J. W. McCOOL, Moderator
GARNSEY McGOUGH, Church Clerk

MRS. NANCY ALICE (BEENE) SMITH was born near Fort Smith, Ark., March 19, 1887, and departed this life Nov. 10, 1949 near Norman, Okla., aged 62 years, 7 months, 21 days. She was married to J. H. Smith, July 12, 1904. To this union were born five girls and seven boys: Mrs. Otis G. Smith, Shawnee, Okla., Mrs. Paul Burgess, Lorene Smith and Mrs. Clifford Kittler, Oklahoma City, Okla., Billy Ruth Smith at the home address; Homer, Tecumseh, Okla., Clarence, Moor, Okla., Allen, Oklahoma City, Okla., George, Norman, Okla., Melton, Corpus Christi, Texas, Ernest and Glen of the home address. There were three sisters and two brothers, one sister preceded her in death one day, besides a host of relatives and friends to mourn their loss.

She never united with the church, but always attended Old Baptist meetings when she could, and we think she gave every evidence of being a child of God. She was a loving wife, kind mother and always ready to help any one in need. Her door was always open to Old Baptists and she did all possible to make their visits enjoyable to which I am sure they would all readily assent. We feel her loss keenly, and while we wonder she should have been taken, we believe she had finished her work here and is resting from her labors. Her sickness was of short duration. Elder C. U. Landers of Coleman, Texas conducted the funeral service and she was laid to rest in the Norman Cemetery. Written by her sister-in-law.

NANCY MILLER

MARION NEWTON WHITTINGTON was born March 4, 1859 near Waldron, Ark., and died Jan. 24, 1950 at his home near Glen Cove, Coleman Co., Texas, aged 90 years, 10 months, 20 days. He leaves to mourn his passing his wife, ten children, 18 grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren. Six sons: C. G., St. Helena, Ore., S. C., S. G., C. T., and M. D., of Glen Cove and Glen of Cutler, Cal. Four daughters: Mrs. Annie Fite, Visalia, Cal., Mrs.

Cleo Smith, Pleasonton, Tex., Mrs. George Rinehart, Cutler, Cal., and Mrs. W. F. Mittle, Glen Cove, Tex.

Brother Whittington united with the Predestinarian Baptist Church about sixty-five years ago, but due to failing health he has not been able to attend meetings for several years. In the presence of a large company of relatives, friends and neighbors he was laid to rest in the Glen Cove Cemetery. Thus he has fulfilled God's command to man, "for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Being given a long and useful life, he was also gifted with the greatest gift of God to man, a hope of life beyond the grave, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." As long as we remain on earth we are natural, corruptible mortal beings, and thus it is written, "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." It is the same "it." That was our brother's hope, that he would be raised in the likeness of our Savior, see him, be like him, and be satisfied. May our heavenly Father comfort Sister Whittington and the children. Written by request of the family.

(Elder) C. U. LANDERS

MRS. ELIZABETH RODGERS, (nee MATTHEWS) daughter of the late Joseph Burton Matthews and Mary Francis Cook Matthews, was born April 4, 1872, departed this life Jan. 4, 1950, making her stay on earth 77 years and 9 months. Her father being a minister of the Old School or Primitive Baptist faith, also her maternal grandfather, Elder Joab Cook, she was raised in a home where all true Primitive Baptist people were shown a warm welcome and made to feel at home. There was much singing and rejoicing when they were gathered together for their meetings. She was united in marriage to John Henry Rodgers, Jan. 25, 1894. To this union one daughter was born. She is survived by her daughter, Mrs. Artous Meeks, three step-grandchildren, four great-step-grandchildren, one sister, Mrs. Martha Ann Wilkes, one sister-in-law, Mrs. Maggie Matthews, and a host of nephews, nieces, and other relatives and friends. She will be greatly missed in her home and among the brethren in the church. She was a good tenor singer, and it was one of her greatest pleasures when she was endowed with the spirit of her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Providence, near Star City, Lincoln Co., Ark., in October 1914. Being in bad health most all her life she did not have the privilege of attending meetings as much as she would have liked to do, but went when she was blessed with health and a hearty welcome was extended to all Predestinarian Baptists who visited in her home. Her dear husband passed away in Feb. of 1933. Her pastor, Elder H. H. Philips, conducted the service in the meeting-house at Providence. A large company of relatives, brethren and friends filled the house, and many beautiful floral offerings were given in love and sympathy, showing the high esteem they felt for a dear sister of the church who so ably defended the cause.

During her last years she lived with her daughter who gave her as good care as she was able to do. The daughter spent most of her time the last year ministering to her mother and her husband who had a serious head injury. All was done that doctors and loving hands could do but to no avail. When her Savior Jesus Christ called she went home to be with him on that glorious resurrection morning when all his beloved children shall obey their Father's call, and arise with him and be like him forevermore in that beautiful home called heaven, while we, who loved her dearly, mourn her passing, we hope she is at home with her Savior Jesus Christ. We feel great sympathy for her loved ones left behind. Written by a niece.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the New Valley Church, Loudon Co., Va., Wed., Thurs. and Fri., Oct. 11, 12 and 13, 1950. Ministers and other brethren of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us. The meeting-house is 8 miles north of Leesburg and 4 miles from Point of Rocks, Md. half a mile from Lucketts on Highway Route 15. Those coming Tues., 10th will come to Leesburg and inquire for Bruce McIntosh or call C. R. Hollandsworth. Greyhound buses leave 12th and N. Y. Aves., Washington, D. C. A local train leaves Rosslyn, Va. near the end of Key Bridge at 2:25 p.m. Those coming Wed. by bus to Leesburg too late to be met will find taxi service near bus stop. Those coming Wed. by private conveyance will go directly to the meeting-house. For further information write

M. W. HOWSER, Church Clerk
Purcellville, Va.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Nassaongo Church located about six miles from Salisbury on the Snow Hill Road, Wed. and Thurs. Oct. 18 and 19. An invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth and especially to ministering brethren. Provision will be made for all present. Those coming by train or bus on Tuesday will go to the homes of the following all living in Salisbury: Mrs. Raymond Parsons, 545 Jackson St., Mrs. Harold Powell, Lincoln Ave., or Mollie E. Fooks, 710 S. Division St. (Elder) D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor
M. E. FOOKS, Clerk

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 118 RUTHERFORD, N. J., NOVEMBER, 1950 No. 11

CORRESPONDENCE

Williamstown, Kansas

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:

If it will not tax your patience too much I feel that I would like to give expression to my thoughts in regard to the scriptures recorded in 2 Peter 2:4, also Rev. 12:9. That in 2 Peter reads, "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved into judgment; and spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness," etc. That in Revelation reads, "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." Rev. 12:7-9. These two parts of Holy Writ, while they may bear no relationship to each other, are equally confusing to some of the Lord's little ones. Sometimes we find it less difficult to tell what these things do not mean than what they really do mean. So if God will guide my mind and pen I would like to present my version of this for the consideration of our dear brethren who read the *Signs*: *"The angels that sinned and were cast down to hell."* It would be dreadful to anticipate even the possibility of any of the angels of the paradise of God sinning and thus forfeit their home in those regions of bliss. This thought really deserves to be dismissed without comment. Firstly, because they must be born of God or they cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, and whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin for his seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin because he is born of God. Secondly, sin is condemned in the flesh and those disembodied spirits are not encumbered with a body of sinful flesh as we who are yet thus encumbered. Thirdly, Jesus has said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." I can see no advantage in a good hope through grace if, after we may have attained to that glorious state we are still in jeopardy of being cast down to hell. The Catholic clergy claim their ability to pray a soul out of purgatory which claim is, to say the least, fantastic, but it is no less absurd and incredible than to suppose that God would cast one of his holy angels down to hell after having received him in glory. So we will dismiss this theory as being altogether unfounded. But the apostle's words are not idle words, so we must look for a better solution than this. He is referring to the old world as will be seen by reading this chapter. God's people, Israel, are the angels under consideration here and the old world, of course, is that old or legal dispensation wherein the people were under the law of carnal commandments. His people did sin most flagrantly. They trampled un-

der foot the holy law of God until they "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," and God did cast them down to hell. Not into an imaginary abyss burning with fire and brimstone but delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment. As a recompense for their sin he sent that wicked king Nebuchadnezzar who razed and destroyed and carried the people into exile seventy years. Briefly stated, these are the angels that sinned and this is the hell into which they were cast. We notice that "Noah, the eighth person" is brought to our view in this connection. Noah, the only one whom God saw righteous in that generation. All the rest were counted as exceedingly wicked and this would necessarily include the family of Noah with the rest. As it applies to God's people now so it applied to them. They were by nature the children of wrath even as others. They did nothing to merit the favor so abundantly bestowed upon them. "But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace are ye saved.)"

Perhaps no clearer demonstration of God's election can be found in the Bible than this. Noah, a preacher of righteousness, a type of Christ, was commanded to build an ark, a type of the church. This he did alone. He sought no help from any source only from God, and no help was provided him. Thus Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build my church." Likewise he went forth in this work alone. He asked for no human aid and any or all who pretend to be helping God must be accounted imposters. "Noah, the eighth person." Besides him, in his family there were seven souls which seven represents a full or whole number. God said, "Come thou and all thy house into the ark." Thus we see the whole family gathered into the ark with Noah, their head and husband. Looking now at the antitype we see the whole family of God gathered into the church with Christ, our exalted head and husband. As before stated, the family of Noah was among that wicked generation hence they did not enter the ark on account of their righteousness or good works but by the virtue of the righteousness of Noah, their head. And likewise God's people are gathered into the church, not on account of their righteousness or good works, but by virtue of the righteousness of Christ, our exalted head. "This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us."

In Revelation it is said, "And there was war in heaven." I hope no one will be presumptuous enough to suppose this chaos existed in those regions of eternal bliss. This cannot be, although there be some who refer to this scripture to prove the devil was once an angel in heaven but he sinned and thus became a devil. How absurd and incredible, I have not words to express. How could any one suppose that God Almighty is so lax in his government as to allow one of his holy angels to sin and sink so low in infamy as to become his adversary. Who would suppose there are temptations in heaven that are more alluring than the shining courts of glory? This war in heaven was the culmination of one of the things of which John came to bear witness which it was said must shortly come to pass. "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." And this is the heaven in which this war was waged and not in heaven above where all is love. This war, no doubt represents the early persecution which the saints of the Lord were called to endure when the Pope ruled high hand-

ed and supreme, having both secular and religious authority and many of the saints who had the courage to withstand his tyrannical rule suffered martyrdom at his pleasure. Blood flowed to the horse's bridle. Let not our brethren be misled by this. This does not mean the blood was two feet deep or more which it must have been to reach the horses's mouth; but the bridle is that by which the beast is controlled. He is held in check, he is turned hither and thither. Says the apostle James, "Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body." Thus the blood of the saints flowed unto the time when this beast, the dragon, was checked in his unholy holocaust. "Michael (Jesus) and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." John "saw an angel, (which no doubt represents the power of the Holy Spirit of God) come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nation no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled." "Thus Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not." This was a bitter conflict but Michael prevailed. The dragon was cast out into the earth and his angels were cast out with him. This perhaps, is the first element that split away from the true church and they remain separate and apart from the true church to this day. They were cast out into the earth. They went out from us because they were not of us. This dragon is called the Devil and Satan. As John stood upon the sands of the sea, he saw a beast rise up out of the sea having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns. The sea, no doubt is a symbol of the legal dispensation, his seven heads representing full or complete authority. His ten horns representing the ten commandments of the law by which he persecuted the saints who recognize the complete redemption from under the law by our Lord Jesus Christ. The ten crowns upon his ten horns representing his regal powers so it mattered not how or in what way the saints offended his satanic majesty they were tried and convicted according to the law of carnal commandments. No doubt their greatest offense was their zeal and desire to worship the true and living God. The dragon, or devil, gave this beast his power and authority. And even he had no power other than that what was given unto him, so hence this war in heaven, power was given unto him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. Michael prevailed, Jesus died that through his death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through the fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. It was God's people who were all their lifetime subject to bondage under the law. It was God's people who were in constant fear of death because the death penalty hung heavily over their heads. But it is God's people who rejoice in a complete deliverance from the bondage of corruption unto the glorious liberty of the children of God. "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Satan is a vanquished foe. Jesus reigns. He reigns victorious, over heaven and

earth most glorious. Jesus reigns.

(Elder) L. L. SCHENCK

Route 2, Box 4, Elkins, W. Va.

ELDER BRANCHE, MY DEAR AND PRECIOUS BROTHER IN GOSPEL LOVE: How good it was to see you again, and to be with you for a short time and hear you and Elder Martin preach. No, Elder Branche, we did not feel that it was wrong for you to go home at the time you did. On the contrary, under the circumstances, I believe that God gave you all a mind to return home just the same as he gave you a mind to come unto us declaring the "unsearchable riches of Christ." We felt thankful that we had you on Saturday and could hear you both preach twice.

We had our regular meeting on Sunday. Elder Poling was still with us. I felt that I was given liberty on Sunday, but realize I was left in the dark Saturday night. If you recall I read my text over a second time and there was nothing there for me. I know that any understanding must be sent from God Almighty and it is not in man. I felt that you explained my text and said many of the things that I wanted to say. I know that you were blessed that evening to be able to speak of such deep things. I have often read along there and desired to understand more about that, and was glad that you spoke on what you did. It was certainly food for me.

In reference to the eunuchs, I have often wondered as to the eunuchs that were so made of men, and some that have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. According to my understanding there is only one true eunuch, and that is he that was so born from his mother's womb. If you see it differently and have a mind to do so please put me straight on it.

Brother Branche, it is now March 22 and your letter has laid here unfinished for some time. In regard to your welcome letter I received it with great satisfaction and find that we have traveled many roads together, even to the extent of living in the state of California, and being brought back to this home state, and I hope by the same power and for the same purpose. I will never forget the dream that I had the Sunday morning that I was called to the stand for the first time. I was greeting you and shaking hands with you when I awoke and said aloud, "Brother Branche." I believe we were at that time greeting one another with "an holy kiss." It was in joyful happiness and embraced with the spirit of God I am sure. Since that time I have desired that if there was a gift for me that it would be partly as good as the one that has been made manifest in you. Since I have read your last letter I feel much better over my own troubles because I am not alone. I only hope that in time God will, at his proper time, bring my wife and me together in spiritual belief. I would so much desire that we walk together in this life in every way, and especially in harmony when it comes to our spiritual thoughts, but I am sure tonight that there is only one that has this power. I am convinced more than ever that it is not in man to do this. On one occasion Jesus straitly charged his apostles, commanded them to tell no man that thing, that he was "The Christ of God." (Luke 9:20-21.) They were never given the power to tell any man this thing, but it must be revealed to them by the Holy Spirit. Then with the same weight the command is given to "feed my sheep" and "feed my lambs," as much as to say this is what you are to do— feed those that are already taught that thing that he was "The Christ of God." It is written "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord," but only at God's time according to the good pleasure of his will and

not ours, having made known unto us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself.

Elder Branche, I cannot write a good letter like you can so please answer when you can and do not wait for an answer to write, but write when you have a mind to do so. Give my kindest regards to your wife and all that I know down there. Elder Murphy has been worse for a few days, but oh how he rejoiced at seeing you precious ones again. I believe that the God that controls all things sent you to us for his good as much as ours. He still talks of you all much of the time, and how he enjoyed hearing you preach again. I believe that you came and anointed his head once again.

I hope the weather clears up for our next meeting date. I look forward to it most of the time with fear and trembling. I know it would be asking too much to ask you to come, but how I would like for you to be here. God willing, Elder Priddy will be here and Elders Bird and Hammond have promised to come if all is well and it is the will of Him.

I saw my oldest brother for the first time in several years in Baltimore the week after you were up here. We were there for a visit and how changed he was since I last saw him. He spent most of the time questioning me and asking many things about myself. He said that he was coming to my ordination. It has been in the past year that he has been brought by the way that he knew not. How wonderful his words were to me when he expressed his feelings to me with tears in his eyes. He told me how he was out of a job and the whole world was against him etc. He got in such a place that he did not know which way to turn. He started for the first time trying to read the Bible. Then he wrote home to see if there was an old Baptist church in Baltimore, and how after finding it and hearing Elders Ashworth from Virginia and Wood from Baltimore that things began changing for him. He never misses a meeting now and seems to be confused in so many ways. Although he grew up in this doctrine it is just as new to him as it was to me. I believe that God is dealing with him. He never ceased talking of this doctrine while I was there two days, and wrote, when I came home, that we never finished our conversation, and that if he could he was coming for the ordination. Yours in tribulation and in love.

(Elder) V. B. LINN

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319 Mankin Ave., Beckley, W. Va.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Enclosed is a money-order for another year's subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. This is a little late but I have just neglected it. I have intended to write you informing you of my change of address. We are now permanently located.

We understood you had been sick and hope you are better now and will soon recover entirely. There is much sickness and afflictions among the Baptist people, as well as with other people, and it seems there are so many of the Baptists being taken from the earth, none considering that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come. I am made to wonder if the words of Elias will be repeated? "Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life," and on down it reads, "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." It is understood that their blood was shed like water in and after the days of this prophecy for the testimony of God and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; we are bound to realize that those who martyred Jesus were killed for believing and teaching that salva-

tion is by grace from the start to the finish of their housing in the eternal heavens, for we realize that the nature of all things is the same as from the beginning of God's creation, the leopard is the same leopard, and the Ethiopian is the same Ethiopian. We have to-day just another generation of what God made in the beginning, their nature has not changed from the beginning. So it is to-day, the unregenerate are paying big money for a lie (and they are welcome to it) and saying away with the truth and grant to us a murderer, you know what I mean. We know what we believed before we were (manifestly) redeemed "from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers." That principle was already in us from our mother's womb, since we were conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity from our mother's womb speaking lies. We could be and were taught that we were free moral agents and believed and loved it, which doctrine is of man and proceeds from man and is not the doctrine that drops as the rain. We were not a free agent even at that time for a man cannot be free and yet be a servent in bondage at the same time. At that time we were servants unto sin, and were free from righteousness, but not out of the control and rule of the great I AM. The apostle says, "Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

This verse of scripture teaches many good things of which I cannot do justice. From the beginning of God's creation man could never rise any higher than the dust of the earth outside of the work of his blessed Son. It says "when we were children" (when we were dead in sins) they were children of promise, and this promise was in his Son from all eternity. It could not have been in the first man Adam for dust will not produce, it is a non-productive substance and cannot produce salvation for there is no seed to start from. Therefore, salvation, which is the fruit of righteousness, is by Jesus Christ, and man could not possibly be an heir to an incorruptible inheritance for he is corruptible. Therefore, adoption must take place before he can be an heir of God's immortal glory. So when the fulness of the time was come, (that the adoption should be confirmed) God sent forth his Son (the promised seed) made of a woman, made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, and fulfilled his earthly ministry without spot, and without blemish, and perfect before God and man, fulfilling the righteous demands of the holy law of God which no man could keep. The law is holy, therefore it took one that was equal in holiness which was not in any other man save Jesus Christ, "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant," and served under the law and kept it for his people; and bore their sins in his own body on the tree of the cross, being judged by Pontius Pilate and the people of Israel with the Gentiles and Herod to be worthy of death of whom guile was never found in his mouth, and of whom Pilate himself said, "I find no fault in this man," but the fault was in his people, but for his love for them and he being the perfect sacrifice "he opened not his mouth." So they nailed that holy body, that was of a heavenly parent and also of an earthly parent, to the cross and buried it, and God raised it (Jesus's body) up again "that we might receive the adoption of sons," for we could not inherit jointly with

him of the heavenly inheritance without this work. Here it is manifested that he is our seed, promised from all eternity. Paul says, flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. No, it cannot because it is of corruptible seed; this is why it must be *adopted*, this is why this mortal *must* put on immortality, and this corruptible *must* put on incorruption, so that it can inherit immortal glory which takes place with us in the change, (as is seen in the resurrection of Jesus) for the adoption is understood to be our body, taken out of one family of another parent, or parents, and adopted into another family of another parent which is God. We now have the spirit of adoption, as he said, because ye are sons. God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts whereby we cry Abba, Father which is the first fruits of the spirit, and the earnest of the inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory, thus he is our *seed* as God promised. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." John 12:24. Was he not speaking of himself? A natural illustration no doubt would say this teaches reproduction, but if that would be so I would fail to see where that would profit us since we have tried to prove that we in and of ourselves have no seed outside of Christ. I am persuaded that it was speaking of the increase of his resurrection, for he said except it (the seed) fall into the ground and die it abideth alone. Since this corn of wheat (the promised seed) fell into the ground and died, and was raised again, there is ground and foundation for a hope of the resurrection of the dead which will be the final increase of that seed. The first fruits is Christ in you, the hope of glory, and the apostle says, "We ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body," which we have not yet witnessed, and shall be brought to pass when this vile body is changed and fashioned like unto his own glorious body, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.

Brother Dodson, this is not meant for strife or vain glory, but if it is sound doctrine it came from heaven, but if unsound it proceeds from man. I am enclosing a good letter from Brother Lynn, who is a young minister of the Tygarts River Valley Association. He was ordained recently. I am here at home to-day alone. One of my legs was broken the 21st of March and I have been staying in close hoping to recover soon. Yours in Christ Jesus.

(Elder) ERNEST BRANCHE

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332 American Ave., Long Beach 12, Cal.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Enclosed find money-order for renewal of my subscription, also for the books, "Fragments" by Elder S. H. Durand, and "Two Worlds" by Elder Milford Hall. I am sorry and ashamed that I have let my renewal go so long although I have not received a paper from your office in months. My mother, Mrs. Rhoda Champion, has passed her papers on to me. Constantly moving and changing my address, in my line of work, I did not want to bother you with making changes all the time.

I love the paper and it is a comfort to me. I never want to be without it. The doctrine of this beloved paper is the doctrine that I love, it is the truth and the light. What a firm foundation to have, believe and have faith in this doctrine of salvation by grace, and not of or by works. I was raised by parents belonging to the Primitive Baptist church, and have a long list on each side of my family tree that were Old Baptists. My grandfather, Elder J. C. Champion, of Winfield, Ala. was or-

dained by the Primitive Baptist church and preached the glad tidings of peace and salvation by grace for thirty odd years before leaving this world, but being dead in the carnal flesh and spiritual discernment I hated the Primitive Baptists, and am sorry to say that I was ashamed that my father and mother were "Hardshells." How blind I was, how great was my darkness until, if not deceived or deceiving myself, the effectual working power and mighty hand of God took effect to give me this little hope in my heart, and to love this Old Primitive Baptist doctrine that the natural world hates. What a wonderful God! What a blessed doctrine to the children of God!

I want to thank, very kindly, Elder C. H. Byrd and the *Signs of the Times* for writing and printing the obituary of my father, William Henry Champion. Yours in hope.

J. P. CHAMPION

Goldonna, La.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: It is with fear and trembling I undertake to write on this beautiful picture of the sun-clothed woman. Fear of what I do not know, unless it is that I may say something that will turn my brethren against me if I be worthy to call the Old Baptists my brethren. Unless God takes this carnal mind and places it on the divine things, I will certainly not be able to write on this subject, for it is by him we live, move and have our being. I feel to be the chief of sinners, but God and God alone only knows what I am. I am not good on scripture but will say in starting I believe the sun-clothed woman to be the true church, the Lamb's bride, and his dove that is preserved and kept by the power of God that worships God in spirit and in truth for she is clothed with the sun. God gave her wings to fly into the wilderness where the red dragon could not harm her. No, my beloved brother, the kings and lords of this earth cannot touch her. Why? Because she is kept by the power of God. We can hardly find the house of worship ourselves by asking people because the Arminian world is not interested enough to know where the meeting-house is. Why? Because God's chosen people are a peculiar people despised by the world. They care nothing about the world because they are not of this world, neither does the world care for them because the people of the world have not the love of God in their hearts. There is a fixed gulf between them and the child of God, therefore, the red dragon cannot harm one of God's little, peculiar and despised people.

Let us go back to the birth of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To my mind the king of the earth tried to do away with him soon after he was born of the virgin Mary, but he could not with all the power he thought he had. Why? Because God forbid that it should happen. Neither had he accomplished what he came to do or was sent to do, which was to save as many as the Father had given him to save, to die in their stead, and that was and still is his bride. I do not believe there is a creature on the face of the earth that can pluck one out of the Blessed Hand or ever will. Why? Because his bride was chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and is kept by the power of God. To my mind that is the sun-clothed woman. If you can understand what I have tried to say do as you please with this and there will be no hard feelings. If I have a home with God's humble poor it was given me before the world was formed. May the good Lord keep us as the apple of his eye, and under the shadow of his blessed wing until we meet in a better world to come. Your brother I hope, if I have a hope.

W. D. GODWIN

"For by him were all things created."
Colossians 1:16.

Then is he not by creation the author of all things? And surely he had a reason for creating them, and his reason must have been a good one; as all he does is for good, surely he had an object of good in view as a reason for all his works, and the object must be attained or he must suffer loss; but he is to lose nothing, and in all of his undertakings he shall never fail. He also works and none can hinder, moreover his work is perfect, and that which is perfect cannot be improved upon. The object moving him in this work of creation must have been a noble one, one of superior greatness; great, grand, sublime, high and lofty must have been the object of such a wonderful display of wisdom, love and power as was manifested in this great and stupendous work. The great aim, the wonderful design above all others, was his own glory. Lesser objects are admitted, but this is the prime one, and that the object be attained everything created is so united, coupled, linked and knit together in its several parts, and is so skillfully arranged that perfect harmony of action pervades the whole. Hence the absolute certainty of the accomplishment of the design intended by the Contriver; creation and predestination must be equal in extent, or coextensive with each other; that is, everything created must be predestinated to the end that it is sure to accomplish the design in creation, and why may the wrong not be as great in the creation of all things as in the predestination of all things? All things only are predestinated, and they only to the glory of God, or at least that is the prime end to which they are predestinated. Other ends, as before said, are admitted, such as are for the good of his creatures in general, and for his people in particular. The "all things" predestinated are the all things created; and the all things created are the all things that God pronounced very good, so in his estimation he only predestinated things that were very good, nothing bad. Man's estimation of many of the "all things" which in God's estimation are very good are miserably bad. Sin is the transgression of the law. The transgression of the law is sin, and Adam by the transgression of law brought sin into the world. So Adam by transgression is the author of sin, by which transgression he and all his posterity became sinners, dead sinners. Now let us divide the "all things" about which I have been writing into three classes of things for the better understanding of how God has predestinated all things. The first class of the "all things" are such things as he will do himself. The second class of the "all things" are such things as he will have done, and the third class of the "all things" are such things as he will allow or suffer wicked men to do, being let, or given up, or over to Satan, from whom they get their influence to do wickedly, who unknowingly take the way of God's predestination, as did the murderers of our blessed Lord, the brethren of Joseph in his abduction, or Cyrus in his war against Israel. God does not in any sense of the word prompt, lead or incline man to sin in any way, form or manner; man has only to be left to himself, left without the restraining power of God, and at once he falls, like Adam, into sin; he needs no influence from any other source than his own depravity, by which he drinketh down iniquity as the ox drinketh down water. That God allowed sin to enter the world is evident, and it is equally evident that he yet allows man to sin. He does not, no, not in the slightest degree approve it, sanction it, command it or lead to it, but right the reverse, he disapproves of it, he gives no

sanction to it, leads from it, hates and abhors it, and will punish it, yet in some way and for some reason he suffers us to sin every day of our lives, yet his suffering it is no excuse behind which we may retreat or hide. Though I thus write, I know of no one who has done so. O that the dear Lord would gather his people from the four winds of the earth to Zion with songs of joy and gladness of heart and soul, that peace, love and fellowship of all our kindred in Christ might be restored.

Dear brother Lefferts, I will send this letter, but by no means for its value, for it is like me, imperfect. You may or may not give it place in the *Signs,* just as you think best, and all will be right. May the Lord be yours to sustain in every need, is my prayer.

W. M. LITTLE

Gap, Texas, Sept. 24, 1915.

(Re-published by request)

3452 E. McDowell, Phoenix, Ariz.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I received the issues of the *Signs.* To me the writings are so precious, and such an amazing flow of love and grace seems to be in nearly all of the articles written, that I can hardly understand any one not wanting to receive the paper more often than it is written even. In the February issue "The Cleft of the Rock" is a wonderful sermon to me. I have read it over and over. How often I have been in this place. When I read it I had to cry as it so described my experience, and now at this time I feel it is such a safe place—a precious refuge.

Brother Dodson, I would like to relate two experiences I have had in recent months. I am so amazed and humbled, even a little afraid and confused. Why should the great and glorious God of heaven be so good and mindful of such as I? If after reading this you or any other can offer me reasons other than I think, please be free to write to me. On Jan. 6, 1950, to be exact, I was restless at night since I was worried and longed to find a Baptist church to attend. I had been thinking and hoping for a letter or the opportunity to meet other Baptist people here. Being upset in mind it took me some time to fall asleep, but finally I did. I must have immediately dreamed I was on a beach or shore with a great many of my family when suddenly we saw a dark storm cloud. I thought I cried out to run to shelter quickly. It seemed we ran into a strange and large house, but all got inside and I felt so happy that all were in the shelter, Then being anxious as to the severity of the storm I went to a window and looked out. As I looked the dark cloud began to change into a hue of very beautiful colors, finally ending in a bright blaze. Then from the center of the brightness it seemed a number of people in a brilliant shining light and one greater than the rest which seemed to me to be Christ. Such beauty and brightness could not be described or written. I trembled and shook but was also delighted. I looked forward from the window and cried "how beautiful?" As I said these words I awakened I was trembling all over. The first thing I thought of was, I must be going to die, I could not see this and live, so I lay waiting but became calm and normal in my thinking. After several hours I fell asleep and slept well the rest of the night. I never mentioned the dream to any one but waited and have come to the conclusion it was for strength and help in my life. The next week I received two letters, also a visit from a Baptist here, and I found the church that I had wanted to attend for so long.

The second dream was on a Saturday night. This time it followed after I had lain awake thinking on spiritual things, praising God and repeating verses I have read and remembered on the beau-

ties and loveliness of Christ. It seemed I wished I was able to show to every one, as I experienced and understood it, how beautiful and lovely was our Savior. We should talk it more, sing it more and tell it more. Finally it was so strong in my mind to do these things I said, "Lord if I should do this give me a sign" and after awhile I fell asleep. I dreamed I was in a beautiful house, very, very large with many stairs and I was descending or going down, when I heard a voice say, "follow the star." I looked up and everything above me was a white brilliance. On the ceiling was a large star and an arrow pointing toward it. I turned to start up and it seemed I was carried so swiftly, I could hardly breathe, toward the top and to the star. Then I awakened and I was trembling as before. This time I was not frightened, but I am so humbled I feel my unworthiness as I am nothing. We are poor, our home is humble, we are very ordinary people. I only know I had three dreams and to me they are an answer to prayer for faith and hope. Not only to me but to all the dear brothers and sisters of like faith, who walk in doubt and in darkness so much; who are miserable, weak and poor. I hope that in following the star it meant to express to others what I have felt, seen and experienced; that all may read and rejoice on the goodness and greatness of God.

Brother T. J. Robinson and Brother and Sister Day of Tucson visited us the fifth Sunday in January. They spent only a few hours in our home. We had never met before but it seemed when they left tears were in our eyes and we felt we had always known them. How unworthy I felt to have them talking to me and treating me so kindly. These are the precious things of the Spirit, given to us to enjoy amid the troubles and afflictions of this world. "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom though now we see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."

I can hardly write this for tears flowing, even the writing of the words cause my heart to rejoice and a desire to give God the glory. May God richly bless you and the writers of the *Signs*. So many letters and other articles are sent to it which helps all of those who read it to press on a little longer.

Brother Dodson I am writing this as an experience to you. I am not asking you to publish it, but it seemed I must tell some one who would understand. Believe me I am not thinking of myself as an example, on the contrary I feel very unworthy. I hope you are much stronger and have recovered from your recent illness. I visited Brother and Sister Bartlett to-day as I had a day off from my work. I know he is one of your subscribers. Just a dear old man. He can hardly talk of his church and people without tears. He is past eighty years of age. His wife is a lovely lady too. It is indeed a pleasure to be in their home and talk with them. I have met several Baptists since I wrote you before. The Lord has surely blessed us in this way. My husband is not a member but he is very kind to me about my church. Remember us in your prayers. Your very unworthy sister.

(Mrs.) MARY SMITH

Granite, Okla.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Please pardon me for waiting so long to send in my remittance. I do appreciate your continuing to send the paper. You do not know how much I enjoy reading those

good articles set forth in the *Signs*. If I believe anything I hope I believe what the Primitive Baptists advocate. I have had a name with them for ten years. I do not know whether this is the experience of all of God's people but I feel so cast down at times. I wonder if the Lord has had any dealings with me, then things brighten up for a little season and I rejoice in what I hope the Lord has done for me. I know it is by his grace and mercy that he looks down on sinful creatures like myself. I think the good Book says that in this world we shall have trials and tribulations, speaking of his people of which number I do hope I am one. May the Lord bless you in the publishing of the dear old *Signs* is my prayer. Your brother in hope.

C. F. HATCHETT

DEAR ELDER HARVEY BIRD: I received your letter a few weeks ago and was glad to hear from you. It was a comfort to me and the poetry was beautiful. You said you might feel to send me more of your poems. I hope you do. I would enjoy reading them. I went to Hopewell the first Saturday and Sunday and heard more good preaching. Elders Bell and Lane were there. Elder Hammond preached a beautiful sermon. I was sorry you were ill and hope you are well now as well as your wife. We are all very well. I do not object to your sending my letter to the *Signs* if you feel it is worthy to be published. As for myself I feel very unworthy. If I am one of God's chosen people I am the least of them all. I would do good if I could but know that I cannot. I am enclosing a poem I wrote not long ago. It expresses my thoughts most of the time.

Am I lost or am I found?
Am I free or am I bound?
Am I His or am I not?
Oft I wonder what is my lot.

Oft I wish that I could pray,
But find I know not what to say;
I feel so lost, so out of place,
If I be found then 'tis by grace.

If I be lost, oh anxious thought,
Then all my hopes will come to naught;
If I be found then 'tis by grace,
Then heaven will be my resting place.

I will close hoping again that you and your wife are well. Your sister in hope, if at all.

(Mrs.) HELEN STICKLER

Yawkey, W. Va.

DEAR ELDER HARVEY BIRD: Many times I have felt a great need to write to you, and have written letters and never mailed them because I did not have your address at that time. All week I have felt an urge to write some of my doubts and fears. This morning I feel like that dear hymn:

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

Oh, how I did enjoy the preaching Saturday and Sunday at Hopewell. It brought to mind the week after the Association at Camp Creek, when I seemed to hear a great rejoicing. I heard wonderful preaching that week, and the voices I seemed to hear were Elders Ben Martin, Wingfield and England. Sometimes I can still hear them as I go about my work. I feel alone and yet not alone. I wonder if there is any one like me. Sometimes all seems hopeless and I fear that I am deceived. Elder Harvey, the day you baptized me I was troubled. I felt so alone but I felt I must go out in the water, I could not turn back. When we walked to the

river bank and I saw the dear ones standing there such sweet peace filled my being. Oh, how dear and beautiful they seemed to me. I had a dream not long ago of being in the most beautiful place and it was spring there. The trees were in full bloom, but suddenly it was winter and everything was white with snow. That is the way I feel at times, suddenly it is spring within me, and then all is cold and still. Elder Harvey, I do not want to worry you with a long letter so will close. I hope you and your wife are well. Your sister in hope, if at all.

(Mrs.) HELEN STICKLER

Riffe, Wash.

ELDER DODSON, VERY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST OUR BLESSED LORD: Your good letter came a few days ago and was much appreciated. We are very sorry you have been ill, my heart goes out in sympathy to those who have to undergo major surgery, yet sometimes we have sweet experiences come out of those times of trial. I have a vivid memory of a time like this in my past life. One time I was taken to a distant hospital for surgery. I left seven little children at home who needed a mother. I had to wait six days to try to gain a little strength. Those were the blackest six days I ever experienced. So many times I thought of "the darkness which may be felt." I thought of my cares at home, but what was far worse it seemed my dear Lord had turned his face from me. The one thing I desired most was spiritual comfort which must come from him and him alone. Needless to say I tried to pray. My very breathing seemed to be groaning to him for mercy and comfort. I felt I could never go for surgery in that darkness. This continued until the ward carriage was brought to my bedside and I was placed on it. I was indeed in despair. I was to have no light, no comfort. My mind was filled with that thought, but we had only passed the door of the ward when the light came in great beauty, and angels voices sang a little known but beautiful hymn, and so all was well as it always is when the all wise ruler, and loving heavenly Father, who knows when to give and when to withhold, is present with us. I was strengthened and some to spare, no darkness only the cry, "It is I; be not afraid." "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." Again and again we are made to say, "Without thy sweet mercy I could not live here, sin soon would reduce me to utter despair." And again, "Grace all thy work shall crown, through everlasting days: it lays in heaven the topmost stone, and well deserves the praise." The dear old hymn, "How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord" seems to tell it so well and so all honor and glory belongs to Him, who knoweth all things and doeth all things well.

Dear brother, forgive me for personal mention of my own cares. I wish to push self away and praise Him, if possible, what few days I have left here, but I cannot of myself do anything that is well pleasing in his holy sight. A few things we have learned along the way are that he can lift up, cast down and can shut us in the darkest dungeon; he can give us light to see that we are vile, so much so that we, must like the poor leper of old cry unclean! unclean! On the other hand he opens the dungeon doors and the brightness of his countenance displaces all gloom, "and makes all within us rejoice." He can and does come to the unclean and say I have paid it all be ye clean. Oh, what pay when we are ten thousand talents in debt and nothing with which to pay. May he give us the spirit of humility which is so often needed by us poor weak ones for there is often a spirit of carnal exaltation which is dangerous

and brings much sorrow.

Brother Dodson, I have thought so often of late about the word *security*. We hear so much of it in our economic and national life. It is not of this kind I think, but when I hear the word it leads me to think of our security in Him who is our all in all. If we are His, how secure we are, having been given grace in Christ before the foundation of the world. This grace never wears out, never needs renewing. We only need eyes to see and feel it, and when He cried on the cross "It is finished" all his dear children were made secure in him. None can pluck them out of his hand, blessed thought. We cannot get so far away his all seeing eye is not on us. David said, "If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there." Jonah said, "Out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice." He is always near though we may not be able to see him for, like he did the servant of the old prophet, he must open our eyes if we see. I wish I could write as some do but that is a vain wish since it is *my* desire. God, if he saw fit, could give me thoughts and ability to pen them as others. May his name have the praise and glory as it most certainly will through all eternity.

We have lost another of our dear old Elders, Elder Jeffreys of Weiser, Idaho. He was dearly loved as a faithful, peace loving man able in the scriptures. We need laborers in the vineyard here. The little churches are small and so far between. Elder Fisher who was ordained last Nov. is in very poor health now with a heart condition, but his faith is strong. May God grant that you will soon be strong again, able to preach and edit the dear old *Signs* which is so loved by us who live in far distant lonely places where there are few of our faith. In Christian love. Humbly,

(Mrs.) ROSA COLEMAN

Box 7, Enterprise, Ala.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I have had a longing desire for some time to write you by way of expressing my heartfelt endorsement and appreciation of the blessed truths set forth in your writings in the *Signs of the Times,* but a feeling sense of my inability to express myself has so far deterred me. With much timidity I now throw myself upon your charity and once more make the attempt. I believe God is a sovereign and works his will in heaven, earth and all deep places, and none dare say what doest thou. Paul says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Paul seals the fact that all spiritual blessings to the saints are in Christ, and the apostle does not leave us to guess why this is so. It is according to God's election, according as he has chosen us in Christ before the sun ever lighted the universe, and I am happy to know I do not even as much as bat an eye in order to receive a blessing my God has in store for me. God did not bless us with spiritual life and then leave us to get our blessings here in time or eternity or by our obedience. Paul says all spiritual blessings which complete our salvation—time and eternity. Well might the apostle say, there is nothing able to separate us from the love of God which we have in Christ Jesus our Lord. I firmly believe that every one who was chosen in him shall enjoy the fulness of all spiritual blessings treasured up in Christ our Lord; that they are elected or chosen too, and there is no space between election and salvation to perform conditions. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," then elected to salvation for the blood of Jesus saves. It cleanses us from sin. All

spiritual blessings come according to God's choice of them. Then if their election is sure and unconditional, even so are all their blessings sure and unconditional. If all their blessings come according to their election, or according to God's choice of them before the foundation of the world, then it is certain they do not get one blessing in payment for what they do.

All the salvation the child of God ever receives is alone through the grace of God in Christ our Lord. Whether we save ourselves from this untoward generation; whether we work out our own salvation with fear and trembling; whether we save ourselves by taking heed to ourselves and to the doctrine; whether we are saved from error by the foolishness of preaching; all these things are God's mercies to us, and are, by the grace of God, coming to us through the merit and sufficiency of the blessed Christ. If any of the Lord's people are saved from delusions and false doctrine through the work of the ministry, it is grace that does the saving. I did not intend to write so much so will sign off. Yours in hope.

W. T. PITTMAN

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233 Monroe St., Camden, Ark.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE OF LIFE ETERNAL: I realize I have neglected to renew my subscription to the *Signs*. which I should not have done. I ask your pardon and thank you kindly for continuing to send it to me. I do love the dear old paper so much for what its editors and writers have stood for so many years. I have had the privilege of reading it as far back as I can remember, and I have now passed my three score and ten years. I hope to be able to continue reading it while I live.

I have written but little for publication as it seems I can but poorly express the truth in its rapturous glory, but I do love to read after the gifted writers who have written all along from its first publication. They are still bringing the same glad tidings that our fathers of old loved and cherished, and we feel to hope we are given to rejoice in the same way they rejoiced, and that we may continue in the same faith and be given to hear the joyful sound, and that the trumpet may give no uncertain sound. Oh, may God arm us with sword, shield and helmet, preparing us to be bold, fearless soldiers of the cross of Christ; acknowledging him as our Captain who has gone before us and fought all our battles, winning the victory for us, and that it is in him we live, move and have our being. "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong," "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Then not unto us, but unto his dear name be all the glory and majesty here in time and in the ages to come.

Dear brother, I do know I am not worthy of the least of God's mercies, but I hope that it is the glorious light of God's holy Spirit that shows us our vileness and imperfections, and that we are really and truly as weak and unworthy as we can feel to be; and that all we ever receive from our heavenly Master is a free gift, and for this reason he deserves all the praise. Bless his dear name, he will not give his glory to another, nor suffer his praises unto graven images. In mercy may he forgive us of all sin and transgression and save us in the realms of eternal bliss for his dear name's sake. Your little brother.

(Elder) J. T. EVERITT

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"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."
—John 4: 23-24.

The great and glorious revolution which should introduce this change: "the hour cometh, and now is," the fixed stated time, concerning which it was of old determined when it should come. The blessed change has come. In gospel times the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth. Now the change shall be in the nature of the worship. Believers shall worship God, not in ceremonial observances of the Mosaic institution, but in spiritual ordinances, consisting less in bodily exercise, and animated and invigorated more with divine power and grace.

The very fact that the Father seeketh such to worship him that do worship in spirit and in truth, intimates that such worshippers are very few. But I am glad that he came to seek and to save that which was lost. "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." "So the Lord alone did lead him, (Jacob) and there was no strange god with him."

Believers desire to be right, not only in the object of their worship, but the manner in which they worship. God is a spirit: a spirit has not flesh and bones, but who knows the way of a spirit? If God were not a spirit, he could not be perfect, nor infinite, nor eternal, nor the Father of spirits. God is a spirit and must be worshipped in spirit. Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill and said, "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, To THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." Jesus said to the woman of Samaria; "Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews."

Worship is a particular disposition, and inclination of man .They will worship something, just so it is called god. But God is not worshipped in temples made with hands; "Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us." Jesus said to his disciples, "Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." I would not spend much time seeking one whom I did not know; neither would I knock on many doors

trying to find one, in whom, I had no feeling interest. One must be brought to the place that he feels that he is nothing, has nothing, all confidence in self taken away, and that that prop on which he is leaning is rotten, before he feels to call for help. But when one is brought to this place, and begins to seek, he finds that He has "not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of his infirmities." These infirmities read about, and seen in others, will not bring us to the foot of the cross. These infirmities are within, and must be felt before there is any seeking. Paul declares that the kingdom of God is not 'eating and drinking.' It is not to be determined by one or two external acts, in which we participate or from which we abstain. The kingdom of God is erected not in the land works and turmoil, but in our innermost being. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there' for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." It is not primarily a matter of clean hands but of clean hearts. It is not a matter of coming to this mountain or going up to Jerusalem to worship the Father, but it is a place where two meet together. It is that inner sanctuary where God and we come face to face. We would not know his kindgom or church on earth, if the fundamental principals of his kingdom were not first established within us. The fundamental change is the overthrow or renunciation of one covenant, and the establishing of another on better promises.

The great change has come, for Jesus said to the woman at the well, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again." Yes, so long as we are tugging to draw from the earth that which is produced by the earth, we will never be satisfied. The people under *law* went up to Jerusalem to worship, or to some place designated for that purpose, but again, there was a remembrance of sin. The offering today would not suffice for tomorrow. But Jesus said to the woman, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." This living water is eternal life; for Jesus said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." It is not only necessary to know the only true God, but also Jesus Christ, whom he hast sent. If this woman, had known these two, she would have asked of the one that was conversing with her, and he would have given her living water. The water which would have been in her a well of water, springing up into everlasting life, and for the lack of it she would never thirst. This knowledge, this water, or life, is indispensable to the worship of him who is a spirit, and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth.

There are no discrepancies or contradictions in the scriptures, but there are paradoxical expressions. For instance, Paul said to the Corinthians; "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." So Jesus meant when he said to the woman, that he that drank of the water that he should give would never thirst again, that there would never be any lack of supply. He didn't mean that they would never thirst, because he said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness. for they shall be filled." This well may seem almost dry at times, but there will always be a sufficiency. It may be only a drop, but a drop will be enough to renew the hope, and to strengthen the faith.

This woman learned one thing of him who talked with her, that he

knew that she had five husbands. I have heard it said that these five husbands represented the law, or the five books of Moses, whether this woman had five living husbands, or these husbands represented the five rulers that had ruled over Samaria, I am not in position to say. But one thing is sure that they did not represent the law, for the Samaritans represent the whole of the Gentile nation; and the law was not given to the Gentiles, but to the Jews. The rites and ceremonies, the different kinds of clean and unclean animals which were used, or forbidden to be used, immersions, sprinklngs and washing of the body, or things which had respect merely to the body, but which had no influence upon the soul, all these rites and ceremonies were given to the Jew, but were not enjoined on the Gentile.

"There was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches." These five porches could represent the law, because this pool was at Jerusalem where they carried on their washings of the body. But a certain man was there which had an infirmity thirty and eight years, and which did not go into the pool. "When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am going, another steppeth down before me." The impotent man evidently was a Jew, and Jesus showed on this occasion that it was no longer necessary to go through with rites, ceremonies and bodily exercises at Jerusalem. Although these rites and ceremonies were the similitude, or figures of the things under the gospel dispensation, they have been fulfilled and nullified by an authoritative act. Therefore, we do not have to go up to Jerusalem to receive the substance of which the rites and ceremonies were the proper representations. And when we think of the relief of the burden of the ceremonial observances, we feel to say with the woman of Samaria, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." The duration of the infirmity of the man at the pool corresponds with the thirty and eight years journey of the children of Israel, from Kadesh-barnea to the brook Zered; see Deuteronomy 2-14. The impotent man was at the pool when Jesus arrived; and by his long suffering and experience he had found that further observance of the Mosaic law was not necessary, because it could not reach his case. We may justly say that the worship of the law was spiritual in its substance, but, in respect to its form, it was what Paul calls the flesh and beggarly elements of the world. This man found that he was too weak to put himself into the pool, and that there was no man to put him in; the power of all flesh has failed in this case. This failure causes the power of Christ to be more strikingly displayed, for Jesus said to the man, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." "The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk." There was a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, lying around on the five porches, waiting for the moving of the water. Yes, waiting as this man did, for the hour to arrive, when they would not have to go up to Jerusalem to worship, when the true worshipper could worship the Father in spirit and in truth. Yes waiting as this man did, to hear

the voice of the Son of God say to them, "rise, take up thy bed, and walk," without any further ceremony.

Jesus said, "I am not come to destroy (the law), but to fulfill" and his answer to them who complained of the man carrying his bed on the sabbath day; "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." The law is not fulfilled with any one until Jesus comes to that one, as he came to the woman at the well; and the man at the pool. Jesus first said to the woman, "Believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father." But when that hour did arrive, He said the hour "now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth for the Father seeketh such to worship him."

"When the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you." But Thomas one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. "The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger in the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." The hour had come to the other disciples, but had not come to Thomas. Thomas wanted to see what the others had seen. He wanted the voice that said unto the others, to say unto him, "Peace be unto you." Jesus granted to Thomas the desire of his heart, and said unto him, be not faithless, but believing. Thomas answered and said unto him, "My Lord and my God." If the other disciples could have caused Thomas to know that Jesus had risen from the dead, I suppose I would believe as many others do, that by sending out men to preach, that many would find the Lord, who, otherwise would never know him.

The time of this change of worship must not only come in history, but it must come in the experience of God's people. There has not been any change made in time or place for those who are not true worshippers to worship. The change is for them who know God in the pardon of their sins, and in whom the spirit of worship has been infused. The spirit of worship, must come from him who is to be worshipped; just as the branch must receive from the true vine its life, before it can produce fruit. The branch must have its union in the vine, just so, the true worshipper must be in communion with the true God before he can worship him in spirit and in truth. There are those who profess to be branches of the vine, who do not possess within them the life of the vine, and therefore, can not produce the fruit of the vine. Many there be who profess to worship God, but who do not possess the spirit of him who is to be worshipped, therefore, they worship they know not what. The branch does not come from some other source and connect itself to the vine, but comes from the inside of the vine, and the sap of the vine causes the bud to shoot forth, expand into blossom, and ripen into fruit. It is necessary for one to have the spirit of him who is a spirit, before they can worship him in spirit and in truth. The worship of God is somewhat like prayer, without any set time or place.

> "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, unuttered or expressed;
> The motion of a hidden fire that trembles in the breast."

Worship comes from the same source, but there must be a knowledge of God before one would have a desire to worship him; before one would have any respect, or reverence toward him.

May God keep us by his power and

grace, and lead us in such a way that we may show forth the praise of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light. H. O. N.

SINAI

A young sister who has recently come into the church in North Carolina has asked that we "write something of the meaning of Sinai." She says that "Huntington in his writings mentions the storms of Sinai as God's fiery law when he chastens and judges us that we should not be condemned with the world."

Perhaps one of the best methods of explaining or presenting a subject is to make a comparison or contrast it with its opposite. We find the apostle Paul employing this method in writing to his Hebrew brethren where this particular subject is under consideration. He says, "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) But ye are come into mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." Here we have, first, Sinai presented in all of its terror and fierceness. Reference is made to the mount which could be touched, "and that burned with fire unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest," upon which God descended and spake as "the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words: which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more." We are further told that they could not endure that which was commanded, and if so much as a beast touched the mountain, it should be stoned or thrust through with a dart, and also that so terrible was the sight that Moses said, "I exceedingly fear and quake." In the twentieth chapter of Exodus we have presented the law which God gave unto those he had brought up "out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." These were his chosen people, and the law which was given unto them was most exacting. The very first command was, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." We venture the assertion that every one of the Lord's people, at one time or another, from that day unto this, have broken that commandment, and we are informed of the fact that when we have broken the law in one point we have failed and become guilty of all. It would appear that *idolatry,* or worshipping false gods, was one of the worst pits into which God's children would fall, as in addition to saying, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," he continued by saying immediately, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me." This would seem to be very far-reaching in its effects and to cut at

the very roots of a great deal that purports to be of a religious nature in the world to-day. Our young sister also says, "We often hear God spoken of as a God of justice, wisdom and mercy, but not many speak of a jealous God and a wrathful God. Would a jealous and a wrathful God be placed under the Father or the Holy Ghost in the Trinity?" We have seen from the foregoing that Israel's God is, indeed, a jealous God, even to "visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation." It would seem to us that it is through his fiery law that God's infinite justice is revealed: it is the scale in which all are weighed and found to be wanting. Therefore we stand justly condemned before God and without excuse, and can bear witness to the testimony which has well been given that, If my soul were sent to hell, His righteous law would approve it well. This is the basis upon which God's wrath is manifested against sin. The prisoner must first be made to feel and plead his own guilt. We would say that this wrath would emanate from God the Father, from him who created the heaven and the earth, and all that in them is. His wisdom is revealed in providing through love and mercy a Mediator, in the person of his Son, to come and redeem his helpless people from their sins, and this redemption, or salvation, is made known unto us by the workings of the Holy Spirit. In this manner, God in the Trinity is made known unto us.

The burden of the apostle's message to the Hebrews is to present to them the new and living way as contrasted to what had been spoken unto the fathers by the prophets, and he was emphasizing to them the fact that in the *gospel dispensation* they are not come unto the mount that burned with fire, which could not be endured, and which was so terrible that the very sight of it caused Moses, their mouthpiece before God, to fear and quake exceedingly. All of this typified the terror and hopelessness of the *legal dispensation,* with which the believing Jews were familiar. They were all well acquainted with the law and the legal covenant and its just demands, and Paul was stressing the fact that he had something far better and superior to that which was contained in the old covenant. Much could and perhaps should be said here on the superiority of the new covenant over the old, of gospel over law, of mount Sion over mount Sinai. Paul in writing to the Galatian church presents the matter in the form of an allegory. He says, "It is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free-woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free-woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."

In our experience we are made to know that the law is our school-master unto Christ, that by it we are brought to a knowledge of sin and are taught our vile and wretched condition according to nature, without the power to even think one good thought, much less to perform a deed that would be well-pleasing in God's sight. Therefore, without Christ, we find ourselves without hope and without God in the world. Sinai pours forth the wrath of a just and holy God, One who is jealous of his honor and his glory and will not divide it with another. The law is as a flaming sword, turning every way to protect the Tree of Life, and we find

ourselves completely cut off, ten thousand talents in debt and not a farthing with which to pay. But the law serves its purpose in bringing us to feel our need of Him who is able to save unto the uttermost.

Having presented what they were *not* come unto, the apostle proceeds to tell what they were come unto by saying, "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." Here we have presented the *gospel church,* the spiritual house of God, established in the top of the legal mountains, or above the law. It is referred to as "the city of the living God," as it is built of lively stones, living characters, and as the heavenly Jerusalem, to distinguish it from the earthly Jerusalem. It is here that God's people worship with saintly or heavenly characters and get a fortaste or glimpse of immortal glory. By the term "general assembly and church of the firstborn" is undoubtedly intended to include both Jews and Gentiles, or those who were chosen of God among every nation kindred and tribe, whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life. King Jesus, Judge of both the quick and the dead, is head over all things to them, for it was prophesied that the government would be upon his shoulder. It is he who in the twenty-fourth verse is referred to as "the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." It is wonderful, indeed, for those who have been stripped of all they possess, and have been taught that their own righteousness is as filthy rags in the sight of a just and holy God to discover this Mediator of the new covenant. Unlike Moses, who feared and quaked exceedingly before God, Jesus, "being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Elsewhere in his epistle to the Hebrews the apostle emphasizes the utter failure of the sacrifices of birds and beasts, which had no efficacy in the blood poured out on Jewish altars—no power to put away sin. The blood of these sacrifices, at best, only reminded the people of their sins, but at the same time it pointed to the one offering which hath perfected forever them that are sanctified thereby. The sprinkling of the blood upon the door posts of the children of Israel who dwelt in Egyptian bondage was but a dim type of the precious blood of the blessed Lamb of God which, when applied to the hearts of his people, cleanses them from all sin of every hue and type. The shedding of his blood was efficacious, in that it put away, for all time, the sins of those for whom it was shed; therefore it "speaketh better things than that of Abel."

We believe God's people must all experience these things before they can

worship God in spirit and in truth. They must first be made to witness to the quickening power of God which raises them from their state of death in nature to a state of life in Christ Jesus. When the light of God's glorious truth first shines into their hearts and they have a knowlege of the glory of God as it appears in his Son, Jesus Christ, they may feel, as Martha did, to be cumbered with much serving, but after they have spent their full six days of labor and used up all their material in trying to do that which is well-pleasing in God's sight, they will come to see Christ as the only door by which they may enter into gospel rest, and then they will cease from their labors and desire to be found at the feet of their Lord, giving all praise and honor to his adorable name. Then they can bring forth the Royal Diadem and crown King Jesus Lord of all; then they can look upon the solemnities of mount Sion, the city of the living God, the new Jerusalem, and behold that "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion***** the city of the great King," and that "God is known in her palaces for a refuge."

We hope our young sister and readers can bear testimony to the truth of these precious things. R. L. D.

Written by Elizabeth L. Fetter

WHEREAS, by the purpose of God, our beloved brother, Elder Horace H. LEFFERTS, has been taken from the midst of his brethren to the fulfillment of his hope in eternal life, we have left to us the memory of a soldier of the cross, who manifested brotherly love, patience in tribulation, was instant in prayer, always serving the Lord in the strength given from above, in meekness and humility, contending for the truth as taught by the Holy Spirit. Having been called in grace while yet a boy, and set apart to preach the gospel while still a young man, he always remained faithful to that calling. Therefore be it RESOLVED, that we by the strength of God may be able to say and feel that it was God's will, let him do whatsoever he may. We extend our sympathy to his widow and family and to the churches that he served so faithfully, knowing that he fought the good fight, and kept the faith and has entered into rest. Further be it

RESOLVED, that this memoriam be published with the minutes of this Association, and copies sent to his widow and for publication in the **Signs of the Times.**

Done by order of the Delaware River Association in session with the Kingwood Church at Locktown, N. J., May 31 and June 1, 1950.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT, Moderator
CASPER G. FETTER, Clerk

OBITUARIES

MRS. LUCINDY DAVIS was born May 23, 1855, and died May 11, 1950. She was married to John Walter Davis, March 7, 1872, who departed this life Jan. 10, 1940. To this union the following children were born: Mrs. Minnie Lee Pumphrey and Mrs. Dora Pledger, Panama City, Fla., C. T. and C. C. Davis, Pensacola, Fla., J. F. Davis, Tallahasse, Fla., Mrs. Mary Phillips, Mrs. Laura Bell Grant, Mrs. W. J. Mitchel, Mrs. H. M. Porter, and W. F. Davis, Marianna, Fla., Mrs. Pearl Thurman, Atlanta, Ga., Mrs. Hattie B. Blitch, Miami, Fla., and Mrs. Pallie Coulette, Marianna, Fla. are deceased. There are thirty grandchildren and forty-two great-grandchildren.

I do not have the exact dates when Brother and Sister Davis united with the church. About 1890 she united with the Old Mt. Paron Church in Jackson Co., Fla., and was baptized by the late Elder Noah Lambert. Brother Davis united with the same church early in life. They settled at the old home place in January 1884 where they both died. This is about six miles south of Marianna and is a beautiful place. Our church (Salem, in Panama City) was constituted in 1842, and since it is nearer than to Mt. Paron, and having two daughters here whom she could visit, she moved her membership to Panama City.

She was faithful in her attendance and loved her church. I have never known a more devoted Old School Baptist. It was my happy privilege to attend one of the family reunions which were held at the old home place the fourth Sunday in May each year. I became personally acquainted with all the family and they are indeed fine people. This coming together in a happy reunion reminded me of only a fortaste of the reunion in the glory of glories where Sister Davis is now sweetly resting. She was familiarly called "Aunt Cindy." Everybody loved her. She had wonderful vitality.

The writer conducted the services at the old home place using Eccl. 12: 6-7. Mr. Chester Pelt,

a great nephew, made a few very fitting closing remarks. Mr. W. F. Burns spoke in prayer which was very timely and impressive. Her remains were tenderly and lovingly borne to Marvin Chapel about a mile from the old home, and laid to rest by the side of her husband to await the glad resurrection morn. Written by request of the family.

(Elder) C. H. BYRD

In memory of Sister ALLIE B. HEDNALL, born in Benton Co., Tenn., March 14, 1870, and passed away May 30, 1950 at the home of her daughter, Mrs. W. G. Lewallen, Route 3, El Dorado, Ark. She is survived by three daughters and three sons: Mrs. W. G. Lewallen, El Dorado, Ark., Mrs. Cecil Harrison, Strong, Ark., Mrs. V. E. White, Lima, Ohio, A. A. Hednall, Snyder, Texas, Ed. Hednall, Watson, Ark., and F. J. Hednall, Kermit, Texas. Also 20 grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren and a host of other relatives and friends to mourn their loss.

Sister Hednall was a member of Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church near El Dorado, Ark., uniting in May 1895. She was the wife of a Primitive Baptist preacher, Elder Josiah Hednall, who preceded her in death some years ago. She was not known to the writer until recent years, but she seemed very meek and humble, and greatly to enjoy the meetings and the presence of the brethren. She was deeply interested in the preaching and the good old songs. It is always with sadness we give up our loved ones, but knowing that she expressed great evidence of a sweet hope in Christ we feel she is better off until the Lord will come and call his saints from the tomb and clothe them with that great and glorious immortality that Jesus and all the prophets and apostles have written and spoken of for these many thousand years. We feel that it will not be long until this most glorious event will take place. Then all the sleeping millions will come forth, those having done good to the resurrection of life, and those having done evil to the resurrection of damnation.

To the dear family and relatives I would say, while it is sad to miss her there is great hope and consolation in the Lord that she is free from suffering, toil, pain and sickness which we are still subject to. May God give us a sweet spirit of reconciliation, and comfort us with his blessed presence is my prayer and desire for Jesus sake.

The unworthy writer and Elder W. A. Speer conducted the services in the funeral home in El Dorado with a large attendance. Interment in a cemetery near Strong, Ark.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES

MRS. ANNIE E. (SIRMAN) POWELL, our beloved sister in Christ, departed this life July 30, 1949 at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Ethel Covington, in Salisbury, Md., aged 82 years. Sister Powell was the daughter of the late Isaac and Martha Tilghman Sirman of near Salisbury. At the age of seventeen she was married to Joshua T. Powell and to this union four sons and four daughters were born, six of whom survive. Her husband departed this life June 27, 1915.

She united with the Nassaongo Old School Baptist Church, Dec. 23, 1895, and was baptized by Elder Thomas Poulson. She was devoted to the church and loved the doctrine of saving grace. Sister Powell was a devoted wife and mother with a loving kindness for all. Her funeral was conducted by Elder David V. Spangler at the Salisbury Old School Baptist meeting-house. May the Lord bless those that morn and enable us all to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

(Mrs.) ETHEL COVINGTON

W. M. SEXTON, a Deacon of Providence Church, Greenville, Ala., died from drowning at Nine Mile Branch, nine miles east of Greenville, Ala. about Jan. 1, 1939. Three months before his death he had a premonition to make all things ready. On Tuesday before he was drowned he asked Brother W. R. Vickery to go with him to see Mr. Stanfield. He put his hand on seven vaults and brought them at cost price. On Sunday after this Tuesday the drowning was as follows: W. M. Sexton and wife; three children, Mrs. Gertrude Thomas, Miss Gussie Sexton, Emmet Sexton, and two grandchildren, Mrs. Sarah Davison and Bruce Crews. The drowning was at 11 a.m. and they were taken from the water about sundown. The driver, Kendrick Thomas, was driving very fast and there were no banisters on the bridge. He escaped. There was a deep hole on the north side of the bridge and the car left the bridge on that side. Willie Stokes dived down and fastened wrenches so they could be pulled out.

Brother Sexton visioned he was going in a gulf, that a light would go in with him and come out with him. When brought out the car light was burning. He also visioned his funeral procession with Elder E. D. Gofford in lead. He said the most folks ever at a funeral would be at his. It was estimated there were three thousand. As per his premonition, Elder E. D. Gofford conducted the funerals. Six were buried at Old Cool Springs Church. Mrs. Davison was buried at Ebenezer Church, Elder Gofford officiating. There was a wonderful display of floral offerings attesting love and esteem. Dictated by W. R. Vickery and written by

(Elder) C. H. BYRD

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 118 RUTHERFORD, N. J., DECEMBER, 1950 No. 12

CORRESPONDENCE

1330 Mt. Holley St, El Dorado, Ark.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON AND ALL THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH: I thank you very much for sending me the paper when the subscription was long overdue. I have had several brothers and sisters tell me at our Association how much they enjoyed the articles I had written that were published in the Old Baptist papers. I thank God if I have been able to write comforting letters to God's believing children. I am not able to think beforehand what to write but write what comes to my mind. What I will attempt to write this time, the Holy Spirit being my leader, will be comments on the scriptures in the book of Jonah.

"Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me. But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord." Did God know that Jonah would try not to go to the city of Nineveh, but would go another way? Surely he did for God had a big fish prepared to swallow him and hold him three days and nights. God knew, and I say according to the scriptures had determined, that he would be in that ship fast asleep, taking a good rest when he (God) would send a mighty wind to prevent him from going only so far, and then throw him overboard where the Lord's big fish would be to swallow him and carry him to dry land. "But the Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken. Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his God, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep." Do you suppose the mariners thought by lighting their load they could go their own way? They could not go one inch farther than the Lord meant for them to. "So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not. And they said every one to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah." Could it have happened any other way, and that any one else could have gotten it but Jonah? If so the fish would have swallowed the wrong man, and God's purpose would have been defeated. "Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us; What is thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou? And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew; and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land." Do we ever find in the scriptures where any of God's people are said to fear the devil? God made the devil for a purpose and the devil

has no power except what God allows him. By this time Jonah began to have wisdom, the scripture reads, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Jonah knew that God had all power if he made the sea and the dry land. This reminds me of the scripture speaking of God's power, and how he limits the power of Satan. "Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." John 19: 10-11. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Acts 2:23. "Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them. Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? for the sea wrought and was tempestuous. And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you." It seems that Jonah was not afraid to be thrown overboard the ship. He was not afraid to die for he says in his prayer, "It is better for me to die than to live." "Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them." They did not know that they could not go farther than God had purposed; they knew not that it was God's purpose for them to go just so far, and that unloading part of the ware had no effect against the storm. "Wherefore they cried unto the Lord, and said, We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee. So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging. Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows." It seems they now knew it was all the work of the Lord; for Jonah had told them that when they threw him overboard the winds would cease, and be calm to them, and so it was. "Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God (he now calls God his God) out of the fish's belly, And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice. For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple. The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God. When my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple. They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy. But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord. (Jonah was made to cry, salvation is of the Lord) And the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land."

The big fish did not know that it was

doing what God had purposed it should do, and that it was swallowing something that would make it very sick, and it would have to take it to the dry land and vomit it. It must have thought it had found something good to eat, not knowing it was swallowing something that it could not digest into food. "And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee. So Jonah rose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three day's journey. And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." How come that Jonah made it to Nineveh so quickly? It was the power of God according to his purpose that the time had come that Jonah should be there. "So the people of Nineveh believed God, (this reminds me of the scriptures in another place, Christ speaking says, you are saved already if you believe on me whom the Lord hath sent. So the people of Nineveh were a saved people in God's purpose.) and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.***** And God saw their works (I say, did not God already know according as he had purposed what they would do, what their works would be.) that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not." Did God change his mind, his purpose? I think not; God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them; I think that when God said that he would go unto Nineveh that he had known that he would do it not, for he knew that Nineveh would repent. "But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry. (What caused Jonah to become angry do you suppose. This causes thoughts to arise in my mind. What caused Jonah to become angry? Was it because God repented of the evil that he had said he would do unto them and he did it not?) And he prayed unto the Lord, and said, I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil. Therefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live. Then said the Lord, Doest thou well to be angry? So Jonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city. (It seems by this that Jonah did not know God's purpose, what he would do to the city of Nineveh.) And the Lord prepared a gourd, and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd. (Did he thank God for the gourd?) But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered. And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live." This is the last record we have of Jonah. I believe his prayers were answered, and that he gave up the ghost and died. Do you suppose that if the shadow of the gourd had remained on Jonah's head he would have been more pleased and not wishing to die so soon? I have only written some of the thoughts that have come to my mind. God has a perfect right to give as he pleases, and the same right to take away. None have a right to say why

doeth thou, or why hast thou made me thus. God works in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. Your brother in hope of eternal life.

F. L. COX

Route 1, Box 78, Smithfield, Tex.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I have a few meditations I would like to mention. Nearly two thousand years ago there was born in Bethlehem of Judaea a baby. This birth was the most curious known to any one. He was born of poor parents and in a poor country. The birth of Jesus was on this wise, when as his mother, Mary, was espoused to Joseph before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Ghost; but Joseph being a just man, and not willing to make a public example of her, was minded to put her away; "But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus." "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." The king heard this and sent men to inquire as to where he was, and when they had gone they returned by another way to their own land. This made king Herod angry and he made a decree that all male children two years old and under should be put to death. The Lord directed Joseph in a dream to take the little babe and his mother and flee into Egypt where he was kept until Herod died.

When Joseph and Mary went up to Jerusalem, Jesus was but twelve years old. When they were returning and had gone a whole day's journey they missed the child, and returning for him found him among the doctors asking and answering questions. His mother rebuked him, "And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" When he had grown older he became greater in stature and wisdom. "And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

Jesus taught and preached the gospel to his disciples and the multitudes and suffered much persecution even to the end. When the evening was come he sat down with the twelve, and as they ate "Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me. And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, Is it I?" The great Lord of all glory knew which one it would be for he even said, "for this cause came I into the world." About the last words he uttered while on the rugged cross were, "It is finished."

Dear children of the living God, that finished the work that he was sent to do. He said, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Dear ones, if it is not of grace and grace alone, man is gone, world without end. He said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for

his friends." Jesus laid down his life for his friends.

Dear Brother Dodson and all the dear ones in Christ, I trust, if not in vain, that bright star will still shine and guide us as it did the shepherds of old. My wish is that all of God's children will remember that notable time when the little babe was born who would bear our burdens. May God's richest blessings be with you this Christmas and all your remaining days. If saved at all, it is by grace only. Your sinful brother in Christ, I hope,

T. T. REID

1008 E. Allen Ave., Fort Worth 3, Tex.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: We were very much depressed to hear of your recent illness, but glad to learn of your health being restored to you. Truly hope it is the dear Lord's will to completely restore you back to your usual strength that you may carry on as editor of the dear paper that we love so well.

We have just passed through one of the loveliest meetings I was ever permitted to attend at our home church here. Our dear ministers were filled to the brim (so to speak). There was no lack. They were completely in union. As Paul said, "Not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified," yet a risen Lord, one that has all power; that holds the keys of death, hell and the grave; and there is no other God but Israel's God, "who sits on no precarious throne nor borrows leave to be." I could write more but fear I may say something that would darken counsel. We were blessed, as we feel, to have a sister from Washington who has moved here recently, Sister Nancy Austin, whom we have all learned to love and enjoy. She has seen you and heard you preach.

Brother Dodson, it seems to me our dear people, the old Primitive Baptists are the loveliest people I ever knew. The older I grow it seems my love for them increases, yet I know I am not worthy their least notice. I have been a member of the Fort Worth Church thirty years yet it seems but yesterday that I first united with them. I have never doubted the Primitive Baptist being the true bride, but I have doubted so much of myself being one of that sacred number that Jesus came to save. "I am so vile, so prone to sin, I fear that I'm not born again."

Mr. Little's sister, Harriet Gray, whose experience was published some time back, is to be baptized soon. She united with our little church last December, but she is in delicate health and it was agreed that it would be best to defer her baptism until warmer weather.

I do wish our people could be more together and not let every little thing separate us. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains (the church) of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." Oh, that we may see our dear brothers and sisters laboring for peace and unity, and not make our brother "an offender for a word." I fear I may be speaking or writing idle words. Again hoping your health will soon be back to your usual strength, yours in hope.

(Mrs.) MINNIE C. LITTLE

2085 East Broadway, Vancouver, B. C., Canada

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR ELDER DODSON: This morning as I read the good book I thought of comfortable truths with which to answer your very welcome letter. I hope the Great Physician ministers healing strength to you dur-

ing that weary time of convalescence. I was reading Solomon's beautiful prayer, "Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: There hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant. The Lord our God be with us, as he was with our fathers: let him not leave us, nor forsake us." 1 Kings 8:56-57. This was the last quotation I saw my mother rise and quote with such power after reading her Bible. "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Heb. 13:5. There are so very many places from which I heard her quote so often like Isa. 46:9-10. I have rested in Isa. 4:6 and Psalm 116:15 and all the other Psalms. The whole book flows with promises and comfort. In 2 Kings 8: I was reminded of Elisha and the Shulamite woman, a type of the church. She had that sweet resting place and dwelt among her own people. It is a nice experience to go to school in the early morning when some text has left a lingering sweet comfort as my portion.

I have had a desire to tell of some of the beauty which the late Elder Jeffrey of Weiser, Idaho left with us from time to time. Every listener remarked about the exquisitely sweet joy in his gift of preaching. We all loved to hear him tell of dropping the Bible to let it open at the right place, which proved to be Deut. 32: 9-12. He had dwelt sweetly under the shadow of His wings. Sometimes it was Proverbs 8 and 9 about wisdom. He explained that the portion of food was there on that table for each lamb. It must not be changed nor interfered with. His message was fraught with such sweetness and unction. He tried to tell, in a rather helpless way, the English language was inadequate, about a spiritual plane of consciousness at rare moments. Once he preached a soldier's funeral which was an experience of joy. As the message came to him the listening congregation seemed to him to be just under an enclosed area of silver light, which reminds me of the watchmen in the Bible who stand on Zion's walls, viewing both ways and never hold their peace. Then Elder Jeffrey very humbly described a baptism in this way: an area of the water seemed to have them encircled with a wide ring of light, something like silver. People remarked the beauty of that baptism. One church member said, "Who am I to be privileged to witness these things." A stranger said, "I never before saw anything as beautiful as that." Truly God makes his servants humble. Like Jonah they have learned to say, "Salvation is of the Lord." The late Elder Vaughn preached about this text to us at Naches one happy Easter. Elder Jeffrey told us of a dream in which he was accompanied by a presence (like another person) up into a glorious place, a beautiful valley. He was led into a home, such a beautiful home of glory which he could not convey to us. His companion said, "This is all yours, but you must not touch anything." So he decided that his human mind must not interfere. Farther up was another lovely home, but he could not go there yet.

Solomon says, "But will God indeed dwell on the earth?" I believe I have read that he chose to dwell with men. Oh, how humble it makes a human being. Like all the men of God in the Bible, each is immediately undone. Elder Jeffrey wanted peace for Christ's sake, and enough humility to love each lamb. One day after three sermons he said, "Didn't they chime?" He liked to think of sheep bells, then contented sheep murmuring in conversation after being fed. Nothing can stop that conversation. At this church meeting, the second elder had no idea what the first sermon was, due to a certain deafness,

but his sermon dovetailed perfectly where it was intended to fit. This beautiful story is endless. The spiritual light reminds me of Mother Withers, a woman of God, who humbly tells of her dear Lord's felt presence both without and within, like something so very, very white and pure ministering so closely toward and beside her, then entering within where her tired heart needed help. She has been so close to death at times when she did not want to come back here. She has visioned that beautiful spiritual place. At her baptism this natural beauty suddenly changed into that other glorious perfection.

I must close with the memory of the late Elder Jeffrey preaching to us about the fundamental principles, and glorious freedom which Christ has given us. He was so glad to be able to tell it and have utterance to try to thank his blessed Lord for the great things he has already done and finished for his people. Elder Jeffrey's dying wife wanted him to travel and preach. Humbly,

(Miss) CATHERINE M. DUFFUS

Route 1, Box 278, Atlanta, Ga.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, KIND FRIEND: Hope you will pardon me for my delay in replying to you for my paper, *Signs of the Times,* for which I am very thankful. I had read a few copies before getting mine. My dear son and daughter-in-law noticed me reading them over and over, time and again, and gave me a year's subscription for a Christmas present. I cannot begin to tell you how much it means to me. I will be seventy-six years old my next birthday. My hearing is almost gone. I love to go to meeting but cannot understand the preaching so that is why I enjoy reading the good letters and wonderful experiences of the dear saints of God.

I am not a member of any church but I do love the good old Primitive Baptist doctrine, also the dear brethren who are faithful in the cause. I love the words, predestination of all things by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Oh, how I love to think that salvation is of the Lord. I love the good old songs, "How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord," and "Amazing grace how sweet the sound." If not asking too much write me a personal letter that will be consoling to a poor, hungry, thirsty soul that does not feel worthy to even call upon the name of our blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

W. W. HORNSBY

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE: I am anxious to hear of your health, and have you returned to your home, but I hope and expect you are regaining your health and strength if it is in the all wise purpose of Almighty God for he is the strength of our life and our eternal inheritance. What an unspeakable mercy for us to be hid in the cleft of the Rock, if so be we are recipients of his everlasting love.

Dear brother, as you and I have spent a long time in the hospital, and have had many questionings, doubts and fears, we would not forget the sweet blessings and encouragements the Lord was pleased, in his great mercy, to enable us to say not my will but thine be done. So much of my time my prayer was make me submissive to thy holy will whether for life or for death. I feel you can say your soul's prayer was as mine. I am being restored very well to my former health and strength, but my fractured knee and torn ligaments of same limb is still sore and aches.

I was pleased to see dear Elder Nash has consented to write as your helper on the paper. In February Signs Brother A. D. Alston wrote an article on "The Cleft of the Rock" which was to me a sweet and heart melting mes-

sage I felt to write him. He answered and wrote so beautifully on Mary Magdalene. Ten of us spent a very profitable evening at Sister Beckie McLachlin's. I took Brother Alston's letter and it was read and enjoyed so much several agreed with me it was good reading for the *Signs*. I asked his permission and he replied he would be submissive to the wishes of the brethren. I leave it to your judgment and to publish when you have space.

I hope you have been quite restored to your former health and strength and sometime in your leisure moments write me a letter. I realize your leisure moments are few. May the Lord be your strength and your divine wisdom is the wish of your sister in hope.

(Mrs.) SARAH McPHAIL

Weiser, Idaho

DEAR SISTER DUFFUS: In reply to your good letter will try and visit with you on this subject. I am aware that you have the Spirit of our Lord in your heart. One could not enjoy this scripture that you speak of if they have not that life that gives them the understanding of the work of the Power that leads them. It was a pleasure to me to read your letter, but I am so unlearned in God's ways that I hesitate to comment on his blessed truths. I love the doctrine of salvation by grace, and it is by the grace of God that we have some understanding of his goodness towards us; to seek to know more about his love and power which is evidence of that life that we inherit by the spiritual birth. No one can say that he is the Christ only by the Holy Ghost. To feel the scriptures you used is evidence of that life that no man can give or take. So it is of the Lord, a life of peace and rest. No more trials and sorrow, pain or grief, when we are called into the fulness of this eternal home of our salvation. Praise God the Father.

When this reading is sweet to you, as you spoke of when reading the blessed truths, it is food to your hungry soul and peace and comfort. I am glad that He remembers us in our weakness, and by his grace and love for us he lifts us up above our sorrows and griefs and causes us to love each other for Christ's sake; and leads us together to worship him in spirit and truth, and partake of that heavenly food that gives rest to the saints of his holy calling while we stay in this world of unrest.

I am thankful I can meet with those of his choice. I was very sick some time back and in the hospital most of two months. Now I feel that I will meet you dear children of God again some time soon. I love to tell the story of salvation by grace, and to defend the truth if I know it. I am gaining strength and weight and may be back to normal soon. I hope to meet you in person this summer if it is the Lord's will. May the God of love be with you and lead you in the way of peace. In hope of a better life,

(The late Elder) B .O. JEFFREY

Enterprise, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: For some time I have wanted to write to the *Signs of the Times*. I am one of its readers and have been blessed many times while reading the letters from the children of God. I would love to tell you of my little hope while it is the most precious thing in all the world to me. Peter says, "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."

I hardly know just when I realized myself a sinner before God. About twenty years ago I found myself down in darkness and despair. There was no rest for my weary mind but the thought of death and where I was going to spend eternity. I thought I was dying

and when my husband would come in from his workshop I would try to hide my face so he would not see me weeping my way to the cross where my Savior shed his precious blood. I would steal away to some lonely, forsaken place to call upon his holy name to lift my burden which had me down to the lowest part of the earth. Oh, the anguish of my soul when I realized that all my efforts were in vain. One evening after having spent the day bowed down in unspeakable grief I knew that I was perished before God in sin, lost and undone before him. How long I traveled in this state I cannot tell but the longer I lived the worse I grew and the more I wished to die. At last the end came, the worst of all. By this time I had given up for the more I prayed the worse I became. I felt that God and all his glory had gone and I saw myself a poor sinner without God and without hope in the world.

It was now getting dark and I did my evening work and began to prepare for retiring which I dreaded most of all times. By the help of God I got my four children tucked in bed. I went to my room then turned and went to my children's room door to look at their sweet faces for the last time on earth as I thought. As I went to my room it seemed as if I was going to my own tomb. I dropped on the bed and said, "Lord save my soul, but take my life." It seemed as if it was all over with me. Finally I went to sleep and the sweetest sleep I ever had. I dreamed that my sister and I were traveling that narrow path that every one of God's creatures travel. It was so high I could not go over it, so low I could not go under it and so wide I could not go around it. I had to go through it with all the fire and smoke that was around me, and I had to leave my sister standing there as I thought it was my travel not hers. It was I and I alone. So I went on until the great God appeared to me in great glory, and there was where I saw the light. It was then I came from my bed praying the great King of Honor. I then thought my troubles were over. I hated sin and would do good if I could, but the good I would I do not, and the evil I would not that I do. I have a season of rejoicing then will be down in the valley away from the light of God's love, held captive in doubting castle when I see nothing but my poor sinful self there. I remained groping and crying for light until my blessed Lord and Master leads me forth in his glorious light where all is joy and peace.

Forgive me if I have worried you, and please cast the mantle of charity over my imperfections. I fear you will draw but little comfort from this. If there is room and you see fit you may publish it. I ask all to pray that I might at all times be willing to follow the footsteps of my blessed Lord and Savior. For some time after I was converted I was in the church of God so they called themselves. I was like a drowning child holding to every straw, thinking that was the only church on earth, but when I began reading my Bible I found a great difference in it from the way they preached. We do not read in the holy scriptures of two ways, but we do read of one way—Jesus Christ, the way, the truth and the life. By one Spirit we are saved and baptized into one body. "For by grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast." I am an Old School Baptist believer who believes God foreknew all things before the foundations of the earth were laid. I believe I had nothing to do with my birth either natural or spiritual. I believe God rules both heaven and earth. I am a Baptist believer, believing in grace and grace alone. I think so much

of Rev. 21:4, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Your sister in hope if one at all.

(Mrs.) JENNIE EVANS

Georgia Military District, Box 1736,
Atlanta, Ga.

DEAR SISTER MCPHAIL IN A PRECIOUS HOPE: We were so glad to hear from you, and hope that you have regained your strength to a degree at least. The Lord is merciful, let us praise him in all things and for all things. We would have appreciated a word as to the health of dear sister Ruston.

Our little family, Carolyn, Mildred, Saralyn and myself are all enjoying good health and have so very much to be thankful for, but alas, He too must give the thankful heart. I have served several years in the service of U.S. and only lack about four more years to qualify me for retirement; thus I am trying to serve that other time. It is, however, a burden at times like the present. I have to work in Atlanta, Ga. while my dear ones live in Virginia. At best, I can only get home once a month to my meetings at Frying Pan. Still, there are dear Baptists here that I love and find much comfort in being among. You have heard our Elder Nash and there are several others within 100 miles radius.

Sister McPhail, I do not know that I shall be able to write you anything worthwhile in this letter, but in my heart I would speak of the blessed things of His kingdom, and if I could I would show a brother's love for you and for all of the little ones who have been given a hope in his salvation by grace. If the Lord will, I shall try to say a little about Mary Magdalene (John 20) as she stood at the tomb of her crucified Savior. Have you and I stood in that place where Mary stood? Have we in all earnestness felt that all we had ever hoped on had been taken away from us, and lay dead and cold, indeed even the remains had been taken from us and we found ourselves with absolutely nothing to rest in, or to turn to, or to anchor our souls? And could we at that time, as did Mary, weep, cry, pray and beg of the Lord; even though it was in a manner that we could not understand or see what we were doing? It was a matter of just being lost, lost, lost, and we were weeping over the matter.

In great sorrow, doubts, questionings and fears, Mary Magdalene came to the sepulchre. "The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre." It was early, it was yet dark. Not only was it early in the day, and before the sun had risen and driven away the natural darkness; but the word "early" carries a meaning of "surely" and with determined steadfastness and certainty coming out of an earnest necessity. "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early." Psalm 46:5. And again, "Early will I seek thee," Psalm 63:1 and "Satisfy us early with thy mercy." Psalm 90:14, and "Let us get up early to the vineyards." S.S. 7:12. Dark may likewise have a spiritual meaning or lack of understanding, or being able to see the things that are before us, or in any wise, comprehend their meaning.

Let us go back for a moment and consider the Lord's dealings with Mary, while he was yet with her on earth. Mary was once a woman of the world filled with seven devils. The number seven, carries the idea of *completeness,* finished and all. In Proverbs 9:1 we read of the seven pillars of wisdom's house; in Judges 13:16-19 of the seven

locks of Samson's hair; God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it; seven weeks was the interval between the Passover and the Pentecost, and on and on; in Revelation we read of the seven churches, the seven golden candlesticks, etc. *Sacredness* is also associated with seven; the seventh day, the seventh year of release (Deut. 15), the sacrifices of the seven victims to be offered, and so on. Mary was taken, soul and body, and controlled by the powers of the devil. In Luke 8:2 we read that Mary was healed of evil spirits and infirmities, and out of her went seven devils. Just as she was *completely* controlled by seven devils before, now she was relieved of seven devils, and made altogether clean; she was *completely* cleansed of her evil, and made to seek and to follow Jesus. So during all of her remaining days of His life on earth, Mary followed in his footsteps, listened to his ministry, and sought him on every occasion. Mary, as the other disciples, did fully expect Jesus to ascend to the throne of David, and become the ruler and deliverer of all the land of Judah.

Instead, Mary stood and saw her Lord and Master taken and crucified; she stood and saw the earth quake; she stood and saw the darkness upon the face of the earth between the sixth and the ninth hours; she stood and saw the veil of the temple rent in twain; she stood and saw the rocks rent. Indeed, she stood and saw many other chides and disgraceful humiliations cast at her Lord and Master. She *stood,* signifying that there was no rest, no peace, no Sabbath day in these things; instead they were disturbing, perplexing, tormenting to the very soul. What can these things mean? Mary had to see her Master crucified and laid in the tomb of Joseph, and a great stone put over the door. Now you will recall that this tomb was carved out of a rock by the rich man Joseph; it was by the hands of man. Can this tomb hold the Son of man and the sovereign Savior?

Early in the first day of the week, Mary came with other women to the sepulchre to anoint the body of Jesus; all that they had left of their Lord and Master; all that was left of that upon which they had hoped; the very last thread they had to cling to. Now they came *early,* but even then he was not there and was not to be found as they had expected. Our earnest seekings of the Lord do not always find him; or even if he is present with us, we cannot perceive or recognize him. Indeed, Mary's hope must have given up in total despair.

Mary, in despair, went forth and told Peter and John, who ran to the sepulchre and saw for themselves. Finding the grave clothes, the napkin and the body gone, they gave up the matter and returned and went away again to their own homes; that is they turned away from the teachings of Jesus, and went again to the ways of life which they had followed before the Lord had come and called them to follow him—they returned to their own homes. But Mary could not turn away; she could not give up; her all was last seen there, and the very power of her Savior, who was with her, though she knew it not, would not let her go. She could not go on for she had nowhere to go; she could not live without her Lord and Master. When Jacob wrestled with the angel, he said I will not let thee go, until thou bless me; so did Mary say I cannot leave this place unless he bless me!

"Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre." Every child of grace, just as Mary, must *stand*: there is no sitting, no resting, no reclining and no ease at a time of such distress and despair. Standing also signifies a waiting for a command,

waiting at attention, ready to hear and to do His bidding, Again, every child must stand *without*: without the camp, without a full understanding, or being able to find the Master, or any way of escape. Thirdly, they must stand *at the sepulchre*: now the sepulchre is a place of death, or a place for the dead, and every child is brought to the very place of death, to the very end of the earth of self; he faces this sepulchre and he is made to weep and to cry. Yes, he is acually in the garden of life, but he looks upon the place of death; and he is seeking life in that place of death! Fourthly, every child must stand *weeping,* and praying and seeking. "He shall call upon me, and I will answer him." Psalm 91:15. Then every child, just as Mary, must *stoop down;* every knee shall bend and every head shall bow before they can find Him! All of self must be crushed, and we must be bent so low that we can no longer see the things of this world or its riches— we see only the *dust* of which we are made.

When Mary had stooped down and looked into the sepulchre, she saw the angels. They asked, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? Mary, who are you seeking for? Is it a stranger that you seek, have you known Him before? who told you to seek this man, and how did you learn of him? What makes you seek him so earnestly, and why do you cry unto him? Remember that the angel asked Jacob (Gen. 32.29) "Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name," Also Judges 13:18, when Manoah had asked the angel of the Lord what is thy name the reply was "Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret?" Wouldst thou know the name of the Lord, Wouldst thou know where to find him, and to come unto him when thou pleaseth? (O how beautiful this question is, but I would not completely leave my subject.) In this question, Mary had to admit that all of her strength had departed from her; that she was helpless and undone; that all of her strength was in him and that she was seeking and weeping for the loss of her Lord and Master who was her all. So did Jacob in Gen. 32 have to admit that he was just a Jacob, just a supplanter, and a robber; that there was no good in him. So do we every one have to confess before our Savior what we are by nature.

Now having seen all of these things, her Master crucified, laid in the tomb; even the body was taken away and she could not find it; and no comfort or help being received from the angels (they did not tell her where to find him, they only brought the conviction in her heart); there seemed no possible way of escape, and Mary turned herself back, to retrace her steps, to give up in utter despair. Why had Mary failed? She was seeking the living among the dead; she was seeking at the tomb of the dead, instead of in the garden of the living where the reviving fruits of life and grace are to be found. She turned from the place of death to the place of the living; she expected to fall in death, but alas, Jesus stood before her! "Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?" These questions were not asked for information, but rather to draw out the prayer of Mary. They were given in love and in compassion and pity for Mary. They were to force Mary to pray for those very things that were to be given her. Neither did Mary answer these questions! Her heart now was so very full that she could think only of one, her Lord and Master; there was no other person or thing in the world but that one Lord and Master! "Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." Poor Mary; what could she do with the lifeless body of Jesus? But her heart was so drawn out and her plead-

ings were so earnest! This body was all that she knew of that was left, and she must cling to that last straw of hope. In this statement, and in this manner, Mary had now proved her love for her Master and was ready to receive the joy and the blessing that awaited her. It was only by the power and grace of God that she was enabled to stand and to plead and to hope when there seemed to be no hope! By the mercy of God, she waited instead of returning to her own home as did the other disciples at that time. "Jesus saith unto her, Mary." Jesus called her by her name, personally; He spoke only one word, but that word was to Mary, personally; The sheep hear the voice of their Master! and a blessed voice it is! Mary fell, and said Raboni—Master! Mary reached forth to grasp him and to hold him with every fibre of strength in her body: she would have held him by her natural strength but "Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not." Mary had to be restrained. She must be taught self restraint; she had to be told that from this time henceforth, she must walk by faith, not by feeling; she must enjoy spiritual communion rather than natural communion as heretofore.

Let us not overlook the fact that Mary received a special mercy. Mary was the first to see Jesus; the first to whom he revealed himself after his resurrection. It was for this reason that Mary was enabled to wait and to pray and to continue to seek in spite of no grounds for hope, while Peter and John and the other disciples returned to their homes. Also, let us notice that Mary received a hundred fold more than she wept for, or dared to hope for. She was weeping and crying for the remains of the Son of man that she had known in this life. She was given that —all that she had sought for—in being given to see her Master as he came forth conqueror over death and the grave. She had wept to find the lifeless Master, but indeed, she was given to see a living Master. The Lord always gives us an hundred fold more than we in our weakess are able to ask for! Mary reached to touch the Master she had kown, but she was restrained and was to learn of a Master and a Savior of a kingdom that is not of this world, a kingdom which knows no bounds in love, power and eternity, even a kingdom inconceivable to the finite mind, eternal in the heavens. So Mary was allowed to see her Master, but not to touch him. She was instructed to "go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father."

Dear Sister, that statement alone makes us one with our Savior. He himself said, "My brethren, and your brethren," and "My Father and your Father." Is that not wonderful in the hearts of a poor sinful creature? Was it not wonderful in the broken and contrite heart of Mary? So with this strength and renewed hope, Mary in obedience, went from the presence of Jesus to the disciples with this message of mercy; telling them that He had risen; that he was alive and not dead; that he had conquered death and the grave; and that he was indeed their and our Lord and Master and Savior! O what a message of love and mercy and hope! and what a blessed privilege to be the one to bear such a message! Surely the Lord had prayed for Mary as he prayed for Peter "that thy faith fail not." Thus was Mary enabled to wait, to persevere, to remain in the garden, to pray and to weep, and to continually seek him. In his mercy, may he please to speak unto you and unto me, calling us by our personal name, and in such a manner as to cause us to turn away from the death of this nature unto the life that is in him and to fall at his feet, and to answer

Raboni! My Master! Lord what is thy will? What wilt thou have of me? Why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? Have we been shown our sin defiled nature in which no good thing dwelleth? Are we weeping over that awful condition? Are we filled with godly sorrow for our sins? Are we seeking that pure and undefiled, that we hope we have been given a glimpse of? As we are enabled to see and perceive that Savior in all of his spotless perfection, in all of his infinite love and mercy, in all of his graces and fruits of the Spirit and in all of his infinite and sovereign power; and again as we are enabled to see the total depravity and the sin and the filth and the rags of our old nature, and our total inability to do one single thing to bring ourselves into the graces of our God; it is to that extent that we have knowledge of our Savior and of ourselves. To know our depravity is to know His purity; to know our weakness is to know something of his strength; to know our finiteness is to have an idea of his infinity, omnicience, omnipotence and omnipresence; and to know of our selfish nature is to know of his love and mercy! Thus are we made to cry and to weep and to pray, above all things, for the salvation of our souls through the imputed righteousness of that Savior. "Why weepest thou?" Jesus taught, "Blessed are they that mourn." Blessed art thou, weeping Mary? "Lord, remember David, and all his afflictions," prays David in Psalm 132. It is a personal cry, and so with every little child of grace, Lord remember me!

I must beg your forgiveness for writing so much. The sweetness of it all cannot be completed. May the Lord sustain your body and give you a reasonable degree of health, but above all of that, may he please to sustain the life of your soul and in the souls of all of his little ones who do mourn and cry after his righteousness. Please remember us to the dear Rustons and others that we have been privileged to know there. My dear wife, Carolyn, is with me in all that I say. Yours in brotherly love and a sweet hope of being embraced in his new covenant of grace.

A. D. ALSTON

Springwood, Va.

Miss Catherine A. Houchins,
Roanoke, Va.

DEAR CATHERINE: We received your letter and enjoyed it so much. No doubt you will be expecting a reply so I will quote 1 Thes. 4:9. "But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." I hope I felt the love of God in my heart in Nov. 1895, and if the love of God also the love of the church of God or the brethren, and it was not anything that I did to bring it about. I hope I have felt that love from time to time from that time until now, but I must confess I do not love all their ways. This love is the gift of God and we need to be kept in that love and fear of God day by day, but we have many trials, temptations and persecutions. The thought with me is am I worthy to bear all the trials and persecutions that are laid on me? No, all my worthiness is in Christ. Do I suffer for his sake? If I love him I do. That suffering is not in the sickness or affliction of this body, but we must suffer in like manner as he did in spirit. We have no account of him having bodily affliction. If God has given us that love we suffer with him, are crucified with him, and are raised to a newness of life with him. All the true love we have for the church is that which is given us in Christ Jesus. There is a worldly love that may be cultivated by man, but that is nothing in the sight of God, and unless we are given that love and also kept in

that love of God we have no love, and if we love God we also love Jesus and his church.

I have been thinking of the meetings I attended last year, four Associations including the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, and five communion meetings. The most enjoyable was the Virginia Corresponding Meeting and the communion meeting at Gilliam Church. Their manner of conducting the meeting without any effort to stir up the passion of man much impressed me, as well as the sound, able preaching at both places. Of course I enjoyed the others also, and I trust it was the love for the church and the brethren, as well as the love of God, that enabled me to enjoy it. If there was no love in us for Christ and his church we would be miserable beings. I cannot cultivate that love and have never tried. If I have it it is the gift of God. Yours in hope.

(Mrs.) M. A. THOMAS

Box 154, Woodward, Iowa

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I would like very much for you to give your views on the passage of scripture that reads, "We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for?" Elder Perkins of Mayfield, Ky. quoted that verse the first Sunday in May in Zion Church in Mayfield, but was just comparing it with something else and it has been on my mind ever since. You seem to make everything so plain I would like so much to have your views on it. It is quite a mystery to me, as was darkness before light until you gave your views on that passage at my request several months ago.

I am still very lonely since my wife passed away more than two years ago. I get much comfort from reading the *Signs*. There is nothing more in this time world to live for, and I long to go and be with the Lord and my loved ones if so it be that I am a fit subject for that realm of paradise. Yours in hope and best wishes.

W. J. KIMBRO

(See Editorial Section)

REQUEST FOR COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

For some years Sister Wood and I have been collecting copies of the "Signs" with the view of securing a complete file if possible. Many brethren and friends have helped us in this until we now have more than 90 per cent of the issues between the years 1850 and the present date. We need all issues between the years 1832 and 1851 and the years 1854, 1857, 1861, 1864 and quite a few of various dates to 1895. If any of the brethren or friends have any of these dates which they are not particularly interested in keeping, we would be glad to hear from you. Also, if you are collecting them yourself, we have many duplicate copies which we will be glad to send you if you will let us know your needs. Will gladly send you a list of the numbers we need if you will drop us a card.

(Elder) JOHN D. WOOD
R.F.D. 5, Box 53,
Baltimore 7, Md.

TWO WORLDS

Having some copies left of the book entitled "Two Worlds" I will give them free to the "Poor of the Flock." To others I will send them to be read and if they like them they can send me $1.

McDowell, Ky. MILFORD HALL, Sr.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

C. A. Taylor, Okla., $2; Eld. J. D. Wood, Md., $2; G. W. Lawson, Ill., $1.50; R. D. McGough, Ala., $3; Mrs. R. H. Palmer, Ala., $1; Mrs. J. H. Day, Ariz., $1; Miss V. M. Jones, N. Y., $2.

RADIO BROADCASTING

Commencing Nov. 5, 1950, the undersigned will speak over station KDMS, El Dorado, Ark. each Sunday morning at 7 o'clock.

Lillie, La. (Elder) R. W. RHODES

EDITORIALS

RUTHERFORD, N. J. DECEMBER, 1950

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BAPTISM

Many and various interpretations have been put on the word baptism. Some of these are to immerse, dip, cleanse, bury and sprinkle. There is a baptism essential to salvation. This is to be baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. What I shall write about here is baptism with water in the way we do as a denomination.

The first Baptist we have record of was John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus. "The voice of one crying in the wilderness." "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." No doubt he received the name, John the Baptist, because he baptized. His requirements of candidates were the same that we expect to-day, "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." The mode of baptism was immersion. Jesus himself came to him and demanded baptism at his hand, "But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him."

After Philip had been sent into the desert to preach to the eunuch, and had preached unto him Jesus, "They came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" This is often true to-day as it was then. When Jesus is preached, and one is given to hear it with joy, and respond in their heart to the truth they hear, a desire is often there to follow the Lord in that service. "Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing."

The word of inspiration has left no question as to the manner or mode of this work. Both Philip and his candidate went down into the water. Nowhere in holy writ is there authorized any substitute for this kind of baptism, and those who embrace the truth, and truly want to follow the meek and lowly One certainly should not be satisfield with anything less. Immediately after Paul received his sight he arose and was baptized. On the day of Pentecost, when Peter preached unto the people Jesus and the resurrection, they that gladly received his word were baptized. When Lydia had heard the word of God, and her heart had been opened to attend to the things which were spoken by Paul, she and her household were baptized. This baptism does not put away the filth of the flesh, but brings

an answer of a good conscience. For one to be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost is professing a living faith in Jesus Christ, a hope in his mercy, and acknowledging to all that they are dead to the world. They manifest a desire to follow him through evil as well as good report. This is putting on the Lord Jesus Christ.

The following of Jesus is in observing his teachings. Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." There is a newness of life found in following the Lord. There is rest found for the weary. Paul said, you that are weary rest with us. It becomes those who believe in him, who love him, and love his people to go home to their friends telling them how great things the Lord has done for them. How good it is when we see those who are given a mind to do this coming home to his dear people. Often one says, I love the church and desire to be a member but I am unworthy. Do we find any worthiness of our own required by him? The only merit he requireth is to feel your need of him. All our worthiness that we have is in him, which of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness and sanctification. The question is, are we believers in him, for he who believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious." "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

The two things we look for in those who manifest a desire to follow the Lord in this service is love and faith. We baptize on a confession of faith in Jesus Christ, not to give them faith. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I think one will never have better evidence that they have been partakers of a heavenly life, than their love for the brethren. When we see those who love the truth, manifesting a love for the brethren and burdened with the desire to follow the Lord in baptism, should we hesitate to say to them, go home to thy friends?

It is true there are those outside of the church who are loyal to the church, and are as active in their interest in the church as the members, who do not seem to be burdened with a desire for church fellowship and baptism. We are thankful to the Lord for such friends, and are sure that God can stir up their minds to take up their cross when it is his will. Some years past a certain friend attended my services and appeared to have an interest in the truth, yet manifested no desire for church membership. One day I received a letter from his wife asking me to come to the next meeting. He later stated that he had never had a desire to be baptized until the time between the two meetings. Then the impression was so strong that he felt he could not wait until the regular meeting. At the next meeting he was received and baptized.

D. V. S.

SOLOMON'S SONG 8:8

Elsewhere in this issue of our paper will be found a letter from brother W. J. Kimbro, Woodward, Iowa, in which he asks that we give our views on the above portion of scripture. He says we have been helpful to him in the past, and for that we are very grateful to the Lord. We hope that such thoughts as we may offer in connection with this scripture may also prove to be interesting and instructive to our brother and the rest of our readers.

The writer began this book by saying, "The song of songs, which is Solo-

mon's." In other words, or so it would seem to us, it is the greatest of all songs. The reason for its being the greatest of all songs is that it portrays the love which exists between Christ and his bride, the church. Of all the love songs which have been penned by mortal man, nothing can compare with what Solomon wrote in this book concerning the relationship between Christ and the members of his mystical body, when we are given an understanding of its spiritual significance. Even when we take into account the fact it was written primarily to the Jews under the *legal dispensation,* we must remember that the *law* contained shadows of better things to come.

Bible students will no doubt agree that the Gentiles had very little to nourish and comfort them under the *law,* since it is declared that the oracles of God were committed unto the Jews. However there are a few instances in the Old Testament scriptures where it would appear that God was particularly mindful of the Gentile church. The verse under consideration is one of the comparatively few places in the Old Testament where God is singling out his people among the Gentile nations. Solomon was spokesman, so to speak, for God's people among the Jews in his day, and he was undoubtedly being moved by the Holy Spirit to prophecy concerning that which would most surely come to pass in the fulness of time, when Jesus would come and establish his kingdom on earth. He says, "We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts." He was here describing the pitiful plight of the Gentiles under the *law.* When Jesus came at the end of that dispensation, he came only as an high priest unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel, or the Jews, but he declared "other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." The Great Shepherd of the sheep undoubtedly had reference here to his sheep among the Gentile fold. Likewise, Solomon, centuries before it came to pass, was foretelling of the time when the tame olive branch would be cut off and the wild olive branch would be graffed in. When Solomon was writing what he did, the "little sister" as he called her had no breasts, or in other words she was in an embryo state, so to speak; she was immature, undeveloped and not ready to be manifested as the church of God, with gospel ordinances, for the comfort and consolation of spiritual Israel. Beholding her in that pitiful condition, well might he ask, "What shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for?" It seems to us that there is real evidence here of that tie that binds the people of God together, whether they be Jew or Gentile. Way back there he was moved to set forth the love of God which was to exist between the believing Jew and the believing Gentile, notwithstanding the fact it was not to be manifested for many centuries later. Paul in writing to the church at Ephesus, describes the relationship of the Gentiles both before and after the coming of Jesus. He says, "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordi-

nances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." He then proceeds to describe their situation under the dispensation of grace by saying, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." To us, it would seem utterly impossible for even Solomon, the wisest man that ever lived, under the *law,* to adequately describe what should or would be done for this "little sister" in the day that she would be spoken for, but the apostle Paul, writing hundreds of years later, under the dispensation of grace, gives us a most wonderful presentation of what was done for her in the day of Jesus Christ. The love of God when it was shed abroad in the heart of the believing Jew broke down and removed completely all of the animosity which had existed between the Jew and Gentile for ages, and not a single barrier was left to remain between them, since they now could and did exclaim, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." The tie which Solomon had but dimly portrayed in type by referring to the Gentile church under the *law* as our "little sister" in Paul's day blossomed in full fruition and was revealed in a more glorious state than had ever been dreamed of before. Jesus by finishing the work assigned him by the Father, has presented his spiritual bride before God in love, and there is no spot, wrinkle or any such thing about her, for she is declared to be the perfection of beauty.

The foregoing thoughts are submitted in the hope that they are in accord with the teaching of the holy scriptures, and we trust they will be of some comfort and satisfaction to our esteemed brother Kimbro, and pray that God's blessings may rest upon him in his lonely state and that he will find that God has promised grace sufficient for all his needs. R. L. D.

CLOSE OF VOLUME 118

Of all the 150-odd millions of people there are in our country, we doubt if there is a single one as old as the *Signs of the Times.* This gives a little idea as to the age of our family paper. There is a complete set of papers—from 1832 to 1950—on file in the Congressional Library in Washington, D. C., and if any one cares to compare the doctrine set forth in the paper to-day with that which appeared over one hundred years ago, we believe they will find that it is substantially the same. If the paper stood for the truth in 1832 and it stands for the truth in 1950 there cannot be much difference for the real truth does not change with the passing of years.

So far as we personally are concerned the present year has not brought us all the good fortune we might have desired, as during the first five months of the year we were very much afflicted, but we humbly hope that God will sanctify said affliction to the good of our soul and cause us to see that it was none other than his omnipotent hand which held us up and sustained us to this very hour. His ways are always just, and his counsel wise. We have desired to be still and know that he is God, and that besides him there is no Saviour. We feel

to thank him for having spared our unprofitable life and humbly pray that he will direct our steps all through life's journey, and give us to know no will but his.

Our family paper was highly favored in having Elder H. O. Nash, of Atlanta, Ga., join our Editorial staff as of the first of the year. Our other Associate Editors have written very ably and acceptably to our readers. Our associate in getting out the paper has measured up nobly to the extra demands made upon him because of our several months illness and inability to carry our share of the load. Our subscribers have been considerate, charitable and encouraging in writing and sending in good letters for publication. Therefore we desire to extend to all who have aided us in any way our heartfelt thanks and appreciation for their kindness.

We hope that our subscribers will keep in mind the fact that they can help the paper materially by paying their subscriptions promptly when due and by telling others about the paper who might be interested in subscribing for it. At this time of the year it might be well to send some loved one, friend, brother or sister a year's subscription in order that they may become acquainted with what a messenger of glad tidings the *Signs* really is. All the help our subscribers can render is needed in enlarging the circle of readers, and we thank them in advance for whatever efforts they may put forth in behalf of the paper.

R. L. D.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Kingwood Church at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J. May 31 and June 1, 1950 doth send greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN: In the kind mercy and lovingkindness of God we have been blessed with the privilege of meeting your messengers, and receiving your correspondence in another session of this Association. It has been a pleasure to us to be able to dwell together in unity of the Spirit of Christ Jesus our Lord with you all. The preached word of the visiting brethren has been edifying to us in the gospel of salvation by grace alone. We hope for a continuance of your correspondence and meeting with us.

Our next session is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Hopewell Church at Hopewell, Mercer Co., New Jersey. The time to be announced in the *Signs of the Times,* which we trust will be the regular time next year, when we again can greet our correspondents with this same love and fellowship.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT,
Moderator
CASPER G. FETTER,
Clerk

Written by Deacon Casper G. Fetter

The Delaware River Association in session with the Kingwood Church at Locktown, N. J. May 31 and June 1, 1950, to her sister churches composing this Association, and to the Associations, churches and meetings with whom we correspond, extend our loving greetings in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN: It has fallen to my lot to write a Circular Letter, but unless the Lord be my guide and help I know my effort will all be in vain. Since the last session of this Association, held with the Southampton Church in 1949, it has pleased the Lord to remove from the Southampton Church her beloved pastor, Elder Horace H. Lefferts, who we sorely miss and are greatly crushed under the blow of our loss. Only a few months previous the Hopewell Church met with the loss of their dear pastor, Elder Charles W. Vaughn. How we miss these dear brethren and pastors. None of the three churches composing this Association have a pastor to go in and out before

them, to guide, counsel and comfort them. Oh, that the Lord would send each one of the bereaved churches a pastor after his own heart, that would be a blessing and comfort to these churches, and to the praise and honor of his holy name.

The subject that has been much upon my mind lately and upon which I will try, the Lord willing, to present a few thoughts is that of—The Image of God. —"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Genesis 1-26. This image of the likeness of Christ who took upon himself flesh and blood will never be destroyed. If man has been formed in the image of Christ and the Father will he not carry that image home to glory? His fleshly corruptible body will go back to dust, but in the resurrection, it shall arise a changed incorruptible body in the image of Christ and the Father. This mortal shall put on immortality. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. In the apostle Paul's time it was asked, "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" The apostle answered saying "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die; And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body."

So man in the resurrection shall not lose the image in which he was made. The same body that is sown in the grave will be brought forth in the resurrection; every seed will have his own body in the resurrection. Though the same body is raised that was sown, an important difference is manifest in the body as sown and as raised; as important as in the difference between corruption and incorruption,—between mortality and immortality,—between natural and spiritual,—between sin and holiness. The body as sown is not that body as in the resurrection,—in beauty and glory, —in honor and excellence; for it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. The apostle in speaking of this asserts the identity of that which is sown and that which is raised, again and again, in his use of the personal pronoun IT. "It is sown in corruption, it (the same as is sown) is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power, it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." He also asserts the difference, the vast superiority, in beauty and glory of the bodies of the saints as raised from the dead, to them as sown in the grave.—As incorruption, immortality, spirituality and glory excel—corruption, mortality and sin, so will the bodies of the saints, in the resurrection,—excel them as deposited in the earth. An important lesson is taught on this subject and much instruction given in the scriptures when speaking of the incarnation of Christ. That he possessed a body in substance and fashioned like our own is certain, for he was "found in fashion as a man," and was made in all things like unto his brethren; a partaker of flesh and blood; verily and truly a man yet "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." And after he had risen from the dead he told his disciples to handle and feel him, "for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." The same body that lay in the tomb arose; it could not corrupt. God has said to his people that he would quicken their mortal bodies and raise them in the image of Christ.

They shall, therefore, be satisfied. "I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness," says the Psalmist. "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the

trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible." "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first," and we (that are then living) shall be changed. "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality," so the bodies of the saints, whether asleep or awake, at the coming of the Lord, shall be made to possess the image of the heavenly. And thus the apostle asserts that the Lord Jesus Christ shall "change our vile body," "according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Why should it be thought a thing incredible that God should raise the dead? Will not the same power that formed our bodies out of the dust of the ground and breathed into our nostrils the breath of life be sufficient to raise them up from the slumber of death? Shall not the voice that said "Let there be light, and there was light;" that voice that said "Lazarus, come forth," and he came—be heard and obeyed by all the dead? "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." If God has decreed and declared it who shall disannul it? "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies." "And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by His own power."

Dearly beloved in the Lord,—God will surely raise the dead, both the just and the unjust, for he has said it; and his saints have borne the image of the second man, the Lord from heaven, the heavenly. Humbly submitted in love with much fear and trembling.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT,
Moderator.

CASPER G. FETTER, Clerk

OBITUARIES

ELDER W. B. OVERBY was born April 8, 1864 and died June 5, 1950, aged 86 years, 1 month and 29 days. He was married on Oct. 6, 1886 to Rebecca Burkhart and to this union eleven children were born, four of them preceding him in death. Surviving are four daughters and three sons; Mrs. Oscar Derrington, Symsonia, Ky., Mrs. Willie Coursey and John Overby, Calvert City, Ky., Mrs. Albert D. Bouland and Willie C. Overby, Elva, Ky., Mrs. Rollie Collie and Frank Overby, Paducah, Ky. There are seven grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and a host of friends.

He was given a hope in the summer of 1887 and was baptized into the fellowship of Pilgrims Rest Church by Elder J. F. Harrison. The date of his baptism and of his ordination to the work of the ministry we do not have. He preached for over fifty-three years and was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace and the final perseverance of the saints through grace unto everlasting life by Jesus Christ. During a division in this country among the Baptists about forty years ago he stood firm without wavering, contending for the old landmarks unto the end. On June 5, 1950 the Lord gave him an humble discharge, and I feel he fell asleep in Jesus Christ to rest from all his labors. He reared a lovely family of children who are left to mourn his departure.

He traveled among the Baptists in Ky., Tenn., and Ill., but in his declining days his health became impaired so he could not travel, but that faith never faltered in him to the end which came in peace. In his last days he was often heard to say he wanted relief, did not want resting medicine, but wanted to be relieved from this world of tribulation. The writer was called to the Kennedy Funeral Parlor in Paducah, Ky. and tried to comfort his bereaved children by using as a text: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing." I feel this text was rightly applied to the old soldier of the cross.

His body was taken to the family cemetery near his home where a large number of his neighbors had gathered. The children requested me to make a few remarks and my mind was carried to the burden that a true servant of Christ has to bear here in this world. Doubtless his duty as a husband and father made him feel that he should stay at home and toil for their support, but there was a deeper impression than the duty of husband and father on him that probably his family and neighbors did not know about, but the Lord took care of them and he went on with his head bowed down, bearing the cross faithfully to the end. I feel that he is resting in that rest that awaits the children of God. May the Lord bless his children and reconcile them is my prayer.

(Elder) O. W. PERKINS

MRS. ELLA M. FOX, widow of the late Daniel S. Fox, passed away at her home in Clinton, N. J., June 9, 1950, aged 93 years. She was the only daughter of the late Cyrus and Sarah P. Risler. She was born at Locktown N. J., and resided in Clinton for the past 71 years. She and her husband lived to celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary. They were married Feb. 22, 1879 in Stockton, N. J. by Elder A. B. Francis, her family lived there at that time. Eight children were born to this union, seven of them surviving; Mrs. Warne S. Smith, Miss Bertha R. Fox, Mrs. Robert J. Van Orden, Mrs. Samuel B. Haver, Rhutson C. Fox, Cyrus R. Fox and Mrs. Sibley C. Kels. One brother, the writer and last member of the family survives. Two brothers passed away in recent years. There are seven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Sister never united with the Old Baptist church but for many years was a faithful attendant. While deafness prevented her hearing the preaching for several years this did not deter her from attending the services and Associations. Her children always made it possible for her to be there. Likewise during her illness of several months they always arranged for the most tender care, and she passed away while sleeping.

Elder R. Lester Dodson was requested to conduct the services but his recent illness prevented him from accepting. Mr. Moran, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Clinton, was called and served very ably. Several portions of the Psalms were read and he spoke sweetly from the theme of grace and faith which from sister's walk we feel had been of vital interest to her. Hymns were used from Beebe's Collection; "Rock of Ages," "O thou in whose presence my soul takes delight," "Amazing grace how sweet the sound" were three of them. Interment in the family plot in Riverside Cemetery in Clinton.

CYRUS RISLER

MRS. SARAH ELIZABETH FOOKS SHOCKLEY was born May 6, 1880, and departed this life Dec. 24, 1949. She was the daughter of the late Benjamin and Mary E. Fooks of Worcester Co., Md. On October 27, 1897 she was married to John M. Shockley. She is survived by her husband and eight children, five daughters and three sons; Mrs. Dorothy S. Morris, Salisbury, Md., Mrs. Pearl S. Bellison, Mt. Airy, Md., Mrs. Edna S. Hitch, Haddon Heights, N. J., Mrs. Lena S. Pusey, Eden, Md., Mrs. Elizabeth S. Wimmer, Baltimore, Md., Luther O., Snow Hill, Md., Bryan L., Baltimore, Md., and Henry B., Eden, Md. One son, Virgil R. Shockley, died in infancy.

It was the writers privilege to know Mrs. Shockley for several years prior to her death. She was a quiet woman, and though she never united with the visible church, she manifested an interest in the truth. She attended services at Nassaongo Church of which her husband is deacon and was loved by those who knew her.

It is a great blessing that we have such people in our midst who are faithful to the church though never uniting with it, and we desire to acknowledge such blessings from the Lord. The home, church and community have suffered a great loss yet we would say, the Lord's will be done.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer from Nassaongo Old School Baptist meeting-house, Dec. 26, 1949. Interment in Wicomico Memorial Park, Salisbury, Md.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER

ELDER W. M. HOLLEY of Samson, Ala. was called to his eternal home July 31, 1950 after having lived an eventful life in the development of Geneva County, Ala. as a pioneer citizen in business, schools and church life. For 64 years he had lived in the same community and had been an active Primitive Baptist for more than half a century, and a minister of his beloved Claybank Association for 40 years. He was a faithful member of Ebenezer Church and believed in the fundamental principles ever upheld by Primitive Baptists since the days when John the Baptist administered baptism to the immaculate Lamb in Jordan's placid and enchanting waters.

Elder Holley is survived by four daughters; Mrs. Mary Watson, DeFuniak Springs, Fla., Mrs. Saberd Yates, Panama City, Fla., Mrs. L. L. Wise, Samson, Ala., and a daughter, unmarried, lived with her father until he took his heavenly journey. Four sons; John of Samson, Ala., Dan

of Vernon, Fla., Homer of Selma, Ala., and Pink of Panama City, Fla. who died Sunday after his father's passing on Monday. Both of Elder Holley's wives preceded him in death.

Elder J. J. Collins of Geneva, Ala. officiated at Elder Holley's funeral at Mt. Gilead Church, using as a text 2 Cor. 5:17-21, and seemed blessed to speak to the comfort and edification of many relatives and an immense host of friends. His grandsons served as pallbearers and the beloved minister and pioneer was entombed beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, there to await the call from the heavenly choir. Evans Funeral Home of Florala, Ala. was in charge of arrangements. He was 85 years of age.

(Elder) J. J. COLLINS

MRS. AMY L. BUCKWALTER, departed this life at the Buckwalter homestead, southeast of Xenia, Ohio at the age of 81. She was the daughter of Aaron J. and Mary Wilson Mutchlar, and was born in Marion, Ohio, Jan. 13, 1869. She spent the greater part of her life in and near Delaware, Ohio. October 15, 1931 she was united in marriage to James K. Buckwalter. They moved to Green Co., Ohio in the spring of 1933. She leaves to mourn, her husband, one brother, R. D. Mutchlar, and one sister, Mrs. Edward Lyle of Delaware, Ohio. Funeral services were held July 6 in the Neeld Funeral Home, Xenia, Ohio, conducted by Elder Gale Hanover, Ashville, Ohio. Her body was laid to rest in the family plot in the cemetery at Jamestown, Ohio to await the summons from on high.

The above was sent to me signed her "Sorrowful husband" and asking me to add whatever I wanted as I was well acquainted with both families.

I have been acquainted with them for more than fifty years. The Mutchar's lived near the Pleasant Hill Church. Her mother was a member and her father was a believer of the Old School Baptist doctrine, as was their daughter Amy. For twelve years of my pastorate of the Pleasant Hill Church their home was my regular stopping place. The mother, Sister Mary, died more than forty years ago which was the second funeral I was called to attend. Amy and her father kept house for several years and it always remained my home. I was called to preach the father's funeral some years later and married Amy to Brother James Buckwalter.

The Buckwalter family, about one hundred and twenty miles away, was another home for over fifty years where all Old School Baptists were entertained. There also I spoke the last sad words for three, father, mother and oldest daughter. There remain four children, James, Will, Frank and Elizabeth, and it is still home.

Amy suffered a stroke about six years ago which left her an invalid. She suffered much, but her allotted time came and she has entered into the joy of her Lord. May he, the great Shepherd of the sheep, reconcile us all to our loss, believing it is her gain. Written by one that loved them both. Your brother in tribulation.

(Elder) GEORGE L. WEAVER

JOSEPHINE McLAUGHLIN FINCH was born near Trout Creek, Delaware Co., N. Y., Sept. 27, 1853, and passed away March 10, 1950 at the age of 96 years, 5 months and 11 days. She was the daughter of William and Sarahette (Southard) Jenkins. On Jan. 3, 1872 she was married to Robert McLaughlin and to this union two daughters were born, Mrs. Lavern Clark of Oneonta, and Mrs. Maynard Finch of Sidney Center, N. Y.

She united with the Old School Baptist church at Otego in 1896 and was baptized by Elder Balas Brundy. The earlier part of her life was spent near her birthplace, but in Sept. 1911 they moved to Sidney Center where on Sept. 25, 1923 her husband passed away. She continued to live in her home and in Nov. 1926 she married Zacheus Finch who died in March 1928. She kept her home until 1941 when she went to live with her son-in-law and daughter Mr. and Mrs. Maynard Finch. In 1946 she had two falls, first cracking the pelvis bone, and the next time breaking her hip so it could not be set. She was never able to walk alone again and gradually lost the use of her legs. This was a great cross to her as she had always been so active. Her home was always a welcome place to her many friends, and she did so enjoy having those of her faith visit her. When her first husband was living they often had meeting at their home when Elder D. M. Vail and others would come. Her first husband was also an Old Baptist, having united at Otego in 1920.

She leaves to mourn her passing the two daughters above mentioned, five grandchildren, sixteen great-grandchildren and eight great-great-grandchildren. We feel that our loss is her gain, that she is at rest from the pain and sorrows of this world, where by the grace of God she has passed from death unto life eternal. Elder C. E. Benson of Clark's Summit, Pa. spoke very comfortingly from the first chapter of 1 Peter. Interment was beside her first husband at Trout Creek, N. Y.

(Mrs.) MAYNARD FINCH

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'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

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CORRESPONDENCE

FELLOWSHIP AND COMMUNION

For a time I have had an impression to address the household of faith on the general topic of fellowship and communion. To my mind there exists a very definite difference in the attitudes connoted by these two words, and it is a difference of great importance, the more so, no doubt, for Old School Baptists, than for many other believers. I have felt for a number of years that in much of our writing and discussion the important point implied in the difference has been neglected, to our spiritual loss. While I do not for a moment pretend that I can in some superior fashion dispel the uncertainty surrounding this question, it is my prayerful desire that the Lord will be in this matter and will enable us through the eyes of faith to see not this alone, but all aspects, of His glad evangel in clairity and peace.

Nonetheless, I approach this discussion with considerable trepidation and misgiving, fearing there will be many who will take exception to my views. I can only state at the outset that the discussion, like its imperfect author, will be only good and praiseworthy insofar as it pleases the Lord to favor it with His matchless grace.

The words "fellowship" and "communion" are frequently translated interchangeably from the Greek *koinonia* although it would seem that "fellowship" is the preferential rendering. Even the translators of the King James Version, however, use the words with a common root meaning: the idea of a life-interest shared by several. That there is a genuine difference in the *attitude* implied is shown by a careful reading and examination of the scriptures. Since this method of approach is the only acceptable one for those who would desire to be numbered among the elect, we shall undertake to trace the divergence through examination of appropriate tests.

In the new Testament the word "fellowship" appears thirteen times; "communion," corespondingly, three times. Even if one makes exception for the interchangeability of translation it would certainly appear that the broader and more inclusive usage is that of "fellowship." From this alone is implied a seclusiveness which is proper of "communion."

Christian fellowship is most fully expressed in I John 1:3-7: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

The notion of Christian communion finds exact expression in I Corinthians 11:24-26, wherein our blessed Lord says: "And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. And after the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and, drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."

Now in the two attitudes described in the foregoing texts there is a certain important difference. The point of this discussion is to show that *fellowship may be had by all believers,* while *communion may be done by only a few.*

1. Consider the first text. The apostle first states the grounds on which it is possible for believers to have fellowship, one with another. "That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us." The apostle has seen and heard, i.e., he has been given the eye and ear of understanding by the Holy Ghost; having been predestinated to righteousness, he can now respond to the gospel tidings with a joyful heart. To whom here does he speak? Evidently, to those of *like mind.* His rejoicing over the kingdom would be quite meaningless to those who know nothing of it. He does not say, "Now I have seen and heard of the Kingdom of Heaven and when I tell you of it my efforts will result in your seeing and hearing it and then we can have fellowship." There is no such implication in his language. ". . . declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us." In other words, when his message falls into their eyes and ears it is falling on eyes and ears *already actuated,* on hearts *already smitten,* on consciences *already* inflamed like his own. Only to such is there a desire for fellowship with him. 2. The fellowship that these folk of like mind have is not merely a friendly gathering of people who have a sort of vague and tenuous relationship: they are united in, and because of, their common fellowship with the great Head of the Church: ". . . truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ." With such a foundation their fellowship is sure, their hearts are one, their desire in one habitation and, as the beloved hymn has it

> "Tears flow from eye to eye
> and joy from heart to heart."

O the blessings they feel in their coming together, and in the peace of Christ, which passeth all understanding, which resides in the midst of them! Though they may ever be so different in their life work, in their stations, in their comings and goings in this temporal scene, in these blessed moments of fellowship what edification and comfort is in their walk together! This is true fellowship. 3. This glorious fellowship is totally without distinction as to *creed,* or *church,* or *class.* It makes no mention of any prerequisite for membership save that *one and only* requirement without which, indeed, there could be no fellowship at all: ". . . if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Each is conscious of that power whereby he is sustained to walk in the light; each knows that without the all-supporting hand of his Lord and Master he would sink back into the abyss of sin, and in the mutual adoration of their risen Lord, they walk in the brilliant light of faith. And this is true fellowship.

I have attempted to show in this brief analysis that the condition of fellow-

ship is an *universal* one for all *believing souls.* It should be amply clear that without belief there can be no fellowship and that without the intervention of the Spirit there can be no belief. Thus fellowship does not merely return to God as its proper object, but indeed has its *origin* in divine intervention in the human consciousness. The point of great importance to many Old School Baptists, should, however, be that of the *universality* of its application. Whom can we fellowship? Can we fellowship, for example, those of other church communions? Can we fellowship those whose doctrine is contiguous with our own . . . some Presbyterians, members of the Reformed Church, other Calvinistic churches? This vital problem cannot be answered by hot-headed human reasoning but must, like all questions of faith, stand or fall on *Scripture.* And the word of scripture is abundantly clear: ". . . if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another . . ." Thus, in *fellowship* (please note well, we speak now of fellowship, not communion), the only question one believer need ask another is: What think ye of Christ? When two souls are brought together, each of whom has tasted the bitter dregs of sin, each of whom has been made to realize his unworthiness before a just and avenging God, each of whom acknowledges the power and the grace and the sureness of salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ, each of whom can say, with Toplady, "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling," then between these two souls, whatever their church, whatever their background, whatever the difference of their *communion,* there can and properly should be the purest Christian fellowship.

But now let us consider communion. From the words of the second illustrative test we see at once that this is an entirely different matter. What are the circumstances under which our blessed Lord said these words? Even in that hour there were many who believed in him, many who had seen the power of his holy word, many who had been restored to health in body and soul through the ministration of his grace. But not all these were gathered together with him for the last supper. To my mind this as a type of the communion service which the Lord intended for his church, i.e., that in the communion there should be not only those of *like mind,* but those of *like order.* These disciples had followed the Master more closely than the multitude; they had partaken of his food, partaken of his sufferings. With him they had crossed perilous seas and sat in the calmness of the mount. They were of *like order.* ". . . Take, eat; this is my body which is broken for you. This do in remembrance of me." In this service, all were joined in a common method, a unique order of worship: each took of the bread, and each drank of the wine. In the communion service there is a seclusiveness in which not all those of like mind participate.

In the Old School Baptist Church we believe that our church order and discipline is most clearly prototypic of the apostolic church amongst all the existing churches of the present day. We believe that it is fitting and proper that a candidate for membership make a public confession of his guilt as a lost sinner and his dependence solely on the grace of God. We believe in believers' baptism as an emblem of the burial of the old reign of sin, and the birth in the consciousness of the love of Christ. We believe in the independence of our churches, in which each unit is a free republic of believers, unfettered by episcopalism or bishoprics. We believe in a free ministry of the Word, in which the qualifications of an

elder are not determined by the profundity of his scholastic background, but solely on how the Lord works in him, and this question in turn is solved by the united minds of his own, free church. This is our order, and we believe, from scripture, from experience, and from faith, that it is the fitting basis for the communion of our members. Therefore, we cannot *commune* with others who do not share this discipline. Were we to do so we would be out of order. We would introduce weaknesses, and deviations, and dissent, and finally open rupture, into our church structure. In the communion service we approach the great Head of the Church not merely as those of *one mind,* but those of *one order,* that we may claim with the beloved apostle "One Lord, one faith, one baptism."

I contend that we should hold these things dear, and persevere in the structure of our particular church community. For in it we have at times felt the overpowering blessing of the Son, and through it we have experienced the "joy, and peace in the Holy Ghost" which Paul rightly calls the kingdom.

But neither ought we to turn our eyes from those who, though they have not our discipline, yet have our *doctrine.* These cannot be our communicants, but they can be our fellows. We must mark well that *none but God knows who his elect are.* Certainly not all his elect will be gathered in these days from our own small communion! If any of us can experience the power of his grace, the beauty of his intervention in our souls, in correspondence or conversation with these other folk of like mind, whether they be communicants of the Reformed Church, or certain Presbyterians, or the Strict Baptists of England and Australia, or the Waldenses of Italy, if adoration to the triune God come from such commerce, then we may be sure that the Lord is in the matter and our fellowship reflects to his eternal glory.

I must say in conclusion that I am by no means advocating that Old School Baptists go out from their own churches and seek out the services of other communions to the neglect of their own affairs: God forbid! In our particular church structure we must seek, with prayers and supplications, that grace which is our daily need. But it is a sad and dismal commentary on the failings of human nature that so many of our people fail to realize that there are many others who feel, as we do, the beauty of the grand old doctrines of salvation by grace, of eternal and unconditional predestination, of election, of resurrection, of the perseverance of the saints. From time to time each of us will come in contact, in spiritual conversation, with these folks of like mind. There is much good for our souls and much glory to God to be gotten from fellowship with them.

For when our blessed Lord returns to gather his sheep together, he will gather them from every kindred, tribe, and tongue, from every church, both large and small, from every race and clan. And there will be no more division, but one elect, predestinated from the foundation of the world to everlasting glory, praising him, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, from whom proceedeth wisdom and peace everlasting. May the God of all grace have mercy upon us all and turn our minds from the carnality of our own minds to the unspeakable riches of the Kingdom of Heaven. HENRY TOWNSEND, JR.

Box 275, San Juan, Texas

MR. G. M. TAYLOR, DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF MERCY: We received your welcome letter and always glad to hear from the people that Jesus Christ died for whether I am one or not. Sometimes I do feel to know that I do love

the people of God. We have never met in the flesh, but I hope and believe we are brothers in the spirit.

Dear brother, I am going to give you a text and let you ponder over it. I have tried to preach from it a time or two and it might be that I have preached from it instead of preaching. You will find this in Deut. 32 beginning with the first verse: "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." Now he assigns the reason; "Because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect." This is supposed to be the song of Moses to the children of Israel. This rock is Jesus and his work was a perfect work. Righteousness is the habitation of his throne. When God spake through the mouth of the prophets it was for some one to hear, and he did not speak to deaf, dumb and blind people. He speaks to people that have ears to hear and hearts to understand, so this is the earth under consideration, is his people and God speaking through the mouth of the prophet, Moses, said, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew." We know that rain on dead grass will cause it to rot quicker, but if there is life in that grass it causes it to spring up and come forth which shows the glory of God. This live grass is typical of God's children. When the little undershepherd (the preacher) is permitted or allowed to speak of the wonderful works of God, it is the doctrine of God our Savior. Therefore, it comes from God to feed his children here below. That is the bread of heaven, that is the water of life, and it flows out from Jerusalem just as our Savior intends for it to flow.

My dear brother, I do not know that I ever made a failure in my life, but I just manifest what is already there so I am a failure to begin with. I do know the little servant has to be given what to speak, and when the good Lord opens up his understanding then these showers are falling upon the live grass. It seemed though that the grass was dead so the live grass is God's people. Have you not been in a dormant state and did not think there was anything for you, and when the preacher would be given a gift of understanding it made you come to life and rejoice in God your Savior? Do you not feel many times that God has deserted you, and you mourn and pine and sigh for the return of the Holy Spirit, and then you cry like one of old, "Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies." It seems like he has forsaken us. How soon though when he returns, as it were, that grass comes forth in adulation and praise. A child of grace has to be fed just like the new born babe. When the little babe is born about the first thing it does is to cry. It shows there is life. Likewise the little spiritual child cries to his heavenly parent.

When the little child is born of the flesh, though it may be asleep, the mother of the babe can tell it is hungry by the sensation in the breast, likewise our blessed Savior can tell when his children need food, and he gives them food at the right time. He said he would never leave nor forsake them. He promised to be with them in the sixth trouble, and in the seventh he would not forsake them. This is just a part of the travel of a child of God. Yes, Jesus is the Rock in a weary land. He is the chief corner-stone, and that building was not complete without the

corner-stone. He is the cap-stone of our salvation.

Dear brother, I have never been satisfied with my preaching. Many has been the time when I have said some things that may be I should not have said, and left unsaid things that may be I should have said, but I have not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God. I have been preaching or trying to preach, for fifty years this month and I still have not learned to preach. I am just as dependent upon the independent God as I was when I first began to preach fifty years ago. You said you met a certain preacher in Texas. I do not think he was our kind. Four years ago I knew all the sound Baptist preachers in Texas. There are six Associations there and I know almost all of the preachers but I do not know of this man.

Please look over my mistakes for there are many. You have my consent to do as you wish with this letter. If you wish you can send it to the *Signs of the Times*. This is to the household of faith. If there be a crumb of food in it give God the praise. If you have a mind write me again. I am in such bad health that I cannot go on long trips any more. May God bless and keep you all the way is my humble desire. I have been in Hopewell Association in Alabama and would surely like to go again but I am getting very feeble physically. Only wife and I at home and we are getting old. I know Elders Brock and Griffin of Ala. I also know Elder Lambert. These are fine brethren. I bid you good night. In love for the truth's sake. Remember us when it goes well with you.

(Elder) JAMES B. REID and WIFE

Route 1, Box 2 D, Ione, Cal.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: After a little delay I am sending my subscription for another year to the *Signs of the Times* which is a source of comfort to me. For several years at a time the *Signs* has been the only preaching I received for my church privileges have been few in the thirty-eight years that I have had a name among the Old Baptists of the predestinarian faith and order. The Old Faith Contender and many other good sound articles and books I have accumulated are a great comfort to me which never grow old. The editorials and other articles written by the Elders feed my hungry soul, if indeed I know anything about it all, and all other letters published are good. The May issue is indeed laden with good substantial food for a hungry soul. The dear Lord has his way with me, and he will give comfort wherever one may be. His eyes are beholding everything, both the good and the evil. I cannot say anything good of myself, but can say I am a poor sinner saved by grace if saved at all. I still seek more evidence to know if I am one of his chosen elect.

When I read about your illness and operations I felt so sad and my deep sympathy was for you and I tried to pray in my weak way for your recovery. I know what it is to be afflicted with severe illness, also operations. The last six months my husband and I have had a miserable time. He had pneumonia and peritonitis in a serious way and finally had to be operated on again in March. I suffered broken bones and a badly dislocated left ankle in Dec. and am just now able to get around slowly without the aid of crutches. My suffering was great, but bless the dear Lord who has been merciful to this poor sinner which I do not deserve. He knows all our pains and I do not believe we will suffer one too many. His body nailed and torn died on the cross and God's holy law was satisfied. He paid our debts and bore our sins. What a scene of matchless grace for poor

miserable sinners, so helpless, trusting and hoping in him.

I sincerely hope your recovery and strength will continue, and the Lord bless you to be able to continue your work as Editor of the wonderful paper *Signs of the Times,* and may you be enabled to write many more editorials. Of the books I have I do prize three, (though all are good) Elder Durand's "Fragments," "Predestination," and "Musing in Green Pastures," along with the blessed book, the Bible. In Christian love, feeling the least of all the dear saints whom God has chosen before the foundation of the world.

(Mrs.) MABEL LINDSEY

1670 Gaither St., Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I do enjoy reading the letters in the *Signs* from the different brothers and sisters which give me so much comfort. Of course I know I am not worthy to think upon His dear name which is above all names, the God of heaven and earth who knows all things and upholds all things by the word of his power for we know there is no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast as he said, "as I have thought so shall it come to pass," ever knowing what has taken place and will take place. All wise and ever to be adored thou art God who makes the rain to fall on the just as well as the unjust; who purged our sins by himself and sat down at the right hand of His Majesty on high for ever and ever. "Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass." "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Do you not see how beautiful this is when one is made to see a portion of it as I hope I have at times. We know the ways of the Lord are as much higher than our ways as the heaven is above the earth, but as we journey along here we desire to learn and are anxious to know more and more of his goodness. As it is written "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they *shall* be filled," no may about it. Are we not glad that this is a certain fact, that there is no condition on the part of man who is as helpless as a new born babe. So we see when God said let there be light there was light, and the things that are to be done will be done. His doctrine drops as the rain upon the grass and accomplishes the things it is intended to do which is food to his little ones.

This food must come down from the Lord of hosts otherwise we are not fed properly. So we see and know it is not voluntary hunger, but we are made to hunger and thirst after the living food and God brings that about with his loving kindness. God is love, and by his loving kindness he draws his children to him. He is the good shepherd of the sheep. He calls and they answer. he knows them by name and they know him, a stranger they will not follow, and there is no may be about that either for it is written, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." He maketh them to lie down in green pastures by the still waters; he watches over them and keeps them by the word of his power. "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." Sometimes I wonder if we are not living in the last days, but that is governed by God and we should not be uneasy about it. Of course we are here in a wicked world as the wheat and tares grow up together, so when harvest time comes the separation will be made, the wheat will be put in the garner and the tares will be destroyed. Let us be submissive to what comes our way and realize the Lord rules in

heaven and earth, and we cannot question him about one thing. I did not intend to write this much when I began. I hope everything goes well with you and all the staff of the *Signs*. I need your prayers, please remember me. Unworthily yours.

HERBERT R. PRINCE

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209 West Pine St., Palestine, Texas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: For some time I have been impressed to write you another letter, but have put it off until a dear mother in Israel asked me to send in her subscription to the *Signs*. I am glad to read of your improvement in health and thankful that you have resumed your work with the *Signs*. I am sure that all the readers appreciated the work done by your able assistant while you were ill. I first learned of it while I was visiting in the homes of my sister and niece, Sisters Grace and Helen Jones, and Dr. B. F. Jordan (my brother) of Hollywood, Cal. We were all gravely concerned about your condition. I had just come back to Grace's after nine days in the hospital following an operation, but I was soon up and taking walks. It was so wonderful to be with my folks again, I had no worries or responsibilities and gained strength rapidly. I will never forget my first trip to California. Grace, Helen and Doctor and wife took me on several nice trips and drives in that section of the state. My soul was thrilled with the beautiful scenery—the handiwork of our God. The green hills, (in winter) the rocky mountains, some snow capped, fertile irrigated valleys where grew citrus fruits, nuts, vineyards and winter crops, and the Pacific Ocean. I enjoyed the palms and other green trees, and beautiful flowers in the yards and along the highways. Even learned to see beauty in the desert with its various forms of cactus and small shrubs.

I attended church with them every meeting day except the Sunday I was in the hopital. I found the members of this church to be a friendly group of Primitive Baptists from many different states. I enjoyed being with them as they know how to treat a stranger in their midst. Their Pastor, Elder O. F. Dearing, is a meek and humble servant of God who is loved and respected by all. If I am any judge I heard sound doctrine preached from the pulpit. I saw all the rest of my close relatives—another brother, nieces, nephews and cousins—and was entertained in some of their homes. But the sweetest of memories were the days after receiving the *Signs*, or after meetings when Grace, Helen, Doctor and wife and I discussed the sermons and articles in the *Signs*, and communed together in Spirit, rejoicing in the evidences of our hopes and discussing the hidden mysteries of God which are revealed to his little ones for we are kindred in the Spirit as well as in the flesh. They all want me to make my future home in California. I long to be near them but somehow feel that my work is not yet finished in Texas. I feel that if God has a work for me there he will show me the way just as he did all of them.

Twenty-five years ago I was impressed from above to get my letter from Iowa and place it in a Primitive Baptist church near here. I loved these dear people and the doctrine they believed and preached, being a stranger I wondered if they would accept me. About this time a dear father in Israel, the clerk of Holly Spring Church, asked me why I did not get my letter and unite with the church. To relieve my heavy burden I sent for my letter and they took me in. There my membership will stay until God impresses me to move it. Though we are few in numbers, we cannot give up the old church, and hold services during the summer months as often as we can.

This spring and summer I have been blessed to attend church somewhere nearly every Sunday. The sermons give me food and strength to go on, and I am made to rejoice and thank God for his goodness to me. I have attended all of the five 3-day union meetings that have been held this summer in the Union Association and hope to attend more of them. I am glad to report that love, unity and sweet fellowship prevailed throughout. The attendance has been good everywhere. Some of the churchhouses could not hold all who attended on Sundays. The singing was melodious, being sung with spirit. The preaching was harmonious—the solid doctrine of God which feeds the hungry souls who come for this food. I have witnessed the ordinance of baptism to one each at three different meetings. It is a beautiful sight to see one of God's little ones go home to his friends, to take up his cross and follow the meek and lowly Lamb of God through evil as well as good report. Baptism is the answer of a good conscience toward God. The burial signifies there has been a death —a separation from the things of this world—the raising up is a symbol of the resurrection, and the child of God certainly walks in a newness of life for a season, the old burden is gone.

It will soon be forty years since I was buried in the liquid grave. Time has wrought many changes since that happy day. I seem to pause for a moment on a hilltop and look back through the years at the path I have trodden. It has not been a flowery bed of ease. I can but give thanks to God for his kindness and mercy towards me all the day long. I can see how he has led me past many unseen pitfalls and snares during the days of my young womanhood. Sometimes the path was rough and stony, and I stumbled and would have fallen over the cliff, but the arms of my blessed Savior closed around me, and lifted me up, and placed my feet on solid ground. Between the hills I see several beautiful green pastures where I fed to my hearts content and lay down by the still waters while I chewed the cud and digested the food. My Lord has safely led me through the deep waters and across the hot burning sands, but the heat only burned out the dross and I could appreciate the showers of rain far better than before. We cannot appreciate our blessings as we should without sorrows and troubles.

When young I dreaded the chastening rod for it hurt my pride, but through suffering we learn obedience and the flesh is subdued by the Spirit. That is why David could say, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." We know when we feel the rod that we are the children of God as he only chasteneth those he loves—his children. We cannot walk by ourselves, we are lame and halt and must lean upon the staff—our precious Lord and Master—as we walk by faith. He is our strength and guide.

While on this hilltop I turn my eyes to the setting of the sun. I cannot see the ground in front of me. It is covered by a mist or fog, and I know not how soon I will be down in a deep valley crying for God to deliver me from the valley of this death. But now my eyes are fastened upon that beautiful sunset, the various hues of color in the sky thrill my soul, the beautiful promises of God in that world beyond enthrall me. I hope some day to realize the fulness of their beauty through the shed blood of our blessed Lord and Master, Jesus Christ.

Elder Dodson, Sister Grace gave me one of her copies of "Showers of Rain" which I appreciate very much when in the proper spirit. You may send me a copy of one of the other publications you give for premiums for new subscriptions, the one you have the most of. I

know both are good reading or you would not give them as premiums.

I promised Grace if I ever wrote another letter to the *Signs* I would reveal my identity. I have given excuses in the past but now have no more to render. I thank you for your kind cooperation in the past and apologize for any inconvenience I may have caused you or your helpers by withholding my name and address.

"I'm not ashamed to own my Lord,
Or to defend his cause,
Maintain the honor of his word,
The glory of his cross.

Jesus my God, I know his name,
His name is all my trust,
Nor will he put my soul to shame,
Nor let my hope be lost.

Firm as his throne his promise stands,
And he can well secure
What I've committed to his hands
Till the decisive hour.

Then will he own my worthless name
Before his Father's face,
And in the New Jerusalem
Appoint my soul a place."

Your little sister from Texas.

(Mrs.) VELMA JORDAN FRENCH

(Many of our readers will no doubt be glad to learn the identity of our "Little Sister from Texas" whose letters have been most interesting. R. L. D.)

Geneva, Ala.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH: During my illness I feel that I have been taught in a clearer more explicit way the truth that "tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope." (Rom. 5:1-5) Truly we owe everything to Him and without him we are nothing. It seems that I can see him in the shining light, the rippling of the waters, the twinkling of the stars and the movement of each atom, molecule and satellite. Most assuredly he unfolds each event, age and purpose. What a masterly hand it is directing you and me in every change and course. Truly our pains, distresses, trials, temptations and tribulations teach us that we are frail mortals without his directing shield. What a great friend is he indeed. One who will never, no never forsake. Be with thee in sorrows, pains and disappointments.

As a whole we feel that we have been wonderfully blessed this year in our Association. There have been several additions by baptism, much improvements made in our buildings, and peace and harmony prevailed generally for which we hope we are thankful. Our communion meetings have been soul stirring and the district meetings good. Elder J. W. McLeod preached the introductory sermon at the First District of the Western Primitive at Mt. Gilead, and the following also preached ably as well to our comfort and edification. Friday P.M. Elders J. J. Smith and E. R. Sorrells; Saturday A.M. G. B. Hicks and W. D. Griffin; Saturday P.M. C. H. Byrd and J. J. Collins; Sunday A.M. W. D. Griffin and F. A. Collins. It was indeed a blessing to have Elders McLeod and Griffin come preaching by grace and love the fundamental principles of salvation. May peace, love and unity abound everywhere in Zion. Yours in bonds of love.

(Elder) J. J. COLLINS

Box 2292, Roanoke, Va.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR EDITOR: I am enclosing check to renew my subscription for two years. I noticed your words of thanks in the May issue, and as I thought of the love of God to his children I also thought of the children's love for their God and Father. I know I do not know as I feel I would like to know. To desire to do right and to know what is right is something to consider. I very often think of Jesus' words

to his disciples when they went fishing, "As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread." John 21:9 They had, at his command by fishing on the right side of the ship, caught many fish, but did they dine on what they caught even at the Lord's command? "Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine." It seems to me the only time we come is at his command. He draws us near by his love and we dine only on what he has done, what he has prepared. We rejoice in him only. He is the way, the truth and the life, and we are by reason of this glorious truth thankful to him. I also like to think of Peter's answer to Jesus when he said unto him the third time, "Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." Although this is usually termed as speaking to preachers only, there is some consolation in it to me, especially the answer the disciple made, as well as the commands and questions of Jesus. Job also declared something that goes through and deep into my heart at times, "Then Job answered the Lord, and said, I know thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not." My thought was, after Job had traveled to this point he then made this answer to the Lord.

In thinking of Jesus keeping the law to a jot and tittle for us, he fulfilled it but he said, "I am not come to destroy it," and in thinking of his leading, guiding and teaching his children I am glad of their experience, but we cannot experiment with his work. We experience, we are taught of God, but we cannot take hold of and try these things out. It does take hold upon us and we are made to observe these teachings of his hand because being taught of God is to learn who he is and to rejoice in him. We learn something but how to perform I find not. We suffer, we endure, we go in the race set before us by reason of his suffering, his endurance and his running because he is before us and has accomplished that which we are unable to do.

I only intended to say I was renewing my subscription. It seems I cannot avoid expressing my feelings in part. I hope this will not be amiss and of no harm. I trust your charity in heart will bear with me. Hope you are recovering nicely and will soon be well again. Humbly.

(Mrs.) CATHERINE A. HOUCHINS

DEAREST NELL: In reply to the questions, "Who am I? What am I? Why am I? and What for?" I presume they are to be understood and answered in a spiritual sense; so in answer to your first question, "Who am I?" I must answer, I feel that I am the chief of sinners. "I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." A natural man, of the earth earthy. Deserving God's wrath, yet imploring his love and forgiveness, and as he only can save such sinners as I, hoping I may find favor in his sight, *not* for works of righteousness which I have ever done, but through free unmerited grace, "For by grace are ye saved *through faith;* and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." (There is no boasting in His kingdom.) If I have received this wonderful gift of his love, then I must have been born again, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." A spiritual birth. If this be so then I may say I am;

"A child of Jehovah, a subject of grace,
I'm of the seed royal—a dignified race;

An heir of salvation, redeemed with blood,
I'll own my relation, my Father is God.

He loved me of old, and he loveth me still;
Before the creation he gave me by will,
A portion worth more than the Indies of gold,
Which cannot be wasted, nor mortgaged, nor sold.

He gave me a Surety, a covenant Head,
To live in my name, and to die in my stead;
He gave me a righteousness wholly divine,
And viewed all the merits of Jesus as mine.

He gave a Preceptor infallibly wise,
And treasures of grace, to be sent in supplies;
Yea, all that I ask for, my Father hath given
To help me on earth, and to crown me in heaven.

He gave me a will to accept what he gave,
Though I was averse to his purpose to save;
He wrote in his will my repentance and faith,
And all my enjoyments for life and for death.

My trials and sorrows, my conflicts and cares,
The spirit of prayer and the answer of prayers,
The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will.

My cross and my crown are both willed by my God,
He swore to his will, and then sealed it with blood;
'Tis proved by the Spirit, the witness within,
'Tis mine to inherit, I'll glory begin."

As to question number two "What am I?" I must say like one of old, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" I feel that I am merely a weak, helpless worm of the dust in His sight. Dependent as a little babe upon my dear heavenly Father for all I have and all I am, and all I ever hope to be or become. Only a little child in understanding and strength, unable even to cry to him in my distress without his help, but comforted to know that "of such is the kingdom of heaven." I am made to rejoice in my infirmities, feeling that it is to the weak and trembling he shows his tender care.

In answer to question number three, "Why am I," I can only answer because it seemed good in his sight. "I am" for the same reason that the worlds were created; the planets placed in the firmament; the sea rolling restlessly from shore to shore; the beasts of the woods and fields roaming about at their pleasure, and all other created things. For the same reason that Daniel, David, Paul, Pharaoh or even the evil one we call Satan were placed upon this earth, and that good and evil both exist. All because "so it seeemed good in his sight."

In answer to question four, "What for?" For his pleasure. We are told in Rev. 4:11 "for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." So I conclude that I too am among the all things created for their good—in some way which I am not permitted to understand—and His glory; and I long to serve him faithfully and submissively in whatever station he sees fit to place me, while he wishes me to serve him here, and then hear the joyful call, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord."

(Mrs.) ADELA PRICE JONES
June 7, 1919.

(The foregoing article was submitted by the daughter of our late Sister Jones, Miss Vesta M. Jones, 1 Edgewood Park, New Rochelle, N. Y.)

Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: We regret being slow in remitting for our paper for we love the contents of this paper above any of its kind and hope to always be able to take it. Our life is a mixture of joys and sorrows as we journey along. So many tried experiences we undergo, and like John we often wonder and ask is this the way or do we look for another; and like John we are so gra-

ciously shown again these things. Life is so filled with many cares that crowd out better things; no time to read or think, but the thought came with the writing of these words, that the devil and all his assistants are not able to hinder God's little ones from getting every crumb that falls for them. If not restrained we would be striving to get our brethren's crumb also. Do we not see the perfection of God's work? In Christ all fulness dwells, our joys and comforts are all treasured up in Jesus and he supplies all our needs. He says *I will* and *you shall* and in these shalls lies all our sufferings also. Ye shall suffer for my name's sake. If ye would reign with him in glory ye shall also suffer with him. The wills and shalls of God set our feet upon the Rock, (if we be one of his children) and establishes our goings. We had no part in this great preparation and we have no power to walk in the way, (of our own) it must be given us of the Father. When Peter declared, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," "Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." The battle is not to the strong or to the mighty, but to those who fear the Lord and trust in his name. Oh, that I knew I have done that, yet that would do away with our hope and it cannot be for the scripture tells us we are saved by hope. So may God who is rich in mercy renew our hope from time to time and cause us to trust in saving grace and hold firm to the end.

I am enclosing an extra dollar to use as you see fit, wish it could be more. I hope it will be God's will to uphold this dear paper to the praise and honor of his name, and to the comfort of his children that are scattered over this world. We beg an interest in your prayers, when at the throne of grace, that we be kept by the power of God, ready to be revealed in the last time. Unworthily,

(Mrs.) LUTHER CAMPBELL

Arkansas City, Ark.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: "And it came to pass." No event since time was declared has been a happen so, or by chance system with the Maker of everything, or from the beginning or dawn of time down to the present 1950, and which now is no older than in the beginning. The cycle of time has run its course, and my subscription to the *Signs* has run out or is expiring. I am enclosing funds to renew for two years and the balance may be applied as you see fit. I do not want to miss a single copy as each one is full of gospel truth. Seemingly each writer and article governed by the divine hand of providence; meat and raiment to the hungering, famishing souls of the saints from the most high God, and may there never be a time when all the household of faith cannot find comfort through the columns of the *Signs,* and that it still can continue on governed by that everlasting covenant of love and truth.

May the love of God continue to guide, direct and watch over all the humble saints with that manifestation of his merciful love. Your very unworthy brother.

BEN PARRISH

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EDITORIALS

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NEW YEAR'S GREETING

The subjects of love, mercy and grace have been consecutively employed in our *greetings* for the past three years. This year we have selected *faith* for our subject. We are told that without faith it is impossible to please God. This emphasizes the importance and value of faith. It is not an earthly product which can be produced or manufactured by the wisdom of this world. No, not even all the *theologians, evangelists* and *preachers* of our time combined can impart the least particle of faith to a poor hell-deserving sinner. Since it is the gift of God, it must come down from above, from the "Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shaddow of turning." This is very definitely one of those good and perfect gifts which God himself bestows upon those for whom it was designed. How mysterious is faith! It is declared to be "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It is "through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." Abel possessed this faith when he "offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." Enoch had it when he walked with God and was translated that he should not see death. It was by faith that Noah, "being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." God gave this faith to Abraham "when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance,****and he went out, not knowing whither he went." The record is that "he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." The parents of Moses were in possession of this faith when he was born, and seeing that he was a proper child, they were not afraid of the king's commandment, and hid him three months. It was by this same faith that Moses, "when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible." It was by faith the children of Israel endured during their sojourn in Egypt and passed through the Red Sea as by dry land.

In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews the apostle continues to enumerate those who, down through the ages of time, walked by faith, and then in the twelfth chapter he speaks of them as being "so great a cloud of witnesses." We like to think of this "great cloud of witnesses" as composing an innumerable company of saints who passed this way during the centuries preceding the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in

the flesh. The apostle says, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." We are persuaded that God's children here in this sin-cursed world are often heavy laden with many weights of sin, which easily beset them, and they need to lay them aside and run with patience the race that is set before them. In running the race that is set before them, they are reminded to "consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." This can only be done by looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of their faith. We are told that it was for the joy that was set before him that he endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. This means to us that his bride, who fell in Adam and became separated from him by reason of sin, was to be fully restored and be all fair, with no spot, wrinkle or any such thing, by and through his sufferings, death and resurrection. When we are blessed with faith to look beyond the things which are seen, which are contrary to our spiritual life, and can "lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec," we can then take courage and press on toward the mark of the prize of our high calling as it is Christ. Paul said, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope; And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." We also like that portion of the word where the apostle says, "For our light affliction, whch is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." It is only by the workings of the Holy Spirit that we are enabled to hope that we are among those whom God foreknew and predestinated to be conformed to the image of his dear Son, and then we can rejoice and feed upon the strong-meat doctrine of the apostle where he says, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Again, Paul says in Hebrews 11:6, "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Therefore, we must conclude that no man can come unto God, verily believing that he is God, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, except by faith in the shed blood of the blessed Lamb of God, who was verily foreordained, before the foundations of the earth were laid or the morning stars sang together, to come in the fulness of time and make atonement for the sins of his people. In or-

der for one to come to God acceptably, he *must* irrevocably, unconditionally and absolutely believe that all things are possible with Him who had the wisdom, power and love to provide salvation by and through his Son. God himself spake by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah, saying, "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no saviour." It was his arm that brought salvation. He that cometh to God, then, must believe this, and must believe that he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we may ask or think. Such an one must be taught that it is by the work of God that we believe on him whom he hath sent. John said "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." One must, therefore, first be born of God in order to believe that he is verily God, with all that his name implies. We can but believe that however weak in understanding of doctrinal points a babe in Christ may be, that he comes into the world of the Lord Jesus Christ with the knowledge and firm conviction in his very soul that God's sovereignty extends over all worlds, principalities and powers, both visible and invisible, and that as Nebuchadnezzar so wonderfully declared, "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" When one is born of God he is given a new nature, one that hungers and thirsts after the righteousness of God, and he will long for the crumbs which fall from his Master's table. Being first taught that there is help in none other, he looks to God and him alone to supply all his needs.

To quote the apostle Paul once more, he says, "We walk by faith, not by sight." This has been brought home to us almost innumerable times during the past more than forty years as a member of the visible church and our experience in the ministry of more than a quarter of a century. How oft have we endeavored to make plans and map out the course of our life, only to be hedged in and about us with hewn stone, and made to know that man may propose, but it is God who disposes and executes. Surely, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. One does not hear his voice, saying, "Be still, and know that I am God," until he has beheld the works of the Lord and seen what desolation he hath wrought in the earth. But it is this same God who gives us to see in him "our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore (says the Psalmist) will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." Such an one as this lives or walks by faith, and he is enabled to drink of the river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God. He beholds that God is in the midst of this city, and that out of her, the perfection of beauty he hath shined. He then sees that most wonderful sight which Isaiah described when he said, "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall

gallant ship pass thereby." It is good, indeed, when we can "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following."

In addressing the household of faith on the subject of faith, such a treatise would be woefully incomplete and lacking, it would seem to us, unless it emphasized some of the experiences of Abraham, who was called the father of the faithful. Ever since we could remember, we have heard the faith of Abraham spoken of, that "he staggered not at the promise of God," etc. and it was not until recently, while studying about him in the book of Genesis that we discovered how weak he was in faith, at times. When he and Sarah entered Egypt, knowing that she was a fair woman, he was afraid the Egyptians would slay him if he told them that she was his wife, and therefore he said unto her, "Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee." Sarah was taken into Pharaoh's house and commended before him, but God plagued Pharaoh and his house that he should not touch her, and they both went on their way unharmed. It was this same Abraham who manifested exceeding great faith in offering his son, Isaac, on another occasion, as he sojourned in Gerar, said of Sarah his wife, "She is my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah." In this instance, God revealed to Abimelech in a dream that Sarah was Abraham's wife, and commanded him to "restore the man his wife." There is a saying to the effect that "Misery likes company," and it may be that some of our readers, when they reach the point that their faith is almost gone, can take courage, seeing that they are only treading the path which our fathers have trod. While traveling over the sea of life, we may experience seasons like Paul, when he said for fourteen days they were overwhelmed with clouds and rain, with not a single ray of light, nevertheless God's promise was sure, and there was no loss of life, even though the ship was destroyed. It is good to have brought to our minds the blessed assurance that God is faithful, "who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

The world has been passing through perilous times, and as we stand upon the threshhold of this New Year, gazing out upon an unknown horizon, it is good to take refuge in that God who in the beginning created the heaven and the earth, who hath made the universe with all that it contains, which our finite minds cannot grasp, neither comprehend, and commit ourselves into his care and keeping, being assured that he is still at the helm and that "he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." It is truly "he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in: That bringeth the princes to nothing; he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity. Yea, they shall not be planted; yea, they shall not be sown: yea, their stock shall not take root in the earth: and he shall also blow upon them, and they shall wither, and the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble." Isa. 40:22-24. Truly, our God upholds all things by the word of his power; he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast, and not a single shaft shall hit, 'till the God of love sees fit. Not a sparrow shall fall without him, and his people have been assured that they are of much more value than many sparrows.

We greet our readers in the hope that we may all dwell in the secret place of the most High and abide under the shadow of the wing of the Almighty, that he will enable us to give thanks unto him for that faith which is spoken of throughout the world and, finally when we shall no longer need the staff of faith to lean upon here below, may he bid us to depart in peace and enter into the joys of our Lord, is our prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen.

R. L. D.

THAT WHICH ABOUNDS

My experience teaches me that there is such a thing as being bound. I believe and hope that I have been taught of God that what he binds he must untie if it is ever united. I do not have any desire to know anything about one of these little gods that tries to tie one of their subjects, nor that binds and leaves the loosening to the tied or to another.

In this experience I have been bound. I have not been nearly bound. I have had to wait until my captor was ready to loose me. It has been hard to wait. I have had times that I would try to loose the cutting, binding cords, but all I have done has not enabled me to become free. In this bound condition I have thought upon fair days of the past when I was blessed with freedom, and I have longed for a return of those days. I have tried to bring them about; I have tried to return to them; I have told myself that I would be free by my efforts, but none of my efforts, prayers (so-called), or resolutions, have availed me anything.

Our editor has wondered at my writing. He has often spoken to others that I was apt at getting in my editorials. I have wondered if he knew my feelings when I would hear of his commendatory remarks about my efforts with the pen. I have not desired eulogies from my readers for what I have written. I have been glad when a poor downcast soul was comforted by my writing, as I have been made glad when my efforts in the pulpit were comforting. But I hope that I have felt and known for myself that all worthwhile writing, all my preaching, together with all other profitable labor in the kingdom was a gift of God. I would have conveyed that to one and all of you could I have done so. I had felt for years—even as long as I had had an impression to preach—a longing desire to write about the wonderful things contained in the will of God. I would not be honest if I did not tell you that oftimes the feeling to write has been so strong that I have had to lay aside the pursuit of the day and write. Many times this writing has been presented to me as sweetly and with as much comfort as my preaching. I trust that I have been exalted above vain and transitory things to praise my Maker for so great salvation. Would I be called vain to tell you, dear ones, that I have not known long periods when something was not given me to write about? And I certainly would not want to give you the idea that I think all that I have written is of the Lord. No, no, not that, but I would tell you, that if I have been called to preach his unsearchable riches, that I have been called to write them, for my experience has been an impression to write as long as I have had one to speak in his great name.

I have known long dry barren times in preaching; I have known what it was to be closed and bound in such a way that I could not say one word in the pulpit, but to have my mind bound that I could not write was something new to me. I have sat down at my typewriter and stared at the sheet of paper; I have done that many times in the last several weeks, finally having to put the cover back on the machine

in the greatest sorrow a poor sinner ever knows.

Experience may not appeal to you dear one, but it is important to me. In this great darkness that came over me I was in trouble. I wanted to be out of it; I wanted to be free as I had been in the past to write to those that I loved; I struggled in my bounds; I even got so far down in despair that I wondered if the Lord was teaching me that it had all been of the flesh from beginning to end. I would roll in my bed at night and in my feebleness of soul would beseech the Lord to remove the barrier from before me. Nothing availed me any relief. But just the other night a welcome relief flooded my poor downcast soul. My sadness was turned to joy for I feel to hope that I was blessed to witness with Paul that "as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." I was given to view my bound condition and then to feel the abounding of the Lord.

This abounding is a wonderful thing. All of the abounding of grace is in the hand of the Lord. I did not have an experience of works in this matter but an experience of grace. I did not find myself contributing anything to the abounding of my deliverance. My whole life was brought before me. It is my hope that I lived over again the way that I have been brought. It seemed that I saw myself dead in sin—actually knew something about the abounding of sin to a death in sin. As far as the result produced I was given to see that sin abounded in Adam's case to bring death to all his posterity, but I trust that I felt in my very life and existence, an experience of this abounding of sin. I do not have a stone to cast at those simple souls that declare they can cast sin from them; they say that they are not subject to its ravages from time to time. They are to be pitied instead of censored, for it is sure evidence that they know nothing of the experience of a poor sinner. If, as I sometimes hear, the child of God now knows nothing of the abounding of sin, I must acknowledge that I am not in the children-of-God class yet. I find yet that sin abounds in me; I find that I am not able to cast it off; I find another law in my members that is warring against the law of my mind.

As my companion lay sleeping I wondered at this abounding of sin. I know that I am not able to keep from sinning. I do believe that I would if I could. Somehow (and yet, if I am the Lord's, one how) I have a principle in me that hates sin, and that I would be free from its ravages and encumbrances. Truly, as I lay contemplating the abounding of sin and that of grace, I did not have any desire to contribute to its abounding. I do not have any desire to continue in sin that grace may abound. I travelled with the Apostle Paul in his treatise upon that. By the inspiration of Jehovah God he declared that sin abounded unto death; that where it abounded grace did much more abound. Nor why did Paul take up the objection that is sometimes brought into the picture? He asks the question, What shall we say then? Since it is true that sin abounded, and that where it abounded, grace did much more abound, shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? I have heard the 'God forbid' trodden under foot many times. In the stillness of night I went over the times that I have heard brethren use excuses about sin. It seemed to me that they intended to convey that the same fountain sent forth sin abounding and grace abounding. If this is what it takes to be an Old Baptist, I acknowledged to God that I was not one, and now, as I relate to you my night experience, I reiterate that my desire is to acknowledge all my sins as mine, flowing from

a corrupt fountain, and that all my righteousness is of the Lord.

Now grace reigned by Jesus Christ in his personal ministry and death unto eternal life, but we must experience that reigning in our lives. Sin did reign in one, Adam, to death, but we must feel in our lives something of that terrible reign; and we must feel in our daily experience the reigning of grace. Sin abounded to death. It did not stop an iota short of plunging or bringing death. It did not abound close by for some, all the way for others, not at all for some, but it abounded all the way for all alike. Grace reigned unto eternal life. There is not any difference in the reigning and the abounding. It abounded all the way for the whole family of God.

Eternal life is something that the children of God have now. It is not enough to say that we have it in prospect; it is not enough that the Lord will come and marry his chosen after awhile; she is the bride now. As the bride of Jesus she has every good and perfect gift abounding to her. For anything to abound it must be started by a power sufficient to cause the abounding. This abounding grace is from God to us. As we did not need, and certainly did not get, any assistance from God in sin abounding in us to death, so, also, God does not need, nor get, any help from us to cause grace to abound to eternal life.

It may be that there is more than one kind of grace, but if so, the scriptures are silent about it. Men talk, it is true about two graces, one that saves us and one that we "let save us" but they do not find that in the Bible. That dear book tells about the abounding grace of God, but is as silent as the cemetery about a grace that we poor sinners cause or let abound. God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work (2 Cor. 9:8), and how bright and glorious the doctrine of grace becomes as Paul is lifted up into the heights of glory and shows to us the abounding work of God. If there be more than one grace God is able to make it abound towards you, but there is but one grace, *the saving grace* of the Lord, and God is able to make it abound. That word 'is' tells it all. God is now able. He has not to wait until we make him able, but this abounding is true now. If this abounding had depended on me I would not be writing to you at this time. May the dear Lord be praised that God is able to do all things; that he is able to make *all* grace abound *always* that abounding gives you *all* sufficiency in *all* things to the end that you abound in every good work. *And then some say that Old Baptists do not believe in good works.*

There is nothing that is more becoming than walking in the examples and commandments of our Redeemer, nor is there anything more dishonoring to God than for us to say that walk is produced by the will of the creature. That walk that characterizes us as children, is of God. That is life—eternal life—in action, and it is a gift of God. The things of that life are a part of that life, and it is by the things or fruits of this life that we know the possessors of the life. It is one thing to say that these people have set down on the stool of do nothing, but is something else to prove it, They are abounding to every good work, and that abounding is the direct result of grace abounding in them; they are busy adding one thing to another; they are busy in that increase that is of the Lord. baptizing, walking in ordinances, preaching, singing psalms, yea, abounding in love that comes from the constraining love of God as it abounds in them.

The gift of God is eternal life (Rom. 6:23), and grace reigned or abounded through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:21). This is all our theme; it is our chief joy while here below to meet together and speak of this wonderful gift of grace that has already abounded in the travel of Jesus from the conception in his mother's womb to the hill of Calvary, when, by the one offering, he forever perfected them that are his. The knowledge of this perfection is by the revelation of our status in him. Listen to this fulness as Paul reveals in his epistle to the Romans; "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 15:13). And his confidence continues for that very thing, for, hear him, "And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another." (Rom. 15:14). Paul prayed that God would fill them. He was given an answer even while praying that they were filled. This is time salvation. This is right here while we live in the flesh that God fills us with *all* joy and peace in believing, that we may *abound* in hope.

But are you wrapped up in Paul that you will not, or cannot bring any other witness? No, I am not wrapped up in Paul. I do not desire to follow man any farther than he follows Christ, but I trust that I have been covered by the robe of righteousness that wrapped up Paul and all that truly love his appearing without sin unto salvation. And in that number is still another witness that gives us an insight to our travel while here in the world. "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ; grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue; whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." Now let me draw in the two phases of this salvation that abounds. 1st. We receive the precious faith through the righteousness of Christ. 2nd. We receive all things pertaining to life and godliness by his divine power. Now to continue, this is not all, beside this there is something else, "giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, *and abound* they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 1:1-8). Now 3rd; we have these things pertaining to life and godliness abounding in us. Thus, from first to last salvation is by grace abounding toward and in us.

You may call this a night time reverie or a trance, but I do not find it strange to the experience of both Paul and Peter. I saw myself, as I had been for weeks, bound in spirit and unable to move hand or foot towards extricating myself from my bounds, but while down so low I hope that the dear Lord came to my rescue and lifted me up by showing me anew the things that I had once experienced that salvation is of the Lord. Truly it is of the Lord that we live and move and have our being, and on that strong

consolation I want to live and die.

W. D. G.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, our heavenly Father has taken by death from our midst our dearly beloved sister, LYDIA R. NASON, whose loyalty and devoted interests in the Oak Woods Church, and whose faithful service during her long membership endeared her to the hearts of her friends and brethren, and

WHEREAS, we have valued her zeal and faithfulness and felt the inspiration and uplift of her fellowship and her sacrifices in attending the meetings of the church and ministering to her brethren be it therefore,

RESOLVED, that we give thanks to God for the gift of Sister Nason, for the example of her unselfish life in her walk and work among us, and that we humbly bow submissive to the divine decree, and be it

RESOLVED, that we as members and friends of the Oak Woods Church of North Berwick, Maine, extend our sympathy to the bereaved relatives and that a copy of this memorial be published in the **Signs of the Times** and in the **Old Faith Contender.**

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Moderator
ROSILLA B. ALLEN, Clerk

WHEREAS, our holy God in his sovereign will and unerring decree has removed from life's activity and usefulness our dearly beloved friend and sister, MRS. ALICE M. HALL, whose liberality and devotion to the church of her membership testified of her faith, and whose life exemplified by precept and example the walk of a Christian, and

WHEREAS, we have appreciated her faithfulness to the cause of Christ, and have recognized the hospitality of her home and her zeal for the truth she loved, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that we give thanks to God for the gracious gift of our departed sister whose memory we cherish, and that we bow in humble submission to the will of God, and be it

RESOLVED, that we as members and friends of the Oak Woods Church of North Berwick, Maine, extend our sympathy to the bereaved relatives and that a copy of this memorial be published in the **Signs of the Times** and in the **Old Faith Contender.**

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Moderator
ROSILLA B. ALLEN, Clerk

OBITUARIES

It is with deep regret that we record the passing of SISTER NANCY JANE MATHISON COLLINS, a true mother in Israel. She was born near Abbeville, Henry Co., Ala., Nov. 29, 1860, the daughter of John A. Mathison, who gave his life for the lost cause in the war between the states, and Mary Lowe Mathison, a native of Georgia.

Sister Collins was reared by a widowed mother during the awful reconstruction era but taught well and wisely as a maiden fair and beautiful. She married E. F. Collins, Dec. 8, 1881, and to this union were born seven children of whom the following survive: Mrs. Mary McCoy, Mrs. Mandie McCoy, Elder F. A. Collins, R. L. and J. G. Collins. Her family moved to Highbluff, Geneva Co., Ala. in 1900 and shortly thereafter she was baptized into the full fellowship of Mt. Gilead Church by the late Elder J. W. Collins. She served well and faithfully as the wife of a clerk and deacon and mother of one of the outstanding Elders of the Primitive Baptist Church. She taught her children nobly and wisely and lived a life to be well emulated in the community, church and Association. Her husband was called home on Dec. 21, 1922 and from thence on she lived with her beloved son, Elder F. A. Collins. During a lingering illness the writer visited her many times and found her ever cheerful and devoted to her heavenly Maker, and desiring the welfare of the church and believers in Christ.

She passed away peacefully Dec. 1, 1949 being 89 years of age. The remains were taken to Mt. Gilead for interment where Primitive Baptists from far and wide and an immense host of relatives and friends assembled to pay their last respects. Many beautiful hymns were sung in a heavenly manner, and Elder J. J. Collins spoke from Proverbs 31: 10-31 feelingly and consolingly to the children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and a host of other relatives and friends. Her mortal remains were placed beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, but her spirit wended its way to the heavenly realms. Truly a great mother and quiet spirit has passed from our Association, but her noble manner and peaceful walk live on.

(Elder) J. J. COLLINS

SPECIAL REQUEST

The Post Office Department will not forward second class mail. If there is the slightest change in the address the papers are returned to us and you may fail to receive your copy. If you anticipate a change of address please advise us as soon as possible and aid in getting your paper without delay.

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m.
W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor.

Ramah Church, Cottonwood, Ala., meets each third Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each second Sunday and Saturday before.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala
Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a. m., ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a. m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala. F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Bethlehem Church, Malvern, Ala., meets each second Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopeful Church, Ozark, Ala., meets each fourth Saturday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock Meeting place at Alder St. at the top of the hill First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham. W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala 11 a. m. E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor.

New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each fourth Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a. m., six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Seclusia Predestinarian Baptist Church meets 4th Sundays, 11 a. m., 9616 South Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. H. Y. BEAUCHAMP, Pastor, 137 Chestnut Ave., Long Beach, Cal.

Bethel Church meets every third Sunday and Saturday night before at the home of L. H. Riley, 5265 Ardelle, Stockton, Cal. For information write Elder L. L. WILSON, 2627 North Tulare St., Bakersfield, Cal.

The Old School or Predestinarian Baptists meet for worship on fifth Sundays at 2:30 p. m., second floor Pythian Temple Building, 1012 Ninth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Elder John D. Wood, Minister. For information write FRANK T. SIMPKINS, Sr., 5214 Harper St., Dillon Park, Washington 19, D. C.

Meetings are held each first Sunday and Saturday before at Little Flock Church, S.W. 29th Ave., and 6th St., Miami, Fla. We extend an invitation to any interested to visit us.
(Mrs.) J. M. FUTCH
7005 S.W. 21st St., Miami, Fla.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m., north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets every second Sunday at 5th and E. Park St.

Pleasant Valley Church Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc.)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator, Williamstown, Kans.

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carver Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church. C. H. EVANS, Pastor.

New Hope Church better known as Lick Creek meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 a.m., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Ky.
R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting-house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert. Q. A. GLADDING

5 Hill Top Rd., Baltimore 28, Md.
Black Rock Church meets every second Sunday at 11 a. m., Butler Md. on Falls Road about 20 miles north of Baltimore. J. D. WOOD, Pastor.

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a.m. in the meeting-house.

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays 11:00 a. m., 1:30 p. m.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every first and third Sundays at Parkside Hotel, 18 Gramercy Park South, one block east of Fourth Ave. and 20th St., near 23rd St. Sta. Lexington Ave. Subway. Take Elevator to Park Room second floor. 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before.

E. H. LANIER, Clerk.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

The Old Orderly Mt. Zion (Cash) Predestinarian Baptist Church meets on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in each month, at the home of Bro. J. J. Darnell, Campbell, Texas.

Sister SIMMONS, Clerk.

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets first and third Sundays each month 11 a. m. 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas.

L. D. ROSE and W. W. TAYLOR, Pastors

Forth Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets first Sunday in each month at 11:00 a. m. and Saturday at 2 p. m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Shepherd Fold Church meets each first Sunday 11 a. m., Saturday before 2:30 p. m., on Little York Highway, 4 miles north of Houston, Texas. One mile east of Highway 76.

W. O. BEENE, Pastor.

The original Pilgrim Rest Church of Lawn, Texas, meets every first Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a. m.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor.
HOWARD EASON, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dr. Wood churchhouse. Those interested write Mrs. Lela Culpepper, Stockdale, Texas.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

The Old Salem Church of Old School Baptists, 4 miles south from Teague, Texas, meets the first Sunday in each month and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 11 a. m. at the home of E. B. Ault on Progresso Highway, three and one half miles south of Weslaco.

E. B. AULT, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk
Route 1, Box 88, Mission, Tex.

Danville Primitive Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday night before Bradley Road, Danville, Va.

W. R. DODD, Pastor.

Malmaison Church, ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meets each first Sunday 11 a. m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3023 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va. R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m. C. M. FISHER.

Bethel Old School Baptist Church, Riffe, Wash., meets every third Sunday, 11 a. m. in the meeting house.

I. F. COLEMAN, Mod.
ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk, Riffe, Wash.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church near Yakima, Washington, meets at 11 a. m. each second Sunday by appointment at the home of one of the members living at Naches, Wash.

A. D. HUGHETT, Pastor
BEATRICE HAAN, Clerk
Star Route, Naches, Wash.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 3 p. m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va., N. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

PLEASE REMEMBER

1.—To renew your subscription promptly when due, if possible. The date on your wrapper cover will show to when you have paid.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 119 RUTHERFORD, N. J., FEBRUARY, 1951 No. 2

The Passing of Elder Dodson

Seldom are we able to write as we feel about our dear brethren whom the Lord has taken unto himself. Much may crowd into our mind that is very precious, but, as of old, so now we sorrow most because we will see their faces no more. As I look over the past years in which all the ministers I first knew in the United States have passed away I feel very much alone, but the precious memory remains.

In the passing of Elder Dodson, the beloved Pastor of the Church in New York City, and Editor of the *Signs of the Times,* I have deeply felt, as I did when others were taken, how blessed it is for a servant of God to depart, loved by his brethren and by all with whom he had spiritual intercourse. The years in which Brother Dodson and I have walked together in love and fellowship as members of the same church at first, and later on in the service of the church, are full of memories that come back to me now. I remember well his ordination when it was my brethren's wish that I preach the sermon, and how at the last minute the words were given to me, "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." Rev. 3:11. Now I alone remain of the Elders who laid hands on him. Later we were on the *Signs of the Times* together for many years, and I know he always longed for my love as I did for his. On one occasion, as he was often in my mind, and knowing somewhat of his trying path, I wrote him commencing my letter with "Let brotherly love continue," and his reply showed that it still remained firm and strong! We must say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Brother Dodson has finished his course, whoever may follow him will not take his place, but his own. The cause of truth is still in good hands, and to his humble afflicted saints I would say, "take courage from the Lord. (Beebe's Collection 872) Truly God must have a controversy with Zion, in recent months three worthy Elders have been taken from our immediate connection, and churches are in mourning. May we all lay this to heart and not forsake the assembling of ourselves together. Dear Brethren, "Let brotherly love continue." These trying times have

come upon us and should cause great searchings of heart, and will in those who are alive and remain. Above all, may it result in a closer walk with God.

"Keep close to Me, thou helpless sheep
The Shepherd softly cries;
Lord, tell me what 'tis close to keep?
The listening sheep replies.

Thy whole dependence on me fix;
Nor entertain a thought
Thy worthless schemes with mine to mix
But venture to be nought.

Fond self-direction is a shelf;
Thy strength, thy wisdom flee;
When thou art nothing in thyself,
Then thou art close to me."

For those who have been taken home they have finished their course. "They are happy now and we soon their happiness shall see." I am here reminded of the last editorial written by our departed brother, Elder Vaughn, March 1949. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Could we wish those lovely brethren to remain here in this sinful world? No, God forbid. May his blessed Spirit, the Comforter, comfort us all and bless us with his love shed abroad in our hearts, in which love we shall say, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth good." I felt it was the least I could do to go to his funeral, he would have come to mine. The large gathering of brethren and friends present showed the great esteem in which he was held by all who knew him. Our sympathy flows out to his wife, son, brethren and friends who cared for him so lovingly and tenderly during his long period of ill-health.

(Elder) GEORGE RUSTON
Dutton, Ont., Can.

Route 2, Annapolis, Md.

It will no doubt be a great surprise and shock to many of the readers of the *Signs* to learn of the death of our beloved Editor of our family paper.

Elder Dodson had been in declining health for about a year, and seriously ill for the last few weeks. He died Dec. 19, 1950, and his funeral was conducted from the funeral home in Rutherford, N. J., Dec. 21, 1950. The following Elders were present, each one taking part in the services. Elders George Ruston, H. M. Bennett, J. D. Wood, A. J. Slauson and the writer.

As Editor and publisher of the *Signs* Brother Dodson has written an editorial for almost every issue of the paper for a number of years. By the letters of commendation and encouragement received from many of the readers it is evident that God has been with him, and directed his mind in such a way that many spiritual crumbs have been received by the hungry souls who feed on spiritual things. I have never known a person who gave himself wholly to the cause as did our brother. His labor was a labor of love, and whether he agreed with all who wrote in our periodicals, there was always manifest in his writings, and preaching the spirit of forbearance and brotherly kindness toward his brethren.

His publication of the paper was for no financial gain as I have been informed that through the years he has published the paper he has refused to profit in any monetary way from its publication. His pen has been laid aside, and

I believe he has been called into the glorious presence of Him whom he loved and served. The blessed truths he has contended for will live on.

Since he began the publication of the paper it has been blest to have the services of Deacon Cyrus Risler of the New York Church to assist in preparing the paper for publication. Through his untiring labors the paper has been sent out regularly even during the illness of our departed brother.

Some time ago Elder Dodson arranged to have the paper incorporated into a non-profit organization so it would continue to belong to the Old School Baptists when he died. A Board of Directors was appointed and in due time another Editor will be appointed, the Lord willing. In the meantime I am sure all who are connected with the paper want all the readers to feel that the paper in reality belongs to every one who receives comfort from its pages, and the Lord willing it will continue to come to you contending for the same doctrine and practice it has in the past.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER

◆

Box 917, Danville, Va.

It was a profound shock to me when I read in this morning's paper that our beloved Editor, a servant of God, had passed away. Of course I knew his physical condition had not been good for some time, yet I did not expect him to be called away so soon. Known to the Lord are all his ways!

We know that you will miss him, not only as a yoke-fellow in the ministry, but the wise counsel in many matters which the Lord hath blessed him with. He was much blessed to pass it on to others for their comfort and edification.

It does seem that our God is removing many of what we call leaders among the Primitive Baptists. Sometimes it causes us to stand in fear and trembling lest they all will soon be gone. But no, the Lord will not leave himself without a witness. He is able to raise up whomsoever he will, even though, as far as we can see, there are but a very few that he is calling to stand upon the walls of Zion, proclaiming the gospel of glad tidings to those that are weary and heavy laden. This is God's work and not man's, therefore he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

May it be his blessed will to give you the mind to carry on, that the old *Signs of the Times,* shall never die as long as the Lord lets this world stand, and may you ever contend for the "faith once delivered to the saints," and that the doctrine and discipline be declared in its completeness is my humble prayer for Christ's sake. Yours in hope of eternal life beyond the grave.

(Elder) POSIE W. ASHWORTH

◆

Mardela Springs, Md.

It is with much sorrow that I attempt to write a tribute to our departed Brother. Elder R. Lester Dodson, our dear Brother and Editor of the *Signs of the Times,* has been removed from this life. He was very highly esteemed by many

for the articles he wrote and the sermons he preached. He was one who stood firm in the truth of God's word, and to me he seemed to have been blessed many times by revelation from God which was manifested by his wonderful writings. Many readers of the *Signs* will miss his letters, but we hope to be submissive to God's will and we believe God is able to furnish material for the paper that will satisfy those that are hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

We extend our sympathy to the family and many friends left to mourn the loss of our dear Brother Dodson.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT

◆

431 Hardendorf Ave., N.E., Atlanta, Ga.

I was very much saddened by the word of Brother Dodson's serious condition, and have just heard that he passed away. This is a great loss to you and to the Baptists generally. I never knew a man that I thought better of than Elder Dodson. He was a good Editor, a wonderful writer, and I am sure that every one loved him as a preacher.

I am sorry that he did not get to visit us in Georgia, so many here were looking forward to having him with us at our next Association. I admired his preaching because he seemed to have felt what he had to say.

May God supply your every need and look upon you in his loving kindness and tender mercy.

(Elder) H. O. NASH

Stem, N. C.

The shadow of your great loss and sorrow reaches and embraces me. It was such a surprise and shock. My heart goes out in deepest sympathy in the friend, brother and Pastor you have lost.

(Mrs.) LAURA REED GOOCH

◆

47½ Park Ave., Flemington, N. J.

There are no words to express the sorrow and loneliness I feel over the death of our beloved Elder Dodson. I know the New York Church and all its members have suffered an irreparable loss. I cannot realize he has passed from us forever. His last text at Kingwood Church, as I look back, seemed so much like a benediction. "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." He did not have to wait for words and preached a beautiful sermon. When I think of him I feel that he has finished the work that was given him to do and has slipped away into eternal peace and rest. Our need, now as always, is to be reconciled to God's will, knowing the Judge of all the earth does right.

(Mrs.) GERTRUDE PYATT

◆

R.F.D. 5, Box 53, Baltimore 7, Md.

It was indeed a sad occasion when we met at Rutherford for Elder Dodson's funeral. Though we knew he was very ill, his passing came as a shock to Sister Wood and me. We had been hoping to hear that he was improving but he had finished his course in this world and it was time for him to

sleep awhile in death. I do not question but that he had completely filled the purpose our God had in his life.

Some years ago it was my privilege to be with Brother Dodson at a brother's home when he visited Black Rock Church. I had not known him before as I knew and loved him then. The evening was spent in godly conversation, during which he told some of the dealings of the Lord with him in bringing him into the knowledge and love of the truth and his call to the ministry. Ever since that time I have loved to be in his company and to hear him preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.

I greatly admired Brother Dodson for his faithfulness to his brethren. Leaving, as he must, his business and other activities behind, he served his churches devotedly, often going far and near to be with his brethren at associations and other meetings. His preaching always emphasized that salvation was by the unmerited grace of God to all who were chosen in Christ before the world began. He must have spent much time writing for and editing the *Signs of the Times,* and the brethren everywhere surely appreciate his foresight when he arranged some months ago that the paper should be in the hands of his brethren after his death. No doubt Brother Dodson had many trials and heartsearchings but he was given grace to overcome and to pass onward. The Lord sustained him and he was not afraid nor ashamed to contend earnestly for the things he believed.

The brethren of the churches Elder Dodson served have suffered a great loss, the evidences of which was so plainly manifested at his funeral. May they be given grace to be assured that He who has provided will yet provide, and may the Lord enable the brethren to continue the *Signs* in the principles laid down and maintained for more than a hundred years. Yours in hope of eternal life.

(Elder) JOHN D. WOOD

◆

904 Ogden Ave., New York 52, N. Y.

The foregoing articles as a tribute to our departed Editor are greatly appreciated. Personally we feel to be like a ship without a rudder. Our close association with Elder Dodson as Pastor for many years and in working with him for a long period on the *Signs of the Times* has formed a companionship, the breaking of which seems almost unbearable. He was more than a Pastor and companion, he was a true friend and counselor. Often when he felt physically unable to do so he gave up his time and strength to the service of his churches and the work on the *Signs.* His faithfulness was unexcelled and his home church in New York City will miss him sadly.

CYRUS RISLER

Redwood, Va.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN A BLESSED HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE BEYOND THE GRAVE. Precious brother, you set forth such able and beautiful declarations of the gospel both in writing and preaching, that is, if I have any zeal and testimony for understanding the gospel truth. I hope the Lord will enable me to speak to you some comforting thought that will be uplifting to your poor soul. If I be not deceived in my little experience and testimony, the Lord has so graciously set apart from the ancients of eternity the bounds, habitations and limitations of all things for and to the perfecting of his elect bride, his eternal heirs of his redeeming grace; they being chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world which makes them legal heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ, and he their covenant keeping God in all things. The Lord rules and controls all things, from the highest in authority unto the lowest in subjection. I believe that each subject of divine grace, after being born again, will render unto God all things required to love, praise, honor and glorify his great name. I have often wondered which of the saints have the most spiritual pleasure and enjoyment here in this life, those that hear the preached word of God by our ministers, or those that do not hear it. We realize his grace is sufficient for all of them, and that our God can comfort them in all conditions and circumstances that fall to their lot. Even the Lord prepares (as I feel it) for each individual of his elect bride, a separate table in the presence of their enemies, and annointest their heads with oil (his Holy Spirit). Their cup runneth over, surely goodness and mercy has followed them all the days of their lives, and they shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Dear brother, we are not trying to tell one another something we do not know, but to converse on the scriptures and exchange talents which is meditating on the things that we hope we do know. We hope our prayers and affections are for the welfare of Zion, wherein dwelleth love, peace, truth and righteousness, and wherein we believe our dear kindred dwell, the people that we love, esteem and prize above all others. They are the salt of the earth, there is no other people like this people that is saved by the Lord. They are the ones I long most to see and be with. We love them and cannot help it, neither do we want to help it. I feel so little, weak, ignorant and unlearned, vile, sinful and wretched to even hope for a little existence in this glorious theme of salvation by grace alone; and yet I hope the Lord in his mysterious works has wrought mightily in my heart, and implanted a little spark of grace for an anchor of my soul which makes the hope sure and stedfast. I believe it is true if once in Christ always in Christ. I may be an extremist although I hope not unto doubtful disputation. I believe the Lord has, from the ancients of eternity, absolutely foreordained and predestinated all things to be brought to pass just exactly as he purposed fixed and decreed it. (Not almost but exactly as he fixed it.) He is God and changes not. He works all things after the counsel of his own will. "As I have purposed, so shall it stand." It stands to reason if God could be defeated in the least iota (which Conditionalists say he can be) there would be a weak point, better say a broken link, in God's chain of events. The possibility is that the devil and his co-workers might by chance break through God's boundary line into his sheepfold and destroy many of God's sheep and lambs, which would leave him a poor, dependent, weak God with a broken kingdom, and perhaps many vacant seats in it, but away with

the chaff of hell's defeat. Our all wis omnipotent God holds the keys to both his kingdom and also to the bottomless pits of hell, and Christ, his dear Son, has triumphantly gained the victory over death, hell and the grave. God has and will wisely rule over and control all things to the exact fulfillment and counsel of his own will and purpose.

Brother Dodson, some say we should not use the word absolute with predestination, that if you do it will make God the author of sin or confusion. Pray tell me how could the whole human generation make God the author of something that he plainly says in his Holy Writ that he is not. By the plastic hand of God the crooked serpent, the devil, was formed or created. I believe the devil was made or created very good for that for which he was made. He was made to torment God's saints, and is always seeking whom he may devour; he is the crooked serpent to do the crooked work; he is a liar and the father of lies, and is the author of all confusion. He works to the fullness of the bounds that God gives him as in the case of Job, the devil readily obeyed God. The scriptures set forth that the devil always obeyed God. When God commanded the legion of devils to come out from the wild Gadarene they obeyed him and came out. God, in giving the devil his commands, only has to say "Get thee behind me, Satan," or "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." We read in Holy Writ that our all wise God is the only being ever in existence who had the pre-eminence over all things. The powers that be are ordained of God. I believe our gracious, Almighty God has so wondrously set apart, in his determinate counsel, both good and bad, as some call it, and that he will bring to pass all things in perfect harmony, and in rotation like clock work which will be the perfection of all things. Therefore, our perfect, all wise, eternal God can in no wise be made chargeable for anything whatsoever. He is free, independent, all wise and an unchangeable God. We little, weak mortals in our frailty can only hint slightly at the glorious height of the high exaltation that our dear Redeemer God deserves. "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou king of saints." We hear our glorious, all wise, eternal Redeemer saying, "My grace is sufficient for thee." He has fought our battles, and has triumphed over the horse and the rider; he has gained the victory; he has put all enemies under his feet. Our glorious Redeemer suffered and died for the redemption of his imperfect bride, that she through him might be made perfect. Through Christ's righteous, sacrificial death his bride was rescued from eternal death, and set free from condemnation under the law of sin and death. Christ's imperfect bride, through the pure rich cleansing fountain of his precious blood, has been cleansed and set free from all incumbrances of that eternal death; and our dear Redeemer is now seated at the right hand of his Father, making intercession for his saints according to the will of God. He is their all in all things. He will safely lead his little flock through this lonely wilderness, even on to the realms of endless day. They can but patiently wait to wit: the glorious redemption of their mortal bodies in the glorious resurrection of our dear Redeemer God.

Dear Elder Dodson, I dreamed last night of meeting you, as I felt, in tender brotherly love. In the dream we were lovingly and peacefully meditating and conversing on the sacred sweetness of the glorious theme of salvation by grace alone, and to the love, praise, honor, and uplifting of our eternal God on high. Yea Lord, none on earth can

ever praise and exalt thy glorious name as thou deserveth. We in our frailty can but slightly hint at this sacred theme of salvation by grace. The thing I feel that most vitally concerns each individual of the household of faith is, am I in his covenant of grace or am I not? This causes much weary and anxious thought and all hangs upon God's eternal justice. He is a just judge, one that will do right.

In conclusion I feel this unworthy scribble is like the writer, very imperfect. I hope it is in line with our faith and doctrine. Do with it as you think best. May the Lord bless you and your good work, and also all of his dear saints is my prayer. A brother I hope in hope of life eternal. J. A. PERDUE

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556 Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.

"My dove, my undefiled is but one."

Today I picked up August *Signs* and read for the second time Elder Dodson's "Identity of the Church." My mind went to the above scripture. I did enjoy reading this editorial. It seems that this expression, more than any other, started my mind to revolving, "They are introducing music, Sunday Schools, etc." In 1945 I attended an Association in Va. They used shape notes song books. I was indeed sorry to find this. It did not sound like the good old line hymn book music. In slavery times the negroes sang the old time spirituals just like they felt in their hearts and souls. When I was teaching in south Georgia I attended a church of a faction called Primitive Baptists. The piano, the shape note song books, the quartets, the testifying, the minister's sermon on repentance was to me in form like all other popular churches. Another mark, the house was full of people. They say they believe eternal salvation is of the Lord but we have the destiny of journey through this world in our grasp. Our church, the Old Line Absolute Predestinarians believe in one salvation from cradle to grave and into eternity, if this is the right way to express it. In other words it is all of the Lord. By grace are ye saved. It is not on my mind now to discuss this salvation.

I have a good old friend here, a Missionary Baptist minister. He is getting old and for the most part has seen his day in the ministry. He is a fine old man, a jolly good fellow, a real prince. He likes me and likes to talk with me in jocularity. One time he walked into three of us. He had a wonderful story to tell of the great federated meeting in New York City. He had just returned and was much keyed up. To everything he said I replied, "that is fine." It was fine to them. He pointed straight at me and said, "Bro. Byrd, every denomination in the U.S. and Canada was represented in that meeting but the Hardshells." I asked that I might tell why the Hardshells were not there and told an experience of my childhood. Sometimes on Sunday mornings we boys would gather in old Aunt China King's mulberry orchard and shoot birds with our slings. One bird we did not shoot, that bird did not come there. That was a Hardshell bird. You folks in that federated meeting were eating mulberries. I want to tell you Hardshells do not eat mulberries. He walked off, waved his hand and with a chuckle said, "Bro. Byrd, you wont do." We just wont do when the truth is put to them. I do not know the source of all food for the dove. I do know that in some sections of the South the peanut, goober, and ground-pea are extensively raised. I have seen the dove in droves fly down in peanut fields. He does not scratch but picks up that already scratched. I think the lesson taught in this is when we scratch under the surface to try to dig up what God has not revealed to us we are in quicksand. I do hope our good old Absolute Predstinarian Bap-

tists will be satisfied to keep using the good old hyms, Lloyd, Beebe, Goble, etc. As sure as we introduce the new things we will begin to eat mulberries. Another diversion will be in the making, "My undefiled is but one." Let us keep the old church clean.

I desire to mention two incidents. A certain man lives here, he has never been in our church, he would not help us build the house. I have sat by his side, listened to him talk and asked him questions. I pronounced him a simon pure dyed in the wool free willer. And yet go back in the years, search the records of a church in Coffee Co., Ala. you will find that a presbytery of Primitive Baptist ministers ordained him to preach for the Primitive Baptists. A certain minister, not so long ago, asked me what I thought of Elder .....I said, "He has no ministerial gift." He said he had decided the same. I said, "Why did you help ordain him?" How careful we ought to be to not let our enthusiasm over balance our better judgment. Keep an even keel. The people chose Saul; God rejected him and chose David.

Our mind goes back to the first passover at Succoth. When it was God's time for Israel to emerge from Egypt it was an easy go. Not a dog could move his tongue to bark. On a deep sense of gratitude that the death angel passed over they observed the passover. "It is a night to be much observed unto the Lord for bringing them out from the land of Egypt." Exodus 12:42. They were commanded to eat unleavened bread. "Put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh, that soul shall be cut off from Israel." Exodus 12:15. The ordinances of the passover were as follows; no stranger, no hired servant and no foreigner shall partake. "Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, and in the seventh day shall be a feast to the Lord." Exodus 13:6. Seven in the Bible denotes perfection.

If we have it right, in the natural realm unleavened bread is flour and water. The type is the spirit of Jesus. The seasoning puffs up which typifies the flesh. This is leaven. To my mind our Lord's supper is the anti-type pointing back to the passover at Succoth. I do not remember where or how long ago, but I do remember I was in a communion where soda crackers were used. I did not enjoy that communion because I knew that was not unleavened bread. Just this year I was in a communion, the bread had seasoning in it. It tasted more like hot cakes than unleavened bread. I think the wine should be 100 per cent fruit of the vine. Jesus says, "I am the vine." When we come to the communion table, partake of the bread and wine, the act says there is no malice, hatred or ill will toward anybody. Remember Israel was commanded to put away leaven out of your houses.

(Elder) C. H. BYRD

Route 5, Box 310, Rayville, La.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I have had a desire to write a little of what I hope is my experience for some time, but never could have the courage. I have felt that may be some little thing that I have experienced along the way might help some weak one like myself. Sometimes when my hope grows so dim I read one or more of the wonderful letters in the *Signs* and *Old Faith Contender* and they tell part of my experience better than I can tell it myself. Then I receive such joy and comfort and am so glad they wrote their experience.

I first saw my sinfulness and that Christ alone could save me when I was thirteen years old, but I was not brought to a knowledge of the truth then. I thought you could live above

sin if you tried and that you should work for the Lord. I united with the Missionary Baptists and tried for many years to live up to what they taught me, but I found I could not live above sin so was constantly backsliding. During revivals I would re-dedicate myself but soon fall away again and would be ashamed. During these years I moved far away from where I united. The Pastor of the church I was now attending wanted me to send for my letter and I agreed but, dear little ones, when the letter came I could not go up and be received as I knew I was not living above sin. About a year later at eighteen I married, and although my husband and his parents were Primitive Baptists and I heard their conversation I did not understand it, and as we were living far away from any church I never heard it preached.

In 1927 we moved to Louisiana and I attended a few meetings in the home of my father-in-law but it was as if they spoke in a foreign tongue to me, but I could see the love and fellowship they had for one another. In 1933 we moved back to Texas and I tried once again to attend the Missionary Baptist church, but it was not home to me and seemed to cause me more unrest to go than to stay away. About this time I had a dream on the resurrection. Always before in my dreams I wanted my husband and only child with me but this time I did not think of them or any one else. It seemed that it was cloudy with dark, low hanging clouds. In the East I could see the clouds part and oh, the brightest light would come through, and I could hear the sweetest music and was trying to go to it. All my neighbors were indoors and begging me to come in as they said I would be killed. It seemed to be raining hot rocks all around but I was not afraid, and when a rock would fall in front of me I would calmly go around it, ever hurrying towards that pretty music and bright light as I seemed to know that was where Jesus was coming down out of the clouds. I did not think of friends or loved ones. This dream stayed in my mind for a long time but I did not understand it.

We moved back to Louisiana in 1937. My husband became interested in the Old Baptist church again. He inquired around until he located one and their meeting day. He went several times before I would go with him and when I did go I was not interested, but I could not help noticing that love and fellowship. Once I saw a very dear friend baptized and it was all very sweet to me. Before the baptizing a wonderful old brother told me I might be the next and it made me very angry with him. I soon began to attend quite regularly with my husband. All the people treated me so nicely and sometimes I thought them the loveliest people I had ever met, but sometimes after meeting, when they had all seemed to get so much out of the preaching, I would hate them and long to get away. But oh, little ones, when I was allowed to taste just a crumb or two from the Master's table how wonderful it seemed to me! I soon reached the point where I hated for the meetings to close as I would have to leave those dear people whom I now loved so much.

I had never thought seriously of asking for a home with them until one day as they opened the door of the church a voice right over my head said so plainly to me, "That call is for you," but I was too stunned and weak to stand and I said, "No, no, I can't, I won't." Well I never spent a more miserable time than I did that following month. For two weeks or more there was a great war going on in my mind, something saying I had to ask a home with these dear people even if they refused me, but I kept saying, no I am

not fit, I would only bring disgrace to the people I was now led to believe were God's chosen ones. I would go to my garden and as I worked there I would try to pray for this burden to be lifted from me. I was brought so low until it looked like I could not bear it. Then and only then I was made willing to pray to the dear Lord to just give me one more chance to go to the church and I would ask for a home with them. Oh, little ones, the time passed so slowly for this poor wretched sinner. I felt something would happen before the next meeting day. It seemed I tried to pray almost constantly when alone for just one more chance. When meeting day did come and I was able to go the preacher was late and it seemed like old Satan was laughing at me saying that I was not going to get that chance. When he drove up I was so happy, and when the door of the church was opened I went up and asked for a home. I was received and seemed very happy, thinking I would never be troubled again, but how wrong I was. It was not long until I felt I had deceived the dearest people on earth.

In going among the Primitive Baptists I so often hear them commenting on such and such a scripture, and hear how much joy they get meditating on it. I cannot do that, which in the past has caused me much trouble and doubt. Being of an impatient nature I am not willing to wait upon the Lord. One day I was arguing with the Lord (as I call it) on this matter, when a voice seemed to say, "Who are you to think you deserve such a privilege? May be it was only intended that you should hear and understand as it is preached to you?" This humbled this ungrateful sinner very much. Now I am more patient to await the blessed Lord's time, and I have a feeling (if not deceived in it all) that there will come a time when I may be allowed to read the blessed Book and meditate on at least a little of it. If not I will be content to feast, when allowed, from the sweet crumbs that fall as God's shepherds feed the little ones of whom, if one at all, I feel to be the least.

I would like to say in closing that I enjoyed Brother H. L. Rogers article on the resurrection so much as that is what I hope I believe. The resurrection preached that way is the only way this poor sinner can get any comfort out of it. May the good Lord bless you in publishing the dear paper as sometimes just one letter seems to give me strength to carry on when my doubts and fears are mountain high. Yours in hope of eternal life. (Mrs.) EARL WILSON

2513 S. 21st St., Philadelphia 45, Pa.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I have thought of writing you a long time, but I feel so unworthy to write any of God's children. So much of the time I am made to wonder if indeed I have had an experience of grace, when I am brought down into the valley and made to beg for mercy for such a vile one as I am. I feel so helpless and weak, then I find reason again for rejoicing for it is when we feel our own weakness that He visits us again by his Holy Spirit, and we are glad to have been brought down into the valley and made to look unto the Lord from which cometh our help. I hesitate to write you even now I feel so little and so unlearned concerning spiritual things, but I hope to be thankful for the little revelation God has been so merciful to give one so undeserving as I am. If I am one of his chosen ones I know it is only by grace and grace alone and I pray for faith to believe the wonderful promises he has given for our comfort. It is so good to be given a mind to meditate upon his word. He has said he will never leave nor forsake his own and his mercy shall endure forever. I find much comfort

from this scripture. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

I can think back through my life, even to childhood, and at times I can see his hand guiding even me, and I feel it was all according to his divine purpose. As long as I can remember I was made to suffer for wrong doing. I kept doing things I knew were wrong, but many a night I laid awake and even wept at times and would try to pray for forgiveness. I remember when attending Associations with mother all of the younger folks wanted to sit in the cars and talk and not go near where the preaching was, but although I stayed with the younger ones I had a desire to sit with mother but would not be different from the others. For many years I had a longing desire to know Jesus and would try to pray in my feeble way to know which was his church I always, even in childhood, felt to be given the understanding that there was only one God, one faith and one baptism, and the new birth was on my mind so much of the time.

About five years ago I felt to be so sinful, and I recalled recently there were days I even walked the floor almost in a daze. I actually felt like I would lose my mind. I remember once mentioning it to my husband as I was worried about what would become of the children. Then I became so desperate, and so attached to certain friends that I united with a Missionary Baptist group and I was made to spend all my living as I humbly hope. Elder Wood was blessed to speak so beautifully on the parable of the prodigal son at Southampton. I was made to shed tears, and it did cause me to see a little evidence that I was one of that number. It was not until I came to the end of my own strength, and felt my own righteousness as filthy rags that I was made to beg for His mercy. I do try to pray for a thankful heart to praise him as I desire to. I feel he has done so much for me.

I hope I have not tired you with this letter. I did not mean to write so much, but feel at times I must pour out my feelings to some member of that great family which I humbly hope I am not deceived in claiming relationship with. I greatly desire that you remember me in your prayers. I feel so weak and afflicted in spirit. May God bless you according to his will to continue to comfort his little ones. I feel so drawn to you for Christ's sake. I thank you for your letter which I enjoyed so much. I hope to be thankful for so many blessings. An unworthy sister if indeed one at all.

(Mrs.) CHRISTINE LINTHICUM

1030 Bruce St., Memphis 4, Tenn.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR FRIENDS: I am reminded that it is time to renew my subscription for another year. I feel to thank God from whom all blessings flow that he has so blessed me to hear and read from the pen of his dear elect children such wonderful messages of truth as is found in the *Signs*. Some of them I have met personally and cannot help but see the mark of God's children in them, and those that I do not know by sight of face but from their experience and writing I feel to know them. They tell so much of the travel I am made to walk. How dependent they are upon God for all things received and how unworthy they feel of the least of God's consideration or the notice of one of his dear ones. They also tell of the greatness and goodness of God and of the feeling of their own nothingness: how they feel to be made to believe God is able to do all things that it is his good pleasure to do. Yes, even able to save such a vile sinner as I feel to know I am. He purposed all events and

brings to pass all things according to his will and foreknowledge; he chose his children in his Son, Jesus Christ, before the world began and brings to pass all things for their good and his glory. He makes his people to stand still in a time appointed and cry "salvation is of the Lord," singing praises to his adorable name for his mercy and love. He has given a sweet hope that we (I hope I am included) are of that blessed number, poor and afflicted not able to pay our way.

"Jesus paid it all,
All to him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow."

We hope we are clothed in that white robe of righteousness that covers every sin God's people shall ever commit in this world. The Lord our righteousness is he. God's people should, every day of their existence, feel thankful for the gift of God's love in sending his dear Son into this low ground of sin and sorrow to suffer, bleed and die for their sins, and in him do they all stand justified before God, he (Jesus) being the head over the church, his body.

I used to think the Old Baptists must be the only people of God, but not so for he has a people in every nation, kindred and tongue, and his children are just as safe in Jesus no matter what church book their names may be on. There is only one true church and that is Christ's invisible body, though I am made to believe the Old Baptists are the only people who declare the whole counsel of God. I hope in God's time and way he has brought me to love and believe the doctrine they set forth and preach, Christ Jesus and him crucified, the amazing grace he bestows upon unworthy creatures such as I.

May God bless you all and keep you to continue to publish the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. I am not a member of the militant church as you have heretofere been told, but I do hope your God is my God, and that he will allow one as sinful as I to go, the balance of my life, among you and hear preached the only thing that will save to the uttermost as the Old Baptists preach. If only in pity, let me draw near to hear what I am made to love. It is not my desire, if I know myself at all, to hurt one of these dear ones. I hope to speak the truth when I say I am brought to love you all, to suffer with Jesus and not be ashamed to own him as my Lord and my God, though I feel if I am a sheep I have not wherewith that I should boast save in him. In a precious hope, I am,

(Mrs.) LOUISE NEWMAN

ERRATUM

In Dec. 1950 issue, page 286, the last paragraph of Circular Letter of Delaware River Association should have read: Dearly beloved in the Lord, God will surely raise the dead, both the just and the unjust, for He has said it. And as His saints have borne the image of Adam, the first man, the earthly, so they shall in the resurrection, bear the image of the second man, the Lord from heaven, the heavenly.

BOOKS WANTED

The undersigned would like to buy a copy of the Editorials of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe.

FRANK T. SIMPKINS
5214 Harper St., Dillon Park,
Washington 19, D. C.

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EDITORIALS

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BAPTISM

The subject of baptism has been a subject of great controversy throughout the centuries. Many false and erroneous theories have been advocated which have tended to confuse the minds of God's little children. This is due to the fact that theologians have attempted to supplant a theological meaning to the term that is foreign to the classical meaning in order to prop up their false theories in trying to hinge salvation on the volition and work of the creature. This has narrowed the conception of the term, baptism, to that ceremonial use of water to admit members into an organized body here upon earth termed the church. I do not believe the term is so narrow in its scope. When I think of baptism I like to meditate upon the classical meaning instead of the theological use of the term.

To baptize is to immerse, submerge, envelope, overwhelm or sink; to dip, wash, or drench; to consecrate; to completely subdue. This is the essence of the classical meaning. Even theologians who advocate sprinkling as the proper mode of baptism admit this. I think that baptism in literal water is figurative and typical of the baptism that is essential unto salvation. The baptism in Jesus Christ and into his death is essential unto salvation. No man is able, empowered or authorized to do that. This is the work of God.

I want to call your attention to one scripture that will conclusively prove that water baptism is not meant every time the term is used in the scriptures. Jesus said as recorded in Luke 12:50—"But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" The word STRAITENED means PAINED. He was undoubtedly speaking of his baptism in death. He was speaking of the time when death would envelope him, when he would be overwhelmed with suffering and submerged into death. This statement was made approximately two years after his baptism in Jordan. (I think his baptism in Jordan was pointing to and figurative of his baptism in death.)

Now, let us consider Romans 6:3 "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" Paul did not say or hint at water in this expression. If Paul had said; know ye not that as many of us as were baptized in WATER were baptized in Jesus Christ and into his death; then, the modern theorists would have something to base their arguments upon. Since he did not say this let us take for granted that he said what he meant and meant what he said. He said, "were baptized into Jesus Christ." Can any man immerse one into Jesus Christ? We may baptize in water in the NAME of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost but man cannot baptize into Jesus Christ. I believe that God chose his people IN CHRIST in the annals of eternity before time ever began. "According as he hath chosen us IN HIM before the foundation of the world." Eph. 1:4. "Whom he did foreknow, them

he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." Rom. 8:29. The entire family of God was baptized into the body of Christ by God, our Father. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many are one body: so is Christ. For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body." Cor. 12:12-13. "We are his workmanship, CREATED IN CHRIST JESUS." Eph. 2:10. If we were chosen IN HIM, created IN HIM, and are baptized IN HIM WE WERE MYSTERIOUSLY IN HIM being bone of his bone as he accomplished the law to a jot and tittle while he sojourned in this world of sin and sorrow. I believe that as Jesus performed the law to a jot and tittle Jehovah could see the entire family of God performing it as they were members of his body, being baptized in him. The ONE BAPTISM spoken of in Ephesians 4:5 is that performed by God, the Father in the Son through the operation of the Spirit upon his children. This baptism is essential unto salvation but cannot be performed by man.

Yes, God's children were "baptized into his death." They went down with him into death because they were chosen, created, and are baptized in him. If we be children of God we paid the penalty of death IN HIM! We satisfied the just demands of the law IN HIM! But thanks be unto God we arose victoriously over death, hell, and the grave IN HIM! This being true, justice is completely satisfied IN HIM for each and every child of God. Nothing can be charged to them.

We have touched upon the subject of baptism relative to all the family of God being baptized at once together into Jesus Christ and into his death. Now, we want to meditate upon the experimental phase of baptism. We want to consider the individual personal baptism that is experienced by each and every child of God. This experimental phase of baptism is progressive in its application as we shall see, the Lord willing. It begins in regeneration and ends in the immortalization of the body. John preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins as recorded in Mark 1:4. All those who made manifest that they were in possession of this baptism by confessing their sins he baptized in the river Jordan, (Mark 1:5) which was an outward manifestation of being in this condition. The rule is according to the words of Jesus as recorded in Mark 16:16, "He that believeth and IS BAPTIZED shall be saved." The form of the verb used shows that it is not water baptism that is under consideration. The present tense of the verb shows that it is a condition they are NOW in. They are overwhelmed, immersed, submerged, or enveloped NOW. Are they NOW enveloped in water by the administrator? No, they are NOW enveloped in repentance by the Holy Ghost! This being submerged in repentance affects the cry for deliverance or salvation from their sins. This salvation is promised in this statement by Jesus. The hope of each child of God, who is so baptized in repentance by the Holy Ghost, is salvation from their sins through the merits of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. When one is baptized in water he outwardly manifests this condition and hope through the grace of the Father, the merits of the Son, and guidance, operation, and revelation of the Holy Spirit.

"John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." St. Luke 3:16. The effect of the Holy Spirit baptism is regeneration. The SOULS of God's people are baptized into

death and resurrected unto life here in time; and, the BODIES of God's people shall be baptized into death and resurrected unto life immortal into the great beyond—the end of this sphere of time. This is that for which we patiently wait and hope.

The natural soul trusts in natural man being inspired by the natural carnal spirit. This is the soul that sins. It shall die. (Ezek. 18:4) All people are born naturally in this condition. When it pleases God to baptize the soul of one of his people by the Holy Spirit he kills and makes spiritually alive the soul. Yes, the soul is overwhelmed, immersed, and submerged into death and resurrected into a new life. The soul that has been so wrought upon by the Holy Spirit shall never die. It is a new creature. According to Psalms 107 the experience of the redeemed is—"Hungry and thirsty, their SOUL fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses." This is brought about by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We read in Luke 3:3 "And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the BAPTISM OF REPENTANCE for the remission of sins." This does not say baptism of water but of REPENTANCE. This means that you must be overwhelmed, submerged, and immersed with repentance. It is a godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of. (2 Cor. 7:10) When you are overwhelmed with repentance you abhor yourself; you repent in dust and ashes. When you abhor yourself you die to the love of self. You sink into despair; you are immersed in trouble and distresses. As he did not leave Christ in the grave he does not leave your soul in despair but raises it up a new soul. This is verified in Psalms 23:3, "He restoreth my SOUL." You are then a new creature motivated by a spiritual soul. The mortal soul which is subject to death, has been baptized with immortality. This makes the soul immortal. Now, you are an immortal soul dwelling in a mortal body. This body has not yet been baptized with immortality. That will be the crowning work of the Holy Spirit.

Paul says in Romans 7:24—"Oh wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Paul realized the sinfulness and mortality of his body. All God's children are possessed with the thorn in the flesh and infirmities of the flesh. Our bodies are subject to weaken and die. We cannot do the things we would because of the evil that is present in our fast decaying bodies. The body becomes lame and tottery with age. Our bodies become weak because of disease. Our natural eyes become dim and our natural ears deafen. Our memory fails and our ability to comprehend is affected. Our natural minds fail to function as they once did. I feel that as we experience these things we become more and more desirous of the immortalization of the bodies. "Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Rom. 8:23. Yes, the bodies of the saints shall be baptized into death and shall be completely submerged, enveloped, swallowed up, or baptized with immortality. "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written death is swallowed up in victory." 1 Cor. 15:54. This will be the answer to the prayer as recorded in 1 Thess. 5:23—"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole SPIRIT and SOUL and BODY be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The baptism in water is figurative of this baptism that is essential unto

salvation. This is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a GOOD conscience toward God; which is a figure of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. See 1st Peter 3:21. There are two kinds of conscience. There is a natural conscience and there is a Holy Spirit conscience. A good conscience is a Holy Spirit conscience. I believe that God's people are wrought upon by his Spirit and are made anxious to follow Jesus in baptism. They are desirous to outwardly manifest this faith in the Father baptizing them in the Son by the Spirit by submitted themselves to baptism in water in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. As the candidate for baptism is passive in the hands of the administrator in the act of baptism in water, so he manifests that he is passive in the hand of God in Holy Spirit baptism which is essential unto salvation. He manifests his faith in being in Christ as he went down into the grave and came up out of the grave. As baptism into Jesus Christ and into his death is the door of entrance into the church which is the one invisible body including all the children of God, so baptism in water is the door of entrance into the church in its organized form upon this earth.

John required those whom he baptized to bring forth fruit worthy of repentance. I believe such characters are the only ones worthy to be received into the organized church. When one comes confessing his sins and considering himself as the chief of sinners and less than the least of all saints, speaking of his unworthiness, my heart goes out to him and I am given to fellowship him. When such an one comes testifying that his hopes for salvation from sins is solely based on the grace of God and the merits of the Lord Jesus, I consider him as a proper subject for baptism in water into the fellowship of the organized church. None but those who have been baptized with repentance would come bringing such testimony from the heart desiring a home with God's people. The church receives such into their fellowship and one properly ordained will gladly administer the ordinance to that character.

I realize that I have just hinted upon this grand subject. These thoughts are my earnest and conscientious convictions. If they be true—may God be praised. If they be false—charge them to my ignorance and vain imaginations. May God bless this to your comfort and edification, if it be his will, is my prayer for Christ's sake. E. J. L.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." John 14:12.

Our esteemed brother and yoke-fellow in the ministry, Elder O. W. Perkins, of Mayfield, Ky., has asked that we present such thoughts as we may have on the above scripture. It is with some hesitation that we undertake to comply with requests sent in by our ministering brethren; however such as we have we desire to submit for whatever it may be worth to our readers, realizing at all times that we cannot shed true light on any scriptural subject unless it be given us from above.

As a starting point, we wish to call attention to the fact that Jesus was addressing his immediate disciples, the apostles, in connection with his forth coming departure from this world. He was saying to them, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that

where I am, there ye may be also." At the time Jesus was speaking with them they only knew God as the mighty God, the creator of heaven and earth and all things therein, but as yet they had no knowledge of God as he is in the Trinity; they knew him not as God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. Jesus was in effect saying to them, ye believe in God, therefore believe in me also for I am equal with God, or in the order of manifestation, God the Son, and he went on to tell them about his kingdom which was going to be set up here in the world. He likened it unto his Father's house which contained many mansions. In their association with him they knew him to be a man of truth, nevertheless he takes the pains to assure them that if what he was saying to them was not the truth, he would have told them, and he proceeds to tell them that the purpose of his going away is to prepare a place for them. Their separation was to be more than compensated for after he had prepared a place for them, by his coming again, when he would receive them unto himself, that where he was there they would be also. This would have been wonderful news had they been able to fully comprehend its significance, but it was very evident, from the testimony of both Thomas and Philip that they did not understand fully what he had said to them. To the question of Thomas, "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" Jesus replied by saying unto him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." Philip then saith unto him, "Lord shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Jesus then said unto Philip, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?" A bit later he said, "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake." In order for them to understand the oneness, or unity, which existed between him and the Father, they must know of the third person in the Trinity, the Holy Ghost, whose work it is to reveal the Son. Jesus, therefore, tells them that he will pray the Father, "and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not; neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." After speaking further with them, he said "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

As we proceed with our explanation, we hope our readers will keep in mind what we have said about God not having been known as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. While it is true that during the sojourn of Jesus here in the flesh, he performed many literal miracles, such as converting water into wine, feeding the multitudes with a few loaves and fishes, calming a troubled sea, raising the dead, giving sight to the blind, causing the lame to walk, etc., his disciples could not penetrate beyond the things of this world. They even thought that his kingdom was to be only the restoration of the throne of David, upon which he would sit and rule and reign over them. Jesus likewise had empowered his disciples to cast out devils, to heal the sick and cure the lame, as Peter and John did the one who waited at the gate of the temple Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple. Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none: but such as I have give I thee: In the name of

Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping, and praising God." The barbarians when they saw that the viper which fastened itself on Paul's hand had no harmful effect upon him said that he was a god. We believe it will be agreed that these works which the apostles did were the same as or similar to some of the works which Jesus had done while here in the flesh, and those who did such works were those who believed on Jesus. But Jesus went on to say, "And greater works than these shall ye do; because I go unto my Father." We have spoken of the literal miracles performed by both Jesus and his apostles, but now we wish to speak particularly of the "greater works," which we do not think could be compared to the literal works under consideration. We believe the "greater works" were those of a spiritual nature, which could only be performed after the death and resurrection of Jesus. In the twenty-fourth chapter of Luke we have some of these "greater works" recorded: (1. Upon the first day of the week as they gathered at the sepulchre early in the morning they found the stone rolled away, and as they were much perplexed, "behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: and as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered his words, And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest." (2) We have the account of the two who went to Emmaus, to whom Jesus appeared. The conversation culminated in Jesus saying unto them, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" We are told that he then began at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. Before he took leave of them their eyes were opened, and they said one to another, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" This was a new experience, a new work, the like of which they had never known before, "And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, Saying, The Lord is risen indeed." "And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you." After having convinced them that it was he himself who was risen from the dead, he said unto them, "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things, And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Following this, we are

told that "he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen." These experiences outweighed and far exceeded anything they had ever known before.

On the day when Pentecost was fully come, there was a further demonstration of the "greater works" than anything the apostles had known while Jesus was here with them. The record is that "they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." We read, "they were all amazed" and while they marvelled, Peter, being moved by the Holy Spirit, preached with such power and conviction "they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall de do?" Peter replied by telling them to "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." This meant that the middle wall of partition which had separated between Jew and Gentile had been broken down, and they were all brought nigh by the blood of Christ.

Paul, in writing to his Corinthian brethren, said, "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." In writing to his Galatian brethren, he said, "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: And profited in the Jews's religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went unto Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus." It was also this apostle who was caught up to the third heaven, and saw and heard things which were unlawful to utter. We believe these references should establish in the minds of our readers that the apostles after the Holy Ghost had come upon them were engaged in performing "greater works" than they had hitherto known anything about.

For many years, we have had the feeling that, regardless of how miraculous the things of nature may appear to be, at most they are but poor and imperfect types and shadows of spiritual

things. We have felt that the preaching and hearing of the gospel is one of the most wonderful works that the sons and daughters of Adam could ever engage in here in this world. We have no doubt but what there have been, at least, a few occasions when our beloved brother has experienced this in his own soul, and when he has been blessed with the tongue of the learned to speak a word in season to those who were weary, we are persuaded that they, too, have felt that the things which he was presenting were nothing short of heavenly and divine. We once heard the late Elder J. W. Wyatt say in the stand that he had been trying to preach for over forty years, during which time he had been ridiculed, persecuted and maligned, and that he had had to suffer many things, but there was one occasion which stood out above all others that he felt he had been blessed of the Lord to preach the gospel in demonstration of the Spirit and of power sent down from above, and he went on to say that he would gladly suffer all that he had had to undergo because of the afflictions of the gospel, in order to enjoy just one more time that liberty of soul and joy of heart which was his on the occasion referred to. We were made to hope that we were not altogether a stranger to such experiences.

Jesus gave as the reason why his apostles would do not only the works that he did, but even "greater works" was, "Because I go unto my Father." Having finished the work on earth assigned to him by his Father, he ascended to the right hand of the Majesty on high, and where as head over all things to the church, which is his mystical body, he gave gifts unto men. It was after his death and resurrection that he gave command to his disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, but he preceded that command by first saying, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." We hope we know enough about preaching the gospel to know that no earthly creature is able to do it except he be wrought upon by some strange and supernatural power. Even in this day and time, when one is under the influence of the Holy Spirit, we believe he can, to a certain extent, engage in performing those "greater works" that Jesus referred to, that had ever been done before, under the legal dispensation. The gospel is declared to be "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," and we earnestly hope that all who take the time and patience to read what we have here written can bear witness to the sweetness of that word which is spoken by the Spirit to the inner man of the people of God. Such as has been given to us has been presented for the consideration and meditation of our readers, in the hope that it will be helpful to them. R. L. D.

CHURCH LETTER

To the Lexington-Roxbury Association now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church at Shokan, N. Y., Sept. 13, 14, 1950, the Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church, Inc., sends greetings in the Lord.

Regretting that it is not in God's providence for us to entertain the Association, and expressing thanks for the love and fellowship by those who are favored to entertain, it is all as a loving Savior who has all power would have it. He who laid down his life for sinners and was raised for their jus-

tification. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. In the beginning all things were made by him, and in him was life, and the life was the light of men. We are dead in trespasses and in sins until we are given that light, or brought up out of darkness into that marvelous light. We know we could not obtain it by anything we could do, all surely is beyond the reach of human mortals, and these are times when that light seems very low, but we find:

"Though but a spark, 'tis heavenly fire,
May dwindle oft but ne'er expire,
Till brighter than the solar rays,
It shines through everlasting days.

Earth, hell and sin, that hateful name,
Together strive to quench the same,
Yet still it burns his power to show,
In spite of all that hell can do.

God is its shield, he guards it well,
When tempests rise and billows swell;
'Tis his by God where none but he
By his omniscient eye can see.

'Tis that blest hope that never dies,
Beyond the realm of hell it lies,
'Twill flourish and immortal be
When death is lost in victory.

Shall this, oh Christian make thee say
I'll serve my lust and from thee stray?
Nay rather thus! my God to thee
Let every power devoted be."

We desire to praise our Savior, and realize it is all of his grace we are given faith that we are saved by grace through faith. That power must be manifest in us continually. We surely cannot keep ourselves but are very dependent on him who has all power to keep us; who can speak and it is done, can command and it stands fast; who can guide, guard and succor; has given to us his precious promises which we rejoice in.

We would like to add to our faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, also be given great patience, knowing that patience worketh experience, experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us. Do we always walk by faith and not by sight? Sometimes we consider our walk more than others. Like the horses in Pharaoh's chariots, if the reins were slackened they would deviate, but were brought back by the whip. We learn obedience by what we suffer, so much so that we surely feel to say:

"Guide me, O thou great Jehovah!
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty,
Hold me with thy powerful hand."

We desire to be held and kept in that straight and narrow way. Paul said when writing to the church at Ephesus. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." We believe the steps we tread and the station we fill were all determined before we came to them and we walk right there; that he brought us up and made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that he might show us the exceeding riches of his grace, and may we realize that there our best friends our kindred dwell, there God our Savior reigns.

Possibly we should speak of material things. We must realize all things are as God wants them in the world to-day. Jesus said there would be wars and rumors of wars but the end was not yet, and though that was nearly 2000 years ago it is true to-day. Nearly 4000 years ago God said there would be a seed time and a harvest time as long as the earth stood. We believe that will be until he speaks it out of existence. When we see the beautiful things that grow from roots in the earth his power is manifest to us, knowing we cannot make

a thing grow. As we view the mountains in all their grandeur we can but think how great is his power. Then too the great ability given man in buildings and all things. Though they can go up they cannot reach the heaven which has stood in all its beauty since it was spoken into existence, and afterwards God rested, showing to us that he can speak and it is done, can command and it stands fast. We can but say with David, "The firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race." Thus we must realize that all things, both spiritual and material, are of him.

We have meetings usually every fourth Sunday. Our Pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows or Elder Amasa J. Slauson is with us. We are glad to have brethren and sisters from other churches meet with us. Our present membership is seven. No deaths or additions during the past year. Written as given by the Lord to the clerk.

(Mrs.) AGNES B. GOODRICH

MEMORIALS

During the last year God has removed from these mortal shores, our brother in Christ, Brother L. B. STRADER, one of the few left of our original membership. Brother Strader was blessed of God with a quiet, orderly life, adorning the profession he made in the Lord Jesus Christ. A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches and he bore that, being established in the doctrine of God our Savior. He for many years manifested that spiritual things were his meat and drink. Be it therefore

RESOLVED, that the Primitive Baptist Church at Dan River has suffered a great loss, yet we believe it is the work of him who makes no mistakes. May we be given grace to emulate the example he has left us, and bow to his holy will saying, not our will but thine be done. Done by order of Dan River Church.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER

WHEREAS, it has pleased our heavenly Father in his infinite wisdom to remove by death our beloved brother and deacon, JOHNNIE WILSON, be it

RESOLVED, first, in the passing of Brother Wilson the church at Dan River feels sensibly her loss, yet desires to bow to him who doeth all things well and say, "Thy will be done."

Brother Wilson was faithful both as a member and deacon to which he was chosen and ordained a few years ago. His life was quiet and peaceable, adorning the profession he made in all godliness and honesty; second, even in our loss we are thankful to the giver of every good gift that our brother was given to us in love and fellowship here, and we desire to leave upon our records a token of our love and fellowship for him. May the God of all grace comfort all that mourn, and may we bow humbly before him who called him hence.

RESOLVED, further that this memorial become a part of our church records. Done by order of Dan River Church.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER

OBITUARIES

Sister ZILPHIA ADELL NEWTON was born Feb. 26, 1886, and died May 24, 1950, making her stay on earth 64 years, 2 months and 28 days. She was the daughter of John W. Jernigan, Elba, Coffee Co., Ala. She married Amos Newton, Oct. 12, 1904. To this union were born the following children: Leonard, Marvin, Earl, Mrs. Lillian Burt, A.A., and Mrs. Leah Grace Flowers all of Greenville, Ala., Lula Clay Shanks, Georgiana, Ala., and Hilton Love, Montgomery, Ala., Lena and Amos Carl are deceased. There are twenty-four grandchildren.

Sister Newton united with Mt. Carmel Church the first Sunday in June, 1916, and was baptized by the late Elder J. E. Skipper. She lived in Mt. Carmel Community all her life. Her funeral was conducted by Elder E. D. Gafford and J. C. Wilson in the little church-house where she loved to worship. The floral offerings were indeed lavish to bespeak love, confidence, and sweet fellowship. Her remains were tenderly laid to rest in the Mt. Carmel Cemetery to await the sound of the horn when the dead shall be fashioned like Jesus, and ushered into the realities of the glory of glories. Sister Newton was a bright and shining light in her church. She had a sweet,

treble voice and was the idol of everybody. The writer frequently visited her church and home. I never enjoyed finer hospitality and sweet fellowship. To the relatives and friends may I say weep not. Wife, mother and grandmother is safely housed in heaven. After my first visit to her church after her departure I missed her so much that my tears mingled with those of her husband, children and others.

(Elder) C. H. BYRD

ELDER J. J. MUSGROVE, a meek and humble servant of God, departed this life Nov. 19, 1949, being 90 years, 11 months and 10 days of age. He was born in Jones Co., Miss., Dec. 1, 1858, and married to Miss Emma Dillard, Aug. 28, 1883. Thirteen children were born to them, ten of whom survice. Ezell, Bastrop, La., J. F., Spring Hill, La., Ted, Beaumont, Texas, F., Mrs. Dora Davenport, Mrs. Julia Barkdull, Mrs. Lula Perry, Forest Hill, La., Mrs. Maggie Duck, Pineville, La., Mrs. Ruth Wilkinson, Gloster, Miss., and Mrs. Della Chancey, Alexandria, La. There are forty-eight grandchildren and sixty-three great-grandchildren, one brother, John, Jackson, Miss. also survives.

Brother Musgrove truly was one of God's noble men, a product of course of God's free unmerited, sovereign and almighty grace. Besides his soundness and faithfulness in the gospel ministry he was one among the most modest, quiet, upright, unassuming men it has been my pleasure to know. I truly recognized him to be a precious old father in Israel, and trust that I loved and honored him as such.

Brother Musgrove first united with the Missionary Baptist people and lived with them about ten years, after which time in 1897 he was brought to cast his lot with the Primitive Baptists and was ordained a gospel minister the following year. From all evidence I have been able to gather concerning his upright and useful life, I feel fully confident he was blessed of God to adorn the holy profession he had made with a noble and godly walk and conversation before others; that he truly and indeed was one of God's chosen people, and that now his soul is enjoying the blessedness and love of the adorable Redeemer, awaiting the great and final fruition of the Christian's hope, the resurrection of the body.

The poor, unworthy writer was called upon to conduct the services which he did as best he could in the presence of many relatives, together with a great host of neighbors and friends. May God comfort and bless, as only he can, all who sorrow and mourn is my prayer for Christ's sake.

(Elder) JOHN LEE SMITH

ELDER DOZIER L. PAULK, moderator of the Claybank Association, and Pastor of Bethel Church, Opp, Ala., the largest Primitive Baptist Church of the predestinarian faith in Ala., died, after a lingering illness, Nov. 19, 1950. He was Pastor of several churches at the time of his death, and had served numerous churches in Ala. and Florida. Although the time of his active ministry was short he was loved dearly as a friend, minister and Pastor. When Elder J. W. Thomas was called to his eternal home the mantle as moderator of the Claybank Association fell upon Elder Paulk, and this position he filled ably and well, ever seeking peace and order among the Baptists.

He was a member of Bethel Church and had lived near Opp, Ala. for many years, being survived by Sister Paulk and several children. The remains were taken to his beloved Bethel Church for interment, Nov. 20, and there in the presence of many Primitive Baptists, Elders, relatives and friends several most appropriate hymns from Lloyd's Book were sung by a picked choir in a most feeling and touching manner. Elder Johnie Aplin opened the services, Elder E. R. Sorrells conducted prayer and spoke in Elder Paulk's memory, and by special request of the deceased Elder J. J. Collins came, using as a text, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is in heaven." Also using, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

An immense throng attended the funeral. Truly a great man in Israel has been called to rest but we remember that, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." Elder Paulk will truly be remembered as a firm believer in the fundamental principles of the resurrection.

(Elder) J. J. COLLINS

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 119 RUTHERFORD, N. J., MARCH, 1951 No. 3

CORRESPONDENCE

Denton, Ky.

MY DEARLY LOVED BRETHREN: "And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many." Judges 7:3. It seems that the Lord has never done his work through great numbers of people, but has always chosen the few to perform his miracles. It seems to-day he still chooses just a few to fight the battle. The Lord appointed Judges to rule over Israel, his chosen people under the law, after the death of Joshua, and when they would go away after idle gods he would give them over to their enemies to rebuke and correct them. On this occasion he had given them over to the Midianites and Amalekites, and the children of Israel cried unto the Lord by reason of their oppression and suffering, and the Lord chose Gideon to deliver them out of the hand of the Midianites; but he (the Lord) told Gideon, "The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me." Judges 7:2 To vaunt means to brag or boast as we see the great numbers do. They love to stand on the street corners and boast and to be called of men Rabbi, but the Lord says I have not called you because you are the most of all people, but because you are the fewest. So the Lord continues talking to Gideon in the 7th chapter of Judges by saying, "Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gilead. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand. And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go. So he brought down the people unto the water: and the Lord said unto Gideon, Everyone that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink. And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water. And the Lord said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand; and let all the other people go every man unto his place." Judges 7:3-7. I think that God chose national Israel as a type of spiritual Israel, and all the things that took place with national Israel under the law that was given to national Israel by Moses in a material way, are taking place with spiritual Israel to-day under the gospel dispensation. That law shadowing or typifying something to come afterward as the apostle says,

"For the law having a shadow of good things to come." So the Lord said to Gideon let the people who are fearful and afraid return to their places. It seems many of the Old Baptists are fearful to stand for the absolute sovereignty of God; they fear the criticism and the losing of their popularity of the world, so they return from fighting the battle; some bow down to drink of the things of the world and lose sight of the God that bought them. We see out of thirty-two thousand only three hundred were chosen to fight the battle, about one out of every hundred. I have wondered if that might compare with the number chosen to-day to fight the battle for the whole truth of our blessed Lord. Dear few, I pray that you be not discouraged for the promise is unto you; I pray that you stand erect with your eyes turned toward heaven as you drink of the water of life and not bow down on your knees to drink of the beggarly things of the earth, for when we lose sight of our God we are filled with fear of the things of the world instead of the fear of God. Our blessed Lord says, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." If he had said big flock the world would have had it on us, but the promise has on all occasions been to the few. He says, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

I have thought it was not a good sign to see churches get too large in membership. I have noticed in such cases they usually get into trouble, and in a few instances where this has been the case I have known churches to go down and out of existence. The people become too many, and become fearful, some of them, of the doctrine. Some want to bow down to the things of the world, some would want the doctrine softened down so it would not be so offensive to the world, some want to bring in the traditions and customs of the world: so the people are too many for the Lord to deliver the enemy into their hands lest they vaunt themselves saying, look what we are doing. The carnal mind is so apt to get the upper hand of us and cause us to feel like we are having something to do in the matter of bringing them into the church. In Acts 3:47 it reads, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." It is also written in Eph. 2:9-10 "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." The above scripture cuts short all boasting as the apostle says in another place, boasting is excluded. He has chosen the weak and foolish things lest any boast or glory in themselves. The apostle says, "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." 1 Cor. 1:26-31. In another place he that worketh hath whereof to glory, but not before God. He may glory in his work before men but he has no glory before God. It is a blessing indeed for this chosen few to dwell together in peace and understanding. Solomon says, "It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman

and in a wide house." Prov. 25:24. Then again he says, "Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than an house-full of sacrifices with strife." Prov. 17:1. We need not look for the presence of the spirit of our blessed Lord to be in every wind that blows, nor every quaking of the earth or every fire that is kindled by men. Elijah looked for the Lord in the wind that blew and shook the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks, but the Lord was not in the wind. Elijah said: "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice." 1 Kings 19:10-11. So we do not look for the blessed Lord in these great winds of doctrine which shake the earth of the ungodly, neither the fire and hell which they make so much fuss about. Our God works within the inward part of our life and soul by a still small voice which none hear but he to whom he speaks. Elijah had fled into the wilderness and into a cave, and thought that the worshippers of Baal had killed all of the Lord's prophets but himself, but the Lord told Elijah he had reserved seven thousand men in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal. Jezebel, Ahab's wife, seemed to have introduced unto Israel the worship of Baal. Israel as a whole had gone into idolatry under the reign of Ahab, who I believe was the seventh king over Israel. He is said to have reigned about the years from 918 to 897 B.C. He seemed to have followed Jezebel, his wicked and idolatrous wife, and all Israel with him into idolatry, and when Ahab met Elijah he asked Elijah if he was not the one that troubled Israel, "And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim." 1 Kings 18:17-18. So it is today- we are the ones that are accused of troubling spiritual Israel by many of our brethren because we contend for the absolute sovereignty of our God over all things; but as Elijah said unto Ahab, thou art he who troubleth Isarel by trying to introduce conditionalism into the Baptist ranks; but as in the days of Elijah and in all generations God will reserve unto himself a chosen few that will not bow the knee to drink of the idolatrous things of the world; but I fear that many of spiritual Israel are to-day following Jezebel into idol worship. Nevertheless it all has its place in the purpose of our God and he will take care of it to the honor and glory of himself; there is nothing going wrong with him, everything is fulfilling the purpose that he made it for, so that our God is not and never will be disappointed in any-thing for he declared the end from the beginning, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

I cannot say at this moment that I have been led by the blessed Spirit of God in writing what I have written. I fear I have not been led by the Holy Spirit, I only hope I have, yet at the same time I do not feel to make any changes in it. Our blessed Savior said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven

and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Matt. 11:25. I hope that I am one of the babes, and feel that if one I am the least of them all. I am at times afraid to even speak, fearing I will say something wrong. I have written to relieve my burdened mind not knowing whether it will be of value to any one. The result is with my blessed Lord. Your unworthy brother in Christ I hope.

H. L. ROGERS

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending." Rev. 1:8.

These words came to John while in the isle of Patmos on the Lord's day. I do not know that I have any light as to why John was in the isle of Patmos (or condition), but it appears to me that he was there that he might be shown some wonderful things spiritual in order for us to understand anything about what John saw. We, too, must know something by experience about this isle of Patmos that he was in. The first thing John was told to bear in mind was that God is God, the first and the last.

I visited a meeting here in the community a few nights ago. The preacher tried to talk on Revelation, but if he has ever known that God is God he forgot it in his excitement. I was afraid he was not in the isle of Patmos, but was out in the world trying to scare people into being Christians; they are successful in frightening a lot of poor little children, and I feel very sorry for them, and for the poor deluded parents who do not know how to teach their little fellows not to get upset over such uproars. The book of Revelation was written for the seven churches of Asia, "And is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."

In Rev. chapter five we find John saw a book in the hand of him who sat on the throne; no one on earth was able to open the book and satisfy the requirements of a just and holy God. His law had been broken and nothing but death could atone for this disobedience. When this search was made we all had sins. I think we were all visible to God's all seeing eye. No wonder poor old John wept. If I have ever seen the deplorable condition of Adam's race I, too, wept; but what rejoicing when this elder told John to "Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." This preacher I heard preaching on these seals, poor fellow, had a lot of horrible tales to tell about awful calamities coming in the loosing of those seven seals. Of course he would much rather they were not loosed, but to the little child of God it is necessary. This Adamic man must be subdued, he must go through the furnace of affliction. Paul said, "We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience." I am afraid I do not glory in tribulation to the extent that Paul did, but that is because I am weak.

Well, I could go on and on writing these things I see in this precious book, Revelation, but others have so much more light on spiritual things. In chapter seven, verse two we read, "And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." I wish some one who feels to have spiritual light on any part of

Rev. would write me. I feel like it all knits together into a perfect picture of the church from the beginning of time until the present which I think is the seventh day of time, the day of *rest* from *works*. An unworthy sinner.

(Mrs.) M. G. HAND

Saragossa, Ala.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES AND ASSOCIATE EDITORS: My heart has been made to mourn ever since I heard of the passing of our much beloved Editor. He was indeed a precious brother to me. Many times I have been comforted from his preaching, also many others that were blessed to hear him. Truly he was an inspired man of God. He loved the flock of God and fed them with spiritual food of which he was made overseer. I was thankful to have him visit in my home, and preach at my home church, Falls Tar River, N. C. Many came to visit with him while in our home in June 1949. He wrote me so beautifully how he enjoyed the trip and especially the singing. I believe he is with the heavenly angels enjoying the everlasting psalms of joy and righteousness.

"Servant of God, well done
Thy glorious warfare's past;
The battle is fought, the race is won,
And thou art crowned at last.

Servant of God, well done,
Rest from thy loved employ,
The battle fought, the victory won,
Enter thy Master's joy.

The pains of death are past,
Labor and sorrow cease,
And life's long warfare closed at last,
Thy soul is found in peace."

We shall greatly miss his editorial writings. His New Year Greeting in the *Signs* was very beautiful. His faith depended on the very things he wrote to us about in the greeting. I often wondered how blessed he was that his mind could dwell on spiritual things, being a man of so much importance in the corporation that he so faithfully served, yet with the responsibility that rested upon him in his office he never referred to it in any way during his preaching in all of my hearing him.

To those of the flock that he loved and served as a true Pastor your loss is great, but so much better for him to depart and be with Christ, to sleep that sweet peaceful sleep from which none ever wake to weep. May the God of grace send you another that you may love and esteem as you did this one. From one who mourns with you.

(Elder) ROBERT B. DENSON

Rocky Mount, N. C.

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46 Cedar St., Kingston, N. Y.

DEAR BRETHREN OF EBENEZER CHURCH, NEW YORK CITY: Almighty God has called from the shores of time and his labors in the vineyard of our God on earth, from your midst and our midst, your beloved Pastor and undershepherd, and our beloved brother and undershepherd in the ministry, Elder R. Lester Dodson, Pastor of Ebenezer Church, New York City, Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y. and Middletown and Wallkill Church, Middletown, N. Y. He also served annually the New Vernon Church, New Vernon, N. Y. and the Brookfield Church, Slate Hill, N. Y. and was also Managing Editor of the *Signs of the Times*. This brings much sorrow and sadness to the hearts of those of us who loved him because we saw the love of God in him, and because of the comfort of the gospel of Jesus Christ that he preached to comfort, strengthen and encourage the sheep, lambs, and litle children in the gospel kingdom of Jesus Christ that hunger and thirst after the sincere milk

of the word of God. The above named churches have lost a very faithful under shepherd and Pastor who was willing to spend his energy, strength, time and money, if needs be, for the cause of Christ and his gospel.

Brother Dodson will be greatly missed in many states because of his writings and aid in keeping the *Signs of the Times* in circulation so that many who had preaching through the medium of this paper could be fed by the riches of the gospel from the pen of those who write for publication. We happen to know that Brother Dodson, when Mr. Beebe had to discontinue the publication, arose from a sick bed and drove to Middletown with much effort to arrange for the transfer of the *Signs* to Rutherford, N. J. Had he not taken a deep interest in the *Signs,* as far as we can see, the paper would have ceased to be published some time ago. We hope all the writers will continue to submit their articles for publication that this paper whom our forefathers put into circulation will not die after its establishment for 118 years.

We sincerely hope that God will strengthen and give courage to those who have done so well to keep the *Signs* in circulation during Elder Dodson's illness. May God reconcile us all to our loss, especially to the flock whom he had the oversight of and enable them to feel their loss is his eternal gain and for him to depart and be with Christ is far better.

So willing was Brother Dodson to be of service to his brethren that in the last year in serving the brethren at Ebenezer Church when he felt unable to stand he preached for them in a sitting position. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." We believe Brother Dodson will be among those at the King's right hand when the King shall say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Submitted in love I hope. Your brother in Christ.

(Elder) AMASA J. SLAUSON

"What have I now done? Is there not a cause?"—1 Samuel 17:29.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS, AND ALL MY KINDRED IN SPIRIT WHEREVER YOU MAY BE: If you can spare the space, I would like the privilege of writing some things about myself and family, and on the subject given above. I read so many good articles in the *Signs* along this line of thought that for some reason, best known to God, I feel impressed to mention a few things. I hope my mind does not deceive me when I say that I believe I can see the hand of the Lord so vividly portrayed in these articles that I believe they are ordered of our great Jehovah. Why do I say that? To deny such would be admitting that the whole thing would be of works, or based on the free will of man. We hear the apostle Paul and the Holy Writ tell us that he was chosen, or called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ saying, "Not of works, lest any man should boast."

On Dec. 17, 1903, so that the purpose of God should not be made of none effect, but rather the thing he (God) had foreknown from before the foundation of the world might be brought to pass, I Homer W. Kennard, was born of a natural birth of natural parents into this world. On July 27, 1929 I was united in matrimony to Beatrice Elom and we truly had a struggle through several lean years, not being able to find enough employment

to earn a decent living. Neither of us had gone through anything like that, and we were probably each blaming the other while truthfully it was not our fault. I am sure we had nothing to do with bringing about those memorable days of depression. When our first child, Harry B. was about twenty months old it pleased our great and merciful God to take him from us, but prior to his death God gave us a baby girl, Shirley Mae. With this ideal pair and both of us young and strong we had not a worry in the world save to earn enough to provide the necessities of life. All this was according to the will of God. Our ways were not his ways. (Isa. 55:8) Our third child was a girl and also the fourth—Rose Ann and Joyce Rea. The fourth one did not come until God had removed from us little Rose Ann. So here we are to-day, mother and I with two very lovely daughters. The eldest graduated from High School and of course the baby is two years behind her.

We must get back to our subject but I felt first to mention something about our family affairs. "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" I believe I have been given an understanding whereby I can see the purpose in the cause. I see myself as a very rebellious, stubborn, hard hearted type of Pharaoh. But this great God, this great Master Builder, this God that has made all things that were made, this same great God that is so full of grace, mercy and truth, he that through his infinite wisdom was able to declare all things from the beginning to the end has set the bounds of his people that they should walk therein. (Deut. 32:8) This same just and merciful God about twelve years ago began or set up a work in this vile man, (that was in keeping with his eternal will) that his purpose might stand sure and steadfast, and at his (God's) own appointed time, I, this hard hearted Pharaoh type of creature, might be brought down in humbleness and be made submissive to his eternal will and purpose. I was given a tiny portion of understanding which enabled me, through the divine grace of God, to see myself, and what I was, according to nature, and what he (God) was eternally or spiritually. Yes, precious, heavenly Master, "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?"

In looking back a few years, as I lay here in bed, a subject of flu, pleurisy, and virus pneumonia which has kept the upper hand of me since May 17 until now which is July 16, and God alone knows how much longer, I recall making some promises after the death of our first baby, but after a period of time had elapsed, and the many little things that were in my mind that our baby would do which were to us hard to forget, but the only wise and merciful God saw fit to remove these memories from before me, and I began to be the old stubborn, hard hearted type again.

One day as I was working quite some distance from home I beheld a neighbor boy coming toward me and as he appeared he spoke briefly and said, "Your baby was found dead in the bed to-day." This was Rose Ann. Well, more vows and promises were made, and after going through the same process as above mentioned I failed miserably to keep any of them. Then came the death of my mother, and the same thing again only worse and more of it. I began to get nervous, troubled and losing weight, yet never dreaming that perhaps the hand of God was in the arrangement. All I had any knoweledge of was to see a physician and for about four years they really got my wages. By then I had lost weight from one hun-

dred ninety to one hundred forty-five pounds. Not being able to keep any food in my stomach in sufficient amounts to give me energy to move, yet I tried every day to do my work, feeling in my own mind that I could not afford to lose any time in order to meet my obligations. But God was not through with his work in this vile man as yet. I must be made to suffer more. For this cause I have raised thee up, yes, my heart was to be hardened once again in order that his name (the blessed name of God) might be declared throughout the world. I must suffer until I became mindful of the fact that I was clinging to the last straw. Nothing else in the world that I in nature could think of that would in any way ease my mind. Yes, dear reader, whoever or wherever you may be my mind was to have thoughts on this wise. Why, O why, did God in all his goodness and loving kindness call from us the two babies that I had held out so strongly that their names should be such as I had chosen, when I am sure that I can truthfully say that my love for them was no greater than the love I have had for the two girls that God has permitted to be with us until the present time. It must have been his will to call from our presence our first child also our third one even if it was I who selected their names.

Here comes the thing that was to typify the last plague. It was the death of my dear father. If space and time permitted I believe the things I could write for your consideration would be very ample as to the kind of this super natural love that I have or had for the dearest man that I had ever known in this world. People who are older than I tell me they surely believed I would never see the beauties of this world, but thanks to God who was able to inspire dear Dad with a mind to keep trying until he found the eye specialist that was able to do the very thing which I am made to believe that God himself had purposed and sealed that should be done in order that I might see, and not have to spend all my days here in nature in total darkness. Please allow me to say love for my mother was abundantly sufficient wherewith I loved her, but the manner and way that my father (in nature) petted and cared for me, and would always defend me against all others, perhaps I needed the hand of correction as we sometimes feel in nature is the proper way of teaching our children obedience, but the approach that Dad would pursue was just the opposite. Thoughts on this wise are the thoughts which occupy my mind to this day. Is it any wonder then that I have been made to believe that the purpose of God was on this wise that the death of my earthly father was the very cause which produced the effect in me that I, in my weakened, sin sick condition, was made to realize that all hope, so far as I knew, was gone, and that I was sinking down to everlasting torment. In this depraved and sinful condition I was made to cry God save or I perish, and when the saving grace of God had turned me around I immediately saw the ram securely fastened by the horns in the bushes.

Yes, dear reader, this great and merciful God that had wrought all manner of affliction and suffering upon me is the same great God that, through his loving kindness, was mindful of the necessity of a remedy or cure for all these sufferings and afflictions, and not stopping at that but going on in his perfection brought to pass the one and only remedy that would be acceptable with him (God) which was nothing less than his only begotten Son which

is our Lord and Savior, descending to this low ground of sin and sorrow, mounting the cross with the whole of your sins and mine, casting them into the sea of forgetfulness to be remembered no more. This is the one and only Son of God that spoke these words, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." John 6:38-39.

My dear friends, I could have inserted many scriptural references as to why I believe as I do, but be that as it may, if any one has a doubt as to any part of what I have said I will be glad to try and find the cause of my belief in the thus saith the word of the Lord. I firmly believe I can substantiate all of it, and I will not have to try to change or enlarge upon any scripture that these blessed writers have been inspired to write. May it be the blessed will of our heavenly Father that his grace may keep and shield us from harm or danger to the end is my humble prayer. My eyes are dimmed with tears, my hope is so strong I feel that my heart will melt. I cannot write more at this time. May the grace of God be with you all. Affectionately yours in hope.

(Elder) HOMER W. KENNARD
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DEAR CHILDREN OF THE TRUE AND LIVING GOD: I am old and feeble and besides this I am a poor, helpless sinner, I do hope a sinner saved by the grace of God; as God showed Paul when he felt his own wretched condition and he (Paul) cried out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death." Paul said I die daily. Yes, the flesh must be slain to live by Jesus Christ. The new life for Christ lies in his children and his grace is in them. Dear children, one and all, I may never address you again, but I hope I love you and I wonder why I do as there are many of you I have never seen. When I read your articles it seems like there is love, and a burning begins to spring up within my bosom and you begin to draw near to me as though I almost know you. This is peculiar but God's children are a peculiar people, yes of good works not wrought by us but wrought in us of God as Jesus hath said, I love you and then you love me "because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." This cuts out man's work altogether because he is the stronger man who hath the right for his own house. "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." He binds him and casts him out leaving him with no goods and no armour. What can that strong man do when bound and with no goods and no armour? He cannot get loose, and the stronger man rules and has the title for his own house. Yes, his house is the household of faith, and it was given to him in the covenant of grace before the world began. He had the first claim on them, redeemed them and freed them from the strong man's dominions. As one of old hath said of them, "Other lords besides thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name." Yes, by thy name forever; other lords can have no right to rule over us we are his forevermore. This strong man did not just go out, but he was cast out bound. He cannot enter any more for the house is

not his in which to enter. He is bound out for the stronger man hath entered and taken possession of his own house. When the unclean spirit just goes out it can return to its own house and take seven more spirits with it for it is empty, swept and garnished to relieve them, and they dwell there together.

Dear little children, see the difference between those two houses. See the true house, or the true church, and the counterfeit. I hope I have a place in the body, and I hope I am one of those members though it be the little finger. If I am ever saved it will be by the grace of God alone for it is in him our fruit is found; "Christ in you, the hope of glory." "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Yes, by my spirit. I will put my spirit within you, and my spirit shall lead and guide you into all truth, and its fruit is love and peace in the Holy Ghost. No wonder we love one another. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." So let us not love in word only, but love in truth and in deed. I hope in that day we will all see each other, and know each other as we are known. God knows all things and sees all things just as they are. Make the tree good and its fruit will be good. This shows me that the tree was not good for if it was it could not have been made good. What did David say about himself? "I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." So as the child grows up it gets no better: it needs to be better before it enters into the kingdom, and it can enter into the kingdom but one way; that way is by the door and the door is Christ. He is the door, the way, the truth and the life. He is the resurrection. They enter into the kingdom by the new birth for it shall be said of this man and that man that he was born in her, yes, born in Zion, the kingdom. We were born into this world by birth by our mother, so we must be born again to be born in Zion, and that birth is called the new birth, the spiritual birth. Ye must be born again, then the fruits are good because they are fruits of the Spirit and they are good. Let us run the race which is set before us and not try to run the race of another. Fare you all well in the Lord. (Elder) JAMES W. LINN

Kinwood, Texas

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES: For some time I have had an impression to write some of my experience and call to the ministry if I am not deceived. When in my seventeenth year as I was standing under an oak tree, while hunting in the woods, something seemed to speak from the top of the tree, you are a condemned sinner. I felt like I would die before I could reach home and tell my parents. Upon reaching home this feeling left and I did not tell any one. I traveled on in this condition until I was in my nineteenth year. I went with father, to another county about thirty miles from where we lived, to hear an Old Primitive Baptist preach. If father professed any kind of religion I did not know it, and why he asked me to go with him I did not know. I heard this Old Baptist preacher, his name was Ben Young, on Sunday. He told so much of my experience that I left the house for which father reprimanded me and told me not to do that again in his presence. This was in May and in August I visited my uncle, who lived near this church, and on Saturday I went with his family. When the opportunity was offered for membership I could not keep my seat so offered myself, and to my surprise my uncle and wife, another uncle and wife, and a girl, who became my wife, all came and

were received and baptized Sunday morning. Two years later my father and mother became members of this same church. There are only three of us left the others have passed on. My uncle is now in his eighty-ninth year, my wife seventy and I in my seventy-third year.

I was near twenty-seven when I first had an impression to preach. I could not understand why God would lay such a burden on me, one so unclean as I, and not having education enough to read well. I had only reached the third grade in school and had never experienced public speaking. This bore on my mind so heavily day and night that I quit my work as a carpenter and obtained a job on the police force thinking that a different environment might give me relief. I first took up detective work and then applied-science in connection with it, then became an employee of the Federal Government. This took me into various states and among strangers. In the early spring of 1931 I was assigned to a mysterious government job, and while working on it I and two other men were walking on a road some distance from where I had been staying with the man whom I was after. I fell to the ground on my face, the men picked me up and said I had fainted or they thought I had. I finally got to my feet and told them I was all right, but did not tell them what was the matter, but felt that I could witness it with Jonah. I left the man with whom I had been working on the case with what evidences I had and tried to resign but found I could not do that. I did succeed in getting local officials not to call me after I was licensed by the church to preach, but I made such a failure of it I decided I would rather be dead than to try it again. When I read the scriptures I could get no light on them, and told my dear mother I would rather go to hell than to try to preach again. I said I would never read another verse of the Bible. I was in such misery that I did not know what I was doing a good deal of the time. My rest and sleep were gone, no one was any comfort to me; I seemed to realize Job's affliction, but how could I compare mine to his. That night after retiring and could get no sleep, having heard the clock strike every hour until one, I heard, as it were, a deep rumble of thunder, and a ball of fire came through one window and went out at the other not breaking the glass. I called my wife and mother, father had passed on three years previously, we examined the windows and went out to see if there was a storm coming. There were no clouds to be seen. Wife and I returned to bed, leaving mother sitting at the fire place. The clock struck two and the same ball of fire passed through the same windows only down close to me on the bed and barely missing mother. She asked if I was hurt. I said, no, and then she went to her room and laid down. That was the last natural thing I recollected until next morning. I did not lay down any more but sat in a chair by the fire place. My mind was gone and I was permitted to see only, as I hope, that which was in the future for me. I was led between two rough and rugged high mountains by a man whose face shined so brightly I could not look to the top of these high mountains. I looked and there appeared a beautiful, white church-house. I was led into it and up to the stand. There I was permitted to view three old Primitive Baptist preachers that had passed on shortly after I united with the church. I was handed the closed Bible and I fell to the floor. The one that led me into the house lifted me up and handed me the open Bible, and I saw a small congregation of people all dressed in white. I

was left standing before them with the Bible in my hand. At that time mother announced breakfast was ready. I again realized natural things and sure enough I had my open Bible in my hand, but O how little I know of it. There are times it is a sealed book to me and I cannot come forth, then again if I only had language to express some of the beauties I hope I have been permitted to see. O that I could know that I could speak words of comfort to God's little lambs then I feel all these trials of the flesh are not in vain, but how can I know it. Do I love the brethren as I should? How can I know that I love the Lord? I only hope I love the Lord, I do not *know* it. I only hope I love the brethren and the church. I can only see my corruptness and short comings.

I have written in as short a manner as I can, as I hope some of the Lord's dealings with me, if indeed it is of the Lord. If not then I am deceived and have no experience or call to the ministry. The brethren are the judges. Yours in much tribulation.

(Elder) BEN B. WALSTON

Route 2, Chewelah, Wash.

DEAR BRETHREN: I just received my *Signs* and have read most of it. I do not know why I am writing this letter for to be honest, and I hope I can be, I do not see why it should make any difference to you what I think; but really and truly there are so many older Baptists that are going, I feel so feeble and fearful that the younger ones will not be able to bear the light of truth as they have. Still it is my only hope that, "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."

We all have lessons to learn and I must learn them over and over, stubborn individual that I am. It would seem that after while I would be able to trust in the Lord and not myself, but no I have to stumble along in the same old way thinking I can do these things. I am reminded of the old prophet that was riding upon the ass, and when she refused to go he got off and beat her. The ass spoke to the prophet when the Lord opened her mouth saying, "What have I done unto thee, that thou has smitten me these three times?" "Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and he bowed down his head, and fell flat on his face." We go along in our natural way determined that it is right, and we get so vexed, at least I do, when we can go no farther and begin to beat the beast of burden. Yes, I blame it all on the natural way of life, but in God's own time when I see, if by God's grace I see, I am made to know that I had to walk some other way and not as I chose to go.

It has been my prayer, especially of late, if I can only defend the truth. That is what my old mother used to say, and I believe now I know a little of what she meant; but what an awful undertaking that is for Christ said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." How I would like to go to meeting again, hear some one preach on that and be able to feast on it. May be I should be like one old minister told me (he is dead now and I surely loved that old man) it was his desire to live that the name of the Lord might be magnified. I am so nothing and less than nothing that I am afraid I will be a failure at anything, but the blessed Lord said God was able to raise up sons unto Abraham out of the very stones, so I guess if it is his will for me to be a witness to his truth it will

be or is that way. I surely know it is not of myself, and O I am glad of this for I would contaminate it if I touched a part of it.

I enjoyed Elder Dodson's article in May 1950 paper and would like to say just a word about fear of God for "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." I believe when we have been awakened to the glory of God, and see him in his brightness and glory, he so far exceeds anything we have ever anticipated him to be that we fear; yes, tremble and fear, and our joints become as water and we are like the ones of old who fell down as if they were dead men. I know I fear God and am not ashamed of it, and there are times that I am so thankful that I fear his rod; glad that I have felt it and know it is a fearsome thing. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." The Savior said, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." I am trying to bring out that there is a godly fear and I think it is a good thing.

I wrote this a long time ago and as I feel to write now will add a few more lines. Every time I receive the *Signs* I have a feeling to talk with each one I have read after, maybe to disagree with them if they do not agree with all I profess to believe. There are many others that I do not read after that I would like to visit with also. I have thought a lot about God's saints being referred to in the scriptures as stones. It says ye are lively stones and yet a stone is an inanimate object. It has to be moved and placed where it is needed. It surely cannot move of itself. It says Christ is the chief corner stone, and in Revelation "I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." I have wondered if that did not mean our hope, for try as we will we cannot put in words just what it is or where or how we got it; we surely hope we have it but we cannot give it to another, or tell them where to get one; we think we can lay it down, and I know I have been sure I would never have a hope again, but surely God moves in a mysterious way for I find to my utter astonishment it is with me whether I know it or not.

I would like to tell of a little experience I had some time ago. I had been greatly worried for it is hard to be poor and in debt, and that is the way I have always been both naturally and spiritually. I was so depressed and just cannot tell how my mind was darkened, and how far away from God I was. I thought he should help me if no one else in this world. How selfish we become at times. I went for a walk after sundown, thinking it might relieve me, and as I walked over a little hill something made me raise my head and look into the sky, and there was the most beautiful rainbow I had seen for many a day. It was between me and the blackest cloud. I went down on my knees and such a sweet peace came over me that I was almost overcome by it. It seemed God told me he would take care of me naturally and spiritually, that these things we have to endure here are for our own good. How can we see the rainbow if we cannot witness the storm? It was a wonderful help to me, surely salvation is of the Lord.

I remain a sinner saved by grace, ten thousand times and more in debt and not a farthing to pay, and yet he says come buy without money and without price. Blessed be the God of our fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob for his great love. (Mrs.) MARY L, ECKARD

Route 2, Brantley, Ala.

DEAR BRETHREN: I am enclosing money-order to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. The paper is such a wonderful blessing to me and I feel to believe it is to all the household of faith. I am getting old and unable to go to preaching and be with the brethren which is my hearts desire. I read and reread the *Signs* many times and get good news each time. The editorial in the September issue was a spiritual blessing. Elder Bynum's letter was also good, in fact all letters were good and the inspiring note in them so much loved by one who hopes to have a little spiritual understanding.

I believe in the foreknowledge and predestination of Almighty God, the Father of all things, with all my soul. That is what the Spirit has taught me and no man. Predestination is the act of foreordaining the doctrine that God has, from all eternity, decreed whatever comes to pass, especially by an unchangeable purpose, the eternal life or death of man, and there is no condition in it, whatever he decreed will stand forever. I do not believe in conditionalism, salvation is sure and without conditions.

When God created the heavens and the earth, and the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, God created man and he created that darkness in him, and that darkness is in all of Adam's posterity. At the appointed time, by the predestination and decree of God the Father, Mary conceived of the Holy Ghost and at the appointed time according to the foreknowledge of God, the Savior was born to bring light, life and immortality to all of God's chosen people that were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world was. "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. 31:1-2. John the Baptist baptized Jesus in the river Jordan, "And Jesus, when he was baptized went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matt. 3:16-17. The dove was an emblem, sign or symbol, of God's everlasting love for his people, that Jesus had come into this world to redeem out of Adam's transgressions, and to bring light to that darkness that was created in them before they were born. We were all born into this natural world without our knowledge or consent; as we grew up we learned the things of this natural life, or world, with that darkness still embodied in us, but when one is regenerated and born again by the Spirit of God that darkness begins to fade away, and light takes its place; the light and life of the eternal decree of God, predestinated and ordained before this child of grace was ever born into this natural world or life; we are saved by the grace of God, and the grace of God is the unmerited favor, and love of God toward man in Christ Jesus. He loves his people with an everlasting love and there are no conditions in it. When Judas betrayed Jesus he did just what he was born to do; it was God's eternal will and purpose for his beloved Son to die on the cross to redeem his people, and bring them from darkness into light and life everlasting. When Jesus was hanging on the cross his last words were, "It is finished." His work was finished, it was a finished product, nothing can be added to or taken from, and there was no condition in his work. Jesus

is our salvation, and salvation is a deliverance from sin and death. We are saved by the eternal love and mercy of God and the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, by grace and the salvation of Jesus Christ our Lord.

When Jesus was here preaching to the people, he was preaching and teaching the gospel truth and there were no conditions, it was an eternal truth from God the Father through Jesus Christ. It was predestinated and foreordained in the determinate council with the Son and God the Father. I do not see where conditionalism originated; I do not see how any one that believes in predestination can believe in conditional salvation. I do not believe one word of it myself.

Before closing I want to mention our Association that convened with Cold Springs Church. It was pleasing to the soul to be there. I only went one day as it was some distance from my home, and I not feeling very well. Elders Nash and Buford of Atlanta were there and several other ministering brethren. Elder Nash spoke from the 13th chapter of 1 Cor. I have heard that spoken from on several occasions but he gave the best explanation I have ever heard. He rightly divided the scripture. That love that is embodied in our hearts and souls is what makes charity worth while. Charity without the manifestation of love is as sounding brass or a tinkling symbol. Elder J. J. Richards was next and was also very good, both preached the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Elder Gafford followed with comments and remarks on what had already been said. He is a wonderful speaker, full of the grace of God, and deserves congratulations for the good things he said. It was like sitting in a heavenly place with Jesus there. I desired so much to go another day but my health and the trip did not permit. I have many trials and afflictions to bear, but I am traveling the path that was prepared for me before the world was. I am traveling that path under the rod, but I have the blessed Savior to lean upon which is a great consolation to a poor wretched sinner as I feel to be.

I must bring this to a close. Could keep writing but it might not be of value. I trust it will please the Lord to carry on the publication of this grand and much treasured gospel news. A sister I hope by the grace of God. (Mrs.) J. J. McNEAL

2211 - 5th St., Riverside, Cal.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES: I am enclosing $3 to pay for the *Signs* another year. I am glad it is now incorporated. I love to find so many good letters in it telling of the Lord's dealings with his dear children in their travels from nature to a precious hope in Jesus. I did enjoy Elder Lytle Burns' article on predestination. I believed in that doctrine from a study of the scriptures, even before I ever experienced my precious little hope in the Lord. I find very few, even among my best friends and brethren, who can see eye to eye with me on the absolute sovereignty of God over all events that come to pass.

God is infinite in wisdom and foreknowledge; how could anything be foreknowledge if not determined before hand? Some writer has said, "Man's accident is God's purpose." I am now in my ninetieth year, near my journey's end. That can account for these poorly written pages. The Lord has been good to me all these years—better than I deserve. Although I have many bodily afflictions I try to be duly thankful as they could be so much worse. Long may you live to wield "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." If I am one at all I am your most unworthy brother in the hope of immortal glory.

J. W. HAYNES

EDITORIALS

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"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."—2 Thess. 2: 3-4.

I have had two recent requests to write on the above scripture. Evidently false teachers had taken a wrong meaning of the words of the first epistle, chapter 4:15, of the coming of the Lord and were led then to conclude that that day was at hand; such a conclusion of course produced confusion in the church, and to correct this wrong interpretation he wrote them again.

People have been prophesying the coming of Christ ever since I can remember. Some had it as far back as 1914, and others in more recent years. I remember reading in one of the daily newspapers a few years ago of a religious sect who predicted that on a certain morning the Lord was coming about 2:00 A.M. and they sold their furniture and retired to a mountain to watch for him, but they arranged to get their furniture back if it did not come to pass at the time predicted. This shows that they were dealing in something of which they had no knowledge. They must have had some of our kind of prophets in the days of the apostles. Paul therefore, comes to them the second time and says, "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God,*****shewing himself that he is God."

I have never heard any one preach from this subject, and all that I have read of this man of sin, either the Pope or Stalin of Russia have been referred to. I want to confine my remarks to one who is closer than either of the two mentioned; one that is more subtle than any beast of the field; one that "as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour," and with whom I have had to contend every moment of my life. Some say that this man of sin, this adversary the devil, is an independent, self-existent and visible being. This man I know nothing about, but I do know that there is one who speaks to me, that leads me, influences me; I cannot see him, I can only feel his presence with me. The man of sin is never seen or felt until he is fully revealed. The only good thing that I know of sin is the knowledge of it. The man in his nature does not know that he is a sinner. Paul, in the 6th chapter of Hebrews, speaks of those who fall away, but he means

those who are destitute of the grace of God. He says, "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." These characters were once enlightened, but he did not say that they had spiritual life. The light that they had, evidently, was the same for which Eve sought and that the serpent told her she would have; but this kind of light does not make one wise unto salvation. "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" Matt. 6:22-23. The children of God do not fall away from the grace of God to the extent that it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, for this would be contrary to the teachings of God's word. The light (wisdom) of their world is the greatest darkness there is when it comes to the teachings of God's word and applying it to spiritual things. There is much in the scripture which can be understood and relished by the wisdom of this world, quite independent of any application of the truth to the heart and soul by the spirit of God. Those who can pick up religion at their will, can lay it down at their will. This falling away, I think, simply means that there is such a denial of the essential principles of Christianity, or such a corruption of its doctrines, as renders the whole system completely inefficient to salvation. I think there has never been a time when a denial of the power of God, and the wisdom of God has been more prevalent than it is to-day.

This man, this spirit, this principle that conveyed itself in the serpent and talked to our mother Eve is the same spirit that was in Judas Iscariot, and to whom Jesus referred when he said, "Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil," Yes, this old man can talk, and his arguments are cogent and convincing. I remember a conversation he had with me just after I united with the church in 1908. The pastor of the church was not present on Saturday of this meeting, and I was not sure that he would be with us on Sunday. As I wanted Brother Jordan to baptize me I asked that the baptizing be put off until the next month. Brother Jordan did come on Sunday, and after learning that I had come before the church the day before he said to me, "Henry, the devil is coming to you before the next meeting, and tell you that you have deceived those people and that you had better not go back to the church, for if you do they are going to ask that you tell your experience over again, for they are not satisfied with what you told them." But he did not come to me just that way. He changed his approach and came up on the other side and said, "Henry, you have not deceived those people, they know there is nothing to what you told them, and do not go back any more." This was just exactly the way I felt about it. Brother Jordan told me to tell him (the devil) that he was a liar and the father of it, but it did not seem like a lie to me, but the truth. So I started out at night asking the brethren why they did not ask me some questions when I united with the church. All of them said that they were satisfied with what I told them. I did not see anybody but I felt his presence. I did not

hear an audible voice talking with me, but this speaking was to my inward feeling and intellect, and I have never been able to tell him that he was a liar. If this man has any shape or form I never have seen it, but I have felt his invisible presence with me as he walked with me, talked with me and went to church with me. I find him everywhere I go for his work makes himself manifest. This man "opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness," and with every art that cunning can invent, and unrighteousness suggest in order to delude and deceive. A temple is understood to be a building set apart for the worship of God, but it does not mean that this temple is built of wood, brick or stone. "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." In this temple is where I find him dictating the form of worship, the doctrine to be preached and believed. I think we often mistake gifts for grace. God has given wonderful gifts to men, but gifts are not grace. It is said of Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus and was numbered with the apostles, he had obtained part of this ministry (gift) but not grace. Men with the spirit of Judas in their hearts sitteth in the church of God, shewing himself that he is God. Gifts puff men up and make them boast of what they are, gifts are of short duration, but grace is everlasting. A man, for instance, may pray and preach most feelingly, and touch the passions of even God's people, yet it would be nothing more than sounding brass or a tinkling symbol. This spirit always works on the feelings and passions of men in such a way as to put confidence in themselves, and to deny the power of God. Some might think that this spirit of denial is in others, but not Old Baptists; but not so, Peter doubted when Jesus told his disciples how he would suffer many things of the elders and chief priest and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. "Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offense unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."

This Satan, this man of sin, is in us all for the thoughts of foolishness is sin. Peter did not understand how Jesus was to suffer all these things that he told them he would, and be raised again the third day. This doubt constituted a denial of his power to raise himself from the dead, and therefore Jesus said get thee behind me Satan. Jesus said, "Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness." We may wash our hands, and dress up in our own righteousness to appear before men as something that we are not, but God knows what spirit it is of. The first record we have of this man of sin that secreted himself in the serpent, which was more subtil that any beast of the field which the Lord had made, came to our mother Eve in the garden. This great orator said to her, "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst

of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the friuit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." If there is one thing more desired to-day than another, it is the wisdom of this world; but it is also God's glory to pour out contempt upon such wisdom and bring it to naught; to lay low all that man idolizes and exalts in himself. When man is full of the wisdom that makes one wise in the things of this world, he feels then that he is also wise in the things of God. When a professor and not a possessor of religion gains much of this knowledge, he will be found setting himself up as a great man of God. There is nothing which blinds man more to the power of God than introducing fleshly wisdom into divine truth, and this satan, the God of this world, will do by teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. God has promised "that the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent," and God is not slack concerning his promise. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." By the merit of his own death making atonement for sin; rendering ineffectual the work of him who had the power of death, and would have brought final ruin to the human family, thus becoming the means of their exaltation and endless glory; and thus the death brought in by Satan is rendered ineffectual by the death of Christ.

H. O. N.

"Dear Elder Dodson: I would be glad if you would give your views on Adam as being the son of God. I read in the Bible that Jesus was the only begotten Son of God. I have always believed that Adam was a creature of God, but not a Son of God. Hoping I am not asking too much of you, your brother,

(Elder) C. Y. OSTEEN."

The late Elder P. D. Gold, of Wilson, N. C. frequently responded to requests on the scripture from his ministering brethren by saying, "That is your text —you preach it." We wish that Elder Osteen had felt to go into his subject in more detail than he did for he has undoubtedly had some meditation upon it.

The expression, "The Fatherhood of God" is frequently made by many so-called religious leaders. The implied meaning is that God is the spiritual Father of all mankind. According to our understanding, the relationship of father can only exist by one of two ways, either as progenitor or by adoption. The scriptures are very clear on the point that God is the Creator of all mankind, as well as everything else that was made. According to the account found in the first chapter of Genesis, following the evening and the morning of the fifth day, God said, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it

was good. And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." We have at times thought of God as presenting to us in the first chapter of Genesis his blueprint of creation, with the details as to when and how everything was made recorded in the second chapter of Genesis. It is in this second chapter of Genesis we find it recorded, "the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Here we have God presented as man's Creator, but thus far nothing has been said about God being the Father of man. There are those who will claim that when God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life" that man then and there became a son of God. Their reasoning appears to be that by so doing God imparted to man eternal life. We do not believe the scriptures will sustain this line of reasoning. In the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians Paul very definitely and clearly says, "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven." He goes on to enlarge upon this theme by saying, "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." From these and other scriptures it is quite evident to us that there are two kinds of families in this world: (1) natural and (2) spiritual. "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." The first Adam was the federal head of all human kind, and every human being from Cain, his first born, to the last one to be born to this family was or will be either a son or a daughter of Adam. Of all the untold millions who have or may yet be born into this family, not a single solitary one had anything to do about choosing either the time or place of his advent into this world, or becoming a son of Adam. This same line of reasoning applies with equal force to becoming a member of the heavenly or spiritual family. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." And by way of explaining how this birth could come about he said, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Between these two families there is an impassible gulf which no man can possibly abridge or pass over. To begin with, the natural man is carnally minded, and the great apostle said "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." His conclusion is, "they that are in the flesh cannot please God." This same apostle in writing to the church at Corinth declared "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." We would like to emphasize the point, as we see it, that the only possible way of becoming a member of the family of God is by adoption and the new birth, and Paul in his epistle to the Ephesians

blessed "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" for "having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." We heard a man say over the radio recently that being "born again" is a very simple thing, that all that is necessary for the sinner to do is to say "Come into my heart, Lord Jesus." The record is that the man in nature will not have this man, Jesus, to reign over him; therefore instead of inviting him to come into his heart he will invariably bolt the door against him. The Stronger Man must first bind the strong man, before there is any dwelling together, and even then there is a continual warfare. God must first send forth his Spirit into our hearts before we will cry "Abba (our) Father," otherwise we can never know anything of that relationship. It is by the word, or power of God, that we are born of that incorruptible seed. He who holds the wind in the hollow of his fists must bid it blow upon his chosen garden before any choice fruits will be borne. On the day when Pentecost was fully come, we are told that "suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting." "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." In response to the prophet Isaiah's query as to what he should cry, he was told to cry "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field," and this knowledge was gained "because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it." We understand from the scriptures that no man can, in truth, say that Jesus is the Christ, but by the Holy Ghost. John was under the influence of the Holy Spirit when he was writing to those whom he termed as "little children," saying, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

Adam as he was formed of the dust of the ground was evidently not a son of God. When he transgressed God's law God drove him out of the garden of Eden and pronounced a curse upon the ground for his sake. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us," made provision in Christ for the redemption of all that where chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and we feel that the fact that God clothed Adam and Eve with coats of skins was evidence that he was a son of God by adoption through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It matters not that Adam's creation took place, according to man's reckoning of time, some four thousand years before Christ's advent into the world. The covenant which God the Father entered into with his Son in the counsels of eternity was ordered in all things, and sure, embraced every subject of divine grace throughout all time. David said on behalf of Christ, "in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there were none of them." It was from beneath the throne of God and the Lamb that the water of life flowed, both toward the former and the hinder sea. This means to us that by the shedding of the precious blood of the blessed Lamb of God the sins of all his people, whether they

came into the world before or after the advent of Christ, was remitted, or put away. There is but one Savior for all nations, creeds, tribes, kindreds and tongues, for there is none other name given under heaven, among men, whereby we must be saved but the name of Jesus.

Before concluding our remarks, we wish to say something on the point of Jesus being the only begotten Son of God. It seems to us there is a sense in which that is peculiarly and definitely so. Many scientific minds will deny that the Son of God was born of a virgin, but this does not mean that it was not absolutely true. It is befitting, we think, that it was Luke, the physician, who gave us the most complete account of the birth of our Lord, and to the people of God it should be conclusive. We will quote from his record, Luke 1:26-35: "And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." This supernatural conception and birth of a son to a sinful woman was something which had never occurred before, nor has it ever occurred since. God, by the Holy Ghost, begat his Son, whose earthly name was JESUS, of a virgin named Mary. Mary was not holy, the record nowhere says that Mary was holy as is claimed by some, but the record does say, "that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Only God is able to bring a clean thing out of an unclean, and this is what took place when the holy child Jesus was born of Mary. The angel also informed Mary of her cousin, Elisabeth, having conceived a son in her old age, who was called barren, and the angel said to her in this connection, "For with God nothing shall be impossible." We are told that Mary then went into the hill country to see Elisabeth, who was in her sixth month, and when Elisabeth had heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb for joy, and Mary herself said, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed." We believe that every manifested child of God can witness with Mary in her experience. They are made to know that the conception which precedes the new birth is altogether of the Holy Ghost, and that man has no part in the matter, for it is all the work of grace, and when they in their low estate are assured that the Lord has been mindful of them, they feel to say with Mary, "My

soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior."

(The late Elder) R. LESTER DODSON

Route 2, Ringgold, Va.

READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES: I feel to write something regarding my dear brother, R. Lester Dodson. My son and I were the only ones present at his funeral from this part of the country. I wanted to write something for our daily paper, since he was well known here and had many relatives and friends, but was so grief stricken I could not quiet my mind to do it and am still in a very nervous state. As one lady put it who has known the family all our lives, she just thought the world could not go on without him, and this expressed my feelings when I first knew of his serious condition on Saturday night before his death on Tuesday. I hurried to see him leaving Monday night. I dreamed of going to his funeral and to the cemetery. I arrived in New York about 11 A.M. and waited to go to the hospital with brother Raleigh but when we arrived he had just passed away. I instantly thought of my dream and was so saddened because I had not gone before, but perhaps it is as well since he suffered so much and I would have broken down in his presence.

Beulah, his wife, said that last January when he entered the hospital he requested that Elder David V. Spangler conduct his funeral services. As many have heard, he was in Florida and was delayed six hours enroute arriving only in time to pronounce the benediction at the grave. Elder George Ruston of Canada was requested to take charge and was assisted by Elders J. D. Wood, Baltimore, Md., H. M. Bennett, Mardela Springs, Md., and A. J. Slauson, Kingston, N. Y. The family was much impressed with the services. Elder Ruston spoke so sweetly of laying hands on Lester during his ordination 29 years ago. He was all to me that a brother could possibly be. The older brother, Raleigh, of New York City and he loved each other as much as it was possible for brothers to do. He was so heart broken it was pitiful. May God reconcile us all to his will.

The services were held in the Collins Funeral Home in Rutherford, interment in Hillside Cemetery there. At times we feel he is better off than we who are left and that he is at rest. What a glorious exchange for him as we feel he is in paradise. The separation seems unbearable. His devoted and only sister. (Mrs.) W. L. FERGUSON

Topeka, Kans.

EDITORS, SIGNS OF THE TIMES: I am enclosing some lines composed by Elder L. L. Schenck (with his permission) with the thought they may be of interest to the many readers of the *Signs*, the most of whom are familiar with his writings for the paper, if you feel to publish them.

I had the happy privilege of attending a three days meeting in July, held with the Little Flock Church near Pleasant Hill, Mo. There I met once again many of the dear old saints of the household of faith, and heard the glad tidings of salvation by grace proclaimed, which is both meat and drink to all lovers of the truth. Elder Schenck is Pastor of this church, and the visiting ministers were Elders L. H. Hardy, Clevenger, Harper, and Licentiate Sapp all of Mo. Among the visitors were Sister Mabel Lindsay from California, and Sister Opal Pounds from Tenn. who came many miles to be at this meeting. It was truly a "Feast of Fat Things," and will be long remembered by those who were privileged to attend. May God bless and prosper you in your good work.

(Mrs.) DELLA DAVIS

MY PETITION

Should the spirit give me utterance just to breathe
a silent prayer,
I should ask in my petition that the Lord would
me prepare
To endure my lot with courage, for my burden
bends me low,
And for reconciliation to this devastating blow.

I have lost my dear companion but 'twas her
eternal gain,
Yet my selfish disposition leads me often to
complain.
I am lonely, broken hearted and my future is
so dark,
And at times I wish the Lord would take away
this vital spark.

For I find I'm prone to murmur when I come
beneath the rod,
And I need a power to keep me lest I wander
from my God.
I would pray the Holy Spirit come and lodge
within my breast,
And give me strength and wisdom till I enter
into rest.

Yea, I ask in my petition for submission to
his will,
And for grace to run with patience till I shall
my lot fulfill.
But without my blessed Savior there is nothing
I can do,
So I ask in my petition that he lead, the journey
through.

It is hard indeed, to know that I must travel
on through life,
And bear the toils that once were shared by my
devoted wife.
So in my feeble prayer I ask the Lord to be
with me,
And keep me till in wisdom he shall set my
spirit free.

Should the spirit give me utterance and teach
me how to pray,
I should ask in my petition for my brethren
by the way,
That the fellowship of kindred souls may ever-
more abound,
And the banner of the kingdom in every heart
be found.
That each may feel his brother's sigh, and with
him bear a part,
And love and harmony prevail in every throb-
bing heart.

(Elder) L. L. SCHENCK

Williamstown, Kans.

RESOLUTIONS

WHEREAS, our heavenly Father has removed by death our dear friend and Pastor, ELDER R. LESTER DODSON. we desire to record the sadness that is in our hearts over this loss. Words fail us at this time to fully express our sadness and sorrow.

WHEREAS, Brother Dodson's passing has left a vacancy that will be difficult to fill, his memory will always be cherished by the church.

RESOLVED, that we give thanks to God for the gift of our dear friend and brother whose ministry these many years among us has brought hope and comfort to us all. We desire to bow in humble submission to the will of God, believing he has entered into that rest that remains to the people of God. We hope and believe he has entered the presence of the dear Savior where there is fullness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures forevermore.

RESOLVED, that Ebenezer Church extends sympathy to Mrs. Dodson and her son, and that a copy of these resolutions be forwarded to them and published in the Signs of the Times. Written by W. D. CHAPMAN.

(Elder) A. J. SLAUSON, Moderator
CYRUS RISLER, Clerk

SPECIAL REQUEST

The Post Office Department will not forward second class mail. If there is the slightest change in the address the papers are returned to us and you may fail to receive your copy. If you anticipate a change of address please advise us as soon as possible and aid in getting your paper without delay.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. A. McDaniel, Cal., $1; Mrs. D. Deal, Mo., $2; Mrs. M. C. Little, Tex., $2; Mrs. L. F. Requa, N. Y., $5; L. C. Spikes, Ore., $1; J. T. Hinson, Cal., $2.50; T. W. Robertson, Tenn., $2; J. A. Johnson, Tenn., $5; Eld. W. D. Griffin, Ala., $2; Mrs. D. S. Reid, N. C., $1; Mrs. S. L. Taylor, Pa., $2; Mrs. L. Campbell, Tenn., $1.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 119 RUTHERFORD, N. J., APRIL, 1951 No. 4

CORRESPONDENCE

Predestination of God, and His Counsel and Control Over all Things

To all the household of faith: I hope it is by the divine spirit of God I desire to write on the predestination of God. Has anything ever taken place on earth that God did not know what was coming to pass? And I believe it was in his purpose for it to be so. If not then how did he do his will? Did God know before he created Adam that Adam would take of the forbidden fruit? Did he not know what man would turn out to be before he made man? Did he have to wait to see what man would do before he made his laws against sin, and purposed that he would send his only begotten Son in the world to save his chosen seed from their sins even before Adam was made? And all that are his chosen were chosen in Christ Jesus from the foundation of the world? Could not God have kept sin out of the world if it had been his will to do so? Did he not have the power to do so? I believe that God controls all things, and that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. This reminds me of a scripture in another place that one of our preachers used for his text. "Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." 1 Cor. 12:3. And so I say that we could not love God except his loving Spirit first be given us.

In the back part of my Bible is found four thousand questions and answers on the Old and New Testaments, intended to open up the scriptures for the use of students and Sunday School teachers. Those questions and answers were not written by Primitive Baptists, and are far from the truth if I ever knew any truth at all. I give here for example three of them: "Were there any restrictions to this permission?An exception was made of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, under the penalty of death. (Gen. 2:17) Thus was a trial made of obedience and love, and a gracious warning given." "Were they forbidden to eat of the tree of life? They were not." (Here is the answer to this that I object to.) "What do we conclude from this? That they were intended to live forever." I say, if God had intended that Adam and Eve should have lived forever, and not have taken the forbidden fruit it would have been so, or else God did not have his own will, and Satan had the greater power? This could not be so for we read that God formed the crooked serpent with his own hands. The devil can do nothing except the Lord gives him power. "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his

power can understand?" Job 26:13-14. "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Prov. 16:4. "Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me hath the greater sin." John 19:10-11. "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." Isa. 45:7. Has God ever been frustrated from anything that has ever occurred on the earth? such as the world's war, and was it not all in his purpose? The Lord has power and control over sin, instead of being in any sense controlled by it. It could not have entered into the world if it had been his will and purpose that it should not. After sin came into the world, and ever since, his control over it has been absolute. Men of the world and wicked men are his hand and sword. (Psalms 17: 13-13) The wicked can go no farther in executing their wicked designs than will be for the fulfilling of his decrees concerning them. The natural man is still saying, as in Paul's day, "Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" Rom. 9:19. And Paul is still replying with authority and boldness; "Nay but, O man, who are thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." Rom. 9:19-23.

Our Adamic carnal nature is strongly opposed to this doctrine of personal election and of predestination. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8:7. The scripture mentioned above, the potter hath power over the same lump of clay, I understand we are the clay, all the same nature, and of the Adamic family, and God the potter has chosen a part of this lump of clay to make some to honor, and some to dishonor. He is the potter. God had a purpose for all of the lump of clay, and to make part to honor and part to dishonor. He had as much for the vessels of dishonor to fulfil his purpose as he did for the vessels of mercy to prepare unto glory. Did not God put a mark on Cain that he would not be destroyed? Was it God's purpose that Peter should deny the Savior three times, and could he have kept from doing so? Suppose he had not denied him, then would Christ have been made a liar? Did Peter sin? Yes, though it was purposed of God, yet God did not make Peter deny him. God only had to leave it to Peter without the Spirit, and when the cock crew Peter remembered what Christ had told him and was very sorry for his sin. Peter remembered the words of Jesus which were said unto him, "Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice," and he went out and wept bitterly. Peter did not try to get behind the predestination of God and justify himself, for he knew that he had sinned and not God. He took all the blame on himself. Peter had to be shown that it was not in himself to follow Christ without the Spirit of Christ leading him. "And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water,

to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Matt. 14:28-31. I believe that every child of God has just as much faith to believe in God and Christ as God has purposed that they shall have, and all their doubts and fears are appointed unto them. "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." Psalms 139:1-4. I believe I have a little faith, but there are times that I fear I haven't any more than Peter had when he cursed and swore, and said that he knew not the man. I believe in a God of all power if I believe in a God at all, and now, when I look back on my past life in my experience, I feel that God has demonstrated his power to me; yet I cannot say that I will come forth from the grave with the saints at the last day, when Gabriel blows the trumpet, but I have a hope that I will.

Was there any chance that Adam and Eve could have kept from taking of the forbidden fruit? If so and they had not, would there have been any increase? Would they have multiplied and replenished the earth? "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it." Gen. 1: 27-28. What was the curse that was put on Eve? "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." Was this not God's purpose from the beginning? And out of this multitude of people God chose his people from the seed of Jacob, and they were chosen in Christ Jesus from the foundation of the world. "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power." Eph. 1:18-19. Chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Was this before Adam was made? If it was not God's purpose when he made man that the man Adam would sin, then how come that it was prophesied that there would be a Savior born that would be crucified for the sins of his people? "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living. for the transgression of my people was he stricken." Isa. 53: 7-8. Those scriptures were written long before Christ came into the world, but who dare say that it was not Christ that it refers to? The same scriptures in THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

"Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture which he read was this, He

was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down, both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing." It must have been great joy to the eunuch to see the wonderful power of God demonstrated to him.

The three Hebrew children were cast into the fiery furnace heated seven times hotter than needed to be. I believe it was God's purposes that all that was done, as well as Daniel cast into the lion's den, that he might show his power, his wonderful mighty power so much superior to the king and all his princes, governors, captains, judges, treasurers, counselors, sheriffs and all the rulers of his provinces. Their power was nothing compared to Daniel's God. "The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret." Dan. 2:47. "Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, (It seems that by this time the king knew that the God of the three Hebrew children was a powerful God, the only God, the true God.) walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God. (Do we not believe that it was the Lord Jesus Christ with them that redeemed them from the fiery furnace?) Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego came forth of the midst of the fire. And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them. Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any God except their own God. Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-

nego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort." Dan. 3:22-29. "I thought it good to show the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me. How great are his signs! and how mighty are his wonders! his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation." Dan. 4:2-3. "And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honored him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Dan. 4:34-35. God's wonderful mighty power had been demonstrated to the king, Nebuchadnezzar. Then the king commanded and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. King Belshazzar was the son of king Nebuchadnezzar who threw the three Hebrew children into the fiery furnace. "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about three score and two years old." Dan. 5:30-31. Darius is the king that put Daniel in the lion's den. "Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee." "And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions? Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lion's mouths, and they have not hurt me: foreasmuch as before him innocence was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt. Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in God. And the king commanded and they brought those men which had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den. Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions." Dan. 6:20:27. This same God, the God that delivered Daniel from the lions den is the only true and living God who has all power that I believe and hope I put all my trust in. I believe that this God, Daniel's God from the beginning, predestinated all things, (and I mean all not just a part) and has power to bring all things to pass just as he has purposed for the good of all his elect that love him because he first loved us, and to his honor and glory. He will be unto them a God, and they will be unto him a people, and will will sing praises to his holy name in that holy city, New Jerusalem, for ever and ever. Amen. From a brother in hope of eternal life.

F. L. COX
1330 Mt. Holly St., El Dorado, Ark.

Newton, Ala.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR BRETHREN. I have just learned of the passing of dear Elder Dodson on Dec. 19. So many had expressed a fond wish that he would recover, but the great Giver of every good and perfect gift had need for him on the Celestial Strand. I had just sent him an article which he may or may not have received on the eve of his heavenly call. The general theme of that article was my trip to Ebenezer Church in Baltimore three years ago, and the fact that of those present that day Elders Walker, Topping, Vaughn and Lefferts had all gone to their eternal home. Little did I dream that dear Brother Dodson would join them so soon.

I first met Elder Dodson at Gretna, Va. in 1940 and was blessed to hear him preach at Durham, N. C. and other places. I shall never forget his theme, "Faith, Hope and Charity," but the greatest of these is charity, and how I love that latter entity. There is nothing like charity, the perfect love of God. One of the greatest shocks of my life was when I received a letter from Miss Naomi Williams, teacher in Danville, Va. stating that Brother Dodson had passed on. Wherever I was associated with him I always found him saintly, Christ like and endowed with spiritual wisdom. I shall continue to treasure my fond association with him. Just a few weeks ago I received an invitation to be with him in his services in the New York Church, and now on earth I shall see him no more, but I feel assured that he lives on. The spirit returns unto God who gave it, does not die, lives on so is it true of all the heavenly host. Believing children live on. Within recent weeks I have been called to speak in memory of two dear ministers and I am sure each of those live on in spirit and in truth.

I think it most fitting that Elder Dodson used faith as the basis of his "New Years Greeting," and that he had used "Love, Mercy and Grace," during the last three years. He was wonderfully blessed in giving us the fundamentals of faith for 1951. Never was a pen more spiritually used as he pointed out to us the cardinal principles of that heavenly theme. We can almost stand on lone Nebo's Mount and cast our spiritual eyes on Canaan's fair and happy land where our dear brother has gone. May his writings continue to embellish our spiritual realms and guide us into the ways of all truth. None of us could believe that Lester Dodson was always free from error. All make mistakes, but we do feel to know that he was most certainly inspired in the 20th century to guide us on in heavenly paths. Truly his pen gleaned unfathomable truths for mortal man. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: neither can he know them unless he be spiritually discerned.

During 118 years great men of God have written for the *Signs* and we feel that he will never leave himself without a witness. Who will bear Elder Dodson's mantle time alone will tell, but we surely believe He will continue to inspire writers who will garnish the pages of the dear old *Signs* with illimitable thoughts from the God of love. Yes, he will continue to feed us with that blessed heavenly manna reserved alone to the sons of grace. There may not be a Beebe, Durand, Chick, Ker, Lefferts or Dodson, but he will raise up a prophet who shall continue to cry out salvation is alone of the Lord, and underneath are the everlasting arms. Yes, he guides on, he never makes a mistake. Perfect in everything. How wise and wonderful is he from times ancient until the unfolding of the last drama on the screen.

(Elder) J. J. COLLINS

Lillie, La.

ELD. J. E. BURGESS, DEAR BROTHER IN

HOPE: I received your good and very highly appreciative letter with contribution enclosed. I appreciate your very encouraging and helpful remarks, concerning the little book, "Gospel Comments." I am very unworthy of the encouragement that the brethren have given me regarding it. I hope and feel in my poor heart that it is the gospel truth, at least in a measure. I know that it is not perfect and that nothing is that pertains to this mortal existence, but I hope I have been brought to believe in a God that is perfect in every respect, and is the sovereign Creator, Ruler and Disposer of all things both visible and invisible. Such a belief is to me a great consolation, as unworthy as I feel in this confession I would not exchange (if I could) this hope that I trust God has given me in this glorious, eternal, sovereign, unchangeable and all powerful God for all this world and ten more like it if it were possible.

Our blessed Savior is soon to come and will not tarry, and I long for his coming, if I know my poor heart, when we shall be changed, formed and fashioned like to his glorious body, be like him and with him and all his redeemed saints out of every kindred, nation, people and tongue under heaven. What a wonderful association that will be. Then we will not take the parting hand as we do here in this dying mortality; there will be no more sin, sorrow, pain, trouble or death; no cares, poverty, or mortgages to harass us. What a wonderful thing it will be! Most glorious is my thought that there will be no more sin to cause His poor cast down ones to fall, cry and beg in sweat, tears and agony, but wonderful thought when he shall say come ye blessed, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; enter thou into the joys of thy Lord, and these shall go away into everlasting life. The anticipation of it is too wonderful to describe; what will the reality of it be? David said, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it."

I only intended to thank you for your good and encouraging letter, and the contribution you sent. May it be the will of the precious and blessed Lord to comfort, keep and preserve us blameless unto his heavenly and glorious kingdom (which is soon to come) is my prayer and desire for Jesus' sake. Please pray for me if you find it in your heart to do so, I feel to be one of the most needy, sinful and unworthy.

I am not sure but I may have met you. I was in Martinsville and among churches close around there several years ago with Elders Sikes, Wyatt, Hutchens and others, and have been through there once since. I have been to several Associations all through that country several times. I went to the Salem Association near Winston-Salem this year (1950) but did not arrive until Sunday or did hear a little of one discourse Saturday evening.

May God bless you and lead you on through this world of sin and sorrow, and by his matchless love, mercy and grace enable you to look to him for all both here and hereafter as he is the source of all our benefits, comforts and consolations. Your very unworthy brother in hope of continued mercy.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES

Route 1, Lambertville, N. J.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS: It is past time for me to renew my subscription. Hope I am not late for my December issue of the *Signs of the Times*. I have been blessed with much good reading through "Zion's Landmark," "Fragments" and numerous copies of the *Signs* for three or four years. When I have finished reading them I can re-

read as they seem not to lose their savor, and are often more profitable after re-reading.

If the Lord wills I would like to write some of my many blessings. Sometimes I feel I should keep them within, and at times I would just rejoice in telling the world what wonders the Lord has done for me. I have no gift to quote scripture, but I feel I have seen many beautiful acts in God's creation, and also have been given to feel and see where I was once much afflicted and at the time very painful to me. Now I am blessed beyond knowing how it has all come about. Yes indeed, I struggled and wished within myself, but to-day I could never wish for any better than my Lord planned and directed. In his way there is everlasting strength, but in my way (the flesh) I could not even exist without him. I find myself in the valley at times and the rivers seem to be dried. "He giveth snow like wool," etc. Psalms 147:16-18. Then I feel to bow down in thankfulness and praise. Often when I wonder if ever he will come to me again I am given a dream which raises me out of the depth, and opens my heart to the blessed truth, then again I seem to live. I might say, if I should write all the dreams I have been given, it could leave an opening for doubts, but I have not a doubt for they are all marked in my forehead even though they may leave me for awhile I am often reminded of them and feel to give them consideration.

In early April of '49 I awoke one morning by feeling the presence of a dove on my bedpost. My first thought was a messenger, but what for? A few hours later I got a call from Hopewell that Elder Vaughn was very low. Not many days after his death I saw in a dream two graves side by side and covered with pure white snow in the northeast corner of Hopewell Cemetery. I awoke calling Elder Vaughn twice. These dreams brought me down in the valley as I was very heavy of heart to think I had not gone as I might have done to Hopewell Church. I had a mind and desire to go before the church, but it was not for me to do so. Now I was remorseful and that seemed to carry me on for I was given strength to go before the church in early June 1949 after attending the Association at Southampton. Elder Bellows came to Hopewell the Sunday after the Association. I felt that I was not worthy to be accepted, but that was and had been my desire for sometime. Shortly after I was baptized I awoke one morning seeing the Bible open to the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy. I was startled for so little did I know of Bible scripture or even the commandments—shameful me. The first thought was honor thy father and thy mother which I am sure now is the fifth one. Later on another morning on awakening (or it woke me) I heard it said, thou art the seed of Abraham. Each and every dream seems sweet to me, and to me are worth considering. Three nights ago Elder Vaughn was again with me. I was resting my head against his forelegs just above the ankles. They seemed so big and strong and crossed at the ankles. That took me to the 147th Psalm again, verses 9-11, "He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry. He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man. The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy." I am given to feel God's strength or food was given through Elder Vaughn. Legs are a foundation, pillars and means of going forth of which I was lifted up through him by God's mercy and grace. If this all seems small to you I hope you will forgive me for taking your precious time from the good that God has given

you to do. A sister in precious hope.

(Mrs.) MARION H. MULHOLLAND

3347 Tutwiler Ave., Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR BRETHREN: I feel I must write you again and try in my weak way to express the joy I received while, and a long time after, reading your editorial in the June issue of the *Signs* on a certain nobleman. (Luke 19:12-13) Oh that I had words of expression to praise our God for the great love he hath bestowed upon man, even before he was ever brought forth this great precreation was made, and how he so wonderfully makes himself known to his little ones along life's way; how gently he leads and guides them into all truth; how we do tremble and rejoice when he opens the secret chamber of our hearts and bids us look away from this world and see the salvation of the Lord. What a glad surprise it was to Zacchaeus when Jesus seeing him, bid him "make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house." The day had come, the appointed time for him to take up his abode in the heart and soul of Zacchaeus. Do we not all climb just as high as our imaginations will carry us when we hear about Jesus, with a desire to see him? We immediately begin to get out and above the place we are in so we may get where we can see him, not realizing where he is to be found; and to our surprise when he finds us we are brought down and look up to see him; and that is not the last time we have to come down, this old nature we have to contend with so long as life lasts, is ever ready to rise and reason against the truth, and confuses us until we are trying again to climb the sycamore tree, feeling we are so hidden with the surroundings that we must make amends and do something about it, or he might leave us there to die. Finding we cannot do that, we wonder if we ever saw him at all; even wish for our burden back that we might watch and see more closely when and how it left us. We now have a burdened mind, but not the one we were carrying at the beginning, no it is gone and we cannot find it, neither can we find who said he would abide with us, he is gone also and we cannot find him. Alas! we begin to read our Bible and find it to say, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." We find where the poor publican could not even raise his eyes toward heaven, but smote upon his breast and said, "God be merciful to me a sinner." He went down justified rather than the pharisee that stood praying and thanking God that he was not even as this poor publican, not realizing that in this very creature was hid the most precious thing that ever came down to earth. Oh, the blessed Son of the Father, standing as a lamb slain before time began. Jesus was to come in due time to redeem it.

Back in the beginning when Adam and Eve partook of the forbidden fruit, and became wise to know good and evil, lest they also partake of the tree of life and live forever, they were put out and that is not all, there was a flaming sword placed there turning every way to keep the tree of life. Notice the all things working for the good of his people. They are the only ones that will ever be allowed to partake of this tree, and they cannot reach forth and take it of themselves, but as time unfolds he works his soverign will.

Look what is found in the two first boys that were born, Cain and Abel. For Abel's offering God had respect, but for Cain's he did not. The great work of God was making its appearance in this world and had ever been. Who can deny this truth, and on down to the present time it cannot be proved he is still not working all things for the good of his people. We do hope to

agree that faith without works is dead, as the Elder used to say, but we believe it is God working in you that exercises that faith to produce the works that are well pleasing in his sight. We often, when examining ourself, are wondering if we really have the faith we claim to have. When trials come upon us in unexpected ways how we feel to stagger at them, and until something is done for us we cannot find a way to exercise that feeling we had called faith. We find it is sealed.

I will quote a very dear brother when he was here for a serious operation not many years ago. He said he had tried to pray for God to give him a reconciled mind (which I feel would really mean faith), before time for the operation. He said the day drew near, the morning came, and he did not have the peaceful mind he had desired the Lord to give him. They came to take him to the operating room and he was thinking, it is time to go and no answer to my prayer, but he said when they placed him on the stretcher it came. Oh, the joy and peace of that exercising power that overshadowed that precious brother was indeed wonderful, and was still shining in his countenance so sweetly as he tried to tell us who had gone to see him. We felt it was good to be there for he was declaring Jesus the way, the truth, and the life, our all, our every help in time of need, and that according to his own purpose and grace.

I do not enjoy or feel comforted to say, unless we exercise faith as other gifts it will shrink, to leave it that way casts a shadow on the perfection of the Lord. In one place the scripture reads, have you anything you did not receive? It is a beautiful thing to see brethren exercised in different gifts that have been given them. We are told not to covet our brother's gift which I sometimes fear I do, but that does not seem to mean we are able to do these things as we desire, nor do I believe one who has the more serving ability can fail to exercise the gift and honor the great God of heaven. He does not want to lay claim to a part of it for surely he has been taught long before this that all the glory belongs to God, for we have learned by tried experience how we are sure to fall if we think we have learned a way to help.

I hope I have experienced at least some of these things that I have tried to write about, although I have thought I would never burden you or any of the brothers or sisters with my poor scattered thoughts again. I wish to say my husband and I get much comfort from reading the *Signs*. The many writers and the editorials from all the staff are wonderful indeed, and we hope we feel thankful to God for the many gifts he has in store for his children. We feel undeserving and unworthy of it all, but his grace in tender mercy bestows such manifold blessings on our heads, who can refrain from saying a little in praise to his adorable name. Oh for a thousand tongues to praise him. I have not written this for publication so do not hesitate to cast it into the waste basket. May God bless you in basket and in store and all who think on his name.

(Mrs.) LUTHER CAMPBELL

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233 Monroe St., Camden, Ark.

DEAR EDITOR AND READERS OF THE SIGNS: My mind to-day is in sweet meditation of the things of the spirit of the true and living God, if indeed it ever has. I feel to know, if not woefully deceived, the sins and transgressions of the descendants of Adam is what has brought us all into the chaos we are now in, and all that we have done or ever can do of ourselves can never bring relief in any way whatever. But the holy sacrifice He himself hath made in

the complete sacrifice of his only darling Son hath forever sanctified them that are his. Something wants to have us believe there is something we can do, something we can perform, since we have been born of the Spirit, that will merit and bring God's blessings down upon us if we will. Such reasoning as this is indeed so plausible to our carnal minds we are not able to reject it, but while I do so truly believe in the obedience to the commandments and statutes of our God, I understand the testimony of the spirit and power of the holy God to bear witness with the spirit of him who has put his spirit within his spiritually born children is what gives us to understand and believe on his name, and to call them out of darkness into the glorious light and liberty of his dear Son. Oh how completely has this holy sacrifice freed us from the law of sin and death, and now to keep the commandments as taught us is to sacrifice praise and thanksgiving to his blessed name for the free gift of his love and leadership, not into sin but out of it and in the path of righteousness and obedience to his commandments and bless his dear, sweet name. He says he calls them out, he puts them forth, and he goes before them and they follow him. Nowhere have I ever found within the testimony of his living word where he has said he would do this if his children would become willing and let him; but to the contrary I see and understand in my meditations of his blessed testimony, and a sweet consolation in my soul and mind, bearing witness to the things as he takes them and shows them to me. Oh, is not this the work of our God? It is marvelous in our eyes, and it lifts our souls and minds to praise his holy and blessed name instead of our wanting to go on into sin and the evils of the old satanic nature; it causes us to see the exceeding sinfulness of sin in our members, warring against the law of our mind, and bringing us into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members. How wretched we feel and do so often inquire "who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Again let me say in my sweet meditations that all deliverance is through the death and sufferings and final resurrection of my blessed Lord, who sits on the throne of his majesty at the right hand of the Father where he is alive forevermore, and maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of the Father.

Dear reader, in my feeble way I have tried to set forth a very progressive work of faith and good works, and Christian duty all performed by Him who has begun the work in his dear people who were given him in covenant of redemption before the world was, and they are his workmanship, and his work is perfect, working in his people to will and to do of his good pleasure. These things are the works so clearly set forth to me in his dear people, and I long and try to see if I have right to lay claim on such sweet and precious promises. My God has allowed me a little, sweet hope through faith and by grace and God's electing love, and not in any wise through any merit of my own that my name is written in the book of the life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Therefore, I find a deep and longing desire to praise him for his manifold and unspeakable blessings in giving me to hope and trust his grace. May he give us faith, light and understanding to look up to him from whence cometh wisdom and understanding that we may do his commandments and depart from evil is the prayer of one of the least among the little ones who profess his name. (Elder) J. T. EVERITT

Merryville, La.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEARLY BELOVED OF THE MOST HIGH GOD: I have just returned from the South Arkansas Association, and am still feasting upon the precious promises of God proclaimed by his able ministers, two of them Associate Editors of the dear old *Signs*. There were fourteen ministers present, ranging from North Carolina to Houston, Texas. All gave evidence of having been taught at the Jonah School. I failed to hear any backbiting or evil speaking by any one. I never saw a more affectionate band of believers in my life. I am down here almost in a desert, and like old Elijah thought the Primitive Baptists were nearly all gone, but the Lord showed me a large house crammed uncomfortably full on the first day of the meeting. My cup was made to run over, and tears of joy ran down my cheeks.

If not crowding out sounder matter I would like to pen a few thoughts that have come to my mind. This may be a fleshly desire, but as I am surrounded by a working people would love, the Lord being my director, to try to identify the only ones that are able to work. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. 2:12-13. The above is quite an Arminian text, especially after leaving off the most important part. Now let us see to whom this was addressed—to the SAINTS. Phil. 1:1. Very well, we are convinced that they were a people that had been regenerated and born again. Now let us see where the ability to work comes in. The apostle goes on admonishing the brethren to their duty saying, "And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you (a token) of salvation, and that of God. For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Phil. 1:28-29.

I am persuaded that the natural mind is separated as far as the East is from the West when it comes to knowing how, or having a desire to worship God. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth," John 4:24. Knowledge must come by revelation. Now where does revelation come from? "But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Matt. 16:15-17. Peter had been blessed of the Father before he received the knowledge of revelation. How any spiritually minded person can say that obedience merits blessings, when blessings produce obedience, is a mystery to me. It is said by some, who can give evidence that they have passed from death unto life, that if we are obedient there will be no chastisement. There is no evidence that one is a child of God without chastisement. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.*****But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." Heb. 12:6-8. Do not understand that I do not believe that the carnal mind can please God, "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8:7.

It is a pleasure to this hell deserving creature when, I hope, sometimes I am made to distinguish between the sovereignty of God and the weakness of man. We should not fall out with those who do not see as we do. They have no power to search and grasp knowledge; neither have we anything that

has not been given us. May the God of all grace keep and guard us into the day of his second coming; then house us in heaven where we can sing praise throughout endless days. The least of all if one at all. J. PAUL McMILLIAN

RFD, Freemont, N. C.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES: Again I must admit I have been very careless in not sending in my dues for the dear old *Signs of the Times*. I do enjoy reading your paper. I get so much comfort from the editorials and letters I deem it a great privilege to have the paper to read.

I enjoy reading the experiences of God's people all over the United States, and it is a comforting thought that no matter where they are they proclaim the same old doctrine of salvation by the grace of God. This doctrine that drops as the rain, the speech that distils as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herbs and plants, as a shower upon the grass has stood the test of all times; it is as refreshing, soothing and consoling to-day as it was when these beautiful expressions of God's everlasting doctrine was proclaimed.

Those of you whom God has qualified to preach his unsearchable riches are a blessed people and suffer tribulations for his name's sake. These wonderful gifts bespeak the beautiful expressions of love and fellowship of the Lord's people throughout the world for all time. They never grow old or tiresome to those who are the called of God. It is sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. It is like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. This wonderful and glorious doctrine makes rivers in high places, fountains in the valley, the wilderness pools of water and the dry land springs of water. Your brother in hope of a better immortality.

H. B. BALLANCE

2513 S. 21st St., Philadelphia 45, Pa.

ELD. R. W. RHODES, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: I feel led to write you after reading your book "Gospel Comments." When I received the book I was made to shed tears, I was so happy to get it. Your good letter was received and I was made to rejoice in sweet fellowship of that heavenly hope God has given to his little ones. I am so unworthy of so many blessings. I have read the book twice. Surely God blessed you in having you write these precious truths as contained in the Holy Scriptures. The Holy Spirit truly enabled you to rightly divide the word of truth, and the Lord has been pleased to comfort his children according to his kind mercies. I feel so drawn to you in spirit and can but by his grace rejoice in thanksgiving and praise for the comfort he was so gracious to bring to me. I have never met you in the flesh but have read much of your writings and have tried to thank our God for the sweet fellowship with the dear saints I have been made to love. I feel to be the least of all if indeed one of you at all. I am so glad our Lord has so wonderfully blessed you in drawing close to him in prayer. That is indeed what I desire most of all though I feel so helpless and hope to realize he does all things his own way and gives gifts to his children according to his own will. Only he can give the spirit of prayer. What a comfort it is in our helplessness to be given a hope that Jesus is at the right hand of God making intercession for his saints. I only hope I am among that number. The evil one is so strong and would indeed devour God's little ones if they are left alone, but he has said he will never leave nor forsake me. I know the Lord only can humble his children and give them a love for one another. That love truly maketh not ashamed. Unworthy as I am I feel so happy to be allowed in the household

of faith; to be given a hope that when this earthly house is dissolved there is a house not made with hands reserved for those whom the Father prepared it. How I do desire to praise our Lord and Master for this hope. If even I can in the least degree, it is Christ in me, my old nature could not even have any such desire. It is like a heaven below to gather with God's little ones and hear their wonderful experiences of grace. One reason I have often hesitated to write to his children is the fact I cannot talk like I write, and, therefore, I have been afraid I was deceived about this burden to write. May the Lord have mercy on me and direct me always in my very thoughts, and may he be given the praise for all things.

I shall never forget (I hope) the way in which he humbled this unworthy one at the Staunton Association last July. I did feel as if I would be satisfied about being there if I was not seen. They all looked so dear to me and I felt so unworthy of so great a blessing. The meeting house was so full on Sunday afternoon that many were standing. An elderly lady was standing in front of me and as much as I wanted to give her my seat I felt if I stood up I would be seen by every one. I did give her my seat but I actually wanted to sit on the floor just so I could hear Brother Finch. I felt so rejoiced and wanted to praise our God for this spirit of humbleness, but oh the hours of darkness I go through, and how low I have to be brought at times. May it ever please Him to let that little hope survive and give me a thankful heart. This too is a gift given by his grace alone.

I hope I have not tired you but I wanted to tell you how much comfort the Lord was pleased to bring me through your good book "Gospel Comments." I have only been among this dear people since last March and have been given such little understanding of his wondrous ways; I have learned that patience that I so much desire comes through tribulations. If we are to reign with him we must suffer with him. Oh! to be counted worthy of that suffering. Please pray for me I feel so prone to stray. If I am blessed to write anything that is of comfort to God's little ones he is to be praised for it and may it be used accordingly. May he continue to bless you in comforting his humble saints. In sweet fellowship from an unworthy sister.

(Mrs.) CHRISTINE LINTHICUM

MY TRIP TO THE WEST COAST

I left home August 3, 1950 and attended meetings near Hartford and Greenville, Ala. I was with Memphis Church in their annual two days meeting second Saturday and Sunday. This was a great meeting. The Memphis brethren are salt of the earth. Elder H. G. Brown is Pastor. The visiting ministers were Elders W. O. Perkins, Wert McCool and Harrison. All preached well. On Aug. 16, I reached the home of Elder I. F. Coleman and Sister Rosa, Riffe, Wash. I have never had a heartier welcome, I felt to be at home sweet home. How God can bring around the unthought of. I read the experience of Sister Lillie Blystone in the March 1949 issue of the *Signs*. It was very touching. Somehow I had a feeling that prompted me to ask if I would ever see her. When I alighted from the bus Sister Lillie saw me, then came Elder Coleman and Sister Rosa, also Sister C. M. Duffus of Vancouver, B.C., Canada. Sister Duffus told me she was baptized into the fellowship of the Ebenezer Church in New York City by Elder Dodson. She had many nice things to say of him and other Baptists in the East. Sister Duffus is a school teacher.

On Aug. 18, 19 and 20 we attended the annual three days meeting with the church at Riffe. The fine little church house is nestled among duglos fir and some cedars entirely surrounded by nature. The sweet spirit of the meeting and the beauties of nature gave me a thrill and a lifting on high that will live in my heart and soul until time with me shall be no more. It was a wonderful meeting. Elder I. F. Coleman is Pastor. Mr. Joe MacKenzie of Marshall, Saskatchewan, Canada came down about 1800 miles to be at the meeting. Joe is salt, a real prince, I did enjoy his company. He has not had ritual baptism but is a sound Old Baptist. If you read these lines Joe I say, "God bless you, I love you." My hope is anchored we may meet again. Sister Effie Parke and the widow of Elder C. H. Bond were at the meeting.

On Sunday the 27th we went to Little Zion Church at Chehalis. This church meets at the home of Elder C. H. Fisher who is the Pastor, and Elder J. W. Cameron is Assistant Pastor. Elder and Sister Cameron came from England at about the age of twenty-eight. It was interesting to hear them talk of the Strict Baptists in England. They call themselves Friends. I shall always remember Elder Cameron. He has a sweet, mellow voice for singing. After he raises a tune he shifts to baritone. Elder Fisher is very feeble, but he is salt, a real prince.

On Aug. 31 we left Riffe and journeyed to Elgin, Ore. to the annual three days meeting Sept. 1, 2 and 3. This was another glorious meeting. They were so good to poor me. At this meeting I witnessed an unusual custom. The meeting was held in a schoolhouse. They used an unused dwelling house in which to serve the meals and many slept there. This house was about two miles from the schoolhouse. After the morning service we went to this house for lunch. After lunch we returned to the schoolhouse for afternoon preaching, then back to this house for supper and night preaching. In this way the entire congregation remained together from the time we gathered for morning service until after evening service. It was indeed a wonderful time. Elder R. R. Wolfe is Pastor of Elgin Church. He baptized his wife at a regular meeting before the three days meeting. They were both very happy. The Washington and Oregon Baptists are indeed a great people. Sound as the Rock of Eternal Ages. At the Elgin meeting several came from Idaho. They, too, were sound. Elder T. R. Jefferson of Marysville, Cal. was at the Elgin meeting and took me home with him. We had meeting in his home Sunday, Sept. 10. This was a sweet meeting. Elder Jefferson and Sister Grace are fine people. To be with them is home sweet home.

September 17 we had meeting with Bethel Church in Stockton, Cal. Elder Seth Bynum is Pastor, and Elder L. L. Wilson, Assistant Pastor. This was indeed a sweet meeting. On Monday night we had meeting in the home of Brother and Sister Snider at Bakersfield, Cal. where Elder Wilson lives. He is another great old man. I went from there to Los Angeles, Cal. to visit my children, and on to Tucson, Arizona. We had meeting here on Sept. 23 and 24. This church is new. Elder T. J. Robinson lives here and is Pastor. On Sunday we ordained Brother J. H. Day and Sister Day to office of Deacon and Deaconess. I spent three nights with Elder and Sister Robinson. It was home sweet home. Elder Robinson is a strong preacher. His church is named Little Flock. The nearest church to them is Seclusia in Los Angeles. Although they are far away they seem happy. They have a little meeting house

in which to meet and worship. I heartily recommend them to any minister passing that way. The ordination service was sweet and impressive. I never heard a better charge than Elder Robinson gave. Thus concludes my trip to the West Coast. To me it was glory all the way. The ministers I met are as follows: Elders T. R. Jefferson, Marysville, Cal., R. R. Wolfe, Elgin, Ore., A. D. Hughett, Selah, Wash., C. W. Fisher, Chehalis, Wash., I. F. Coleman, Riffe, Wash., L. L. Wilson, Bakersfield, Cal. They are all sound, all old line predestinarians. They are ours, no they are us. The odor of Mary's ointment filled the room. The odor of the sweetness of this trip fills my house full to overflowing. May God bless all of you, I love you. You were so good to poor me. I do not deserve it but you did it any way. (Elder) C. H. BYRD

R. 1, Box 2440, Marysville, Calif.

I have been requested to write an account of a meeting held over the fifth Sunday in December, 1950 at Chowchilla, California. This meeting was not held by any particular church but in the interest of all Predestinarian Baptists in California. We are indebted to Brother Wm. Echols and his good wife for being taken care of so well.

The Elders in attendance were C. H. Byrd of Florida, R. R. Wolf of Oregon, L. L. Wilson and T. R. Jefferson of California. Due to illness in three or four families, the attendance was small, but this did not mar the sweetness of the meeting. God's presence was manifest in each session and his little children were fed manna from on high. I am not a member but I believe some crumbs were dropped even for me. Could it be they were dropped as those "handfuls of purpose" were dropped for Ruth to glean among the sheaves?

If there are any readers in California who are interested in attending services of the old Predestinarian faith, we would be glad to hear from them.

(Mrs.) T. R. JEFFERSON

Box 335, Kingman, Kans.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS AND WRITERS: Another year has passed with a new one beginning. I have surely enjoyed the *Signs* and may the great God of the universe continue to bless all those who write for the *Signs*. What a joy it is to get it, one can hardly wait to read it over. May it ever be kept sound and in the ways of truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord is my prayer. In humble faith and bonds of love.

(Mrs.) E. E. CATES

RADIO BROADCASTING

The Lord willing I will preach over radio station X.E.G. The Voice of North America, 1050 kilocycles on the dial, beginning March 11, 6:30 P. M. Central Standard Time. As long as the Lord sustains me to do so I will continue on this station every Sunday night.

Lillie, La. (Elder) R. W. RHODES

DURAND & LESTER HYMN AND TUNE BOOKS

We expect the books to be ready for delivery sometime in March. If you want books please send your order at once to insure delivery.

Since the proclaiming of a national emergency we may not be able to have more printed for some time. Round or shape notes $1.65 each or $18.50 per dozen delivered. Mail orders to P. G. Lester, Jr., 2246 Memorial Ave., S.W. Roanoke, Va. or F. D. Long, Roxboro, N. C.

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sundays in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y. at 10:30 a. m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meeting-house, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:00 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed. W. D. CHAPMAN.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

I. McIntyre, N. Y., $2; H. L. Gloer, Ga., $5; J. L. Butcher, Va., $3; Mrs. I. P. Froude, Mich., $2; Mrs. C. E. Tacey, N. J., $5; Mrs. H. D. Hewitt, N. Y., $2; M. E. Welch, Tex., $6; Mrs. E. H. West, N. Y., $2; Mrs. T. L. Rakes, Va., $1; Mrs. M. L. Lucas, Ala., $4; A. W. Glass, La., $1; Mrs. D. O. Yeisley, Wash., $1; B. McIntosh, Va., $5; Miss C. M. Duffus, B. C., $4; F. H. Richardson, Ia., $17; Mrs. M. H. Bond, Ore., $4; W. Black, Neb., $2.

EDITORIALS

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THE BODY OF JESUS

In presenting some thoughts about the body of Jesus, first of all I would like us to keep in mind that whatever kind of body he had God prepared it for him. In Hebrews 10:5 Paul, referring to Jesus, says, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me." It is shown that all the offerings of the bodies of various animals under the law was not sufficient to put away sin, that only the sinless offering of the body of Jesus Christ, as the sin bearer of his people, could atone for sin. Jesus came from heaven according to John's testimony for Jesus. "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me;" hence he was with the Father as the eternal Son before he came down from heaven and took on him the body prepared for him. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of his people." "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law. To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

In the offering of the body of Jesus once for all, taking part of flesh and blood it was all to the end that we might be sanctified by his body as offered to God, and receive the adoption of sons; hence he is not merely a substitute for his people, but they are in him in the sense that they had a spiritual standing in him from eternity. They were created in him unto good works before the world began. Jesus was not any other man for he was the incarnate Son of God. Therefore, we cannot think of the blessings that flow from him as all because of what he did, but also because of what he was: the offering for sin that God himself prepared.

The church of God was blessed with all spiritual (not part of them) blessings in him, according as they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him (God) in love. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" In the giving of Jesus in covenant unto his people, included in him was all their spiritual needs; and his offering himself, without spot to God was through the eternal spirit. No wonder he is called, the man Christ Jesus. When we behold Calvary let us remember it was God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. When we view the cross let

us remember that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins; that we are justified by the blood of Jesus from all things which we could not be by the law of Moses. "For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

Let us now pass on and consider the body of Jesus in death, the grave and after his resurrection. The price of redemption for his people was his own blood; the laying down of his life as the Son of God in the likeness of sinful flesh, dying the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God. By the mouth of the prophet it has been said, he would not leave his soul in hell; neither would he suffer his Holy One to see corruption. His body was different from ours. Our body will see corruption, his body saw none. Though it was in the heart of the earth three days, it saw no corruption for God would not suffer it. After three days he came forth from the grave. He was raised for our justification by the glory of the Father. There was unmistakable evidence given to the disciples of Jesus after his resurrection, that it was the same Jesus that died that was raised from the dead. He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve. After that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, witnesses chosen before for this very thing. After that he was seen of James, then of all the apostles, and last of all Paul says, he was seen of me. He ate in their presence, and commanded Thomas to put his hand in his side and behold the print of the nails in his hand to behold him saying, "handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." Here he presents to them the proof that the same body that was buried had been raised from the dead; yet there is no evidence that any unbeliever ever saw him after his resurrection from the dead. His disciples only recognized him as he revealed himself to them. There must have been some difference in him as to recognition, as unbelievers saw him many times before his death. When Mary appeared at the tomb, as the first witness of his resurrection, she did not recognize him, thinking the one she saw was the gardener. Only when Jesus said to her "MARY" did she recognize him. When the disciples were journeying to Emmaus, Jesus went with them yet they knew not who it was until he revealed himself to them. At times he would appear in their midst when the doors were shut and say, "Peace be unto you."

All these things seem to show that Jesus was revealed to them in such a way to prove to them it was the very same one that was buried had been raised from the dead, yet the difference was such that he must be revealed each time to them. When he arose from the dead it was by the glory of the Father and he entered heaven by his own blood. (Not with his own blood.) He could not enter himself until after his blood had been shed, for he must enter by it. Heaven was shut to him until his blood was shed, for by it access to heaven is provided according to the covenant of redemption. This covenant provided for redemption through the shedding of his blood, and he as heir and joint-heir with his people must fulfill this requirement. The apostle reminds us in reference to the resurrection that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

Jesus asked the Father before he died that he might receive the glory that he had with him before the world was. It was one of his prayers that he might receive, or enter into the same glory. When he returned to heaven God glorified him by crowning him with glory and honor, and seated him on his own right hand. As to his appearance in heaven, I cannot say, but Paul says,

though we have known him after the flesh, henceforth know we him no more. He has received the glory of the Father, the same glory he had before the world was. On the mount of transfiguration, before his death, he was shown to three witnesses. His raiment was white as the light, and his countenance was as the sun, and God shewed these three witnesses his pre-eminence over the law and the prophets, giving them a view of him in his glory. They were told not to tell any about the things they saw until after the Son of man be risen from the dead.

D. V. S.

"And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isaiah 35:10.

A brother in Texas writes us as follows: "I am writing to ask if you will give your views on Isaiah 35:10. The main thought in this is the returning and coming to Zion. Do they in this get back to where they fell from in the garden of Eden, or where do we locate Zion behind the gospel day?"

We are not certain that we clearly understand our brother's query in its entirety. We believe we do understand it sufficiently, however, to realize that we are likely to find ourself in very deep water, so to speak, in attempting to comply with his request, unless the Lord undertakes for us. There have been occasions when our mind has been led to consider the significance of this scripture, but we have never undertaken to enter into the depth of the subject, and it is with fearfulness and trembling that we do so now.

Unquestionably, the prophet of the Lord was inspired by the Holy Ghost to look down through the centuries of time, by faith, and see some great and notable event taking place. He first declares that "the ransomed of the Lord shall return." It might be helpful at this point to ask a couple of questions: (1) Who are the ransomed of the Lord? (2) Where were they originally, and where had they been that it might be said of them "they shall return," In attempting to answer the first question, we believe the apostle Paul had "the ransomed of the Lord" in mind when he was writing his epistle to the church at Ephesus. He said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Eph. 1: 3-4. And in the tenth verse of the second chapter of the same epistle, the apostle says: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Our understanding is that these ransomed ones are the true spiritual church of God, the Lamb's wife, who was created in Christ. Therefore it was said after God created the world and the fulness thereof and was ready to create man, or Adam, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." Gen. 1:26-27.

The record shows that Eve was created in Adam, and it is said that God caused a deep sleep to fall upon him and he took out one of his ribs and made a woman. And when they had partaken of the forbidden fruit, God called unto Adam and said, "Where

art thou?" This sets forth in type the church of God as she stood in Christ before ever the earth was, and also showed that God only looked to his Son as the responsible head for the sins of his bride and, therefore, it is written, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Isa. 53:4-5. We have been reading something along this line of late in the *Signs* under the topic of Adam being the figure of him that was to come.

As we have already said, the church of God was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Like Eve, at first she was not manifested, or did not appear separate and apart from her head. David, speaking on behalf of "the ransomed of the Lord" said, "My substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." Psalms 139:15-16. God seeing the substance of his Son, saw his bride as she stood in him, and she was perfect in him, though not yet manifested. It is to be noted it was said she "being unperfect," not imperfect, but *unperfect,* or not fashioned, for as yet there were none of his members manifested. In due time, however, they were to be manifested in Adam and take on flesh and blood, and through the transgression of Adam, their federal earthly head, were to become involved in sin and come under the condemnation of death, thereby being separated from God, who would hold his Son, their Spiritual Head, accountable; and who in the fullness of time would come in the likeness of sinful flesh to suffer and die to ransom or redeem and deliver them from under the curse of the law. Therefore Paul says, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them, who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Hebrews 2:14-15.

In trying to answer the second question, we wish to say that "the ransomed of the Lord" stood originally in Christ, but as we have already indicated, when they partook of flesh and blood and Adam transgressed they all fell from their first estate and died, or became separated from God by wicked works with Adam in the transgression. We read in 1 Corinthians 15:22, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Therefore when Christ came and gave his life as a ransom for them, they were redeemed, which means they were his before they sinned, otherwise he could not have redeemed them, for to redeem means to buy back that which was possessed before, and having redeemed and delivered them from the bondage they were under, they became free and reinstated, or restored in favor with God. And when Jesus said, as is recorded in John 17:1-8, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest

me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me," they stood complete in Him and as perfect as though they had never sinned. In Romans, eighth chapter, verse thirty-two, Paul says, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" He then asks some questions and shows conclusively in the answers which he gives that nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. While our readers have doubtless read and heard them many, many times before, they cannot be said or repeated too often.

Here they are: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long: we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." This is certainly reassuring to poor sinners.

Our brother asks, "Do they in this get back to where they fell from in the garden of Eden, or where do we locate Zion behind the gospel day?" If they do not get back beyond their standing in Adam in the garden of Eden, may God pity them still, for their standing in Adam was only an earthly standing. It is written, "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." Adam in his first state was not a subject of salvation, being upright and not having sinned. To return to that state, or condition, would mean little, comparatively speaking. When Adam transgressed, the calamity which came upon "the ransomed of the Lord" was that their standing in Christ was jeopardized, but when Christ came and stood and suffered, the just for the unjust, in their stead, their sins were imputed unto him, and then they became all fair and without spot, wrinkle or any such thing before God in love. Let be noted it was not said the ransomed of the Lord shall return to Zion, but rather that they shall return and *come to Zion.* The same prophet in the seventh verse of the fifty-fifth chapter says: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." It is this returning unto the Lord which is so vital and so all-important to the people of God, and the prophet not only tells of the highway by which they shall return, but also what would take place

when these things should come to pass. He begins the thirty-fifth chapter by saying, "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God." This was foretelling what would come over both Jew and Gentile when the Lord Jesus Christ would appear in his glory in the gospel day. It is in this day that the weak hands need to be strengthened and the feeble knees confirmed, and that it should be said to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you." Let us take courage and be comforted in all things. The prophet continued to tell of the blessings that would accompany this day. He said, "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes." Herein is set forth the fruitful condition of Zion. Then he says, "And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." He is here exalting Christ who said of himself, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." It is the way of holiness which was cast up in the wilderness, when Jesus came and was manifested in the flesh, Nothing unclean shall pass over this way; no lion or any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, neither has the vulture's eye seen it, but it is for those, the wayfaring men, though fools shall not err therein, and the redeemed shall walk there. The truth is gloriously beautiful when seen in its simplicity, and the humblest may behold it when it is revealed unto them. Then it is that Zion is seen as a city set on a hill, which is beautiful for situation and the joy of the whole earth, and those who have returned unto the Lord do desire to come to Zion, and when they come it is with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, and they do obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing flee away.

We trust the Lord has guided and directed us in our attempt to comply with our brother's request, and if so it will redound to His own praise and glory, and we most certainly would not have it otherwise.

(The late Elder) R. LESTER DODSON

(Republished from May 1942)

RESOLUTIONS

WHEREAS, our all wise Father has been pleased to remove from the scenes of this mortal life our much esteemed friend and brother, ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, and

WHEREAS, Elder Dodson took a most active part in the establishment of the Primitive Baptist Home, and supported it in many different ways, and

WHEREAS, we shall keenly miss his wise counsel in conducting the affairs of the Home, therefore be it

RESOLVED, First, that we give thanks to our heavenly Father for the gift of Elder Dodson as an able minister of the gospel, and for the humility and concern for the aged and infirm among his brethren. Second, that we extend our deepest sympathy to his loved ones. Third, that we record this memoriam in our annual statement, cause it to be spread on our minutes and publish it in the **Signs of the Times.**

Done by unanimous voice of the Trustees of the Primitive Baptist Home, Inc. at their annual

meeting at Welsh Tract, Jan. 13, 1951. Written by (Elder) John D. Wood with authority of the Trustees.

QUINCY A. GLADDING, Pres.
CHARLES S. OSBORNE, Sec'y

IN MEMORY OF R. LESTER DODSON

Dearly beloved, brother of mine,
Through whose life the light of God did shine;
My heart is heavy each passing day,
This world is poorer — with you away.

I see you once more, a little boy
For whom to care was my pride and joy;
I watched you grow to man's estate,
And give yourself to things true and great.

When in times of trouble, stress and need
I often looked to you to lead,
I found you ready to aid and cheer,
And help me to conquer doubt and fear.

I thank God for your love — strong and true,
And your counsel when I needed you,
Your steadfast loyalty to the right
Was like a star — shining in the night.

The way you lived will show me still,
How better to do the Father's will,
By following Christ, who gave his life
To deliver us from sin and strife.

In our Father's home where now you rest,
Sharing the fellowship you love best,
United with dear ones gone before,
Know that I love you — forevermore.

RALEIGH W. DODSON

OBITUARIES

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, Rutherford, N. J., Editor and Manager of the Signs of the Times, Inc., was born May 12, 1886 at Ringgold, near Danville, Va. He departed this life Dec. 19, 1950 at the age of 64. He was the son of Robert Leonard and Eliza Shelton Dodson. Surviving are his widow, Mrs. Beulah R. Dodson and one son, R. Lester Dodson, Jr., two brothers, Raleigh W. Dodson, New York City and C. Willard Dodson, Danville, Va., one sister, Mrs. W. L. Ferguson, Ringgold, Va., and a number of nieces and nephews. He was united in marriage to Miss Beulah Robins of Richmond, Va. on Nov. 24, 1909 in Washington, D. C.

In early life he united with the New School Baptist Church, but was later persuaded by experience that they were not his people. He was drawn by experience and the doctrine they preached to unite with the Old School Baptist Church at Cane Creek, near his boyhood home, and was baptized in August 1908 by the Pastor, Elder J. M. Lewis. Later on he moved his membership to the church in Richmond, Va., the place of his residence. Moving from Richmond to New York City in 1911, he was received by letter into the fellowship of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in that city March 29, 1914, and remained a member there to the end.

The Ebenezer Church seeing a gift in him licensed him to speak in Aug. 1918, and he was ordained to the full function of the gospel ministry Nov. 8, 1921. In less than one year after his ordination their Pastor, Elder John McConnell, passed away and he was called as Pastor of the New York Church Oct. 1, 1922. This call he accepted Jan. 7, 1923 and continued as their Pastor until death came. He also served the Middletown and Wallkill Church, Middletown, N. Y., and the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y. about 19 years. After serving for several years as Associate Editor of the Signs of the Times, on Jan. 1, 1941 he purchased it from the owner, Mr. Gilbert Beebe and from then on until his death was the Editor and Manager.

His funeral service was conducted from the Collins Funeral Home in Rutherford, N. J. Dec. 21, 1950 by Elders George Ruston, J. D. Wood, H. M. Bennett, Amasa J. Slauson and the writer. Interment in Hillside Cemetery, Rutherford, N. J.

It has been my privilege to be associated with him as an Associate Editor of the Signs practically the entire time of his ownership, and mere words fail to express the love and esteem in which he was held by me. The many letters received from the readers of the Signs speak for themselves as to the esteem in which he was held by the readers. Many who never heard him preach have been comforted by his able editorials, and though his pen has been laid aside, and his voice heard no more, the truth he preached will continue to live. It can truly be said that his labor was a labor of love always manifesting a spirit of brotherly kindness, forbearance and charitableness toward his brethren. Truly the reproaches of Christ were greater riches to him than the treasures of Egypt. When the word came that he had passed away this scripture stayed with me for days, he has kept the faith. This was manifested by love to his brethren, being the manifestation of the love of God for by this you may know you have passed from death unto life, because you love the brethren. His widow, son, and other members of the family, his church and many friends have suffered a great loss yet it is his eternal gain for the apostle says, for me it is far better to depart and be with Chirst. He has fought a good fight, he has kept the faith, and finished his course. Surely he is numbered among the ones mentioned by John, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from hence-

forth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." May the God of all grace comfort all that mourn, and enable us to emulate the example he has left is my desire.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER

MR. HOPKINS DEAN HEWITT was born near the village of Halcottville, N. Y., 1868, and departed this life June 21, 1950. For several years he had been in failing health, during which time he was under the constant care of his devoted wife, Sister Amy Hewitt. Occasionally he was able to go with her to meeting, until, through bodily infirmities, he was confined to his home. The Sunday before he died he fell in his home and fractured his hip. He was taken to Margaretville Hospital but gradually failed and the best medical skill was unavailing to stay the hand of death. He is survived by his dear wife, Sister Amy Hewitt, a half-brother, Harry Hewitt, and a number of nephews and nieces. As a business man, friend and neighbor he was greatly respected. To those who knew him as an adherent of the Old School Baptist cause he was a worthy man, ever ready to aid and never ashamed to show where he belonged. For over thirty-three years we knew and loved him for the truth's sake. Many were the times, when living in that section that we knew he was more than just a hearer of the Word. He and his dear companion showed by their interest where their hearts were. None in the Catskill Mountains felt it more than H. D. when I was called away from them to serve the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, and though it distressed him for us to go, he never lost that love and affection for us. While attending one of the Lexington-Roxbury Associations at Halcottville, N. Y., we were in his home and a number of Baptist friends came in and we were favoured to sing a number of hymns together. He was deeply touched, his heart was warmed and tears fell from his eyes. He never forgot that occasion and would often speak of it. As one who believed in Jesus, he knew how to express his unworthiness and unfitness for such a profession, but he knew there was salvation in none other name. The writer was called to his funeral to fulfill a long-standing wish of the departed. He was assisted at the services by Elder A. H. Bellows. We tried to comfort those in sorrow from the words found in Psalm 127:2. "For so He giveth His beloved sleep." Interment was in the Hubbell Cemetery, Kelly's Corners, N. Y.

(Elder) GEORGE RUSTON

MRS. EMMA GALENA HASTINGS McGEE departed this life March 1, 1950 at her home in Bethel, Del. She was born near Whitesville, Del. May 18, 1872, the daughter of the late Benjamin B. and Sarah E. Hastings. She was married to Jacob B. McGee, Dec. 14, 1892 by the late Elder A. B. Francis.

In the year of 1897 she united with the Little Creek Old School Baptist Church, and was baptized by Elder H. C. Ker. A few years later, having moved near Broad Creek Old School Baptish Church, she moved her membership there where she was still a member at the time of her death. She was very faithful to the church and attended the meetings as long as her health permitted. She dearly loved all the people of Old School Baptist faith and was always happy to be in their midst. Her home was a welcome place to all her friends, and she especially enjoyed having those of her faith visit her. She was never more pleased than when she was making plans and preparing to entertain some of the Elders or people of her church. She had been a subscriber to the Signs for many years.

Besides her husband at Bethel, Del. she is survived by one son, Alfred B. McGee, Laurel, Del. and seven daughters: Mrs. Theresa Roberts, Baltimore, Md., Mrs. Estella Gary, and Mrs. Sarah West, Laurel, Del., Mrs. Sallie Mae White, Delmar, Del., Mrs. Martha Morris, Wilmington, Del., and Mrs. Elsie Huston, Seaford, Del. One son, William B. who had been in poor health for a number of years, died March 10, 1949. She also leaves twenty-seven grandchildren, twelve great-grandchildren, one sister, Mrs. Martha Holloway, Newark, Md., and one brother, Mr. Ananias Hastings, Salisbury, Md.

The funeral service was conducted by her Pastor, Elder H. M. Bennett in the Little Creek meeting-house, and her body placed in the adjoining cemetery. Written by her daughter.

(Mrs.) ELSIE HUSTON

MISS EVA ASHBEY passed away suddenly at her home in Noank, Conn., Feb. 8, 1951. She united with the Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church in New York City and was baptized by the late Elder R. Lester Dodson in June 1925. Many will remember her having attended the Warwick Association. She was quiet and unassuming and dearly loved by the members of her home church. While able to travel, she came frequently to the meetings in New York, but on account of a fractured hip had not been able to make the trip for several years but was in correspondence with us. In her last letter she manifested her love for the church and was grieved at the passing of Elder Dodson.

CYRUS RISLER

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 119 RUTHERFORD, N. J., MAY, 1951 No. 5

CORRESPONDENCE

"For thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country." Ezek. 34:11-13.

READERS OF THE DEAR OLD SIGNS: By your permission, and if you think it worthy of space, I desire to write but a few thoughts of my understanding of the above scripture. By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word is to be established, and here the prophet Ezekiel agrees with Isaiah and Jeremiah as to the gathering together of the church of God under the gospel, and the certainty of their being the Lord's people before they are gathered, and that their being his is the cause why the Lord will bring them home to himself. Let us examine Jeremiah 31:10. "Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock." The prophet Jeremiah and Isaiah agree perfectly in the doctrine and faith of the gospel church for we find here not only the certainty of the Lord gathering his scattered Israel, and keeping them when gathered, but also that this is not to be kept secret, it must be published to the distant isles, and declared to be the Lord's work, for as certain as he had scattered them, because of their sin he would gather them for his own glory. "For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him (the power of darkness) that was stronger than he."

We now understand the cause why this declaration was made for he that scattered Israel for their sins has redeemed them by the sacrifice of his Son Jesus Christ; and we understand the cause why the gospel is sent to all nations. It is because there are some of the Lord's sheep scattered among them, and the Lord will bring them home. Facts are truth and will not yield to error. If we, upon examination, should find that the Lord's people are not spoken of as being his before they are converted, and that they do not bear the application sheep until changed by grace and brought into the fold, then the arminian doctrine is true; but if we should find it a fact that the Lord's people are spoken of as being his before they are converted, and that they actually do bear the application sheep before they are changed by grace and brought into the fold, then the arminian theory is false and should be exposed as an enmity of truth. It is wickedness of a criminal nature to believe a lie and undertake to enforce it as the truth. If God's word will not or does not settle the point one way or the other we should drop the controversy. I maintain that God's people

are spoken of as his sheep before they are brought into the fold or church. Thus keeping in view the scriptural facts already brought to view we shall now examine a few more points.

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way." The whole flock of God's people is certainly here spoken of as being like sheep that have strayed off, not like sheep turning to goats by straying off, but they are like stray sheep, wandering or turning to his own way; and the Lord laid on Christ, the glorious Shepherd of his sheep, (not goats) the iniquity of us all—yes all, not a part. The iniquity of the whole flock was laid upon Christ. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." 1 Peter 2:24. Notice Peter said to these strangers that were scattered in these different provinces that they were like sheep scattered, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls; and just as certain as I am correct in this fact, the arminian system must fall, and the doctrine of election and predestination is a Bible truth. Peter is here absolutely in accord with the prophet Isaiah in the suffering of Christ, as well as the cause, why; and that of the children of God being as sheep gone astray. The scattered brethren he was now writing of were of those sheep who were now returning to Christ as the Shepherd. The same may be said to and of every child of grace brought home to the fold. "But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Matt. 15:24. If the Savior is to be believed in this pointed statement, and can be correctly understood, I think it will settle the point in hand. Thus they are called sheep while in their scattered situation. John 10:1-2 proves that there is a sheepfold, there is a door into it, and that Christ, the real Shepherd, entered into the sheepfold by the door, and that all who had come before Christ, climbing over the wall, were thieves and robbers. The third verse proves that the door into the sheepfold was guarded by a porter who would not open to any but the shepherd of the sheep who came in by the door. The porter I believe to be the cherubims and flaming sword which turns every way to keep the way of the tree of life which is the truth and justice of God, and will not acknowledge satisfaction of any nor admit of any being the shepherd of the sheep but Christ the head and husband of the church, the good Shepherd who came in by the door of prophecy according to the plan of salvation as secured in the covenant of grace. The shepherd and owner of the sheep, having made good all damages, the law being fulfilled, magnified and made honorable, truth and justice acknowledged and said, let the prisoners go free. Thus the sheep, though dead in sin, can by divine power be quickened and made to hear the voice of Christ and live. "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." God's national Israel, as his chosen people, he had treasured up as his distinguished people; the covenants with all the rich treasures of his house and nation is here spoken of as the fold, and the sheep which the Savior claims as his were not of this (Jewish) fold, but were evidently those of whom

the several prophets spoke of as being the scattered chosen of Zion of Israel which were scattered in different isles among the Gentiles, not of the Jewish nation or fold, yet they are his sheep, he brings them home. "Them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."—not two. Positive language. The Savior said they are his sheep and he must bring them. You say, they may become his sheep if you will accept him and come. The Savior says, they shall hear his voice. You say, that if you will become obedient you will hear his voice and become his sheep. Jesus said, the good Shepherd knows his sheep, speaking of them as already being his sheep was the reason why he gave his life for them. You say, the good shepherd gave his life not for sheep but for goats, alien sinners, to make them sheep provided they will accept him as their personal Savior and obey him.

You may now see the point at issue between the Savior and the arminian theory of religion which is popular with the world. How do you think the controversy will come out between you and the Savior? The cost must be paid. Let us hear one sentence more on the part of the Savior, but ye believe not because ye are not my sheep. The Savior shows here the cause why those wicked Jews did not believe in him. It was because they were not of his sheep. "For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost. How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?" The Savior here expresses the object of his coming into the world. It was to save that which was lost. Can any man in truth say he has lost that which he never had? I think not. "And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house,"*******For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." We now understand why the Savior called Zacchaeus down and went to his house. It was because he was a son of Abraham, or one of the lost sheep of the house of Israel and must be brought home. "And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?" Here we find is a daughter of Abraham, and she must be loosed, even if it be on the sabbath day, from Satan. He is not to keep her always bound under her infirmities. We might quote many more passages of divine writ which proves that Christ came, suffered and died for his people, not to make them his but because they were his. Respectfully submitted. (Elder) B. B. WALSTON

1101 Seale Drive, Dallas, Texas

TO ALL THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH: For some time I have had a desire to write what I hope was the blessed Savior's will in leading this poor sinner from nature's darkness into the glorious light and liberty of his dear Son. My father and mother were baptized into the old church, when I was a mere child, by Uncle Ben Parker as he was lovingly called by all who knew him. He, with others of the Baptists, spent many nights at my father's home and would sit and talk for half the night about the wonderful works of God in watching over his little ones. I would slip into an unnoticed corner and listen for hours. I do not know why for I did not understand what they were talking about, but it was sweet to me. Not long afterwards I became deeply interested in my soul's salvation. I saw myself a wretched sinner, undone and lost without God and without hope in the world. Oh! what a wretched and

undone sinner I was. I began to read the Bible and search for something that might give me a little comfort, but instead of obtaining any comfort I sank deeper into the belly of hell. This went on for several years. In the meantime a brother of mine, Walter Neel (known by many of the Baptists in the South) united with the church and immediately became impressed and burdened with the knowledge of having to preach. He, in his trouble, was a great comfort to me. He would help me wash the dishes at night and we would confide in each other about our troubles. When I felt that my days were few upon the earth and I was sinking down in woe, he told me that I was just beginning to live and to read Galatians 5:17. I did and was comforted to some extent. I found that Paul said, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." The apostle Paul must have been experiencing this state of warfare when he said, "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." Rom. 7:22-23.

I will hasten along to the first sermon I heard my brother preach. It was at an Association. I do not remember whether he took a text but I will never forget how he so beautifully pictured the birds in their nests in the cedars of Lebanon. When he finished I felt that I would be bound to go down in torment. I arose and started to leave the room for I thought every one could see what a sinner I was. When I reached the door I looked back. My brother was coming to me, he took me in his arms and spoke words of comfort to my poor heart. He asked me why I did not come home to my friends and tell them what great thing the Lord had done for me. I felt that he was mocking me, but no he would not do that. I thought he had never realized what an undone wretch I was. Some time after this I felt that I was dying and I knew hell would be my portion, that it would be impossible for God to save such a sinner as I. I arose from my bed for I was smothering and knew I would soon be gone. I was afraid and did not want to die alone so I started to my mother's bed to tell her but turned and went out the back door. There was a large tree in the yard and I fell down at its roots thinking in the morning they will find me and bury this lump of clay, but my soul will be burning in torment. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then I heard a voice, a soft still voice, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." I can never tell of the joy and beauties of that night. My mind was directed to the church, and after breaking many promises I finally went, but before the day was gone I was sorry I did for I felt I had imagined it all and decided I would not be baptized.

I was just a young girl of twenty-two years and felt that my young friends would make sport of me and not like me any more for the Old Baptists were not a fashionable church, in fact they were looked down on by the world. I went to spend the night in the home of one of my married brothers and had fully determined not to be baptized, but the next morning my sister-in-law began packing my clothes for baptism, while I dressed, and sent the suit-case to the wagon (we traveled in wagons then) by one of her children. I was ashamed to tell her what was in my mind so let it pass. I felt this bur-

den and this terrible dread until I came up out of the water and then I felt so light and happy. The congregation on the bank was singing the old hymn, "The blood bought mercy seat" in Lloyd's hymn book. I wanted to shout and praise God for what he had done for a poor wretch like me, but I soon stopped thinking the people would think me crazy. The old prophet said, "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen: the lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it," yet it is said that "fools shall not err therein." Could it be possible that I found it? and

"Now, my remnant of days
Would I spend to his praise,
Who hath died my poor soul to redeem;
Whether many or few,
All my years are his due,
May they all be devoted to him."

I have had a name with these dear children of God for fifty-two years, and if possible I love them more and more as time goes on. My whole desire is to live in a way acceptable to them and my heavenly Father. God knows my heart and knows there is no good in it, that it "is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" I often get out of the way and have to be chastised, but it is good for me. The scriptures say, "Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty: for he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole." I feel that I know something about this. He has been so wonderfully good to me after binding up my wounds. My dear companion was a member of the old church many years, being baptized by my brother, but I was baptized by Elder S. P. Pipkin now deceased and my brother is also deceased. My dear companion passed away in 1936 and I have spent many lonely days without him, but I have two wonderful sons. The oldest lives next door to me and is such a comfort. He looks after me so carefully and is the only member of the Old Baptists anywhere near me. We have many pleasant conversations which is a great consolation and pleasure to me. My youngest son lives in California. He went there for his health. He never united with the Baptists but is a strong defender of the faith. I see him about once a year.

I have had so many strange things happen to me, (I say happen but they did not happen) no they were fixed things and had to be. The God of the universe has shown me some strange things. I know it was he for I have the evidence, but why he is mindful of me, a poor weak, sinful creature I do not know. I would like to tell of a few, if you can bear with me, for the benefit of my children and grandchildren, and generations on down the line. My oldest son was across the waters in the last war almost two years. I suffered many long sleepless nights on account of it. The God of heaven showed me many wonderful visions. I will say visions for I know they were. I will tell you of the last one first. It was in the early summer of the closing of the war. I was alone with the shades down and the door closed and was reading the Bible. I turned a page and looked up, my eyes fell upon the mirror and lo I saw the most wonderful picture. It was awe-inspiring and to this day I cannot think of it without the same unexplainable feeling. I saw a beautiful grove of green trees in a smooth, level, green, meadow, and a troop of soldiers in uniform leisurely moving about. In the foreground were two white flags rippling in the breeze. While I looked the larger one came to the ground in a soft, white heap. I

kept staring and later the small one came down and bunched around the pole. I then noticed a very large man, he being visible from just above his knees down, pass on out of sight. He was just back of the flags. This was about 9 o'clock. I wondered what it was and finally decided it must be a reflection from outside, but I kept gazing in wonder knowing there was no opening to the outside, but I looked to make sure and when I looked back the picture was gone. I sat for hours wondering what it meant. I knew it was supernatural and that God had a purpose in showing it to me, but could not arrive at any solution. About 12 o'clock I went to bed still puzzling about it. Just at 3 o'clock something wakened me. I wondered what it was for I could not hear a sound, but I felt so calm and contented. Finally I opened my eyes and they fell on the same mirror and the same beautiful picture. I looked and wondered, finally I decided to put my hand on it to see what it was. Then remembering that before when I took my eyes off it it disappeared I was careful to not let that happen again. When my foot touched the floor I stepped on one of my shoes which threw me off balance and when I looked up it was gone. I thought and wondered about it so much I decided to write my son and ask if he could explain it. I also wrote my brother and they both answered with the same interpretation that the war would close before the grass and trees turned brown, and the large man just back of the flags was the blessed Savior watching over and caring for his people. He said he would be with them in the sixth trouble and in the seventh he would not forsake them.

I have had several other visions just as wonderful and strange as this that I may write about some other time. My letter is getting too long. If this is not an experience of grace then I have none. It seems to me there is not much to it, but I would not take ten thousand worlds like this for it. Examine it and if it is worth anything you may use it as you see fit, if not cast it aside and all will be well with this old sinner. I am fast going down the hill of time. I have but one more river to cross, and may it please the Almighty to be there and waft me over to the other side where we will sing praises to the Great I Am, where there will be no more sorrow nor sighing; where we will ever be with God and the holy angels, singing the song that no man knoweth. A little sister saved by grace if saved at all. (Mrs.) SALLIE NEEL LUCE

Route 6, Hopkinsville, Ky.

ELDER D. L. CLARK, DEAR BROTHER IN A SWEET HOPE: I received your letter some time past and have thought to answer it, but could not bring myself to do so. Now if God will give me a mind to write I want to write of the mercy bestowed upon a certain people of God and precious. For a text I want to use Ezek. 20:37. "And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant." No chastisement seems good for the present, but afterward works the peaceable fruits of righteousness. First, we desire to consider to whom this is addressed. It is being addressed to the house of Israel only. God in olden times spoke to national Israel by the mouth of the prophet. These same words are now applicable (to us) to spiritual Israel, or to the elect according to the foreknowledge of God, spiritual Israel being now scattered through the whole earth for not all Israel is of Israel, but "in Isaac shall thy seed be called." "Jacob is the lot of His inheritance." God is not speaking to every man of Adam's race, but only to Israel wherever they may be. The Old and New Testa-

ments are not addressed to all of Adam's race, but to those chosen of God in his Son back in eternity before the world was. His children are the only ones that can receive it for it is of the Spirit and the world cannot receive the things of the Spirit.

Brother Dan, you wrote of your afflictions and of being alone at that time, (and I know that they are great) and of your son's accident and the seriousness of it. I have meditated on this in this text as it is applicable to all of us. The New Testament is written to a certain characteristic people, and they are a special people elected according to the foreknowledge of God, and there is not a command, exhortation or promise recorded in the Bible without a certain descriptive character being applied. I feel that I would be guilty of high treason before my God if I should try to apply any part of the scriptures as applying to the whole Adamic race.

We will consider to whom he was speaking. First, we will take the *you* in the text, and that *you* applies to all those that were chosen in the everlasting covenant, all those who will be finally housed in heaven and immortal glory. I do not want to bore you as I sometimes think I do those who sit under the sound of my voice when trying to speak in His name, and I hope His honor, but I want to stress the fact that all scripture is written to and for the consolation of God's children only. Second, we will consider the *I* included in the text, and consider who the *I* is that is here speaking. It is the great God, the one who created the heavens and the earth; the one who cast, as it were, the stars into the ether of the heavens and causes each and every one to swing in its own orbit and not hinder the others at all; the One who speaks and it is done; the One who works all things after the counsel of his will and none can stay his hand; the One who declared "it (my word) shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it." It is God who has spoken, who has declared this thing. He commands and it stands fast, he has spoken it, he will also do it, he has purposed it he will also bring it to pass. That great and ever to be adored God speaks saying, "I will cause you to pass under the rod." O my soul what does he mean by this statement, and may I ask what is the rod? When I think of the rod I think of my dear old father, whom I believe is now resting in blessed rest where no mortal or earthly trouble can ever disturb that rest, when he would chastise me; how sweet it was afterward to rest in his sure mercy when he would take me in his arms and solace me. "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." I believe that troubles, trials, temptations, afflictions, tribulations, all things that so sorely oppress God's little ones are the smarting of the rod. They are not by accident, they do not occur by chance, but God in his wisdom causes you to pass under them.

Brother Dan, you cannot escape them for they are laid in your way by the will of a just and all wise merciful God. Life here is only a shadow with persecutions to endure for the shadow of time, but think of that all eternity in which we shall live in the joys of praising that just and holy One. I know that these things do not seem good to us now but they are good for us. Some people would have you believe that all troubles are of the devil, but I affirm that it is not so. God has ordained them to your cause and they are a blessing purposed of God.

The Psalmist says he makes the clouds his chariot and it is in your deepest distress that he appears to you as your deliverer; and when in your deepest distress you feel him, and see him as your deliverer you are made to feel the bond of so great a deliverance. We would not, could not appreciate the bond if it were not for the rod, so to speak, neither could we appreciate the the staff if it were not for the rod for David said, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." The rod beats us down and makes us to lean upon the staff which is Jesus Christ our Lord. The rod of God makes us to see our unworthiness, our filthiness in unrighteousness, our inability, and how destitute we are, thus fitting us to be able to call upon his holy name. So when we are given to trust in him our past troubles then become a comfort to us for we learn that God used these means to bring us to this trust in him. Paul says, "We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope," and that hope makes us not ashamed of the blessed gospel of Christ Jesus, but rather makes us declare it even to the world, just as Noah did in his day. The rod is not applied to bring us into or punish us for our sins. No, no for Christ paid it all when he hung between the heaven and the earth and declared "It is finished." So it is not applied to those who are included in that covenant, it is applied to lead us by experience into the right path. Paul said Jesus learned obedience by the things that he suffered, so if Jesus learned obedience by the things that he suffered is it a terrible thing that we should learn obedience by the things that we suffer here in this time world? Surely it is a blessing to be covered by that great and ever to be adored God to pass under the rod of afflictions.

Now Brother Clark, we have passed under the rod, (and notice that we were already in the covenant otherwise it would not apply to us) and I will bring you into the bond (not into the covenant) of the covenant, so we must pass under the rod before we can be brought into the bond of the covenant. Oh blessed hope! when you were hungry, thirsty and tired, and life felt a burden to you, and you felt that hell was your certain doom, and felt yourself stuck in the mire sinking deeper and deeper without a hope, God restored your soul and was gracious in that he spoke peace to your soul; so the bond must be that stamp of mercy and grace that is implanted in your heart; it must be the fruits of the spirit that separates God's children from those of the world such as love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, temperance, etc., the wills and shalls that make the covenant certain to all those embraced therein. I like to think about Jehovah's promises, his wills and shalls. "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." "I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him. With long life I will satisfy him, and shew him my salvation." There is not a single condition left for man to perform. Time and space will not permit me to speak of God's wills and shalls that are flooding my mind, but will just say that time salvation was trampled under the law covenant, and our Savior came to establish that which would (and has already) save. "I will put my laws in to their mind, and write them in their hearts." "I will accept you with your sweet savour, when I bring you out from the people, and gather you out of

the countries wherein ye have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you before the heathen." God does the scattering, the gathering and the sanctifying, and poor man is left out of the whole thing, and I am glad it is so for "If God be for us, who can be against us?" I fear not Satan with all of his wiles for he is a limited character, but can the bond be the full fruition of the covenant, could it be heaven and immortal glory? Could it be the final fulfillment of the obligations expressed in the covenant that will be experienced in eternity after this time here? I am persuaded that the bond of the covenant is the earnest of the inheritance that is experienced by God's children here in this time world, and the many deliverances experienced by us here. Oh, how wonderful! and when we are given a mind to pray how sacred is this privilege; how sublime is the joy of his sweet fellowship; the tie that binds us together in love and fellowship one with the other. These fleeting moments of enjoyment make us yearn and look forward to the high calling of God when we shall quit the walks of men, and be received into the full fellowship of God and all the dear little ones that have gone before.

Will bring this to a close by saying, may the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the sweet communion of the Holy Spirit be ours to grace us in a godly walk here in time, choosing our changes according to his will, making us submissive to his choice, comfort us across the chilly waters of death, and finally receive us in heaven where there will be no more sorrows, sufferings or death, where it will be just one eternal now with the saints, rejoicing in the presence of a loving Savior. All glory and honor to his precious name. In hope,

(Elder) WADE Y. CHANDLER

3452 E. McDowell, Phoenix, Ariz.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER ROBINSON: I was very glad to hear from you again. Have waited a good while to answer but news is not plentiful. I am also busy and night time finds me tired and in no mood for writing. I am glad indeed to hear you and the people there are having meetings as a few together can have a unity of spirit, and it is pleasing to God that we should do so. I have attended church each Sunday that they have had meetings. I took Brother Bartlett the first Sunday. I am not very old as a member, but according to the teachings of Paul we find in Colossians 3:1-17 enough advice for all to study and pray over. How can we have humbleness, longsuffering, meekness and forgiveness if we are stiffnecked? I attended church again last Sunday. There were thirty-three present. Several new faces at least to me. I took some of my *Signs* and gave to one of the ladies. Apparently it is a paper very few know of here. In the February issue "The Cleft of the Rock" was an inspiration and help to me.

Brother Robinson, I want you to read Isaiah 51. It is a part of my experience before I ever heard a Primitive Baptist sermon. In 1933 my husband was very ill, and taking a turn for the worse he asked me to send for his brothers and made me promise never to leave him as long as he was with us. He felt he was going to die. I promised him and as he lay in a light slumber I knelt near his bed. Picking up the Bible I whispered, "O God give me comfort and help that I may be able to do what I have promised and give me hope." I opened the book and it seemed to fairly speak to me, "Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord." Was not that a marvelous answer to my prayer? My husband was very low for four weeks after that and every day his peo-

ple and friends would think it was the last; many said to me "Mary, how can you go like you do, and how can you believe he will get well?" Nearly all who said this to me were church members. I always said, "I will never lose faith, he is going to live." I never told any one of my experience at his bedside. To me that is a chapter of chapters. I can never read it without wanting to cry and praise God. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

I must close as I must write my father. I had a letter from him to-day. He always writes a little scripture, To-day it was on predestination. He longs to be near his church people, he is much improved in health for which we are very thankful. I am writing you as though I had known you for years, hope my letter is not too tiresome. I know you will understand what I am talking about. Give my best regards to Brother and Sister Day and daughter. We enjoyed your visit in our home. If you can come to Phoenix be sure to come here. Yours in hope.

(Mrs.) MARY SMITH

Stewart, Miss.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR BRETHREN: As I am confined to the house I cannot do much but read, write and meditate. I have wanted for some time to write you and all the precious writers to the dear old *Signs of the Times*. All winter I have been reading back numbers, some of them I have read several times. Dear ones, write on as it sounds like that dear old bell that I first heard nearly fifty years ago—salvation by grace and grace alone. Conditionalism was preached only among other orders of people, but how sad it is now, claiming that regeneration is by grace and after regeneration all our blessings depend on what we do. I cannot see how one that has tasted that the Lord is gracious; one that has grown up in grace and knowledge could want to exchange some of their filthy rags to the Lord for a blessing. My experience has taught me to have no confidence in the flesh. I know there is a blessing in an orderly walk and conversation. One is blessed before, after and while doing this for it is God that works in them the will to do, and then by his grace enables them to do that which is in harmony with the will. If this is not true my experience has been wrong. God has before ordained that some are going to walk in that strait and narrow way, but they have to be shown that way and kept in it. Yes, kept by the power of God unto salvation, without Him ye can do nothing. No doubt the Lord allows or permits his children to make their bed in hell to teach them something, but he is there as David said, "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." No doubt it will be with the rod, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." "If ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." "Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." Peter had to learn by sad experience to have no confidence in the flesh. Jonah had to learn in the belly of hell that salvation was of the Lord. How good it is when we cannot go forward or backward, and know not which way to turn or what to do, to be able by the grace of God to stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord. "Be still, and know that I am God."

It is useless for me to tell you of my weakness, and what a poor writer I

am. For some reason the dear Old Baptists have borne and overlooked my weakness for forty-five years. Please let me hobble along after you a few more days, and be able to read the good writing in the *Signs*. Your unworthy brother I hope. J. F. JACKS

Goldonna, La.

DEAR BRETHREN: I would like to say I was somewhat surprised and happy to get a card thanking me for the part concerning the Lamb's Bride. I am sending $3 to renew my subscription for another year.

If I am blessed by the God of Israel to do so I will write a few lines starting with Heb. 8:10. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Let us notice the wills and shalls in this verse and those following, "And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Remember he was talking to the house of Israel. Some may think we are trying to teach one another by or through an Old Baptist paper, but to me it is a comfort. The scripture says, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." Then, too, it says, "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished."

I do not believe any child of grace writing the articles published in this paper has it in mind to try to teach another to know the Lord. I do believe the new covenant has given them a desire to comfort one another, in fact the scripture says they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and I believe it would be just as impossible to teach them to know the Lord as it is to go to heaven. I am not saying they are not trying all over the world to teach one another how to get to heaven, but dear little trembling child of God not the Old Baptists, at least we hope we are not.

I have let some people have part of my papers that perhaps thought that was the way we had teaching one another. I have told several that was one way we had comforting one another, but I am going to say if that is the only way for me to learn anything about the Lord I would never have known him for I am too dumb to learn, no not if I am one of those chosen in Christ before the world was in the covenant by God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, the three in one. If we have one we have the other two also for they are so perfectly blended together until you cannot have one without the other, at least that is the way I see it. Somewhere in the council the Bride was chosen in Christ Jesus before land and sea were divided, before there was man to till the soil, before there was a tender herb to feed on, and all God had to do was to speak and it was done. All things that were agreed on in the council, and at God's appointed time were and are being manifested, and all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, whether it be thrones or principalities visible or invisible. All things were made for him and by him for there is no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God.

If we had to depend on one's self to get to heaven, who would be the weaker God or mammon? If we have a home beyond this vale of tears it was given to us before the world was, and some sweet day at God's appointed time his beloved and his dove will reach

that beautiful city of gold that the Lord has prepared for them. Jesus, our blessed Redeemer, said, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself." I believe that he is coming again to carry his beloved home to that sweet home that has no end, and so shall we be ever with the Lord. There will be no night there, stars and moon will not be needed to give light for God is light, there is no darkness in him. There will be no more seeing through a glass darkly, no more pain or sorrow, no more crying Lord have mercy on me a vile and helpless sinner for they shall all know him as he is.

We poor worms of the dust can only hope, while others say they know they are saved. Dear little child of grace, if we did not have our chastisements, a cross to bear, we would not be a follower of the Lamb; we would be bastards and not sons. Let us be thankful we hope we have a hope. May the good Lord enable us with his rich grace to bear our cross patiently and hope for a better world to come. Please overlook my mistakes for I am full of them. Do not publish this unless you see fit. Your brother, if I be worthy, in hope of a better world to come. If you have gotten anything out of this give God all the honor and praise. A sinner saved by grace if at all.

W. D. GODWIN

Route 5, Box 858, Visalia, Cal.

DEAR EDITORS IN A PRECIOUS HOPE BEYOND THIS VALE OF TEARS: I am sending a money-order to renew my dear old *Signs* for another year. Wish it could be more as it is a great comfort to my weary, hungry soul. I so anxiously wait from one issue to the next. I read and reread them with tears of joy the world knows nothing about. I have been reading the *Signs* for fifty years and do not want to miss a copy. I hope I will be blest to read it as long as I stay in this world of sin and sorrow. I did not know there was such a people or paper until I met my dear companion. At the first meeting I attended I united with the church and have always loved the dear Old Baptists. If not deceived I believe God predestinated my roving feet to tread the heavenly road to meet my dear companion and the Old Baptists that are hated by the world. How sweet and comforting the words of our dear Savior, "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you." "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." The world has always hated the true called servants that earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

Dear brothers and sisters, I have always loved the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things, and the resurrection of these bodies of ours. Take that away from me and you have destroyed my hope if I have a hope. Sometimes it seems so little I almost lay it by, and sometimes it seems sufficient if I were called to die. My Baptist papers mean so much to me. I read the writings of dear ones I have never met in the flesh but I do hope we are joined together in that blessed spirit that can never be separated. They tell my experience and what I believe better than I can tell it myself although thousands of miles apart. I hope the dear old *Signs* will keep coming with food from the Master's table that feeds the sheep and lambs that are scattered over this world of sorrow and trouble.

I did not mean to write so much. It has relieved my wearied mind to write these rambling thoughts with fear and trembling, and I trust you will overlook my weakness and many mistakes.

Please remember this lonely sinner when at a throne of God's rich grace. The least of all if one at all in hope of the resurrection beyond this vale of tears. (Mrs.) W. G. SLUSHER

Island City, Oregon

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR OLD FRIEND AND FELLOW TRAVELER: Again the time has come to renew my subscription. I cannot afford to miss a number. I have been reading it since my earliest recollection, more than half a century ago. At that time it was folded and had to be cut apart. Mother always had to do that, otherwise it might be torn. I liked to spell and stammer through the lines because the print was so large and clear. Sometimes I wonder if that is the reason I believe in predestination and salvation by grace because I never knew anything else, but when I try to find something else it is not there, not if you read it as it is written. Sometimes I listen to a talk over the radio and my only comment is "consistence thou art a jewel."

Our belief is such a comforting, restful belief. Why do some go to such great length to try to prove it is not true. O if they could only know the peace and joy we feel when we can say the Lord knows what is best. They can believe God rules the cyclone, the earthquake and the storm, but as for war that is man made. He says, "without me ye can do nothing," and I believe that means exactly what it says, nothing, not any thing. E'en though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, (just where we all walk every day, and where our army walks in Korea) thou art with me. Though I make my bed in hell, he is there. Then, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

I did not start to write a sermon, but only to wish you a Happy New Year, and a prosperous one for the dear old *Signs*. May the Lord make us reconciled to his will in all things is the prayer of your unworthy sister.

(Mrs.) MARTHA H. BOND

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630 Sherwood Road, N. E., Atlanta, Ga.

DEAR BRETHREN: I am sending check to renew my subscription as I notice it expires with this issue, I have just been reading the editorials of Elder Dodson and Elder Lambert in the September issue which are wonderful. O the joy of being privileged to read such edifying, soul lifting and comforting writings. I feel that the dear old *Signs of the Times* is certainly written by inspired men and women, and if I may say it (without sacrilege) it is as true as the Bible itself, and the writers no less inspired than the prophets and apostles of old. Yes, there has ever been men inspired to write of the things of the Spirit of God. From Moses down to this present day poets and profound thinkers have and are writing of the things which they have received, not of the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given us of God; which things also they speak not with words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

O if I could find words to express my joy and appreciation for God's wonderful plan of salvation, if I could only praise and adore him at all times. I do feel that I am not altogether carnal or natural for I do feel at times to know and understand, and do desire some of the things of the Spirit of God. They are not foolishness to me, therefore my little hope and what faith I may have, which is given me, is very precious to me. Yes, it is not meet to give the children's bread to dogs such as I, but I do feed of the crumbs that

fall from the Master's table. I am not always thankful to God for his wonderful blessings, and I do trample his goodness and mercies under my feet, and am not mindful of him at all times, but I do have seasons of meditations, and have a desire to come before him with praise, songs and gladness making a joyful noise. If I am your Christian brother it is only by the mercies of God that I am. W. W. JACKSON

Box 10, Route 1, Shirleysburg, Pa.

DEAR EDITORS: Only as the dear Lord reveals it to us can we say anything worth while. How I wish I could say the right thing but I seem to be tongue tied. Sometimes I am cheer and sunshine to others and then I feel happy, but most of the time I feel like one in a prison, condemned, forsaken, without a friend in the world. Yet I know better for did not Jesus cry on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and he knew he was not forsaken and would soon rise again. Why, oh why does one get in such a mood? Is it, too, for good? I hate to be like that but cannot help myself. I try to read and find myself staring at the pages, (seeing nothing) my mind far away on something else. I try to pray and words fail, my mind far away on something else. I try to pray and words fail, my mind is a blank. All I can say is Lord be merciful to me, a sinner of whom I am chief. I can understand Paul when he said, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" It seems the things I hate most I do, and what I should do I do not. Can one help himself? Can the leopard change his spots?—no.

Lately I have been in the "Slough of Despond." Only God knows the misery in the heart of a poor sinner, and only he can comfort them. Why the *if's* in modern preaching? Oh for a faith that will not shrink, for a hope that will never die. I find myself in such perplexities at times, I know not what to do or where to turn, then his word condemns me, "O ye of little faith?" I truly want to wait upon the Lord for in my soul I know all his ways are best, and that all things work together for good to them that love him. I find myself wondering if this is his way and if I do love him. Just a conflict all the time. Tell me, do you ever have such feelings? I have no one to talk to that understands. That is why I have taken the liberty to write this. I will appreciate letters from those who have understanding hearts. Respectfully and in hope of life eternal.

(Mrs.) FLORA BOOHER

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103 Livingston St., Salisbury, Md.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC., DEAR FRIENDS: I am reminded it is time to renew my subscription for another year. I feel to thank God from whom all blessings flow, that he has so blessed me to hear and read from the pen of his dear elect children such wonderful messages of truth as are found in the *Signs*. I am enclosing remittance to cover my renewal. Sincerely yours,

JAMES E .WEST

TRIBUTES

306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas

It was such a shock to learn of Elder Dodson's death. I so much enjoyed our visit together in Virginia. His preaching was inspirational. I appreciate our correspondence and association together more than words can express. His writings have been, and I trust will continue to be, as I re-read them, a great source of comfort to me. I feel that our God graced Elder Dodson with such glorious gifts that his memory will be held sacred in the hearts of God's afflicted people for years to come.

(Elder) E. J. LAMBERT

556 Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.

I am deeply grieved at the passing of Elder Dodson, He was my friend and he was indeed a great benefactor to our blessed cause. Another great tree of the forest has fallen. May we bow in humble submission to thy will O! God. My most sincere condolence goes out to the family, the brethren and his host of friends.

(Elder) C. H. BYRD

Box 4, Covin, Ala.

What a shock to hear of Elder Dodson's death. I had not dreamed that his trouble was that serious. May the arm of the Lord be revealed in raising up one to carry on the rigid duties of editing and caring for his churches. My wife was in the office a few minutes ago and exclaimed, "Just to think that we have desired so much to see him and now we never will!" This shows the high esteem that he was held by the readers of the paper in this section. I know that our brother delighted in spending and in being spent for the good of Zion. I would, if blessed to thus approach a throne of abounding grace, ask for the like measure of godly zeal in the cause of our Lord's organic body. (Elder) W. D. GRIFFIN

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64 West Randolph St., Chicago 1, Ill.

I deeply regret the passing of the Editor, Elder R. Lester Dodson. He had expressed a desire to visit with the brethren of the Obion and Soldiers Creek Associations, and Elder Biggs and others had looked forward with hope for such a visit. While I had never met him, he had invited me to visit his church if I ever went back East again. He was liberal minded and I am sure loved his calling much. I enjoyed his editorials, and hope his successor can keep a similar balance and show both the prudence and wisdom that he has done.

JOHN FRANKLIN LAX

525 Holloway St., Durham, N. C.

I feel so lost in trying to find words to express some of the meditations I had in the loss of our much loved Elder Dodson. What a strong and noble man, yet so tender in his manner and dealings with his fellow man; what a love he had for the cause he so much defended; what a shepherd that fed the sheep of his Master's pasture; what a ready writer to fill our poor hearts. We shall miss that dear man of God. Bless the Lord O my soul, bless his holy name. What a promise the Lord's little children have. May the Lord bless me to remember Elder Dodson. Yours in the bonds of Christian faith.

J. J. WHITLEY

Route 3, Providence, Ky.

DEAR EDITOR: Enclosed find a money-order to renew my subscription for another year for the good old *Signs of the Times*. I do not feel that I can do without it. I am getting old and all the preaching I get is by reading. I was grieved to hear of the passing of Elder Dodson. I never met him but I have read so many of his wonderful articles that I had learned to love him. Besides reading so much from his pen I have had several personal letters from him written when my wife passed away over four years ago. They were so sweet to me and gave me so much comfort and relief. To think that a man I had never seen would write such a sinful wretch as I such comforting letters.

I wish to send my sympathy to his loved ones and friends who are left to mourn, but their loss is his eternal gain. Yours in hope of eternal life.

MANCE BROWN

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Elder C. E. Benson from Clarks Summit, Pa, to 1512 N. Jackson St., Wilmington, Del., effective April 5, 1951.

EDITORIALS

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P. O. Box 70 Rutherford, N. J.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6.

More than seven centuries before the birth of Jesus in the city of Bethlehem these words were written by the prophet, Isaiah. There can be no doubt in the minds of true Bible readers that Jesus Christ is the character under consideration. We pray God will bless us to consider this text in such a wonderful way that we may be comforted and edified. May we be blessed to gloriously rejoice upon some of the beauties contained in these thoughts. We desire to consider the text by phrases in the order in which they are written.

"UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN." Who is included in the term "US?" Isaiah is writing to the Israelites, the chosen people of God. National Israel is a type of spiritual Israel. Spiritual Israel is in existence to-day. Paul was an Israelite as he stated in his letter to the Corinthians. (2 Cor. 11:22) I believe that all God's children who are chosen into eternal life are members of spiritual Israel. True Israelites are the only ones who are included in the pronoun US in this text. If you are a child of God you are included in this term. Isaiah did not say unto each and every Adamic creature, but "unto us a child is born." He is born unto a specific people. Yes, he is born to you. He was born of the virgin, Mary, in the city of Bethlehem almost two thousand years ago, and people have set a date to annually attempt to celebrate his birth; but when did you and do you actually celebrate the birth of Christ? You actually celebrate his birth when he is born in you as your precious hope of glory. (Col. 1:27) When God knows a person by the direct operation of his holy spirit in individual relationship there is a conception. The result of this conception is a birth, the birth of Christ in you as your hope of glory.

"UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN." This son is peculiar in the fact that he is the son of God as well as the son of man. He is both human and divine. There are two erroneous theories concerning Jesus Christ prevalent to-day. One theory is that he was solely divine which would deny him as being the son of man. The other theory is that he was solely human which would deny him as being the son of God. Jesus, as the son of man, was acquainted with grief, was tempted, wounded and bruised, and did suffer and die on the cross. Jesus Christ, as the son of God, performed miracles, was glorified, overcame temptations, accomplished the law, conquered death, and is at the right hand of the throne of God making intercession for the saints of God according to the will of God. This son is GIVEN. He is not offered subject to acceptance or rejection of the creature. If it be necessary to raise a hand, say a word or do anything in order for the

creature to receive this son it would not be a gift—it would be an offer or reward. I believe this son is given to each and every one who has learned through sad experience appointed to them that they are unworthy, unable, and that it is utterly impossible to do anything to merit any favor or mercy of God. Paul said, "We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is GIVEN unto US." Rom. 5:3-5.

"AND THE GOVERNMENT SHALL BE UPON HIS SHOULDER." This one who is given unto us is our King. The preacher said, "Where the word of a king is, there is power." Eccl. 8:4. This King has all power in heaven and upon the earth. This being true, when he speaks it is done, when he commands it stands fast. The word that goeth forth out of his mouth shall not return unto him void; but it shall accomplish that which he pleases; it shall prosper in the thing whereto he sends it. (Isaiah 55:11) We, being creatures who are created equal, believe in the democratic form of government as being proper in our political and earthly organizations. Even in our organized churches we do not believe that one creature should have the authority to lord anything over others with exception of that One who has the government upon his shoulder. We maintain that Christ is the head of his church. He calls, qualifies, sends and uses each and every one of his subjects when, where and how he pleases. He never makes a call in vain. He never fails to qualify, when he sends they go. Each and every one fits and functions properly. You show me any church that places the government of that church upon the shoulder of any mortal man or group of men, and I will show you one that is not the church of Christ. You show me a church that has to have boards, auxiliary societies and many organizations to assist in the business of the church, and I will point to that one as not the church of Christ. The government of Christ's church is upon his shoulder and he is sufficient to attend to its business. No business is good business when it concerns the church. Some think that gathering sheep into the fold is the function of the church. This is the work of Christ as he said. "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice." John 10:16 If the government be upon his shoulder and his words are true—do you think he needs any assistance in this work? They tell us of a person who is begging, pleading and trying to get people to accept him; thousands of people and organizations who are assisting him and holding him up; notwithstanding all this he is unsuccessful to the extent that the devil gets the majority of them. This person is not the One under consideration in the text.

"HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL." He is wonderful. When I think of wonderful I think of something astonishing and singular. Words cannot express the amazement I experienced when I was given to trust in the work of Jesus Christ as accredited to my account. I was astonished that he should have compassion upon a hell deserving wretch such as I felt myself to be. His name is above every name. It is the only name given whereby we must be saved. He is the way, the truth and the life of each and every one of God's children. It is wonderful that he is God manifest in the flesh. It is wonderful that he could accomplish the law to a jot and tittle for his people. It is wonderful that he could pay the penalty and satisfy justice for his peo-

ple's sins by dying on the cross. It is wonderful that he could conquer death, hell and the grave and come forth from the tomb and walk and talk with his disciples. It is wonderful that he could ascend into the heavens and leave the comforting thought with his disciples that at some future time he would come again without sin unto salvation to gather his people into that eternal home. It is wonderful that he is so acquainted with all your temptations and troubles that he can intercede to God for you as your Counsellor.

Yes, his name is to be called COUNSELLOR. You hire and pay your counsellors in earthly courts, but this Counsellor is given to you. He is the one who pleads your case before the judge. He is in a position to tell the judge that he sat at all the requirements in your stead. Earthly counsellors do not agree to pay the penalty assessed against you by the court, but this Counsellor paid the penalty assessed. When you look for one to represent you in the courts of the land you want one who is thoroughly acquainted and experienced with your type of case. Here is the Counsellor who was tempted in all points like as we. (Heb. 4:15) He was forsaken, grieved, suffered and was tempted with poverty. He also experienced inability as he said, "I can of mine own self do nothing." John 5:30. When you give all the facts in the case that you can think of to earthly counsellors at their inquiry you find later that you have left out something vital to the case that you wished you could have told them. This Counsellor already knows your every trouble and has all the facts in your case. Earthly counsellors may be busy and you have to wait for your time before you can talk with them, but this Counsellor is not neglectful and has ample time and ears to hear your cries and beseechings. You may have tried to tell your troubles to your friends here and pour out your heart to them, but have you every experienced the relief of mind and peace in your heart as you did when you poured out your heart and was blessed to pray through this Counsellor to Almighty God? As long as you are capable of handling your affairs, even as long as you think you are capable, you have no use for a counsellor. When things get beyond your knowledge and power you seek a counsellor. I maintain that as long as a person feels capable of pursuing any distance toward gaining eternal life upon his own merits he does not feel the need of a counsellor. He is acting upon his own strength and self-righteousness and will not call upon this Counsellor. When a person learns by sad experience that he is nothing and all his seeming self-righteousness is but filty rags in the sight of God, he feels the need and desires the aid of the Counsellor. Jesus Christ is officiating as Counsellor when he is at the right hand of the Father making intercession for the saints of God according to the will of God. He is officiating as the Counsellor when he is speaking words of comfort to the trembling child of God. He is officiating as the Counsellor when he is calling, qualifying, sending forth, and using each child of God to the praise of his glorious name. Dear trembling child of God, do not put your trust in any man upon earth, or any set of men to give you wisdom. James was inspired to say, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God." May God grant you grace to trust all to this Counsellor!

This same character is also to be called "THE MIGHTY GOD." The scriptures affirm that the three in the Godhead are ONE. God the Father; God the Son; and God the Holy Ghost; these three are ONE. Jesus Christ was once without power but now he has all

power in heaven and on earth. If Jesus Christ be the MIGHTY GOD he has all power in heaven and on earth. He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isa. 46:10. If he be the MIGHTY GOD do you think he will fail in bringing any of the subjects of his grace to the knowledge of the truth? Do you think that any one for whom he gave his life will fail to be saved in heaven and immortal glory in the end of this timely sphere? I cannot conceive the idea that any of his purpose will fail in the least degree.

His name is rightly termed THE EVERLASTING FATHER. He is Father because he is founder and builder of his church. Jesus Christ is Father because he is the chief ruler of his people. He is King of his kingdom. He is the author and finisher of our faith. The term EVERLASTING signifies unchangeableness. We change but his care for us never wavers. He loved us even when we were dead in trespasses and in sins. When we are cold and careless he is interceding and caring for us. He is the everlasting Father because he finishes anything he begins. Our earthly fathers may forsake us but he knows what we need and gives us exactly what is best for us even though we may not think it best. He keeps each and every one of his people from falling finally away and saves them eternally from the dominion, power and presence of sin.

His name shall be called THE PRINCE OF PEACE. Those of you who have been in severest of troubles, and have experienced that deep soothing calm that came from no earthly source can rightly call him the Prince of Peace. I heard a soldier once relate an experience concerning this peace. He said he was in the midst of one of the severest battles of World War II where bombs were exploding all around. Every one of his comrades had been critically wounded and killed by falling shrapnel. He was so afraid and distressed that there was indescribable throbbings and surgings of his troubled and depressed mind. All at once there was such a wonderful, deep, calming influence that affected him that he was not afraid or troubled even though the bombs were still exploding, and shrapnel still falling all around. He was made to know that God absolutely controlled everything and that nothing could hurt him. This Prince of Peace caused this boy to peacefully rejoice in the midst of battle. This Prince of Peace causes his people to be content with their lot and gloriously reconciles them to his will. Is it not a peace that surpasseth all things else to realize that God cares and is mindful of you? He takes care of sparrows and not one falls without his notice, and even the hairs of your head are numbered. He understands your thoughts afar off and there is not a word in your tongue that he does not know altogether. He becomes your Prince of Peace when he causes you to feel that his providence will protect and his grace will direct you aright. He becomes your Prince of Peace when he takes your feet up out of an horrible pit of self-dependence and places them upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, as your hope for eternal life. He becomes your Prince of Peace when he puts a new song in your mouth which sings praises unto God instead of the old song of praise of yourself. He comes as a Prince of Peace when he picks you up on the balmy wings of his love while you are hopelessly falling down—down into the abyss of destruction and ruin. That wonderful peace that you experienced when you are blessed to pray, sing, speak, write and meditate upon his wonderful goodness

to the children of men is inexpressible. What a calming peace when you are blessed to speak kind words to some cast down individual. What a blessed peace when you are given to assist some fallen creature and do deeds of kindness to the less fortunate.

May the Prince of Peace be pleased to soften the hearts of the political leaders of the countries of this war-torn world that lasting peace be the result. If this be contrary to his will may he cause us to be content with our lot and make us reconciled to his will for he knows best. May God direct the words that have been written to the comfort of some poor soul is my desire. Pray for me because I feel to be the chief of sinners and less than the least of all saints so much of the time. E. J. L.

"Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set." Prov. 22.28.

This is undoubtedly a real proverb. A proverb is said to be a "brief pithy saying." In other words, a concentration or wealth of meaning in a few words. We believe this one to be all of that. Literally speaking, it was a well-nigh-sacred custom for our fore-fathers in the days of old to fix a landmark as the boundry line between their lands, properties or estates, whichever we may choose to call them, to separate or distinguish them apart. With all of the new inventions of this modernistic age, our surveyors are still making use of a landmark, corner stone or slab to determine the point where one man's ownership ends and another begins. In the fourteenth verse of the nineteenth chapter of Deuteronomy we read, "Thou shalt not remove thy neighbor's landmark, which they of old time have set in thine inheritance, which thou shalt inherit in the land that the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it." And in the seventeenth verse of the twenty-seventh chapter it says, "Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor's landmark." They were in honor bound to strictly observe, generation after generation, such markers, otherwise they established a bad repuatation or name for themselves. Solomon, no doubt, had reference to that custom when he said, "A GOOD name is rather to be chosen than great riches." One main trouble with the world to-day, in our opinion, is that man and nations, because of selfishness and greed, have shown an utter disregard for the rights of others. Honesty, however, is still a pearl of great price in the sight of honorable men, and a man whose word is as good as his bond is much to be preferred to the one who resorts to unscrupulous methods for accumulating his wealth. Character has been said to be better security than gilt edge bonds. When we consider the meaning of a "GOOD NAME" to the Lord's people, yea the best name in all the world to them, even THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, for it is by this name that the church is called, it is indeed, rather to be chosen than great riches. Diamonds and pearls, gold and silver, and the greatest honors that can be bestowed by mankind, are but sordid dust compared with this good name.

Coming back to our text, we wish to call attention to the fact that "landmark" is spoken of in the singular, as ONE, and not in the plural, as though there were many. Also, we would like to stress the fact of its being said to be "ancient." Sometimes we hear brethren speak of it as though it meant the modern writings of more or less recent men. Without turning back the pages of history too far, we may well esteem very highly such men as Dr. John Gill, J. C. Philpot, William Gadsby and others of England, and Samuel Trott, R. C. Leachman, Gilbert Beebe

and others more recent in our own country, nevertheless we must at all times keep in mind the fact that at most they were but fallible men. Personally, we are fearful that there are some who regard the sayings of such men too seriously, or as the very last word of authority. In this connection, we might do well to consider the writings of some of the apostles. Paul said, "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus." Gal. 1:11-17. This same apostle admonishes the church even unto this day, in saying, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Col. 2:6-9 Peter comes along and reminds us that we were not "redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ." In the ninth article of the Original Prospectus of the *Signs of the Times* Elder Gilbert Beebe said: "The Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God." The "ancient landmark," which is not to be removed is that which God himself hath set by the fathers between right and wrong, between the true and the false, between his own possession and that of the Mammon of Unrighteousness. God by his Holy Spirit inspired holy men of old, being linked together in succession, although in many instances having no knowledge of each other, but nevertheless steadfastly contending for the same glorious truth, even down to the days of Jesus Christ and the apostles, thus plainly showing the unerring influence of the ONE mind of that I AM THAT I AM, who called and sent them forth as sheep among wolves. Do we need any greater evidence of the divine inspiration of the scriptures than the fact that men who graced the stage of action at different periods of the world have consistently taken up the banner of truth, where it was lain down by those who had gone before, and borne it aloft as a standard for the elect of God in all ages of the world to rally around. Though Moses wrote of the creation of the world and events which took place long before he was born, and others prophesied of things a thousand and more years to come, we have such an abundance of proof as to the accuracy of their testimony that none of God's children will dare question his word. The prophets foretold of the coming of Jesus and his mission on earth, and he came and sealed it with his own precious blood, fulfilling in every jot and tittle all that was prophesied of him. This was followed by the apostles who were a unit in bearing

witness to the fact that Jesus finished the work of redemption in every detail and by declaring that the church is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." The doctrine of God our Savior has been clearly set forth for the foregoing divinely inspired authors, and we will do well to regard them with reverence and stand firm for the truth as it is in Jesus. Let us, therefore, seek for the old paths, and inquire "wherein is the good way, and walk therein," "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Paul, writing to the Corinthian brethren said, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." This is good, sound and wholesome doctrine. The flock of God can feed, feast and thrive upon this without suffering any ill effects. We wish we might all realize that we owe our allegiance to God, that we are accountable to him for what we preach and teach, and may we be given to look for him, and him alone, for wisdom, for knowledge, for understanding and guidance in the way that we should go, being careful not to remove the ancient landmark which he hath been pleased to set by our spiritual forefathers, in moving them by his Spirit to stake out the bounds of eternal truth.

(The late Elder)
R. LESTER DODSON

(This article was found on his desk and is believed to be the last one he wrote.)

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, it has been the will of Him who doeth all things well to remove by death from these mortal shores, our beloved editor of the **Signs of the Times, Inc.**, ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, we desire to bow to his holy will.

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of the **Signs of the Times, Inc.** feel deeply their loss in the passing of our beloved brother, who as editor of our family paper, has for many years manifested so great a love for the truth, and an untiring interest in the welfare of Zion realize he has left to us, who are intrusted with the carrying on of this work, an example worthy of our emulation. May the spirit of him who guided the pen of our beloved brother guide us as we undertake this work, that we may ever be mindful of the spirit of brotherly love, and his great zeal for the truth in all our deliberations, is our humble desire, and further

RESOLVED, that we leave upon our records an expression of our love and esteem for him who was blessed to minister to God's humble poor, both by pen, and word of mouth, to the glory of God, and the comfort of the household of faith, and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution of love and esteem be sent to his widow, Mrs. Beulah R. Dodson, and son, a copy recorded upon our minutes, and a copy published in the **Signs of the Times.**

Done by order of the Board of Trustees of the **Signs of the Times, Inc.** in session this March 9th, 1951.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER, President
CYRUS RISLER, Secretary

OBITUARIES

It is with much sadness I relate something of the life and death of my dear mother, EMMA HINES GILBERT, age 77. She was born Nov. 16, 1873, near Wake Forest, N. C. Her parents, William Taylor Hines and Rebecca Jane Powell Hines were Primitive Baptists, members of nearby Cedar Grove Church. She united with Cedar Grove Church during an Association in Sept. 1893 at about 20 years of age, and was baptized by the late Elder J. T. Edgerton of Pikeville, N. C. She and her father have served as clerk of Cedar Grove; her father having been a Deacon there also.

She taught school for 12 years and during that time met and married Albert R. Gilbert of Benson, N. C. He was an Old Baptist also. They settled on their farm near Benson. She then moved her membership to Hannah Creek Church. She remained through life a good Old Baptist

and a faithful member of her church. They had seven children, two dying in infancy. Those living are as follows: Ovid B. Gilbert of Merchant Marines, Houston, Texas, Mrs. Elsie G. Brockman, Salisbury, N. C., Mrs. Virginia G. Woodard, Kenly, N. C., P. N. C. William H. Gilbert, U.S.N., Key West, Fla., and Mrs. Velma G. Sullivan, Milwaukee, Wis. There are eight grandchildren.

My parents moved to Petersburg and Hopewell, Va. in 1930, and lived there until father died in Jan. 1936 when she made her home with her daughters. She was given a beautiful spiritual promise when she was 17 years of age while she lay very low with typhoid and pneumonia, after the deaths of her sister and parents. "How Firm a Foundation," every word of this song she felt was her promise in her future pilgrimage. In viewing her life, the fulfillment of that promise continued with her, even in death. The following is a poem she composed at her home, Pernell, N. C., July 5, 1893, soon after her parents died. It so fittngly speaks my feelings now.

"Oh God, be my guide, my help, my all,
And lead me through this life of care;
And when in Satan's snares almost enthralled,
Be thou my strength and succor there.

Oh Lord, I'm ignorant, weak, unskilled,
But thou art full of strength and power,
Thou the fear and sting of death can still,
Will thou be with me in the inevitable hour?

Lord, thou hast snatched away from me,
My earthly help and fairest hope,
Thou hast called them up to thee,
Alone through this dark world I grope.

Oh Lord, on my dark pathway shine,
And give me courage, let me not faint,
At last lead me to thy home divine,
And up there crown me as a saint."

Many times when troubled or perplexed, she would say, "Our times are in thy hands," and then she seemed to relax and be patient and submissive to her longings and sufferings, yet so weary and tired of the cares of this world. She was so very patient, loving and kind. She would often exclaim, if I reign with him, I must suffer with him.

Having been a good mother, neighbor, friend and Christian was attested in part by the beautiful flowers, the many messages, visits and acts of love and kindness bestowed on her and her children during her illness, death and following her burial. Since 1942 she was a semi-invalid, and suffered several critical illnesses. She became very ill Thanksgiving week, and continued critically ill until she died on Thursday, Dec. 28, 1950, at her daughter's home in Salisbury, N. C.

Her funeral was conducted at Hannah Creek Church, Sunday, Dec. 31, 1950 by Elder T .F. Adams of Willow Springs, N. C. She was laid to rest beside her husband and two babies in Benson Cemetery. Written by her daughter and sister of her faith I hope.

(Mrs.) VIRGINIA G. WOODARD
Kenly, N. C.

With deep sorrow we note the passing of Brother THOMAS R. STARR, who departed this life at his home in Pomona, near Chestertown, Md., Jan. 24, 1951, after a brief illness following a heart attack while engaged in cutting wood. He was past eighty-three years of age. Among the immediate surviving relatives are three sons: Russell of Chestertown, Md., Sherman and Walter of Pomona, Md., four daughters, Mrs. Minnie M. Grussing, Mrs. Rose S. McMullin, Chestertown, Mrs. Ruth S. Lucht, Pomona, and Mrs. Daisy P. Saathoff, Denton, Md. One son, Elmer, died in 1949. Also surviving are twenty-five grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

Brother Starr was born near Needmore, Pa. in 1868 where he spent his early life following the avocation of farming, and at times being engaged in the lumber business. He was married in 1895 to Miss Rachel C. Mellott of Whips Cove, Pa. who died in 1938. He moved to the vicinity of Chestertown in 1905 where he conducted a truck farm and also followed his trade as a blacksmith, being successful in all his pursuits. He was a man of marked industry and inflexible honesty, and was highly esteemed as a neighbor, citizen and friend. His pleasant manner and willingness to be helpful appealed to all who knew him. He was baptized into the fellowship of the Welsh Tract Church by Elder J. G. Eubanks and was always faithful to his church, and present when possible at the church meetings. He was sound in doctrine, firm in his convictions, unassuming in manner, and failed in no respect as a husband and father. He will be greatly missed by his neighbors, friends and the members of the church of his faith.

The funeral services were conducted Jan. 27 at the Bond Chapel in Pomona. The writer officiated, assisted by Elder Harold M. Bennett of Mardela Springs, Md., as the regular servant of the Welsh Tract Church of which Brother Starr was a member, Elder D. V. Spangler, was in Florida. Interment was in Chester Cemetery, Chestertown, Md.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

It is with a feeling of sadness we chronicle the passing of Sister MARY CATHERINE WHITTINGTON, who was born in Taylor County, Georgia, Dec. 21, 1857. She remained in the state of Georgia until Dec. 10, 1884 at which time she moved to the state of Florida where she spent the remainder of her natural life. The Lord had beautifully brightened her pathway thus far, but soon after moving to her new home in Florida the goodness and mercies of God became more and more evident to her, and the brilliancy of a blessed hope in the Lord Jesus Christ began ripening fast, so on Nov. 24, 1890 she was led by the Spirit of God to Washington Church where she related her hopes and fears and expressed a desire to be baptized. She was joyfully received into the fellowship of Washington Primitive Baptist Church and baptized by the late Elder George Ray with all the graces of the church bestowed upon her, the beauty and graces of the church she reverenced and loved the remainder of her life.

On October 30, 1950 in the serenity of the eternal purpose of God, while all nature seemed to tell us in its own language it was fast withering, the leaves, grasses and other vegetable material was in its golden hue, proving so truly that it was withering and going back to the earth, and then it was that our eternal God, who is our refuge, spoke in no uncertain terms, yet in a still small voice to his child, our sister and mother, and said it is enough, child come home. On Nov. 1 the remains of our precious sister and mother were placed in Washington Church Cemetery to await the coming of her blessed Lord, peace to her memory. The services were conducted by the writer in Washington Church house in the presence of a large host of close relatives and kindred in Christ, friends and neighbors from far and near. The Brake funeral home of Panama City, Fla. very efficiently took charge of the arrangements, and the immense number and beauty of the floral offerings bespoke in their language the high esteem in which this great mother and sister in Christ was held by all.

Seven children are left to mourn her passing; W. R. and B. F. Whittington, Chipley, Fla.; J. E. Whittington, Scotland Neck, N. C., J. T. Whittington, Bogalusa, La., R. R. and C. O. of Panama City, Fla., and Mrs. P. L. Noles, with whom she made her home in Panama City, Fla. There are sixteen grandchildren, twenty-five great-grandchildren and five great-great-grandchildren. The writer takes great pride in saying the above named children are very outstanding, and numbered among our best citizens. Evidently the teachings of this great and good mother is bearing fruit in these fine children. May the great lesson she taught never grows less. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." Rev. 14:13. Written by the request of the family. (Elder) F. A. COLLINS

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Delaware River Association will convene with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J., Wed., Thurs., and Friday, June 6, 7 and 8, 1951. Services will begin at 10 o'clock D.S.T. Wed. morning. A cordial invitation is extended to all ministers and brethren of our faith and order in fellowship with us, and all friends of our faith will be welcome. Those arriving by car or bus on Tuesday please go to the home of Mrs. George Genther, 25 W. Broad St., or Mrs. Letha Blackwell, 9 Princeton Ave., Hopewell, where they will be cared for. Those arriving by train, Reading R.R., from N.Y. or Phila. will be met Tuesday evening. All arriving on Wed. morning should go directly to the meeting-house.

(Mrs.) LETHA BLACKWELL, Church Clerk

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Welsh Tract Church, near Newark, Delaware, Saturday and Sunday, May 12 and 13, 1951. Services to begin on Saturday at 10:30 A. M. Brethren, sisters and friends are extended a cordial invitation to meet with us. (Elder) D. V. SPANGLER

ENDOWMENT FUND

J. M. Shockley, Md., $100; Minnie Lee Williams, Tex. $15.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. H. A. Strube, Tex., $2; A friend, N. Y., $10; Miss B. McLachlin, Can., $1; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., $2; Mrs. J. Clifford, Wash., $2; A Love, La., $2; M. E. Kuns, Cal., $2; Mrs. J. W. Free, Tex., $2.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

The Trustees of the Signs of the Times, Inc. are pleased to announce the appointment of Elder D. V. Spangler, Route 2, Annapolis, Md., Editor, and Elder J. D. Wood, Route 5, Box 53, Baltimore, Md., Assistant Editor, commencing July 1, 1951.

On and after that date (July 1, 1951) all mail for the Signs of the Times, Inc. should be addressed Annapolis, Maryland, P. O. Box 86. All money orders should be made payable at Annapolis, Md.

To many of our subscribers both Elder Spangler and Elder Wood are well known, and we are confident the Signs will be continued on the same high standard it has been in the past by Elder Dodson.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC...
CYRUS RISLER, Sec'y

CORRESPONDENCE

"And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made." Gen. 2:2.

If God in his wonderful wisdom, and supreme power over all things will reveal to this unworthy speck of dust, this less than the least of all saints if one at all, I am in his hands like clay in the hands of the potter. I realize there is a cause that produces the effect and no effect can be produced without a cause. I am reminded of a hymn, number 8 in Beebe's Collection.

"Eternal God! Almighty Cause
Of earth and seas, and worlds unknown;
All things are subject to thy laws,
All things depend on thee alone."

How completely all the details of every thing was worked out in the six periods, or days. All were worked out in the unseen. His decree of all things from the smallest microbe to the largest being that has life, to the still life of grass, herbs and trees, the sparrows, the hairs of your head, the air we breathe, the water we drink, the rain that falls, the ice and snow, the life that we live all is dependent on Him. We might say, in our times, the drawing board with all its sketches is blue printed. His work is over, and on the seventh day he is resting from all his work which is now being fulfilled according to it, the blue prints. His will in all things is coming to pass. It is not a chance world, not by unreliable works of man, not by fate or uncertainty, but the work of an omnipotent God according to his will and for his purpose as he hath decreed, and is coming to pass bringing glory to his name. "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches."

I have spoken in a general way and now we look at the written word which he hath left upon record, "that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." Rom. 15:4. They were written for our learning. It is our try-square for in all things they must be a witness, it is light that makes manifest. Some of the things in the Book we do not understand, nor can we understand the simplest quotation unless he reveals it to us; they must be a witness, and there is a witness within when God by his spirit takes

the things of Jesus and shows them unto us. (John 16) In the absence of testimony there is no belief. One must be quickened by the grace of God, and be born of an incorruptible seed before he can fathom, or know, the things of God and God resting from all his work which he declared was very good. "Declaring the end from the beginning." Isa. 46:10. Let us examine the blue prints which records before the world was made, for there is recorded in the book of life the names of certain ones that God had chosen, and his choice was before the world was made. The Lord's chosen people is believed a truth. It is eternal and unconditional according to the record. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." 2 Tim. 1:9. "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." John 17:5. His own words prove to us that Jesus Christ was one with the Father when his people were chosen in him. Speaking of the second death, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Rev. 20:15.

Brethren, I did not start to preach election to you for I know the readers of the *Signs* believe it, but merely to call your attention to the scriptures of truth as the blue prints have gone out and see that you make it according to the pattern. Remember that God is resting from all his work. I believe it is yet the seventh day with him and all his work is done. Here it is now being fulfilled, and the power of God is still being declared by his chosen watchmen, and it is as foolish to-day as it was to the Greeks, and the wisdom of the world still stumbles at it, but to them that are called it is the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

I am thinking of the passing of the former Editor. It was a shock to me. Many are the times I have heard him preach the wonderful works of God: I have been entertained in his home and at the churches that were under his care and of the promptness in which he would answer one when written to. He spared no pains in entertaining his brethren; many of his Editorials are a matter of record, and the good Lord, according to his decree, has another who will stand in his place that the *Signs of the Times* will still go on proclaiming "The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon." Elder Dodson has now fulfilled the part of the decree concerning him, he is now resting from his labors as God did from his. May God reconcile us all in our loss for it is his gain. We are left to endure a little longer but God will not leave himself without a witness. All that we have has been given to us, and how small it makes one feel, how little, how we are broken down in tears when 1 John 3:1 is revealed unto us, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." Take courage children for your names are written in heaven. "Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." Isa. 26:4. He that is resting from all his work hath decreed it so. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his." 2 Tim. 2:19.

I first dedicate this imperfect writing to Brother Cyrus Risler, who has been such a help to Elder Dodson during his sickness. If approved by him, providing there has been no Editor appointed, then to the readers of the

Signs, asking for your prayers that I may be kept faithful. I beg to remain your brother in Christ.

(Elder) GEORGE L. WEAVER

2802 Marcum Terrace, Huntington, W. Va.

Lillie, La.

ELDER J. E. BURGESS, DEAR BROTHER: I received your highly appreciated letter to-day and was glad indeed to hear from you again in reply to my recent letter. As to publishing it in any of the papers it will be all right with me only I do feel so much my unworthiness and unprofitableness. I do not remember what I wrote you, but if there is anything in it that you think will be of comfort to the Lord's people I freely give my consent for it to be published.

Yes, you are right about my being at the Pig River Association. I remember it very distinctly and remember hearing your name, but I do not recall you in mind as seeing you. I remember the meeting and several things that took place there. My wife remembers your wife at this meeting. I am about fifty-eight years old and have been going among this people about thirty-six years. In one sense of the word it seems as of yesterday. I was only twenty-two years old when I started. Though I do feel so unworthy and unprofitable among them, if I am not deceived, I love them and their experiences and travels. It has been very comforting evidence to me as one I trust has been blessed with a sweet hope in Christ Jesus the Lord and Savior, otherwise I have no hope.

If Jesus is not my hope, my great desire and my salvation then I have none at all. Everything that I do, hear, see and feel would completely condemn me, and ruin me forever and ever were it not for my hope in Jesus who is the way, the truth and the life, the only salvation of his people either for time or eternity. If people were saved in any sense for well doing then who can do well? Paul said when he would do good evil was present with him, and how to perform that which was good he found not. Not only this but we find that Paul in another place says there is none that doeth good, no not one.

I truly wish that I could do good, and not only so, but if it could please the Lord to enable me to be so. I wish I were perfect and sinless altogether, and would remain that way the rest of my pilgrimage here below, but alas I am vile and sinful and often made to weep and mourn, sigh and cry because of this fact. But, dear brother, I am hoping and longing for that time when our blessed Redeemer will come and change us from mortal and sinful creatures to immortal and righteous beings like unto himself, where there are eternal joys and pleasures forevermore.

I am glad you are sharing Gospel Comments with the brethren and sisters. If you find any who would like to have a copy of their own tell them to write me and I will send one. May God bless and comfort you, yours and all the household of faith in your section as well as elsewhere. Pray for me and write anytime you feel to do so. I am always glad to have a letter from any of the Lord's little ones. Your very unworthy brother in hope.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES

1158 Falls Terrace, Union, N. J.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER RISLER: I wish I could put on paper all the thoughts I have written to you in mind for the past three months, hoping I could speak some words of comfort to you in your saddened and bereaved condition at the loss of our dearly beloved pastor, but I hesitate to say anything knowing there is only one source of comfort to those of a broken and con-

trite spirit. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Though we feel deeply our loss, so deeply that our hearts are too heavy to even speak of it when we see each other, yet we would not wish him back in this world of sin and sorrow for we feel that he is now at rest in peace where there are pleasures forevermore; where joy awaits those of like precious faith. At first it seemed as if we could not go on without the ever loving, watchful care of Elder Dodson, but we must be submissive to the will of God for we know "he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" For he has all power and has promised that all things work together for good to them who love the Lord.

We feel sure that the above statement is true yet we stop and ponder "Do I love the Lord or no? Am I his, or am I not?" Be our faith and hope ever so small we would not exchange it for ten thousand worlds like the one we are living in to-day. Though our faith may waver and seem smaller than the smallest grain of mustard seed, yet we would not have the courage to press forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, if it were not for the faith and hope of a brighter world than this. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Sometimes we feel that we just cannot go on our way, our load seems so heavy and there seems no way of escape from the many trials and tribulations of this world, but his everlasting arms are underneath us every step of the way; he has promised never to leave nor forsake his people regardless of what man may say or do against the redeemed of the Lord. Not one will ever be lost, his grace is sufficient for each and every one whose names are written in the eternal book of life. May it be his will to give us strength and courage to stand fast in the faith of our fathers, looking unto Jesus at all times as the author and finisher of our faith, the one altogether lovely, the first, the last and always the great omnipotent who rules and reigns in this great universe; whose hand is mightier than any two-edged sword; who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. What a blessing it is to be able to see the hand of the Lord in all things be they great or small. If he takes care of the sparrow, or the blade of grass that withereth and falleth by the wayside, you may rest assured that he careth for his precious flock, regardless of where they may be in this world, and he needs not the help of poor, helpless, puny man to do the work which he foreknew and predestinated before man was formed of the dust of the earth. I would not want to worship a God who would not be able to do what he has purposed. If one single act could fail what assurance would we have that the entire plan of salvation would not be hopeless. Oh no, not that for me, I want to worship a God who has all power, then I know that if my name was ever written in the book of life it cannot be erased, and some day the call to enter into the joys of the Lord will be sounded, and great will be the rejoicing in that world beyond this vale of tears. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." That is our greatest assurance of being numbered with those of like precious faith; without the love we hope we feel for the brethren, we would have given up in despair long ago as that seems to be our only evidence of being one of that number whose

hope the Lord is. We love him because he first loved us, and gave himself a ransom for his people. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." How many of us would pass that test of our love, yet we would not be the redeemed of the Lord if the life had not been given to redeem us from the everlasting torment of this world. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Our minds are too finite and weak to comprehend the full significance of the above, yet there is a sweetness beyond measure of expression in words when we are able to gather a crumb of mercy from reading such blessed words of comfort and joy.

A peace that passeth all understanding comes over our tired and weary souls, and for a few moments we are grazing on the mountain top amid the joy of light and love which we could never convey to any other, yet there is something inexpressible in words which tell us that we are traveling in the same way as others whose hope the Lord is. Traveling in the straight and narrow path that leads to heaven above where the joy and expression of that great love is more than we are able to conceive at this time. What a wonderful blessing to even be able to think of such precious things. If we were not given this by the grace of God I am sure we could not think one good thought of our own as our minds are as prone to sin as the sparks are to fly upward. If left to ourselves we would have gone in an entirely different path, but thanks be to God, he, for some reason unknown to us, saw fit to direct our minds to thoughts concerning his great and marvelous plan of salvation alone by the grace of God. We are saved by grace, through faith and that not of ourselves. We are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus, unto good works, foreordained and predestinated in all things before man had the breath of life breathed into him. We had nothing to do with our natural birth, neither do we have any part in our spiritual birth. If left to ourselves we would be helpless, hopeless, lost and ruined forever. We could not even see our ruined condition unless given the eye of faith to see and understand what has been done for us. He has done it all, all to him we owe. Nothing in our hands we bring, simply to the cross we cling, hoping we are for whom the precious blood was shed on Calvary. We live by hope, hope of an eternal world where we will no longer need hope, for then our joy will be complete; and when we awake in thy likeness, O Lord, we shall be satisfied; satisfied to see him and share in the joys prepared for those that love him because he first loved us. "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." If it were not for the love that God had for his people, sending his Son into the world to be the propitiation for our sins, there would be no way of salvation for any; no hope of heaven and immortal glory; no joys beyond this world of trouble. Words fail me when I try to express the great overwhelming love that the Father hath bestowed on those whose sins were washed away, and their robes made white in the blood of the Lamb.

So many times I would like to sit down and discuss with you or others of like precious faith, the great truths of the Bible, but I always hesitate as I feel to know so little, and am always afraid I might say the wrong thing, or my words might betray ignorance and lack of knowledge of the scrip-

tures. There are so many things I would love to have talked to Elder Dodson about, but my weakness prevented it and, alas, it is too late now. My heart becomes heavy and I feel sad when I think that we shall see his face no more nor hear his voice. We miss his wonderful words of wisdom and spiritual advice he gave us from time to time, sometimes he was not able to be there, but he was so faithful to the little flock at all times, ever giving praise, honor and glory to the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

It was the Lord's will to call him home at the appointed time, and I am sure the Lord will take care of the little flock left behind. He will never leave nor forsake his people. Though the way may seem dark and gloomy he is watching over and caring for us at all times. "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Be not dismayed, he has a purpose in all things be they great or small they will all work together for his good.

I am sure we all appreciate the work you have done carrying on the *Signs* since the passing of Elder Dodson. I did not mean to write so much but these thoughts have been on my mind continuously for the last three months. In bonds of love.

(Mrs.) ELSIE LOEFFEL

Route 3, Chestertown, Md.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST: Tonight it seems very lonely to me for some reason. I have been sitting in Dad's old rocker reading the latest *Signs* with all the beautiful letters from the writers, and one with the letters of tribute to Elder Dodson's memory was very sweet to me. Every one loved him so much. He had a firm place in the hearts of all the brethren who had worked constantly with him, even as he did with those who had never met him except through his writings. Dad and I always enjoyed hearing him preach, but now both he and Dad are gone, and we other poor, humble ones are left to mourn their passing. We are not desiring them to return but feeling lost without them here on earth.

Tonight I have been meditating over the years as I have lived them, not wisely nor too well. I find as far back as I can remember that Dad always was a sort of steady rock in the midst of a large family of children. Mother was a Methodist and we went regularly to church about one quarter of a mile from home from the time we were old enough to go. Dad never went and often at night I would hear them talking, and mother begging him to go with her, and he telling her he just could not go in a church and listen to preaching that he did not agree with. Being a child I never could understand it, and as Mother and Dad always got along very well, and raised a family of eight children I did not think too much about the conversations. Sometimes Mother would cry and beg him to go just for her sake, but after going once or twice he did not go again. He was always friendly with the ministers and entertained them in the home. Every one who knew Dad respected him all through the years.

When I was nearly eighteen years of age I had met the man I later married. Mother did not approve of him because she had been told that he drank, but I did not think that was correct and I did love him. The day I was married Dad took me on his knee and asked me why I wanted to leave home, was I not happy? I told him I was but loved the young man so much, He said sadly, "Well I guess that is human nature and I hope you get along all right," I never forgot that talk as the years

went by. We had our family of children and our ups and downs. My husband did drink, but somehow as the years went by, and when times were hardest, a sort of hidden strength was given me not to complain, but I found myself many times unconsciously praying for faith enough to carry on, and keep me going until there was a way shown me that would bring us out of our troubles safely. Once when the going was nearly unbearable I sat down and poured out my heart to Dad nearly one hundred miles away. He answered at once in the only letters we ever exchanged, and one of the many beautiful things he told me was, "Keep your chin up darling, and hold fast to your faith, and everything will turn out all right in the end." After that I seemed to feel better and felt as though I had gained strength from somewhere.

I had always known Dad was an Old School Baptist but at that time I did not give it any special thought except to wonder why he never spoke of it. I knew that every so often he made trips to Needmore and Sidling Hill, Pa., and to Newark, Del. but he never spoke of those trips at home. My husband died in 1940 and I was left with seven children. The oldest a boy nearing fifteen and the youngest a girl three. In two years the war called my son into the Navy. Dad made visits to my home after the death of my mother in 1938. Sometimes he would stay two weeks at a time. I then lived only about ten miles from his home. The sweetest hours of all to me were after the children were in bed. He and I would sit on the big porch of the farmhouse in which we then lived, and he would speak of Him and how dear he was to Dad. He would speak of the meetings he attended so often and expressed the wish that some day I would go with him when he went. He often brought copies of the *Signs* for me to read and I thought some of the letters were beautiful, but it was a different language than any I ever heard among the people I knew. The things they spoke of believing were the same things I knew something of, but I had never felt that love and fellowship they spoke of.

In 1943 when Dad was ready to make his trip to Needmore, Pa. for the October meeting he came and asked me if I would go along, saying he did not want to go alone. I had had a nervous breakdown that spring and our boss felt I should take the vacation it meant. My six girls all declared they could take care of things for a week, but I took the youngest with me. It is a trip I will never forget. We spent wonderful evenings in the home of a dear brother and sister in Christ, and at meeting that Saturday and Sunday I was made to feel the warm love they all had for a stranger in their midst. A goat among the dear sheep of God I felt to be even then. When we returned home I often thought of that warm feeling of love I had felt. It made me wonder what manner of love was this! I had listened to Elders Lefferts, Vaughn, Walker and also Elder Herndon. He was nearly blind then, and his wife and I became good friends. We corresponded until his death.

The following May Dad asked me to go to Welsh Tract for their Saturday and Sunday meeting. I did not hesitate long. I wanted to mingle with the only people I had ever known who had made me feel at home with them even though I was a stranger. After that I did not need to be asked twice to go, I heard such sweet preaching, and Dad continued to leave copies of the *Signs* for me to read. I could understand the language better now and re-read many letters I had not understood before. Dad never spoke of me going to the church

for a home. He was wise as he knew if it was of the Lord I would be led there eventually. In 1945 I made my home with him and in 1946 he fell and broke his hip.

Elder Lefferts had been corresponding with me for over a year and I was beginning to long for the good things which only God could give me. Elder and Mrs. Lefferts visited us in our home once while Dad was in the hospital and spent the night with us. Then in the spring after Dad had returned home they came again and spent a night here after the meeting at Welsh Tract. Needless to say we were going to meeting pretty regularly, but after Dad was hurt we missed a lot. Then on Dad's 80th birthday, three years ago we started going again. The hunger in my heart for the blessed food and drink which could only be had at His banquet table was nearly unbearable, and I felt untold misery how sinful I was in my own sight, not to mention how I must have seemed to Him, knowing He could see me as no one else except as I could see myself. I felt I was facing a merciless Judge and that I surely could not win in any event I felt so low. Dad only knew how much I meant to him because I always found a way for us to go to Welsh Tract once a month, and to Pennsylvania in the spring and fall. Then I found I had a great desire to go to the Virginia and Salisbury Associations. Oh, what feastings we did have and have had ever since. It always seemed that at the last it was the most beautiful. I often felt it so not knowing how others felt until last fall I was talking with a dear little sister in Salisbury and she said the same thing wondering why. I told her I thought it was the sweetest because it was the last Association I would be attending for a long time, and each time I never knew if Dad would be with me next time, making it doubly precious to me. Elder Lefferts seemed to read something between the lines of the many letters we exchanged that year. In August after the third Sunday meeting he surprised me with a letter that told me better than anything else, that he had known for a long time the fight I had been having with myself, and he asked me what I was waiting for. He said he felt his time on earth was short and that before he left he wanted to be given the privilege of calling me Sister Ruth. It was such a beautiful letter and it filled me full to overflowing with a great desire to tell every-one how much I loved the Old Baptists and how much I longed to be one of them, but I felt I was not fit, and again I sat down and poured out my aching heart to Elder Lefferts. Needless to say my nights were filled with unuttered prayers. He answerd by return mail quoting scriptures from the portions of the Bible where others were baptized in His dear name, Lydia, the eunuch, etc. The whole letter was portions of such scriptures, and he finished by telling me if I could find one instance in the Bible where any-one was baptized because they were worthy he wanted me to tell him, and that he wanted me to kneel and pray earnestly for guidance. That night was a night that still remains vividly in my mind. I was so worn out I thought sleep would come easy but it did not. I thought once I would get up and write to a dear brother in Christ, telling him how torn up I was, hoping to find relief in that manner, but I could not write nor could I pray. Finally I seemed to fall into a sleep, yet I was not asleep. I was in a long hospital corridor with cots on both sides filled with patients. I suppose I was there to sing and cheer them, at least I was walking up and down, hands behind my

back, head bent and my load too heavy to carry it seemed. I was trying to sing "Rock of Ages" but I could not sing in tune no matter how I tried. The patients remarked on how I sounded. One raised up and said, "Is she supposed to be trying to cheer us up?" Another said "Is that supposed to be singing?" And through it all I kept pacing back and forth trying to sing, not looking to either side. Gradually my heart began to feel lighter, my head seemed to raise and I found the tune. I awoke singing those sweet words, "Nothing in my hand I bring! Simply to thy cross I cling." That whole verse was so clear to my mind and I felt I had my answer right there. The blessed Savior had shown me. "Could my zeal no respite know, Could my tears forever flow, All for sin could not atone; Thou must save, and thou alone!" I was able to fall asleep after that, but the next day doubts began to arise. I began to think again how miserable I would be if I was in any way deciving the dear brothers and sisters. I felt I was sure, but was I? God alone knows how I felt. This was Friday and meeting was Sunday. I went to bed Friday night praying silently again for reassurance. This time my answer came in a different way. I awoke after a time with the words of an old song we used to sing in church on my lips, and it seemed these words came so plainly to my mind.

"Helpless I am and full of guilt,
But for me thy blood was spilt,
Oh, cleanse and make me what thou wilt,
But take me as I am."

I felt so light hearted then and all my doubts left me. I knew what I wanted to do.

Dad had been spending that week with my sister and returned Saturday night. He knew nothing of all my troubles. I had wished many times he was there to talk it over with, yet I knew no one could help me or advise me. It was all in His hands. When Dad came home and we were alone after supper I got one of Elder Lefferts' letters and showed it to him. Then I pulled a footstool up to his side and rested my arms on his knees while he read the others. There were four letters in all came that week. Precious, sweet letters. Tears were running down Dad's cheeks when he got through. He asked me what I was going to do. I told him if the Lord allowed me to live another day I wanted to go tell them all how I felt. He only said, "That would make me the happiest man on earth." The next day was beautiful, warm and sunny. We left for meeting with my cousin and her husband, I put a change of clothing in the car saying nothing to any one. Elder Lefferts came and met us as we left the car. His eyes asked me how I felt and I told him. He and Dad both let their tears flow freely. I thought I was the only one that would be happy, but I found that others shared that happiness too. That made me love them all the more. The sermon Elder Lefferts preached was much on the same order of one of his letters except stronger, and how any-one desiring a home with the church could ever sit through it without going forward was a mystery to me. I could not find words to tell them how much I loved them, but I tried. No words can ever tell what we feel, it is too deep in our hearts. We can only try. Jesus told those whom he healed "See thou tell no man," knowing full well that every-one could tell by his actions that the hand of the Lord had been at work in that life. No words needed. His love shines all around. I was accepted and that afternoon I was baptized. That sounds plain and ordinary as I say it but it was far from that. I was so happy I could not express any thoughts or feelings for a long time. I

felt like shouting and singing, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." But it was such a deep, humble feeling of sweetneess that I could not express it audibly. Even now when I think of it I still feel an unreality about the wonder and beauty of it, knowing that I do not deserve such great things as he has promised to his loved ones. I still go on daily hoping and praying he will have patience with me, and uphold me in my weakness.

Just one year to the day from the time I was baptized Elder Lefferts lay ready to be put to rest. I thought then that I never wanted to go to meeting again, that I had lost the only precious link I had with the church. I did not yet realize that regardless of who preached, as long as it was Christ and him crucified, I would long to hear it. I found that out when next meeting day came. I felt that same strong desire to be there regardless of who preached. Elder Berry preached that Sunday. I had never heard him before but he preached the gospel and that was what I had come to hear. I have heard many dear saints preach and loved most of them, for what they stood for was what I believed and wanted to hear expounded in all its truth and beauty. Some I could not get as much from as others but that is not in the speaker, it is I. I have come to learn that, and I know that regardless of who is the speaker if he has something for me the Lord will enable me to hear it, but if not I will hear but not feel. I have often thought of the words used somewhere in the scriptures, saying not to glorify the man who is speaking but God who is in him. They are not the right words but that is what they mean, and as I think of the way some ministers always seem to have a beautiful message for my empty and hungering heart, I try to analyze my feelings. Is it the man or the message and I am sure it is only the precious truth which the dear Lord has blest the speaker to speak upon so plainly and humbly.

I have written much more than I intended, but tonight just seemed to be one of the times I feel too full to rest without unloading a great burden from my heart and mind. Dad has gone to his rest now. I will have him no more to go with me to meetings. The Lord let me have him and allowed me to take care of him for the past six years. I am thankful for that. He died knowing my faith was the same as his only he never knew how weak I am at times. His faith was a deep abiding faith, and he told me I should not worry for all was well with him. I knew that. If I can gain a small measure of the faith and peace of mind he had I will be happy, but that is only God given and by his grace and mercy. May be some day I will feel as though I can stand any test he will send to me. Right now I can only say humbly, Thy will not mine be done. Many times in the past I have been brought up short in my wanderings and made to realize that he said, stand still and know that I am God! Then for a time all goes well with me and life seems so bright. I will always miss Dad for he and I were both alone. My children growing up and gradually being self sufficient. He depended on me and I always knew he was there to be loved and cared for. It seems strange to me not to have to think of him first, but as I said before I will miss him most when I go to meetings for he loved to go so much even though sometimes it was hard for him to hear everything. I must end my ramblings or my letter will be far too long. Please think of me, dear ones all, as you kneel at the throne of grace for I do need your prayers and his

mercy. Your sister in hope of salvation by grace. (Mrs.) RUTH LUCHT

MEDITATIONS

To-day is May the seventh
The year of our dear Lord;
A few did meet together
To worship in his word.

To praise his name most holy,
His ordinance to keep;
Took bread and wine to show his death,
And washed one another's feet.

The time did pass so pleasantly,
My mind now on it dwells;
The memory of each dear face
I wish I now could tell.

Dear Sister Stowe was with us,
Though quite ill and weak,
By the grace of our Lord Jesus
Her actions, of him, did speak.

Our precious sister Wisenbaker
A pillar in the church,
Would in his strength, and by his grace
For his people ever work.

And sister Beene, so very dear,
In the spirit of love so calm;
Ever ready to help God's poor
And encourage them to press on.

The three dear sisters, (Walston, Berry, Anderson) absent,
Left places that could not be filled;
We hope they may return to them,
It being the dear Lord's will.

Our brethren, Lindsey and Foster
In meekness to us came,
Their faces shone with love to God,
As hymns of praise we sang.

Our visiting brother Chandler,
With countenance humble and meek:
His writings in the **Signs** we read,
'Twas good his face to greet.

Three Elders there were with us,
Each dependent upon our Lord
For food to set before us
As set forth in his word.

Elder Walston opened the service,
In prayer and hymn did beseech
The spirit of our Savior
To abide in our midst.

Then our visiting brother, Elder Ault,
Read from God's word most true,
About the holy child Jesus,
Who came, his Father's will to do.

Then Elder Walston again did speak,
Continuing on this wise,
How the Savior grew to manhood,
On the cross was crucified.

Then brother Beene, our beloved pastor,
Almost eighty-five years old,
Spoke of the riches of God's love
So great it can never be told.

And as our Lord did enable him
The little flock to feed,
The spirit in us was refreshed
Who felt a Savior to need.

There were others with us also,
And though they bear not the name;
We feel 'twas love for Jesus
And to hear the truth they came.

This writer most unworthy,
In fellowship was received;
Felt to be a deceiver
And these dear ones to deceive.

Does beg their prayers and forbearance,
And a home with them to keep;
No worthiness or merit in the flesh,
But a crucified Savior to plead.

These poor afflicted people I love,
Rich in God's pure grace,
Do hope in his Son, Jesus,
At last to view his face.

And now this day is ended,
The day that God hath made;
We would thank him in dear Jesus name,
For these blessings we received.

And may his loving countenance
On this little church continue to shine;
And his dear people who find rest here,
Be kept by his love divine.

To witness for our Savior,
Who in all things rules supreme;
And a crucified Savior, holy in love,
Forever be the theme.

Written in love to all God's people everywhere, and especially to the dear people at Shepherd Fold Church. A sister in hope.

(Mrs.) R. C. Wright

3801 Amherst St., Dallas, Tex.

* * * *

Our sister who wrote these lines
Is so faithful and true,
She walks and she talks
Of his grace and mercies too.

She has written so lovely and so well
Of the riches of His grace and glory,
We would be unmindful of our love for her
If we did not include our part in this story.

(Elder) W. O. BEENE, Pastor

Premier, W. Va.

DEAR EDITORS: I am subscribing for the *Signs of the Times*. It seems I like to read it more than anything I know when I can feel the spirit with which to read it. It seems these dear people whom I trust are the people of God can write my experience, if I have any, much better than I can myself. I love to see my wife walk over to the table and pick up one of the *Signs* and start reading and the tears begin to roll from her eyes. It seems I have been blessed with a companion that is of the same mind as mine but we feel at times that our hearts are so prone to sin.

I often wonder if I will ever be able to write my experience and be able to speak as those I have heard. It seems that when I would I don't, and when I want to I cannot. If what I think is hidden is made manifest then I could be made to rise up from under tons of weight in spite of the sins wrapped around me. I promise to do that which is good but am made to be a liar, and if I make a vow it is sure to be broken. My prepared feast always flees away when I would speak to anyone about my thoughts. When I would do good evil is present, and when I think I have done something good I have digged a pit and fallen into it. The only time I can cry for mercy is when I am in great distress and I am often in that condition. When I judge myself by the the law I am under full conviction of my awful sins. Tracing back to my childhood days, as I walk this life trying to live upright, I find I have never been able to live without sin, yet I believe if not deceived I have a hope in Christ and that obedience is in him.

I hope I am not altogether a deceiver to the people of the Primitive Baptist Church, but I was baptized by the Free-will Baptists. I was never united with them in spirit I found by the will of God. I could find no fellowship with them because they served idol Gods. I was called on to testify but was speechless and counted void because of not being able to say anything good about myself except I believed in worshipping God in spirit and in truth. If I have any experience at all I believe that salvation is of the Lord and that all understanding is from him. I am now called a backslider by the "Free-willers" but I realize that God has all power and "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." I have never slipped back from what was taught me by grace for it taught my heart to fear. If I have a hope at all my faith is in Christ for I have no confidence in the flesh. I am not a member of the church but I do desire the prayers of the saints of God. LEMUEL C. BRANCH

Route 3, Benton, Ky.

DEAR BRETHREN: Elder Dodson had two articles in the *Signs* in December, but when he wrote that the year 1950 was not all he might have desired in bringing good fortune I could go along with him there. Then when he wished that he might be able to stand still and know that He is God, or whatever he said about it, the *made to stand still* is what I wanted so much to be made to

do in the adverse things I had been undergoing this fall for three months. Then as he further stated, *to know no other will but His,* it seems I have fought so often for my will before I am made to stand still, willing to stand still and wait for what does come about and then feel reconciled this must be God's will. Surely we all are fearful at times that his mercy will not reach out in that way and place where we want it to extend. We grow fearful, I say, in fear that we are afraid of ourselves, and, too, we get afraid it will not turn out to please us. Oh, we are so poor, so miserable, so undone, we never know just why. The long dark shadows creep in and threaten us in such devastating ways. We search for experiences to bear us up; we read in His word to find just a few consoling words that seem to be dropped down for us, and when we fail we cry out as David did, "Hath God forgotten to be gracious?"

This fall I have attended meeting after meeting, my heart so crushed, my health so impaired by worry and long impatient waiting, trying to forget everything but the sound of the minister's voice; searching through the discourse to find a place to rest and study his words; find comfort, find peace. Then in listening I have been almost to the point I could not listen being so burdened with worldly circumstances, then may be a little word would come and help me to forget all for a few short minutes.

We had a wonderful Association at the Old Soldier Creek Church. We were blessed in so many ways. The Lord had blessed the ones who felt a will to help take care of the visitors and our homes were open to our friends. I hope in no way trying to out-do some one else, but to do the best we could and in the manner that was orderly and decent in everything commendable to our God and to the church of the firstborn. We did rejoice that God was mindful of us in keeping us humble before him in love to our friends. We had preaching in our homes at night and felt to have had messages of love, truth and God edifying and man abasing. We hope God will continue to be gracious to usward.

Glad Elder Dodson said what he did in the closing of volume 118 as it touched a very responsive cord in my heart and mind. I do so hope I desire no other will but God's, yet I fight for every incident to turn out as I want it to, I feel very stubborn and ugly and my views very slanted. I was moved many times within the last few months to say, surely I am not His. Then a few little crumbs would be dropped I thought probably for me—thanks to his name. May he keep us is my wish.

(Mrs.) EFFIE BOWDEN

Route 2, Box 36, Hickman, Ky.

DEAR CHILDREN OF THE ALL POWERFUL GOD: He is the only one to help a poor sinner who tried to save himself and only got worse. Thanks to his holy name when the time came he spake and relieved me of my burden. Seemed that I had a new road to travel at times. Do not feel worthy to call you brethren for at times I get so low down I see no light to guide me, but I try to beg Him for mercy for he said he will not forsake us.

I am enclosing check to renew for the best paper I have ever read. Use the balance as you see fit. May God bless you in his work.

W. G. ANDERSON

CORRECTION

On page 84 in the April issue near the bottom of the second column a line was left out. It should have read: "Now do not understand that I do not believe in obedience, but I do not believe that the carnal mind can please God."

EDITORIALS

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SHEEP

Many times I have written and said that the New Testament was directed to the children of God. Until I began researching for this article I did not realize that the word goat was used in reference to men but the one time in Matthew Chapter 25. In every other place some other word is used, but in all instances it is always by way of condemnation.

The Lord's people are reckoned as sheep. The children of the devil are reckoned as goats. The sheep are like their shepherd; the goats are like their father. The sheep hear the voice of Jesus; the goats hear him not because they are not sheep. The sheep follow their shepherd; the goats follow their father. The Shepherd is the leader of the sheep; the devil is the leader of the goats.

A passing reference to goats is enough business for sheep to have with them. The Savior forever sounded the death knell of any goats getting to be sheep. They tempted him by their persuasion to come out plainly and tell them whether he was the Christ or not. Hear his answer: "I told you, and ye believed not; the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." John 10:25, 26. And, "Why do ye not understand my speech? even bcause ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." John 8:43, 44. Let us leave the goats right here. Unless the Lord was mistaken in what he said, they will still be in the same condition should we want to refer to them in the future.

I like to think upon Isaiah's message about the sheep. He says, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isa. 53:6. In this there is a going and turning away that belongs expressly to the family of God; and there is a laying on him the iniquity of all involved. These dear little ones are not glad that they nailed him to the cross; no, no, not that, for it is with shame faces that they must acknowledge that they are the guilty wretches that nailed the glorious Redeemer to the cross of Calvary. The elect family of God all fell or went astray in Adam, and are helpless to recover themselves from their fallen condition. It may seem trite to go over again the fact that man is unable to recover himself from under the condemnatory sentence of death that is upon him in a two fold sense. He died in Adam, that is, the whole human family came under the passing of death upon men, (Rom. 5:12, 18) and then he is involved in the death sentence that sin brings. (Ezek, 18:4. 20) This was inclusive and conclusive. Every son of Adam was included in this decree of God; every one of them passed from a state of natural felicity

to state of perpetual and total depravity.

Can the elect get out of this condition? Not if they died. If they lack a little of being dead, then they did not die in Adam at all. It is a sure doctrine, founded on common intellect, that a thing dead cannot act in order to have life. Paul, in writing to the brethren at Ephesus, tells them that they were quickened by the Lord. This quickening into divine or eternal life is God giving or imparting life where none existed. Until this life was given them, they were not unlike all others of the Adamic family, being dead in sin, following in the exact footsteps, *yea, making footsteps just like the children of wrath.* God and godliness was as foreign to them as anything else is to a dead thing. It was not a case of them knowing God and not able to get out; it was not a case of them desiring to get out from under death and not able to do it. But it is a case of them being dead to any knowledge of the existence of God. The first inkling that they get of the existence of God, is after they are born of God.

The sheep are not different from the goats in their fallen nature. They fell into whatever condition the goats or non-elect did. They do not hold any superiority over the goats as far as possession of qualities that would enable them to hold communications or gain favors from God. The Scriptures are silent in showing any difference in the behaviour of the elect and non-elect before a new birth, but rather is to the point in showing the walk and talk to be natural, carnal, and in all instances the same. The whole family of Adam enjoyed the walk in fulfilling the lusts of the mind. The god of this world was only the kind of god that any of them know, or cared to know, anything about. They all, one as much as the other, believed in an arm of flesh to bring about whatever changes that they desired.

In the purpose of the King of glory the time unfolds for the chosen vessel to be born again. This great and paradoxical event is the work of a sovereign wrought in the person. In this performance the sovereign works alone and independent of him that is being wrought upon. There has not been any improvement on the Saviour's likening it to the wind. It is not my intention to tell you that the sheep are not conscious of something taking place; it is not my desire to tell you that God's people do not know that a work has been performed for them and in them that was never done before; it is not necessary for me to tell you, who have experienced the blowing of this mighty wind, that nothing has happened to you. There is too much impression left by the sovereign movement of this wind; there is such a change in the demeanor of one thus wrought upon; there is such a difference in what they now relish and what they formerly did, that it can be readily known that the wind has blown.

Do you mean that the children of God, the sheep of his pasture, can know that they are born of the Spirit? Do you mean to set aside our being saved by hope? Are you relegating to the past, as being out of date, the little children's testimony of a precious hope that they have been born again? No, dear pilgrim, nothing of that is in my mind. But I would comfort those that have such a hope, by telling you that you do know something overcame you: that some almighty and irresistible power swept away your dependence on an arm of flesh; that, as a thief in the night, a mighty rumbling, devastating power seized hold upon you, bringing terror into your soul, tossing you from

wave to wave, up, down, to and fro, finally to land you broken and bruised into the arm of a rest that you have often desired that you might experience again. But there is a question in your mind that will stay there as long as you tabernacle in this frail body of clay. That question you would give a world like this to have answered. It is, What was this power that dealt with me? Was this the Lord? Was this the change that so many speak about? And perhaps the questioning turns to another form, and you ask yourself if this is the work of the carnal mind? Am I deceived in the matter? Did I fix this up in my own mind? Now to these serious queries that all the sheep know in some degree, let us apply the reasoning and power of the statement of the Saviour. The necessity of the new or second birth is clear. Verily, verily (so be it, so it is, I say unto thee, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3. Personally, I have not accepted a difference in what Jesus taught in the third and fifth verses, but that in the first reference he clearly teaches the necessity of the second birth, and the second reference is from what source he is born again. Technically, I would not make any difference in seeing and entering the kingdom, but we are not dealing in technicalities, but with being translated out of darkness into the kingdom. Another solemn experience comes into our spiritual existence just here. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." John 3:6. Oh, how often have the little lambs come to the conclusion that they are nothing but vile hypocrites; how often, how often have they cried out, "O wretched man that I am;" how many times have they decided that they have misled the Old Baptists, and that they do not have any right in the dear sanctuary of the saints. Ah, me, little lamb here is the truth exemplified in your experience; here is truth shown you in your daily travel. It is one thing (and that is a good thing) for the truth to be laid in the Bible, but it is of more value to the sheep when they have it manifested in them. Yes, me thinks, that I hear you saying that you would lay aside the hypocrisy of this mortal body; it seems that at the glorious appearing of your Shepherd that you would lay aside this wild olive tree nature and live in the life of that new birth. But again and again you find that that which is born of the flesh is flesh. It may get religion; it may practice so-called good works; it may go through the form of displaying the body to be burned, but it will be the flesh in action.

To these twice born characters he brings in the wind. The sovereignty of the wind; you hearing the sound of it; your inability to tell from where it comes and goes, are all a part of the whole to you. At one time I thought that the lack of knowledge was limited to the first of that work. In other words, I thought that it had reference to regeneration, and to that alone. Many years later I hope that divine power gave me to understand the present tense of the language that Jesus spoke. So *is* every one that *is* born of the Spirit.

Now, dear child of God, we have found that all the sheep were totally depraved in Adam; that none of them were able to extricate themselves from their fallen condition. That is Bible doctrine; that is Baptistic doctrine; that is the experience of all the sheep. These two points of doctrine are incorporated into the harmonious whole of every Old School Baptist association in America. The most, if not all, of our people have agreed that the elect are effectually called; that the calling is

always effected; that the work of the Spirit in this calling is always irresistible. But is that our experience? Have we so learned Christ? Has he taught us that? Have we felt the power overwhelming us and bringing us into sweet submission? Has he taught in the Bible, *and in our souls,* that this is so? Some body has been claiming to be sheep shepherds before his day, but he labels them thieves and robbers. He that enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. It is not asking too much for us to remember what those promised and purported to do for Israel, that came before him. They preached a conditional doctrine based on the creature, did they not? Did they not tell the Israelites that if you do thus and so, that you will get the full benefits of the good of the land? If there had ever been any able to have kept that doctrine, the Jews would not have been ready for the coming of Jesus, but it was a failure from the beginning, and it will always prove a failure to every sheep that tries it. He is the Shepherd of the sheep. Is that gospel? Is that true? Have you, dear pilgrim, experienced his guiding and leading you into green pastures and beside still waters and to the banqueting house of the Lord? Now let us take another step. The sheep hear his voice. Is that gospel? Will that do to preach? Will that do to rely on? Is that enough? Do we have any authority to divide the sheep? Can we scripturally say that some of the sheep hear his voice? Can we say that some of the sheep hear his voice part of the time? Now another step into this glorious doctrine that the throng of sheep are taught. He calls them by name. What are we to believe about this? He calls them by name, and if language means anything to the sheep, it means that he calls them by name. He does not call *at* nor *to* these sheep, but he calls them. He leads them out. How many does he call? How many does he lead out? Does he try to get them to hear him? Does he try to lead them out? He puts them forth. How many does he put forth? Well inspiration did not say that he puts forth as many as he can, but it says that he puts them forth. He puts them *all* and he goes before them. *All* that he goes before he declares that they follow him. How far do they follow? How often do they follow? The flesh asks such questions, for it doubts all that God has promised.

God is the Sovereign in the calling, putting forth of the sheep, going before them, in their following. He makes or causes them to hear. They know his voice. They do not know the voice of strangers and will not follow them. They flee from the strangers. May the dear Lord bless us with a fruitful mind to think upon the goodness and mercy of God in sending the Good Shepherd into this world to take upon himself the herding of every poor lamb of the fold into a place of safety; in giving to them eternal life: in keeping them in such a way that all the wiles of Satan shall never be able to rob them of that inheritance; that no matter how lowly and sinful and poor they may feel that he is the faithful Shepherd ever looking to his own everlasting righteousness to feed and succor them; and that whatever charges the world may think to bring against them, that it was brought against him first, and having been brought against him, and he their daysman and Redeemer, that he paid the penalty for them all, and that they shall never, *never,* come into condemnation. W. D. G.

THE WORLD SAVED

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but

have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." John 3:16-17.

Opposers of the doctrine of the particular and personal election of the subjects of divine grace, sometimes refer to this expression of our Lord as authorizing the conclusion that God has endeavored to save all the world of mankind; some claiming that this effort of the Almighty has made it possible for all sinners to save themselves by complying with conditions, while others hold that the will of God is fulfilled in the universal salvation of all the children of men. This latter theory is in itself more consistent than the conditional system, since it does not involve the gross absurdity of the omnipotent God being unable to accomplish his will. But the falsehood of this doctrine appears from the direct testimony of the inspired record, wherein the final and everlasting destruction of the ungodly world is definitely stated. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." Psalms 9:17. See also 2 Peter 2:6; Jude 7-13. And John the Baptist testifies of the two opposite characters in the close of the chapter in which our text is written: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not on the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

It is not necessary to argue as to the truth of the words of Jesus under consideration, for we are not writing for the purpose of convincing infidels; believers of the inspired Scriptures accept the truth of all that our Lord taught, however it may be beyond the power of their finite minds to comprehend the mystery of his doctrine. In the text the Lord assigns the reason for his declaration immediately preceding these words. He must be lifted up, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." In the illustration to which he refers there is the pattern of the matter in which the love of God is displayed in the lifting up of the Son of man. By considering the type we may find something of the doctrine here taught, The literal circumstance is recorded in Numbers 21:4-9. There is no account of any except Israelites being bitten by those fiery serpents which the Lord sent among the people; and not even an Israelite was in a condition to be relieved by looking upon the brazen serpent unless he had been bitten by those venomous flying serpents which the Lord had sent among the murmuring people. It was not a remedy which Moses had devised by the wisdom he had learned in Egypt, but it was by the express command of God that the serpent of brass was lifted up; "and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass he lived." This was precisely what the Lord had said unto Moses should "come to pass," when he directed that the serpent should be lifted up. Now, let it be remembered in the antitype that it is just "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up." If there was nothing left to the discretion of Moses in the type, then in the antitype all is settled by the inflexible purpose of God; as he said to his disciples after his resurrection, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Luke 24:46-47. The object for the accomplishment of which this suffering behooved our Redeemer,

who is here called the Son of man, was that the objects of the election of grace might be ransomed from the power of the grave; and there is no reason given for this provision of grace but that stated in the text. This is also by Paul assigned as the consideration for which the saints are saved. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved)." Eph. 2:4-5. This declaration of the perfect work of God in the saints, whose life is in Christ, is true of all them on whom his love is fixed. If he loved every sinner with that same love, then they are all saved by grace. So Paul says, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom. 8:38-39.

The love of God was fixed upon the world which is mentioned in our text in such a way that the eternal purpose of that love is accomplished in the salvation of all that world. The artful device of the tempter would mislead the saints by caviling over the word "world," as if it must mean that all the family of Adam were loved of God. In thus wresting the Scriptures we know of no reason for limiting the word to the race of man, for in some cases the word includes all things animate and inanimate. But it is not our wish to contend against those who dare to wrest the language of Scripture so as to change the truth of God into a lie; if we could even succeed in convincing them of the truth, it is not possible that they should do more than "believe and tremble," for they could not love the truth of God without the Spirit of Christ in them to produce that divine fruit. If the Lord will give grace to enable to expose the sophistry by which some little child of God is robbed of his rest in the sweet assurance of the gospel, it is all we wish to accomplish. In order to show the saints that our Lord did not seek to convert them who were not of his sheep, it is only necessary to refer to his own declarations. "And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I shall in no wise cast out." "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." John 6: 35-37, 44. "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." John 10:26. "I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." John 17:9. It is clear from these expressions of Jesus that they who believe not the truth were not included in the world which God loved. Of that world, Paul says, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." Romans 5: 8-9. It will be seen that there was no condition for us to fulfill in order that the love of God might embrace us; but it was the everlasting love of God which prompted the gift of his only begotten Son for the salvation of all his people, that is, "whosoever believeth in him." As all believers in Jesus have everlasting life, so all who have everlasting life believe in him. Well might John call attention to this wonderful revelation of divine favor, saying, "Be-

hold, what manner of love the father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." 1 John 3:1. It needs no argument to show that this world which knew not God, and knows not his sons, is not the same world for whose salvation God sent his Son into the world. It is easily seen by the plain record of the Scriptures that the love of God does not embrace that whole world which lieth in wickedness, (1 John 5: 19), and which hates the saints as it hated their Lord. John 15:18. The world which God loves is that world to which he giveth life, which cometh down from heaven as the bread of God. John 6:33.

The sending of the Son of God into the world, as we understand it, is not merely the manifestation of Christ in a body of flesh as the son of Mary, although this is included in that work for which he was made flesh and dwelt among us. In every member of his body, the church, he is come in the flesh, and dwells in them and walks in them. 2 Cor. 6:16. In this unity with the members of his body he is the very life which inflexible justice demands of them as sinners; and he came in compliance with that demand, not to offer a substitute for the life of the sinner, but to give himself as that life which was justly forfeited by the sin of his body. He had power to lay down his life and to take it again. John 10:18. It was by this power that he was qualified to finish the work which by the commandment of the Father was given him to do. John 14:31; 17:4. No other being in earth or heaven could satisfy the requirement of divine justice; therefore, his own arm brought salvation unto himself. Isa. 63:5. It is very significant that the Deliverer says that this salvation was brought to himself exclusively. This accords perfectly with the inspired judgment of Paul, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead." 2 Cor. 5:14. Since all whose sins were borne by our Redeemer were included in his body, the justice of this judgment is evident, so far as the death of all the members is necessarily involved in the death of the Head. But the glorious display of life and immortality which was brought to light through the gospel of his resurrection, is too wonderful for reason to comprehend. This crowning glory of the work of Christ can never be received in any other way but by the revelation which is given by the Spirit to them who are born by the Spirit.

To the finite judgment of man it would seem right that the Son should come to condemn the world whose transgressions had brought on him the awful load of suffering by which he satisfied the demand of justice which was against his members, who are the world saved through him. But he was not sent to condemn. Divine justice poured forth just condemnation in the law of sin and death. This is found in the experience of the saints. Before they see Jesus as their Redeemer they have painful knowledge of sin by the revelation of justice in the law. "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Every believer is qualified to bear witness to this truth; having experienced the knowledge of sin by the law when the commandment came and sin revived, and death reigned by sin, until Christ was revealed as the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes. This revelation always carries such conviction in itself that every one to whom it is given is a believer. So all the unbelief of Thomas vanished at the ap-

pearing of the risen Jesus. It is not said in the text that the gift of the Son of God was that whoever will believe in him should not perish. Observe the definite character specified, "Whosoever believeth in him." Words could not be more definite in describing the people whose salvation shows how God loved the world. Every one who has ever felt the burden of sin, knows how utterly destitute of this belief he was until Christ was revealed in him the hope of glory. Without the evidence of living faith he could no more believe in the Son of God as his Savior than he could see the natural sun at midnight. When he believed in Jesus as his Savior he already had everlasting life in his own personal experience. So Jesus says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." John 10:27-28. There is as much difference in one who believeth in Jesus and one who believeth not, as there is between light and darkness; and there is as much consistency in trying to persuade the darkness to glow with the radiance of noonday as in urging an unbeliever to believe in Jesus. On the other hand, the believer can as easily blot out the noonday sun as to cease to believe. This assertion may startle some dear doubting child; but without belief there can be no doubt. The hypocrite does not doubt; for he knows that he is wilfully pretending to be what he is not. They who are deceived are not tempted to doubt, for their deceiver would not thus expose his own devices. It is necessary for the followers of Jesus to be tried by doubts, that they may learn the strength of that faith on which their comfort rests. As our Lord was tempted by the suggestion of doubts when the devil presented those fearful proposals in the wilderness, so all his disciples must meet the same in that measure which God gives to each one. Thus their very doubts attest the genuineness of their hope in Christ Jesus. Herein the believer has the witness in himself; and indwelling darkness gives assurance to the saints that they are "the children of the day." Having experienced the power of faith in delivering them out of all their trials, they can testify from personal knowledge that "Salvation is of the Lord."

There was no need that the Son of God should come into the natural world to condemn it, since that world was already under the curse for the sake of sinful man. Paul says, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." If it remained for condemnation to be brought upon this natural world by the coming of the Son of God in his being born in Bethlehem, then death had reigned thousands of years before that condemnation came. But it was to save that which was lost that the Son of man came. He finished the work which was given him to do; and therefore the world for whose salvation he was sent, was saved when he gave up the ghost on the cross of Calvary. The purpose of God in sending his Son into the world was not to give the world the opportunity of choosing whether to be saved or lost. If that world is not saved then the design of God is defeated. But if in one case the will of God is not done, then there can be no certainty that it may not fail in all his designs. This would utterly destroy the hope of salvation, since no assurance can remain that God is able to save. Such awful blasphemy against the per-

fection of God is not worthy of a place in the thoughts of a redeemed sinner. As it was the design of God in sending his Son into the world that the world might be saved, that design must have been fulfilled. His truth requires it, for he says, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isa. 46:10. "Whatsover the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in the earth, in the seas, and all deep places." Psalm 135:6.

If it had been the will of God that the wise and prudent of this world see the things of Jesus, then they would have been qualified to receive them; but they are and ever will be hidden from the wisdom of men, and revealed unto babes. So, doubtlessly God is able to have given the testimony of truth in words which could not be perverted; but he has been pleased to confound the wisdom of man by showing his truth to babes, while they who would by searching find out God are held under everlasting chains of darkness; and to them the plainest statement of divine truth is unsearchably concealed, for so it seemed good in the sight of God. Like all other points of revealed truth, this word discriminates between those who are led by the Spirit of God and such as have not that Spirit. The believer in Jesus shall not perish, but has everlasting life. The verse following our text says, "He that believeth not is condemned already." It is not for failing to believe that he shall be condemned; but his unbelief proves that he is already condemned, and therefore it is evident that he is not included in that world which is saved through the Son of God.

The world which is saved through the Redeemer is that world which John includes with himself when he says, "We know that we are of God," in distinction from that "whole world" which "lieth in wickedness." 1 John 5:19. It is very essential to a correct understanding of the letter of the Scriptures that the distinction be observed between natural and spiritual things. Otherwise the Bible will seem to present a mass of irreconcilable contradictions. But when the light of revelation shines in those who read, the sacred pages glow with celestial radiance, while every ray of their heavenly light is bright with the testimony of justification through the blood of Jesus, by the sovereign grace of God, secured to all the world of his redeemed, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

Editorial from Signs of the Times. Nov. 1, 1885.

Route 1, Box 901, Auburn, Wash.

DEAR SIGNS EDITORS: I received the February *Signs* with the notice of our beloved Editor's death. It surely filled me with sorrow. I wish to extend to you and to his wife and son my deepest sympathy. I would like to dedicate this hymn to his passing.

SUBMISSION

"Jesus, while our hearts are bleeding,
O'er the spoils that death has won,
We would at this solemn meeting,
Calmly say, "Thy will be done."

Though cast down, we're not forsaken,
Though afflicted, not alone;
Thou didst give, and thou hast taken,
Blessed Lord, Thy will be done."

Fill us now with deep contrition,
Take away these hearts of stone,
And make all with true submission,
Meekly say, "Thy will be done."

Though to-day we're filled with mourning,
Mercy still is on the throne;
With thy smiles of love returning,
We can sing, "Thy will be done."

By thy hands the boon was given,
Thou hast taken but thine own;
Lord of earth and God of heaven,
Evermore, "Thy will be done."

I am near my 79th birthday and am not well. It is hard for me to write but I did want to dedicate this hymn to our dear brother. I wish you all the love that passeth understanding. Your sister in hope of the resurrection.

(Mrs.) JENNIE CLIFFORD

OBITUARIES

Sister NANNIE ELIZEBETH LANDERS was born in Sabine Co., Texas, Sept. 29, 1871, and passed away March 5, 1951 in Lawn, Texas where she resided, aged 79 years, 5 months, and 7 days. She leaves to mourn their loss her husband, C. F. Landers; four daughters, Mrs. R. W. Borden, Portales, New Mexico; Mrs. C. R. Harrell, Brownsville, Texas, Mrs. J. C. Baker, Dallas, Texas, Mrs. Truett Hipsher, Coleman, Texas; two sons, Elder C. U. Landers, Coleman, Texas and A. W. Landers, Lawn, Texas. Two daughters passed away in infancy. Two sisters, Mrs. Lorena Hulsey, Stamford, Texas, Mrs. Hannah Johnson, Quanah, Texas; two brothers, A. L. Grant, Oklahoma City, Okla., and J. W. Grant, Stamford, Texas. There are twenty-three grandchildren and nineteen great-grandchildren.

She and brother Landers were married April 27, 1893 at Snyder, Texas. They united with the Predestinarian Baptists in 1910 and have been in good standing ever since. She was ever ready to give a reason for her hope in Christ as being of faith and by grace. She will be missed at our meetings. No one can take her place but our loss is her gain. May God reconcile us and enable us to go in the faith that we saw manifested in Sister Landers.

In my weakness I tried to speak a few words of comfort to dear Brother Landers, setting forth to him that God has all power in heaven and earth, and needs not the help of man because his work was complete in Christ Jesus before the world was made. Elder W. A. Little of Ft. Worth, Texas and I conducted the service March 6, 1951 at Dewey Church near Lawn. My prayer is that God will raise us from the grave and fashion us like his own body, and we will see him, be like him and be satisfied. May the Lord bless all that mourn is my prayer, and may he lead us in paths of love and fellowship. Your brother in hope.

(Elder) J. W. SHIPMAN
Route 12, Box 535, San Antonio, Texas

SISTER EMMA ELIZABETH HURST DAVIS was born May 26, 1852, and departed this life Jan. 24, 1951. She was married Nov. 17, 1870 to George W. Davis, who died July 16, 1924. Ten children were born to this union; four boys and six girls. She is survived by two sons, Mr. Clarence Davis, Americus, Ga., and Mr. Roy Davis, Lexington, Ky.; four daughters, Mrs. Leila Cannon, Barwick, Ga., Mrs. Bernice Wallace, Rutledge, Ga., Mrs. Vessie Harwell, Covington, Ga., and Mrs. Winnie Phillips, Buckhead, Ga.; one brother, Mr. W. B. Hurst, Mansfield, Ga.; also thirty grandchildren, thirty-five great-grandchildren, and twenty great-great-grandchildren.

Sister Davis united with the church at Harris Springs, June 15, 1872, and was baptized by the pastor, Elder Isaac Hamby. She remained a devoted member as long as she lived. I think there never lived a more sincere and faithful Baptist. She attended all services as long as her health permitted. She was afflicted with paralysis and unable to walk several years before her death, but bore her afliction with remarkable fortitude, very cheerful and happy, her mind continually on the scriptures and the many hymns she loved.

The funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder H. O. Nash, who was assisted by her grandson, Mr. George W. Davis, at the Davis Family Cemetery, Jan. 26, 1951. The fourth chapter of 1 Thessalonians was used as a foundation for the discourse, beginning at the ninth verse. Two hymns requested by her "Amazing Grace" and "How Firm a Foundation" were sung by the congregation. The floral offerings were very beautiful. She was a great lover of flowers. She was continually reminding those around her that all our blessings come from heaven. Be it

RESOLVED, first that the church bow in submission to God's will, feeling our loss is her eternal gain, second

RESOLVED, that the church extend to her bereaved family their heartfelt sympathy, hoping that God will reconcile them to his holy will, third

Resolved, that a copy of this memorial be sent to the family, a copy placed on our church records, and a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference at her March meeting.

Written by her son-in-law, J. O. Adams.

(Elder) H. O. NASH, Moderator
W. F. ADAMS, Clerk

In perfect wisdom and mercy our heavenly Father has taken his servant, ELDER BENJAMIN CUBBAGE, from his field of service here — the Primitive Baptist churches, Cow Marsh and Wilmington in Delaware, and Harford in Maryland — in which he worked as faithfully as he knew how, feeding his Master's sheep with the deep, precious things of the doctrine of Jesus Christ.

His earthly parents were Deacon Benjamin C. and Elizabeth (Meredith) Cubbage. It was a pleasure to Elder Cubbage to recall his childhood days when he lived near the Cow Marsh meeting-house and played about the grounds and house as his father was busy with his duties as sexton. He married Miss Fannie Marvil whose parents were members of the Primitive Baptist Church at Delmar. To that union three sons were born: Byron Marvil, Walter Stuart and Gilbert Meredith. He is survived by Byron M. and Walter S. His wife passed away in 1942 and Gilbert preceded her.

Elder Cubbage and his wife were baptized by Elder Whitely W. Meredith (then substituting for Elder E. Rittenhouse who was physically unable to be present) in 1902, and received into the Cow Marsh Church after the baptism. He soon began speaking in prayer meeting which was still being held in that locality, and he was ordained to the ministry in 1904.

In 1945 and 1946 he underwent surgical operations from which his nervous system did not recover, and his house of clay continued gradually but steadily falling down until September 1950 he was stricken with a cerebral hemorrhage and taken to the hospital unconscious. He remained unconscious most of the time until he passed away October 1. Only twice he tried to speak but could not articulate. The second time, Sept. 12, he reached out his hand in greeting and his grip was firm. Although he could not convey thought by speech it is a comfort to recall the expression of love and appreciation as he looked at us, and that he was calm and undistressed as he lay there waiting his Master's time. "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." What part of God's great purpose required that twenty-nine days of hovering between time and eternity we do not, and will not know, unless God sees fit to reveal it, for revealed things belong to man, hidden things belong to God. Let us humbly leave it in his keeping, taking comfort in the belief that whatsoever his purpose, it has been, or will be gloriously performed.

Elder Cubbage was a descendant of Job Meredith, Sr., who came from Wales with several brothers, and who, with some of his brothers and some other Baptists constituted the Cow Marsh Church in July 1781. He was also a descendant of Job Meredith, Jr., who was one of the First ones baptized at Cow Marsh, and who gave the first acre of ground upon which the meeting-house was built. In Christian love.

(Miss) BERTHA M. FRASER

Sister Bertha has written so beautifully, the memoriam of our beloved Elder and Pastor. I can only heartily endorse all she has said of him as a man, and as a minister of the gospel of Christ. His body was laid in the cemetery surrounding the church building of his ancestors, and among whom he had loved and associated his entire life in a most godly manner, that showed himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. Text used at the funeral, 2 Timothy 4: 6-8. God bless and comfort all who mourn his passing.

(Elder) C. E. BENSON

The Lord in his infinite wisdom saw fit to call from our midst; our precious sister and mother in Israel, Sister MAGGIE WATSON, who was born in Calhoun Co., Ark., March 2, 1864. She was left an orphan at the age of four, and reared by Elder R. N. Rice in Bradley Co. Sept. 17, 1879 she was married to Brother William Levy Watson of Calhoun Co., Ark., near the old Dob Post Office where mail was brought from Pine Bluff, Ark. on horseback, enroute to Camden, Ark. This community is now known as Watson Town where Sister Watson made her home for nearly seventy-two years, near Tinsman, Ark. To this union eleven children were born of which three preceded her in death. There are eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Her husband passed away Sept. 7, 1907, leaving her a widow for more than forty-three years. She is survived by eight children. Five sons: W. R. Watson, Hampton, Ark., Frank, Rufus, Ray and Deacon Ross Watson all of Tinsman, Ark.; three daughters, Mrs. Joe Brown, Tinsman, Mrs. Effie Hopper, Lake Village, Mrs. O. B. Johnston, Hampton. There are thirty-five grandchildren, forty-one great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild, a total of eighty-five.

She united with White Water Primitive Baptist Church in Dec. 1909, and remained a faithful member for nearly forty-two years. Sister Watson was highly esteemed by the brethren, sisters and friends. She was strong in the faith, well established in the doctrine, and faithful and true to her church family and friends until her death occurred at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Joe Bowen, Tinsman, Ark., making her stay on earth 86 years, 11 months and 28 days.

Our hearts are saddened by her passing yet rejoicing in the spirit in the realization that she is better off than we. She being at rest and peace, waiting for the time of the resurrection when the saints shall arise from the tomb in the glorified image of Christ forever to bask in the sunlight of God's eternal love on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance through Christ the redeemer of all saints. Amen.

Funeral services were conducted by the unworthy writer, Elder W. W. Taylor, assisted by Elder R. W. Rhodes and Elder W. A. Speer, March 1, 1951 at the Watson Cemetery in her home community. (Elder) W. W. TAYLOR

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 119 ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND, JULY, 1951 No. 7

SALUTATION

On March 9th, 1951, I was appointed editor of the Signs Of The Times, Inc., by the board of trustees. This board was appointed by Elder R. L. Dodson to carry on the work of publishing the Signs after his death. The Signs was incorporated, as a non-profit corporation and belongs to the Old School Baptist.

I approach this work with fear and trembling. I do not feel capable to carry on the work that has been assigned to me. May he who makes no mistake be my guide is my humble desire, and the paper continue on the same high standard it has in the past.

Our readers are invited to write for the paper when they are so directed. Your support is solicited in getting new subscribers, and circulating the paper among the brethren, and friends.

May you dear reader be given to pray that the paper will continue to go forth as a periodical worthy of the name *"Signs Of The Times,"* devoted to the Old School Baptist cause.

Deacon Cyrus Risler, of the Old School Baptist church of New York, together with his wife, have been getting out the paper for many months. They deserve much credit for their untiring efforts in getting out the paper, and I am sure the many readers appreciate their good work.

I am favored to have an assistant Editor, Elder John D. Wood, who is well known among our people. I am sure he will be of much service to me.

Our policy shall be to continue the paper, as published by our deceased Editor, Elder R. Lester Dodson; To allow our brethren to freely express themselves through the paper, so long as there is manifested a brotherly spirit, and the sentiment expressed is in accord with the principles of Grace.

D. V. SPANGLER

* * *

The personal experience of Elder Gilbert Beebe, founder of *The Signs of The Times.*

Republished from April 30th, 1834 issue of the Signs.

We are acquainted with an individual whose history we will give in the following words:

He was, like all the race of which he is a member, conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity. He was born in the Eastern part of the State of Connecticut. He was a religionist from his birth, yet an enemy to God, and a stranger to Grace during the first seven years of his natural life; for he was alive before the commandment came. He had at this period been taught to say his prayers, but had never been taught to pray; he had made some progress in the Westminster Catechism, and in short, as touching the religion of the Pharisees, he excelled many of his equals. It would have terrified him exceedingly to have gone to bed at night without counterbalancing all the sins of the day by a repetition of his forms of

worship; but on all occasions, when he had "paid his vows," he had peace offerings at home. Up to about this period of life he was led to suppose that as touching the righteousness of the law he was blameless. We cannot describe to our readers the mortification and disappointment of this young lad, when being suddenly arrested by an arrow from the quiver of the Lord, he was summoned to stand before the dreadful bar of divine justice, and give the reason, if any he had, why the tremendous sentence of the law of God should not be executed upon his guilty soul.

Great was his consternation when he cast his eager glance around in search of those fancied treasures of personal holiness which he had believed himself to be in possession of. Alas, his stronghold failed him in this very critical moment, he felt he was ruined. But like Edom he said "I am impoverished, but I will return and build again my waste places." Great were his efforts, his labors, toils and pains to mend again that holy law which he had broken. He would have prayed, but he could no longer view the great, the dreadful God as a being that might be trifled with, or pacified by what he could do. He struggled, but the harder he struggled the deeper he seemed to be involved in a horrible pit, and in miry clay. These exercises continued for many days and weeks. Sometimes he meditated a retreat from this awful wretched state, but whither could he flee? If on the wings of the morning he should fly to the uttermost sea, God was there, everywhere present, beholding the evil and the good; there could be no retreating from God, before whose flaming eyes all things are naked and open.

At length the day seemed to arrive when the dreadful sentence of the inexorable law of God must be put in execution. Now blackness and darkness and tempests gathered around his frightened soul. Hell yawned before him; justice stood with uplifted arm, and the flaming sword of vengeance was drawn from its scabbard, and brandished over his guilty head. The books were brought. The arch accuser was also there, and what was to him more dreadful still than all, the piercing eyes of God brought the black crimes of years to light, and what had been transacted in midnight darkness was now exposed upon the housetop. Chilled thus with horror, and pressed down to death with intense despair, remorse, guilt and keen anguish throbbing in his breast: tell us, dear reader, did he need an anxious bench, or knives, or lancets, to secure his conviction? Or would it have comforted him to have been informed by some Universalist that there was no hell, when the very pains of hell got hold of him? As well might he be told, when writhing on a bed of embers, that there was no heat in fire. The spell of such delusion was now broken. The spirit had now moved upon the face of the great deep of his inmost soul, and although all had been without form and void, yet God had said, let there be light; and light broke in upon him; and in this light, that heart which he had thought was a temple meet for the Holy Ghost to dwell in, was now manifestly the habitation of dragons, of every unclean and hateful bird. It was thus, when in or about his seventh year, he went to a distant barn, under an impression like that expressed by the poet:

"I can but perish if I go,
I am resolved to try;
or if I stay away, I know
I must forever die."

He fell upon his bended knees, but he could not pray; a rustling leaf, a turning straw, frightened his guilty soul, and chained his speechless tongue; awful apprehensions and fearful forebodings pursued him back to his chamber, when despairing of mercy he threw himself upon a bed to die and meet his fiery doom. Worn out with labor and want of rest, nature sank beneath the load, and he fell into a sleep. Unconscious of what passed while sleeping, he awoke himself singing these words:

"How glorious is our heavenly king,
Who reigns above the sky;
How shall a child presume to sing
His dreadful majesty?"

He seemed indeed in a new world, his load of guilt and sin were gone, the love of God shed abroad in his heart.

"His tongue broke out in unknown
strains and sang surprising Grace."

At the age of eleven years and four weeks, on the second Sunday in December, 1811, he was permitted to be buried with his precious Lord in Baptism, in the river Thames, in the city of Norwich, Connecticut, by Elder John Sterry, who has since fallen asleep.

After remaining eight years a member of the Baptist church in Norwich, he removed his relations to the church in the city of New York, then under the pastoral care of that champion for the truth, Elder Jonathan Van Velsen, who also has fallen asleep. While a member of the Ebenezer church in New York, the subject of our narrative, when in his twentieth year, was licensed to preach the gospel. The peculiar circumstances of his call to the work of the ministry our present limits will not admit. Let it suffice to say, that being experimentally, he could not help being doctrinally a predestinarian. For more than fourteen years he has been lisping the name of Jesus with such abilities as the Lord has been pleased to bestow, without any of the polish of Gameliel's school; and although it has been his privilege to suffer some persecution, yet he has not resisted unto blood, striving against sin. He finds by every day's experience that he is a sinner yet, his nature is still as evil as it ever was. "To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not." He is still the chief of sinners, and if a saint, the least of all.

* * *

Denton, Ky.

Elder J. S. Murphy, Elkins, W. Va.

DEAR BROTHER MURPHY: I feel very unworthy to address you as brother, yet I hope I have that same love for you that the beloved apostle had when he said, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." That is a thing that gives me much comfort for it is one thing I am sure about. Whether I am one or not I love them for some cause, and if it is not for that cause I do not know why it is so. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." The time with you and me, Brother Murphy, is drawing nigh when we will leave this troublesome world. Our silvery hairs will soon be silent in the tomb. That is a sad thought in nature. Nature dreads the thought, but the spirit rejoices in the blessed thought of being clothed upon with that house which is from heaven, or above, or in other

words where in spirit we rejoice in that thought. I feel that it will be me, myself, that will be raised from the dead. The scriptures, if I know anything about them, emphatically teach that it is the dead that are raised, and if there is anything except the body of man that is dead or dies I do not know what it is. We have no account that the spirit or soul dies. The apostle Paul says, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Rom. 8: 18-21. The apostle says the creature itself, not just something about it. The same apostle says in another place, "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption." The apostle is saying that the same *it* that is sown in corruption is raised in incorruption, that is if I know anything about the meaning of language. The creature meaning a created living thing, which the scriptures say was made subject to vanity, or subjected to vanity. I do not recall that a spirit is ever called a creature or that it was ever made subject to vanity; but the creature was made subject to become proud, deceitful and empty of all good, born in corruption. So this vanity shall follow the creature to the grave. "And it was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of hosts, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die, saith the Lord God of hosts." Isa. 22:14. When blessed in the spirit we look forward with joy for the time when we shall be purged from iniquity and corruption of this vile body and be made like Christ's glorious body. The apostle says, "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Rom. 8:22-23. The same apostle says, "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you." Rom. 8:11. He also again says, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thes. 5:23. "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." 1 Cor. 19-20. "Therefore, let no man glory in men. For all things are yours. * * * And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."

These are indeed blessed thoughts. It is I, myself, that feel I need redemption from the bond of corruption. I also feel that the above scripture is sufficient to prove that it is the man that is redeemed for that blessed spirit of Christ was never lost. It was the man that God created in his image and formed of the dust of the ground and placed in the garden; and he said their name shall be called Adam in the day that he created them male and female and blessed them saying, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it," and have dominion over

all of his creation. It was not just a spirit that he created for a spirit is neither male nor female; so it must have been of this created and formed family of Adam that he made choice of a definite number which was chosen in Christ, to create within them the spirit of his Son and to redeem them from the bondage of corruption which they by transgression fell into; it was this man that was created and formed from the dust of the ground that he gave the law to, not a spirit. It was that man that transgressed that law; it was the same man that suffered the consequences of that violated law; he was the man that died and was cast out of the garden; it was he that became dead in trespasses and sin, and became totally passive and alienated from God in a lost condition and deprived of all ability to make one step back to God. He lost all communication and knowledge of God; he sold himself for nought and had nothing whatever to restore or redeem himself with. Now if he ever has any communion or knowledge of God he must be recreated or regenerated and born again, again means a second time. "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

So we see that Jesus says a man. If there is anything else called a man except that which God created and formed of the dust, or ground, I do not know what it is. The first birth gives knowledge of the earth and earthly things, the second birth gives knowledge of heaven and heavenly things. We do not think that the spiritual birth changes the carnality or nature, but in the last birth he is given a spiritual mind which leads in a different direction from the carnal mind. Many things that he once loved with the carnal mind, he now hates with the spiritual mind as he was then rich, proud and boastful. Now he is poor, humble and a beggar; before he hated the humble saints of the blessed God; now he loves them with that love of God which is shed abroad in the heart; before he felt to be as good if indeed not better than any man; now he feels to be the most wretched man of all the earth; before he stood upright and said, as he thought to God, I am not unjust, I am not an extortioner, I pay tithes of all I possess, I fast twice a week. The only thing that he thanked God for was that he was better than other men. The above is a description of man in his first birth, but how different is his second birth. He feels that he is standing afar off, and feels unworthy of looking toward heaven or even opening his eyes. And as I see the tears running down his cheeks almost in a stream he smote his breast with his hand saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." It is I that is suffering, it is I that is hoping, it is I that is longing, it is I that is waiting. Will I be disappointed? I am not hoping or desiring to be raised natural with a natural body as I am here, but my hope is that I, myself, will be changed and made spiritual. I do not think God will disturb the old earth in bringing us up. He will only call and we will come forth as Job says, "Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee." The grave that is spoken of in the scripture does not, as I think, mean a hole in the earth all the time, but is a grave of death which is the last enemy to be conquered. "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" 1 Cor.

15: 54-55. David said, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." "We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." It is enough. Your brother in tribulations and hope.

H. L. ROGERS

* * *

THE MIRACLE AT BETHESDA'S POOL

John 5: 1-8

The miraculous healing by Jesus at Bethesda's pool of a man helpless for thirty-eight years possesses typical significance in the redemptive work of Christ in the gospel dispensation. The typology of scripture is not impaired by the fact that all types must necessarily fall somewhat short of their antitypes. This miracle was performed when Jesus attended a feast at Jerusalem, which seems by implication to have been that of the feast of Pentecost, one of the three great annual feasts which every male Jew was obliged to attend at Jerusalem, respectively the feast of Passover, the feast of Pentecost, and the feast of Tabernacles.

The feast of Pentecost under the law dispensation came just fifty days after the Passover lamb was slain, and the Holy Ghost descended at Pentecost just fifty days after the crucifixion of Christ, the true Passover lamb, when the visible gospel church was established at Jerusalem, when the hearts of those converted there were troubled by the word of the Lord as the Holy Spirit wrought upon them. They believed, confessed, and were baptized. All believers must be troubled by the angel of the Lord's presence before they can know Christ savingly. At Bethesda's pool an angel came at a certain season and troubled the water and whosoever was able first to get into the water was made whole of his disease. All of the diseased people evidently could not comply with the necessary condition and receive healing. The helpless in nature must remain without help just as people dead in trespasses and sins must remain in their hopeless state so far as self aid or human help is concerned.

Water is often used in scripture to represent the word of God which must be applied by the Holy Spirit in the work of the washing and regeneration of lost sinners. The water at Bethesda's pool had no healing virtues unless first troubled by an angel. The word of God has no experimental saving value until the sinner is troubled by the angel of the Lord's presence. Unless a man be born of water, that is, the word of God, and of the Spirit he can not see the kingdom of God. The word of faith must be applied to the quickened sinner in his experience, and a soul must first know trouble because of sin before it can know the peace of God.

It is the work of God in the Trinity that the individual believes upon the son of God. The feast of Passover typifies the redemptive work of Christ the son; the feast of Pentecost signifies the office of the Holy Ghost in quickening dead sinners into spiritual life and manifesting their salvation; the feast of Tabernacles adumbrates the work of God the Father in predestinating all things and in the gift of his son by which God tabernacles in man through the work of his son on earth and in heaven and through the work of the Holy Spirit in man here and his intercessory work in heaven.

In considering the healing of the impotent man at Bethesda's pool, it is to be noted that this pool had five porches of appproach. No one could reach the pool except by passing under one of these porches which represent the five

books of Moses known as the law. The justice of God is revealed by the law, but there is no manifestation of mercy in it for it was a ministration of death, written and engraven on stones, and could only exact obedience to all its precepts as it testified to the righteousness of God and brought terror to the guilty conscience because of failure to render full obedience. Law is necessary to manifest the sin that is in man before grace can manifest the love and righteousness and mercy of God in salvation. By the law the sinner is slain and rendered spiritually as helpless as the impotent man was physically at Bethesda's pool. The word Bethesda means house of mercy and may well symbolize the church as the house of mercy for all helpless and penitent sinners to whom Jesus comes as the helper of the helpless as he did to this poor invalid under consideration. Bethesda was a sheep market and doubtless sheep used for sacrificial purposes were washed there. The word also has reference to a sheep gate, and Jesus is the door or gate through which all the sheep of God purchased by the blood of Christ must pass before they can feed in the gospel pasture.

The helplessness of a condemned sinner to save himself is typically set forth by the statement that under the porches of this pool lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water by an angel that came at a certain season and troubled it. The invalids under these porches or near the pool had no power to hasten the appearance of the angel any more than a child of God has to bring about the work of the Holy Spirit. The blindness of the afflicted ones represents lack of spiritual sight to discern Jesus and the way of salvation. The numerous impotent people mentioned emphasize the inability of the unquickened sinner to exercise spiritual life or accomplish his own spiritual birth. They were by nature just as helpless to earn a natural living as the Lord's people are spiritually unable to deliver themselves. Salvation of the creature by any effort of his own is therefore an utter impossibility.

The subject of this article had lain thirty-eight years on a portable bed without receiving physical help or cure. This was the time in length of years that the Israelites occupied in journeying from Mount Sinai to Jordan in which they were homeless in the wilderness, unable to care for themselves and dependent upon food and water miraculously provided before they entered the promised land. But in due time deliverance came to them and they passed over into Canaan. For upwards of two thousand years the Jews were a scattered people in the wilderness of this world without a home nationally and without a temple, helplessly waiting for a Messiah that has not come unto them in the manner they believed to accomplish their expectations. But now prophecy is being fulfilled as set forth in the scriptures and Israel has again become a nation. There is much yet to be fulfilled regarding the Jew. He is returning in unbelief as far as the Christ of the scriptures is concerned, but when the fullness of the Gentiles shall have come in, all the Jews that belong to the Israel of our God will believe savingly on the Lord Jesus Christ and acknowledge him as the true Messiah. This is prophetically set forth in the thirty-seventh chapter of Ezekiel, when all the dry bones seen in that wonderful vision representing the whole house of Israel, lay scattered in the midst of a valley and were very dry and dead. But all these bones came together, each in

its proper place and flesh came upon them, but at first there was no breath in them. Breath here signifies the Spirit of God, for at the command of the Lord, breath typifying spiritual life came from the four winds and they lived and the spirit of the Lord was in them, and they recognized the work of God. Through the work of the Holy Spirit the called of Jesus Christ among the Jews in the four quarters of the earth will in the restoration believe in Jesus. As Jesus came to the impotent man and restored him, so will he come to helpless Israel when the appointed time comes.

In the eleventh chapter of Romans Paul says of the Jews: "And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be graffed into their own olive tree. For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."

But in dealing with Israel we must not forget that Israel under the law dispensation typifies the church of the gospel dispensation. As Christ will come savingly to the saved of Israel as he came to the helpless cripple at Bethesda's pool, he will come to every believer. Jesus did not converse with any other invalids at Bethesda's pool nor heal any other of the afflicted ones there. Nor is it recorded that on this occasion that any of the other helpless ones reached the pool. The man whom Jesus approached in mercy replied that he had no man to put him into the water, in other words, that he was helpless. This is the condition of every poor subject of grace to whom the Lord reveals his salvation and ministers a spiritual cure. The man who was cured by the word and power of God was waiting for the troubling of the water. We do not receive Jesus until our consciences have been troubled because of sin. This man did not know Jesus when he first saw him and was cured. The Jews who return to Palestine will not know Jesus until he is revealed to them. This man later confessed that Jesus was the Christ.

We see in the cure of the lame man a mark of distinguishing and sovereign grace. None of the other helpless ones mentioned under the porches who depended upon themselves or other human means received restoration to health. There was a confession of utter impotency in the reply to the question asked by Jesus, that no man could give him aid. Jesus told him to rise and take up his bed and walk which command was instantly obeyed, in which we see the experience of a saved sinner. The bed represents the body of flesh, the natural man with whom he lived and walked and slept. We carry a body of death from which none but Jesus can deliver us. Before the man could walk, he must rise. So the child of God rises to newness of life before he walks after the spirit by which he mortifies the deeds of the body. We also note that there appeared no natural reason why Christ singled out this one person as a recepient of divine mercy. The man before he was healed did not approach Jesus, but Christ took the initiative and came to the man. This proves that salvation is of the Lord and not of man.

The miracle of healing the paralyzed man occurred on the sabbath day, showing in figure that the Lord's people find

themselves cured on the gospel sabbath of the disease of sin with its terrible penalty and enter into that rest that remains to the people of God, Jesus having finished the work of salvation for them for time and for eternity. We read that later on the man whom Jesus healed was found in the temple and that the enmity of the Jews had been aroused against Jesus. After the healing balm of God's grace has been applied to sin-sick souls, they are found in the church, the anti-type of the temple, and the enmity of the world is against them. But thanks be to God, they have the victory through Jesus Christ.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

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Route 1, Box 2440, Marysville, Cal.

Dear Readers of the Signs of the Times:

By request as well as a personal desire, which we hope is not prompted by the flesh, we are giving an account of some meetings among the Predestinarian Baptists of the Pacific Coast, and especially those of our little church located at Sacramento, Cal.

On the first Sunday in November, 1950, our church was organized and we were made to feel that the mighty hand of an all wise God of love and purpose had brought us together. Though we are few in number it seemed that the good Lord passed this way and removed every obstacle. The church chose Elder Seth Bynum as Pastor. We feel that the Lord has wonderfully blessed him in the knowledge of the truth.

Elder C. H. Byrd, of Panama City, Fla., was with us at the January and March meetings. His text at our last meeting was "Come and see," and every one present seemed to rejoice in the Lord. In the afternoon two Deacons were ordained, brethren Hammons and Echols. Elder C. H. Byrd was chosen moderator of the Presbytery, and Elder T. R. Jefferson, clerk. Elder Byrd delivered the charge, and Elder Jefferson offered prayer, Elder Bynum acted as spokesman. We feel that the dear Lord has wonderfully blessed the church with these two Deacons.

On Monday night following our meeting we were invited to hold services at the home of Mrs. Marion Brooks at Chico, Cal. This dear old sister in Christ is seventy-six years old and had never heard an Old Baptist preach. Her Bible and the *Signs of the Times* are her reading matter. Elder Dodson had written her several letters and she treasures them very highly. She wrote her experience in a letter to Elder Dodson in 1943 and it was published in May issue that year. Elder Byrd was blessed to bring her and others present the good news from "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel." This old soul seemed to enjoy every word and she has invited us to come again. In hope.

(Elder) T. R. JEFFERSON

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3347 Tutwiler, Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR BRETHREN: It is with fearfulness I address you or call the *Signs of the Times* our paper, nevertheless I hope I will always be blessed to receive it and have it coming to my home as long as I live for in its pages my experience I hope is written from all parts of the world. Yes, my dark and gloomy days are told, also the times of joy and sweet meditation. The scriptures are so beautifully set forth and explained; the great work He performed, the riches of his grace is so sweetly told by those who are gifted to do so. Our Lord gave

gifts unto men. Some are gifted in preaching, others in prayer and others in singing; some with deep understanding and meekness and kindness are always ready to hold up the feeble knees as much as in them is; while some are gifted to watch over the care and needs of the church and see that such things are taken care of. It is so pleasant and comforting when we are enabled to view the great preparation God made for his people while traveling this low ground of sin and sorrow. Had it not been for his keeping power, love and mercy this poor one would have been swept off this earth long ago. I hope I have been killed and made alive, if not my hope is in vain, but oh my soul, there are times when we feel to view our whole life in a moment, and feel to say we know our Redeemer liveth. Most of my time seems so long and full of darkness and sin until I wonder why my life has been spared. I feel so fearful that yet I will feel the awful stroke of God's anger. We, such helpless creatures, cannot do one thing to help ourselves, standing before a just and holy God. The awful weight of such feelings only those know who are brought through such fiery trials for no one will voluntarily subject themselves to it; but the joy and sweet peace of a child when the storm is over, and we feel the warmth of God's love flowing into our hearts, joy unspeakable is then felt, and sweet words of love singing to our Beloved; our minds are taken from the cares of this life and centered on Jesus, the one altogether lovely; love fills us to overflowing and goes out to our brothers and sisters far and near, we feel to encircle them in our very arms of love, though they be miles away; we feel to be lost in amazement and love that passeth understanding it is so marvelous.

Then these seasons soon fade away, and so quickly sometimes we wonder at the sudden change and think am I losing my mind? So short a time ago all seemed well with me. I feel in these pleasant times I can go on a long time in the strength of it and it does prove sufficient to keep me. We cannot go back to the flesh pots of earlier days where we fared sumptuously every day, but we do want to go back where we could view the handiwork of God. We long to press on to the prize of the high calling where all is joy, peace and love, but so suddenly we lose sight of it all and find ourselves unable to think a good thought and darkness hovers around us. We are afraid it was only imagination and would go back where our souls were at ease but cannot.

I enjoyed the article on "The rich man and Lazarus." I never had gotten that picture before and it was good. How wonderful indeed God fixed everything for the good of his children. Not one thing left undone, but all made sure in his wills and shalls. Some find so many things to do for the Lord until their entire time is taken up raising funds for their great work. One asked the Lord at one time, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." In another place he said, ye have seen and believed, but more blessed is he that hath not seen and yet believe.

We enjoy the whole paper and especially the editorials. We have heard Elders Lambert and Griffin preach and hope Elder Spangler will have a mind to come. We looked for him once but he was hindered. The many privileges along the way are so sweet and comforting. Such as being settled where

we get to attend services each month, and sometimes we are blessed with visiting brethren in between for which we hope we are thankful, and doubly thankful for our little church and our beloved Pastor whom we feel is a wonderful gift to us. We desire to be kept by the power of God that we remain in peace one with another as long as we live, and that we will feel to realize the sweet effect of His promise "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Remember me when at the throne of grace, and may the dear old *Signs* be carried on for many years to come in honor and glory to our blessed Lord. In love of the truth.

(Mrs.) LUTHER CAMPBELL

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Trenton, Tenn.

Mr. W. F. Stafford, Greenfield, Tenn.

DEAR FRIEND: This belatedly acknowledges your very nice letter sent to me in which you express your thanks for the recent article published in the *Signs*. Naturally I am glad and encouraged that our Lord enabled me to write anything that is any encouragement or comfort to the household of faith, but my chief joy is not that I have written anything acceptable, but that I am encouraged to hope that my name is written in heaven. Therefore, if there is any praise or glory derived from the article the praise and glory all belong to him who doeth all things well. I am not a minister, neither am I worthy of that exalted office. I am a member of the sect that is everywhere spoken against. My membership is with the old order of Baptists, and is with the church in Memphis.

Speaking of the *Signs*, I have been a reader of the *Signs* more or less since 1896, and have read it regularly since 1916. I also have taken the Old Faith Contender since 1933. I was reared by Old Baptist parents but as you probably know that does not make one an Old Baptist. I went the way of the *prodigal son* and hired myself out to the taskmasters; tried to feed the swine and lived on husks for several years until, I hope, the Lord arose with healing in his wings and revealed himself to me as my Savior. Since that time I have never lusted after the flesh pots of Egypt, but have been fully persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. Sin is ever present with me and I am as prone to sin as the sparks are to fly upward, but my hope is that Jesus is my mediator and advocate and that

"He has paid it all,
All to him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow."

The church at Mud Creek, near Hickman, used to have a dearly beloved, Sister Stafford as a member. After the Mud Creek Church was disbanded she moved her membership to Boaz Chappell, two miles east of Felton, Ky. Are you related to her husband? I moved to Trenton from Memphis last July, purchasing a business here, but I have been so discouraged with the business that I have not been able to go anywhere to church this summer. I want to go to Cane Creek over near Rives to meeting next fourth Sunday if I can. If you want to hear the old line preaching you will hear it at Cane Creek.

When I am passing through Greenfield and have time to look you up I would like to meet you. In the meantime may the grace of God that bringeth salvation, rest upon each and every one who calls upon his name according to

his will. In bonds of Christian friendship I am, unworthily yours.

H. M. BOWDEN

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1168 High Ave., Topeka, Kansas

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR EDITOR: I am enclosing remittance due on my subscription. Sorry for the delay. I do enjoy reading the dear old *Signs* which seems to be the only Primitive Baptist paper to have survived so long a period of years.

We deeply regret the loss of Elder Dodson, not only as Editor and publisher, but feel his death is a great loss to the Baptists both far and near. It was one time my happy privilege, years ago, to visit the church in New York where he was Pastor, and hear him speak, a pleasure which has ever remained outstanding in my memory. Our deepest sympathies are extended to his companion and son whose loss is indeed great.

May it be the gracious will of Divine Providence, who has seen fit to remove him from our midst, to raise up those who are able to carry on the work he so long and faithfully performed to the comfort and edification of the household of faith, and may we be given a spirit of reconciliation in all things to Him who is "too wise to err and too good to be unkind." Unworthily,

(Mrs.) DELLA DAVIS

* * *

Route 2, McDonough, Ga.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES: Please renew my subscription for another year. Many times I feel one article is well worth the price of the paper. I was saddened to learn of the death of Elder Dodson. I am truly thankful that the *Signs* will continue to be published for the edification of those, especially, who are unable to meet with the saints in worship. I desire to be associated with the humble poor who claim no worthiness of their own, and seek to worship God in spirit and in truth. The prayer taught us by our Lord should be evidence enough for us to know to whom all the honor should be given. "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. * * * For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever." If we pray otherwise it is for naught, if we act otherwise than rendering to Him all honor, that is for naught. Praise him for bestowing unto us the knowledge of honoring him who died on the cross, and even in that hour of suffering prayed for us unto the Father.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with each one who contributes to the *Signs of the Times,* and to all the household of faith in every nation, who have been given a knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Yours in hope of eternal life beyond the grave.

(Mrs.) HENRY ROMAN

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Box 275, San Juan, Texas

DEAR SIGNS OF THE TIMES AND ASSOCIATE EDITORS: It is with a sad heart I thus address you as I cannot address our dear Brother Dodson any more. It fills my heart with sadness to think he has gone from us. He was so good to me, a poor unworthy worm of the dust, in sending me the good family paper, *Signs of the Times,* as a token of love as I am financially unable to pay for it. He surely was a man of God that we believe is now enjoying the realities of a better world. Though it makes us sad to think his love and kindness has ended here, we believe he is at rest and his good works have gone on before him,

and all his sins were forever put away in Jesus Christ.

Dear people of God, when we believe all is well when one has passed out of this sin cursed world, we should rejoice to think that they have gained the victory. Yes, he has fought a good fight and now his trouble and suffering is over and he is at rest.

"Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep,
From which none ever wake to weep!
A calm and undisturbed repose,
Unbroken by the last of foes."

This beautiful hymn comes into my mind when I look for the last time on earth at the departed one who has fallen asleep in Jesus. We do hope and believe that God will provide one that will take up where he left off in the publishing of the *Signs of the Times* to the honor of God, and to his people who look forward to the *Signs* each month. It is a source of comfort to me. I never lay a paper down until I have read it through, and I am careful to take care of every one. I sometimes pass them out to friends to read, but they always return them to me. I know that you who were associated with him are sorrowful, but we weep not as though he had no hope, but rather praise Him who has kept him as the apple of his eye.

May God in his love and mercy guard and guide us all to walk in the right way, and may his richest blessings be with us all we ask in Christ's name.

(Mrs.) J. B. REID

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Box 154, Woodward, Iowa

KIND FRIENDS: Enclosed you will find check for two years subscription to the dear old *Signs of the Times.* I had a letter ready to mail when the announcement came of Elder Dodson's passing. It stunned me so and seemed such a loss that I just could not collect my thoughts enough to write anything about it. I never had anything to upset me as much in my life except the passing of my wife three years ago. Since then I have not been the same person. I seem to be so alone and desolate. I go on alone and forsaken by the world, and am glad it is so for I would rather spend one moment in the presence of the Lord and his people, than to enjoy the pleasures of this world for a season.

I do not seem to know any of you people as I did Elder Dodson, but I love you and hope to get better acquainted as time goes by. May the Lord guide and direct your mind and hearts to the cause that the paper has stood for all these many years. I have been reading it since the *Gospel News* published by Elder John Perkins of Mayfield, Ky., was discontinued many years ago. I see no difference in it now and then. Yours in a precious hope.

W. J. KIMBRO

* * *

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. L. M. Beebe, N. Y. $25; J. F. Davis, La., $5; G. A. Paul, Ala., $2; N. Crawley, Ala., $2; Miss V. M. Jones, N. Y., $7; Mrs. M. Simmons, Tex., $4; W. E. Beene, Tex., $1; A. S. Roberson, N. C., $2; J. T. Bratten, Md., $4.50.

A SYMBOLISM

More beautiful than robes of state
That kings and princes wear,
Of more import than thrones and crowns
Are roses in their leaf-laced gowns,
Whose fragrance is so rare;
More precious than the priceless gems
By monarchs worn, or diadems,
The lilies are the sweet emblems
(The Scriptures so declare)
Of Christ's redeemed; no other thing,
Not even ancient Israel's king,
In glory can compare.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS,
West Hurley, New York

EDITORIALS

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"And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." Gen. 3:12

"And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." The Lord thought it not good that man, this man, should be alone. There were angels above, and brutes beneath, and he between them; yet there being none of the same nature with whom he could converse. Therefore, "The Lord caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Out of this rib taken from Adam there was made of the same nature, but of a different sex. This was necessary in order that man, as well as beast, should multiply and replenish the earth. "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man." This perhaps, is argued as reason for the submissiveness, humility, and modesty of that sex in general, and particularly the subjection and reverence which wives have to their own husbands.

After Adam was formed and placed in the garden, "The Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." But the serpent comes up and said, "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent. We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." Ever since that crooked serpent was formed, men have been working, and I suppose in an earnest effort too, to make straight that which God made crooked; but thus far they have not succeeded, for it is not in the power of man to straighten that which Gad has crooked.

When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was

pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. If there is any one thing on earth that men desire above another, with possibly the exception of filthy lucre, it is wisdom. Eve desired this wisdom, and this lust and desire is in all of Adam's race. There is nothing which binds men more to the power of God, than introducing this fleshly wisdom into divine things. Eagerness in Eve to possess and enjoy that which was pleasant to the eyes, brought death upon her. James tells us, "Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished bringeth forth death."

Now the question arises, what kind of fruit was it of which Eve ate? Some say it was an apple, some one thing and some another. Frankly, I do not know the color, shape or form of the tree, or its fruit, but I trust that I know what this fruit represents. Paul says, "For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come." The law stood in the midst of these three dispensations, just as the tree stood in the midst of the garden. The tree of knowledge of good and evil, then must represent the law; for by the law is the knowledge of sin. Eve listening and believing what the serpent said, instead of what God said, manifested the lust conceived in her; and thereby brought sin into manifestation, the result of which was death. Thus she gave Adam, and brought him under the same sentence with her, because she was bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. God gave Adam the woman to be with him, not separated from him. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Adam left his maker and Father to be with his bride, and to cleave unto the woman whom God gave to be with him.

When this was done, the eyes of them both were opened. What eyes? Certainly not the eyes of the body; these were open before, for every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air were brought unto Adam to see what he would call them. He was not blind, and the woman saw that the fruit was pleasant to the eye, and it is obvious she was not blind. But they did not see the folly of transgression, and themselves naked before God, until there had been an opening of the eye within, and felt a disorder in their own soul of which they had never before been conscious. They were in no worse condition after their eyes were open than they were before, they were no more naked before God than they were before, but by the opening of their eyes they could see that which they had never seen before; and felt something they had never felt before.

I have heard it said that God made man in the likeness of himself, and that he (Adam) should not have followed Eve into the transgression, but let her go her own way. I will not speculate upon what would have taken place if Adam had not gone with his bride into the transgression, but he certainly would not have been a figure of Him that was to come. The man, the woman, and the serpent were arraigned before their maker to receive their respective judgments, and after they had been pronounced, God said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he

put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken." After the transgression, "God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us." Here we see the figure complete as a type, or a figure of Him that was to come, which was the one of us referred to. He was driven from the garden, and forbidden by divine decree to return; and put forth his hand and take of the tree of life; and this decree has never been repealed.

Adam received from the woman, who was deceived by the serpent, that which brought him under the law with her. So the second man, "The Lord from heaven" received from the woman (Mary) that which brought him under the law with her. "He was made of a woman, and made under the law." As divinity did not possess flesh and blood, it was necessary that Christ should derive flesh and blood from another source so that he could satisfy the law that demanded the shedding of blood for the remission of sins. "The angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." In this conception a child was born, receiving from the woman that which was necessary to satisfy the law to every jot and tittle. "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."

There is a religious sect who claim that this child (Jesus) is holy, and uncontaminated, only, because his mother from whom he received his flesh and blood was holy, and free from sin. This, of course, is a denial of God's word, for he said, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so." Mary could not of herself produced any offspring that was not of her kind. When she was informed that she would bring forth a son, she said to the angel, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Mary in her nature was as much of a sinner as any one else, under the law and the sentence of death, and stood in need of a Savior just as all the rest of the human family. Though she gave him his flesh and blood, his conception was not of man, but of the Holy Ghost. Well could the apostle say, "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh."

The church was given to be with Christ, just as Eve was given to be with Adam. Jesus said, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." The church was with her husband in His travail on earth, she was with him in his death, and triumphantly speaking, she was with him in his resurrection, and she shall be with him in glory.

The word marriage is used first, literally; and second, figuratively to represent the union of Christ with his church. Paul says, "For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: * * * For this cause shall a man

leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerninng Christ and the church." His children being partakers of flesh and blood, He left his Father, came to earth and likewise took part of the same; that he might be with the woman that his Father gave to be with him. Although she had fallen under the law by reason of transgression, He says, "I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord." A betrothal is not a marriage, but an engagement or a promise to take one in holy wedlock; and God is not slack concerning his promise.

I am persuaded that a ceremony performed by man does not in the true sense of the word, giving men and women the legal right to live together, constitute holy matrimony that cannot be sundered by man. But that which God joins together no man can put asunder. The Father gave his Son a bride, they died together, rose together, and will live together throughout an endless eternity. Paul says, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." But some will say that this does not mean that you cannot separate yourself from the love of God. I think it does, self is included with "any other creature." May it be the happy lot of the reader, together with the writer, to be in this number.

H. O. N.

* * *

Route 3, Box 176, El Dorado, Ark.

DEAR ELDER RHODES AND WIFE: I have thought of writing you for a long time but have neglected it. John and I both enjoy your sermons over the radio. I am sure it is a great privilege to the dear ones who are not able to meet with their churches. I pray in my feeble way that God may see fit for you to continue to tell the truths which I believe the Old Baptists to do. I am not a member and do not feel worthy to ever be, but sometimes I do feel to want to ask a home with you people. I know the Old Baptists are the people I love and feel more at home with them than any other denomination. I enjoyed reading your book, "Gospel Comments," very much. We also take the *Signs of the Times* and get much consolation from it. So many can tell just the way I feel better than I can tell it myself. Elder Lambert preached to me today if to no one else. I beg you to remember me and mine in your prayers if it be God's will. An unworthy friend.

(Mrs.) ANNIE LEE DAVIS

* * *

COVETOUSNESS

DEAR BRETHREN: My attention has been called of late, more than ever before, to the frequency with which this sin is mentioned and denounced in the word of God; and some very solemn reflections have rested upon my mind with regard to it. Perhaps we are all in danger of this sin, as much as of any other, and so it may be profitable to spend a little time in speaking to one

another about its nature and sinfulness and consequences. This is all that we can do. The Holy Spirit alone must reveal this sin in us, give us repentance for it, and help us to crucify it.

By the Scriptures themselves must the exceeding sinfulness of this sin be judged. They declare its deformity, as it appears in the view of infinite holiness. They declare it to be idolatry; that is the setting up of the temporal before the eternal, of the creature before the Creator, of the gift before the giver. (Col. 3:5). Idolatry is the most arrant exhibition of the folly and rebellion of fallen man. It is not only turning away from God, but it is a turning against him. It is not only a careless indifference to his claims, but it is a transferring of our allegience to another, Idolatry says, "These be thy gods, that have saved thee, that brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." Idolatry is base forgetfulness and black ingratitude; and covetousness is idolatry.

The Scriptures also call it the root of all evil. (1 Tim. 6:10.) It is not only an awful thing in itself, but it is a prolific source of all other sins. They also declare it to be a bar to the kingdom of heaven. No covetous man shall inherit the kingdom of heaven or hath any part in it. (1 Cor. 6:10; Eph. 5:5.) They associate it with murder, theft, falsehood, fornication, and the vilest of sins. (1 Cor. 6:10; Eph. 5:5.) According to these Scriptures, a man may say, "I have done no murder, I have committed no theft, I have declared no falsehood, I have not been guilty of fornication," and yet, if he has been a covetous man, he is just as vile and guilty in the sight of him who searches the heart as though he were stained with all these crimes. Yea, if he have coveted his neighbor's ox, or house, or land, or wife, he has been guilty already of all these crimes. They are in his heart, and, if unrestrained, they will all be brought forth.

Covetousness was the cause of Laban's churlish treatment of Jacob; of Jacob's deceit in supplanting his brother; of Baalim striving to curse Israel; of Achan concealing the golden wedge and Babylonish garment; of Saul reserving the best of the flocks and herds of the Amalekites alive when God had commanded him to destroy them; of Judas betraying his master; of Ananias and Sapphira lying to the Lord; of Felix keeping Paul in prison after he was well assured of his innocence. From all this Scripture testimony may we not judge that it is a most grievous crime against God, a most daring blasphemy of his name? See how David, when his conscience was probed by the heaven inspired and heaven directed words of Nathan, after his covetousness of his brave captain's beautiful wife had led to murder and adultery, cries out, in the fifty-first Psalm, in words of the humblest contrition for pardon and cleansing, and confesses his sin. The root of it all was covetousness. O that we all may see its heinousness, its exceeding sinfulness, as did David then! Would we not all be compelled to say, as did he, "I have sinned."

But perhaps it is well to define covetousness, that we know just what this thing is that is so vile in the sight of God. There is hardly a word relating to the passions of men used in the Bible but what is susceptible of a double meaning. There is a good and bad anger, hate, love, jealously, etc. Even so the word "covet" is sometimes used in a good sense, as, "Covet earnestly the best gifts." 1 Cor. 12:31. This is a lawful, a heaven-inspired desire to be in that place wherein we can be of the most service in the house of God. This the apostle commands. But the

most common sense in which the word is used is evil. Covetousness is not merely to think a thing lovely or desirable; it is not merely to desire the possession of a thing. This may be lawful, because the thing may be lawfully desired. It is not merely a spirit to diligently labor for a competency. This may also be lawful and right. But it means to have a desire in your heart for the very thing that belongs to our neighbor; it means a spirit to take it from him; it means greediness or averice.

Thus we see how evil the Scriptures declare it to be, and what evil company it keeps, and what an evil meaning is in its very name. Its exceeding sinfulness will also appear when we consider its source. It is the child of unbelief, of worldly mindedness, and of self love. It is based first upon a lack of confidence in God; for if we fully believe in the providential care of God over us every day and hour, we shall be sure that he will provide all that we need, and so cannot see any reason to covet that which he gives to another. Covetousness denies to God the right to distribute his bounties as he will; and therefore, though we covet and rob the goods of our neighbor, and cause him suffering, yet the sin is against God. This is what David meant in the fifty-first Psalm when he said, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight," etc. Covetousness denies that God is all-wise, almighty and good, and refuses to believe that he is our friend. It buffets Jehovah in the face, and declares all his faithful promises to be lies. Again, an underestimate of the things of this life, and an extreme worldly mindedness, incite and arouse covetousness, the world, this present evil world, is all and in all to its sin-bewitched gaze. Another source of covetousness is a Satan-born desire to excel others of our fellow-men in riches, reputation, honor, power, pomp and ostentation, which is the very reverse of that meek and lowly spirit which becomes creatures and sinners. All these things are condemned in the word of God. An improper fear of want by-and-by, also often characterizes this spirit of covetousness. I say improper fear, because we are bidden not to be careful concerning this, as our Father knows that we have need of all these things. Surely if we may know a thing by the company it keeps, there is not one redeeming trait about covetousness, not one word to be said in its favor, when it fastens upon the things of the world.

Since its sources are so evil, and it is so evil in its own nature, and its associates are so evil, may we not justly conclude that its results must be evil, and only evil, and that continually? It robs God and man. It robs God in that it denies him the honor that is due him; it refuses to trust him or to praise him; it defies human power and wisdom and worldly riches instead of God. When we covet, we do these things. It robs man, in that it is the parent of all theft, and of all slander and lying and cheating. It also robs our fellow men, in that it withholds from the poor and needy that which God has committed to us for them. By reason of it we embezzle the Lord's goods committed to our trust for others, and the voice of our brother's distress cries to God against us. It causes the heart to be hard, and shuts the eyes and ears to every call of distress. It stupefies the conscience, and kills every generous emotion. It leads to sins of omission and commission. It is the first parent of all wars, persecutions, debates and robberies. It fills all our jails, and support all our judges, courts and lawyers. In the house of God it is the chief cause of all

dissensions, coldness and alienations. To love our neighbor as ourself is the law of God; but covetousness loves self first, last, and all the time, and the neighbor's goods rather than himself. It is the rebel of heaven and earth, the deadliest foe of God and man, and the most fearful weapon of the prince of darkness himself. Because of covetousness the poor are hungry and naked and cold and shelterless, often the pastors of churches suffer want, our houses of worship are not made neat and comfortable, and the ways of Zion languish. (Mal. 3: 8-10.) It insinuates its subtle form everywhere, often under the garb of an angel of light, calling itself "prudence," "foresight," "economy," etc. These are all good things, but let us beware of being deceived by this child of the arch-deceiver.

These are some of its outward effects, as regards our relation to others; no less fearful are its effects upon a man's own soul. No one of us, can harbor wrong, or do wrong to others, without it reacting upon ourselves. The covetous man is a poor man. He is poor in his own estimation of his goods, for he thinks he has not all that he needs. And this is to be poor, though his riches can be counted by the million. He is of necessity poor in happiness or contentment. What does the covetous man really have, even of this world? Poor as his neighbor may be, yet if he can say, like Paul, "I have coveted no man's gold or siliver," he is happy. He has what his covetous neighbor cannot buy with all his riches. But this is all purely natural, and is as true of the natural as of the spiritual man. The spiritual man who falls under the dominion of a covetous spirit meets with greater loss still. From such a man it cuts off all growth in knowledge, love and peace. It shuts its deluded slave away from all his rightful and blood bought privileges, both of communion with God and with those who love him. It cannot be otherwise. What child of God is there but that knows that this is true in his own heart? Who has not witnessed its truth in the life of others? Some did run well, whom you and I have known. Where are they now? Afar off, backsliden from God, and alienated from his church. They neither speak of Jesus nor enjoy the theme. They are not dead, but they sleep, and have lain down among the dead. The love of money they have indulged till they have coveted after it, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows. May God bring such ones back, and heal their backslidings, and remove the covetous spirit. If the soul be filled with covetous practices, it cannot be filled with the love of God. If we seek the friendship of the world, we cannot have the tokens of the friendship of God at the same time. If we trust in uncertain riches, we cannot be sensible of the sustaining power of the everlasting arms at the same time. If we are studying by every craft to increase our worldly wealth, we cannot expect to increase in the true riches. God's bounty felt in the soul will produce riches of literality, not the poverty of covetousness.

"Thou shalt not covet" was one of the first revealed commands; and afterward, through all the pages of inspiration, by precept, warning, reproof and example, God put the seal of his condemnation upon this sin. This same law has he written in the hearts of his willing people, so that they abhor it, and pray to be made free from it.

Since it is such a fearful, God dishonoring sin, ranking in the catalogue with murder, lying, theft and adultery, ought it not in our pulpits to be rebuked, and dealt with in our churches, just as is the case with these other crimes? Ought not those members of churches

who, while equally able with others, yet bear none of the burdens, which therefore fall doubly upon the rest, to be reproved and rebuked, and dealt with as though they had been guilty of these other crimes? We should start back with horror at the thought of robbing our brother; and yet are we not doing so when we bear none of the expense of the church, while he bears a double share? This is covetousness. May God, for his own name's sake, for the sake of his cause, for our own soul's sake, remove from us this grievous sin. I remain, as ever, your brother in hope of life.

(The late Elder) F. A. CHICK
Reisterstown, Md.
Feb. 18, 1887

OBITUARY

MRS. ROSA WEST GORDY was born May 20, 1871, and passed away at her home on the Ocean City Road near Salisbury, Md., Feb. 26, 1951. She was the daughter of Burton and Hettie West. On Dec. 24, 1890, she was married to Charles F. Gordy who preceded her to the grave. To this union five children were born. Three surviving are Charles B., Ann Arbor, Mich., Herman W., Salisbury, Md., and Mrs. Lawrence Adkins, Salisbury, Md. One child died in infancy and Sister Effie Givans, a member of the Nassaongo Church, died several years ago.

Sister Gordy was baptized by the late Elder T. M. Poulson, of New Church, Va., into the fellowship of the Nassaongo Old School Baptist Church, April 21, 1894. She dearly loved her church, having been a member for about fifty-five years. She will be missed very much by those who knew her. Her home was an open one to her brethren and many friends. She was well versed in the word of God, and the gospel hymns. Most of the hymns she could sing from memory.

In her last days she lived alone part of the time, yet she was not alone as the Lord was with her. A short time before her death she became ill during the night, and as she was alone in the house became dreadfully frightened at the thought that she might die with no one with her. Suddenly the scripture was given her with much comfort that I am not alone, the Lord is here. The writer conducted the funeral service using the above mentioned scripture. He was assisted by Elder H. M. Bennett, of Mardela Springs, Md. Written by her pastor.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER

OBITUARY

SISTER ALICE M. LUPTON, daughter of the late Allen and Abigail Hamilton, was born July 25, 1865, and died Feb. 4, 1951. Surviving are her daughter, Mrs. Lydia L. Taylor of the home, Sea Level, N. C.; three sons: Elmer H. Lupton, Edward M. Lupton, both of Baltimore, Md., and Dr. Charles H. Lupton, Norfolk, Va.; two sisters: Mrs. Mary Etta Taylor and Mrs. Allen Taylor; one brother, Mitchell Hamilton, all of Sea Level; six grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

This beloved sister united with the Primitive Baptist church the fourth Saturday in December, 1883. She was a wonderful gift to us all. Often have we enjoyed her conversing on many scriptures. Her faith was abiding in the mercy of God.

What a wonderful God we have that he should highly favor the dear ones left behind with the abiding evidence that their dear ones shall awake in his likeness and shall be forever with the Lord. God knew in mind and purpose his people before they were created or formed, and their names were written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you."

The funeral services were conducted by our pastor, Elder Eddie Humphrey, and Elder R. W. Gurganus, who preached with much power and sweetness at the home of the deceased. Her mortal body was laid to rest beneath a mound of beautiful flowers in Styron's Cemetery until the blessed time shall come—the glorious coming of the Lord to raise from among the dead those who sleep in him. "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? * * * But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Written by the request of Bay Sea Level Church in conference Feb. 24, 1951. One copy to be sent to the **Old Faith Contender,** one to **Signs of the Times,** one recorded on the church book, and one to her family.

(Elder) EDDIE HUMPHREY, Moderator
LULA T. MASON, Church Clerk
NELLIE WILLIAMSON, Asst. Clerk

OBITUARY

EVAN SILAS FRASURE was born at Dowell, Ky., July 30, 1870, and departed this life at Pocatello, Idaho, April 14, 1948, making his stay on earth 77 years, 8 months and 14 days.

Brother Frasure united with the Primitive Baptist church in Kentucky in 1897. Sister Frasure united in 1896. Both were baptized by the late Elder Robinson. Jan. 6, 1888, Brother Frasure and Mrs. Frances Brown were united in holy matrimony. To this union were born the following children: Bert, Mrs. Rosa Howell, Elijah, Mrs. Una Newsom, Mrs. Martha Akers, Mrs. Margaret McColl and John. All of them live near Pocatello, Idaho. Mrs. Mary Bell Hall lives at Amba, Ky., there are sixty-eight grandchildren, ninety great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild. Mrs. Rosa Howell is deceased.

Brother Frasure was a member of the Old Line Predestinarian Primitive Baptist church fifty-four years. He was a great fireside talker, and his was a home for Old Baptists. He loved their sweet Christian fellowship to mingle tears and blend spirits. A good neighbor, good father and husband, loved by all who knew him. Sister Frasure is about eighty. The Frasure clan live close together and are indeed a great people, including in-laws. It was the writer's happy blessing, with Elder A. D. Hughett, to spend a week with this clan in February. We held meetings every night and on Sunday in Sister Frasure's home. It was a heaven below.

Elder A. D. Hughett, Selah, Washington, conducted the funeral service for Brother Frasure, and his peaceful remains were laid to rest in Morland, Idaho.

(Elder) C. H. BYRD

OBITUARY

MRS. NAOMI LEFFERTS ROUNDS passed away suddenly at the home of her son in South Yarmouth, Mass., November 20, 1950. She was born in Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., Aug. 24, 1881, the youngest of four children and only daughter of George W. and Sarah P. Lefferts. Her three brothers, Howard H., Henry T., and Elder Horace H. Lefferts having pre-deceased her. September 2, 1902, she was married to Edward F. Rounds, of Salisbury, Md., and to this union two sons were born. The eldest son, Paul L. Rounds, passed away several years ago in Honduras, the younger son, E. Stuart Rounds, survives.

On April 4, 1926, she was received into the Old School Baptist Church in New York City, and was baptized the following Sunday by the late Elder R. Lester Dodson. After the passing of her husband she lived for a number of years in Warwick, N. Y. Later she served as matron of the Primitive Baptist Home in Salisbury, Md., for several years.

Sister Rounds was a lovable person, manifesting a love for the truth as it is in our Lord Jesus Christ, and for all who love Him in sincerity. Her passing is truly a loss to the many who loved her, yet we must say, Thy will be done. It is far better for the blessed in Jesus to depart and be with the Lord. The Ebenezer Church of New York City has suffered a great loss in her passing as well as her family.

Because of the illness of her pastor, the writer was called to officiate at her funeral, reading and commenting on the twenty-third and twenty-fourth Psalms by request. The funeral services were conducted in the Welsh Tract Old School Baptist meeting-house near Newark, Del. Interment in the cemetery adjoining.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, since our meeting last fall, the church has suffered by death the loss of our dear friend and Pastor, ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, and

WHEREAS, his death has plunged our members and friends in deep sorrow, so much so that it seems almost too much for us to start our meetings this spring without his care and guidance, remembering his labor of love among us these many years. We recall his trips to Warwick and Middletown each fourth Sunday, except the winter months, many times when he was not able to make the long journey, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Middletown and Wallkill Church record its feeling of grief at the loss of Elder Dodson, bowing in humble submission to God for his removal from the scenes of his earthly labors. We desire to record our thankfulness to God for the gift of him to us, and sorrow not as others having no hope, but believing our departed Pastor has entered into the presence of the dear Savior, and is enjoying the rest that remains to the people of God.

RESOLVED, that a copy of these resolutions be forwarded to Mrs. Dodson, and a copy to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Adopted by the Middletown and Wallkill Church, Middletown, N. Y., at their meeting April 22, 1951.

(Elder) A. J. SLAUSON, Moderator
W. D. CHAPMAN, Acting Clerk

Pleasant Valley Primitive Baptist Church, Kingman, Kansas, meets the first Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Jan., March, etc.) at the home of Sister Verda Machesney, 516 East Ave. C., Kingman, Kans.
(Mrs.) PHEBE CATES, Clerk

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carver Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U. S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church.
C. H. EVANS, Pastor

New Hope Church better known as Lick Creek meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 a. m., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Ky.
R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St. near Calvert. Q. A. GLADDING

Black Rock Church meets every second Sunday at 11 a. m., Butler, Md. on Falls Road about 20 miles north of Baltimore.
J. D. WOOD, Pastor

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a. m. in the meeting house.

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays 11:00 a. m., 1:30 p. m.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m., north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

APPOINTMENTS FOR ELDER H. O. NASH AND D. V. SPANGLER
Bush Arbor, Monday night, July 2nd, 7:30 P. M.; Lambs Grove, Tuesday, July 3rd, 11 A. M.; Raleigh, Tuesday night, July 3rd, 7:30 P. M.; Willow Springs, Wednesday, July 4th, 11 A. M.; Roxboro Wednesday night, July 4th, 7:30 P. M.

The Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with Dan River Church, July 14, 15, and 16, 1951. The church is located about fifteen miles from Reidsville, N. C., on what is known as the Mayfield Road, and about five miles north of Ruffin.
All lovers of the truth are invited.
D. V. SPANGLER (pastor)

Bethlehem Church, Malvern, Ala., meets each second Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Hopeful Church, Ozark, Ala., meets each fourth Saturday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock. Meeting place at Alder St., at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala., 11 a. m.
E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala, meets each fourth Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a. m., six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Seclusia Old School Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday at 12812 Williamson, or write A. J. Taylor, 932E Monterey, Pomona, Cal.

Hopewell Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at 10:30 a. m. each second Sunday in American Legion Hall, 1119—21st St., Sacramento, Cal. All lovers of the truth invited.
SETH BYNUM, Pastor
WM. ECHOLS, Clerk
Chowchilla, Cal.

Bethel Church meets every third Sunday and Saturday night before at the home of L. H. Riley, 5265 Ardelle, Stockton, Cal. For information write Elder L. L. WILSON, 2627 North Tulare St., Bakersfield, Cal.

The Old School or Predestinarian Baptists meet for worship on fifth Sundays at 2:30 p. m. second floor Pythian Temple Building, 1012 Ninth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Elder John D. Wood, Minister. For information write FRANK T. SIMPKINS, Sr., 5214 Harper St., Dillon Park, Washington 19, D. C.

Meetings are held each first Sunday and Saturday before at Little Flock Church, S. W. 29th Ave., and 6th St., Miami, Fla. We extend an invitation to any interested to visit us.
(Mrs.) J. M. FUTCH
7005 S. W. 21st St., Miami, Fla.

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets every second Sunday at 5th and E. Park St.

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3023 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va. R. B. DENSON, Pastor

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.
R. B. DENSON, Pastor

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m.
C. M. FISHER

Bethel Old School Baptist Church, Riffe, Wash., meets every third Sunday, 11 a. m. in the meeting house.
I. F. COLEMAN, Mod.
ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk, Riffe, Wash.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 11 a. m. at the home of E. B. Ault on Progresso Highway, three and one half miles south of Weslaco.
E. B. AULT, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk
Route 1, Box 88, Mission, Tex.

Pleasant Grove Church near Yakima, Washington, meets at 11 a. m. each second Sunday by appointment at the home of one of the members living at Naches, Wash.
A. D. HUGHETT, Pastor
BEATRICE HAAN, Clerk
Star Route, Naches, Wash.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 3 p. m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va., N. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m.
W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

Ramah Church, Cottonwood, Ala., meets each third Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each second Sunday and Saturday before.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala. Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a. m., ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a. m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every first and third Sundays at Parkside Hotel, 18 Gramercy Park South, one block east of Fourth Ave. and 20th St., near 23rd St. Sta. Lexington Ave. Subway. Take Elevator to Park Room second floor. 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before. E. H. LANIER, Clerk.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

The Old Orderly Mt. Zion (Cash) Predestinarian Baptist Church meets on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in each month at the home of Bro. J. J. Darnell, Campbell, Texas.
Sister SIMMONS, Clerk

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets first and third Sundays each month 11 a. m. 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas.
L. D. ROSE and W. W. TAYLOR, Pastors

Fort Worth, Tex., Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets first Sunday in each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday at 2 p. m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting house.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor
W. A. LITTLE, Asst. Pastor

Shepherd Fold Church meets each first Sunday 11 a. m., Saturday before 2:30 p. m. on Little York Highway, 4 miles north of Houston, Texas. One mile east of Highway 76.
W. O. BEENE, Pastor

The original Pilgrim Rest Church of Lawn, Texas, meets every first Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a. m.
C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
HOWARD EASON, Clerk

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2. p. m. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. at the home of M. J. Culpepper. Lovers of the truth invited.
E. B. AULT, Pastor

The Old Salem Church of Old School Baptists, 4 miles south from Teague, Texas, meets the first Sunday in each month and Saturday before. MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

Danville Primitive Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday night before Bradley Road, Danville, Va.
W. R. DODD, Pastor

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 119 ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND, AUGUST, 1951 No. 8

THE HIGHWAY OF HOLINESS

ISAIH: 35

There's a glorious, blood-bought highway
Narrow and strait is the road,
The redeemed of the Lord shall walk therein
For Jesus is their abode.

- 2 -

No unclean thing shall go this way
This highway that leads to God,
It is called the Way of Holiness
Which saints in all ages have trod.

- 3 -

This highway is closed to the public
Man hasn't the price to pay,
None but God's chosen have passes
To travel this holy highway.

- 4 -

The Father made this provision
On the merits of His dear Son,
And freely places the sinner there
When the work of grace is begun.

- 5 -

The wayfaring men on this journey
Tho fools, shall not err therein,
For Jesus, Himself, is their shepherd
His blood paid the price for their sin.

- 6 -

This highway is paved with sacrifice
And bloodshed, mingled with gall
And those who travel this heavenly road
May stumble, but never fall.

- 7 -

Their soul is stayed on eternal things
Their hope is anchored above
Their eyes are fixed on their risen Lord
Who redeemed them in wonderful love.

- 8 -

Along this highway are branches
Yielding fruits so rare
Meekness, love, joy and longsuffering
Are some of the fruits they bear.

- 9 -

At the end of this glorious highway
We are told is a county so fair
Where the saints shall see Jesus, their Savior
And be satisfied in Him there.

- 10 -

I love this blood-stained highway
Which saints in all ages have trod
Lord, plant and keep my straying feet
In the road that leads to God.

MILDRED DYKES

EXPERIENCE

DEAR BRETHREN: I have wanted to write my experience but have put it off, thinking it not fit to be classed with the many sweet ones I have read. I cannot remember the date when I felt I needed the help of something to save me from destruction, but I was small. I would wonder how I would ever be saved. It was on my mind when at work or at play. I had never been a really bad girl, but I knew I was not fit for heaven. One day I had strolled off into a field away from anyone. All at once I heard some one call me. I looked around, but could see no one, so I decided I was mistaken. I heard the same voice again, and again looked around, and seeing no one I began to feel bad and uneasy. Then I hear my name called out plainer than before. I started for home in a hurry. I went to mother and asked her if any one had been calling me. She said they had not. I did not tell her about what had happened, but it stayed on my mind and made me fear more than ever. I would be restless at night and could not sleep. I would go to preaching to hear all I could. I went to hear the Primitive Baptists, and it seemed they were the hardest folks I ever heard. I could not understand them at all. I thought their doctrine would never do for a dead sinner like me. I felt like I had to work, and work hard, but did not know how to begin. I loved all their members, and they seemed to love each other better than self.

I went to the Methodist meetings and joined their Sunday School. It seemed that they were more interested in my soul than others. They and the Missionaries could preach so that we who were in the world would understand them. Father would call me his little Methodist, and I thought if I were ever anything I would be a Methodist. Father and mother were both Primitive Baptists, and strong in the faith, but they never tried to make us children be Baptists. When a protracted meeting was held near I would go. When they would call for mourners I could not stay away, and it seemed the more I went the worse I got. I could see my playmates and others go to the altar, and it would not take them long to find their Savior, but I felt that I was doomed and there was no chance for me. So I decided I was one who had sinned against the Holy Ghost and people were losing time praying for me. By this time I was nineteen or twenty years old. I asked Father what sinning against the Holy Ghost was. He said he could not tell me just what it was, but he did not think there were many who had ever committed it. He was a Primitive Baptist preacher, but I would not tell him why I asked that question. I remained in this state of mind until I was twenty-two years old, then I was married. My husband was a Deacon in the Missionary Baptist Church. I went to preaching with him all the time. When they held "big meetings" all the good ladies would come to me and beg me to make a start and let the Lord save me, for I was grieving the Savior, and that he was waiting for me to come home. I did not tell them that I had tried all my life and he would not have me. I began to go again and try, I thought, with all my heart, for I did not know what would become of me. By this time I had one or two little boys, and thought I was not fit to raise them, that it would be better if I was taken away from them, that they would be better off with their good Christian father than with me. I had tried all I knew how—had every one I could to help me. I would slip out at night and try to pray, but my prayers seemed to go no farther than my lips. All I could say was, have mercy on me and help me. I would have my husband pray for me at night, but all seemed to fail. I felt sure that I was lost, that I was doomed, and hell was waiting for me. I got to where I did not want to go to preaching. I felt too mean to be with any one. That was on my mind day and night.

One day I was at home ironing and the thought came into my mind that the great God of heaven had placed me here and I was his, and he had the right to do with me just as he pleased, that I was helpless as a new born babe, and if he sent me to hell it was just, I was helpless and no one else could help me. It was left to him, I had nowhere else to go. The first thing I noticed, with all these thoughts, and more too, rising up in my mind, I felt the burden had left me, and all my trust was in the Savior and not in mankind. I united with the Missionaries, thinking it would do, for my husband belonged to them, and was a deacon; but he never did ask me to unite with his church, although I knew he would be better pleased. Now I thought my troubles were over. In a year or two my troubles began to come again. I would go to their big meetings and would help them sing, and a few times went up to the mourners and tried to speak to them, but never could say the right words to them. The thoughts kept coming faster and faster, one after another, "who helped you?" How did you get what hope you have? Who led you through the wilderness? With many such thoughts coming up in

front of me I had to drop out and take a back seat. I felt like I was a hypocrite and was betraying the Savior as Judas had done. I thought I would stay in the church and let the other fellow do the work, but that did not last long. The trouble began coming again. I could read my Bible with more understanding than ever before. It did not seem like the same book I had read in Sunday School. It seemed like it was showing me to where I was drifting. I cannot describe my feelings while I was in this church. By this time I had six sweet babies—four boys and two girls. One night I dreamt there was going to be a double burial. We had all gathered around the grave, which was already dug. The preacher was standing there with song book and Bible in his hand. Some one asked, "Where is the corpse?" Some one answered that they had come to life and that we would have no burial this time. When day came all was well and I did not think much about my dream. This same day my sister was going home. She had been here on a visit from Oklahoma. I tried all morning to go to mother's to see her leave, but something kept me from going. After dinner my husband went to Alma with a load of cotton, and I thought I would take the little children and go to his nephew's—it was in sight. I stepped to the door and saw they were gone. I made two or three efforts to leave that day but all failed. In a few minutes I stepped out of the house, but told the little girl, aged four, where I was going and for her to watch the baby. Just as I passed the corner of the house, I heard her crying, "mama, mama," in distress. I turned and saw her coming to meet me, and a blaze was higher than her head and no one near to help me. I cried out, "Lord, what must I do." I ran to her, caught her by her clothes, gave her a quick sling, like a man popping a whip, and all her clothes tore loose from her except her pants. I picked her up and had a doctor called. She looked up and said to me, "Mama are you going to bury me?" I said, "No you are not burned much," but I knew she was badly burned. Soon the doctor came, and the house was full of men and women. They all told me I had just as well give her up, that she could not live; but I told them she was at the edge of the grave but would not be buried. I did not tell them why I had such strong hopes, although they asked me. I was looking for a newcomer in about four months, and I was uneasy about it, as much so as the one that was burned. Both made it through after all, but it seemed it was to show me that His will was to be done and not mine, that he would work and none could hinder nor stay his hand. As time passed and things kept coming up before me, the more I longed to be out of the Missionary church. I got so sick of it I thought I could not live. I did not want to hear them preach, but still I thought how would it do for me to leave and my husband a deacon. These thoughts would come to me, "Take up your cross and follow me;" "He that is ashamed of me, of him will I be ashamed." "Come out from among them, my people." I wrote the church a letter asking them to take my name off the book for I was not one of them. The first opportunity I offered myself to the Primitive Baptists. I told them part of what I have written and they took me in. I know I love the Baptist Church and her members. I do so much enjoy being among them, though unworthy I feel. I want to live with them, die with them, and be buried by them. If anything be said or sung over my dead body I hope it will be done by the good old Primitive Baptist members and ministers. Some may think I am a

Primitive because my parents were. I do not think so in the least, thought I am thankful that my fore parents were Baptists, for I feel and trust that I am an heir and did inherit the faith and love I have. A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all. Dyer, Ark.

(Mrs.) KATE COTTRELL

* * *

1506 Morning Glory Ave.,
Durham, N. C.

Elder R. W. Rhodes, Lillie, La.

DEAR BROTHER RHODES: Your letter came in due time and was very glad indeed to hear from you again. I notice that you mention being cast down, etc. I feel like I know how to sympathize with you in such a condition, for such has been my condition for four weeks. I awoke from my sleep about 2 o'clock in the morning of Monday after the first Sunday in February crying out, "Lord have mercy," and for about two hours I could not sleep, but did lay on my bed feeling that I was mistaken in what I hope the Lord has done for me. How miserable I was! I felt that surely I had never known anything about a call to the ministry, and even though I had spoken in public, and while doing so, that I had preached a false doctrine. I could not help meditating about the matter, and there were times when I felt that I would never make another public attempt to speak in the name of the Lord. However, when I would get to talking with those I came in contact with about the scriptures, I would find myself making endeavors to vindicate the doctrine of sovereign grace. One day while talking with a man on the subject of religion I felt some power taking hold on me, and the next thing I knew my eyes were dimmed with tears, and there again I found myself standing before him affirming the fact that Jesus Christ came down in this sinful world, not to do his own will but the will of the Father; and that he fulfilled every jot and tittle of the law, and was finally crucified for sin, because the sins of his people were laid upon him; and while he was on the cross he cried out saying, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Somehow I felt that this prayer of our dear Lord reached the Father's ears, and that the spirit had now made the application of this truth to me, that I was remembered in that prayer. Once more I found myself rejoicing in the unspeakable gift of God for the dry bones had come forth with the preparation of the Lord, and I felt that I was his, and that he was mine.

But how short was the duration when again I was cast down, and had to go with a bowed head. Yes, lamenting my case as I felt the chilly winds blow upon me. I take it for granted that this is the way of the Lord, the way that he foreordained to bring this poor sinner. It is in the winter season with the ice, so to speak, heavily hanging upon us that we are caused to consider, where we came from, and how we have been brought. We do not bring these seasons upon ourselves, but God who knows best brings them, that we may know how weak and frail we are, and to realize that he is God, and know there is none like him. Unto him we are caused to look, for it is written, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth," etc. We like to think of our God as being as high as the heavens and as deep as hell. From hell he has delivered, and when we have soared high upon the wings of his love, we still know that he is higher. It is indeed a consoling thought when we are made to know that wherever we go God is there, and how sweet the thought when he so gently says to his little children, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

The other day when talking with

some brethren, and feeling all out of joint, and surrounded with darkness, I remembered an experience I had in the year 1918. It was when I thought that I was at death's door. I was exceedingly low with double pneumonia in connection with the "flu." I remember asking my father if he thought I would recover from my sickness. His answer was "the Lord is able." I knew that but I wanted to know what he thought about my case. I asked him a second time what he thought about me recovering. He looked at me, and I noticed that he was choking, and that he was in a strain holding back tears. However, he did answer me, and when he did he said, "We have done all we can." I remember that I was given strength to turn from my right side over on my back, and when I had done so I looked up in the room and asked myself this question, "How will it be on the other side of the river?" O, my soul! Heaven came right down in that room and everything was as light, well, the sun does not give such a light as that was. I told my father how to give out the little possessions I had. I told him who to give this to, and who to give that to. I had in my mind brothers and sisters. As I think of this I know that I certainly must have thought that I was going to leave this world. But how sweet the thought of going to a better home than can ever be found on this earth. It was just a little more than a year past when the Lord in the person of the Holy Ghost visited me and gave me a precious hope of heaven and immortal glory. That hope which he gave me then was sufficient when I was so low down at death's door. That hope is all I have to-day. It has been, and I feel it will ever be, "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast." Thanks to God for this most wonderful hope.

Brother Rhodes, I have said, and I still say that I do not dread death, but the thing I do dread is what I must endure between here and death. Somehow I cannot help but rely on the promise of our God that he will be with us when we must quit the walks of men; I feel the Lord will be with us when the death angel comes to take our spirit away; that when he does come the Lord will open the curtains of heaven sufficient for us to see our heavenly home. Who will want to remain here in this sinful world with such a view of a home far better? I feel that we get a glimpse of this while we live, and when we do we can say, it is far better to depart and be with the Lord.

I seem to have gotten away from what I first was talking or writing about. However, the words of Jesus must be proven true, "In the world ye shall have tribulation," etc. So while we live we must know something about sorrow, conflicts and trials. The conditionalist will tell us that we must remember that it is written, "be of good cheer." Yes, but the conditionalist cannot make it so, but when the Lord speaks through the medium of the Spirit and says, "be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" right then and not until then are we lifted up in our feelings, and given fresh courage to press on. We then know that he has delivered, and are given faith to believe that he will continue to deliver us through all the toils and trials that he has appointed that we shall endure here in this life. He gives us the treasures of darkness although we would not have it this way. Nature must be crucified and set in the background, and when it is so then cometh forth that which endureth forever—the perfection of the spirit. How true did the poet express it:

"Trials make the promise sweet;
Trials give new life to prayer;

Trials bring me to his feet,
Lay me low, and keep me there."

When we are blest to see, we can say with David, "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes." And again, "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so," and it is only the redeemed of the Lord that can say it is the truth. They know it, not from reading, but instead they know it from experience. Then having experience, they have hope, and hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts.

I hope I have not worried you with my many statements. I had no idea that I would write as much as I have, but take what I have herein stated and consider the poor, unworthy feeling writer, and if it is possible cast the mantle of charity over me. O my soul, how could I get along if it were not for the grace of my brethren which God alone gives them. I want to ever live at their feet. I feel that I can see that the Lord has anointed them, and I love them for this cause. They are, I trust, my kindred, even you my precious brother whom I hold in the highest regard, one who God has called to stand on the walls of Zion to cry unto spiritual Jerusalem, "that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Yes, I love all those who walk meekly before him, and how precious are those who have to bear "the burden of the word of the Lord." May the dear God of our salvation keep us and bless us to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." May I say press on and fight the good fight of faith. The Lord has come and he will come again and make our souls glad, and fill us with the spirit of thanksgiving, and to his name shall be all the praise, honor and glory. Let me quote the language of the servant of God, Moses: "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord."

Kindly remember me to the many dear and precious brethren, and give my regards to your family. With best wishes to you, and begging that you remember me when at a rich throne of grace. Write me again. The Lord be with you. Your little brother in hope.

(Elder) F. W. RHODES

* * *

Route 1, Box 78, Smithfield, Texas

DEAR BRETHREN: If you will allow such a worm as I to thus address you. I am not gifted by words or by pen to express my poor, lowly feelings. I was reared by good Old Primitive Baptists. My mother and dad would go to church ten or twelve miles by wagon and mules as that was fifty years ago and the only mode of travel. Being small, of course they carried me, and for some unknown reason after I grew up they quit going and of a surety at that tender age no one taught me the way I believe.

When nineteen I married a fine girl and to our union there are two fine boys and they have families of their own. At twenty-one I united with the Missionary Baptist Church. I was scared into it by the religion they preached which is so prevalent to-day and was in the days of old. "In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: (the people) whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool:

but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed and walk." Realizing I was with the wrong people I quit going to church. I moved to Ft. Worth, Texas in 1941. It had been many years since I had heard a Primitive Baptist sermon. In 1948, my eldest brother who is an Elder, asked me to go to the Association. I went and was baptized by my oldest brother in the good old faith. I did not have any one to teach me or coax me into that. John 3:8 says, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." I feel so unworthy to even try to mix and associate with the good people I have met, but that does not lessen the desire I have to be with them.

I get great comfort and rejoicing in reading the *Signs* which was sent to me by my Elder brother. Reading the good writings and experiences of the dear brethren and sisters of the faith that was delivered to the saints is about all the comfort I get. I feel I have been crucified to the love and lusts of the world for I have no desire to mix and mingle with them.

Wishing, if not in vain, all of the children of God the best in everything that the dear Savior sees fit to give, I am a sinner desiring your prayers. Your lowly brother I hope in Christ.

T. T. REID

2085 East Broadway,
Vancouver, B. C., Canada

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC., DEAR BRETHREN: The thought in mind is Zion's joy and the hymn,

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love!
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

A back number of the *Signs* has filled me with joy, a joy which the world cannot take away. Oh, the beautiful letters. I am now reading the fifth one. These writers repeat thoughts and fears which have also been in my mind, and a holy love for Christ's sake reaches out to Zion. Then ere I am aware my cup fills up as I feasted on the light given to Brother H. L. Rogers. I thought of my aged mother just before she died. She had been reading about the resurrection and decided that there is no one who knows what that change is. But oh, how sweet when some light comes shining into our understanding which enables this writer to explain it to us.

Sister Campbell repeats so much which I have experienced from time to time. I believe I once saw her in Ontario. So we reach out in love and joy when the waters of life flow toward us. I appreciate Brother Perdue's inspired view of the pure truth down through the ages, and I know something about Brother Lawson's feeling as he reached eagerly for the *Signs* from the mail box. He expresses my fears and need for the prayers of Zion. Often have I feared about my silent tongue when perhaps I should have been confessing my Savior before the sons of men. I must not get started with all this flowing joy from that river that flows past the city of God with trees on either side, the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations, because I want to copy letters from other people who have been led down into deep waters in Zion. But I must tell you that this very morning the busy world has receded to give place to that shining armour in Ephesians. "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the

preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

I have before me a hungry, joyful letter from a predestinarian Baptist who loves the *Signs* and repeats that there is nothing else like the church meetings and three day associations. The writer is C. P. Hunter, Route 1, Marion, Ill. The clear view of some light in Zion reminds me of the pure gold and the clear crystal. I must pause with sweet mediation lingering in the midst of Brother Roger's vision and Sister Slusher's humble heaven-born thoughts. I wish I could visit with some one this morning about Christ before Pilate, Paul before Agrippa, the beautiful prayers of Christ, Paul, David, Solomon and so much more than that. I did have a bleak, lonely experience lately but that has left. Humbly,

(Miss) CATHERINE M. DUFFUS

* * *

Cascade, Va.

DEAR BROTHER ROGERS: Your circular letter in the Pocatalico Minutes you sent me was so complete, I can't help wanting to write, and tell you that's exactly what I believe, whatever I am, and ably written, so much so that it was God through you, by His Spirit, that wrote. No man of himself could do this.

Oh! how can it be possible, that so vile a wretched sinner as I, could know the truth, whether spoken or written? Yet it is so. Whether I'm embraced in it or not. I believe in a covenant, and in a covenant-keeping God. Said covenant being held in the annuals of Eternity, between God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost, Three in one God. In which great covenant all the whole Church was chosen before the foundation of the world, and the Church was given Christ, and Christ was given the Church, and He was made the Surety for each member of His body, the Church, covenant-bound to safely land each of these chosen ones on the blissful shores of Heaven Eternal some sweet day. Just as the law of our land makes the husband responsible for the debts of his wife, so is Christ responsible to God for His Bride, made of God unto her "Wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption."

Jesus has paid the whole sin-debt. Nothing stands against the Church today, nor ever any more will stand against it, in God's sight, for He sees the Church as She stands in Christ, "Holy and without blame before Him in love" as She shall manifestly stand on that last and final day. Resurrection Morn. With all my very soul, I believe this, Brother Rogers, whether I'm embraced in it or not, it stands forever the truth.

We were not born of earthly parents to become their children but because we *already were* their children. Birth only made it manifest. So it is, Spiritually. Like Elder Hammond said at Elkhorn Association, several years ago. "Brethren, if a child is born in your home, if it ain't your child *before* it's born, I'll swear it ain't afterward!" A blunt expression but undeniably true.

I have not always believed this doctrine, Brothers Rogers. I was a bitter enemy to it once. I can't say I hated the Old Baptist *people,* but I hated the doctrine of Electing Grace. To me, then, it appeared unfair, unjust. Yet, I'd take the Old Baptist papers my Daddy subscribed to (when I got old enough to read) and go off to myself, and read the precious experiences written therein, and cry, feeling "O how good these peo-

ple are, they have a home in Heaven, and I, poor sinner am doomed to hell!" Picture to yourself a poor little boy, who began grieving over his sins when too small and too young to go to natural school. Feeling to be a lone stranger, a homeless one, black sheep of my father's family, and, when old enough to go to school, felt to be one alone, a target for other children to make fun of, and scorn and ridicule. Making all kinds of promises to God, as I wandered in the foothills of the Blue Ridge mountains of Virginia, begging for mercy, and broke every promise I ever made, thus seeming to make my damnation all the more sure, for I had lied to God. How I would dread to see the evening sun go down! Bringing on the dark shadows of night, and I would go to bed, cry myself to sleep many a time, fearful I'd never see the dawning of a new day in this world any more, that hell was my awful doom. Mother or Dad would hear my muffled crying, and would ask, "Layton, what's the matter with you." I'd say, "nothing." Thus lying again. That's how most of my childhood was spent, Brother Rogers. I have been a mourning stranger almost all my days. It used to be the sins I had committed that grieved me. Now it's what I daily commit.

On Sept. 16, 1911, I first saw the light of day in this natural kingdom. On Aug. 4, 1939, I first saw the light of day in the Spiritual Kingdom, I hope, when peace was spoken into my soul by these words coming into my very heart of my soul, in *felt power*. "For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Ephesians, 2-8:9.

This is the manifest reason to me, *why* I believe as I do today. For ever since *that* day, I have never feared hell nor satan anymore, and I have had a hope of Heaven Eternal, dating from Aug. 4, 1939, until now. If I am a child of God, now, I have *always* been one, in His mind and will. My experience is evidence to me. Born again, not to *become* a child, but because I *am* a child of the most High God. This is my hope. I find with the poet.

"Mixtures of joy and sorrow,
I daily do pass through."

One verse reads:

"Sometimes it (hope) grows so little
I almost lay it by,
Again, it seems sufficient
If I were called to die."

I *know* I'm a sinner by nature and practice. I'm *fearful* I'm a deceived deceiver, and I *hope* I'm a child of God, all at the same time.

Another poet expresses my feelings, as much as possible to be done in this world by mortal words:

" 'Tis seldom I can ever see
Myself as I could wish to be;
What I *desire,* I can't attain;
From what I *hate* I can't refrain."

With all my very soul, these words contain a word picture of this poor grieving, mourning soul.

Farewell, lest I weary you.

When driven to your knees by the knowledge you have no where else to go, won't you please try to remember this poor, unworthy sinner?

Humbly submitted in hope.

(Elder) LAYTON WINGFIELD

* * *

Bloomburg, Texas

DEAR SIGNS OF THE TIMES: I am sorry to be late in sending in my subscription. I greatly desire to continue reading the *Signs*. To my understanding it is the best Primitive Baptist paper I ever read. I began reading mother's paper many years ago. It stands firm in that saving grace. God saves his people by sending his spirit of love and great mercy into the hearts and lives of poor sinners

such as I. It is comfort and peace in your heart when you can hear that small voice saying, if God is with you no man can hinder.

I am deeply saddened to know of the passing of Elder Dodson. I never met him in person, but I was drawn to him in that sweet spiritual love God gives his people to love one another. I felt to know him by his writings. They always brought much comfort and peace in my heart and mind. I believe he is at rest and crowned with joy and peace forever.

I am enclosing my remittance for renewal for one year, and the balance to be used to help the *Signs* carry on. I remain a very little sister in that blessed hope in God if included at all.

(Mrs.) MAGGIE SIMMONS

Stella, N. C.

DEAR BRETHERN: I am enclosing remittance to advance my subscription date to 1952. I hope, if it is the Lord's will, that I may be able to take it what time I live here in this world of trouble. I do enjoy reading the *Signs,* and if I know my heart I love the doctrine it sets forth. I am seventy-three years old and have had many troubles and trials, yet I feel the Lord has been good to this poor sinner, and has given me a sweet hope, though at times it seems so little I think I will throw it by, but at other times it seems sufficient if I were called to die. I am so often made to lament and mourn, feeling surely I have never known anything about the goodness of an all wise God, and say if I was one of his little ones surely my troubles and trials would not have been so great. But, dear people of God, when I am made to look over my past life, and see how he has delivered this poor sinner, and am made to know there is no help in man, but only One who could deliver me, then I am made to rejoice in the midst of my troubles. I am made to know that there is a merciful God that has all power in heaven and earth, and none can say what doest thou great Jehovah for in him is everlasting life.

Oh, if I could only live in honor to his dear name what time I have to spare in this unfriendly world, but

"I find myself out of the way,
My thoughts are often gone astray;
Like one alone I seem to be;
Oh! is there any one like me!

From an unworthy sister.

(Mrs.) NOMA A. RHUE

Route 1, Indian Valley, Va.

DEAR BRETHREN: I received "Showers of Rain" which I enjoyed very much. I also enjoy reading the *Signs of the Times.* I have been a member of the Old School Baptist Church for almost two years. I believed the doctrine as far back as I can remember and longed to be in the church many years before I united, but felt too unworthy to be among God's people. I believe God's will shall be done, and when the right time came I united with the church at Indian Creek, Floyd Co., Va. and was baptized by our pastor, Elder Landon Harris.

The doctrine the Old School Baptists preach is my food and my drink. I was blessed to attend six associations and two union meetings last summer and fall, and heard some wonderful preaching. I feel like God's people are made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ. By their love one for another they are brought together by the will of God and I hope I am one of his little ones. I believe I have an ear to hear and a mind to understand when I hear the truth preached without any effort on my part.

My husband was killed in action in World War II leaving me a widow for six years with three daughters. In my sorrow and trouble, which felt I was unable to bear, the Lord was my only comforter. My husband was a believer of Old Baptist doctrine but not a mem-

ber of the church.

His aunt, Sister Minnie Turman's experience was in the *Signs* of April 1950. She was an invalid for almost twenty years and passed away Dec. 2, 1950. She bore all her sufferings with patience. Elder Golden Harris preached at her home one month before she died. She told me that sermon did her more good than any medicine she could have taken. The week before the meeting she was blessed to sing "Amazing Grace." At her request Elders Golden and Landon Harris preached her funeral at Indian Creek Church. She leaves her husband, Miles Turman, two daughters, four sons, and two granddaughters. Five children preceded her in death. Before she died she remarked that her grave would be covered with flowers and they would be frozen. It was very cold the day she was buried. Her last words were that she wanted to go to her heavenly home. I feel that she is sweetly resting, awaiting the resurrection of the saints where there will be no sorrow or suffering. How wonderful to meet our loved ones, be like our blessed Jesus and be satisfied. To be satisfied is something we do not experience in this world of sin and sorrow except for a few moments at a time. Your little sister in hope.

(Mrs.) EDITH E. TURMAN

* * *

1650 E. Polk Street,
Paris, Texas

Mr. & Mrs. C. E. White,
Winnsboro, Texas

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER:

In a precious hope of eternal life from God, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, if indeed it has pleased God to ordain a weak sinful creature like I see myself to be to ever be prepared by the preparation of God's perfect wisdom and mighty power to be a son subject to redemption from sin and everlasting destruction, which cometh only through the poured-out blood of Jesus Christ, the only name given under Heaven and among men whereby we must be saved:

Being due you an answer to two of your recent letters I feel it my duty to try to answer them as they both brought to me a feeling of sweet fellowship and, I hope, led my mind into some degree of meditation as well as a heartfelt nearness to one of God's highly blessed pilgrims along the way of life.

I hope that God may bless me with the guidance of His spirit that I may not be a burden and annoyance by boring you with my weak and stammering effort.

In St. John 3:14 we find this language: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." Now, before we are able to grasp the sum and substance of this scripture or to be able to understand what is under consideration, or how it can come to pass so it will benefit God's humble poor to their comfort and edification it is necessary for us to go to the 21st chapter of Numbers and get the history of why Moses lifted up this serpent which is under consideration in this scripture. We find that Moses was leading the Children of Israel out of the land of bondage to the Land of Promise by way of the Red Sea, and that they had become discouraged and spoke against God and against Moses, their minds having gone back to their life of bondage and to the flesh pots and to the bread which they had eaten to their full. So they murmured against God and against Moses, saying, "Why have you brought us out of Egypt to die in this wilderness? There is no bread, neither is there any water and our soul loatheth this light bread." We will notice this word "Loatheth," meaning extreme dislike, and as we begin to

take a spiritual view of this picture we find the light bread here spoken of to be the heavenly manna which God sent down from Heaven, and we find that the man who stands in the state of nature receiveth not the things of the spirit, for they are not spiritually discerned, neither indeed can be. Also we see these people as National Israel and as a whole represent the whole Adamic generation before the Gospel Covenant or the new birth, and who, on this journey, were under the covenant God made with Moses for the Children of Israel, which covenant is referred to as the Mosiac Law and served as a school master to bring God's children unto Grace, but had not the power to give them eternal life by their complying with its conditions.

So when they had murmured against God and Moses the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people and much people of Israel died. Now, we will notice it does not say all the people were bitten, neither does it say all the people died. Notice the language as spoken in Numbers 21:7 and see who this language represents. I believe it will have a familiar tone or sound to any of God's humble poor who have been called out of the Land of Darkness into God's marvelous light. When they have received life to move and feel, sight to see, and hearing to hear through being an infant of spiritual life and able to survive only on the sincere milk of the word, and they come forth confessing their sins and showing a desire to seek knowledge and help from mother, father, brother, or sister, or from the nearest and dearest friend on earth in whom they can put confidence, what do they say? Just as the Children of Israel in Numbers 21:7—"Therefore the people came to Moses and said: we have sinned against the Lord and against thee. Pray unto the Lord that he take away these serpents from us." Is not this the desire of all of God's little ones when they come forth repenting and confessing their sins, not realizing from whence deliverance comes?

"And Moses prayed for the people." We feel here that Moses stands as a figure of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as he is the mediator between God and His people. "And the Lord said unto Moses, make thee a fiery serpent and set it upon a pole; and it shall come to pass that every one that is bitten when he looketh upon it shall live" (Num. 21:8). So often we hear this scripture spoken of with the application thereof "Look and Live" and with the interpretation that all who desired by the will of the mind of man could look and receive life. Now, let me ask this question: even in those days of Moses where did this power of life lay? Was it in the serpent of brass which Moses made at the command of God, by which life was sustained for those who were bitten; that is, those who stand in the curse of sin? We notice in Numbers 21:6 where much people of Israel (I believe this means National Israel) died before Israel was brought to her knees and came forth confessing her sins and asking for prayer by Moses that these serpents be removed from among them and before the remedy for sin, that is, the remedy for the serpent bite, was ordered by God and before the serpent was raised up on the pole. Now dear ones, God being all wise and all powerful and declaring that He doeth all things after the counsel of His own will, why did these people of Israel die? We must admit that God, being the source of all life, both natural and spiritual, and that neither can come from any other source other than from the great Fountain Head, God, that the power of life

demonstrated in those days through the brazen brass serpent must have come to them by the power of God manifest through the brazen serpent.

Again we will notice that only those who were bitten by the serpent had access to look upon the serpent and live. This brings to our mind the scripture which says: "Come unto me all ye who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest (this being the language of Christ): take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart and I will give you rest." To whom is this spoken? Is it the whole world (or the whole nation of Israel)? No, it is only to those who are weary and heavy laden, to those who have been made alive to see their sins and to mourn over or because of them and them that are burdened because they see no way of escape from destruction: those people who died of the serpent bite in the wilderness from the journey from Egypt to the Promised Land which flowed with milk and honey, died only a natural death and so beautifully typifies the class of people known as the children of wrath, or the non-elect, or children of the Evil One, who, though being alive naturally, still stand in the region of darkness, not having been called out of darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of God.

Again we have this scripture: "Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who sinned not after the simultitude of Adam's transgression." I do not understand that any of God's chosen generation ever died a death from or to loose eternal life, because God ordained his only begotten son to stand before the foundation of the world as though He were a lamb already slain for the sins of his people. Christ tells us that no man can come unto Him except the Father who sent me draw him. We again see God's power here manifested through the brazen brass serpent, yet it was not the life FROM the serpent but from God THROUGH the serpent.

In St. John 10:9 Christ tells us he is the door. "By me, if any man enter in he shall be saved and go in and out and find pasture." St. John 5:30-31—"I can of my own self do nothing." "I hear; I judge; and my judgment is just, because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. If I bear witness of myself my witness is not true." Therefore we see the power being manifested from God through His dear Son.

Again we hear Christ saying the Father gave Him power to give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given Him. Our mind again goes back to the brass serpent which Moses made and which the people of Israel looked upon according to the command of God that life might be saved or that they might continue to live, which so beautifully figuerates that eternal life which God ordained before time that it should not come to an end but be everlasting.

Now, what became of that brazen brass serpent? And why? In II Kings 18:4 we read that when King Hezekiah, a righteous king, had come into reign, and here I quote: "He removed the high places, and break the images, and cut down the groves, and break in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it (the serpent) and he called it Nehushton (which is translated, a piece of brass)". So we see that the children of Israel had gone off into idolotry and false worship, in that they were worshipping things which had not life, knowledge, or life-giving power and had not been given to see God's marvelous light but were still sitting in the shadow of death and in the region of darkness.

In I Cor. 13:1 Paul, in speaking to the Corinthian brethren says: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of Angels and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbol." As we understand Paul's language here, without charity, which is necessary to possess the love and spirit of God, and without the presence of God's spirit and love it is impossible to serve God and to please Him. So then we are dead to spiritual life and things and therefore we become as sounding brass or tinkling cymbols because we have not the power of God working through us. Again we see this brazen serpent in its day of originization or the time it was made and raised on a pole to be used in the type of religious worship common in that time and circumstances has been referred to as an example of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and points to the broken body of our Lord who, according to God's ordination before the world was must be broken on the cross to pour out His blood to supply the fountain which washes white the souls of the entire blood-bought host of God, and whose body, after He had conquered all the foes that God had ordained should be conquered, even death being the last foe, should be put under His feet, and being raised by the spirit of God, who raised Him up, came forth victorious over all, and should ascend to sit at the right hand of God the Father to make intercession for the saints unto the Father until the time when He shall come to receive the whole blood-washed host of saints and present them unto the Father. I hope I feel so glad that the salvation of man does not depend upon the weak, feeble conditions which man can perform.

Just a weak, unworthy sinner saved by God's Grace if at all.

(Elder) S. O. TATUM

ORDINATION OF A DEACON

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the call, heretofore sent out, by New Hope Church for a Presbytery to be organized on the above date for the purpose of the ordination of Brother Ed Chandler to the office of Deacon of New Hope Church the following Elders and Deacons to wit: Elders R. W. Rhodes, John Lee Smith, John T. Everitt and W. A. Speer; Deacons T. J. Smith, S. J. Slaughter, L. S. Hill, W. J. Pilgreen, M. F. Smith, and Hilton Goodwin, met and organized themselves into a Presbytery by electing Elder R. W. Rhodes as Moderator and W. A. Speer as Clerk. Brother John L. Smith was appointed as spokesman for the Church. Whereupon said spokesman then presented Brother Ed Chandler to the Presbytery. After due examination of Brother Ed Chandler as to deportment, qualifications and evidence of God's gift to him as a Deacon to the satisfaction of the Presbytery, the Presbytery proceeded to ordain him as follows:

The Presbytery selected Elder John T. Everitt to word the prayer and Elder R. W. Rhodes to deliver the charge. Then proceeded with the laying on of hands of the Presbytery and in prayer by Elder John T. Everitt and the delivery of the charge of Elder R. W. Rhodes.

Then the Presbytery returned Deacon Ed Chandler to the Church as a duly ordained Deacon and commend him to all orderly and orthodox Primitive Baptist as being sound in doctrine, careful in deportment and humble in the display of God's gift to the office of Deacon.

The right hand of fellowship was given Deacon Ed Chandler by the members of the Presbytery, New Hope Church and other Brethren, Sisters and friends.

These minutes of the proceedings

were then read and approved, and the Presbytery having finished the duties called upon to perform was dismissed in order with prayer by Elder John Lee Smith.

* * *

ORDINATION OF A DEACON

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the call, heretofore sent out, by Rehobeth Church for a Presbytery to be organized on the 6th day of May, 1951, for the purpose of the ordination of Brother A. L. Rowell to the office of Deacon of Rehobeth Church, and the call was further made that for the convenience of all concerned it was by motion, second and unanimous approval in Conference at Rehobeth Church on Sunday, April 8th, 1951, directing that said Presbytery be organized and held at New Hope Church in South Ouachita Association, thereupon the following Elders and Deacons to-wit: Elders R. W. Rhodes, John Lee Smith, John T. Everitt and W. A. Speer; Deacons T. J. Smith, S. J. Slaughter, L. S. Hill, W. J. Pilgreen, M. F. Smith, and Hilton Goodwin, met at said time and place and organized themselves into a Presbytery by electing Elder R. W. Rhodes as Moderator and W. A. Speer as Clerk. Brother Hilton Goodwin was appointed as spokesman for the Church. Whereupon said spokesman then presented Brother A. L. Rowell to the Presbytery. After due examination of Brother A. L. Rowell as to deportment, qualifications and evidence of God's gift to him as a Deacon to the satisfaction of the Presbytery, the Presbytery proceeded to ordain him as follows:

The Presbytery selected Elder John T. Everitt to word the prayer and Elder R. W. Rhodes to deliver the charge, and proceeded with the laying on of hands of the Presbytery and in prayer by said Elder John T. Everitt and the delivery of the charge by Elder R. W. Rhodes.

Then the Presbytery returned Deacon A. L. Rowell to the Church as a duly ordained Deacon and commend him to all orderly and orthodox Primitive Baptist as being sound in doctrine, careful in deportment and humble in the display of God's gift to the office of Deacon.

The right hand of fellowship was given Deacon A. L. Rowell by the members of the Presbytery, Rehobeth Church and other Brethren, Sisters and friends.

These minutes of the proceedings were then read and approved, and the Presbytery having finished the duties called upon to perform was dismissed in order with prayer by Elder John Lee Smith.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES, *Moderator*
(Elder) W. A. SPEER, *Clerk*

* * *

ENDOWMENT FUND

Some time back a reader of the *Signs* suggested that an endowment fund be set up by the *Signs of the Times*. The party who made the suggestion was not a member, but a very good friend, and we approve of the suggestion, believing it to be one of the ways a fund can be built up through the years to help send the paper to those not able to pay for it.

There are several ways this fund can be contributed to:

By a direct gift to the fund for your self; by a gift in memory of some loved one who loved the paper, and by leaving something in your will to the paper for this fund. In what better way could you dispose of part of what the Lord has given you than by leaving a part to help carry on the work of our family paper.

ENDOWMENT FUND:

Miss B. R. Fox, N. J., $100.00 in memory of her mother, Mrs. Ella M. Fox.

EDITORIALS

ANNAPOLIS, MD. AUGUST, 1951

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EDITORIAL

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begatten of him. 1st. John Verse I.

According to the word of divine truth the evidence of the new birth in the heart of a person is evidenced by two things; believing that Jesus is the Christ, and a manifest love for God, and the children of God. These two things are clearly set forth in the scriptures and are closely related one with the other. One cannot be a believer and not love God. Neither can one love God, and his children, and not be a believer. We cannot consider one without the other for they are manifest by the spirit.

Let us notice closely the reading of the text. It does not say that whosoever believeth that Jesus was the one to come, but whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God. There is a difference in believing in Jesus, and believing he was the Christ. To believe he was the Christ one must be favored to see him as the anointed of God, the one who was full of Grace and truth.

There never seemed to be much disputing about the word Jesus. It was given to him before he was born. An angel appeared to Joseph telling him not to be afraid to take the Virgin Mary as his wife, for that which was conceived in her was of the Holy Ghost; that she would bring forth a son, and his name would be called Jesus, because he would save his people from their sins. When he was born this name seemed acceptable to the Jews, his own nation. To accept him as the Christ was another matter.

The name Jesus means Jehovah, saviour, the one able to save. The word Christ means anointed, the Messiah, the promised one and the one that was willing to save.

Jesus Christ appears in the prophecies as the one both able and willing to save. If the word Jesus could have perfectly described him he would not have been also called Christ. One could be able to save a person and yet have no desire to do so. Also one might desire to accomplish something and still not have the power to do it. Jesus as the Christ manifested both a willingness to save, and the power to accomplish his desire. It was his delight to do the will of him that sent him. "I delight to do thy will O, God." For the joy set before him he endure the cross, despising shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

In John 15-11 Jesus says "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. Jesus desired that his followers might have some knowledge of his joy in saving them, and as his joy remains in us so our joy is full.

If one should give us a precious gift and we had no knowledge of the great love of the giver, and the joy they received in the giving there would be something lacking. So it is in Salvation. Much of the joy of salvation comes from the knowledge of the great love he had for us, and the offering of himself without spot to God for us that we through him might live.

When Jesus went forth to be taken to be crucified He went forth to meet His enemies. He never drew back, but when the enemy told Him that they were looking for Jesus, he said "I am he." Here we see that his sacrifice required a cup of suffering he was ready to drink it. No wonder it is said that in him we have peace; through the knowledge of him as the Christ.

David as a type of Christ offered to fight the battle for his brethern when they faced the giant Goliath. They did not send for him, yet the love he had for them caused him to offer to battle their enemy who had challenged the armies of the living God. In offering of his own accord to fight their battle he was a symbol of Christ in his willingness to save. When he slew him, and cut off his head with his own sword he appears as the promised one who was able to save.

Solomon in his desire to build the temple as a type of the Church shows the willingness of Jesus Christ to save his heart's delight. I will build my church says the saviour. In the erection of the building without the sound of an iron tool being heard shows Jesus as the one able to bring the timber, and erect the temple.

Where Jesus Christ was presented in the Old Testament by type he is the fullness of all the needs of his people. In the life of Solomon as a type he is presented as the wisest of all; in his riches as being rich in mercy. Job is the patient sufferer, and Sampson as the one who slew his enemies in his death. This not only presents him as the willing one, but one who was able to save; who overcame and destroyed his enemies so far as their power to destroy one of his little ones.

In pointing out one born to God, and the evidence of it the apostle shows that one is not just a believer in Jesus, but he must believe that Jesus is the Christ; That he has all power in heaven, and in earth and the work of salvation was a work of Joy.

The Jews as a nation looked for a Messiah to come, and the spirit of Jesus in the prophets signified his suffering, and the Glory that would follow. Yet it was an earthly looking, and the desire for an earthly glory. When he appears as the humble carpenter's son; telling them that the foxes had holes and the birds of the air nests, but the son of man had no place to lay his head they were disappointed in him. He to them had no resemblance of the Christ they looked for.

What a wonderful blessing to you, as subjects of God's Grace to see him as the Christ. He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and one altogether lovely. The Joy of Salvation is imparted to you by his spirit. For joy he sold all that he had and bought the field for the pearl that was in it. The pearl is of great price; the blood of him who died that we might live. How glad we are that he is described as the one anointed to preach good tidings unto the meek; to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prisons to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God: to comfort all that mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness: that

they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.

My beloved friends if the experiences of the one benefitted, and described above apply to you, he has said "come unto me all you that labor, and I will give you rest." He bids you come boldly to the throne of Grace to obtain mercy, and find grace to help, and you can only come as you are given to believe that Jesus is the Christ.

D. V. S.

State Road, Delaware
August 2, 1881

BROTHER BEEBE:

I have been requested to write something for your columns on the subject of the Sabbath day; or, I may suppose what is desired is, how far the obligations of the old Jewish Sabbath are binding upon Christians under the gospel dispensation. The subject has been written upon, discussed through the columns of the *Signs,* preached on and talked over, until I suppose all Old School Baptists were thoroughly posted and of one mind.

As the term Sabbath was first used to designate days and times set apart for observance by the Israelites of old, and always used in reference to those days and times, we of course must understand the term in that sense, as it was understood, and as those days were to be kept by the Israelites. When people talk about keeping the Sabbath, and enjoin the press on each other this keeping of the Sabbath in these days, we have nothing else to go to to find what is intended, and what this keeping of the Sabbath is, but to the law given to that people. To all readers who are not read up on this subject, and have been more or less in doubt as to whether the obligations of the Jewish Sabbath continued binding upon New Testament saints, I would call attention first to the fact that no Sabbath day was observed, or commanded to be observed, before it was given to Israel. Neither Enoch, nor Noah, nor Abraham, nor Job, mention anything of a Sabbath day. Not only is there no mention anywhere from Adam to Moses, either among the sons of God or the sons of men, of a Sabbath day, but from Moses to Christ we do not find such a day known or observed by any nation or people on earth except Israel; neither do we find among all the list of their crimes, and the judgments upon them (the nations of the earth), any mention of Sabbath breaking. We have then the Sabbath definitely located, both as to time and place, and it need not to be difficult to fix both its character and design. This cannot be better done that it is done by the pen of inspiration, and by the word of him who appointed the days and years, and himself declared the design of their appointment. "Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you." "Six days may work be done, but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the seventh day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever." Ex. 31:13, 15-17. It will be seen that this setting apart of the seventh day was not a day of worship or of assembling together, but simply of abstaining from all manner of work, and devoting the time to absolute rest. As a sign, the observance of certain days and times as seasons of rest showed that the Lord had sanctified them in giving them rest from the bondage and servitude of Egypt; and

as a memorial of their deliverance these Sabbaths were instituted, and enjoined to be observed throughout their generations. It was not a question, in this observance of the Sabbath day, as to the amount or kind of work, but whether it was work at all. As its observance was rest, any kind of work, even the most trifling or the most benevolent, was a violation of it. In the mere matter of resting, abstaining from all exercise whatever, it might seem difficult to see any worship or religious service about it; but as a memorial of what the Lord had done for them, and a perpetual thank offering, we can see the design and force of it. If it was a perfect rest that the Lord had given them, the picture or memorial must present it perfect, and the least particle of work would mar its beauty, and spot and destroy the perfection of it. The Lord is jealous for his name's sake, and for his own honor and glory; but he needs nothing at the hands of his creatures. It is for their sakes, and not for his own, as they can be benefitted by it as he cannot, that it is enjoined upon them. His goodness and faithfulness to them were such that there was always comfort and profit to them in the remembrance of them. But such is the legal bent of the minds of men, that even the seasons of rest and of feasting appointed unto that people each of them memorials of some great display of the love and faithfulness of God to them, became in their hands a mere round of unmeaning legal duties, constituting a bondage only less galling than that from which they had been delivered. In this view of the subject, of what possible interest, or to what possible profit could these Sabbath days, or these Jewish feast, be to any other people? What would the feast of the passover be to Moabites or Assyrians, or to any other people except those who had experienced what they represented? We need not wonder that there was a vail upon the heart of national Israel, and that they could not see the design and emblematic character of those sanctified days and times; for with all the light of the New Testament dispensation there are multitudes now upon whose heart the same evil remains untaken away. How unsparingly the apostle denounced the Galatian brethren, for that they had got to observing days and times as a religious service. After that Christ has come, as the end of all the law and the prophets, and brought to everlasting righteousness, we would suppose that those who had faith in him would not feel any need to go back and dig up out of the law some religious duties. Keeping the Sabbath day is one of the most common phrases among religious people in this day that I could name. It is a prominent theme of pulpit discourse and of Sunday School teaching. Not only is the observance of the Sabbath day enjoined as a Christian duty, but its very strict and rigid observance seems in the estimation of multitudes of religious people to constitute a prominent, if not the most important, part of their religion. Have so many people failed utterly to understand that Christ is the end of the law? Or is it because Christ has not become the end of the law to them? You that desire to be under the law, do you hear what the law saith? If the Jewish Sabbath is binding at all upon disciples, it is binding just as it was originally given. No fire was allowed to be kindled, no victuals cooked, no horses or oxen driven, but men, women and servants, as well as beasts, were to rest. The penalty for violation was death. Every seventh day and every seventh year was to be so observed. Who among all the advocates of Sabbath keeping but have broken God's holy Sabbath? Who but

has incurred the penalty? Have they not all made void the law through their traditions, or rather, perhaps I should say substituted their own traditions for the law? Instead of keeping the seventh day, and resting from all their works, they substitute a different day, and make all imaginable uses of it, engaging in a multitude of works and duties, such as they deem to be charitable or benevolent, or such as necessity or mercy might seem to require, and call this keeping the Sabbath. Without meaning to say a word to the disparagement of any commendable action that may be done on the first day of the week, or on any other day, it cannot consistently be claimed that in this way the Jewish Sabbath is kept.

From what I have already written it will be understood that I believe the Jewish Sabbath, and all obligations to observe it as such, have passed away, with all the feasts, sacrifices, and other ceremonials of that dispensation. As Israel was a typical people, so they were also carnal or temporal people; and the deliverances wrought for them, and the blessings and gifts conferred upon them, were all temporal, but they typified and looked forward to spiritual things. So the celebration of those temporal blessings and deliverances looked backward in acknowledgment and gratitude, and forward in faith and hope, God having reserved better things for Israel under the gospel. If they had spiritual understanding, they might look through the shadow to the substance, and from carnal to spiritual things. To those who know what it is to labor and be heavy laden, it must come, I think, as a welcome idea, that the Lord has provided a rest for his people. Redemption work is finished, the curse is borne, the law is fulfilled and satisfied, and all that was against them and contrary to them is taken out of the way. So "we which have believed do enter into rest." And the rest is a perfect one. No works left unfinished, but all done. "His rest is glorious." The finishing of the works of creation, and the everlasting and unbroken rest from creation work, is but a type or illustration of the work of salvation which the Lord should finish for his people. So "He that is entered into his rest hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Whoso believes in Christ as a Savior must necessarily enter into rest. If we do not believe in him as he is, we do not believe in him at all. We have not known him. Those who act upon tradition are not apt to examine the word to see what it teaches. But those who go to the word for instruction will find nothing in the preaching of Christ or the apostles in regard to keeping a Sabbath day. Never once are they taught to observe the seventh day, or the first day, or any other day as a Sabbath; neither in all the letters to the churches, nor throughout the acts of the apostles, do we find an instance of admonition or reproof touching the observance of a Sabbath day. Once in the New Testament do we find the term *Lord's day*, but I have no idea that any particular day of the week is intended by that term. It was a day that the presence and favor of the Lord had made. What, then, some will inquire, are Christians not required to keep any Sabbath? O yes; Christians keep Sabbath all the time. Their day of rest *remains* to them; and it must remain, because it remains that the work is finished. And they who believe in a finished salvation must continue to enjoy rest. Those who violate and desecrate the Sabbath are those who have not ceased from their own works, but insist on conditions and other works to be performed on the holy Sabbath of rest that God hath appointed for his

people. He heard their groaning and saw their affliction by reason of the hard bondage wherewith they were made to serve, and came down to deliver them. The apostle speaks of their "coming together on the first day of the week"; and this seems to have been their practice from the first, as it belonged to the gospel order to meet at stated times for worship. But he did not tell them they must meet together on that day, or that the first was any better or more suitable than any other day. As Christ had risen and opened the gates of paradise on the first day of the week, assembling together on that day ever afterward was like bringing an offering of the first fruits. Nevertheless, they were "daily in the temple," etc.

The attentive reader will readily understand that the assembling together of those that love and fear God, to worship him and show forth his praise, is an entirely and different thing from the mere observance of stated days of rest. While we hold to keeping inviolate perpetual Sabbath, holy unto the Lord, we do not expect to make the days on which we meet for worship any more holy or sacred than they already are. If we do not observe the day to the Lord, our observance of it is vain. Now, if any readers should fail to appreciate this view of the subject, I would inquire of them, What can you see in merely abstaining from work and sitting still in your houses? Can you see anything of devotion or spiritual profit in it? Is it not rather work than rest, a round of religious duties and services, that constitutes the charm of the traditional Sabbath? Are not those who so fondly hug the idea of a Sabbath day to themselves, and are so zealous of its observance, giving evidence that they are building upon these and other duties, and making a savior of them? One inquiry more. What religious duty or service can you see in the restriction in regard to the fabric of your garments? Israel might not mix the fabrics, as linen and woolen. Do we know that this literal injunction upon Israel is one of perpetual obligation upon us? Not that God takes care in regard to our literal garments, or the teams we drive to the place; but his righteousness must not be mixed with creature works, and the faith of his people must be a pure, unmixed faith. The Lord requires the whole heart, and all the law and the prophets are fulfilled in that faith that recognizes its obligations to God and loves him supremely. As the first day of the week has so generally been adopted by the churches as a day to assemble together for worship, I think it is well that the governments have generally set apart this day to preserve the worshippers from interruption and annoyance by the busy, working crowd, whose chief concern is for the things of this life only.

(The late Elder) E. RITTENHOUSE

SPECIAL MEETING

The Border Union Churches of Idaho and Western Oregon will hold their union meeting the 4th Sunday in August, the Friday and Saturday before. All preaching brethren and members of our faith and order and all visitors are welcomed.

The meeting will be held with the Salem Church located at Weiser, Idaho, on East Park St.

(Elder) R. R. WOLF, *Moderator*
MRS. A. L. TURNIDGE, C.C.

* * *

INDIGENTS

J. E. Lemons, Tenn., $1.00; J. A. Johnson, Tenn., $1.00; Mrs. W. N. Green, Okla., .75; H. Bailey, Del., $2.00; Mrs. M. Finch, N. Y., $2.00; G. Sears, O., $1.00; Mrs. Annais Hastings, Md., $5.00; Miss Gertrude Secor, N. Y., $10.00; D. W. Holland, Md., $2.00; Robert D. McDough, Ala., $3.00; Sherman Buckner, Mo., $2.00.

ASSOCIATION NOTICE

The annual meeting of the Lexington-Roxbury Association will be held at the Old School Baptist meeting house in Halcottville, Delaware County, New York on Wednesday and Thursday, September 12th and 13th, 1951. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. The services will open Wednesday morning at 10:30 daylight saving time. Those who arrive on Tuesday afternoon, unless previous arrangements have been made otherwise, will meet at the Grange Hall in Halcottville near the post office where supper will be served and arrangements made for the entertainment of the guests. Those who come Wednesday morning will go directly to the meeting house. It will be greatly appreciated if those planning to attend the Association will notify Mrs. Prudence Hinkley, Halcottville, New York. The village of Halcottville is on the Catskill Mountain branch of the New York Central railroad and there are bus connections with Halcottville from Kingston, Oneonta, and Margaretville.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, *Moderator*

The annual meeting of the Brookfield Old School Baptist Church of Slate Hill, Orange County, New York, will be held on Friday, August 24, 1951 before the fourth Sunday of that month. The meeting will start at 10:30 A.M. daylight saving time. All members and friends are invited to attend at this historic old meeting house.

WILLIAM D. CHAPMAN, *Clerk*

* * *

OBITUARY

With a felt sense of my own weakness I make the feeble attempt to write of the life and death of our dear Sister in Christ, MRS. MALINDA MAE (SPEARS) BIRD. The subject of this notice was born Nov. 13, 1887, and departed this life Jan. 31, 1951, making her stay on earth 63 years, 2 months and 18 days. She was united in marriage to Joseph Addison Bird, Aug. 19, 1905. To this union were born twelve children, four sons and eight daughters. One son, Kenneth, preceded her in death several years ago. She leaves to mourn, her husband, Joseph Addison Bird, Route 3, Hurricane, W. Va.; three sons, Everett and Clyde, Hurricane, W. Va., Willard of Nitro, W. Va.; eight daughters, Mrs. Elizabeth Johnson, Mrs. Mrytle McCallister, Mrs. Lena Mae Johnson, Mrs. Mary Thornton, Hurricane, W. Va., Mrs. Lottie Edwards, Mrs. Ida Edwards, St. Albans, W. Va., Mrs. Violet Bird, Huntington, W. Va., and Mrs. Selma Bird, Culloden, W. Va.; one brother, Ward Spears; three half-brothers, Wilson Spears, Alfonso Walls, and Otto Walls; one sister, Nona Walls; thirty-seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren; the church, the neighborhood and a host of relatives and friends. We grieve not as those who have no hope, we feel in our very heart for her to die was gain.

To rightly chronicle the life of this dear sister in Christ would be beyond my limited ability. Sister Bird was quiet, unassuming in her manner and beloved by all who knew her. She was not given to idle or foolish talk, still she had a very pleasant and loving personality. She was a neighbor indeed, and a mother in the neighborhood. She united with the Providence Primitive Baptist Church, April 23, 1933, and was baptized by the unworthy writer of this sketch May 28, 1933. She was one of the first to whom I administered the holy ordinance of baptism, and the baptismal scene is as fresh in my memory as if it had been but yesterday. It is quite indescribable as I recall in memory my feelings, as I led this humble saint of God into and immersed her in the grave of baptism, and witnessed the seal, as it were, of God's good pleasure in the serene and peaceful expression radiating her face as I raised her up from the water.

She was faithful in all things to the church, always filling her seat when not providentially hindered. I wish to say this, as one who humbly tried to serve as her pastor, that she was to me one of the rare jewels of the Lord; one blessed with deep spiritual discernment and understanding of the deep things of God; her rejoicing was great under the sound of the preached word. Often under my feeble ministerial labor (when the gracious Lord was pleased to manifest the letting down of his holy land in the turning of his hand unto the little ones in the power of the Holy Spirit) have I see her countenance radiate and shine like a polished diamond. I feel, if indeed I have a calling of God, that my God who is husband and head was pleased to set this humble mother in Israel to be a very blessing to me, as it were, in the upholding of my feeble hands, and faith answering to faith in the

strengthening of my feeble knees in this holy calling. Her convictions and love for the doctrine of truth was deep indeed. Salvation by grace was the theme of her song, the joy of her heart and the boast of her tongue. Jesus blood and righteousness was her bread of life, and the manna to the inner man of her heart.

She had been in failing health for several years, but the end came quite unexpectedly being smitten with a cerebral hemorrhage or stroke from which she never recovered, but thanks be to Thy name O God, it was Thy manifest good pleasure to spare her from long hours of suffering. She died in the full triumph of a living faith. The funeral was conducted in the church-house (the place where she loved so well to attend) by the unworthy writer, her pastor. I used as a text 2 Tim. 4:7-8 and Rev. 14:13 with an humble desire possessing my soul to try to speak words of comfort to the bereaved family and friends, feeling some weight of assurance that what I said in much weakness was the very doctrine our dear sister wholeheartedly believed. With very bad roads and inclement weather there was a large attendance attesting to the high esteem in which she was held. The floral offerings were beautiful. Her earthly remains were laid to rest in the family burying ground not far distant from the old church-house. May God reconcile the bereaved family. Written by request.

(Elder) H. J. BIRD

OBITUARY

BROTHER THOMAS WILSON BOWERS was born to John and Nancy Bowers Feb. 17, 1874 in Leon Co., Jewett, Texas. Departed this life April 22, 1951, making his stay on earth 77 years, 2 months and 5 days. He suffered a paralytic stroke on April 17th from which he never regained consciousness.

He was married to Ida Jane Yarborough Oct. 24, 1897. To this union were born seven children. Two have preceded their father in death. Those remaining are Wilson, Harvey, Radford and Mrs. E. M. Barnes, Levelland, Texas and Mrs. Berford Badgett, Canon City, Colorado.

Brother Bowers joined the Old School Baptist Church at the age of 16 years. Was baptized by his uncle, Elder J. W. Bowers, of Fairfield, Texas. He was a subscriber of The Signs of the Times for over a half century. Was also a subscriber of Old Faith Contender. He loved the precious truths they stand for.

Brother Bowers was a deacon of Pilgrim Rest Church of Lawn, Texas, and a very faithful member.

Surely, we have sustained a great loss, but we trust and believe his eternal gain. His blessed Master perfumed the grave and made even death gain. Now he is quietly resting.

In viewing his remains, it seemed I could almost hear him say:

"Forebear, my friends, to weep
Since death has lost its sting
Those Christians that in Jesus sleep
Our God will with Him bring."

Some sweet day, we hope not far off, we may hear our blessed Master's voice "Come forth, you that sleep in Jesus, rise to die no more, rise to endless bliss."

Funeral services were conducted by the writer, assisted by Brother Howard Eason and Rev. J. H. Hallford.

C. M. HAYGOOD

In respectful memory of MARY W. CRAWFORD, born Feb. 21, 1868 in Titus Co., Texas, and whose earthly life was finished Feb. 17, 1951 at her home near Cash, Texas, where she moved at an early age and remained the balance of her life. Survivors are: two sons, Bertis Crawford, Cash, Texas and Dee Crawford, Wichita Falls, Texas; two daughters, Mrs. Jewell Caldwell, Cash, Texas and Mrs. Tyra Martin, Van, Texas; one sister, Mrs. Sam Hauck, Altus, Okla. Her husband preceded her in death several years ago.

In 1888 Sister Crawford united with the Primitive Baptist Church, and until ill health prevented was an attentive member. She was also a conscientious wife, mother and friend, and few are blessed with that motherly helpfulness she so readily rendered to those who are in need.

Though we are saddened by her absence there is consolation in the feeling that she is at rest, awaiting that resurrection through Christ, the Redeemer of all saints. Funeral services were held at the Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church under the direction of Elder George Sagen. Interment in Simmons Cemetery.

(Mrs.) MYRTLE SMITH

In memory of MR. L. J. DANIELS who was born May 12, 1862, and passed away April 12. He was born in Georgia and came to Arkansas at an early age, being reared near Camden and Stamps where he spent the remainder of his life. He was married to Julia Kennedy, May 1892, and to this union were born seven children, one boy and six girls. Three of them preceded him in death. His wife died June 29, 1926. In addition to the four children he is survived by many relatives and friends.

Mr. Daniels was a hard working man and made the living for himself and family mostly at farming. He was not a member of the church but a strong believer of the doctrine and loved to attend the Primitive Baptist meetings. The writer knew him for a long time, and knew that he was deeply moved with joy at the preaching of the gospel. He was very

plain and outspoken in his belief. While in his last days he gave great evidence of a very gracious state, and said that he would soon go home to that beautiful and glorious city of heaven and immortality. His family and loved ones told me of the last and gracious words when he was on his death bed or near the time of his death. The things he was blest to say at the last leaves no room for doubt that the Lord took him out of this suffering and troubled world, having a more glorious place prepared for him above.

To his dear family and bereaved ones I would admonish in the language of inspiration to weep not as those who have no hope, as the evidence is sufficient to warrant us in believing that he is much better off than we who are still struggling on in this sin cursed earth.

We believe his spirit has returned to God who gave it, and that his mortal remains will rest in the tomb till the bright and glorious day of the second coming of Christ Jesus our blessed Redeemer who will raise the vile bodies of his saints and form and fashion them like to the glorious body of Jesus, that King of kings and Lord of lords, and carry his loved ones high in the heavens to that great and precious city whose maker and builder is God; there where there will be no more sin, sickness, sorrow or trouble, pain or death, but where all those who love the Lord, and those called according to his purpose will ever shout, sing and praise that precious God and Redeemer forever and ever more around that great white and glorious throne with all the holy angels, and all the saints out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

I believe it was at the home of his daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Copeland, Norphlet, Ark. where he passed away. The writer conducted his funeral service in the presence of a sizeable congregation of relatives, friends and loved ones. The burial was in a cemetery about four miles north of Buckner, Ark. May God bless and comfort all who mourn their loss. Your very unworthy brother in hope of life everlasting through the grace and atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES

In memory of our beloved Brother SAMUEL L. ROBERSON of Haile, La. Brother Roberson was born May 5, 1873, son of John E. and Sarah Salissa Davis Roberson. He was married to Orphy C. Haile, and to this union were born eleven children two of which preceded him in death while they were small. He is survived by his dear wife and nine children, and one aged brother Tom L. Roberson who lives in Monroe, La. His surviving children are as follows: S. T. Roberson, Mrs. N. A. Pace, R. S. Roberson, and R. W. Roberson of Haile, La., Mrs. L. R. Ross, Miss Ruth Roberson, W. H. Roberson, Monroe, La., J. L. Roberson, New Orleans, La. and Mrs. O. M. Parks, Delhigh, La.

Brother Roberson united with Union Primitive Baptist Church in Sept. 1911 and was baptized by the late Elder J. T. Walsh. Brother Sam, as he was so widely known among the brethren, was greatly loved and esteemed among the brethern everywhere he was known. He also was so looked upon among his home brethern and was elected church clerk, serving in that capacity for several years until he became feeble in health. He was a very firm believer in the doctrine of God our Savior, and an interesting talker on the contents and teachings of the Scriptures. His doctrinal and experimental conversations were enjoyed by the brethern far and near. The writer was called to serve the church of his membership in 1915, and I have only the fondest memory of him. He was very considerate and kind to God's humble and poor ministers, and was outstanding in the entertainment of the brethern and sisters in his home, which I think is very great evidence of his heart's desire and treasure of that holy and true gospel, and the God who teaches, and his people who love it.

He died Dec. 24, 1950 after a long and suffering illness. All was done for him that kind and loving hands could do. The writer and Elder J. L. Smith conducted his funeral at Liberty Church near Linville, La. in the presence of a large congregation of sympathetic relatives, friends and brethren. May God bless and comfort his bereaved widow and family by the light of his holy and blessed Spirit, and make them reconciled with the precious thought that our loss is his eternal gain. He left abundant evidence of a very gracious state, and that he possessed that hope that is an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, looking by faith to the reality of the final immortalization of our vile bodies. I feel that that perfect and glorious day awaits all of God's children when the Lord comes and calls them from the sleeping dust, or tomb. Then they will arise and sing the worthy and glorious praises of the blessed Redeemer and Savior. Your unworthy brother in hope.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES.

BE SURE TO NOTE THE CHANGE OF ADDRESS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC. OUR PRESENT ADDRESS IS BOX NO. 86, ANNAPOLIS, MD. CHECK THE WRAPPER ON YOUR PAPER FOR EXPIRATION DATE PLEASE. YOUR PROMPT REMITTANCE WILL BE VERY MUCH APPRECIATED.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 119 ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND, SEPTEMBER, 1951 No. 9

LORD OF ALL

Oh Lord of all! Oh Lord of all!
Who holds me close, nor lets me fall;
Who sees my sins, my wicked ways,
Yet loves me well through all my days;
Through seasons dark in days gone by
He led my mind to things on high;
He held me close, nor let me go;
Oh Lord of all, who loves me so!

Oh Lord of all! Oh Lord of all!
Who loved me first and sent His call,
Who made me hear and come to Thee,
And gave me hope Thy face to see;
Then kept that little hope alive
Until at last I shall arrive
There to be known as I shall know.
Oh Lord of all, who loves me so!

Oh Lord of all! Oh Lord of all!
Laid in the manger of a stall;
Though greatest of the great Thou art,
Yet ofttimes comes into my heart;
This heart so proud, sinful and weak,
It needs Thy love to keep it meek.
And so Oh Lord to Thee I go,
Oh Lord of all, who loves me so!

EFFIE PARKE
Castle Rock, Wash.

* * *

DEAR BRETHREN;

With an unexpressible feeling of inability and unworthiness that I shall, God granting me the liberty, try to write something of the glad tidings of great joy to my weary, hungering and thirsting soul. John 14:18 "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." A blessed assurance even in these times when man's heart is failing for fear of the devil and his hosts but the Lord's word is sharper than a two edge sword and cuts to the innermost parts, giving us as the Apostle Paul gives us in the 8th Chapter of Romans, a blessed assurance in Christ, no condemnation and ends with no separation to them which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Looking at the world from the view point of the Holy Scriptures, which teaches us that God is a Spirit and must be worshipped in Spirit and in Truth. Yet, the deep shadows of sin and its consequences hang over the world until even the wrath of man trembles for fear.

Looking back through the annals of time, which the Lord has given man, we see, by the disobedience of one man, that is, our Federal Head Adam, we find all have died in trespasses and in sin. God being a perfect God and him being perfect He demands perfection in every detail and for lack of perfection man was driven out from the Garden of Eden, from the presence of the Lord. God being perfect gave a perfect law and He demands a perfect fulfilment, and for the lack of one we are guilty of all.

If we but go back and view the travels of the man of God in the Old Testament we are given to see how man in every instance was disobedient to the one and only God who created heaven and earth. The Old Testament the type and shadows of things to come, we see building up and tearing down of kingdoms and nations. Why were these torn down? Simply because what is termed riches and honor here in this world is ignominy. The highest attainment of mortals here, is all vanity, and vexation of the spirit. The glory and honor was not given to the creator as the law clearly demanded. Man changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man,

and to birds, and four footed beasts, and creeping things. Yes, man has changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever.

We see where all the kingdoms of the world was destroyed until there was only one kingdom and that dominated the known world as far as man was concerned and man even the Jew, the children of Israel, was under bondage and had to pay. The decree had gone forth from Caeser that all the world had to be taxed. In all the vast empire of Rome this enrollment was going on. Under this edit from Rome every one must go to his father's city to be enrolled as there they kept the record, and among the many travelers we find the poor and lonely carpenter and his wife. A couple persuing their way to Bethlehem carrying out the command of Caeser. Whether this was to increase the revenue or minster to pride of the empire we are not told, but we know that the mighty Caeser was but an instrument in God's hands to carry out His long promised plan that Christ should be born at Bethlehem, born under the law, to redeem them whom the Father gave him, out from under that which they could not of themselves, as they are weak in the flesh, but God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to redeem them out from under the curse of the law, taking upon himself in all their sin and has bore it for them, now giving them to live by grace through faith, which is in Jesus Christ our Lord.

The world would have us believe that Christ died for everyone, but that can't be found anywhere in the Bible. Modern theologians follow the line of human assumption, what the crowd wants to hear. Is not that what our country is following the precepts of man? Just a short time past in our country the United Nations was formed by man. Christ's name could not be used as it might offend some that do not believe in Christ. What does the Bible tell us of the house which is built on sand. Today our country is acting as an agent of the United Nations. The papers tell us that the president of our country is an agent of the United Nations, a country which was founded by our forefathers upon Christian principals, as Christ the author and finisher of our faith. Now our country is the agent of the United Nations and is carrying out the military objectives of an agent of baal.

What do we have the world over in our day, do we have wars and rumors of wars, in fact, we can over the past few years see where the Bible is being fulfilled as there used to be numerous kingdoms and powers. What do we have today? Only two. When Christ came the first time there was only one. Now we have two. What does this signify? The Scripture tells of gog and magog. Gog having a sounding name as if it might be God. There is a people today who profess to be Christians, but what is a Christian? A follower of Christ, giving God the praise and glory. Magog having a sounding name of no God. Isn't this what the Communists believes in no God. These are two evil forces of which we have today. I believe them to be gog—Catholicism, this embraces all arminanism. Magog—Communism, they shall gather their forces together to battle, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. To our sorrow we are a part, that is our country. The Federal Counsel of Churches for Christ in America as well as our armed services have only one creed. All chaplains have to take orders from one head chaplain as well as these United Churches they

are going to take orders from higher echelon (another man). We equally have all kinds of organizations, political, and social and religious, and through all runs the spirit of war, each striving to master the other. Combinations of churches of different orders and combinations of preachers, politicians, etc., striving for more power and more money, in fact, the church has fairly entered the political area with its many man-made institutions which money is begged for, but in the back of their minds, and some are openly saying that taxes should be enforced to keep up the churches and many institutions. All this is contrary to teachings of Holy Writ, as Primitive or Old School Baptists have stood for Election, Pedestination, Vital Unity, Redemption, Justification, Resurrection, and Salvation wholly and solely by grace, separation of church and state, an orderly walk individually and for New Testament order in the Church.

From the present indications, it looks to me that the time is drawing near, that there shall be only one power the world over and as in the time, the coming of Christ it shall again be the Roman Empire, of which we shall be submissive. Today we see them doing, as in Caeser's time, a decree has gone forth from the Pope that all shall visit Rome. Paying taxes to the church. Going to their father's city as in the time of Christ, looking to man as the finisher of their faith.

These are times of sorrow on this earth as in the morning of time an object casts a large shadow, so does it in the evening of time. The shadows of sin and its consequences hangs over the world and if I believed as the world I would fear and tremble but thanks be to God who gave us Christ, His Son as our Mediator, one who works and none can hinder. All things, not just a few, but all is in His great and mighty hand. When all whom the Father giveth the Son has been called out from under nature's darkness into his marvelous light, but until then no man knows the time, but from the signs of the times which we are given to see the clouds are beginning to gather.

My most imperfect letter has grown rather lengthy, and I fully realized that I have only hinted at some of the things but a hint to the wise is sufficient. I, myself, fear that like my many imperfections I catch myself murmuring, and can this be the thoughts of my foolish mind. I hope that you will cast the mantle of charity over this and if not in accord with Holy Writ cast it aside.

2430 Lincoln Avenue
Granite City, Illinois

JOHN F. SIMPSON

* * *

Route 1, Troy, Ala.

SIGN OF THE TIMES: Please find enclosed $2 to pay on my subscription, I notice it has expired. I want to mention articles I have read that are so comforting to me. Brother F. L. Cox's in the April issue, also Sister Campbell's, Elder C. H. Byrd's on his trip to the West Coast, D. V. Spangler's and Elder Dodson's. In fact, all of the issue is very good. In the March issue, Sister J. J. McNeal sure wrote what I believe better than I can tell it. Elder H. O. Nash's article on 2 Thes. 2: 3-4 was good.

I have not read all of the May issue, but what I have read is good. Seeing Elder Wade Y. Chandler's text used from Ezek. 20:37 makes me want to mention a fifth Sunday meeting we were privileged to attend with Brother Nuck Darnall from Ky. and Brother Wade was there. There were five visiting elders and five home elders. It was a sweet place to be.

We, the Flint River Association, would like space in the *Signs of the Times* to invite all our Primitive Baptist friends everywhere to come to our Association in Sept. 21, 22 and 23, 1951, at Old Kelly's Creek Church. Would like all your presence. We have met quite a few Baptist in our travels and love to see them as often as possible.

Hope to be able to subscribe for the O. F. C. and the *Signs* as long as we live, and may God enable the Associate Editors with the Editor to continue as in days gone bye, to publish as sound a doctrine as has been published. I can not say that I endorse all that is published, yet, I love to see the *Signs* in my mail box and I love them lying around to read when I do read, and I hope to be recognized with the Old Baptist when the Lord comes. A little sister, I hope.

(Mrs.) REANER REECE

* * *

Mardela Springs, Maryland
October 12, 1950

Signs of the Times
P.O. Box 70
Rutherford, New Jersey

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

It is time to renew my subscription for the Signs of the Times, the dearest paper I have ever had the pleasure of reading, for it, if I am not deceived, contends for the previous truths that I believe and love. I have known for years since my early girlhood days that if I was saved, it was by grace and by grace alone, for in me there surely dwells no good things and I am just a vile sinner. I am dependent upon my dear heavenly Father for everything and I treasure the precious promises of my God above all earthly treasures; for they have never, nor will never fail. So if it is written in His divine will that I may be one of his chosen ones, I am comfortingly persuaded that nothing can snatch me out of His hands, Satan, Hell, things present nor things to come. Oh, what sweet consolation to a poor lost sinner.

So many with whom I talk and come in contact with, believe and say that we have to work for God and refrain from sinning. But they never are able to tell me how to do it, and so far as working for God, I feel He is too far above me and any mortal sinful man to need any help from me or anyone. What strength have I to do anything, or a will to do anything good? But, what He in all His great power, love and tender mercy, sees fit to give me; so it is I hope in much humility that I do desire to give Him all the praise, honor and glory for everything. For it is truly where all praise belongs. I desire to be made reconciled to His holy and righteous will and may He have mercy on this poor sinner. I would not exchange the little hope I have for the riches of this wicked world.

Your Sister in Christ, I hope

MRS. MINNIE E. GAMBRILL

* * *

Route 3, Wadesbora, N. C.

DEAR BELOVED IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:

I felt this morning that I must write of God's goodness and mercy to such a weak sinful one as I. After such a "feast of fat things," as I was blessed to enjoy Saturday P.M., March 3, I have been lifted up and made to rejoice in God's wonderful love and mercy. I hope and believe that these two dear servants of God, Elder Sam Curlee and James T. Jones experienced the same, as we talked of God's saving grace and mercy to his poor little flock. How I did thank God in my feeble way for sending these two brethren, his witnesses, to speak

words of comfort to such an undeserving wretch as I, just when I needed them most. I felt to be so burdened down with sorrow and troubled on every side before their visit; and afterward I felt like a plant after a refreshing rain. With all my troubles, trials, and sufferings, how could I go on without such visits from God's humble poor. As some of you know I have been afflicted with tuberculosis for about eight years, though I have been up and about for two years and nine months, although during this period I was not too well.

I am not a member of the Militant Church in one sense of the word yet, but I have asked for a home at Pleasant Grove Primitive Church around three years ago and was accepted. I have not had the sweet privilege to be baptized yet by water baptism but hope that I have been baptized by fire and the Holy Ghost. When my son was small and before I asked for a home in the Church, he said to me once, "Mama, why don't you join the Church?"

I said, "I don't know son, I don't feel fit."

He asked, "Are you a Primitive Baptist?" I said, "I don't know, I don't guess I'm nothing, but if I am anything, I am a Primitive Baptist."

I know that I am nothing if I am anything spiritually speaking, I am what I am by the Grace of God. I don't feel that I am nothing to the Old Baptists but what a rich blessing they are to such an unworthy worm of the dust as I.

My mother and my father were Old Baptist. I have one brother who is a member, and also one sister-in-law. I don't feel this is the reason I am an Old Baptist, for their language was just as new to me as it was to anyone in Missionary Baptist family or any other denomination before they joined the Old Baptist.

I have caused my dear, old, white-haired mother and father, especially during my younger days, much trouble and heartaches. No one on earth knows how much sorrow I have felt over it all and how many tears I have shed since I have been made to know that God is God and there is none else beside him. I had a dream about my dear father who is dead now. I dreamt I was in a pretty place with flowers all around me and he came up and sat down beside me. He looked so well and happy. I truly believe he is at rest. Not long ago I had another dream which has impressed me very much. I dreamt my Mother, myself and some others were up on a high hill and down at the bottom of the hill two men were standing. One was Elder Stanfield (deceased) and the other was a black headed man whom I believe was Elder W. J. Berry. It seemed that they were holding a two page letter from me reading it. I went down on the hill a little farther from Mama and the rest and squatted down. When I did the hill began to crumble just enough for my foothold. A small rock rolled from where I was and landed right against one of Elder Stanfield's feet. When I went down on the hill and squatted down and it began to crumble some, Mother said to me, "Are you not afraid you'll fall?"

I said, "When a person's feet is planted on a firm foundation there is no danger of falling."

* * *

Dear Editor and Publishers of the *Signs,* I thank you so much for sending me the *Signs.* I am unable to attend church and the Primitive Baptist editorials are much comfort to me, as I lie here on my bed of affliction. At times when my hope of glory grows so

dim, I am prone to murmur and complain my lot. If I could help myself I'd get up from here and never be sick again, but dear ones, puny man can do nothing. God holds everything in his hands. He knows best for us. I don't know what is good for me but he does. I have to be brought down by the Chastening rod over and over again to rest on his staff. I often get puffed up and think I'm something. I have to be shown that I am clay in the potters hands. I have so much dross, I need a lot of refining.

Your unworthy little Sister in Hope of rest beyond this vale of tears.

MRS. EARL VAUGHN,
Route 3, Wadesbora, N. C.

* * *

Malachi 3:17.

"And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."

The above scripture was written by Malachi in a very graceless age when Judaism was at a low ebb and Israel's house of workship was almost deserted, which corresponds to the present age when there is such a notable falling away of interest manifested in the church of God and coldness and deadness prevail where there should be life manifested with zeal and interest for the things of Zion. Yet there were those who feared the Lord and spoke often one to another of His goodness and lamented the low estate of Israel. Motivated by Godly fear, they did not lose faith. And the Lord hearkened and heard and a book of remembrance was written for them that thought upon his name. It is heart religion that has true value, the word of God being in the heart that confession may be made with the mouth unto salvation. The Lord spoke of them as his jewels, those that shall be a diadem of glory in the hand of our God.

Various objects in nature are used in Scripture to represent the Lord's people, such as lillies of the field, the stars of heaven, and the sheep of the pasture; but here most fittingly jewels are used in reference to the subjects of grace. Jewels are obtained in the earth in most cases and have a lowly origin in nature, having to be taken from the mines and polished and fitted and made meet for the purpose intended. Man is born in nature before he is born of the Holy Spirit and has to be cut and polished by the work of the Holy Spirit through trials and reverses and tribulations and made to see his lost state in nature before he can comprehend the mercy and grace and goodness of the Lord Jesus. The justice of God in passing sentence upon him must be realized experimentally before he can know the meaning of the sweet deliverance that comes when Mercy's angel form appears.

It is fitting that a jewel should be employed to denote an heir of grace and glory, for jewels are generally considered of great worth and kings have paid fabulous sums to obtain them. So the church of God is well spoken of as the pearl of great price for King Jesus gave all that he had to purchase his bride and bring her off more than a conqueror over death, hell, the grave, the eternal wrath of a sin-hating God, and make her forever free from the condemnation of a holy law, that He might clothe her in his own spotless righteousness and crown her with fadeless glory. Jesus suffered on the cross all the pangs of hell, all that His people would have had to suffer through eternity if He had not redeemed them, being made to partake of the flesh of His bride, sin excepted, that He might condemn her sin in the flesh and answer for her transgressions as her surety. He being finite as man in that he was subject to death could pay the full penalty and bring her from the

grave victorious, because being infinite as God, the man Christ Jesus in whom dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily could suffer on the cross the infinite consequences of her sin, so that there is now no condemnation against those that are the chosen and redeemed of the Lord.

It should be emphasized that a jewel can not be created by man, but is by nature of divine origin, so the jewels that comprise the election of grace were created in Christ Jesus before foundation of the world. The action of fire is necessary in the creation of a jewel by nature's process, so the word of God is as fire in the experience of a true believer in christian experience. "Is not my word as fire, saith the Lord. "The Lord's people must needs experience fiery trials as sin becomes exceeding sinful in them and they feel in their very lives the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning. The law given on Mount Sinai was a fiery law and evidenced the wrath of God against sin and sinners. When the high priest of the law dispensation offered prayer in the tabernacle, he took a coal of fire from the brazen altar where sacrifices were made, and placed it upon the incense in the golden censer which he carried and a fragrant cloud of incense ascended to the highest part of the tabernacle as the priest made supplication before the Lord. No prayer was offered without the coal of fire applied with the incense. The fire of God's word must come into their souls before any prayer can be offered by God's children and they must be accompanied by the fragrant incense of the merit of Jesus Christ, who makes intercession for the saints. The brass altar represents the cross of antitypical sacrifice, and so it must be a God-indited prayer kindled by His own word that ascends to the courts of heaven.

The high priest of ancient Israel wore a breastplate over his heart on which were engraved the names of the twelve tribes of Israel on the twelve jewels upon the breastplate, showing that alike near to the heart of Christ are all those who were tasted that the Lord is gracious. Also the high priest had twelve jewels upon the onyx stones on his shoulders, upon each jewel being engraved a name of one of the twelve tribes of Israel, showing that, as the Scripture says of Jesus, "the government shall be upon his shoulders", our blessed Lord bears His people upon His shoulders in their march through the wilderness of this world.

Jewels do not shine by their own light, but glow with luster only when they reflect the rays of the sun, so the jewels of God's rich and reigning grace shine as they reflect the rays of light that come from the Sun of Righteousness. In nature jewels can not be destroyed because of their peculiar nature and creation, and so these jewels of a heavenly creation in Christ Jesus that were purchased by the blood, suffering, and death of Jesus Christ will never perish, for no man is able to pluck them out of the hand of their Redeemer.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

* * *

Route 2, Olney, Texas

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR EDITOR: My sister recently brought me copies of the *Signs* to read. My father, the late J. D. Kee, took the *Signs* ever since I can remember until his death in 1944. I am the youngest of a family of fourteen, and am forty-two years of age. I have read the Bible and I cannot find any other way to save a soul except by the grace of the all powerful God. I have missed the *Signs* and the spiritual food Uncle John Kirkpatrick and father would drop to me when they would get

together. They were both believers in the foreknowledge of God. I believe all this but sometimes I get spiritual things tangled up with this sinful flesh, and I feel as Paul in the seventh chapter of Romans. I feel I have the faith of Abraham and Job, but I know I could not have this except it be given me from God above. I believe the first three chapters of the Bible tell us his power is far above what the human mind can understand, so you see I am as the little babe trusting in Him.

I find much that would tangle me up with works, but find my steps are guided and I cannot do anything of myself. I believe the scriptures speak of a live sinner and a dead sinner. I believe I am a live sinner. I sin, and of myself I cannot help it, and get chastised for it. This I am grateful for as it makes me feel I am one of his little ones. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." John 3:16-17. I believe Christ's blood was shed for us. The dead sinner that is spoken of rolls sin under the tongue as a sweet morsel and has no check of conscience, so surely Christ did not shed any blood for him. If so it was shed in vain, but I cannot believe any was shed in vain. Perhaps some of the Elders can enlighten me on this. I do not know of any church here that are Absolute Predestinarian Baptists and believe God has all power, and that salvation is of the Lord by grace through faith. In hope,

JOE KEE

Mrs. Thelma Jordan French,

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST: It is with fear and trembling that I attempt to write you this letter. I hope it is of the Lord. If it is not, surely He will make it plain to me after a few more words and I shall lay it aside.

First, I want to tell you that I am a hungry child for sweet fellowship with God through His Son, Jesus Christ. Then the dear saints will know where I stand, add their fellowship, and I shall enjoy it. I do feel so unworthy to even think upon such a blessing, and I do hesitate to write to you. I feel you are truly a child of God and I can see from your letters in the *Signs,* that your gift of writing has been given to you through much sorrow and trials. Surely they were very grievous at the time, but how comforting it is to this weak one to be given to understand the road along which God's little ones are brought. I thank Him for your comforting letters. A dear sister gave me a number of back copies of the *Signs* recently, and I have been made to rejoice, through tears over each of your letters that I have read, because of God's love and mercy showered upon you. I feel so drawn to you and I hope we are one of the same spirit.

I have come such a short way. Most of it has been joy the past year, in fact, so much joy that I have become very much alarmed. I hope to have been given to understand that God's people are a poor and afflicted people and they are to suffer persecutions and afflictions here in this world. I had been so overjoyed, I was made to cry out for new evidence that I had been given a hope in Jesus. He has brought me through many trials which seem severe to one so weak and little as I am. Still, when I read of your experience and other dear ones, I realize my trials have been light. He has promised that as thy day, thy strength shall be.

My parents were Primitive Baptists. My father is dead. I hope he is one who died in the Lord and is free from all suffering and sorrowing. My dear mother lives in Virginia. Her shining light in the Lord is still precious to me. I loved the sweet doctrine of grace

when I was a child and thought much about the hereafter. I seemed to be given to know there had to be a new birth before one could belong to the church. In my early childhood, I felt like that church was the one called Primitive Baptist, but as I grew older, I felt it to be old-fashioned, and I wanted it to be some other group. I believed it was revealed to me through all those years, but I was not to be brought into the full knowledge until I had gone through much trouble and been allowed to seek my own way. If not deceived, I always had somewhat of a hunger and thirst for righteousness.

Three years ago next Sunday, I thought I had found that righteousness within myself. I was so pleased with myself. I joined a Missionary Baptist group. After joining, it was about six weeks before I was led into the so-called baptism. During that six weeks, I was far from happy. I was in a turmoil a good portion of the time. Although I wrote my mother, I wanted her to come for the occasion, secretly I was ashamed for her to come. I didn't fully understand my feelings at that time, but now it all comes to me and I hope much has been revealed to me since. I felt no peace after coming out of the water, although I cried. But I know now, they were not tears of joy. I was in that church two years. I wanted so much to be recognized by all. I spent much time trying to teach my neighbors to know the Lord. I am ashamed to write this, yet I am thankful that the Lord had mercy upon me and showed me my error. He made me to hate the things I then loved and love the things I then hated.

In September, 1949, I became very dissatisfied and realized I was not at peace with God. I became unfaithful in my duties in the church. Strange as it seemed at the time, I felt no guilt about it. This was hard for me to understand. In December I felt that I must be in the wrong church, Yet, I thought maybe I wasn't doing enough for the Lord, so I went on. Part of the time I felt that I would lose my mind if relief did not come. I thought much about the verse of Scripture, "*Ye* blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel." Wasn't too sure about the gnat, but I felt like I had swallowed a camel. I went to see my dearest friend and neighbor, the minister's daughter, and told her that I just couldn't go on. I cried and she couldn't understand my actions at all. She and her mother became very cold and indifferent toward me, because I was not anxious to work for the church any more. On the first Sunday in February, 1950, I felt to be made willing by God's power and given sight to know that I coudn't stay where I was. After much pondering, I went to the church. It was communion day. I didn't want any part in it, yet felt of myself I could not refuse it. But when the time came, the power of God surely took hold of me for I politely passed it by, caring not who saw me or what they thought. I hurried home and have never been back since.

That night I wrote my uncle, Eld. P. W. Ashworth, and told him what I hoped was revealed to me. I had not seen or heard from him in five years, in fact, I had never written him before. He has written me such good, comforting letters since that time. I love him for Christ's sake, for as an uncle in the flesh, we were never close. I could not write my mother for many days as I felt so unfit. I felt I had persecuted the true Church of God and my precious mother, who had been given sweet forbearance and patience with me. My mother has rejoiced much in the Lord's dealings with me, and I desire to praise Him for bringing me this way while she is here on earth.

Eld. Ashworth wrote me that he had an appointment to preach at Ebenezer Church in Baltimore on the third Sunday in March, and invited me to attend. I was graciously blessed to go to the meeting. He and Sister Rowe met me at the station. I had never met her

before, and I really felt that I was meeting him for the first time. I shall never forget that day while I am in my right mind. As I went into the meeting house, it was a time of rejoicing for this unworthy one. Here I was in the midst of these dear people whom I had never seen before, and I wanted to embrace them all. I believe I did in my heart. I felt so little and unworthy, but I was given sweet assurance that I had been brought to the militant Church. I could see the image of Christ in those dear faces and could feel His divine presence. I had not heard an old Baptist preach since I was a child by my mother's side. I mentioned the song, "Amazing Grace." When they began to sing, I began to cry for I felt that amazing grace had saved a wretch like me. As they began to sing, "There is a fountain filled with blood, Drawn from Emanuel's veins," it was enough. I thought not about these people never having seen me before, in fact, I knew not that they would decide as to whether I would be accepted into the church. I went to the front and was told to speak. I knew not what to say until the Lord made me feel my littleness in such a way that I felt to tell all the things that I had been ashamed of and kept hidden for years. They had pity on me and God overpowered them with love for me and I was given a home even before hearing my uncle preach. It must have been an unusual procedure. I knew not just what had taken place, but I felt whereas I had been blind, now I saw and felt God's love shed abroad in all the hearts and my cup was running over. I was baptized near Black Rock Church in Maryland the second Sunday in April, 1950. I hope I have been given to know the peace that passeth understanding. A peace that is in Christ alone. My doubts and fears have been many at times, and I feel to fear I have been mistaken about my relationship with you people.

I did not mean to write so much, but I felt so close to you today. I felt like you would understand my weakness. I hope it will please our Heavenly Father to give you a prayer for me, as I feel so much in need of it. I have been given so little understanding of Spiritual things, and at times I do not seem to have any feeling at all. Then, if not deceived, I am once more given a sweet moment of peace and joy; and my desire is to be kept by His grace to love not the world or anything therein, but to look ever to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

I do not feel like asking you to write to me personally, but may the Lord bless you to continue to write for our papers. I shall be looking for such letters. May you be blessed to enjoy God's precious nearness the remainder of your stay in this sinful, troublesome world. Pray that I may be taken away from self and given to think of His everlasting love and mercy for His children. Oh! to be kept at the foot of His cross. Then we shall be kept at the feet of our dear brethren for His sake. All praise and glory to Him from whom all our blessings flow.

Love and sweet fellowship, from an afflicted little sister,

CHRISTINE LINTHICUM

* * *

Elder William M. Startzman
Oak Grove, Missouri

MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:

Your recent good and true letter was very much enjoyed by me, as Sallie read it to me, and I do not think the truth of salvation, both in its doctrine and experience, could be more clearly and comfortingly stated, and your letter showed very plainly that you have been taught of God, and have therefore come to Christ, who is the END of the law for righteousness unto everyone that believeth in Him. He said to Martha, "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." How infinite the blessing, then, to live and believe in Jesus, the Son of God! At the same time, he is as verily the Son

of man, and so the Brother of everyone that believeth in Him. This, dear brother William, is a relationship more noble and exalted than to be the son or brother of the most renowned kings and potentates of earth; for this is to be a child of Jehovah, a very brother of the Immortal Son of the Highest, and both a priest and king. O how amazing, that the holy and blessed God of heaven and earth would in his love most freely bestow such divine honor and flory and blessing upon the sinful sons and daughters of earth, upon which the curse of God righteously fell for man's sake! Paul gives the wondrous reason for this "Amazing grace," saying, "But Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he LOVED US, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved,) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." So it is all of God, and all in and with Christ, and the moving cause is the great love of God for all his chosen people, which is love everlasting and infinite as eternity itself. This perfect love called into active manifestation and exercise the infinite wisdom and goodness and omnipotent power of God. And his divine power and goodness and wisdom were wondrously and gloriously commended and displayed toward us, in that he sent forth his beloved Son into the world as a Man, and in the likeness of sinful flesh, yet as holy as the Father himself, the Anointed and most holy High Priest of his sinful people, to make a full and perfect atonement for all their sins through his own law-fulfilling life and by his sacrificial death; thus paying the full redemption price to infinite Law and Justice on the behalf of all his beloved people, as their own devoted Brother in the flesh, who was then raised up from the dead by the power and glory of the Father, as the Head of his body, the church, and the Life and Righteousness of all his royal priesthood, to whom he says, "Because I live, ye shall live also." So they shall be one with him in his life, as sacredly as he was one with them in their death.

This, all this, is the power and blessing of God's great love wherewith he loved us. Paul again touchingly expresses it in Rom. V, saying, "But God *commendeth* his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, CHRIST DIED FOR US." "O wondrous love, to bleed and die!" "MUCH MORE THEN, being now justified by his blood, WE SHALL BE SAVED FROM WRATH THROUGH HIM." This, dear brother, is SALVATION full and free, and the very salvation we need, and desire, and pray for. So when good old Simeon held the infant JESUS in his arms of love and faith he said to God, "Mine eyes have seen THY SALVATION." Yes, this is the salvation of God to his people, and it is thus richly and freely given to them for his great love wherewith he loved them. And so Paul again says, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not *with him also* FREELY GIVE US ALL THINGS?" Paul makes this challenge to all who would dispute it, and who would contend for offers and terms, conditions and rewards, and say salvation is not full and free.

Therefore, hear noble Paul again: "Being confident of this very thing that He which hath *begun* a good work IN YOU will PERFORM it until the day of Jesus Christ." This good work of the Lord is salvation, the wrought out and wrought in righteousness of the holy Son of God, which is not only wrought *for* all his people, but as well wrought IN THEM? so that they are

made "The righteousness of God in him, his Son." "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto US wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." Not in himself nor in his works, not in man. But every sort of salvation which is in the least of works of obedience as conditions depending upon us and which we must perform first, that we may obtain such salvation and blessing as a reward, opens the door for man to glory in himself and boast. And it is the natural result, that all who hold to any part of salvation as conditional upon their part, do boast of their religious zeal and works, when they think they have done their part and complied with the supposed conditions. And why should they not boast? Boasting is lawful and legitimate, to the full measure that salvation is conditional, when the conditions are performed by the one who is thus saved conditionally. Paul, the mighty logican, well understood this when he said, "Not of works, lest any man should boast." He said this of present salvation, of salvation through faith, which is salvation in time, we know. In another place he asks, "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay, but by the law of faith." He then says, "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." Thus conditional works, conditional salvation and rewards are forever cut off from salvation by grace, and consigned to the law, the legal doctrine or principle of merit and reward, of debt and credit.

I want to tell you, Brother Willie, that if you preach as you write, you preach the gospel of Christ. In love to you all, your brother,

DAVID BARTLEY
David Bartley

July 16, 1951
Redwood, Virginia

Elder D. V. Spangler:
Editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES
PRECIOUS BROTHER IN CHRIST:

I was very glad to meet you in the Staunton River Association and to hear you and many others of our precious ministering brethren. They came forth as it were clothed in the undefiled righteousness of Christ's redeeming love and grace and preached the glorious gospel of glad tidings of great joy. The precious brethren and sisters seemed to be filled to overflowing with the sweet manifestation of Christ's love and holy zeal. We believe God has graciously chosen and elected and set his seal of of approval upon them. They have been purchased by the precious blood of His own dear Son. When Christ hung on the cross and said it is finished; the complete debt of redemption was paid. Satisfaction was made; the royal law was fulfilled and restored honorably unto the Father and without failure. Christ is now seated at the right hand of his Father making intercession for his Saints according to the will of God.

Oh, what love and comforting thoughts, joyful feelings, and sweet meditations that Zions little ones sometimes feel and enjoy. They have Christ the dear spotless Lamb of God for their glorious intercessor; who has been, is, and forever will be all things to the perfection of his little church. He has triumphed gloriously over the horse and the rider. Christ reigned until he put all enemies under his feet. He is a wonderful counsellor to his church.

I feel and believe that in the mind and predestinated purpose of God his church has a clear title to be carried by her righteous Redeemer through the confirmation of all things; even His final righteous judgement and His glorious resurrection into the final preservation of eternal Glory. I believe his ransomed ones will be permitted to bid this world adieu and say farewell vain world I am going home to forever

be in the great love, joy and peaceful presence of their glorified Redeemer God.

Dear Brother, if I be not deceived I believe the essence of this unworthy scribble, which I have tried to hint at is most sincerely believed among Primitive Baptist. I truly hope I have an inward testimony in these things, that God is true and besides him there is no other. I cannot express these things just like my brethren but I truly hope that I do believe in line with them. We truly hope this sacred theme is our daily meat and drink which causes us many weary and anxious thoughts, as to whether we are in God's glorious covenant of Grace. Oh may we be made able by his divine Power to say as did Job, "Though he slay me yet will I trust Him."

Dear Elder, I feel that you have entered into a very worthy cause as being Editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. May the Lord enable you and Elder John Wood to edit the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in an humble devotion of peace and in the same high doctrinal standard that it has always been since its origin. I hold the SIGNS in high esteem. I am sending $3.00 for a new subscription for our beloved Brother Bowles of Roanoke, Virginia.

Oh may it be God's will that his dear children shall walk circumspectly, is my prayer.

A brother, I hope
J. A. PERDUE

* * *

July 5, 1951

Elder D. V. Spangler
SIGNS of the TIMES
Annapolis, Maryland

DEAR ELDER SPANGLER:

I am so glad you and Elder Wood have been named Editor and assistant Editor of the dear Old SIGNS. I feel that the Lord will abundantly bless and sustain you in the discharge of your various duties. It has been my blessed privilege to be in Elder Wood's home and to be associated closely with both of you, I feel in spiritual things. Never shall I forget our fond associations on one occasion particularly where Elder Wood and I were riding on the picturesque Blue Ridge Parkway. How alluring and entrancing did Mother Nature seem in all her glory as we conversed on spiritual and Heavenly things.

I have been so wonderfully blessed in hearing you on several occasions speak so wondefully of Jesus and His Matchless Love. In my feeble manner I would say that you have been devoutly inspired to speak on the intricacies of spiritual and divine things to my comfort and edification.

THE SIGNS is greatly blessed in having such an able staff of associate editors each of whom I love and know intimately. May all be inspired to carry on in the same manner that Elder Beebe, Purington Durand, Chick, Lefferts, Kerr, Vaughn, Ruston and Dodson with so many others have upheld the banner of Truth and Justice. Truly we miss these able soldiers of the cross along with a host of other able writers to expound his sacred truths. He will not leave himself without a witness.

May He bless each of you in material and spiritual things to serve as herald's of those things that are divine. May He direct your pens in such a manner that the bleating lambs and sheep will be comforted, united and kept by the mightly power of one who is all wise.

We have been wonderfully blessed here in the deep South by having wondrous meetings and several additions to our small churches.

I hope to be with you at your association at Dan River. May all unite in supporting his flaming herald of the true and living faith.

Yours in bonds of love,
(Elder) J. J. COLLINS

EDITORIALS

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EDITORIAL

In making this initial appearance as assistant Editor of the Signs, I would would say to the brethern and friends that it is with much fear and reverence. For many years I have loved to read the Signs, for in it's columns have been found those wonderful things of grace, which I hope are experimentally precious to me. Should I be of any assistance in the publication, or of any comfort to the brethern and friends, I must be enabled to do so by the effectual working of the Spirit. Preaching the gospel is not in the wisdom of men, neither can writing be of any value to the brethern unless it is of the Spirit. It remains, therefore, to be seen whether the Lord shall be pleased to uphold me in this undertaking.

Those of the brethern with whom I am acquainted and to whom I have been trying to preach the gospel with such ability as I am given, cannot but know that I have many shortcomings. Yet I have ever desired to contend earnestly for the faith that was once delivered to the saints. I have tried to speak plainly my convictions and understanding of the doctrine of God our Saviour, and cannot allow even a hint of creature ability or good works in order to salvation. More than 30 years ago I was brought to see myself as I was in the sight of God, and I hope was shown that Christ Jesus was of God made unto me wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. I Cor. 1:30, I trust that I have been preaching the things I have seen and heard, and in which I have been made to rejoice of the Word of life. We know the things of a man by the spirit of man which is in us, but no man knoweth the things of God but the spirit of God. The distinction is thus set up between the flesh and the Spirit and should always be before us whether in speaking or writing. I cannot follow, "every wind of doctrine", but would present those things for which there is a, "Thus sayeth the Lord." May all those who are truly interested in the truth as it is in Jesus, pray that the columns of the Signs of the Times may continue to set forth those things which are God honouring, and are thus precious to the household of faith.

With these remarks as an introduction, I hope, as the Lord may enable, to present from time to time other thoughts for the consideration of the brethern.

JOHN D. WOOD

* * *

CIRCULAR LETTER for the MAINE ASSOCIATION

(1950 Written by Sister Minerva Dunlap)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Whitefield church sends greetings to the Associa-

tions and Meetings with which we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED,

Again throughout the land there is unrest, uncertainty, fear, and foreboding. Nations are warring against nations and our boys are again dying on foreign soil. As all people must, we wonder at times why evil rulers should be allowed to govern nations, we wonder at times whether our own leaders have been wisely chosen, and above all, we wonder, why, if God is just and omnipotent, he can permit so much of misery, disease and crime. At such times we have to look back to our experience when we saw ourselves as less than nothing in the presence of an Infinite Power so far above us that we felt we could not stand in his presence, when our only thought was: "Have mercy, Lord, or I perish." Until our eyes have been opened to see His marvelous goodness to the children of men and until we have been shown that our minds can not possibly grasp the designs of the mind of our Creator, it is natural that we should try to judge Him by our mortal standards. But to those who have been shown His infinite power and to those who have experienced the lowliness of their estate, then how reassuring at a time like this, to turn to that Book of Books and to read such passages as these:

"Remember the former things of old, for I am God and there is none else. I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My council shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isaiah 46:9-10

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God." Rom. 13:1

"O the Depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out. For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his councillor? Or who hath first given to him and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him and through him, and to him, are all things, to whom be glory forever." Rom: 33-36

In the old testament we have the history of how God guided his people Israel, through slavery, through wars, through temptations. They were not able to keep his holy law and by sacrifices they obtained pardon. But in the valley and the mountain tops, God was their leader. He appointed their way and prepared the promised land. He was the pillar of cloud by day, the pillar of fire by night. Under the new dispensation with a sacrifice prepared for their sins, God still leads his people through trials and temptations. They have to learn that the flesh is weak and that they can do nothing to effect their own salvation. The deeper into the depths they fall, the greater seems His power to save and his mercy. Whether they fall or whether they rise, it is his will. He is omnipotent and his strength is made known in their weakness. And whether there are wars or rumors of wars, He is still the ruler of all and not one sparrow falls that he does not know. How this can be we can not understand. For as the Heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. Is. 55:9.

And we of all the peoples of the earth having been shown the truth, should be able to rest in the assurance that the "Eternal God is our refuge and underneath are the Everlasting arms", and we should feel to say with the psalmist: "If I take the wings of the morning and

dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. Psalm 139:9-10.

* * *

Corresponding Letter for the Maine Association

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Whitefield church at Whitefield, Maine, Sept. 8-9-10, 1951 sends greetings to associations and meetings with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:

Another year has passed with its joys and sorrows and by the kind providence of an all wise God our little band has met again in the Maine Association. How comforting it is in these troubled times to believe that all things are known and directed by almighty God for our good and His glory. He knows the end from the beginning and nothing takes place contrary to His will.

Your correspondence was gladly received, and your ministering brethren Elders Everett Jones and John Wood have come to us inspired by the Holy Spirit, like the apostles of old, to preach the gospel for our peace and joy; giving all praise and honor to God and our Lord Savior Jesus Christ, the only name given among men whereby we must be saved. We felt His presence with us and it seemed good to be there.

The meeting was well attended by the Maine brethren as well as several from distant states. They were strangers in a natural sense yet showing as by a mark in forward the fruit of His Holy Spirit making them kindred in Christ, and it seemed the setting down together in a heavenly place. We were made to feel that sweet assurance that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. In the words of the poet:

How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
  When those who love the Lord
In one another's peace delight,
  When thus fulfill his word
When each can feel his brother's sigh,
  And with him bear a part;
When sorrows flows from eye to eye
  And joy from heart to heart:
When free from envy, scorn and pride,
  Our wishes all above,
Each can his brother's fallings hide,
  And show a brother's love:
When love in one delightful stream
  Through every bosom flows;
And union sweet, and dear esteem,
  In every action glows.

Between the morning and afternoon preaching service, Sister Ada Bartlett was baptized, uniting with the Whitefield church.

The next meeting of the Maine Association will be, the Lord willing, at Whitefield, Maine, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday before the second Monday in September in 1951.

* * *

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Delaware River Old Baptist Association, now in session with the Hopewell Church, send greetings to sister Associations and meetings with which we correspond.

Dear Brethren:—

Through the mercy of God we have had the privilege to meet again and to greet your messengers and members, and to sit together in a bond of peace.

In this unity which these associations bring about, your fellowship, and the edifying words of the ministering brethren, both, help bind us together so that we can rejoice the more on the feasting of spiritual blessings. For we need not only the edifying things of the spirit to bind us together, but to enable us to rejoice, one with another, in the Lord.

The ministers have all preached Jesus, whom to know is life eternal. The gift of each is indeed a Gift beyond

price, and we feel blessed to have heard them, and know it is indeed enough when we can gather together in the unity of love and fellowship.

We hope, the Lord willing, to meet with you again next year through this Association.

So written in a blessed hope of eternal life.

H. M. BENNETT, *Moderator.*
CASPER G. FETTER, *Clerk.*

* * *

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Delaware River Association in session with the Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J. Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 6th, 7th, and 8th, 1951 to her sister churches composing this association, and to the associations, churches and meetings with whom we correspond, extend our loving greetings in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ:—

Dearly Beloved in the Lord. It has fallen to our lot to again address you in a Circular Letter. And as a subject to write upon we have been impressed to attempt to express a few thoughts upon the Love of God. Where could we find a greater theme to write upon than the Love of God? We believe that if it had not been for the love of God to have quickened us unto newness of life, Spiritual Life we would not know anything about this love. We believe that it was because God first loved us that we were made to love Him. We believe that God in eternity loved us, and before the world was made we were chosen in Him to be made manifest here in time as his chosen people. In the beginning of time, in the sixth day God said, "Let us make man in our image: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he them; male and female created he them." And God blessed man because of that wonderful love he had for them before the world was made; Yes blessed he them with all things that would be for their good and his own glory. His eye was ever upon them watching over them, preparing for them the things of which they would have need. He planted a garden eastward in Eden: and there he put the man whom he had formed. "And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food: the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." "And the Lord God took the man, and put him in the Garden of Eden to dress and keep it, and the Lord God commanded the man, saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; But of the tree of the Knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." "But for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof: and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, this is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." "And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed." Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made, tempted the woman to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, saying, "Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." So the woman did eat and gave

also unto her husband with her; and he did eat, and their eyes were opened, and they knew they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons, a cloak of self righteousness to cover their nakedness, their sins from the sight of the Lord God. "And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day; and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden." How utterly impossible it is for Gods people to hide their nakedness, their sins from Him. "But for Adam and Eve the Lord God made coats of skins, and clothed their naked bodies;" but they had disobeyed the commandments of the Lord God and in this act of disobedience they had sinned and were cast out of the garden, fallen undone lost sinners. But God in eternity forsaw all this, and in his great love for his chosen people planned for their redemption, planned to redeem them from their fall in Adam by sending his only begotten Son, born of a woman, who took upon himself flesh and blood that He might bear our sins in his own body and shed his blood on Calvary's cross to save us from our fallen and lost condition. What love and mercy. God loved us in eternity. He always loved us. He planned for our redemption in eternity before the world was made. Yes we were chosen in Him before the world was spoken into existence. God loved us when we were dead in tresspasses and in sin. Behold what wonderful love. His love for his people was greater than the love of women. Like Samuel we can say, "Passeth the love of women." Peter thought he loved the Lord so greatly that he said he would follow him even unto death. But was the love of God in his heart when he denied that he knew the Lord with cursing and swearing? When Peter heard the cock crow he remembered what his Lord had told him and he went out and wept bitterly. Then the love of his Lord entered into his heart reminding him of his weakness and of his Lord's tender mercies and never failing love for him. Oh the love of God. God's love for his people is so great that He will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able. God is our refuge and strength when in trouble. He only is our Rock and our Salvation. "And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have wrought with you for my name's sake, not according to your wicked ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel, saith the Lord God." Does He not bring all his children to know, after he has wrought with them, that he is God, and besides him there is no Savior, and that without him we can do nothing? Were not all the ways that he wrought with us for our good and his glory? It was not according to our wicked ways, nor according to our corrupt doings, but it was according to his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, that he thus wrought with us. It was for his name's sake, his mercy and grace. Oh, it was "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." "Dear brethren is the love of God in our hearts when we denigh him on our meeting days, when we fail to meet with the children of God to worship him and sing praise to his holy name for his goodness and mercy to poor sinners, in the giving of his only begotten Son to suffer, bleed and die that we might have life everlasting. Oh but for the mercy and love of God we would be as aliens having no

hope, and without God in the world. Again if we neglect to read the record of the word of God and fail to come to the throne of grace, to his house of prayer, can we expect to find his love dwelling sweetly in our hearts, and hear him say, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."

Dear brethren let us not fail to attend the services of our God, and render unto him, Father Son and Blessed Spirit the praise due his Holy Name. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen."

Adopted as our Circular Letter by the Delaware River Association, held with the Hopewell Church, June 6th, 7th, and 8th, 1951.

H. M. BENNETT, *Moderator.*
CASPER G. FETTER, *Clerk.*

* * *

Vega, N. Y.
July 20, 1951

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

Enclosed you will find a check to renew a subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I think I have been reading them as long as almost anyone now taking them. I find that I do not want to do without them as long as I am able to read them. When I first became acquainted with them they were printed as sheets of paper and folded in a square to be mailed out. I have been acquainted with the Editors from then on down and I believe they still hold fast to the same old doctrine that they did when it was started. There seems to be so few Old Baptists these days but the Lord has said he will have his witnesses as long as time shall last. He also has said where two or three are gathered together there will I be in their midst. I believe His word shall stand as long as there is one to be gathered, they will be brought forth.

A most unworthy little one,
VIRTUE BALLARD

* * *

Le Grande, Ore.
July 5, 1951

SIGNS of the TIMES
Annapolis, Maryland
GENTLEMEN:

I am enclosing three dollars for one year subscription to SIGNS of the TIMES. This is a renewal for my mother, Mrs. Etta J. Lassiter, 1114 Wash St., La Grande, Ore. She will be 91 years August 26. She has been reading your paper about 73 years. Her health is very delicate the last year but she reads quite well yet.

Yours very truly,
MRS. JEWEL McCLURE

* * *

PLEASE REMEMBER

1.—To renew your subscription promptly when due, if possible. The date on your wrapper cover will show to when you have paid.

2.—That when your remittance reaches us before the 10th of the month, credit will be shown with the next issue of the paper, otherwise it cannot be shown until the second month following. This also applies to changes of address.

3.—That notices of Special Meetings should be sent to us at least thirty days in advance of the month in which the meeting is to be held.

If our readers will be kind enough to observe the foregoing suggestions they will aid us very materially in getting out the paper.

D. V. S.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the **Signs of the Times** at the following prices: 1 copy, 25 cents; 3 copies, 75 cents; 6 copies, $1.50; 12 copies, $3.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

Please check the renewal date on your wrapper. It shows when your paper expires.

ASSOCIATIONS AND SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the Frying Pan Church, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, of October 17th, 18th and 19th 1951. All Ministers and Brethern of our Correspondence and others of our faith and order, and lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Those coming Tuesday in own conveyance, will come to Herndon, Va., and inquire for Sister Carolyne Alston or Brother Walter Norman, who will provide entertainment.

Bus travelers directed as follows:

Nearest approach to Herndon on route 50, is Chantilly, Va.

On route 7, Herndon Junction.

On arrival telephone Herndon 308 or 229W.

For further information communicate with the undersigned.

G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk
914 9th Street, N. E.,
Washington, D. C.

* * *

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Indiantown Church near Powellville, Md., on Oct. 24 and 25th, 1951, at 10:00 A.M. Ministers of our faith and order, and lovers of the truth are cordially invited. Those coming by car on Tuesday will go to the home of Brother William Adkins on Mt. Hermon Road, third house on the left from Salisbury, route 350, Salisbury-Powellville Road. Trains and buses will be met in Salisbury, Md., Tuesday p.m. Anyone not met will telephone Brother Adkins, Salisbury 22198.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT, Pastor
WILLIAM S. ADKINS, Clerk

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NOTICE OF MEETING

There will be an all day meeting of the Old School Baptist Church of New Vernon, Sullivan, New York, on Saturday, September 22, before the fourth Sunday of that month. Lunch will be served as usual at the near by restaurant. All members and friends are invited to attend.

* * *

The Original Little River Association meets with the Saline Creek Church at Bumpas Mills, Stewart County, Tennessee, beginning on Friday before the 4th Sunday in August, 1951.

(Elder) J. N. DARNALL,
Moderator,

Cadiz, Kentucky

The Original West Tennessee Association meets with the Yellow Creek Church, 3 miles west of Sylvia, Dickson County, Tennessee, beginning on Friday before the 2nd Sunday in September, 1951.

(Elder) R. L. BIGGS, *Moderator,*
1811 Manchester Avenue,

Nashville 8, Tennessee

The Original Flint River Association meets with Kelly's Creek Church, Lincoln County, Tennessee, beginning on Friday before the 4th Sunday in September, 1951.

(Elder) R. M. HAWKINS,
Moderator,

535 Walker Street,
Huntsville, Alabama

The Bethel Association meets with Bethel Church, Graves County, Kentucky, 7 miles east of Fulton, Kentucky, beginning on Friday before the 1st Sunday in October, 1951.

(Elder) R. L. HARRISON,
Moderator,

Route 1, Rives, Tenn.

The Soldier Creek Association meets with the Mount Pleasant Church, Graves County, Kentucky, beginning on Friday before the 2nd Sunday in October, 1951.

(Elder) PAUL POYNER,
Moderator,

The Original Obion Association meets with the Walnut Fork Church, 10 miles north of Paris, Henry County, Tennessee, beginning on Friday before the 3rd Sunday in October, 1951.

(Elder) PAUL POYNER,
1115 Olive Street,
Murray, Kentucky

* * *

The Maine Old Baptist Association will be held with the Whitefield Church at Whitefield, Maine Sept. 7, 8, to 9th, the Lord willing. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

SANFORD BARTLETT, *Clerk*
Damariscotta Mills, Me.

* * *

We, the Flint River Association, invite all our Primitive Baptist friends everywhere, to come to our Association Sept. 21, 22, and 23, 1951, at Old Kelly's Creek Church. We have met quite a few Baptist in our travels, and love to see them as often as possible.

(Mrs.) REANER REECE

* * *

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT IN MEMORY OF ELDER J. F. STEGALL

Whereas: It has pleased Almighty God in his infinite wisdom to take from our midst our dearly beloved Pastor Elder J. F. Stegall, who passed away May 25th, 1951 at the age of 68 years.

We would humbly bow before him and acknowledge him as our Savior and the giver of all good and perfect gifts. And in the passing of our Brother we would acknowledge that it was the Lord that giveth and the Lord Taketh away, Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Elder Stegall was an able minister of the Gospel and was Pastor of Roanoke Church for about 19 years. He was loved and highly respected by all who knew him.

While we find that in his departure our loss is great, yet we must confess that we have been greatly enriched by his long and useful life among us. We shall miss his wise council and guidance in our Church meetings, our association and in our homes.

While we shall miss him yet we feel to render to the Lord thanksgiving and praise for the benefits and words of comfort we derived from his presence while with us. His memory shall linger long in our hearts to make glad our thoughts of him.

Done by order of the Church in conference June 2nd, 1951.

(Elder) O. K. TENCH, *Moderator,*
F. G. HOLCOMB, *Clerk*

* * *

IN MEMORIAM

Whereas, it has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from this earth into everlasting peace, our beloved Brother Elder R. Lester Dodson, ever faithful to the calling of God to the ministry, he preached with power the unsearchable riches of the Kingdom of God, serving the Lord in meekness and humility, ever contending for the truth as it is in Jesus.

Therefore be it resolved, though our hearts are bleeding in so great a loss, may we bow in humble submission to His most Holy will, believing our loss is his eternal gain.

Soldier of Christ, well done;
Praise be thy new employ;
And, while eternal ages run,
Rest in thy Savior's joy.

Resolved, that this memoriam be published with the minutes of this association, and copies sent to his widow and for publication in the Signs of the Times.

Done by order of the Delaware River Association in session with the Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J. June 6th, 7th, and 8th, 1951.

H. M. BENNETT, *Moderator.*
CASPER G. FETTER, *Clerk.*

OBITUARIES

WILLIAM DANIEL WITHERS was born April 28, 1872, and died May 3, 1951. He was born in Bourbon County, Kansas, the eldest of 9 children, 6 boys, and 3 girls, all of whom are living, except him. He was the father of 16 children, 9 of whom are living.

He was received and baptized into Bethel church of Bellingham, Washington December 25, 1909, and held to the faith until his death, or as he would put it, the faith held him. He was a faithful husband and father, and a good provider.

He liked to tell a dream that was a part of his christian experience. He was climbing a mountain and was very weary, when he came to a great wall which seemed to reach to heaven and was endless. He looked as he stopped and pondered how he could get over or around it. Looking to his left he saw a great multitude of people that were in semi-darkness and milling around and around. Then looking to his right he beheld a small group of people some were old white headed men, kneeling in prayer and oh, the glory that shone around them and on these few. But he couldn't get to either group because a great gulf and the wall. He was filled with fear but would not go to the ones on the left. Then he heard a voice saying, "Salvation is of the Lord," This was his belief too, "That Salvation is of the Lord."

He was baptized in Lake Whatcom by Elder Eaton where the ice had to be broken to receive him. The night he died I was not with him, but I dreamed of being by his side and clasping his hands in mine; we sang a hymn and then he said, "The window is open and I'm going out." The next morning he had passed away.

He was tenderly cared for by his youngest daughter and son-in-law, and his dear wife, who is left mourning his passing. They had been married 55 years.

Our loss is his eternal gain, Praised be the God of fathers, written by his daughter.

(Mrs.) MARY ECKARD

JUDSON ZEH

On July 14, 1951 MR. JUDSON ZEH departed this life at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Golding in Cobleskill, New York after an illness of five weeks. The funeral services were held the following Monday afternoon at the Bellinger Funeral Home near Lawyersville, N. Y., the writer conducting the services. The interment was in the Cobleskill cemetery. Deceased would have been eighty-six years old next October. He was unmarried and among his surviving relatives are several nieces and nephews. He was the youngest of seven children and the last survivor. Judson Zeh was born in Seward, New York in 1865. His parents were Peter Zeh and Eliza Bellinger Zeh. He followed the avocation of farming for many years in which his success evidenced his thrift, industry, and excellent business management. After retiring from the farm he lived in the Earl Stevens homestead at Central Bridge for twenty years. Nearly two years ago he went to live with Mr. and Mrs. Frank Golding in Cobleskill, who ministered to his wants with tender, loyal, loving care, sparing nothing for his comfort.

Mr. Zeh was deeply religious and believed with unshaken firmness in the principles of the Old School Baptist faith and was a faithful attendant at the meetings of the Middleburg Old School Baptist church, though he never united with the visible church. He was a constant reader of the Signs of the Times for over fifty years. His unblemished character, his upright walk, and godly conversation exemplified the walk of a follower of Jesus. He was widely known and had a warm and lasting place in the hearts of all who know him.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

ELDER JOHN W. B. CAMERON, our dearly beloved Brother in Christ was called to his eternal rest on June 10, 1951. He was born in England, March 4, 1882. He was married to Mary Alice Clough September 12, 1907 in England at Strict Baptist Church. They came to America in 1915.

They were both baptized into the Salem Strict Baptist Church in Cleveland, Ohio, in the year 1919. Afterwards they transferred their membership to Friendship Church at Fowler, Colorado. Some years later they came further west and for a time their membership was at Forest Grove, Oregon. At t he time of his death they were both members of Little Zion at Chehalis, Washington.

We feel that they were a great blessing to the little church and it is difficult to see how we can go without him. He was our assistant pastor and a willing servant. His mind was led into the deep mysteries of the scriptures and he was never too occupied to give his mind on anything asked of him. The blessed Lord knows our needs and has promised to supply them all so our faith and trust is placed in Him.

The faith and belief of the strict Baptist is the same as that of our Primitive churches I believe, but the practice and order of a little different. I have heard Elder Cameron say many times that a great many things were cleared up for him since his association with the Primitive Baptists. Theirs was the only Baptist home where I was privileged to share in family alter service. I hope I have not been envious of any ones blessings but I have often wished I could live as close to my Lord as he seemed to.

He left to mourn his passing a dear faithful wife, Mary Alice Cameron and two sons; Colin B. Cameron, and William B. Cameron all of Seattle, Washington, Mrs. Hannah Bates, of Olympia, Wash.; and Mrs. Rhoda Hamilton, of Centralia, Washington. He had eight grandchildren.

We wish to bow in submission to the will of our heavenly Father.

Services were conducted by Elder C. M. Fisher, and Elder I. F. Coleman. Interment in Washellie's Cemetery, Seattle.

Done by order of the church.

C. M. FISHER, *Moderator*
(Mrs) EFFIE PARKE, *Clerk*

With a deep feeling of sadness we desire to speak briefly of the life and passing of JOHN PHILLIP CAMPION. He was born January 2, 1913 and departed January 17, 1951. He is survived by his mother, sister Rhoda Ann, and the following brothers and sister: Jasper, of Winfield, Ala.; Lowell who is now in the U. S. Army in Korea; Mrs. Juanita Gallaway, Einfield, Ala.; Mrs. Mildred Williamson, Panama City, Florida; Mrs. Wiester Miller, Panama City, Florida; Mrs. Ernestine Tipton, Birmington, Ala.

His funeral was conducted by Elder Elmer Kitchens at the Bush Primitive Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala. The following songs were used: "Amazing Grace", Lone Pilgrim", and "Pilgrims Farewell"; these were also the same songs used at his father's funeral, the late W. H. Campion, whose obituary was published in a recent issue of the SIGNS. His remains were tenderly laid to rest in Elmwood Cemetery. The many floral offerings manifest love and confidence.

He served two years over seas in World War II. He fought five major battles and many minor ones. He felt his conviction while on the battlefield. In Nov., 1950 he wrote an article to the SIGNS. He was then at Long Beach, Calif. Sister Lunah Hudson read the article and wrote him about it. He came to see her and they had a long pleasant talk.

On Saturday before his passing he came to see her again. He expressed sweet communication with Jesus. He was so happy. After reading of his passing Sister Hudson went to his apartment and talked with the landlady. The landlady said that he had paid for his rent, meals, and put everything in order just before he was killed that afternoon. His landlady said "This looks like predestination."

He never united with any church but he left every evidence he loved the Lord's anointed. The writer has spent many hours with his parents and with some of his sisters and brothers, but I was never associated with Phil very much.

To the family may I say my tears mingle with yours and my spirit blends with yours. Allow me to give you the comforting assurance that Phil is at rest. In humble submission we bow to thy will, Oh, Lord.

C. H. BIRD

SISTER CARRY STEWART was born April 20, 1871, to Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Chandler of Lincoln Parish, La.; and she was married to J. D. Stewart Feb. 15, 1888. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church on the third Saturday in August, 1913. Her death was May 8, 1951.

Sister Stewart and her husband were very lovely and consistant members of Old Ephesus Church, which was about four miles from Ruston, La. They lived in this vicinity for many years, but later moved to the vicinity of McCalister, Oklahoma. They lived here until the death of Brother Stewart which was a few years ago. Sister Stewart came back to Louisiana where she made her home with her son, Loy.

When she moved back to La. she joined Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church near Farmerville, La. Here she was highly esteemed by the brethren and sisters who knew her. She was one of the sweetest singers of the old time SACRED HARP music that I have ever heard. I could drive up to the church where singing was going on and I could always tell whether Sister Stewart was there or not. Her voice was excellent for singing and she knew how to sing. Sister Stewart was very much devoted to the church, the doctrine, and the brethren and sisters; although she was not conveniently located near her church she was always at her meetings unless she was prevented by unavoidable circumstances.

She was the mother of six children who were: Mrs. Gertrude Hall, McCalister, Okla.; Mrs. Jimmie Harrington, Lamont, Calif.; Carl Stewart, Santiago, Calif.; Arvel Stewart, deceased, having been killed in World War I, Loy Stewart, West Monroe, La.; and Mrs. Eva Blackwelder, Ruston, La. There were 27 grandchildren and 30 great grandchildren, and one great great grandchild. She also leaves two brothers, Paul and John Chandler both of McCalister, Okla., and three sisters, Mrs. Clara Edwards, McCalister, Okla.; Mrs. J. D. Dodd, Phoenix, Ariz.; and Mrs. Minnie Thomas. There were a host of neices, nephews, and many other kindred.

Dear bereaved we are admonished to weep not as for those who have no hope, I am fully satisfied that Sister Stewart is asleep in the tomb, awaiting that glorious resurrection morning when our Lord shall come and raise these vile bodies, and fashion them like the glorious body of the blessed Savior Jesus Christ our Lord. All the saints of God will dwell with Him in that beautiful City which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God. What a beautiful Hope this is, may God speed that great and glorious day.

I, her pastor, tried as best I could, to speak a few words of comfort to her mourning relatives. The services were conducted in the Kilpatric Funeral Chapel at Ruston, La. Her remains were carried back to Oklahoma for burial in the family cemetery.

R. W. RHODES

LOUISA JANE COOK ESTEP, our beloved sister in Christ was born in Ira, Bushman County, Virginia, Oct. 25, 1870 and passed from this life, April 28, 1951, aged 80 years, 9 months and three days. She was baptized into the Free Will Baptist Church about 1890 by Elder Wm. Estep. In about 1930 she was rebaptized, this time into the faith and order of the Primitive Baptist Church by Elder John Peters.

She had been a member of a Baptist church for about 58 or 60 years. She was firm in the faith of a Sovereign God and the total helplessness of man. She was very ill for many years yet when ever possible, she was at the meetings. Her children were as follows: William Estep, Onalaska, Washington; Thomas Estep, Napavine, Washington; Londy Estep, Forest, Washington; Loyd Estep, Longview, Washington; Floyd Estep, Elbe, Washington; Mrs. Gertrude Schreck, Onalaska, Washington; Mrs. Virgie Lester, Onalaska, Washington; and Mrs. Bessie Cramer, Raymond, Washington.

She had eighteen grandchildren, 11 great grandchildren, and 4 great-great grandchildren.

Her husband William Riley Estep who was born July 26, 1866 and died Oct. 29, 1918. He belonged to no church. They were married in 1887.

We have lost a faithful sister but feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Done by order of the church.

C. M. FISHER, *Moderator*
(Mrs) EFFIE PARE, *Clerk*

MRS. LENA MARY HITCHENS LOWE was born Sept. 4, 1878, and, after one year of illness, passed away August 7, 1950, at her home in Laurel, Md.

Private services were conducted the following Thursday by the Reverend Ralph Jones of Milford, Md., and Reverend R. Ward Mills of Stocton, Md. Interment was made in Laurel Hill Cemetery, where her remains were placed besides her late husband, James W. Lowe, Jr. She requested the hymn, "I Would Not Live Always", to be read at her funeral; and it was read by the Reverend Ralph Jones.

Mrs. Lowe was the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Gillis Smith Hitchens. She lived in the Sycamore community for 50 years, and for the last four years made her home in Laurel, Md. She is survived by the following children: Mrs. Audrey Parker, Millesbora, Md.; Dr. Alton Lowe, Delaware, Ohio; Mrs. Jeanne Morris, Rehobeth Beach, Del.; Edwin Lowe, Huntsville, Pa.; Deolan Lowe, Laurel, Md.; Mrs. Gertrude Hudson, Frankford, Del.; Mrs. Evelyn Pepper, Georgetown, Del.; Delbert and Herbert Lowe, Los Angeles, Calif. Surviving are the following brothers and sisters: Mrs. William Tyndall, Georgetown, Del.; Mrs. Maggie Elliott, Laurel, Md.; N. G. Hitchens, Concord, Md.; William Hitchens, Milford, Del.; and there were the deceased brothers and sisters, Benjamin and Daniel Hitchens, and Katherine Hitchens. There were eight grandchildren.

Mrs. Lowe joined the Broad Creek Old School Baptist Church in July 1942, and was baptized the same day. She was a firm believer of salvation by Grace. She attended her church whenever her health permitted. She lived a faithful member to the end, proving the abiding faith of her Savior that faith is the substance of things hoped for. It was her delight to care for her children, and labored untiring that they might secure an education and be morally well trained. She was tenderly cared for during her last illness by her children. Written by her sister,

(Mrs.) MAGGIE ELLIOTT

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 119 ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND, OCTOBER, 1951 No. 10

We wonder sometimes we can't understand
God's dealings with his people here
And sometimes at our disappointments
In the things we hold most dear.
For if we could have things our way
They would very different be
But our sight is not like Gods
He the end from the beginning can see.
For the paths that we would choose
Would not always be best for our feet
And sometimes in our greatest trials
We are brought to the mercy seat.
As sheep we would sometimes wander far
As sheep oft did of old
But the shepherd's rod is used with love
For they don't stray away from the fold.
We wonder sometimes at the darkness
And wonder we don't have more light
The answer is over and over again
Because it's not best in his sight.
We wonder why some have to suffer so
We wonder and can't understand
But then we know all things
Are ruled by his merciful hand.
For to everything there's a purpose
Every tear drop and a sigh
And sometimes our greatest sorrows
Are blessings in disguise.
For each one will be prepared for the burden
That they will have to bear
And when that burden is too great for us
He will that burden share.
For Gods ways are not our ways
His wonders great and small
For if we could understand his ways
There would be no mystery at all.

CORA B. POWELL
Salisbury, Md.

* * *

319 Mankin Avenue
Berkley, W. Va.
July 4, 1951

DEAR ASSOCIATE EDITORS:

Enclosed is a money order to cover expense for another year's subscription for the "Signs of the Times." I beg you to forgive me for my neglecting to send it in on time. Yes I thought of it several times, and had the money, but just slothful and slack in my duty. Now I hope that I am not one that after I have made excuses, I feel that I am justified thereby. In Jesus only is justification and we are made to groan many times by reason of the weight of sin and this corrupt nature.

There is times with me when I am made to feel that I must be deceived, and that surely this hope is not hope, that it is just something that is of my self. Do you ever feel this way? Some say that they never have any doubts and that they are riding upon the high places at all times and that they know that heaven is their home because they have met the conditions required in the promises of God. (How be it not true Primitive Baptist). If this were so, then how about Thomas, John the Baptist, Jacob and many others. I asked them sometimes did John doubt the Savior? Jacob is on my mind (while I know if I have ever been blessed with a revelation from the Mighty God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob) that this scripture is too deep for them, as all others for that matter. He tells us that the dead knoweth not anything; to know anything is to experience it. Then if the power of God is not with us we would deny it. I understand that the thorn in the flesh was not removed when Paul besought the Lord (not prayed) for it to be removed. He said, "My grace is sufficient, Strength is made perfect in weakness."

Now I come to the scripture that was on my mind, and submit to you what I hope that has been revealed to me in it, concerning the experience of God's people while living here is this world of sin and sorrow. Gen. 34th Chapter

and 30th verse on through to the 35th Chapter, and about the 6th or 7th verse, you will notice that this is dealing with the experience of God's people; I believe while here in this world, yet written in the patriarch's age. "And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Cannaanites and the Perizites: and I being few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me, and slay me; and I shall be destroyed, I and my house. And they said, Should he deal with our sister as with an harlot? And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of thy brother Esau thy brother. Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments: And let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went." I will not quote any more of it but if blessed with the mind from on high, I will come back to it in the letter.

We are bound to realize that since that He is the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob that somewhere in their travels, if we be heirs of promise and born of the spirit of God, we see some of our experience. Do we not? We go back to when God made promises to Abraham that he said unto him, "Know of a surety that thy seed shall sojourn in a strange land and be evily entreated and shall serve them and afterward come out with great substance." Now when he said "Thy seed" does not mean nor take in every natural seed of his posterity, even as the promise of God does not take in every Adam creature of this world for if so they will all be saved. We trace this on to Jacob and Esau and prove that it is election and that of grace and before they were ever born here in this world and also prove that God appears to his people when they are brought to distress and answers them in the day of their troubles, (While they have troubles all way from here on after that God deals with them) and gives them hope in Jesus and in this text is called Bethel. When the time came for Isaac to bless according to nature he purposed to bless Esau for he was the firstborn was he not? But for some cause Rebekah had been made wise to know whom was to receive the blessing (which was the blessing of Abraham) she deceives her husband and moves Jacob to go and get two kids, I believe it was and she dressed them and made him the savory meat that he might obtain the blessing when she went to enquire of the Lord he spoke to her and said two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels and two nations are in thy womb and the elder shall serve the younger. Paul tells us that the purpose of God according to election might stand not of works but of him that calleth "It was said to her the elder shall serve the younger." What was the purpose? To show to the heirs of promise that the election is not of works but of grace, and not according to any fleshy standing that we might have here in this world. It was right reversed to that which would be natural. Naturally the blessing would come to Esau for he was the elder or the firstborn, was he not? Well, I quote also, "It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth but of God that showeth mercy". Romans 9-16. When Isaac mentioned it to Esau he was willing and took his bow to go out hunting for the venison, did he not? Here is

where grace is first and last, always, by all means. Jacob was the heir all the time and when his mother mentioned it to him and commanded him to do this thing, he kicked on it and said, "I may receive a curse and not a blessing". Anyway when he took the savory meat in to his father as his mother had commanded him the skins of the kids were put on him and he deceived his father, thereby and his father said the voice is Jacob's but the hands are Esau's; and he discerned him not and when he asked him I believe the second time art thou my very son Esau he said, yes. This was not true was it? For he was not his very son Esau, he was Jacob pretending to be Esau. Did not the truth of God abound here through Jacob's lie? I believe it did, for it was already truth that he should receive the blessing and that before worlds began. You see how it was worked, all contrary to nature; so is the grace of God and the grace covenant, it is contrary to nature. The elder shall serve the younger, was spoken when they were yet in the womb, which means at least to me, that Jacob is, and was the heir of the promise of God to Abraham and to his seed after him. We understand that these twins had to be born on the same level, both Jews and the seed of Abraham, according to Nature to set up election or to prove election; not to set up, that one was as good as the other, or that one was no better than the other and one had not any advantages over the other. Also being a Jew by nature means nothing, but that the election was of sovereign grace, now when Jacob was blessed, Esau purposed in his heart to slay him because of the blessing wherewith his father had blessed him, and he was instructed of his mother to go to his Mother's kindred and stay there until the anger of his brother should be appeased. This is in a figurative sense Grace taking care of him and when he fled from the face of his brother, Esau he lighted upon this certain place and God appeared to him in a dream, here is where the "Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God". Jacob was in trouble, his spirit broken because of the troubles that had come upon him and it cannot be proved anywhere that he was to be blamed for it. His mother directed it from a natural standpoint. And God spoke unto him aid said, "I am the God of Abraham Thy Father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest to thee will I give it, and to thy seed:"

Now Jesus spoke to some of the unbelieving Jews and said to them, "I know that ye are the seed of Abraham but if ye were the children of Abraham ye would love me."

Now one may be the seed of Abraham naturally and not be the children of Abraham according to this. Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children. "If children then heirs and joint heirs with Christ" therefore he said I am the God of Abraham, thy Father because he was a "Child" of promise and God bearing him witness appearing to him and revealing himself to him, when he said, "I am the God of Abraham thy father." Jacob like the children of God in this day and time, had to be made acquainted with this God.

On down he said in the same promise; "I will not leave thee nor forsake thee until I have performed that which I have spoken to thee of."

Now after this precious dealing of God with him he was made to say that, "I and my house shall be destroyed."

Child of grace, is there not many times with you that you doubt that if this was God that dealt with you like Jacob, appeared to you in your troubles

and made to you precious promises? Do we not have to be brought down to the feet of sovereign mercy and cry unto God for his mercy and afraid that we will yet be destroyed? Yes it is when we are down in this condition that God speaks to us in mercy and commands us to arise, for he said to him, "Arise and go to Bethel and dwell there (dwelling in the Spirit) clinging to the promises of God, and make there an altar unto to God."

Yes we are troubled many times because of our sins and the just condemnation and are made to cry to God for his mercy, and like Jacob who was commanded to go to Bethel, we are made to go back to our experiences and feast again and again on things that have been wrought in our hearts which are Bethel spots. We notice that after God spoke to him that the scripture says, "Then" he commanded his household and all that were with him to put away the strange gods which were among them and be clean and change your garments and so on. Why did he not command them before then? Because he had not the command himself this thing envolves the whole household of faith; for as Jacob was the head of all of the house—there so is also Jesus the Head over all things to the church, which is his body. We read on and find that they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand and all the earrings which were in their ears and Jacob hid them under the "Oak". Now dearly beloved is not this worth something to us? Why is it an oak, and not just any kind of a tree? I believe that the OAK represents STRENGTH. When this thorn in the flesh buffet us that we should not be exalted above measure. His Grace is sufficient and made manifest, and that his "Strength" is made perfect in weakness. We are brought to the state of weakness in reality and truth and his Son revealed in us our "Strength". Was this not manifested when he raised him from the dead and put all things under his feet and gave him to be the head overall things to the church. When these strange gods are hid out of sight, we like Jacob and his household journey, and the journey is toward the land of Canaana. For the scripture reads on and says "And they journeyed and came to Luz and the terror of God was upon all the cities around them and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob as was expected. When he said, "I and my house shall be destroyed," is this not figurative of that which arises in our flesh? "The sin that doeth so easily beset us."

And as Jacob, they do not follow us to condemn us for at the command of God we journey (in Spirit). We find later in the journeys of the children of Israel when the cloud was over the tents of the Children of Israel that they journeyed not, but at the command of God the cloud removed and they journeyed. The journey was toward the Canaan land as was in this same case. And we like Jacob build an "Altar" unto God. An altar of praise to his name. He shall be as the light of the morning even as morning without clouds, when the sun riseth as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining rain. The grass when in time of drought will have the appearance of being dead, but the showers upon it will revive it and it will take the appearence of life; yes, newness of life. When he makes known his voice of mercy once again, and again, while here in this life though our outward man perish, yet, the inward man is renewed day by day by his voice of mercy once again, and again while here in this life. Though our outward man perish yet the inward man is renewed day by day

by his Spirit in the inner man. With his hand he formed the crooked Serpent and with his Spirit he garnished the heavens, is this not the garnishing of the heavens, the name of Jesus preached in the hearts of his creatures? The Holy one of Israel that fought and won the battle of which no man could fight? He brought me to his banqueting house and his banner over me was love. This banner of peace that Jesus made through his blood. Love was the motive for his coming down from the heavens and fighting that battle. Love is the motive for your hope in Jesus for the final redemption from this present world.

Farewell. If you see fit cast this in the trash can. It will be no offense to me. It is imperfect like the writer.

Elder W. E. BRANCHE
August 7, 1951

DEAR BRETHREN: If through the mercy of God, I have a right to thus address you. As the time has come to send in for our much loved paper, I have a great desire to humbly beg forgiveness of my brethren for the past attempts at writing. I am not ashamed of what I believe, nor the sweet meditations of my heart, but always fearful to write them down. Yet, it seems, that has been my weakness and I want to say right here, the brethren and sisters have been so kind in bearing with me, but my mistakes, short-coming, ignorance, and sin roll up before me like a mountain, covered with fog, till I wish I could erase the past lines I have written and remain silent, but there always follows another thought and feeling of guilt. I feel I might be like the one that was given the one talent and buried it in the earth, so I find no rest from my confused mind, only when the Lord speaks, "Peace be still, it is I, be not afraid." "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29. "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own." John 15:19. "Therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Jer. 31:3. Oh! I feel so glad and I hope thankful to Him who has blessed us with all spiritual blessing in Christ, treasured up in Him from the foundation of the world and is given to us in due seasons, not according to our works, but to his own purpose and grace. He leads us along and we are prepared to receive each of them as they come. We are not left to ourselves to the extent that we will reject them, or fail to be present when our refreshment is on the table. No, no, we are led by the still waters and are *made* to lie down in green pastures. We feast on his love, and sweet words of expression flow thru our minds that would make a book should they be put down, but they are gone, and we know not, from whence they came. We feel strengthened and do believe they are sent from God, but we cannot stop there, if so, we would, for rest is so sweet, but we have not come to the end of our journey. How we do desire and beg Him to be ever present in time of need and that is every minute of time. I believe he watches over His children, at all times, even when we are sinking down in darkness and distress, and the warmth of His love seems to be all gone and our way seems to be hanging, as it were, on a high cliff, held with uncertain cords, that might break at any time, and we be plunged into outer darkness. So is this not the fear that is placed in our hearts, that causes us to call upon the name of our God? Oh! I feel His grace is sufficient for us, when I have any feeling at all, but much of my time is spent in the valley, but I can see that is the best for me. I hope that I will always be kept

humble, down at my brethren's feet.

May He be gracious to you and all the editorial staff, writers, and lovers of the *Signs,* and all His children, wherever they are. He knows them, for He is caring for them. Use the remainder of the money, as you see fit. My husband joins me in greeting to you. Yours in hope.

(Mrs.) LUTHER CAMPBELL

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS,

You are strangers in the flesh, as are most of those who write to the SIGNS. I do feel to hope and believe that we are kindred in and through the spirit of God. So many times I have felt this to be true and rejoiced, I hope in spirit.

But, Oh, how empty my heart has been for such a long time, as though I were dead, yet going about mechanically with the duties of this natural life. While in this condition you and all my brethren and sisters are strangers. I feel so alone, I realize more every day what a stranger I am to my neighbors, friends and relatives with whom I come in daily contact. I almost never dare mention what I believe concerning God and the salvation of sinners. Then to feel so empty of feeling toward those who believe the doctrine of Grace for life and salvation, is awful indeed. I tried to stir up a pure mind but I had none. I tried to feel and believe in this love, I hoped had been shed abroad in my heart, but there was just emptiness. I could not read the Bible, nor the SIGNS; I could not direct my mind into thoughts of God or on Heavenly things. I wondered if this would go on for the rest of my life. I would talk to my only Sister who is very dear to me and she would bring to mind many things that were once comforting concerning what the Scriptures teach; but they were dear and I just could not believe. Some would say "Surely now is the time to pray", but I could not pray. There were just no words. I thought at night when I lay down I would ask in my mind "Oh, Lord where are you? If you are there would you look down in much mercy and be merciful to my unrighteousness and deliver me out of this empty place." I could not see any good in being in this condition and wondered how it could work good in any way.

I tried to recall sweet meditations I once had and to re-live the time I was so sure the holy spirit had lifted me up to view things I wasn't able to tell with this tongue. I remembered all the way the Lord had brought me, only to wonder if it was all in vain, same natural emotion.

I remembered a time once before while in La. my heart was heavy and burdened for so long. I groaned in spirit each night and tried to pray and how suddenly and unexpectedly it vanished one morning. My heart and soul seemed to soar upward in praise and worship while the tears fell from my eyes, but this was dead and so far away, also.

The second Sat. and Sunday was our meeting days and on this particular time in August we always look forward to having visiting preachers and brothers and sisters from other places with us. These Elders R. L. Biggs from Nashville, O. W. Perkins of Mayfield, Ky., and R. Harrison of Rives were here and such wonderful words of truths they did speak. I felt that the words surely must have come from the very fountainhead of Truth. It was wonderful and I marveled while listening and thinking how good it sounded to me. It was not I hope a stumbling block, neither was it foolishness, but it seemed like the power of God and the wisdom of God. I wondered if it would all go

away even as they had to go to their homes, and if I would have to continue on in this empty dismal frame of mind.

When I came in this Monday from work, my SIGNS was there. I opened it and began to read and my soul was filled with love and fellowship before I finished the first letter by a Sister Kate Cottrell and how thankful I was to God to again let me feel this love. He had restored again unto me the joy of His Salvation, not an overwhelming joy but enough to let me again believe that he is the Christ. I then felt a desire to go in my bedroom and fall on my knees and thank Him and beg Him to keep me ever in the way He would have me to go—lead and guide me and not let me wander away.

One of the preachers spoke of a verse of Scripture in Ecc. "I returned and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong," etc. I felt almost as though I had returned from a desert place. I do not know or see the good that could have been in it, or if it was a chastening rod for my many sins, even so if I could know without doubt that it was, it would be sweet, for the Lord chasteneth whom he loveth.

Even as I write these words I wonder if it will be His will to withdraw this and leave me again as before. He is a Sovereign and asks leave of no one. My life is lived in hope of eternal life after the grave. Sometimes I am made to believe that truly He is the Christ and it is then I feel that I have been quickened into life and knowledge of Him by Him and the way is good; but I have just told you how it is other times with me—all of which keeps me tossed about like a leaf on the ocean.

I hardly think this is worth space in the paper but it has relieved me to tell it. To have something to tell is wonderful, indeed. I have been so low and poor in spirit that I wondered if my hope was really gone.

I am ashamed to have been so slow in sending in my remittance. This will take care of this year and next and a little to spare.

I as everyone else, was grieved to hear of Elder Dodson's passing, for we enjoyed and was comforted many times through his writings. I rejoice to know he has finished his course and is gone from this troublesome life for I truly believe he is resting. And I believe God is able to hold up whom he will to take his place for I do not think His arm is shortened nor has He lost any of His power. Oh, if I could hold fast to that and not let it go.

Your weak and unworthy sister,
in hope of eternal life

MRS. LUCILLE YOUNG

"Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Matthew 22:37-40

The law is said to be a rule of conduct enforced by a higher authority than the persons to whom it is given. In the Bible we find a record of the law in the Old Testament is often called the law. It was originally laid down to the Hebrews through Moses. While it had special application to them and special requirements they were bound to observe, the fundamental principle or antitype is universal and perpetual to the children of God is all ages, generations, dispensations of time; but man has never been able to keep this law. It is a perfect law and man is an

imperfect being, a sinner. The law requires a perfect obedience so man in his human nature could not keep it. If he offended it in the least point he was guilty of the whole law. Christ our Savior came as the end of that law, one who was without sin.

Dear Reader, do you remember when you came to the end of the law in your experience, when you were bound hand and foot and laid on the altar and the arm of the law was stretched with the knife to take your life. When the voice of the Lord spoke from behind saying to the law, stay thy hand, for I have prepared for myself a sacrifice. I have sent my only begotten son, made of a woman, made under the law to redeem them that are under the law. He is the one who loves the Lord thy God with all thy soul and with all the mind and all the strength and his neighbour as himself, which is fulfillment of the law. He was the ram that was caught by the horns in the thicket behind us. He was just behind us when the dreadful moment came with us. When the law was making its dreadful stroke to cut us down and justly so, too, He stepped in front and let it strike Him instead of us and fulfilled it to every jot and tittle, and rolled it back to the father honorable and thus fulfilled that law of carnal commandments which was restricted to the Hebrew nation, as a type of the spiritual Hebrew nation or Israel. That law which was carnal in its applications was only a type of the law which is written in the hearts of spiritual Israel in the perpetual or everlasting covenant made with spiritual Israel. When they shall enter into the sabbath of rest as is said in Exodus 31:16 "Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant."

And it is again said "Wherefore say, Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace; And he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel." Numbers 25:12-13

So since the old covenant has fulfilled its purpose as a type, it gives way to the antitype, and God says by the mouth of Jeremiah, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the Lord; if heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord." Jeremiah 32:31-37

So we see that this covenant can never be broken, it shall stand forever. In the old covenant there was a name written on a stone and given to everyone of the children of Israel which none could read but he to whom it was given. This figurated the law or covenant which is written in the heart of life of those whom the new covenant is made with, so we should be careful about passing judgment on another. We cannot look into the heart of another. It is said that man looketh on the outer appearance but God looketh on the heart. In the above new covenant he says I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. So long as the ordinance of the sun, moon and stars of heaven remains to give light on the earth and heaven above cannot be measured or the earth searched this covenant will not be broken. So your sins and iniquities will never come against you any more, no not forever. What a blessed thought.

While sin remains in the flesh it is condemned there so that it will never separate you and your God. While the flesh serves the law of sin, the mind of Christ which dwells in us serves the law of God. Paul says, "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law of God in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." Romans 7:14-25

The dear apostle here has told the whole experience of everyone of the servants of our God from the first to the last one that shall be on the earth when our blessed Lord shall come again to gather them home to that blessed immortality. Note that Paul says I delight in the law of God after the inward man, which is the Christ man a spirit that dwell in us which is the spirit of love. This spirit fulfills and keeps the law. For love is the fulfillment of the law and all God's chosen people keep the law in Christ, or in other words Christ keeps the law for them as their head and vine which they are members. The head speaks for all the members of the body. The life of all the branches is in the vine and receives all their substance from the vine. Note that Paul says again so I myself with the mind (that mind of Christ) serve the law of God but with the flesh the law of sin. There Paul goes on to write "There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned

sin the flesh, That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Romans 8:1-9

Those who receive this blessed spirit of Christ possess a supernatural love which the world of the ungodly know nothing about and it seems that even we ourselves do not understand much about it. The apostle says beloved or behold what manner of love is this that the Father hath bestowed on us that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. The same apostle says again love worketh no ill to his neighbours therefore love is the fulfillment of the law. He also says for all the law is fulfilled in one word, even this thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self.

James also says, "If ye fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:" James 2:8

This is the best order that I know of a manifestation of love and zeal for God and love for your brother, this is better than all the man orders. As the scribe when he had asked Christ concerning the commandments, which of them was the greatest and the first. "Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandment is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrificies. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question." Mark 12:29-34

While we believe in good order as laid down by Christ and his apostles, but when we make orders ourselves and get so bent on them that we begin to set up bars to fellowship against our brethren because they do not see all points of doctrine as we do or because they are not in correspondence with our associations, and for many causes too numerous to mention in this letter; but manifesting more interest in the man made orders than they do in love of their Brother. It seems to me it is time to call a halt. We do not like to have our feelings cramped or bound down by the dictations of others as to whom shall fellowship, or who I shall not fellowship. But I like to be guided by my own feelings by the feeling of love which I believe is wrought in my heart by that spirit of love, which is the fulfillment of that law of Love, which is written in the heart and which teaches us who to fellowship and who not to fellowship.

I have not written as I had wished to, may God guide and direct us in the

way he would have us go and keep us in that strict and narrow path to whom be the honor and glory for ever and ever more. It is not a question with me who I can fellowship but the thing that bothers me, who can fellowship me.

Your unworthy brother in Christ,
I hope
H. L. ROGERS

* * *

DEAR EDITOR OF THE *SIGNS*,

You will find my subscription money as I want you to send me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I am a new subscriber for someone gave me some of the *Signs* and I do enjoy them so much. They are a great comfort to me. I have just finished reading a good sermon (it is to me) by Elder L. F. Harris, written in 1948.

I knew Brother W. D. Griffin when we were both small children. We then lived in Alabama but in 1916 we, that is my parents and family moved to Texas. In 1920 my mother passed away, she was only 38 years old, but for some reason unknown to us God took her from us; leaving father with six children. The year after her death I received a letter from Brother Griffin and we corresponded for awhile. Then I was married to Seaborn Shelton and I did not hear anymore from Brother Griffin until 1937 when my Aunt gave me some copies of the *Signs* to read. I was resting one day and picked up one of the *Signs* to read. I did not belong to the Primitive Baptist church at that time but had been terribly disturbed about my condition and about predestination. I hope I had been given some light on it. But as I was reading this article, I would read and cry and thank God for such a wonderful paper. When I had read about half, I said that I must look to see who wrote this. To my surprise it was signed, W. D. Griffin. I laughed, I cried, I was so happy. I said thank God he is a good old hard shell preacher. Then I wrote and asked him if he could be the one I used to know and he answered saying, yes. I would love to hear him preach.

My husband was a Missionary Baptist when we were married, so I joined them but was never satisfied. I should not have been in any church at that time. I was terribly disturbed about my condition. I felt when I went to bed I might die before morning and if I should I would be lost. I stayed under a burden for a year. I got so where it made no difference where I went to church I was so very easily touched that I would cry and want to do better, but could not. In '37 I offered myself to the Old Baptist at Dewey, Texas, and to my surprise they accepted me.

If I know this poor heart of mine I love what they preach and teach. I was made to love them everywhere. Well, I was just going to send in my subscription and I did not mean to write a letter. But excuse me and please look over my imperfections and mistakes.

When at a throne of mercy, remember me and mine.

ESSIE MAE SHELTON
1629 E. Harris
San Angelo, Texas

* * *

DEAR EDITORS:

The primary purpose of this communication is to transmit my wife's (Mrs. H. T. Faulk, 325 West Missouri St.) renewal of her subscription to the Signs of the Times, which renewal I, not my wife, have been negligent in attending to as all of us should.

However, I feel to thank the Master for His goodness in raising up someone to carry on in Elder Dodson's stead, and to express to you our appreciation of your faithful efforts to carry on in

the publication of the paper as you think Elder Dodson would want it and as the Spirit directs you to do.

Again we renew our invitation to any and all Old Baptists who may be journeying through this part of the country to stop with us. We are seven hundred fifty miles from our home church in East Texas. So far as I know my wife and I are the only people out of a population of one hundred thirty thousand in this town, who are identified with the Primitive Baptists. You may know how lonesome we oft times become and how glad we are when we can meet and converse with others of our faith and belief.

You may use the remainder of my monetary enclosure in such manner as you see fit and in doing so be assured that we are made to feel thankful to the Blessed Giver of all good and profitable gifts, that we are privileged to do even this small bit.

Your Unworthy Brother,
HUBERT T. FAULK

* * *

Dutton, Ontario
January 4, 1951

DEAR SISTER EDWARDS,

It is a long time since we received your nice letter with snaps enclosed. That is a lovely group and I cherish it very much, although I am sorry I have been so tardy about telling you so. We have such a large correspondence, it seems difficult to keep up with it, especially as we are away from home so much. You did not enjoy being here anymore than we enjoyed having you and we hope you may be able to come again some time. We had a very pleasant Christmas, our eldest son, Frank and his wife and four children, and our second daughter, Ellen with her husband and three children were with us for a few days. The eldest child was eight years old and the youngest five months, seven of them, but they were all so good. We really enjoyed having them. We spent New Year with our son Frank in Hamilton and had a lovely time.

Our meetings are going on about as usual and the dear Lord sometimes gives us sweet tastes of His love in our quiet times at home. I am sometimes glad there is a Christmas time although it probably is not the exact anniversary of our Savior's birth, for it brings to mind what we might otherwise not dwell upon. I had a sweet time alone here in this home which some might think would be lonely. It seemed as though it must have been the dear Lord who gave me the happy thoughts, and the comfort has stayed with me; so I feel like passing them along hoping that others might share the goodness of the Lord to me.

The Wise men. Who had given them wisdom made them wise unto salvation, taught them to seek the young child, Jesus the Savior of us sinners? Was it not the Lord God of Hosts? They came from the East, the place of the rising sun, and I thought of the dear Son of Righteousness, who rises with healing in His wings, who is the One who fills us with desires after Him, and shows us the star of Bethlehem, and gives us wisdom and strength to seek Him where He is lowly laid in a manger.

"Not the fair palaces to which the great resort
Are once to be compared with those
Where Jesus holds his court."

The next thought was that they brought gifts, gold, and frankincense and myrh, and there I seemed to have to call a halt, for I felt I had nothing I could *give* Him, and then Scriptures came like a stream of life giving water to me, and I saw how we are taught by the Lord to *give* Him what He has wrought in our hearts.

"My son, *give* me thine heart." Proverbs 23:26

"*Give* thanks unto the Lord—*Give* unto the Lord, glory and strength—

'*Give* unto the Lord the glory due unto his name.' " I Chronicles 16, verses 8, 28, and 29.

"Freely ye have received, freely *give*" Matthew 10:8

I wonder if that means that when the Lord freely gives us a blessing we should tell of His goodness to others, that they may share it with us? I think there is a natural meaning, that wherever possible we should help others in material things when we see them in need. There are many other passages showing what we can *give* when taught to do so by God's grace. I find a concordance a great help in finding allusions to certain subjects.

I suppose you are still at your orphanage, loving and helping your children. I like to think I do not actually have to own children and things for them to be mine. Perhaps its just a whimsy of mine, but when I enjoy children, trees, flowers, music, etc., I feel they are mine in so far as I get pleasure out of them, and I do not want to take them from their rightful owners, but enjoy what contact I may have with them. I know you feel that way about your children as you talked of them I could see the love and interest you had for them, and I was very interested to listen to you tell of your life with them. Mildred once said to me how thankful she was we could enjoy things in retrospect, and I certainly am too, and you evidently could look back and enjoy over again your trip to Canada. She and her husband were here in October to our Quarterly meeting in Duart. We always enjoy them so much.

With best wishes for the New Year.

Yours in sweet fellowship

GEORGE and ESTHER RUSTON

DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE: I will try to write you a few lines to let you hear from me. I am not feeling as well as I was when you were here. I hope that you are as well as usual. You don't know how much good it did me when I heard your sweet prayer. I have been wanting to tell you for some time what I hope has been the dealings of the Lord with me.

Back in my younger days when a girl about 18 or 19 years old, I was at a meeting in Virginia when old Elder Corn was preaching. He told me the difference between morality and Christianity, and it appeared to me that he was preaching to me, and that was when I was made to feel that I was a sinner in the sight of the Lord. It came to me later, that we know we have to pass from death unto life because we love the brethren.

I will have to leave off some for I cannot tell it like I would like.

About 47 or 48 years ago I had a dream. I thought that I came to some clear water and I walked across to the other side on top of the water, and when I got to the other side, there stood a ladder on the water. I thought that I went up the ladder with Sister Jenny Loftis in front and Dory behind me, and when I got to the top, I thought the ladder was hanging on my arm with all of us on it, and I did not feel the weight of it. Then I laid my head over on the ground and was dying and all my fears were gone I knew that I was going to Heaven. Then I went on through a field and came to a place where there was a gathering of people, and I thought they were the happiest people I had ever met. I have only told a little here and there, but I hope that you will understand.

I wanted to join the Church but I stayed away until 1902. I was made willing in Aug. or Sept. 1902.

I would like to see this in print for the children to see.

I will close for now. You and sister Bessie write and come to see us when you can. A sister in hope.

(Mrs.) D. O. SLOAN
Route 3, Hurricane, W. Va.

DEAR BROTHER SPANGLER,

I want to congratulate you as the person selected by the Brethren to be Editor of our old and very reliable and esteemed paper, the SIGNS of the TIMES. It most certainly denoted the regard you are blest to enjoy among the Brethren with whom you have lived.

I hope the Lord will continue to bless the paper, and its writers and contributers, to the glory of His precious and Holy Name, as well as the comfort and consolation of His poor and afflicted people. I have been reading and subscribing to the SIGNS of the TIMES nearly forty years. Although I know that it is not and will not be perfect, but I believe it has and I trust will still have a very useful place among our people, as one of the best religious periodicals, of its time.

I truly hope the Lord will bless you as our new Editor, with the wisdom, the light of His blessed Spirit and the heart warming love of our Lord and Savior; that you may be able to fill your very important place in selecting material for our paper.

I do not know whether you would remember me or not but I have met you several times in the past twenty years and I believe I had the pleasure of meeting your father once.

Your very unworthy Brother
R. W. RHODES

Houston 9, Texas
August 7, 1951

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:

I am enclosing three dollars to extend my subscription to the SIGNS, which expires June 1, 1951. I have passed my 86 year and I have been reading the SIGNS for 66 years. I desire to continue as long as I live. I am still active in the ministry, though my strength is not much.

May the Lord bless you to earnestly contend for the grand old doctrine of unconditional election, salvation by Grace, in the future as you have in the past.

Yours in hope,
Elder W. O. BEENE

July 21, 1951

DEAR EDITORS OF SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

I am sending a one year renewal for the SIGNS of the TIMES. I do and have always enjoyed nearly all that was printed in it since I have been reading it which has been for about ten years. No one is infallible except our Heavenly Father and if some thoughts occasionally that I read in our papers are not according to my own, I do not wish to find fault with anyone for no one can have spiritual wisdom except it comes from above. I often feel to have very little but that little is precious beyond description, way above anything this life has to offer.

I have prayed that the new Editor may be given grace and strength to go ahead and continue to give us a good paper.

At this time I am physically unable to write more.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
EFFIE PARKE

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

Renew my subscription for another year. I am sorry that it was late.

My heart goes out with sadness to

all of the readers of the SIGNS to hear of the passing of Dear Elder Dodson. We have lost but he has gained. His battle was finished on this earth. Oh how we miss his good, good words of God.

I have been a reader of the SIGNS since Gilbert Beebe was editor of the SIGNS. I still love the precious words of all those good letters that are in the SIGNS. I am sorry to say that there are not any Old School Baptist near me. My father and mother were strong in their belief.

Please excuse this, I am so shaky to write as I am now past 86 years and can't see very good any more.

Yours in christian love,

ARTIE M. MILLER

Southampton, Pa., Feb. 15, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Your very good letter was received a few days ago, and read with much interest. I am very glad you were in New York when I was there, and I would be glad to have a longer time to get more fully acquainted with you. Your mind seems to be much upon the things of the Spirit, and you are evidently growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. That kind of growth might seem to any worldly mind an easy thing to do. But when one is experiencing that growth he will find it one of the hardest and most painful things to be experienced. The Lord says "And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It *is* my people: and they shall say, The Lord *is* my God." Zech. 13:9. That trial of the faith as gold is tried causes everything to be burned up that fire can burn. It is a hard way to learn what faith is in the experience of it. I see by your letter that you know something about it. I find myself questioning from time to time whether I have known that true faith; and sometimes I am questioning whether I have truly known the dear Saviour as my Saviour. I often think of the verse:

"Tis a point I long to know;
Oft it causes anxious thought;
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his or am I not?"

Sometimes, it seems that I cannot be mistaken in the thought that I have known that "love of God which passeth knowledge." I am thankful to read of your assurance at times that you do feel the love of God breaking in upon your soul.

You refer to the "Beatitudes" very sweetly. I had comfort many years ago in contemplating those few verses in Matthew 5 and wrote some articles on them, which are in my book called "Meditations upon portions of the Word." The following words were given me about 47 years ago, causing me to feel the first hope I ever had that Jesus died for me: "Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." It was a Monday morning in March, I think in 1864. At that time I had been exercised on that subject 20 years, but had never been able to say, "Perhaps I am one for whom Jesus died," until then. I never knew until then what real gladness was.

But I will not at this time go farther in speaking of my experience. You speak of my article on "The Virtuous Woman." That occupied several numbers of the *Signs*. It is a subject that was a real comfort to me.

There are a number of things in your letter to which I would like to refer but cannot now.

Your brother in Christian Love,

(Elder) SILAS H. DURAND

EDITORIALS

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THE FLOCK OF GOD

He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm; and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. Isa. 40:11

Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Luke 12:32

The use of natural facts and figures in the illustrations pertaining to God's people are noteworthy. These apt illustrations never mislead. They are used to set forth the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. In our earthly realm of existence we have shepherds to care for the flock. If it was not for the lack of wisdom and power in the flocks we certainly would not need shepherds. Any ranchman that turns his flock loose to take care of themselves will soon be in trouble. It is to be noted that Adam was given jurisdiction over the things that were made (Gen. I:26). Men have been tending flocks ever since the morning of time. Our subject deserves delicate treatment and, unless I am blessed with diversity in writing, I will be tedious. The flock does not point out the better places; it does not fend off the enemies; it does not advise the shepherd; it does not look up and occupy the green pastures besides the still waters. Until this is true in earthly matters it will never be true in heavenly.

The flock belongs to God. I do not have any desire to divide the Godhead and say that the flock belongs to Jesus Christ but not to the Father. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be on his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. As far as the life of the flock is concerned it has always been with God. God is eternal and his purposes are as old as he himself. God is a God of purpose. He did not purpose and fail to bring to fruition. The choice of God was made before there was anything created. God has done all that has been done for his flock according to his purpose. The flock of God does not have an owner that thinks too late. Every purpose of our God is established by counsel (Prov. 20:18), and he works all things after the counsel of his own will (Eph. 1:11). To show the immutability of his counsel he swore to it (Heb. 6:17).

If the puropse of God is thwarted in any instance in his dealing with his flock it becomes null and void all the way. If our Shepherd has ever been a secondary herdsman he certainly is not the same yesterday, today, and forever. If our God lost anything in the garden of Eden evidence tends to show that the Shepherd did not deal truthfully with Peter about the gates of hell prevailing against the church. If he who

is most precious to the believer has not kept his covenant all the way and always, he may not at some future time be able to keep it. That we poor frail creatures are faithless and fruitless in ourselves we know; that we are restless and changeable and unstable is plainly discernable; that we have not, nor will not, nor cannot, keep our vineyard we feel to acknowledge. But Almighty Redeemer, we feel to beg thy mercy and deliverance from ourselves.

There is not any other God. He has not divided his flock. In all the creation there is not a name nor a power that has any lien on this flock. There is not a spot of uncleanness on this flock; there is not a sin (for time and eternity) that has not been atoned for; there is not a farthing of indebtedness against this flock. Whatsoever his soul desires concerning his flock it is his pleasure to do. God the owner, has created all things for his pleasure. Of all these created things none of them are able to successfully call in question the dealings of the Shepherd with the flock. It is lawful for the Shepherd to do what he wills with his own flock.

This flock is called. Is there a difference in the sanctification by God, the preservation, and the calling? The sanctification or setting apart by reason of choice we allude to as being perfect. The preservation in Christ every Old Baptist association in America has prominently displayed in their minutes. To me, the santification before time is not any surer nor stronger than the calling in time. How precious is that doctrine of God's electing love. What a manner of love it was that God elected us to in eternity, and bestowed on us in time, that we should be called the sons of God. That election in eternity was in Christ. It undoubtedly was sure and steadfast, being ordered in all things. The preservation in Christ has got to be commensurate with the sanctification by God the Father. The poor, the halt, the maimed, the blind, all must be brought to see this election in Christ. What soul cheering promises are given them that there is not any spot found in them and that they are all fair in him. But how downcast it brings them to think that they are perpetuated by their own works. Ah, never, no, no, not that. But how glorious the new and abiding covenant becomes when it is all brought into view. Their preservation is in Christ the head, the corner, the foundation, the topmost stone. Wars may come, and when they come, they are of times as tired and weary of them as anyone that has not been shown the covenant (Ps. 25:14); winds and waves and fires may all come in like a flood of destruction, and the sheep will succumb to doubts and fears and tossings to and fro, but when the trial of their faith is complete there will be a calmness, a resting, a quietness, that will soothe and console them into a blissful attitude of peace.

But this flock is called. It is trite to tell again and again that they are not called *at*, but if there was not somebody constantly preaching false doctrine there would not be any need for a continual fight of faith. In this flock there is not one volunteer. In the organic body there will be volunteers, some to serve for loaves and fishes, some to spy out our liberty, some to carry the bag, but in the triumphant flock of God, they are all called with a holy calling. If good language means anything (and it does) the saving and calling cannot be separated. One of them is as holy as the other. They are both according to his own purpose and grace that was given them in Christ before the world began. The saving and calling are coextensive with each other.

This little flock does not have any-

thing to minister to the Shepherd. This is all according to God's eternal purpose. The Shepherd does not need anything that the flock might *think* to do for him. He did not come to be ministered unto. Since there is not any change in the Man Christ Jesus, the shepherd of the sheep, he is not now in need. And since we the flock (I hope that I am one) are the same poor needy ones that we have ever been, we do not have now something to minister to him. It is the prerogative of the owner of the sheep to do with them as he sees fit (Mat. 20:15). He has not seen fit to send subordinate, secondary, or inferior shepherds. But he is the owner of the flock and he tends the flock. When one of them strays he does not send somebody to get it. And they do not stray because he is lacking in power and knowledge. There is not a slipping away while He is not watching. No, no, not such earthly trifling with this heavenly flock by this given Shepherd. But "with supplications must they all come" and how dreadful to venture on our own. But the members of this flock do not rove beyond the limits of his eternal love. At the "set time to visit Zion" he leaves the ninety and nine and goes to the stray. It is brought back without loss to the assembly of the sheep.

W. D. G.

TO THE BRETHREN AND SISTERS COMPRISING THE CHURCHES OF THE LOWER COUNTRY LINE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, AND TO ALL WHO MAY READ THIS

Stem, N. C.
July 22, 1931

In August, 1906, you saw fit to choose me as your clerk. During this quarter of a century you have re-elected me without a dissenting voice. I feel that I have done my best to fill this position without fear or favor. I have served with four Moderators, three of them having passed away during their term of office; all of them being unanimously elected each year without any opposition.

I further wish to state during all this time there has never been, (as I can recall), a dissenting voice raised against a single motion or resolution made by any of our members. Therefore we are a united body, and I trust that we may ever remain so. As there are divisions and discord coming in other Associations, I hope you will not think it unbecoming in me to ask that all of us ever strive to remain in peace and union.

Just at this time there seems to be in some sections, a division or contention over predestination; I am glad that we have never let such mar our fellowship and trust we never will. Some of our brethren have been led much deeper in it than others, but all of us unanimously agree that God is not the author of sin, therefore there is but little difference in us on that point; the seeming difference is in the manner of expressing ourselves.

I am, as you know, a predestinarian, and know not where to draw the line. To say that only good things work together for good, and not all things as declared by the Apostle Paul in Rom. 8:28, is more than I care to say; to say that God did not have a purpose in the selling of Joseph to the Midianites is more than Joseph himself said, for he told his brethren that they meant it for evil but God meant it for good. When Ahasuerus put away his wife, Vashti the queen, at the suggestion of his wise men, when his heart was merry with wine, (though wickedness on their part) and Esther became

queen, was it not according to God's purpose and plan? Or was it by mere chance? Will the reader read the whole book of Esther? I know that finite men cannot comprehend God's work. The poet has said: "Blind unbelief is sure to err, And scan God's work in vain." May the seeming difference with us not mar our fellowship, and may each of us present our views in love and not cause confusion. The Master has commanded us when speaking the truth, to speak it in LOVE. I know of lovely brethren who do not see predestination as I do, but I can truthfully say that I love them none the less, when their lives are in accordance with their profession. Just here I will state that while I am an unlimited predestinarian (if I am allowed to use the word unlimited), one of my favorite preachers is classed as a limited predestinarian, but I love him none the less and have requested that if he be living, that he attend my funeral, when I leave this world, which I feel, at times, will not be long.

For either the limited or unlimited predestinarians to put up resolutions barring good brethren from their Churches, in my opinion is of the flesh. Our Association has never passed such resolutions and I trust never will.

I believe that I would voice the sentiment of our Association, should I say to these extremists, on either side, when coming among us, if you can't express your views (when necessary), without wounding the feelings of good brethren, we would prefer that you stay away. To make a hobby of any special thing will starve the children of God. Our old brethren whose dust I love, did not declare non-fellowship on such, but remained in unity. Well do I remember my first visit to the Black Creek Association at Healthy Plains, in 1900, thirty-one years ago. Elder J. C. Hall, of Virginia, a strong predestinarian, was there at the special invitation of Elder P. D. Gold, the Moderator, and preached with much ability twice at the Association, and once at the home where he was stopping, and not a voice was raised against his preaching that I heard of.

Often have I heard Elder Gold refer to Elder Hall's preaching at that time, who said that he looked at the face of his wife while listening at the preaching and it shone like that of an angel. There are many now living who well remember Elder Hall's preaching at that place.

It was my pleasure and privilege to attend the same Association last Fall, thirty years later, but Elder Hall was not there, neither was Elder Gold, the former Moderator.

The above is written without the knowledge of our Association, and I alone am responsible.

Brethren, live in peace and union, as did our old brethren, who never thought of a division over such matters.

Submitted in love I trust
Yours in Hope,
J. H. GOOCH

* * *

The foregoing article was sent us by Deacon J. J. Whitley, clerk of the Lower Country Line Assocaition in N. C. He made the request that it be published, and we are glad to comply with the request.

The article written by Deacon J. H. Gooch appeared in the minutes of the Lower Country Line Association in the year 1931. Brother Gooch at that time was clerk of the association. After his departure in 1935 Deacon Whitley was elected clerk, and is the present clerk.

It has been my privilege to serve as pastor of Gooch Memorial Church, since 1934. He passed away in March 1935. While reading the article I thought of him, and his humble, yet

steadfast adherence to the things of the Lord. Tears flowed freely as fresh memories came with the reading of the article again.

The sentiment expressed in the article is what this paper stands for, and by the grace of God will continue to contend for. To make a hobby of the doctrine of predestination, and present it in a fighting and unbrotherly way will only lead to trouble and confusion. How good it would be if we all could be blessed to have a thus sayeth the Lord for all we present about it. How important it is we heed the admonition of Paul "Hold fast the form of sound words." II Tim. 1-13. To many including the writer the doctrine of predestination is as much a part of the doctrine of grace as the doctrine of Election, yet we desire to present it in such a way that we will present man as an accountable creature, acting voluntary in sin. That God is not the author of sin, and cannot be. I think all can witness with the apostle James. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man."

It has been my privilege to be associated with ministers who did not see predestination to the extent that others did. These ministers, if I should judge, were sound ministers of the Gospel. They did not fight the doctrine of predestination of all things, and abuse those who preached it, and all lived together in peace and love.

There have been those in years past who were so bitter against the doctrine, and the ones who preached it, that there was no peace where they met together. These have usually went to the camps of those who preach conditionalism in times past, and will no doubt continue to do so in the future.

The doctrine as set forth, and believed by brother Gooch is the same that has been held by this paper for one hundred and nineteen years, or from the beginning of its publication. It is now held by the writer, and I believe is held by his associates in the publication of the paper.

We are commanded to Preach Jesus as the Word; to study to show ourselves approved unto God as workman who needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth. Not to strive over words of no profit; to shun profane and vain jangling. May it be the will of God to bless us all to do that is the humble desire of the writer.

—Editor

RESOLUTIONS

Because of the deep love and respect which we have for our dear sister, Fannie Saunders, and in memory of and the esteem which we have for her recently deceased husband, Cleve C. Saunders, we, the Saints Rest Church of Dallas, Texas, submit the following:

We highly esteemed Mr. Saunders because of his orderly walk here in this life. He was an inspiration to all who knew him, doing deeds of kindness, ever ready to do service when needed, and always faithful to his loved ones; thus, showing faith by his works. So unto you, Sister Fannie and son Melvin, we would say, "Sorrow not as others who have no hope, for we believe that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall this dear one also appear with Him in glory."

Therefore be it resolved: That we bow in humble submission to the will of our all-wise God who doeth all things well, who is the giver of grace to sustain us in all trials and of courage to press onward.

Also resolved: That we record this memorial in our church record, send a copy of same to Sister Saunders and

son, also a copy be sent to "The Signs of The Times" for publication.

Written by order of the Church in March, 1951.

PEARL LEE

* * *

MEMORIAL

We, the Olive and Hurley Church, Shokan, N. Y., desire to place on record a memorial and tribute to our dearly beloved Brother and Deacon, ORVILLE WINCHELL, who served the church faithfully and tenderly for many years, always standing firm in the doctrine of salvation by grace. We are persuaded that he has gone to be with and praise his Lord whom he loved and served so faithfully while here on earth. May we bow in humble submission to the will of our dear heavenly Father, feeling that our loss is his eternal gain. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family, and be it

RESOLVED, that a copy of this memorial be sent to the Signs of the Times and Old Faith Contender for publication, also a copy be sent to the bereaved family. Written by Deacon E. K. Adsit.

(Elder) A. J. SLAUSON,
Moderator

* * *

WHEREAS, since the last session of the Pigg River Association it has been the will of our heavenly Father to remove from our midst and the scenes of his labors, our beloved brother, ELDER JAMES F. STEGALL, and

WHEREAS, Elder Stegall served as pastor several churches of this association together with the Roanoke church which he served as a faithful pastor for nineteen years, and

WHEREAS, his passing is keenly felt not only by the churches he served but by all of us in the Pigg River Association, therefore, be it

RESOLVED that we add our tribute of respect to his memory and testify of his faithfulness in his ministry amongst us. He had a wonderful gift in preaching and expounding the scriptures always contending for the doctrine of salvation by grace, and never slack in his efforts to minister to the churches which he served, therefore, be it further

RESOLVED that we hereby extend our heartfelt sympathy to our sister churches who are bereft of his ministry, and to his beloved companion and their children, and pray that the consoling grace of God be theirs and our portion. It is further

RESOLVED that this memorial be spread upon our minutes and a copy be sent to Mrs. Stegall, and copies to the "SIGNS" and "OLD FAITH CONTENDER."

Done by the unanimous voice of the PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION, Aug. 4, 1951.

Elder RANDOLPH PERDUE,
Moderator.

Elder JOHN D. WOOD, Clerk.

INDIGENTS

Robert McGough, Ala, $3.00; Friend, Maine, $5.00; Mrs. Sally Stallings, Tenn., $2.00; John F. Lax, Ill., $5.00; Elder Biggs, Tenn., $2.00; Mrs. H. D. Nelson, Texas, $2.00; Mrs. Della Johnson, Ala., $1.00; Mrs. J. B. Hill, N. J., $1.00; Homer Bailey, $3.00; Mrs. Daniel Holloway, $5.00; Elder S. T. Curlee, N. C., $3.00; Elder L. D. Rose, Texas, $2.00; Hubert Faulk, Tex., $2.00; Mrs. James Young, Tenn., $1.00; Mrs. James Reid, Ind., $1.00; Joe MacKenzie, Canada, $15.00; E. T. Bellamy, S. C., $2.00; J. A. Owen, Ala., $2.00; Martha Addis, Penn., $5.00; Gertrude Secor, N. Y., $3.00.

OBITUARIES

God saw fit to remove from this life, Dec. 24, 1950, SISTER EVALINE BOGART WINCHELL, beloved wife of Deacon Orville Winchell, 59 South Manor Ave., Kingston,

N. Y. This dear sister in Christ and mother in Israel was taken with a stroke while caring for Brother Winchell, who was not feeling well, and only lived a few minutes. She was born Feb. 13, 1868, making her stay on earth nearly 83 years. She was united in marriage Feb. 13, 1888 to Orville Winchell, making their married life just a little less than 63 years.

She united with the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church at Shokan, N. Y. June 18, 1916, and was baptized by Elder George Ruston. Sister Winchell was a devoted companion, a loving mother, and a meek and humble sister in Christ. Her heart and soul was full of love for the brethren of the church and the cause of Christ. She was always at the feet of her brethren, manifesting much fruit of the Spirit which a branch will when it is of Christ, the true vine. Besides children, which are mentioned later, she left to mourn, her husband, Deacon Orville; one sister, Irene Stevens, who made her home with them; three brothers, Jacob, Joseph and Virgil W. Bogart; the church brethren who all loved her, and a host of friends. The funeral was held at the Winchell home conducted by Elder A. H. Bellows and the writer.

also

Again our hearts were saddened as DEACON ORVILLE WINCHELL, her husband, only lived a few weeks after Sister Winchell's death as God called him from the shores of time March 18, 1951. He was born April 19, 1869, making his stay on earth a little less than 82 years. He was married Feb. 13, 1888 to Evaline Bogart. He was the son of Isaac and Emily Winchell. Nine children were born to this union, five preceding them in death. Those living are: Elnora Sickler, Prattsville, N. Y., Verna Ellis and Harry Stanley Winchell, Kingston, N. Y., and Lelah Rose Benda of California.

Deacon Winchell united with the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, Shokan, N. Y., Nov. 17, 1912, and was baptized by Elder John B. Slauson. He was a very active deacon, it being his delight to do all in his power for the welfare of the church. Gospel preaching was his great joy. To hear Jesus preached was his meat and drink. At the last meeting he attended he said at one time he was afraid to die but not any more.

He was sick nearly all of the time since Sister Winchell's passing, most of the time in the hospital or a nursing home, and because of his serious condition the last resort was an operation from which he only lived from Friday until Sunday when he passed peacefully away. Some of the last words he said to the writer were that he might be able to attend our meeting in April.

This dear father and mother in Israel will be greatly missed for in the church circles they were widely known and loved by their many brethren and friends in the several Associations which they had attended in years past. Though we feel our loss is very heavy we do not mourn as those that have no hope. The evidence they gave of the love of God in their hearts enables us to feel that our loss is their eternal gain, and for them to depart and be with Christ whom they loved is far better. We feel to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." His funeral was held at Lasher's Funeral Parlors, Woodstock, N. Y., conducted by Elder John D. Wood, Baltimore, Md., and assisted by the writer. The bodies of Brother and Sister Winchell were placed in the vault at Woodstock, N. Y., both to be buried in one grave in the Winchell Cemetery at Shokan, N. Y., at a later date.

(Elder) AMASA J. SLAUSON

Brother Harry Gilbert Price was born Nov. 21, 1881, in Campbell County near Gladys, Va., the son of Sidney M. and Ventia Price, and departed this life April 11, 1951. He was married to Miss Edna McDaniel in 1904 who survives him, also one daughter, two grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Three sisters—Mrs. Rosa Brown, Ida Moorman and Mrs. J. F. Gibson also survive.

Mrs. Price, the daughter and in-laws were so faithful in the care of Brother Price. All was done that kind hands and doctors could do for his comfort.

Brother Price joined the church at Oak Grove in Campbell Co., Va., over thirty years ago and remained a faithful member until death. He was baptized by his pastor the late Elder C. T. Evans.

The funeral was conducted at the home by Elder Raymond Payne and the writer, amidst a host of friends and neighbors which showed the high esteem in which he was held. On Jan. 1, 1950, when visiting him with Brother Raymond Dalton, Brother Price requested that we two have part in his services. He also requested that the following act as pallbearers at his funeral; Brethren Raymond Dalton, Morman Pickeral, Eddie Butcher, Posie Holley, Wyatt Oakes and Charlie Lewis.

"Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. Psalms 103-I." I feel that Brother Price and I were blessed to walk together in fellowship of the

things most pleasant to the church of God. He loved the company of the brethren and loved to have them visit in his home. It has been my happy lot to meet in his home many times and read the scriptures and talk of them and how pleasant it was that we were agreed on them. Brother Price loved the church and attended meetings and associations as long as his health permitted. For many years the brethren had favored his request to meet at his home on the Fourth of July and have all day meeting with him and family which were always good.

Brother Price was a great sufferer for a long time but bore it with much patience believing that the Lord would take him out of all suffering and sorrow at His own time. He had the dreaded disease Lukemia. For many months he had to go to the hospital and take blood transfusions, finally having to remain not to return until all was over with him in this world.

We feel the church has lost a faithful member, the community a good neighbor and the family a good father who provided well for his household, but feel to be reconciled to One who doeth all things well. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh, blessed be His name.

Written by one who loved him for Christ's sake.

W. R. DODD

On May 10, 1951, our all wise heavenly Father saw fit to remove by death Mrs. Naomi Spangler Ray. Her death occurred at the Walter Long Hospital, Greensboro, North Carolina, after a serious illness of about two weeks.

She was born December 29, 1883, and at the time of her departure was sixty-eight years old. Naomi was the oldest of eight children born to Elder and Mrs. J. F. Spangler. Her father preceded her in death by about twelve years. Her mother is yet living.

Many years ago she received a good hope in the Lord Jesus Christ and for many years manifested a love for the truth as it is in Jesus. Because of a feeling of unworthiness she remained out of the visible church, yet she often went home with a heavy heart because she had not offered herself to the church. Several years ago while seriously ill she promised the Lord if she was made well again she would go before the church for membership. On the fourth Sunday in August, 1950, her youngest son went before the church and was received for baptism. The writer thought surely she would also come, and be baptized with him, but she still lingered. On the fourth Sunday in September she was united with the church, and baptized the next meeting day by the writer.

Though it was for a short duration, her home in the church was a great comfort to her. Surely she has gone to be with Him whom she loved so well, and as she testified, had done so much for her. We cannot grieve as for one without hope.

Surviving are the following relatives: her husband, W. L. Ray; sons, Clarence E. Ray, Julian L. Ray, Ivan W. Ray, Samuel W. Ray, Jessie W. Ray, William L. Ray, Richard Herman Ray, and also, Mrs. Lillian Nelson, Mrs. Pauline Everheart, and Mrs. Helen Shane; her mother, Mrs. J. F. Spangler; four brothers, Arch Spangler, Noah Spangler, Isaac H. Spangler, D. V. Spangler, and two sisters, Mrs. W. H. Cannaday, Mrs. J. T. Phillips; and twenty-five grandchildren.

Funeral services was held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, of which she was a member, May 12, 1951. It was conducted by Elders W. C. King, and G. W. Hill. Interment was in the church cemetery.

Written by her brother,

D. V. SPANGLER

The passing of Sister Laura Greenland of Huntingdon, Pennsylvania at her home there on Tuesday morning, April 10, 1951 caused deep sorrow in many a home among her brethren and friends in the different states where she was so widely known and loved so well. She was suddenly stricken with a heart attack and was found dead in her bed. The funeral services were conducted the following Friday afternoon at the Trough Creek Valley Church of which she had been a member almost sixty-nine years, the writer endeavoring to speak words of comfort to the mourning friends and brethren. The interment was in the adjoining cemetery. She was past eighty-eight years of age.

Sister Laura Greenland was born November 7, 1862 in Trough Creek valley, the daughter of Burton and Susan (Baird) Greenland. For twenty-five years she served as postmaster at Colfax, and her spotless integrity, business ability, and accommodating ways appealed to all with whom she came in contact and won for her an ever growing circle of friends. She was active to the last and interested in the promotion of every worthy community enterprise. She was the last immediate surviving member of her family, and among the survivors are a number of nieces and nephews. She was a firm believer in the tenets of the Old School Baptist faith and early in life she

united with the Trough Creek Valley church and was baptized into its fellowship by the late Elder Joseph Correll, May 28, 1882. During the nearly sixty-nine years of her membership she was constantly faithful in her attendance at the meetings and ministered with unfaltering faithfulness to the temporal needs of the church of her membership. By precept and example she exemplified the virtues of the Christian and she will retain an abiding place in the hearts of her brethren and friends.

ARNOLD ST. BELLOWS

Sanford J. Morse of Halcottsville, N. Y., was born May 15, 1870 to Jason and Electa Sanford Morse, and he died April 4, 1951. His first wife, Hattie E. Hall preceded him in death in 1926. Later he married Sister Celestia Morse, a member of Clovesville Church, Clovesville, N. Y., who is still living. He also leaves to mourn his passing: one sister, Mrs. Leslie Sanford, East Meredith, N. Y., one brother, Albert Morse, Margaretville, N. Y., and one niece, Mrs. Clifford Sargeant, East Meredith, N. Y.

He was near to many of us because of that love that God places in the hearts of those who love his gospel. We have much reason to believe that he loved the gospel of Jesus Christ; and that it was meat and drink to his soul. He had been very faithful in attending the Old School Baptist meetings, and there were many times when he would drive many miles to hear the gospel preached. He manifested a meek and humble spirit. The Baptist Meeting House in the village of Halcottsville never lacked for care, or fires to warm the house when he lived.

He was a devoted husband, full of kindness and honesty; with a personality of one made such by the Grace of God, one that feared God, loved his kingdom, and desired to live Godly.

I tried to comfort the friends from the words, "Blessed are the poor in Spirit for theirs is the kingdom of God."

May God give us that meek and humble spirit and watch over Sister Morse.

ELDER AMASA SLAUSON

Brother Arnold Redmond, of Arkville, N. Y., departed April 19, 1951. He was the son of Tracy and Edna Redmond of Arkville, N. Y. He was born November 30, 1911 which made his stay here on earth a little over thirty-nine years.

He united with the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church at Shokan, N. Y., the third Sunday in June, 1942. He was baptized by Elder Arnold Bellows. He was a very meek and humble brother. For the last number of years he was in poor health and not able to work but his prayer and faith was to the God of Heaven much of the time. When no earthly hand could help he would call upon his God for help; so we feel that he died in that faith, which is God given, and when one dies in that faith it is better to depart to be with Christ.

His pastor, Elder Bellows was away from home at the time of his passing and I conducted his funeral. I used "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness."

AMASA J. SLAUSON

Mrs. Ella Magnolia Owens Teague was born in Jackson County, Ala., January 28, 1873, and passed from the walk of life, April 17, 1950. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Owens, coming with her mother and only brother to Texas during the year 1888. She settled near Rising Star where they resided several years. She married C. B. Teague 1894 and to this union were born four daughters.

Left to mourn the passing are: the daughters, Mrs. Pearl Lee, Mrs. Boyd, and Mrs. Pruda Rhodes, (Mrs. Ruby Lee preceded her mother in death) and her husband, Elder C. B. Teague. For more than five years following a stroke of paralysis she lay almost helpless. She endured this with much fortitude and patience, yet apparently looking to yonder hill from hence her strength came.

Sister Teague first joined the Missionary Church. When at the age of seventeen after her marriage to Elder Teague she was led to follow with him in faith and belief. She joined the church at Rising Star and was baptized by her husband in 1922. At the time of her death their membership was with Saints Rest Church.

I was called to conduct her funeral but was ill and unable to attend, and Elder W. W. Fowler of Dallas was called. He spoke very comfortingly to the family and friends. Her remains were laid to rest in Laurel Land Cemetery in Dallas.

To Elder Teague, would we say weep not as those who have no hope, but that God has abundantly blessed you, in so directing your lives, binding you together, as well as these dear girls given you in this world; who have been so dear and precious in your trying hours, to share your labors, giving of their love and strength to soften your burden, to you and to them is left a glorious heritage.

L. D. ROSE

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 119 ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND, NOVEMBER, 1951 No. 11

BEAUTY BEYOND COMPARE

It is beautiful to watch the clouds,
The headers floating high,
To know that up far above
There's another watchful eye.

An eye that never fails to see,
The sparrow in his flight.
That never ceases in it's watch
Tho dark may be the night.

It is beautiful to take a ship
And safely sail away,
To meditate upon the things,
That never will decay.

It is beautiful to gather crumbs,
From Jesus' table spread
Where well we know His favorite few
Forever will He feed.

INA MAY PILCHARD
Stockton, Md.

* * *

EDITOR OF THE SIGNS: I have been a reader and subscriber of the *Signs of the Times* for three or four years. I have thought from time to time that I would write a letter to Brother Dodson, but now God has made that impossible. Physically, he has passed from among our midst, but his spirit, I believe, will live on.

I hope that I am a member of the Old School Baptists in all things pertaining to the church. They have been good enough to give me a home among them, and my name is inscribed in their church books to say the least, in spite of my unworthiness.

I have never been very good at expressing myself, either by the spoken or written word. I have always, and do now, prefer to take a back seat and listen to others who know how to express themselves. More especially do I prefer to sit back and feast on the crumbs, when the subject pertains to the Scriptures and the things of God. No one can appreciate my ignorance concerning such things like I can, and it would probably be best if I never even attempted to express myself concerning them.

If not deceived in myself, I believe that "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." I believe that this new-birth is brought about solely by the Spirit of God in the heart of man. It could never be brought about by any operations pertaining to the flesh because, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." John 3:6. If man could voluntarily of his own free will bring about his own new-birth, or that of another, he would have no use for God, Christ, or his Holy Spirit.

As for myself, I do not know whether I have experienced a new-birth. I do not know whether I am saved or not, and frankly, I doubt if I ever will know in this world. Some evidence of a small hope that I have, from time to time, is that, if not deceived, I love the brethren and I love the doctrine of an all powerful God, that does his will in Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

I know that the world claims that Adam was a free moral agent and that all of his posterity after him are free moral agents and that they can voluntarily of their own free will, accept or reject, eternal life. I do not believe

that Adam was a free moral agent any more than I believe that man now is a free moral agent to accept or reject things pertaining to God. God said "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: "He did not stop there but he went on and completed the sentence and said "for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen. 2:17. The last part of the above scripture is one indication to me that God knew that Adam and Eve would eat of the forbidden tree. Had God actually wanted and desired and intended that Adam not eat of the tree and he went on and ate of it contrary to and in spite of God's wishes, I would have to conclude that Adam was and is practically the equal of God, and, in that case, he could of his own free will and accord accept or reject the things pertaining to God. I could never in the world subscribe to that kind of doctrine.

When God made Adam and Eve, God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Gen. 1:28. He also gave them every herb bearing seed, fruit tree, beast of the earth, and fowl of the air, "Upon the face of all the earth" and he said, "To you it shall be for meat". God evidently must have known that Adam and Eve would eat of the forbidden tree and be driven out of the Garden of Eden, for he had already made preparations for them on the outside before he ever said, "thou shalt not eat of it."

Looking further at the record, we hear God say. "Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness." Evidently there was someone present with God even before man was created from the dust of the earth. We read in another place that, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:1 In still another place, we hear Jesus say." And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thou own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." John 17:5. I am forced to conclude, therefore, that Christ was with the Father before Adam was ever formed of the dust. I believe I will conclude also that Jesus Christ was just as much the Savior at that time as he was when he hung on Calvary's Cross.

Now, if Adam had not partaken of the forbidden fruit, he would have lived on forever in the Garden of Eden and all the herbs, fruit of the trees, beasts of the fields, fowls of the air, and fishes of the sea throughout the world that were made for Adam and his posterity would have been uselessly created. If Adam had not partaken of the forbidden fruit, God would have had a Savior on his hands with nothing for him to do.

In conclusion, let me say that I believe that Adam was merely a link in the chain of God's eternal purposes and that he fully and completely served his purpose in that chain. We, being descendants of the first Adam, are very small and almost insignificant links in that chain. We will also serve the purpose that God has for us although we do not know what that purpose is. We can only see it little by little as it pleases God to unfold it to us.

If these rambling thoughts are in harmony with God's Holy Word and seem worthy of any further consideration, you may use them in any way you see fit. On the other hand, which is more probable, if they have no merit, please do not bore the brethren with them.

Yours in the assurance that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

A. C. CARTER
Troy, Alabama
Rt. 4, Box 21

* * *

Elder D. V. Spangler and Associates:
DEAR BRETHREN,

If you can allow one so steeped in sin as I am to thus address you, although I love to associate with this people. It is the greatest happiness I have here in this life. I feel to say that I know I am not worthy of the fellowship extended me by them. Although when I am graced to meet with them in worship to God the Giver of every perfect gift, then I can rejoice in praises to the Savior and esteem my brethren better than I am. And I hope that I do at all times, although I am in the flesh and at times I feel to be the greatest arminian living. At times I try so hard to make things work out as I would have them, and have to be made willing to say, Thy will be done and not my will.

I appreciate very much your sending the May issue of the SIGNS, also the letter you published from my pen, for I would never have known the contents of that letter otherwise. Surely God was directing my pen for it is not in me to write such as I wrote there although I meant to pour out my heart to Brother Clark, for I love him as a man and also for the truths sake. He is far deeper in the sacred bonds of scriptural truths than I can ever hope to be. He is almost deaf, and had to give up his trade of watch maker because of his eyes failing, leaving him heavily handicapped. I learned just a few days before I received my first issue of the SIGNS that Elder Dodson had passed on to his reward. This was a shock to me for I had hoped to visit the Baptist in those parts this fall and had so much desired to meet him. I know I shall miss his writings which I enjoyed so much. May God reconcile his family, brethren and friends, for He is able and the only source from whence comfort can come.

Dear Brother, you are mistaken about me being an elder for I am not ordained. Although they mostly call me Elder except with the brethren of my home church, although I have been trying for four or five years to speak I have never been ordained and am not worthy of such trust.

Yours in sweet hope, is my trust
WADE Y. CHANDLER, L. P.

* * *

THE HIDDEN PATH

There is a big cross on the top of the ridges here. It is lighted at night and many have been up there to see it. I was near and started but it seems that was not the way up the mountains, the path I was on, gave out—so I did not go to it.

There were one or two vultures sitting on it, so I thought maybe there was no life there—that it was a path that the vultures eye had seen and I would seek "A path which no fowl knoweth and which the vultures eyes hath not seen. The lions' whelps have not trodden it nor the fierce lion passed by it."

This is in Job 28, and the whole chapter is full of beauty, wisdom, and yet I can not touch it; I cannot see a scripture to take hold of. Yet to one with wisdom from on high it would reveal the gems from the depths of the sea and the rubies from the center of the earth. Hidden so far from the sight of man, in the deep and dark and hidden places.

There is a path, yes, there surely is one. "The stones of it are the place of sapphires and it hath dust of gold." This path leadeth into the heart of His

holy mountain, which is so often mentioned, where no hurt or destruction shall be. Isa. 66-25, Isa. 11:9, Isa 2:2-3, Isa 25:6, and many other places in Isa. As a path leads into a rich mine.

It is strewn with precious stones and dust (lumps) of gold. These are the blessings by the way, which bring in the knowledge and wisdom. The subject of this chapter is "Whence then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding?" Oh, but it is hid from the wise and prudent—it is in the heart of His Holy mountain. There is a path that leadeth to it, a path the birds of prey have not seen or known or come upon; for indeed this path is not seen or found or discerned by the natural eye. Oh, the vulture is a bird which lives upon the dead and there is no death or even hurt or destruction in this path or in His Holy Mountain. Isa. 66:25

There is no feed here for the vulture nor for the lion who is the proud beast of flesh. There is no food here for the man who has not been made alive by the Holy Spirit, nor any for those who desire food for the flesh, praise of fellows to feed his ego, nor for any shall hear the voice of His servant, our Savior. Indeed, if he were not drawn by that voice, he would like the world, stumble over the path of jewels and never stop to see the riches he treads under foot. He that treads this path, the Lord says, "I will give thee the riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel." Isa. 45:31

The Holy Mountain of God, the word of God is as a vast deep mine, in which precious metals of various kinds are concealed and in which thousands of jewels of blessings and experiences are hidden in the deep and dark places. The surface of the mountain above the mine, every eye may see by natural light but the "treasures of darkness and the hidden riches of secret places, lie in that path that Job mentioned and are known to but few."

The learned professors (birds of prey) and the wise doctors (proud lions) study the surface of the mountain, they learn the letter of the scripture but remain ignorant of all the treasures of the jewel strewn path that leads to the mine in the heart of the holy Mountain. The city of Gold, the new Jerusalem, the dwelling place of God. There is a path, Oh, thank God there is one. There is a way. There is a door. There is a Life. There is a Redeemer and a Savior. There is a path strewn with jewels of wisdom and understanding.

And unto men, he said, "Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom and to depart from evil is understanding."

I just hit here and there on Scriptures. I cannot get into something that is so beautiful. But praise God, there is an entrance, a way that leads into His Holiness. There is a path and that He hath revealed that path to babes. I am not at all satisfied but what can "little me" do about it? It is so great, so wonderful, so infinite. As Paul to Romans 11:33 "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out."

Lately I have come across the expression, "My Holy Mountain" several times, though I have no light or lead of mind on it. It holds something, guess that is why I connected it with the path. No, there is no hurt or harm or strife there. It is there the proud lion becomes as an ox and the bear as a cow and the serpent himself plays with a suckling child, even a little child shall lead them everyone, for no harm shall

be in all my mountain. The old proud haughty nature becomes humble and poor and even pleading for mercy before it is shown this path, before it hears the voice of His servant. Oh how the world tramples the holy mountain under foot void of law, void of knowledge and wisdom, which is to know and fear God. How they see the surfaces and care not for the treasures of the deep and hidden places. How they can connect the word, take it in mouth, twist it to suit themselves, make historical and all natural connections and come forth, proudly telling others their knowledge, which is foolishness in His sight. They take light for darkness and darkness for light and it is because they are after the fashion of the world they judge by human reason. They see by the natural eye, judge by natural mind and they possess natural knowledge. All of which is contrary to the Spirit and enmity to God. O, Father, to think that thou hast revealed these things, this path of true knowledge and wisdom, even to babes.

In the Scriptures Job 28:7 the words "There Is" were added. Our subject is no more than a "path", a certain, specific, designated and one chosen path. Just as there is one chosen designated and specific way, Door, Entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Redeemer and Savior.

O, our God what preservation we beg at thy Hand. What must it bring? It is well we can not see for we would faint indeed. Give us this day, our daily bread, One day, one home, one moment at a time. O, to be enabled to "Be still and know that He is God." Besides Him there is none other.

* * *

MY SECOND VISIT WEST

MY DEARLY BELOVED:

I left home 22 of Nov. last year to go to Hot Springs, Ark., to take a course in bathing and return home. I left Hot Springs Dec. 19, the day Eld. Dodson died. Christmas found me with my children in Los Angeles. I journeyed on up to Chowchilla and we had meeting there Friday, Sat. and Sunday. The fifth Sunday in Dec. Sister Grace Jefferson wrote beautifully of the meeting. Elder and Mrs. Jefferson took me home with them. On 2nd Sunday in Jan. we had a sweet meeting in the home of Eld. Jefferson. On 11th of Jan. I packed my clothes to return to Hot Springs and on home. As I slipped into bed that night a voice told me not to turn back.

This voice did not give me any further orders. I studied till I decided I would go to Riffe Church the third Sunday in Jan., to Eld. Fisher's church near Chehalis 4th and return to Elder Jefferson's.

Eld. Goin was a Riffe. He handed me a letter from Eld. A. D. Hughet asking me to come to his home. Eld. Goin took me in his car to Eld. Hughet's. We had meeting at Touchre Church 4th Sunday in Jan. Eld. Hughet, Goin, and Wolfe were there. Eld. Wolfe, Bro. Lloyd Spikes and his mother Sister Spikes, came over from Elgin, Oregon and took me to Sister Spikes. We had meeting with the Elgin Church first Sunday in Feb. Eld. Wolfe, pastor. Eld. Hughet came over Friday following.

On Sat. we went of Weiser, Idaho. This is their regular meeting day. We began Sat. afternoon and all day Sunday. Eld. Wolfe is pastor at Weiser. A brother Hall took us to his house Sunday night. I believe he lives in Boise. On Monday Eld. Hughet took me to Bro. Fred Carson's at Twin Falls, Idaho. We reached there at noon and stayed over until Tues., and then on to Pocatello, Idaho. There we spent a week in the home of Bro. Bill Akers and

Sister Martha. I gave an account of this meeting in writing the obituary of Brother Frasure.

We returned to Elgin and had a meeting with Elgin Church again the 4th Sat. in Feb. Here Eld. Hughet and I separated. In route we spent another night in Twin Falls with Bro. Fred Carson. Also we spent a night with Sister Bond, the widow of the late Eld. C. W. Bond. We visited a Sister Lassiter, who is very old and feeble. I left Elgin Sat. night, reached Portland for breakfast in the home of Brother and Sister Cummins. They took me to Eld. Fisher's church 4th Sunday in Feb. A Mr. Estes said his mother would not live much longer and had Eld. Fisher arrange a meeting the first Sunday in March. Snowbound, I could not get there. Elder Fisher, Cameron and Goin spoke. Sister Estes asked for me. In a few days her spirit slipped away in the sweet beyond.

May I mention Eld. Cameron again. Readers remember in the writing of my first visit, I mentioned Eld. and Sister Cameron, about two months ago, Elder Cameron slipped away into the cool shade. Readers recall mention of his singing, a dear sister in a letter said, "We have lost our sweet singer in Israel." His mellow, sweet baritone voice has rung in my ears and blossomed in my bosom since I first met him in August last year. In my other writing in naming the Elders I met I unintentionally omitted his name and regret this.

After visiting in Portland with Bro. Cummins, I returned to Eld. Jefferson at Marysville, Calif. I was gone seven weeks to the day on this trip. It was snow nearly all the time. I did get such a thrill. The beautiful snow flakes falling reminded me of purity, the perfectness of our Creator, the righteousness of Jesus. From the mountain tops covered with snow, I think I could hear the voice of Jesus. I recall the old adage, "As white as snow." With exception of maybe twice I had not seen snow since my childhood. The third Sunday in Feb. I walked out of the home of Bro. Bill Akers to cross the road to church at Sister Frasure's. I faced a beautiful white world. I did not know until then that snow had fallen the night before. The thought came to me, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things," is as beautiful as this snow. Then I thought of this scripture, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined forth." Me thinks I could see the glory of God had blanketed the earth. Then this scripture came to my mind, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, etc." It seems I was caught away into a realm of happiness, the glory of glories. Our God, our God, how wonderful. I wish I could express it like I felt it.

I spent some time in the home of Brother and Sister Fannie Davis. When I waked in the morning I could see yonder mountain, snow covered, Mt. Zion, whose habitation is in the top of the mountains, is as beautiful as that snow. Sister Davis said I chose a cold season to come to see them again. "We are glad to see you anyway". I said that it was not for me to choose the time to come.

I was with the church in Sacramento four regular meetings. Also same number with Seclusia church in Los Angeles. We held three meetings in Bakersfield. They have no organized church but a fine group of Old Baptists. They have some fine soil. They need a shepherd to cultivate. I would get too lengthy to use enough adjectives to tell the sweet spirit of all these meetings. I cannot pass without mentioning too,

the second Sunday in March with the church in Sacramento, I used Paul's farewell address to the elders of the church. The Lord lifted me up on high. My little congregation went along with me. We broke bread (Jesus) together high up in Mt. Zion's hills. We were so happy there. One sister said the church looked prettier to her then than it ever had before. My last meeting on this trip with Seclusia church in Los Angeles. Enough said, just take it for granted. A fine group of Old Baptists, they too need a shepherd. This was the fourth Sunday in June. I was treated so fine by everybody. Elder Jefferson wrote of ordination service in Sacramento.

C. H. BYRD

* * *

DEAR BRETHEN:

I am enclosing money order for back pay and future pay on my subscription to the *Signs*. It is but carelessness that I got delinquent. I thought many times that I would send it in but, "Procrastination seemed to be the thief of time." I do not want to ever be without the *Signs*. It is the only consoling reading that I have any access to in this part of the world. I read the *Signs* some during my early years. Then there was a long stretch of time that I never saw one. All during this long period which was in my maturing years, say the teen age and early manhood, I was associated with other denominations who preached the evils and doings of the human race and their weaknesses. After telling a few grave yard and deathbed stories an invitation was sent out to, "Come up and accept Christ as your personal Savior." It was during one of the revival escapades that all the youths around 14 and 15 years old became all too sentimental and joined the so called church. It never changed one iota the way we lived and acted afterward. We were the same as we were before. Most of us got kicked out because we did not pay the preacher. For my part, I never felt at heart there was anything to it except a social affair where the youth got together, I do remember years before this episode I was listening to an old preacher propounding what he called the truth, that a voice said to me, "Fear not, I'll be with you until the end." I felt to the best of my knowledge that God spoke to me in a still small voice to protect me from falling at that time into the clutches of the false preaching and teaching. Then after the teen years began to do to me most of that which befalls all youth of those years, I went along a few years as if the small voice had not spoken to me. Then as I reached manhood, I began to be more curious minded. I don't remember ever enjoying a sermon delivered by one of the self appointed apostles who preached for money. I was a long way from my place of birth for several years, from age 19 to 23. During these years I read the bible quite a bit and matched the truth with my associates, but they never coincided. Then upon my return to my homeland, I began to go to Old Dry Creek in Trigg Co. Ky. to hear the Primitive Baptist propound what I could but declare to myself and all others, the Truth indeed. I have seen and heard the dear old elders stand from ten minutes to two hours and it has always been as sweet music and comfort to my soul. It is during their discourse that that first "still small voice" that spoke to me before my teen age began, tells me, this is the comfort and satisfaction that was bespoken, "Fear not, I'll be with you until the end." All through the years of sorrow, trials and tribulations, the ups and downs assigned to the human race,

regardless of where I was or what happened to me that blinded my paths that one still small voice has always comforted me and I feared not the ultimate outcome.

I am not especially writing these few lines for publication, but I have read in the *Signs* many such exhortations that have been a comfort to me in as much as it has coincided with many of my experiences along the rugged road of life when the going was really rough. And too, I now live in a country where one who has destined as I, live almost alone insofar as having contact with others of my belief. I look forward to the first of every month for the SIGNS of the TIMES to refresh my mind and heart. Meanwhile I go back over former issues and feast upon the many worthwhile articles and editorials which I believe from the bottom of my heart are spiritually inspired and penned by earnest endeavors of the God called elders who contend for the faith that furnishes food for His sheep.

I would like to relate one more little incident, if it may be called little, about one of the most inspired Elders I have ever known. At the same time, penning a memory bouquet on the same Elder. Those of you who have heard Elder J. Nuck Darnall of Cadiz, Ky. preach may well understand why I say pen a bouquet on him. I knew Nuck Darnall from childhood. He was every bit a boy. He did just what most all boys do as boys. His father before him was every bit a man and every bit a preacher who contends for the faith. When the call came to young Nuck Darnall to preach he was not at any mourners bench. If so, it was far from any building and he was alone in the field at work. When or rather, after he had made a few more or less, weak utterances regarding his experiences, he was invited to speak at a school house in his home community and where he got what little book learning he had. I say little and mean just that. At the same time there was another boy from the same county who had graduated from a Theological Seminary and who, too was invited to speak at the same school house at the same time. Both invitations were accepted by the two boys and it drew quite a congregation of the peoples who knew the two. It was not a debate. So the young Theologian who was well dressed, polished, etc., spoke first. He delivered a very concise, well worded discourse, so far as English grammar was concerned. His discourse was written and prepared for the delivery and many people seemed swallowed up with the discourse. Then came the intermission of a few minutes and much comment and compliments passed among the hearers as it was the first public appearance of either of the young preachers. Then came the second, young, long, lean, lanky Nuck Darnall, coat sleeves six inches too short, pants legs above his shoe tops, embarrassed at himself (and the congregation was seemingly as much embarrassed) to such an extent he didn't so much as have his Bible with him. After a few scattering remarks, I thought he was going to sit down before he fell down. Just when every body seemed to be about of the same opinion as was I, he stumbled onto and out with a verse or two of scripture that came to his mind and the Almighty just pored thoughts through his mind and into words for fully one and a half hours that seemed to come easier by the minutes and such a proclamation of the Truth as fell from his lips has never been excelled by any man. The aisle of the school house was full of standing spectators. All the crowd who usually mill around outside at country school house gatherings had crowded in and at the windows to hear

Nuck Darnall proclaim for their and his first time the mighty power of a just and righteous Creator who worketh all things well, both in Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. God was with him and for over thirty years I have followed him along and there has never been any variation in what he contends for. Nothing but Christ and Him crucified and that He is a God of all chosen ones who were with Him before the world was and will be until the end of our time and through eternity.

I am past sixty and don't have money on which to travel very far very often, but my heart is with the Old Baptist wherever and whenever they meet, if I know my heart. If I have a prayer on my heart at all, it is, "God's will be done, not mine." And in so asking a blessing my preface is, "If it is according to thy Holy will, may it be so."

Yours in faith and hope and may it be God's will to look over, guide and direct all Primitive Baptists to continue in the faith.

Most humbly and unworthily,
A. P. WILSON

* * *

Have not the Protestant Churches Departed from the Doctrinal Teachings of the Reformation?

In what is known as the Protestant Reformation there were three prominent reformers: Martin Luther, John Calvin and King Henry the Eight of England. They were all members of the Roman Catholic Church, which church grew out of the division in the Church of Rome, in the year A. D. 251.

Between Novation and Cornelius, two opposing bishops, Cornelius was in favor of admitting great numbers into the church without regard to character. An election was held in the church and Cornelius received a majority of the votes and so was elected pastor of the church. Novation protested this disorder and withdrew, and a large number followed his example. Maintaining the discipline of the church in accordance with the emphatic command of God. (2 Cor. 6:14, 18: 1 Cor. 5:11; Rev. 18:4.)

Constantine, the Roman Emperor, took the side of the Cornelius party and by imperial decree declared Christianity the religion of the Roman State and proclaimed himself head of the church, with the result that the Pagans rushed pell-mell to unite with the church, without any reference to conversion, bringing their Pagan superstitions, rites, and ceremonies with them, and the church sank to the plane of political Paganism (Scarbow, page 4).

It must be admitted by all who hold to the Christian religion that Christ set up or organized a visible church or kingdom when he was upon earth in fulfillment of prophecy (Dan. 2:44). It must be further admitted that he gave the church, or kingdom, all laws and ordinances necessary to be observed unto his second coming, as he is the King, Judge, Head and Law-giver of this kingdom. His church is a theocracy, its government is not left to other people. Moses and Christ were the law-givers in the two dispensations. Moses was told to make all things according to the pattern as shown to him in the mount. At the transfiguration a voice came out of the clouds, saying, This is my beloved Son, hear ye him. This great Law-giver after his resurrection told his disciples to teach the nations to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them. His followers are forbidden to teach for doctrine the commandments of men. Christ told the Jews, in vain do ye worship me, teach-

ing for doctrine the commandments of men, in the affairs of religion have always been a hindrance instead of a help.

The Waldenses, who were the successors of the Novation party, called Puritans, Anabaptists and Baptists, in their confession of faith in the eleventh century, said, "We esteem all the inventions of men in the affairs of religion as an unspeakable abomination before God." Milton said, "They kept God's truth so pure of old, when all of our fathers worshipped stock and stone." It hath pleased our divine Father in both the law and gospel dispensations to reserve to himself a remnant of his people, and not suffer them to bow the knee to the image of Baal.

We believe that God has a people in all the so-called churches, both Catholic and Protestant, also in the various divisions and subdivisions in the Baptist church. While there are hundreds of different church organizations, the true church is the only daughter of her mother (Jerusalem), the choice one of her that bore her. When this church is spoken of as a visible organization, it is always referred to as a little flock, a remnant, the very elect and the fewest of all people; but when it is spoken of as an organism, or Christ's body, embracing all the redeemed family of God, it is spoken of as many and an innumerable company, which no man can number.

We will now examine the doctrinal teachings of the various churches since Christ set up his church. The following principles of doctrines were taught by Christ and his apostles, also by Augustine and the Jansenists in the Catholic Church, the reformers Luther, Calvin and Toplady, the Waldenses and the Old School Baptists: First, the absolute sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for all matters of faith and practice; Second, the triune Jehovah; Third the sovereignty of God; Fourth, the Deity and perfect humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ; Fifth, the personality of the Holy Spirit; Sixth, the fall of man; Seventh, unconditional election; Eighth, particular redemption and effectual calling; Ninth, justification by inputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ; that man in the fall wholly lost all the ability to any spiritual good accompanying salvation.

In opposition to the above principles of doctrines, the Pelagian heresy arose in the fifth century. Pelagius (370-420) was born in England, went to Rome in 400, to Africa in 409, later Jerusalem, where he was accused of heresy before a synod in 415. He was a monk by profession, but never took orders (Chambers 728), was a legal moralist, and it would seem not having any Christian experience (Hassell 396). Pelagius with a lawyer named Coelestius founded the religious system known as Pelagianism, defined as follows: That the sins of our parents are imputed to them only, and not to their posterity, and that we derived no corruption from the fall, but are pure and unspotted as Adam came out of the forming hand of his Creator; that therefore, mankind is capable of repentance and amendment, and of arriving at the highest degree of piety and virtue by use of his natural faculties and powers, that indeed, external grace is necessary to excite his endeavors, but that he has no need of internal succor of the Divine Spirit. Third, that Adam by nature was mortal, and whether he sinned or not should certainly have died. Fourth, that the grace of God is given in proportion to our merits. Fifth, that mankind may arise at a state of perfection in this life. Sixth, that the law qualifies men for the kingdom of heaven, and was founded upon equal promises with the gospel.

(Shumaker, p. 243.) John Cassian, a Greek monk and founder of convents for men and women at Maraillesk, was the founder of semi-Pelagianism (Hassell, p. 396). This system teaches that salvation is partly by works and partly by grace, the same heresy resurrected by James Arminius (1560-1609), defined in five articles as follows: First, conditional election and reprobation in opposition to the absolute predestination taught by Calvin. Second, universal redemption, or that the atonement was made by Christ for all mankind, though none but believers can be partakers of the benefit. Third, that man in order to exercise true faith must be regenerated and renewed by the operation of the Holy Spirit, which is the gift of God. Fourth, that man may resist divine grace. Fifth, that man may relapse from a state of grace, in opposition to Calvin's perseverance of the saints.

(Webster.) The two opposing doctrines have been defined as follows: Paulinism and Pharisaism, Augustinism and Pelegianism, Monergism and Syergism, Calvinism and Arminianism. Calvin's Institutes, Luther's Bondage of the Will, Toplady's Observations of the Divine Attributes all clearly, as does the Bible, teach that salvation is alone based upon the will, purpose and grace of God, and not any merits or foreseen obedience in the creature, "which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The heavenly birth is alone the work of the Spirit, without the cooperation or assistance of the flesh. "It is the spirit that Quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing."

The system of doctrine known in history as Paulian, Augustinian, or Calvinistic, says Professor Charles Hodge, is taught, we believe, in the scriptures. It was developed by Augustine, formally sanctioned by the Latin Church, adherred to by the witnesses of the truth during the middle ages, repudiated by the church of Rome in the council of Trent, revived in the church by the Jansenists, adopted by all the reformers, incorporated in the creed of the Protestant churches of Switzerland, of the Palatinates of France, Holland, England, and Scotland, and unfolded in the Standards formed by the Westminister Assembly, which have been doctrinally adopted by the Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Baptists of Europe and America. Unless words are twisted out of their lexical meanings, the Episcopal articles of faith, from the ninth to the eighteenth, and the Methodist articles, from the seventh to the twelfth, establish the same doctrine and are emphatic witnesses against their members, who repudiate this doctrine of the Bible and of their fathers.

I will conclude this article by inserting the following poem by Isaac Watts, the great English poet, who taught the truth according to God's Word:

"Not all the outward forms of earth,
  Nor rites that God has given,
Nor will of man, nor blood nor birth,
  Can raise a soul to heaven.
The sovereign will of God alone
  Prepares the heirs of grace;
Born in the image of his son,
  A new peculiar race.
The Spirit, like some heavenly wind,
  Blows on the sons of flesh;
Renews the spirit of the mind,
  And forms the man afresh."

(the late Elder) LYTLE BURNS

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Rt. 4, Box 21, Troy, Ala.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES
Annapolis, Maryland

DEAR BRETHREN IN BONDS OF LOVE:

I did not notice the cover on paper of this late issue, but if I recall my subscription expires in June. I have received the last issue and especially enjoyed its contents, all of it. I am proud

to see the appointment of Elder Spangler as the new Editor. I do not know him in person but feel to know him as genuine Primitive or Old School Baptist by his writings, and editorials in the *Signs*. His writings always seemed to have that familiar sound, joyful sound, which Old Baptist some way seems to know when they hear it.

Personally I had never met Elder Dodson but it seems I had known him many years. I had learned to love him through his writings in the paper, and also had had quite a little personal correspondence with him. I have wanted to express my deep appreciation for him, and the great sorrow in our hearts of his passing. So many brethren, much more able than myself, have written so beautifully of his life and devotion to the cause he so ably set forth. I feel satisfied to a great degree that the very high tribute paid Elder Dodson by brethren whom have known and laboured with him in our Father's vineyard, that he might be numbered among the few called or spoken of by the Apostle, saying, "You see your calling brethren, how that not many great, not many noble, not many wise men after the flesh are called"; indicating that there are some called, who may be recorded in the category of the great, noble, and wise, but only as God sees fit to so adorn them with his grace to so labor in His cause.

That the Lord may continue His spiritual leadings in setting forth the doctrine order and discipline of the Church as has been these many years the medium of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, dating back to its founding. When the more modern theories and practices of the church began to make its appearance, when it was evident that the time had arrived that brethren who were so adorned with the gift knowledge and wisdom from on high, came to the defense of the truth established by Christ.

This is our prayer, and that He grant us all grace, enabling us to support and lift up the hands so appointed to carry on this defense in the cause of Christ. To the glory and honor of God, and to the comfort of His dear people.

In hope of life beyond
L. D. ROSE

* * *

DEAR EDITORS:

It is time to send in my subscription for another year. I desired to send it the first of the month, but sickness prevented. The articles in the *Signs* have been a source of comfort to me for many years, and I was deeply grateful to have it when I was so far away from the Church and the dear people in it, whom I love above all others. The dear Church means so much to me, words fail me. I love to go to the meetings when situated so I can go, and the dear Lord opens the way, and Oh! I long to go more just to sit under the shadow of His wing and be blessed to hear the gospel preached, rightly dividing the word of truth, a sweetness that is beyond me to describe.

I wonder, and fear that I am not one among His dear people of His chosen race in election of the dear ones that are His own, saved by grace through faith and not of themselves, it is the gift of God. I feel that I will not miss a blessing the Lord has for me, to send in his own time. Praise Him from whom all blessings flow, for often sweetest moments come when least expected. That is a time when the poor heart sings praises unto Him, yet feeling so utterly unworthy and the least of all to have sweet blessings to come from Him which are so deeply cherished in the heart and ever precious memories.

I read with deep interest the articles in memory of Elder Dodson. I was surprised to hear of his passing. The last account he wrote of himself, he felt he was improving. The Lord's time had come to take him to his blessed reward. I know many there miss him deeply. May the dear Lord give the Associate Editors strength to carry on, and lead them in choosing another Managing Editor, God willing.

In Christian love, hoping I am sealed in His promises.

Unworthy,
(Mrs.) MABEL LINDSEY

* * *

Marysville, Calif.

Elder D. V. Spangler
Annapolis, Maryland

DEAR ELDER SPANGLER:

If you will let me intrude on your time once more, I want to tell you of a couple of things that transpired at our meeting at Sacramento last Sunday. First, the church agreed, the Lord, willing, to hold a three-day meeting at our home, or nearby, in Marysville, over the fifth Sunday in December. A suitable notice will be sent for publication later.

I thought you would be interested to know that the Lord gave me grace and courage to ask for a home with this dear little band. I had nothing to offer of myself but my love for them. I asked them to watch over me carefully, for I need it more than they can ever know. They received me in that tender, kind, loving way that they had received me into their company since meeting with them. Never have they said an unkind word to me about my belief when I would ask questions that were very pointed.

After receiving your answer to my questions put to you, I was never troubled along that line since. Not that I could explain to someone else just how it is, but my mind is satisfied. The one thing that did trouble me was would I want to go back to Egypt when the going is rough. Would I want to go back where there was plenty to eat and I was satisfied, although not resting? All the dear ones to whom I put this question said that food would not now satisfy. After attending the two meetings in the Northwest and enjoying the sweetness of the communion with God's very elect, yes, I felt like Ruth, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee." But I was still doubtful if I could ever be one of them for they seemed so spiritual with a deep understanding of the Scriptures and if I understand anything it is so little and shallow. But last week, before our meeting, I was impressed through a dream that I had been married to the church for nearly a year and wasn't living with her. I felt so ashamed of myself for shirking. Before this I felt there were several without the fold that were far better than I and it would look as if I were assuming too much to ask for a home when they stayed out, but after the dream I felt what was given me to do must be done and I should not ask as did Peter, "what shall this man do?"

Pray for me, Elder Spangler, that I will be kept at the feet of Jesus and serve those who serve Him.

Your little sister, I hope,
MRS. T. R. (Grace) JEFFERSON

* * *

Blevins, Ark.

DEAR EDITOR: No one knows except our all wise Father how much the sending of our good paper means to me, a very poor old lonely woman, who loves the doctrine, it holds. I have been a reader for over 50 years, and it has never changed. I enjoy reading the good letters sent in by the dear saints, as the *Signs* is all the preaching I get now. We do not have a church close enough for me to attend.

Sometimes it is so hard to be reconciled to trials that come to us. There have been times in my poor useless life that I could not say "Thy will be done". I so wanted my own way, but thanks be to our Heavenly Father, he works all things for good to those who love him, who are called according to his purpose. I hope, I love Him.

I am old and broken in health, living alone, have had much sorrow, nothing left but my faith in God, and that was given, not bought by good works.

Done by this poor sinner, who depends on his mercy and grace to carry me on.

MINNIE HENDRIX

* * *

Williamstown, Kansas.

To the Publishers and Readers
of the SIGNS, Greetings:

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:

In the 7th chapter of the book of Judges there is something presented that has arrested my attention and won my admiration. If God will guide my mind and my pen I should like to drop a thought or two relative to this portion of Scripture for the consideration of my Brethren scattered abroad.

"God said, Bring them down to the water and I will try them for thee there." So he brought down the people to the water and the Lord said unto Gideon, "Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself, likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink." And the number of them that lapped *putting their hands to their mouth* were 300 men. All the rest bowed down upon their knees to drink. And the Lord said unto Gideon, "By the three hundred that lapped will I save you and deliver the Midianites into thy hand." Every one familiar with the Scripture will remember how this once proud army of thirty two thousand were reduced to ten thousand because that are with thee are too many lest the Lord said unto Gideon, "The people Israel should vaunt themselves against me saying, Mine own hand hath saved me." Those who were fearful and afraid were screened out of this army and there were twenty and two thousand who returned or departed from Mt. Gilead, thus reducing that great army to ten thousand. And the Lord said unto Gideon, "The people are yet too many. Bring them down to the water and I will try them for thee there." So of this great army there was just a small remnant that survived the trials with which they were to be tried. The water symbolizing tribulation and distress. As it is written, "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee. When thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flames kindle upon thee." The choice of this little remnant confirms the truth of that expressed in the Proverbs; "The race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong, but by my spirit saith the Lord." But these, although they be weak and few in number they must be tried. "The trial of your faith being much more precious than gold that perisheth though it be tried with fire might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." There are many ways by which these trials are effected. My mind now reverts to the experience of the old prophet of God. Ezekiel 24-16. The Lord said, "Son of man, behold I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke, yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shalt thy tears run down. Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead. Bind the tire of thine head upon thee and put on thy shoes upon thy feet and *cover not thy lips* and eat not the bread of men; So I spake unto the people in the morning

and at even my wife died and I did in the morning as I was commanded." Thus this old Prophet of God was brought down to the water to be tried there, and he found the waters bitter indeed. Being forewarned of God that he would take away from him the desire of his eyes, his wife, his bosom companion, yet notwithstanding this severe trial it was enjoined upon him *"Cover not thy lips."* Often times in the experience of God's people, when the Lord is pleased to lay his hand heavily upon us, you may feel that you never again can lift your voice in praise to his Holy name. Yet if He has put a new song in your mouth it is yours to sing. From "all their afflictions God's glory shall spring, And the deeper their sorrows the louder they'll sing." To those who are called of God to prophesy or "preach the word" it is incumbent upon them to "cover not thy lips" but to continue in the work whereunto God has called you. Remembering our light afflictions which are but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. This remnant of Gideon's army who lapped like dogs put their hand to their mouth and so I am persuaded it becomes every tried servant of God to do likewise and thus suppress the murmurings and complaints that might arise from our evil hearts and escape our lips. Yea, lest we reply against God. I am made to fear this unworthy writer has not observed this injunction as I should have done. I have complained. I have faltered in my duty from time to time feeling that my burden is more than I can bear. Though quite unworthy of comparison I have suffered a like experience to the old prophet of God. Twice brought down to the water to be tried there. I have yielded up two noble companions, and yet it seems that the voice said cry, and I said, what shall I cry. "All flesh is as grass and the glory of man as the flower of the field, the grass withereth, the flower thereof fadeth but the word of the Lord endureth forever." In referring to this personal experience of mine, it is not with a view of enlisting sympathy for I know I am no more deserving of sympathy then others who have been tried in like manner. But I trust it may impress upon the minds of my brethren the solemn truth that every one called of God to fight the battles of the Lord must in some way be tried to prove their willingness and readiness to endure hardness as good soldiers. So think it not strange, brethren concerning the fiery trials which are to try you. For this entire remnant lapped like dogs putting their hand to their mouth. John saw this little remnant when on the isle of Patmos. "And one of the elders answered saying, unto me, What are these that are arrayed in white robes and whence came they, and I said unto him, Sir thou knowest, and he said unto me, these are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." For it is indeed, through great tribulation that we enter the kingdom of Heaven. These lapped as a dog lappeth. It is a rare thing in the scripture for the people of God to be likened unto a dog, but this shows a diversion between the dog and the beasts of the field. None of them can imitate the dog in this which seems to stress the difference between the people of God and the world. While the beasts of the field drink in draughts as it were, the dog must lap with his tongue which may symbolize the people of God, as with them the word of the Lord is here a little and there a little, line upon line and precept upon precept. Behold now Behemoth—Behold he drinketh up a river and hasteth not. He trusteth that he can draw Jordan into his mouth, Behemoth, the

elephant, a beast of huge proportions. Well might he typify the legions of Anti-Christ. See that boastful spirit. He trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth. Jordan is a turbulent stream. The children of Israel must needs pass over this stream ere they entered the Promised land. It represents tribulation and trouble. Indeed, this is some of the waters where the Lord brings his people. Behemoth, or Anti-Christ trusteth he can draw it up into his mouth and thus eliminate or avoid those severe trials by which God's people must be tried. For example; I saw and heard, when a boy an Arminian Minister come before his congregation rubbing his hands and telling them, "It is so easy to become religious." Overlooking the fact that Israel spent 400 years in bondage. They passed through the Red Sea, they journeyed forty years in the wilderness and they passed over Jordan. Does this represent ease? If it does then this poor sinner has missed the way. May I be indulged a little farther and quote that oft repeated expression; It has been said the dog is man's most faithful servant. He will follow his Master into danger and even defy death to do his Master's bidding. So Gideon, who is a type of Christ, instructed this tried, little army who lapped like dogs. "Look on me and as ye see me do so do ye." They were not provided with sword and spear nor any weapon or carnal warfare for the battle is not their but the Lord's. They were provided with an empty pitcher and a lamp in the pitcher which they must carry in their left hand. In their right hand they must carry the trumpet to blow withal. This was their equipment. Those pitchers representing our earthen vessels, our fleshly bodies, the lamps representing the spirit of God within. As it is written, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power might be of God and not of us." I have said this little army is just a remnant. Even so at this present time also there is a remnant "according to the election of grace" and the instructions of our leader are just as definite and binding on us today as it was on that tried little remnant. "Look on me and as ye see me do so do ye." When I blow the trumpet and those that are with me, then blow ye the trumpet also on every side of the camp and say, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." And the three companies blew the trumpets and break the pitchers and held the lamps in their left hand and the trumpet in their right hand to blow withal and they cried, "The sword of the Lord and Gideon." How essential it is that this old pitcher be broken, the flesh be eliminated in every service we may render unto our God. This earthen vessel must be broken so that the light of the spirit of God shine forth for "It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing." In a word we cannot fight the battles of the Lord in a fleshly attitude for God is a spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. And it is no less essential that we shout the battle cry, for no greater or more sublime battle cry was ever conceived than this, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." Which is briefly, The gospel of the Son of God, which in turn is Jesus Christ and him crucified. This is by interpretation our battle cry for there is no other name under Heaven given amongst men whereby we must be saved." So by the 300 that lapped will I save you and deliver the Midianites into thy hand. So dear Brethren, All who are brought down to the water to be tried there, let us put our hand to our mouth and murmur not at the

Hand of Providence, but may we assimilate the words of Job, that tried and true servant of God when he said, "When I am tried I shall come forth as gold." Job was tried in sundry ways. His children were killed, his worldly possessions were taken away, he was afflicted and subjected to the temptations of Satan. He suffered the adverse counsel of his wife when she asked, "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God and die." But he said unto her, "thou speaketh as one of the foolish women. What! Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord and shall we not also receive evil?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips. Surely he put his hand to his mouth as he lapped these bitter waters. It would be well for every saint to emulate this example of patience and fortitude. Of this vast army of thirty two thousand I think it safe to assume they were every one a child of God, As there are at this present time untold numbers outside the pales of the church militant who give ample evidence they have been with Jesus and learned of him.

This little remnant were set by themselves. Set apart, sanctified for the special service of the Lord. In other words they represent the organized church of baptized believers, chosen of God to hold up the banner of the kingdom and fight under the leadership of Christ the Captain of our salvation. Thus it is written, "Many are called but few chosen." Needless to say the victory over their enemies was given into their hand.

So with you, dear Brethren, may we say, "Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." In view of this I pray that every child of grace may be given grace to heed the charge of our illustrious Leader, "Look on me and as ye see me do so do ye." Break the pitcher, Blow with the trumpet and shout, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon."

Submitted in much weakness,

L. L. SCHECK

* * *

DEAR BRETHREN: Enclosed you will find money order for five dollars for subscription to the dear old *Signs of the Times*. I have unintentionally let my subscription run out and hope this will about take care of it. Thanks for sending the paper. It means so much to me, I would hate to miss a copy.

I feel too small and insignificant to even mention my feelings toward the death of our beloved, Elder Dodson. I think the Baptists were so blessed to have him in our midst, a preacher such as Elder Dodson. One was made to feel, beyond a doubt, that he was taught in the school of grace, and called by our Lord and Master to feed his sheep. A man of such means, so far as this world goes, but the Lord did not let him become puffed up in the midst of it all. He kept him humble and always ready to do or say anything he could to feed and comfort God's poor and weak. Thank God for such a man!

It was my privilege to visit in his home last Sept. a year ago. I have a brother who lives in Lyndhurst, N. J., right near him, and he took me over one evening. It was such a lovely place to go. He and his wife were very nice to us, and I somehow had a feeling, I wanted to sit at his feet and tell him some of the things, I hope the Lord has done for me.

When I heard of his passing, I was deeply grieved. I felt that there will be a vacancy hard to fill, but I know God is able. I so often feel that our loved ones who have gone on before us are so near and somehow there is such a sweet communion in the Spirit.

Yours in a blessed hope,

PEARL S. HONEYCUTT.

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EDITORIALS

"And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his Father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons. In that day, saith the Lord of host, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the Lord hath spoken it." ISAIAH 22-23, 24, 25.

All through the old testament "Him" the Lord Jesus Christ, is set forth in type and under various names. This is not true with God, that is, God in the abstract. A type must precede the antitype, and as God is before all things, there is therefore, no type of God. But we have a type of the Godman. The first intimation we have of this man is in the garden, where God said to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." This seed, which evidently is the same referred to in the PSALMS 132-11 where "The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; He will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne."

The Prophet ZECHARIAH said, "I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom; and behind him were there red horses, speckled, and white." In this way the Lord Jesus often appeared as an angel or a man as a prelude to His incarnation. The night may be emblematical of the afflictions and the seventy years captivity of the Jews, but I rather think, that it refers to the law and prophecy, neither of which makes any thing as clear as does the gospel. The apostle says, "Holy men of old desired to see the things which we see and saw them not." By night the prophet saw this man, but did not clearly understand who he was, or whom he represented. The red horse which he was riding, indicates the blood that was shed for the people among whom he stood, represented by the myrtle trees. The bottom indicates the earth, where the blood was to be shed, and where He lived and died.

In the 20th verse of this chapter the Lord said of Eliakim, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah: And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Juda." Eliakim was also a type of the Lord Jesus, and must have been a very good man for the Lord called him "My servant

Eliakim". The Lord also said, "And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut, and he shall shut, and none shall open." A key is an instrument to open a lock. It is also an emblem of knowledge, wisdom, government and power. The gifts that God has given to His church to open up and expound the scriptures to the comfort of His people, are keys to the kingdom; and we read that the kingdom of heaven is within you. Jesus holds the key of the knowledge of His Father, for He said, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." Jesus ask His disciples, saying, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Philip was given a key to unlock the scripture which the Eunuch was reading, but did not understand. The scriptures are locked up, and can not be understood until they are opened. "The angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert." When Philip arrived, the EUNUCH wanted to know "Of Whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man. Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." The great trouble of today is, that so many go out with a key of their own making. This kind of a key will never fit the tumblers of that lock, that opens into the kingdom because the message they bring does not touch, or fit the experience of those of the household. "A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men. He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him." Every gift that comes before the church is searched, to know if it be of God, or if it is our own sponorship, or in the interest of our own cause. But when one comes with God's gift, he will unlock the door, and we will desire of him, as the Eunuch desired of Philip, that he come up and sit with us. Until He who holds the key turn it over, no one will never be able to feed the church of God.

"And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his Father's house." I've read in some book that in olden times the nails and spikes upon which things were to hang, were not driven in the walls after the building was complete, but were placed in as the building went up. Whether this is true or not, I do not know. But one thing I do know according to the scriptures, that Christ has always been in His church, or among His people, either as an angel or man as their security and salvation. We read in the PSALMS 118-27 "God is the Lord, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar." These cords I think, represent the decrees of God which fastened Him to the horns of the altar, where the sacrifice was to be made as a nail fastened in a sure place.

It is some times necessary to bind the animal so that he may not escape the knife. This was true so far as the humanity of Jesus was concerned. He cried out in the garden, and said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me." And He went a little farther, and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." In His humanity He felt the ordeal through which to pass as much as you or I, and there is no doubt but what He felt the sting of the sword in His blessed side, as much as any other human being. But He was so bound by the decrees of the covenant, which was ordered in all things and sure; that He was as a nail fastened in a sure place. He, "Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

"And He shall be for a glorious throne to his Father's house. The Queen of Shebe, after hearing of the fame of Soloman concerning the name of the Lord, came to prove him with hard questions. But after hearing and seeing what she did, "She said to the King, it was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard. Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of ISRAEL: because the Lord loved ISRAEL for ever, therefore made he the king, to do judgment and justice." This throne had steps, and at each end of each step was placed a golden lion. These lions represent power, boldness and authority to dispence the justice and judgments of God. This throne is not made of dead material, such as ivory and gold that cannot hear, see nor feel, but of living substance, that which can be touched by the feeling of our infirmities. Jesus shall be for a glorious throne, because He is the seat of government, power and authority. And it has pleased God that in Him all fullness should dwell. He is not a glorious throne to the world, they do not see in Him any power or authority to do any thing, except as they work with Him. But He is a glorious throne to His people, because, "He is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." Jesus is the head and lawgiver of His church, and the church knows no other. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." This the law of Moses did not do. They that look to the law of Moses for righteousness and justification, will find confusion and condemnation. But they that look to Him, who, shall be a glorious throne to His Father's house, shall find mercy and peace.

"And they shall hang upon Him all the glory of His Father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons." As Eliakim was considered a principal stake in his Father's house, so Jesus is immovably fastened in the wall of His Father's house for the support of all the vessels destined for sacred uses. And the consequence of His continued

power will be the promotion and flourishing condition of His family and dependents, from the highest to the lowest. How good it is in time of doubts, fears and dissipation and want, to have that on which to hang or depend. All the issue, all the offspring from righteous Abel down to the last seed that shall come forth, have Him as a sure support. We have Him as our hope, for, "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." Glory was put for the ark of the covenant, and indicated the presence of God with Israel. When the Philistines took the ark they said, the glory is departed from Israel. The hope, comfort and peace of Israel hung upon the presence of the ark of the covenant. No other nation could glory in the ark as Israel did. The unregenerated do not see Him as the glory of His Father's house. They do not see Him as a nail fastened in a sure place, but glory in their own works instead of His. They feel that He is dependent upon them for help, and could not do any thing without them. But spiritual Israel has learned that without Him they can do nothing, therefore they look to Him for all that they have, and all that they are, is of Him. No other people can see or feel the presence of Christ as Israel does. Jesus Himself felt that He could not glorify His Father without first being glorified of His Father. Therefore He said, "Father the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." If He in whose mouth no gile was ever found, felt that He could not glorify God except as He was glorified of God, How should you and I, who are just dust worms of the earth feel? Our hope of salvation both for time and eternity, is hung upon Him, and that which He had done for us. "For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Yes all the praise, thanksgiving and honor of His Father's house, are hung upon Him.

"In that day, saith the Lord of host, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the Lord hath spoken it." This does not mean that He did not do the work that He came to do, but that for which He came into the world had been accomplished. He could not be removed until all His work was finished, until the salvation of all hanging and depending upon Him was secured. In the day that Jesus was crucified, His life was cut off from the earth. So far as the world was concerned, He came to His end, the life that He derived from the Virgin was cut off. But He took it up again and is living now in another sphere, and that for-ever-more. For He said, "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for ever more, Amen; and have the keys of death." He took the sins of all His people in His own body to the cross, and the shedding of His blood washed them all away. Thus the burden that was upon Him was cut off, when He had finished the work for which he was born of the virgin. And He did it alone. For He said, "I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me." He called upon His disciples to watch with Him for one hour, but when He returned He found them asleep. No man could help in accomplishing the work of salvation. "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me." The atoning sacrifice which was offered once every year had to be offered by the high priest alone, no other one could go beyond the veil into the holy

of holies. Every other one was cut off, or forbidden to go beyond the veil into the holiest place, and into which the high priest did not go without blood. The law of Moses did not require the life of the transgressor as a sacrifice for his sins, but prescribed what the sacrifice should be. When these vessels were chosen in Christ unto salvation, Jesus at the same time was chosen to make the sacrifice for them. When our mother Eve hearkened to what the serpent said, instead of what God said, it brought death upon the human family. But God intimated a deliverance from this death, when He said, that the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent.

In conclusion I can do no better than quote from the 9th chapter of Hebrews. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that He should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." And as, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:" So, "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." What a glorious day this will be to all the vessels of mercy, when they shall, "awake with Thy likeness."

H. O. NASH

* * *

Covin, Alabama
September 12, 1951

THE SIGNS of the TIMES
Annapolis, Maryland

DEAR BROTHER SPANGLER AND WOOD:

I really would like to complete my file of the SIGNS. I have all of them from 1880 to the present time except scatered numbers. I want the following copies: 1900—March 15, May 1, June 1; 1909—Sept. 1, Dec. 1, and 15; 1919—April 15, July 1, July 15; 1715, August; Sept. 1715. I am very anxious to obtain bound volumes from 1869 to 1879 inclusive, and from 1840 to 1861 inclusive. If I cannot get bound volumes I would appreciate any copies for these years regardless of condition.

I also want to know the history of our people in the New England States, New York and Pennsylvania. Will those Baptists in these states that have some knowledge of the churches, please write me? I want to locate and know the history of the churches in those states that are still in existence, as well as those that have become extinct. I care nothing for churches of the Mission Baptists. Particularly do I want details about the Redstone, Juanita, Chemung, and Western Corresponding Associations in New York and Pennsylvania. I would like to get any data on the Old Order of Baptists in these sections. Any old paper or minute pertaining to our brethren in these parts would be appreciated. If you have data that you do not care to turn over to Precious Library, will you lend it to me?

Please insert this notice in the Signs at your convenience.

Evansville, Indiana

DEAR EDITOR:

Brethren we are not our own but are bought with a price which was and is the blood of the Blessed Savior. Jesus the Christ who hung on the rugged cross and died, was buried, and rose again the third day is alive for ever more. All this in order that poor unworthy sinners as I am, might have life. No wonder the Poet could write, "What wonderous love is this, Oh, my soul."

When given to see the beauty of the life our Savior who lived and the death He suffered for sinners who were ashamed to own his name.

"Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out." (Rom. 11:33). I sometimes feel to think I am given to understand some of the beauty, or inexpressable beauty which Paul saw when he exclaimed, "Oh," an expression of wonder and amazement and awe, Paul here was evidently given to see by the revealing light of the Holy Spirit of God some of the deep things of God. These are beyond the carnal preceptions of natural man. They are revealed only by the Holy Spirit to those elected before of God.

Brethren I believe this same experience that Paul had here comes to every child who has come to know that God is God and besides Him there is no other God. He is ready to confess before the world that God's wisdom and knowledge reaches to immeasurable depths, and the world cannot search them out for God. He has foreknown all things He knew our substance even when there was none of it; this knowledge is perfect. My dear Brethren, God has never learned anything because he has always foreknown all things, and not only foreknown but also foreseen all things, what so ever comes to pass.

God's purposes cannot fail; they are just as sure as God Himself is sure. Then no wonder Paul could say, "How unsearchable are His judgments and his ways past finding out, for of Him and through Him and to Him are all things to whom be Glory forever Amen."

I only intended to renew my subscription and have it changed to my new address, but I forget myself. I know I am behind in my payments but I hope to help all I can.

In hope
WADE CHANDLER

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS, Associate Editors, and all who read and contribute to same:

I have just returned from the 126th session of the Yellow River Association in Georgia so greatly revived that I want you to know about it.

We were privileged to have with us Elder D. V. Spangler and wife, Elder W. D. Griffin and wife, Elder E. J. Lambert, and our own Elder H. O. Nash, all contributors to the SIGNS, which we felt highly favored with such able ministers of the gospel, who were greatly blessed to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, to our comfort and edification, with Elder Lord from Oconee Association and our home ministers.

We felt to exclaim with these words that Elder Lambert used for a text: "We are bound to thank God always for you brethren, etc." 2 Thess. 1:3.

Have just received Oct. number of the SIGNS, which continued with the same sweet truths that were presented at the Association. We were glad to here from Elder and Sister Ruston through the SIGNS.

We thought of many who were unable to meet with us, our own dear brother Douglas Alston who was in Korea, no doubt was with us in mind. We rejoice in the fact that the presence of Him, whom we hope to serve, who is everywhere at the same time, was present with him in a sweet manifestation of His love.

May the communion of the Holy Spirit remain with all the redeemed, while passing through this troubled world, and enable us to meet with those gone before, where reunions never cease.

Yours in a sweet Hope
MRS. HENRY ROWAN

Chestnut Church
Sept. 8th, 1951

In answer to a call by Chestnut Church, of the Pigg River Ass'n, on August 11th 1951, a presbytery assembled to ordain for a Deacon, Bro. Tom W. Turner, if found qualified.

The Presbytery was composed of Elders Randolph Perdue, C. E. Turner, J. E. Burgess, O. K. Tinch and P. E. Ingram, with Deacons F. S. Shelton, Willie Meadows, Jno. Turner, Sylvanos Carter, Homer Minter, J. H. Perdue, T. R. Plybon, O. S. Tyree and L. J. Potter.

Elder Randolph Perdue was elected to serve as Moderator and Elder P. E. Ingram, clerk. O. S. Tyree was chosen as spokesman for the church; Elder C. E. Turner to question the candidate; Elder O. K. Tinch to offer prayer and Elder J. E. Burgess to deliver the charge.

Elder Perdue read the qualifications of a Deacon from IInd Tim. while questioning the spokesman for the church. Elder Turner continued the questioning to the candidate concerning his faith and the conduct of church business. All questions were answered in an acceptable way. It was then agreed to ordain him.

While a multiplicity of hands were laid upon him Elder Tinch prayed a beautiful prayer and Elder Burgess delivered the Charge.

Deacon Turner was then given back to the church.

Signed,
ELDER RANDOLPH PERDUE, Mod.
ELDER P. E. INGRAM, Clerk

NOTICE.

We have learned that many of our subscribers, especially on the West coast did not receive their August Signs. We don't know why, and we are checking with the Postal department about it. In case any one does not receive their paper by the 10th of the month of issue we will appreciate you letting us know, and we will mail a copy. We want to know about it, and want you to get it.—Ed.

In as much as it has pleased Our Heavenly Father to take unto Himself our dear Sister Belle Griffeth be it resolved that Macedonia Church asks to be given grace to say "Thy will be done," and bow in humble submission, knowing that it is good when one of the Household of Faith can depart and be at rest to await the coming of Our Lord.

We deeply sympathize with the bereaved family—may they be comforted by the Spirit of the Heavenly Father she loved to worship.

Done by order of the Church while in conference, July 1951.

ELD. C. W. LANDERS, Mod.
L. K. FOSTER, C. C.

WHEREAS. Since we last met at this place, known as the Brookfield Church, Slate Hill, N. Y., our hearts have been saddened again as God who does his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, has removed from the activities of this life, and his labors in the Vineyard of our God, our much loved Shepherd, and brother in Christ, Elder R. Lester Dodson. He faithfully served this church annually as a minister of the gospel of Christ, and as moderator of the meetings held at this place. An invitation to attend these meetings was extended his ministering brethren, and it has been much by his efforts and the strength which God gave him that the meetings at this place have been continued through the years.

Resolved, That we thank God for his gift. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. We are comforted with the thought that our brother's hope and faith have now become a reality, and our timely loss is his eternal gain. We desire to record this Memorial in our annual statement, and a copy be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS,
Moderator.
William D. Chapman, Clerk.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 119 ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND, DECEMBER, 1951 No. 12

CORRESPONDENCE

Dutton, Ontario

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER TRUITT:

Your card with the written message was received and appreciated of Dec. 13, 1950. I put it on one side hoping to write to you during the Xmas or the New Year but did not get to it. I am now trying to do some of the things I ought to have done and I hope this finds brother Handy still improving, but whatever be the case may your testimony be that God is good.

Mrs. Ruston's health has continued to improve and we too, feel greatly blessed. In the 23 Psalm, David says "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me, Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me". Our walk is through this valley as we journey to the promised land, many times evil shows itself in so many ways, our beloved Paul says "when I would do good evil is present with me", often it mars our peace and damps our joys, but sin is not a sweet morsel as perhaps it once was. We have learnt that but for Jesus, sin would have sunk us into perdition and such has been the teaching of His blessed Spirit that in our blessed Lord Jesus, God is with us and not against us. When the people of Israel had come to the River Jordan and as soon as the feet of the priests bearing the Ark of the Covenant touched its waters, Jordan began to divide and though Jordan always overflowed its banks at harvest yet this time they divided and stood up a great and high wall. The people followed the Ark and when the priests had come to the depths of Jordan they stood still on dry ground while the children of Israel *all passed over Jordan.*

Twelve men had also accompanied the priests and ark, and from where the ark stood, they took up twelve stones and carried them up out of Jordan to stand for a memorial of that wonderful event. The ark is Jesus, the wall of water was death, which was held back but fell back as it did when it overwhelmed the Egyptians, Exodus 14th. Those twelve men are like the twelve Apostles who accompanied Jesus while here and whose twelve stones or shall I say twelve baskets full of fragments are preserved for us to read and talk about, in which is declared our great deliverance.

Our glorious High Priest entered into the Holy of Holies, which is Heaven itself, forty days after His ressurection and ten days later poured out the Holy Ghost upon those twelve disciples so that their testimony was to be infallibly preserved throughout all ages, that by Him all things pertaining to life and godliness might be spiritually discovered.

Through the blessed Spirit we know that the Ark of the Covenant is Jesus. The wood and the gold of the ark shows He was God and man. In the ark the Law was kept, the pot of manna (heavenly food) was there, Aaron's rod was there to show that Jesus is our High

Priest. Jesus said, "behold I am with you always *even unto the end of the world*". Thus while death and damnation will overwhelm the wicked, when all Israel have passed over, yet through our covenant head not one of the ransomed can ever be lost. Now let us look for a moment to our scripture: "I will fear no evil for Thou art with me". Oh, how we ought to rejoice and sing His praise! "The horse and his rider He hath cast into the sea". And though we fear no evil we have a loving spiritual fear of Him that is not taught by the precepts of man. A fear that is a loving regard to Him, to His people, and to His word. "For Thou are with me". Let us think of what that means. True, Jesus our High Priest is in Heaven, our advocate with the Father, but His Holy Spirit, the Comforter is with us, and while Moses' Law was kept in the heart of Christ, Christ's perfect Law, Psalm 19:7 is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Jesus said, "A new commandment I give unto you that ye *love* one another". The Law of Love, "Who loved, me and gave Himself for me". Just so the Spirit feeds with the hidden manna from the golden pot. His rod, which has swallowed up Aaron's rod, for Aaron's rod is fulfilled in our High Priest Jesus Christ. So His rod and His staff they comfort me. Oh, what a difference the rod of His blessed word and the staff of His promise is His to His people than to the world! To His people it is a comfort even to be chastened, for tribulations work patience, and patience experience, and the word of His promise upholds them when ready to sink. To the world His rod is a rod of iron that shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel, Psalm 2 and Rev. 12:5. It is spoken of as iron as it cannot be broken and to the world it is cold and unyielding. How good when we feel to say, "Thy rod and Thy staff, *they comfort me.*"

We have a sweet verse in Psalm 119 as we sing it in our meeting here, it is verse 24: "My comfort, and my heart's delight, Thy testimonies be; And they, *in all my doubts and fears,* are counsellors to me". Another verse in the 147 Psalm verse three goes: "Those that be broken in their hearts, and grieved in their minds, He healeth, and their painful wounds; He tenderly upbinds". Now there were twelve men who took up the twelve stones out of Jordan for a witness in the land. There were also twelve men that by the Holy Ghost wrote of Jesus, preached of what he did and said, and so when John saw the door open in Heaven and he heard as it were a trumpet talking with Him. he went up and saw things which must be hereafter. He saw the four and twenty elders sitting clothed in white raiment and crowns of gold upon their heads. And they cast their crowns before the throne saying "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive honour and power and glory". "And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts (Ministers of the Gospel) and the four and twenty elders stood a *Lamb as it had been slain*". He who stood here in the Jordan of Judgment in the lowest spot until all were crossed, or saved, now stands in the midst of the throne. He lives, our neverdying friend, and because he lives, we live also. It seems when I think of the day we are in, a day of sin and gloom, it is as though most of the people have gone over to the other side and we are a few stragglers, following on, some times fearful that we shall be swallowed up of the world. No! No! that can never be for when we get down in the lowest spot of the river, Jesus is there. Ought we not my precious friends to sing Blessings and glory, honour, praise and

power unto Him who sits upon the throne?

God bless and keep you in the way and may we be kept to the day and place where we shall see His lovely face and be like Him forever. Mrs. R. joins with me in love to you both.

Sincerely,
GEO. RUSTON

* * *

H. L. Rogers,
Denton, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER ROGERS: I have been reading your article in the June, 1950 *Signs of the Times*. I hope I love to read the good old *Signs* so much that I go back and read many of the good writings in some over and over again.

Now in your article mentioned, I wish a little more information to get me straight and I feel that you might be able to put me right. You mention that you do *not* believe that Christ was raised a natural body, but was raised a spiritual body, this we do not question, but there is one thing that puzzles me; and that is the conversation between Christ and the apostle Thomas when Christ asked Thomas to feel the hole in his side and the prints of the nails in his hands. Now did the spiritual body raise with or have these wounds in it? It does not seem to me that it would, but this puzzles me, I cannot understand it.

If you have light on this point, please explain same to me. Now do not take my question to be an argument, for it is not but I am seeking information and keep writing for the good old *Signs*. I love to read all of you good writers pieces and I hope I believe what you all write. Yours in hope.

P. L. KENLEY.

Mr. P. L. Kenley,
Roanoke, Va.

DEAR BROTHER KENLEY: Received your letter a few days ago and note your request for my view on the subject of the resurrection of the body of our blessed Lord, so I will give you such thoughts as I have on the subject if the blessed Lord gives me the spirit to do so. I have learned by experience that I can not straighten myself out much less any one else. The blessed Lord only can do that and I fear many times that he has never given me any light on his blessed word at all. I hope you will keep in mind that I am just a human, as is all of us, and when led only by the carnal mind we are shown to be wrong, and I fear so much that that is all that I have. Do not take what I say about this subject without comparing it with the Holy Scripture, for I am apt to be wrong as any man and it seems to me that I am more apt to be wrong than any one else, so keep this in mind and if I write something that is not right, it is through ignorance and by the carnal mind and I pray that God will correct me and set me aright, so I will now in the fear of God and in my weak and imperfect way try to consider the subject.

First, I will say that I believe that our blessed Lord when he came to earth in person he taken on a natural human body, except sin, that is, he had no sin of his own. I believe he was carried nine months by his mother, just as other natural children are, and was born as all other are into this material world and grew up as all other boys do, he took material food to grow and developed his natural body, had a heart that functioned in his body which circulated the blood through his veins, and the scriptures tell us that he was obedient to his parents. The apostle Paul says, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power

of death, that is, the devil: And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." Heb. 2: 14-18. So we see from the above scripture that he was a man that was subject to be tempted, subject to suffer and to die as other men in nature. Notice that he says that in all things it behoved him which means it become him to be made like unto his brethren. The apostle says again, "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Gal. 4: 4-5.

All the children of God were held condemned under this law, they had all broken it and all guilty, and nothing to atone for their guilt and as far as we were concerned, we were forever gone, without God and without hope in the world, so he took on himself a body like ours which was made subject to the penalty of the law which we were under, and took on him all of our sins and our guilt and when the time came that the law made its demand, it found all the sin and guilt on him, so it struck him instead of us. The apostle says, "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Phil. 2: 6-8. The apostle again says, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. 5:21. Isaiah says, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isaiah 53:6. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." Romans 8:3.

Now I think the above references are sufficient to prove that he took on him a human body, and the question seems to be in the mind of some of our brethren. Did he return back into heaven or unto the Father with this human body without any change in it? Some may think that he did not take on him a human body, we understand that while he was here on earth, he was the Son of God in spirit but the son of man in the flesh, in other words, he was God manifested in the flesh. So, when he went to the cross, he went in a body that was made to be sin and in the form of a servant, but we do not think when he arose from the tomb that he came up in the form of a servant, neither with any sin in it. He had nailed all sin to the cross and cast it all in the sea of forgetfulness. So, as it seems to us, he came up with a spiritual, glorified body, which he returned to the Father with, as far as his spiritual standing is the Son of God, it was never changed, only the body that he taken on which was in the form of a servant. When he passed by the nature angels, he laid aside his glory which he had with the Father before the world was, then when his work was finished here on earth, he prayed the Father: "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have

finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." John 17: 4-5.

Now comes Brother Kenley's question; did the spiritual raise with or have these wounds in it? We say, "No." But, on the other hand, our blessed Lord said, "All power is given into my hand both in heaven and on earth." So he had the power to appear in any form which it seems that he did appear in different form on different occasions after his resurrection. He would appear and disappear before their eyes, he would appear on some occasions that they would know him, on others he would appear in a way that they would not know him. Mark says, "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils. And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not. After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country." Mark 16: 9-12. So we see by the above scripture that he did not appear in the same form on all occasions. After his resurrection he again appeared unto two others as they went to a village called Emmaus, he drew near and went with them but they did not know him until he made himself known to them, it says their eyes were holden, that they should not know him. He also appeared in the house where the disciples were assembled, the doors being shut, without an opening for a material body to enter, this is all characteristic of a spiritual body. We do not believe that he after his resurrection had a natural heart in him that functioned as before, with natural blood circulating in his body when he ascended up into heaven, though he did show his disciples the nail holes in his hands and feet and the spear holes in his side, that was the way he chose to prove to them that it was he himself, as they doubted his resurrection. On one occasion, he sat at meat with them. He took bread and blessed it and brake and gave to them, and their eyes were opened and they knew him and he vanished out of their sight. Luke 24: 30-31. Luke goes on down in the same chapter and says, "And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread. And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? (so we see at this point they did not know him, then he said unto them) "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them." Luke 24: 33-43. Then he goes on a little further in the same chapter, he began by saying, "And he led them out as far as Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." Luke 24: 50-51.

So we do not think that he went into heaven with any nail holes in his hands or his feet and no spear holes in his side, neither with a body in the form of a servant or the natural seed of Abraham but with a perfect glorified body. So now I hope what I have written, if it be the truth, it will be satisfactory.

There is a few more things I would like to mention. I believe the disciples were caused not to believe at first in order that he might reveal or make known to them by the most positive evidence for their comfort and learning and also the comfort and learning for the generations to come and us today, that he did raise from the dead and that it was really himself, which gives to us, as I think a guarantee that his body was raised our body shall also be raised in like manner be raised and be like him and see him as he is. "And when he had spoken these things, while he beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, two men stood by them in white apparel. Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1: 9-11. And the blessed Lord said, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; and where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:3. We are told that we shall be heirs and joint heirs with him and if so, we shall receive all things that he receives. Paul says, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Romans 8:16-17. What a blessed thought indeed that we shall see him as he is and be glorified together with him and heir all things which he is an heir to.

I hope I have written nothing but the truth, but if not the truth, I hope that you will not believe it, and if I am wrong, I pray the good Lord will forgive me and set me right. It seems sometimes I cannot be sure whether I know any thing about these things or not. I hope that I have had some faint glimpse of this blessed truth. I have other requests besides Brother Kenley's to write on this sacred subject, so I am trying to comply with them all in this letter through the *Signs of the Times,* if the dear Editors think it worth publishing.

So may the good Lord guide and direct us in the way that He would have us go, and keep us in the straight and narrow and thine shall be the praise forever and forever more. Amen.

H. L. ROGERS.
209 West Pine Street
Palestine, Texas

* * *

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES: Enclosed you will find remittance for another two years' subscription to the **Signs** which a brother asked me to send in for him. I am always speaking a good word for the dear old family paper wherever I go, and am happy when people ask me to send in their subscriptions. I loan my copies of old issues to others who love to read them but cannot subscribe because of these strenuous times.

I am so grateful to God that I am so situated and have the privilege, the health, and conveyance that I can attend some church of our faith and order every week end, which I usually do. These meetings are the happiest moments of my life. They are spent in the worship of a true and a living God with those who love the sacred truth

as it is in Christ Jesus. We hear the same old sweet story of salvation by grace and grace alone through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Yet it is ever new and refreshing to the wayworn traveler here below. It is both meat and drink to him. It revives that hope which is an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast which entereth to that within the veil. It is a haven of rest to the weary soul who is tossed to and fro by the cares of a tumultous world.

The Lord has been indeed merciful to the churches in this part of His vineyard. To my knowledge, He has brought eight of His hungering, thirsty little ones into the fold of three of the churches of the Union Association in the past two and one-half months—two by letters from churches of other associations and six by experience and baptism. It has been my happy privilege to attend three of the four baptismal services. In April I saw a precious brother baptized whose home for years has been a haven for Primitive Baptists. He had longed for a home in the church for many years, but felt too unworthy to offer himself for membership. Finally his burden become so great that he was forced by the power of God to go home to his friends on the second Sunday in March and tell them what great things the Lord had done for him. The wind blew hard on the Saturday afternoon he was baptized and the waves of the lake lashed high as he and the minister walked into the water, but the preacher said afterwards that it was the easiest baptismal service that he had ever performed.

A month later, at the same church, not far from Houston, I saw two sisters in the later years of life enter the water together, assisted by pastor and deacon. It was a beautiful scene to see them buried in that liquid grave and raised in newness of life, typifying the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

On last Saturday and Sunday I attended Corinth Church in an adjoining County. While there I witnessed some scenes I shall never forget. On Saturday morning after the doors of the church had been declared open for the reception of members, a slender lad of 14 years went to the rostrum holding up his arms to the pastor who stooped down and embraced him. He cried so hard for a few minutes and then became calm—while the sobs of the members could be heard throughout the house—everyone was deeply affected by the sight as most of them had known the boy all his life. His forefathers on both sides of the house were faithful members years ago in the same old church and a grandfather is now a deacon and is clerk of the church. He had been reared in the environs of the church and attended regularly, his mother being a member and his father a believer. I could not hear all he said, but knew that he spoke the truth when he said he had always loved the dear old church, and loved the doctrine of God our Savior which the ministers preached. He said he desired so much to be baptized and to have a home with the dear brethren and sisters. Everyone was astounded to see the boy go forth at this time, though all loved him for his manly, quiet demeanor all his life and felt that he would unite with the church some day. He had sung from his own hymnal ever since he could read the hymns. He was different from other children, preferring the company of the brethren and sisters to children. Often he was the only child seen in a group of older people. His teacher was in attendance and was greatly affected by the move the boy had made. He told friends later that he

wished all his pupils were as courteous, considerate, and studious as Curtis Wayne, the valedictorian of his eighth grade graduation class. He said that at all times his conduct was the nearest perfect of any pupil he had ever had.

Saturday night when told of the boy's joining the church, the father was greatly disturbed and spent a tearful, sleepless night. He had been impressed for some time to unite with the church but keenly felt his unworthiness. Sunday morning he told his wife that he could not bear for Wayne to be baptized without him. He dressed for baptism before going to the creek and joined at the water's edge. It was a sacred sight that Sunday morning to see the father and son standing in the water beside the minister. The boy was immersed first. Their countenances were beautiful to behold as they were raised up out of the water. Truly "A little child shall lead them". The Spirit of the Lord was with the pastor and he preached a marvelous sermon at the church in continuation of the services which were begun at the water's edge.

When the congregation assembled for the communion services, the father and son walked in together and took a front seat. The father's arm rested on the son's shoulders part of the time. Both were calm. After the Lord's supper was observed, the gray haired pastor laid aside his garment, girded himself with a towel, poured water into a basin which he placed before the boy, and kneeling, washed the feet of the young brother. Later the lad washed his pastor's feet. These experiences will never be forgotten by either and the beautiful pictures are engraved in the minds and hearts of all who witnessed them.

I heard many predictions as to the future of the boy. He has planned a high school and college education, but God knows what lies before him and we know that God's will must be done in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. Whatever comes, I feel that Wayne will be given grace to go forth into the paths of truth and righteousness and follow his Lord and Master through evil as well as good report.

It is indeed a very rare occasion to see one so young prefer the old church to the modern so-called churches which attract the youth of our land because of the social activities attached to these societies, all sorts of allurements to please the carnal mind. When asked why he did not attend Sunday School some time ago by a teacher, the boy replied, the bible says, "And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." He has defended his belief whenever questioned by friends and schoolmates, and has chosen to follow the meek and lowly Lamb and to suffer persecutions for His name's sake rather than the joys and pleasures of this world for a season.

As my mind has dwelt on the foregoing scenes this week, I have been made to meditate about the boys spoken of in the bible, especially Joseph, David and Christ. Christ at the age of twelve years was found by his mother with doctors and lawyers in the temple attending to his Father's business. "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

As you know, I seldom name the people I write about, but because of the unusual circumstances I will give the lad's name as some might want to write him a few words of encouragement. He is, Curtis Wayne Boyd, R. R. #1, Athens, Texas.

With Christian love to the Household of Faith,

Your little Sister from Texas.

(Mrs.) VELMA JORDAN FRENCH.

* * *

Star Route 4, Lamesa, Texas.

DEAR SISTER FERGUSON: Some way, I wish I could say or do something to make your grief over the loss of our beloved Brother Dodson easier to bear. Truly he was a man after God's own heart. I never met him, I never heard him preach, but I am the sister from Texas who asked him to write on, "The Identity of the Church". How I loved to read his writings! They were the manna from heaven. He has probably fed the sheep more abundantly than most are blessed to do. My spirit joined his in his writings and I could almost hear him preaching. May God bless you and all who loved him to be reconciled to God's will. I hope they will make a book of his editorials and other articles in the *Signs of the Times*. I think we would all like to have one. I am sure at his call, Christ must have said, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant", and, I am sure he had fought a good fight, the fight of faith.

He always worked for peace and was so agreeable with those he was not able to see eye to eye with. Oh Lord! give us more like him, that peace on earth may abound and trouble cease. Let us all look to God for consolation and be glad he does not have to suffer any more, but can abide in the sunshine of God's love. He has lightened the burdens of many and we feel assured his reward is great.

I got my *Signs* to read after supper, my little family having gone into town, and read all the pieces, as best I could about his funeral. My family came in and found me weeping profusely and could not understand why I should weep for one I had not known. In this natural life I never met him, but to me, he was an elder brother, one I could go to in perfect confidence with my spiritual desires. May another be put on the *Signs* who can also carry a banner of love for God's children, one we can go to when we feel we must go to some one for enlightenment. We are not all gifted to find in the scriptures the true meaning and have to go beg of those to whom the Lord has given light and how lovingly he wrote to us as though we were his special charge. We know he had no other God and his love for his brethren was great. He made us feel his love for each of God's poor. I know we have lost a good friend and we also know God can raise up others.

God give us all grace to say, "Thy Will be done". A sister in hope.

(Mrs.) LAURA WOMACK.

* * *

Elder T. A. Wall
Bivins, Texas

DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER IN CHRIST, I HOPE:

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they *shall* be filled.

I don't know why I should write you or anyone about my troubles, but for some unknown reason I have had a longing for a very long time to pour my heart out to you and now it seems I can no longer put it off. I, within myself, had rather not even think on spiritual things, but there is no rest or peace for me when the spirit is absent, and that is most of the time. For many years I have felt there is something amiss with or in me and I pray the Lord will guide my hand so you will understand what I am trying to say.

For quite a while I have felt impressed to relate to you some of the things which at times, often far between, are sweeter than all the world

to me, and the scripture quoted at the beginning of this letter constitutes the very foundation of any little hope I may have that the Lord has ever dealth with me in a spirit of mercy and grace.

It all began when I was a very young boy, at which time there would come grave doubts as to my eternal welfare and I would begin to do my best to live a better life and gain favor with my Creator, trying all the while to pray and making all kinds of promises to do better and cease to live a sinful life. Still, things grew more and more depressive and I sank further and further into desperation, still trying to believe and hope that somehow I would be able to work out my own salvation—but not with fear and trembling—as I now am sure the true meaning of fear (love) and trembling (humility) was foreign to me at that time. Each time I would open the Bible to try to find some comfort I would, instead, find something which sank me further into Hell. I was in a terrible state, the most miserable of all creatures, and the worst part of it all was I had been unable to do anything about it. This feeling of depravity continued to grow worse and worse through the years and almost daily petitions to my Maker and oceans of tears gained me no surcease and the constantly hounding realization that I was justly condemned by a just God.

Just as this torture was becoming unbearable and I had lost all hope I was at home alone, swimming in tears because I had by then been made to know there was nothing I could do. Oh, how I longed for the peace of mind and the goodness and the righteousness I saw in others. Everyone was better than myself and I was crying out and justly condemmed soul. For some reason I was possessed to pick up the Bible again. Where do you think it opened? Matthew 5:6, and the blessed words, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" struck me squarely in the face. That scripture must have been directed to my attention by a higher power, I cried, "For no man has ever hungered and thirsted after righteousness more than I have," and at that moment I was filled and began to shout praises to Hosannah while tears of joy coursed down my cheeks, the first and only relief I had ever had; for my heart was indeed filled to overflowing with the blessed assurance that God loved me and that Jesus had shed his blood for me. I was never so happy in all my life as I felt all the self-righteousness I had been carrying in my heart change to filthy rags and replaced with mercy from on High, for only through mercy from a merciful God and Savior could such blessed relief been found.

Since that day I have been sometimes in the mountain tops but most of the time deep in the valley of sorrow and doubt. For why should any one so base and sinful as I even hope that God would stoop low enough to speak to my heart, yet there have been fleeting moments when I have been made to see the great mysteries of God's eternal plan of salvation which He has revealed unto babes but hid from the wise and prudent. The memories of these fleeting moments are the most precious treasures of my life, and oh, for more and more of them. One such incident took place about a year ago while reading the Bible. All at once my attention was drawn from what I was reading to what appeared to be a host of evil beings closing in upon me and entirely surrounding me. I recognized them as enemies of my soul who had come to wreak vengence upon me. Just at that moment a voice came to me saying: "Fear not; thy name is written in the Lamb's book of life." What rejoicing

and ecstasy, and what the neighbors thought of my shouting I don't know, yet I have never been able to understand it all except to hope and believe at times that it had something to do with assuring my poor trembling soul that I had been born again.

Now, with all this background and all the trials and tribulations of, at times, a contrite heart and a broken spirit, with all those hopes and fears—hope that the Lord had touched my heart and fear that it was all a miserable mistake on my part, with all this I have labored and wandered for more than 40 years trying to find a place of rest and an earthly haven for this weary traveler. I have never found the church where I did not feel as though I would be a disgrace to it and to the brethren and sisters. About two years ago I had a longing to hear the hymn, "When I can Read my Titles Clear", and felt that if I ever heard it in church again that would be a sure sign that I belonged there. I heard it in Prospect Church at the Association but it left me cold and not a crumb of comfort did I get out of it, so I am still a wanderer on the face of the earth, without an earthly home, borne down by cares and weighted down with sorrows, yet for some reason I can't explain hardly ever going to hear the gospel preached. Heard Elder Lambert at Good Hope two weeks ago and fully intended going to Providence last Sunday, but just did not do it. I hope I believe all this is the Lord's own doing and that it is all for good to them that love the Lord, to those that are the called according to His purpose, and I also hope I realize that tribulations worketh patience: patience experience: and experience hope; because of the love of God which is shed abroad in our hearts. Surely, I am the most miserable of men, but like the time back in my youth, I can do nothing about it.

I shall be most happy to have a few lines from you if you ever feel so disposed. The things set forth in this letter have been on my mind and I have had a desire to write them to someone for quite awhile. Pray that the grace of God may comfort and sustain me in all my dark hours that I may be enabled to share a few crumbs from his bountiful table of love.

Unworthily yours and the chief of all sinners

D. W. WHITE
1718 Kenwood Blvd.,
Roanoke, Va.

* * *

TO THE READERS OF THE SIGNS:

I would like to write a few lines to those fellow travelers, whom to know is to love. So the blessed Savior said, "A new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another." When he speaks it stands fast.

I believe it says in my Bible that He will be with us in so many troubles and will not forsake us in so many more. I know this is true, for by God's grace I have a few of my own. I surely could not even stand if He did not hold me up. Oh, how I wish I could give unto those who despair some of the comfort I have received. But He is the Giver and Comforter. I am glad of this.

Our house burned the second of May and the same night my father died. I dreamed I was with him and took his hands in mine and sang "Oh Come my Savior, Come Away." I dreamed he said, "Mary, the window is open and I am going out." The next morning they told me he was gone. I was so upset I had to go to the hospital for a week. But what I want to say is this, I could feel the blessed presence of the Master with me. The shock of his death was almost too much as my heart is bad. I do know that it was only God's hand that held

me up, and I have found out again it is sweeter than honey in the comb when He is with us. Then the storm is peace, the darkness is light, and the crooked paths are straight, not will will be; but they are.

I do not care what anyone says about our being able to do, or let God do, for I know we are only worms of the dust and can do nothing, not even breathe without God's power moving us. When I hear or read of people telling of the things they do and the things they let God do; I think of the book of Job where it says, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel with words without knowledge?" They do not even have knowledge let alone wisdom and God knows I have not either. Otherwise He would not pick me up and shake me so many times and say "This is the way, walk ye in it."

Last August my husband was baptized and joined the Riffe Church and that was one of the sweetest blessings to me. I rejoiced so much that he has been given the Light that no darkness of this world can dim. We are a long way from a church and yet so hungry at times till we almost despair. When we get a letter or the SIGNS it is like a cool drink in a shady place in the desert. In the midst of our troubles we still can say, "God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform, He plants His footsteps on the sea and rides upon the storm." No, not a single shaft can hit until the God of love sees fit.

It has always been my prayer since I was a little girl that I would see God, and then I, finally, realized it was not possible to see Him; then I slowly began to desire to know Him. Now I think I can begin to realize we can not know Him, for it is too much for our mortal bodies and minds to stand. Now I hope my prayer is, He will give me such as I have need for and unto my loved ones the same. Surely this is so much more than I deserve.

I hope the new Editor of the SIGNS will be upheld by God and kept in straight paths for his precious sake. I know it is my prayer that such will be the case. I know we are nothing and it matters not what we think, but the Truths we hope we believe in are precious, indeed. I hope if it is taken from me that God does away with me for I will be useless for sure, then.

MARY L. ECKARD
Bivins, Texas

* * *

Route 3, Hurricane, W. Va.

DEAR ELDER BIRD: It has been on my mind for quite a while to write you but I do not know what to say that would interest you. First, I hope you and Bessie are well, Mary is no better.

I have wanted to tell you something about myself, what I saw sometime back. I was on my bed one night with eyes closed, not asleep. I walked out in the yard, it was day out there, I was still on bed, but while I was standing there, a nice dressed young man came to me with a smile, he had a suit case in each hand, and said, "If I would fall down and worship him, he would give it all to me." It took no effect upon me. The word came to me what the blessed Savior said to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan". Mark 8:33. Never saw him any more. I saw a large rock in front of me, it was as smooth as glass, had diamonds all over it, I was moved up to it, put my hand on the rock and some unseen power raised me on top and set me on a ridge over to the left in a beautiful grove and such a fine building and happy people. I only got a glimpse, tried so hard to see more plainly but could not. I begged my unseen guide to show me something else. I was led on farther. I saw another

building, more beautiful than the first, but only a glimpse and the most happy people and beautiful flowers. I tried so hard to see in full, but could not. I begged my guide to show me something else. I was led on up a grade and came to a narrow gate. I could see back a little way, as in a large field, and as far as I could see, the field was full of sheep. I asked my guide to take me in, he said, "You cannot go in there until you cross the river of death." I was on my bed, had not dropped off to sleep, had not heard any noise.

It makes me think of the woman who was in the crowd and had an issue of blood for twelve years, had spent all her living but could not be healed. (Is this some of my good works, that I had done?)

I have had many serious thoughts about what I saw in that vision, sometimes it has given some relief. I am afraid it is just me, and that is all there is to it.

God bless you all.

D. O. SLOAN.

* * *

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES: Find enclosed $3 to pay for another year's subscription for the paper, as it is all the preaching I hear. I do enjoy it so much. It contains what I hope I believe. It is so far from here to any church that I seldom get to go.

I have had a name with the Old School Baptist 49 years, getting too old to get about by myself, my eyes are getting dim, but I can read the *Signs* very well and it is a great pleasure to me. If I am saved, it is by the mercies of our dear Savior, for there is nothing good that I can do.

Yours in hope of a better world.

(Mrs.) S. F. McDANIEL

* * *

DEAR SIR:

The SIGNS is the best paper published if I know my poor heart. I love the doctrine it contends for. You will find enclosed Post Office money order for three dollars for my renewal.

I am also sending you a letter written to me from a friend David White, which I would be glad to see it published in the SIGNS, that others might enjoy reading it.

As ever, unworthy little brother

Elder T. A. WALL

Mount Pleasant, Texas

* * *

TO THE READERS OF THE SIGNS:

Since taking over as Editor of The "Signs" we have received many letters of encouragement, and Co-operation. Whether all are acknowledged personally or not I want each one who has lent a helping hand to know it has been highly appreciated. I have made mistakes, and will doubtless make more, but will try to eliminate them as much as possible.

Any suggestions you may have will be appreciated. The paper belongs to you, and I am only your humble servant.

Many have sent in new subscriptions, and these are a lot of help. Every year there are a number who pass away, whose names are dropped from the list. Many are very Old of our readers, and will not be with us long, according to nature. To continue the paper new subscribers must fill in the gap. If each one who loves the "Signs" would make a special effort to secure just one new subscriber, or send us the name of some one who you think would be interested in the paper it would help. How about sending it to your sons and daughters; would they not appreciate it. Or sending it as a Christmas gift to some friend.

I am thankful to report that the work so far has been encouraging, I humbly desire an interest in your petition at a throne of Grace. EDITOR.

Elder David V. Spangler,

DEAR BROTHER,

If I am worthy to call you brother. If it is the Lord's will, I will try and write what I hope the Lord's dealings have been with me.

In the year 1903, I was seventeen years old. One night I was sitting on one side of the house, my father and my mother were at the other end of the hall singing, "What Wonderous Love is This". I had a very peculiar feeling come over me, like I never had before. I went on and did not think very much about it; but never could forget it.

Three years afterwards I was sick with Typhoid Fever and was in bed about three months. When I got able to get up I was not very strong. I went for about seven years trying one doctor and then another. They did me lots of good; but I never did get strong like other people; which worried me very much.

I was twenty-seven years old and had never had a dollar to call mine. My father had taken care of me up to that time. I did not worry so much about my sinful condition. I just wanted to get well and able to work. By this time I had got able to work some; but could not do heavy work. One day I was working in the field picking up limbs and trash which had fallen from the trees. I worked and strained myself until I was completely knocked out. I sat on a log for about half of the evening. I looked back over my past life and it seemed that everything was against me, that God was against me, too. It seemed I would never amount to anything in this world, nor in the world to come. I could not see anything but destruction. I went to the house about dark and just before I got to the barn I went to singing a song,

"Lord What of All my Suffering here,
If Lord thou count me meet,
With that enraptured host appear,
and worship at thy feet,
Give joy or grief, give ease or pain,
take life or friends away;
But let me find them all again
in that eternal day".

Then for a few minutes it seemed that it made no difference what my life was, how much I suffered in this world, just so I was counted in that eternal Day.

I believe or rather hope the Lord revealed to me that I would be counted in that one day, and would live forever. That was in 1912 when this took place with me. Before then I would go to church, sit on the front seat and help them sing. I thought I was as good as any of them. After then I would sit back in the middle of the house. I felt like I was not fit to be in the house and I was sure I was not fit to help them sing. I quit going to meeting very much for about ten years. I was afraid somebody would find out that there had been a change in my life. I did not want anybody to know it.

In 1925 I threw my hip out of place and could not go to church for about three years. During this time I read all the back numbers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that my father had; him being an Old School Baptist.

I would go off to myself and read and cry and I did not want anyone to see me reading them. I told my father what little experience I had. He told me to go and talk to the church about it.

I have been going to meeting as regular as any member for the past twenty years and have had a desire to unite with them often; but did not join until two years ago last June. When I did join the church they were having

a three day meeting at Prospect church in Bowie County, Texas. I don't think I ever enjoyed a meeting any better.

On Saturday night I stayed with an old Brother John Burkhalter. I told him I did not have any idea that I would ever join the church.

I had got to the place I did not think the Lord would have such a vile sinner as I felt myself to be in the church; but the next day Brother W. A. Speer from Eldorado, Ark. preached the last sermon, and told about what a good meeting we had had. He described my feelings better than I could myself. I thought if they opened the doors of the church that I would join. When they opened the doors, I had decided I would not join. There was a lady who came asking for a home with them, a Sister Huggins, that I had known all my life, and really loved her for truths sake. I lost all control of myself, and the next thing I knew I was up there shaking hands with Brother Wall and told a little of what I have tried to write. I was received.

I hope the Devil was put in the background for a little while. That was the happiest time of my life, to think that those people so freely welcomed me in the church; one of the greatest sinners that ever lived in this sin cursed world. Sister Huggins and myself were baptised the fourth Sunday June, 1949 by a Brother T. A. Wall. A day I will always be proud of and never regret.

I sure do enjoy reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and want to take them as long as I live in this world. I had rather be with the children of God, go to meeting, mix, and mingle with them, hear them preach and help them sing; than anything I know in this world. It is the greatest thing in this life, for a hell deserving sinner like me.

I do not know whether this is an experience of Grace or not; but it is all I have, and will be when my time comes to leave this world. I am a very poor man financially and spiritually, been afflicted for forty-six years; but if I am counted in that eternal Day, it is enough and it is all right.

I hope you and the other Editors will live for many years yet, to carry on the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. If this is not worthy of a place in the paper just throw it in the waste basket and all will be well.

I remain a very little brother if one at all.

B. F. HARPER
Atlanta, Texas

* * *

Dothan, Ala.

Elder David Spangler
Editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEAR BROTHER SPANGLER,

I am enclosing a check for $5.00 to pay for a subscription to the SIGNS of the TIMES for two years.

Of all the papers I have had the privilege to read that were devoted to the Old School Baptist cause I think the SIGNS is the best and the soundest. Sometimes in reading the letters from the various writers I am made to think of the assertions of the apostle Paul in his letter to the Ephesians.

Paul begins his letter by saying, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ."

After telling the saints at Ephesus and the faithful in Christ Jesus that God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ had blessed them, and to what extent, and why he had blessed them, and why (according to his choice of them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. All the assertions of Paul, such as God's predestination, adoption, praise to the glory of His

grace, redemption, and forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.

He then begins the second chapter by saying: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;" Farther on in the same chapter he says, "But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by Grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

Dear brother, God's knowledge was great enough to see and comprehend all things and his wisdom was great enough, deep enough, and rich enough to arrange or make secure all things to the good of his elect, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.

The assertions of Paul to saints at Ephesus and the faithful in Christ Jesus includes all of the elect from Adam to the end of time for we read that he stood us a lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

We could quote many places in the old testament where the riches of his grace had been shown to servants of God, in his kindness toward them through Christ Jesus but it would get these meditations of mine too lengthy. I will just quote a few instances as recorded in the new testament.

There was the raising of Lazarus, together with many instances of healing the sick, opening the eyes of the blind, causing the lame to walk, and many others during Christ's stay on earth.

Then we note the appearance of Jesus to Paul or (Saul of Tarsus) making him to love the things he once hated and hate the things he once loved. Then the kindness through the richness of his grace shown him rescuing him from the hands of his enemies until he had performed or accomplished all that was assigned to him.

Since the words 'in the ages to come' means to day as same as yesterday or any other day, we are made to feel that the riches of his grace is being shown forth, exceeding riches which shows forth to me exceeds all other riches; in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus today.

When a poor, defenseless sinner realizes his condition and realizes there is nothing he can do to bring God under any obligation to him, having tried keeping the law (take ten commandments) the law being our school master and Christ being the end of the law for righteousness to them that believe. Then they are made to know the exceeding riches of his grace and to know that it is through Christ Jesus who made the sacrifice, paid the whole debt, by dying in our stead. After we have been quickened from our state of death in trespasses and sins we get very often like the Psalmist David was when he ask God to "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit."

God never fails us in times of need but is constantly renewing by his spirit. The blessed redeemer Christ himself promised his deciple that "I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

If you find anything in this that you think will be any comfort to any of the household of faith, you may publish it. If not cast it aside and it will be all right.

Your unworthy brother and yoke brother in Christ, I hope

Elder J. A. TEW

DEAR BROTHER,

I can't think we can bless material things in the sense that God blesses. There are a great many references where God being the agent. Also God being the object and where man being the agent and object. All seems to be to the praise of God. I wonder sometimes if I am a pessmist, I know God will raise up true servants and witnesses to go forth in His name, but I do love the old time preaching when they were taught by hardships their dependence was wholly in God. Yes we do have some yet that give God all power and not limit the Honly One of Israel, as they did in the wilderness yet God did bless them and have compassion on them. We are commanded to watch and pray. Do we watch enough and pray as often as we should.

I have wondered if the desire to pray is not in our hearts if it is a time prayer or just lip services. I know I have been made to fall on my knees and pour out my heart in gratitude and thankfulness to Him who is my all and in all. Maybe all of us cannot see eye to eye on some scriptures but brotherly love should continue. We should have fervent charity also for each other.

May God bless you and all editors and writers for the SIGNS. Pray for me.

Christian love
Mrs. J. R. McAJEE

* * *

DEAR BRETHREN,

I get so much pleasure out of reading the good experimental and doctornal pieces. I find they have traveled a lot of the same rugged and dark road that I have traveled and that I am still traveling. Often it seems that the older I get the darker my road seems to be. Sometimes it gets so dark and gloomy that I am made to say Oh wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death? If I could be like some people who tell me that they know they are saved. I tell you my dear friends if it wasn't for my blessed little hope I would be one man most miserable. I hear a person say that he knows he is saved; I don't get any comfort from that kind of talk.

I feel the Lord has been better to me than I deserve. If I am saved it is by the grace of God.

MANCE BROWN
Providence, Ky.

* * *

DEAR BRETHREN,

I have often prayed that when our ministers go among the churches that they might be refreshed in spirit as we are who hear the joyful gospel sound and I feel a depth of gratitude to our Lord that He puts it into the hearts of His servants to come proclaiming what the Lord has prepared for him. We know and rejoice with the preacher when he has been given great liberty and his words come with power for it is the Lord speaking through his servant.

Yet it is not always at these times that we are given the hearing ear. "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a picture of silver." Pr. 25-11.

Often when the minister feels that what he has tried to declare has been very unsatisfactory is when some hungry soul has eaten that spiritual food that God alone can provide, and drank from that fountain which is Christ. How comforting to feel, if only at times, the sweet assurance that we are partakers of the Savior's pardoning love, and know that it is by His grace only that we are made one with Him and will never forsake us.

Yours in hope
Mrs. LYDIA MASON
El Dorado, Ark.

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EDITORIAL

"THE STEPS OF A GOOD MAN ARE ORDERED BY THE LORD—"

The expression that heads this article is found in Psalms 37:23. We trust that we have learned by experience and revelation the truthfulness of this statement. There was a time in our sojourn here that we could not receive this as a true statement. We thought we could order, command, decree, or perform our own steps within and of ourselves. We thought this was the right way and that we possessed the ability to direct our steps aright. But, alas! we found by sad experience that this was the way that seemeth right unto a man but the end thereof are the ways of death! In our desperation we were made to cry out as the prophet, "O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jer: 10:23.) We did not know this until we had tried with all our might to walk aright and every trial met with defeat. All of our own devising was fruitless. Then we were made to trust no longer in ourselves for deliverance; we were forced to look to another source for salvation; we were made to cry to God; and, He heard our cry! We trust that we experienced the deliverance as recorded in Psalms 40:2 "He brought me up, also, out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my FEET upon a rock, and ESTABLISHED MY GOINGS."

Have you ever been in an horrible pit and tried to walk when your feet were in the miry clay? Your feet slip and slide so that you cannot direct your steps. Every trial leads you deeper into the mire until you are stuck. It is in this helpless condition that you pray for deliverance. When the Lord hears your cry and brings you up out of the pit and miry clay and sets your feet upon a firm foundation and directs your steps—you are, then, made to agree with Proverbs 16:9 "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps."

Is it your experience that you have to be shown again and again these things? My experience is that this primitive experience was not sufficient to make me to be at all times conscious of my dependence upon Him. Sometimes, it seems, that God graces me with a godly walk for a period of time and my body is kept under subjection and I begin to gloat over my steadfastness in my walk and feel that I shall never stray from the paths of righteousness. Then I am brought to my true status and made to embrace the language as expressed in Psalms 73:2 "But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped". I notice in Psalms 37:24 regarding the good man of the text the psalmist says, "Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for

the Lord upholdeth him with His hand". If I know what this fall is I have experienced it many times in my pilgrimage here. I believe Peter experienced it when Satan was permitted to sift him as wheat. Jesus did NOT tell Peter: I have prayed that YOU fail not; but, "I have prayed that THY FAITH fail not". Peter failed to do that he had avowed to do. He desperately failed but that Faith that had been given him by the Lord was not faith in Peter but faith in JESUS CHRIST. These falls are destined to strengthen our faith in Him who is able to deliver us from these terrible conditions. These falls enable us to rejoice in the mighty Hand of the Lord that upholds us so that we shall not be utterly cast down.

We read in Psalms 37:31 of a good man that: "The law of his God in his heart: none of his steps shall slide". None of his steps shall slide because God orders by His law; directs by His spirit; and, enables and performs for him by "working in him both to will and to do of His good pleasure". We are informed by Proverbs 16:1 that the preparations of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is of the Lord. According to the scriptures He takes from us the stony heart; gives us a heart of flesh; writes His law in our heart; and, enables the heart to believe and the tongue to confess by the direct operation of His Holy Spirit. It is no wonder that none of the steps of God's children shall slide when we consider that He is so gracious to them by establishing their goings and causing them to know from whom cometh their strength!

We want to consider now some of the steps that are ordered by the Lord. The steps that God orders would not be the steps that man would voluntarily take upon his own initiative. Man would naturally try to escape the first step that we shall mention. We maintain that man is not able or desirous to take any of them.

Suffering must be a step for we read in I Peter 2:21 "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also SUFFERED for us, leaving us an example, that ye should FOLLOW HIS STEPS". This emphatically states that you are CALLED to suffering. Suffering is necessary in order that we reign with Him according to II Tim. 2:12. The writer to the Hebrews in speaking concerning Jesus said, "Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He SUFFERED and being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that OBEY HIM". (Heb. 5:8-9) Suffering was necessary in order that Jesus learn obedience. Suffering is necessary for us in order that we OBEY. We learn obedience by the things which we suffer. Were it not for suffering we would yet be satisfied with our own righteousness and ability. Severe afflictions were blessings in disguise, causing us to realize the filthiness of ourselves and our need of Him and His guidance, love, and mercy. "Not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that TRIBULATIONS worketh PATIENCE; and patience, EXPERIENCE; and experience, HOPE; and hope MAKETH NOT ASHAMED; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us.

Yes, severe afflictions work patience —the next step the Lord orders. We are brought into humble submission to His ruling. He causes us to be still and know that He is God. (Ps. 46:10). He makes us to know that He works all things after the counsel of His own will. We are made to be content with our lot and reconciled to His will. We are blessed to endure hardships and con-

stantly look to Him for deliverance.

Experience is the next step recorded by the apostle. After that we have been caused to suffer until we have been made to patiently wait upon Him—then we begin to experience and realize the hand of God in the matter. He comes to our rescue and begins to manifest Himself as our deliverer. We experience His grace, loving-kindness and tender mercy. We begin to look upon Him as our Rock, our Refuge, and our hiding place. He has stilled the tempest, calmed our minds, and delivered us from trusting in self and has caused us to look to the merits of the blessed Son of God for our salvation. This has worked a HOPE.

We are not yet delivered from sin for we find that sin is mixed with all we do and "When we would do good evil is present with us". We earnestly desire and expect some day to be delivered from even the presence of sin through the merits of Jesus and the amazing grace of Almighty God. This is the hope of God's children. "For we are saved by HOPE: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience WAIT for it." (Rom. 8:24-5) When blessed to be in the sweet embrace of His love we realize—"Which HOPE we have as an anchor of the soul, both SURE and STEADFAST, and which entereth into that within the veil". (Heb. 6:19) This hope MAKETH NOT ASHAMED.

The subjects who have been ordered to take the above stated steps are not embarrassed to own Him as their total Saviour. Jesus will not be ashamed of us because we are made not ashamed of Him. We are not of them that Jesus referred to as recorded in Mark 8:38 "Whosoever therefore shall be ASHAMED of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his father with the Holy angels." Do you consider it a disgrace to believe and avow that God is sovereign over all things? Do you blush in contending for the doctrine of salvation solely by grace through the merits of Jesus?

"Ashamed of Jesus! Sooner far
Let evening blush to own a star;
He sheds the beams of light divine
O'er this benighted soul of mine.
Ashamed of Jesus! yes I may,
When I've no guilt to wash away,
No tear to wipe, no good to crave,
No fears to quell, no soul to save."

—GREGG

Repentance is a step that is ordered by the Lord. No doubt Ephraim of old tried to repent of himself thereby ordering his own step. He certainly was unsuccessful in the attempt and was made to cry to God, ". . . Turn thou me and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord, my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented. . . ." (Jer. 31: 18-9) You see that repentance must be ordered by the Lord. When it is so ordered it is sure. It is certain because Christ gives it to spiritual Israel for it is recorded in Acts 5:31 "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to GIVE REPENTANCE to Israel, the forgiveness of sins. When God revealed Himself to Job it caused him to say, I abhor myself; I repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:6) We are made to hate sin and pray for deliverance from it.

Faith is a step that is ordered by the Lord. Faith is the evidence of the new birth. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God" (I John 5:1) The faith that was once delivered to the saints is the trust in the three-one God. Do you have faith in the Father who chose His people in the

Son; predestinated them unto salvation; made all the provisions for their salvation; and who is so perfect in power and wisdom that none of His decrees shall fail but all shall have the desired affects—all things were ordained by Him and for the perfecting of His grand purpose, the salvation of His people? Do you possess faith in that Son who accomplished all the requirements of the law for you; took your sins upon Himself, paid the penalty, satisfied justice by shedding His blood for you: is now at the right hand of God's Throne making intercessions for you according to the Father's will? Have you been made to feel the calming influence of the Holy Spirit that reveals these things to you that the Father has designed and the Son has accomplished? Has the Comforter ever soothed your aching heart and made you to cry with joy, "My redeemer liveth"? This faith is the gift of God, "For by grace are ye saved through FAITH; and that (faith) not of yourselves: it (faith) is the GIFT of God." (Eph. 2:8) We find by reading further that it is not of works but unto good works. So, the next step we find ordered by the Lord is GOOD WORKS.

These good works are the results of that faith which is a living or working faith—not the dead faith spoken of by James 2:17 "Even so faith, if it hath not works is dead, being alone. This living faith activates the subjects and causes them to" . . . warm them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men. (I Thes. 5:14-5). When it pleases God to work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure a godly walk is the result and our conversation is godly. All these good works are inspired by faith and motivated by LOVE.

We love God because He first loved us. (I John 4:19). He did not love us because we loved Him for—"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propituation for our sins. (I John 4:10) We are not capable of loving divinely until He manifests His love toward us in giving us this divine love by the Holy Spirit. Then, we love Him and love one another. It is an order of God that we love one another and this order is effectual. He said through the mouth of the prophet, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. Love is one of the fruits of the Spirit and is made manifest in the lives of God's children. Those who are not born of the Spirit act solely upon selfish desires in hope of reward or in fear of punishment. Those born of the Spirit are stimulated by love in their actions to one another. Love is a step that is ordered by God. Love is the law He indelibly imprinted in this new heart of yours.

Many of God's children are ordered to follow their Lord in being baptized in water which is an outward manifestation and figure of being enveloped by the body of Jesus—being IN HIM as He accomplished the law, paid the penalty of death, and was resurrected. (See Romans 6:3) Baptism in water is an outward manifestation of being enveloped and immersed in repentance. Baptism in water is signifying a hope of the mortal body being some day baptized with immortality. As baptism into Jesus and His death by God creating them IN Him was the entrance into the Church universal—so then, baptism in water is the proper entrance into the

church militant.

God orders, directs, inspires and empowers His children in the steps of singing, praying, preaching, communing, and doing all that is becoming to saints. When He says, "sing", we sing with the Spirit and understanding. When He says, "pray", we pray without ceasing. When He says, "preach", we preach the Word. When He directs us to teach we teach transgressors His ways. When He directs us to RUN we are enabled to lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us and run with patience the race that is SET before us—looking only to JESUS as the AUTHOR and FINISHER of our faith.

Time, space, nor ability will permit us to put in words our many thoughts upon this great subject. We have briefed the steps mentioned. Many steps that arrested our thoughts have not been written in this manuscript. Suffice it to say, we trust that God will bless these few hints to your comfort and edification. May He stir up your pure minds to recall the many steps in your experience that God has ordered. I desire to close this article on "THE STEPS OF A GOOD MAN ARE ORDERED BY THE LORD" by quoting Philippians 1:6 "Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

E. J. LAMBERT

* * *

Ruffin, N. C.

BELOVED OF GOD, CHOSEN AND PRECIOUS,

Today as I take my pen in hand desiring to address you may I hope God is in the matter. If he is not may you cast this aside as the filth of the flesh and all shall be well.

To me this has been a very empty summer as I have felt so barren much or most of the time, just about lifeless seemingly so and hope that I had heretofore cherished dear grew so dim that I began to fear that I was one who had run and was not sent, had caught the shadow missing the substance. I felt surely that what I had hoped was a little light given to me on some of the teachings of the scriptures must have been only vain imagination on my part, thus I went head bowed often desiring some evidence that if I were deceived to undeceive me dear Lord, and if what I had hoped was a hope given me in the love and mercy of a just and holy God let it be kindled with fire from above glowing once more.

The scriptures teach us that that which comes down from God ascends back unto him and it prospers in the things where unto God sent it, praising God from whom all blessings flow.

My dear companion entered Black mountain sanatorium for treatment of a slight lung infection, July 24th of this year. For some purpose known to God he is away from home, and his church which he loves very much. His membership is with Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church located about 13 miles east of Reidsville, N. C. and where when he was well at home we attended together. The dear ones there bear evidence that they have been taught in a school of grace, such as the world knows not of I am not a member of the militant church and I feel the older I get the more unworthy I am to ever have my name on that book, not that I don't feel to need you very much but I feel you don't need such a sinner as I know myself to be, have known this for several years now. That hope I felt was given me that God had pardoned my sins for Jesus sake having grown so dim, and fearing greatly that I was just a hypocrite, and a deceiver,

a persecuter and all things evil surely must be me. Yes, this was hurtful to me for I hoped that though I had never had the privilege of following the Lord in water baptism, my hope was that I had been baptised with one from above, the most important one, if you please. After my dear companion entered the sanatorium I had a dream one night and I thought much about it. It disturbed me and I went to church at Pleasant Grove on the regular meeting day having three visiting Elders there that day. Elders Ashworth, Paschal, Pulliam were the Elders there that day. I seemed to enjoy them all. While Elder Paschal was in the midst of preaching the word that dream I had previously, came before me, and surely was revealed to me its meaning. It came so strong that I trembled as a child at the revelations. Leaving the church I came home and wrote to my companion at the Sanatorium, but when I wrote him something told me that I had been deceived in what I had that was a revelation of that dream, so in writing him I did not tell him of the revelations but did tell him the dream and even said Satan sure could disturb us in our dreams to destroy and keep us torn up, too. Dear children of God when I got an answer from my companion he told me the meaning of the dream as I had felt while at church. Surely I felt as did John when he sent inquiring, was this the Christ or look we for another? And Jesus sent word back to John to tell him the things they had seen, the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and the poor have the gospel preached unto them. What a wonderful God is this who knows our every need, never too late to supply food to a dying soul, able to do all things, working all things after the counsel of his one will that which is well pleasing in his sight. He knows just what it takes to teach one humbleness and humility, and when one is killed to confidence in the flesh, pride, selfishness, covetness and all things that are works of the flesh, what a dying that takes place, dying daily if you please. On what love, joy, peace, etc. in Christ we feel when shown again the things of Christ, the comforter comes and takes the things of Christ, and teaches you all things needful.

Yes dear ones, we want flowery beds of ease but that is not the travel of God's children. They must suffer persecution, he was hated by the world without cause Christ said, remember if they hated me they will also hate you. God's "wills and shalls" never fail, and the scripture tells us if we have hope we must bear tribulations which worketh patience and patience works experience and experience, hope and hope maketh not ashamed for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given us freely through Christ Jesus our Lord.

This old flesh must be held in subjection, we are not sufficient to think or do one thing as we ought, our sufficiency being of God. Our nature is as prone to sin as the sparks are to fly upward. How corrupt it is, makes me shudder, self is loathsome and God is good, full of tender mercy to all who call upon His name out of a pure heart. Bless His dear and Holy name. May I ask all who are given to pray to remember us in our afflictions and all who have a mind to do so write to a dear child of God on a bed of afflictaion. His address is, Fred Cobb, Western N. C. Sanatorium, Black Mountain, N. C. He hears so little of the things he is made to love, I do hope he won't have to stay much longer but God alone knows the time of his departure from where he

now must be. We fulfill his purpose in us wherever we are called on to be.

I did so grieve at the departure of Elder Dodson though I knew him not by sight, yet I felt to surely know him by his writing. I cherish dear the letters he has written to me on spiritual things and I believe he is at rest and may this dear paper ever stand contending for truth as in the past. You who have been added to its staff may God direct you causing you to go forth holding in the work given you to do. May all God's ministers be given strength to declare upon the wall so of Zion that salvation is of the Lord. This abases man. Ye cannot preach Christ and Him crucified for sin without preaching there are sinners elected to be the happy recipiants of that redemption, precious every drop of blood be shed for his elect race. This people have I chosen for myself and they shall show forth my praise. Keep us ever more in thy way.

In a Blessed Hope, I am

Mrs. FRED COBB

* * *

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST: Enclosed find remittance for the dear old *Signs of the Times* for another year.

I do not have a church near where I live and do not get to hear the good sermons preached often. I can read the good messages in the *Signs,* they are made so plain, it is almost like sitting in church and listening to some dear Brother preach.

It was a shock about Brother Dodson's death. I never knew him personally, but felt like I had always known him through his writings. I enjoyed them so much.

I have just received my June issue and see where the Lord has given us another leader for the *Signs* and my prayers in my weak and feeble way are with him.

I desire the prayers of my dear brethren, that I may always be a sister in Christ, for without Him, I cannot do anything.

A sister in Christ.

(Mrs.) DELPHIA BLACK

Rolla, Ark.

* * *

OBITUARY

Mrs. Katharine Virginia Cole, wife of William S. Cole of near Purcellville, Virginia, departed his life June 27, 1951 in her 76th year. She was a regular attendant of Mt. Zion Old School Baptist church for many years and a firm believer in the doctrines of grace. She was a daughter of the late Francis Marion and Mary Matilda Cole and a lifelong resident of Loudoun County. She and Mr. Cole celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in February of this year.

Besides her husband Mrs. Cole is survived by two sons, Francis Marion and William Curtis Cole and four grandchildren, Ann Cole, William Curtis Jr., Francis Marion and James Miller Cole; also three sisters, Mrs. Laura L. Keeler, Middleburg, Va., Mrs. Rachel Norman, Purcellville, Va. and Mrs. Henry Rogers, Arlington, Va. and one brother, James M. Cole of near Lincoln, Va.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at the home in Purcellville, where a large congregation of her friends paid tribute to her sterling worth as a neighbor and friend. Mrs. Cole will be greatly missed from the meetings at Mt. Zion and by those who counted her as their friend. Burial was in Sharon Cemetery, Middleburg, Va.

May the merciful Father reconcile all who mourn and give them grace to realize that He doeth all things right.

(Elder) JOHN D. WOOD

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the **Signs of the Times** at the following prices: 1 copy, 25 cents; 3 copies, 75 cents; 6 copies, $1.50; 12 copies, $3.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

Please check the renewal date on your wrapper. It shows when your paper expires.

CORRECTION

On page 262 of November SIGNS is a request for some historical information, and some back copies of the Signs. Please send this information and Signs to Elder W. D. Griffin, Covin, Ala.

Editor

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 120 ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND, JANUARY, 1952 No. 1

Mesilla Park, N. M.
Oct. 3, 1951

ELDER D. V. SPANGLER
Annapolis, Md.

Enclosed find my check for $3.00 to cover one years subscription to the SIGNS of the TIMES.

Not having had the pleasure of knowing you I would guess you are an elderly man, an old soldier of the cross having experienced many seasons of joy and sorrow. I would like more than anything to visit the Primitive Baptist in the East and have the pleasure of hearing you and the other brethren among your churches declare the whole council of God. Brother Spangler many times I am made to feel like Eliga that I am left alone. For fourteen years I have not had the pleasure of hearing a sound old Baptist sermon. At different times I have been back in Okla. to hear preaching but every time something would happen, floods, sickness and bus strikes to prevent me. Now I hope I believe that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to purpose. Brother Spangler I believe salvation is by grace. Whatever type of saving we have and as many as we have and it is not of works which we can perform.

I believe in the natural man, the one created in the garden of Eden, dwells no good things. The first man is nothing and less than nothing and all together vanity. I have no confidence in any works only the works He performs in us. For it is by Him and through and to Him are all things.

If we are led by Him we climb on high and rejoice in His presence but when we are left to the old man we go down like Peter on the water.

When I am cast down I feel like the young eagles that were left alone, to be forced off their nest not knowing the old Eagle was near. Some times I go to some sacred church of God. I always feel like the prodical son who was trying to feed with the swine. I am made to remember my Father's house and his store of good things.

All of the world are looking for self glory and if you try to give Christ the glory they do not like it. Christ at no time took on himself glory but always gave God the glory. Most of the so-called christians are like the Pharisse who thanked God he wasn't as other men. When I am let by His spirit I feel like the poor publican, God be merciful to me a sinner. I have no righteousness of my own. I have no patience with anyone who tries to rob the Son of God of His glory. I get no pleasure out of praise of man as his wisdom I often remember the scripture where it says how beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace and bring good tidings of good things, not hell fire and damnation. How his people were 10,000 talents in debt and not a farthing to pay and He paid it all. He works all things after the council of

His own will. Even man who goes about to do anything without a plan, we say is foolish. If he has a plan and follows it and fails, either the plan or the one trying to fulfill it was imperfect; but God is perfect in all His works from the foundation of the world. I have heard some preachers that seem to be afraid to say some things they fear they will get God in bad. I say let God be true though every man a liar. His is a law given and not under any law. Sin is transgression of law.

This is my first attempt to write any of my views. If I am wrong I can not help it. I am most 53 years of age and a barber by trade. My health is not very good but when the time comes for me to depart from this life I want all who know me to know that I give Him, Christ all the praise and glory for that inheritance that reaches within the vale. In conclusion if it is God's will you will write me a long letter and be led by His spirit that I might feast on the crumbs that falls from his table. If any of the Baptist among your acquaintance have a mind to write me I will try in my feeble way to answer.

One of my favorite scriptures is Hebrew 12:1-2 "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Your unworthy brother in hope of a perfect life,

JAMES A. BELL

* * *

DEAR BROTHER,

You will find a money order to pay for my renewal to the SIGNS, also one for Miss Florence Robinson's.

I have been blessed to be able to attend three associations. It was wonderful to meet with all the dear Baptist in sweet fellowship and have such good meetings. All the Elders were blessed with good food to feed the sheep. I certainly did enjoy all the wonderful sermons. We were so glad to have Elder W. D. Griffin with us at Soldier Creek Association. It was a feast to me, and I wish I had the mind to write as seems I would love to but one can only write as God gives me my thoughts. He gives us all we have in this life.

I received the book "Fragments" and have enjoyed it so much. May God bless you and all the editors of the SIGNS.

It is my pleasure to visit among the Primitive Baptist and attend the meetings, and read all the good articles that are written. If I never meet you in this world I hope to meet you and all of God's little ones at the throne of Grace. I need your prayers. Remember me when you are given mind to pray.

An unworthy sister, if one

Mrs. S. S. KERLEY

* * *

DEAR BROTHER,

Ever since I received my paper I have wanted to write and tell you what a great feast they were to me and I am not able to get out any where and Oh I was so hungry to hear the Truth preached once more, how I wish I could find words and was a good writer so I could tell you just how wonderful they were to me. This last one seems to me is the best of all, it is just full of the wonderful works of God. It has given me light on so many of the scriptures that I have never been able to understand. The Scripture you used in your editorial was so wonderful. How I wish I were able to help you out with the

paper as my life would be so lonely without it.

The good meeting they wrote about down in Tenn. was at my old home church and my membership is still there. It is the dearest spot on earth to me. I have never wanted a high seat there but all I want or ask for is a place at their feet. That is far more than I deserve. I have slipped in and not let them know that I was there as I felt so sinful and unworthy to be with such good people. I know they can live without me but it is so hard to live without them.

I feel that predestination and the purpose of God mean the same thing. I do not see how anyone could be an Old School Baptist and hate predestination. I love that doctrine better than anything in this world. The longer I live the sweeter it grows to me and I hope you will be able to read this bad writing.

Sister in hope
SOPHIA TILLMAN
2206 Reosco St.
Chicago 18, Ill.

* * *

Toney, Ala.
July, 1949

DEAR BROTHER,

I am enclosing a bit of money for the SIGNS. I feel like it is a great family paper. One that is welcome in our homes. I wish it could be had by all those who desire to read it. The OLD FAITH CONTENDER is a good paper, too.

I like to see the corrections, reproofs, and doctrinal views on different subjects as the Bible says all scriptures are given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. That the man of God may be perfect, Thoroughly furnished unto all good works. So if we Old Baptist are what we hope we are we love the different gifts that is given to the church; and how sweet it is to see these gifts put into effect. My gift is not noticeable but the great God of Heaven knows them that are his. And could I have the assurance I am his, I would not worry over my short comings. Yet, I hope I have a Hope. My conflicts and burdens are many.

I saw one of our beloved Sisters go into the creek last Sunday for baptism and how sincere she looked and how glad it made our hearts to see our kind pastor, Minister R. M. Hawkins administer the ceremony.

It makes our hearts sad to hear of Elder McCool in Five Mile Creek Association so seriously ill. We hope God will comfort his Brethren and family and be his great helper in time of need. Here is a few thoughts on peace.

PEACE

Peace is the glorious gift of God
Its comforting while paths of earth we trod
While conflicts arise and sorrows we bear
Its peace we enjoy a little here and there.
Peace is so sweet when God has given
His children joys and fortitude of Heaven
His peace, His son sent to comfort and cheer
Gods peace we enjoy a little here and there.

A poor beggar of mercy,
REANER REECE

* * *

DEAR BROTHER,

The time has come again when I gladly send amount due for another year's subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I look forward to the arrival of the paper each month filled

with gospel truth that is good and feeds the hungry soul.

He is the supreme ruler, He knows all things, times, events, and none can stay His hand and say, "Why doeth thou", the editorials are a source of comfort to me. I love the deep doctrine, if indeed I know anything about it. Sometimes I read with a joyful heart and deep meditations and at times I try to read with a joyful heart and all seems a closed book. I sometimes don't know if I have confidence in the reality of an experience, but I am conscious that something is wrought in me, and longing for more evidence to feel it may be the grace of God wrought in me, and hope is all that I can do. I hope that I can say as the poet,

Jesus draws his chosen race
By his sweet, resistless grace;
Causing them to hear His call,
And before his power fall.
From the blissful realms above,
Swift as lightning flies his love;
Draws them to his tender breast
There they find the gospel rest.
Then how eagerly they move
In the happy paths of love
How they glory in the Lord
Pleased with Jesus' sacred word.

In my ill health all through my years of life, at times I feel it has drawn me closer to the Lord, in much hope, love, trust and mercy in him. For all good things must come from Him in time of need, he alone can lift us up from a bed of sickness and suffering. A number of times when under the care of doctors, I was given the feeling it was the power of God working through them and relief from Him, and I hope I praised Him. When I examine myself I see nothing good, just filthy rags, and wonder how the Lord can be mindful of me. My little thread of hope is more to me than all the gold that glitters. There is a cord that binds that cannot be broken, the little spark that does not quite go out. Although it seems gone at times, it is for my good and His glory. I cannot doubt Him, but doubt myself. These lines of the poet seem a prayer to me,

Come, thou long expected Jesus.
Born to set thy people free;
From our sins and fears release us,
Let us find our rest in Thee;
Israel's strength and consolation
Hope of all the saints thou art
Dear desire of every nation
Joy of every longing heart.
Born thy people to deliver;
Born a child, and yet a king,
Born to reign in us forever,
By thine own eternal spirit;
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By thine all sufficient merit
Raise us to thy glorious throne.

In my younger days I was at a meeting with my father and mother, not especially interested in the meeting myself, while all were singing and for some reason this line of the hymn rang in my heart. "Streams of mercy never ceasing." Those were all that were outstanding to me, I did not know the hymn they were singing. Those words were with me all the way home. I wanted to ask my mother what hymn those words were in but I seemed afraid to ask her. I took the hymn book and hid and searched each song until I found those words, "Streams of mercy never ceasing." The whole song was beautiful to me and it is a favorite among many others now to me.

May the Lord's blessings be with all his little ones and I hope I am included in his blessings, and hope He will be to me a sanctuary wherever He may lead me in my path of life He has laid for me to travel.

In hope in Him though unworthy

Mrs. MABEL LINDSEY
Ione, Calif.

Merryville, La.

DEAR BRETHREN,

It is time for my renewal to the good old SIGNS of the TIMES. I enjoy reading it and do not want to miss a single issue.

As we are embarking on another new year we feel ourselves to be the same old sinner that we have ever been. If I live to see the nineth day I will be 73 still groping along in sin, doubts, and fears. I don't care to take up too much of your time, for I know you are very busy but would like to write some of my late experiences.

In March 1947 I was stricken with "Flue" and then developed pneumonia. For five weeks I was a very sick man. I spent 17 days in the hospital and most of the time they thought that I would die. But this was the happiest time of my life. I know that something must be done if I should live. Something said to me, mans days are numbered as the days of an hireling. Then I was carried to a ford or crossing on a large stream known to me as the river of Jordan. A black line was drawn in front of me as small as a sewing thread. That represented the space between me and death. I was placed face down in the sand. The bottom of this stream was lined with rocks of all shapes and sizes. The water was rippling through these rocks without a sound. I viewed the opposite side which was beautiful beyond description. I would gladly have passed over but it was not the Lord's time. Then in a twinkle of an eye I was wafed away and this language came to me as plain as if someone was speaking to me. "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, he leadeth me beside the still waters."

This may not mean anything to anyone else but it is precious to me. I am still feeble and feel to be a burden to my family and friends. But I would not give up this little hope, if it be a hope, for the gold of Ophir.

God chose his people before the highest dust of the hills were fashioned or even the earth was; not for their good doers but for his own good pleasure. It is my hope that I be one of his chosen.

May long live the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to cheer the scattered saints abroad.

J. PAUL McMILLIAN

* * *

"Pray without ceasing" 1st, Thes '5-17

DEAR BRETHREN:

I was pleased indeed to read in the Jan. "Signs" the writing of the brethren on the subject of prayer, how timely, and necessary, for us to be reminded, to pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. It is a subject that I have pondered over all my life, and I tremble as much as I did fifty years ago, the solemn place, the groanings that cannot be uttered, when our hearts are tuned to sing his grace.

Nineteen years ago, I was led to express myself on this wonderful subject to the "Signs of the Times" and they published it, in Vol. 97, February 1929, page 25-26, and the brethern of today write the same. How the spirit of truth, binds us together, tears unbidden flow, the strong are made weak, the poor are made rich, O that I am worthy to approach the throne of grace, too unworthy to even look toward heaven smite upon our breast, and ask God for mercy, O God be merciful to me a sinner, O Lord save me or I perish, O Lord teach me how to pray. Let us all take an inventory of ourselves, and see what is lacking what can we bring to the

altar, is there any thing on the shelves of our establishment that will merit us before a holy God, or rather do we find it full of dead mans bones, and all uncleanness. Wounds and bruises, putrefying sores, O wretched man that I am, who can deliver me from the body of this death, when suddenly a light from heaven above the brightness of the sun at midday, blinding my natural sight, opening my inner eyes, and the Lord says of him, "Behold he prayeth". There is no exception, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, there is none righteous, no not one, now by the light of the knowledge of God, in face of Jesus Christ, by His light we see light, see ourselves guilty and pray for mercy, nothing in my hand I bring, naked and helpless to thy cross I cling, grant me mercy O Lord, I have no other place to go. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, for my brethren and companions sake I will now say, peace be within thee. Pray for me.

GEO. L. WEAVER

* * *

Chewelah, Wash.
Rt. 2

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEAR SIRS:

I am sending money for my subscription to the dear old paper.

I hope it will always stay full of the truth and the good things of the spirit. I know only God can sustain you and hold you up. This is the way walk ye in it. A highway shall be there and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those the wayfaring man, though fools shall not err therein. Oh, we may be fooled, but when we walk in the truth we shall not err. Christ is the way, the truth and the life. I hope God will bless you to pick out the letters that have the light of truth for the paper. How blessed are a people whose God says I am your God and ye are my people. I cannot believe in a God that the world worships. That he has to wait on man before He can move. In his mind dwells only corruption and he would rob God of his glory and power. It makes me think so much of the Scripture in Job where He says who is that that darkeneth counsel with words without knowledge? How often we do this? But praise be His holy name He has a people who can sing great and marvelous are thy works Lord God Almighty. Just and true are thy ways. How do they do this? Through the blessed Savior. It also says the letter killeth, but the spirit maketh whole.

So I hope that Spirit is with you in your journey in the SIGNS and life. This is not a matter to be treated lightly. For it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the true and living God. No one but those He has dealt with know this. But they know and are made to cry for mercy and that He will ever sustain them. How well we know in our spiritual travels that man does not live by bread alone. Now a little one soon tires of the sop of this life and begins seeking and trembling for Him to come again. This is the highway the way of holiness. First we must be cleansed, for the unclean shall not pass over. All self must be removed and we become as a little child trusting only in Christ Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. And when we are in Him we are wayfaring men traveling on a long journey. If you have traveled as I have you'll know that Christ is your all in all. If you have a hope it is in Him. If mercy it comes in Him. Oh how precious He becomes to one who stands afar off and can only cry unclean, unclean. Perhaps I am

making this too lengthy, if it is not the truth please know I'll be glad for you to destroy it. For I say let God be true and every man a liar.

I love the SIGNS. May it always be full of God's truth and may the spirit over show it unto us to a feasting of our soul and to God's glory.

Written in Christian love, I hope

MARY ECKARD

* * *

Mt. Vernon, Ill.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES,

I am enclosing a personal check for $5.00 to renew my SIGNS, another year, and the remainder to help carry on the dear paper. I love the paper. I have just finished reading Oct. number which came this afternoon and certainly enjoyed it all. Elder W. D. Griffin's editorial "The Flock of God" was wonderful. I also enjoyed Mrs. Luther Campbell and Mrs. Lucille Young's letters feasted on all. Seems I have been so grieved in the passing of Elder R. L. Dodson, I loved his editorial, feasted on them and had hoped to hear him preach sometimes. But God knows best and what He does is ever best. He is God and none can stay his hand. He does His will according to His purpose. But oh how wonderful He does His will and his wonderful power that He can raise up others to carry on, his ways are higher than ours and past our understanding. Dear Editors, I hope you all can be blessed to keep the dear SIGNS, as has been in the past, and I feel that God will uphold you all in doing so. It is a great comfort to me that the old Primitive Baptist can publish a good paper with sound doctrine that people can read as so many dear brethren and sisters that are not able to attend the churches, but can read and enjoy the good tidings in the SIGNS and feast on the fat things that are so sweet to the hungry soul.

Sometimes seems I have a desire to write if the Lord was willing for me to do so, but I have never been given a light of understanding; but I have been made to love the Old Baptist for they preach Christ and Him crucified. He is my all in all. How wondrous is his love.

I did not intend to write all this. But oh sometimes I can't stop. I want to go on. If I could write something that would be any comfort to anyone, it seems it would be a relief to me. I only take up space. May God bless and uphold you all in these trying times. Remember me when you are given a mind to pray.

An unworthy sister, if one, the least

Mrs. S. S. KERLEY

* * *

DEAR EDITORS,

It is time for me to send my renewal so am enclosing same—I would not want to miss any copies. There is so much good reading and so many sweet letters. I have often wished I were gifted to comfort others but such is not the case. I do thank the Lord for such gifts and trust His spirit will lead them on to other letters and edifying articles. I have so much to be thankful for and I seem to lack the spirit of thankfulness I would like to have. I wonder if I am alone in this matter. I feel so sorry for those in afflictions and troubles and try in my weakness, for that is the only way I have, to pray for them. My life has mostly been laid in pleasant places. I was raised in a Baptist home by wonderful parents, while my husband is not a church member he should be, and always take me to church or makes provisions for me to go. I have three lovely daughters, they are grown and married to very fine men and all are church

members of the Primitive Baptist church. There is one line in one of our hymns that fits me so well, "In all the paths thru which I've passed, what mercies I've enjoyed"—with all of this I wonder why I feel so worthless at times and wish there were ways of being of service to my brethren.

I have the privilege of going to Liberty Church twice a month, that is where my membership is—Elder Dearing is our pastor, and a very able and humble man. On the 1st Sunday in the month we go to Shiloh Church in Bell. Elder Baxter Hale is the pastor. I enjoy hearing him and meeting with them. Please do not print such a worthless letter.

I do pray the Lord to bless you and keep you.

Your unworthy sister
ETTA DONIAVY

122 Lincoln Avenue
Salisbury, Maryland

ELDER SPANGLER, MY BELOVED PASTOR:

When you asked me Sunday night how I had been getting along since my baptism and if my burden had been lifted, there were many things I wanted to say but it seemed my tongue was tied and I couldn't tell you anything. So if it pleases the Lord to enable me, I want to tell you a little of what is in my heart. I may not be given to write anything worth the paper it is written on. I know it will be only empty words unless dictated by the spirit.

First of all I want to say that although I never experienced the heavy burden of membership as many others have, I have for a long time loved the Church and seen a wondrous beauty there and had a desire to be among that number, but I never anticipated the sense of peace and communion and the enlargement of my soul that I have known for the past few weeks. The night before the Church received me while you were preaching at Snow Hill about Ruth, I felt with great conviction as Ruth did, that "Whither thou goest, I will go—Thy people shall be my people and Thy God my God"—that I could not "go to gleam in any other field", for there would be no food for me in any doctrine save that of God's sovereign and electing grace and that there could be no kinship with any except those who declare that "Salvation is of the Lord". All night long I wrestled and Satan tried his best to reason me out of it, but toward morning I was given a verse, I hope, which seemed to settle it and I was made willing to leave "my times in His hands." I hope the Lord's time had come and that is was all of Him. I do hope I may be given grace to walk circumspectly, that I may ever be kept humble before Him—that I may be made reconciled to His blessed will, whatever it may hold for me—that I may be thankful for those things which He denies me. From the depths of my soul I echo the words of the hymn writer:

"Whatever Thou deniest, Oh give me Thy grace
The Spirits sure witness and smiles of Thy Face."

I hope that I may be given patience to wait upon the Lord. I am by nature very impatient. I am prone to try to hurry events along to suit myself yet how glad I am that our decisions are not our own and that we cannot direct our steps for what a blunder we would make of it all. I think so often how blest Paul was to state I am therewith to be content.

A good deal of the time lately and today in particular I seem to have been "stirred up" and at times carried away from earth and the things thereof and

my soul been made to soar like the eagle. All day today my heart has been almost bursting with joy and gratitude to "Him whom my soul loveth" and have said over and over in my heart "My beloved is mine and I am His". I have been hardly able to attend to my work and once I went in the back room where I could be alone and let the tears flow—not tears of sorrow or grief but tears of thankfulness for the hope that I trust is within me, and I felt with great force;

"Thou the source of all my comfort
More than life to me
Who on earth have I beside Thee
Who in heaven but Thee."

These times of rejoicing are very sweet and precious—they are the breath of life and I feel I could not go on if the "joy of my salvation" were taken from me entirely, yet tomorrow I may be entirely empty and completely concerned with the affairs of earth. I've had just such experience even in the last few weeks but I hope I'm thankful for the glimpses I do have now and then.

I also want to tell you, Elder Spangler how I feel the Lord has blest us in sending you among us. Truly the things you preach are meat and drink to the hungry, thirsty soul. The Lord has richly blest you. I have felt so very humble when you and others of God's dear family have celled me "Sister". It is difficult for me to assume the new relationship in that way, but it is very sweet to be so addressed. It is the closest of all relationships—the tie of blood—the blood of Our Lord Jesus. What matchless grace that that precious blood was shed for "even me". What a perfect Savior He is. Perfect not only in His saving grace but also in His grace to keep us from falling. I am completely with Him but not with myself.

Elder Spangler as I was doing my work the other day the portion of Scripture found in Isiah 35:8-10 came into my mind. You have referred to it a few times and as I meditated upon it, I had a few thoughts which I put into verse and I'm sending it along to you. If it isn't any good and especially if it is not Biblical in every respect, simply disregard it.

I would love hearing from you, Elder Spangler, but I don't expect it and hope you won't feel in any way obligated, and besides it will hurt your arm to write. It will seem like a long time before we will see and hear you again, but it is a great pleasure to anticipate your coming and we feel it is worth waiting for. Please give my love to your family and especially Sister Spangler.

In bonds of love
MILDRED DYKES

* * *

SIGNS of the TIMES, INC.,
ELDER DAVID SPANGLER,

I have a desire again to write to your paper. Some of the brethren and sisters at our association told me how much they enjoyed reading the articles which I have written for your paper. I know not how to begin; I know nothing and can not think of anything to write except it be given to me by the Holy Spirit that will be of any comfort to those that are in the Spirit. I hope to be guided by the Holy Spirit to rightly divide the words of truth and nothing but the truth. I know that I am not able to make one believe the truth, but those that have ears to hear, let them hear, and hearts to understand, let them understand. It is by the power of God that we believe.

I can only write what comes to my mind first.

The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know is the

riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us, who believe, according to the working of His mightly power. Christ speaking, says, Ye are saved already if ye believe on me whom the Lord has sent. I have a mind to write some on the word WORLD. This word *world* is misused as much as any word in all the scriptures, by all denominations outside of the Old School Baptist. It does not mean or include all of the Adam family by no means, in every place that it is used.

"I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. And if any man heard my words, and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." What *world* is this? It is the *world* that the Father had given Him, that Christ came to, or was sent to save those that He died for. I believe that all of their names were found in the Lamb's book of life; they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." (John 12 Chapter 46:48)

For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, He gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is life everlasting; whatsoever I speak therefore even as the Father said unto me, so I speak. If all the preachers would speak the words only what God gives them to speak by the Holy Ghost, there would be no confusion. But it is said that evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me: for they are thine. (St. John 17:6-9)

This world that Christ says He prayed not for is not that world that God so loved that he gave his only begotten Son; it is not the world that Christ came to save that he died for.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have ever lasting life. (John 3:16)

This world that God so loved does not mean the whole Adam family, but it is God's Elect world that were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and in due time he will make manifest by his holy Spirit. If this included the Adam race, all that are born in the world would receive that heavenly throne and that would make a universal salvation. I believe that Jacob represents God's elect world that God so loved that He gave his only begotten Son to be slain, and resurrected from the grave without any corruption.

"Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead." (Cor. 15:12)

"For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand not of works but of him that calleth; (Rom 9:LL)

"As it is written, Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated.

"O righteous Father, the world hath not know thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast

sent me." (John 17:25)

I have felt at times that God has loved poor me; that His holy spirit is dwelling in me, and that I know that my Redeemer liveth.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulations, persecutions, or famine, or nakedness, or sword? Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.

For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities nor powers nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

F. L. COX

* * *

DEAR PRECIOUS BRETHREN IN CHRIST,

One of my sons was taken prisoner and held during the last war for three years and nine months. I lost a son at Salamauwa in the Army Air Force after 4½ years. My daughter is Roman Catholic.

However it is not of personal family affairs I wish to visit on you this bright May Day, but to declare the greatness of God—not to try to wash God's hands or make excuses for His absolute decrees—for if ever a poor mortal piece of clay has been made to see His mercy, His gentle loving kindness, His grace, and His greatness; it is I.

"My beloved is gone down into His garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies." I think that I wrote you once before, about the figure of Moses' wife being black, chapter in Solomon's Song, the church spoken of as being black but comely (beautiful) in Him the church is perfect (spirit) but the flesh is imperfect and weak—but through His work She becomes a Pearl of great price and priceless. Naturally a grain of sand gets into the oyster, presses against it; the nacre (mother of pearl) which is the living, is deposited layers upon layers about the grain of sand till a pearl is formed. The pearl is thus an answer to the injury. The offending object itself becomes through the work of the injured one, a precious and beautiful gem. A picture of God's divine grace. Pearls are of different degree of value and beauty, dependent not upon the grain of sand which gets into the oyster, but upon the layers of nacre that are wrapped about it. A figure of the greatness of God's grace bestowed upon us. It is not the depth of sinfulness one has done which makes one fit or unfit for the Church of Christ, the Heavenly Bride; but the beauty and glory of Him we crucified by our sin that is put upon us a robe to clothe us. Not any righteousness we have or could have that would make us fit for such a wonderful calling. It is Christ's righteousness put upon us, enfolding us, that makes us as a church, a worthy Bride for Him. He took the sin wherewith we wounded Him and made of it a Pearl of Great Price.

"As an eagle stirreth up her nest, and beareth away her young"—the natural habitat or nest of the eagle is always in a high rocky clift—just in the edge of a precipice, she builds her nest. She first selects thorny sticks, then lines it with soft wool. She feeds her young until they become too fat to fly and then she starves them, and begins to remove the soft lining of the nest. The thorns begins to hurt them, then she begins removing a stick at a time until only one is left (man's works, self righteousness) and how they cling

to that one (self help) stick. Then she pushes them off the precipice and they go down screaming. Nothing but sure death below—no help they feel below—no help from above; but all the time the old eagle is watching for she has caused all of this upheaval. Just when they have given up all hope of rescue, she spreads her wings, sails underneath, lifts them and bears them away. A notice it says, "As she stirreth up her nest" and my brother I don't feel that was written as a just "happen so", but a true figure of God's dealings with the sinner. A true figure of His matchless mercy and greatness that He is the One who decrees and the One who knows and decides. It is not for the creature to so limit Him or decide who is or isn't one of God's own.

My father-in-law, was an eminent physician. My daughter-in-law is a very fine registered nurse and through the privilege of knowing them I have been taught naturally that no doctor, nor nurse passes an opinion upon a patient they have never seen or known whatever the reports or messages given them. They must have all the case history, the cause—and I have been taught by the God of Heaven that John looked and found not one worthy but the Lion of the tribe of Judah. So each one is dependent upon the nacre, Mother of pearl, Christ's righteousness, God's mercy, His ordained decree and plan way back in the annals of eternity.

For a long time I was so confused I did not know whether it was Baptist or Catholic. One teacher, all grace, the other, part grace, and part works, both teach mercy and I was in so much trouble—pushed off the precipice. Then taking the 107 Psalm, He maketh the storm a calm—they that go down to sea and great waters in ships. Believe me my brother, my ship was wrecked. "The raging storms be ere so wild, it is then I am most near thee". Oh how gentle and loving He leads in His steps. Yet He shows His power. I wish I had time to sit and visit with you face to face and tell you. I am convinced whether Catholic or Baptist or whatever creed man calls them, that pearl of great price is His true Church and in that land of beginning again where all our mistakes, all our heartaches are cast aside like a shabby old coat at the door, He will be at the gate like an old friend who waits, the One whom in our blindness we have made the victim of our sin and our mistakes. What a great plan, "I have put my coat off, here shall I put it on, I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them."

He suffered and died, put off the old coat of flesh (He did not sin) paid the price (Pearl) washed His feet (Church) and sits enthroned in majesty at the Father's right hand. I wish I could shout it to the house tops. This is my humble basket of chips, I lay at your feet. I wish I could go deeper and deeper into His beauteous truths, but find there is suffering in wisdom and I shrink from that, too.

"Oh when shall I see Jesus, and reign with Him above
And from His flowing fountain drink everlasting love
When shall I be delivered from this vain world
Of sin and from His blessed fountain, drink endless pleasure in"

And then, "There shall be abundantly fed with the fat of thy house. He will make thee to drink from the fountain, etc." Truly there is a feast of fat things and now I must close.

Sometimes when I have time I will write you an experience of the son while in the hands of the Japanese. He was a Catholic until that ordeal and the daughter told me of an experience she had one time going through a bam-

boo forest, while she lived abroad. I see it differently than they do but I am sure they have suffered too.

Love and fellowship, humbly a beggar

LEONA TUTTLE
Stockton, Calif.

* * *

PSALMS 127:1

"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the City, the watchman waketh but in vain."

Except shows us that the house of the Lord is his work, from start to finish. "Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Math. 16-18. "For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" 1st, Cor. 3-17. I have had some experience in the Building trade, and I know what authority means, I have had men working for me, I would say to Bill here is the plan of that west approach, take Jack, and get that started. Bill says Ok Boss, and goes at it, then I say to John, when you and your partner get this sub-floor finished, go into the back room, and do the same there. John says Ok, never in my experience, did any of my material ever offer any assistance, or say why doeth thou this like clay in the hands of the potter. It was my building, and I claimed a perfect right to use the material as I had determined it for. I had it all studied out before I bought it from the mill, and each item had its place. This shows Predestination, that we all have. The ability that God has given us, all trades is the cunningness that God hath given us, no matter how small we owe it to Him. When Moses built the ark of the testament, the Lord told Moses to send for Bezaleel for I have made him cunning in all kinds of work, See Exod '31. All of us in our daily life we are by nature predestinarians, we plan, we look ahead and determine, and the world praises us for it, but when we turn the tables, and speak of God Saving by grace, and not of works, they stumble at it, and say foolishness. Denying to God, what they claim for themselves.

We have a beautiful picture in type, Solomons Temple, 1st Kings, 6-7. "And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither; so that there was neither hammer, nor Ax nor any tool of Iron heard in the house, while it was in building." The material of this house was wood and stone, the wood was framed in the forest, the stone cut in the quarry, then sent to Jerusalem for the temple, by command of Solomon, it had been fitly framed together, and grew up as the house of God here in the Wilderness, and the type which is so beautiful to us here, we are made to wonder, what must be the house that the Lord builds out of his redeemed sinners, the church of God. For His great love he had for them even when they were dead in sin quickened us together with Him. For ye are God's building, ye are God's house, here in this low ground of sin and sorrow, made ready, hewed, squared, and fit, as members of his mystical body, who is their head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. Whose builder and maker is God.

There is no exception whatsoever, there is no substitute for God's love nor his grace, even his watchmen waketh but in vain, except the Lord keep the City. What a sure foundation is laid for his chosen people, and they are given the assurity, that, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall arise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn; This is the heritage of the Servant of the Lord, and their

righteousness is of me, saith the Lord" Isa 54-17.

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." Jude-24-25.

GEORGE L. WEAVER,
2802 Marcum Tr.
Huntington, W. Va.

* * *

THE PLACE OF THE SEA

By Annie Johnson Flint

Have you come to the Red Sea place in your life
Where, in spite of all you can do,
There is no way out, there is no way back,
There is no other way but through?
Then wait on the Lord with a trust serene
Till the night of your fear is gone;
He will send the winds, he will heap the floods
When he says to your soul, "Go on".
And his hand will lead you through, clear through
Ere the watery walls roll down;
No wave can touch you, no foe can smite,
No mighty seas can drown.
The tossing billows may rear their crests,
Their foam at your feet may break;
But you shall walk over their bed dry shod
In the path that your Lord shall make.
In the morning watch 'neath the lifted cloud
You shall see but the Lord alone
When he leads you forth from the place of the sea
To a land that you have not known,
And your fears shall pass as your foes have passed,
You shall no more be afraid;
You shall sing his praise in a better place,
A place that his hand hath made.

* * *

THANKSGIVING

Lord, I am glad for the great gift of living,
Glad for Thy days of sun and of rain;
Grateful for joy with endless thanksgiving,
Grateful for laughter and grateful for pain.
Lord, I am glad for young April's wonder,
Glad for the fulness of long summer days;
And now when the Spring and my heart are asunder,
Lord, I give thanks for the dark Autumn days.
Sun, moon and blossom, O Lord, I remember,
The dream of the Spring and its joy I recall;
But now in the silence and pain of November,
Lord, I give thanks to Thee, giver of all.

Hopewell, N. J.
(The late Elder) F. A. CHICK

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INDIGENTS

Isaac McIntyre, N. Y., $2.00; a Sister in Va., $1.00; L. L. Schenck, $2.00; Kan., N. Bumpass, Ill., $7.00; Mrs. S. S. Kerley, Ill., $2.00; Reese Furgerson, Texas, $1:00; W. R. Wallis, Miss., $10.00; W. R. Fielder, Tex., 2.00; Mrs. S. F. Seabolt, Tex., $1.00; James Truitt, Md., $1.00; T. S. Chester, Ky., $2.50; H. H. Faulk, Tex., $1.00; Middletown and Walkill Church, N. Y., $25.00; Mrs. A. C. Holloway, Md., $2.00; John D. Hassell, Okla., $1.00; Charles S. Taylor, Mo., $2.00; L. D. Duke, W. Va., $1.00, J. L. Turner, Tex., $2.00; a Friend, Kan., $20.00; Mrs. A. V. Pearce, Va., $5.00; Mrs. C. M Richardson, Va., $5.00; Mrs. R. B. Shortridge, Ill., $5.00; Meckie McLachlin, Can., $1.00.

EDITORIAL

ANNAPOLIS, MD. JANUARY, 1952

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

P. O. Box 86 Annapolis, Md.

NEW YEARS GREETING

Through the Providence of a merciful God, the "Signs of the Times" has weathered the storms of another year. Many changes have taken place in the world during the last year, and the paper has also seen changes as to Editorship. A year ago this month God called home our beloved former editor, Elder Dodson. In March I was appointed to take over as editor, and manager, to succeed him, as of July first.

Elder John D. Wood of Manasas, Virginia, was appointed as Assistant Editor. The associate Editors continue the same, Elders H. O. Nash, of Atlanta, Ga.; E. J. Lambert of Winnsboro, Texas and W. D. Griffin of Covin, Alabama.

I am greatly indebted to these brethren for their co-operation in the work. Could not ask for more than they have given. Their work helps very much in carrying on, as they have been blessed to write for the paper to the comfort of His people, and the glory of His name. They have also been helpful in sending in new and re-newal subscriptions.

Our readers have also been very helpful in many ways. Many have sent in new subscriptions for others, thus helping us in circulating the paper among our brethren. Others have written for the paper many good letters for publication which I would encourage you to continue to do. There are many shut-ins who never have the privilege of going to the house of God to hear preaching, who receive many crumbs from the Master's table through your writings. To our ministers and other subscribers we would say, "continue to write for us, we need you and your help".

I have been very humbled by the many, many letters of encouragement I have received. Often my tears have been my meat as I read these messages. I have been unable to acknowledge all of them, but they are appreciated.

To all who have helped in carrying on the work, please accept the sincere thanks of all connected with the publishing of the paper. It is yours, and we want you to feel that way about it.

The "Signs" has been sustained by the hand of God for one hundred and nineteen years. We realize very sensibly that it is in the hands of God. If it is His purpose for it to continue, it will continue, as long as He has a purpose in it. It is the oldest Old School Baptist paper in America. The fact that it has been sustained through the upholding hand of God through all these years causes us to believe it reflects the sentiment of the Old School Baptist generally.

The continuing of the paper has been like the experience of Elijah's and the widows much of the time. They lived upon a little oil, and a handful of meal.

From day to day it continued that way, but the meal wasted not, neither did the oil fail. Our continuing today, dear brethren is that way.

The very fact that the sustaining has been that way, seems to denote the peculiar way God has of doing His will.

Deacon Cyrus Risler, of the New York church was blessed to carry on the work of getting out the paper for the first half of the past year, and until I took over the work I did not realize the many problems that arise from time to time. We are greatly indebted to him, and the co-operation of our Board of Trustees.

We would not fail to mention the kindness, and consideration of those who have contributed to the Endowment Fund. This fund is being invested, and the proceeds from the investments used for the poor of the flock.

May it be the will of Him who doeth all things well to grant us faith to look away from a world of strife and confusion, to Him who has said, "I will never leave you"; to not trust our own carnal wisdom, but Him; to know and do His will; to love Him more, and serve Him better, is the humble desire of the writer. He can cause wars to cease, if His will, and the greatest of all cause them to cease in the hearts of poor sinners, and say, "Be still and know that I am God".

Where strife exists among our dear people; O, that He might bring dear brethren together in peace, and love, cause each one to esteem his brother better than self, that all who love our Lord in sincerity might be brought together to His banqueting house, where His banner over them is love.

D. V. SPANGLER

* * *

EDITORIAL

"Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called. Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.—Jude 1,4."

For several months I have contemplated writing again on the doctrine of the primitive church. In a sense all preaching and writing, that is of the right kind, is doctrinal. But in other respects there are different tenets of our belief. There has always been those that made efforts to differentiate between doctrinal and experimental matters, between doctrinal matters and practical godliness. To those that feel to make that difference, I recognize and respect your views, but, to me, I feel that all preaching and teaching and writing, is doctrinal. At the same time, in order to make ourselves understood, we divide the things of God, into groups.

In the beginning, let me say that I am not writing to give the views of the Hopewell association, of which I am a member, nor to speak for those of my associates on the Signs staff. I am writing what I hope the Lord has taught me. I say that I 'hope' the Lord has taught me. I have heard brethren that do not subscribe to what I believe say that the Lord taught them what they believe. In one of our cases, if not both, this is not true. The Lord does not teach two doctrines, nor two experiences. He teaches us all that we know,

and that is the same in all his family. I feel, in order for us to understand each other, to tell just one episode in my experience. Here is the reason that I believe in the predestination of God concerning all events. I believe God taught it to me in my experience, and while he was teaching me, I believe he just as effectually taught my wife the same thing. If I have been called to preach his unsearchable riches, it was at, and in, the very beginning of my experience. I am not able to tell any kind of a feeling or condition that existed before I had an impression to preach the gospel. The circumstances before and at my birth, my name, my demeanor before the audiences in school, all, all, had given me, before men, the name of preacher. But this was what others thought. It certainly was not what I thought, nor by any means intended. Just after I hope that the Lord revealed to me the shortness of my arm, and the length and strength of his, I was thrown in company with those that did not believe in the doctrine of God's sovereignty. I loved them then, and I still do. Their memory is sweet. I hope some sweet tomorrow to meet them over home. They tried to get me to join them. It was not because I knew that my home people believed different from them, for I thought that they believed the same. Is it too much to say that God ruled to the end that I did not? I did not know any better myself. I did not know that the Primitive Baptists back at home were classed as Absoluters. But imagine my surprise, and chagrin, when I got back to my old home, that I found them to be the kind of people that believe 'what is to be, will be'. I wrestled with the problem for months. If ever a boy came home an enemy to the doctrine of God's absolute predestination of all things it was surely I. I was tossed to and fro for months. I lived in the very midst of torment. I got to the place that I did not want to talk about the Bible. During this time, I was as much weighted with preaching as ever before or since. I preached to my team in the field; I dreamed of it night after night; I sought an escape from it and found it not; I sought rest and found it not. In the summer of 1930 the last baby was born in our family. In the fall of that year my wife's mother died suddenly. They lived three hundred miles away from us. Our baby had been sick all of its life, but on this particular Sunday morning the physician said that it was better and would continue to get better. When she got the message that her mother had passed away, it was natural that she would want to attend the funeral. We knew that she could not take the sick infant, but my brother's wife had a baby about the same age of ours, and the doctor said that she could take care of both. Arrangements were made for my wife to go with her sister next morning, starting at day light. Before day we were on our way to her sister's home with plenty of time to get there before the agreed moment. But her sister, knowing the condition of our baby, did not have any idea that she would attempt making the trip, and when we got there they were well on their way. We could not head them off, and we did not have any other way for her to go and be on time for the funeral. There was not anything to do but to go back home. As I write the trying ordeals that she has passed through as a minister's wife come up before me. I can today, as I did that memorable morning of twenty years ago, see that heart-broken girl as she had to turn towards home knowing that she would never see her mother any more in this life. But the worst had not yet come. That same evening

as the sun was setting, and at the time my wife would have been three hundred miles from her little one, the baby was seized by a fit and died in her arms in just a few seconds. You talk to me that my God does not control all things and it falls on deaf ears. We know better. Men can claim that God has taught them that he does not rule all things, but they do not have any proof. She and I lay claim to the fact that he does control all things and here is our proof. Here is abundant evidence to us that men's mind is controlled by Israel's God. It would be the height of absurdity to tell us that it was an accident. We knew then, and by his amazing sustenance, we know now, that our mind, and our arm, and our aim, was all too well trained on getting her away from the baby, *and from now until time is not, is too short to make us to know that it was our carefulness.* EITHER THEN, OR BEFORE, OR THAT IT WAS OUR OBEDIENCE, that brought things to pass as did come to pass.

I often travel back in mind to Missouri to the spot where I hope that the Lord revealed his grace to me. But again and again I have had to travel backwards to that day when God displayed his mighty power, and revealed to me my weakness. I do not mean to intimate that past blessings and experiences will do to live on for tomorrow. I would not have you to think dear kindred that I am not prone to forget the way that I trust the Lord has led me. If I was left to myself to that end, then I could not stand for one hour alone any better than the disciples of Jesus could watch one hour. But the Lord deals with his people in a way that they are a remembering people (Deut. 8:2).

I would, if I could (woudn't you) always be ready to give a reason of my hope. Sometimes I desire to do that, and even now feel an inclination to dwell experimentally for a while among you on the way that I have come. The many days of anxiety when hell loomed before me as my just doom; the groans and sighs as I sought deliverance from the burden of sin; the sleepless, tossing nights when I called to this one and that to see if they knew where my lover had gone (S.S. 3), I will leave off at this time. I wanted to tell you this much of the way that I hope the Lord has led me, so as to acquaint you with my reason for believing that God rules in heaven and earth. Telling this as my experience will not be to you what it was to me. If you have not so learned Christ, *what have you learned?* Have you learned that you *can?* Then by all means preach that you can. I do not desire to change any one's views concerning the doctrine of God our Saviour. It would be like me, and it certainly would not stand the test. I have tried to leave my experience and could not: I fain would go back to Egyptian darkness could I do it: I would wear my own apparel as readily as Adam and Eve wore their fig leaf apron if I could get the rotten, filthy, stinking texture adjusted on me; I would, if I could, eat husks and feed swine, and spend my money for bread that satisfieth not (Luke 15:16; Isa. 55:2). No matter how circuitous the route which I, like unto Jonah, would take, I have had to cry out from the belly of hell that salvation was of the Lord.

I meet up with others as I travel among the churches that enjoy hard corn. I meet the younger people among us, and they often speak of the way that they have been brought. Yet, they find so many lo heres and lo theres that they are wondering at which we call the hard doctrine. I feel that that is an ambiguous term, for the doctrine of God our Saviour is not a hard doctrine.

It is the easiest doctrine to believe that a sheep ever comes in contact with. To the carnal affections and desires it is hard—so hard that not one has ever believed it, but to the sheep, what else is there to believe? (John 6:63). And I tell you here and now that they are equipped to feed on this doctrine (S.S. 4:2; 6:6).

I have not dealt with the text at the head of this article. I wanted it for a starting place, and if the dear Redeemer is with me, I will dwell on the work of God in saving sinners in the future. I kindly ask you to keep in mind the text.

W. D. GRIFFIN

* * *

THE ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTIETH VOLUME OF THE SIGNS

We have had some requests for the prospectus of the Signs of The Times to be republished. We are glad to comply with this request.

Below is the ten articles published in the "Signs Of The Times" in the first Volume, in 1832.

Proposals for publishing a semi-monthly paper, to be called "The Signs Of The Times," devoted exclusively to the Baptists cause, maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments;

1. The existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah—The revelation which God has given of himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are One." I John v.8.
2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.
3. Eternal, Unconditional Election.
4. The Total Depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.
5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the Elect only.
6. The Sovereign, Irresistible, and in all cases, Effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in Regenerating and quickening the Elect of God.
7. The final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God, by Grace.
8. The Resurrection of the dead, and Eternal Judgment.
9. That the Church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers—that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God.
10. That there is no connection between Church and State, and as touching the proposition for a marriage between them, the Hon. R. M. Johnson, in his report on the Sabbath Question, has expressed our faith.

    The "Signs of the Times" will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath Schools, etc., making war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of Institutions.

The above is an exact copy of the "Prospectus as it appeared in the "Signs" in the year 1832. "The Editor, and I believe Assistant Editor, and associate Editors still hold the precious truth as set forth in the above articles as the Doctrine of God's eternal truth.

The Lord willing I hope to comment on the various articles during the coming year, also to re-publish the last editorial on Predestination written by Elder Gilbert Beebe, founder of the "Signs."

DEAR BROTHER,

It is now time to renew my paper. I hope I will always be blessed to renew it and have it coming as long as I live. In its pages my hope is written from all parts of the world. Yea, my dark and gloomy days are told also, and my joys along with sweet meditations are related. The scriptures are so beautifully set forth and explained in the SIGNS. The great work He performs is so sweetly told by those who are gifted to do so.

Our Lord gave gifts unto men. Some are gifted in preaching while others are gifted in prayer, others in singing, some with deep understanding, meekness and kindness. There are those gifted to watch over and care for the church and to see that things are taken care of. It is so pleasant when we are enabled to view the great preparedness God made for His people while traveling through this low ground of sin and sorrow.

If it had not been for his keeping power, love and mercy, I would have been swept off of this earth long ago. I hope I have been killed and made alive; if not my hope is in vain. There are times we feel to say we know our Redeemer liveth. While most of my time seems so long and full of darkness and sin till I wonder why ml life has been spared. I feel so fearful that yet I will feel the awful stroke of God's anger. We are such helpless creatures that we cannot do one thing to help ourselves, standing before a just and holy God. Oh, the awful weight of such feelings no one knows except those who are brought there through trials for no one will voluntarily get there of themselves. But the joy and sweet peace of a child when of his promise; that where two or three are gathered together in my name there will I be in their midst.

Remember us when at the throne of grace, and may you be spared and enabled to carry on with the SIGNS for many years to come in honor and glory to our blessed Lord.

In love of the truth,
(Mrs.) LUTHER CAMPBELL

* * *

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, it has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from the scenes of this life and his labors amongst us, our beloved brother and Elder, R. Lester Dodson, and

WHEREAS, Elder Dodson was a faithful minister of the gospel, serving the brethren of our correspondence and often visiting us of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, and

WHEREAS, we appreciate his humility and his faithfulness in giving his time and means to serve the housefold of faith in general through the Signs of the Times and the Primitive Baptist Home,

THEREFORE, be it resolved that we give thanks to the giver of all mercies for the gift of this his servant unto His church and that we extend our deep sympathy to Mrs. Dodson and family, and that we spread this resolution on our minutes and publish same in the Signs of the Times.

Done by the unanimous voice of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting at their session held with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia in 1951.

ELDER JOHN D. WOOD,
Moderator
G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk
ARTHUR L. CARTER,
Asst. Clerk

MEMORIAL

God has seen fit in his infinite wisdom to remove from these shores of time our dearly beloved brother in Christ, Elder R. Lester Dodson. We bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Father who doeth all things well.

We wish to go on record that we miss his

kindly advice, his gift as a preacher of the gospel of Christ, his comforting words written in the Signs, and his presence at our associations and yearly meetings. The Lord gave him wisdom and we loved to sit at his feet and listen to him. May the Lord of all grace comfort those who mourn.

Resolved that this memorial be published with the minutes of this association and in the Signs of The Times.

Done by order of the Salisbury Association held with the Indiantown Church, October 25th, 1951.

Elder H. M. Bennett, Moderator.
Maud T. Laws, Clerk
William S. Adkins, Asst. Clerk

* * *

JOHN W. YOCUM

The Primitive Baptist cause lost a firm and faithful friend in the death of John W. Yocum who passed away at his home in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania on November 12, 1951 at the age of fifty six. He was a veteran of World War I and a member of Standing Stone Post No. 1754, Veterans of Foreign Wars. He had been in failing health for four years during which time he received the tender ministrations of his faithful wife who did everything possible for his comfort. Death was caused by an incurable heart ailment. He was born February 11, 1895, in Huntingdon, the son of H. G. and Ada (White) Yocum. In 1923 he was united in marriage to Miss Alice Greenland of Trough Creek Valley, who proved a loyal and true companion through all the years of their happy married life. During World War I he served in a motor transport division and spent two years overseas. For twenty-seven years he was in the employ of the Pennsylvania Railroad at Altonna, retiring four years ago because of ill health. Surviving are his wife and four sisters: Miss Dorothy M. Yocum, Mrs. Sarah Lutz, Mrs. Martha Johnston, all of Huntingdon, and Miss Maude Yocum of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The funeral services were held in McClain's funeral home in Cassville, David J. Heim, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Huntingdon, conducting the services. The interment was in the Trough Creek Valley Cemetery. Mr. Yocum was a man of many splendid qualities of mind and character and possessed a very pleasing personality.

His honesty and integrity and neighborly traits were among his many virtues. His hospitality was noted by all who knew him, and on several occasions meetings of the Primitive Baptists were held in his home, his wife being a devoted member of the Primitive Baptist Church of Trough Creek Valley.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

West Monroe, La.

To the SIGNS of the TIMES, and the household of faith who read it, I desire to present a memorial of Brother J. R. Baxter who died August 28, 1951 in Monroe, La.

Brother Baxter was born in Lincoln Parish, La. in the year 1872 and lived near Ruston, La. for many years and then moved to West Monroe where he passed away.

He was married to Miss Beula Riser Baxter of the same community and to this union were born nine children, all of which survive him together with his wife. The survivors are as follows: His wife, Mrs. Beula Baxter; Ivy Baxter, Vicksburg, Miss; Ellis and Rubin Baxter, Mrs. J. L. Witherington, Mrs. W. L. Moore, Mrs. Johnny Markham, all of Monroe, La.; Mrs. W. B. Williams of Shreveport, La.; Mrs. L. E. Watson, Dubach, La.; thirty eight grandchildren, eight great grandchildren, four brothers and two sisters.

Brother Baxter joined the Primitive Baptist Church called Ephesus, four miles east of Ruston, La., long years ago, and was a strong believer in that doctrine of God our Savior. This writer had the pleasure and privilege of being with him in his home and other places and talking with him concerning that faith which was once delivered to the Saints, and I am reminded of that beautiful and comforting expression of God's holy word, where it says "Blest are the dead who die in the Lord, from hence forth they shall rest from their labor and their works to follow them". I feel sure that this scripture, together with all the comforts and consolations were and are applicable unto him.

May God bless and comfort his bereaved and mourning family and loved ones with all the comforts of the blessed promises of the Lord, in His holy word. It will not be long until the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven and the dead in Christ shall rise, and we who remain alive shall be changed in a moment, and be caught up with the Lord, and ever be with Him and all the redeemed host around that eternal and ever blessed throne to praise Him forever and ever in the realms of fadeless glory and bliss.

The funeral was conducted by the unworthy writer, in the Kilpatric Funeral Chapel at Ruston, La., on the above date in the presence of his family and a host of relatives and friends after which he was laid to rest in the Douglas Cemetery near Douglas, La.

Yours in Hope,
R. W. RHODES

* * *

WILLIAM ORVILLE HOBBS
CLAUDE M. HOBBS

In compliance to a request by the widow of the late Elder W. N. Green of Altus, Okla-

homa we attempt to jointly write obituaries of her two sons—W. Orville Hobbs and Claude M. Hobbs—who departed this life May the 14, 1951 and June 4, 1951 respectively. Our heartfelt sympathy goes to this dear old mother in Israel who seems to have so patiently borne many troubles.

W. Orville Hobbs of Oklahoma City was born August 2, 1906 and was taken by death May 14, 1951 while visiting in the home of his mother, Mrs. W. N. Green, Altus, Okla., in order to attend the annual three day meeting of Little Flock Primitive Baptist Church there. He seemed to have greatly enjoyed the meeting manifesting a love for the doctrine of God, our Saviour. He was stricken with illness immediately after returning from church Sunday and was stricken with death Monday, 10:05 P.M. Funeral services were held at Tims Funeral Chapel, Altus, 3:00 P.M., May 16, 1951. Elder E. J. Lambert of Winnsboro, Texas officiating; bureal was in Altus Cemetery. Our sympathy also goes to his devoted wife of Oklahoma City, Mrs. W. O. Hobbs.

Besides his wife and mother, he was survived by one brother, Claude M., one step brother C. D. Green of Oklahoma City, three step sisters, Mrs. Willie Foster of Oklahoma City, Mrs. Ethel Champeau of Norman, and Mrs. Flora Davis of Little Field, Texas.

God saw fit to also call by death at Veterans Hospital on June 4, 1951, Sister Green's last surviving child, Claude M. Hobbs, who was stricken seriously ill two weeks before his death. Claude served his country in World War One. He is survived by his precious aged mother of 79 years and the afore-named step brother and step sisters. Funeral services were conducted by Elder W. W. Tayler of Dallas, Texas at Tims Funeral Chapel and burial in Altus Cemetery. Shortly before his illness Claude made many comforting expressions to his dear mother concerning his hope, belief, and trust in Jesus Christ, the redeemer of all Saints which will be a source of comfort to her in her lonely condition.

We, the writers of this manuscript, pray that God may console you, Sister Green, with His Spirit and make you able to bear with thanksgiving these many sorrows; may He be a companion to you Mrs. W. O. Hobbs and a comfort to you in your bereavements; may He bless the other survivors to be content with your lot and reconcile you to His will. We believe that Claude and Orville fulfilled perfectly God's purpose in them here and they lived their allotted time. We are living in hope of the resurrection and that heavenly sphere where death nor sorrows never enter.

(Eld.) W. W. TAYLOR
(Eld.) E. J. LAMBERT

ISAAC L. KIP

In the death of Isaac L. Kip at his late home in Neshanic, New Jersey, October 11, 1951, not only the community in which he resided most of his life, but other communities which he frequently visited in New Jersey and New York, and especially the Old School Baptist cause have sustained an irrepairable loss that will be felt for many years to come. Mr. Kip was widely known in several states, was prominent in the social and political life of the community in which he resided and was greatly beloved. His pleasing personality, keen sense of humor, abounding hospitality, strict integrity, and unsullied character combined with his outstanding neighborly qualities stamped his life with the impress of true nobility and has left a monument of precious memories in the hearts of all who knew him. He was an attendant at the Neshanic Reformed Church and also attended whenever possible the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, New Jersey. He adhered firmly to the principles of Calvinism, and his home was always open to entertain members and friends of the Old School Baptist Church, though he never united with any church organization. He possessed a library unusual in size for a private home and was an authority on local history.

Death was due to a heart ailment, and his passing was sudden and unexpected. He was born at Fultonville, New York, December 10, 1873 and was therefore nearly seventy-eight years of age. He was the son of Francis Kip, a locally well known and able minister of the Reformed faith, and moved to New Jersey in 1883, receiving his education in the district where he resided. He moved to his late home in 1898 where he resided until his death. He was united in marriage to Miss Anna B. Eick in 1900 and their union was blessed with over a half a century of happy married life. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Anna B. Kip, three children, Leon, William, and Mrs. Alida Totten of Neshanic, also seven grandchildren and one great grandchild. One daughter, Miss Elizabeth, died in 1944.

The funeral services were conducted at the Neshanic Reformed Church on October 15, and were in charge of G. B. Scholten, pastor of the Neshanic Reformed Church, assisted by Elder Arnold H. Bellows of West Hurley, New York, pastor of several Primitive Baptist churches in New York state, and by Edward Irish of Harlington Reformed Church, Henry Hotaling of Millstone Reformed Church and Harry Blackburn of the Neshanic M. E. Church. The interment was in the family plot in the Neshanic Cemetery.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

CHURCH NOTICES

Pleasant Valley Primitive Baptist Church, Kingman, Kansas, meets the first Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Jan., March, etc.) at the home of Sister Verda Machesney, 516 East Ave. C., Kingman, Kans.
(Mrs.) PHEBE CATES, Clerk

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carver Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U. S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church.
C. H. EVANS, Pastor

New Hope Church better known as Lick Creek meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 a. m., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Ky.
R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St. near Calvert. Q. A. GLADDING

Black Rock Church meets every second Sunday at 11 a. m., Butler, Md. on Falls Road about 20 miles north of Baltimore.
J. D. WOOD, Pastor

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a. m. in the meeting house.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m., north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Bethlehem Church, Malvern, Ala., meets each second Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3023 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va. R. B. DENSON, Pastor

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m.
C. M. FISHER

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 11 a. m. at the home of E. B. Ault on Progresso Highway, three and one half miles south of Weslaco.
E. B. AULT, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk
Route 1, Box 88, Mission, Tex.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Hopeful Church, Ozark, Ala., meets each fourth Saturday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock. Meeting place at Alder St., at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala., 11 a. m.
E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala, meets each fourth Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a. m., six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Seclusia Old School Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday at 12812 Williamson, or write A. J. Taylor, 932E Monterey, Pomona, Cal.

Hopewell Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at 10:30 a. m. each second Sunday in American Legion Hall, 1119—21st St., Sacramento, Cal. All lovers of the truth invited.
SETH BYNUM, Pastor
WM. ECHOLS, Clerk
Chowclilla, Cal.

Bethel Church meets every third Sunday and Saturday night before at the home of L. H. Riley, 5265 Ardelle, Stockton, Cal. For information write Elder L. L. WILSON, 2627 North Tulare St., Bakersfield, Cal.

The Old School or Predestinarian Baptists meet for worship on fifth Sundays at 2:30 p. m. second floor Pythian Temple Building, 1012 Ninth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Elder John D. Wood, Minister. For information write FRANK T. SIMPKINS, Sr., 5214 Harper St., Dillon Park, Washington 19, D. C.

Meetings are held each first Sunday and Saturday before at Little Flock Church, S. W. 29th Ave., and 6th St., Miami, Fla. We extend an invitation to any interested to visit us.
(Mrs.) J. M. FUTCH
7005 S. W. 21st St., Miami, Fla.

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets every second Sunday at 5th and E. Park St.

Pleasant Grove Church near Yakima, Washington, meets at 11 a. m. each second Sunday by appointment at the home of one of the members living at Naches, Wash.

A. D. HUGHETT, Pastor
BEATRICE HAAN, Clerk
Star Route, Naches, Wash.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 3 p. m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va., N. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

Ramah Church, Cottonwood, Ala., meets each third Sunday, 11 a. m.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each second Sunday and Saturday before.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala. Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a. m., ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a. m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor

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Richmond, Virginia Primitive Baptist church meets every fourth Sunday in their new meeting house about ten miles South of Richmond, Virginia. Just off Highway 360 South.

R. B. Denson, Pastor

Little Flock Primitive Baptist church of Tucson, Ariz. meets for worship on the third Sunday, and Saturday before at 134 E. Prince Road. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

T. J. Robinson, Pastor
Mrs. J. H. Day, Clerk.

The Church of Shepherd Fold, Houston, Texas, meets every first Sunday in each month, and Saturday before at 10:30 A.M. Located on Little York Highway, four miles north of Houston, Texas one mile east of Highway 76.

W. O. Beene, Pastor

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every first and third Sundays at Parkside Hotel, 18 Gramercy Park South, one block east of Fourth Ave. and 20th St., near 23rd St. Sta. Lexington Ave. Subway. Take Elevator to Park Room second floor. 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C.. meets each fourth Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before. E. H. LANIER, Clerk.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

The Old Orderly Mt. Zion (Cash) Predestinarian Baptist Church meets on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in each month at the home of Bro. J. J. Darnell, Campbell, Texas.

Sister SIMMONS, Clerk

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets first and third Sundays each month 11 a. m. 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas.

L. D. ROSE and W. W. TAYLOR, Pastors

Fort Worth, Tex., Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets first Sunday in each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday at 2 p. m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting house.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor
W. A. LITTLE, Asst. Pastor

Shepherd Fold Church meets each first Sunday 11 a. m., Saturday before 2:30 p. m. on Little York Highway, 4 miles north of Houston, Texas. One mile east of Highway 76.

W. O. BEENE, Pastor

The original Pilgrim Rest Church of Lawn, Texas, meets every first Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a. m.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
HOWARD EASON, Clerk

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2. p. m. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

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Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. at the home of M. J. Culpepper. Lovers of the truth invited.

E. B. AULT, Pastor

The Old Salem Church of Old School Baptists, 4 miles south from Teague, Texas, meets the first Sunday in each month and Saturday before. MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

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Danville Primitive Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday night before Bradley Road, Danville, Va.

W. R. DODD, Pastor

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 120 ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND, FEBRUARY, 1952 No. 2

October 30, 1951

"Let no man therefore Judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an Holy day, or the new moon, or the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." Colossians 2; 16th & 17th.

The words "Let no man therefore Judge you", in the nature of their use, in this scripture, are positive in their order and could not possibly be wrested by the vanity of men's minds to signify conditions on the part of men, as having relation to something which we ought not to allow men to do, without doing violence to the preceeding verses of this chapter. (Please read the entire chapter). This language is just as positive in its nature of meaning as if it had been rendered, "No man can judge you." Men may try, and do try, with all their might and main to judge another man, as to what he may eat doctrinally, or as to what he may drink, to the assuaging of his spiritual thirsting after righteousness, and their efforts just utterly fail because all of this eating and drinking, the place experimentally of your keeping of an holy day unto the Lord, or of the new moon, (servitude of the law,) or of the sabbath days (Gospel rest seasons of the soul) are all fixed of God, in the personal experience of each heir of promise.

Out of the unwasting bounty of a kind and merciful Father, all of these things are meted out to the exercising of the soul, individually, experimentally to everyone who has in his, or her, travel of experience of soul, through the ministration of the Holy Spirit; have tasted that Jesus is gracious, as the Holy Spirit takes the things of Jesus and delivers them unto you. Hence no man can judge you.

When the master, even Jesus, the high Priest and Bishop, of your souls, brake the bread and blessed it, and gave to the twelve apostles, and said, "Take eat; this is my body broken for you," and likewise, when he took the cup, and poured the wine, and said, this is the wine of the new testament in my blood, "Take ye, and drink ye all of it. He was not leaving the matter optional with them as to whether they ate or drank, but rather he made this positively mandatory, not only to them, but to all who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, in the pardon and forgiveness of their sins. Every heir of promise, regardless of whether they have ever partaken of the emblems of the Lord's supper, in the order of what the church calls the keeping of the ordinance, or not, they have, and do, subsist upon and eat the spiritual essence of the Lord's broken body, and drink the wine of the new testament in his blood, everytime they experience a season of rejoicing in a saviours love, therefore then, all of this being fixed in the personal experience of every heir of promise, "No man can Judge You". Again, when we come to ex-

amine the nature of a "Holy Day", the season or time, the day of days experimentally, the day when peace was spoken to your troubled soul, when Jesus was revealed to you as your personal saviour. When with tearful eyes, you by faith beheld Jesus, God Incarnate, smitten, afflicted, wounded for your transgressions, in your law room and stead, drinking the gall and wine of the fierceness of the Divine wrath of God, (which was your just portion and due). When you beheld the mystery of mysteries, Jesus treading the winepress alone, and you beheld his garments dyed in the winefat, his own blood, and by faith you hear the sweet whispers of his love to the chief of sinners, saying I bore all of this for you, to set you the lawful captive free, and thus I have taken the prey from the mighty, and have put away your sins by the sacrifice of myself, to be remembered against you no more forever, even I have taken away the handwriting of ordinances, which was against you, and contrary to you, having nailed it to my cross, having slain the enmity thereby. Oh Holy day! When I first rejoiced in a saviours love. There is no other day like it in my life. This is the day when the sun stood still and the moon stayed in its motions, while God fought your battle for you, the sun was turned to darkness, (Jesus smitten put to shame for you.) The law demanded the life of every guilty transgressor, hence when Jesus agonized in Gethsemane, and poured out his soul unto death on the tree of the cross, the Just for the Unjust, the law which demanded the life of the lawful captive, when it got his life, it got your life, He, Jesus being your life.

"When he who is your life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory, rejoicing. In his personal coming, dear tried and tempest tossed, children of God, in your own personal experience, and revealed to you personally, his gracious power to save, when this was yours to taste by faith, the moon (law), stood still, that is, ceased to have its dominion over you. The moon (law) was turned to blood, in the obedience of Jesus unto death, on the cursed tree of the cross. (See the prophesy of Joel) the strict Justice of God was forever satisfied in your behalf, the wrath of God was appeased, Justice and mercy met together, and Kissed each other, and the prey was taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive, (poor guilty sinners) was delivered. All of this must have its place of application in the experience of God's trembling children, and hence this is the new moon to you, the law (moon) fulfilled, forever satisfied BY THE OBEDIENCE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS of Jesus, even his obedience unto death, and thus the moon (law) experimentally is put under your feet. Jesus your friend having satisfied its every just demand for you, having done for you what you could not possibly have done for yourself. Therefore then, in this glad day, season of rejoicing, you receive your first tasting of the "Sabbath Day", season of rest in the finished work of Jesus; and this rest is seasonal, and intermittent from the time peace was spoken to your soul, unto the time of your final and full deliverance, when, and where, you dear weary child of God, who often here are groping in darkness, cast down by sore and fiery doubts, and often you feel to be an utter castaway. Yes, you shall see the king in his beauty, in his Holy glory, with unclouded eyes, eyes no longer fettered by sin, shall see him, Jesus without a veil between, when mortality shall be swallowed up of life, and you shall be ushered into his Holy presence to dwell in his fullness forever

and forever. This is the ultimate of your hope, fullness of his grace. "Let no man therefore judge you etc." No man can judge you for Jesus is judge of the quick and dead. All of this dear children of God, which is yours to experimentally taste, by the sovereign, irresistable will of God, and is sweetly yours through his abundant mercy, and predicated solely and alone, on the premise of, be-cause it seemed good in his sight and not because of worth or merit of, or in the creature, for that all have sinned, and fell short of the glory of God. Every moment of your rejoicing before him in love, when you are lifted up from your dead state in natures night, and transplanted to his native air, (the Eden of Love) raised up and made to sit together in love, before his wondrous throne, and taste through grace of the dainties of wisdom's table, all of this in its entirety is but a little foretaste, received in part in measure here of that which shall be yours in its unmeasured fulness, when that which is in part shall be done away, when you are finally ushered into the fulness of his presence and his glory, and you shall see him as he is and shall be forever satisfied in the ultimate of your hope, when hope is ended in fruition and faith is turned into sight. Therefore then these little seasons of his heavenly visitation, the seasons of tasting of wine on the leas, and of fat things full of marrow, compared to the ultimate and the glory which shall be revealed in you to the praise of the glory of his grace, rightly are but a shadow of things to come. But hear the conclusion of the whole matter, lest any flesh should glory in his presence. "The body is of Christ" and the body fitly framed together of him is nourished, strengthened by joints and bands and growth unto an Holy temple in the Lord. To the measure of the stature and fulness of Christ, and God, sets every member in the body as it hath pleased him. Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, in whom not just merely on him, but in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an Holy temple in the Lord. Where is boasting then, excluded by what law—by the law of works, nay, but by the law of grace. This is my hope, my all, yea all my consolation, all my joy resting in the full weight of conviction that the body is of Christ, first, last and forever; therefore it is of grace through faith to the ultimate praise of His Holy name. Blessed be his name forever and forever more.

How unsearcheable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out, how little a portion is known of him. How great is his love, how wondrous is his grace. Finally of him are ye in Christ, Jesus; who of God is made unto us righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

My God, my life, my love,
To thee, to thee, I call
I cannot live if thou remove,
For thou, art all in all.

Submitted in love for the truth, in humble hope of his adorable mercy.

H. J. BIRD
1039 Beech Ave.
Charleston, W. Va.

* * *

Bluefield, West Virginia
Route 1, Box 212 A
October 16, 1951

SIGNS of the TIMES
Annapolis, Maryland

DEAR BROTHER:

I am mailing you a letter written by J. A. Perdue for publication, with his permission, in the SIGNS. I feel like it would be comfort to all believers of the Baptist faith.

If you don't mind, send me a copy of

your paper. I hope and trust I am a brother of the same faith and order of which I hope you stand for.

J. T. CRAFT, SR.
August 2, 1951
Redwood, Virginia

DEAR BROTHER CRAFT:

I hope you are all well and enjoying good health. We are reasonably well at present. I was truly glad to have you all as well as many others to visit our good Association which I feel and truly believe the Lord was in the midst of them, and even was a great source of comfort to Zions little ones. They are the true household of faith, of whom the Lord keeps as an apple of his eye. He says I will be with them even unto the end of the world, I will never leave nor forsake thee. The Lord's faithful promises to his little flock is without the beginning of days or ending of time.

He says I have loved thee with an everlasting love therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee. Dear ones, we too sometimes hope and believe that we love the Lord with all of our heart and all of our soul; even with the same sweet spiritual love wherewith God loved his little children from the foundation of the world; even through an endless eternity. I believe it is true if once in Christ always in Christ. According to Holy writ, all whom Christ died to redeem is just as sure for heaven and immortal Glory as God is sure. If God be for us who can be against us. I feel persuaded that regardless of what the consequences is, and have been and will be with God's dear children that there is nothing in this world nor that which is to come that will ever be able to separate us from God's love. They often feel to be the vilest of the vile, miserable, wretched and in the most distressful perplexities, and not even a friend on earth or in heaven. In the flesh we are nothing.

They shall be tried by fire and refined as pure gold. Some of this refining requires being carried through floods and flames of bitter persecution. The Lord's refining fire is his precious work and high commands for training valiant soldiers of the cross, of which I hope to be one of, don't you?

I often think of the confirmation of dear old Job's faith and hope. The Lord so graciously preserved Job until he could withstand the wiles of the devil, even his own wife and his miserable comforters. Job said "through the Lord slay me, yet will I trust him".

Dear kindred we little creatures are so helpless and dependent upon the Lord for all things even for the forgiveness of our many sins and short comings, which are many. I often wonder could there be one so vile as I. I hope we have true fellowship with the great apostle Paul when he said "O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death" and too, Paul continued to say that we are saved by hope. Also he says, " Where sin abounds Grace did much more abound".

When Paul's departure was at hand it seems reasonable that his hope was in possession, and that he had no more to hope for, for he said: "I have finished my course. I have fought a good fight. I have kept the faith, henceforth there is a crown of righteousness laid up for me"; not for Paul only but for all of the dear saints of God. Dear old Paul, passed away in the triumphs of faith and likewise do I believe that all of Christ's bride pass away. I do not believe that any of God's saints will die corporially in fear of eternal hell. "When through the deep waters I call thee to go, the rivers of woe shall not thee overflow." He will be with them in the sixth trial and yea not forsake them in the seventh; God will never leave

nor forsake thee. He who has promised is faithful. So it is all of the Lord that we live move and have our being. Man that is born of woman is but few days and full of trouble. Dear ones I do, don't you, so much desire to have all of your trials, troubles, and afflictions here in this sin-cursed world. Though they be many and very great I beg, give mine to me while in sinful humanity, for it is so humiliating that our dear Jesus went before us and many sorrows bore. We who follow after can never meet with more. We feel sure that there is none that will ever go beneath our dear Saviour in his suffering humanity, but dear saints be not discouraged for our glorious Redeemer arose from Joseph's new tomb. He triumphed gloriously over the horse and the rider. He reigned until he put all enemies under his feet. He conquered both death, hell, and the grave.

When Christ said it is finished, your salvation and mine, I hope is complete and secure in God's mind and purpose and now his Son is seated at His own right hand ever making intercession for His saints according to the will of God.

I suppose all who read my unworthy awkward scribbling think I try to hint so much about the resurrection of God's dear saints. To take away from me my hope of the blessed assurance in Christ's glorious resurrection of His saints. I feel that my hope would be totally blighted. We are living in hope that we are waiting to wit the redemption of these our vile bodies, and even in sincere expectation that when the final consummation of all things comes to hand that Christ our blessed Redeemer will come again the second time without sin unto salvation to resurrect and raise his purchased bride from her sleeping dust. He will raise them incorruptible, undefiled even in the perfection of beauty and glorification of His saints. Then they shall see Christ as He is, be like Him and be satisfied. His saints that remain here alive shall be changed and caught up together to meet the Lord in the air, to be ransomed home to their eternal abode, even His high court of glory. I feel His glorified Bride will hear the welcome applause, "come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." It is true if His little unworthy feeling children only inherits His glorified kingdom it would be enough, his kingdom with all of its grandeur and beauties can never be too highly praised. It is the new Jerusalem the city of our God whose builder and maker is God.

I hope this unworthy scribble is in line with what Primitive Baptist believe and maintain. I hope you all enjoyed the association and will come again and visit us. I hope Elder Priddy is much improved and also Brother and Sister Arington.

May the Lord bless you and also all of the household of faith that they walk circumspectly in the ordinances in His faith and love, is my prayer. A brother I hope, of eternal life.

J. A. PERDUE

* * *

October 23, 1951

DEAR BROTHER:

"O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me." Isaiah 38:14.

This morning after breakfast while in the lobby smoking my pipe and roaming in a world of thought; the above seemed to grasp hold of me. I went to my room, stretched out on my bed and cried in anguish of soul. "What a wretched sinner, I am."

Hezekiah was sick unto death. How apt have I been so sick that I could see only death. At the command of the prophet, "Set thine house in order," Hezekiah turned his face to the wall

and prayed.

This signifies the end of his strength. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of earth." Isaiah 45:22.

I felt to be at end of my earth. Then suddenly a voice said, "Get up and write."

What a happy message it must have been, I have seen thy tears, I have heard thy prayer. How blessed it is to mingle our tears and blend our spirits with the family of God. The evening of oppression, the morning of joy; midnight is between these two periods. Behold for peace I had great bitterness, but thou hast cast out all my sins behind my back. What a happy message when Jesus said to the woman, "Go sin no more." "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion." Psalms 137:1.

Israel was in captivity. They could not even sing the songs of zion in a strange land. This is time of the travels of a child of God. "O Lord, I am oppressed: Undertake for me."

Jesus must do all my undertaking, or else I have no hope.

I have been brief but I hope to have provoked a few thoughts.

I desire here to get away from the subject and mention a recent visit. On the first Saturday and Sunday in August I was with the Church in Kingman, Kansas. In the flesh I was a stranger to those people, and they to me. I had never seen any of them. Those Old Baptists are not of us, they are us! I have never enjoyed a sweeter meeting and have never received a warmer welcome. I am yet breathing the rich perfume of their fine hospitality and sweet fellowship. They have no shepherd but they meet regularly. I had a strong feeling that a certain Brother will preach.

C. H. BYRD
Panama City, Florida

Draper, N. C.
Oct. 15, 1951

DEAR BROTHER SPANGLER,

I noticed my subscription to the SIGNS expired with the Oct. issue. I am enclosing $5.00 to renew for two years.

I have been reading the SIGNS around fifteen years and always look forward each month to getting it and searching its pages for every crumb I can find that has fallen for me from the Master's table. Sometimes I get no comfort or understanding and have to lay it away and pick it up and read some other time.

I am enclosing a prayer that came to me around midnight last night. I arose and got paper and pencil and wrote it down. If you see fit to publish it you may, otherwise put it in the trash can. It will be no offense to me.

The writer is imperfect, but perfect and gracious is He who gave me the prayer.

I've been physically unable to sit up all day for three days now. I am hoping to meet you dear brethren at Dan River the fourth Sunday.

Remember me when at the throne of grace.

Yours in hope,
(Mrs.) EARL BRANNON

A PRAYER

Dear God in heaven reach down
Thy omnipotent hand,
Lead me to Thy Throne of grace,
To pray at Thy command.
Its concerning my two sons, Dear God
I so humbly want to pray,
That they may live to come back home,
Once more with me to stay.
They are both in a foreign land,
Almighty God, You know where they dwell,
Please watch over them,
Guide them and keep them well.

Give them strength to endure their trials,
Give them wisdom to understand,
That through life's dark shadows and sunshine,
And God is at their right hand.
Now that our home life has beeen severed
Here on earth by Uncle Sam
When we are called to that home eternal
May we be joined to forever dwell with the great,
I am. AMEN.

Marks, Miss.
October 12, 1951

Elder David V. Spangler, Editor
SIGNS of the TIMES
Annapolis, Maryland

DEAR SIR:

The enclosed money order should probably be sent to your business office, except that I wanted to talk to you editors. I wrote to Elder Dodson when he took over. In some way my subscription was marked to June 1952. That was an error. It should have been to 1951. I wrote Elder Dodson but he thought he was correct. Therefore you should credit the entire amount of this order to contributions, and that will make the 1952 correct.

The SIGNS have been in the homes of my family since it was started. I personally knew Elders Gilbert and William Beebe, both having been entertained in the home of my parents. From this you will understand I am by now what is properly called an old man. My uncle, Elder Thomas P. Dudley was one of about the same age of Elder Beebe. He was a regular contributor to the SIGNS. My great, great Grandfather, Elder Ambrose Dudley was one of the organizers of Licking Association of "Particular Baptists" in central Kentucky. My mother was baptized by Elder Silas H. Durand during one of his frequent visits to Licking Association. My Father was a deacon in his church. In addition to the Elders I have referred to we knew and have entertained Elder Pollard of Canada, W. J. Purrington, A. B. Francis, W. L. Smoot, P. D. Gold, P. G. Lester, and others. Elder John Eubank who finally lived, I believe in Delaware, was formerly from Georgia, then Kentucky and later lived and died in the east. He was a frequent visitor in our home.

I regret very much to have to say I am not a church member. We left Kentucky when I was a young man. There are no Primitive Baptists near home. Many years ago my father had a chance to visit a Primitive Baptist near home. Upon his return home he said he believed they were good people but not our kind. I did not question him. At a later date I was in a distant part of Mississippi and attended a Primitive Baptist church. Ae soon as the preacher found I read the SIGNS he told me, the "SIGNS Baptist" did not fellowship them. That ended my effort to find a church. Probably it should not have.

Do you ask why I am writing this? So far as I know there are in my entire connection, and it is a large one, there is not a Primitive Baptist. And in my entire acquaintance in Miss. there are none.

Some times, in fact very often I get hungry to talk with some one who can look at matters of a spiritual nature, as I feel I am able to understand it.

The local Baptist cannot understand why I cannot join with them. But I feel when one offers to join a church he is ready to endorse their doctrine and co-operate with their entire program. That I could not do. How I do wish I could go to a church that believes the doctrine held by my parents and grandparents, and so well proclaimed by the writers of the SIGNS and ask them to let me be one of them.

I think you will pardon this long letter as I believe you will understand why I am writing.

Our small cottage in Lexington, Kentucky used to be jokingly called "The Baptist Preacher's Hotel" because so many of them would stop over night with us. I wish it could be so now.

I want always to have the SIGNS to read.

Though I am now past 81 years of age I am blessed with good health, so that I can continue to follow my vocation as an engineer. For that I am so thankful.

Now with a sincere wish that all good things may come to you and those associated with you in giving us the SIGNS.

Very truly yours,
W. R. WALLIS

* * *

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:

I am sorry to be so late in renewing for the SIGNS and desire to give thanks in my Heavenly Master's name for the means He has provided to enable me to remit at this time.

It has pleased the dear Lord to bring me through deep waters since I sent my subscription in last year, but He has not forgotten to be gracious. He has taken me into a sacred nearness with Himself and in tender love and compasion made me to rejoice in thanksgiving and praise to His Holy Name, even while my breast broke in grief and sorrow in my great loss. On the 7th of May this year my beloved husband and companion for thirty-two years and eleven months was stricken with a cerebral hemorrhage which paralized his throat. We took him to the hospital where he seemed to rally for a time, but on the fifth day he became much worse and had to be put in an iron lung where he remained till he breathed his last on the 19th day of May.

I had thought I was praying the Lord's will to be done, and that I was reconciled for it to be so; but was made to realize on the day the Lord released his soul from it's suffering that the spirit of the flesh was fighting to keep him with me. Then it was as though the dear Lord spoke to me in tender love and compasion, and told me my loved one was ready and longed to go home, though he could not speak to tell me, and I said in my heart, dear Lord if Thou will be my strength, and will take my precious one unto Thyself I will not grieve to have him back. And when I was thus made submissive with a perfect trust and assurance all was well with my loved one, and that my Lord was caring for us both in His love and mercy, his soul took its flight back to its Maker.

The days and nights are now so long and lonely and I do miss him so, but my Heavenly Father has been kind and faithful, and when I would give up in my weakness and desolation He lifts me up and gives me strength to go in His strength and forbids me grieve for my loved one but rather give praise to Him who hath done all things well.

As I stood by my loved one and looked upon his intense suffering and he trying so hard to talk to me and could not, I could not have borne it had not my gaze been fixed by faith on the cross of Calvary to behold the suffering of my Lord, whose suffering and death and resurrection took the sting out of death and made my suffering bearable in a blessed hope in Him. And to His holy name I would ascribe all praise. To His poor and afflicted children who are now drinking of the dregs of the cup of sorrow I would comfort them by the comfort where with we ourselves are comforted of God.

"The cross of Christ constrains my
heart to sing redeeming grace

Awake my heart and bear a part
in thy Redeemer's praise
O who can be compared to Him who
groaned upon the tree
This is my glory, joy and bliss that
Jesus died for me."

I now have the constant care of my mother who is almost 83 years old and is totally blind and her mind is deranged. Many who read the SIGNS will remember her, Sister Ruth Hill, she has been a member of the Primitive Baptist church since about 1915, and was a subscriber to the SIGNS till about four years ago when her eyes got so bad she could not read. She is twofold precious to me, first by nature then by grace.

And to those who have offered up their humble petitions in my behalf in my recent trial and sorrow I do humbly desire an interest in their supplications at the throne of grace for His continued mercy and goodness to me in this present trial.

The poem enclosed written to the memory of my departed one, are expressions of my heart, drawn forth in love to him and adoration and praise to my blessed Saviour who is worthy of all praise.

Yours by the grace of the Lord Jesus
(Mrs.) R. C. WRIGHT

* * *

Charleston, W. Virginia

DEAR EDITORS,

I am enclosing money order for five dollars to pay on my subscription. I do enjoy reading the SIGNS. I am a shut-in and can't get out to church meetings often as I am nearing my 73rd birthday and am very feeble. About all the preaching I hear is through the SIGNS. I love to read the editorials and all the good letters they contain.

I love the dear old Primitive Baptist. I love the doctrine they advocate. It is my meat and my drink. "By grace are ye saved through faith that not of yourself it is the gift of God lest any man should boast." Every child of God is brought down to know there is nothing they can do to merit salvation. It has to come from the giver of every good and perfect gift. It is by the grace, love and mercy of God that we are drawn to Him. I have loved Thee with an everlasting love and with loving kindness have I drawn Thee. Yes His love is everlasting, what He doeth is done forever.

He saw the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things not yet done saying my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure.

There is no chance system or happen so with the Lord. It is all one chain of events coming to pass just as God pre-arranged it. In hope of Immortality, beyond this vale of tears.

MRS. ERNIE NULL

DEAR ELDER SPANGLER:

In my weak way I want to write and tell you a few things about my sinful life. But in writing to you I feel to be taking a great privilege, a person so much my superior.

I am the least and most sinful in the world. Sin seems to crowd around me and the more I try to be good the worse I get. It seems I sink deeper and deeper each day. Sometimes I wonder if there can possibly be a way for me to ever find rest from the load of sin I am burdened with most of the time.

The Lord has been good to me and I have nothing to offer in return. I did enjoy reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and my Bible, also the Landmark. It really seems that the crumbs would fall. Though often small I would be made for a space of time to rejoice. It is believed I am to be blind and I

can not read much anymore. I am not better to be blind than other people. There has been a lot of people blind. If it is the Lord's will for me to be blind regardless and if it is will for me to retain my sight the rest of my life in this world, I will continue to see.

If it is really my lot to be blind, closed in from the natural things in this world, I hope to be able to pray that God will give me a clearer view of the spiritual things. If I must be blind tomorrow, I think that is all the more reason I should thank the Lord that I can see today and not worry about tomorrow.

I would liked to have gone to the meeting at Snow Hill. I thought about you and wondered what you would preach about. I do not know what has happened but there is one thing I do know, I am not the person I once was and the entire world has changed to me. I so often feel like the publican "afar off" and I try to say, God be merciful to me, a sinner. It seems to reveal my weakness more and more each time. I see myself the chief of sinners. Sometimes I try to say with all of my heart, "remember me, Lord remember me and save me or I perish." But why should I expect the good shepherd to watch over and remember me a black sheep. I fall so short in every point. Unworthy to call the precious name of Jesus. Often when I ponder over my many sins I find some comfort in the one "He forgave most, loved Him most." I find many beautiful words in God's words that are comforting.

I do not read the Bible like I once did. It is an entirely new book and I am not afraid of it now. If Jesus ever comes into my life and teaches me the way the truth and the life like He has you good people; I hope to be thankful but I do feel so unworthy. The thirst and desire for this world's goods has faded. Now I often grow hungry for the understanding of God's word. I do not think that flesh and blood will ever teach it to me. This won't fall in line with you good people I am corrupt, just one mass of sin. There is no good I do, because there is no good in a sinner like me. There are so many things that I would like to understand. The dear Lord knows all about it all.

It is beautiful to know there is one who knows and understands. I often think about my many comforts and Jesus did not have a place to lay His head. He did not try to gather gold and silver in this world. That was not what he came for. The dear Lord has been good to me, and I wish that I could write and tell you what he has done for me.

It has been near forty years since I had my first experience of knowing that God had all power as in Matt. 28-18. I really think you people are the ones Jesus was referring to when He said, Lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world.

There are many beautiful things in the Bible that I would like to read and reread. But God had a just reason for me being almost cut off from them. When I could read the SIGNS I would be lifted so high. I suppose to an elevation where I did not belong, and I would fall back in my old path of sin and my stony heart would be harder than ever.

I do not want to take too much of your time. That is of so much value to the ones I consider the children of the Lord. Some people seem to be sorry for me and I appreciate their sympathy. But I have a lot of pleasure no one knows about. I get so much out of a cloud. I love to hear the thunder roll and see the lightning flash. It makes it so plain that God has complete control. I have often watched them and

thought how happy I would be if I could be up there and ride on them. The trees, birds, flowers all seem to express the Glory of God. Above all the wind, I like to compare it with God's spirit. It moves about yet we can not see it, still we know that it is there. All of these are pleasures poorly expressed. I can not find words to explain, but you will understand. A man with your spiritual knowledge can read between my broken lines.

I read in Luke 16-25 Abraham said, "Son remember that thou in thy lifetime received thy good things and likewise Lazarus evil things, but now he is comforted and thou are tormented." This seems to tell me that the poorest are sometimes the richest. I believe there is still a lot of Lazarism in the world today. What I most desire is the crumbs from the unseen table and to be willing to accept the bitter as well as the sweet. Humbly surrender all to the Lord and say take this world, but give me Jesus.

Mrs. Truitt said you put the poem I sent you in the SIGNS. Do not think that I do not appreciate your trouble, but I am afraid it is out of place as I do not feel worthy to mingle, or commune with you good people. Yet as little as I am, the dear Lord has been good to me.

God Bless You
MRS. INA PILCHARD
Stockton, Maryland

* * *

London, Ont., Canada
353 Dufferin Ave.

DEAR ELDER SPANGLER,

You will find a money order for a renewal to the SIGNS of the TIMES for two years. May it please the Lord to give to you and Elder Wood wisdom and understanding in publishing the SIGNS that it may honor and glorify His Holy name. May He be your counsellor at all times. For in Him we move and have our being.

Enclosed you will find a copy of a letter written by one who is hungering and thirsting after righteousness. If it meets with your approval and if you have space, please put it in the SIGNS.

Last night I had sweet meditations as I reviewed anew the way I have travelled this wilderness journey. The way a sinner travels from nature to grace.

Not so long ago the words, "thou has abiding faith" were whispered in my soul and I was given renewed hope and a sweet rest and a shelter in the storm. We know that faith is the gift of God. How wonderful is the love of God to his little children.

Sometimes we have to pass through the flames, the dross to consume and the gold to refine and it is needful to humble us at Jesus feet and at the feet of the brethren. To me humility is one of the greatest virtues. When I meet a brother or sister who is meek and lowly, I am greatly drawn to him or her. Then he is following in the footsteps of the Master, then he will be a comfort to his brethren. Again it takes the power of God to make and keep us humble.

The lot is cast into the lap but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord and as a dear brother remarked, we must sit down before there is a lap. We must rest from our labors and trust in the Lord. I feel I have a very small mind and I know so little.

I think of Mary and Martha. How Mary sat at Jesus' feet and heard his words but Martha was cumbered about much serving and she came to Jesus and He said unto her, Martha, Martha: thou art troubled about many things. But one thing is needful and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her.

May all His little children be kept ever looking unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of their faith. Praising His name now and forever world without end.

LOLLIE MAY CAMPBELL

Paris, July

MY DEAR LOLLIE,

"Mid scenes of confusion and creature complaints, How sweet to my soul is communion with saint!" Thus I felt upon receiving your lovely letter and I hope I am thankful to the Giver of every good and precious gift that He put it in your mind to write me upon the subject that is our greatest joy and more to us than anything else in this life below, it made me very humble.

The world seems so full of confusion and complaints and in business it is difficult times, that I feel the urge to run away. The question comes up—where shall I go? Immediately ones thoughts go to God—"Oh that the Lord would guide my ways" and we long to move among God's people, just to be in their midst and listen, but going to the meetings isn't the same as it used to be in our father's and mother's days. They were happy days as I look back and remember the mingling together in the homes and the visits. However, there is a time for all things and conditions, but to me it is change and decay in all I see, but thou who changest not, Oh Lord abide with me.

Is I prepared to go to the June meeting, my thoughts were—all the feeling seems to be gone and what's the use of going. However, I feel that I came home with a few pleasant memories and since have been reminiscing, hoping to have gathered a few crumbs to hold me on my way.

Bitterness and rebellion are known unto me. How lovely when this is taken from us. Again it is God alone who can do this, then are we glad, calm and still and willing to lie passive in His hands and know no will but His. It is God in everything whatsoever, wheresoever, nothing too small, nothing too great for it is in Him we live and move and have our being. How happy to know this is all in the plan even before the foundations of the world were made. Therefore if we are one of his, no one can pluck us out, but the great question is with me, am I his or am I not?

Not long ago as I was meditating upon my sorrows, trials, my down sittings and my uprisings, the words came sweetly to me—"Afterwards the peaceful fruits". "By their fruits ye shall know them", but with myself there is always a clinging of doubt, which makes me cry unto the Lord to make my case clear unto me. I will remember Elder Slauson saying to me at one time—"The bud may have a bitter taste but sweet will be the flower". I replied "some buds never flower". His reply was—"yes but it belongs to the stem." I never forgot that, if we belong to the stem what does it matter so far as this world is concerned. A peculiar people in the world but not of the world.

As I look about me there are people everywhere all the time coming and going, often I find myself peering into their faces, looking for the mark in the forehead, but there seems never to be one around to whom I can go. It is then we remember there is One—One above all others who well deserves the name of Friend, but one does get lonely at times and longs for the presence of the Lord's people, again alone, yet not alone—"Jesus trod the wine press alone and of all the people, none were with Him." In the days of mourning, perhaps we are walking closer with God.

Now I must close, but not before thanking you for your letter, I cherish it. This is a poor attempt for a reply

but I felt I must write.

With sincere love,
FLO FEGAN

* * *

Portsmouth, Va.

DEAR ELDER SPANGLER,

I hope to always have the SIGNS. I am sure I do not say this because seeing it in our house is among one of my earliest recollections, but because it is the best paper published in our United States.

I feel that it will continue to be in good hands while in yours and Elder Woods. I feel nothing will find a place on its pages that the dear Saints of old would not sanction, with a "Thus sayeth the Lord".

I would like to say I am thankful that you are in charge of the paper, but am I truly thankful for anything?

It was wonderful to be at the Salisbury Association and hear that wonderful doctrine proclaimed, the doctrine that one of our gifted English writers says if "We know and love will take us to heaven."

I know it is for God's humble poor, the people everywhere spoken against, but Oh I have only such a faint weak hope that I am one of them.

It is too beautiful, too marvelous, too high, it always seems for me to claim any part of. If the dear Lord knows me it must be for my "sin and sorrowings".

I notice you occasionally have a poem in the SIGNS, I am enclosing two that I recently ran across in one old collection of mine. Elder Chicks was cut from an old copy of the SIGNS.

I thought perhaps you might use them, if not as I love them both, please return them. Thanking you in advance, and with love to both you and Sister Spangler.

I am I hope your sister,
MRS. MARILTA PEARCE

R. R. #5
Princeton, Ky.

DEAR EDITOR OF SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

I wish I could write something that would show my appreciation of the comfort your paper gives me. I seem to be alone in this world, old, deaf, afflicted and ignorant. I scarcely ever get to go to church and when I do go I do not hear. Yet I love to be with them that love the promises of God. The question is, am I included in that promise? Those who are led by the spirit of God love one another.

People might ask why were you at church? Why did the tears roll down your cheeks? Was it for show? It is, I hope, the manifestation of the love of God. I do not think so, but know that God knows those that are His. He has known them always. There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sineth not.

Paul speaks of a warfare, it take two to have a war or more. Now the law was given Moses but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Jesus came into the world to redeem a people from under that law. But you He hath quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sin. Do you meet them that are walking after the flesh? Also, there are those who are walking after the spirit, showing abundant proof that they are the Lord's. Thus you may know you have passed from death unto life because you love the brethren.

There is bound to be a natural man and a spiritual man. One is the reverse of the other. Here springs the warfare. When you would do good, evil is always present. How to perform that which is good you find not. You are alive once without the law but when the commandments came sin revived and you died. Was then that which is good made death to you? You know the law is

spiritual, holy, just and good but you are carnal, and sold under sin. Oh brother, is it your sins that bothers you, and makes you doubt and fear you have never known the Lord? You have a knowledge of sin. That it keeps you humble and shows you that you are not as good as those you love. It makes you esteem your brother and love him and keeps you feeling unworthy of them. The apostle Paul cries out "Oh wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death." Paul could see his littleness. But he was made to rejoice in the law of God after the inward man and to thank God that with the mind he served the law of God; but in the flesh the law of sin. There is now no condemnation to them that is in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit, for the law of the spirit of life in Christ has made us free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sent His Son into the world and for sin condemned sin in the flesh.

I see a little flock who was saved and called with a holy calling. There is a little flock who are hungrying and thirsting after righteousness. It is according to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ before the world. It is the Father's good pleasure to bring them to the kingdom. They are washed in the blood of Jesus Christ and made whiter than snow, and Christ Himself has gone to prepare a place for them that where He is there we may be also and what a place that will be. There will be no more sorrow, pain, and death, but all will join around the throne and sing the songs of Moses, and the song of the Lamb. This is my hope and my all. If I am wrong I feel that all is lost as to my part for it is not by the free grace of God I am lost. What have I done that is worthy of that great love and devotion that I hope I am given sometimes to see. Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, it is not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to His mercy. He saved us and its so sweet to see that God loved us even when we were dead in trespassed and in sin and has quickened us together in Him and saved us by His grace and no man can take us out of His hands. I realize my time here in this world is short and my past whole life is full of sin and if I am saved it is by the free grace and mercy. I ask that I may be given grace to rejoice and see those things as I see them tonight. I feel that I could go on and on, but it is the same old story you have heard many times by more able writers than I am. Yet it can be said at the final windup of time that the half has never yet been told.

Cast the mantle of charity over this dear brother, and tell all who have a mind to write to a poor old deaf sinner, that I will be glad to hear from them. We are strangers in the flesh but I hope not in the spirit. My membership is at Old Lick Creek Church near Dawson Springs, Ky. Elder R. L. Biggs of Nashville is our pastor. I wish that you could visit us some time.

I am your unworthy Brother in a brother in a good hope of Jesus Christ.

D. L. CLARK

* * *

April 2, 1951

R. W. Rhodes
Lillie, La.

DEAR ELDER RHODES:

I feel too unworthy to call you Brother as much as I would like to do so if you would permit me. I am ashamed that I have waited so long to send you my many thanks for the little book "Gospel Comments", it is wonderful and has given me so much enjoyment. It is sweet preaching to me, the food I

crave for. I am afflicted but my afflictions are the greatest blessings I have ever received, for through them I was brought to the church of God and given my Hope that is worth more to me than the whole world. I can truthfully say I am happier now than I have ever been in my life, I go to preaching every time I can. God has blessed me to go a lot since I was afflicted and I always enjoy the preaching so much. My husband says that I heard you preach at the Association last year but I don't remember, I heard so many. If I am ever where you are again I hope to meet you and also hear you preach and if I never meet you in this world I am glad I have a sweet hope of meeting all of God's dear children in that home above. Death is something that I don't dread now as I once did, God has been so good to me, what if I had been taken away before my blind eyes were opened to the truth, then I hated the Baptist for I thought I believed the ways of the world, now I cannot stand them, even on the radio. I heard one say the other day that God did not answer a sinners prayers, I know he has answered my prayers many times and I also know I am a sinner. Oh yes he is much better to me than I deserve, I would be the most miserable person on earth if I did not believe what I do now in these terrible times, I know now God is above all and I feel that he is with me all the time. My husband asks me sometimes why I never worry about the children, I tell him God is taking care of them and praise His Holy name, He always has. I know they will not get through this world without some trouble, we will have trouble as long as the world stands, I don't expect Peace on earth, and in heaven alone no sin is found and there alone is Peace for all the children of God.

I did not mean to write so much and hope I haven't worried you so I will say many thanks again for the book and please accept this small donation. I wish it was a lot more near what the book is worth.

I haven't been able to hear you on the radio yet but I hope to sometime. I heard Elder Fred Rhodes from Durham preach yesterday, he announced after service about your radio program, he said he heard you one time but not very plain.

May God bless you to write and preach a long time in this world before you are taken to that happy home above.

God bless you always and please remember me in your prayers as a unworthy sister in Hope.

MRS. E. G. HALL
45 Victor Street, Spray, N. C.

DEAR EDITORS:

My mind is impressed to write some of the things I feel, that is of the dealings of the Lord. Since a child I have had these feelings now I am eighty-three years old.

I remember when I was a child I was told to come to Christ and I tried, but I found that I was just like I was. I went on until 1896, I was on a ball room floor as I had a great desire to dance. At that time my attention was called to look down at myself. I saw that I had on a long black cloak. I broke loose from the ring and there my trouble began. I got to the place when it was day, I would wish that it was night and when it was night I wished it was day, I did not know what to do. These were the dealings of the Lord I hope.

Your unworthy brother,
CHERRIE BENJAMIN

SIGNS of the TIMES, Inc.
Annapolis, Maryland

BRETHREN:

Please find enclosed three dollars for

my renewal of the SIGNS. I enjoy reading it. I have read this paper most of the time since about 1915, or a little later. There has been a few years during this time which I did not see any of them because I was going from place to place; so lost out for awhile. But as I am now located for awhile at least I want to renew my subscription for another year.

I have enjoyed very much the editorial page of the paper for this month. We know that whatsoever God the great Creator, purposed in his work will be fulfilled. Man's work is always a failure; but God's work is a perfect work and will stand. No dear brother, God did not lose anything in the Garden of Eden. Adam was the loser. He sold his birthright for a little morsel and had nothing to buy it back with. Because evrything belonged to God and because we are Adam's offspring by nature. We too have nothing to offer Him. Our service, our worship, and everything we have to offer all belongs to Him in the beginning.

Paul said after we have done all these things, we are still unprofitable servants, we have only did the things which we should have done (our duty). We owe all this to God anyway. Christ our great shepherd is the divider of these sheep. He calls them and they follow, He is the preserver both of His Father's will and purposes; He finished the work His father sent Him to do and left us a record of His life suffering, and death, also of His resurrection. We have a complete example of His Father's will that He came to do and this record has been preserved by the Father for our learning. We do well to think on these things and learn what is written and preserved for us.

In time past only a past of the people could read of His word. But it has pleased God to preserve His written word until the day came when all who desire to learn of His word and what it tells us can do so. Before this day of education, He God had prophets and men, who feared Him, to tell of His wonderful works to those who were wanting to know of God's work and purposes as He had and did reveal these things to His servants by the spirit. But the time has come when it is God's will to have each and all who want to learn the truth of His written word to read it for himself and know what the Bible really tells us. Christ called the scriptures which He had in His day, the prophets and the law because these scriptures He had and all these was a preserved record of the things which God had revealed to his men of old. But after Christ came and was the living example which His Father was preserving for us.

He the Father said This is my son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him. So then the holy Scriptures which we have of Christ's life and of His death, resurrection and ascension to Heaven is his word given to us, preserved by God for us, and through the spirit of God we are made able to see the beautiful things or a part of them; that He has promised to all those who love Him. We are creatures of flesh and cannot see the spirit. We learn by the things we see, hear and feel, and it has pleased God to fix it so. But we cannot see or understand the things of God by His spirit. It is a wonderful blessing from God to have His written word to read. We get comfort from it.

MRS. FRED MARTIN

November 4, 1951

Signs of the Times
Annapolis, Md.

GENTLEMEN:

Enclosed is check for $5.00 to extend

my subscription to the 4th month of 1953.

I recently enjoyed attending the Bartehotaker Association in October held at Bishel Church, Lamor County, Ala. Elder Biggs of Nashville, Tenn. preached the introductory sermon to a large attentive audience.

My nephew, Charles P. Hayes, principal of Kennedy High School, Kennedy, Ala. is moderator of this fine old Primitive Baptist Association.

The Hopwell Old School Baptist Association was held with Union Church, Fayette County, Ala. Friday and Saturday before the third Sunday in October. Elder C. H. Davis served this church as pastor when I was a small boy more than 50 years ago.

Elder W. D. Griffin, Associate Editor of the Signs and clerk of the Association preached the introductory sermon to an overflow throng of people, many from distant states. The Lord led Brother Griffin along the line of thought in a very able way of wholesome words, which was referred to by the many able preachers.

All through the three days meeting, I can't recall all the names of the visiting ministers but will give the names of the ones I do remember. Elder Lambert of Texas, Elder Perkins of Ky., Elder Taylor of Texas, and Elder Hawkins of Ala. Our local ministers of this association were Elder H. M. Brock, Moderator, W. D. Griffin, clerk of Ala., Elder Wes. McCool and E. B. Sanders of Gords, Ala. are all able preachers of the Faith once delivered to the Saints of God.

I enjoy very much reading the Signs.

GILBERT DAVIS

Montgomery, Ala. P.O. Box 1691

* * *

DEAR BROTHER,

After many years of living away from you who I believe to be the dear and precious children of Him who created the Heavens and the earth; together with all that is within. My heart and thoughts are made to leave the lusts of the flesh, after which I have sought to satisfy to no avail and turn to behold my own weakness. To see part the greatness of Him who has said "If I were hungry I would not tell thee, for the cattle on a thousand hills are mine, the earth and the fullness thereof."

So I am God, and there is none other. Yes the serpents that will not be charmed have bitten and stung this poor sinner.

Now to whom shall I turn? If not to my first love, if indeed my heart is not deceived and now as my thoughts begin to wander I could write more but will try to stay myself. I long to see someone who loves the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Oh, that I could sit among you and eat manna from the master's table again.

In closing I have one request, if anyone who cares to will write me or if you live near, please contact me.

May God's grace keep and uphold you. When at the throne of Grace remember this unworthy sinner.

W. O. WAMMACK

11559 Willake Street Whittier, Calif.

* * *

Horse Shoe Lake, La.

DEAR EDITORS,

Please renew my subscription for another year.

Speaking of the SIGNS I have been a reader of it more or less since Elder Leffert and G. Ruston Vaughn were editors. Also I read the Old Faith Contender from which I get comfort. I am glad to know that the Lord has men to fill the vacancy of our Elder Dodson as editor.

Yours very truly,

CHERRIE BENJAMIN

EDITORIALS

ANNAPOLIS, MD. FEBRUARY, 1952

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EDITORIAL

Those who believe and rejoice in the things set forth in the Signs are those who have found that nothing else satisfies, and that nothing else is consistent with what they have learned through much exercise of heart. Most of us have sometime been satisfied with most anything having a semblance of religion. But not so when a change has been wrought in our hearts. It is because of this change that we are particular what we endorse as doctrine and order. Without a being turned about and brought to a much different understanding through a new birth, or quickening from spiritual death, we would yet rejoice in the way that seems right to men. This is the greatest and most important blessing that the Lord bestows upon His people, to be turned from trusting in self for our righteousness before God, to trusting in Him alone for everything either in time or eternity. Few voices are being raised today calling attention to the difference between the doctrines of men and the doctrine of God our Saviour. Comparatively few are really interest in searching, as did the Bereans, whether these things be so. When, however, the Spirit begins a work it is an entirely different matter with them. When the sands of self-righteousness begin to shift and the foundation begins to sink, then the struggle begins; a struggle which always ends up with the sinner in a horrible pit and miry clay. The struggle goes on as long as there is any strength remaining in the sinner. Oh, what a terrible condition he finds himself in; he is a condemned wretch before his God, justly condemned for he learns that all his thoughts and actions are open before God. He gives up all for lost, yet is enabled to beg for mercy; all helps have failed, even God has turned his face away and eternal condemnation stares him in the face. Little can he know that the merciful eye of God is upon him and has been all the while. He is being brought by a way he knew not. The Spirit points out and applies the righteousness of Christ and opens up the great truth why God sent his own Son into the world—to save sinners. Then there is a rejoicing and peace wholly unknown before. Indeed, with David, he is brought up out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and his feet are set upon a rock, and his goings are established, and a new song is put in his mouth, even praise unto his God. The foundation is now secure —no more shifting sands. He is led about and instructed and grows in grace and knowledge of the truth, in which leading about he is often tried as gold is tried in the furnace; rejoicing awhile and then in heaviness through manifold temptations. 1 Peter 1:6-7. All these things make him careful in his belief

and practice. Yes, in his talk and actions. If the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to him, he is taught something. It teaches him that, denying ungodliness and wordly lusts, he should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the Great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Titus 2:11-13. Again with David, he can say, ". . . for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." II Samuel 23:5. How else is he known to the brethren, except he brings forth the fruits of the Spirit. In these things are manifest love and fellowship one for the other.

Dear reader, have you been led about in this way, either suddenly or gradually having been brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus? Do you rejoice in the deep and mysterious doctrine of predestination, election, effectual call, resurrection and final preservation of the saints? If so, you rejoice that the Lord raised up Elder Beebe, and those who stood with him, and qualified them to cry aloud not only *for* these blessed truths, but *against* all the errors which had crept in gradually. The church is entirely separate from the world and its doctrine. It is the only divinely sanctioned organization in the world—the only organization established by Jesus. He gave her his commandments and settled her in all her parts; and she is to contend earnestly for the faith which was one delivered to the saints, not believing every spirit, but to try the spirits whether they be of God.

There are comparatively few (in comparison with the number of men in the world) who are faithful in these things. Not many are interested in a, "Thus sayeth the Lord", for their faith and practice. The church's foundation stands sure, however, having the seal that the Lord knows then that are his, and that he is not slack concerning his promises as some men count slackness, but is long suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to the knowledge of the truth, as said Peter and Paul. The church is built upon "this rock", and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

What a wonderful thing it is that salvation is not in the hands of men, either to obtain or give to others. Our God has made all the arrangements from beginning to ending. Peter sums it all up, when writing to the "strangers scattered", when he wrote, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." I Peter 1:2-5. May the Lord bless all who are interested in the Signs, both writers and readers, and all everywhere who love the truth, to heed the admonition of the Apostle in Hebrews 10:23-25, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

J. D. W.

TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF WELCH TRACT CHURCH

Newark, Deleware

On Sunday, December the 9th, The "Welch Tract", Old School Baptist Church at Newark, Delaware, celebrated its two hundred and fiftieth Anniversary. The church was organized in Wales in 1701, and emmigrated to this country as a regular constituted church.

This is the oldest Old School Baptist church in America. I have been requested by several to give an account of the meeting through our paper, as it would be of interest to our readers.

D. V. SPANGLER, *Pastor*

As this is the two-hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the organization of this Church, I think it appropriate to make some mention of the history of our people, the Baptist, or known today as Old School Baptist; Also called Primitive or Predestinarian Baptist.

From the days of the apostles until the second century there is a space of time that has never been bridged completely by historians.

In the days of the second century the World was ruled by the Romans. In the early days of the second Century we have much evidence of the Christian's faith in God in those days. Among the true followers of our Lord in those days was manifested a desire to worship him according to the dictates of their own conscience. They were not persecutors, but the persecuted.

I shall here quote an address by Tertullian in his appeal to the established civil government in Rome, in the second Century. This gives us a picture of what the spiritual desires were in these days.

"We are a body united in one bond of religious discipline and hope. We meet in our assemblies for prayer. We are compelled to have recourse to the divine Oracles for caution and recollection on all occasions. We nourish our faith by the Word of God; we erect our hope, we fix our confidence, we strengthen our discipline, by repeatedly inculating precepts, exhortations, corrections, and by excommunications when it is needfull."

In the third and fourth Centuries God raised up men of his own choice to declare the faith once delivered to the the saints. Novatian and Donatus were two of the outstanding ones of that Day and age.

Novatian was an Elder in the church at Rome, and because of laxity of morals, and loose discipline in the churches he withdrew from it. The majority of the churches followed one Cornelius, a person according to historians who was more lax in discipline than Novatian.

Churches were established under Novatian who would receive no members from such as held the faith and practice of Cornelius except by re-baptising them.

In the fourth Century one named Peter Waldo became the leader of what was later called the Waldenses. These people according to ancient writers continued in the apostles faith and practice until the days of the reformation.

The two ordinances observed by the Waldenses was the Lord's supper, and Baptism. The latter as showing forth the Lord's burial and resurrection from the dead; the Lord's supper as showing that our continued perseverance is because of him, and both ordinances are but emblems and signs of inward Grace.

I mention these things that we might be reminded of the practices and order of the early church.

During the sixteenth century the Baptist were called Ana-Baptist. This name was applied to them by their

enemies because they insisted on re-Baptising all who came to them for membership, regardless from what order they came. They were in their faith and practice but a continuation of the followers of Novatian and Waldo.

The true followers of our Lord Jesus Christ, regardless of what name they were called have often been persecuted. This was often because they recognized no authority for Faith and practice except the Word of God; no king of kings except the Lord Jesus.

No doubt this persecution was one factor that caused our Welch Brethren whom we desire to mention the memory of to-day, to cast their eyes to a new world, where they hoped to worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience.

It no doubt was a very solemn undertaking; to leave their native land; homes and many loved ones for a land unknown to them; to set out to-day for a foreign land with nothing settled as to where one would live, a means of livelihood, or a certain dwelling place would cause many serious thoughts. Yet this is what the founders of this place were confronted with. How truly we are reminded of the experience of the Lord's servant Abraham when he was called to go out to a place he would afterward inherit! He went out not knowing whither he went; he sought a city which had foundations whose builder, and maker was God.

Likewise the Pilgrims who left all behind, and as an organized church of Jesus Christ sailed for America. No meeting house for the worship of God is theirs, yet they go forth. With them they brought letters of commendation to any they should find of the same faith. This was a precious possession of theirs.

It is evident that the decision was not made because of their desire alone for riches. This was manifested by the fact that they were organized into a church before leaving their native land.

Neither were they unmindful of their need of a minister among them to speak unto them the word of God.

In the Month of June, 170[illegible], this body of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ, later to be called The Welch Tract church, sailed from Milford-haven, South Wales, in Great Britain. The number was sixteen including their pastor. The names are as follows:

Thomas Griffith, Pastor
Griffith Nicolas
Evan Edmonds
John Edward
Elizeus Thomas
Enoch Morgan
Richard David
Elizabeth Griffith
Lewis Edmond
Mary John
Elizabeth Griffith
Shonnet David
Margaret Matheas
Shonnet Morris
James David.

They landed in Philadelphia, September 8th of the same year, and continued in that vicinity for about a year and a half. They were received by a congregation meeting in Philadelphia in a loving manner, as both held the same faith; There was a difference in belief about the ordinance of laying on of hands of newly Baptised persons. The Welch Tract brethren held this as a gospel ordinance, the Church in Philadelphia did not. This caused some conflict between them for some time, but was finally settled to the extent that all could commune together at the Lord's Table.

Early in the eighteenth century William Penn granted to David Evans and William Davis a tract of land of thirty thousand acres. This tract has since

been known as "The Welch Tract". This land was to be divided and deeded to settlers from South Wales.

To this place moved the Welch Baptist church, and in 1703 built a log meeting house in which they worshipped until the present structure was erected in 1746. The first house occupied the same location as this present building.

The bricks in the present house were brought from England, and carried by mule-back from Newcastle to the present location. It is reported that these mules were led by women members of the congregation.

In 1680 representatives of over one hundred congregations of Baptists from England and Wales, meeting in London, put forth what is generally known as "The London Confession of Faith." These articles of Faith were adopted by this church in February 1716. It is mentioned in the original church records that this confession of faith held the following principles of Faith; believers Baptism; election and final perseverance of the Saints.

These Articles of faith were translated into the Welsh Language by Abel Morgan, to which was added an article relative to laying on of hands; singing Psalms; and church Covenant.

The first pastor died June 25th, 1725, living about twenty years after immigrating to these shores.

As the Church was composed of Welch People, the preaching for about one hundred years was in the Welch language.

This church was one of the five original churches forming the Philadelphia Association in 1707, and according to history was for many years the most influential members of that body.

Ministers who have served this church as pastors are as follows:

Thomas Griffith, Elisha Thomas, M. E. Thomas, Enoch Morgan, Owen Thomas, David Davis, John Sutton, John Boggs. Also Gideon Farrell, Stephen M. Woolford, Samuel Trott, William K. Robinson, Thomas Barton, G. W. Staton, William Grafton, Joseph Staton, John Eubanks and H. H. Lefferts. There may have been others, but according to the information I have been able to obtain, this is the complete list.

This list includes eighteen names. These pastors served nearly two-hundred and fifty years in all, and the average time of service of each would be about fourteen years.

Buried in the church cemetery are nine former pastors as follows: M. E. Thomas, David Davis, John Boggs, Gideon Farrell, Enoch Morgan, William K. Robinson, G. W. Staton, Joseph Staton and John Eubanks. There may be others.

Buried here are also other noted ministers who did not serve here as pastors, among them is Elder B. F. Coulter.

On September the 3rd, 1777 the meeting house took part in a military engagement. The Americans after being driven from Cooch's bridge retreated along Christiana and made their last stand under the shelter of the church walls. At this time a Cannon Ball is said to have passed through the building.

A few of the prominent descendants of Welch Tract include President Garfield of the Union, Jefferson of the Confederacy, Senator Chamberlain of Oregon and John Griffith McCullough, former Governor of Vermont. In 1894 he erected two of the large monuments in the cemetery in memory of his Griffith and McCullough ancestors.

"One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism. One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. Ephesians 4th.ch. V. 4 and 5."

Today as we come together to celebrate the two-hundred and fiftieth Anniversary of this church we are wonderfully blessed; We have religious freedom; the privilege to worship God according to the dictates of each ones conscience.

Blessed to meet where the children of God have gathered to worship him for over two hundred years. Here around this meeting house sleep many precious loved ones who continued steadfastly in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and prayer.

How thankful we should be to the giver of every good and perfect gift. In the midst of rejoicing may we ever be mindful that we enjoy these things to-day through the tender mercies of God.

In reviewing the History of this church, we would do well to remember that the identity of a church, as the church of Jesus Christ cannot be claimed because of the age, or length of time it has been in existence. Its identity is in the doctrine, Faith and practice.

A church could be very old as an organized body; have articles of Faith that would be in accord with the Word of God, and hold fast to the ordinances as taught in the new testament, and then not bear the mark altogether of the Apostolic Church.

Neither can a church or denomination lay claim to Apostolic Faith and practice, because of the name it bears, the number of members enrolled, or its success in the eyes of men. The Name is only one of the marks.

The Name of a church usually signifies the practice of it, or the name of the person who founded it, and advocated the doctrine it holds.

The Name Baptist is applicable to our people because we recognize only Baptism by immersion as one of the ordinances of the house of God.

John the Baptist was known by that name because he was the forerunner of Jesus, and Baptised in the River Jordan.

Jesus was Baptised in Jordan, and so were the apostles of whom we have record.

The true Church, regardless of what age it existed in, or name it bears is a body of Believers, called out of the World, Born of his spirit, who walk in his commands, and observe his ordinances. There are many believers who have been called by his grace, and born of his spirit, who are never members of his visible church, but our reference is to the organized body.

One Lord; There are Lords many and Gods many, but to them that believe there is but one Lord. The word Lord means Master, and Jesus is spoken of as the "Lord of Lords, and King of Kings".

The master has said, there would be many saying "Lo here and Lo there". We are commanded to go not after them because the Kingdom of God is within you. This means that the Government of him who is called "Our Lord Jesus Christ", is a spiritual government. The prophet Isaiah well describes his work, "The Government shall be upon his shoulder;" he is head over all to the church, which is his body. The fullness of him who filleth all in all.

The body of Jesus, which is his church is designated in holy writ as The Lamb's wife; the chosen in Christ Jesus; the chosen of God; the faithful in Christ Jesus; the election of grace, and the children of God.

The expression, One Faith, is closely related to the one Lord. This Faith does not stand in the wisdom of men, but the power of God. As Jesus is acknowledged in the heart as the only divine

master, so there can be but one Faith. This Faith is the gift of God, the fruit of the spirit, the substance of things looked for.

It lays hold of Jesus Christ as the one called, "Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace".

This one Faith, Does not direct to several sources for salvation. It looks to Jesus alone, who is the author and finisher of it. To him who by his own blood entered heaven, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

One Baptism; This epistle referred to in the text was to the church of Jesus Christ at Ephesus, and shows that the one Faith, and one Baptism, is because there is but one Lord. How well the apostle describes this in the 6th verse. "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

D. V. S.

OBITUARY.

By request of several of our Baptist friends, I am sending an obituary of our late beloved sister Jennie A. Gillis. She was one of ten children born to John C. and Ann Frances Bateman, whose home was in Caradoc, Ontario. Her father was a deacon of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, and used often to conduct services when the Elder was away, and his speaking was very acceptable to the church for many years. His wife and several of their children were members of the church and were dearly loved by their brethren.

Sister Jennie united with the church in New York City over thirty-five years ago, and was baptized by the pastor, Elder John McConnell, as she was then living in New York with her sister and family. On March 29, 1919, she was married to Deacon Duncan Gillis and took up her abode with him at Muirkirk, Ontario. In the fall of the same year she was dismissed by letter from the watchcare of the New York Church to the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, where she remained a faithful member until her death.

She was an excellent companion and wife, making their home an Old School Baptist home and aiding her husband as a deacon's wife, so that he used the office of a deacon well, and purchased to himself a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Jesus Christ. Her dear husband died after a short illness in December 1929, soon after we became pastor of the Church in Canada. We were members in New York when Sister Jennie made a good confession before the Church there, and was gladly received into their fellowship. While there she endeared herself to the brethren by her faithful attendance and her spiritual-mindedness, and, after her return to her native land, she was greatly esteemed by her brethren. As it was said of her mother before her, by Elder Ker, so it can also be said of her:—"She was one of the noblest of women, kind, faithful and true. She was deeply exercised and well instructed in the doctrine of grace, and dearly loved the truth in all its fulness."

After her husband's death she moved to London, Ontario, where she lived for over twenty years, and her company and fellowship was greatly prized by the brethren and friends in that city. For several years she was very frail, but would get to meeting if possible, and sometimes came when she seemed too weak to leave her home. At last she was confined to her bed, her nephew, Mr. Archie Blue, seeing that she had every care, and at last took her to his own home, where kind loving hands did all they could for her. She gradually got weaker in body, but in spirit she longed to enter into rest. She passed peacefully away August 6, 1950. She leaves to mourn her loss, one sister, Mrs. J. L. Young of New York, besides a number of nephews and nieces and many friends and brethren. Funeral services were held at Duart, Ontario, where the writer tried to speak to the comfort of those present, and her remains were laid beside her dear companion to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ from Heaven, when the dead in Christ shall rise first.

GEORGE RUSTON.

MRS. MAUD TAP McGREGOR was called from the walks of life. Her age was 68, September 28. She was a dear friend to the Baptists and a sister we believe in Christ. Her home was always a home to the Baptists. She seemed always to love to wait on them. Her favorite song was "When Sorrows Encompass Me Round". She always filled her seat at Church and her place will always remind us of her. Her life was a quiet, meek and lowly disposition, as near the life of a Christian as one could imagine.

Our pastor, R. L. Biggs, talked and the Church sang "Amazing Grace" before her remains were layed to rest in the Old Beulah Cemetery.

Written by

MONA McGREGOR

Route 4, Box 149 Monroe, La.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 120 ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND, MARCH, 1952 No. 3

FORTY-SECOND PSALM

R. ANNA PHILLIPS

As pants the hart, hard-hunted for the streams
Of waters cool, and seeks them mid the strife;
So pants my soul for God, whose smiling beams
Upon me, as healing founts of life.

So thirst I for the living God and true,
In searching tears, while foes continual cry--
"Where is thy God?" as though I never knew,
Or ere would know His saving presence nigh.

In cravings deep my restless spirit sighs,
Nor will be comforted without Thee near;
Wilt Thou no more in pity hear my cries?
When shall I come before Thee to appear?
My weary soul doth faint of thirst for Thee,
To drink but tears as from the wells of strife
In Marah's plain; -- Thou only art to me
As springing wells of health and love and life.

When I these things compare to other days,
As when Thy presence did my soul bedew,
And fill with joy and holy peace and praise,
Then pour I out my heart for Thee anew.

But oh! my soul, why fallen thou so low?
And gloomed so deep? -- Hope thou in God as thine
That waters full once unto thee did flow,
Is that again thou 'lt taste the streams divine.

God of my strength, remembering 'twas Thy hand
That helped me hitherto - from Mizar's hill,
And of the Amorites, and Jordan's land, --
Revives a hope that Thou wilt help me still.

For sure deliverance from one Deep doth call
To my poor soul in this -- though wave on wave
Goes o'er my head with surging billows all --
To trust the same dear Hand again to save.

Deep calls to Deep, - a voice comes from the sea
Confirming Faith, that, strengthened, now would plead, --
"From out those depths each lifting up shall be
A seal to help in every time of need."

Day speaks to day, and for this night hath ears,
And soft replies, -- the God Who blest our sway,
Will this night-time, though met with weeping tears, --
Bless with sweet songs, and lift the veil away.

Then, oh my soul, why art thou so cast down,--
Disquieted and stirred with deep alarm?
While day to day, and night to night makes known,
That God for thee will bare His holy arm?

Hope thou in God; though fallen, He'll replace;
He bruises but in healing to refine;
And casts thee off to showHis smiling face
The more, the health and light and life of thine.

God of my life, -- my Rock whom I adore
And trust, too weak Thy dealing hand to trace; --
Who art my life and health must these restore.
Restoring me unto Thy smiling face.

Then thou, my soul, shalt reap thy night's own tears
And bind great sheaves of holy peace and praise: --
Hope thou in God, -- the night far spent appears, --
The harvest time -- the dawn not long delays

* * *

21 January, 1952

Dear Brother Spangler,

May we mortal creatures of this world, if only but blessed by our Creator, being endowed with wisdom from above to visualize some of the greatness of our God, we at once find our finite minds lost as to words to even attempt to ascribe or speak of His vastness and His loving kindness to we poor mortals of this time world.

The Lord willing, it is my desire to put down some of the thoughts as it occurs to me from Holy Writ wherein the Spirit of the Lord gave David to slay the great monster of the Philistines named Goliath. If we but read the 17th Chapter of 1st Samuel, we shall see what a tremendous fear that was cast upon the men of Israel by this man monster who defied all Israel and cursed David, a man of God.

The 38th through the 40th verses appear to be on my mind, particularily the 40th verse. "And Saul armed David with his armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail. And David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him. And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine." We notice that King Saul a man of the world gave David an armour of brass and that upon his head, where the knowledge of man and his religion are, in the head and not in the heart. Equally, we notice that David could not use the armour and sword as he had not proven it. Isn't that the way of a child of God's? They can not be girded with the armour (laws) which offers no protection but only condemns. Here they wanted to put a sword in David's hand so they could say or tell man what he must do to be saved. Yes, attempting tc take the honor from the Lord God and give it to puny man. David by the grace of God was given to pull off the armour as does all of God's children who are called out of Egypt, the land of darkness, into the glorious light and walk of a child of God. It could be proven as the scriptures tell us there is a way which seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. David being a man who put his trust in the living God and not in any of man-made doctrines, he could not fight the fight of faith by the traditions of man, but like Jesus who was never subject to any of man's education or training to install in Him any of man's wisdom. David's help must come direct from God and maintain the freshness; the purity; the glory and return to the Lord God the giver of every good and perfect gift.

And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook. David tells us in the 23rd Psalm, "thy rod and thy staff they comfort me". So we see that the Lord was leading him the same way as His people are being kept today. The heart deviseth the way but the Lord directs his steps . The five smooth stones to me represent:

1. Omniscience - Unlimited Knowledge
2. Omnipresence - Everywhere present and no place absent.
3. Omnipotent - Unlimited Power.
4. Infinite - Perfection.
5. Eternity - No beginning and no end.

OMNISCIENCE: Uulimited Power. We notice that David was given to put his hand in his bag and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead. That is just where the religion of the world lies in the forehead. It is mv understanding if we are given to praise the Lord and acknowledge His powers thereof, then we are endowed with understanding, we see darkness and light are the same to His all penetrating eye; He who chose His people in Christ Jesus His Son before the foundation of the world and none can stay his hand. He who not only saw the end from the beginning but has declared it thereof. All prophecy is founded on God's foreknowledge and predetermination of things to come which is clearly set forth in Election, Predestination, Vital Unity of Christ and His body, the Church, Redemption and Resurrection. God clearly predetermines the incarnation of Christ, His sufferings, death, and resurrection. Yes, nothing comes to pass but what it was decreed by Him and that it was foreknown and foretold by the Lord long before it was done. Is it any wonder that the exact proportation and the wisely adaptation of every ob-

ject in this world to each other and of all to the praise and glory of our God, is but befitting His Omniscience, which includes both perfect knowledge and wisdom.

Foreknowledge means to know before it comes to pass. It it not that God foreknows what will be, but it is simply that He is a God of purpose because He has decreed it just that way and that is the way it is and ever will be. I would like to know how anything can be foreknown if it is not certain and it being certain to come to pass, then it must have been proposed by the Lord God Almighty. So it is written by the Apostle Peter, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace be multiplied". We see that the foreknowledge of God embraced and that long before this world was spoken into existance, Election, Predestination, Justification, Redemption and Resurrection and that all in His dear Son who paid the supreme sacrifice for His people, everyone from Adam until the final consummation of time shall be saved by the powers of God, as all powers that be are ordained of God.

We notice that there was only one stone used and if we are only given to see the foreknowledge of God it will kill any head doctrine (man made) that this world has ever produced, so only one stone was required to kill the great monster Goliath, who trusted in his gods of this world. The other four could do the same but they were not needed, as all it took was one and that is the foreknowledge of God. There is no difference today, as the Truth never changes, the Truth thousands of years ago is still the Truth today, let God ever be given the glory, without Him there is nothing.

OMNIPRESENCE: Everywhere present and no place absent. The Lord being a Spirit and not being bound by space as a body of this world made up in parts, if so he would be finite, for a body and matter is a product of time. God being an uncreated spirit and having no beginning and no ending as we poor mortals of this earth. God is immutable, He changes not, and if He did change or move from place to place He would be mutible. If He rose from non-existence as the world would have us believe He would not be existence (everlasting) as the Scriptures declare. He is from everlasting to everlasting, and there is no beginning and no ending. Malachi 3:6 tells us, "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." The Lord's presence reaches the unlimited vastness of space, comprehending all things that are, though ever so numerous whether falling of a hair or sparrow or the immutable company of His son.

The Lord being everywhere in spirit ever leads His people in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them. It is the Lord who brings His children to the knowledge of the truth and they have been made to feel and taste the sweetness of His tender mercy, and regenerating power, having experienced it in their hearts, simply in that Jesus has made himself manifest unto them, giving them to hate the things which they once loved, the ways of the world. Nothing is sweeter or more comforting than to look over the road with fellow travelers, who have been given by the grace of God to travel over the same road. How sweet it is to look back over the way one has been brought and made manifest to see the merciful kindness of the presence of the Lord guiding every step and keeping them from the evil world. It is not strange for a child of God to want to talk of the sweetness with the like travelers, comparing places where they struggled together without knowing it, yet comforting one another in their joys of a blessed Savior who has pleased to make all these joys manifest unto them.

OMNIPOTENT: Unlimited power. God being perfect in knowledge, perfect in purpose, it is befitting that He would be perfect in power. If He did not have the power to carry out what He knew would come to pass then He would not have all power, but thanks be to God of all grace, He who speaks and it is done, He who commands and it stands fast,

speaks with authority as the Prophet Isaiah in the 46th Chapter tells us, " . . I am God, and there is none else; I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." God the creator did not take man into His counsel, neither was he consulted in his creation. The Scriptures tell us that the heavens are higher than the earth, so are the Lord's ways higher than man's ways, and His thoughts than our thoughts, and His word that goeth forth out of His mouth; it shall not return unto Him void, but it will accomplish that which the Lord pleased and it shall prosper in the things whereto he sent it. Nothing is impossible with God as He is the power behind all power, and His operations prove it by the visable works of His creation as all forces of this universe, displaying stupendous power but none can exist or go one grain farther than what the Lord has ordained.

INFINITE: Perfection. The Lord God being perfect in all His Attributes, He who made the world out of nothing and has stretched the north over the empty spaces and hangeth the earth upon nothing, had to have more than the know how, more than just being there and having the power to perform. There must be a feasting and rejoicing unto the Lord. The Scriptures tells us that the world is ever learning but never able to come to the knoweldge of the Truth. That which is imperfect cannot put on perfection, so it behooved the Son of God to come down upon this earth taking voluntarily upon Himself the likeness of sinful man (sin expected) for the love of his whom the Father gave Him out of this world, living a perfect life, fulfilling everything required of the Father in their stead. Christ also has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. We see the law was filled by obedience, the obedient one being Christ, and had he not, man would suffer ever more, for his disobedience, or God must lose the manifestation of His holiness therein. For if it were never kept in any instance, never fulfilled by any one person in the world, how should the glory of it be declared. Is it any wonder then we should praise the Lord God for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men.

God being infinite, equally are all His powers infinite. If He is finite then there would be a power higher than His and all would come tumbling down upon Him, but the Lord God is unlimited and unbound as to power and space. He is unlimited and unbound depending upon none, but his creation clearly depends upon him. He who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that man can possibly think, for He knoweth all things proper and fit. He who leads His people in a way that they know not, a way that they would not in and of themselves choose, and if they did not choose the way which they are brought, then how can they praise any but the One who has made it manifest unto them. We must see and understand and know that all powers that be are ordained of God, for by him all things consist.

ETERNITY: No beginning and no end. The things which are not seen are eternal, they are spiritual, not tangible, something that cannot be accepted or rejected by mortal man. In Genesis the Bible records for our learning. Let us make man in our image, in the image of God created he him. The greatest honor bestowed upon mortal man is to be in the image of God (Christ) who was with the Father before the world began. Eternity is that which is without beginning or ending. As the Psalmist tells us, Psalm 90: "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God". It is not in the mind of sinful man to visualize but a short period of time as time is with man. Man judges time by darkness and light but there being no darkness with God, He is without beginning self-existant. If God had been eternal then there must have been a period of time that there was no God and if so, there may be one

again as the thoughts and belief of man would have us believe. God being the cause of all causes as He has purposed so shall it stand. His purposes and decrees are never frustrated, because He ever lives to bring them into execution. Age does not exist with God, He is not a bit older than when the world was created, neither will He be when it is destroyed. What we should be thankful for is that His people were blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus as they were chosen in Him and that before the foundation of the world, and had grace given unto them in the mind and purpose of God before they were created.

We believe the basic principle of the Bible is to set forth God in all His power and glory and to present His Son, Jesus Christ, as the Savior of His people as is set forth in the Law, Prophets and Psalms, and by the fullfillment of the law and the prophets and Psalms as recorded in the New Testament by none other than His eternal Son Jesus Christ in a certain number of people whom the Father giveth Christ He shall lose nothing but shall raise it up in the last day to praise the Lord for evermore. Man in this time world if called out of nature's darkness shall acknowledge and praise the Lord for His knowledge made present, in power, in Christ Jesus.

In love, I hope a brother in Christ,

JOHN F. SIMPSON
2430 Lincoln Avenue
Granite City, Illinois

* * *

Lillie, La.
Jan. 18, 1952

To the Household of Faith,
Through The Signs Of The Times
Fellowship and Christian Greetings.

It is with much fear, and great apprehension that I undertake thus to address you, as I feel very ignorant and very unworthy to undertake to speak or write, in the great and worthy and precious name of the Lord, to His people, but I find a desire in my heart to communicate with you concerning His precious and holy and comforting Gospel truth, that is taught and left upon record in the Holy scriptures, for the learning and comfort of the children of God.

The passage that I have been meditating upon at times for several days now, is that of Jacob and Esau, the twin brothers of Isaac and Rebecca. This is a subject that the worldly and the wise professor has but very little, or no use for, as it shows the attitude of God in His soverign will and choice, which is not based upon the will of either Jacob or Esau, neither the desires, and conflicting attitudes of Isaac, nor Rebecca.

I will quote herewith, Rom. 9:13. "As it is writen Jacob have I loved, and Esau, have I hated." Now I will say that no natural reasoning of so called theological or earthly wisdom can ever explain satisfactorily to human minds, on their levels, just how and why God's attitude was to love one and hate the other. because we human creatures, unrestrained would have it in some way or another that it was due to something, that either or both of them had done or would do, that caused this reverse attitude, but the scriptures in Rom. 9:11, plainly tells us that this attitude of the almighty and unchangeable God was this before either one was born, and before either one had done either good or evil, that the purpose of God according to Election might stand, not of works but of Him that calleth. How is this dear brethern and sisters, from the teachings of the natural Adamic Creature, on this great subject.

Man's persistent teachings, upon this subject from early morning of time, is that the way to get God to love and save you is to do something good, when the scriptures plainly says "There is none that doeth good, no not one", Rom. 3:12. So if it had been left upon men to do good spiritually, then all would have been lost, and gone forever, world without end. Then as bad as the natural man dislikes this despised and rejected doctrine of Election, it is the only reason that any are saved, and housed in Heaven and Immortal Glory. While this is true, it must be remembered that even though this is true, the Lord Jesus Christ died for the sins of all the Elect, and the Righteousness of Jesus Christ is given every one of them, and

they are led by the Spirit of God after they are regenerated and born of the spirit of God, and they are made to see themselves sinful, vile and very unworthy, and entirely dependent, before God, which is the best scriptural sign, that they are the children of Jacob and not of Esau, because Esau was a cunning hunter, and a mighty man in his own estimation, and hated Jacob, and wanted to kill him. So it is with all the children of Esau (spiritually) they hate those who are born of the Spirit of God and are and have been determined to kill them.

Now on this great subject, there are many different angles that can be followed, for an example there seems to be plenty of evidence that Jacob was a much worse fellow naturally than Esau was, in that he was ready at the beckoning of his mother to take advantage of his aged father's blindness and feeble and aged condition, in order that he would receive the Blessing that ordinarily would have been Esau's from a human standpoint, and this deception worked, so far as Isaac was concerned and though so far as the sinfulness of the act was not of God, but was under Gods perfect control, and Jacob did receive the Blessing, though both he and his mother were traitors, and deceivers, yet the unchangeable doctrine of election triumped over all to the extent that Jacob, whom God loved and saw fit should receive the Blessing, regardless of the fact that he was a deceiver.

On the other hand Esau did not in this instance practice any deceit, but obeyed his father and went and killed the true venison as he was commanded, and brought it to his father, to find that his father had already blessed Jacob. SoEsau's good and true venison, and Jacob's deceitful savory meat of the kid he had killed, did not alter the case. That Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated. Now I do not think this circumstance of sin, and deception that is so clearly set forth in the scriptures would have the least tendency to license any of God's children, to want to sin as a result of this application. They are sick of sin, and are made to say, O wretched man I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death. So then nothing can disinherit those to whom the Lord in His covenants has made promise and on the other hand none can by any means of works or otherwise get or obtain that blessed and glorious inheritance to whom the Lord has not made an heir of that promise.

How can those who say that salvation, depends on works and the will of the creature, take the case of Jacob and Esau and make it harmonize with their contention. If they try to base it on the works of the creature, then was Jacob's case based on what he did? If so it must have been because he did evil work, in deceiving Isaac, and on the other hand, Esau was condemned because he obeyed his father, and secured true venison and did not deceive his father, it will not work either way, but the truth is, it is not by works, but Him that calleth as the bible says in this same chapter, not only this but the average professor completely ignores the fact, that the bible says this love of God for Jacob, and His hatred for Esau existed before either of them had done either good or evil, that the purpose of God might stand. Then dear child of God will His purpose stand? If so then it is not of anything good that Jacob did, because he had done nothing and neither was it because of anything evil that Esau had done, because he had done nothing.

Then where is there any scriptural justification for the idea that God loves His people for what they do? And where is there scriptural justification that God hated Esau for what he failed to do? I really want to know. Yet I want to assure you dear brethren that I believe that Jacob had done wrong and wicked in deceiving his aged and afflicted father and also Rebecca had done wickedly in perpetuating such deception upon him, and I also believe that Jacob was given to hate himself and his wickedness and to repent of it before God, if the purpose of God did embrace it.

I believe that the Lord loved Jacob, long before he and his mother purposed to deceive Isaac, and long before either Jacob or Esau were born into this world. We find that the Lord told one of His servants of old, Yea I

have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee. Jer. 31:3. Then here is a place where the Lord has declared that His love for one of His has existed everlastingly and that being the case I am of the opinion that the Lord has always loved His people, one of the old writers says, but He is in one mind, and whatsoever His soul desireth even that he doeth. Job 23:13. So then if the Lord is in one mind, then He loved Jacob with that mind, and to me it seems He has ever loved them, or else He must have been in at least two minds. We also find in Malichi 3:6, where the Lord Himself says, "I am God, I change not therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed, it is also said in another place concerning God, that He is the same yesterday, today and forever, Heb. 13:8. Then if there ever had been a time that God and Jesus Christ did not love Jacob, or his people according to this last quotation of scripture, there would never be a time when He would, because He is the same yesterday, today and forever.

So then dear child of God this wonderful, and everlasting love of God for His people is beyond the description of mortal tongues or pen it is so wonderful, that no wonder John described it thus, "behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God, therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not". 1 John 3:1 This is a different manner of love to that of natural love of the Adamic creature, because that kind of love cannot reach back into the everlasting annals before the world began as this manner the Father bestows upon His people is said to be or to have been in existence before the world began. Read Jno. 17.23, 24. You will find that this love was in existence even then, and I am certainly sure that this was before Jacob or any of the children of God had done anything good, I am equally sure it was before they had done anything evil, and also I am sure that the love and the choice of God of Jacob, and God's hatred of Esau and all the others He hated was finished and complete too early for either Jacob or Esau to have had anything to do with it.

The marvelous and glorious thing about all this dear child of God is that the Lord in His mercy bestowed such mercy, love and kindness upon a poor and unworthy, and sinful wretch, as we are made to feel and see ourselves to be, or as Jacob was. I believe that the best scriptural reason to believe that one is a Jacobite, and one that God loves with this everlasting and unchangeable love. It is to find one who feels and realizes he or she is a great sinner, and that often mourns and weeps because of their sins and one who is so destitute of any righteousness of his own, that he is made to hunger and thirst after righteousness, O how destitute the Lord's people do feel, when the Lord lays His hand of gracious dealings on them they are truly undone and are made to faint in that great wilderness, and to hunger and thirst in that desert, but the Lord visits them in this condition with rivers of waters, and with springs in the desert, and waters then flow from that fountain that flows from the throne of God, which water is as clear as crystal and which streams made glad the city of God.

This manner of God's everlasting and unchangeable love to His people was made manifest when Jesus died for our sins (if I am one) on the cruel cross, when He suffered the just for the unjust, when He wore the crown of thorns, and sweat as it were great drops of blood, and when He was given the vinegar mingled with gall, it was because of this love, that was stronger than death.

Yours in hope,

R. W. Rhodes

* * *

Gartt, Alabama
January 1, 1952

Dear Brother Spangler,

Today brings in the new year but I can't say that I have anything new. I do hope for it all to be good.

I have never met you, neither did I ever meet Brother Dodson but I was made to love him for some reason and I hope it was from

hope of love and as I say love is God. I hope to love you as I loved him and so far we have agreed as he and I did.

Some of my children have seen and heard you preach in our country and they liked you, I hope I shall know more of you too. I would like to meet you in this life but my hopes seem to be weak as I am ninety-three years old and my health is weak. I know I can do nothing without the aid of our Lord and Master. I am not able to do my writing but can think of a lot to talk about and have to get someone to write it for me. I don't go to church to try to learn anything as I can't hear and my memory is short. The SIGNS of the TIMES gives me all the preaching I can get.

I am now a meditator, I am sometimes made to rejoice and sometimes I'm made to mourn. We can do nothing without the help of God and my daily thought is that I hope the Lord will lead me and take care of me. It's all his and if I'm not his, I can't make myself. I have fear and sorrows and it is all just.

If I could do my own writing, I might have something to interest you but before I can write my own thoughts, they have gone from my mind then I have to wait until they come back. God has purposes and causes and I must say that I can't do anything without a purpose and cause. Jesus is the first great cause and the last great end to everything.. This is my belief. My wants are greater than I can fill.

I wanted to write you a comforting letter and I see no comfort I can fill. Please excuse the attempt and I want to say I wish you a Happy New Year and please remember me in your prayers.

Your brother in hope,
J. S. Scott

* * *

505 E. Houston Street
Levelland, Texas

Editors:

Just received my January 1952 SIGNS which reminds me it is time once again to renew my subscription. My husband was a subscriber when we were married in October 1897 so you see it is a family paper as we have taken it since that time.

The Signs is dear to me now since my husband passed away as I live a long ways from church and will not be able to go often because of the distance and age as I am near seventy-three.

I would love to say a few words by way of encouragement and appreciation to both the Editors and contributors but my mind seems almost a total blank now; but if I know my own heart or mind, I do heartily endorse the SIGNS and seldom put the paper down when it comes until I read it through, and then leave it on my table where I can continue to read it from time to time.

I will bring this to a close and may the dear Lord bless you the Editors and enable you to continue to contend for the Faith which was once delivered to the Saints for many years to come for it is a comfort to all the Saints whereever they may be and especially those who are situated as myself and when you are blessed with a mind to pray, may you remember me.

Mrs. T. W Bowers

* * *

Atlantic, N. C.
January 7, 1952

Elder David V. Spangler
Annapolis, Maryland
Dear Elder Spangler:

Enclosed is a check for three dollars to renew the SIGNS for another year.

It is the best Primitive Baptist paper I have ever read, and the December issue was wonderful.

May the Lord give you health and strength to publish it as long as he sees fit for the comfort of his people.

Sincerely
Mrs. Harold R. Daniels

* * *

SIGNS of the TIMES, Inc.
Annapolis, Maryland

Dear Brethren:

As my subscription is up in December I will renew now.

I will try to write a few words to let my many friends know that I am still here though very unworthy as always.

I have not been to church for a long time but I always think of the good meetings they have. In 1944 I had neuritis in my head and lost my left eye; then I had and still have heart trouble. In 1945 I was operated on and they took off my right toe as the hardening of the arteries caused it. Then in 1950 they had to take the other leg off both above the knee; but I am fine now and get around good in my wheel chair. "God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform."

We live with our daughter Elsie and her little son Billy. Ellen and Ivan both live here close. I see them every day. They have a little son, Jimmy. Nathan is 91 years old and I am 74 and we can both wait on each other.

When Ivan was in the Army and while he was in California he went to Seclusia Church. He said when he got near the church house he heard them singing and then he thought that that is the church alright. It sounds like home. Elder Slusher and Elder Berry were there. He sure did enjoy the meetings and they were all so good to him. I sure do miss going to church but I do try to be reconciled to the dear Lord's will. The dear old SIGNS help me through, and there are others so much worse off than me.

I did not mean to write so much but do with this as you think best.

Best love to all, your unworthy sister,

Mrs. N. R. Parks

* * *

December 10, 1951

Elder David V. Spangler, Editor
Signs of the Times
P. O. Box 86
Annapolis, Maryland

Dear Elder Spangler;

I am enclosing my check for $5.00; $3.00 for my subscription and the balance to use as you see fit.

Am glad to see letters from many of the old writers in the Signs, and hope you every continued success as its editor.

Was privileged to attend the Obion Association at Walnut Fork Church in Henry County Tennessee the 3rd Sunday in October (the 123 Session) and was promised copies of the minutes which I will be glad to forward to you should the clerk fail to send you one. Of the Elders who attended, there were Biggs (Nashville), Poyner (Murray, Ky.), Kerley (Ill.), Smith (Ark.), Harrison, Lowrey and others. I recall in the Signs a short time ago, an article written by Bro. Barnes (also attended) on the ordination of Brother Harrison. The late Elder Dodson expressed a desire to meet with this association a short time before he passed on, but providence prohibited. I hope that you may some day have the opportunity as most of the members are readers of the Signs. The late Elder Wyatt of Selna, N. C., met with them in 1928 at their Centennial meeting. He edited a Primitive Baptist paper, but I do not recall any editors of the Signs ever attending. Dad, during his life time, took the Signs for over 50 years, and as clerk of Hephzibah church, kept each copy as long as he lived, often quoting from them.

In the November issue there is a letter from Covin, Alabama, concerning old numbers of the Signs, and the History of the Eastern States, with minutes, etc. I do not know if my brother preserved Dad's copies or not, but in 1928 at the Obion Association Centennial, with their permission, the permission of Hephzibah church and the aid of the late Elder J. C. Chester and others, I was given the privilege of speaking on the history of that association, and of the Primitive Baptist and their associations generally. The history most commonly used by Primitive Baptist generally, is Hassell's, I believe; but the one which gave me many facts; minutes citations, etc. was compiled by Benedict, and is in the Chicago Library. As the break with the Missionaries came in 1825 at Nashville, if I remember correctly, all minutes before that time were of the Primitive Baptist. I also have borrowed Elder Alexander Campbell's old song book, but do not have the date when the Campbellites (Church of Christ) broke away. I feel, as does the writer, that conditionalism in no form fits with Primitive Baptist teaching.

In comradeship and hope,

John Franklin Lax

Lamesa, Texas
12/19/51

Dear Elder Spangler:

It is time once more to renew my subscription for The Signs Of The Times and wish for you and all the associated editors and all readers the blessing that only a good and kind savour can give to his chosen ones. May each sorrow be a blessing in disguise through the coming year and may God give us all a feast of good things. I have enjoyed some sweet spiritual feast this year and as I grow into middle age it seems that I thirst more for the Living Water and enjoy their spiritual coolness beyond expression. It seems as though I could shout aloud His name so divine as I write these few lines

Our beloved Elder Dodson has been gone to his great reward a year and we miss his writings and may I say you all have done a wonderful job and may God bless you all with his presence in the future to write on, to feed the sheep and lambs God has chosen and called forth to be fed, and the food we love so well though the world is mingled with gall. Why for their hearts are not right in the sight of God. So the sweet food to a true call of God is not sweet to those that set up the scripture to suit the modern day religion.

I truly believe that should this war end, it will not be because of the so called "Religious America" but because of the few that can be found who still hold his name in reverence and all power, we know he can and will end all wars when he sees fit. Wars are brought about by selfish men but they are ended by the all powerful hand of God and if it is His will I pray this present conflict will soon end. May peace and good will reign in this new year is the prayer of an unworthy sister.

Laura Womack

* * *

209 W. Pine St.
Palestine, Texas

Signs Of The Times, Inc.
Annapolis, Maryland

Dear Editors;

Enclosed you will find a money order for $3.00 for another new subscription.

I thank God we are still blessed with the precious privilege of assembling ourselves together, to worship God. One who sits on his throne, and controls all things; one who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast. Who knew the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done; the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last.

As in days past, the world is full of false Gods. All about us we find a religious world who have a form of Godliness, but deny the power thereof. It is full of the praises of the accomplishments of men, not seeming to realize that without God man can do nothing. Yet men, not God get the praise. Christ said, "No man can come unto me except the father who sent me draw him. All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the son but the father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the son and he to whomsoever the son will reveal him". Then how can poor puny man choose Christ as his Savour? Even Christ came to this world not to do his own will, but the will of the Father, and this is the will of his father that of all the Father hath given him he should lose nothing, but should raise them up at the last day. He performed the work the Father gave him to do, and said on the cross, "It is finished".

I thank God that I can sit under the drippings of the Sanctuary, and drink of that living water which comes down from the fountain of life, and is served to us by his faithful servants. These have not chosen this profession, but God has chosen them. They have passed through the same school of experience that Jonah was called to pass through. Through much suffering they have been made willing to go forth and stand on the watch towers of Zion, and declare the whole counsel of God to a little flock — the poor afflicted pilgrims here below.

Christ said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name; he may give it you.

These things I command you, that ye love one another.

If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

Remember the word that I said unto you, the servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

But all these things will they do unto you for my names sake, because they know not him that sent me."

I pray that brotherly love will continue throughout the household of Faith. May God continue to shower his blessings upon the meek and humble; may he watch over them, and forgive their trespasses and guide their footsteps in the paths of truth and righteousness, that they may rejoice in their savour, and sing his praises to his ever blessed name throughout their journey here below. I pray his blessings upon the dear "Signs Of The Times" that it may continue to spread glad tidings of great joy throughout our land; especially to those who cannot attend their church services because of afflictions or providential hinderance.

Rejoicing in hope, and trusting in the mercy of an all-wise covenant keeping God, I remain,

Your little sister from Texas,
Mrs. Thelma Jordan French

* * *

Centralia, Virginia
January 7, 1952

SIGNS of the TIMES,

Enclosed find check for five dollars for my renewal to the SIGNS for two years.

We enjoy reading the good letters from the Brethern and Sisters published in the SIGNS. Also the editorials and may the Lord continue his blessings on you and the associate editors to carry on the good work which is so comforting to the Lord's little ones.

Sometimes I feel that I can witness with the Psalmist David, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want, He maketh me lie down in green pastures, He leadeth me beside the still waters." These words are so much comfort to me in times of trials such as the little Richmond Church has just gone through is found in the five verses which reads, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies, thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runeth over, surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

Brother Spangler I feel that the little Richmond Church has been greatly blessed and we are having regular meetings each 4th Sunday and Saturday night each month. Elder Raymond Payne is preaching for us and we all love him for truth's sake.

I feel to say that no hand that is formed against his chosen few can prosper.

Will close with love and may the Lord bless and keep his little ones is my prayer for Jesus sake.

G. S. Weider

* * *

Route No. 3
Hurricane, W. Va.

Dear Elders of the SIGNS:

I see my time is up to renew my subscription and I don't want to miss a copy of the dear sisters, brothers and friends writings. Such sweet letters does my soul good to read them. If I could write like you I would spend the rest of my days writing.

I need the prayers of all of you.

D. O. Sloan

* * *

30 Rives Road
Martinsville, Va.
12/19/51

Dear Editor and Associates:

I don't know anything to write that would be interesting except possibly news items. We have about completed a new church building at Town Creek. The Pigg River Association will be held there in 1952 and so many of you will be able to visit us then I hope.

To the Primitive Baptist who are so widely scattered and many of whom are so far apart, I would like to remind them that it isn't so

here, I believe there are fourteen Elders living here in Henry County and within a radius of fifty odd miles there are fifty Primitive Baptist Churches. We can visit churches in seven associations within an hours drive and a good many of them within 30 minutes. Truly we live in the Gospel Vinyard but are at times forgetful and ungrateful.

Keep up the good work with the SIGNS. I feel that it is a publication worthy of the price and the efforts put forth in its circulation.

Your unworthy brother,
Elder T. E. Ingram

* * *

December 8, 1951
Rives, Tenn.

Editors of the SIGNS:

I am not especially writing these few lines for publication, but to pay for this years subscription and for the new year 1952. I do like to read the SIGNS, the good writings from other states of the good meetings and associations. I have had the privilege and health and conveyance to attend church of our faith and order almost every week-end as my home church is not too far away. Some of my neighbors cannot understand why I go so far away to meetings when all around me there are other denominations. I wonder and fear that I am not one among His dear people, but long to go more if they will just permit me to come and sit on the back seat. "Praise Him from whom all blessings flow", we are not our own but are bought with a price that was the blood of the blessed Saviour; the Christ who hung on the cross and died, was buried, rose again the third day and is alive forever more.

An unworthy sinner I feel to be. No wonder the poet could write "What wonderous love is this Oh my soul", Sometime on the mountain tops all praises he is due, but most of the time deep in the valley of sorrow and doubt and feel all self rightousness and been carrying in my heart. Is it your experience that you have to be shown again and again these things? Sometimes God braces me with a godly walk and makes me feel that I will never stray from the paths of rightousness, if this fails I know what it is I hope. Peter experienced it when Satan was permitted to sift him as wheat. These falls enable us to rejoice in the mighty hand of the Lord that upholds us so that we shall not be cast down.

Dear ones, we want flowery beds of ease, but that is not the travel of God's children, they must suffer persecution Christ said, remember if they hated me, they will also hate you, God's wills and shalls never fail.

He knows just what it takes to teach one humbleness, humility, also all things that are works of the flesh. Christ teaches you all things needful, worketh patience, and hope maketh not ashamed for that great love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given through Christ Jesus our Lord.

If not room in your good paper, cast it aside.

Thank you and yours, in Christian Love,

Mrs. Sophia Price

* * *

6807 Gainsville St.
Houston 20, Texas

Dear Brother Spangler;

Although I do not feel worthy to call any of God's children brother or sister I love them so much I cannot help doing so.

I feel I could not do without the Signs Of The Times. It is so full of precious provisions from the Masters table I am surely blessed with a feast of fat things of which I feel most unworthy.

I feel the same way when privileged to meet with God's Saints; I feel to be the very least one there, (that is if I am one of his) I do not feel worthy of the least of Gods sacred blessings.

I often wonder if there are others that feel as I do; so wretched, so evil, I feel there are none, and if they could only see me as I am I feel no one could love me. Neither do I feel worthy of their love.

Sometimes I wonder why I am here. I know should I receive my just deserts the very depths of Hell would be my doom,

But that precious hope is my comfort. The precious spirit which God promised he would send for our comfortor, and I know that if

there is hope of eternal life, there is a little spark of that blessed spirit.

When I am made to forget self, and remember his sure promises, great power, Wisdom, Mercy, Goodness and everlasting love to his people. I wonder that I yet worry and doubt, and say I shall not anymore.

But ere long there are "cloudy and dark days" there is fighting within me, and fear without. This brings to my mind the sweet old hymn;

Mixtures of joy and sorrow I daily do pass through
Sometimes I'm in the valley, sinking down with woe
Sometimes I am exalted on Eagles wings I fly,
Rising above Mount Pisgah, I almost reach the sky.

O that precious memorable nite sixteen years ago, when the blessed Lord spake to me, (I hope it was he) called me out of darkness into the most glorious light; in brilliant light I stood on a great white Rock.

What peaceful hours I then enjoyed,
How sweet their memory still,
But now I find an aching void
The world can never fill.

At times remembering his precious promises, and meditating upon them I seem to feel that he is near -- within my heart. In these sacred moments the Lord, our saviour is feelingly dwelling in me. I live in him, and he in me. My beloved is mine, and I am his.

As God has said, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." Oh, am I one or no?

He has promised that He will never forsake His children. I believe that the God of Heaven and earth who rules all things after the counsel of His will is able to reconcile His people to His will.

I know that He has a purpose in all things. I am here for a purpose, I know not what, and when that purpose has been fulfilled he will remove me from this old world. He will use us according to his will and for our good, and when he has no further purpose for us here he will call us to a better home.

I hope that I believe in a God of all power, who decreed all things, and that each and every event takes place just as he purposed in the beginning.

Yea, I hope I believe in the absolute Predestination of all things; that God is a complete soverign, working all things after the counsel of his own will. I hope I have been that the world has nothing to offer that would taught of the Lord to believe as I do, and I feel change my belief.

"All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Jesus said, "For without me, ye can do nothing". We cannot walk alone, but must be guided by the giver of every good and perfect gift.

"Lean not unto thine own understandings, in all thy ways acknowlege Him and He shall direct thy paths". God is our surety in all things from eternity down through all ages, yea before the day was I am he, and there is none that can deliver out of my hand, I will work and who shall let it.

Jesus said, "My father which gave them me is greater all: and no man is able to pluck them out of my hand".

O the comfort, satisfaction and strength to know that we are kept by the power of the mighty and all wise God.

"Am I a God at home, and not a God afar off, saith the Lord; can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him; do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord; is there a God beside me? I am the Lord, and there is none else beside me. I am first and I am last".

He is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings.

I believe, God the creator of all things, chose his people in Christ Jesus before the world began and that they shall be holy and without blame before Him in love. That his people are quickened by the spirit, raised up out of a state of death in trespasses and sins, born again, called with a holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace given them in Christ Jesus before the world began.

His eternal purpose and power was great

enough to make manifest his will in time to all the elect family that were created in Christ Jesus .

Before the world began. They were created unto good works which God before ordained that they should walk in them. He works in them both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.

God in the riches of his grace hath to the charge of Jesus laid the sins of all this chosen race, whose debt of suffering Jesus paid. Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

For by grace are ye saved, through Faith, and not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.

Brother Spangler I have been writing on this since Oct. 11th, my sixty-third birthday. But since I have been somewhat ailing I have read my Bible and written a little now and then. (It is now Oct. 25th).

It helps to shorten the hours for I have enjoyed it. Although what I have written is rather scattered, and too I know not how to express my feelings as I would like to. I am so ignorant of spiritual things. I often wonder if I really know anything about God spiritually.

I love to read the scriptures and one part or another are most always on my mind.

After reading this over it seems an awful mess. I only hope I have not said anything to darken Counsel.

"Who is this that darken Counsel by words without knowlege". Job.38. If I have written amiss please lay it to the ignorance of a poor old sinner. I realize my imperfection and ignorance in spiritual things, and know that I should keep quiet, for it seems that all things that I do are wrong. I can never do the things that I would do, but the things that I would not, this I do.

Oh how I yearn to grow in Grace and in the knowledge of the Lord; the glorious gospel of Christ Jesus our crucified Lord. I know that God's dealings with me is just, and I know that he has dealt more merciful - more lenient than my iniquities deserve. Whatever my portion may be it is just as it should be.

May God bless you and all his little ones wherever, and whoever they may be.

Love to all from and old sinner living in hope of life eternal.

Hariett Little Gray

* * *

Spray, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler,

Since visiting in your home last summer, I have felt somewhat impressed to write a few of my thoughts concerning "Hope".

Brethren, it was early one morning in August, 1951, that my three sisters and I, together with my dear brother-in-law (John Blackwell) who has since passed away, went to visit our dear Pastor and his his loving wife, at Annapolis, Md. A time I shall never forget. It seemed so good to feel just like you were at home, and with God's people. While there we had the pleasure of meeting many more of God's humble poor, and I love them all, I hope, for Christ's sake.

Brother Spangler and wife took us over town and showed us the large buildings and many other things of interest, but what attracted my attention most were those large anchors which were lying on either side of some steps to a large building. We saw many ships out on the water. We also saw one that a family lived in, out in deep water. Anchors were used to hold it secure there.

Hebrews 6-19 says: "Which Hope we have is an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast".

Now this hope that I am speaking of will be with us in the ceaseless years of eternity. It will not decay, but the anchors that hold those ships will.

The Bible says be ready always to give a reason for your hope. One of my reasons is that Christ shed His precious blood on the cross back yonder before I ever had a being in this world, that such a sinner as I feel to be might not be lost. What wonderous love is this; and I say again, surely Hope is an anchor to the soul. Praise God, praise His holy name.

Sometimes we feel like He has completely forsaken us. But He hasn't. It's just that our faith gets weak. Is it not in that time of storms

and the waters get rough that we need this anchor? Then it is that He manifests His love toward us again. I believe with all my heart that Hope is an anchor to the soul.

I was young when I first united with the church at Dan River. But I hope I have been shown that our good works cannot supply the spotless robe that we must wear. But Jesus will supply all our needs. And in this I see a good hope, an anchor to the soul.

Thus far the Lord has led me and kept me. I hope I feel to know that from His bounteous hand we will all be fed. For He who feeds the Ravens, will give His children bread.

Although I feel so little, if I am a child at all, I hope I feel to know poor sinners think at first they can do something to save themselves. But it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. There is nothing that we can do. There is nothing that He can't do. He speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. Sure Hope is my anchor firm and strong.

But where The Lord has planted grace
And made His glories known.
There fruits of heavenly joy and peace are found
And there alone.

May the Lord tune my stammering tongue and heart to love and praise Him more. So that when He has finished with me here I may go to a place where no chilling wind or poisonous breath, sickness, sorrow, pain or death will be felt and feared nomore. There I see, I hope by faith, perfect love and perfect joy. Then we can with the poet sing.

Forbear my friends to weep,
Since death has lost it's sting.
Those Christians who in Jesus sleep
Our Lord will with Him bring.

As I lay on my bed several years ago, sick, I dreamed I was to die, and that someone was going with me to show me where I would be buried. He led me to a most beautiful stream, and just as far as my eyes could see it was clear as crystal and as I thought, was flowing from the throne of God. I dreamed an old sister in the cemetery rose up and said to me, "How do you like it here, we can talk to each other?". I told her it was heaven to me for I wouldn't have to suffer any more. If such is the sweetness of that stream, what must the fountain be!

I hope that the good Lord will ever keep me humble and let me live at the feet of my dear brethern. Because they are the ones I want to live with, and the ones I want to die with. I want this same gospel preached over my dead body when this world can afford me a home no longer. So I will bring my few scattering remarks to a close by saying may the Soveriegn Lord of all keep and bless His children everywhere is my prayer.

Mrs. J. C. Hyler
215 Primitive St.
Spray, N. C.

* * *

MEETINGS DISCONTINUED

Due to the desire to serve the brethern regularly at Needmore and Sideling Hill in Pennsylvania on the 5th Sundays, we find it necessary to discontinue the meetings in Washington, D.C. This is with regret, since the interest and congregations have been good in Washington. Those who may desire information as to nearby meetings may phone Frank T. Simpkins, Sr., Hillside 2747.

John D. Wood

* * *

Indigents to February 1st, 1952

Sarah L. Taylor, Pa., $5.00; Mr. and Mrs. Handy Truitt, Md., $5.00; W. A. Carter, Ala. $10.00; Mrs. Val Werner, N. J., $4.00; Mrs. Bertie L. McCoy, Del., $1.00; Rachel M. Millerin, Pa., $1.00; Mrs. Carl Twilley, Md., $5.00; J. W. Goyne, Ark., $1.00; Joseph Johnson, Tenn., $5.00; R. L. Buckner, Okla., $5.00; John Franklin Lax, Ill., $2.00; Mrs. P. I. Froude, Mich., $2.00; W. G. Anderson, Ky., $2.00; J. R. Davie, Ky., $1.00; Mrs. M. L. Doss, Calif., $2.00; Martha M. Thompson, Tex., $2.00; Mrs. H. D. Hewitt, N.Y., $7.00; C. A. Groves, Tex., $2.00; Madora Gibson, Okla., $1.00; Mrs. W. G. Thompson, Canada, $5.00;Mrs. Maynard Finch, N.Y., $2.00; Friends, N.Y., $100.00; Mrs. W. B. Germany, Tex., $2.00; Ben Parrish, Ark., $5.00; Mrs. Lena Burtin, Va., $1.00; L. B. Hylton, W. Va., $1.00;

EDITORIALS

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THE PROSPECTUS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

I promised in the January issue of the Signs, to offer some comments on the prospectus of the paper, treating, the Lord willing on each article separately.

Though I was numbered among the associate Editors of our paper for about fifteen years, I have never written on several subjects that are dear to our people, The Old School Baptist.

I can heartily subscribe to the articles set forth in the first edition of the Signs. I believe they are most surely believed among us. The fact that they were first published in 1832 as the doctrine the paper stood for, and continues to contend for today, does not make them the truth. They are in accord with the doctrine of Christ, the Prophets, and Apostles, hence they were the truth when first published, and to us are the truth today. By the many communications I receive, and the writers of old, I believe the principles set forth have reflected the views of our brethern, and I have no desire to depart, from them, or remove the ancient Landmarks.

All truth does, and must harmonize. To attempt to remove certain principles of the doctrine of grace, or modify them would destroy the perfect harmony of their relationship, one to another.

We are living in a day when vital principles of doctrine mean little to many professed followers of the Lord. Yet it is only through an understanding of these things that believers are enabled, by faith, to lay hold of Christ and his redemptive work as suited to the needs of lost and ruined sinners. The question is often asked, Why do the Old School Baptist continually dwell on the doctrine of God's purpose, Election, Predestination, Preservation, Perseverance and the Resurrection of the dead? We affirm and reaffirm them because it is the only doctrine that honors God, and points to Christ as the complete Saviour of his people. The more we are given to understand these things, the more we are strengthened in the inner man, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh.

As the first expression in the prospectus speaks of the existence of God, I shall endeavor to treat on this subject as he may direct.

The creation of this universe speaks of a power beyond comprehension by mortal man. The creation may have been over a period of thousands of years, as far as we know. A thousand years is as but one day with God. The sun, moon and stars speak a language all their own. Of a power that has placed them in the heavens, and they have needed no repair or care of man. They move in their fixed orbit year in, and year out, through the thousands of years. Man with all his wisdom has never been able to create anything comparable. The apostle aptly describes this in Heb. XI-3. "Through Faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things that do appear". "The invisable things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse". Rom.I-20. He spake and it was done; he commands and it stands fast.

The millions of animals that inhabit the world; the fowls that fly in the heavens, and the creatures that live in the briny deep,all speak of a great creator. Each has it's pecular nature, or instinct that causes it to know what to eat and when to eat. And not the least of all, the food it would need was provided for it, and it was placed at the right place to obtain food.

The flowers that bloom, the plants that produce herbs for medicine and every other plant whether for food for man, or other purposes were created by Him, and each thrives according to the place he made it for. What a wonderful creator, and how little mortal man knows of him. He is most High and Holy; inhabiting eternity; dwelling in light whom no man can approach unto. There is no language where their voice is not heard. They speak to every nation, kindred and tongue of Him who created them. How wonderfully blessed is the man who beholds this power in creation, providence and Grace. He can truthfully exclaim, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God almighty".

The minerals of the earth that are discovered by man, as God gives him the knowledge, and the need of that generation calls for it, but reflects the existance of Him who created them. Many of the minerals we use to-day were never found by man until there was a need for them by the human race. It certainly appears that this great creator placed the needs of each generation in the earth for the time they would be needed and gives man the wisdom to use them when the need arises; yet man often tries to take the credit for such things.

As we behold the wonders of Him all about us, in the plants that grow, the flowers that bloom and the birds that sings can we not witness with the Psalmist where he says, "The fool has said in his heart, there is no God". Ps. 14-I. He is everywhere present; His presence fills immensity.

All nature owns his guardian care,
In him we live and move;
But nobler benefits declare
The wonders of his love.

Job described the power of him, and evidence of his existance in Job 26th Ch. "Hell is naked before him and destruction hath no covering".

He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.

He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them.

By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.

Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? But the thunder of his power who can understand.

D. V. S.

OBITUARIES

Minerva Flinchum

Mrs. Minerva Flinchum, wife of Thomas Flinchum was born July 22, 1872, and departed this life July 8th, 1950, making her stay on earth 77 years, 11 months and 17 days.

She had been in declining health for more than a year and had a very serious operation from which it seemed almost impossible to recover, but she had a strong constitution, such remarkable courage, that she once again could be up and about her work and attend Church. However, this dreaded, malignant disease returned and even though she must have suffered severely at times, she was so patient, meek and humble, never complaining and bore her afflictions bravely. Seldom do we see anyone with such a meek and sweet disposition. It seemed that anyone could see the mark in her forehead that she was one of God's chosen elect. She was loved by all who knew her.

She was a faithful and beloved member of Lamm's Grove Primitive Baptist Church and was always at meeting when her health permitted.

She is survived by her husband, Thomas Flinchum of Carthage, Route No. 1; six sons: Arthur, Robert, Brady, Joel and Emory, all of Carthage, Route No. 1 and Alex of Carthage; three daughters, Mrs. Wylie Purvis of Robbins, Mrs. H. B. Brady of Star Route, Carthage and Mrs. D. J. Hicks of Carthage; thirty-two grandchildren and eighteen great grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted from Lamm's Grove Church by her beloved pastor, Elder S. T. Atkinson, Sr., and her body laid at rest in the Church cemetery where she will sweetly sleep until the morning of resurrection, when she will be caught up with all the redeemed family of God and carried to that City of Gold, whose Builder and Maker is God, where there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away and all will be peace and love.

We feel that we have lost a precious sister in Christ, but our loss is her eternal gain.

The floral tribute was beautiful, expressing the high esteem in which she was held.

R. Lee Comer
Lizzie G. Comer

* * *

William Bennett

William Bennett, son of James and Louvinia Bennett was born in Surry County, North Carolina, October 12th, 1862 and died October 5th, 1951, at the age of 88 years, 11 months and 23 days.

He was married to Pheobe Ellen Key in 1885. To this union were born seven children of which six survive. J. C. Bennett of Winston Salem, Mrs. W. T. Badgett of Broadway, North Carolina, Mr. G. M. Fulk, Sanford, North Carolina, Mrs. A. L. Hall of Carthage, North Carolina and R. E. Bennett, Carthage, North Carolina. One daughter, Mrs. Pearl Slawter passed away several years ago. He leaves one brother, who lives in Independence, Missouri. His wife died November 5th, 1946. She was a member of Union Primitive Church in Surry County. They lived in Surry County until 1920 when they moved to Sanford and spent their last years in Lee County.

Brother Bennett united with the Church at Lamm's Grove on the second Sunday in March of 1929, and was baptized by Elder D. V. Spangler on the second Sunday in April and was a devoted member. Everyone who knew him, loved him, for he was so thoughtful of others, esteeming them above himself. His walk, talk and his life was an inspiration to those around him. His face shone with the beauty of a meek and humble expression. Truly it must have been to ones of this character that Jesus said "Blessed are the Meek, for they shall inherit the Earth." We shall miss him, but we feel our loss is his eternal gain.

He was so devoted to his wife, waiting upon her with such patience, for she was almost an invalid for several years before she died. He was also a loving father and a wonderful friend.

Funeral service was conducted by Elder S. T. Atkinson, pastor of Lamm's Grove Church and his body laid to rest beside that of his wife in the Church Cemetery.

We feel he is sweetly sleeping in Jesus and is at rest from all his labors, awaiting the Judgment Day. It will only be as one long night of blessed sleep and when he awakes it will be to live forever in a world that knows no end.

R. Lee Comer
Mrs. R. Lee Comer

* * *

OBITUARY

Mrs. Elizabeth Mellott, member of Sideling Hill Church, died March 19, 1950, in her 86th year. She was the widow of David R. Mellott, deacon of the same church, who died in 1909. Sister Mellott spent her entire life in Fulton County, Pennsylvania, and was baptized by Elder E. V. White in early life. She was a faithful member of the church and loved to entertain her brethren, which she did until illness prevented.

There are three surviving children, one Veda Mellott Schooley, died in 1935; Rosa Mellott Deavor, Elmer V. Mellott and Orien Mellott, all of Fulton County; also 8 grandchildren and 7 great grandchildren.

In the absence of Elder Wood, the funeral services were conducted by Eld. Wm. Smoot, at Sipes Funeral Home, Saluria, Pa. Burial was in the Sideling Hill Christian Cemetery.

Another one of the Lord's redeemed has finished her earthly journey and is peacefully awaiting the coming of her glorious Redeemer. May all be reconciled to the will of their God.

JOHN D. WOOD

* * *

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

John Ruben Ely was born near Victor, Comanche County, Texas, December 18, 1875; departed this life November 11, 1951 at the age of 76 years.

He was united in marriage to Miss Maud Thomas of Comanche County, Texas in 1897.

To this union nine children were born. Six boys, Albert, of Torrance, Calif., Dewey, in the U.S. Army, Cortez, of Seymour, Texas, James, of Mineral Wells, Texas, Homer, of Torrance, Calif., and John, Jr., deceased. Three daughters, Mrs. Lillian Underhill, DeLeon, Texas, Mrs. Cordie Blankenship, Seymour, Texas and Mrs. Annie Stephens of Electra, Texas.

Mrs. Ely passed away in April 1924.

Besides his children he leaves to mourn their loss 15 grandchildren, 7 great grandchildren, three brothers, Joe, of Corcoran, Calif., George of Santa Marie, Calif., William, of Floydada, Texas and one sister, Mrs. Elizabeth Laquay of Vernon, Texas, together with nephews, neices, his brethern and sisters in Christ, and a host of friends.

Brother and sister Ely united with the Predestinarian Baptist church at Lovington, New Mexico, in the year 1920, and died in this faith. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord"

Brother Ely's home was in DeLeon, Texas. He was stricken with a heart attack while visiting his children in Electra, Texas. Upon reviving, he requested that the writer be called if anything should happen to him. The writer with Elder J. A. Neatherlin of Wichita, Texas, conducted the services at Totten Funeral Home, Electra, Texas, after which his remains were taken to Post, Texas and placed beside his wife in Terrace Cemetery, to await the final consumation of all things, when the children of Faith shall come into perfection, "And these all, having obtained a good report through Faith, received not the promise; God having

provided some better things for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Heb. II 39-40.

Written by request of the family,

(Elder) C. U. Landers

* * *

Brother John R. Blackwell was born October 17, 1899, departed this life October 5, 1951, making his stay on earth 51 years, 11 months and 18 days.

He was married to Miss Lelia Dix in 1925. To this union were born five children. One died in infancy. He also leaves one grand child.

Brother Blackwell united with the church at Dan River Saturday night before the fourth Sunday in March, 1946, and was baptised by our pastor Elder D. V. Spangler the following day.

He was a pilgrim here journeying to a better world which is heavenly. He was looking for that city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God.

Brother Blackwell was a lovely brother, a good provider for his family, and always ready to lend a helping hand. He will be greatly missed by his family, his friends, and his church, but we feel our loss is his eternal gain.

The funeral services were conducted at Dan River Church by our pastor Elder D. V. Spangler, Elder J. W. Gilliam and Elder S. M. McKinney. His body was laid to rest beneath a mound of beautiful flowers in the church cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ.

Therefore be it resolved:

1st - That we humbly submit to the will of our heavenly Father who doeth all things well.

2nd - That we extend our heart felt sympathy to the bereaved family.

3rd - That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family, a copy be spread on our church record, and one each to the Old Faith Contender and the Signs Of The Times for publication.

Done by order of Dan River Church in conference, Saturday night before the 4th Sunday in November, 1951.

W. C. Vipperman

* * *

Sister Naomi Ray was the daughter of Sister and the late Elder J. F. Spangler. She was born December 29, 1882 and departed this life May 10, 1951. She was married to W. L. Ray June 27, 1901. To this union were born twelve children (9 sons and 3 daughters). Two sons preceeded her in death.

Sister Ray united with the church at Dan River fourth Sunday in September, 1950, and was baptised by our beloved pastor ElderD. V. Spangler, her brother in the flesh, the fourth Sunday in October following.

We feel that she was a mother in Israel and that her sorrows while here were nothing to be compared to the joy that is in store for her.

The funeral was conducted at Dan River Church by Elder W. C. King and her body was laid to rest beneath a mound of flowers in the church cemetery to await the morning of the resurrection when Jesus will come with thousands of his angels to gather his jewels into that world which hath no end.

Therefore be it resolved:

1st - That we humbly submit to the will of our eternal King who never made a mistake.

2nd - That we extend our deepest sympathy to the bereaved family.

3rd - That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family, a copy be spread on our church record, and one each be sent to the Old Faith Contender and the Signs Of The Times for publication.

Done by the order of the Dan River church in conference, Saturday night before the 4th Sunday in November, 1951.

W. C. Vipperman

* * *

In as much as it has pleased our Heavenly Father to take unto Himself our dear Sister Belle Griffeth, be it resolved that Macedonia Church ask to be given grace to say, "Thy will be done," and bow in humble submission; knowing that it is good when one of the Household of Faith can depart and be at rest to await the coming of our Lord.

We deeply sympathize with the bereaved family. May they be comforted by the spirit of the Heavenly Father, whom she loved to worship.

Done by order of the Church while in conference, July, 1951.

ELDER C. W. LANDERS, Moderator

L. K. FOSTER, Clerk.

* * *

R. Carl Hall was born Feb. 8, 1886 in Union Parish, La. and died August 3, 1951 at his home near Farmersville, La.

He is survived by his wife, Eula Taylor Hall, a brother, Mrs. Willie Hall, Farmersville, La. and two sisters: Mrs. Haile Ward, Farmersville, La., and Mrs. Lula Norris, Sunflower, Miss.

Mr. Hall was a good neighbor, devoted husband, and a lover of the doctrine of God our

Savior. He was a dear friend to the Primitive Baptist and their cause.

The funeral was conducted by myself and Elder W. A. Speer, at Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church. The burial was in what is known as Taylor Cemetery at Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church to await that glorious resurrection when the Lord comes again.

R. W. RHODES

* * *

Elder S. O. Tatum

Elder Silas O. Tatum, age 55 years, passed away at his home at 1650 East Polk Street Paris, Texas on October 10, 1951. He was married to Miss Murl Shelton in 1917 and united with the Providence Church of the Primitive Faith and Order, Franklin County, Texas on September 2, 1933, was liberated to preach September 30, 1933, and ordained to the full ministry October 4, 1947.

Elder Tatum was a son of that faithful old watchman on the walls of Zion, Elder W. H. Tatum, and we feel was also given the charge to follow in the footsteps of his father, which charge he faithfully kept. There never lived a more humble, loving human being; faithful to his church and loved by all who knew him. He was firm in the doctrine set forth in the scriptures, having a great gift for the truth, a gift which we are persuaded came from on High: a kind friend to everyone; a devoted husband, and a loving father.

For the past few years this unworthy writer has been more closely connected with him, in a church capacity, than with any other man in my entire life, and many of the most pleasant and profitable hours of an otherwise unprofitable life have been spent in communion with him.

Elder Tatum was called as pastor of the Providence Church, where he was baptised, immediately following his ordination; a position he faithfully filled until his death. He was a patient sufferer of cancer many months prior to his passing, always greeting everyone with a smile, continually expressing willingness that the Lord's will be done, and oh, how we miss his smiling face and loving countenance.

The funeral was conducted at the funeral home in Paris, Texas by Elder E. J. Lambert and his body was laid to rest in the family burial ground near Enloe in Delta County, there to await the resurrection morn when all like him shall come forth to be reunited with their spirit from on High, thence gathered together around the Great White Throne where there shall be no sorrow, sin, or death. To the bereaved ones we would say—"Weep not as those who have no hope." The survivors are his widow and one daughter of Clovis, New Mexico. Written by one who loved him and I hope the doctrine he preached.

C. E. White,
Winnsboro, Texas

Mrs. J. P. Murphy

Sister Murphy was born Dec. 12, 1877 in Union County, Ark. and passed away Sept. 2, 1951, at the age of 73.

She is survived by her husband, J. P. Murphy, five daughters: Mrs. Frank Reed, Ruston, La.; Mrs. Homer Bird, and Mrs. Nella Wright of El Dorado, Ark.; Mrs. Nannie M. Harrell, Dallas, Texas; and Mrs. C. H. Weeks, Shreveport, La.; and fifteen great grandchildren and eleven grandchildren.

She was a very highly respected member of the Primitive Baptist Church at Rehobbath. She openly professed that faith several years ago and was a regular attendant of her church as long as she lived.

I and another minister of another order conducted the funeral at the Funeral Chapel in El Dorado, Ark. after which she was laid to rest in the cemetery at El Dorado, Ark.

R. W. RHODES

* * *

Mary B. Fisher

My precious mother, Mary B. Fisher, passed away at the home of her daughter, Mrs. W. A. Little, Ft. Worth, Texas, December 18, 1951, at the age of eighty-eight years, six months, and nineteen days.

Mother had been in failing health for several years but eight months ago she took with a heart ailment and gradually grew worse. At the time of death she seemed to be as usual and was sitting in her rocking chair when all at once she made a little sound and she only breathed twice and was gone.

Her funeral was conducted by her dearly beloved Pastor, Elder C. Y. Ostun. Mother joined the Primitive Baptist Church in Kentucky in 1893 and was baptised by Elder P. W. Sawin. She loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. She fell and broke her hip seven years before she died and was unable to attend meetings at the church but we had meetings at our home for her occasionally.

She was the mother of seven children, five surviving. A. H. Fisher, Oregon City, Oregon, J. S. Fisher, Ft. Worth, Texas, Mrs. J. W. Free, Pomona, Calif., Mrs. W. A. Little, Ft. Worth, Texas and Mrs. Rhoda Jones, Long View, Texas. She also leaves four grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

We would say we are sad and lonely without her and feel it is so hard for us to view her room where she stayed for eleven years with us, yet we would not call her back here to suffer as she did at times. She has gone from the evil, and is at rest, sweet rest which she longed for.

In deep sorrow yet in a glorious Hope that these bodies will come forth at the sound of the last trumpet, and be fashioned like Christ's glorious body.

Mrs. W. A. Little, Daughter

Nathan Riley Parks

NATHAN RILEY PARKS, was born in Orange County, Indiana, October 13, 1860 and passed away January 4th, 1952, at his home in Union, Oregon, at the age of 91 years.

He came to Oregon in February, 1891. He was married to Ida E. Cummins, December 30, 1900, at Touchet, Washington.

To this union were born three children, all of whom survive him, together with his widow, Ida. The children are: Mrs. Ellen Caudle, Mrs. Elvie Rizor and Ivan C. Parks; two grandsons, Billy Rizor and Jimmie Parks, all of Union, Oregon. Also one brother, Levi Parks of Elgin, Oregon, and other relatives and friends.

He was a strong believer in the doctrine preached by the Old School Baptist. His home was always open to the Baptist as long as he was able to keep a home. His widow is a member of the Presdestinarian Baptist church in Touchet, Washington.

The dear Lord called him home, and he answered the summons to go home to God the Father, and now rests in peace.

Elder R. B. Wolf, of Eagle, Idaho, pastor of the Elgin church conducted the funeral services, taking for his text 1st Corinthians, verses 48 through 57.

Submitted in sorrow by sister Ida E. Parks.

* * *

Mrs. Joseph Korlmel

MRS. JOSEPH KORLMEL, aged 73 years, passed away at the hotel apartment of her daughter, Mrs. Fred Eppinger, in Kansas City, Mo. January 4th, 1952.

Mrs. Eppinger and her husband and son, came to Kansas City for the duration of the holidays and had taken this apartment for the duration of their stay, and she had invited her parents for the New Year's day and the few days following. Sister Korlmel was the eldest daughter of brother George and sister Mollie Alenubough of Wellington, Mo.

At young womanhood she was united in marriage to Joseph Korlmel, and they made their home in Lexington, Mo. many years. To them were born one son and three daughters, one daughter aged 6, preceding her in death. Those who with their father are left to mourn their loss are: Mrs. Fred Eppinger, Dallas, Texas, Mrs. Murel Chambers, Kansas City, Mo. and Archie Korlmel, Kansas City, Mo. Two brothers—brother J. B. Alenubough, Oak Grove, Mo. and Forrest Alenubough, Houston, Texas. Also three sisters, Mrs. Nora Blair, Chicago, Ill. Mrs. Eliza Flourney, Ann Arbor, Mich. and Miss Maud Alenubough, Independence, Mo.

She united with Big Sbi a bar Old School Baptist church near Wellington, Mo., in September, 1910; her husband joining at the water, and they were baptised by the late W. L. Hall. When they moved to Kansas City, Mo., she and her husband placed their membership with Little Flock church, in Cass County, Mo.

Sister Korlmel ever lived faithful to her church, and was highly esteemed by all who knew her, and especially by her brethren in the church. Her meek and humble disposition, her Christian attitude is well worthy of our emulation. We loved her for these virtues, but God loved her more and he has taken unto himself only that, that was his. May he comfort all who mourn, and especially her lonely companion and sorrowing children and enable all to say, "Thy will be done."

Her funeral was preached on Sunday at the Earp Funeral Home in Kansas City, by her pastor, the undersigned, to a filled Chapel of relatives and friends, and her body was laid to rest in the cemetery, at Wellington, Mo., there to wait the resurrection Morn.

L. L. Schenck

* * *

Harmon Bell Jackson

HARMON BELL JACKSON, was born November 8, 1902 and died August 9, 1951, making her stay on earth forty-eight years, eight months and a few days.

She leaves Mrs. Bessie Parrish of Sharon, Penn., Vida Byrd and Cecil Jackson of the home, Hugh Jackson of Chicago, Ill., George Jackson of Union City, Penn., a half Brother—Cleveland Jackson of Sharon, Penn., and a number of nieces and nephews.

Sister Jackson united with Cane Creek Primitive Baptist Church in Obion County, Penn., by experience and was baptised by the writer into the fellowship of the church which she so highly prized and lived a devoted life to the cause of Christ.

She will be greatly missed by her Brothers and Sisters but her going is not like the going of those that have no hope. I can say that this is one of the most devoted families to each other I have ever met, I have visited in their home for about thirty-five years and have tried in my weakness to preach in this lovely home which has been an outstanding place for the Old Baptist people to visit. They have had preaching at the Jackson home for many years every fourth Saturday night in July and I hope the Old Baptist preachers will still continue to visit this home and preach for these children as they are a devoted family to the Baptist cause. May God reconcile them to their loss and their Sister's eternal gain and bless them with all they need in this life and the world to come, life eternal.

The funeral was conducted by Elder R. L. Harrison, who was her Pastor and the writer in the presence of a large crowd of relatives and friends. Her remains were interred in the cemetery to await that last and sweet call from on high where

she will be in the image of her maker. May God's blessing be with those who mourn.

O. W. Perkins

* * *

Mrs. Margaret Van Woert Osborn

With profound sorrow we report the death of Mrs. Margaret Van Woert Osborn, wife of Brother Hewitt Osborn, who died suddenly of a stroke in the early hours of Sunday morning, January 6, 1952 in their home at West Athens, New York. Her husband discovered her lifeless body when he arose in the morning, she having passed peacefully away by his side during the night. She had suffered for a considerable time from high blood pressure which refused to respond to treatment and terminated in a sudden and fatal stroke. The funeral services were conducted the following Wednesday afternoon at the West Athens Methodist church, Elder A. J. Slauson and the writer having charge of the services. The interment was in the Woodstock cemetery. Besides her husband, she is survived by two brothers. Lamont Van Woert of West Athens and Dr. Reginald Van Woert of Ravena, New York; also two sisters, Mrs. Blanche Cotton of Athens and Mrs. Nellie Lewis of Coxsackie, New York; also one step daughter, Mrs. William McCormick of Middletown, New York; also two step sons, Scott Osborn of East Orange, New Jersey and Floyd Osborn of Syracuse, New York.

Mrs. Hewitt Osborn was the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. John K. Van Woert of West Athens, and was born June 5, 1889, and was therefore past sixty-two years of age at the time of her departure. She had taught school successfully and served several years as housekeeper for her father after her mother's death. In 1932 she was united in marriage to Hewitt Osborn to whom she proved a most helpful and loyal helpmate. Her charming personality, ready wit, and appealing humor were qualities that combined with her stainless character to make her greatly beloved. She had often traveled with her husband to visit various associations and churches of the Old School Baptist faith in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland and was widely known and impressed all who met her by her noble qualities of womanhood and her thoughtfulness of others. She was a constant attendant with her husband at the meetings of the Olive and Hurley church in Shokan, which he served as a deacon, and she never failed to render any aid possible in looking after the welfare of the brethren and friends and in loving ministration to them. Though she never united with the church, she evidenced the life of one who had learned of Jesus in her walk and in her desire to know the truth. She has left vacant a place that can never be filled, and to her bereaved husband and to the entire community she has bequeathed a legacy of precious memories.

Arnold H. Bellows
Arnold H. Bellous

Lillie, La.
December 5, 1951

To the Signs Of The Times,
and to those of like Faith.
In Memory of Brother M. J. Whatley:

Brother Whatley was born in Union County Ark. in the year 1868 and lived there the most of his life. He died November 27, 1951 after a long and serious illness. He died in a Hospital at Houston, Texas.

Brother Whatley joined the Primitive Baptist Church seven miles north of ElDorado, Ark., called Bethel, where he was a consistant member for many years. He was an enthusiastic and interested believer in the truth of the Gospel of our Lord and Savour Jesus Christ. When the writer was younger it was my priviledge to visit in his home near Bethel Church, and I was made to feel welcome, and enjoyed his good conversation in Christ Jesus as I believe and understand it.

I feel to hope from the evidence of his testimony and manifest experience, that he is much better off than if still here suffering these earthly afflictions, sorrows and heartaches, and disappointments, as is very common to earthly beings, especially the children of God, as in the case of Job, and many others that I could name. I do not believe as some seem to, that he has gone to his final and Glorious reward but that he is in a state of rest of the soul, I have no doubt, as is taught in Rev. 6.9 to 12. But there is that time of the bringing forth in that final Resurrection, and being changed from Mortal to Immortality, and from Natural to Spiritual, and from corruption to that of incorruption 1 Cor. 15th chapt. Then shall the grave be robbed of its victory, and death of its sting, and all the children of God will be given that eternal inheritance, that was prepared for them before or from the Foundation of the world, Matt 25.31 to end of chapter.

That will be the Glorious and final, and eternal ushering in of that glorious, and indescribable, and eternal, and perfect inheritance of the Saints. Still I believe that the children of God are relieved, and given at least a measure of rest of their souls, or Spirits, when they depart the

body, and return to God who gave it. Rev.14.13 says, They shall rest yea saith the Spirit from their labours and their works do follow them.

So with these scriptural evidences, and encouragements, dear bereaved ones May you be comforted and consoled, to trust in Him who has promised graciously to save, resurrect and Glorify with that Glorious and eternal Immortality, at His second coming, which isn't long, if I mistake not. May God comfort and console you, and may you be given to look to Him, as He alone is able to comfort you.

Brother Whatley leaves to mourn His passing, three sons, Aca, Thad and Bill Whatley, all of Houston, Texas. Two daughters, Mrs. Eva Terral and Mrs. Harvey Richmon, also of Houston, Texas. Three sisters, Mrs. Jett Hill, Mrs. T. C. Goodwin and Mrs. John Burton, Sr. all of ElDorado, Ark. As well as 14 grandchildren and great grand children. The funeral was conducted by the unworthy writer, assisted by Elder W. A. Speer, at the Primitive Baptist Church at Rehoboth about six miles northwest of ElDorado, Ark. The remains were laid to rest in the Rehoboth Cemetery. In charge of Barton Funeral directors.

Your unworthy Brother in hope.

R. W. Rhodes

* * *

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

The Soldier Creek Association of Old School Baptist in session with Mount Pleasant Church Graves County, Kentucky desire to leave upon our records a tribute to the memory of our departed brother, and minister of the Gospel Elder W. B. Overby.

Elder Overby departed this life May 5, 1950 at a ripe old age. He was ordained to the Ministry in 1899; he had the care of several churches in this association during his ministry. For several years before his death he had been inactive because of infirmities of old age, but he was ever ready to give a reason of his hope, speaking the things of truth and soberness, in the doctrine of our God.

Be it therefore resolved, that we bow in humble submission to God's holy will, in removing our beloved brother from our midst, hoping our loss is his eternal gain.

Committee:

W. A. Bowden
H. C. Adams
T. S. Chester
O. W. Perkins, Elder

RESOLUTION

Resolution adopted at the New Vernon, N. Y. Church meeting September 22, 1951.

WHEREAS, Since our meeting last September the Church has suffered the loss of our dear friend and pastor, Elder R. Lester Dodson. For many years he has gone amongst us, preaching the gospel of the Son of God. He had never shunned to declare what he believed to be the whole counsel of God. We are greatly saddened at his loss and that we shall never more be blessed to hear his words of hope and comfort.

RESOLVED, That we give thanks to God for the gift of Elder Dodson and for his long service in the church. We wish to bow in humble submission to God's will. Our grief is tempered by the thought that our dear pastor has entered into the rest that remains to the people of God.

Adopted at the meeting of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church, September 22, 1951, and ordered to be printed in the *Signs of the Times* and included in our minutes.

(Eld.) AMASA SLAUSON, *Moderator*
WM. D. CHAPMAN, *Clerk*

* * *

MEMORIAL TO BROTHER R. L. DAVIS

This article was written in memory of our highly esteemed and dearly beloved Brother R. L. Davis who passed away August 2, 1951, at his home in Dodge City, Kansas. Brother Davis joined Little Flock Church by letter May 10, 1947, and he will be sadly missed by that body. Brother Davis was seventy-five years old. He was a strong believer in salvation by Grace, and put no confidence in the flesh. He was widely known among the Primitive Baptists and had traveled extensively among them. He was unassuming, honorable and highly respected among his brethren and friends, who feel the loss of his passing very deeply.

Funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Elder W. W. Taylor of Dallas, Texas, who was accompanied to Dodge City by his wife and Sister W. N. Green of Altus, Okla.

Therefore be it resolved that we bow in humble submission to God's most holy will and be it further resolved that

a copy of this memorial be sent to his bereaved children, a copy to the SIGNS of the TIMES for publication and a copy be made a part of our church records.

Done by order of Little Flock Church at Altus, Okla., September 9, 1951.

Elder C. E. TURNER, *Moderator*
Mrs. LORE KESTER, *C. C.*
Mangrum, Okla.

* * *

IN MEMORY OF MY BELOVED HUSBAND WHO PASSED AWAY MAY 19th, 1951

Sleep on precious one, thy sweet slumber
I would refrain forever to intrude
Thou art at rest in the arms of Jesus
The Shepherd, the only Good.

Thy sufferings were so great, precious darling
As thou did pass through death's gloomy woe
But a dear Saviour whose sufferings thine did surpass
Bade release to your soul, to Him go.

He tread the winepress alone, precious darling
That in Him your weary soul might repose
He took you from the evil to come
It's sufferings no more to know.

My pathway is now so lonely, dear
I miss you and need you so
I long to leave this evil world
And to my Saviour go.

But He forbids me want my way, dear one
He knoweth what is best for me
And to my lonely weary heart
He sayeth, "I still will succour thee".

O Saviour, be Thou my Husband
The vacancy Thou hast made do fill
Till Thy purpose in me hath been wrought out
According to Thy most Holy will.

Then bear my soul home to glory
To share in that peaceful rest
Thou hast prepared by thine righteous arm
For Thy saints thou hast forever blessed

AMEN.

(Mrs.) R. C. WRIGHT

* * *

Mrs. Ella Ports Kelly, wife of Horace F. Kelly, was born July 19, 1868, and departed this life March 19, 1951, making her 82 years and 8 months of age. Besides her husband, she is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Clarence Baublitz and two grandchildren, Ivan Baublitz of Baltimore and Miriam Baublitz at home.

Mrs. Kelly was born and always lived in Northern Baltimore County, Maryland, and attended, when able, the Black Rock Old School Baptist Church under the pastorship of Elders Rowe, Topping and Wood.

In the absence of Elder Wood, the funeral service was conducted by Mr. Louis Young of the Methodist Church at Tipton Funeral Home, Hampstead, Maryland, and she was laid to rest in the Black Rock Cemetery. May the Lord give reconciling grace to those who mourn her departure from this life.

ginning December 28—continuing through the 30th of December. A number of visiting brethren and Elders are expected.

A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends to meet with us.

WM. ECHOLS, *Church Clerk*
Chowchilla, California

* * *

A NEW YEARS RESOLUTION

A good New Years resolution would be to send in a new subscriber to the "Signs."

How about the son in the Army? Would he enjoy it? Or the daughter away from home; a friend who loves the truth.

* * *

IMPORTANT

Please watch the expiration date on the wrapper of your paper, and renew promptly. If the reading is 6-51, it means your subscription expired in June 1951. We depend entirely on subscriptions, and the gifts from brethren and friends to pay all the cost of publication, mailing etc. We do not use the paper for advertising, so your co-operation in these things means much to the paper. We appreciate your promptness more than we can tell you.—Ed.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the Signs of the Times at the following prices: 1 copy, 25 cents; 3 copies, 75 cents; 6 copies, $1.50; 12 copies, $3.00 These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

Please check the renewal date on your wrapper. It shows when your paper expires.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 120 ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND, APRIL, 1952 No. 4

Hebrews 7:25 and 26

I stand amazed when blest to view
My Saviour, Priest and King;
To glimpse the fullness of His work
And of His excellence sing.

The bride, His father chose for Him
Sank low in sin and shame;
I'll bear her guilt, the Lord declared,
And give her my own name.

To earth the Man of Sorrows came,
Was bruised of God, and died;
And in the travail of His soul,
His God was satisfied.

He rose, triumphant over death,
Fulfilled the law's demands;
Now, interceding for his bride,
Before the throne He stands.

'Twas wondrous love that led Him thus,
'Twas matchless grace, and free;
My soul, by faith, beholds that love,
Including even me.

For when my heart in sorrow bleeds,
By trouble sore distressed;
'Tis then His spirit gently speaks,
And woos me to His breast.

Oftimes the tempter to me comes,
In dazzling, bright array;
With promise sweet of earthly joy,
He lures my soul away.

My frame is dust - I can't resist,
A greater strength I need;
I try my own, but find myself,
A twisted, broken reed.

But lo! my Surety then appears,
At God's right hand he stands;
He speaks, and shows my guilty soul
Engraved upon His hands.

Charge nought to her account, He pleads,
She is my spotless bride;
Dying, I paid her debt in full,
And rising, justified.

Though dead in sin, I loved her still,
She ever lived in me;
My robe of righteousness she'll wear,
Through all eternity.

And then, some day, I'll come again,
To take my waiting bride;
She'll rise, her garment white as snow,
For I was crucified.

The Father hears His glorious Son
And answers to His blood;
Then tells my soul, for Jesus' sake
That I am born of God.

So in the judgement, may I stand
Before the great white throne;
Accepting in God's beloved, when
He claims me for His own.

Oh, perfect love, oh, love divine,
Sweet balm for hearts that fear;
It sanctifies my deepest loss,
And dries each falling tear.

Oh Dearest Lord, Thy blessed self
In grace Thou gavest me;
Whom else have I upon this earth
Or whom in heaven, but Thee?

Mildred Dykes
Salisbury, Maryland

* * * *

Huntington, W. Va.
January 1, 1952.

DEAR BRETHREN: In looking over some old writings of mine, I found an article I had written in 1914, it was my first trip over in Ontario, and no doubt, there are some living today, that will remember. This letter was written about the time of Elder Chick's passing, and when Elder H. H. Lefferts was appointed one of the Editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. "The Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada" is still contending for the Faith once delivered to the saints, Elder George Ruston, has been their Pastor for many years

and lives among them. I have visited them many times since I wrote the article in 1914, and the Lord willing I expect to visit them again next year. I think the enclosed article will be appreciated, by some at least. I wish to state to my many brethren in Virginia, West Virginia, and North Carolina that my visit among them was a pleasant one in 1951, and I look forward to seeing them again,that my health has been very good for one of my age and I hope I am thankful to the giver of all good for his watchful care and protection over wife and me, here in this sinful and war-torn world. May we all be made reconciled to our lot, and some day hear his voice, and be like Him, and be satisfied.

Yours in Hope,
GEO. L. WEAVER
2802 Marcum Terrace

* * *

Cleveland, Ohio
July 4, 1914

DEAR EDITORS:—By request of some of the brethren in Ontario I send you a short sketch of my visit among them this June, to the Ekfred quarterly meeting. Meeting with an accident at home, which made me unable to work at my trade (carpenter), I felt impressed to visit the brethren of Canada, and leaving home June 25th by boat I arrived at St. Thomas the following morning, and was met by Elder J. B. Slauson, who took me to his home in St. Thomas, Ontario. It was our first meeting, and our conversation at once was on the things of the kingdom of our Lord, and as far as I could see my visit with him and family was one long to be remembered. Friday evening quite a number of the brethren gathered, and I tried to speak to them with the ability that God gave me. Next morning we left for the Ekfred meeting, where I had the pleasure of meeting for the first time Elder Silas H. Durand. The meeting Saturday, Sunday and Monday was a season of much enjoyment to me. An appointment was made for Elder Durand at London Monday evening, when we heard a very able discourse from him. Tuesday I spoke to the brethren at Dunwich at 3 o'clock, and from there was taken to the home of sister Lilly, in Dutton, where we were very pleasantly entertained until evening, when I took the train for Pt. Stanley and boat for Cleveland arriving home Wednesday morning, July 1st. Now that I am back at home, in the hustle and jostle of a busy city, my visit seems almost like a long, pleasant dream and a sudden awakening, and I wish to thank our heavenly Father for his wonderful mercy, protection and liberty, and the brethren for their hospitality toward me, a poor sinner. May the Lord bless them.

Brother Ker, I am glad to hear that you have a brother editor. We felt since our dear brother Chick was taken from us that the Lord had some one in mind, and we have wondered who it was, and are glad to know it is Elder Lefferts, and we hope the Lord will sustain you, that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES may still cry, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." The time is now when we need plain, straight talk about the doctrine and order of God's house, for there are so many isms among us, so many trying to become popular, underestimating the power of Almighty God, to draw away disciples after them, and we have always looked to the SIGNS as a paper whose editors shunned not to declare unto us the whole counsel of God, and may God by his omnipotent power, eternal wisdom and perfect love guide and protect you against the lo heres and lo theres for the comfort of his people and the glory of his name. Amen

Geo. L. Weaver

* * *

Arkansas City, Ark.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

The cycle of time has again rolled around to where my subscription to our paper has expired, and not wanting to miss a single copy, I am enclosing money order to extend my subscription another two years, and the difference you may use as you see fit. I say our paper;if I know anything at all pertaining to Gospel truth this SIGNS OF THE TIMES comes in its completeness every month, and if this poor stoney heart of mine deceives me not, I do not believe it does according to divine in-

spiration, each and every writer has been visited by the same guiding hand that visited Joseph recorded in Matthew 2:13.

"And when they departed behold an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream saying, arise and take the young child and his mother and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him."

All those who have tasted the goodness of God are familiar with the first chapter of Matthew regarding the angel appearing to Mary in her conception, also to Joseph regarding his wife, and the Child Jesus. Also the star guiding the wise men on their journey when sent out by Herod to seek the young child.

Herod orders to destroy under two years of age all children in the province. No, no we do not believe that the king or all the orders from his court could destroy this little babe Jesus. Yet the purpose of God was that he should be taken into Egypt, that the prophecy might be fulfilled, "Out of Egypt have I called my son." I did not have in mind to write on this text, but do have a mind to try in an humble way to tell the readers, writers and editors of the family paper my appreciation evidenced by Truth, love and fellowship are for the others.

The love of God shed abroad in the hearts and minds of his children is undoubtedly the brotherly love manifested by those who have tasted that he is gracious. We are not called upon to originate this love, for it is absolutely the sovereign gift of God.

We are commanded to keep a watchful eye for the pitfalls and snares, yet striving in an humble way to follow the meek and lowly Lamb of God, and we hope all who have tasted and enjoyed the special blessings of God, and feel the joys of his salvation, elevating their affections one for the other, and strengthening the sacred cords that bind their kindred hearts in fellowship and union will be blessed to continue to manifest their love one to another.

They desire to speak one to another of the goodness of the Lord, and through the SIGNS this is made manifest in each issue.

When christians are so situated where they cannot commune together in fellowship in the services and of worship of God, to them the correspondence of the brethren is truly refreshing. While gratitude and praise to God are due from us for the temporal mercies which fall our lot, for food, raiment, homes, friends, civil and religious liberties, above all it behooves the children of God, to praise and adore the great author of salvation for the gift of his dear son, and for the evidence we enjoy that he has included us, a peculiar people, in his salvation, among the redeemed family. However it should not be forgotten by us that Godliness is a great mystery, and all that we can know of it must be revealed by the Holy Spirit, and that all the Holy spirit ever has, or ever will reveal of Christ to us, is a priceless and precious gift, and must be in perfect harmony with the scripture of divine truth.

These facts all the writers, and especially the Editors and associate editors of the SIGNS stand for four square.

In concluding these thoughts my precious brethren in a divine spirit, we must give honor and praise where it is due. We have an advocate with the Father even Jesus Christ, who is our peace, or the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but of all his people, his peculiar chosen people, his church, the Lamb's wife, throughout the world.

There is no other saviour, no other way of salvation, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified. He is our Advocate, our redeemer and our life. Through him we are reconciled to God, and delivered from his wrath.

Through and by this great manisfestation of God's love and mercy, we poor helpless sinners find salvation unto us from a just and holy God. There is none beside me saith God, neither is there any atonement for sin except that which is in Christ, and that for his people of every nation, kindred and tongue. Not of works lest any man should boast.

"And this is the Fathers will that hath sent me that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise up again at the last day."

"No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day." This is in accordance with the solemn declaration of our blessed intercessor in his prayer to the Father. "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."

"Those thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the scriptures might be fulfilled." For whom thou hast given thy son to redeem from all iniquity, and to purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works; whom our God saved and called with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purposes and grace given us in Christ Jesus before the World began. These people who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will are quickened by his spirit from their state of death in trespasses and in sin, and saved by grace, through faith, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works lest any man should for fear of worrying the dear saints of the most high God I am closing. If these thoughts find the waste basket, all will be well. May the most Holy God of love and mercy guide and watch over each and every one, keeping, and revealing himself unto the lovers of his truth and ways, and when our trial of life is over gather us into that house not made with hands, where we can forever sing praises and honor to whom honor is due. From one of the least, if one at all.

Unworthily,
Ben Parrish

* * *

Penhook, Va.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES INC.

DEAR EDITORS:— Find enclosed $3.00 to pay for my subscription to the SIGNS for another year. I hope I will always be blessed to receive it, and have it coming to my home as long as I live, for in its pages my experience I hope is writen from all parts of the world. Yes, my dark and gloomy days are told, also the times of joy and sweet meditations, the scriptures are so beautifully explained; the great work he performed, the riches of his grace are told by those who are gifted to do so.

I have been a reader of the SIGNS for over fifty years, and it has never changed. I have been a member of the Primitive Baptist fifty years. I am getting too old to get out much; I can read the SIGNS, and it is a great pleasure to me.

In hope of a better world,
Mrs. W. T. Potter

* * *

Jan. 9th, 1952
Ringgold, Virginia

Dear Elder Spangler and Readers of the Signs:

I do enjoy the Signs most of all papers. I miss my dear brother in many ways. I had a sweet letter from his wife to-day. Spoke so sweet of him; twice of being awakened by his calling her name, he had gone but still with her. Of December 19th, being one year since he left for his heavenly home.

I did so much enjoy the December number of the Signs. I read, read and reread its contents. The brother H. L. Rogers from Texas was indeed rich in spiritual food. He is certainly gifted. I also enjoyed the two sisters from Texas. Sister French is a wonderful writer to me. Also glad to see in print a letter I received from sister Laura Womack. It did me so much good at the time; I've never met her but she felt so close in a way I wanted to embrace her in my arms.

I wish I in return could write something of comfort to the readers, but am not well, and cannot at this time.

I want to say, so far as I can see you, Elder Spangler, and others are doing a fine job in publishing the Signs. Am so thankful it can be continued, I feei all of you deserve credit.

Wishing all the blessings that only God can give in the New Year.

A little sister in hope of a better home.

Sister W. L. Furgerson

Castle Rock, Wash.
Jan. 20, 1952

Dear Friends in the Lord;

Of late I have had some beauties shown to me which I wish to share with the house-hold of faith. To others they may not seem beautiful, but to my little mind they are as jewels. I am not worthy to address the dear saints as friends, but were I to await a worthy feeling I never would write at all.

If I have any merit or worthiness it is in Christ the redeemer and not of myself. I do not desire to dwell on this phase of my spiritual life, for I hope I have been enabled to put away my childish things and attained adulthood.

While reading the 20th chapter of John I felt to see some beautiful things in the recordings of the visit of the saints to the tomb. It seems that poor heart broken Mary was very desirous of finding her saviour and knew not where he might be found. Things that occured then and are still occuring to us now; the desire to find our saviour, and our inability to find him until he makes known his whereabouts. And the joy she knew when at last she knew his presence.

Was it greater, do you think that of a lost undone sinner of to-day when at last they know him, and where to find him?

In part he said to her, "Go to my brethren and say unto them I ascend unto my father, and to my God and your God."

He did not say, tell it to the whole world but to my brethren. This touches me deeply for how few of us go to his brethren, and tell them that we have seen the saviour, and that he has ascended to his God and our God. So now to-day I desire to tell you brethren and sisters that I have seen my saviour. I have seen him as one altogether lovely and adorable as the lowly lily of the valley, pure in color and of delightful fragrance.

When he told Mary, "I ascend to my God and your God," he was speaking down through the ages to poor unworthy me, and that is tempts at prayer, with his God, and our where by faith we find him in our feeble at-God. Eve making intercession for us. How glorious!

When he left the sepulchre he left the linen cloths which was about his head, wrapped together in a place by itself, and not with the other clothes. I do not think that this means that they were wrapped in paper or cloth or any such thing, but folded or rolled up neatly as we would express it to-day. Why were they left there in the tomb? To me it signifies the sin and grief with which I am now clothed so completely shall be left in the tomb when I am resurrected, if indeed I am blest to be his. If I am not his then at the resurrection I shall bring with me all the sins that satan so admires. Christ had no sin to leave in the tomb, but his clothes left there are significant to us of the sins we have which shall be left in the tomb, and we shall come forth clothed with the same spiritual glory as that of our saviour.

The napkin or head linen was by itself in a different place signifying that the head (Christ) was to no longer need clothes, but the church (body) would require clothes for some time to come.

Then too, it gives a beautiful lesson in order; the things being folded or wrapped together and placed in separate places. Those being yet needed all in one place, but the one whose use was finished laying apart by itself. Oh that he would grant us mercy and wisdom to follow this lesson in our own lives and in the church, that we might perform and do that which is acceptable in his sight.

How often like Mary I seek him in tears and fear and wonder where I can find him, while always and ever he stands holding me by one hand, and our dear God by the other, thus securing poor sinful me to the throne of the most High, yet like Mary I weep and seek until he speaks, then like her I can say, "Master" Then I am assembled with his dear disciples and the doors are closed against the world he appears in our midst and speaking says, "Peace be unto you." Then indeed do we rejoice and say with Thomas,"My Lord and My God." This is not all the beauty I see in this lovely

chapter but it is all I can express. If any child of God finds any comfort in it God alone is to be praised.

A weak one trusting alone in the great I am, and who is surely saved by Grace, if saved at all.

Mrs. Effie Parks

* * *

January 14, 1952

Elder D. V. Spangler, and to all the Household of Faith.

The Lord being my strength, I now make the attempt to write again to the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. What I write I hope is ordered of the Lord; for the comfort of God's believing children. Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of our selves; but our sufficiency is of God. (2 Cor. 3:5.

I am glad to know that your work as an Editor is encouraging to you. may it be the Lord's will to bless you and family, and all believers of the truth. I believe it is by the power of the Spirit of God that we are made to believe the truth; to believe the scriptures. We read in the scriptures where God's chosen elect people are made to believe. My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power. "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe according to the working of his mighty power." Eph. 1:19. I believe the scriptures mean what they say and say what they mean; if not so, then who can tell what they do mean? I hope that I am enabled by the power of the Spirit to rightly divide the word of truth. "For by grace ye are saved, through Faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast." Eph. 2, 8:9. Faith is the fruit of the Spirit, a free gift of God. The scripture reads "All men have not Faith," "Without Faith it is impossible to please God" "Without me ye can do nothing."

I have been asked to give my views on the scripures where it speaks of Paul being sent to preach the gospel to the heathen. Now WEBSTER'S definition of the word heathen is a non believing people. ". heathen (Hethn) n. one who does not believe in the God of the Bible; unenlightened; heathenish." This puts the heathen down pretty low. But we find in the scriptures where the heathen is justified by Faith. So I believe those heathen that Paul was to preach the gospel to had been justified by Faith.

"Know ye therefore that they which are of Faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scriptures, forseeing that God would justify the heathen through Faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith."

Now we know according to the scriptures, and our experience that the preaching of the gospel is not to make believers. The preaching of the gospel is to them that believe, (present tense) according to the power of God and the wisdom of God. Those that have no faith it is foolishness to them. Without faith being given to them they will not believe. "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word (What was this word under consideration? Was it not Christ?) preached did not profit them, not being mixed with Faith in them that heard it." (Heb. 4-C, 2-V.) They had not been born of the Spirit, quickened into life. Now the scriptures read, "All men have not faith." Now the word heathen is spoken of in the book of Psalms, 2-C. 8-V. In the first and second verses of Psalms, take notice what kind of people the scriptures are speaking of. "Blessed is the man (present tense) that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful, but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night." (1-C., 12-V.)

I have read in the scriptures somewhere, God's people shall meditate day and night, and I do believe that I have been made to do my share of meditating day and night; My sleep

has been taken away from me a lot lately by the power of the Lord according to his purpose, I hope for my good. "Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy posession." (I believe this scripture has reference to Christ speaking to his people. "Blessed are all they (present tense) that put their trust in him. In Christ, who is the author and finisher of our Faith." (Ps. 2, 8:12) I do not know that I am included in this US, but I have a hope that I am. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: (those that say, I know that I am saved, have they any hope? According to the writings of Paul they have not) "for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" (Rom. 8-24)

To the only wise God our Savior, be glory, and majesty, dominion, and power, both now and ever. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisable, the only wise God, be honour, and glory for ever, and ever. Amen.

From a brother, I hope, in hope of eternal life beyond the grave when Christ comes with his Holy angels with power.

F. L. Cox
El Dorado, Ark.

* * *

Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Editors of he SIGNS:

How we do miss addressing our much loved Elder Dodson, who has been called to the great beyond, to be forever with his God. He was indeed a father in Israel, so kind and always ready to comfort those who would ask him.

His writings were always with such sincerity and humbleness and love, giving God all the honor, praise and glory. How we hope we thank God for such gifts as he was given. Now we believe and are sure he is able to qualify as many as He sees fit to fill all the stands and print all the papers which He pleases. I sometimes feel the many blessings that God has in store for His children here are so grand and glorious. I would love to shout His praises from the house top. Then I feel like crawling under the house sometimes where I think of me. Who am I to be thinking or saying such things we do not stay that way either. For when light shines in these hearts of ours we begin to sing again.

Oh how beautiful are the mansions in God's house? I do not know what way I fit there, but I have wondered about the seasons of joy, life and love we experience along life's way. It seems as I am looking at a beautiful mansion, examining the wonders of its making. The upkeep of it, its purity will never wax old, nor fade but it gets more beautiful from every way you look. There we find we can only look a little while. We must travel on. We must not be too downcast because things seem to be against us. Really if we be one that hungers and thirsts after righteousness; then our meat and drink is not found on the highway of life, the broad way that so many are enjoying here. No, we can not find any place to fit in there. No food, no drink, no comfort, no kindness, no love, just a mad rush; each striving to outdo the other. When the dear Lord comes to your rescue and says be not afraid it is I. How good it is and how happy, 'tis heaven below. Just as darkness vanishes when the light is turned on; just so the darkness that has you so surrounded to almost smother you is gone immediately when light springs up in your heart, and you can not turn on that light. I have tried so hard, pleading the return of the comforter to restore unto me again the joys of the salvation. Not realizing that would soon be saying the blessing came from our good doings, like so many are doing, but not so with the fewest of all people.

I believe God is pleased to show unto some the works of the Lord in the deep and this people is brought in ways they know not and in paths they have not trod. They are not even asked about it nor is it ever explained or made clear and sure to them in the way we long to know. As you see, the lame walk, the blind see, the deaf hear and the poor have the gosple preached unto them. Now it has been said by those that understand not, if I believed so-and so I would go out and take my fill of sin.

That is evident fact they know nothing of its weight and guilt. To those whom the Lord has taken up his abode within and turned on the light that exposes our sin and uncleanness and they feel to be standing before one who knows all things they have ever thought or done. They see themselves ten thousand talents in debt and not a farthing to pay. After trying and using up all their efforts, their eyes are opened to see the truth of the matter. They see themselves sinking deeper in sin. This poor one has already had its fill of sin and desires to put it down once and for all. And in its early days of life its hope was that as they grow older they will be able to enjoy heavenly things more, not knowing how closely sin is woven into this nature of ours. Not knowing that man is nothing and less than nothing and altogether vanity and vexation of spirit. This heavenly spirit that takes over the lives of God's children is the light and the pilot of their soul, and He directs it in the way which He pleases. There is a great warfare going on with us until at times it seems all will power in heaven and earth was given unto Him. Yea, in him all fullness dwells;these paths we had not trod and the ways we know not lead through the wilderness and the deserts, where we do not have the flesh pots of Egypt, no more to eat till we are full of the things we left behind.

In this life we meet with many disappointments that we wonder if we are going to be destroyed. But our Pilot has all our needs and will supply them in due time and the exact amount. He knows our every need and how sweet and pleasant it is when brought to our Master's table and the food is so good. We are told His Grace is sufficient for us. Then we feel to know it is. We have been well fed, but remember the children of Israel began to complain while the meat was still between their teeth. Do we not feel to know what that means.

I had a good letter from Sister Duffus of Canada, and one night about a month later I was called to the telephone and it was she at the bus station passing through Memphis. We talked for an hour and a half such sweet words and joyful voice praising God from whom all blessings flow. She had been visiting with Elder Cloud and family in Alabama and others. She left me with so many wonderful things to think about, and each one was flowing with the goodness of God who is rich in mercy and gives us such manifold blessings till my cup runneth over. Now we know such sweetness must be given us of God. All arrangements are ordered of Him that benefits his little ones along the way and we want to give Him all the praise and honor.

May God bless you and uphold you to carry on with the SIGNS to his own Honor and Glory and to the comfort of Zion.

Mrs. Luther Campbell

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Box 315
El Dorado, Arkansas
January 10, 1952

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am enclosing herewith a typewritten copy of an article written to me by Deacon T. P. Wilson, of Liberty Hill Church in our (South Ouachita) Association, setting forth some of the experiences he has experienced which he hopes in the dealings of the Lord in an experience of grace manner with him. He asked me to type it and send it for publication. I feel that it is a wonderful article and it seems to me to set forth evidence of a rich experience of grace and if you feel that it should be published would be glad for you to publish in the SIGNS. I have his letter authorizing it for publication if you desire to have me send it to you.

I am also attaching herewith notice of church meeting time of two of our churches in this Association which I will appreciate that you insert in the Church Notice column of the SIGNS.

I feel that you and those associated with you are being enabled to carry on with the dear old SIGNS in a wonderfully good manner and way and publishing the family paper to the comfort and consolation of the Household

of Faith, and may it please the God of all grace to continue to uphold, lead, direct and enable you to continue the publication of it and to earnestly contend for the Faith once delivered to the saints.

I am especially glad you were given to publish in the January issue the prospectus of the Signs of the Times, which was published in the first Volume, in 1832. I feel that you, and the Assistant Editor and Associate Editors are still holding the same precious truth.

Yours in a sweet hope,

W. A. Speer

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Elder W. A. Speer
Dear Brother:

As I have so often thought of what was meant when it was said, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." Dan.2:44

I often wonder if that was done for me, but I do have some experience of something I hope is of the Lord, and if I don't weary you I want to just tell you what I hope the good Lord has done for me, and I do hope he showed me what I was and gave me a sweet hope, that some day heaven would be my home. When I was fifteen years old I had a spell of fever and thought sure I would die but I got up and was walking down an old road, and my mind was drawn up and I looked up and it seemed I heard a voice say "here is your home." I was so happy and I begged the good Lord to let this old body die and let me fall asleep in His care and await the resurrection, and be out of this world of trouble. Then I saw a dark road that I had to travel, and the more I begged the more I saw this dark road. I went on for ten years and I tried everything I could. In that time I joined the Missionaries and they ordained me for a deacon. I led their prayer meetings and was a Sunday school teacher. I led their singing. I played every part for five years and I got in so much trouble I sold out and went to Oklahoma. There I visited the Campbellites and every other order I could hear of and then I sold out and went back to old Mississippi where I was before and then I joined the Methodists. I was Clerk of their Conference for two years and then I joined back to the Missionaries where I started. Then in a few days I was walking down a road going home and a feeling came over me I can't express. I stopped and it seemed that the earth would let me fall through, and it came in my mind of all the good works I had performed and it seemed I heard a voice that said, "because you have done this you are bound for hell." Oh, dear Brother I have never forgot how I did feel. I saw hell was my home. I hated to go to my house but I made it and went where my wife was and told her I never expected to have anything to do with no so-called church while I lived, and it seemed a thousand pound weight was taken off of me. Then I wondered what that meant. I had never heard the Old Baptist preach and had never been in one of their churches. So that night I went to bed, and went right off to sleep and saw in a dream a large crowd and they was on my left side all dressed in black suits, some tall and some short, and I turned my head and saw a lot of people all the same size and all dressed in garments as white as snow and I heard a voice say to me, "These are Old Baptist." The next morning I borrowed a mule and rode four miles to where one lived, and when I got there he said to come in, that he had been warned I was coming. I told him I had a dream and he just went down and rejoiced and we both had a joyful meeting. He told me a preacher would be at a place twenty miles from there. That was in 1915. He said we would go on Saturday. So I went with him. We went down there horse back and that was the first Old Baptist I had ever heard, and it was a joyful sound. So the next Sunday after that, being the second Sunday in November, 1915, and Saturday before, was their meeting time and I went and when an opportunity was given I was up there before I thought, and then I saw myself the biggest sinner in the world and that is all I could tell, but I wanted to go with them

and they received me and I was baptized the next morning. So now I feel sure that it don't take a lot of talk from the preacher to get one to join the church for I was made to love them before I heard one preach. Now please tell me don't that scripture I began with apply here and in our experience, for do know that the things I helped carry on in the orders of men I now have no use for. In them we always had night meeting to call for mourners. I don't feel like I want any more night meeting. It seems to this poor sinner that the manna fell in day light, and was gathered in day light and it could not be kept over night. So all was types and shadows of good things to come and we see that they fixed their altars to offer their offerings on as they were directed, all a type and shadow of this day. We go and fix a house for the same purpose to meet and try to offer all we have in songs and praise to the one that their offering represented. But I do hope I have been killed to the love of fashion and style of the world. I have no desire to pattern after the world. We find the old Prophet let them fix their altar and then he fixed his. I do not believe any Old Baptist should take outsider's evidence and follow it in no sense of the word, nor try to run their meeting to suit outsiders. They that worship God in Spirit have no confidence in the flesh. So if we do things they do, surely we have confidence in the flesh. We hear it said, "O, he is a believer." Maybe he is, but my experience teaches me that I could not stay out when I was made to see where the church was, and I wanted to ask them something instead of telling them what to do. And also the preacher did not have to preach where I could hear it for me to understand. I had never heard one preach when I was shown the church. And I had to go ask for a home with them. Dear ones, I am just a poor boy, just about 68 years old. I have been let stay among the Old Baptist thirty-six years. Twenty-eight years ago I was ordained a Deacon but I have never felt like I was one. So now we read how Jesus said you are brought into His kingdom. "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 18:3. Now notice Luke 22:29 Jesus said; "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my father hath appointed unto me." Then in Matt. 19:14 Jesus said, "suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." So that is why this poor sinful boy has a sweet hope that I suffered the loss of all my self-righteousness and when we are brought down as a little child then we are made to think of what is meant in Hebrews 4:10, "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His." For we see that he has been taught that salvation is a free gift and all His children are kept by His power and everyone that is born again that walk the narrow way, it is because the blessed Jesus leads them. Look at Ezekiel 36:27, "And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Now as we are brought to know that if we do anything good it is because the Lord caused it. Now we know our nature or the natural man can't walk no way but the broad way where destruction is. For our carnal mind is not subject to His law neither indeed can be, so it leads the other way. Now we see the old scriptures all speaking of and pointing to the Saviour and His kingdom in this time, and it was said of Jesus in Hebrews 9:26, "but now in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." So we see then he used the word world. So that must have been the going out of the law and we see in Revelation 1:1, "The revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto Him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass." So it must of been the going out of the old law and the setting up of His kingdom by making with them a New Covenant, for John said in Revelation 21:2, "And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." That must have been the kingdom or church under the New Covenant for we see the old law Covenant was as old Jerusalem. So now we

see that everyone that is teaching salvation by the law, or works, is just trying to build up the old Jerusalem. So now she is not the mother of us and she has no husband, but she has many more children than the true mother. Of course I mean children that have not been born again.

So, Dear Ones, whoever may chance to read this , don't think I am trying to learn any one anything. It has been on my poor mind so much here of late. I have got disable to work, but, Dear Ones, some times this poor boy is made to rejoice when I think of that sweet and comforting word we read of the second coming of the blessed Saviour in 1 Thess. 4:16-18, "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Dear Ones, if it was like the world preaches, a great judgment coming that would not be any comfort to no one. Jesus said He had finished the work the father gave Him to do. So this poor boy believes that explains His second coming, for He has no need to set His foot on the ground any more, but when He calls, His children will hear.

So I am afraid this is too much I have written now, for it may be as I feel, not worth anything to any one. So every one that feels like it is worth anything to them, please write this poor boy. I am in the South Ouachita Association in Louisiana.

T. P. WILSON

Rt. No. 1, Downsville, La.

* * *

Hurricane, West Virginia
Route 3, Box 49

Signs of the Times
Dear Sir:

I am sending a money order for my subscription to the dear old paper. I hope it will always stay full of the truth and the good things of the spirit. I know only God can sustain you and hold you up. This is the way, walk you in it. A highway shall be there and a way and it shall be called the way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those the wayfaring man, though fools shall not err therin. Oh, we may be fooled, but when we walk in the truth we shall not err. Christ is the way, the truth and the life. I hope God will bless you to pick out the letters that have the light of truth for the paper.

How blessed are the people whose God says, "I am your God and ye are my people." I cannot believe in a God that the world worships. That He has to wait on man before He can move. In our minds dwells only corruption and it would rob God of His glory and power. It makes me think so much of the scripture in Job where He says, "Who is he that darkeneth counsel with words without knowledge?"

How often we do this. Praise be His name. He has a people who can sing great and marvelous are thy works, Oh, Lord. Just and true are thy ways. How do they do this? Through the blessed Savior. It also says the letter killeth, but the spirit maketh whole.

In bonds of love,
L. M. Johnson

* * * *

1137 Thomkins Ave., S. E.
Roanoke, Virginia

Dear Brother Spangler,

I have a letter here I have enjoyed reading so much that I thought I would send it to you for publication; if you think it worthy.

I hope you and your family are well as usual and enjoyed Christmas. We are all well as usual.

A brother, I hope, in Christ
Luther C. Bowles

* * * *

June 29, 1951
Redwood, Virginia

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Bowles,

I hope that you are well. We are reasonably well. I often think of you both and about the joyful meditations that we have had on and about the sacred theme of salvation by Grace.

Which we have sought and hoped for, and through tribulations, doubts, and fears with much grief and sorrow; which causes us so many weary and anxious thoughts as to whether we are the true circumcision of the Lord Jesus Christ. If not deceived, we feel to know that glorious things of thee are spoken and that Thou knowest and doest all things. For by him all things consist. We in our mortal existance are less than nothing, and are but dust and ashes in the sight of God. But our spiritual existence, that is if we have any, has been wrought by the true merits of God. Through the sacrificial offering of His dear Son, who was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, sacrificed His life and His precious blood on the cruel, agonizing cross, to save and redeem His Church. Who is described as being but a remnant and the fewest of all people.

Christ has brought His little bride under the appellation of many beautiful lovely names such as, my little children, my little flock; He says my heritage is unto me as the speckled Bird, and all the other birds round about her are against her. He describes Her in the singular, She is but one, She is His true Church. He called Her, his love, my dove, my undefiled. She is the only one of her mother. She is the only one of her. She is the bride, the Lamb's wife. Christ has preserved and blended His bride together into one bundle of united love, until I believe there is but one true experience of Grace, and all of the children of God have and will have it. There is but one Lord, one faith, and one baptism and they all have identically the same power, essence and glory.

All of His saints shall know him from the least unto the greatest of them. If we have Christ in us the hope of glory, we have that true experience of Grace. Christ is all things unto His church, His lovely bride. He is the sure foundation, and the center of our attraction. That is, if we have any. We sometimes grumble and complain at our afflictions which is but light to be compared to the glory of God; which we hope has been revealed to us. We desire, and strive to run with patience the race that is set before us, ever looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Dear kindred, when we feel to be thus exercised in the liberty of God's Holy spirit to rejoice in the fruits of the Canaan language. To praise Him from whom all blessings flow; then we are constrained to truthfully say, take away every other and give me but this. I feel very safe in saying that this doctrine which we hope that we believe and has been established in our hearts. I feel sure there never has been or ever will be anything greater under the sun for the saints, other than Christ's glorious doctrine. Sometimes I wonder in amazement why do I sit so many different days with my head bowed trying to express on paper to these my dear brethren and sisters some little hints of my ups and downs, feeling and believing that surely all of my precious brethren had more zeal of these sacred things than I. Then I again wonder, is there not a cause? We hope it is the affectionate love of God which has been shed abroad in our poor hearts that has produced the cause and effect of our peculiarness. Though the world thinks our doctrine strange but we would not with the world exchange. We truly believe there is a cause for things being thus and so with us and we hope the cause is a just one. Dear ones since I met you both last, I hope it has been God's will and good pleasure to comfort you all with many spiritual blessings as well as carnal. He is truly worthy to trust for both. Yes, even for all things. I hope it has been your lot to continue running around to your good meetings, and enjoying the Holy fruits of the Canaan language. If so be that we are worthy of being esteemed the least of God's saints.

Oh may we be clothed in His holy spirit; that we may walk worthy of the vocation where with that we are called, to even show forth his undivided praise, love, and great esteem in this unworthy scribble.

I have so much desired that the Lord would bless me to write you both some little comforting thought, though much unworwthy I feel to be.

We are commanded to comfort one another with the comfort wherewith that ye are comforted. I hope this scribble is in line with what Primitive Baptist believe and stand for. May the Lord bless you and all of his dear saints in such ways that they shall walk obedient to His holy command, is my prayer.

A brother, I hope
J. A. Perdue

* * *

419 E. Live Oak
Altus, Oklahoma
February 15, 1952

Dear Elder Spangler:

With Elder W. W. Taylor's permission to send this for publication, I am enclosing an article written by him.

We enjoyed it so much, would like to share it with others.

If this is not published, please return his writings to me.

We enjoy reading the SIGNS so much and save every one of them.

Yours in hope,
Faye Houk

* * *

August 15th, 1951

Dear Brethren in the Old School Baptist Faith.

If one so weak, undone, vile and unworthy as I should address you dear people as such.

I have a mind to write also some request to do so. With this thought in mind I seem to have a desire to try, the Lord willing, to express some of my views on a text found in Isaiah 14; 24. "The Lord of Hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." I believe this text to be a very deep and wonderful one when properly explained and applied. To my mind it is a key to the entire bible, that it has direct contact with every verse in the bible. I agree with a recent writer in the Old Faith Contender, scriptural truth should be contended for and declared by our ministers and that which is not the truth condemned. On all controversal issues scriptural proof should be furnished and proper scriptural connections. So may God enable me to do just that.

In the above text God confirmed it with an oath that everything that He thought about shall come to pass. No stronger manner of confirmation can be found.

Now what we are concerned about is, what did God think? Well surely He thought about everything, for He is omniscient. Col. 1; 16,17. "For by Him all things were created, that are in heaven and that are in the earth, visable or invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him. And He is before all things and by Him all things consist." This shows that He knew all things or else He created something that He did not know about, and is before it and it is consisting by Him. Now if He knew it He surely thought about it, and swore that it shall come to pass. Isaiah 14; 24.

We see His thoughts before the world began consisting of His dear Son and the salvation of His people, which is of great interest to us all. For that is a personal and individual matter with us. 1st Peter; 18, 19, 20. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptable things as silver and gold from your vain conversations received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world but was manifested in these last times for you." Now if God ordained Christ before the foundation of the world to redeem His people with His precious blood, surely He thought about Him doing just that; therefore it must come to pass for God who cannot lie had sworn that it shall come to pass.

He also thought about what He would redeem them from. Matt. 1; 21. "And she shall bring forth a son and you shall call His name JESUS for He shall save His people from their sins." Yes, He thought about His people becoming sinners or He would not have that His son which the virgin Mary was going to bring forth would save them from their sins.

And it must be just as He thought or His oath was not true. When did He think about man sinning? Before the world began, when He ordained His son to redeem them from their sins.

Why should it mean so much to us that He thought about sin and wickedness? It does show the perfection of God's mind. Makes it clear that He did look down through the ages of time, from the annal of eternity and see everything that would ever transpire. I do not want to be misunderstood, so before I go further I wish to say that I do not believe that God is the author of sin. He is not the originator of wicked acts, nevertheless, He knew all about them before they came to pass and this knowledge has a very important part in the salvation of His dear people. for if there were one single sin of mine or anyone else's that God did not know about that would be one that would not be atoned for, for God never thought about it. So it would be very inconsistant to say that God had taken care of a sinful act and never had even thought of the act being committed.

God thought of redemption before the world began according to 1st Peter 1, 18, 19. Therefore He thought of His people being lost and by what means they became lost. Yes their own sins and iniquities. God though of Adam transgressing His pure and holy law when He placed him in the Garden of Eden, and told him that the penalty would be death. Gen. 2: 17. "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shall not eat thereof for in the day thou eat thereof thou shall surely die." He did not say IF you eat thereof but said in the day thou eat thereof thou shall surely die. Does this not show that God thought of man eating of that fruit which He told him not to eat thereof? If so, He has sworn that it shall come to pass. If He had not thought of it God would have been surprised when He came walking in the garden in the cool of the day, Gen. 3; 8, and found out that man had done something that He never thought of him doing. That would have destroyed sovereignty and immutability of God. So it can not be true.

God did not make the man Adam transgress His law and become a sinner. James 1; 14, 15. "But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished it bringeth forth death." This proves that the man was enticed and drawn away with his own lust when he sinned, not pushed away by the God of heaven, nevertheless God knew that he would do it and He knew it with a perfect knowledge: therefore He was not surprised at any of it, for He had thought about it coming to pass before he ever made the man. And swore that it shall come to pass according to our text. And most wonderful of all, he thought of the wonderful cure of this dreaded disease of sin, even before it came into the world. Isaiah 53 - 11. "He shall see the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied. By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many: for He shall bear their iniquities." This was spoken by the prophet Isaiah approximately 800 years before the Savior was born into the world, as it was revealed to him by the God of heaven. So God must have thought about that. Yes He thought of the travail of His son's soul, his suffering and dying, as well as the satisfaction of the saving of his dear bride which is the church of the living God.

The saving of His people is where the real satisfaction came in, nevertheless it took the suffering of His dearly beloved and only begotten son to bring it about. His son, Christ Jesus, was willing to suffer, for He knew it would accomplish God's purpose: the saving of His dear people which was His bride, lost in sin by her own lust being conceived. James 1: 14, 15. Now did God think of Isa: 53, 11, or did He inspire Isaiah to write something for our learning that He never thought about? It would be foolish to say such a thing. Well, just what all does this cover here in God's thoughts? The travail of His soul. Then Christ Jesus' suffering was in God's thoughts. Did He think about why he was suffering? Yes the salvation of His dear people. "For He shall bear their iniquities." Then He must have thought about the iniquities of His people: therefore they are going to have iniquities or

God's oath is not true. Isaiah: 53, 5. "But he was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed." The above quotation tells us why He was wounded, bruised and chastised, also tells us the accomplishment of it. This was all in the thoughts of God before they came to pass. Therefore it must come to pass. And it did come to pass just as God thought it would and at the time God thought it would come. Yes, He thought of His son being wounded and how he would be wounded and what for. That covered the wicked act of Judas Iscariot betraying Him, as well as every lick those wicked ones struck Him with their hands and the nails being driven into His hands and sides by the Roman soldiers. Surely God thought about all these things or else He was OH so much amazed when He found it out. Surely no one would want to say that. Because He thought of it that did not make Him the author of sin, even though He knew all of this and swore that it shall come to pass. These wicked characters did not do it in order to fulfil God's thought, knowledge and predestination, but they did it by being drawn away and enticed by their own lust, having evil intentions in their hearts when they were doing it. As it was in Joseph's case who was a figure of Christ. Gen. 50; 20. "But as for you ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass as it is this day to save much people alive." Here Joseph was talking to his brothers when they were beseeching him not to requite them of all the evil that they had done to him. We know that they had evil intentions when they were selling this poor boy to the Ishmelites merchants, deceiving their father etc. Yet God meant it, that same act unto good for the purpose of saving much people alive. God's grand and holy purpose was carried out; but Joseph's brothers' purpose was not carried out. They were desiring to get rid of him forever because they hated him because of dreams he dreamed and his father loved him more than he did them. None of this was in any way Joseph's fault. No doubt the God of heaven caused him to dream these dreams. Isaiah 45;7. "I form the light and create darkness: I make peace and create evil; I the Lord do all these things." So he was giving Joseph light on this matter but the same thing was darkness to his brethren, and created evil in their hearts according to Gen. 37, 5. Yet the very lives of those boys were going to be taken care of by the acts of this little hated brother of theirs. For God was going to send him before them into Egypt. Gen. 45, 7. "and God did send me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance." So by the hatred of his brethren and a sale to the Ishmelites merchants he reached Egypt. His brethren had no intention of sending him to Egypt to save their lives but to the contrary, they wanted to get rid of him: but God had thought of all this and how it would work out for the good of his people. Romans 8, 28. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." So it was in the case of the blessed Saviour, God thought of him coming in this world and redeeming his precious church, the Lamb's bride from her sins, by Him being delivered into the hands of the wicked. Acts 2, 23. "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" This shows that the thoughts of God included the deliverance of his son into wicked hands. Surely He thought of what He was being delivered for. Romans 4, 25. "Who was delivered for our offences and was raised again for our justification."

So with the foregoing in mind concerning the thoughts, knowledge, and purpose of God, to my mind it adds up to but one thing, and that is God did absolutely predestinate, think, foreknow, purpose and decree all things whatsoever comes to pass and in no way became the author of sin, neither do I have any patience with men who try to hide their misdemeanors behind predestination. To me it is nothing

short of God dishonoring and damnable heresy for one to say, "Oh, well I could not help doing that wicked act" and try to excuse himself for doing it by saying it was predestined.

Predestination does not cause men and devils to do wickedness any more than God's thoughts and foreknowledge does and neither of them are causative.

So may God bless the truth at all times and forgive us of our short comings, and bless us with the light and understanding of His word and the holy scripture. Pray for me and cast a mantle of charity over the foregoing. If it is of any comfort to you praise God for it all, for it will be so justly due Him.

W. W. Taylor
1019 S. Llewellyn St.
Dallas 3, Texas

* * *

West Hurley, New York
February 23, 1952

Dear Brother Weaver:

The fifth, sixth, and seventh verses of the sixth chapter of Genesis read as follows: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them."

This scripture so puzzling to the natural understanding has a sweet and solemn experimental import to the children of God. It is an error to suppose that the word "repent" inevitably carries with it sorrow for an act committed, because sorrow for a transgression is by no means repentance itself, as the offender because of inherited sin and the weakness of the flesh may continue to persist in doing wrong without repenting or in any sense turning back or ceasing from his wicked ways. Repenting means to turn back or to cease from, whatever associated meanings it may sometimes possess. In the experience of a child of God sorrow for sin is one thing and repentance or turning from it is entirely something else though both are related. But the repentance attributed to God does not and can not apply in the sense that a sinner repents, for God has no sin to be repented of. In the experience of a saved sinner Godly sorrow for sin must precede repentance, but with God there can be no repentance or turning back from a sin that is not committed.

The Godly sorrow that worketh repentance ot salvation is the operation of the Holy Spirit in the heart of a subject of grace and depends upon the person, work, life, and beath, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We accept as true believers the fundamental truth that God is all-wise, all-powerful, and all-holy. In his wisdom he saw the end from the beginning and with the exercise of his sovereign power could have decreed things otherwise, had he so desired. Being all-holy it is inconceivable that he could sin or make a mistake in the purpose and work of his creation. Then we are assured that God was not sorry because he had created man, for he is of one mind and who can turn him? In all there are fifteen places in the old testament referring to God repenting, but in no case does it imply or express that God was sorry for his work of creation or any part of it. God promised that the seed of the woman would bruise the head of satan, and that promise was fulfilled in Christ, and in that promise declared his unchangable purpose. If there had been no sin, their could have been no Savior and no demonstration of the eternal and unfathonable love of God. The depth of love is demonstrated by its application to the greatest need of love which is salvation from eternal wrath and woe by free and unmerited grace. Hence hell is set over against heaven; eternal happiness against eternal woe; sin against righteousness; the purpose of God against the wiles and schemes of satan.

God's hatred against sin must be evidenced, and therefore man was hindered by the prov-

idence of God from waxing worse and worse and sinking deeper and deeper into the filth of sin until the time of the flood. Then God repented that he had made man and in this very thing turned away from the man he had made, the creature he had favored and blessed in so many ways, the creature who has prospered and multiplied and the imagination of whose heart was only evil continually, and so brought about the means of man's destruction save the family of Noah who believed in God and for whose preservation provision was made by the building of the ark. God had given sinful man many blessings and had greatly prospered him; but now God repented in that he turned away from the creature of his creation and witheld his blessings and manifested his wrath against sin and the unsaved sinner by sending the terrible flood as a punishment, so typical of the future judgement that awaits the impenitent ungodly. Noah by faith prepared an ark for the salvation of his family. Only by faith do we see Jesus as the ark of our safety from the flood of the wrath to come when the judgement of God is executed upon the ungodly.

Sin is hateful to God, inexpressibly so, and the grief in the heart of God was because of sin in this world, even though God decreed that it should be because it was necessary to accomplish his eternal purpose and redound to the glory of His son in the work of redemption. Without the entrance of sin into the world God's people could not be glorified through the consummation of the work of salvation. As much as God is grieved because of sin, yet it must come into the world with all its fault and filth and folly and fruit to accomplish the purpose of God. In nature man is grieved to do certain necessary things not sinful in themselves like the destruction of a family pet for the sake of mercy. God was grieved because of his infinite hatred of sin. As man and beast and the earth itself partook of the curse of sin, God repented after he had favored the creation of man and beast by sending the terrible judgement of the flood. But this repenting in no sense signifies that God in the slightest degree changed his eternal purpose from what he had determined to perform in his divine plan of the ages. Turning the wickedness of unrepentant men to their destruction redounds to His glory quite as much as turning the election of grace from everlasting wrath and woe to a state of endless happiness and glory. Whatever God does comports with his ineffable holiness and justice.

Arnold H. Bellows

* * *

In October of 1951, Elder H. O. Nash, one of our Associate Editors had a severe heart attack. We are glad to report that he is slowly recovering.

This is the reason that his regular editorial failed to appear in the last issue of the Signs.

I am sure that all connected with the paper together with our readers wish him a speedy recovery, and that God will bless him to continue to write and preach again the Gospel which he has so highly favored to do in the past.

Editor

* * *

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EDITORIALS

In January there was re-published the Prospectus which Elder Beebe issued when he began the publication of the Signs in 1832. This Prospectus has been an ensign all the years, and, on one occasion, Elder Beebe said "The following Prospectus still waves at our mast-head; we see no cause to shift our course in any particular. We are still pledged to conduct our paper according to what is therein stated."

We have every reason to believe that all who are in any way connected with the paper are dedicated to these same principles. If oherwise, we could not conscientiously lend aid to it's publication. The truth as it is in Jesus in of such importance to the Church, and we trust to ourself, we would weigh prayerfully and carefully each and every point of doctrine and practice which we hold to be the doctrine of God our Saviour. There must be a complete and perfect harmony between the things we hold and the things Jesus taught and instituted —and the Apostles proclaimed—else we are not "hewing to the line." This, we believe, everyone who has been brought out of darkness into light would do. We cannot feel for a moment that Jesus with-held anything that was needful for his people to know, believe or practice in their sojourn in this world; nor can we feel that the inspired writings of the Two Testiments contain anything superficious. We firmly hold, therefore, that, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctaine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." Changing times cannot bring about a condition in which it is necessary to leave off some, or add other things to the "Faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life," and we believe it. Truth has the property of being always precisely right under all conditions, and since Jesus is THE TRUTH anything thaught or believed contrary to His teaching, however slightly, is NOT THE TRUTH. This is the reason all Old School Baptist and all others taught of the Spirit, insist on a "Thus sayeth the Lord," for all doctrine and practice. If we are said to be behind-the-times and old fashioned, we do not blush or feel dejected, for we are not ashamed of the Gospel any more that the Apostle was. Rather, we are more concerned whether we are included in the number of those written in the Lamb's book of life. To this end we are given to heed the Apostle Paul's admonition, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." 2 Cor. 13:5. And Peter also, "------give diligence to make your calling and election sure." 2 Peter 1:10.

The Prophet Malachi spoke of the polluted bread and the blind, lame and sick which were offered - with which things even their governor would not have been pleased - and we surely have learned: "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the wholelump," and, "Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour." We cannot,

therefore, turn aside from the things taught us of the Lord, as if we could improve upon them; nor tone down the doctrine of God our Saviour to please the fancies of men; nor, indeed, do we have any desire to, "rule by our own means," though many would like to have it so. The TRUTH as it is in Jesus means something to us, and we are content to have it as He taught it. We are well aware that all we know of truth has not come by the teaching of men, nor by natural intellegence. It is basic truth that the carnal mind is not susceptable to spiritual things. Unless there is a "quickening" and a revelation, we can never be concerned with things other than those belonging to and in the natural kingdom of Adam. We humbly hope that we have heard the sound of, "the wind that bloweth where it listeth" and were brought to feel and realize the state of death we were in nature, and after sore trials and many sorrows, there came to us a peace which passeth understanding; and the reality of the Saviour and the hope of redemption were opened up. It was through this experience, and the things vouchsafed in this experience, that our hope was and is founded. Stated briefly, this means to all those of like experience, that their choice in Christ before the world began is revealed and assured to them. However they are first brought to conviction; that is, to the realization if their lost and ruined condition before God because of sin and transgression and that they are utterly depraved and unable be any means of their own to satisfy the devine justice of God by which they are condemned. This is the work of the Spirit of Truth, and the assurance of the love of God to them when He chose them in Christ before the world began; this together with all that this comprises, is being born again, or from above. We have no reason to feel or believe, either from experience or the Scriptures, that our flesh is born again. But there is a quickening to the knowledge of death and the implanting of hope, but each will testify that they are still sinners and that mortality is imminent. Our flesh is so subdued that we do not love the things we once did and we hate our own life. These things are better felt than expressed, when we would do the things we cannot do, and would not do the things that we do. Yet, withall, there is assurance given us that we are reconciled to God by the atonement of His own son, Jesus Christ; but we have as yet only received the earnest of the Spirit, the Spirit of adoption, the hope of glory and are sealed with the holy spirit of promise, knowing full well that the work begun in us is yet to be completed; and we run with patience (endurance) the race of mortal existance until it is completed. We recognize that we are yet mortal and corruptible—not yet fitted for heaven and immortal glory; but we are "sealed" until we (the flesh man which is alienated from our Father by reason of sin) shall be adopted, that is, redeemed unto our Father (God). This will be accomplished when "this mortal shall put on immortality and the corrupt shall put on incorruption." This is the resurrection and refers only to that which is mortal and dies. It is because of that which shall be completed or accomplished in the resurrection that we, who groan within ourselves, are redeemed and thus fitted for the kingdom prepared for us from the foundation of the world.

Let us further consider the "new man." In being born again (or from above) we are said to be born of the spirit, or born of God. We know of no better way to present it than to say that this is the manifestation to the "heirs of promise" of the life they had in Christ before the world began. It has respect to none others than those "chosen in him." All these had their standing (being) in Christ before time began, but can know nothing of it until they have their natural life in Adam by ordinary generation, according to the will and purpose of God. In this is made the election of grace manifest among the generations of Adam, for there is no such thing as a "spark of grace" in each Adam creature. This manifestation is called a new, or spiritual birth. And properly so, for the natural birth is a bringing forth of that which is from Adam; likewise the new birth is the bringing forth of that which

is from or in Christ. In the 22nd Psalm it is said, "A seed shall serve him; and it shall be counted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this." Each of these births produces or manifest the nature of that of which it is born; the natural, producing that which is corrupt and remains so until redeemed; the spiritual, producing that which is holy and cannot sin, and, consequently, needs no redemption."Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." 1 John 3:9. This is a great mystery, for both of these are in the same man. This complexity is shown by Solomon in his Song 6:13, "What will you see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies." we have here the "old man" and the "new man" - the flesh and the spirit. The old man is the earthen vessel which the treasure is in, for God has shined in our hearts. "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." 2 Cor. 4:7. In each one who is "called out of darkness into his marvelous light" there is a warfare, for, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things ye would." Gal. 5:17. And, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."

The sum of the matter, brethern, is that each object of the love and mercy of God have their eternal election manifested in them, and, though they are fallen in sin, Jesus has satisfied the wrath and justice of God by his atonement for them. This is confirmed in them by the work of the Holy Spirit so surely that they have the spirit of their adoption while in this life; as well as a foretaste of their eternal joy to come.

These are deep and mysterious things, brethern, and if we are so signally blessed to, "Have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col. 3:10), and "risen with Christ," and have our affections set on things above and not on things on the earth, may we consider well what it means to us; and, knowing that all "these things" shall be dissolved, may we be mindful of, "What manner of persons we ought to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God": for we, "According to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be dilligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless. And account that the long suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."

J. D. W.

* * *

FIRST COR. 6th CHAPTER, 2 V.

"And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God."

One of our readers has requested our views on the above portion of scripture. We are glad to present such thoughts as we have on the subject for her consideration, and all others who read it. Please accept them for what they are worth, and remember the writer is very imperfect and liable to err.

By reading the fifth and sixth chapters, we notice that the apostle Paul in this letter to the church at Corinth pointed out to them gross disorders that were being tolerated in the church, and admonished them to deliver the transgressor unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus.

They were also puffed up, and had not rather mourned that the wicked person among them should be taken away. These two things usually go hand in hand, disorder of some nature and a puffed up condition in the flesh. Sometimes the one to be delivered unto satan is a very important member in their eyes, one manifesting to them a gift, and they are puffed up because they have such a one among them.

Such glorying is vain, for there can be no true glorying in deed and in truth in the church except they glory in the Lord. "Let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord." This is experienced in the church when they are blessed to walk in his commands; to know no man after the flesh.

A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. In other words when a church is so enraptured with a man's gift that they fail to require a Godly walk and a Godly conversation, their glorying is not good. The whole body is affected by the disorderly walk of one member. It is like a cancer affecting the entire blood stream, poisoning the entire body, and holding with it is some sense partaking of it.

We are admonished not to keep company with fornicators, yet reminded at the same time that to avoid them all the time we would have to go out of the world. That in our daily affairs with our fellow men we are bound to come in contact with fornicators, drunkards and idolaters. We are commanded to shun them as much as possible.

"But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or coveteous, or an extortioner, or a railer, or a drunkard; with such an one, *not to eat.*

The man who keeps company with those who live a disorderly life knowing these things becomes partakers of his deeds, as the express command of the apostle is NOT TO EAT WITH SUCH A ONE. If we as the professed followers of Jesus Christ, and as organized bodies professing to be the church of Jesus Christ, fail to observe these express commands, sin lieth at the door, and we can expect nothing short of the chastening rod of God.

The question may be asked how long shall one be delivered unto satan. The answer is until the flesh has been destroyed; until the cause of the trouble has been subdued; the old leaven purged out, and a true manifestation of repentance by ceasing to walk in the path of disorder. When this has been proven, not by words, but by his walk, then he should be restored to the table, not before.

Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?

Do "ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?"

Besides holding in their fellowship a fornicator, one who took his father's wife in fornication, and also being puffed up, to this was added the charge of going to law against each other before unbelievers. All this was to their shame, and condemned by the apostle. Was there not one among them that was capable to judge? We are told to let the one least esteemed among us be the judge. One who has no worldly ambition such as glorying in the flesh. This is usually the one least esteemed when there is a walking after the flesh. Christ as the King of Zion, is often ignored, and His blessed teaching, when these things abound. He in the capacity of the lawgiver seems to be least esteemed.

And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, (Ye have put on Christ) and by the spirit of your God.

Here the church is reminded that they were one time by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God who is rich in mercy, wherewith his great love he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, has quickened us, and made us alive unto God and holiness. The more reason is given that they should purge their house because God had delivered them from such things. They are called upon to recount the mercies of God to them; to seek the things above, where Christ is on the right hand of God; to set their affections on things

above, and not on things of the earth, because they are dead, and their life is hid with Christ, in God. When he who is our life shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory.

He refers to their former state as the more reason they should be careful to observe the teachings of Christ, the King, and walk according to the order of the gospel.

The church of Jesus Christ is the highest court on earth, to the saints. She may hold things in her bounds that are disorderly, and yet be the church of Jesus Christ. Her laws are binding, and there is no higher court to appeal to. When one is excluded from one church he is excluded from all. The door he went out is the one to return through.

Paul never took the position that the things he admonished them about caused them to cease to be a church of Jesus Christ, but rather admonished them to remove the cause of their trouble and disorder.

As long as a church is recognized by sister churches, as a church of Jesus Christ, though she holds things in her bounds not according to good order, her authority must be acknowledged. When she persists in continuing to hold such things, AND GOSPEL LABOR HAS BEEN BESTOWED UPON HER WITHOUT AVAIL, NOT BEFORE, then she is to be considered no longer as a church of Jesus Christ. Her candle stick will certainly be removed.

Until such time, he that neglects to hear the church shall be unto us a heathen, and a publican. (One who bears no evidence of the work of grace).

Now I have written much more than I expected to when I started. This request came from a sister in Texas. I have attempted to reply as I hope I have been directed. The disposition of the matter is with the Lord, Whom I hope to serve, and whose I am. I can certainly say, it is written in love for his dear people, and the cause of his blessed son. I have no man's person in view, only the cause of truth, and the glory of his great and glorious name.

It has been the policy of this paper not to publish articles from excluded people if we knew it. It will continue to be the policy. If some write that we do not know about we cannot help that. We hope through his grace to acknowledge the authority of each church as a sovereign body, to labor for the things that make for peace, and the things that edify the household of faith.

D. V. S.

* * *

OBITUARIES

Sister Laura Viola Morgan

The subject of this sketch is Mrs. Laura Viola Morgan. Before her marriage to Judge Mack Morgan, she was Miss Everage, she and Judge Mack Morgan were united in matrimony in the home of E. Morgan, Oct. 6, 1890. The late Elder H. H. Wyatt officiating. This was in Brantly, Ala., Crenshaw County. Judge Mack Morgan was called to his eternal home, Dec. 6th, 1908.

Six children survive Sister Morgan, namely; Mrs. Carlee Lowman, Panama City, Fla., Mrs. Viola Jay, Walter M. Morgan, Panama City, Fla., W. C. Morgan, Andalusia, Ala., B. G. Morgan, and J. B. Morgan, Brantly, Ala. Two children deceased, John E. Morgan, May 6, 1914 Henry L. Morgan, Feb. 23, 1945. John at the time of his passing lived in Brantly. While Henry at the time if his passing lived at Panama City, Fla. Five step children survive Sister Morgan, namely; Lewis Morgan, Vous, Fla., Mrs. Lillie Everage, Andalusia, Ala., C. L. Morgan, Brantley, Ala., P. G. Morgan, Luverne, Ala., Frank Morgan, Brantley. However Frank passed away Dec. 22nd, 1936. Besides children and step children, there are 26 grand children and 23 great grandchildrren.

Thus we see the host o hearts that were broken in the passing of this great mother and grand mother, along with a host of other relatives and friends and neighbors.

Sister Morgan was truly a help mate to her distinguished husband so long as he lived, aiding in every way possible that he might make good in the world. She was always his right hand bower, and evidently God crowned their efforts with success. They brought their children up in the nature and admonition of

the Lord. And they are among us today, God loving and God fearing citizens. In her childhood days she attended the common schools of Crenshaw County both at Providence and Bullock and when the common school had no more too offer, she was determined to get more education, so she entered Troy Normal College of Troy, Ala. and finished her schooling there which so well equipped her for the task that lay ahead of her. She was truly very efficient for all the duties that befell her. She was a great lover of flowers, and spent much time in caring for them in her garden situated on the east side of her beautiful home in Panama City, Fla.

Sister Morgan was very talented both as a nurse and seamstress, she was always ready to help those in need, she was friend to all the rich and poor alike, and was happiest when she was helping others, she seemed to understand so well that kind deeds done were only lent, and in helping others she grew strong.

Sister Morgan together with her distinguished husband and all the children could always be seen around when old Baptists held their meetings, though Mr. Morgan never joined the Primitive Church his convictions were strong and strictly Primitive. Soon after Judge and Mrs. Morgan were married the Lord manifested beautifully to sister Morgan and by reason of what the Lord revealed to her she offered for membership at Old Union Church which at that time was in Connecuh Association, she was joyfully received into the fellowship of the Church, and was baptised by the late Elder B. J. Wilson and spent the remainder of her life in the sweet fellowship of the people of God,truly consecrated to the cause she had espoused. She seemed to understand her frailty so well that she expressed often when it was the good Lord's will to call her, that it would also be his will to take her in ease, and it is the understanding of the writer that two physicians were present at her passing and they agreed they had never observed the passing of one so easily, apparently she just fell asleep.

Owing to the farsightedness of Sister Morgan, the keenness of her vision I know of no other poetical expressions that could pay greater tribute to her than the following few lines.

There is a land mine eye hath seen,
In visions of enraptured thought;
So bright that all which spreads between
Is with its radiant glory fraught.

A land upon whose blissful shore
There rests no shadow falls no stain
There those who meet shall part no more,
And those long parted meet again.

Its skies are not like earthy skies
With varying hues of shade and light
It hath no need of sun to rise,
To dissipate the gloom of night.

There sweeps no desolating wind
Across that calm serene abode
The wanderer there a home may find,
Within the paradise of God.

Elder J. J. Collins

January 27, 1952

* * *

ELDER JONAH S. MURPHY, the subject of this notice, was born February 5, 1867, departed this life December 27, 1951, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Bernice Linn of Elkins, W. Va., with whom he had resided since the death of his wife, who preceded him in death. she having passed in death February 15th, 1938. Elder Murphy had been an invalid for the past several years, having sustained a broken hip which resulted from a fall in his bedroom. Complication and his age being against him, he never recovered. He suffered greatly during the years of his confinement, but he bore his afflictions with a spirit of meekness and resignation.

Elder Murphy was the son of the late Elder James Murphy and Mary Stansberry Murphy. He was united in marriage July 12, 1885 to Lanora Dorcas Shoemaker to which union was born ten children; four sons and six daughters. Two sons, Beeman and Burland and two daughters, Mrs. Bessie Lake and Bunis preceded him in death. Left to mourn are two sons, Burr and Benton and four daughters, Mrs. Bernice Linn, Mrs. Bycie Greathouse, Mrs. Bonnie Johnson and Mrs. Beulah Weese. Two brothers, Stephen and Hickman. Sixteen grandchildren and twenty-three great-grandchildren.

Elder Murphy was apprehended by the unerring spirit of God early in life and was brought to a convicting knowledge of his before the bar of God's holy Justice, experimntally in a tedious labor of convicting trial. Peace was spoken to his troubled soul in the revealing of Jesus as his hope, his salvation, his all, in such a full and wonderful measure of rejoicing, in his full aquittal from guilt and sin, in the atoning blood of Jesus which hope was his staff and an anchor of his soul to the end of his pilgrim journey.

He united with the Leading Creek Primative Baptist Church of Mostrose, Randolph County, W. Va. (Tygarts Valley River Association) May 27, 1893. He was ordained to the full work of the gosple Ministry June 28, 1902.

The Leading Creek Church was organized May 27, 1854 and Elder Jonah S. Murphy's grandfather, the late Elder David P. Murphy, was called to the Pastoral care of the church. He faithfully served as pastor until his death November 30, 1885. Then the late Elder James Murphy (the father of Elder Jonah S. Murphy) was called December 26, 1885 to serve as pastor. He served in faithfulness until he was called in death January 30, 1903. Elder Jonah S. Murphy served as pastor for forty-nine years in a service of love, as a faith-undershepherd of the Lord.

As one who knew and loved Elder Murphy, I wish to say in humbleness of spirit, that in my close and intimate acquaintance with this dear Father in Israel, it is my humble opinion that few men indeed in our day have stood on an equal plane with him as a Miniser and a Pastor. The power and eloquence of his deep doctrinal and experimental preaching (which preaching was done in the very essence of the spirit of meekness and love, yet in power and in demonstration of the spirit) was one of the rare gifts of God to his church and people. He was well gifted in discipline and his labor was for peace in Zion.

Since the passing of Elder Murphy, the Leading Creek Church has called a grandson of Elder Murphy, our young and highly esteemed brother, Elder Veldon Linn to the Pastoral care of the church. I felt called upon in my feeble effort to chronicle the life and death of this dear man of God, to add this little historical data of the church, which Elder Murphy loved and served so faithfully and so well during the days of his ministry. The history of the Leading Creek Church insofar as its pastoral care of service is concerned, is rare and perhaps almost without precedent. I realize that neither time nor space would permit me to speak more than briefly of the characteristics and virtues of this dear humble servant of God. To know him was to love him. His humility, his sincerity, his faithfulness marked him as an outstanding personality. He was indeed a father in Israel to me. My memory goes back through the years to the time when he as one in the presbytry of Elders, lay his hands upon my sinful head; upon the occasion of my ordination to the ministry. It was Elder Murphy who delivered the charge to me.

He completely relaxed all muscles several hours before the end came. His passing was very quiet, quitting the ways and walks of men as a full ripe shock of grain. For him to die was gain. The loss to the family, the church and the host of friends is great indeed, but we grieve not as those who have no hope. May God visit reconciling grace upon the bereaved. According to the request of Elder Murphy, Elder J. C. Hammond was called to conduct the funeral. He used for the text, Job 5:26. "Thou shall come to thy grave in a full age, like a shock of corn cometh in his season." He was blessed to speak to the comfort of the bereaved family. Burial was in the church cemetery December 30, 1951.

He passed away in the 84th year of his life, lacking from December 27 to February 5 of being 85. His life was long and eventful and blessed in a varied field to his fellowman. The grandson, Elder Veldon Linn, has the undivided support of the members of the Leading Creek Church. May God sweetly bless his labors as he did that of his grandfather.

Written in compliance of the request of Elder Murphy. May God bless his bereaved family. I wish to say that all of his children are all of the Primitive Faith and are all united in that deep bond of love to my heart.

Submitted in love,
H. J. Bird

* * *

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Whereas, it has been the will of God to remove from our midst by death, November 15, 1951, our dear brother, J. C. Presley. We hope to bow in humble submission to the will of Him who doeth all things well.

Resolved, that we deeply sympathize with the family and relatives of the deceased.

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be spread on our church book and copies sent to the *Signs of the Times* and to the family.

Done by the order of the church, November 18, 1951.

Elder C. E. Turner, *Moderator*
R. L. Buckner, *Clerk of Church*

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 120 ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND, MAY, 1952 No. 5

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN

We have been requested to give our views on what constitutes the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, the sin which Jesus said should not be forgiven unto men. Inasmuch as it is necessary to have the scriptures upon this matter plainly before us as we write, we shall begin by quoting those passages which refer to this matter. The first is in Matthew XIII, 31, 32 and reads as follows, "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." The gospel according to Mark III. 28-30 puts it in this way: "Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blasphem: but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation; because they said, He hath an unclean spirit." Turning now to Luke XIII, 10, we find it thus: "And whosover shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven." both in Matthew and in Mark this declaration of Jesus concerning the unforgivable sin is in connection with the Pharises accusing Jesus of having cast out devils by Beelzebub the prince of devils. This ascription of the work of the Holy Ghost to the devil is what is called the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. To thus ascribe the work of the Spirit to the devil is to be guilty of a sin which shall not be forgiven. The period during which this sin shall not be forgiven is "never". Matthew puts it, "Neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Mark says, "Never." Therefore we take it that the expression, Neither in this world, neither in the world to come," is the same as, "Never". That is, whosoever ascribes work of God's Spirit to the devil is a lost soul, there is not forgiveness for that sin throughout all the period of time. As for the heaven beyond this life, there will be no sin in that world therefore no forgiveness of sin there. To be guilty of this blasphemy is to be in danger of eternal damnation. In the eternal mind and purpose of the infinite all-wise God from before the foundation of the world, God's elect were not, and have never at any time been, in danger of eternal damnation. When the blessed Jesus declared this truth about the unforgivable sin against the Holy Ghost, He was then in the legal or Jewish world. Under that legal covenant and in that legal world, there was no such thing as forgiveness for blasphemy against God. Witness the Scripture in Leviticus xxiv. 16: "And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well as the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the Lord, shall be put to death." When Jesus further said, "Neither in the world to come," He had no reference to the world of eternal glory beyond this mortal life. He meant by "the world to come," the gospel world or age which was to follow after his resurection from the dead, when the legal world or age should come to an end. As there had been no forgiveness in the legal world for blasphemy against God, so there is not now any forgiveness for this blasphemy against God in this gospel world. The law of Moses could not forgive that sin, but killed him who committed it, neither does the gospel of Christ forgive

blasphemy against God, but excludes from the household of faith one who ascribes the Spirit's work to the devil. Therefore neither in the law world nor in the gospel world is there forgiveness for the sin against the Holy Ghost. The word "never" does not mean eternal. It means "at no time," and has reference to the whole extent of time, there is no forgiveness for blasphemy against the Spirit. We know that this subject has been a matter of concern to many of the Lord's dear children, because most of them have at some time in their soul's travels feared themselves to be guilty of the unpardonable sin. That great adversary of the soul's peace, the devil, loves to tease and torment the children of God and his accusations against the brethren are never so poignant as when he can take the very Scriptures of truth and hurl them at the saints. Never is Satan so plausible as when he comes garbed as an angel of light quoting passages from the sacred book. But while he quotes Scripture at times, he always quotes it piecemeal, never having any regard for the context; and while he quotes it often glibly, he never construes it corectly. Nevertheless the pain which Satan causes by his gross misapplications of the Word are terribly acute and give rise to sore doubts and misgivings on the part of the harassed believer. Now, we feel to say emphatically that where one has a fear lest they have committed the unpardonable sin, the presence of that very fear is itself an evidence that the unpardonable sin has not been committed. Those who are guilty of this unpardonable sin never have any such fear about it. The presence of the fear proves there exists also a reverence for God. Where reverence is there can be no blasphemy. A spiritully awakened soul is alive to sin, the unawakened soul is dead to sin. When dead in sin there is no fear of sin, indeed no consciousness of sin at all. To be consious of sin and to be in fear of it is evidence of spiritual life. We feel to say to our readers, especially to those who may have at times feared themselves guilty of the unpardonable sin, that if you would not know it, you would be callous and hardened, and without feeling any pain about it. The fact that this fear of the sin is with you shows your conscience to have been made tender regarding the offensiveness of sin, and this fear of the Lord is the knowledge of life to depart from the snares of death. Jesus says in the Scriptures quoted from Matthew that a word spoken against the Son of man shall be forgiven. This means that any offense which comes against Jesus shall be forgiven. All the sins which are chargeable to the second Person in tht Trinity are forgiven, it does not at all matter what may be the character or kind of blasphemy or sin committed.

Jesus Christ is the Mediator between God and God's elect, and is the elect's Surety for all the debts they owe to divine justice. Almighty God has laid on his Son all the sins of all his elect children. There is not one single sin which the elect of God have committed, or are committing at this present time, or that they may or will commit, but that Jesus Christ has atoned for the whole of them. He has washed away all the sins of his people in his own blood. This is because the sins of all God's chosen people come against the Son of man, Jesus Christ. He is the Scapegoat for all of them and bears their sins, all of them, away into the land of forgetfulness, whence they shall never return to be remembered any more, never to be again charged to their account. On the other hand, the sins which come against the Holy Ghost are not forgiven. This is because there is no mediation provided in the will of God for these sins. These are the sins for which Jesus Christ was made responsible, the debts for which he was not made Surety. Suppose Mr. A gives to Mr. B his note for $500, and that Mr. A asks Mr. C to go his surety on this note. Mr. C consents to be A's surety. In the event that A cannot pay this note, C will have to pay it, because he is the surety for it. But suppose Mr. D also owes Mr. B a note and that D fails to pay it. Now, B goes to C and wants C to pay D's note. Will C do it? He will not. Why not? Because C is not D's surety, therefore iss not liable for D's debts. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was from all eternity the predestinated Mediator and Surety for his

people who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. All their debts to God he will pay and has paid. He gave his life for them. But Jesus Christ is not Surety for the sins of the whole human family. Therefore the sins of those for whom Jesus was not made Surety., are not atoned for and never will be atoned for. All those sins are sins against God the Spirit directly, without a mediator to stand between and render satisfaction for them. Therefore these offenses being against God the Spirit, and not against Jesus Christ, have never forgiveness. There is no sin so terrible, no blaspehmy so heinous, but that it is possible to be forgiven, provided it is against Jesus Christ, that is provided he is the Surety for the transgressor committing that sin; but even it be but a word against the Holy Ghost thert is not forgiveness anywhere for it, because it is an offense for which there is no mediation provided, no surety to pay it. The apostle Paul had at one time been a blasphemer, as witness his first letter to Timothy, thirteenth verse. But this blasphemer found forgiveness. Why did he? Because Jesus Christ was from all eternity predestined to be his Savior, therefore the Surety who paid all Paul's indebtedness to divine justice, thus bringing unto Paul the forgiveness of all his sins. No doubt there have been many who have blasphemed God who have not found forgiveness as Paul did, who were naturally no worse men than Paul had been, but who obtained no forgiveness because Jesus Christ was not from eterniey responsible for their safety, was not made of God to them their Surety. Therefore their sins were against God the Holy Ghost without a mediator to stand between them and divine justice to make good the debt that they might go free. From all this line of thought which we have been pursuing here, it will be seen that it is not possible for a child of God to commit an unpardonable sin. There is not one single sin of all the elect of God which Jesus Christ is not the atonement for, If there is anything which he left out or overlooked, then he is not the perfect Captain of their salvation, but liable to err, as the rest of us. Since he has however perfected all his set-apart people by the one offering of himself, it follows that not one of them can commit an unforgivable sin. This unforgivable sin is the sin committed by the wicked, or by those who were not included in the covenant of election before the foundation of the world. Their sins have no atonement. There is no mediator provided for them, hence their offenses are directly against God the Holy Ghost, and not against Jesus Christ. If they were against Jesus Christ they would be forgiven.

We hope we have made ourselves sufficiently clear, so that you have grasped our view of this matter. We hope we may have been enabled to set at rest your fears as to yourselves being guilty of this unpardonable sin. If you have had a fear within yourself that you may have guilty of this, that very fear is testimony of spiritual life within your soul; having this life you must belong to Christ, and belonging to him you have him as your Advocate in the court of heaven to present you faultless before the throne of God. Belonging to him, you cannot sin yourself away from him. "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." L.

* * *

MY EXPERIENCE

One day in late September, 1921, in the morning at 11 A. M., I was sitting quietly at my desk in the office where I worked a number of years (C. V. Hill, 8 Co.,Inc.) and Mr. C. V. Hill came in with his bible. He had lost his oldest daughter that year in the winter and had to postpone the funeral on account of a very bad snow storm,the roads leading to the cemetery all being blocked with snow. His mind seemed to be on God's word and he brought his bible daily and I would see him reading at his desk frequently. Finally we got into conversation about the scriptures and his thoughts and mine were very different, especially about the way of salvation. At the time, I belonged to the Methodist Church and

I never knew anything else but the work system. I thought we had to do something in order for God to bless us with a new birth. I had joined the church when I was 21 years old and I remember one thing which was outstanding and that was, I did not feel any different in my feelings than I did before the minister called on my sister and myself and asked us to join, so we joined together.

I was about 41 years old on the morning mentioned above while at my desk. Mr. Hill and myself together with Mr. Alfred Titus, who thought as Mr. Hill did, had talked together many times, when we were alone and it seemed the more we talked the further apart we became. We made no headway. At last Mr. Hill opened his bible to the scripture in St. John's gospel, Chapter 6, 29th verse. "Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God that ye believe on Him whom he hath sent." He pointed his finger to the word BELIEVE and it changed into very large letters as I have indicated, and that same word was surrounded by a light brighter than the noonday. I took my eyes off the word and looked up and exclaimed "I see, I see, I see it all" and Mr. Hill went to find Mr. Titus and told him about the expression I had made and we three came together in tears. I could not work any more that day but fumbled everything. I felt such power which wass unseen by everyone else around me. They gave me much good literature to read at home and everything had changed in my belief to what they believed. Everything was made so plain to me. I went to the Methodist church the following Sunday and I did little else but weep to realize that all was dead works there. The preaching and prayer both seemed dead and I remember someone bringing me water as they thought I was ill.

The following Sunday I went to Hopewell on the trolly as I did not drive then and Elder Vaughn preached from the text "If ye love me, keep my commandments." They sang "Springtime" which just suited my condition and he opened the door of the church, as I was in tears. I then arose and went forward, telling them my experience and they accepted me although an entire stranger to everyone except Mr. Hill who was present. I was baptised that same afternoon about 5 o'clock in a beautiful stream outside of Hopewell and there were many people on either side of the stream singing beautifull hymns. When I came up out of the water I did not say anything but I had a most wonderful peace in my soul which passed all understanding. I did not come back to myself until after I was baptised. It just seemed that I must be baptised first, before I could be interested in the common things of life. As I write, it all comes back to me so real and I can hardly see for tears.

Most everyone thought I had lost my mind especially my old friends at the Methodist church where I previously belonged, and of course much persecution set in a little later. They thought Mr. Hill had influenced me but it took the power of God to show me the right way. My dear sister Sarah had a Christian heart but she could never see as I did.

My brother Joseph who died a year ago this er days but I never could understand him. He died at 71 years but he had stopped going to the Methodist church and had never found the true church in the earth (the Old Baptist.)

My brother Joseph who died a year ago this month had an experience while I was taking care of him in my home. He tried to talk about it one morning about 4 o'clock when he said he had been in the Garden of Eden and that he wished he could tell me about it, but he did not feel that he could. I told him it might be just for him if he could not tell it and he seemed satisfied.

Your sister in sweet fellowship of the Gospel.

Sister Susie A. Stone

* * *

Princeton, Ky.

Dear Brother and Sister Chandler: I received your letter this evening and was glad to hear from you. But Brother I am so sorry to learn of your troubles and truly hope that all of them will be O. K. I know it is a great burden

to you all at this time, but listen I am glad to know your faith in our blessed Lord is strong. He tells us to rejoice in these things for they worketh patience, patience experience, and experience hope and hope maketh not ashamed.

It is all in the Lord's hands and I believe those things are sent upon us to try our faith. We must be led through fire and tried that the dross be consumed, the gold refined. So count it all gain for you have the blessed assurance of that Almighty God that all things work together for good to them that love Him. This is to prove your love, test it and cause you to give praise for all things and glorify Him in it.

When we suffer let us realize we are following in His footsteps for His sheep must follow Him. We cannot be reconciled to what goes on here in many things. Even Christ, the only begotten son, said, "Not my will but thine be done." And it is my sincere desire and prayer to God that you can be made to say, this and mean it from the bottom of your heart. Those he loveth, he chasteneth and those he loves are made to realize this and give Him the glory.

Old Job says man is but a few days and full of trouble. We cannot expect anything else out of this life for it is all vanity and vexation of spirit. But thanks be to God there is another life where sorrow and disappointments, troubles, and distress are not known. It will all soon be over with us. We will soon be where our dear old fathers are, in a grave knowing nothing. They had their troubles what if they could arise and speak, don't you think they would say, "Put your trust in Him for He knows His business and it will all work out for your good."

I wish there was something I could do to help. You wish I could see you and hear you tell it, but I have no way of going anywhere. I have not been to meeting since last spring. I hear from Elder Darnall often and he seems to remember me. He is a great comfort to me.

Pray for me and mine when it goes well with you and remember me as your unworthy brother in a good hope.

Dan L. Clark

Dear Editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

May God bless and keep you as long as you have a being in this world, and at death, may may you yield your last expiring breath bosomed upon the love of Jesus Christ, by the will of the Father.

If not deceived too badly, I lov this way and the way of which the SIGNS write about. I understand that God's in all and through him all things consist. God knows what is in darkness, but He abides in Light. This Light is Jesus Christ. This light shines out of darkness, the man,and the darrkness comprehended it not. God is holy. Man is unholy, God is light, man is in darkness, and he remains in this darkness until light appears. Then it is this light that shines and not man. Man is only a servant. A man that can have and feel this love and can sit beneath the wings of the love of Jesus Christ. Here are a few verses out of a poem I composed that suit my case:

I'm sold, depraved, I can not find,
My Savior's love at any place.
He comes to me by His own will
He calms the storm, says, "Fear be still."

My soul she waits upon the Lord,
He is my shield, He is my sword
He is my Savior, "Priest and King,"
And all I am or have He brings.

* * *

Dear Editor, you may ponder over these few remarks, if you judge them to be worthy of space you can carry them in the SIGNS, if not just count them as the writer feels to be:

Nothing, if there is anything less than nothing, put me in that class. Some of the brethren have asked mae to send some of the poems, here is one on faith as I understand it.

We know by Faith, God framed the worlds,
The heavens the earth, the sea,
He set their bounds, they can not go,
Beyond His firm degree.

There is a faith that men say ac,
That is no faith at all,
It is the faith that doth deceive,
A faith that cause our fall.

The faith that's Christ's the Author,
In death will bear us safely o'er,
That Faith will save from sin;
For ever back to Him.

By Faith of old, did Enoch walk,
Upon this sin cursed sod;
His heart was full of love and truth,
He walked, and talked with God.

By Faith did Sampson use the bone,
He slew one thousand men,
When can we have such faith as this;
When Christ this faith begin.

By faith king David He took the sling;
With five smooth stones in hand,
His faith was set in God alone,
With these, he slew the man.

By faith we view, our heavenly home;
Beyond our mortal eye,
In peace we'll dwell with Jesus there,
And never more to die.

By faith we see the distant things,
In to that distant clime!
There'll be no need of sun nor stars
Where men, no more count time.

God made the worlds by Jesus Christ,
And all things in the sea;
Their bound all set they can not run,
Beyond their set degree.

Yours in hope of that heavenly home, beyond our mortal life.

Warden Lewis
Lowland, N. C.

* * *

Route 2
Farmerville, La.
March 15, 1951

Dear People:

I will write a little about what I believe, and have found in the scriptures about the church of God, and believers.

It is a great pleasure to search the scriptures although I'm no perfect speller or writer, and I cannot understand it like I would love to. I know it will be scattered for I have always read it that way ever since I was a child. And since I have been among the Primitive Baptist people here, and off at other meetings they have, I have prayed for an understanding or for the Lord to show me the way, and I believe my prayer was answered. My belief about the scriptures has changed and it is more comforting to think that there is a God that works all things after the counsel of his own will. Eph. 1:11, and that he has his people, or his church here on earth scattered among every people, tongue, kindred and nation. Rev. 7:9, no matter where, or whether a member of anyones church, for he said; they will all be taught of the Lord. Heb. 8:10-11, John 6:45. The Lord said they will need no teaching, He made a new covenant and he said; I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts, and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother saying know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. Heb. 8:10-11. So the Lord said they shall, and in John 10:16 other sheep I must bring. When he prayed for his disciples John 17:20 he said: neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word. And so it is a sure thing that God's people will be saved. The last words, when he hung on the cross, he said, "It is finished." He meant he had done the work that his father gave him to do.

Yes, he called them, predestinated, justified, glorified them, Rom. 8:29-30. Preserved them, Isa. 49:8. Planted them, Isa. 61:3, 60:21. A garden enclosed, S. S. 4:12. Thy plants are in the orchard, 13 verse. The book sealed, 2 Cor. 1:22, Eph. 1:13, 4:30. They are taught to love one another, 1 Thess. 4:9. He maketh this people to do, Phil. 2:13, Ps. 23:2, Jer. 10:23. Grace was given to this people, James 4:6. Understanding was given, 1 John 5:20, Col. 1:9. Their steps are ordered of the Lord, Ps. 37:23, Prov. 16:9, Jer. 10:23.

Yes, the garden was planted and the Book was sealed with all the good works and true prayers in it. He died for the church, and it won't grow. 2 Sam. 23:5. So where is our part if God has done it. What is there for us to do? In Phil. 2:12 it tells us to work out our own salvation for it is God which worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure. Phil. 2:13. So it is grace and hope. Grace means everthing from the beginning to the end. If we have a hope, that is a gift. Yes, God declared the beginning to the end. Isa. 46:10. The way is prepared for them, or fixed before the world began. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. Cor. 2:9, Isa. 64:4. Read on down through the rest of this chapter. Oh, this a wonderful doctrine to believe in a God that did save. No, he is not a changeable God. The way I once believed he was a changeable God. I thought by my good works I would be saved, and if I didn't do these things I would be lost.

I will never forget when I first began to believe or understand this doctrine. I would search the scriptures, the Bible in my lap, and I would find myself gazing out the window with flowing tears in my eyes. But I wouldn't tell anyone for a long time. I would go to their meeting and I would notice how they met one another and I thought they loved one another better than any people in the world. And they would start singing those old-time songs and it seemed every hair on my head would stand to itself.

And so I began to love this people and love this doctrine and I would search the scriptures the long winter nights until ten or eleven o'clock before I would go to bed. And through the day sometimes I would drop my work and get the bible to look for something that would be on my mind. Oh it is more precious than all the money in the world. It was in the year 1932 that I first began to find this doctrine and on and on and in the year 1941 my oldest son was in the Army and in a year or two another one had to go and that time it seemed to me if it had not been for believing this doctrine I could not have stood it.

But along those years I did not have a desire to live in this church. It seemed to me I was filled on finding this doctrine, but the last year or two I want to be a member of this faith and order. Maybe I will sometime, I hope so. I have been following after this people the last few years off at other places where there would be people from several states, and they would have such wonderful meetings and so much wonderful preaching. I believe all the true Primitive Baptist ministers have the word of God in their heart when they go to these places, and if they preach the word of God He is with them. In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the Word was God. John 1:1. To preach the word is to preach Christ, the Gospel, glad tidings of good things. The Lord told his Apostles to feed my sheep. And I believe the hearers under the voices of the Primitive Baptist ministers get fed. All through the Bible we will find where it says he that hath an ear let him hear. And those that hear its a gift. Understanding, believing, prayers, all is a gift. For without the Lord we can do nothing, John15:5. So this leaves us helpless like infants because they are helpless and that is what it means in Matt.18:3 where it says "verily I say unto you except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Now if the people of god are compared with the infant how can they do anything without the Lord. I'm glad it is that way, for if it was left for us to do we would all be lost for the thoughts of foolishness is sin. And he knows the imaginations of the thoughts. And our righteousness is as filthy rags, no one good. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above", James 1:17. But whosoever is born of God does not sin for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God. 1 John 3:9.

Well, this brings about hope again, that

prayer in our heart that we were buried with him by baptism into death. Oh, if I could only write like it has come to my mind sometimes. But this people I'm trying to write about thirst after righteousness and they are poor in spirit. I believe that is what Matt. 5:3 means is that it is the humble soul that is blessed. And the higher he gets in divine life the more humble he will be. He will give up his self-confidence. This people is the Church, whose names are written in the book of life, they shall come, they must come, nothing shall be able to destroy them. Jer. 32:40, Dan. 12:1, Rev. 3:5, 13:8, John 10:16, 28. Not a one of them will be lost. Now I do not mean just the Primitive Baptist, but the church, the body, scattered among every kindred, tongue and nation, but I believe the Primitive Baptist people are the only ones that believe this doctrine. If they are the only ones then they are scattered among every kindred, tongue and nation. I'm writing this just like I talk to myself. I talk to this people night and day about the scriptures, just in my mind without even a whisper. And I do not know whether anyone will ever read this or not. But it is a relief to me to write about what little I believe and understand about the doctrine. That is the only hope I have that I believe I understand and believe the true doctrine, if I do.

It seems to me when I was a child it was told to me that the old bible was no more good, when Christ was crucified. But when I began to trace those references it would carry me in the old scriptures from Revelations to Genesis. Yes, the old scriptures are full of predestination. The old prophets prophesied and the new prophets testified. Gen. 3:15 God told the devil what he would do. That he would put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. God separated the sheep from the goats before the world began. He loved Jacob and hated Esau before they were born. Rom. 9:13. I will say again this people I'm talking about is the church but I do not mean just the Primitive Baptist. But God planted this Church, and they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of his planting and the work of his hands, and they are trees of righteousness. Isa. 60:21, 61:3. These people are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained or prepared that we should walk in them. Eph. 2:10. God loved this people and he gave them an everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work. Thess. 2:16, 17.

So hope and good works are a gift. It is all a gift. Remember John 15:5, Without me ye can do nothing. Then when a person thinks he is good and can do this and that and that his own work will carry him to heaven, he doesn't know that it is the goodness of God that leads him to repentance. For if a man think himself to be something when he is nothing he deceiveth himself. Gal. 6:4. Well it is said right there that we are nothing, and we do not know anything. And then this brings about hope again. If we know nothing we do not even know we have a hope, for hope is a gift. It is all by grace and grace alone. Christ died for sinners, He didn't come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. Matt. 9:12 says they that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. Those that are whole believe in their own good works, depending on what he can do and getting their names on some church book and they are full of self-righteousness. And those that are sick are the sinners that Christ died for and they have a desire in their hearts continually, for mercy, giving God all the praise, all the glory, thirsting for righteousness, hoping his name was written in the book of life of the lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Yes, he died for the sins of the whole world. He died for the church and his church is scattered all over the world. And this was done in his mind before the world began, and he knows them by name. And when he comes again he is not to save anyone. He is coming to gather them up from all nations, yes, hope again.

With all the little unfortunate things that

comes about, as soon as I think of this doctrine it's a joy. I will say again when I first began to believe this doctrine I would find myself with tears and it seemed to me I was glad of those tears, for it is a comfort to have some one to depend on. And I will say I hope I have a God to depend on. But hope is all we have.

I will bring this to a close but I'm not satisfied. I thought before I started I could write the things about this doctrine in line just like it's on my mind, but I am still searching for a brighter light.

A believer I hope,
Mrs. O. G. Hicks

* * *

I feel that I would like to sit down and talk with the dear people whom I esteem as God's people, of the wonderful things of God and Godliness, that pertain to their salvation.

When I read their writings in the various periodicals containing their communications throughout the length and breadth of the land telling of their trials, tribulations and the rejoicing in the hope of their salvation it strikes a responsive cord in my heart; stirs up my love to the extent I want to tell them about it, and how I feel. Then the thought arises, what do I know and what could I say? There would be lot more I could say about what I do not know, than there would be about what I know.

The mystery of God and Godliness is beyond my comprehension; I cannot attain unto it. I read the scriptures and feel to rejoice in some of the blessed truths as they seem to unfold to me, but there is much of it I cannot apprehend, therefore its the simple things of life that I can only speak of. For this reason I hesitate to speak much with God's people lest I reveal a lack of understanding, or div knowledge, but prefer to listen that I may learn something from those I feel have a greater Revelation of the scriptures than I have.

Sometimes I am filled with ecstacy in contemplation of the glorious kingdom of the New Jerusalem. These are things I cannot lay hold of with my hands, but must travel most of the time in a land of no pasture, so to speak, and feeling very sensibly the corruptness and exceeding sinfulness of my nature. I can also witness with David when he said "The Lord is clean gone forever." It is then we want to speak with our brethern and tell them how we feel, and to know if they have passed this way, and thereby have some mutual comfort. "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another."

They do speak, and are speaking to one another through the columns of the Zions Landmark, The Old Faith Contender and the Signs Of The Times. We hear them speak from every part of the land, and they speak the language of our heavenly Father, having the same teacher, and we rejoice in the fact that they have been taught the same thing. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children."

Humbly,
Wm. Graham
Christianburg, Va.

* * *

Sunday Eve., February 17, 1952

DEAR SISTER YOUNG:

We will try to answer your wonderful letter we received a few days ago.

It was somewhat of a surprise to us to get this letter, as we were thinking that we had been forgotten of God, and also man. In other words, we have been left in such a desolate state that it seemed to us that if God had ever visited us in His love and mercy, that surely He had withdrawn Himself and hid His face from us. We could not find Him no matter how much we searched. Of course we have been enabled to meet with the dear brethren and sisters at church here, and some other places, but still that feeling of being alone still remained with us.

But your good letter that we were not looking for, that we did not expect, was so full of the great power of God to remove the great mountain of unbelief (which is sin), and cause the great trees of the forest to be plucked up and cast into the sea. In fact, it was full of life, and we believe it is the same life that Jesus is to His people.

Jesus says to his children, "I am the

Way, the Truth and the Life. No man can come unto Me except the Father which sent Me, draw Him." Now in our desperate loneliness, in our feelings of being foresaken in the desert which we have been traveling in for sometime, we hope we have learned the truth of the language of Jesus as quoted above.

"I am the Way, I am the Truth and I am the Life." Now Jesus is all this to His children, and yet no man can come unto Him except the Father which sent Him, draw Them.

Now can you imagine that I, even I, have been trying desperately to go to Jesus, since He seems to have hidden His face from me. Oh, such loneliness, such a feeling of destitution such as being alone on an uninhabited desert, nothing in sight only a vast expanse of land. No one to go to, no one to talk to, no God to pray to, no Saviour to commune with, and no power to go.

Let me tell you dear ones, that I have been trying to go to Jesus ever since I found myself in a desert land. I have not succeeded in my efforts; I have failed miserably. All I have done seems to separate me farther and farther away from Him. I seem to be going in circles, not knowing whither I go.

But thanks be unto our God Who sends His Son to where we are. And He so kindly tells us that, "You cannot come to Me except the Father which sent Me, draw you."

I love the words "sent Me", and "draw Him." Now the scriptures have been written a long time. This scripture we are discussing has been written a long time, and we have probably read it many times, but it never did sound so good as it does right now.

No man can come to me. Oh yes, I know the truth of this language now. I have been trying to go to Jesus, but could not. Don't tell me I could have gone if I had tried hard enough, for I tried very hard. I hope the truth of this scripture has been revealed to me. And if it was, it was revealed while I was in the desert land.

I know now that you have been drawn to Jesus. I can't draw you to Him. You have to be drawn by the Father; there is no other way. "No man can come unto Me except by the Father which sent Me, draw Him." Such gracious words, and oh so true. Who is it that does the coming unto Him?

"All the Father hath given Me shall come unto Me." Yes, all the Father gave the Son shall come. Why? Because the Father draws Him. They would not, they could not come to Jesus were it not for the great drawing power of the Father. But God will draw all of them to Jesus, His only begotten Son.

Jesus says, "And he that cometh unto Me I will no wise cast out." You have to experience the truth before you believe it. It is easy for man to make great assertions about what they believe and what the scriptures teach, but do they know the meaning of the scriptures? Have they experienced the truth?

God draws His children to the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and Jesus is all of this to the child of God.

Jesus says, "I thank Thee, oh Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hidden these thing from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes."

So you see, the wise and prudent cannot by reading find the things that God has hidden from them. Neither would the babe know anything about Jesus unless it was revealed to him. But it seemed good in God's sight to do these things.

The only reason given for this is, because it seemed good in God's sight.

Please come to see us.

J. W. AND CLARA BARNES

OBITUARY

There is much sadness in our hearts as we try to write in memory of our dearly beloved pastor and moderator, Elder S. J. Priddy, who passed away suddenly and so peacefully of a heart attack in the early hours of Saturday morning February 9th, 1952, at his home in Princeton, W. Va. He had been in declining health for many years, but just the weekend before he passed away he attended his church at Crumpler, W. Va. His prayer that night was so tender and touching, and his preaching was with unusual power and sweetness, both Saturday night and Sunday.

For many years Elder Priddy has gone amongst the Baptist both far and near, preaching the true gospel of the son of God, declaring the whole counsel of God, not fearing the faces of men.

I have traveled many miles, and have never known him to compromise the truth, regardless of the opposition he met. In my early experience there was trouble in the association where we were a member, and he took a stand during the business session on Friday and Saturday in which he stood alone seemingly. When I arrived at the association on Sunday, (being absent Friday and Saturday) he was sitting off to one side alone in deep meditation. He seeing I had arrived called to me and after giving me his reason for the stand he had taken, and stated that if the church felt he had put their lives in jeopardy that he wanted no one to follow him. This impressed me very much. I realized then that he was willing to stand by his convictions, though he might be alone.

In all his many afflictions he was the most patient sufferer I have ever seen. He was so faithful to the cause, serving us when he had to walk on his crutches, unable to stand he would preach to us sitting in a chair. When he began having these heart attacks one after another, his doctor strictly forbid him going into the pulpit, but he continued to do so at every opportunity, though he never had an attack while preaching.

Elder Priddy was born in Stokes County, N. C. September 13, 1885, son of Snider and Martha Moorefield Priddy.

He united with the church in 1919, was first ordained a deacon, was licensed to speak in public in November 1922, then ordained to the full ministry of the gospel on Saturday before the second Sunday in April, 1923.

He was married to Miss Maggie Graham July 29, 1906, who has been a true companion both in the home, and in his work as a minister, encouraging him in the work at a great sacrifice to herself. He leaves his dear companion, two daughters, Mrs. Verna Shaw, Sophia, W. Va., Mrs. Nawasa Cratty who made her home with him, two grandsons and one granddaughter, also two sisters and one brother. Three brothers and two sisters having preceded him in death in the last two-and-one half years.

We want to say to our dear sister Priddy and family, the churches he served and to all who knew and loved him, may God give us grace and strength to be submissive and to know that God doeth all things well; that he is too wise to err and too merciful to be unkind.

The funeral services were so sweetly conducted the following Monday afternoon at Glenwood Park Church by Elders Golden Harris, J. P. Helms and W. G. Branch, with a host of sorrowing relatives, brethren, sisters and friends from far and near. His body was tenderly and lovingly laid to rest in Rest Haven Cemetery, Princeton, W. Va. there to sleep in Jesus that blessed sleep, until he comes in all his glory to claim his own.

Two that loved him for Christ sake we hope,

Lonnie and Rosa Hylton.

Written by request of sister Priddy.

I was favored with a personal acquaintance with Elder Priddy for nearly thirty years. A great man in Israel has fallen. May God's reconciling Grace be the lot of all who mourn his passing is our humble desire.

Editor

* * *

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Pa. Wednesday and Thursday June 4th and 5th, 1952. Services will begin at 10 o'clock D.S.T. Wednesday morning. A cordial invitation is extended to all ministers and brethren of our faith and order in fellowship with us, and all friends of our faith are welcome. Those arriving Tuesday either by bus or train at Philadelphia will transfer there to the Reading Terminal Depot and take train direct to Southampton, where they will be met. Those arriving Wednesday take train to Bethayres and there take bus to last stop in Southampton which is one fourth mile from Meeting-house. Come to my home next to the Meeting-house and you will be cared for.

CASPER G. FETTER, *Church Clerk.*
Southampton, Pa. Mar. 10, 1952.

* * *

The annual meeting of the Brookfield Old School Baptist Church of Slate Hill, Orange County, New York, will be held on Saturday, May 24, 1952, before the fourth Sunday of that month. The meeting will start at 10:30 A.M. daylight saving time. All members and friends are invited to attend at this historic old meeting house.

WILLIAM D. CHAPMAN, *Clerk.*

Important Notice

THE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC. has been changed from Annapolis, Md. to Box 1271 Danville, Virginia. Please send all remittances and communications there. EDITOR

EDITORIALS

"Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called."—Jude I.

It would indeed, my brethren, be a wonderful thing if we could all read this portion of Holy Writ and be satisfied with what we find there. All of our controversies have been over what the Bible *did not* say. Of one thing we may feel sure about. Jude is writing by the inspiration of God. That means that they were infallibly moved to pen what they wrote. If they could write *what they thought* or if they *could leave off* what they were being inspired to write, then it all is worthless to the church of God, for we would not have any way to know what was left off and what was added in. We hear a lot about a basis for reconciliation of warring brethren. This would prove all of the household of faith as to what sort they were. As it has always been, there would be imposters and spies, but, generally speaking, those that believe in the irresistible work of the Spirit in moving Bible writers to write, are able to say shibboleth, and are blessed to lap water like unto a dog.

Articles of faith are alright. An objection to them is evidence of leaning from what was formerly taught. Yet, even that can be wrought for the promulgation of false issues. It does seem that the church of the Lord Jesus Christ is on safe ground when they believe that the Scriptures are given by inspiration. If so (and it certainly is so) then let us examine what Jude had to say. If we believe in the canonicity of Jude, we must (and do) believe in the aggregation of his writing. A part here, then a part left off, and a third part put in is not, nor, indeed, can not be, acceptable. Now, my dear brethren if we

are satisfied in inspiration of the Bible and the canonicity of Jude we may, by the grace given us, delve into the riches of our text.

Jude is a servant of Jesus Christ. Unless we would be ready to accuse the Saviour of being less wise than men, we must conclude that there is unity and harmony among his servants. Paul and Peter and James all acknowledge their place of servitude to Christ. Paul makes mention at least six times in his letters that servitude to Christ is by the will of God. There would have been as much discord in the apostles time, between one that served, because it was the will of God, and one that served by his own choice, as there is now. It would be unthinkable that Jesus had two kinds of servants. Then Jude is a servant by the will of God. And there isn't any doubt but that in his preaching, as with the eminent Paul, he preached *only* Christ, and himself a servant for Jesus' sake.

The apostle wrote one short letter. While the letter was short, it was as widely addressed and sent as any letter has ever been. Unless we accuse Jesus of poorer management than men, we must conclude that the letter of Jude was not, nor has not, nor will not, be returned marked "whereabouts unknown" nor will it ever be "missent". These are self-evident truths. Knowing something about mail service, postal employees, maintenance of equipment, I am free to tell you that with very few exceptions everything is done to get the mail through. But with all the efficiency that we have in the service, we do have inefficient employees. Letters go astray and are never accounted for; many are returned unclaimed because the whereabouts of the addressee is unknown. But our heavenly Father surely did design and devised in eternity to send forth his truth to his chosen people. The apostle has given the correct names of those that he was writing to. Will they get the message? If the addressee is correctly named they will. It is to those that are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called.

'Sanctified by God, the Father' is believed (by profession) by every kind of Primitive Baptist in America. There is not a body of Baptists, claiming to be Primitive, in America but what does, or has in time, carried the choice of God's people in Christ before the foundation of the world, as one of their basic articles of faith. According to the wording of what men have believed in the past and, incidentally, what the church still believes, this election was of God in every sense of the word. It is absurd to say that man was active in the election. Furthermore, reasoning from a scriptural standpoint, we know that God did not elect because of foreseen merit in the one chosen. This sanctification is equal and synonymous with the election of God the Father. In the Scriptures when a sanctification takes place it is a separation and setting apart. That is the primary meaning of the root word as well as all the derivatives. God set you a part, dear brethren, according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world was founded. The manifestation in time of this separation and setting a part, undoubtedly was according to his purpose and grace. If not, God is not in one mind, reason how we may. The doctrine that God is in one mind is too precious to the poor and afflicted children of God for us to spend time trying to convince men and women that it is so. It is still true, as it was true in the apostle's day, that the children of God must be taught by revelation. The church has been taught by experience the separation or setting a part in the mind and purpose of God. They have, as led and guided into the

way of truth, felt the separating hand of God. Not one of my readers (that know the truth) that intended at all to be separated from the world with which they were in love. Not one of them intended to be purged from their dead works to serve the living God (Heb. 9:14). Not one of them knew God, and knowing him not, certainly intended not to follow his Son Jesus Christ. But that that God determined to do in eternity, was manifested in time, and they all, one by one, and that all the way by grace, have been separated from that that they intended not to be.

'Preserved in Christ Jesus' means just what the words mean. By God's amazing grace and providence, I have been blessed to set under the sound of nearly all brethren that preach salvation by grace for time and eternity. I have not at any time, heard the first one of them that preached any more than what Jude preached in this letter. Ah, dear ones, have you felt *your* buildings all slipping on sinking sand; have you been shown that all of your works are as filthy rags?; have you been brought before the angel of His presence with every shred of your garment filthy? have you been bound by he that spoiled all of your goods? and had, instead of the sweet smelling odors of myrrh (S.S. 5:5), the odors of your spoiled rotten fleshly works to overwhelm you day by day? If you have felt these things, happy indeed art thou poor pilgrim, for the Lord has been gracious and has shown, and will continue to show, that there is not, nor can not be, any preservation in you. What a blessing it is to know this. The Lord alone prepares his people to know that their preservation is in Jesus Christ.

The Old Order of Baptists have always believed in the preservation of the saints in Christ Jesus. Their minutes have almost universally had inserted in them as a tenet of faith that the saints were preserved in Christ Jesus and that they would not fall away. It has slipped into the camps of Israel that this does not actually mean what it says. How grand it is to be accorded the blessing of an experience that is in corroboration with the Scriptures. Then, instead of denying that righteousness that is of the Lord, we poor sinners are brought into unity and harmony with that righteousness, and are blessed to tell the truth as well as to know the truth. In some places there has been a tendency to say that God's people persevere in grace. In all the Bible there is not any mention of a kind of grace that a sinner *can* be active in, in order to receive. This would not be grace at all. Any thing that must be earned in order to have, is not grace at all. If perseverance in grace is necessary in order to be preserved in Christ Jesus Christ, then, I say, to my horror and utter dissatisfaction, that salvation (if it be called salvation) is an after thought with God, and such a far fetched after thought that he will keep thinking *maybe* and *perhaps* it will be so after enough perseverance of the creature. There is a tendency to limit this preservation to purpose and birth and the resurrection. This kind of doctrine is the shell without the kernel. It lays claim for surety in election or choice; it lays claim for the sovereign work of God in bringing to birth of all his children; it lays claim to the final resurrection of all those thus elected. Just one thing lacking in that flimsy doctrine. We do not have anything to preach for time. There is (not a weak link, but) a missing link in such a travesty. The substance of this kind of preservation is that God elects and brings to birth. From that time until death it is 'root pig or die poor'. You may think I am trite, and you may think that my illustration is backwoodsy, but I tell you dear child of God, that it expresses clearly the preserva-

tion of the creature. I am not sent (if I am sent) to preach such a monstrosity as the gospel. But my experience as concerning my call to the ministry is to preach that preservation that is in Jesus Christ both for time (that is, after birth) and eternity. Paul prayed that God not only sanctify us wholly, but that we be preserved blameless in soul and body and spirit unto the coming of the Lord (I Tes. 5:23), and exactly the same word is used in regard to time that is sometimes said to regard only election and in each case it means to keep. However, I want it understood that when God keeps us or tells us to keep ourselves, that it all amounts to the same thing. If God's dear children can not do anything without Christ, there is not any way for any glory to be given the creature for doing that that he can not do without Jesus. This subject is too grand and glorious for one article, for in it is that travel from birth to our departure from this thorny and rocky vale.

The 'calling' of our text is as irrevocable as the being sanctified by God the Father or the preservation in Jesus Christ. Each of the three things are coextensive with the other. Whoever that was covered in the sanctification was equally covered in the preservation, and those covered by both were equally covered by the calling. As sure as the sanctification is, just that sure the preservation reaches to each one that is sanctified. And the beauty of the whole is that God calls them by his Spirit. O, brethren, how could you ever preach anything short of the divine and eternal sovereignty of an allwise and eternal God? Would you limit the Holy One of Israel? Is he supreme in choice, having sovereignly elected or set a part a definite portion of Adam's race before they existed, only to turn them over to their fallen selves to keep in time? Has he, after sanctifying and preserving in Christ Jesus, *called at* them in time? No, he certainly has not worked at cross purposes to his eternal purpose and mind when he purposed in Jesus Christ before the beginning of time. But he has done in time what he purposed in eternity to do. He purposed to save those that he elected, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. Primitive Baptists have been noted for their firm tenacity to the doctrine of the effectual calling that is of God. If you will search our minutes that are available (which can be had for at least one hundred fifty years) you will find that all associations in America *have in the past* held to that as a fundamental doctrine. Has it grown obsolete? Has the truth grown stale? Is it still the truth, but unsafe and unprofitable to preach openly? No, brethren it has not. Old Baptists still believe that God elected in eternity based entirely upon his own will; that all thus elected were elected in Jesus Christ, and that all of them are preserved in him; that all thus elected and preserved are called in him, but that it is made effectually manifested to every heir in time.

This saving and this calling is manifested in time. Both of them are holy. Both of them are according to his own purpose and grace. One is as far reaching as the other. In no sense of the word has there been any failure in either. Not once has the calling come short of the saving. And all that we are, and our life in the flesh, and our portion and lot in the church, and our hanging around the sheep fold for crumbs, and our hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and our home in heaven, all, all, are based upon the precious fact that we were sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called.

W. D. G.

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EDITORIAL

"And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep. And said unto me, 'What seest thou?' And I said, 'I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon top thereof, and two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl and the other upon the left side thereof.' "

I've been asked to write and give my views on the above scripture, and as Peter said to the eleemosynary, "whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; Who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked an alms. Then Peter said, 'Such as I have give I thee.' " So, such as I have, I'll try to impart in such a away as to be of some comfort, and instruction to those who may read. It is a great blessing to gather gleanings which the Lord commands thee to let fall on purpose for us, and we feel willing to write such thoughts as we have in reply to the request of our brother. There is one thing that marres our enjoyment in speaking or writing upon the scriptures, and that is our want of understanding and comprehension of what they contain.

We have in this scripture for our consideration, the angel, the candlestick with a bowl upon the top of it, the seven lamps, the seven pipes to the seven lamps and two olive trees by it. We desire to comment briefly upon each of these in their order.

"And the angel that talked with me came again and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep." Of the many things that the Prophet was blessed to see in his vision or visions, it does not appear that it was one of uninterruption, without intervals. The angel came again, signifying that he had been there before. Whether this interval was one hour or one month we do not know, but evidently there was a period of time that intervened.

In order that I might convey in some way this lapse of time, I feel to relate an experience I had while in bed during my recent illness. For six weeks I lay in bed seemingly not mindful of the kind hand that delivered me from an attack, from which I understand few survive. I was blessed to go back to the last text I used the 5th Sunday in September at the Greensboro church in North Carolina. I had some thoughts that I had never had before, and saw things that I had never seen before, and to add to the enjoyment of what I felt and saw, my wife in another part of the house began singing that good old Hymn, "Amazing Grace How Sweet The Sound." This brought tears to my

eyes, and I felt that I had been awakened as a man out of sleep to see things not seen before. The only reason I know that I didn't see all of this at the same time is, that our minds are capable of receiving and retaining just so much. God knows how much to give so that nothing be lost. Often, after speaking, I am blessed to go over my text, and many times I wonder why I didn't think to say things at the time I was speaking, that I thought of after.

It is superfluous to say that the angel is none other than the Son of God, Who appeared many times to the patriarchs and prophets in the likeness of a man or angel. He came again to Zechariah to awake him out of his prophetic trance, or state of dormancy in which he was for some period of time. This brings us to consider the first thing that he saw.

The angel asked the prophet what he saw. "And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold with a bowl upon the top of it." In the first chapter of Revelation, we read that John, while on the Isle called Patmos, heard a voice speaking to him, and he said, "I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks." In the 20th verse of this chapter we find that the voice that John turned to see, said unto him, "That the seven golden candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches." Evidently then, the candlestick that the prophet saw, represents the church of God.

This candlestick was all of gold, that is, it was not of many metals, such as bronze, copper, tin or zinc, but of one metal. To the Ephesian brethren Paul said, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in you all." To the Apostles Jesus said, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me." Jesus didn't address them as many hearts, but as one heart. The church of God is not composed of many hopes, many spirits, and many faiths, but there is a oneness in the church, as there is a oneness in the trinity. This is because there is one teacher, one Father, and one God. The candlestick represents both the legal and gospel church, because the bowl on top of it represents Jesus, Who is the head of the church, and Whom everything that is necessary for the church is treasured.

The bowl upon the top of the candlestick, and from it issued the oil that was necessary to supply the lamps and cause them to give light. All that these lamps needed was in that bowl, so everything the church needs is in Christ, Who is the head of the church, and in Whom it has pleased the Father that all fullness dwell. Paul says to the Colossians, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." From the head of our physical body flows the marrow down the spinal column to feed and supply the cavities of the bone, and nerves of the body. So does the Spirit from the head of the church, flow to and through each member of His body, to supply everything that each individual member of the body needs. This oil is collected in the bowl, which to my mind represents Jesus, the mediator, through Whom alone all grace and mercy descends to His church. And Paul says, "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. That according as it is written, He that glorieth,

let him glory in the Lord." First Cor. 1-30 and 31. In Him Who is the head of the church, is every gift and qualification that the church, or individual stands in need of.

From this bowl upon the top of the candlestick flows the oil through the seven pipes, to seven lamps. These lamps represent the gospel minister, just as the seven stars held in the right hand of Him Who stood in the midst of the golden candlesticks; represents the angels of the seven churches which are in Asia. Regardless of what we think our needs may be, the seven is a complete number, and is sufficient. The seven pipes signify the means or manner in which the Spirit, wisdom and knowledge of the gospel is communicated to the ministery. Paul said, "The gospel that he received and preached was not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Men may study the Bible and commentaries and learn to preach the letter of the word, but they will never know anything about the gospel of God our Saviour, by such means. These pipes have a direct connection with the lamp, and John saw these lamps, or lights, as stars in the hand of Him whose voice was as the sound of many waters. John was commanded by this voice to write the things which he saw, not the things he had heard about or read about. As a preface to the command of Jesus to His disciples to go and preach, He first showed His authority by saying, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." No man therefore, has the right to preach anything that he has not received direct from Him, Who is the head of the church. Jesus is the great mediator, through Whom all wisdom, understanding, grace and mercy descends, not only to those who are to be ministers, but to every member composing His body.

"And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl and the other upon the left side thereof." These olive trees represent the fountain head, or source, from which all divine mercy and grace flows through His Son, not only to the church under the law, but also under the gospel dispensation. If God is the God of all grace as Peter says He is, then there is no grace but that which is of God. God is said to be the fountain of living waters, Jeremiah 2:13. Fountains are said to be living when they are sending forth their refreshing streams to satisfy the thirsty. God through His Son, is ever feeding the hungry, and supplying the needs of His people in the dispensing in their behalf, His kind providence and grace. On one side is the Father and on the other side is the Son, and Jesus says that, "I and my Father are one." John 10:30. From these two flow the fullness of God into the head of the church, represented by the bowl on top of the candlestick. "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one." The Father and Son are separate only in their respective offices, but not in essence, glory and power, for in these all three are one. Let us also consider the two olive branches mentioned in the twelfth verse of this chapter, and what they represent is recorded in the fourteenth verse.

"Then answered I, and said unto him, 'What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick

and upon the left side thereof?" And I answered again and said unto him, 'What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves?' And he answered me and said, 'Knowest thou not what these be?' And I said, 'No, my Lord.' The said he, 'These are the two Annointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.'" Notice that before the angel replied to the prophet's question about the two olive trees, he asked again, "What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves?"

Then said he, "These are the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." These two anointed ones are Zerubbabel who is a type of our spiritual Zerubbabel, and King of Kings, and Joshua a type of the great High Priest over the house of God. In neither Zerubbabel nor in Joshua, could both King and Priest come together under one head, as it does in the Lord Jesus Christ. He is both King and Priest.

If Zerubbabel was not King at that time, he was the son of Jehoiachim, who was King of Judah, who died in Babylon leaving the right of the crown to his son, Zerubbabel. Therefore we feel that Zerubbabel was a lively type of the Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Kingdom which He said was not of this world. This Kingdom of His extends to men and angels; for He is the head of all principality and powers, and all things visible or invisible. The golden oil that was emptied out of the two olive branches typifies the unalterable and immutable government, of the Kingdom which was given Him of His Father; and of the increase and peace of which there shall be no end. John saw Him as King on the Isle of Patmos. "And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of Man; and His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength." This assures the subjects of this Kingdom that, "The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God, thy glory." The inhabitants of this Kingdom are righteous people, therefore the judgements and laws of that Kingdom that is not of this world, must be that of right and administered by a righteous King, with divine power. The golden oil being emptied, signifies the administering of the laws and ordinances of the Kingdom of God. "Behold a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgement." Isaiah 32:1. Christ was appointed King by His Father, Who said, "I have set My King upon My holy Hill of Zion." Psalms 2:6. Isaiah says of this person, "The Lord is our judge; the Lord is our lawgiver; the Lord is our King; He will save us." From His hand went the fiery law and oracles of God; to rule, and to instruct the church in the wilderness. He appeared to them as an angel, or in form of man. From Him goes this golden oil, (the true teaching and instructions to the subjects of the Kingdom His Father appointed unto Him).

The other anointed one that stood by the Lord of the whole earth, is Joshua, who was priest, and a type of Jesus Who was also appointed by God the Father to this office. We read in 110th Psalm fourth verse, that, "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." The mercy and blessings that come to the church, from Him as Priest over the house of God, is typified by the oil of the olive branch. This oil also signifies the inviolate, sanctity and immutability of the promise and word of God, "Thou art a priest forever

after the order of Melchizedek." God chose the priests the sons of Levi to minister unto Him, and bless in the name of the Lord. The High Priest of our profession appeared to Jacob in the form of a man, and wrestled with him until the breaking of the day."And he said, 'Let me go for the day breaketh.' And he said, 'I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.'" May God grant that we be as earnest and tenacious in our supplications, and as humble in our petitions as Jacob was. This High Priest not only listens to our petitions, but is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. "For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." This is the only way that one can sympathize with the other, is by experiencing the same thing, or practical knowledge gained by living through the same suffering and daily events. It is good to know that there is one to give ear, and to harken to our petitions. I might be standing by a well, and to my knowledge it is full of water, but if I have no access to the water in the well, my knowledge that it is there will not satify my thirst; but if I can receive one sip of that water it will do more to quinch my thirst than just knowing that there is plenty of water in the well to which I have no access.

Paul tells us that, "God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, Whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds." No other person has ever been heir of all things. Therefore, no one else can dispense to the people of God, the things that they stand in need of, because these things are treasured up in the Son of God, and it is His to bestow all blessings upon the subjects of grace. And one day these blessed people will hear that blessed voice say, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matthew 25:34. This will be good news to those who are persecuted, but not foresaken; cast down but not destroyed.

We may not be able to comprehend this vision as a whole; for the angel didn't answer all the questions asked by the prophet. But though the particulars are hard to understand, yet the general meaning has, I hope, been given in such a way as to shed some light of truth upon the subject.

H. O. NASH

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EXTREMES.

Of late, more than for several years past, the word "extremes" has appeared in the writings of many of our brethren in different parts of the country, and in the sense in which it is used, almost invariably carries with it the suggestion of overreaching. Some say we should, in our presentation of truth, avoid extremes, but give us no just reason for doing so. We have had some meditation upon this subject, and have carefully examined the word "extreme," and our conclusion is that grave and disastrous mistakes occur in trying to make the doctrine of God our Savior appear smooth, plausible and attractive to all classes, both in and out of the church. Not since 1832 has the church of Jesus Christ had as many "feeble," "lame," "sick" or unestablished ones to trouble her as at the present time. Is it because "extremes" have almost ceased to be preached? Think seriously upon this question, brethren.

Some young men, within the last few years, have united with the Old Baptist Church in different parts of the country.

They were zealous; manifested what was thought a gift to preach; were ordained; labored far and near; were never considered "extremists"; pleased many; after awhile indulged in exhortation to the young to follow Christ and consecrate their lives to the Master's cause; later were found holding protracted meetings, singing pathetic songs and gathering in many young, giddy people. These men became high-minded, thought Old Baptists were slow and should be stirred up to be more progressive, and advised that they have a supreme council to adjust all matters of difference in churches which could not be settled at home; they also said that the commission to preach the gospel to all nations was given to the church, therefore the church should send the gospel to alien sinners. These men continued for awhile, but are now with the New School Baptists, some of them having been rebaptized and reordained, thereby absolutely renouncing the Old Baptists as the church of Jesus Christ.

Just here, brethren, let us all engage in a little sober thought. Why is all this? We answer, Because "extremes" were avoided. These men, and many others who have gone to their own place, as Judas did, were never established in the doctrine of free, unmerited grace, effectual calling and justification by faith; had they been, "the gates of hell" could not have prevailed against them. In the face of these undisputed facts, will the ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ continue to oppose and avoid "extremes"? The word "extreme" simply means: "utmost point; edge, or border; outer-most; greatest; highest." Therefore it does not signify beyond bounds or without authority. Consequently to "go to extremes" in preaching the gospel does not mean to get beyond the truth of God; and since it has no such meaning why should any mortal saved according to the foreknowledge, predestination and grace of God object to "extremes"?

We shall now try the word "extreme" in connection with some points of the doctrine of God. Peter uses the expression, "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." We shall therefore take up the doctrine of foreknowledge first. Do we, as a people, believe it? All answer, Yes. To what extent do we believe it? as regards the salvation of the church only? or do we believe that it embraces all things in eternity and time, even the thoughts of men? David said, "Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; thou understandest my thought afar off." This is very minute; it is an extreme. Do we believe it? If so, why not preach it? Do we believe in predestination of all things? O yes, is the answer. What term of language then is too strong to use in setting it forth? Some one replies, The term absolute predestination of all things is too strong. This is another extreme. If God did predestinate all things, surely it is absolute predestination, and absolutely sure to come to pass as predestinated; but if he did not predestinate all things, whatever is not predestinated happens by chance only, and God is not in it at all, either in purpose or decree. The wisdom of all the world could not make it appear otherwise. Paul said, He "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." This is another extreme. If any one thing is not included in this declaration, Paul was mistaken. Why credit, therefore, anything he said? since he might be mistaken in all that he said. Again, in Romans viii. 28, we read, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." Some say this text refers only to the sorrows and temptations in the lives of God's children, that their faith may be tried;

others say it refers to the things of salvation only. The epistle to the church at Rome is one letter, and in it the apostle clearly and definitely sets forth sin through the disobedience of Adam; the reign of sin unto death; that those brethren had been the servants of sin, and he thanked God that it was so; the weakness of the law through the flesh, and the utter inability of man to lift himself above the law of sin and death. All these things, and many others are embraced in the text: "All things work together for good." Together does not mean apart or separate; as one link of a chain supports and strengthens another, and many make the chain, so Paul said, "All things work together for good"; the disobedience of Adam and the reign of sin, as well as the obedience of Christ that grace might reign through righteousness. If we believe Christ's testimony, is it wrong to use terms of speech which set forth the "utmost points" of the predestination and sovereignty of God? If the Bible teaches special atonement, which unquestionably it does, is there any language too extreme which declares that truth? If "by grace ye are saved" be true, can it be declared by the servants of God in terms too positive? If not, why not employ plain, positive language to set forth the doctrine in the extreme, that no one mistake our meaning? How would it do to say Paul went to an extreme when he said, By grace ye are saved? No term could be more so, and carries with it power and positiveness which men or angels cannot refute. In reaching this point the apostle presents the doctrine of foreknowledge, election, predestination, redemption, resurrection of Christ and adoption to show his authority for the extreme language: "By grace are ye saved," in which short sentence is cut off every idea or avenue to salvation by creature works. The same authority abides for each servant of God and for the faith of the election of grace. Salvation, and all that brought it about, and all that pertains to it, is according to God's eternal purpose; no language therefore can be employed which is too positive, in declaring the counsel of God. The children need to be instructed in every point of doctrine; the fathers and mothers in Israel need to be reminded if established, and if not established they need to be instructed also. One of the qualifications of an Elder or Bishop is, "apt to teach." To impart knowledge it is necessary to be clear in expression, using such words as can easily be comprehended, and as few of them as possible to convey the thought in the mind of the instructor. We have no thought of suggesting by anything we have herein said, that the ministers of Christ should be railers, or abusive of other denominations, but to the contrary, to be gentle, kind and considerate.

* * * *

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT IN MEMORY OF BROTHER H. F. AKERS

WHEREAS—

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our dearly beloved brother, Deacon H. F. Akers whose death occurred January 4th, 1952.

We bow in humble submission to the Mighty Hand of Almighty God, for it is the Lord who giveth and the Lord taketh away—Blessed be the name of the Lord!

Brother Akers united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Roanoke August 20th, 1922, by letter from Greasy Creek Church of Floyd County and was ordained Deacon November 5th, 1922.

Brother Akers was a most excellent Deacon and it will be hard to fill his place. He was always to be found at his church conference and meetings. He

professed an abiding love for the church and its cause, and was vigilant and diligent in his endeavors to maintain its doctrine, order and discipline.

We shall greatly miss our brother in our meetings and church conference but while we shall greatly miss him, we know that our loss is his eternal gain. We shall always cherish his memory in our hearts.

Done by order of the church in Church Conference February 2, 1952.

ELDER LANDON HARRIS, *Moderator*
FRANK G. HOLCOMB, *Clerk*

* * * *

Obituaries

MRS. DAVID A. GEORGE passed away at a ripe old age, in the 86th year of her life, after a short illness.

She is survived by several children and grandchildren.

Her membership was with Flat Shoals Primitive Baptist Church, in Henry County, Georgia. She was a member for sixty-six years and attended her meetings regularly. Her burial was on the regular meeting day, in the church cemetery.

The funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder J. C. Hewett and Elder W. F. Burford, her former pastor.

Elders Tom Huff and J. R. Chandler were also present.

We feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord. Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.

May God's richest blessings abide with all who were near and dear to her, and may it please our heavenly Father that we meet again in the world that knows no end.

MRS. MALINDA STOVER SPEER, at the age of ninety-one years, three months and fifteen days passed away at the home of her daughter, Mrs. J. W. Bowen at Tinsman, Arkansas, on April 18th, 1951. She was born near Holly Springs, Miss., and at the age of three months her parents moved to Fordyce, Arkansas, and she lived there until grown and was married in the yar 1881 to the late James A. Speer. She moved to Calhoun County near where the town of Tinsman now is, in which vicinity she lived all the remainder of her life after her marriage. From the time of her marriage she lived near Whitewater Primitive Baptist Church, in South Arkansas Association, and was a regular and consistent attendant, when not providentially hindered, at Whitewater church during all her life in that vicinity. The home of she and her late husband, who predeceased her, was a welcome home to all Old Baptist visiting Whitewater church and their vicinity and they had the privilege and pleasure of entertaining many of the brethren during their married life They did so greatly enjoy the Old Baptist visiting in their home. And after the death of her husband her home with her daughter where she had lived for the past sixteen years was a welcome home to all the Old Baptist and still is. Except for the last few months of her life, she had been able to continue to go to meeting at Whitewater church fairly regular. Up to shortly before her death she was very active and alert for a person of her age. She made manifest that she was given to feast and rejoice when hearing the doctrine of God our Saviour preached.

Aunt Lindy, as we called her, was not a member of the visible church, but the evidence was that she loved the Old Baptist and the doctrine they believe and proclaim and contend for. She was a firm believer in a Sovereign God, Salvation by Grace and a Risen Christ. Her hope was in God's Grace applied through His Son Jesus Christ.

She left surviving her two daughters, Mrs. J. S. Young of Hampton, Arkansas, Mrs. J. W. Bowen of Tinsman, Arkansas, thirteen grandchildren, thirty-two great grandchildren and five great, great grandchildren to mourn her passing.

The funeral was conducted by the writer and Licentiate B. S. McManus, at Whitewater Church. Burial was in the Watson Cemetery at Whitewater Church where her remains were interred beside that of her husband to await that glorious resurrection when it is our hope her body will be raised in His glorified image. May God's blessings be with those who mourn.

W. A. SPEER

MRS. ETTA J. LASSITER was born August 26, 1859 in Miller County, Missouri and died January 19, 1952. She married Archie C. Lassiter in 1878 in Puryer, Tennessee and moved to Weiser, Idaho in 1900 where she

resided until 1936. She had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for 71 years. The survivors are her daughter, Mrs. Jewell McClure of LeGrande, Oregon and a brother, Mr. Manly Brizendine of Portland. Grandchildren are Mrs. Newel Clifford of Weiser, Mrs. Iona VanSickle of Seattle, Thomas Lassiter of Seattle, Mrs. Orval Sailer of LeGrande, Mrs. Leonard Kelly of The Dalles and Mrs. Delmer Olson of Hermiston and fourteen great grandchildren. She passed away at a hospital in LeGrande where she had been taken a few weeks before. She had lived for many years with her daughter who had so faithfully cared for her and made a way for her to go to church whenever possible. Her funeral was held at Weiser, Idaho, January 22, with Elder R. R. Wolf officiating. He spoke of her faith and hope which had been given her by her Master so many years ago and which was an anchor to her soul so often in life. She loved the church and was always present whenever it was possible. She loved to talk on the scriptures. She had read Hassells church history and was well informed on the fundamentals of the church. May her faithfulness be an inspiration and example to all of us. She wanted no praise for herself but only wanted to praise her Saviour who had done so much for her. She had been a reader of the Signs of the Times for 75 years which fact alone speaks for her faith.

She was a member of the Salem Baptist Church at Weiser, Idaho. She united with that church in August 1900 by letter from the Zion church in Grove County, Kentucky. We will miss her greatly but feel to know she is at rest with her Saviour. May God richly bless the sorrowing family.

Mrs. A. L. Tunridge, C. C.

MRS. ROSA E. AUSTIN, of Chantilly, Virginia, departed this life suddenly on January 9, 1952, aged 74. In 1917 she and her husband came from Baywood, in southwest Virginia, and resided within the bounds of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting. She showed her interest in the church by her oft attendance of the meetings.

Mrs. Austin was a daughter of the late Calvin and Margaret Murphy, of near Galax, Va. and was married to John H. Austin in 1906. She is survived by the following children: Charles W. Austin, Alexandria, Virginia; Mrs. Vera Ashbahian, Annondale, Va.; and Mrs. Verda Brown, Annondale, Va. and also one sister, Mrs. Jones Kirk, Greely, Colo.

Funeral services were conducted at Frying Pan Church by Elderr J. D. Wood, and interment was made in the National Memorial Park, Falls Church, Va.

John D. Wood

SISTER LAURA VIOLA MORGAN was born in Brantley, Alabama September 13th, 1872. Was living in Panama City, Florida at the time of her passing, which was January 9th, 1951. Funeral services were conducted at Brake funeral parlors, by the writer in the presence of the heartbroken family and a host of neighbors and friends, the music was rendered very softly and touching, truly appropriate for such sad occasion, the floral offerings were immense, and each petal of every flower seemed to express the love and admiration, and high esteem in which this saintly Mother was held by the donors. The writer read the 23rd Psalm and also the 54th verse of 1st Corinthians, and confirmed his reasonings to the same, in an endeavor to comfort the bereaved, reiterating briefly the great change from corruption to incorruption, and from mortal to immortality and also spoke assuringly of that monster death being swallowed in a glorious victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The service in the parlors being over, she was carried to Greenwood Cemetery where her body was committed to the tomb there to await the coming of her blessed Lord, peace to her precious memory, and to all the bereaved go my sincere sympathy.

Written at the request of her son, Mr. Mack Morgan, Panama City, Florida.

Elder F. A. Collins
Hartford, Alabama

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Whereas God in his infinite wisdom and mercy has removed from our midst our beloved pastor, Elder S. J. Priddy, and

who has been so faithful in ssrving us these

Whereas Glenwood Park church feels deeply her loss in the passing of our beloved pastor many years, be it therefore resolved;

That we bow in humble submission to His holy will and express our belief that our loss is his eternal gain, and be it resolved;

That this tribute to his memory be written in Glenwood Park church book, and copies be sent to the Signs of the Times, and the Old Faith Contender for publication.

Done by order of the church Saturday night, February 16th, 1952.

Elder John Martin, Moderator Protem.
L. B. Hylton, Church Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 120 ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND, JUNE, 1952 No. 6

"PREACHERS CONFUSED ME"

By

Hubert T. Faulk
325 West Missouri Street,
El Paso, Texas.

The principal character in this narrative could be any one of the millions of people who have lived and died since man first appeared on earth. Though the related events and experience supposedly occurred in modern times, the fact that God is unchangeable and there are now and always have been two theories concerning the eternal salvation of man, the experiences told herein might have occurred at any time in the history of mankind, beginning with Cain and Abel. Perhaps the use of the expression two theories concerning the eternal salvation of man is not exactly a correct statement. Rather it should be said that from eternity God has had a purpose concerning man's eternal salvation and man has had a theory.

The character relating this experience has no name. He is just an ordinary person of average intelligence. He is a student and an avid reader, seeking knowledge both from the written and spoken word. But let him tell it.

My father and mother were church members and faithful in attendance. From my earliest recollection until I was old enough to begin to go places without my parents accompanying me, I was carried to church by my parents. After I was old enough to go places by myself I went to church for quite some time through force of habit. I had been reared to go to church. From early childhood I believed there was a God just as a believed as a child that there were "boogers." I had heard my father's preacher talk about God and I had heard other grown people say there were "boogers" that would get naughty children. I had no particular reason to doubt either of them but had I been pressed for a reason for my belief I could have furnished none except what I had heard from others who were no wiser than I.

In the course of time and according to the laws of Nature I grew older in years, larger in physique and my reasoning powers became stronger. Likewise, I ranged farther from home and from the church of my parents. I strayed into the churches within my range. Until I went into another church and observed its services, it had never particularly occurred to me that the services at the church of my parents was very simple and lacking in many of the details that appeal to people. I had never been particularly impressed with the preaching at my parents' church. I was not sure whether it was because the preaching was of poor quality or because I just did not understand it. At any rate I began to vary the monotony of going to their church by going to other churches. My very first adventure took me to a church where, though no one was prohibited from singing, there was a select group trained to sing the songs for the service. It was really nice and impressive. The sermon delivered on that occasion was so different. It was easily understood. The preacher made it so plain that I could not see why any person could afford to take a chance on going to hell when it was so easy to go to heaven. I wondered why my father's

preachers could not make it that plain. God had a son, Christ Jesus, who gave his life that sinners might be saved. This same Jesus is in heaven to which he arose when he came from the tomb to assure us of a resurrection of the dead. He is ever knocking at the door of sinners' hearts, ready to save them if they will only accept. What more could one want than to just be able to accept Christ and be saved. Of course, the preacher stressed the propriety of the new convert being baptized, though not urging it as a necessity. He characterized baptism as symbolic of our Saviour's burial and example set by Christ which we should emulate.

Before too long, my curiosity took me to another and different church. The simplicity of the services reminded me of father's church. There was no organ and no choir. However, the songs had a different measure and a different meaning to those we heard in the church of my parents. The preacher was really a smart man. He quoted more scripture than any preacher I had yet heard. He had a different plan of salvation to offer; different than I had heard before. He said that the sinner must repent and be baptized into the church in order to attain unto eternal life, and even then unless the convert continued in his good works and exemplary conduct, he could lose all he had gained by being baptized. I went away from the services glad that I had gone. I had something to think upon.

After attending my parents' church another time or two I again went in quest of more light on this thing of salvation. I attended a service at which the minister talked in either an unknown tongue or in a foreign language. At any rate I do not know yet what he said. I noticed as the people came into the service or into the church, they would make gestures and motions. I noticed numerous pictures and statues in the building. After I had left the service I talked with one person whom I took to be a member. I learned from him that unless one were a member of that church he would never see heaven or immortal glory unless perchance he had a relative in that church who could and would get one of their ministers to make intercession for the soul of the non-member. I did not see any Bible as I had seen in the other churches I had visited. Going to this service actually gave me a creepy feeling. I wondered if the members of that church really knew what had taken place while we were there.

For a few months I was content to go back to the church of my parents. Though I did not understand the theme of the preacher's discourses, and the service was actually dull, I felt that I owed my parents the respect to go to their services. Before long though, I decided to go elsewhere for a change and attended another and different service to anything I had attended before. The choir came out in robes and sang to the music of a huge organ. Finally the preacher came out in a robe. Over at my parents' church I had heard the preacher mention "predestination" several times. At this service the minister touched on "predestination" by saying that for hundreds of years his denomination had believed and preached predestination but recently, by act of one of their conventions or associations, had voted "Predestination" out of their articles of faith. He said too, that for hundreds of years his church had believed in baptism by immersion but had dropped the practice for that of sprinkling as a mode of baptism. In short, it seemed to me that his church had done a good job of stream-lining itself.

After these experiences I began to

read something of the history of religious denominations and occasionally checked on some of the theories advanced by reading the Bible. But really, the Bible was of little help to me. I also read much on the so-called theory of evolution. All the time my confusion became greater and the greater my confusion the more I went about listening to smart men talk, hoping to get some settled opinion of my own. I dropped in on services one day at a church where I had not been before. The music was sweet and the singing was fine. It seemed that at least thousands of dollars must have been dropped into the collection plates following a plea from the minister for money to support the church's missionary in some foreign country. Singing, announcements and the collection took up most of the time and the sermon was short. It was an impassioned plea for sinners to repent, have faith and accept Christ as their personal saviour, and unite with the church. This preacher, more than any of the others, stressed the work that the sinner must perform in order to attain unto eternal salvation which Christ had provided for all who would accept it. I learned from one of the members after services, that the mode of baptism practiced in this church was that of sprinkling.

From all the preachers I had heard thus far, I assumed that God would tolerate a certain amount of sin even among those who had been saved. But now I find myself attending a service in a rather simple, poorly furnished meeting place, which so far as the simplicity of the building itself was concerned, reminded me of my parents' church building. However, that was as far as the resemblance went. There was much singing and more praying. Too, there was quite a bit of shouting and testimony as to what the Lord had done for the testifying members. I learned from this preacher's discourse that one who sins cannot hope to go home to eternal glory on departing this life.

This last service brought to a total of seven different denominations whose services I had attended over a given period of time. Up to this time I had not given any thought to the question of how many religious denominations there are in this country. But having gone into the meeting places of seven different ones, six of whom used the same Bible and one of which used no Bible so far as I could tell, and having heard what they called the gospel of Jesus Christ expounded in seven different ways, I concluded that I would make some investigation as to how many more denominations there might be so I would have a better idea as to how long it would take me to get around to hearing all of them. I consulted the authorities in the public libraries and my encyclopedia on this question. To my amazement I learned that there are two hundred fifty five so-called Protestant denominations and the Roman Catholic Church. My hopes of being able to hear a preacher from each denomination before making up my mind on just where I would cast the lot of my soul to insure its ultimate salvation, were dashed to pieces by this information. I then and there concluded that my time would be better spent by research and reading than it would be in the elusive search for the right church. So, to reading and meditation I dedicated my spare time.

I first turned to the theory of evolution advanced by some of our smart men; the theory that man was not created as the Bible teaches, but evolved from a minute cell, first as an animal of some kind, which by environment and by the laws of necessity, developed and progressed through thousands of

years into a man. This is such a deep subject that one is compelled to explore many other possibilities, probabilities and angles. Exploration of the subject posed many questions not necessary to be repeated here or answered here. But one serious question does seem to call for an answer from the smart men. How do you account for the "cell" from which man evolved, if in fact man evolved from a minute cell rather than from the creative act of God? If you answer that the cell was created, then might you not be mistaken as to man not being created as the Bible teaches? If you answer that you do not know and cannot account for the existence of the cell from which man evolved, then might we not be justified in being skeptical of your theory of how man came into being? Not being able to accept the theory of evolution, I turned my limited reasoning ability to a dissection and analysis of the various theories of God's plans, purposes, intentions and wishes concerning man that I had heard expounded from the pulpits of seven different denominations. In so doing I reasoned from the premise that there is a God. The moon and stars which give us light by night and the sun which gives us light by day, all testify in unison to this fact.

As I see it, the Bible's teaching that there is a God would not be acceptable proof of His existence were it not corroborated by the hosts of nature on every hand. I reasoned that in creating the earth and all things that exist on it, God had a purpose. Even men who erect great buildings or bridges have a purpose in mind in building such structures. With this purpose God had a determination. A determination that His purpose would be accomplished assured that it would not fail. But now, back to God and man whom He created. My father's preacher believed and preached that before God made the first man, He had chosen for Himself a people to whom in time a hope of life eternal would be imparted, and that for this people God made provision after death; that of this people not one would be lost because at a time appointed of God, a Saviour would come, sent from God and the Son of God, to pay with His life for the sins of His Father's people. Another minister I heard preach, believed and preached that Christ, the Son of God, died for the sins of all the human family, leaving nothing for the individual to do but accept this gracious gift from on high, believing on Him and living a life expected of one who professed to believe in Christ. Still another preacher believed and preached that Christ died for all men, but that the sacrifice made by Christ for men's transgression would avail nothing unless the individual believed, repented and submitted to baptism. Still another preacher to whom I listened believed and preached that even after Christ died for our sins and returned to His Father, He continues to plead with the individual sinner to open the door of his heart and allow Christ to come in and save him.

Now, these four preachers used the same Bible. I reasoned that it could not be the fault of the Bible because no one book, though it be a holy book, could teach four different theories involving but one God. Of course, when the four different sermons were analyzed and classified, actually only two theories appeared; one holding that God chose for Himself a people none of whom would be lost, and the other holding that man chooses for himself whether he will be one of God's people and if he does not so choose he will be lost. Put in another way, the two opposing doctrines hold: God chose for Himself a people for whom Christ later died and

of these none will be lost. God wants every one of the human family to be saved but only on the condition that they accept Christ will they be saved because God cannot save the individual who refuses to accept Christ as his Saviour. So, when the four different sermons and doctrines I had heard had been boiled down for their substance and actually only two theories were left, I still said that the fault was not with the Bible these four preachers used. But my mind had not yet been made up as between these two opposing doctrines or theories.

I decided to explore one or more of the angles to the theory that Christ died for all mankind but the salvation provided by His death must be accepted by the individual. So, I asked one of the believers of this doctrine, this question: 'How were those people who lived and died before the coming of Christ, to be saved, if the individual must accept Christ as his personal Saviour?' The answer was that those people were saved by faith in the Christ that was to come and if they did not have faith in Him they were lost. This did not satisfy me because in those days of no schools, no radios, no books, no newspapers, no printing presses, no telephones and no postal service, literally thousands of people must have lived and died without ever having heard of the prophecies concerning the coming of a Saviour. This same lack of communication doubtless prevented thousands of people in the long ago from hearing of the law under which the people to whom the law was given, lived and died but without being able to keep the law.

If I were to accept this theory, that men were saved by faith in the Christ that was to come, then I must also accept the obvious corollary to this theory, that is, that there were some who never heard of the coming of Christ, and never heard of the law which obtained until the coming of Christ, and therefore could not have faith in something they never heard of and having lived and died without having an opportunity to hear of the Christ that was to come and save them from their sins, and without opportunity or reason to have faith in this Christ of whom they never heard, they could not justly be condemned to everlasting punishment though their sins were as scarlet. Having run this reasoning to where such a theory would put a murderer in heaven alongside my dear sainted mother, I had gone far enough to prove its falsity.

I then turned to give my attention to the matter of those poor unfortunate people to whom missionaries are being sent for the purpose of preaching to them the good news that Christ came into the world more than nineteen hundred years ago and gave His life that man may be saved. I soon ran into the same trouble I had in exploring the other angle. I found that Christ fulfilled the law which man had not been able to keep, and therefore the people who have lived since the fulfillment of the law and died without an opportunity to hear of this Christ, cannot justly be condemned to everlasting punishment, though they were sinners of the deepest dye; they had lived and died in far off lands without ever having heard of Christ and without an opportunity to hear of Him and accept Him.

Following these explorations I made a check on that church where the minister talked in a foreign tongue and the members gestured. I found from history that the head of the church or denomination, is in Rome; that he is recognized by the members of the church as being a man without fault or sin and claims to be the successor of St. Peter and the representative of Christ

on earth. I learned further that he proclaims the doctrine which the members of the church must embrace. But what really brought my research on this angle to a quick conclusion was the fact that this church had no head until more than three hundred years after Christ and at one time there were three men claiming to be the head of this Church and Christ's representatives on earth. Undisputed history revealed this illuminating fact. Consequently, I was not seriously impressed with the thought and contention that if I were not a member of this particular church when I die, my soul would be lost, unless my brother-in-law who is a member of that denomination would get a minister of that faith to intercede for my soul.

As a result of my exploration, meditation and investigation, these questions came into my mind: Did God, by the act of creating man, become obligated to man in any way? At what stage in the history of mankind, did man become so powerful that God cannot save him unless man will accept salvation? Can God do anything He wants or wills to do? Is God to be successfully resisted by the very creature He created? Could God have known when He was preparing a place for His children after death, how to prepare not knowing just how many of His creation, or whether any of them, would accept his proffered salvation of their souls?

With these questions in my mind I went back to my father's church where I had sat through so many dull, drab sermons. Up to this time the Bible had not meant anything to me because I could not get anything from reading it. The fact that people said it was genuine, and was the inspired word of God did not necessarily mean anything to me. I am accustomed to demanding proof of statements others make unless I am in some way personally acquainted with the facts about which the statements are made. In short, I do not think the Bible would mean anything to me yet had not my travels and experiences corroborated the scriptures on which I sometimes think I now have some light. Up to this time my father's preacher's sermons meant nothing to me. But now, it was different somehow on my next going to hear him. On that morning, had I handed him a list of the questions that had come into my mind, he could not have done a better job of answering them to my satisfaction.

In that sermon he portrayed to me and I believed it and understood it, a God that is not under any obligation to me in any way for having created my ancestor Adam. He showed me that progress and education have not changed the nature of mankind. He showed me and I understood it, that if man can successfully resist the Spirit of God when God is of a mind and purpose to have man, then God is not all powerful and I could not trust him all the way. He showed me a God that is all-wise and knew from before the making of the dust from which Adam was created how many souls would be housed in the climes of glory eternal. The reflection from the love of this God of whom the preacher talked, was so bright that my own sins and unworthiness loomed as mountains, so to speak and made them so vivid to me that I was then and there of the conviction that if God should consign all mankind to doom and destruction, only justice would be done. As against the pleas of the preachers I had heard saying and exhorting, "Christ will save you if you will come to him and accept him as your personal saviour," father's preacher quoted this scripture to forever settle that question in my mind, and should

settle it for any who believe there is a God and a Christ and that the Bible is to be believed: NO MAN CAN COME TO ME EXCEPT THE FATHER WHICH HATH SENT ME DRAW HIM AND I WILL RAISE HIM UP AT THE LAST DAY.

THE END

* * *

Williamstown, Kans.
April 9, 1952

"Rise up my love, my fair one and come away for lo the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear upon the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land." Sol. song 2.

This is the Scripture which seems to be occupying my mind just at this time. Primarily I think it presages the entering of the gospel dispensation, tho it is pleasant when we can appropriate these words to our individual experience and I think we are doing no violence to the truth when we can so appropriate them. No doubt it represents the voice of the Lord addressing his bride, the church. He addresses her as "My love", that is to say, the one he loves. And what applies to the church collectively does in a great measure apply to each member of his body individually. He addresses her as if she is "Down" and this state of being Down every dear child of grace can readily assimilate. We are won't to call it Down in the dark valley of despondency. It is needless to try to define this state for every true child of grace is familiar with it. Many of the old patriarchs, prophets and kings were down, so to speak. I am thinking of Joseph as he was in the dungeon through no fault of his own. But his bondage was timed to the pleasure of God to deliver him. Of Job who was deprived of his loved ones and of his earthly possessions and suffered the taunting and adverse counsel of his wife. Dost thou still retain thine integrity. Curse God and die. Nay, dear child, he did retain his integrity; his answer was, "have we not received good at the hand of the Lord and shall we not also receive evil." In the end he could say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth" and that he shall stand in the latter day upon the earth. He declared God knoweth the way that I take and when I am tried I shall come forth as gold. I am thinking of David when he was down in a horrible pit and the miry clay. "I waited patiently for the Lord," said he, "and he inclined unto me and heard my cry. He brought me up also and set my feet upon a rock. He established my goings and he hath put a new song in my mouth even praise unto my God." These with others of God's humble poor, I find it convenient to refer to, for these were examples to us to show there is no pit too deep, no dungeon too dark, and no trial too severe for the Lord to undertake for our deliverance and we rejoice in the assurance the beloved apostle gives us when he said, "We are troubled on every hand yet not distressed, we are perplexed but not in despair, persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed.

How sweet is the voice of our Master when we can hear him say, "Rise up, my love, my fair one and come away for lo the winter is past, the rain is over and gone." The cold season is broken up now and the Sun of Righteousness is risen with healing in his wings. Rise up and come away, the winter is past the rain is over and gone. When it rains the sky is overcast with clouds and it is a gloomy day but it brings a blessing, without which we could not long survive. A blessing in disguise. When it is over and gone all nature seems to smile, the flowers appear upon the earth, the time of the

singing (of birds) is come. "Of birds" are supplied words, so omitting them we are sure this singing applies to the Lord's little ones. When their cold season is broken up and the dark clouds of gloom are dispersed they give vent to their joy; they break forth into singing, yea the fir trees rejoice at thee and the cedars of Lebanon. These cold, dark seasons are memories now. But we are not unmindful of the fact, they will return again. God has declared as long as time exists, day and night and winter and summer, and seed time and harvest shall not cease. According to God's providence the one follows the other in perfect rotation. But the same God who ordered all things from the beginning is still able to deliver. Our father is still at the helm.

These seasons naturally, are a symbol of our spiritual experience. So think it not strange, brethren concerning the fiery trials which are to try you. This is God's way of preparing your hearts to call upon him. Showing us how futile are our efforts to eliminate the clouds or change our winter into summer. So let us wait patiently for the Lord. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." Now to view this from a prophetic standpoint. "Rise up, my love, my fair one and come away." No doubt the Lord is referring to the time long waited for when his bride, the church should be delivered from under the law and ushered into the glorious liberty of the children of God, the ushering in of the gospel dispensation, when the words of Jesus should be fulfilled. "The people which sat in darkness saw great light and to them that sat in the region and the shadow of death light is sprung up," yes the sun of righteousness is risen now with healing in his wings, Jesus the light of the world. John pointed to him saying, "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin (not sins) of the world." The sin of the world was a broken law. He took it away. "He took away the first that he might establish the second," that is, speaking of the two covenants. As it is written, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Juda, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand led them out of the land of Egypt, which covenant they break althought I was a father unto them." "But this is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my law in their hearts, I will write it in their inward parts and they shall no more teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother saying, Know the Lord, for they all shall know me from the least even unto the greatest of them and their sins and their iniquities I will remember against them no more forever."

No need to go back under that old covenant and try to teach our neighbor and our neighbor's children to know the Lord. Under this new covenant this is forbidden but it is a sacred duty and a privilege to bring up our children in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord." It is time now to rise up and come away from that old covenant, the law of carnal commandments. "For ye are no more under the law but under grace. Jesus hath taken away the sin of the world. He hath also taken upon himself our many sins and hath made complete atonement therefore. It was indeed, a gloomy day, a gloomy prospect for the people of God under the law, for the law was rigid in its demands. "The soul that sinneth it shall die," and behold, "All have sinned and

come short of the glory of God." Our finite minds are too weak and our hearts too corrupt to offer up adequate praise to Jesus for taking away this sin of the world and that he, himself should be the surety for us and suffer the penalty of death which was justly ours to suffer. The winter, that cold season is past now, the rain, that gloomy day is over and gone. The flowers, a symbol of God's spiritual people appear upon the earth. That new earth, of which it is written, "the whole earth is at rest and quiet; they break forth into singing, yea the fir trees rejoice at thee and the cedars of Lebanon." All evergreen trees, Jew and Gentile saying "since thou art laid down no feller is come up against us." Our obligations have been cancelled, the debt is paid and Divine justice is satisfied. Jesus paid it all.

Truly the time of the singing is come and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land; the voice of the turtle, that is the turtle Dove. As he thus addresses his bride, the church, "My dove, my undefiled, Let me hear thy voice, Let me see thy countenance for sweet is thy voice and thy countenance is comely." Yea, her voice is heard in the land now as in contrast to the sea, the sea being an emblem of the legal dispensation. As it is written in connection with this unspeakable act, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away and there was no more sea". Christ's redemption is complete, that old covenant, the legal dispensation is relegated to the past. The work of salvation is finished and our God has declared, "I make all things new." This law never was designed to give eternal life even when it was in force, much less now after it has been done away. What folly then to seek justification by the deeds of the law; "For by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin condemned sin in the flesh."

So again the words of this text: "Rise up my love, my fair one and come away for lo the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear upon the earth, the time of the singing is come and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land." So with all this bespeaks a deliverance from the law of carnal commandments, so let us rise and come away and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. "Sing unto the Lord, sing psalms unto him, talk ye all of his wondrous works, make known his deeds among the people. Glory ye in his holy name for truly the Lord hath done great things for us whereof we are glad." Truly the "time of the singing is come and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land."

Sing ye saints, make joyful mention,
Christ is our complete redemption.
May we sing the joyful story
In the higher world of glory.

Jesus Reigns.

L. L. SCHENCK

* * *

Eld. R. W. Rhodes,
Lillie, La.

DEAR BROTHER RHODES:

I will try to write you this morning in answer to your comforting and gladly received letter of a few days ago. I hope that you are well and enabled to rejoice in the love and mercy of God in whom there is no variableness neither shadow of turning. Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name given under heaven or among men, whereby we must be saved.

It seems for the past three or four weeks that I have been in a great siege of darkness, where I could neither see light, or cry out to any comfort of mind.

But, as it were, cut off from the land of the living, from the soul cheering presence of my Savior, but it seems in the last few days that a beam of heavenly light has shined across the horizon. And that it has pleased Him from whom all blessings flow, to restore His soul-cheering presence to my cast down soul, and enabled me to rejoice in the name of Him who said, "In this world you shall have tribulations, but be of good cheer I have overcome the world." Thanks be unto God He did not say that we should overcome this world, and therein is my hope that Jesus overcame the world, for I know that I cannot.

Paul says, "We glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost." Paul also tells Timothy, "Be thou therefore not ashamed of the gospel of Christ or me His prisoner, but be thou a partaker of the affliction of the gospel according to the power of God who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works but according to His purpose and grace which was given us in Christ before the world began." We are also told it is through much tribulations that we enter the kingdom of God. And think it not strange concerning the fiery trials which are to try you, as though some strange thing has happened unto you. He also says the trial of your faith is much more precious than gold which is tried in the fire.

So when it pleases our Heavenly Father to restore His soul-cheering presence to our weary hearts, and the Holy Spirit to bear witness in our hearts to the sufferings of Christ, then we are made to glory in tribulations; for the Holy Spirit takes the things of Christ and shows them to us, and I believe here witness in our hearts and his witness if true, to wit, that He was tempted in all points like unto His brethren, yet without sin. Though He were a son yet learned obedience by the things He suffered. I believe that the Holy Spirit bears witness in the hearts to the agony suffered by our Savior in the garden when He said, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" I believe the Holy Spirit also bears witness, in our hearts, at His own good pleasure, that our Savior is a merciful High Priest, and that in being tempted in all points like unto His brethren, He is able to succor them that are tempted and is touched by their oft infirmity.

"Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled. Blessed are ye when men shall speak all manner of evil against you, as the apostle tells us, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us and gave Himself for us."

Unto you my Father's children that dwell in darkness and tribulations a part of your time, our Savior has said, "In this world you shall have tribulations, be of good cheer I have overcome the world." And as John was shown that throng which no man could number of all nations, kindred, tongue and people, these are them that come up out of great tribulations and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. And they shall be with the Lamb, God will wipe all tears from their eyes, the Lamb will be a light unto them. Neither shall they hunger or thirst any more, for the Lamb will lead them and feed them. Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Now all praise, honor, glory, dominion and power be unto God and to the Lamb for Thou wast slain

and hast redeemed by Thy blood out of every nation tongue and people, even so, amen.

If what is written, is in your humble judgment, the truth receive it for the truth sake, if not, cast it aside and receive it not. Write me when you have a mind to.

Your brother I hope in Christ
and in tribulations.
J. H. HAMRICK,

* * *

313 E. Barrett St.,
Tyler, Texas.

P.S. I know that what I write myself is no good, but in your humble judgment, that the Lord may direct my pen and you have been comforted by anything I have written, and you think that it would be of any comfort to the poor and afflicted children of God, you may use my letter as you think best. I have nothing in view other than to ascribe greatness to our God. If God be pleased to make me a servant that I may be enabled by His grace, to give a cup of cold water to one of His little ones in His name, His will be done.

J. H. HAMRICK.

* * *

Lillie, La.
April 6th, 1952.

Eld. D. V. Spangler,
Annapolis, Md.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:

At the request of old Brother and sister W. M. Harwell of Popler Bluff, Mo. I am writing an article, the Lord willing, for publication in the Signs Of The Times, if you approve it for publication.

I will quote the Scripture they requested me to write on, "And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" 1 Pet. 4-18.

Now I am sure that this is a very great, and extensive, and deep subject, and I fully realize that I am utterly dependent on the Lord, and the light of His Spirit, to be able to rightly divide the word of truth, upon this great subject, as well as any other scriptural subject, because, with the depraved, blind and sinful nature of Adam, it is evident that these things are hid from the wise and prudent, and it is utterly impossible for anyone to find anything that God has hid from them, and it is said in this scripture that I have slightly mentioned. At that time Jesus said "I thank thee O Father Lord of Heaven and earth because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes." Matt. 11-25.

So we are entirely dependent on Him, who does both the hiding and the revealing, of these things, and it is both hid and revealed because it seemed good in God's sight that it be that way according to this and other scriptures, and there is nothing in Heaven, earth or Hell that can prevent it from being, hid from the wise of this world, and there is nothing in either place that can prevent the Lord from revealing these things to those whom Jesus called Babes. So I hope brethren we are small enough in our own sight and estimation to be among that class He called Babes, and that He will reveal to me and guide me into the truth.

Now there are many different phases of almost any subject in the Bible, and so it is the case of the Subject of the Righteous. Jesus in His teachings said, "For I came not to call the Righteous, but sinners to repentance," Matt. 9-18. So it would seem that Jesus must have had some manner of reasoning on this subject, along the line, that there are some who are righteous in their own estimation, not actually so, but think and feel themselves righteous, and in another place we read of a people who

are righteous in their own eyes, but it is sinners, w ho are made to know they are sinners whom Jesus came to save.

Then according to Rom. 3-10 where it says, "As it is written there is none righteous no not one." I think this statement is just as true in its proper phase and meaning as any other place where the word Righteous is used, but I believe Paul had under consideration, the depravity of all of Adam's race, all the decendants of the Federal Head of the Human race, as Paul also says in Rom. 5-12 where He says, "wherefore as by the disobedience of one man, sin entered into the world; and death by sin, so death has passed upon all men because all have sinned." So we can see in this sense there is none righteous, no not one. Then what does it mean where Peter speaks of the Righteous, who are scarcely saved? I think He is speaking of the Children of God who are made righteous, by the blood, righteous, and grace of God, we know that all God's people are righteous in this sense of the word by many scriptures.

Now in order to prove from a scriptural standpoint that there are those set forth in the scriptures, as being righteous in some sense, I want to quote you the saviour's language in Matt. 13-43. "Then shall the Righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father, who hath ears to hear let Him hear." Also in Matt. 25-37, Jesus says, "Then shall the Righteous answer Him saying Lord when saw we thee ahungered and fed thee, or thirsty and gave thee drink?" So we see that in this sense there are those who are truly righteous, through the blood and righteousness of Christ. We also see from Rom. 3-10, "that there is none Righteous within and of themselves, but sinful, unrighteous, unholy, and sinners." There are many other scriptures that would prove these things but suffice this for the time being on these phases of the subject.

There is also abundant scriptures to show many who think they are righteous, and who so announce themselves, and they are sometimes referred to as righteous, as in the case of those already referred to where Jesus is recorded as saying, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" Matt. 9-18 and other places. Also in Lk. 18-9. And He spoke this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others. This is the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican, who went to the house of the Lord together, and the Pharisee stood, and prayed thus with Himself, God I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican. Then He goes on and sets up all His good works, but not so with the poor trembling child of God but He stood afar off, and smote upon His breast saying, "God be Merciful to me a sinner." So you can see the difference, one was a righteous man in His own eyes, and the other was a great sinner in His feelings, Jesus came to call one of them to repentance, and not the other one, one of these went down to His house justified and the other didn't.

Now I think what is under consideration, about those who are scarcely being saved, is that the child of God being made to see His extreme and sinful condition, and His terrible dependance, upon God, and His helpless condition, to the extent that Jesus says in St. Jno. 15-5, "For without me ye can do nothing." With all this manifest in the heart of a child of God then He most certainly feels that if He is saved at all He just will be, as David said, "He brought me up also out of a horri-

ble pit, out of the mirey clay and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings" Ps. 40-2, with David in this condition then certainly it must have appeared that if saved at all it would be scarcely indeed.

But in reality there is no saving nor salvation except of the Lord and being the only salvation that there is, then certainly those convicted deeply of their sins, would feel that they would scarcely be saved, but in the light of God's inspired teachings on the subject, when the Lord teaches His people to see their true condition, and brings them to behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, then they are given to see that there is no scarcity at all, but an abundance of Mercy, and Grace, and righteousness through our Lord Jesus Christ, as Peter mentions in 2 Pet. 1-2 saying, "Grace and peace be Multiplied unto you, through the Knowledge of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Then Salvation isn't scarce, and it is a good thing indeed that it isn't, as sinful, depraved, needy, and Helpless as we are without Him.

We find in support of this same thing, of the abundance of the Lord's salvation, in Isaiah 40:1-2. He commands, "Comfort ye comfort ye my people saith the Lord, speak ye comfortably unto Jerusalem tell her that her warfare is accomplished, her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received at the Lord's hand DOUBLE for all of her sins. This does not indicate any real and genuine scarcity at all of their salvation, but it certainly does have some bearing on the proof that it is only a seeming scarcity, and may be for our exhortation to, Strive to enter in at that straight gate, because many shall seek to enter in and not be able. He also speaks of the real way as narrow and the seeming way as broad, but there is just a few in that straight way, as Jesus says, "Straight is the gate and narrow is the way and few there be that find it" Matt. 7-14. This shows that they are scarce that will be in it and that many will not be able to go in this narrow way, even though they seek to enter therein as is recorded in Lk. 13-24. "Strive to enter in at the straight gate, for many I say unto you shall seek to enter therein and shall not be able." So the Lord's people do enter in through that straight and narrow way, but they are scarce so to speak, compared with the many who seek to enter and are not able.

Noah was scarcely saved, with His family, from the terrible flood which rose above the tops of the highest mountains, while the teeming and countless thousands of other Human beings, together with all the animal and fowl creation perished in the mighty flood waters. Lot and His two Daughters escaped from Sodom, and was saved, while all the inhabitants were destroyed, and Lot's wife looked back and became a pillar of salt. Daniel the Prophet was scarcely saved from the Lion's jaws, when cast in the Lion's den, so to speak, for when those who cast Him in were cast in they, had all of their bones crushed by the mighty Lions before they reached the bottom of the lion's den, the same thing was true of the Hebrew Children, David, Job, Rahab, Jonah, in the fishes belly, and many others who were righteous were scarcely saved, and delivered, by the power, Mercy, the Grace and Righteousness of Jesus Christ our Lord.

So then this scriptural question, For if the Righteous scarcely be saved where shall the ungodly and sinner appear? This to me shows that this scarcity has to do with the fact that they being Washed in the blood of

Christ, and redeemed, from sin, would have forever perished if it had been dependent on their own merit, or anything good that they were to do, true enough the Sheep on the right hand of the Saviour, when He said "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, for I was hungry and ye gave me meat, thirsty and ye gave me drink I was a stranger and ye took me in, Naked and ye clothed me, I was sick and ye vistied me, I was in prison and ye came unto me." Matt. 25:35-36. And the very next verse calls the sheep The Righteous, by saying, "then shall the Righteous answer Him saying, Lord when saw we thee hungered, and fed thee, or thirsty and gave thee drink?" And so on, so then it would seem that the sheep, the righteous, were in much better shape than they thought, but to them it seemed that they thought and felt, that they were just scarcely being saved, that they could not claim to deserve it in the very least, they wanted to know when they had ever done anything good? So far as their salvation was concerned, on what they had done, they felt scarcely to be saved at all.

So dear brethren and sisters, I believe with each of you there is a real scarcity of any merit of salvation in you that you can see, and that you can feel, and if one should ask you how plentiful the prospects of any salvation of you on what you had done, I am sure that you would have to say that it was scarce indeed. But when ask, about the merits, righteousness and salvation, through that Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world, I believe that they are all brought to believe, that there is bounties of it, yea a double portion indeed as Isaiah 40:1-2 states, "For she hath received at the Lord's hand double for all Her sins."

Dear Brethren when we consider the expressions that the sheep made when the Saviour called them, to come and inherit the Kingdom, and what the goats said, they felt, there would be no scarcity with them, and they were sinners of the deepest die, then if the Righteous, the sheep were so sinful, so vile, and so needy, and so poor, and void of righteousness in their feelings, and they are so scarcely saved in this sense, where O where will the truly ungodly, and sinner appear? All we have to do is look at what the Lord says about it in this same chapter, where He says, "and then shall the King say unto them on his left hand, Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and His Angels, this is where they will appear because the Lord Jesus Christ has already told us so in Matt. 25-41. Not only this but David in Psalms 9-17 says the Wicked shall be turned into Hell and all the nations that forget God. Then this doesnt' leave any question as to where the ungodly and the sinner will appear.

The children of God will appear on the Right hand of Jesus, the blessed Saviour, and shall hear that welcome call, come ye blessed of my Father inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, that is where He will appear, and these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal Matt. 25-46. There can be no mistake about where either the ungodly, and wicked, nor the child of God or Righteous, shall appear according to this last verse of scripture, and reference, one is to appear in everlasting punishment, the other into life eternal, the Humble Child of God was scarcely Righteous, in His feelings, and the other thought that He had no scarcity of righteousness at all. What a great contrast in these two characters, one thought He was

righteous and he was an ungodly man, and a great sinner, in that Christ was not His righteousness, and the other thought and felt to be a great sinner, and felt to be scarce of any righteousness, and yet through Christ He was Righteous and made free from sin through the precious blood and righteousness of our Saviour and Redeemer.

Dear humble trembling Child of God, be encouraged, because you do feel to be a sinner, because you are made to feel poor and scarce of any righteousness, O how rich you are indeed, because Jesus said in His Great sermon on the mount, "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven, Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled." See Matt. 5, 1 to 6, when you are poor, hungry, thirsty, mourning and weeping, you are in a different condition altogether to the high, proud, mighty, full, and rich fellow who feels that he is so righteous, and that they have no doubts within themselves, because they are completely deceived, and think they are righteous altogether, and there will be no scarcity of salvation for them at all. Lk. 1-53 says He hath filled the poor with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away.

One of Jesus' Disciples ask this question, Lord are there few that be saved? So we can see from this, and observation, where and who the ungodly and the sinners are, they are those multitudes who feel to be righteous, that feel to be rich, that feel to be secure, in their own righteousness, they make great pretenses of religious abilities, and accomplishments while on the other hand, the real Righteous feel to be poor, sinful, needy, unworthy, unprofitable, and indeed scarce of anything good, as Paul said on one occasion, "I know that in me that is in my flesh there dwelleth no good thing, the will is present with me but how to perform that which is good I find not, O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. 7, 18 to 24.

Now dear Brethren I want to say that I may not have been given the true light, and understanding on this great subject, but I hope I have not done any violence to the word of inspiration, in what I have written on it, if I am not deceived it has been my true desire to write to the glory of God and the comfort of God's people. I feel that whatever else it may teach, that many, many scriptures make it very plain, that His people will be saved with an everlasting salvation, without the loss of one, and all who are not the Lord's people, will hear that woeful depart ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and His Angels. That is where the ungodly and sinner will appear.

May the Lord bless us to understand His Holy and scriptural teachings, and be enable to render praise and Glory to His Holy Name and to receive comfort, food and consolation from, all which is or was written aforetime for our learning. Your very unworthy Brother, in hope of everlasting life through our Lord Jesus Christ.

R. W. RHODES

* * *

We are glad to inform our readers that with this issue the title of Elder J. D. Wood is being changed from Assistant Editor to one of the Editors. This action was taken by the board of trustees recently, and in the future we hope to have an editorial every other month from him.

D. V. SPANGLER, *Editor.*

EDITORIALS

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THE WORK IS FINISHED

How distressing it is for us to hear men proclaim doctrines entirely contrary to that of God our Saviour; and our souls are vexed at the ungodliness in high and low places. False doctrine is the rule rather than the exception among the nominal christians, and millions follow their leaders without question. It would not seem quite so bad were it not for the fact that these things are professedly preached in the name of Jesus; if they were in any other name we would not be so much concerned, but when the name of our God and Saviour is dragged in the dust of ignorance and unbelief we are much troubled. For many years now there have been but few voices raised in strong and persistent opposition to these things, or, as a matter of fact, in strong defense of the truth. To do so has seemed to many to be a hopeless and thankless task, but it did not deter the prophets of the Lord in olden times to cry aloud and spare not, for thus they were commanded to do. Jesus and the Apostles did not spare ungodly men and their errors. In Proverbs we read, "The lot is cast in the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord."

Not only did the prophets cry against the heathens, but they also reprimanded Israel for their idolatries and unfaithfulness; and in the days of the Apostles there was a continual cry against errors both in and out of the church. Paul charged Timothy to, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." No one can deny that this is what many did, and it remains so until now; and it accounts for the many different denominations in the world,—and the many different and contrary doctrines, each claiming to be the church and to hold the doctrine of the church. These claims are absurd when a comparison is had of the things taught and recorded in the Scriptures,—and written in the hearts of the true followers of Jesus, with the things taught and believed by the many orders.

There is no denying that Jesus established but one church, and set it up on one foundation, with the doctrine and order clearly defined. It is, therefore, safe to say that any organization, no matter what its name, is definitely not the church unless it is standing solely on that foundation and upholding the doctrine and faith and practice of the original. It appears that all men must have some sort of religious belief, which

may be called a natural religion, for it is after the way that seems right to them; but pure religion, and true worship is truly a matter of revelation from the Father, for in no way else can mortals know God, nor the things of God; neither can they know his purpose in all created things, nor his decree for eternity after time and earthly things are ended. Philosophers of old searched for these things, but their searching could not open them up; it remained for God himself to reveal them, and this he did to holy men of old, causing them to record them in the Scriptures. And not only this, but he reveals and confirms his ways in the hearts of his people by his Spirit, when the blood of Christ purges their consciences from dead works to serve the living God. The religion of man is handed from father to son in their generations, and may be taught in schools and learned by study, but can never transcend the limitations of the spirit of man which is in him; while the Spirit of God teaches the individuals of the generation of Jesus Christ and they are all fellow-citizens of the household of God and they are, "A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that they should show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light." (1 Peter 2:9).

The church, therefore, is not a worldly organization; though they are in the world, they are not of the world. Their worship is in Spirit and in truth, and they are no longer concerned with forms and ceremonies, for they are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein they were held; that they should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. (Romans 7:6). The church is composed entirely of those who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began, being the very ones for whom Jesus came into the world to redeem,—every one of them, no more or no less. The whole purpose of God in them is complete, since it is both designed and executed by the God-head; and the members of it are the recipients of the amazing love and grace of God, rather than the attainers unto it either by will or by work.

The purpose for which Jesus came into the world is stated clearly in the Scriptures. It was to save his people. He did not come to offer the world anything, or to compromise with them, or make a way possible for them to be saved; but rather, to redeem those who were his people and who had eternal life with him, but who needed redemption because of their fall in sin. The angel announced to Joseph that Mary should bring forth a Son, and that he should call his name Jesus; for he should save his people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21). And Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." And also, "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." (St. John, 6th Chapt.) This is a sure thing,—the whole power of the God-head is behind it. Peter said to the strangers scattered that they were, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." And Paul wrote in 2nd Timothy, "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began." It is a glorious thing to contemplate the sureness of the salvation of the Lord's people.

The exact number of specific persons

who should make up the "body" of Christ was determined from the foundation of the world; and they are, "—blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." In the 139th Psalm we find this wonderful declaration: "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."

These Scriptures, together with many others, show that the church is a determined number of the Adam race, loved of God, who should be his heirs and joint heirs with his Son Jesus Christ. Witness the following also: "No man can come unto me except my Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." "All things are delivered to me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

The religious world is afraid that many are going to be lost who could be saved; and that there are many who are fallen away after they are "saved". If our God were this kind of a God, we would be in a most precarious condition. But the evidence is, brethern, that heaven will be fully occupied,—not too many or too few; for nothing is left in the hands of men. "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." (Romans 9:15-16) Salvation is not conditioned on a good and orderly walk, (these things are the fruits of the Spirit), but is made certain as shown in the following: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and underfiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are KEPT BY THE POWER OF GOD through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Peter 1:3-5)

Paul was not fearful of the Lord's people being lost, for he said, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerers through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:35-39) Salvation is not something that may be bandied about, nor sold, nor bought, nor lost; but it is secured to us by the eternal

will of God. It pertaineth to all the elect of God, not to all the family of Adam.

Preaching the gospel is unto those who have an ear to hear it, and is glad tidings of great joy to them, confirming them in their hope. When Jesus ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. This was for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. (Ephesians 4:8 and 12) It is not in their power to persuade men to believe, for, "This is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." God sends forth his servants to minister unto the household of faith, not to proselyte. It certainly is not preaching the gospel,—the power of God unto salvation, to preach that salvation may be accepted or rejected, or to declare that many are going to hell because the efforts of men have not been exerted to convert them. God has ordained the calling as well as he has the redemption; and there is not a spot in all the world so remote but that the Spirit of God works there in the heirs of salvation as much so as in the so-called christian lands. If even a small part of salvation were left to the volition of men there would be no salvation. Even in this enlightened age men are not able to put life into inanimate objects; and we know of nothing more inanimate that one who is dead in trespasses and sins.

Salvation is not universal as some teach; neither is it conditional as some aver. But it is absolutely sure and certain to every one for whom Jesus shed his blood, and for whom his body was broken, and for whom he arose as their justifier before God. There are those of whom Jesus said, "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My Sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." There are vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, and there are vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory. (Romans 9:22-23) The destination of each is prepared for them after this world. The amazing thing is that all are not vessels of wrath. The love and mercy of God is manifest on the one hand, his justice on the other; no one can charge him with injustice, but many will praise him for his mercy.

May our God enable us to contend earnestly for the faith, and be zealous of his name's honor and glory.

J. D. W.

* * *

Denton, Ky.
April 13, 1952

"Who is the figure of him that was to come" Romans 5:14. "Let Israel hope in the Lord from henceforth and forever (Psalms 131:3).

I have quoted two texts of scripture and at the present moment I do not feel that I shall be able to say anything in connection with either that would be of any interest to the dear children of God. In fact I know by experience except the Lord leads my mind and directs my pen I cannot write anything that will be worth while. First we will try to considered the first text hoping that the good Lord will bless us to say or write something that will be of interest to some one at least.

God has since the foundation of all material things, has taken natural as material things to make comparison

figures of spiritual things or things to come afterwards. Let us take particular notice how the apostle says this He says, who is the figure not a figure the one figure and the one to come was evidently Christ. So our desire is to view this figure correctly and scripturely and see if we can see the resemblance of the antitype. To make the matter more clear we will quote the pretext to the above Scripture. Paul says nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses even over them that had not sinned after the similarity of Adam's transgression who is the figure of Him that was to come.

Romans 5:14 so after God had created the Heaven and the earth and all the host of them saying "let everything bring seed after his own kind, He then says, And God said, "let us make man in our image after our likeness and let them (notice how he says this and let them not Him) have dominion over the fish of the Sea and over the fowl of the air and over the cattle over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image in the image of God created He him, male and female created He them, and God blessed them and God said unto them. Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." And God said, "Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed which is upon the face of all the earth and every tree yielding seed to you it shall be for meat (please notice in particular the above wording and keep it in mind, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed to you it shall be for meat) and to every beast of the earth and to every fowl of the air and to everything that reapeth upon the earth wherein there is life I have given every green herb for meat and it was so, and God saw everything that he had made and behold it was very good, and the evening and the morning were the sixth day. Gen. 1 26-31.

Thus the heaven and the earth were finished and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which he had made and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all His work which God created and made. These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth (notice not heaven but heavens more than one for there are material things he is speaking of). When they were created in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens. And every plant of the field before it was in the earth and every herb of the field before it grew. We note from the above scripture that all the host of the heaven and earth were finished in the creation before they were formed of the dust and placed in the earth or on the earth. For the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth and there was not a man to till the ground.

But there went up a mist from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground. And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food and that everything that was made was made for the man and that he was to have dominion over it. The tree of life also in the midst of the Garden and the tree of knowledge

of good and evil. Gen. 2 1-9. Then it goes on down a little farther in the same chapter beginning with the 15th. verse, and the Lord God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. The Lord God commanded the man saying, of every tree of the garden, thou mayest eat but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. And the Lord God said it is not good that man should be alone. I will make a help mate for him and out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every fowl of the air and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them and whatsoever Adam called every living creature that was the name thereof and Adam gave names to all the cattle and the fowl of the air and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there not found an help mate for him. And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept and he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said this is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called woman. Because she was taken out of man therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be one flesh.

They were both naked the man and his wife, and were not ashamed (man in his unregeneration state is naked before God and is not ashamed because he does not know it, because his eyes has not been opened to see his nakedness).

The 3rd. Chapter of Gen. begins by saying, "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made." And he said unto the woman, "Yea hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden," and the woman said unto the serpent, "we may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden. But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden God hath said ye shall not eat of it neither shall ye touch it lest ye die" (what God is saying that ye can not eat of this tree and live). And the serpent said unto the woman "Ye shall not surely die" (so the serpent disputed God's word is where and when he fathered the first lie as Christ said to those unbelieving Jews he is a liar and the father of it).

For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof then your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as gods knowing good and evil. The individual while in his unregenerated state his eyes are closed to his lost and ruined condition and he is condemned but does not know it. Can we not see in this figure we believe that Adam was but a natural man there in the garden and all these things taken place there with him, naturally, and that tree as we believe was a natural tree not like a peach tree or some other kind of fruit tree, but as we think it had a far greater meaning as that would not seem scriptural neither logical to us, but while we believe these things, which are recorded here by the inspiration of God really took place as recorded in a material way they were all figuring something spiritual.

So then it says, "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise she took of the fruit thereof, did eat and gave also to her husband with her and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened and they knew that they were naked and they sewed fig leaves together to hide their nakedness." This is just what the poor fellow does when he is made to partake of that

Holy spirit in the work of regeneration. His eyes are opened to his nakedness before God. He seeks to cloth himself with the works of his own hands and tries to hide himself from the presence of God.

And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the Garden of Eden in the cool of the day. And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord amongst the trees of the Garden. And the Lord called unto Adam and said unto him, "where art thou." And he said "I heard thy voice in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked and I hid myself." That is when the poor child gets scared when he hears the voice of the Master calling.

He said, "who told thee that thou was naked. Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat." And the man said, "the woman whom thou gavest to be with me she gave me of the tree and I did eat." Notice here that the woman gave the man the fruit of the tree.

And the Lord said unto the woman, "What is this that thou hast done?" And the woman said, "The serpent beguiled me and I did eat." Because thou hast done this thou are cursed above all cattle and above every beast of the field upon thy belly shalt thou go and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. We see that his meat is of the earth in the flesh.

I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed, it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel. Do we not see this manifest enmity between these two seeds on every side.

Unto the woman he said "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow, and thy conception in sorrow, thou shalt bring forth children and thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall have rule over thee."

And unto Adam he said "because thou hast harkened unto the voice of thy wife and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee saying 'thou shalt not eat of it', cursed is the ground for thy sake, in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thou life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee and thou shalt eat the herb of the field in the sweat of thy face shall thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground for out of it was thou taken, for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return." Here is the sentence of the death of the body for this death was to take place in the future with the man Adam. This as we think is not the death that was to take place in the day that he partook of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Adam as I think was but a natural man while in the garden he had not a spiritual mind nor spiritual life existing in him while in the garden as he had not partaken of the tree of life which represented Christ as I think he was not forbidden in the love which God first gave him to partake of the tree of life but having only a natural mind he had no desire for the tree because it was spiritual and he was natural.

For Adam also and for his wife the Lord made coats of skin and clothed them. Do we not see here the figure, it took the shedding of innocent blood to cloth them, to cover their nakedness before God and it took alone the Grace of God. They did not have anything to do in clothing themselves not even the putting the coats on themselves, after God prepared them, he put them on them.

The Lord God said "Behold the man has become as one of us to know good and evil and now lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat and live forever." Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the

Garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken. He drove man out of the Garden and placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims and a flaming sword which turned everyway to keep the way of the tree of life. This is the death which I think that took place when he partook of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It was a death of banishment from the presence of God. While in the garden he communed with God. Adam was but a natural man at that time but in this banishment he lost Communion with God and all knowledge of Him and became dead in trespasses and sin. Adam was not a free agent, for God did not give him the mind and ability to keep the law but made him subject to vanity or fall. If the man had been perfect in the sense which Christ was perfect there would not have been anything in him to respond to temptation and the very fact that he was under law is evident of itself that he was not perfect as there is no law for a perfect being. While he stood upright and innocent until he transgressed the law. To commune with God again he must be born again, not of a corruptible seed but of an uncorruptible by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever.

Let Israel hope in the Lord from henceforth and forever. That is from the time of regeneration for there is not more hope in man except that which is given him of God.

I summit this in love and I have just written my thoughts and if any differ on this, that is their privilege. I am only human and see through the glass darkly. But I hope I have been giving some light on this subject.

Your unworthy Brother in
Christ, I hope

H. L. ROGERS

Obituaries

SISTER MARY CALDONIA HUDSON

Sister Mary C. Hudson, died at her home in Fordyce, Arkansas, March 17, 1952 at the age of 92 years, 9 months and 17 days. She was born in Logan County, Arkansas, the daughter of Elder John S. and Nancy J. Lee, on May 30, 1859 and moved to Hot Spring County with her family when a girl. She was married to the late George W. Hudson, January 11, 1880 and they moved to Dallas County, Arkansas, in the vicinity of Fordyce. She continued to live near and at Fordyce the remainder of her life. Her husband preceded her in death 49 years, 5 months and 26 days. To this union was born 10 children, 5 daughters and 5 sons. Immediate survivors left are 3 sons, Mort S. of Camden, Will L. and Dewey of Fordyce, 3 daughters, Mrs. Etta Garner of Abiline, Texas, Mrs. Lura Huneycutt, of Fordyce and Mrs. Zelma Easterling, of Thornton, 38 grandchildren, 76 great grandchildren and 5 great, great grandchildren, 3 brothers, W. T. Lee, Arkadelphia, M. S. Lee, Little Rock and Buster Lee of Donaldson, 2 sisters, Mrs. H. L. Pennington and Mrs. H. T. Thompson, of Arkadelphia.

Sister Hudson united with Macedonia Primitive Baptist Church near Dalark, September 5, 1886 and was baptized by her father the late Elder John S. Lee. She later placed her membership in Pilgrim Rest Church at Fordyce where it continued to her death. She was devoted to her church and loved the doctrine of God our Savior and was consistent and regular in attending meeting until she was physically disabled to attend. The last meeting she was physically able to attend was about three years before her death thereby being enabled in her church attendance, which she gave evidence that she so dearly loved and enjoyed, until she was near 90 years of age. She was truly a mother in Israel. She will be missed by the Old Baptist along with her devoted children, other relatives and many friends.

Funeral services were held at Liberty Primitive Baptsit Church near Fordyce Wednesday afternoon March 19, 1952, conducted by the writer and assisted by Rev. R. A. Raney, of near Fordyce who was a very dear and long time friend and acquaintance of Sister Hudson and her children, and Rev. Louis W. Averitt of the Methodist Church of Fordyce, who is the pastor of a devoted daughter, Mrs. Lura Huneycutt and her good husband. The body was laid to rest in Liberty Cemetery to await the appearing of her blessed Redeemer, the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the second time without sin unto salvation on the resurrection morning when it will be raised in His

glorified image, reunited with the soul and carried home to glory, body, soul and Spirit to be with the Lord forever.

May God bless and comfort her bereaved loved ones.

ELDER W. A. SPEER

* * *

Bro. Horton Rogers, 58, of Pedro, Route 1, died at the Ironton General Hospital at 8:00 A.M. Sunday, after suffering a heart attack at his home Saturday night. Born in Carter County, Kentucky, Feb. 26, 1893, a son of George and Elizabeth Ratliff Rogers. He was married to Connie Cunningham in 1910, and they moved to Lawrence County, Ohio in 1931. For the past several years, Mr. Rogers has been associated with the Agricultural Extension program here.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by the following children: Raymond of Prenter, W. Va.; Harold of Ironton, Route 2; Mrs. Edith Roe of Wheelersburg, Route 2; Sherman of Dayton, Ohio; James, with the U. S. Army stationed at Fort Knox, Ky.; Hallie, Joe, Lawrence, Curtis, Mrs. Catherine Hutchinson, and Mrs. Charlene Phillips all of Pedro, Route 1; and Brownie at home and nineteen grandchildren.

The following brothers and sisters also survive: Thomas of Pedro, Curtis of Beres, Ky.; H. L. Rogers, of Denton, Ky.; Mrs. Hattie Holbrook and Mrs. Ethel Young of Columbus; Mrs. Mary Jones of Argillite, Ky.; Mrs. Hulda Mullins of Ashland, Ky.; and Mrs. Nannie Melvin of Ironton, Route No. 2.

Bro. Rogers was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church at Loss Creek, Ky. Bro. Rogers was received and baptized on August 5th, 1945, baptized by Bro. J. S. Hunnicutt and was a loving and faithful member. His seat was always filled in the church and his home was a welcome place for old baptist. He would get up a load of them in his car and take them to meeting far and near. We surely do miss his loving companionship, yet we must be submissive to the will of Him who works all things after counsel of His own will. As dear Job says, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, and blessed be the name of the Lord."

His funeral was conducted by: Bro. H. J. Byrd of Charleston, W. Va., and Bro. C. H. Evans of Enterprise, Ky. who is the pastor of the church where Bro. Rogers membership was. The funeral was preached the 29th of January and the remains were laid to rest in the family cemetery on his farm in Lawrence County, Ohio, to wait the call, "Come ye blessed of my Father and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

H. L. ROGERS

* * *

Betty Ann Garton, daughter of Zachariah and Rebecca Garton, was born August 14, 1858 near Decalb, Missouri. She passed away at her home in Guyman, Oklahoma in February 1952.

On October 23, 1879 she was united in marriage to Jubal M. Wood and to this union were born five children: Vernia and Carrie Wood of the home; Walter Wood of Kingsburg, Calif.; Mrs. Ray Crouse of Nash, Okla.; and Theodore Wood of Guyman, Okla. Also survive nine grandchildren and thirteen great grandchildren and a host of friends and relatives.

When at the age of 35 years she was blest with a good hope through Grace and although she never could see her way clear to unite with the church she loved and attended the Old School Baptist whenever opportunity was offered. She departed this life at the ripe old age of 93.

Her funeral was largely attended and I spoke to a large group of sorrowing relatives and friends after which her remains were laid to rest beside her husband who departed the life several years ago.

Hers was a life worthy of emulation. May God grant her family peace and reconciliation and a spirit to say, "Not my will but Thy will oh Lord be done".

L. L. SCHENCK

* * *

INDIGENTS

Arch Mariner, Va., $2.00; Mrs. R. L. Nelms, Ala., $1.00; Mildred G. Gordy, Mich., $2.00; A. C. Jessup, N. C., $3.50; Curtis Spitler, Ill., $1.00; Robert S. McGough, Ala., $5.00; Mrs. Bennie Clifford, Wash., $2.00; Mrs. G. P. Miller, Tex., $2.00; Mrs. F. R. Akers, Va., $2.00; R. R. Peters, Cal., $1.00; A Friend, Kan., $5.00; Mrs. F. M. Rushing, Tex., $2.00; Mrs. Della Horn, La., $2.00; A Friend, Md., $15.00; J. T. Chenowith, W. Va., $1.00; Ben F. Preston, Ore., $10.00.

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CORRECTION

The Obituary notice of Mrs. Laura Viola Morgan published in April 1952 paper should read Elder F. A. Collins conducted the funeral services instead of J. J. Collins.—Ed.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 120 ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND, JULY, 1952 No. 7

Mrs. Lytle Burns

I know not what the Future hath
Of marvel or surprise;
Assured alone of Life and Death
His mercy underlies.
Not now, but in the coming years,
It may be in the Better Land,
We'll read the Evening of our Tears
And there, sometime, we'll understand.
We'll catch the Broken Thread again
And finish what we here began.
Heaven will all mysteries explain
And then, Oh then, we'll understand.
We'll know why clouds instead of sun
Were over many a cherished plan,
Why song had ceased when scarce begun;
'Tis then, sometime, we'll understand.
God knows the way, He holds the key,
He guides us with an unerring hand.
Sometimes with tearless eyes we'll see,
Yes there, up there, we'll understand.
Then trust in God thru all thy days,
Fear not for He doth hold thy hand!
Tho dark the way, still sing and pray
For sometime, sometime, we'll understand.

Written April 2, 1950

* * *

Mrs. Annie Lowhead,
Amelia, Ohio.

DEAR SISTER LOWHEAD:

We received your card and were all pleased to hear from you all, and note your request that we write more often for publication. We very much appreciate your request but we do not think it best to burden our editors too much, taking up time and space from better material and more able writers than myself. Nevertheless, I will write as often as I deem it expedient or as the blessed Lord gives me a mind and ability to do so. I have learned, as He says, "Without Me ye can do nothing," and only by Him that "We live, move and have our being," and so it is that we are daily and momently being saved and preserved by His grace. As the apostle Paul says, "For by grace are ye saved", notice he says are ye saved, in present tense. Through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast." So when we hear men boasting it is evidence of itself that they know but little about the grace of God, if indeed anything at all. While the Lord's people were chosen and eternally saved by grace in Christ before the world was, before they existed in person on the earth. That grace did not stop back there but follows them on through time and preserves them daily through time into the end of time, and finally houses them in eternal Glory.

" 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved, How precious did that grace appear, the hour I first believed." "Grace all the work shall crown, through everlasting days, It lays in heaven the topmost stone, And well deserves the praise."

We do not receive grace as a reward because of volunteered obedience, but

to the contrary, we are made obedient by grace. "For by grace are ye saved and that not of yourself." If we had to render volunteered obedience, or could render volunteered, that much would be of ourselves, and would lack that much being all of grace, and so we would have that much to boast of; but with me I have nothing to boast of, except the blessings of my God, for with me it is grace first, grace last and grace all the time. Through many sufferings, toils and trials I have already come, 'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far, and grace I hope, will lead me home. Grace taught my soul to pray, and made eyes o'erflow, 'Twas grace that kept me to this day, and will not let me go.

I have generally tried to stay away from my own experience or travels, but it seems that I have drifted into it, so I will mention some of my travels. The first serious thought that I recall must not have been more than 4 or 5 years old, when an old man died, one of our closest neighbors. Father and mother went to the burying and took us children, which was the first burying that I can recall ever being at. When they lowered the corpse in the grave and began to shovel dirt in on him, serious thoughts began to run through my mind, I began to wonder if that would be the end of that old man, who was very old, or would he live again some time. I began to become sensitive to the fact that everybody was going in the grave some time, so it gave me much concern. I thought on it for days and nights, in fact, it never did leave me, but thoughts would run through my mind, and I would ask myself questions such as, where will we all go, then after death. So such thoughts continued to brother me all through my childhood days.

It seemed that I was not allowed to enjoy the sports that other children enjoyed because of the fear that was always before me. I would try to think at times that this fear was imaginary and try to throw it off, and it seemed that I could for a little while, but then it would seem to return with a greater force than ever. I would say to myself, "Lord what have I done?" I would feel so wretched, and so condemned that I thought everyone knew it, so I would slip off to myself and try to pray and beg God to forgive me. I felt my time on earth was short, I thought I knew positively that I would never live to see manhood. As the year would pass I would think it would be the last one that I would live to see. Each birthday I would say to myself, this would be the last one that I will see, but many of them have past and I am here yet and today is my birthday Dec. 21, 1951 and is the 68th one.

So I traveled on this way until I was 26 years old, I united with the Old School Baptist Church and was baptised Dec. 21, 1909 and I thought my troubles were over I felt so good for a while, then there came another that I had rassled with for years, I had many dreams and visions which is too numerous to mention, in this letter I will mention one. I thought I was going to a little village and on my way I came to a palace of a king. It was up to the right above and I saw the king sitting on the throne, so I felt that he would require something of me and I realized what it would be, so I dropped my head and thought maybe I could slip by but just as I reached the foot of the beautiful stairs, He sent His waiter to meet me there. She had in her hand a silver cup and it looked to me full of fine seed which looked as pure as gold.

She said here take these seed and sow them. I dropped my head and paused for a moment, and thought of my plans. I had just bought a little

farm and was in debt and had two or three small children. So I said, "I can't sow them now, but if you will wait until I get out of debt I will sow them." She said, "Well, you will have to sow them." She returned with the seed to the king. I went on my way feeling very much burdened, and thought that I had put the king off about sowing the seed. But nay I learned that he had just begun to school me, I must go through the lowest belly of hell and here the sea weeds wrapped around my head, and made to cry from the belly of hell that salvation is all of the Lord, and every act of obedience is of grace and grace alone.

'Twas grace that set me on the mountain top,
'Twas grace alone that brought me low,
Grace alone is all my prop,
For grace alone is all I know.

'Twas grace in Christ that gave me life,
By grace alone I persevere,
Grace alone is all my delight,
'Tis grace alone that I am here.

Grace alone is all my theme,
And grace alone is all my song,
Grace alone did my soul redeem
And grace alone has led me along.

By grace alone I am what I am,
By grace alone I stand or fall,
By grace alone I have hope in the Lamb,
For grace alone is my all and all.

'Twas grace alone that saved me from the fall,
And grace alone has housed me in,
For grace alone is a solid wall,
So grace alone will keep me to the end.

By grace alone He made His choice,
And sealed it in His Son,

By grace alone we are made to rejoice,
That we were chosen in Him before the world begun.

There is no end to grace story,
So I now shall come to a cease,
And ascribe to Him all the glory,
And hope by grace to lay down in peace.

I have just told my travels in past but it would take pages to tell in full. I do not recall the time when I did not have the impression to preach but fought and rebelled against it. I have been forty years in the wilderness of rebellion, making promises and breaking them and lying, saying that I can't preach and I will not try. At the same time preaching to the hill, rocks, trees, birds and the insects that fly and crawl on the earth, and in my sleep preach until I was entirely exhausted and could not speak above a whisper; yet I have tried all these many years to wear the impression out, but it has worn me out, so I give up, I have surrendered in full.

I am now willing by the power of God to do that which I feel is my duty to do. If I can do that which is pleasing to my God that which will relieve my burden and give me peace, I am not much concerned what man thinks about it. I feel that God will take care of the result. One planteth another watereth, but God giveth the increase.

Your Brother in tribulations,
H. L. ROGERS,
Denton, Ky.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES,
DEAR EDITOR:

With Brother H. L. Rogers permis-

sion, I am enclosing his letter to us, for publication, providing it meets with your approval. We enjoyed it so much we wish to share it with others.

We enjoy reading the Signs very much. I have been a subscriber since 1922, but it has been in our family for many years and I hope I can still take it as long as I live.

May God's richest blessings uphold you to carry on with the Signs to His own honor and glory.

Yours in hope,
ANNIE LOWHEAD,
Amelia, Ohio.

* * * *

"For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." Thus spoke the Apostle Paul, 2d Cor'-13-8. Now: Jesus is the truth, what can you say against Him. It is evident if Jesus does not dwell in you, you do not have the truth. And no matter how you talk, or loud you yell, you can do nothing against the truth, for the truth is not in you, you cannot say that Jesus is the Christ, but by the Holy Ghost. This is the truth; no matter what you think, or do about it, it stands out more bright, to the ones that have it, for God hath spoken. Now the Apostle says by grace are you saved, notice in the past tense: One would not think that any one would want to talk against this truth, but we hear it every day, I do not believe that, why that would make man a machine; no I would rather believe that I can do wonders, I can come when ever I take a notion, I believe that man is a free agent, (a contradiction of terms) speaking against the truth, but thanks be to God, the truth of God still stands, unharmed by the powers of earth, it is the truth that they do not believe, and do not walk by faith, for God as yet has not given them faith and are as eager to contradict His sayings, as the serpent in the garden, you shall Not surely die. This power was a liar from the beginning, and spoke not the truth. For there was no truth in him. Jesus; has said; "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day" Jn'6-44. Do you believe that? Yes we do; for the truth hath spoken. But can you always, or is there times of doubt, Peter: bragged about it, and told Jesus to his face, "Though all the men forsake thee I will not" The Lord told Peter, thou art an offence unto Me, for the Cock will not crow this night till thou deniest me Thrice. Are we today any better than Peter? He spoke against the truth, and a lesson to all of us. I am speaking to the people that have been born again, that have the truth in them. Listen brethren: how necessary it is for us all, to be shown again, that we are in His hand, as clay in the hands of the potter.

Now Jesus spoke to the Jews that believed on him, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Jno'8-32, here is a great consolation to the believer, the truth shall make you free. We are in the perilous time. The world is at war, nations rising against nations, unrest and fear, graft and greed, lying, stealing, and Men lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; not only among the nations but in the church. Men are not asking for the old ways, want something smooth, even to prophesying deceits; men of our own selves rising up drawing disciples after them. Crying peace where there is no peace. "But there were false prophets among the people, even there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift de-

struction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways: by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. "2d Peter-2-1&2." We answer why? Solomon answers, Eccles'8-11." Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." God's promise is sure, also his judgements. He that speaketh against the truth, is of the flesh, and it is manifest "Surely the wrath of man Shall praise THEE;" Psalms 76-10. He that is not with me is against me; (Says Jesus,) and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad" Math' 12-30. God's Chosen people, have the truth in them Jesus in you the hope of glory, the Kingdom Of God. I feel too little to go on, realizing I can do nothing against the truth, as I hope He has revealed it unto me, his grace is sufficient, His word is truth, His Power infinite, and Omnipotent, and all His ways are perfect, God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He, read Deut'32. I hope some that believe the truth as it is in Jesus, may glean a few thoughts from this imperfect, Article, First to the editors of "Signs" then if thought worthy to its pages.

GEO. L. WEAVER.

* * *

DEAR MRS. DEAN:

It was very kind of you to write me such a nice letter. I am not an Old School Baptist and there has never been one in my family that I know of. Pa liked them very much and read a lot of their papers and also went to the Primitive Baptist Church when he could. I have had the privilege of hearing Elder T. F. Adams preach once, also Elder D. V. Spangler once, which I enjoyed very much. Sometimes I wonder if I don't love the dear Old Baptists. I have enjoyed reading their papers very much. It seems at times that I could understand a little and be made to rejoice even though it would soon be gone. It was beautiful while it lasted. I have no one to talk to on the Scriptures, as there is no one in our neighborhood who would listen to them in the way I hope to understand them. My husband is a Methodist.

Mrs. Handy Truitt from Snow Hill has been to see me twice and once she brought another lady with her. They are Old Baptists. I enjoyed them very much. I do not insist upon people visiting me. I am not able to do my work and have no one to do it for me and I am not in a position to hire it done. It seems that active people of today would be wasting their time to come visit me. I am not finding fault. If it is God's Will for me to be contented with my lot, I really think I am more blest than to have the best of health and the most of wealth without a contented mind. I have lots of blessings. I have but little nervousness. I am not afraid and seldom lonely; neither do I have the so-called blues. There are beautiful white clouds floating around as well as the dark ones and the dark ones are often edged with white. Oh, that I could repeat the words of David "The Lord is my shepherd".

I seldom leave home any more. In fact, I find it hurts me of late to ride in the car. I love for people to come see me, if only for a little while. It helps to break the long days more than a healthy person could realize.

If I am ever to be clothed in a robe of righteousness, it will have to be done by the God of love through His precious Son, Jesus, the Savior of sinners. Sometimes I find my self saying "Me Lord, Me, a child of Thine, a sinner like me". I try to examine myself, only to find more and more worthlessness, too much

so to even find words to pray, for God to be merciful to me a sinner. I feel so alone. I find that Jesus was alone at times. He departed into a solitary place to pray. I find that I am so unlike Him. Will I ever drink the pure water, that I may thirst no more? There is no good that I have ever done. I am clothed in filthy garments. I seem to be living in a prison of sin with no power to break the wall to freedom; no way of escape; no strength to conquer the evil within.

I have received a nice letter from Mrs. Mildred Gordy from Ann Harbor, Michigan; a wonderful book from Elder Adams of Willow Springs, N. C.; and a nice book from Elder R. W. Rhodes of Lillie, Louisiana. Mrs. Truitt called and told me Elder Spangler had published in the Signs the letter I had written him. I can't recall what I did write him. I am afraid I am much out of place to write him. I think you good people have elevated me above my height, that I should fall at your feet and hide my face in shame. It reminds me of the words in Luke 19:40 "If these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out".

We live on a farm with no very close neighbors. My husband is not able to work and has not for years. We have two daughters and three grandchildren. I have never had the doctors tell me what my trouble is. I have to sit in dark and alone most every night. A lot of the time I keep a black scraf over my eyes. I see very poorly and am allowed to use my eyes very little. I have something heavy in my head. If I stoop or turn it moves and hurts and throbs hard when I lie on a pillow. The doctor wants me to have pictures made of it, but I am 66 years old and think it will be well to let it stay as it is. I have unconscious waves at times, lasting only a little while. My husband, Raymond, offers to stay at home with me, but I think it would be selfish to deprive him of going to the store in the evening. There were lots of Scriptures that have seemed to comfort me when I was able to read. There are still many beautiful things in life. I enjoy many sleepless hours at night when everything is quiet and still and I can think and think. At times some bad, uncontrollable thoughts creep in and there are some very pleasant ones too. The dear Lord is good to me. I have my good days and my bad ones. The bad ones are not too bad. I often think I find a sensation of happiness through them.

I have made this rather long, but I felt free to write to you after getting such a nice letter from you. I have been trying to finish this ever since I had your letter, which, if I make no mistake, has been more than three weeks. I am sorry about your eye and I hope you will find something to help it. May God bless and keep you always.

(Mrs.) INA PILCHARD

* * *

4113-4th. Avenue
Sacramento 17, California
March 16, 1952

DEAR ELDER SPANGLER AND
ASSOCIATE EDITORS,

Please accept the enclosed as payment for four years subscription to the SIGNS. My subscription expired November 1951 and please start from that date.

I shall never forget the enjoyment I received while in Europe during my stay in World War II. From the pages of the SIGNS was the only preaching that I could fellowship. I especially enjoyed Birch Rays letters because per-

haps he was in the service too and I could understand his circumstances physically and I hope spiritually.

During four years service in the army I never had the privilege of meeting a soldier who believed the Old Baptist doctrine.

I am not a member of the church but if not deceived I have been made to know that there is nothing that a poor sinner can do to merit Eternal Life. All one can do is pray, Lord save me or I perish!

"For by grace are ye saved, and that not your selves, it is the gift of God."

Humbly yours
HERMAN BUCKLER

* * *

Mrs. Velma French,
Palestine, Texas.

MY DEAR SISTER:

Your sweet letter arrived by Aunt Grace's hand and was so much appreciated. I read it to my father and the tears rolled down his cheeks; to be reminded again of the fellowship and love of God's dear children. You wrote so sweetly of God's love and power. That is what has sustained him all these 93 long years and is still his mainstay and I hope mine also. Without both we wouldn't be here long. Nor would we want to be if we had to depend upon our own hands, for mine are weak, soiled and altogether shaky.

My father prays daily to be released from this house of clay. He is tired, I pity him but can do nothing only make as comfortable as possible. He is like the traveler who approaches closer home, tired and weary with the cares of the day, all his thoughts are of rest and love at home—his heavenly home.

It is wonderful for you to be able to go to church so often and I'm so glad for you. So much of my time I feel so lost, I wonder if I know anything of the truth at all, if so, why do I feel so dreary? A few times in my uneventful life I have felt that maybe the Lord remembered me, but most of the time I have spent in the valley. Of course, even in the valley there are green pastures and still water. I know that He is there but I long for closer union and communion. Often at night when sleep is slow to come I shed tears wondering if I know anything of His love. I try to comfort myself with remembering the depths of despair and heights of happiness I have had.

When I was about 22 or 23 years old a feeling gradually came over me, causing me much anguish. I remembered my father and mother reading the Bible and talking of an experience of grace or being born again. I didn't understand much of their talk and the Bible which I tried so diligently to read was a closed book to me. I tried to pray the Lord to give me an experience of grace. Scarcely a night passed for the next ten years that my pillow was not wet with tears, all that time I prayed to be born again. At that time we lived in the state of Washington, far from my folks who probably could have helped me if they had known. I went to all the denominations of churches around there, but they lacked what I desperately needed. We finally sold our home and went back to Nebraska. You know Uncle George Jones was the pastor of the Primitive Baptist Church near our home. His preaching began to enlighten me, but broke my heart, as I could see what a sinner I was, and if I was ever to see Heaven something would have to be done for me. I cried so much it worried my dear husband and he wanted me to quit going to church. I told him I had to go, that I would feel no better at home. One day I was crying while ironing, the thought came that maybe the Lord

wanted me to kneel down to pray. I composed a nice prayer in my mind and went to the bedroom and knelt by my bed. I opened my mouth to say what I considered a nice prayer. All I said was, "Lord have mercy on me." I was so startled I quit because I hadn't meant to say that at all. Again I tried and again that was what come forth. I tried one more time; but each time all that come out my over-burdened heart was "Lord have mercy on me". I went back to my ironing with the thought in my mind, "I'm too far gone, I can't even pray!" In one of Uncle George's sermons he spoke of God's planting or lighting a candle in a heart, those are not his exact words, but the thought struck me and I wondered if all I had gone through was His work. I then wrote to Uncle George who had moved back to Iowa. He advised me to tell the church my feelings.

After a prolonged battle with my pride, for I once told my dear mother I would never belong to the Old School Baptist. I was finally made willing and eager to belong. I went before the church. They received me, saying they had been waiting and praying for me. It's no wonder I love them. They were so sweet and kind. When Uncle George raised me out of the water I think I had a taste of Heaven. Everything was so beautiful and "Not a wave of trouble rolled across my peaceful breast." The thought came how wonderful it would be to die while I was so happy. These are some of my thoughts as I lie awake at night. I love to hear the truth preached if I am not deceived. I am so glad I can place my trust in a God who can do all things, even direct my feeble steps.

Pray for me if you feel you can. I deeply appreciate your letter to my father. Lovingly yours

ETTA DONLAVY,
9428 Madison Ave.
Southgate, Calif.

TO THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

I feel I want to write to you, so will make the attempt. If it is of the flesh it will profit no one and I will be glad for you to destroy it. For the scripture says, now if any man build on this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay and stubble, every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it because it shall be revealed by fire, and the first shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

I've read something about works lately and I've had it on my mind a lot and if so be it is God's will, I'd like to say a few things, if it please God, I do not want to distort the truth. He says I have laid a foundation according to the grace of God which is given unto me as a wise master-builder, read the 10th and 11th verses of 1st chap. of 1st Cor. Now, He says He hath laid that foundation according to the grace of God which is given Him as a wise master-builder. But let every man take heed how he builds thereon, and again He says, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid," which is Jesus Christ. It is laid in the past. It has already been laid, altogether He says He has laid the foundation.

Now, I'm just telling what I think I see in these works. They are not revealed what they are until the day and the fire hath proved them, or tried them. So now whereof can we boast? How do we know what good things we have done? I thing this fire is going on all the time, for to me, this is the day of Jesus Christ and has been ever since He stretched out His arms and died on the cross and then arose and is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

He told them after he arose that all power both in heaven and on earth hath been given into His hands.

I know that in the flesh, I cannot please God, and the scripture confirms it is so. So then am I unprofitable? Let me ask you one thing. If I am a child of God, and we are supposing a big thing, and that spirit of Christ dwells in me, do you really think I am going to do the things I shouldn't do spiritually I mean, and then be lost forever, or eternally? Is this according to the holy writ? No it is not. Though the flesh will still be flesh yet the spirit will bring forth fruit unto righteousness. But I do not do it, for far as I the fleshly man knows it may be wood or stubble, and I build on and only the fire will try it and show what it is. But is that building going to be part missing? Whose building is it anyhow? Is Christ the foundation to be left incomplete? Is His bride to be an unsilghtly, haphazard thing constructed by us humans? No, I say. I know better, this building is perfection itself and is being built by God Himself, and I know it will be perfect.

The very things that hurt me now while I am being chiseled into shape are the things that constrain me and hedge me round about. I have done many things I was sure was wrong in my life and done them just for contrariness, to be contrary to my Creater, if I know whereof I speak. I have had these very things to be turned into a blessing for myself or someone else. Then I have labored hard for the Lord and was so sure I should receive a blessing for it and felt so good over it, and then it became as a stench in my nostrils and I have felt as if I were moving in the valley of dry bones.

Now then according to this you will say, oh, well then do as you please, it will come out all right anyway. I ask you, why can't I do as I please? Well, friends and brethren I hope in Christ, I have learned long ago I was a prisoner, I was not my own keeper. I cannot walk alone, I cannot think for myself, I cannot draw a breath except power be given me to do so. You know I have believed since a little child, that nothing, and I mean nothing, can move or have its being upon this globe of ours except by the power of God. I hope this belief is never taken from me. I have been in places where it was impossible for me to help myself, and I do know only God's power helped me. One little instance, I was being dragged behind a runaway team and the lines were wrapped around my foot. My last conscious thought, "Is this the end?" A voice said, "Not yet" and I was released and let go. I regained my senses in time to run and turn the team from the gate to save my baby and little girl from perhaps being killed. Did I do it? No, I know better than that.

Maybe it is all right to believe that after we are born again we become good if we try, and are able to perform good works, then God rewards us for it, I say maybe that is right. But I do not believe it, and only God can change me. Maybe I'm a devil, I don't know, if so, I reckon it is because God wants me a devil, I honestly don't think He'd let me do as I please, if I was a devil. I believe if I am born of the spirit of Christ, I will be as Jesus said: John chap. 3 verse 8, "So is everyone that is born of the spirit." I will go on stumbling along trying to do what I think is right, except when I get too contrary maybe, but still knowing that of myself I can do nothing, having no confidence in the flesh. But trusting and hoping that if God is a God of all power, He will not fail in His purpose in the salvation of His people. The blessed Master said "Fear not little flock it is your

Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." My counsel shall stand, and I will do all pleasure." In this kind of a God I can put my trust, and if I do so it is because, He has drawn me and if He has drawn me, it is because He has loved me with an everlasting love.

I hope to remain a little sister in Christ, if one at all. Trusting only in Him and not in anything I or anyone else can do.

As ever,
MARY L. ECKARD

* * *

March 21, 1952

DEAR BROTHER SPANGLER,

I wish to tell you just how much I enjoyed reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Had I known a paper like this was published I would have subscribed for it long ago.

Enclosed you will find a check for one year's subscription.

There is not a Primitive Baptist church here in Fort Lauderdale. The nearest one is Miami. I finally found out just where it was located but still was not sure if it was of the same faith as there are other churches that use the name "Primitive Baptist" that are entirely different from the real old time Baptist.

But just as soon as we got close enough to the church and I heard them singing those old time hymns then I knew that was the Church.

Since I am only 25 my husband can not understand why I am such a firm believer of my own religion and want to travel so far to attend the Primitive Baptist Church since there are so many churches here in this town. He can not understand this because he is of different faith.

I feel that I will get a great deal of enjoyment from the SIGNS and also the OLD FAITH CONTENDER.

May the good Lord continue to bless you and the editors of the paper.

MRS. SHERRILL BURLESON

* * *

502 S. Broadway
Marlow, Okla.

ELDER DAVID SPANGLER

DEAR BROTHER,

As my time is up to send in my $3.00 for another year for the best Baptist paper published anywhere. My husband and I believe every word the paper contains to be the Bible truth and may the Lord bless you Brother and all the children of God that write for it.

My dear father, J. K. Arnn took the SIGNS years ago for 25 years or more. He lived to be 102 years old. Mother and father joined the Primitive Baptist Church in 1887 and Mother died the 14th of October 1940 at the age of 98 and they had been married 75 years.

Seems I just cannot do without the paper as that is most all of the preaching we get. There are those that call themselves Primitive Baptist but some have music in the church, youth camps and such like. I am for the old path and except we agree we cannot walk together. So we do not ever go to church.

My dear Brother some time when you have time and a mind would like to have your views on Isaiah 45th chapter and 7th. verse. Here is a lot I do not understand and I would like to be enlightened. But we always have believed in the predestination of all things and I don't believe it makes God the Author of sin for where there is no law there is no transgression so there is no law over God for anything he does there is no sin attached. Am I right?

Excuse this poorly written letter and may the dear Lord keep and guide you and bless you long on the earth to declare the whole council of God, and comfort us poor mortals that don't hear any preaching. Pray for us when at the

throne of Grace and may we all meet in a better world than this.

Yours in hope
FORREST & ETTA JONES

* * *

O'Donnell, Texas
April 1, 1952

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS,

I am enclosing a check for five dollars for my renewal to the SIGNS for another year and the rest may be used to carry on the dear paper.

It is my meat and drink and it is next to the Bible with me and I read and reread them. I loan them to others that likes to read them and I wish that I could write as others do, but if I did it would crowd out better things.

I try to be reconciled to my lot and that if I can be numbered with them, Brother Spangler, it is enough.

I want to thank you after so long a time for the book, SHOWERS OF RAIN and also for sending the SIGNS to Sister Garner. I sure did enjoy reading the SHOWERS OF RAIN.

May God bless you and all the Editors in your work and keep the SIGNS coming to the dear Saints. I hope I can be able to read the rest of my days here.

As ever a sinner
MRS. F. M. BUSHING

* * *

Memphis, Tenn.
March 28, 1952

DEAR BROTHER SPANGLER AND WIFE,

It seems I just have to write you this morning and try in my weak way to tell you your visit with us is one we will never forget.

Your sermon from the 53rd. chapter of Isaiah was most surely magnified and unfolded beautifully! It still lingers sweetly in my heart this morning. I read three or four chapters with the 53rd. in Isaiah and 15th. chapter of John. Also some in Hebrew all with the sweetest feeling of understanding. I have desired to give God all the praise and honour to whom it is due.

There is a Scripture which says in Romans 10-15, "How shall they preach except they be sent. As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things, that reading is also the entire good.

Now I am not striving to write you a lengthy letter that might be weary words without any meaning; but I could not rest without writing these few lines.

Hope it was God's will to bless your visit together with all whom you assembled on this trip and I do hope it will also be His will that you will come again. I have talked with others here and they expressed their feelings concerning the sweetness and joy while you delivered your sermon.

When our Lord opens a window to His storehouse of mercy. We there can sing the sweet song of Zion, Glorious things of Thee are spoken. Zion's city of our God! There is no end to speaking of these things so long as they are with us.

Yours in hope of a better life
in the world to come.

MRS. LUTHER CAMPBELL

* * * *

This is an appeal to our delinquent subscribers. Won't you please check the date appearing on your paper, and if you are behind, catch up. Getting behind with most of our readers is an oversight, yet it means a lot to those who carry on the work. Such things are a matter of business, and we are commanded not to be slothful in business.

Thank You.

EDITOR.

DEAR ELD. SPANGLER:

I thank you for sending me the requested booklet. It was passed on to a friend who will appreciate it, as I have another copy myself.

I am enclosing a letter which I feel the readers of the Signs will appreciate, as they have read several short letters of Sister Donlavy's. She was reluctant to have the letter published as it was not written for publication, but finally gave her consent.

I have never met Sister Etta until two years ago, but have known of her ever since my sister married her father's youngest brother. I knew her parents very well when I was young. Many times I have listened attentively to the conversations of Bro. Z. I. Jones and his Bro. Jesse R. Jones, my sister's husband, discussing the plans and purposes of an all-wise, covenant-keeping God—His power, love and mercy, His foreknowledge and predestination. Both loved to read the dear old Signs and to defend the doctrine of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, contained therein. I know that Bro. Zack has been a reader of the Signs over 60 years, as he was a deacon and the clerk of the presbytery which ordained my father, Eld. F. M. Jordan in Iowa 56 years ago.

I was so glad I could visit him again while in California. That soul-inspiring visit in Sister Etta's home in company with my sister, niece and my brother, his wife and mother-in-law will never be forgotten by me, and I hope to go again some day.

Eld. Spangler, please note that my name is Velma and not Thelma. It has been printed incorrectly twice in the past year and my correspondents are becoming confused. I do not mean to be critical, for I know you have had a big undertaking and I congratulate you upon the way you have handled your heavy responsibility. With Christian love. Your little sister,

(MRS.) VELMA JORDAN FRENCH
209 W. Pine St.,
Palestine, Texas.

* * *

Dudley P.O. Muskoka
Ont. Canada
March 31, 1952

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
ROUTE 2, BOX 636
Annapolis, Maryland

DEAR ELDER SPANGLER,

When brother Cyrus Risler, deacon of the New York City church let me know you had accepted the editorship of the SIGNS of the TIMES with Elder Wood as assistant editor, I was truly thankful to the Giver of all good gifts for I know Brother and Sister Risler were assuming the responsibility of the publication until an Editor could be appointed which seemed to be an astonishing undertaking at their time of life. Surely they were good and faithful servants.

Certainly the SIGNS of the TIMES would be missed by those of us denied church privileges and the companionship of those of like faith even though we may be blessed to have and enjoy a good library of many who were deeply taught of our Lord and in the spirit of love expounded sound doctrine, christian experience and the absolute sovereignty of God.

Although both you and Elder Wood are strangers to me in the flesh, I hope and believe we are one in Christ Jesus who as time advances becomes more and more our all and in all—the altogether lovely—our refuge and hope.

My love to all brethren
Your sister in hope

ALMA VIOLA MORTIMER

Signs Of The Times,
R. 2 Box 637,
Annapolis, Md.
Dear Editors:

Enclosed find $5.00 for which apply to my subscription for 2 years. I have been reading the dear Old Signs for over 50 years.

When I was a boy I would slip it into my shirt and hide out into the woods and look for the experiences, have had many a cry out by myself over my sinful condition, O how could such a just and holy God ever have mercy on a sinner like me.

I remember one Sunday spending several hours in the woods reading two of the Signs and that evening when I got home my Father gave me a real scolding for going swimming and staying in the water too long, he said just look at your eyes how red they are, I took the scolding and did not tell him I had not been near the river.

One day when I was about nine years old I came through my mother's bed room where she was sick in bed and said Mother we got a new Signs today she said well son, take good care of all of them, maybe some of the children will want to read them some of these days, I could hardly keep the tears back but I did not want her to know I was interested then in reading them.

One time when I was in my teen years, one Sunday night while my Father had gone to the train with the minister I told mother I did something in church that day, that I sure regretted and she said what was that? I said I cried in church, she said that is not bad and a sweet smile went over her face, and she began to talk and console me tenderly with an understanding that only a mother with an experience of grace knows about such things. I did have a good Old Baptist Mother and Father.

And a great comfort in my younger days was my grandfather M. V. Dykes that came from Tennessee to Texas in the early days, he was a great fireside preacher and lived to a ripe old age.

I was blessed to be with two of the associated Editors of the Signs at Associations last year, Elder Lambert and Elder Griffin and I am so glad to see the Signs contending for the same grand Old Doctrine of Salvation by Grace.

Love to all the house-hold of faith.

E. B. AULT

* * *

CONCLUSION OF THE ARTICLE OF HUBERT FAULK'S PUBLISHED IN JUNE SIGNS

To answer the charge of those who say that God is just and holy but would be an unjust God if He should choose some men for eternal salvation and beneficiaries thereof, and reject others, the preacher on that day made this answer: JACOB HAVE I LOVED AND ESAU HAVE I HATED which scripture is entitled to the same degree of credence and belief as any other scripture but does not ascribe to God the charge that He is unjust in doing what He will with His own. I do not understand very much of it but I am no longer confused. I am made to wonder thought, about the state of mind of the poor fellow in the far off jungle lands of Africa and South America, who until the coming of the missionaries never heard of God or of Christ but still, in his simple way worshiped a Supreme Being and meditated upon a life hereafter. What must be his state of mind after one missionary comes to him and tells him that this Supreme Being is God; that God had a Son called Christ whom God sent into the world to be slain for the sins of all mankind and be the Saviour of all men who would accept Him as their personal Saviour

and who should, upon accepting Christ be baptized because Christ set the example by submitting to baptism. Following this missionary and his teaching still another one comes along and tells this poor fellow of God and of Christ who died for the sins of all men but that Christ's sacrifice means nothing unless man will believe, repent and be baptized by being immersed in water.

As the poor fellow ponders these two theories another missionary comes to him to tell him of this same God and Christ who want to save all men who will have faith in Christ and turn from their sins, but who cannot save a man who refuses to meet these requirements and as a reward for those who do meet these simple requirements, crowns of glory await them in Heaven.

The missionary insists that the poor fellow accept this Christ, meet these requirements and be baptized into the church by the simple method of having water sprinkled on his head. This subjected the poor fellow to having his uneducated, unlearned mind being taxed with three different methods by which he could attain unto that which he had hoped for before he ever saw the first missionary. While he wrestled with the matter without having accepted either one of the three plans put to him already, another missionary approached him. We can just hear him thinking unto himself as the missionary introduces himself: 'Oh no, not another one.' This bearer of good tidings told the fellow of God and of Christ coming to earth and while here Christ set up a church for which a head would be needed after Christ returned to Heaven and to supply this need Christ appointed a man named Peter to head the church, and upon the death of Peter another man became the head of the church and so on and so on down to this time, a man without fault or sin has been the head of that church and has been empowered to proclaim the doctrine which its members must believe and the practices which they must follow.

The missionary made it plain that membership in this church is essential to the eternal salvation of the soul. Getting into this church was simple and easy. Be sprinkled with holy water and pledge allegiance to the head of the church and you are saved. When sin overtakes you, go to one of the ministers of the church and he will make things right by interceding with Mary, the mother of Christ, who will use her influence with Christ to get you forgiven.

This, added to what he had already been told by three other devout bearers of glad tidings, was more than the poor heathen could bear up under and retain his sanity. The last missionary had walked away to give the fellow time to think it over. The man stood there, his head swimming and his steps unsteady. As with one last resolve to escape further confusion, he stood erect for an instant and then darted into the heavy brush as he saw another white man with a book under his arm approaching at a distance. We might well believe that this poor heathen, when well within the protecting arms of his jungle retreat, fell on his knees and prayed to that Supreme Being to whom his soul within him had appealed on many occasions.

* * * *

DEAR BROTHER,

Enclosed you will find cash to renew my SIGNS. I look forward each month for my paper, because I thoroughly enjoy it. From each book I am taught of the things I believe in. I read and reread them each time being lifted up in hope and faith. May God bless you in your wonderful work.

A Sister in hope
Mrs. L. L. HUTSON

EDITORIALS

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P. O. Box 86 Annapolis, Md.

CORRESPONDING CIRCULAR LETTER

To the Lexington Roxbury Association, now in session with the First and Second Churches of Roxbury, at Halcottville, N. Y., September 12th and 13th, 1951, to the churches and associations with us, with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN IN A MOST PRECIOUS HOPE, which we have in Christ Jesus:—The time has come again and another year has passed. Many things have come to pass with us that have made us fearful, hesitant and questioning. We have lost many of our loved ones of whom we all know and we have prayed much for guidance, and we have wept. As we have come to these words it brings to mind something that, God willing, we might speak a little from, and is found to be in a manner as the shortest sentence in the whole Bible and sweet to us. It is found in the gospel of John, the eleventh chapter, thirty-fifth verse, and it says, "Jesus wept." What goes through our mind when we think of that? To you, the children of God, it is the story of Lazarus, Mary and her sister Martha. The word says in part, Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, and Lazarus was sick and died. Mary and Martha had called Jesus to come and Lazarus was four days in the grave. Both Mary and Martha had said in turn, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. And then "Jesus wept." O gracious and jealous God, we see now why thy Son Jesus wept, if only through a glass darkly. The word says, "And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hath heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always." "Father, I thank thee"! Think of that, brethren. Jesus' weeping then, was in love and faith, and thankfulness to the Father. The saints of God, do they go to the Father in thanksgiving first? The Father of Light, in whom there is no variableness, and as the hymn says, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow"? We believe the true saints of God do.

Jesus says, Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do, shall he do also: and greater works than these shall I do, because I go unto my Father. Such love for you, my brethren and children of Christ Jesus, such love has never been known, and this same Jesus prayed for you, prayed for us. Do you wonder that Jesus wept, in thanksgiving to his omnipotent, sovereign Father? This wonderful Jesus wept in love and faith and thanksgiving. Such was his abiding love for the Father, for he said, I knew that thou hearest me always. Think of this. *I knew* that thou hearest me always. Did you ever hear of such love

of Father and Son? The Son with eyes lifted up to heaven and praying in thankfulness to the Father. Here, too, is presented the blessed Trinity. What love is here, what sweet communion. Jesus knew that soon he was to be crucified, and he talks to his disciples, saying, "He that seeth me, seeth Him that sent me." In another place in John's gospel, the apostle Jesus loved, we find it says, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, *as I have loved you,* that ye also love one another." Think then what Jesus wept for. For you! for us! Such love has never been known until you, brethren, his children, had come to a knowledge of his tender loving care.

Another place in chapter fourteen it says, "I will not leave you comfortless," and this is where the Holy Spirit comes. To have the living God nigh unto us, to have the sweet privilege of calling upon his adorable name *in all things.* To have his power and mercy directed toward us, to have the light of his blessed countenance to shine upon us and to have him manifesting himself and abiding with us, from day to day with infinite grace. Now is not that a love beyond compare, and do you wonder that Jesus wept? and are we prayerful and thankful enough?

Now Esau lifted up his voice and wept. Jacob lifted up his voice and wept. David lifted up his voice and wept at the grave of Abner, and Peter, what did he do? He remembered the words of Jesus which were said unto him, "Before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice," and he went out and wept bitterly. And what does it say about Jesus? It says, "And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me." And I knew that thou hearest me always. Brethren, we cannot speak too much of God's love for us in that he gave his only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, as an offering for us.

When you are in distress, troubled over many things, which way or to whom do you, or to whom do we turn? Jesus gives us an example here, but instead we complain, lament, clamor or kick against the pricks. But it says, "Jesus wept," an expression of sorrow in the flowing of tears and deep grief. Was not Jesus a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief? And Jesus said, "I thank thee, Father." Do we turn to him for all things? Do we? To him who is able to keep you from falling. He continues to pray in thanksgiving, and says, And I knew that thou hearest me always. Do we as followers of Christ Jesus have the faith and pray as we ought, first, last and always in thanksgiving to the Father as Jesus did? In the seventeenth chapter of this same book of John's gospel. (Read it all, brethren and friends who love the truth.) It begins with these words, "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven," and closes with, "And I have declared unto them thy name (meaning you his children), and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." Have you ever heard of such love? And we say again, Are we thankful enough? We think on these things. It is then that the pure white raiment is put on; pure white linen is the righteousness of the saints, and remember, beloved ones, that Jesus wept and Jesus prayed for you, his children. Remember and turn to him in prayer, humbly and sincerely in love, and he will give you rest. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you, and may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the

love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Ass't Mod.
EDWARD K. ADSIT, Clerk.

NOTICE

In the February Signs we published an account of the celebration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Welch Tract Church, near Newark, Delaware. This is the oldest Old School Baptist church in America.

We have had so many calls for extra copies, and our supply is exhausted, that I have decided to publish in book form a short history of the church, much more complete than the article appearing in the Signs. A copy of a number of the original minutes, together with articles of Faith, etc. will be included.

We hope to be able to give this book away for any new subscription sent in at regular price. The price we think will be one dollar per copy.

Before undertaking this work I would like to hear from all who are interested in securing a copy, either for themselves or someone else.

EDITOR.

ORDINATION OF A DEACON

On Sunday, February 24, 1952 the Reidsville, N. C. Church met 2:30 P.M. to ordain Brother Z. J. McKinney to the office of deacon.

A presbytery was formed and named the pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, as moderator.

Deacons from other churches were invited to take part, and the following came forward.

Brother Gold Minter, from Dan River.

Brother C. W. Cagle, from Greensboro.

Brother A. J. Paschall, from New Hope.

Nominations for a spokesman for the church were called for. Brother Alonza Sommers was named and elected.

The question was asked: Is the church of the same mind as to wanting Brother McKinney to serve as deacon; answer was in the affirmative.

The moderator stated some of the duties of deacons reading 3rd chapter of 1st Timothy 8-13. Prayer was offered by Elder Harvey Smith.

Elder Spangler delivered the charge to the deacons and the church, dwelling on the 9th verse of the chapter mentioned, stating that the mystery of the Faith means a knowledge of the doctrine and order. Also saying that the deacon is to know no man after the flesh but serve in humility and love but with boldness, emphasizing that we should be faithful in the house of God.

Brother McKinney was given the hand of fellowship by the Presbytery.

Brother McKinney was then delivered to the church as deacon.

Motion was then carried to adjourn.

Elder D. V. SPANGLER, Moderator
KATE MITCHELL, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Sister Nannie Lou Evans was born June 5th, 1877, the daughter of Wm. G. Farthing and Nannie W. Thomson Farthing.

She passed away January 5, 1952, making her stay on earth 75 years.

She was married in early life to Ben F. Evans. To this union thirteen children were born, nine of whom survive.

Sister Evans united with the Primitive Baptist church at Malmaison in August 1907, and was baptized by the pastor, Elder J. M. Lewis.

She was indeed a mother in Israel, a lovely sister and faithful to her

church, often attending when she could not walk alone to her seat.

She was afflicted for many years and bore her sufferings with patience and fortitude.

She enjoyed entertaining the Baptist in her home as long as she was able, and loved to speak of the Goodness and mercies of God to her.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder Cecil Turner, assisted by Elder W. R. Dodd.

Her body was laid to rest in Highland Burial park, there to await the second coming of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ.

We feel that our loss is her eternal gain. Therefore be it resolved,

1st, That we bow in humble submission to the will of God, who doeth all things well.

2nd, That we extend our hearfelt sympathy to her bereaved family.

3rd, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family, a copy be spread on our church books, and one each to Old Faith Contender and the Signs of the Times, Inc for publication.

Done by order of the church in Conference Saturday before the first Sunday in February, 1952.

Elder CECIL TURNER, Moderator
A. H. COX, Clerk.

* * *

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The annual three day meeting of Old School of Predestination Baptist of Riffe, Washington is appointed to be held with Bethel Church. Meeting will begin August 15th and continue three days, The Lord willing. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

For further information, write Rosa Coleman, clerk, Riffe, Washington.

Elder I. F. COLEMAN, Moderator
Riffe, Washington.

The Lord willing, Pleasant Grove church of Yakima, Washington will hold a three day meeting August 8, 9 and 10th at Naches, Washington, 14 miles Northwest of Yakima on Highway 410.

Phone Naches 3561, or write D. H. Baker or Mrs. Susie Shanks.

Elder A. D. HUGHETT, Pastor

* * *

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Staunton River Association will be held with Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church, Friday, Saturday and second Sunday in July, 1952.

The church house is on road No. 726 which leads East off U. S. route 29 about six miles north of Danville, Va. Church house is about two miles from Route 29.

MRS. KATE DODD, Church Clerk

OBITUARIES

THOMAS PILLNER DAVIS

Brother Thomas Pillner Davis, most generally known and affectionately called "Bud Davis" by his many friends and neighbors and as Brother "Bud" by a large number of the brethren, passed away at his home in El Dorado, Arkansas, Thursday afternoon December 27, 1951. Brother Davis was a retired carpenter and a life long resident of Union County, Arkansas, born near Calion, in Union County, January 4, 1870, making his stay on earth 81 years 11 months and 23 days.

He leaves to mourn his going his faithful wife, Mrs. Nellie Hair Davis, four sons, Jesse Davis, of Junction City, Dewey, Travis and Wade Davis, all of El Dorado, five daughters, Mrs. Bessie Wilson, Danville, Ill., Mrs. Gus Rainwater, El Dorado, Mrs. Marie Pyle and Mrs. Blanche Pyle of Smackover and Mrs. Tressie Pyle of El Dorado, Thirty-two grandchildren, nine great grandchildren and a host of other relatives and friends.

Brother Davis united with Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church many years ago and was baptized by the late Elder W. K. Smith. Shiloh Church has long ceased to exist and records of the date are not available. After joining there he moved to El Dorado and placed his membership with Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church where it remained until his death. He was devoted to his church and was regular in attendance on meeting days up until his last illness which illness confined him at home for more than a year. Prior to his last illness he had for several years been blessed and

privileged to visit and go among our brethren to many meetings and Associations in several states which he greatly enjoyed. He made manifest that on such visits he was given to feast with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Brother Davis delighted in reading his Bible and was well read in the scriptures and in conversation he was an able proclaimer and defender of the Doctrine of God our Saviour. He was enabled to be steadfast and was a firm believer in a Sovereign and all powerful God, salvation by grace and a risen Christ.

He manifested a blessed hope of the second coming of Christ and the resurrection of the body.

Funeral services were held at Bethlehem Church at 10 o'clock Saturday December 29, 1951 and conducted by the writer in the presence of a large crowd of relatives, brethren and friends. His body was laid to rest in Bethlehem Cemetery to await the resurrection when, our hope is, it will be raised in the glorified image of the blessed Saviour.

May God bless the bereaved family and all that are bereaved and that mourn his passing.

ELDER W. A. SPEER

MRS. ESMA FREE, was born in Upshur County, Texas near Glenwood, November 8th, 1889. Departed this life January 12, 1952. She is survived by her husband, W. C. Free, Gilber, Texas, two brothers D. W. Richardson, Longview, Texas, and M. A. Richardson, Gladewater, Texas, two sisters Mrs. H. C. Jamison Freer, Texas and Mrs. R. C. Killingsworth, Longview, Texas and many nieces, nephews, and a host of friends.

Sister Free was the daughter of Mr. & Mrs. J. F. Richardson. She was married to W. C. Free February 9, 1919.

Her and her husband manifested a great love for the Old Baptist by faithful attendance at the services. On the second Sunday in August, 1943 they presented themselves before the church for membership, was received with much joy, and were faithful to attend services as long as they were able.

Sister Free was an afflicted person because of a broken ankle, but bore her afflictions with much patience, and was always cheerful. Her greatest pleasure was in meeting with and serving her brethren and sisters. Her home was ever open to her brethren and friends.

The funeral services were conducted at Fellowship church where she held membership, by the unworthy writer, her pastor, and Elder S. C. Davenport, the writer using the last six verses of the fourth Chapter of first Thessalonians. Burial was in Mt. Old cemetery where she now awaits the ressurection morning.

Truly her church feels a great loss, but we are made to rejoice with a wonderful hope that our loss is her gain. May the Lord bless her afflicted and dear husband in the prayer of her unworthy pastor.

T. A. WALL

In as much as it has pleased our Heavenly Father to take unto Himself our dear Sister Belle Griffeth, be it resolved that Macedonia Church ask to be given grace to say, "Thy will be done," and vow in humble submission; knowing that it is good when one of the Household of Faith can depart and be at rest to wait the coming of our Lord.

We deeply sympathize with the bereaved family. May they be comforted by the spirit of the Heavenly Father, whom she loved to worship.

Done by order of the Church while in conference, July, 1951.

Elder C. W. LANDERS, Moderator
L. K. FOSTER, Clerk

ELDER T. D. WALKER

It pleased God in his infinite mercy to call from our midst our husband, father and faithful friend, Elder Thomas D. Walker from the scenes of times to those heavenly mansions, on April 13th, 1952.

Elder Walker was born March 4, 1872 in Retra, Tenn., and lived the greater part of his life there. He was united in marriage to Elizabeth Jane Copeland November 15, 1889. To this union was born three children.

In early life he experienced a working of grace by the blessed holy spirit, and felt humbly grateful to an all wise God to be counted among the elect.

He united with Mt. Hebron Primitive Baptist Church at Saddy, Tenn. very early in life. Was ordained to the ministry March 29th, 1896. He was a faithful servant of God, and served several churches in both Tennessee and Georgia. In 1927 he moved to California and was active in the ministry in the Primitive churches in Southern California until death. He ever held dear to his heart the doctrine of Election, and Predestination as set forth in the holy scriptures, and never failed to preach them in his labors among Gods flock.

On July 5th, 1951 he was confined to his bed with an extremely high fever. From then until his departure he never regained his former strength. I visited him often during his illness, and I never saw anyone so reconciled to his Lord's will. It seemed to be a privilege to him to suffer. All his conversation was on the love and mercy of God bestowed upon us unworthy creatures through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

He has left this land of sorrow for that bright and glorious home prepared for God's Elect.

Surviving are his widow and faith companion, two sons, Thomas of Hollywood, Calif. and Mark of Burbank, Calif. (one daughter deceased).

Funeral services were conducted at Pierce Funeral Home by Elder L. O. Moore. Burial was in Valhalla Cemetery in Burbank, Calif.

Oh happy harbor of the saints
Oh sweet and pleasant sails
In thee no sorrow may be found,
No grief, no tears, no trials.

—Myrtle Cross.

Addie Henslee Parker, of Murray, Ky., Calloway County, departed this life October 18, 1951, making her stay on earth 84 years and 6 days. Sister Parker was the daughter of Wm. J. and Martha C. Smith Henslee. She was married to L. B. Parker January 20, 1884. Brother Parker preceded her in death five years.

To this union was born ten children, three of them died at an early age. Those surviving are Miss Ethel Parker, who lives at the home, Mrs. Tronie Evans, Mrs. Vela Smith and Mrs. Mary Elkins. Sons, Lowery, Dunas, and Otis. Aunt Add as she was lovingly called by the Primitive Baptist family, united with the New Salem church November, 1904, going home to her friends telling them the reason of her hope in the Lord. She was baptised by Elder J. P. Chandler. She later moved her membership to Old Shiloh church in Calloway County, and represented her church year after year in the union meetings and associations, when there was no one else to do so. Aunt Add had an unusual and beautiful singing voice which attracted even strangers to her. Her cheerfulness, soundness in doctrine, good views on what she thought the bible sets forth and always ready to give a reason of her hope, graced her every day walk. She was a beautiful example of what she professed to believe. Yes, so many of us often said, While we can see her walking and talking among us, we will have evidence, living evidence, that Jesus lives.

Her funeral was preached Saturday A.M. before the 3rd Sunday in October, 1951. Two Elders were called, Elder Paul Poyner and Elder J. N. Darnall of little River Association.

These two Elders had often held services in her home, where the funeral was preached, and which was much like a regular Eleven O'clock church service. The songs consisted of Aunt ADD's special selections; afterward SCRIPTURE READING AND PRAYER by Elder Paul Poyner, followed by a most outstanding sermon by Elder Darnell that poor, frail hopeful creatures could never hope to hear excelled by any sent servant of God, using as a text Isaiah 40th Ch. stressing on the part, comfort ye my people, saith the Lord. Surely the family, relatives and the friends of Old Baptist were comforted and consoled in the dealings of Our God while hearing the sermon.

Elder PAUL POYNER.

Funeral for Mrs. Vina Belle Griffith, 80, who had made her home at 1003 West Fourth with a daughter, Mrs. Elmer Ward, in recent years and who had lived in Sweetwater since 1929, was held at the West Side Baptist Church.

Mrs. Griffith died in Sweetwater Hospital at nine Saturday. She had been ill for some time, had been in the hospital since May 14 and had undergone surgery three days before her death.

She was born in Denton County and was married there in 1891 to Ison Griffith. They lived in Denton County for ten years, and later lived in Paul's Valley, Okl., and Coleman before moving to the Sweetwater area. Mr. Griffith died in 1923 while they were living in Scurry County.

Mrs. Griffith belonged to the Primitive Baptist Church.

Officiating for her funeral were the Rev. Dee Cates, and Elder R. V. Sarrells. Interment was in the Lone Wolf Cemetery beside the grave of Mr. Griffith.

HE LEADETH ME

In pastures green? not always; sometimes He
Who knoweth best, in kindness leadeth me
In weary ways where heavy shadows be.
Out of the sunshine warm and soft and bright,
Out of the sunshine into darkest night,
I oft would faint with sorrow and affright.
Only for this,—I know He holds my hand,
So whether in a green or desert Land
I trust, although I may not understand.
And by still waters? No, not always so;
Oftimes the heavy tempest round me blow,
And o'er my soul the waves and billows go.
But when the storms beat loudest, and I cry
Aloud for help, the Master standeth
And whispers to my soul, "Lo, it is I."
Above the tempest wild I hear Him say,—
"Beyond this darkness lies the perfect day;
In every path of thine I lead the way."
So whether on the hilltops high and fair
I dwell, or in the sunless valleys, where
The shadows lie,—what matter? He is there.
And more than this,—where'er the pathway lead
He gives to me no helpless, broken reed,
But His own hand, sufficient for my need.
So where He leads me I can safely go
And in the blest hereafter I shall know
Why, in His wisdom, He hath led me so.

Weslaco, Texas.
March 9th, 1952
P. O. Box 785

DEAR BROTHER,

My wife and I get some good reading in your paper. I do like to hear God talked about when it is from the heart of His children. We live about seventy miles from our church as it is in Memphis, Tenn. We go almost every month and that seems like a long time to not see them. That is one thing I brace my hope on is the love I think I have for the brothers and sisters; if we love God we do love His children, and if we love God it is because He first loved us and He loved us before He formed anything. Yes, and He promised His children Eternal life and with a loving kindness he clothes them. It is not of their free will that they love God but God's loving will.

Please look over my bad writing and spelling. I am a poor sinner looking to God for help here and a home in the hereafter.

My wife joins me in this

J. H. KERLEY
Mt. Vernon, Ill.

* * *

DEAR BROTHER,

Enclosed you will find a money order for five dollars for which please renew my subscription to the dear old SIGNS and also accept my thanks for the extention of the paper as I sure do enjoy it. It has been all the preaching I have been able to hear for the last ten years until last month when I was able to go to Amarillo to hear Brother Clarence E. Turner preach an able sermon. I really did enjoy it as it had been so long since I had heard any preaching.

May God in His richest mercy and goodness watch over you and yours and enable you to keep the good work going that I feel sure you are doing for the little ones of our God and Savior. Please remember this poor sinner when

it goes well with you. As ever a poor sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

Your brother I hope
E. K. SMITH
Box LP, Quail, Texas

DEAR EDITOR OF THE SIGNS,

I am enclosing money order to pay for the SIGNS for 1952 and the remains is to help the SIGNS.

Words fail me to express how much comfort I get from its pages. When I feel so little and cast down I often pick up the SIGNS and it seems I always read something that renews my hope and my strength and my faith. I am thankful the SIGNS fell in such safe hands. May God ever be with you and sustain you, and give us sufficient Grace in every trial of life.

May He give us a home in Heaven that we may praise Him through endless ages!

Though unworth I be
MRS. DAVID FARMER
Rising Sun, Maryland
Route 2

DEAR BRO. RHODES:

On Saturday night, March 29th, I had the pleasure of hearing Eld. Spangler preach. His text was, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" I believe this great salvation is the work of God, and a wonderful work, salvation is of the Lord. Brother Spangler said, "Salvation is of the Lord, not of works, they are not mixed." I don't believe that man can do any works that will help him go to heaven. I believe that God works in His people both to will and to do of His good pleasure. I think that is in Phil. 2:13.

Brother Spangler's text was in Hebrews 2:3. I believe that he was blessed to preach both Saturday night and Sunday morning over the radio. I hope that I was blessed to hear.

I believe that God surely blessed you to preach the last time I heard you at Liberty Hill. I believe you Primitive Baptist preachers are God's preachers, you don't go to college to learn to preach. You all depend upon God to teach you how to carry out your preaching. The preachers that go to college to learn to preach are preaching by the letter. I believe you Hardshell preachers are preaching in the spirit. "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." 2nd Corinthians 3:6.

In hope of eternal life,

WOODROW HUDSON, JR.
Parmerville, La.

CHURCH NOTICES

Hopewell Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at 10:30 a.m. each second Sunday in American Legion Hall, 1119 21st St., Sacramento, Cal.

L. L. WILSON, Pastor
WM. ECHOLS, Clerk
Chowchilla, Cal.

New Hope Old School Primitive Baptist Church near Patmos and about 10 miles South of Hope, Ark., meets each first Sunday at 11 A.M. and Saturday before at 2:30 P.M.

W. A. SPEER, Pastor.

Rehobeth Old School Primitive Baptist Church located 5 miles north of El Dorado, Ark., and half mile west of Highway No. 7 meets Second Sunday in each month and Saturday before at 11 A.M.

R. W. RHODES, Pastor
W. A. SPEER, Clerk.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon meets every first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes.

Elder R. R. WOLF, Pastor

Pleasant Valley Primitive Baptist Church, Kingman, Kansas, meets the first Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Jan., March, etc.) at the home of Sister Verda Machesney, 516 East Ave. C., Kingman, Kans.
(Mrs.) PHEBE CATES, Clerk

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carver Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U. S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church.
C. H. EVANS, Pastor

New Hope Church better known as Lick Creek meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 a. m., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Ky.
R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St. near Calvert. Q. A. GLADDING

Black Rock Church meets every second Sunday at 11 a. m., Butler, Md. on Falls Road about 20 miles north of Baltimore.
J. D. WOOD, Pastor

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a. m. in the meeting house.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m., north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Bethlehem Church, Malvern, Ala., meets each second Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3023 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va. R. B. DENSON, Pastor

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Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m.
C. M. FISHER

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.
PETER JONES, Pastor

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 11 a. m. at the home of E. B. Ault on Progresso Highway, three and one half miles south of Weslaco.
E. B. AULT, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk
Route 1, Box 88, Mission, Tex.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Hopeful Church, Ozark, Ala., meets each fourth Saturday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock. Meeting place at Alder St., at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala., 11 a. m.
E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala, meets each fourth Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a. m., six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Seclusia Old School Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday at 12812 Williamson, or write A. J. Taylor, 932E Monterey, Pomona, Cal.

The Old School or Predestinarian Baptists meet for worship on fifth Sundays at 2:30 p. m. second floor Pythian Temple Building, 1012 Ninth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Elder John D. Wood, Minister. For information write FRANK T. SIMPKINS, Sr., 5214 Harper St., Dillon Park, Washington 19, D. C.

Meetings are held each first Sunday and Saturday before at Little Flock Church, S. W. 29th Ave., and 6th St., Miami, Fla. We extend an invitation to any interested to visit us.
(Mrs.) J. M. FUTCH
7005 S. W. 21st St., Miami, Fla.

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets every second Sunday at 5th and E. Park St.

Pleasant Grove Church near Yakima, Washington, meets at 11 a. m. each second Sunday by appointment at the home of one of the members living at Naches, Wash.
A. D. HUGHETT, Pastor
BEATRICE HAAN, Clerk
Star Route, Naches, Wash.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 3 p. m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va., N. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.
HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m.
W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

Ramah Church, Cottonwood, Ala., meets each third Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each second Sunday and Saturday before.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala. Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a. m., ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a. m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala. O. G. CARVER, Pastor

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Richmond, Virginia Primitive Baptist church meets every fourth Sunday in their new meeting house about ten miles South of Richmond, Virginia. Just off Highway 360 South.
R. B. Denson, Pastor

Little Flock Primitive Baptist church of Tucson, Ariz. meets for worship on the third Sunday, and Saturday before at 134 E. Prince Road. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.
T. J. Robinson, Pastor
Mrs. J. H. Day, Clerk.

The Church of Shepherd Fold, Houston, Texas, meets every first Sunday in each month, and Saturday before at 10:30 A.M. Located on Little York Highway, four miles north of Houston, Texas one mile east of Highway 76.
W. O. Beene, Pastor

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every first and third Sundays at Parkside Hotel, 18 Gramercy Park South, one block east of Fourth Ave. and 20th St., near 23rd St. Sta. Lexington Ave. Subway. Take Elevator to Park Room second floor. 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before. E. H. LANIER, Clerk.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

The Old Orderly Mt. Zion (Cash) Predestinarian Baptist Church meets on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in each month at the home of Bro. J. J. Darnell, Campbell, Texas.
Sister SIMMONS, Clerk

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets first and third Sundays each month 11 a. m. 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas.
L. D. ROSE and W. W. TAYLOR, Pastors

Fort Worth, Tex., Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets first Sunday in each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday at 2 p. m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting house.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor
W. A. LITTLE, Asst. Pastor

Shepherd Fold Church meets each first Sunday 11 a. m., Saturday before 2:30 p. m. on Little York Highway, 4 miles north of Houston, Texas. One mile east of Highway 76.
W. O. BEENE, Pastor

The original Pilgrim Rest Church of Lawn, Texas, meets every first Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a. m.
C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
HOWARD EASON, Clerk

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2. p. m. C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

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Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. at the home of M. J. Culpepper. Lovers of the truth invited.
E. B. AULT, Pastor

The Old Salem Church of Old School Baptists, 4 miles south from Teague, Texas, meets the first Sunday in each month and Saturday before. MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

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Danville Primitive Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday night before Bradley Road, Danville, Va.
W. R. DODD, Pastor

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 120 DANVILLE, VIRGINIA, AUGUST, 1952 NO. 8

A NUMBER OF OUR SUBSCRIBERS TELL US THEY ARE FAILING TO GET THEIR PAPER REGULARLY. IF YOU HAVE FAILED TO GET YOUR PAPER NOTIFY US OF WHAT COPIES AND WE WILL TRY TO GET THEM TO YOU.

WHEN RENEWING CUT OUT THE ADDRESS ON YOUR PAPER AND MAIL IT TO US. WE ARE TRYING TO CORRECT OUR MAILING LIST AND CORRECT ANY MISTAKE IN ADDRESS. THANK YOU.

**EDITOR

* * *

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Send all, letters, remittances and communications of any kind to the Signs Of The Times Inc. Post office box no. 1271, Danville, Va.

* * *

After this issue the paper will be in larger type.

The Editor

* * *

Houston 20, Texas
809 Gazin Street.

Dear Editors:

Find enclosed $5.00 to renew my subscription to the dear old Signs. It is such a comfort to read the articles and letters written by ones inspired and made able to write words of love, admonition and instruction to God's little ones; especially to those who feel to be so weak and poor in spirit as I feel to be. If indeed, I am one of them, I am only according as God wills, for I am the least, if one at all.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. Irene Wisenbaker
Dutton Ontario, Canada

Much of life I've been lonely;
For what, I just cannot say.
But it seemed to always elude me,
Or pass by another one's way.

My dreams and plans for the future,
The hopes I've cherished for years,
Never blossomed into fulfillment.
But wither and leave me in tears.

I glimpse, and reach for a sunbeam
Only to find it has flown;
And the rose so tenderly cared for,
Has pierced me deep with a thorn.

But, I've tasted a bit of life's sweetness
That God has so lovingly given;
And it's being so rare and precious,
For more I have constantly striven.

But my efforts are all unavailing;
They have left me nothing but dross.
Defeated, forsaken and helpless:
I fall at the foot of the cross.

O God, beyond the horizon,
In that home I now cannot see,
Is there comfort and peace for the lonely,—
For a weary pilgrim like me?

There's a spark of hope brightly burning,
Though at times it fades from my sight.
Will it burst and bloom into glory
To dwell where everything's right?

Yes, God has faithfully promised
To keep and care for his own;
Not one shall be lost that was given:
O God, how I trust that I'm one.

Flora A. Booher,
Shirleysburg, Pa.

* * *

Hurricane, W. Va.

Dear Elder Harvy Bird
and Household of Faith:

I have let my subcription to the Signs become due and am enclosing $5.00 for two year renewal, if it is not too much trouble

for you to send it in for me.

I feel I would like to write some of my experience in Christ Jesus. Brethern, if I have a hope, I was a school boy about 14 years of age when I was first exercised: a woman appearing to me singing a hymn, and I thought it was the sweetest song I had ever heard. It was,"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound," and I thought it was the voice of my mother. I went on and on until about 25 years old, and then I had a dream which made me worry down inside: I thought I was down in a pit and all was dark about me; then I looked up into heaven and was flying like an angel. I went on in this way and was in such a condition I didn't know what to do, - I couldn't rest at night. My companion would ask me what was wrong, and I could only reply, "Oh, nothing." Then one morning in 1949, I was lying in bed and a voice spoke to me, saying, "Why not be baptized, you are all right." I called on the good Lord for mercy and cannot explain just what kind of shape I was in. But I went to the Providence Church on Saturday. The preaching was so good it filled my hungry soul. When they sang the closing hymn and published an open door, I found myself walking up to the Elder and they accepted me in the church; and I was baptized on Sunday. I am just a poor, helpless sinner saved by hope through the grace of God. As God showed Paul his helpless condition, and Paul cried, "O, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?", so have I in weakness been along this road.

I went to the meeting at Providence Church today; it was sweet to my soul, for I felt that my cup was filled to the brim. I hope I am led of the divine spirit to write these few lines to the children of God. I get so much comfort from reading the Signs of the Times; often tears run down my face. It seems that some of the brethern can tell me of my own experience better than I can. I feel the least of all, and am worthy to be among God's little children.

Yours brother in hope,
Y. W. Wade

* * *

Swan Quarter, N. C.

Mrs. Earl Brannon,
Draper, N. C.

Surely, my dear child of God, I do have so much fellowship for you. When you spoke of times when you get nothing from reading the Signs, and then again are fed, surely this is my experience. I often wonder why it is so; yet I know that the reader has to be prepared to receive, as well as the writers to pen them. Oh, are we not full of mystery? The more we try to search and find just who and what we are, the farther, it seems, we get from the solution; yet I rejoice to know that the Lord knoweth us all together. I am so glad this is true, and to know that we are not left to ourselves. He knows how weak we are and how prone we are to stray when left to ourselves; and I am so glad that He never leaves nor forsakes the objects of his love. No, but he watches over them for their good and his glory. Yes, He is taking care of you; and how wonderfully blessed you are that He is tenderly caring for you, and inditing words so wonderful. I am sure that you have seasons of joy, and rejoice that the Lord is so near that you can feel his presence. He is such a wonderful saviour,—a present help in time of need, and sticketh closer than a brother.

I feel sure your boys will be kept safe and return to you. I do not have one in this war, but had one in World War Two, and he came back. Oh, that faith, that living faith which is yours; and I feel that what your soul desires will be so. I trust you have been restored to good health and all is well. I feel sure that in and through the righteousness of Christ you have found that peace which the world cannot give or take away. Are you not glad that the world has no more charms for you?; and that the older you get, the more you feel crucified to it, and it to you? Indeed, our hope is worth more than all the world. Though you may feel imperfect, your perfection is in Christ. If it were not, he would not have chosen you out of the world; or loved you, redeemed you and sanctified you, and will glorify you. Are you not pressing onward and forward to that day, —perfect day, when you will be glorified in and with Christ? Surely it is worth waiting for and suffering for. You have a living faith which keeps you standing fast; soon your hope will be turned into possession, and you will ever be with the Lord, and clothed in his image. Then you will be satisfied, but not until then. Then you will join your voice with the redeemed family of God, and sing the songs

of redeeming love and electing grace; and meet with those long parted. Sometimes I long to quit this unhallowed ground and dwell with Christ at home. Pray for me when you have a mind and write to one who loves you for Christ's sake.

Your sister in hope,
Mrs. Effie H. Caravan

* * *

Dear Elder Spangler:

The great God of heaven being my strength, I hope I can set forth a few thoughts and meditations which have come to my mind since your discourse the Sunday morning you spoke here over the radio. It brought things to my mind that I had never thought of before. To my understanding, the light the window goingc are of the Lord; for he said "As I produces is the light of Jesus Christ our Lord. When this window brings it's light into the dungeon darkness of our stony hearts, we are made to have many sweet and joyful thoughts and meditations; it makes our souls cry out in us and we have assurance of a grand and glorious relationship with Jesus and his righteousness. It seems that when we are in deep darkness, and the love of Jesus is far from us, then this light will appear, and we are made to rejoice. Then we are given to meditate upon portions of the Scriptures and find comfort. David said in the 139th Psalm, " . . . if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me." David rejoiced in this light.

When our lusts carry us so deep into the mire of sin, if the Lord is pleased to bring this light into our hearts with power, we then rejoice in a comforting fellowship and spiritual knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus; through this light we walk in and talk of godly things. I wish that I could find words to express the comforting and consoling thoughts this light has brought to this unworthy sinner. We are made through the Spirit to realize that we are nothing, yea, less than nothing, of ourselves in the sight of God; but are often comforted by this thought: "By the grace of God , I am what I am." We have nothing, and can do nothing to merit grace. It is through the love and tender mercies of God toward his people that this light is given to shine in their hearts, guiding, guarding and directing them into the knowledge of his never dying love; and comforting them with the knowledge that He is God, and there is none other beside him; and through this light we are enable to eat the spiritual crumbs that fall from his table.

We cannot express how much we enjoyed having you in our home. If we never meet again in this life, we hope to be together in the great beyond. May God give us sweet meditations of the heavenly city which is prepared for his people.

Yours the least of all,
J. J. Davis

* * *

Roanoke, Va.

Dear Editors:

I find my subscription will expire in May, and as I don't want to miss a single copy, I am enclosing a check for three dollars for renewal.

It gives me much comfort to read the papers, for I am a poor sinner, and if saved it is by the grace of God. I haven't been able to hear preaching since before Christmas, except one sermon at Mt. Zion church in February, which I enjoyed very much. My health is not very good, but I trust that I have one who has cared for me these seventy-two years. And I pray he will continue to care, but sometimes I feel that he is clean gone, and I am mistaken in the whole matter. But when I read the letters written by the dear saints, I rejoice in the love of my Saviour, I hope. May God bless all of you is my prayer for Christ's sake. Please remember me in your prayers.

Very unworthily,
Mrs. Elizabeth E. Cox.

* * *

A TREE PLANTED BY THE WATERS

My dear Brother Spangler:

How did my heart rejoice to hear
My friends devoutly say,
In Zion let us all appear,
And keep the solemn day!

How did my heart rejoice to hear the sweet message that you sent in your letter! You mentioned the trees. Last night my eyes fell

on Jeremiah 17:7-8. I do not know that I had ever noticed the passage before but it sort of caught me. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when he cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit".

To "trust" means to have confidence in, to have faith in, to believe in and to rely on, to hold faith with and to wait for the fulfillment of. To have trust in someone, is to render credit with the expectation of receiving from that one. To have trust in the Lord is to recognize Him for His ability to render the inheritance in full. It is to wait to receive, and to wait patiently and believingly. Naturally speaking to have trust in some man is to have a credit or partial ownership in something that man holds; and to expect in time, the deliverance of that which was held in trust. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord! Blessed is he that renders credit to the Lord, in the sense of believing that the Lord is fully trustworthy and able to deliver in full, every need and a complete salvation. Blessed is the man whose hope the Lord is! We notice that the word "blessed" is written first; the blessing comes first; the man is already blessed when this condition exists in his soul. Blessed is he, in whose breast this trust and this hope has been planted! Why?

Because he shall be AS A TREE PLANTED BY THE WATERS! Begging for the Lord's guiding Spirit, let us consider the "tree planted by the waters". "Water" is often used in the Scriptures to refer to that which sustains life. Jesus gave the Samaritan woman at the well, the living waters. John saw and wrote of the "pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God-". Water does not give life, but it sustains that life that has been given of God. A dead tree might be planted beside the rivers of waters, but there would never be any growth, or putting on of leaves, or bearing of fruits. Indeed, it would only rot faster because of the waters. So here we are considering only the living tree, and that living tree is being compared, or being used as a comparison to the man that is blessed.

"By the waters" seems to refer to a stream, and to a continuous flowing of waters. The stream flows from a fountain, and the fountain is a source, a never ceasing source of supply. Then to be "by the waters", means to be near to this continually flowing source of that which is necessary to sustain life. The tree that is by the waters sends out its roots toward the stream and finds a plentious source of moisture there. The sun may shine with intense heat, the season may be dry and all the uplands may be parched, but the stream is continuous because it is fed from the fountain. So this tree shall find water even in the year of drought.

Next consider that the tree was PLANTED by the waters. It did not visit the waters for a day, or a night, or a season, but it was planted there. It has never been anywhere else. To be planted means to be fixed and to be set, and to have taken root in that place. As the tree does not move from one place to another, the man that trusteth in he Lord does not move from one standing to another, nor from one idea to another. His hope is fixed and sure and steadfast. His hope, the Lord is! As the tree, his is planted in steadfastness. Both shall remain in their place all the days of their lives according to the will of an immutable God.

Has the tree, in all the days of its life, been able to go out and get water for its life? Has it been able to cause it to rain upon its place? Has it been able to earn its necessities of life? Again has it been able to cool the scorching rays of the sun, or to slow down the stormy winds, or to stop the icy sleet that breaks its branches in the winter season? Has it ever in all of its days been able to move over the hill to get out of the path of an oncoming cyclone? No, no indeed! It must ever stay in its place and it must receive and bear and submit to every storm that the Lord in His wisdom sees fit to send upon it. It must bear the sleet of winter, the burning heat of summer, the winds, the cyclones and all of the lightenings and thunders. All these things break its tender limbs, tear loose some of its roots, even twists its very branches and splits its trunk at times. Even so, it must remain in its place and bear every storm. Still the tree

is planted by the waters, and finds that which sustains it alive. In His proper time, the Lord causes the storm to cease, and He causes the tree to grow again in the spring; every broken limb and every wound will heal. Nor can the tree prevent nor speed up this healing process. The broken limbs tend to grow and and to untwist themselves in His time and manner, and the broken spots and wounds will heal over. Let us look at the tree that has withstood the storms of many seasons: there are rought places and there are scars. Jesus came forth from the tomb, with nailprints in His hands and His feet, and with a great wound in His side. There were wounds upon His head and stripes of humiliation upon His back. If He had not borne afflictions, if He had not suffered humiliations, if He had not worn the crown of thorns, there would have been no scars. Just as the tree that has remained in its place has had to withstand the weather and the storms, so is the "blessed man" called upon to follow his Lord and Master, and to bear afflictions and trials and testings and provings along the way. Each affliction leaves its scar; each trial leaves its rough place, and the effects of every wound may be seen. When we look at the scars and the bruises and the torn places, we are reminded of the blessings that we experienced in passing through the furnace. The scar is ever a memorial of the mercy of our Savior in delivering us from the affliction. If we had not been delivered, if we had not been healed, if we had not been safely brought through, there would never have been the scar! When Joshua came to the River Jordan, just bordering the Promised Land, those bearing the Ark stepped down into the waters, and the waters of Jordan parted before the Ark and stood up as great walls on either side, while the children of Israel passed over on dry ground. As they passed through the depth of the river bed, they took up great stones from the depth of the river (from the deepest of their trial) and carried them up with them to the shore and set them up as a memorial of their deliverance to the Promised Land. Every time they looked at the memorial they remembered their deliverance. The rocks were a scar upon the face of the Land. So the scar is a memorial of the mercy of our God in delivering us.

O my dear Brother, may we be enabled to stand firmly in our place and find the strength to weather every storm of life that our Lord sees fit to send along our path. May our wounds be healed, and may we be enabled to look upon the scars and praise God for His mercies and His deliverances and His salvation with us. All these trials and afflictions prove His love and His mercy toward us; they show that He deals with us, not according to our iniquity, but according to His mercy in salvation by Grace. May we treasure these scars and praise God for His mercies.

The blessed man is as the tree planted by the waters! The storms of time tend to blow the tree out of its place, but every wind that loosens the roots only leaves more space for growth. So it is that the roots grow larger and deeper and stronger, and the tree becames more fixed in its place. The limbs may be broken back, but new ones put forth and grow beyond the older ones and the tree grows larger and higher into the heavens. Years pass, storms come and go, the tree grows on, the scars continue, even increase. And so it is with the "blessed man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is"!

May the little ones of Zion be enabled to withstand every storm and come forth stronger, more fixed and more steadfast, ever being sustained by the Living Waters.

My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life or breath remains;
There my best friends, my kindred dwell,
There God my Savior reigns. (Watts)

Yours in Christian hope,
A. D. Alston.

* * *

Dear Family of God:

Since August 3, 1950, (to April, 1952), I have made four trips from Panama City, Florida, to the West coast; and twice on return came by the way of West Virginia. On each trip I spent quite some time with my two youngest sons and their families in Los Angeles. I am not writing this to advertise myself but to advertise the blessed Old Predestinarian Baptists. I wrote about my first trip and it was published in the Signs; and I have been asked to write of the others, but I fear I would be charged with a spirit

of vanity. These trips were rich to me and I lacked nothing. I am thinking of you dear blessed of the Lord, and it would make me happy to write each of you a personal letter, but I beg that you accept this as an expression of my heart and soul, and let it suffice. You are a great people; you are the salt of the earth. It was heaven below your greatness to show. "Then one said unto him, behold, thy mother and thy brethern stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethern! For whosoever shall do the will of my father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." (Math. 12:47-50). The reason we don't attend popular churches is we don't find mother, brother and sister, but we travel many long weary miles to find them. We are lost in wonder of the beautiful mansions which are ours to behold; we eat the fat of the land, and we break bread(Jesus) together high up in Mt. Zion's hill.

(Elder) C. H. Byrd,
Panama City, Fla.

* * *

Martinsville, Va.

Signs of the Times:
Dear Brethern:

I have the consent of Brother Perdue to send this letter to you for publication. It sets forth just what I have been trying to set forth nearly forty years with the ability my God gives me.

Your brother in hope,
(Elder) J. E. Burgess

* * *

Elder J. E. Burgess,

Dear brother in a precious hope of immortality beyond the grave, I hope you and Sister Burgess are well, and enjoying much fruition of God's Holy Spirit. My lot has been to stay very close at home since December. I purposed to attend the Staunton River Union at Danville the fifth Sunday in December, but I feel sure that God did not purpose for me to go. Our goings are of the Lord; for he said "As I have purposed so shall it stand, and As I have thought so shall it come to pass." Dear little Brother, for sometime my desires and meditations keep lingering on trying to hint to you some of my thoughts and feelings, which I hope you and I both know better than our stammering tounges can express. But the thoughts keep bearing on my feelings. What am I to even think about instructing one so learned in Godly knowledge as I deem you to be? But I beg that the Lord may bless me to to express some little uplifting thought of comfort to you, which will be edifying to your soul. Shall I comfort you with some strange and unknown doctrine hatched out by commandments of men? To this we would say, No; for we can receive no other doctrine but that of Christ, which was once delivered to God's dear saints.

We are commanded to comfort one another with the comfort wherewith we are comforted. The doctrine of God our Saviour is all in which we have to trust; and we feel safe to say, take away all other and give us but this. I have talked this, written it and believe it, that there is but one true experience of grace, and that all the children of God have and will have it. There is but one Lord, one faith and one baptism, which is with each heir identically the same in power, essence and glory: even Christ formed in them the hope of glory, which is regeneration, - a renewed heart, a true and living testimony, witnessing and evidencing that God is true and beside him there is no other. We need all his loving attributes to make up and constitute eternal life, and the continuance of his guiding hand on and on. And too, we feel to need the comfort, presence and kind, loving embrace of each through this toilsome journey here below. Though our way seems rugged and hard, our alwise God has promised never to leave or forsake his dear children.

Dear kindred in Christ, we believe that just as sure as our omnipotent Jehovah sits on his high eternal throne of glory, just that sure will all his thoughts, purposes, shalls and wills come to pass. Else we would have nothing certain and unchangeable to look to to satisfy our weary and hungry souls. But we believe that our true, alwise, just and merciful God has so unchangeably and absolutely predesinated and foreordained all of His purposes and degrees, that He fixed and set the final bounds of all things and they come to pass at his appointed time.

I have read the book on Absolute Predestination which you loaned me. In my judgement it is very good, and would be profitable for all true believers to read. May the Lord bless you and Sister Burgess, and all His dear saints everywhere, is my prayer.

A brother in hope of a
glorious immortality.
J. A. Perdue

* * *

Elder D. V. Spangler:
Dear Brother and Servant of God:

I realize more and more as I come near my journey's end, the sacredness of the high calling of God in setting apart for the work of the ministry, men, mortal depraved men. Yet it shows the wonderful workmanship of God,—all his works are wonderful. "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." The poet says:

"O could I speak the matchless worth,
O could I sound the glories forth
That in my Savior shine;
I'd soar and touch the heavenly strings,
And vie with Gabriel while he sings
In notes that are divine."

In my oft lonely hours, I love to sing His praises (and this sweet hymn stirs my inmost heart strings), I hope with gratitude and joy unspeakable, for His matchless worth to me, a miracle of His grace. "A monument of His great mercy," the poet says. I have also been enraptured with the poet's beautiful sentiment, expressed by him in the 1st hymn of our sacred songs:

"When all thy mercies, Oh my God,
My rising soul surveys;
Transported with the thought,
I'm lost in wonder, love and praise.
"Oh, how shall words with equal warmth,
The gratitude declare
That glows within my ravished heart;
But thou canst read it there"

A sister in hope and love,
Sarah McPhail

* * *

Valley Head, W. Va.

Mrs. A. S Parker and
Miss Emma Parker,
Baltimore, Md.

Dear sisters Parker in bonds of love,

So often my thoughts have gone out to you folks in sweet memories of the times I was permitted to visit with you; but realizing my weakness and being a poor excuse, I seldom ever attempt to write to any of the brethern. My heart goes out to them many times however through the dark seasons that seem to overshadow me.

Oh! how we hope and pray that God will ever be mindful of us, comforting us and bringing us into the knowledge of the truth. We are dependent upon Him for all things and without Him we can do nothing. Many say this in word, but, according to my understanding, only God's people believe it. And at the appointed times when they are blessed to sit in a heavenly place, they are made to realize as the scriptures say (Psalms 137), "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, Yea, we wept when we remembered Zion". At these times we sit down and quit working. We do not go to Him, but He comes to us on every occasion when we remember Zion. Zion can only be remembered after we have been taught by God's Holy Spirit in the school of grace. (All of thy children shall be taught of the Lord). Many today will give instruction on how to walk in order to become a child of God, but as I understand it, the instruction was given to the man of God not to make Him one but because He was one already. (2 Tim. 3-16, 17) Jesus never told a blind man to look until after He had opened his eyes.

When Jesus was in a certain place preaching the Word, (Luke Ch. 5), one was brought to Him borne of four. He was sick of the palsy and could not walk, and had to be carried upon the bed in a helpless condtion. After they had uncovered the roof where he was, because of the press around the door (the many people there), they let him down at the feet of Jesus. He had not walked; and the one thing that is brought out here in the scriptures was their faith, which is a gift of God. Then Jesus spoke the "wonderful words" or "good news" to Him: "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee" (Math. 9-2) And it was after this that Jesus gave him his instruction, "Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house." He was not instructed to leave his bed behind.

Therefore I feel that someplace along the line he still had need of this bed that held him so helpless. We have to be told these things and shown these things again and again, as Jesus said, "Go show John again these things etc., when we are shut up and in prison. In-asmuch as he, after visiting him, said "Go thy way into thine house," this man then had a certain and definite house to go to. The house of the Lord, and I believe it is in substance the same meaning as when Jesus said "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee." Is this not the sincere desire of a dear child of God who has been taught of the Lord? How well they realize that they can only tell these things to their friends at home: The living church of the true and living God, filled with living children. The children of light and of the day, who will not be caught sleeping, as the children of darkness, when He comes.

They worship God who is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last; the ALMIGHTY. There is nothing else to tell to their friends at home except how great things the Lord has done for them, —The Christians experience. Then they are heard, if it be a true church. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches". God is complete and undivided and prepares for and provides for in every direction at the same time. Nothing is left for poor puny man to do because the natural man cannot discern anything pretaining to God. When they are blessed in His name they cry out, "Without thee I can do nothing".

May the God of all grace strengthen and uphold you in your tribulation and sorrow while here below. These tribulations are embraced in the same promise to his children. "In the world ye shall have tribulations: but be of good cheer; I have overcame the world". Therefore, we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. He has done it for us, the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory; and all things work for the good and welfare of Zion,—those that love the Lord. That I might be enabled to praise his high and exalted name far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion and every name that is named not only in this world but also in that which is to come, is my prayer.

I have written more than I expected to but only as my mind has rambled here and there in a scattering way.

I hope that you might find a thread of consultation or comfort in these words.

From an unworthy sinner, hoping at this moment in tears that He has worked for my good.

(Elder) V. B. Linn

* * *

Denton, Ky.

"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." (MAT. 1:2;)

I will state some things that I believe; and if the Lord should be pleased to bless me, attempt to show by the Scriptures that what I believe is true. First, I believe that God in eternity (before time or the foundation of the world) did choose or create in Christ a certain, definite number of people to be the recipients of his free Grace, or free gift of eternal life; and that these are the only ones who are subjects of regeneration, and birth of the Spirit. These are the only ones who are subjects of the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. The Apostle Paul says that the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. Our blessed Lord did not come to earth to make a way possible for men to accept, or voluntarily believe in him.

But he came to redeem those only whom the Father had chosen or created in him, and whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. Christ, speaking through David says "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." (Psalms 139:15-16). Jesus said to his disciples, " . . . rejoice rather, because your names are written in heaven." (Luke 10:20). It is to be noticed that they are written, not will be; which means a definite number, and specific individuals. The angel said unto Joseph, " . . . He shall save his people from their sins."

This means a certain people who were his

already when he came to earth; for he did not come to choose himself a bride, for she was already his, but because of transgression she had fallen and became dead in trespasses and sin. He came for the sole purpose of redeeming her from this lost condition. "I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me and this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should loose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." (St. John 6:38-39).

The Apostle Peter in addressing the church, calls them elect; which means they were chosen. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through santification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (I Peter 1:2-5).

We see from this scripture that this certain, elect people are secure. If their inheritance is incorruptible, it cannot be corrupted; if it is undefiled, it cannot be defiled; if it fadeth not away, it cannot cease to be; if it is reserved in heaven, it cannot be lost; for they are kept by the power of God through faith. It is written that all power is of God, and the powers that be are ordained of him. How could the salvation of this elect people be more secure?

"For he shall save his people from their sins." Our blessed Saviour just before he was crucified prayed, saying, "Father the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee; As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word." "I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are." "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may be hold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world." (St. John 17th Chapter). All these quotations use the past tense in showing when the elect were given Christ.

On another occasion Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish; neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me s greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (John 10:27-29). He also tells the unbelievers why they do not believe his word: "Ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep." Those who belong to Jesus do not become his sheep by believing, but to the contrary, they believe because they are his sheep. The reprobate does not become a reprobate because he does not believe: He believes not because he is a reprobate; he was not chosen unto eternal life. When Paul and Barnabas began to preach to the Gentiles, it is said: "And when the Gentiles heard this they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord, and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."

We see from this Scripture that the believing is limited to, or ordained to the chosen generation. Peter said, "But ye are a chosen generation ,a royal priesthood; a holy notion, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." And Paul says, "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." (2 Tress. 2:13).

The Saviour said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever you shall ask of the Father in my name, he

may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another." And, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Do we not see this manifested on every side? This doctrine is hateful to the carnal mind; and they say it is dangerous. Nevertheless it is sweet and dear to those who have experimentally been brought to believe it. Those who's names are not written in the Lamb's book of life will worship the beast, as John says in Revelation 13:8.

I feel that I have only touched on the subject, for a volumn could be written concerning it. May the blessed Lord guide, direct and keep us all in the way of truth.

Your unworthy brother in Christ,
H. L. Rogers

* * *

Magnolia, Ark.

Signs of the Times,
Dear Brethren in Christ:

It is time to send in my subscription for another year. Enclosed you will find money order for $3.00. The little paper has lots of good reading in it's pages.

I have so often wanted to write to the Signs, but just couldn't get words down on paper. I am not a member, but hope to have a home with them some day, if the Lord sees fit. I know the old Primitive Baptists are the people I love and feel at home with more than any others.

Yours in hope for a better world,
Mrs. F. A. Estess

* * *

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Am sending you $5.00 for my renewal to the dear old Signs of the Times. Am sorry that I have neglected this, but I seem to get more neglectful as I grow older. I will soon be eighty years old, and my health is bad, so my mind as well as my body is growing weaker. But I feel to say, I believe I'm stronger in the faith and love of our God, and the love of His precious little children.

Oh, how I love the association and sweet fellowship of his loved ones, - the meeting together and the worship at a throne of grace with those I love. I have been deprived of that pleasure a lot for the past year; so you can see why the dear old Signs means so much to me. I get such lovely and inspiring letters from several of the dear ones.

Am enclosing a letter I received from dear which was so sweet and uplifting, and so full of the spirit, I feel I would like to share it Sister French, of Palestine, Texas, in February, with others of God's little ones. I have her consent for it's publication.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,
Mrs. Sallie Neel Luce,
2015 Shortal Drive,
Dallas, Texas.

* * *

My dear precious Sister and Mother in Israel:

I was so glad to get your card last week, - always glad to get a few lines from you. I didn't think you would want to hear from me so soon after I had seen you, although I did not get to visit with you as I wanted to. I was so happy to have you and Brother Neel and his dear wife and daughter, and Sister Mc Shan at Pilgrim on both days. I know it is an effort for all to get ready and get down to church for the services on Saturday.

It means sacrifice and extra work for all, but, Oh, what a joy and sweet pleasure it gives us to have you with us in our worship. I am sorry that Mary is not well and hope that she regains her health soon. I'll never forget the sweet picture she and her father made Sunday morning sitting together, listening so intently to every word that was spoken. I felt she could understand every word Elder Weisinger uttered. It seems to me that he has the best way of putting forth his ideas, and the easiest, smoothest delivery of any one I ever heard.

I am so glad she should hear those two sermons, and I wish she and all of you could have heard the four others I heard since then. It seems that when he goes into the stand, he is just a weak, puny man, dreading the task before him, but not shirking his responsibilities. He is meek and humble, - so dependent upon God to furnish him food with which to feed His sheep. Being lifted up and given

the insight into the truth, he is given the courage to stand for the things which give honor to our God. We all thank God for the privilige of hearing such a gift. We know he has had many sore trials and tribulations, and many disappointments and heavy responsibilities, but he feels that he has been kept by the power of God and led into the paths he chose not. He seems to get deeder and deeper into the mysteries of the Father, and shows so beautifully God's work - his plans and purposes, and the fulfillment of them in the work of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. He always ascribes greatness to our God.

We had a wonderful meeting at Bethel 4th Saturday and Sunday. We sure miss Bro. Dave Roden since he moved away. It was cloudy on Sunday and we didn't look for many visitors, but there were thirty visitors in all. Every church in the association was represented except the one at Tom Ball. After the close of Elder Weisinger's sermon, Elder Fugate talked a few minutes. His voice was so husky it was hard to follow him. He did not stand long, but endorsed the wonderful sermon Elder Weisinger had preached; and expressed appreciation of so many beloved brethern and sisters. At the close of the services, Brother Leopard went forward requesting a home in the church. He was received and will be baptized on the 4th Saturday afternoon, the Lord willing.

I had dinner with Bro. King's daughter on Sunday. Last Saturday she called me and asked where the appointment was, but could go only on Sunday. I took a lot of old copies of the Signs of the Times out to Brother Owens' for them to read, and he asked me to subscribe to it for him when I saw him at the Pilgrim Meeting, which I did. I pray that the new Editors can keep the paper going with the good material it has had. It is so badly needed and such a boon to those who can't attend church services.

I think of my past life, and am made to give praise to God for leading me in paths I knew not. That was not the way I wanted to go. I've had many disappointments, yet now I seem to see the beauty of God's ways. How kindly I have been cared for! Though, I have not had the wealth of this world, yet I would not give my precious hope and the sweet association and understanding of God's little ones for all the wealth in the world. This is something money cannot buy; yet God in his mercy, has given it to poor, unworthy me. It wasn't for any good that I had done, but because of his loving kindness toward me all the days of my life.

I have been made glad that I was separated from the things of this world and taken into the church home at the early age of nineteen years. It hasn't been easy to be alone a lot of my life, and separated from my young friends; but I have a sweet relationship which has grown sweeter the older I get, - - the association of God's dear children, those of like precious faith.

"How sweet how heavenly is the sight
When those who love the Lord,
In one anothers peace delight,
And thus fulfill his word.

"When each can feel his brother's sigh
And with him bear a part,
When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart."

Dear one, though we may be poor in this world's goods, we have the necessities of life, and are rich in hope of an inheritance of the happy home beyond this vale of tears and sorrow. Though our Lord came down to earth, he had no place to call his own; not even to lay his head. He was sent down to do the work the Father ordained beforhand he should do. Oh, that we could continue to sing praises from the house tops to our God, and ascribe greatness to his holy name. Is it any wonder I was so glad to get back home last summer where I could spend almost every week end in the services, and worship the true and living God with those whom I love: my fathers and mothers in Israel; my brothers and sisters, and sons and daughters. Truly I have been shown how rich I am; and to me the most important thing in this world is to meet with my beloved kindred in Christ and worship at the throne of my blessed Lord and Master. It is all so good, so marvelous, when I think how kind and good He has been to this poor little girl.

As I look back, I can see His purpose in my life; but I couldn't see it then. He has brought me safely through sorrows and tribulations; and has caused me to lean upon His ever-

lasting arm, and to trust him to care for my natural as well as my spiritual welfare. I don't worry about my future; I seem to have a greater trust and faith than I used to have. I think that is one reason I can enjoy Bro. Weisinger's sermons so much. I think of the strange blessing the Angel gave Jacob after they wrestled that night. Jacob told him he would not let him go until he had blessed him. The Angel struck him in the hollow of his thigh, and made him lame, so he would have to lean on the staff of his Lord the rest of his days. "By his stripes we are healed."

Dear one, I could go on and on, but I must bring this letter to a close. I was happy to know that you would be in the house with Brother Neel, - God bless him. I sure want to come up this summer. And plan to do so, for I love you all so very much. We are all glad you will be in the house with your son at night. It will be a great relief to him, as you are too feeble to be by yourself long at a time. I hope you are much better and will enjoy the lovely new home. Mrs. Weaver just came in; she sends her love, and always asks about you. I am fortunate to have her with me. I hope you will be able to attend Pilgrim several times this Spring and Summer; we are always glad when you can come. I want you to visit with me again, and this also goes for sweet Sister McShan.

Now I must close for tomorrow will be a busy day. Will be looking for a long letter from you soon. With all my love to you and yours.

Your unworthy sister in hope,
Velma J. French

* * *

Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe,
February, 1862.

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is salvation nearer than when we believed." (Romans 8: 10)

Our Redeemer said of the Pharisees and Sudducees, Ye can discern the face of the sky; but ye cannot discern the signs of the times, - Mat. 13:3. But the apostle implies that the saints addressed in our text know the times. There are times in the spiritual kingdom, as well as in nature, for every purpose of God to be accomplished. In nature there is seed time and harvest, summer and winter, day and night, and as the wise man has said, There is a time for all things under the sun. A time to be born, and a time to die, a time to sleep, and a time to awake, and a time to be merry, and a time to mourn.

So in the spiritual kingdom, - everything is appropriate in it's appointed season. When the Bridegroom is present is not the time to fast; but when he is absent then the children of the bride-chamber shall fast. The time indicated for the church to buckle on the armour and confront the enemy, is very inappropriate for her to sleep. Paul says to the Thessalonians, "But of the times and seasons, brethern, ye have no need that I write unto you: for yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, and they shall not escape. But ye, brethrn, are not in the darkness, that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore, let us not sleep as do others: but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night: and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breast-plate of faith and love, and for a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thess. 5:1-9)

The time for sleeping, drunkeness and rebellion, was with us when under the power of darkness, before we were translated in to the marvelous light of the kingdom of Christ; but now in our manifestation as the children of the light, it does not become us to sleep as do others. When christians do sleep, in a spiritual sense, it is with them a time of darkness, as their fleshly powers are carnal and worldly; so the powers of darkness on them produce drowsiness, inactivity, stupor and insensibility in regard to the things of the kingdom.

All this Paul says the saints know perfectly. Therefore, Knowing the Time, they were aware that with them it was high time to awake out of sleep. When men sleep, their mind wanders

at random in baseless visions and unreal dreams. So christians, when at ease in Zion, lay off their armor and become vain in their imaginations, and their minds are with the fool's eyes traversing the ends of the earth. When we have taken on us the name of Christ, have renounced the hidden things of darkness, it is time to awake, to watch and be sober, and never be caught sleeping on our post.

The admonitions given to the saints in this chapter show that the saints are surrounded with manifold temptations, and liable to be overcome of evil; whereas, they are exhorted to overcome evil with good. In their relations to the world, in the revolutions and changes of earthly governments, Let every soul be subject to the higher powers, - as children to parents, servants to masters, as citizens to rulers, knowing the powers that be are ordained of God; and we cannot resist them without resisting the ordinance of God; for, he says, in the third verse, Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. "Wherefore you must needs be subject not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake."

After setting forth many of the obligations which rest on christians, he says, If there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehend in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law. He then adds, And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. From the connection we infer that the saints in regard to some of these obligations, had been sleeping, dreaming, or inattentive, if not directly violating these precepts, they had neglected them, or had failed to discharge them with that degree of assiduity and promptitude which their importance demanded.

As an incentive to vigilance, the apostle not only shows the liability of the saints to fall into temptation, and be drawn into present difficulties, but he urges the approximation of the day of the Lord, or the day of their deliverance from all the cares, duties, responsibilities, trials, vexation, and turmoils of this mortal life. "For now is our salvation nearer then when we believed." The term salvation in this text, means deliverance.

The apostle says, Romans 8:19, "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God," and in the same connection adds, "And not only they (the whole creation) but ourselves also which have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit: the redemption of our body. For we saved by hope; but hope that is seen in not hope: for what a man seeth, why doeth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."

Thus the salvation which is neare than we believed, is that wherein we are saved by hope, - the redemption of our body from mortal to an immortal state; when death shall be swallowed up in victory, - when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall be clothed in immortality. That happy period, - that glorious day is drawing near, and is now nearer than when we believed: That is, it is nearer now than it was when we first became believers. You have progressed thus far in your pilgrimage.

You are thus far nearer to your great deliverance. "The night is far spent." Your struggles, toils and labors will soon be over. "The day is at hand." The perfect day when clouds shall no more obscure the Sun, nor hide from you the refulgent glories of your inheritance above. This being the case, Let us, therefore, cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day: not in rioting and drunkeness, not in clambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying: But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provisions for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.

* * *

PLEASE NOTE

In the July number, notice of meetings in Washington, D. C. was inserted. These meetings were discontinued some time ago, since the brethern and friends there can attend meetings in nearby Virginia and Maryland. We are, however, holding our meetings at the Sideling Hill Church in Pennsylvania on the 5th Sundays.

Also, the meeting time of Black Rock Church, near Butler, Md., has been changed from 2nd Sundays to the 1st Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock.

John D. Wood

EDITORIALS

Danville, Va. August 1952

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ILLNESS OF BROTHER A. D. ALSTON

With much sadness we announce the serious illness of Brother A. D. Alston. He is a patient in the Walter Reed Hospital, Washington, D. C., having been brought there by plane from Japan, where he was serving as Major in the U. S. forces. An operation for brain tumor was apparently without success. May the Lord give grace to all and especially Sister Alston and daughters, that we may be reconciled to the will of our God.

John D. Wood

* * *

On entering into the additional responsibilities as Editor with Elder Spangler, we are more conscious of the need of the sustaining grace of the Lord in everything we do or write. While we know that in our flesh dwells no good thing, we do feel to hope that we have been given a love for the brethren, and a willingness to serve them in any way we may be enabled. We desire to be found contending for the doctrine of God our Saviour, and nothing else; and we believe that the principles upon which Elder Beebe founded the Signs contain this doctrine. We hope to be found sustaining them with such strength as may be given us.

J. D. W.

* * *

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt save thyself, and them that hear thee." (Tim. 4:16)

In a recent editorial we voiced our concern for false doctrines which are presented in the name of Jesus by nominal Christians. We are far more concerned, however, about matters that pertain to the church. We need not be surprised at what goes on in the world, either politically or religiously; and this is because unregenerated people have not been taught in the school of Christ and have not been quickened to know anything of the laws of Christ. The very best that is in human nature falls far short of spiritual things; for no person is subject to the laws of a kingdom unless he is a citizen of that kingdom and living within it's bounds.

Every subject of the kingdom of God is born into the kingdom and are citizens by birth, there being no provisions made for naturalization as among natural kingdoms. Each of these subjects is taught of the Lord, for his laws are put into their minds, and written in their hearts. The prophet Isaiah wrote, "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." And a portion of the New Covenant reads, "I will put laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people; and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."

We believe this is true with respect to each and every subject of grace; and there are no ignorant ones in this family, for to whatever extent of the depth of the mystery of godliness any of them may be led, they are all built on one foundation, and feed on the sincere milk

of the word.

There is another important side of the matter, however, which, if we are faithful, we will look into; and looking, we will find much which will take us unto the throne of God for grace to guide and lead us aright. There is much in us as individuals and as churches which is not according to godliness; and the eyes of our understanding are surely blinded and our conscience seared, if we fail to recognize it.

Conditions were such in the church at Corinth that Paul wrote them: "For ye are carnal; for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?"; "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it s wrtten, He taketh the wise in their own craftness." (I Cor. 3:3 and 18-19). Also to the Galatians, Paul wrote: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you." (Gal. 3:1) What ever the circumstances which demanded the above from the Apostle, (which are named), the same is demanded whenever there is any departure from the faith anywhere or at any time..

When Jesus spoke to the eleven after his resurrection, he said: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER I HAVE COMMANDED YOU; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." (Matthew 28:18-20)

In our early days among the brethren we felt,—as did many of the brethren, that a brother was sound in the faith if he believed Predestination, Election, Resurrection, etc. And we are certain that these are sound doctrine if correctly understood and defined, and as such are absolutely necessary to be preached and believed every time the GOSPEL is preached; but these are not the only things which are sound doctrine.

To preach everything whatsoever Jesus commanded to be observed is sound doctrine and everything which the Apostles taught and commanded is sound doctrine. And we must insist that everything which was written by inspiration is sound doctrine; but that everything else not in accord is not sound doctrine. Sound doctrine is properly called the truth as it is in Jesus, and cannot be rightly separated into distinct parts, for it is one continuous whole. Therefore, if any part is neglected to be taught and believed, truth,—or sound doctrine, is neglected.

To illustrate what we have in mind, we may say that orderly walk and godly conversation is sound doctrine; but if exhortation to these things is neglected, or if reproof or rebuke is neglected where necessary, then the WHOLE TRUTH is not being presented. It is well to read the whole of the 2nd chapter of Titus; where Paul wrote: "Speak thou the things which become SOUND DOCTRINE: that the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in the faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded.

In all things shewing THYSELF A PATTERN OF GOOD WORKS; in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you. Exhort servants to be obedient to their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again, not purloining but shewing all good fidelity; that they may ADORN THE DOCTRINE of God our Saviour in all things.

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, TEACHING US that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. THESE THINGS SPEAK, AND EXHORT,

AND REBUKE WITH ALL AUTHORITY. Let no man despise thee."

It is our understanding that all gospel ministers are under this charge, as well as all other things they are instructed to teach and preach; such as, "Of these things put them in remembrance, CHARGING THEM BEFORE THE LORD that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain bablings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness." (2 Tim. 2:14-16). In the 4th Chapter of 1st Timothy, Paul wrote, "These things COMMAND AND TEACH. Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou AN EXAMPLE of the believers, in WORD, IN CONVERSATION, IN CHARITY, IN SPIRIT, IN FAITH, IN PURITY. Till I come, give attendance to READING, TO EXHORTATION, TO DOCTRINE. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophesy, with the laying on of hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that they profiting may appear to all. TAKE HEED UNTO THYSELF, AND UNTO THE DOCTRINE; CONTINUE IN THEM; for in doing this thou shalt both SAVE THYSELF, AND THEM THAT HEAR THEE." Are not these things included in the calling of a servant of God, and is he not charged with them when he is ordained? Surely so; for whether spoken or not, all things which belong to the office-work of an elder are included in the charge.

Not only are the servants of God to preach and teach these things, but the brethren are exhorted to hear them and continue in them, as children who have been taught of the Lord and have his laws written in their hearts and put in their minds: That they may lead a quiet and peaceful life, and adorn their profession, and walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called. Being children of God and taught of him, there is no walking outside of these things which may be tolerated in the church; for though it is said,—and it is true, that when we walk astray it is because we are walking in the flesh.

Yet if this reason is sufficient to give license for such walking, and allowable as a principle governing conduct where would there be place for gospel order and discipline? Though each of us feelingly realize our fleshly walk so often, are we not therein condemned by the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which has made us free from the law of sin and death: and being dead to sin cannot walk any longer therein? Is there not that within us which causes us to know that these things are not becoming to us as professed followers of Jesus, members of his body, and having a hope of eternal life? We understand the Scriptures to teach, and our experience to confirm that, though we have these treasures in an earthen vessel, we are not at all excusable, but are amenable to the discipline and order which belongs in the church, and which the brethren are enjoined to maintain.

If this were not true, the church would have no right to require godly walk and conversation of her members as necessary for the retaining of fellowship and privileges of the church. It is therefore, gospel order that when members are in disorder from any cause, the weakness of the flesh cannot be accepted as giving them a right thus to walk; but they are required to walk as becometh godliness. If they do not thus walk, after proper admonition and labor on the part of the brethren, the fellowship and privileges of the church must be withdrawn.

He is a faithful preacher who preaches the word to his people, not only in the fundamental principles and experiences, but in exhortation reminding them what is required of all those in fellowship, who are baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; and have right to the communion of the blood and body of Christ. But if any should withhold anything from the brethren which he is commanded to teach, he is not faithful to his calling. "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." (1 Cor. 4:2) No servant of God should inquire of men what he should preach, nor turn aside for any earthly reason from preaching the whole truth; but taking heed unto himself and unto the doctrine, and realizing that he falls far short of ability and wisdom, he will betake himself unto God who called him, as James said: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But

let him ask in faith, nothing wavering." etc. (James 1:5-6)

Jeremiah mentions a terrible thing among the priests and prophets: "A wonderful and horrible thing has happened in the land; the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their own means; and MY PEOPLE LOVE TO HAVE IT SO; and what will ye do in the end thereof?" (Jer. 5:30-31). No doubt the same things may be said of some of the Lord's people in this and former days: some love their own ways, and their own desire of advantages, rather than the Lord's ways according to the pattern and examples given; and what makes it worse is that many are ready to follow. In this they are not only wrong themselves, but are upholding those who are wrong. If any are in disorder they would soon come to naught were they not strengthened by those who uphold them Personalitites should have no place among the brethren, for they should preach, not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and themselves the servants of the brethren for Jesus' sake (see 2 Cor. 4:5)

Our earnest prayer for Zion is that the Lord may be pleased to give us sober minds and understanding hearts; and a sitting still, (Ruth 3:18); and a laying down of our lives for the brethren, (1 John 3:16). It is such a serious thing for any to cause unrest and disturbance of the peace of the churches. May we all be blessed to take heed unto ourselves, as well as the doctrine, and not have the following apply to us: "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrfice for sins, but a fearful looking for of judgement and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengence belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. IT IS A FEARFUL THING TO FALL INTO THE HANDS OF THE LIVING GOD." (Hebrews 10:23-31).

No doubt all brethren will agree that the saying mentioned in the text pertains not to eternal life but rather the saving the church from errors in doctrine and practice; for it is a very noticeable thing that where there is a sound and faithful ministry, there is usually a sound and faithful church.

J. D. W.

* * *

EVIDENCES OF A GRACIOUS STATE

I feel a desire to comply with a request that I write something concerning the marks of a child of grace. This is a subject that is well suited to each poor wayfaring pilgrim, and it seems one that all could very well come to agreement upon. And if we came to agreement upon that from an experimental standpoint, we would be in as good a shape for agreement on other things as we will ever be in this life.

To begin, life always precedes action. This rule holds good in every article that has ever been written or sermon preached. The life under consideration is not this fleeting natural life, which we all know we must lose in order to come into the fulness of eternal life. Let us remember that thought. We do not want to deny that the children of God have eternal life now—that they are the children of God, and that they are now heirs, and joint-heirs, with their Saviour, of all that God, the Father, possesses. While they are now born of that incorruptible seed, by the word of God, that liveth and abideth forever (I Pet. 1:23), yet they are still in the world, and, after Adam, a part of the world.

The children of God are possessors of two natures; one of them is of the earth or a fleshly nature, the other is a divine nature or spiritual. There is not any compromise between these two natures. Since ever one is seeking evidences that they are children of God, I kindly ask that you keep this thought in mind. The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit is equally against the flesh, and since these two are contrary, one to the other, the children of God cannot do as they would. This is true in two ways. We are not able to run in wisdom's path as we desire; and it has been my own experience that even when I would have followed after the weak and fad-

ing things of this life, that my mind has been caught away and I have felt a refreshing season from the Lord.

This conflict rages with unabated fury as long as we live here in the world, and sadly disappointed is that saint that expects cessation of the warfare. There is not any discharge from the warfare until we are blessed to ground our arms in Jesus Christ and pass over the stream of death. The tenseness of the conflict is evidence of a gracious state, but when we are in the dismal swamp of despair, this is not worth much to the poor tossed child of grace. Just recently I arose from my place of slumber expecting to soon be on my way to my regular appointment where I had been going for many years. But unexpectedly, a query was presented to my mind about my fitness to go among the saints. Did I have any evidence that I was a child of God? I was not, at this moment, exercised as to whether the Lord had called me into his vineyard to preach his unsearchable riches. The question that was so momentous to me was whether I was a child of grace or not. This may not concern you dear readers, and, from a proud, human standpoint, I would wish that you might be spared of the gloom that filled my soul. I looked for evidence; I sought up and down the past avenues of my life for waymarks of my acceptance with Jesus, but it was all turned against me. I found evidence in abundance but it was all tending towards proving that my feet were set downward and that I was in agreement with hell (Isa. 28:15). I labored long, and, I believe faithfully, looking for acceptance with him, but I found none in that laborious and burdensome field.

In the midst of these reflections my attention was called to a passage of scripture. "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children" (Isa. 54:11, 13), came as a bulwark of evidence and consolation. Surely I was afflicted with a weight of despair, but how dreadful to be heavily weighted and tossed at the same time with the tempest. None but those of like experience will ever know what it means.

Do you know? How do you travel on the road? Are you travelling light? Or do you feel that all your actions are being weighed (I Sam. 2:3); that your afflictions or tribulations (both words coming from the Greek *thlipsis*) are working against you; that you are encumbered with a dead body (Rom. 8:10)? Are these things a bother to you? Do you have these thoughts thrust upon you? If so, I want to hasten to assure you that they are true marks of grace. The dead know not anything (Eccl. 9:5); it is the living that are exercised in the truths of grace. Carnality would have those exercises to be free of all limitations and bounds. Exercises of doubts and fears would all be removed by the flesh—it is one sport of ungodly men that they do not have the troubles of poor wayfaring pilgrim. *How is your life ordered?* Are you able to do as you would? *If so, it is evidence that you are not born of the spirit.* If your life is not ordered, it follows that you are ordering it. Ah, what a difference, my dear brethren, in an ordered life and a life according to your order. One is a bright evidence of a work of grace in the heart and mind and soul; the other is plain for all to read that runs, that there is not any cross, and not being any cross to take up, there is not any following of Jesus to do.

The weight and degree of crosses differ. I do not feel to say that all are exercised alike, but that crosses are caused by the same thing. Remember that we are dealing with the crosses and tosses of the children of God. Natural, and even ungodly, men and women have perplexities of natural life. We do not need them mixed into our subject. It is as much cross-bearing to fear that we do not have a cross as it is to have any other part in it. To feel that we are not exercised like our fellow brethren and sisters is cross bearing of the bitterest kind. I had rather hear a poor sinner say that he has not any experience of grace than to hear one say that he is sure of being born again. One has a cross—a bitter, humiliating cross, nevertheless a cross from the motions of the spirit and flesh as they are arrayed in opposition: the other has never been in doubts, he has not been wretched, he has not been in the third heaven (for being there one does not know whether in the body

or out, (2 Cor. 12:2); he knows nothing at all of feeling unprofitable and unfit. Now do you feel unfit to be called a saint? Well, just how unprofitable do you feel? Now, my dear brethren and sisters here is the whole answer of all the saints. Feeling this way is not an isolated case. What we term our leading preachers and leaders in Israel feel this way. The eminent apostle Paul felt the raging of the warfare until he exclaimed "O wretched man that I am"; and poor old Job was shut off completely from communication with the Lord and cried "O that I knew where I might find him"; and that sweet singer in Israel David, lost all the joys of his salvation and begged the Lord "Restore unto me the joys of thy salvation". If these things are part of your life, you have the gist of the matter. You may feel ever so little—all the balance do the same; you may feel the chief of sinners—this is the prevalent feeling of the household of faith; you may feel your lack of wisdom and knowledge, and you may stumble under the impression that you have not any grace, but whatever your weight and burden, I desire to say that it is common with the children of God.

The blessings that are bestowed on poor sinners are the true marks of the family of God. It is strange that learned men cannot differentiate between these blessings that belong to the Lord's people, and conditions whereby dead alienated sinners become children. But that is true. It is equally true that we poor wayfaring people of God cannot lay hold on these things as bright evidences of acceptance with him. We are as helpless now about continuing in belief as we were one time about the coming into belief. To feel our acceptance with Jesus takes that unction from on high. It is true that any may read about the evidences given on the Mount, but it is also true that we are to need the presence of Jesus now to make us feel that being "poor in Spirit" is an evidence of acceptance instead of rejection. And as I write and grope for the right words to convey hope and cheer to the downhearted, I feel my helplessness to do so. I have so many times tried to tell my own experience in order to comfort those that mourn his love to know, but even that is empty to others, if they are not exercised by the Spirit.

Now the various blessings or evidences are bestowed upon all. It does not make any difference how poor in spirit you may feel; how many lonely vigils you may spend in mourning; how hungry and thirsty you get for that righteousness that is by faith; how persecuted you may be because there is not any charge against you save that your only plea is the blood of the Lamb; how vile and wretched and undone you feel to be; how oftimes you seek for acceptance and find none; how many times you feel to be the offscouring of all things; these are the marks placed on the children of God. And these things are given to encourage one another. All things belong to the church. This is a high and exalted favor to the Bride of Jesus: that they have a way of knowing one another. This way does not fail; this way does not mislead; this way will not lead the wise and prudent into the love and fellowship of the saints. But I desire to leave it on these pages for the poor tempest tossed, sin scarred, pilgrim that it lends encouragement to the one that is in this way. Wherever his lot is cast, there will be someone to talk this matter over with ere long. For these people are among all nations and peoples and tongues.

W. D. G.

* * *

NOTICE OF DELAWARE ASSOCIATION

The Delaware Association is appointed to convene with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pa., directly on Route 222, highway from Conowingo, Md., north to Lancaster, Pa., and about 1/8 mile north of Md.-Pa. State line, on Wednesday and Thursday, August 20, 21, 1952, sessions starting at 10:30 a. m., Daylight Time. The Trailways Bus gives service past the meetinghouse daily. Should anyone arrive on Tuesday, by either auto or bus, go to Osbornia Farm, on Route 222, near Robert Fulton Birthplace.

Ministers and brethren of our correspondence are invited to meet with us. Also other believers and lovers of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus are welcome.

If further information is desired, write the undersigned.

Chas. B. Osborne, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

Chewelah, Wash.

To the Signs of the Times:

I feel I want to write you so will make the attempt. If it is of the flesh, it will profit no one. The Scripture says,"Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."(1 Cor. 3:12-13)

I have been reading something about works of late, and it has been on my mind a lot. If it be God's will, I would like to say a few things, but not to distort the truth. Paul says, I have laid the foundation according to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a masterbuilder, but let every man take heed how he builds thereon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Laid is past tense: it has already been laid; and though Paul said he had laid the foundation, he meant that he preached nothing but that which was of Jesus Christ. I think these works are not revealed what they are until the day and fire has proved them or tried them. How can we boast and say we have done some good things? I understand that this burning is going on all the time; for to me this is the day of Jesus Christ, and has been ever since he stretched his arms and died on the cross, then arose and is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high. He told them after he arose that all power both in heaven and in earth was given unto him.

I know that in the flesh I cannot please God; and the Scriptures confirms it is so. Then am I unprofitable? Let me ask, if I am a child of God (and we are supposing a big thing), and if the Spirit of Christ dwells in me, could it be that I will do things which will cause me to be lost forever? Is this according to Holy Writ? No it is not; for though the flesh will still be flesh, yet the spirit will bring forth fruit unto righteousness. But it is not I that do it, for as far as the flesh man knows it may be wood or stubble; only the fire will try it and show what it is. But is the building to be missing in part? Whose building is it? Is Christ the foundation to be left incomplete? Is His bride to be an unsightly, haphazard thing constructed by us humans I say no; for I know better. This building is perfection itself, and is built by God himself, and will be perfect. But what hurts me now while I am being chiseled in to shape, are the things which constrain me and hedge me round about. I have done many things which I am sure were wrong, just for contrariness, (Oh, I know whereof I speak), and then have had these things turned into blessings for myself or someone else. Then I have felt that I was working for the Lord, and was so sure I would receive a blessing for it; that I felt good over it. But then they became a stench in my nostrils, and I have felt as if I were in the valley of dry bones.

According to this, some might say, then do as you please; it will come out alright anyway. But why can't I feel this way about it? Brethren, I hope in Christ I learned long ago that I was a prisoner, and I was not my own keeper. I cannot walk alone; I cannot think for myself, and cannot draw a breath unless power is given me to do so. I have believed since childhood that nothing, yes nothing, can move or have it's being upon this globe of ours except by the power of God; and I hope this belief is never removed from me. I have been in places where it was impossible for me to help myself, and I know God's power helped me. One instance: I was being dragged behind a run-away team, and the lines were wrapped around my foot. My last conscious thought was, Oh, is this the end? And a voice said, "Not yet." I was released and let go, and regained my senses in time to run and turn the team from the gate to save my baby and a little girl from being run over. Did I do it? No, I know better than that.

Some seem to believe that after we are born again, we can do good if we try; and God rewards us for good works. But do not believe it; only God can lead me aright. I believe that if I am born of the Spirit of Christ, I will be as Jesus said, "So is everyone that is born of the Spirit." I will go stumbling along trying to do what I feel is right, but still knowing that of myself I can do nothing; and having no confidence in the flesh, I am made to trust in God of all power who will not fail of his purpose in the salvation of His people. The blessed Master said, "Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." And it was said that his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his

pleasure. In this God is all our trust. He draws us; and if he draws us, it is because he has loved us with an everlasting love.

I remain a little sister in Christ, if one at all; trusting in him and him alone, and not in anything I or anyone else can do.

As ever,
Mary L. Eckard
327 S. Jackson St.,
El Dorado, Ark.

* * *

Bloomingburg, N. Y.

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am enclosing the obituary notice of Gilbert Beebe, of Middletown. He died June 4th He was the grandson of Elder Gilbert Beebe, and had spent his whole life working on the Signs of the Times, and when his father and mother died, he became the publisher of the paper. He continued as publisher for many years until he was forced by ill health to discontinue; and it was then that Elder Dodson assumed control of the paper.

Yours in hope,
Wm. D. Chapman

* * *

1019 Llewellyn Ave.,
Dallas, Texas.

Dear Editor:

I was very glad indeed to hear from you, and to know that you had a very nice and enjoyable trip West. I am also happy to enclose one new subscription and one renewal. Hope to have some more soon.

May the God of Heaven continue his rich blessings upon you to continue on with the paper: firmly standing for that grand old doctrine which the little paper was founded on, which is the doctrine of God our Saviour. Yes, the doctrine of Jesus Christ will stand forever. Salvation by grace and grace alone is sweet to me. I often think of the words of the Apostle Paul in Romans 4:25, "Who was delivered for our offences and was raised again for our justification." Oh yes, he went to Calvary's hill for our offences, but thanks be unto God, he was able to satisfy the demands of the law; for to that end he gave his life for his dear people, and then was able to come forth from the tomb for their justification. If he had not come up from the grave, his dear Bride, the church of the living God would never have been justified in his sight, for he, "arose again for our justification." Yes dear Brother Spangler, if I know myself, I love the sweet thoughts of the resurrection of the dear Saviour, and of the precious fact that his dear people will be raised in the same manner. (Romans 8:11) "But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that riseth up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you."

Yes, raise them also; for those in whom this spirit dwells will be raised in like manner. What does this mean to us? Well to me, it means that the saints of God will be raised a spiritual body, pure and holy and righteous; for that is the way Jesus came forth, as well as the manner in which he was raised. I hope some day to write my views on this wonderful subject, but time and space will not permit it now. On a separate sheet, you will find names and addresses of the subcribers; and also a list of regular meetings I would like for you to announce in the Signs.

Your unworthy brother
in hope,
W. W. Taylor

* * *

2822 Florence Street,
Houston, Texas

Elder R. W. Rhodes and wife,

Dear Brother and Sister in hope:

Your good letter came yesterday and is a wonderful feast. I was feeling very low, alone and almost forsaken, so that the past and future was barred against me. But your message declaring the salutation of the Lord, his mercies and goodness, and the lovely illustration of the poor old publican, brought joy and comfort to my troubled mind and burdened heart. After reading it, I felt like singing, "Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved of the Lord." Indeed your letter was so much help and encouragement to me on this "cloudy and dark day." It also makes me feel very humble when you say my letter was a comfort, etc.; and that you might decide to send it to one of the papers for publication.

While I can only recall a small part of what I wrote, I feel that there is not much in it(if any), that would be of comfort to anyone; for I am such a poor ignorant old sinner, how can I do anything good? I can find nothing good in anything I do. Oh, how I wish that I might say something that would lift some poor tired soul up, - up high; but, alas, this old worm I fear cannot do this.

I often wonder, and wonder and wonder if I have ever indeed drunk of the waters of salvation. About sixteen years ago, I was given, if not deceived, a precious hope in Christ, but realizing my unworthiness, and feeling that there was no hope of ever being numbered with the Old Baptists, I went through all those years yearning for a home with them. Then last July, (2nd Sunday, 1951), I was received and was baptized on Saturday before the 2nd Sunday in August; and this was the second happiest event of my life.

So you see I am only a babe, if one at all. At a later date, the Lord willing, I would like to tell you a little of what I hope the Lord has done for me.

Brother Rhodes, I shall not write more now, except to say that my parents were Old Baptists, father being a minister, as was my grand-father; and my youngest brother is also an Old Baptist minister. Thanks again for the books; I am reading them and they are good. God bless you all.

A little sister in hope,
Harriett L Gray

* * *

209 W. Pine Street
Palestine, Texas

Signs of the Times,
Danville, Va.
Dear Editors:

I am happy to send in a new two years subcription for a friend I met a month ago. I have met him and his wife and parents four times at three different churches since then, and find him very interested in the truth as it is in Christ Jesus and proclaimed by God's servants. He said his childhood memories were of attending a Primitive Baptist church near where his mother belonged, but moving from here to West Texas years ago, he had not heard the preaching of regular Predestinatian Baptists until his parents recently settled in East Texas. He feels it is his duty to take his parents to the church of their faith every Sunday, regardless of distance, as long as they are able to go; and regrets that they have been deprived of that sweet privilege so many years of their lives, since both love to go so much. His mother expects to place her membership in a church nearer their home soon.

We all feel that this friend will some day renounce the organization he now belongs to, and unite with the church where he can get the food he hungers for. His attitude and countenance show his love for the truth and the association with God's people. We hope it is the lord's will for him to soon take up his cross and follow his master through evil as well as good report. We know that it is the Lord who adds to the church daily such as shall be saved, and that no one can join the church until God's appointed time. God makes his people willing to forsake all and follow him in the day of his power; for he has all power in heaven and in earth, and none can stay his hand or say, "What doest thou." He rules in the hearts of his people and when he calls, saying, "Come out of Babylon, my people," they will obey.

I was privileged to witness another beautiful baptismal service last Saturday. Though there had been much rain and the ground was wet, we were well paid for going to the edge of the stream, in witnessing the beautiful, serene countenance of the sister as she was raised form the water, and in hearing her praise God as she walked out. She was so happy, - such a contrast from the weeping, drooping form that sought a home in the church a month ago. Her husband was baptized at the same place two months ago. They had been believers many years, but had not been made willing to declare their faith before the world until now. Both are very happy in their church home and attend meetings somewhere nearly every Sunday.

It is so encouraging to see the zeal shown by many of God's people the last few years. Where ever I go, I meet some people nearly every Sunday, unless it conflicts with their own meeting day. There were two preachers, and members from seven different churches at a regular meeting near here last Sunday. I was happy to have my car filled again with Primitive Baptist. I went alone a few times during the winter because of the illness of some of the older sisters.

May God's blessings rest upon the servants of the true and living God, whereever they may be, and upon all His believing children, is the prayer of

Your little sister form Texas,
Velma Jordan French

* * *

Miss Virginia Lee Simpson

Miss Virginia Lee Simpson, of Washington, D. C., died at her home April 29, 1952. She was a daughter of the late Henry Clay and Angeline Simpson, and was born February 17, 1867. Of her immediate family she leaves one sister, Mrs. Sallie Gaines, of Washington. Miss Simpson was an invalid for about nine years and during all that time she had the tender and loving care of Mrs. Gaines. The Lord strengthened Mrs. Gaines to care for her sister as she would an infant.

Miss Simpson was not a member of the visible church, though she was a firm believer; and it was her joy to attend the meetings of the near by churches and associations, which she did for about sixty-five years. Her home was always a place of entertainment for ministers and church members. So consistent was her faith that she requested that no services be held at her funeral unless an Old School Baptist Elder could be had, for she had often said, "My heart is with them." During her illness she felt that she should not get well, but said she had no fear of death.

Funeral services were held at the Lee Funeral Home in Washington, conducted by the writer. Her body was entombed in the Congressional Cemetery. Many friends showed their esteem and paid their tribute of respect at the services. May the Lord comfort and give grace to those that mourn.

John D. Wood

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 120 DANVILLE, VIRGINIA, SEPTEMBER, 1952 NO. 9

SALISBURY OLD BAPTIST ASSOCIATION CONVENES

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Little Creek Church in Delmar, Delaware, on Wednesday and Thursday, October 22 and 23, at 10:00 A. M.

An invitation is extended to ministers, brethren and friends of our faith and order to meet with us. Those coming on Tuesday will go to the home of Mrs. Bertha Tomlinson, 204 North Second Street, Delmar, Delaware, Telephone Delmar 6401. Trains and buses will be met on Tuesday.

Elder H. M. Bennett, Pastor
Mardela, Maryland
Ananias Hastings, Clerk
Route 3
Salisbury, Maryland

NOTICE OF MEETING

There will be an all day meeting of the Old School Baptist Church of New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, on Saturday, September 27, before the fourth Sunday of that month. Lunch will be served as usual at the near by restaurant. All members and friends are invited to attend.

MAINE ASSOCIATION

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, on September 12, 13, and 14, 1952.

Sanford S. Bartlett, Clerk

Camden, Ark.

Signs of the Times,
Dear Elder Spangler:

I am enclosing five dolars for my subscription to the Signs. I was priviliged to hear you speak over radio when you were visiting in our part of the country. Your portrayal of the window in the Ark was very wonderful to me. It seems to me there is only one light to the little child of God, and it has to shine from above or else he stays in darkness.

I desire an interest in your prayers for I feel myself to be the very smallest child, if indeed I am one.

Unworthily yours,
Mrs. L. R. Alexander

ASSOCIATION NOTICE

The annual meeting of the Lexington-Roxbury Association will be held, the Lord willing, at Shokan, New York, Wednesday and Thursday, September 17th and 18th, 1952, beginning Wednesday morning at 10:30, daylight time. Ministers, brethren, and friends of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us. Entertainment will be provided at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Ruckert, situated on the East side of the meeting house. Those arriving Tuesday will go to the home of Mr. Ruckert, and those coming Wednesday will go direct to the meeting house. There are bus and rail connections with Kingston and Oneonta. In order to know approximately how many guests to provide for, it would be greatly appreciated, if those from out of town, who plan to attend, would notify Elder Amasa J. Slauson, 46 Cedar Street, Kingston, New York.

Arnold H. Bellows, Moderator

1700 Garrick Building
64 West Randolph Street
Chicago, Illinois

Elder David V. Spangler, Editor
Signs of the Times

Dear Brother Spangler;

I am inclosing $3.00 for one year's subscription to the "SIGNS" for Miss Annie Townley.

She also gave me a copy of the reprint of the Signs published in December 1921 requesting a reprint of an article written by Elder J. W. McClanahan on Lincoln and his parents.

Brother Spangler, if you have the space, I hope that you can fulfill this request.

As the associations convene this fall in West Tennessee, Kentucky and Southern Illinois areas, I hope that you may be able to visit with some of them.

Fraternally,
John Franklin Lax

P. S. I am interested in the minutes of the Welch Tract Church which is now 250 years old. I had the privilege of speaking on the History of the Primitive Baptist at the Centennial of the Obion Association in 1928. Some of the churches in that association are approximately 130 years old, and these records preserved by them are invaluable in preserving a true history of our people.

J F L

Poca, W. Va.,
Nov. 12, 1921

Dear Editors:

I am sending for publication a short sketch of the religious faith of Thomas Lincoln and his family, hoping it may be thought worthy a place in the Signs. The minutes of their meetings sounded right to me, and I feel that it would be read with interest by many, but you are more compentent to judge as to what would be best.

Your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord,

J. W. McClanahan

LINCOLN REARED AS A HARDSHELL BAPTIST

Rolling back the mists of a century and offering the deerskin bound records of Little Pigeon Baptist Church, near Lincoln City, Ind., as the missing link of Abraham Lincoln's religion, Thomas B. McGregor, assistant attorney general of the state of Kentucky, has given to an appreciative America substantial evidence that Abraham Lincoln was reared in the simple faith of the "Hardshell" Baptist Church. There is no record of Abraham Lincoln affiliation with any church denomination, but Mr. McGregor's story of Thomas Lincoln, moderator and pillar of the little Baptist church, proves conclusively, Mr. McGregor says, that the Lincoln family were Baptists. "The parents of Abraham Lincoln deserve a fairer estimate than has been allotted them by most of the biographers of Lincoln," said Mr. McGregor, "and the story, as told by the records that are still to be found in the archives of Little Pigeon Church, near Lincoln, City, Spencer Co., Ind., of the devotion paid by the parents of Lincoln to him who guided the lad of Pigeon Creek in the hour of the nation's travail, goes far to give them their true estimate. In fact, they were well to do pioneers of their day, of sturdy ancestral stock, owned a farm, domestic animals, tools and a family Bible; neighborly, sacrificing and active church- going members."

"Pigeon Creek Church was founded June 8th, 1816, the year that Thomas Lincoln and his family moved from Kentucky and settled on Little Pigeon Creek, in what was then Warrick County, Indiana Territory. It was then, as now, the chief church in that vicinity. When the meetinghouse was built its site was selected about a mile west of Thomas Lincoln's home, the church

building to-day occupying practically the same place. When Lincoln's mother died she was buried between their home and the church, the graveyard not having been at that time started at the church, but when Lincoln's sister, Sarah Grisby, died in 1828, she was buried in the church burying-ground, where her grave is yet to be seen, marked by a rough stone.

This church, with its continous existence since 1816, has only two books containing its records and minutes, the first covering the period from 1816 to 1840. It is in this book that we find Abraham Lincoln's father, stepmother and sister were active members of the Hardshell Baptist Church of Pigeon Creek, and this book, with its deerskin cover, the hair still remaining, not only reveals in its crude historic way the true religion of Lincoln's parents, but gives us the best insight yet found to his own religious views."

"Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks were married by a Methodist minister by the name of Jesse Head, but shortly afterward they were united with one of the churches of the Baptist Licking Locust Association of Regular Baptist churches in Kentucky, and when Nancy Lincoln died in Indiana, Abraham by his own efforts had their Kentucky pastor, Elder David Elkins, come to their wilderness home and preach his mother's funeral."

After Thomas Lincoln had married Sally Bush Johnson he sent back to his Kentucky church and obtained his letter of fellowship, and as the minutes of June 1st, 1823, show, he united with the Pigeon Creek Church by this letter and his wife by experience. From that date until they moved to Illinois, in 1830, their names appear frequently in the minutes of the church proceedings, Thomas being one of the pillars of the church, acting as moderator, on committees to investigate the conduct of brethren and sisters and messenger to associations, bearing the letter of Pigeon Creek to her sister churches. The historic minutes which record the affiliation of Thomas Lincoln and his wife with this little pioneer church follows:

June 7th, 1823.

The church met, and after prayer meeting proceeded to business.

1st. Inquired for fellowship.

2nd. Invited members of sister churches to seats with us.

3rd. Opened a door for the reception of members.

4th. Received brother Thomas Lincoln by letter and * * *

7th. Received brother John Wire by relation and sister Lincoln and Thomas Carter by experience.

"Thomas Lincoln was not in such poor circumstances but that he always donated to the needs of his church," said Mr. McGregor, in offering the following copy of an agreement to build a new chimney on the meetinghouse:

We, the undersigned, do agree one with another to pay the several sums next to our names in produce this fall to be delivered between the 1st and 20th of December, the produce as follows: corn, wheat, whiskey, soft linen, wool or any other article or material to do work with,. The produce will be delivered at Wm. Barker's in good mercantile produce.

Signed with other names is:

Thomas Lincoln, white corn, manufactured—pounds—24.

"Thus," continued Mr. McGregor, "we have revealed to us the religion of Abraham Lincoln's parents, his sister Sarah, and of himself. He was raised in the simple hardshell faith, which in after years never left him. We have no record of Thomas Lincoln or his wife ever uniting with any church after they moved to Illinois in 1830."

Eld. D. V. Spangler,
Signs of the Times.
Dear Bro. Spangler:

For some time I have had much meditation on the Scriptures, and many

thoughts to attempt to write something for our paper. I have wondered if I was numbered with the class of, "the shut in's". In the seventh chapter of Geneses, part of the sixteenth verse, we read, "And the Lord shut him in." This refers to the time when the Lord bade Noah enter the ark.

Here we have the fulfillment of the word of God; for when Adam transgressed in the garden of Eden, God said, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee." As the nations of the earth began to multiply and God saw that the heart of man was wicked continually, he said, "I will destroy man that I have made." Did God have foreknowledge of this wickedness and the downfall of man?

The Psalmist said, "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods." "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." In my work as a psychiatrist's aid, I am in constant touch with what we call "shut in's". Many of these are bed fast and others never go out. In the church there are many who are sick or confined to their home and can never attend meetings; we call these also, "shut in's".

However, when Noah entered the Ark, there were two classes of people upon the earth. There were the "Shut in's", and the "Shut out's". And it is so today. Whereever and whoever the Lord has called, he is a shut in. Paul in his epistle to the Romans said, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." The Apostle did not say to them who are called, but, "To them who are the called."

Paul, in his epistle to the Ephesians, said, Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to the good pleasure of his will."; That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ."; In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." and, "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourself; it is the gift of God."

The Lord spake to Noah and said, "Come thou and all thy house into the ark." This was a commandment of God. It had pleased God to choose this man for that purpose, that out of his seed should come one who should guide his people. Ancient history was recorded on papyrus and the study of Archology confirms the record we have in our Bibles. We have the promise of a new king that was to reign. The prophet Isaiah foretold his coming when he said, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert of a highway for our God." The prophet was speaking of the coming of John, the Baptist. In the third chapter of Matthew, we read, "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He did not speak of himself, but of him who was to come. "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him." The prophet foretold the coming of Christ when he said, "Rejoice greatly, O daughters of Zion; shout O daughters of Jerusalem; behold thy king cometh unto thee; He is just and having salvation."

In the memorable night in the garden, only a few hours before his betrayal by Judas, Jesus in his prayer, said, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they

may be one, even as we are one." Jesus had been sent from God, born of an incorruptible seed, and in whom there was no guile. He was sent a King, a leader to the lost children of Isreal. His kingdom shall never be destroyed. Nations may come, and empires may be built, but they shall fall. This kingdom of God, however, standeth sure.

In conclusion, we quote the Psalmist, "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men."

Henry H. Townsend, Sr.

Keysville, Va.
July 9, 1952

Elder John D. Wood,
Dear Brother Wood:

I am enclosing a letter which I received from Eld. P. W. Ashworth which he wrote me after the funeral and burial of my dear wife. I enjoyed the letter and thought others might enjoy it too. I hope you will publish it in the Signs of the Times.

Yours in hope,
W. H. Setliff

Danville, Virginia
January 25, 1952

Mr. Willie H. Setliff,
R. F. D. No. 1,
Keysville, Virginia

Dear Brother Setliff:

No one but our Lord knoweth just what trials you are passing through. But He knows! Just before our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ left this world, His disciples were much troubled over the thought that He was soon to leave them and He spoke these comforting words: "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in Me.

In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:1-3).

On this same occasion Jesus told the diciples (and that is for his people in this day also) that when he went away, He would send the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, that is, God would send Him in Christ's name. The Scripture tells us that He said: "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: BUT YE KNOWETH HIM; FOR HE DWELLETH WITH, and SHALL BE IN YOU. I will not leave you comfortless: **I will come to you:"** John 14:16-18).

We understand that Jesus had under consideration when He spoke the words: "I WILL COME TO YOU!", that is, when you are in trouble, and the billows roll high, and your trials seem to be unbearable, and that all seems to be dark and stormy, and you are left alone— "I WILL COME TO YOU," I will send the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, to comfort you. He will take the things which I said and show them unto you, and will give you "peace"; that peace which the world cannot give, for it knoweth not Him. Yes, dear brother in Christ, He can, and will "speak peace to your soul."

He has promised to make a way for your escape from the tempters' clutches. He will comfort you during your hours of loneliness. He will be closer than a brother to you. He has not promised to prevent trials and tribulations from coming upon us, but He has promised that they "shall not destroy us." There is nothing that shall be able to seperate "His love from His children." He sayeth, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." We love Him because He first loved us. "Therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."

Maybe, the Lord willing, Brother Dodd, and I and some of the other brethren and sisters can visit you some time this spring. I would love to visit your good home again. Of course we would miss your dear companion. However, we know that which the Lord doeth is

right. She had finished her course on this earth, then He called her home, to ever more be with the Lord. There, she will have no more suffering, no more toils and cares which one has to pass through in this world. I know you will miss her, but you would not ask the Lord to give her back to you now. No, she is much better off. Yes, better off than we are. Because we still have to suffer many pains and disappointments here in this world of sin and sorrow. But our hope is, that we shall meet together in that world which hath no end, there to praise His blessed name forever.

Your little brother in hope,
Posie W. Ashworth

Charleston, Miss.
March 6, 1952

Dear Editors of the Signs of the Times:

Am enclosing check to pay for two two year renewals as noted.

Since my mother's death in 1927, I have been a subscriber. She was Mrs. L. E. Neely and your records should show how long the paper came in her name. Prior to that time it came in my grandmother's name. She was Mrs. S. N. E. Barns. Her father-in-law, Col. S. Barns, was a subscriber for many years. It was while reading the Signs to him (he was blind for a number of years before his death) ,that she become interested in the Primitive Baptist doctrine and became a member. Until her death at the age of eighty-four she was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. If I am not mistaken, this paper has been coming to a member of my family for over one-hundred years.

My great-grandfather, Col. Shadrach Barns, was born in Gallatin County, Kentucky in 1789, and died in 1880. The inscription on his gravestone, near Oakland, Miss. is: "He was a Primitive Baptist fifty years, and fell asleep in full assurance of the faith."

Yours truly,
Mrs. Lillie Neely Henry

Bloomburg, Texas

Dear Signs of the Signs:

The old year has passed on, and I hope to be deeply thankful for the precious privilege of reading the dear on Signs. I am enclosing a ten dollar check for subscription another year; and the balance to help carry the paper on in any way needed. It is the best Old Baptist paper, to my belief, I have ever read. I find much comfort and peace in reading the dear letters and editorials. I wondered, as did others, what would become of the dear old Signs after Brother Dodson passed on. He was a precious brother to all wherever he was known. I know God is able to place deeply gifted Editors to carry on the paper. May God bless and strengthen them and all the writers, and give them many more days to labor in His dear name.

I believe I was taught many years ago that I am a poor, unworthy, helpless sinner; taught of the Lord, if at all, through tribulations and great sorrows. I pray that God will remember me and my dear loved ones, and lead us through the dark places, and bless us with his lasting love and great mercy. I feel that He has given me a precious spiritual love for the dear brethern and sisters of our little home church. I am so far away, somehow I feel I am a burden to them, yet they receive me with a heart full of christian love always, in which I greatly rejoice.

I enjoy all the Editorials on prayer. May you all find a little prayer for me and mine when at the throne of grace. Yours in a precious hope in God our Saviour.

A little sister, of one at all,
Mrs. Maggie Simmons.

Maynardville, Tenn.
July 5, 1952

Dear Elder Spangler and Wood,
Dear brethern in the Lord:

I have procrastinated from time to time sending in remittance for the Signs, which it seems we can hardly do

without. I am in the seventy-fifth year of my sojourn here. I like to read the Signs and admire what is contended for in it.

I am enclosing check to set my subscription up one year; and am also enclosing notice of Powell's Valley Association of Predestinarian Baptists, to be held with Union Church, Union County, Tenn.

Yours in glorious hope,
John E. Walton

NOTICE

There are quite a few associations throughout the country who stand upon the principle advocated by the Signs, of whom I have no direct information. Such information would be invaluable to me; and if the Clerks of such associations would mail a copy of their 1952 minutes to me, I would greatly appreciate it.

Also, I am desirous of obtaining copies of the Signs previous to 1850, as well as the 1857. If any have copies of these and are willing to part with them, they will be appreciated.

(Elder) John D. Wood
Manassas, Virginia

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am sending another letter for the Signs when space permits. It is such a good letter; it filled my heart with love and joy, and I feel others would enjoy it too.

The last two Signs have been wonderful, and it will soon be time for another. I can't always enjoy reading as I would like to. I find as my mother said, "Without the Spirit, there's no beauty in what you read." This has always puzzled me: if one has truly been born of the Spirit, can he ever be without it? If I know anything about it, I have felt as Brother Barnes, — to be without it; to be unable to read or think of the works of God. What happens to this spirit when one feels like that? If it is Christ in you, the hope of glory, and you desire to read and cannot, Why? "Oh the depths the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; how unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out."

Mrs. Lucile Young.

Union City, Tenn.

Dear Sister Young:

We shall try to acknowledge your wonderful letter which we received a few days ago. It was somewhat of a surprise to us to get the letter, as we were thinking that we had been forsaken of God, and also man. In other words, we have been left in such a desolate state that it seemed to us that if God had ever visited us in his love and mercy, surely he had withdrawn himself and hid his face from us; and we could not find him no matter how much we searched.

Of course, we have been enable to meet with the dear brethern and sisters at church here and elsewhere, but still that feeling of being alone and forsaken still remained with us. But your good letter, which we were not looking for, was so full of love of God; so full of our own experience; so full of the great wisdom that God alone gives his children; and so full of the great power of God to remove our doubts and great mountains of unbelief (which is sin). In fact, it was full of life; and we believe it is the life of Jesus is to his children. Jesus says, I am the way, the truth and the life. No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me, draw him.

Now in our desperate loneliness and feeling of being forsaken, in this desert we have been traveling in for some time, we hope we have learned the truth of the language quoted above: I am the way; I am the truth; I am the life. Jesus is all this to his children. Yet no man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him. Now can't you imagine that I have been try-

ing to go to Jesus since he seems to have hidden his face from me: such a feeling of destitution, and being alone in a wild unhabited desert. Nothing in sight except an expanse of desert land; no one to go to, no one to talk to, no God to pray to; with no power to go, I just can't go.

Let me tell you dear sister, I have been trying to go to Jesus ever since I found myself in this desert land. But I have failed miserably. All I have done seems to get me farther and farther away; I am going in circles, not knowing whither I go. But thanks be to God, who sends his Son to where we are, and he so kindly tells us, You can't come unto me except by the Father which sent me. I love the words, Sent me; and draw him. Now this scripture has been written a long time, and we have probably read it many times, but it never did sound so good to me as it does just now.

Oh yes, I know the truth of the language now. I have been trying to go to Jesus, but could not. I would have gone to him, if I could. None can tell me that I could have gone to him if I had tried hard enough, for I tried. So I hope the truth of this scripture has ben revealed to me; and if revealed, it was while I was in the desert land. Oh, the sweetness of his words, "No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me, draw him." Yes, I know now that we have to be drawn to Jesus, and I can't draw you to him, and you can't draw me to him, but we have to be drawn by the Father. There is no other way.

Now who is it that does the coming? "All the Father hath given me shall come unto me." Yes, all the Father gave the Son shall come. Why? Because the Father draws them. They would not, they could not come were it not for the great drawing power of the Father. But God the Father shall draw all of them to Jesus, his only begotten Son. Then Jesus says, "And he that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." Such gracious and glorious truths.

Why could I not have grasped the sweetness of these scriptures before now? They have been scripture all the time. I simply believe we have to experience the truth before we can believe the truth. It is very easy for men to make great assertions about what the scriptures teach and about what they believe. But do they know the truth of the scriptures; have they experienced the truth? Has the truth been revealed to them? If not, they cannot preach the truth, — for they know not the truth.

We sometimes read the scriptures; we read the words found in the Bible. How often have I read them to see if I could learn the truth; but I have never learned the truth by reading the Bible. Jesus says, "I am the truth."; "I am the way"; "I am the life". The Father draws his child to the Way; to the Truth and to the Life. Jesus is all this to the Father's child. Then, if I have the truth, I have Jesus; if I have the way, I have Jesus; if I have the life, I have Jesus. If I have all this, Why?

Because I have been drawn to it; because I have been given the Son, and it seemed good in God's sight. Jesus said, "I thank thee Father, lord of heaven and earth, because thou has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." So we see the wise cannot, by reading the Bible, find the things that God has hid from him; and the babe would not know anything about Jesus, the way, the truth and the life, if it had not seemed good in the sight of the Father to reveal it to him.

But it seemed good in the sight of God to do these two things: to hide somethings from some (the wise and prudent), and to reveal these same things unto babes. This shows to me that without the revealing, we are wise and prudent; but with revelation we are babes. The only reason given for any of the things God does, is that is seems good in His sight; and that is reason enough. God is good, and wise, and merciful and

powerful; and God is love. He acts from all his great attributes, sovereignly and independently, and for no other cause outside of himself.

Give all our friends there our best regards. We hope you will write us again and come to see us.

J. W. and Clara Barnes

Association Notice

The Powell's Valley Association of Predestinarian Baptists, will convene with the Union Church, Union County, Tennessee, (God willing), for it's one hundred thirty-third session, September 5, 6 and 7, 1952.

Elder John Wilder, Moderator,
Pineville, Ky.
John E. Walton, Clerk,
Rt. 1, Maynardville, Tenn.

Marion, La.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I am sending five dollars to renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times. If I know my own heart, I love all it stands for; and I love to read the inspiring letters. I have been with this people only a short time. After years of work and self-righteousness, I was brought down to the Red Sea. I could go no further, and could not turn back. While in that condition I heard the Old Baptist doctrine which I had once made fun of. It seems to me that it is the only everlasting truth that is being preached today; if it is not the truth, I don't know what truth is.

Mrs. J. T. Bird.

Fremont, N. C.

Elder D. V. Spangler
Dear Brother:

Enclosed find check for five dollars to renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times. I enjoy reading the magazine; it is a source of much comfort and spiritual food to those who hunger for the blessed doctrine which comes from a far country. Which doctrine drops as the rain, and speech that distills as the dew; as small rain on the tender herbs and plants; and showers upon the grass.

I am glad that the Lord has blessed you to become Editor of the Signs. It is indeed a blessing when the Lord calls and qualifies his servants to fulfill his word concerning his house, and bless the provision of his house, so that the poor can have the gospel preached to them.

It is true that when the Lord deals with his people, he brings them to places they know not what to do, — he brings them down to a very low state. When all of their comforts and joys are gone, their hope of his loving kindness and the joy of his salvation is gone; and they feel that these precious things will never return. But in due time these blessings come again and we rejoice in Him as our Saviour. He promised never to leave or forsake his people; and he never fails concerning his promises. Out of these blessed experiences come our hope and comforts.

Your brother in hope,
H. B. Ballance.

Fort Hall, Idaho

Signs of the Times,
Dear Brethern:

There is nothing good that I have done to cause the blessings I have received from visiting the good old Primitive Baptist churches here in the West and Eastern states.

We attended church the fourth Saturday and Sunday in August, 1951, at Weiser, Idaho, and had a three days meeting the first of September here at Pocatillo, Idaho. We all enjoyed the sermons by Elder C. H. Byrd and Elder R. R. Wolf. We were blessed to get to go to Ohio and Kentucky for two months and hear several wonderful sermons; they were as sound as the Rock of Ages, and we rejoiced with the good brethern and sisters there.

If it is the good Lord's will, we hope to have a three days meeting the 13, 14 brethern and members of our faith and order visitors are welcome. The place is nine miles North of Pocatello at the W. M. Akers' home, and ten miles North of Pocatello at the home of Noah Newson, on U. S. Highway 191-91 North. We will be so happy, especially my mother, as she is a firm believer in the Old Baptists; that is all she has to look forward to. It pleased the Lord to call her dear husband and our father, Evan S. Frasure, from us four years ago; and how we all miss him. Mother lives alone but is blessed with eight children who live around her now to take care of her. She likes nothing better than the company of Old Baptists, and to entertain them.

We had a good little meeting the other day with Bro. C. H. Byrd. He left for the Eastern States after our meeting. We enjoyed his company so well, and were blessed to have him visit us several times. We enjoy his fellowship and sermons. I have read many good letters and sermons in the Signs of the Times, and enjoy them very much.

An humble little sister, saved by grace, if saved at all.
Mrs. Noah Newson.

(We regret that this is late in publication. J. D. W.)

CHANGE OF YEARLY MEETING TIME

The Yearly Meeting of the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church has been changed from the first Sunday in October, to the second Sunday in October.

William S. Adkins, Clerk,
Salisbury, Md.

THE VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING

The Virginia Corresponding meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with Mt. Zion Church, on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, October 15th, 16th and 17th, 1952. Brethern of our faith and order, and all interested friends, are invited to meet with us.

Mt. Zion meeting house is located about two miles East of Aldie, Virginia, on Highway No. 50. Those coming on Tuesday will go either to Herndon, Virginia, and inquire for Brother Walter Norman, or to Manassas, Virginia, to Elder John D. Wood's home, where entertainment will be provided. Brother Norman's phone is Herndon 229W, and Eld. Wood's is Manassas 422J. Further information on request.

Mrs. David Farnie, Church Clerk
Leesburg, Virginia
Grover C. Spindle, Assn. Clerk
914 9th Street, N. E.
Washington, D. C.

NOTICE

The Welch Tract Church of Newark, Delaware expects to hold an all day's yearly meeting Sunday **October 12, 1952** All lovers of the truth are invited to attend.

Lydia Rittenhouse, Clerk
D. V. Spangler, Pastor

Ordination of Elder A. B. Chumney

In answer to the call sent out by Ramah Church for the ordination of Brother A. B. Chumney to the ministry, upon his call to Bethlehem Church as Pastor, the following presbytery was organized April 15, 1951: Elder G. B. Hicks, Moderator; Elder J. J. Collins, Clerk, and Elder W. A. Brooks. The church chose Brother A. R. Sellers to answer as to Brother Chumney's qualifications, as set forth by the Apostle Paul to Timothy. Elder Hicks questioned Brother Chumney on the Articles of Faith. Elder Brooks led in the ordination prayer; and Elder Hicks delivered the charge. Whereupon Ramah Church extended the right hand of fellowship. Brother Chumney was duly ordained an Elder, to serve wherever his lot is cast.

Elder G. B. Hicks, Moderator
Elder J. J. Collins, Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pleasant Hope Church

Cass County, Texas June 28, 1952.

Pursuant to call heretofore sent out by Pleasant Hope Church for a Presbytery to meet on above date for the purpose of the ordination of Brother Arthur McLeod to the office of Deacon of Pleasant Hope Church the following Elders and Deacons met and organized themselves into a Presbytery; Elders T. A. Wall, E. J. Lambert, J. W. McCool, R. W. Rhodes, W. W. Taylor and W. A. Speer. Deacons L. S. Hill, David Shelton, G. W. McDuff and T. P. Wilson.

The Presbytery organized itself by electing Elder R. W. Rhodes, Moderator and Elder W. A. Speer, as Clerk. Deacon L. S. Hill, was appointed as spokesman for the church who presented Brother McLeod to the Presbytery.

After due examination of Brother McLeod, as to deportment, qualifications and the state of God's gift to him as a Deacon to the satisfaction of the Presbytery, the presbytery proceeded to ordain Brother McLeod, as follows;

The Presbytery selected Elder E. J. Lambert, to word the prayer and Elder W. W. Taylor, to deliver the charge.

Whereupon the Presbytery then and there proceeded with the ordination by the laying of hands of the Presbytery and in prayer by Elder E. J. Lambert and then by charge delivered by Elder W. W. Taylor.

We the members of the Presbytery commend Deacon Arthur McLeod, to all orderly orthadox Primitive Baptist as being sound in doctrine, careful in deportment and humble in the display of God's gift of the office of Deacon.

The right hand of fellowship was given Deacon Arthur McLeod, by the members of the Presbytery, Pleasant Hope Church and Brethren and friends. Deacon McLeod, was delivered back to the church duly ordained by the Presbytery and received by the church.

Minutes of the proceedings were read and approved and adjourned in order with prayer by Elder E. J. Lambert.

Elder R. W. Rhodes, Moderator.
Elder W. A. Speer, Clerk.

Naches, Wash.

Signs of the Times:
Dear Editors:

Knowing the "faith and patience of the saints", I am ashamed of being guilty of seeming to take advantage of those virtues by being the least bit delinquent in renewing my subscription. When the Signs comes the wrapper is apt to be unnoticed in my haste to see who has written. I feel that I know all the writers; a good many I have actually met, while some I have known a long time. I always enjoy the "family paper", I call it.

Sister Eckard's mother died since she wrote the letter which appeared in the July Signs. Dear Mary is a sister of many trials and deep experience. I sympathize deeply with those writers who can seldom, if ever, go to church; though I know they are blessed with the presence of the Lord as much as those who seem to be more fortunate.

I remember being quite ill a few years ago, and there never was a time when I seemed to be more in the presence of my Saviour. All was peace; and I could have left the world gladly. Later, when death came to one of the family, it was a comfort to recall the days of my illness. Truly, we are given strength for our days:

Last year, in April, we were blessed to have Sister Vaughn, of Hopewell, N. J., with us for a short visit. Then in August, Elder and Sister T. R. Jefferson, of Marysville, Cal., and Elder Wilson and Brother Eckols, of Bakerfield, were here. Who am I to be so blessed in having the saints in my home?

Just a poor sinner saved by grace,
and in need of your prayers.

Mrs. D. H. Baker

EDITORIALS

Danville, Va. August 1952

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"Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied" (Jude 2).

The kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ is a fruitbearing kingdom. In spite of all charges to the contrary, there is a generous supply of these fruits. At times it seems that plants come up which are not of the true planting, but the promise concerning them is that they shall all be rooted up. There is a rule of the husbandman that the plants in his planting bear fruit. In fact, the trees of his planting are trees of righteousness, and they always bear the choisest of fruits. His cutting and purging produces results in his vineyard.

None of the fruitbearing is traceable to our carnal nature. The carnal or fleshly mind produces works, but the spirit produces fruit. These two (the flesh and the spirit) will not mix. A good tree will not, and cannot, produce anything but good fruit; an evil tree will not, and cannot, produce anything but evil fruit. In the vineyard of the Lord, he plants, he waters, he cultivates, he cuts, he purges. They are all his trees—all trees of righteousness.

The tree comes first; the fruit follows. From the planting to the fruit, it is all to the praise of his grace. No praise whatever to any other source is permissable. It just cannot be so in this vineyard. Other kingdoms, however near right, however benevolent they may be, perhaps will praise other sources. But none of it is in this kingdom in the spirit of the case. When in this spirit, none of these plantings desire to claim any credit for any fruitbearing.

These fruits are delightful to see. They are rich clusters well balanced, on a well balanced tree. The fruit is clean. It is not mixed with anything of an unclean or wild nature. They are not products of the natural man in that relationship that he holds with his forerunner, Adam. Yet, these fruits are produced **by the spirit** in the new creature.

There is not any way by the use of good language to make the text depend on any of the chosen of God. Nor is there one scripture that contradicts the sovereignty taught in the text. If any feel to bring up a contradiction, that would show a disposition to put forth a denial of the prayer of Jude. We must remember that all prayer is answered, but we must not be led to take form of words for prayer. Outwardly we have not been given rule to know just what prayer (in formality) was indited by the Spirit, but we are not faced with any such problem here. This is by the inspiration of God; this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning the elect (2 Tim. 3:16; I Thes. 5:18; I Pet. 1:2). If prayer is answered, then it, of necessity follows that only that mercy prayed for in behalf of the elect, will be enjoyed. None, I hope, know any better than the poor writer how excruciating to nature it is to find deeply imbedded in the foundation of the Scriptures this

sovereign doctrine, and it is my hope, dear readers, that none of you have rejoiced to any greater height that I have, when I have been exercised in soul to the feeling that all mercy, and peace, and love that we have ever enjoyed, or will ever enjoy in this life, is alone by the gift of the Spirit in the first place and later by the multiplicity of the Spirit that Jude prayed for.

Mercy cannot be deserved; it cannot be earned; it cannot be gotten in any degree by works of any kind from whatever source that may be suggested. The word mercy is found in the New Testament about twenty five times; in the Old about two hundred seventy five times. As the word suggests in all of its various meanings, it can never be anything except something shown to a guilty wretch that deserved wrath. It has seemed strange that, since the Bible so repeatedly speaks of the mercy of God; since each taught child of grace is a living monument (by experience) to the mercy of God, why that creature merits, do-and-be-blessed doctrine, ever did find any place in the camps of Israel. But that it has, we are witnesses to, an that it has left the old order and the sweet assurances found under living in that realm covered by Jude's prayer, we feel to know is true.

The salvation of the elect is of God from his eternal purpose to save to final deliverance of them all to immortal felicity. The salvation in time is co-extensive with the choice and the preservation. The declaration about the choice and the preservation is not questioned. Why should the calling be? It certainly cannot consistently be called in question. Ah, dear burdened sinner, neither can the prayer be thrown aside. The Lord from heaven is the author of ever prayer, and every thing that he is the author of, prospers. The divine pleasure of God towards his little ones is now what it has always been. He is eternal (and absolute) in all of his attributes. His power and his wisdom and his whereabouts are co-extensive with each other. As long as he has been God, he has been (in purpose) a God of mercy. Nothing can be different than his eternal wisdom and power determined it to be. To me, there is not any difference in the source of Jude's prayer and the prayers of Jesus Christ. The doctrine of redemption is all based on the redemptive powers of the eternal God; these powers were all vested in Jesus as the Surety of the covenent. Jesus, being born of a woman and coming under the law, being a partaker of flesh and blood, always looked unto the Father for divine perfection. Jude, being called to the apostleship by the great Shepherd, always looked to him for divine perfection. His prayer said as much; it looked to God for fulfillment of all promises in the covenant.

Ah, the endless wonder of it all, peace and love be multiplied unto you. What loving and tender watchcare is manifested here. How thoughtful our heavenly Father in supplying all the nutriment for the sustenance of the church. He moved Jude to write; he named them one by one in the choice and the preservation and call. But their need is great while in this wilderness road; enemies within and without to be met; hunger and thirst and all the changing vicissitudes of a time state to undergo. Mercy, how wonderful, but more than that, but not better, is peace to be multiplied to all of these elect vessels of mercy. Before a thing can be multiplied it must be in existence. The Lord has given peace to the sinner. The world may pride itself in telling people to make peace with God before it is too late, and it may go right on and never realize the difference, but just as sure as such pride gets in the church, whether it is telling regenerated sinners or ungodly sinners to make peace with God, there is going to be a fall (Prov. 16:18, 29:23). The only peace worth writing about is that that was purchased by the shedding of Jesus' blood. All that world has ever made, together with all that Old Bap-

tists have wrought in conferences and conventions and peace (pieces) meetings, added to by all the self-righteous gained peace, will never last nor be any satisfaction to God's humble poor. But this peace is in the very beginning, the work of the Spirit, as it works in the heart and mind and soul of the recipient of grace. And this all being a work that God begins, it is to me a progressive work. I want to be understood that this progression is the work of grace—that it is performed until the day of Jesus Christ.

In every letter that was written to the church there is this prayer in behalf of the church: Peace to you from God our Father. The letter to the Hebrews declares him to be the God of peace, and James declares that every gift comes from above. Man is the offender, and God is offended, but how precious is the truth that Jesus has come in the body and made peace between the two parties, and there is joy and peace in the Holy Ghost (Rom. 14: 17). In Jesus, we still have peace, it is multiplied to one and all of the children of God. As is multiplied to them, the sum is the total of what Jesus is to his people. It is never to little; it is never too much, but it is dispensed to them in portion as their day of need (Deut. 33:25).

All I have to testify to is a hope, but it is not a dead hope. Nor is your hope dear, dear brethren, but alive forevermore. It is wrought in you at the time that you experienced the power of resurrection of the dead. It will continue to flourish and to become precious to you as you go down the evening of life. Why? Isn't it necessary to tell God's people that they may forfeit all right to the mercy of God? If I did tell them I feel that I would hang my head in shame, for, mark my words well, it is not gospel food to preach such a doctrine to them.

We forfeited all right every blessing in Adam, but we gained every blessing that we will ever enjoy in time or eternity in and through the shedding of the precious blood of Jesus. It was through him that we got the first precious taste of his love and mercy and peace: what rich seasons since then we have enjoyed, all coming by the multiplication of that first supply; and what does the future hold? Ah, it holds as much as the past has held. Peace still abounds as wrought by the Holy Ghost. Mercy is still being experienced among the Lord's humble poor. The love of God is abounding today as it has ever abounded. I do not know how far reaching it is. I do not know who of my neighbors have had the love of God shed abroad in their heart.

I cannot tell by the way a man or woman ambles down the street as to whether they have felt the revealing influence of the mercy and peace and love of our text. But when I stand behind the sacred desk and speak to them of their travel and I see in their countenance the image of the lowly Nazerene, I feel that he is yet on his throne and that his redemptive work is going on. When I have them write from all factions of our people telling of their leanness and barrenness, I am made to praise the grace of an alwise and eternal God that is still multiplying peace and love to his chosen people, and that mercy is still toward them as it has always been.

What a wonderful text. The promise is that I will have mercy. Prayer is always asking for what God has promised. Peace was promised to extend like unto a river. Jeus is that peace and is alive forever more. That was asked for by Jude in prayer. Love is everlasting to Israel and is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. That is asked for in prayer. It all is freely given. Therefore be content with what you have (Heb. 13:15).

W. D. G.

TONGUES

Before entering upon the discussion of the text of this article, I beg to make an apology. I have been so nervous the

past several months that it has been impossible for me to sit still and concentrate long enough to write a letter. I trust the readers of the SIGNS will find in their hearts a spirit of forgiveness to forgive me for not writing before now. I have to be convinced over and over again that the will to write is not sufficient. I must be given the ability in the self-same hour that I attempt before I can write.

May I evade further to tell you that we have been highly honored to have Eld. Spangler and Sister Spangler, Eld. Griffin and Sister Griffin to visit us in our little home, as well as the homes and churches in this vicinity since writing you. Their graceful preaching at the churches and over the radio will long be remembered in this section of the country as inspirational, edifying, and very comforting. Now, may the Lord bless us to meditate upon the text in answer to a request from an esteemed elder.

The best definition of TONGUE, as used in the scriptures, is that it is a particular language or dialect spoken by any particular people. We want to base our remarks upon one of the five signs that shall follow them that believe, as recorded in Mark 16:17, "They shall speak with new tongues." The believers are the particular people, and the new language given them by the Lord by the direct operation of His Holy Spirit, is the new tongue. We maintain that the new language spoken by God's people after the work of regeneration is unknown to the world and cannot be learned or understood by them.

The early ministrations of the Spirit in the manifestation of the power thereof was evidenced in the performance of natural miracles which were signs, types or figures of spiritual miracles. Jesus raised the natural dead, signifying His power to raise the spiritual dead unto spiritual life. Natural blind eyes were opened; natural deaf ears were unstopped; the lame walked; the palsied were made whole: they spake in different natural languages; - all to figurate the spiritual work in regeneration of His people. This was evidenced on the day of Pentecost acording to Acts 2:3-4, "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them: and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance." Even though there were people of many different languages, each heard in his own tongue. Today, if we speak the truth to the edification of the Lord's little children we have to speak as the spirit gives utterance with the tongue as of fire from heaven. All hear in his own language.

I shall never forget attending a meeting of colored people one time. The colored minister was so blessed to tell my experience and to speak my thoughts and belief that I said to those accompanying me, "They speak our language." It is marvelous to note the similarity of expressions in the different parts of the country. I was so deeply impressed on my first trip to the East coast that I said to those strangers in the flesh, "I am persuaded that we all have the same teacher, as we speak the same language."

I am glad the record says that, "On the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost, for they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God" (Acts 10:45-46). This new tongue magnifies God, thus abasing man. The gift of tongues in those days caused them to prophesy, according to Acts 19:6, "And when Paul laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied". Paul said in Cor.14:4"** He that prophesieth edifieth the church". Jabbering that can neither be understood by the speaker nor any of the hearers could not be edifying.

I do not believe God gives gifts in vain. I believe the gift of tongues is the gift of a particular language — not something that is a language that cannot be understood by anyone. We can see the necessary use of these special natural gifts of the spirit as several

language were spoken by the people of the same locality. It would be foolish for me to make a display of the gift to speak French language in a congregation where there were none who understood French. If I should go to a country where the people only spake and understood Latin, it would be improper for me to speak English in the church there unless there was an interpreter, according to 1st Cor. 14:27-28.

If my lot was cast among people who spoke many different natural languages, to prophesy there would be a necessity for the gift of speaking different languages. I believe this could be a necessity for the gift of speaking different languages. I believe this could be just as possible in this day as in days gone by and is the case when necessary. I know of men who have the special gift of speaking several languages. Paul said in Cor. 14:9* "Except ye speak words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak in the air". Paul said he had rather speak five words with understanding in the church than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue. (1 Cor. 14:19)

I think the true significance of the gift of tongues a prevalent today is whether they speak with the tongue of men or the tongue of angels. Paul inferred a possibility of being in possession of the gift of the tongue of angels and at the same time having not charity. He states that the result of this would be as "sounding brass or tinkling cymbal". This would give an uncertain sound (See Cor. 13:1). We would like to contrast the "tongue of men" and "the tongue of angels" or the "old" tongue and the "new" tongue.

We call your attention to Psalms 58:3 "The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray, as soon as they are born, speaking lies". So, the tongue of men is a lying tongue. David's natural tongue was a false and deceitful tongue, as he prayed, "Deliver my soul O Lord, from lying lips and a deceitful tongue. What shall be given unto thee or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue?" (Ps. 120:2-3) David realized something had to be given to or done for that terrible tongue which he was unable to do. Therefore, he prayed to God. In Proverbs 4:24, we read of "A froward mouth and preverse lips".

This kind of tongue speaks contrary to right reason contrary to the law of God; things that are foolish, ,filthy, unjust, and untrue. According to Ecc. 5: 2-3 and Prov. 10:19, hasty speech and multitude of words are sin. The tongue has to be restrained, bridled, and tamed. The tongues of men enter into contention, becomes a snare to their soul, and are as whisperers and tale bearers as proved by Proverbs 18:6-8. Yes, it talks of fornication, uncleanness, coveteousness, foolish talking and jesting; (Eph. 5:3-4) anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, and filthy communication. (Col. 2:8)

James 3:5 says that the tongue is a little member and boasteth great things. The natural tongue boasts of the ability of man. When we hear one boasting of what he can do we may be assured that he is speaking in the old or natural tongue which has never been supplanted by the new. The natural tongue boasts of self - righteousness. When one speaks boastfully of his own righteousness, we may know that it is the old tongue. James also says that it defiles the whole body, being an unruly evil which is full of deadly poison.

Can the tongue be tamed? Man may put bridles into horse's mouths and direct them. He may tame beasts, birds and serpents, and may direct a ship with a very small helm wheresoever he desireth even against fierce winds, but can he tame the tongue? According to the third chapter of James man may do all the above "BUT THE TONGUE CAN NO MAN TAME". (James 3:8)

According to the words of James and my experience, it is impossible for a man upon the volition of his own will to tame the tongue that it will not lie, decieve wound, talk foolish and jest.

If man cannot tame or bridle the tongue, then I want to know as David did, what must be given or done to it? and who can do it?

I am persuaded that the Lord must give us the new tongue by the direct operation of His Holy Spirit before we can manifest a bridled tongue. If you will notice in Mark 16:17, that it says, "They shall speak WITH new tongues," not in new tongues. The tongue must be given them.

Let us read Isaiah 50:4 "The Lord GOD hath GIVEN ME THE NEW TONGUE OF THE LEARNED, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth my ear to hear as the learned", If I am in possession at any time of the learned tongue it is because it has been GIVEN me by the Lord. I believe there is a time and a season for every word properly spoken to the weary to their comfort and edification.

I cannot learn how to do this. I do not know when certain words ought to be spoken. Even though I try to learn when, how, and what to say to certain people on certain occasions, I learn by sad experience that I cannot learn those things, but must depend on the words being put in my mouth that would edify and comfort. The learned tongue is the GIFT of God. The learned tongue speaks words in proper season. The learned tongue gives a soft answer that turns away wrath. The learned tongue confesses Jesus as our Savior. Quoting Romans 10:10. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousnes; and with the mouth confession is made into salvation."

God does not begin something that He doesn't finish. He begins by giving the new heart that believes. He continues that good work begun by giving the new tongue that confesses. You may be a believer and think you are hiding it, but are not, — YOUR SPEECH BETRAYS YOU. You talk of your unfitness, unworthiness, and of your inability; you say if you are saved it will be soley because of God's mercy and grace based on the merits of Jesus. You speak a different language; you sing a different song.

Let us meditate upon Psalms 40:3, "He hath put a new song in my mouth even praise unto our God****." You sing of his mercy, grace and truth; you sing of His power, wisdom and holiness. Your song is now in harmony with the scriptures. It is in perfect accord with the experience of your brethren. The old song was sung in the key of man — the praise of man being the keynote. The new song is sung in a different key,— the key of Jesus. This new song praises God. If you want to hear a discord in natural singing try singing in a different key to the others in the class. If you hear some praising man and some praising God, you hear a discord. The old tongue can't learn to sing the New song. The new song must be put into the mouth by the direct operation of God's Holy Spirit, threby the new tongue is given to sing the new song.

We read in St. Luke 12:12 "For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say". The instructions say to take no thought how are what ye shall answer. As I stated before I am guilty of taking thought, which manifests one of my many weaknesses. I learn continually by sad experience, that my efforts are in vain. I am allowed at times to speak upon the subject that I have premeditated to use at a certain time, and most times it makes me sick. Sometimes I have tried to reuse a line of thought that was so inspirational to me when first I experienced them, but behold, worms have gotten in them and they are stale; they have lost food value.

James says, "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain" (James 1: 26). True religion must manifest a bridled tongue. No man is able to bridle it; so, it must be the new tongue that God enables you to bridle. This bridled tongue is a wholesome tongue. In pro-

verbs 15:4 we read, "A wholesome tongue is a tree of life**." It is soothing and healing to be in the company of those who speak words that are pacifying. The wholesome tongue speaks sound doctrine which cannot be condemned. Those in possession of this tongue speak healing words to wounded consciences. They speak of the pardon, peace, righteousness, redemption and salvation through the life and blood of Jesus, motivated by the Love, Mercy, and Grace of God, our Father.

May God bless us with this new tongue that drives away wrath instead of stirring up anger. May He bless us to edify, comfort and heal. May we not be hasty in speech, but may we speak "As the oracles of God". Peter wrote by inspiration, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles fo God***." (Peter 4:11) If man speaks as the oracles of God it is by divine utterances. It would be in accord with the scriptures.

I realize that I have not been enabled to do justice to the text. I trust that the readers will be charitable to forgive imperfect expressions and that you realize all errors are expressions of the old tongue. If there be anything wholesome in this article, it is evident of the new tongue and be assured that God is to be praised for it.

E. J. L.

Lawrenceville, Ga.

Mr. H. L. Rogers,
Denton, Ky.

My dear Brother in like Precious Faith:

It has been my intention for some time to write you a letter to let you know how much we appreciate your contributions to the Signs of the Times. My brother in Christ, Elder J. R. Chandler, who is a neighbor of mine, always makes mention of, "That fellow Rogers", writing so well. One article in particular he and I both appreciated was by you on the resurrection of the body. I think you set out correctly according to the scriptures, and our understanding.

Of course you have had the experience of having your mind settled on certain scriptural points, but when you find one whom you do not know in the flesh, or perhaps have never heard of before, who comes along and bears your understanding out, — witness with you, it is indeed a great comfort; and is some evidence and assurance that it is all of the same spirit, as Paul told the Corinthians.

I have written several papers, we might call them, on different scriptural subjects, moved with a desire to express myself, and being, I feel, better gifted at writing than speaking. I consider myself justified in doing this because I get great enjoyment out of it, although my condition as a sinner, and my utter unworthiness, prevents me from pushing my efforts under the eyes of the blessed saints, who perhaps as the trite saying goes, have already forgotten more than I will ever know or be given.

I wish, if you are ever given a mind to do so, you would write Elder Chandler a letter. He is eighty-one, and has been a faithful servant for many years. Old Baptists are few down here. While Eld. Chandler is still able to plow a little and work his garden, he has many "low and lonesome days". He is always comparing his experiences with Job. If there is any portion of Job's life or experience you feel to write him about, I know he would enjoy it. Elder Chandler's feet, I believe, are planted on the Rock of sovereignty of God in all his works; where, of course, they should rightly be, and, as, I also hope, my own are by the grace of God.

I read your last article, and appreciated especially your setting out what I call the two deaths. Incidentally, I believe, there are two resurrections also. It has been my opinion that our ministry fails to emphasize our corporeal death to the extent it is warrented by the Scriptures. I believe that corporeal death is indicated exclusively with the, "delivering of prisoners from the prison house;" "setting the prisoners free," and, "who were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Job contemplated the grave; so did David. Christ himself led

the way through the grave, and I think for no other purpose than to remove the fear of corporeal death and the doubt of eternal life. His ascension indicated the direction resurrected saints will take.

You set it out right, as I see it. Adam was dead to God and contact with God; dead in his trespass, — no communion with God. That is why we can't teach God to people. He himself must quicken and restore man from his lost and dead condition; he must open their eyes to see. Christ implies this when he repeats often, "He that hath ears, let him hear." Also, to Thomas, "Blessed are they who have not seen (naturally as you have), yet have believed." But Adam also, "gave up the ghost." So did Jacob, Abraham, Isaac and Christ. Christ not only fulfilled the righteousness of the law for us, but also the penalty of the law. He was unjustly condemned; we justly must die a bodily death.

Sin reigned from Adam unto Moses, even over them who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression. I take this to indicate that they sinned in their own right, sufficently to warrant death; and the flood's destruction was one instance of the wrath or justice of God vented upon the life and body of creatures, both man and beast, — showing his mercy upon the faithful. The law was established by Moses, "because of your transgressions", but the law which was four-hundred years later, could not make the Abrahamic covenant void. I believe what is meant by "death reigning", is that it stood fast and secure as the oppressor of men, who would find no hope, seek though they might. The law brought hope, but Jesus Christ certainty. Our hope, which we so often speak of, is not a hope for eternal life, but a hope that is FOR US. Eternal life has been established and demonstrated by Christ. No more do we have to ask, "If a man die shall he live again."

I know that I have written sketchy, but I hope I have correctly interpreted your views set out in the article, as well as adding a few thoughts of my own, which I hope are given me by the spirit of truth.

Would appreciate a letter from you, if you feel to write such a poor, unworthy one as I feel myself to be. When I measure my holiness by the side of the perfections of God and his Son,"My heart fainteth with-in me."

Your friend and brother
in hope, I trust,
J. B. Dunagan

It seems proper, from a scriptural standpoint, to refer to the quickeing not as a resurrection, but rather an awakening unto the knowledge of our death in sin; and UNTO the HOPE OF the resurrection.

Our eyes are indeed opened to see, and our ears to hear; and we become DEAD TO SIN, so that we can no longer live in it with pleasure. But does not our daily experience confirm that we are yet sinners; and our only hope of being conformed to the image of Christ not yet a REALITY. It is only when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immorality, that death is swallowed up in victory. This, of course, is the resurrection; all experience before it is an assurance of it, but this experience only points out and leads to the resurrection.

J. D. W.

Ordination of Deacon J. M. Cassidy

Mt. Gileas Church in conference assembled chose Brother J. M. Cassidy for deacon June 14, 1952, and asked for a presbytery consisting of Elders F. A. and J. J. Collins and Deacon A. E. Sorrells. After preaching services by Elder J. J. Collins and Elder F. A. Collins, the presbytery was organized by chosing Elder F. A. Collins, Moderator; and Brother A. E. Sorrells, Clerk. The Church chose Brother Sorrells to answer Elder F. A. Collins on the qualifications of Brother Cassidy for deacon according to Paul's letter to Timothy. Elder J. J. Collins questioned Brother

Cassidy on the Articles of Faith. Elder F. A. Collins led in the ordination prayer and delivered the charge. The brethren present extended the right hand of fellowship to Brother and Sister Cassidy. After which the church gathered for baptismal rites by Elders F. A. and J. J. Collins. So ended a noble service in the Lord.

Elder F. A. Collins, Moderator
Deacon A. E. Sorrells, Clerk

Bivins, Texas

Eld. D. V. Spangler,
Dear Brother:

You will find money order for three dollars for subscription to the Signs for a friend who loves the truth which the paper contends for.

My heart's desire is that it ever please God of Heaven to bless you with light and liberty to speak of the wonderful things of our God, to the comfort of His humble poor, as you did while with us. And may it be His will to enable you and the other editors to continue to publish the paper for it is the one I enjoy most. May He also enable those who write to comfort the Lord's people.

My little church is undergoing much sorrow, the ordination of brother A. O. McLoud was called for, but since that time he has suffered a stroke and is still in the hospital. We desire your prayers for our brother and our little church.

A poor sinner in hope of mercy,

T. A. Wall

Rocky Mount, N. C.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am enclosing $3.00 for the Signs of the Times for another year. I want to tell you I surely have enjoyed reading the paper. I am a new subscriber, but I hope I will be able to read it the rest of my stay here.

I hope I am a little sister in Christ, trusting only in One who is able to do all things.

Mrs. Fannie Mae Harper

OBITUARY

Chiquapin, N. C.

Signs of the Times:

The family of Sister Anna Quinn asked me to write an obituary for her and send it to your paper for publication. I have written it as near like they desired as I could; and hope you will publish it as early as you can. She enjoyed the Signs very much, and so do I.

Sincerely yours,
Mrs. Perry Brown

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ANNA QUINN

It pleased our heavenly Father to visit the home of Sister Anna Quinn and claim her by death on October 31, 1951. She was born May 23, 1875, making her stay here on earth seventy-six years, five months and eight days. She was married to Henry Quinn, January 2, 1902, and this union was blessed with six children, five of them living: Mrs. J. H. Jones, Mrs. W. M. Thigpen, Mrs. H. W. Lanier, Mrs. M. T. Jones, Wayne C. Quinn and Mayo Quinn (deceased). Surviving also are four sisters and three brothers: Mrs. Allie Baysden, Mrs. Katie Lanier, Mrs. Mattie Shephard, Mrs. Dora Thigpen and T. C., C. R. and Elder T. H. Edwards.

Sister Anna united with the Old Baptist Church on Saturday night before the fourth Sunday in May, 1916, at a meeting held at her home. She was baptized by Elder Isaac Jones the following Sunday morning, and her membership was at Muddy Creek Church. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and always filled her seat at her home church and sister churches, unless sick or hindered in some way. In her later years she was afflicted with rheumatism and arthritis and confined to her home a lot; and though her suffering was severe, it did not dim her faith. As she declined in health and aged in years, it seemed that her faith grew stronger, and she ever looked with patience unto the one who is stronger and higher than man for her comfort and relief. There

was nothing she enjoyed more than for the brethern and sisters to come and visit and talk with her concerning heavenly and divine things. She enjoyed very much the meetings which were held with her: the singing, prayer and the brethern speaking.

It was the writer's privilege to know her for a number of years, and, I hope, to love her for Christ's sake. While I always loved her, it seemed that after we were both members of the same church, she was more precious than ever before, and I miss her greatly. She was a loving wife and mother, and kind and loving to all who knew her. The family feels their loss greatly, and still feel there is a vacant place which cannot be filled. We humbly hope our grievous loss is her eternal gain.

The funeral was conducted November 1, 1951 from the home by Elder D. A. O'Bryant, with Elder Floyd Lawrence and Brother Bill Brown making a few remarks. Elder O'Bryant spoke from St. John 5:25.

I feel unworthy to attempt to write about one so greatly blessed as Sister Quinn, but at the request of the family, I have done so. I hope God will give us strength and faith to press on toward the mark of the prize of the high calling in the spirit of love which Sister Quinn manifested so much.

A sorrowing sister,
Mrs. Perry Brown.

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GILBERT BEEBE

Mr. Gilbert Beebe, grandson, of Elder Beebe, died June, 4, 1952, in Middletown, N. Y.. For many years he was the publisher of the Signs of the Times, but a few years ago he was forced by illness to give up the publication of the paper.

The following extract in regard to Mr. Beebe is from the local paper in Middletown:

"Gilbert Beebe, grandson of Elder Gilbert Beebe, preacher, printer and colorful figure in the early days of the Village of Middletown, died yesterday at his home, five Linden Avenue. Until recent years, Mr. Beebe had continued as publisher of the Old School Baptist publication, "Signs of the Times," founded by his grandfather in 1832, shortly after the historic meeting at Black Rock, Md., at which the Baptist Church split over the subject of missionary work.

Mr. Beebe was born October 13, 1871 at eleven Orchard Street, now the site of the Burnett Funeral Home, where funeral services will be conducted tomorrow at two P. M., by Mr. Stephen Bachelder, pastor of the First Congregational Church. His father, Benton L. Beebe, is credited with having launched the telephone system in the Village of Middleton by stringing a wire from the Orchard street home to the printing shop of Elder Beebe, which was situated in land near the present Grand Union Market.

In the printing business here all his life, Mr. Beebe had lived at five Linden avenue. He had been ill for nearly six months prior to his death yesterday.

The son of Benton L. and Josephine Beebe, he was married April 15, 1897 to Janet C. O'Neill in Middletown. Although not a member, he regularly attended Old School Baptist meetings in this area.

Surviving him are a son, Gilbert R. Beebe, of Auburn, and a granddaughter, Joan E. Beebe, also of Auburn.

Internment will be in Hillside Cemetery."

Wm. D. Chapman

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WILLIAM G. HUTCHENS

High Point, N. C.
June 13, 1952

William G. Hutchens was born November 8, 1881. He was called home March 8, 1952, making his stay on earth seventy years and four months.

Brother Hutchens united with the church at High Point, N. C., March 20, 1937. He was a faithful member and a loving brother. The church loved Brother Hutchens and held him in high esteem. They called him to te deacon's office in January, 1939, and on the fif-

teenth day of the month a presbytery was called and laid hands on him. He served the church with complete satisfaction until he was called home. The church does and will miss him. We loved Brother Hutchens and always looked forward to seeing him at the meetings. He was a faithful attendant; we are sure his family and friends will miss him beyond expression.

We feel to extend our deepest sympathy to them, and would, if we could, point them to the Lamb of God, who is able to help in time of need. We bow to divine providence and acknowledge His wisdom and power in the execution of His will, desiring that His will be done. We could not ask for Brother Hutchens back, even though we miss him so much we would not disturb him from his rest.

I want to say to his wife and children that husband and father is now sleeping; just resting and waiting for the dawn of a day that will never end, where he will be forever happy. We trust that we too can depart this life in that faith which the Father gives his people.

Resolved, that a copy of these Resolutions be recorded in our church book; a copy sent to Zion's Landmark, and a copy sent to the family.

Done by order of the church in High Point while in conference and written by his humble pastor at the request of the church.

Elder D. A. O'Bryant, Moderator
Mrs. H. M. Taylor, Church Clerk

(We would like this printed in the Signs of the Times, as he was a great lover of the Signs.

His wife and children.)

* * * *

MRS. EMMA BARTLETT

The death of Sister Emma Bartlett, which occurred June 2, 1952, of a heart attack at her home in Damariscotta Mills, Maine, is deeply mourned by relatives, friends, and brethren in near-by as well as far distant places. She was widely known, deeply loved, and held in highest esteem for her many praiseworthy traits of character, loving services to her neighbors and brethren, and devotedness to her family and to the church of her membership. Her upright walk and Godly conversation evidenced the fruits of the faith she professed. No one delighted more than she to hear the preached word of God and to meet with the brethren of her faith and order, and her truest affections were reflected in obedience to the precepts of the gospel. She was past eighty-three years of age, having been born in 1869 at Pittson, Maine, where she attended school and received her education. Her maiden name was Emma Bailey, and in 1887 she was united in marriage to Charles H. Bartlett to whom were born two children, one dying in infancy, and the other Brother Sanford S. Bartlett survives. Her husband died in 1925. She lived in Newcastle until 1932 since which time she made her home on the farm of her son, Sanford, until her death. Among the surviving relatives are nine grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren. The funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Strong Funeral Home in Damariscotta. The internment was in the family cemetery at Newcastle. She was the grateful recepient of many loving ministrations from her relatives and her legion of friends. She was a remarkable woman in many ways, as attested by her strong character and her thoughtfulness of others: She was a member of the Whitefield Primitive Baptist church of Maine for over fifty years and was baptised by the late Elder Frederick Keene, for many years a resident of Maine and a servant of churches there.

Arnold H. Bellows

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MRS. EMMA ETTA SHEIFFIELD

Mrs. Emma Etta Sheiffield, was born July 18, 1874, and departed this life February 9, 1952, at the home of her son, Lawrence, in Lawton, Oklahoma.

She fell and broke her hip thirteen months previous to her death and was not able to walk or sit up very much. She suffered much but patiently waited

the call to leave this world of sorrow. God called her home from her labors to reign with him, where there is no more sickness, or death and parting of friends. Her stay here on earth was seventy-seven years, six months and twenty-two days. She was laid to rest by her husband in Lawton Cemetery; he preceeded her in death eight years.

Surviving are four sons, Earnest, Ira, Irwin and Lawrence; eleven grand-children and eight great grand-children; and three brothers and two sisters: L. O. Watson, Rising Star, Texas; W. O. and R. R. Watson, Marlow, Oklahoma; Mrs. W. L. Darman, Marlow Oklahoma, and Mrs. O. E. Self, Seymour, Texas.

Mrs. Sheiffield received a hope when a young woman and was a member of the Primitive or Predestinarian Baptist faith and order. She united with the Macedonia Church, Rising Star, Texas, by letter in 1918, where her membership remained until death. Throughout the darkest hours of her life God's hand was always with her, and he did not fail her in her last hours; His love never failed, and all of trust was in him.

This sweet, precious sister is at rest, but we all miss her so.

Written by her sister,
Mrs. Inez Self

* * * *

SISTER MARY J. GRIEST

Sister Mary J. Griest passed from the scenes of this lowly earth on March 5, 1952, at the Pocopson Home, near West Chester, Pa., in her 90th year, and survived only by nieces and nephews.

She was a daughter of the late Hiram and Martha Phillips Wilson, was born Nov. 26, 1862, and with her husband resided in southern Lancaster County, Pa., many years. About ten years ago, after her husband's death, she went to live with a niece, Mrs. Oscar J. Wagoner, Oxford, R. D., Chester County, Pa.

Sister Griest (Aunt Dollie, to her many friends) was united in marriage with William H. Griest, at the Union Presbyterian Church Parsonage, by Calvin W. Stewart, on January 26, 1887. There were no children born to this union, but — Louie T. Patton, when but a young girl, came to live with Sister Griest and husband Will. Miss Patton, too, a sister in the church at Rock Springs, preceded them both in death, she having passed to her heavenly reward in the year 1927.

Sister Griest and Sister Louie lived their years together, apparently, as mother and daughter, and as true sisters in their church. Sister Griest and husband Will were indeed bereft at the loss of their closest and dearest friend and the one person in the whole wide world that they counted on to care for them in old age. The ways of the Lord are not our ways. Often, in the full fruition of time, events prove to be far that which the human mind has planned. Such is our lie here below in this vale of sorrow. Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him. Indeed, Sister Griest had trust in Him.

The funeral service was conducted by her pastor, Elder John D. Wood, at the Cauffman Funeral Home, Oxford, Pa., on Saturday, March 8th, at 2:00 p. m. Internment was in the Rock Springs Church Cemetery, the burial ground of the little church were she had been a faithful member for over sixty-one years. Our dear Sister came before the church Nov. 30, 1890, was accepted, and baptised that afternoon, by the late Elder William Grafton, the pastor. Sister Griest was possessed of a love for her church and the brethren that perhaps no other has surpassed in intensity. all that knew her speak highly of her sterling and lovely character. Her brethren could readily see she had the mark of one acquainted with the Lord.

Not ours to know the reason why
From loved ones we must part;
But ours to live in faith and hope,
Though bleeding to the heart.

Chas. B. Osborne

* * * *

MRS. MARY J. SMITH

Mrs. Mary J. Smith, widow of the later Elder H. A. Smith, who was for

many years Clerk of the Western Primitive Baptist Association in Alabama, and it's Moderator from 1916 to 1937, died June 3, 1952, after an extended illness. She would have been ninety years of age in July. Sister Smith served ably and well as the companion of one of Alabama's leading ministers. She was truly a mother in Israel, and gladly aided the distressed; and lived an exemplary life as a minister's wife.

As a young girl she attend regularly the services at Mt. Enon Church in Henry County, Alabama, and met, loved and married a young Geneva County teacher. To this union were born seven sons and two daughters. Two of the sons, Jesse, a newspaper editor, and Damon, a physician, have been called to their eternal home. Surviving are, Charles C. Vice President of the Geneva County Board of Education, W. F. and Russ, of Slocumb; B. W., an attorney, and J. W. a business man, of Pensacola, Florida; and Mrs. H. A. Smith, Slocum.

Sister Smith and her husband united with New Hope Church in 1889, and remained consistent members of the Primitive Baptists the remainder of their lives. Elder Smith served as pastor of five churches, and others at times, and was a true minister of the new covenant.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. J. Collins, at Slocum Primitive Baptist church on June 4th, and Sister Smith was tenderly laid to rest beside her beloved husband in the city cemetery. The text used at the funeral was 121st Pslam. A very large congregation was in attendance and there were many florial tributes banked about the church. Her's was a noble life for us to endeavor to emulate.

Elder J. J. Collins

* * * *

ELDER JOHN GENTRY RATELIFF

Elder John Gentry Rateliff, at the age of 87 years, 1 month and 7 days, a resident of Hemstead County, Arkansas, died early Friday morning March 21, 1952 at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Vallie Earick, at Texarkana. He was born at Necaise, Miss., February 14, 1865. He was married to Mary Elizabeth Lewis, December 22, 1886, who predeceased him about seven years.

In addition to his daughter Mrs. Earick, Brother Rateliff, is survived by four sons, Lum and Bill of Hope, Lonnie of Texarkana and Andrew of Oklahoma City, Okla., three other daughters, Mrs. Arthur Fuller, of Hope, Mrs. Clifton Whitten of Camden and Mrs. R. E. Sexton of La Porte, Texas, forty-five grandchildren, seventy-four great grandchildren and four great, great grandchildren.

Brother Rateliff was a member of New Hope Primitive Baptist Church at Patmos, having united with said church in August 1913. He was liberated in August 1925 and ordained an Elder in October 1931. He was a faithful member of New Hope Church, a firm believer in an all powerful and Sovereign God that worketh all things after the counsel of His own will, salvation by grace and grace alone through the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, His meritorious and finished work of redemption, His Second coming and the resurrection of the body. He made manifest and gave evidence of his love for doctrine of God our Savior. It was evident that he was blessed to worship God in Spirit, and rejoice in Jesus Christ, and have no confidence in the flesh. Funeral services were held at New Hope Church Saturday March 22, 1952, conducted by Elder E. J. Lambert and the writer. The body was laid to rest in New Hope Cemetery beside that of his companion, which laying it to rest beside her body he had longed for and desired ever since she passed away, there to sleep in Jesus awaiting the resurrection when it is our hope, as it was his blessed hope, that it will be raised in the glorified image of the blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

May God bless and comfort his bereaved children and other loved ones together with all that mourn his passing.

Elder W. A. Speer

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 120 DANVILLE, VIRGINIA, OCTOBER, 1952 NO. 10

By request we re-publish the following Editorial by Elder J. M. Perkins, copied from May, 1912 issue of Gospel News:

JOHN'S BAPTISM

"And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Luke 1:17.

It is observed by the careful reader that the mission of John was, "TO MAKE READY A PEOPLE PREPARED FOR THE LORD."

This idea corresponds exactly with all other scriptures bearing on the design of the proclamation of the gospel. It should be remembered that it was to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. It was not to prepare for the Lord, but to make them READY. This was the Lord's chosen people among the Jews at that time.

In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Now reader, bear in mind that Johns mission was to make ready somebody, and the Bible tells who it was. Let me ask, Who prepared this people; and were they not prepared before John preached to them? Then, if they were, preaching was not the means of preparing them. Now I must insist that as the gospel started, so must it continue. It was not for one thing in one age, and for something else in another age.

When John said, "Repent ye", it should be well considered. The same thought is found clear through. Even on the day of Pentecost, Peter exhorted the Jews to repent and believe the gospel. Now as repent means to turn from something; if we can find out what that something was, we will have the keynote. These Jews had been brought up in the legal day, but the legal day had come to an end. Paul says, "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." That seed was Christ, and when he came, he took away the first and established the second.

The time had come and was at hand; and John, the forerunner of Christ, appeared saying, "Repent". Turn now from this law worship for Jesus Christ is to follow me. You Jews turn from this law service, in which sacrifice is offered on altars, for the true sacrifice is now to appear in the end of the world (the Jewish world), to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. The day is now breaking when the true light is to appear.

John was not that light, but came to bear witness of that light. He confessed that he was not that light, but came to bear witness. Jesus was the light that cometh into the world who lighteth every man.

I want to say just here that unto this day, — and all other days to come, the true preachers of Jesus are the witnesses of him, and instead of going out into the world to save sinners, they are witnesses that Jesus did it. Every preacher who goes out to save sinners, denies Jesus Christ, and was never sent by him.

I wish now to notice a little more of John's mission, and will take John, First chapter, where he spoke of the Baptist's mission. "There was a man

sent from God, whose name was John, the same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe." I wish to call special attention to the expression, "THAT ALL MEN THROUGH HIM MIGHT BELIEVE." I take it, that through John's preaching all men might believe. But who are the all men? The all men who believed through John's preaching were the people prepared for the Lord. These were the ones he came to make ready for the Lord, and he made them ready to receive the Lord by teaching them. John certainly did not disobey his God. His mission was, "To make ready a people prepared for the Lord." God had prepared this people's heart to receive the testimony of John and they were ready to receive Jesus when he came.

Jesus, "Came to his own (the Jews), and they received him not; but to as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them which believe on his name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Now I ask, can any candid reader, who has any regard for the word of God, deny that these had not been born of God before they received Jesus? "The preaching of the cross of Christ to them that perish is foolishness, but unto us that are saved, it is the power of God." Now I ask, did John preach the gospel? Let us prove it. "The law and the prophets were until John, since that time the kingdom of Heaven is preached." Now I know of but one denomination that holds that preaching is not the means of regeneration, and that is the Old School Baptist. They are on the side of this question, and all the rest are on the other.

It is admitted by all Old School Baptists that preaching the gospel will teach believers, but believing is not regeneration. No one would presume to say that teaching a natural child would have anything to do with its natural birth. Does teaching spiritual things have anything to do with spiritual birth? Can anyone not born of the Spirit anymore comprehend the things of the spirit, than an unborn natural child can understand the things of nature? If not, how can there be any truth in the popular theories of the day which say that preaching the gospel is the means of regeneration. They may vainly say, It is the spirit's power in the preaching that quickens. But how about those fellows who deny the spirit's power, or any operation of the spirit? Let them get over Paul's words if they can, "Because the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. 2:14. And again, "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Romans 8:7.

The man who makes no distinction between believing and regeneration, is most sure to fall into the error of making the preaching of the gospel the means of regeneration.

THE GOSPEL

What is the gospel? If the Bible does not define it, then we are as a vessel at sea without pilot or rudder. Paul says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." If we preach the gospel, we must preach the power of God in Jesus Christ in the salvation of sinners. Paul said, "For I determined to know nothing among you but Jesus Christ and him crucified." Then to preach the gospel is to preach Jesus Christ, for he says, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life."

God, the Father, sent Jesus Christ into the world to save HIS people from their sins. Now where are the people, save the Old School Baptist, but who say that Jesus came into the world to give every man a chance? Is a chance theory the gospel? If we preach no more than a chance, do we preach the gos-

pel?

Preaching the gospel may teach believers, but it never makes children; this God alone can do. But preaching may turn them from following after the ways of darkness and turn them from following after the ways of Satan and the power of this world, with all its allurements whereby men lie in wait to deceive. But God must first open their hearts, as He did Lydia's that she attended to the things spoken by Paul.

If men in nature are dead in sins, and their carnal minds are enmity against God, and destitute of spiritual understanding, it must be true that spiritual understanding must be given before spiritual things can be received. For this reason the preaching of Christ and him crucified must remain as foolishness until spiritual understanding is imparted. It seems that the words in the First chapter of John ought to settle the dispute, "In Him (Jesus) was life; and the life was the light of men." Men cannot have spiritual light unless they have spiritual life. Spiritual life is just as necessary in the spiritual field as natural life is in the natural field.

Action never did precede life, but life will produce action. Spiritual fruit cannot precede from natural causes. Every effect must partake of the nature of the cause which produced it.

Gospel seed must be sown in gospel ground; otherwise no fruit will spring forth. The wild olive branch must be broken off from the wild olive stock and grafted into the tame olive stock before it can bear fruit contrary to nature.

J. M. Perkins

Fairmont, W. Va.

Dear Editors and Brethren:

It is time for me to renew my subscription for the Signs, and I thought of writing a little article to the children of God. I am old and get so lonely in being housed up in the winter time. You will find enclosed a check for $3.00 to pay for the Signs another year, as I don't want to be without it, for I have been a reader for many years.

I wonder if the dear brethren are like me: I feel so cold and lifeless in prayer that if I pray at all, it is but a form without any feeling. It used to be different, for I used to feel a sweet relief at times; but now so much of the time my burden still follows me. Many doubts are raised in my mind whether I am truly born again. Yet I cannot throw my hope away, for at times it is sweet to me, and I feel like saying with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." And also, "Lord to whom can I go, for thou hast the words of eternal life; for thou art the Son of God and art the sinners friend. So turn me not away, but give me an humble heart that I may call upon thee, for whosoever shall call upon thee, the same shall be saved. Dear people, tell me is it thus with you?

I believe in God: that he hath all power both in heaven and in earth; and I believe that he who hath begun a good work in you, will finish it. But this is what concerns me: Has he begun that good work in me? I often fear that he has not, but what I have I cannot throw away. No, for I believe that Christ is the life of the child of God, and when Christ appears, then we shall also appear with him in glory. There is no glory outside of him. He does all the work for the sinner; he justifies them, and he alone is their sanctification, their righteousness and their all in all. Yet I fear that I am not his child. Still I know there was a change in me when I felt my sins forgiven, for it seemed that I know he bore all my sins in his own body of the cross.

It is a terrible thing for a person who sees his lost condition and knows there is no way of escape except by the blood of Christ, and who feels that he has been born again, and then to be shut

up in darkness. It makes him fear and dread his end, and to sometimes wish he had never been born. Still I have a hope which I cling to; and that hope is through our Lord Jesus Christ's blood which he shed for the remission of sins. He says in his Word that blessed are they who mourn, and blessed is the man who fears always.

I hope others will write concerning these things for the truth is the only thing which will do us any good. I am nearly eighty-three years old, so you see I cannot stay here much longer. But I have a hope of being a sinner saved by grace of God alone.

James W. Linn

Riffe, Lewis County, Wash.

Dear Children of God, who read the Signs of the Times:

I have thought for some time that I would write so ministers of our faith and order could know that we have need of one or more Elders in Western Washington. We have only two Elders in this part and they are old, and will soon quit the field. If some minister is willing to move out West, and could be satisfied here, there are a few Baptists who like to hear God's called minister's.

Elder C. M. Fisher, R. F. D. 2, Chehalis, Washington, has care of one church and I am pastor of Bethel Old School Baptist Church, at Riffe, Washington. We meet on the third Sunday in each month. Wife and I have read the Signs for many years, and have met a number of the Elders and heard them preach; but most of them, as Paul said, have fought a good fight, and the time of their departure came, and they are removed from this life. God sent his Son Jesus and freed them from the law which pronounced them dead in sin; he arose from Joseph's new tomb for their justification. This sacrifice atoned for the sins of all who will have a home with him.

Jesus laid down his life, and took it again; and in doing this water and blood flowed from his side. This was living water that was spoken of by the prophet Zechariah in the fourteenth Chapter: He spoke of a certain day, a day that was looked forward to by the children of God from the morning of time; and when that time came, the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. (Job 38-7).

This was the day of salvation; the day the world was not able to destroy when they crucified Jesus. The soldier pierced the side of Jesus, and water and blood flowed out. This is the water God's dear redeemed people love to drink. Half of this water went out from Jerusalem toward the former sea (people), and half toward the hinder sea. They drink and live.

This is the water Jesus referred to when he said to the woman at the well, "If thou knowest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, give me to drink thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." Jesus was teaching the woman that he was the Christ; and when he was through talking with her, she wanted to tell others what she had learned from this man.

She left her water pot and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, "Come see a man which told me all things that I ever did, is not this the Christ?" She seemed to be so stirred up that she forgot to take her water-pot. This reminds me of the old Edler who baptized me sixty-four years ago. He went to an association riding a horse; but when the meeting was over, the Elder forgot his horse and walked about a mile, when someone asked him if he did not ride to the meeting. He said that he did, and then went back and got his horse.

I don't know whether the woman ever got her pot, or not. The Bible says that Jesus must needs go through Samaria. The reason was to teach this woman and tell her all things that she ever did. It seems that all her sins came into her mind, and yet I think she was happy and was drinking of the living water, for she seemed to be taken away from wordly things.

Isn't it that way yet at times, when you dear child of God, feel that the Spirit is with you. Isn't it wonderful to think God is so lovely he came to where his people were dead in sins, and went to the cross, freeing his people from the curse of a violated law; and by so doing he destroyed the power of Satan and cast him into the bottomless pit.

Then fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. For now, said Jesus, is the judgement of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea, for the devil is come down among you.

As ever a little brother in hope,
(Elder) Isaac F. Coleman

Dallas, Texas

Signs of the Times,
Dear Brother Spangler:

I received my July Signs yesterday afternoon and enjoyed it very much. I was off from work with a cold, and my wife is not very well, but, thank the good Lord, we both seem to be better. I enjoyed many of the sweet letters from different ones, telling their experiences and travels. These are a great comfort to me.

I had a very sweet experience the week end of the fifth Sunday in June. It was the time of the Sulphur Fork District Meeting, and I was driving from Dallas to that community, about two hundred miles away. While driving along, (my wife had become tired and had gone to sleep) I saw a vision! I saw myself standing in old Pleasant Hope Church, where the meeting was to be held. There was a large crowd; and I was standing close to the pastor, Elder T. A. Wall, when a sister came and offered to the church and told a very sweet experience. She was received into the church and requested that I baptize her. I then stepped forward and talked a little, when another sister and her husband came forward, trembling and talking of their unworthiness and asked a home with the Old Baptists. I knew them all by name.

When I came to myself, I was saying, "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness unto the children of men." Then I realized what I was doing, and hushed for fear of awakening my wife and she would think I had gone crazy. I drove on down and spent the night with the brother whom I saw join the church in the vision. We had a very good meeting the next day, and I was to leave that evening to go to another meeting on Sunday. But, somehow I just could not leave. I tried to tell myself that I was going on, but I just could not go; so I stayed over for meeting on Sunday.

When an opportunity for membership was announced, Sister Lessie Carter came just as I saw her come in the vision, and related a very sweet experience and asked this unworthy one to baptize her. Then I stepped forward and talked a little about what I saw on the way down, after which Sister Dorothy Taylor came, talking of her unworthiness; and her husband came behind her, —just as I saw them. They were both received. This unworthy one baptized the three that afternoon. It was a heavenly sight; yes, a heavenly place to all of us, — a day of rejoicing, with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

It all seems too wonderful for this poor, vile, wretched sinner, who does not deserve the very least of God's goodness. I wish to be remembered in the prayers of God's dear people. Of all the blessings, experiences and revelations, the above is one of the sweetest of my thirteen years as an Old Baptist minister, if so be that I am one.

May God bless you, Elder Spangler, to continue on with the good work of the Signs.

Yours in hope of the resurrection,
(Elder) W. W. Taylor

Tyler, Texas

Elder R. W. Rhodes,
Lillie, La.
Dear Brother Rhodes:

In reply to your letter received a few days ago, will say it was very comforting to receive and read same, and to learn that you were as well as usual. I hope I am thankful that the Lord has spared us in his goodness and mercy, and has blessed us, we hope, to rejoice in God our Saviour.

If we know our hearts, we ask not to shun the trials and afflictions that are to befall us in our journey in the flesh; but ask for grace and strength, as vile and needy creatures, that we may run with patience the race set before us, looking to Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith. He is our life, our hope, our strength, and our prophet, priest and king; our all and in all.

I believe that David was enabled by the Spirit to see the glories of Christ and his kingdom when he said, "He (the Lord) hath made with me and everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure; it is all my salvation, and all my desire." It contains all that is required to satisfy the demands of justice which are charged to God's humble poor; it reaches down in the horrible pit, in the miry clay, and picks the subjects up and places their feet on a rock and establishes their goings; it puts a new song in their mouth, even praises to the Lamb, who is the mediator of the covenant.

Daniel was given to speak concerning the everlasting kingdom that shall never be destroyed; and of it's duration there shall be no end, for the government shall be on His shoulders. Oh, the wonderfullness of God in his goodness and mercy toward vile and needy creatures; and of his Christ who was made to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. I believe in this we have the love that passeth all understanding: that manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we might be called the sons of God. This is the everlasting love with which God loves us; and with loving kindness he draws us.

We hear our Saviour say: The kingdom of heaven is at hand; and I came down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me (the Mediator of the new covenant), and this is the will of him that sent me, of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. They shall all be taught of God, and great shall be their peace. The Saviour also said, I am the good shepherd; my sheep hear my voice and they follow me, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand, for my Father which gave them me is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

All the subjects of this kingdom are secure, for this kingdom or church, is built on the Rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. God has blessed all the subjects of this kingdom with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.

I am persuaded, with Paul, that neither height nor depth; nor principalities nor powers; nor death or any other creature is able to separate them from the love of God,, which is in Christ Jesus; for he that hath begun a good work in you, will not perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. What he has promised He is able to perform. David said this covenant God made with him is all my salvation, and all my desire. So, if we are subjects of this covenant, we can say with David: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." Even so, Amen.

We were made to rejoice that it pleased the Father to send Elder Smith to our meeting at Hopewell. God blessed him and he was enabled to preach the gospel by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; and we hope he will be sent to us again. May the Lord be pleased to send Elder Rhodes also, and other preaching brethren.

Please look over my short comings, and write again when you have a mind to.

Your unworthy brother in bonds,
J. H. Hamrick

THE PHILOSOPHY OF PRIMITIVE BAPTIST

Philosophers are those that teach or seek out the real but unseen nature and cause of things that be and exist. They endeavor to explain the "Why" of things. Every school of thought has had their pholosophers. The apostle Paul came into contact with philosophers of the Epicureans and Stoics, when he visited ancient Greece.

Of the Epicureans we know little; but the Stoics were a school of Grecian philosophers who took their name from the Greek word stoa, meaning portico, because Zeno, the head of the Stoics taught in a portico in the city of Athens.

They held that a wise man ought to be free from all passions; never to be moved with joy or grief, esteeming all things to be ordered by an inevitable necessity and fate. Josephas says, that the Pharisees approached very near to the sentiments of the Stoics. They affected the same stiffness, patience, apathy, austerity and insensibility. (Cruden)

Here we have a brief explanation of the Stoic philosophy. They were a people that knew not God. They had never heard of Jesus Christ, or the Ressurection. When Paul came preaching, they exclaimed, "He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange doctrine."

However they were interested to the extent that they took him to Areopagus, the highest court in Athens, saying, "May we know what this new doctrine whereof thou speaketh is."

Immediately Paul stood up in the midst of the court of the Areopagites and declared, "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious". (Acts 17:22) Then in nine verses following he proceeds to set forth the subject of this composition, PRIMITIVE BAPTIST PHILOSOPHY".

Our philosophy is different to that of any other denomination or sect of people. Because of our firm belief and positive stand in faith and practice, we are referred to as being, "Dogmatic". This accusation is true; as the word Dogmatic is derived from the word Dogma, meaning: - an established opinion; a definite belief; a doctrine that pertains to the Church. We Primitive Baptist have all these characteristics.

Our philosophy is different to that of the ancient Stoic, for they publicly announced that they worshipped an "Unknown God". Jesus described it more fully in addressing the "Woman at the well", when he said "Ye worship ye know not what". (Jno. 4:22)

While other denominations refer to us as ignorant and peculiar, we hope and trust that we are those that the Lord had under consideration when he spake thru the mouth of the Prophet saying, "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord". They are further described as a people that shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies, neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth; for they shall feed and lie down and none shall make them afraid." (Zeph. 3:12-13)

At this point some one may ask, "How can Primitive Baptist lay claim to such a hope; that they are among the highly favored few, the Elect of God? Our philosophy which follows, so far as is humanly possible, will in part explain. In trying to understand these things it must be remembered that "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him: neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned." (1st Cor. 11:14) With this thought in mind as a cardinal point, we will proceed back to the beginning, before the foundation of the world, when God, the Father, loved God, the Son, and made an everlasting covenant with him; that he should come into this world at a specific time for a specific purpose; to save his people, the subjects of his choice, from their sins. The choice was made by God the Father, before man was created, or a world for him to

live in. (Eph. 1:4)

After God created the world and all its fullness; man was created out of the dust of the ground. This man, Adam, whom he created, was upright but not perfect. He was made subject to vanity. Being subject to vanity he disobeyed God's law, which was given him, and by this disobedience sin entered the world. (Romans 5:12)

Because of Adams transgression sinfulness became his nature, and the nature of all his posterity. The Lord said unto Adam, "Because thou has hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shall thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee; and thou shall eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shall thou eat bread, till thou shall return to the ground, for out of it thou was taken: for dust thou art and unto dust shall thou return."

This sentence carried the sentence of death. The wages of sin is death. All men must die for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Although all men die a natural death those of his choice, oft referred to as the"Elect of God", are given a living Spirit in their new birth and they never die. They are the true believers in Christ Jesus; and He it was who said, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

It is only the mortal body that goes back to dust but the spiritual man, who is immortal, to God who gave it. There our never dying souls shall rest sweetly in the Paradise of God until every Heir of promise shall be brought into the knowledge of the truth and then shall the Arch Angel set his right foot upon the sea and his left foot upon the land and declare by him that liveth for ever that time shall be no more. Then shall the Lord descend from Heaven with a shout and come with power and great glory with all the holy angels; and the dead in Christ shall rise first, and we which are alive shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

God's people have ever believed that he knew them and loved them from all eternity, for he declared, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Yes, they must be drawn, for they must go to Jesus who is the Way. Not only is he the Way; He is the only name given under Heaven whereby we must be saved. The newborn Babe in Christ doesn't know this, so he must be drawn. Do any go any other way? No. Jesus declared, "No man cometh unto me except my Father who sent me draw him." "He that climbeth up any other way is cast forth as a thief and a robber."

From such declarations we conclude that the dead sinner is wrought upon by an irresistible power that draws him to Christ. Jesus says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (Jno. 6:37)

We are of the opinion that the election of God's people was certain and that their salvation is sure. We believe, as Jesus declared, "This is the word of God that you believe on him whom he hath sent." God sent Jesus into the world but it is only through and by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit sent down from Heaven, in the hearts of poor sinners that they are brought into the knowledge of the truth.

Hope now springs up in the sinners breast and he is made to love God and trust in his mercy. His burden of the knowledge of sin is lifted and he can sing praises to his God for the hope of his salvation.

Elder P. E. Ingram
Martinsville, Va.

(Note: What a vast difference when revelation superseeds the philosophies of men in the hearts of God's people.

There is set up in them a living faith which assures them of what was, is and will be. All the searchings and seeking after wisdom of unregenerated men really get no farther than rationalism. Of these things the Apostle warns us in Colossians 2:6-9 J. D. W.)

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE MAINE ASSOCIATION

Written by
Sister Minerva Dunlap

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with Whitefield Church at Whitefield, Maine, Sept. 7, 8 and 9th, 1951, to the churches with which we correspond:

Greetings in the Lord: Our prayer is that of the Psalmist, "Oh Lord, open thou my lips and my mouth shall show forth thy praise." (Psalms 51:15). Unless the Spirit leads, we can say nothing to his honor and glory. We want to hear His name praised, for unto him belongs all credit for our salvation. When His children come telling of their own inability to save themselves, of their sinfulness and weakness in the flesh, and of their utter dependance upon their Saviour, we believe that they have experienced the grace of God in their hearts; and this dependancy upon God makes them brothers in a great hope.

Works of the creature, the sarifices of slain animals and offerings of gold and silver are no longer of any avail. Those who come to the altar bring a broken spirit, — a broken and contrite heart; we are told that these are the sacrifices that God does not despise. When one can say, "Truly my soul waiteth upon God, from Him cometh my salvation," that one has given up works and his trust is in his Redeemer.

It is the desire of the association, in view of the fact that a great sorrow has befallen us during the past year in the death of Elder R. Lester Dodson, that this Circular Letter should contain, as a Memorial, a statement of appreciation for all that Elder Dodson has meant to us during the years since he first began coming among us; and an acknowledgement of our love and gratitude for his services.

We feel that God had blessed him richly, anointing him even as David was anointed, with His blessing, to prepare him for that greatest of occupations among men: The ministry of the Most High. More gifted naturally than most men with gracious personality, with ambition and ability to succeed in the world's highest stations, yet he was made willing to spend his talents and time among a poor and despised people. How great is the power of God! He can raise up his servants from castles or cabins and make them willing in the day of his power.

Of Elder Dodson it can truly be said, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good; that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion: Thy God reigneth." (Isaiah 52:7)

Elder George Ruston, Moderator
Sanford S. Bartlett, Clerk

CORRESPONDING LETTER FOR THE MAINE ASSOCIATION

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, September 7, 8, and 9th, 1951, to the associations and churches with which we correspond we send greetings and love in the Lord.

Dear Brethren: Again we have had the pleasure of meeting together in an association at Whitefield. Your correspondence and messengers have been gladly received. Elder George Ruston came to us laden with the riches of the Gospel of Christ, preaching Him the light, the truth and life of our salvation.

As the years pass by our meeting seem more and more precious, — indeed a sitting together in a heavenly place. We see less and less in ourselves; and more and more in our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Like John, we know we must decrease, and He must increase. So it must continue, until the time when we shall

awake in His likeness, see Him as He is and be satisfied.

While we are a very small association in numbers, we hope we have faith to believe we are strong in the Lord, who hath known the end from the beginning, and will accomplish all things according to His will. Love, joy and peace. It is our prayer that the peace of God which passeth all understanding, keep our hearts and minds through Jesus Christ.

The next meeting of the Maine Association will be held, the Lord willing, at Whitefield, Maine, September 12, 13 and 14th, 1952.

Elder George Ruston, Moderator
Sanford S. Bartlett, Clerk

Oct. 13, 1949
Draper, N. C.

Dear Brother and Sister Spangler:

I don't feel worthy or capable of writing you, but the nice letter you wrote recently deserves acknowledgement. I wish I could command language sufficient to express to you what it meant to us, and how much we appreciate and love you and Sister Spangler. You two surely are a father and mother to us in Israel.

I have long since been afraid you would become worried and disgusted at my stubbornness and feel like casting me aside, but I was doing the best I could. As much as I desired to be with the church, the way was blocked. In all these years I never could have offered to the church until last fourth Saturday night, when every obstacle was removed and the way was perfectly clear.

It has been a long, long journey. I feel like I have been a stranger in a strange land, wandering in the wilderness forty years; having been touched by the finger of God's love, as I hope, at the age of twelve years.

As a boy I would see man and wife carried down into the liquid grave together, — one of the most beautiful sights to behold, which gave me a desire for the same some day. I don't know that this desire was of the Lord, but he was able to give me the desire and then withhold it from me. I looked forward to the fulfillment of that desire until three years and six months ago, when my dear companion offered to the church and was baptized. This was something I had never thought of her doing first, although she had worried lest I should go first and leave her alone; and it may seem strange, but if she had separated herself from me, I don't think I would have felt more hurt because I wanted to be baptized with her.

But I did not think that I could offer to the church, not being impressed to do so at that time. As time went on during the four weeks prior to my wife's baptism, I became partly reconciled and thought surely, since I had desired so long to go into the water with my wife, I would be given a mind to do so. As the time drew near, I packed my clothes, secretly from my wife, and slipped them in the back of the car, fully believing I would be able to offer at the water's edge. But, alas, when I arrived on that scene, light and warmth was gone, and was replaced with a cold darkness. So that was as far as I could go.

After the services were all over and we had started for home, I told my wife that if it were not for her, I would quit going to church. This made her seem very sad. But I thought it would look too bad for me to quit going as soon as she joined, so I was hedged in, it seemed. As time went on, my greatest desire was a home with the church. Then I would grope in the darkness and say, I'll never offer to the church unless I am made to do it. But one Sunday at service they began to sing, "I'm not ashamed to own my Lord,"etc. I was filled so full I could hardly keep from crying out. I love that song, but after that, I would hope they would not sing it, for I was afraid I would lose control of myself, and I had a desire if I should offer to the church, I could go quietly.

When you announced you would be absent for a meeting or two, my heart was filled with sorrow and sadness. I had been made willing to offer myself when the Lord saw fit to open open the way, and I wanted you to be present. Two months was such a long time to wait. Then the two sisters joined the meeting before you were to be absent, (that didn't just happen) and you announced you would stay and baptize them. You don't know how glad I felt. "If God be for us, who can be against us." I feel he did something for my poor soul. So through the two weeks preceeding your appointment, (while the fire burned, I mused), I was begging and hoping for the way to be opened for me to take up my cross and follow Jesus. I wanted to learn of him.

We went to church Saturday night, and heard a song before services which stirred my soul and made me glad. Then it was taken from me and left me in darkness. But I tried to beg and plead for strength and courage to go home to the people I loved. When the other services were over, and the door published open for the reception of members, you began to sing, "When I can read my title clear to mansions in the sky." etc. I was filled with joy and gladness, for I love that song. I tried to sing it on a lonely ship deck on the sea, walking to and fro, while in the service of

my country more than thirty years ago. So everything was moved out of the way, and it was no trouble to go.

But I am not worthy of the warm reception the church gave me. I hope I will be kept and never give her any trouble. If I really have a little humble place there I wouldn't exchange it for all the world.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Carl Vipperman

Tuscaloosa, Ala.

Elder J. D. Wood,
Dear Brother:

I have read with much interest your Editorial in August, 1952, issue of the Signs. How neglected is such teaching and heeding in this day. But how needful and commendable are such given in the Holy Scriptures. If I know my own heart, I greatly appreciate and rejoice in such writing, and I desire to let you know it.

The true doctrine of God, as I see it, and you have set it forth, can only be rightly obeyed and preached from the heart. If men preach from the head, their hearers will follow suit. When the truth is obeyed and preached from the heart, those who hear it, will obey it. The word, or work of God is wrought in the heart by the Divine Spirit, and it's subjects are manifest by their obedience thereto. Everything must be denied or sacrificed for the Truth; it compromises with none; it knows no partnership. We hope we love the true doctrine of God, that which searches the hidden parts of the soul; and not that which reaches only the head and tickles the ear.

I hope the dear Lord will continue to add his blessings to you in that good work of faith, and labor of love in the Gospel of his dear Son. Spare not the rod, not even on the very favorite ones, if there be such. Whatsoever He saith unto you, that do. Saul spared or kept back the favorite ones in disobedience to God. God needs no special favours nor advantages of men. The truth is to be contended for and obeyed regardless of what men think or do. Where is the wise, of the wisdom of the world? Where have they gone from the former generations? Many who claim to have preached and contended for the doctrine of God, such as the Old Presbyterians and their followers, have gone into complete idolatry.

I say the truth of the Gospel, the doctrine which is of God, is to be preached and obeyed from the heart, in love. I mean the love of the truth; and man must be a living sacrifice to that faith, that the doctrine of God may be be adorned with preeminence in the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe the church, or children of God, is to be taught, led and governed by the Truth and love of the Spirit of God; and they are not to be run over or dragged around by ungodly men. Neither are they to be bossed by the laws and dictation of men. The truth will be received and obeyed by the power of God's Spirit in love. In no other way can men love or obey it.

Please forgive all mistakes, and remember me in your prayers. This is not written for publication, although I am not ashamed of the truth. Yet I am ashamed of my poor way or manner of trying to describe it. Your brother, I hope, in the truth, love and fellowship of the Lord Jesus Christ.

J. L. Sanders

Caledonia, Miss.

Dear Editors:

I would like in my weak way to write on some visions I have seen in the past.

My wonderful father revealed to me and showed to me our oldest son's crown that he will wear some day when he leaves this world of sin and sorrow. When this boy was three years old, I was lying on my bed one night, when I thought I heard a car coming. I raised up and looked toward the West. It was the most beautiful sight I ever saw; for I have never seen anything in this world to be compared with his crown.

I know that he has a dark road to travel here. He is in te service now, and may have to go across at any time. I know that God has all the power and can take care of him whereever he may be. But if I don't see him any more in this world, I have a blessed hope that I will meet him over yonder, where there will be no separations, wars or goodbys.

Then in the years of the thirties, I saw a vision at night. It was a large monument out in front of our house. At the top of this monument were two large "W's". They represented that the worst was yet to come. Just below were two large "E's". They represented the end; and I do not feel like that God's dear children will have any more peace on this earth.

Then about six years ago, I was sitting here in the room, and looking back in the Southwest, I beheld the Saviour appearing in a cloud of glory. Oh, he was such a beautiful sight, and had such a beautiful face.

I don't know why the dear Lord has been so good and merciful to me, to give me these beautiful visions. I know it is not for any good that I have done; but I believe he has reason and purpose in all things. I have seen a good many more visions, but time and space will not permit me to write of them now. Cast this aside, if you see fit.

Pray for me when at a throne of grace. A sister in hope of a mansion not made by hands.

Mrs. Maudie Aldridge

EDITORIALS

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"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well."
PSALMS 139-14

In the beginning of this chapter, David said, "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me." That is, thou art thoroughly acquainted with my whole soul, body and spirit. "Thou knowest all my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandeth my thoughts afar off. Thou compasseth my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways." Yes, even the small and casual things. God takes notice of. He is acquainted with our ways, and does not wait until He finds us in some path to become acquainted with us or the way we take. In fact, we read, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Jeremiah 10-23. Even "The preparation of the heart in man is of the Lord." Proverbs 16-1.

David also said, "There is not a word in any tongue, but, Lo, O Lord, knowest it altogether." Thus we must realize that there is not even a thought unformed, not a word on our tongue, not even a step that He does not know all about. But David said: "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." But he felt to praise Him for His marvelous work.

The human or physical body is an intricate piece of mechanism, and indeed, is wonderfully made. But the Psalmist desired to praise God for the assembly of so many parts into one machine, that each part in its proper position, worked in unison with all the other parts. Not only did he desire to praise Him for this work, but he also feared God, knowing that He had power to keep, and power to destroy him. None of the members of this body were hid from God even in their undeveloped state, or not as yet manifested.

I do not know whether David had any reference to this physical body or not, but if so, his body was a type of the body of the Lord Jesus, Who was curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth the (Virgin Mary). Therefore what we have to say in reference, will be the formation of His body, and the manifesting of God in the flesh, which the apostle says without controversy is a great mystery.

He was curiously wrought in the Virgin, and His birth excited attention, because it was inconsistent to nature. "Now the birth of Jesus was on this wise: when as His mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.

But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, "Joseph,

thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary for thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." This kind of a conception baffled the minds of the great in His day, and continues to confound the wisdom of the world. This conception was in secrecy. No one on earth knew anything about it, and no man had anything to do with it.

"For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also himself took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death; that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." But His flesh and blood must be without blemish and without spot. Thus it was necessary that His conception be of the Holy Ghost, and not of man. God in the beginning said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so."

Therefore if man had had anything to do with His conception, then He would have been conceived in sin just as all other men. But His body being the fruit of the Holy Ghost, He is free from sin, though He took upon Him the seed of Abraham, and not the nature of angels. This was done that He might have that which was necessary to satisfy the law, for it was of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. But a curiously piece of workmanship it was. As God, He had no mother, and as man, He was without a father.

But, this not only has to do with the human body of Christ, but the bride of the Lambs wife, the church of God, the body of which Christ is the head. This spiritual workmanship is just as wonderful as the conception of Jesus in the virgin. Man has nothing to do with either of them. This spiritual conception, or the birth by the spirit is of the Holy Ghost. When the son of God was incarnated, then God was manifested in the flesh. So, when the life of God is infused into one of His chosen, then God is manifested in the flesh. But in no way has God been manifested as He was in the human nature of Jesus.

In the body of Christ there was no sin, no corruption and absolutely without contamination in any form. Not so with His children. The flesh being not that which is born again, or of the Spirit, sin still dwells in our flesh though God is manifested there. This makes it a wonderful wrought piece of workmanship. For those who think that the flesh is that which is born again, may settle the question by consulting their own mind, and after doing so if they find one foolish thought, then they cannot say that the flesh is born of the spirit; for the thoughts of foolishness is sin. We can all say with David, that we are wonderfully made, and may we have the spirit to praise Him for His wonderful work for, and within the children of men.

"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." The substance to which David referred is the body of Christ, and the body of Christ is the church, the bride, the Lambs wife. The composition of this body is harmonious, without spot, wrinkle or any such thing. There are no misfitted joints, and every piece of material is marked by the great architect for its proper place in the body.

The word work implies preparation for labor; while the word wrought, suggest the molding or fashioning of things from the rough or crude state, says Webster. The body of Christ, the church of God, is fragmentary in its state here below, but triumphantly it is one harmonious whole. And in this unperfect, or (unmanifested state) the eyes of God were ever upon them.

"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. The texture of

the material of which the human body is made is to me the most intricate and curious that can be conceived. It is, indeed, wonderfully made; it is fragile, it is subject to sickness, it is subject to sin, and it is also subject to death. Yet inside there is a principal that is pure, sinless and will never die. This is a wonderfully and curiously wrought body. When we refer to a person as being curious, we mean that he is peculiar, a little different from others, having a characteristic or habit out of the ordinary.

And as God's people are a peculiar people, I feel that the body under consideration refers to the bride, the Lambs wife, a sect that is spoken evil of the world over. A people "Unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." 2-Cor. 6th chapter.

And in the 4th chapter and 8th verse of the same book, Paul says, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." These experiences causes one to praise God for His wonderful work and to fear him. This is not a slavish, but a filial fear.

"But who can speak thy wondrous deeds;
Thy greatness all our thoughts exceeds;
Vast and unsearchable thy ways,
Vast and immortal be thy praise."

H. O. Nash

Malachi 3:10

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessnig, that there shall not be room enough to receive it".

Some time ago we were requested to write on the above quoted scripture, and the Lord willing will offer some comments on the SUBJECT.

First we notice by referring to the New Testament, that neither Christ, nor any of the apostles commanded the practice of paying tithes in the gospel Church; hence we shall discard the idea that it was to be continued beyond the law dispensation. The New Testament presents the perfect rule for faith and practice, for the saints, and we have no right to add to that rule. The question is often asked of our people as to what we believe about tithing, and our answer is, that we have no authority for it in the gospel church.

Under the law there was several sorts of tithing, which is usually thought of as a tenth. One of these was to the Levites for their maintenance in their service in the Tabernacle. Another was the offering every third year for the poor to be eaten in their dwellings; Still another was the support of the Priests as they had no inheritance in the land. The various sorts of tithing shows that it was God's way of providing for the services in his house, and to keep before Israel the thought that the service of God should come first with them.

In their offerings under the law the offerings made by the people was not to be of secondary value, but was to be the first of the first fruits; The best they had. When that which belonged to God and his service was held back, it was likened to robbing God.

This service under the law had a shadow of better things to come, pointing to that which is required of his professing people that there are services required of his people in the gospel dispensation, there can be no question, and whatsoever we do even unto his people is to be done as unto the Lord.

By referring to the preceding verses in the third chapter of Malachi it will be noticed that the Lord's people are promised better things than they then enjoyed. The change was to be wrought in them by the Lord as a fire. And he

shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

The people are commanded to bring all the tithes into the storehouse. Is not God's gospel church today truly his storehouse? Is it not here that his mercies are often manifested in bringing them together in his great name? This word applies to those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious. The gracious dealings of God with them belong to his storehouse. They are commanded to bring all the tithes, (spiritual experiences that they have received from his hand) into this great storehouse. What belongs to one, belongs to all, for under the gospel, they had all things common. Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit which is God's.

We are commanded to bring the first of the first fruits unto the house of the Lord the God. In coming before the church for membership, many of the Lord's dear people tell of the first work of God's holy spirit in their souls; how they have been convinced of their depraved state, and made to hunger and thirst for righteousness; They have been made to see the justice of God in their condemnation under his righteous law, and given faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as their sinbearer, and saviour. How good it is to see them manifesting the fruits of the spirit which is love, joy and peace etc.

God's chosen people belong to him, and to each other in spiritual union. In bringing forth these spiritual tithes unto his storehouse, one finds love and fellowship there, because those who live together in blessed experience are fed from the same storehouse.

There is in being led to bring all the tithes into the storehouse, a proving of him, and his word cannot fail that the windows of heaven shall be opened, and a blessing poured out. Surely this is spiritual tithing, and what a blessing it is that we have this place provided where weary pilgrims can come bringing that which is acceptable to each other, because it is God's storehouse, and all the fruit belongs to him who has said, " I will never leave you."

The law tithing mentioned in the New Testament only shows the disposition of those who trust in their own works, as the Pharisee did when he boasted that he had given tithes of all he possessed and thanked God that he was not as the poor Publican who was so cast down. Yet Jesus says, " The publican went down to his house justified, rather than the other. The spiritual tithing is not just giving a part of our earthly gain, but is bringing unto the Lord's house the evidence you have of his heavenly mercies, and it demands our life, our all.

D. V. S.

IMPORTANT THINGS

Each of us use the expression, "I believe."

Do we, however conscientiously ask ourselves why we believe what we believe? Or do we believe, — or profess to believe, certain things without substantial ground for believing? The things we believe and practice in everyday life are important; while the things we believe and practice in our religious life are much more important.

Are you a member of an organization called a church? If not, do you lean toward one, or another? In either case do you know what the doctrines of your organization are? Do you know your Articles of Faith? Does your church actually believe and practice it's creed? Have you ever inquired into the facts of the history of your organization?

Though there are many organizations, known by different names, there is but one Church of God. There is but one foundation, — Jesus Christ. The doctrines of the Church are such as He and his apostles taught; and these

only, which he has caused to be recorded for us. Names mean little except to historians; while the truth means much, — or should mean much, to each of us. Doctrines firmly held and practiced is the test of a gospel church.

The history of each organization should show how and why it came into existance, and who was it's founder; it will show whether it's beginning was an attempt to reform an existing organization; whether it was the result of a "new" revelation; or whether it is founded upon rational principles, or upon the revelations of Jesus Christ.

Men have long since ceased to blush at the name, "Christian". Though first given in derision to those who believed and followed a "crucified Christ", the stigma has been removed for the "ordinary professor" by the keeping alive of "smooth" things, and discarding "hard" sayings. It was not so at the beginning, and it is not so now. For believers then believed All Things which Jesus taught; and believers, true believers, still believe and hold fast to those same things. These things have no variations, or different shades; they are not subject to alterations to suit particular times or notions. They are eternal; — they are right for all times or conditions. Believers are conformed to them, rather than they being conformed to believers.

If all "believers" knew the truth, and if "truth" did not take on so many variations in the professions of men, it would not be necessary to "try the spirits." But the chimericals of much of professed truth make it necessary to "beware of every wind of doctrine," and to hold fast to that only which fits the original perfectly. A searching, if prompted of the right spirit, will lay aside the "doctrines of men"; for "he that hath an ear" will hear only what the Spirit says. The Spirit displays the truth in it's mysterious splendor; and at the same time brands all it's would be kindred as false.

The Scriptures contain all that God has been pleased to reveal of his eternal will and purpose. Inspired men recorded them; and the same spirit that inspired acts also to reveal and confirm them to whomsoever they pertain. No further revelations have been made, nor are necessary for the doctrine and order of the church, despite the claims that men make.

The simplicity of the true worship of God, — the worship in spirit and in truth, has no attractions for "wise and prudent" men. Only babes in Christ are able to understand and rejoice in the completed and fulfilled type and shadow manner of worship, which was formerly proper, but is now comprehended in the "Simplicity that is in Christ." (2 Cor. 11:3).

We call attention to these things. If any are exercised in them they might well hear the Apostle Paul, when he says, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." (1 Thes. 5:21)

J. D. W.

THE FOUR BEASTS
Revelation 4:6-11

In the fourth chapter of Revelation, verses six to eleven inclusive, mention is made of four beasts, translated living creatures in the marginal reference, and to which allusion is made in the first chapter of Ezekiel. These living creatures had eyes before and behind, and the first creature was like a lion, the second like a calf, the third having a face like as a man, and the fourth was like a flying eagle. Each creature had six wings about him, and each was full of eyes within, and they rested not day and night, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." After they had given glory, and honor and thanks unto him that sat on the throne, who liveth forever and ever, they fell down in worshipful adoration and cast their crowns before him, acknowledging the worthiness of the Lord, who sat upon the throne.

There is often a two-fold interpretation and application of many scriptures, and this is especially true of each of these living creatures, for truth in scripture is often like a diamond radiating light in many directions, yet not in conflict. These living creatures, spoken of in Revelation as beasts, were seen by the apostle John as he was enabled by the Spirit to discern through a door opened in heaven a throne about which was a rainbow like unto an emerald, and upon the throne a man who was none other than the risen Christ, and round about the throne twenty-four elders seated, clothed in white, and having on their heads crowns of gold. The throne and its occupant have a definite connection with the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures, which demands our reverent attention. The voice like a trumpet that spoke to John assured him that he would show him things which must be hereafter.

A throne whether in heaven or on earth is the seat of kingly power and authority and denotes the administration of a sovereign ruler. In scripture Jerusalem is spoken of as the throne of our Lord, and like Zion is a figurative expression of the church. It was then the church that John saw in heaven, and this wonderful vision is a representation of the church in the gospel heaven of the present gospel dispensation, but also may prefigure the church in that heaven of eternal glory when Jesus shall have delivered up the kingdom that God may be one in all.

Christ revealed in the heart of a poor sinner today is but an earnest of the fullness of that incorruptible inheritance reserved in heaven for him. Not only does a throne denote a king and a kingdom, but subjects as well, for Christ and his bride, the church, shall reign over all things while the eternal ages roll. The rainbow spoken of in connection with this throne was like unto an emerald, the color of which is green and suggests fadelessness and thus emblemizes eternity with all its unspeakable glories as the church enjoys the blessings of the new covenant typified by the rainbow like an emerald. In other rainbows mentioned in scripture there is no mention of the emerald, as those rainbows of beauty spangling the storm clouds of heaven contained with other colors the three predominating, red, blue, and purple.

The first rainbow was beheld by wondering Noah when the ark rested on Mount Ararat and was given as a type of the new covenant, the color red denoting the blood of the son of God by which all true believers would be cleansed of their sins when he became incarnate through the miracle of the virgin birth; the blue signifying the heavenly ways of God in his infinite holiness; and the purple not only a sign of royalty but a uniting of God and man in the person of Christ Jesus. When blue and red are mixed together the color purple is the result, and the purple can not again be separated to form blue and red. Through the Holy Ghost God of heaven dwelt in the person of his son Christ, who was God manifest in the flesh and justified in the spirit, verily the word was made flesh. In these three colors we have the work of the Trinity, blue denoting God the Father, the red typifying Christ the Son, for the blood is the life of the flesh and the soul: and the father and the son of man became one by the work of the Holy Spirit, all three being necessary to the work of salvation, for it is the work of God that men believe upon him, that is, the work of the Trinity.

All believers are made spiritually alive by the work of the quickening power of the Holy Ghost following the redemptive work of Christ the Son in fulfilling all covenant engagements made with the Father. The work of salvation being accomplished in time,

the blood does not have to be applied in heaven again when the saints are in glory, therefore the rainbow like unto an emerald beautifully signifies the completion of that covenant ordered in all things and sure. The twenty-four elders before the throne are seated, which means rest in the fulfilled promises of God, which are yea and amen in Christ Jesus, their white garments signifying the righteousness with which the saints are clothed and the crowns of gold denote glory as the consummation of all righteousness The number twenty-four, being twice twelve denotes the Jewish church and the Gentile church becoming one in Christ as represented by the twelve patriarchs of the Old Testament and the twelve apostles of the new.

We shall now consider the four living creatures which were in the midst of the throne and round about it, therefore a part of it and identified with it. These four beasts represent the gospel ministry which embraces the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, which are one gospel, or the power of God unto salvation.

It is said figuratively of the church, "A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." In the garden of Eden man was placed after his creation, and this garden was watered by one river that parted into four heads. Without water natural life could not exist, neither without the river of the water of life flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb could the church maintain its spiritual existence.

Water often signifies the word of God in its life-imparting power and its cleansing efficiency. So the garden of grace is watered and sustained by the living stream of the gospel as it parts into the four heads of the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the remainder of the new testament being an amplification of the principles set forth by the four evangelists as they declare the revelation of God to man through Jesus Christ. The first gospel, that of Matthew, presents Jesus as the kingly one, who was born a king, and a descendant of his fatherDavid after the flesh and entitled to the throne of Israel.

A lion is often spoken of as the king of beasts, and truly Jesus is the lion of the tribe of Judah and is the king of the Israel of our God and of his kingdom there shall be no end. It was therefore fitting that the first beast should be represented as a lion and signify one who is king of kings and Lord of lords. But Jesus could not reign as such until he had fulfilled the law and put his enemies under his feet, and conquered death, hell, and the grave. He therefore must be made of a woman and be subject to death and live a righteous life in the flesh, be crucified, endure the full punishment for sin on the cross as a sacrifice as the bleeding Lamb of God, and rise triumphant from the tomb before divine justice could be satisfied and God's ineffable holiness vindicated. The calf or ox represents a sacrificial animal, and Mark's gospel depicts Jesus as a servant under the law and dying under its awful curse.

He could not reign as king until he had satisfied the just demands of the holy law of God.

It is written that the third beast, or living creature, had a face like a man, which points to Jesus as being son of man, as indicated by the gospel of Luke, who traces the geneaology of Jesus back to Adam, showing the Redeemer as the seed of the woman. As God made the first Adam a man and formed him into sinless flesh, but subject to temptation, sin, death, and the awful penalty of everlasting wrath,, that the love, grace, and glory of God in redemption should be made manifest to the heirs of eternal life, it was necessary that the second Adam should also be a man, although the Lord from Heaven manifested as a quickening spirit.

The first man was subject to death, but the second Adam had power over

death. As the first man received the law in the flesh and transgressed it, the second man, the Lord from Heaven, must appear in the flesh, keep the law, fulfill all righteousness, and satisfy divine justice, so the gospel must present Jesus as the son of man as well as son of God.

The fourth beast was like a flying eagle, representing the gospel of John, which declares that the Word was in the beginning with God and was God and became flesh and dwelt among men. The eternal Word saw the end from the beginning with the unerring vision of divinity. The eagle is a bird that soars high in the natural heaven and sees its small prey when high in the air and descends to seize it, and ascends again upon its ample wings. When Jesus had ascended into heaven, he had made death, Satan, and the grave his prey.

Jesus discerned the thoughts of men's hearts from the infinite depths of his divine being, so the gospel of John portrays Christ as the eternal son of God. The four gospels represent Jesus as son of God and son of man, as a sacrifice under the law, and as king above the law, all being necessary for the salvation of regenerated sinners.

The ministry of the gospel is always within the church in its application and extends to the four corners of the earth and embraces all the called of God, and the four living creatuers in another sense typify the ministers of Christ, who, with their eyes before and behind, look back to the covenant of grace and the finished work of Jesus in redemption as well as forward to the consummation of all the promises of God in that blessed immortality that crowns with glory the saints of God.

The eyes within the wings of the living creatures may denote the searching power of the true ministry of the gospel as the hearers are led to search themselves to see what manner of people they are, as well as the minister to examine himself as he realizes his utter insufficiency of self and his dependence upon the author of every good and perfect gift to preach the word of God and to confirm his hearers in their holy faith. Each of the four creatures had three pairs of wings, suggesting the fullness of the work of the Trinity in the work of salvation as faith, hope, and love, three graces of the Spirit, find their final fulfilment when the saints are seated with Christ in the world that has no end.

A true minister must be as bold as a lion in preaching the whole truth and combating the hosts of error as he takes upon himself the whole armor of God. Also he must be patient like the ox as he bears his yoke in the vineyard of our God. The minister too is like a flying eagle in discerning the revealed things that belong to the children of God and in rightly dividing the word of truth. One of the living creatures had a face like a man, reminding us that men are called to declare the unsearchable riches of the gospel in comforting the little ones in Zion. Holy men of old spoke or wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and God's servants are taught by revelation of the Spirit today and ascribe holiness to God and cast their crowns before him as they offer up as acceptable sacrifices the calves of their lips.

(Elder) Arnold H. Bellows

Atlanta, Texas

Dear Editors of the Signs:

If I have a gift of any kind, it is to stand still and wait. Hymn number 325 in Lloyd's Book appeals to me. First line is, "Keep silence all created things, and wait your maker's nod."

If I know anything in a spiritual sense, I have to stay in the dungeon, it seems, until it is time for the light to shine; then my wickedness shows so plainly I can hardly believe I ever knew anything in the true sense of the word, except evil thoughts and actions.

I sometimes hope that I have a hope which was given me nearly forty years ago. At that time I felt my troubles were over, but instead, found that they were just begun. If I have a good thought, the praise is due the Lord God of heaven for being so merciful to allow me that privilege. My daily career finds me striv-

ing for the goods of this world; so to speak, in a waste howling wilderness, blind and deaf to any way to get out. I am seventy-one years old, and instead of getting better in my old days, I get worse as the years go by. I realize at times the the Lord has a purpose in my being born, and I know his will and purpose will be accomplished. As for any benefit I am in this world, the space occupied by me must be the dry bone of the valley; not even a fit subject to be respected by the world, much less by the children of the Heavenly King.

The desire to do the right thing is all I have ever had; and longing to be clothed with the robe of righteousness. But, alas, it is impossible; and the seasons come and go and I still find myself in the same mass of corruption. If I know myself, at times I would walk ten miles to hear an Old Baptist preach; at other times I don't seem to hear what is said, though I be present.

I don't feel to be a fit character to address you as brethren, but I would ask to be remembered in your petitions to the Lord. Please renew my subscription since it expired in May, 1952.

W. A. Harper

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847 Lynwood Drive
Florence, S. C.

Dear Editors:

We wish to thank the staff of the Signs of the Times for their promptness in changing our address whenever it has been necessary.

We are two weary pilgrims who have a little hope in Jesus. Often there are months, and always weeks when we hear no preaching; so our papers come to water the thirsty and feed the hungry with words of comfort from others in like circumstances. We have much to be thankful for, though sorely tried, since God, for Christ's sake we hope, is very merciful; even to sparing our lives recently in an automobile accident. He alone knows for what purpose. We believe He is a God of purpose, and that all power, honor and glory belong to him. He sent his son to redeem his God given bride, the church, from under the curse of the law sin and death. He bore our sins in his own body, and He who knew no sin, was made a curse for us. "What wondrous love is this, Oh, my soul."

We were glad to read that the paper will return to larger type, as to many of the readers, whose eyesight is not good, have been heard to exclaim. "My Signs is all the reading I can do."

A sinner who has a hope that she was saved by grace before the world was, and to whom God manifested that love many years ago. We beg an interest in the prayers of God's elect.

Ester Wilson Whitefield

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Find enclosed a little help in sending the grand old paper. Fourteen years ago in this month, I wrote the publisher I couldn't pay for it any longer since I had lost all I had: a loving husband and a good daddy. But he wrote and told me not to worry, I would get the paper; and I haven't missed a copy. I wish I could express how much I appreciate your kindness.

I have had a struggle, but still feel the good Lord has blessed me in so many ways, of which I am not worthy. If you have too big a burden in sending too many free ones, don't send it to me any longer. I hope some day I can pay you all I owe, for I have enjoyed the paper as far back as I can remember.

Yours in hope.

Note: We do not want the sister who wrote the above, to feel that she owes the Signs of the Times anything. It is a great pleasure to all associated in publishing the Signs, and those who contribute to the Indigent Fund, to send the paper to those of our brethren and friends who delight to read it, and yet are not able to pay for it. There are many such; and it is hoped that we shall be able to continue the paper to them.

Editors

Murray, Ky.

Signs of the Times:

Seeing that my subscription to the Signs is out this month, I am enclosing a check for $5.00 for two years. I am eighty years old and my wife will be eighty in November. We have no living children and my wife being feeble, I manage to fix some food and the neighbors send in some nice things to help us along.

All my brothers and sisters who have joined any church are members of other denominations. I do not get to church often as I do not leave my wife. We live at 109 N. Fourth Street, Murray, Ky., and have a spare bed room and will welcome any of our faith to stop with us.

My grandmother subscribed for the first issue of the Signs, and my mother took it as long as she lived; and I hope to get as long as I live.

I have no authority to invite, but will presume to invite any who can to visit Little River Associaion the fourth Sunday in August, held near Cadiz, Ky.

T. O. Turner

Houston, Texas

Elder D. V. Spangler,
Dear Brother in Christ:

I have wanted to write my appreciation since reading your article, in answer to my request, which you beautifully unfolded. It was edifying and consoling indeed. I hope that

others will receive as much comfort from it as I did.

I do like reading good things; and the Signs are full of good things, nourishing those who hunger and thirst for spiritual food. We never tire of reading when we find an interest and a warmth of heart, and a feeling of kindred spirit. I love to read letters from brothers and sisters who have the same hope I have, if indeed I have a hope; and who have traveled the same way I have.

If not deceived, I have always, or for many years, been a believer in the doctrine the Old School Baptist teach, but have had a home with them only one year. I received a hope sixteen years ago. This and my baptism, were the happiest events in my life. Oh, how unworthy I do feel of these blessings, and to have a home with these dear, precious Old Baptists. Yet, I still have my trials and troubles. Most of the time I am in darkness; a feeling of doubt and fear that this precious hope is no hope at all. Though with this fear and doubt, I cannot lay it by, but cling all the closer to this little light of hope, — the anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast.

Oh yes, indeed, I still, and shall ever have trials, tribulations and burdens to bear; for I am not expecting to go through this old world on flowery beds of ease. Our blessed Lord, and Saviour, suffered sore trials and afflictions while here on earth, and we know that we are not better than he. Our Lord knows just how much his poor, little weak ones can bear. He will make a way for their escape.

I have permission to send the enclosed letter which I received from Sister Minnie Hendrix, of Blevins, Arkansas. I believe others will enjoy it as much as I. She lives alone and never gets to meetings any more.

I would appreciate your views on Gen. 30: 14-15. I long to hear a sermon or read an article on these verses, and would be very grateful to read either your's or Elder Wood's views, or any of the Associate Editor's, if given a mind to write.

Thanking you for your time, and asking an interest in your prayers. May God bless you in your wonderful work.

A little sister I hope,
Harriett Little Gray

Blevins, Arkansas

Dear Sister Gray:

Although I don't feel like I am a sister to anyone, I like to be called Sister, even if I am down in the, "Slough of despondency", feeling so far away from all that is dear to me. I seem to be dead to all spiritual knowledge; dead and yet alive. Just drifting and begging, "Oh, Lord, restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." I have felt that joy and peace which the Lord alone can give. What natural or fleshy thing can undo what the Lord has done? He says that not a sparrow falls to the earth without him. If He takes care of the sparrows, may He in mercy take care of me, and take me out of my doubts and fears.

As the days come and go, I feel my unworthiness. "Nothing in my hand I bring; simply to thy cross I cling." I know that if I am one of the redeemed of our Saviour, and have born of His Spirit and made to praise His holy name, I need not fear. But the flesh is weak, and when things go wrong and we feel forsaken, and trials and tribulations come, we forget that it is through much tribulation we enter the kingdom. "Even so, Father, it seemeth good in thy sight." "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Would we lean on the staff if we hadn't felt the rod?

I can only hope that my name is written in the "Lamb's book of life." If it is not, I or no one else can write it there; for it is sealed, and no man can break that seal. It is left for the "Lion of the tribe of Judah", Jesus Christ our Saviour, to open. Maybe you can tell I didn't quote correctly; I did not get my bible. I did like an old colored Auntie used to say, "I have the bible in my heart." So I have just written along as it come into my mind.

As I am one of the poor, they send me the Signs free. A Mrs. Nelson, at Lindon, Texas, sent me a bundle of Old Faith Contenders, so I have some good things to read. Thanks for your kind words to me, and if you have a mind and time to write to me, I enjoy your letters very much.

In bonds of love,
Mrs. Minnie Hendrix

NOTICE OF MEETINGS

Correction —

Notice of meetings of Saints Rest Church as published in July, should read as follows:

Saints Rest Old School Baptist Church meets each first Sunday at eleven o'clock, and Saturday night before at seven-thirty, at 4614 Sylvester Street, Dallas, Texas.

W. W. Taylor, Pastor
John T. Beene, Clerk

Little flock Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at eleven o'clock, and Saturday afternoon before at two-thirty, at Altus, Okla.

W. W. Taylor, Pastor
C. E. Turner, Co-pastor

Virginia Corresponding Meeting

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with Mt. Zion Church, near Aldie, Virginia, October 15, 16 and 17, 1952. For further information, see September issue of Signs.

Salisbury Association

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to meet with Little Creek Church, Delmar, Delaware, on Wednesday and Thursday, October 22 and 23, 1952.

For further information see September issue of Signs.

Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, Cash, Texas, meets each third Sunday at eleven o'clock, and Saturday afternoon at two-thirty.

W. W. Taylor, Pastor

CONTRIBUTIONS TO INDIGENT FUND TO AUGUST 1, 1952

Mrs. George Beebe, N. Y. $25.00; H. F. Earnheart, Tenn. $7.00; J. L. Smith, Miss. $1.00; Lollie M. Campbell, Can. $1.00; Mrs. Lena B. King N. C. $1.00; Elder Kenneth R. Pinkstaff, Ga. $3.00; Mrs. Annie Love, La. $2.00; Mrs. Daniel Holloway, Md. $5.00; Pattie Krewatch, Md. $1.00; Mrs. H. G. Flourney, Mich. $2.00; J. B. Baron, N. C. $2.00; Joseph Johnson, Tenn. $1.00; Mrs. David Farnie, Va. $1.00; L. H. Swarthwood, Okla. $2.00;

NOTICE

Please continue to send all communications, and remittances to box 1271, Danville, Va.

ORDAINATION

Pilgrim Rest Church, Lawn, Texas. July 5, 1952. Pursuant to request of Pilgrim Rest Church, the following Elders met to ordain Brother Howard Eason an Elder: C. M. Haygood, B. B. Walston, E. J. Lambert, W. R. Rhodes. Being organized by electing Elder Haygood, Moderator, and Elder Walston, Clerk, and Elder Lambert, Assistant Clerk; On motion and second, the spokesman for the church made statements as to Brother Eason's qualifications and gift. After hearing the spokesman's statements, by motion the presbytery proceeded by prayer and laying on of hands. Prayer by Elder E. J. Lambert and charge by Elder R. W. Rhodes. After which the presbytery presented Elder Eason to the church, and the right hand of fellowship was extended.

Minutes read and approved, and signed by the Presbytery.

Elder C. M. Haygood, Moderator
Elder B. B. Walston, Clerk
Elder E. J. Lambert
R. W. Rhodes

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, it has pleased Almighty God, the controller of all things in heaven and earth, to remove from our midst by death our beloved brother and Moderator, Joseph A. Brooks, we bow in humble submission to his divine will, and

WHEREAS, Bethel Primitive Baptist Church has enjoyed his many years as a faithful member and moderator, the church is now brought to realize her great loss; but we feel that our loss is his eternal gain, so be it

RESOLVED, That as a token of our love and esteem for our departed brother, who for 45 years was a member in regular attendance, and served Bethel Church as Moderator since October 1, 1921; and as a record of our love to his memory, be it further

RESOLVED, That these resolutions be spread upon our Minutes; a copy sent to the wife of the deceased; and a copy sent to the Signs of the Times and Old Faith Contender for publication.

Adopted by order of the church.

Elder Harvey Prilliman, Act. Moderator
Walter C. Brooks, Clerk
Committee: James S. Matthews
James H. Perdue
Walter C. Brooks

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WHEREAS, it has been the will of our Heavenly Father to remove from earth, our beloved sister, Stella Crenshaw, who died at her home near Hollis, Okla., August 4, 1952. She was born July 31, 1869. Her husband, Brother A. J. Crenshaw, died February 14, 1946. They both joined the church October 11, 1924. She leaves a daughter and two sons to mourn her loss,

THEREFORE, be it resolved that we deeply sympathize with her family and friends, and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of these resolutions be made a part of our church Record, and a copy sent to the bereaved family, and a copy sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Little Flock Church, Altus, Okla., while in conference August 9, 1952.

Elder W. W. Taylor, Moderator
Mrs. Lou Kester, Church Clerk

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OBITUARY

Deacon J. W. White

Obituary of Deacon J. W. White, who departed this life May 11, 1951. Brother White was born in Alabama, February 29, 1880, and came to Texas when a young man. He was married to Miss Missouri Smith in 1912. She passed away in 1918, leaving three small children, two boys and one girl. After the death of his wife Brother White returned to Alabama. His baby girl passed away about two months after her mother's death. In 1920, Brother White married Mrs. Clemmie Rhowden, and she passed away about a month after their marriage. In the Fall of 1920, after the death of his second wife, he, his two children and his sister came to Texas. In 1927 he married

Mrs. Ethel Tillie, who is left to mourn his passing, together with two sons, three step-children, two brothers, four sisters, and many other relatives and friends.

Brother White united with Big Springs Primitive Baptist Church in September, 1917. He moved his membership in November, 1927 to Fellowship Church, where he was ordained to the office of deacon in 1937. The church feels that he filled the office of deacon well, and purchased to himself a good degree and a great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Elder T. A. Wall, May 13, 1951, at the Rainey and Talley Fneral Home, in Marshall, Texas. The text used was the last six verses of the fourth chapter of First Thessalonians. There was a large concourse of relatives and friends present.

His body was laid to rest in the Hallsville Cemetary, to await final resurrection; at which time he will come forth in the likeness of the Blessed Son of God.

Written by the Church Clerk

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Robert J. Chilton

Robert J. Chilton was born May 10, 1863, and died at the hospital in Louisville, Kentucky, July 27, 1952, being in his ninetieth year.

He was married to Miss Lucy B. Lindsey, February 10, 1881, in Henry County, Ky. Sister Lucy died twelve years ago. To the union were born seven children, six sons and one daughter; all survive except one son who died ten years ago. There are also twenty grand-children and eighteen great-grandchildren surviving.

Both of his parents, and his wife were members of the Old School Baptists; and Robert was a staunch believer, but never felt worthy to unite with the church. As long as health would permit he was always present at the meetings with his wife. Robert lived all his life on a farm near Turners Station, Ky., where his home was always open to the brethern. Many times the writer has been entertained in his home.

The writer was called from his home in Huntington to attend the funeral. The body was brought to the McCarty Funeral Home, in Campbellsburg, Ky., where services were held Tuesday at two-thirty. Burial was at Turners Station. It was very warm and I was thankful for the assistance of the quartet, who sang Amazing Grace, and Abide with Me. Also to the two local ministers of Turners Station and Campbellsburg.

May the good Lord Comfort and reconcile us to our loss, believing it is his eternal gain. And may all the dear children for whom Christ died on the Cross be given encouragement as they are led by faith in this low ground of sorrow, that they may hope and trust in Him with full assurance of hearing His voice in the resurrection of the dead.

Elder George L. Weaver

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Sarah Adaline Chandler

Sarah Adaline Chandler (nee Ashbrook), died Saturday July 19, 1952, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Maud Carlisle, near Carrollton, Kentucky. She was in her eighty-fourth year. Her parents were Francis and Celest (Sleete) Ashbrook. She was married to Mr. Frank Chandler, who preceeded her in death eighteen years.

To this union were born six children: five sons and one daughter; Ballard, Omer, Robert, Warren and George and Mrs. Maude Carlisle. Also seven grand-children and seven great-grandchildren, and one sister, Mrs. Mattie West, of Colorado.

Sister Addie, as we all called her, received a hope in her Saviour early in life, and upon relation of her experience to the Sulphur Fork Church, was received and baptized by their pastor, Elder P. W. Sawin. For over forty years she was faithful to the cause of Jesus Christ; her judgement was wise, and we of Sulphur Fork Church will miss her keenly. While we mourn our loss, we feel it is her gain; and we bow in humble submission to God's will, and pray Him to reconcile all of us.

At the funeral, I was reminded that at the services of her husband eighteen years ago, I used the Hymn, Amazing Grace, and I was asked to use it again. I read the hymn and commented on it as I read. It was a quiet service; for I knew it was what she had wanted. It was very warm, but the brethern and friends from far and near filled the house. The body was tenderly borne by her four sons and two nephews to the church yard and placed beside her husband. There to await the call of the Master, with sure and certain hope to arise, and be like him, see him as he is, and be satisfied.

"Now to the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory, majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

Her pastor,
George L. Weaver

* * * * *

George Henry Edwards

George Henry Edwards, the subject of this notice, was born in Noble County, Ohio, August 1, 1866; and departed this life, October 9, 1945. Age seventy-nine years, two months and eight days.

He was afflicted with the dread disease of cancer of the stomach and other complications, and was a constant sufferer over a period of years. In his last days his suffering was acute

indeed, but he bore it very patiently, showing a great measure of resignation to his lot of pain. He was a firm believer in the primitive doctrine of salvation alone by the grace of God. He was not a member of the church, but the Primitive Baptist people were highly esteemed by him; he was truly a friend to the church and cause of Christ.

In September about the year 1886, he was united in marriage to Elizabeth Sena Carpenter. To this union were born six sons and one daughter; one son preceed him in death, having died in infancy.

Mr. Edwards spent the greater portion of his life in Putnam County, West Virginia, and brought up his family and farm by dint of honesty and hard labor. He was very indstrious, and a useful and influential citizen; a good neighbor, kind husband and father, always ready with a helping hand for his neighbors.

In conclusion, I feel to say, his hope was Christ. In his last days he spoke very sweetly to his family, leaving sweet evidence of his wellbeing in Christ. The unworthy writer was called to conduct his funeral, where I desired to speak words of comfort to the bereaved family and friends.

Also

Mrs. Elizabeth Sena

* * * * *

Mrs. Elizabeth Sena (Carpenter) Edwards, his wife, was born August 8, 1871, in Mercer County, West Virginia; and departed this life March 27, 1951. Age seventy-nine years, eight months and nine days. Mrs. Edwards had been afflicted for quite a number of years, and for some years before her death was almost totally blind. But during all her suffering she manifested great patience, and sweet resignation.

She never united with the church, but had a sweet experience of grace, and a good hope in Jesus. She had a felt sense of unworthiness, but I feel sure she carried in her heart a strong desire for a home in the church, though was not given boldness to go home to her friends. Mrs. Edwards loved to talk, and to hear the doctrine of grace talked. Her life was one of humility, serving unselfishly her husband, her children and her neighbors in every way possible. After her husbands departure, her decline was more marked; and soon she was called to follow him in death.

I visited her not so long before her departure, and she talked freely and sweetly of the mercy and grace of God, — attesting her hope and faith in her Redeemer. At the time of her death, I was ill in bed; so her funeral was set for a later date. At which time I tried once again to speak to the same bereaved family and host of friends. Speaking of the same grace and faith in which her hope was stayed.

Mr. and Mrs. Edwards leave to mourn, Deacon A. O. Edwards, Wilbert, Thomas, Del and Bryan Edwards, and Mrs. Effie Buzzard; all residing in the home community, near St. Albans, W. Va. Several grandchildren and great-grandchildren, as well as two brothers, Hugh and Asa Carpenter, also survive.

In their passing, the church in this place has lost two devoted friends. I grieve not for them, only that I will see their face no more here below. I feel that for them to die was gain. Their mortal remains were laid to rest in the family burying ground near their old home. The florial offerings attested the high esteem in which they were held.

May God, who is rich in mercy, comfort the bereaved. Written by request of the family, and humbly submitted.

Elder H. J. Bird

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 120 DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1952 NO. 11

"For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." (1 Peter 3:12)

What a wonderful blessing it is that we have our natural eyes. What a dark dismal life we would have if we could not see, but must grope about in nature's darkness, expecting someone to lead us.

Now our Lord takes things that we are acquainted with to represent to us spiritual things. I call your attention to several examples in the Scriptures, and we hope to use the Scriptures for the basis of our remarks. In John, Ninth Chapter, we are told of a man that was born blind, and had lived all his life in darkness, and never saw a ray of light. He was a beggar asking alms of the people. Now this one did not ask for sight for he did not know what sight was. Jesus made spittle of clay and annointed his eyes, and told him to go wash in the pool of Siloam. (Siloam means "sent"). The Lord sent him to the pool; and he washed and came seeing. The Jews found great fault with Jesus for healing on the Sabbath day. They had seen this miracle with their natural eyes, but were blind spiritually. This shows to us that there is nothing too hard for the Lord.

Another example: the restoring of life to Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha. (John 11:13). Let us keep in mind that His eyes are over the righteous. It is necessary for us to be lifted up, and also to be bowed down. For the trial of our faith worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is give unto us." (Romans 5:5). Sometimes we deny Him before men, and we forget what He has told us; then we remember what we have done and, under the gaze of those fiery eyes, we repent and weep (Luke 22:61).

Sometimes we feel justified in our lusts, and the Lord sends to us a Nathan; and we boastfully say that anyone who would do this terrible thing should be put to death. Then says Nathan, "Thou art the man." Then David said, "I have sinned against the Lord." (see Samuel 12:7) According to David's ruling, David should be put to death. But Nathan said unto David, "The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme."

The Lord's people are set for an example: the Elders, Deacons or other members none of them, have license to do as David did, nor any other works of the flesh, to give occasion to the enemies of Christ. It is an evil to the Lord, and we are commanded to shun all appearances of evil. How the eyes of the world are upon us; they do not believe a word we say, nevertheless they look upon us as an example. How the tongues wag when one of the Old School Baptists go wrong. "Who would have thought that an Elder, of all people, would go wrong," one would say, "I did think that some day I would try and join them, but when I hear of drunkenness, adultry and the losing of all respect for church and sovereignty among them, I feel to stay outside." These things give great occasion for

the enemy to talk.

Think, brethren, where are we going? No doubt there is a falling away. Maybe the army is too large, and we boast more of our strength than we praise God. Are we in our closet asking God for peace, or on the house tops crying for war? Surely the words of Paul are coming upon us. Men of our own selves have arisen, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. Have we forgotten that the eyes of the Lord is upon us, and his grace teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously in this present world; looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith? His word is sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the hearts.

It is a known fact that life preceeds action, both naturally and spiritually. And it is the truth that except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. His grace is sufficient and his love everlasting. Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear. We love Him because he first loved us, and He has taught us how to behave in the house of God.

Now, brethren, I beseech you, suffer a word of exhortation from one who has stood on the walls of Zion, preaching Christ and Him crucified; with my mind serving the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin, knowing that in me (the flesh) dwelleth no good thing. To me it has been a serious task that the Lord has laid upon me. I have experienced many ups and downs, having my name cast out as evil among my own flesh and blood, - which I have forgiven, for they know not what they say. My greatest trial and heartache was among false brethren, those in whom we have had great confidence; those who have walked in the house of God in company, and took sweet counsel together; mine equal.

Oh Lord, what can I say? Can I say with Paul, that I have not shunned to declare the counsel of God? Have I taken heed unto myself, and unto all the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made me overseer, to feed the church of God which he has purchased with his own blood? Have I seen the enemy coming, and closed my eyes; or did I sound the alarm in God's holy mountain?

His eyes are over me, searching my innermost parts and causes me to feel, "Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel." It is my desire as a servant of the church, to have forbearance with my brethren, and as a servant of God, to preach the word, and cry aloud and spare not. It is my desire that my brethren follow me only so far as I follow Christ. I of myself can do nothing; and if there is any good in my writings, rest assured it is the product of the Spirit.

Brethren pray that I may be kept faithful for the short time allotted me in this world of sin and trials. The eyes of the Lord are upon us, and to him and him only do I give lasting praise.

(Elder) George L. Weaver

Weslaco, Texas
Aug. 25th, 1952

Dear Brethren;

Enclosed find Bro. W. J. Chambers' experience which I have typed for him. I believe it will be read in the dear Old Signs by his many friends and others, if you have space for same. If not Bro. Chambers wants you to just lay it aside and all will be well with him for he is a very humble brother and does not want to crowd out better matter.

I remain a sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

E. B. Ault

EXPERIENCE OF W. J. CHAMBERS

Rt. 2, Box 23
Weslaco, Texas

This is what I hope the Lord has done for me while I was busy at work in the field. The Lord showed me what

a great sinner I was and showed me that I was lost. Every thing I had ever done came before my eyes, I broke in tears and asked the Lord to show me what to do to be saved.

I read the Bible and everything I read condemned me. I would go down to the branch and get down on my knees and try to pray. All I could say was Lord forgive me a sinner. I promised the Lord I would do better, but I would do worse. I kept trying to pray that the Lord would have mercy, but I kept breaking my promises; then my troubles would get worse and I could not rest day or night. I went on this way for about six months and decided I had sinned my chance away. My wife would ask me what was the matter with me but I would tell her nothing, but she knew that there was something wrong. One night after I had gone to bed I told her that I was going to die before morning, she said she could not see anything wrong with me.

I finally went to sleep begging the Lord to forgive me. The next morning when I got up and dressed and stepped out the door before I thought of my troubles, and they were all gone. It was just before sunrise and everything looked bright even the leaves on the trees seemed to be praising God. The birds were singing and praising God, it was all I could do to keep from praising God out loud.

I went on and fed the stock and planned to tell my wife when I got back to the house, but as I went back, I decided to wait until I got to my Dad's, as we intended to spend the day with them that day; and as we walked along down there, the thought struck me that I may be mistaken and deceived and if I was I might deceive them all if I told it, so I did not tell it. I began to go to hear the Primitive Baptist preach. I heard Bro. Joe Taylor and he told my experience in his preaching better than I could tell it. I did not know how he knew it as I lived ten miles from him.

As I was coming home from meeting one Sunday evening about sundown, riding along wondering where God came from, and I got in so much trouble I wondered and doubted if there was a God. I decided that there was nothing to my experience. But as I rode along, doubting, I looked towards the sun and I saw the brightest light I have ever seen. The sun was shining through a small tree top; it looked as if the tree was covered with ice and it was the prettiest sight I had ever seen. I have never doubted there being a God since that day, but I am in doubt about myself the most of the time. And I have been in the dark the most of my life, I only have a few moments at a time when I can praise the Lord. Most of my time I am in the dark and my troubles and trials are great. I fear that I will fall into the snares of the devil.

I know that the Lord has made a way for my escape many a time. I know that if it had not been for the protecting power of God I would have long ago fallen under the mighty hand of the devil. But he has protected me thus far and I hope he will watch over me the rest of my life.

I believe if the Lord has begun a work in me, he will perform until the day of Jesus Christ. I thought when I joined the church that my troubles were over, but I find that the longer I live the worse I get, and that brings on more trouble. I thought when I got old it would not be so easy to get in the flesh and have so many temptations, but I get worse the longer I live and have never been able to walk like I want to walk. I have missed the mark of a Christian so bad that I almost give up and say there is nothing in me that resembles Christ and my whole life has been a failure. I am now entering my 84th year, and when I go back over my life and come to the place where the Lord took my troubles away it gives me some consolation.

Oh wretched man that I am who can deliver me from this death, I am not

like others, I am so prone to do wrong and walking in forbidden paths. If I could live like my brethren I would be satisfied. These are only a few of my travels in this world. If I am saved it will be by God's mercy for I have never done anything good but I want to give God all the praise and honor, for my mind is most of the time on the things of this world. I have learned long ago that I can not control my mind, if it is ever on spiritual things it is God that caused it.

If my brethren could see me as I see myself, they would not fellowship me, but still I love them and desire to do God's will if I know what it is. I can only trust the Lord to watch over me and keep me in that straight and narrow road.

Now I want to tell some dreams and revelations that the Lord has shown me. I joined the Predestination Baptist Church at Willow Springs in Comanche County, Texas, in 1902.

Not long after I joined I dreamed that someone told me I had to go through a dark woodland, it was misting rain and the woodland was very thick with brush. I could not see my hand before my face but I started thinking that the brush was so thick that I could never get through, I went, it seemed like for a great distance, then I could see a a little light just like day was breaking. The further I went the lighter it got. I finally came to an old rail fence. I climbed over it and on the other side was the prettiest sunshine, there was a straight wall of darkness went up as high as I could see but on this side of the wall was a farm planted in melons with dead trees standing all over it, I cut several of the melons but they lacked some of being good ripe. Then I awoke.

Not long after this I dreamed some one told me to go down in a low place in the earth, it looked like a place where a cellar had been, but larger. There was a trail down to the bottom, I went down that narrow trail to the bottom and came out and there were snakes in the grass on both sides of the trail and I could see them stick out their tongues, but I did not get bit.

I have been down in the valley of darkness so long at times I would lose all hope of ever seeing the light any more. I went to sleep one night begging the Lord to show me in some way if I was one of His. When I awoke the next morning there was a form of a man standing at my bed pointing at me and saying, I am the way, the life and the truth, your cup runneth over, who can say you are not one of his little ones. This strengthened my faith for some time.

Recently when I was in the hospital I had a vision or dream (can not say if I was awake or asleep), I saw two men sitting on top of two telegraph poles, then one of them began to climb a tree that had both green and dead branches and began to pull off the dead ones and piling them and then he set them afire. I could see the blaze and he looked at me and said he was burning out the chaff. Then they both disappeared and left me in the worst trouble that anyone could have suffered. I do not have words to describe the suffering I went through with. It seemed it was twenty four hours in my dream, and I suffered untold misery. I thought the Lord was gone forever. All this time I was praying for the Lord to forgive me for the way I had been doing. When the Lord came back I could feel his presence, it was the sweetest feeling I had ever felt.

I promised Him I would do his will from then on, if I knew what it was. I know what the Apostle meant when he said, "No chastening at the present seemeth to be joyous but grevious, but afterwards yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness." This I would not take anything for. When I was put in the State institution I felt like all my kinfolks and friends had forsaken me, but since my release I have a good home with one of my sons and a home with

the Mt. Zion church, all of which I hope to be thankful to my Creator for. Yes a friend that sticketh closer than a brother, one that shed his precious blood, I hope for me.

I remain a poor sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

W. J. Chambers

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS

We are living in an evil age and a terribly disrupted world. Wars and rumors of more wars. Bloodshed and all manner of debauchery, graft and corruption is being practiced on every hand from our highest public officials and down to men and women of low rank. Truly it was foretold in the Scripture, "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse deceiving and being deceived." And again, "Now the spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter day perilous times shall come." One need not be a sage to see the development of these divine prophesies.

Recently the doctrine of God's absolute predestination has been assailed. And having a faint hope that God has placed me as a watchman upon the walls of Zion I feel it my duty to at least sound a warning and to offer what defense God will enable me to render. I feel it is no small matter when God's wisdom and power are assailed, for these are some of the very attributes of God. His very name, "God Almighty", implies there is no power but of God. And I find this agreeable to scripture testimony, to wit; "There is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God." I can find no exception to this divine expression. Therefore the influence of these powers, whether it be for good or evil, is irrefutable, — they are ordained of God. But though evil is everywhere extant there is no danger that it will ever get beyond the control of God who ordained it. These ordained powers are limited while the power of God knows no limit.

Thus, he has ordained that "the wrath of man shall praise him and the remainder of wrath thou shalt restrain." Just why one should doubt or deny the absolute government of God is beyond me. Indeed, one cannot deny this without acknowledging another power somewhere that controls that part which is not controlled of God; or else to say a certain part just goes at random, which, of course, would be the height of absurdity; or to say God has a superior rival. I would say SUPERIOR rival from the fact there is a great deal more wickedness extant in the world than there is good. Therefore this fancied power, whatever or wherever it may be has great superiority over God Almighty. This idea is no less absurd than the other and it is easily defeated by a thus saith the Lord. "I am God, and besides me there is none else, I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done saying my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." "Yea, thou art worthy, oh Lord to receive glory and honor and power for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they ARE and were created."

Who would dare make the claim that these things, or any of these which ARE and which were created for his pleasure should react to the contrary. Satan, the serpent is a conspicuous element in God's creation. God endowed him with a power and subtility such as none of the beasts of the field possessed. He was ordained to perform his work which none other could perform and all of his devilish work from Eden down through the ages responded to the eternal purpose for which he was created. Through his influence man sinned, but consider well. Was this a sign of laxity in the government of God; was it the part of wisdom or lack of wisdom on the part of God when he placed these elements all in the garden of Eden; did the serpent sneak in unawares of God; Was God disappointed

in the outcome of this venture? If so, then we must yield the point and confess that God is not absolute; we must confess that matters began to go awry right from the start and that God has created a something that he could not control.

Such a conclusion is worse than folly. God is absolute. His purposes are laid deep in divine wisdom. The devil and all his creation cannot thwart him in one of his purposes. He created the devil, and he created man and made him susceptable to the wiles of the devil, that in the end Jesus should be glorified in saving his people from their sins. To say that man, or Adam was made able to stand but liable to fall would be equal in substance that God willed that he should stand but the devil overruled him in that purpose. Why did the law enter? Does this betray a lack of foresight in God? Was it not that the offense might abound? And why should the offense abound only for the paving the way for the operation of soveriegn grace. It is written, "The law entered that the offense might abound but where sin abounded grace did much more abound." It is therefore quite evident that God had a purpose even in the entrance of sin into the world. How could Jesus have been glorified otherwise?

One might inquire, why did God create an evil nation. Was it not that his power over evil should be made manifest? His decree to Abraham was that his seed should serve an evil nation 400 years. Their bondage was timed, I should dare say to the very moment when they should be liberated. Was this predestination? What power but that of God was at the controls in this affair? It was no accident that the seed of Abraham came down to this evil nation; for, inasmuch as God had decreed it, everything else must of necessity work in harmony with that decree. It necessitated suffering on the part of Israel to bring them to this evil nation but their deliverance was also predestinated just as surely as their bondage. The arrangement for their sustenance while they were there was also fixed and this involved suffering on the part of Joseph. It was not a voluntary act of Joseph that he dreamed dreams that caused his brethren to hate him. But as brilliant type of Jesus they hated him without a cause. They abused him and they meant it for evil but God meant it for good. Why did God harden Pharaoh's heart repeatedly and effect his final destruction in the Red Sea? God, himself gives the answer; "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up that I might show my power in thee and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." Israel could not come forth until their bondage was complete. They were a long time in bondage but God is not slack concerning his promise; 400 years and after that they shall come out with great substance. "To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven."

Why did not David allow his servant to slay Shimei as he cast stones at David and cursed him as he went along? David said let him alone, God hath commanded him to curse. Should one question the justice of God in this and similar acts. God is absolute. His decree and his government, his predestination and, indeed, all the attributes of God are absolute. He governs the movements of all his creatures yet he himself is above reproach. All creation is his and he holds the undisputed right to use his creatures and dispose of them in any way as it may seem good unto him.

Why should anyone heap this indignity on his pure and holy name by saying, "If you say that God predestinated the evil acts of men you make him the author of sin." Since God is under no law, by what law can he be judged and tried? By the law of man, of course. But this verdict will not stand in the court of divine justice. He has declared, "I am the Lord, that is my

name and I will not give my glory to another neither my praise to graven images." God has reserved unto himself the right to do his will and this he doeth "in the armies of heaven and amongst the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay his hand or say unto him, what doest thou." "Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor." "What if God willing to show his wrath and make his power known endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he hath afore prepared unto glory." What if God does this? Must his divine wisdom suffer impeachment in the laws of puny man? It cannot be questioned but what God could have softened the heart of Pharoah just as well as to have hardened it if that had been agreeable to his will. But it pleased him to harden his heart because his decree must be fulfilled. Some will say God is unjust if he has not given everyone an equal chance to be saved. But the Scripture answers this contention, "Nay but oh man, Who art thou that thou repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" God has declared, "I will have mercy on him whom I will have mercy and whom I will I hardeneth."

Does this make God the author of sin? The deeds of a man do not make him either good or bad but they reveal the true character of the man. His deeds are commensurate with his nature whether they be good or evil. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Jacob and Esau, which is Israel and Edom, God loved and hated respectively before they were born. Thus it cannot be established that their works were a factor in shaping their final destiny. Their destinies were sealed before they were born, neither having done any good or evil that the purpose of God according to election might stand. It was said unto her, "The elder shall serve the younger." The purpose of God in this as in all cases is preeminant. No power but of God was employed in shaping this allegory. So may I repeat, Their works are merely commensurate with the nature God has given them.

Now to the climax of the whole story culminating in the tragic crucifixion of our Lord. God has said, "Awake oh sword against my shepherd. Against the man that is my fellow. Smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered and I will turn my hand upon the little ones." The wicked are designated as his sword. Hence the wicked come and go at his command and are made just as subservient to the will of God as the weakest saint. So in response to this divine command, wicked men led Jesus as a lamb to the slaughter. Hence, it is recorded; "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." And again, "For as a truth against thy holy child Jesus whom thou hast annointed both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles with the people of Israel were gathered together for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." They could do no more and they could do no less; for in the words of Jesus, "How could the Scripture be fulfilled, that thus it must be."

Thus we see a glorious triumph for the complete Absolute Predestination of God. Overruling the powers of darkness to his own glory and the ultimate salvation of all his elect people. Jesus died but it was not possible that he should be holden of death. He is risen from the dead, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil and deliver them who through the fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." He thus addressed his elect saying, "I am he that was dead but behold I am alive forevermore and because I

live ye shall live also." So to the wicked all down the line it may be said as it was said to Pharioah; "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up that I might show my power in thee and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth."

Christ crucified is our theme. Nothing but the blood of Jesus can do helpless sinners any good.

I have by no means exhausted the great array of testimony relating to the Absolute Predestination of *all* things, but this may suffice for the time being. Thanks be unto God "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

(Elder) L. L. Schenck
Williamstown, Kansas

The following article by Bro. A. D. Alston was sent to us for publication by Sister Sarah McPhail, of Canada.
Editors

"EVEN SO, FATHER, FOR SO IT SEEMED GOOD IN THY SIGHT

"In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." (Luke 10:21). Reading the context in both Luke and Matthew, we see that Jesus had gone out teaching the gospel and condemning the evils of the people. He had"appointed other seventy also and sent them two by two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come." He empowered them with His Spirit, and they "returned with joy, saying Lord, even the devils are subject to us through thy name."

Jesus had given them power to "tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy" and then He tells them "rejoice not that the spirits are subject to you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." Rejoice not in this, but rather rejoice because Jehovah God hath seen fit to choose you, and qualify you and deem you fit to go forth in his Name to teach His truth, and finally to inherit the Kingdom."

On this occasion the disciples were rejoicing and rather glorying in the possession of the power of their Jesus, and Jesus was, in a manner, teaching and admonishing them to look deeper and to glory not because the spirits were subject to them, but rather because the Lord of mercy and love, had chosen them out of the world to inherit the Kingdom. He is, as it were, telling them that all shall not be pleasant; all shall not be in the form of rejoicing, but rather they go forth as lambs among wolves, and in many cases shall be spitefully used; they go forth as beggars without script or purse; and as they tread on the serpents and scorpions they shall be bitten and hurt and wounded, but not unto death.

Then at this time, Jesus seemed to rejoice exceedingly in spirit, and turned His head unto the Father and cried, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Amen, Father, I pay my praise to thy Name for doing so. I thank thee, O Father, for this very thing, blessings out of trials, true wisdom out of Christian exercises, sweetness from the horm of salvation!

Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. Even so, even in this exact and particular manner, even precisely this, as it is before us and has come unto us; for so, for in this exact and precise and predestinated thing, it seemed good in thy sight! The words "even so" seem to express an obedience and a reconciliation and a submissive willingness to accept the whole will of the Father in the matter. It is to say Thy will, O Father be done in all that seemeth good unto thee. Then the words "for so" seem to say: For

in this exact, set and particular manner, for under precisely these conditions and circumstances hath it seemed good in thy sight.

There is no change in the least that could be made. Just so, and in no other manner, hath it seemed good in thy sight. This particular affliction, or burden or trial, or blessing of whatsoever we have, and in whatsoever manner we have it and under whatsoever conditions it comes to us — even so it seemed pleasing and as Thou wouldst have it. It is easy to accept the expression when we are passing and receiving a blessing, but it is just as true when we are receiving our greatest trial or affliction, or when we lie in the depth of the pit. Can we say and feel this truth when in the bottom of the pit?

Can we go under a great trial, can we face what seems impossible for us to bear and still say with sure trust and faith: Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight? Can or could I go into the thickest of the battle, could I face death, naturally or spiritually, could we be burned at the stake, and still in faithfulness, and trusting His perfect and complete wisdom say: Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight? Could we face death and know and declare the justice of God in the matter? If he condemns my soul to hell, His righteous will proves it well. Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him!

Could Stephen say it when he was being stoned to death? "Lord lay not this sin to their charge", they know not what they do. Could Paul say in the depth of darkness in the inner chamber of the prison, bound in chains head and foot? Even when many stripes had been laid upon him? "At midnight, Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God". Jonah under the deep waves, declared that salvation is of the Lord. Did not our Lord and Saviour declare it when He hung upon the tree between earth and heaven, as if men had declared Him fit for neither? "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do". At the mount of Olives He cried "Father, if thou be willing remove this cup from me, nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done"! In every case, the will of the Father, be done. In every case, Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.

Then may we look upon our little afflictions, and our little burdens and testings of faith with these words on our lips. It is to pray: Thy will Father, be done in the matter! It is to faithfully trust in His mercies and His salvation; it is to "In all thy ways, acknowledge him" and his wisdom and his omnicience. O Lord, thou knoweth the way that I take, I do not know anything of that which is to come to me, but thou knoweth, and even this thing now before me, even so hath it seemed good in thy sight.

Every time we begin to complain at an affliction or burden or trial, our little faith speaks from behind us, saying: This is the way, walk ye in it; this is the Lord's way, trust in it; even this very thing, even precisely as it is, even so it seemed good in His sight. Yes, it requires God given faith to say those words indeed and in truth; but Oh may we have it in time of need, God given faith sufficient for each trial as it comes to us! And we feel that He will grant sufficient faith, for He has promised it. He told Peter, "But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not—". Then can we think for a moment that Peter's faith could possibly fail? Ever fail, regardless of how many times Peter denied? Regardless of whatsoever Peter did or did not do, his faith could never fail in the end, for the Saviour had promised that it fail not.

Jesus prayed the Father that every one of the little ones be kept from the evil while in this world. Then shall evil ever lay hold upon us for eternity? Shall we ever be left to go all the way to Jericho, or be allowed to dwell there after we have been given a dwelling

place in Jerusalem? Oh no, our Saviour will send the thieves and robbers and stop us on the way, and send the good Samaritan to pour in the oil and the wine and to bind up the wounds and carry us again to the inn, with all debts paid in full!! God given faith will never fail, but we have this treasure in an earthen vessel (that all honor and praise may be His) and we flinch and draw back, and we cry and we would run away when we see the rod and the lash.

It is through Christian exercises of faith under burdens that we learn of Him and of His salvation and that we are brought into sweet fellowship with His sufferings and even into fellowship with His crucifixion. Truly it is that very suffering unto death, that crucifixion in which we have a hope of life.

The blessings and the burdens the joys and the sorrows of one in the flock has its counterpart in the hearts of others. "Blest be the tie that binds Our hearts in Christian love. We share our mutual woes; Our mutual burdens bear; and often for each other flows The sympathizing tear." Is it not because we are not in love, one in faith and hope, one in the church, one with the brethren, and we humbly hope, one with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? I feel that all our burdens are in His heart, and that He is shedding the penitential tear when he looks down upon His little ones in love and mercy and compassion and pity and says: "O My dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely."

I feel that infinite love is expressed when He speaks to His church and says: "Come my beloved, let us go forth into the field-" etc. Oh what an endearing term he uses. And He says "let us" go together; that is He is drawing the the church unto Him as a bride and as one with Him. His yoke is light and His burden is easy because He is the Yokefellow and He bears the burdens with His people. And are there not pangs in your very heart for His sufferings, for the sins that you laid upon his body?

Is there not within your soul a Godly sorrow for your sins that are so hateful in His sight? Do you not hate your own self and all of the vileness and sins within yourself for His sake? Oh my brother, this is the feeling of the fellowship with the Saviour and with his sufferings. If we have not these things, if we have no inward pangs and wounds and sufferings, and Godly sorrow for our vileness and filth, then, I fear, we have no fellowship with Him.

Dear Brother my words fail me; I cannot express it as I would; I cannot praise His glorious name as I would. If I had a thousand tongues I could not tell it; if I had ten thousand thousands of hearts I could not praise Him as I ought. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. Oh Lord, may we not complain or reply against thee. We shall not be spared our burdens and trials and afflictions in this life. He looks down in love upon His little ones as they are for a moment under trial, as if to say: This is necessary for thy own good.

I know thy hurts and thy pangs, but persevere and endure faithfully unto the end, even as I endured unto death for thy life. It is all right and proper and suitable in every sense, it has been looked upon by the Father, and even so, even precisely as it is, it seemed good in His sight! It will not take thy life, but will consume thy chaff, and purify thee as pure gold, suitable for the streets of New Jerusalem, the habitation of Jehovah God.

O Lord, my Saviour stood without a cry or complaint; He bore the burden even unto death, He said, "Thy will, not mine, be done" and drank the cup of bitterness that we might live. Oh that I could walk in His footsteps. Yet I tremble and shake from head to foot to even speak the words. Realizing that

in my finiteness I could not stand for a moment in His tracks.

Oh dear little ones, who is willing to suffer as He suffered, and thus be brought to stand in His tracks? O Lord, may our faith be sufficient unto the trial. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight".

A. D. Alston
6 March 1951

CIRCULAR LETTER
(written by:—
Sister Mary Louisa Hellings)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Southampton Old School Baptist Church of Southampton, Bucks Co. Pa., sendeth greetings and Christian love in the Lord to the Associations and Churches with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:-

As it has been our custom, we address you with a circular letter. We would not have the courage to write, knowing our limitations and imperfections as we do, except for this thought: no one can reach unto the heights, nor into the depths of the mysteries of the wisdom and knowledge of God, unless it be revealed by the Holy Spirit to know Him and the power of His word.

So in the strength of this knowledge, we desire to bring to your attention some thoughts on godly wisdom.

When we felt ourselves to be poor convicted sinners, we realized our need for help and wisdom. We received our first knowledge of the truth, and felt the need of prayer. In the 90th Psalm, 12th verse we quote a prayer of Moses: "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." Moses' prayer has really been every poor, convicted sinner's prayer down through the ages. Moses being a man of God prayed for godly wisdom. He knew, as we do, that of ourselves we have no more of godly wisdom than the earth, or the moon in themselves have of light. And just as we know something else is needed to give the earth and moon light, just as certain we know some power is needed whereby we may be able to apply our hearts unto wisdom.

It is most comforting to note Moses did not pray wisdom be given, but to be taught to so number their days, that they could apply their hearts unto wisdom. Little by little through life's teachings their experiences would give them some knowledge and understanding of godly wisdom. Moses felt the need of it, and we are in just as great a need of being taught today. It is a continuous prayer, because we experience many trials, each one seeming to be different. But how sweet is the realization that Jesus is the wisdom we pray to know, in God his Father!

Solomon dwelt considerably upon the benefits of wisdom. In the 7th verse of the 4th chapter of Proverbs he said: "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting get understanding." In many ways we need this virtue. If we do not have it, we can be of little comfort, or help, to the church. Nor can we feast upon spiritual things for our own comfort. Furthermore, if we cannot attain unto some things of divine wisdom, we cannot experience any soul growth.

When Solomon succeeded his father to the throne of Israel, his first prayer to God was for wisdom. In his position it would seem he desired greater fame or power, but it was divine wisdom which so directed his prayers that he might rule more wisely over Israel. It is marvelous how God gives every subject of grace a special gift. By His divine wisdom and foreknowledge He knew this would be needful, if every lamb in the fold was to be fed.

Perhaps no other word has such com-

plex meaning to the child of God. In our everyday living we could acquire considerable knowledge on various subjects through learning, and yet not be wise. So we see that knowing about various things in life means nothing if we have not the ability to apply our learning so that both knowledge and understanding serve us.

If worldly wisdom is complex, how much more so is godly wisdom! With us, at best, our foresight does not serve us too well. We can but hope and pray to walk by faith, and to be kept in the way of the righteous. For by faith we know God chose his people in Christ before the foundation of the world. He foresaw every need for all the heirs of glory, and made provision in His son for them. Yet in our journey here on earth we are hedged about on every side. We need to be assured again and again. It is well that this is so. It is well that we cannot by our own searching and learning attain unto God, for it makes it needful for us to pray. Otherwise we would become boastful and unprofitable in the Church. How much better is God's way. It places all of us on the same level, and if we are heirs, then we are all equally subjects of grace.

Much of the inspiration for this circular letter came to us in our rose garden, for there grows a rose unlike any other rose. From old English writers we learn the origin of this rose is wrapped in obscurity. But in the more recent cataloguing of roses it is listed among the Mosses. Although it is not a true Moss, the calyx is so remarkably fringed and frilled that it cannot be assigned to any other class, so we know it as the "Crested Moss".

Once long ago this rose grew and budded and bloomed within a garden wall, and it continued to grow and bloom long after the wall had fallen to ruin. Yet in between that space of time it grew untended, until one spring it reached a crevice in the wall through which the warm south winds blew and beams of sunlight shone. Encouraged thus by the refreshing dews, the warm winds and sun, it stretched forth its budding branches through the crevice-length, and unfolded the beauty of its blooms on the other side.

Now, each three-cornered crested bud when seen all moss fringed in the morning light is both a crown and a glory, which unfolds into a bloom of rich rose-hues of dawn, and glorified with a heavenly fragrance. No other rose has the grace and charm of the Crested Moss.

How wonderfully we thought the life of this rose portrays the life of every child of God. Not only in its early life that had been hidden from our learning but in the grace of its blooms, and in the branches which turn in every direction in their desire to catch the light of the morning sun, that the glory of its flowers might be lifted up and spread a heavenly fragrance over the garden kingdom. . . . Just as it did in those days long ago when it bloomed within a sheltered garden not seen by the world. Just as it did in those days when it reached the crevice-length in the ruined wall and unfolded its beauty on the other side.

When the calyx of this rose opens outward to show the expanding bloom within, our thoughts dwelt upon the words in the 45th chapter of Isaiah: "I will open the two-leaved gates. I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places." This two-fold type reveals to our understanding the judgment of God opening outward to the penitent sinner and inward to salvation. And when we think of the budding branches of this rose being unable to hold themselves up, we see our inability to stand alone, and pray we may be kept by the wisdom and power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

May God in His goodness and mercy so direct us, that it will be for our

righteousness and His Glory, is our prayer for Christ's sake.

Elder George Ruston, Moderator
Deacon Casper G. Fetter, Clerk

Lexington, Ky.

Signs of the Times:

Dear Elders you will find enclosed remittance for the Signs for another year. I enjoy it more each issue, as there is so much pleasure in reading the good letters. They seem to bring us closer together and make us stronger in our belief.

I have had the Signs in my home since a child. May it continue always to have the good reading and be the same dear Signs as it is and has been in the past.

May the Lord be with and bless the Editors and writers is my prayer.

A sister in Christ,
Mrs. Delphia Black

* * * * *

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association now in session with the Southampton Church, June 4th and 5th 1952, sends greetings to sister Associations and Meetings with which we correspond:-

Dear Brethren:-

Another time we have been blessed by our Heavenly Father to meet together and enjoy the wonderful food brought us by the Ministering Brethren. To sit together and feast upon these morsels ; to mingle with one another and to feel the love and fellowship shown in the warm hand-clasp, is a privilege not to be compared with.

To have a meeting with all of these great privileges makes us feel very humble and very unworthy and yet makes us feel to say as the Psalmist did, "Bless the Lord O my soul and all that is within me, Bless his Holy Name."

We feel we cannot be thankful enough for the brethren coming so far to be with us, not only at our Association but all during the year.

We hope and trust it will be the will of our Heavenly Father to bless us to meet you all again next year.

Written in a blessed hope of eternal life.

Elder George Ruston, Moderator
Casper G. Fetter, Clerk

McDowell, Ky.

Signs of the Times
Dear Editors
I am sending check for renewal of my subscription.

Here are a few verses which came into my mind, which you may publish if you see anything good in them.

Oh, rugged Cross! Oh, bloody Tree!
Wherewith He wrought his works in me;
A finished work that wove my dress
Of his imputed righteousness.

Now I am holy and most free,
Through the red blood of Calvary:
No other hope I have but Christ,
My risen Lord and Sacrifice.

Deepest wisdom! Uttermost love!
Which gave me Christ the Lord above.
Saving mercy! His freest grace!
Which gave my soul this hiding place.

Yours in a victorious Saviour,
Milford Hall (Sinner redeemed)

2627 N. Tulare Street
Bakersfield, California
September 9, 1952

Dear Sister Baker:

Just a line to wish you and yours well and let you know we are well. We were glad to hear from you dear ones, and glad to hear Elder Byrd was improving. May it be God's holy will to restore him to normal health. We miss his loving presence so much. If he is still there, tell him that on last Sunday, our regular time of meeting here, with the help of Hopewell church and Seclusia church, Elder Robinson, Elder Bynum and Elder Jefferson, we were blessed to organize a church here at Bakersfield. Tell him that Brother Snider 93 years old, and two of his daughters, Clara and Etta, were baptized. Sister Snider and Sister Bertha Wright joined by relation, making five of the Snider family that are members. And we are looking for two more of the children to join soon.

We have a bright prospect of a strong church here in membership in the near future. Elder Jefferson wanted us to name it Little Flock and that name just suited everyone. The address is Route 7, Bakersfield on the Jenkins Road. For information, write Mrs.

Bertha Wright the church clerk, at 108 Circle Drive, Bakersfield, California or to me at the address at the head of this letter. We want to extend a hearty welcome to all lovers of the truths of our God to visit us. Our time of meeting is the first Sunday and Saturday evening before in each month.

Any time you dear people can, we want you to visit us. We do feel so unworthy of such great blessings but on this occasion the fatted calf was killed and a heavenly feast was made ready and the windows of Heaven were opened to us and all we had to do was look and rejoice and feast off the drippings from the holy sanctuary of our eternal God. It was as wonderful a meeting as any of us ever enjoyed. It makes us say our God is a wonderful God and is ruling and reigning in all things. And our High Priest is yet very much alive for we heard the gospel bell on the borders of His garment the spotless robe of righteousness that He wrought out on the cross of Calvary. He is alive forevermore and because He lives we shall live also. May the love of God together with the comforts and communion of His righteous spirit rest and remain in with His little people the world over is our prayer.

Give our love and best wishes to all. Tell Elder Byrd we all wish him speedy recovery if its God's will. Write us how everything is and remember us in your prayers.

Yours in a blessed hope,
L. L. Wilson

Houston 20, Texas
Sept. 9, 1952.

Dear Editors:

The enclosed is written at the request of this dear old brother (Elder Beene) and he desires that all information contained therein be printed in the dear old Signs, as he has traveled in many states of our nation and would like for the ones of his acquaintance, who read the Signs, to see a little of the history of his life in the ministry.

Our little church of Shepherd Fold enjoyed having the Pleasant Valley Association meet with us on September 5, 6, and 7th, which association is comprised of four churches. We had a wonderful meeting and several other churches of like faith and order were represented. We desire in our weak way to give God thanks and praise for the outpouring of His blessed and Holy Spirit.

A sister in hope, if one at all,
Mrs. Irene Wisenbaker

ELDER W. O. BEENE CELEBRATES EIGHTY-SEVENTH BIRTHDAY

Elder W. O. Beene, of Houston, Texas celebrated his eighty-seventh birthday anniversary of July 3, 1952, on Sunday before at Shepherd Fold church where he is Pastor. The church is located on Little York Road, between Humble and Airline Highways, and is Primitive Baptist of Predestinarian faith and order. After preaching by Elder Beene, dinner was served.

His wife, Lethia, a devoted companion and member of the church, and seven of his children were present. Also several grand-children. The children present were: Mr. and Mrs. A. O. Beene, and three children; Mr. R. R. Beene and son; Mrs. Ida Howard and daughter; Mrs. A. A. Baty and three children; Mr. and Mrs. T. Rickard and son; Mr. and Mrs. O. A. Sparkman and son, all of Houston, Texas; and Mr. W. R. Beene, of Palestine, Texas.

Four other children were absent, being unable to be with their father on the occasion: D. F. Beene, Percilla; J. L. Beene, of California; Staff Sergeant Walter N. Beene, USAF, now in Korea; and a daughter, Sergeant Bobbie Beene, USMC, Washington, D. C.

Elder Beene has been pastor of Shepherd Fold Church since it's organization in 1947, and has been an ordained minister since 1926, and a member of the church since 1897. He was born the first year after the Civil War, in Mississippi, and came to Texas at the age of nineteen. He was ordained at Salem Church, Freestone County, November 27, 1926. The Presbytery was composed of Elders J. J. Brooks, P. E. Weisinger, and Deacon J. D. Bynum, of Shiloh Church, Houston County, and Deacon W. A. Barrett, of Salem Church, Freestone County.

Elder Beene and wife reside at 1005 Vincent Street, in Houston. Dear Sister Beene is in ill health and not able to attend meetings regularly. She is patient and kind, and altogether lovable as a wife, mother and Christian friend. Elder Beene is a grand old Soldier of the Cross and a standard bearer of the good old doctrine which we hope we love. Their home is a welcome place and is open to all Old School Baptists and friends.

Mrs. Irene Wisenbaker

Hiawatha, Kansas.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I see my subscription is due, and I want to send in for the dear old Signs for another two years.

I love to read the many good letters of God's dear children scattered here and there. When I have read them, I pass them on to my sister who enjoys them as much as I. May God bless you to continue the good work.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. Lillie Fridell

PASSING OF BROTHER A. D. ALSTON

Brother A. D. Alston, who was a patient at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, for over two months, died September 22nd. The obituary will appear as soon as it prepared.

EDITORIALS

Danville, Va. November, 1952

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THE SAMARITAN

We have been asked what we understand is taught in the parable of the Samaritan and are glad to give such views as we have.

In this connection, we remember a paragraph in an Editorial by Elder Chick in the Signs of August 15, 1887 which reads as follows: "Almost all the discourses of our Saviour grew out of certain circumstances which had occurred, or were replies to things said or done by others; and if we would at any time know the real drift and bearing of his words, we must know the circumstances and ascertain the thoughts, ideas and words of those to whom he spoke. This is the only safe way of interpreting anybody's words; and it is very manifest that the same words spoken under different circumstances may bear a great diversity of meaning. In the words of Jesus under consideration it is therefore needful that we know the occasion of their utterance, and to whom they were spoken."

Elder Chick here expressed our own thoughts on these matters so well that we feel to quote him; and, although he was not writing on our subject, what he said is so very true that we would do well to heed these particulars whenever we are considering any portion of the Scriptures. How true it is that a jewel of gold in a swine's snout is out of place, for it's beauty and value is utilized only when it is properly set. (see Prov. 11:22)

A careful reading of Luke 10:21-37, is necessary for an understanding of the circumstances which gave occasion for the utterance of the parable of the Samaritan; and it would be impossible to understand the parable if we should fail to note two things especially. First, that the parable was addressed to the Lawyer; and second, the concluding remark by the Saviour: "Go, and do thou likewise." It was not addressed to the disciples; and the conclusion, though simply stated, no doubt stopped the mouth of the gainsayer.

Several important matters are disclosed in the parable, chiefly the contrast between the actions of the priest and Levite, on one hand, and the Samaritan, on the other. But it is noted that this difference is directed to the lawyer and, of course, to those whom he represents.

Jesus was talking to his disciples concerning many wonderful and glorious things which they were blessed to see and hear, which prophets and kings in other ages had not seen, though they desired them. Then the lawyer, who no doubt had heard him talking, "stood up" to tempt or provoke him, and asked, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

It was so characteristic of the lawyer and his kind, in their feelings and deportment, to stand above and apart from those who believed in and followed Jesus, for they knew nothing of the

need of grace and redemption. Being a son of Abraham and keeper of the law, as he thought, his conscience did not question his righteousness. Desiring, therefore, to tempt or entangle Jesus, he would boldly have Jesus know his position, and demanded to know what else was necessary; for, to him, Jesus was teaching a strange and ridiculous doctrine. Therefore, in the question, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life," we can almost hear him putting emphasis on "I", for he was so very complacent about it.

How easy it was for Jesus to be master of every situation. He simply asked the lawyer, "What is written in the law? How readest thou?" It was easy for the lawyer to reply to this since he was acquainted with the letter. He quoted, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." Then Jesus said, "Thou hast answered right; this do and thou shalt live."

Any difficulty in this answer of Jesus is resolved if we bear in mind that Jesus was, for the moment, taking a stand on the lawyer's own ground, allowing him to "dig his own pit" and unwarily to fall into it.

By this time the lawyer felt that he was doing quite well for himself in the conversation; so he continued by asking, "And who is my neighbor?" This was a further effort to tempt Jesus, and was his downfall, since it gave proof on the very face of the question that his religion lacked vitality, — an outward appearing with no inward marrow. If indeed and in truth he had loved the Lord his God with all his heart, soul, strength and mind, he would have likewise loved his neighbor as himself; for it is to be noted that the loving his neighbor as himself is connected with loving his God. The question need not, therefore, have been asked.

Though men may say, "These things have I kept from my youth up," there is a "One thing thou lackest." Jesus said on another occasion, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharasees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weighter matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not leave the others undone." How true it is, as said a poet, "Long, sanctimoneous faces oft hide hearts that are foul."

The purpose of the parable which followed was evidently to portray the difference between the fruits of a naturally religious man and the fruits of a spiritually religious man; that is, the fruits of one unregenerated and one regenerated. In all his teaching Jesus had declared the necessity of a change in heart, — a being born again. The change is within, and is acquired when a NEW COVENANT is made with the sinner; or rather, when it is manifested to the sinner that the new covenant is made with him, the laws thereof being written in his heart and put in his mind. This, and this alone, produces new "externals", as shown by new walk, new talk and new actions. The "externals" of an ascetic life, the pretensions of piety, evidenced by routine fastings and prayers, can never change the heart; yet these are the ways in which men would acquire righteousness, and are quite satisfied with this appeasing balm in their un-broken hearts.

When the priest and the Levite "passed by" the man half-dead, neither were moved with any degree of compassion. They no doubt saw his condition and his need, but had no "fellowship" for it. Without a doubt neither had ever been left for dead, or robbed, or wounded experimentally: nor felt the need of comforting ministrations of a fellow traveler. They probably felt they were glad they were not as this publican, as one did on another occasion; so they passed by. They were entirely self-centered, and strict in their deportment; they felt that if others would do as

they, others would not fall into divers straits as this man had. This seems to represent the feeling of carnal security; and self sufficiency to be righteous in the sight of God, which is inherent in all who have eyes and see not, ears and hear not, and hearts and understand not. These characters are vividly portrayed in the Gospels and in the Acts; they are as much among us today as they were then, for none can show forth the fruits of any spirit except that which they have; and these have only the spirit of man.

There comes another man upon the scene, however, whose spirit is entirely different. He shows it by his actions, though he was practically an "untouchable", being a Samaritan. There was an immediate response from his heart, and half-dead man's troubles became his troubles, his wounds became his wounds. A fellowship for the sufferings of the wounded one was quickly apparent, — was he not a sufferer, too. His understanding and feeling for his fellow took not just a mere form of well-wishing, but there was a giving of his all. Love, a heart felt love, prompts a laying down of our lives for our brethren. And we cannot but understand that this is what the Samaritan had. He is typical of all those who are brought to know themselves as they are in the sight of God, and who have felt and experienced the love and mercy of God shed abroad in their hearts, and a forgiveness of their sins. In this there springs up a real loving of the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, soul, strength and mind, and our neighbors as ourselves. We do not have to inquire "who is our neighbor." There is an attraction of kindred spirits to each other, and a going forth of love and fellowship, so that there is not only a rejoicing with those who rejoice, but a weeping with those who weep, and a mourning with those who mourn. The poet wrote:

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love:
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

Before our Father's throne
We pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
Our comforts and our cares.

We share our mutual woes;
Our mutual burdens bear:
And often for each others flows
The sympathizing tear."

When this so great a contrast was shown the lawyer in the parable, he could but say that the neighbor was was the one who showed mercy. Then Jesus said, "Go, and do thou likewise." We see in this a plain and severe rebuke to the lawyer, just as he had rebuked others of his kind on other occasions for their pretensions of religious zeal and piety. It was the same as saying to him, if your religion were not vain, you would show the fruits of it as the Samaritan did.

It is not difficult to see that this stopped the questioning of Jesus by the lawyer, for the rebuke was so pointed that he probably was glad to end the conversation.

From the above we will be understood to see in this parable a showing of the works of the flesh and the extent or limit of those who are working under the law for righteousness, as it is contrasted with the fruits manifested by those who, by grace, are delivered from the futility of self righteousness into the righteousness which is imputed. This is the difference between law and grace; between those who are dead and those who are quickened. The actions of the priest and Levite show the very best which may be found in anyone yet under the bondage of the law of sin and death; while the Samaritan shows the fruits of the Spirit in those quickened ones who have the love of God in them, which fruits are manifest in the love and compassion one toward another.

The half-dead one represents any with whom we come in contact in our journey of life who is in need of succor, whether a word of comfort to a troubled soul, or assistance in the necessities of life. Jesus is, of course, the true neighbor, for he came to minister and not to be ministered unto; but his brethren who walk in the Spirit, through grace follow in his footsteps.

Are we not all concerned often as to whether we too are but mere pretenders, seeing that we walk in the flesh much of the time. But what a blessing it is to know the difference and to feel so condemned for our carnality. Do we not oftimes examine ourselves whether we be in the faith, and seek at the throne grace and wisdom that we may walk worthy of our profession in quietness, meekness and humbleness? If we think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think, and esteem any of our brethren less; if we shut up the bowels of our compassion and with covetousness seek our own rather than our brother's welfare; if we are right and everybody else is wrong, and we would rather have our own way than to see the brethren at peace; or if we are fault finders and busy-bodies, then we are walking in the flesh and shall of these things reap corruption. But, if we are blessed to remember that it is by grace that we are saved, and that we have nothing but what is given us of the Lord, and have nothing to boast of ourselves; and feel the love flowing out to the brethren which makes us esteem them far better than ourselves, and feel that we could not live without them, but must have some humble place among them, then we are "clothed in our right mind". This is the fruit of the Spirit.

That brother who is greatly concerned whether he is a deceiver, and is afraid he will do or say something to offend, proves by his very anxiety that he is not a deciever. As long as he is thus afraid, he will not cause trouble.

J. D. W.

Stem, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I am sending a three dollar money order to pay for the Signs of the Times. You will never know how much I appreciate it being sent to me the past year without cost. I don't feel worthy to get it without paying for it. I have been blessed to work some, and am sending the money for it another year.

I enjoy reading the Signs so much, and especially the experiences of those whom I think are the Lord's people. If I could tell what others do, I would feel so much better; but I can't get any more than is given me. Sometimes I think I will just give up, but I didn't take it up myself and I can't lay it down. I just have to travel on as I am led. I love you people and have had a mind to be with you for fourteen years, but something keeps me back. If all knew me as I know myself, I am afraid you wouldn't have any confidence in me, for I am afraid my sins have not been forgiven.

I hear others tell about such great rejoicing and deliverance, but it has been but a few minutes in my life I have felt peace. I wish I could explain how I feel, but I can't; and I am afraid I am deceived in it all, except I feel like I know I love the Lord's people, and the doctrine they preach.

I hope you and your wife are well. Remember me in your prayers.

A friend,

Mrs. Lester Blalock

Talbotville, Ontario

Elder D. V. Spangler,

Dear Brother:

At this time of year it comes time for me to send in my renewal of the Signs; also for John Olde, R R No. 4, Glencoe, Ontario. Please find enclosed money order for six dollars.

There has just come to my hand the Articles of faith approved by the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, dated February 1, 1873. One of the Articles reads, "We believe therefore, that this very child as afore testified is both God and Man; the Christ of the Living God." Agreeing whole heartedly with this, as well as the rest, my mind was turned, like the Queen of Sheba who came to Solomon, to see if the report be true. This led me to searching the Scriptures. Now Jesus said, "Search the Scripture, xxxxxx, and they are they which testify of me."

In the first Chapter of Luke, verses 26 to 35, we notice that Gabriel was sent from God to the city of Nazareth unto Mary, and said, "Fear not, Mary, for thou has found favor with God, and shall bring forth a son and shall call his name Jesus." (Note: Jesus was called the Prophet of Nazareth, and there were those who said, "Can any good come out of Naza-

reth.") We find in Genesis 2:15, a promise of the coming of the Son of Man. It reads, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman; and between thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel."

In going back to Abraham, who had the blessing of the most high God, we see Isaac, the child of faith and promise, was free born and is a type of Jesus, the Son of Man; in whom we see Jesus, as head of the everlasting Covenant, and the fulfillment of it, full of grace and mercy. It was said to Abraham, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." This seed is Christ, and, in direct line, is the seed of David.

The Word says that He (Jesus), took not on himself the nature of angels, but was made a little lower; that is, of the seed of Abraham. Therefore, we see him, as he called himself, the Son of Man; made after the flesh for the suffering of death, that we through him might have Eternal Salvation.

As man, He was meek and lowly, yet he was without sin, but he took our sins upon himself. Being without sin, He was Holy. The word holy means morally pure, spiritually perfect. "And his name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save His people from their sins." Here we see an unbroken line from Abraham, — Isaac, Jacob, David and Jesus. All this was done that all might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophets. Isaiah 7:14 says, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

Moses spoke of Jesus in saying, " A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear—." Moses represents the Law. Jesus came to fulfill the law and prophets for his people. In speaking of the seed of David in 2 Samuel 7: 12, the Lord through the prophet Nathan said, "And I will set up thy seed after thee which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish His kingdom."

Let us look at Jesus as the Son of God. In Isaiah 9:6-7, we read, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The prince of peace. Of the increase of his government there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgement and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Abraham experienced that what God had promised he was able to perform. He believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness. And the Word says, And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Jeremiah prophesied of Jesus as the Son of God, saying, "And this is his name whereby he shall be called, the Lord of righteousness." The angel said unto Mary, "Therefore also that Holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Paul said in Hebrews, "But unto the Son he sayeth, thy throne Oh God, is for ever and ever. A sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy Kingdom."

When Jesus was baptized, a voice from heaven spoke, saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." At the mount of transfiguration came a voice out of the cloud, saying, "This is my beloved Son; hear him."

Now we see Jesus the Son of God, as our Brother, Saviour, Meditator, High Priest and King; and he sits at the right hand of the Father, and rules in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. He is able to save to the uttermost all them that come to God by Him; for He said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

Please do not overrate me, Elder Spangler. I am very little in these things and have only written as it has been shown me by the word. I was privileged to go to the association at Southampton with Elder Rustin. It had been my wish for some time to see the brethren there, and am glad to be able to say they are the same as here in Canada. And, too, the voice of the Turtle, the Word of God, is the same there as here; and the hospitality was wonderful.

We had Elder Bennett with us at the June Quarterly Meeting at Ekfrid, and hope, the Lord willing, he may come again. Now, Elder Spangler, I hope this finds you well. I am enjoying the Signs and always look forward to the next one. Remember me to Elder Wood.

Your Brother in hope,
Eldon Gilbert

Chestertown, Md.

Signs of the Times,
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Tonight it seems to me I have been communing with the very saints of God. As it has been pouring rain for a long time, I have spent the evening reading over again the latest copy of the Signs; and as I read again the sweet letters and editorials, there came over me such a feeling of love for each of the writers that it made me stop and think. It seems so beautiful that, in a world of people so at war with each other, so full of greed and lust, so anxious to grab everything in reach for themselves, there are so many who want only the good things that come only from the God of Heaven.

As I read over the letters, each had a beautiful portion of Scripture in mind and wanted to tell how they felt about it. Through-

out all the letters there ran the same basic doctrine of Faith and Love. As I read, a picture formed in my mind which seemed lovely. It's hard to tell as I seemed to see it, but perhaps you dear ones will understand it the way I saw it. Life on the surface isn't always beautiful, but if one stops to think about the basic things that make life worth living, one finds a measure of beauty. The picture in my mind was like a piece of tapestry,—it was woven on the dull, drab warp of our everyday life. Then as I looked, I saw the beautiful colors appear, composed of the different things which make our lives richer and brighter: the bright rosy hue of our dreams, the golden glow of the love in our lives, the cool shades of green pastures where our Saviour has led us; the dark shades representing the valleys of despair and sorrow, then the brighter blues, violets, etc. representing the rainbow of Hope that He has put into our hearts. It is a beautiful picture that I see; like a beautiful piece of music: the tune is primary, but the real beauty is brought out in the harmony,—the chords in the background, as it were. I am no poet but I feel beauty in everything, even if I can't find words to express what I feel.

As I continued to read, it seemed that I could say with the writer I knew exactly how he or she felt, and they had found the right words where I felt dumb. We can indeed thank God that he has put it into our hearts to love one another with the love which is past understanding. We cannot understand why He has loved us with so great a love. We do not know why He has given us the sweet hope we feel that we have. We know that we are nothing but sinful wretches, full of no good whatever and filled with pride and envy, even though we try our best, as mortals, to overcome it. We know we crucify Him in the flesh every day, and in our misery we cry out unto Him, "Save, or we perish." We feel we love Him with all our heart and soul, yet we are not ready to give up the world entirely for Him.

We think of how He was sent down to earth as a tiny baby, to live among us, work as we do, suffer trials and heartaches as we do, only, when we have our troubles we tell each other and so share our burdens, but He bore his all alone. Having no home to go, He wandered from place to place, Followers He had by the thousands at times; disciples He had that professed to love Him dearly, even as we do. But when the real test of their love came they were found wanting.

Oh, it makes me feel so good to know for sure that no matter how much times, and events and people may change, God never changes. He is the same from beginning to end. He promised us eternal life, and His promises are sure and steadfast.

The other day I heard a Methodist minister speaking to a person, and as some opinions were expressed on religion, the minister remarked, 'Oh, we do not preach that now. That is old fashioned. The modern teachers have chosen a different interpretation of that scripture." It shocked me, for no matter how modern anyone becomes, the Bible will always be the same, yesterday, today and forever. Thank God for that. As Elder Spangler once remarked,"If one little thing changed in God's plans, then nothing would be sure." We can feel safe, therefore, in holding onto the blessed doctrine that is set forth by all the dear saints in the meetings. I know all the Old School Baptist feel the same, or they would never travel for hundreds of miles in all kinds of weather, in all kinds of health and under all sorts of conditions, to hear the blessed truth preached. If we miss meetings, even once, we feel as though we have missed something very precious to us. It is a part of our very existance and is just as necessary to our well being as material food and water is to us. Our spirits must be fed, and I believe if our spirits are starved, we are as completely undernourshed as though we were missing our bodily food.

If we are dead or weak, spiritually we aren't worth anything to anyone; just a shell and a cracked one at that. As I look back (and I often do), I wonder how I even thought I was living before I met with the Old School Baptists the first time. I can see the Lord's hand in many things that I couldn't understand then. They took pity on me and gave me a home with them, yet I can never feel that I deserve it. They are so dear, and I am nothing.

Sometimes when I come home late at night, too tired to sleep, and feel as though I'd like to read awhile and relax, I often find comfort in reading some of the sweet letters in the church papers. If there is anything on earth that can make one forget how weary they are any quicker than that, I'd like to know what it is. I seem to be able to hear the writer relate his experience and express his or her views.

Or maybe it is one of the dear Editors and the subject is one that grips the mind and heart of the reader so completely I forget where I am. In one issue of the Signs there was an article by Elder Wood entitled, "The work is finished". That title alone made me think of the last words of Jesus on the cross: "It is finished". All the work His Father had given him to do was finished. Then, when I came to the part where he used the passage of scripture, "The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.", my mind went back to a sermon Elder Spangler had preached a long time ago on that text. I hope sometime to hear a sermon from that text again, for it contains a wonderful lesson

for each of us.

I hope the Lord will forgive me if in anything I have said what is not right, and that the dear readers will cast a mantle of charity over this poor letter, for it is much like the writer, in need of correction and reproof.

Your little sister in need of grace and mercy,
Ruth Lucht.

ILLNESS OF ELDER C. H. BYRD

Naches, Washington
Sept. 16, 1952.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Elder C. H. Byrd, of Panama City, Florida, was moved from a convalescing home in Yakima, the 8th of September, to his son's home near Los Angeles. He would be glad to hear from any of the Baptists. The address is: in care of Gilbert Byrd, 4804 Camellia Avenue, Temple City, California.

Elder Byrd became ill here at our home the seventh of August. He had planned to be at our three days meeting at Naches, Washington, the 8th, 9th and 10th, and also the Riffe meeting a week later. He was very much disappointed in not being able to attend.

As far as we know, he is still not able to be up and around.

Enclosed is a letter we believe the readers of the Signs would enjoy.

Humbly,
Mrs. D. H. Baker

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT FOR SISTER JENNIE HOLLEY

Whereas, it has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst by death our beloved Sister Jennie Holley on Aprill 18, 1952. She was born Aug. 16, 1871 making her stay on earth over eighty years. She leaves to mourn her departure three sons and four daughters; Coleman, Leonard and Spencer Holley; Mrs. Hattie Steagall, Snowie Payne, Lutie Powell and Virginia Horsley.

Sister Holley was truly a mother in Isreal, faithful to her profession as long as she lived. She was faithful to the needs of the household of faith and always had a smile and kind word for everyone. Her honesty and neighborly traits were among her many virtues. Her hospitality was known by all who knew her.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor Elder W. R. Dodd at Swicegood Funeral Home amidst a packed house of friends and neighbors who showed their last tribute of respect.

We, the Church at Strawberry, greatly feel our loss which is Sister Holley's eternal gain. We extend our sympathy to the family who so devotedly cared for their mother, and especially her youngest daughter and family with whom she made her home, who were faithful in bringing Sister Holley to her church meetings. May they be given to continue to trust in the God their mother was blessed to trust for over fifty years.

Therefore, be it resolved that we bow in humble submission to Him who works all things after the council of His own will. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh, blessed be His name.

Furthermore, be it resolved that a copy of this resolution be recorded on our Church record, a copy sent to the family, a copy sent to Old Faith Contender and The Signs of The Time's for publication.

Done by order of the Church in conference the first Saturday in July 1952.

W. R. Dodd, Moderator
Josephine Dodd, Clerk

OBITUARIES

IN MEMORY OF MR. D. M. WHITE

Mr. D. M. White of near Jamestown, La. was born March 21, 1871. He was the son of the late Elder J. J. White, a widely known Primitive Baptist Minister of about 50 years ago.

Mr. White was married to Miss Willie Thomas, Nov. 22, 1900. To this union twelve children were born and ten survive him, together with his dear wife and companion. He was a very highly respected citizen having been honored with leadership in community and Parish affairs by serving in the capacity of an elected Parish official for a number of years, in which position he served with honor and destinction.

Mr. White was a strong believer in the doctrine believed and advocated by the Primitive Baptists, but due to long drawn out confusion and division he never united with the Church, but was a strong and ardent advocate of the doctrine of God our Saviour. He expressed a good experience of grace, and professed a sweet and abiding hope in the mercy and Grace of God, and was a great encouragement to many whom he came in contact with, peaceably, and meekly talking of God's power and love and mercy, which is the only hope which the Lord's people have of that sweet Home of Heaven and Immortality.

The unworthy writer and other Primitive Baptist Ministers conducted a regular appointment in his community for the last year of his life, and he manifested great and deep interest in the doctrine as well as in the brethren, sisters and friends, and took an active part in the support of this appointment in his community, and the support of those who filled the appointments there at old Mt. Olive Church, where his father once served as a member and pastor.

While Mr. White was not a member, yet from every expression I had the priviledge to hear him make, I fully believe that he was

well established in a sweet hope in the salvation of Jesus Christ, and I believe that he is in one sense, dead, but in another he is only sleeping, till our Lord Jesus Christ descends from Heaven. Then with a shout, and the sound of that mighty trumpet, He will awake those of his saints who sleep beneath the clay, and they will be made alive, and be like the blessed Saviour, and will hear His voice saying, "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Then dear ones do not mourn for him as those who have no hope. I feel perfectly assured that he is much better off than we are. May the Lord enable you to bow in humble submission to His sovereign will and purpose, feeling sure that all things work together for good to them who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. The writer had the priviledge of visiting in his very pleasant, and hospitable home on several occasions, which confirms me that he was an humble, praying, and hoping child of God. He expressed to me once how anxious he was to unite with the old Church if it could be reestablished in order.

Mr. White's health failed him the last several years, and finally he passed away Decem- 10, 1951. Funeral services were conducted by Eld. J. L. Smith, and his remains were laid to rest in the Mt. Olive Cemetery.

May the Lord bless us all to be reconciled to all the Lord's appointments, even the death of our loved ones. As it is said in Rev. 1:18, "He holds the keys of Hell and death."

Your very unworthy Brother in hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

R. W. Rhodes.

Elizabeth H. Withers

Elizabeth H. Withers was born November 11, 1877, and died June 29, 1952. She was born in Bourbon County, Kansas, and was married to W. D. Withers in 1893. They moved to the state of Washington more than fifty years ago, and helped in their humble way to make it a state. She was the mother of sixteen children, including a set of twins.

She was given hope in Jesus at a very tender age, and that hope was with her to the end of life. She joined the church at Touchet, Washington, about fifty years ago and was a faithful member to the end. She was baptized by Elder Barnes of Touchet. Several years later she united with Bethel Church, of Bellington, Washington, by letter; and a few years ago, after the church at Bellington was dissolved, there being no members there at the time, she united with the church at Cheholis. She was always desirous of attending church and being with her people; and was a strong Predestinarian Baptist and loved to talk on the scriptures. She was always quick to defend the truth, though she was sometimes persecuted for doing so.

She was a wonderful mother to her children, striving to teach them to do what was right. She became ill on Sunday evening and died the following Tuesday. Her daughter Evie Floyd, cared for her and there were several of her children with her at the end. Sister Evie had a wonderful vision just before mother died. She saw a woman with two roses and a saucer of water. One was a beautiful rose, and the other a withered and old one. The woman put the old one in the saucer with the beautiful one, and it became beautiful also. It was a sign to her that Mother was going to Dad, and now is with him, and is young and beautiful again.

We do not mourn because she is gone, but because we miss her so badly. She was a lovely mother, and, I think, a true Mother in Israel, as those who knew her will testify. Elder Coleman, of Riffe, conducted her funeral, and preached a good sermon.

She was clear in mind up until three days of death. There are five daughters and four sons; and twenty-seven grand-children and seven great-grandchildren who mourn her decease.

Unworthily, her daughter,
Mary L. Eckerd

WILLIAM S. COLE

The following is copied from Leesburg, Virginia newspaper:

"William S. Cole, 84 retired farmer, and one of Upper Loudoun's best known citizens, died at his home, Shadowlawn, near Purcellville, late Sunday August 3, 1952. Mr. Cole, born near Laurel, Md., November 6, 1867, had lived in Purcellville community for more than fifty years. He was a son of the late John Alexander and Susan Denmeade Cole and was the last member of his immediate family.

Mr. Cole had owned and operated one of the good farms in Purcellville section during his active years. He was an attendant at Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church. Mr. Cole was widely acquainted and highly esteemed in his community.

Surviving are two sons, Frank M. and W. Curtis Cole, and four grandchildren, Virginia Ann Cole, William Curtis Cole, Jr., Francis M. and James Miller Cole.

Funeral services were held from the home on Tuesday, conducted by Elder John D. Wood. Burial was made in Sharon Cemetery, Middleburg, Va., by the side of his wife, whose death occurred in June, 1951."

Thus another good friend and firm believer has passed from the scenes of this life. May the Lord give grace to those who mourn his passing, and reconcile them in the assurance that their loss is his eternal gain.

"Death is no more a frightful foe;
Since I with Christ shall reign,
With joy I leave this world of woe:
For me to die is gain."

John D. Wood

CHARLES ELLIS LYNCH

Charles Ellis Lynch was born September 26, 1871, and died February 16, 1952. He was the son of the late Samuel N. and Rebecca Townsend Ellis Lynch, of near Laurel, Delaware. He was united in marriage to Miss Nettie Ellis, of Delmar Delaware, December, 1892; who passed away July, 1894. On November 29, 1900, he was united in marriage to Miss Ethel Cannon, of Seaford, Delaware; and to this union were born four daughters, viz, Mrs. James W. Truit, Snow Hill, Md., Mrs. George Rounds, Mardela Md., Mrs. Alvin Parsons, Selbyville, Del., and Mrs. Edward S. Leyshon, Philadelphia, Pa. Also six grandchildren and three great grandchildren survive to mourn the loss of a good, devoted father and grandfather.

He united with the Old School Baptist at Little Creek Church, near Laurel, Delaware, and was baptized December 20, 1895, by the later Elder A. B. Francis. It may be said of him that he stood steadfastly in the faith and doctrine of the church of God. His expressions were open, clean and without deceit.

Funeral services were conducted by his Pastor, Elder H. M. Bennett. Burial was in the Little Creek Cemetery.

We feel he will be greatly missed by the church and all that loved him for the truth's sake; but we feel that he is at rest, and our loss is his eternal gain.

Written with much sadness in memory of dear Daddy.

Mrs. James W. Truitt

MRS. VERNA STOWE

Mrs. Verna Stowe was born March 13, 1893, and departed this life July 6, 1952, making her stay on earth fifty-nine years, three months and twenty-three days. She was the daughter of Aaron and Elizabeth Whitehead.

On August 25, 1909 she was married to Thomas A. Stowe; and to this union were born five children: Mrs. Helen Johnson, Mrs. Ada McCullar, Mrs. Elmar Lee Dancer, Raymond E. and Thomas Wilson Stowe all of Houston, Texas. There are five grandchildren. Other survivors are: one brother, Lem Whitehead, of Crockett, Texas, and two sisters, Mrs. Etta Sweeten and Mrs. Bessie Blackman, both of Houston. Sister Stowe joined the Primitive or Old School Predistinarian Baptists in July, 1919. She remained a consistent member, and was a firm believer in salvation by grace and grace alone. She never wavered in her belief. At the time of her death she was a member of Shephered Fold church, of Houston having joined in August, 1947.

Her life held much suffering, but she expressed that she was ready to go and be with her Saviour. Oh, how her family will miss her, and her influence in their lives. Sister Stowe was a lovely sister in the church, and we will miss her sweet presence at meeting time. Her home was a welcome place for all Old Baptists and friends. It was a sweet privilege to meet in her home and sing the songs of Zion, and hear the doctrine preached she so loved.

The surviving family have our deep sympathy in their bereavement and loss of a dear wife and mother, but their loss is her gain. May they be comforted by our Heavenly Father, who doeth all things well; and may they be reconciled to His holy and just will.

Her remains were laid to rest in Whitehead Cemetery, near Crockett, until her sleeping dust shall be raised in incorruption and her mortality shall put on immortality, and she shall be forever with Jesus, singing praises forevermore.

Elder W. O. Beene, her pastor, conducted the funeral service at the grave amid a throng of family, relatives and friends.

Written by request.

Irene Wisenbaker

JAMES T. COUNTS

Deacon James T. Counts was born December 22, 1868, in Trigg County, Kentucky, and departed this life March 14, 1952, making his stay here over eighty-three years.

Brother Counts was married to Miss Alice Mobbly, who preceeded him in death. To this union were born nine boys and two girls, viz, Aubrey Counts, Mayfield, Ky., Guy, Kyle, Marvin and Carl Counts, Detroit, Michigan, Frank Counts, Toledo, Ohio, Mrs. Myrtly Combs, Detroit, and Mrs. Mable Gardner, Mayfield, Kentucky. After the death of his first wife, Brother Counts married Mrs. Lena Paschal, to whom no children were born. He and both of his wives were buried at Pleasant Valley Church, in Kentucky.

Brother Counts received a hope in Christ in early manhood and united with Brush Creek Primitive Baptist Church of Christ and was baptized by the late Elder T. M. Yates. He lived a devoted life to the cause of Christ for sixty-two years, in fellowship with his brethren. He will be missed by all who knew him.

Brother Counts was considered one of the outstanding members of the Primitive Baptist faith; he was well established in the doctrine of God our Saviour, and contended faithfully for it before friend or foe. His church called for his ordination as deacon several years ago, and I was in the presbytery which ordained

him; and I feel that he filled this office as far as humanly possible. This dear soldier of the cross fought a good fight, and I feel that he kept faith, and his great Captain gave him an honorable discharge and laid him down to rest from all his labors, to await that final call from his Creator to inherit that kingdom prepared for all His humble poor before the world began.

No one knows how much I miss him, for he was a good counselor on doctrine and church discipline. He will be greatly missed by all the Baptist of West Kentucky and Tennessee. Brother Counts was making his home with his daughter, Mrs. Mable Gardner, of Mayfield, when he died. The writer tried in his weak way to comfort the children and friends at Zion Church, in Mayfield. May God comfort those who mourn.

Elder O. W. Perkins

ELDER ANDREW LEE HOLLOWAY

Elder Andrew Lee Holloway was born October 30, 1869, and departed this life March 20, 1952, after a brief illnes caused by a stroke of paralysis.

He was the son of Kinchen Holloway and Mary Jane Dunnigan Holloway, and was reared in a part of Orange County which is now in Durham County, in the State of North Carolina.

At the age of 19 years he joined Mt. Lebanon Primitive Baptist Church. In 1893 he was married to Miss Annie Rebecca Tilley of Durham County, who preceded him to the grave by a little more than a year. To this union were born several children. The following survive: Miss Annie Lee Holloway, Mrs. Phillip Gunter, Mrs. Zack Vickers, Mrs. Lawrence H. Johnson, Mrs. Charles H. Blackwood and Mrs. Pete Ferettino, all of Durham, N. C. Also two sons survive, Walter F. of Durham and George K. Holloway of Wilmington, N. C.

On February 17, 1907, both Elder Holloway and his wife, who also joined Mt. Lebanon Church in 1899, called for and were granted letters of dismission from Mt. Lebanon Church and were received into the membership of Durham Church in the City of Durham. On November 15, 1925 Elder Holloway was ordained to the full functions of the gospel ministry, and during his ministry he served Bethel Church in Johnston County, Raleigh Church in Wake County, both in the bounds of the Little River association. He also served Flat River and Eno Churches in the bounds of the Lower County Line association. At the time of his death he was serving only Eno Church as pastor.

On April 17, 1937, both he and his wife, sister Holloway, were granted letters of dismission from Durham Church and were received into the membership of Eno Church where both retained membership until their deaths.

Elder Holloway, was an unusual deep thinker—a man of keen sense and a close observer of nature, and was blest to portray the thoughts of his mind in a very clear and vivid way to his hearers so that his discourses were very comforting and much appreciated. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of election, predestination and adoption, and was favored to present his views in such a manner that he never did offend. Yet he did not hesitate to speak firmly and boldly the truth as he saw and understood it.

After the death of his wife, he seemed to not to want to live here in this troublesome world. He appeared to feel lonely, and would often say, "a few more risings and settings of the sun, I shall pass." He appeared to rejoice in the thought, "Yet a little while I am with you". He seemed to realize that his stay on earth was short or death so near, until he made known his mind regarding his funeral arrangements, which was carried out just as he ordered.

His funeral was conducted on Saturday evening of his home Church meeting, but at Mt. Lebanon Church by Elders T. Floyd Adams of Willow Springs, N. C., and Frederick W. Rhodes, of Durham, N. C., after which his body was laid to rest beside that of his wife in the Mt. Lebanon Church cemetery to await the resurrection of all the saints, who shall come forth in a state of perfection and be gathered home to ever be with the Lord.

Eno Church has lost in the passing of Elder Holloway a most highly esteemed and respected servant, and all who knew him do, and will continue to miss him, one who was loved and regarded as a most gifted man of God. However, we feel our loss is his eternal gain.

This memorium is written in honour and in loving memory of a great man who has fallen in death, but to arise again to die no more with all for whom Jesus came to save from their sins, who shall sing everlasting praise to Him, "Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." II Tim. 1:9.

We, the undersigned, submit this notice in love, honour and the highest respect to, both Elder Andrew Lee Holloway, and Eno Primitive Baptist Church Durham, North Carolina at the request of the above said Church.

C. M. Mayhew
Frederick W. Rhodes
Committee.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 120 DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1952 NO. 12

CHARITY

The word Charity is used numerous times in the New Testament and by four different Apostles. Cruden gives it three definitions but concludes that most people take it to mean alms-giving to the poor and needy. Therefore the Revised version of the Bible renders the word, "Love" instead of "Charity".

This translation, no doubt, meets with the approval of the "wise and prudent", but to the regenerated, born again believer in Christ, no such change is acceptable.

Paul, the highly educated Apostle, used both words and if their meanings were synonmous there would have been no need for different words in the first place.

While none of the Apostles define Charity, Paul goes to some length to describe it. "Charity suffereth long and is kind" he says. "Charity vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things."

All these explanations describe the characteristics of Charity, but what else does it do? "Charity edifieth and never faileth". These are the two most outstanding characteristics, to our way of thinking. That which edifieth the new-born babe in Christ is from above and it never fails to reach the "Heirs of promise".

Paul concludes the thirteenth chapter of 1st Cor. by saying, "And now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity".

How great must charity be! It is greater than faith; greater than hope and yet we hear so little said about it. How little are the manifestations seen among the inhabitants of the earth today!

No wonder the "Wise and prudent" wish to discard it and forget about it. They do not have it neither can they know it, for it is included in "These things" that Jesus had under consideration, no doubt, when he rejoiced in Spirit and said, "I thank thee O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes: even so Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." (St. Luke X;21)

Do we Primitive Baptist have Charity? Yes, those of us that have been born of the Spirit. Also anyone else, regardless of their church affiliation, regardless of whether they are church members at all, if they have been born of that Incorruptible Seed that liveth and abideth forever, they have Charity.

But what is Charity? some will ask. We should know since we are instructed to "Put on", "Follow", and "Continue" in Charity.

The "Wise and prudent" have coined a phrase— "Charity begins at home". This has been quoted so much and so often that many people think it to be Scripture. However it is not Scripture; it is not the truth; its author is the Devil.

The natural man looketh well to his own household; is vain, puffed up, selfish, unkind, impatient, thinketh evil and is easily provoked. He is dead to the knowledge of the Truth; having never been born again, and is without hope

and without God in the world. There is no Charity there. He may give gifts for selfish reasons or to be seen of men but never is a sacrifice made or suffering contemplated.

Paul concludes "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor and though I give my body to be burned and have not Charity it profiteth ME nothing." May we not assume that with Charity he would receive great joy in feeding the poor and comforting the unfortunate? If it were not for Charity the militant Church would cease to exist. The ministers would cease to labor. The household of faith would go unfed. The Apostle Peter admonishes, "Above all things have fervent charity among yourselves; for charity shall cover the multitude of sins." May we not conclude that where charity abounds there will be few sins to cover.

Then what is Charity? We all want to know, and since there is no acceptable definition that we have seen; may we not offer one that we hope will be acceptable to the household of Faith.

Charity is the outward expression of the love of God that has been shed abroad in our hearts toward our fellow man. This outward expression covers all the "Good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in."

Does Charity embrace giving? Yes. While on this subject the Apostle Peter said, "Use hospitality one to another without grudging; as every man has received the gift, minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." Charity may be expressed in a friendly smile, a pat on the back or a sympathizing tear.

As we travel about the country, we occasionally find a church whose building is in despair. The grounds are grown up. The whole place is desolate. No one is interested enough to keep the floor swept or any of the little things that go to make the place look home like. What is wrong here? There is no Charity. Everyone is looking after his own house and letting the house of the Lord go unkept.

Without Charity "I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal", said the Apostle Paul. Did he have Charity? Yes. Unto Timothy he declared "Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, CHARITY and patience, persecutions and afflictions." This great Apostle who spoke of himself as the least, said by the grace of God he laboured more abundantly than they all, etc.

We are made to rejoice when we meet with brethren that always have time to do things for the church; that need not be reminded of their duty to the poor but manifest that they are fruit-bearing branches of the Vine. In conclusion, Brethren, ye that are spiritual, let us heed the admonition of the Apostle and by the grace of God put on, follow after and continue in Charity. "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5:16)

For now abideth faith, hope, charity but the greatest of these is CHARITY.

Humbly submitted in love for the Brethren.

(Elder) Posie Ingram

SKETCH OF THE LIFE AND EXPERIENCE OF JOHN WILLIAM HAYNES (deceased)

(Written August, 1927)

I was born in North Alabama, in Jackson County, November 7, 1863, of poor but honest and Christian parents. My father was William L. Haynes and my mother was Miss Margaret Starkey. I grew to manhood in Alabama and married Miss Jennie Johnson, December 25, 1881, and remained there until June, 1884. We moved to Eastland County, Texas, near Rising Star, and later bought land three miles South of Rising Star, in Brown County. Having a severe drought in 1886, we moved in 1887 to Pope County Arkansas, returning again

to Texas in 1890, where we have lived ever since.

Our marriage union has been blessed with twelve children, four boys and eight girls. Two girls and one boy died in infancy; one dear girl, Leola, died after she was grown and married; three boys and five girls are yet living, and are all married. I want to say by way of commendation to our children, that they have always been a pleasure to us, in that they have been so loving and obedient, showing us the honor and reverence due us as parents. They are all honest, upright men and women. The three boys and the two oldest girls are members of the Primitive Baptist Church, and the others have given evidence of a work of grace in their hearts. Also, we have one son-in-law, three daughters-in-law and two granddaughters who belong to the same church. So we feel thankful to the giver of all good for His wonderful love and mercies, which have followed us as a running stream from the earliest of our existence to the present. And I hope that it will continue to the end, unworthy though I be.

I desire now to pen a few lines which will give some expression of my little hope, of a change from nature to grace, through the channel of regeneration; or being born again, "Not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever." As far back as I can remember, I have had serious thoughts about death, and what would be the final destiny of the righteous and the wicked. But these were only momentary and soon forgotten.

My father died when I was only about nine years old, and this bore seriously on my mind for quite a time. Father and Mother were both members of the Primitive Baptist Church, and he was a preacher for several years prior to his death. I, though young in years, can remember him as a kind and loving father, and he was loved by all who knew him. I can remember only one quotation of Scripture in his preaching: "And he said unto them, go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16:15-16.

My mother is yet living and is ninety years of age. When father died she was left with five little children, three boys and two girls. I was the oldest and only two of us are now living. Mother had a hard struggle trying to raise us, but with our help she managed to pull through. She taught us to work and to obey her, to be honest and truthful, and I am still thanking her for this motherly care.

At about the age of sixteen I was made to see myself a sinner as I never had before. I was so burdened for a time, but this seemed to pass off and I was glad to be rid of it. After a time the burden returned with greater force, and I was made to wonder why it was that this great burden of sin and guilt was upon me, since I had thought I was a pretty good boy. I had obeyed my mother, never used any profane language, was truthful, and had never taken that which was not mine, and tried to do unto others as I would have them do unto me, etc. Yet this would not lighten the burden under which I was laboring. After a time it passed off and I seemed to be at rest again, and I went on enjoying myself in worldly amusements with which I was surrounded.

As time went on, the burden would return at intervals, but with greater force, until I could find no rest of mind. I would try to pray and ask the dear Lord to be merciful to me a sinner, but my prayers would seem to get no higher than my head. I was brought to where I was willing to try anything that offered relief. I had tried all of my efforts and resolutions and found them to be a flat failure; I desired the prayers of Christians, so went up to be prayed for but found no relief.

I tried the "mourners bench" at different times, and they would there talk with me and pray for me, and tell me to put my trust in Jesus; just exercise a little more faith, etc., and He would save me. Well, I tried, as I had many times before, to trust Jesus and have faith in him that he would save me. I would exert, it seemed, all my powers to do this; but to no avail. I just couldn't for the life of me, believe that Jesus was my personal Saviour. I had read in the good book where it said, "Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted." But this did not give me any relief, since I couldn't feel any comfort, — couldn't realize that I had ever been blessed and didn't know that I had ever truly mourned. So I concluded that mine was an odd and hopeless case; I lost all hope or confidence in anything that I could do, or that any of my friends could do for me, for this had been tried time and time again.

About this time, late one evening, I was going to visit my Uncle John Haynes, who lived about a half-mile away. On the way I turned off on a trail which led across a hollow where there was a secluded place among the tall trees. There, all alone, I lay down flat on my face to try one more time to implore the blessed Saviour to have mercy on me a poor, miserable, sinful wretch. I felt that I might never have that privilege again. I realized that if ever saved it would be through the goodness and mercy of God alone, and not by any power of effort of mine. I felt I had no claim upon God's mercy, and if I was eternally lost, it was only just; that, "If my soul was sent to hell, God's righteous law approved it well." I thought I was doomed, and without God and without hope, — not a friend on earth, and none in heaven.

After continuing upon the ground for some time, I arose, still feeling no relief. This was the darkest gloom of my life; I thought my doom was sealed. Just at that moment dear Jesus came to my relief, "As the chiefest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely." There was such a change in me that I can't describe it, nor find words to express my feelings. Everything, even in nature, looked so different. I can't find words to express it better than to quote the Apostle Paul when he says that, "The light was above the brightness of the noonday sun." My burden was gone, and I was enabled to rejoice in a Saviour's love. I could now view Him as my own personal, individual Saviour, and didn't have to strain a nerve trying to believe it. I wished there were someone present to tell it to. I could feel the precious promises of our blessed Saviour verified: "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

I then thought that my troubles were over, and that I would hurry on down to Uncle John's, where I had started, and tell them all about it. But before I could get there, this thought came to my mind, "You had better wait and see if this is real, or only imaginary, before you tell it." So I choked it back and did not tell anything. When I got back home, I didn't tell my wife or mother, and had fully decided not to tell it, at least for awhile; but somehow it was found out. A few days after this, I attended a meeting in the neighborhood. I had heard that "Old Uncle" John Walden, a man about 60 years of age, had a few days before professed a hope, and when I went into the meeting house and sat down he was there, and when he saw me, he got up and came over and gave me a hearty handshake, something he had not done before, and without saying a word. I thought I could see the image of Jesus in the expression of his face, and I trust he did in mine. This was a real feast to me. Though I don't believe a word was passed to give away anything on either of us, that hearty handshake and that lovely countenance was enough. It

told the tale. This is one of the bright spots now in my memory which I cherish, and is the reason I mention it. But the one which I cherish most, is the time and place where I hope that God for Christ's sake pardoned my sins.

This was in the hills of North Alabama in the summer of 1883, and if I ever visit that country, I shall try to find that spot. The very memory of it is sacred to me. I have had many doubts and fears and have been ready many times to throw it all down as just a myth and give up in despair, then my mind would run back to this time and place, and it would encourage me to press on the few more days of my sojourn here in faith. There was something done for me there that I cannot doubt, and that is the great burden which I had carried so long was removed, and has never returned. This is evidence to me which has been a great prop in time of adversity, and I would not exchange it for a world like this.

(to be continued)

Selma, N. C.

Elder R. W. Rhodes,
Lillie, La.
Dear Elder Rhodes:

I received the two books yesterday, and I don't believe I will be able to express my appreciation for your thoughtfulness in sending them to me. After my name and address was in the Landmark, I had hoped to hear from some of the brothers and sisters, but I hadn't dreamed of someone being so nice as to send me books.

Truly the Lord is good to me, for all along the way there is just enough comfort and encouragement to last until the next time He has comfort in store. The books with your note in each, was just that to me.

I have had my name with the Primitive Baptists seven years this May at Beulah Church in Black Creek Association. My natural father was pastor there for forty years before he died, and he had been dead nine years when I asked for a home with them. There were several years before asking a home with them that I did not go to this church very often. I felt that I was the worst one of Papa's children and that he surely couldn't have any fellowship for me if he were alive; and I was afraid they would take me in just for papa's sake, and I didn't want to deceive anyone. Even up until Friday night before they received me on Sunday, I said I would never join any church until I had to. Saturday I was at Beulah Church and was made willing to ask for a home there.

It would take books to contain the things that come in my feelings these seven years. It began when I was yet standing up after they had given me the right hand of fellowship. Within me was suddenly the awful feeling that I had persecuted one of God's little ones, and this one was my little boy. Months before he had asked me if he could be baptized. Just to put him off (he being so young), I said for him to wait until I went, then he could. I had been in so much trouble I had forgotten about promising that. He was not there when I was received; and when he found out that I had joined, he buried his head in his arms and wept. He was seven years old and the only child I had. He told me I had promised he could go when I did. I told him he could join at the water, if the Lord told him to it was alright. We hardly understood his feelings at the time. He gave as his reason for wanting to be baptized that the Lord had been good to him. At the water's edge I asked him if he felt alright in not going, and he said, yes, the Lord hadn't told him to. He seemed to be so relieved after I was baptized.

After being received I was in so much trouble that I went to the tobacco barn to try to pray. My prayer was, if it was right for me to be baptized that the burden would be taken away. This continued until six o'clock next day and then ceased. I was baptized by our pas-

tor, Elder W. E. Turner, and about three hours afterwards I was more troubled and burdened than ever. I again tried to beg over and over that evening and much of the night. The next morning, while washing dishes, suddenly heaven was there. Mortal tongue cannot tell the happiness that was mine, — such love, joy, peace and happiness. It was such that from that instant on for six months I hoped that I wouldn't see the sun rise here in this world anymore. I longed so to go to that heavenly home. After I had finished drying the dishes and was putting them in the safe, suddenly the Saviour appeared before me, hanging on the cross. I could see Him moving as in the agony of death. There came over me the feeling that he was innocent and was suffering for me the guilty one. I felt so low to think my sins had put him there. I was walking on holy ground.

The feeling of hoping each night that when the sun arose next morning I would be in that heavenly home lasted until my little boy was struck by a car and died the same night. I could not want to take away from him what I had so longed for myself, so I was more reconciled to his going.

In the meantime, the thought that I had persecuted one of God's little ones kept coming back as a thorn in the flesh, and I was much troubled. But each time I was brought low, passages of Scripture were given to me to lift me up and comfort me. During the seven years this has been so with me.

I wonder if you can have any fellowship with this experience. I had no intention of writing any of this, but only to thank you for the books and your thoughtfulness. I hope to be thankful to God for all things, realizing they all come from Him. I have just touched on part of my experience and have not mentioned the ten years of torment I was in before asking for a home with the church. The last few weeks I was in the pit of torment is more than I can describe.

I hope you will be given a mind to pray for me.

Roda Collier Cox

Palestine, Texas
July 16, 1952

Dear Brother Spangler:

Thanks for your recent letter. I shall be very happy to receive your "History of Welsh Tract Church" when it is published. I have never attended this historical church, but have heard so much about it through my sister and niece, Sisters Grace and Helen Jones. They loved to go there and were regular attendants during their sojourn in the East. Elder Lefferts was the pastor at that time. Helen has some pictures of the church house and cemetery and groups of people which she took during those years.

I feel that I must tell you of the meeting of Mt. Olive church which I attended last Saturday and Sunday. We were all happy to be there and rejoiced to see the manifestation of God's power and mercy and love throughout the services. You may remember that I wrote about Brother R. B. White and mother uniting with that church last May and that he was awaiting baptism. I am happy to report that at the proper time his father, Brother M. L. White, his wife and two of his sisters went forward and asked for a home in the church. The wife and father had come to the church prepared for baptism if they were given the grace to take up their crosses and follow their Lord and Master through evil as well as good report; but the sisters had come to hear the preaching and witness the baptismal services. When they left their home they had no idea that they too would be baptized. But God's power moved both, and they arose at the same time and went forward hand-in-hand before the close of the song, after their father and sister-in-law had gone.

They each talked so humbly of God's love and mercy towards them: they

loved the doctrine that was proclaimed at that church and wanted to be taken into the fellowship of the church. The father said he had loved the church and it's doctrine for over forty-two years, but had been such a rebellious sinner, and that at this time he didn't come of his own will but was made willing by a higher power, and was ready to humbly submit his case to the church, and wouldn't blame them if they didn't take him in as he was such a miserable, wretched sinner. The sisters said they had felt the love of God in their hearts for several years and had tried to live a good life in their churches but were never satisfied. Now they were willing to lay aside all their former associates and the social allurements, etc., if they could only find peace and have a home with God's humble poor. The wife told of her love for the church the first time she heard the doctrine preached.

They were all received into the church as candidates for baptism; after which they were received into the full fellowship of the church. The sisters were provided with baptismal clothes by the church members so that the family could be baptized together. After lunch, all repaired to a beautiful lake for the baptismal service.

It was a beautiful scene to see five members of one family standing in the water with the minister, and see them all baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Not only the little mother, uncle and aunt were over-joyed at the sight, but all present rejoiced with them. They were all so happy and their countenances, and that of the silver-haired pastor, were beautiful as they stood in line to receive the hand of Christian fellowship. The minister said it was the first time he had ever baptized so many in the same family at the same time.

I am sure that those who knew Bro. M. L. White's father, Elder R. E. White, a prominent preacher in East Texas during his lifetime, will be happy to read about the manifestation of God's love and mercy toward this happy family. These things prove to us that God is caring for his own and will bring them to his banqueting house in the day of his power. "Many are called but few are chosen."

The militant church is made up of the chosen ones who must bear witness and declare the goodness of God in this world until the second coming of Christ. There will be a visible church when he comes again to receive his own, — all that have been called from nature's darkness into his marvelous light of love and liberty, wherever they may be. If they have been born of his Spirit, they have been cleansed by his blood. It matters not what organization they belong to, or if none at all, all that will ever see Heaven and Immortal Glory have been justified by the blood of their Redeemer, and by no righteousness of their own, — saved by grace, which is the gift of God.

I feel that it is the Spirit of God that makes me lay aside the things of this world and journey to some meeting house each week end, taking others with me. At times I feel that I just can't go the next week end and that I just must stay at home and attend to my own affairs closer. Then these words come to me, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." "Take therefore no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself," and I find myself just as eager to go on the next week-end. There is surely something that draws us to the house of God, and we are always glad that we went.

I wonder when I am on the hill-top after such meetings as I have described, that I should ever doubt or fear again. But we must be made to realize that all our strength comes from above. It is in Him that we live and move and have our being. Even though the intervals may be of short duration, it is certainly

a heavenly blessing to be carried above the torments of this sinful world and to get fleeting glimpses of the matchless beauties of God's Kingdom, His all-wise plans and purposes, His power, His love and mercy to poor sinful creatures here below.

I am sorry to relate that the sister I saw baptized in April, and her beloved companion have been called to pass through deep sorrow the past few weeks by the sudden death of a son. But she and husband were both at church Sunday, and said they had both been upheld by the power of God, and sustained by his love and mercy to carry on. I pray God to be with them and all others who are bowed down in grief and sorrow.

May God bless his dear children wherever they may be throughout this world, and cause them to sing praises to his holy name. May God's blessings continue to rest upon the dear old Signs of the Times and it's Editors that it may always bring glad tidings of great joy to all it's readers, is my prayer.

Mrs. Velma Jordan French

Salisbury, Md.

Editors of the Signs:

I am sending you a copy of a Circular Letter which is so comforting to me, I feel that others would enjoy reading it too, if you have space for it in the Signs.

Stella Parsons

Circular Letter written by Elder T. M. Poulson, taken from the Minutes of the One Hundred and Twenty-Second Annual Session of the Salisbury Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Association held with the Snow Hill, Church, Worcester County, Maryland, October 19, 20, and 21, 1904.

"The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Snow Hill, Worchester County, Maryland, October 19th, 20th, and 21st, 1904, to the churches and messengers composing the same, sendeth greeting.

"Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

"Time with its rapid wheels has brought us again to the anticipated time of our annual meeting in an associated capacity, and if we follow the line marked out by our fathers, and observed from year to year by this association in preparing this Circular, we shall have to cite you to some portion of the word of God, and to what we may discover it contains for the the help of the Lord's people. To this end we will refer you to the first, second and third verses of the fourteenth chapter of the gospel of the evangelist John:

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." These saying of Jesus no doubt were intended to minister comfort to His disciples after He should be taken from them in person. He knew what was in store for them, though they did not, any more than a heaven-born soul does today, while yet in his earliest love.

Jesus knew that the time was coming when the disciples would be overwhelmed with disappointment, and that this would involve them in trouble. They were to be soon driven from their present mansion, which was one of hope, of rest and perfect peace; for their hope was that He would redeem Israel literally, though not by the shedding of His blood, but in some other way. So He speaks these words to them as an antidote when it should be needed by them.

When their present hopes were gone, and the sun of His presence was blotted out, and they came into a second mansion, what wonder and surprise seized upon them. They could not mourn bebore, but now they could do nothing but mourn over their sad experience

in passing from the first to the second mansion. Now they can remember what He said to them: "Let not your heart be troubled." Why? For "ye believe in God." That is, ye believe in what holy men have written concerning Him; and these holy men spoke of His sufferings, and the glory that should follow.

We understand the mansions spoken of to represent the different dwelling-places of the disciples all the way through this life; and not only of the twelve, but also all of His disciples in all ages of the world. "In my Father's house are many mansions." The number will not stop with the two that we have named, but there are many.

The disciples must be reminded that these mansions are all in the house of God, and are not found anywhere else, and all they that are in the house are they that dwell in these mansions, and each one must at times dwell in all of them, even though they are many, in order to have fellowship, and to be one in experience.

We judge that when the scales, as it were, fell from the eyes of the Aposlte Paul, he never thought of any other mansion, for he saw the glory of God, and went right on preaching what he had seen. But how soon was he brought to see another law in his members, warring against the law of his mind, which made him cry out, "O wretched man that I am!" Here is another dwelling-place, another mansion. And the same man was caught up to the third heaven, above the legal and gospel heavens, into the full consummation of it all. What a delightful mansion! These things are spoken with reference to frames and feelings.

In taking up the history or testimony of Paul during his life, see what a description he has given, not of one, or two, or three, or five, or twenty-five different conditions of mind, but of unnumbered conditions, forming the many mansions wherein he had dwelt. He does not say how long in each. Also take the life of the psalmist David, and see the many mansions or dwelling-places of which he speaks. All the holy men of old are still living examples of this, and all these dwelling-places, and all who dwell therein, are in the hand of God.

We do not think it would be instructive or edifying to the people of God to present these mansions as though one mansion applied to one child and another to another child. This would be to say that each one dwells but in one part of the house of God. Why is it that the Lord's people are brought so closely together and are so endeared as they give an account of the road they are traveling, and of their different dwelling-places? It is that each one's heart responds, and says, I have dwelt there and there. Here is one of the ways by which we find out that we are in the house of God. We have found so many dwelling-places when faith is triumphing and Jesus is near. What blessed mansions are these. But when one is left in a state of questioning and unbelief, what a different mansion! When one's path seems to be lit up with the light of life how beautiful does the way appear. There is a mansion when darkness, such as can be felt, falls upon us. Then how desolate we feel and we say, "There is no one like me." When all know more or less of these things for themselves then each is a witness, and the same gospel is glad tidings to each one. Then having these marks invisible when the visible house is in order, and its order is declared, each one finds himself or herself dwelling there, having passed in and out, each in his measure, in all these different mansions.

The author of this writing, during the fifty-three years of his pilgrimage, has been in and out of all these peculiar dwelling-places, sometimes rejoicing, sometimes mourning, sometimes believing, sometimes doubting, sometimes the spiritual sky clear and beautiful, and at other times dark and fearful; sometimes caught up to the third

heaven, and seeing the glory of God beyond the power of tongue to express, and at other times feeling that the pains of hell have taken hold on him. Sometimes wanting to read the Bible and yet cannot, and at other times no interference can hinder; sometimes seemingly in prison and unable to come forth by all the effort that he can make. These and many other changes to our mind make up the many mansions, and if we did not believe, as we have for a long time, that these different places constitute the finishing of the house of God, we should have sunk in despair. So much for the mansions.

He said, "I go to prepare a place for you". We do not think that He meant here the heaven of immortal glory, but to open the way by which we are prepared for that world. Heaven has been the home of the elect of God from all eternity, as was Canaan the home of the seed of Abraham. But the law with its demands must be met, and the sword of justice taken out of the way, and then the Spirit begins to make its call, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of God is risen upon thee". Now the house of God is set up within these scattered pilgrims and strangers in the land. He has come without sin unto salvation to set up or establish the place which He has prepared for them. We call it the church of Jesus Christ, the pillar and the ground of the truth.

There He has established his name as a King who shall reign in righteousness, and here He has authorized his twelve Princes to rule in judgment. His glorious reign and the sweet decisions or judgments of his Princes, form the drawing magnet of the place thus prepared; and this magnet has more power or control over the circumcised in heart and ears than all the pipe organs and well arranged music can ever have to the natural mind, because Jesus is there; and Jesus lives in them, and walks in them and dwells in them. Thus He is fulfilling His word, steadily drawing and receiving them unto Himself.

While His church is in the world, it is not of the world, but is separated from it.

These sorrowful strangers are brought together, and find that their lives for a certain length of time have been alike, dwelling in tabernacles, as it is declared, with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and with each other in all these varied mansions. How they love to talk with each other of the glory of these places to which they have been brought; and also to speak of the power which has caused this great wonder to appear with might. The psalmist said, "Beautiful for situation is Mount Zion".

All these things, brethren, does God do for His people here in time to bring them and to keep them in touch with the fullness of His glory, that glory which awaits them in the realms of immortality, when He shall finally bring them to Himself. They come to remain, for His glory holds them as the magnet does the needle; they cannot get away from the magnet. They are drawn by the power of God, kept by the power of God, and all will terminate in never-ceasing praise to His great name.

T. M. Poulson, Moderator
John H. Truitt, Clerk
George W. Adkins, Assistant Clerk

Decatur, Ga.

Dear Elder Spangler:

Since your visit to my home, I have wanted to write to you, for I felt that I had done despite to the Spirit of Grace. I truly thought we had a wonderful association, and just to say I enjoyed it, did not half express what I felt. When Elder Nash asked me to say a word, I could not; and in a moment my joy was turned to heaviness and mourning.

I have been searching my mind and heart to see if there was any evidence that the Lord had ever dealt with me.

Many experiences came into my mind, of which I will try to tell you a little.

My father belonged to the Primitive Baptist Church as far back as I can remember. As a child I heard him talk on the Scriptures many times, but at that time it did not interest me very much, yet I was always ready to try to defend his church. I went to different churches and to Sunday School, and was embarrassed many times when friends and others insisted I join the church. But I could not join, believing even then you have to have an experience of grace.

There came a time in my life after I was married that I was troubled over my condition. I searched and pondered over it for a long time, trying to ask the Lord to show me the right way. I went on this way without any relief until one night I stayed awake almost all night thinking on these things, and at last begged the Lord to show me the truth and what I must do to be saved. The Saviour seemed to appear to me and say, give up the world and come follow me. He led me down into what appeared to be a grave, yet there was no water in it, — the pool I was later baptized in looked like this same place.

I was convinced the Primitive Baptist was the true church, and I have never doubted it since. I arose with the desire to be baptized and told my husband I wanted Elder Cook, who was the Old Baptist minister in the town where I lived, to preach my funeral if I died, for I felt I would die; but if I lived, I wanted him to baptize me. This he did some twelve years later. I went through many trials and temptations during these years, always with the desire to be baptized, but felt that I had no experience and could not go before the church. By not making a public confession, I felt I was denying Christ. The Scripture that says, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven," often came into my mind. Once in a dream, I was in the church and someone came and gave me a bottle of milk. I said, I know I am not ready to join the church for only babes drink milk and strong men eat meat; not realizing the Lord's people are all babes in Christ Jesus, and grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth.

I struggled along realizing I could not do the things I would, and that there was no good in my flesh. I had come to my row's end and I felt I could stand it no longer, and I asked the Lord to give me some evidence to go by. In a dream, I was going down to the water to be baptized, when suddenly I looked down and saw I had my sister's clothes, but I thought it was alright, she would not mind. As I reached the water's edge where Eld. Cook stood in the water, I stopped and said, Elder Cook won't baptize me for I have no word. I awoke, and these words came to me: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." I was made to understand I was nothing myself and couldn't of myself do anything. I resolved, if the Lord would spare me to get to the meeting, I would ask for a home. This I did and was baptized the 4th Sunday in April, 1929. I did not tell anything of what I have written, only saying, I believe Jesus is the Christ and that I loved his people.

I have always felt so weak, little and unworthy, never able to express my feelings or defend the truth, or speak to His praise. Is there anyone like me? Remember me in prayer, if you have a mind to.

I am turning this over to Brother Nash to read first, and if he thinks there is any truth in what I have written, to send it on to you as a relief to my mind.

Remember me to Sister Spangler. Hope you will both visit us again.

In both fear and hope,
Alice C. Morgan.

Lawrenceville Ga.

H. L. Rogers,
Denton, Ky.

My dear brother in hope:

Somehow I feel to address myself this morning to the saints of God, to all whose hope the Lord is. The cause for this I do not understand, for at this moment the subject matter is not very clear.

However, I have always the encouragement of the Scripture recored in feared the Lord spake often with one another." The Lord has said that these shall be his in that day when he makes up his jewels. He does not speak of making any jewels, but of making them up, or gathering them together unto himself. If my name is written in his book of remembrance, I feel that it is alone by his will, his grace and mercy; and that it is not there as a reward for any work of righteousness that has ever arisen out of this poor worthless lump of clay. If any righteousness indeed has arisen, it has come from the Lord, for the Lord is our righteousness. If I know anything about myself, Micah 7:8 expresses my feelings: "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause and execute judgment for me; He shall bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness.

This, and other Scripture which we are given to meditate upon, if followed through will lead directly to Jesus Christ. He is the warp of the Scriptures, because in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He is the king pin which binds the old and new testament together. He is the sole Mediator between God and man. He stands as the grand connecting link between the old and new covenants. He was a subject of the old covenant, but the new covenant is subjected to him. Naturally speaking, the terms old and new refer to the relative age of anything in time. But not so with the covenant of law and the covenant of Grace. Both of these covenants are as old as God himself, who is from everlasting to everlasting. No human mind has the capacity to evaluate everlasting to everlasting. There are some things man can never know. The secret things belong to God, but that which is revealed, unto us and our children. (Duet. 29.)

Thus we see that what may be older than the hills, may become very new to us when first revealed, but to God, the Father, Son and Spirit nothing is new; for they have been of one mind, unchangeable, the same yesterday, today and forever. Old and new relate to man and not God, for, as I understand it, God is one eternal now. The things which are yet to be accomplished within and for the children of God will certainly be new to the beneficiaries of His grace; howbeit, they are timelessly aged in the mind and purpose of their God. One writer says concerning our hope of the resurrection, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." Another, emphasizing the forward look asks, "For that which is seen why do we yet hope for it."

It is quite evident that Sinai's covenant, which appeared at it's appointed time, was new to the children of Israel. Doubtless many of them felt it to be the untimate of God's grace and mercy. Why should they not? Their cries had gone up to him and he had heard them, and with a mighty hand had delivered them from bondage. It was not necessary that one javelin should be thrown, nor one life given for this delivery. On the contrary, the Egyptians, moved with a natural fear of the terrors of the Almighty God of Israel, literally urged them to go out and furnished them with the goods for their journey. Because the three are one God, it does not require any stretch of the immagination to see and believe that God, the Invisible Son, was in the midst of Israel in all her travels, being typified by Moses; yet very few of Israel perceived him in any way, even as it is today, many

are without faith and understanding.

However, all the prophets, beginning with Moses, were blessed to envision him by an eye of faith. Only to them to whom He was revealed, in my opinion, had any inkling of the significance of the lamb's blood upon the lintel, and the sacrifices upon the altar. The apostle tells us, "They are not all Israel which are of Israel." Moses, in perhaps the most beautiful and sublime chapter of the Scriptures, Deut. 32, describes national Israel as a very froward generation, children in whom there is no faith. He shows that God charges them with all of this: a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding in them. It appears that even under the legal covenant God required faith and understanding. The New Testament writers tell us that without faith it is impossible to please God.

Deuteronomy 32, also shows that God has secret things laid up in store, and sealed among the treasures. One of the things which was sealed by the will, foreknowledge and pre-determination of God was that LEGAL MINDED ISRAEL should never see that the Gentiles, by the grace of God, should in the fullness of time become fellow-heirs and partakers of the favor of Israel's God. They had no mental or spiritual perception of this New Covenant, in which the righteous laws of God would be taken from the cold inanimate stones and stamped within the heart. They had no faith, no counsel, no understanding of this covenant, in which God would do for men that which they could not do for themselves. They did not understand grace without merit. With few exceptions, I am told, it remains so with all national Israel to this very day.

Yet Peter told them on the day of Pentecost, "The promise is to you and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." At this time Peter had not seen the vision of the sheet let down, nor received the command not to call unclean what God had cleansed. Yet on the day of Pentecost he was moved by the Spirit to, "Enlarge the place of Israel's tent, stretch forth the curtains thereof, lengthen the cords and strengthen the stakes"; so that the afar off Gentiles, the unclean nation should be embraced in the mercies of God.

I believe this declaration to have been the beginning of the revelation of the "universal" gospel. The "all men" of the Scriptures does not embrace every son of Adam, but embraces the nations, both Jew and Greek, who are the called of God, and whom he has cleansed. Keep in mind that the newness of the New Covenant is to man, not to God who alone can do whatsoever his soul desireth. The "universal" Gospel does not guarantee universal salvation; for the Scriptures plainly teach that God has chosen in Christ Jesus and called out of the world a people for his name. It is only those whom God foreknew that he predestinated; it is only those whom he predestinated that he called, etc. (Romans)

There is much more that, if time and space permitted, I would be pleased to have the Lord lead me through, but I shall content myself to commend to every Gentile sinner who has ever felt the warmth of the Holy Spirit, the fulfillment of the new covenant in his soul, these words by Paul to the Ephesian brethren, beginning at 2:11, but especially these words, "Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." This is the true Israie of our God, of which national Israel was only the type.

It is my earnest hope that you may read this with a tolerant and charitable mind, and if it is erroneous, don't believe it. None of us can do anything against the truth only for it. That this is the truth is the hope of this poor

sinner, saved by grace, if saved indeed.

Yours in hope of the calling of Israel's God.

J. B. Duncan

TAKE NOTE

There has been some delay in getting out the history of Welsh Tract church. The money sent in has been properly credited, and we hope now to have the book ready about January.

Editor

VALUABLE BOOKS FOR LOVERS OF THE TRUTH

HASSELL'S CHURCH HISTORY and GILL'S, BODY OF DIVINITY have long been out of print, but are now available at modest prices. All who are acquainted with the writings of these authors will be glad to own and read these two books.

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The Signs Office

NOTICE

In changing the printing of the paper from Annapolis, Md. to Danville, Va. there has been considerable delay in setting up dates, changing addresses, and entering new subscriptions. Part of this delay was due to an oversight in our former printer in making changes. We are now bringing the list up to date, and apologize for the delay. Your money has been received and properly credited.

D. V. S.

EDITORIALS

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CHURCH ORDER

In setting forth some thoughts on this very important matter, we do so with no thought to dictate to our brethren, but with the thought in mind to present such things as we understand them to be the order of the Lord's house. I fully realize that anything we might say on the subject must be in accordance with his word, and the spirit of the Gospel of Jesus Christ if it is to be of profit to anyone. This is a very important subject, and the writer feels very sensibly his own dependence upon an unerring guidance in the matter, hoping that God will bless what is said to his glory, and a better understanding among our people.

Each Church a Soverign Body

The meaning of the word church as we understand it is, "An assembly called out". It has generally been recog-

nized by our people that each church is independent in matters of discipline, and I will here quote the 12th. article in the Articles of Faith of both the Upper Country Line, and the Lower Country Line Associations, and in many others, in substance. "We believe that every church is independent in matters of discipline, and that associations, councils and conferences of ministers or churches, are not to impose on the church the keeping, holding or maintaining of any principle or practice contrary to the churches judgment".

In the commands given unto the churches by the Apostle Paul, these commands were to the churches. Sometime the instruction was to a certain church, at other times it was in a general way, but always to the church. The instruction to one church as to their dealing with trangressions would apply in principle to all. 1 Cor. 4:17, "For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach *everywhere* in every church.

In the fifth and sixth chapters of First Corinthians, (Please read them) we notice that there were various offenses the Apostle referred to, and gave express command to the church as to how to deal with them. One of them was fornication, and the church was commanded to, *"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,* when ye are gathered together, and in my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ. To deliver such an one unto satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus." We would apply this in the same way as, withdraw from everyone that walketh disorderly.

The Apostle further writes upon the matter in the 5th. Ch. 11th. V. "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one not to eat."

It appears that the church is forbidden to eat, (Commune) with such an one until such time that the flesh is destroyed. They are to be delivered unto satan for the destruction of the flesh; until such time repentance has been manifested by turning from whatever sin he has been committing. This destruction of the flesh is to our mind the evidence in the life of one dealt with that the offense that led to their separation from the communion has been subdued by God's abounding grace, to their good.

The minister, as an overseer of the flock, is to reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering, and doctrine. He is to cry aloud when he sees something in the church that is dishonoring to the cause. If he fails to do so then he himself becomes a partaker of the sin. He is hiding that which should be exposed. Churches look to their undershepherds for advice, guidance etc. and if he tolerates the things that are expressly forbidden in the word, and fails to bring the matter before the brethren there is a loss of confidence to a certain extent in his guidance.

The question is often asked, What shall we do when a church divides over a matter, and cannot see eye to eye. In some church rules there is one that reads about like this. "If a minority be grieved at the action of the majority, they shall immediately make it known, and if satisfaction cannot be obtained, help shall be called in from sister churches." This is the substance of this rule, and is in many other church rules. This is a good rule, and if observed, we believe would help often in seeking a common understanding of problems. The majority should always be willing to seek counsel with their brethren when these conditions arise, and the minority be willing to also counsel with sister churches about such matters.

In divisions in a church or association

it is often the case that both sides are more or less to blame. Rushing in by outsiders, and taking sides often lead to more confusion, and division. These matters should be confined to their immediate locality, and especially where no point of doctrine is involved. . "He that passeth by, and meddleth with strife belonging not to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears." Prov. 26:17.

In briefly reviewing the matter there are a few things I believe we would do well to keep in mind. 1st. we are to recognize the soverignty of each church, and its independence in matters of discipline, and when a man does not hear the church, let him be as an heathern and a publican.

2nd. when a man's conduct is such that it is offensive to other churches, and the church fails to carry out the plain teachings of God's word in the matter, that church should be left to it's own affairs and not communed with by other churches until such time that the plain command of God's word is complied with. Yet this church must be left to it's own affairs, hoping God will show them the error of their way.

3rd. All confusion should be left where it starts, and not be meddled with by outsiders, nor sides taken quickly with either side in a division.

4th. Where division exist both sides will be willing to labor for reconciliation.

Now let us consider John's message to the seven churches in Asia, while he was in the Isle called Patmos. Though there was much fault found with them, yet the word of God to them was to REPENT. Let us examine the salutation of John to them. "John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace from him that is, and which was, and which is to come: and from the seven spirits which are before his throne.

And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness and the first begotten from the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.

And hath made us Kings and priests unto God and his father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

I John who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the midst of the Isle called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.

Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and what thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia."

The language speaks for itself. Though there was conditions in the several churches that they were commanded to repent of, or turn from, yet he desire that they receive grace and peace from Jesus Christ, and they are warned that unless they repent the candlestick will be removed out of it's place.

Instead of declaring non fellowship for these churches, John is admonishing them through the spirit to repent. They are STILL THE CHURCHES of Jesus, and the spirit is speaking to them through the Apostle John.

Finally, brethren may we be given patience to wait upon the Lord: to be patient in tribulation; to be kind to one another, always remembering that as poor sinners in the flesh we need the tender watch care on each other for one another's good, and his glory.

D. V. S.

EDITORIAL

"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salva-

tion, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints; for there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterwards destroyed them that believed not." (Jude 3:5).

Every minister that God has called, loves the churches that has been purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ, and over which the Holy Ghost has made him overseer. Unless I am mistaken in my call to the ministry, I desire that those little flocks which I appear before, be strongly indoctrinated in the truth. If a man is called of God to preach, *and grace is given him,* he will be found faithfully contending for sound doctrine, sound practice, and a godly walk among the saints. *And just as certain as he is blessed to that end,* his churches will not be carried about by every wind of doctrine that comes along.

As has been proven to the exercised mind, this writing is to the household of faith. If there is one excluded from this letter of Jude's then it means one that has not been sanctified by God the Father; one that has not been preserved in Jesus Christ; one that has not been called. Such cannot be, and if any have imbibed such an erroneous, Babylonish, blasphemous doctrines, may the Lord bless us with an unction from on high to know better. It is to the beloved, to you that were set apart in the eternal covenant of God before the world was, that Jude gave all diligence to write about this common salvation. Since we could not make sensible reading matter out of the Bible without the 'we' and 'you' and 'us', it follows that everyone is included in the allusion to the common salvation. I know that this is likely to be denied, since it has been so many times, but I feel to take my stand upon the scriptures and on the correct usage of our language that this common salvation applies to everyone included in the first verse.

I do not desire to make any pause just here but to pass on and say that everyone to whom this common salvation is applicable, is the receipient of that salvation. The simple definition of 'common' is this: belonging equally to more than one. This is the experience of the Lord's dear children; it is the teaching of the Bible; it is the true and correct meaning of the written language. Thus, it is good resting ground; it is a complete fulfilment of every desire and aspiration that every child of God has ever had.

Not so many months ago I spoke in the Saints Rest church in Dallas, Texas to an overflow crowd of Primitive Baptists, some of whom were not in fellowship with the doctrine of God's sovereignty over all things and events. During the lunch hour a dear sister who had read after me for years in various periodicals, and who seemed (and I indeed believe was) to be interested in the things of the Spirit, said unto me, do you mean that the salvation of God's children in time is so sure that they do not lose any of it, and that it is such forceful work when wrought in them that they go forward doing the things commanded in the scriptures. Oh, how I felt my inadequacy to reply to this inquiring child, yet there was a delight in my mind to speak of the glorious wonders of the salvation that is of the Lord. I referred to the church as they journeyed from Pentecost. After Peter's preaching (which was brought about by what the Holy Ghost accomplished), there was a glad reception of it. He exhorted them as Jude exhorted them. It was effectual that day; it is still effectual in this day when it is of the Lord. Why, I

asked (and I am asking now), am I, together with my brethren, censored for preaching the effectual work of God in his children, seeing that these all, all, continued stedfastly in the apostles doctrine. The continuity of this traveling, together with manner of it, is so glorious to the Lord's people. Will you notice that? They continued, *and it was in a stedfast manner;* it was in the doctrine that the apostles preached: they were in fellowship; they broke the bread; they continued in prayer; the apostles did many wonders and signs; fear came upon every soul; all that believed were together; *and they all had things in common;* they all sold their goods and parted them to all; they continued daily in accord in the temple; they broke bread from house to house; they did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. *And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved* (Acts 2). Then I went on to speak of this being true with the church in its organic body as well as those on the outside. Thus, this inquirer was satisfied about what we believed about time salvation, but she thought that predestination was preached in a way to license men to sin. As gently as I could, I referred her to the fact that it was wicked hands that crucified and slain the Lord Jesus Christ; but that it was only *after* he was delivered to them by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; that they were all, gathered together to do what was done. But, said she, did the gathering of them together make God the author of sin? I asked her if Pharoah committed sin in his dealing with the children of Israel. She said yes. Then I told her that God raised him up for what he did do, and that the "raising up" of Pharoah and the "gathering together" of the hosts that crucified Jesus was by the same power, but that what they did was by their vile and wicked nature, and was not all worked in them by the Spirit. Further, when this kind of predestination was preached to this stedfast and continuing church, that they all were in one heart and soul.

At the time of this incident in my life, I felt that it was necessary to speak to this dear child of grace. Not that I felt that it was optional with me, no sir, not that kind of conditional doctrine, but I felt moved in tender compassion to speak of the salvation and sovereignty of our God. Now drive a stake there. We hope to return to it. The Lord chose the apostles; he qualified them; he sent them. In all the lids of all the Bibles, there is not the least intimation that any apostle ever had to go to school to better fit him for preaching. We know, beyond any doubt whatsoever, that Paul did not choose this way, and, having been chosen, that he did not go to school to better preach. We know that neccesity was laid on him. Mark that 'laying' well, and mark that that was 'laid' well. This is solid hard corn; this is the common salvation. That necessity that was laid on Paul, is laid on all. If a thing is not necessary, very well, squirm out of it, but when it is done, it carries it's own testimony: it was not necessary to begin with. But that necessity which was laid on Paul was *necessity* and not volition of the human will. And that 'need' that Jude wrote to the Lord's people was laid on him. Was it effectual? The answer is that he did write, and that he did exhort. And as Peter's exhortation was profitable and produced continuity in service, I feel just like saying that when the Spirit of the Lord takes the things that Christ has given his ministers and shows them to us that there will be action and service. And it will not be mixed with fleshly walk and talk. It will be acceptable service, for if I remember aright, Paul prayed for grace to that end. And for fear that I may be misunderstood, and as a result, misrepresented, I want it definitely understood that I believe that it is right to do right and never right to

do wrong. I had as soon have (yea, I had rather have, for they would at least be better neighbors and citizens) a conditionalist that was honestly looking at the scriptures in that light, than to have one that thought that they authorized the children of God to drink whiskey, get drunk, and carouse around.

If God does work both the will and the do in his people, it seems that it will be at the right time, does it not? And, if he does work it in them, it is his word going forth out of his mouth, is it not? If it does go forth out of his mouth it will prosper in the thing where unto he sent it, will it not? Then this word going forth out of the Lord's mouth into the mind of Jude produced prosperity, didn't it? It prospered to the extent that Jude wrote. Unless the Lord has quit sending forth his word from his mouth, it will prosper today in his people in the same way that it prospered in Jude. Just as there is prosperity, there is action—loyal, willing service to God. I have read my histories carefully and as for as I have found there has not been a time since Jude wrote this letter when the church was not contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Just one time in my life for any length of time and any degree of depth, was I permitted to slip into error in thinking that we, as a people, were about to die out. I did think it for a while; I acknowledge that the sin and lack was in me, but as I tried to "walk on the water" and began to sink, the Lord reached forth his hand, as I hope, and brought me back to his feet and to sweetly trusting in his all prevailing power. Today, and for a goodly length of time now, I have had the sweetest assurance that any poor sinner ever had, that my God is on his throne, and that the Spirit of the Lord is safely leading his dear children to fountains of living water; that they are being led in green pastures and still waters, is the doctrine that is most precious to me.

However, I want to assure you that the Lord did not lead me into this error, I do not believe at all that God led David into sin; there is not the least harmony in my experience to that end, but that when he quit leading me, immediately and instantly I was in the flesh and could not maintain my integrity. My hope embraces the precious fact that Jude's epistle was sent to me in power and in the Holy Ghost, and that he that first made me, and, as I hope, had kept me alive, was trying me and refining me for the earnest contending that salvation was, and is, of the Lord from the design in eternity to the landing of every saint in the haven of rest to which we hope that we aspire.

Now let us notice the certain men who have crept in unawares. They were 'certain men' then in Jude's day. Now, today, there are certain men who are still creeping in unawares. I am fully persuadad that these certain men are fully numbered and known to our God, and that none, no, not the first one, has been able to creep by his vigilant eye. They have gotten in by us, it is true enough, slipping in unawares, slipping in by their cunning craftiness, acting out the spirit of their father the devil, without any coercion or influence from the God who made them. But, as the mob that crucified the Lord of glory acted out of their wickedness, yet, they were, together with these ungodly men, ordained to this condemnation. How did ungodly men turn the grace of God into lasciviousness? Did they, ungodly men possess grace? While ordained to condemnation, did they have grace given them as did godly men? The Lord willing we shall see.

W. D. G.

West Point, Miss.

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing $5.00 to renew my

subscription two years. If I know my heart, I love all it stands for, and I love to read the inspiring letters.

I have had a name with these people for forty-four years, but have never felt fit to live with such good people. I have tried to serve as a deacon for forty years, but have been a poor one. I am seventy-two years old and still enjoying good health.

Yours in hope of a better world.

L. M. Cook

Dallas, Texas

Editors Signs of the Times:

I am sending a copy of the Experience of dear old Brother J. W. Haynes, deceased, of Rising Star, Texas. Also some comments on different points of Bible doctrine, which all seem good to me. Bro. Haynes said he wanted to leave this as a "Memior" for his wife and children, that they may know what he believed on certain points of doctrine.

I think it would make good reading matter for the Signs, which I appreciate so much. If you approve, and there is not too much of it, I hope to see it in the Signs at your pleasure.

In hope of eternal life,
(Elder) C. B. Teague.

---

635 K. Ewing Street,
Seattle 99, Washington

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing my subscrption for the Signs for I enjoy it so much.

I was privileged to be at the three day meeting at Riffe, which was a season of refreshing. I belong to the church at Chehalis. Elder Fisher isn't so well and could not attend the Riffe meeting, so three car loads from Riffe went to his home and had services on Friday, which helped to cheer him up some. Two joined by baptism on Sunday; one being my son. I was surely pleased and hope he will be given strength to walk in his dear father's footsteps.

A sister joined by baptism in July, at Chehalis. She lives not far from Seattle and is able to go to church with me. The Lord alone knows how thankful I am to have someone like that as I miss my dear husband so much, for we always went together. When I have been to a meeting, I can say with the hymn writer, "If such the sweetness of the streams we are privileged to sip by the way, what must it be when we get to the Fountain Head above."

Hope I have not tired you in reading this, but I feel so full. May God bless you all is my prayer.

Mrs. J. W. Cameron

Brownsville, Tenn.

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am enclosing money order for renewal of the Signs. It is the greatest comfort I have since losing my husband last February. Sometimes I feel that I cannot go on, as so much of me went with him.

One day as I was so miserable, I picked up a Signs and turned to a letter written by Sister Wright, who had just had an experience similar to mine, even as to the number of years married, and her husband being the hospital in an iron lung when the end came. She truly expressed my feelings when she said, "The days and nights are now so long and lonely and I do miss him so."

Some days I wonder how I live through them, and others I have a tiny ray of comfort and do try to thank my Father in Heaven for his wonderful mercies. But I am still so lost and bewildered, yet I'm submissive to the Lord's will.

Sometimes I wonder what we are here for and how can we do things that

are pleasing in God's sight. I do so want to do something to show I love our God and my fellow man, but what can I do? So many Bible verses come to my mind which make me feel so helpless and unworthy, and by the time they pass, my thoughts make me realize all I can say is, "Thy will not mine be done. Be still and know I am God."

Sometimes I am told there are conditions whereby we can work out our salvation. Yet there comes another verse into my mind, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." When we know belief is faith, and faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. And doesn't the Bible teach that the Word is Jesus!

I won't bother you longer with my doubts and fears as I grope along in the darkest hours I have ever spent in this life. Do wish someone would write to me who has lost loved ones, especially their life's companions, and tell me how they came out from the deep shadows which seem to engulf me. Yours humbly and unworthy of space.

Mrs. Verta Osborne

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association has lost several members of her body since we last met, to-wit: Deacon Charles Lynch, of Little Creek Church; Sister Lenora Bailey, of Rewastico Church; Sister Martha Holloway, of Snow Hill Church; Sisters Laura Hall and Annie Fooks, of Salisbury Church, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, First, that we leave upon our records some mention of our love and fellowship for these faithful ones whom God in his infinite wisdom has removed from these mortal shores. Their memory will live in our hearts, as we believe our love and fellowship with them was that blessed tie that will not let us part.

Second, We desire to bow in humble submission to God's holy will and truly say, Thy will be done.

Third, That we extend our sympathy to each family, hoping that God will reconcile them to his holy will.

Done by the unanimous voice of the association in session with Little Creek Church, Delmar, Delaware, October 23, 1952.

Elder H. M. Bennett, Moderator
Maude Laws, Clerk
William Adkins, Asst. Clerk

OBITUARY

WALTER WEEKS

The grim angel of death visited the Maine Association and removed from a long life of activity and usefulness brother Walter Weeks, who passed away at his home in Gardiner, Maine, September 4th, 1952, after a lingering illness, though he was confined to his bed but little over a week. He was eighty-one years old, and is survived by his wife, one sister, eight children (of whom three are members of the Old School Baptist church), twenty-one grandchildren, twenty great-grandchildren; besides several nieces and nephews.

The writer officiated at the funeral services, assisted by Mr. L. H. Clark of the First Baptist church of Gardiner, for many years a close friend of the family. The interment was in Libby Hill cemetery. Brother Weeks was a man of unusual qualities of character in many respects. His stainless honor, faultless integrity, upright walk before God and man, and his love for the church of his membership and devotion to its cause were outstanding attributes of an exemplary life. He was generous to a fault and intensely devoted to his family. He was married in 1894 to Miss Mabel Gowell, and nine children were the fruit of this union, eight of whom survive.

He was a member of the South Gardiner Old School Baptist church for over forty years and served as deacon of the church many of these years. For fifty-seven years he was continuously employed by the L. D. Warren Company of Gardiner Me., manufacturers of fine India paper used in printing bibles and dictionaries. He retired in 1949. He will be sadly missed by his church and the community where he had lived so long and was known so well.

Arnold H. Bellows

LOU EMMA EDEN

Whereas it has pleased our Lord and Master to call to Himself our dear sister in Christ, Lou Emma Eden, be it resolved that we humbly submit to Him who doeth all things well, after the counsel of His own will and holds the issues of life and death in His hand.

Sister Eden was born in Patrick County, Va. April 10, 1870, departed this life July 7, 1952, making her stay in this troublesome and sinful world 82 years 2 months and 27 days. She was the daughter of the late Mr. & Mrs. M. E. Harris.

In 1890 she was married to J. L. Eden and they lived happily together for over 62 years. To this union was born one son who preceded her in death about ten years.

She leaves to mourn their loss besides her devoted husband and her church, 8 grandchildren, 3 brothers, 2 sisters, and a host of other relatives and friends. But we feel our loss is her eternal gain, and that her spirit is now resting in the paradise of God.

About 49 years ago she was received in the Primitive Baptist Church at Concord and was baptized by Eld. J. Matt Blancett. Several years ago after coming to North Carolina she moved her membership to Dan River Church and remained a faithful member until her death. Sister Eden loved her church and she enjoyed visiting sister churches. She suffered much in her last days and attended service many times when she was seemingly unable to go. We feel in her afflictions she remembered the Lord.

The funeral was conducted at the home in Draper, N. C. by her beloved Pastor Eld. D. V. Spangler and Eld. R. S. Smith. Her body was tenderly laid to rest in the Dan View Cemetery at Draper to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, with thousands of His Angels to gather His jewels into the New Jerusalem where sickness, sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more.

Written by order of the church at Dan River in conference Saturday night before the Fourth Sunday in July 1952.

W. C. Vipperman

ALEXENA HAMILTON

Alexena Hamilton, daughter of the late John N. and Eliza Hamilton was born February 27, 1870 and died July 25, 1952.

This beloved sister united with the Primitive Baptist Church on Saturday before the second Sunday in August, 1908 at Hunting Quarter Church. She was baptized by the late Elder L. H. Hardy.

Surviving are her brother, Allen Hamilton and a number of nieces and nephews.

Her funeral was preached by Elder R. W. Gurganus at Bay Sealevel Church at which her membership is recorded.

She was laid to rest in Styron's Cemetery among a beautiful display of flowers, to await the coming of her Saviour. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord".

May the bereaved ones be reconciled to His will realizing that, "All things work together for good to them that love God and to them that are called according to His purpose."

Adopted by Bay Sealevel Church in conference Aug. 23, 1952.

Elder Eddie Humphrey, Mod.
Mrs. Lula T. Mason, C. C.
Mrs. Nellie Williamson, Assistant C.

MRS. ANNIE FOOKS

Mrs. Annie Fooks, of Salisbury, Md. died at the Peninsula General Hospital, Salisbury, Md. July 25, 1952, at the age of 89 years, one month and nineteen days.

She was the daughter of Asbury and Mary P. Kelley, of Worcester County, Maryland. In the year 1885 she was married to the late Affria Fooks who preceded her in death twenty five years.

To this union were born two sons, William F. and A. Welton, she was preceded in death by Welton, in July of 1945. Surviving are one son, William F. and two sisters, Mrs. William Pope, and Mrs. Alice Watson, of Salisbury, Maryland; also nieces and nephews.

Sister Fooks received a good hope through Grace over fifty years ago, and was received into the Nassaongo Old School Baptist Church, and later removed her membership to Salisbury church by letter, where she remained a faithful member until death.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler in the Old School Baptist meeting house, in Salisbury, Maryland.

The Church, family and friends have truly lost a lovable person in the passing of our beloved sister in Christ. Her delight was in the assembly of the saints, and hearing the word of God proclaimed. Her lovely home was open to her beloved people and she entertained many of them in her long life in the church.

May the God of all Grace grant grace to all who mourn, and say, "Thy will be done."

D. V. Spangler

MRS HATTIE WARD

On August 29, 1952, it pleased the Lord to remove from this life our highly esteemed sister in Christ, Hattie Ward. Her death occured at the Davis Memorial Hospital, Elkins, W. Va., after a serious illness. She was stricken at her home on August 7th, and remained in a critical condition until her departure.

She was born February 1, 1882, making her

stay on earth seventy years, six months and twenty-eight days. Her husband, Mr. Ray Ward, preceeded her in death by seven years. Many years ago she received a precious hope in Christ Jesus and for many years manifested her love for the truth as it is in Jesus. She united with the Leading Creek Primitive Baptist Church on July 16, 1950, and was gladly received into our fellowship.

Though her membership in the visible church was of short duration, it was a great comfort to her, and she was known and loved far and near, and had a host of friends around her home community.

Surviving are the following: Lanier Ward, Zanesville, Ohio, Austin and Waldo Ward, Elkins, W. Va., Willard, Arlington, Va., and Lawrence, Parkersburg, W. Va.; and Mrs. W. W. White, South Charleston, W. Va., Miss Ada Ward, Columbus, Ohio, Mrs. Dorotha Toadvine, Arlington, Va., and Mrs. L. E. Enlow, Baltimore, Md. Also a brother, Forris Truplett, Cumberland, Md., and a sister, Mrs. T. J. Chenoweth, Elkins, W. Va. There are seventeen grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder V. B. Linn at the Lohr Funeral Home, Elkins W. Va. and were largely attended. The floral tributes were numerous in testimony of the high esteem in which Sister Ward was held. She was laid to rest in the Maplewood Cemetery to await the resurrection of these bodies.

Written by request of Leading Creek Church.

(Elder) V. B. Linn

MRS. EFFIE JACKSON EDWARDS

The passing of Sister Effie Jackson Edwards is one of deep concern to the family, relatives, friends, and the little church at Mt. Zion is moved in grief at their loss. The death occured at the home of her daughter, Kathleen, in Eutaw, Alabama, on March 18, 1952.

Sister Effie was widely and favorably known among the saints of God for her devotion and faithfulness to the cause, to the children of God, to her Saviour's commands, and to the Signs of the Times. It can well be said that we have indeed lost a true mother in Israel. She loved her children and grandchildren with true motherly devotion and singleness of heart, but there was a love for the things of God, and for the children of God, that surpassed the fading love of earthly families, which is dissovled in death, but in our contemplation of that home of God's children, we are fully persuaded that the love of God that was shed abroad in her heart will live on and on.

I have been her pastor for about twelve years, and during that time I have spent many days and nights in the Edwards home—time that will never be erased from my mind while I am blessed to retain my reason. While at the beginning of this pastorship I was just a lad of a boy, yet we three, the boy and the old brother and sister, were blessed, as I believe, to be as completely satisfied in each others company as three young or old could have been. Under divine blessing, it was she that often gave encouragement and solace when the little church looked that it would go down.

She did not believe in works; yet I think that I am justified in saying that she came as near living her profession as any one that ever bore the name of Jesus' follower. I have been much annoyed by a fiery nature which sometimes gave vent to ridicule in the pulpit to those that were not of us. It was given her to know the truth in all of its phases, and to know the right deportment of a minister. And she gave me advice about this and the way of Godly zeal and deportment, and I feel to leave this testimony on record concerning her life that it was above reproach in the home, in the world, and among the children of God.

She loved the Signs and especially did she love the writings, and the lovely spirit in which they were written, of the late Elder Dodson. She did not read any other paper, for in it she found all that an Old School Baptist paper should be.

About two weeks before she died I visited her. I asked her if she had found Jesus a present help—if he had ever failed her in any promise. Her answer was a clear testimony to that salvation that had been hers to enjoy for forty years, she having joined the church at Mt. Zion in the spring of 1923. The day before my visit she could not talk; the day after she could not, nor never did much after, she being afflicted with that dread disease, cancer, which affected her speech.

She leaves brother Edwards, to whom she was married in 1893, two sons, Robert and Austin, of Birmingham, one daughter, Mrs. Kathleen Griffin, (no relative of mine) of Eutaw, and two sisters and other relatives. The little church has lost much, but resting in the fond embrace that she is far better off than we, and that, through grace, we will meet her over home.

Funeral services were conducted at the funeral parlor of the Brown Service Home in in Norwood (Birmingham) by the writer, after which her body was laid to rest in Elmwood Cemetery.

Elder W. D. Griffin

MRS. RACHEL BEAL POTTER

Sister Rachel Beal Potter, died at a nursing home in Topsham, Maine, on November 19, 1951. She was born in Bowdoin, Maine, May 19, 1869, the daughter of Elder Zacheus and Phoebe Trufant Beal. She was married to Woodbury Potter and lived in Bath until 1936, when they moved to Topsham. Mr. Potter died about ten years before his wife's death.

Sister Rachel was in her middle fifties when she had a wonderful experience of grace. Her eyes were opened to see the truth during a sermon by Elder Dodson at one of the Association meetings at Whitefield. She joined the church at Bowdoinham. Previously she had been active in the Eastern Star and other organizations, and she had a soul searching task in trying to convince her former associates that she could no longer enjoy their social activities.

She was a firm believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine and loved to attend the meetings, and often opened her own home for the assemblies on Sunday when the meetings could not be held in the church.

She enjoyed especially corresponding with some whose letters in the Signs interested her. She spent hours reading her Bible. She was a good and faithful sister and was loved by her brethren. At the end her faith and trust was strong that God would still guide and keep her. Her passing is a sad loss to the church.

Minerva Dunlap

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Inasmuch as God in his infinite mercy, has taken unto himself one of our dear members, Sister Verna Stowe, who passed away July 6, 1952; the church of Shepherd Fold hopes to bow in humble submission to He who doeth all things well, and ask for grace to say, "Thy will be done."

RESOLVED, that we extend our deep and sincere sympathy to the family and relatives of the deceased. May they be comforted in their time of sorrow by the sovereign and all-powerful God, through Jesus Christ, whom she loved to worship, and

RESOLVED, that a copy of these resolutions be spread on our church book, a copy be given the family, and a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference, August 2, 1952.

Elder W. O. Beene, Moderator
Irene Wisenbaker, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 121 DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1953 NO. 1

GOD IS JUST THE
SAME TODAY
(Quoted by Eld. Slausen
in Corresponding Letter)

When Moses and his soldiers from
Egyptian land did flee,
Their enemies behind them, in front of
them the sea.
God raised the waters like a wall, and
opened up the way,
And the God that lived in Moses' time
is just the same today.

When Daniel, faithful to his God, would
not bow down to men,
And by his enemies was hurled into
the lion's den.
God shut the lion's mouth we read, and
robbed him of his prey,
And the God that lived in Daniel's time
is just the same today.

When David and Goliath met the wrong
against the right,
The Giant armed with human power,
and David with God's might.
God's power with David's sling and
stone the Giant low did lay,
And the God that lived in David's time
is just the same today.

When Jonah left his country and was
swallowed by a whale
The guilt and anguish that he bore no
human tongue could tell.
God helped him make dry land again
when willing to obey,
And the God that lived in Jonah's time
is just the same today.

When Pentecost had fully come and fire
from heaven did fall
The Holy Ghost like a rushing wind
baptized them one and all.
Three thousand were converted then
and were made soldiers right away,
And the God that lived at Pentecost is
just the same today.

Then courage take poor helpless child
your race will soon be run,
And you can lay your armor by and
dwell with Christ at home.
When we've been there ten thousand
years bright shining as the sun,
We have no less days to sing God's
praise than when we first begun.

Mrs. Lizzie Adams

We are re-publishing a letter written to Elder P. D. Gold of Wilson, N. C. by Elder C. B. Hassell of Williamston, N. C. This letter is re-published from Zion's Landmark, of May 1873.

Elder Hassell was the moderator of the Kehukee Association for many years, and started the work of compiling the Hassell's church history which contained over 900 pages. This work was completed after his death by his son, Elder Sylvester Hassell.

Elder P. D. Gold was owner, and publisher of Zions Landmark for many years, which was published at Wilson, N. C.

Both men were noted ministers of their day, having traveled and preached in many of the states in the United States. Very few have equalled such men in the ministry, and yet we notice by this letter that each knew the depravity of their nature, and were ever wrestling with the powers of darkness, and made to say with others, "O wretch-

ed man that I am, in this analogue."

Editor

Williamston, N. C.
April 14th. 1873

Dear Brother Gold;

Your brotherly epistle of the 1st. was duly received and eagerly perused. I am glad to learn that you were at Tosnoit Union meeting. I have some expectation of attending the Northern associations, and if so, it will afford me much pleasure to give the brethren your kind regards and notify them of the many pleasant thoughts you have concerning them. They would much prefer seeing you to hearing from you. A Baptist need desire no trip more agreeable than he will have by attending the five spring associations, beginning with Baltimore and ending with Chemung; especially if he takes in the Conference of Western New York, which succeeds the Chemung.

You must have a queer genius up there in Wilson. You told me of a man there who lives in an old tabernacle with the plague of leprosy in the wall, and he doesn't seem to know how to get out of the house or have it cleansed. He needs the priest to look at it, but is slow to go to him. He has seen his power displayed before, but is about as backward as though he had never seen it. He has gone to him before now, but yet is still so ignorant he does not know how to go, and if he knew how, he is not able, because of weakness. He must be taught the way and then be carried along the way or else he finds no saviour. If left to himself his house is his grave and the plague in the wall sweeps all before it.

You say the man is so badly diseased himself that although he has had some evidences of divine favor, some assurance that Jesus, Jesus only, can do helplees sinners good, yet that he is trusting in the arm of flesh, and amusing himself with his own foolish thoughts and self works.

You say that the disease has prostrated his senses so that he knows not the way of himself and knows nothing as he ought to know, but feels to be the least and meanest of all things.

Now what shall be done with or for such an one? Good people will avoid him. The upright and pure minded who never did any harm in their lives, who always kept the law from their youth up; who fast and pray and give alms, and always wanted to be Christians, will be sure to look down upon him with contempt and refuse to keep his company. They are not going to be contaminated by contact with such depravity, No, not they.

But I have a match for him, if we can only get them together. Here is a man down here that is one of the greatest oddities you have seen and would do well to pair off with your leprous Jew.

This man down here was so diseased that he died once but he is alive now. He was killed at one time and then made alive. He was lost but is found now. He was blind but he sees; he was deaf but he hears; he was lame, but he walks; he was dumb but he talks. He is a great ignoramous, hardly knows his right hand from his left, doesn't know his alphabet, thinks foolishly, talks foolishly, acts foolishly, and it seems doubtful whether he has the sense he was born with. He is a terror to himself, is afraid of himself, has no confidence in himself. Sometimes he would do good, but evil is present with him. So that the things he would not do he does, and the things he would do he does not. He is an old man and a little child, and there is an old man that goes with him wherever he goes, meddles in everything he does, gets in his way, gets before him and behind and tries to frustrate all his purposes, looks impudently in his face, coaxes, threatens and jeers him so that he has no peace of his life, and can't get clear of this troublesome old man's company.

It is said of this strange man in our

town, that he is a great sinner and a worthy saint. That he is human and divine, a worm and an angel, part God, part devil, good and bad, right and wrong, truth and error, light and darkness, — all enter into the composition of his nature.

He is a wonder to himself and many others. He is in people's way. He annoys them, troubles them, won't let them alone, is a disturber of THEIR peace AND THEY SAY IS ALWAYS TURNING THE WORLD (their World) upside down that he is a pestilent fellow and a mover of sedition. Yet they can't well get rid of him and sometimes conclude they might as well let him alone. They say of him that he is troubled on every side, yet not distressed, perplexed but not in despair, persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed, always bearing about in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in his body.

Now brother Gold, if your diseased man in Wilson can surpass in drollery this comical creature in Williamston, I should like to see him do it. At any rate I should like to see them together, if only for a short space. Can't you and I fix a plan to get them together, so as to look each other in the face.

Yours in hope,
C. B. Hassell.

It sems to me the plague is worse, the diseased far deeper, in this sufferer in Wilson than the one Williamston; though from what I can learn from that one the diseases are similar. If brother Hassell will please bring the one in Williamston to Wilson we will see how he behaves here and will gladly entertain the Stranger.

P. D. Gold

Martinsville, Va.

Dear Editors:

I think the lettter enclosed is good. With your approval you may publish in the Signs.

J. E. Burgess

Aug. 9, 1952

Dear Elder Burgess:

Just a few words in appreciation for the loan of the Signs of the Times, also to Mrs. Burgess for sacrificing her privilege of reading them first. We appreciate you both more than we can express in words or writing. Surely you are both blessed in your generosity.

We enjoyed every page in the Signs and it is comforting to know there are so many yet who are not afraid to declare the truth as (I see it) in Christ Jesus.

I think the association with those who have the spirit of the Lord is by far our greatest blessing, and when we are able to comfort any fellow believer we are performing good works, as set forth in the word of truth. "As oft as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

This is the spiritual works controlled by the power of God, and is God's work in his children, and that leaves us no room for boasting, or claiming it as emanating from our carnal life or nature, as some claim and seem to think.

As for myself I know in my nature there is no good, being utterly dependent upon the Lord for all good deeds, thoughts, and actions. We would if we could destroy all carnality, and lay aside every weight, and the sin that does so easily beset us, and run with patience the race set before us. But this has not been the Lord's will, so we have to journey on as the path is laid out before us, hoping we can see a ray of light and comfort in the way.

I have said more than I intended. So I will desist for now by hoping the Great Jehovah will continue to bless you both, with all spiritual blessings, enabling you to be "Instant in season, and out of season rebuking with all long

suffering and doctrine." Come to see us when you can, and especially, when so impressed. Thanks again.

B. L. Snyder and Wife

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." (Rev. 3:20)

The word, Behold, means to regard with attention, or to fix the mind, or listen. Let us consider who is speaking and who is being spoken to. We find that it is Jesus who is speaking, and that it is his people who are being spoken to. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock," saith Jesus. We who have a keen sense of hearing, if we heard someone knocking at our door, would arise at once and open the door. If, upon opening the door we found it to be a friend or relative, we would at once invite them to come in. But if we were deaf, we would not hear the knocking, and so would not open the door. I am speaking naturally, as you see.

But now let us come to the spiritual part. There must be a prerequiste for a man to hear what the Spirit speaketh. What is this that is so necessary? The Holy Spirit must first begin a good work in the heart before one can understand the things of the Spirit, — one must be born again. We have nothing to do with our natural birth whatsoever; neither do we have anything to do with our second birth. The Bible plainly teaches that God has an elect people, chosen in Christ from the foundation of the world; and that the Scriptures were written for this elect people.

My understanding, therefore, is that the words, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock," apply only to this elect people. In verse nineteen of this chapter, we read, "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent." These words are a comfort to those who feel that they are the chief of sinners. Notice that it is only those whom He loves that He rebukes and chastens. It is written in another place, "If ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then ye are bastards and not sons." In reading the messages to the seven churches which were in Asia, we find that five of these churches had departed from the way of righteousness; so they must be rebuked. But Christ said, as many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. If he had not loved them, he would have let them go their own way, which would be destruction.

Now again, "If any man hear my voice"; notice the "if" in this sentence. I cannot see where there is anything conditional in these words. It does not say, if any man WILL hear my voice, but, if any man HEAR my voice. Notice the difference. I know that many religious teachers teach that this Scripture is addressed to the entire race of mankind, and that it is up to everybody to hear His voice, open the door and let Him (Jesus) come in. They have a song, "Let Jesus come into your heart." They are honest and sincere, I have no doubt, or at least some of them.

Now let us get right down to the root of the matter: Could you keep from hearing that Still, Small Voice when it began speaking to you? Did you not open the door, so to speak, and say, Yes I am a sinner, do with me as you see fit; I am unworthy of thy notice, but if it be thy will have mercy on me. Then one day your burden was gone, and you rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Why did you do it? Was it not because your deaf ears were unstopped, your blind eyes opened and your heart made to understand the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone. And could you not then rejoice with the Apostle when he said he was confident that He who had begun a good work in you, would perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Yes, Christ begins the good work

and He will carry it on to completion.

And now to consider the twenty-first verse briefly. "To him that overcometh". Is there anything conditional in these words? I do not think so; because we are told in another place how they overcame: Rev: 12:11, "And they overcame him (the dragon) by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death." In this verse there are two thrones mentioned. According to the reading, there is a throne for Christ and one for his Father. I have never seen a throne where an earthly king sits, but I can imagine it is of great beauty and splendor.

Now what is the office of a king? Is it not to rule over his subjects? If there are no subjects, there is no need for a king. Christ says that He overcame and is set down with his Father in his throne. In like manner, all that overcometh by the shedding of His blood, will he grant to sit with him in his throne. Then, at this present time, Christ has a throne for himself. But where is his throne? To my understanding, the true church is his kingdom here on earth, and He is king over it. For it is written that He is head over all things to his church, which is his body. But some day (we know not when) Christ will deliver the kingdom, or his kingdom, up to the Father, and He himself will be subject to the Father which did put all things under his feet: that God may be all in all. Read 1 Corinthrians 15:24-28.

Now to consider the twenty-second verse. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." It occurs to me that the sound of the gospel is embraced in these words. "Let him hear." That is to say, preach to all who have an ear to hear. Hold not back the truth from anyone who hath an ear to hear. It matters not who they are, if they have an ear let them hear. The Apostle said, "Necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is me if I preach not the gospel." And he said more, "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the barbarians, to the Wise," etc. This Apostle was a God sent preacher. He did not fail to declare the whole counsel of God; but in doing so he brought the wrath of his countrymen down on his head. He continued on, however, and at last could say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course," etc.

Where the Lord has implanted his word, it will never return unto him void. Whether the gift be small or large, it will be exercised according to the measure of it.

I have presented my views and I believe what I have written to be the truth.

Yours in hope,
A. T. Benson.

EXPERIENCE OF JOHN WILLIAM HAYNES

Concluded

Though I must confess that the sins I have committed since this, even daily, do give me much trouble, but when the goodness of God leads to repentance and we can feel the sweet smiles of the Saviour's face, then all is well again; and we feel so glad that Christ is exalted a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and remission of sins unto Israel.

Since the Lord has done so much for me, I began to feel it my duty to obey him, for He had commanded that the believer, the regenerated, — those born again, to follow him in baptism, and I was much impressed to be baptized and began to look about for the church of Christ. I had always loved the Old Baptists as a people, and upon carefully investigating their doctrine of salvation by grace, I found it exactly harmonized with my little experience. So it was not long before I knew where I wanted to cast my lot.

But, Oh, my imperfections were so great that when I had the opportunity

to offer I would shrink from it, feeling too weak and sinful to be among such good people as I thought these to be. I felt that if I was deceived, and still in my sins and without God and without hope in the world, I did not want to deceive these good people. So this state of things went on and on. Sometimes I went to meeting almost fully determined to offer to the church, but would as often shrink back from what I felt to be my duty.

In June, 1884, we moved to Texas, just my wife and I for we had no children then, and stopped temporarily near Rising Star, in Fastland County. The country was very sparcely settled then, but Elder P. Lambert, who lived about twenty miles away, preached occasionally at a little school house near us and on August 8, 1885 a church called Macedonia was organized by Elders Burks, P. Lambert and J. B. Taylor. Elder Lambert was elected Moderator and Pastor, and D. J. Hull, church Clerk. At their next Conference, September 12, 1885, I went forward and asked for a home with them. After relating as best I could some of the dealing of the Lord with me, I was cordially received amid tears of rejoicing, and was baptized next day in Ceperas Creek by the pastor. This is another time in my life well remembered, and I was there relieved of a burden which I could not have been relieved of any other way. "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." But I have felt so little and unworthy and felt I had deceived these good people.

In April, 1887, I asked for a letter and moved to Pope County, Arkansas, and joined Sharron Church, near Russelville. In 1890 I moved back to Texas, bringing my letter and placing it with the same church I had first joined, and there my membership remains to the present. Elders P. Lambert, J. F. Richardson, R. Jenkins and J. C. Kilgore have served this church as pastors, and I have tried to serve as it's Clerk almost continually since 1896.

In November, 1912, my dear wife joined this church by experience and was baptized by dear old Elder J. C. Kilgore. Thus my cup was again filled to overflowing. She has been a great companion to me, from first to last, "through thick and thin."

In conclusion, will I say that I am aware that what I have here written is poorly stated, and that I have left much unsaid, but it is dedicated for whatever it might be worth, to my wife and children, and to any others who might be interested, as a short sketch of my imperfect life.

Saragossa, Ala.

Signs of the Times,

Dear Brethren:

You will find check enclosed for one renewal one subscription and for my own renewal.

I spent yesterday with a precious friend and sister in the Lord, although her name is not on a church book. I see evidence of the Lord's dealings with her. She is almost an invalid and isn't able to get out to church, and her eyesight is failing so that she cannot read long at a time now. However, she has read much in her life and, for her age, she has a wonderful memory.

Our subject yesterday was the eleventh Chapter of Revelations. I wish some of you who have been given light of the Two Witnesses and Olive Trees would write your views. I am not able to understand much of the Scriptures, and especially the deep things we find in Revelations, but I think both Moses and the Prophets testified of Jesus Christ. When the rich man asked for someone to warn his brothers, Abraham said, "They have Moses and the Prophets."

When the Saviour was on the mount and was transfigured, and after Moses and Elias disappeared, the Voice said, "This is my beloved Son hear ye him." No need for the witness now, — the Saviour was to speak for himself. But

poor old Peter thought it would be the thing to do to build three altars. After what had been revealed to them, it would seem that Peter would have known that he was to hear him who had been declared the beloved of the Father.

All these things are comforting to the little children for we too get confused. Often I feel afraid of what the future holds, not so much for myself but for my children and grand-children. When we meet for our services, just a few meet with us, and the rest of the world just look full of curosity toward our little church. Some of my neighbors try to modernize me and educate me in my ignorance. When to me, it is the greatest degree of ignorance to try to help Israel's God do anything. He has already done His work and it is perfect, — as time rolls on, it is revealed to US, not to HIM. I know He will handle all the wars and frightful things that are in the future for us.

A little sister in hope,
Mrs. M. G. Hand

Dallas, Texas

Dear Sister Lessie:

Somehow you seem to continue to come across my mind, and I thought I would answer your letter of a few days ago, which I enjoyed very much. I am always glad to hear from the dear old Baptists.

While I was thinking along this line, some Scriptures came into my mind: "Bind up the broken hearted." Upon looking it up in Isaiah 61:1-3, it reads, "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of our Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified."

It brought tears to my eyes, as I felt I must move in such a manner and proclaim these things: to bind up the brokenhearted and preach good tidings, etc. To bind up the broken hearted seems to be foremost in my mind at this time. To bind up something properly, we must have the proper thing to bind with. It seems that I keep thinking of this in connection with you: is the Lord sending me to bind a broken heart and to comfort one who mourns? If so, may He give me grace and power from on high that I may speak in power and demonstration of the Holy Spirit.

How are we going to bind the broken hearts, and what are we going to bind it with? "Is there no balm in Gilead, is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughters of my people recovered?" (Jer. 8:22). Yes, there is a physician that never lost case; the blessed Lord Jesus, of whom the prophet spoke when he said, "With his stripes we are healed."

Where shall we go to find something to bind a broken heart and comfort one who mourns? Surely we will search for a balm, the soothing salve, as well as the strong material to bind with: In 2 Corinthians 12:9, "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Yes, whatever the sufferings may be, whatever the afflictions and sorrows may be, the grace of God is sufficient for thee.

In Matthew 5:4, "Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted." Note the positive declaration: They shall be comforted. For God is a present help in time of need; he is not a God afar off, but is ever near his dear people to watch over them, as well as to protect and keep them in all their ways. It seems to me that these sweet

and wonderful words are comforting to those who mourn, and a soothing salve to the broken hearted.

Now we look for the strong binding. As we have the balm applied, so let us bind it up with the sweet doctrine of God our Saviour, (if I be allowed to use the pronoun "our").

We go to Psalms 40:1-5, "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings." Let us pause right here for a moment and consider some of these things. Surely they are comforting and consoling to the broken hearted. Just think of the wonderful work of the dear Saviour when he brought you up out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set your feet upon a rock. Well, you may ask, what proof do I have that I am one of them? That is my great concern, too; let us look for evidence.

Dear Sister, when you gave your experience, you pointed out how you were about to go in a different direction, but the Lord lifted you up from the horrible pit; yes, from the miry clay. When you saw the beautiful light, your trust was then placed in Jesus when everything else was gone, as you saw in your dream. Then your goings were established; they surely are established: every move, every sigh, every sorrow and every grief, as well as every joy, every peaceful moment, every comforting thought and word and every hour of happiness are well established.

This work was all done in the mind and purpose of God before the world began. "The Lord of host hath sworn, saying surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed so shall it stand." (Isaiah 14:24). He thought of it all, therefore it shall come to pass; and none can change it. "I am the Lord and change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

How does this bind up the broken hearted? Well, the broken heart was in the establishment of your goings. What can harm you: "If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is that God justifieth." So, surely nothing can be against you while God is for you; it is God who justifieth you through the wonderful works of his dear Son.

Then Paul, the apostle said in Romans 8:34, "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Here we have it all taken care of; for we read, "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." So to preach good tidings, bind up the broken hearted and comfort all that mourn is my desire, if I know my heart; but the heavenly Master must supply me with the bandage.

You were lifted out of the horrible pit and your goings established; you are, therefore, upon something solid. Your feet will never bog down any more, for Moses said in the 32nd chapter of Dueteronomy, "He (the Lord) is the rock, his work is perfect." Also, "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him (Jacob)," etc. Jacob is representative of the Lord's people. So in your travels in this life you may have many cast down feelings, and seem to be down in the low valley of darkness and despondency, and seem to be sinking lower and lower, yet, as the eagles, the Lord alone will lead you, lift you up and bear you along, and carry you high above the earth and earthly things.

Though you fall again you shall not be utterly cast down; for the old eagle carries her young high in the air on her wings, and then lets them fall

again, but does not let them fall to destruction. She catches them again and carries them away above the earth again and again, until finally they learn to fly.

Oh, dear sister, you may many times feel lonely, wayworn, heartbroken and weary, but the Lord alone will lead you about, and instruct you, and keep you as the apple of his eye; as Moses said in the thirty-second chapter of Deuteronomy. Yes, he will continue to lift you up and make you sit together in heavenly places with his dear people from time to time. You will never get so low but what he will lift you up again. This will continue 'till some glad morning yonder after awhile, the blessed Master will come in person and carry you away to be forever with him; to bask in the sunlight of His eternal love on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance.

My mind seems somewhat relieved and I hope to some degree I have proclaimed good tidings, comforted the mourning and bound up a broken heart. If so, may God be praised for it all, for I am nothing, yea, less than nothing and altogether vanity.

Unworthily, yours in hope,
(Elder) W. W. Taylor

CORRESPONDING CIRCULAR LETTER WRITTEN BY ELDER AMASA J. SLAUSON

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, Shokan, New York, Wednesday and Thursday, September 17-18, 1952.

To the Churches and Associations with which we correspond.

Dear Brethren in Christ,

Through the will and mercy of a covenant keeping God, again we are permitted to meet and greet each other in friendship and fellowship, we trust of the Holy Spirit, we trust in that love which has been shed abroad in our hearts through Jesus Christ and the teaching of the Holy Ghost, not because of our merits or our goodness or because we deserve this pleasure, far from that, but because of God's goodness toward us.

For this epistle of love called a corresponding circular letter, we wish to quote from Romans VIII Chapter, a portion of verse 31, the words of Apostle Paul to the Roman Brethren, "If God be for us who can be against us". Are not these words the very sentiment and faith of God's elect? Though these words appear as asking a question, If God be for us who can be against us?, the true believer has the answer written in his heart, which has been written there by the Holy Spirit, that God given faith gives answer to that question. In the travel of the true believer his assurance and surety is in the Almighty power of God, the Father and Christ, the Son. So when one becomes a true believer the word, the truth of God and the power of God brings the believer to the point where he rests assured that Christ was God manifest in the flesh, who has said "all power is given unto me both in Heaven and in Earth" to this one His word is power.

So when a poor sinner has been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the Kingdom of God's dear Son then, and not until then, does one know that there is a power over all other powers. Such a one then knows that the seed of the woman has bruised the serpent's head. Such a one then knows that the blind is made to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk and the poor is having the Gospel preached to him. The dead in trespasses and in sin have been quickened and been made alive. Though such a one might of thought that as sin and darkness was upon the face of the deep was the greatest of all powers. But after deliverance came they can answer the question, "If God be for us who can be against us?". They can answer it with God given faith and say that they are persuaded that not even death

can separate. Lazarus who was dead in the grave for four days death nor the grave could not separate him from his Lord when Jesus called. Lazarus came forth from the dead.

Even the denial of Peter could not separate Peter from his Lord. Jesus said, "Satan has desired to have thee, that He might sift thee as wheat, but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not". Oh, Brethren, if God be for us who can be against us, though Satan goes up and down through the earth like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. But thanks be to God who controlled the jaws of the lion in the cage with Daniel. He also controls the power of Satan, "thus far shalt thou go and no farther, and there shall thy proud waves be stayed". The true believer's surety does not rest upon his own strength but upon the wills and shalls of an omnipotent God, for he knows if it did he would be like poor Peter, for he has learned in the school of Christ that flesh is flesh and only sinking sand at best. And he that searcheth the heart knoweth what is the mind of the spirit for he maketh intercession for the Saints according to the will of God.

For when one is translated into the Kingdom of God's dear Son, that one by the law of the Spirit of love in Christ Jesus is made free from the law of sin and death and has been delivered from the power of the kingdom of darkness of this world, hence now is under the power and domination of another kingdom or king, and in this new life or dwelling place the words of this king, Christ Jesus, they are spirit and they are life to this heaven born soul. So being delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of God's dear Son, they delight in the law after the inner man, desiring from the depth of their heart to put off the old man with his deeds and desiring not to look back as Lot's wife did. For "he that puts his hand to the plow and looks back is not worthy of the Kingdom of God."

For if there is no change in the life of the Heaven born soul where is there any light to shine before men or in the House of God. But, Oh, Brethren, hold fast, see that no man take thy crown. Men delight and stand ready to say something that will mar our standing in the Kingdom of Heaven and in the eyes of our Brethren. In the court of our land if a witness is found not to be a true witness, the judge will throw the evidence out. Is not this true in the court of our God? It only takes a little of an ungodly walk or deceit, or worldly life, before our standing in the esteem and judgment of the Church, our Brethren, is badly marred and the crown of love and respect for us which was once ours, is taken away and our standing in the church is hurt.

Now coming back to our subject "If God be for us who can be against us?" As all power or powers are subject to the power, control or management of the eternal true and living God at His will. Paul was writing to the Roman Brethren. Paul being a servant of God wrote as he was moved by the Holy Ghost. In other words, Paul tells us that he is persuaded that death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

This is foundedor established upon the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord. So in the beginning the people of God were chosen in Christ before time, chosen by God and loved by God with an everlasting love. So if God be for His people it is because of his love for them. Though His Son being one with Him, yet God's love for His people who was a people of sinful race by nature, children of wrath even as others, yet this Elect people according to the foreknowledge of God and determinate counsel of His own will, did not withhold His only loving Son, who knew no

sin, should be made sin that this sinful people should be made the Righteousness of God in Him (Jesus). And, before God, the Father, without blame in love, Brethren, are we numbered in these wonderful works to the children of men?

This grand and glorious doctrine is the work of God and it is marvelous in our eyes. Now this love that God had for His people before time through Christ Jesus He has given them here in time according to the word of God, will continue for them, for if God be for them nothing can prevail against them. It is finished, the battle is fought, the victory is won, JESUS the victorious conqueror over death, Hell and the grave. Though all the power that men had was used to hinder the resurrection of Jesus, but of no avail. So at the resurrection of God's elect, regardless of men or devils that love of God for His people will, according to His word, be fulfilled and they shall come forth each with the body as it pleaseth Him to give, see Jesus as He is and be like Him and be satisfied.

The great comfort to the children of grace is that God is for them. They are free from the power, might and dominion of all other powers. Therefore, my beloved Brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord for as much as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

LaPine, Ala.

Dear Elder Spangler:

Find enclosed $3.00 for my renewal to the Signs, which I enjoy lots when I am given the spirit to read and understand. There are times when I go to meeting and hear the gospel preached by the dear elder, and tears dim my eyes. Then again I go and don't seem to get anything out of it. I wonder if it is this way with others.

I was so sorry that you couldn't be with us at our Association. I learned that you got as far as Georgia and was then called back to attend a funeral. I was very disappointed, for I went with the expectation of hearing you, but the Lord knows best.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all.

W. W. Williamson

Louann, Ark.

Signs of the Times

Dear Brethren:

Enclosed find check for which renew my subscription for two years, and renew Bro. Arch Evans, Marion, La. one year; and new subscription for one year to my son, Charles Britt, Jr., ElDorado, Ark. Bro. Evans is a hopeless cripple, since he fell and broke his hip about ten years ago, he has not walked since. My son is becoming interested but does not get to attend church very often, so I would like for him to have the paper too.

I enjoyed Bro. Spangler's visit to our churches this Summer very much. I heard him speak twice. He did not speak fast, as most of our ministers do, but his words were carefully chosen, so that, it seemed, one often equaled many words of the average minister. It called to my mind the building of the temple. Each stone was so carefully fitted that not the sound of a hammer or ax was heard while it was in building. Nor did he reject the Chief Corner Stone, as did the builders of another day, but, using it for a foundation, built very carefully thereon to the glory of the Most High God, and the comfort of His children; and very comfortably to this poor sinner.

I enjoy reading the Signs very much at times; at others, when I am out of season, I sometimes delay reading it for a while. But usually I read it through upon arrival. To my mind it still contends for the faith once delivered to the saints and is in accord with the original principles upon which it was founded, and so wonderfully expounded by Elder Gilbert Beebe in his

day. I also enjoy the corresponding letters very much. I don't always agree with all the views expressed in them, but as long as the theme in them is Salvation by Grace alone, the minor differences are permissible, especially considering the fact that even the Apostles once disagreed over the necessity of circumcision. Surely we who are endowed with lesser gifts could hardly be expected to agree on all the different phases arising. So long as the heart is established with grace, I feel we should be very charitable to our fellow brethren who do not agree with us in details.

May God bless and keep you and all the household of faith, is the prayer of your little, unworthy brother.

C. B. Britt

Martinsville, Va.

Signs of the Times:
Dear Editors:

Enclosed please find $3.00 money order, for which please extend my subscription another year for the Signs of the Times.

I have been taking the paper for forty years. I think you are bound to know that I am pleased with the contents. The Editors are contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, as the original Prospectus did.

Yours as ever,
(Elder) J. E. Burgess

Auburn, Washington

Dear Brother Spangler:

I can't go to meetings now. I am old, (past eighty) and alone in my home here in Washington, but my faith is as strong today as it was when I was baptized in 1938.

I have always been a believer in the Bible. When I was young, I went to meetings at my Grandpa's house every fourth Sunday. My father and mother have long since passed on to their reward. Mother was a member of the Old School Baptist Church. I have no bothers or sisters.

I get the Signs every month; it speaks of the things I love and cherish. Nothing is dearer to me than my Saviour, bless His dear name. I haven't very good health, but by God's grace I am able to carry on here by myself, and I have my own home. I don't think I will be here much longer, but God only knows. I am enclosing $20.00 to help in whatever way you deem best.

May you be spared many years to edit the Signs; I have been a reader of it nearly all my life.

Not with our mortal eyes
Have we beheld the Lord;

Yet we rejoice to hear his name,
And love him in his word.

On earth we want the sight
Of our Redeemer's face;

Yet, Lord, our inmost thoughts delight
To dwell upon thy grace.

And when we taste thy love,
Our joys divinely grow

Unspeakable, like those above;
And heaven begins below.
With love to the Household of Faith.

Your sister,
Mrs. Jennie Clifford

MARRIED

By Elders Otto Brittain and P. E. Weisinger, at Corinth Church, Henderson County, Texas, on October 12, 1952, Mrs. Mary Velma French to Elder William Thomas Fugate. They will make their home at 209 W. Pine Street, Palestine, Texas.

Lebanon, Mo.

Elder D. V. Spangler:

Dear brother in a precious hope of rest and joy and peace when called to depart this life. I know that I am a great sinner but I just wanted to tell

you how much I enjoyed your writing on the subject someone asked you to give your views on.

How good it is to have our pure minds stirred up. When I had finished reading, I said, how good it is that there are a few who are not ashamed to declare the truth as it is.

When King David went to bring the Ark it was put in a new cart, and it brought death. When we bring in self it brings death. The Ark was to be carried, not moved on a cart. As you said, a little leaven leaventh the whole lump. So putting the Ark in a new cart was a little leavening, and we know what the end was because it was not done in due order. If we fail to hear the truth as it is, then we are as the heathens. Like the King, we ought to be ready to acknowledge our wrongs and lift high the royal banner, for it must not suffer loss.

I hope I have not written anything which is not in accord with sound doctrine.

A brother saved by grace, if saved at all,

W. W. Kenaly

Tuscaloosa, Ala.

Dear Elder Wood:

Will you please publish in the Signs of the Times that my son, stationed at Air Base near San Antonio, Texas, wishes to know if there are any Primitive Baptist meetings held near this location.

If anyone knows of any, will they please write or contact my son, 2nd Lt. John L. Sanders, 305 W. Cypress, San Antonio, Texas.

Thanks.

(Elder) J. L. Sanders

Cross, Texas

Dear Editors:

I enclose $5.00 to pay for the best Baptist paper I know of. I don't want to miss a single copy, for I like to read the many good letters the brethren and sisters write. I am 83 years old the 17th of October, 1952, and I want to receive the Signs as long as I live. I hope I believe the truth that it sets forth and as it is written in the Holy Bible.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

J. W. Cox

Dear Brother Spangler:

Am sending $3.00 to pay for the Signs another year. I surely have enjoyed the good writings and especially the editorials. I hope the Lord will continue to bless you and all in the future as he has in the past.

Hope you and family are well. Give my regards to Sister Spangler. Hope to see you and hear you preach soon, and would be glad to have you come and visit with us.

Your sister in hope and love,

Mrs. E. D. Hill

Nov. 24, 1952

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I have been in the hospital in Houston since the first of March this year and not able to write very much, and am still nervous.

I have been reading the Signs since boyhood days. My father, the late Elder W. K. Smith, of Lillie, La., took it when I can first remember. He died in 1933. I don't think I will be reading the Signs much longer, as I am seventy-four years old; but I want to read it as long as I live. I feel that I haven't much to live for since I lost my wife three years ago.

I enjoy reading the good articles in the Signs. I am, I hope

Your brother

J. H. Smith, Sr.

Meadow Grove, Nebraska
November 18, 1952

Dear Editors:

We took a trip this Fall and visited two of our children. We find them much interested in the dear old church, but

not taking any Primitive Baptist paper, so we want to send both of them a years subscription. Do you ever encolse a card saying who is sending it? Would like their subscription to start with the December issue. Their names are: Rodney W. Black, Attica, Iowa, and Mrs. Sidney S. Cloud, Portland, Oregon.

We hope they will enjoy the Signs as much as we do. We have been lending copies to them, but if it is coming regularly, one can pick it up anytime and feel more interest.

Our best wishes,
Walter and Myrtle Black

(Is this not a good example for others? If you desire your children to read the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, send them your family paper, the Signs of the Times.

Editors)

CONTRIBUTION TO INDIGENT FUND TO NOVEMBER 1ST. 1952

H. N. Bumpass, Ill. $3.00; W. R. Wallis, Miss. $7.00; Mrs. R. A. Hocutt, Ala. $1.00; Mrs. W. D. Fooks, Md. $3.00; Elder H. M. Bennett, Md. $5.00; Elder L. L. Schenck, Kan. $5.00; C. W. Edwards, $5.00; A sister in Kansas, $10.00; Mrs. J. H. Day, Ariz. $2.00; Mrs. George Hagar, N. C. $2.00; J. A. Owen, Ala. $5.00; Elder Homer W. Kennard, Ky. $1.00; Miss Ethel Carter, Va. $3.00; Mrs. J. A. Lewis, Va. $1.00; H. H. Faulk, Tex. $1.00.

These contributions are certainly appreciated, and are of much help in sending the paper to those unable to pay. In taking care of increases in cost of operation, we can continue to send the paper to those who want it and are not able to pay. There is not one cent used of this money to the profit of any individual.

EDITORIALS

Danville, Va. **January, 1953**

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TO
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EDITORIAL

NEW YEAR AND ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FIRST VOLUME

With this issue we begin not only a New Year but also the One Hundred Twenty-First Volume of the Signs of the Times. We trust we are all thankful to the good Lord that He has sustained the Signs these many years; sustained it not only in continuation, but sustained it also in the doctrine of our God our Saviour.

There has never been a deviation from the principles of the Original Prospectus; for in the Prospectus was summarized the doctrines of the faith once delivered to the saints, and as long as the world stands these things will remain the cherished possesssion of the Lord's people.

Your present Editors realize the need of the sustaining grace of the Lord just as much as the Editors in other days. Were there not some evidences of this grace from time to time, they could not continue. Our whole desire, without reservation, is to contend for the things the Lord and His Apostles declared to be the doctrine of God our Saviour; and to "Set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us." (Luke 1:1) We can have nothing to do with additions which men would have us accept; and certainly we will not agree that some things of our faith have outgrown their usefulness in this modern day.

Salvation is still by grace through the atonement made for us by the Lord Jesus Christ; the Holy Ghost is still calling with a holy calling each heir of promise in all nations, and is still teaching them all things and bringing all things that Jesus said and did to their remembrance; and the New Covenant is still as effective as ever: "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

In the reality of these blessed truths is all our hope. We rejoice in them and would contend for them with all our strength, though we know they are not popular with many of our fellow men. If need be, we are content to suffer reproach for them, and would say with the Apostle, "For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar." (Romans 3:3-4)

The world would gladly have us lay down these sacred and holy things and join with them in a common faith acceptable to all. (It was in the midst of the denial of the faith by many that the Signs was born). We may see within a few years an amalgamation of many religious bodies, and there is no reason why many may not compromise among themselves and join together, though caution is to be had that through subtility the freedom gained in the Reformation is not lost. But there can be no joining of house to house, and laying field to field by those whose faith is vital to them, and means more than large membership, popularity and even life. The Lord made no compromise with the prevailing sects of his day; nor did the Apostles, and neither can we. (It is just as wrong to compromise with any who hold the truth in unrighteousness as it is to compromise with out and out fidelity) We are persuaded that what God has delivered to us in the Word is truth both in principles and practices, and for these things we are zealous.

We rejoice in and advocate the right of all men to worship (or not worship) as seems right to them, and this is what the church in all ages has desired that all should have; though this right is denied by some nations and religious organizations, and we may see it spread more and more. Our freedom is the priceless heritage which we have by the grace of God.

It is well to pause and take stock often, as a traveler might stop and look back over the trail which he has come. Or to do as the Apostle Paul said to Timothy, "Consider what I say; and the Lord give the understanding in all things." (2 Tim. 2:7). We might well CONSIDER WHAT HE SAID, and what others have said in the inspired word, for we are oftimes led away of our own lusts; and when we are led away, we are departed from the faith.

If we are so highly blessed as to have been called with an holy calling as the evidence of our salvation, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which

was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, it should be our most SERIOUS CONCERN, for it is of more importance to us than anything else in our pilgrimage in time. The evidences of our calling, and He that has called us, and the commands he has given us, and the exercises of our hearts in these things, is what we are concerned about. Having exceeding GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES, there is a giving of all diligence in adding to faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in us and abound we are neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But if we lack these things, we are blind and cannot see afar off and have forgotten that we are purged from our old sins. (see 2 Peter 1:4-9). What a blessing it is to be exercised in, "Giving diligence to make our calling and election sure." These things concern every member of the church, and every one to whom the Lord has been revealed.

And especially, it seems to us, that those who stand upon the watch walls of Zion, if they be true servants of God, are concerned first of their calling, and then of the voice which they lift up and the report they make to the inhabitants of the City. For, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" And, "Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion." (Isaiah 52:7-8).

In our ministry we are often very much concerned as to our calling, and there is much searching of heart; but no more so, perhaps, than we are concerned that we lead not our brethren astray either in doctrine or order and discipline. The weight, seriousness and responsibility is far too much for the flesh of any man; and we would that not only ourself but that all our fellow-servants might be given to constantly seek at the throne of grace for wisdom, strength and leading of the Spirit in all our ministrations. We would that each and every one of us might read and ponder over the first four verses of the twenty-third Chapter of Jeremiah, and ask ourselves, "Am I the man?" For these things are just as applicable to the Gospel Church, and sheep of the pasture, as they were in Jeremiah's day.

The Lord alone calls and qualifies his ministers. This is not in the hands of either the man or the church; but the evidences of the calling are given to both. How important, therefore, it is that these evidences be weighed carefully both by the man and the church, and that ordination not be given hastily or unadvisedly. To be a called servant of God is the highest office any man can hold; there is nothing light-hearted about it. How important it is that the dignity and honor of the office be the chief concern of those holding it.

There is another most important thing that should be the concern of each church. And that is, those who make up her membership. We might well listen to the inspired David as he sang of his Beloved, "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." There are unmistakable evidences given through the work of the Spirit to each of these members, and these should be sought for and inquired into before fellowship can be had and baptism administered. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." (1 John 5:10) These "secret things" are discovered to the church, but the church cannot disclose them to anybody; this is solely the work of the Spirit, and is quite out of the hands of the brethern. This is en-

tirely different from any worldly organization, for they may disclose their secrets after they receive members, but never do before; so none can come to them and already know their secrets.

The church stands alone, entirely separate from any organization of men. How necessary it is that she keep the house clean and tidy, and that the uncircumcised in the heart be not admitted. A man who speaks a different language in a community is soon spotted and unless his background and training has given him the same ideals, there will be trouble.

We are considering weighty matters, —matters which are of utmost importance to the peace of Zion. May we be given to pray with Habakkuk, "O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy."

J. D. W.

SPIRITUAL SONGS ACCORD WITH GOD'S STRINGED INSTRUMENTS

My late visit with the editors and many readers of the Signs in Virginia, Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania and other places has stimulated me with a greater desire to write to the Household of Faith through this medium. The visit with the Welch Tract, Hopewell, and other historical meeting places of God's children through the centuries past has peculiarly affected me. It is inspirational to learn that the same principles of Truth has been loved, cherished and contended for by His people these hundreds of years in the same meeting place.

While attending Salisbury Association held at Delmar, Delaware, the text of this article began to arrest my attention. God willing, I shall use Isaiah 38:20, as basis for my remarks: "The Lord was ready to save me; therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord." We shall attempt to prove that the songs of God's people are their spiritual experiences and the stringed instruments are the harp of God, the hearts of His people, the Bible, etc. We want to show that a psalm or an hymn is not necessarily a spiritual song to one of God's people at all times. We expect to show that the stringed instruments under consideration are not pianos, organs, or any like instrument made and tuned by man — which will get out of tune—; but, that which God has tuned, strung, and prepared — which never gets out of tune—.

Re-read the paragraph above and may it become fixed in your mind before we meditate further upon the text. Read Isaiah 38, and then prayerfully consider the following meditations.

The expression found in 20th verse was made by Hezekiah, King of Judah, after undergoing critical experiences brought about by the Lord dealing with him. Even though he be king he was brought low by the Lord. He was sick unto death, and word came to him from the Lord, "Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die and not live". (Is. 38:1) We read a similar command in Amos 4:12 to Israel: "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel". I am persuaded a similar command comes to every spiritual Israelite in the beginning of an experience of grace. When we try to cope with the situation in trying to set our house in order in preparation to meet God, we find ourselves as miserable failures in the attempt. This forces us to pray to God for mercy. Surely Hezekiah's attempts were in vain to set his house in order and he was made to depend upon God for this. We would all sink into death were it not for what the Lord adds unto our life. Our life is sinful, He adds holiness; our life is unstable; He adds stability; our life is earthly, He adds heaven; our life is ungodly, He adds godliness. We come to

the end of our path, He leads us into a new path. We die, He adds life. Dear trembling child, has the Lord added unto your life? Our life is unstrung and untuned. He tunes and strings our hearts to sing His praise! This must have been Hezekiah's experience as he said, "The Lord was ready to save me."

We learn that we cannot save ourselves. It is not the question: am I ready for the Lord to save me? But, is the Lord ready to save? All things are so ordered and arranged, tuned and strung by the Lord that events so fall in perfect order and rhythm that a fixed time, place, and circumstance comes for the Lord's salvation to be made manifest to each and every one of the trophies of His amazing grace.

Because the Lord was ready to save me— "we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments". We read in Ephesians 5:19, of "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." What were the songs Hezekiah had under consideration? Psalms and Hymns would include all compositions written with natural verse to be used in religious worship. When any hymn or psalm is in perfect harmony with our experience and feelings, it becomes our spiritual song. Paul says in 1st Cor. 14:15, "I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." There is a natural song and there is a spiritual song. There are experiences that are natural and there are experiences that are spiritual. The song that is natural is the old song and the song that is spiritual is that the Lord adds by putting into your mouth the new song. We would like to contrast the old song and the new.

The old song is sung in the key of man—man being the central keynote. The new is sung in the key of Jesus Christ, — He being the foundation key. If you want to hear a discord try singing the old and the new together. They will not harmonize, for the old song praises man and the new song praises God. The old sings of the ability of man and the new song proclaims man's inability. The old song utters salvation is hinged upon the volition and works of the creature, while the new bases the creatures' salvation upon the volition and work of the three-one God. The new song being opposed to the old prevents the harmonization of the two.

You will note that Hezekiah says, "my songs". This means his own personal spiritual experiences. Unless the Lord has added to your individual life you cannot sing these songs. There are more spiritual experiences than one; therefore more songs than one. Sometimes you sing, "All things work together for good". Sometimes you feel, "All things are against me." Sometimes you are asking, "Is God gone forever?" Sometimes you say, "I know that my redeemer liveth". Sometimes you sing, "Jesus, Lover of my soul": and at other times, "I am a stranger here below". Sometimes you ask, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Sometimes you sing, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want".

The stringed instruments these new songs perfectly accord with are the instruments God has prepared, strung, and tuned. The word "instrument" is translated from a word meaning "prepared". Our songs are sung to that that God has prepared. We find recorded in Proverbs 16:1, "The PREPARATIONS of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord". When the Lord strings and tunes the hearts of His people there is perfect harmony in their experiences. When your experience harmonizes with the experience of Hezekiah, Jacob, Paul, and others whose lives are recorded in the Bible, it is singing your songs to the stringed instruments. When your experience harmonizes with the fundamental principles expressed in the

Scriptures, and held sacred by your brethren, it ACCORDS with the stringed instruments.

Pianos and organs are made, strung, and tuned by man. These may be damaged, get out of tune, and the strings broken. Natural musical instruments only give forth natural mechanical tones. The instruments under consideration give forth spiritual Godly melody. The command to the Church is to "speak to yourselves, singing," — not, to play a mechanical instrument. The question should be, "Is our singing to accord with the mechanical instruments or spiritual instruments? Is our singing to be in accord with the piano, organ, or heart? I am persuaded the singing should be in harmony with our hearts that God has prepared, tuned and strung; thus, "making melody in the HEART". When brethren are blessed to come together and sing with the Spirit and understanding in sweet fellowship and harmony it is much greater and sweeter melody than the best of singing without the Spirit accompanied by the best mechanical musical instruments. The accompaniment of mechanical musical instruments is pleasing to the natural ear. The accompaniment of the Spirit and understanding is pleasing to the spiritual ear.

We read in the Psalms of the harps of God, and also in Revelations. According to Josephus and what we can find in the scriptures, these harps had ten strings. We can call your attention to Psalms 33:2-3 "Praise the Lord with harp; sing unto Him with psaltery and an instrument of ten strings. Sing unto Him a new song. We want to quote the following stanzas from the hymn THERE IS A FOUNTAIN:

Lord, I believe thou hast prepared
(Unworthy though I be)
For me a blood-bought free reward—
A golden harp for me.

'Tis strung and tuned for endless years
And formed by power divine,
To sound in God the Father's ears
No other name but thine.

Hezekiah stated in the same chapter from which the text of this article was taken— "He hath BOTH SPOKEN unto me and HIMSELF hath DONE it" (Is. 38:15) Here is a double. He commanded "Set thine house in order," and He performed the command Himself by setting it in order. He works both the will and the do. Children of God receive "of the Lord's hand DOUBLE" (Isaiah 40:2) Scores of doubles come to our mind that neither time nor space will permit us to mention. Suffice it to suggest that the harp of God consists of a number of double strings. If the harps used back at that time under the ceremonial worship had ten strings, the spiritual harp must have five doubles which results in ten. Let us turn to the 8th chapter of Romans to find these five principles of the doctrine briefly stated. As we read them let us keep in mind that He has both spoken and Himself hath done it. Now, "For whom He did (1) FOREKNOW, He also did (2) PREDESTINATE to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also (3) CALLED and whom He called, them He also (4) JUSTIFIED: and whom He justified, them He also (5) GLORIFIED. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:29-31)

This foreknowledge is an intimate relationship with His people even before the manifestation of His decrees in time. He chose them in His Son. "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect and in Thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there was none of them." (Psalms 139:16). He knew them in eternity; they shall know Him in time. He predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son. He has ordered, arranged, and fixed all things to fall out at appointed times and seasons so that all things work

together for the fulfillment of this grand purpose. See Romans 8:28. He calls and they shall answer. He performs the double as the word that goes forth out of His mouth returns not to Him void, but accomplishes that which He pleases and prospers in the thing whereto He sends it. He decreed the justification of His people and He justifieth them by sending His Son into the world to pay the penalty for their sins, thus satisfying justice. The just bore the sins of the unjust that justice divine might be perfectly satisfied. He not only justified them but also glorified them through the divine righteousness of His own Son. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled (justified) to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved (glorified) by His life." (Rom. 5:10) We are glorified by the imputed righteousness of His Son. These five wonderful things are both spoken and performed by God the Father, Son, and Spirit. These ten strings ring clear the melodious song of praise to Him. This ten stringed harp becomes ours when it pleases God to give it to us that we receive it with praise and thanksgiving. Then we are HARPERS HARPING WITH THEIR HARPS. See Revelation 14:2. We have the harps of God. Rev. 15:2). We sing to the accompaniment of these harps in the "house of the Lord," Zion, the new Jerusalem, the Church, or with the children of God. We sing "all the DAYS of OUR life." Sometimes the day is gloomy because of the clouds of trouble and despondency which hides the view of the brightness of the Son of Glory. Sometimes the day is cold because of the felt sense of our unworthiness. We experience cloudy and bright days; cold and hot days; jovial and sorrowful days; but, they are all days because it takes the light to manifest the darkness that is in our heart and the coldness in our thoughts. Nevertheless the expression of days in the plural shows that there are night times in our experience.

We hang our harps upon the willows by the river, Babylon, during the nights of our experience. (Psalms 137) We have no use or regard for the Lord, nor Zion nor His people during the night. We are then resting in our own carnality and we are at ease. We do not think upon Zion nor his people. We forget Zion as is intimated in the expression, "We wept when we remembered Zion." (Ps. 137:1) When the dwellers in Babylon require of us in mirth to sing one of the songs of Zion, we are made to realize we cannot sing the Lord's song in a strange land. We must be brought again out of Babylon into Zion before we have any more use for the harp. It is not in the night that we feel unworthy, unfit, and so wretched but on dark and cloudy days. In the night we have no feeling, no sense of guilt, no deep concern over our spiritual welfare, neither any regard for His house. It is when we are awakened in the morning that we are made to weep because of our forgetfulness and unconsciousness of His providential care over us. It is when we are awakened by His Spirit before the rising of the Son of Glory. Thanks be to God, when the Son rises and we see the brightness of His face whose rays warms and calms our troubled breasts, fear is driven from our souls and love springs forth. Songs of praise again are sung to His matchless and glorious Name for His amazing Grace toward us.

You notice that Hezekiah says "OUR LIFE" in the text. It seems to the natural mind that he should have said, "my life" or "our lives" to have been consistent with the proper usage of language. Let us see. The Lord added unto his life. My life had its end as my life when the Lord added His life to my life. My natural life ended as only a natural life when the Lord added that that is spiritual to my life. The life of a child of God prior to regeneration (or the addition of the graces of His Holy Spirit) is only a lustful fleshly life. After God adds that that is

spiritual it becomes our life. When the Lord adds his Spirit there is set up a dual character in one. This results in a warfare. The flesh lusts against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh so that you cannot do the things that you would, these being contrary one to the other. See Gal. 5:17. What the Lord adds is contrary to that naturally possessed.

One more thought and I shall close. The last night will be when death shall come at the end of our sojourn here. Then will be the dawning of the final day when we awaken in His likness and shall be satisfied. There will be no night there but one eternal Day of perfect joy and peace. No cloudy and cold times to mar our peace. There will be no night nor river of Babylon. There will be no hanging of harps in the willows. We will all sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb harmoniously to the harps of God forever and forever.

E. J. L.

SEVERAL THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

1st. When you re-new for the paper please give the exact name you are now receiving the paper in.

2nd. Please send in the expiration date as shown on your paper. This will be of much help to us.

3rd. Notify us promply of any change of address as second class mail will not be forwarded, and is returned to us for postage.

4th. Help us circulate the paper among the brethren and friends. It is your paper. If you endorse the doctrine and order of the Lord's house as contended for by this paper, then prove it by helping us increase it's circulation.

Thanks—Ed.

HISTORY OF WELCH TRACT CHURCH NOW AVAILABLE

A short history of Welch Tract Church, the oldest Old School Baptist church in America, is now ready for delivery.

The history of about 40 pages will contain the following information:

Several pictures of the meeting house, both outside and inside.

Two hundred and fiftieth anniversary.

Names of the present membership.

Names of the present board of trustees.

Copies of minutes of church meetings, exclusions, church rules, articles of faith and wills of property left to the church.

Names of Revolutionary soldiers and patriots burried in the church cemetery.

Marriages in the meeting house.

Present status of the church.

Names, and short account of the church as constituted.

A copy of the book will be sent prepaid to anyone sending in a new subscription of one year or more to the Signs.

The sale price without a new subscription will be $1.00 per copy prepaid. Send all orders to Signs of The Times Inc. Rte. 5, Box 332-F, Danville, Va.

Note; As this is the Oldest Old School Baptist church in America, being organized in Wales, in 1707, and crossing the ocean as a church, we believe every old Baptist member and friend will want a copy of it. This church organized with sixteen members, and with their pastor, Thomas Griffith, came over as a regularly constituted church, leaving Wales in June 1701, and landed near Philadelphia in September of the same year.

CHURCH NOTICES

Hopewell Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at 10.30 a.m. each second Sunday in

American Legion Hall, 1119 21st St., Sacramento, Cal.

L. L. WILSON, Pastor
WM. ECHOLS, Clerk
Chowchilla, Cal.

The Church of Shepherd Fold, Houston, Texas, meets every first Sunday in each month, and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M. Located on Little York Highway, four miles north of Houston, Texas one mile east of Highway 76.

W. O. BEENE, Pastor

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in NEW YORK CITY

Meetings every first and third Sundays at Parkside Hotel, 18 Gramercy Park South, one block east of Fourth Ave. and 20th St., near 23rd St. Sta. Lexington Ave. Subway. Take Elevator to Park Room second floor. 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M.

Bethlehem Church, Malvern, Ala., meets each second Sunday, 11 a. m.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3023 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at 1360 First Street Chehalis, Wash. in the home of Sister Effie Parke, the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m.

C. M. FISHER, Pastor

New Hope Old School Primitive Baptist Church near Patmos and about 10 miles South of Hope, Ark., meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before 2:30 P. M.

W. A. SPEER, Pastor.

Rehobeth Old School Primitive Baptist Church located 5 miles north of El Dorado, Ark., and half mile west of Highway No. 7 meets Second Sunday in each month and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

R. W. RHODES, Pastor
W. A. SPEER, Clerk.

Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon meets every first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes.

Elder R. R. WOLF, Pastor

Pleasant Valley Primitive Baptist Church, Kingman, Kansas, meets the first Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Jan., March, etc.) at the home of Sister Verda Machesney, 516 East Ave. C., Kingham, Kans.

(Mrs.) PHEBE CATES, Clerk

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carver Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U. S. 60 at Garyson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church.

C. H. EVANS, Pastor

New Hope Church better known as Lick Creek meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 a. m., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Ky.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2.30 p. m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every third Sunday at 11. a. m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St. near Calvert.

Q. A. GLADDING

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a. m. in the meeting house.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m., north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 11 a. m. at the home of E. B. Ault on Progresso Highway, three and one half miles south of Weslaco.

E. B. AULT, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk
Route 1, Box 88, Mission, Tex.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Hopeful Church, Ozark, Ala., meets each fourth Saturday, 11 a. m.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11

o'clock. Meeting place at Alder St., at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt city from Birmingham.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala., 11 a. m.

E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each fourth Sunday, 11 a. m.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a. m., six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

Seclusia Old School Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday at 12812 Williamson, or write A. J. Taylor, 932E Monterey, Pomona, Cal.

Meetings are held each first Sunday and Saturday before at Little Flock Church, S. W. 29th Ave., and 6th St., Miami, Fla. We extend an invitation to any interested to visit us.

(Mrs.) J. M. FUTCH
7005 S. W. 21st St., Miami, Fla.

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets every second Sunday at 5th and E. Park St.

Pleasant Grove Church near Yakima, Washington, meets at 11 a. m. each second Sunday by appointment at the home of one of the members living at Naches, Wash.

A. D. HUGHETT, Pastor
BEATRICE HAAN, Clerk
Star Route, Naches, Wash.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 3 p. m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va., near Route 60 at Russell Creek.

R. C. BELL, Moderator
B. G. BIRD, Clerk
211 3rd Street
Altezer Addition
Huntington, W. Va.

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

Ramah Church, Cottonwood, Ala., meets each third Sunday, 11 a. m.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each second Sunday and Saturday before.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala. Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a. m., ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a. m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.

O. G. CARVER, Pastor

Richmond, Virginia, Primitive Baptist church meets every fourth Sunday in their new meeting house about ten miles South of Richmond, Virginia. Just off highway 360 South.

R. S. PAYNE, Pastor

Little Flock Primitive Baptost church of Tucson, Ariz., meets for worship on the third Sunday, and Saturday before at 134 E. Prince Road. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

T. J. ROBINSON, Pastor
(Mrs.) J. H. DAY, Clerk

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before.

E. H. LANIER, Clerk

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

The Old Orderly Mt. Zion (Cash) Predestinarian Baptist Church meets on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in each month at the

home of Bro. J. J. Darnell, Campbell, Texas.

Sister SIMMONS, Clerk

Fort Worth, Tex., Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets first Sunday in each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday at 2 p. m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting house.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor
W. A. LITTLE, Asst. Pastor

The original Pilgrim Rest Church of Lawn, Texas, meets every first Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a. m.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
HOWARD EASON, Clerk

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. at the home of M. J. Culpepper. Lovers of the truth invited.

E. B. AULT, Pastor

The Old Salem Church of Old School Baptists, 4 miles south from Teague, Texas, meets the first Sunday in each month and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

Danville Primitive Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday night before Bradley Road, Danville, Va.

W. R. DODD, Pastor

Saints Rest Old School Baptist Church meets each first Sunday at eleven o'clock, and Saturday evening before at seven-thirty, at 4614 Sylvester Street. Dallas, Texas.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
JOHN T. BEENE, Clerk

Little Flock Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at eleven o'clock, and Saturday afternoon before at two-thirty, at Altus, Okla.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
C. E. TURNER, Co-pastor

Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church meets each third Sunday at eleven o'clock, and Saturday afternoon before at two-thirty, at Cash, Texas.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor

Black Rock Old School Baptist Church meets each first Sunday afternoon at three o'clock, at Butler, Maryland, which is on Falls Road about twenty miles North of Baltimore.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

Frying Pan Church meets each second Sunday at eleven o'clock and Saturday afternoon before at two o'clock, and is located between Herndon and Chantilly on Route 28.

New Valley Church meets third Sundays at eleven o'clock and Saturday afternoon before at 2 o'clock, each second month (February, April, etc.), and is near Lucketts about eight miles North of Leesburg.

Broad Run Church meets third Sundays at eleven o'clock each second month (January, March, etc.), at Poolesville, Md.

Mt. Zion Church meets each fourth Sunday at eleven o'clock and Saturday afternoon before at two o'clock, and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, on Route 50 between Washington and Winchester, Virginia.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held in Washington and we are always glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Deacon G. C. Spindle, Atlantic 5091, Washington.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

Sideling Hill Old School Baptist Church, Fulton County, Penn. meets each 5th Sunday and Saturday afternoon before, from May through September, with two days meeting the 1st Sunday in May; and meets at Needmore, Pa. from October through April, with two days meeting the 2nd Sunday in October.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
ORIEN MELLOTT, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 121 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1953 NO. 2

Following is copied from Leesburg, Virginia paper:

NEW VALLEY KEEPS FAITH WITH 'OLD TIME RELIGION'

Still keeping faith with oldtime religion, New Valley Church just west of Lucketts at the foot of "Bald Hill" is one of two Old School "Beebe" Baptist churches still active in the county. The other is the pretty little red brick Mt. Zion, one mile east of Gilbert's Corner on Route 50. These and Frying Pan Baptist just over the line in Fairfax County, are under the pastoral care of Elder John Wood of Manassas, Va., who succeeded the late Elder H. H. Lefferts in 1950.

A present member of New Valley said that "Beebe" refers to Elder Gilbert Beebe, who stood firm for the old tenets when the New School Baptists broke away in the schism of 1832. Some time later the Old School divided again, when the "Clark" Baptists broke away. (The Old School Baptist Church at North Fork belongs to the latter classification.)

Probably first meeting in the open air near the present site of New Valley, colonial worshipers erected a temporary log or frame structure there before March 26, 1771. The will of a William Jones so dated reads, "I give and bequeath a piece of land containing 1½ acres whereon the Baptist Meeting House is built, joining this plantation, to Joseph Thomas, Minister, and William Lewis and Thomas George, Elders of said Meeting, to them and their successors or Ministers and Elders of said Congregation forever."

It was no doubt here that formal organization took place on July 21, 1792, under the aegis of the old parent Ketoctin near Short Hill. The articles were duly signed by Thomas George, Mary Steere, Eleanor Steere, John Steere, Enoch Thomas, Bethany Thomas, Tobias (of no surname and probably a slave), John Oxley, Catrin Sheperd, John Lewis, James Hixson, Jane Warner, Peter Davis, and Catherine (again no surname).

In simple but stern language, the yellowed minute book, still extant, reads among other covenants, "It is unanimously agreed upon by the Church that if any member or members shall be found erroneous or disorderly in any of those particulars (i.e., articles of faith and rules for conduct previously enumerated) . . . they shall be liable to censure and in case of obstinate continuance entirely excluded from our Communion."

This was no idle threat, for a year later, on September 21, 1793, we regretfully read that, "Whereas _____ _____ has been for some laid under Suspense and no Fruit of Repentance appearing, therefore we conclude to Excommunicate him from among us for the sin of Drinking, Gaming and Neglecting his Place in the Church." There were others more fortunate who repented and were duly restored. Standards must have been high, for some were Elders who fell under the bans.

In those days the church council operated much like a civil court, acting in temporal as well as spiritual matters where its own members were concerned. On March 20, 1819, an entry reveals, "First the Case of Judah R_____ was taken up and after full Discussion and she affirming that the wheat was Brot

when she was not at home and that she had no hand in receiving or concealing (sic) the same and that she raised Geese herself and we having no evidence to the contrary, we therefore unanimously Acquitted her of the Charge and Restore her to her place in the Church."

New Valley functioned in this fashion, meeting the third Sunday of each month and the Saturday before until February 1861, when its formal meetings were forced to discontinue until the close of the Civil War. Their pastor at this time was Elder Joseph Furr, who was succeeded in the 1870's by Elder E. V. White of famed White's Battalion, succeeded in turn by Elder Horace H. Lefferts in 1910. Deacons today are C. R. Hollandsworth of Leesburg and Leslie D. Duke of Charles Town, W. Va.

The present structure was built around 1851, the work of local stonemasons Benjamin Grubb and John L. Stout, though the actual construction of the building is not mentioned in records. The old log sexton's house, date of building also unknown, was willed to the church by Charles W. Williams shortly after the Civil War and is still standing across the road.

—SOLANGE STRONG

Nov. 18, 1952

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am enclosing my subscription for the Signs again, though I am a little late.

The article in the last Signs on Predestination is very good, I think. I like all the pieces in the paper, but some I enjoy more than others. The blessed Lord has surely been good to me, and I hope it is not boasting for me to say so. Though I have been cast down, He has never forsaken me. All the rod has been for my good, and I hope for His glory.

I am not one who believes that of ourselves we can perform good works. My experience has been that when I would do good evil is present with me; and how to perform that which is good, I find not. I can look back over almost forty years of life and I cannot see where I have ever performed one good deed. Oh, the world would say I have, and I guess maybe some of my own people would say I am, shall I say, a good woman; but what would they say if they knew me as I know myself. All the good works I can find in my experience is what the dear Lord has done for me. If I look for spiritual evidence of and in works, it's always what God has done for me.

Now the scripture says, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you. I wonder what we are seeking, and what we would have opened up. A long time ago a woman stood at an empty tomb, seeking,—seeking the body of her Master. She was not seeking a risen Lord. She did not believe Him when He said He must die and would rise again. She could not believe it because she had not experienced it. It had not been given her to believe.

When Christ spoke to her, "Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?", (I think these are awful deep words, and beautiful) What did this poor woman do? She did not know Him, and thinking Him the gardner she said, "Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away." Then Jesus spoke her name, "Mary". Here is where I think the Saviour opened the door to her. That's all it takes. Mary was seeking him naturally. We can seek Him spiritually only when He calls our name. Then instantly we answer as she did, "Master." Ah, then we know a risen Lord,—a spiritual life.

And I am glad it is so. Christ said, "Suffer it to be so." All the wisdom of the world cannot reveal these things to a poor, miserable worm of the dust. How do I Know? Christ said, "I thank thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou has hid these things

from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." I have experienced it, — it is within, I believe, and the Bible confirms it; and therein I grasp a little hope that maybe His blood was shed for me.

I hope you Editors will hue to the line and let the chips fall where they may. I hope God is with you in this, for I know from experience you are going to do just as He has willed you shall do. Would that we all could walk humbly before our God, ever giving thanks and praise to His Holy name.

I must close. I wish all of you Godspeed, and may He ever be with you in a felt presence. It is better to feel the rod than not to feel at all. I remain

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

Mary L. Eckard

Keeling, Virginia

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am sending a Check for $5.00 to renew my subscription for two years to the Signs. If I know my heart, I endorse all it stands for.

It does my soul good to see some laboring for peace among our people. God is not the author of confusion but of peace. May He bless us to this end. The world is filled with strife and confusion, but it is hurtful to see it in the house of God: among the people for whom we believe Christ died. In this state we are not manifesting that great love with which He loved His people before the foundation of the world.

May we examine ourselves and be shown how helpless we are, solely dependent on an all wise God for everything, both natural and spiritual. I am such a poor, vile sinner, and fall so far short of living the life I desire to, that is makes me doubt and fear that the God of all grace has ever known me in the pardon of my sins. But I still cling to the little manifestation of a hope in Him which was given me when quite young. He has wonderfully blessed me, unworthy though I feel. I can say as Paul, I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwells no good thing. If I am saved it is through His grace and mercy, not for anything I have ever done.

A sinner saved by grace,

Mattie B. Williams

December 11th, 1952
Topeka, Kansas

Dear Editors:

I am sorry to have delayed sending my remittance for the Signs of the Times. Please accept my apology and the enclosed Order for its continuation.

I enjoy reading the good letters of precious brethren scattered everywhere and often when reading I am filled with the words of the hymn,

"Blest be the dear uniting love,
That will not let us part,
Our bodies may far off remove,
But we are joined in heart."

For the readers of the Signs, many of whom will remember her writings in the paper in days past and gone, I will mention the passing of my aged Mother, Mrs. Mary Ellison, 95 years, who suffered a stroke the 10th day of October, and after lingering two weeks, during which time she was completely helpless and her organs of speech so affected she could not speak so we could understand, her light went out; her life's journey was complete and she fell asleep in the arms of her blessed Saviour and entered into that rest to which she had long looked forward. While we do miss her sorely yet we can but realize it is a blessed release for her and our loss is her eternal gain, and we desire to bow in submission to the decrees of an allwise Providence.

It was my precious privilege recently while in Pocatello, Idaho, with my son and daughter, to meet with a faithful few of the Household of Christ near Fort Hall; among them an aged Sister

Frazure and Brother and Sister Akers. These are precious brethren and while they have no organized church in their community they gladly welcome any of the Baptists who come their way.

May the Lord bless and prosper you in your work.

Unworthily,
Della Davis

(Yes, many of us remember Sister Mary Ellison's writings in the Signs over a period of many years. We regret to learn of her passing, but feel, as Sister Davis has expressed, that our loss is her eternal gain. J. D. W.)

The following is copied from an editorial in the **Washington Post.** The subject is of vital interest to all in the preservation of our freedom:

SECULAR EDUCATION

"******. Those who share a common concept of God may well worship Him together. But it is of the essence of American life that they shall not force their concept or their form of worship on any others. We believe that in the nature of our multidenominational society this principle is inescapably endangered by the introduction of any religious training into public education.

American public schools, tax supported, are institutions to which students of every faith—or of no faith at all—may go for secular education. The Jew, the Moslem, the Buddhist and, indeed, the atheist should feel as comfortable there as the Christian. But this would become impossible if the public schools should encourage forms of devotion to a deity incompatible with the consciences of any of the students. Neither education nor religion can be fostered by authorizing any sort of religious observance under the public school's auspices. To forgo any such observance is simply to accord to the individual conscience the respect which is due its individuality.

The proper place for religious education we believe, is in churches and homes and Sunday schools. Those who choose to combine religious and secular education should remain free, as they are today, to maintain parochial schools, apart from the public school system, where the religious beliefs they hold may be inculcated in their children. But they should not seek tax support for such schools. Those who insist upon the divorce of religion from secular education do not necessarily aim, as the bishops charge, at "a total monopoly of education." The aim, speaking for ourselves, is to preserve that degree of toleration which is indispensable to the maintenance of unity with diversity."

Eagle, Idaho.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I am enclosing $5.00 to cover my subscription for this year and next year too. We enjoy reading the paper and get news of the churches and brethren that we couldn't get otherwise.

We wish you all blessings and prosperity during the coming season and New Year in your work with the Signs, as a worker in the Vinyard of the Lord, and in your personal life.

We would consider it a privilege to meet you sometime, but don't know if we ever will.

Remember us at a throne of grace.

(Elder) R. R. Wolf and wife.

Green Valley Road, Rt. 1
Huntington, W. Va.
Nov. 14, 1952

Dear Editors:

Am sending in my renewal for the Signs. Sorry that I am late, but I am such an one to put off things like that.

I hope that my hope is in Jesus Christ alone. I believe my helpless condition has been revealed to me many times; and if I am so fortunate as this then indeed His light has shown in me, and I am a very wealthy creature. I am deserving of Hell and I think I know it.

Concerning the Devil, the Editorial by Eldler H. O. Nash in the March, 1951, suits my feelings so well. I had a talk with one of my helpers last evening, just such as Elder Nash speaks of in his article. This fellow was sorry for me for I denied any goodness in man; and I told him I was glad it was so. I was happy that I could say that I was no good, for I feel that when we are debased we shall be lifted up with joy. If I be not chastened, it is evident that I am not a son of God, for I would then exalt myself; but if I am exalted, it is only in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ alone.

There are some, who say they are Old Baptists, who seem to lean on the Old Man. Any who would deny that God is supreme, deny that Christ is the salvation of helpless man. I hope that I do not lean of this flimsy prop, but rather hope in the Lord alone. To all who hope in Him it is assured that Christ alone is sufficient for them. For indeed He has made a way of escape for His children whom he loved from the foundation of the world. Praise be to the ageless God, the Father of all; Yea, the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom is my hope. If I have not him, then of all men I am most miserable.

Yours in hope of "the only Salvation",
Walter Young

2430 Lincoln Ave.
Granite City, Ill

Dear Brother Wood and Readers of the Signs,

If not deceived, I have in mind to write some of the things I hope the Lord in His goodness and merciful kindness has given me to see from Holy Writ, that is, the Church: the Body of Christ. In tracing the Church downward toward Christ, or tracing it upward toward Christ, but either way, it cannot cross the stream of blood which flowed out of Christ Jesus. Every link of the chain of succession must be perfect down from Christ, it cannot be man-made.

Turn with me to the book of Joshua in the Old Testament and we readily see that the Lord spake unto Joshua; and all Bible readers will surely agree Joshua to be a type of Christ under the law. The New Testament tells us that the law and prophets were until John. We find recorded that the Lord had given the children of Israel the land beyond Jordan, and the only way they could enter therein was by crossing over Jordan.

The Lord promised Moses long before that the children of Israel would inherit this land and that no man shall be able to stand before them. Like when they crossed the Red Sea, the Lord dried up the water permitting them to cross over, so we notice that the Lord dried up the River Jordan, permitting them to cross over into the promised land. We notice in the 4th Chapter, where the Lord spake unto Joshua telling him to have twelve men, one from each of the twelve tribes, carry a stone and where the stones were there was the lodging place.

There were twelve stones taken, and where were they taken? From out of the same place that Christ was taken when burried in baptism, the River Jordan. I believe this as well as other places to be a type of the Church under the law and, if we but follow it, the scarlet line from the offering of righteous Abel by faith to the sacrifice of Christ on the cross is seen in all the Scriptures, and should the truth prevail in our speech or writings, it must be from the Lord, communicated to us by His unerring Spirit and sustained by the Scriptures; and experienced by all who are born of God, not of the will of the flesh but of the Spirit of God.

We notice the twelve stones were taken from the River Jordan, so was Christ. We notice there were twelve disciples, and they were taken from the River Jordan in baptism. Dueteronomy, 27th Chapter, tells us these stones shall have all the words of the law written

on them, and Paul in the 9th Chapter of Hebrews tells us under the New Covenant: "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Under the law it is an outward act, but under grace it must proceed from the heart,—thus an inward act.

The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ is the most perfectly organized body on earth, and no man can find a flaw in her organization. As to when the true church was organized we have been made to believe that it was set up by none other than Christ Jesus when, Matthews 3: 13-17, "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased". John did not feel worthy to baptize, neither does the minister today feel worthy. Yes, on the river banks of Jordan, Christ went before His people, God manifested in the flesh, taking upon himself the likeness of sinful man, going before and beyond into the depths of humiliation, and farther than any of His whom the Father gave him will ever be called to go.

The Lord told Joshua in the 5th Chapter, verse 9, "This day I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you". Egypt stands for darkness, and when the Lord commanded light to shine out of darkness, that light shines in the heart giving a knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It is Christ in you the hope of glory,—the perfect one taking His abode in the heart. Then is it any wonder that they can see that they are nothing and less than nothing?

Daniel 2:44: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever". We know when Christ came on this earth all the natural kingdoms were submissive to the Roman Caesar, even the Israelites to whom said Christ: "He came into His own and His own received Him not." That is, the Jews were looking for a natural king to make them of power naturally, since they were in bondage as were all the kingdoms of this world.

In the 16th Chapter of Matthew, we find, "Thou are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." We notice that the Lord first asked whom do men, that is, whom does the world say that I the Son of man am?" "Some say that hou art John the Baptist, some, Elias; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." Then saith Christ unto them, "But whom say ye that I am?", making it a personal question for them to answer. "And Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered and said unto him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jo-na: for flesh and blood hath (past tense) not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

The Bible written by revelation, and like to the apostle Peter, it must be revealed, can only be understood the same way as it was written. If we know anything of the truth, it must be as Ephesians 1:17: "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him." Thou art Peter, and upon this rock, the

same rock which followed Moses and the children of Israel in the wilderness, and when they became thirsty Moses struck that rock and water flowed out and watered the Isrealites. The same rock as Paul tells us in 1 Cor. 10:4 "And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ". **Will** is a command, a Divine determination, and can only be carried out by power which is of God and not of man. Will with God does not mean future, as time is only with man, there is no such thing as time with God. **Shall** is to be under submission. Man is under obligation to God, but God is not under any obligation to man. The creature is dependent upon the Creator, but the Creator, having all power, is dependent upon none. The Lord works in, and the creature works out. The Lord being the head and we know the head does all the thinking, wherein the body works out that which the head gives it to do.

From the Scriptures, we can only recognize the Church as one body having but one head, and built upon one rock by one builder. The Apostle Paul said, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling: one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." We notice that Christ cleansed ten men that were lepers. Just what is leprosy? It is a disease of the flesh, and they were considered unclean." Now, what is sin? It is a disease of the flesh, which no man can cure, but the Lord Jesus did heal the lepers, equally he shed His blood for the remission of the sins of His people whom the Father gave Him out of the world.

Just how many of the lepers whom Christ healed followed and gave Him the glory? We cannot say that they were not all clean. What God hath cleaned let not man call it unclean, but why did only one follow Christ and give Him the glory? Simply there could only be one true Church, there could not have been ten churches. Christ only had one head and one body and His body is the Church. Christ being the head and doing all the thinking, with the Church, the body being submissive to the head, Christ. Well, some may say what happened to the other nine. The Scriptures tell us that God has a people in every kindred, tribe, nation and tongue.

I do not believe that God only has a people in the Old School or Primitive Baptist, but I do believe that they are the only people that can trace their succession to Christ as their head and founder. They have always believed Election, Predestination, Justification, Salvation by grace and the Resurrection. We can only trace them through the dark ages by their blood. We know that the Lord did set up a church on earth, and we know the Lord having all power, it is still in existence and will be until the final one is called out of nature's darkness into God's marvelous light.

"And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it". I feel this to mean the gates of death, and from history there has been a great multitued persecuted and slain in the attempt to do away with the Church, but as the Lord has promised the gates of hell (death) shall not prevail, the Lord has given the world to open up and has swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out attempting to do away with her and the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandment of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

History plainly shows that the Primitive Baptist are in no way the offspring of any church or worldly institution constituted by man. Every historian of any repute concedes that from the days of the Apostles to the Reformation there existed congregations and communities separate from the church of Rome, by far more primitive and purer in faith of Christ. Yet they may not have been called Baptist, but they were bound together by Scriptural truths, by a doctrinal unity of common faith and

that in Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

It is common among the Primitive Baptist to refer to each other as brethren. We note that children of the same family, born of the same parents are brethren in the flesh and are brethren indeed, simply in that they are blood kin, whether they address each other as such or not, they are still brothers and sisters by birth and it is nothing that they have done to make them as such. Children of the family of God, those who have been born not of the flesh but of the Spirit, do not consider it a duty but a glorious privilege (the desire is in their heart) to do the commandments of their God which are more to him than bread and water.

Yes, to do the will of God is the meat and drink that the world knows nothing about. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, but that which is born of the spirit is of the spirit, not of man, but of God; God being their Father, and Jesus Christ being their elder brother. It may seem strange to the world, but not to those born of God, to want to call each other brother and sister. It is an experience of love within the heart to look upon the Church, a portion of the family of God, with earnest desire to be one with them and share in the happy privileges of a home in the Church, giving reverence to God and following in the ordinance of the house of God, such as baptism and the Lord's Supper, not only praising the Lord but acknowledging his power thereof.

The natural birth of the earth enables one to see natural things of the earth, like Nicodemus believing all that is necessary for salvation is to be taught. Simply imparting knowledge from one man to another, is thought to be all that is needful to prepare a man for Heaven and immortal glory. That is exactly what is being taught in the Sunday Schools and Seminaries. Remember, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh."

Before going any farther I would like to set forth what I believe the Bible teaches about the Family of God, the Kingdom of God and the Church of God:

Family of God: The Apostle Paul, a man of God, left on record for our learning, Eph: 3:14-15, "For this cause I bow my knee unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in Heaven and earth is named". We see that the family of God embraces all whom the Father gave His son Jesus Christ and that before the foundation of the world from Adam to the final consumation of time. All that are saved, are saved by the shed blood of the Son of God. Not one drop of the blood of Jesus Christ was shed in vain.

Kingdom of God: Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of God. This includes all of God's people whom He has on this earth in every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue. Many are today in the Kingdom of God who have never been baptized into a visible church. The Kingdom of God is not of this world and is not a visible kingdom. It is in this world but not of this world.

Church of God: One must be born in the Family of God, and in the Kingdom of God by spiritual birth, "That which is born of the spirit is spirit." The external law-abiding citizen is not sufficient for baptism into a church, the Scriptures tell us, "Ye must be born again", a washing, a regenerating, an implanting of the Holy Spirit before they are a fit subject for baptism. Thus, baptism is the door of entrance into the visible organization called a church. A door is not the church but a portion through which one enters into a house.

One may be baptized and become a member of some visible church and still not be a believer, if he has never been born of the spirit. One born of the spirit of God will recognize and confess that his one supreme desire, is to worship and be a follower of the lamb of God, Christ Jesus. They equally recognize the confessions of the lonely and sorrowing spirits of the lambs of God before they are given to ask for a home with the Church as in the days of Christ on this earth, confessing their sins, acknowledging how un-

worthy they are, looking to Christ as their complete faith, hope and salvation.

The world accuses us of being selfish because we do not admit outsiders to our communion. They call it a closed communion. That is not true. We have the only open communion and invite all of like precious faith and order to partake with us. They must be of that Family, that Kingdom and of that Church of like faith and order. If we did accept outsiders we would be putting friendship first, and who has ever read in the Bible where the Lord's Supper is a test of friendship. It commemorates the death of Christ, not the love for man. 1st John 2:19 tells us, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt, have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not of us". 2nd John, 1:10-11, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctring, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds".

The popular theory of the world over is that the Church was set up on the day of Penticost. We find in Acts 2:41 "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls". In order to add to something there must have been something to add to. Were the three thousand believers added any more the church than they who received them into the church, into fellowship in Christ? Has there been any ordinance added to the church that Christ did not institute while here on earth?

He was buried in baptism, and should we be true followers of Christ, it means an open confession of Christ as our Saviour. What is baptism, and who does it belong? Baptism belongs to believers in Christ Jesus and it represents death, burial and resurrection. It was Christ, after His resurrection who called them brethren, and if brethren, they were bound to have had a church. Today many hold the church in light esteem. It is not to them the divine institution towering above every man-made institution. There is nothing made by man but what is of this earth. In the 4th Chapter of Matthew we find recorded for our learning and instruction, "The devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, all these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me".

From this we readily see the devil could only offer the kingdoms of this world, but Christ said, "My kingdom is not of this world". The devil can only give that which he possesses, but the man who is taught of God knows that salvation is of free grace from first to last. By the death of Christ a perfect atonement was made, by a perfect offering, and he is now at the right hand of God, the Father, and each for whom His blood has been shed is as safe as is Christ.

Thus, we see that the Church is a local individual body, and is composed of professed believers, men and women of God's creation, they, like, Christ, must be visible, who have acknowledged Christ as their Saviour and have been baptized, as was Christ their elder brother, into an orderly church by an orderly minister. It is a selfgoverning body, no one man or group of men, associations or any organization having any authority whatsoever over it.

It is organized according to the New Testament and is under the authority of Jesus Christ as its head, who gave it's ordinances, the characters of its members, it's mode of bringing them into the visible church as well as all it's methods of discipline, and it shall be perpetual with Christ as it's King. Then as it was established by Christ, and Christ being it's Supreme head, founder and keeper, it will never be destroyed.

In Christ we hope, a brother in faith,

John F. Simpson

Misella Park, N. M.
November 18, 1952

Dear Brother Spangler:

Several months have passed since I met you at Brother Falk's in El Paso, Texas. I have lived that evening over many times, and am thankful that it pleased God for you to come our way. I hope that which made me love you was the Faith of our God working in us. We are made to rejoice when our faith is revealed from faith to faith. Our faith, or the faith of God's children, is the same faith Simeon had when he knew the Son of God, though he was but an infant.

I received the Signs of the Times a few days ago and enjoyed the articles a lot. The Signs is all the preaching out here in New Mexico that I have. I believe all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. Just stop and think of the natural cause that brought you this way. God knew he had a poor sinner out this way, saved by grace if saved at all. When His children cry out for food, the Shepherd of the Flock will come crying in the wilderness, Here I am.

Brother Spangler this summer after working all morning in my yard, after lunch I lay down to rest for a while. While lying there going over in my mind the many blessings and also short-comings, this Scripture came into my mind so forcibly that I got up and got the Bible and looked it up to be sure it was Scripture: "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." (Rom. 14:23). The revelation I had on this scripture was so beautiful. At this time I will not attempt to relate it to you, as I am a poor hand to write my ideas. Unless man is led by the Spirit of God, to see the beauties of God, he won't see them by the Spirit, but by man's wisdom; which is naught. My prayer is, Brother Spangler, that God will give you a mind to write either to me or in the Signs on this faith of ours. If you are led by his Spirit to bring out the beauties of Christ, it will be by the faith of Christ in you. We know no man after the flesh, but by the Spirit of Christ which is in him.

How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the Gospel (not works), and bring glad tidings of good things. These things are the finished work of the Son of God, who washed our robes and made them white as snow; who conquered both death and the grave; and who has risen and is now at the right hand of God making intercession for us. Our Lord knows we are but dust but was not ashamed to call us brethren. He became us, and bore all our sins whether past or present; it is His blood that will keep it white as snow, and in him we are perfect even as He is perfect. No lion's whelps have trodden this way, nor vulture's eye seen it; none but the Lamb of God and his Bride know this way.

God's children have to be born naturally before they can be born spiritually. When the Spirit of the Son of God enters into a natural man, the quickening begins; and we have a deliverance or birth. Not that we enter again into the womb, but are delivered from bondage to walk in newness of life: Christ being our all in all. He is our faith, hope, resurrection, life, righteousness and perfection. May we be given grace to give the Son of God all praise, for by His stripes we are healed. None but a poor little, humble child of God, led by the grace of God, will ever be able to praise him as he ought. "Cursed is man that trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm."

We could go on and on praising him, for the half has not been told. I have written more than I intended. I hope the remarks I have made are of the Spirit and not of the flesh. I desire, with the Apostle Paul, to know nothing among you save Christ and him crucified. My prayer is that God will give me wisdom and understanding, that I might be kind and gentle and long-suffering to all mankind, especially the

household of faith, and that when I have finished my course here in this world, my brethren and sisters may say his hope was in Christ and not in the deeds of this body. Christ works and none can hinder; hinders and none can work. How we long at times to feel after him: but at his appointed time he reveals himself to us and we are made to rejoice.

Brother Spangler, when at the throne of grace remember me. I hope it will be God's will for you to come by and visit me in my home. With love and fellowship and hope of a perfect life, I remain

Your brother in Christ, I hope,
J. A. Bell

1360 First Street
Chehalis, Washington

Dear Editors and readers of the Signs:

This is a message to the dear people I love, both near and far. I have lived at Castle Rock, Washington, for about or nearly thirty years, but now it has pleased the Lord to bring about a change for me.

Within the past year Elder C. M. Fisher's health has failed so much that it has become a burden on them to keep their home open for the meetings; and it began to look as if we would have no place to meet. But the impression seemed to press my mind so deeply to sell the home at Castle Rock, where I had lived so long, and buy another at Chehalis, Washington, so that, if the Lord willed it so, the meetings could be held with me.

I had made the journey to the meetings under trying conditions many times since my husband was called home six years ago. Now my prayer is that the meetings may begin again. At our September meeting it was voted by the church to discontinue the meetings indefinitely. We had no meeting in October, but God willing, we hope to meet in my home on the fourth Sunday in November; and, if the church pleases and God wills, they will be held with me as long as it is wise and well to do so.

My new home is located at 1360 First Street, Chehalis, Washington. There will be times no doubt when I shall not be well, but the home will be open to the meetings, and to any of God's precious children who may care to come. I feel that God's hand has directed my every move in this change of residence.

After Elder Fisher moves away to be near their children, we will have no regular pastor. We hope and expect the church at Riffe, Washington, will continue to assist us, God willing, as they have so lovingly and faithfully done in the past; but their pastor is aged and failing also, and the drive is long and cold in the Winter. He is Elder I. F. Coleman and is well past eighty.

Our own dear Pastor has expressed the wish that we meet as regularly as we can, and even though we have no pastor to moderate or preach for us, that we sing hymns and read sound articles. And so thereby, if God in his tender mercy wills it, the little church may be kept alive.

We are often in prayer that He will, if consistent with his divine purpose, raise up an able and sound undershepherd for us. May his divine will be done in all things, and may He reconcile us to it no matter where or what it may be.

All my dear Baptist people who read this, please note the change of address. I shall be glad to hear from any of you at any time.

Humbly, with Christian love,
Mrs. Effie Parke

Lebanon, Mo.

Elder D. V. Spangler:

Dear brother in a precious hope of rest and joy and peace when called to depart this life. I know that I am a great sinner but I just wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed you writing on the subject someone asked you to

give your views on.

How good it is to have our pure minds stirred up. When I had finished reading, I said, how good it is that there are a few who are not ashamed to declare the truth as it is.

When King David went to bring the Ark it was put in a new cart, and it brought death. When we bring in self it brings death. The Ark was to be carried, not moved on a cart. As you said, a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. So putting the Ark in a new cart was a little leavening, and we know what the end was because it was not done in due order. If we fail to hear the truth as it is, then we are as the heathens. Like the King, we ought to be ready to acknowledge our wrongs and lift high the royal banner, for it must not suffer loss.

I hope I have not written anything which is not in accord with sound doctrine.

A brother saved by grace, if saved at all,

W. W. Kenaly

Emory, Texas

Editors of the Signs of the Times:

You will find enclosed check for $10.00. Am so sorry that I have neglected to send it sooner.

The Signs has been in my family for three generations, and I am eighty-two years old. I get so much consolation out of the book, and I enjoyed the October issue. I feel so grateful that our writers have such great revelations and that God's little children have such wonderful things to feast upon.

I think we are blessed with a wonderful preacher. I do not get to attend meetings each time, but I go as often as my health will let me. I ask you brethren to remember me in your prayers.

A little sister in hope of eternal life,

Mrs J. W. Potts

Paducah, Ky.
Nov. 16, 1952

Dear Editors:

Enclosed find money to pay for my paper for another year. I don't want to miss a single copy, for I enjoy those good letters so much.

I do not get to hear very much preaching; I live so far from my church that I seldom get to attend, but, Oh! how I do enjoy it when I do get to go. Our pastor is Eld. Paul Poyner and we think he is a very able preacher.

May God sustain and keep you dear brothers is my prayer.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Ambie Hall

The following is a reprint of Editorial by Elder H. C. Ker, September 15, 1908:

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." (Rev. 3:20)

In the first chapter of this book we read the revelation to John of seven golden candlesticks, and in the midst of them one like unto the Son of man. In his right hand he held seven stars. These things were wonderful and mysterious to John, therefore further revelation of them was made to him. The candlesticks were the seven churches of Asia. He in the midst of them was Christ, who upholds the entire church, represented by the number seven. The stars were the angels or ministers of the seven churches; or in other words, all ministers of the gospel of the grace of God are in his hand (under his control) and are accountable to him only for their stewardship. A message was sent to each angel or pastor of the seven churches by Him who is in their midst. Our text is embodied in the message of the angel of the church of Laodicea. Five of the churches were in disorder and were sharply rebuked. One had left her first love; another had

those who held the doctrine of Balaam; another suffered that woman Jezebel to teach; another had a name as though she lived, but was really dead; another was rich and needed nothing, while indeed she was poor, miserable, naked and blind. To each church the Lord said, "I know thy works." The works were then described and the remedy for each transgression given, which was repentance. If they did not repent, the candlestick should be removed out of it's place. The church of Philadelphia was commended for it's steadfastness, and blessing was pronounced upon it.

If we note the time and circumstances under which the writings of the Bible were penned it will give us a more proper conception of their import. This book, Revelation, in which is recorded the seven messages to the churches of Asia, was written in the gospel day, therefore sets forth gospel order and discipline, not legal commandments and legal obedience. While the church is freed from the law, it is under law to Christ, and he demands gospel obedience; hence order in his house must be maintained or the candlestick will be removed out of it's place. He is fully acquainted with all our works, we therefore should be careful to keep his house clean. None of us should forsake our first love for gold and silver. We should not hold the doctrine of Balaam and put a stumbling-block in our brother's way. We must not suffer a woman to teach and usurp authority over the man. None of us must manifest false zeal, thereby giving others to think we are alive when we are in reality dead.

The church of Laodicea seemed to be in a deplorable condition, notwithstanding they thought they lacked nothing, being rich and full. The message says they were "lukewarm," and because of such condition the Saviour would "spew" them out of his mouth. This lukewarm condition seems to be the state of many of us in this age of the world. If such condition was distasteful to the Master of the house in the days of the churches of Asia, is it not equally so now? There seems to be much indifference in all the world toward church privileges; if everything is favorable we will go to meeting, if not we remain at home quite satisfied. This was not the case with us in our first love. If a man comes along bringing the doctrine of Balaam, some one will say, O he may have been embarrassed, we should be charitable toward the poor fellow. Such was not the case with us when we lived upon the sincere milk of the word and would not even for a moment tolerate anything that gave a shadow of Ashdod. We do not seek the society of each other as we once did when the relation of the experience of the sheep and lambs was precious to us. The Scriptures seem old and we read less than in former years. Do we who are pastors visit our flocks and thereby keep up that warmth of feeling between pastor and people as we once did? Do we render all the service we can to the church? Or do we render as little as possible? Is our conversation seasoned with salt, that the hearers may be edified thereby, or is it upon worldly topics mingled with levity? Is our walk before men such as commands respect and has influence for good? Do we seek to have variety in our preaching that the interest of the church and congregation be kept up? If we, together with the churches, are neither hot nor cold, we surely must be lukewarm.

This knocking at the door by the Saviour is not at the heart of the dead sinner for admittance, as many imagine, but each knock is a revelation to the church in disorder, whether individually or collectively. To the church individual who says, I am rich and increased in goods and have need of nothing, the revelation from God that they are "wretched, and miserable and poor,

and blind, and naked", is the knocking at the door. To be shown that they must buy of Him gold tried in the fire, that we may be rich, is to reveal to us that our gold is not refined and purified. To be shown that we need white raiment that we may be clothed, that our barrenness and destitution appear not, is to reveal our righteousness as filthy rags. To make known to us that our eyes need anointing with eye salve that we may see, reveals our blindness to spiritual things. When He thus knocks the door opens and the poor sinner or church sits down with him in his kingdom which cometh not with observation. In his light they see light; in his righteousness they are clothed; in his riches they are rich. Through this operation of the Spirit order is restored; true zeal and warmth of love are again given.

Is not this supping with him? Is not communion with God and with his Son Jesus Christ supping with him and he with us? It is because of his love to the church that he rebukes and chastens it. He deals with us as with children; we overcome through his strength the powers of evil and sit down with him in his throne, even as he overcame and is set down with his Father in his throne.

SPECIAL NOTICE

Please check your expiration date on your paper. If the date is 10-52 it means your subscription expired in October 1952. We are not sending notice of expiration as we are mailing the paper without wrapping. Please re-new promptly. Thank you,

D. V. Spangler

EDITORIALS

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TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

P O. Box 1271 **Danville, Va.**

EDITORIAL

"Zion shall be redeemed with Judgment, and her Converts with Righteousness"
Isaiah 1:27

Sometime ago, after using this scripture for a text, I was asked to write an article on it.

The Zion under consideration, must undoubtedly be the church of God, often referred to in the Word of God as such. "Out of Zion the perfection of beauty, God has shined". "The Lord loveth the gates of Zion."

"Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities; thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken."

These and many other passages show that the church is often referred to as Zion. Though there is a hill near Jerusalem named Mt. Zion, it is a type of the spiritual family of God.

It will be noticed that the promise of God, by the mouth of the prophet is very definite. "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment." We are noted as a people as mentioning often the shall's of God, and such reminders is often a comfort to the ones who can rest in nothing less than the promises of an immutable God. One who is able, and will bring to pass every promise He has ever made. His word that has gone forth will not return to him void but will accomplish the things whereunto he has promised.

There can be no true comfort in the knowledge of this redemption until one has some understanding of what they are redeemed from, the kind of redemption they receive, and the one who perfects this redemption.

There can be no question as to who the redeemer is. He is spoken of as, "The man Christ Jesus". He was the offering that God prepared to forever put away sin. The only one that could perfect forever them that are sanctified; the body spoken of in Hebrew where it is said, "A body hast thou prepared me". The offering that only God himself could make.

Job saw him even before he was born of the Virgin Mary, and could say, "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.

And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; Though my reins be consumed within me."

There is a sense in which one might be redeemed from something, and be brought into bondage again and the debt have to be paid the second time; the price of their deliverance might only serve for a limited time, and they would find themselves again needing redemption. The first redemption would not secure the payment of all future debts.

Not so with the kind of redemption we here refer to. "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

Neither by the blood of goats and calves, BUT BY HIS OWN BLOOD HE ENTERED IN ONCE INTO THE HOLY PLACE, HAVING OBTAINED ETERNAL REDEMPTION FOR US". Heb. 9th. Ch. 11-12, V. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sin." "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many. For by one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified". Hence we see that the kind of redemption perfected by our Lord Jesus Christ was eternal, and we can sing,

"Dear, dying lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved, to sin no more."

The next question is, what are the people of God, the chosen in Christ Jesus, redeemed from. According to the word of inspiration they are redeemed from everything that would ever condemn them. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Titus, 2-14." Peter describes this redemption from our vain conversation, hence the people of God are redeemed out of every nation, from the curse of the law, from sin, from iniquity and from their vain conversation.

"Zion shall be redeemed with judgment." The prophet describes how this redemption shall be obtained. Christ was made sin for us, who knew no sin,

that we may be made the righteousness of God in him. He died the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God. The righteous execution of God's wrath because of sin fell on him as the sin bearer. God's holy law must be honored, and the demands of justice satisfied. He looked and there was none to help, therefore his own arm brought salvation. Help was laid upon one that was able to save.

Pardon alone for a sinner would not do; reconciliation must be made, and the handwriting of ordinances that were against us must be blotted out. The sins of all the chosen of God were imputed (charged) to Jesus Christ, and as their sin-bearer, the judgment of God must fall on him. He is made a curse, that he might redeem from the curse. As the Ark rose above the waters when God's wrath was poured out upon the world because of sin, as we see him, who knew no sin, made sin for us, hanging upon a tree, and hear him cry "My God, My God why hast thou forsaken me." The sun refuses to shine on this scene the earth quakes, and the Vail of the temple is rent. Here is the judgment of God that redeems Zion. One important question is in the minds of his dear people, Was I represented there? Was this great love for me? If one sin is left unatoned for, the one will forever banish us from him. Christ, Our blessed Saviour, suffered all the agonies of hell as he hung, as a curse. He trod the winepress alone. O, my soul, how great was his love, how tender was his pity, how enduring are his mercies.

The righteous indignation of God, and the execution of his wrath in his judgment was his way of salvation. It is called in his Word, The way of holiness. The Lion's whelp, (king of beasts) the vultures eye has not seen it, but the redeemed of the Lord shall walk there. This execution of his righteous wrath on one who has a perfect offering, one who could die under the stroke, and rise again from the dead, was the justifying of all his people, and being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

This judgment has ransomed them from the power of the grave, and they wait for the adoption, to-wit the redemption of their bodies, which is just as sure as their redemption from sin.

The judgment of all the family of God is already past according to the Word, "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to Judgment; and some men they follow after." 1 Tim. 5-24.

"On him almighty vengeance fell,
That must have sunk a world to hell:
He bore it for his chosen race,
And thus became their hiding place.

A few more rolling suns at most,
Will land me on that heavenly coast
Where I shall sing the song of Grace,
And see my glorious hiding-place."

"And her converts with righteousness." Through his perfect work of atoning for sin, putting it away, Jesus became The Lord our righteousness. And the power of this righteousness is what brings all of Zions converts into the heavenly way, for "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

D. V. S.

WHAT SHALL I CRY?

Please get your Bible and open to the 40th. chapter of of Isaiah and read the entire chapter. May the Lord now enable us to meditate together upon this scripture using the first part of the 6th verse as basis for our meditations: "The voice said, 'Cry', and he said, 'What shall I cry?' "

Cry means to utter, proclaim, groan, shriek or speak. When you cry it is involuntary brought about by a stimulus that cause you to speak, proclaim, and say things that, were it not for

this stimulating influence, you would not utter. We believe that the "Spirit of the Lord" is the stimulating influence that prompts God's people to cry. When the "Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon" us it prompts the opposite cry from that of the spirit of man. (See 7th verse) There is such a drastic change brought about by the direct operation of the Spirit that there always is a question. A question intimates that you do not know.

When the Spirit fell upon them on the day of Pentecost they asked, "What shall we do?" (Acts 2:37) When it arrested Paul on the way to Damascus he asked, "Who are thou, Lord?" and, "What wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:5-6) Those who were pricked at heart by the Spirit on the day of Pentecost did not ask what MAY we do? But "what SHALL we do?" Paul did not ask, what do you WANT me to do? But, "What wilt thou HAVE me to do?". The one in the text did not ask, what MAY I cry?, but, "What SHALL I cry?" All upon whom the Spirit of the Lord has blown are made to realize that God has ALL power and that they have NO power. They are made to realize that "He speaks and it is done; He commands and it stands fast." When I was identified with another order of religion I outlined my sermons beforehand and delivered them according to outline. I knew what to cry because the Spirit had not withered my flesh and caused my goodliness to fade. I was certain, sure and proud of myself. Since my flesh withered until I have no power and the goodliness thereof faded until I have no self righteousness, I have been entirely dependent upon God to give me at the self-same hour light of thought and liberty of speech. I go groaning, wondering, "What shall I cry?" (I trust this has been brought about by the Spirit of the Lord blowing upon me.)

It has already been intimated that those who cry the Truth do so because of the stimulating influence of the Holy Spirit. They wonder what to cry because they have nothing of themselves to cry. When the voice says, "Cry", they know they MUST cry. I am persuaded that every time the Voice commands to cry the child of God does cry that which God puts in his mouth. Now, "What shall I cry?"

"All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass." (Isaiah 40:6-7) How is all flesh as grass? The grass withers. Therefore, all flesh withers. How is all the goodliness of the flesh as the flower? The flower fadeth. Therefore, all the righteousness of the flesh fadeth. What causes the flesh to wither and the righteousness thereof to fade? The Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it. Has the Spirit of the Lord ever blown upon you? If your natural power has so withered that you realize you cannot lift yourself up to the extent to be approved of God I am persuaded that the Spirit of the Lord has blown upon you. If all your righteousness has faded in beauty that it appears as filthy rags, I am convinced that the Spirit has blown upon you. "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away". (Isaiah 64:6).

What shall I cry concerning all nations as a whole? Can they combine and unite their strength and accomplish anything of their own power? Let us see. All nations are "counted as the small dust of the balance." (Is. 40:15) The small dust upon the balances that the merchant uses in weighing his commodities are so insignificant that no purchaser would ask the merchant to remove the small dust from the balances before weighing in order that what he has purchased would weigh less. If all nations combined would be so insignificant, what would one man be? We are

to cry that they are less than that! (Isaiah 40:7) "All nations before Him are as nothing; and they are counted to Him LESS THAN NOTHING and vanity." If all nations are counted to Him as nothing and less than nothing — what would one man be counted as? Using the expression of the late Elder A. D. Wall, of Amity, Arkansas—: "Nothing split open and both halves thrown away, would be about the best way I know to express the size of one man's power as counted by God". Who can boast of the power and righteousness of puny man in the face of these startling statements! God forbids His people to boast of their righteousness and power because of the withering and fading effects brought about by the Spirit.

What shall I cry concerning God? "It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers." "That bringeth the princes to nothing; He maketh the judges of the earth as vanity." (Is. 40:22-23) He did this to Hezekiah though he was a king. Each and every one upon whom the Spirit blows (read v. 24) is brought to nothing and vanity whether they be king, prince, judge, rich or poor, bond or free, — regardless of their status in this world they are all brought to the same low level. What shall I cry concerning that which God does for those upon whom He hath blown His Spirit to wither and fade into faintness and weariness? "He giveth power to the FAINT; and to them that have NO MIGHT He increaseth strength." (V. 29) When their life ends; He adds His Life. (See Isaiah 38:5) When their power becomes as vanity He gives His power. When they are weak then they become strong in the Lord. When the Lord is your strength you run and do not become weary because "He is strong in power; not one faileth." (V. 26)

What shall I cry to the Lord's people? "Behold the Lord God will come with STRONG hand, and His arm shall rule for Him; behold His reward is WITH Him, and His work before Him. He shall feed His flock like a shepherd; He shall gather the lambs with His arms, and carry them in His bosom." I am persuaded that Jesus and the Spirit are the strong arm and hand that shall rule for Him in the lives of His people. He gathers, carries, and feeds those that are His. Jesus came to seek and save that which was lost. It is not left upon the volition of the creature to find God. This is the work of the strong arm and hand of God. He carries them in His bosom. They were chosen in Him before time began. They are bone of His bone. None of these shall fail for the Lord carries them and feeds them. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man PLUCK THEM OUT OF MY HAND. My Father which gave them me is greater than all; and NO MAN IS ABLE TO PLUCK THEM OUT OF MY FATHER'S HAND" (St. John 10:27-29) We see the certainty of all the sheep of God hearing the voice, following after, and persevering unto Life Eternal without the loss of one.

What shall I cry to Jerusalem, God's people? "Comfort ye, comfort ye MY PEOPLE, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to JERUSALEM, and CRY unto her, that her WARFARE IS ACCOMPLISHED, that INIQUITY IS PARDONED; for she hath received OF THE LORD'S HAND DOUBLE for all her sins." (Isaiah 40:1-2) Take notice that the cry is to be made only to God's people. This cry is to be of comfort to the church—or those whom He hath called out. God's ministry tell her that Jesus was the lone warrior who accomplished this warfare by fulfilling all the requirements of the law in her stead. He is a warrior in whom God was well pleased. He came to "give eternal life to as many as thou hast given Him." (St. John 17:2). "And this is the record, that God hath given

us eternal Life, and this life is in His Son." (1 John 5:11)

Not only did he accomplish OUR WARFARE but also paid the penalty for our iniquity! He suffered and died that Holy Justice might be perfectly satisfied, the penalty for our sins fully paid; that we might appear before His judgment seat with a record without blemish. He did not stop by just accomplishing the law for us, which would have left us with our sins against us. Neither did He only atone for our sins, which would have left the task to us of strictly obeying the ten commandments with all of its supporting laws. But, He performed DOUBLE for us. He reconciled us unto the Father by His death, and He also saves us by His life. (see ROM. 5:10)

We receive of the Lord's hand DOUBLE in all things pertaining to eternal life. He speaks and also does it. He commands and cause it to come to pass. Jesus is AUTHOR and FINISHER of our faith. He works in us BOTH TO WILL and TO DO of His good pleasure. He commands to repent, and gives you repentance. He says, "Awake", and awakens you. He commands to live, and gives you life. He says, "Come unto me", and DRAWS you to Him. He says, "Hear", and gives you a hearing ear. He says, "Cry", and puts the words into your mouth to cry. He says to Zion, "Get thee up into the high mountains", and sets them on high.

What shall I then cry concerning the salvation of God's people? I must cry that salvation is solely by the grace of God through the merits of Jesus Christ both in time and unto eternity. I must do as Jonah, acclaim that salvation is of the Lord. I must cry that it is certain and sure to each and every one of the subjects of His amazing grace. I must cry that boasting is excluded. I must praise Him for His wonderful goodness to the children of men. In Him we move and have our being. The breath that we breathe belongs to Him. Even natural possessions are in His hand and He distributeth them to whomsoever He will. All the hairs of your head are numbered by Him and not even a sparrow falls without Him.

What shall I cry to the discouraged? God providentially cares for you and so sovereignly controls ALL THINGS that that they work together for your good. God has a noble purpose for you to fulfill in life and He will so protect you and guide you that you will completely fulfill this purpose before He takes you from this sojourn of sin and sorrow. Even though you feel so insignificant, God's purpose in you being here is just as important as the greatest ministerial gift that has ever graced the pulpit. May God bless you to take courage with these thoughts and press on toward the the mark of the prize of the high calling — looking unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of this precious faith. God has so arranged, fixed and decreed that we have need of each other and we do serve one another; thereby serving Christ. (See Matt. 25:31-40) We are made to do as Paul—thank God for the brethren.

What shall I cry concerning our conduct one toward another? Forgive a brother his trespasses as our heavenly Father hath forgiven us. Esteem a brother higher than ourselves. Do good unto all men; especially unto the Household of Faith. As much as in you is live peaceably with all men. Do unto them as you would have them do unto you. "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." (1 Peter 4:8-10) "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief or as an evil doer, or as a busy body in other men's matters—yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf." (1 Peter 4:15-16) As the body has need

of each and every one of its members, so the church has need of each other.

What shall I cry to God? "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy Loving kindness: according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." (Pslams 51:1, 10) Perform for me that my walk and conversation may be godly in this life. "Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion." Cause strife and confusion to cease—if it be thy will—that God's little children may live together in sweet fellowship one with another. Cause us to be content with our lot and reconciled unto Thy will. Give us this day our daily bread. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Finally, save us in that eternal abode where and when all will be peace, love, joy, and fellowship forever and ever is the prayer that we beseech in the name of Jesus Christ who art Thy Son, and our redeemer. Amen.

E. J. L.

NOTICE

In changing the printing of the paper from Annapolis, Md. to Danville, Va. there has been considerable delay in setting up dates, changing addresses, and entering new subscriptions. Part of this delay was due to an oversight in our former printer in making changes. We are now bringing the list up to date, and apologize for the delay. Your money has been received and properly credited.

D. V. S.

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Texas Brethren Please Note:

Since the request for information of Primitive Baptists near San Antonio, Texas, by Lt. John L. Sanders appeared, he has been transferred to Florida.

Editors

American children owe their Christmas trees to Pope Gregory I, according to the National Geographic Magazine. He enjoined missionaires not to destroy pagan customs but try to weave them into the fabric of Christian ceremony. Thus the missionary Boniface persuaded the Germans to substitute for Odin's sacred oak an evergreen tree decorated in honor of the Christ Child.—*Washington Post.*

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

God is calling us home one by one, and it has pleased Him to take from our midst our dearly beloved Brother Albert Henry Cox.

He was born February 24, 1879 and passed away September 30, 1952, and was the son of the late Albert Coleman Cox and Sallie Jackson Cox. He was married to Miss Anna Jackson on March 18, 1909; to this union were born four children: Albert Edward, Raleigh Carlton, Ambrose Henry and Mrs. Sallie Cox Jones. Brother Cox was a devoted husband and father to his family.

In November, 1912, he joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Malmason and was baptized by Elder Clayton. Funeral services were conducted from his home by Elder O. K. Tench, his pastor, and Elders W. R. Dodd and P. W. Ashworth. Burial was in Highland Burial Park, Danville, Virginia.

Therefore, be it resolved,

First, that we desire to bow in humble submission to the will of the all wise God, believing that our loss is his eternal gain, and that we cherish the memory of this dear brother, and that we desire to imitate the noble life he lived among us.

Second, that Malmason has lost a faithful and devoted member. He loved to read his Bible daily, and was ready and willing when God's summons came to call him home.

Third, that we extend our sympathy to his bereaved family. May God bless, comfort and lead them in the way of truth and love.

Fourth, that a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family, the Signs of the Times and Old Faith Contender and a copy be recorded upon our church book.

Written at the request of Malmason Church by Lettie Adams Cox.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Kate Dodd, Clerk

OBITUARY

MARTHA HASTINGS HOLLOWAY

Martha Ellen Hastings Holloway, daughter of Benjamin and Sarah Truitt Hastings, was born on Christmas day, 1865, near Whitesville, Sussex County, Delaware. She was one of eight children, and a twin sister of Mary Hastings Truitt; all preceeded her in death except one brother, Ananias Hastings, Salisbury, Maryland. Sister Holloway departed this life September 29, 1952, at the age of eighty-four years; her husband Archie Clay Holloway died January 29, 1947.

In February, 1882, she united with the Little Creek Church, near Delmar, Delaware, and was baptized by Elder E. Rittenhouse at the age of sixteen; she later moved her membership to Snow Hill Church, and was a faithful member until her death.

On December 10, 1884, she was married to Archie Clay Holloway, of Pittsville, Maryland, and they moved to a farm near Newark, Maryland. To this union were born six children, two dying in infancy. Those surviving are, Chester C., Clermont, Florida, Mrs. Benjamin A. Johnson, Salisbury, Md., William H., Snow Hill, Md., and Mrs. Lee Warren, Berlin, Md.

The funeral was conducted from the home in Newark, Md., where she died, on Thursday, October 2, 1952, by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, assisted by Elder H. M. Bennett.

Sister Martha, as she was affectionately known to the hosts of loved ones and friends, was a very noted person. I have never known one more devoted to her church, family and friends than she. She not only attended regularly the services of her home church, but attended the meetings of the other churches nearby when there were no services at home. She was known over a wide area by the Old School Baptists; and wherever known, was loved. Not only did she manifest an interest in the truth by attending services, but the welfare of her people, the Old School Baptists, was near her heart. During the lifetime of her husband, they entertained many, many of the brethren and friends.

During the last few years of her life, Sister Holloway, was confined to her bed by illness, yet she manifested the same loving interest in her family, church and friends as when she was able to go to meetings. It was truly an inspiration to visit her home, to behold her bright countenance and to hear her speak of

the tender mercies of God. She would ask the ministers for a word of prayer, and at the conclusion would say, "Thank you." Usually some hymn would be sung for her each day and, even when she was very feeble, she would join in the service, as she knew most of the hymns by heart. The last visit I had with her, when she took notice of but few things, I asked her if she would like to go to church, and the answer was, "Yes."

No one ever had more loving care bestowed upon them than our sister during her illness. Day and night loved ones, and a very faithful nurse, hovered over her to attend her every need.

We can certainly say of her, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." To the loved ones I would say, weep not. Yet, as I attempted to speak words of comfort at the funeral, words failed me to express a tribute to her memory as I would. I felt that I could understand the scene when Jesus was told that Lazarus was dead: "Jesus wept."

She died in the triumph of a living faith, from which none ever wake to weep.

Elder D. V. Spangler
Written by her pastor

ELDER C. H. BYRD

Elder C. H. Byrd, member of the Salem Church in Panama City, Florida and a prominent minister of the Western Primitive Baptist Association of Alabama, Georgia and Florida, died December 1, 1952, enroute home from California at a Mobile, Alabama hospital.

Brother Byrd had been in ill health for several years, but had continued to travel and preach, having crossed the country several times during the last two years, and had spoken perhaps in more than half of the American States. He had also written many comforting articles for publication in Primitive Baptist papers.

He was 78 years of age, and a native of Dade County, Alabama. In early life he was a prominent teacher, being a graduate of Troy Normal School and the University of Alabama. He served as County Superintendent of Education of Coffee County, Alabama, for sixteen years. While in that position he worked untiringly in the cause of education.

When he retired as a teacher, he devoted more and more time to the ministry and was ordained about ten years ago by Elders F. A. and J. J. Collins and Deacon A. E. Sorrells at Panama City, Florida. He was a consistent member of the Primitive Baptists and loved the cause dearly.

Elder Byrd is survived by six sons: A. A. Byrd, Brooklyn, N. Y., Gilbert and Edward, Los Angeles, California, H. C. and H. M., Mobile, Alabama, and R. O. Byrd, Dotham, Alabama, and one daughter, Mrs. A. E. Lee, Enterprise, Alabama. Funeral services were conducted December 2, 1952, at Enterprise by Dr. B. R. Justice and Elder J. J. Collins. Text used was 2 Corinthians 5:1. Elder Byrd had made written request that Elder Collins serve in this capacity.

An excellent teacher and able minister has gone to his eternal home.

J. J. Collins

MRS ESTELLE B. WATSON

Mrs. Estelle B. Watson was born May 13, 1877, and died March 20, 1952. She was born in Walton County, Georgia, near Loganville and was married to Leni M. Watson September 24, 1893. To this union was born nine children, seven of whom survive.

She received a hope in Jesus at a very early age and that hope was with her until the end of life. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Shiloh, Walton County, September 2, 1922, and was baptized by the late Elder J. M. Lindsey. She was a faithful member and a firm believer in salvation by grace and grace alone.

She was a wonderful mother to us children, striving to teach us to do what was right. Becoming very ill on Saturday afternoon, she died the following Thursday evening. We do not mourn because she is gone, but because we miss her so much. She was a lovely mother, and I think a true mother in Israel, as those who knew her will testify.

Elder H. O. Nash her Pastor, and Elder W. F. Beauford conducter the funeral in a very comforting way.

Besides the following children there are six grandchildren and one great-grandchild who mourn her passing: Mrs. W. L. Mobley, Buford, Georgia; Mrs. Ernes Hunt, Auburn, Georgia; Mrs. Clyde Trotter, Cornelia, Georgia; Mrs. Cecil Holbrook, New Richmond, Ohio; Daniel and Delmas Watson, Winder, Georgia, and Elmon Watson, Auburn, Georgia.

Written by her unworthy daughter,

Mrs. W. L. Mobley

DEACON ALGERNON DOUGLAS ALSTON

Algernon Douglas Alston, was the son of Nathaniel Charles and Kate Alston, and was born October the 29th, 1903 in Webster County, Georgia and died at Walter Reed Hospital, Washington, D. C. on September 22, 1952. He was admitted on July the 9th, 1952.

On December the 20th, 1931, he was married to Miss Carolyn Peters, daughter of Mrs. G. W. Peters and the late G. W. Peters of

Monroe, Georgia. The union was blessed with two daughters, Miss Mildred Alston, who is now a student at Mary Washington College: Miss Sarah Alston, who resides with her mother at Herndon, Va.

Brother Douglas obtained his master's degree in chemistry at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. He taught mathematics and science in high schools in Georgia and North Carolina. He entered the Army Reserve in 1934. He served overseas in World War II and was in the Rhineland campaign. After his discharge in 1946 Major Alston went to Virginia to live. He was recalled to active duty in September, 1948, and served in Korea and Japan until illness necessitated his being returned and hospitalized.

Brother Alston was a deacon in the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church near Herndon, Virginia, where he joined in May, 1948 and was baptized by Elder H. H. Lefferts. He was ordained a deacon in that church in May, 1949. When permitted, his seat was always filled in his church and his home was a welcome place not only for Old Baptists, but his friends also, which were many.

He was very spiritually minded and his speaking and writing was a source of great comfort to the household of faith. In the words of his beloved wife, "his time was not idled away, but spent in reading and writing his meditations of God." What a wonderful testimony of his life by the one who knew him best!

Jesus said, "A good man out of the treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: He also said, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Brother Douglas spoke good things!

It was always the pleasure of the writer to have him present in our meetings, though reluctant to speak, he always brought from the good treasure of his heart, the things that he felt and loved. I shall always remember the refreshing seasons spent in his presence.

Brother Douglas was of an amiable disposition and to talk with him was to know and love him. His meat and drink was to be in the company of his brethren, and his conversation was always that of a spiritual nature. He loved his church and brethren above all else. The writer performed the ceremony which united Douglas and Carolyn in holy wedlock. Through the years their life together has borne testimony of their knowledge of Him, "Whom to knom is life eternal."

In addition to his widow and children he is survived by his Mother, Mrs. N. C. Alston, Sr., a sister Mrs. E. W. Gibson and a brother, Norris C. Alston, all of Atlanta.

Funeral services were held at H. M. Patterson and Son Funeral Home, Atlanta, Ga. by Elder W. F. Beauford and the writer. Interment in West View Cemetery in Atlanta.

To the sorrowing, I would say in the words of Paul, "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others who have no hope."

May God comfort each of the bereaved with the comfort wherewith He comforteth His children.

H. O. Nash

SALLIE CARTER BENNETT

God in His infinite wisdom has seen fit to call to her eternal home one of our eldest members, Sister Sallie Carter Bennett. She was the daughter of the late Brother J. H. Bennett and Sister Mary Holderby Bennett.

She joined the Church at Wolf Island when a girl and was baptized by the late Elder Hardy—later joining Reidsville Church by letter in November 1915.

She departed this life September 23, 1952, at the age of seventy-seven. "Miss Sallie," as we affectionately called her, taught school for many years. She had a remarkable memory, a wonderful personality, and felt a keen interest in all her former pupils.

Her delight was in the Church. She was a strong predestinarian and felt that God's ways were unquestionable. She told us several times in her illness that God could make her well if it were His will, but if not, that it was all right. She was brave, patient, and optimistic throughout her long illness. She never complained; never-the-less, some of the hours must have been tedious and tasteless; however, her faith in God never failed her. We loved her, but God loved her more and we feel that she is at rest from her labors with Christ in Glory.

She will be greatly missed in her community, having been so friendly and hospitable. She endeared herself to all who knew her. One of her greatest pleasures was entertaining Baptists in her home. Just before she became ill, she prepared for, and had preaching service there. Elder Floyd Adams preached. It was a lovely meeting.

Funeral service was held at the ancestral home and conducted by Elders D. V. Spangler, T. F. Adams, and S. J. Reich. Interment was in the family cemetery near by. The many who attended the funeral and the beautiful floral offerings bespoke the high esteem in which she was held.

Our Church has lost a precious member—one who was kind, faithful ,and consistent, but we feel that our loss is her great gain. Therefore be it resolved:

First: That we submit to the will of God who doeth all things well.

Second: That we extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family.

Third: That a copy of this memorial be sent to the family, a copy be recorded in our Church minutes, and copies be sent to the *Signs of the Times* and *Zion's Landmark* for publication.

Passed by the Church in November, 1952.

D. V. Spangler

MARSHALL GREEN LOWERY

Marshal Green Lowery was born March 8, 1855 at Kingston, Georgia, and died July 9, 1952, making his stay on earth over ninety-seven years. He was a son of Solomon Reece and Elizabeth Henley Roy Lowery, and was married in 1884 to Mary Jane Yates, of Water Valley, Kentucky. To this union were born seven sons and one daughter; four sons are the only survivors, viz, Elder E. C. Lowery, R. K. and B. H. Lowery, Fulton, Kentucky, and W. D. Lowery, Beaulah, Kentucky; together with six grand-children and six great-grandchildren and many other relatives.

Brother Lowery united with the Primitive Baptist Church of Christ at Old Bethel about sixty years ago, and remained a faithful member until the Redeemer saw fit to give him an honorable discharge, when he quietly laid his armor by and fell asleep in Jesus. He was sound in the doctrine of God our Saviour, always contending for salvation by grace both for time and eternity. It can well be said that he fought a good fight and kept the faith, and will be greatly missed by the brethren of the Bethel Association and of his home church, and the citizens of the neighborhood in which he lived and raised his family of fine, honorable children.

We would say to the children, weep not for Dad as those who have no hope after this life is over, for we feel that he is only sleeping, awaiting the last call of his great King to arise from the grave in His likeness and be just like Him, and see Him in his beauty. There will be no more death but a singing of His praise without end. Won't it be wonderful to just fall asleep in Jesus, to be awakened in His image, where there will be no more sorrow but peace and happiness without end!

Dear old Brother Lowery requested me several years ago to preach his funeral when he died. When he made this request, he said, "I want the doctrine preached, and not me." I did the best I could in the presence of a very large congregation.

May God's reconciling grace be with all who mourn the passing of Brother Lowery.

(Elder) O. W. Perkins

JEFFERSON CARL MELLOTT

Jefferson C. Mellott was born in Fulton County, Pennsylvania, near Needmore, October 10, 1865, and died November 27, 1952, being a little over eighty-seven years of age. He was the son of Dennis and Miriam Hess Mellott; and was married to Margaret Palmer February 6, 1894, who survives. Their fifty-ninth anniversary was near at hand.

Brother Mellott united with the Sideling Hill Old School Baptist Church August 13, 1913, and was baptized by the late Elder H. H. Lefferts. The gift of deacon was soon manifested, and he served in that capacity faithfully until his death. He was a man of integrity and none in his community was more highly esteemed than he. He loved the truth as it is in Christ Jesus and was deeply taught in the doctrine of God his Saviour; and was always interested in discussing the Scriptures with his brethren, rejoicing with them in the sovereignty of God and salvation by the unmerited grace of God. None were more faithful to his church and brethren than he, he always filled his seat at every opportunity. He missed only one October meeting (second Saturday and Sunday two days meeting) in seventy years, beginning as a boy of seventeen. In those days he delighted to drive a team to Hancock, Maryland, a distance of about twelve miles, to bring the Elders and brethren who came on the train to the meetings. Through the grace of God, he fought a good fight and kept the faith, manifesting the fruits of the Spirit in his daily walk and conversation.

Brother Mellott was one of thirteen children, ten of whom preceeded him in death, viz, Silas, Solomon, Jeremiah, Adam, Harvey, and Job Mellott, Mrs. Tabitha Truax, Mrs. Mary Mellott, Mrs. Sarah Hollinshead and Mrs. Elizabeth Tate; those who survive besides his widow, Sister Margaret Mellott, are Brother Marcus Mellott, Needmore, Pa., and Mrs. Ella M. Walters, Altoona, Pa., and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were conducted at Sideling Hill Meeting house by the pastor, Elder John D. Wood, where a host of relatives and friends were gathered to pay a last tribute of respect to one whom they loved and respected. Interment was in Sideling Hill Cemetery.

May the Lord give grace to all who mourn, that they may be reconciled to their loss, and truly say, "Thy will be done."

John D. Wood

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 121 DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1953 NO. 3

Williamstown, Kansas.

"It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory." (Cor. 12:1-6)

"I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above 14 years ago (whether in body or out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth). Such a one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man (whether in body or out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth). How that he was caught up into Paradise and heard unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such a one will I glory, yet of myself will I not glory but in mine infirmities."

The Apostle Paul is credited with writing some things hard to be understood. In fact, every expression given by divine inspiration must, in a lesser measure require an inspired knowledge to comprehend those deep sayings. For "the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit for they are foolish unto him, neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned." For this very reason I tremble to undertake to comment on these dark sayings. For, not unlike the Apostle, it is not expedient for me **doubtless** to glory, that is to say without doubts. These doubts and fears seem to be a common phase in the experience of every child of grace. One poet expresses our case for us;

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord or no,
Am I his or am I not."

It is not a restricted feeling among the Lord's people for they all without exception, even to the Apostles, experience those seasons of doubts and fears. There is so much carnality interspersed with our joys and our hopes we are often made to confess with the Apostle, "The good that I would I do not and the evil that I would not that I do. O wretched man that I am, Who shall deliver me from the body of this death." Thus while we glory in our little hope it is expedient or fitting that we have our doubts. It is a sign of a godly, humble spirit, it is congenial with a Christian experience, it eliminates boasting. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. Should one say, "I never have any doubts" it is equal to saying, "I know that I am a Christian", which is purely an Arminian expression and for which we have no fellowship. So then as a matter of encouragement to the poor doubting Pilgrims I would say cheer up, "These clouds you so much dread, are filled with mercy and shall break with blessings on your head."

So the Apostle declares, "I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord." Concerning the entire gospel which the Apostle preached he said, " I received it not of man neither was I taught it but by revelation." So here is a very extraordinary revelation which is, so to speak, the very kernel of the gospel of the Son of God. "I knew a man in Christ above 14 years ago, (whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth)." The number 14 is very significant. Twice seven. Seven denoting a full or complete number. Hence twice seven representating two full or complete dispensations of time. Thus Christ was revealed to him, or he saw him, in a vision before time began. I presume it is conceded by every lover of the truth that Christ is from everlasting to everlasting. Christ prayed his father, "Glo-

rify thou me with thine own self with the glory that I had with thee before the world was." "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.....And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the father full of grace and truth."

The patriarchs and prophets spoke of his coming in the flesh centuries before he made his advent into the world. They also spoke by revelation. Jacob gathered his sons together and told them what should befall them in the last days. To Judah he declared, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah nor a lawgiver from his feet till Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." The unerring predictions of the Holy men of old who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost were fulfilled. As it is written, "When the fullness of the time had come God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law to redeem them that were under the law. Thus the Apostle saw in a vision this same man Jesus Christ caught up to the third heaven, which is the third or gospel dispensation. It is indeed, of deep interest to every child of grace to know that he came to redeem them that were under the law. And it is also of deep concern whether or no this work was really accomplished. There was no provision made for a helper in this stupendous task. No help from either saint or sinner. But he declared "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me." Thus he went forth alone "And by himself purged our sins" and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. The right hand denoting a mark of infinite favor.

Thus the Apostle was given a glorious preview of our blessed Lord before time began. It was a vision from the Lord. Whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell, or was this just an idle dream, God knoweth. Many of the dear saints hesitate to tell of the sweet visitations of the Lord, the dreams and visions they have had, for fear after all it was only an idle dream. Whether in the body or out of the body you cannot tell, God knoweth. Ah, those doubts again. But dear child, the Lord knoweth them that are his. Christ came at the appointed time. Not too soon and not too late. And although his career on earth was short, there was ample time given for him to complete everything that he was ordained to do. The Apostle declared "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief." The prophet Isaiah wrote of him saying "Behold the Lord God cometh with strong hand and his arm shall rule for him. Behold his reward is with him and his work before him." His work was outlined for him, as he declares "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all that mourn, To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called trees of righteousness the planting of the Lord that he might be glorified."

Briefly, this is what he was anointed to do. And John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, testified, "And many other things did Jesus the which, if they were written every one, I suppose the world itself could not contain the books they should be written."

Now let us hear his report from his own lips when he prayed unto his father before he was offered up, "I have glorified thee on earth, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do, and now, Oh, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory I had with thee

before the world was." Did he preach good tidings unto the meek when he said "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth."? (the new earth). This expression is synonymous with that when he said, "Fear not, little flock for it is my Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Did he proclaim liberty to the captives when he declared, "Ye are no more under the law but under grace."? Did he proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord when it was declared, "The great day of his wrath is come and who shall be able to stand."? Did he comfort all that mourn when he said, "Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted"? Did he appoint unto them that mourn in Zion when he said, "I appoint unto you a kingdom as my father hath appointed unto me."? Briefly, did he leave anything undone that he was anointed to do? Did he refuse one stroke that divine justice ordained that he should suffer? Was he led as a lamb to the slaughter? Did he refuse to die that his people might live? Was God Almighty speaking lightly when he said, "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all? Was it a misinterpretation when it was said, "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows"?

All of these can be answered by a "thus saith the Lord." If he has endured all this and even more, has it proved ineffective unless a sinner should cooperate in the work of salvation. Truly this man whom the Apostle saw in a vision above fourteen years ago, was put to death in the flesh but quickened by the spirit; by the which he went and preached to the spirits in prison, thus opening the prison to them that were bound. It is not assuming too much to say the Apostle saw by revalation the whole plan of redemption bound up in this one man. He saw him before time began; He saw him caught up to the third heaven the gospel dispensation); he saw him ascend into paradise. Yes, such a one caught up into paradise. Of such a one will I glory, yet not of myself will I glory but in mine infirmities. In other words in my weakness. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake, for when I am weak then am I strong." He heard unspeakable words which it is not lawful for man to utter. It is not given us to know what these unspeakable words were. But should we conjecture it might have been akin to this, "Father I will that those thou has given me be with me where I am that they may behold my glory." He told his disciples while he was here that he would return unto his father, but he said, "If I go away I will come again and receive you unto myself." The Apostle has said, "Now that he ascended what is it but that he also descended first into the lowest parts of the earth. He that descended is the same also that ascended high above all heavens that he might fill all things." The very same Jesus whom the Apostle saw in a vision before time began is now in Paradise where those for whom he shed his precious blood shall be with him. Righteous Abel was a type of him and the Lord said, "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground."

So dear saints, remember that blood that Jesus poured out still crieth unto God from the ground. That voice will never lose its virtue. Now concerning his coming again, the Apostle describes it in this way; "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with a voice of the Arch angel and with the trump of God and the dead in Christ shall rise first." So the whole plan of salvation as wrought out by Jesus Christ was revealed to the Apostle. He saw it all in a vision. Thus he declares, "I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified. "Of such a one will I glory." Amen.

(Elder) L. L. Schenck

Huntington, W. Va.

Editors of the Signs:

If you have space, I would like very much to see reprinted an old letter written to Elder Jackson and me by Elder Newton Peters, of Portland, Indiana. He was sound in the faith and order of the Old School, and his manner of preaching was very comforting.

Yours for peace and order in the church of God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

(Elder) George L. Weaver

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PSALMS XLV. 14

"She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework."

Dear Brethren Jackson and Weaver:

I have been shut up at home for a couple of weeks with a slight siege of la grippe, and have had much time to meditate and think of the brethren, and yourself and brother Weaver came into my mind along with many others. I was wondering how it was with you both. I see in the Signs the obituaries of sister Cross and sister Main. I know that you both feel as though the Lord was calling his children home, and you do not see others filling their places. I was also called to Canada the eleventh of the month, where I preached the funeral of a dear old soldier of the cross.

The text at the head of this letter is one calculated to inspire confidence and hope. In the thirteenth verse is a strong declaration and a promise: "The King's daughter is all glorious within." This I understand to mean that the Lord hath cleansed her heart, and shed abroad his love there, and hath put his Spirit within. The strong man armed has been dethroned, and God has created in her a clean heart, and renewed a right spirit within her. This could only be the cause of her being all glorious within. The King's daughter is none other than the daughter of Zion, and "her clothing is of wrought gold." This I understand is the righteousness of Jesus Christ, with which she is clothed. The robe of righteousness which was wrought out on Mt. Calvary is the only suitable raiment to make her presentable to the King. It is added, "The virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter the King's palace." There is one thing I am glad has been repeated three times in the thirteenth and fourteenth verse, and that is, thy shall be brought. They do not voluntarily go, but they are brought. You know the Lord has said, "I will bring the blind by a way that they know not, I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight." Again, he said, "I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name." All these come unto the King in raiment of needlework with gladness and rejoicing. David said, Psalms xlvi. 1, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." Therefore in all our discouragements we have much to comfort us. Therefore David said in the same Psalm, "Therefore will not we fear, though the the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early." So, dear brethren, what wonderful and strong assurances we have here that Zion shall endure, even though we see her numbers growing smaller. In Psalms xlv. 16, it is written, "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth." "And I will make thy name to be re-

membered in all generations; therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever." Therefore, dear brethren, God will preserve his name in the earth, continually praise him in all the earth, and this shall be so, even though we do not see them. In Psalms xlvi. 10, he says, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." David says, The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge. How many are the strong assurances that our God reigneth, even though we cannot see his hand, and while it is true that at all times we cannot read our title clear to mansions in the skies, yet David said, The Lord will choose our inheritance for us. How much better is this than to be left to choose our own inheritance for ourselves. Some think we are left free to choose or reject, but David here declares that our God does the choosing for us. In one Psalm David breaks forth in words like these: Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. This is none other than the daughter of Zion, the church of the living God. This is the King's daughter who is brought to the King in raiment of needlework and is all glorious within. God is in the midst of her; he shall help her, and that right early. How then can she help but be all glorious within, when her God is within her for a refuge? She is beautiful for situation, as David declares again, and why should she not be, for God is a wall of fire around about her and the glory in the midst? Her clothing is of wrought gold, and she is brought to the King in raiment of needlework. David says of her again, She is the joy of the whole earth, this Mount Zion, this city of the great King, and God is known in her palaces for a refuge. This is the great beauty of this city. We remember, dear brethren, that Jesus said to his disciples just before he was crucified, In My Father's house are many mansions. Well, this house of the Father is none else than this beautiful Mt. Zion. This is the church of Christ, the bride, the Lamb's wife. Paul said to the Ephesians that God has raised her up and made her sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. These mansions, these palaces and these heavenly places are all one and the same thing. "Let Mt. Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad because of thy judgments," said David again, and he tells us to "walk about Zion, and go round about her." This is what I am now trying to do. I am trying to tell of her wonderful magnificence, and not only this, but how strongly she is fortified. We are also told to count her towers, her defences. How high is the mountain of God's holiness! She is not only called Zion, but Mt. Zion, and we are not only to tell her towers, but to mark well her bulwarks. It is said that when the kings of the earth assembled and passed by together they saw it and were troubled and hastened away, and fear took hold upon them, and pain as of a woman in travail, and we are not only told to mark well the bulwarks of this mighty city, but also we are to consider her palaces. Here again the palaces of Zion are spoken of, the mansions of the house of God, the heavenly places in Christ. How good it is to behold this wonderful King's daughter, who is all glorious within, and to consider her palaces, for God is known in her palaces for a refuge. Now the psalmist gives the reason why we are to be so careful in our examination of the daughter of Zion. It is that we may tell it to the generations following. This is what all of God's ministers have been trying to do for generations. It is also said that this God, who is in the palaces of Zion for a refuge, will also walk in her, and out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. This city hath no need of the light of the sun, moon and stars, for God and the Lamb are the light thereof. One may wonder while viewing his own sinful nature and inborn corruption, and the corrup-

tion of every thing in nature, how it can be that the church of God is arrayed in needlework and can be all glorious within, and her clothing be of wrought gold, and also how she is called the perfection of beauty out of which God hath shined. But when we take into consideration that the apostle Paul said to the Ephesians, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it would be holy and without blemish," we learn the way in which she becomes perfect, so that God is known in her palaces. Christ clothed her in this raiment of needlework, he sanctified her with the washing of water by the word and he made her presentable to himself. John saw her coming down from God out of heaven as a bride adorned for her husband, all glorious within, and adorned with raiment of needlework; and in this city John saw a pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing out of the throne of God, and on either side of the river was there the tree of life, and God is known in her palaces for a refuge, and he and the Lamb are the light thereof. The river of life is there, and the tree of life also. There is a river the streams whereof make glad the city of our God; this is the river that John saw flowing out of the throne of God. Our God sits upon his throne there. John saw this city fenced with a great wall, and it had twelve foundations, and in them were the name of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. John further said that no one could enter this city save those whose names were written in the book of life of the Lamb.

But I am getting tedious, and will hasten to another view of Zion. I have been presenting her in her light seasons, but in the forty-ninth chapter of Isaiah we are told that Zion gets into dark seasons. At one time she said, The Lord hath forsaken me: the Lord hath forgotten me. But the Lord said unto her, Can a woman forget her sucking child? Yes, she may forget, but I will never forget thee. Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, and thy walls are continually before me. I create the smith that bloweth the coals, that formeth an instrument for his work, and no weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper. Again, the word that goeth out of my mouth shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish that which I please, and prosper in the thing whereto I have sent it. Again, Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down. Not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, nor one of the cords thereof broken, for there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall be no galley with oars, and neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. Therefore, brethren Jackson and Weaver, let not your discouragements swallow you up with overmuch sorrow, for the Lord will keep Zion safe. It is written, Isaiah liv., that the Lord has bidden Zion to break forth into singing, because although the desolate had more children than she had, now she should enlarge the place of her habitation, and lengthen her cords, and strengthen her stakes, because she should break forth on the left hand, and the right, and her seed should inherit the Gentiles, and her desolate cities should be inhabited. "For," he said, "thy Maker is thine husband; The Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called." Here was one of the dark seasons of Zion, but the Lord comforted her with promises of enlargement, and declares himself to be her Husband and Redeemer. He tells her that he had forsaken her but for a small moment, but that with great mercies would he gather her. In a little wrath he had hidden his face from her, but with

everlasting kindness would he have mercy upon her, and that the covenant of his peace should never be removed from her. For, he said, this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee. I hath laid thy beams with fair cedars, and all thy borders with pleasant stones. All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. The mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee. Let my right hand forget her cunning, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I do not prefer Jerusalem above my chief joy, was the exclamation of one who had been given a view of this glorious city.

I only intended to write a short letter, but when I got started the foundations of the great deep became broken up, and I could find no place to stop until now. Excuse this long letter, and if you deem it worthy a place in the Signs you may send it there.

Yours in hope of blessed immortality,

NEWTON PETERS.

Portland, Ind., Jan. 28, 1913.

The following is from the Signs of the Times of February 15, 1850, and shows that old things are ever new:

Chambers Co., Ala., Jan. 18, 1850

Brother Beebe:

The true followers of Christ, while in this world are subject to many carnal things, and it becomes their duty through the spirit to mortify the deeds of the body. Even those who were with Christ personally, were some times forgetful of what manner of spirit they were of, and at a certain time, merely because they were not favorably received by the Samaritans, they wished to know of the Master, if they should call fire from heaven to consume their enemies. At another time they were *disputing* in the way, which of them should be the greatest. Mark ix. 33. It is possible that the disciples of Jesus in this day are sometimes tinctured with motives of "vain glory," and are more concerned about their personal reputation, than for the comforting and edifying of Zion, or the glory of God. We should be careful to remember that "where envy and strife are, there is confusion and every evil work." James iii. 16. Strife and envy do not come from God, for "he is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." 1 Cor. xiv. 33.—Neither do they come from any principle in the new man, for the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, &c. Gal. v. Where then does strife, confusion and all the sharp and acrimonious language used among christians come from? "Come they not hence, even of your lusts, that war in your members." James iv. 1. Peter was well acquainted with these fleshy lusts, and knew all the evils attending them, consequently he entreats his brethren in an affectionate manner, by saying, "Dearly beloved, I beseech you, as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshy lusts which war against the soul." 1 Pet. ii. 11. These fleshy lusts sometimes so far get the advantage, when our peculiar views are questioned, that it is too apparent that it is not the spirit that is grieved; but that our outward or old man is angry. In such instances we would do well to take the advice of Paul, Col. iii.17, "Whatsoever ye do in *word* or *deed* do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." I am aware that no man can come to the line of christian rectitude as required in the scriptures unless he has rich supplies of grace from God: to will is present with the christian, but how to perform that which is good he finds not.—The corrupt passions of unrenewed nature being always present with us, and often being aroused, it is from this source that variance and strife among breth-

ren arise. "But if you bit and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another; walk in the spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." Gal. v. 15. The tongue among our members is quite unruly and full of deadly poison, and the christian will frequently observe the necessity of bridling it, lest he offend in word, and some filthy communication should proceed out of his mouth, contrary to apostolic advice. Eph. iv. 29. To *tame* the tongue is not in the power of man, but bridle it he may, and he who does this is able also to "bridle the whole body." James iii. 2. When we sin against the *weak* brethren and wound their weak conscience we sin against Christ, and one of the things which God abominates is "him that soweth discord among brethren." Rev. vi. 18. There are many weak and tender lambs of Christ, who, as new born babes are desiring the sincere milk of the word, and when there is sharp shooting and strife among the saints, it becomes a stumbling block in the way of these little ones, and furnishes a weapon to the enemy of souls to distress the saints with distrust and perplexing fears.

May we all by prayer and supplication, make our requests known unto God, Phil. iv. 6, and through his heavenly support bear one another's burdens in this world and "give none offence to the Jew, nor to the Gentile, nor to the church of God." 1 Cor. viii. 32.—Because of the world that lieth in wickedness, it is impossible but that offences must come, but woe unto him by whom they come! So close is the relation between Christ and his people that he who offends one of them offends their Lord, he who afflicts them afflicts him, for "In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them and carried them all the days of old." Isa. lxiii. 9.

Dear brethren, lest I should say too much, and thereby afflict some of the dear saints, I will use but very little more argument.

Paul advised Timothy to rebuke not an Elder, but to entreat him as a father, and the some admonition applies with equal force to all God's ministers yet, I, therefore, being young, will not wilfully and knowingly disobey, but will entreat in the language of inspiration itself to "let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender hearted," &c. It is to be hoped that vain glory and striving for the mastery will not prevail among that "sect that is now every where spoken against." All of you (says Peter) should be subject on to another, and humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, and the promise is "he will exalt you in due time." It should always be borne in mind that the order of Christ's kingdom and the kingdoms of this world are very different. In earthly governments those who are counted worthy to rule, exercise authority, but it shall not be so among the subjects of Christ's kingdom, those who would be great should be the least of all and servants of all.

May peace and love abound among the household of faith, is my prayer.

Wm. M. Mitchell

"And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranites and of the figs." (Numbers 13:23)

In the days of old the children of God were given the word of truth in types and shadows. Every type points to it's anti-type, and every shadow points to it's substance. Through the medium of revelation, by these types and shadows they were given a consolation in better things to come.

First, we see Moses obeying the word of the Lord when he said, "Send a man of each tribe into the land of Canaan,

which I give unto the children of Israel, to spy out the land." I do not believe that Moses could have refrained from sending these men; neither could they keep from going, for all power in heaven and earth was behind that imperative word SEND. Remember, only two out of the twelve who went saw any of the beauty and sweetness of that land. Ten saw only giants that they could not resist. Don't you know for them it was an awful trip; for they had only natural understanding, but it was necessary that they be there. But in the shadow Joshua and Caleb, who had another spirit within them, were enabled by that spirit to see the substance of the shadow, which is the Staff of that land which flows with milk and honey, and bears grapes which no man can handle save by the Staff.

I see in this scripture a type of God, the Father, and the Holy Ghost, bearing the cut Branch which bore one cluster of grapes to the children of Israel. "Behold the man whose name is the Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord." The divine Branch of God took not on himself the nature of Angels but the seed of Abraham that he might be part of the same flesh and blood; made like unto his brethren that he might be a merciful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. This Branch which bore one cluster of grapes is to me a beautiful type of that man whose name is The Branch, the divine Son of God: made of a woman, made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. In him we see in one bundle the absolute predestinated purpose of God in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their Salvation perfect through suffering; and that the many sons were the many who were given Him in the covenant entered into before the world began. In one cluster, I am going to say, there is everything that pertains to God's absolute predestination of all things for the purpose they were designed. Power, wisdom, justice and mercy are complete in Him, and when these are displayed, as portrayed by the four beasts in Revelations, the whole household of God falls down and worships Him who sits upon his glorious throne.

To me, this Scripture has a twofold meaning. We see in Joshua and Caleb the power of an omnipotent, omnipresent God to show to the two the magnificence of His Kingdom and give them a taste of it's sweetness, and to withhold it from the ten. This does not mean that they were not his children, for I believe they are in Babylon, and God was not pleased to give them a seeing eye, hearing ear and an understanding heart. Because it was pleasing unto Him for it to be this way is all I can say about it. Those two who were enabled to go into this land flowing with milk and honey, brought back to their own family fruits meet for repentance as a proof they had been to that land. Dear child of God, you had to be brought into that land to view and to taste the wonderful working of God, and to behold the many mansions of beauty and to drink of the cup of the wine before you could go home to your friends and give them evidence that you had been there. Just think of the goodness of God, that you were so wrapped in the predestinated purposes of God to see all this beauty instead of the giants that would frighten you away from these mansions.

Who made this spirit to differ! I wonder why those ten didn't get busy and go to work to obtain that spirit so they might see the beauty of this land. No, I don't wonder why, and you don't either. I have always heard that "ignorance is bliss." All people in nature are so ignorant they don't even know there is a different spirit. But when it pleases God to wake them up in newness of life, to feel another spirit within, then it is they can say,

"Nay but, O man who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another to dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which were afore prepared unto glory. O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out."

How wonderful for a poor blind, lame and helpless creature of the dust to be enabled to walk about Zion, and mark well her bulwarks and view her palaces, and to feel that this God who giveth all understanding is our God for ever, and will be our guide even unto death.

We had a pleasant meeting recently at my home church, Popular Springs, of which Elder H. C. Moon is pastor. From there we went to a very impressive baptising. Brother and Sister Ray and Sister May were baptized by Elder W. D. Griffin into the fellowship of Bethel Church. When they came forward with fear and trembling, asking for a home in the church and telling of the mercies of God, it was evidence that they had been in the land flowing with milk and honey, and were returning to their immediate family with the evidence. The church had no doubt that they had been blessed to come boldly forward with fruits meet for repentance; the whole assembly were as the tender herbs after a shower of rain, and you could read in their faces: "He is the Rock, his work is perfect for all his ways are judgement, a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He."

What a union, what a tie that binds together all of like experience. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments." The precious ointment does not stop at the head, nor the beard, but runs down to the skirts of his garments. Not just the skirt of one garment, but in the plural; just how many we do not know, but as many as the Lord our God has been pleased to anoint. One of the prophets said, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law giver from between his feet, until Shiloah come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Jesus said, "And it be easier for heaven and earth to pass than one tittle of the law to fail." (Luke 16:17) We would be of all men most miserable if it stopped at the head, for all mankind is a failure from the first man Adam to the last one that shall be born of the flesh.

But behold, the shadow is enveloped by the brightness of the Son, for it is midday. The substance is here and the shadow is no more a guide, for the anti-type, whose name is Branch, has appeared saying in his own voice, "The law and the prophets were until John, since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth unto it." "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." "And the gospel must first be published among all nations."

Since the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that beieveth, it is evidently not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. "Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven. Yea, the Lord shall give that which is good; and our land shall yield her increase. Righteousness shall go before him; and shall set us in the way of his steps." Psalms 85:10-13). What more could you want, poor wayfaring

child of God, than to be set in the way of King Jesus' steps? That way is the highway of holiness where no unclean shall pass over; no lion nor ravenous beast shall go thereon, but it is for the wayfaring man. The redeemed shall walk there. Jacob of old is a beautiful type: when he was carried to see his son Joseph alive he said, "It is enough." And Simeon when the true and living babe Jesus was brought in his presence, took him in his arms and said, "Now, lettest thou servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." It is enough to see the Branch with one cluster of grapes.

(Mrs.) Maggie Lee Hayes
Vernon, Alabama

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San Juan, Texas.

Elders Spangler and Wood,
Dear Brethern:

I am enclosing a letter written to me by Elder R. W. Rhodes, of Lille, Alabama, with his consent. It seems to me to be too good to be hid and I would be glad if you would publish it in the Signs, which we all enjoy so much.

I enclose $1.00 as a little gift. It is not much but hope it is in love.

(Elder) James B. Reid

Lille, Alabama

Elder J. B. Reid,
San Juan, Texas.
Dear Brother Reid:

I am herewith attempting to comply with your request for my views on Revelation 20:1-4.

This is indeed a very deep subject, and one concerning which there has been plenty of speculation and controversy. It is nevertheless one that is contained in the Scriptures of inspiration, and is therefore for doctrine, correction, reproof, instruction and thorough furnishing of the people of God unto all good works.

Revelation 20:1. "And I saw an Angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand." There are numerous passages contained in the Bible similar to this, but this one is designated as coming down from heaven. Therefore, we are sure that God gave him power and authority with this great chain, and the key of the bottomless pit, and to use them according to the holy will and purpose of that sovereign, eternal and all powerful God, so that God's purpose would be fully accomplished in the thing this angel came down from heaven to do. We know that in Rev. 1:18 Jesus says he holds the keys of hell and death. Matthew 16:18-19 shows that the Lord has, and delivers to his people, the keys of the kingdom of heaven. All this being true, then surely the Lord can, will and does his pleasure in heaven, in earth, the seas and all deep places. (Psalms 135:6). We are assured in this incident that the angel came down from heaven with the key of the bottomless pit. This pit I do not think was literal, or naturally visible, but I do think that it most certainly existed, and there was no bottom in it. Then I am of the opinion that, regardless of Satan's tireless efforts, there will be no escape of Satan from this pit and chain (authority of the angel). There is no bottom, no standing, no way for Satan to ascend from this place until the one who holds this authority over him relinquishes it.

Revelation 20:2. "And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years." This very specific and plain language most certainly covers Satan, and all satanic power, by variety of names used. So I believe all the agencies of Satan, or the Serpent, or the Devil, or Dragon was in this great capture of the Angel of God, and that all the satanic power is, was or shall be bound to the extent that the full and complete purpose, time and place that the Lord has ordered comes

at the appointed time, and will be fully made manifest at that time.

Revelation 20:3. "And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season." Then there is a casting into this pit of something: Satanic influences are so bound and so cast into this bottomless pit that there will be no more deception of the nations till the Lord's time and purpose be fulfilled. So dear brethern we certainly see in this the definite sovereignty of God, and his purpose in Satan and his deception of the nations; and in God's deliverance from Satan's deception. We most certainly see in this that God rules in heaven, in earth, the seas and all deep places, even to the binding of Satan from his great deception of nations and kingdoms. And we see God's sovereign rule in loosing him and permitting him to deceive them according to God's purpose. No doubt Satan has been miserable all the time of this thousand years in his great desire to deceive these nations. But God is demonstrating his power and making his glorious name manifest in this thing, as he did in Pharaoh's case when he hardened his heart so that he should not let the children of Israel go. The Lord had said, I will harden his heart so that he shall not let them go.

Revelation 20:4. "And I saw thrones and they that sat upon them, and judgment was given to them, and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their forehead, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

John, in this language presents so much that without much time and effort it would not be possible to do more than just hint at what he has said. I will mention briefly some of these great things. You will notice in this verse John makes mention of the Beast, and his being worshiped, and his image and his mark. I am sure that all will agree that this beast is manifested in an earthly king, ruler, monarch or dictator to nations; through which power and might he has caused many to be put to death who would not bow down and worship him, nor receive his mark and number, as set forth in Revelation, 13 Chapter. (Read it) No doubt that it was through the powerful influence of the beast, through the deceptive influence he once held over the nations, that all these Saints were beheaded and put to death, as John speaks in this fourth verse.

In my opinion, the time that this powerful Angel and the great chain began to be brought into play was about the latter part of the Sixth Century; and made general and sure progress till this great satanic, beastly influence and bloodthirsty power of the devil, serpent, dragon or beast was finally bound and cast into the bottomless pit of political oblivion in some places among the nations about the middle of the eighth, or beginning of the ninth Century; and has drifted around more or less ever since in this bottomless pit. But he has been trying all the time; and in my opinion, he is beginning to be loosed again and is succeeding in deceiving the nations again. But thanks to the God of Heaven, it will only last for a little season, until the Lord will destroy him with the brightness of His coming, and consume him with the spirit of his mouth. (2 Thes. 2:8)

Now it seems to me very plain that there is both a literal and a symbolical thousand years reign set forth in this teaching. Certainly it is not a literal or natural reign of God's people with the Lord for a thousand years, as many believe. I thing that the thousand years that Satan is bound and cast into the bottomless pit, is the same thousand years that the reign of the Lord with his people is going on. If you will notice

the seventh verse of this chapter, you will see that as soon as the thousand years expire, Satan is to be loosed out of his prison and shall go out to deceive the nations again; and the ninth verse shows he is to compass the camp of the Saints, and the beloved city, (Church).

Dear Brother, if this reign is literal in the fullest extent, as lots of people believe, how is it going to be? Is the Lord going to leave his saints to Satan in the end? I do not believe that this reign is more than the righteousness and justice of God being brought to bear by the reigning grace of God here among God's church and people, which had influenced the nations to see the falacy of brutal, beastly, persecuting and murdering power of so called religious authorities, who caused the early church to be so bitterly persecuted, murdered and destroyed. He lost this great power and influence once, but is to have it again some day; and I am much concerend that the day is not far ahead when Satan shall be loosed again as in former time. I seem to see all the Satanic influences coming together, strengthening their hand in this way.

I do not assert that I or anyone knows the day or year that the rampant satanic power was bound for the thousand years, but I am of the opinion that we are nearing the end of this thousand year period, and when God's people are openly persecuted by the nations under this powerful beast, or dragon, or serpent or Satan, it will not be long till the Lord Jesus Christ will come again and consume this Man of Sin.

Now I think the background of the Satanic power is very clearly outlined in many different portions of the Scriptures. Daniel, in the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, indicated that there were to be a certain and specific number of universal earthly kings; and his dream went on down until the Lord Jesus comes again. In response to this we find in Revelation 17:10. John confirming this when he says there are seven kings, five are fallen, one is and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh he must continue for a short space. At the time the book of Revelation was written, five of the kings Daniel saw in Nebuchadnezzar's dream had already come, and had gone; and one was still in power. And there has arisen another universal kingdom since then, which makes the seventh, and we know that this seventh kingdom was Papal Rome with all its persecutions and destructions. But the time came through the reigning grace of God that the Angel of light and truth through His people, and otherwise, made his influence felt to the extent that power was taken from the Roman organization, and it was bound by the mighty chain of God's blessed truth and justice, and cast into the bottomless pit of political oblivion till the Lord's time for him to be loosed, then he is to revive and succeed in destroying the nations again, and to compass the camp of the Saints again. Then the Lord will come again and deliver his people and cast the devil into the lake of fire where the beast and false prophet are.

There can be no mistake about the recurrence of this mighty destructive beast, and its revival after a long time of being out of power over the nations. We know that in Revelation 13:3, it says, And I saw one of his heads wounded as it were unto death, and his wound was healed and all the world wondered after the beast. This very definitely shows a revival of the original beast, head or king; and the seventh verse of this chapter shows that in the end the beast is to have power over every nation, kindreds and tongues. Which is nothing more than figurative of the time when this seventh king, head or beast is to loose its power over the nations, and to be restored in the end, as in the case of Revelation 20:1-4.

I feel that the Pope, being the head of the organization, is gaining power and in as fast as it seems possible for him to gain. And yet I am aware that all the satanic powers are not in the literal, visible organization,

but there will come a time, as I understand prophecy, that all the satanic powers will be together in one. (see Rev. 18:2-3 and 2 Thes. 2:9-10). And I believe that it is an inescapable prophetic fact that Rome, and its combination when complete is the kingdom, the dominion and the influence of the satanic power that is to work with all power and signs and lying wonders just before the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now is to the thousand years reign, I feel that the privileges and influence of God's people in their teachings, practices, and their voting in their governmental affairs through the powerful influence and wisdom instilled in them by the Spirit of God, is the reigning under consideration. It is said in another place that He hath made us kings and priests unto God; so in this way I think they have reigned with him in a literal sense thus far. And I am sure that they have reigned with Him through grace divine and that sin does not reign or dominate over and in their mortal bodies, as Paul relates in Romans and other scriptures.

So in a brief way, dear brother, I have related a little of my idea about the subject of the thousand years reign of Christ with his people on this earth, which is the same time that Satan and his influence and reign over the nations is bound and cast into the bottomless pit till God's appointed time. Then Satan, and his power and lying wonders are to go forth and deceive the nations again. May the Lord teach us and lead us in these dark and troublesome times till he comes and delivers us. May the Lord bless you.

Your brother in hope,

R. W. Rhodes

EDITORIALS

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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EDITORIAL

"Where no oxen are, the crib is clean: but much increase is by the strength of the ox."
(Proverbs 14:4)

A few weeks ago I talked for a few minutes on this subject, but as it is still running through my mind, and as it is time for me to get another article in the Signs, I'll try to put some of my thoughts on paper.

I don't know much about the nature of oxen because they were before my time. But from what we have been told, and read, they had certain characteristics which we might compare with scripture. For instance, Paul writing to the Corinthians said, "For it is written," referring to Deuteronomy 25-4 "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn." Evidently, referring to the minister,

that his mouth should not be muzzled, not only from a monetary point of view, but that he should not, for fear of wounding the feelings of some one, fail to preach as firm a doctrine in one place as he would in another. I've been asked not to preach too strong on the doctrine of predestination and election because there were some not indoctrinated and should be fed milk instead of strong meat. My answer to them was that if we always fed a baby sweet milk and mush, we would have a runt in the family. Paul says "who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?" I certainly don't want to feed my flock something that I myself can't eat.

"Where no oxen are the crib is clean;" that is, there is nothing in the crib. Nothing to feed to the hungry, nothing to feed to those who come to the fold for succour. Peter said, "The Elders which are among you I extort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the eversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." The mission of the ox is to bring corn to the crib so that there may always be a supply, and that the crib be not barren. The ox does not create the seed or plant, he just tills or cultivates that which is sown. It is not the work of the ox to load that which is harvested into the cart, but to carry the fruit to the crib.

It is not the function of the minister to produce the food, but to bring and impart the food in such a way that it will be nourishing and strengthening to those who wait upon him. Many of the children of God do not understand their own experience, but like King Belshazzar, who could not read the writing upon the plaster of the wall. "Then was King Balshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were astonished. Now the queen by reason of the words of the king and his lords came into the banquet house: and the queen spake and sand, O king, live for ever; let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed: there is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, and sothsayers." But none of them could make known the dream. So Daniel was brought, and the king said, "I have heard of thee, that thou canst make interpretations, and dissolve doubts: now if thou canst read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom." This proposition of honor did not appeal to Daniel. "Then Daniel answered and said before the king, let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation."

So the work of the minister is to interpret for the children of God the things they don't seem to understand themselves. They are to do it without hope of reward; or as Peter says "not for filthy lucre." I like to see the children eat as I am speaking, and sometimes think that this is one of the evidences I have of my call to the ministry.

The increase of the flock depends upon the strength of the minister. That is, how strong he is in the doctrine. If he is one that has been taught of God, and knows something of the things that he is imparting from an experience, then his preaching will "strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees."

The ox is a profitable beast, he is not as fast as the mule or horse, but he is

steady, and seems willing to pull his part of the load and is not expensive to maintain. By his hoofs he treads out the corn without shoeing. Neither does the called minister have to go to some college to get him a good foundation to stand on before he can tread out the corn; or bring from the store house "the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places." These treasures are not darkness, but they are "hid from the wise and prudent," therefore in darkness until they are brought to light. Paul said to the Ephesians, "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the firey darts of the wicked." Therefore, the minister does not have to take special training to qualify himself for the treading out of the corn, because he is shod with the preparation of the gospel, and needs nothing more that the revelation of the spirit to enable him to bring from the store house things both new and old to the comfort of the household of faith. He might present it in a more flowery language, but we can't eat flowers.

I have observed that when a congregation is brought up under sound preaching, that they are as a rule, strong in the doctrine, and established in the order of the house. It seems to me that we as Old Baptists have lost sight of all order and discipline in our churches. More thought should be given by the ministry to feeding the flock instead of themselves, as the shepherds of Israel did. The Lord instructed Ezekiel to say "thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds; woe be to the shepherds of Israel that feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks?" Ezekiel 34-2.

I once knew a man among us, who, when any little trouble got up among the brethren, he would go from church to church, and from association to association, instructing them as he thought, how and what they should do, thinking perhaps, like Paul, that he was doing God's service. But instead, he was playing havoc with the churches. This was not feeding the flock, but dividing them! You can't heal a sore by picking at it. Often the sore will heal faster by leaving it alone. James said, "let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting (lacking) nothing." James 1-4. But so many of us want to feed our own personal ambitions that we forget the flocks and who supplies the food which we are to distribute among them. Let us remember that before the five loaves, and two fishes were given to the multitude that sat on the grass, Jesus took them, "and looking up to heaven, He blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to His disciples, and the disciples to the multitude."

After the crucifixion of Jesus, "Simon Peter saith unto them," that is the disciples, "I go fishing. They say unto him, we go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing." But Jesus appeared on the scene, "and He said unto them, cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. So when they had dined, Jesus saith Simon Peter. Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, feed my lambs." Three times the Lord asked Peter the same question, and the third time Peter said, "Lord, Thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." It wasn't necessary for Peter to answer this question because the Lord knew before as well as after the question had been answered in the affiirmative, that Peter loved Him. I don't know what the Lord meant by the expression, "lovest thou me more than

these?" But I doubt if "these" have reference to the fishes. I rather think that "these" refer more to the disciples, and that the Saviour was impressing Peter that something more than words were required to prove his love and devotion for Him. Previously Peter had told his Lord that "though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended" Jesus said unto him, "verily I say unto thee, that this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. The repetition of the question, "lovest thou me more than these?", seemed to have impressed Peter that mere affirmation of his love for his Lord is not enough, it must be put into action or stronger evidence. The point I'm trying to make is, that the feeding of the sheep and lambs is more evidence of love for them and their Lord, than all the words that might be appropriated.

The increase and growth of these spiritual sheep and lambs depends not on the quantity, but on the quality of the food fed them. Should that, imparted, feed those who serve the tabernacle, then we would not think it good for the household of faith. Paul says, "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle."

It isn't my opinion that the ox is a type of the preacher in the general acceptation of the word, but those who are called and gifted of God to feed the church, not of something of their own production, but of that which God has stored in the crib (heart) out of which "man believeth unto righteousness." The gift has the same seasoning effect on the word spoken, as salt does in the food we eat to sustain our physical body. In the absence of the gift the crib is clean or barren of that which would increase and strengthen the children of God.

Paul says, "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" (called) "as it is written, how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" No one can preach peace and bring glad tidings of good who does not have these things in the good treasure of his heart, out of which he speaketh.

This same apostle admonished Timothy to "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2-Timothy 2:15. The children of Israel were permitted to eat of "every beast that parteth the hoof, and cleaveth the cleft into two claws, and cheweth the cud among the beasts, that ye shall eat." Deu. 14-6. And as the ox has a divided hoof, the people of God were permitted to eat of the ox. So the minister who rightly divides the word of truth, or who separates the law from the gospel, spiritual Israel may eat of that which he brings to them. Where the gift of rightly dividing the word of truth is, the crib is not clean or empty, but has corn in it for the flock of God. I feel that it is the desire of every called man of God, to feed the flock of God which is among them, on good wholesome food, things that they have seen, felt and to some degree understand.

In the 7th verse of this chapter, the beast of which Israel shall not eat are described: "Nevertheless these ye shall not eat of them that chew the cud, or them that divide the cloven hoof; as the camel, and the hare, and the cony: for they chew the cud, but divide not the hoof, therefore they are unclean unto you." There are many perhaps who spend as much time in reading and meditating the word of God, as the called minister does, but are not given to rightly divide the word of truth. Paul says, "An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which has the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law." Romans 2-20. The law is truth, because God gave the law. But we need a division of the law from the gospel.

And in the absence of the God given gift to rightly divide the word of truth, the crib is clean, and therefore no treading out of corn and wheat.

There are gifts given to men, of God, to feed the natural professor of religion, just as he gives food to sustain our physical bodies. But there are spiritual gifts also, to satisfy the thirst and hunger of the spiritual soul. It isn't every one that is taught of God, and understand to some degree spiritual things, that is able to impart that knowledge in such a way as will give increase and strength to the household of faith. Many who profess to be teachers in our public schools, and who evidently have the knowledge because they have to pass the examination, but who do not have the gift to convey the knowledge so as to teach those who are intrusted to their care. Also there are those who carry the name of preacher, and perhaps proficient in knowledge, but have not the gift to teach the things that they have knowledge of in a way to give comfort and strength. But let us not forget that each gift is "according to the measure of the gift of Christ." Ephesians 4:7.

Where there is a body of people organized in church capacity, and have not the gift of a gospel minister, that building is clean or without that which is necessary to feed the children of God that might be among them. Often the gospel minister goes empty, feeling that he has nothing to hand out, and many times his feelings are justifield. I feel like quoting a verse or two of hymn number 225 in the Goble Hymn book.

"Sometimes I read my Bible—it seems a sealed book;
Sometimes I find a blessing wherever I do look.
Sometimes I go to meeting, and wish I'd staid at home;
Sometimes I find my Jesus, and then I'm glad I come.
O how I am thus tossed—thus tossed to and fro!
How are my hopes thus crossed wherever I do go!
O Lord, thou never changes—it is because I stray;
Lord, guide me by they Spirit, and keep me in the way."

H.O.N.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON"

Agreeable with the request of a brother in Louisiana, we give some thoughts on Gideon and his band of three hundred to whom the Lord delivered the Midianites.

The reader might well read again the sixth and seventh chapters of Judges, and among other things note the following:

1. The cause of Israel's distress and the reason they cried unto the Lord.
2. The Lord heard their cry—and what he did.
3. The evidence of Gideon's calling.
4. The reduction in numbers of Gideon's army—and why.
5. The battle.

The gracious dealing of the Lord with his chosen people stands as a marvel of all ages. Just why he was pleased to single out this nation—this seed of Abraham—finds no logical conclusion in the thinking of men. "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you," etc. (Deuteronomy 7:7-8). The reason for this love is hidden in the unsearchable purpose of God, and finds its counterpart in the election of grace; for the election of grace was the chosing by the Lord of his people from among the nations of the world, and unto whom He would show his amazing love and grace in their salvation. The love of God was manifested to Israel many, many times in his long-suffering to-

ward them: and in his not utterly casting them off when they transgressed against Him time after time. To Israel as a nation was not promised eternal life or salvation if they would obey the Lord, but rather that they should eat of the good of the land and be a great nation and have peace and prosperity. For disobediance they were to receive divers judgements, and be overrun by other nations.

This is an important point to remember, for most of the religious world understand and teach that obedience to the laws of God on the part of men is the means of obtaining the eternal favors of God. While, as a matter of truth, the law is not a means of life, but rather to condemnation. The Apostle Paul gave the sum of the matter when he said, "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound." All men are sinners, depraved sinners, and it is the application of the law (which is holy, the the commandment holy, and just, and good) in the heart of awakened sinners which brings the knowledge of condemnation, since he finds that he has not and cannot keep the law. Paul said further, "For without the law sin was dead." So the law works (as a schoolmaster) to bring the sinner to Christ, in whose person is opened up mercy, and grace, and forgiveness of sins: redemption and eternal life.

In the above subject, which we propose to offer some comments on, is contained another one of many evidences of God's love and long-suffering toward his chosen nation; and in which dealings with these people we find typified much of the experience of the family (or church) of God.

A reading of the above named Scriptures will show, among other things, the following: The terrible distress which Israel was confronted with was due to their having done evil in the sight of God. "And I said unto you, I am the Lord your God; fear not the gods of the Amorites, in whose lands ye dwell: but ye have not obeyed my voice." Each time Israel had been delivered, after having been given over to their enemies for their infidelity, they soon forgot God again; and here, because they had done evil again, the Lord had delivered them into the hand of Midian for seven years. And Israel was sorely oppressed by a people who were as grasshoppers for multitude, and they were hiding in dens in the mountains, and caves and strongholds; the increase of the earth was destroyed, and they were greatly impoverished. And they cried unto the Lord: AND THE LORD HEARD THEM AGAIN.

After reminding them, through a prophet which he sent to them, of his past mercies and of the cause of their present distress, the Lord sent them a deliverer in Gideon. Now Israel was a people who were prone to vaunt themselves against the Lord, and would if possible boast of their own strength, so the Lord chose to deliver them in this instance in a manner in which his own delivering hand should be fully manifest.

After answering Gideon's doubts and assuring him of his calling through the fire coming out of the rock and consuming the flesh and unleavened cakes; and then the wool first being wet and the ground dry, and then dry and the ground wet; and in the incident where the saying was, "If he (Baal) be a god, let him plead for himself."; and in overhearing the interpretation of the dream of one of the Midianites, the Lord instructed Gideon that his army of thirty-two thousand were too many, lest Israel should say, "Mine own hand hath saved me." So the fearful and afraid were instructed to depart; only ten thousand remained. Those were still too many; so these were brought down to the water and tried. Those who bowed down upon their knees to drink were separated from those who "lapped water with his tongue as a dog lappeth." This most remarkable "trial" resulted in three hundred men who lapped water being the ones suitable for the Lord's work

of saving Israel from the Midianites.

Then came the "ordering of the battle". There were no swords, no horsemen—nothing which men find necessary to fight with or to defend themselves. The men were divided into three companies of one hundred each, and with a trumpet in their right hands and an empty pitcher, with lamps within the pitchers, in their left hands, they were to, "Look on me, and do likewise: and behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do."

"And they stood every man in his place round about the camp." Thus this little band of men, without ordinary weapons of warfare, stood arrayed against a multitude. Their fight consisted in this: "They blew their trumpets, and brake their pitchers, and held their lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withall: and they cried; The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon." This was all that was necessary: the enemy ran, and cried and fled, and the Lord set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host. And Israel was delivered from the hands of the Midianites and were never again approached by them with the sword.

We cannot read this account of Israel's deliverance without realizing something of the Lord's power and long-suffering toward his people of old; and there is much is it that is symbolical of the mercy of God in delivering us from the power of darkness, and the experience of each one in being delivered.

We will mention a few as they occur to us: Israel's sinning against the Lord time after time even after many evidences of his goodness toward them, is characteristic of our own weakness in the flesh, and of our faithlessness, though He has been so gracious to us. Israel cried unto Him by reason of their troubles. Do we not do the same? Often forgetting Him when we are at ease, we cry unto Him when pricked with thorns in the flesh; and the Lord hears and answers, as he did to Paul. "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." God's providential dealings with us consume our dross, that he may appear unto us as our all and in all. How true it is that, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." We have hope and assurance of being conformed to the image of Christ —of adoption (or redemption) of our body, and sin is condemned in our flesh so that we no longer find pleasure in it, yet our experience is that we must often cry, "O, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death," The cries of the Lord's people are heard, and they are delivered after a consuming of dross and trial of faith.

It is said, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountains of Samaria,****". There must often be trials similiar to Job's, that when we are delivered there is no boasting (vaunting against the Lord) in our flesh as if, "Mine own hand hath delivered me."

How hardly would we find men in nature who lap water like a dog! How few of the ten thousand did! It is contrary to the natural way; and yet there were sufficient to fight the Lord's battle against the enemy, who had the proper qualifications. There are sufficient who are qualified of the Lord to fight the good fight of faith under their Captain, who blow the trumpets (declare the power of their God), and from whom the light of the glory of God shines forth when the pitchers are broken and whose crys are (in combination with the blowing of the trumpets), "The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon." We note that the Midianite when he interpreted the dream of his fellow said, "This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel," but the qualified fighters cried, "THE SWORD OF THE LORD, and of Gideon." This is always

the cry of the Lord's people, for with the Apostle Peter they desire, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

"And they stood every man in his place round about the camp." There is a time and place for each of the participants in this warfare. There is a standing of every man in HIS PLACE. Just as he is qualified to stand, so is his place of standing his. Of old it was said, "A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men." (Prov. 18:16) "Wherefore he saith, When He ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." (Ephesians 4:8) Whether they are Apostles, teachers, prophets, evangelists, pastors, writers, deacons, or hearers, is not each one standing in his place?

In closing, may we be reminded in the language of the Apostle Paul, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds." Whenever any use carnal weapons: deceit, lies, backbiting, false reports or any other fruits of the flesh we are not crying, "The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon."

J. D. W.

Hermleigh, Texas

Dear Editors:

It is time again for me to send remittance for the dear Signs of the Times for another year. If not deceived, I greatly enjoy the paper for the wonderful truths it sets forth about the gracious God that I try to worship. I get such a great comfort and consolation from reading the experiences of others that I feel I know are children of the Heavenly King. Sometimes they seem to express my feelings far better than I could do it myself.

We miss the wonderful writings of our beloved Elder Dodson, but we desire to thank the blessed Lord for enabling Brother Spangler to carry on in his stead, and so ably assisted by the other beloved Elders.

I would like very much to have a copy of the history of the Welsh Tract Church. Kindly let me know the price—I might want several copies.

May the dear Lord continue to enable the Editors and publishers to keep sending the Signs filled with good editorials and letters to the little flock of Zion scattered over our land and country, is the humble prayer of one of that number I hope.

Your unworthy sister in Christ,
Minnie Lee Williams

North Las Vegas, Nevada
Box 386

Dear Editors:

Am sending you money order for extension of the Signs. I am truly thankful to our heavenly Father and Redeemer and all who are supporting it, for it seems to grow more precious daily.

May his blessings both natural and spiritual continue with you is my humble prayer. Yours in fear and trembling and in hope of that eternal peace.

Virgil Simpson

Seagoville, Texas

Signs of the Times:

I am enclosing check for five dollars to keep the Signs coming to our home. We have been a subscriber for only one year and do not want our time to lapse. We enjoy reading the wonderful letters that are contained in it. My husband and I can hardly wait each time for it to get here and when it comes I usually sit right down and read it through before I can quit.

We are not members of the visible church, but we do love these wonderful truths which are proclaimed in the dear

Signs and we wish much success for the future of the paper.

It was a privilege and a pleasure to hear Elder Spangler when he came through our part of the country. We enjoyed his message so much and hope we may hear him again, I remain

Yours truly,
Mrs. A. C. McLaughlin

SPECIAL NOTICES

Please check the expiration date on your paper. If the date is 10-52, it means your subscription expired October, 1952. Since the paper is now mailed without wrapping, we are not sending notice of expiration. Please renew promptly. Thank you.

WELSH TRACT CHURCH HISTORY

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OBITUARY

ELDER A. B. DENSON

With a sad heart I will try to write a short sketch in memory of my dear husband. There is much that I would love to say about his walk in life but space will not permit; his life was an open book.

He was born February 12, 1873, and died at his home October 5, 1952, making his stay on earth seventy-nine years, and nearly eight months. His funeral was conducted by Elders T. F. Adams and Joseph D. Fly from the Falls Primitive Baptist Church, Rocky Mount N. C. There was a host of sorrowing brethren and friends present. Elder Adams spoke very comfortingly from 2 Timothy 4-7. The body was intererd in Pine View Cemetery by the side of his first wife. The floral offerings were many and beautiful and bespoke the high esteem in which he was held.

Elder Denson united with the Falls Primitive Baptist Church the second Saturday in June, 1897, while the late Elder P. D. Gold was pastor, and was baptized by him on the following Sunday morning. He was ordainel deacon in June, 1909, and served faithfully in that capacity until the brethren saw the gift of a minister, and he was ordained Elder in December, 1916, by Elders P. D. Gold and M. B. Williford. Upon Elder Gold's death, the church at the Falls chose him as their pastor. He served them humbly and faithfully for thirty-three years. He desired to always be at the brethren's feet.

He also served the Kenukee, Mill Branch and Pleasant Mill Churches for about thirty years. His last sermon was at Mill Branch, and his text was, "I have glorified thee on earth; I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." (St. John 17-4). He loved his churches and spent most of his time to this good cause. He was strong in the doctrine and believed in salvation by grace alone. Elder Denson also served as Moderator of the Kehukee Association for twenty-three years.

He united many couples in marriage; and conducted many funerals of brethren and friends, and was always ready to visit the sick and speak comforting words to those in trouble.

His afflictions grew worse in his last months; for three weeks and four days I stood by him night and day trying to do something for his comfort, and all was done for him that skilled physicians, nurses and loving hands could do, but none could stay the icy hand of death.

Elder Denson was twice married; the first was to Miss Emma Harris, February 19, 1895. To this union were born three sons and one daughter, the daughter died in infancy. The survivors are, Elder R. B. Denson and F. B. Denson, of Rocky Mount, and S. L. Denson of Whitakers, N. C., together with seven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. This companion died October 17, 1918. On December 25, 1919, he was married to Miss Ella Mangrum. There were no children by this union. We were blessed together for nearly thirty-three years and it was my privilege to be by his side to render any help that he might need. He was a wonderful and understanding companion.

I appreciate the many words of comfort and deeds of kindness offered by his churches and our friends and neighbors. Pray for me, I feel so lonely and unworthy.

His devoted wife,
Mrs. A. B. Denson

ELDER LANDON A. HARRIS

This is a notice of the passing of our beloved brother and pastor Elder Landon A. Harris, the son of Elder Asa Harris and Lucy Manning Harris.

He was born July 30th, 1899 and married to Lela Zena Quesenberry, Dec. 26, 1917. Two children were born to this union; a daughter, Mrs. Howard Smith and a son, Odes Vinton Harris, who preceded him in death six years.

Brother Landon united with the Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church July 30, 1922 and was baptized the same day by Elder Q. D. Weeks. He was liberated to speak in public the 4th. Sunday, November 1922, and licensed the 4th. Sunday, April 1923. He was ordained to the full work of the Ministery, October 1923.

He passed from time and timely things January 17, 1953. His funeral was conducted by Elders John D. Wood and S. L. Moran and J. P. Helms. His body was laid away in Indian Creek Church Cemetery under a mound of flowers. His funeral was attended by a host of friends and his brethren, and many of them mingled their tears with his bereaved family and the brethren he served.

Brother Landon Harris was one of the ablest gifts that has lived in his day. He has traveled far and near to serve his people in his modest and meek way; to know him was to respect him. He was held in high esteem by his community and was active and intrested in things for the benefit of his neighbors. Elder Harris preached many funerals not only for the people of his faith, but he was a servant to all and was ready to help all in time of trouble. He stood firm but meek in the defense of the doctrine held by his people. He maintained order in the church. His council and advice was sought by many far and near and was heeded.

So has one of God's humble servants lived and died in the faith.

His last sermon was preached on the day of his death, and he used the following scripture: "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor heights or depths, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom. 8: 38-39.

Therefore, we extend our sympathy to his family and brethren, but bow to the will of our heavenly Father, for he knows what is best for us.

We send a copy of this notice to the Signs and Old Faith Contender for publication and a copy to sister Harris, and spread a copy on our Church book. Done by order of the Church in conference Jan. 24, 1953.

Committee—Elder J. P. Helms
Guy B. Phillips
W. C. Hollandsworth

Those brethern of many parts of the North, South and East were favored with visits of Elder Landon Harris in their churches and homes, had a deep and abiding love for him as and earnest, sincere and faithful minister of the gospel. His love for the cause and desire of the welfare of the brethern led him to travel much, being ready whenever possible to fill the requests of brethern to visit them, especially those churches which were without pastors. His gift of preaching was such that babes in Christ were fed comforted, and such as had need for strong meat were fed with things which delighted their souls.

Brother Landon and I were drawn unusually close together more than twenty-five years ago, through the mutually felt weakness and inability of our flesh to rightly serve our God. We never forgot the circumstances, and often spoke of them; he recalled them again in our last correspondence about two weeks before his death. In the language of David, I may rightly express my feelings. "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant has thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." 2 Samuel 1:26.

Elder Landon Harris was a gentlemen in deportment, a most interesting conversationalist, and an able servant of God.

John D. Wood

MRS. MARY ELLISON

Mrs. Mary Ellison, fourth child of John and Mary Schenck, was born June 26, 1857 near Whitestown, Boone County, Indiana, and departed this life at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Everett Zinn, Grantville, Kansas, making her stay on earth 95 years and four months. After the death of her mother which occurred November 21st, 1869, she with her father and his family came to Kansas and settled on a farm near Springdale, Leavenworth County. On November 14th, 1877 she was united in marriage to Wm. T. Sparks. To this union were born three children, two daughters and one son. The husband and youngest daughter died in the year 1882. She lived in widowhood until shortly after the death of her son, Zenas Sparks which occurred in 1895. On December 20th she was united in marriage to Overton A. Ellison. They were the parents of two children. Mr. Ellison departed this life in 1932 and from that date on she lived in widowhood until she passed away.

Sister Mary had been a member of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church sixty-eight years and her faith in God as an Absolute Sovereign never wavered. She was blessed with an extraordinary knowledge of

the scripture and her able writings have entered the homes of many Old Baptists throughout the United States. She was sound in the faith and until her mind and body weakened, due to her advanced age, she was a splendid counsellor. To me, Sister Mary was not only a sister but a mother as well. She dandled me upon her knee when I was an infant and watched over my footsteps when I was growing up, our own mother having departed this life at my birth. She was a wonderful help to this poor sinner in my early experience and in my subsequent ministry she was a real prop to lean upon. On the 10th of October, 1952 she suffered a paralytic stroke but lingered till the 25th of the same month when her spirit took its flight. I, with her children and grandchildren and some neighbors and friends, was standing by her side and witnessed the spark of life ebb away. By request of her children it fell to my lot, her youngest brother in the flesh to conduct her last sad rites; and by her expressed desire her six grandsons acted as her pall bearers.

She is survived by two sisters, Mrs. Z. J. Allen, Omaha, Nebraska and Mrs. Edith L. Bartlett, Kansas City, Kansas. One brother, Elder L. L. Schench of Williamstown, Kansas. Two daughters, sister Della Davis of Topeka, Kansas and Mrs. Ursula Zinn, Grantville, Kansas, with whom she made her home; and one son, Firman A. Ellison, Waco, Nebraska; thirteen grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and one great, great grandchild. Her passing is a sad blow to the little church which is already depleted in membership. But "This is God's Way, His will be done." May the dear "Lord comfort all that mourn" as he was appointed to do.

Sadly, by her brother,
L. L. Schenck

ZACCHEUS ISAAC JONES

Zaccheus Isaac Jones was born near Knoxville, Marion County, Iowa, January 9, 1859, and passed away in Los Angeles, December 6, 1952, making his age nearly ninety-four years.

He was a son of Isaac and Mary Booth Jones and one of thirteen children, viz, Albert M., Silas W., Jasper M., Mary A., Charles H., Z. I., Elder G. J., Martha A., Louise A., Theodosia R., Edward M., Elder J. Q., and Jesse R. These all preceded him in death.

He was united in marriage to Miss Mary E. Dickson, of Newberg Iowa in December 1883. Two sons were born to them, one dying in infancy and the other at the age of twenty-seven years. In September, 1887, he was married to Miss Anna Bridges of Attica, Iowa. To this union two daugters were born: Mrs. J. E. Donlavy, Southgate, California, and Mrs. Walter Black, Meadow Grove, Nebraska. They also raised a nephew, Floyd Bridges, who has been a loving son to them.

Father united with the Primitive Baptist Church at an early age and was faithful until death. Two of his brothers were Elders. He was a subscriber of the dear Signs longer than I can remember. My mother's people were Primitive Baptists also and entertained many associations in their home.

We cannot mourn as those who have no hope, for we feel he has only gone on before us a little while. He loved the doctrine and we believe he is at rest, waiting our Saviour's call at the last day, when we all hope to be with Him forever more.

Mrs. Walter Black

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, it has pleased Almighty God, who rules all things and does his will, to remove from our midst by death our beloved Brother and Deacon, T. J. Wood. Brother Wood died the latter part of June, 1952, and his funeral was conducted from the Townes Funeral Home by Elder P. W. Ashworth. He was buried in the family cemetery at his old home place.

He united with the Malmason Primitive Baptist Church in 1892 and remained a devoted and faithful member until his death, although after the death of his wife he lived with his sons and was too far away to attend his meetings, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that we bow in humble submission to our God, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind; and that a copy of these resolutions be put in our church records, and a copy given to the family, and copies be sent to the Signs of the Times and Old Faith Contender for publication.

Adopted by order of the church while in conference the First Sunday in October, 1952.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Mrs. Kate Dodd, Clerk

CHURCH NOTICES

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J., have meetings at the present time by appointment, and not each Sunday as appeared in the January Signs.

Letha A. Blackwell, Clerk,
9 Princeton Avenue,
Hopewell, N. J.

Sardis Church, Amarillo, Texas, is now meeting each First Sunday at 10:30 A.M. in the home of Deacon C. M. Toler, 119 South Bowie Street.

Elder C. E. Turner, Pastor
Orin Parsons, Clerk.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 121 DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1953 No. 4

GOD'S VARIOUS DEALINGS WITH HIS CHILDREN

How hard and rugged is the way
To some poor pilgrim's feet!
In all they do, or think, or say,
They opposition meet.

Others again more smoothly go,
Secured from hurts and harms;
Their Saviour leads them gently through,
Or bears them in his arms.

Faith and repentance all must find:
But yet we daily see
They differ in their time and kind,
Duration and degree.

Some long repent, and late believe;
So when their sin's forgiven,
A clearer passport they receive,
And walk with joy to heaven.

Their pardon some receive at first,
And then compelled to fight;
They feel their later stages worst,
And travel much by night.

But, be our conflict short or long,
This commonly is true,
That, wheresoever faith is strong,
Repentance is so too.

—Beebe's collection

———o———

"ONCE IN GRACE, ALWAYS IN GRACE"

The reader will note that I put the above statement in quotation marks, for I have quoted a statement made by many people. Some have made the statement to express one of the tenants of their religious faith, believing that the doctrine "once in grace, always in grace", is Bible doctrine and clearly taught in the New Testament Scriptures.

Others say, "I don't believe the doctrine of once in grace, always in grace." This was said to me not long ago by a lady. I did not ask her to state her reason for not believing it, for I knew she could not give a Scriptural reason. I think I can safely say that every genuine, Primitive or Old School Predestinarian Baptist firmly believes the doctrine of ONCE IN GRACE, ALWAYS IN GRACE; and they can give a Scriptural reason for so believing.

God helping me, it is my purpose in this article to show that the Bible teaches this doctrine. When we speak of being in grace, we mean in the grace or favor of God. To be in the grace or favor of God, is to be right with God; to be right with God, means to be righteous in His sight; to be righteous in God's sight, is to be right with God in the righteousness of Jesus Christ; and to be righteous in Christ's righteousness, is to have His righteousness imputed to us, with our sins imputed to Him. And this is precisely the blessed state of grace God's chosen people are in, as well as the cause of their being in such blessed state; and I have to believe that once in that blessed state of God's grace or favor, such state is both for time and eternity.

Believing in the doctrine of once in grace, always in grace, involves belief in the Divine Character and Attributes of God; it involves belief in the Bible doctrines of God's predestination and election of his people unto grace and final glory; and also belief in the Bible doctrine of salvation from sin and its dependent consequences by the amazing, super-abounding and saving grace of God alone, which reigns through

righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 5:20-21).

Be it far from me to think or speak unkindly of those who hold to the doctrine of apostasy. But the doctrine itself belittles the mission and work of Jesus Christ on this earth, and denies some of the most cogent Scriptures relating to his mission and work found in both the Old and New Testaments. We have from the lips of Jesus himself that he came not to do his own will, but the will of the Father who sent him. "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of ALL WHICH HE HATH GIVEN ME, I SHOULD LOSE NOTHING, but should raise it up again at the last day." (John 6:38-39). In the 37th verse of this chapter Jesus says, "All that the Father giveth me SHALL COME to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

The Bible clearly teaches the doctrine of Election: that God elected or chose a people in Christ before the foundation of the world who should be holy and without blame before him in love. The Angel who talked with Joseph, the husband of Mary the mother of Jesus, called them HIS PEOPLE, saying, He shall SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS. The doctrine of apostasy says that some of the people God gave his Son, and for whom Jesus was sacrificed on the cross, laying down his life for them, will be lost and go to hell of fire and eternal torture even after Christ saved them from their sins by his atoning blood. Such reasoning and such teaching represents Christ as having failed to do his Father's will—having failed to save his people from their sins. This in the face of the positive declaration of one of God's prophet's speaking of Jesus, "HE SHALL NOT FAIL."

The doctrine of apostasy teaches that though God, the Father, laid the iniquities of the people he gave his Son upon Him by divine imputation; and though Jesus came into the world to PUT AWAY sin by the sacrifice of himself, which thing he did for all for whom he died, yet those same sins, some way, somehow are once more upon the sinner and they that damn him to the perdition of ungodly men. I think such ideas and such teaching on the part of those holding to the doctrine of apostasy, can be explained and accounted for by the fact that most, if not all, of them believe that man has some part to play or something he is required to do in order to his salvation; and that sinners are not saved by the grace of God through and by the ONE OFFERING made for sins in the person of Jesus Christ.

All religionists of whom I have any knowledge concede the fact that God does not and cannot fail. They tell us that those who are finally lost and go to hell, are lost not because God failed to do everything in his power to keep them out of hell, but because men fail to do their part in being saved, or after they are saved, fail to do his part in keeping himself saved. All of which notions are rank Armenianism, and no genuine Old Baptist can believe it.

One of the attributes of Jehovah is love. But God did not learn to love—there was no time when God began to love. Just as God is from everlasting to everlasting, so is his love; what he loves now he has eternally loved. The Scriptures teach that God loved the people he chose in Christ. Jesus said to his Father, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." Read the seventeenth chapter of St. John. Speaking of those whom the Father had given him, Jesus said the Father loved them as he loved the Son, and that he loved the Son before the foundation of the world. The Apostle John writes in his first epistle, "Love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." He also tells us why we his children love God: "We love him because HE FIRST LOVED US."

Can anyone who truly believes in God as he is in his divine Character and Attributes, in his everlasting and

unchangeable love and mercy, imagine one whom God loves and for whom Christ died ever being consigned to the place prepared for the devil and his angels? Can they truly believe that one who is born of God, and is therefore a child of God, falling away and getting out of the blessed state of God's grace of love and salvation? Others may believe it that way, but as for me I cannot believe it and at the same time believe in God as he is, and have faith in him as he is. The precious words of my blessed sin-bearing, suffering Savious which he spoke to his Father before he went to the cross to take my place, to suffer and die to satisfy divine justice and deliver me from the wrath to come, bring joy to my heart and needed strength, because they give me assurance of my salvation being sure because of his finished work of saving His people from their sins, by putting them away by the sacrifice of himself.

These are his words, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son may also glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him .And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I HAVE FINISHED THE WORK WHICH THOU GAVEST ME TO DO." (John 17:1-4). The work of God's salvation, the work which he gave his Son to do, is a finished work. The man Jesus Christ is the one who finished it when he put away the sins of his people by the sacrifice of himself on the cross. Almost with his last breath ere he died, Jesus said, "IT IS FINISHED." But modern Christendom seems not to believe what the dying Jesus said; they say that Christ is still in the saving business, and exhort their members and all "Christians" to join the Crusade for Christ (whatever that means), and help bring a lost world to Christ that He may be given a chance to save them if they will let him.

I thank God for the truth that makes me free from all such kinds of doctrine. Jesus said to his disciples, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." By the grace of God, I have been preaching the doctrine of "Once in grace, always in grace", for nearly sixty-three years, and am still at it; and it still feeds the flock of God over which the Holy Ghost has made me overseer. This doctrine relates to every truth in God's word pertaining to the Eternal God and His work of salvation from sin by and through His Son Jesus Christ, whom the Father prepared to be a sin-offering and a suitable sacrifice for the sins of the people the Father gave him. By ONE OFFERING he (Jesus) hath perfected forever all them that were sanctified or set apart to be the members of the Body of Christ —the Church of God which He hath purchased with his own blood. I do thank my God that he has blessed me to believe and to know that when Christ atoned for my sins on the cross and put them away by the sacrifice of himself, he saved me from the danger to which my sins exposed me, even from the Second death, and that he saved me completely and everlastingly, and not just for a little while, and then put me on trial or probation to see whether I would stay saved.

Jesus said to his Father, "I have glorified thee on the earth, I have FINISHED the work thou gavest me to do." Christ could not and would not have glorified his Father on the earth had he failed to finish or complete the work given him to do; and that was to do the will of the Father and save His people from their sins. In St. John 4:34, we hear Jesus saying, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and TO FINISH his work." The Father's will was that He (Jesus) should lose nothing—not one of those the Father had given him. Had Jesus lost just ONE of them, he would not have finished the work of his Father and glorified Him on the earth. But thank God, Je-

sus did finish his Father's work, and did save his people from their sins, just as God's angel said he should do. And on the finished work of Jesus rests the hope of every child of God for eternal life and the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world.

The Lord willing, I will soon reach my eighty-sixth birthday, the 15th of February; and the nearer I come to the end of life's fitful journey, the more I appreciate and love the doctrine of "Once in grace, always in grace", and the more I feel the need of God's all sufficient, sustaining grace. I know my God can not and will not fail to do his will in all things, and that he is immutable. He changes not, therefore his people are not consumed. For this reason none of them shall ever perish. "For this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."

We wait and long for the coming of our Lord and Saviour, for when He who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory, awake in his likeness and be satisfied. God be praised for his unspeakable gift of Jesus, who finished his Father's work when he had himself purged of our sins and sat down on the right hand of God to intercede for his redeemed people until he returns to take them home to live with him forever and ever.

A poor sinner, saved by God's grace, if saved at all,

(Elder) Charles M. Weaver
Johnston City, Ill.

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Williamstown, Kansas

Mr. T. P. Wilson,
Downsville, La.
Dear Brother in Christ:

I have your kind letter dated December 19, 1952. It was duly received and I regret that I have been so slow answering it. But the Chrustmas rush with all my other duties, and also a feeling of unfitness to write anything that would be profitable to a child of grace, has deterred me until now. I still feel that unfitness, brother, but beg your forbearance and I will try to comply with your wish that I write upon the subject of THE CHURCH, the Lord being my helper.

It is a most interesting subject, dear brother. Inasmuch as the church is the body of Christ, we cannot well speak of one without considering the other, for they are unseparable. The church is recognized by several appelations, such as, The Church, The Body of Christ, The House of God, The Kingdom of Heaven, and the City of Our God. We have pictures or types of the church throughout the Old Testament scriptures. Have you ever noticed what a close relationship Noah's Ark bears to the church of God. God himself was the architect of that remarkable old structure; Noah, a type of Christ, was the Builder. Every detail was carried out as God outlined to him. Its length and breadth and height were all specified. Rooms thou shalt make in the ark, with first, second and third stories; and the window thou shalt finish in a cubit above. So here is the outline; it was built in such a way that floods could not destroy it. Christ said, "Upon this Rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

The three stories of the ark no doubt represent the three dispensations of time, as time is divided into the Patriarchal, the Legal and the Gospel dispensations. Noah and his family occupied the third or uppermost story, which shows the family of God housed in the third or gospel dispensation. The Lord said unto Noah, "Come, thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." Noah was the only righteous person in that generation, his family no doubt were reckoned among the sinners. Hence they came into the ark not on account of their own righteousness, but by virtue of the righteousness of their head and husband. As the apostle says, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath

saved us." Thus we see a wonderful exhibition of salvation by grace and grace alone.

They—the whole family, are gathered into the ark with Noah their head and husband; so when we turn to the antitype we see the whole family of God gathered into the Church with Christ our exalted head and husband. The Lord shut them in, so it was impossible for one to fall away and be lost. But they were, as we might say, prisoners of the Lord, and their room was a dungeon except for the fact that there was a window above. Truly they must look upward to Him who is the source of all light. All the light we have must come down from the Father of Lights, in whom is no variableness, neither the shadow of turning. I fear this is why I am so much in the time of darkness: I seem to forget to look upward for light.

Many pages and even volumes could be written concerning this Ark, but I will pass on and notice the church as the Body of Christ. The apostle has declared, "Now are ye the body of Christ, and members in particular." God has set the members of every one of them in the body as it has pleased him. So one member cannot say to another, I have no need of thee. Every member of the body has its own particular function to perform: the eye to see, the ear to hear, etc. "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." And it is very important that every member labor in the capacity that God has meted out to him. For instance, I have seen some mistakes the church has made in ordaining certain ones to the ministry and to the offices of deacon, when the gift necessary to qualify for their respective offices was lacking. It is like a garden of fruits: the husbandman plants the seed and he knows the fruit each seed will produce when it is matured; and it would be folly to go to the bean vine expecting to gather tomatoes. No, every plant must bear the fruit designed for it. Thus it is very important that the church exercise caution in setting its members forward. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Every member has his or her own peculiar gift, and it is a gift suitable to the duty that is theirs. But we hear some of the little ones say, I have no gift, I can't preach, I can't sing, I can't even converse on things pertaining to godliness. Dear child, to say you have no gift is equal to saying, I have no duty to perform. We remember that not every plant in the garden is a fruit bearing plant; some merely grow and bloom and spread their fragrance around. They have their place in the garden, and the gardener bestows the same tender care upon them as he does the others. The garden would be a lonely place without them. "Consider the lilies of the field how they grow, they toil not neither do they spin, and yet I say unto you that even Soloman in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." We have known some like this, but when meeting time came they were in their seats; or if they were not in their seats, they were greatly missed.

So this is their duty, and God has supplied the gift to perform that duty. God has not required impossibilities of his children, but he has by his Apostle given this command, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhort one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." And another Apostle has said, "See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently."' Love is the very best basis of fellowship, therefore let love be without dissimulation. So whether our gift be an outstanding one, or a very humble one, whatsoever thy hands find to do, do with thy might; for every gift will make room for itself. In the house of God they are necessary. "If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister let him do it as the ability

that God giveth." etc. (I Peter 4:11)

Every feature of the church of God deserves more comment than we can give in one letter. Before I sign off, I would like to notice a few things concerning The Kingdom of Heaven. John baptized in Jordan, and preached, saying, "Repent ye for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Jesus also preached the same thing. This repentance no doubt was turning away from the law of carnal commandments to serve God in spirit and in truth. He was not baptizing unto salvation, but unto repentance. He was not baptizing to wash away sins; as is evident from the fact that Jesus himself was baptized, and he had no sins. But he submitted to baptism to prove to his followers they should turn away from those weak and beggerly elements, for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.

The Apostle has said that ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched (Mt. Sinai), but ye are come to Jesus the mediator of a better cove nant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel. The blood of Abel was poured out upon the ground, but it never atoned for sins; the blood of Christ was poured out and it did atone for all the sins of all of God's people, hence it speaketh better things than that of Abel. Now Jesus said, "Fear not little flock for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." So the kingdom is ours, but it is still governed by the laws of King Jesus. He is our lawgiver, and I fear that many times the subjects of this kingdom forget the obligations upon them by reason of this glorious gift. It devolves upon the subjects of this kingdom to see that the laws of the kingdom are honored and obeyed.

The prophet has said that a King shall reign in righteousness and princes shall rule in judgment. Thus it becomes every church organization to see that the laws of the Kingdom, or the house of God, are respected. Now this kingdom is a spiritual kingdom; its King is spiritual, its subjects are spiritual and its laws are spiritual. It is in every way separate and distinct from the world and all worldly institutions. It is a home for the people of God, a sanctuary for way worn pilgrims. It is the Bride, the Lamb's wife; she is as old as Christ himself, being in eternal union with him; but she was not manifest in her mystical form until the deep sleep fell upon her glorious husband, then she was brought forth as bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh.

Her husband loves her with an everlasting love. Hence we have the sublime admonition of the Apostle of Jesus, "Husbands love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it unto himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." etc.

Dear brother, I have left so much unsaid I fear you will not be able to glean much comfort from what I have written, although I trust what I have written is according to a "thus saith the Lord". I was glad to receive your kind letter and glad to know you could endorse the doctrine I tried to set forth. I hesitated before I sent it to the Signs of the Times, fearing I had not presented it in an acceptable way. However, it seems to have struck a responsive chord in the hearts of God's people from coast to coast. Please cast the mantle of charity over this poor effort, and if you can feel in your heart to write me again, I can assure you I shall be pleased to hear from you. Pray for me.

Unworthily,
(Elder) L. L. Schenck

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Princeton, Ky.

Signs of the Times:
Dear Editors:

I know you are busy and have a lot

to contend with. Will you stop just long enough to note a few thoughts of an afflicted sinner, lonely, destitute and hungry for the truth of the gospel of Jesus. I live where I scarcely ever see a brother or sister of my faith. Therefore if I talk, which sometimes I feel I have to, there is an argument, and I hate an argument, for there is nothing gained in one. I feel they have the right to their belief as I have to mine.

I look at it all as by the free grace and mercy of God. Paul says its by the grace of God I AM WHAT I AM; and Paul was a contender of a SOVEREIGN GOD, who is ALL WISE, ALL POWERFUL, of ONE MIND and UNCHANGEABLE, who does his will in all things. Old Daniel says, He does according to his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay his hand, or ask why doest thou. Some tell me that there are many things contrary to God's will.

This brings us to the sweetest text I know of; one I get a lot of comfort out of, but it seems to me it is the worst abused text in the Book. Many quote this text as the Lord is not willing that ANY should perish but wants ALL saved—ALL should come to repentance. Now if I may quote half-verses, stop at commas, etc., tell me something that I cannot prove by the Book of all books.

Let's quote the whole text and see how it sounds, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promises as some men count slackness, but is long suffering to USWARD, not willing that any should perish, but all should come to repentance." He speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. He is God and besides him that is none else. He forms light and creates darkness, makes peace and creates evil. He is the first great cause and the last great end of ALL THINGS. When did he get this way? He is from everlasting to everlasting and cannot grow in knowledge. He therefore has always been a God of power, knowledge, love, mercy and truth. "I am God and change not." etc. He was the same in the beginning as he is today, and will forever be. He planned it all before time began, and had a purpose in view for all things; and they are filling that purpose. We live and are made to rejoice in his love, power, knowledge and truth.

Now suppose God is not all this, but is finite as man is; has many desires and wants many things, but man is just too stubborn to obey: God is doing his part and wants us to do ours. (This is the way I understand all conditionalists to believe. If I am wrong God forgive me for such horrible thoughts). But God being perfect in every direction in all his ways, foresaw it all, determined it all and predestinated and foreordained it all. He has prepared a place far more lovely than we can imagine for the people he has always loved. There is also a place of torment, to my understanding, just the reverse. Many say that God does not want any to go there. Then why was it made?

The word Usward is used often in God's word. The Apostle refers to this as a people loved of God. He is long suffering to USWARD, not willing that any should perish, but all should come to repentance. And I believe they will all come, for I firmly believe there is a higher power than ours that brings about repentance. So the usward refers to all the elect, chosen, saved and called with a holy calling, not according to their works but according to HIS own purpose and grace which was given US in Christ Jesus before the world was.

If the Usward referred to all the Adam family, then the Universalists are right; for Christ plainly says that He finished the work the Father gave him to do. IT IS COMPLETED. But we have abundant Scripture evidence that all were not brought to repentance. All that the Father gave Christ shall come unto him.

Dear brethren, if I am wrong in these things please tell me where with a thus sayeth the Lord. I want the truth as it

is in Christ. As I said in the beginning, I do not want an argument, but to unload these thoughts which I rejoice in. I believe what I have written and I try to thank God upon bended knees for this great blessing.

Would appreciate a letter from anyone as I am deaf and can't hear a preacher. But sometimes I am called on to stand before these dear people who know more in five minutes than I will ever know; and I sometimes get great comfort out of it whether anyone else does or not. This is just sometimes; for many other times I get nothing and don't believe anyone else does. I enjoy reading the good letters in the Signs. If anyone has a mind to write me, I will appreciate it.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

Dan L. Clark

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Roanoke, Virginia

Dear Brother Spangler:

I have been a subscriber to the Signs since 1944, and am glad the Lord arranged for its continuance. I was very sad at the passing of Elder Dodson; I loved the Signs when he was publisher, and still love it.

I have been in ill health for many years and I can't get out to church. My Primitive Baptist papers are all that I get. We members of Roanoke church are very sad over the passing of Elder Landon Harris; and not only Roanoke church but many others. I never had the pleasure of hearing him preach, since I am a shut-in, but was looking forward to hearing him.

Would say to his wife and daughter, may God bless and comfort you as he sees fit. We feel to know that Bro. Landon is resting from this world of trials and troubles.

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:2-3.

Love to the household of faith.

Mrs. Maude A. Moran

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Downsville, La.

Dear Brother Wood:

I have read your editorial in the January, 1953, Signs. You spoke so sweetly of how all things are still just like the allwise God thought before the world began. He said, As I have thought so shall it come to pass. We know that since He said shall come to pass, there is no way for men to change his shalls and shall-nots.

In Hebrews 8:11, it is said, "And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother." But sometimes we see some who feel that they can show someone the church, or the Kingdom of Christ that is here in the world. We might as well try to tell a natural child how to be born before he is born.

You showed how church members should give evidence of their hope; and when they give this evidence it is good to be there. I contend that the church stands alone from all the get up of men, and no matter how much men may try to help the Lord carry on his business, they can not bring a joyful thought to a poor, hungry child, for man at his best is vanity.

The letter written by Elder P. D. Gold and answered by Elder C. B. Hassell shows what is in the natural man better than I can. And all the other good letters which have been published from time to time are sweet and comforting to a poor old sinner as I feel to be. While we stay here in this world we shall have tribulations, sorrows and troubles, but our hope is that in the resurrection we shall come forth in the image of Christ. It says in Romans 8:29, "For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." Remember me when you can.

T. P. Wilson.

R.F.D. 1,
Brackney, Pa.

Signs of the Times,
Dear Editors:

It was at the tender age of eight years that I began reading our household paper. A darling sister, two years younger than I, had been called away by the Father, and I was very sorrowful. Our father and mother subscribed to the Signs; and as long as I remained at home, and many years after my marriage, I still read their Signs. After coming to Binghampton, I sent in my subscription, I do not recall the year, but it has not lapsed since.

I have always regretted not being able to send in any new subscriptions. And now, happy day, I can send in two. I realize the difficult period of publication, and perhaps the subscriptions will be welcome at this late date.

Yours in humble hope, a little sister,
Mrs. Richard Miller.

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Stewart, Miss.

Dear Brother Spangler:

While rereading the dear old Signs last night, I noticed that my time had expired, and I am enclosing $5.00 for two years.

I don't want to miss a single copy for I do so enjoy your writings and all the corresponding letters and many others that so ably contend for the truth as it is in Christ our Lord.

I have met Elders J. J. Lambert and W. D. Griffin and heard them preach. They are both ringing the same old bell that I first heard fifty years ago. They mix no green goards in their preaching. Brother Griffin has preached in my humble home twice. To know him and his wife is to love them.

Your unworthy brother in hope,
J. F. Jacks

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Dear Brethren and Editors:

I am enclosing the money to advance my subscription date to 1953. I hope it is the good Lord's will that I may be able to take it what time I live here in this world of trouble. I do enjoy reading the Signs and, if I know my heart, I love the doctrine it sets forth.

I am seventy-seven years old and have had many troubles and trials, yet I feel that the Lord has been good to me and has given me a sweet hope. Though at times it seems so little, I almost lay it by; but at other times it seems sufficient if I were called to die. So often I am made to lament and mourn, feeling surely I have never known anything about the goodness of an all wise God, and saying if I were one of His little ones, surely my troubles and trials would not have been so great. But, dear people of God, when I am made to look over my past life and see how He has delivered this poor sinner, I have been made to rejoice in the midst of my troubles.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. W. T. Potter

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Dear Brother Spangler:

In regard to your nice appreciated letter, I thank you for your kindness. I do enjoy reading the Signs of the Times; it is the only paper I am receiving at the present time. My health gave down and I was not able to do my work for a long time, but thanks to the good Lord I am now restored to very good health for my age of sixty-seven years.

I get a great comfort in hearing you Elders preach and give your views on certain passages of Scripture. I am enclosing $5.00 for my subscription to the Times. I do not want to miss a single copy and I hope the Lord will enable me to read it as long as I live.

Yours in gospel bonds,
Sadie J. Minter

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Redwood, Virginia

Dear Brother and Sister T. K. Dalton:

We hope you and your family are well; we are up and around but not so

well, but we have so much to be thankful for since we are blest far above that we deserve.

Dear ones, I so much desire to write you both some little comforting thought that would be edifying and uplifting to your souls, but I keenly feel my cold state and inability to speak even one comforting word. May the Lord bless me to speak in accordance with our faith and doctrine, even things which become sound doctrine.

My Christian friends, it seems there are comparatively few who truly believe and esteem sound doctrine, but according to the election of grace there is a remnant to be saved. Our understanding of a remnant is a small portion; and we feel well persuaded that John saw all of the remnant as an innumerable company come up out of great tribulation, whose robes had been washed in the blood of the Lamb, and made white and clean. Beyond all doubt, through divine revelation, John saw the whole family of God, the Bride, the Lamb's wife, all dressed in her resplendent beauty and adorned to meet her Husband.

We cannot doubt that all of God's chosen will be safely housed in eternal glory, but what individually concerns us so much is, are we in that elect number. This causes us so much fear, unrest and anxious thoughts. But while in this life we only live in hope. The great Apostle's testimony is that we live by hope; and we feel to know that Paul had a true and living testimony of the true oracles of God, yet while in this life Paul continued to say that we live by hope. He also said, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast."

We believe that after Paul's conversion much of his remaining life was full of troubles, that is, after the flesh; but the more wicked hands persecuted and strove to fright him, the more he did endure. Likewise, I believe that all of God's saints will be given sufficient grace, strength, love and faith to meet and endure their trials, and be victorious conquerors through him that loved them. We notice that though Paul continued to say that we are saved by hope, yet when his departure was at hand, he said, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

I feel sure God's sure mercies embraced Paul so strongly that hope here became possession with him. Likewise, I believe all of God's little saints will pass from this life without the fear of Hell, and have the blessed assurance of being carried to a glorified home in eternal heaven; for the Lord has made so many faithful promises to his bride. He is not slack concerning his promises, and said he would never leave nor forsake them; he keeps them as the apple his eye.

Therefore, dear ones, we conclude that there never has been, nor ever will be any danger of all the devils destroying even one of God's little ones. They are too precious and too costly to ever be tarnished by the fangs of satan. These men are the Lord's portion, even his heritage.

Dear kindred, I will say again, we don't doubt that all of God's chosen will be safely housed in heaven, but what concerns us so much is whether we are, or are not, among those of his electing love and distinguishing grace. It is my sincere desire to abase man and exhault the name of our God: all praise, glory and honor are his.

May the Lord bless you and all of His dear saints throughout the earth is my prayer.

Yours in hope of a glorious immortality.

J. A. Perdue

(Editor's Note: We were requested by an Elder Osteen of Texas to give our views on

the above Scripture, but having read the following Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe in the March 1, 1853, Signs on the subject, we feel to republish it rather than to attempt to write ourself; and especially since we feel that Elder Beebe has given a clear explanation of the subject. J. D. W.):

REVELATIONS 22:19.

"And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

It is quite essential to a correct ununderstanding of the text that we first learn what is intended by the two books, and by the holy city which are spoken of. The first book is called **the book of this prophecy,** and undoubtedly means the book in which our text is recorded. **This** book is a book of prophecy, and treats on things which were, and things which should shortly come to pass; and from the last clause of the text under consideration, we learn that this **book** contains things which belong to those who have part in the holy city and in the book of life.

The other book is called the book of life. We also read in other portions of scriptures, and in this revelation, of a book of life which is designated, "The Lamb's book of life," or the book of life of the Lamb, which is said to be written from the foundation of the world. Many have have seemed to regard the book of life in our text, and the Lamb's book of life written from the foundation of the world to be one and the same book; but to our mind it does not so appear. By the Lamb's book we understand that book in which all the members of Christ were registered before time began, and of which Christ says, (as personated by David) "And in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there were none of them." This book of the Lamb, in which are registered the Head the Body, and all members of Christ, is not, nor can it be subject to erasures or interlineation. It is utterly beyond the power of men or devils to add to, or take from its records. It is the faithful record of the immutable God. But the book of life mentioned in our text, appears to be the city record, or book of the names of the living in Jerusalem. In other words, we understand it to be the record of the gospel church, in which is recorded the names of all members in fellowship. This record is kept by the church, not to show how many have been attached to the church, nor is it a duplicate of the records of eternity, which are unalterable, but it shows who are for the time being recognized by the fellowship of the church as living members of the household of God, or living citizens of Zion.

The holy city we understand to mean the church of God in her gospel order and militant state. The gospel church is called, the City of God, the Holy City, and the City of the Living God, of the great king, etc., and in the revelation made to John, he saw the "Holy City, Jerusalem," adorned as a bride for her Husband. She is called the Holy City in distinction from all anti-christian churches, which are called Sodom and Egypt, Babylon, etc. They are called the great city, but no where are they called in the scripture, the holy city. Immediately preceding our text, we have a lively and beautiful description of His holy city, of its foundations, its gates, its walls, streets and provisions, and of the character of its citizens. It is written, "Blessed are they that do his (the Alpha and Omega's) commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city; for without are dogs and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whatsoever loveth and maketh a lie." This last quotation proves that the holy city embodies only the blessed of the Lord, who are made manifest as his blessed and peculiar people by their doing his commandments, honoring Christ as their King, respecting his laws and walking in his ordi-

nances. These enter in through the gates on which are inscribed the Israel of God. And they are written among the living in this New Jerusalem, or New Testament church, and they have right unto the tree of life, all the rights of citizenship, to all the things which are written in this book.

If we are correct in the foregoing views, we think it will be easily seen that all who have been admitted to the fellowship of the gospel church, are registered as living members or citizens of Zion, so long as they maintain gospel walk and deportment which entitles them to that fellowship; but if they transgress the laws of Christ, and walk disorderly they are subject to the discipline in such cases provided. And Christ himself testifies in the solemn admonition before us, that. If any man shall add unto **these things,** God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.

The plagues written in the book are very many and severe, which figuratively show that the way of the transgressor is hard. Whether those written in the book of life be only nominal members, as Judas was written or numbered with the twelve apostles, and had part of their ministry, or are vitally united to Christ by a living faith, they are to be subject to the discipline of the Holy City. If any man whether he be a minister or private member, whatever his standing or emenance, if he add to these things which are written in the book—if they shall add any doctrine of works as a ground of justification before God, or if they add the doctrine of means, instrumentalities, free agency, and teach that Christians are obligated to engage in religious voluntary societies for Mission, Tracts, Sunday School or any other purpose, which is not named in this book, God will bring upon him, or them, the plagues which are in this book written. The passage through the gates into communion of the Gospel church shall be closed upon them, and they shall be classed with dogs, and sorcerers, etc., which are without the precints of a gospel communion.

"And if any man shall take away," His part, whatever his part may be, shall be taken out of the book of life. If he be a minister, holding a high place in the confidence and esteem of a church, or a deacon, or a private member, for suppressing the testimony of God, remitting the enjunctions of the King in doctrine or ordinances, the discipline of a truly gospel church (over which the Alpha and Omega presides as the Head) shall take effect on such offenders, and they shall be expelled from a place of privilege in the church, and their name no longer retained as living members of the body, they shall be unto the church as the heathen men and the publicans were to the Jews.

Nevertheless, we are assured, that where any of God's children transgress, and persist in their violation of the order of the city of our God, and are put away from the fellowship of the saints, their name will not be arased from the immutable purpose and decrees of Jehovah; they shall be brought back to privileges of the citizens, of the church of God, while all the Judases being expelled from fellowship will finally go to their own place.

Thus, in as concise a manner as possible, we have expressed our understanding of the text. Let all us of remember our obligation to prove all things, and hold fast only to that which is good.

Toney, Alabama

Dear Elder Spangler:

This is the beginning of another year, and I want to begin by renewing my subscription to the Signs of the Times. I believe I get weaker and need the paper more each year. I enjoy the writings of each writer although I do not always agree with all I read. I do not believe any of us could say we endorse all he or she reads. If the arm of flesh is in the writing, it is the same as in preaching. When I don't agree with the writer, I say perhaps it is me.

I feel to desire that all Old School Baptists would keep as good books as our Baptist papers in our homes and encourage our children to read them. There is encouragement found in them since they point to better things instead of worse things. The writers write of the things which are revealed to them. I believe I was made to hunt the Old Baptist church through reading the Signs. I was reading the Bible and the Signs and in those days went to Sunday School and big meetings. I desired salvation and was seeking evidence and a revelation. I couldn't find any evidence, and in my wanderings I finally was given to see that of myself I could do nothing. After other experiences, I offered to old Kellys Creek church and have had a wonderful home here since.

Remember this poor worm when you can pray.

Mrs. Reaner Reece

Dear Editors of the Signs:

You will find enclosed remittance for the Signs another year. I have greatly enjoyed reading the good pieces of the different writers and the wonderful editorials which have been published throughout the year. I hope that all who are given a mind to write from time to time will be blessed by the great I am to continue in the same principles of truth and soundness of doctrine which our forefathers held to.

I feel that it is high time for peace loving people to think seriously of these dark and gloomy times we are now witnessing. We are hoping that it may be the Lord's will that Zion may be comforted and built up and edified, and that peace and fellowship may abound among the brethren.

T. D. Dodson

Hermiston, Oregon

Dear Brethren in Christ:

Enclosed you will find $10.00 to apply on my subscription to the Signs of the Times. I have been a reader of the Signs ever since I learned to read.

I feel that the Baptists have been richly blessed to have such editors and associate editors. For so many years they have never stream-lined or modernized it in any way. It still holds to the truth we love to hear. My wife and I get so much consolation in the doctrine of salvation by grace and predestination of all things. I feel that we have had some extra good articles on predestination lately.

I hope and pray that the all wise and merciful God will continue to raise up shepherds to look after the little flocks, as he has in the past. We wish to ask all where ever you are to remember us in your prayers. I hope to be just one of the little ones.

With love
Ernest Attebery

Marysville, California

Dear Brother and Sister Spangler:

Please discontinue Elder C. H. Byrd's subscription to the Signs to the above address. He passed away at Enterprise, Alabama, on December 1st.

We shall miss him on the West coast. The Lord gave him strength to travel among the churches here and it revived them. He helped us both when the Lord was leading us out of the wilderness, if not decieved. When I first met him I was still determined not to forsake the belief I had clung to so long. My husband was already a predestinarian in belief, and had been for some time. So we were disagreed and Elder Byrd helped us over the rough places.

Before he made his second trip West, I awoke one morning with a scripture on my mind which I was sure would stump him. In December, 1950, we went to a three day meeting and Elder Byrd was there. On Sunday morning he took my scripture for his text. Of course he did not know what was in my mind, for I had told no one. The text was, "Come

unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden," etc. He also quoted, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come," etc. For the first time in my life I saw that the two were the same so far as being a command is concerned, and that my idea of the first being an invitation to come into the visible church was wrong. I hadn't an argument left in me or a prop to lean upon; I was left shaken and wilted. So you can understand our tender feeling for Elder Byrd.

We trust the New Year will bring to you both the assurance that God in His wisdom is guiding you in your efforts to serve Him.

Yours in humble hope,
T. R. and Grace Jefferson

———o———

5500 Del Amo Blvd.,
Torrance, California

Signs of the Times,
Dear Brethren in Christ:

I realize that I am behind with my subscription to this "Wonderful Paper" which I have been reading and enjoying for many years, so am enclosing money order to cover and extend for another year.

I get a great deal of pleasure and comfort from the wonderful writings of the editors and corresponding letters. May the blessed Lord enable you to continue this publication and keep it sound and good, as it has always been.

I have recently moved from Rising Star, Texas, to California, but have not been able to contact any Old Baptist as yet. Would be glad of any information concerning churches in the Los Angeles vicinity.

May God bless and keep us and continue his mercy toward us.

Yours unworthily in hope,
Martha Seale Broughton

EDITORIALS

Danville, Va. **April, 1953**

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EDITORIAL

"And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" (I Kings 18:27)

Through the ages times change and conditions vary, but the nature of people does not change. It is said that history repeats in substance the same things over and over; and the same may be said of spiritual conditions. The trials of the taught of God may differ in manner, but it will always be true that, "They that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." These trials do not always come from without but often arise among ourselves. Paul suffered at the hands of false brethren; yet none of these things moved him, neither did he count his life dear unto himself. He shunned not to declare all the counsel of God, and counted all

things as loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ.

Ahab was king in Israel in the days of Elijah, the prophet; and he accused Elijah of troubling Israel. But let us consider the answer of the prophet: "I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim."

When trouble arises it is often the case that the parties who cause trouble accuse those who would adhere to the old paths, and refuse to endorse their course, as being troublers of Israel. We are commanded in the Word to remove not the ancient landmarks our fathers have set—to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. It is only a dead fish that floats with the tide, and there is no evidence of spiritual steadfastness when one is carried about with every wind of doctrine.

It is true that Elijah had many trials, but his God did not forsake him. The prophet felt that he was left alone, but the answer of God to him was that he had reserved to himself seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. It is necessary at times for one's faith to be tried, else they would have no evidence that they have faith. The trial of it is like the rubbing of pure metal: it causes the metal to shine. Certainly many can witness with the poet:

Trials make the promise sweet,
Trials give new life to prayer,
Trials bring us to his feet,
Lay us low, and keep us there.

Elijah would never have fully known the power of his God, if he had not been called to pass through these trying experiences. God fed him by a raven, and preserved him at the hand of a woman with oil and meal; and he lived to see the false prophets destroyed. The race is not to the swift, neither the battle to the strong. When there was a battle to fight in Israel, the army on one occasion was too large and only those who could lap water like a dog could go into battle. If it falls your lot to be accused of troubling Israel because you refuse to bow to the image of Baal, or because you refuse to go along with any and every practice prescribed by men, remember that HIS fan is in HIS HAND, and He will thoroughly purge his floor; he will gather the wheat and burn the chaff.

It is good in all these things to examine ourselves whether we be in the faith; to take heed unto ourselves, and unto the doctrine, and when trouble comes in Israel ask ourselves, "Am I the cause; does it come through ignoring the teaching of God's word?" When the question arises, Art thou he that troubleth Israel, let us examine and see who brought the trouble by forsaking the commandments of the Lord; because on whose head these things fall, he is the troubler of Israel. When order is ignored, when discipline is thrown to the winds, when one becomes the follower of men instead of God, it always leads to trouble for God's people. We are commanded to forsake all to follow the meek and lowly One. If we find in ourselves the tendency to compromise the principles of truth to go along with certain conditions because someone else does, we may well answer the question, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel", for we become a party to that which undermines the doctrine and order of God's house.

What was true in the days of old, in Elijah's time? The ones who would ignore the teachings of God's word, forsake the commandments of the Lord, and pull down His altars, are the ones who will continue to accuse all who will not subscribe to their men made rules and practices, as being troublers of Israel.

Whatsoever a man soeth that shall he also reap, and God is not mocked. I am sure that there are some who will be found faithful to the end. Those who have been through the fire would rather be followers of God than of men. The principles of God's truth mean more to

them than the ties of flesh and blood; and they can sing:

"If he is mine let friends forsake,
Let wealth and honors flee;
Sure he who giveth me himself
Is more than these to me."

D. V. S.

———o———

"For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 4)

To step backwards for a moment, the sole reason that Jude gave for the necessity being laid on him to exhort the saints to a contention for the ancient faith, was that certain men had crept in.

I have had some of as trying times over the doctrine of predestination as anyone could expect to go through in this vale. My personal experience, as I have told you heretofore, has led me deep down into the furnace. Had it not been for the deep and heavy sufferings that I was called on to go into, I do not have any idea at all that the doctrine of sovereign grace would mean to me what I hope it does now. As for the bickering and quarreling over it, I do not have time to do much of that. While I believe (or I think I believe) in the unlimited predestination of God, I have never believed that it is causitive, that is, that the perpetrator of wickedness is moved by the Spirit of God to do what he does. Thus, I would say this: that we should not be divided over the doctrine, but since we have divided, I want it understood that I believe we are still on apostolic ground in contending for the old doctrine, the doctrine of salvation by grace and the eternal purpose of God concerning all events.

It is a good thing, if on the track, to stay on the track. Every road or way has two sides to it. Getting off into confusion on either side is wrong. Let us reason right here for a moment. Does it make any difference how long before this that the ordination to condemnation took place? These certain men, these ungodly men, were before of old ordained to condemnation. It is the most abrupt denial of the inspired writing to say that God did not before this particular hour ordain these ungodly men to this particular event in the history of the church and their lives as men in the world. I have noticed in the history of the church here in America many brethren who have carefully declared the absolute foreknowledge of God in connection with the wickedness of men, but have been equally as careful to steer clear of embracing any of God's ordination in connection with that ungodliness. Let me further step into the pages of history and declare this fact for you: that nearly all the brethren who one time embraced the doctrine of God's absolute foreknowledge have passed on, or have gotten still about that point of doctrine. I am willing to admit freely that foreknowledge is one thing and predestination is another, but I am not ready to admit that God foreknew something, had rather it not be, and was helpless to keep it from being. That isn't the Being that I hope to have seen and felt in my heart many years ago. I must insist that the doctrine of foreknowledge and predestination are equal in scope.

Was the ungodliness of these men predestinated? Did God predestinate the turning of the grace of God into lasciviousness? Did he appoint and ordain that these ungodly men should deny the Lord? Now I do not want any apostacy in the church. These men did not start out godly and get to be ungodly. They were not good humble brethren in the church and fall from grace. They did not begin right, for their coming in was when somebody was not looking. Creeping into a thing shows that you are "slipping by" some one.

Let me approach the matter in this light. We will perhaps better understand it that way. The person that is

not born of God is not conscious of being in a condemned state. He that believeth not is condemned already (John 3:18); this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil (v. 19). And these characters are not conscious of being in condemnation. If you tried to convince them of it you could not begin to do so. This state of condemnation is proven by the works manifested. Every act is an act of a condemned creature. Now let us go back to our text. These certain men acted like condemned creatures. They did not come in like sheep would come in, but they crept in unawares. These men were all ordained to this condemnation; they acted it out from the beginning. They were either from all eternity ordained to this condemnation, or things were not going suitable to the Lord and he had a second series of ordinations some where after he let the curtain of time down. Which?

These men had fooled the church. How sorry am I to hear boasting in this day. The boast "that the church is not nor cannot be fooled" is now in that very stage. We have aften given hypocrites every protection and blessing and gift of the church. They have had every refuge from lies (Isa. 28:15) given them. Yet they have not continued with us. They have left us, becoming a reproach upon our fair table where the rich food of the gospel is displayed.

I want to be careful just here, and far be it from me to hurt feelings for the sake of hurting them. Yet, I do not have any hesitancy in saying that every devilish doctrine, every false doctrine, every seducing doctrine, has come into the church by these creeping certain ordained men. They were not right to begin with; they came to lead silly women captive; they came to lead astray those that could be reached by their seductive powers and influence. They came to abide by the rules of the church, to preach her doctrine, to obey her ordinances as long as it suited their scheme for leading disciples with them. They were not part of the royal priesthood, holy nation, peculiar people, except in a nominal sense. When it suited their purposes best to travel apart from the church they went their way, thus making manifest that they were in a state of condemnation all the while, and that they had not been a part of us at any time.

Brethren have always differed. But the ungodly have driven wedges and caused hurtful divisions. They turned the grace of God into lasciviousness. Lasciviousness is to be lustful, lewd, wanton in mind and conduct. Remember, dear brethren, that these never had grace except in a nominal sense, unless falling from grace is the truth. Remember that there is a class that seems to have but that the time comes when that is taken away (Luke 8:18). We look back to the time when some have been with us seemingly in full fellowship with our doctrine and practice. Where are they? They have found our way too straight (2 Kings 6:1) and have gone their own way. Grace does not lead men to sin. Perish the thought wherever it originated. Grace has never been the cause of any lewdness, or lust, or wantonness. But men have said so. I have heard it said that God was as much the cause, and as much pleased, and as much to be praised, and received as much glory, from a man gambling outside the church window as he was with a man preaching the gospel on the inside of the house. If that is what you call absolute predestination, then by all means please excuse me for I do not believe it. If I have unguardedly said that, or if you think that I have, then I am due to make amends or to receive a closer reading. I have not intended to say that.

At the time of the division between the mission and anti-mission people there was not one, mark you well this, there was not one who left their writings in the Signs and the Primitive Baptist (N. C.) that advocated grace

leading into wantonness, lewdness, lust. Every writer was careful to say that the sin that they did was of themselves, a product of their carnality. These men had grace, being called to magnify that grace, having a heavenly vision of a Man being slain and buried and rising that grace might be given to them to go forth to the Priest and show their leprous hands. It was many years before these certain men made their appearance, saying, that it does not make any difference how we live as long as we preach the truth. Then their dictum became: Preach the truth, but live anyway it suits you. Now this is turning the grace of God into lasciviousness.

These certain men also were given over to a denial of God and his Son Jesus Christ. This denial of Jesus Christ is the other side from turning grace into lasciviousness. While the first turned grace into the same channel as the sinful nature of humanity, the second denied the effectual work of Jesus who is the effectual performer of all our salvation. There isn't any difference in the two principles. Both belittle and make mockery of the work of God. To deny that grace saves is as bad as to say that grace leads to sin. One is a way from the truth on one side: the other is a way from the truth on the other side. It was about fifty years from the start of the Signs until anyone began to openly deny the Son of God and his saving effectual work in the hearts of his people. At the time when the separation brought the brethren together at Black Rock Church, there was not one dissenting vote to the doctrine of the saving grace of God and the predestination of all things. There isn't any way to authoritively claim apostolicity unless we go back to Black Rock. All of us that have apostolic succession go back by the way of this meeting. The Mission Baptists might deny this, but let them deny (remember the text!), for if they were not part and parcel of that meeting at Black Rock, they will have a still harder task to get by the Welsh Tract Church.

The Church, the Bride of Jesus Christ, the kingdom of heaven (manifestly) have always traveled in cycles. Peace has been extended to her like unto a river for many years, and then the time of sifting and trial and lapping of water like unto a dog comes. No matter how bitter the trying hours that we have faced, nor, little ones, no matter what comes in the future, the remnant that he keeps will continue on until the Bridegroom comes. It is with the best of feeling to one and all that I say that whatsoever the Lord has thought in eternity concerning us, that will be our lot here in time, for we read, "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." (Isa. 14:24).

The precious doctrine of God's unchangeable love is wrapped up in his eternal thoughts concerning the Lord's humble train of followers. His thoughts are known unto him, thoughts of peace and not of evil towards his people (Jer. 29:11), and since he knows all things (John 21:17), and has known all his works from the beginning of the world (Acts 15:18), and his thoughts concerning us were his own, them we must conclude that He purposed to think upon us in time. Without counsel purposes are disappointing (Prov. 15:22), but that which our God has purposed concerning us will not bring dissapointment to our God, nor will it ultimately bring any to those that God loves. He works all things after the counsel of his own will (Eph 1:11), and every purpose being established by counsel (Prov. 20:18), it follows that the Church is in safety, now, henceforth, and forever.

In conclusion let us remember that every individual saint has had their trial. They will yet come to the Lord's people. The Church, collectively, has had them down the ages. She will continue to have them. If she selected or ordained her travel we know what that way would be. It would not be the way that God has chosen. Thus he has laid

out our pathway, and he has laid up supplies for the journey. These supplies constitute every blessing of time. He has said to the proud waves, Thus far shalt thou come, and no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed (Job 38:11). The waves of adversity will come. They are predestined to come, eternally purposed before time and the things of time, to come at the time, and place, and manner, well pleasing to God. They are predestined to stop. Isn't that good news. The trial (the washing, rolling, cleansing waves) predestined by One that loves us to the end, and at the end of the trial, the waves roll on away, stopped by the power of God.

I have not intended to say that every one possessed with these spirits of denial and turning of the grace are not God called, and born again, for I have all that about me, but I do intend to say that everyone left in that condition will sooner or later travel on—on away from Jerusalem towards Jerico, and if they are true followers of the Lamb they will fall into the hands of thieves and truly left by the wayside, but will be found at the right time. If not true followers they will get farther away.

W. D. G.

———o———

Kosmos, Washington

Signs of the Times,

Dear Editors and brethren:

You will find enclosed money for a year's subscription to the Signs. Please send me also the History of Welsh Tract Church. I would love to visit this church if it is the dear Lord's will; and I have long desired to visit the Old Baptists in East Tennessee and Kentucky where my dear deceased father, Elder G. W. Goin preached for many years of his sojourn here. If any of the Baptists care to write to me, I will be glad to hear from them. Also, any of the Baptists on the West Coast, as I live in the North West, I would love to visit in the churches of Oregon, California, Arizona, Texas, Arkansas, Tennessee, and Kentucky.

My membership is in Pleasant Grove Church, Neachese, Washington, and if I am not mistaken, I love and believe the doctrine which the Old Baptists hold to as set forth by the Signs; and in my weakness, I have tried to defend this doctrine which is hated by the world, but loved and defended by a select few down through the ages. I am fervently persuaded that there will be a few who will be found contending for the dear old doctrine of salvation by grace, whose God has designed and arranged in His unchangeable purposes the salvation of every member of Christ's body.

Oh, that I may be one of that number who praises God in time and shall praise him in the ceaseless ages of eternity; for he must be praised and nothing shall prevent it. All power belongs to him, and from him comes all love.

Remember us in your prayers, and may God bless and keep the Signs.

In Gospel bonds
J. R. Goins

———o———

Anabel, Mo.

Dear Editors:

I enjoy the Signs so much; the print is large and plain. It has been in our family for a long, long time. My grandfather Rush took the Signs before I was born, then my grandmother continued it, then my mother; and after her death in 1918 I have been receiving it. So it has been in the family for about a hundred years, I am sure.

I miss Elder Dodson's articles, but you are advocating the same doctrine. Oh, how I love the many good articles the Signs contains. I was glad to hear about Helen Jones. I knew her and her mother by meeting them at associations. I love all Old Baptists, but feel to be the least of all, and so unworthy of the love and fellowship they extend me.

I enclose check for $6.00 for my renewal and to help the Indigent Fund. When my two years are up and you don't hear from me, you may know I've

gone on to my eternal home, for I am seventy-seven years old and know not when my God shall call me. May God bless you to continue the Signs. Pray for me.

A little sister saved by grace, if at all,
Mrs. J. R. McAfee

———o———

Downsville, La.

Dear Brother Wood:

I am sending you a letter I received from Eld. L. L. Schenk. I have just read the good letters which others wrote in the February Signs and I would like to share with them the joy I received from the enclosed letter.

I wrote Elder Schenk after reading his last article in the Signs and asked him to write on the subject of THE CHURCH, and this is his answer. I have his consent to send it off to the Signs. I don't feel worthy of such good letters, but if you cut me off from the dear ones that try to worship God in Spirit and in Truth and have no confidence in the flesh, then you have taken all that is worth living for in this world.

We read in Psalms 34:18-19: "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." Dear brother, that is where my hope is; that some sweet day the Lord will deliver us poor sinners from all our troubles in this world. Please beg your God to have mercy on me a poor sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

T. P. Wilson

———o———

McDonough, Ga.

Editors of the Signs:

I am enclosing $3.00 for another years subscription to the Signs of the Times. It is indeed a lot of comfort to read the many good editorials and letters contained therein.

Wishing for each contributor many blessings throughout the New Year, and in the years to come.

Yours in a sweet hope,
Mrs. Henry Rowan

———o———

VALUABLE BOOKS FOR LOVERS OF THE TRUTH

HASSEL'S CHURCH HISTORY and GILL'S, BODY OF DIVINITY have long been out of print, but are now available at modest prices. All who are acquainted with the writings of these authors will be glad to own and read these two books.

Prices postpaid are as follows: CHURCH HISTORY, $4.85; BODY OF DIVINITY, $5.00. Order them from:

The Signs Office

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SPECIAL NOTICE

Please check the expiration date on your paper. If the date is 10-52, it means your subscription expired October, 1952. Since the paper is now mailed without wrapping, we are not sending notice of expiration. Please renew promptly. Thank you.

———o———

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———o———

CHURCH NOTICE

Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist Church of Cass County, Missouri, will hold her meetings, beginning the 4th Sunday in March, 1953, in the Memorial Building, Pleasant Hill, Missouri, until further notice.

We invite brethren of our faith and order to visit us when Providence opens the way.

Elder L. L. Schenck, Moderator
Mrs. J. W. Taylor, Clerk

———o———

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to convene with the Welsh Tract Church one mile south of Newark, Delaware, Saturday and Sunday, May 9th, and 10th. Service will begin at 10:30 A.M. on Saturday.

MEMORIAL

INASMUCH as it has pleased Almighty God to remove by death three of our very highly esteemed brethren within the past year:—to wit—Brethren J. H. HAMRICK, T. ERVIN RALEY, and JOHN T. CROFFORD; and

WHEREAS, we feel deeply the great loss of these brethren and with sadness of heart we must bow in humble submission to God's will; and

INASMUCH, as we desire to place on record a tribute of respect and thanksgiving to God for having blessed Hopewell Church, Wood County, Texas, with the gifts and graces manifested in their walk and conversation while among us:

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that we include the following brief obituaries in this MEMORIAL:

JAMES HERMAN HAMRICK, (May 26, 1904—March 18, 1952.) Bro. Hamrick became a member of Hopewell Church in 1922. He was graced with a godly walk and conversation and was blessed to speak publicly several times of the sovereignty of God and salvation by grace through the merits of Christ to the comfort and edification of God's little children. His writing and speaking was inspirational. Our sympathy goes to his wife, Mrs. J. H. Hamrick, 313 E. Barrett, Tyler, Texas and to their children—James D. and Francene Fortner.

and

THOMAS ERVIN RALEY, (November 24, 1873—May 14, 1952.) Bro. Raley became a member of Hopewell Church in 1893. He was blessed to be faithful in attendance and to his duties as clerk of the church for 38 years. He served as clerk of SULPHUR FORK ASSOCIATION many years. His fatherly counsel and good advice was sought and adhered to by the community as a whole. Bro. Raley was blessed to be active in all projects for the betterment of his community and for peace and fellowship of the church. Our sympathy goes to Sister Samantha Raley and to their children—Henry, Clarence, Mrs. J. F. Dickson, Clyde, Arnie, Mrs. William Mills, and Bruce.

and

JOHN T. CROFFORD, (February 8, 1866—July 13, 1952.) Brother Crofford was born near Troy, Alabama. He moved to Texas in 1876. He became a member of Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church of Christ about the year 1896. He was blessed to be a faithful member of the church, attending regularly as long as his health permitted. Brother Crofford was conscientious in his convictions and well established in the doctrine of salvation by grace. He was blessed with a rich abiding faith of God's wonderful work, tender mercy, and great love for His Elect Family. Our sympathy goes to his children—Connie Mae, Walter, and Johnny Bell.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this MEMORIAL be spread on our book of Minutes; copies be sent to the bereaved; and, a copy be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

This memorial read and unanimously approved by Hopewell Church of Christ of the Primitive Baptist Faith and Order, Winnsboro, Texas, while in regular conference January 10, 1953.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Moderator
J. J. Mills, Church Clerk

OBITUARY

MRS. RACHEL DUNDAS

Mrs. Rachel Dundas was born in Kent County, Ontario, Canada, August 18, 1863, and passed away October 27, 1952. She was a daughter of Elder William and Mary Lloyd George, of London, Canada, and the second youngest of thirteen children; only one of whom survives: Mrs. Emma Edmunds, Ingersol, Ontario, Canada.

In 1890 she was married to Gustavos Adolphus Dundas, and to this union were born six sons: John, Albany, California; Harold A., Upland, California; George Ernest, Long Beach, California; David, Long Beach, California; Gustavos William, Indio, California and Joseph (deceased). These together with two grandsons, two granddaughters and four great-grandsons, mourn her passing; her husband having preceeded her in death eleven years.

She and father joined the Old School Baptist Church at Poplar Hill, in Ontario, Canada, and after moving to California in 1907, they united with the church at Riverside, the Liberty Church, Los Angeles, and later the church at Compton, near Long Beach. Her father, Elder George, was born in England and reared among the Strict Baptists. After coming to Canada, his home was a welcome place for visiting ministers and brethren.

Mother suffered a stroke more than three years before her passing and was very feeble from that time until her death. Though I lived nearly five hundred miles from her, I visited her as often as possible and we talked of spiritual things; and she often spoke of how great a sinner she was. She loved her Lord and Saviour dearly, wanting no honor to herself, she gave Him all the glory. She was a great woman and a great mother and I pay homage to her memory.

The funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder W. H. Osborn, and she was buried at Westminister Park Cemetery, near Long

Beach. Elder Osborn read the one hundred twenty-first Psalm. The service was beautiful and comforting, and the flowers bespoke the esteem in which she was held.

We miss her greatly, but are happy to know she is with Him and is at rest. She requested several years ago that I write her obituary for publication in the Signs of the Times.

Her son
John Dundas

———o———

Fairmont, W. Va.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

It is time for me to renew my subscription for the Signs and I am enclosing check to cover, as I do not want to be without it.

I have recently lost my only daughter, Mary Murphy. She passed away quietly trusting in the blood of Christ for cleansing of her sins. She had said that she wanted to care for me in my old age, but, you see, God knew best and took her first. She became satisfied and said she was reconciled. Now I am lonely and sad; no one can realize what this means except those who pass through these things. I hope the Lord will lead me and guide me through life .

Please publish this that your readers may know of her death. The funeral services were conducted by Elders V. B. Linn and J. J. Poling, who spoke very comfortingly to a goodly number of people.

Yours in hope,
Elder James W. Linn

———o———

LEORA LAVINA FOOS

Leora Levina Foos (nee Place) was born January 2, 1871, on a farm near Calidonio, Marion County, Ohio. She was a daughter of Sullivan Leroy and Sarah Harris Place.

Leora attended the Calidonia High School and graduated with the class of 1888, the second class to graduate from the school. After graduation she taught school in Marion and Crawford Counties until her marriage on Christmas day, 1890, to George Earl Foos, who died August 26, 1947. They lived on a farm near Marion and Galion, Ohio.

She is survived by two children: a son Harley L. Foos, where she lived, and a daughter Mrs. Laura Edith Smith, of Marion; also a half-sister Mrs. Clara B. Stone, Galion, Ohio; and nine grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Early in life our sister received a hope, and upon the relation of her experience was received by the Old School Predestinarian Baptist church called Bethel. She was baptized the same day, February 2, 1896, by Elder M. L. Jackson and the writer. It was just fifty-seven years later to the day and hour, that I was trying to comfort the friends at her funeral.

She was a faithful member all these years, and we mourn for her; but her trials are over and she has entered into her rest, awaiting her Saviour who will come again and speak, and they that are in their graves shall come forth and see Him as he is, and be like him and be satisfied.

May he reconcile us all, and enable us to say, "Thy will, O Lord, be done." The family requested this obituary be sent to the Signs of the Times and Old Faithful Contender. I was called from my home in Huntington for the funeral, and fulfilled my promise of years ago.

Elder George L. Weaver

———o———

LESLIE A. BROWN

Leslie A. Brown was born January 23, 1874, in Hopkins County, Kentucky, and died September 21, 1952. His father was Daniel Brown, and he married Miss Cynthia Perkins. To this union were born two children, one dying in infancy, and the other P. G. Brown who survives.

Brother Brown and wife made their home with their son while they lived. He had been a member of Lichcreek church a number of years and gave evidence of his love for the doctrine of God, our Saviour: salvation by the grace of God. He went to every meeting far and near as long as he was able. When he was old and feeble and his mind was weak, he would often lose his way, but he was always there if he could make it.

His vacant seat will long remind us of him, and we will miss him in our homes where he so often stopped on his way to church. He realized his time was short, and often spoke of the songs he wanted sung when he was laid to rest. One in particular was:

"When sorrows encompass me round
And many distressed I see,
Astonished I cried, can a mortal be found
Surrounded with troubles like me."

Death and sickness has taken such a big toll from our little church this year, we are sometimes made to wonder will we always have two or three to meet in His name. If we do, he has promised to be in their midst.

Funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Eld. R. L. Biggs, Nashville, Tennessee, and the body was laid to rest in the cemetery near Lickcreek church beside his companion, there to sleep in Jesus, awaiting the resurrection when it will be raised in the glorified image of Jesus.

Written by request of the church.

Mona McGregor

NANCY ELLEN TUGGLE

At the request of the church, I will write a short sketch of our beloved sister and mother in Israel. Her memory is very sweet and fresh with me, yet it is sad when I think of her and those priceless smiles and sweet expressions, knowing that I will not see them again. She will live with me on and on, and I am sure that she lives and will continue to live in the memories of her many friends.

Sister Tuggle was the daughter of the late Deacon John Westley and Tempy C. Huchens. She was born November 10, 1873, and died July 1, 1952. The high and exalted Saviour blessed her to stay on earth seventy-nine years, eight monthes and twenty days, to complete the work assigned her; which she did in His strength and in much humbleness.

Sister Tuggle wonderfully manifested the life of Christ in her everyday life. I was blessed many times to be in her company and observe the sweet expressions and smiles of her sainted face. She never complained of her afflictions but bore them with patience; and was ready to talk about how good the Lord had been to her, and how little she deserved his blessings. I felt enriched by being in her company and listening to her talk.

She joined the church at Russell Creek in the Fall of 1895, and moved her membership to High Point in March, 1919, by letter, where she remained until death. Sister Tuggle was a faithful member, always filling her seat when able. We have missed her so much, yet we have to bow to the will of God. Oh that we could be as resigned to His will as our dear sister was.

Sister Tuggle was the mother of nine children. Her husband and three children preceeded her in death, leaving two boys and four girls, together with thirteen grand-children and eleven great- grandchildren to mourn their loss. She is also survived by two sisters, Sister J. E. Neal, Greensboro, N. C., and Mrs. D. E. Ellis, Stuart, Va.

We do not weep as those who have no hope, but rather say, Sleep on dear Sister and take your rest; we know that you were tired of this pilgrimage and desired to go home. We that are left behind are yet battling with the problems of life with sad hearts and troubled spirits, longing for the time when we too can leave this unhallowed ground and dwell in peace with Christ. Written by one who loved her.

(Elder) D. A. O'Bryant

Resolved, that we put a copy in our church book and send a copy to the family, and send a copy to the Signs of the Times for publication.

By order of the church in conference.

(Elder) D. A. O'Bryant, Moderator
Mrs. H. M. Taylor, Church Clerk

JIM McGREGOR

In sorrow we prepare the obituary of Brother Jim McGregor who died June 20, 1952. He was the son of Elder Sam McGregor who preached and zealously contended for salvation by grace in all the churches of the Highland Association, in Kentucky.

Brother Jim was married to Miss Hannah Lantaff December 22, 1881. To this union were born six children, five of whom survive. After the death of his wife, Brother Jim made his home with his children. Not withstanding all the rough and unpleasant things in life, he always had a smile for his friends. He did not get to attend his church very often, since he was dependent upon someone to take him. He joined the Lickcreek Primitive Baptist Church, Lickcreek, Kentucky, in August, 1932.

Funeral services were conducted at the funeral home in Madisonville, Kentucky, by his pastor, Elder R. L. Biggs, who made a beautiful talk. Brother Jim had a lot of friends and many were there to pay their last respects. Burial was in the family cemetery. He was nearly ninety-three years old, having been born August 8, 1859.

Resolved, that we extend our deep and sincere sympathy to the children and relatives. May they be comforted in their sorrow by the sovereign and all powerful God through Jesus Christ, whom Brother Jim loved to worship. We feel that it was his gain to go, but the church feels great loss.

Done by order of the church while in conference, and written by

Mona McGregor

———o———

THOMAS C. PEDEN

Brother Thomas C. Peden was born June 23, 1880, and died December 13, 1952, being seventy-two years old. He leaves a wife, one daughter, Mrs. Otto Fluman and three grandchildren to mourn his passing. He was a kind and loving husband and father.

He joined the Little Flock Primitive Baptist Church, Altus, Oklahoma, February 8, 1942, and was a faithful member. He was honest, upright and unassuming in his walk and was loved and respected by his fellowmen.

A strong believer in salvation by grace, Brother Peden was always in his place at church meetings when possible to be there, but most of the last year was unable to attend due to illness. Little Flock church has lost a steadfast member and feels deeply its great loss. We extend our deepest sympathy to his bereaved wife and family.

Elder W. W. Taylor, his pastor, conducted the funeral services at the Henderson Funeral Chapel, Vernon, Texas. He spoke words of comfort to the loved ones from I Peter 1:1-6, after which the body was laid to rest in East

View Cemetery.

Therefore, be it resolved that a copy of this memorial be made a part of our church records, a copy be sent to the bereaved family, and a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Little Flock church, Altus, Oklahoma, December 13, 1952, while in conference.

(Elder) W. W. Taylor, Moderator
Mrs. Lou Kester, Church Clerk.

FANNIE HENDRICKS CHESTER

Fannie Hendricks Chester was born February 13, 1882, and passed away July 1, 1952, at her home in Murray, Kentucky, making her stay on earth seventy years.

Born in Henry County, Tennessee, she moved with her parents to Calloway County when she was five years old. On November 24, 1919, she was married to Brother W. T. Chester, who survives.

In September, 1904, Sister Chester joined the Primitive Baptist Church of Christ at Salem, Calloway, Kentucky, and was baptized by the late Elder J. M. Perkins. She lived a very devoted life to the cause of Christ, and was a firm believer in the cardinal points of the doctrine, contending for them before friend or foe. She loved her church and the worship of God, and we of Zion Church greatly feel her loss.

The writer, her pastor, was called to conduct the funeral, after which her body was laid to rest in Old Salem Cemetery to await that final and sweet call, Child come home. May God bless all who mourn.

(Elder) O. W. Perkins

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN CULP

On November 27, 1952, brother Benjamin Franklin Culp suddenly passed away. 'Tis sad we know for death to come so suddenly, yet how sweet it is to hear our loved ones say before they close their eyes for the last time, I don't see why I should stay here and suffer; I know that I am all right.

Brother Culp was born October 19, 1862, the son of William Henry and Evalena Culp, and was ninety years old when he died. He was first married to Ollie A. Brown and to this union were born six children: Maude, Selma, Daveys, Henry, Bennie Gilbert and John Robert. His second marriage was to Cordelia Bonds, to whom one child was born, Lucy. There are two children yet living, together with twenty-seven grandchildren, forty-eight great grandchildren and seven great great grandchildren, to mourn their loss.

Brother Culp was a firm believer in the Primitive Baptist doctrine and was well grounded in the faith. He will be greatly missed by those who knew him. Elder E. C. Lowery conducted the funeral and he was laid to rest until his Maker and Redeemer calls, when he shall see Jesus as he is and be like him.

May God bless those who mourn. Written by request.

(Elder) O. W. Perkins

JULIUS J. VAUGHN

Julius J. Vaughn was born August 31, 1871, and departed this life November 13, 1952, after filling his place well for eighty-one years. He was married to Jessie Lee Taylor August 2, 1891, and to this union were born nine children. This union lasted sixty-one years. His wife died just twenty-one days after him. (see obituary below). The children surviving are: Opal, Hoyt, Eva, Fred, Harvey and Hontis; all fine and noble men and women.

Brother Vaughn lived his long life, married and reared his family near where he was born. He was well posted in the Bible and it was his chief delight to talk on the Scriptures, and was considered among the strongest proponents of the doctrine. When his health would permit, he went far and near to associations and union meetings, but for the last few years his declining health prevented him from going very much. Though such a strong believer, he did not unite with the visible church, saying he was not worthy to be with such a great people. But to me he certainly had the marks of one who has been born again and taught by the grace of God. He was an humble man and ever esteemed others better than himself. He was held in high esteem by the brethren who knew him, and by his neighbors, which was shown when he departed this life.

The funeral was held at Shady Branch Church, in Weekly County, Tennessee, conducted by the writer.

Also

JESSIE LEE TAYLOR VAUGHN

Just twenty-one days after the death of her husband, Sister Vaughn passed away. She was seventy-nine years old. She united with the Primitive Baptist church in early life and was devoted to the cause of Christ. Their home was a welcome refuge for all Old School Baptists, and they will be greatly missed in the Bethel Association.

The writer also conducted the funeral in the presence of a large congregation of sorrowing brethren and friends. May God bless those who mourn, is my prayer.

(Elder) O. W. Perkins

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 121 DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1953 NO. 5

EXPERIENCE

I want to tell my brethren,—my friends and neighbors too,
I once believed a sinner had something he must do;
I thought a sinner could come to Christ and be forever blest,
And when his work was ended, he'd go to God and rest.

I had not read the Bible, but preachers told me so;
I always had considered that preachers ought to know.
But when I cast about to see—and learned each preacher's plan,
I saw there's nothing to it, but just the works of man.

I thought I'd read my Bible and do the best I could,
But when I was convicted, I knew not what to do:
My soul was dark with sin,—I thought it was too late;
Oh, Lord have mercy on me, and then I fell prostrate.

While in this vale of sorrow, I traveled on in pain;
I mourned and wondered daily, but no relief obtained;
I thought of all poor souls on earth I surely was the worst,
There was but one condition, or else my soul was lost:

Would God in tender mercy relieve my troubled soul;
Would ever grace be given to make my spirit whole.
I feared the Lord Almighty God, and those I knew so well;
I loved and feared God's people, but had no fear of hell.

I was the strangest mortal; I thought I was alone.
All in a shroud of darkness, my soul was sinking down.
But when the Lord revealed the light, the world was made anew:
I tried to view my trouble, but they were all gone.

But when my soul was easy, the tempter said to me,
If I was such a sinner, how could I ever be?
And then doubts and fears began, I thought I must be wrong;
I tried to view my troubles, fearing they were not gone.

I thought I was no Christian, but felt I wished to be;
But how was any Christian a sinner just like me.
I thought I'd go and be baptized, and follow Christ the Lord,
But how could God's dear people receive me on my word!

I loved the dear old Baptists, I knew they were of God:
I saw their service plainly; Of Jesus Christ the Lord
They take the Bread, sup the wine, and wash each other's feet;
This is the Bible picture of Jesus at their feet.

At last I made the venture; and to my great surprise
They all received me gladly; They showed it in their eyes

The fellowship bestowed on me, — O
Lord beyond degree,
The grip of all fraternals was given
then to me.

Elder B. B. Walston
Kinwood, Texas

MORE THAN CONQUERORS THROUGH HIM THAT LOVED US

Dearly Beloved in Christ:

Tonight, as I sit here listening to the rain steadily falling upon the roof, somehow there is a desire in my mind to jot down a few thoughts for your consideration in connection with some scripture which for some reason known to God, has been lingering in my mind for several days.

I am fully aware, that unless God should be pleased to undertake for me my effort like myself will be a failure to begin with. Realizing, (I hope) my utter helplessness, and inability to see, understand, or write any thing that would comfort God's humble poor, unless guided by the divine light of the Holy Spirit. I do not wish to set forth anything new, God forbid that I should ever write, or speak, any thing that would cause confusion or unrest among the household of faith. But hope to give my views clearly, and without sophistry, or criticism to any one who might see, or believe otherwise. The apostle tells us that, All scripture is given by inspiration of God; and that there is no private interpretation of the scripture, for holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. All scriptures harmonize together, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and instruction in righteousness, that the man of God, might be perfect thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Before going further, dear reader, I hope you will get your Bible, turn to the 8th chapter of Romans, and read the entire chapter. You will find that this is a letter written by Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, and addressed to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, and called to be saints, as found in chap. 1; verses 1 to 7. Now, may we be given grace to meditate upon a portion of the 8th chap. beginning with the 37th verse, where the apostle says, "Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

We have already observed, that the apostle was addressing the beloved of God, those that were called to be saints. In other words, he was speaking of the family of God, those that were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. (see Eph. Chap. 1,) The apostle could embrace himself in the number, because he wrote by inspiration, as moved by the Holy Ghost. Therefore, he could say, Nay, in all these things WE are more than conquerors through him that loved us. What all things did he have reference to, and what was meant by the words MORE THAN CONQUERORS? I am sure that there is something rich and wonderful in these words. Something that is sweet and precious to every child of grace, when given to see the hidden mysteries contained therein. Hidden from the wise and prudent, but revealed unto babes, even babes in Christ.

Now, let us go back to the 28th verse and see if we can find what the apostle had reference to, and what was meant by all these things. He says here, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spare not his own Son, but

delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us ALL THINGS? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercessions for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Ver. 28-39).

As I understand this, the apostle was not just referring to the good things (as some believe and advocate) when he said, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose." But when he said all things, I believe he meant ALL THINGS. All things both good and evil. Another witness to this is found in Hebrews, 2:10. "For it became Him, for whom are ALL THINGS, and by whom are ALL THINGS, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." The apostle also tells us in Colossians 1:16-17. "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in ALL THINGS HE MIGHT HAVE THE PREEMINENCE."

So if he has preeminence in all things, no wonder Paul could say, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." What is it to be more than Conquerors? If it is not that the evil things in which we are so often beset, are made to work together for our good. If you could overcome an enemy, you would be a conqueror, but if you could turn that enemy into a friend and have him minister unto you, you would be more than a conqueror. I feel that Paul meant for us to understand that all trials, temptations, and sorrow and affliction are working together for our good. For he says in 2 Cor. 4:17, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Also we hear David saying, "It was good for me when I was afflicted, then I remembered the Lord." This is contrary to nature, because in carnality, in the flesh, none of us likes to suffer, none of us can rejoice in sorrow, affliction, trials and tribulation. Because "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grevious: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceful fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

"We should always keep in mind that it is only THROUGH HIM THAT LOVED US that we are more than conquerors, only through him, and by him, that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Paul goes on to state why he can be so sure in this matter; he proceeds to state reasons why it is so, and why it MUST be so. He says that God has foreknown, predestinated, called, justified and glorified his people. He has done all these wonderful things for them; He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for them all, and shall he not with him also freely give them all things. Who has the power to charge any thing to God's

elect, it is God that has justified them. Who is it that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercessions for them. Will Christ condemn them after shedding his precious blood on Calvary's cross, suffering in their room, and dying in their stead, that they might have life and have it more abundantly? No, we hear him saying, "Their sins, and their iniquity I will remember against them no more. They shall not rise in time to shame, nor in judgment to condemn. If he will not condemn them, who can? Certainly he will not withhold any lesser good, nor suffer anything to harm them. Whatever then befalls them though it be, as he says, tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword, they are more than conquerors through him that loved them. For he says, neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor thinght present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Instead of the "all things" referring especially to what he has named in the the 29th and 30th verses to wit; foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification, and glorification of the beloved, they rather are brought in as things in addition to what he has named before, and which he proceeds to name. Indeed it would not have been needful to say to his brethren, all these things work together for your good, because this truth would be apparent to them all. But it is not so apparent that trials and afflictions, and even the very slips and falls of believers, were among the things which should be for their good; so the Apostle includes this in his writing to them, that they may not be over burdened by their trials, nor be in despair when they are made to realize their inability to keep his holy law. It would be needless to say, that all good things work together for their good, but many things which are really for their good, do not seem good to them, so the apostle uses the term, "All things."

Our slips and falls work for our good in that they show us our weakness and vileness, so that we learn the truth about ourselves, that in our flesh dwells no good thing. And they work for good in that they do but drive us nearer to the Lord for grace and strength to overcome.

The poet, speaking of God's humble poor, is another witness to this.

"Poor and afflicted oft they are,
Sorely oppressed with want and care.
Yet he who saved them by his blood,
Makes every sorrow yield them good."

We find another witness to this glorious truth in Isaiah, 54:17. "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."

Yes dear saints, all your righteousness, is of the Lord, for Paul says, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, whom of God, is made unto us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. His righteousness was imputed unto you." "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." No wonder the apostle could say, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

In 2 Cor. 11:23-28. Paul proceeds to name some of these things, saying, "In labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prison more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five time received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeying often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heath-

en, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watching often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches." Not with-standing all this, the apostle says, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

This is the doctrine which I love, and have been trying in my weak way, to contend for, for the last twelve years. Whether I am one of his or not, I believe with all my heart, that "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called, according to his purpose, And that they are more than conquerors through him that loved them.

Humbly submitted
(Elder) C. D. Whitley
Albemarle, N. C.

———o———

Erwin, N. C.

Elder D. V. Spangler

Dear Brother:

Enclosed please find money order for $5.00 for the renewal of my subscription to the Signs for two years.

I enjoy reading the Signs for it is always filled with good tidings of great joy for those who have felt the weight of sin, and have been made to feel that God through his great mercy has saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his purpose and grace.

When I am reading in the Signs the messages that come from different parts of the country, I see that they are all taught alike, though they are strangers in the flesh; yet they are taught of the same God, who first teaches us that we are living sinners and laboring under the law, until we learn that we are lame, halt and blind. Then Jesus comes down to where we are, and lifts us up out of the horrible pit, and sets our feet upon a rock and establishes our goings; He puts a new song in our mouth even praises unto our God. This new song certainly is a wonderful song, and I enjoy reading the articles in the Signs which come from those whose pens are guided by the music of this grand song.

Yours in bonds of love,
(Elder) Luther W. Turner

———o———

"Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherin the Son of man cometh. For the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling in a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods." (Matthew 25: 13-14)

There is a material difference between the parable of the talents and that of the servant in Matthew 24:45-51. In the latter we have ministry inside the house; in the former ministry abroad in the world. But in each we find the grand foundation of all true ministry to be the gift and the authority of Jesus Christ. We note particularly that, "He called his own servants, and delivered unto them His goods." The servants are his, and the goods are his. No one but the Lord Jesus Christ can put a man into the ministry, as none but He can impart a spiritual gift. It is utterly impossible for anyone to be a minister of Christ unless He calls him and qualifies him for that particular work. Dear reader, this is so plain as not to admit a single question to the contrary. It is possible that a man may be a minister of religion, he may preach the doctrines of the gospel, and teach theology; but a minister of Christ's calling he cannot possibly be unless Christ calls him, and gives him the gift of ministry. If it be a question of ministry abroad in the world, we are told that, "He called His own servants and delivered unto them his goods."

Let us listen to the Apostle Paul's own words when he says, "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath en-

abled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry." (I Timothy 1:12). Thus it must be in every case, whatever the measure, the character or sphere of the ministry. The Lord Jesus Christ alone can put one into the ministry, and enable that one to fulfill it. If this is not true, it will be either a man putting himself into the ministry, or his followers doing it; both of which are alike opposed to all the principles of true ministry as taught in the written word of God. A man may set himself up as a minister, or he may be set up by his fellows, but it is all utterly vain; for it is not from heaven,—it is not of God and it is not by the Lord Jesus Christ; and in the end it will be made manifest and judged a most horrible and daring usurpation of sovereign power without proper authority.

It is important that every child of God thoroughly understand the principle of true ministry; and, moreover, that it rests on a basis truly divine, which cannot be successfully questioned by anyone who bows down—as every Christian should—with unqualified and absolute submission to the authority of God's divine word. Let each of us take the Bible, and read carefully and prayerfully every line therein which bears upon the subject of ministry. If we turn to the parable of the house-steward, we will read, "Whom his Lord hath made ruler." We will observe that he does not make himself ruler, neither is he appointed by his friends. The appointment is divine. So also is the parable of the talents, the master calls his own servants and delivers unto them his goods. The call and the qualification are both divine.

We observe the same truth in the Acts of the Apostles. When one was to be appointed to fill the place of Judas, the appeal was made to God, "Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou hast chosen." (Acts 1:24). And when it is a question of local charge, as of deacons in chapter six of Acts we read, "Wherefore brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom ye may appoint over this business." We also read in the fourteenth chapter that it is by direct apostolic appointment, both deacons and elders. In other words, divine appointment which is of God and not of or by man. A man could not even appoint himself to a deaconship, much less an eldership. In the case of the former, inasmuch as the deacons were to take charge of the people's property, these latter were in the grace and lovely moral order of the Spirit, permitted to select men in whom they could confide; but the appointment was divine, whether deacons of elders.

Again, if we turn to the Epistles, the same great truth shines in full and undimmed brightness before us. In the opening of the twelfth chapter of Romans we have these words from the Apostle Paul, "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith," etc. We might well read the balance of the chapter. In the fourth chapter of Ephesians we read, "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ."

All these scriptures, and many more which might be quoted, establish the truth that the ministry in all its branches, is DIVINE, is OF GOD, is FROM HEAVEN, is BY JESUS CHRIST. We do not believe that there is such a thing in the New Testament as "human authority" to minister in the Church of Jesus Christ. We may turn where we

will throughout the Holy Writ, and we will find only the same blessed doctrine as is contained in the one brief sentence in the parable quoted: "He called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods." The whole New Testament doctrine of ministry is embodied here; and we earnestly pray and entreat the Christian reader to let this doctrine take full possession of his soul, and exert its full sway over his conduct and course of character. (We do not mean to re strict the application of "talents" to direct, specific spiritual gifts; however, we do believe the parable takes in the wide range of Christian "service"; just as the parable of the ten virgins takes in the wide range of Christian "profession.")

Someone may ask the question, "Is there no adaption of the vessel to the ministerial gift deposited therein?" We would answer, unquestionably there is; and this very adaption is distinctly presented in the words of the parable, "Unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; and every man according to his several ability." This point is of deepest interest, and should never be lost sight of. The Lord knows what use he means to make of a man; he knows all about the character of gift which he purposes to deposit in the vessel, and He shapes the vessel and moulds the man accordingly. We certainly would not doubt that the Apostle Paul was a vessel specially formed of God for the place he was afterwards to fill, and the work he had to do. The gift is from God; and there is always the most distinct reference to the ability of the man. If this is lost sight of, our apprehension of the true character of ministry will be very defective indeed.

We should never forget these two important things, namely, the "divine gift", and "the human vessel" in which the gift is deposited. There is the Sovereignty of God, and the responsibility of the man in which the gift is deposited. How perfect and how beautiful are all the ways of our God. But alas, alas, man mars everything, and the touch of the human finger only dims the lustre of divine workmanship. But we should never forget that true ministry is divine in its source, its nature, its power and its object.

The question may be asked, What has all this subject of ministry to do with the Lord's coming? We believe much in every way. Does not our blessed Lord introduce the subject again and again in his discourse on the Mount of Olives? (Matthew 24:3). And is not the entire discourse a reply to the question of the disciples: "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world." etc. Is not His coming the great prominent point of the discourse as a whole, and of each section of it in particular? Unquestionably it is!

And what, we may ask, is the next most prominent theme concerning his second coming? IS IT NOT THE MINISTRY? Let us look again at the parable of the servant made ruler over the household. How is he to serve? Why, of course, having in view his lord's return. Does not the ministry link itself onto, as it were, the departing and return of the Master? It stands between, and is characterized by, these two great events. What is it that leads to failure in the ministry?—Losing sight of the Lord's return. The evil servant says in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming; and as a consequence, he begins to SMITE HIS FELLOW SERVANTS, and to eat and drink with the drunken. (Matthew 24:49).

So in the parable of the talents, the solemn and soul-stirring word is, Occupy till I come. In short, we learn that ministry, whether in the house of God or abroad in the world, is to be carried on in full view of the LORD'S RETURN. After a long time the lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them. All the servants are to keep continually before them the solemn fact that there is to be a reckoning time coming. This thought will regulate their thoughts and feelings in every branch

of the ministry. Let us harken to the following words in which one servant seeks to animate another: "I charge thee, therefore, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word, be instant in season out of season: reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine." ets. And further, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. BUT WATCH THOU in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, MAKE FULL PROOF OF THY MINISTRY. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing." (2 Timothy 4:1-8).

Dear brethren in Christ, does not this very touching passage of Scripture show how intimately the subject of "ministry" stands connected with the Lord's return? This blessed Apostle,—the most devoted, gifted and effective workman that ever handled the mysteries of God, the wise master builder; the great minister of the Church, and preacher of the Gospel; the incomparable servant and precious vessel, carried on his work, fulfilled his ministry and discharged his holy responsibilities in "full view of that day".

Yours in that blessed hope of His return for his Bride, the Church.

(Elder) Posie W. Ashworth,
Danville, Virginia

———o———

Chewelah, Washington

To the dear readers of the Signs:

I would like to write to you, if so be that God wills, a few thoughts and meditations of the past few months and maybe years. I do not write this so that you may believe, but because you already believe. Really and truly I write in fear and trembling, for fear I am boastful or it is of the flesh, but I hope not. If I boast, let it be of God, and let the flesh be crucified daily. I don't think this means physical suffering, but that it is the warfare between the spirit and the flesh,—the Spirit of Christ and the old man. I hope whoever reads this, that God's spirit is there, and if it is no good they will know it so strong that they will not hesitate to throw it in the trash.

There is so much we might write about that all the world could not contain the books. God, before the foundation of the earth was laid, took counsel with Himself, and we know He was there, for without him was not anything made that was made. I believe he knew just what he wanted to do, or else he wasn't God, for God is all wise. All wisdom is of Him, and, as he is all powerful, he surely has brought to pass all that was in his wisdom to do. He says, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. I believe He was there, Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Now, I don't know why God created the heavens and the earth; I do not know why from the smallest atom to the great universe is his creation. But I know it is so. Something within me tells me, and has for many years,—before I was given a hope in Christ, before I ever heard an old hardshell speak in His name. So, also, I don't know why he created this world and man to walk thereon, except that it was his pleasure to do so. God did not have to find out anything, as many would have us believe; he did not need to prove what man would do,—He was all wise.

But, I think he wanted a people with an unbounded love to be with him in eternity; so he created these people, and made a proving ground for them, not to prove them to himself, but to them-

selves, that they were nothing; and all that kept them was God's infinite love and mercy. So they had to walk in strange paths, and the ways of sin are all that they know,—they are steeped in it, and it is all they know until He strips them down. "Hath not mine hand created the waster to destroy?"

We think physical death is awful, but I don't think it can be compared to the death of a sinner, when God has shown him he is dead in trespasses and sins. Why even Hell would be a welcome place, or at least it would have been to me. But no, though I make by bed in Hell, thou are there. I felt as though against Him only had I sinned. Then for a long time I was indeed dead and had no feelings at all. Then when the still, small voice came: Lo, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee. How utterly astounded I was. No wonder we are all made to cry like Jonah out of the belly of Hell.

When we are made to see that this love is meant for poor worms of the dust such as we are, then indeed does peace flow like a river. When we are made to know that the Lamb of God Hangs between us and His wrath, no wonder we stand in amazement, and cannot comprehend why this is so. As life goes on, we often feel that we are back in the same old place, and a yearning and a void is there which nothing can fill until He comes again and speaks our name. Then for a time all is quiet and peaceful again. I think if so be it is God's will that we reach that glory world, we are going to be made to see that nothing we ever did or thought has helped us one bit. We are going to be glad to say it is all of him who gave himself for us. So the love of God will rule supreme in the manifestation of the blessed Son.

I was seated one day with my hymn book trying to sing, and I thought, well I'll sing like my mother and father (now gone on), if I cannot be as good a Christian as I believed them to be, and as sound in doctrine, maybe I can sing as they did. But I was having an awful time doing it; somehow my heart just wasn't in it and my thoughts did not seem to be my own. I just wish I could repeat the words that came to me. Oh, I wish I might always have such experiences when in doubts and fears. The substance of it was, that all the brethren and all the disciples and all the old prophets were only flesh too, and God gave them of His Spirit as he saw fit; Christ revealed himself to them and was in them,—Christ in them the hope of glory, and that was what set them apart. Of themselves they were no more than I am; I who am only a poor worm of the dust.

As Christ said, Go and tell John AGAIN, not once but again; so I was told again that of ourselves we are nothing, and less than nothing. It is the Spirit that brings forth good fruit, not the old physical man.

If Christ is in you, if your hope is in him, you will carry on the race just as our forefathers did, for surely God's hand is not shortened today, neither has he hardened his heart to usward. For it is said, "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God and the word was God, and the word was made flesh and dwelt among us." And again, "My word shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish that which I please." The world and the devil would have us believe God is losing his power, but it is not so. As we need more grace He will supply it; the darker the night, the nearer He is to us, yea, even within us. Though the evils of the present world overflow us, yet He will be with his own, and we will come forth conquerors through him that loved us and gave himself for us; for the Scriptures declare that, "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able," etc. Oh, we may have to give up our life, but that is no more than He did; and only God can receive a life, so He will have it in his keeping.

I hope this isn't at odds with sound

doctrine, I remain

A sinner saved by grace if at all,

Mary L. Eckard

———o———

EXPERIENCE

I was born about fifteen miles southeast of Fairfield, Texas, in 1877. My mother said when I was about eight months old she took me to a meeting and when the preacher began to preach, I began to cry. She took me outside, and I learned obedience by the things I suffered; and she said I was a pretty good boy after that. I well remember that when I was about seven years old my parents took me back to the same old church; and I can still remember the same sound today that I heard that day.

We moved from Freestone County to Leon County, about seventy miles east of where we did live, and I heard no more Old Baptist preaching for many years. My father, Benjamin R. Echols, passed away July 1, 1900. I was twenty-three years old, and I had to take father's place as head of the family. By the help of God, mother and I managed for the three younger children, two sisters and one brother. In the Fall we moved to Oklahoma, and after five years I married Exta Lee McMinn. To us were born nine children.

After living in Oklahoma about seven years, a man came by one afternoon and asked if I would like to work out my road tax, and I said yes I will help you. He told me that meetings were held in a school house and invited me to come out. I did not know that I was talking to the preacher. When I went out the next Sunday and as I walked up to the house, they were singing. I said to myself, "That's old Buck's bell" I hear. I went in, and that was the first Old Baptist I had heard preach for twenty-seven years; but it was the same old doctrine I had heard in Freestone County, Texas. After attending the meetings several times, I asked for a home with the church and was received. I felt that something just pushed me up to the stand. Old Elder Tipton was the preacher, and the old deacon said, (there were some conditionalists in the neighborhood) I think he is one of our kind; so I was received and baptized. I thought all my troubles were gone, but it was for a short time only. I loved the brethren and the church: I had found my home, but, old Satan didn't stay away very long. The brethren chose me as the clerk of the church, which office I did not feel worthy to fill. The church was called Hopewell and was visited by Elder J. C. Sikes.

Satan seemed to follow me everywhere I went; and I thought I would run away. I went to Idaho, where the three youngest children were born. We had lost our first one, a boy about two and one-half years old, which left us two boys and six girls. I got so blue and deep in the pit that I decided, since the weather was so cold and there was no church close, I would move again. We came to California, but I still could not find anybody to talk about the great God I believed in. My sins just kept piling up; I would try to pray but it did no good it seemed. I was reading the Signs, and found a little church eight miles East of Stockton. I heard Elder Slusher and Elder Seth Bynum preach. My letter from Old Hopewell church in Oklahoma had become lost, but the brethren took me in and wrote to Brother Bob Mangum, who wrote that the church had been dissolved, but that I was a member in good standing. I felt good for awhile, but troubles arose in the church, which caused much concern.

In the meantime, my sins got so big that I could see no way out. One day while at work, I stopped all at once and was down on my knees with tears running down my cheeks; I asked God to please remove the burden, and that the Lord would plead my case and remove the mountain of trouble. When I looked to my left I saw something clothed in purple moving as a fish in water; then I looked to the right and saw my sins

as a scroll of black smoke moving as smoke from a locomotive. I was lifted up for awhile and was afterwards given to understand what Jesus meant when he told his disciples, "If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea: and it shall be done.

Bless God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, this God I am speaking about is from everlasting to everlasting. He is the biggest thing I can imagine, and he is the smallest thing I can imagine. He holds the waters of the sea in the palm of his hand; yet he comes into the heart of a new born babe.

I will close now. Do with this as you think best.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Wm. Echols,
Chowchilla, California

Auburn, Washington

Dear Brother Spangler:

My subscription to the Signs expires this month, so I am enclosing $10.00 for another year's subscription and a copy of the Welsh Tract History; the balance to aid the paper.

I have had the Signs all my life, or nearly so. It speaks the things I believe, for I love the Saviour and what He stands for. I know I am just a human soul, a sinner in every sense of the word. I am alone in my home with no one to talk to, so I get rather blue at times, but I try to look on the bright side of life, and think my Saviour knows my condition. I am past eighty years old, so I won't be here many months or years.

I enjoy reading the Signs and all the letters of loved ones far and near. I wish you success in your work, and may God's grace be with you ever.

Your sister in faith,
Mrs. Clifford

Martinsville, Virginia

Elder D. V. Spangler:

Dear Brother:

I received the History O K; many thanks. I have been getting subscriptions for the Signs for many years, and it has afforded me much pleasure to solicit the brethren to subscribe.

By the grace of God, it sets forth the doctrine sustained by "thus sayeth the Scriptures"; as in the original Prospectus. If it departs from that, it will be worthless to the taught of the Lord. Wild gourd pottage is death to the truly annointed of the Lord.

I hope your health is improving and that the Lord will provide all things needful temporal and spiritual. Hope you can come to our association at Basham. I hope to go if it be the will of the Lord; my health is poor and I am in my seventy seventh year.

Your brother in hope of mercy,
(Elder) J. E. Burgess

Bloomburg, Texas

Dear Editors:

I am a little late but greatly desire to continue reading the Signs. I enclose $10:00; Three for another years subscription, and the rest to help carry on for a long time, I hope. I feel the Editors and all the staff are carrying on a beautiful labor of love throughout the world, with the strength God's great love and mercy gives to them. I hope they will be strengthened to carry on for a long time.

I greatly enjoy reading all the Editorials and good letters, although some come closer to my heart. In my travels I hope God is walking with me and leading me with his loving Spirit and will never let me fall. I hope, although unworthy, to be permitted to assemble with God's dear people in our home church for a long time yet, as well as with our other brethren. I believe I love

all the dear Old Baptists wherever they are, with the love God gives his people to love one another. Sometimes I find my heart very low and poor in spirit; then again He lifts me up and shines brighter than before.

I hope my loved ones and I will be remembered in your prayers.

A sinner saved by grace,
Mrs. Maggie Simmons

———o———

Mardella Springs, Maryland

Dear Elder Spangler:

Find enclosed check for renewal of my subscription for the Signs of the Times for two years.

I do enjoy so much reading the articles published in the Signs, and find it comforting to know there are so many that feel as I do concerning the Scriptures; and also so many confessing so humbly to their poor sinful condition, and trusting in the free grace and mercy of our Saviour for salvation.

I pray God given strength and divine guidance be given the editors to continue publishing the good paper and contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

Humbly, your sister in love and hope,
Mrs. Minnie E Gambrill

———o———

San Juan, Texas

Editors Signs of the Times:

I am enclosing $3.00 to pay for the Signs of the Times, which is the best paper we know of, for dear brother W. J. Chambers, who is very old and an invalid.

Dear brethren we feel we are having such sweet and glorious meetings down here. While there are but a few of us in numbers, we feel to be at perfect peace, for which we hope we are thankful to the giver of every perfect gift. Some of us are getting old and we realize that our time is short in this troublesome world, and we hope we are looking forward to His return to gather his little flock and take them home, where they will be at rest with him. We feel to be so unworthy, and sometimes we fear he has not known us in that sweet covenant of mercy; but for those whom he loved, Oh, what a glorious change it will be.

We desire an interest in your prayers, for we feel the need of the prayers of the righteous.

Yours in humble hope,
(Elder) James B. Reid and wife

———o———

Durham, California

Dear Brethren:

Please find enclosed $5.00 for renewal of the Signs. I do love the dear old Signs; so much of the time it is all the preaching I have, as I am one hundred miles from my church and I often do not get to go.

I am so thankful to the giver of every good and perfect gift that we have Elders to proclaim the truth. May God in his rich mercy and goodness bless you editors to keep up the good work. Please note change of address.

Your unworthy sister in Christ Jesus,
Mary Etta Jones

———o———

Greenfield, Tenn.

Dear Elder Wood:

We sincerely hope and trust you will please pardon us the liberty we are taking in addressing you a few lines, in respect to your excellent article in the March Signs, entitle, "The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon," which was real food to my soul. I thank the Lord for enabling you to pen such good and true gospel truth.

I have read the Signs since June, 1910, and it seems to be better with each issue. My copy came in Saturday, and I spent Sunday at my humble home reading all the copy. Was made sad at the death of Mrs. Mary Ellison, who had written me some interesting letters. One of my hobbies is to write many of God's gifts and get a letter from them in their own handwriting, and so I am hoping to receive a few lines from you, telling me some items of yourself and your activities.

I am now eighty-two years old, and most worn out; and do not get to attend real preaching very much. I was privileged only once last year to attend good sound preaching. I heard Elder Perkins preach at his Mayfield, Kentucky, church. He is an able free grace preacher and pastor of a fine band of Old Faith Baptists.

Please pardon me with this scribble, and let me have a few lines from your ready pen about your people and your self.

Unworthily,
W. F. Stafford

An editorial by
Elder F. A. Chick
of March 15, 1902

FATALISM AND PREDESTINATION

A brother inquires, What is the difference between fatalism and predestination?

There is a difference it is sure, but before replying directly to this question, we will call attention to one thought especially, and that is, If there be no difference between these two words, then if any one act is predestinated, that act comes under the head of fatalism, as it is called. It is claimed by some that the predestination of all things which come to pass would be fatalism. If this be so of all things, it would follow that it would be true of any one thing which was predestinated as well. So if men fear the reproach of fatalism, they must not contend for the predestination of anything.

But they are not the same, they are as opposite in meaning as light and darkness. In this one thing their difference is at once to be seen, fatalism puts God out of the universe altogether; it does not allow that there is any God, or at least any God who concerns himself with the affairs of men. On the other hand, predestination brings God in everywhere. It declares that a self-living, self-conscious Creator has made all things that are made, and that he has declared the end from the beginning; it declares that nothing happens by chance, but that an all-wise and beneficient being has appointed all things that come to pass. This was the faith of Job in his trials, a faith which gave him hope and comfort. He said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." He said, "Shall a man receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall he not receive evil" (at his hand). He said, "He performeth the thing which he hath appointed for me, and many such things are with him." And we know that Job spake truth, for the Lord so testified of him at the end of the book of Job. He said, The friends of Job had not spoken the thing that was right concerning him, as had his servant Job.

Was it fatalism when Jesus was betrayed according to the predestination of God and crucified? Was it fatalism when Joseph was sold into Egypt to save much people alive? Was it fatalism when God hardened the heart of Pharaoh, that the purpose for which God had raised him up might be fulfilled? Was it fatalism when the people of God were predestinated to eternal life? If there be no difference in the words, then it was fatalism, and then fatalism would be the sweetest word in the English language. In short, predestination acknowledges God in all things; fatalism acknowledges him in nothing; predestination tells us of a God who sees all things, knows all things, and who controls and appoints all in wisdom; fatalism sees nothing, knows nothing, and manifests no wisdom in its control, if indeed it may be said to control anything: fatalism is own brother to chance; predestination has nothing to do with chance, and is its most bitter enemy. Let no one again say that they are the same.

UNION MEETING

A union meeting will be held, the Lord willing, at Laurel Creek Church, Floyd County, Virginia, Saturday and fifth Sunday in May.

All Elders and brethren who are in order with us are invited to attend.

(Elder) S. L. Moran, Pastor,
P. S. Vest, Clerk
Copper Hill, Va.

Please Note:—

Brethren having notices of specia meetings, associations, etc. for publication will please send them in as early as possible so that we may insert them in the issue desired. Such notices should be in our hands five or six weeks before publication date.

Editors

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SPECIAL NOTICE

Please check the expiration date on your paper. If the date is 10-52, it means your subscription expired October, 1952. Since the paper is now mailed without wrapping, we are not sending notice of expiration. Please renew promptly. Thank you.

———o———

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EDITORIALS

Danville, Va. **May, 1953**

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All letters for this paper should be addressed and remittances made payable

TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

P O. Box 1271 **Danville, Va.**

"Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him, for if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son: much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life; and not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." (Rom. E:9, 11).

It is comforting to the children of God to know that ahead of them are joys and comforts yet ungleaned. They are eating at a table that has every thing that is needed for growth and fruition, and drinking from a fountain that remains constant in its flow winter and summer. As well to say that our God will be removed from his throne as to say that there will ever be any scarcity in the supplies of the Commonwealth of Israel.

In the days of yore, when I was younger than now, I heard the faithful old soldiers speak of the Scriptures having a two fold meaning. It was beyond my depth; I could not measure and comprehend anything but the simplest of terms and descriptions. I am still a child in understanding, if a child at all, and have a great hesitancy in attempting to expound that that has always been, and is yet, mysterious to me.

It has always been good and pleasant for me to dwell upon the "double" that belongs exclusively to Israel. I have known precious brethren to differ about that "double for all her sins". Just why that we should differ, to hurt, over such a wonderful promise, I am not able to tell. I will leave that for others to do, and I will, as blessed of God, deal in those things that I feel to hope has been shown to me. "Much more then" causes my soul to mount up the winding stairs and my heart to leap for ecstasy and joy unspeakable and full of glory; for if there is something more than what I have been privileged to see and taste and handle, I am given to count all the sorrows and conflicts of this present evil world as but for a passing moment and to run with patience the race that is set before me, ever looking unto him whom I hope to have seen, to have tasted as the bread of life, and to have handled as the salvation of the Lord.

The 'moreovers' and 'much mores' and 'alsos' are the cordials for our going on towards perfection, towards the mark of the prize of the high calling that is in Jesus Christ our Lord. "Much more then" shows a truth already presented, and leads the poor sinner towards another stepping stone, another firm place for slippery feet (Josh. 4), another feeding and drinking place of the sheep. *Christ has already died for us;* and this is our theme song as we journey this wilderness road. This is our dwelling place, and it does not matter how rolling the waves, how howling the winds, how dense the tempest, there is a going backwards to this hour in our travel. Prophets and apostles, bards and prosaic writers have sung the praises of this grand truth, but that poor soul who has experienced this truth in his own bosom is indeed exalted. It has its beginning in the unchangeable and eternal love of God, which simply means that it does not have any beginning with God, but that God has eternally commended his love to poor sinners, and that while they were yet sinners, He laid down his own life for them.

People are constantly telling in my presence that all the sinner has to do to be saved is to keep the law. Methinks I know better than this, for even the shedding of the precious blood of Jesus did not save sinners. His blood was the life, which was the price to be paid for the breaking of the law, and this price freely justified them for every mandate of the law, which the law, as the law, could never do. But it takes more than justification to save a sinner. Had it have been pleasing to God to have executed every law breaker it would not have saved one of them, the life and the death of Jesus were important in the salvation of sinners, one as much so as the other. Not one sinner would ever have been delivered home to glory with out the full benefits of his life and his death being imputed to them.

It is a most precious doctrine that Jesus died for his people. But the life that Jesus lived in the body of flesh was just as important as his dying. It was not that the life had to be lived without purpose just in order for Jesus to die. No, no, not that, dear Redeemer not that, but that while his death, even the cruel, degraded, ignominious death on the cross was forever justifying all chosen vessels unto honor, his life, even every pulsebeat, every weary step, all touches of his dear hands, were for the saving from wrath of the same. God has not appointed us to wrath, but (he has appointed us) to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ (I Thes. 5:9). It is in Jesus our Head that all necessary supplies have ever been. Not only is the

covenant well arranged for every object of God's love, but the Surety of that covenant is sent to insure and assure the justification of them all, and the salvation of them all. This salvation is in the singular; there is one Saviour, one Lord, one Faith; the salvation is from wrath, and the wrath of God in time would not be any the less than his wrath in the final consumation of all things. Or, if it will elucidate any tenderfooted minds, let us say that being justified in time is co-equal with being justified eternally (This is superfluous; it is a violation of the scriptures, for there is not a word in the lids of the Bible about two justifications, one by Jesus the other by the creature, one that is timely, one that is eternal; it is also butchering the King's English, for no language can be made to mean what it does not mean; moreover, it is a plain denial of every association in America, and it is a plain denial of the abstract of principals of every purpoted Old Baptist paper in America).

Now notice two things, two performances, that come from the work of God: *Justified by his blood, saved from wrath through him.* How wonderful that God has thought upon our name in eternity to this end; that he appointed us to obtain salvation through Jesus. Now let us travel on. It is a good doctrine to preach and to teach, to have and to hold, that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us, and how honorable and glorious the extending of the olive Branch to God whereby reconciliation comes in.

Aaron must lay his robes away,
His mitre and his vest,
When Christ the Lord comes down to be,
The offering and the priest.

And in this reconciliation every child of God has had to travel in sweet submission and in perfect complacency that all the handwriting has been removed; all the ordinances have been fulfilled; the middle wall of partition between us being broken, since he in his flesh has abolished the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, he in himself making of twain one new man, so making peace, and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby (Eph. 2:14, 15).

Justice demanded that the condemned criminal die. In no other way could the demands of the law be extirpated, and in no other way could justice be satisfied. If you will read the old periodicals of the Primitive Baptist people you will often find where the first part of one's experience was how could God be just and save a sinner like them. You will see that yet some, but sad to relate, these deep soul searchings do not seem to be as prevalent as at one time. But as sure as we ever come to look in wonder and amazement at this wonderful way of God, we shall, just as sure, be given to see upon what basis God saves a sinner. This reconciliation is one thing, the salvation by his life is another. I want to urge that here are two distinct gifts from God. Justification and salvation, reconciliation and salvation. Notice, dear tried saint, that your justification and reconciliation comes through his blood and death; that your salvation from wrath, past, present and future, is alone through Jesus, the living Vine.

The only salvation that comforts a child of God, who is exercised by the life of which he is born, is that salvation that comes from the life of Jesus. He that hath the Son hath life (I John 5:12), and it is this life that is in us by which we are saved. We are not saved in any sense by the natural life that is in us, for that life has never produced anything to reconcile us to God, nor to justify us before God. God, the Father, was well pleased in his Son, and the work of redemption was wholly acceptable to the Father when he got back to heaven and, from a law standpoint, every jot and tittle of it was fully satisfied, and each heir of promise that fell in Adam's transgression was freely justified, all the wrath of God having been spent on Jesus. When the wrath and

fury of a sin avenging God had been spent on his Son it brought in reconciliation. I want to say, even if reprimandable for it, that God has not been stirred in anger and wrath at his people since Jesus arose from the tomb.

God was reconciled before we were. Is that too much to say. Not if I am to preach Jesus as the way the truth and the life. If I am to preach that God is hiding, as it were, behind the door to pounce on poor sinners, then I must not preach reconciliation except as all other phases of the Arminian theory is preached—that is, that God will be reconciled if you will do this and that. I have something better to tell you: We were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, and we shall be saved by his life. Even this is in a two fold. In one sense his life on the earth finished it all, but the present truth is that this life which is in us is the immediate cause of our present salvation, I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me (Gal. 2:20). How foreign to the doctrine of reconciliation, to the doctrine of redeeming love and grace, to hear of anyone living other than in Christ in this life. It is from Jesus that we get all things that pertain to life and godliness. Every poor sinner knows that they do not get their natural life from Jesus, for Jesus lives, and abides, and rules, and conquers, and overcomes, and rejoices, and this Adam life is going, going, and will be soon gone. It is in Jesus that we live (this is good news for the living), move, and have our being. Here is plenteous grace; here is salvation for the weary (it is in time that we get weary); here are riches untold and undiminished for the poor (it is in time that we are poor); here is comfort for the mourner (it is in time that we mourn). All, all, comes through Jesus who is our life.

"And not only so". Something else coming dear weary child of grace. Something still in reserve for the day of adversity. Oh, what a fountain of love that did arise in the eternal mind of God for his dear family. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not be with him also (notice this word, and notice that here are two portions, Jesus, and all things) freely give us all things? Yes, dear brethren, he gave us Jesus, and with him he included all things. What all things? I have quoted it above, I will quote it again, and here it is: According as his divine power has given unto us all things pertaining to life and godliness, etc. (2 Peter 1:3). How far shall I go just here? As a Son, Jesus learned obedience by the things which he suffered. Sufferings then are a part of the appointment; trials are a part of the journey, and in these sore sufferings and trials we are reconciled. Not only are we reconciled to God, but joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Two fold again for the poor gleaner as they go into the rich harvest fields. We are now joying in God, who we once could not see how he could be just and save us. We are delighted in God the Father, as we were delighted in the Son. No wonder we joy now in God for it is in Jesus Christ our Lord that we have received the atonement.

We are now in at-one-ment with God. He calls us his people, we call him our Father. He is reconciled to us through the righteousness of his Son and our Redeemer. We are one with him as Christ is one with him. It was the good pleasure of God, coupled with the mighty power, that raised Jesus from the dead. This coming from the dead made us heirs of God and joint heirs of the Lord Jesus Christ. It will not be long—and certainly not any longer than the Allotted time—until we shall pass over death's dark and dismal scenes into the joys of the Lord forever more.

May God give me grace to live among the reconciled; to bear all my days of appointments until the end comes; to be given to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him;" to be reconciled to my lot, knowing that the lot is cast

into the lap and that the disposal of it is of the Lord; to know nothing among you save that joyous salvation that is of the Lord; to be firmly and yet kindly contending earnestly for that faith that is solely of God; and finally, when old age and disease and decay sets its ravages to work, and the devil and the world and self rises for airing of its case, may I rest in sweet reconciliation that all power, and all judgment, and all things, are in the hands of Jesus by the commitment of God, and that his power is unlimited, his judgments unsearchable, and that all things are working together for the good of the storm tossed children of God.

Dear little ones, farewell in the two things that are doubled to the poor fragile children of God, and that all of your doubles are the same kind—both from the hand of God.

W. D. G.

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Manassas, Virginia

Mr. W. F. Stafford,
Greenfield, Tenn.
Dear Brother Stafford:

I assure you that I was glad to receive your letter this morning. It is always a great pleasure to hear from those who have been taught of the Lord and who rejoice in the same things that are meat and drink to me. What a wonderful thing it is to be brought out of the darkness of nature into the marvelous light of the Son of God, and to be enabled to know that there is nothing good in us in our flesh. Truly we have learned that without the Grace of our God we have no hope of salvation. But when Jesus is revealed to us as our Saviour, then there is a joy and rejoicing that none can know anything about unless they have been taught in the same way.

I am glad that you enjoyed the article on, "The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon." I had not felt at all satisfied that there was anything in it that would be of interest to the brethren. But I have long since learned that I cannot speak or write anything of myself, and that I am at all times dependent upon the Lord both for things in nature and things spiritual. I have many doubts and misgivings as to my call, as well as whether I have sufficient evidence that I am a subject of grace. Sometimes though I believe I have learned, as did the Apostle Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

You asked me to give you some few items of myself and activities. I am 54 years old, and joined the church at Roanoke, Virginia in 1916, and began speaking soon afterwards and was licensed; but the matter was too great for me, for I knew that I couldn't preach and was mistaken in the call, so, perhaps like Jonah, I ran away from it, and for about ten years or so I was too fearful to make the attempt and often remained away from meetings. I cannot describe my feelings during this time; I felt I must preach but knew I couldn't. As I look back over this period, somehow I feel that I learned obedience by the things I suffered. A few of the brethren were still impressed that I had a calling and the pastor of Roanoke Church at that time, Elder P. G. Lester, stated in my presence that they would expect me to speak for them the next day. This was a trying time for me, but with much fear and trembling I tried to speak that day, and have been trying from that day until now. I was ordained in 1931 and served two churches in the Pigg River Association until I moved to Baltimore in 1942. After the passing of Elder Topping and Elder Lefferts I began serving some of the churches which they had long served in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania, numbering six at the present time. These churches are in the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, Delaware Association and Baltimore Association and one not in any association.

I think I realize more and more what a fearful responsibility it is for me to try to go in and out before so great a

people as the Lord's people. I feel that I know less now of these things than I once thought I knew, but the brethren are charitable and patient, for they too know that these things are all in the hands of the Lord. If I have determined to quit once, I suppose I have dozens of times; but somehow I can't, but go along in weakness and fear, hoping that I trust in the Lord to sustain and uphold me in presenting the wonderful and glorious things of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. I would know nothing save these things, but would contend earnestly for the things that have been delivered unto the saints, and that with such ability as I may be given.

You spoke in your letter of not being able to attend meetings very often and how you spent your Sunday in reading the Signs and enjoyed it. We know of many who are in your same condition, who get most of their preaching from the paper. To realize that this is so, makes us glad to be a part of editing and publishing the Signs, and to press onward in the matter, trusting that the Lord will continue to sustain us. You spoke of hearing Elder Perkins last year and how you enjoyed his sermon. I remember hearing him a good many years ago at the Pigg River Association held at Roanoke (at which time he visited in our home,) and I don't believe I ever heard a sermon which I and many of the brethren enjoyed more. In his humbleness, he was made bold to declare the power of God and the riches of his mercy. I have not seen him since, but would be glad to should it be the Lord's will.

You mentioned that you were 82 years old and most worn out; but isn't it wonderful to be able to look back over your long life, though no doubt you have experienced many troubles, and to know that the Lord has led you and kept you, and best of all, has given you a hope of eternal life through the riches of his grace. I have long felt that this "earnest of our inheritance" is our most valuable possession. How well we know it is all by the grace of God.

Do we not rejoice sometimes with the Apostle Peter when he said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." As well as when he continued, "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."

These are things which belong unto the, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Those who have been "called with an holy calling" know that it is not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

When we have the assurance that these things are ours, and are rejoicing in them, would not we (as indeed we do) exalt and praise His name. With David we can then sing, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

I am rather lengthy with this reply, but am glad to comply with your request that I write you something about my activities and my people, etc. May the Lord continue to lead and direct

you; we know his grace is sufficient.

Yours in gospel bonds,
John D. Wood

(NOTE: Finding it impossible to write an editorial, we publish the above reply to Brother Stafford's letter. J.D.W.)

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INDIGENT FUND

To April 1, 1953
To help send the Signs to
those unable to pay

New York Friends $100.00; Elmer Hastings, Md., $6.00; R. W. Rhodes, La., $1.00; Mrs. Dora Deal, Missouri, $2.00; Elder L. L. Schenck, Kan., $5.00; Mrs. Chas. B. Gordy, Mich., $2.00; Mrs. Norma McCarney, $2.00; Mrs. Isaac T. McIntrye, N. Y., $2.00; Mrs. Nancy Austin, Tex., $1.00; Victor D. Berst, N. Y., $10.00; Mrs. E. K. Morris, N. C., $2.00; Helen Jones, Calif., $5.00; W. B. McGregor, Ky., $1.00; J. L. Butcher, Va., $5.00; E. C. Redman, Ala. $1.00; J. F. Lax, Ill., $1.00; Ethel Werner, N. J., $4.00; Mrs. James E. Young, Tenn., $1.00; Mrs. M. L. Lucas, Ala. $9.00; Homer Bailey, Delaware, $9.00; Mrs. J. R. Mcaffe, Mo., $1.00; Mrs. E. H. Loftin, N. C., $2.00; T. P. Wilson, La., $1.00; Mrs. Clione Tarry, N. J., $5.00; Katie Ragan, Tenn., $2.00; J. T. Martin, $1.00; F. H. Richardson, Iowa, $17.00; H. T. Earnheart, Tenn., $1.15; Jennie Clifford, Wash., $1.00; Miss Lula Dennis, $2.00; Mrs. Maggie Simmons, Tex., $7.00; Jennie Clifford, Wash., $5.00; Flay Forrest, Tenn., $1.00; Mrs. A. V. Pearce, Va., $2.00; W. W. Yeisley, Wash., $1.00; P. S. Vest, Va., $1.00; May Morris, Md., $4.00.

REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Ingalls, Arkansas

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Will you please publish in the Signs of the Times that my sons wish to know if there are any Primitive Baptists meetings held near their homes. Their names and addresses are:

H. M. Harrod, Box 167, Spring Park, Minnesota, and J. E. Harrod, 1111 W. Carr Street, ElDorado, Kansas.

If anyone knows of any, will they please write or contact them at the above addresses.

Thanks,
Mrs. Charlie Harrod

NOTICE OF ASSOCIATION

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, N. J., Wednesday and Thursday, June 3 and 4, 1953. Services will begin at ten o'clock Wednesday morning (DST).

A cordial invitation is extended to all ministers and brethren of our faith who are in order and fellowship with us; and all friends of our faith are welcome.

Those arriving Tuesday by bus or train will go to the home of Mrs. Kathryn Darby, 192 Main Street, Flemington, or to Mrs. Edward Pyatt's 47½ Park Avenue, Flemington, N. J., and they will be cared for.

Gertrude Pyatt, Church Clerk
47½ Park Avenue,
Flemington, N. J.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, in the infinite wisdom of Almighty God, who works his will both in Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can hinder, was pleased to remove from this earthly pilgrimage our dearly beloved brother, Elder L. A. Harris, Jan., 17th, 1953, and,

WHEREAS, brother Harris was dearly loved, for the truths' sake by us and being such a gracious and wonderful gift in the ministry of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; our memory of his coming to us both as visitor and supply with glad tidings of great joy will linger as cherished thoughts in the days to come and we feel to say that our brother was one whose walk was beyond reproach and who rightly divided the Word of God when blessed to preach. We feel to say, also, that a great man has fallen in Isreal, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that we humbly submit to the Holy Will of our God, who worketh all things together for good for them who love His Great Name; and that a copy of this resolution be spread upon our minutes and that copies be mailed to Sister Harris, The Old Faith Contender and Signs of the Times.

Adopted by order of the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church, Floris, Virginia, while in conference the second Saturday in March, 1953.

Elder John D. Wood, Moderator
G. C. Spindle, Clerk

OBITUARIES

MISS LULU MAY ADKINS

The Salisbury Old School Baptist church, of Maryland, and the adjoining community,

were made poorer by the death of Sister Lula May Adkins, who passed away at her home near Hebron, Maryland, January 31, 1953 after a brief illness. The funeral services were held in the meeting house of the Old School Baptist church at Salisbury, February 3rd, and were conducted by the writer in the absence of her pastor, Elder David V. Spangler, who was in Florida at the time of her passing. The interment was in the Parsons cemetery at Salisbury.

Sister Adkins was born near Hebron, Maryland, May 15, 1891, where she resided with her brother, Elmer, until the time of her death. She was baptized into the fellowship of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church by the present pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler. The immediate surviving relatives are one brother, Elmer Adkins of Hebron; one sister, Mrs. Gertrude Austin, of Hebron; one niece, Mrs. W. D. Holmes, Jr., of Edenton, N. C.; two nephews, John E. Austin of New York City, and Rodney E. Austin, of Washington, D. C. The deceased will be greatly missed in her home, in the community where she lived, and in the church, where her noble qualities of womanhood were an example and an inspiration to all. She was faithful in attendance at the church of her membership and dearly loved the assembling together of the church folk. She truly lived the religion she professed and her life is a shining example of all that is praiseworthy in womanhood. The hospitality of her home was acknowledged by all who visited her and her brother with whom she lived. Unassuming in her ways, loyal in her friendships, and strong in the faith of God's elect, she has left vacant a place that can not be filled.

The surviving friends and relatives are the recipients of much sympathy in their loss.

(Elder) Arnold H. Bellows

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MEMORIAL

MARY JANE HUMPHREY

Sister Mary Jane Humphrey, of Jacksonville, N. C., was born to E. W. Morton and his wife, Alice Morton, on April 6, 1900, and died January 29, 1953. Our beloved sister was one of the richest gifts I have even known to her dear husband, Elder Eddie Humphrey, also to the church. In all the time Elder Humphrey has served our church as pastor she was absent only two times and then only because of sickness. Such a Mother in Israel cannot be praised enough by the children of God for her love and faithfulness. God has finished her pilgrimage on earth. We firmly believe she is rejoicing in her Saviour's love "where sin and sorrow are all done away, in that home not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." May God's grace continue to rest on our beloved pastor and their children and may He give them grace to bear their many hours of sorrow and loneliness.

God giveth and he taketh away at HIS appointed time. Lord, make us submissive to Thy will. Death is swallowed up in victory. "Oh death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?" Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Bay Sea Level Church will miss our dear Sister's presence greatly but God knew best for her and has taken her to dwell with him forever.

This memorial is to be included in our church record, also sent to SIGNS OF THE TIMES AND THE LANDMARK.

Approved in conference Saturday, Feb. 21, 1953.

Lula T. Mason, Church Clerk
Elder Eddie Humphrey, Mod.
Nellie Williamson, Asst. Clerk

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ADA L. HAMILTON

Our dear Sister, Ada Lupton Hamilton, was born to John Lupton and his wife Rebecca, December 27, 1874, and died December 17, 1952. Funeral services were conducted by Elders R. W. Gurganus and Eddie Humphrey, December 20 at Bay Sea Level Primitive Baptist Church.

On Sunday, August 26, 1951, after preaching by Elder Humphrey and Elder Harris Bryant, while the congregation was singing the song, "Tis religion that can give the sweetest pleasure while we live," Sister Ada came before the church and was gladly given a home with us. She was in very feeble health, and was not able to be with us again, but she was a sweet sister to us before she came to the church. She had come to preaching whenever her health permitted each time she visited Sea Level. Since she lived with her daughter in Springfield, Pennsylvania, she was not with us often. We have a rejoicing hope that she is with her Saviour and loved ones who have gone on before.

She leaves a son, Guy Hamilton, New Bern, N. C., and a daughter, Mrs. Wilbur Cox, of Springfield, Pennsylvania, and their children to mourn her passing. May the bereaved ones be reconciled to God's will, realizing that, "All things work together for good to them that love God and to them that are called according to His purpose."

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Adopted by Bay Sea Level Church in conference, February 21, 1953.

Elder Eddie Humphrey, Moderator
Lula T. Mason, Clerk
Nellie Williamson, Asst. Clerk

C. W. ANTHONY

The angel of death once again visited Lamms Grove Church and called one of its members, saying, we believe, Child come home! This one will be greatly missed but we bow in humble submission and remember the Scripture that reads, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Also, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Brother C. W. Anthony, of Carthage, North Carolina, had been in ill health with a heart condition over two years, becoming critical it was necessary for him to remain in Moore County Hospital until his death November 17, 1952, at the age of sixty-one.

He was married in 1920 to the former Maude Goolsby, and to this union were born five children; one dying in infancy, the following children and his wife survive to mourn his passing: C. W. Anthony, Snow Camp, N. C.; Mrs. O. G. Crabtree, Carthage, N. C.; Mrs. J. W. Gilliam and Mrs. U. T. Lamm, Sanford, N. C., and nine grandchildren.

Brother Anthony and wife joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Brush Creek, Randolph County, in 1926, but later, after moving to Moore County, they joined by letter at Lamms Grove in 1946, where he remained a loving and faithful member, always keeping the welfare of the church first and foremost and ready to help his brethren and fellow travelers as best he could. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation alone by the grace of God, loving the doctrine, the order and fellowship of the church. He was always present at his home church when health permitted, and was a frequent visitor with other churches of his faith and order. The latch string hung on the outside of his door for brethren, neighbors and friends of a vast acquaintance. His nature was so kind, meek and humble, one can only liken him to Job: An upright man, one that feared God and eschewed evil. This kindness showed in his countenance so that even the doctors, nurses and all who waited on him noticed his humble disposition, and commented that he was so patient and so easy to satisfy, wanting only the necessary attention. Jesus said, "In your patience, possess ye your souls."

By his request, the funeral was held at Lamms Grove, conducted by the pastor, Elder S. T. Atkinson and Elder A. B. Barham, who spoke comfortingly to a host of relatives and friends. After which the body was laid in the church cemetery beneath a large floral mound, there to await the call of the Master; then his hope will become a reality, when he sees Him and he is, be like Him and be satisfied.

Written by request of the church while in conference.

Raymond and Wilma Comer

MARTHA ANN STRONG

Martha Ann Strong, daughter of Shedric and Artnecie McGregor, was born April 28, 1870; she was one of a large family of children. On December 25, 1892, she married Nelson Strong, to whom she bore two children, Calcie and Zelie; the latter (Mrs. Lexie Doclsery) preceded her in death, and the former (Mrs. Clyde Rambo) survives. Her husband passed away in 1935. There are also six grand children, eleven great grand children and a host of other relatives surviving.

She received a hope in Christ and united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Providence, Kentucky, over thirty-two years ago. Later she moved her membership to Lichcreek Church. Se was a firm believer in salvation by grace.

The funeral was conducted from the home in Dawson Springs by her pastor, Elder R. L. Biggs.

Sister Martha, as she was affectionately known to her loved ones and friends, was very devoted to her church, and was always at the meetings when possible. In their younger days, she and her husband did everything they could to help those get to the meetings who wanted to go, and they entertained many, many in their home. Even during the last year or more after she became ill, she never lost interest in the church, still manifesting the same loving interest in her church and friends as when she was able to attend the meetings.

We can certainly say of her, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. I feel that her life's walk manifested a living faith and she is asleep in Jesus from which none ever wake to weep.

Mona McGregor

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IRA O. HODGES

Ira O. Hodges, a prominent Geneva, Alabama, business man and oil executive, died suddenly December 2, 1952, at his home. He was a native of Geneva County and active in church work, having rebuilt New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, which he dedicated to the memory of his parents; and greatly aided other churches and worthy causes in this section.

He was fifty-six years of age, and is survived by his wife, Mrs. Ira O. Hodges of Geneva, and three daughters, Mrs. Lewis Kennerby, Savannah, Georgia; Alice Kay, and Sandra, Geneva, Alabama; four brothers, Charlie, Lee and Ed, Graceville, Florida, and Jesse, Chattahoochie, Florida; and three sisters: Mrs. A. W. Miller, Geneva, Alabama, Mrs. Early Williams, Graceville, Florida, and Miss Lillie Hodges, Ft. Walton, Florida.

A short time before his death, Brother Hodges related a most vivid experience to the writer, confessing a firm faith in his Lord,

and telling what wondrous things the Lord had done for him, and how he felt the ever presence of a supernatural power in caring for him. He requested the writer to conduct his funeral, and made all plans for it, even when he seemed in the best of health. In accordance with this request, Elder J. J. Collins held the last sad rites at his home, December 5, 1952; using as a theme, John 3:14-18 and 36, with prayer by Mr. R. M. Holms, pastor of the First Baptist Church. Pittman Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements, and internment was in the Geneva Cemetery, where he was laid beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

(Elder) J. J. Collins

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J. M. DANPHIN

Brother James M. Danphin, of Florala, Alabama, and a member of New Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, died January 4, 1953, after a heart attack. He was ninety years of age, and is survived by four sons: J. M. Jr., Monroeville, Alabama; V. M. and W. A., Jacksonville, Florida; and two daughters: Miss Allie and Mrs. Beatrice Noles, Tampa, Florida.

Brother Danphin united with the church just a few months ago; being an invalid at the time, it was necessary for several to aid in his baptism. But when he arose from the water, he said he could walk from the water alone, and he did so. What an example of miraculous healing and faith.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. J. Collins at Chapel Hill Church, using as a text John 12:1-3, to a very large congregation. Interment was in the adjoining cemetery.

(Elder) J. J. Collins

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ROSA CALDWELL

Sister Rosa Caldwell, of Bethlehem Church, Malvern, Alabama, died after a lingering illness, December 24, 1952. She united with the church about twelve years ago, and was baptized by Elder J. J. Collins. She remained devoted to the Primitive Baptist faith until death. She is survived by two sisters: Miss Lula, and Mrs. Pomp Lunsford, Columbus, Georgia; and two brothers: Frank and Albert, Graceville, Florida.

The remains were taken to her beloved church, where services were conducted by her pastor, Elder J. J. Collins, on December 26th, amid many sorrowing relatives and friends; with interment in the church cemetery.

(Elder) J. J. Collins

HUEY HARRISON

Brother Huey Harrison, another faithful member of Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church, died January 9, 1953, after a short illness. He drove regularly more than two hundred miles monthly to attend his church services, and was greatly devoted to the cause of his Lord. His seat will be hard indeed to fill.

He is survived by his companion, one daughter, two sons, his mother, Sister Mary Harrison, and several brothers and sisters, and many other relatives and friends.

Funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Elder J. J. Collins, assisted by Elder F. A. Collins, at his church, with many beautiful flowers. His funeral service was on the afternoon of his regular church service, January 11th. Interment was in Bethlehem Cemetery, Malvern, Alabama.

(Elder) J. J. Collins

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ETTA TAYLOR

Sister Etta Taylor passed away suddenly at a rest home in Harrisonville, Missouri, June 5, 1952. She was the widow of Brother J. P. Taylor, who preceeded her in death several years.

The funeral was conducted in Little Flock meeting house by Elder W. E. Harper and she was laid to rest in the peaceful cemetery at Greenwood, Missouri, where her parents and other loved ones lay.

Auntie, as she was lovingly called by her nieces and nephews, lived just across from the church, and from my earliest recollection her lovely home was a home for the Baptists. It is sweet to recall the lovely seasons spent there. She was born in Illinois, and moved with her parents to Missouri in young womanhood, settling at Greenwood. Her brother came to the next meeting at Little Flock, and the following meeting she came with him and united with the church that day. Soon her parents bought the farm of one hundred sixty acres across from the church and moved to it. From then on it was an Old School Baptist home.

Both she and her home will be greatly missed, but she "rests from her labors, and her works do follow her." She and her parents before her had taken the Signs almost from the beginning. She gave me copies of 1856, 1857 and 1858 which I highly prize. I felt I wanted to write this in memory of her.

Her niece in law,
Margaret S. Taylor.

MRS. LULA M. McGRADY

The sad news of the death of Mrs. Ennis McGrady of Rising Sun, Maryland, at the

Havre de Grace Memorial Hospital, January 16, 1953, after a brief illness of the infirmities of old age, caused mourning in many a home and cast gloom over the community in which she had lived so long and was known and loved so well.

The funeral services were held January 19, at the home and were conducted by the writer, assisted by Mr. Perry Hill, of Cecil United Parish of North East, Maryland. The interment was in Ebenezer cemetery near Rising Sun.

She is survived by her husband, one brother, one sister, and five children, also eleven grand children and four great grand children. Mrs. McGrady bore the maiden name of Lula Maud Scott and was born at Laurel Fork, Virginia, August 19, 1876. In 1896 she was united in marriage to Ennis McGrady to whom she proved a loyal, loving, and capable help-meet. She never united with any church organization but adhered to the doctrine of the Primitive Baptist church. She was a woman of stainless character, and her honesty and industry were equaled by her generosity and hospitality. As a neighbor and friend she was greatly beloved. Her life is a shrine of pleasant memories and in her walk she exemplified the noblest qualities of wife and mother. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

(Elder) Arnold H. Bellows

LINA FINLEY THOMAS

Sister Thomas was born in Scott County, Mississippi, March 2, 1873, and departed this life December 7, 1952, at a Shreveport hospital. All that loving hands could do for her was done, but her time to die as appointed by the allwise and sovereign God arrived and she passed away. (See Eccl. 3:2)

Sister Thomas was married to Brother M. H. Thomas in the year 1893, who survives, being eighty-eight years old and greatly afflicted. She is survived also by the following: R. C. Thomas; Miss Maude Thomas, Miss Mabel Thomas, Mrs. Della Godfrey, and Mrs. Artie Belle Reese, all of Castor, Louisiana; Mrs. Mary Fisher, Canhattie, Mississippi, and Mrs. Minnie Hicks, Campti, Louisiana. Also twenty-four grandchildren and eight great grandchildren; and five sisters: Mrs. Hilda Tyler, Mrs. Rena Regions, Mrs. Mary Matthews, Mrs. Edna Harvey, all of Chestnut, Louisiana, and Mrs. Nan Thomas, Shreveport, Louisiana, and many other relatives and friends.

She joined Oak Grove Primitive Baptist Church around 1893, and was baptized by late Elder J. J. White, a noted preacher of his day. Her aged companion and large family are left in a very sad and mourning state, but I would exhort that they weep not as those who have no hope, because there is every Scriptural evidence, coupled with her experience, belief, conversation and walk, that she is much better off than we who are still subject to sin, sickness, pain and death. For, according to the blessed and glorious promise of the Lord, she will rest or sleep until the Lord comes again; then she will be changed from corruptable to incorruptable, from mortal to immortality, and be like her blessed Saviour, and shall see him as he is and be satisfied.

May God bless, comfort, lead and sustain each in their troubled and saddened state, that they may look unto Him for all things. The unworthy writer was called to conduct the funeral services at Oak Grove Cemetery, near Ashland, Louisiana, where the remains were laid to rest.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

I. C. DENTON

In memory of our beloved brother I. C. Denton, Madison County, Alabama. Brother Denton was born in Sevier County, Tennessee, in 1861 and died November 7, 1952, being 91 years old. He was united in marriage to Hetty P. Bird in 1884, and to this union were born seven children. His wife and four children preceeded him in death.

Brother Denton came to Alabama in 1884 and lived here until death. The surviving children are: Thomas Denton, New Market, Alabama; Mrs. L. E. McCord, New Market, Alabama, also twenty-two grandchildren, twenty-five great grandchildren and eight great great grandchildren. Surviving also is one sister, Mrs. M. C. Joiner, Harvey, Illinois.

He united with the Primitive Baptist church at Bethany, Madison County, Alabama, on the fourth Sunday in July, 1897, and was baptized by the late Elder J. M. Bragg. In March, 1907, he was ordained deacon and later chosen Church Clerk, which office he filled until death.

Brother Denton will be greatly missed by his brethern, children and many friends; but let us say with one of old, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord." He was a firm believer in the doctrine of God our Saviour and was loved far and near. His doctrinal and experimental talks were enjoyed by his brethern.

May God bless and comfort the family, and reconcile us with the thought that our loss is his eternal gain. Just before Brother Denton became unable to go, he told me that he had been a member of Bethany church for fifty-two years, and had missed only two meeting days. He passed away at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Luther C. McCord, New Market, Alabama.

R. O. Simmons

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 121 DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1953 NO. 6

(The following is copied from the January, 1930, Signs, and is republished at request of Sister Laura Gooch)

THE HOLY BIBLE

The account of Creation in grandly simple language; the generations of men and the formation of families; the flood and the miraculous preservation of the human race; the history of nations in the world's infancy; the divine call of Abraham, and God's covenant with him, and its renewal with Issac and Jacob; the sojourn and oppression of Israel in Egypt, and her deliverance; the history of the wondrous theocracy; the captivity of the covenant people for their sins; the preservation of the kingly tribe of Judah, who ruled with God until Christ came; the record of the virgin birth; the Savior's life, given in touching simplicity; the account of his death, told in awful dignity and majesty; his resurrection, and ascension into heaven; the day of Pentecost, and the subsequent and consequent ministry of the everlasting gospel, and its glorious success; Christ's care of the newly-planted churches, exhibited in the epistles; the descriptive and prophetic book of Revelation; all these matters constitute the Bible, and were given by inspiration. The inspiration of the Scripture sets it alone, above and different from every other book that has existed, does exist and shall exist. The Bible is what it is because it is the inspired word of God. It is therefore absolutely unique. We call it the "Holy Bible;" it is supremely, exclusively so.

It is holy in the sense of being written by inspiration, and infallible. It is not composed of words chosen by the human writers of it to express thoughts which the Holy Ghost suggested; they spake as them were *moved* (inspired) by the Holy Ghost. They constantly say the word of the Lord came to them, the Spirit of God spake to and by them. Inerrancy requires that God should choose his own words. The revelation of himself, of his will and purposes, must needs be made to man in his own pure words. The man of business will dictate his own words to his secretary in all business letters; he will not trust that his secretary will correctly express important, delicate and complicated matters, which might be given to him in general terms. Much less would the Holy Ghost say to his penmen, Write to the *effect*. No, the deep things of God must be expressed by himself. The words must be his own words. He must say his own things in his own words. His things are eternal. They are the Being of God, his eternity, his perfections, his subsistence in three Persons, bearing the essential names of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, showing their distinct Personalities, their eternal equality. Only God could, in the first place, utter the sublime sentence, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," it is too profoundly incomprehensible and glorious for merely human expression. And again, John 1:14, 18, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

A mere suggestion of such divine truths would have shattered the mind which was required to express it in correct and adequate terms, by its very weight, mystery and glory. Only an involuntary pen, under the absolute control of the divine Dictator, could write such awfully grand and blessed words. Thus the Bible makes revelations of the eternal, internal acts of Jehovah, and who but himself knew how to put those mysteries into human language? This divine Book states most explicitly the fall of man. It tells us that man was made upright, and under the law to God, his Creator. Here we must find man's responsibility to God, a better word perhaps is accountabilty, accountability of which we cannot divest ourselves. The Bible reveals the second Man, the last Adam, who is a quickening Spirit to his seed.

It must not be omitted to state that a holy and wise providence has a prominent, honorable, important place in our inerrant Bible; it is, as it were, the handmaid of grace. The lives of some individual persons, the histories of some nations, are related. Its accuracy in these are matchless; its impartiality, inimitable. Viewed from every standpoint it may be confidently affirmed that no merely human mind or hand could have produced our infallible Bible. *It is the very and immediate word of the Holy Ghost.* The penmen were his instruments. The holy, beautiful words of revelation, of description, of history, of promise, of threat, were traced on the original parchments as he dictated them. Both the Testaments, Old and New, thus bear the ineffaceable stamp of divine origin; that is, of verbal, plenary inspiration. Moreover, by his numerous quotations from the Old Testament the Lord Jesus Christ has welded it into the New Testament, and thus they are manifestly one organic whole. They have but one voice. They stand or fall together. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. The sanction of the holy Trinity is on holy Scripture.

I judge we are now in a position to adopt and lay down the proposition with which Dr. Owen opens his work on the divine original of the Scriptures, viz.: "That the whole authority of the Scripture in itself, depends solely on its divine original, is confessed by all who acknowledge its authority." I hold that that portion is absolutely correct. The word of God can receive no accession of authority from any human source. It is a perfect Word. It is the sole and everlasting rule of faith and practice. Against this divine rule both the Papist and the Modernist object. The former, that he may introduce and place above holy Scripture his necessary tradition; the latter, that he may honor his own intellect and inner consicousness—whatever that may be. Alas, divine authority is abhorrent to fallen man. The Papist has numberless idols, the Modernist has but one. He must rid himself of the incubus of authority, otherwise he must bow down to the Bible. Rejecting that, as to its full, complete inspiration, he thinks himself at liberty to edit it, correct it, criticise its facts, question its dictrines, shorten it, omitting what he objects to, and to tell us what God ought to be, what He cannot do, and what He is ever attempting to do, but is unable to accomplish. Be it given to bow before Jehovah and reverence his word, which he has exalted above all his name.

[The foregoing is an address delivered at Brighton, England October 3rd, 1929, by Mr. J. K. Popham, editor of *The Gospel Standard,* of London, England. Volumes have been written on the subject of the inspiration of the Scriptures, but for brevity, conciseness and forcefulness, this address of Mr. Popham's in defense of the integrity and verbal inspiration of the Bible, surpasses anything that has come under our notice recently.—H. H. L.]

CIRCULAR LETTER OF MAINE ASSOCIATION 1952

(Written by Sanford S. Bartlett)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, September 12, 13 and 14, 1952, to the churches and associations with whom we correspond, Dear Brethren:

Another year has passed, and in accordance with our custom we address you by Circular Letter.

From a natural point of view, as we meet this year there is a sadness among us, as we do not see, and know that in this life we will never behold again, the faces of those whom God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to remove from this life to a better and higher life with the redeemed of the Lord, since we last met. We pray that we may be reconciled to our loss, with the realization that our loss is their gain; and sincerely be able to say and feel, Lord not our will but thine be done. The Apostle Paul has written that the day of our death is better than the day of our birth; and a highly esteemed Elder has said that death is but one step toward Heaven.

While we are a small association, we have the assurance that our God is still mindful of us. He has promised that where two or three are gathered together in his name he will be in their midst. (Matthew 18:20). "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." (Matthew 10:29-31) No man has seen God at any time; but he has revealed himself to us through his only begotten Son Jesus Christ, who died on the cross as atonement for our transgressions, and rose again for our justification. Greater love hath no man than to lay down his life for his friends.

He found us, as he did Jacob, in a waste howling wilderness, and led us about and instructed us. He brought us up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set our feet upon a rock, and established our goings, and he hath put a new song in our mouth, even praise unto our God.

As we review our Christian experience, how many times, when we looked within ourselves, have we found nothing but vileness and wickedness that drove us almost to despair; and we were made to pray, "God help me", but how happy was the season when the terrible burden was lifted, and we were filled with that heavenly joy and peace, and everything around us glowed with that radiant mellow light. It seemed at that time that nothing could ever trouble us again. We felt to say with the Psalmist, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. (23 Psalm)

Our season of rejoicing endures only for a season, but it establishes hope. Oh, how precious this hope is, and we would not lose it for all the riches of this world. When He witholds His presence from us, how we long for Him to come again; but no man by searching can find God. It is like the wind that bloweth where it listeth: We hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell from whence it comes or whither it goes; so is every one that is born of the Spirit. He reveals Himself to us as He sees our need. May it be His will to lead and guide us in His ways.

He chose us before the foundation of

the world; He has loved us with an everlasting love, and with loving kindness has He drawn us; and nothing can separate us from His love. The Apostle Paul says in Romans 8:38-39, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Our sincere desire is that we may be kept by His Spirit until that time when we shall awake in His likeness, see Him as He is, and be satisfied.

Elder E. C. Jones, Moderator
Sanford S. Bartlett, Clerk

Covin, Alabama

Mrs. Lucile Young,
Memphis, Tennesee

Dear Sister in Christ;

I have had your letter on file for months, expecting that sometime I would get time to write a few words in reply. However, I find that procrastination never gets things done. I like order in all things but am not able to keep an orderly desk, for it just seems to me that so many things come along that must be done that I know that I will never catch up anymore.

I feel this, and clearly day by day it is manifested how far from being able to do the things that I would. From one standpoint, it seems that if I believed what this world declares to be the truth, that this would make me miserable. For I think I know enough about law (the law of God) to know that excuses and alibis would not exempt one from the penalty of a broken law. Yet, it does not give this world any concern. Perhaps the reason is found in the fact that we know only by revelation. I often preach and write that it comes alone by the revelation of Jesus Christ, and as often wonder if anything has been revealed to me. Doctrine is the foundation of orderly, well disciplined churches, but it becomes just as empty, just as void, just as dry, just as lacking, when it is in the head instead of the heart, as the lack of doctrine among the churches (so called) of the world.

I have been called too much doctrinal in my preaching and writing. But the things that I have been preaching and writing as doctrine, I have in my heaving bosom a hope that they are living nuggets of experience instead of dry doctrinal tidbits. The power, and the judgment, and all things, were given into the hands of Jesus for the salvation of his people. There is not a single scripture that lets us know how many (numerically) will be saved. But whatever the number, be it ever so small or large a part of the Adam family, it was all given for them. It does not mean anything for gainsayers to tell me how few believe as I do; it does not make me uneasy for workmongers to belittle the little churches that I go to, for I am persuaded that numbers, be they small or large, do not constitute a God sanctioned church. It is all to those to whom it is revealed. Just think a moment, dear sister, that all or any part of the human race cannot reveal those things to anyone of themselves. Jesus, and him alone, has authority and power to reveal the truth to a poor sinner (Luke 10:22; John 5:21). Jesus is truth, and if you know the truth, whom to know is eternal life, then it shall make you free. This being made free is more than any mind can comprehend, and I feel pleasantly that is of far more value than this world knows.

Here is doctrine. Those that have had Jesus revealed to them have had a complete filling of sin, or rather, they have had it revealed to them that they were full of sin in their nature. They are sick and tired of the ravages of sin; they have felt the burden of their natural affections and desires, and have longed to be free from sin and its devastating effects. They are made to hate sin, and to desire to live above it, and if it was

in their power they would ever after refrain from it. But not so with others. They measure everything by human reasoning. Their affections have not been changed; their mind is still bearing the image of earthly things; their seeming change in walk and talk has been from one of two, (or both) selfish motives. They are looking for reward or for escape from punishment. Either of these are sufficient to make a seemingly outward difference in the walk and talk. But since the natural mind calls grace unreasonable, when it is presented to the world, they immediately say that if that doctrine was true then I would take my fill of sin, for there is nothing to be gained by obedience and nothing to be lost in disobedience.

God's dear children have a better and a more excellent way than that. They do not know anything about this better and more excellent way until the Lord is pleased to reveal it to them. How does it come? It comes by revelation. Well, says one, I do not feel as you do. I do not even do as you do. I am not forced to serve God. I *could* stay my services to Him and place them at the disposal of Satan. I do not have to go to heaven. I *could* turn my course from the path of righteousness and do all manner of unrighteousness. But that person is in darkness, in spiritual ignorance, in the bonds of iniquity. That that he calls serving The God of Israel is only serving gods many and lords many. These people have ability, yes. I do not think we should question them having ability to serve their god. He certainly cannot serve them. All service in the kingdoms of darkness (I use the plural reservedly) is to the gods from the subjects. He waits on them—they do not wait on him. He has nothing; they have everything. Ah, dear sister, these poor deluged creatures are to be pitied instead of censured. And, in our case, if we have a case at the throne of grace, God is to be praised for our knowing a better and more excellent way, and certainly not us.

There are given signs and fruits and evidences that identify the people of God. These fruits come from the tree that has been made good. Fruit has never been before the tree, nor has it ever been in order to the tree. These trees are all the plantings of the Lord (Isa. 61:3; Matt. 15:13), and we know this. How do we know it? We know it by revelation. We have felt in our soul and heart and mind the digging and rooting out of those hateful plantings in our mind. One of the hateful plants that must be rooted up and out is that of independence. This is not a quality of grace; this is not an identifying mark of a saint. God has planted *dependance* in us and it will never, no never, be removed while we stay in this clay house. We got independence in our fall, but we get dependence in our rise. We fell in Adam, and in Adam we stay until we are raised in Jesus.

But wait a moment. Alright put a scotch there. Why do you preach so much about the helplessness of God's children? Haven't we talked enough about the can't-help-it doctrine? A dear brother, who began among us as humble and God fearing as any I ever knew, says to me that very thing: We have talked too long the can't help it doctrine and we should now be talking the can-help-it doctrine. Oh, I admit, he had it well fixed so as to catch the unsuspecting. He said, We ought now to say that we can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth us. I am not aware of any of the poor and afflicted of the Lord that has ever denied that we do things through Christ; I have yet to meet one that denies the effectiveness of that Strength that cannot lie (1 Sam. 15: 29). It is one thing to know and feel that in him we live and move and have our being, but it is something else to think that we can put him on and off like unto an old garment. We *can* do all things *through* him. But the bringing to desire: the uplifting from nature to state of doing, is all, all, of the Lord. The desire and perception of mind to-

wards the doing is through the Strength of Israel's God.

Some have come to me with the idea that we can do or not do. Now you look here. That is works pure and simple. The old works system is do and live, the newest is live and do. They are both just alike, for they both must depend on the natural man for obedience. The natural man (or I like natural mind better) is not any better able to do good works now than before regeneration. But the best way is grace all the way from birth to death. This way we have the right to sing,

"Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come,
Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

And unless we believe in that salvation that is entirely, whether timely or eternal, of the Lord, that hymn is not ours. And to sing it is to rob it from those that it belongs to.

To be found in grace, to be kept and sustained by grace, to die in grace, to be brought forth from the grave by the grace and power of God, is salvation of the Lord. To be found while wandering away from God and home and lost in the wilderness and desert is good. That is good doctrine. And that phase of doctrine is sound and to the point and is worthy of being preached. But that part is only a third of a loaf. It takes the whole loaf to satisfy the poor. Finding a poor weak, wayworn, traveller and turning him loose to the ravages of the same wilderness and desert is not my idea of mercy. But to find him is good, and travelling with him until the shadows flee away and the dawn of eternal day is better. I hope I was made to love the good—being found— and then made to love the better—being kept—and it has been so wonderful and the taste of the graciousness of our God has been delightful to my spiritual appetite that I am reaching forth towards the best—the heavenly home — that waits for those that it was prepared for before the world had its begenning.

He says, I know my sheep, and I give unto them eternal life and they do follow me. The report may be evil, they may be good; the travel may be in joy and lightness of heart, it may be downhearted and burdened; the way may be made straight and smooth, it may be rough and crooked, but they will follow on. Independence will have been delivered a deathlike blow, and the fruits of dependence will be made manifest. There will be roots of that independence left which will sprout again and again when water runs freely (law), but the mattock will be brought down to the hill of the Lord and digging will take place. What an awful struggle, but the digging deep must go on and on until the time of final deliverance, and the purging of dead works is complete and the hill has been completely digged and the exposure of all our filthiness is brought to pass. We then will be approaching the best, the grandest, the sublime. As we come to the best and final of all the things of redemption we will be losing that which has caused us nothing but sorrow and trouble — the worst of it all. And to be perishing daily, and to be being built up daily, (and it all in the same house), will bring us to say in the end that truly, truly, salvation is of the Lord. And as we come to the end there will be a looking back with deep regret. We will acknowledge that we have not known how to live (godly) and as our hope embraces the having been taught how to live while in the better condition, we will be found begging God to teach us how to die that we might enter into the best.

When at a throne of his rich and abounding grace, make mention of me, the least, if one at all.

In precious hope,
(Elder) William D. Griffin

Dutton, Ontario.

Miss Ada Bartlett
Damariscotta Mills, Maine

Dear Sister Ada,

You have asked me to write about the fifteenth verse of Paul's epistle to Philemon. Before doing so, I would like to tell you some very interesting things about this epistle, which is just one chapter.

The Apostle Paul was greatly blessed in the work which the Lord gave him to do, and had many seals to his ministry, as he travelled from place to place. Timothy was one whom Paul, in another place, calls his son in the faith. You will see that Timothy joins with Paul in sending this letter to Philemon, who also was a man converted under Paul's preaching, and these men were fellow-labourers with Paul in the gospel. Now the chief reason for Paul writing this letter was concerning a man named Onesimus, who many think, and perhaps rightly, was once a slave belonging to Philemon, who had run away and had gone several hundred miles to the city of Rome, where no one, who would return him to his master, would find him. No doubt Philemon was rich, a Gentile, and evidently, from this letter, we can see that he was a very gracious man, who had in his household those who also loved the Lord Jesus Christ, so that Paul makes mention of a church in his house, of which also Apphia and Archippus were also members. You will see that Paul in his epistle to the Colossians makes mention of Archippus as a minister among them and so we conclude that Philemon dwelt in Colosse.

Philemon, by his Christian love and kindness to others, was well-known and loved, so much so, that even in Rome, Paul and his brethren heard of the loving care he manifested to the persecuted saints. Though separated by many miles Paul's heart was encouraged by the good reports that came to him of this dear brother, and Paul ceased not to thank God and to make mention of Philemon always in his prayers. Here we have a sweet example for ages to come, of what practical love and kindness means to those of like precious faith. When seen in action by the saints it fills them with love and joy in the Lord Jesus Christ.

When Paul went to Rome, he did not go as we might go to the city, he went as a prisoner, taken there to appear before and be tried by a wicked Emperor, Nero. In Acts 20th and following chapters to the end, we read about this. He defended his course before the rulers of the people, but they in their rage would have pulled him to pieces, had not the chief captain commanded the soldiers to take him by force and bring him into the castle. The following night, the Lord stood by him, and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul, for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness of me in Rome." Read Acts to the end of chapter 28 from chapter 20, it is most interesting and instructive. You will find that Paul appealed to Caesar, even though he must be taken to Rome as a prisoner, for he knew that the Lord whom he served ruled over kings and princes, for he is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. After he got to Rome, when he wrote letters to the saints, he called himself the prisoner of the Lord Jesus, had not the Lord used the army and navy of the Roman Empire to carry his servant where the Lord had said he should go? So wonderfully did the Lord show his arm and his power, that the wicked rulers of Rome allowed him to rent a house and to live there in the custody of a soldier. After three days in his new home he began his ministry as you will see in Acts 28, and for two whole years he lived in his hired house and received all who came unto him.

Amongst the many who came to his door was one named Onesimus, who could be called a low and sinful man, who had fled from his master to hide in the populous city, but he could not hide from the Lord, and the appointed

time had come that he should hear the truth from the Apostle Paul; and Onesimus, under the mighty power of God, was convinced of what a vile sinner he was, and heard from Paul's lips of a Lord Jesus who can save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him. The God who directed his feet to Paul's house, changed the heart of this once runaway slave, and gave him a heart to love His name and His people, and now Paul was as a father to him, and he was as a child who had come home. No doubt he wanted to stay with Paul, as the mad Gadarene would have stayed at the feet of Jesus. Let us think for a moment of Paul there in Rome, a prisoner who must not only feed himself, but the soldier also who stayed in his house. How glad would have been Onesimus to stay with Paul, to labour with his hands and do all he could to see that Paul's expenses were paid. Surely Paul had need of him, which you can easily see by closely reading the epistle to Philemon, but Onesimus had told Paul his life's story of how he had betrayed his trust and fled from Philemon, so Paul felt that he must send him back to his master. Did not Paul have an abiding confidence in the Lord, who had stood by him in Jerusalem and upon the ship that was later wrecked and who was standing by him, though perhaps unseen to his natural eye? It was therefore his resolve to do the thing that was right, even though he were the loser by it.

Yes, Onesimus was his own son in the faith, who, by his devotion and sweet fellowship, was a great comfort to him; also the Lord had bestowed a gift on Onesimus, he was valuable to him as a fellow servant of God. He was sufficiently educated to write letters for Paul, and above all, he was a living example of what the Grace of God can do for a person, no matter how low and sinful he may be; and to his beloved Paul he was an evidence that he had not laboured in vain, nor spent his strength for nought. God can make society's castaways into valiant men of God whenever He pleases. Onesimus cannot, must not, ignore his former master, nor would Paul allow him to do so. Thus we see him sending one, who could be, and was, a great help and comfort to him, back to Colosse to his old master. He was now an honest, God-fearing man, yet the same person who had been so unprofitable to him before.

Looking at Paul's letter we see that he beseeches Philemon that he receive Onesimus, not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, both in the flesh and in the Lord, telling him, that if he hath wronged him or oweth him ought, Paul would have him put it to his account. He gave him, as it were, a written statement, that if needed, Paul would pay whatever Onesimus owed Philemon. Read and meditate upon the letter as a whole, and notice Paul's love and his humble way of address to his beloved brethren.

Now I will consider verse 15 in particular. I notice in my Bible a reference in the margin. It is to the words of Joseph, "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves that ye sent me hither, for God did send me before you to preserve life." That is a sweet truth that God's children love to hear, Onesimus had done wrong, he had fled from his master, he had perhaps been lazy and good-for-nothing, or had robbed him of his goods. He could not do these things and get away with it, any more than Joseph's brethren could. They had sold their brother into Egypt and had lied, and deceived their father. As they stood before Joseph in Egypt, not knowing it was Joseph, although he knew them, they CONFESSED THEIR GUILT, read Genesis 42:21-22, and in chapter 44:16, Judah said to Joseph, "God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants." Paul therefore says, perhaps, that is, maybe, it was God's way, even though it was wrong for him so to do, for he meant it to your hurt, but God meant it for his and your good. Perhaps he departed for a season,

a few days or months or years are but a season, each season has its place in our lives. This season of trouble to Philemon, in which Onesimus was dishonest, unprofitable and reprobate, was through the mercy of God only to last so long, for a season, when God would "Change the heart, renew the will, and turn the feet to Zion's hill." He departed a thief for a season, he returns a brother beloved, a fellow-heir of the same body, and a partaker of God's promise in Christ Jesus through the Gospel. He also had a good testimonial from our beloved brother Paul the aged, as to the soundness of his conversion and the sincerity of his profession, which was enough to make Philemon receive him with the open arms of love into a fellowship for ever.

Men of this world, both high and low, live and serve themselves or their fellows, for a time or season. Onesimus was one of these, but after conversion, the Lord's people shall not be reckoned among the nations. Those who are born again, shall live eternally as children of God, through Jesus' blood their body, soul and spirit are to be preserved BLAMELESS. When they depart this life, falling asleep in Jesus, their soul and spirit leave their body to be forever with the Lord. Their body, which was bought with Jesus' precious blood, must needs go to the grave as Jesus was laid in the grave, but Jesus' body did not see corruption, but theirs will; and we are assured that the creature shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption. In His sweet fellowship the church in the gospel has a memorial she keeps, just as Israel had a memorial after they left Egypt. They kept the passover, the church keeps the memorial of His death, as He said, "This do in rememberance of Me." I Corinthians 23 to the end. It says in verse 26, "Till He come". He shall come again. As they saw Him ascend into Heaven, so He will come again in His Glory, and every eye shall see Him, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Onesimus and Philemon, Paul and all the saints that have left their bodies here in the earth are for ever with the Lord, their bodies here, their souls and spirits there.

From Adam until now, every one that has died, but Jesus, has seen corruption. David said concerning Jesus, "Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." Paul says that David was laid unto His fathers and saw corruption. Jesus waited in Paradise (which is Heaven) for the third, the appointed day, for his spirit and soul to take up his body from the tomb, and forty days after his resurrection he went, body and soul and spirit into heaven to appear for us in the presence of God. When He shall again bodily come, glorified, that is, the fulness of God shining through the man, we shall be raised incorruptible, seeing Him as He is, and we shall be like Him. Now verse 15 can be taken to imply that just as sin separated Onesimus and Philemon for a season, so death separates us, those who are alive and those who have departed, because the body is dead because of sin. This is only for a season. Your dear Grandma, whom you learned to love so dearly in the spirit, died and is separated from us here for a season. This separation is because of sin, (for if we were not sinners we should not die.) Our bodies must die and be buried to be raised again in his likeness to dwell forever in our eternal home.

In closing might I say a few words about heaven. Some boldly say, that there they will not know one another or who they were on earth. First, to sing the song of the redeemed they must know what they were redeemed from and redeemed to. Identity is fully established in the scripture. Some quote part of a scripture and say Paul says. "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." If they would quote the whole of the verse it would be well, for he states, "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh." Paul would have Philemon to know Onesimus as a

man after the Spirit, not after the flesh. What a change would come over Philemon as he receives him as one in the Lord, for he knows that Jesus died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again. Those, like Paul, who knew Chirst after the flesh, said "Is not this the carpenter's son?" Men, even his disciples, saw him and judged him after the flesh, and he was a puzzle to them all. After his resurrection, then understood they fully what he said in John 6, 63. "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life."

We find much carnal reasoning even amongst brethren, which shows they have not the knowledge of God. We have heard men say, heaven would not be heaven if we knew there what took place here in our lives. Does not God know all things? Does he not see the thousands of homeless, miserable people suffering and dying here in this world? Does it make heaven any the less heaven because He knoweth all things? Jesus in heaven, in his glorified body knows perfectly what is going on here. Who would deny this? Are those who have gone to heaven like Him? If they are not, let us have proof, a "Thus saith the Lord". God knows and hath determined all things whatsoever comes to pass, He hath perfect understanding. Here, we cannot know the reason why. Jesus, who was God, knew and said, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." In the church, while we walk in the Spirit, we are neither male nor female, sex does not belong to the heavenly life, nor will it hereafter. While this is so, it doth not yet appear what we shall be, for the body is dead because of sin, but we have this assurance that if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in us, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. The soul and spirit return to God to Paradise, which is Heaven, and our flesh, like David's, shall rest in hope. That is why the linen clothes were not folded and put in a place by themselves, as the napkin, that was about the head, was in Jesus' tomb. John 20:5, 6, 7. The church, the body of Christ, must be covered with the blessed hope that was David's, while it lies in the earth. Elder Gilbert Beebe quoted from Dr. Watts in the Signs of the Times, July, 1, 1856, almost a century ago:

"This flesh shall sumber in the ground,
Till the last trumpet's joyful sound;
Then burst its bands with sweet surprise,
And in my Saviour's image rise."

Then everything that God has seen fit to be in this world, will seem good in our sight, and right when we are there in the world to come, for we shall be perfect and God will fill all in all. In school we are taught the meaning of "I, we, us, you and it," and we know that such words identify. Identity is essential for the glory of God and glorification of the saints.

George Ruston

THE FIRST MIRACLE OF JESUS

(John 2:1-11)

The first miracle that Jesus perfromed in his earthly ministry is of profound significance from both a doctrinal and an experimental viewpoint: that of turning wine into water at a wedding feast. We are told that on the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Gallilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: and both Jesus was called and his disciples to the marriage. It is a notable fact that the third day is mentioned here, which may have a dispensational bearing, both to the called of Israel as well as to the church of the present day gospel dispensation. The number three is the number of the Trinity, and without the work of all the offices of the Trinity in the person of the God-

head, there could be no life from the dead, for it is the Holy Ghost, the third person of the Trinity, that quickens dead sinners into spiritual life, shows the things of Jesus unto them, gives them spiritual life, light, and understanding, and enables them to hear and interpret the word of God. The coming of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost ushered in the gospel day as the preached word quickened into newness of life those that were assembled in that large upper room at Jerusalem, typical of the gospel dispensation being positionally above the law dispensation.

The number three also denotes life from the dead. It was on the third day in the story of creation that natural life was manifested. It was on the third day that Christ Jesus rose from the dead, having conquered death, hell and the grave. Saul of Tarsus received his sight after being blind three days. Hosea speaking to national Israel said, "Come and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn and he will heal us; After two days will he revive us, and the third day we shall live in his sight." Not only does the church of God live spiritually on the third day, but in regard to the called of national Israel, there may be a prophetic allusion that applies to the restoration of Israel, for the two days (two thousand years) will soon be finished, and the third day dawn upon those regenerated of national Israel to fulfill prophecy.

Under Jewish law an espousal had all the force of the marriage vow as far as fidelity of the parties involved is concerned, for the church of God according to the apostle Paul is espoused as a chaste virgin unto Christ. Marriage is a sacred ordinance instituted by our Lord in Eden and confirmed by the presence of Jesus at Cana's wedding feast. And it signifies the indissoluble union of Christ and the Church. In the mention of the mother of Jesus being present, there may be an adumbration of the whole church of God, which is spoken of as the New Jerusalem, which is above, which is the mother of us all, though we do not wish to overstress the application of any figure in attempting to present an exposition of this remarkable incident. Both Jesus and his disciples were called unto the marriage. None but the called of God can come to the marriage supper of the Lamb, therefore only the called of our Lord can partake of the blessings of this gospel dispensation. They must be chosen, elected, predestinated, sanctified, justified, and glorified.

As the two days ended and the third day of the marriage solemnities began, it was discovered that there was no wine. On the third day it was customary to serve the best wine, but on this occasion a delemma of a serious nature confronted the host and the guests. There were six waterpots of stone, each holding two or three firkins apiece, which had contained water for the purification of the Jews, who were very careful to perform their ablutions on occasions of this nature, but each vessel was empty. Water is necessary for cleansing, and it represents the word of God, as we read elsewhere of "the washing of water by the word". Jesus said, "Except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he can not see the kingdom of God."

The Holy Spirit must take the cleansing word of God and apply it to the heart and conscience of the believer in every experience of saving grace. Sometimes this water comes into the soul as the gentle dew of the Spirit, sometimes by the rain of doctrine, sometimes by the heart feeling frozen by the dead works of the law until there is a longing for the warm south wind of the Spirit to revive, refresh, and manifest growth and fruitfulness. The word must be nigh each saved sinner and in his heart, the word of faith that justifies and enables the regenerated one through the blood of atonement to lay hold upon the precious promises.

The jars were empty, showing that the water had been exhausted. The law

contains the word of God and in its application it brings condemnation and a feeling of emptiness, helplessness spiritually, as creature effort and fig leaf righteousness fail to give life, for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to all that believe. These vessels represent the children of God in their helpless state by nature, yet they were vessels, for Paul says, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. "They must be empty before they can be filled. Six is the number of man by nature, Adam being created the sixth day, a perfect natural man, but without a knowledge of the saving grace of Jesus.

The mother of Jesus realized that her son possessed unusual powers, though his Messiahship had not been revealed unto her, and said unto him. "They have no wine." She hoped he might relieve the difficulty, though she knew not how. Jesus answered, "Woman, what have I to do with thee. Mine hour is not yet come." He addressed her as Woman, not in disrespect, for mothers were often spoken to in that manner, but to show also that Mary was only woman without those divine virtues that Roman Catholics often ascribe to her. She was blessed among women, not above women. There is no Mariolatry forshadowed here.

It is not difficult to ascertain the application of "mine hour is not yet come", as Christ had reference to the hour when he would be delivered into the hands of men, and be crucified, when he would submit to the dictation of men. But here he would receive no orders from his mother or any other person. We note several proofs of this in Scripture, among them being the first verse of the seventeenth chapter of John, as follows, "These words spake Jesus and lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son that thy Son may glorify thee." Jesus was to be subject to the will of man only in the hour of his humiliation.

Jesus ordered the empty stone jars to be filled with water, and they were filled to the brim. This proves that there was no opportunity for deception. When the command was given to draw out and bear to the governor of the feast, it was found that the water had become wine; and the governor of the feast acknowledged that the good wine had been kept until now. The water of the Word of God in figure had become the sparkling, refreshing exhilarating wine of the Gospel. The Word of God in the law with its condemnation and curse of the Old Testament, gives way to the blessings of the gospel in the New Testament. The word of God is often to the believer quite meaningless, or puzzling until it is opened up and applied to the comfort and consolation of the one to whom it has been a mystery. How sweet prophesy is to our understanding as we see it fulfilled! What comfort to see Jesus revealed in the word, as it is sealed in our hearts and manifested experimentally in the work of salvation!

Of course, wine denotes the joy that comes with salvation through the blood of Christ, for Jesus referred to the wine as the cup of the new testament in his blood. The first miracle of Jesus was turning water into wine, symbolically the wine of the gospel. The first miracle a child of God experiences is when the water of the word becomes the wine of salvation through the power of Christ in him the hope of glory. The first miracle of Moses was turning water from the Nile into blood, for the word of the law demanded blood be shed for the remission of sin; but the first miracle of Jesus was changing water into wine. The gospel wine is kept until now, and is enjoyed by every believer who has tasted that the Lord is gracious.

(Elder) Arnold H. Bellows

St. Charles, Kentucky

Dear Editors:

Have neglected to renew my subscrip-

tion, but feel like I just can't do without it, and can hardly wait for it to get here. It has been in my home ever since I can recollect. Father loved it and talked about every piece. He has been gone almost fifty years.

When Father talked, I loved to listen, but did not know what he meant, but now what he said often comes back to me.

Please renew my subscription two years and send me the Welsh Tract Church History.

Mrs. W. B. McGregor

Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Elder Spangler:

It is time to renew my subscription to the Signs, and with my remittance I am sending a wonderful letter received from Elder W. D. Griffin, Covin, Alabama. I would love to share it with the readers of the Signs. My sister and I have enjoyed reading and re-reading it together.

I wish I was full of things to write—it is so pleasant when one's mind is filled with thoughts of the Kingdom of God, but I can no more think or write of those things without that mysterious prompting within (which I truly believe must be the Holy Spirit sent down from God), than I can fly away to the heavens.

Sometimes I find this mysterious joy and ecstacy flooding my heart, soul and mind; what a joy then it is to talk it, write it or sing it. But at this time I am empty and void of feeling, and think surely it would be much better if I did none of these things. But to everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven, and there is no power that can keep these seasons from being just as they are, and when they are; they will accomplish the purpose for which they were ordained,—working that which is well pleasing to God.

Our pastor, Elder H. G. Brown preached a wonderful sermon on our last meeting day. The church here is indeed blessed to have him feed them with such food as he brings. Jesus, and nothing but the shed blood of this Jesus, can purify sinners so that they stand before the Father holy and without blame: Jesus the way, the truth and the life. This is what is given him to preach, and this is what he gives the flock; and it is glad tidings.

We had meeting twice this month, and I am so in hope that it will continue. One meeting a month seems such a long time between meetings; it is such a sweet privilege to meet with each other, believing in a God who is able to save to the uttermost all who come to him; and it is because of His love for them that they come to him, drawn by his loving kindness. "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee", etc. (Psalm 65:4)

The enclosed check will cover my subscription for two years and $1.00 toward sending to another.

Mrs. James E. Young

North Pleasureville, Ky.

Dear Editors:

My subscription to the Signs expired with the March issue, so I wrote to have it discontinued. Since then, I feel like I cannot do without it, so am enclosing check for another year. It has been in our family for more than sixty years. I am close to eighty-two years of age and in bad health.

With best wishes that the Signs will continue to be published many years, and may peace and love abound.

Mrs. Sadie B. Turner

Richlands, N. C.

Dear Editors:

You will find enclosed $5.00 to pay for my subscription to the Signs of the Times. Though I am a little behind in paying, you continued to send it right on; for which I thank you.

I enjoy the good things the Signs sets forth, for, if not deceived, this is the doctrine I believe. I cannot express in words or deeds how much I love the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone. I have just read E. J. L.'s. views on What Shall I Cry, and think he was wonderfully blessed. I think sometimes that I will try to write my experience, but when I think it over, I am afraid.

Hope that I may be remembered in your prayers. May the Lord lead and guide you for his name's sake.

Unworthily,
Mrs. J. L. Andrews

Puente, California.

Eld. D. V. Spangler,

Dear Elder:

I am enclosing my check for two years subscription to the Signs and a copy of the Church History as advertised in the Signs.

I would appreciate information of church meeting places and dates of meetings, if any are near me. I live between Los Angeles and Pomona, California. I have had the privilege of attending meeting only once in the last ten years, so I get a lot out of the Signs.

I enjoy your Editorials and writings very much and would like to hear you if you are ever out in this country.

J. H. Hinson,
15731 E. Hill Street
Puente, California

SPECIAL NOTICE

Please check the expiration date on your paper. If the date is 10-52, it means your subscription expired October, 1952. Since the paper is now mailed without wrapping, we are not sending notice of expiration. Please renew promptly. Thank you.

EDITORIALS

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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EDITORIAL

"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." (Hebrews 10:25-27)

Sister Helen McCormick, of Pennsylvania, has requested my views on the above text of Scripture. There has been some difference of opinion and interpretation of this Scripture, yet I think all Old School Baptists are agreed in one particular: Only the blood of Christ Jesus can redeem from sin.

In considering this, as well as all other portions of the Word, we do well to take under consideration the connecting scriptures. Usually the writer has one main theme in mind in setting forth

any matter, and usually there is an underlying thought which is brought to the surface from time to time. An island is sometimes submerged in the waters, and from time to time it appears in plain view as the waters recede from over it. So it is with God's Word, a precious truth is brought to view many times in various ways, yet it remains the same truth each time we see it; only the beauty appears differently as we are favored to approach it from another direction.

A perusal of the book of Hebrews shows that the underlying thought of the Apostle was to present the difference between the ceremonial service and the Gospel Dispensation: God was speaking to our fathers by the Prophets, and speaking unto us by his Son. The difference is clearly shown between the service of the Priest and High Priest and what their service typified, and the work of our great High Priest, Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven.

By noticing the preceeding verses in the tenth chapter of Hebrews, it appears that the writer makes it clear that the atonement of Christ forever put away all the sins of his people. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." By this offering he has obtained eternal redemption for all of his people. "Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin." No offering that a sinner makes can ever atone for a single sin, for where the blood of Jesus Christ speaks, there is no more offering. If ONE sin of a child of God was unatoned for, that one sin would condemn him. The Apostle leaves no question but that the offering of the body of Jesus was once for all, that through his suffering he became the author of eternal salvation to all that believe; yet, at the same time, he exhorts his brethren to stand fast in the faith, and not be carried about with every wind of doctrine.

His word of exhortation to them was, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." The admonition is not to hold fast to their faith, for a believer cannot do that, — his faith holds him. The faith of God's elect is spoken of as the faith once delivered to the saints; also as abiding faith. Even though it is said to his disciples, "O, ye of little faith", it shows that they still had faith given them.

The profession of the faith of the saints is spoken of as putting on the Lord Jesus Christ: their being united with other saints in their profession before men as the followers of Jesus Christ. In the old Confessions it is spoken of as, "Giving ourselves unto the Lord, and to each other; being baptized in Jesus' name into the fellowship of the church of God." The profession of ones faith is in acknowledging the doctrine and ordinances of the Lord, and agreeing, as far as it lies within us, to observe the order of the Lord's house, and walk in his commandments. Most churches have "rules of decorium" and "articles of faith" which are embraced by one when he is received into membership. The Apostle seemed to have in mind the assembling of ourselves together as one portion of our profession; hence we are admonished not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together.

Now we desire to come to that portion of the Word concerning wilful sinning. It is clearly pointed out that whatever chastening there is in this wilful sinning, this chastisement is for those who have received the knowledge of the truth.

This wilful sinning is not the lust of the flesh or the temptations that come to believers, such as drunkness, fornication and other temptations of the flesh. It is a wilful forsaking the ordinances of the Lord's house, such as failure to assemble with the saints for worship, allowing little things to keep us away

from the service of the house of God: failure to walk in the good way of the Lord in holding fast our profession by attending to the things we have acknowledged from the Lord.

"And that servant, which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more." (Luke 12:47-48)

No doubt many have experienced just what the Apostle describes as that which awaits those who wilfully sin in failing to observe and perform the things enjoined upon them in their profession of faith. There is a fearful looking for of Judgment and fiery indignation from the Lord. This does not destroy the believer, but devours the adversaries. They are humiliated and humbled; often there is a great drought in the soul, and they pass through great chastisement, through which the adversaries are devoured. It is sometimes more grievous to them than dying without mercy under Moses' law; yet the very fact that they do experience these things is evidence that they have received the knowledge of the truth.

"For whom the Lord loveth he chaseneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chasening, God dealeth with you as with sons, for what son is he whom the father chaseneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." (Hebrews 12:6-8)

I think by due consideration of the things set forth in the entire tenth chapter of Hebrews, the following facts will be noted:

First, that the work of Jesus Christ was a complete work in the redemption of his people from every sin that would send them to Hell. He has redeemed them from all sin: not one for whom he died will be lost.

Second, the profession of ones faith before God and man is a very solemn thing. They have agreed, by the help of God, to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called. They profess to be called out of the world, and are united with the saints in observing all things whatsoever Jesus has commanded them. One of these requirements is, not to forsake the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is, showing that there were some who did not assemble together who had made this profession.

Third, that the failure to hold fast their profession by forsaking the assembling of themselves together, or in any other way to observe and walk in the ordinances they have embraced, is wilful sinning; and such an one can look for a certain judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

I remember several years ago visiting the home of a very dear and aged sister. She was feeble and so afflicted that she could not stand upright. On Sunday morning it was raining very, very hard, and I had no idea that she would try to attend the service. She looked out of the window to where my car was, and asked me if my car had a running board. What she wanted to know was whether it was possible for her to get into the car. I inquired if she planned to attend the meeting, and her reply was, "Of course I'm going." Somehow this remains with me, and has been of much strength and encouragement to me to this day.

Oh, that God would continue to lead us in such paths, that the joys of Zion would be our chief joy. To you who sometimes let small matters get in the way of attending the services and doing the things enjoined upon you, such as staying away from the assembly of the saints because someone is visiting in the home, or some other reason, may you be given to lay aside such things and be found walking in the profession you

have made, holding fast the profession of your faith without wavering, for He is faithful that promised.

D. V. S.

"For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."
(Hebrews 7:21)

In the very beginning of the Epistle to the Hebrews, Paul starts out by saying, "God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." Heb. 1:1, 2. To me, this Epistle is the epistle of the Epistles. In it all the doctrines of the gospel as well as the laws are found, illustrated, and to a great extent explained. In the first verse of the 8th chapter Paul says, "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the Sum: we have such a high Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." All that was set forth by the prophets, all that was preached, and all that will be preached by His called ministers, Jesus is the result or sum of it all. The sacrifices, rites and ceremonies under the law, had Christ as their object and end. His manifestation was a full and complete revelation and explanation of all the types, the fulfillment of prophecy, and the end of the law for righteousness to all that believe. The manifestation of Christ in the flesh, His death and resurrection from the dead supplied all that was wanting to reveal the plan of salvation and redemption to man.

In the 15 and 16th verses Paul says, "And it is yet far more evident: for after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life." Similitude or facsimile, means in the likeness or an exact copy. Let us note that Melchisedec was not only a priest, but also king. None of the Levitical priests enjoyed this double honor, and as Jesus is to be after the order of Melchisedec, He is not only priest over the house of God; but King in Zion.

He must also be without father, that is, after the flesh. "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: when as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost." Matthew 1-18. Joseph then, was not the actual father of Jesus, but the reputed father, that is, one having the reputation of father. He must also be without mother. Therefore, as He is man without father, so as God, He is without mother.

He also must be without the beginning of days, nor end of life. In the body or form in which He was to be manifested in the flesh, He stood as an introductory to this incarnation, under the name of Melchisedec, whose father or mother no one knew anything about, nor His beginning or ending. They had no record of ancestors from whom he could have descended.

God spake in divers manners unto the fathers, and this is one of the ways that God used to depict to man the coming of His Son, and His incarnation in the flesh, the antitype of Melchisedec. In the Proverbs He is referred to under the appellation of wisdom, and says, "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." So, we see that Christ did not start to exist at His birth, but was by His Father, "as one brought up with Him: and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him; rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth; and my delights were with the sons of men."

The apostle says, "If therefore per-

fection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change of the law." The priesthood of Melchisedec existed several hundred years before the law was given, or the institution of the Levitical priesthood. The order of the Levitical priesthood being now abolished, to give way to the unchangeable priesthood of Christ, prefigured by Melchisedec. The Levitical law consisted of sacrificial offerings, but He said, "Sacrifice and offerings thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required." Psalms 40-6. These offerings and sacrifices did not wash away sin, purify the heart of man, or make reconciliation to God. Thus God not only changed the law, but also the priesthood, not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchisedec. "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

The children of God have one unto whom they can go for refuge, and upon whom they lay hold, for, "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." Jeremiah 17: 7. Jesus is the only hope of Israel, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. There will never be another priesthood to supersede the priesthood of Christ, for, "The Lord sware and will not repent," that is, He will not change His mind, "thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Kings and kingdoms come and go, empires rise and fall, but the kingdom and priesthood of Christ, which is not of this world, will stand forever.

The Lord spoke to Moses saying, "And thou shalt say unto them, this is the offering made by fire which ye shall offer unto the Lord; two lambs of the first year without spot day by day, for a continual burnt offering." Numbers 28-3. These daily offerings are not necessary, neither are they required, as the one to whom they pointed has satisfied all the law demanded, by offering Himself upon the cross. "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Hebrews 10:4.

Jesus was not appointed priest according to the carnal commandment; and without oath, but with an oath, and according to the power of an endless life. He, therefore, ever liveth to make intercession, and will never become disabled in office, or have to be replaced by reason of death, for He says, "I am He that was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen, and have the keys of hell and of death." Revelation 1:18. As there will never be a change of priesthood, it is evident that there will never be a change in the plan of salvation, for, "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." God interposing an oath, to show the continuance of the priesthood of Christ, the immutability of His counsel, and that there will not be a change in the gospel dispensation.

"Now consider how great this man (Melchisedec) was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils." This Melchisedec stood as an arch type of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the High Priest over the house of God. "And Melchisedec, king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine: and

he was priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth." In my opinion, bringing forth bread and wine, was a type of the institution of the Lord's supper. The blessing of Abraham by Melchisedec, who was a type of Christ, shows that all who are of the same faith of Abraham, are blessed by the antitype, the Lord Jesus Christ. Melchisedec was greater than Abraham, because to him Abraham payed tithes; Levi also, "For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him."

Let us now consider the greatness of the antitype, the Lord Jesus. First Paul says, "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my son this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, and let all the angels of God worship him." He is not a typical priest, but the real priest, which all the others prefigured, and to whom all the rites and ceremonies pointed. He is greater than Moses, for this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honor than the house." Hebrews 3:3. No other man was ever made to suffer for the sins of all people. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." Hebrews 2:9. This man hath said:

"I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in rightousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." And again, "For it is written, as I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God."

Well could the apostle say, "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

H. O. N.

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349 Elmira Place, N. E.
Atlanta, Georgia

Dear Elder Spangler:

Enclosed is a Postal Money Order for six dollars to be applied as follows: To renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times for two years, and a copy of Welsh Tract History.

I would like to obtain a copy of the Old Paths, written by Eld. Sylvester Hassell, and published in 1889 or 1890. If you know of any one who has a copy and will part with it, I will appreciate it if you will give me his name and address.

I am still enjoying the good preaching that the Lord blessed you to do at our two last associations, and I hope that you can be with us at our next association. We are always glad to have you come down and be with us whether it is at an association or any other meetting.

Yours in hope,
Milton M. Absher

Riffe, Washington

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am enclosing $3.00 to pay for the dear old Signs another year.

My dear husband, Elder I. F. Coleman, passed away March 12, 1953, after an illness of six and one-half months;

he suffered much. An obituary is planned later.

May the dear Lord continue his blessings with the Editors of our precious old paper. I hope I never miss a copy the few days I have left here in this world of time. I am enclosing a new subscription and would appreciate a copy of the Welsh Tract History.

Humbly, your sister in hope,
Mrs. Rosa Coleman

O'Donnell, Texas

Dear Elder Spangler:

I am sending a check for the Signs of the Times for another year. I don't see how I could go on without the Signs, for they mean so much to me. I read and reread them and then hand them to others who love the truth the Signs sets forth. I hope I can continue receiv-it as long as I live, for no one knows the comfort I get from reading the good articles it contains. May the Lord bless you and the others to continue writing and proclaming this doctrine of God our Saviour.

May the Lord bless the readers to read as well as the writers to write, for we all need the blessing to read or write the unsearchable riches of the Lord and Saviour. It is by him and through him that we live, move and have our being. Satan has such a wonderful pleasure in me that he leads and has charge of me much of the time, to the extent that I am not able to utter one word of praise to God's grand and glorious name. Please excuse my manner of expression, but I hope these few thoughts are from deep down in the heart of this poor unworthy sinner, saved by the grace of God, if saved at all.

Your sister in hope of eternal glory,
Mrs. F. M. Rushing

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, September 12, 13 and 14, 1952, sendeth greetings to the associations and meetings with whom we correspond.

Dear Brethern:

In these perilous times it is through the kind providence of our Heavenly Father that we have been able to meet again in the Maine Association. Your correspondence was gladly received. We hope it may continue through the years to come.

Elder E. C. Jones was our only minister. He was blessed to preach six wonderful sermons during the three days meeting, giving all praise, honor and glory to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; who we feel was in our midst.

The meeting was well attended by the Maine brethern and friends. Peace and harmony prevailed.

The next meeting of the Maine Association will be Friday, Saturday and Sunday before the second Monday in September, 1953, the Lord willing, when we hope to meet again. The place of meeting will be given by notice in the Signs of the Times.

Elder E. C. Jones, Moderator
Sanford S. Bartlett, Clerk

Tuscon, Arizona

Dear Editors:

Enclosed please find $3.00 for which please extend my subscription another year for the Signs of the Times.

I have been taking the dear old Signs for many years, and how I do enjoy reading the the good letters written by the dear brothers and sisters. I certainly endorse and am well pleased with the contents. The Editors are contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, as the Original Prospectus did. Hope you God's love and courage to keep this up till the end of time. If I know anything, I love the Old Baptist doctrine.

Yours unworthy sister in Christ,
Mrs. B. Coopwood

Opp, Alabama

Dear Editors:

I want to subscribe for the Signs of the Times, and am enclosing money order for a years subscription. Would like to have a copy of the Welsh Tract Church History.

Brother and Sister C. W. Porterfield, of Ft. Deposit, Alabama, takes the Signs and have been passing them on to us. My wife and I both have enjoyed reading them. We think it is a good paper.

Yours in bonds of love,
(Elder) H. G. Morgan

Oxnard, California

Eld. D. V. Spangler,
Dear Brother in Christ:

I have just received your History of Welsh Tract Baptist Church.

My grandfather's people came over from Wales about 1700 or 1704 for religious freedom. They were Baptist in Wales. My grandfather was named Abishai Curl, and was born in 1809, in Virginia. I think his father was named William, but am not sure. My grandfather's mother was a quarterine Indian descendant of Pocahontas, and was born in Virginia. He married Ann Maria Watson, whose father came to America for religious freedom about 1808. (I noticed several Watsons in your Church History) In England, where they came from, my grandmother's father was Lord John Watson.

I am glad I had the privilege of reading the History, but didn't find the name Curl. My father (A. J. Caughron) used to take the Signs of the Times, and his father took it before he was born. They have told me I am a Primitive Baptist for at least five generations on both sides of the house.

Thanks for listening, and God bless you every one; may he spare you many years to carry on.

Christian love,
Mamie Edwards

Portales, N. Mexico

Dear Brother Spangler:

Just received the dear old Signs and have read it through. How I love to read these wonderful letters. My father, Elder I. R. Greathouse preached for over sixty years, and wrote many fine articles for the Signs. I have a good many of his articles written from 1915 to 1935, when he passed away. I often get some of them out and read them.

I see my subscription expires next month, so am enclosing my check for a two year extension. Nothing does my soul so much good as to read the wonderful letters of the dear old Signs of the Times. May God bless the Signs to continue many years to come.

Your brother in hope, I trust
C. H. Greathouse

Newport, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

The time is past for sending in my remittance for the dear old Signs, but you will find enclosed three dollars for another year. I like to read its contents very much, and, if not hindered too much, I seldom lay it aside until I read it through. It does not take so long to read them through, but the contents of each one refreshes my hope, renews my strength and makes me feel that I am sitting in heavenly places with them while I read; and they give me thoughts on the Scriptures and I meditate on them for a long time afterwards.

Such good reading refreshes my soul, just as the little raindrops refreshes a withered flower, for I feel like one so much; but when my papers come, I am refreshed at once, for I know I have some good news from a far country. They do not seem like a foreign language, for deep in my heart they tell and express my trouble so briefly till I shed tears of joy, sometimes feeling and knowing that I am not the only pilgrim traveling this rugged highway alone. I

hope, as all poor sinners do who feel to be made alive in Christ, that the rugged way is the straight and narrow way that leads to life eternal. So it is my plea to Him who saves us by His grace that I might walk in the light and counsel of His will for His name's sake.

May God in his infinite marcy guide us one and all, and give strength and courage to the editors to carry on the duties they have obligated to do, since the Lord saw fit to take the former able editor from us. He was an able and gifted man and his writings were enjoyed by many. Submitted in love.

Mrs. W. H. Cannon
A little sister,

CHANGE OF MEETING TIME

The time for holding the Yearly Meeting of Rewastico Church, of the Salisbury Association in Maryland, is changed from the First Sunday in August to the Second Sunday in August.

(Elder) H. M. Bennett, Pastor

MEMORIAL

WHEREAS, our assembling together this year (1952) has been saddened by the loss of three of our oldest members, the Maine Old School Baptist Association wishes to place on record in the Signs of the Times an expression,

First, of our respect and love for these faithful members who for so many years have enjoyed with us the preaching and communion of the saints at these meetings, and

Second, of our sympathy to the relatives and the churches sustaining these losses.

From the Bodoinham Church has been called home Sister Rachel Beal Potter, who was firm in her belief in the doctrine preached by her father; and whose chief delight after the death of her husband was the reading of the Signs and the Bible, and corresponding with brethren, many of whom she had never met.

From the Whitefield Church, Sister Emmie Bartlett, whom to know was to love; and whose life, spent in helping others, shone with a sweetness unselfish and Christ-like.

From the Gardiner Church, Brother Walter Weeks, whose guiding light was the welfare of Zion; and whose humility before his God was beautifully manifested in his sincere testimony and his gracious walk.

Published by vote of the Maine Association.

(Elder) E. C. Jones, Moderator
Sanford S. Bartlett, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS it has pleased Almighty God, who rules all things and does His will, to remove from our midst by death our beloved Brother and Deacon G. S. Weider. He passed away at his home on December 5, 1952. The funeral services were conducted from his home by Elders W. R. Dodd and Raymond S. Payne.

Brother Weider was married twice; his first wife died in June, 1902, at Dixon, Tennessee. He united with the church after her death. Then he married the second time to Lillie Maughmer, and then moved to Virginia in 1904. He helped to organize the Richmond Church on June 25, 1910.

He was a faithful member and served as deacon for a number of years, therefore BE IT RESOLVED that we bow in humble submission to our God, who is too wise to err and to good to be unkind; and that a copy of this resolution be put in our church records, a copy given to Sister Weider, and a copy be sent to the Old Faith Contender and the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference the fourth Saturday night in March, 1953.

J. L. Butcher
Elder R. S. Payne
Nettie Farnsworth
Committee

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, our Heavenly Father has been pleased to remove from the scenes of this life our dearly beloved brother, Deacon Jefferson C. Mellott, and

WHEREAS, the passing of our brother gives us much sadness and a keen feeling of our loss because he was so faithful in his relationship with the brethren and friends; and because he was a firm believer in the doctrine of God our Saviour, and loved to talk about and discuss these precious things, and

WHEREAS, Brother Mellott in his daily life was an example in word and deed unto all of us, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, First, that we give thanks to our God that he was pleased to give unto our little band of believers this humble and faithful deacon and brother, and

Second, that we extend to our dear Sister Mellott our deepest sympathy, and pray that the father will be pleased to give her grace to sustain her in her great loss, and

Third, that we spread this Resolution of Respect on our minute book, and give a copy to Sister Mellott, and send a copy to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by the unanimous order of the church in conference November 29, 1952.

Elder John D. Wood, Moderator
Deacon Orien Mellott, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our dearly beloved brother in Christ, Edward H. Lanier, who was born March 19, 1877 and passed away March 2, 1953, making his stay on earth almost seventy-six years. He leaves his wife, Mrs. Annie Lanier, a son, E. H. Lanier, Jr., a daughter, Mrs. Russell Brammer, all of Memphis, Tennessee; two sisters, Mrs. Maggie Powell, Murray City, Tennessee, and Mrs. Pearl Woods, Crocket Mills, Tennessee. He is greatly missed by his church which he served as a deacon, clerk and song leader, for he was faithful in attending his meetings and was an active member until his death.

His funeral was conducted at National Funeral Home, Memphis, Tennessee, by his pastor, Elder H. G. Brown, who used for a text, "And we know all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28. And also at the Zion Methodist Church, near Friendship, Tennessee, using as a text, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." 2 Cor. 5:1.

We, the Primitive Baptist Church, greatly feel our loss, but our loss is his eternal gain; and we extend our sympathy to his family who so greatly miss him. May they be given grace sufficient to reconcile them to God's will, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that we bow in humble submission to Him who worketh all things after the council of His will, and is too good to do wrong and too wise to make a mistake, and further,

BE IT RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be placed in our minutes, a copy given to the family and a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference, Sunday, March 8, 1953.

Elder H. G. Brown, Moderator
L. C. Campbell, Clerk

OBITUARY

DEACON C. F. LANDERS

Deacon C. F. Landers was born July 2, 1869, in Granbury, Hood County, Texas, and died December 27, 1952. Age eighty-three years, five months and twenty-five days. He was united in marriage to Nannie E. Grant, April 27, 1893; to this union eight children were born. Two girls died in infancy, and his wife preceeded him in death, he leaves the following children to mourn his passing: C. R. Landers, Coleman, Texas; A. W. Landers, Lawn, Texas; Mrs. Edna Borden, Portalis, New Mexico; Mrs. C. B. Harrell, Wichita Falls, Texas; Mrs. J. C. Baker, Dallas, Texas; Mrs. Truet Hipshis, Coleman, Texas. And two sisters: Mrs. J. C. Rash, Manahans, Texas; Mrs. R. Yates, Yuma Arizona. And two brothers of Pasedena, California; together with twenty-three grandchildren, and twenty-two great grandchildren, nephews and nieces, and a host of friends.

He and his wife joined the Predestinarian Baptist Church in 1910, near Robert Lee, Texas, and were baptized by the late Elder L. E. Skinner, of Fletcher, Oklahoma.

The subject of this sketch will be long remembered by all that knew him. His walking to and fro before the neighbors and friends of his community was a pattern in which all would do well to follow; which few have equalled and none have ever surpassed. Brother Landers was strict in all his dealings with his fellowmen; his word having never been called in question, having lived all his life in keeping with the laws of his country, a loyal citizen without dispute; a Christian gentleman above reproach. He was ordained deacon of his home church, and served the church in that capacity all the rest of his life. His going in and out before his brethren was calm, gentle and sedate. He made the duties of his office in the church his daily practice; and even so the same rule of government was observed in his home.

Brother Landers was a dearly beloved and faithful husband, a gentle father of six living children to praise and adore his beloved name. He was a strong believer in the doctrine of God his Saviour: Salvation by Grace, election, the resurrection of the just and unjust, the absolute predestination of all things. He loved the Signs of the Times and the doctrine it has ever contended for, having been a subscriber many years.

After the services were over, his body was taken to its place of rest, there to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour to gather his elect unto himself, saying to the North give up and to the South keep not back, and present them to the Father pure, holy and without blame. A sturdy oak that has battled the tempest so long has now fallen as a great man in Israel, not to be soon forgotten, as all the brethren of his acquaintence here and elsewhere looked up to him for advice and counsel.

The unworthy writer, together with Elder C. Y. Osteen, conducted the services.

(Elder) W. A. Little

LUCINDA R. ROUNDS

On May 15, 1952, it pleased the God of love to remove from this life our beloved and highly esteemed sister, Lucinda R. Rounds (nee Meredith), familiarly known as Lucy. Her death occurred in the Palmer Home for the Aged in Dover, Delaware. She had suffered a

stroke from which she lingered only a few days. She was born February 16, 1864, making her stay on earth 88 years. She leaves two sisters, Sarah M. Benson, Wilmington, Delaware, and Martha Wilson, Houston, Delaware, together with several nieces and nephews to mourn her loss.

She was the daughter of Jacob B. and Catherine Frazier Meredith, born and reared near Petersburg, Del., where she attended meetings at Cow Marsh Primitive Baptist Church. She began teaching school at seventeen, near her home. A few years later she taught near Welsh Tract Church, and attended services there. She was baptized by Elder Joseph Staton on the first Saturday in March, 1888, in the fellowship of Welsh Tract Church, where she remained a faithful and devoted member until death.

Here she met Arthur W. Rounds, also a member of this Church, and they were married February 17, 1897, starting their housekeeping on the Parsonage farm to be near their church. About 15 months later, she was stricken with Typhoid Fever and complications developed which made her an invalid for 14 years. During this time, Sister Lucy had many soul-searching experiences that made her the tender, loving, and sweet person she was. By surgery, her condition was greatly improved, and she was again able to enjoy life's blessings in home and Church.

"A Shut-In Life" was published in the March 15, 1914 issue of the Signs of the Times, in which she wrote concerning what it meant to her to be a Christian. During her invalidism, they moved first to Camden, Delaware, then to Milford, Delaware, where Brother Arthur followed his vocation as trucker and chicken raiser, in which he was expert. When his health failed, they sold their home and, in October 1944, came to live with his niece, Mrs. Louise S. Johnson, in Newark, Delaware. On July 23, 1945 is pleased God to call Brother Arthur home from his labors, wherein he had proven himself a workman that needed not be ashamed. A true and devoted husband, a tried and faithful member and Deacon of the Welsh Tract Church, he entered his rest to ever be with his Lord he loved and served so devotedly.

After his death, which she bore with bravery and Christian fortitude, Sister Lucy applied for entrance in the Palmer Home, where she spent her last days in full acceptance and reconciliation to God's will concerning her station and place in life. Funeral service was held in the Welsh Tract meeting house, May 19, 1952. The pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, was unable to attend and the service was conducted by this writer, a brother-in-law. The scripture used was the 26th Ch. Matthew, 6-13 verses inclusive. Interment was in the adjoining cemetery, beside her late husband.

(Elder) C. E. Benson

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WILLIAM JOSHUA CHAMBERS

In memory of our beloved brother William Joshua Chambers, who was born August 2, 1869, in Leon County, Texas, and departed this life February 19,1953; making his stay on earth eighty-three years, six months and seventeen days.

He was married to Miss Annie Collier, November 26, 1889, and to this union were born nine children. His wife and four children preceded him in death, leaving the following sorrowing children: C. L. Chambers, Weslaco, Texas; A. A. Chambers, Rogers, New Mexico; Mrs. Clara Hansford, Gatesville, Texas and Mrs. Alice Roberts, Sundown, Texas. Also eighteen grandchildren and twenty great grandchildren, one brother, T. B. Chambers and two sisters, Mrs. Lula Stubbs and Miss Maggie Chambers, of Comanche, Texas.

Brother Chambers received a hope in Christ in 1892, and united with the Primitive Baptist Church in Comanche County, Texas, in the year 1902; his dear companion joining soon afterwards. His membership at the time of his death was with Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas.

He was a wonderful man—to know him was to love him. He was faithful to his church and was well read in the Scriptures, and the writer has had many enjoyable talks with him, for he was wonderful company and did enjoy talking on the scriptures. He told me a few days before his passing that he felt his way was clear; and he asked me to conduct his funeral, which I did to the best of my ability. I tried to speak comfortingly to his dear ones. We deeply feel his loss, but we feel it is his eternal gain. May his sorrowing children weep not as those without hope, but rejoice that he is out of his sufferings and at rest from all his labors.

We used as a text a portion of the fourteenth chapter of Job: "Man that is born of women is of few days and full of trouble; he cometh forth in the morning, and in the evening is cut down." And, "If a man die shall he live again?" And, "Yea all my appointed time will I wait till my change come."

Written in sorrow by one who loved him, and at the request of his children, who desire that this be printed in the Signs of the Times.

(Elder) J. B. Reid,
San Juan, Texas.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 121 DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1953 NO. 7

Following is a copy of a letter written by Brother Casper G. Fetter, Southampton, Pa. to his grand-niece, aged twelve, who had given evidence that she had been born of the Spirit. I obtained permission from Brother Fetter to publish it in the Signs:—

E. J. L.

Southampton, Pa., Mar. 1952

Dear Joan:—

I have been thinking today about a little girl who lived many years ago in the time of the prophets of old of whom the bible speaks. She was an Israelite-ish maiden in the province of Samaria who had suffered much in mind; and no doubt many a night she had lain sobbing upon her bed, being troubled about her soul. And while she was passing through this trouble of mind, a great and wonderful prophet named Elisha passed by where she was, and he beheld her, and saw she was in trouble and was crying; and he spoke to her in such glorious sweet words and with such power that her trouble of soul left her; and she became very happy and could not speak highly enough of this prophet. In a short time after this the Syrians invaded the part of the country where she lived, and the soldiers carried her away captive as a slave into the home of a man whose name was Naaman, who was a captain of the soldiers of the king of Syria. He was a good and honorable man, and well thought of by the king, but he was a leper, and was much troubled about his condition (like the little maid was and many others) and there seemed to be no cure for his disease, for they had sought every where for a cure but found none.

The little Israelite maiden had been placed in the home of Naanan and she waited on Naaman's wife. After she had heard of Naaman's trouble and of all they had done in a way to find a cure for her master's leprosy, she said to her mistress one day, "Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria; for he would recover him of his leprosy." She knew that the prophet had taken away the trouble of her soul, and felt he could heal her master of his leprosy. It was told to Naaman about the little maiden and what she had said and also to the king of Syria; and he said, "Go to the land of Israel to this maiden's people; and I will send a letter to the King of Israel also."

And so Naaman departed and took silver and gold and changes of raiment, and he brought the letter to the king of Israel which said:— "Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent Naaman my servant to thee that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy. When Naaman arrived at the house of Elisha, he, being a very prominent man and having a letter from the king, thought that the prophet would come out of his house and make a big fuss over him and heal him. But no, this is not the way the Lord works his miracles; He comes to us in a quiet way. When He speaks it is in a still small voice, but with power to heal. So Elisha the man of God just sent a messenger out to him, who said, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee and thou shall be clean." But poor Naaman was greatly disappointed and went away, and said, "Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand on the place, and

recover the leprosy." He also said, "Are not the rivers in Damascus, my own country, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them, and be clean?" So he went away in a rage. But his servants spoke to him and said, "If the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? How much rather then, when he saith to thee; Wash and be clean." Then Naaman wend down and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, as Elisha had told him to do, and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

We should always try to follow the leadings of the spirit in all we do, believing that the Lord's way is best and for our good and his glory, as Naaman found out. We have to be kept low and humble, and as a little child at the feet of Jesus, praying always to be led and kept in the straight and narrow way that leads to Jesus. "Because straight is the gate and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life: and few there be that find it." (Matt. 7:14) Also in John 14:6 we find it recorded, "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

After Naaman had been healed he returned to Elisha and said, "Behold now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel: now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant." But Elisha said, "As the Lord liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none." The grace and mercy of God cannot be bought with money. The grace of God is free, and it is often bestowed upon his children on their bended knees. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; Yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price." When the King of righteousness says come, his subjects come, for in his command there is power; and when He calls, they obey. But to whom did He say, come ye? It was only to those who thirst—no one else; and to those who are thirsty He giveth to drink of the water of eternal life. We cannot buy this eternal life or secure it by anything we can do. It is given freely and without price to his dear chosen children, those who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. After Naaman learned of the way of the Lord as he never knew it before, he asked the man of God, the prophet Elisha, to forgive him of all he had done wrong. Elisha said unto him, "Go in peace."

May we all hear that still small voice speak to us when we are troubled on account of our sins, the weakness of the flesh, "Go in peace."

With love,
Poppy,
(Casper G. Fetter)

Covin, Alabama,
December 5, 1952

Mrs. Gussie Hardy,
Plad, Missouri.

Dear Sister in Christ;

The apostle says, But to do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased (Heb. 13:16). How pleasant indeed is the blessed privilege of talking and writing to those of like precious faith about the things of the city of our God. True, indeed is the fact that saints have no continuing city here, but through the grace given us, we seek one whose maker and builder is God. (Heb. 11:10). To the worldling it might cause sadness of heart to think that we do not have a city here, but see and embrace the promise of a covenant keeping God that he will come again to gather home his redeemed in every nook and corner of the globe.

Many people want perfection now; And God's children have it now in Jesus Christ, but none in ourselves. The precious truth that God has a people who are seeking him, is, within itself, a wonderful source of comfort and satisfaction. We (I hope I am one) are not seeking aimlessly and without an objective. No, no, not that, but we seek Jesus, we seek the company of his hum-

ble train of followers, we seek the city of rest and bliss and joy evermore. It is no wonder that David said "happy is that people, that is in such a case, yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord." The dear followers of the Lamb have an earnest given them of the inheritance. (Eph. 1:14). This 'earnest' is something in keeping with what was given the poor man that fell among thieves. At the proper time the Samaritan carried him to the inn and gave two pence. The two pence was an earnest of his return. God cannot deny his own work—he cannot fail—and his promise of returning, together with what he was to do when he got there, was as good, and just like unto what his first coming and his first work was.

This 'earnest' is like unto the taste of the good word of life (Heb. 6:4; I Pet. 2:3). There has to be life to taste a thing, and if the taste is in harmony with that form of life that is present, there will be a yearning, a seeking, for more and more. They desire deliverance from that bread that satisfies not, and from those that peddle the unstable stuff. David says, Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a hand of falsehood. (Psa. 144:11). Read it all. What a wonderful petition. What a prayer to ascend to God the Father's ears. What music it is to the Creator to hear the feeble cries of the poor lost and ruined children as they cry to him for help, succor, and guidance.

This taste, or this earnest, causes prayer to spring up in the soul as living waters in the bowels of the earth causes streams to break out in the deserts. What a blessing it is to be a beggar at the throne of grace. What a bonanza of wealth is **now** in store for the weak, the tempted, the tossed. Oh, Lord, the beggar cries, deliver me from the hands of strange children, from those who speak vain things, that bear falsehoods. The solid comforts of the gospel, the sweet and lingering taste of that Bread well bruised, of that wine well refined, brings us nearer, ever nearer to the cross; brings us with all our doubts and bitter complaints to a throne of grace and there we are blessed to cast all our cares on Jesus who cares for us. These are the people who pray; these are the ones that come crying grace, grace unto this stone; this is the nation that does not have any confidence in the flesh, but whose confidence is in God, the living God.

The deliverance of God's humble train of followers from these vain and lying children, produces a family well grounded in the principles of grace. The sons are plants that are grown up in their youth. No wonder that the Blessed Redeemer was annointed to preach to the poor, brokenhearted, mourning characters and to do all for them that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord (Isa. 61:1, 3; Luke 4:18). This deliverance from sinking sands, miry floods, broken cisterns (lies, vain things) brings the sons of God to a growth in grace, strong, well established plants. This deliverance is fully embraced in Soloman's strong command, Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, etc. (Eccl. 12:1). But the daughters are embraced in this deliverance that is of God. When the deliverance of the Lord is made manifest the sons and daughters will all be at their post. Not at the post to win something else. No, God forbid. But at the post because the deliverance, the blessing, has put them at the post. To be corner stones is indeed a worthy and coveted place in the kingdom or building that is of God. It is all of grace, to be thus placed in the kingdom. I hear our people say that the sisters are to be, like little children used to be, seen and not heard. Well, be that as it may, the deliverance that is of God, places them in the building as corner stones polished like unto a palace. This deliverance gives a full garner, affording to these sons and daughters all manner of stores.

It makes sheep to bring forth in the streets thousands and ten thousands.

What about this. I am making a spiritual application of David's prayer. If allowable I cannot switch here and say that this part is applicable only to our natural flocks. I must hold to the pattern; I must continue to speak of the deliverance and the effects that it has in the kingdom of our Lord. First, let me say that the prophet Jeremiah, speaking as God, declares, Behold I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them. Afterwards will I send for many hunters and they shall hunt them. I want to make this clear that the Lord God did not say that I will send for fishers and hunters and that they will fish and hunt for them. But notice, "they shall fish and hunt them". (Jere. 16:16).

When someone promises us a thing we are always delighted in the fulfilment of that promise. God promised that thing to Israel. It was not to fish fish; it was not to hunt grizzly bears. It was to fish and hunt his people out from their scattered abodes. Now the time came when that was to be. Every promise has a time of fulfilment. This is not an exception. Peter and Andrew were fishing for fish. Put a scotch right there. They were at it for food and for a livelihood. I think I have every scriptural right to say that those fish were like unto ours today, and that their working at it was not any different than our preachers who were farming or fishing or in the mercantile business. But the Lord calls them, and this is in direct fulfilment of the prophetic language, both as to the calling and the work they were called to. They were to be fishers of men, but, very markedly, not for men.

Now I believe that there is a begetting in the gospel. I many not be using the right words to convey my intention but I believe that you will read charitably my poor thoughts. Paul declares, "for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel (1 Cor. 4:15). " There is the promise to send; there is the promise to call to work; there is the work. These sons of Paul will fill the deliverance that David so wonderfully speaks about. Furthermore I have a hope that I have a commission from this same Jesus to hunt and fish the little children of God. Thus this salvation that flows out of David's deliverer is full and complete.

Not only is there fullness but there is strength to labor. It is not gotten by exercise, nor by cultivation, but these strong oxen get their strength to labor from their owner. Where this Strength is, there will not be any breaking in nor out, nor will there be any complaining in the streets for the Lord God is the mighty deliverer. Yes, dear sister, happy is that people that is in such a case. What kind of a case? Well, the kind of case like David's case, like your case, like (I hope) my case, like unto every follower of the Lamb's case. An outside case. A case that is hopeless. A case that remedy after remedy has been tried, and as often tried as often failed. A case where men no longer cared, where they passed by in derision, but thanks be unto his dear name, a case that he knew and determined the full extent of the ravages of the disease before it came, having made himself the surety of the covenant, and that he took the poor sinner under his care, and gave him drink and meat and bread. Furthermore, he promised to fully take care in the end.

And it will not be long, dear sister, for the Bride is now passing through her dressing room, and the morning of his coming is approaching. I do not know when, I do not propose to delve into the when, but I do propose, through grace, to go on speaking and talking of his eternal goodness and mercy to poor sinners, assuring every halting and doubting child that he surely will return again.

It is about mail time. I have run away in my thoughts. Lois joins me in love and sweet fellowship.

Write when you have time and a mind.

In precious hope,

William D. Griffin

EXPERIENCE

Williamstown, Kansas
December 18, 1952

Mr. J. B. Dunagan,
Lawrenceville, Georgia

My dear brother in hope of eternal life which God that cannot lie promised before the world began:

You asked me in one of your recent letters to write a sketch of my travels and experience. I fear that I have not much to tell that would be interesting to you, yet relying on your forbearance, I have undertaken to jot down a few things and submit them to your judgment as to whether or not my experience is a real Christian experience.

Will you pardon me if I mention one incident that happened just a short time before I was born. Of course I can only relate this incident as it has been related to me. It is said that shortly before I was born, a turtle dove flew into the house and lit upon my mother's shoulder. It showed no sign of fear; and after resting there a few moments it flew out of the house and flew straight to the field where my father was at work, lit on the ground and fluttered near his feet. Whether this was an omen or not, may be decided in the minds of any who may read this. But whether it was a token or not, shortly after that my mother gave birth to twins and her own life went out. Hence I have never known a mother's love. My twin brother died before he was a year old.

For brevities sake, I will not dwell long on the early years of my life. Suffice it to say that my father and his family of ten children, soon after the death of my mother, left the State of Indiana and emigrated to the State of Kansas and settled on a farm in Leavenworth County. He departed this life on the 20th day of May, 1879; hence I was left an orphan at an early age.

I will also mention that I was impressed early in life concerning the state of the soul after death. But I think I was about fifteen or sixteen years of age when I first felt the contamination of sin in my body. Lightly at first; so light indeed that most of the time I was able to pass along under its baneful influence without suffering any great remorse. I had always tried to conduct myself morally and uprightly; I had never indulged in profanity; I never attended a dance and I never gambled. Yet with this feeling of fancied security, there was a something that came over me, a something that I could not explain, a feeling of depression that I could not attribute to any visible cause. I would sometimes ask myself, What can be the matter? I kept this matter entirely to myself, and gave it not much thought except when this same feeling of depression would return; which it did at intervals with increased intensity,—that feeling I could not explain and did not try. I only knew that I was feeling wery ill at ease at times, and for what reason I could not tell.

I had now begun the sphere of young manhood. My tendencies were not unlike that of other young men: I developed the desire for young company. I betook me frequently to places of amusement, and I became a regular attendant at Sunday School and what may be known as various religious exercises. These places I attended more for pastime than for anything else, but I was proud of the fact that I came to be recognized as a scholar in the Sunday School class. The Methodists were the dominating sect in that community, and frequently the neighborhood was stirred with protracted meetings and great efforts were put forth by old and young of both sexes, by preachers and laymen to convert all and turn them to the Lord. I seldom was absent from any of these meetings, and I saw many of my associates go forward to what was called the mourner's bench. These performances were rendered in various lingoes, such as getting religion, joining the church and giving their heart to God. I saw many go forward in this way whose character and deportment was everything but commendable, and whose ways were not materially changed after they had made a profession of re-

ligion. This practice gave me much concern. I was not wholly prepared to condemn the practice, but I was far from being convinced that it was worthy of commendation or of imitation. Since that time, however, I have been given much serious reflection on the matter, and have long since been convinced that such is not the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ. One poet has expressed it like this:

"Vain is all our best devotion
When on false foundations built.
True religion's more than notion;
Something must be known and felt."

A good resolution is commendable, but if it emanates from a carnal source, it is like the waters of a spring: It can never rise above its fountain head, and it never can effect anything in the matter of salvation.

In the year 1888 or 1889, I went to live with my sister Mary, who had purchased a small place and moved into our neighborhood. I did her chores and attended district school in the Winter. Our teacher was a very capable lady, and I seemed to make very good progress in my studies. She was a Methodist in her profession of religion, and she was also a splendid musician. Twice a day she would devote a period to singing and playing on the instrument. I greatly enjoyed this practice for a while. Her songs were practically all Methodist hymns, and the music was well fitted to the words. It was enough to charm the mind of any lover of music; but by and by my mind began to search the sentiment of these songs, and at the same time I had also acquired a deep desire to know the Scriptures and the truth taught therein. I compared the sentiment of those songs to the teaching of the Holy Scriptures and found they were not in harmony. I will append here one or two excerpts from those songs, as I remember them: "There's a stranger at the door, let him in. He has been there oft before, let him in; Let him in, he is your friend. He your soul will sure defend; he will save you to the end, let him in. He is knocking at your heart, Let him in. If you wait he will depart; let him in." It was clearly evident to me that if those songs represented the truth, then a poor sinner could baffle the will of Christ; for if the sinner chose not to open to him, Christ could do no more than to turn away disappointed and sad: His pleading all in vain, His death and resurrection, in fact, His will and purpose were all in vain. Perhaps it is superfluous to comment further on this, for there were other songs that were equally absurd.

As a result, I became disgusted with those songs to such an extent that I could not join in the singing with a clear conscience. I told my sister I believd all they sang those songs for was only for the music there was in them, and even that ceased to hold any charms for me. As time moved on, I became deeper and deeper involved in searching the Scriptures, and the more I became convinced that salvation was of the Lord, that God had a chosen people and that he could and would save them without any means of instrumentalities of man whatsoever, but I was not prepared to say, nor even hope, that I was one of them.

In the spring of 1890, I hired out to work for a man by the name of Biven Goode for $15.00 per month, which was considered fair wages at that time. He furnished me a horse to ride, which I appreciated very much, and I seldom missed an opportunity to go when there was anything to go to. In the Summer of 1887 or 1888, while I was living with my brother-in-law, during a season when Pharisaical religion was running high, I myself became quite a Pharisee, although I never could get the consent of my mind to join their so-called church. I thought I could live a Christian life as well as they. I meditated much on prayer, for I thought that if one could speak well in prayer, it would be acceptable. Consequently, I began to secretely practice speaking in prayer. I confess that my talent in that line was nothing to be proud of, but, believing it to be a good

work, persisted in it for a while, but I must confess that I would have been very much ashamed if I had been caught in the attitude of prayer. One occasion I remember quite well, (and I think I shall never forget it), I was in the field plowing corn; a great drouth prevailed in our section of the country and it really looked as if the crop would perish if rain did not come soon. As I worked along thinking of the seriousness of the situation and the power and influence of prayer, I resolved I would offer up a prayer for rain, and at the conclusion, I said, "Amen". This may seem odd, but the word AMEN sounded so loud to me, I almost trembled after I had spoken it. The words of my prayer seemed to fall with a thud to the ground instead of soaring upward to him who answers prayer. As well as I remember, this was the last time I tried to practice the art of prayer; and although rain came in time to save the crop, I never could bring myself to believe it came as a result of that prayer.

My mind goes back frequently to those days, and I have been persuaded that those secret efforts of mine, or the like efforts of someone else, is not an evidence of faith in the Lord, but rather an evidence of lack of faith.

My self righteousness began to fade rapidly. I began to realize I had no righteousness of my own; I began to see myself a sinner lost and undone. Indeed when I turned a retrospective view of my life, I found it to be one continuous scene of sin against a true and holy God. In the Summer of 1890, while I was working for Mr. Goode, as afore mentioned, I had some varied experiences. One night during the month of April, — it was a very dark, stormy night, I was lying in my bed all alone in the upper room, when suddenly there was a light flickered at the East window,—just enough to draw my attention. I turned my eyes toward the window, and immediately the light appeared again. This time it entered the room and passed slowly and quietly through the room and out a window on the South side of the room. There was no noise, no demonstration of any kind, but I saw it come and go. Many years have passed since then, but as yet the purpose and character of that light has never been revealed to me. I thought at the time that it might have been a token of some kind, but if it was, its significance never was opened up to me.

Again, while I was yet working at this place, this time in the month of June, one night while I was lying in my bed, the first that I was conscious of was that I was lying on my back, when suddenly a wondrous bright light appeared just above the foot of my bed. Strange to say, I felt no alarm. I barely had time to wonder what it meant when something seemed to tell me the angel of the Lord was right in that light. No sooner had this occurred to me than I heard a voice speak from within that light. It spoke as clearly and audibly as I ever heard any voice. It said, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." Then the light vanished as suddenly and mysteriously as it had appeared. But those gracious words were spoken! What could that mean? Could it mean that MY sins were forgiven? Could it be possible that the God of all grace, the Saviour of sinners, had condescended to visit a poor, proud hearted sinner like me? In all my previous meditations and practices I could not recall one time that I had ever asked forgiveness of my sins. Did this mean salvation for me? If so it was evidently and absolutely through the mercy of God and not on account of some good that I had done, for I had done nothing good. This circumstance seemed to open up a world of joy to me. I arose in the morning lighthearted and free. I experienced a feeling that if I should die just then, all would be well with me. But I was ignorant, Oh, so ignorant; I thought this meant only my past sins, —sins that I had already committed, and that it reached no farther. Consequently it would devolve upon me now to live a sinless life from that time on,

or all would be lost. In my ignorance, I vainly thought this could be done. I followed the leadings of my deluded mind and set about to live a life without sin. Before one day was past, I was very much discouraged; I HAD SINNED. It was all too evident that I had sinned. Before many days had passed my high hopes and bright prospects were literally dashed to pieces.

In fact, I had no hope,— I had no prospect. I found that I could not cease from sin. Imagine my gloom and disappointment. I thought I had had salvation right in my very grasp just a short time before, and now it was all gone, I feared, forever. I was brought to realize that unless it should please the Lord to appear again for my relief, I was lost world without end. I presume I sank as low as any mortal could sink. But while I was so low in despair, when I had given up all for lost, I believe it pleased the Lord to renew his visitation to me. One night I saw in a vision an illustration of my condition. I saw myself in an old boat on a wide river. Near the center of the stream was a desolate island, and something seemed to tell me, if my boat struck that island, I would be totally wrecked. I exerted all my power to reach the main shore and thus escape the wreck on that island, but the more I worked, the more I drifted toward the island, till finally it struck and there I was, thrown out in a hopeless and helpless condition. I looked longingly at the main shore which I had toiled so hard to gain, and where I had hoped to rest, but had failed. On the shore I saw a light burning by a table, and a man sitting by it. It had not once entered my mind to call to him for help. But now, as I was utterly helpless, I beckoned to him for help, and immediately in some mysterious way, I know not how, I was delivered. I found myself standing in the presence of that man rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Here is the interpretation of that dream. I had been relying upon my own work to land me on the celestial shore. I had not thought to call upon the Lord for help until I came to the end of my own strength, and saw myself an utter outcast: A lost and helpless sinner, dependent entirely upon the mercy of God for deliverance. When I was brought low and made to call upon him, he hastened to my rescue.

In the Summer while I was yet working for Mr. Goode, A. D. Jones, who at that time was a licentiate preacher of the Old School Baptists, came through the neighborhood and announced a meeting at our school house. I went to hear him preach. His discourse was quite different from what I had been accustomed to hearing, and I was not able to follow him throughout his remarks. I was moved by the spirit in which he spoke more than by what he said. There seemed to be a power behind his words that I had never witnessed in any one before. While I could not follow him in his sermon, there sprang up within me a desire to hear it again. I began to accompany my sister, Mary, to her meetings. Mary had been a member of the Old Baptist Church for a number of years. In the Winter of 1890, I attended the meeting, and I well remember when I came near the place I heard them singing. It sounded like angel's voices to me. How unworthy I felt to go in amongst them, and yet, how I longed to be there. I entered, and found that besides Elder A. D. Jones, Elder R. M. Thomas was there. Elder Thomas was very deep in expounding the Scriptures. Indeed he was too deep for me to follow him. But that same power was in evidence that I had witnessed before. There was something very mysterious about it all, and I was led to hope that I might someday be led deeper into these mysteries, or that my understanding might be opened that I might understand the Scriptures.

At this meeting I first met the one who was afterwards to become my wife. With me this was a case of love at first sight. I heard her sing, and she had the sweetest voice I had ever heard; and she loved to sing the songs that I had

learned to love. And, withal, it developed that she was traveling the same road that I had been traveling. This only served to increase my admiration for her. Her father also was at this meeting, and he too was a lovely singer, and in time became a very influential member of the Old Baptist Church.

In the winter of 1890-91, I hired out to work by the month to Elder A. D. Jones. Accordingly, I arrived at his place on the 10th day of March and began work the next day. I had looked forward to this time as a high privilege, that I might be much in company of one in whom I had so much confidence of being able to explain the Scriptures. Many pleasant hours we spent together. The Elder was as free to answer my questions as I was to ask them. I continued with him the entire Summer, and my stay was rendered the more agreeable from the fact that they also hired the young lady with whom I had fallen so violently in love. When I left Elder Jones' place, I returned to my sister Mary's place, where I continued to make my home, and I began to accompany her to her regular meetings. My love and devotion to this people and the cause they espoused seemed to increase more and more. I was fully confirmed in their faith and doctrine, and I began to have a pressing desire to be united with them in fellowship. I longed to follow the Master in baptism, but a sense of my unworthiness and weakness kept me back. All my life I had been timid about going before a congregation to try to speak, and, therefore, to go before the church and try to relate my little experience seemed quite impossible for me; and yet my desire increased, but my feeling of unworthiness never abated.

It finally was impressed upon me as a duty, but still my weakness stood in my way. Thus, while I halted between desire and duty on the one hand, and a feeling of weakness and unfitness on the other, strange as it may seem, I became imbued with a desire to tell others the riches of God's wisdom and love and power, and the wonderful salvation he had wrought for his people. Although I never heard a voice speak to me, telling me I must preach the gospel, yet these impressions were so strong I oft times sought seclusion that I might propound to dumb objects about the unsearchable riches of God's love, and many times I have been made to loath myself in dust and ashes, so to speak, that I should allow myself or my ambition to drift in this way. Could I tell the story of God's love to ruined sinners, or his power to save? No, not I, a wretch so vile, so ignorant, so weak and low, to speak of a theme so high, so pure and frought with such solemn interest to dying souls. Not I. I could not even go before the church and relate my little experience, much less preach the gospel to others. My education was greatly limited, and as to the gift of oratory, I was quite destitute. No, I could not preach.

In the Fall of 1891, after I had left the home of Elder Jones and returned to the home of my sister Mary, my mind was much exercised on the matter of duty, which I felt was enjoined upon me, to unite with the church. It occupied my mind by day and my dreams by night. One night I dreamed I was riding on a train; the cars were of very simple construction, open cars so to speak, having no sides and no covering; with benches for seats which extended clear across the floor of the car, and arranged one behind the other. The road over which we were riding was extremely rough. Just in front of me on the same car, there was a small group of people, and among them I recognized my future wife, but I sat behind her. We rode until we came to the end of this awful road. When we got off the car, there was a little city to be seen at a distance. She and I started on together on foot to reach the city. We had not gone far until we came to a quagmire which we could not cross. I looked and saw Elder Jones standing at the edge of the city; he beckoned to us to go further along the side and we could cross. We went a little further and tried, but still

could not cross. Again the Elder beckoned to us to go a little further, which we did and tried again. This time we succeeded in crossing the mire, and we entered the city and passed through to the other side, where we beheld another road. This one of indescribable beauty.

There appeared nothing that could mar the peace and pleasure of one who should be fortunate enough to ride upon this road. As we passed through the city, we were handed tickets. I knew not what for, neither did I know by whom or by what authority they were given us. But I awoke and it was a dream. I pondered this dream in my heart. I related it to my sister, but could see no interpretation of it until the next day when my sister received a letter from Elder Jones' wife, in which she told of a glorious ingathering into the church at Topeka. A little group of six had gone forward and related experiences of grace, and were received for baptism. Among them was my wife to be. My dream was opened up to me. Was not this the little group I had seen riding on that train just ahead of me? Were we not all traveling the same rough road, and were we not all striving to reach the same little city (the church)? It pleased the dear Lord to show me that my companion and I should be wayfarers together. Could those tickets mean that we were fully prepared to launch upon that beautiful and celestial road; that our fare was paid by someone other than ourselves? I have even dared to hope that it might be so. But, withal, in my dream, I saw myself just behind them. This little band of six were received on the fourth Sunday in October, 1891, and were baptized the first Sunday in November. I was present, and saw the solemn ordinance administered, and I was admonished to take up my cross also, but I could not. I felt that my time had not yet arrived, but felt just surely that when our next meeting day arrived I should have to go forward. I verily believed it would be that way, for I was just behind them in my dream. Consequently, I went to the next meeting with my mind fully made up that when the opportunity was given, I would go forward and try to relate my little experience and hope. Meeting day came, and I was on hand. Not lighthearted by any means, because the burden of suspense which rested upon me was terrible. I felt more like I was going to a slaughter than to a feast.

The time arrived when the opportunity was given for the reception of members. I think I shall never forget it. My brain was in a whirl, my heart sank within me, and it seemed that my feet were nailed to the floor, good as dead,—at least I was perfectly helpless. Meeting was dismissed, and I was still on the outside. I felt indeed like an outcast. I had lied to my maker; I had not taken up my cross as I had vowed that I would. And what about my dream! It seemed now that must have been only a myth, a delusion. I went home feeling very sad indeed; I could view myself only as a weakling, a coward and utterly unworthy of the confidence of anyone.

I made another resolution, however, but viewing myself in this light, I had no business in the church anyway. Notwithstanding I loved them; my heart was drawn to them as it was never drawn to any other people on earth. Yet it seemed I could not go along with them. My new resolution was, that I would never set another time to join the church. I had given up hope that I would ever be able to perform that duty. When the next meeting day came, I was there again. I went in company with Elder Jones, but for some cause we arrived too late for the Saturday meeting, so it was arranged to hold night meeting at the home of one of the brethren. There were only a few assembled at this night meeting, and as my heart and mind were still occupied with a sense of duty, I thought this would be an ideal time for me to relieve my mind, and once again I resolved that when the door of the church was declared open, I would go before this little

band, and thus avoid going before a housefull and expose my ignorance. But, alas, when the time came it was just as it had been before. Again I proved myself unfaithful and disobedient. I went to bed that night with a heavy heart, the last thread of self-reliance had been broken.

Having given up all hope of ever becoming a member of the church, I went to meeting the next day downhearted and sad, having no resolution, no object in view, only to sit under the sound of the gospel and go away again as I had always done before. But when the opportunity was given for the reception of members, I found myself going forward and gave Elder Jones my hand, and tried in a very awkward manner to relate my little experience. I was received without a dissenting voice, and seemingly with great joy among the members. I was led into the water and received baptism at the hands of Elder Jones on the third Sunday in May, 1892. Elder R. M. Thomas was at this service and he read hymn number 1119, Beebe's collection. This was to me the most solemn occasion of my life. And then it developed that I was after that little band I saw riding on that train.

On the 29th of June, 1892, I was united in marriage to Arminta Zinn. Three children were born to us; and she departed this life April 1, 1897. On July 2, 1906, I was married again to Lenora (Wood) Gray. We toiled together for more than forty years, when the Lord took her to himself July 10, 1949. She was not a member of the visible church, but she was a true and devoted companion to me. She is gone, and I am still here; for what purpose I cannot tell. I can only say, "Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

I see I am making this article too lengthy. This is just an extract from my autobiography, which I have written. May I claim to be a member of the household of faith.

(Elder) L. L. Schenck

Downsville, La.

Dear Brother Wood:

I am sending money to apply on subscription for my nephew, Melvin Wilson, who has recently been made to go to the church and ask for a home. You dear ones have been blessed to write so many good pieces, and I want him to enjoy reading some of them.

I feel sure that no man can do or say a word that would be of comfort to a poor child that has been born into the kingdom unless he is enabled to, for the Good Lord had to give the fish and the loaves to the disciples before they could pass them out. So it is now; if we get a crumb from the Master's table, he has to drop it on purpose,— and it always fills the purpose for which it is sent. And I do beileve that no man has ever caused anyone to see or love the church, for the Lord does that. All that we could get in, would be a mockery.

Dear brother, I feel at times that maybe that is all I have ever been, for the natural man receives not the Spirit of God; and maybe that is all I am. But I was shown the church in a dream in 1915; and I heard a voice say that was what they were, and they all had on suits as white as snow, and were all the same size. I was standing at one corner, not with them but wanted to be with them so much; and I still do. I have never felt that I was worthy of being with them. I feel sure that just having my name on the church book does not make me a member, for the Saviour said we must be born again. And then he said in Matthew 18:3, "Verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted and become as a little child ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." So then we as poor sinners just have to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. It is not by anything we can do, or the preacher either.

So, if we worship God it is in spirit and in truth, and we have no confidence in the flesh. We see in Jeremiah 13:23, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed

to do evil." So we see it is impossible for us to do good within ourselves; but when the work of the Lord is done in us like he spoke of in Ezekiel 36:27, "And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them," we know that if we have ever done or thought of any good thing in a God honoring way or manner, the Lord was the cause of it, and not us. For you know that Paul said that we are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God. So then, let me say that if I even have a good thought, the Lord will have to give it to me. Oh! how dependent we poor sinners are; but sometimes in my older days I feel to hope the good Lord has kept me and given me a crumb of joy. At times I have been awakened in the night and given sweet meditations on subjects of the Bible, and made to lie there and rejoice, I hope, in what the good Lord showed me.

Dear ones, if it was necessary that I would have to pay out a lot of money to get to hear preaching, I never would hear it, for I am poor in this world's goods. But I am glad it is not that way. When it comes the Lord's time to speak or show us something, if these old eyes were out, we could still see; and if these old ears were stopped up, we still would hear what the Lord says to us, for we know the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit, and our carnal mind is not subject to the laws of God, neither indeed can be. So then we see, if we are what we hope to be, we possess two principles; and having two, the one is contrary to the other. This is where the cross is; we see the two vessels in the same lamp, one honors and the other dishonors. But the blessed Lord said, Take up your cross and follow me; and everyone to whom he says that, does it, for power was given him over all flesh. We know that God works all things after the counsel of his own will; so if it was not his will for his poor little ones to do this, he never would have said, Follow me. So it is done; and that is the only way or time that any of his children have ever obeyed. So this leaves us sinners poor and dependent on an independent God.

I don't know, Brother Wood, how I came to just keep on writing; I expected to write a line or two. When you are at the throne of God's grace, ask him to have mercy on me.

A poor boy in hope of a better world,

T. P. Wilson

The following is from Elder Silas H. Durand's "Fragments":

"Elder R. C. Leachman, of Virginia, once told me of a peculiar dream he had when he was exercised about baptism, and seeking assurance as to which was the true church. Elder Samuel Trott was then serving a few scattered churches of the Primitive order, while popular preachers were preaching to large congregation of the New School. Mr. Leachman liked the preaching of Elder Trott, but the question would often arise in his mind, Could so few be right and so large a number be wrong? One night in a dream he saw large fields of wheat, and men with cradles cutting it down. He admired the large fields and the fine appearance of the wheat standing so erect; but when he took some of the fine appearing heads of wheat in his hand he found no grain, only chaff. Then he looked more particularly at an old man whom he had noticed gathering with an oldfashioned reaphook or sickle some scattered stalks or wheat in various fields. He observed that the heads of wheat which he was reaping were hanging down, and as he took some of them in his hand he found they were well filled with sound and excellent wheat. When he awoke he had no longer any doubt as to where the true church was. He was soon after baptized by Elder Trott. I was favored to travel some with Brother Leachman, and to hear him preach many times, and I think I never heard a more powerful preacher nor a more eloquent speaker."

Stockdale, Texas

Dear Brother Spangler and
readers of the Signs:

I am sending our renewal for the Signs for two years. I consider the privilege of reading the Signs of the Times one of the greatest blessings bestowed upon this poor sinner while traveling my allotted journey through the low ground of sin and sorrow.

I hope I am truly thankful for this as well as so many other comforts from above, to help us all hold on our way. I think it is wonderful that as one editor or writer passes on, another is raised up to take his place.

I read with sorrow of the death of Sister Mary Ellison. Many years ago, before I read the Signs much, my parents enjoyed her writings. My mother would finish an article of hers, and then she would say, "Mary Ellison! I thought that was some big preacher writing that piece." My heart went out to her dear old brother, Elder L. L. Schenck, when I read the sad but loving words he wrote of her life and death. I thought I surely would write him and try to comfort him in his sorrow; but time has passed and I have not done so. If these poor lines reach you, dear brother, please accept my deepest sympathy. Also, want you to know that I, and many others that I know of have feasted on your writings in the Signs for years. I hope the Lord will bless you to continue to write for many years.

I know how it is with the dear ones who write of having so few Old Baptists in their part of the country. We are very few in number also. I feel thankful though that we have been blessed to have a little church, and especially blessed to have a good pastor almost all the time. Elder J. B. Bowden was our faithful and beloved pastor for several years. Elder C. Thomason was with us off and on for several years. Elder E. B. Ault has faithfully served us for a number of years, and now we have Elder J. W. Shipman as co-pastor. We have learned to love him and Sister Shipman very much in the short time we have known them. We feel to know that the God of Heaven is watching over us and sent these under-shepherds of his to care for us. This makes me feel thankful and humble.

And now, I want to invite all the brethren and sisters who read this to come to Pleasant Valley Association, here at Stockdale, the first Sunday in September, Friday and Saturday before, 1953. We are on highway 87 between San Antonio and Houston; and 123, between San Marcos and Corpus Christi. Inquire for M. J. Culpepper's home.

Elder W. O. Beene, of Houston, is Moderator, and Elder B. B. Walston, Clerk. Other ministers belonging to the association are: Elder J. B. Reid and Elder E. B. Ault, of Mt. Zion Chuurch, Weslaco, Texas; Elder J. W. Shipman, of San Antonio, but a member of Mt. Olive Church at Stockdale; Elder W. W. Taylor is pastor of Mt. Zion Church, Cash, Texas. So all who can come, we shall be glad to have you.

Unworthily, a sister in hope,
Lela Culpepper

Martinsville, Va.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I was blessed to be present at a good meeting at Martinsville, which will be long remembered by me. Elder Cecil Turner was blessed to preach the best I have ever heard him. He was the only minister present, and had had in mind to visit some other church, but filled his appointment here. I feel that the Lord had a purpose in his coming. The meeting house was almost full of hearers, and three united with the church. I had looked for two of them to come for a long time, but there is an appointed time for the Lord's work. They are to be baptized the third Sunday in May, and I hope I can be present.

I enclose $3.00 for another years subscription to the Signs of the Times. You may publish this if you care to.

An unworthy sister in hope,
Sadie J. Minter

APPOINTMENTS

Elder W. D. Griffin, of Covin, Alabama, associate editor of the Signs of The Times, is expected to fill appointments at the following named places.

Dan River Primitive Baptist church, near Mayfield, N. C., Monday night July 20, at 7:30 P.M.; Martinsville, Va., July 21, 7:30 P.M.; Roanoke, Va., July 22, at 7:30 P.M. at Gooch Memorial Church, Thursday July 23, at 11 A.M. and Durham church, in Durham, N. C., Thursday night, July 23, at 7:30 P.M.

He is also expected to be at the following meetings, Staunton River Association the week end of the second Sunday in July; the Upper Country Line Association the week end of the third Sunday in July, and at Mt. Zion Church, near Washington, D. C., the fourth Saturday and Sunday in July.

ASSOCIATIONS

The Upper County Line Association is appointed to be held with New Hope church, about ten miles south east of Reidsville, N. C., beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in July, and continuing three days.

D. V. Spangler, Clerk

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with Mt. Ararat, or generally known as Old Mountain, beginning Friday before the second Sunday in July, and continuing three days.

To reach the meeting house from the east or south turn off route 58 about one mile west of Danville, Va. on what is known as the Mt. Cross Road, follow about seven miles, and inquire.

From Martinsville, and Roanoke, turn left off 58, on to 689, about ten miles west of Danville, and go to Myers Store and inquire.

W. R. Dodd, Moderator.

The Pigg River Association is appointed to meet with Basham Church, beginning Friday before the first Sunday in August.

John D. Wood, Clerk

EDITORIALS

Danville, Va. **July, 1953**

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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EDITORIAL

BACKSLIDING ISRAEL, AND HOPE OF RESTORATION

"I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him. (Hosea 14:4).

The above quotation is a stated promise of God to raise again each and every one of His people from backsliding; and his reason for such a wonderful promise. May god grant us, first, to meditate upon backsliding; and then, discuss the reason for this promise; finally, study the certainty of this promise being fulfilled.

A thorough understanding of what is meant by the term BACKSLIDING is necessary before we can determine whether or not we have experienced it. If the true meaning is revealed to us from the Lord and we have experienced it, then, not until then, we will truly

know what it means. Backsliding is falling from or sliding back from a higher position you once occupied. Sliding back is returning toward a lower position from which you were once raised. Have you experienced it?

Have you experienced the backsliding heart? Solomon says in Proverbs 14:14, "The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways * * *". The heart being the seat of affection (or love) sometimes becomes cold and leaves the "first love" as did the church at Ephesus—"Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because THOU HAST LEFT thy first love" (Rev. 2:4). Have you experienced a falling from the joy of salvation and made to pray as David?—"Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation" (Psalms 51:12). Have you ever fallen from the sweet enjoyment of that precious faith in Christ to such an extent that you are finally made to cry—"Help thou mine unbelief?" (Mark 9:24). Do you you ever question and pray as Cowper expresses in the hymn we sometimes sing:

"Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I saw the Lord?
Where is the soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus and his word?

What peaceful hours I then enjoyed!
How sweet their memory still!
But now I find an aching void
The world can never fill.

Return, O holy Dove, return,
Sweet messenger of rest;
I hate the sins that cause my mourn,
And so disturb my breast."

We are made to realize an aching vacancy caused by the absence of the Holy Spirit that once so wonderfully calmed our troubled breast. Sometimes we cherished the memories of the soul-stirring experiences we once had and long for their return. We fall into many temptations and wonder if God has forgotten to be gracious. We get so cold and lifeless in our feelings that when we attend church, converse, and sing with the brethren we are convinced that our actions are mere formality and the very essence of hypocrisy! I am persuaded that each and every one of God's little children many times experience this backsliding of heart when the brethren do not see anything amiss in their conduct. This backsliding in heart is the experiences within the child of God that effects his conscience and inner thinking that sometimes results in great turmoil within that is not necessarily made manifest at all times in conduct. Inward backsliding results in great grief to the person experiencing it, while backsliding in conduct effects others. We now want to consider backsliding in conduct.

When the walk and conversation of a child of God is contrary to that which is becoming to His saints, backsliding in conduct is experienced. Sometimes our conduct grieves the brethren and causes them to lose confidence in our sincerity and profession. Sometimes our conduct is so obviously ungraceful that it "gives occasion for the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme". Read the 11th and 12th chapters on 2nd Samuel, which gives an account of David's disgraceful conduct, Nathan's conversation with David, and David's confession; and you note an outstanding example of backsliding in conduct. You will also see why this terrible sin haunted David all through his life even though he repented and was given the promise that he would not die. Read the 22nd chapter of St. Luke and you will find that Peter was delivered to Satan for a sifting and that Peter denied three times that he had any knowledge of Jesus, even though Peter had affirmed that he would follow Jesus into prison and death. One af the writers said that he cursed and swore. Peter fell from the remembrance of his oath to Jesus and what Jesus had told him he (Peter) would do. This outward unbecoming conduct of Peter proved to him his utter inability of himself to stand, even though he had once been enabled to stand. Past grace does not suffice for the present or future. When God with-

holds His grace (unmerited divine favor) from us, we are as certain to fall as Peter and David did. When we are shown that we are in this fallen state it causes us to do as Peter: "weep bitterly"; and to greatly yearn and pray for the lifting up that only the unmerited divine favor of God can perform.

We stumble and fall so often that we are made to pray to God to give us grace, give us grace! Thanks be to God that, "We have access by faith into this GRACE, WHEREIN WE STAND AND REJOICE IN HOPE OF THE GLORY OF GOD". "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1st Cor. 10:12). Paul gave the experiences in the travel of the Israelites (in the 10th chapter of 1st Corinthians) to warn us that even though we be baptized into Jesus Christ and into his death, have eaten of the spiritual meat and have drunk of the spiritual drink, that we may murmur, commit fornication, tempt Christ, be an Idolator, and thus, not be well pleasing unto God. (Ist Cor. 10:5). All this happened to Israel for ensamples or types and are written in the scriptures for our admonition. (I Cor. 10:11).

Paul exhorted the brethren to flee from these ungodly things. John was ordered of the Lord to write to the seven churches of Asia pointing out to each church its characteristics—some of which were not very becoming—exhorting them to repent or turn from their heretical departings from doctirne and practice. God-called, God-qualified, God-sent, and God-used ministers of this age exhort and admonish brethren and churches to turn from these unscriptural doctrines and practices which are of men, and to implore God's grace to lift them by His power from the fallen state in which they are in.

The spirit of jealousy prompts brethren and ministers to stir up strife and confusion and falsely accuse brethren. Self-conceit prompts some to stubbornly contend for their petty opinions to the extent of causing divisions. Ministers and members of the church seeking praise of men and self-exaltation design and scheme—using the corrupt tactics of politics—to set themselves on coveted high places, to the destruction of the peace in the church and churches. Bars of fellowship are raised under the false cloak of standing for "right order and doctrine" THESE THINGS OUGHT NOT TO BE!! May God fulfill His promise to heal our backsliding!

May God enable us to see our many faults, confess them to our brethren and repent. May we seek to unite instead of divide; acknowledge our wrongs instead of justifying ourselves for un-becoming actions; Forgive our brethren instead of taking vengeance; esteem them instead of considering them less than we; do good unto them instead of evil; yes, love them instead of hating. It must be revealed unto us that we are at fault before we can desire to be rid of it. It must be proven to us through sad experience that we cannot rid ourselves from these ungodly actions before we can sincerely pray to God for deliverance. He hears our cry and will fulfill His promise by healing our backsliding.

His promise to heal our backsliding is positive and sure. He says, "I will"—(not, I may or I can), heal their backsliding." It is God that does it and His people are made to know it by revelation and experience. It is because of God's great love for us and that FREELY (without merit) given that we are lifted up by His grace from these backslidden positions.

We do not deserve it, but He raises us up and sets us on high. We deserve to be cast down to never rise again, but, because of His great love, God extends His mercy toward us, lifting us up many times so that we do not fall FINALLY away. Have your thoughts been so sinful and your actions so ungodly that you felt it would be unjust for God to forgive you? Notwithstanding this just banishment you deserved, God's anger was turned from you and

you again experienced God's mercy and grace. Why? "For mine anger is turned away from him".

God's anger was appeased. His anger was not withdrawn without due punishment. This punishment was turned from God's people upon His only begotten Son, Christ Jesus. He bore the punishment for our sins,—past,—present, and future,—that we might enjoy His mercy. If Christ was punished on account of so many sins, is it a great thing that we should be scourged, chastened, and rebuked by Him in order that we be corrected—brought into the right path—and learn obedience by the things we suffer? His promise is to do an effectual work of it. It is because of God's love for us that we are chastened by the rod of correction. It is because of His wonderful love that we are forgiven of our many sins. If God forgave us so much, is it a great thing for us to forgive those who trespass against us? Our sins are so great that when we are enabled to behold our true position regarding holiness, the little offences of our brethren sink into insignificance and unimportance. We are then in the position to forgive our brethren. We can then pray from the heart, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." When it has been revealed unto us that God is so merciful to us then we are merciful unto those with whom we come in contact. When the love of God dwells in our hearts it causes us to have love one for the other and to manifest it in our actions and conversation. These graceful experiences quoted above show that He fulfills His promise to heal our backsliding.

Time will not permit us dwelling longer upon this subject in our written meditations; and it is needless to say that volumes of our thoughts while writing are unexpressed because of the infirmity of not being able to write as fast as thoughts come into the mind. We trust, however, that God will bless you to glean some edification and comfort from the words that are written. May He enable us to see our own faults instead of the petty faults of our brethren, that we may be meek, humble, and lovely in our walk and conversation. May He heal our backsliding that we may be raised up closer unto Him and to each other. May we be enabled to repent —individuals and churches—that there might be Uniting instead of dividing.

E. J. L.

CHURCH ORDER BY ELDER F. A. CHICK RE-PUBLISHED FROM JANUARY, 1905, SIGNS

From the first volume of the SIGNS to the present one it has been a custom followed by the successive editors to present to our readers some reflections especially called out by the beginning of a new year and a new volume. We have no wish to omit the custom now. It seems but natural that at the beginning of a new year and volume we should have many reflections concerning the past, and many thoughts regarding the future. There are occasions in the lives of men, and in the history of nations as well, when the past and the future will crowd themselves upon the thoughts of men with special force.

There are such seasons in the life of believers and in the history of the church of God. So now we can but remember the past record of burdens, trials, crosses, reproaches, cares, and anxieties, on the one hand, and of helps, comforts, encouragements and victories on the other hand, which have been along the pathway of the SIGNS more or less thickly scattered during all the past seventy-two years, and with the remembrance of all these things we can but praise the goodness and mercy of God for his unfailing grace manifested to all who have been connected with the management of the SIGNS, supporting them in their anxious labor all along through the years. From all this we can but look forward with hope, and a measure of confidence to the future, remembering that

"His love in time past forbids us to

think
He'll leave us at last in sorrow to sink."

The solemn words of the apostle come to our mind as we write these words: "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come." And remembering the past goodness of God, we are encouraged for the future, and are led to trust that as the SIGNS has been blessed to very many in all these past years, in that troubled hearts have been made glad, and downcast souls have rejoiced, and the tempted have been given the victory through words written for the SIGNS, so will it continue to be the messenger of good news in the time to come to very many of the tried and distressed children of God.

For all these past mercies, and for all that we hope for, would we give all praise and thanksgiving to God. Whatever may be the service which we render to him in serving his little ones, let it always be remembered that to him belongs all the praise. Paul once said, "I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." All praise to grace then for all things. From the God of all grace comes down every good and perfect gift. He gave the SIGNS to his people at a time when it was needed, and he has continued it because it has been needed, and he gave grace to all the former editors, and to all who have been moved to contribute to its columns, and he gave every word that through its pages has ministered to his people in every way, and he has spoken the word of admonition, of exhortion, of reproof, of warning, of consolation, of comfort; in short, every word that has edified in any way his needy children.

God forbid that any of us should take one atom of praise to ourselves for any of these things. If we have labored, after all it is not we, but the grace of God.

It seems well at this time to call attention to some of the things that pertain to the order of the house of God. We mean the general principles of that order as laid down in the New Testament. We say the New Testament, for only in the New Testament Scriptures can we find that order laid down. The ceremonials enjoined upon Israel under the old covenant have no place in the order of the house of God under the gospel; they were shadows of things completed in Christ; they are not the rule of outward life to the church now. We need not pause to argue this here, supposing that all our people are well settled in this one thing at least, yet it is well to call attention to it now and then, since we are all so prone to forget.

In the New Testament, however, our God has seen fit to lay down that order which will be to the good of his people and to his glory in this gospel day. In its place to know this order is just as important as to know that salvation is by grace. We all dwell much upon the travel of the child of God under the law and in the gospel; we also dwell upon the obligations of believers toward the church, and in all the relations which they hold in life; we dwell much upon the strong doctrine of salvation through Christ with each principle of that doctrine, and this is all well and needful. It is also our solemn obligation to ask after the order of the church, what it is, as a body ordained of God to administer the affairs of his kingdom on earth.

One thing we desire to call special attention to here. This one thing is that each special body of believers stands by itself, subject to no other body, and subject alone to God and the world which he has revealed in the Scriptures. This has ever been the ground occupied by the Baptist churches in all ages past. So much has this been the case that for centuries it was never questioned among them; and ever since we can ourselves recollect, this has been one thing continually maintained among all Old Bap-

tists whom we have known.

The people of God have been very jealous regarding this one thing, because they have believed that the glory of God, the relation of the church to Christ her Head and Lawgiver, and all that simple, plain, spiritual service which God requires of his people could be fulfilled in no other way. Baptists have recognized but one Head and Lawgiver, and so have been zealous that nothing should obtain a place in their order that would come in between them and their one King.

It is but reasonable to believe that our God would not leave his people uninstructed with regard to their order as to his house on earth, and in fact he has not, for in the New Testament all that is needed is revealed. It is ours to come up to that rule, and not to go beyond it. With reference to this one thought, the dependence of each body of believers upon God, and their independence of each other, so far as maintaining the order of the church is concerned, we desire to appeal to the testimony of the word itself.

In the Acts of the apostles, and in all the epistles, we shall look in vain for one word that would imply that each church was not sufficient unto itself for the transaction of all its affairs. In all the exhortations of the apostles to the churches regarding what we call discipline or order there is not the slightest intimation that any other church was even called upon for advice or counsel in any matter. They all had one Counselor, one Guide, and one Judge; each church ought to appeal unto him. It was not only true that if any man lack wisdom he should ask God, but the same was true of any church as well.

Many things required setting in order in the church in Corinth for instance, but there is no intimation that they should call in the church at Ephesus, or at Rome, or at Jerusalem, for help, or even for advice in any of their differences. We know that they were divided in feeling, and that dissentions existed among them, but still they were all to look alone to God, and all such matters were to be dealt with among themselves, subject alone to the apostolic authority. The only reference recorded in the Bible of church differences or misunderstandings to any other body of men, is that recorded in Acts fifteenth chapter. This was beyond controversy to the apostles alone. To the apostles alone ought we still to go in all matters of difficulty.

If we should be so presumptuous as to say that God has not or will not give wisdom to any one church in the administering the order of the church, or in dealing with any matter of difference, it is equally uncertain, to say the least of it, that he will bestow upon a church at a distance that wisdom whereby they shall judge righteously. The longer we have lived, and the more we have seen and thought upon all such matters, the more we have been convinced that the great lack in all cases of difficulty unsettled or unhealed, has been that the church involved spent more time discussing the matter among themselves than they did in looking to God for guidance as to the meaning of his word, and for a proper spirit to dwell in their midst while considering the difficulty.

The dear Lord has said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst." Has the church come together in his name? Is the important consideration. If so, he is with them, and if so, wisdom is there to deal with all that may present itself. To undertake to refer questions that may arise to another body of the disciples of the Lord, is to say that we do not believe that our God will be with us and give us wisdom, or that we are not his disciples gathered in church order.

But we need not pause to reason or argue the matter, it is enough that in the New Testament there is no record of any church, or minister, or body of believers of any kind, being chosen to administer the affairs of the churches, or to settle any difficulties. This is enough for all who believe in the perfect wisdom of God, and that the people of God must not be wise above what is

written.

We are here writing in this way because it is always needful that our pure minds should be stirred up to remember all that pertains to the cause of God and truth, and surely this is one of those things, if anything is. Another reason is, that we have seen it intimated that in some sections of our country there is a move on foot to destroy this plain, simple order of the church, and substitute a sort of federal government in its place, a government of a few men who shall be a sort of court of last resort to settle all questions and difficulties that may come at the last, before them, and whose decisions shall be final.

First, we have no fear that when the attention of the God-fearing children of God is called to the unscripturalness of this move they will give it their indorsement at all; yet the watchmen are to watch, and to give warning, for there are always unwary ones who yet do love and fear God, and whose desire is to glorify him, but who may be ensnared before they know it.

Second, like Israel of old, the church of God is a theocracy, and must acknowledge no sovereign but her God. This proposed plan would turn the government of the church into an aristocracy instead. It is proposed in this way to furnish a way to heal all dissensions, whether in doctrine or practice. We do not here judge the motive of those who are making this move. It may be that they are truly grieved at all difficulties and dissensions and truly desire to do what they may to heal all such things as annoy and grieve the children of God, but we must say that it is a poor way to strive for peace by methods which are in plain violation of the law of God in Zion. Can strife among the brethren be healed by rebellion against God? And this propossed plan is rebellion if anything is.

If the law of Zion has been broken can that break be healed by causing a still more serious break of that law? The streams may have become polluted in many places; will that pollution be cleansed by visiting the very fountain with a still worse pollution? Such a federal government will do for Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcapalians, Romanists, and even for New School Baptists, but it will not do for the simple, humble-minded children of God, who know no king but Jesus, who respect the authority of his word alone.

But suppose that such a move should prevail us, who would be chosen to sit as a court of final resort? If, for instance all the churches in one or more States or sections of the country should adopt this plan, who among them would admit that upon him had fallen the mantle of judgment above his fellows?

Not the truly humble among them. If any were proud and desirous of occupying the highest seats, such would no doubt seek the honor, but the humble would not, and what is more, could not be brought to believe that they were wiser than any of their brethren, or more capable of judging righteously in any matter. Such humble ones would not so sin against God as to either seek or accept such a place. Then if, still further, all these various sectional boards should have over them one national board, as we understood has been contemplated, the matter would still be worse.

Is any brother, any minister in all our land, who has been known as an Old School Baptist, willing to come forward and say, I will accept such a position? If so he is presumptuous and self-willed, heady and highminded, and not fit to judge anything in the church. Still further, when such boards in sections, and such a board in the nation, shall have been appointed, when and where shall they meet and by what machinery shall difficult cases be laid before them? Who is to pay for time and for expense that must be incurred by such gathering?

Brethren, let any such plan be adopted, and soon we shall have all the elaborate machinery in use among all the different denominations of people named above. Wherein then will our order differ from theirs? We are sure that it will

differ from the plain, simple government laid down in the New Testament, as much as night differs from day or truth from falsehood; as much as the nations in the olden time who were governed by despotic kings, differed from Israel when they had no king but acknowledged the Lord alone as their Ruler and Judge.

Thus far it has been in our mind to speak here, and here we will leave this matter for the present, at least. We have written in a general way, desiring to call attention to the truth that each church must attend to its own affairs, subject alone to him who is their Lawgiver and Judge.

Now, in conclusion, we desire to express our gratitude to God, and to our brethren for their kind forbearance toward us, especially during the past year, since our beloved brother Benton Beebe was removed from his work in the conduct of the SIGNS; and we ask that the brethren will remember during this coming year that we still shall need much forbearance and help from them.

We hope that such matter will come to the office for publication as will edify the readers, as has been the case in the past. May the blessing of our covenant-keeping God be with us all, those who conduct the SIGNS, and those who are correspondents, and those who are subscribers. May all strive for the things that make for peace, and the things whereby one may edify another. All this, with every needed blessing, our God will bestow for Jesus sake.

(The above article of Elder F. A. Chick, re-published from the Signs Of The Times of 1905, certainly sets forth to us, what is the order of the Lord's House. Elder Chick was editor of the Signs at the time of the foregoing writing, and the sentiment expressed is worthy of prayer-ful reading, especially due to the trying times we are passing through.

D. V. S.)

PLEASE NOTE: Elder L. T. Tucker, Clemmons, N. C. requests that it be stated in the Signs that his membership is at Lexington Church, which is in the Abbotts Creek Association, of which Jesse Trogden is Moderator.

ORDINATION OF DEACON ARTHUR L. CARTER

At the request of Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, for the Elders and Deacons of the sister churches of her vicinity to sit as a Presbytery and inquire into the qualifications of Brother Arthur L. Carter for the office of Deacon, and to ordain him if they thought proper, the following Elders and Deacons met at Frying Pan Meeting House on the second Sunday in May, 1953:

Elder John D. Wood, Elder Cecil E. Turner, of the Pigg River Association, Deacons G. C. Spindle, Isaac T. Long, C. W. Norman, Orien Mellott, C. R. Hollandsworth and L. D. Duke.

After singing and prayer by Elder Turner, the Presbytery was organized by choosing Elder Wood, Moderator, and Brother L. D. Duke, Clerk, and Brother C. W. Norman, Assistant Clerk.

Brother Carter was presented to the Presbytery by Deacon G. C. Spindle, who was spokesman for the Church. Then Elder Turner led in questioning Brother Spindle as to Brother Carter's qualifications for the office, using the third chapter of 1st Timothy in the inquiry. Inquiry was also made as to the qualifications of Brother Carter's wife, as required in the same chapter. Then Brother Carter was questioned as to his belief in the Scriptural doctrines of Predestination, Election, etc.

Every answer was entirely satisfactory to the Presbytery, and they unanimously moved to proceed with the ordination.

This was done by prayer and laying on of hands; the prayer being by Elder Turner. Then Elder Wood delivered the charge to Brother Carter.

After the right hand of fellowship was given by the Presbytery to Brother Carter, he was given back to the church as duly qualified of the Lord for such work as required of a deacon.

Elder John D. Wood, Moderator
Leslie D. Duke, Clerk
C. W. Norman, Asst. Clerk

CHANGE OF MEETING TIME

The time for holding the Yearly Meeting of Rewastico Church, of the Salisbury, Association, is changed from the First Sunday in August to the Second Sunday in August.

(Elder) H. M. Bennett, Pastor

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Elder Frederick W. Rhodes, Sr. has changed his address to: 26-C Holman Few Gardens, Durham, N. C.

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 11 A.M.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Saturday, 11 A.M.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 11 A.M.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

WRIGHT'S CREEK CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday, 11 A.M.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday, 11 A.M.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11 A.M., six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Alabama.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each Saturday before the fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Alabama.

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A.M., ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Alabama.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

BEULAH PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Troy, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday, South end of Three Notch Street.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

MT. PLEASANT PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located two miles South of Dothan, Alabama, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A.M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before.
E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

MT. GILEAD PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles North of Hartford, Alabama.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Pratt City, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11 A.M. Meeting place at Alder Street at top of hill, first car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

LIBERTY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A.M., eight miles South of Gordo, Alabama.
O. G. CARVER, Pastor

MT. CARMEL CHURCH, Coffee Springs, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 11 A.M.
W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Tucson, Arizona, meets on third Sundays and Saturday before at 134 E. Prince Road. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.
T. J. ROBINSON, PASTOR
Mrs. J. H. Day, Clerk

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A.M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P.M.
W. S. SPEER, Pastor

REHOBETH OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located five miles North of El Dorado, Arkansas, and half-mile West of Highway No. 7, meets second Sunday in each month and Saturday before at 11 A.M.
R. W. RHODES, Pastor
W. A. SPEER, Clerk

HOPEWELL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Sacramento, California, meets 10:30 each second Sunday in American Legion Hall, 1119 21st Street.
L. L. WILSON, Pastor
WM. ECHOLS, Clerk
Chowchilla, Cal.

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Pomona, California, meets each fourth Sunday at 12812 Williamson (or write A. J. Taylor, 932 E. Monterey).

LITTLE FLOCK CHURCH, Miami, Florida, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before, S. W. 29th Avenue and 6th Street. We extend an invitation to any interested to visit us.
MRS. J. M. FUTCH,
7005 SW 21st Street,
Miami, Florida

SALEM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Panama City, Florida, meets each first Sunday at 11 A.M., north end of Harrison Ave-

nue.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Weise, Idaho, meets each second Sunday at 5th and E. Park Street.

PLEASANT VALLEY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas, meets the first Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (January, March, etc.) at the home of Sister Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C.

MRS. PHEBE CATES, Clerk

THE LOST CREEK CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, meets first Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Kentucky, ten miles South of Grayson and two miles from Denton on the Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

C. H. EVANS, Pastor

NEW HOPE CHURCH (better known as Lick Creek) meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A.M., five miles North of Dawson Springs, Kentucky.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE ZION CHURCH OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS, Mayfield Kentucky, meets first Sunday of each month at 11 A.M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P.M., on South 7th Street.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Baltimore, Maryland, meets each third Sunday at 11 A.M. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Stdeet, near Calvert.

Q. A. GLADDING, Deacon

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on Falls Road about twenty miles North of Baltimore.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, in New York City. Meetings every first and third Sundays at Parkside Hotel, 18 Gramercy Park South, one block east of Fourth Avenue and 20th Street, near 23rd St. Sta. Lexington Ave. Subway. Take elevator to Park Room second floor. 11 A.M.-1:30 P.M.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets each 5th Sunday and Saturday afternoon before, from May to September, with two days meeting the 1st Sunday in May; and meets at Needmore, Pa., on 5th Sundays and Saturday afternoon before, from October through April, with two days meeting the 2nd Sunday in October.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
ORIEN MELLOTT, Clerk
McConnellsburg, Pa.

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, Houston, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A.M. Church is located on Little York Highway, four miles North of Houston, and one mile East of Highway 76.

W. O. BEENE, Pastor

BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin, Oregon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes.

R. R. WOLF, Pastor

MT. ZION CHURCH, Weslaco, Texas, meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 and Saturday before at 11 A.M., at the home of E. B. Ault, on Progresso Highway, three and one-half miles South of Weslaco.

E. B. AULT, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk
Rt. 1, Mission, Texas

SARDIS CHURCH, Amarillo, Texas, meets first Sundays at 10:30, in the home of Deacon C. M. Toler, 119 S. Bowie Street.

Elder C. E. TURNER, Pastor

THE OLD ORDERLY MT. ZION (CASH) PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Campbell, Texas, meets on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in each month at the home of Bro. J. J. Darnell.

Sister SIMMONS, Clerk

PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, 1211 8th Avenue, meets first Sunday in each month at 11 A.M. and Saturday before at 2 P.M. Take South Summit car to All Saints hospital, go one block North to meeting house.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor
W. A. LITTLE, Asst. Pastor

THE ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST CHURCH, Lawn, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A.M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
HOWARD EASON, Clerk

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A.M. and Saturday before at 2 P.M.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTI-

NARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30, at the home of M. J. Culpepper. Lovers of the truth invited.

E. B. AULT, Pastor

THE OLD SALEM CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS, four miles South of Teague, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

SAINTS REST OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A.M. and Saturday evening before at seven-thirty, at 4614 Sylvester Street.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
JOHN T. BEENE, Clerk

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each second Sunday at 11 A.M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
C. E. TURNER, Co-pastor

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 11 A.M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor

THE PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Memphis, Tennessee, meet in the Primitive Baptist Church, corner of Getwell and Fizer Streets, on second Sunday in each month at 11 A.M. and Saturday evening before; also on fourth Sundays at 11 A.M.

H. G. BROWN, Pastor
791 Watson Street
L. C. CAMPBELL, Clerk
3347 Tutwiller Street

LITTLE FLOCK PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Cass County, Missouri, meets on fourth Sundays in the Memorial Building, Pleasant Hill, Missouri. We invite brethren of our faith and order to visit us.

L. L. SCHENCK, Pastor
MRS. J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A.M. and Saturday before at 2:30, Fairmont Park, 3023 Cottage Toll Road.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Richmond, Virginia, meets each fourth Sunday in their new meeting house about ten miles South of Richmond, just off highway 360 South.

R. S. PAYNE, Pastor

DAN RIVER CHURCH, between Danville Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A.M. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville, Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A.M. and Saturday night before, on Bradley Road.

W. R. DODD, Pastor

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A.M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2 P.M. and is located on Route 28, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH, meets third Sundays at 11 A.M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2 p.m., each second month (February, April, etc.), and is near Lucketts, about eight miles North of Leesburg, Virginia.

BROAD RUN CHURCH, Poolesville, Maryland, meets third Sundays at 11 A.M. each second month (January, March, etc.).

MT. ZION CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A.M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2 P.M., and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, Virginia, on Route 50, between Washington and Winchester, Virginia.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are always glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Frank T. Simpkins, Jordan 8-2747.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

LITTLE ZION PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Chehalis, Washington, meets in the home of Sister Effie Parke, 1360 First Street, the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 A.M.

C. M. FISHER, Pastor

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, near Yakima, Washington, meets at 11 A.M. each second Sunday by appointment at the home of one of the members living in Naches, Washington.

A. D. HUGHETT, Pastor,
BEATRICE HAAN, Clerk
Star Route, Naches, Washington

HARMONY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, about four miles East of Huntington, W. Va., near Route 60 at Russell Creek, meets each second Sunday at 11 A.M. and Saturday before at 3 P.M.

R. C. BELL, Moderator
B. G. Bird, Clerk
211 3rd Street, Altizer Add.
Huntington, W. Va.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 121 DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1953 NO. 8

Dedicated to
Bro. J. Paul McMillian
by Isaac Nichols

When all was on the altar laid,
Our hearts were cleaned from sin,
The holy spirit took control
And now abides within.

The cleansing stream I now can see
Its billows o'er us roll.
All glory to the dying lamb:
Thru Jesus' blood we're whole.

The healing stream we see,
'Tis flowing deep and wide;
Salvation to all his own—
For his own it doth provide.

That stream from calvary flows
From Jesus' wounded side
To all His erring wayward own
For whom he bled and died.

Our Lord the sacrifice hath made
Upon that cruel tree
A fountain there for all his own
Is open wide and free.

Jesus! The name that calms our fears
That bids our sorrows cease:
'Tis music in the sinners' ears
'Tis life and hope and peace.

Lillie, La.

To The Dear Household of Faith,
Through the Signs of the Times.
Dearly beloved in the Lord:

I have had some sweet meditations upon one of the most beautiful passages of scripture that I nearly ever have been blessed to enjoy, and although I feel very unworthy, ignorent, poor and insignificant, I desire to write you a few thoughts upon it, the Lord willing.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." (Psalms 103:1-2)

This, as you know, is the very beautiful language of David, the sweet singer in Israel, who shared the sorrows, trials, heart aches, pains and the high and low experiences that the Lord saw fit to lead his people through; and oftimes did David through his many beautiful expermental writings express many heart rending pleas to the Lord for his mercy, his grace, his salvation and his deliverance. I think that David was blessed to record more beautiful prayers than any writer that I recall in all the Bible.

These particular two verses, as well as several chapters in connection, were no doubt recorded at a time when the Lord in his great mercy had been most graciously manifested to David, and his poor heart was softly melted in sweet and perfect praise to the Lord. He was so beautifully made to call upon his soul to bless the Lord; and so many times repeated nearly the same deep utterances of his praise. We should take under consideration the reason David was calling upon his soul for such great praise, and blessing the Lord, for when he repeated in this second verse, he gives a great reason why such blessing and praise is coming forth from his poor heart; as he said, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

I am sure that David's heart was made very conscious of the many, many blessings and benefits of the Lord. He testified that he was made to trust in the Lord when he was upon his mother's breast; he was made to hope in

the Lord then. He said also the Lord took me out of my mother's womb. So David evidently was made to credit the Lord with all his benefits, even to his birth and his hope while upon his mother's breast.

Dear ones, if we are blessed to be mindful of all his benefits, then truly David's beautiful and deeply inspiring language is very appropriate saying, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all within me bless his holy name". "O, it is the true desire of every one of the Lord's little ones to bless and praise the Lord. Because it is in him that we live, move and have our being; and without him we are nothing, and can do nothing. So it is by the Lord, and His Goodness, Mercy, Grace and Righteousness that we receive what David calls ALL HIS BENEFITS, including natural blessings. And we find that it is the Lord and his mercy towards his own chosen elect that causes them to inherit, and to be made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord. Jesus says in John 15:5, "For without me ye can do nothing." Then how appropriate is this beautiful language of David, "Bless the Lord, O my soul."

Dear child of God, have you not been brought and made to deeply desire to bless and praise His precious and holy name for all his many rich and gracious blessings so freely bestowed upon you from the earlist period of your existance? And even long before that, as Paul in Ephesians 1:4 declares, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Do we consider the eternal covenant love of God as one of the many great and gracious benefits of the Lord? Jesus said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go forth and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." O, how numerous are the Lord's benefits! Then, bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

When we consider this rightly, David's language was much more far reaching than we might think. If we consider that David was a member of the innumerable race of Adam who had fallen into sin, transgression, ruin, and death,—and all of Adam's race was in this condition and none of them could extricate himself, neither could any assist in extricating his fellow creature, (as it is stated in Romans 5:12), "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."; if we consider the utter impossibility of any ever being brought out of that condition without the BENEFITS of the Lord,—his mercy, his grace, the death of his only darling and begotten Son as he bled on the cross to wash away all the sins of the Lord's people; and the great benefits of the new birth and all the graces of regeneration, together with a true belief in God, and true repentance; and that Jesus is exalted a Prince and a Saviour, we can begin to have a small glimpse of why David considered it necessary to say in beautiful language, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name; bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

So all the Lord's benefits, as David mentions, most certainly cover a vast territory, including all the benefits of God's everlasting and covenant love, his eternal choice of his people in Christ before the world began; together with all the sweat, blood and suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose redemption with all its attendant blessings, and the eternal benefits of that eternal, peaceful and glorious dwelling place in the presence of the Lord with all his redeemed loved ones. Then the words of David, "and forget not all his benefits", includes the eternal council of God in behalf of his people, and all the gracious provisions that he purposed in his grace in Christ, and all things which are given them by his divine power, as is set forth in 2 Peter 1:3.

It seems that these all things which

pertain to life and godliness, referred to in Peter's language, and this language of David, are certainly akin; and in my opinion are one and the same thing. As David called them, "all his benefits", so Peter called them "all things pertaining to life and godliness". Peter's testimony shows that they are all by the Lord's divine power, and David refers to them as "all the Lord's benefits." I feel sure they had the same things under consideration, and entitles the souls of the Lord's people to use the language of David, and say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is in me bless his holy name; bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

Then, dearly beloved, how wonderful it is indeed when the Lord gives us to see the many gracious benefits that he so freely bestows upon us. How undeserving we are of them within and of ourselves. But the Lord's free and gracious benefits make all these wonderful and grand blessings ours (if I am one). Heaven and all that it is, and all that it means, is given to poor sinners. Jesus said, "I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." So all these many benefits that David so freely blesses the Lord for, were a free gift of God to poor, unworthy sinners,—hell deserving sinners.

Dear brethern and humble friends, I desire to bless and to praise the holy name of the Lord for the sweet hope that I have in all the Lord's benefits. He has promised that he shall save his people from their sins, and to receive them to himself, that where he is there we may be also. There is no way to rightly describe the many benefits of the Lord in the salvation of his people. When this weary life is over; when the Lord comes and receives us into heaven, then we will sing, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name; bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. Farewell.

In hope

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

Vandervoort, Arkansas

Dear Kindred in Him who loved and gave himself for us:

If it be the Father's will, I have some pleasant thoughts I desire to share with you. I hope I am willing to look for guidence to Him.

The Old Testament contains many types or patterns of truths that are clearly revealed in the New Testament, —many pertaining to Christ himself. Isaac in his miraculous birth and his being offered as a sacrifice by his father, Abraham, is a type of Christ. The offerings in Leviticus are figures of the one great sacrifice of Christ on the cross; and they are indentified by the Holy Spirit's calling to and interpreting them. There are many other clearly identified types, and many divinely given illustrations of New Testament truths: the study of which, to God's people, are most profitable.

In the ninth chapter of Samuel is the story of David and crippled Mephibosheth. The long period of persecution by Saul, during which David was hunted as a patridge in the mountain, had terminated. David had many times been aided by Jonathan, Saul's son, and his heart had been refreshed by Jonathan's love; for Jonathan loved David as he loved his own soul. (Samuel 18:1)

Now Saul and Jonathan both were dead, and David mourned for them. (2 Samuel 1) And David was king of Israel, with all the power of Israel's kings. His desire was in someway to repay Jonathan for his friendship in his days of need; so this question, "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake." (2 Samuel 9:1). This chapter illustrates in a marvelous way how God's grace operates in bringing lost sinners into the known relationship of the heaven born family; and demonstrates what goes with that blessed relationship.

In answer, David was told that Jonathan had a surviving son, who was lame in both feet. This poor helpless cripple,

Mephiboshith, is a picture, a type of God's people before regeneration. He was helpless and could not come to David. David (a type of Christ) must seek him.

Mephibosheth was crippled by a fall at the hands of another, as God's people became crippled, and helpless toward God by the fall of Adam, the federal head of humanity. "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, for that all had sinned. Therefore, as by the offense of one, judgement came upon all men to condemnation." (Romans 5:12-17). Being under this condemnation, we are helpless to come to God. We are crippled in both feet, which, to my understanding, is heart and mind; crippled in both, we cannot use them to get to Him because we are dead in sin. They are of no value to us in attaining salvation.

In this day we hear much of a divine spark in man that can seek after God. This is one of Satan's untruths. There is no such thing in man! He is crippled, and his mind is useless; the heart cannot frame a desire, - it is helpless toward God. "There is none that understand, there is none that seeketh after God." (Romans 3:11)

David sought Mephibosheth, and brought him unto himself. Just so, Almighty, allwise and all powerful God seeks out sinners; and if he did not do the seeking, none would be saved. "The Son of man came to seek and save that which was lost."

"I know not how the Spirit moves,
Convincing men of sin,
Revealing Jesus through the Word
Creating faith in Him."

Mephibosheth was not attractive, again like the human race: nothing in us to make God want us as his own; neither do we merit his love. "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. (Isaiah 64:6)

David showed kindness to Mephibosheth for Jonathan's sake, because of the relationship that had existed between David and Jonathan. Just so, God shows mercy to us for what His Son, the Lord Jesus, did on the cross. There he took our place, and thereby can God deal kindly with those for whom Christ died. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor. 5:21).

Without mention of Mephibosheth's condition, David said unto him, "Fear not: for I will shew thee kindness for Jonathan, thy father's sake." etc. (2 Samuel 9:7). How good Mephebosheth must have felt at this greeting from David; Just so, God seeks us out and speaks his "fear not" to our hearts. Then poor Mephibosheth said, "What am I that thou should look upon a dead dog as I am." What could be more worthless than a dead dog? But it is a true picture of what all are by nature. In Ephesians, second chapter, we are told all are dead in trespasses and in sin, and are children of wrath.

For no other reason, but for Jonathan's sake, did David give the blessing to Mephibosheth; who was placed in a place of greatest blessing: to be as one of the king's sons. And our place of acceptance before God is as his own son. God no longer sees us as we are in ourselves, but he sees us only in Christ. Oh, that we were given to lay hold on these precious truths. We stumble in our walk; fellowship becomes broken, but in our acceptance before God, He always sees us in Christ, "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." (Ephesians 1:6).

How can the legalist, who claims we must live up to a certain standard to be accepted, deal with this. David's promise to Mephibosheth was to eat continually. It was settled then; his place was secure forever, as long as the need existed. And so is our place in Christ; we can never lose it. Once a child of our parents, always their child. To disin-

herit does not do away with the relationship. If we could lose our relationship, then salvation would not be by grace; it would be by works. Hear these familiar words by John, tenth chapter, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life (never ending) and they shall never perish, neither shall an pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Fathers hand. I and my Father are one."

Is there any power able to overcome the Father and take us from him? No. "We know all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose. For whom he did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be the first born among many brethern. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Romans 2:28-30) In the purpose of God, every child of God is both justified and glorified already. Can the purpose of God be thwarted? No. Neither can a saved person, whom God has marked out for glory, ever be lost. Blessed assurance! Can I even hope to be in that number?

Mephiboshith's eating at the King's table suggest fellowship. Being saved by grace (favor), as was Mephiboshith, "Our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Christ Jesus." (1 John 1:3). Even now, by his spirit who dwells in us, we at times have communion with our blessed Lord. What a trinity of blessings showed forth in Mephiboshith: Acceptance, Security, Fellowship! How comforting!

Mephiboshith, poor, crippled, helpless, undone - how richly was he received into the king's house and heart, and all for the sake of another (Jonathan). "He raiseth up the poor out of dunghill, that he may set him with princes, even with the princes of his people." (Psalms 113:7-8). Such hath he done for us who were so low: he hath lifted us so high. "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air; the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Among whom also we all had our conversation in time past in the lust of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. " (Ephesians 2nd Chapter).

Mephiboshith was lame on both his feet. In spite of all the rich favors he had received, he was unchanged in a natural way. And so are we; our nature is still the same. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." (John 3:6) We shall carry with us our Adamic nature till we depart and be with Christ. But we receive a new nature also, we are quickend from the death in sin to life in Christ; whereby the warfare abounds: the flesh against the spirit, etc. We are now new creatures in Him, and can say, "Christ liveth in me."

No matter how much Mephiboshith may have tried, he could never have made himself worthy or desirable as a king's son. He was merely accepted by grace, for the sake of another. No where in Holy Writ are we told to try to do anything to make ourselves accepted before God. We cannot. Christ has done ALL THAT for us. However, after all this has been done for us, and we are made alive unto righteousness, it behooves us to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called. (Ephesians 4: 1) But we can never add to our accep-

tance by this. We should desire to walk with Him because we love him for all that he has done for us. "We love him because he first loved us." (1 John 1: 19) "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then all were dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rise again." (2 Corinthians 5:14-15)

Many meditations on the Old Testament makes Christ and his grace more real and precious, if understood. May He give us desire to study these scriptures, which are given for our learning.

In hope of immortality,
Nancye (Johnson) McDaniel

MEDITATIONS

What I am writing will not long be remembered, for our days are few, but long after we are gone some of our grand-children may come across this composition and be impressed. With this thought in mind I shall, the Lord willing, set forth what we stand for in Faith and Practice.

The eternal, omniscient God made a choice of the people that should be created upon the earth before there were any of them; before the foundation of the world. (Eph. 1;4)

After God created the world and all its fullness, man was created out of the dust of the ground. This man whom he called Adam was created upright but not perfect. He was made subject to vanity. Being made subject to vanity he disobeyed God's law and by this disobedience sin entered the world. (Romans 5:12) Because of Adam's transgression sinfulness became his nature and all his posterity. Because of sin a curse was placed on Adam that carried the sentence of death. The wages of sin is death. All men must die for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

God in his infinite wisdom saw the fallen state of man and because of his great love that he had for the subjects of his choice, prepared a remedy for their sins in the person of his Son; that he should come into the world in the fullness of time and take their sins in his own body and die in their stead, thereby setting the sinner free. This is what is refered to by God's people as "Salvation by Grace", seeing that it is an unmerited favor bestowed upon an undeserving people. How-be-it all men die a natural death, those of his choice, oft referred to as the "Elect of God", are given a living spirit in their new birth which never die." Jesus said, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." It is only the mortal body that goes back to the dust, but the Spiritual Man goes to God who gave it; there to await the Ressurection Day, when the Lord shall descend from Heaven bringing them which sleep in Jesus with him; those that died in Christ shall rise first and we which are alive and remain shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

God's people have ever believed that he knew and loved them from eternity, for the prophet declared, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee". Yes, they must be drawn, for they must go to Jesus who is the way. He is not only the way, but the only name given under Heaven whereby we must be saved. The new born-babe in Christ doesn't know this so he must be drawn. Jesus declared, "No man cometh unto me except my Father who sent me draw him". "He that climeth up any other way is a thief and a robber." From such declarations we conclude that the dead sinner is wrought upon by an irrestible power and drawn to Christ. "He that cometh I will in no wise cast out", and "I will raise him up at the last day". (John 6th Chapter)

The election of God's people was certain and their salvation is sure. They will be brought into the knowledge of

this salvation while here in the world and rejoice in God their Saviour, for Jesus testified that "It is the work of God that you believe on him whom he hath sent". (John 6:29) God sent Jesus into the world, but it is only thru the working of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of poor sinners that they are brought into the knowledge of the truth. Having been brought into the knowledge of the truth thru the effectual working of the Spirit, hope springs up in their breast and they are made to love God and to trust in his mercy. Whereas they have been burdened with the knowledge of sin, they now have relief; their burden is lifted and they can sing praises unto their God for the Hope of their Salvation.

In practice, we receive members into our fellowship who come testifying to the goodness and mercy of the Lord in the pardoning of their sins; baptising them by immersion in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

We observe the Lord's Supper in each of our churches, as a Gospel Ordinance, but the washing of feet as an example of Jesus is held discretionary with each body and is not held as a test of fellowship.

(Elder) P. E. Ingram
Martinsville, Va.

Electra, Texas,

Dear Editors:

I don't know just how I should begin, but I want to say that I do enjoy the Signs. It is all to my way of thinking; although I do not feel that I have any wisdom in understanding the Scriptures.

My main reason in writing is to ask that someone of the Old School Baptists give their views on the following Scriptures: Matthew 16:26; Mark 8:36-37; Luke 9:25. We often hear other preachers use these texts. If not asking too much, would like an intrepertaion of them.

Sincerely,
Mrs. J. W. Stephens

Dublin, Texas

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing check for $5.00 for two years subscription to the good old paper. It is always full of good reading, and we have had it in our family for many years.

I have been a member fifthy-three years, and I still love the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone; no man's works in it for me. I will be eighty years old the fifth of July; and God has blessed me to be able to see and keep house. My husband passed away fourteen years ago. I wish I could write like some of the others. God bless you all.

Remember me in Jesus' name.

Mrs. J. T. Gilbreath.

San Juan, Texas

Dear Brother Spangler:

As I am situated here in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, six or seven miles of the line of old Mexico, I get very cast down at times, and I cry like one of old, "Return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we might look upon thee."

When we get a good letter from some of the brethren, it is as news from a far country; and I feel like one of old, when David enquired whether there were any of Saul's house living. The answer was that there was one in Lodebar; and David sent for him. And they brought little Mephibosheth up and set him at the king's table; and Mephibosheth said, "What is they servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?" Here is one of God's children comparing himself to a dead dog. It is at the king's table where we are allowed to eat and drink from that fountain which never runs dry; yes, it is manna that comes down from the Father of Lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither the shadow of a turn. What a merciful Father, with the visitation from on high he sends the sunshine and the rain. It was joy to the trembling jailor, and the weeping

Mary.

Sometimes we mourn like a dove; sometimes we hunger and thirst after righteousness, and, dear loved ones, we are consoled a portion of the time. Sometimes we grope in darkness, and cry out, Have you seen my love? If you meet him, tell him I am sick of love. Sometimes we wonder why we are made to hear his voice and enter, while thousands never hunger.

I do believe that the children of God get hungry; not for earthly food, but for the manna which comes down from above. And I believe God hears his little one's cry, and he knows when they need food; just as the mother knows when her child is hungry. He sends spiritual food, and O, what great rejoicing there is for the time. If it were in our power, we would not let Him go. Sometimes we cry like David, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." The joy of it is unspeakable and full of glory.

Dear brethren, I only hope that this is my experience. At times I do not know and only hope that I have a hope. But hope is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and enters within the veil, whither our forerunner is entered.

Submitted in love,
(Elder) J. B. Reid

Ponce de Leon, Florida

Signs of the Times,
Dear Brethren in the Lord:

I am sending $3.00 to renew my subscription for another year. I see that my time is out once more, and I don't want to miss a single copy.

I was very glad to get it again yesterday, for I do love to read it, as it contains just what I believe. I love the things it advocates. If I knew I was counted in the covenant, I would be so happy, and not have so many doubts and fears.

Wish I could write as I feel. I was eighty years old last November, and feeble; but God has always blessed me.

Humbly, your sister in hope,
Sarah D. Murphy

Marlow, Oklahoma

Dear Editors of that good paper,
The Signs of the Times:

According to my count, my subscription is past due a month, since I sent only $3.00 at the last renewal. Am enclosing another $3.00.

This old world is in terrible trouble, and if any of the dear ministers have a mind and given wisdom, would be glad if they would write and give us their views on "the signs of the times" that are now going on. I feel sure that prophecy is being fulfilled in every way; and I believe that God purposed every thing in eternity before time began, and that it all will come to pass according to that purpose. Evil men and seducers are waxing worse and worse, and there seem to be more terrible crimes than we ever saw.

If we can only be among those who hold out faithful, all will be well. I know the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists will stand when this old world is on fire, whether I am one in that number or not. I am not afraid of the doctrine, but it is I—am I one of that number. I am seventy-one years old, and my husband is sixty-six; so I feel that our days are not many here.

We want the Editors and all the readers of the Signs to know we think it is the best paper published, and we want to take it as long as we live. May the dear Lord bless and keep every one of you, and land you safe on the other shore when the crossing time comes.

Your sister in sweet hope,
Mrs. Forrest Jones

Goldendale, Washington

Signs of the Times:

I enclose a copy of a letter written by Elder Hughett; or, I should say, a copy of the last page of a three page letter written to Primitive Baptists in the state of Oregon. Seems to us that it contains so much real meat that it should be published in the Signs of the Times.

Elder Hughett has been in poor health for some time. He is at a large hospital in Denver, Colorado, for a

check up and treatment. He preached a wonderful sermon at Naches, Washington, Sunday, May 31st.

Bert H. Knox

We cannot expect to have anything perfect here in this world. We are all at best very imperfect beings in ourselves; all our perfection is in Christ. Neither did God intend that we should have a perfect peace here in this world. Jesus told his disciples, "In the world ye SHALL have tribulations, but in me ye SHALL have peace." When the angels heralded the birth of Jesus, and said, "Peace on earth, good will toward men", we are not to understand that to mean a worldly peace; but the peace which Jesus told his disciples about in John 14:27, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you." Then if that peace is the gift of God, we cannot expect to obtain it of ourselves.

Our peace is one of the "all things" that Paul said are of God. This being true, then we are nothing in or of ourselves. Even Jesus, who was God in the flesh, said, "Of mine own self I can do nothing, the Father in me doeth the works." How much more this must be true of ourselves. In the fourteenth chapter of John, first verse, Jesus said to his disciples, "Let not your hearts be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." If we could believe in God in the true sense of the word—God in all that it means, there would be nothing to trouble us, for we would be perfectly reconciled to all the works of God which take place here in this world. If everything that takes place here in this world is not of God, then He is not God in the true meaning of the word God. But Paul says that all things are of God. (2 Cor. 5:18). If all things are not of God, then he is limited in his power and works; and we would have to account for some of the things that take place here in this world as coming from some other source than from God, and our hearts could still be troubled.

But if we believe that ALL THINGS are of God, whether they be works of men, angels or devils, what have we to fear but God himself. To teach or preach that there is any other power but of God, is to destroy the very foundation of our hope of life in this world or the world to come, and leave us in a constant state of jeopardy. There is comfort to me to believe the word of God in Isaiah 45:7, where he said he created evil; for I know that if all evil is controlled of God, then it is one of the ALL THINGS that the apostle Paul said work together for good to them that Love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

So, if all the evil we experience here in this life works together for our good (and we have faith to believe that it does), then why should our hearts be troubled. If God made the wicked (and in the book of Proverbs it says he did), and they are also embraced in the word evil that God said he created, they also must be one of the all things that work together for the good of them that love God, we can take comfort in this truth. If all this is not true, then how could Jesus say in Matthew 28:18, "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth.

If there is one man, angel of devil that has any power at all in himself, then Jesus does not have all power in heaven and in earth; his power is limited to that extent. But, let me believe in an unlimited, all wise, almighty, unchangeable God that declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying my counsel SHALL stand, and I WILL do ALL my pleasure. In Revelation 4:11, the angel of the Lord said, "Thou are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created ALL THINGS, and for thy

pleasure they are and were created."

Who is it that can't take comfort in a God like that; what have we to fear. Why should our hearts be troubled if we believe in this kind of God? There is no other true and living God. But there are some who would make a god out of the Devil; and there are many who claim to be their own god,—free to act in and of themselves independently of the ALMIGHTY GOD. Let me repeat the words of Jesus, "Let not your hearts be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me."

In fear of God, I submit this for your consideration. May God bless the truth and pardon all errors.

(Elder) A. D. Hughett,
R.F.D. 2,
Selah, Washington

ASSOCIATION

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 11, 12, 13, 1953. All lovers of the truth are invited to be with us.

Sanford S. Bartlett, Clerk
Damariscotta Mills, Maine

NOTICE OF MEETINGS

Mt. Zion Church, at St. Helens, Oregon, the Lord willing, will hold a three day meeting beginning Friday before the fourth Sunday in August, at the church house located in St. Helens, twenty-six miles out of Portland.

For further information write Mrs. Wyona Mills, Church clerk, 542 N. E. 80 Street, Portland, Oregon.

The annual three-day meeting of Bethel Predestinarian Baptist Church, of Riffe, Washington, will be held, the Lord willing, beginning August 14th, and continue the following two days.

All brethern and sisters of our faith and order are invited to meet with us; also, friends are always welcome.

For further information write Elder D. C. Davis, Ajlune, Washinton; or Mrs. Rosa Coleman, Riffe, Washington.

ASSOCIATIONS

The 1953 session of the South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association will convene with Smyrna Church, Union County, Arkansas, commencing Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, and continue through Sunday (Sept. 25, 26 and 27). This church is located nine miles South of El Dorado, Arkansas, about one mile East of U. S. Highway 167.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes, Moderator

WELSH TRACT CHURCH HISTORY

Our first edition of the Welsh Tract Church History has been so favorably received that the 500 printed have been mailed out.

We have another edition now ready; if you have not received your copy, do not delay in ordering. Price $1.00 per copy, or one copy given free with each new subscriber until further notice.

D. V. S.

The Pigg River Association is appointed to meet with Basham Church, beginning Friday before the First Sunday in August.

John D. Wood, Clerk

EDITORIALS

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TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

P O. Box 1271 **Danville, Va.**

EDITORIAL

SUPPORT OF THE MINISTRY

Recently a group of old Baptists, who are in full fellowship with the doctrine advocated from the beginning by the Signs, were discussing various phases of doctrinal truths. One threw in his mite; another enlarged on a subject precious to all; a third asked this question: We all believe in maintaining good works (Or, they asked, do we?), and it was agreed that we do, then she asked, Why is it that you preachers and writers do not write upon those things? Silence. More silence. Finally this sister, who is respected from coast to coast, turned to me and asked: Why do you not write on our people visiting the sick, walking circumspectly by; the evils of Old Baptist visiting grogshops; doing good unto all men; support of the ministry? Silence. More of the same. A long wait, hoping that someone would come to my assistence. Finally, I had to admit that one reason that I did not do so, was because I was afraid to do so.

Saying that was the wrong thing. For I was challenged to "know no man after the flesh" and to write on these things, and suggesting that I write on the title of this article. I have written on this subject in other places, but I do not know how to write to my people who know my life in detail; over whom the Holy Ghost, as I hope, has made me overseer; whom I hope to continue to live in fellowship with as long as I am tabernacling in this body of clay. Yet, I should not be this way, for if I have any close brethern and friends, they are among my own that I am trying to serve from day to day. I feel to hope that should I deviate from sound doctrine that they will deal with me kindly, remembering that, at best, I am a frail vessel.

I would say to one and all that I am not after any man's silver and gold. Unless I am sadly mistaken in my call to the ministry, it is not a meat and bread affair. I have a fond hope that it is of far more importance than that. I feel to hope, that at least part of the time I would have gone if there had not been any money left in the world, even to taking it foot and hand to reach the assembly of God's people. At the same time, in my struggle to serve my brethren and to keep my family clothed and fed, in some instances I do not know how that I would have gotten by if it had not been for the brethren lending a helping hand.

Let us face the issue fairly and candidly. Let us talk it over as brethren and sisters in the Lord. We are not all called to preach. No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron (Heb. 5:4). But all preachers' families must eat and dress and maintain homes just like all of the church members. If you think I am on a forbidden subject, you ask your pastor about his struggle to rear his fa-

mily, pay for his home and go among the churches. We all believe that there is something in this subject, for it effects us all. Some of the Old Baptist believe in helping their pastor; others believe in not doing it. In many cases, it is those unable to do, that show the most willing mind and that do the most. I do not see much of the grace of God in this kind of treatment to those that are called to leave their homes, their work and businesses, their every day tasks and to serve others. Now let the objector speak: But we are poor, and have a large family, and can scarcely make ends meet. This is all true, but the thing that is true with this objector is this: the pastor is in exactly the same shape, and in addition he must go to serve the churches. It is fair for me to ask this question: Would you (and I am writing to you) feel like leaving your plow stand twelve times a year to go serve me, or any other man that is serving churches? How would you feel if we were to call on you in a professional job and you hired some one to work in your place for twelve times a year to come to serve us?

It has been said, Let the Lord keep them humble and we will keep them poor. This has been said as scriptural action, as the work of the Spirit in the children of God. It isn't to be found in the scriptures; it isn't the more excellent way that is of the Lord, but it is the works of the flesh. Covetousness is one of the most rigidly condemned sins in the Bible, and it is not of the world of ungodly men, but the children of God that are condemned for this sin. When the Old Testament speaks of covetousness it always means to "gain dishonestly", and in the New Testament it always means "a lover of silver" and "to wish for more". I will illustrate what I mean. These illustrations are not the remarks of any one that will see this, so no offense will be given unless they fit. A few years ago one of our churches was at a low ebb. The membership was low and scattered; the pastor was poor and afflicted; the house was in a bad state of repair. Two or three still were interested enough to try to pay the minister's expenses and to build some new steps. One brother said: "If God wants any steps built he can build them, and if the preacher wants any money he can work for it." This man was considered sound. Was he?

Another case that I know about: A man had an argument with a friend about paying the salary of their minister. During the depression years it was hard for any kind of salary to be paid, so these people were finding it hard to pay. This brother gave the Arminian the horse laugh by saying; "Pshaw, it only takes a few dollars a year to pay for our minutes, and otherwise we do not use money." This man was a deacon and considered sound. Was he a deacon, and was he sound? This man did not know, or did not care, that his pastor had served him for years, spending the money that belonged to his wife and children to do so. Yet, he owned a farm worth thousands of dollars and his pastor did not own a foot of land.

In no sense of the word is this article meant to encourge ministers to fail to go to their appointments because of the slackness of their brethren, but rather to be punctual in every promise and every duty to which you are called. But I must be faithful and charge the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ that you be found faithfully observing every phase of the duties that you have obligated yourself to perform. I have been in the ordination of several deacons. It has fallen to my lot to do the most of the clerical work in such things. On one occasion it was laid on me to give the charge. I told my brethren in the presbytery that I could not give a charge that would suit, but nevertheless it was assigned to me. I tried to give that deacon a charge that he would diligently look after the minister that they called, to see that he not only had something for his expenses, but something for his time, and then to put in something extra that would help for the many funerals and churches which would not help.

We all believe in doing the right thing. But the **right thing too** many times is what we think, regardless of what the Scriptures teach. Every Old Baptist in the United States subscribes to the tenet of faith that reads like this: We believe that the Old and New Testaments are the word of God and that they contain everything for a rule of faith and practice. Faith still means something to some of us (but we must decide what) but practice is not needed any more, except that it doesn't make any difference how you do, since God has predestinated it all, and even if a man's practice is not good, if his faith is, he is alright. I have searched carefully, and I want to say to one and all, that that kind of stuff is as foreign to what Elders Beebe, Chick, Durand, Purington and a host of others taught as a thing can be. I am prepared to say, and by the grace of God, I hope, to prove, that, while these old fathers of Israel contended earnestly for the unlimited predestination of God, that they just as faithfully contended for a sound and careful practice or walk. Today, we all believe in doing right. Even if it is **right wrong**, we believe in doing that which is according to our preconceived thoughts of right and wrong.

Does the Bible make it plain that the minister should be helped along his way? For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things, (Rom. 15:27), and while this is primarily for the poor, I have known but few exceptions of our ministers being poor working men. To place these "spiritual things" and these "carnal things" on an equal footing is certainly begging the question and subverting the scriptures as well as the believers. One is the "things of the Spirit", the other "the things of the flesh", that is, meat and drink. The apostle further says, When therefore I have performed this (the collection of the contribution for the poor saints) and have sealed to them this fruit (those in Macedonia and Achaia) then I will come into Spain. Apparently this was important to Paul.

"If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ. Do ye know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. (1Cor. 9:11, 14). I beleive that every minister feasts on the gospel he preaches. But I do not beleive that Paul was talking about this here, for he declares that he has not used this power (v. 12,15). If Paul had not used this gift (living of the gospel), it follows that he was talking of something other than feasting on that that he preached. He further declares "that he has not written about this thing so that it can be done unto me" and I feel to hope that that is my feeling and experience. I believe that if the Apostle could discuss this subject and not be doing it for personal gain, that we might be blessed likewise today. At least I hope so.

"Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessilonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account." (Phil. 4: 15, 17). Every minister of the gospel has experienced all this. I once heard my father in the ministry, the late Elder G. W. Berry, say that when he first begin to preach that he gave a charge to a deacon at ordination in which he stressed his duty towards his pastor. Elder Berry said that some of the Old Baptist suspected that he would soon return to the Missionary Baptist

because of this view. But he lived and died in full fellowship with the Old Baptist and told me not long before he died that one church that he served for years had not given him as much as ten dollars. This church was certainly not like the church at Philippi. How many have we got today like the one at Philippi? And how many churches with members reading this, that are helping your pastor in his struggle to serve you? The church mentioned above is one that believed in "the Lord keep them humble and we will keep them poor".

There is not an Old Baptist minister in this United States that does not have settled convictions in regard to this question. The most of them are just exactly like I have been—afraid to mention it—and yet have been told time and again that the ministers are to be blamed for the state of affairs that exist in regard to this matter. I have shunned the question among you, and probably would have continued to do so if it had not been put up to me as it was. I want to say that my brethren have been towards me as have the Philippi brethren—they have ministered to me time and again. I am not finding fault with them. But I do think that many of our brethren are abused—that they are called and die in the harness for the church that called them with a desire to preach the gospel without cost to any one, yet they have been neglected and mistreated by the very ones that they serve.

I will conclude this by asking again: How would you feel if someone ten, twenty, fifty miles away, called on you to leave your affairs twelve times a year and drive into his neighborhood to help him? Perhaps you could, but the question is, Would you do it? And if you did do it, would it be right for you do so on your own time and own expense? Again, I do not have a personal axe to grind, for I have a very nice place in government service, and make a living at it, but if what I have written stirs up your mind to look carefully after your pastor I will not have sent this out in vain.

I believe in the purpose of God respecting all events. I do not expect to frustrate that purpose in any degree. He is the ruler in heaven and earth. He is the supreme Architect and the sole Arbiter of all creation. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God and our Saviour be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. (Jude 24).

W. D. G

"I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart, for I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethern, my kinsmen according to the flesh." (Romans 9:1-3)

The portion of the above Scripture quotation which reads, "For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethern, my kinsmen according to the flesh", has often given us concern as to just what the Apostle meant to convey. It bothered us much, since we could find no counterpart in our own experience; and we do believe that the Scriptures are proved the truth to us by the things we have experienced and comprehend by faith. Not that we ever feel to deny any portion of the Scriptures, but we are often concerned as to expressions used.

Some years ago we were discussing this text with a brother deacon, who had a deep understanding of the truth, and he said, "I don't understand that, for I have never experienced anything like that." And we say that neither have we. It is quite doubtful that any child of God is ever called upon in his feelings to be willing to be cast away from his hope in Christ (an impossible

thing), in order that another might be brought to the knowledge of the truth. The matter is too personal, too intimate and too valuable; and something that is never required of a subject of grace. What we have is ours, and ours alone, by the grace of God, and cannot be lost, given away or sold; and none can take it from us.

So this expression has given us much concern, and puzzled us for several years. It cannot have the same meaning as expressed by John in his first Epistle, which we hope we know something about: "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethern." For John was speaking of the love that is manifested for our brethern when we are blessed to do all possible for their comfort and edification in our relationship in the gospel, saying, "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but IN DEED and IN TRUTH.

Neither may we suppose that the Apostle is intimating that there would be any efficacy in his being accursed from Christ for his kinsmen according to the flesh; for he knew that in Christ Jesus alone was there salvation. Again, neither may we suppose that the Apostle meant that it would be possible for him to be accursed from Christ. Such a thought would be directly contrary to what he had just stated in the eighth chapter: "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

We believe we can understand Paul's concern for his kinsmen, the Israelites: for he knew their enmity for Christ. He was once as bitter against Christ as any of them; and went to greater ends than most of them. Do we not also have many thoughts concerning those who oppose the very things which we know to be the truth in Christ Jesus; and are more concerned since we know that we were in the same darkness when in our unregenerated state. It is sometimes said, "Unbelievers are more to be pitied than censured." And this, perhaps is how the Apostle felt toward his kinsmen, knowing as he did, that, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." etc.

In the tenth chapter we read, "Brethern, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." It is quite a different thing to pray that the Lord might save, if it be His will, than it is to desire oneself to be accursed from Christ for them.

Then just what did the Apostle mean? When our attention was again called to the subject while doing some reading, we went to the Diaglott to find out what the literal translation of the Greek is; and found that the wishing was in the past tense: I WAS WISHING myself to be an accursed thing from Christ. This put an entirely different light on the matter.

We understand, therefore, that Paul was not wishing that he might NOW be accursed (as if this might bring them to see the truth in Christ); but, rather, reflecting on his own life, THAT HE WAS ONCE ACCURSED (SEPARATED) FROM CHRIST (and delighted in it), and would have no more to do with Christ then than his kinsmen would now. This is a parenthetical expression and explains why he is concerned for

them. Paul, now being brought into the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ, knew their blind zeal, and was in heaviness and sorrow for them; for to them pertained the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came.

In spite of all this concern, we see how quickly and completely the Apostle expresses the faith of God's elect. (Modern religionists would have made an altogether different approach: It would have been a wonderful opportunity for them to start to work. But nothing of the kind with the Apostle.) He knew the power of the word of God, and said, "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but in Isaac shall thy seed be called." Paul knew the election of grace,—that the Lord his God would work mightily in those who were children of promise, and bring them at his own time into the light of the gospel, just as he himself had been brought, He knew that the purpose of God according to election would stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; and quoted, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."

"What shall we say then?" he cried, "Is there unrighteousness with God?" "GOD FORBID." God had said to Moses that he would have mercy on whom he would have mercy, and compassion on whom he would have compassion; and so the Apostle declared in language which is echoed in the hearts of every subject of grace: "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that Sheweth mercy."

This is what we now see in this Scripture. It is submitted for your consideration.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION

Our Standard Lexicon defines **Absolute** to mean, in its literal or general sense, free, independant of anything extraneous. 2. complete in itself; positive, as an **absolute** declaration. 3. unconditional; as an **absolute** promise. 4. existing independent of another cause; as, God is absolute. 5. Unlimited by extraneous power or control; as an **absolute** government or prince. 6. Not relative; as absolute space. See Webster's definition. As this word is no where used in the scripture to qualify the word **Predestination,** we will not contend for it, especially as the word **predestination** when rightly understood needs no such qualification, as it cannot be otherwise than absolute. We merely used the word **absolute** to distinguish our views of **predestination** from those who, while they admit that the term is frequently used in the scriptures, deny its plain and obvious meaning, as though it were only vaguely used by the inspired writers, without any positive or unequivocal meaning.

On the signification of the word **predestination** our brother is correct; it means foreordination by an unchangeable purpose. But the grand question on which we are principally at issue, is, whether the predestination of God extends to the wicked actions of men or devils. We have rejoiced greatly in the firm belief, that God's goverment is universal, that "there is not a sparrow nor a worm, but's found in his decree." That sin and death, and hell are under his control, so that the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain. And if the scriptures do not authorize us so to believe we know not at what hour we may fall a prey to the unbridled rage of the enemies of God and of his people. If the divine government of Jehovah only ex-

tends to the good conduct of his creatures, his government is much more limited in regard to this world, than we had supposed, for he has informed us that there is none that doeth good; no not one. But that he has set limits to the wicked men, we should infer from his declaration, "I have formed the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and bringeth forth an instrument for his work; I have created the waster to destroy. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that riseth against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Isa. liv. 16. 17.

If God has created the smith, and the waster to destroy, and so limited their operations that they cannot go beyond his decree, and if this is a part of the heritage of his servants, they cannot yield it without marring their inheritance. We confess that to us this part of the saints inheritance is too valuable to be sold for a mess of pottage. Paul has said, that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; and God has told us, by the mouth of Isaiah, that he has declared the end from the beginning, &c., saying my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure, calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country; yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass, I have purposed it, I will also do it." How unmeaning would all this language be to us in the absence of predestination! The end declared from the beginning and yet not determined in the mind or purpose of God, how preposterous!

We cannot believe that our God would declare a thing beforehand that he was undecided upon, and which might be quite different from what he had declared; and if he has only declared what he had determined on, that is the most absolute predestination that we have any knowledge of. And this predetermination of events, extends throughout all the intervening space from the beginning to the end, and consequently embraces all things. When wicked men conspired against the life and liberty of Joseph, and against the predestination of his and their own destiny as signified by Joseph's dreams; they intended evil but God intended all for good. If God had not previously intended to harden Pharoah's heart he would not have told Moses that he would do so. If he had not predestinated that the children of Israel should sojourn in a strange land, and be afflicted by the Egyptians four hundred years, he certainly would not have told Abram so; read Gen. XV. 12—16. Let it be remembered that God told Abram this long before either the children of Israel or the Egyptians who were to be concerned in it were born, and the things which the Egyptians were to do to the children of Israel were such, as God told Abram he would judge and punish them for.

The Son of God was delivered into the hands of wicked men, that they should, with wicked hands, do to him what God's hand and counsel had before determined to be done. He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.

Paul writes to the Thessalonians concerning the manifestation of that wicked people, whom the Lord would destroy, and says, God will send them strong delusions that they may believe a lie, that all may be damned, etc. God said by the mouth of Isaiah that he would choose their delusions. This is a solid Bible testimony, and is what we intend to express by the words absolute predestination. And pray, brother, what objection have you to it? Would you wish the right, the power, or the government of God to be circumscribed? Would you wish to restrict his government, and confine his dominion to good people and their good works, and leave the powers of darkness to rage at random, without the restraint of God's predestinating decrees?

Are you fearful that this view reflects upon the purity and holiness of God? But why these fears? Are not the inspired Scriptures sufficiently guarded to secure the honor of their supreme Author? If not, all our attempts to supply the supposed deficiency will be as vain, if not as presumptive, as Uzzah's attempt to protect the ark of God. Because God controls, restrains, overrules and disposes of all beings, and all events, precisely as he enternally designed to do, it does not by any means follow that he is the fountain from whence impurity proceeds. He is perfectly holy, just and good; but he has all power to set bounds and limits to that which is unholy, unjust and wicked. If it be admitted that God now has power to restrain the wickedness of men and devils, according to his sovereign pleasure, and that he is immutable, then it follows that he always had that power. If it be denied that he has that power, where is the safety of his church? Or if he has now a perfect knowledge of all beings and of all events, then he must always have had that knowledge.

It certainly does not become us to say that either his wisdom, holiness, prescience or power is at fault that he has allowed his creatures to rebel against his government, when he had power and wisdom enough to have prevented it, if it had been his pleasure to have done so. We do not charge our brother, nor those brethern who are associated with him, with attempting to limit Jehovah, or set bounds for him to be governed by, but we would give and take admonition, "Be still and know that he is God." If we cannot comprehend him, it still is our privilege to confide in him, for he is too wise to err, and too good to do that which is wrong.

We have no disposition to press our views on those who do not understand the Scriptures as we do on every subject. But we wish all our readers to understand that we do as firmly believe, and as greatly rejoice in the doctrine of Predestination, and its extension to everything in heaven, earth and hell, as we do in any other part of divine revelation.

(Editorial of Elder Gilbert Beebe, July 1, 1855)

The foregoing article was published in the editorial columns of the Signs of the Times nearly half a century ago, and many thousands of copies of it read in nearly every State and Territory of the country, and received by the brethern and sisters generally, as the truth. As then stated by our dear father, "This is solid Bible testimony, and it is what we intend to express by absolute predestination," so we now state. Many of the dear saints have been deceived by a misrepresentation of the position of the Signs on this subject, and we can but feel that in many cases they have been deceived by those who knew they were misrepresenting us. There has been an effort to make it appear that the Signs advocates, and its patrons believe, that God, or the Holy Spirit of God, prompts man to sin. Some have even gone so far as to say that with us a man can commit any sin, and if arraigned before the church, he can plead that it was all predestinated, and we are obliged to accept his plea, and can take no further action in church disicipline.

Now if any one will show us a single number of the Signs of the Times, in which any such sentiment is published, either in the editorial, or correspondents' columns, we will make a public acknowledgement of the error if in an editorial, or if by a correspondent, we will refute the same, and beg forgiveness of our brethern for having published it.

We have been pained to observe of late a disposition to resort to ridicule, and slang, in referring to brethern who believe the doctrine of the predestination of all thing, designating them as "The can't help its." Aside from all question as to the truth or error of the views held by the brethern on this subject, there can be no doubt as to the

spirit manifested in such a course being prompted by the carnal mind. It is one of the strongest evidences of the self-consciousness of the weakness of the position of an opponent, when he is driven to ridicule or derision, in an effort to maintain his position.

As to the appellation itself, taken in a scriptural sense, it is not so objectionable to us. We were born of the Adamic race, and we, "can't help it"; we were conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity, and we "can't help it"; we are prone to evil as the sparks are to fly upward, and we "can't help it"; the good that we would, we do not; but the evil which we would not, that we do, and we "can't help it". Almost endless instances of scriptural definitions might be sighted in which we know that we are a "can't help it." Does it then follow that we are led or prompted by the Holy Spirit to sin? God forbid. From whence, then come these wicked promptings, causing us to sin? Let an ancient inspired "can't help it" answer. He says, "Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." (Romans 7:20)

Now if Paul did that he would not, he most certainly was a "can't help it." But he does not leave us in the dark as to why he could not help it, but tells us it was because of sin that dwelt in him. Inherent sin is the cause of all our wicked acts, the grace of God is the restraint, power, or limit placed upon them. The Psalmist says, "The wrath of man shall praise theen: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." In our sinful nature we are full of wrath against God; our carnal mind is enmity against him, and is ever striving to rebel against his holy law, and if not held in restraint by his almighty power, will make itself manifest. The engineer admits just such amount of steam in his engine as may be necessary to accomplish his work, and the remainder he restrains, but what sane man would say that the engineer propells the engine? Just so we understand our God permits just sufficient amount of the wrath of man to escape to accomplish his praise, and the remainder he restrains.

That every thought, act and circumstance is as firmly fixed in the future, as in the past, and that by the determinate counsel of God, we most sincerely believe, and this is what we mean by predestination of all things. If this doctrine seems, to some, to be fraught with too fearful consequences, we have no disposition to argue the matter; the inspired word, to our mind, answers all cavilings on that point. What we wish to refute in this article is the false charge that is being circulated that the Signs, and those who indorse its position in regard to predestination, believe that the Holy Spirit prompts men to sin, and that a member of any of our churches having been overtaken in a fault, could plead that his wickedness was predestinated and therefore he was not responsible, and we would be obliged to accept this excuse, and could not deal with him for his sin. As stated above, we never knew of such a case, but if we should, we would have no hesitance as to what course to pursue. In the first place, we should have very serious doubts about any one who could commit sin, (whether discovered by his brethern or not) and not experience, "a certain looking for of judgement," having any knowledge of the grace of God. But, be that as it may, we have the law of the gospel directing us how to proceed against a transgressor, and if we act in obedience to that, we need have little concern as to whether or not it is in harmony with the reasonings of the carnal mind as to justice.

When we commenced this article it was on our mind to simply append a note, stating that the editorial above, was in accord with the views of the present editors of the Signs, and its readers in general, as far as we understand them, but we have extended it to a much greater length than we intended, and ask the forgiveness of our brethern for trespassing upon their forbearance.

(Editorial by B. L. Beebe when he re-

published the editorial on Absolute Predestination in February, 1898)

In publishing the above again, we will be understood to affirm that we are in accord with the editors of former days.

J. D. W.

OBITUARY

ELDER E. L. COBB

In the afternoon of February 25, 1953, Elder E. L. Cobb fell quietly asleep in death after a long lingering illness, at his home in Wilson, N. C. He was seventy-one years of age; and the son of the late John E. and Lucy Lewis Cobb.

He was born November 4, 1881. On September 9, 1903, he was united in matrimony with Minnie Lawrence Warren, and from this union three children were born. Two boys died in infancy; one daughter, Mrs. Agnes Petway and her husband live with her mother.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders W. E. Turner and R. B. Denson at the home in Wilson, N. C., which were largely attended; and the floral tributes were numerous. He was laid to rest in the family plot in Wilson Cemeery.

Elder Cobb was born in Edgecombe County, N. C., and moved to Wilson, where he was a successful business man, and managed his own affairs well. In February, 1916, he united with the Primitive Baptist Church, Wilson, N. C., and was baptized by Elder Frank Farmer. He was liberated to speak in public August, 1917, and ordained to the ministry in November, 1919. In later years Elder Cobb moved his membership to the White Oak Church.

In the course of his ministry, he served nine churches, namely: Old Sparta, White Oak, Pittmans Grove, Raleigh, Norfolk, Aycocks, Healthy Plains, Durham and Gooch Memorial. He also served as Moderator of the Black Creek Association for a number of years. He was known far and near as a man with a wonderful gift; and his quiet manner and love for others won for himself much love and respect.

May his loved ones and friends find comfort in the things that he loved and cherished: Salvation by Grace. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." (Psalms 116:15) Written by request.

J. J. Whitley,
Durham, N. C.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God in love and mercy called from our midst by death on February 25, 1953, Elder E. L. Cobb, our much loved former pastor,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, First, that we bow in humble submission to the passing of this our loving and humble leader and undershepherd for eighteen years.

Second, that we cherish the memory of this faithful servant, who always manifested his love, duty and devotion during his many years of service. When he became unable to serve on account of ill health, the Durham Church went on record to hold him as their honorary pastor for the remainder of his life.

Third, that we extend to Sister Cobb, his daughter and son-in-law, and his many friends, our deepest heartfelt sympathy and love.

Fourth, that a copy of these resolutions be placed on our church records, a copy sent to the bereaved family, and a copy sent to Zions Landmark, Old Faith Contender and Signs of the Times for publication.

Written by order of the Durham Primitive Baptist Church while in conference on Saturday before the third Sunday in March, 1953.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Brother J. J. Whitley, Clerk

DELLA WILLIAMS LYNSKEY

Our beloved sister, Della Williams Lynskey, passed to her reward on December 25, 1952. She was the oldest child of John and Texanna Williams, and was married to John J. Lynskey. She is survived by five children, of which four live in New Jersey.

Della had not been well for about a year; and her sisters were summoned to her bedside Christmas Eve, and I stood by her all night. It was hard to give her up, but, if she could have spoken, she would have wanted us there. Della never joined the church, but was a strong believer in the Primitive Baptist Doctrine and attended church when possible. She was a loving sister, and a dutiful wife and mother, having nursed her husband, who was an invalid for seven years.

Elder D. V. Spangler conducted the funeral from a local funeral home. She will be greatly missed by her family and her neighbors. May we all feel that, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be His Holy Name."

Written by her sister in twofold love,
Ella Richardson

ELD. ISAAC FERREL COLEMAN

Elder Isaac Ferrel Coleman, born August 22, 1870 in the state of Virginia, passed away March 12, 1953 in Centralia, Washington, at the age of 82 years, six months and 20 days. He was married to Rosa Allice Riffe, July 25, 1895, who, with three sons and five daughters, survive him. The sons are Earl Coleman,

of Hoquian, Washington, Ralph of LaHabra, Calif., and Ernest of Kennydale, Washington. The daughters are Mrs. E. J. Drew, LaMesa, California, Mrs. S. L. Mills, Riffe, Washington, Mrs. S. N. Shaw, Huntington Park, California, Mrs. P. E. Jellum, Pendleton, Oregon and Mrs. O. E. Molthu, Coquille, Oregon. He is also survived by twenty-two grandchildren and five great-grandchildren, one brother, Jasper, of Morton, Washington.

Elder Coleman joined the Primitive Baptist Church in Virginia when he was eighteen years old, and was ordained to the ministry on August 20, 1904. Elder Coleman was one of the most humble servants that I have ever known. At his passing he was pastor at Bethel Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church at Riffe, Washington. This church was organized in Virginia and moved in a body to Washington nearly sixty years ago. Elder Riffe, his father-in-law, was the pastor at that time.

Elder Coleman had been sick for some time and the writer had been visiting his church during his illness. During one of these visits he requested me to conduct his funeral services at his passing. During all my years in the ministry I have never conducted a funeral for anyone who had such a large gathering of brethern and friends. He was well known and loved by all. He was laid to rest in Claquato Cemetery, about five miles west of Chehalis, Washington, to await the resurrection. May it please the dear Lord to comfort Sister Coleman, her children, the many friends and the little church, in this sad hour.

T. R. Jefferson

I, (Deacon) D. C. Davis of Bethel Church wish to add, in memory of our beloved Moderator and Pastor, to the above obituary the following:

Elder Coleman was an able Minister, a friend to all men and spoke ill of none. He faithfully filled, in character and deed, the requirements of an Elder considering the care of the Church above worldly obligations. He was given to hospitality and his home, presided over by his gracious and faithful wife, Rosa, was the gathering place of local and visiting Baptists.

We feel that he, like Paul, fought a good fiight, kept the faith and has gone to his reward. In conclusion we repeat his last spoken word--"AMEN".

D. C. Davis

In memory of our mother, Mrs. Jennie Holley, who passed away one year ago today, April 18, 1952.

Before our eyes mother faded,
Growing weaker day by day;
Patiently bearing her suffering
Until God took her away.

Human hands toiled hard to save her;
Prayers and tears seemed all in vain.
Happy angels came and took her
From this weary world of pain.

Her many dear unselfish traits
She showed day after day,
Are in treasured memories
That will not pass away.

And many lives will be more blessed
Because they have known awhile
The beauty of her character,
The sweetness of her smile.

Dear mother, sleep thy last sleep
Free from all care and sorrow;
Rest, where none may weep,
Till the eternal morrow.

Not always shall this parting be,
The time passes slow;
We too will claim eternity
And find the way you go.

Her children
(By Mrs. J. H. Payne, daughter)

MRS. LOUELLA GOODRICH

God in His wisdom saw fit to call from our midst our precious sister, Mrs. Louella Goodrich, whom we loved so dearly.

Sister Goodrich was born October 5, 1879, in Dixon County, Tenn. Was married to Brother M. S. Goodrich 1895, and came to Texas 1905.

To their union eight children were born, all of whom survive: Four sons, L. C., O. R., J. D. and W. H. Goodrich, all of Dallas, Texas. Four daughters, Mrs. G. H. Ford, Mrs. J. D. Glatin, Mrs. A. H. Hodges and Mrs. Virginia Dellard, all of Dallas, Texas.

Sister Goodrich was well loved and highly respected by her church, neighbors, friends, and all who knew her. Her life was an open, and inspiring book, showing forth her faith and love in and for her dear Saviour.

She was a faithful member of the Old School Baptist Church for more than forty years. Always kind and generous, filling her place well, discharging the duties of the same until ill health prevented her doing so.

We realize that the family has lost a precious mother and we, the members of Saints Rest, have lost a precious member, but as our sympathy goes out to the breaved family, we feel the sweet assurance that our loss is her gain.

Yes, we feel as she quietly passed away from this world, April 17, 1953, at her home 2818 Model St., Dallas, Texas that it was a peaceable departure and she is now resting peacefully awaiting the glorious ressurection

morning when she, together with all the saints of God, will come forth in the glorious likeness of the dear Saviour to forever be with Him were sorrow, pain or death never, never, come. Amen.

Funeral services were conducted April 18, 1953 by her unworthy pastor (and writer) together with Elder L. D. Rose, at the O'Neal Funeral Home, Dallas, Texas; after which her body was laid to rest in Restland cemetery to await the glorious appearing of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and be forever with Him in peace.

Her unworthy pastor;
Elder W. W. Taylor

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Whereas, our all wise Father has been pleased to remove from the scenes of this mortal life our esteemed friend and sister, Mary Jane Humphrey, and we bow in humble submission to the Giver, whom she surely loved. Therefore, be it

Resolved that we give thanks to our Heavenly Father for the gift of our sister, and wife of our pastor, Elder Eddie Humphrey; and

Resolved, that we send a copy of these resolutions to the Signs of the Times, Old Faith Contender and Zions Landmark for publication; and a copy to the bereaved family.

Done by the unanimous consent of the North River Primitive Baptist Church on Saturday before the first Sunday in April, 1953.

Elder Eddie Humphrey, Moderator
S. W. Lawrence, Clerk

MISS LUCY GURGANUS

It is with a sad heart that I write a short sketch in memory of my sister, Miss Lucy Gurganus, who was born September 6, 1871, and departed this life on May 18, 1952; making her stay on earth eighty years, and eight months. She spent most of her life in the vicinity of South West, near Jacksonville, N. C. She was the daughter of James and Talitha Dixon Gurganus; and made her home with a younger sister, Mrs. B. P. Williams, during the last few years. Three months before passing, she fell and broke her hip, and although all was done for her that could be done, none were able to stay the hand of death when the Master called. We feel our loss is her gain.

She leaves to mourn her departure two sisters, Mrs. B. P. Williams, Jacksonville, N. C. and Mrs. W. H. Cannon, Newport, N. C., several nieces and nephews, and a host of relatives and friends Let us not weep, dear ones, for those who have a hope in the Lord, for her hope was fully based on God's great love. She often said she had no one else to depend on but God, and her trust was in Him. She said that she had had a hope since early womanhood, but did not offer to the church until October, 1922. It was at a meeting in my home when she, her sister and my husband came forward and were received; and were baptized by Elder R. W. Gurganus.

She remained a faithful member until death, missing but four Quarterly meetings during her many years in the church. Her greatest desire was to be faithful to her church, visit the sick and afflicted, and do all for them that she could. She always tried to speak well of all people, and look over their weaknesses and short comings for their good.

The funeral was conducted by Elder E. F. Pollard, who spoke comforting words from Paul's writings, saying that she had fought a good fight, had kept the faith once delivered to the saints. Closing remarks were made by Elder R. W. Gurganus; then she was laid to rest in the family burying ground near her home, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, which showed the high esteem in which she was held, to await the resurrection when Christ shall come to call his saints home. Then we shall be like him and be satisfied.

Since dear sister you have left us,
And you lay beneath the sod,
No one here on earth can wake you —
No one to save you but your God.

Now that your span of life is over,
And the battle has been won,
May we bow in humble submission
And say, our Father's will be done.

Written by her youngest sister,
Mrs. W. H. Cannon

JOHN D. SIMMONS

Brother Simmons was born in Ashland, Texas, May 22, 1871, and departed this life March 6, 1953; making his stay here on earth eighty-one years, nine months and twelve days. He was a prominent farmer in Harrison County, and was widely known and well respected throughout this country.

Brother Simmons was married to Mrs. Florence Carrington in June, 1915, who survives him. He is also survived by two brothers: W. H. Simmons and J. A. Simmons, James, Texas; one half-brother, J. E. Simmons, Harleton, Texas; one half-sister, Mrs. Rebecca Campbell, Mana, Louisiana, and one step-son, Ennis Carrington, White Oak, Texas.

A member of the Primitive Baptist Church for fifty-three years, Brother Simmons was widely known, loved and esteemed among them. He served as a deacon, and also moderator of the Fellowship Association for a number

of years. He filled his positions well, and it was with great humility and humble fear that he served among the churches and people of God. The writer knew him for many years, and in my humble opinion he bore the mark and abundant evidence of one of the humble servants of the Lord. To know him was to love him. It is a comfort to the bereaved companion and family and many friends that, though he has gone the way of all earth, yet from the evidence of the light of the Holy Spirit in him, we feel that our loss is his eternal and glorious gain. His sufferings, sorrows and pains are all over, and we feel that that blessed day will soon come when the Lord will come to call his sleeping saints from the tomb and carry them away in those glorified bodies to that eternal and heavenly abode, where they will praise his blessed and holy name forever. We feel that we are justified in saying these things because Brother Simmons manifested a sweet hope and the precious faith which is the gift of God to his people.

Dear Sister Simmons, may the Lord bless and comfort you, sustain and uphold you. He says in the Scriptures that he would be a husband to the widow and a father to the fatherless, so I hope that the Lord will manifest his loving kindness towards you and cause you to trust in him both for time and eternity.

The funeral was conducted by the writer, assisted by Elders T. A. Wall and W. O. Beene, March 7th, in the chapel of Croley Funeral Home, Gilmer, Texas. There was a large and attentive congregation, and a lovely display of flowers, which clearly indicated the confidence and respect which Brother Simmons well deserved of those who knew him.

Burial was in the Walnut Creek Cemetery, near New Diana, Texas, to await the glorious resurrection at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. We would comfort all who look for Him with this word, we feel it will be but a short time until He comes, and then what a glorious time it will be when death and the grave are done away for all the Lord's people.

May God's richest blessings rest upon all who mourn. Your unworthy brother in hope.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

FRED L. COX

Brother Fred L. Cox was born in North Arkansas October 2, 1877, the son of M. S. and Jane Cox. He was reared on a farm; later lived in Arkdelphia and then moved to El Dorado, Arkansas. He died December 27, 1952, after two operations. Brother Cox is survived by two brothers and three sisters: John A. Cox, Charles Cox and Miss Leora Cox, Little Rock, Arkansas; Mrs. C. N. Morrison, Vienna, Ontario, Canada, and Mrs. W. M. McKenzie, Ola, Arkansas.

Brother Cox joined the Primitive Baptist church in North Arkansas quite a number of years ago; and later joined at Chapel Hill, which was Eld. J. T. Everett's home church, and was a constant visitor of all the Baptists wherever he had opportunity to go. Later he became a member of Bethel Church, after he became acquainted with the brethern around El Dorado. He was a firm believer in the doctrines held by Primitive Baptists, which was abundantly evidenced by his presence at the meetings, his conversation, his oftimes tears of joy and his frequent writings to the Signs of the Times.

Although poor in many respects, Brother Cox was rich in faith which was once delivered to the saints. He rejoiced under the sound gospel preaching as much as anyone I have ever known, and was well posted upon doctrinal subjects. When informed that he would have to undergo an operation, he sent for me to come visit him. After informing me of some business details, he told me weeping, "Brother Rhodes, I hope, if it is the Lord's will, that I will never wake from the operation." He further said that as old as he was, he would likely never be able to visit with the brethern and sisters again, and if so, he would rather go on. Thus proving what John said, "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethern."

Brethern, we have lost a rare jewel in the faith, and we shall greatly miss him, but we are fully satisfied that he sleeps in Jesus till the darkness and troubles, judgment and wars, and destructions of this world are past, when Jesus, Our Saviour, shall call, "Come, ye blesssed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

The writer, assisted by Elders W. A. Speer and W. W. Taylor, conducted the funeral, and he was buried in Bethel Cemetery.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

NANCY IDELLA ADKINS KOCH

Sister Nancy Idella Adkins Koch was born in Salisbury, Maryland, April 20, 1884, and passed away April 8, 1953, at her home in Philadelphia, Pa. She leaves her husband, Deacon T. C. Koch, to mourn her passing. Brother Kock is clerk of the Old School Baptist Church in Philadelphia, where Sister Kock was baptized into membership, April 18, 1915, by the pastor, Elder B. F. Coulter.

Her parents, the late Deacon Lambert Adkins and Ida Hitch Adkins, were members of the Old School Baptist Church of Salisbury, where she enjoyed going with them to meetings when a child. Sister Koch felt unworthy to be in the church, but was well established in the doctrine of salvation by grace. For sev-

eral years she was unable to attend, as she was in poor health and a great sufferer.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Barret Funeral Home in Philadelphia; and her body was laid to rest in Mt. Peace Cemetery. In my weakness I tried to speak words of comfort to brother Koch, relatives and friends, but I realize all things are in the hands of a just God.

(Elder) H. M. Bennett

LAURA ANN ADKINS

Sister Laura Ann Adkins, daughter of the late Stansbury B. and Levicia Ann Truitt Adkins, was born in Worcester County, Maryland, January 30, 1881.

While enroute to meeting with her two daughters and son-in-law on February 8, 1953, she was taken with a heart attack, and asked to be taken back to her daughter Levicia's home in Salisbury, where she passed away on arrival. Her many friends were shocked to learn of her sudden passing, but for several years she had been in poor health, and although we shall miss her, we feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

On January 4, 1904, she was united in marriage to the late Brother George Frances Adkins, of Wanga, Maryland, who was deacon and clerk of the Indiantown Church for several years. To this union eight children were born: Mrs. Gladys B. Eaton, Akron, Ohio; James B. Adkins, Salisbury, Maryland; Mrs. Levicia F. Andrews, Salisbury; William S. Adkins, Salisbury; Mrs. M. Catharine Perdue, Parsonsburg, Maryland; Mrs. Elizabeth M. Bell, Rhodesdale, Maryland; Mrs. L. Emma Shockley, Eden, Maryland, and George F. Adkins, Jr., Salisbury. There are thirteen grandchildren and one half-brother, Hartwell S. Adkins, also surviving.

A noble family indeed, which has risen up to be highly respected by all who know them. Their mother was kind and sweet to all her children, and was loved by all who knew her. She and Brother George lived on a farm near Powellsville, Maryland, for forty-five years. Sister Laura was given a hope in Christ several years before her baptism, and was a firm believer in Christ as the way, the truth and the life, but did not unite with the church until December 9, 1945, at which time she was baptized by the writer and received into Indiantown Church. The writer also conducted the funeral service in the Indiantown Meeting house. Interment was in the Forest Grove Cemetery.

(Elder) H. M. Bennett

HENRY M. THOMAS

I feel to give a sketch to the memory of our dear Brother Henry M. Thomas, who was born February 12, 1868, and who died February 26, 1953, near Ashland, Louisiana. He was married to Miss Lina Finley, January 5, 1893, who preceeded him in death two or three months (see obituary in May, 1953, Signs).

The following sons and daughters survive: Miss Maude Thomas, Miss Mabel Thomas, Mrs. Delia Godfrey, Mrs. Arlie Belle Reece, Mr. Claude Thomas, all of Caster, Louisiana; Mrs. Mary Fisher, Conehatta, Mississippi, and Mrs. Minnie Hicks, Sampti, Louisiana.

Brother Thomas was blessed with a long, honorable respected life on this earth, having lived eighty-five years here. He joined the Oak Grove Primitive Baptist Church under the ministry of Elder J. J. White, and was a member of this church when he died. The writer was blessed to visit this section of the country about thirty-five years ago, and met Bro. and Sister Thomas then; and renewed acquaintence with them a few years ago. They were lovely children of God, as manifested in their conversation and in their countenance.

Brother Thomas was too feeble to attend the funeral of Sister Thomas, and from conversation with him at that time and his appearance, he showed that he did not expect to live long. Dearly beloved and bereaved children, we feel that they are at rest beyond this veil of sorrow, suffering, troubles and death, awaiting that glorious day when the Lord Jesus Christ, our blessed Saviour, shall come in the brightness of his glory, and shall call all his sleeping saints from the tomb in his glorious image, to be with Him forever.

Brother Thomas was buried in the Oak Grove Cemetery. His funeral was conducted by the writer in the presence of a large congregation of relatives and friends. He will be greatly missed by the members of his family and all who knew him. Funeral services were in charge of Rockett Funeral Home, of Ringgold, Louisiana.

May the Lord bless and comfort all that mourn.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

suffer any trials and any need. They would be on the mountain top, surely they would, if in their power rejoicing instead of being in the valley. If sufficient of themselves, surely they would never have to cry out of the belly of hell. We understand that Jonah was cast into the sea. "So they took up Jonah and cast him forth into the sea and the sea ceased from her raging." (1:15) "For thou hadst cast me into the deep, into the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about; and all thy billows and thy waves passed over me." (2:3) "I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal;" (Deut. 32:39) "For he maketh sore, and bindest up; he woundeth, and his hands make whole." (Job 5:18-19)

How comforting it is to his children that it is said; "Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah." (1:17) This great fish the LORD had prepared, seems to me, among the many things it represents and denotes, it most surely is figurative of the LORD'S love, mercy and grace in having prepared a way of escape for his children out of the dangers, pitfalls, snares and temptations and for their delivery out of all their troubles. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (1 Cor. 10:13) "And the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah up on dry land." (2:10) "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Pet. 1:5)

We do not praise the LORD when we are in trouble but instead we cry unto him. "I cried unto the LORD with my voice: with my voice unto the LORD did I make supplication. I poured out my complaint before him; I showed before him my trouble." (Ps. 142:1-2) David was in trouble crying unto him. He had to pray for deliverence. He could not deliver himself out of his trouble. I believe he was led and enabled what he should pray for. "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit maketh intersession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." (Rom. 8:26) When delivered out of our troubles and distresses then we praise Him, for He has done something for us that we could not do for ourselves. David was given to praise Him. "Praise ye the LORD, O', give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever." (Ps. 106:1) "For I know that the LORD is great and that our LORD is above all gods. Whatsoever the LORD pleased; that he did in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and in all deep places." (Ps. 135:6) "All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD; and thy saints shall bless thee." (Ps. 145:10)

The LORD'S people are taught by the Spirit through the things they experience that salvation is of the LORD. Hence, Jonah declared; "I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD." (Jonah 2:9)

(Elder) W. A. SPEER
Box 315
El Dorado, Arkansas

Canyon, Texas

Signs of the Times:

Please find enclosed check to renew my subscription for two years for one of the best papers printed. I have neglected sending this before. My health is bad, but I am thankful for all things, if I know my heart.

The Scriptures say that our blessed Lord works all things after the council of his own will; he works his will in the armies of Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. Again, whatsoever his soul desireth even that he doeth. The lot is cast in the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.

Man is nothing, and less than noth-

ing, and altogether vanity. So what can the natural man do that is pleasing in his sight. I feel like Job when he saw the Lord, I repent and abhor myself in dust and ashes. Ah, when we are made to feel the mercies of this loving God, we are made to know that there is nothing that the natural man has or can do; but all is by the mercies of God. I would that I could pour out my soul that God's humble poor could see it as it is, if I am not deceived. If I am deceived, the gracious God is just; "If he sends my soul to Hell, his righteous law approves it well." He is my all. My soul longs for the morning of the resurrection.

For twenty years I have been reading my bible daily, and have about worn it out. I read it through, and counted the SHALLS. This word is used over twelve thousand times. His shalls are sure, for all power and knowledge is his. When he says a thing shall be, it will be; and when he says it shall not be, it will not be.

May our God keep the Signs going as long as he lets this old earth stand, and fill the minds of the writers with good things for the sheep. May His blessings be to all that love him. Unworthily, a poor sinner.

In hope of God's mercies,
C. M. Presley

Dallas 8, Texas

Dear Brother Spangler:

I really enjoy the dear old Signs, as I do not get to meetings any more unless someone picks me up. Elder W. W. Taylor usually comes by for me when I am able to go. He came by for me when Elder Griffin had an appointment the night of May 7th. He enjoyed good liberty and it was a feast to me. I am blessed to enjoy better health this year, but still can't see to drive my own car.

I was wondering last night how graciously a merciful God cares for such a sinner, unworthy, unfit and dependent for even a thought. I hope I am appreciative of his goodness, mercy, grace and watchcare over me for over fifty-five years. I just can't be as thankful as I wish to be. At times I enjoy sweet meditations of his precious promises, which enliven my little hope, and remind me of the rain drops on tender, withered plants; and encourages me to hold fast to all he has given me.

Excuse me, I only wanted to send in my subscription for one year; the rest to use as you see fit. Your little sister in hope of mercy through grace. I'll be seventy-five years old in June.

Mrs. H. A. Strube

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Elder George Ruston)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Kingwood Church at Locktown, New Jersey, to the several churches of which it is composed, sends greetings:—

Beloved Brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling:

We feel our unworthiness and inability to address you in this our Circular Letter, yet desire by God's help, to write as we are led. Our prayer is that a gracious God will use our feeble efforts to the comfort and lasting good of His dear children who have been very precious in our eyes these many years.

The sweet Psalmist of Israel said "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." (Psalm 133:1.)

Let us, in approaching this lovely scripture, consider the wonderful sight that David saw in his brethren walking in love and good-will towards each other, a sight that cheers the heart and fills the soul with gratitude and praise to God. Behold: As if he would say to Israel in all ages, look, and take notice, of this wonderful sight, which the smiling grace of God has wrought by His Holy Spirit upon hell-deserving sinners, unworthy of His notice.

He would call God's saints to wonder and admire the love and power of God

in turning foes to friends. O what wickedness was in the hearts of Joseph's brethren, what distress and pain their ungodly ways gave to Joseph, and to Jacob too. They would have persisted in their own course of deception and wrong but for the amazing goodness of God. Yes, it was God's goodness that brought them as suppliants to Joseph's feet.

"How little they thought it was he
Whom they had ill-treated and sold.
How great their confusion must be,
As soon as his name he had told."

He wept with them and kissed them, and after that (though guilty as they felt to be) they were able to talk with him. When he sent them on their journey home, he admonished them saying "SEE THAT YE FALL NOT OUT BY THE WAY."

This love of Joseph must have been a constraining power over his brethren, and Paul says "the love of Christ constraineth us."

In the ark of old, there was a power that kept the various creatures, that were preserved therein, from destroying each other.

The Church of God, both Jew and Gentile, are by one Spirit baptized into one body and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. (1 Cor. 12:13.) It is well for us, as we BEHOLD, to consider what we once were, to get a right and proper estimate of what David would call our attention to. The Lord Jesus gave us the example of one who was forgiven a debt of ten thousand talents; When the one who was forgiven found his fellow-servant who owed him one hundred pence, he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying "Pay me that thou owest," but this wretch did not escape the judgment of his Lord.

Paul says "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? BE NOT DECEIVED; neither fornicators nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortiners shall inherit the kingdom of God. AND SUCH WERE SOME OF YOU; But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. 6:9-11.)

"Both he that sanctified and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them BRETHREN." (Hebrews 2:11.) So we see that it is those who are led of God's Spirit who are His sons and who are called brethren in our text.

Behold how good and how pleasant it is to walk as children here in God's family, good to see the work is of God and that He it was that brought Me to the banqueting-house, and His banner over Me was Love. The power of divine love turns a slave of sin to love and fellowship of His children, renouncing the world with all its charms, the flesh with its train of evil works (Gal. 5:19-21), coming into a fellowship in which we have all things in common, neither are we our own, for "ye are bought with a price." Here we can say, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." In this love, it seems easy to hide a brother's fault by those who feel they have so many, and here they can forgive and forget offences and sincerely pray for those who hate them. Whenever and wherever this is done, such, with a joy their Lord gives them to feel, behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. Here flows the river of the water of life, clear as crystal, where streams make glad the City of God. Here are the green pastures in which our Shepherd makes us to lie down, and such is His protecting care that none dare to make us afraid.

A taste of such heavenly comfort does not puff up but it does make such to love one another, for here we see and know our brother and we know what John means when he says "For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath

seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? "Love makes the church of God a delightful dwelling-place, and this is the charity that never faileth. Love in action does not demand nor wish for apologies, even when one's pride has been hurt, or a reflection cast upon one's reputation. Love remembers ONE who made Himself of no reputation, and knows that "God is judge Himself, Selah." When Shimei cast stones at David in his humiliation and cursed him, Abishai would have taken off Shimai's head, but David said, "It may be that the Lord will look upon mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day." (2 Samuel 16:12) This love in action, stops us from doing unto others as they have done unto us. It makes us to ask nothing more of another than he is willing to give. Worldly wisdom says I will go half-way, brotherly love says I will go all the way. "If any man take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also." There is One who said, "In as much as ye did it unto the least of these MY BRETHREN, ye did it unto me." Love made our Elder Brother willing to give His back to the smiters and His cheek to them that plucked out the hair.

"Behold how good and how pleasant IT IS for brethren to dwell together in unity." This unity of the Spirit brings with it a unity of doctrine and purpose. It is seen in our walk before men, our approach to each other, and our longing after God, the Living God. "I opened my mouth and panted: for I longed for thy commandments. Look thou unto me, as Thou usest to do unto those that love Thy name. Order my steps by Thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me." (Psalm 119:131-133.) Such are the prayerful longings of those who dwell together in unity. David compares this dwelling together in unity with two wonderful things. One, the precious ointment poured on Aaron's head, a lively type of the Holy Spirit poured upon our Lord, without measure, which covers His Body, the Church. This holy oil exalted Aaron as the High Priest unto God.

This blessed Spirit poured out upon the Church on the day of Penticost sets apart as holy every one that is touched by it, to serve their God and to serve one another. Walking after the Spirit they will not serve themselves, fulfilling the desires of the flesh. Like their Elder Brother, they will give their lives for the brethren. "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever shall lose his life for MY SAKE and the gospel's, the same shall save it." Mark 8:35.

The second comparison is, "As the dew of Hermon." The goodness and pleasantness of the Church walking in Christ is a living testimony. "A city set on a hill that cannot be hid." It is a sight that captivates the soul and refreshes the weary, like dew refreshing parched plants. From Hermon, the highest mountain, the dew comes down upon the lower mountains and hills. He, who has gone up with a shout, dispenses his gifts as He will, and still whispers His love to the souls who are weary of earth, themselves and sin. He it is whose speech distills as the dew and as the small rain upon the tender herb and as showers upon the grass. "There the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."

Elder Harold M. Bennett, Moderator
Casper G. Fetter, Clerk

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association now in session with the Kingwood Church at Locktown, N. J. June 3rd, and 4th. 1953, sends greeting to her sister associations and Meetings with which we correspond.

Dear Brethren:—

Through the mercy of God we have again been permitted to meet and greet, in sweet fellowship, your messengers and members and to sit together in

unity and peace.

The preaching of the word of God is a priceless gift, given by the inspiration of God. Our ministers have declared this truth and we have been blest to feed upon it throughout this meeting.

May we again, through the love and mercy of our Covenant-Keeping God, be permitted to meet again next year through this association.

Yours in a precious hope of life eternal beyond the grave.

Elder Harold M. Bennett, Moderator
Casper G. Fetter, Clerk

Vivian, Louisiana
Box 693
May 28, 1953

Dear Brother Taylor:

You asked me several weeks ago to write my experience. At times it is very sweet for me to recall, then again I feel very low. As I was thinking of a year ago to-day, I felt that I wanted to try to write. You can do as you see fit with this.

I hope this is an experience of Grace. In 1940 my husband and I were living in a small town in Texas. We had a small grocery business. We lived close to the Methodist church of which my husband, Roy, was a member. The minister would come by my home every few days and want to know why I didn't join the church, and would insist on me coming to his church. As much as I wanted to be with Roy in his church I could never join. Later on their revival meeting started and I went some, also played the piano sometimes. This same minister got to where he would stop by nearly everyday and mention me joining the church. To myself I said, "Well, I will join to get him to leave me alone"; and went one night with the intention of joining, but I couldn't.

A night or two later I had this dream: A voice spoke to me to read a certain chapter and verse of Job. The next morning I got the Bible and read the verse. Of course I couldn't get too much out of it, but the thought came to me to be patient. The next night I dreamed my mother, Mrs. J. S. Moffett, and I were standing by a pond of muddy water and I could see snakes and small ugly animals in it. I heard a loud roaring noise and looked up and a great dragon like image appeared. Then it started disappearing, but I kept looking up; and Oh, the most beautiful sight started forming: Christ started forming. It started with his head and kept slowly forming until his body was complete. He had on a white robe and his hair was shoulder length. I kept looking at him and my mother disappeared. Well, it seemed that everything disappeared; nothing mattered any more, and I was so happy I didn't know what to do. I just stood there looking at him, he was so beautiful.

I waked up and couldn't keep from crying. I felt so little and unworthy to have seen what I did, yet I was happy too. I waked Roy with my crying and he asked me what was the matter. I told him and he put his arms around me and said, "I don't know what it means." Well, it seemed like I felt so good and had a little hope. I also felt that I didn't want to join the church that I had planned to.

That day a friend of mine came to visit me. I couldn't keep from telling her, it seemed I had to tell someone. She said, "Lessie, do you think you ought to join the church?", and that hurt my feelings, but she didn't know it. I said, "Well I won't tell it to any one else," but as soon as I got to mama, I told her and she started crying.

A few days later this same minister came by the store and asked my husband why I didn't join the church. Roy told him not to bother me; and I don't think the man liked me any more.

In a few years we moved to a large town and I would go to church with Roy but I wasn't satisfied. To tell the truth, I would get mad nearly every time I

went and declare I wasn't going back. I didn't believe what they tried to preach. Everything seemed so different and seemed like I felt more at home and got more joy and comfort when I would go to the little church that mama went to. Sometimes I would go there and get so full and want to join, but just couldn't. During this time I could tell Roy was getting dissatisfied too and we would go to different churches but always seemed more satisfied with Primitive Baptist. One Sunday just he and mama went to church and he talked with her on the way home. He said, "I believe the Primitive Baptist is the right church." Mama said, "Roy, I have never said anything to you about your religion and I haven't taught you that." He said, "No, you haven't, and I appreciate it." He also told me if I ever joined he wanted to go with me.

On the fourth Sunday of April, 1952, we heard Elder W. W. Taylor of Dallas, Texas, preach at Pleasant Hope Church and Roy said, "That was the best sermon I have ever heard." I had seen Elder Taylor only a very few times, but I felt he was the one I wanted to baptize me.

On the twenty-seventh of May, 1952, I took my husband to Dallas, Texas, for a brain tumor operation. We had just found out a few days before what his trouble was. My daddy came to be with me, and he called Elder Taylor. He came on to the hospital the night before the operation and Roy asked him to pray for him. He also told him he believed the Primitive Baptist was the right church and everything was fixed like it was supposed to be, and which ever way it went he wasn't afraid. Oh, Bless his dear heart, God made him not to fear. He passed away the first day of June, 1952. Oh, it seemed like I couldn't stand to give him up but the Lord knows best.

How I longed for him the fifth Sunday in June because I joined at Pleasant Hope Church and was baptized by Elder Taylor. I had a dream after that which made me feel that my husband was baptized before I was, so I feel that we went to the church together after all. May I also thank my friends for their kindness, also for the beautiful flowers. Remember Elder T. A. Wall, our pastor of Pleasent Hope Church, Roy loved him very much and spoke of him often.

I have probably written too much but it seemed to all fit in with my experience. Oh, that I may see Jesus like I did in my dream when I leave this old world. I know I have to look to him for everything. Pray for me.

A lonely Sister, saved by Grace if saved at all.

Mrs. Lessie Carter

Martinsville, Virginia
R.F.D. 2

Dear Brother Perdue:

Your good letter came as a surprise, but a most precious one. I fully endorse every word you have written, which is to the Praise of God's glorious grace. My hope is that I have been taught of the same power you have: it seems to me that we are sitting together in a heavenly place.

I have been believing in a sovereign God that rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth in all events, from the chigger to the elephant. To me, He is *God Almighty*: none like him, and none beside him. I hope my trust is in this God of power. It would be folly to trust in any other. I have preached the Gospel as being the power of God unto salvation to the believer (if I have preached), with the ability my God has given me, not shunning to declare what my experience has taught me,—as I hope. Not to please man, but to glorify God.

My efforts began near forty years ago. Some of the old brethern preachers told me it never would be popular, but to continue to contend for the doctrine, and if I went down they would go down with me. They have gone to

their reward, and I have been feeling I was almost alone in believing in a sovereign God over all worlds, principalities and powers; yet I feel He will have some faithful witnesses here when He comes again. I deem you one of those witnesses not afraid to declare the truth. The doctrine of absolute predestination of all things is the most glorious doctrine on earth to me. It certainly does not make God the author of sin. The testimony is: Sin entered the world by the transgression of Adam, just one man. The devil was the cause of that. God is under no law, and can do no wrong. Man alone is the sinner, and God is the only saviour; He does not need the help of man. He is the salvation of the elect for time and eternity. He keeps them as the apple of his eye. All this great salvation came to us, and the blessings we are the recipients of, through the mercy and grace of God. Grace is a free favor,—no worth or merit on the part of the creature.

I have not written as I thought I would. I aimed to say in the beginning that you said too many good things about me. I am not worthy of such things: it humbles me. I fear I am mistaken, and that you are mistaken in me. We were at Rocky Mount last meeting, and hope to be there next meeting. Hope to see you there.

Do hope your wife has fully recovered. May the Lord bless you and family. Come to see us; and write often. I love you and your writing.

Your brother in hope,
(Elder) J. E. Burgess

Benton, Kentucky
June 15, 1953

Dear readers of the Signs:

My experiences are so odd that sometimes I want to tell them to the household of faith; but about the time I think my experience in one circumstance is so rich that I will write it all out, then it begins to fade out into nothing, and I am made to believe it was nothing and not worth mentioning. Strange things are always taking place with us creatures who have to live by hope, and sometimes can't believe we have enough experience to sustain us in hoping that God has drawn us to his Son.

Our Union Meeting met the fifth Sunday in May, and Friday and Saturday before. We saw many "lifting ups" in the crowd: their spirits were renewed, they rejoiced, and they wept with the many experiences they passed through. Before the meeting began, I thought for several days I was sick, (and really I think I was sick of being with dead folks; I mean by that, no sign of life in Christ in them). But the Friday our meeting began, I was the "wellest" person there. So I know now, I wasn't sick.

Last week we had awful hot weather, and Saturday morning meeting time was drawing near. On Friday afternoon this poor weak worm of the dust decided to call the moderator, who lives about eighteen miles away, and tell him not to come on Saturday, and I would call the ones who come on Saturday. When I went to the telephone, I tried to call another party, and when I got back to the church affair, I think I saw the church in her beauty, and the only living thing on earth, with our Saviour the Chief Moderator and Governor over it.

So it seemed to be too far above me for me to meddle with. While in that mood, I was so exalted I could hardly keep my feet on this earth; and I left the house where the telephone was without saying, "come", "goodby" or anything. When Saturday morning came there were six of us present at meeting, and my first thought was, "This sure is a mess, — no one here." But, little, insignificent me was crucified, and I do believe that I was just as dead to all around that could keep me away from truth as ever I was. Such a sermon I've never heard before.

The Faith of God's Elect was preach-

ed in its beauty; and I knew right then that faith had been handling me at times. I believe we know something handles us, cuts down and throws us aside. When that day was over, this text came to me, "He suddenly comes to his temple." The word "suddenly" rather stopped me, and I started looking for my text, and found it in Malachi, third chapter. My belief was this, that I had been going through some very low, trying experiences, but in each of these Jesus, the Lord, would suddenly come to his temple and block out all my black, sickening thoughts: Satan would get behind me for a few minutes and I would forget.

What a creature I am. All kinds of thoughts creep in, wild thoughts. No wonder that sheet let down for Peter had all those four footed beasts and creeping things in it. We all have these things to face in ourselves; and the only way we get away from them is for the Lord to suddenly come to his temple. We hope we are of that building, and within us is the kingdom of God.

We had a very warm Union Meeting. Elder Grady Brown, from Memphis; Elder Utley, from Alabama; Elder Biggs from Tennessee; Elder Hawkins, from Alabama; Elders Harrison and Lowery from Betherl Association, and Brother Waid Chandler, Licentiate, from Little River Association, were our guests. We still hope in God, a three one God, when the three are with us. We hope to awake in his likeness.

Effie Bowden

Bellingham, Washington
2338 Orleans Street

Dear Editors of the Signs of the Times, and Brethern in a sweet hope:

I see it is time to renew my subscription to the Signs. It is the only Baptist paper I take; and I wish it could be published twice a month. It is about all the preaching I get, as we live about two-hundred miles from our church at Chahalis, Washington.

We have no pastor, as our dear Elder Fisher, who was our pastor, is not able to preach any more. We would feel so grateful if the dear Lord would see fit to send us a pastor to feed us the spiritual food we hunger for so much. There is no food in the other churches, even though there is one only a block from us here; and the same church I used to drive a horse and buggy about five miles in from the country to attend. There is nothing there for me now. I live on the crumbs I get from the Signs, and when we are blessed to attend some Primitive Baptist church two or three times a year; and also from the good letters I get from some of the dear Baptist brothers and sisters.

I cannot complain, as I feel my blessed Saviour blesses me more than I deserve. He has truly been good to me in every way. He brought my feet up out of the miry clay, and put a new song in my mouth, and I love to sing and praise His holy name.

I would like for you to write sometime through the Signs your views on 1 Corinthians 15:29.

A little sister in that blessed hope of a brighter and better world, where all confusions and troubles are wiped away.

Mrs. Blanch B. Brown

Redwood, Virginia

Dear Editors:

I have in hand a good letter which dear Elder J. E. Burgess has written me; and which I much enjoyed, and highly esteem as being in accord with the doctrine and fundamental principles of the Lord and his Apostles. I feel much unworthy of the confidence he had in me, but I do feel that his lovely declarations are too good to hide away. Please publish in the Signs of the Times, if you deem it worthy of space.

A brother I hope,
J. A. Perdue

Vernon, Alabama

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am sending three dollars to renew my subscription for 1953. I enjoy reading the good pieces of the writers, and wonderful editorials; for they set forth what I believe to be the truth. I hope all who have a mind to write from time to time will be blessed by the Lord to continue in the Apostle's doctrine.

Remember me in your prayers.

A sinner saved by grace,
H. F. Waldon

Ivyland, Pa.

Editors of the Signs:

I am enclosing check of three dollars to renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times. I do enjoy reading our paper very much, and look forward to the next issue coming each time. My husband enjoyed reading it very much while he lived; we have had the Signs in our home for many years.

Most truly yours,
Mrs. Joseph Rook

Compton, California

To the Dear Old Signs of the Times,
And Its Beloved Editors:

I see that my time has expired, so I enclose cash for two more years.

I have just returned from a good meeting which was held near Bakersfield, California. We had Elder T. R. Jefferson with us and his preaching was greatly enjoyed. We still hold our regular meetings here in Compton at my place. The address is: 12812 S. Williams Street. All lovers of the truth are invited to attend with us. We believe in Predestination, Election and free grace.

Yours in humble hope,
L. W. Langwell

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Hare's Corner, Del., March 4, 1879

Dear Brother Beebe: — One of the most interesting and important inquiries that ever engaged the attention of men is that which relates to the salvation of lost sinners; what that salvation is, and how it is made known to the subjects of it in a personal experience. It is scarcely possible that one truly awakened could be indifferent to the consideration of this question. It becomes the great and momentous question, as a question of life and death.

In contemplating the great work of a personal salvation, there is no better place to begin than at the quickening by the Spirit of the Lord, or the communication of divine life. The comforts, instructions, and all the various heavenly blessings stored in the gospel of Christ, minister unto the nourishment and development of this life. The natural life develops itself in hungering, thirsting, and longing for natural blessings and earthly comforts. So does spiritual life. A knowledge of the preciousness of divine things, and a hungering and longing for them will discover themselves. A living soul knows and feels the bondage of the prison, the burden of guilt, the desolation of the desert, and of the pit without water. Hence a cry of distress, and a longing for relief and deliverance. The blessing is really in the desire towards God, and the cry unto him, because the *life* is in them. The blessing of pardon, of righteousness, of food and of rest, always comes in answer to these desires and longings, that nothing else would satisfy. The spirit of prayer unto God, and the sense of poverty, of unworthiness and need, all develop a life to which the things of this world do not and cannot minister. Desires for holiness, for deliverance from guilt, and

for the love and favor of God, are holy desires. They do not exist in nature, nor spring from depravity. They do not exist in our carnal, fallen state.

No man ever yet in nature desired to love God and to enjoy his love, or to hate sin and to be delivered from its dominion. These exercises are neither produced or controlled by nature or by men. Sin is oppresive only to the renewed spirit. Guilt is felt and mourned only by those who have been given to taste what an evil and bitter thing it is. We need not mistake either the character or the source of such exercises. Contrition of soul and penitence before God bear the seal of his Spirit, and are the fruits of his work. The same heart that would rejoice in pardon and in a ministration of righteousness, would necessarily mourn the presence of sin. The seasons of relief are transient, unfrequent, and of short duration. But they are joyous when they come, and blissful while they remain. The days of darkness, of hungering, of labor and of perplexing doubt may be many. When they come and while they remain they are saddening and oppressive. While we love the light, it is not for us at all times to enjoy it. But we love it all the same notwithstanding. If there are professors who have no consciousness of the presence of sin and of shortcomings, and who do not encounter what appear to be well grounded doubts and fears, it is hard to believe that they know the life of faith.

The class of exercises under contemplation are more of sorrow than of joy, and of conflict than of peace. But the one is set over against the other, and belong to the same life. The Spirit of God bears witness with *our spirit* that we are the children of God. This witness is made up in large proportion of mourning and penitence, of hungering and thirsting, of waiting and longing, &c., and these exercises are just as certain and conclusive evidence of spiritual life as the joy and deliverance and song of triumph can be. It is the believer's privilege, undoubtedly, at many times to sit under the droppings of the sanctuary with comfort—the shadow of the tree of life affords great delight, and its fruit is sweet to his taste. But his life consists not in the abundance he possess. He will enjoy these things whenever they come, and sorrow and mourn when they are withheld.

We hunger to be fed. We mourn to be comforted. We cry unto God to be heard. And we experience conviction to experience forgiveness. But we feed to again hunger. We drink to again thirst. And we are comforted only to sorrow and feel the need of comfort again. Crooked and paradoxical as all this may seem at first view, it will bear examination, and it will be found to be all straight. This pathway leads direct to the fellowship of the saints. Every gracious promise, and all gospel comfort, and every gracious fulfillment of promise, are strewn along this path. It leads into the brotherhood of Israel, and to the companionship and mutual love in which the saints dwell. Moreover it leads to such knowledge of Christ, and the riches of his grace as a Savior, as no other pathway will lead. It is a straight way, wherein those that walk shall not stumble. Those that inquire the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, will always be inquiring. This is their character. And like Israel of old, they will ofttimes be discouraged because of the way. Sometimes their faces will be quite turned away from the promised land, and toward Egypt and Mt. Sinai. But it is the *right way,* and leads to a city of habitation. It is cast up for the redeemed of the Lord, and they shall walk there.

Israel was Israel just as much in the wilderness as in the land of vineyards and olive-yards. And if they did not eat of the milk and honey of the good land, the manna that they did eat was as truly God-given, heavenly bread, as the other. But however long and weary the years, and crooked and ted-

ious the journey, Israel at last emerged from the wilderness and possessed the promised rest. There was much after-comfort in the lessons they had learned during their forty years discipline in the wilderness.

My idea in writing has been to extend if possible some word of recognition, of promise and hope, to some who need encouragement, wandering in a wilderness in a *solitary way*, hungry and thirsty, their soul fainting in them. The prophets and apostles, and all the primitive saints, have passed that way before. That which appears crooked becomes straight, and the darkness becomes light; and he that leads them has promised not to forsake them.

Yours to serve in the cause,

Elder E. Rittenhouse

Merryville, Louisana
June 29, 1953.

Dear People of the Most High God:

While sitting here this afternoon, I had a desire to hunt something to read. In looking through some old papers, I came across the enclosed article which I had not seen for several years. I sometimes hope it is an experience of grace; if not, I have none. I am copying the article as it was written then (about February 27, 1927).

If you deem it worthy of space, you may publish it. There have been many storms which have passed over my head since then. I have seen my people rended apart, but I am trying to contend for a God who rules in time and in eternity.

J. Paul McMillion

I have had a mind for sometime to try in my weak way to write a partial record of what, I hope, the Lord has done for me. Time and space will only permit a portion, for it seems to me mine is an outside case.

I was born May 9, 1876, the son of Primitive Baptist parents. I have loved these people as far back as I can remember. When a little boy, those old saints would gather at my father's place, and many times I would sit, often in some secreted place, and listen to them tell about the Lord's dealings with them, until I would fall asleep. I have often thought that my love for them was prompted by surroundings when a child.

Often, when a boy, I thought over my condition and shed tears. My dear mother, who passed to her happy reward many years ago, used to talk to me, and, to hide my tears, I would begin some foolishness, or leave her presence. Time rolled on and the cares of life occupied the most of my thoughts. I grew very cold, and many times when my companion would want me to go to church with her, I would speak unpleasantly to her and turn away, leaving her in tears. I went on in this condition for several years. In 1912, on account of financial embarrassment (for I lost about everything that I had made), I quit saw milling, and moved back on the farm. My future welfare began to bear on my mind again. I was working my father's place six miles from my home; and often I would watch father, and when he would leave the house, I would slip the old family bible and read it, trying to find something that would comfort me; but every sentence seemed to condemn me.

One day I happened (I supposed) to turn to Romans 12:1: "I beseech you therefore, brethern, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." That was too much for me; my eyes were turned within. I viewed this frame as a mass of corruption, which, I knew, would not be acceptable to that holy and just God. I laid the old book aside and went on about my work. My condition grew worse for about eight years; finally I became so restless that (as I have expressed it) I could not stay at home, neither could I stay away. As soon as I left home, maybe before I had gotten to where I had started, I would want to go back home. Many

times my wife would ask me what was the matter, and I would say, "Nothing". I often tried to pray, but as far as my thoughts would get was, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner."

Often I would turn my face to my pillow and cover my head and cry, "Lord be merciful to this poor creature: Lord direct me that I might walk uprightly in thy sight." I began to think I was either going to die or go crazy. My condition grew worse, until one night in the early Spring of 1921, I went to bed feeling that I would never see the sun rise again. Sometime just before day, I saw a vision: I was sitting in my own house, and hearing a noise, I stepped to the front gate, and saw an innumerable host of people. They were coming down a broad road, and didn't appear to know where they were going. While gazing at them, a voice told me, "This is the host of the earth." I fell into the procession, not knowing where I was going. Suddenly I came to a great precipice; my feet were over the brink. Just my heels were on shore. At this instance, a voice behind me said, "This is the end of time." I left the shore, and down I went with the rest of the throng. I saw the bottomless pit. While going down, I cried, "O Lord, if there ever was a time I could have bettered my condition, it is everlastingly too late; for I have been assured that this is the end of time."

I came to a man who had a pair of scales. He placed me on them and weighed me. His sentence was, "You are too short." I was turned loose: and down I went, saying, "O Lord, I am justly condemned, but thou art just." At this instance there was a large hand placed under me, and a voice from behind said, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." I was raised out of that pit, and placed in a most beautiful evergreen forest.

Dear children of God, I don't know that this is an experience of grace, but I believe it is unnecessary for me to tell you that it was a time of rejoicing. When I awaked, the birds seemed to be singing praises to their maker; the sun shined brighter, and all nature looked more beautiful than I had ever seen it before. I went on for a few hours rejoicing, and wondered what had happened; but pretty soon something seemed to say, "Nothing has happened, you are just deceived."

I went on for several months feeling weighted down. One day I was talking to a very dear brother, and told him a part of what I have written here, and he said, "If I had such an experience of grace as that, I would never doubt." This was a shock to me, for I had never thought of having an experience of grace. I would go to meeting, and, O, how I would long to have a name among those good people, but felt that it would insult them to offer myself. I came in one night (words cannot describe my feelings) and my good wife asked me what was the matter. I told her I had to do something: that I could not live in this condition: that it appeared to me that I would have to offer to the church.

Strange! but we had never talked about our future before. She began shedding tears and told me that she had wanted to join the church for fourteen years, but she didn't think that I wanted her to. I guess it is useless to say to the children of grace that that was a happy season with us. Though I felt mean, and do yet, that I had kept her out of the church so long. Just one week later, September 21, 1921, we were baptized by her father, Elder H. F. Hennigan; and we have been blessed with the happy privilege of enjoying many good meetings since that time.

Written by the least of God's heritage, if one at all.

J. Paul McMillian

NOTICE OF ASSOCIATIONS

The annual meeting of the *Lexington-Roxbury Association* will be held at the *Halcottville Meeting House,* at Halcottville, New York, on Wednesday and Thursday, September 16 and 17, 1953. Services will begin at 10:30 daylight time Wednesday morning.

Ministers, brethren, and friends of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us. Those who arrive Tuesday before the meeting will go to the Halcottville grange hall where supper will be provided and provision made for their entertainment. Those residing out of town are requested to notify the writer of the time that they expect to reach Halcottville, which will help in locating places of entertainment.

(Elder) Arnold H. Bellows,
West Hurley, New York.

The 1953 session of the *South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association* will convene with *Smyrna Church,* Union County, Arkansas, commencing Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, (Sept. 25, 26, 27, 1953). Smyrna Church is located nine miles South of El Dorado, Arkansas, about one mile East of U. S. Highway 167.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes, Moderator

NEW VERNON MEETING

There will be an all day meeting of the *Old School Baptist Church of New Vernon,* Sullivan County, New York, on the first Saturday in October. This will be October 3rd.

All members and friends are invited to attend the meeting.

Wm. D. Chapman

EDITORIALS

Danville, Va. **SEPTEMBER, 1953**

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EDITORIAL

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14-1, 2 & 3)

This is a Scripture that is a favorite of most ministers when conducting a funeral. However, they should understand that they have not the power to apply, or inforce the words, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God believe also in me." Many seem to think that all they need to do is to quote or read this Scripture, but "Never man spake like this man." He speaks

and it is done! If man was given the ability to inforce Scripture, then there would be no need for the Spirit to take of the things of God, and show them to us.

There are many promises in the Scriptures made to the children of God, and one may be in the condition to which the promise is applicable, but not able to apply that promise to them selves. The Spirit must make the application! I was once called to conduct the funeral of a young man whose mother was a member of one of my churches, and was grieved by the death of her son, it seemed that she could not stand up under the strain. My wife was with me at the house, and said, "Go and say something to her." I felt that I had said all I could say, but went to her and said, may the Lord comfort you with the comfort wherewith He comforteth His children. I felt that He was the only one that could say let not your heart be troubled, and it be done.

Jesus did not say let not your hearts be troubled, but let not your heart be troubled. These words were addressed to the eleven apostles, but one heart is recognized. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one Faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Ephesians 4-4, 5, 6. All the household of faith have the same Father, the same calling, the same hope, and the same Spirit. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." The heart and faith of these apostles were soon to witness the crucifixion of Christ, in whom they had trusted to redeem Israel. This scene was calculated to shake their faith in Him as the Messiah, therefore He said:

"Ye believe in God, believe also in me." Many people believe in God, who do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as their saviour. The Jews believe in God, but they do not believe that the one who was taken, and by wicked hands crucified and slain, was the one prophesied of to come. Jesus said, "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?" The people said unto Jesus, "What shall we do, that we might work the work of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, this is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom he hath sent." Our belief or faith in God and the Son, may be steplike, as trials, temptations, and tribulations work within us hope and faith; but it is not divided so as to believe in God, and not in His Son, for the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father; He and the Father are one.

There is but one faith, and this faith is the gift of God, without which it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." The disciples said to Thomas, "We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God." Thomas believed only after He had revealed Himself to him. And this is just as soon as any one will believe. There must be some evidence given, and a revelation made to each individual, before they can say, "My Lord and my God."

"In my Fathers house are many mansions." No man could describe the house

of His Father, but He. This house is made without hands, and is in the heavens, from which place Jesus came. Therefore He could describe what was in this house. And as this house is eternal in the heavens, it is not of this earth, and therefore, has no reference to the church on earth. It is said the God dwelt in the tabernacle in the wilderness, and in the temples at Jerusalem, but these were types of His dwelling in the person of His Spirit in these tabernacles of our's; for we are told that our body is the temple of the Holy Ghost: but His permanent dwelling place is in heaven. In my opinion, this house is the one to which Paul referred when he said, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so being clothed we shall not be found naked." Paul gives us to understand that when this body of flesh has been dissolved, we will not be found naked, but clothed with that robe of righteousness wrought out by our Lord Jesus Christ. "Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit." This house referred to is not this earthly body, when it has put on incorruption, for it is of the earth, and came from the earth. And because it is of the earth, "We groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven."

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you." These mansions are the children of God, and they sing a new song, saying, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." These are the ones that will live in the presence and Glory of God, in the robe of righteousness wrought out by Jesus our Lord, and is their permanent abode and dwelling place. Well could Paul say, "For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." Those who are redeemed by the blood of Christ, and made kings and priest unto God, whose garments are washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb, are the mansions that will occupy this heavenly dwelling place, in the presence and Glory of God for ever and ever.

"I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Jesus had a work to do on earth, and when the time come for it to be done, "God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." The redemption price had to be paid, reconciliation had to be made, death to be destroyed and him that hath the power of death, that is the devil, sin washed away, the prison doors to be opened and the captives set free, death taken away, and victory over the grave.

When all this was done, He was taken by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, crucified and slain, and cried out on the cross saying, "It is finished." And when He came forth victorious over death and the grave, He said to John on the isle that is called Patmos, "I am he that liveth, and was dead and, behold, I am alive for evermore; and have the keys of hell and of death." Having the keys of hell and death, no one can get in or out of either place until He unlocks the door.

Jesus said to His Father, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I pray for them: I pray not for

the world, but for them which thou hast given me; they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them." And He will come as He said, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 17-4, 5, 9 and 10. They will not only be with Him, but will be like Him, without spot, wrinkle or any such thing. "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of host, in that day when I make up my Jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Malachi 3-17. For all of this these children can join David, and say, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake."

H. O. N.

"Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling Savour." (Ephesians 5:1-5)

It is interesting to notice the number of times the Lord's dear people are addressed as children by Jesus, and also by the apostles. The Saviour often referred to his followers as little children, and declared to the apostles, when they disputed as to who was greatest in the kingdom, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children; ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

The Apostle Paul and John both speak of those of like precious faith as little children, showing the tender love and care for them as God's people. This shows the everlasting tie that binds together the minister and the children of God who have been called out of the world, and given to receive the things of the Lord as little children.

What a lesson this should be to us who profess to be the followers of the meek and lowly one today. Does it not become us to be as children in dealing with each other; and would we not all do well to heed the admonition of the Apostle to the Corinthians: "Be not children in understanding; howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men"?

The desire of the apostle toward his brethern was that in understanding the things set forth they might be men, and not as children tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine; that their hearts might be established with grace and the knowledge of the Lord, that they might grow thereby, if so be that they have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

In dealing with one another, he says, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, and all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." These are the things he has reference to when he admonishes them to be ye children in malice.

In the things concerning the doctrine of God our Saviour, we are commanded to be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. When we are brought to understand the principles of grace, and the heart has been established with grace, to the extent that we know that all our salvation is of the Lord, if we fail to observe His teaching in our relationship with each other, we are not adorning the doctrine we profess.

The apostle, in his epistle to the Ephesians, refers to their following the Lord as dear children; and as a basis for this he refers them to the work of Jesus for them: "And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour." Nothing stirs the heart of these dear children like a reminder of God's goodness and mercy to them. The fountain from whence flows all true obedience to him is the knowledge of

him, and his sacrifice for us.

When Joshua spoke to Israel the last time, he recounted to them the many things that God had done for them, saying, "And I have given you a land for which ye did not labor, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them; and of the vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not do ye eat. Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerety and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord."

It will be noticed that the words both of Joshua and Paul (one an Old Testament writer and the other a New Testament writer) directs their minds to the mercies of God toward them; and then admonishes them to put away certain things, and refrain from certain practices. "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you as becometh saints. Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient; but rather giving of thanks. For this we know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them."

May God give us grace to take heed to these things: to walk worthy of the vocation wherein we are called in all meekness, esteeming our brethern as the dear children of God.

D. V. S.

Lillie, Lousiana

The Signs of the Times, and the Household of Faith Everywhere:

I have had a mind to write you for the past several months. I do not know whether the desire to write is of the flesh or not, but I hope it is from a sounder and more loving source than that. If so, I am sure it will be made manifest.

If I know my own poor heart and soul, I love you dear brethern and believing children of God; and it would pain my very soul if I was to be made to see that I do not love you, for Jesus has said, "He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love." (1 John 4:8). Oh, dear brethern, what have we to hope for, and to look to, if we love not one another? Truly we are deceived and are deceiving others, if we love not each other; because God's true Bible description of his people is, that they love one another. I would not have you think that this love that I have introduced is of an earthly or worldly source: not at all, but it is that love of God which is shed abroad in our hearts. So then you can see what encouragement, hope and rejoicing that the true evidence of this love brings to the children of God. John says in another place, "We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethern." Now I would call attention to the fact that John did not show that we have a perfect knowledge of this fact, but he said we know it if we love the brethern.

Dear brethern, do you know beyond any doubt that you love them with that true and godly love? If so, then you can know that you are passed from death unto life because of that fact. Oh, how I do believe and hope that I love them, which is equivalent to saying, How I do believe and hope I am one of them who has passed from death unto life. Yet we will have to view this matter in the light that we are still mortal, imperfect, weak and very much subject to vanity through the flesh. I think this is the reason Paul in 1 Corinthians, eighth chapter, said, "And if any man think he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing as he ought to know." Read also the next verse, "But if any man love God, the same in known of him." So I am afraid to boldly stand up and say that I know these sacred things. My depraved nature is such that

I often see nothing in myself that would warrant me standing in such desirable assurance as loving the Lord's people without a doubt. There is no doubt in my mind but that John the Baptist knew what he was talking about when he said, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world." But later, when he was put in prison, he sent his disciples to ask Jesus, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another." So I am afraid to be too strong in saying that I know that I love God's people. John and others in the Holy Bible greatly doubted things which no doubt they had been taught of the Lord.

Jesus, our Saviour, was made to cry out on the cross, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me? Think dear ones, what agony he was going through: and he was sinless and righteous. In contrast, we are sinners. I feel that all the children of God experience a being forsaken of God: they feel it, and they are greatly troubled and dismayed; they grope in the dark, and they weep and mourn. But, as Jesus was immediately strengthened and was raised the third day, and ascended into heaven, and highly exaulted after being brought so low, so dear humble, weeping child of God when we are brought into such great trouble and dismay, darkness and trial, we too, as his children, will be lifted up and made to rejoice in him. I believe that the Father taught his Son by the things he suffered; so all our sufferings, afflictions and trials are for our good and learning. Remember that when the Israelites were journeying through the wilderness, they were on their way to that land which flowed with milk and honey, and only Jordan separated them from it.

So dear brethern let us look up; for the evidence is that the children of Israel when traveling in the wilderness, were nearing the border of Canaan Land, that land of promise that flows with milk and honey. And let us remember that Jesus said that it was through much tribulation that we should enter into the kingdom. (Acts 14:22).

Now, it seems so clear and convincingly strong that the greatest scriptural evidence we could possible have that we are the children of God, would be to love the children of God, as he has commanded. This point is very clearly brought out in the language of the Saviour when he said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to the other." (John 13:35). So dear brethern, let us search our hearts as to this most important question. Is there not a great yearning in your heart to find this priceless jewel of evidence? Do you not feel drawn to those who have the evidence of a deep felt sense of unworthiness before God? Is it not a fact that when you hear and observe the Lord's trembling ones express their longings for the Lord, his true gospel truth, his great love, and his great and everlasting salvation, that you cannot keep from loving them, whether you have ever seen or heard of them before or not?

Is it not a fact that just to read the writings of those who are in the trend and leadership of the Spirit of God, dealing with their heart throbs and longings after God, that you are made to feel that love, though you have never heard their voices or seen their faces? Yet there is a love in your heart for them that is inexpressible, and reaches far above every earthly love and affection. This, dear ones, is the greatest evidence that you could be blessed with that you are one of His, that you have this great love for them. It is evident that it is the love of God which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given us. (Romans 5:5).

Those to whom you are thus drawn through that kindred spirit, would you not do anything for their welfare and comfort? Do you not yearn in your hearts for their welfare and for their prosperity, both naturally and spiritually; and do you not long to be with them who are filled with this sacred love? And

do you not long to communicate with them of the precious truth? I am sure that we (if I be one) long to be with each other, and to hear spiritual testimony of this love of God which is shed abroad in our hearts.

Then, if these things are felt and truly realized in our hearts, O, how careful it should make us want to get along with each other, and not to offend one of the least of these little ones. Can we afford to abruptly and intentionally mistreat or offend them? Jesus tells us on this subject that it would be better that he who would offend one of these that a millstone be placed about his neck, and be cast into the sea. Yea, it would be better that such offenders had never been born, than to offend one of these little ones.

Then, dear brethern, let me urge you and admonish you to take it to heart, and live and strive not to offend God's little ones. It is certainly admonished and exhorted in the scriptures that we admonish one another as brethern, and to reprove and even rebuke with all long-suffering and doctrine. Brethern, I had rather be debased and even excluded from the Old Baptist church, as much as I love you, than to wrongfully offend one of these little ones. I desire, if I know my heart, to build you up, comfort and strengthen you, and cause you to be strong in the faith; yea, I long after you, and desire your edification and establishment in the glorious Gospel of God our Saviour. I had rather suffer, than to see you wounded; I had rather endure wrong, than to see you falsely accused and persecuted wrongfully. I would to God, dear brethern, that it please the Lord that I be spared from offending any of the Lord's little ones; but I would comfort them.

Love is the fulfilling of the law; and John deeply exhorts and commands, "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God." O, what a great consolation this is, to bear the evidence of loving one another; and if so, then we are born of God, and knoweth God. (1 John 4:7)

Then if all this is true, you are forever and eternally His, and you are secured by every dorp of the shed blood of our Redeemer and Saviour; and everything is fixed and set for your good, and every obstacle is done away with in Christ for you. Even though you may suffer want, and have trials and tribulations, darkness and great distress, you are born of God. What a consolation, dear brethern, to those among poor sinners who are thus born of God: John says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin because he is born of God." (1 John 3:9). Then, regardless of the seeming complication to our poor, weak and incapacitated minds, there is a sense in which such who are born of God do not and cannot sin. I had rather know that I am in that class that does not, and cannot sin than anything I can think of.

Dear mourning, cast down child of God, even though you are a sinner in your flesh and carnal nature, yet in the sense that you are born of God, in the sense that you are blessed to love the Lord and your precious brethern and sisters, you do not sin; but to try to show you the consistent truth on this subject, John says in 1 John 1:8, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." So, we dare not say we have no sin; but in and through that incorruptible seed which remaineth in us, we do not commit sin. Now Paul said I know that in me, that is my flesh, there is no good thing. This should at least show us that our flesh, as such, is not born of God; but as Paul in Hebrews says, in speaking of the church (and I think he speaks of the children of God here in this earth), "But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the

first born, which are written in heaven; and to God the judge of all, and to the SPIRITS OF JUST MEN MADE PERFECT." Notice it was the Spirits of Just men made perfect. So, in this spirit that is perfect, they cannot sin, and do not sin; but as long as we live in this tabernacle of flesh there is sin in the flesh. In that sweet day of the great and glorious resurrection, these vile bodies will come forth like unto our Lord's glorious body, and then we shall be like him, and see him as he is. What a wonderful day that will be. I long for that day; I long to be away from sin in every sense of the word; I long to dwell with my precious Saviour whom my soul loveth, and with the dear saints of God in heaven. I long to praise him with that perfection of immortality in the presence of all the mighty and holy angels.

Then, dear brethern, if we love one another, may the Lord keep us that we watch over one another for good and not for evil; may we be free from tattling, and talebearing, and sowing seeds of discord; may we be ready to consider each others weakness, and forbear one another in love. And may we not engage in envy, jealousy and strife, which the holy and precious word of God says comes from our own lust. I quote James 4:1, "From whence cometh wars and fiightings among you? Come they not hence even of your own lusts that war in your members." So we know where they come from. There is so much of this this very day and time among those who love one another, or should love one another if we are what we hope to be. If we are born of God, we do love one another.

May God bless, sanctify, keep and comfort you, and save you and be with you in every trial and affliction, and cause you to look to Him for every blessing, for they all must come from Him. Please pray for me, and cast the mantle of charity over me in my weakness, mistakes and many imperfections. Farewell in the Lord.

Your very unworthy brother in hope,

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

NOTICES

We will give one copy of the Welsh Tract Church History with each new subscription to the Signs Of The Times until October 1st. They are also for sale at $1.00 per copy until further notice. Mail orders and subscriptions to Signs Of The Times, Route 5, Box 332-F. Danville, Va.

We would appreciate our readers writing more for the paper, and especially would we like to have the experiences of our subscribers who feel inclined to tell of the Lord's gracious dealings with them. It is your paper, give us some good material for it.

We plan to re-publish a number of articles of some of the writers who wrote for the paper fifty years ago or more. Several of the articles of the same writer will appear in the same paper so each section of the country may have some of the old writings of their local minister who has passed away. We believe these articles will be of much interest to all, and especially to those who personally knew the writers.

Our correspondents will greatly assist us if they will observe the following:

1. If you use a typewriter, use only one side of paper, and double space the lines.
2. Write as plainly as possible, especially names and addresses.
3. We are always glad to publish Obituaries, but please do not make them too lengthy.
4. Notices of special meetings, etc. should be sent in about five weeks before date of publication.

Editors

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

It has been our Heavenly Father's wlll to remove from our midst the third member of our little flock within a year, namely Bro. Luther F. Brumfield.

Brother Brumfield was born Sept. 16, 1875, and departed this life March 10, 1953, at his home. He is survived by his widow, Sister Dora Collins Brumfield and four sons and four daughters: Clarence, Silas, Matthew and Charlie Brumfield and Mrs. Newrie Johnston, Virginia McDowell, Lola Fuller and Miss Ruth Brumfield. Three sisters and a brother also survive.

Brother Brumfield and wife joined Straw-

berry Church in May, 1916, and was baptized by the pastor Elder C. O. Boaze. He was ordained a deacon of this church thirty some years ago. He was faithful to the duties laid upon him and was mindful of the Church's needs and always filled his seat unless providentially hindered. His daily life and conversation, and love for the Church was such to cause us to believe that he had passed from death unto Life, thus enabling him to have a good report of those without as well as from those within the household of faith.

We, the Church at Strawberry, greatly feel our loss, which we hope is his eternal gain. The Church has lost a faithful member, the community a good neighbor and the home a faithful, loving husband and father who provided well for his own household.

We, extend our sympathy to the family who so devotedly cared for father during his long illness.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor Elder W. R. Dodd and Elders P. W. Ashworth and Raymond Payne, at Wrenn-Yeatt's Funeral Home, with interment in Highland Burial Park, amidst a beautiful mound of flowers.

Therefore, be it resolved, that we bow in humble submission to Him who works all things after the council of His own will. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh, blessed be His holy name.

Furthermore, be it resolved that a copy of this resolution be recorded on our Church records, a copy sent to the family and a copy sent to Old Faith Contender and Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of the Church in Conference Saturday June 6, 1953.

Elder W. R. Dodd, Mod.
Josephine Dodd, Clerk.

OBITUARY

ROSA LEE HALL

In memory of our dearly beloved and venerable sister, Rosa Lee Hall, widow of the late Elder William Lawson Hall. She was born in Franklin Co. Virginia the 12th day of March, 1861, and departed this life in her home in Independence, Mo., April 27, 1953, thus making her stay on earth 92 years, 1 month and 15 days.

She was blest with a good hope through grace many years ago, having joined Gilead Church of Old School Baptist in Miami Co. Kansas, on Saturday before the first Sunday in June, 1886, and was baptized by Elder S. P. Ramey Sunday morning after service. She cherished this hope as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, which entereth into that within the vale, whither our forerunner hath for us entered.

Sister Hall, with her husband, united with Little Blue Church near Grain Valley, Mo., by letters the fourth Saturday in May, 1908. This church later united with Sni-A-Bar Church and, although it had ceased to function as a church, she remained steadfast in the faith of God's elect. She was loved by all who knew her, especially by her brethren and sisters of the Old Baptist denomination. Her unswerving devotion to the church, her gentleness and forbearance toward all, her patience and fortitude in her last days of suffering here on earth is an example worthy of emulation. Her extreme age rendered her almost helpless before the end came, but all was done for her that kind hands and loving hearts could do. Naturally, her passing caused sorrow among her many friends, yet we sorrow not as others who have no hope for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even also them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. This is our hope and confidence. For her to depart and be with Christ is far better.

She is survived by two sons, Paul R. Hall of the home, whose privilege it was to minister to her wants in her last days, and Harry C. Hall, also of Independence, Mo. Also, a brother, three sisters, five grandchildren and nine great grandchildren. Her funeral was conducted by Elder L. L. Schenck of Williamstown, Kansas, after which her remains were laid to rest in the Blue Springs, Mo., cemetery by the side of her late husband, there to await the sound of the last trump. For the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptable, and we shall be changed.

(Elder) L. L. Schenck.

MRS. ORA SKINNER

God in His infinite wisdom, love and mercy has seen fit to remove from our midst our dearly beloved friend and sister, in hope, Mrs. Ora Skinner of Fletcher, Oklahoma. We wish to express our deepest felt sympathy for her beloved family. Sister Skinner was born March 24, 1890 near Lexington, Texas.

She was married to Mr. Ed. Skinner, April 14, 1907. To this union three children were born, two sons and one daughter who passed away at the age of three and a half years.

She is survived by her husband Mr. Ed. Skinner, two sons, Urbane of Fletcher, Oklahoma and Eston of Willows, California. Five sisters: Mrs. T. F. Hart., Mrs. Mona Thomas, Mrs. H. C. Thomas and Miss Lina Sikes all of Breckenridge, Texas and Mrs. C. U. Landers of Coleman, Texas. Three brothers: Mr. Dane Sikes, Mr. H. O. Sikes and Mr. F. H. Sikes, all of Breckenridge, Texas, Four grandchildren and one great grandchild with

many other relatives and friends survive.

Since 1907, Mrs. Skinner had been strong in the Old School Baptist faith and sound in the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone, ever trusting in her maker and making her belief and love for Him known by her daily walk and conversations. Always speaking the praise of her dear redeemer and leaving her praise to be spoken of by those who knew her. Her life being an open book of inspiration to her dear family, friends, neighbors and love ones.

Therefore, we feel that our loss was very great, as she passed away May 22, 1953, at her home in Fletcher, Oklahoma; never-the less we feel our loss to be her eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Baptist Church in Fletcher, Oklahoma, after which her body was lain to rest in the Fletcher cemetery, to await the final resurrection morning, at which time we feel the sweet hope that she will come forth, together with all the family of God, to meet the blessed Lord Jesus and forever be with Him in that Land where sorrow, pain, and death never come; and will forever be there to bask in the sunlight of God's eternal love while the ceaseless ages roll around.

(Elder) W. W. Taylor

CHARLIE McLEMORE

Mr. Charlie McLemore was born July 11, 1890, near what is now Goldona, Lousiana. He is survived by his wife, Linnie, and the following children: Claude, Culman, Alabama; George, Heflin, Lousiana; John, Pane, Lousiana; Mrs. Christine Sherrill, Spring Hill, Lousiana; Mrs. Corryce Thornton, Ringgold, Lousiana; and Miss Charlie Jo McLemore, Heflin, Louisiana. He is survived also by his mother, Mrs. G. W. McLemore, and three brothers: Gus, of Mississippi; O. M. Shreveport, Lousiana; and A. W., of Shreveport; and one sister, Mrs. Georgia Viears, Heflin, Lousiana, and four grandchildren.

He was not a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, but was a strong believer and regular attendant of their meetings, which, to me, is a clear indication of the faith and love that is characteristic of the true children of God.

For the consolation of the bereaved, I quote a portion of God's Word recorded in Revelation 14:13, "And I heard a voice from Heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works to follow them." From this we understand that those who die in the Lord will rest forever and evermore. And I believe that the testimony and actions of the subject of this sketch were such as to cause us to feel that he died in the Lord. He was trusting alone in the Lord, and he advocated that there was no salvation except of the Lord. May the Lord be pleased to comfort you in the fact that he is at rest, and that all his suffering is over.

Death came very suddenly, but all was done for him that could be done. It was with much sorrow that his dear family and friends gave him up. I truly hope that the Lord will lead and comfort the sorrowing ones. The Lord has declared that he is a husband to the widow, and a father to the fatherless; may you be graciously blessed to trust in Him and look to Him for every need.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral services at Madden Church, near Heflin, Lousiana. The remains were laid to rest in Madden Cemetery till the Lord comes again, when we shall be fashioned like his glorious body, and He will say, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

In hope of continued mercy and grace.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes.

EDWARD J. FROST

Edward J. Frost, of Marysville, California, and a member of Hopewell Predestinarian Church, of Sacramento, California, was born June 18, 1891; and passed away April 28, 1953, making his stay on earth nearly sixty-two years.

He leaves to mourn his passing, his wife, Martha, and two sons and two daughters: Jewell Barker, Baldwin Park, California; Bertha Millsap, Pepperwood, California; William H., Pepperwood, and J. D., of Richmond, California. Also, six grandchildren, and two sisters, Stella Hook, Los Angles, and Merle Allen, of Inglewood, and a brother, Roy E. Frost.

We feel that our loss is his gain, and we feel lost without him; but we remember the Scripture which reads: "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away." We can say with David, "Blessed be the name of the Lord."

He united with the church at the age of seventeen, and loved the doctrine of salvation by grace. He served as church clerk for several years. Feeling that his time had come, he was ready and willing to go, and requested his pastor, Elder T. R. Jefferson to conduct his funeral. Elder Jefferson spoke words of comfort which will long be remembered by us. We miss him in our home and in the Church. We can say only, Sleep on dear one, and take your rest; God called you home, he knows best.

Martha Frost,
1153 N. 13th Street,
Richmond, California.

J. HENRY HUNDLEY

J. Henry Hundley died at his home near Swansonville, Virginia, February 27, 1953.

He was born January 30, 1869, and was the son of the late Caleb and Betty Mitchell Hundley. He spent his entire life in Pittsylvania County, where he was engaged in farming. He was an honest, hard working man, providing well for his family; and was highly respected by all who knew him.

While he never joined the militant church, he manifested much interest in the Old Baptists, and attended meetings as long as his health permitted. The writer visited his bedside often during his last illness, and he would tell of the good dreams the Lord had given, which were much comfort to him; and evidence to us that the Lord had been with him. We feel to know that when our Lord begins a good work with his loved ones, he will carry it on until the day of Jesus Christ.

Mr. Hundley is survived by his widow, the former Miss Minta Oakes; and also by four daughters and two sons.

The funeral services were conducted from the chapel of the Swicegood Funeral Home on Sunday afternoon. The writer was unable to be with Elder Raymond Payne in the funeral, due to illness. Interment was in Highland Burial Park.

Written by request.

(Elder) W. R. Dodd

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

It has been our Heavenly Father's will to remove from our midst another of our sisters in Christ, Flora Dodd Harvey, who passed away February 18, 1953. She was born February 19, 1883. The following children survive: Dwaine and Isaac Harvey, Hazel Norton, Kitty Myers and Helen Nuckols.

Sister Harvey joined Strawberry Church October 3, 1931, and was baptized the following day by her pastor and brother in the flesh, Elder W. R. Dodd. She proved faithful to the church and it's needs as long as health permitted.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Raymond Payne and Mr. C. W. Fink at Moseley Memorial Church, Danville, Virginia; after which her body was laid to rest by her husband in the cemetary, amidst a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the resurrection morn when Christ shall come to call his children home.

We, the Church at Strawberry, greatly feel our loss, which is her eternal gain. We extend our sympathy to her family, and may they be given to trust in the God their mother believed and trusted;

Therefore, be it resolved that we bow in humble submission to Him who works all things after the council of his own will. The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh; blessed be His name. And, be it further

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be recorded on our church record; a copy sent to the family, and to the Signs of the Times and the Old Faith Contender for publication.

Done by order of Strawberry Church in conference the first Saturday in March, 1953.

Elder W. R. Dodd, Moderator
Josephine Dodd, Clerk

MEMORIAL

The grim angel of death has again visited the Long Creek Church, of the Original Little River Association, and taken from the activity and usefulness of this life out sister in Christ, Mrs. Mary E. Darnall Dunn. She passed away at her home March 9, 1953.

She was the daughter of John and Bell Hargrove Darnall, born March 1, 1893; making her stay here sixty years and seven days. She was married to Albert Thomas on December 10, 1912, and to this union were born two sons: Earl S. Thomas, San Francisco, California, and Arthur V. Thomas, Houston, Texas.

I do not have other dates, but later in life sister Mary was married to Brother Lucian Dunn, and to this union were born three children, of whom two survive: Mrs. Oscar Dunn, St. Louis, Missouri, and Marvin Dunn, Nashville, Tennessee. Also surviving is one brother, Julian Darnall, Colorado Springs, Colorado, and five grandchildren.

WHEREAS, it has pleased the Father of Light to call our dear sister in Christ from our midst,

BE IT RESOLVED, that we bow in humble submission to His will. Although we will miss her, we grieve not as those who have no hope. Hope was the brightness of her countenance, and she was ever ready to give reason for the hope wherein she trusted unto life eternal through and with Christ, our Saviour.

Sister Mary once said to the writer, "I am living in a coma, but, if I have a hope, Christ is my life." This should be comforting indeed to us who are left to mourn. May it please God to give divine grace to our bereaved brother, the children and many friends to live on in that sweet hope and faith wherein our sister trusted. She was a Mother in Israel, and would go for the sake of the church, when she was not able.

The funeral services were conducted by her pastor and cousin, Elder J. N. Darnall, March 10, 1953, at Long Creek Church; with burial in Long Creek Cemetery.

Written by request by one who loves them for Christ's sake.

W. Y. Chandler

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 121 DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1953 NO. 10

THE ONE SAVIOUR

Christ Jesus,
In that bright home above,
Through thy tender mercy,
Grant me a share of thy love.

Come to my rescue,
Lighten my sinful load;
Without thee, I must travel
A dark, stormy road.

There is no other Saviour,
Dear Lord, but thee
In whom I can trust,
Or hope from sin to be free.

There's none but thee Lord,
So gentle and so kind,
Can remove the stone
From this cruel heart of mine.

There is no other refuge:
Thou art the only way
That leads to eternal life,
And everlasting day.

Iona Pilchard
Stockton, Md.

Redwood, Virginia

Dear Brother Spangler:

We hope, though much unworthiness this sinful rebel feels, to thus address you; but I truly hope I have an abiding interest in Christ's glorious theme of salvation by grace, even the true merits of his distinguishing love, mercy, grace and glory bestowed in my poor heart. For, in my humble feelings, nothing short of the meritorious work of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ will ever land His little bride safely over Jordan to even view the promised land.

Dear Brother, once in awhile we believe we have a little foretaste of the sweet manifestation of the true oracles of God, our Saviour; which, if true, is greater treasure to us than would be the Indies of Gold, or the whole world combined. When we feel to manifestly have these little rejoicing seasons, do not we love the Lord our God with all our heart and soul; and also love our precious brethern who have brought forth fruits meet for repentance, and have proven faithful to their God and their church? Who can define this undissembled love of God! It is unbounded; we cannot tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth. So is everyone who is born of God's Holy Spirit. When we believed that the final reproaches of an everlasting hell had become our doom forever, to the reverse, as we hope, the Lord wrought mightily in our poor being, and victoriously triumphed over our foes, conquering even death, hell and the grave. His work established for his sin polluted bride a far more exceeding weight of eternal glory: what we felt to be our eternal ruin, became our chief joy, as we truly hope.

At little seasons, we have the sweet consolation that our merciful God has taken our feet out of the miry clay, and has placed them upon a rock, even himself; and has established our going, and put a new song in our mouth, even with love and high praise to our dear redeemer God.

Dear kindred in Christ, if this vile rebel has ever been a recipient of this new song, it was given me thirty-five years ago through divine revelation.

This new song doesn't belong to Adam's posterity, but unto the family of God. I feel that this new song has always had its counterpart in all of God's loving attributes. Should I prefer either of God's divine attributes one to another, it seems it would be mercy; for it seems that his merciful hand has reached my helpless case in so many different ways. We feel that God's goodness and mercy has followed us all the days of our life: his mercy endureth forever. I believe that God's divine attributes are equally essential to his redemptive work.

Back again to the new song, which is redeeming love, and which none but the redeemed of the Lord can ever sing. When the inhabitants of Zion are blessed with His Holy Spirit, that new song will be sung. Notice that this new song is but one, as its great author and composer is but one, which is God. Pardon me for saying so much about this new song, for it has touched a responsive chord in my heart. Truly this sweet song has the true characteristics of the theme of redeeming love, for it is the life of our delights, even the bright jewel of our hope. If we are true professors, it is Christ in us the hope of glory; which is to all his saints a true and living testimony, testifying and witnessing from their hearts that God is true and besides him there is no other.

This vital theme of salvation by grace, which by his own free will and purpose God framed and set apart by his mighty power before the world began; and which is the doctrine of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, which was set up and taught by him and his apostles here in time; and gladly received by his saints for their glorious inheritance in God's kingdom, and their final preservation in eternal glory. At times, we feel to taste and handle these vital things with our own hands: their fruits have become our meat and our drink. Though through much tribulation, we hope to enter in the strait gate through the love and abounding mercy of God.

Dear Elder, I had only intended to express to you a few of my thoughts and feelings about the Signs of the Times: how I feel that the Lord has wrought so mightily in its beloved editors and associated editors, that they have so faithfully and truthfully served the Signs from its beginning down to the present time; together with the many brothers and sisters who have from time to time set forth in their own plain way and manner, the doctrine of God our Saviour: even Christ, the way, the truth and the life, - salvation by grace and grace alone. I will make mention of our beloved Elder Dodson. I loved him and his ablely gifted manner of preaching, and especially his editorials. In my feelings he was a wonderful counselor: he fought for peace and unity among brethern and churches. We miss him, but he is at rest; where we too shall be ere long, to wait the adoption, to-wit the redemption, of these our vile bodies.

Many able gifts have been passing out lately, but we still feel that the Lord is raising up and qualifying others to fill their places just exactly as He will have it. He carries on his own undisturbed affairs. In Elders Spangler and Wood, I feel the Signs has two able elders for editors: I feel well satisfied with you both, my dear brethern.

I have been taking the Signs for eleven years, and am well pleased with the good, wholesome doctrine advocated in it. I am enclosing check for $5.00 to extend my subscription for two years. May the Lord's sustaining grace abound with her dear saints everywhere, is my sincere desire.

Your brother in hope
of a glorious immortality,
J. A. Perdue

Denton, Ky.

Dear Brother Wood:

Just received your letter of the 7th and was pleased to have a letter from

you; am always pleased to have a personal letter from an Old School Baptist.

My mind has been running on a portion of Scripture recorded in Revelations and it seems that I can't get rid of it, so, as my grandfather used to say the only way he could get rid of a burden was to talk it off, and that seems to be my experience, so I will quote the scripture. It is found Revelations 21:9, and reads as follows: "And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and he talked with me saying, Come hither and I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." We understand this bride which the angel shewed John to be the church here in the world; and the angel proceeds to give a description: "And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like jasper stone, clear as crystal." (Which is the light of the Son of God most glorious to behold, - the light which God commanded to shine out of darkness, which hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face af Jesus Christ). "And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel."

These twelve tribes of national Israel are typical of all spiritual Israel, which is composed of some out of every kindred, tongue and people in the world. And this city, or church has a wall that is so high and great that it cannot be penetrated by all the forces of men and Satan combined. With all their institutions they will never be able to get one subject through or over its walls; though some do get into the literal church here in the world, at the proper time they will go out that it might be made manifest that they are not of us.

We notice that there is an angel standing guard at each gate where the names of the children of Israel are written; so the angels see to it that none enter exsept those whose names are written upon the gate (or in the book of life). And this city lieth foursquare: the width, height and breadth are all equal, signifying a perfect city. And on either side there are three gates, so that there are gates facing in every direction, which stand open continually and shall not be shut at all by day; and there being no night there, they are open at all times to receive His sons and daughters from every direction as they come from every kindred, tongue and people under heaven. We, as a local body of this most glorious church, should be very careful about turning one of these little ones away when they come with an experience of grace, for this is not our church, but God's and Christ's, his Son. When God quickens and gives one of his elect an experience of his grace and a desire to unite with the church here in the world, and he or she comes with a confession of sins and evidence of forgivness. I feel we have no right to question any further than "if thou believest thou mayest".

"And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb." So this, as we see it, is founded on the doctrine that is set forth by the twelve apostles of our blessed Lord, whose names are written in the foundation of the church, or city of our God.

"And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones." Garnished with the precious doctrine of the sovereignty of God's grace, mercy and loving kindness to his elect people. "And I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." That is, he saw no building made by hands, with inscription on the altar

"to the unknown God." As Paul said, "As I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, To The Unknown God. Whom ye therefore ignorantly worship declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of Heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is he worshiped with men's hands as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." Etc.

So the dwelling place of this elect people is in God through Christ. Many of them have no houses called churchhouses; they worship many of them in school houses and in each others homes, and in the open when weather permits.

"And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth; neither whatsoever worketh adominations, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life." All others, he says, shall worship the beast; as it is said, "Power was given the beast over all flesh, so that all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

"And he shewed me a pure river of water of life clear as crystal proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bear twelve manner of fruit and yielded her fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Notice that this tree of life yields her fruit once a month, and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations of this city: Those who have been brought to the knowledge of a ruined and lost condition, and are afflicted in soul and spirit and crying for mercy; their eyes have been opened to a lost and condemned condition, and are afflicted with putrifying sores from the sole of the feet to the crown of the head. But their weary souls are poulticed, balmed and soothed by the leaves, as graces that fall from this tree of life unto them, though unmerited. The pure river of water of life runs through the midst of the city, and through the midst of every subject of it. It is their life which flows to them from God through Christ. They are all strung on one cord of life and love, as one strand of pearls on a cord which has no end; it begins in God and ends in God through Christ. It has no loose end whereby one might slip off; neither is there place or end where another could be strung on the cord, for each end is connected in God, and when one member suffers the whole body suffers. And we notice the city has but one street, and it is just a one way street. Its subjects all travel in one and the same direction, as there is just one way to go, and that way is Christ.

"And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there, and they shall need no candle neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever." Notice, his name shall be in their foreheads. We see this when one comes with an experience of grace, singing praises to His holy name; and proclaiming that his name is all my trust, for he is my Lord, my King and my Priest, my Daysman, my Sacrifice, my Redeemer, my Kindsman, my Elder Brother: my all in all. And they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light. They need no material or physical light for their light comes from God. He commandeth his light to shine out of darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not. The world cannot see this light which God gives his chosen; which light Paul saw above the brightness of

the sun at mid-day. "At mid-day, O king, I saw in the way (notice how he says IN THE WAY) a light from heaven." etc. This way which Paul saw evidently was the way which Isaiah spoke of when he was prophesying of the coming of Christ and the setting up of the gospel church. "And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; and the unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any revenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: and they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." On the outside of this highway, and the walls of this city, are dogs and sorcerers and whoremongers and murderers and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

Let us drop back and take a brief view of the type of this church, or city, under the law. God made a promise to Abraham and to his seed; and the seed was to be accounted in Isaac, Jacob being the lot of his inheritance. "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh, and the hollow of his thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel." (Genesis 32:24-28)

Dear reader, do you recall when you wrestled in your experience with this angel through the darkness of the night, and felt that your bones were out of joint, and you could see nothing but death and hell before you; but at the break of day he blessed you, after you had gone through the dark season, and through the valley of death. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. So, did you not see by the eye of faith your Saviour face to face when he pardoned your sins and set your guilty soul free? You then could sing praise to his most glorious name. Jacob went hobbling along from that time on, and had many ups and downs, and suffered many grievous things. So have you and I; but, as He said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me peace."

So Jacob and his posterity went by the name Israel from that time on until the end of the dispensation of the law, and were God's chosen nation under that law; while they were not all believers in God, and were not all his elect people in Christ, and did not all belong to spiritual Israel. He says, Not all Israel are of Israel, neither is he a Jew who is one outwardly, but he is a Jew which is one inwardly; neither is circumcision that which is outwardly made with hands, but circumcision is of the heart. As a nation of the world, they are still called Israel; but the name Israel, as concerning the Lord's people, ceased with the ending of the law dispensation. And he said by the mouth of the prophet when he was prophesying of the coming of Christ, and the setting up of the gospel kingdom, "And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shall be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken: neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called HEPHZI-BAH, and thy land BEULAH; for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married." Etc. (Isaiah 62)

The gentiles were to be brought in at the ending of the law covenant, and

they were to be called by a new name which the mouth of the Lord should name; that is, the chosen people out of the Gentile race with the believing Jews. So John was sent before Christ to make ready a people prepared of the Lord. Christ said of John, "Verily, I say unto you, among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist. (Matthew 11:10-11) And, "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John." I firmly believe that the name Baptist given John by Christ is the new name that the Lord's people were to be called by in this Gospel Dispensation, and that every one who has been baptized in that pure river of the water of life is a Baptist, regardless of color, nationality, etc. The Baptists have suffered the most severe persecutions and oppressions; they have been beheaded, imprisoned, burned at the stake and banished from their homes, because of the doctrine they believe and preach; yet they have survived through all this and retained the name Baptist, and no doubt will through until the end of time, when Christ, our blessed Lord, will present the church unto the Father a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

While here in the world from a physical standpoint, she is not perfect, because her subjects are not perfect while clothed in humanity. The seven churches of Asia, which we think is representative of the whole, the Angel found something against all of them: none of them were perfect. Nevertheless, in Christ she is perfect.

I see I am making this too long, so will come to a close. The angel said, "Come hither and I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife."

H. L. Rogers.

---

170 N. Filbert Avenue,
Exeter, California.

Dear Christian Friends:

I have been asked to write on the subject of the resurrection. Knowing my inability as I do, I undertake this with fear and trembling; and knowing that without the guiding hand of an alwise God, my efforts will be a failure.

The man Christ Jesus died on the cross. I understand it was his humanity which died, and not his divinity; because divinity cannot die. His death was by his voluntary laying down that wonderful and precious life, which neither men nor devils could take from him. He laid down his life in obedience to the covenant commandment of the Father (John 10:18); for it is plain that this commandment has a direct reference to a previous important and well defined agreement between the Son and the Father. The death of our blessed Saviour was far from being an accident, because it was the subject of ancient prophecy; and was therefore surrounded by the predestinated certainties of Jehovah. (Acts 4:23-27).

After the death of Jesus, a Roman spear was thrust into his side, but his once tender body did not feel this wound, which was made in fulfillment of prophecy; and it also seemed to give public evidence that he was really dead. Before his arrest by the armed mob, his enemies were so carefully and powerfully restrained that they could only look upon him with malicious intent. So now from this time after the spear thrust, their hands were also as carefully restrained from all other abuse. I believe we can plainly see the ever ruling hand of God in this matter.

The death of the Son of God was the most momentous event that ever took place in this world. The earth was convulsed by a mighty earth quake, as if in protest of abhorance; and even the sun refused to shine. Jesus, paid the full penalty of all that divine justice demanded of him as the covenant surety in behalf of those the Father gave him in the covenant. Justice could de-

mand no more because it had received full satisfaction.

Now the treatment toward Jesus changes altogether. It was with most tender hands that he was taken down from the cross (the same kind hands tenderly washed the many blood stains from his bruised and torn body) and carefully prepared for burial. He was laid in a new tomb: one that had not been contaminated with dead bodies. The gracious Lord having died as the covenant head and representative of his people, he satisfied the exacting demands of the broken law in their behalf. But death could not hold him in the grave — his body did not see corruption, because it was sinless blood that flowed through his veins. His resurrection surely proves that at that time all the power of death was actually forced to surrender its hold on him. For when the awful curse of the law, because of that load of imputed sin he was bearing, lost all its power over him, in every way death was then forced to release its strong hands from him. His triumphant resurrection certainly proves that sin was on him no longer, for it had lost all the death power of its penalty.

His resurrection is indeed one of the great and glorious marvels of the New Testament, and loudly proclaims his everlasting victory over sin and Satan. After our Lord had completed his wonderful and saving work of redemption by his death upon the cross, he arose victoriously from the grave. It was indeed his crowning act in the redemption of sinners; his ignomenious death was actually turned into a most glorious and everlasting victory. Consequently, he is declared to be the Son of God with power: all power in heaven and earth (Matthew 23:18), by his resurrection from the dead. (Romans 1:4 and 1 Corinthians 15:3-4). And marvelous as it may seem to all human mind, it is declared that it was through death that he was to triumphantly destroy him that had the power of death. (Hebrews 11:4).

Our Saviour's enemies among the Jews instigated by Satan, vainly attempted to defeat any grounds for a report that He arose from the grave. But all of Pilot's army would have been equally as helpless as those few soldiers who composed the guard at the sepulcher; for at the appointed time an angel came from heaven armed with divine power, and rolled away that great stone, and sat upon it. The Roman guards became as dead men through weakness because of the angel's presence. The dead body of Jesus was very carefully and tenderly laid in Joseph's new tomb: it was this very same body that was resurrected. He was with the Apostles forty days after his resurrection, and they were given every opportunity to examine him and to know beyond a doubt that it was the same body that was crucified.

At the end of his proving to his disciples his resurrection, this same body was received up into heaven. It appears to me that when he came out of the grave his body was glorified, and is now in heaven seated at the right hand of the Father. His victorious resurrection most positively assures the certainty of our rising from the grave with glorified bodies. The resurrection of Jesus was an actual, though miraculous event. In harmony with his previous history and character, the object of the manifestation was not only to convince the Apostles personally of the resurrection, but to make them witnesses of the resurrection, and heralds of salvation.

The Resurrection of Christ! Nothing is more important than this. It deserves our particular attention, because it is the grand hinge on which Christianity turns. The Apostle says He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. Resurrection is a word among words; the doctrine of which, the eventful consequenc-

es of which, involve in it all our high hopes and expectation of happiness for the life that now is, and that which is to come. The resurrection is the keystone in the arch of Christian faith: the firm belief in the resurrection and eternal life is one of the products of Christianity, and rests upon the resurrection of Jesus. His resurrection confirms the faith of Christians in his person, as he is thereby declared to be the Son of God with power. (Romans 1:4) He was the Son of God from eternity, and from the first moment of his incarnation as God-Man; yet the honor of this relation was much eclipsed in his poor life, and ignomenious death. But in his resurrection, God did publicly own him in the face of the world. Therefore, God testified from heaven, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." (Acts 13:33).

His resurrection was likewise a most positive proof of the all sufficiency of his resurrection. The curse of the law accompanied his death, and seemed like an infinate weight to lie on his grave; but in rising again, the virtue of his suffering was fully declared. (Romans 4:25). He was delivered for our offences, and was raised for our justification. Having, as our surety, paid our debt and given full satisfaction to divine justice, he was released from the grave; and the discharge was most solemnly published to the world.

On this doctrine of the resurrection is also built our faith in the promises to give life and glory to his servants. How could we believe him to be the author of life who remained under the power of death? If he had been confined to the grave, all our hopes had been buried with him; but his resurrection is the cause, pattern and argument of ours. And Christ may be said not only to have raised his body from the grave, but also his church with him. The Christian's hope earnestly expects that the vile bodies of the Lord's people now in their graves, sleeping the sleep of death, will be awakened from death and made to live. We cannot scripturally talk about their resurrection without speaking of Christ's resurrection also. "Thy dead shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." (Isaiah 26:19). For in a special sense Jesus is the resurrection of his people, since he is their covenant head and representative. So when we prove his resurrection, we also prove the resurrection of all his people with glorified bodies; "For if we believe Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. Submitted in love to the redeemed of God.

Mrs. G. W. Atkins

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227 19th Street
Dunbar, W. Va.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I am enclosing check to cover my renewal for two years; the balance you may use as you think best.

The "Signs of the Times" has been in my home since I can remember. My father took it and my grandfather, Elder Wm. A. Melton, took it before him. I used to slip around and read it when I was but a small child. Why I didn't want to be seen reading it, I do not know, unless it was because I often shed tears while reading it; and this I still do.

Most of the articles published are balm to my weary heart, and I especially enjoy the editorials.

I have been blessed (as I hope and believe) to attend some wonderful preaching the past three Sundays. What a glorious privilege this is: just a little foretaste of what it will be when we see Him, our own Redeemer, and be like Him. How could this be for one so weak and sinful as I, is my worry; and Mercy, Mercy, is my plea.

So very unworthy, as sister in hope,

Mrs. Nanna M. Carney.

5111 N. Crestline,
Spokane 28, Washington.

Dear Editors:

I want to thank you so much for sending me the Signs of the Times, even though I was past due in payment of the subscription.

I enjoy reading the paper so well. It usually, or I can say always, brings to my mind different thoughts concerning the things written regarding the Scriptures. I remember in my childhood days asking my mother concerning these scriptures, and wanting to know how and what they meant. She did not know and would say, I can't tell you. But I think I now have a clearer knowledge of them.

The article on The Holy Bible, I thought was very good, and I enjoyed it much. In fact, I always enjoy them all. I am sure everyone has been and is sincere in what they say; and to be sincere is good.

I enclose the price of two year's subscription. Yours in humble hope of mercy while I live, and life eternal in the resurrection.

Mrs. Fred Martin

White Oak, Texas.
Box 725.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am writing to have my address changed from James, Texas, to White Oak, Texas. Since my husband's death, it has been necessary for me to move my home. I hope to get the Signs O. K.

I want to say that the good letters in the Signs have been a great comfort to me; and if not taking too much space, I will write some which may relieve my mind of some of the great burden which has followed me since my husband's death, March 5th. I will use Psalms 30:5: "Weeping may tarry for the night; but joy cometh in the morning."

I had been worried and down-hearted all day. It was dark and drizzly, and I felt in a sad world, a dreary world, a weeping world; and when my mind was weary of counting up my troubles, I fell asleep. After a long night of healing sleep, I awaked to a new morning. The sun was shining from a rain washed sky, and my misery of yesterday was a dim memory. Then I remembered the Psalmist saying, "Weeping may tarry for the night; but joy cometh in the morning."

All sunshine and no rain makes no garden of the Lord; it only makes a desert, and a desert is a very depressing place. We need the clouds as much as we do the sunshine in this life. Our sorrows and weepings come in the night, —in the night of worldly reverses, and in the night of broken health. Just a short time ago we found pleasure and satisfaction and strength for our daily tasks. But then comes a time when all strength seems to seep from us, and we become acquainted with pain. I have spent many days of my life with people sick in mind and body, and have traveled many miles to sit by the sick. A friend said she could not see how I stood it all. No, we do not become hardened to it; but we do become more tender, and more understanding of the suffering of humanity. And we do become more conscious of how greatly we are dependent on the love and help of our Heavenly Father. Sorrow comes to all; and yet the night of sorrow is not without its consolation and hope. Paul's words are, "Sorrow not as others who have no hope." He, thinking about life's sufferings, said, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us."

At some time we all go through trials; but seeing the blessings which follow in their train, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." Love to all who read the Signs.

Mrs. J. D. Simmons.

A SON TO HIS MOTHER ON THE DEATH OF A SISTER-IN-LAW

Junction City, Oregon.

Dear Mama:

I know you are heart broken over Ora, and so are we. It is so hard to believe; I know you miss her and we all will, and if we ever get to come back, we surely will miss her. I could go there any hour of the night and she would get up and fix me something to eat. It is sad, and if we had our way, we would have kept her here. But it would not be right, for God prepared a place for her even before she was born in this world; and he set or fixed a time for her to occupy that place: and, to think, it is a perfect place. Yet for the love we had for her, we would have kept her here in a troubled world.

Aren't human beings strange? We are taught that Christ came, suffered and died for our sins, then arose and went and prepared a place for us: a perfect place, where there is no sin; yet we would keep them here from that place, if we could. I feel sure that if we could look and see that place as it is, then we would want to rush to it before our time. Death is feared by man, but I wonder if fear isn't the worst part. The Scriptures tell us that through fear of death we were all our lifetime subject to bondage. It looks to me like it is pretty plain that it is the fear of death that we are in bondage to. In this same scripture (Hebrews 2nd Chapter), it tells us He destroyed him that had power of death, which is the devil. How did he destroy the devil? By giving us eternal life. So, while here in bondage of fear of death, we cannot see that life everlasting.

In James 1:15: "Sin when it is finished bringeth forth death." So surely, after finishing sin or death, we see what everlasting life is; while here we cannot see and know what everlasting life is, even though we know it is without end. We stood before him holy and without blame in love before the world began; so we were his before this world was. I believe we were children of God before being partakers of flesh and blood; and when sin is finished, then comes death, then rest of everlasting life we see. I say we, because I hope that I have a hope, and none but God's people have a hope. For, if we see a thing why do we yet hope for it? So we do not see it until after death.

The world is worried about sinners. Paul said he came to save sinners, of whom I (Paul) am chief. He came for them that the Father gave him, and none of them are lost. They were thine, and thine are mine. So there is no such thing as becoming a child of God by works. He said he finished the work the Father gave him to do; then what has man got to do with it. If man had anything to do with it by good works, then man is his own saviour instead of Christ: and Christ died in vain. Looks like any one could see that.

We don't have any scripture for preaching funerals that I know of. The way I feel, I don't want anyone to preach my funeral that believes in works of man to become a child of God. I told Carol and Sidney today there were two things I didn't want, and that is one of them; and I don't want to be cremated. As I am out here where I guess there is not a Primitive Baptist of any kind, I think sometimes I will write what I believe, to be read when my time comes. That way there won't be any lies told over me.

I thought of something new to me the other day: He that saith he is without sin is a liar, and the truth is not in him; it appears to me that when he says the truth is not in him, it means the truth of God: he knows nothing of the truth of God or he would not say he was without sin. I feel like sometimes that I have a little light of what truth is, and at times I wouldn't take anything for it. Then again, sometimes I get worked up over world conditions, and wish I didn't know anything.

I wish Ed would come out to see us. The Summers are so grand here, I know

it would help him. Hope you will let us hear from you. You are a good old mama.

Kie Skinner

Compton, California

Dear Brother Spangler:

I send you herewith an article by our dear sister Verda Machesney, of Kingman, Kansas. She is a sister of Elder J. R. Hardy. I enjoyed the article very much and would like for others to read it.

Unworthily,
L. W. Langwell

I believe what the Bible teaches about the resurrection. In Revelation 20:6, it reads, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." So there must be a second resurection; but since all his little ones are in him, they arose with him, figuratively speaking: they were crucified with him, for they are also His body.

He suffered for their sake and they suffer for his sake; but these vile bodies must return to dust: "For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." (Genesis 3: 19) The first resurrection made them priest unto God and Christ, and, to my mind, that is right here on earth, for I do not believe there will be priests in the world to come; but they will be one: heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. Heirs of what? Why, the love of God and Everlasting Life, where there is no more trouble nor sighing, no sorrow nor pain, but all will be perfection forever more.

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:1-2) The Father's house is his kingdom on earth, or his church; the many mansions are his little ones in the church. Christ said, "I go to prepare a place for you." Now that could not have been their place in heaven above, for Matthew 25:34, reads, "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." That kingdom, I think, is the continuing city, whose maker and builder is God, which they look for.

The place, to me, that he went to prepare was the grave. He lay there three days and three nights, which took care of all his people in the three dispensations of time; and when he arose he destroyed the power of the grave. (Hosea 13:14)

Paul says, "Thou which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." He also said the body thou sowest is not the body that shall be: "For it is sown in corruption and is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor and is raised in glory: it is sown a natural body and is raised a spiritual body. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

Christ has been, and always will be the first in all things. He arose first that his little ones might be raised, not only from the grave but spiritually also. So the first resurrection raised them up spiritually, and when he comes again our bodies will come forth from the grave like unto his glorious body; we shall see him as he is and be satisfied; and so shall we ever be with him (if so be that I am his). There would be no need for his second coming if there was to be no second resurrection.

Submitted in fear and trembling,
Verda Machesney

(Note: In publishing the different views of the brethern, we hope our readers may be given to search out these things for themselves, comparing scripture with scripture, that we may know the mind of the Spirit. J. D. W)

575 Arlington Street,
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.
Signs of the Times,
Dear Editors:

I hope you will forgive me for being delinquent in sending in my remittance for our good old paper, that has been coming to our home, and to my Mother's and Father's home, and my grandparent's home for over one-hundred years; in fact, I believe from the time it was established by Elder Gilbert Beebe.

I love the God honoring truths it contends for today, the same as it did in its earliest days; and I trust that the Lord will comfort, strengthen and guide each and all of the editors that they may continue to carry on the Signs to the comfort of so many of the wanderers here below, who are made to long after the truth and search for it each day of their travels.

We do not have any preaching out here in our country, but we enjoyed listening to good preaching by your colaborer, Elder E. J. Lambert, at the May meeting in Dunwich, Ontario. We also visited at the home of my wife's aunt, Mrs. Arnold Bellows, in West Hurley, N. Y., where we enjoyed a lovely visit with Elder Bellows, and also Elder Amasa Slauson. It is good to meet with those who love the same truths and have traveled the same paths through the wilderness.

I am enclosing five dollars which will pay my subscription till the end of the year, and also send it to someone who is not able to pay for it. We have copies of the Signs from 1925 to 1950, unbound. If anyone would care to have them, we shall be glad to send them to them. With love in the truth,

Unworthily,
James W. Black

Rising Sun, Maryland

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

It makes me tremble to call you brother and sister, realizing I am most unworthy and least of all, if I be one. If I cannot go with you dear people I have no where else to go. You preach the word as I see it, and tell my walk of life and experience far better than I can tell it.

I do believe that when we feel so little and cast down, and our hope seems so dim, it is then we feel so much the need of prayer. He hears our supplications and prayers, for he knows our every need before we ask him and our thoughts from afar off; but, like John in prison, we need to be shown again.

May we be given grace and patience to wait on the Lord, who is able to do more than we can ever ask. He is the only one who can give us a hope in his mercy; and all the power of Satan can not take it away, for our hope as the anchor is sure and steadfast. What manner of life ought we to live in our walk and talk: we are commanded to come out from the world and live a separate people. In our warfare we find as Paul said, "When I would do good evil is present with me." Do we not meet with the same?

I do not know why I am writing this, for I have such a poor way of expressing His goodness and mercy. I hope you are feeling much better, and will get to come and spend a few days with me. I feel it would be a blessing to have you come, though unworthy I be. I am always glad to hear from you. Remember me and mine when at the throne of grace.

"O for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame;
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the lamb!"

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Mrs. D. P. Farmer

Williamstown, Kansas

Elders D. V. Spangler and J. D. Wood:
Dear brethren in the Lord:

I have in mind to jot down a few

thoughts, which, when you have examined them carefully, if you see fit to allow them space in our family paper, "The Signs of the Times", you have my consent to publish them; otherwise you have my consent to cast them aside.

I am much like a little child, at least in one respect, I love to turn through the pages of the old book called the Bible and look at pictures, and when I see a picture that reflects the image of my Master, or that of his lovely bride, the church, it is indeed fascinating. My mind was especially drawn to Noah and his family and the Ark and the conditions that prevailed before the Ark was constructed. The earth was pronounced exceedingly wicked. Every imagination of the thoughts of the people was only evil continually. And the Lord declared, "It repenteth me that I have made man." Yet it is folly to conclude that the Lord meant he was sorry for what he had done or that he had made a grave mistake; for God is not as man that he should repent. Briefly, that was all for the manifestation of his power over sin.

It is contended by some that God did not predestinate the evil acts of men yet we see his greatest glories spring from the facts that his power and wisdom is sufficient to overcome all sin. "His mercy endureth forever." If there were no sin there would be no need for mercy. Thus while this condition prevailed the Lord spake unto Noah and said, "The end of all flesh is before me for the earth is filled with violence through them. And behold I will destroy them with the earth." It will be noted that Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. In another place it is said, "For *thee* have I seen righteousness before men in this generation." Thus signifying that he was the only righteous one in all the earth. Even the family of Noah, I am persuaded, was among that wicked generation. Noah, no doubt was a type of Christ. And the Lord said unto Noah, "Make thee an Ark of gopher wood." And it will be observed that every detail of this Ark was prescribed by the Lord. A counterpart of this we find in the words of Jesus when he was upon earth, viz, "Upon this Rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

As Noah was a type of Christ, so the Ark is a type of the church. There were rooms in the Ark. We are not told how many, but we are told there were three stories which represents the church in the three dispensations of time; the first, the second and the third. The third or topmost story representing the church in the third or gospel dispensation. This is where Noah and his family dwelt. And it was so ordered of God that the window, the only source of light was finished in the cubit above. Thus it was imperative that they must look upward for all the light they received. There were no artificial lights in the grand, old structure; nor are there any artificial lights in the church of God today.

There are artificial lights in the world however, and they are known by various names, such as Sunday schools, Bible schools, Christian Endeavor, etc. These are artificial lights and they are calculated to throw light upon the ungodly, but in the true church of God there are no artificial lights known. It is written, "All thy people shall be taught of the Lord and great shall be the peace of thy children." We need not talk long to one who has been instructed under these artificial lights until we discover the light which they seem to cherish is not "that true light that lighteth ever man that cometh into the world." Their light did not come down through that window above but rather it comes "up from below." "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

Now as pertaining to those words of God when he said, "It repenteth me that I have made man." God is not lamenting the fact that he made man, as though he was about to acknowledge he had

made a great mistake in so doing. No, indeed, God has never made a mistake, but he is about to manifest his power and authority to deal with sin and with sinners as seemeth good to him. Thus he declares, "the end of all flesh is come before me," and he therefore declared, "I will destroy them with the earth." This was a complete overthrow for every man; and everything in which was the breath of life perished, save Noah and those that were with him in the Ark. And thus in Revelations we see the counterpart. And he that sat upon the throne said, "Behold I make all things new." Thus presaging the termination of that old covenant, which indeed they broke, and the ushering in of the new. The Lord declared, "Behold the days come saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand and led them out of the land of Egypt which covenant they break."

Briefly, this shows the complete picture of the complete redemption of Israel from under the curse of the law. "Behold I make all things new." This new, of course is the new covenant. And it is indeed, not only new but decidedly different from the old. In this New, it is declared, "I will put my law in their hearts". Not on tables of stone this time. Moreover it is declared, "They shall no more teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother saying, "Know the Lord for they shall all know me from the least even unto the greatest of them and their sins and their iniquities I will remember against them no more." Thus, under this new covenant, under which we, as a people, are blest to live and enjoy, we have one of the sweetest promises contained in the Bible, the forgiveness of sin. The law had a shadow of good things to come and not the very image of the things. It could never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect, for then would they not have ceased to be offered. Because the worshippers once purged should have no more conscience of sin. But in those sacrifices there was a rememberance made again of sin every year. "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin." (Read the tenth chapter of Hebrews)

(Elder L. L. Schenck to be concluded)

APPOINTMENTS FOR ELDER SPANGLER

Elder Spangler expects, the Lord willing, to attend the Conecuh River Association in Alabama embracing the second Sunday in October, and the Hopewell Association embracing the third Sunday in October. The following appointments have been arranged between the two associations:

Paran (5 mi. E. of Troy) Monday Oct. 12th at 11 A. M.

Greenville Monday Oct. 12th at 8 P. M.

Rutledge Tuesday Oct. 13th at 8 P. M.

Elam Wednesday Oct. 14th at 11 A. M.

(Elder) W. D. Griffin

ASSOCIATIONAL NOTICES

The *Virginia Corresponding Meeting* will be held, the Lord willing, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 14, 15 and 16, 1953, with New Valley Church.

This meeting house is located about eight miles North of Leesburg, Virginia, near Lucketts, on Route 15. Brethern of our faith and order, and all interested friends, are invited to meet with us. Those arriving the day before the meeting will call Brother C. R. Hollandsworth, 'phone 59J, Leesburg, Virginia, who will arrange for accommodations.

Miss Mattie Howser, Church Clerk
Purcellville, Va.

Arthur L. Carter, Assn. Clerk,
Manassas, Va.

The *Salisbury Old School Baptist Association* will convene, the Lord willing, with the Snow Hill Church, Snow Hill, Maryland, October 21, and 22, 19 53.

All ministers or our faith who are in peace and order, and all lovers of the truth, are cordially invited. Those coming by bus or train should go to Salisbury. Those coming by car come to Snow Hill. Please contact Brother Lee Warren, Berlin, Maryland: telephone 61W; or Brother Handy Truitt, Snow Hill, Maryland: telephone 499J11.

For further information write:

Mrs. Maude P. Truitt,
Church Clerk,
Snow Hill, Maryland,

CONTRIBUTIONS
TO THE
INDIGENT FUND

(To August 1, 1953)

Mrs. David P. Farmer, Md., .50; Wayland Chandler, Ind., $2.00; John Burson, Texas, $10.00; A. W. Mariner, Va., $5.00; Joe McKinzie, Canada, $1.00; Chas. A. Taylor, Okla., $2.00; Mrs. J. B. Hill, N. J., $2.00; Joe A. McLamb, N. C., $5.00; J. E. Lemons, Tenn., $1.00; John F. Davis, La., $5.00; Mrs. J. R. Hardy, Mo., $1.00; J. E. Jones, Ariz., $2.15; Mrs. H. A. Strube, Texas, $2.00; D. B. Thomas, La., $2.00; Loyd Cole, Colo., $1.00; Ida Bowers, Texas, .50; Grace Hastings, Md., $5.00; Mrs. Daniel Holloway, Md., $5.00; Mrs. Thomas Darby, N. J., $3.00; Mrs. Nannie M. Carney, W. Va., $3.00; Elder L. L. Schenck, Kansas, $2.00; C. L. Williams, Va., $3.00; J. W. Black, Canada, $2.00; Mrs. Carrie Hodgins, Mich., $5.00; Homer Bailey, Dela., $3.00; Loyd Spikes, Oregon, $1.00.

EDITORIALS

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EDITORIAL
CHURCHES AND ASSOCIATIONS

We are about ready to start traveling so that we may attend the Pigg River Association, where we hope to join with the brethern in the worship of our God; and we are thinking of what a blessed privilege it is to want to be with the brethern, and what a privilege it is to be able to be with them. For many years we have had this pleasure, and many have been the enjoyable seasons.

Our thoughts being turned to the subject of associations, we feel to give some of our reflections concerning them. There is no doubt but that the Lord's people have always loved their assemblings. We read in Malachi, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that

feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man speareth his own son that serveth him."

Those who brought the brethern together in various places in church organizations, as given in the New Testament, were careful that the churches were constituted of believers in the Lord. Their doctrine was the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles; and this doctrine included faith, order and discipline: for all these make up the "doctrine of God our Saviour" .. These things were "set in order" by the Apostles. By personal visits and epistles, the Apostles instructed the brethern what the doctrine was. When any turned away from these things, they perverted the doctrine; then the Apostles reproved them, and admonished them to continue in the things they had learned, and to mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine; and avoid them. (Romans 16:17) We believe that there was perfect direction of the Spirit in all that was delivered by the writers in the New Testament, so that there has never been need for additional instruction in order to maintain gospel churches. The doctrine is there: If any question of faith should come up, it is there; if any question of order, it is there; if any question of discipline, it is there.

The Apostles of the Lord did not continue to live, but that which they were empowered to deliver to the churches yet lives with us with as much authority as when they personally delivered it. We hear the Apostle Paul saying to Timothy, "But if I tary long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God." And Peter, "Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. Morever I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance."

Each church was separate and distinct in her organization: her members were bound together in the things of the gospel as an independent body, subject only to the commandments given by their great Head. She was then, and now, to look well to the guidance of the Spirit in all things, as given in the record of their Saviour and the epistles of his Apostles; and which now comprise the New Testament. She is to acknowledge no other authority for anything, but is to maintain these things faithfully. Jesus instructed his Apostles as follows: "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." There is no authority for leaving off or adding anything whatsoever.

And, while each church was separate in her own organization and government, there was, and is now, an inseparable union between them: They have the same Lord, the same faith, and the same baptism. As it is writen in the Acts, "As they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily." As they had the same faith, and "common salvation", they had a deep interest in each other's welfare, and there was much communcation between them. We read in the Acts, "We neither received letters out of Judea concerning thee, neither any of the brethern than came shewed or spoke any harm of thee." To the Corinthians Paul wrote that he desired Appollos to come to them with the brethern, and said, "All the brethern greet you." And Paul commended the Thessalonian brethern for their love toward all the brethern of Macedonia. To the Corinthians again he wrote, "Whether any inquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellowhelper concerning you; or our brethern be inquired of, they are the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ." And we have the accounts of the contribu-

tions made for the poor of the flock.

These associations together continued among the churches; and thou there was a gradual assuming of certain authority on the part of some who were associated together during and second and succeeding centuries, to the extent that their associations together became legislative as well as judicial bodies. These, it is needless to say, were those who were departed from the faith and rule of the gospel, and corrupted to such a degree that they were no longer churches of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is to be understood, however, that the apostolic churches maintained communication and association together for their mutual comfort and for the worship of God, either by letter or personal visits.

We believe, therefore, that associations of churches together within a conveniently located territory is proper, and that there is nothing wrong with their being thus associated. But care must be had that no association as a body ever assumes any legislative power over the individual churches composing the body: for all the laws or commands to which the churches are subject were long since laid down for them; and care must be had that no association as a body ever assumes any judiciary power over the churches composing the body: for the right and duty to maintain such laws or commands is entirely in the power of the churches themselves.

This is a particular point which all brethern and churches should always bear in mind, for, otherwise, there is a departure from the old order of things. Any body organized as an association of churches is a creature of the churches; and the churches have no right ever to place authority in the association to assume any sort of power over them. If there is a departure in this, the fault is in the brethern composing the churches, for the churches are composed of the brethern. The churches composing the Pigg River Association when it was formed in 1825, made this statement, "This association assumes no legislative jurisdiction over the churches but acts merely as an advisory council. When a church wants its assistance she must make her wishes known either by query or request, and, if not deemed unreasonable, the association will pay respectful attention to it."

It is right, of course, for an association of churches to have a moderator and a clerk: the moderator to preserve the decorum which the association deems necessary and have adopted; and the clerk to record the proceedings of the body. This is the sole duty of these officers. They are not in any sense a kind of superior officers with some kind of authority over brethern, but rather, they are but servants of the brethern in their associated capacity. They have individual rights as any other of the brethern, but no more. We remember an old elder who had been moderator of an association for many years, said, when asked to what he contributed his success as a moderator, and was held in high esteem by the brethern, "I have always let the brethern rule themselves."

An association is not a continuing body. That is, there is no association except when the body is in session. These officers cannot speak for the association: the churches through their messengers do all the speaking.

It is also right, of course, that individual churches (or brethern) consult with each other if they have some difficulty on which they feel to need some counsel. An association of churches may, if asked, give counsel to one of her churches; and, if such church should refuse to heed the counsel in matters affecting the fellowship of brethern, and decides to maintain her own ideas of what is right and wrong to the disturbance of the sister churches, then the association of churches may refuse to recognize such church in order, and discontinue their fellowship and association with that church until such time that she stes herself in order. It is regrettable that this action should ever have to be taken, but it is necessary if such circumstances arise. Certainly all other

churches and brethern should recognize and heed any just and proper action taken by a church, or any just and proper action taken by an association of churches. Failure to do this has given rise to all those who call themselves Old Old School or Primitive Baptists, but whose faith and order is for different from those whom they have left.

The main purpose of churches meeting together in an associated capacity is for the worship of God in singing, prayer and preaching. It gives opportunity for brethern to meet brethern whom they would seldom if ever see; and it gives opportunity often to hear elders from a distance preach whom we would seldom if ever see or hear. It is good to meet together and learn how our brethern are getting along, and join in the worship of the true and living God.

These are some of the thoughts we had while contemplating our visit with the brethern, and some of the things we feel make for good order. We pass them on to our brethern.

J. D. W.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

We have a request to answer the following questions pertaining to order. This request comes from a sister in the West, and since we do not know whether they are pertaining to actual cases or not, we must qualify the questions in giving our answers.

1. Is it scriptural order to receive a member into a church by relationship from a church which is having trouble and division, if the member is in no way causing any of it?

If a church once in fellowship and correspondence with sister churches departs in doctrine or order, and time proves that she is likely to continue in such departure, then we feel that should a member of such church, who cannot continue to go along with the disorder, desire to be affiliated with a sister church who is still standing on the same principles which the disorderly church used to stand, and if such a member is desirous of declaring against such disorder, the sister church may properly receive him on relationship or confession of faith. It is assumed, of course, that the member was a member in good standing before the disorder in his church appeared, and that he has not become a member since the disorder was declared against by the sister churches. Caution should be observed that too hasty action in receiving on relationship would not be proper: plenty of opportunity should be given for the disorderly church to put herself in order; after that a church may receive a member on relationship.

2. If a church has had disorder and division, but feels itself to be orderly although it is not recognized as being in order by the majority of sister churches with whom she is accustomed to be affiliated, can such a church be considered to be in order to the extent of issuing a letter of dismission for a member to be received into another church?

Such a church can, of course, issue a letter of dismission since she feels herself to be in order; but the question here is whether the letter may be received by a church that considers the church issuing the letter in disorder. We would not receive such a letter lest we partake of the disorder also.

3. When a church has been restored to peace and found to be in order, what is the proper procedure to establish affiliation with the church which received the member by relationship, so that they may be in good order and fellowship? (Please be explicit)

We cautioned against being too hasty in receiving on relationship in our answer to the first question; but should such a condition prevail as is put in this third question, we feel that if the church which was in disorder has now

discovered that she was in disorder, and has taken all necessary steps to be restored in the fellowship of her sister churches, there should be no question as to fellowship with the member who was received on relationship by a then orderly church. Such a church is but belatedly recognizing that such member was standing for order all the time. Certainly, if the church is fully restored to the fellowship and love of the sister churches, there can be no question of order or fellowship here; and the church which received on relationship may give a letter of dismission back to the former disorderly church, if it is desired. Should a question be raised, or dissatisfaction be evidenced, it would show that the church is not fully restored to her former order.

4. If a member who is in a church where there is disorder feels an impression or call to the Lord's service, how long should he wait for peace to be restored before moving his membership to another church where he has a desire to go that he may enter into the work?

We feel sure that no time limit can be given in answer to this question. If a brother who feels a call to the ministry, and his calling has been recognized by his brethern (for what assurance can he have if his brethern have not recognized it), but who realizes that his church is in disorder either in doctrine or practice, and if such brother was received as a member when the church was not in disorder; and if the brother has labored to have the church restored to order, but to no avail; and if the brother cannot conscientiously continue with the disorder, but is in line with the doctrine and order of another church with whom his church was formerly in fellowship; and *if the sister church is desirous of recognizing the gift in the brother,* then we feel that the brother may be received on the relationship by the sister church.

5. Is it considered among Old Baptists to be in accordance with Christ's teachings and commandments for a minister to baptize persons who wish to be baptized, but have expressed no desire to become members of any church?

We have often considered this question, and are come to this understanding: Since the churches receive members subject to baptism, and after baptism they have right to all the privileges of the church, we think it proper that all who are baptized should be under the watch-care of a church as a member thereof. We are aware that Phillip baptized the Eunuch with no mention of a church affiliation, but so far as we know, others became members of organized churches. "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Baptism is not essential to salvation, as some may claim, but it is essential to membership in a church. If a person desires baptism but refuses to be recognized as a member of the church, we do not feel he should be baptized, since we think it would give evidence that something was wrong in his desire, and in his feelings.

We can conceive that a condition might arise in which an elder might properly baptize a person upon being satisfied of that person's qualifications, and without the previous sanction of the church; but not within reach of an organized church. Should such circumstance arise, we should for ourself require that the person consent to membership in a church, and would report to the church such baptism, feeling that the church would receive the work of the elder in whom they had confidence.

We submit the above to our sister and other brethern, as our understanding of order under the circumstances

outlined in our answers.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

ARE THE MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL REQUIRED TO PREACH TO SINNERS?

We answer without hesitation, They are. If they were not to preach to sinners, we know not where on the face of the earth they could find a people to preach to. All the sons of Adam have sinned, and by the law of God every mouth is stopped, and the whole world becomes guilty before God. If therefore Christ has commissioned his ministers to preach to the whole, or to any portion of the human family, they are commissioned to preach to sinners.

We understand from the scriptures, that Christ has redeemed a portion of the human family from the demands of divine justice, the curse and dominion of the law, and the guilt and consequences of sin; and that these are in due time called with a holy calling—quickened by the Holy Spirit, and that they are gathered with the glorious arm of their great Shepherd, and brought into the liberty of the sons of God, and into the order, and made partakers of the privileges of his church: that they are and shall be translated out of the kingdom of satan, and into the kingdom of God's dear Son. And these being thus redeemed, regenerated and brought into the kingdom of Christ, are denominated *Christians, Believers, Saints, &c.* And that those who are not so called and born again, are denominated unbelievers, &c. But it is nevertheless true that even God's people, while here in the flesh, feel, know, and confess that they are still sinners. It is true they hate sin, but they feel its working in their flesh, and often cry out in bitterness of spirit, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death." "The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law."

So far as the proclamation of the gospel is concerned, it is to be preached to both and to all classes of men, wherever God in his providence opens a door to his ministers to proclaim it.

The preaching of the gospel does not mean the telling men to do this, or that. It signifies the work of proclaiming among the Jews and Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. Not calling on dead sinners to quicken or save themselves; but the proclamation is that "Salvation is of the Lord." It is not to tell or command sinners to repent, but to proclaim that Christ is exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentence to Israel and the remission of sins.

To hold forth the idea that the gospel is a system of duties which unregenerate men are required to do, as a condition of salvation, or that the ministers, or the preaching, are means of saving dead sinners, is, in our estimation, a perversion of the gospel. But the ministry is to bear testimony before the whole world, that there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved; neither is there salvation in any other.

But it is frequently charged, that Old School Baptist refuse to preach the gospel to sinners. This charge has probably been met and refuted a thousand times; but, the reason why it is still reiterated is because they refuse to **give the children's bread to dogs.** Or, in other words, to address the promises and consolations of the New Covenant to those who are not manifestly in that covenant. Such, for instance, as "Seek and ye shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you." The gospel is in its nature discriminating, it has charms only for the heaven born souls.— It being spiritual, cannot be received by unregenerate men. "The

natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." It is not the province of the preachers to supply the destitute with ears, nor are they in any sense the means of supplying them; for none but God can give ears to hear and hearts to understand; yet when and where God has given ears, the preaching of Christ crucified, is Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God; but where God has not given ears to hear, the preaching is to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness. The preacher may make the proclamation, authorized by the example of Christ and his apostles, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

It should also be observed, that Christ's ministers are to preach **the gospel.** They are not ministers of the Old Covenant, but of the new. Not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for Moses has in every city them that preach him. Neither are they to preach the doctrines of men, nor traditions of men, nor a gospel, but **the** gospel of Christ.

When the gospel is preached in truth and soberness, it will find out those who have ears to hear—it will commend itself to those within its sound who are born of God, and although its preaching will not give life to the dead, it will feed, comfort, edify and instruct the living, and it will, as a general, if not universal thing, make all others angry.

No argument can penetrate the deep recesses of the unrenewed heart, to carry thither one spark of spiritual light or truth; for this sufficient reason, "God hath hidden these things from them, and revealed them to babes, even so, because so it seemed good in his sight."

The impenitent sinner is under the law; and what the law saith, (not what the gospel saith) it saith to them that are under the law. The law curses all that are under it. "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." The law curses, but cannot bless; for if a law had been given that could give life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But, on the other hand, the gospel blesses, but cannot curse; yet all its blessings are upon those who are redeemed from under the law, and are brought under grace. Instead therefore of preaching the law, or obedience to the law as a way of life and salvation, the ministers of Jesus, like Paul, should preach, that by the deeds of the law, no flesh shall be justified before God. And, instead of preaching the gospel as the power of **man, or men, through instrumentality,** unto salvation, which is not true; he should preach that the gospel is the power **of God through faith,** unto salvation; which is true, and which the bible affirms.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, December 1, 1850)

MEMORIAL

Inasmuch as it hath pleased our Heavenly Father in His divine wisdom, to remove from us by death, on July 1st, 1953, our beloved brother, **Deacon John Alvis Clayton,** who for many years had faithfully served in that office; who was firm and steadfast in the faith once delivered to the saints, yet meek and humble in his deportment, we, the members of the J. H. Gooch Memorial Church, desire to place on record this Memorial testifying to the high esteem in which he was held, and to our sincere grief in his passing. Therefore be it

Resolved 1st. That in his death we have lost a true and valued member whom we shall greatly miss in our meetings and councils; that we bear testimony to his cheerful and willing service, and that we strive to emulate the virtues with which the Lord adorned his life.

Resolved 2nd. That we "sorrow not, even as others which have no hope," feeling assured that he trusted only in the righteousness of that One in whom alone is salvation; that he had no confidence in the flesh, and that our loss is his eternal gain.

Resolved 3rd. That we tender our deep sympathy to his bereaved widow, our dear sister Verna Clayton and family, in this sore trial, commending them to the care of Him who has promised to be a husband to the widow, and a father to the fatherless.

Resolved further; That a copy of this Memorial be placed on record in our church Minutes,

a copy be given to the sorrowing family, and a copy be sent to the "Signs of the Times" and "Old Faith Contender" for publication.

Done by order of the J. H. Gooch Memorial Church in conference assembled, this Saturday afternoon, July 25, 1953.

Elder P. E. Ingram
Acting Moderator
Laura Reed Gooch
Clerk

OBITUARY

JOHN LESLIE STEVER

With a saddened heart we report the illness and death of Brother John Leslie Stever at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Clair Colbert, of Calvin, Cass Township, Pennsylvania, June 15, 1953, after an extended illness following a stroke. During his long confinement to his home, he was tenderly cared for by his daughter, Mrs. Rachel Miller and also by Mr. and Mrs. Clair Colbert, who ministered to his needs with loyal, loving care, sparing nothing that would contribute to his comfort.

The funeral services were held at the Trough Creek Valley church of Old School Baptist faith on Thursday following his death, Brother Stever being a devoted member. The writer had charge of the funeral services and endeavored to speak to the comfort of the friends and relatives. The interment was in the Baptist cemetery at that place. The deceased was born near Calvin, March 13, 1878, a son of John and Elizabeth (Corbin) Stever. He was united in marriage to Miss Adessa Roland who preceded him in death in 1941. Among the immediate survivors are one sister, Mrs. Orpha Mierley, and the following children: Fred Stever, Mrs. Rachel Miller, Mrs. Evadene Colbert, and Mrs. Dwight Colbert of Calvin.

Brother Stever was a man of stainless honor and unimpeachable integrity, successful in business and noted for his industrial enterprise in making a success of the large lumber business in which he was engaged for many years. A few years ago he was baptized by the writer into the fellowship of the Trough Creek Valley church. As father, citizen, friend, and Christian his walk exemplified the precepts of his faith, and his influence will be felt in the community where he resided for many years to come.

(Elder) Arnold H. Bellows

HENRIETTA LYNCH

Henrietta Lynch, dearly beloved wife of William Cecil Lynch of Warfordsburg, Bethel township, Pennsylvania departed this life on June 18, 1952, at 10:00 o'clock A. M.

Mrs. Lynch was the daughter of Dennis W. and Mary Alice Mellott, both deceased, and was born August 30, 1894, being aged 57 years, 9 months and 18 days.

On June 11, 1911, she was united in marriage with Army J. Peck. To this union, three children were born: Floyd H. Peck of Philadelphia, Fred M. Peck at home, and Helen who died at the age of seven months.

On May 20, 1933, she was united in marriage with William Cecil Lynch. No chlidren were born to this union.

Mrs. Lynch was a member of the Sideling Hill Baptist Church for forty years, and was baptized by Elder H. H. Lefferts.

She was buried June 20, 1952, at 2:30 P. M., from the Sipes Funeral Home. Her funeral was conducted by Elder John D. Wood of Manasas, Va., at the Sideling Hill Baptist Church and her body was laid to rest in the adjoining cemetery beside her first husband and little daughter.

Besides her husband and two sons, four brothers also survive: Ira E. Mellott of Hancock, Ralph C. Mellott of Needmore, Rolla E. Mellott of Big Cove Tannery and Arthur W. Mellott of Warfordsburg; three sisters: Bertha, wife of Simon E. Daniels of Needmore, Lucy Smith, widow of George E. Smith of Warfordsburg and Mary, wife of Sherman Garland of Greencastle, RFD 2; four grandsons, three granddaughters and a number of nieces, nephews and cousins.

Mrs. Lynch was paralyzed March 16, 1950, and never had her feet on the ground for 27 months and 2 days.

Her pall bearers were Bretherd B. Lynch of Warfordsburg, Quincy A. Gladding of Baltimore, Orion Mellott and Claude Mellott of McConnellsburg and Michael Bard and Cadiz Schooley of Harrisonville.

Gone but not forgotten—sadly missed by her husband, family, relatives and friends.

* * * * * *

Copied

(From local paper)

EDWARD J. FROST

Edward J. Frost, 62, was born in Arkansas, but had been living on the Pacific Coast for a number of years. He quietly passed away in a local hospital at Marysville, Calif, on April 27, 1953 .Surviving are his dear wife, Martha Jane, two daughters, Mrs. Jewell Barker, Mrs.

Bertha Millsap; two sons, William H. and J. D.; one brother, two sisters and six grandchildren, all of California.

Brother Frost was well informed in the Scriptures. The writer has enjoyed many sweet conversations with him. He and his wife came to make their home on our place last year, stating that he was desirous for me to have more time to travel among the churches. He greatly relieved me by seeing after my business while away. We can truthfully say that a God-fearing man, who believed that God worked all things after the counsel of His own will, has been called home to cease from his labors. To his dear wife and children, your loss is his gain. After a brief sermon by the writer his body was laid to rest in the Sierra View Cemetery to await the resurrection of the dead.

(Elder) T. R. Jefferson.

IDA ELLEN CUMMINS PARKS

Ida Ellen Cummins Parks was born February 7, 1877, near Los Angeles, Calif, and moved with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. John M. Cummins, to Walla Walla County, Washington, the same year. She was married to Nathan R. Parks December 30, 1900 at Touchet, Wash. They came to Elgin Oregon, Jan. 1, 1901, where they made their home until August, 1934, when they moved to LaGrande. Later moving to Union, Ore. in 1947.

Mr. Parks died January 4, 1952, at the age of 91 years and 3 months. Sister Parks passed away quietly at her home in Union June 7, 1953, at the age of 76 years and 4 months. She had been in ill health for a number of years and suffered a great deal, but was not one to complain.

She leaves to mourn her loss three children, Ellen M. Caudle, Elvie I. Rizor and Ivan C. Parks, all of Union. She also leaves two grandsons. She was a member of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church at Touchet, Wash. and was a firm believer in the Predestination of all things.

This precious old sister wrote the above as her own obituary. The writer was called on to officiate at her funeral, at her request. I had only met her once but found her to be truly a Mother in Israel. She leaves three fine children, all prosperous and useful citizens. Let me say to those who mourn her passing, her sufferings are over. May it please the dear Lord to reconcile you to His will.

(Elder) T. R. Jefferson

MRS. BERNARD WATKINS

Final services for Mrs. Bernard Watkins, a resident of Eastland County, Texas, and surrounding territory for the past forty-seven years, and who passed away at the City Hospital in Rising Star, Texas, Monday June 8, 1953, were held at the First Baptist Church, Rising Star, Texas, June 10, 1953.

Aletha Evaline Watkins, daughter of the late C. A. and Permelia Ann (Biggs) McGee, was born January 21, 1877, at Hickory, Newton County Mississippi. She was married to Bernard Watkins January 22, 1905, at Hickory, going to Texas immediatley following their wedding, where they continued to make their home. To this union were born four children: M. L. Watkins, El Paso, Texas; Mrs. Woody B. Hall, Rising Star, Texas; Mrs. T. J. Fowler, Dallas, Texas, and Mrs. A. G. Foyt, Austin, Texas; also seven grand-children. All are surviving and were present at the funeral. She is survived also by four brothers and two sisters: Dr. T. I. McGee, W. A. McGee, J. R. McGee and Frank McGee; Mrs. John T. Graham, and Mrs. N. C. Barber, all of Mississippi; and a host of other relatives to mourn her passing. One brother C. C. McGee, Hickory, Mississippi preceeded her in death a few years ago.

Mrs. Watkins united with the Primitive Baptist Church September 20, 1908, and was baptized by Elder J. C. Kilgore. She was a faithful member as long as her health would permit. Services were conducted by the following: Mr. Harry Hames, Graham, Texas; Elder C. Y. Osteen, Perrin, Texas, and Elder C. W. Landers, Coleman, Texas. She was laid to rest in the Rising Star Cemetery. Pall bearers were: Ray Agnew, E. E. Winfrey, R. G. Merrell, J. H. Wilson, J. R. Morrow, Jr. and Clarence Bush.

Written and sent to the Signs of the Times by her husband,

Bernard Watkins

MRS. PEARL (VAWTER) OWENS

Our dear and respected sister in Christ was born in Anderson County, Kentucky, in the Spring of 1872, and died at the King's Daughters Hospital, Shelbyville, Kentucky, June 29, 1953. She was the daughter of J. D. and Sarah M. Vawter.

Early in womanhood she was married to Andrew J. Owens, who preceeded her in death several years. Surviving is a son, Roy Owens; three grand children, and three great grandchildren; one brother, Henry L. Vawter, and several nieces and nephews.

The Shelbyville News had this to say, "Sweet of Personality, always cheerful and kind, Mrs. Owens was truly a Christian; one admired and

respected by a large circle of friends." Early in life Aunt Pearl (as we called her) received a hope in her Saviour, and upon the relation of her Christian experience, was received and baptized into the fellowship of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, called Bethel, in Shelby County, and remained faithful in the faith. Her home was truly an Old Baptist home and many times we have been entertained there. For several years she was in poor health, and just six days before she died she was brought to our meeting at Sulphur Fork, took communion with us and enjoyed herself, saying to me, Once more I have heard the gospel preached; and made a remark as though it would be her last. None of us thought that the end was so near; but her time had come and she entered into the joy of the Lord. May the Lord comfort us in our loss, for we know it is her gain. She has but gone on before us. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Soon we will follow. Then, O happy day, when Jesus comes again without sin unto salvation, they that are in their graves shall hear his voice, see him as he is and be like him, and be satisfied.

I was called from my home in Huntington, W. Va., and tried with the ability the Lord gave me to comfort the brethern and friends at the funeral home; then to the Grove Hill Cemetery, and laid she beside her husband. May the good Lord reconcile us all.

(Elder) George L. Weaver.

ISAAC TOBIAS McINTYRE

The death of Brother Isaac Tobias McIntyre, of Jefferson, New York, at the Fox Memorial Hospital, Oneonta, New York, December 30, 19 52, closed a long life of usefulness both in community and church relationships. His last illness was brief: pneumonia following a severe cold necessitating his hospitalization. The funeral services were held January 2, 1953.

Brother McIntyre was born April 25, 1871, and sucessfully followed the occupation of farming. He augmented his agricultural pursuits by shoeing horses for his neighbors and community friends, and soon had a large patronage. Even the infermaties of age did not seem to mar the efficiency of his work, which continued until shortly before his death. His ambition, industry and honesty were notable attributes of his strong character.

He was baptized into the fellowship of the Jefferson Old School Baptist church by Elder John Clark in April, 1913. He was a man of deep spiritual discernment. His gift as a deacon was recognized by the Middleburg church, into whose fellowship he had placed his membership, and with which he continued until the time of his death. He could speak with depth of feeling, and with pleasing interpretation of Scripture at church gatherings.

He was married three times, his two former wives having pre-deceased him. In 1903 he was united to Miss Margaret Hicks, who survives. Several children were the fruit of these marriages, one of which is numbered among the surviving relatives.

(Elder) Arnold H. Bellows

SALLIE LOU HALL

God in His infinite wisdom saw fit to remove from our midst our much beloved Sister Sallie Lou Hall. She was a lonely pilgrim here in this unfriendly world from July 30, 1882, until April 23, 1953.

She was united in marriage to W. M. Hall Dec. 28, 1899. To this union were born three children, Mrs. Claude Hodge of Draper, N. C., Fred F. Hall of Draper, N. C. and Brother Luther Hall of Reidsville, N. C.

She joined the Church at old Dan River in Patrick County, Va., the 4th Saturday in June, 1902, and moved her membership to Dan River Church near Mayfield, N. C. on Sept. 21, 1929, where she remained a faithful member until death. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God. She manifested her love for this doctrine, and the fellowship and order of the church.

She suffered many afflictions during the last 25 or 30 years of her life, underwent several major operations. When the old Baptist, her relatives or neighbors visited her, she met them with a smile, never complaining; she bore her suffering well. She was a good neighbor, a kind and devoted wife and mother.

Her funeral was preached at the home. Her pastor being in Florida at the time of her death, Elders R. S. Smith, Jessie Paschal and G. W. Hill were called on to preach her funeral. She was laid to rest in Dan View Cemetery, Draper, N. C.

Sleep on, sleep on, Dear Sister,
In your quiet and lonely tomb,
We hope to meet you up yonder,
In that bright heavenly home.

Your Church seat here is vacant,
Your loving memory lingers here,
We miss you, but cherish the memory,
Of a faithful member so dear.

Written by the request of the Church at Dan River in conference Saturday night before the 4th Sunday in June, 1953. Therefore, be it resolved that a copy be placed on our Church records, a copy given the family and a copy be sent the Signs of the Times and the Old Faith Contender for publication.

A Niece,
Mrs. Earl Brannon.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 121 DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1953 NO. 11

THE PLACE OF CRUCIFIXION
(John 19:41)

There is profound significance to the forty-first verse of the thirty-ninth chapter of John's Gospel, which reads as follows: "Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was man never yet laid."

When the great Creator of the universe had formed the earth to be a fit habitation for man, he breathed into the nostrils of the being he had formed from the lifeless dust of the earth, and man became a living soul. The woman was created in the man but was not yet made manifest to him who was to be her husband. So the church, in a mystical sense was in Christ before the morning stars sang together or the sons of God shouted for joy. The members of the body of Christ were chosen in eternity but were to be manifested in time. After the creation of man, the Lord planted a garden eastward in Eden: and there he put the man whom he had created.

This garden was a special product of God's planting, not man's, as it typifies the church of the living God, which is the planting of the Lord that he might be glorified. In a garden even in nature plants are cultivated which differ somewhat from their original state in nature, as they have been operated upon by the horticulturist in the same sense that garden strawberries differ from wild strawberries, after the original plants have been properly treated. Of the church it is prophetically written, "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." The garden of grace is an inclosure separated from the world, into the bounds of which no one can truly enter except by the new birth by the water and the spirit: by being chosen of God, called of God, and drawn by the Spirit of God. The inclosure of spiritual circumcision cannot be surmounted by the natural man. The garden, in which God place the subject of his creation, faced eastward toward the rising sun. The subjects of divine grace in the church of the living God look eastward toward the risen Sun of Righteousness: the crucified and risen Lord who ministers to them the healing balm of Gilead, and effectually heals the terrible wounds of sin.

In order to consummate the divine plan, it was necessary that a holy law be given unto man in order that sin might enter the world, that in the fulness of time God might manifest his love by sending Christ into the world to satisfy the greatest need of poor, guilty, helpless creatures under the sentence of eternal death, and wrath, and woe. The greatest love must satisfy the greatest need in order that Christ might have the fullest glory possible, and demonstrate that incomprehensible divine love by redeeming man from the terrible estate into which man had fallen by wilful transgression. The one who redeemed fallen man must be a surety for him, take his place in being condemned, suffer the penalty due the transgressor to the fullest extent, and rise triumphant from the grave, having put away sin to the believer by the sacrifice of himself. As in the flesh and in the soul the blood is the life, sin could only be remitted by the shedding of blood, and the sinner be justified thereby; that is, made free from guilt, and so stand blameless before God. Pardon is a re-

lease from punishment, but a sinner must receive more than a mere pardon: he must be justified to enter the heaven of eternal glory.

So, according to the purpose of God, Satan must enter the garden in which man had been placed and tempt the woman, who being deceived, was in the transgression; but Adam was not deceived, but, knowing the penalty, he knowingly participated in the transgression; that he might suffer the penalty with his bride: the one who was bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. So Christ in the antitype, suffered the full penalty on sin to redeem the one who is spiritually bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. Now as sin first came in the garden where God placed Adam, the redemption from sin came also in a garden, in the very place where Jesus Christ as a burnt offering, sin offering, trespass offering and peace offering, all combined in one offering, atoned for the sins of his people by his righteous life, ignomenious death and glorious resurrection. The law of sin and death was given in a garden, and it was fulfilled in another garden. In the first garden in Eden sin came and brought man under divine judgement. In the second garden where Christ was crucified, the atonement was made and divine justice satisfied.

In the first garden under consideration, where God placed Adam after he had created him, the typology of Scripture shows that man by nature outside of the garden of God's grace, is a sinner. In Eden's garden sin was committed that involved all the human race, but in the garden where Christ was crucified atonement was made for all sinners that believe savingly upon the Lord Jesus; that is, believe with heart knowledge and not with mere head knowledge. In the first garden Satan triumphed and brought man under condemnation and the sentence of death, but in the second garden the devil was overcome and the seed of the woman bruised the serpent's head. In the first garden the promise of salvation was given, and in the second garden that promise was fulfilled. In the first garden man by transgression stood before God as a guilty creature, but in the second garden the believing sinner is presented as being justified by the blood of the crucified Saviour. In the one garden the curse was pronounced, but in the other the curse was removed from those to whom are given repentance and remission of sins. Death came upon man as the result of transgression in the first garden, but life from the dead came as a result of the obedience of Christ in the second garden. On the morning of the resurrection, when Mary came to the garden where Christ was crucified and buried, she supposed the risen Christ to be the gardener in a natural garden; but there on the third day after his death, she received the revelation that he was the gardener in the garden of saving grace, accomplishing the redemption of his and her brethern who transgressed in Adam in the first garden. Therefore, it was fitting that in the place where Christ was crucified there should be a garden.

Bible truth is often presented and emphasized by reference, allusion, comparison or contrast, so in this instance we find two gardens contrasted. In the first garden, by his transgression, man became possessed of a sinful nature, and because of this sinful nature he commits sin, and so is guilty of trespasses before God. The holy and changeless law of God requires a sin offering for the very nature of that sin inherited from Adam, also a trespass offering for the numerous sins committed. The transgressed law of God demands a holy offering for the nature of sin, also for trespasses, also for acceptability with God, also that peace might be made between a holy God and a sinful creature. The offering must be holy, and the offerer himself must be holy. Jesus Christ was all of these offerings in one by virtue of the glory of the virgin birth, by the majesty of his deity, and by the power of his resurrection. Jesus, as a sin offering in the garden where he was

crucified, gives the new born child of God coming into spiritual life, a new nature by which he hates sin and his former life, and writes bitter things against himself; and is made to realize that bitter warfare between the old man and the new man, between the flesh and the spirit. Every child that is a member of the mystical body of Christ, that dies at birth, receives full atonement for his sinful nature, and is thereby washed in the blood of the Lamb of God.

Jesus is also a trespass offering for all the heirs of glory. Under the Mosaic law, when a trespass offering was made, the offerer had to add one-fifth of the value of the offering, so that more was given in restitution than was taken away. So Jesus, as the trespass offering of his people, gives them eternal life; while in Adam before the transgression they had but sinless life subject to death.

The burnt offering was a sweet savor offering, and pointed to the acceptability of Christ with God, and the church, as his people, being accepted in him. The acceptability of Christ with God was announced from heaven at the baptism of Jesus, and also at his transfiguration. Jesus offered himself without spot to God to purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

The peace offering signified the fullness of that finished work by which Christ made peace with God for all the sins of the election of grace, thereby vindicating the ineffable holiness of God, and bringing life and immortality to light through the gospel.

So we see in the two gardens the solemn truth that in one the wages of sin were manifested as death to the sinner, but in the other garden the gift of eternal life.

(Elder) Arnold H. Bellows.

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing the experience of Elder W. R. Utley and I would be glad if you can find a place for it in our paper.

Yours in fellowship,
(Elder) H. G. Brown
791 Watson,
Memphis, Tenn.

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER W. R. UTLEY

Dear Brother Brown:

I received your comforting letter this morning and I don't know how to answer you. I haven't been to meeting anywhere for two months except Pratt City, although I am supposed to go other places except on fourth Sundays. I would like to tell my experience and have it on record so it could be read, but that would be impossible for me to do intelligently. I have been trying to preach for fifty-three years and I don't know whether I have ever preached the gospel or not. I was raised a missionary Baptist and went through that machine and got religion to keep from being lost. The first of July about eleven o' clock at night in 1892, my father fell dead. While I was praying for the Lord to restore him back to life, my religion was sealed to my conviction and I was already lost and a criminal in the sight of God. The administration of death was written in my heart and hell was my portion and that justly so. I began reading the New Testament. I carried one with me for five years and read it every day. There was no promise there for me, but I believed the doctrine it taught,—all the promises were to God's people, but I was not one. I was a criminal in God's sight and there was no mercy for me. I will not try to tell the suffering, mourning and sorrow I had for five years.

In 1897, this scripture came to my mind, "Ye must be born again!" I had read it many times and knew it was in the Bible, but I was like Nicodemus, "How can this be?" It stayed with me. I had a desire in my heart that the Lord would show this to me, and that night I saw the church. They were the Primi-

tive Baptist and I wanted to be with them but I wasn't fit. I turned my back on them and walked away and came to a bottomless pit and just lacked one step falling in. I fell to the ground and cried out Lord be merciful to me a sinner. The spirit of Christ appeared by me and it was pure and holy as Christ was before he came to the world and I was corrupt from the crown of my head to the sole of my foot. This was the first vision or dream that was given me.

I could not get the church off my mind. I wanted a home with them. I thought when I got back home I would ask if they would let a sinner like me live with them. My troubles got worse. I saw another vision or dream. I was walking a narrow path, there was a veil or something over me, and it was in my heart the administration of death. I thought I could not live any longer and cried out, oh Lord, why am I so long in this condition. The thought came to my mind, look up. I looked up and my burden was gone, and I heard a voice say, "You are no more under the law but under grace". I saw Christ, every member of his body complete in him. There was a light like a rainbow around him and I was inside the circle and I raised my right hand, pointing to Him and preaching Him the Way the Truth and the Life. This was Sept. 1897. The fourth Saturday in January, 1898, I offered to the church and was baptized the next day by Elder W. R. Brown in Bear Creek, Tuscaloosa County, Alabama. In the following April or May I went into the stand for the first time and have been going ever since. I have only touched at the high points.

This experience was given me in September, 1879, before I was twenty years old. If this is not of the Lord, I am still lost; it is all I have to base my hope on.

Yours in hope,
W. R. Utley,
Berry, Ala. Rt. #3

September 29, 1892.
Paris, France.

To Little Flock Church,

Dear Brethern and Sisters:

In my last letter I tried to show by the figure (the company of horses) that God's love draws us, and our love for Him and His people, draws Him. So we see that it is a fitting figure that Soloman used. The love our Father has put in our hearts is directed, kept, and guided by Him; for He works in them, "both to will and to do of his good pleasure". It is this love that brings the clouds, His chariots, in which he comes, however terrible the way seems to us. Let us beseech him, not to take away the cloud, but to give us strength and a patient trust in him, knowing that what he has decreed cannot be changed, and that it is all for the good of the "little ones". "Wait upon the Lord, and He will strengthen thy heart".

May the life that, I trust, he has given us, and the love that he has manifested for us in the past, enable his troubled ones to wait upon the Lord. "and run with patience the race that is set before us, ever looking unto Jesus, the **author** and **finisher** of our faith." I know we cannot do this at all times, at least I cannot. So often I find myself astray, and crying, "Lord have mercy. Am I thy child?" Can it be possible that one so useless, so sinful, and so far from what I think one ought to be who has his name with the people of God,—in short, one like me, be His child? How can I have the assurance to call upon the Lord? It seems it will only call down his wrath upon me. It is with a fearful heart that I say, "Our Father". And yet, when we think of the many blessings: the kind friends, who are still kind in spite of our faults; the loving, helpful brothers and sisters, do we not then feel ashamed of doubting, and think of what Jesus said to Thomas, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." Then, like the little sparrows, I must pick up the crumbs that I find at my feet (in the dust) in the

morning after a long, dark, fearful night. All night long we grope in the cold and the dark, thinking we may never see the light, and doubting that we ever did.

Yet, strange to say, this doubting is only another proof that we are saved; for we do not wish for that we know nothing about. If we had never seen the great light from the throne of mercy, and had never known that blessed peace and security in His love; or, in other words, if we were dead spiritually, we could not know what it is to doubt. Is not this doubt, after all, a trembling belief? Then let us rest in the promise that, "He who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

But why reason? Reasoning will not help us when we are in the dark. The darkness is as necessary as the light, for God who made the light to shine out of darkness, hath decreed it so. We must wait for that peace, and when it comes we are content. It is all a great mystery, and words fail me when I try to tell of the wonderful things of God. Yet there are some things so sweet, and so plain that the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein.

I cannot tell you anything you do not know; and sometimes I think I only tire you. But it is a pleasure to talk about these things, and to "walk about Zion". It is a pleasure, too, to find the stakes so sure that they cannot be removed. Let men contend as they will, they cannot answer against the truth, nor can they contend against it very long. If I know my heart, I love the Lord and His doctrine. But the people I meet do not seem to have heard of it. One person I met was speaking lightly of religion, and I said to him that a person who did not profess it, knew nothing about it; for it is a world in which they have never lived.

It is so sweet to feel that His hand is in it all, and to feel that confidence and patient trust in His love that we see manifest only in the people of God. The day I left New York, I felt very sad and depressed until the words of my favorite hymn were given me: "How firm a foundation", and the lines, "At home or abroad, on the land, on the sea; as thy days may demand, shall thy strength ever be." I never heard a sweeter sermon.

Pardon mistakes; I have written hurriedly. May God's peace be with you, in the name of Jesus.

Your brother, I hope and trust,
Dudley G. Johnson

PHILIPPIANS 2:12

In the above reference will be found the following language by the Apostle Paul: "Wherefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

I know of two Primitive Baptist ministers who construe the foregoing language to mean that the Apostle was telling the brethern at Philippi to get rid of their salvation which they imagined they had obtained for themselves by reason of some deed or act of theirs which merited salvation; to get that out of their system, so to speak. Far be it from me to argue the matter with these two able men whom I esteem highly as ministers called of God. But I am at a loss to understand how they arrived at their conclusion. To me it is the most unsupported and far-fetched construction that could be put on the language. Certainly, we do not find anything in Paul's letter to the brethern at Philippi rebuking them for such heresy and doctrine as claiming that they had obtained eternal salvation by their works. One must believe from reading Paul's letter to the church at Philippi that the brethern were in order and holding fast to the doctrine of salvation by grace, because he does not mention anything to the contrary.

The foregoing language strongly implies that the members of this particular church had always obeyed those laws

and ordinances enjoined upon the children of God to be by them observed and obeyed, whether Paul was with them or absent from them. It is not unreasonable to assume that Paul wrote the church as he did because he could not be with them in person. In this letter he laid down to them what he believed to be their duty as children of God. He reminded them that it was given to them not only to believe in Christ but to suffer for His sake; that they might expect to experience the same conflict which they saw in the Apostle, which conflict I understand to be the eternal warfare that goes on in man between the spirit and the flesh: In view of all the language of Paul's letter to the brethren at Philippi—and the letter must be construed as a whole, otherwise it can be picked to pieces and be made to support whatever one may want to contend for—the words "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" has no reference to eternal salvation whether obtained by grace or by works. I am not a Greek scholar and therefore have no way of knowing what the Greek words were from which this language was translated. But the English translation is in words that clearly mean to me that Paul used the words "obey" and "work" as being synonomous in meaning. This for the simple reason that the word "Wherefore" prefaces a summing up or summarizing of the substance of what he had said in his letter down to this point. The sum and substance of what he had said down to that point was that he approved and was proud of the manner in which that congregation had behaved itself in every way, and how they had obeyed all that was enjoined upon them as church members by the Scriptures. In these words he told them that no matter what trials, tribulations, adversities and conflicts might come upon them in his absence they should continue to obey and in obedience they would, with God's help, bring themselves, or work themselves, out of any grievous situation or condition that might arise from any source.

Their "salvation", as used, here was their safety or deliverance from the harm or evils that grow out of going off after other gods and other doctrines than that of the gospel and doctrine of Jesus Christ, and it was this salvation, or safety, or deliverance, that Paul had in mind when he was penning this epistle. If we are to put such construction on this language as these two ministers do, then why employ the language "not as in my presence only but much more in my absence?" Are we to believe that these brethren had been working and striving while Paul was present, to get this self-righteousness and self- obtained salvation out of their systems and their minds, and that Paul was afraid they would cease from these labors while he was absent from them unless he reminded them to continue their obedience in his absence and thereby get rid of that salvation?

The facts are, as I see and understand this letter, Paul was telling the brethren at Philippi to continue in the way they had been behaving, but that if troubles, conflicts, strife, adversities and dissension should at any time arise among them, to solve their own problems with the help of the Holy Spirit guiding them, and they would be saved or delivered from the harm of evil that could come upon them out of strife, conflicts, or heresy or heretical practices. If they would do this for themselves then they would not have to call in preachers from elsewhere who sometimes do more harm than good in resolving the troubles of a church. In so many words he told them not to depend too much on him either, as the members of churches of today too often depend on their preachers too much. We would not destroy the meaning of this language if we omitted the words "not as in my presence only but much more in my absence," and make it read thus: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." If they had always obeyed, they certainly had not

been so heretical as to profess a salvation obtained in some way other than by the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ, who gave his life that his children might have eternal life. Then, if they were not professing to be in possession of a salvation obtained by works, there was no need for Paul to tell them to get rid of something they did not even claim to have.

You may well appreciate my reluctance to express myself on this scripture, I being but an ignorant lay member, but I have in my time seen some disastrous results of the laity accepting as final the minister's explanation of the scriptures which is much easier and less trouble than it is to do some reading and thinking for themselves, asking the guidance of the Holy Spirit while they do. These are my sentiments and no church is bound thereby; and what I have written is not to be constructed as being representative of the doctrine generally of the Primitive Baptists or of the belief of the editors of the paper.

Hubert T. Faulk
325 West Missouri St;
El Paso, Texas.

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801 E. 9th Street,
Coleman, Texas

Editors, Signs of the Times:

Dear Brethern:

The enclosed obituary is sent to the Signs of the Times for publication at the request of the husband of the deceased, Brother F. E. Skinner, of Fletcher, Oklahoma.

I can't keep from telling you in this little note how much I enjoyed the last two "Signs", and especially the re-print of the articles by the late Elders F. A. Chick, Gilbert Beebe and B. L. Beebe. This is what we of the New Hope Association, of Texas, and all those with whom we are in fellowship, believe. I have personally heard brethern of our association and other associations express themselves concerning the articles.

May the Lord bless the editors and writers to write more of this comforting doctrine, which, to my mind, is the "Doctrine of God."

In hope, though unworthy,
(Elder) C. U. Landers

(Elder L. L. Schenck's article concluded):

Now when the Ark was completed the Lord said unto Noah, "Come thou and all thy family into the Ark". This was not an invitation, but a divine command. It was not an offer to save Noah and his family on condition they would accept the offer. But they *All*, every member of the family, came into the Ark because the Lord said, "Come". And the Lord shut them in. So we find the counterpart to this in the words of Jesus when he said, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." This is no less a divine command than the other and the subjects are no less ready to obey. But as stated before, the family of Noah no doubt, were reckoned among that wicked generation. Then is God unjust that he should call this little family out and leave the rest to perish? "Is there unrighteousness with God. God forbid." As the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up that I might show my power in thee and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." I think our critics should now begin to understand why the earth was full of violence in the days of Noah. It was according to God's predestination that he should show his power over sin and also his power of deliverance from sin of all his elect people.

God has an elect people whom he has pledged his holiness to deliver and protect. How could the beautiful story of Noah and the Ark have been made possible had not the earth been full of violence. This proves the doctrine of

election, so sweet to every child of grace. As the Apostle has said, "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace," Thus, the family of Noah being sinners proves again this divine declaration, "He shall save his people from their sins." It is quite evident that the family did not enter the Ark on account of their own righteousness, for they had none, but by virtue of the righteousness of their head and husband; and even so with the dear family of God today. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy he hath saved us." Thus we glory, not in the fact that we are sinners but in the fact that God hath power on earth to forgive sins. As Jesus expressed in his illustrious prayer, "As thou hast given him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." It seems to me there is no part of the divine record that shows this discrimination more clearly than the case of Noah and his family.

So here is our consolation: as we see the whole family of Noah gathered into the Ark with Noah their head and husband, even so when we look away to the anti-type we see the whole family of God gathered into the church with Christ, their adorable Head and Husband. Not one is left out. Besides Noah himself, his family consisted of just seven Souls which represents a full or complete number.

In conclusion let us notice the words of Jesus, "All that the Father hath given me shall come unto me and he that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." This is just one of those beautiful pictures which are seen by the light of that window that was finished in a cubit above.

(Elder) L. L. Schenck

THE POWER OF GOD

One of God's attributes is His power by which He can do whatsoever He hath purposed to do. His authority is absolute, His will and power omnipotent. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to believer, kept by the power of God. There is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. In the beginning this power was made manifest by the command, "Let there be light," and there was light. This is given in the old scriptures, and in the new, "I will, be thou clean." The believer cries, O God be merciful to me, a sinner. Here are three witnesses, and we could produce many more, for it is before us at all times. The invisible things from the creation of the world are clearly seen by the believer, who has the power of God in him. He dwells in His people, and without Him we are nothing. We cannot know Him without this attribute, the power of God. God's power and will are equal, one is as strong as the other. Paul, in speaking to his beloved, tells them to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, gives us the reason: "For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and do according to His good pleasure." "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world." Notice, in the world, not to the world.

God's love is as great as His power; and His judgements are as sure as His mercy, for He commands, and it stands fast, speaks and it is done. We read of powers many and also of gods many. Our God is one, all powerful, almighty, and everlasting. And His love for His chosen people is so great that the powers that be cannot separate us from His love. Death can separate us from all natural ties, but that is what we have of our earthly parents. Angels, principalities, heights, depths, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, for it is the power of God. It may seem strange to those

who have never experienced this power. But are we any better than they? No, in no wise, for we all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. None but those who have been born of God can realize or comprehend this power. They may study and work to get wisdom, but it will come only by revelation. All they can do is to learn the letter of it. "The world by wisdom knows not God."

God's people are a happy people. They have Christ in them, the hope of glory. Therefore, the world knows them not, because they knew Him not. None but the born of God can truly say, My Father. This relationship was established by God before He made the world. He chose His church without spot or wrinkle, the ground and pillar of the truth, the perfection of beauty. Out of her God is shining. He spread out the heavens with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance. Who can say to such a God, What doest thou? He has spoken, and His will, will be done. Job speaks of Him dividing the sea with His power, and by His understanding He smiteth through the proud. By His spirit He hath garnished the heavens; His hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts of His ways, but how little a portion is heard of Him. The thunder of His power, who can understand?

By His power the Lion's mouth was closed; and by the same power, the dumb ass spoke; the raven left his carrion and carried bread and meat to Elijah; the dove went to and fro from the ark; He protected the sparrow, so that not one of them can fall to the ground without Him, and even the hairs of our heads are numbered. His plans cannot be frustrated. The mighty sea parted, the proud waves stayed. The wind and the waves obey Him.

What manner of Person is this? Our minds are too small to comprehend just a small portion of this omnipotent One.

Our hope is that one day, because of His mercy, we will have a building, a house not made with hands, eternal, and in the heavens. And when that illustrious day shall come, and it will come, because He has promised, He will not come as a sin-bearer, but as the voice of the Arch Angel, and the trump of God, and will say to them that are in the graves Come forth. The dead in Christ will come first, and them that remain shall be caught up. Those whose names are written in the Book of Life will come into the inheritance for which they have been waiting. There is no middle ground. Either you are saved, or you are not saved. The great Shepherd will divide the sheep from among the goats by that same power that raised Jesus from the dead, and quickened our vile bodies. While natural eyes cannot see; natural ears cannot hear; natural hearts cannot understand, it is nevertheless the truth, even if we cannot now see it clearly. For he says, I am the resurrection and the life. There are no ifs, or buts, for God has spoken.

Oh happy day when this vile body shall be changed! This corruptible body, this natural body shall be raised in incorruption. Then again, the morning stars will sing together, and the sons of God will shout aloud for joy. As He is in His glorified state, so shall we be like Him. Oh glorious thought! not as He was, but as He is, and we will dwell with Him forever in perfect satisfaction.

In my weak and stumbling way, in my closet, I thank God for His notice of this poor old sinner. This has been my meat and my drink for sixty years.

Bear with me brethern; point out my errors, and pray for me that I may be kept faithful. The text that I have tried to write about is so wonderful that my very soul trembles within me. To try to write of His goodness, and power over all things, is standing on holy ground.

May the Lord bless my humble efforts to our good.

(Elder) George L. Weaver
2802 Marcum Terrace,
Huntington, W. Va.
(copied from "Old Faith Contender" by request)

Denton, Kentucky.

Signs of the Times,
Dear Brethern:

I am enclosing a letter which I received from my niece, which I did very much enjoy. She is Brother Horton Roger's daughter. (His obituary appeared in the June, 1952, Signs). She is the youngest of thirteen children, eleven of them living. She was received by the Lost Creek Church of Old School Baptists, and baptized the sixth day of September, 1953.

I feel her many friends would enjoy this letter if they could have the opportunity of reading it. She is around twenty-two years of age. So, if it meets with your approval, I would appreciate it if you will publish it.

H. L. Rogers

Pedro, Ohio.

Dear Uncle Hi:

I am writing not just as your niece, but as an unworthy sinner who would like to become a member of your church and be with the children of God. I am not very good with words, but would like to tell you a little of my experience.

I have been made to see what a small person I am, and that no one can do anything without the help of God. But the worst part of all is that I can't stand myself. I have done a considerable lot of thinking, and wondering if I am good enough to be with the people of God. I worry so much about things that never bothered me before. I felt awful until I started talking to Mom about how I felt, and that I would like to be baptized if I knew it would be the right thing to do. I have carried this load with me for several weeks, and have been unable to sleep, and even to do the work that I should.

After talking to Mom, she suggested that I write to you and tell you how I felt. So, Uncle Hi, if it is God's will, and you think me fit, I would like very much to be baptized the first Sunday in September, if you could arrange to have church and would baptize me.

Hoping to hear from you to see what you have to say about this sinful person that I am.

Your niece,
Kathryn

Island City, Oregon.

Editors of the Signs of the Times:

I am sending you a copy of a letter I found in the church book of Little Flock church, which was my old home church in Anderson County, Kentucky. I found this letter written to the church by our dear little brother, Dudley G. Johnson, while in Paris, France. I cannot express the feeling I had while copying the familiar handwriting, penned so many years ago. "They shall cease from their labors, and their works to follow them."

I found the church book at my brother-in-law's, who with the exception of myself, is the only remaining member of the old church. I find from their record, that the church was organized in 1826. O, the memories brought to mind as I look through the book: troubles, and joys and sorrows recorded there. There are other letters there, which I will send to you later.

With memories in mind, and hope in my heart, I am

Your sister in gospel bonds,
Martha Herndon Bond

Downsville, Lousiana.

Dear Brother Wood:

It is again that, if it be the Lord's will, I may write a few lines; not that I feel that I may teach someone anything, but just to give a few of my thoughts; and also to send you a letter I received from Elder L. L. Schenck, of

Kansas.

Dear brother, I don't want to worry you or take up space in the Signs, but I enjoyed his letter so much, and I feel there may be some others as I have been: with no light on the book of Revelation. As I was reading the first chapter, I noticed it said, "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass." Then in the 9th and 10th verses John said he was in the isle that is called Patmos, and he was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. It seems to me that he was at the same place all the time, and that all of these things were to the churches, and must shortly come to pass. Christ was making known to John the going out of the law dispensation, and the coming in of the New Covenant of grace; and that there was a great change to take place in the world in the establishing of the church, or his kingdom in the world.

In reading on to the fourth chapter, and first verse, he showed John things which must be hereafter. So I wrote Elder Schenck to give me his views on that: the things which must be hereafter. I am sending his answer for your consideration, and wrote him that I was going to send it.

So, dear ones, who may read this, I do hope the good Lord will keep everyone in his place in the church; but we notice in the second chapter, fourteenth verse, that some hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication. Sometimes we see new things spring up, but we feel that the good Lord will over rule all things for good; he had purpose in forming the serpent. But, dear brethern, the little ones who worship God in Spirit have no confidence in the flesh, for the Lord has to prepare our hearts to pray, sing, or even have a good thought. No one can tell us how, or show us the way, to walk orderly, but the dear Saviour.

Feeling as I do, dear brother Wood, when you are down in the valley begging God for his mercy, please beg him to have mercy on me. Number seventy-six hymn in Lloyd's book reads:

Christ is the way to heavenly bliss,
And Christ the only door:
My soul, persue no way but this,
For this alone is sure.

T. P. Wilson

Williamstown, Kansas

Mr. T. P. Wilson
Downsville, La.

My dear brother in Christ:

If one so vile as I should address a dear child of God in this sacred relationship. Your welcome and interesting letter came into my hand some days ago, although you are a stranger to me in the flesh, I feel that you are a brother in the spirit.

Your desires and inclinations seem to run in the same channel as mine. In reading your kind letter, I did not overlook your request that I write something concerning the scripture recorded in Rev. 4-1. I feel very humble, dear brother, to try to write on a subject so deep and sublime, and unless it please the Lord to direct my mind and my pen, I am sure I can write nothing that would do you any good; but trusting in God as my help I will drop a few thoughts as they are given to me, asking your forbearance if my thoughts are not according to the truth as in Jesus.

It will be observed, dear brother, that the things that were seen, were seen through this door that was opened in heaven, and if I may be given anything to write in connections with this scripture, I hope this door will be my principal theme: For this door is Christ. He has declared "I am the Door, by me if any man enter in he shall be saved and shall go in and out and find pasture." And again he said, "He that entereth not in by the door into the sheepfold but climbeth up some other way the same is a thief and a robber."

Hence there are some other ways, but

Jesus declared "I am the way the truth and the life", thus using that definate article "the", denotes that there is only one way by which any can enter into his sheepfold. These other ways are the ways of man and we can see them in evidence all over the world, and no matter how high they may climb their course will never lead them to the sheepfold because they are not in the right way. All such are counted merely as thieves and robbers. We do not wish to be counted with thieves and robbers, so we do not avail ourselves of the ways of men to enable us to enter into those deep mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven. That heaven that is spoken of here in connection with this scripture is not the eternal paradise of God, but the Kingdom of heaven which is at hand; in other words the church of God. Jesus said unto his disciples, "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven but unto them it is not given."

Briefly, then those things that were seen through this open door pertain to the church of God. He said "I saw a throne and one sat on the throne, and he that sat was to look upon like a jasper or sardine stone. Very precious stones, and indeed they must be for no doubt they represent the garments of our King of Kings and Lord of Lords. "And round about the throne I saw four and twenty seats and upon the seats four and twenty elders sitting clothed in white raiment and they had on their heads crowns of gold." It was no accident that there were just enough seats to accomodate everyone to whom it was given to occupy one of those seats. There was not an empty seat there and there was no one seeking a seat and unable to find one. This is indeed a divine arrangement and proves that divine declaration, "The Lord Knoweth them that are his." They that occupied those seats were denominated as "elders". I think we should not confuse these elders with our common use of the word "elder". In our common use of the word "Elder" it means one who is ordained or set forward by the church to preach the unsearchable riches of the grace of God. But this expression means even more than that. It embraces everyone of the household of God: they were all ordained, to be sure,—as it is written "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."

The believers in Christ are the favored ones, and when we speak of a "Believer" it means more than lip service, because Christ has declared that there are some who draw nigh unto me with their mouth and honor me with their lips but their heart is far from me. Those who actually believe from the heart that Christ has come and that he finished the work he was given to do (that is to save his people from their sins), these are they that believed; these are they that were ordained to eternal life; these are the Elders who occupy the seats around the throne, even all the elect of God. There were four and twenty of them. Where can we find a figure that would represent more accurately the whole family of God. We note the twelve tribes of Israel, and under the gospel dispensation we see the church of God as fed and fostered by the twelve apostles of the lamb; twelve and twelve,—four and twenty. These are the Elders who surround the throne of God, even everyone that was ordained to eternal life.

But this was not all that was seen through this open door. Before the throne was there a sea of glass clear as crystal, and in the midst of the throne and round about the throne were four beast full of eyes before and behind. These four beasts represent our Lord Jesus Christ, as viewed in so many aspects. Full of eyes before and behind,—thus denoting that Jesus sees both backward and forward. Back before time began and forward to the end of time. The first beast was like a lion, strong, bold and fierce. He is called the King of beasts, and indeed our Jesus is known as the lion of the tribe of Juda. He it is that is able to loose the book to us. The second beast was like a calf, strong and

humble: a beast of burden, a beast fit for sacrifice. Jesus was all of this to his people, for he was our supreme sacrifice and he was our great burden bearer. The third beast had a face as a man. Again in this we see a likeness of our blessed master. He was made in all points like unto his brethren, tempted as we are yet without sin; and further, being found in fashions as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. In the form of man he was made our high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. The fourth beast was like a flying eagle. The eagle's flight is very swift indeed and his vision is extremely keen, thus denoting in a figure that our Lord can and does see to the four corners of the earth. There is nothing hid from his view, but all things are naked and open unto him with whom we have to do. As a flying eagle he comes quickly to those of his little ones who cry unto him in their distresses.

Thus those four beasts are one: they all add up to our Lord Jesus Christ. He was in the midst of the throne and he was round about the throne and indeed it was none other then he that sat upon the throne. He is King; "He is that blessed and only potentate the King of Kings and Lord of Lords". Yes, He is our lawgiver, it was written of him in the early pages of Holy writ "The Scepter shall not depart from Juda nor a Lawgiver from between his feet till Shiloh come, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be". This same John who saw these four and twenty Elders, saw them under the Altar. When the fifth seal was opened of that book that was sealed, he saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God and far the testimony which they held. Yes, they were not seen upon the altar as though they were in a position to atone for their own sins, but they were seen under the altar where the blood of the sacrifice ran down upon them. So the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.

Dear brother this is a very imperfect diagnosis of the scripture to which you called my attention. But my writing is like my preaching, I always leave out so much that is good. When you have read this mark the errors and notify me if I have made a mistake. I trust that I have not climbed up some other way to enter into these mysteries but hope I saw it through the open door.

Sincerely, though very unworthy
(Elder) L. L. Schenck

Philadelphia, Pa.

Signs of the times,
Dear Brethern:

Enclosed you will find $3.00 to renew my subscription for another year. I do hope I will be able to get the Family Paper for the remainder of my life: it means so much to me.

I have read the August copy which contains the editorial, "The Support Of The Ministry". I do not believe there should be a salary fixed for the ministers, but I do think that members and friends of the Predestinarian or Old School Baptists should contribute something to the ministry, as well as to the needs of one another. Our ministers surely need something for their time and travel, and other expenses.

It is a great blessing to have Elder Bennett come with us the Fifth Sundays, bringing uplifting messages to us burdened souls here in Salem Church. I feel cast down in spirit much of the time, but I also feel thankful to Almighty God that I am not destroyed. I do believe in the predestination of all things.

I only wanted to send in my little subscription. Remember me when at the throne of grace.

Unworthily, your little sister in hope,
Annie Miller

EDITORIALS

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EDITORIAL

"Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they baptized for the dead?" (I Corinthians 15:29)

One of our correspondents has requested that someone write through the Signs on the above scripture; and since we have had some exercise concerning it, we feel to give our understanding of what the apostle was presenting.

The great subject of the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians is the resurrection of Christ, and the consequent resurrection of his people; for, as his people have borne the image of the earthy, they shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

There were those, of course, who denied that Christ was resurrected, believing the report which the chief priests and elders of the Jews bribed the soldiers to make, that the body of Christ was stolen away. The Sadducees taught that there was no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit; while the Pharasees taught and confessed both. And there were some who taught that the resurrection was past already; in which they erred, and overthrew the faith of some. But the Apostles preached the resurrection of Christ; and as Christ was resurrected, so would his people be resurrected in his likeness. It was against the denial of the resurrection, and errors taught in connection with the resurrection, that the Apostle Paul contended, and for which he suffered much persecution.

Nevertheless, he declared that he, "Delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures; and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, he was seen of above five hundred brethern at once." (I Cor. 15:3-6). "And last of all he was seen of me also as one born out of due time." It is significent that Christ was not seen after his resurrection by any save his own disciples; but they saw him, - not just a few of them, but many of them: and they testified that Christ was risen from the dead. It has ever been so: none have ever seen Christ, and know the truth and power of his resurrection, save those unto whom he has appeared; but these know him, and testify of his resurrection with as much assurance and joy as if they had been present with those who actually saw Him immediately after his resurrection. This is what the Apostle meant when he said that he saw Christ as one born out of due time.

The Apostle being "A chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the, children of Israel", went forth in the power of the Holy Ghost, preaching Christ the

Son of God and the redeemer of his people; and that he both died and rose from the dead: "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." He preached before believers and unbelievers, boldly declaring these things, and patiently bore the "Great things he must suffer for my name's sake."

After the Apostle had received the knowledge of the truth in Christ, having then "eyes to see", he was baptized. Every person who is orderly and truly baptized receives this ordinance after they are given to believe, that is, after they are born again. This baptism is not a part of regeneration, nor is it necessary to regeneration, (baptism of water must be distinguished from the baptism with fire and the Holy Ghost), for it is plainly stated by Peter, "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good concience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved", said the Saviour. This baptism is the conscientious acknowledging that Christ both died, was buried and rose from the dead; and is a confession before the brethern, and before the world, that the recipient has evidence in himself, as he hopes, that Christ is risen and that he has received the benefits of His death and resurrection. The benefits being, that he is reconciled unto God (being dead in trespasses and sins and alientated from God of himself) by the atonement wrought out by Jesus by the sacrifice of Himself.

We do not hesitate to say that no person has the right to baptism until and unless he has evidence in himself that Jesus is the Christ, and that he was buried and rose from the dead. Baptism is figurative of this burial and resurrection; and it is but a farce for a person to enter into baptism without a living faith in the things which baptism typifies.

While baptism of water is not essential to salvation, it is essential to entrance into the fellowship and enjoyment of church privileges with the brethern composing the church in the world. It has been so since the church was first established, and all its members have been baptized upon their profession of faith. We do not question that many of the redeemed of the Lord are never baptized into the fellowship of the church, but that heaven shall be their eternal home; happy are they, however, who are given to "go home to their friends and tell what great things the Lord has done for them", and enjoy those things which only church membership afford.

The church at Corinth was no exception. All her members were baptized, professing their faith in the death and resurrection of Christ for their redemption and justification. But there were some among them who said there was no resurrection (whether they had crept in unawares, we cannot say), which gave occasion for the Apostle to defend the truth he had been preaching in language unequaled by any writer: "If Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" IF THERE BE NO RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD, THEN IS CHRIST NOT RISEN: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not." So parallel was the resurrection of Christ with the resurrection of his people, that Paul states that if the dead rise not, then is Christ not raised; and if Christ be not raised, the faith of his people is vain, and they are yet in their sins. So also, they which have fallen asleep in Christ (in hope of the resurrection) are perished, for if our hope does not go beyond this life, we are of all men most miserable.

But then the Apostle asserts that Christ is risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept; and that since death came by man (Adam), by man also (Christ) came the resurrection of the dead: for as in Adam all (his people) die, even so in Christ shall all (his people) be made alive. Every man, however, in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then will the end come, when Christ shall have put down all rule and authority and power, and delivered up the kingdom to the Father.

These things the Apostle declares are true: "and so ye believed" (eleventh verse). But how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? If they are not true, "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?"

It seems to us that the Apostle is saying, If there be no resurrection, why have some of you professed faith in the risen Christ, but now deny the resurrection? Why were you baptized in the likeness of his burial and resurrection, for that is what baptism is? "What shall they do?": what else is there to trust in; what else are you looking for, if you have no hope of the resurrection? And not only for yourselves, but all they that have fallen asleep in Christ are perished, if there is no resurrection. Surely without this hope of the resurrection we are of all men most miserable. "Why stand we in jeopardy every hour?"

"I protest (solemnly declare you are wrong, and that the resurrection is true) by your (our) rejoicing which I have in Jesus Christ our Lord, I die daily (rejoicing in sufferings and persecution and exposed each day to death because I contend for the resurrection)." It was, "of the hope and resurrection of the dead" that Paul was called in question (Acts 23:6), and for which he suffered many things: "If after the manner of men I have fought with the beasts at Ephesus, what advantegeth it me, if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die." Which is to say, if there is no resurrection, and I have no assurance of it, it were better for me not to expose myself to the furies of unbelievers, and suffer these things; for life in this world is short at best.

But, "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." That is, let no one deceive you by their talk and arguments against the resurrection, for sometimes the unwary are led astray by their dissemulations. "Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame." Rather than listen to evil communications, give attention to the things which are right (true), - to the things which are of God, and deny not the things which he has plainly revealed.

The Apostle then continues with further matters in connection with the resurrection which we shall not mention in this writing. We hope, however, that we have made ourself sufficiently clear on the things contained in our text.

Note: It has been supposed that the subject of our text gave rise sometimes to the practice of "substitutionary baptism"; that is, that living persons were baptized in the name of and in the place of those who had died without baptism. That this has been practiced, we do not doubt, but never among the Lord's people. History gives account of almost every conceivable kind of heresy; some of it based upon misinterpretation or misapplication of the Scriptures, and some of it purely imaginative or taken from heathen customs and practices. To us, the very purpose and reason for baptism in the church of Christ precludes any such practice.

J. D. W.

"Arise, cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up thy hands towards him for the life of thy young children, that faint for hunger in the top of every street." (Lamentations 2:19)

This is the language of the God of Israel to Jerusalem. It is a sad picture that Jeremiah has depicted of the Lord's people under the law. Close examination and inventory is in order to know if we are the people under grace that this describes under law. Have we, as the church of Jesus Christ, had an experience like unto what the prophet has shown us?

The law came by Moses (John 1:17). Strange as it may seem, most people believe that we are now under the law for life and salvation. Others believe that the law is not in force any more to any one. Both of these thoughts are certainly wrong. The Lord does not have a people that are not under the law of Moses, but in the experience of his children, as they are born into his kingdom, they still experience the force of that law. The reign of the law from its being given on Sinai to the dying of Christ under that law, is a picture of our daily and individual experience. The travel of ancient Israel under that law was not any more realistic than a poor sinner's travel under it now. The Lord's people come now to Sinai as they did then; they hear the same awful denunciations that they heard in ages gone by.

Hear the children of Israel as they come down from the fiery mount. They implore Moses to go receive that law for them, that they cannot again hear the voice of God and live. There is not the least degree of mercy in the law of God. As it was thundered to them from this high and lofty hill of his wrath and fury, it served as a yardstick to each of them. It was laid down parallel with the deportment of each on them. When they came off that mount they came telling a uniform experience. Not the first one of them expressed his ability to hear it again. If law worshippers (not the law of Moses, but the law unto themselves (Rom. 2:14), knew all this, if they could read, and understand what they read, the Old Baptist churches would be filled to overflowing, yet we know that merely reading a thing does not cause understanding and experience. Moses heard their plea, and as their chosen leader, recognized it as a good one, and he went in their place to this fiery mountain. He talked with the Lord God, and spoke of the feelings of Israel and their inability to hear the law and live. Israel had spoken the truth and God recognized it as truth. That truth is still recognized in his people. He is still saying that they have well spoken the truth (Deut. 5:28).

There cannot be any fault found with this law. It is holy—wholly holy, we would say; it is just—God's justice was not tarnished by the giving of that law; it is good—as good as he who gave it, who, alone, is good. The accepted and recognized leader of Israel received that law for them. They agreed to obey that law—to have it over them as their rule of conduct towards him and one another. In all this God has not become chargeable to any one of his people. At no time, in no dispensation, has anyone had the right to charge God with any wrong, or any mockery of his people.

This law is revealed to us by his Spirit. Until this revelation, we are not under the law of Moses. We are, as all Gentiles, under the law that is unto ourselves. We must remember that the law of Moses was not given to any of the ites of that day. This law was given exclusively to Israel. I may sound trite and repetitious, but I must insist that not the first one of all the nations around ancient Israel was by intention or mistake on hand at the reception of this law. Likewise, I must insist that none in this day have received that law in the soul and in the experience, save those that have had it delivered to them. This cuts out all the ites from having participated in its reception—it even goes farther and cuts out all that

are hypocritically bearing his name among the church today. Lord, am I included in that number?

This time of revelation is not a time of night to the Lord. Wherever his Spirit is, it is light, but when this comes to the Lord's little ones, it is night to their soul. A man or woman may have lived morally a clean life; they may have been good citizens of the land in which they dwelt; they may have walked circumspectly before their fellowmen, but when that law is revealed in them they feel that they have sinned and come, oh, so far short of the glory of God. How hurtful it is to the pride to have failed one who has put trust and confidence in you. What shame (natural) and remorse of feeling at having fell short of that required of you. What a lowering of the eyes as our former associates pass us by in derision. Whatever our former glory may have been; whatever the zenith of our attained success, it has come night now. Ah, what a night. Dear child of God, have you experienced the travel with this daughter of Zion? In the day of plenty (when you thought your fences were all mended, and your vineyard well kept) you had a horn of plenty; thy gates were attractive and bars were up to keep away the poor beggars (Luke 18:11). But a change has come, the law of the Lord has been thundered to you, and all that you thought until now has been laid in the dust and night has came into your soul (Rom. 7:10). This revelation is the first taste of night that you have had. What a perfect light you have been stepping in! What a well kept place you had been living in! What gaudy doors and windows were in it!

Watching has come. Prayer has not yet entered your soul. No one to cry to, no one to talk to in the dark shades of this Stygian night. No help has been found, no cure has been applied, no balm is in Gilead, no ointment is there. What are you watching for weary one? Do you think that you can match the night? Are you able to discern and avoid the creeping things that come forth to devour you out of the blackness of this long watch and wait? And what are you waiting for? Have you not already felt that death is your portion? Have you not already been weighed and found wanting and known that your doom was the penalty for the violation of this holy and just and good law?

The poor of the Lord are called shameful names, among which ignorance gets a greater degree than anything else. But would you exchange what you know about this law for the learning of all the degrees of men? And isn't it true that even now valuable lessons are learned along the way? Ah, yes, sometimes we yet set down by the rivers of Babylon and hang our harps on the willows (Psa. 137:1,2). It is not any small wonder that Paul could say that "I speak to them that know the law" (Rom. 7:1), for this lamentation of Jeremiah was the result of the ruin and devastation brought by a failure to keep the law. But these people under the law, that is, the Jews (nationally), were a figure of all the Lord's people under it. They, in figure or type, stood for us in the sum and principal of being under that law by spirit. They were under it by promise, we are under it in reality; they were under it in figure, we are under it in substance of what the figure stood for. We, nor they, could not be perfect without the other.

But let us notice the good things to come even while traveling under this law. What a lesson is learned in those first watches! What comfort is found that even the night belongs to the Lord! As far as God is concerned in his glorious work, he is not limited nor hindered by night and darkness. They are alike unto our God (Psalms 139:12), and even our sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, will not prevent his guiding our feet in the way of peace (Luke 1:79). It may seem long as we watch, but his tarrying is always shorter than looked for or deserved (Isa. 46:13; Hab. 2:3). Ah, dear kindred, how sweet the doctrine of amazing grace. Death and destruction before you; dark-

ness and the perils of the night seeking your rest and peace, but a voice is heard across the mists; help is laid on one that is mighty to save and he is coming with such power and vesture and appeal. This command has power in it. The gospel is the power of God, and it comes just that to those to whom it is spoken. It is not a poor puny man speaking, no, no, not that, but it is the Lord. What does he say? How did he know you were down? Ah, poor wanderer, he knows all, he is acquainted with all of your ways. You did not know it, but he has had you beset behind and before all the time. There was a time to succumb to the power of the law (Eccl. 3:1), and there is a time to arise. Watching has had its course; lying in your self righteousness is at an end. Arise, and cry out into the night. Get up first, and then cry. Praying has come at last. The coal of fire has touched your lip (Isa. 6:7), and speaking his dear name has come. The one raised up has made his appearance (Deut. 18:15), and bids you live (Ezek. 16:6).

The watching has been complete. It has called forth all you had. Now the praying has come. It is not in degrees. Your whole heart is to be poured out unto the Lord like unto water. No holding back at all, cast the whole case into his hands (Pet. 5:7), for there is every assurance that he will keep that comitted into his hands until the day of Jesus Christ (2 Tim. 1:12). This is to be done before the face of the Lord, showing conclusively that the law has been the schoolmaster to Christ. The law has been tried; the law has failed to give life and relief; the gates are all sunk down and destroyed; the bars are all broken asunder; she has, ere this, called the Gentiles dogs, but now her king and her princes go among them; the law is not anymore (Lam. 2:9). The Lord has said, Seek ye my face, the heart has said unto him, Lord, they face will I seek (Psa. 27:8).

As I write I am carried away into enjoyment of soul. Transforming love seems to have flooded my soul and I feel the talking face to face with the dear Redeemer who bore my sins in his own body, fulfilling the law in my room and stead. Face to face with Jesus, my Mediator, my glorious Daysman, who is the Restorer of my ruined vineyard, my Intercessor, my loved one. Oh, once I had no hope, but now the Prince of the house of David has become my Prophet, and his voice is indeed music to my soul. I heard God, the Father, thunder in justice from Sinai, but through my weakness I could not meet Him and live; now I have heard his Son in mercy speak in a way that I have never heard before. Confidence has been given, and, dear child, a lifting of the hands toward him has come. Confidence was all lost in the creature never to be regained completely anymore; confidence has been given in Jesus never to be lost completely anymore. Yes, hunger may be in the church individually and collectively, but here is the bread of life for all the little fainting ones in every street. The streets are the ways of his visits among us. Here is one, yonder is another; two shall be in the field, on the housetop, at the mill, one shall be taken the other left. Not one shall travel in the winter, not one shall travel on the sabbath (S. S. 2:11; Matt. 24).

—W. D. G.

Oak City, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

My subscription to the Signs of the Times will expire next month. I am enclosing check for two years and $1.00 to help send to others. As long as I can read, I do not want to be without the comfort of having it in my home. I am nearly seventy-five years old, and read the Signs and other papers as soon as they come, reading my bible along with them.

May the Lord God strengthen and sustain the editors and other writers of the Signs.

In kindred love, I hope,
Sallie L. Johnson

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ELECTION

Election is the sovereign act of God in grace, whereby certain are chosen from among mankind for himself. This choice was made by him in Christ before the foundation of the world, and is not conditioned upon any act of man whatsoever. Whatever human excellance there may be in any man, this does not make him one of the elect of God; whatever human degradation may be one's lot, that does not prevent his being one of the elect. In short, God's election of his people is based solely in his own will and pleasure. His predestination assures the security of all the elect forever. The divine order is: first, foreknowledge; second, election; third, predestination. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father," says Peter. Foreknowledge is thus the fountainhead of election. Whom he did foreknow, them also he did predestinate, says Paul. Elected unto the obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ. Thus predestination secures the election. We suppose there is no point of all the doctrine of God our Savior that so arouses the animosity of the carnal mind as this of election. The human mind revolts at the thought of God's choosing some from among mankind unto salvation and leaving the rest to perish in sin. It staggers at the fact that this election is not made to hang upon man's presumed goodness or obedience. No matter how good and upright a man may try to be, or think he is, this will not influence God one jot in his favor. No matter how depraved and sunken in sin a man may be, this does not prejudice God against him. God's treatment of his people, and his plan for securing them unto himself, is so utterly at variance with man's notions of justice and equity that man will have none of it. Pride must be laid low, self must be abased, our wisdom must become foolishness, our upward strivings vain, and faith must be in active exercise, before one can view God's way of saving sinners with whole-hearted belief. At Thessalonica the enemies of the church called the christians "these that have turned the world upside down." It is even so now, to the world it seems that we put darkness for light, and error for truth. The doctrine of Christ is at all points exactly the opposite of what the world teaches, and does turn the world upside down. Christ's preaching the doctrine of election to the people caused them, more than any other one thing that he said, to fall away from following him.

It will be remembered that at the time he fed the multitude with the loaves and fishes there were a great many who were following him. The motives in this multitude that caused them to follow him were various. Some followed him out of curiosity, and from no real interest in his preaching, but simply to see the miracles he performed, and to feed on the loaves and fishes; others followed him for the very truth's sake, and because they could not help it, while still others followed him to find an occasion against him that they might deliver him to the authorities and get him out of the way. At last Jesus put their discipleship to the test by preaching election to them. See John sixth chapter. "There are some of you that believe not," Jesus told them. Afterwards he told them why they did not believe: "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." The fact that were not the elect of God prevented their being believers. "Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him." Jesus knew "from his sheep, and who were not. "Therefore the beginning" of the world who were said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it was given unto him of my Father." Instead, therefore, of

the sinner giving himself to Christ, it is God that gives him to Christ. This God did before the foundation of the world, when he elected them in Christ. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." All that thou hast given me I have kept. "From that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him." They could not endure such teaching, it made them mad. "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" Indeed, the truth of Christ is all a hard saying unto the natural mind. Not until we are given grace to receive this word in ourselves can we believe it and rejoice in it.

To-day one of the marks of the true church is that the multitudes of men are not found running after it. Human nature has not changed in the days since Jesus was on the earth, the truth is no more popular now than then. But is it not strange to the spiritual mind how that man will deny to his Creator a prerogative which he claims for himself?

The principle of election is written large over the face of nature. We see it in plants and in animals, and it is inherent in the nature of man. Every man is an elector in some sense or other; not a day passes but we make choice of something that appeals to our sense or judgment. Why deny this attribute to the Almighty, therefore? It is in the nature of corn to select certain elements from the soil to insure its growth; it is in the nature of wheat to select certain other elements; what the one selects, the other does not, or if it does, it does not select them in the same proportions. We see two plants growing side by side, one will have red flowers, the other yellow ones. These plants instinctively select from the earth those chemical elements necessary to make the reds and yellows and other colors. The elements in the earth cannot by any means induce the plants or trees to absorb them, but the nature of the growing thing dictates what elements shall and shall not be taken up. What is this but the doctrine of election seen in the vegetable world? We see birds choosing where they shall build their nests: the eagle among the rocky crags, the sparrow in the house-eaves, the thrush in the hedge, the lark among the grass. Here is the principle of selection even among those creatures that have not judgment to reason why they do so. Some principle of their nature dominates their selection. We see cows and sheep grazing, they will not eat just anything that comes to hand, but will pass this by and crop that. The various grasses and weeds in the pasture cannot compel the animals to eat them, but the animal will select that which it likes and which meets its need. These illustrations could be multiplied indefinitely, but enough to show what we mean by the principle of election being dominant even among those beings that are not endowed with man's superiority.

Breathes there a man who has never made a choice of anything? Is there one who is not in some sense an elector? Here a farmer looks abroad over his acres and decides to put corn in this field, wheat in that and to pasture a third. Can the fields themselves dictate to him his choice? No, his own judgment decides how the choice shall fall. The farmer has sheep, cows, hogs, &c., at his disposal, he looks upon them as his property to do with as he pleases. He decides to kill this and to spare that, to sell this and keep the other. Can the sheep or the cow or the hog influence the farmer in his disposal of them? No, he uses his own pleasure with them. Then, if election or selection be a faculty inherent even in men, why should man want to deny to the Almighty that made him this same function of election? Are we not all God's creatures? Has he not a right to do with us as he will? Should we expect to tell him how he shall use us, when we will not brook such interference from that which is lower than ourselves?

The vegetable kingdom cannot tell the animal kingdom above it what to eat and what not, but the animal kingdom can and does reach down into the ve-

getable and take that which it will. The animal kingdom cannot tell man how to dispose of it, but man uses his own pleasure and suits his own ends in dealing with animals. Man cannot reach up to God and induce him to elect this or that one, but the kingdom of heaven does reach down into the world and takes those whom it chooses into itself. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, says Jesus to the twelve. If by faith we do choose the way of life rather than that of death, it is because God's choice of us preceeds our choice of him, and we choose him because he first chose us, even as we love him because he first loved us. That man is richly blessed whom God chooses and causes to draw nigh unto him.

Mr. Bryan said a few years ago in an address to the Y. M. C. A. in Washington, that religion is that attitude in which a man places himself toward God. This is certainly getting the cart before the horse. True religion is based in God's attitude towards us, not in our attitude toward him. Pure and undefiled religion comes from above, and descends into the hearts of men, lifting them upward unto him. Their lifting up is the effect of God's condescension unto them. As the heavens bow down to earth, so is the kingdom of heaven set up in the earth, so does the doctrine water the inclosed garden of the Lord. The doctrine drops as the rain, and its speech distils as the dew, when heaven draws near to earth. No man has ascended into heaven to bring Christ down, or into the depths to bring Christ up, but the Word is made flesh and dwells among us. Then, and then only, do we see his glory and know verily that he is the Christ of God, being taught it not of men, but by revelation of the Fatherhood of God.

The fact that men do read the Bible and do not acknowledge the doctrine of election written therein serves to show how utterly blind they are, for election is seen in every page of the Bible, not only in express declarations, but in types and shadows, and in the manner of God's dealing with mankind. God's election alone distinguished between Cain and Abel. They both had the same parentage, the same environment, the same upbringing, yet there was a difference. The difference was not one of nature, but one of election. Noah and his family were saved in the ark, all the rest of the world were lost. Noah was no different by nature from those that perished, but the election of God distinguished between him and them. Jacob and Esau were brothers, both born of the same parents, both possessed the same nature, yet God loved Jacob and hated Esau, and that before either of the boys were born, and before either of them had done anything either good or bad. God made this choice of one and the rejection of the other before either of them had been born in order that his purpose according to election might stand, not according to works, but according to the calling of God. God will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy, and will harden whom he will. Man may say, and does say, that this is not just, but man's saying so does not alter the fact of its being so. Whether we believe a thing, or do not believe it, changes nothing. "In thy book all my members were written, * * * when as yet there was none of them." This the psalmist declares with reference to Jesus. All the members of Christ's body were written in the mind and purpose of God and embraced in his election before the foundation of the world, when there was none of them manifested as yet.

Those who are now by the operation of the Holy Spirit being brought through grace unto the knowledge of the truth, are those who were chosen unto salvation in eternity. Experimental election is the result of the doctrine of election. This is the way, and the only way, that any point of God's doctrine can be appreciated: not simply in grasping it with the mind as an intellectual concept or theory, but in living it in our lives and having it become part and

parcel of our spiritual existence. When election is experienced, then we suck honey out of the rock and oil out of the flinty rock; the hard saying to the natural man becomes the meat of the spiritual man. We have often heard that one man's meat is another man's poison, and it is true that the new man in Christ Jesus would starve if compelled to eat the food of the old or earthy man, and it is just as true that human nature cannot feed on the delectable things of the Spirit.

Editorial by
(Elder) H. H. Lefferts
Oct. 15, 1915

OBITUARIES

MRS. ALTHA LEOTA MERCER

Mrs. Altha Leota Mercer has been called by her Heavenly Father,—called away from this worn out, afflicted body, and carried, we hope, to Abraham's bosom; there to await the promised resurrection, when her body shall be raised a spiritual body, like unto her Saviour; and she shall dwell with him forever.

She was born July 24, 1877, and died January 22, 1953; age seventy-five years. She was before her marriage, Altha Leota Henderson; and was married to Thomas S. Mercer in 1897, by the late Elder Dick Boaz. There were five children born to them, all of whom were near her when she was laid to rest in Forrest Hill Cemetary, Memphis, Tennessee. They are as follows: Thomas H. Mercer, Washington, D. C.; Wilbur W. Mercer, Jessie S. Mercer, Mrs. Vera Thurman and Mrs. Elizabeth Coleman, all of Memphis.

Sister Mercer had an experience of grace at a very early age, and desired a home with the Primitive Baptists, but it was not until 1910 that she was united with Boaz Chapel Church, near Fulton, Kentucky. She was received by letter into the church at Memphis, August 2, 1914. She was a faithful and beloved member, always willing and ready to support her church and assist her brothers and sisters in any way she could. She became ill about eight years ago, and spent almost all the rest of her life in the hospital.

Elder H. G. Brown, her pastor, conducted the service at the National Funeral Home. He spoke comfortingly of the God which Sister Mercer believed and trusted in,—the God who had been her strength and shield, her comfort and her guide.

Death is a sweet release from this mortal prison; why do we dread it?

Written by request of the church.
Mrs. Lucille Young.

MRS. J. B. STALLINGS

Mrs. J. B. Stallings (Aunt Sallie, as she was known by many), passed away at her home in Humbolt, Tennessee. She united with the Primitive Baptist church more than sixty years ago, and was faithful until death. She saw division come among the churches, but always stood firmly in her belief in salvation by grace and grace alone for time and eternity.

She was interesting to listen to when she told the history of the church in times of peace and times of trouble, marking well the hand of God who does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. She lived a long way from her church, and could not come regularly in her declining years, but came as often as her health would permit. Her cheerfulness and sweet smile will long be remembered. To know her was to love her. Now she is at rest. Surely our loss is her gain. Blessed are they who die in the Lord, who hear the welcome call, Child come home.

May it be resolved that we bow our heads in humble submission to God's will in these things, and pray that we who remain may be strengthened and kept.

Her beloved pastor, Elder H. G. Brown, conducted the service. As many of the loved ones in the church here as could, attended her funeral. We have been unable to get desired information, and have done the best we knew.

Written by request of the church,
Mrs. Lucille Young.

MARSHALL LEE EGGLETON

Marshall Lee Eggleton was born July 14, 1874, in Franklin County, Virginia. He passed away at his home, May 22, 1953, age 78 years, 1 month and 22 days.

He was married to Miss Sarah Elizabeth Kempleton, who survives him and misses him greatly. Both of them taught school before they were married. They lived together at their home on Boxley Hill, Roanoke, Virginia for 44 years.

Brother Eggleton joined the Church, July 21, 1939, and was a sincere and faithful member and firm believer in the principles of the Primitive Baptist Church. He loved the truth and was a believer in predestination and the chosen Elect of GOD.

He always looked forward to his Church Meetings until he became crippled and unable

to attend Church. He loved to have the brethern come to see him and was very humble, never complaining about his illness, although he was badly crippled. He was a pleasant man and esteemed highly by the brethern and sisters.

Elder Landon Harris held services in the home by his bedside, which was the last preaching that he heard, and he feasted on it very much.

The funeral services were conducted at the home by Elders Cecil Turner and Randolph Perdue, where a host of relatives and friends were gathered to pay a last tribute of respect. He was laid to rest in Sherwood Burial Park.

Russell A. Bowles

MRS. BERTHA ENOCH STADLER

Sister Stadler was born in Caswell County February 25, 1881 and departed this life on June 17, 1953 at the age of 72 years, three months and twenty-two days. She was the daughter of the late James P. Enoch and Martha Stanbach Enoch. She is survived by eight daughters, one son, three sisters, two brothers, fourteen grandchildren and three great grandchildren, with a host of near relatives and friends to mourn her departure.

Sister Stadler had been a member of Bush Arbor Church for many years and was a most faithful and loyal person. She was sorely afflicted for many months before her departure, all of which she endured with much patience. She often expressed she would like to remain with her family, yet she was satisfied and had been made willing to die.

We know of no greater heritage that one might leave than to know their loved-ones had died in the faith. We do not feel to mourn for Sister Stadler as for those who have no hope. Therefore, we, the church at Bush Arbor, desire to bow in humble submission to the will of God, knowing that He does all things well, is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. Loving hands and tender care could not keep her with us. Therefore, may her family be given to say: not our will but thine be done. Be it resolved; first, that a copy of this resolution, with our sympathy, be presented to the family of Sister Stadler; second, that a copy be spread upon our church record books in memory of this beloved sister, and third, that a copy be given to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Bush Arbor Church in conference on August 8, 1953.

J. D. Simmons, Clerk

Elder W. C. King, Moderator

ORA BELLE SIKES SKINNER

Ora Belle Sikes Skinner, of Fletcher, Oklahoma, was born near Lexington, Lea County, Texas, March 4, 1890; and died May 22, 1953, at the age of sixty-three years, two months and eighteen days. She was united in marriage to Francis Edward Skinner April 14, 1907. To this union three children were born: J. E., Redland, California; E. U., Fletcher, Oklahoma; and one girl who passed away in infancy.

Besides her husband, of the home address, and their two sons, she leaves to mourn their loss three brothers, J. D., H. O., and F. H. Sikes, of Breckenridge, Texas; and five sisters, Mrs T. G. Hart, Mrs. Mona Thomas, Mrs. H. C. Thomas, Miss Lina Sikes, all of Breckenridge, Texas, and Mrs. C. U. Landers, Coleman, Texas; four grand children and one great grand child, and her nephews and nieces. Also, her dear old mother-in-law, the widow of the late Elder L. E. Skinner, together with all Old Baptists who knew her, and her host of friends.

Ora, was a devout wife and kind, loving, sympathetic mother. She possessed a disposition and personality that is seldom equaled. She is missed by all who knew her, and very much by Old Baptists. At about the age of fourteen, Ora joined the Missionary Baptist church, but had not been identified with them for a number of years. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and the predestination of all things, believing that "all things" work together for good to bring to pass the final consummation of all things, and the reality of that hope for those of hope; which hope she confessed and manifested by her walk. She bore her suffering from an internal malignant ailment with patience, never complaining. In years gone by, we have heard her say, "There are many things worse than death."

There is no more suffering, sorrow, or heartaches for our dear sister. Rest, beloved, until our Redeemer comes again the second time, without sin unto salvation ready to be revealed at the last time. Then shall he gather the "whole house of Israel" from all parts of the Universe and present them unto the Father. Then shall we see Him, be like Him, and be satisfied. This was her hope—that she would be in that number.

Elder W. W. Taylor, of Dallas, Texas, conducted the services. He spoke words of comfort to her relatives and friends, using as a text, Ephesians 2:8, her favorite Scripture. Having known this writer all his life, she seemed more like a sister than a sister-in-law.

Written by request of her husband and children by one who hopes she is his sister "in Christ".

(Elder) C. U. Landers

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 121 DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1953 NO. 12

AGREEMENT BETWEEN ELDER JOHN LELAND AND JAMES MADISON COMMEMORATED

An interesting and important event in American history was recalled on October 4, 1953, when the Leland-Madison Monumental Park was dedicated near Orange, Virginia. The site of the park marks the place where Elder John Leland and James Madison met to discuss their differences pertaining to the ratification of the Constitution of the United States. This was in 1788.

The Constitution, as it was drawn up by the Convention in Philadelphia in 1787, did not contain a guarantee of religious liberties and free speech. Elder Leland, and those he represented, opposed the ratification by Virginia unless such provisions were included. This was a large and influential group of citizens, and it was not likely that the Constitution would be ratified without their support.

The following is quoted from an article in a Washington newspaper by Dr. Joseph M. Dawson:

"Authorities agree that Leland was a key man in obtaining Virginia's ratification of the Federal Constitution. Without Virginia's favorable action, in all probability the Constitution would never have been ratified.

"The Rev. John Leland though a native of Massachusetts, owes his place in history to his activities in Virginia from the time he went to Culpepper in 1775 to his return to Massachusetts in 1791. In that 16-year period, he proved to be a statesman as well as a flaming evangelist. Elected to the Virginia Assembly, he collaborated with Washington, Jefferson, Madison and Mason in behalf of religious liberty. He also baptized more than 700 converts in the region between the Ketockton Mountains and the York River. He was affectionately called Parson.

"While Leland enjoyed the friendship of the leaders mentioned above, he opposed Madison's election to the Virginia Ratification Assembly because Madison's document lacked a Bill of Rights. At a picnic near Orange, the two men composed their differences and agreed on an amendment. Then Leland pledged his support, with the result that Madison was seated and Virginia ratified the Federal Constitution as amended.

"In the meantime Leland, on behalf of the Baptists, had written George Washington, saying, "when the Constitution first made its appearance in Virginia, we, as a society, feared that the liberty of conscience, dearer to us than property or life, was not sufficiently secured . . . . Under the regal government mobs, fines, bonds and prisons were our frequent repast."

"Although Washington belonged to the Established Church of Virginia, he sympathized deeply, as evidenced by his reply: "If I could have entertained the slightest apprehension that the Constitution formed by the conventions where I had the honor to preside might possibly endanger the rights of any ecclesiastical society, certainly I would have never placed my signature to it; and if I now could conceive that the general Government might ever be so administered as to render the liberty of conscience insecure, I beg you will be persuaded that no one would be more zealous than myself to establish effectual barriers against the horrors of spiritual tyranny and every species of

religious persecution."

The first amendment to the Constitution, referred to above, reads as follows.

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press; or the right of the people peacefully to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

There is little mention in secular history of the part our religious fore-fathers took in securing this freedom for us, but we should be most grateful that in the purpose of God, He gave us men of courage to fight for and secure our priceless heritage. —J. D. W.

Dutton, Ontario.
November 28, 1951

Miss Ada Bartlett,
Damariscotta Mills, Maine.
Dear Sister Ada:

At last I am writing to thank you for the very nice mittens that you made and sent to me. They fit me fine, and I am sure I shall often think of you when I wear them. They will keep my hands warm during the cold winter weather, for I often have to go long drives when my hands need such covering.

I hope, dear one, that you are not suffering very much or very often, and that you are still able to help your dear mother; and that your grand-ma is keeping well. Paul says in Romans 8:18, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." The saints in Paul's time suffered much from persecution, as he says in verse thirty-five, "Tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril and sword." None of those things were worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. We are bound to have trials of various sorts; some have troubles, others sickness and can seldom say that they feel well. Yet these very things shall work together for good to them who love God, to the called according to his purpose. In this life our bodies are not changed; they will all have to die soon or late. Our Lord Jesus also died, but his body did not see corruption, for it was holy and is now in heaven sitting at the right hand of God. We are told that even David said in the Psalms, "Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." David did see corruption, and in Acts 13:36, it says that after David had served his own generation, by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption. But in Romans 8, Paul says the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

When we are delivered from corruption is when this corruptable shall put on incorruption when we shall be raised from the dead. Jesus, being the first fruits of them that slept, is the only one who has been raised from the dead. He now has a glorified body just as he was seen in the mount of transfiguration by Peter, James and John; where they also saw Moses and Elijah, whose bodies were not as yet glorified. They had never seen Moses and Elijah, but it was the Holy Ghost who gave knowledge to the three disciples who they were. In Romans 8:17, it tells us that we shall be glorified together. Here the whole creation groaneth and travaileth **together** in pain until now. There, when we are glorified with a body like unto His glorious body, it will be **together** also there. Those who have gone home to glory are liberated from sin, pain and death: their souls and spirits are forever with the Lord. When Jesus comes again they will be with him, and then their bodies, with their souls and spirits will be glorified together.

Then what wonders will open up before our eyes, and with what joy shall we look upon and admire our dear Redeemer; and if earth can be so lovely at times, how much more wonderful will heaven be to our admiring eyes.

Paul tells how he was caught up to heaven and heard things which it is not lawful for a man to utter. (2 Corinthians, 12th chapter). The glorified body of Jesus when looked upon by Peter, James and John (they fell at his feet as dead), could not be looked upon by our eyes in their present state. John, in Revelation 1:17, said, "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead." John said in another place, when He shall appear **we shall be like him.**

Let us, therefore, dear sister, desire patience to run the race that is set before us, "Looking unto Jesus", as our hope in this life and in the life to come. We have not followed cunningly devised fables: we have seen his glory in stopping us and turning us to love his great name.

"From whence doth this union arise, that hatred is conquered by love."

Let us go to him with all our cares, for he careth for us. Dear ones we love you all for Jesus' sake. Hope you have a nice time together during this season of the year.

Sincerely,
(Elder) George Rustin

Fayetteville, Tenn.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

It has been a long time since I tried to write a few lines, but since my dear brother Alton W. Sisco passed away so suddenly on January 18, 1953, I have wanted to send this writing of his, hoping that you would think it alright to publish in the Signs. I would have copied it myself, but I knew you could see that years have past since he wrote these lines. He loved the Old Baptist people, and often expressed his desire to follow the dear Saviour in baptism, but felt too unworthy.

He was working when he had a stroke but got to the house where I was before he was unable to walk; he then lived a little over twelve hours. He and I stayed with mother, Mrs. J. E. Sisco, whom I feel sure some of the readers remember, for nearly fourteen years after our father was taken away. Then when mother was called seven years ago, we still stayed together until the chilly hand of death broke the tie. I have grieved for him, yet not as those that have no hope. The days are sad and lonely; it is not like home now, its just a place to stay. All I can say is, the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord. We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

My health is very poor and I don't feel that I have much longer to linger here in this world of trouble. If not asking too much, pray for me that when this life ends, I may be carried on the wings of love to that home not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

God bless each one, is the desire of a poor sinner saved by grace, if at all.

(Miss) Willie Sisco

(Note: No doubt many thoughts are written by the Lord's people which are never published. We were greatly interested in the following by the late Alton W. Sisco, and though unsigned, and perhaps unfinished, they show the unmistakable work of the spirit of God in him. J. D. W.)

April 18, 1937

Dear Editors:

Last Sunday I was standing at old Pleasant Grove Church, in South Lincoln County, Tennessee, waiting for someone to come (for that was the regular meeting day), and I looked out across the heavily wooded lands South of the church, and I noticed that the trees were beginning to bud. My mind was, I hope, truly directed back almost two thousand years ago when a little child was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger.

Why was he laid in a manger? Because there was no room for him in the inn. And today, when more than nineteen centuries of time have rolled swiftly by, there is still no room for him in

the inn.

When this great ordained even of the Almighty God came to pass, the greatest kingdom the world has ever known was beginning to bud. This was the stone that Nebuchadnezzar saw in a dream five hundred and eighty years before it began to bud. (the king's dream concerning this kingdom, and also the kingdoms it should break in pieces and consumed, was interpreted by Daniel) And this kingdom that began to bud almost two thousand years ago is still too common and old fashioned to suit the inhabitants of the inn. Oh, they say just to be called by His name is enough,—that is all you need to be saved. Well, that might satisfy the hearts and minds of some but it doesn't satisfy me, for I know if I am not saved by the grace and mercy of God, then I am gone; for I fully realize there is nothing I can do to help or assist in the saving of myself or anyone else. Paul says in Ephesians 2:8-10, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

God implants in the hearts of his people the tree of life, and then waters and causes it to bud and bring forth fruit (good works) which he has ordained them to produce. Not one single child will fail to produce his portion of fruit, neither will he bring forth any more than his portion. Why? Solomon says, "I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him." (Ecclesiastes 3:14).

Now Paul told the Ephesians that the children of God were the Father's workmanship, and that he had ordained them to walk in good works; and Solomon says that whatsoever God does can not increase, neither can it be decreased. Then, as God has placed the strength in the earth which causes the natural trees to bud and bring forth fruit, he has also placed the strength in the spiritual tree that causes it to bud and bring forth fruit.

"Then said Jesus unto them, verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the Sheep."

For some time my mind has been on the subject of the sheep; and I am made to wonder whether or not I am one of them. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning". (James 1:17). So, therefore, all the gifts that the Father has ever bestowed up his children, or ever will bestow on them, come down from above. Eternal life is the greatest gift that God has ever given to any man. This gift comes through his Son (the door of the sheep). "And I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (John 10:28). "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23)

What wonderful mercy the Father has upon his children: He sent his Son into this world of sin and sorrow, that they might live through him. They were all locked in the prison of sin; so He came into this world and became the door to this prison, and calls his sheep out, and they heed his voice and follow him wherever he leads them. For Paul says in Romans 8:14, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." And also in Galatians, "But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law." When anything is led it does not move of its own will; it acts because it is being acted upon by a greater power than its own. So, He leads them by his Spirit in the strait and narrow way, and plants their feet upon higher ground, and washes them whiter than snow, and holds them up by

his omnipotent hand. Neither is it left up to them as to whether they will keep themselves saved or not, for he preserves them all; and when anything is preserved it cannot spoil.

On that great judgement day when the Lord shall return in his royal glory, he will sit upon his magnificent throne, and all nations shall be gathered there before him; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats. He will set the sheep upon his right and the goats upon his left. Here is where the ones whom he called out of the prison of sin, —those whom he has given his life for —will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father: they will inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. And he will lead them to the living waters of life where they will drink endless pleasures throughout eternity in that wonderful kingdom that is to come.

The Apostle Peter spoke of this great kingdom: "Nevertheless we according to his promise look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Peter 3:13)

WARS AND RUMORS OF WARS

May, 1942

"And when ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars, see that ye be not troubled, for all these things must come to pass." (Matthew 24:6)

Dear Editor: Several years have elapsed since I made a feeble attempt to write you, and tonight, as I cannot sleep, it seems that I cannot resist writing you any longer. I am very restless, as I was honorably discharged from the army about six weeks ago; I broke down under the training and had to go to the hospital, where I spent five weeks before receiving an honorable disability discharge. Now I am at home trying to recuperate, but it seems very slow to me. I liked the army, and, of course, that adds to my restless condition.

While thinking over the condition of the world, as well as my own, the above Scripture keeps presenting itself to me. Christ, in speaking to his disciples, told them plainly, "And when ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars——" Here he very plainly expresses the certainty of these wars and rumors coming to pass. People have wondered why the League of Nations which was formed following the other war, did not and could not stand. Well, the answer is in this verse. The Saviour goes on and tells them that when they hear of these wars and rumors, see that ye be not troubled for all these things must needs be. We should all give a deep thought to that one little word, Must; for it carries with it the weight of compulsion. Nevertheless while he expressed the certainty of these things coming to pass, he did not leave them without consolation: "See that ye be not troubled." Why shouldn't they be troubled? Because he told them that all these things must come to pass. Christ had spoken it, that was sufficient.

The Apostle Paul drops a deep thought when he said in Ephesians 1: 11, "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Yes, God himself rules and controls wars and rumors of wars; and he, and he alone, receives the glory and praise at the end.

Alton W. Sisco
(deceased)

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626 E Sixteenth Street,
Houston, Texas.

Dear Brethern in the Lord:

I do not feel fit to address you as brethern, and feel very humble when addressed as sister. For sometime I have had the desire to write; but it seems that I have nothing to write except it be of my utter unworthiness to even meet with the Lord's dear saints, and feast at His table.

There is an old hymn I have learned "by heart", which I often find myself reciting:

O, could I find some peaceful bow'r
Where sin hath neither place, nor power;
This traitor vile I fain would shun,
But cannot from his presence run.
When to the throne of grace I flee,
He stands between my God and me;
Where'er I rove, where'er I rest,
I feel him working in my breast.
Lord, free me from this deadly foe,
Which keeps my faith and hopes so low;
I long to dwell in heaven home
Where not one sinful thought can come.

Of late I have been blessed with the privilege of visiting several meetings. Oh, how sweet to meet with God's little ones — meet and sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; to hear and feast on the glorious gospel of our blessed Lord. How sweetly the name of Jesus our Lord and Saviour was set forth, in deed and in truth to be the righteous creator of all things which are in heaven, in earth, in sea and dry land.

I hope it is by experience that I can say, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." Surely the Lord is their Shepherd and supplies all their needs, giving suitable and sufficient food and drink for the hungry and thirsty little lambs and sheep. If ever the Lord was in the midst of a congregation, (and I believe He is), He was surely in those meetings. Our little church here has only about twenty-seven members, yet that does not prevent good meetings. I think one alone has a good spiritual meeting when they have the sweet presence of the dear Lord with them, and often shout praises to His righteous and holy name. He is a God who never sleeps, and often visits his children in the night hours, and they are awakened to rejoice and oft times dampen their pillows with tears, feeling His presence so near.

Sometimes, yes often, we feel deep down in the valley of doubt and despondency — in darkness and dispair, a prisoner shut up in "doubting castle". But through the great love he has for them, He reaches down and raises them up and sets them on mountain tops, and establishes their going and they are enabled to praise his righteous and holy name. Yet we poor, weak creatures are unable to render just praise to his holy name, try with all the strength given us, we fall far short in giving him just praise, honor and glory. The deeper we are in the valley, the more we desire to shout praises to his name. Often trials and tribulations are our lot, and we feel to be a castaway from his loving presence; but these things need be oft times, to keep us humbled at the foot of the cross, lest we should become exalted, and turn away to the carnal things of this sinful old world.

Many times persecutions and reproaches are ours to bear; but the Lord said, "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." Then are we not grateful and thankful that we can suffer for Christ's sake? That if God be for us who can be against us? The Apostle Paul suffered the thorn in the flesh lest he should be come exalted because of the revelations that were given him. He prayed thrice that it be removed from him, but God told him, "My grace is sufficient for thee." And it is sufficient for all our troubles in this world.

My heart's desire, if not deceived, is for a closer walk with God. We have the sweet privilege of looking unto the hills from whence our help cometh; and for that great day when we will be enabled by his mighty power to gather around his throne and sing praises to his holy name; where there will be no sighing, no crying, no tears, no pain, no heartaches, no separations nor death, but eternal peace and happiness. O, glorious thought that we have hope some day to be carried to the realms of fadeless glory where there will be one sweet, eternal day. Then can the full song of redemption be sung. Who can describe it all! I feel sure no one can. Indeed, we may truthfully say, "The half was not told me."

Will this heavenly, glorious bliss — this peaceful joy of heaven, be mine. Dear ones, many are the times when I feel I shall not enter therein. I feel so

vile and wretched I can't even think a good thought. I often wonder and tremble with fear and doubt if I have ever drunk of the waters of salvation. There are times when I feel as one dead; or so far off as to wonder indeed if I have ever known Him. But he says that we walk by faith and not by sight, and He is the giver of that faith; and he gives it to whomsoever he will, and in the measure it pleases him. None can stay his hand, or say, "What doest thou." He is worthy of all praise, and will have all the glory.

Oh, that I were more devoted to Him —less selfish, carnal and foolish, and that my heart was entirely his. But still, the Lord has borne me and has not destroyed me: how great are his tender mercies, his longsuffering, and bowels of compassion, — He is able to save to the uttermost.

"Guide me, O thou great Jehovah!
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak but thou art mighty,
Hold me with thy powerful hand:
Bread of heaven,
Feed me till I want no more.
When I pass through death's dark shadow,
Bid my anxious fears subside;
Death of death, and hell's destruction,
Land me safe on Canaan's side:
Songs of praises
I will ever give to thee."

May the good Lord bless and keep you and all connected with the dear paper, and the saints everywhere remembered me in prayer. Just an old sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

Harriett Little Gray

Redwood, Virginia

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

We hope that you both and family are well; we are reasonably so. The good letter you wrote me April 2, 1952, was received and read over and over by Sister Perdue and I, and others, with much love, joy and appreciation. I fear to try answering because of my deep feeling of inability and unworthiness, and stammering manner of expression; but we are dependent upon our merciful God for all things, for by him all things consist.

Dear Elder, I hope the Lord will direct me with spiritual zeal to write some little comforting thought that will edify you both, even a thus saith the Lord; things that becometh sound doctrine: glorious things that our souls loveth; and which things we have hope in, and have experienced and witnessed and testified to. If so, we have a living testimony, for we believe that God's born again children are by His divine revelation given knowledge, wisdom and spiritual zeal to try the spirits whether they are of God, or of the evil one. And in his peace loving spirit he leads his little flock to harvest the peaceful fruits of righteousness, even to love, worship and adore the blessedness of their great and eternal King's worthy name. His little sheep and lambs know his voice, and they do follow him, and strangers they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers. Christ, being the great shepherd of his sheep, leadeth them beside the still waters, and he maketh them to lie down in green pastures and supplieth all their needs, and they shall not want. If we but have Christ in us the hope of glory, we have all things, for in him all fulness dwells.

According to Holy Writ, as I see and believe it, there is but one true experience of grace. All whom Christ died to redeem have, and will have, that grace in measure according to the gift of their faith: there being but one Lord, one faith and one baptism. This grace is identically the same with each heir of promise in power, essence and glory; and Christ, the spotless Lamb of God, is the way, the truth and the life, and is the center of attraction for and in all things to his saints. Therefore, there was no other way for Christ's bride, his church, to be saved, except through and by him and his imputed righteousness. I am persuaded to believe that the entire household of faith is Primitive Baptist in principles of faith and doctrine, let them be wheresoever our al-

wise God has placed them; even though some make their bed in hell, behold the Lord is there to bring them out at his own good time and purpose, and to reveal unto them his love, mercy, grace and glory in due season. We do not doubt the safety of all whom our dear Saviour died to redeem, but what individually concerns us so much is, do we among them stand; or are we just pretenders, and have traditionally grasped at the shadow of these things and missed the substance of them.

Sometimes it seems that our personal affairs have wrought havoc for us, so that even God's love, mercy, grace and glory, which we have patiently sought and long hoped for, now seem to be just a myth of worldly tradition. But, if we be not deceived, from time to time our blessed Redeemer God has delivered us from the midst of all our trials, sorrows and afflictions, and restores us again unto a lively hope, even to the feasting of our souls. Dear kindred, at little seasons haven't we felt the loving embracement of our dear Saviour's amazing mercy and distinguishing grace, and feel to be carried to glorious heights of his redeeming love, so that it seems our full soul could hold no more. No wonder that true believers, in feasting on heavenly prospects, can in true reality say, What wondrous love is this. We (if I be included in that elect number), have nothing to boast of, but so much to be thankful for. We feel persuaded that we have meat to eat that the world knows not of, when we feel the peaceful presence of Christ as a sure anchor of our soul. Our redemption is just as sure as our Redeemer, for God's sure mercies and promises fail not. He has promised never to leave nor forsake his children, and he will be with them even unto the end of the world. He has tried his precious jewels as by fire, and has refined them as pure gold; he has prepared and preserved his little flock to withstand all the trials, hardships and bitter persecutions such as fall to their lot. "When through the deep waters I call thee to go, the rivers of woe shall not thee overflow." Our dear Saviour will sustain his lovely bride throughout an endless eternity.

We believe all of God's saints will be given patience, faith, grace and love manifestly as that of Job, David and Paul; though we feel these manifestations very weak with us, but yet in like manner with the household of faith, for we feel within us that if a saint, we are the least of all. But says Christ, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Therefore, the greatest saint has no preeminence over the least of them. All of his saints are as one: just little dependent children; and feel when wrought upon by his Spirit that is meat to do their Father's will, with no worth or merit on their part. So we are in hope that we are pilgrims and wanderers journeying to a goodly land which flows with milk and honey. Our daily experience and prayer is, Lord gave us of thy Spirit, that we may worship thee aright and praise thy name above every name; and that we kept submissive to thy will, and esteem our brethern better than ourselves, and thus fulfill the law of Christ; for in thy spirit we desire to do thy will, Oh, God.

We love to meet together and mingle our voices in singing the sweet songs of Zion, and hear our ministers preach the unadulterated Gospel of glad tidings of great joy. What greater privilege could the saints have here than the freedom of meeting together in public worship of the only true and living God. This freedom may be short, but as long as our God has willed it so.

In conclusion, dear Elder and Sister Wood, I could not write you as I desired, but have just blundered along in my awkward manner. If I have written anything that Primitive Baptists don't believe and stand for, charge it to the error of the head and not the intent of the heart, for I have a great desire to believe in line with my brethern, so far as it is a "thus sayeth the Lord", and as my experience has taught me. We

were glad to have you both, together with many others at our good association at Basham Church. Dear Elder, we enjoyed your good sermon, together with all who preached at the association. Our next association is scheduled to be held at Gills Creek, which is my home church. We hope the Lord has willed that you meet together again with us next year.

Elder Wood, in true sincerity we feel well pleased with you and Elder Spangler as editors of the Signs of the Times; and pleased with the great ability you both have, together with your good associate editors, for preaching and writing such wonderful editorials for the Signs; and also, many other able writers who contribute to its columns, which, to me, makes the Signs a wonderful and lovely paper. We miss dear Elder Dodson's editorials, but we believe he is sweetly resting from his labors in the peaceful paradise of God.

May the Lord's Holy Spirit and comfortable communion rest and abide with the household of faith, that they may walk circumspectfully in the ordinances of God, is my prayer. A brother in hope of a glorious immortality beyond the grave.

J. A. Perdue.

MATTHEW 16:24; MARK 8: 34-37; LUKE 9: 23-25

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

There is little variation in the wording of what the three writers had to say about this subject, and it seems that each of them are so close to the other in the exact words that we may use what Matthew has to say about it.

Writing upon a particular text of scripture without carefully consulting the context will make us leave out the lesson being taught. Abridging, adding to, or leaving out what is taught in the Bible, will tend to confuse instead of edifying. My leanness and barreness is a constant reminder that I do not know anything as I ought. This feeling serves to make me tread carefully, and I hope prayerfully, in coming before the Lord's people.

As in all of the balance of the Scriptures, I think that this is teaching the sovereign grace of God, and at the same time thoroughly setting forth our fallen nature and incapacity to rise above it. The doctrine of the purpose of God found strong opposition among the apostles. The Bible not only plainly says it (Matthew 26:35), but it teaches it by inference in many places, that all of the apostles were in strict opposition to prophecy being carried out. Prophecy is being fulfilled now, and yet men are just as much opposed to it taking place as were the apostles. The apostles told the Saviour face to face that he did not know what he was talking about when he told them what evil men would do; furthermore, they told him plainly that they were able to do better than he thought about them.

The Saviour preached the fulfillment of those things concerning him. He spoke of how he must go up to Jerusalem; of how and what he must suffer and die; of his resurrection on the third day. Peter began to rebuke him, and to tell him that these things shall not be done unto him. I wonder sometimes, how that men, especially those that are called brethren, can revile the Lord's dear people for preaching the doctrine of predestination, seeing that Peter rebuked the Lord for preaching it. I am not, nor have I been, neither have I heard of my brethren preaching it, that the things of time are falling out for any other reason than for the good of those that love God. If they do go to preaching it, I certainly will protest at

it. And the things that were done at Jerusalem, in fulfilling prophecy, were all done for the good of God's people. Peter protested at it taking place; some of the brethren are still protesting that the things that are, should not be Now since Peter was called an offence to the Saviour because of his limited predestination, I dare not be any the less offended at the limited doctrine when I hear it advocated.

It is of men to preach that the things that God has said should be, will not be. Jesus said it was. I didn't do it; my brethren are not the ones that said it. The blessed One said that for a man to think and say that the things that were prophesied are coming to pass would not come to pass, did not savor (know) the things of God. Now mark that statement well, and keep your mind on it.

After declaring this solemn truth, then he spoke the text at the head of this article. There is not any conditional doctrine in it; there is not any idea expressed or implied that a child of God can act so as to lose his soul, or barter it off for the material things of this world. These are self evident truths and mean what they say, and say what they mean. Peter was not denying himself. Of that we may be sure, and when he protested at the Lord's strict prediction about this denial, we may be sure that not a one of the twelve were any better than he. Every one of them were placing self in front. When Peter drew his sword and cut the ear of the high priest's servant (John 18:10), he was doing that that each one of them had asked permission to do (Luke 22:49). None in all the world of our day, have boasted any more of self and creature ability than did the apostles. These men were chosen at the beginning of the ministry of Jesus Christ. Who chose them? Did they have any remote part in making the choice effective? Not the least thing did they have to do with that choice. Now after they were chosen and called to follow the Lord, who qualified them? From the very beginning of the following the Lord, it is clearly demonstrated that they did not savor the things of God. Who did they put in front? From time to time they put themselves to the front. It was self that they put in front. It was what they thought about things regardless of what God has said hundreds of years before. We will not let anyone hurt you; we will die with you if need be; we will be found at the post of duty when all men have forsaken you, was the substance of their preaching, even before the Saviour's own face and in his hearing. Let us suppose that this had not been rebuked and stopped. Let us suppose that this self righteousness had the approval of Jesus. As it developed in them, what would they have preached? They certainly would not have preached Christ. If they had stopped the purpose of God from being fulfilled; if they had been able to stand steadfast in the face of death; if they had been able to maintain His honor and sovereignty by carnal weapons, then I ask again whose name would be preached? If they had been able to preach self before Jesus, and to have gotten by with it, what would they have preached before men?

As this was not the good and better way in the early days of the church; as this way was a way that savored not of the things of God then, just so, no more nor no less, is it not the good and better way now, and savorest not of the things of God. As it was put behind at that time, just so, no more nor no less, must it be put behind now. This self doctrine was wrong then to all of the disciples; it is wrong to all of them now. In just the proportion that the Saviour rebuked and brought them away from that self doctrine, just that much, no more nor no less, must it be done now. Let me say just here that at no time did the Saviour lose a combat with Satan. Each time that Satan was commanded behind, behind he went. Each time that self is displayed in the things of God, there will be a consumation of those very things. All works that are of the flesh will be consumed by the wrath of His

Spirit. This includes our sins of various kinds, but I am dealing with the text as I see it, and there is no sin any more rebuked than the self righteousness of the creature. "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet as by fire." (I Corinthians 3:13-15). This fire will always bring to nothing all the satanic works and in the end of things will always come off victor.

To follow Jesus has only one prerequisite. Self must be reduced to a nonentity; it must be denied, not in part, no not in the least, but in whole. Now this denial is not the work of self. No kingdom works against itself. Two kingdoms that are antithetical to each other will not accept the work of the other (Rom. 8:18). Peter has made a positive statement of selfishness. He will not turn on that work until he is turned. It must be in the One that turns his people that turned Peter (Psa. 85:4; Jer. 31:19). Only those that have had to deny themselves know anything of the intensity of this conflict; only those that have arrayed themselves against the work of God and had that work of theirs all put behind and expunged from further consideration in the kingdom, will know what is included in this denial. This qualifying of God's people goes on and on. There is no graduation in the school of grace. The way always leads upward to something higher. As soon as the denial is wrought in and worked out, then the taking up of the cross comes. It is from one thing to another, and all the steps of grace, and none of them of self. This cross is not a piece of lumber nailed to another; it is not something that we expect to be nailed to in body. It is not the cross of our brethren, nor our neighbors, no, nor of our Saviour. It is our cross. It is a cross that has been wrought in us. We could make a world as easy as we could make this cross; we could make another one as easy as we could refuse to take this one up. Now here are two things that self will not do. The third step is like unto it. There is a following Him. Self would not do these things, but self has been put behind.

It could not be said that Peter did not try to save his life. As often, and as hard as he tried, it was a losing proposition all the time. Let us turn from the technical point of this doctrinal to the experimental. Have you, dear child of God, tried to maintain your integrity? (Job 27:5). Have you fought with hands uplifted high? Are you able to sing:

> Against the God who rules the sky,
> I fought with hands uplifted high;
> Despised the mention of his grace,
> To proud to seek a hiding place.

If so, then you know something of the selfrighteousness that God's people must deny. And you know the ends you went to in order to hold on your way. Self wanted this; self wanted that; self wanted the other. That life you thought was worth saving; you thought you could save it. To that end that Peter and the disciples saved their life, just that much, no more, no less, must we save ours. And to the end and degree that they lost that life, just that far must we lose ours. Middle grounds will not do; a happy medium cannot be wrought out; any sort of compromise cannot be had. This saving must be done. We must first be selfish before we cannot deny self. This feeling of saving power must be felt before it can be lost. We must feel our selfish life, think well enough of it to save it, do all we can to save it, before we will know the sweetness of saving grace that will enable us to deny the only thing we have.

The disciples are Bible examples of this being done. Peter lost a life while trying to save that life. He tried to keep his integrity, and maintain his ways.

He did the best he could; he did as well as any man can do. Peter tried to maintain his life and his way in communing with the Gentiles; he tried to do so in the hour of crucifixion; but lost every time. But in the losing of his selfishness in Adam, he was given a life (manifestly) in Christ. The rule of self came to an end; the rule and dominion of the flesh became subordinate to the spirit; the life in Adam, which life he would have saved, he lost in service to the Saviour. But few know when this takes place. But few can tell when they were brought to lose their life and then to find their life again. In each case it was their life. They lost it in trying to save it.

Perhaps it will not be amiss to speak something concerning the word "whosoever". It does not seem that there should be any confusion and wonder about this word among Old Baptists, yet we know that there is a question as to why we do not use it more. The truth of the matter is this: We never make any reference to the work of Christ and the relationship of that work to his people, but what we use words meaning the same thing. Unless I am badly mistaken, the Bible never says that all of the Adam race can come to Christ. It does say emphatically that all those given Christ shall come; it does say that it is the will of God for them all to come. It does not say one word that God wills any to come except those given Christ. It does seem that this is enough to put to rest every child of grace. This coming to Christ is first predicated upon the will of God. It is his will that they come. IT IS NOT THE WILL OF GOD TO BRING THEM AGAINST THEIR WILL. At one time they lived to self and would not come to him, but in trying to maintain that life they lost it (as a reigning, controlling power), but were given to find a life that was in accord with the will of God. The psalmist David viewed this glorious day, and even felt its wonderful fulfillment, that the people of God would be willing in the day of His power (Psalms 110:3). He did not say, That some, or a few, or many of them, but he said thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power. The setting of our text embraces the power of God, but it excludes the power of men and devils, for it was commanded to get behind. In the natural life, Peter never did have any willingness to serve God. Let it likewise be said, once and forever, that no man or woman of Adam's race can do any better; that he or she must lose that life as the ruling influence, and be given to find a life in Christ that rules, thus making them willing to do whatsoever is at hand. It certainly was not against the will for Peter to stand up before Christ and argue his sanctification of the flesh; and had he remained in that condition, he would have preached it all over God's kingdom on earth. But he died to that; a man must die in order to live; he must die to self in order that the life in Christ follow.

There is no profit in gaining the whole world, if gaining the whole world means the loss of the soul. If a man gains the whole world, would the exchange of it for his soul be permissable? Could he do some trading with the Almighty? These questions have been answered when Christ was driven into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan. The world was offered to the blessed Redeemer on condition that he fall down and worship Satan (Matt. 4:8, 9). There is no liklihood of one of the chosen vessels of mercy gaining the whole world. It is true that they would, if they could, but since Jesus stood the wiley temptings of Satan and put him behind with all that he had to offer; and since we are justified before God by the imputed righteousness of Christ; and since he lived that law for us; and since he died to satisfy divine justice in our room and stead, there is nothing to lead us to believe that he will leave us to gain that which would cause us to lose our soul.

This whole world is nothing more nor less than having our way. It is nothing more nor less than self righteousness in full sway. It is nothing more nor less than having established our own righteousness. It is nothing more nor less than laying up treasures here on earth. Now let me say again, at the time realizing the triteness of my expressions, that this is what we all do by nature. We first aim to gain the goods of this world. We are going to have our way in that. Second, we are then going to get religion, and with it, get the whole adamic race with us, and go home to heaven and show what OUR SELF has accomplished. Now let me ask the same question that the Saviour asked, What will this profit, seeing that this is all to be met with the awful denunciation, Depart from me for I never knew you? And when the time comes for the mountains and rocks to fall on these, what will they give in exchange for their souls?

Will Peter be there? Will he be brought to this place with nothing but the world, and his soul hanging precariously in the balance? Will any of the disciples be there? Will any poor and afflicted child of Jehovah be there?—No, none of that. Nothing could be further from the lesson taught. But at some time or another as with the woman of Samaria, there will be a leaving of the earthern pitcher behind; there will be a fleeing for refuge; there will be a leaving of the fishing nets; there will be a suffering of afflictions rather the pleasure of sin; there will be a quiet submission to the powers of darkness.

All created things shall be in subjection to him that made them in the bringing of his people to victory. Peter and Jonah had to realize that they could not have their way. All of the apostles had to be taught and brought along the way of denial of self. They all had to learn that this world cannot be gained; that even, if he gives us to travel in selfishness a little way, that when we are converted, we see that we cannot gain the whole world, for that which we thought we had is taken away. Not one of these people shall fail to deny self; not one of them shall fail to take up their cross; not one of these shall fail to follow Christ; not one of them but shall try to save their self, and not one but what shall fail; not one that loses that life as a rule of action, but will find a life in Christ Jesus: and not one but shall have all the world taken away from them.

I do not see this now. I do not even experience it all the time, if indeed I have at all. I see many of the Lord's people that are as ready to condemn the doctrine as set up by Christ as were the disciples. I see many, many, and feel much of the time, a serving of self. But I am looking for a new day. I am looking for a land of endless peace and happiness. Unless I am mistaken, I am living under the watchcare of a Father who has ordained all things; who has foreknown all of his people; who predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son. This conforming is now being done in our lives. We are being weaned from this world. It is fast losing its gleam and attraction to us. Its treasures are all on the wane to us. More and more self is being denied, and just a little longer of waiting; just a few more rolling suns at most; just a few more days of sorrow and trial, and death shall come. We may go many miles in service to his people, and we may have the world and self removed in death, but be it short or long, we will lose them both in death. In losing them we shall one day, one blessed day, awake in glory.

—W. D. G.

Denton, Kentucky

Signs of the Times,

Dear Brethern:

I would like to clarify my position on the subject of secret orders, as I may be misunderstood by some of my brethern as to my position. I would like to do

this through the Signs, so that the Baptists in general might understand just how I stand on this subject. I hope you will publish this, correcting all mistakes.

First, I will say that I do not believe that Baptists should attach themselves to the secret orders or institutions of men, and unequally yoke themselves with such orders, which in general are composed of all manner of men. It seems to me to manifest the lack of proper faith and trust in God. I may be speaking too plainly, nevertheless it is hard for me to refrain from speaking the things which I feel and think to be the truth. I suppose I hurt myself with some of the brethern sometimes by being to plain in expressing my thoughts and feelings.

So far as secret orders are concerned, I have no fellowship for them at all, that is, the orders; but I do have fellowship for any individual whom I have reason to belive has an experience of grace. While I think and feel that we should counsel and warn against the brethern attaching themselves to these orders of men, yet I do not believe that we have any authority to coerce them by withholding or barring them from our fellowship. I myself am afraid to do that lest I call that common and unclean which God hath cleansed. We believe that God will bring them out himself at the appointed time. Many of our brethern belong to labor unions, which are not but institutions of men, and secret orders; and to me is no better than any other secret order. It is trusting in man for worldly or financial protection. God, by the mouth of Jeremiah says, "Thus saith the Lord, cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." (Jeremiah 17:5) If such is not trusting in man and making flesh his arm, I do not know what it is.

I believe God will protect his people and provide for them both spiritually and temporally, and I hope I have no trust in anything but him alone. I hope and pray that He will keep me separate from worldly institutions of ungodly men, for I am experimentally aware that I can not keep myself, and I know that if He should withhold his saving and preserving grace, I could but fall and follow the course of nature. None of us are so strong that we could endure the least of temptation if left to ourselves.

Paul in his epistle to the Corinthian brethern admonishes them in the following words: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Corinthians 6: 14-18)

I hope that what I have written will not be an offence to any one, but if my thoughts are right, I hope they will be of profit to some.

Yours in a blessed hope,
H. L. Rogers

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245 Locust Lane,
Danville, Virginia

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am sending three dollars to subscribe to the Signs of the Times for one year. I love the good writings that I have read in some of them at my mother's in Reidsville. I want to tell you that I have enjoyed your preaching many times; you speak in such a consoling manner, — such an humble manner, and with authority; it is comforting to hear you speak, especially when I

have an ear to hear.

But the thought is with me, am I one of the Lord's children, or am I not. I am so miserable, so vile and sinful, that I am made to quake with fear, and tremble so much of the time that I am completely mistaken in the whole matter, as I have not experienced this as plain as some: I don't have any definite time or place that any change came about. It is like the Scripture says, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit".

It is hard for me to try to explain anything except to write, as I have an impediment of speech and can't well be understood. I will never forget the wonderful sermon that Elder Griffin preached at the association this summer, about some of the Lord's people having impediment of speech. The sermon seemed to be directed to me alone. It doesn't matter here, but, Oh, how I do hope to speak plain in that beautiful City of God, where all will speak alike and be satisfied. This is my sincere desire, if I know my heart. I fear so much that I am deceiving them, but I am continually begging the Lord to restore unto me again the "joy of thy salvation". I have to be shown over and over again, as I am too weak to stand alone. He will support me if it is his will to do so; and if not then I am a complete failure.

I long to hear that blessed call, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." There is a beauty in this that I can't explain. I hate the sins of this world, and I hope that the Lord will keep my mind from them. I long for a reassurance of his blessed view, and to be kept from evil.

Brother David, I'm afraid that I am worrying you, but I wanted to write; I reckon I have made a failure of this also, as I am a stranger to everyone, even to myself.

Mrs. Betty Mae Bradner

EDITORIALS

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EDITORIAL

This seemed an opportune time to add a few additional remarks in regard to my piece in the September issue of the Signs. Since then, I have received a letter from a brother asking that I explain a little more clearly the "place" to which I thought the Saviour meant He was going to prepare for His people. I have answered his letter and have thought that if one did not understand, there might be many who did not understand.

I realize, first of all, the importance of a speaker or writer throughly understanding his subject, otherwise, he can not present in a cogent way that which he does not understand himself.

The word "go" means to move on a course; proceed. So Jesus meant that He was g o i n g to continue the work which He came to do, and this work

was on earth and not in heaven. This language was uttered before he was crucified, meaning, that He would proceed with the work which His Father gave Him to do until His death and resurrection. At which time, all things would be "Complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power."

The place which He was to prepare was on earth and not in heaven. I would not consider for a moment that there was ever any thing incomplete in heaven. But the grave was to be prepared for the release of its captives, and this was done in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The apostle tell us, "That we have redemption through his blood," and the shedding of blood meant death. Another thing brought about by His death was reconciliation, and Paul says that, "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." It was necessary that He go to where our bodies are consigned and come forth victorious from the grave, and there by, releasing that which was lawfully held, so that when He comes to this earth again to gather His people unto Himself, there would be no obstacle in the way.

The Lord said by the mouth of Isaiah, "I will make thy gates of carbuncles." In order to get relief from a carbuncle, it is necessary to release the blood. Therefore, through the death and shedding of the blood of Jesus He was relieved of His agony, and thereby opened the gates to, and prepared the way to heaven.

Not only has He prepared the way to heaven, but He has prepared a kingdom for His people which is not of this world. Jesus said to His disciples, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." This kingdom was in the purpose of God complete before the foundation of the world, but it was not in its manifestation. It would do a thirsty man little good to know that there was water in another room, if he had no access to that water. One sip of water would do more to satisfy the thirst, than all the knowledge he might have that there was plenty of water, but out of his reach. So the children of God are not satisfied to know that there is a kingdom prepared for His people, but they want some evidence that this preparation is made for them individually. If then, His kingdom is not of the world, the subjects of His kingdom, though in the world, are not of the world. Therefore, we see the necessity for a kingdom which is not of the world, for those who are not of the world, that they might have an abiding place.

I trust that however ambiguous the words "go to prepare a place" may have appeared in my piece in the September issue of the Signs, that this ambiguity will be removed by these additional remarks.

—H. O. N.

DOCTRINE——ORDER

In closing the One hundred and twenty first volume of The Signs of The Times we are constrained to mention the loving kindness of the Lord. Through his continuing grace we have been blessed to continue the paper to you.

Each year brings a certain number of trials, and problems to those who send forth your family paper, but above all things else we desire, if we know our heart, to continue, "steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship."

We have been favored with the support of the brethren and friends in our undertaking, and much charitableness has been manifested toward us. We desire an interest in your petitions to the God of all Grace. Please bear with our short comings, and remember the paper is yours, and we want each subscriber to feel free to write us at any time about any matter

in question.

We are indebted to our editor, and associate editors for their fine co-operation in the work. As we mingle with them from different sections of the country, we are thankful to almighty God for casting our lot with them.

The brethren and friends have been liberal in their contributions to the indigent fund. We have a goodly number not able to pay for the paper, and but for the kind remembrance of our readers we would be unable to continue the paper to them. Many of our readers are shut in and the paper is all the preaching they receive.

The paper actually belongs to you who read it, as it was willed by Elder Dodson to the Old School Baptist before he died, and no one receives any profit from it.

To those who have sent in subscriptions during the year, please accept our thanks. We notice that a number of parents have sent the paper to their children who are away from home. Some are across the waters in foreign lands. This is commendable.

Please continue your writing for the paper. If you feel to write your personal experience, do so. We depend on your writings to help in the work.

Now we come to the heading of the article. Doctrine—Order.

As we understand the doctrine to be the things taught in God's word, which is given by inspiration; so gospel order for a church is the observing of this doctrine in their practice.

Whether written or unwritten, gospel order flows from sound doctrine, and we might mention a few things wherein it is shown that sound doctrine, and the practice, or observing of it in the church are inseparable, and are to be considered as the doctrine and order of the Lord's house.

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself lest thou also be tempted." (Gal-6-1) "Confess your faults one to another, and pray for one another, that ye may be healed."

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you with all malice:

And be ye kind one to another, tendedhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

In the gospel order of the church there are a number of things set forth, that we are well favored if we are given to observe them as the order of the Lord's house:

"If a man neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us." As to keeping company with fornicators: "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." In reference to other sins it says, "but now have I written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or coveteous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat."

If these things are not the doctrine of our Lord Jesus, and Gospel order for his people, we do not understand the word. These things are but a few, but plainly show that Gospel order is embraced in gospel doctrine.

All church rules unless administered in love and kindness fall short of the word of God.

"Let brothery love continue;" this is not just in word, but to be observed in deed. Keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, and in being blessed to walk in the good ways of the Lord there is much joy, and peace to his people.

We have noticed a tendency by some of the brethren to divide doctrine and order. The word of God abounds with

proof that good doctrine, sound doctrine and gospel order go together. They are inseparable.

In the order of the Lord's house if we do not find a thus sayeth the Lord for our practice, it is evident that it is not gospel order, and must be called church order.

We profess to take the word of God as our rule of faith and practice, hence we should seek to conform to it in the order of the house, as well as the proclamation of it in our rules of order. In most cases the rule that would apply to brethren as individuals, in their relationship with each other, would also apply to churches, one with another, for the same relationship exists.

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf; but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil." It is not this doctrine and order inseparable. (Romans 16:17-19)

In Paul's epistle to Timothy he says, "As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine.

Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions rather than Godly edifying which is in faith: so do.

Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and out of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:

From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling. (I Timothy 1:3-6)

Also he exhorted to, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in so doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness.

He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings." It is clearly shown that in observing the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, in being blessed to practice what we preach, there is an adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour. (Titus, 2-10)

"Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed." Is it not manifest that this word to the servant to honor his master is part of the doctrine of God.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."

In Paul's commandment to the Corinthians to put away from among them, or deliver the fornicator unto satan for the destruction of the flesh, it was a part of the doctrine of the apostle. We are reminded that we are to judge things pertaining to this life, we are commanded to set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.

In the fifth chapter of Ist. Timothy it is said, "Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine." Hence we are well favored if we as the servants of the Lord have solemn things commited to us, inasmuch as the order of the house, or church is entrusted to his servants. Where there is a lack of ruling well, such as holding the ones whom we are commanded to with draw from, trouble always follows.

I find no record in the scriptures where any apostolic church ever chal-

lenged the right of another church to discipline her members, neither do we find them carrying their troubles to others, but a matter of controversy among brethren should be confined to where it starts, and not peddle it over the land.

Wherever churches have failed to recognize the right of a sister church to discipline her members it leads to endless divisions, as the disorder that starts the matter leads to others being contaminated with the trouble until brethren are forced to with draw from such practice.

In conclusion, may we be reminded that what is good doctrine, is good order. May God give us all to examine ourselves, and to remember that the same relationship that exists between individual members would apply to churches. If two churches are at variance, let them meet together, just the two churches, and try to settle the matter. If no satisfaction is obtained, call help from sister churches, and where the spirit of love and forbearance exists troubles will soon be settled. May we be given to remember that in God's word (his doctrine) there is a perfect rule to settle all differences. If we hold a practice, or order not founded in his word, it is man's rule, and if found in his blessed word it is the doctrine of God our saviour.

D. V. Spangler

"BE YE NOT UNEQUALLY YOKED TOGETHER WITH UNBELIEVERS" (2nd Corinthians 6:14)

The communication of Brother Rogers brought many things to mind, and gives us occasion to note a few things in connection with sunday schools and other organizations of men. We have sometimes been asked why we oppose these things in connection with Old School Baptists; and in reply have given our reasons. We feel now to state some of them for those who may be interested.

We feel perfectly willing, even desirous, that all men should have their own views on religious and other matters, so long as they do not create a disturbance in the social or political order of things which we are blessed to enjoy as free men; and would desire, as far as it is the Lord's will, that all men have the same freedom as we. It is right that we come under rule of government with our fellowmen, which is for our comfort and protection as we live in this world; but this is entirely different from any constraint or coercion in religious matters. That nation is happiest which has a just and equitable code of laws for social and economical protection and betterment of all its people, and which leaves all matters of faith or religious belief to the individual conscience of the people.

Should we therefore oppose in our own conscience and practice certain things which seem right to others, we do not desire to circumscribe their right to the same privilege. Our opposition will go no further than to assert our own understanding of what is right or wrong in matters of faith; and that, according to our understanding of things which the Lord has revealed of himself in doctrine and practices which he set up for his people in their worship of himself. Beyond this roctrine and practice we would not go.

From our own experience and observation (confirmed as it is by the Spirit of Truth in the Scriptures), we know that the unrenewed hearts of men cannot receive and believe things beyond their realm. That is, men know the things of men by the spirit of man that is in them. (1 Corinthians 2:11). Which means, that his capacities are limited to his own environment,—limited to the things which the spirit of man in him comprehends, and believes, and practices. At the same time, we know that this same man (having by nature only the spirit of man) may be brought to the knowledge and understanding of things beyond his natural environ-

ments, by the effectual working of the Spirit of God in him; which working of the Spirit is called a being born again. This new birth is accomplished in every subject of the grace of God,—in every person who was chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began. And this new birth has this effect: "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." (read the second chapter of 1st Corinthians).

It is evident, therefore, that before the new birth men know nothing of the things which God has freely given; but afterwards they know these things and speak of them in the wisdom of the Holy Ghost's teaching. It is foolish for unregenerated (not born again) men to try to teach the things of God to unregenerated people, or to urge their teachings on those who have been taught of God. We can witness that they either deny the plain teachings of the Scriptures, or so give a private interpretation to them that they meaningless to those who know the truth. They teach the things which "seem right to men", and men will receive them, for they seem right to them also. We were partially brought up under such teachers, and knew not but that our salvation was in our own hands to accept or reject. We knew nothing, and heard nothing, of being dead in trespasses and sins; we heard nothing of the election of grace, and that salvation was by grace alone. To accept Christ, join the church and be baptized, was the sum and substance of the way of salvation.

If this is still the scope of the teaching in the schools of men, we want no more of it. We still have reason to believe that this is their doctrine, for we yet doubt that the Ethiopian can change his skin, or the leopard his spots. Yes, we have learned far different, and we do not desire that our children be taught things which are contrary to sound doctrine, for we know that our children, or any other persons, can learn the truth only in the same school we have been taught. Not only is this so, but we ourselves cannot cause our children to see and know the truth, however much we may strive. What was true for us, is true for them: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." We think it right and well for all to know the Scriptures in a literary and historical sense; but let us not teach that the way of salvation is other than it is. The truth has ever been revealed from heaven in the hearts of the Lord's people, and we are content that it should remain as the Lord said by Jeremiah, and confirmed by Paul in Hebrews 8:10-11: "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." etc.

Now, as to other institutions of men as they apply to the church. We have every reason to believe that the church was the only organization which was established by Jesus. And he established in on "this rock", and we are assured that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. No other helps were needed. The Lord established it, and brings all its members into the knowledge of all things in connection with it, and chooses his servants to confirm it and comfort its members in their pilgrimage in the world. "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

All other organizations, whether religious or semi-religious in their character, are organizations of men. In the economy of all things, these have their

places in and among men of the world. But a christian is a follower of Christ only, and, as they are given grace, they will follow Him in his commandments. They are to, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ", and, "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world. are ye subject to ordinances, (touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments of men?"

Those who are truly followers of Christ cannot follow two masters, lest they love the one and hate the other. They are not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers, but are to come out from among them, and be separate. They are not even to walk with their own brethern who walk disorderly. We, therefore, cannot see how anyone can walk with Christ on the one hand, and believe his doctrine, and at the same time walk with some organization which may have some sort of religious formulas at varience with Christ. Those who may have become connected with these organizations before being brought into the knowledge of the truth in Christ, very readily know the difference; and should as readily give up their affilliation, if they desire the fellowship and privileges of their brethern in Christ. We would not urge them to do this, but simply state the fact, and wait until they are of a ready mind to dis-associate themselves.

Now as to moral influences: We are certainly highly in favor of the moral uplift and social betterment of all men; and we know that many organizations have moral teachings, which are good as far as they go, but we must discountenance that which is right part of the way, and wrong the rest. That which is moral is fine, but that which holds up before unsuspecting people a way of salvation, based upon the labors and works of men, and is false in fact and in principle, we cannot go along with.

We are of the opinion that moral teaching by precept and example in the home has far more influence and effect than that which may be had from any other source. Examples of modesty, truthfulness and sobriety set by mothers and fathers in their homes and lives are fixed far more indelibly in the minds of children than anything we know of. The home is the very seat of moral influence in the natural minds of people. Immodesty, lying and insobriety lead to many crimes; yet many homes set these examples. We wonder what an ill dressed mother unshamed in public may expect from her daughters of future generations; or what parents may expect if they raise children almost unrestrained, and whose examples are for evil rather than for good. These things pertain to the morality in the lives of men in nature, and may be termed the best that is in human nature.

How good it is to see the children of God as they show forth the fruits of the Spirit in their walk and conversation. With John, "I rejoiced greatly that I found thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father. And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandent unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another. And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it."

—J. D. W.

Seattle 99, Washington

Dear Elder Spangler:

I am enclosing $3.00 for another year's subscription to the Signs. I surely enjoy reading it, especially the letters.

I was privileged a few weeks ago to be at a meeting in Sister Parks' home

in Chehalis. Elder Jefferson spoke so well on the good old truths, which cheered us up. I was also privileged with others to go to visit our Pastor, Elder Fisher, who is very sick. Elder Jefferson was there, so we had singing and service to help cheer him.

The following verse has comforted me many times:

"His love in time past forbids us to think
He'll leave us at last in trouble to sink;
Each sweet Ebenezer I have in review,
Confirms his good pleasure to help me quite through."

May the Lord bless you all in your labor of love, is my prayer.

Mrs. J. W. Cameron.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

He is a very good speaker, you say, a very good writer, but he fails to cover the whole subject which he is considering. He does not reach out in every direction in which he might go, and does not go exhaustively in any one direction. Whenever I read what he has written I can at once see many things which he did not seem to notice, and many thoughts are suggested to my mind which he did not express, though they are very clear and prominent. Yes, but if he had not written as he did, you would not have seen those things which you say he did not reach; if he had not spoken what he did, those thoughts which he did not express would not have occured to your mind. His writing and speaking are not exhaustive, but suggestive and comprehensive. Some good writers and speakers exhaust not only the subject, but the reader and hearer also. They go so thoroughly into the subject in hand that they leave nothing for the reader to think out by himself. They give him plenty of things to remember, but nothing to stir up his mind into activity.

It is good when you are sent off by the writer or speaker into new fields of thought, which he has not entered himself, but only pointed out to you. It is good to be set to thinking on your own account while you read or hear, so that more thoughts are coming into your mind than are seen on the printed page or heard in the sermon that is preached.

Elder Gilbert Beebe was one who had such a rare gift as this, and I have known many such among our preachers in the last forty-seven years. When I had to preach at associations, I loved to follow Elder Beebe. His preaching stirred up my mind in such a way into activity, and brought so clearly and powerfully to my mind my own experience, touching my heart and filling it with a sense of God's love, and suggesting so many more things than he said, and opening up the depths and heights and power of the word of God's salvation, that when he was done speaking it seemed to me an easy thing to preach. The very atmosphere seemed to me to be full of the power and comfort of the gospel.

The relation of an experience of grace is not preaching the gospel, but every gospel sermon does relate more or less of an experience of grace. The word preached by a sent servant of God touches the experience of the same word in the soul of the hearer. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to him who has felt that power in his own soul. There must be at least one believer present, one who has felt the power of God unto salvation, before there can be a gospel sermon. One may point through a window to a glorious scene in the distance, but if there is no one to follow the direction of his hand and see the prospect, the pointing will mean nothing; but when there is one present with eyes and a desire to see what the hand points to, it means much

to him as he looks upon the prospect to which his sight is directed. There must be both a preacher and a hearer in order that there shall be gospel preaching. The believer may see much more in the prospect than the one who directs his sight, but he will see in it nothing conflicting, nothing that is not there. He will hear only the words spoken by the preacher, but they may mean much more to him than was in the mind of the one who preached them, as they may have touched a wider and deeper experience of the power of God in his soul. To the believer the gospel is always the power of God unto salvation in such measure as he has experienced that power. (Romans 1:16)

(Elder Silas H. Durand in FRAGMENTS)

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT FOR ELDER LANDON A. HARRIS

WHEREAS, it was pleasing to our gracious Father to remove from the scenes of this life since our last session, our highly esteemed and greatly beloved brother and faithful laborer in the vineyard, Elder Landon A. Harris, and **WHEREAS,** Brother Harris came among us for many years laden with the gospel of peace, preaching to our comfort and edification, and to the praise and honor of our God, and

WHEREAS, his genteel and kindly manner endeared him to all who knew him, and he was always welcomed into our homes and the churches of this association, and **WHEREAS,** Brother Harris' godly walk and conversation, and his earnest contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, is greatly missed by us since his passing; and since we shall no longer have the benefit of his presence amongst us, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that we bow in humble submission to our Father's will, and give Him thanks for such a gift unto his church; and for the gentlemanly qualities with which our brother was endowed, and which he exercised in his dealings with all men; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that we express our deepest and heart felt sympathy to Sister Harris and family, and to our brethern whom Brother Harris served as pastor; and that this resolution be spread on our minutes, and a copy sent to Sister Harris, and that it be published in the Signs of the Times and the Old Faith Contender.

Done by the order of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting while in session with the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, October 16, 1953.

Elder John D. Wood, Moderator
Arthur L. Carter, Clerk
Grover C. Spindle, Asst. Clerk

ORDINATION OF ELDER D. C. DAVIS

At the request of Bethel Church of Predestinarian Baptists, of Riffe, Washington, the Hopewell Church of Stockton, California, sent Elder T. R. Jefferson and Deacon Wm. Echols; and the Little Flock Church, Bakersfield, California, sent Elder L. L. Wilson, at our regular meeting time, the third Sunday in May, 1953, for the purpose of enquiring into the qualifications of Brother D. C. Davis for the gospel ministry, and to ordain him if found qualified.

The presbytery was organized with Elder Jefferson, Moderator, and Deacon Wm. Echols, Clerk. The church delivered Brother Davis into the hands of the presbytery, who proceeded as follows:

After enquiring into the qualifications of Brother Davis, and being fully satisfied, Elder Wilson offered prayer with the laying on of hands; then the charge was delivered by Elder Jefferson. Brother Davis was thus ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry.

Elder T. R. Jefferson, Moderator
William Echols, Clerk
Rosa Coleman, Church Clerk

OBITUARY

WINFIELD SCOTT JOHNSON

Dying at the unusual age of one hundred years at the Wanda Nursing Home in Kingston. New York, Winfield Scott Johnson ended his long, honorable, and useful career September 26, 1953, and leaves as his mourners his daughter Miss Lottie, several other relatives, and a legion of friends in Kingston and vicinity places. This remarkable man was born March 17, 1853, in Pine Hill, New York. Early in life he united with the Methodist church, but ever remained a true and loyal friend of the Old School Baptist cause though never casting his lot with those of that faith. In 1876 he was united in marriage to Miss Emma Elmendorf, who died in 1937. One daughter Miss Lottie was the fruit of that marriage.

Mr. Johnson with his wife went to Il-

linois and followed the avocation of farming there for several years before removing to Kingston where he lived for fifty years, successfully following the trade of a house painter, also dealing in real estate. His honesty, industry, genial ways, appealing personality, with a happy combination of thrift and generosity, made a profound impression upon his legion of friends and acquaintances. His home life was ideal. Since the death of Mrs. Johnson, Miss Lottie ministered to her father's needs with all a daughter's love and devotion until ten days before his death when it became advisable to remove him to the nursing home where he passed away.

The funeral services were held at the Carr funeral home in Kingston, September 29, the writer officiating and using the seventeenth verse of the second chapter of Revelation as a text. The interment was in the Wiltwyck cemetery in Kingston. Mr. Johnson was wonderfully preserved physically and mentally until after he passed the milestone that marked a century of life, witnessing meanwhile the wonderful progress and the great changes that have left their impress upon the history of mankind.

(Elder) Arnold H. Bellows

MARY ETTA TAYLOR

In memory of my precious mother:

God, in his infinite wisdom, has seen fit to remove from our midst my mother, Mary Etta Taylor. She was born January 26, 1870, the daughter of Allen Hamilton and Abigale Smith Hamilton, of Sea Level, N. C.

She united with the Primitive Baptist Church Saturday before the fourth Sunday in March, 1888. She was faithful in all things pertaining to her Master's house, her family, relatives and friends. She was a mother in Israel, and sound in the faith. We have great hope that her spirit has gone where Jesus is, to enter into the joys of her Lord. Oh, the place, the happy place where Christ and his own shall meet in everlasting bliss: No time of parting, nor sad farewells!

The funeral was preached by our pastor, Elder Eddie Humphrey, at Bay Sea Level Church. Burial was beside her husband, Joseph E. Taylor, in Styron's Cemetery, beneath a beautiful blanket of flowers to await the coming of the Lord.

Left to mourn her loss are five children: a daughter, Mrs. Lula T. Mason, of the home; four sons: Harvey Taylor, and family, of Sea Level; Ralph G. Taylor, and family, of Sea Level; Mitchell Taylor, and family, of Atlantic, N. C.; and Alton Taylor, and family, of Durham, N. C.; also, one sister, Mrs. Allen Taylor, of Sea Level; twelve grandchildren, six nieces and five nephews.

Her smile—ever lighting her sweet, youthful face — an outward expression of that eternal affection for and unfailing generosity to all, will long be remembered.

Best of all, Time is a great consoler. When we lose those we love, we feel that the sun has set for us, and that forevermore the earth will be shrouded in blackness. We find no cheer in anything — no rest in anything; our horizon ends in a grave. No words, no sympathy can lighten our sorrow; nothing can help us but Time, for it has been mercifully ordained that the wounds and pains lessen with time. It brings us fresh interests, and our duties to other people give us work that absorbs us, and so by degrees, it turns the grief that rends us into sorrow that can be borne. Blessed be Time and God who heals us.

Approved by Bay Sea Level Church in conference, September 26, 1953; a copy to be sent to the **Signs of the Times,** and to **the Old Faith Contender.**

Mrs. Lula T. Mason

MRS. PARTHENIA L. DISHONG

Mrs. Parthenia Lake Dishong passed away quietly, as she lived, September 6, 1953 at her home near Needmore, Pennsylvania. She was the daughter of the late Samuel P. and Lydia Lake of this community, and was born February 20, 1867; thus making her stay on this earth eighty six years, six months and fourteen days.

She was united in marriage to Clayton Dishong on February 17, 1885, who preceeded her in death nineteen years ago. To this union were born two children: Wilbert M. Dishong and Lola Ruth, wife of Lester W. Mellott, both of Needmore; also there are three grandchildren and six great grandchildren. Mrs. Dishong united with the Old School Baptist church at Sideling Hill thirty-nine years ago, and always filled her place in church when health permitted. She was always ready to lend a helping hand in time of need. She was cared for in the home where she always lived by her daughter and son-in-law, and all was done for her that kind hands could do. She was in ill health for the past two years.

Services were conducted from the Sideling Hill Baptist Church, with Elder John Smoot officiating in the absence of her pastor Elder John D. Wood. Interment was made in the church cemetery by the side of her husband.

Written by her daughter,
Lola Ruth Mellott.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 122 DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1954 NO. 1

A PROPHECY

The world will soon to ruin go,
With all its boasted pride,
But God who rules the world below
Will surely save His Bride.

The Gentile world will surely end:
By prophets so divine;
And Jews will flourish once again
On Zion's mountain clime.

When Jews begin to gather home,
We know the time is at hand
That God will surely gather them
In their own native land.

The Gentile world is drifting on
As fast as time can roll,
Back to the state she once did stand
In ancient days of old.

But surely the Heavenly Bride
Will all be gathered in,
By the fullness of the time
That God has set for them.

We see the churches growing cold,
And very few attend;
But surely faith is still on earth,
And will be to the end.

(Elder) Randolph Perdue.
(written 30 years ago)

Redwood, Virginia

Dear Elder:

I am sending you a Prophecy written thirty years ago by our beloved Elder Randolph Perdue, of Rocky mount, Virginia. I feel well persuaded that he had clear foresight in writing this poem.

Elder Perdue, who is and has been moderator of the Pigg River Association for thirty-five years, is past eighty-five years old. Will you please publish this prophecy in the Signs.

J. A. Perdue

Evansville, Indiana

Dear Editors and readers of the dear old Signs:

Dear brethern, if one like I know myself to be can be permitted to thus address you as brethern; yet there is something in me that makes me desire the love and fellowship which is among the Old School or Primitive Baptists. When I am graced to meet with them, it seems that I can feel that sweet love, which is not like any other, flow from breast to breast among them, even to me; and not only there, but when I am on my lonely watches I am made to rejoice and praise God who saw fit to give me an eye to see and an ear to hear; and I hope I understand.

If it pleases God to give me a mind, and direct my pen, I will try to write a few of my thoughts on a Scripture which I have tried to speak from in the past. It is found in Revelation 3:20: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

The word, "Behold", as the sound of a judge's gavel, means to pay strict attention, or a fixed mind. Who is he that speaks? It is Jesus, the Christ. Who is he speaking to? Brethern, he is speaking to the subject of grace, or His people who were given him in the covenant before the world was. I am at home alone at the present time, and just a moment ago I heard an alarm at the door; and of course, I went in answer to my neighbor's call. But, should I have been deaf, and no one else here to answer, the poor fellow would have gone away empty. This is speaking naturally. Natural men receive not the things of the spirit, neither can he know them,

for they are spiritual; one must be born of the spirit before he or she can know them. Therefore, this knock is spiritual, and he that believeth is born of God, and he is given spiritual understanding. We have no more to do with our spiritual birth than we did with our natural birth. When born to our mother and father of the flesh, we knew nothing; but it was not long before the manifestation of a knowledge of love of that mother, who answers our cry and every care, begins to grow and be manifested, and we receive the fruits of that love unto knowledge. So it is with the Spirit, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof but canst not tell from whence it cometh or whether it goeth; so is every one that is born of the spirit." (John 3:8).

Dear ones, the Bible plainly teaches that God has an elect people. I do not know who and where they are, except I do hope that I know a few of them who are called in my section, the old hardshells; and brethern, the doctrine they preach is despised, if not they also. The Scriptures are written for their (the elect's) learning; so the words, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock," are not addressed to the whole Adam family, as the world is teaching today, but to this elect and chosen in Christ in the covenant of redemption before the world was. But in my city and community the riches of men's splendid work is being preached, leaving the God of all Grace to receive of them.

It would be well to read the entire chapter, and see the contents of this writing to the churches of Asia, for they had departed from the ways of righteousness. The nineteenth verse reads, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent." So, dear ones, do we not see to whom the, Behold I stand at the door and knock, is addressed? Not to dead sinners, but to those who are dead to the law, and are alive to the power of God through his grace. "Be zealous therefore and repent". Are not these words a comfort to those who feel themselves to be the chiefest of sinners? Surely we must be born of the spirit before we are made to realize that we are sinners: so if we are without chastisements whereof all are partakers, then are we bastards and not sons.

I know that the world is teaching that the words of the text are addressed to the human race as a whole; but it is not so. Who can hear except he first be given an ear to hear! Who can see in the darkness! This Scripture does not say, if any man **WILL** hear my voice. The will, so far as man is concerned, is left out; therefore only he who is born of the spirit is enabled to hear and open the door. When that knock comes, it has a perfect sound different from all other sounds: it is clear and easy and pleasant to the ear, and you cannot help but answer and open the door. You are forced to say, "Lord, I am a great sinner. What wilt thou have me to do? I am unworthy of thy notice. Have mercy on me, as wretched as I am." You feel the yoke of your burden loosed and you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; and you praise the God of all grace from whom all blessings flow. Why rejoice in a Saviour's love? You rejoice because your deaf ears have been opened to the sound of the Saviour's knock, and your eyes have been given to see the light of the glorious truth, and understand the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone.

Now let us consider the twenty first verse. "To him that overcometh" etc. I fail to see any place for conditionalism in what is written here. We read in Revelation 12:11, "They overcame him (the dragon, or satan, or devil) by the blood of the lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death." So we can rejoice with the great Apostle who said, "I am confident that He who has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." It is Christ

who by the operation of the Holy Spirit, begins the good work, and He will carry it to completion.

Just one more thought and I will bring this to a close. In the twenty-first verse there are two thrones mentioned. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." What is a throne? Naurally speaking, we would say it is a place or office where a king sits over his subjects — a place of beauty and splendor. So Christ Jesus is in his throne and is king over his people, and the true church is his kingdom here on earth. It is written that he is head over all things to the church; and we know that some sweet day (no man knows when) Christ will deliver his kingdom unto the Father and He also will be subject to the Father, who puts all things under his feet, that God be all in all.

Therefore, he that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit sayeth unto the churches. When bowed in humbleness before the throne of grace, I ask to be remembered in your prayers. An unworthly sinner; yet I hope I have a hope.

Wade Y. Chandler

Bivins, Texas.

To the Signs of the Times,
Dear Beloved:

You will find enclosed money order for the renewal on my paper. I enjoy reading the wonderful writings of the able gifts that the Lord has enabled to write, and although I feel unworthy to address them as brethern, I do love them as brethern and for the doctrine that they contend for. Sometimes I have a little hope that it is the same love that is spoken of in the third chapter I John, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." I am made to feel that this is a different love than that of nature, for it is the love that has been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.

I am sending you a letter which was handed me by Deacon L. S. Hill, which was written to him by Elder R. W. Rhodes. I enjoyed it so much I would like for all the household of faith to have the pleasure of reading it. I had the pleasure of attending Elder Rhodes' association and spending the night with him; and I spoke to him about the letter and told him I would be glad to see it in the Signs; and he told me to do as I saw fit.

I also had the pleasure of attending four other associations; and all the preaching was in one accord. It was wonderful to see brethern and sisters gathered together from different parts, and to see the love manifested toward each other. Those that we had never met before, when they began to speak of the wonderful things of God, we felt that same manner of love toward them as toward those we had known all our lives. Sometimes, by the grace of God, I feel that I can rejoice together with this beloved people; then again I get so low down in the valley that I am made to wonder why did I rejoice, and am made to cry for that sweetness that I may rejoice again. Then again I am enabled to say, Praise ye the Lord, O, my soul; all within me praise His great and good name.

I must stop here. If I could write the things which I hope the Lord has given me, it would be a great joy.

A poor sinner, saved by grace,
(Elder) T. A. Wall

February 6, 1952
Lillie, La.

Mr. L. S. Hill
Bivins, Texas
Dear Brother Hill:

I received your very highly appreciated letter today, with enclosed money order for $13 from the Churches; while I very much appreciate their kindness, yet I had not even thought of it, and neither do I feel worthy of their kindness and thoughtfullness towards such an unworthy sinner as I feel to be among God's people.

Glad that you and family are well as

usual. We are well for people our age, I guess, at least I feel that our portion of the goodness and mercy of God is much more than we deserve. Hope all the Bretheren, Sisters and friends are well and enjoying the rich blessings of our Lord in the light and the leadership of His Spirit to their comfort and consolation, as that is worth more than all things else without it.

I would like to be at your District Meeting, the Lord willing, and I might get to come since it is on the 5th Sunday, as I don't know of another appointment at that time. I am expected to go to the Church at Lawn, Texas the 5th Sunday in March, the Lord willing. You and family come to see us anytime you can, we are always glad to have you visit us, our homes, and our Churches.

Now as to your request, I feel very insufficient to deal with this great subject, but I feel to know that the Lord is able to cause us to see it and write it if according to His will. Now the quotation; "Behold all souls are mine as the soul of the Father; so also the soul of the Son is mine, the soul that sinneth it shall die." (Ezeekel 18:4) The word soul is often indicative of the whole or entire being of man, as in the case of Adam in creation, it is said that God breathed into his nostrils, and he became a living Soul, also in the case of Noah and his wife and his sons and their wives, 8 souls were saved by water from the flood that destroyed the rest of the human family. We can see that these Scriptures do not refer to that living entity, that in many other instances is indicated, as in the case of the Parable of the certain Rich man who tore down his old barns, and built greater barns and said; "Soul, Soul, take thine ease", but God said, "Thou fool this night thy soul shall be required of thee." (Luke 12:19:20.) Many places show the same meaning.

So I think that we are to recognize both applications of the scriptures on this subject. Yet, I believe that man was created in the Image of God, and in that there are three in the triune God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, there is also three componant parts of Man, the Soul, Body and Spirit; and I think this is what is meant where it says man was made in His image and likeness. And inasmuch as there are three divine personalities of the triune God, there are also three components or parts of Man. Even though it is clearly taught that the Triune God consists of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost, yet there is just one God, these three are one; the same is true of man. He is just one, and it takes all these components to make up man.

When Adam transgressed in the Garden, in my way of thinking, the entirety of man transgressed, and the entirety died that death in trespasses and in sin, —Soul, Body and Spirit, because God told Adam in the day thou eatest, thou shalt surely die. Adam and Eve were two Souls that did die, and were driven out of the Garden, but they both heard the voice of the Lord God in the cool of the day, which voice I believe, quickened them into divine life, in Spirit, and in that sense of the word, to the extent of their Soul and Spirit, they never did, nor could sin anymore, because St. John says, "He that is born of God doth not committ sin, because His seed remaineth in Him and He cannot sin because He is born of God." (I Jno. 3:9) Yet we are not to take it for granted that they were quickened above and beyond sin in Body or flesh; no, in no wise, because Paul says, "If Christ be in you the Body (not the Soul) is dead because of Sin, but the Spirit is life because of rightousness." (Rom. 8:10.) Read also the entire 7th and 8th chapters of Romans.

Now Adam and Eve's Bodies never did die (in the Garden of Eden), naturally speaking, but they died in the sense that God has said, died in sin. But when God saw fit to quicken them by His Spirit in Regeneration they were made alive in Soul and Spirit, but their Bodies were still dead in their nature in

trespasses and in sins, and will be till that glorious day takes place at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Read Roman 8:21, 22-23, which shows what I am trying to set forth. Well, one might say to me, that part of the man is dead and part of him is alive, that is true in the sense we are talking about. I would also call attention to the same fact, with the Personalities of the God in a Triune sense, the holy and immaculate Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary, died, and was buried in Joseph's new tomb, while Divinity still lived, and raised up Jesus in Body after the third day.

So, if the Triune God could and did live on while the Son in the flesh was dead, then cannot, and does it not stand to reason, that man who was created in God's image and likeness, could live in one sense, in part, and be dead in another at the same time. Romans 8:10, shows the body still dead in the sense that the Spirit is life. This to my mind most certainly shows this very condition, and even though it is very mysterious, yet it is a whole Bible truth.

But as Jesus died and was not suffered to continue in that death, so the children of God, who are born of the spirit of God, will be caught up and changed in a moment in the twinkle of an eye, into that Glorious Immortality in the likeness and image of Jesus Christ our Lord. This is the Change that Job is speaking of where He says, "All of my appointed days will I wait till my change comes." Job was a Regenerated, born again Child of God, and insofar as he was born of God, he did not and could not commit sin, because he was born of God. But the language of Paul in another place shows why Job was waiting for another change, that change from corruptable mortality, and carnality of this fleshly nature, as Paul says in Romans 8:28, where the Bodies are to be redeemed, and changed into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God.

Now as to Matthew 10:28, Jesus says, "Fear not them which kill the body but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell." This shows that the soul is at least separated to the extent that even though man is suffered to kill the bodies often, yet there is that Soul which none but God himself can destroy in Hell, which to me, shows that the Soul and Body are two of the three componant parts of man, and I believe that God's children, when they are quickened into divine life in Regeneration are at least two thirds alive, and one third dead, in that the Body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of rightousness. Roman 8:10.

No man can kill that which God has made alive in this sense; and, on the other hand, no man can make alive that which God has imposed death upon, as in the case of death in trespasses and sin, as Adam and Eve and all their posterity died in the Garden of Eden. But God did quicken Adam and Eve of His own will and power and without any help, and clothed them with skins, which showed the Redeemer being offered for them, and in the morning of the Resurrection, they will all be quickened in Body, and made like the blessed Saviour, Soul and Body and Spirit which completes the Glorified Image of the eternal God of Heaven and eternal glory, the same as if there had been no sin, nor transgression at all. How I do long for evidence that I am one of them who is made alive in Soul and Spirit, as they are the same ones who shall wear the image of the Heavenly as they have borne the image of the earthly Adam.

These things are mysterious, but how experimentally and scripturally true they are. The Soul and the Spirit of man are not material substances, as is the body that was formed of the dust of the ground. At death, we find from different scriptures that both the Soul and Spirit depart from the Body, as in the case of James, where He says; As the body without the spirit is dead so is faith without works, being alone. (James 2:26) Another place where this same truth is manifest is Luke 8:55, where it

is said that she who had been dead, her spirit came again.

There is also scriptural intimations that the inward life and entity of soul of man also departs from the body at death. Read Luke 12:20. And there are many others that will prove this same position. Now I am sure that these things are deep and mysterious, but I think we should be willing to search for them, as the Lord enables us to do so, even though we know we cannot, and will not fully understand them, while still here in this dark and thorny maze of sin and darkness and trouble.

On one occasion Paul related an incident that He could not tell whether He was in the Body or out of it, but, at any rate, it was when he was caught up to the third Heaven, and saw things unlawful to utter. (2 Cor. 12:2-5.) Read it; it shows that there is recognition and reality in what ever state he was in at the time, no matter whether in or out of the Body. So there is great mystery and wonderment about these things, as I want to call to your mind when we sleep naturally, we close our eyes, and yet the Lord can and does show His people great and marvelous things, beyond description, without any effort on the part of the body.

Now the last passage you ask about (I Thess. 5:23) reads as follows: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly (which means entirely, all parts), and I pray God your whole Spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." This, in my way of thinking, means that it will be literally so in a manifest sense, as the Lord Jesus Christ made full and complete sacrifice, and fully justified them in His righteous and cleansing blood on the cross, when He died for His people; and their Bodies are the last of this triune creature to be made manifest to be blameless, as Paul says in Romans 7:25, I thank God through our Lord Jesus Christ, so then with my mind I serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." So, in this last text that you ask about, I believe that it refers to that time when this mortal will put on immortality and this corruptable shall put on incorruption; when this natural body shall be made a spiritual body. This, I think, is the Prayer that Paul prayed, that all three of the trinity of man be preserved blameless.

Now this takes care of what I have tried to say unto this point. I am going to say that there is a second death that is to be experienced by all whose names are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life. (Rev. 20:15.) But we find that none of those Paul prayed for were in this number, but they, as I believe, were (or will be, as we can understand that better) preserved blameless in Body, as well as Soul and Spirit, against whom the second death shall have no power (Revelations 20:6); because they have part in Christ, and in that regeneration of Soul and birth of the Spirit, and in that eternal and immortality of the glorified Body of Jesus Christ our Lord. If you will look at Revelation 21:8, you will find this second death to be the casting away in that lake of fire of all whose names were not written in the Lamb's book of life.

So the whole and the entirety of man, is and is to be redeemed from sin and death, and be blameless before God in Love, as Ephesians 1:4. The difference in God's Children and those that are not in this coming and mighty incident, is to live wholly again in Righteousness; and those of the Non-Elect, are to be raised up to die the second and eternal and horrible death of eternal misery, pain and suffering. But God's Children are to escape that second death and are to live Soul and Spirit and Body in God's eternal and glorious presence, and the others are to die forever and ever more, that is, they are to suffer eternal death in Hell and torment.

I know that there is a great and seemingly strong argument that the wicked are annihilated, and cease to exist, and are burned up and destroyed, but all such speculation is wholly unauthorized

in the Scriptures, because we find Jesus himself, saying in Matt. 25:46, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the rightous in to life eternal." Another place where this is shown is in Mark 9:44; and it also is Jesus' language, "Where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." Read also the 43rd verse of the same chapter. There is abundant evidence that the wicked will not cease to live in one sense of the word, and in another sense of the word, they will not cease to die, which is mysterious and unexplainable in a natural Adamic wisdom sense.

We find in Rev: 14:9-11, it says in part, "And they shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever." Be sure to read this last reference in full; and there are many other places in Holy writ that agrees that the wicked eternally die, and that they are still living and tormented in Hell. The sense of their death that is under consideration, is that lake of fire, where they are to be cast and where their worm of a guilty conscience never is destroyed, or put out of existence, nor annihilated.

But the children of God after they are born of the spirit and after regeneration, (despite the fact that body is dead because of sin) their Soul and Spirit lives; and Jesus proves this where He said: "He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die." (St. John 11:26) He certainly did not mean that they would not die in body, but it most surely does mean that there was some sense that they would not and could not die. So my solution of it is that those who are born of God, and whose souls have been made alive, shall never die. There is one and only one sense in which the Children of God do die, and that is they die in body. I do not mean that there are not many and varied deaths that the children die in their experience. Paul said he died daily. Yes, experimentally we faint and die from the highly exaulted state of mind that the Lord lifts us up to at times; and often we are left in that low land of sorrow and death experimentally, but the Soul doesn't die. We may sometimes feel we are gone, but only the Soul that sineth shall die (second death). Those who are born of the Spirit doth not commit sin. Then the flesh, nor the carnal mind is not born of God. Therefore, we will die corporally, as James says, "When sin is finished it brings forth dead." So we are sinners in the flesh, as long as we live because I John 1:8 says, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and there is no truth in us. . ."

So I am sure that there are many angles and phases on this great subject that I have not, and cannot explain; and maybe I don't understand any of it, but I hope what I have written is in harmony with the Scriptures; and the experience of the children of God. I know that this subject is one in which lots of our dear bretheren differ on some points, but the life of the Children of God in spirit is like that of Christ in them the hope of Glory, which is indicative of that Immortality of Christ. And at the coming of the Lord, that Immortality will be that of the whole Spirit, and Soul and Body. But now this body is sinful in its nature, and it makes us mourn and weep and sigh because of our felt sense of sin.

May God bless you and family, together with all the household of faith. Pray for us. Write again and come to see us when you have a mind and opportunity. Give my best regards to all the brethern. I certainly hope that Brother Tommy is improved in health.

Cast the mantle of charity over all my weaknesses, and mistakes, as I am sure that this article is like I am, it has many imperfections, in expression if not in the entirety.

Your very weak and unworthy brother in hope of eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

Lawrenceville, Georgia

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Pursuant to an invitation in the August issue of our paper for readers to write some good material for publication, this humble correspondent now come confessing a desire to do so, and at the same time readily and willingly admitting that it is not an inherent power of this poor creature of the dust to do so unless our God is in the matter for good.

Of late my mind has been exercised upon some scripture found in Paul's epistle to the church at Galatia. One verse reads, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's **seed,** and heirs according to the promise." In the first place, we would like to note that, while God has promised many things, the promise referred to is not one of many promises, but is one promise — **the promise.** Indicating that all other promises must stem from it and become subsequent and subordinate to it. There is not a single blessing of our God's abounding grace toward his children, whether it be in the past, present or future, which was not then locked up and preserved for futurity in the covenant which God made with Abraham: in which He promised that in Abraham shall all families of the earth be blessed. (Genesis 12:2) And there is not a single recipient of this abounding and saving grace of our God who is not, in a spiritual sense, a seed of Abraham; otherwise he is not entitled to this inheritance.

This, at first thought, may appear untrue; yet it is true in a spiritual sense. In Romans 9:8, Paul shows that, "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the **children of the promise** are counted for the seed." Also, in Romans 2:29, "He is not a Jew which is one inwardly; and cirmumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." So then, we can deduce nothing else than that when a member of any family, or nation, or denomination upon the face of the earth, be he a natural Jew or natural Greek — member of, or foreigner to, the natural Commonwealth of Israel, is circumcised of the **heart** by the Word of God; (which is the sword of the Spirit, wielded and directed by Almighty God to the cutting away of all fleshly desires, ambitions, and confidences, and to the eternal forsaking and denying of them in principle); and by this same irresistable power is made to loathe himself and to see himself as totally unworthy of the mercy of God, nevertheless secretly hoping for it; and when this same Spirit testifies in conformity and unison with that some time little, yet ever lively hope within, then that person has become manifestly a spiritual Jew, and is, therefore, **heir** to the promises of God. (Romans 8:17), "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ ——". Aliens may reform, but God's work is not a reformation, but a transformation and a translation, — a new creature.

As the Mosaical law had only the shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things to come (Hebrews 10:1), so was the Abrahamic covenant and the Jewish nation, when considered historically, but a shadow which the unborn Christ and his coming kingdom was casting before him. A shadow will never be found where there is no intervening substance. Isaac was the seed of Abraham, and we might say that figuratively he was the shadow of Christ, but he was not the substance.

Jacob likewise, and Joseph, and Moses and David, were shadows of the Perfect One which was to come; yet they themselves were not perfection. So then, although all these were the lineal seeds of Abraham, it was in neither of them, nor any of their immediate sons, that all families of the earth should be blest. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the

law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." (Galatians 3:16-17). Then, now and at no future time, the Mosaical law can never supersede the **Seed,** even Jesus Christ; in whom God's promise to Abraham has now been fulfilled. The Abrahamic covenant, as well as the Mosaiac covenant, have both been fulfilled in Christ; and He, therefore, has superseded them. He was the substance who was casting these shadows. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and hath given him a name which is above every name." etc. (Phillipians 2:9). Abraham and his circumcision must now bow; Moses and his law and ceremonies must now bow, for the Sun of righteousness has arisen with healing in his wings, and all shadows have fled away.

Dear brethren, our past blessings which we have received in Christ, we may recall; our present we may recognize; but what of Eternity? Brethren, first John 5:11, says, "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son." "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Is this not your hope?

If this is sound, you may publish it; if not, I would not desire you to.

Yours in hope,
J. B. Dunagan

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233 Monroe Avenue,
Camden, Arkansas.

Dear Elder Spangler:

Enclosed you will find check for which please send the Signs to Mrs. M. Moran, Thornton, Adkansas, one year, and give me credit for the balance.

Dear Brother, there is a subject on my mind which I desire to express my views on. This subject has occured to my mind many times in recent months; it has to do with the three dispensations of time, but I do not know whether I shall be able to write my thoughts in such a way as to be of any worth or comfort to any of the household of faith. If you think not, just cast it into the waste basket and forget about it.

To my mind, the first dispensation was through all the years of the righteous dealing of our blessed Lord with the Adamic family because of their manner of living. God looked down and saw that the wickedness of man was so great that it caused grief and repentance. (I think there is a vast difference in grief and repentance, and indignation and wrath.) So our God brought destruction by the flood of waters because of grief and repentance.

Now let us think some on the second dispensation, and of the righteous dealings of our God with the people of the earth in giving them promises in a conditional and legal covenant; and in sending prophets and warning his people what should be their lot, or final end, if they did or did not keep his commandments; all of which were so plainly given until there was no reasonable excuse for them not to have kept them, and obeyed His righteous laws and commandments.

So now, at the end of the second dispensation, having poured out His holy wrath and His righteous indignation many times and in different ways in his hot displeasure against a stiffnecked and rebelious people, until in the end when his righteous wrath and indignation was satisfied to the extent that the time now comes for him to make a new and different covenant, which should be govened in an entirety different manner than that of the first and second dispensations: the first bringing grief and repentance, and the second bringing wrath and indignation. Now comes the third and last time, or dispensation, which is to be ruled and governed by **LOVE.** Now this is so great and so wonderful that I realize that it is too deep, to high and too broad for my little mind to comprehend its vastness and its superlativeness, and its sweetness. But, dear reader, may we be given that living faith to look forward in hope, by grace through faith, to have a portion of the great inheritance at the end

of this the third and last time.

My only hope is that when grief and repentance, holy wrath and righteous indignation shall have been finished, and their ends have been met, that then I shall be given an inheritance in that eternal covenant of love beyond this vale of sorrow and tears.

I realize that if any of the blessings of God's everlasting love are to be merited by any righteousness in any way imaginable other than the free and atoning blood of the only Son of God, and his righteousness imputed unto the heirs of heaven who were chosen in Him before the world was, I would have no reason to hope. But feeling to see, if not altogether deceived, all of the purposes, decrees, foreordination, election and predestination being fulfilled in the last dispensation and covenant of eternal love and mercy, surely it will not be long until our blessed Redeemer shall come with all the holy angels, to gather together all his precious jewels from the four winds of the earth, and separate them, the precious from the vile. Oh, how will it be with me then, is the most vital and most important longings of my poor soul!

Dear ones, may God give us courage, and more courage, and faith, yea, a living faith without wavering, in the precious promises given to the poor tempest tossed and contrite hearted, whom the world has ever looked on, and will continue to look on, with shame and contempt.

But let us now think a little about the final and last change or dispensation; when He who is eternal and without variableness or the shadow or a change, has fulfilled by the **one great sacrifice,** all His purposes and decrees, even all his holy wrath and righteous indignation, and all his holy law of justice has been fulfilled and forever satisfied, then there will be no more need of repentance, nor grief, nor wrath, nor indignation, and times and dispensations of times will be no more. Then in eternity the ransomed of the Lord shall, with all that heaven and immortal glory shall afford, rejoice in the perfect, equal and undivided praise to Him to whom all praise is so richly due.

May his free and saving grace keep us humble and at each others feet, ready and looking forward to His coming,—who's coming draweth near, is the humble petition of the least of all, if one at all, of God's little servants.

(Elder) J. T. Everitt

Mount Vernon, Texas.

The Signs of the Times,

Dear Members and Readers of Like Faith:

The following comments were not written by me for publication in the Signs. When I finished them, however, it seemed to come to my mind to mail them to you, and you may or may not use them — it is all as you see fit. I don't know that any of the comments will be of any value to anyone, but thinking upon them has meant much to me.

It takes natural things to bring out the spiritual things. Jesus so often addressed his brethern and followers as little children. In thinking of this, we know He gave his life for them; and we parents often feel within ourselves that we had rather suffer pain, shame or humiliation than have one of our children do so. He set the example of suffering and self denial for us to follow. His baptism and burial to me are illustrated in the Scripture that says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." (John 12: 24).

Now this we know, we must fall from our exaltation of self-importance and self-ability if we walk with him. We must be covered or buried if we bear fruit. The corn of wheat could not have born fruit were it not covered. This covering to the child of God, in order for him to bear fruit, is the righteousness of God our Father. The dying must also take place before he can bear fruit. We must die to the wants and wishes of this

world. Inasmuch as the wheat spoken of is dependent on the bountiful Father for its transformation from a lonely grain into a plant that is fruitful, so must the child of God. He cannot convert himself from one thing to another. He must fall to the ground as the grain does when it is planted; he must be covered as it is covered; and must die as it must die, and be raised as it is raised, before fruition takes place.

To the natural eye the children of God are not all alike, — some have more of this world's goods, some more able physically, and others more comely in appearance, but to the Father they are all alike: all having the same importance and are all the same size. They all walk the same road, having the same experience. Paul wrote so much for our comfort in speaking of his thorn in the flesh, and his outcry of, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death." He spoke of "dying daily". In Romans 8:36 he said, "For thy sake we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Oh, that we could sometimes know that we are one of these; then could we say with James, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations: knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." (James 1:2-3). But we cannot know; we must live by hope, which is the anchor of the soul. We must look through the glass darkly: we cannot see all as yet. Hope is that which urges us on from one day to another, for we are all "saved by hope," (Romans 8:24); "rejoicing in hope," (Romans 12: 12). We are not to live by actual knowledge, or we would have nothing to hope for. I feel we all look for an assurance that we are one of His elect.

I would to God that I have suffered some of the pangs He suffered when he was here, then could I count it all joy. I know that in me dwells no good thing, and if I have ever done a worthy deed, it was not my flesh that did it, for "in my flesh dwells no good thing." "Vanity, vanity, all is vanity." Any good done by this person of low estate was motivated and carried out from beginning to end by the Spirit of One who does all things well.

The least, if one at all.
Neva M. White,

EDITORIALS

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EDITORIAL

LOOKING BACKWARD AND FORWARD

Those who have had grace to look back over the old year, and, no matter how many were the trials and disappointments, have said in their hearts, "The Lord was with me all the way"; and no matter how many were the seasons of rejoicings, have confessed that they were undeserved, these are they who look forward in the New Year with a calm assurance that all shall be well.

Though each may have had many experiences of being "emptied from vessel to vessel", and the pathway was not always lighted before them in faith, yet

there was that within them which said, "Thy will be done."

So, to come to the beginning of another year, is not a matter of bravery to face the unknown, but rather a matter of grace that we have implicit trust that He who has determined the coming events, will surely perform them; and to know that whatsoever our individual parts may be in them, we shall be preserved; so that with the end of another year, we may say again, "The Lord was with me all the way."

Or, should our earthly journey be completed before, it shall be far better to have endured the storms, and to be safely in port.

Thus we would greet our brethern again at the beginning of the New Year, 1954, and the One Hundred Twenty second year of the Signs of the Times. We desire most of all that the Lord's people everywhere have the spirit of praise and thanksgiving for all His mercies, confessing all the while that His blessings are all of His grace.

We are glad that the Signs continues to be of comfort and edification to the brethern, judging from the communications and the number of new subscribers. For these things we desire to give thanks and praise to the Lord alone, for if the Editors were not sustained of Him they could not continue.

May the Lord give all needed grace to the brethern and friends.

J. D. W.

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THE FIRST PRINCIPLES OF THE ORACLES OF GOD

(Heb. 5:12)

The title of this article is part of the 12th verse of the 5th chapter of Hebrews. Before meditating upon the principles as recorded in the first part of the 6th chapter of Hebrews we desire to understand the meaning of the expression. May God bless us with the leadership of His Spirit that we may be edified in this attempt.

The FIRST PRINCIPLES are the primary fundamental phases of the truth which compose the foundation upon which all further developments must be founded. They are the first experiences of the work of the Holy Spirit. The gracious act of God in translating us out of darkness into light, converting our souls, establishing our belief, setting our feet upon the Rock, changing our desires, causing us to confess Him as our Saviour, etc., are the FIRST PRINCIPLES to be experienced, understood, believed, and relied upon. This work must be, and is, perfectly wrought out by God and instilled in us before it pleases Him that we should further grow in Grace and knowledge of our Lord and our place in running the race that is set before us. These FIRST PRINCIPLES so equip us that when the time comes for us to "put our hand to the plow" that we look not back but persevere in hope upon the path that is set before us — looking forward. What God does is forever done. There is no need of any of it ever being redone.

"Therefore leaving the **PRINCIPLES** of the doctrine of Christ, let us **GO ON** to perfection; not laying again the foundation of (1) repentance from dead works, (2) faith toward God, (3) the doctrine of baptisms, (4) laying on of hands, (5) resurrection of the dead, (6) eternal judgment. (See Heb. 6:1) These principles enumerated have already been perfectly laid in the foundation of our experience. An attempt to

lay them again would be an attempt to crucify the Son of God afresh, which would be an open shame. Away with the idea that anything God has done for us has to be redone! If it were possible for one of His children to fall from these FIRST PRINCIPLES it would be impossible to renew them to repentance unless Christ be recrucified! "We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ **ONCE FOR ALL.**" (Heb. 10:10) He was crucified **ONCE** for all God's people and **ONCE** for all times. These FIRST PRINCIPLES have to be delivered ONCE to the Saints.

Before dealing directly with these first principles let us consider what is meant by the ORACLES OF GOD. Things uttered, spoken, or revealed by God are the oracles of God. When God spake it was done; when He commanded it stood fast. These first principles then to be considered are things that God has uttered, spoken or revealed. They are not things that man has found out by searching, but things that God is pleased to reveal to His children. It may be necessary that we speak many times before we are given a hearing, but God speaks ONCE. He spoke and this earth came into existence. He said, "Let there be light", and there was light. He spoke natural life into creatures. He speaks spiritual life into His Children. When it pleases Him to establish His children in these FIRST PRINCIPLES by laying the foundation it need not be laid again. God speaks to His people in all things.

The earth, the sun, the moon, and the stars bespeak the wisdom and power of God. Each one so precisely moves in its destined path so minutely timed that there is no variation. Has God ever spoken to you through these great things and caused you to stand in awe, admiring Him in them? I have heard people, in relating their experiences, tell of these things as well as the trees of the forest, the flowers of the field, the birds of the air,—all were singing praises of Him.

He speaks through insects of His providence. I have stood in amazement and watched bees as they went from bloom to bloom in gathering their food; thinking how God has provided for man's food in using these insects for proper pollination that a greater harvest from these plants may result. God speaks! He speaks in dreams, visions, circumstances, troubles, and the Scriptures. Have you not had a dream that when you were awakened and caused to meditate upon it that you felt surely that it was God speaking directly to you? God spake to Joseph in a dream (Gen. 37: 5-6). Sometimes He reveals himself to you in the dead hours of night when the faculties of your mind and body are inactive in sleep. Sometimes when you are wide awake naturally, going about your daily activities, it pleases God to appear to you in a vision. You see something with the spiritual eye so real that you forget what you are doing and you are completely absorbed in meditation on the picture revealed. Sometimes you behold and hear Him in all your environment: All creatures you see; all acts you behold; all words uttered; all thoughts of your mind; — **ALL** sometimes bespeak God. Sometimes He speaks to you in troubles. Have you not been calmed in the midst of the greatest of your troubles and made to realize that God used these troubles as chariots upon which to ride to you and speak sweet peace to your troubled breast. Then is when you can truly thank Him for trouble. He speaks directly to you through the Scriptures. I have tried to read and meditate upon the Scriptures many times when it would be mere formality and the words would be dead and without meaning. Sometimes portions of scriptures so arrest my attention and the words read seem so alive and forceful — penetrating every fibre of my being — that I am made to say, "God is speaking to me."

God speaks to us through His Gospel ministers, through our brethren and friends, and through their deeds of kindness to us. Have you not watched people all around you drinking joyfully words that fell from a preacher's mouth

when it seemed dry to you? At other times it seems the words are being spoken especially for your benefit. When the minister's exhortations are piercing and affect you so much, it is God speaking to you. Sometimes a brother in private conversation with you makes a remark that is indelibly stamped on your mind that you never forget —it seems God spoke through this brother to you. A casual expression of appreciation spoken to you by a friend so encourages you that you are caused to lay aside all things that discourage, and go on. A deed of kindness rendered you by a friend, in the face of the fact that you feel to be so unworthy of his notice, stimulates you with new courage and your hope is renewed. Many times I have been so greatly depressed and felt to deserve a frown from every one, that a smile from the face of a friend directed to me raised me up and gave me new courage. Could this be God speaking to me through the smile of a friend? This line of thought seems to have no end so must conclude it by saying, God speaks to us through **ALL** when and how it pleases Him.

We wish to meditate now upon the FIRST PRINCIPLES in the order given in Heb. 7:1. The first is **repentance from dead works.** Repentance is a sorrow for anything past which denotes a change of mind. Repentance is a turning from one desire, work, or trust to an opposite one. Repentance in this case consists of being convinced that these dead works are sin; sorrow for them; confession of them; hatred to them and renunciation of them. Repentance being a change of mind, denotes a change from the fleshly or carnal mind to the spiritual mind. When the spirit of natural man — the carnal mind — is wrought upon by the Spirit of God there is a change of mind, or true repentance. I am persuaded that there is a godly repentance and there is a fleshly repentance. Sometimes we may mistake one for the other. Let us contrast them. One is God-given and the other is the work of the flesh. One is the daily exercise of the true Christian, which never vanishes; and the other is temporary. One is the result only of a sense of danger and fear of wrath and the other is a true mourning for sin and an earnest desire of deliverance from it. One produces a change in heart and life and the other can be only an outward appearance of a change. The recipient of true God-given repentance denies himself and looks to God for his strength; and the one actuated by fleshly repentance trusts in himself to effect a reformation that he might have a higher standing with those around him. May God bless us to discern between the two. Now, let us contrast **DEAD WORKS** and that to which you are turned. You are turned from the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21) to the fruit of the spirit, having crucified the affections and lusts of the flesh. (See Gal. 5:22-24.) Your desires have been changed from outward, formal, lifeless ceremonies to trust in the inner-workings of God's Spirit in effecting an experience of Grace. You have been turned from depending upon self to depend upon God. Your desires are turned from fulfilling the lusts of the flesh to desire to do the will of God. You are turned from sin unto holiness. The process of change from death unto life is the first of the FIRST PRINCIPLES experienced by the child of God.

The second of the FIRST PRINCIPLES is **faith toward God.** You repent from dead works to faith toward God. This faith is God-given and abiding. It causes you to look forward — not backward — because, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen." This substance is the essential part, or characteristic, that God has endowed you with which causes you to look beyond this vail of human flesh, and inspires you with hope of something better in the future. This faith is the evidence of something super-natural in you that cannot clearly be seen because of the darkness of wretched sinful flesh. How you do yearn to come into its full pos-

session and reality! You must have this substance and evidence before you can truly believe. You cannot believe anything you want to believe. You must have sufficient evidence. I may want to believe I have ten thousand dollars. If my banker should mail me a dulpicate deposit slip showing that ten thousand dollars had been deposited to my credit and it properly signed with his signature, it would be the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. I would have the evidence that it was there for me even though I had not seen one dollar of it. I would hope to realize it by procuring with it the things I would need. This faith we are talking about is far superior to the faith in the wealth of this world. This faith is toward God; not toward money. Do you have faith in God? To the extent that you trust in your own ability and righteousness, you do not have faith in God. If you have been made to have no confidence in the flesh and realize that all goodness must come from Him, I am persuaded that you have faith in God. God, the **Father,** chose His people and predestinated them unto salvation; God, the Son, accomplished their salvation for them by fulfilling the law and paying the penalty for sin with his blood, arose again and is now interceding for them; God, the Spirit, regenerates, reveals, calls, comforts, and edifies His people as they sojurn here, and will finally be the means of quickening the mortal bodies into eternal Life in the resurrection.

The third of the FIRST PRINCIPLES is the **doctrine of baptisms.** These baptisms are the different phases of the ONE baptism. The baptism that is essential unto salvation is "By one spirit are we ALL baptized into ONE BODY." (I Cor. 12:13) This one body is Jesus Christ, as we see in Romans 6:3, "Know ye not that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" Primarily we were baptized in him when we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Experimentally we are baptized by the Spirit in many experiences of the different phases of the doctrine of baptisms. John preached the BAPTISM OF REPENTANCE, which is being immersed in God-given repentance. (Mark 1:4) He BAPTIZED IN WATER all who brought forth the evidence that they had been baptized with repentance. There is the BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY GHOST and the BAPTISM WITH FIRE spoken of in Matthew 3:11. The fire of God's vengeance burns the dross and purifies as silver. The Holy Ghost baptizes the soul in regeneration and will baptize the body of His saints with immortality in the resurrection. The BAPTISM OF SUFFERING is experienced by God's people. (Matt. 20:22-23) BAPTISM IN WATER is a figure of the baptism of Christ into death and the trust of our lot in the same and has its saving effect. In 1st Peter 3:21, we read, "The like FIGURE whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, (Not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." The GOOD conscience is the HOLY GHOST conscience which is in contrast to the natural conscience. The good conscience always results in the proper answer. When the good conscience directly commands an individual to follow Jesus in BAPTISM IN WATER, the result is the individual is baptized and he feels that he has done the bidding of his Master.

The fourth of these FIRST PRINCIPLES is the **laying on of hands.** Laying on of hands denotes imputation of power and authority. God has promised to "turn His hand upon the LITTLE ONES." (Zech. 12:7) After one has been converted and made to become as a little child, God "Upholds him with His hand." Ps. 37:24. One is made to humble himself "Under the mighty hand of God" that he may be exalted in due time. (See I Peter 5:6) Job was brought into close contact with the hand of God and was made to exclaim, "The hand of God hath touched me." The hands of God are the hand of judgment and the

hand of mercy; the hand that kills and the hand that makes alive; the hand that wounds and the hand that heals. He kills and makes alive; He wounds and heals; He renders judgment and extends mercy. You are besieged with these reverse experiences in your experience of grace.

The fifth of the FIRST PRINCIPLES of the oracles of God is **eternal judgment.** One phase of judgment is decree. You are made to realize the decrees of God are eternal. God made His decrees in eternity embracing all things and events and no variation or change can come to frustrate one of His eternal decrees. Chastisements inflicted on saints is another phase of Judgment as seen in I Peter 4:17, "Judgment must BEGIN at the house of God."

This phase of judgment is everlasting in the experience of God's people as long as they tabernacle here, for we never get beyond this in this life. Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, or shall be delivered according to the wisdom and equity of God, and through the infliction of punishment on God's Son. (Isaiah 1:27). God's judgment is not temporary but eternal. It never has been changed and never will be. What He judges is eternal. The decree can never be altered. There is no higher court for a new hearing.

The sixth FIRST PRINCIPLES is the **resurrection of the dead.** Those who are dead in tresspasses and sins are raised up from performing dead works to depend upon the performance of the Spirit. The dead are raised to newness of life when they are translated out of darkness into His marvelous light as a result of this holy calling. The soul has been quickened and made new which we might term as the resurrection of the soul. This is the first fruits of resurrection, or the earnest of the inheritance. This first experience gives you hope of the same thing being done to your mortal bodies. The making new of the soul causes you to realize the infirmities of the flesh, so that your desire is that it be immortalized in the resurrection. The holiness that is infused into your heart in the resurrection of the soul causes you to see how sinful are the deeds of the body, that you anxiously desire its immortalization, which shall be experienced in the resurrection. The brilliance of the light experienced in the first fruits of the spirit makes you to see how gross is the darkness of your finite being so that you pray for it to be made new.

Space nor time will permit us going into these things as we would like, but may God bless you to glean a few thoughts from this to His praise, is the prayer of one who feels to be less than the least of all saints.

— E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

FAITH

There is, perhaps, at the present day as much said about Faith, and the term is as frequently used in modern theology as any other word used in our version of the scriptures; but it is generally used in a sense entirely foreign to that of its legitmate scriptural meaning. Webster, guided undoubtedly by the decisions of learned (so called) Doctors of Divinity, defines the word thus: "Belief; the assent of the mind to the truth of what is declared by another; the assent of the mind to the truth of a proposition advanced by another; belief, on probable evidence. And, in theology, the assent of the mind or understanding to the truth of what God has revealed. Evangelical, or justifying, or saving Faith, is the assent of the mind to the truth of divine revelation, on the authority of God's testimony, accompanied with a cordial assent of the will or approbation of the heart," &c. And this is about the view which is entertained by a very large majority of the religionists of the present day. No idea seems to be entertained by Webster, nor by the

learned theologians, from whom he borrows his theory, that the mind of man is a carnal or fleshly mind; that it is at enmity against God—not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Indeed, the prevailing doctrine of all will-worshippers and carnal religionists is that regeneration, the new birth, and all that is involved in the christian experience, is only to give some new impulse to our old carnal faculties—a new direction to the old carnal mind, and a new inclination and direction to the affections and lusts of the flesh. To be born again, in their estimation is, as Watts says, to

"New model all the carnal mind,
And form the man afresh."

This is a fundamental error comprising the ground of difference between the religion which is of the world, and that which is of God.

The worldly system, supposing that man is a free agent, possessing all requisite power to will and to do that which is neccessary and indispensible to commend him to the favor of God, and to secure immortal glory beyond the grave, labors to influence the carnal or natural mind by moral suasion that it would be advantagious and profitable to yield assent to such theories as tradition point out as pious, and calculated to secure the favor of God. The selfish inclinations of the unrenewed heart are appealed to, and such incentives, motives and allurements are presented, as the carnal mind can appreciate, to draw the corrupt, depraved, deceitful and desperately wicked propensities and imaginations of the mind into a new channel, without any radical change or implantation of any new principle. Under this delusion Infant and Sunday Schools, Bible classes, and all the machinery to them belonging, are employed to bend the twig the way they wish the tree to grow, without observing that the nature and character of the twig is in no wise changed by such restraints. Without heeding the immutable standard set up by Christ himself: First make the tree good, and the fruit will be good. A twig growing out of a corrupt tree, will partake of the corruption of that tree, incline or bend it which ever way we may. In all the Scribes, Pharisees and hypocrites detected and rebuked by our Lord, we have exemplifications, of the carnal mind religionized by traditional influences. The influence may multiply converts to Judaism, or any other work-mongrel religious persuasion, and it is employed with the same results at the present time, as when the self-righteous pharisees encompassed sea and land to make proselytes to their faith. Now if the assent of the natural mind of man to the force of testimony is the faith which accompanies salvation, why is it so called? What new principle does such an assent develope? Had not the natural, carnal, depraved mind of man in its most degraded condition the requisite faculty to yield an assent to any demonstrated proposition, set home by the force of overwhelming testimony? This theory, if it can be established, will be of great service to the whole Arminian world; because it calls for no more grace now to make a christian, than was formerly required to make a Jewish proselyte.

But let us not be deceived—God is not mocked; however plausible or palateable this theory may be in the estimation of men, it cannot stand the test of eternal truth. The scriptures are regarded by us as they have always been by the church of God, as an infallible standard of our faith, both as to faith as a vital principle in the hearts of God's people, and the doctrine of the gospel embraced and comprehended by that faith. Then let us turn to the law and to the testimony; for if any speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. The scriptures, instead of representing faith as a creature of ours, expressly define it to be the gift of God. "Unto us it is given in the behalf of Christ that we should believe on him." We are bound to give thanks unto God always for you brethren, beloved of God, because God hath from the beginning, chose you to sal-

vation, through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth. For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. And we are not only assured that faith is not of ourselves, but it is the gift of God, but we are also told that Jesus Christ is both the author and the finisher of faith which is unto life. Furthermore, we are informed that saving faith is the faith of the Son of God; it cannot, therefore be an assent of the natural mind. Paul says, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved me and given himself for me." It is also distinguished from all other kinds of faith as that faith which is of the operation of God.

The inspired Paul, having analyzed poor fallen human nature, sums up its legitimate productions in striking contrast with the fruits of the Spirit. Now, the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revilings, and such like. That is, all the other emanations from the flesh are like those above specified, and faith is not found among them. "But," he continues, "the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance—against such there is no law."—Gal. v. 19—23. Here we find gospel faith enumerated among the fruits of the Spirit and in direct opposition to the works of the flesh.

Another inspired Apostle, treating on the origin and power of the gospel faith, informs us that it is born of God, and that it overcomes the world. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."— I John v. 4. If a faith originating in us, or born of the flesh, could overcome the world, it would show that the world is not equal to itself, that it contained in itself, and of itself, a power superior to, and capable of overcoming itself. This faith, being born of God, must be animated by the life and immortality and power of God. It is vital, but its vitality is of God, and not of the creature, hence it can and does overcome the world. The 11th chapter to the Hebrews presents us with many examples of its power to overcome the world. After many illustrious examples of the power of faith in the patriarchs and prophets, says: "And what shall I more say? for time would fail to tell of Gideon and of Barak, and of Sampson, and Jephthae, of David also, and Samuel, and of all the prophets, who, through faith, subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of the fire, escaped the edge of the sword, and out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to fight the armies of the aliens, women received their dead, raised to life again; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection; and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned; they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword, they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted and tormented. Now this faith and all its power, is in this very connection, ascribed to our Lord Jesus Christ.— Heb. xii. 2.

As the faith which is peculiar to the children of God, is in all respects essentially different from the faith of men and of devils in regard to its origin, its nature, its vitality and its power, so it is equally distinct from theirs in all its workings, operations, perceptions and associations.

That of men is perfectly manageable by them, and they boast that they can exercise it at their pleasure; and why should they not? If they have given it

being, they ought, of course to be able to conrtol it, and to have much, little, or none of it, as they please. But the faith of God's elect, being born of God, and his special gift, has a divine power over his children in whom its divine power is developed. They cannot exercise it, but they are exercised by it. That faith which is of the flesh, works by fear, and corrupts its possessors with all manner of delusion, causing them to believe a lie, and to suffer the consequences of their delusion. But that faith which is born of God, works by love, and purifies the soul, or him who is the happy recipient of it, for it enables him to discriminate between truth and error. Hence while the Arminian will-worshipper requires the preaching of terror, wrath, fire, brimstone, and such as is calculated to excite the carnal passions of the flesh and produce fear and terror, the very melody of heaven, breathed forth by the Spirit of the gospel, and the melting strains of the gospel, which set forth the eternal, immutable, and transforming love of God, calls forth the active workings of the faith of the saints. And while the faith of the world inflates the pride of those who are under its influence, leading them to boast of their works, their piety, their zeal, and their benevolence, that faith which is of God, leads his children to worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Jesus Christ, and to have no confidence in the flesh. The perceptive qualities are equally dissimilar. The faith of the flesh looks for signs, like the Jews, and to seek after wisdom, like the Greeks; but that which is of God, is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen; and it qualifies them to look not on the things which are seen, which are temporal; but directs them to the things which are not seen, which are eternal. It qualifies them to see the kingdom of God, and makes them experimentally familliar with the things of the spirit, which are hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes.

The faith which is of the world has its associations with the theories, doctrines and commandments of men, the delusions, heresies, idolatry and spiritual wickedness of high places; it gives its possessors a place with the enemies of the cause of God and truth, and identifies them with those who stoned the prophets, crucified the Son of God, and slaughtered the apostles of the Lamb of God; holding then their place under the delusion that they ought to do many things contrary to Jesus of Nazareth, and that they do God service when they persecute his people and oppose his truth. On the other hand the faith of the gospel bring those who are born of God unto the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God. They have one Lord one faith and one baptism; they are but one body, having one spirit, even as they are all called in one hope of their calling. The faith of Christ in his people, is inseparably associated with all the other fruits of the spirit; as love, joy, peace, long-suffering, &c., and the end of this faith is the salvation of our souls. So far is this faith from receiving any support from the flesh, it is constantly opposed by the flesh and every power and faculty of the flesh; but as it overcomes the world, it shall ultimately triumph over all our corruption, doubts, fears, unbelief, and over sin and death—and bear the saints away from every opposition to that divine abode in glory where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.

(Editorial of Elder Gilbert Beebe
February 15, 1858)

OBITUARIES

E. HENRY ROUNDS

Deacon E. Henry Rounds, of Salisbury, Maryland, was born February 15, 1867, and departed this life June 29, 1953, at his home. He was married to Miss Laura Powell, November 4, 1891; and to this union were born six children, five of whom survive, as follows: Mrs. Emma Benson, Mrs. Lida Twilley, Harry E., George, and Joseph Rounds.

Funeral services were conducted by the writ-

er from the Hill and Johnson Funeral Home, Salisbury, Maryland, on Thursday, July 2, 1953.

Brother Rounds was appointed deacon of Salisbury Old School Baptist Church soon after being baptized in 1918, and filled the office of deacon well, and purchased to himself a good degree and a great boldness in the faith.

About ten years before his death he was stricken with diabetes, which caused amputation of both legs necessary; and for these many years he was confined to his home, and mostly to his bed. He was most faithfully cared for by his widow, who survives him. He was as free from murmuring as any person I have ever known. When one visited him, he met them with a smile; and was truly an inspiration to his brethern and friends. Surely the Lord gave him much patience to wait upon Him. Surely the cause of truth has lost one of the Faithful, yet we believe he has fallen asleep in the arms of one from whom none ever wake to weep.

To all his family, who were loyal and thoughtful to him, we would say, weep not as for one who had no hope. May God give grace to all to say, Thy will be done.

Following this sketch is printed Brother Rounds' experience, as published in the Signs of the Times, October, 1918; which will give us a spiritual picture of our brother.

D. V. Spangler

Dear Elder Durand:

I feel like writing a few words to you. I felt for years that I was wandering in the wilderness. I was trying to find some way of myself. I could not see the need of being baptized. I feel as if the Lord found me and led me out while I was wandering about. Monday morning after the baptism of Brother Will Holloway on the fifth Sunday in June, the words of John, tenth chapter, part of first verse, came to me very forcibly: "He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." Immediately afterward the words come: "My yoke is easy and my burden is light."

I believe the Lord showed me I had nothing to do but stand still and know that salvation is of him; I had become as a little child. Then I was made willing and glad, and not ashamed. Do you remember my telling you about that beautiful tree? I believe the Lord showed me his people as a beautiful tree. To my mind the tree is his people. No twigs had broken off; all there seems as one, combined, perfect. I was shown the strait and narrow way; it seemed to point to this same tree.

I went before the church Saturday before the second Sunday in July, and was received and baptized by Elder Francis. When I came up out of the water, surely the Lord must have been shining on their faces. It was a beautiful sight to me. I was given the right hand of fellowship at the water. The baptism was very pleasant, and I was made glad. It has seemed like a well of water springing up, until one morning last week I felt like a dry well. I told Sister Dellia how I felt, and she said it would spring up again. I believe it has already.

I went to the Rewastico meeting yesterday. Elders Francis, Vaughn and Mellott were there, and preached to my comfort. Last night Elder Vaughn preached at Salisbury; his text was Isaiah 55:1-2. It was a wonderful sermon; and Elder Francis added a few words which were beautiful. I was glad I could hear it.

Dear brother, you may send this letter to the editors of the Signs, if you think it fit. The hymn commencing, "Happy the birth where grace presides," tells my experience better than I can.

I must close. I would like to see your face. Come if you feel able, for I want to hear you preach.

Unworthily,
Henry Rounds

MRS. HANNA MARGARET MELLOTT

Sister Hanna Margaret Mellott was born May 29, 1865, and died October 22, 1953, a daughter of Thomas R. and Maria Margaret Palmer. She lived her long life near Needmore, Pennsylvania.

She was married to Jefferson C. Mellott, February 6, 1894, by Elder C. L. Funk. Brother Mellott preceeded her in death on November 27, 1952. There were no children. She is survived by one sister, Mrs. Mattie Lake, of Paris, Illinois; and one brother, B. N. Palmer, Portage, Pennsylvania.

On August 13, 1913, she and her husband united with Sideling Hill Primitive Baptist Church, and were baptized by Elder H. H. Lefferts. They were both faithful members and always filled their places at the meetings unless providentially hindered. Their home was for many years a place of entertainment for brethern and friends, and they enjoyed their companionship as much as any we have ever known. Sister Margaret was almost blind for several years, and about five months before her death she fell and broke a hip, from which she did not recover. She received loving care and every attention of Mr. and Mrs. Orville Beatty, who had long lived with her, so she lacked for nothing during her illness.

It was always a pleasure to visit with Sister Margaret; she was spiritually minded, and loved to talk of the goodness and mercy of the Lord unto her, claiming no goodness of her

own. She will be missed by her neighbors and friends, and most of all by her brethern.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at Sideling Hill Church October 24th, and she was laid to rest in the church cemetery by the side of her husband. The presence of many sorrowing friends testified of the esteem in which she was held by those who knew her. May the Lord give reconciling grace to all who mourn her passing.

John D. Wood

GEORGE TURNER HARRIS

George Turner Harris was born June 5, 18 73, in Davidson County, North Carolina; and departed this life December 21, 1948.

He was first married to Miss Maggie Lanier, and to this union was born a son who died in infancy; and she lived only a short time. On February 25, 1900, he was married to Miss Sarah Priscilla Loftin, who survives. To this union were born eleven children, six boys and five girls; two died in infancy, and one son, Walter, died since his father's death. He was a kind and faithful husband and father.

In August, 1930, he joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Toms Creek, and remained a faithful member until his death.

This is written at the request of the church at Toms Creek while in conference Saturday before the fourth Sunday in July, 1953, with a copy to be placed on the church record, a copy to be given the family, and a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Mrs. Wilma Garner, a daughter,
and Minnie Loftin

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association has lost several members of her body since we last met, namely: Deacon Henry Rounds and Sister Lulu Adkins, of the Salisbury Church; Sister Yerkie Smith, of the Forest Grove Church; Sister Laura Adkins, of the Indiantown Church; Sister Ida White, of the Little Creek Church and Sister Holland, of the Snow Hill Church; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that we leave upon our records mention of our love and fellowship for these faithful ones, whom God in his infinite wisdom has removed from our midst. Their memory will live in our hearts, as we believe our love and fellowship with them was that blessed tie that will not let us part; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that we desire to bow in humble submission to God's holy will, and truly say, "Thy will be done."; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that we extend our sympathy to each family, hoping that God will reconcile them to his will.

Done by the unanimous voice of the Association while in session with the Snow Hill Church, October 21-22, 1953.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Maud T. Laws, Clerk
William S. Adkins, Asst. Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove by death one of our members, Brother Z. M. Stanland, of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, who passed away August 26, 1953.

Brother Stanland joined the Little Flock Church May 8, 1953, and was baptized the same day by the pastor, Elder W. N. Green. Little Flock regrets the passing of our dear brother, and extends heart felt sympathy to his bereaved family; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that a copy of this memorial be made a part of our church records; a copy be sent to his bereaved family, and a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference September 12, 1953, at Altus, Oklahoma.

R. H. Houk, Moderator Pro-tem.
Mrs. Lou Kester, Church Clerk

also

WHEREAS, our heavenly Father, in his infinite wisdom and mercy, has removed from this mortal existance our dearly beloved Sister M. A. Powell, of Wichita Fall, Texas, who died at the ripe old age of ninty-five years.

She, together with her late husband, was a long time member of the Primitive Baptist Church; and during his lifetime were faithful in attending their church meetings, but for several years she was unable to attend. She has been sadly missed by that body. She joined Little Flock Church January 9, 1942, at the disbanding of Dawson Valley Church. She is survived by three daughters, two sons, ten grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that Little Flock Church has suffered a great loss, and extends sympathy to the bereaved family. Be it also

RESOLVED, that a copy of these resolutions be sent to her family, a copy be made a part of our church records, and a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference September 12, 1953, at Altus, Oklahoma.

R. N. Houk, Moderator Pro-tem.
Mrs. Lou Kester, Church Clerk

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Saturday, 11 A. M.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 11 A. M.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

WRIGHTS' CREEK CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday, 11 A. M.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday, 11 A. M.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, meets every third Sunday at 11 A. M., six miles SE. of Sulligent, Alabama.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each Saturday before the fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Alabama.

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles S.W. of Fayette, Alabama.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

BEULAH PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Troy, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday, South end of Three Notch Street.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

MT. PLEASANT PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located two miles South of Dothan, Alabama, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before.

E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

MT. GILEAD PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles North of Hartford, Alabama.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Pratt City, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. Meeing place at Alder Street at top of hill, first car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

LIBERTY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., eight miles South of Gordo, Alabama.

O. G. GARVER, Pastor

MT. CARMEL, Coffee Springs, Alabama, meets each first Sunday 11 A. M.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Tucson, Arizona, meets on third Sundays and Saturday before at 134 E. Prince Road. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

T. J. ROBINSON, Pastor
MRS. J. H. DAY, Clerk

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

W. S. SPEER, Pastor

REHOBETH OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located five miles North of El Dorado, Arkansas, and a half-mile West of Highway No. 7, meets second Sunday in each month and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

R. W. RHODES, Pastor,
W. A. SPEER, Clerk

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Pomona, California, meets each fourth Sunday at 12812 Williamson (or write A. J. Taylor, 932E Monterey).

LITTLE FLOCK CHURCH, Miami, Florida, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before, S.W. 29th Avenue and 6th Street. We extend an invitation to any interested to visit us.

Mrs. J. M. Futch,
7005 SW 21st Street,
Miami, Florida

SALEM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Panama City, Florida, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., North end of Harrison Avenue.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Weise, Idaho, meets each second Sunday at 5th and E. Park Street.

PLEASANT VALLEY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas, meets the first Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (January, March, etc) at the home of Sister Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C.,

MRS. PHEBE CATES, Clerk

THE LOST CREEK CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, meets first Sunday in each month and Satur-

day before, near Denton, Carver County, Kentucky, ten miles South of Grayson and two miles from Denton, on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U. S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

C. H. EVANS, Pastor

NEW HOPE CHURCH, (better know as Lick Creek) meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., five miles North of Dawson Springs, Kentucky.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE ZION CHURCH OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS, Mayfield, Kentucky, meets first Sunday each month at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M., on South 7th Street.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Baltimore, Maryland, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Street, near Calvert.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on Falls Road about twenty miles North of Baltimore.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, New York City, New York, meetings every first and third Sundays at Parkside Hotel, 18 Gramercy Park South, one block east of Fourth Ave. and 20th St., near 23rd St. Sta. Lexington Ave. Subway. Take Elevator to Park Room second floor. 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets each 5th Sunday and Saturday afternoon before, from May through September, with two days meeting the 1st Sunday in May; and meets at Needmore, Pa., on 5th Sundays and Saturday afternoon before, from October through April, with two days meeting the 2nd Sunday in October.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor,
ORIEN MELLOTT, Clerk
McConnellsburg, Pa.

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, Houston, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M. Church is located on Little York Highway, four miles North of Houston, and one mile East of Highway 76.

W. O. BEENE, Pastor

BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin Oregon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes.

R. R. WOLF, Pastor

MT. ZION CHURCH, Weslaco, Texas, meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 and Saturday before at 11 A. M., at the home of E. B. Ault, on Progresso Highway, three and one-half miles South of Weslaco.

E. B. AULT, Pastor,
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk
Rt. 1, Mission, Texas

SARDIS CHURCH, Amarillo, Texas, meets first Sundays at 10:30, in the home of Deacon C. M. Toler, 119 S. Bowie Street.

C. E. TURNER, Pastor

THE OLD ORDERLY MT. ZION (CASH) PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Campbell, Texas, meets on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in each month at the home of Bro. J. J. Darnell.

SISTER SIMMONS, Clerk

PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, 1211 8th Avenue, meets first Sunday in each month at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, go one block North to meeting house.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor,
W. A. LITTLE, Asst. Pastor

THE ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST CHURCH, Lawn, Texas, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
MRS. NOLA STEWART, Clerk

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30, at the home of M. J. Culpepper. Lovers of the truth invited.

E. B. AULT, Pastor

THE OLD SALEM CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS, four miles South of Teague, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

SAINTS REST OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday evening before at seven-thirty, at 4614 Sylvester Street.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
JOHN T. BEENE, Clerk

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
C. E. TURNER, Co-Pastor

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor

THE PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Memphis, Tennessee, meet in the Primitive Baptist Church, corner of Getwell and Fizer Streets, on second Sunday in each month at 11 A. M. and Saturday evening before; also on fourth Sundays at 11 A. M.

H. G. BROWN, Pastor,
791 Watson Street.
L. C. CAMPBELL, Clerk
3347 Tutwiller Street

LITTLE FLOCK PREDESTINARIAN BAPCHURCH, Cass County, Missouri, meets on Fourth Sundays in the Memorial Building, Pleasant Hill, Missouri. We invite brethren of our faith and order to visit us.

L. L. SCHENCK, Pastor,
MRS. J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2:30, Fairmont Park, 3023 Cottage Toll Road.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Richmond, Virginia, meets each fourth Sunday in their new meeting house about ten miles South of Richmond, just off of highway 360 South.

R. S. PAYNE, Pastor

DAN RIVER CHURCH, between Danville, Va. and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville, Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday night before, on Bradley Road.

W. R. DODD, Pastor

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2 P. M., and is located on Route 28, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2 P. M., each second month (February, April, etc.), and is near Lucketts, about eight miles North of Leesburg, Virginia.

BROAD RUN CHURCH, Poolesville, Maryland, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. each second month (January, March, etc.)

MT. ZION CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2 P. M., and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, Virginia, on Route 50, between Washington and Winchester, Virginia.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are always glad to have brethern and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Mrs. Eunice G. Craig, Jackson 2-0985, Arlington, Va.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

LITTLE ZION PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Chehalis, Washington, meets in the home of Sister Effie Parke, 1360 First Street, the first Sunday of each month at 11 A. M.

C. M. FISHER, Pastor

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, near Yakima, Washington, meets at 11 A. M. each second Sunday by appointment at the home of one of the members living in Naches, Washington.

A. D. HUGHETT, Pastor,
BEATRICE HAAN, Clerk,
Star Route, Naches, Washington.

HARMONY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, about four miles East of Huntington, W. Va., near Route 60 at Russell Creek, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 3 P. M.

R. C. BELL, Moderator,
B. G. BIRD, Clerk,
211 3rd Street, Atlizer Add.
Huntington, W. Va.

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Stockton, California, meets second Sundays and Saturday night before at 5265 Ardella Avenue. All lovers of the truth invited. Please note change of address from Sacramento, California.

T. R. JEFFERSON, Pastor
WM. ECHOLS, Clerk
Chowchilla, Cal.

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, about one mile South of Newark, Delaware, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 122 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1954 NO. 2

"We shall see him as he is, be like him, and be satisfied." (Psalms 17:15-I John 3:2)

What a joyful, glad reunion
When on earth with saints we meet!
Children, think just what it will be
When our Saviour's face we greet.

Here a tiny glimpse — a foretaste
Is enough to make us sing;
As we meet, our voices mingle
In adoration to our King.

Earth, with all its painted glamor,
All its boasted pomp and show,
Can't compare with association
Of God's children here below.

As we meet in this reunion,
Voices sweet, and handclasps dear;
Love is flowing to each other
As we sing, and praise, and hear.

The old story told so often:
By grace we're saved and not of man;
Jesus paid it all, dear children;
That was God's victorious plan.

We, the happy, blessed formation,
Looking forward, — up beyond,
When we see him there in glory:
Hear Him say, my child, come home.

Mrs. Fred Cobb

THE PILGRIM'S SONG

My days on earth are fleeting,
And soon they will be o'er;
Each day I'm drawing nearer
To heaven's happy shore;
Soon, soon I shall be landed
In heaven by grace divine,
There, in my Jesus' likeness
I shall forever shine.

I'm nearing to the haven,
The haven of the blest;
The voyage will be over
And then I'll be at rest.
Time, time is quickly passing;
How swift the moments roll!
Eternity is dawning,
Is dawning on my soul.

And when my days are ended
On this terrestial ball,
And from the realms of glory
Jesus for me shall call,
Then from all care and anguish
I will in haste away,
To dwell with my Beloved
In one eternal day.

Then sweetest hallelujahs
I will to Jesus sing,
And bow in love and wonder
Before my gracious King;
With His own hand He'll take me
And seat me at His side;
With Christ I'll reign forever
And be His own dear bride.

FREDERICK W. KEENE

THE CANDLE OF THE LORD

"The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord . . ." (Proverbs 20:27). This candle of the Lord is the light of understanding. "Wisdom resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding." (Proverbs 14:33) "The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom; and before honor is humility." (Proverbs 15:33). "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord." (Proverbs 16:1).

The understanding heart is conscious of this spirit or light, having been given it of the Lord; and he is then conscious of his own weakness, which in turn makes him meek and humble, fearing the Lord. He then knows that in himself dwelleth no good thing. He now sees his own unworthiness, and realizes that the outward man is forever sinning in thought, word or deed; and his heart is continually fearful, and he humbly begs (in spirit) the mercies of a loving Saviour. This indwelling spirit has opened the eyes of the former blind man, and he is made to see that which he never saw before. Small wonder the restoring of sight to the blind man was

called a miracle. Who can perform miracles but God? And what greater miracle could ever be performed than the opening of our spiritual eyes, so that we may behold the greatness and goodness of our precious Lord.

This candle of light sends forth that gleam of hope that enables his little ones to look beyond this life, and hope for that everlasting rest and peace that Christ has promised to every one that the Father gave him to bleed and die for, and redeem from sin and the grave. O, the mysteries of this great love; the depth, nor height, nor breath can ever be measured by our finite natures. We see through a glass darkly, which, I believe, is exactly as God intended us to see while sojurning through this life on earth; for if we could see the wonderful things of God, how could we yet hope and long for the blessings he has in store for his promised seed. In his great wisdom he gives us along the pathway of life many a sweet taste of his goodness, also refreshing showers of his blessings, that we may be encouraged and faint not along the way.

But he knows the importance of **hunger** and **thirst,** and we are just given according to his will what he knows we need, and not what we may want. **We have known of crippled or dying animals crawling a great distance to find water to quench that burning thirst. Don't the children of God, crippled in knowledge, dying daily to self and sin, crawl, as it were, humbled and sick in soul, thirsting for that water of life which proceeds out of the throne of God?** Somehow there is **enough strength, enough courage, enough hope** — all because God has made the **thirst so strong, the desire so great,** that nothing in the world can satisfy or fulfill that thirst or desire. Only the blood of Jesus, the fountain of grace, that great love of God for his people, is the beginning and the end.

Yes, his little ones are crawling through the dust of doubt, the filth of sin, and over the rocky and thorny paths of tribulations, but he that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. This is one of the rays of hope that urges the pilgrim on and on. "In my Father's house are many mansions," etc. Jesus spoke these words to his disciples, but they were intended for every one that God foreknew before the world was, and who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

"God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Corinthians 4:6). "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." (1 John 5:4). Faith purefieth the heart; what is not of faith is sin. Faith in God is hope in reality: When we have faith in God, we have that hope of glory, "life everlasting" beyond the grave. This hope makes its possessors humble, meek, loving, kind, and to shed abroad the love of God; knowing that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. We sin, and doubt, suffer and then die; but death only opens the door to admit His wandering sheep to the fold of God, forever to be with Him in that mansion of rest.

That candle of the Lord, bequeathed to man when he chose him out of the world before the world was, is returned from his wonderings in this world still burning but brighter than ever — a glorious light at last, that spiritual part of man returned to God who gave it.

Your humble and hopeful sister,
Mrs. Flora Booher
Shirleysburg, Pa.

JESUS NOT A SINNER

R. F. D. 1,
Lillie, Louisiana.
October 12, 1953.

Elder W. D. Griffin,
Covin, Alabama.

My Dear Brother In Christ:

I have your letter dated last Monday

night. I certainly am appreciative and grateful for the kindly advice and for the brotherly, Christ-like spirit in which I feel it was written. I trust I have been enabled to receive it in the same spirit. I would to God our brethren at large (especially the ministers) might at all times be so filled with the wisdom, the love, the tender compassion and the forbearance that ever characterized the holy Jesus, so that one might feel free, perfectly free, to write a brother for his good, and the glory of our adorable Redeemer, as I feel was the case in this your letter to me.

Your letter (not on your part, but on account of the information furnished) has caused me no little concern, as well as considerable grief. In the matter relative to which you wrote, I find myself deeply concerned, — I trust even soul-searchingly concerned. Concerned as to whether I myself, poor, ignorant wretch that I am, might have been so left to myself and the deception of Satan, as to preach, declare, advance, proclaim, state, imply, or even for a split second imagine that the holy, pure, just, merciful, altogether righteous, spotless, adorable, immaculate Son of God, ever did, or has, or could in any sense of the word be really and actually himself individually a sinner or transgressor.

No, my noble brother, and ten thousand times no! Why, I would just as soon believe and preach, or be accused of believing and preaching, the doctrine of total apostasy; of salvation wholly by creature merit, or, as I was about to say, even that there is no God, as to preach, or teach, or believe, or hint, or imply, or insinuate that my precious Saviour, my adorable Redeemer, my lovely Sacrifice, was anything except **All Righteousness,** and **All Perfection.**

Yet, dear brother Griffin, I say, not with standing what I have written above, I trust I have been made to believe, and to rejoice in the belief, that the holy Son of God, who also was the Son of Man, was (Oh, miracle of divine grace), "Made to be sin for us, who knew no sin." Or, to come more fully into this glorious matter, this heavenly and this unspeakably glorious wonderment, let's have the quotation in full: "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Corinthians 5:21).

In this wonderful display of the eternal Jehovah, of the Almighty Father, I trust I, even I, have had some little glimpse at least, and some faint hope though it be ever so small; some token of faith to the end that it has caused me to believe and to love the solid, holy, the God honoring truth that Jesus the Righteous One was made — **actually made** to be sin for his people. And for no purpose other than that God's people might be made, **actually made** "the righteousness of God in him".

No where can I find (and I'm glad it is so) either in Scripture, or in my little experience, any place, or time, or way, or manner, or sense, in which the blessed Jesus himself personally or individually was in the least tainted with the smallest sin or imperfection, or any defilement whatsoever. Had it been so, then most certain it is that he would not and could not have been a fit or proper person to atone for sin. But thanks, unending thanks, be given to Israel's God. Marvel, O earth, and be thou astonished, O heaven! For lo and behold, a most wonderous miracle is performed. It being nothing less, as it could be nothing more, than the hand and power of our most gracious, omnipotent God.

In this stupendous work of making his blessed, holy Son to be sin, God in the same manner, and through the same divine, unfrustratable power, has made his dear people to become "the righteousness of God in him." I am glad it says **in him.** This means so much to a poor sinful mortal like me. Does it not mean ever so much to you also, dear brother? I trust it means (let me qualify just here, and say, Not much, or ever so much, but all) that he is all and all to his people; and, therefore, He,

through the stupendous act of the Father, "Is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, santification and redemption". etc. (1 Corinthians 1:29-30)

So, if I be, and if you are, one of these chosen of God, then the only righteousness sufficient to save us from the wrath to come, and to present us faultless before the Father's throne and glory, is that righteousness of God's, coupled with His eternal purpose in his Son. Which righteousness, and which power and which purpose, Satan with all other wicked ones, never could hinder or rener it null and void.

The most awe-inspiring mystery poor mortals ever thought upon is the transcendently glorious parallel work of the holy God in the wondrous wrought work of his which accomplished a two-fold purpose, viz: That which caused his Son to become sin for his people, while they were made to be God's righteousness in him.

I cannot say what I would love to concerning such noble and lofty matters; nor can any mortal being ever properly and adequately set them forth. Such things are far too lofty for finite perception; and they have ever evaded the scrutiny of the mind of the earth's most wise and mighty. No wonder, then, David said, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me: it is high, I cannot attain unto it."

But after all, what I have desired to say might have been briefly summed up in this: I believe all the sin or sins the Son of God felt and bore in the glorious atonement, all the guilt or iniquities he ever endured or suffered for, that it was literally and really, and actually the sins of his people laid upon Him. (see Isaiah 53:6). While, as to his people, I believe all the righteousness (in the sense I am considering) they will ever know or need, here or in the world to come, is that personal wrought-out, individual righteousness of the Saviour of sinners imputed unto them; which is none other that the righteousness of God in him (Christ) transmitted or given to all the heirs of grace, experimentally and savingly here in time. The manifestation, or showing, or revelation of which things being the work of the Holy Spirit exclusively: "He shall take of the things of mine and shew them unto you."

In this profound, this immensely profound sense, then, and only in this way, could God (or did he) ever consider his lovely, precious Son as being, as being made sin. In this sense I likely set the matter forth two years ago in the association you spoke of when I was last there. I grant that I probably said something similar to this: "In this sense then (of the atonement, etc.) he, under the law, and from the stand point of his being surety for his people, was looked upon, considered and treated as the greatest sinner who ever lived; when, in fact, he was the holiest person ever to bless this old sin cursed earth." etc.

And finally, when given the unction, will you remember me and pray that I might be forgiven, if I preached outright so hellish a doctrine as the report indicated I might have done; and that I might always be kept from such, I believe I will just call it, blasphemy. On the other hand, if I was blessed to proclaim it aright, as I have endeavored herein to do, and those dear saints of God in that section failed in all, or in part, to understand me, and therefore have wrongfully accused me, then may the God of all mercies forgive them. And may this great and good God; this all-holy Sovereign; this merciful, just, righteous, Supreme Being; he who in the Scriptures is designated as God the Father, God the Word, or Son, and God the Holy Spirit, may he ever and always even into eternity keep his people: keep and preserve them unto his heavenly kingdom. Yes, may he keep them by his almighty power: "to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you who are kept by the power of God." etc.

I trust I am your poor unworthy brother, and fellow-servant, in the bonds

and afflictions of the gospel.

(Elder) John Lee Smith

THE PIERCED SIDE OF JESUS

"But one of the soldiers with a spear pierce his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water". (John 29: 34.)

It is written of Jesus that it was he who came by water and by blood, not by water only, but by water and by blood. It seems therefore to harmonize with this saying that from the pierced side of the crucified Lord should come blood and water. In Scripture typology water often signifies the word of God, for Jesus himself declared that except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit he could not see the kingdom of God. Water in nature is an absolute essential to life on the earth. Plants and animals require it and man can not live without it; even his body is largely composed of water. Water comes in various forms in its manifestation, sometimes as dew, again as rain, often as frost or snow, sometimes as mist, and then again as ice, all playing their part in the economy of nature.

The word of God is necessary in the life of a child of God that he be saved for time and eternity. Jesus was the eternal word made flesh and dwelt among men in his holy humanity that he might render to God the obedience that God's inflexible law demands of man in all the just requirements of holiness. Sin had been committed by Adam in the flesh, by a sinless man made subject to death through transgression and the ensuing wrath of a sin-hating God as a just penalty to demonstrate the justice and holiness of God. The eternal Son of God has his dwelling place in the bosom of the Father, being one with him, and as God is a spirit, a spirit can not die, so the eternal Son as a spirit could not die for man's transgression and become a surety for him and take the sinner's place in suffering physical death and the awful wrath of God that followed the consequences of sin. So God as an eternal spirit alone could not redeem man, but through the provisions of that covenant made with the eternal Son before ever the world was made could give salvation to fallen and helpless man by having his eternal Son assume holy human flesh by the miracle of the virgin birth of Jesus, who thus became the Son of man on the maternal side and the Son of God because of the conception of his mother Mary by the work of the Holy Ghost. The blood element of an infant comes from the father, medical men have asserted, so the blood that coursed through the veins of the child Jesus was the very blood of the Son of God and was therefore holy so that Jesus Christ was holy and divine though clothed with a cloud of humanity, or flesh.

Man inherits sin from Adam and, being conceived in sin and of himself unable to rise higher than his sinful father Adam, he can not live a holy life nor by himself have access to God. The life of the flesh is in the blood as well as the life of the soul. It then required a holy life, the death of a holy man and the death of a holy soul to atone for man's sin. Jesus poured out his soul unto death, but his soul was not left in the abodes of death and his body being holy saw no corruption. Because of the Godhead in him, he had power over death and having suffered the eternal consequences of sin on the cross, could rise from the tomb a triumphant conqueror over death, hell, and the grave and give immortality to all the called of God.

Jesus himself was the Word and that which he spoke also constituted the Word, and that Word must be given the quickened sinner by the Holy Spirit, who quickens dead sinners into life and shows them Jesus as their great salvation. That word is a lamp to our feet and a guide to our path. It is the Spirit then that applies the word when a sinner is regenerated and made alive spiritually.

The creation of the world and of man was the work of the Trinity, God the Father, Christ the eternal Son, and the Holy Ghost. All things came into being by the word of God. All the prophecies and promises of the Old Testament came by the word of God and were recorded by men who wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. It was promised that the seed of the woman, that is, the Word, should bruise Satan's head. When Christ was born in Judea, he came by water and by blood, being the fulfilment of God's word and the very word himself in that he was God manifest in the flesh. Because of the miracle of his birth, his blood was the very blood of the eternal Son of God, having divine efficacy and virtue and so could cleanse all believers.

It should be most strongly emphasized that the Word is eternal and that the body of Christ as the word made flesh saw no corruption and therefore the blood of the Son of God has cleansing power for time and for eternity. When the side of Christ was pierced, he hung dead upon the cross. And in a natural body born according to nature blood an water will not flow after death takes place. But the flowing of blood and water from the side of the crucified Christ was a miracle of stupendous importance, as it shows that blood and the water had not lost their efficacy, for the blood of Jesus justifies his people for time and through the eternal ages, and the cleansing water of the word applied by the Holy Spirit has to do with the state of the redeemed. The blood of the Saviour cleansed the people of God in a judicial sense in that they stand before Him without spot or blemish as pure as though they had never sinned. The water of the word has a cleansing moral value, for when one sins and feels condemned in the flesh, there is the appearing of Jesus and the repentant sinner is washed by the water of the word and cleansed of his defilement. We sin daily and need daily cleansing, to have our feet, our walk, spiritually washed in the laver of the word. When the priests of the old dispensation went into the temple to worship, there was first the shedding of the blood of the sacrifice, which pointed to Christ as the lamb of God, and then followed the washing of the hands and feet of the priests before they could worship in the holy place. The hands of the priests were rendered unclean in the menial work necessary for them to perform in the temple service. The church of God in this gospel dispensation is a holy priesthood of believers, and though the blood of Christ has been shed for them, they can not worship when in a fleshly state of mind with animosity towards their brethren, so they must be first spiritually washed in the water of the word and be in the spirit to worship. We find that the blood gives us standing before God in our justification, and the water has to do spiritually with our state before God, whether we are worldly minded and harbor ill will towards any of our brethren, so we need a daily cleansing from the defilement of sin. The blood has a significant relationship to the atoning death of Christ, while the water is applied experimentally as the Holy Spirit works in us applying the word to our hearts and showing us that we daily stand in need of the washing of water by the word. The blood denotes, as it flowed from the spear rent side of Christ, that we have an eternal standing in Him; and the water signifies that we are renewed day by day and thus kept by the power of God unto salvation. The blood and the water from the side of Christ testify to their eternal merit in the experience of every heir of grace and glory.

(Elder) Arnold H. Bellows

Bells, Tennessee
Rt. 2

Very dear Editors:

I have tried many times to write my experience, but I could not get it together, so it makes me feel I have none. I thought I would try to write a few things I believe. I am past seventy-

eight, and have to hold my hand with the other so as to write at all.

I believe the God the Old School Baptist serve is the true and living God: The Father, Son and Holy Ghost, these three are one. This is not the God the world runs after to try to help sinners. Our God spoke and it was done, commanded and it stood fast. Who commanded the raven to feed His prophet; who hardened Pharoah's heart; who caused the Egyptian to hate his people, then gave the Israelites favor?

I wish I could write so you could read it; am not through but will have to close, as I can't hold my hand still. I don't get to hear much preaching, but I can't hear very good anyhow. I surely enjoy the Signs of the Times. I am just a poor old sinner, but I do have some sweet meditations. If there is anyone who believes this old doctrine living within thirty miles on me, I don't know of them.

Please all who may read this, remember me in your prayers. With much love.

George M. Colvett

Halcottville, N. Y.

The members and messengers of 2nd Roxbury Church send greetings to the churches of the Lexington-Roxbury Association, now in session with the First and Second churches of Roxbury, at Halcottville, New York.

Dear Brethern: As we read the pilgrimage of David, our mind goes to his prayer in Psalms 51, "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness, according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions." If our transgressions are before us like a thick cloud, then we can have no rest until the Lord blots them out.

In the language of the words we wish to refer to in this Psalm there are two petitions: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me". David has defiled himself: there was a leprosy, and because of that he was shut out of the service of God. He fain would be clean, so he asked that the God of all grace deal with his heart so that new things would be in him. This was his prayer; according to the Scriptures this could only be done by blood. The blood that can cleanse from sin in the blood of Jesus Christ.

David wanted to be cleansed from this leprosy by hyssop dipped in blood and applied. There must have been some cleansing power in this, for he says, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean." This is by the grace and virtues of the blood of Christ; and oil applied represents the spirit of the living God. We also read of the soldiers having filled a sponge with vinegar, put it on a stick of hyssop and applied it to the lips of Jesus as he hung on the cross.

In a clean heart there will be thoughts of God's kindnesses, peace, joy and love which passes all understanding. What thoughts a sinner has of that fountain:

"There is a fountain filled with blood;
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains."

We can think that when David was quickened in His spirit, which had dealt so kindly and so mercifully in the forgiveness of his sins, it was to him peace. "God commended his love toward us while we were yet sinners" The sinner says: There was never any one so ungodly as ourselves. When David was quickened again, great faithfulness had been spared to him, and God dealt kindly and mercifully in the forgivness of his sins. To have right thoughts of God, we are brought to his feet to repent; and He deals with us as a gracious God, not according to our sins, but according to his mercies. "Renew a right spirit within me". A right spirit is the spirit of faith and love, longing for Christ: There is nothing like him. Faith is like love, it beareth all things. The right spirit will make the Lord the chiefest among ten-thousand, and altogether lovely.

We need that to give us an understanding of the precious things of the Lord. We know his voice: "My sheep hear my voice, and they do follow me." Faith gives us hope, which seems pretty small sometimes, but we never lose sight of it; its like an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and reaches within the vail, whither our forerunner Jesus has entered for us. Lord give us this right spirit, for thou alone can give it.

Elder Bellows comes the second Sunday in each month setting forth the precious things in the right spirit. Elder Slauson has been with us a few times the past year, preaching the precious things of God's kingdom. With sadness we mention the departure of Sister Courts by death, which leaves only five members. We send Elder Bellows and all other members present as our messengers.

Done by order of the Second Church of Roxbury.

Prudence O'Connor Hinkley, Church Clerk.

Sulphur Springs, Texas

Dear Editors:

I will write a few lines to let you know that I appreciate getting the Signs. My sight is such now that I can't see to read, but my wife reads to me, and I enjoy it very much.

I would also like to give you some of my experience. I was reared in Mississippi by Missionary parents; and Dad told me that was the church, and the only church, which I believed at that time. I wanted to be saved, so I went to the mourners bench time and again, trying to get religion, for that is what they called it then. First one and then another would come to me and tell me how to get religion; so I tried every plan that they told me, but none of the plans did me any good. Finally they said, "John, you are not a bad boy. We believe you have got religion and don't know it." My daddy told me the same, and that I might go ahead and join the church and go on doing right, and when God finds out that you are going to do right then he will save you. So I did, but I couldn't feel like I was saved. I went on for several years, until I was thirty-six years old; and I saw that nothing I would do would do me any good. I was reading the Bible at that time, and I saw that the Lord alone was the Saviour of his people. Then I saw that my work was in vain, for I had done everything that I could to get saved, and I was still just the same creature. I said I would try no longer and could only leave it to the Lord. I was in much misery. One day I went to the field to plow a certain piece of ground. It was so hard that I thought to give my team justice, it would take me pretty well all day to break it up. I went two or three rounds, then stopped to let the team rest awhile. Then the next time I thought about resting the team, for I was in deep thought, I looked back and found that the ground was nearly all broken up. It scared me, but looking at the team, I saw the horses were not blowing or sweating, and I felt that the Lord was with me. I was so happy I went rejoicing, and felt that I would have something to tell my wife when I got to the house; but just before I got to the barn something seemed to say, you had better be careful what you tell, you may be mistaken. That bothered me, and I did not tell about it for sometime.

I didn't know anything about the Primitive Baptists, but I read my Bible and found that God had a chosen people, and that Christ was the only one that could save. I noticed also that he told his disciples to preach the word, and to go without charge; and I began to get pretty hard against the way the missionaries were preaching it. Also, the foreordaination and predestination of God began to work on me; and having found out that there was a Primitive Baptist church about ten miles from where I lived, I began to go to their meetings, and found that they taught

just what I believed, and as the Bible taught it. I went time and again, thinking I would offer to the church, but I just couldn't. I would go away wishing that I had; and would think that next time I will offer, but then when they would extend the privilege of the church, I couldn't go. Elder R. E. White and Elder W. H. Tatum were pastors of the church. As well as I remember it was on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, when Elder Tatum used for a text, "By grace are ye saved." etc. I thought it was one of the sweetest sermons I had ever heard, and when they went into conference and offered an opportunity for reception of members, I was up there shaking hands with the preacher. I didn't know whether they would take a sinner like me or not, but they gave me a home with them. And I still love the doctrine of salvation by grace.

Brother Spangler, I did not think I would write as much as I have, but wanted to say that I surely like the good old Signs of the Times. May the Lord enable all to keep up the good work. Please remember me when at the throne of grace.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all.

J. J. Sanders

Newton, Alabama.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I appreciate your recent request that I write again for the dear old **"Signs"**. My mind has been with you much of late, and certainly wish you and Elder John D. Wood, with the associate editors, the guidance of the Holy Spirit in your labor of love.

We were indeed glad to have you in Alabama recently and wish that I could have been with you more. I feel that you and Elder Griffin were abundantly blessed to speak at the Conecuh River Association. So many times I have heard you proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ, and each time I felt the comforting influence of One who makes no mistakes in the army of heaven or among the inhabitants of the earth.

In the current issue of the Signs, Elder Arnold H. Bellows is abundantly blessed in discussing the "Two Gardens" in a way that had never occured to me. As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive, but every man in his own order. Truly Eve was the mother of all living; and without Him was not anything made that was made. The Father is the matchless creator of each and all things. So in the Garden of Eden, we find each and everything gloriously arranged by a master Architect and Painter. Not one thing was arranged by man until Adam was placed there as the caretaker. In like manner are all men placed in a particular sphere at an appointed time known alone unto Him who doeth all things well, for an express purpose and duty.

Since this was true in the first garden, most asuredly it is true in the perfect garden where Christ made the supreme sacrifice, and rose triumphant in the first resurrection from Joseph's new tomb. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." Yes, Jesus made a perfect offering, a pure sacrifice, for each and every one of the children of the Heavenly King. Not one shall perish or be lost. He bought them, — dear the cost. "My sheep hear no voice," says Jesus, "and I know them, and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish." My kingdom is not of this world; if it were, my Father would send legions of angels.

Would you rather live alone in an earthly kingdom, or have the two fold nature of every one born of the Spirit? "If in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable." Yes, Jesus came out of Joseph's new tomb with every member of God's spiritual fold, and these are those who live when the rocks and mountains are melting with fervent heat. This is the life eternal, — the life that is the proud poses-

sion of every child of the Heavenly King; those redeemed in the perfect garden that I hope you have a glorious part in.

In the same issue we find Elder George L. Weaver, whom I have heard preach so many times, write ably upon the Power of God, and Love, — one as matchless as the other, and each essential in the economy of His holy will. Think what His power would mean without love! And then bear in mind a God of Love without Power. No other characteristic can exceed Love. Think upon Jeremiah when he says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and with loving kindness have I drawn thee." And then remember John says, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." And then Paul says, 'There is no power but of God." How closely related these are, and how necessary each is to the other. Elder Weaver was well blessed to trace this divine relationship for your comfort and mine.

I also enjoyed very much the Editorial on the resurrection by Elder Wood in the same issue; and "Election" by Elder H. H. Lefferts. Well do I remember having been with these two Elders at Ebenezer Church in Baltimore, Maryland, some six years ago. Perhaps no other day in my spiritual life will be more important to me than that beautiful June day when I was permitted to be with Elders Dodson, Topping, Vaughn, Bennett, Walker, Wood, Lefferts, and many other brethern. Some of these have already gone to be with the Lord.

On that day, it was my privilege to hear Elder Lefferts soar to the skies on the divine principles of the Resurrection; and here Elder Wood discusses most vividly this same theme. Nothing like it for depth and height in the spiritual realm. It is the keystone of the Christian's hope; by it we press on to the mark of the sublime call. During my remaining days here below, I hope to cry aloud that her warfare is accomplished, her strife is over, and henceforth there is laid up a crown of righteousness for those that Jesus left the shining courts of glory to redeem; and not one of these shall perish or be lost. It is a perfect kingdom, treasured up from the dawn of that great meeting of all time, when the Father, Son and Holy Ghost entered into a royal agreement that a certain chosen generation, elect, precious and holy, that make up the bride, should be redeemed by none other than the immaculate Lamb of God. Is it not glorious to live in that holy number? Paul is very explicit when he says, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." And again, he is most positive when he said, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethern."

I most assuredly feel to know that I love so many in Alabama, Florida, Texas, Tennessee, Georgia, South Carolina, Kentucky, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Ohio, Delaware, New York and New Jersey. Whereever I have gone there is a remnant according to the election of grace who abide in the paramount principles that Primitive Baptists have stood for since Jesus delivered them to the Apostles. Yes, these principles stand, and shall stand.

On earth my days may be few, but I live in the fond hope of the resurrection of this mortal body, changed to an immortal; from a natural to a spiritual. I do not believe in death as some. The spirit returns unto the God who gave it — does not die but lives on; and today I believe that Elders Lefferts, Ker, Beebe, Dodson, Purington, Topping, Walker, Collins, Smith, Wilson, Rowe, Durand and Chick live in a clime that is sublime, and then in that final day Jesus shall come with all his holy angels, and the dead in Christ shall rise to meet Him in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. What are we waiting for? Is it not glorious to think of the heavenly state that awaits all the blood washed throng of all ages? Is your

trust in Him? Are you living in His glorious presence? Can you say with David, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help." Yes, it is wonderful to be a child of the King, and a joint heir with Jesus.

Yes, brethern Spangler and Wood, you have a tremendous obligation resting upon you to carry on the royal principles of the Signs, walking in the paths of Elders Beebe, Durand, Chich, Ker, Lefferts, Vaughn, Dodson, and others. May you both be blessed to walk in the paths of peace and scatter not the seeds of discord. May you seek peace among the Baptists, that bars of non-fellowship may be removed where ever possible. Some are separated now whom I love, and with whom I hope to be again. May peace be in Zion, and ever abide.

I can never forget the glory for me that was at Ebenezer, Martinsville, Meadows of Dan, Danville, Bush Arbor, Clarks Grove, Big Meadows, Gretna, Helena, Durham and Philadelphia. I love you all and long to see you again. Well do I remember, Elder Wood; my glorious visit in your home in Baltimore, there with Sister Rowe, Elder and Sister Topping, and you and Sister Wood, with many others; and our wonderful trip over the blue Ridge mountains to Christianburg. May peace ever abide in Zion.

I would dearly love to receive Minutes from every association, and will try to return one of ours. May the New Year bring joy, happiness and spiritual unity everywhere in our fold.

Yours in bonds of love,
(Elder) J. J. Collins

2085 E. Broadway,
Vancouver 12, B. C., Canada.
December 5, 1953.

Dear Editors:

Elder Isaac Coleman (deceased), former pastor of Bethel Church, Riffe, Washington, for many years, requested that the enclosed letter be sent to you, with permission of the writer, Joe MacKenzie; which is so done by the unworthy writer whom Joe MacKenzie married in August, 1952, and who must teach here three and one-half years before retiring (if it meets with the Lord's approval, as dear Elder Coleman, that humble man of God, used to say). Joe will come here soon for the winter months.

Humbly, from another sinner,
Mrs. Joe MacKenzie
(nee Catherine M. Duffus)

Marshall, Saskatchewan, Canada.
July 25, 1948.

Dear Elder Coleman:

Just a little note to say I'll be with you during the three day meeting, August 13 to 15th. I am leaving here August 8th, and expect to be at your place about the 12th, or Friday morning at the latest.

I really don't know how to commence this note. I'm such a sinner, I don't feel good enough to be writing you. Most of the time my thoughts are evil, and I'm seeking after the things that perish. However, I've had many seasons in the valley, when I sought after that which this world cannot give, and it proved to be the school master, which caused me to meet with the Old School Baptists. I well remember my first experience some twenty-one years ago. What I figured was unto life proved to be unto death, and what I thought was unto death proved to be unto life. It seems rather strange that a person who was given such a glorious foretaste should be such a sinful wretch now.

About one month after this foretaste, I was called upon to go through deep waters, and slowly, but surely, watched it fade, until my wonderful deliverance seemed like the faintest ray of light or hope. Some fifteen months later, I surely felt an arrow pierce my heart for sins I'd committed. I believe in telling the truth and let the chips fall where they may, for nothing can be hid from God.

I will now skip along until eleven years later, when I had two experiences within two weeks of each other. The

first was just a gradual letting down, with the burden growing heavier each day. How fitting some of the hymns describe a weary traveller's experience:

"Though my weary steps may falter
And my soul athirst may be,
Gushing from the Rock before me,
Lo, a spring of joy I see."

My weary steps sure did falter; and I used to think of Him who walked to the cross. In the midst of it all, I woke up one morning with my burden completely gone, and I was very happy. I thought I was in for a long period of rest, but not so. There was another storm ahead which struck with such fury that it fairly wrenched me asunder; but out of this storm there came a wonderful peace, also a supernatural boldness. I didn't ask for a vision or a voice, because I couldn't. It was enough! If we ask, it means we are not satisfied. I was given to see just like Peter, that man cannot stand alone.

Although I've had pronounced experiences, yet I cannot say that I love the brethern. I do not say it in a daring manner, but, on the other hand, it often causes doubt and fear. I sometimes hope this is my cross, to cause me to search and inquire. If I cannot say that I love the brethern, I could truly say at the times I have referred to when the Great Messenger came, that I drank at the fountain; and Jesus told the woman at the well, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I give shall never thirst."

In my first experience I was given such a wonderful drink of this water that I wanted to leave all behind and cross over where sorrow is never known.

I've made this note as brief as possible, for if nothing unexpected happens, I'll soon be seeing you; and if I am given liberty to talk, I'll do so. From my own experience, I'd say that God is a loving Father, and has lots of patience with his rebellious children. I often wonder if I am one; and if so, why am I thus.

I think this is about all I have to say, apart from that I feel certain there is a glorious rest for you on the other shore, and I hope there is for me. I don't need to ask to be remembered to the rest of the family, for, as I said, I will soon be down that way. Hope I haven't deceived you, for I am still a sinner.

Yours sincerely,
Joe MacKenzie

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626 E. 16th Street
Houston 8, Texas

Dear Brothers Spangler and Wood:

I see it is time to renew my subscription to the Signs — a paper I hope I shall be able to read as long as I am left in this low ground of sorrow. I do enjoy the editorials and good letters from the brethern and sisters; after reading through the Signs, I feel about as I do after a good meeting. Of course, I cannot see the writers, but I do vision their sweet faces and feel to know them. I hope many will write that the paper may continue to be filled with "feasts of fat things".

I would be glad if you or one of the associated editors could be given a mind to write on Isaiah 49:20-21. For several days this has been on my mind, and I am unable to get rid of it.

I am enclosing a copy of a piece of poetry written several years ago by our late brother, Elder Fredrick W. Keene. It is lovely and beautiful, and I enjoyed it so much that I felt that others would enjoy reading it. It appeared in the *Sovereign Grace and Pilgrim* in 1936.

Must close now; my feeble prayer is, may God bless and keep you all. If not asking too much, please remember a poor old needy creature when at the throne of grace. Just an old sinner living in hope of life immortal.

Harriett Little Gray

Ruffin, N. C.
RFD 1

Dear Editors:

Am sending you a few lines written on some thoughts of what it means to me, a vile, sinful wretch hoping in the sure mercies of God, to meet in association with the saints of God. I am not

offering this for your consideration of its publication to attempt to show anyone that I think I am something. Oh, no! For I know I am nothing, and less; and I feel that I am surely unworthy of my church home with the people whom I feel are God's chosen flock, the Elect Lady, the church militant. If you had turned me away, I had no where else to go. I hope I have been drawn by the invisible cords of God's love. He knows: as He knows all things, nothing being hid from him, for all things are open and naked before him with whom we have to do.

It will soon be a year since I offered to the church for membership with those I am made to love for Christ's sake, I hope. I had made the remark that if ever I offered to the church, I would be made to do so; that I never wanted to bring hurt to the ones I felt were God's people. The time came, and I was made to go; and I was surprised and awed that I was received. I know the Scriptures say of God's people, that they shall be a willing people in the day of His power; also, "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." And, "——it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." And, "This people have I formed for myself; and they shall shew forth my praise."

So, the way of the child of God is not in himself, he cannot direct his steps: they are all ordered of the Lord, — his down sittings and his uprisings, all working together for his good and God's glory; Christ being the way, the truth and the life, as He is made of God unto his children, wisdom, righteousness, santification and redemption. Let him who glories, glory in the Lord; the praise is his. The praise is his also when he gives us to write about, to speak about, and to meditate upon things not of this world.

If these few lines be to His praise, you may publish; if not cast it away. May our walk be kept in order. We beg interest in your prayers; and also that we shall contend for the old way, leaving out the doctrines of men, and having no confidence in the flesh. Only a little one, if one at all, hoping that you and yours are well. Beneath the feet of all who are made to fear God, I am

Mrs. Fred Cobb

EDITORIALS

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EDITORIAL

PAUL'S SERMON ON MARS HILL

"Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you."

One of our readers has requested that we offer some comment on the above scripture.

Paul was waiting in the City of Athens for the arrival of Silas and Tim-

otheus from Berea. While tarrying for them, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to Idolatry. One of the evidences of idolatry was an altar with the inscription, **"To the unknown God".**

It is evident that what Paul saw led him to preach to them the sermon he did. The people of the city spent their time in nothing else, but neither to tell, or hear some new things. How strange are the ways of God. Surely all things work together for good to them that love God, and this is but another evidence of that fact. The Idolatrous worship of an unknown God, led the apostle, by inspiration, to speak to you and me of the God of all Grace.

Times change, but human nature does not change. Many today worship they know not what. On every side we hear the expression that God wants to get certain things done, but the people won't help him. All worship is an ignorant worship, unless the Spirit has imparted some knowledge of God's power. In the revelation of God's mighty power in the heart of a poor sinner, he also learns something of the weakness of man. This eminent apostle bears record in his own life of the power of Almighty God. He was a persecutor of the saints, and when called by the Lord unto a knowledge of his grace, he was on his way to Damascus to bind the saints, and put in prison all whom he found in this way. No doubt this experience was fresh in his mind. He remembers the voice of one who spake unto him saying, "Saul, Saul why persecuth thou me".

He was stricken blind, and the man who was formerly called Saul is led by the hand into the city. But for the effectual call of God from nature's darkness, into God's marvelous light he would have himself continued as an ignorant worshipper of God. The call of God brought him to the ground as a praying character; as it has many since then. He had never been acquainted with such a power before, and he is made to inquire who it is that is speaking to him. Out of a personal experience of this mighty power, he could testify of the power of God.

He had seen before his conversion one of the Lord's servants, Stephen, stoned to death; and he consented to his death: He had seen him die with his face looking like an angel, and listened to him pray for his enemies, but these things did not turn him from his course. He seems after this to be more determined to persecute the followers of Jesus. "The appointed time rolls on apace, not to propose, but call by grace." Through the effectual call of God unto the Gospel of Christ, he was prepared to preach the God he worshiped out of an abundant personal experience.

"God that made the World and all things therin, seeing that he is Lord of Heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands." To the Colossians he declares, "For by him were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."

All his works shall praise him, because they speak of a perfect creator. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard."

Surely he who created all things, even the wicked for the day of evil, has control over it. He is Lord of Heaven and earth. He is as much the Lord of one, as he is the other. Heaven is his throne, and the earth his footstool. Could one who has learned of him believe that his power over his footstool is any the less than his reigning in Heaven.

Today there seems to be a race among the people to see who can build the finest house of worship. When one sect builds a new house, another faith tries to build one more pretentious. The spiritual progress is measured by the size and grandeur of the building. Could it

be that the worship of fine buildings has replaced the worshipping of Idols? If so, their worship is just as ignorant as was the Athenians.

"The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure; into whose hand God bringeth abundantly." "But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee: or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee. Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this? In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind."

"He dwelleth not in temples made with hands, neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, as he is Lord of heaven and of earth. He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things."

The entire sermon of the apostle is directing their mind away from worshipping a dead God. God is a spirit, and they who worship him must worship him in spirit. The temple where he is truly worshipped is the heart of his people. "I will walk in them, and be their God saith the Lord."

How is it today? Is not the God preached the dividing line between and ignorant worship, and true worship?

It is certainly true that a preacher, usually preaches the God he knows. If his dependence in his ministry is upon human learning, it is a dead ministry, as far as the gospel of Christ is concerned. If he is aspiring unto worldly honors, or churches that pay large salaries, or seeking the applause of men, without the call of God to preach the Gospel, he is just as ignorant of the true God as were the people of Athens.

So likewise the churches of today, if their affection is set on great buildings, paid choirs, hired musicians, etc., such a people are just as ignorant as the ones Paul preached to.

As in Paul's day, so today, the true worshippers of God do not worship a God who is in need of the help of man. By the revelation of Him in the heart, they know him as the King of Kings, The Holy one, the God of all grace, Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: The God of all Grace, whose mercy endureth forever; who is God of the whole earth; one who is alive forever more, and has the keys of death and hell.

The knowledge of him, and his abounding grace, fills the heart to overflowing with praise unto him. Truly these are the people who know the God they worship, and worship the God they know.

D. V. S.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

If any of the readers of the Signs of the Times know of a Primitive Baptist Church located near Rockdale, Texas, we would appreciate hearing from them.

Dr. M. O. Slaughter,
c/o Richards Hospital,
Rockdale, Texas

Brother J. A. Perdue, Redwood, Virginia, is desirous of obtaining copy of a book entitled BAPTIST MARTYRS. The author and date of publication is not known to him. He has a partial copy which does not contain this information. Write him direct.

PSALMS 73:24

"Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."

This language would not be misapplied if it was used by any child of grace. Any language, any doctrine, any gospel other than this is not the truth. This is the truth. The truth makes free.

Only those that have tried and failed in guiding themselves need a guide. It seems so simple, and is so simple. The simple understand it and are glad to turn in where this simplicity is (Prov. 9:4). There is simplicity of a kind that is not good, and our concern is not with those that compose this group. It does seem strange that the simple understand these blessed truths, and just as strange that learned men do not. How wonderful it is that God has hid these things from some and revealed them to others. This is his right and he has not been careless about the

work, for to every one that it has been hid from, it will remain so, and to every one that he has revealed it to, they shall never forget it.

Those that the Lord has revealed himself to as their guide, they all feel the need of Him as the guide. That makes this the only doctrine, the only gospel, the only sure foundation. This is the only doctrine that includes all in it. We have often had it said of us that we do not preach a gospel that includes all. But we do. We speak with David. Our testimony is just alike the world over. "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel" is the mark of a disciple. It is the mark of the church. It includes the guided ones. **It includes all the guided ones.** This guidance is not divided between the creature and the Creator. Salvation is not a joint affair. All this guidance is for all the ones guided. The Guide begins the guiding. His guiding does not begin until ours has guided us to ruin. We are not on the brink of ruin when he comes with counsel. We are not nearly lost when he appears as our guide. We are ruined and we are lost.

How far is he our guide? How long does he counsel us? In the beginning of our experience does he counsel us until we get in the right way and then leave us? No, that is beginning in the Spirit, but it is ending in the flesh. And it is not sound doctrine to advocate that thought. Here is another remarkable thought upon the simplicity of the gospel. Paul rebuked the brethren at Galatia for their beginning in the Spirit and following seducers back to the works of the law. In my files of the Primitive Baptist people are many glowing accounts of an experience of grace as far as the beginning goes, but as soon as the Lord guided them from the ruin and clutches of eternal damnation, then they carried the ball the balance of the trip. If Jesus does not mean anything more than that, we only need his guidance the one time in all of our pilgrimage here. It does look like that Paul's rebuke to the church at Galatia would be sufficient to show to anyone that not only must grace, or the Spirit or the counsel, guide us away from the first ruin and first sin, but that it must be our guide all the way.

It was God the Father that gave us to Christ. No loose threads left dangling nor no hanks tangled in that transaction. It was God the Son that accepted the gift and did the redeeming. Not a thing did he lose in that work, nor fail to bring to God complete satisfaction for the sins of all. Now who is our guide? And when was his work to be done? God the Father did his when he eternally made choice of the elect family. There is no account of God until he by inspiration begins to give that account. Did he acknowledge any failure back in the hidden depths of his eternal mind? No, blush at the thought and let it be banished forever. It was the work of the Lord Jesus Christ that was to redeem. He came at the proper and appointed time to do just that, no more, nor no less. Is that work tinged with failure? Or will his work do to lay parallel with the work of God the Father?

Come hither dear children for here your travelling supplies and marching orders are all in this Guide. The Guide is equal with the First and Second persons in the Godhead. If there is a weak link in salvation then salvation is weak, and if salvation is weak, then the Lord is weak, for salvation is of the Lord. If this is true, then Isaiah had Jesus mixed up with some one else, for we hear him declaring. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth and forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this", (Isaiah 9:6,7). This is what every gospel sermon and every gospel article is based on.

Here is God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Ghost all in One. Any attempt to separate them, or to minimize their work, will end in failure and ignominy.

Oh, Lord, we beg thee to keep us in this way. We are not worthy, precious God, of thy notice, but may it please thee, based altogether on thy grace, to keep the earth salted with those who are following the guidance and counselling of this One. Father, grant us to know and to sweetly feel the beginning of his government, and to experience in our daily and timely lives the unending extension of the increase and peace of the same. How happy we are when the Guide tells us that in me is peace; and whispers in our longing ears the things that the Spirit (guide) has to say to the churches. If we are the church of Jesus Christ, we must feel the same thing that Isaiah was given to see. He spoke in the present tense. I want to speak and write in that tense now; I want to tell what now is the truth. I want to set him forth as a present help in time of trouble. I want to tell others about, and have for my very own, unworthy though I be, a guide that is now ruling and guiding in his government with judgment and justice. And I want to feel, Oh, Lord, how I do want to feel that down and out yonder in the years before me that my salvation and blessings and safe landings will not be for me to guide myself into, nor for me to establish myself in the truth and maintain fellowship among the household of faith and order my speech and course before the Lord, but that the Holy One of Israel will guide us into the way of all truth, order all of our steps in that governing of his kingdom that is to stand forever, establish and ground and settle us in the doctrine now and henceforth forever.

That the sovereignty of God displayed in providential and parental care preserved us before being born again must be left to skeptics and unbelievers to deny, but it is primarily the children of God that the text applies to. It is a poor sinner that has felt his ruin and woe bring him to an ignomenious end, and that has felt the deliverance of God, that is blessed of God to take this text of his own. It is one that has pronounced himself as fit for death as a result of poor guidance (2 Sam. 12:5); it is one that has found out that the way of a man is not in himself (Jer. 10:23); it is one that has looked everywhere and not found the Lord (Job 23:8, 9); it is one that has tried to be his own guide and found that the guidance of the Lord is best even if found out in the belly of hell (Jonah 2:9); it is one that guided himself into the way of death (Rom. 7:10); it is one that felt so sure of his own guidance that he could stand face to face with the Guide and declare that he could take care of matters unto death and later found out in weeping that the Guide must take care of us (Luke 22:62), that finds this text sweet. With all the witnesses that can be found whose testimony is that the guiding of the Lord delivered them, it looks that we would never be troubled by any new doctrines that would intimate that a sinner could guide himself.

This guide is now counselling his people. How affectionately he calls her from the state of winter dormancy (S. S. 2:10); how exquisite the touch of his lips as he woos her into displaying her loving face to him and speaking of his love and guidance (S. S. 2:14); how precious the service that he guides us into, making us to leave all and follow him (Mark 10:28; I John 5:3); how green the pastures that he displays to our astonished gaze, and how deep the love of our guide is displayed in the still waters (Ps. 23:2; John 10:9); how establishing it is to be instructed (counselled) while in this waste howling wilderness and desert land (Deut. 32:10). Yes, this is being done now. This is this side of death; this is timely; this guidance is that salvation that is of the Lord. It begins with us when the Sun of righteousness arises with healing in his wings and the Sun will never set. Oh, precious readers, what a rich heri-

tage is ours; this radiant guide is to be our guide even unto death (Psalms 48: 14).

He begins the guiding and it lasts until death. It is Jesus that has begun a good work in you; it is he that will finish that work of instructing you with the guidance of the Comforter in the way of all truth. After this finished work of guidance by his counsel then cometh the end. We will not need guiding any longer. But we will need receiving up into glory. However much we have to do with the getting ourselves up into glory, just that much, no more, no less, do we have to do with the guiding while here. Both are of the Lord. The church is now preaching the guidance of the Lord; she will praise his holy name for her royal reception into glory. Thus, when the prophet declared that God would not give his glory and praise to another, we see it verified in this precious promise. He guides us here; he receives us up into glory. And to sum it all up. When the Lord promised to give both grace and glory (Ps. 84:11) he has done all for us for the time state and for hereafter that we will need. Grace to guide us here; grace to counsel us into paths of obedience while journeying through time, and at the resurrection we shall be received up into glory in soul and body and spirit.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

RESTITUTION
(Acts 3:21)

A sister whose address is Harding, West Virginia, wrote asking as follows: "In the restitution of all things, what will be the 'all things' that are to be restored? I have never heard any views on this, neither have I been enabled to grasp its full meaning."

We cannot tell why our ministers of late years have been silent on this subject of "restitution," unless it has been simply because their minds have not been exercised to speak and to write of it. In looking back over the writings of Old School Baptists years ago, one occasionally comes across references to this subject, which shows that our people of former generations accepted and believed the doctrine of "restitution." Nowadays, however, when this subject comes up, it seems to strike many as something they never heard of before. Thus, it may be good for us to be reminded of those things which we have let slip through not having been taught them. Restitution simply means restoration; the act of giving back what had at some former time been taken away. In this connection, it means restoring to the Jews what God had deprived them of. It means restoring the Jews to their own land and giving back to them the land taken from them. Not only, however, does restitution apply to giving back to the Jews their former land, but it means restoring the Jewish nation to covenant relationship with the Almighty through his Son Jesus Christ, whom they rejected and cruicified; but whom at his appearing again they will believe in as their Messiah and Redeemer. This can take place only when the Gentile church has been brought unto completion; and from the signs now among us, we believe this is about at hand. Religious organizations, that is, the form of religion, may continue on for some time to come, but the true body of Christ, which is his church, seems to be about finished. Already, and for some years past, the world has been witnessing the steady movement of the Jews toward their own land. The World War of 1914 to 1918 gave this movement a great impetus, and since then it has been growing by leaps and bounds. "He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

Just exactly as the word here says,

God the Father will send to the Jews his Son Jesus Christ. This Jesus was before preached unto them in all the types and shadows of the Mosaic covenant. He was declared by all the prophets unto them. It is perfectly true that the Mosaic covenant was disobeyed by the Jewish nation, wherefore they were cast out; and since their being cast out, God through Christ by his grace has brought the Gentile church in. When this body of Christ is completed from among the Gentiles, then will be brought to light the kingdom of heaven among the restored Jewish remnant in the land of promise. The covenant made by God with Abraham was before the law four hundred and thirty years, and the law which was afterward cannot by any means disannul the promise which preceded the law. But the Jews, as well as the Gentiles, cannot come in by the works of the law; they cannot possibly come into the kingdom by flesh and blood: it must be by promise, and wholly by God's grace. It will not and cannot be by their own might and power, but by the Spirit of the Lord. This is why the present world movement of Zionism has about come to a standstill on account of England's refusal to execute vigorously the mandate over the land of Palestine assigned to England by the League of Nations. England is afraid to antagonize the Arabs who are opposed to the Jews coming back to Palestine. Thus, the movement of Jews in that direction has been slowed down, but it is with almost breathless interest that we look for the next development in world affairs which will speed it up again.

Jesus Christ is at the present time in the heaven and has been in the heaven ever since his disciples with their own eyes beheld him ascend out of their sight; he will appear again at the fullness of the times of restitution, will appear to the Jews, and when they see him next time they will not say, "Away with him, crucify him. We will not have him rule over us." No, they will say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." They will gladly hail him as their King and Messiah. There is no spirituality in them as yet, and will not be until they are circumcised in heart, and that will not take place until they are back in the land, as Moses says in Deuteronomy 30:6. There is not a single one of the prophets but who declares this restoration of the Jews to their own land. As Acts 3:21, says, "The mouth of all his holy prophets" has spoken it. Moses, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Amos, Jeremiah and Isaiah all say so. Had we space, we would quote them all. "Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel." (Hosea 1:11) "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms, any more at all." (Ezekiel 37:21-22.) Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones refers entirely to this time of restitution, and not to the Gentile church at all, though it is often made to apply that way. You will note in this vision of the valley of dry bones, that the bones came together while there was still no life in them; flesh and sinews came upon the bones and yet there was no life there.

What an amazing picture is this of the coming together of Israel which we are witnessing today! In all this world-union of Jews everywhere for the purpose of returning to their own beloved land, there is no spiritual life from God yet. Nevertheless, the bones are coming together and the flesh and sinews are coming upon the bones. Never since the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans under Titus in 70 A. D. has there been such a world movement of Israel toward their own land as in this

present time. We are today seeing the verification of Ezekiel's vision, and the breath of spiritual life will be breathed into this restored remnant some time following their restoration to the land; just when, God alone knows. They are coming up out of their graves now, and the "graves" in this instance mean the different nations of the earth where the Jews have been scattered during their dispersion from their land. These graves are now opening and the dry bones are coming up out of them and are coming to their fellow-bones, and are receiving flesh and sinews, yet are still spiritually dead. The time of their awakening, which will take place when the Lord from heaven appears to them, may be much nearer than we think. Remember, it comes as a thief in the night and none of us will know of it until it is a matter of full realization. Read Amos 9:14-15; also Jeremiah 31:10-14. Indeed, search through all the prophets and then stand amazed at the declared wonders of prophecy you see revealed there. The marvelous workings of God's eternal plan and purpose are nothing short of stupendous. The present distresses among the nations of the Gentile world are plainly of the Lord, are plainly the fulfillment of his writen word. Economic depressions, droughts, famines, wars, pestilences, earthquakes, floods and all their kindred ills, are vials of the seven last plagues being poured out from heaven, all to wear down the political and world supremacy of the Gentiles to prepare the way for the kings of the East, to usher in the kingdom of heaven among the restored Jews, and when that is done the whole world will realize such a blessing flowing to all nations because of the kingdom of heaven, such an age as the world has never yet seen. Then, that which missionaries have been trying to do for one hundred and fifty years by proselyting and money raising will be done instantly, because it is expressly declared in the prophets that even the heathen shall know that God is the Lord and that Israel is his people, when the Lord shall set up his kingdom to reign; in that day when he shall take unto himself his great power and shall reign. Prior to this coming in of the kingdom, there will be some kind of world-federation, a last and most desperate effort on the part of Gentile world-power to retain their hegemony over the world which they already feel slipping from their grasp. When this world-federation is an established fact, we shall expect to see the "man of sin" at the head of it. But it will all go for naught. The final act of this "man of sin" with the world league backing him up, will be to move against the helpless restored Jews in the holy land; and that move will be the last desperate act of the Gentiles to regain their hold on world power. It will be nothing short of suicide for them.

In confirmation of this fact revealed in Holy Writ, read Ezekiel thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters. There you will find, just exactly as God has predestinated it, the assault of allied powers against the restored Jews, which will not only be fruitless, but absolutely fatal to Gentile supremacy: they shall die by thousands upon the mountains of Israel and be buried there, not because the Jews will be able to defeat them by themselves but because the Lord will himself appear and fight against them with the fire of his own wrath and indignation. This "day of the Lord" shall not come until the world shall first witness the rise and supremacy of the "man of sin", whose number is 666. So Paul says in 2 Thesalonians 2:3-4.

Strange as it may seem, the very day we received the request from this sister for information upon this subject, we received the February number of the **Gospel Standard** from London. To our amazement, we found in that number an article written by Mr. J. C. Philpot in 1854, over three-quarters of a century ago. We cannot forbear letting you have part of it, but wish you could read all of it. It comes from out of the past as a startling confirmation of what we believe, but which we find few peo-

ple at the present time do believe. Here it is:

"The restoration of the Jews to their own land seems to us as clearly revealed as their dispersion. (Deuteronony 30:1-5) It seems evident from the words, 'that the way of the kings of the East may be prepared,' that there will be a gradual preparation for their return, and that it will come to pass, not as a sudden miracle or unexpected event, but will take place as a matter long anticipated."

Now, this is amazing when you consider that when Mr. Philpot wrote these lines Zionism was not heard of as yet, and there was not yet any world organization of the Jews in 1854. Mr. Philpot bases his assertions entirely on the Bible, and not on the events of his time: a most wonderful proof of the spiritual insight of Mr. Philpot into these hidden things. Not one single word of what Mr. Philpot has written needs changing in the light of what we know today: events as they have come to pass show clearly that Mr. Philpot was entirely right. Let us quote him a little further:

"Most clear and distinct are the promises that the ten tribes thus carried into captivity, called in the Word of God from their leading tribe, 'Ephraim', and sometimes termed 'Israel', as distinct from the tribe called 'Judah', will be restored to their own land. We will not multiply quotations. It will be sufficient to refer our readers to the following passages: Isaiah 11:11-14; Ezek. 37:19-28; and to one which, from its distinct mention of the 'house of Joseph', that is, the ten tribes (Joseph being the father of Ephraim), we can hardly forbear quoting: 'And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them; for I will have mercy upon them; and they shall be as though I had not cast them off; for I am the Lord their God, and will hear them.' 'I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; and place shall not be found for them.' (Zech. 10: 6-10). The drying up of the river merely prepares the way for the return; but years may intervene before the event is accomplished, and there appears every reason to believe that Babylon will be destroyed before it takes place. See Isaiah fourteenth chapter."

So wrote the able Mr. Philpot seventy-seven years ago. All that has transpired in these seventy-seven years does not make necessary the change of a single word of his prediction. "Years may intervene before the event is accomplished," he says. Well years have intervened and it is being accomplished under our very eyes. As events come to pass day by day, they reveal what has been in the Divine Mind from eternity; history is nothing more or less than the unrolling of predestination. The Bible will interpret these events as they come to pass, if only we are given to understand them in the light of the Spirit. It is good for us to watch, and to pray as we watch.

May the Lord give us ever more and more of his light and not leave us to sleep on in darkness; that is, ignorance of his wonderful purpose.

(Editorial by Elder H. H. Lefferts, April, 1931 — republished by request)

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MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY
PLEASANT HOPE CHURCH

Cass County, Texas
November 29, 1953

Pursuant to call heretofore sent out by Pleasant Hope Church for a Presbytery to meet on above date for the purpose of the ordination of Brother H. S. Hill, to the office of Deacon of Pleasant Hope Church, the following Elders and Deacons met and organized themselves into a Presbytery; Elders T. A. Wall, R. W. Rhodes, John T. Everitt, C. M. Haygood, John Lee Smith and W. A. Speer. Deacons L. S. Hill, Arthur McLeod, W. B. Burkhalter, David C. Shelton, G. W. McDuff, Ed Chandler and A. L. Rowell.

The Presbytery organized itself by electing Elder T. A. Wall, Moderator and Elder W. A. Speer, as Clerk. Deacon Arthur McLeod was appointed as spokesman for the church who presented Brother Hill to the Presbytery.

After due examination of Brother Hill, as to deportment, qualifications and the state of God's gift to him as a Deacon to the satisfaction of the Presbytery, the Presbytery proceeded to ordain Brother Hill as follows; The Presbytery selected Elder John T. Everitt, to word the prayer and Elder R. W. Rhodes, to deliver the charge.

Whereupon the Presbytery then and there proceeded with the ordination by the laying on of hands of the Presbytery and in prayer by Elder John T. Everitt and then by charge

delivered by Elder R. W. Rhodes.

We the members of the Presbytery commend Deacon H. S. Hill, to all orderly orthodox Primitive Baptists as being sound in doctrine, careful in deportment and humble in the display of God's gift of the office of Deacon.

The right hand of fellowship was given Deacon H. S. Hill, by the members of the Presbytery, Pleasant Hope Church and Brethren, Sisters and friends. Deacon Hill was delivered back to the church duly ordained by the Presbytery and received by the church.

Minutes of the proceedings were read and approved and the Presbytery was adjourned in order with prayer by Elder John Lee Smith.

ELDER T. A. WALL, MODERATOR
ELDER W. A. SPEER, CLERK

ORDINATION OF ELDER H. L. ROGERS

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists, in peace and fellowship, standing as an independent church, made a motion at her November meeting to ask for a council to sit with them and consider the propriety of ordaining Brother Hiram L. Rogers to the gospel ministery on December 5, 1953.

According to promise, Elder George L. Weaver, of Huntington, W. Va., and Elder Charles Evans, and deacons of Enterprise Church, met with the Lost Creek Church.

After prayer and preaching by Brother H. L. Rogers, a Presbytery was organized, with Elder Weaver, Moderator. Sister Connie Rogers, to act as Clerk. Deacon Rogers was called upon to state his impressions on his call to the ministry; which was to the satisfaction of the Presbytery, both in doctrine and order of the Church of God.

Then proceeded with the ordination by the laying on of hands of the Elders and prayer. The Moderator delivered the charge and his sermon, using as his text 2 Timothy 4:1-5; then gave the right hand of fellowship to Elder Hiram L. Rogers as a regular ordained minister of the gospel, with the right to administer all the ordinances thereof, who was presented back to the church and received by them. Then the Presbytery was discharged.

After singing and prayer, adjourned until Sunday at ten o'clock.

Elder George L. Weaver, Moderator
Elder Charles Evans, Pastor,
Lost Creek Church
Sister Connie Rogers, Clerk
Fred Evans, Deacon

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, The Lord in his infinite wisdom and mercy has seen fit to remove from our midst by sudden and tragic death our beloved brother, C. F. Hatchett and our beloved sister, Mary Hatchett, his wife,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to God's holy will, desiring to be reconcilled and given grace to press forward to the mark and the prize of high calling, ever looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith;

RESOLVED, That the Hopewell church has lost two faithful members, but we feel that our loss is their eternal gain;

RESOLVED, That they will be missed by all who knew them and their humble life of service should be an inspiration as we journey along in the hope of a better world.

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be recorded on our church records; that a copy be furnished to the family and a copy be published in the Signs of the Times.

Done by order of the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church of 327 East Pierce Street, Mangum, Oklahoma, while in conference.

Elder C. E. Turner, Moderator
R. L. Buckner, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

We the Providence Church in regular session wish to pay respect to two of our oldest members and sisters and mothers in Israel, — Sister Mary D. Sloan and Sister Cordelia Bird, each was the good wife of our beloved Deacons.

Whereas, in the providence of Almighty God he was pleased to call from our midst our dear sisters, (Sister Sloan being a member some 50 years and Sister Bird 31 years).

We the Church of Providence wish by the help of God to bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father who doeth all things well. May his Grace sustain the bereaved husbands and families and host of friends.

Elder H. J. Bird, Moderator
St. Albans, West Virginia
V. L. Byrnside, Clerk

OBITUARIES

JOHN W. DAVIE

John W. Davie was born in Fulton County, Kentucky, December 10, 1882, and departed this life in July, 1953, making his stay on this earth seventy-one years and seven months.

He moved to Washington, D. C. in July, 1917, where he was employed by the I. C. C. until he retired in 1942; then he returned to Kentucky for a few years, and then moved to Bradenton, Florida. In 1908, Brother Davie was married to Miss Belle Atwill at her home in Fulton County, Kentucky; who survives him. He is also survived by Brother J. R. Davie, Fulton County, Kentucky, and two sisters Miss Zora Davie and Mrs. Ethel D. Cooper, Washington, D. C.

Soon after coming to Washington, Brother John located Shiloh Old School Baptist Church, of which Elder J. T. Rowe was pastor, and was baptized by Elder Rowe in 1917. After moving to Florida, he met Brother J. M. Haines, a deacon of Bethel Old School Baptist Church, Hillsboro County, Florida, and attended the meetings there. Later he and his wife moved their membership there by letter from Boaz Chapel, Fulton County, Kentucky, and was always present at meetings as long as health permitted.

Death came suddenly, and his body was brought back to Kentucky, attended by Brother Haines, where it was laid to rest in the old church yard among many of his loved ones to await the coming of his dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, whom he loved above all else and whom he had tried to serve so long. Burial services were conducted by Elder Harrison, of near Midway, Tennessee, who spoke comforting words to the grief stricken family and friends.

Since early in life he was a firm believer in salvation by grace only; and that God predestinated all things from the beginning of the world, and had hope that God in his goodness and mercy had included him among the ones that he sent his dearly beloved Son Jesus to redeem, and to call forth on that glorious morning of the resurrection when he shall come again and gather together those that God gave him from the foundation of the world.

Written in loving remembrance by his sister,

Ethel Davie Cooper

CORA A. WILSON

This is to note the passing of our dear sister, Cora A. Wilson, who was born December 13, 1887, and died October 1, 1953. Several years ago, she joined the Primitive Baptist Church, and was baptized by Elder Campbell, and lived a Christian life ever since. She was devoted to the cause of the truth, and loved the brethern with a pure heart feverently.

In 1936, she moved to Fort Worth and was received by the church there, where she was loved by all who knew her.

Her funeral was conducted in Fort Worth by her pastor, Elder C. Y. Osteen, who tried to speak words of comfort to those who mourned. The text used was, "His Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the sons of God."; trying to portray some of the beauties of the world to come, of which we have hope.

(Elder) C. Y. Osteen

MRS. MATILDA JOSEPHINE MOORE

At the request of Mt. Zion Church, and with a sad heart, I will try to write a short sketch of my mother-in-law. She was born in Roanoke, Virginia, September 19, 1856, and passed away August 20, 1953; making her stay on earth ninety-six years, eleven months and one day.

She was married to John A. Moore, and to this union were born ten children. Her husband and six children preceeded her in death; four are yet living: Mrs. Cosby Howard, Altus, Oklahoma; Mrs. E. B. Ault, Weslaco, Texas; Hassel M. Moore, Austin, Texas and John A. Moore, Corpus Christi, Texas. There are twenty grandchildren and a host of great grand children.

She and her husband both joined Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, Weslaco, Texas, twenty-seven years ago; and both lived faithful members until his death May 18, 1930. It was then that the church lost a kind and well qualified deacon, and Grand-ma Moore lived a faithful member until her death. She has been a jewel in our home these many years. She was sound in the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone. For several years she was blind, and many times I watched her listening to the radio, and when they would preach salvation by works she would shake her head. That dear old sister in Israel knew by experience that it was not by works that she received her hope. Yes, it teaches all of His little ones that it is not by works of righteousness which they do, but by free grace bestowed upon unworthy creatures.

We miss her so much now, but realize that she is out of all the trials and troubles of this life. She always looked forward to our meeting days, and enjoyed them so much. Most of the time I was able to read some to her out of our religious papers or the Bible before going to bed, and she enjoyed these few minutes so much. I have always had a tender feeling for old folks, and especially for Old Baptists and those who have a hope.

It will not be long before we too come to our journey's end here in this life. Grand-ma had a sweet hope of that heavenly home not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. A few days before she passed away, she told me of a dream she had. She said it seemed that her children were around her bed, and that she was talking to them and telling them goodbye, that she was leaving this old world, soon to be with her blessed Saviour. O, what a manifestation of that precious love which is more precious than any earthly love.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor and Elder J. B. Reid; after which her remains were laid to rest in the Weslaco Cemetery, where her dear husband was placed some twenty-three years ago, to await the resurrection morning. Truly a mother in Israel

has passed on.

(Elder) E. B. Ault

W. J. WOODALL

Mr. W. J. Woodall was born in Cherokee County, Texas, November 1, 1870, and departed this life September 11, 1953, making his age eighty-three years and nine months. He was married to Miss Mary Clemantine Harris, December 19, 1890, and to this union were born seven children: Miss Lizzie Woodall, Dorsie, Texas; Elder Charlie C. Woodall, Franklin, Texas; Mrs. Dora Wren, Dorsie, Texas; Mrs. G. D. Woodall, Baytown, Texas; Mrs. Lois Suttle, Dorsie, Texas; and two having passed on. These, together with sixteen grand children and sixteen great grandchildren, and a host of friends and neighbors mourn his passing. They will long remember his orderly walk in going in and out before them. His expression denoted his character; calm and sedate his manner and disposition, he made his word his bond, never suffering it to be called in question; which was a pattern set that all would do well to follow. Such was he as a citizen, and as a Christian gentleman above reproach, is why we mourn.

Mr. Woodall never felt himself fit to offer himself to the old church, but was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace, and not of works lest any man should boast, (Ephesians 2:8-9); eternal and unconditional election of His people chosen in Christ and called; the resurrection of the dead of the just and unjust; and the absolute predestination of all things, yea, signs, events and wonders. I have spent many pleasant hours in his home, and his whole conversation would embrace the goodness and mercy of God, and praising the Lord for the great and many blessings he had bestowed upon him; but not for what he had done for the Lord, for he, by the grace of God, had been made to see that he had never done anything for the Lord. He loved the Signs of the Times, and the doctrine it contends for. He believed in the absolute certainty of things, and an ordained purpose for the same; a fixed beginning and end for every piece of his handiwork: the environments thrown around the whole being of such nature as to subject each piece to such circumstances and conditions as to naturally incline them all to the fulfilling of His purpose.

Elder W. M. Barger, of the New School Baptists, spoke words of comfort to the bereaved; after which the body was laid in its tomb, here to await the second coming of our Lord without sin unto salvation, to gather his elect unto himself; saying to the North give up, and to the South keep not back, and presenting them to the Father, pure, holy and without blame before God in love.

Written by request, and for the Signs of the Times.

W. A. Little
Fort Worth 4, Texas

MRS. ANNIE ELIZA GIBSON

We the Saints-Rest Church of Christ, of Dallas, Texas, write and record this article on our church record in memory of our dear sister in Christ, Mrs. Annie Eliza Gibson (nee Rogers), whom the Lord in His wisdom and mercy has removed from us, bringing sorrow and sadness to our hearts. But while we are deprived of her presence and her godly conversation here, we feel that it is best; for she is removed from a world of sin to a land of rest, where no sorrow can come.

She was born October 20, 1872, departed this life June 6, 1952, at the age of 79 years, 7 months and 17 days.

She was married in young womanhood to J. A. Gibson. She was the mother of eight children, four sons and four daughters. Her husband, three sons, and one daughter preceeded her in death. She also reared an orphan boy, Eugene Brewer. She was a member of Saints Rest Church in Dallas for many years.

She leaves to mourn her passing one son, L. Wallace Gibson, three daughters, Mrs. Frances DeFir, Miss Ruth Gibson, Mrs. Charles Campbell, and Eugene Brewer, a number of grandchildren, together with many friends who showed their love and respect with an abundance of flowers. To all these we would say; Weep not as those who have no hope, for we believe that when Christ comes to make up His jewels she will among them stand.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder L. D. Rose of Athens, Texas, assisted by the unworthy writer. She was laid to rest in the cemetery at Waco, Texas to await the coming of her Lord.

Be it resolved therefore that we bow in submission to the will of our God; record this on our church record; send a copy to the family, and a copy to the Signs of the Times for publication. Done by order of the church in regular conference October 31, 1953.

(Elder) W. W. Taylor, Moderator
John J. Beene, Clerk
Written by,
(Elder) C. B. Teague

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 122 DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1954 NO. 2

EXPERIENCE OF SISTER LUCY W. CRAIG

For many years I have had a desire to write what I hope and believe is an experience of grace.

It has been thirty-four years since I united with the church at Camp Branch (in Virginia). As early as I can remember I feared God, and felt his all seeing eye watching over me. I remember going with my parents to old Snow Creek Primitive Baptist church before services were discontinued there. The singing was so beautiful: it seemed then that I felt heaven near me. The preaching sounded like a far away voice, and I could not hear or understand. Then there were several years that I did not hear a Baptist preach. But when the elders and members visited in our home, I wanted to hear them discuss the Scriptures, for I had a love for them that I didn't have for other people.

As the years passed I attended the Christian church with my brothers and sisters, and at the age of sixteen I joined that church. I was persuaded to believe at that time that it was my duty to join the church if I wanted to be saved. I obeyed the rules of the church, but I was not happy about it and felt condemned, as I did not feel any change of heart. I went on several years, not giving any serious thought to my fears that I had not been good enough to join any church. I read the Bible but never read the Scripture that seemed to always be coming into my mind: "Marvel not that I say unto you ye must be born again." One day a voice come to me very forcibly: "Remember thy creator in the days of thy youth." A fear came over me, and I felt condemned as a heavy burden was laid on me.

I went to the family Bible and opened it. My eyes fell on the words I had just heard. I tried to pray for forgivness, but my burden became heavier — I could find no comfort in reading the Bible. For a year I carried the burden, trying to hide it; and all the while praying for deliverance. When I had given up hope and was so distressed I felt I couldn't go on living with the burden, the same voice awoke me from sleep saying, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, you cannot tell from whence it comes or whither it goes; so is every one who is born of the Spirit." The burden was gone. My heart felt a joy I could never express: I felt as if everything was praising God with me.

A blessed sweetness flowed into my soul. He had put a new song in my mouth, even praise to his great and holy name. I thought I could keep this to myself, as I felt too young to join the Primitive Baptist church, and didn't feel worthy of a home with such good people as I felt they were. The next service I attended was at North Fork church. When the Elder took his text, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," I felt the words were spoken to me, for I was heavy laden. I believe the God of our salvation gave me an ear to hear and a heart to understand — it embraced me and the tears of sorrow were turned to joy.

Paul testifies: "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Corinthians 4:6). And Isaiah says, "I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; I will lead them in paths they

have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight." (Isaiah 42:16).

I didn't offer to the church then. At times I would feel that I was mistaken in it all — I wanted more evidence. One day when I was exhausted from worry and the burden I was carrying, I laid down to rest and fell asleep. I was awakened by a voice as if reading from the Bible: "He who is ashamed to confess me before men, I will also be ashamed to confess before my Father in heaven."

"This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be **after me."** (Isaiah 43:10 a 21).

The fourth Sunday in April, 1919, I went to Leatherwood church to preaching. When the doors of the church were announced open, I was in front of the stand, shedding tears, before I realized what I had done. I couldn't tell one word of my experience, or any reason why I was there asking a home with the Lord's people. They received me, and I have enjoyed their fellowship and love all these years; for which I am truly thankful, but unworthy of. I was baptized the third Sunday in June, 1919.

I have passed through many trials and deep sorrows since then; but His grace has been sufficient. I hope I can say with the Apostle, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." (2 Corinthians 4:17). I have felt His strong arm beneath me, and have had many seasons of rejoicings. The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy and peace. I have felt his presence near me many times when I thought I was facing death, and at other times when I felt my burdens were too heavy to bear. I can understand part of what Isaiah said in the forty-second chapter: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

I hope I have been enabled to look to Him to direct my steps, and prepare me for the day when He is pleased to call me hence, to praise him through the countless ages of eternity.

In bonds of love,
Lucy W. Craig
1218 Bay Street,
Portsmouth, Virginia

2085 East Broadway,
Vancouver, B. C., Canada.

Dear Brother and Sister Risler:

In answer to your kind letter my thoughts reach out to your loneliness at Ebenezer Church and to Mrs. Dodson in her sorrow. I have longed to find words to tell her how the Comforter does come to fill the unbearable emptiness which closes in around one.

To glimpse the sweet spiritual beauty attending the death of a saint is sometimes given to one as his portion of comfort. This sweet unction lifted me up to the joy in Zion as each of my parents died. The perfection of Zion shines out and obliterates the dreadful grief down here in this low ground. I desire words to meditate about the peace of God which passeth all understanding and the Comforter. Christ promised to send the Comforter. He promised to come to us, He promised never to leave nor forsake us. I do know that we live to die at the appointed time. That sweet moment when He calls, is a moment when heaven opens with unspeakable perfection.

I wish I could have a long visit with you about something so spiritually sweet in a saint just before going home to glory. In our home was a presence invisible and undescribably sweet to take my saintly mother home immersed in a spiritual love which I cannot describe. The Bible shows me that in any experience it is indeed sweet when at-

tended by another like unto the Son of God. Our gentle Saviour has destroyed any terror of this second death for a child of grace. He hid the sadness away from me and showed my inner mind how perfect and altogether lovely the departed one was.

My deceased father, who might have preached if he had been well enough physically, ended his last letter to Bellingham church thus; "How blessed is the Lord to give us comfort even in sickness. I did not take into consideration the thought of being down sick up in the woods, yet I was brought to find out. I am so glad you still get together as a church. Do this all you can and you will be comforted by so doing. I think brother Davis Burch will be over as usual when able. If the Lord sees fit to give me back my former strength I may come up and visit for a few days. How little we thank the Lord for when we have health and strength. May we be more thankful for what we receive again. I received a letter from Elder Coleman. I am glad you meet as often as you can as a church. The meeting in December was a precious one to me and I think it was to all. It may not be long before we are taken from our earthly home to dwell in the heavenly one, and if we are so blessed it will be because of His infinite mercy and comfort. We cannot do anything to make the Lord do this, it is all of mercy, grace and peace from Him. May He comfort and keep you and so guide you into rest in Him. As ever yours in gospel love. J. R. Duffus."

My father preached and was ordained there near Bellingham, Wash. He did love brother Davis Burch so much and enjoyed brother Burch's preaching. These members have moved away from Bellingham, Wash.

I was reminded of other glimpses of this rest in Him. The deceased Elder Jeffreys wrote about a life of rest and peace to the saints of His holy calling. I have witnessed this sweet wisdom and rest in more that one saint before their departure from these shores of time. This theme is so sweet to me — that of dying grace — when the inner man shines forth more brightly, and, oh, so sweetly.

Once my father rose to his feet and preached to cursing men in the woods. After they listened to him ascribe honor, glory and peace to his God, the listeners apologized for their conversation. Another time in a street car father explained to questioners that our physical eyes will never see that changed perfection in the resurrection. This brings me to a few sweet moments which I glimpsed with sister Rosa Coleman. After receiving a letter about the resurrection she dreamed that she was approaching a square dwelling with the door ajar towards the left. Inside that door was a heavenly beauty she could not convey to me, velvet lined with the most delicate sunset tint. That room was filled with this indescribable beauty not of this earth. Then a voice spoke saying, "This is what Elder Dodson believes." To the right she noticed a kind of projecting bar of metal perhaps iron. From that direction the thoughts without words printed an impression on her mind, "It is just asleep." Then sister Rosa told me of two sweet death bed scenes from out of her long nursing experience. One woman sat propped up and wanted them all to sing. She named several departed ones who were marching in a white robed heavenly host coming to take her into this joy. Another man was visited exactly 24 hours before he would die. He told friends they would come and take him with them in 24 hours, when he did die. There is shining joy above the sorrow and suffering.

This letter has been laid aside for a long time but I will post it anyway. I wish I could live in these letters and think and worship with my best friends who know the joyful sound. Humbly,

(Mrs.) Catherine McKenzie
(nee Duffus)

172 Emery Street,
London, Ontario, Canada.

Dear Elder Spangler:

It is time for me to send in my renewal for the Signs of the Times; and if the Lord will direct my mind, I would like to tell something of my travel of mind in this low ground of sin and sorrow.

Many years ago I feel I was made to "Wait patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings; And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." I was made to tell it to the church, and was received and baptized. What precious memories are brought to my mind that I was made to confess His name when but a young woman, and all through the years I have been kept by some wonderful and mysterious power until this time, ever looking unto Jesus. Sometimes I feel I cannot praise him enough.

"Nothing in my hand I bring!
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die!"

Sometimes we travel through the valley of dispair; then on the mountain top, viewing the King in his glory afar off. Then he draws near and we feel his presence, and we are filled with wonder, love and praise.

We do all need to tread softly lest we wound a brother. We desire to be forgiving and to have charity in our hearts for one another. There is none righteous, no, not one; all our sufficiency is in Christ. "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." (James 1:5) "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." (James 3:17-18). Is the Lord not our peacemaker? And if we look to him, and if it is his purpose, we shall have peace, for in no other way can we attain unto righteousness.

How many times are we made to plead and pray that He would guide us in all things, for He knows the way we take; and he also knows how frail we are. Sometimes it is through the fire — the dross to consume, and our soul to cleanse from all sin. How unsearchable are his ways, and his wonders past finding out. He leadeth me and I want to be still and know that he is God.

Yesterday I received the December number of the Signs; and it contained so many precious truths which were sweet to my taste. It least, I trust I know something of the way of a sinner. Sometimes I feel that I am the chief of sinners. Yes, I know I am a great sinner, but it is my hope that I have a great Saviour. Your editorial **"Doctrine — Order"**, was especially good. How needful it is to have our pure minds stirred up upon those things. It was needful when Jesus was here upon the earth; also in Paul's generation. To us, it seems even more needful in the present time. Nevertheless, we have to look to the Lord to guide and keep us in the narrow way that leadeth unto eternal life.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." Amen.

If I have written anything I should not have written, do not put it in the Signs. I have quoted much scripture but it will not be edifying unless the Lord bless the reading of it. I feel He must increase and I must decrease. To him be honor and power and glory forever.

Kindly remember me to Sister Spangler. We certainly felt blessed in having you in our midst.

Yours in a precious hope,
(Miss) Lottie M. Campbell

Rives, Tennessee

Dear Editors:

I have been requested to send the enclosed Obituary to the Signs for publication when you have room. It is in memory of "Uncle Tom" (James Thomas Golden), as he was called by all who knew him. While he never united with the church, he was a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God; which was evidenced by his words and actions, manifesting a great love for the brethern and church.

Paul says that we know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethern. Love is the foundation upon which all things rest. Love is of God: We love him because he first loved us. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God" (John 3:1). There are none other than the sons that can behold that love, because John continues to say that the world knoweth us not because it knew him not. Christ says, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." He spoke of this in reference to his laying his own life down for his friends: they being his Father's sons and joint-heirs with himself. God's love is prevailing now as it has ever prevailed, and will prevail and make known these things to his sons and hide them from others; and Jesus thanked his Father that it was so. Christ also says that no man knoweth the Son but the Father, and no man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

Paul says, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out." (Romans 11:33). And Jeremiah makes record of the fact that the Lord has loved his children with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness he has drawn them.

This is just a glimpe of the manner of love he has bestowed upon his sons. We believe that God's love was wrought in Uncle Tom to the end that he loved the brethern. Services were conducted by Elder E. C. Lowry and myself; after which the remains were laid to rest in the church cemetery shrouded with a beautiful array of flowers — a token of the love of his many friends and relatives.

(Elder) R. L. Harrison.

WHO WAS THE CERTAIN MAN THAT FELL AMONG THIEVES?

"A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him and departed, leaving him half dead." (Luke 10:30)

We believe that Jerusalem sets forth the city of God, of which Jerusalem that then was, was a type, being walled about, elevated at the top of the mountains, and having within its walls the Temple of God. Jericho also stands here as a type, it sets forth man and his fleshly righteousness, whose pride and vainglory, like walls and towers that brave the skies, will be laid low, even in the dust. It was here that one of the Israelites, named Achan, disobeyed God's word, lusting after and taking a Babylonish garment, two hundred shekels of silver and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight. This city's walls were thrown down at the blast of the rams' horns, and Rahab the harlot was miraculously saved when the city was destroyed. She was a lively type of Gentile believers, for she had faith in the God of Israel, a faith that can, and does, justify the ungodly. Not only was Jericho to be destroyed, but Joshua (a type of Jesus) adjured them at that time, saying, "Cursed be the man BEFORE THE LORD, that riseth up and buildeth this city of Jericho: (mark the language) he shall lay the foundation thereof in his first born son and in his youngest

son shall he set up the gates of it. (Joshua 6:26.) In the days of wicked Ahab and Jezebel, a man named Hiel laid the foundation in Abiram his first born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub. (I Kings 16:34.) Hiel means the life of God, and a subject of grace has the life of God in his soul, but when he turns again after the flesh, which is dead to the life of God, he then builds again that which (in his right mind) he would destroy, and he is a transgressor. All the offspring of this man, from first to last, is built upon a false foundation. Often in the Scripture a name is full of meaning. Abiram, the first born, means "a father of fraud" showing a fatal error in turning and building on other foundations than that that is already laid, the foundation laid in Zion. Segub means fortified or raised, he set up the gates in his youngest son. This city that is thus established signifies the strange woman, Proverbs 5. who has established, almost universally, the Pagan practice of sprinkling water for burial in baptism, and instead of believer's baptism has ceased to wait for God's work to be manifest, bringing into her house the whole family from Abiram, the first born, unto Segub the youngest. Wisdom hath builded her house, which sets forth Jerusalem, but the product of fleshly pride, Jericho is the home of the strange woman. "For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil. But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go DOWN to death; her steps take hold on hell." (Proverbs 5: 2-5.)

This certain man had been in the city of the great King, and had enjoyed the freedom of that blessed city, the security of its walls of salvation, and had entered by the gate of praise. His very name was written in Heaven, even though he were only a babe in Christ, Jesus had rejoiced over him and had said "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them into babes." (Matthew II: 25.) Jerusalem sets forth the elect of God, a blessed people who know the joyful sound, and walk in the light of God's countenance, a people who have been delivered from the bondage of the Law, into the liberty of the Gospel. Now it has always been the thought of God's children in their first love, when their mountain seems strong, and their soul is full of comfort in believeing, that such is their lot that they will never see trouble again. They have much to learn. One lesson they may have to learn, yea, all do, sooner or later, is, that the world, professing and profane, is no friend to grace. It is grace in the heart, and that only, which shows that such an one belongs to the City of God. Being still in a body of flesh, they learn that the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, the one contrary to the other, so that they cannot do the things that they would. Though they have evidence that God has begotten them again unto a lively hope, they must be kept by the power of God, yes, and they are kept by that power, but He has His own way of teaching them lessons, that they could not learn in any other way. Jonah, to preach the preaching God bid him, must go down into the deep, so that the weeds were wrapped about his head, till he felt the earth with her bars about him for ever. There he learned "Salvation is of the Lord." Peter too, learned, in a very strange way, but by the mercy of God, he learned it well.

This man, after he had felt the righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, for some reason, best known unto God, leaves the city. No doubt his carnal mind began to show itself averse to the law of the city, through an evil heart of unbelief, which is the sin that so easily besets us, and losing sight of Jesus, who is the light of the city, in whose light we see light, he, trusting in himself, and his own strength, leaves Jerusalem behind him and goes down with his face TOWARDS JERICHO. Blessed be a covenant-keeping God, he never got

down that far. How very strange that one who had tried to go up to Jerusalem and had found it an impossible thing, until the Lord brought him there, opening to him the everlasting doors, that he might enter in, should be so beguiled as to leave, and go down towards such a place as Jericho. The foolish Galatians were here, they began well, but were later bewitched by false teachers, who, as thieves, robbed them of their raiment. Acting as taskmasters, they wounded them and left them half dead. We would like to state here that this certain man under consideration is not a person who is dead in trespasses and sins and who by the law is convicted of sin. The law is no thief, it demands what is its own, for he is a debtor. The law never leaves a man half dead, IT KILLS HIM, for it is the ministration of death. This certain man is a citizen of the city of God, and as the Galatians, he finds what it is to be stripped of all comfort, joy and peace in believing, being robbed and spoiled. He was wounded, sick and sore and left half dead. There was life enough left in him to feel his sad plight and to remember what blessedness was his to enjoy when first he saw the Lord, and what a soul-refreshing view he once had of Jesus and His word. This poor wanderer was dead enough to know the plight he was in, which we are sure resulted in a self-loathing, and it was here he learned what Jonah's vow really meant. He could not help himself, no matter how many thieves might say it was up to him to act out faith and get up and be doing. Such thieves always belittle the precious evidences of grace in which God's saints are established, but though they have stripped and wounded the poor soul, who sighs and groans and is ready to faint, he is still alive and blaming himself for his condition. The priest, by chance, came down that way, he saw him, but passed by on the other side. To the priest he might appear quite dead, as most of the saints do to the worldly priests to-day, for such teachers generally teach darkness for light and light for darkness and call death in carnality, life, and how can such COME NEAR or comfort a soul in distress? The priest stands for the moral law and the Levite for the ceremonial law, therefore they could be no help to this man, rather they added to his discomfort, going by, as they did, IN THEIR OWN STRENGTH. They passed by on the other side. This man had been delivered from the law by the body of Christ. He journeyed from the city which is free from the curse towards Jericho, and here, we would not have you think that it was just Arminian preachers that robbed and wounded him, far from that. We are all Arminians in the flesh, and if a man is in the Spirit, all that Arminian preachers say cannot hurt him, rather, if he, at any time, has to listen to them, it may result in sharpening his spiritual wits to the preciousness of those things which he himself has been taught of God. There was a time in Israel, and we fear it is coming again, when God's servants, who divided between the precious and the vile, like the blacksmiths, who sharpened the share, coulter, axe and mattock, had disappeared, and as in I Samuel 13:20. The Israelites went down to the Philistines to sharpen every man his share, coulter, axe and mattock. May God pity us, and spare us from such a calamity.

But to come back to this certain man, we believe he is typical of every child of God, who suffers in the flesh, that he should cease from sin and live unto God. Oh, how very soon many of us, who had enjoyed the freedom God has wrought, turned from our steadfastness, and found ourselves glorifying in the flesh, beginning also to find fault and even to smite our brethren. (Matthew 24:49.) In this case, of course, we all carry the thieves with us wherever we go. To name a few of these loathsome thieves they are pride, vainglory, hypocrisy, malice, guile, envy, evil speaking, an evil heart of unbelief, and fleshly and worldly lusts; their number is legion. No one knows the vileness and filthiness of all these, until he gets

down where this poor man was, stripped and wounded. This is not just an incident once in a lifetime, it often occurs with the most gracious of men, look at David, a man after God's own heart. This was no "can't help it" religion with him, and it will not be in these days with God's humbled poor. He cried again and again unto the Lord with his voice, unto the Lord he made his supplication, he poured out his complaint before Him and showed Him his trouble. He took all the blame upon himself, "Against Thee, and Thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight." What a prayer-book is David's Psalms for such as this man. The priest and the Levite passed by all this, but glory to God, there is One who will never pass by such a poor groaning soul. It is written "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, SAITH THE LORD. I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him." Now our Lord was a Jew but could be called a Samaritan, and the Jews hated Him as they did the Samaritans, and said to Him, "Thou art a Samaritan and hast a devil." The Samaritans were of mixed blood, not pure Jewish stock. Jesus did have Gentile blood in His veins, as did many of the Jews, but took on Himself the seed of Abraham and was David's son. He is the certain Samaritan that journeyed that way, not to Jericho, for He can never come under the curse again. He went that way to rescue His sheep that was lost. He had compassion on him and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, the oil of the Spirit and the wine of His own precious blood. Oh, the comfort that is felt and the tears of gratitude that flow from Zion's poor when Jesus shows His lovely face. When He speaks, "love sits in His eyelids and scatters delight," and the stony heart is soft. Peter knew, and felt this, when Jesus looked on him WITH COMPASSION. Thomas did also, when from his heart he cried "My Lord and my God." The love, compassion and tenderness of the dear Redeemer is beyond words of ours, it can only be known and felt, it beggars language to describe it. He applied the only remedy for such a case, which is His balmy blood, and poured into the wounds the oil of joy, so he rejoiced in the Spirit and had no confidence in the flesh. He took him up in His loving arms and put him on His own beast. Whatever this beast was it was His. He Himself rode into Jerusalem on an ass, whereon never man sat, and the disciples were told to answer any man who asked why they untied the colt, "The Lord hath need of him." Here then is one of God's humble servants, unclean in himself as the ass, but used by the Master, one who goes, and stops, at the word of God, who is content with a "Thus saith the Lord." The Lord used the ass as He may use whomsoever He pleases, as He used the angels to carry Lazarus to Abraham's bosom (the covenant of grace) The servant of Abraham used a camel, another unclean creature, to carry Rebekah until she saw Isaac, when she lighted off the camel, and Isaac brought her into mother Sarah's tent. He used one of His creatures. This ass could do nothing of himself, he is at the Master's bidding, and the word must come from this CERTAIN SAMARITAN. He sent His word and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions. (Psalms 107:20.)

"And He brought him to the inn." Now an inn is a place of refreshment and rest, where the wayfaring man, though a fool, is brought, and where brethren encourage one another in the way, and where they sing to the praise of the mercy they have found. This sets forth the Church of God while in this wilderness world, the place where His wayward sheep are brought again and again to the rest and peace of Zion, to be refreshed with dainties such as angels have, and with the children's bread. He took care of him as only He could, and on the morrow, which means another day has come, He departed, for it would not do for the child of God to always be blest with the pre-

sence of the Son of man, for we walk by faith and not by sight, but though He withdraw, yet goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our life. When He departed He took out two pence and gave them to the host and said unto him, "Take care of him and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again I will repay thee." This host is the pastor of the church, who has the watch-care of the flock, the two pence are equal in value to the half-shekel, and that was the price of the soul. In Exodus the rich could pay no more and the poor might pay no less. (Exodus 30:15.) Thus He who paid the price, to whom we owe all, has given to true pastors, faith to know and see that Jesus is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and faith to see in the Old and the New Testaments who they were for whom He died. Faith being the currency of the Kingdom. His host knows that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and he desires to declare the whole counsel of God. There is also an embracing and attention to the two ordinances of the Gospel Church, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The host, for the welfare of those committed to his care, must be of a ready mind, not for filthy lucre, he must dwell upon experience and doctrine, for his guests are very fond of honey in the honeycomb, not railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing. He must reprove and rebuke with all long suffering and doctrine, he must beseech by the mercy of God and exhort with fidelity to the truth of God. He must not think of pleasing himself, he must bear the infirmities of the weak, he must weep with those that weep, and rejoice with those that do rejoice. To be faithful to his trust, he must do all these things and more. He must draw from the Old and New Testament as from the divine storehouse, not by the wisdom of this world which cometh to nought, but by these two pence, the faith of the operation of God. He must feed the sheep, not whip the goats. Feeding the sheep and the lambs and not disputing or debating with Arminians, he must be an example to the flock. His daily walk and conversation among his fellow-men must be above reproach, he must not drink wine to excess but be filled with the Spirit. Much depends upon his testimony, he should therefore be grave, not flippant or light, he should strive to read the Word carefully and quote it correctly, and speak distinctly as before the Judge of all. If conscientious, he will want every word to be heard and understood. To be faithful, he must preach a full and complete salvation of body, soul and spirit, which are God's, through the precious blood of His only begotten Son, and whatever labour, suffering and reproach may be heaped upon him, in the good fight of faith. His Lord, when He comes again, will bestow a crown of righteousness upon him, and not only upon him, but upon all who love His appearing. He will be abundantly repaid.

"Go thou and do likewise" was spoken, shall we say, in derision, unto that lawyer who would be wiser than his Maker and tempted Jesus, and who, willing and desirous, like so many today, to justify himself, said, "And who is my neighbour?" We will leave him to the desolation and destruction that was soon to come upon them. A full and sufficient account of the latter end of all such is given in Proverbs 1:24-33. Could we take this sentence from its setting and address the people of God, we would ask if we are in any way doing likewise? Our complaint will be, we have left undone the things we ought to have done and done the very things we ought not to have done and we fear we are as guilty as this wise lawyer of tempting God, and often we show ignorance of who our neighbor is. But to return. Here then has our Lord set before us an example, that we should walk in His steps. He has shown who was his neighbour, and who the one was who journeyed that way and bound up his wounds and carried him to the inn. While he was here, He, as well as His apostles, showed us how we ought to behave, not to

please ourselves, but to please God. Oh, how unkind brethren in the ministry can be to brethren, and often a bad spirit rules which says, do unto him as he has done unto me, and if not prevented by God's mercy, the church becomes a den of thieves. Much of the distress in the church to-day comes through the pulpit. The host is unfaithful, the guests are not fully cared for, there is a sadness and discontent, and the ways of Zion mourn. May God cause us to lay it to heart and give us a zeal for His house, a sympathy for each other, a love for His cause and a sincere desire to love and minister unto every poor soul that has ever fallen among thieves. If the host is in his right mind, he will be clothed with humility and be at the feet of his brethren, and when he is by himself, he will be praying and crying to his God for help to enable him to make full proof of his ministry, looking unto and longing for that day when his Lord shall return and he shall hear him say "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

(Elder) George Ruston — (1949)

Star Route,
Northport, Alabama.

Dear Elder Sanders:

I don't feel worthy of taking up your valuable time to read my poor scribbling. I know it can't be of much value to anyone, for I feel to be cast down and in the dark so much of my time; though, if the Lord wills, and you will bear with me, I might try to tell just a little of my past life, and what took place with me in the year 1927. Prior to that time I went along for four long years not knowing what my troubles were all about. I couldn't be content at home or anywhere else. I wasn't thinking anything about the Lord and his goodness, and didn't even take time to try to call on Him for mercy. I was at that time trying to build great castles here, thinking I might have a big name among men in trying to get a school house built — thinking that I might see myself as the Pharasee saw himself when he went to pray.

In October, about one week before the school was to start, one of our neighbors wanted to go down to the County Agent's office and see if I couldn't get her a job as one of the teachers in the school. So, I was getting my car ready to go, and, to my surprise, I was struck to the ground, and was carried into the house by my wife and children. They laid me on the bed, and there I was for three days — couldn't even turn myself in bed. I was in the most painful condition I had ever been in in all my life, and getting worse all the time. I never had before been made to see myself such a vile sinner as then, knowing that if I died in that hour Hell would be my doom. I was lying there looking right down into that bottomless pit, realizing that my own arm was too short to reach my case; yet feeling too unworthy to call on His great and good name. Through, Elder Sanders, I was made to realize that He was my only strength — not having any of my own, and I was made in my weak way to try to ask the Lord to have mercy on me a sinner, feeling as Saul did: the chiefest of sinners. And while trying to pray, there were a few moments of my life that was blank to me; when I came to myself it seemed brighter than the noon day sun, and I was made to feel so good I just can't start to tell my feelings. I realized that I was on the bed, but felt so light that I was almost floating in the air. There wasn't an ache or pain about me at that time, while just a few minutes before I had never been in such a restless condition. This happened about sun-down and I felt good until midnight.

I couldn't keep from telling my wife my feelings, though since that time I have had many doubts and fears, and many dark hours have come my way. If you could know my feelings at times, you would not want to read this.

I don't know if this means anything to anyone else to read, but when I get

so low down in my feelings and my mind drops back to when this took place with me, it's much brighter; and if I have ever had a hope in the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, it has been since this happened. I am not made to know that I am saved like some say they are. I find in Romans 8:24-24, "For we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doeth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Another thing that strengthens my hope is in hearing you and others preach, giving me much comfort. You preach Christ and him crucified: Christ the way, the truth and the life; him being all in all.

I hope this statement won't be out of line of what you believe: We know the truth because our experience teaches us the truth. And would you think me wrong in believing that every individual that has had a true experience of grace will believe the Primitive Baptist doctrine, whether their name is ever on a church book, or not. I have been among other people, but haven't gotten any food or comfort out of their preaching, and wonder if they do. I hope, if I have ever had a mind to worship, it is one that has all power: one that speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast; one that doeth his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. The one Paul was speaking about when he said, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers, for there is no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God."

When we are brought to the end of our strength, we can't help but believe this is true. And when you are speaking of the Lord, we just can't place him high enough; and when speaking of man, we just can't place him low enough. This is my feeling at the present time. When you have a mind to pray, will you think of one so vile as I?

Will Waldrop

2007 Atherton Street,
Sweetwater, Texas.

Dear Editors:

My father was G. B. Williams, pastor of the Old School Baptist Predestinarian Church at Pleasant Valley for ten or twelve years; also Steels Creek Church for several years. He died in 1902. I was twenty-five years old, and remember all those old timers: old brother Ben Parker, Ben Young, Weeks, and a number of others.

I've heard those old brethren talk of the early times, (this brother Parker was one of the first Primitive Baptists, as a child, to enter the state). The Parkers organized their church in Illinois, and came to Texas. As they journeyed they observed every monthly meeting day on the road. They came to Texas before Texas became a free state; up to that time the Catholics were the only denomination allowed in Texas.

Texas was freed in 1836; and according to Texas history they were the first protestant church allowed in the state. I would like very much to know if you have any information, or history, of this Parker church. These old brethern I mentioned were members of some church in Navaurow (?) County, and I thought maybe someone would know about them. Would be glad to purchase history of this church if anyone has one. The Parkers were prominent in state affairs.

I enjoy very much reading the Signs. My folks took it when I was a child.

Very truly yours,
C. P. Williams

(Note: If anyone has the above information, please write Bro. Williams, Ed.)

1216 S. Brighton Ave.
Dallas, Texas
December 4, 1953

Greetings to the Dear Editors of the Signs,
and all the Household of Faith;

As I sit here alone in my little study room, meditating upon the fact that the wheel of time will soon roll up to the

station of 1954, it seems that I am given a mind to write you a few lines, knowing not what to say or how to say it. Yet, I feel that I would like to make an attempt to express my appreciation for being blessed to have the dear old Signs come into my humble home for the past year. Oh, how I do hope that it will so come for many years to come; though it be a blessing from God, which I am not worthy of.

As I look down the trail of life, I am short sighted and cannot see a far off. Therefore, I cannot tell what the future holds. And as I look back over the weary road of 1953, I can in my memory see many of the dark valleys and weary hills which I, by the God of Heaven, have been given grace to pass through and to climb over, and though it has been a trying year for this poor mortal, I feel that I should not complain; but, Oh, that I could praise the Lord for His goodness.

Though earthly objects have been removed and human ties been broken, what do we see in it all by an eye of faith? Surely, God has removed them, that he might make room to give us of Himself instead.

Yes, the cares of this life with it's fleshly ties and foolish pride and vanity must be removed from our hearts before there is room for God therein. Yes, and God must remove them, for we are not able to remove them ourselves; yea, and would not remove them. Then He must implant himself in our very heart and soul, and give us to rejoice in him, if we are ever to know of the joy of the Lord, in having knowledge of him dwelling in our lives.

One year ago, as I was given to look down the trail of life into the grim dark chain of time for the year 1953, I seemed to shutter at the thoughts of what it might hold for me, a poor hell deserving wretch, all unholy, all unclean, vile and full of sin; and not feeling worthy to even ask God to be merciful unto me, yet hoping he would be, and feeling to have a sweet hope in Christ, and thereby trusting I was safe and secure in Him; and that God for Christ's sake had cast my sins away and would remember them no more.

It was by that blessed hope, supported by God's love, mercy and power that I was given strength and courage to press on toward the mark of the prize of the high calling, trusting in God's word, promises and ever loving care for all things. Yet, many times I was made to tremble as the wheels of time rolled on, and as the train of life would approach a curve or a hill, I would wonder what would be on the other side for this poor worm of the dust to experience.

Well, on March the 2nd, my poor heart was saddened as the death angel came and took my earthly father away; but I feel that I should not complain, for we were blessed to have him for a long time, and he was blessed to have a life to exceed four score years. Elder E. J. Lambert was blessed to speak so comfortable to us all, from the text, "Be ye reconciled unto God." While his passing brought about the breaking of a fleshly tie and removing an earthy object, I have been given to feel that God broke it and removed to make room for Himself, to give us more of His precious gifts, which He has been pleased to so graciously bestow upon this unworthy sinner.

Then lo, the sad hours and sore trials, afflictions and bitter persecutions I have been given to face, along the way, and many times it seemed that my poor soul would sink within me as fiery darts of my enemies would be hurled.

Lo, the dark and trying hours, yea, as it were with fire, lo, through floods and flames; but may we all remember I Peter 1:7 "The trial of your faith is better than gold." etc.

Oh, God, give me strength and courage to say as the poet:

"Through floods and flames, if Jesus leads
I'll follow where He goes;
Hinder me not, shall be my cry,
Though earth and hell oppose."

Oh! now may I remember God's grace and not complain at my lot, for God has

so graciously carried me along. Yes, every trial, every affliction, every sorrow, etc., as well as every joy, is of His own design and working together for His chosen people's good and His own glory; but lo, how weak, sinful and rebellious my nature is. Yea, how often I do think of the language of the poet:

"But of all the foes we meet,
None so oft mislead our feet,
None betray us into sin,
Like the foes that dwell within."

Yes, many times along my way, vanity, pride and the foolishness of my ownself would darken my poor soul, and the evil cares of this life would make me stumble into the darkness, and my rebellious heart would rage within me; but God has been pleased from time to time, to visit me with His love, mercy and power, to deliver me and carry my mind away from the vain and passing things of this world; and thereby I am given to rejoice in Him.

Oh, if I could but express the sweet meditations, revelations and visions that the God of Heaven has been pleased to bless this poor mortal with in the past year and a half, but words fail me, as I try.

And "though" I have many times been cast low and made to feel as the aspostle said, not wrestling against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickness in high places. (Ephesians 6: 12.) Though it has been a hard struggle, I feel that I must say God has not forsaken me or left me alone, for I feel that He has carried me through the fiery trials to burn out more and more of the corruptness of nature and imperfections of the flesh, and thereby give room for Himself, to make us know more of Him.

Though men and devils may hate me for what I stand for, may God grace me to stand, as Paul said, "Having done all to stand; then stand, having your loins girt about with truth, your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, a breast plate of rightousness and above all a shield of faith and a helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God." (See the sixth chapter of Ephesians) Now, may the dear Lord grace me with such equipment and enable me to so stand. Amen.

Now, I did not intend to write all these things concerning myself. I only meant to write you a few lines and let you know that I enjoyed the Signs for the past year and bid you God's speed as you go along the way with the work of truth, declaring it both with pen and speech.

And when cast down at the throne of God's mercy, may you remember me, dear brother. I also offer the same prayer and make the same request of all the household of faith. And as for my enemies I feel to say from the depths of my poor heart, Father forgive them for they know not what they do.

Farewell in love and sweet fellowship;

(Elder) W. W. Taylor

2713 White Oak Drive
Houston 7, Texas

Dear Editors:

The last copy of the paper was blessed to the comforting and refreshing of "the inner man", insomuch that I was made aware again, and to consider anew, that He is all and all, and there is none else. He opens and none can shut and shuts and none can open; and He doeth that that pleases him.

Could a child of God of himself bring forth the happy seasons that His lovely presence gives, none would go through the long nights of weeping that our souls must have when He hides his loving countenance. Can the children of the bride-chamber mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But, Oh, when He is taken way, who can know the mourning of that heart and soul that has tasted He is gracious, who has reclined on his bosom of love, and felt his left hand under his head and his right hand embracing him. None but He that searcheth the heart can know

the depth of it.

As the year draws to a close, with its unrest, turmoil and uncertainties; with destruction and evil so rampant in all the nations; with men's hearts failing them for fear, and for seeing those things which are coming on the earth, I desire to declare that it is of His mercy that I am not consumed, and to testify of his grace in his goodness and mercy to this unworthy worm of the dust. Many were the times in this past short year, I was made to say of a truth; If it had not been that the Lord was on our side, then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul. Our help is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth. It is of his mercies I am not consumed. (see Psalm 124)

"O praise the Lord, all ye nations: Praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise ye the Lord." (Psalm 117). An unworthy sinner,

Hoping in the blood of Jesus,
Buena V. (Mrs. R. C.) Wright

Rt. 1, Box 268
Dothan, Alabama,

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing check for $10.00 to renew my subscription, and to send the Signs to my daughter, Mrs. A. B. Craig, Mobile, Alabama.

I am often made to meditate on the assertion of the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 1:6, which reads as follows: "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the beloved." And in the twelfth verse he says, "That we should be to the praise of his glory who first trusted in Christ."

We understand by reading the Scriptures that Paul (or Saul of Tarsus) was a proud, arrogant, assuming Pharasee until it pleased the almighty God to change him. After that he declared that being of the tribe of Benjamin, an Israelite of the seed of Abraham, gave him no justification for glorying, but realized that it was only by the mercy of God, by grace through faith, that he had whereof to glory.

He begins his letter to the Ephesians by saying, "Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus." When he said unto the faithful in Christ Jesus, that included every heir of promise. He continues by saying, "Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." He then extolls the blessedness of God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and emphatically asserts that he has blessed (in the past tense) us with all spiritual blessings; and that it was done in heavenly places in Christ. Now, if all the faithful in Christ Jesus have already been blessed with all spiritual blessings, and that in heavenly places in Christ, I would like to know who can hold one more blessing, or take one away.

He further states that this was done according as he hath chosen us before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

All these things: the blessing his people in Christ, the choosing them in Christ, and the adopting them in Christ, were all done to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. We know, dear people of God, that it was none other than the God in whom we trust, whose grace Paul is here speaking of, and the praise of the glory of it.

To keep this from getting too lengthy, I will just sketch at some other things I would like to bring out more fully. Paul mentions our redemption, forgiveness, the riches of his grace, his abounding toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known unto us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself; in whom we have obtained

an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. All these were done that we (or all those that are embraced in that number who are referred to as the faithful in Christ Jesus) should be to the praise of his glory who first trusted in Christ.

He perfected his people in the Spirit, because Paul says in another place, that with the one offering he perfected forever them that were sanctified. They will all be to the praise of the glory of that grace which raises fallen man; that grace, the riches of which far exceeds the riches of this world, and is shown forth in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

The glory of that grace is something that we can't see with these natural eyes of ours. It is something that is eternal. We will never be able to enjoy fully all the glory of that grace until we ascend with our blessed Redeemer to that blissful shore, where those who meet shall part no more.

I have penned in my weak way a few of my scattered thoughts. If you think there is anything in it that might be comforting to the household of faith, you may publish it in the Signs if you wish.

(Elder) J. A. Tew

Stewart, Mississippi

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I have had a great desire to let you know how proud I am of the dear old Signs — the only objection is that it doesn't come often enough. I read and reread my old copies and feast on them. I have read Elder Sikes and Elder Beebe on Predestination and I heartily endorse all they said. I heartily endorse the doctrine and practice the Signs of the Times was established on, and what the old London Confession of Faith stood for.

About seventy years ago I was six years old, and I well remember my grandfather reading the Signs, and the cracks in the old log house where he would keep them. In those days the dear old Baptists believed and were grounded on what the Signs stood for. But, Oh, how it it now! Seeds of discord were sown; perverse things spoken: conditionalism preached with two separate salvations. This I abhor. I have been made by experience to know and believe what the blessed Saviour said: "Without me ye can do nothing." And what one of the ancient writers said, "O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." And, "The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord."

A falling away has come, and some will not endure sound doctrine. I have heard it said that if preaching predestination divides the Baptists, then it would be best not to preach it. I don't see how the gospel can be preached and leave it out. God's children cannot be established in grace and leave out predestination: you couldn't preach Jesus. If conditionalism is true, wouldn't we still be under the law. Then would Christ have been the end of the law? To preach conditionalism denies Christ being the end of the law. Certain fellows preached to the Galatian church that except they be circumcised and keep the law they could not be saved. Isn't this being done today? Those who oppose such as preach conditionalism are called by them absoluters. My answer is, No, we are not absolute, but God is in all his ways. He said, "I am the Lord and change not —". He declared the end from the beginning, and said his counsel should stand and he would do all his pleasure; and, "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand". He is the same yesterday, today and forever.

I am glad there are some here yet who are not afraid to declare the whole counsel of God. A few words to the Editors, Associated Editors and many other writers, may the Lord continue to give you a mind and enable you to write for the Signs. Do not let this crowd out other things, I just wanted

to express my feelings.

An unworthy sinner saved by grace alone,

J. F. Jacks

R. 1, Box 2440
Marysville, Calif.

Dear Brother Spangler:

In a recent issue you asked the readers to write their experiences for publication. Experiences of grace are food for the lambs. Peter was told to feed the lambs as well as the sheep. I have heard the publication of experiences criticized by a few, but they must have forgotten that the Lord had Paul's experience recorded twice in His Book.

Here lately I have been wondering if anyone could be a child of God and experience the coldness that seems to continue with me. I have never lost sight of the fact that there is a God — but is He mine? Is there any way that I can entice the Holy Spirit to visit me? My past experience teaches me we must wait upon the Lord. But in my foolish way, I find myself wondering if there is not something I can do to push aside worldly cares and think of nothing but spiritual things. I found myself just this week in going about my work asking the Lord to help my unbelief. I feel that is my trouble — lack of faith or belief.

"Let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." I have thought for some time that "the sin which doth so easily beset us" is the sin of unbelief. If we could at all times in the face of all trials keep uppermost in our minds and hearts that all things do work together for our good, wouldn't it be easy to run the race with patience? Can you do it? If so, I would love to know how. Perhaps I'm not even in the race.

Sincerely,
Mrs. T. R. Jefferson

EDITORIALS

Danville, Va. March, 1954

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TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

P O. Box 1271 Danville, Va.

EDITORIAL

"As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving."

(Colossians 2:6-7.)

The apostle Paul admonished the brethren to "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." He also said, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."

It might behoove us all to take inventory of ourselves, to see if we can determine in what way we have receiv-

ed Christ. Whether in the mind, by tradition, or in the heart by faith. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Romans 10-10. All the miracles that Jesus performed when on earth, did not cause the people, except one here and there, unto whom He revealed Himself, to believe and receive Him as the Messiah that was to come. John tells us that, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:11-12-13. Men tell us today, all we have to do is to believe and receive Christ into our hearts, and He will save us. How are we to receive Christ into our hearts? He can only be received by faith! No man can really say that Jesus is the Christ, but by the Holy Ghost.

To receive Christ is to receive and believe His word, not just in the letter, but by the revelation of this truth in the heart. A man may go all his life in a profession and find out at the end that he is destitute of that knowledge and faith that brings Christ into his soul.

Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; to receive Him into our hearts as the gift of God, and to view Him with an eye of faith as the one who hath suffered, bled and died for us, but now who is raised and seated at God's right hand as our Mediator and Intercessor, is receiving Christ Jesus the Lord. He is not to be received by the hearing of the ear, but by the believing of the heart.

Paul tells us to "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art called, and professed a good profession before many witnesses."

The question might be asked, how are we to lay hold of eternal life? The answer is, by the hand of faith. That faith that cometh by hearing (understanding,) and is backed up by evidence. The natural mind of men, which is enmity against God and not subject to His law, neither indeed can be, is sometimes persuaded by the logic and eloquence of the speaker to believe and receive the doctrine of men as the doctrine of God. But the heart of those who have been given to know the truth, is not given to receive flowers and eloquence as the truth.

After the army of Gideon had been reduced to ten thousand, "The Lord said unto Gideon, the people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, this shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and whomsoever I shall say unto thee, this shall not go with thee, the same shall not go. So he brought down the people unto the water: and the Lord said unto Gideon, every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink. And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed upon their knees to drink water." Only three hundred of the people conveyed the water from the stream by their hand to their mouth. This hand represents the hand of faith by which his children receive Him: their meat and drink.

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." That is, as you have received this doctrine and faith as His gift to you, continue in it and be not led aside by Judaizing teachers. John says, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out unto the world." Yes, Paul would say to these brethren, let it not be once said unto you, as was said unto the Galatian brethren, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you." Paul gives these brethren to understand that they are complete in Him, which is the head of

all principality and power. The apostle would have them know that they were not subject to ordinances, because they were dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world.

"Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving." Now that they are immovable and firmly settled, praise and thanksgiving becometh them. The roots of their faith penetrate deeper than the natural mind, into the soil (heart) which God had prepared. No one who is versed in gardening would plant seed in ground that had not been prepared to receive it. These brethren were admonished to continue in the faith and doctrine which had been taught them. Good seed may be sown in unprepared ground or stony places, where they would never have any depth or root. In such a case, strong winds would soon blow them away. Likewise, the gospel preached may light upon the natural mind, or the stony heart, but would never produce any fruit of the Spirit. The fault would not be in the seed, but in that which received the seed.

To receive Christ, "We must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." This faith is the "gift of God, without which it is impossible to please God." And we must receive Him by faith as our redemption, and the only "name given under heaven, or among men whereby we must be saved."

To walk in Christ Jesus the Lord, is to walk in the path in which He leads us. To go forth to continue in the doctrine and order of His house as we have been taught, turn neither to the right nor to the left; listen not to the lo heres and lo theres, but, "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled with the yoke of bondage." (Galatians 5-1.) "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went." Yes, the children of God go many times, "not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth them." He says, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." (Isaiah 42:16.) Again, "Thus saith the Lord, thy redeemer, the Holy one of Israel; I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go." (Isaiah 48:17.)

In conclusion may I say, Lord, "Draw me, we will run after thee." (S of S 1: 4.) Again may we say, "O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles." (Psalms 43:3.)

H. O. Nash

STATING THE MATTER CLEARLY

We have word from a brother that he was not quite certain as to our meaning when we wrote in the December, 1953, Signs (page 285) as follows:

"**** Those who may have become connected with these organizations before being brought into the knowledge of the truth in Christ very readily know the difference: and should as readily give up their affiliation, if they desire the fellowship and privileges of their brethern in Christ. We would not urge them to do this, but simply state the fact, and wait until they are of a ready mind to dis-associate themselves."

Lest there be others who may not have understood our meaning, we quote from our reply to the brother:

"There is such a vast difference (between the organizations and the church) that it is not possible for the two to walk together. I hold it necessary before one can be received into the fellowship of the church that he must have already been made to renounce in his heart all association with the order. My meaning in the article was therefore, that if one had to be urged to dis-associate himself from the order, he was

not yet ready for the church; and that the church should not receive him until he has of a ready mind come out from among them."

J. D. W.

INDIGENT FUND

Indigent fund contributions to help send the Signs to the ones unable to pay. List includes contributions to Feb. 1st. 1954.

D. B. Thomas, La. $1.00; Mrs. Verda Machesney, Kan. $5.00; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich. $2.00; Hubble Brothers, N. Y. $7.00; Elder L. D. Rose, Texas, $2.00; Mrs. G. L. Reaves, Fla. $7.00; Mrs. Jean Weaver, Wash. $3.75; Emma Parker, Md. $3.00; Sadie E. Shortridge, Ill. $5.00; Bertie Brown, N. C. $2.00; Ben Parrish, Ark. $2.50; C. M. Richardson, a. $5.00; J. D. Hassell, Ala. $1.00; Joseph A. Johnson, Tenn. $5.00; Phemia Gray, Canada, $3.00; Lola Campbell, Canada, $1.00; Mrs. Luther Campbell, Tenn. $1.00; Mrs. P. R. Froude, Mich. $2.00; Harry T. Vories, Mich. $10.00; New York Friends, $100.00; J. H. Merrell, Texas, $2.50; J. R. Davis, Kentucky, $1.00; Mrs. Robert Watt, Canada, $5.00; T. A. Stanaland, Texas, $1.00; Dozier Deal, Mo. $2.00; H. T. Earnheart, Tenn. $5.00; Mrs. Frank Wyatt, Mo. $1.00; Mary Harris, Arkansas, $5.00; Ben Campbell, W-Va. $1.00; R. K. Fennell, Texas, $4.00;

STATEMENT CONCERNING THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST HOME, INC.

At the annual meeting of the Board of Trustees of the **Primitive Baptist Home, Inc.,** held in Philadelphia, Pa., on January 9, 1954, a statement was authorized to be published to give our present status, and to call the attention of brethren and friends to the desire of the Trustees in regard to the future of the Home.

The Primitive Baptist Home was incorporated in 1928, and its object was to **"provide a home or funds for members and believers of the Primitive Baptist faith."** The Board of Trustees is composed of two members from each of the seven associations participating, who manage the affairs of the corporation through the officers elected, with a meeting of the Board once each year. These Trustees and Officers serve without pay, gladly giving their time and talents as needed. We are fortunate to have two attorneys as members of the Board who give their services in any matter necessary. For this reason all donations are used strictly for the benefit of the Home.

A building was purchased in Salisbury, Maryland, and operated as a home until 1945, when due to cost of operation, unsuitableness, etc., it was deemed advisable to dispose of the property. From that time the needy among us have been helped each month with cash payments.

It is to be seen, therefore, that the Primitive Baptist Home is active, and that, the Lord willing, will carry on to the limit of its ability in the aid of those among us who may need assistance; and is doing collectively what the individual churches, for the most part, are not able to do themselves.

The Trustees have the following four objectives in view:

First, To give financial assistance to those among our people who are in need.

Second, To maintain the Endowment Fund intact; and use only the income from the Fund for the aid to the needy — to which may be added such donations as may be contributed for this purpose.

Third, To plan for the acquiring either by erection, purchase or gift of a building where our needy, or those who desire a place to live, may reside and be taken care of.

Fourth, To extend the bounds of our assistance to brethren beyond our present limits.

Under the **First,** We are now assisting (1953) from eight to ten persons who were recommended by their pastor or deacon as being in need of assistance.

Note: During 1953 this required about $200.00 more than the current income.

Under the **Second,** There is accumulated more than $50,000.00 in the Endowment Fund in stocks, bonds, mortgages, etc., which pay interest or dividends; which income is used to supply the Needy Fund. The Endowment Fund has been given by brethren and friends over the years, and is growing each year by gifts from individuals or churches, and through legacies of stocks, bonds, real estate, cash, etc. The Trustees invite the brethern and friends to contribute to this fund.

Under the **Third,** A suitable location and building for a Home is desired; and will become a reality as soon as there are sufficient funds for the purpose. It is hoped that this may be acquired without using any of the present Endowment Funds.

Under the **Fourth,** It is hoped that sufficient interest may be shown by brethren and friends of other churches and associations of our faith who are not now participating, so that brethren who are in need, or who want a home, may be benefitted also.

It is easy to see, therefore, that the Primitive Baptist Home, Inc., is actively being carried on. If any have been wondering about the present status of the Home, or have been hesitating to send contributions or designate something for the Home in their wills, we hope this statement will resolve their minds on the matter.

Contributions should be addressed to: **The Primitive Baptist Home, Inc., P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Virginia. Contributions are deductable from Income Taxes.**

Anyone desiring to name the Home as beneficiary in their Will, or other legal document, may obtain free advice by writing either of the following officers; also any other information pertaining to the Home will gladly be furnished:

Quincy A. Gladding, President,
5 Hill Top Road, Catonsville 28, Md.
Charles B. Osborne, Secretary,
Quarryville, Pa.
Elder John D. Wood, Treasurer,
P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

LUKE XII. 15.

"Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." (Luke 12:15)

Since the Lord said to Adam, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread", the human race has, undoubtedly, been struggling for an existence and a competence. Every honest man should be willing to expend sufficient effort to earn his way through life, and "if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." So far as we know there can be no objection to one securing for himself, lawfully, and for those entrusted to his care, some of the comforts and even luxuries of life, but he can do all this and yet not be covetous. To be covetous is to have an inordinate desire, especially for money; to be immoderate or excessive.

What brought forth the words of the text was, one had said unto Jesus, "Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me." An inheritance is something which becomes ours by reason of our relationship to another, ordinarily that in which we had no part in creating, and since time immemorial there has been contention and strife as to how it shall be divided and who shall possess it. It may have been the law or custom at that time that the eldest should receive the inheritance. It is evident the one in question had not received what he felt to be his share, which might be said to be only natural, but the teaching of Jesus to those who have reason to hope they have a foretaste now and that some day they shall come into full possession of that inheritance which is "incorruptible, and un-

defiled, and that fadeth not away," is that they should crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts; that those who are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with his Son, and who have been partakers of his sufferings, death and resurrection and have risen with him should "seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth," is the inspired admonition. Jesus, therefore, said unto them, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness." They were not only to be careful, but to "beware," or regard covetousness as an enemy. Paul said, "They that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition," and he warned "the man of God" to flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

Jesus went on to show that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" by speaking unto them this parable, saying, "The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool! this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul (his life)?" "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out," yet there is that insatiable desire to hoard up and build greater barns in which to store one's goods, and he begins to lose sight of the finer and better things, "For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

It is a great truth that no man can serve two masters; his heart cannot be divided, "for he will either hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other." The man after God's own heart, who declared, "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, then to dwell in the tents of wickedness," said, "Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not covetousness," and the wise man wrote, "He that hateth covetousness shall prolong his days." In other words, the man who is willing to lose his life, shall find it. How strange this seems. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that witholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." These things sound paradoxical. A man's life, then, does not consist in the abundance of things which he possesseth. We see this even in a natural sense. One may accumulate and pile up wealth, but if in attaining his coveted goal his health has been undermined and he loses his ability or capacity to enjoy that which he has gathered, of what account is it to him?

There is seen here and there a disposition on the part of some who have gained great possessions to distribute them where needed. There is a joy, or prolonging one's days, in giving, if done in the right spirit, and we are glad to observe a tendency in the right direction. Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," and his words are ever true. Those who profess to be followers of him, above all others, should bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ.

We too often see those who have been highly favored of the Lord shut up their bowels of mercy against their brother who is in need. How good it would be to lighten his burden a little, to show in some tangible way your love for him

for the truth's sake, to visit him while he is in prison and cannot extricate himself with such things and assistance as will release some of the chains which bind him, that he might be set free. We have no doubt but that many of the Lord's servants should receive more consideration at the hands of their brethren than they do. If he sends them forth to feed his flock, having received those things which are spiritual they should administer of their carnal things to the needs of those who serve them. They are commanded to provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in their purses, nor scrip for their journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat. The gospel is to be preached without money, and without price, and among the qualifications for the office of a bishop, or true minister, are to be found these: He must be given to hospitality, not greedy or filthy lucre, not covetous. We know of no surer way for one to kill himself in the church of the true and living God than for the people whom he serves to discover that he is preaching for money. Nevertheless, the ox that treadeth out the corn is not to be muzzled. In our opinion, it is not true that one of God's ministers will preach better by reason of hardships forced upon him through the withholding of those things which his brethren are simply able to provide for his needs and sustenance. To the contrary, we firmly believe where there is umistakable evidence of one's acceptance by those whom he goes among endeavoring to serve, in the realization by him of the appreciation on the part of his brethren of his gift, there will be a growth and development in things which are spiritual, and they will grow up together as calves in the stall, all realizing that all that they have and are comes from their heavenly Father, who is the great Shepherd of his sheep, and that it is his good pleasure to give them the kingdom. In the ministrations, one to another, love will abound, and they will feel it is a blessed tie that binds their hearts in christian love, and that it is there their best friends and kindred dwell, and there God their Saviour reigns. They will have all things in common, and none shall possess more than another, equal heirs, and joint-heirs with Christ, the head over all things to the church; being in one place and of one accord and possessing the mind of him though rich became poor, that through his poverty they might be made rich.

We have observed for many years, in different parts of our country, some who appear to possess all of this world's goods that is necessary for their needs and comfort, and yet when it came to doing for the cause which they profess to love above everything else it was not convenient, or they were too thoughtless, or cold and indifferent, and sometimes too busy to even attend their meetings. The pastor needs the flock as much if not more, it seems to us, than the flock needs him. Oftentimes he feels to be wavering and tottering, ready to give up, when some old, reliable wheel-horse of a brother or sister, so to speak, one who can be depended upon on every occasion, comes to his rescue and his heart is strengthened and he is encouraged to press forward with the load. Personally, we are made, continually, to feel thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift for having cast our lot in such pleasant places and among such devoted and faithful brethren.

In conclusion, we would desire of our readers that they be thoughtful and considerate of one another and of them who serve you in a spiritual way. Do not let such things come at the bottom of your list of obligations. We are well aware that many of our people do not possess a great deal of this world's goods, and we would remind them that it is expected of a man according to that which he hath, and not according to that which he hath not. We would also remind others of Paul's epistle to the church at Corinth, concerning the collection for the saints, that every one is to lay by him in store, as God hath pros-

pered him. Of him that hath much, much is expected. The strong are to bear the burdens of the weak. Therefore, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

(Editorial August 15, 1923 by Elder Dodson)

OBITUARY

CHARLES FORTUNATUS HATCHETT
MARY ELIZA (COGGINS) HATCHETT

It is with a sad heart that we attempt to write the obituaries of Brother and Sister Charles F. Hatchett, who were killed instantly in a head-on collision car accident early Sunday morning, October 25, 1953, on highway 283, near Mangum, Oklahoma. Four other members of the family were injured, and the driver of the other car, Mr. Ripley Harris, was fatally injured.

Brother Hatchett was born February 22, 1885, near Athens, Alabama. He was married to Miss Maggie Buckner in 1908; to whom were born two children; one, Mrs. Ava Stewart, Granite, Oklahoma, survives. Mrs. Hatchett died in 1912.

On December 17, 1916, Brother Hatchett was married to Mary Eliza Coggins; and to this union seven children were born. One died in infancy, and the others survive. Sister Hatchett was born at Pulaski, Tennessee, March 5, 1899. There are also surviving eighteen grandchildren and other relatives.

Brother Hatchett united with Hopewell Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church, Mangum, Oklahoma, in 1939; and Sister Hatchett united with the same church in 1950, and she was baptized by the writer. Brother and Sister Hatchett will be greatly missed in the church; and especially for his leadership in our song service, but we feel that our loss will be their gain.

Funeral services were conducted in the First Baptist Church, Granite, Oklahoma, Wednesday, October 28, 1953, by the writer, who used for a text Revelation 14:13, desiring to speak to the comfort of the many relatives and friends who were assembled. A son and a daughter remained in the hospital, and were unable to attend the funeral. Brethren from the churches in Altus and Mangum, Oklahoma, and Amarillo, Texas, sang during the services.

Burial was in twin graves in the Reed Cemetery, near Granite, Oklahoma.

May God give comfort and show pity to us all, for Jesus sake, Amen.

"Now to the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory, majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen."

(Elder) Clarence E. Turner

JAMES THOMAS GOLDEN

James Thomas Golden, son of David Allen and Emaline Golden, was born in Weakley County, Tennessee, December 9, 1864; and departed this life November 26, 1953, at the age of nearly eighty-nine years.

He is survived by eight nephews and four nieces, several great nieces and nephews, and a host of other relatives and friends.

Although "Uncle Tom", as he was known to everyone, did not unite with the church, he was a strong believer in the Primitive Baptist faith. He will be greatly missed by everyone: And precious memories of his kind words and deeds will live on in the hearts and lives of his many relatives and friends of the community where he lived so long.

Written by a friend.

MRS. CHATTIE HEAD

I desire to write a few lines in memory of our beloved and departed sister Chattie Head, who was born in Union County, Arkansas, in 1874; and who lived in Union County all of her life. She was the widow of T. J. Head who died some twelve or fifteen years ago as the result of an automobile accident.

Sister Head united with Rehobath Primitive Baptist Church in 1947, I believe, and was blessed to show great love and devotion to the Lord, his people and the doctrine of God our Saviour: which is evidence to us that she was one that was wrought upon by the Spirit of God, and that she was an heir of the matchless grace and abundant mercy of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. With this evidence we would say to the family and bereaved ones that she is much better off than we who remain in this sinful world. The storms of this sinful and troubled life are over for her, and we have Scriptural evidences that she shall rest henceforth. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Her spirit has taken its flight from this mournful veil to the glorious presence of the Lord, until the appointed day when the Lord with all his holy angels shall come and shall raise these vile bodies. Then all his saints shall be with him, and shall praise him forever in that beautiful home where there is no sorrow or trouble, sin or suffering, but where peace and joy shall be forever.

Sister Head is survived by three sons and three daughters: J. D. Head, Prescott, Arkansas; Leroy Head, ElDorado, Arkansas, and R. T. Head, Smackover, Arkansas; Mrs. Virginia

Whatley, Hope, Arkansas; Mrs. Josephene Langston, Greensboro, North Carolina, and Miss Geneva Head, ElDorado, Arkansas. She is survived also by three brothers and four sisters: O. H. Goodwin, Junction City, Arkansas; John L. and H. A. Goodwin, ElDorado, Arkansas; Mrs. Martha Head; Mrs. Sula Johnson; Mrs. Bettie Pickring and Miss Sadie Goodwin, of ElDorado, Arkansas. There are also six grand children and many other relatives and friends, as well as the brethren of the household of faith.

She died at the home of her daughter, Miss Geneva Head, in ElDorado, December 25, 1953, after loving and devoted hands had done all they knew to do for her. The funeral services were held at Rehobeth Church and burial was in the church cemetery, where a large congregation was gathered and where the many flowers testified of the love and respect in which she was held.

The writer, assisted by Elder W. W. Taylor, Dallas, Texas, made what we hope were appropriate remarks, and prayed for the comfort of the bereaved. May the Lord comfort all who mourn, and bless the sorrowing ones.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

MRS. RENA KING HARRIS

In memory of our precious sister:

God has seen fit to remove from our midst Sister Rena Harris, widow of the late Elder V. R. Harris, of Fordyce, Arkansas. She was born December 3, 1874, near Quachita, Arkansas, and was married to Elder Harris in early life. She passed away November 13, 1953.

Sister Harris is survived by the following sons and daughters: Charley, Lennie and Durand, of Missouri; and Elvis, of Ft. Worth, Texas; Mrs. M. W. Shell, Pine Bluff, Arkansas, Mrs. J. T. Tackett, Lewisville, Arkansas, and Miss Mary Harris, Fordyce, who lived with her mother. Also one sister Mrs. Annie Vanlandingham, Quachita, Arkansas.

All was done for Sister Harris by her children that loving hands and hearts could do. Miss Mary had lived with her mother most of her life, and never tired nor failed to see that her mother had the very best of everything she needed day or night.

Funeral services were held at the Benton Funeral Home at Fordyce by the writer, her pastor, assisted by Elder W. A. Speer, of ElDorado. Burial was in Oakland Cemetery by her husband.

Written at the request of Miss Mary for publication in the Signs of the Times.

(Elder) J. T. Everitt

MRS. CALDONIA NAYLOR JACKSON

The church at Harnett, Sampson County, North Carolina, being assembled in regular conference Saturday before the first Sunday in December, 1953, requested that these lines be written in memory of our departed sister, Mrs. Caldonia Naylor Jackson.

She was born January 24, 1880, and departed this life October 27, 1953; making her stay on earth seventy-three years and nine months. She was the daughter of the late Franklin and Betsy Ann Warren Naylor. On the first Sunday in August, 1909, she united with the Harnett Primitive Baptist church and was baptized by Elder J. A. Monsees, a visiting minister.

Sister Jackson was married to Martin Dixon Jackson, and to this union were born three sons and two daughters. Her husband preceeded her to the grave by several years; the children all survive, viz: Graham, Fuller and Bynum, Mrs. Mila Faircloth and Mrs. Lima J. Honeycutt.

Sister Jackson was a faithful member of the Harnett church, was never absent unless providentially hindered, always taking an active part in the building up of the church and community. While she is missed by the church and mourned for by her relatives and friends, she is not mourned for as one without hope. She left behind evidence that there was planted within that living faith and hope which is the anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast. She was a lover of the doctrine of salvation by grace, trusting not in her own strength but in Him who has declared that, "All the Father has given me shall come unto me." Hence the Harnett church desires to bow in submission to our Father's will, knowing that he doeth all things well; and it seemed good in his sight to take this precious one to himself.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Luther W. Turner, assisted by Elder M. F. Westbrook and Elder Lester Lee, in the new Harnett church building, which was completed only a few days before her death. Her body was laid to rest in the family burial plot near the home, to await the coming of the Lord; at which time we hope to meet her and all our loved ones who have gone from this world of sorrow to that home who's maker and builder is God; and where sickness and death cannot enter, and parting will be no more.

These lines are ordered recorded on our church records, a copy to the family, and a copy to the Signs of the Times and Old Faith Contender for publication.

Done by order of Harnett church in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in December, 1953.

Elder Luther W. Turner, Moderator
Brother Avery Gaggett, Clerk
Brother Joe McLamb, Committee

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 122 DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1954 No. 4

PARADISE FOUND

Paradise was lost, but was found
By the Holy Child Jesus of Bethlehem;
Who fared desperately from there to Calvary,
And brought Heaven down to you, and to me.

Oh rugged cross, Oh bloody tree!
Wherewith He wrought his works in me:
A finished work, that wove my dress,
Of His imputed righteousness.

Now I am holy and most free,
Through the red blood of Calvary;
No other hope have I but Christ,
My risen Lord and Sacrifice.

Infinite wisdom! Covenant love!
Which gave me Christ, the Lord above;
Promised mercy: Surety — grace,
That gave my soul this hiding place.

This Hiding place is for the children of men,
Who are weary of self, and tired of sin;
For them its a safe and sweet retreat:
Its Heaven! Its Home! Its Christ most sweet!

I'll sing of His Blood, and freely relate
The story of my King and Advocate;
I'll maintain "good works" but prove by my creed,
Its Heaven, its a Home — Its Christ we need.

I'll hope in mercy, and sing of the grace,
Of Heaven, my Home, my Hiding place.
This Hiding place is none other than Christ,
My Heaven, my Home, my Paradise.

Soon shall the trials of life be o'er
When I shall walk by faith no more.
Then shall I be what I've hoped to be:
A happy creature in Eternity.

To be with Christ in heaven above,
Is the promise in the Scriptures of love.
No other Heaven need I save Christ,
The greatest name in Paradise.

Refrain:
The shepherds heard the angels sing:
Peace on earth, good will to men

Milford Hall, Sr.,
McDowell, Kentucky

(Note: the above has been set to music; if interested write the author)

THE CRUCIFIED JESUS

In order to fully understand this subject we must be transported by the Spirit of God back to the place where it occured. If the brethren will go along with me, I will try to tell how this picture was shown to this poor creature many years ago. This dream, or vision, is clear at times, and I see it again, and again; and sometimes it is so real that I can scarcely write for tears — for I was there. I do not mean in body but in spirit.

At the present time the title that was put on the cross seems to stand out prominently; and as I gaze at it, I feel as the prophet who had seen the Lord high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple: I am undone. How completely was prophesy being fulfilled concerning the Anointed One: there he hung upon the cross between two thieves, numbered with the transgressors. (Isaiah 53: 12). Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. The writing was, "JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS." And so that there could be no misunderstanding of the title, it was written in Hebrew, and Greek and Latin. The chief priest of the Jews murmured at the writing, and wanted Pilate to change it to read, "—that he saith, I am king of the Jews." But Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written." (John 19:22). It is evident that the Jews did not believe — they hated him. And to this day Jesus is no more to them than just a man; and they still look for their Messiah to come.

I saw in my vision the difference between those who looked on: Some taunted and made fun; some said. come down

from the cross and we will believe; some said, He saved others, himself he cannot save. Jesus had told them in a parable, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." (Luke 16:31). But the scriptures must be fulfilled: He who was the truth was bruised for our iniquities and wounded for our transgressions, and by his stripes we are healed. (Isaiah 53:11).

But there were a few who were sad, and powerless to stop the proceedings; poor in spirit, mourning and weeping: showing that His spirit was in them. We watch as the soldiers divide his garments among themselves, and cast lot for his vesture. (Psalms 22:18) "And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced." (Zechariah 12:10) What suffering he must have endured. We hear him cry, "My God, My God why has thou forsaken me." He thirsted, and they gave him vingear; a soldier pierced his side with a spear, and they looked upon him whom they had pierced; He said, it is finished, and gave up the ghost.

Joseph, who was also his disciple, begged the body of Jesus; and Pilate ordered it given him. He laid it in his new tomb and a great stone was rolled to the door. But the Jews were not satisfied, remembering that Jesus had said, "After three days I will rise again." — "Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first." Pilate said unto them, "Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch."

"God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." etc. (Hebrews 1:1-2). "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out!" (Romans 11:33). How thankful we poor, unworthy creatures are to be carried back in the spirit to review the scene; and then to remember, as John said: "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death." (Revelation 1:18).

The prophets all looked ahead and saw the same, and told us about it by the same spirit that has stirred up our minds. The same God is still watching over his own; for he is the Almighty one that gave Israel manna, and brought them out of the land of Egypt (darkness). Likewise he brings every son from darkness into light, and feeds them that spiritual manna; and separates them from the world while in the world, since he has chosen them out of the world. His grace is sufficient for them: for Jesus finished the work the Father gave him to do; and the light of the knowledge of this God has shined in our hearts. His grace has humbled us, and we are troubled; but not in despair, persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed — bearing about in our bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus.

Like Isaiah, we have seen the Lord; and we mourn not for him, but for ourselves. We know that of ourselves we can do nothing, but through him we can do all things, for he gave himself for us. In faith and hope, we are looking unto that day known unto God, when we shall see Him as he is and be like him, and be satisfied.

Brethren, have you experienced some of the things I have mentioned; do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; do you love him? If you love the brethren, you love him. We go into our closet and try to pray, and thank him for all he has done for us. O Lord, lead us beside the still waters, and not forsake us; for thine is the kingdom and

the glory for evermore. Amen.

(Elder) George L. Weaver

Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Elder Spangler:

You will find enclosed four dollars; three to renew our subscription to the Signs, and one to use in helping send to others. I appreciated what Elder Griffin said concerning it at Hopewell Association. I feel that the Lord has blessed its support all these years: many have been called from this life, but others have been qualified to carry on with the work. It was sad to learn of Elder Dodson's failing health, and then his passing: how quickly we feared for the Signs of the Times; and then, how thankful our hearts are to know that it was God's will to raise up others to stand for the same principles that dear Elder Dodson ably set forth. We had hoped we might hear him preach some day, but our hopes went down when we heard of his failing health.

I want to tell you that your sermon on Sunday at Hopewell association was wonderful to me; and also Elder Lambert's. It was a gracious favor from our God to number us with the assembly at that time and place, and to feel that he in his tender mercy removed all earthly cares from our minds while listening to such glorious things. Won't it be a wonderful thing to lay this body down, and awake in the likeness of Jesus: to be forever satisfied, and bask in his love forever.

But, Oh, my soul, I feel to be but a dead dog! When I glean all the sweetness and joy that is for me at the time, and then sink into the cares of this life again, then the beauties of heaven have vanished, and all feeling sense seems to be gone, which makes me fear that I am wrong. It is such a great change that I can feel no good, and I hate my natural life. It is a miserable feeling indeed. But somehow we are enabled to carry on with life's duties, though often poorly done. With burdened heart I find myself wondering why it is so with me; but when blessed to meet with the Lord's people, and with ears to hear and a heart to understand, and feel such love flowing from the very fountain of love, then we loose sight of all earthly frames and view the wonderous works of God's hand: one who said my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. So grand and glorious are these things!

We also enjoyed the preaching on Saturday when Elders Pascal, Gafford, Huff and Reid preached; and we enjoyed our stay with Sister Lucas and husband. They spare nothing to make you feel welcome; but best of all they love to talk of the goodness and greatness of God: How he does his will in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay his hand.

May God bless you and Elder Wood and the associated editors with all you need to carry on with the Signs to His own name's honor and glory, and to the comfort of Zion; for many feast upon the truth that is set forth in its pages, and are made to lift up their bowed heads and to run with patience the race that is set before them.

Unworthily, your sister,
Mrs. Luther Campbell

DECLARING THE GLORY OF GOD

"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork." (Psalms 19:1)

The word **Heavens** has various meanings in Scripture. Sometimes the word is applied to the **legal heavens,** at other times to the **gospel dispensation,** and again to the **heaven of eternal glory.** The word heavens has been applied to the clouds and the atmosphere above us; and again to the planets and the starry orbs that gleam and glitter in the night time. The sun and the moon belong to that interpretation of the natural heavens. And all these declare the glory of God. There is perfection stamped upon the universe according to things in nature, for the creation speaks the glory and power of the creator.

But the heavens as seen by the na-

tural eye suggest a spiritual interpretation that far excels in glory the natural heavens as understood by man. The glory of the natural heavens is temporary, but the glory of the spiritual heavens is eternal. The sun that shines in the visible natural heaven is the source of all heat, energy, light, power and life to things in a natural sense, for without the sun life would cease on the earth, and death would be sure and lasting. How beautifully the sun typifies the spiritual sun, Jesus, Lord of Heaven and Earth. Without the power of Jesus — who is the Sun of Righteousness — there would be no spiritual life or knowledge, and eternal death would be the inevitable result. All power in heaven and earth is vested in Him who brought all things into being. God the Father created and foreordained all things, and gave the church by covenant promise to His eternal Son before time began, or a single star illuminated the sky.

Christ the Son redeemed his bride, the church, by his sinless birth, his stainless life, his obedience even unto death; by his death on the cross; by his resurrection from the dead; by his ascension into Heaven; and by his continuing priesthood after the power of an endless life.

The Lord the Holy Ghost reveals unto the Church of God the condemnation of the law, and quickens the members of his body, the church, into spiritual life, and shows them the law fulfilled in Christ; instructs them in righteousness; guides them by his spirit and manifests to them the riches stored up in their heavenly husband; and reveals unto them such measure of his glory as suits their needs to understand.

Truly the spiritual heavens declare the glory of God. The moon is an apt figure of the law, for it shines in the night; and it was before the fulness of the gospel day was manifested that the law was a schoolmaster unto Christ, that every heir of grace and glory should be justified by faith. The moon shines in nature by the borrowed light of the sun; and law is a reflection of the glory of God, as there could be no shadow without a substance, — and the law sets forth, by its just demands, the glory and honor and power of the great Lawgiver of the Universe. The law is holy, and therefore sets forth the ineffable holiness of God. The law is as strong as God himself; therefore it cannot be set aside or annulled; for a law is as strong as the power that makes it. A law is of no value or force without a penalty: therefore justice and judgement are the habitation of God's throne. The law must exact its awful penalty upon the transgressor before justice can teminate in mercy to the family of believers. As God cannot change, his law cannot be altered: the law demanded death in the flesh, banishment from the presence of God and the awful penalty of eternal conscious wrath upon those who transgressed it. A sinless man had violated a commandment of that law, and so became unholy in the person of Adam. His blood, in which was the life of his soul, became unholy; his progeny would therefore be unholy — dead in trespasses and sins. A dead man in nature is unable to give himself natural life, or even realize that he is dead. So with a child of God in nature: life must come from a higher power; and that life could not come until the penalty of the law was endured.

So far as the creature goes, he would be forever dead. But thanks be to God, there was a surety provided in the person of his eternal Son, who had his dwelling place in the bosom of the Father; and who, when the fulness of the time was come, assumed human holy flesh by the glory of the virgin birth when angels announced the advent of him who was both God and Man — Son of God and Son of Man, subject to death in the flesh, but because of the Godhead in him, had power over death and was able to rise from the tomb, having fulfilled the law, and rendered obedience to it in every jot and tittle and suffered the fulness of its curse and penalty. As

the church was chosen in Christ before the morning stars sang together, or the sons of God shouted for joy, the bride paid, in a mystical sense, the penalty in Him who was her surety: being spiritually bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, — giving him the right of redemption because she belonged to him from eternity, and will dwell with him while the eternal ages roll in the mystery and fulness of the resurrection.

Surely if there had been no eternal punishment for the transgressor, God's eternal glory could not be manifested, or the perfect love of the Son of Righteousness demonstrated unto believers. The glory of salvation can be understood by what the children of God are saved from. Satan was necessary in the predestinated purpose of God, that he should tempt man and that man might fall under the curse of the law, that God's perfect love might be manifested; that the holiness of God should be vindicated; and that his mercy should be shown in the wonderful work of Him who is our great salvation.

The stars of heaven are referred to as the spiritual seed of Abraham — an uncounted number so far as man is concerned. Then the election of grace shall be glorified, and thereby bear testimony to the glory of the spiritual heavens.

(Elder) Arnold H. Bellows

Camden, Arkansas,
December 21, 1953.

Dear Brother Spangler:

Enclosed find obituary of Sister Harris, widow of the later Elder V. R. Harris who passed away in February, 1935. Elder Harris was an able minister of the gospel, if I ever heard one, and was highly esteemed by the Baptists in this country. He helped in the ordination of this writer to the ministry, and left me to take care of his home church, Pilgrims Rest, Fordyce; and now I have the care of four churches in the South Arkansas Association. Our little association has been left with just a little bunch of the old Predestinarian faith. Our association is settled on the doctrine as set forth in one of the recent issues of the Signs of the Times by Elder Gilbert Beebe. We are few in number and in peace with each other and in order; and we are glad when any of our orderly ministers and brethern see fit to visit with us.

I believe in the predestination of all things, as taught in the Bible; but I know that this is a subject that can only be handled by inspiration of God. I do not have any desire to enter into any controversy on the subject, but desire to be plain in my little, simple way of expression on this and all points of doctrine. I would say right here that this world and all the things of this world are timely and must come to an end, and the God of the Bible knows now and has ever known the exact time of the end of all things. His purpose and his foreknowledge are in harmony to the end that all must redound to his honor and glory. To my mind this is the destination of them which God must have predetermined.

Dear reader, if I were as sure of my portion or lot in the heaven of bliss as I am sure of the great sovereignty and government of Almighty God over all things, I feel that I would never doubt any more. Now as to a reason for a hope of a home in heaven, I feel of a certainty that it cannot be because of any works of righteousness that I have done, or ever can do. If my poor soul is sent to Hell, it is because of my sins and transgressions, and God's righteous law approves it well. None of my sins or transgressions were authorized by this holy and righteous and sinless, sovereign God. And, dear reader, I feel that every blessing that I have had here in this world, either temporally or spiritually, was a blessing that was laid up in store for me; and also the afflictions and trials and griefs, as well as the comforts and consolations of the felt sense of the manifest presence of His blessed and holy and sweet Spirit.

And, dear reader, because of this God given hope, I how feel a longing and desire, if I know my poor heart, to spend every fleeting breath to His honor and praise. But I cannot frame language to sufficiently praise him as he is so richly due; however, "When I see thee as thou art, then I'll praise him as I ought."

Dear brother, I did not think of writing so much, and this is not for publication if your judgement is against it. I do not want to cause any confusion, or to darken counsel. If what I have written should be of any spiritual joy to anyone, may God be praised for it all is the prayer of this poor sinner — saved by the grace of God through faith in his dear name, if saved at all.

(Elder) J. T. Everitt

R. F. D. 3, Box 26C
Sulligent, Alabama.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I thank you so very much for sending the Signs of the Times on so long after my subscription had expired. I am enclosing $5.00 to renew for two years.

I certainly enjoy reading the many good letters and the Editorials, and I hope I love the doctrine set forth. I have been a victim of arthritis for thirty-seven years, and a shut-in for twenty-one years. Yet with all my afflictions, I feel that the Lord has been good to me: he has blessed me in so many wonderful ways. I can't do any work, or even get outside my home unless someone carries me out, yet God has provided a way that I get to go to church most every first and third Sundays of each month; for which I hope I am thankful.

I am a member of New Prospect Church, of the Buttahatchee Association; and Elder H. M. Brock, of the Hopewell Association, is our wonderful pastor. We hope we are thankful for such a faithful pastor as Elder Brock has been for the past sixteen years. I get to go to the Macedonia Church the first Sunday of each month. Elder W. D. Griffin is their pastor, and we enjoy hearing him preach so much. I was blessed to attend our association, and also Friday and Saturday of the Hopewell Association, which I enjoyed very much. I was sorry that I did not get to attend the Hopewell Association on Sunday and hear you preach. Yet I hope I have been made reconciled in my many disappointments along life's way, and made to see sometimes that all things do work together for good to them that love God and to them who are called according to his purpose. If I only knew I was one of "the called", I wouldn't have so many doubts and fears; yet all I have is a hope that I have been made to love God and his people. I have often been made to wonder if I am mistaken in it all, and have deceived the dear people of God by asking a home with them. I have no doubt about the church as to where it is, but am I one of them?

Yet with all my doubts and fears, if the dear people of God should turn me away, I have no other place to go. I know I am no help to them, and feel so little and unworthy of their sweet fellowship, yet I want to live with them, and die and be buried with them. I look forward from one church day to another; yet, if I am not mistaken, I have had some wonderful consolation given me from the Lord here in my little home, and I have been made to rejoice in the finished work of the blessed Saviour, and made me to sing praise to his name while here alone. That is, none of the family was here, yet I know I was not alone if the Lord was here.

I have been blessed to hear all three of the Associate Editors preach, and hope the Lord will provide a way that I may get to hear both you Editors preach. Please pardon me for writing so much, my fingers are so drawn that I can't write very well, as you can see.

May the Lord be pleased to give you health and strength to carry on your wonderful work for many years. When at a throne of grace, I ask an interest in your prayers.

A little sister in hope,
Miss Tennie Egger

THE BLACK BULL OR A NEW VERSION OF AN OLD CASE

For all whom it may concern:

PART ONE

Once on a time, date and place wanting in the chronicle, but once on a time a certain church got into great difficulty and commotion, as churches sometimes unhappily do. Brotherly love gave place to alienation and coldness, and harmony to contention and mutual crimination. As might well be supposed, Christian enjoyment was unknown. The spirit of prayer was silenced, and a spirit of unchristian bitterness and animosity resigned. The power of the church to do good was completely paralyzed. Their minister preached, and preached well, but he might as well have talked in the midst of a tempest. When he inculated the duties of Christianity and spoke of its benign influence on its subjects, some graceless unbelievers in the gallery would dart a glance down upon some of the members below, and then with a malicious smile look the good man right in the face as much as to say, "Don't try to impose these fictions on us, yonder sit fifty staunch witnesses, all members of your church, who testify against the truth of every word you say."

Thus the word of divine truth fell powerless at the feet of these sinners like arrows striking the iron. Friendship became less known and enmity became more deeply seated. So that it became a common remark among the surrounding populations whose eyes and ears were wide open, "See how these Christians hate one another." If this is Christianity give us in preference to it the worst form of paganism, or the most naked system of infidelity itself. Things were rapidly approaching a crisis. Appearence portended the dissolution of the church as unavoidable and even desirable. And the pall of death seemed likely to rest on the murdered case of Christ and heaven. Many loudly exulted. The sons of Belial in their drunken orgies and nightly revels indulged a fiend-liked triumph over the bleeding body, pouring contempt and insult upon those who have troubled their heads by their piety and their prayers; yet there were a few names even in this Sardis whose garments were undefiled, who wept and sighed over the desolation of their beloved Zion, and who stood daily between the porch and the altar, crying: "Spare thy people, O Lord; and give not thy heritage to reproach. Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion; build thou the walls of Jerusalem."

The minister was deeply pained on learning the sad state, and with all forcible dispatch prepared a suitable answer to their request. We have no copy of the letter he intended for them, but the substance was probably something like the following; "I sincerely lament, brethren, the unchristian state into which you are fallen. How contrary is it to the letter and the spirit of that gospel you profess to believe! How opposite to your own covenanted obligation? How grievous to that Holy Spirit by which you are quickened! And how ruinous to the souls of men around you, many of whom know nothing of the gospel, but what they learn from your walk and conversation. I, therefore admonish you, first of all, and beseech you, that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forebearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Let all bitterness and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice, and be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. But if ye bite and devour one another take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. It is as ye thus love one another that all men shall know that ye are the disciples of Christ."

From this brief specimen the reader can easily imagine how the letter went

on; and so it concluded. Pity, we think, the church never got it! But not to anticipate.

Now this good man owned a good farm some distance from this residence, (obtained most probably by inheritance or marriage,) and it so happened that just as he had folded the above letter, and before he had directed it, word was brought that certain mischief was being done on his farm, and which required his advice. Whereupon he took up another sheet of paper and wrote the following laconic order for his over seer: **"Mend the fence and keep the black bull out."** This sheet he also folded up as the other, and by sheer mistake directed it to the church — and away it went; and the letter for the church went to the farm: at which we might well suppose the overseer marveled greatly. But before the mistake could be corrected the letter had gone past recall: which brings our story to

PART TWO

"Church met for business pursuant to adjournment. The Moderator took the chair and the Clerk his seat at the table with the afore said letter in his hand, sealed and duly directed to the church. He commenced breaking the seal with a gravity becoming the occasion and his office. A profound stillness reigned over the assembly, such as had not been witness for months before. All waited with breathless expectation the counsel of aged and the advice of experience and wisdom. The Clerk opened the letter. The first thing which struck his prying vision was its brevity. But without saluation or note he preceded — "Mend the fence, and—and—keep—the black bull out." He looked, but he was sure he had made no mistake. He turned over a leaf, but there was nothing there but a blank and it was manifest he had reached the end of the epistle. He colored and looked at the church, and the church looked at him. And then they looked about among themselves, and it was very evident they were all taken by surprise and thrown back.

After some time spent in silent musing, some of them began to move their feet, and one of the brethren recovered himself sufficiently to ask that the letter be read again. Where upon the Clerk read, "Mend the fence and keep the black bull out." On which the brother afore said rose and delivered himself much as follows: "Brother Moderator: I am astonished! utterly astonished! I don't know what to make of it; nor what to say or think about it. What does, what can the man mean? We wrote to him out of the depth of our affliction for counsel and advice; and we are here answered with this impertinent and vulgar trifling. The man, old and esteemed as he is, deserves our rebuke if not scorn. Having said the above with all resentment, he sat down. Another of the brethren then rose, one of the forty opposed to the last speaker: "I agree, perfectly," said he, to what the brother just up has said. It is indeed to bad. It is absolutely provoking. It is utterly unworthy of the character of the man and of the respectability of this church. Something spiritual ought to be done. He ended and gave place to a third brother, who through the course of the long difficulty had been esteemed a neutral. He remarked very calmly: "I am heartily glad to hear my brethren who have spoken for once express an agreement. For to my certain knowledge it is the first time they have been agreed on any thing for the last twelve months. I am also of opinion that something ought to be replied to that strange letter decidedly disapproving of it. Though as to the respectability of the church of which mention has been made, the less we say about that under our present circumstance the better. However, I move that a letter be prepared and sent to Elder Good, expressing our disappointment, and our disapprobation of the one he has sent to us. The motion was instantly seconded: but just as the Moderator was about to put it, a somewhat unobtrusive brother rose and asked the priviledge of making a

few remarks.

Now, concerning this brother, we would just premise that he had a remarkable tact and turn at allegorizing and spiritualizing. And it was amazing, unpretending as he was, how he would sometimes make a great deal out of just nothing at all, greatly to his own edification, and the wonder of others. This pecularity in the man's genius was accounted for, in part, by the fact, that in his younger days, when impressions are supposed to be the strongest and most durable, he attended the ministry of an Elder Wiseacre, a famous preacher, who also had great skill in allegorizing, and in which it was thought his main strength lay. Elder Wiseacre could prove the doctrine of the Trinity from the three white baskets on the head of Pharoah's Baker: the same doctrine together with "the decrees," from Solomon's: three-fold cord is not easily broken. Also he had a sermon which proved to his own satisfaction the universal history of the Church in all ages from the seven Apocalyptic letters.

Such were the early advantages of the brother now on the floor, who spoke and said, and I also am astonished; not so much at the letter in question, as at the views which the brethern have taken of it. Why, it is just the thing, a better letter could not have been written. You call it, "impertinent." I say it is quite appreciative. You say it is "trifling". I say it implies a solemn and just rebuke, and contains a most important piece of advice, to which we do well that we take heed. I can explain it according to the method of interpretation which I learned many years ago from our good minister. Here the recollection of past days and of Elder Wiseacre awakened his sensibilities, and his emotions produced the following reflection: Ah, we had preaching then. They knew how to explain the hardest parts of Leviticus and the Revelation. We have no such preaching now. But to the letter, "Mend the fence, and keep the black bull out". "Here," said he, "It is plain, the fence means gospel discipline, manage it with Christian love." This fence was put up by Jesus Christ and his Apostles to keep the bad out and good in, and it ought never to be down. Then that black critter evidently means the wicked one, that old serpent, which is the devil; who goeth about like a roaring lion, as saith the Apostle, seeking whom he may devour. Now brethren, our fence is broken down and trampled underfoot. Gospel discipline is neglected, and brotherly love banished; and we are become hateful and hating one another. The devil has got in among us. He has set brother against brother, and husband against wife, and children against their parents. He has made sad work. He has caused the Holy Spirit to withdraw and leave us almost desolate. He has made us a reproach and a byword among our neighbors, and our enemies rejoice among their selves, saying, Aha, so would we have it.

Now brethren, the letter means that we should banish this bad, unchristian spirit from our hearts, that we should make straight paths for our feet, that we should confess to God and each other our evil ways and forsake them; and that we should thus drive the devil out of our midst and let him no more gain advantage over us. Then brethren, all will be well; and God will again delight to bless us and to make us a blessing.

Here he ended. But the effects of his good speech founded on the allegorizing principles was wonderful. The eyes of the church were opened. The letter became light itself. It was excelent, oracular. They all saw it, and what was better, they felt it. They saw their evil state. There was the devil before them. They shuddered at their danger. Their hearts began to relent. The sluices of deep contrition were opened. Returning brotherly love began to glow in their bosoms. They began to mend the fence, each one his own length. They confessed to each other with weeping their unchristian conduct and spirit. They mutually asked and obtained forgive-

ness. They knelt together before God with weeping and supplication. They rose with renovated feeling, and soon it was like a little heaven on earthly ground and glory in the earth. After some further profitable exercises they all joined with heart and soul in singing the following hymn, which had not been heard among them before for many, many months:

"From whence doth this union arise.
That hatred is conquered by love?"

Here many voices faltered, overcome by deep feeling: and many eyes were dimmed by the gushing tears of mingled penitence and joy. But they recovered and went on.

"It fastened our souls in such ties,
That distance and time can't remove."

After this they all cordially shook hands and every man went to his home, wiser and better for the "strange letter," each resolving henceforth to look well to the fence and keep the Black Bull out.

Remark:

Brethren, think on the above and act as well.

Editor — (P. D. Gold)

(The above is reprinted from the Landmark of March 1, 1892, and sent to us by Brother O. Y. Clayton, Sr.)

7917 East Knox,
Spokane, Washington

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed please find money order for $3.00 to renew my subscription to the Signs and to let you know I wish you all well.

I was reading an old copy of the Signs (of 1901) the other day that belonged to my mother; and, unless I am deceived, the ones today seem to be very much the same. Sometimes I think people don't take such a positive attitude now as they used to. I hope and pray that I am always made to stand on the sure foundation of the truth. I know that if we stand on our own works, we are on shifting sands. Only the foundation of God stands sure, having the seal that the Lord knoweth them that are his: it has already been sealed and fixed. The foundation of God, to me, is his determinate counsel and foreknowledge in all things, and the working of all things after the counsel of his own will and good pleasure. He says, "My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power"; and I do not think that there are any days that are not in or of his power.

Jesus says, "Fear not little flock for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom"; and also, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Can we then wander from a loving Father's care? No, a thousand times no! We may experience death's dark shadow here on this earth, and feel that surly we are forsaken, but it is for our good and His glory. He is just as much in our passing through Hell, as He is when we are on the mountain top. I hear many say the devil appointed Hitler, Stalin and Malenkov. Well, maybe he did; but I read in the book of Daniel, fourth chapter, where God cut down Nebuchadnezzar and bound him about and he ate grass as an oxen until seven times passed over him. Why? So he could see that God does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and that none can stay His hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? And also that he, or "the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men." Is there any reason why, if He did that in Daniel's time, he would change now? "I am the Lord, I change not."

So, I believe that the salvation of his people is just as sure as there is a God — an almighty power, just and true, and all wise. "Fear not little flock." But we do fear sometimes; for we cannot see how such a one as we are could be in that blood-washed throng. There just isn't any reason I should be unless it is because He loved me and gave himself for me. That is the only reason I have a hope: not that I have chosen Him, but

that he has chosen me. Yet I am so fearful — sometimes I am sure I am only a deceiver.

"But though I have oft forgot,
His loving kindness changes not."

A sinner saved by grace, if at all
Mrs. Mary L. Eckard

Cottage Grove, Tenn.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I want to thank you for sending this good paper, which is always so full of the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone; and written by those who have been called out of darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of Jesus Christ our Lord.

I am nearing my eighty-eighth birthday, and my wife was eighty-two the first day of this year: so you can see that according to nature our days are swiftly drawing to a close. I am not able to work any more, and my wife has been an invalid for the last twenty-one years, caused by rheumatism; and I have had two operations on my throat in the last few years for cancer, which has handicapped me in my talking. Yet the Lord has been so good and merciful to both of us, and we are able to be up and around most of the time.

We both joined the Old School, or Predestinarian Baptist Church at Walnut Fork, which is about one mile from our home. This was in 1920. This church was organized in 1821, and the present building was built in 1921. We do not feel worthy to be numbered with the dear saints who belong to the church, yet we love them and desire to live with them. We have only ten members now, having lost three male members the last few years. There are only three churches in our association (Obion); one has three members and the other six. So you see we are weak as to numbers, but we are in peace with one another, and with our corresponding associations. This is a great blessing, and we feel to thank, and give praise and glory to our Lord. We do not have a minister in our association, and haven't had for the last twenty-three or twenty-four years; but we have been blessed to have able and sound ministers to pastor our churches. Elder H. N. Oliver was the last minister to belong to our association, and he passed away several years ago.

Elder R. L. Biggs, of Nashville, Tennessee, is our pastor, and has been for the last seventeen years; and we hope to have him continue with us. Though we have only the three churches in our association, we have been blessed to continue holding our associations and Union Meetings every year, and the Lord has seen fit to send able ministers to us at these meetings. Elder Biggs is the moderator of our Union Meetings, and Elder Paul Poyner is the moderator of our Associations.

Soon after I joined the church in 1920, I was appointed clerk of the church and also of the association and union meeting. I have been trying to serve in this capacity, and as a deacon, for about thirty-two years, but I feel my unworthiness to fill either of the places. I have tried to do the best I could, and have prayed the Lord to guide me and uphold me that I might discharge the duties placed upon me in a way that would not cause a reproach to the cause.

We always look forward for the coming of the Signs, and we read and reread it over and over. May the Lord continue his blessings upon you, and uphold you in his love, mercy, and grace and enable you to continue the paper, is our prayer. Your unworthy brother, in hope of eternal life beyond this vale of tears.

R. L. Veazey, Sr.

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170 N. Filbert Ave.,
Exeter, California

To the Household of Faith:

The Redeemed of God:

It is you that I desire to be with and talk of the goodness of our blessed lord, who gave his life that we might live. I do not understand myself: if I can't be with the people who talk my language, it just seems that I can't resist the

desire to write. Yet, knowing my inability, I fear that I might write something that the scriptures do not teach, and that I am mistaken in their meaning. But, be that as it may, I trust that God will guide me into all truth.

I want to be plain, and I want to be understood. I read from some of our writers and it confuses me; and sometimes I wonder if it is not the cause of so much trouble in Zion. I believe the Bible teaches that some have to be fed on milk — they are not strong enough to eat strong meat. Now, I do not mean for the preacher to sugar-coat any part of the scripture.

The deliverance of the people of Israel was called a redemption. God promised to rid them of their bondage, and to redeem them with a stretched out arm; and when they were delivered, He is said to have led forth the people he had redeemed. (Exodus 6:6). The ransom of the people of Israel when numbered was typical of the ransom by Christ. The giving of half a shekel was called the atonement money for their souls; which was given alike by the rich and the poor, that there be no plague among them. (Exodus 30:12-16).

None but Israel was ransomed; and none but spiritual Israel is ransomed by Christ; those whom God has chosen, Christ has redeemed; and they shall be saved with an everlasting salvation — even the whole Israel of God, both Jew and Gentile. They were a numbered people for whom the ransom was paid, and so are they who are ransomed and redeemed by Christ; whose names are written in the Lamb's book of Life. They are the sheep for whom He has laid down his life — a special and peculiar people. The half shekel was paid alike for rich and poor: neither more nor less. Christ's people are all redeemed from all their sins, and with the same price — the price of his blood; which is, as the half shekel was, an atonement for their souls, by which peace and reconciliation, and full satisfaction was made for sin; so that no plague shall come near them. They are delivered from going into the pit of destruction, and are saved from the second death.

"O matchless grace that gave my soul a hiding place;" how marvelous is his love, and how great and matchless are his ways. He stills the storms of the great oceans; he speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast; he holds all of space in the palm of his hand. Yet some people say our eternal salvation depends on the creature's "do and live"; but, thanks be to God, if I am not deceived he has given me a better understanding — given me a sweet hope that some sweet day, when I have finished my course here below, I will bask in the sunlight of my blessed Lord. But it will be by the righteousness of Jesus, and not for anything good that I have done. I want to live at the foot of the cross, ever looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

I am past three score years and have lived through natural depressions; and can also say depressions in Zion. Brethren, these things ought not to be: why can't we get the beam out of our own eyes that we might see clearly how to get the mote out of our brother's eye. I can fellowship a brother or sister when they give evidence that they have tasted that the Lord is good. I can't bow down to some things that some teach. I believe that salvation is by grace and grace alone; and I believe that we are carried away in the spirit sometimes, for I have been to church when this natural me forgot my natural babe, and my cup ran over. "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." I can't believe the spirit was ever dead in sins; I believe it was a natural man that God made and put in the garden of Eden. It was this same man that transgressed God's law, and it was this same man that Jesus shed his precious blood on Calvary's cross to redeem.

I wish I had the mind of a ready writer, but as I do not have, will say to the editors correct all mistakes and publish,

if you see fit.

A sinner saved by grace, if at all,
Mrs. G. W. Atkins

A SUBSCRIBER SIXTY-FIVE YEARS

Fairmont, W. Va.

Dear Editors:

I am sending you a check for three dollars to pay for the Signs of the Times for another year. I have subscribed for it for something like sixty-five years; and now I am old and feeble and do not want to miss getting it.

I am not able to travel any more and don't get to hear preaching very often. I don't expect to be here but a short time, and this may be my last time to send for the Signs. I hope you dear Editors and brethren and sisters well, and a happy New Year.

I bid you farewell in the Lord.

James W. Linn

ASSOCIATIONAL NOTICES

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 2, 3 and 4th, 1954. Services will begin at ten o'clock Wednesday morning (DST).

A cordial invitation is extended to all ministers and brethern of our faith who are in order and fellowship with us; and all friends of our faith are welcome.

Those arriving on Tuesday will go to the home of Mr. and Mrs. George Genther, 117 West Prospect Street, Hopewell, N. J., or Mrs. Letha A. Blackwell, 9 Princeton Avenue, Hopewell, N. J., and they will be cared for.

(Mrs.) Letha A. Blackwell, Church Clerk.

PLEASE NOTE

Elder W. W. Taylor, 1216 S. Brighton Avenue, Dallas, Texas, desires to obtain a copy of the Second Volume of Elder Gilbert Beebe's Editorials; also any other periodicals, minutes, etc. pertaining to Old School Baptists. Please write him direct.

Brother C. T. Echols, 802 Leroda Avenue, Corpus Christi, Texas, would be be glad to have brethern in that vicinity call on him. He is past eighty and would be glad to see those who talk his language. — Ed.

PLEASE NOTE: We have now disposed of all our copies of the History of the Welsh Tract Church. The warm reception given this booklet is appreciated. Ed.

EDITORIALS

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EDITORIAL

WHAT IS YOUR LIFE?

(James 4:14)

Your natural life is "a vapour that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away." You cannot say with assurance that you will be living tomorrow. As vapour only appears with certain circumstances and conditions upon which the vapour has no control; so is your life. When these circumstances and conditions are changed, your life vanishes as the vapour. The flowing of the blood, the functioning of the mind, and the movement of the muscles are evidences of natural life. This life is given upon the volition of the will of God, and it is taken at His appointed time. When the mind ceases to function, the muscles to move, and the blood to flow; a person is pronounced naturally dead. This natural life is

timely. It has its beginning and it has its ending.

It is a true biblical saying that "Life is in the blood". The expression in Leviticus 17:11 says, "the life of the flesh is in the blood". The flow of the blood stimulates the muscles and mind. When there is a change in the flow of the blood there is a change in the functioning of the mind and movement of the muscles. Heart stimulants affect mind and muscle. When one is under the influence of alcohol — which stimulates the flow of the blood — it is often truly said, "He is not himself." His actions and conversation are changed.

The Lord willing, we desire to meditate upon the functioning of the natural mind before comparing and contrasting natural and spiritual life. We want to say to the reader, who is wondering what our object is in this treatise, that we desire to prove a true and experienced state of life that exists in the regenerated child of God; why regeneration is necessary; how that Jesus is our life, and to define eternal life.

The nature of the natural mind is to function within a natural realm. This nature would have to be changed before it could act within the spiritual realm. We reason according to our understanding. When we have only natural understanding our reasoning is according to natural wisdom. Our affections by nature are carnal, earthly, and sensual — bent on gratifying self. The approval or dis-approval of the natural mind is based on a natural conscience which is forever changing with the changes of social customs and ideas. The will of the natural mind chooses that which is evil, indulges in the lusts of the flesh, and chooses to please self. This is the mind of natural life.

What is your life? Have you been elevated above that which is natural to such an extent that you are never bothered with this old nature, conscience, will, understanding, or affections? Have you been wrought upon in such a way that you are living a pure, holy, spiritual life void of fleshly inclinations? Is your life so holy that you never have a doubt concerning your future abode? I must answer, "no" to all these questions. My experience proves that I possess a darkened understanding, an unregenerated will, and earthly affections. That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. There is a natural life and there is a spiritual life. I maintain that God's children who have been born again and are yet living in this natural world are characters who possess dual characteristics. This conforms to the expression of the prophet (Isaiah 38:20) "—All the days of OUR LIFE." "Our life" is an expression that is inconsistent with the proper usage of language unless it could mean two characters in one person. There is the Spirit of God and there is the spirit of man. As long as we live in this natural tabernacle we will be beset at times with this old depraved nature, hardened conscience, darkened understanding, UNREGENERATED WILL, and earthly affections.

God infuses Eternal Life into one of His children by His Spirit in enacting the new birth. When this is done the one being born again is given a new nature, an enlightened understanding, a new conscience, a renewed will, and heavenly affections. This act of God does not do away with his natural birth nor his natural life. To the regenerated — born again — child of God may I ask, "What is your life?"

May I answer, as God will direct? God has ADDED his life to your life. You are not only born of the flesh but of the Spirit. Yes, you are given a new nature by which you are enabled to see the depravity of your old nature. Your understanding is enlightened that you may realize the darkness of your natural understanding. You are given a will toward God and godliness that proves to you that your natural will is to choose evil rather than good. These heavenly affections that God has implanted in you show how selfish and

earthly are your natural affections. Has your life been changed? Yes, as a person. You do not esteem yourself as highly as you once did. This experience has humbled you and caused you to realize your dependence. You find that whereas you were in peace with yourself there is now a warfare. The spirit is lusting against the flesh and the flesh is against the spirit. These are contrary one to the other so that YOU CANNOT DO THE THINGS YOU WOULD. Time nor space would not permit treating upon the extent of the change. May I ask another question?

Has your flesh been purified, renovated, refined, or made better? No. Your experience is as Paul wrote to the Romans concerning himself, even though he had been graced by this new life being added to him. He expresses in Romans 7:19, "For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do." If you read his experience you will find that when he would do good evil was present with him. You will find that sin was mixed with all he did. He realized that he served the law of sin with his flesh. He considered himself as chief of sinners, less than the least of saints, and a wretched man who needed and prayed for deliverance. He possessed the thorn in the flesh, which was a messenger of Satan to buffet him about, lest he be exalted above measure. He repoiced in physical pains and personal persecutions, but the indwelling workings of sin in his carnal mind — the opposition of his depraved nature to the grace of God — caused him to cry out concerning his wretched condition. You will find that Peter possessed his old nature after being so wonderfully blessed with such special divine gifts. His regenerated will was to follow Jesus to the extent of death, but there was another characteristic abiding with him that resulted in his denying any knowledge of Christ — not just once but three times — confirming with an oath, cursing and swearing. Job abhorred himself. An old prophet considered himself as being a man of unclean lips. Many wonderfully gifted characters, whose experience is recorded in the Book of Books, were affected with the same evil tendencies as you are. May I ask again, "What is your life?"

Your life is a mixture of joys and sorrows. Sometimes you are on the mountain top rejoicing in the grace and love of God, but so much of the time you are in the valley of woe. Sometimes your hope of eternal abode in heaven is so little that you wonder, "Do I have a hope?"; and sometimes it is an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast that entereth within the veil. Sometimes you doubt you have grace; at other times you are convinced of His gracious care for you. Probably much of the time the Bible is a sealed book to you; but, sometimes it is as God speaking to you. Sometimes you want to talk of God's love for His people; but, much of the time you are shut up and have no desire to meet one who believes in God. Sometimes the minister preaches directly to you with comfort and edification; but much of the time — though you try to listen — you are cold and lifeless. Why am I thus tossed and have this cross?

You would depend upon the goodness of your own life were it not for this tossing to and fro that you experience. You must be given to know the vileness of your life, the weakness of your understanding, the deceit of your heart, the evil of your will, and the carnality of your affections, before you can obey the command of Jesus to DENY YOURSELF. You must possess this cross of flesh against the Spirit before you can obey the command of Jesus: "TAKE UP YOUR CROSS". You must realize the vileness of your own life before you can be made submissive to Jesus' command, "FOLLOW ME". You must realize these infirmities through the remaining part of your life, else you would not pray for salvation from sin, look to God for grace, depend upon Jesus for your merits, or hope to be finally delivered

from evil into the glorious liberty of the children of God. What is your life?

Your natural life is in evidence when the flow of the blood stimulates the activity of the natural mind and the movement of the muscles. Your spiritual life is in evidence when the flow of the Spirit of God stimulates the spiritual mind (or heart) resulting in a godly walk and conversation. When the blood flows and the mind functions there is action of the muscles. When the Spirit flows, and the godly mind functions there is action consisting of good works. These good works are done only by the stimulation of the Spirit of God. Thus it is by the grace of God that we are what we are.

What is your life? "For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God; When Christ, WHO IS OUR LIFE, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (Col. 3:3-4) We have a foretaste of Christ appearing here in time, which is glorious. These experiences last only for fleeting moments; but the glory of them encourages us to press on with renewed hope and a strengthened faith. Christ is our life because we have been made to depend upon His righteousness. Christ is our life because He suffered the penalty of death — blotting out our sins by dying — that we might live. He is the author of our spiritual life; the fountain from whence flows the water of life; the root of our godly life; and He is our head which stimulates a godly walk and conversation. "Your life is HID with Christ in God".

Yes, your life is hid from the world. You cannot make known to the world the precious things of this life. You cannot cause the wise and the prudent to see it. It is HID from them. Jesus thanked God that He had hid these things from the wise and the prudent and revealed them unto babes. Your life is hid from the law in Christ. The law can have no dominion over you. Your sins are hid from God by the blood of Christ, for it is impossible for Him to see your sins through the blood of His Son. Those who would destroy your hope and faith cannot, because your life is hid with Christ. Is it not true that your eternal life is hid from you much of the time? Two of the three things that abide NOW, according to Paul's letter to the church at Corinth, proves that your eternal life is hid from you. "NOW abideth faith, hope, and charity" (I Cor. 13:13). "Faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things NOT SEEN". If a thing is not seen it is hid. Paul said, "We are saved by HOPE: but hope that is SEEN is NOT HOPE: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that WE SEE NOT, then do we with patience wait for it". (Rom. 8:24-5) If we SEE NOT that which is hoped for, it is HID. If, then, we are saved by hope, surely our life is hid with Christ. Take courage, brethren, and may God comfort you with the thought that, "Now we see through a glass DARKLY; but then face to face—" (I Cor. 13:12). Sometimes His smiles are hidden from us. We grope about in darkness. Our minds are taken up with the vain things of this world so that we are made to realize:

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know,
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again,

What is your life? You are a stranger to yourself. Your life is so hid that you are fearful that you are not born again. When He "shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in Glory". These foretastes of His appearing here in time renews our hopes and strengthens our faith. We wonder so much of the time: is He coming again? Our faith and hope is that when He appears we shall appear with Him in Glory. We look forward to that grand appearing when He shall take us into that glorious home where we shall live and abide with him eternally. What is ETERNAL LIFE?

The word ETERNAL indicates that this life under consideration is endless. It shall never cease, but perserves without a break into an endless eternity.

Those who possess this life shall never perish. They shall live forever without any danger of dying. No power is able to destroy it, for this life is in Christ." He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." (I John 5:12) This eternal life is inter-linked in the golden chain of eternal life and includes therein all of God's chosen people; for we read "I in them, and thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in ONE." (John 17:23) The Father is in his Son, his Son is in his chosen. His chosen is in the Son and his Son is in the Father. This interlinking is why Jesus could say, "And I give unto them ETERNAL LIFE; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my father's hand." (John 10:28-29) The children of God are so interlinked in the Father and Son that it would be just as possible for God to be dethroned as for one of them to perish or lose that life! It would be denying the power of God and blaspheming his Son, to proclaim that any who have this eternal life shall ever be severed from it, so that the second or eternal death shall have power over them! What is Eternal Life? "And this is LIFE ETERNAL, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou has sent." (John 17:3)

If you know God and know his Son, you have enternal life. If he has seen fit to reveal himself to you, then you know Him. Peter has eternal life, as was manifested in his answer to Jesus, as recorded in Matthew 16:16, "Thou are the Christ, the Son of the living God." This answer of Peter was given not because he had learned it from flesh and blood, but because he had been divinely favored by a direct revelation from God, as you shall see in reading the statement of Jesus following this answer. It takes the life of God imputed to an individual by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit to enable one to know God or Jesus Christ. "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, AND SHALL NOT COME INTO CONDEMNATION; but is passed from death unto life." (John 5:24) The revelation of God unto His people causes them to cease to believe in themselves and to place their trust in Him. This life of God imputed to you makes you lose confidence in yourself. This eternal life has saved the soul in regeneration and we are confident that the same spirit will save the body in the resurrection. The work of salvation that has been begun in us experimentally will surely be performed and perfected unto the deliverance of our bodies from sin and death. As this life immortalized the soul in regeneration, this life will immortalize the body in the resurrection. As we now have the first fruits — being a foretaste — we shall come into full fruition in Heaven. We shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberties of the children of God. What will be your life then?

Your life will then be free from imperfections, warfares, tribulations, doubts, fears, persecutions, thirst, hunger, and confusions. You shall have uninterrupted joy, peace and happiness forevermore. There will be no dying as experienced daily in this life, but you shall live! live! LIVE!!! What a wonderful and glorious life is ETERNAL LIFE!!!

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE CREATURE SUBJECT TO VANITY

Dear Brother Gold:

Thirty-one days ago, while on my way to the Pigg River Association at Town Creek, I was taken with sciatica in my left hip. At first I thought but little about it, as I thought it would probably be of short duration, but I have been taught otherwise. This vile body of

mine has been the seat of much pain and suffering; all of which teaches me that it is nothing but a body of vanity — an earthly tabernacle that is fast decaying and will soon be dissolved.

But while this is the case, there is a spirit or creature that, at the present, has to make its home in, and be subject to, this mass of vanity. Yet that spirit or creature is almost constantly groaning in hope to be delivered from the vanity of this old man which is corrupt in his deeds. While these two are made to dwell in the same house, yet they are by no means related to each other. Neither do they live on friendly terms with each other, for the one is contrary to the other. One is called "an earthly house of this tabernacle," (see 2 Corinthians 5:1) while the other is called the "new man which is created in righteousness and true holiness." (Ephesians 4:24). And this new man is not of the earth, consequently not earthly, but is born of God; and is, in my humble opinion, the creature that is made subject to vanity, as Paul affirms in Romans 8:20, saying, "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." The Apostle says in the 19th verse, "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God."

This verse convinces me that the Apostle was not speaking of the first man Adam as the creature that was made subject to vanity in the 20th verse, as I once thought. For I could not see how he, Adam, could be earnestly in expectation, or waiting, for the manifestation of the sons of God, when as yet he was in a state of innocence and his whole person undefiled — no sin that we read of to give him any concern about the matter. I reasoned thus: Did this upright man have any reason to look for condemnation; was he anticipating the result that would follow a transgression; was he meditating a transgression and hoping that if he did become vile that God would eventually give him a manifestation of the sons of God? I could not see that inanimate matter could unwillingly be subject to that which it had no knowledge of. Hence the change in my thoughts. I thought, and yet think, that the apostle was not writing about the creation of man, Adam. For saith the apostle, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." (Romans 8:1-3)

Now I think if Adam is the creature who is spoken of in the 20th verse, who in his creation was made subject to vanity, that it is wonderfully strange that at the time he was created he was not under the law, for it was after his creation that he was put under law; at least that is the way it looks to me. Hence, it is another creature that was made subject to vanity, not willingly. Vanity signifies emptiness, insanity, falsehood, arrogance, idle show, enmity, vain pride. Now it seems to me these things were far from Adam when he was made. For, "God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." (Ecclesiasties 7:29). In his making he was not subject to vanity. Then it appears to me that the vanity of the flesh was not in the first man when he first came from the hands of the Creator. After his transgression he was vanity itself. "Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity." (Psalms 39:5). This being the case, the new man or the creature created in righteousness and true holiness is the creature that is made subject to vanity, for it has to dwell in this vain house until he who hath subjected it releases it from this body of death. God never intended that this world should be heaven, or that the saints should be free

from the shafts of the wicked one; if so, his children would be perfect in the flesh. But not so, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (John 16: 33).

There is something about the child of God that they did not bring into this world when they were born of flesh. That which we bring with us into this world, or that which belongs to us as natural men and women, was conceived in sin. (see Psalms 51:5). Then, of course, it is flesh and not spirit; this flesh is simply vanity. That which is born of the spirit is spirit; and that which is spirit by God's wonderful and unfathomable and wise, deep and unsearchable purpose, has been made subject or has been sent into the heart of each of his redeemed children, and it is that which is called by the apostle, the creature. And this creature believes, and hopes, and trusts in God — in fact, it is Christ in you the hope of glory. (see Colossians 1:27). This creature hope is the living principle which lays hold of eternal life. This hope is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth within the veil whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. (Hebrews 6:19, 20).

This hope is the product of grace reigning through righteousness unto eternal life by or through Jesus Christ. Now vanity is opposed to grace and hope, and is no friend of holiness; yet God hath thought it proper to make it — the new creature — subject to vanity, or to be annoyed by the outer or fleshly man; not willingly, but by reason of him — Christ, I understand — who hath subjected the same in hope. It is like one who is racked with pain, mourns, sighs and groans under it, not willing bearing it and would be free from it if he could, but is bound to be subject to it in hope that he will be delivered from it.

So, in a sense, the new man or new creature, or the creature trusting in the Lord, would willing be always basking in the sunshine of God's all abounding grace, and is not willing to be harrased with doubts and fears while passing through this vale of sin and gloom; but God knows what is best for them, hence he subjects them in hope. This spirit, or creature, comes into the heart renewed by grace at the time of the new birth, or the time that the recipient of it finds evidence of pardon which fills the soul with ecstatic joy and praise. But, being of a holy and divine origin, it finds itself annoyed with the whims and vanity of this vain tenement of clay — being made subject to it not willingly but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. This vain, sinful old man often resists the new man, or creature, and causes groaning which cannot be uttered; for the one is contrary to the other. But he who hath subjected it, hath done it in hope. Faith is given, and the creature lays hold of faith and hope, which, as an anchor, stays it on Christ; not withstanding we are often made to cry, "O my leanness, my leanness, woe is me." (see Isaiah 24:16). Yet hope comes to its relief, and we hear it saying, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." (Psalms 23:4).

I have thought that the rod and staff are fitly representative of faith and hope. For even when in deep and sore afflictions, even in the darkest hours, when the waterspouts seem to be gone clear over our head, there is a remembrance — though it may be dim and small — of former joys; and the creature through faith and hope that it will be delivered from this bondage of corruption, begins thus to reason and enquire, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." (Psalms 42: 11).

Thus we see that, notwithstanding its subjection to the vanity spoken of, hope — glorious hope, blessed hope, soul comforting, living hope — never fails. The apostle declares that the creature shall be delivered. Faith says, Yes, God's promises are sure. Hope clings to the promises of its author, God. The assurance it has, says the apostle, is "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, (what they? It must be they, the new creation, the creature who is subjected in hope) but we ourselves also which have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit: the redemption of our body. (Romans 8:21-23) How wonderfully experimental the apostle is in these expressions: They bring us into fellowship with him, for we are earnestly hoping for these wonderful changes.

The apostle continues, "For we are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do with patience wait for it." (24th and 25th verses). Now I think this glorious hope is that which the apostle refers to when he says by reason of him who has subjected the same in hope; that in the reign of grace it is foreordained or predestinated by the subjector that this corruptible, or this vanity, shall be overcome or destroyed; and the saints will no longer be annoyed by it. Hope looks to the dissolution of this vain body, when this corruption shall put on incorruption. "For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal (old man, not the new creature, for the new creature never was corrupted by vanity but only made subject to it) must put on immortality. So, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality (not until then), then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory. (the creature completely delievered from vanity, for vanity will be destroyed) O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Corinthians, 15th chapter).

I think that until then the creature will be subject to vanity — at least this is my view of the subject. The subjecting of the creature in vanity is for the glorifying of God through Christ, and is for the good of the saints. To be afflicted is grievous and trying, but these things, of whatsoever nature they be, serve to drive us to God, for in him we are blessed to have hope through Christ. Never shall our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us anything but a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. The apostle says, "And he that searcheth the heart knoweth what is the mind of the spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. (That insures the victory). "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethern. Moreover, whom he did predestinate them he also called, and whom he called them he also justified; and whom he justified them he also glorified. What shall we say to these things? If God be for us who can be against us? He that spared not his own son, but delievered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Romans, 8th chapter).

These things being so, what a visible mark of our vanity for us to be quarreling and wrangling about who it is, or what it is that is made subject to vanity, or what it is that God has predesti-

nated. "We are but of yesterday and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow." (Job 8:9). And we ought to know that if we quarrel and wrangle over these things all the days of our lives, we but show how vain and foolish we are; we cannot alter or frustrate one of the purposes of God. Therefore let us cease to dispute and cavil over these things. Preach as the apostle has enjoined the word; and what we find there preach, and stop where the word stops. Let us not try to apologize for God, but be content to be still, and know that he is God.

May the Lord bless Zion, and extend peace to her like a river, for Christ's sake. Your suffering brother in Christ, I hope.

(Elder) John C. Hall.

(Copied from **Zion's Landmark** of August 15, 1899)

The opinions and doings of men are of no value unless motivated by the Spirit of Truth; if otherwise, they "darken counsel by words without knowledge".

WE QUOTE:

"Whatever our condition be, God the umpire of the world hath from everlasting decreed that condition for us, and by his providence ordered all appertenances thereunto. Let a Christian often think with himslf, who hath placed me here, whether I am in a high sphere, or in a lower. Not chance or fortune, as the purblind heathens imagined; no, it is the wise God that hath by his providence fixed me in this orb. We must act that scene which God would have us; say not, such an one hath occasioned this to me; look not too much at the under wheel. We read in Ezekiel of, "a wheel within a wheel". God's decree is the cause of the turning of the wheels, and his providence is the inner wheels that move all the rest. God's providence is that helm which turns about the whole ship of the universe. Say then, as holy David, "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou, Lord, didst it."

"God's providence — which is nothing else but the carrying on of his decree — should be a *supersedas* and counterpoise against discontent; God hath set us in our station, and he hath done it in wisdom. We fancy such a condition of life is good for us; whereas if we were our own carvers, we should often cut the worst piece. Lot, being put to his choice, did choose Sodom — which soon after was burned with fire. Rachel was very desirous of children, "Give me children, or I die." — and it cost her her life in bringing forth a child. Abraham was earnest for Ishmael, "O that Ishmael might live before thee!" — but he had but little comfort, either of him or his seed; he was born a son of strife, his hand was against every man, and every man's hand against him. The disciples wept for Christ's leaving the world, they chose his corporeal presence: whereas it was best for them that Christ should be gone, for else, "the Comforter would not come." David chose the life of his child, "he wept and fasted for it." — whereas if the child had lived, it would have been a perpetual monument of his shame.

"We stand oft in our own light; if we should sort or parcel out our own comforts, we should hit upon the wrong. Is it not well for the child that the parent doth choose for it? Were it left to itself, it would perhaps choose a knife to cut its own finger. A man in a paroxysm calls for wine, which if he had, it were little better than poison: it is well for the patient that he is at the physician's appointment. **The consideration of a decree determining, and a providence disposing of all things should work our hearts to holy contentment.** The wise God hath ordered our condition; if he sees it better for us to want, we shall want; if he sees it better for us to abound, we shall abound: Be content to be at God's disposal.

"God sees, in his infinite wisdom, the same condition is not convenient for all: that which is good for one may be bad

for another. One season of weather will not serve all men's occasions, — one needs sushine, another rain; one condition of life will not fit every man, no more than one suit of apparel will fit everybody. Prosperity is not fit for all, nor yet adversity . . . . The wise God sees that condition to be bad for one, which is good for another; hence it is he that placeth men in different orbs and spheres: some higher, some lower. **. . . Shall I be discontent at that which is enacted by a decree, and ordered by a providence?"**

(From a sermon by THOMAS WATSON (died about 1689) on the text, *"I have learned, in whatever state I am, therewith to be content."*)

OBITUARIES

ELDER R. M. HAWKINS

Elder R. M. Hawkins was born in the year 1875, and departed this life December 18, 1953; making his stay on earth nearly seventy-eight years. He passed away suddenly at his home in Huntsville, Alabama.

In January, 1898, he was married to Miss Susie Simpson, who died in 1941. To this union were born one son and three daughters; the following daughters survive: Mrs. Pearl Solomon, Huntland, Tennessee, and Mrs. Taylor Solomon, South Pittsburg, Tennessee. Also surviving are seven grand children and six great grand-children. On June 23, 1943, he was again married to Miss Julia Hawkins, who also survives.

Brother Hawkins united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Mt. Fork, Madison County, Alabama, the third Sunday in August, 1910; and was ordained to the full work of the ministry the third Sunday in June, 1914. He served as moderator of the Flint River Association for many years.

Elder R. L. Biggs conducted the funeral at Mountain Fork Church in the presence of a large congregation of relatives, brethern and friends. He was wonderfully blessed to speak words of comfort to the bereaved, using Psalms 27:4, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple." And Romans 8:31, "What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us."

Elder Hawkins will be greatly missed by his family, brethern and many friends. He was a faithful pastor of all four churches in the Flint River Association. We are now without a pastor, but we believe in an all wise and powerful God who is able to raise one up at his own time, for He doeth all things well. Let us all say that our loss is his eternal gain. "The eternal Shepherd still survives, new comfort to impart: His eye still guides us, and his voice still animates our hearts." In humble submission we bow to thy will, O God.

The Flint River Association requests that a copy of this be sent to the widow, Mrs. R. M. Hawkins, R. F. D. 2, Toney, Alabama. Written by

R. A. Simmons, Plevna, Alabama

JOHN WESTLEY JARRELL

In sorrow we write of the death of our uncle John W. Jarrell, who passed away on February 17, 1952. He was born November 9, 1869; and was married to Miss Anna A. Stanley, daughter of Elder and Mrs. W. R. Stanley, who survived him about twelve months (see obituary). Surving also are a son, Willie T. Jarrell and two daughters, Mrs. Ralph Briggs and Mrs. Frank Gammon; eight grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

He was a good neighbor and kind and devoted husband and father, and was loved by all who knew him. He was not a member of the church, but was a strong believer in the faith of the Primitive Baptist's, and attended with his wife as long as he was able to go. He did not complain of his afflictions but bore them with patience. We do not weep as those who have no hope, but rather say, Sleep on, dear one, and take your rest. We know he was tired of this pilgrimage, and desired to go home. We that are left behind are yet battling with the problems of life with sad hearts and troubled spirits, longing for the time when we too can leave this unhallowed ground and dwell in peace with Christ.

Before our eyes Uncle John faded,
Growing weaker day by day;
Patiently bearing his suffering
Until God took him away.

Human hands toiled hard to save him;
Prayers and tears seemed all in vain:
Happy angels came and took him
From this weary world of pain.

His many dear, unselfish traits,
He showed day after day,
Are in treasured memories
That will not pass away.

Dear Uncle, sleep thy last sleep,
Free from all care and sorrow;
Rest where none may weep,
'Till the eternal morrow.

Not always shall this parting be:
The time passes slow;
We too will claim eternity,
And find the way you go.

The funeral was conducted at Macedonia Church by Elder R. D. Bell and Elder Layton Wingfield, and others. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the resurrection morn, when his body will be fashioned like the Saviour's. We feel our loss is his eternal gain.

Written by his wife's niece,
Mrs. Jesse R. Somers.

MRS. ANNA A. JARRELL

God, in his wisdom saw fit to call from our midst our precious aunt, Mrs. Anna Jarrell, whom we loved so dearly. She was the widow of John Westley Jarrell, who passed away February 17, 1952. They were married forty-four years. She leaves a son, Willie T. Jarrell, and two step-daughters, Mrs. Frank Gammon and Mrs. Ralph Briggs, and eight grand children. She made her home with her son after her husband's death. She was a lonely pilgrim here from February 17, 1952, until January 29, 1953, when she passed away. She was seventy-one years old.

Aunt Anna was well loved and highly respected by her church, neighbors and friends — and all who knew her. Her life was an open and inspiring book, showing forth her faith and love in and for her dear Saviour. She joined the church when a young girl, and remained a faithful member; and was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. She manifested her love for this doctrine and the fellowship and order of the church. She suffered many afflictions during the last years of her life, but always met her callers with a smile.

We realize that the family has lost a precious mother, and Saints Rest Church a faithful member, but as our sympathy goes out to them, we feel that our loss is her gain; and that she is resting peacefully, awaiting the glorious resurrection when she, together with all the saints, shall come forth in the glorious likeness of the dear Saviour to be with him forever, where sorrow, pain and death never, never come.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder R. D. Bell, assisted by Elders James Gardner and Layton Wingfield. The body was laid to rest in the Macedonia cemetery beside her husband.

"We shall sleep, but not forever;
There will be a glorious dawn.
We shall meet to part, no never,
On the resurrection morn."

Dearest aunt is gone but not forgotten,
Never will her memory fade;
Sweet thoughts will always linger
Around the grave where she is laid.

Written by her niece,
Mrs. Jesse R. Somers.

JOHN ARCHIE BARRON

The subject of this sketch, Mr. John Archie Barron, was born April 4, 1871, and died December 5, 1953, making his stay here more than eighty-two years and eight months. He was the son of the late James D. and Martha J. (Cherry) Barron. He passed away at his life long home in the vicinity of Spearsville, and near New Hope Primitive Baptist Church.

He married Miss Clara Denton early in life; and to this union were born eleven children. His wife preceeded him in death about fifteen years; and also one son, Floyd Westley, went down with his ship, the U.S.S. Houston, in battle February 28, 1942.

Mr. Barron is survived by the following children: James M. Barron, Mrs. Lillie Ogden, Mrs. E. D. Lee, Mrs. J. R. Powell, and Willie Barron, of Lillie, Lousiana; John L. Barron, Santa Rosa, Texas; George L. Barron, Mrs. W. C. Smith, Mrs. Bill Smith and Mrs. Ellene Coleman, El Dorado, Arkansas. There is also now surviving one sister, Mrs. Della Castleberry, Houston, Texas. One sister, Mrs. Lucy Farrar, died about two weeks after Mr. Baron's death. There are seventeen grand children and four great grand children.

Mr. Barron was seriously handicapped physically for many years, but was a good manager and provider for his family, and was well liked and respected in his community, which was much evidenced at his funeral by the large and sorrowing congregation and the great display of flowers.

Mr. Barron was a very plain, honest, conservative person, and outspoken in what he thought. He was very interesting to talk with, and though not a member of the church he was a Bible reader and gave evidence of a sweet hope through the grace and mercy of God. He attended the meetings as often as possible and loved the doctrine of God our Saviour.

The writer was at his bedside numerous times during his lingering illness, and though handicapped in his speech, Mr. Barron was heard to say, "Lord, thy will be done not mine." He also quoted much from the Bible; thus giving evidence that, "Where the treasure is there will the heart be also." The love of God had so inflamed his heart that even in the agony of suffering and death he seemed to be meditating on the gracious consolations which are written to the children of God.

I would admonish his dear children who loved him and did all they could for him, not to weep as those who have no hope; for there were many evidences that your father had been born of the Spirit, and that all is well with him, and when the blessed Lord comes again that welcome voice will be heard, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Elder J. L. Smith and I were called to conduct the funeral at New Hope Primitive Baptist church, after which he was laid to rest in the Spearsville Cemetery.

May the Lord graciously bless and comfort all the bereaved ones, for he is the source of all real and lasting comfort.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes.

MRS. J. J. WHITLEY

"Sun set and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar
When I put out to sea.

"Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell
When I embark."

In memory of our dear sister, Ruthie Honeycutt Whitley, born in Wake County, May 7, 1879. She was married to J. J. Whitley of Durham, N. C., and they happily celebrated, with their three children, their three grand children and many friends, their golden wedding anniversary on December 17, 1952.

Ruthie, as we all knew and affectionately called her, was a devoted and faithful wife and a gentle, helpful mother. To her neighbors she was kind, and she enjoyed sharing her home with her friends. To know her was to love her.

Patient in sickness as in health. loving hands of family, friends, and physicians were constant in their kindness and care of her. Our Heavenly Father in whom she trusted called her Home October 10, 1953; and in His love her husband, her children, and her friends find consolation and faith to sustain them in their loss and sorrow. She was united with the Durham Church in June, 1933, and lived actively with her husband in its fellowship until her death. Elder W. C. King and Mr. A. C. Lee conducted the funeral services on Sunday, October 11.

"Life! we've been long together
Through pleasant and cloudy weather:
'T is hard to part when friends are dear —
Perhaps 't will cost a sigh, a tear;
Then steal away, give little warning,
Choose thine own time;
Say not Good-Night — but in some brighter clime
Bid me Good-Morning."

Her Sister-in-law,
Mrs. J. A. Herndon

SISTER R. L. KELLY

It is with sorrow and deep feeling of loss that we of Little Flock Church submit this Memorial of love and respect to our dear sister, R. L. Kelly, of Petersburg, Texas, who passed away November 15, 1953, in a Lubbock hospital after an illness of four days.

She is survived by her husband; R. L. Kelly; three sons, Raymond, H. G. and Billy Rex Kelly; five daughters, Mrs. Harmon Handley, Mrs. Ralph Weise, Mrs. Eloise Goebel, Mrs. Bill Dixon and Mrs. W. R. Sexton; eleven grand children; two brothers, T. C. and Glen Greer; three sisters, Mrs. Edna Hughes, Mrs. Henry Glitch and Mrs. Robert Freeman.

Sister Kelly was a long time member of the Primitive Baptist Church, having joined the fourth Sunday in July, 1910. She remained a faithful member, and although she lived for twenty-eight years at Petersburg, Texas, and could not attend her meetings regularly, she came as often as she could. Her sister, Edna Hughes (who was a cripple from a stroke of paralysis), visited her in late Summer; and Sister Kelly, not being willing to see her go alone, drove to Altus for her church meeting the second Saturday and Sunday in September. She afterwards carried Sister Edna to her home in Oklahoma City, and before going home she visited all of her brothers and sisters — which will always be remembered by them. Soon after reaching home she underwent surgery, from which she did not recover.

She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and had a great love for Primitive Baptists. Little Flock Church extends deepest sympathy to her family, relatives and friends. She will be sadly missed by her church.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this memorial be made a part of our church record, a copy be sent to the sorrowing family, and a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Little Flock Church while in conference December 12, 1953, at Altus, Oklahoma.

Elder W. W. Taylor, Moderator,
Mrs. Lou Kester, Church Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 122 DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1954 No. 5

A SINNERS PRAYER

Oh, Lord I come to you so humble,
So unworthy, weak and worn;
Do help and save me, dear Lord,
In this troubled life of scorn.

To me you are the Sunshine,
Hope, Strength and Love.
I am only looking for that City
That I know is somewhere above.

I am only a tired sinner —
I hope I'm pure within;
I know you are Love, Power and Beauty,
But not the author of sin.

When I feel so burdened, Lord,
So humble — and have to pray;
I pray your glory be with me
Forever and ever to stay.

Lord, I'm so humble and thankful
For the things you have made me see:
And the glory to know your great power,
And that your will shall forever be.

It is so wonderful to believe in you, Lord,
And know the things you can do;
You say the death of saints is precious
When this life on earth is through.
Lord, I hope I'm one of your chosen,
And death will be sweet to me too;
That blessed hope is a comfort
When with this life I am through.

I don't feel worthy, dear Lord,
To ask this favor of you:
Please help and lead my children
To holy life that is true.

Dear Lord and loving Master,
It is to you I want to live;
Please give me strength and courage,
And my sins please forgive.

Don't let me break the commandments;
Lead me in the straight and narrow way;
And keep my heart so burdened
That I won't forget to pray.

Lord, you have blessed me many ways,
Though I have suffered much pain;
But earthly things don't count now,
So let it be Heaven I gain.

Again, dear Lord, do forgive me;
Do keep me pure and from sin.
When this lonely life is over,
Let me be grateful and thankful — Amen.

Velma Estelle,
Hamburg, Arkansas

"But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." (Hebrews 8:6)

Children, come a little closer,
You who've heard your Master's Call;
He, who wrote your names in heaven,
Saw you ruined in the fall.

Though the law He gave by Moses,
Better promises hath he made —
A new covenant with Israel;
Firm foundation there is laid.

In this covenant, dear children,
Grace — it is in measure given;
Treasured in our dear Redeemer
Carries us through earth to heaven.

You who've tasted God is gracious,
Know the gospel's joyful sound:
Little children love each other.
In you will this fruit abound.

For you made He this provision;
For you, suffering, He died:
All your sins were laid upon him;
All the law he satisfied.

Oh, what love for rebel sinners
When he shows His smiling face.
Little children, 'tis a wonder —
This, the Covenant of Grace.

Mrs. Fred Cobb

LETTER TO HER CHILDREN

To my Darling Children and your Companions (I love them, as they are part of you):

This is what I will say:

Don't grieve for me as you see my

body put into the grave; but think of me as being with you in spirit, as the Lord and Saviour is with us in Spirit. If He had not been with me through all my many years of trials and troubles, I could not have lived. O, how I pray that He will be with all as He has been with me — to help you over the rocky roads.

The Lord prayed when he knew his time had come, "O, Father, not my will but thine be done." O, the comfort that has come to me through prayer! I have laid on the bed and prayed until the wee hours of morn, when nothing else would help. I feel that everything that comes our way is for the best to those that love the Lord our God. I hope and pray that none will doubt that Jesus was the Son of the Living God. As He did speak, it was done. He sent his Son to this earth to suffer and to die for our sins; he grieved and shed tears over his people — he wept that we might weep. But in heaven there is no weeping. We will all be happy in that bright world over there — we are given faith to see this. I pray that this letter might have the power to soothe someone's troubled heart, if he is present when it is read. I will try in my weak way to tell my experience of grace.

When I was eight years old, I had a dream that the earth was burning: my step-mother and I were standing on a little plot of ground surrounded by fire. Of course, I was afraid. I looked toward the West; there stood three men. The one in the center was taller than the others. As I gazed at him, he spoke to me, saying, "Be not afraid." It seemed in the dream that I knew it was Christ.

As the years passed on from my childhood to young womanhood, I was ever thinking of that dream; but I did not forget that I was young and full of life. Somehow I had it in my mind that I was as good as anyone, and that when I had time, I would ask God to bless me. But before I got to that time, I was made to weep and mourn for my sins. For eighteen long months, I was made to know God's power over me. He brought me to my knees, in prayer begging for mercy. Then one day I was standing by a window that faced a big tree; the tears were streaming down my cheeks, and I was wringing my hands, when a beautiful light shone in the tree, and a voice said, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Oh, how happy I have been since the Lord dried my tears! I have had deaths in my family since that time, but they did not hurt me like the ones I had before I was given a hope.

I was not given to pray in public, but to pray in secret; and my blessings were always openly. If I could count them one by one, there would be more than could be numbered. The Lord has always caused me to smile when my heart was sad. Oh, how happy I am in Him! Now I am waiting for his call, and don't feel that it will be long. I am thankful for my darling ones and for my many friends. Though I have walked through the valley of the shadow of death, I feared no evil, for I felt that God was near me. He has been my rod and staff. Oh! if it were possible, I would that everyone could know the same joy in the power of the saving grace of the blessed Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. May the Holy One of God be with all, is the prayer of one that feels unworthy to call upon his name. May God bless and keep all of you.

Your mother,
Minnie McCool.

P. S. Have this old body fixed anyway you want it. But I would like for this to be read at the funeral. Do as you like, anyway, I want each of you children to have a copy. I have loved you as the Lord has loved all. I would have given my life to keep you from suffering. God be praised. Amen. (see Obituary)

1631 — 18th Avenue
Columbus, Ga.,
March 10, 1954.

Dear Editors of the Signs,

This is a letter of experience written

to me by my daughter about twenty years ago. She is Zula Thetford O'Neal and was at this time a member of the Missionary Baptist Church. It tells of her being brought out from among them. The letter was very sweet to me and I have kept it.

She found a little church of Predestinarian Baptists soon after she wrote this to me and she joined with them. Later this little church had to disband because the pastor, Elder W. J. Chancellor, passed away. She and I then united with the East Atlanta Primitive Baptist Church, Atlanta, Ga. on confession of faith.

Elder H. O. Nash, of Atlanta, Georgia, is our beloved pastor. Elder Nash baptized me twenty-five years ago. If you think that this would interest the readers of the Signs of the Times you may publish it.

Your Sister in Faith,
Mrs. E. N. Thetford

"A SMALLER CHILD THAN THEN"

Columbus, Ga.,
Sept. 19, 1935.

Dear Mamma,

Your package came to us yesterday and all the family thank you for your gifts. You are so sweet to remember us with so many nice things. "Faith without works is dead," wrote one of old. Now there can be no dead faith, so then it must mean that any other kind (of faith) had never lived. Is it not the sweetest thing on earth to be given a living faith in a living Redeemer? For several years my prayer to God has been for grace to trust him more — Jesus, precious Jesus.

I thought of you yesterday while at the association; I wish I could have carried you with us but the car space was so soon taken. We had a "Feast of Fat Things" there. It was as though we were all in one accord and that we were just sitting down at the feet of Jesus listening to the words of life by those God honoring and fearing ministers of this Association, and their visiting ministers. It was so good to be there. The meeting is over but this morning I feel so full of the sweet memories that my cup almost runneth over.

Now there is another something here and it must be named "pride," — the cost of discipleship I must pay to follow Jesus. Let me see if I can tell it, I am afraid I cannot. There has been a genuine desire in my heart (even in earliest childhood) to love and serve Jesus in sincerity and in truth. I can't think of any time in my past life that I didn't reverence Him. Let me say here that if He was in this childhood love and preservation of my life then, He is still the One I serve, for He is altogether Lovely; and **I am even a smaller child than then.** I have had a yearning for the deeper and the higher things of God for a season. During this time I have been a member with the Missionary Baptists. These do not manifest any experiences such as I: I trust mine are of the Lord. I desire a deeper fellowship with God and with his dear people — instead of simply being a good church member, etc. These people couldn't understand me. Now the spirit gave me and unto two others of this people, a manifestation that we were together in this thing, and together in mind: Brother Troy Barnett and his dear wife, Esther. One evening, as we reached my home from attending a prayer meeting, he asked me a simple question, — just a short one, but the words seemed lively. "Sister O'Neal, are you satisfied where you are?" Now we were knit together in a bond of true fellowship, and it was such comfort for we could not be happy or even be a good church-member. Now these two stood head and shoulders high there for he was a deacon. I will say that if Esther is not fully caught up with us, as Faithful caught up with Christian in John Bunyan's, **Pilgrim Progress,** she cannot be very far behind. Our footsteps seem to be in the same way as did theirs in this allegory, and we hope it is of the Lord. If it is, all

praise unto him.

Time and events never stand still; so here, too, they moved on quickly, and in the same direction. Surely the Holy Spirit has caught us away and we three have gone on steadfastly, having set our faces toward Jerusalem. I've waited on the Lord, for I know he is God and that he saves from the enemy from within and without, and I do seek to do His will. At intervals I've attended a little Primitive Baptist church not very far away, and I greatly enjoy each service; and often heaven itself seems to come down upon me. The evil one has been robbing me of many loaves and fishes from my Lord's table. Each time I return to the church to which I have belonged, things seems to be worse. Even now I seem to be almost a stranger in their midst. My friends are slipping away from me and this is a very hard thing for me to bear. They are almost a part of me, and we live very close together, as only good neighbors can. Howbeit, the Lord's will shall be done in this as in everything; His arm isn't short, and by faith I know that He does reign. Come unto me all ye who labor, my yoke is easy, my burden is light. I will give you eternal life and abundantly. There's a **friend that sticketh closer than a brother and that is Jesus,** — He knows and understands.

Today I have decided to withdraw from them. The Holy Spirit descended upon me while listening to a sweet sermon, a gospel full of good news. He was a lot higher than I, and I promised the Lord that I would carry myself away — as He had surely carried away my spirit and mind in this thing. Then again, I felt prone to leave the ugly thing alone, being tempted surely, but the good Lord thought otherwise. A business conference was in session. The moderator spoke my name, and I had to answer concerning the calling of a pastor. I arose to my feet and I tried to tell them what good things the Lord had done for me, that he had removed my spirit from them, and now I was asking them to consider me not a member anymore. The words were not many for I couldn't talk much, but it's a strange thing, they couldn't understand much either. Oh, the sweet peace that I have had since I came out.

Now Mamma, what do you think of this? I hope I have not offended anyone because of this, but most of all, Jesus. I have counted the cost of this and I find that it surely does "take all that I have to buy The Great Pearl." It was a great price to pay, and yet with the poet, I can say,

"Since from Thy bounty, I receive,
Such proofs of Love divine,
Had I a thousand hearts to give,
Lord, they should all be thine."

The Lord is sweeter each day of my life and it is all of grace.

May the peace of God be multiplied now and forever,

Your prodigal daughter,
Zula Thetford O'Neal

Fayetteville, Tennessee
December 27, 1953

Elder A. T. Benson:

Your letter received and appreciated more than words can express. Many times have I thought of you since I heard from you last, for I so much enjoyed your letters in the little paper you published some years ago.

Dear brother, if one so unworthy should thus address you, you expressed a desire to be enabled to say something that would comfort me in the loss of my brother. In Isaiah we read, "Comfort ye, my people saith your God." Well, I can truthfully say, if I have any right to claim a little place with His people, you have fulfilled this command one time: when you said you believed my dear brother had been born again; for this means more to me than all the riches of this old world. I was overjoyed in the way the editor (in the **Signs**) spoke of his writings. Then when your letter came, it added to my joy; feeling you all knew better than I how to judge these things.

My brother was wonderful. After mother was taken from us, and my health was so poor, he was so good to me. He did everything he could to keep me from worrying. I have high blood pressure so bad that it keeps my head hurting; and when the way would seem so dark, as it did many times, he would say, "Don't worry, there will be a way for us. To worry will make your head worse." He was at the farm doing some work he wanted done, when he was stricken. He came to the house saying that he felt curious, and asked me to help him get his coat off so he could lie down. I looked at him and he was so pale, and tears came to my eyes. He said, "Now don't get excited; we have to face it, for it's coming." He was so calm and complained only with his head. When I got the doctor there, he gave him a shot and said he must get some rest. He raised his eyes and looked at me, and then gently went to sleep never to awake in this world.

I hope you will forgive me for writing at length about my brother. I just wanted you to know how he took this as long as he knew anything. In late years, he would sometimes get so full he would just sit down and talk to me. He wanted to go to the church, but felt too unworthy. I feel God's time never came for him to go, or he would have given him the strength to take up his cross and follow the dear Saviour.

The days, weeks and months have been so lonely for me; sometimes I can't sit up all day, and I can't read like I used to on account of my head hurting so much, and my eyes are weak; neither do I write a lot. But I have read your letter several times, and am sorry to hear about your wife's affliction. It is like the dear old hymn:

"Poor and afflicted Lord are thine;
Among the great unfit to shine.
Though the world may think it strange,
They would not with the world exchange."

This old world is filled with trials, troubles and tribulations; but we are told to be of good cheer, for Christ has overcome them all. He will be with them in their sixth trouble, and in the seventh he will not forsake them. Sometimes it takes me several days to read through the **Signs**, for I can't read long at a time. Yet I love its contents. I hope you have many blessings to enjoy during the New Year; and may the peace of God that passeth understanding be yours to enjoy, and may you live long to comfort those who hunger and thirst after righteousness; and when you have finished your earthly journey, may you be carried on the wings of love to that home not made with hands, but where they sing redeeming love and grace in a never ending world.

When at a throne of grace, if not asking too much, remember this poor, lonely sinner who hopes for mercy and protection from Him who doeth all things well. If you have a mind, and the time, I would love to hear from you again sometime.

Yours unworthily,
Willie Sisco.

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

(Matthew 28:18-19-20.)

As we are given to journey through life, and if given a sweet taste of God's mercy, illuminating our benighted minds by taking up His abode in our hearts, we are thereby given the light to shine inwardly, giving the creature to view not necessarily what is on the outside but first of all the filth and sin that lays inwardly; given to see that the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edge sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the

thoughts and intents of the heart; giving them to see that all things are open unto the eyes of the Lord God of all power, not only in heaven but in earth.

If we teach or speak the truth, we must notice that Jesus said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth". First, we must recognize the absolute sovereignty of God over His creation, Colossians 1:16: "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." We must be given to see that the Lord God is the first cause of all causes, and all things are under His feet and in His keeping.

The creature must first be brought to realize his inability, and recognize the ability of God, since there is no power but of God: as all powers that be are ordained of God. If a man looks to and respects another man, when his every need must come from the giver of every good and perfect gift, he is looking to the way that seemeth right unto a man. But what says the Scriptures? "The end thereof are the ways of death".

This portion of God's word to believers has been misapplied, and has caused a great amount of persecution by the many religious organizations of this world. There are only two beliefs the world over: The believers and the non-believers. A believer believes in the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; those whose eyes of understanding have been enlightened to believe according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand. Thus we see that in order to believe one must see the manifestation of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead by the working of His mighty power which is above principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come; and hath put all things under His feet, and given Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.

"Go ye therefore". Equally, we notice another place, Matthew 11:28: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest". We readily see that the "Go" as well as the "Come" is not of man. Thus there is more than what man and the teachings of man could possibly put into words. The Bible being written by the inspiration of God, carries divine authority. It is written as a direct command, not as an invitation as man would have it. God having all power in heaven and in earth, His word carries divine authority. We can get an example from a natural father to his child; when he says to the child: "Go" or "Come", that does not mean an invitation, but is a command to the child; likewise, with God almighty when He says, "Go ye therefore". Could it possibly mean that God is speaking with authority? The Go was directed the same as the Come. To whom? All ye that labor and are heavy laden. Paul in Phillippians 2:12-13, says, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure". The go, there, was directed to a certain people and they were loved of the Lord, as was David of old, when the Lord picked him up out of the miry clay and put his feet on a rock and established his going. Yes, they are directed of the Lord to go unto all that labor and are heavy laden, laboring under the law and laden down with sin.

First, we notice they are to teach. What? All things whatsoever God has commanded. Like Paul, the Lord gave him as well as yourself, the desire and a belief, and that before it was made manifest. Paul had it in his mind to see Rome, and when taken as a prisoner

for preaching Christ he appealed to Caesar and was taken to Rome as a prisoner. The Lord manifesting the desire that was given unto him, and that not of man. In Ephesians, third Chapter, we notice where Paul was a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and by revelation what the Lord had in store for him. God does not give man the responsibility of carrying his work to foreign lands as man commonly teaches. He makes it known unto His children at His appointed time. Should man have the responsibility the Lord would need the help of man. God does not need man's help but man is helpless and does need the Lord. Like David of old, "Lord be my help". Yes, all and all.

Mark 16:16: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned." We readily see that the many worldly religions are out of tune with the Scriptures as they teach that man is saved by baptism, but the Scriptures tells us he that **BELIEVETH** and is baptized. The believing precedes the baptizing. They must be born again, born of God and not of man. The first birth is of the flesh, of which we had nothing to do; equally, the birth which is of God from heaven needs not the help of man, but is bestowed by free grace through the operation of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of those the Lord chose in His Son, our Lord and Redeemer, Jesus Christ; and that long before the world began. It is not possible for man to see or visualize eternal things, except by faith which is a gift of God.

The Apostles baptized believers in water, and today God's servants baptize only professed believers in water. The Apostle Peter tells us, baptism does not save from sin, neither does it put away the filth of the flesh. It is the experienced answer of a good conscience toward God, by following the Lord and Saviour in obedience to His commandment. Baptism brings one into the privileges of the church and fellowship of the brethren. It is not a duty but a glorious privilege to those who have been given to taste the merciful kindness of the Lord. The command rests only upon all who believeth in the Father and the Son and Holy Spirit. Often we hear the expression, "I am not worthy." It is not the privilege of the individual to sit in judgment, judging their own case.

Mark 16:17-18. "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." It is true the disciples were given the power to heal the sick naturally. Equally today, many things are given by faith, but we feel this Scriptures like all other is given to the believer. "That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."

"In my name shall they cast out devils". Christ is the head over all things to the Church, which is His body. So the Church is submissive to the head; and when Christ was here on earth He cast out devils. Today the Old School Baptist are the only people that gives the Lord all glory. They only preach Election, Predestination and Justification; and that wholly and solely by the free grace of God. They preach salvation by Grace and Grace only, and the Resurrection of the dead. They are the only people who denounce the world, and will withdraw or declare non-fellowship from one who has not a God fearing walk.

"They shall speak with new tongues." Isn't it true that when one is given to believe in salvation by grace, they have entirely new belief which is not of this world? If it be not of this world, it must be as first Cor. 2:14 says: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." He looks not at the natural things which are seen and are temporal, but the things which are not seen and are eternal. They speak with a

new tongue. With what? Their tongues express praise unto their God.

"They shall take up serpents". In the 21st Chapter of Numbers we read where the Lord commanded Moses to make a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole, and it should come to pass that every one that was bitten, when he looked upon it should live. Not every one that looked upon the fiery serpent lived, but only those that were bitten. Did Christ die for all; or as the Scriptures plainly declare in the seventeenth Chapter of John that; Christ giveth eternal life to as many as the Father giveth him. That evil serpent disbelief, that coils in the breast, is ready to strike and denounce Christ. Sinful man must be called out of nature's darkness into God's marvelous light and brought to put all his hope, faith and trust in the finished work of Christ. It is Christ that takes His abode in the heart; and where Christ is, the serpent has no power.

"And if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them". James 3:8, "But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil full of deadly poison." Again let us turn to Romans 10:9-10. "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is is made unto salvation". Yes, no man can tame the tongue, but God can and does. One whom the Lord has given to believe, they can and do have to live in the world, listening to all the man-made doctrines; yet, with all the deadly doctrines it only makes them stronger in faith in Christ.

"They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover". Again, as all the other, this is in the Church. In turning to Acts 8:17, "Then laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost". These were believers, who had been baptized, thus fulfilling what Christ had told them before He was crucified by the hands of wicked men. Believers are continually seeking for more evidence like Gideon of old, where the fleece appeared each time as he desired it to be, still he was by no means satisfied. He went into the battle in the service of the Lord, and that against his natural will.

Jeremiah 20:9, "Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But this word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forebearing, and could not stay". This prophet thought he had been deceived and said he would not speak; but the Lord, being a consuming fire, makes one willing in the day of His power. Paul tells us, "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel". We know the gospel cannot be preached unless it comes from God.

We feel the laying on of hands are given to the Church. The Elders and Deacons are the only two offices in the Old School Baptist Church, and they are ordained by a presbytery of Elders and Deacons and the laying on of hands and prayer, which bestows the full work of a minister upon one called as a minister; and that wherever called by an orderly Church to serve, or wherever the Lord has seen fit to send him.

May the Lord, the possesor of all power give us a spiritual desire to worship God our heavenly Father in spirit and in truth through His Son Jesus Christ, and our delight be in spiritual conversations with our brethren and sisters in Christ our Savior. To Him belongs all glory, admiration and praise world without end.

A sinner asking for your prayers is my humbly hope.

(Elder) John F. Simpson
2430 Lincoln Avenue
Granite City, Illinois

Signs of The Times

Farmerville, Louisana

Dear Editors:

Here is a piece I wrote about six months ago, and which I came across again

today:

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16). I do not believe that this scripture pertains to this wicked, sinful world. It says, For God so loved the world; but this world spoken of is not the universal world. It is the world of God's little children; for the children of God are a world unto themselves. God's children are in this world, but they are not of the world. They are a peculiar people, and are called the children of light; they are hated by this wicked world. "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." (John 17:14-16). "The world hath hated them." In this world that hates the children of God the same world that God loves?

"I pray for them - I pray not for the world." (a portion of John 17:9) Christ prayed for his children, but not for the world (Remember: "For God so loved the world." - "I pray not for the world.") Both scriptures were spoken by Christ, and they were referring to two different worlds; and are not contradictory.

He also said, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." Therefore the children of God are a world of themselves - and this is the world that God loves. He does not love the world that hates his children. "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of this world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John 15:18-19). God's people are still in the world, but they are not of the world. Christ chose them out of the wicked world into a world of themselves. THEY DID NOT CHOOSE CHRIST! God's children were called out of the darkness into his marvelous light: the darkness is this wicked world. Christ is the light of the world, and his children are called children of light.

This wicked world loves darkness, because it is in the dark. "And this is the condemnation, the light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light." (John 3:19-20).

An unworthy one,
Woodrow W. Hudson, Jr.

WHY DO WE GRIEVE?

Topeka, Kansas.

Dear Sister Taylor:

. . . I know how lonely you feel. I have been through the ordeal. It was in 1947 that I went to North Carolina to nurse my baby sister who had cancer: I stayed with her to the bitter end. Then, knowing my daughter-in-law was in the hospital for her second baby, I took a plane to come home.

The morning was cold and gloomy, and I felt in harmony with the weather. This being my first flight, I was curious to see the city from above. Just as soon as I could, I looked out, and to my surprise there was no city. Instead, there unfolded to my view the most beautiful sight I have ever had the pleasure to see. The sun was just coming up and sending its rays against a world of soft, downy clouds: mountains and valleys, hills and vales and plains of those billowy, fluffy clouds. I think all the colors that God gave were represented there in that picture — words are inadequate to describe, and no artist could paint what I saw.

As I sat there gazing at God's handiwork, I seemed to forget the world below, with its sin and sorrow — and death beds. I thought of the promise, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Then I was made to wonder why, with a promise like this that dims the beauty of the clouds, do we grieve for our loved ones? Is it a

lack of faith, or is it selfishness? Surely we would not have our loved ones brought back here for their good. I am persuaded it is selfishness and not a lack of faith in the alwise God. This brings to my mind a verse of a song I knew in the long ago:

"All unto Christ that God hath given,
Redeemed in glory shall stand.
No power on earth, or hell, or heaven,
Can pluck them out of his hand."

At best it won't be long until we too shall answer the call: I would like to think that my loved ones, instead of weeping, would think of the precious promises God has given — and wish me **bon voyage.**

Give my love to the family; remember me to the Alumbaughs.

Sincerely,
Lottie Gardner

Ruffin, N. C.
R. F. D. 1,

Dearest Kindred in Christ:

Again my mind is arrested and stirred up to write something of the beauty of the way of salvation — the provision God made: the only way whereby man must be saved. This you so wonderfully preached at Reidsville Church yesterday, as it was given you from the giver of every good and perfect gift. Such preaching certainly praises God; and what praises Him, abases man. How thankful, yet how humble, should we feel who have been given a hope in the Lord. If I know myself at all, there is something in me that desires to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world; but the Lord must work righteousness in me, or there will be none in me: to will is present, but how to perform that which is good I find not.

"When I pray, or hear, or read,
Sin is mixed with all I do;
You who love the Lord indeed,
Tell me is it thus with you."

This is my experience; yet whether it is an experience of grace or not, the Lord surely knows. I am made to believe that every one of the spiritual house of Israel shall one day reign with their blessed Meditator, being heirs, and joint-heirs with him. "If so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Romans 8th Chapter)

Now an heir is one who shares equally in an inheritance; nor does he have to work or perform one thing in order to that inheritance. It rightfully belongs to him — he did not choose it thus, but it was given him freely. Likewise is the covenant of grace; likewise is measure of grace given every heir of that covenant — as thy days demand, so shall thy strength be; not that we have any strength of our own, for there is no power but of God, and all powers that be are ordained of him. In him we live, move and have our being, as he is all things pertaining to life and godliness to the church, his body — this spiritual Israel we speak of.

God is faithful, and has promised he will not suffer his children to be tempted above that which they are able to bear, but will with the temptation make a way of escape, that they may be able to bear it. I believe this surely covers every escape, or deliverance, ever given God's chosen. "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." He that hath begun a good work in his children is able and does perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Now the law that was given by Moses could not make the comers there unto perfect, there being no promise of life therein; so what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. Yes, he sent his son to do that which we could never do: keep the law to a jot and a tittle; and to be a faithful and merciful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of his people. In that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that

are tempted. Did not he tell us, — leaving us a written testimony of his words, "I am come not to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." This he did when he bowed his head on the cross, and said, "It is finished."

What is finished? "Finished all the types and shadows of the ceremonial law; finished all that God had promised, death and hell no more shall awe. It is finished! Saints from hence your comforts draw." Thus he paid it all for his people. "He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things." This was the New Covenant made with the house of Israel: In Jesus shall God's people stand, his righteousness being imputed to them. He has promised mercy to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities to be remembered no more.

Here is the key that unlocks the door of entrance to the sheep fold: Jesus the way, the truth and the life — and love, as he left a written testimony by John 13:34-35: "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

All truth praises God. May we be kept humble. I desire your prayers.

Mrs. Fred Cobb

Lillie, Louisiana

Dear Brethren, Sisters and Friends,
Who are Readers, Writers and Editors
Of The Signs of the Times:

I feel very unworthy, helpless and dependent at this time to undertake to address you through the medium of this good family paper, but for some reason I feel inclined to do so; and with the hope that the Lord will lead and direct me, I will attempt it.

I desire to call your attention to St. John 10:11, which reads as follows, "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." I feel that this passage, though short and seemingly simple as far as the letter is concerned, contains many phases of the doctrine of God our Saviour which are most beautifully presented; and I desire, the Lord willing, to set forth some of the comforting and consoling things which are presented.

This language was spoken by the Lord himself, who spoke as never man spoke — so testified his enemies; and I believe this testimony is true, even though his enemies gave it. For Jesus said on one occasion, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Matthew 24:35). He meant that what he spoke was effective, and that it would not fail to be fulfilled, or come to pass as he says. He being, as he said in the text, THE GOOD SHEPHERD, he is just that; and I think it means in essence the same as if he had said: I am the perfect Shepherd. That is, he is not only perfect in himself, but that all he has purposed to do as the good Shepherd will be perfectly done; and that the results and accomplishments will be just as perfect as he is a GOOD or a PERFECT SHEPHERD.

Notice that he has said, "I am THE Good Shepherd," meaning that he is the only one under consideration. The language also shows what kind of a flock he was shepherd of — no doubt about it, because he said, "The good shepherd giveth his life for the SHEEP." There is no doubt about whom he is shepherd of, and there is no doubt about whom he gave himself for. Just one kind of animal is used here as a type, which is full of deep and emphatic doctrinal meaning. Jesus was expressing no uncertainty about whom he was giving himself for; for if the sheep in this passage means all of Adam's race, or all humanity, why should he have used the term sheep? We know that in another place He mentions SHEEP AND GOATS — the one went into life eternal, and the other into everlasting punishment. (Matthew 25:41) We are bound to re-

cognize that the sheep in the text are the ones who go into everlasting life, for they are the ones he gives his life for.

Then consider this question: if he gave his life for the sheep, will he be successful in redeeming them? Certainly so! Otherwise he would not be the Good Shepherd — but not if he fails, not if he looses some of them. If he fails he is not the good shepherd. But he that is ever blessed, holy, good and perfect cannot fail. We hear the prophet say, "He shall not fail, nor be discouraged." (Isaiah 42:4). And the reason is, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." (Matthew 28:18). If he had been weak, dependent, helpless and needy, then he would have been a poor shepherd indeed. But not so with our blessed Lord: he came travelling in the greatness of his strength, spoke in righteousness and was mighty to save; and his own arm brought salvation. (Isaiah 63:1-5).

Again, we question: What is a shepherd for? It is understood that the shepherd is able to care for, feed, keep and protect the flock that is not able to care for themselves. Surely, if the sheep could have taken care of themselves, Jesus would not have come — he would not have laid down his life for them. But they were helpless and there had to be a shepherd to care for them. What is more helpless than a sheep naturally? He is absolutely helpless and defenseless: when he is attacked, he will lie down and let the wild beast devour him. Jesus says in St. John 15:5, "For without me ye can do nothing."

The question might be asked, How did Jesus come to be their shepherd? Did the sheep choose him? No. We hear Jesus say in John 15:16, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain . . ." So we can see how they came to be his sheep, and how he became their shepherd. This is plain language, spoken by the lips of the Lord himself. Who can dare say that alien, dead sinners choose him, in contradiction to this language! This introduces and proves the peculiar doctrine of particular and individual Election, as well as salvation by the matchless grace and abundant mercy of God, which is freely and sovereignly and unchangeably bestowed upon those sheep who are sinners by nature, even as others; with no merit of their own to cause Him to become their Shepherd and give himself for them, to redeem them from their sins.

Then, dear brethren, is it not wonderful, and most merciful indeed, that the God of Heaven gave Jesus to be the unfailing shepherd and redeemer of poor, hell deserving sinners — redeemed them from their sins, filth and slime; and take them up from that open field of darkness and shame, and wash them in his own blood; and clothe them in wonderful, acceptable and everlasting righteousness. And not only this, but the Good Shepherd furnishes his sheep green pastures — He maketh them to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth them beside the still waters. O, dear child of God! Have you ever been beside (and in) the turbulent, stormy and troublesome waters; have you ever been beside the rivers of Babylon, in captivity, as it were, when your harps were upon the willows, when this Good Shepherd would take you up out of the horrible pit of sorrow, and lead you beside the still, peaceful and pleasant waters; and into green pastures to rest, and to feast upon his loving kindness, as David so beautifully recorded in his twenty-third Psalm.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes
(to be concluded)

ASSOCIATIONAL NOTICES

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 2, 3 and 4th, 1954. Services will begin at ten o'clock Wednesday morning (DST).

A cordial invitation is extended to all min-

isters and brethren of our faith who are in order and fellowship with us; and all friends of our faith are welcome.

Those arriving on Tuesday will go to the home of Mr. and Mrs. George Genther, 117 West Prospect Street, Hopewell, N. J., or Mrs. Letha A. Blackwell, 9 Princeton Avenue, Hopewell, N. J., and they will be cared for.

(Mrs.) Letha A. Blackwell, Church Clerk.

NOTICE OF UNION MEETING

A Union meeting will be held with Union Church in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, the 5th Sunday in May. This meeting house is located on Highway 605, six or eight miles West of Gretna on South side of Route 40.

All orderly brethren are invited to be with us, and especially glad to have our ministers.

H. M. Mattox

NOTICE OF
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Being urgently solicited to reproduce the foregoing work, we have decided to begin the task, which is no small undertaking.

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EDITORIALS

Danville, Va. May, 1954

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EDITORIAL

FELLOWSHIP

For sometime I have felt to write a few of my thoughts about the different phases of fellowship. Strictly speaking there is no fellowship that comes outside the pale of the Holy Spirit. However, to understand better, we speak of Christian fellowship and church fellowship. Fault may be found with each wording, but since we know what is being sought an answer to, we will not expect any quibbling about the terms; or, if so, to know that it will be a striving about words to no profit. To begin with, I think that each may be strained and put to an extreme meaning.

Fellowship is not a cloak to be put on and off at will. We are either in fellowship with the church or we are not; we are in fellowship with any given indivi-

dual or we are not. It is like faith, it cannot be exercised in order to have it. Fellowship, like diamonds, cannot be genuinely simulated. A stone can be sold to the unwary as a genuine diamond, but when it is put to the test it will show beyond doubt that it is a clever imitation. Fellowship can be talked and published a lot, but when the test comes, it can always be ascertained that it did not exist at the beginning.

Before there can be fellowship among the people of God, there must be fellowship for God. Fellowship for God the Father must flow through fellowship for the Christ. No sinner has ever attained fellowship for the Father without first having had it for Christ. The Son of God, being with God, being God, was not begotten, but the dear Child given us, was begotten of God. Everything that has been done was done that in Christ all eminence and fulness dwell and exist. He is first in it all, being the first born among many brethren. He being first, there must have been a reason worthy of the divine Creator of all. It became him to be first among the family of God (Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:15, 18). This becoming the first was that the balance of the harvest or family be like unto him. His work was to bring sons unto glory (Heb. 2:10).

He, who is our fellowship, is not ashamed to call the sons of God as his brethren. Unless there is a conformity to him there cannot be any fellowship and harmony among them. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren (Rom. 8:29). This is the thorough work of God and to talk of this predestination not coming to pass, shows most conclusively that the conformation to the image of the Son of God has not yet been made. If we have not been conformed to the image of God's dear Son, there is no fellowship for the Son, nor for his Father. The fellowship among the sons of God is now felt and enjoyed according to the degree of conformation to the image of the Son of God. This predestination is as precious to one as to the other, the difference being in the carrying out of God's purpose in conforming us to the first born. This fellowship and unity and agreement, is felt only as worked in us. We do not work to it; we do not come to this perfection in order for it to become the predestination of God in full fruition; we do not get in fellowship with something that does not exist, in order to have it exist, or in order to become in fellowship with it.

I do not call this church fellowship. To me it is as far reaching as the children of God. They have this fellowship abounding in them according to their experience in grace. This abounding experience is just that, no more, no less, a gift of God sent forth from him to them. There is no rebounding of this experience of grace. No child of grace can ever have fellowship for grace that they can cause to rebound to God. It is from him to them, and as caused to abound to them and in them, there is a sweet counselling together, a lingering around the sanctuary, a sitting down in heavenly places in Christ, a walking together in agreement. This fellowship is as universal as the kingdom of heaven. God is a wise master builder and in every instance he has measured and counted all the cost and known and determined all the outcome. Before the precious grace abounds, there is a previous work of getting the field cleared of all obstructions and objections to this grace. God does not experiment in the work of fellowship. Every son and daughter is visited with power that produces a willingness to the abounding of grace.

The production of a willing mind is the work of God. There is fellowship wrought among the whole family according to the power of God in them. This is seen and felt and handled according to the gift of grace. This gift of grace means just as much to one as to the other, but it is by measure to one

and all. If the measure is small it means that the gift is small, but there are no inferior gifts. As the gifts of the measure that is in Christ is made precious to us, then fellowship flows from heart to heart. Every minister of God knows what I am writing since they have often been given to see a mixed multitude eating and drinking of the flowing fountain and broken bread. This gift of grace brings all to a common level in fellowship, in love, in oneness of spirit. It will bring the heady and high minded down to the plane on which the broken and contrite heart is dwelling, and it will bring up those little ones that are ready to perish in despair.

There is another conformation to Christ that I want to dwell on. I hope that my kindred in the Lord will be patient and charitable to my efforts. I may not be able to separate the being conformed to the image of Christ and being made conformable to his death. In fact there may not be any separation, but it does seem that the Holy Ghost spoke of it as though there was a difference. It does not say: being made conformable unto the image of his death, but unto his death. We see fellowship abroad in the land to the things that are gain for the creature, but how wide the difference between this fellowship and that that counts it all loss for Christ. Here is a wide and inaccessable gulf fixed between the two fellowships. There is no crossing either way. O, the depth of the riches of God, that he has brought us from the fellowship of things that are gain, to the fellowship of things that are loss. How wonderful! My soul leaps forward at the thought of such a manner of love manifested in our lives that turns us from fellowshiping the gain to fellowshiping the loss. How can such things be? They cannot be by human, natural efforts. What can remove doubt? Can a man? Can the earth? No, dear child of grace, but God conforms us unto the death of Christ, by the taking away from us all things. Have you ever felt that all things put together were not worthy to be compared with one glimpse of your dear Redeemer's face? Well, did you know that you had to count them all as loss? It will strike a responsive chord in the experience of many of the little ones as they take a retrospective review of their precious travel in grace. How hard it was to give up some things! How excruciating to be compelled to count off some of the most treasured things of life as a total loss. Ah, I see, because I have felt, the poor and halting one as they come, having counted off as loss all that they had. Here is fellowship that the powers of flesh have never contributed anything to, for those very powers must all be counted off as loss. The counting must go on, the laying aside of this weight and that weight, must go on.

There is no fellowship for a volunteer in this being conformed unto death. If anything of Adam could be retained, surely, surely, it would be life. But no, not even that. We would, if we could, hold on to this life, but that must be counted off as loss. To count off as loss that rich and full and supreme life in Adam, is the conforming unto the death of Christ. And how full of pleasure it is to meet a poor fellow traveller that has had to count off, and even yet is counting off, as loss all things. Please do not try to induce me to think that this can be put on or off at will. No, no, it is given to you. This transition from the fellowship of that that was gain to you (as you thought) to a fellowship for it all being loss, is beautiful to behold. How could it ever be broken? Do you think that it is? Not I, no, not at all, but that as the conforming unto the death of Christ is made in us, that fellowship is cemented and knitted together and will never be broken.

The children of God are spoken of as walking. Now that means step by step. From one step to another, from one experience to another, from one deliverance to another. This walk is not of the earthly kind: it is not that the Lord

puts you to walking and then you quit; it is not that you start by the spirit and finish by the flesh. Whoever heard of a live creature volunteering and helping out in a conformation unto death? No, this counting of all things loss is that there may be a winning of Christ. And you may go from coast to coast and from shore to shore and when you find one who has and is counting all things as loss, you will find one that the things of this world are fading with, and the things of Christ will be increasing to them, and they may be among our people or among others, but fellowship will abound, for you will have found a brother or sister in the Lord.

In this walk, the first step is in becoming acquainted with the Lord. This introduction is initiated by the Lord. He comes to us and makes himself known, causing us to count off all we have that we might have him reign in our heart. Paul did not know him until all of his righteousness, which was by the law, was counted off as loss, and the righteousness of Christ, which is by faith, was given him. Knowledge does not begin until we enter this phase of experience, and we must enter here in order to have fellowship. Paul is moved to include himself with the household of faith and to declare that, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." Often the writer has been censored for saying that we know things, but the Bible is my counsel, my guide, my evidence, and, coupled with my experience, I find sweet fellowship in the assembly of the brotherhood. This is knowledge in the spirit, and not in the flesh, and it always comes after the counting off as loss all things. And here is the most precious phase of fellowship, and it always follows the coming into a knowledge of Jesus. How do you know one another? By the love of the brethren, which is mutual to a child of God. What sweet fellowship this is in the Lord!

This fellowship of the saints is a priceless heritage. Fellowship is something that comes from God, and it only finds fellowship on the premises of God. There is no fellowship found where the Lord is not. This fellowship does not come in any degree whatsoever from the natural mind and works of men. Alone does it flow out from the gift of grace to us; alone is it made to abound; alone in the Lord is it perpetuated among his people. There is no fellowship with the works of darkness. Then again let me say that this fellowship is found only in the realm of the kingdom of God's grace. It is spread from faith to faith, from the bounds of the promises of God to places where that grace has further abounded. But never has there been fellowship to flow from the living vineyard of the Husband to the dead and uncultivated and infertile fields of natural talents.

This fellowship is prevalent among the redeemed of the Lord. It comes from the Redeemer to the redeemed, and they are among all peoples, countries, and denominations. If I find the characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ in a poor sinner, I have fellowship in the Lord for that one. Sometimes the characteristics of Adam may be so preminent in one of these that the true worth in the Lord is oftentimes in a small way; but if so, the counting off of all of it is being made, and the count will be complete. As the counting goes on, the fellowship abounds, and no poor sinner has ever died without this complete rendering of account. This ends in reconciliation to God, to his dear people, and fellowship without degree.

W. D. G.

P. S. It becomes necessary for me to write a few words in regard to carrying on a private correspondence. I do not see how that I can do so. It gives me grief that I cannot do this, but time forbids me doing all that is asked of me. I hope that you understand why I am making this statement. It is not intended to keep you from writing (if you

misunderstand what I say), nor is it intended to keep you from sending me your requests that I write on certain subjects and texts. If I have anything given me, it belongs to the household of faith; and I am always glad to comply with your requests, if I am given a leading mind. However, I am as dependent as any of you when it comes to ability to write, and I hope that you may be patient. I beg an interest in your petitions at a throne of grace.

W. D. G.

"GIVE GOD A CHANCE"

We have often seen the above in connection with modern day religious propaganda, and we note that Elder Rhodes calls it blasphemy in his article; and with which we certainly agree.

Such a statement is enough to cause one to stop: and stare in amazement.

Is it possible that any one should have such a conception of God — such a base conception of God the Creator; and especially those who greatly profess to believe in him — and talk so much about his Son.

Is it because God has weakened, or is failing in his work? No! For those who would "Give God a Chance" have always been ready to give God a hand to accomplish the things they think he wants to accomplish.

The whole design of such an expression is to say that God cannot do anything for a sinner unless the sinner will co-operate: unless the sinner will stop resisting what God is trying to do, and let God come into his heart to convince him that what God has to OFFER is better than what he now has. Is not this the sum and substance of all the teachings of men; and the very thing that the true servants of God have ever cried against, as being contrary to the things which Jesus and his Apostles taught.

Such slogans as, "GIVE GOD A CHANCE" and "COME TO CHURCH TODAY, THE SOUL YOU SAVE MAY BE YOUR OWN," should cause as much concern today to those who know the Lord and his power, as did the things which Paul saw in Athens; for we feel that it is no worse to erect an idol to an unknown god, than it is to proscribe the one they pretend to worship, when professedly this one is the only true and living God.

But there are thousands who have never heard anything other than a dependent God, who needs the help of men. One generation has passed it on to the next; and it is received as the truth, simply because it is the thing that seems right to them. Traditions today — which came only from former traditions — are accepted as gospel truth, with little or no inclination to search the record for themselves. And thus we have a nominal Christian church, whose teachings are not the Gospel, but "another gospel."

In the past there were many who lifted their voices against such contradictions. But today, what do we have! The modern Athenians, for the greater part, are permitted to continue in their superstitions (for that is what it is: blind acceptance and teaching things contrary to the gospel, or power, of God), with but few who boldly proclaim that God has all power both in heaven and in earth; and that, consequently, he works his sovereign will in all things — not only against, but in both men and devils.

THE MODERN PULPIT is far more concerned with superficials than with fundamentals; with science rather than with revealed religion; with so called potentialities of men rather than with their being dead in trespasses and sins; with merited salvation rather than by grace; and with helping God rather than proclaiming that all our help comes from Him.

From what pulpits can one hear: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." — "This is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." — "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." — "No man can come to me except the

Father which hath sent me draw him." — "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." — ". . . I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." — "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all . . ." — "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." etc.

And many, many other quotations which show the power of God, and that he works his will and none can hinder him; the helplessness of men; the working of the Spirit in the Lord's people bringing them to the knowledge of the truth; the necessity of a new birth in order to see the kingdom of God. Etc.

Such things we desire to proclaim and hear proclaimed, but it grieves us to hear men "teaching things which they ought not." We are persuaded that no person who experimentally knows the power of the Spirit of God will ever use the phrase, "Give God a Chance."

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

IMMUTABILITY OF GOD

"Will you give us an article on Jonah 3:10 and Genesis 6:6, and other places where it is said that God repented? Yours in love of the truth, I. J. C."

Our dear brother who makes this request will not need to be told that the passages cited cannot be understood to conflict with any other portion of the inspired record. As the whole revelation of Scripture is given by the unerring Spirit of God, it is absolute truth; therefore every portion of it must harmonize perfectly with the whole. The least discrepancy would invalidate all the testimony and disprove the truth of the record. But the witness which the believer has within himself, attests that the record is true. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son." — I John 5:10. The truth that God is immutable is clearly declared as the reason why his people are preserved. "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." — Mal. 3:6. If this foundation were destroyed, the hope of every saint must perish with it, and the black pall of despair would cover the sinful race of man. That nothing in the Scriptures can teach such a terrible doctrine is therefore clear, and we shall not stop to consider that false theory. The passages to which our attention is called may be mysterious to finite minds, but in the light of divine truth they testify to the same great fact of the unchanging purpose of God, which is revealed in the whole record of the testimony of Jesus, whose name assures the salvation of his people from their sins. — Matthew 1:21.

"And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not." The context shows that this declaration signifies the change in the manifest providence of God, which appeared in the sparing of that city of Nineveh against which Jonah had been directed to prophesy. So far is this text from indicating any change in the purpose of God, that it confirms the immutable declaration which is recorded by another prophet. "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of

the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them. — Jer. 18:7-10. This was exemplified in the case of Hezekiah, recorded in Isaiah 38:1-8. The messages sent by the prophets had the effect which the Lord designed in these cases, and then was manifested the gracious purpose of God in adding to the days of Hezekiah which he had already lived, fifteen years; and in the case of Nineveh, the effect of Jonah's preaching was just what God had designed it should be; and the mercy displayed in sparing that idolatrous city was the very purpose for which the message was sent to them. Truly it appeared to them that God had changed his design, since the destruction threatened was not visited upon them at that time; but when that denunciation of judgment had wrought the effect upon them which God had designed it to do, then he manifested his long-suffering mercy in sparing them according to his purpose, as declared in the words above quoted from Jeremiah. The message sent by Jonah denounced the sentence of justice against that wicked city; the forbearing pity afterward displayed in averting that awful calamity manifested the great mercy of our God even in the dispensation of his temporal providence toward the children of men, which is everlasting. — Psalm 100:5.

The inability of finite minds to understand how justice and mercy harmonize in the government of God, is no better ground for doubting that harmony than our inability to gaze upon the meridan sun is evidence that the sun does not exist. The deficiency is alike in either case in our own weakness, and not in any defect in the subject contemplated. Reason is too weak to grasp the wonderful truth that God is just in saving his people from their sins; but as this glorious revelation is made to his saints by faith they are enabled to rejoice in it. In temporal dealings with the fallen race of man the mercy of God displays only absolute sovereignty; but in the revelation of salvation to the subjects of his "grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" his justice and mercy are together manifested. Sin is condemned, and yet sinners are freely justified by his grace. Sovereign power spared the wicked city of Nineveh from temporal destruction; but amazing grace has saved his people from their sins, though they "were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." When that grace was manifested in our salvation we did not see that our sin was less sinful in the judgment of God, but we were made to rejoice that we were redeemed and saved by the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth us from all sin. — I John 1:7. We did not see that the truth and justice of God were sacrificd in our salvation, but we rejoiced in the revelation of divine grace by which we were washed in the precious blood of Jesus Christ, "That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." — Titus 3:7. So, he is "a just God and a Savior." This is faintly typified in the sparing of Nineveh after the sentence of destruction had gone forth against it. So, it may be said of every ransomed sinner, as it was said of Jerusalem, "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" The condemnation of the sinner is just, and yet God is just in justifying the ungodly. — Rom. 4:5. This marvelous work of our God is beyond the understanding of finite intelligence, hidden from the wise and prudent, and yet it is revealed unto babes. As Jonah fretted against the mercy which spared Nineveh, carnal reason may murmur against this more wonderful exhibition of the goodness and mercy of God; but as the prophet was instructed by severe reproofs, so the rebellion of the natural mind in the saints is silenced by the wise judgments of our Lord. As "he giveth not account of any

of his matters," it becomes us to heed his solemn command, "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." — Psalm 46:10.

"And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart." In this text, as in that on which we have been writing, the words recorded are explained by the connection in which they are written. To understand them as teaching that God "repented" and was "grieved" as men might do under disappointment, is not only at variance with the whole inspired revelation which he has given of himself, but it represents him as destitute of foreknowledge and subject to failure in his designs. This is too preposterously blasphemous to be worthy of argument. The plain meaning of the text will be seen by reference to the command in the first chapter, where after blessing the man whom he had created, "God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth," &c. — Verse 28. Until the time referred to in the text, this blessing in his providential dealings with men had prospered them in this respect. In the execution of his righteous judgment against their great wickedness, now this blessing was withdrawn, and instead of multiplying them, God visited awful destruction upon them, saving only Noah and his family of all the inhabitants of the earth.

In the brief and comprehensive language of inspiration this almost universal extermination is **expressed in the record as it appeared to created minds;** not as authorizing the doctrine of a changeable God, but as showing the dreadful extent of that visitation. That God from the beginning not only knows but declares the end, is expressly stated by himself. "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure; calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." — Isaiah 46:9-11. Then he cannot be subject to disappointment and grief, as finite creatures are. And on his immutability rests the hope of every saved sinner.

The important testimony of this text is the same great truth presented in the text from Jonah, that is, the sovereign grace of God in the salvation of his own chosen people from their sins. The judgment of God has already come upon all men to condemnation, for that all have sinned. There is no deliverance from that judgment by any efforts of the sinner, since all his works are defiled by the sin which reigns in him; nor is there any created power which can render any relief to his hopeless case. As the earth was then covered by the waters of the flood, so all earthly refuge is cut off from the condemned sinner. The special favor of God has provided salvation for his elect in Christ Jesus, the ark of the everlasting covenant of grace. Securely shut in that safe abiding place by the Lord himself, no storms of vengenance can overwhelm them. As there was nothing unforeseen to the omniscient God in the universal corruption of all flesh, by reason of which the flood was brought upon the ungodly world, while a safe refuge was prepared for the preservation of the chosen family of Noah, so, in the entrance of sin by the disobedience of the one man, Adam, the eternal purpose which in his manifold wisdom God purposed in Christ Jesus was by no means frustrated. On the contrary, the very wickedness of sin was overruled to the accomplishment of the purpose of God.

"Here Satan was baffled in what he had done,
For the fall wrought the channel where mercy should run
In streams of salvation which never run dry;
And all for the lifting of Jesus on high."

Even Balaam was compelled to wit-

ness to the truth, "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" — Numbers 23:19. And Samuel said to Saul, "The Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent; for he is not a man that he should repent." — I Samuel 15:29. This is conclusive evidence that no expression in the Scriptures can be rightly understood as teaching that God is subject to disappointment, grief or repentance, in the sense that these emotions are understood as applied to finite creatures.

While many expressions in the Scriptures, when detached from their connection, may seem to conflict with the great truth of the immutability of God, the disagreement is not real, but is the result of our own blindness to the infinite glory of God. So, Israel of old charged that the way of the Lord was not equal, but the Lord proved the fault to be in themselves. — See Ezekiel 18: 25-30; 33:17-20. This charge is continually urged upon the tried subjects of grace by the tempter, and their carnal mind readily accepts the falsehood. But the saints cannot afford to lose the comfort of full assurance on this vitally important point. If it were possible that God could change, the hope of every sinner who trusts in sovereign grace must perish; for conscious vileness in themselves would at once sink each of them in despair, even as when the Lord announced that his betrayer was eating with him, every disciple asked, "Lord, is it I?" So every saint would at once feel that there was no possibility of salvation for him if sinfulness could alienate the everlasting love of God from the objects of his choice. But thanks be to his holy name for the sweet assurance given in the revelation that he changes not. Every redeemed sinner is included in the experience recorded by the prophet, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." — Jere. 31:3. This is the abiding witness which he that believeth on the Son of God hath in himself. — I John 5:10. But there would be no comfort in that testimony without full confidence in the immutability of God, and therefore it is written that "God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." — Hebrews 6:17, 18.

In these passages the truth of God is not controverted, but the apparent discrepancy results from the error of separating a single expression from the connection in which it is written. In this way any record may be falsified. The same principle of observing the context is necessary in rightly understanding any portion of Scripture. However obscure the true meaning may be, it is certain that no passage can be correctly construed when it seems to conflict with the clearly revealed truth of the whole inspired testimony. When any passage is not clear to us, it is always safe to wait for the light of that revelation which the Spirit shows to the saints, rather than attempt to search out by the dim light of depraved reason that knowledge which God has hidden. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering." — James 1:5-6.

(Editorial by Elder Wm. L. Beebe March 1, 1884)

We publish the above again, believing it will satisfy those who have inquired concerning the subject. J. D. W.

The opinions and doings of men are of no value unless motivated by the Spirit of Truth; if otherwise, they "darken counsel by words without knowledge".

WE QUOTE:

"It is the purity of worship that God loves better than the pomp. It is a dishonouring of God's name, to bring anything into his worship which he hath not instituted; as if God were not wise enough to appoint the manner how he will be served. Men will go to prescribe him, and superadd their inventions: this God looks upon as offering strange fire, and is a high provocation." Thomas Watson in his, **Body of Divinity.**

"Among the disciples of Christ, a majority is not reckoned by simply counting heads in the fashion of this world, but according to the imitation of Christ on either side." — Wycliff. Quoted by Blackburn in his, **History of the Church.**

"To sanctify means primarily to separate, or set apart, for holy uses; thus dedicating and consecrating them to the special service of God. Thus Aaron and his sons were sanctified, or set apart, in a solemn manner for the service of the tabernacle; and so was the tabernacle, and the altar, and all the vessels of the sanctuary. In a similar way the church was sanctified, or set apart, in Christ when she was chosen in him, that she might be holy and without blame before God." J. C. Philpott in, **Meditations.**

OBITUARIES

ELDER B. V. HELMS

Elder B. V. Helms was born in Henry County, Virginia, November 25, 1894, and was married to Lavaine Hollandsworth April 20, 1916. To this union were born three children — two boys and one girl, who, together with his wife, survive him.

Brother Helms united with Basham Church August 13, 1939, and began speaking August 9, 1941; and was ordained October 13, 1943. His gift was profitable and he was held in high esteem by his brethren. He was called to the care of Bellview and Little Creek Churches, which he served until his death. He was afflicted for some years before his death and suffered much, but his faith sustained him to the end, which came February 14, 1954.

He was laid away in the church yard at Basham, and a host of brethren and friends came to mingle their tears with the family and churches. We know that our loss is his gain.

(Elder) J. P. Helms.

To the above we would add: It was our pleasure to have known Brother Helms for many years, having lived next door as neighbor to him for some time. We had many long talks both before and after he united with the church. He was deeply experienced in the providential dealings of the Lord with him, and he was ever ready to ascribe all honor and praise to the one who had been so gracious to him.

As Elder J. P. Helms said above, we know that our loss is his gain. May the Lord give reconciling grace to all that mourn, and enable all to realize that the Lord doeth all things well.

J. D. W.

JACOB BENJAMIN McGHEE

Brother Jacob Benjamin McGhee, of Bethel, Delaware, was born July 18, 1869, near Laurel, Delaware; and was taken out of this world November 6, 1953, at the age of eighty-four. He was ill only for a short time, and was active in his work of buying and selling wood, delivering it himself in his truck until he was stricken a few weeks before his passing.

He was the son of the late John William and Mary Elizabeth Gordy McGhee; one of a family of three children, of which only one is living: John Edwin McGhee, Millsboro, Delaware. Brother McGhee was married to Emma Galena Hastings, December 14, 1892; who passed away March 1, 1950. The first few years of their married life they lived in Millsboro, then moved to Jamica, Virginia, where he was engaged in the lumber business; after which they returned to Delaware, where they spent the rest of their time near Laurel and Bethel.

To them were born ten children. One daughter died in infancy and one son passed way March 10, 1949. Surviving are: Miss Mary Ellen McGhee and Mrs. Sarah West, Bethel, Delaware; Mrs. Theresa Roberts and Mrs. Martha Morris, Baltimore, Maryland; Mrs. Estella Gordy and Alfred McGhee, Laurel, Delaware; Mrs. Sallie Mae White, Delmar, Delaware and Mrs. Elsie Huston, Seaford,

Delaware. There are also twenty-six grandchildren and nineteen great grand-children surviving.

Brother McGhee was baptized and united with the Broad Creek Old School Baptist Church the third Sunday in July, 1942. He was a very faithful member, and attended the sister churches almost as regularly as his own — and provided a way for others to go much of the time. He is greatly missed by many.

His funeral service was held in the Little Creek meeting house at Smith Mills, and was conducted by the writer. The body was laid away in the Smith Mills burying grounds.

(Elder) H. M. Bennett

CORNELIA ELEANOR WYATT

Cornelia Eleanor Wyatt was born April 3, 1883, at Delphi, Indiana, the eldest daughter of the later Elder Wm. M. and Cornelia (Brown) Startzman. When she was four years old, the family moved to Lafayette County, Missouri; and later to Jackson County, where she received her education, and taught school until her marriage September 28, 1904, to Frank E. Wyatt, of Oak Grove, Missouri. Here they lived until they retired.

To this union were born four children: Keith S. Wyatt, Vernon E. Wyatt, David W. Wyatt and Mrs. R. E. Moses, all living in Kansas City, and who, with their father, survive. She also leaves four grand children and three sisters. The sisters are: Mrs. J. W. Taylor, Pleasant Hill, Missouri; Mrs. T. O. Thornton, Kansas City, and Mrs. Dan G. Norvell, Kansas City.

Seven years ago they purchased a home at 3419 Benton Blvd., Kansas City, and here they resided at the time of her death January 30, 1954, after a short illness. She united with the Little Blue and Sniabar Old School Baptist Church on the fourth Sunday in May, 1926, and was baptized by the later Elder Wm. M. Hall. She was a devoted member, never missing a meeting unless illness prevented; and ever humbly giving praise to God for this unspeakable gift, enabling her to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith she was called; striving to raise her children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Her funeral was preached February 3, 1954 at the Mellody McGilley Eylar Funeral Home, by her pastor, Elder L. L. Schenck; who spoke words of comfort to the bereaved family and to a large assembly of her friends. Burial was in the family lot in Blue Springs Cemetery, there to await the resurrection morn. The many beautiful flowers paid silent tribute of the many who loved her; for, to know her was to love her.

May I add that I have not only lost a sister, but a sister in the church — and how we shall miss her. But I do desire to be reconciled, knowing our loss is her gain. Her sister,

Mrs. J. W. Taylor.

MRS. VIRGINIA DUNCAN

With a very sad heart I will try to write for the Signs of the death of my mother, Mrs. Virginia Duncan. She was born at Turners Station, Kentucky, July 18, 1861, and passed away January 5, 1954, in Westlake, Ohio, at the age of ninety-two and one-half years.

She was married to my father, John K. Duncan, in 1882; and there were eight children. Her husband and two children preceeded her in death; six survive: Oscar, Richmond Hill, New York; Charles, Louisville, Kentucky; myself, Mrs. Mary S. Sauer, Westlake, Ohio, (with whom she made her home); Mrs. Elizabeth Ormes, Louisville, Kentucky; Joseph, Sarasota, Florida; and Mrs. Lorena Hamilton, Louisville, Kentucky. There are twenty grandchildren; forty-seven great grand-children; and one great-great-grandson.

Mother was loved by all who knew her, and, though she was in a wheel chair for the past eight years, she always had a smile for everyone. My husband called her room: The Sunshine Room. Mother united with old Sulphur Fork Church, Campbellsburg, Kentucky, when a very young woman; and father followed her in the same faith later in life. She was a true Christian, and though there were none of her faith in our community, she never failed to rejoice in prayer, and did so enjoy her reading of the Signs. She also was blessed with letters, and, when possible, visits from Elder George Weaver. These she cherished.

I only pray that should I ever be handicapped as she was, may God let me be like her and accept my lot with a smile, as she did. Though her sufferings were severe the last few days, she quoted the following verse from one of her favorite hymns — after which she peacefully went to her eternal rest:

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are,
While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

Funeral services were conducted by Mr. H. W. Freer, of the Dover Congregational Church of Westlake; after which she was laid to rest in Lakeview Cemetery, Cleveland, Ohio, where my father was buried in October, 1929. A wonderful mother and friend who is sadly missed.

Her daughter,
Mrs. Mary S. Sauer

SARAH D. TOLER

Sarah D. Toler, who was born August 28, 1875, in Buchanan County, Virginia, passed away quietly at her home in Riffe, Washington, on November 23, 1953.

Surviving are her devoted companion, James S. Toler, and five daughters and two sons: Mrs. Pearl Christian, Vida, California; Mrs. Gladys Knowles, Fortuna, California; Mrs. Lena Brooks, Mayfield, Washington; Mrs. Inez Buesch, Riffe, Washington; Mrs. Ruth Birley, Mossy Rock, Washington; Fred Toler, Arcata, California, and Edward Toler, Alton, California. Also surviving are one sister, Mrs. Bessie Cowdell, Porteland, Oregon; One brother, Joseph Cook, Ira, Virginia; seventeen grand-children and seventeen great grandchildren.

Sister Toler united with Bethel Baptist Church, Riffe, Washington, in 1934, and was baptized by Elder Peters. She was a strong believer in the doctrine that God rules all things after the counsel of his own will. She was outstanding in her walk and conversation, and was, indeed, a mother in Israel. Bethel church will miss her, as she was a constant attendant; but we know that our loss is her gain. She was devoted to her dear husband and family, and lived to see her large family take their places in society with honor.

The funeral was held in Bethel Church, conducted by the writer at her request. Her body was laid to rest in Greenwood Cemetery, Chehalis, Washington. May it please the dear Lord to comfort those that were near and dear to her. Grieve not as those without hope, for her sorrows are all over. Written at the request of the family.

(Elder) T. R. Jefferson.

MRS. MINNIE McCOOL

Signs of the Times,

Dear Editors:

Enclosed you will find a letter of Sister Minne McCool's, of Athens, Texas, which I have been requested to send to the Signs and to the Old Faith Contender for publication, in order that the beloved brethren and sisters in the Lord might read it. All who have read it feel that it is worthy of publication.

Her children knew about the letter, which was written some years ago, and that it was to be read to her family after her death; but they did not know about the post-script, which was written more recently. The family assembled in her room at her son's home after the funeral, and the letter was read to them. As it was not read at her funeral, as she requested, the members of the church obtained permission of the children to have it published in the Baptist papers, along with this explanation and notice of her death.

Sister McCool had lived a fruitful, useful life, lacking but one month and five days of obtaining four score years. She loved people, old and young, and never seemed to grow old. She was left a widow many years ago, and endured many hardships in rearing her family, some of whom she laid away several years ago. She is survived by four daughters and two sons, and several grandchildren, who mourn her loss; but realize that their loss is her gain.

She spent most of her life in the same neighborhood and was known far and wide for her good deeds. In her younger days, she was recognized as the best nurse in the neighborhood — the night was never too cold or too dark for her to get up and leave her home to attend to the needs of a sick neighbor, when she was sent for. When age prevented her from managing her farm, she divided it among her children, and lived with them. Her health was bad during her last years — at times she was confined to her bed for several weeks, but would get up and be able to attend different meetings for several months at a time. Though sick last Spring and early Summer, she seemed to recover to attend two associations and several meetings last Fall, which she enjoyed so much. She loved to cook, and it was always her delight to help fix the church lunches, etc. Wherever she went she always managed to be in the home of a widow, or a sick sister, if any, at meeting time where she felt her services were most needed.

She united with Corinth Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, near Athens, Texas, in September 1922, and was a faithful member the rest of her days. She was baptized by Elder H. T. Pace. After an illness of three weeks duration she passed away on Sunday, January 3, 1954, and was buried the next afternoon. The funeral was held in her church home, conducted by her pastor, Elder W. T. Fugate, assisted by Elder P. E. Weisinger. The large crowd and beautiful floral offerings attested to the esteem in which she was held. A large number of people were unable to get into the church, as standing room was utilized. She chose the cemetery nearby as her resting place, so that her beloved brethren and sisters could visit her grave.

Your little "sister from Texas",
Velma J. (French) Fugate
Palestine, Texas

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 122 DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1954 NO. 6

WHEN HOPE IS TURNED INTO POSSESSION

How perplexed is the walk of a believer;
And so oft so little evidence to be found.
Though hope so precious — if left up to me,
I long ago would have laid it down.

The paths so rugged — and thorns by the way,
And it seems that all comforts are gone:
That often I say as I travel along,
Where's the hope I have cherished so long.

For life at its best as we journey along,
Is like the leaves of a book that unfold:
When the pages are turned back what do we see
But His mercies: and mercies unfold.

The trials and sorrows we daily pass through,
Harass us from day unto day;
But when I look back down through the years
There have been Bethels along the way.

Then we look away from the things which perish,
And we loose sight of all of our foes;
And we walk in the garden of His grace,
Where the desert blossoms as the rose.

There we think of the wonders and beauties,
And the many glories we long to possess;
Where hope will be needed no longer,
When we enter the mansions of rest.

Where hope will be turned to possession,
When these glories our eyes will behold:
When we see the King in his beauty:
When we enter the mansions of gold.

Nora Powell,
Salisbury, Md.

SHARING WITH THOSE OF LIKE FAITH

When I was baptized many years ago, a few of the household of faith (who can view only the outside of the vessel) asked that I write the dealings of the Lord with me. I, who see the inside clearly, wonder how this can be done; not being at all sure that I've been in His hands in an experimental way. Since that time, others have asked the same of me; so, after much and long soul searching, and now in the evening of life, I have decided to try to comply; realizing, if indeed I was recognized in that covenant that was ordered in all things and sure (2 Samuel 23:5), I have no right to withhold from my friends in the faith anything I have experienced that might comfort even one of His little ones. **What we experience, I conclude, is to be shared with those of like precious faith,** that we may have the greater fellowship one for another.

I was born near what is now Gillham, Arkansas, January 26, 1889; the fifth in a family of eleven children of Louis C. Johnston and Irene Simpson Johnston: godly, god-fearing parents. Looking backwards, I am unable to see that they really had any faults; but alas, parents do not impart godliness to their offspring.

I cannot remember my first serious thoughts as to my eternal welfare — it must have been very early in life. I suppose I was about the same as other normal children, except, at times for my almost melancholy feeling, when I could not enter fully into the joys of childhood because of the almost ever being minful of sin and its consequences. Perhaps it was high ideals which my parents tried hard to instill in us, that just caused a desire for wholesome living; but my failures in this direction were legion. I must surely have failed more often than others around me. During these young years, I seem to have been much in a spirit of prayer, — at least, ardent desire.

My father spent much time, when he could be at home, reading aloud to mother, while she cared for a child, sewed, or some other homely duty. When he was reading, I would almost invaribly find some excuse to be near enough to hear, pretending to look at a book, play with my doll, or something to be in hearing distance. "Pride Humbled," by John Leland, was published in Zion's Landmark in 1898. If I had not since read it for myself, I could still tell much of its contents from hearing him read it. I was then nine. I often wonder if this listening to him reading from the Bible and the Landmark, etc., together with their Puritan like strictness in discipline, is not after all the cause of my belief, since I have never had an exciting deliverance from the bondage of sin. My grief has never been so piercing as most Christians — just a constant knowledge of sin abounding, and a desire to be rid of it. Neither have I experienced the ecstatic joy that others have — just a quiet satisfaction, and somehow an assurance, of abiding grace.

During these youthful years. I went a few times to Armenian mourner's benches. Each time I came away from them with a feeling of repulsion, condemnation and shame, that in seeking His favor, I was trying to depend on arms of flesh. This must have been the Lord teaching me that what I needed was the application of His blood to my case: and I could not find out how to give my heart to God, as people of Armenian belief told me to do.

In my fourteenth year, Elder J. H. Fisher came to preach at Vandervoort (we had moved there that Spring), and we attended, of course. He took Daniel 2:44, for a text; either his masterful sermon, his eloquence, or something, attracted me as I had not been before, (though to this day, I can recall texts and parts of sermons which I heard others use before him). Having for some time desired baptism, I was minded to wish I was a fit subject that he might baptize me sometime — and this desire followed me till its consumation more than two years later; though I did not see or hear him during the interim.

At this meeting, my baby sister was taken seriously ill about noon, and before seven o'clock next morning, her lovely little spirit took its release for its home with the Giver; but all night I sat near my parents by her bedside: now and then stealing out into the darkness to try to beg the Master to spare her; but each time, in my childish way, would ask if he could not spare her, to reconcile us to His will. Her loss to us was an intense blow. Would I ever be good enough to go to her? His finished work I did not know: I did not know that not my obedience, but thy blood, O Lord, saves; and that alone through the efficacy of His blood do sinners reach the shores of felicity. I now pined much over the uncertainty of my mind, and often wished to be like the beast whose breath is in his nostrils, with no soul to face eternity. I even then seemed, in a way, to question the authority of my Maker to do as he pleased with his own. That Summer my parents united with the church, and this pleased me immensely. During the following two years my wanderings were much the same as previous ones. In my sixteenth year I took teacher's examination, and went about sixty miles and taught a little school near the home of my eldest sister.

This was 1905, the year of the Baptist division in this section. We had moved back to Gillham where few Primitive Baptists lived — no trouble there; but in this new community predestination was a mooted question, but I understood little of it. I attended church there twice a month, and the ministers were able and likeable. My mind was much agitated — a desire for baptism had become paramount, but because of my gradual deliverance (if indeed any), I was hesitant (and yet am) to believe I was a fit subject; but to a greater extent I had been made to see His finished work, and believe in the efficacy of His blood. All

this came so gradual, I am loth to claim deliverance. I hope though, I had come forth, not with this nature changed, but with a new spirit: not with my mortal powers made capable of discerning spiritual things, but with faith in that incorruptible and unfading inheritance.

School was nearing the close; there was much talk about the convening of Rich Mountain Association at Vandervoort. I drew the bow at a venture, and many times tried earnestly to pray that if I was a fit subject for baptism, that Brother Fisher would come to the association as a sign to me. During this time, I had a dream that Brother Fisher came to the association alright, but they would not let him preach. I didn't know why; but people asked him to preach at the spring, which he did.

When the day arrived, I walked into Ephesus Church, and there sat Elder Fisher. Instead of being elated at Elder Fisher's presence, I felt a sinking sensation; feeling sure it was not an answer to my asking, and that that had nothing to do with his coming: He surely was not sent as the sign I had begged for. Friday night until noon Saturday I pondered — could such a sign really be given me. But when church privileges were extended, and they began to sing, "In all my Lord's appointed ways, my journey I'll pursue," I was up and shaking hands with the preacher. I had little to tell, but requested that Elder Fisher baptize. Some others offered to the church, too. They received us, but after giving us the right hand of Christian fellowship, the pastor stated that it would be out of order for Elder Fisher to baptize me, as he was an Absoluter. I, as well as most others there, was shocked. (Elder Fisher had been invited, I understood later, but the Moderator at this time, was sick and unable to be at the association.) During the noon intermission someone asked my mother to see if I would consent to some other minister performing the rite, for the sake of peace and order. I told her not now — I want time to think: I was not baptized at that time.

Back to my dream; they refused to let Elder Fisher preach in their stand, but he did preach at night at an elderly Sister Witherspoon's home. My parents invited Brother Fisher to our home for the latter part of the week following the association. In the meantime, they had decided to ask for their letters and to organize a church at Gillham.

During this time, my doubts increased as to my fitness: Was their refusal to let Brother Fisher baptize me a sign to me that I should not be baptized? I was deeply alarmed and grieved. Had I, like Judas, a part to play; had I just been there and offered to the church and asked baptism at Elder Fisher's hands to somewhat lessen the blow to one of God's humble servants, who had been prohibited from preaching in their house of worship? I was almost overwhelmed. So, on two different nights, I tried to earnestly pray for a sign: that I might follow my Saviour in the liquid grave, if it was right that I should be baptized. Strange as it seems, each of these nights I dreamed of being baptized, and was each time so satisfied with the baptism that I was temporarily comforted and fortified. But again, before Good Hope Church was organized, I was doubting (and still am). Was my young mind so agitated over the things that had happened that I just dreamed about it, or was it a sign? I didn't seem to be able to help these thoughts. If the dreams were answers and signs, I am ashamed that I doubted. But how do I know? I am still beset with human frailties. True, I have short seasons now and then when His spirit bears witness of a hope within, but, alas, not often these sweet evidences.

On October 28, 1905, Good Hope Church was organized. On October 29th, with three other dear ones, Brother Fisher immersed us. More than forty years have passed since that day: Little seasons of rejoicing — long seasons of gloom. Sometimes I am given to be thankful for even the short season; then

I am doubting, and trying to get some evidence of a work of grace within. And, kindred in Christ, you in whom I have evidence of His grace, I know it is so with you — by this my hope is renewed.

I have parted with many loved ones since that day; I now realize that when they depart, earthliness is done way. We shall know them as the children of the Master. Things of the flesh will not be in evidence there, but I do have a very little hope that someday I may be permitted to be with them, and sing praises to Him in that heavenly band, if of it we are a part.

We are not promised much joy here, but that "in the world ye shall have tribulation." I hope my desire is to live a life that will adorn my profession, though I am far from the goal; still I cannot sit with a placid mind, partake of or relish frivolity and lightness of worldly indulgence. This, together with my love for His children, constitute my most comforting assurance and evidence that I partake of that religion that is pure and undefiled. I cannot, however, measure myself up to the standard, and must cry again and again, "Lord save or I perish."

So often that discriminating light lays my heart bare, causing me to be abashed and agonized at the abundant hideous evil that is in my walk. Sometimes, like Paul, I would be a castaway I think, if in any way it would atone for those I love in the flesh. This is much to say, I realize, but if his law condemns me it is just; but in them I cannot quite comprehend their natures to be so vile as mine — I have more compassion for their infirmities.

I am sometimes given to be glad for the way I have been led, and even though I should miss that home of bliss, I've lost nothing. The way has been sweet, pleasant and undeniably refreshing, and more satisfying than any other way. It is more suitable to my natural inclination, all of which is His dispensing; for all of which I still am dependent on Him. If I was ever sorry for sin, it was because I could not help it: I have never tried to be sad, or of a contrite spirit. If I have been, that too is of Him. It is impossible to enjoy the love of the world and of God at the same time; one must be denied, moritfied and crucified, if the other survives.

With me there is still often great disturbance within; my mind is in tumult. Does Jesus walk on the water, and I unaware of his presence? Should I be disappointed? I often wait long for a morsel of assurance, but I waited long before I heard. So, sorrowing, I continue; desiring fellowship with the faithful; loving to be with them; sharing the same complaints of self and unfaithfulness; and then rejoicing when one is given to tell of the faithfulness of Christ; hoping that I shall not deceive his church, or walk in the way of Baalam. If there is a difference between others and I, I did not put that difference there.

I have tried to abridge this article, but failed. Much more could be written, but have said perhaps now more than is comforting to any. If I have an experience, it did not end at baptism, but most of my sweetest evidences have transpired since then.

I hope I live "in hope of" that glorious immortality, but shall not know this till I've crossed Jordan.

Nancye Johnston McDaniel
Vandervoort, Arkansas

Dry Fork, Virginia

Dear Brother Wood:

Since reading your article in the March issue of the Signs to the brother who asked for more information on your article on Primitive Baptists being members of secret orders, I have had a mind to write you of my experiences and beliefs on the subject.

Your explanation teaches my early experience very forcibly. At the age of about thirty I became very much interested and dissatisfied with my condi-

tion — was made to feel that there was a home and people somewhere that were my people. At first I could not know who they were; later the Primitive Baptist Church and people were shown me. I loved them — but they were too good and separate from the things of the world. The many times they visited my mother's home when I was a boy, I loved their godly conversations so much that, as time passed, this love for God's people grew greater and greater; yet I could not feel fit and worthy of a home with them, and felt they could never take one like me into their fellowship. I felt to know I was a sinner, and they would not take me with them.

I loved Strawberry Church — my mother's church, and I was so lonely. My wife went to Strawberry meeting one Saturday, and could not tell me what she felt to do that day; however, the good Lord gave her to the church. When she told me, I was so glad, but felt that I was left out in the cold to starve; yet I felt that it was just and right with my blessed Saviour, for he adds to the church daily such as should be saved. However, the temptor came when two prominent doctors came to me and told me they had organized a secret order about ten miles away, and they wanted me to go with them and join. They also stated that the order was founded on the Bible, and they knew I believed the scriptures.

I knew they did not know what I believed; however, I felt that I might get some relief of mind and tired soul, so I fell for the offer and joined, and paid for a year. I attended the next meeting but did not get any comfort from that visit. I attended the third meeting: and in that visit I saw the greatest worship of idols that I had ever seen, and was made to promise my God, if he would let me get out of there, I would never be there again. The Lord has kept that promise for me until now. Brother Wood, this turning from this which is of the world, was not a turning from the church, for I was not a member, and felt that I would never be; but I felt that the Lord had done something for me that no order established by men could ever do. My brother, I felt then that if I was ever given to join in fellowship with the people of God, I could not take Christ the Lord in one hand, and the orders and churches of men in the other. Yes, there is such a vast difference that it does not seem than anyone could travel this way of undergoing the change when God turns them, and says, "They shall be turned," and still desire to hold on to the unfruitful darkness of unbelief and practice.

I have seen in my time with the church that the rules of the church would need to be applied to cause some to give up their membership with secret orders. If we are what we hope to be, we feel that we are like Israel was: being called, "To come out from among them and be ye separate, sayeth the Lord."

Brother Wood, your article on the above subject did me much good: to know that you felt as I have felt for a long time regarding this subject. While I have no confidence in such orders, I still have my faults, which give me trouble. I find I am not my keeper, and the things that I would not do that I do; and I can't live as I would like. I hope to be your brother in faith and practice, to the honor of God the Father, who, I hope, will keep us that we may show forth that we love Him and the cause of Jesus Christ, by an orderly walk and godly conversation. Though the Lord be high, yet he has respect to the lowly.

Sister Dodd joins me in best regards to you and family.

Yours in bonds,
(Elder) W. R. Dodd.

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604 Lexington Road,
Pleasant Hill, Missouri
March 29, 1954.

Dear Kindred in Christ:

If one so unworthy may address you.

I have a desire this morning to write you and tell you of the wonderful meeting we had this past week-end. Elder John F. Simpson and his dear wife, of Granite City, Illinois, arrived about eleven-thirty on Saturday, and our pastor, Elder L. L. Schenck, of Williamstown, Kansas, arrived on the two-twenty bus. Services began at three P. M., with a choice number of ones hungering for a crumb of mercy, and it seemed we were bountifully fed with the many crumbs which fell from the Master's table: Elder Simpson, followed by Elder Schenck. We met on Saturday in our home. After services our conversation was on heavenly things.

On Sunday we met in the Memorial Building, where again a lovely number gathered and we were fed again. Two wonderful sermons: Elder Simpson from 1 Peter 1:2, followed by Elder Schenck from 2 Corinthians 12:1-4. Through both discourses you could have heard a pin fall — the attention was wonderful. Sister Beatrice Haan, whose home is in Washington State, but who is attending the University of Denver, was returning from taking her mother to Kentucky, stopped over here for the meeting on Sunday. We were glad to meet her.

After services, we enjoyed a bountiful dinner, and then repaired to our home, where many stayed until five o'clock; with Elder Schenck spending the night and leaving on Monday morning.

I think each one felt it was good to be there; it was a wonderful blessing from the dear Lord. It was a time long to be remembered. How wonderful when the dear Lord gives the oil of joy for mourning, and we can again see and rejoice in His mercy, which indeed endures forever.

In hope of that mercy, and with love to all

Mrs. J. W. (Margaret S.) Taylor

Bowman, Georgia

Signs of the Times,

Dear Brethren:

You will find enclosed a money order for twelve dollars, for which you will please send the dear old Signs to the following names and addresses, who are my children, and renew my own.

One of my earliest recollections is hearing my mother read the Signs to my daddy, who did not know one letter or figure from another; but I have never heard anyone who could quote more of God's word (and tell you where it was) than he could. If his mind was stirred up on God's word, he would sound almost like someone reading. He had a keen, accurate memory, but for several months before he passed on his mind became weak; however, on the word of God his mind was clear and correct as is humanly possible.

I sometimes wonder if it is wrong to wish for something that God has decreed otherwise; but I do wish I could go down to the old home place, and sit and talk with my wonderful old, loving daddy. His understanding of the Holy Word, and what it meant to the weary pilgrims in this sinful world, is sweet to me yet.

Yours in hope a peace not to be understood by humans.

S. N. Moon

MY EXPERIENCE (IF I HAVE ONE) RACHEL ELLEDGE TO MY CHILDREN

Scroggins, Texas
June 16, 1945

I am alone this evening and have been reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I read so many good letters that suited my experience that it made me want to send in my experience that I wrote May 21, 1929 as follows:

I have been reading the LONE PILGRIM and there are so many good letters I wanted to write a few things on "What I Hope the Lord Has Done for Me." Back when I was a child ten years old, I was walking through my father's pasture one day thinking what a bad child I was. The song came into my

mind —

"In seasons of grief to my God I'll repair,
When my heart is overwhelmed with sorrow and care;
From the ends of the earth unto Thee will I cry,
Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I."
(Wm. Hunter)

Then I began to think if I should die I would be lost, for I was so vile and full of sin. My father was then a believer in the Christian Church. He told me if a child died before it was twelve he thought it would be saved. I thought to myself: if I could die now I would be saved in infancy, but if I lived until I was twelve I would be lost." I felt like I could not live right. I felt like if I were saved it would have to be in infancy. My father told us he believed the Jews was a chosen generation and I would think, "if I could be one of those chosen ones." I felt like if it be by works I couldn't be saved.

I was about ten years old when my father and mother quit going to hear Old Primitive Baptists preach. I would hear them say that the Baptists believed God foreknew all things and He had a chosen people. I would think how good my dear old Grandmother Keith and Uncle Levy Keith looked to me. I could remember many others that believed in the Old Primitive Baptists at that time. I didn't know much about what they believed, but learned in later years that they belived just what I believed. I didn't know it at that time and I would try to do better, but it seemed I would do worse.

I would go to the Arminian meetings and went to the "Mourner's Bench" twice in my life, but that did not do any good. I went to dances, then go home thinking what a sinner I was. Oh! Could I but quit dancing, I would join the church. When I would see a black cloud rising I would think, "Now I am going to be killed in a storm and be lost." I did want to do right but could not! After my brother died, I did not want to dance any more. I believe God took the care for dancing away from me. I do not believe it was I that did it, for I did try so hard to quit.

I went on this way for about a year. I was in trouble most all the time but no one knew it but me. One day I was made to rejoice and found myself shouting and praising God. Then everybody looked good to me. I went on trying to do what I thought was right but it seemed to me that I got worse all the time. I couldn't get good enough to join the church.

Dancing didn't bother me now there was something else yet in the way. I wanted to join the Primitive Baptist Church but I didn't think they would have me. I hadn't heard an old Primitive Baptist preach in seven years but I had love for them and believed that God foreknew all things and knew them that were His. I knew they were the only people who believed that way. I would read the tenth chapter of John where it said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (St. John 10:27-28) I could see so much in that chapter. It seemed that if that were the only chapter it is enough to show everybody that God forknew all things and knew them that were His. I loved to sing the sweet songs.

I would get my old song book down and sing for hours at a time, — and how I would rejoice to myself, for there were no Primitive Baptists close by. If there had been, there was no one who knew that I believed that way. I did not want anyone to know I believed that way. I hadn't told anyone.

After about six years of trials and troubles, there moved two old people close to us. They were Primitive Baptists. They got Father and Mother to go with them to their meeting up at Pisgah at a school house called Elm Ridge, where Brother Dickens was to preach. When I got there those old people looked good to me. I had not thought of joining the church that day, but when preaching was over Bro. Dickens

called for members, and they began to sing:

"In all my Lord's appointed ways,
My journey I'll pursue;
Hinder me not, ye much loved saints,
For I must go with you."

I got up, and offered myself to the church. I don't know what I said but they received me. I was not baptized until next meeting day. (I think it was in the year 1904). I was go glad, but when I got home, I began to study about what I had done. What if I get out of the notion of being baptized? This bothered me a lot for I did not want to deceive those good old people, and I thought, "what would I do now?" When I awoke one morning that was the first thing I thought of; and it bothered me so much until it seemed I heard a still voice say, "I have brought thee in; I will keep you." All at once I was relieved and I longed for the time to come to be baptized. When the time came it seemed I was willing and ready to go.

I often think of the scripture where it says, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." (Psalms 110:3) When I got to the water it was a beautiful place to me. The people all looked good. Singing began, and my mother and Sister Edwards came and joined and was baptized with me. After I was baptized, while coming out of the water, tongue cannot express the joy and happiness I received. I then felt my sins were all gone and I was a new creature and would never be bothered again. I went up to the church, and when I got there they were singing, "Amazing Grace How Sweet the Sound." Oh! How sweet it did sound to me! A good sermon was preached by Brother Dickens and we went home. I saw some of the happiest days of my life, but I soon saw that I would get mad and do things that I ought not to do.

This old trouble began to bother me again which I thought was gone forever. I found I was not yet perfect and this was a great trouble to me. Now, I thought of Communion, and I thought one so sorry and full of sin as I was not fit to take the Sacrament, nor wash the Saints' feet! So, I thought I must have been mistaken about the whole thing. Then my mind would go back and think of what I felt the Lord had done for me. Oh! Has He forsaken me!

I went on this way for two years, and was married. After this I was not in an Old Baptist Church-house but once in five years but often thought of the dear people of God. I went through many trials and troubles during this time. I often thought of what I felt the Lord had done for me, but I felt so sorry I couldn't see anything I had ever done. I would think of Communion and would try so hard to do better so I could go and commune with these good people. But the more I tried to do better it seemed I got worse.

We moved to Franklin County, Texas in the year 1910 close to Good Hope Church. There I was blessed to hear Brother Jones and others preach. I still felt I was not worthy to commune — and I didn't until one day I heard that still voice again say to me: "It is not what YOU have done but what I have done for you." I felt so happy — now I could think of so much I felt the Lord had done for me. He had wonderfully blessed me in mercy.

After this I saw Brother Tatum and asked him if he thought I could get my letter from Pisgah Church, and he said he thought we could. So now I longed for my letter and went to Pisgah next meeting. I heard Bro. Tatum preach a good sermon. It seemed like now I could enjoy preaching better than I ever could. I got my letter and put it in here at Good Hope, and have been wonderfully blessed in hearing Brother Jones and others.

Since that time I have gone through many trials but I hope the Lord has been my deliverer, who I hope, will yet deliever. In the fall of 1917, I was greatly troubled. I felt I had done wrong and had enemies all around me. Then one night I dreamed that there was a great white stone that stood beside our porch.

It was about fifteen feet high and four feet through. There was a bench around it about seven feet above the ground. I dreamed that my enemies were after me and were going to burn me. I got on the first bench and saw them coming. I then got on top of that stone. I could see them striking matches and putting them to the stone. As soon as they touched the stone the matches went out. I was so afraid that I was trying to get off the stone onto the top of the house; but I could not get off that stone! (I can almost see it now.) I awoke and began to think of my dream. To my mind that Stone is Christ. As long as we are on that stone, no one can harm us.

I am a poor weak saint, if one at all; but I hope the Lord has brought me up out of that horrible pit, placed my feet upon the rock, and established my goings. I hope the Lord has shown me some of the beautiful things He has in store for His children. I am made to believe He has all power in Heaven and earth and none can stay His hand, or say, "What doeth Thou?" "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:8-10) For He says "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." (Psalms 110:3) And He works in them the will and the do of His good pleasure. I AM SO GLAD HE IS ABLE TO SEE AFTER HIS CHILDREN.

(The above experience of Sister Rachel Elledge was written by her own hand while living, in hope it would be preserved by her children after her death. The words: "MY EXPERIENCE — IF I HAVE ONE — RACHEL ELLEDGE, TO MY CHILDREN" is written on the back of the tablet that contains this experience.

TO THE CHILDREN OF RACHEL ELLEDGE: May you be inspired to treasure this highly. Your mother was blessed to speak many words of comfort to the weary and to administer good deeds to those who were in need. Her interest in the things pertaining to God and godliness proved very inspiring to me. May God bless you with that same faith that so wonderfully possessed your mother. (see Resolutions of Respect, this issue)

Her Pastor,
(Elder) E. J. Lambert

ELDER RHODES' ARTICLE CONCLUDED

Dear humble, hungering and thirsting one, is he not a good shepherd indeed? Is he not that Friend that sticketh closer than a brother: to redeem his poor, helpless, dependent sheep, who are sinners poor and wretched. Yet he was such a Good Shepherd, and so full of love for his sheep, that he laid down his life for them, and saved them from their miserable state; and cleansed them as white as snow, and made them joint-heirs of heaven and immortal glory. He gave them a heart of flesh, taking away the hard and stony heart; and clothed them with his own perfect robe of righteousness. What a good shepherd he is! How can a poor sinner ever praise him enough for all his goodness and mercy toward them. No wonder David said, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O, my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

He is such a good shepherd that he declared concerning these sheep, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I must bring." Will he bring them? He is the good shepherd — and he will bring them. They can't come of themselves, but he must bring them. What could be more assuring than this, "I MUST BRING THEM"! What a difference is this language from: Begging them to give God a chance to save them.

I saw a picture of a church house with these words, "Give God a chance

now." To me this is blasphemy. But the Good Shepherd said I MUST BRING THEM.

In Hebrews 13:20, Paul calls our Lord Jesus, the Great Shepherd of the sheep, and says that God brought him again from the dead. This evidence that he is not only the Good Shepherd, but he is the Great and Good Shepherd of the sheep who gave himself for them; and is brought from the dead and is alive forevermore; and is at the right hand of the Father making intercession for the saints according to the will of God. Then, dear brethren, he is the good shepherd; indeed he is. He secured their eternal welfare: He died for them, suffered for them, bled and groaned for them, was buried, and rose for their justification; and ascended into Heaven for them, having obtained eternal redemption for them. (Hebrews 9:12). He says in John 10:27-28, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish . . ." In Luke 12:32, he said, "Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

He is called many wonderful and gracious names: he is called the Shepherd and Bishop of the souls of his people — which, to me, makes sure that he is and always will be that Shepherd, that Priest, that Offering, that Sacrifice, that Daysman, that Lamb that taketh away all the sins of his people; that Prince, that King, yea not only that king, but that glorious King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. The prophet says, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." etc. (Isaiah 9:6).

This, dear child of God, is your good and great Shepherd; this is your Saviour; this is He that died for you; this is He that has done great things for you, whereof you are glad. He has loved you with an everlasting love. This is He that has promised to keep you, and to present you faultless before the throne of God's glory. He is still your Shepherd, and he has promised never to leave nor forsake you — he has promised to be with you even unto the end of the world. In Matthew 25:32, he said, "And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

So, he says he is the good Shepherd; he said he gave his life for the sheep — and he must have done that exactly, as the sheep were the only ones who were on the right hand: they were the only ones who inherited the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. They receive that kingdom — no one else does. They felt unworthy — they felt that they had never done anything good. The sheep felt this way; but the goats felt that they had done all these good things, and asked when they failed to do them. (see Matthew 25th chapter). But all their profession of good works failed to entitle them to that kingdom which is prepared for the sheep only; and the sheep have it as the result of what this good Shepherd has done for them.

Dear ones, let us praise him — he has done it all; and soon he will come again without sin unto salvation. May God bless you all.

Yours in hope,
(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

TITHING

Dutton, Ontario.

Dear Catherine and Charles,
(Mr. and Mrs. Charles S. Reynolds)

In answer to your question dated September 1st, on Tithing, I will consider

the Scripture found in Malachi 3:10.

Tithing was appointed of God under the law, to support the priests and Levites, who did not have any inheritance of their own, but dwelt among the various tribes. There were also tithes to be sent up to the temple at Jerusalem, where the Lord recorded His name. The tithes of corn and wine and oil and cattle, or their value in coin, were looked upon as a sign of homage and gratitude to God, who had given them this good land, a land flowing with milk and honey.

This people and its land were typical of the Lord's people and their possessions in the Gospel dispensation. Their High Priest was a type of Jesus Christ, as all the offerings were in various ways a type of His one offering. The land was given them by Joshua by lot, and it was the declared will of God that the land should not be sold forever, for, said the Lord, "The land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me." (Leviticus 25:23.) In the Gospel, that which Jesus (Joshua) gives us, "cannot be wasted nor mortgaged nor sold." He, today, brings His children from Egypt to the promised land, and this world is the house of bondage; and, as He leads us, He feeds us with bread from Heaven and water from the Rock (Jesus) that Moses (the Law) smote. He it is who gives us a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled that fadeth not away. They sowed earthly crops, we sow to the spirit. As we are led by the Spirit, we get an increase, for "Tribulation worketh patience: and patience experience: and experience hope: and hope maketh not ashamed: because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

Malachi, who came about 397 B. C. is the last, but one, prophet of the old dispensation. He truthfully charges the Jews with shamefully robbing God in their tithes and offerings. Those under the law were a disobedient and gainsaying people; they offered polluted bread upon His altar; they offered cattle that were blind, lame and sick. (Malachi 1:8-9) God was soon coming to judge that nation as chapter three shows, and when this terrible day of the Lord came, one born under the law, Jesus, had come, to whom the land belonged. He was born King of the Jews, and He it is who brought all the tithes into the storehouse. That land and its people existed in the purpose of God, to show forth in types and shadows things yet to come. The spreading fields, its mountains, hills and streams, all were typical. Its priests, blowing the silver trumpets, directing the people to the temple of God: a type of Jesus where all sacrifice acceptable to God must be offered. The lamb without blemish and the flocks and the herds, the corn, the wine and the oil, the milk and the honey, with innumerable things besides, are but imperfect shadows of better things to come. Jesus came to do GOD'S WILL. He brought all the tithes into the storehouse of the Gospel. Moses had prayed, "Establish thou the work of our hands upon us." (Psalm 90:17) Jesus established the law, for the law pointed to Christ. Jacob (not Rachel) made a coat of many colors for Joseph. God made a coat that fitted the back of Jesus only. None but Jesus could bring all the tithes into the storehouse. He is the seed of the woman that bruised the serpent's head. He is the Lamb, the firstling of the flock, a child born of a virgin; yet a Son given from Heaven, whose going forth had been of old from everlasting. In God's own way He made a coat that would fit only Jesus, for holy men of old were moved by the Holy Ghost and they testified of Jesus, His sufferings and the glory that should follow. Did Jacob feel but a worm? He testified of Jesus. Did David say "They parted my garments and cast lots upon my vesture?" It fitted Jesus. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" "They pierced my hands and my feet." "Awake, O sword against my shepherd, and against the

man that is my fellow."

These, and many, many more Scriptures, fit Jesus; and the testimony from first to last, of those who were strangers and sojourners, would have sunk, like the ax that was borrowed, into the deep forever, had not Jesus come and brought all the tithes into the stor house, — the Church of the living God, spoken of in the text as "mine house." (Read Ephesians 2:19-22) Thus Jesus fulfilled all that God commanded under the law, He has brought all the tithes into the storehouse and proved God to be true. He has proved that God did speak by Moses and all the prophets the things concerning himself. (Luke 24: 27) Jesus said, "Every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things NEW and OLD." This He said of God's true servants, whom He feeds that they may feed others. When Malachi spake, there was no New Testament, but when Jesus came there were those who spake often one to another. There have always been a few: there were of old, a few who searched diligently, "what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified before hand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." (I Peter 1:11) "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another and a book of remembrance was written." The New Testament is truly a book of remembrance written by inspiration as surely as the Old Testament was, and Jesus owned them as His own when He came in that day, (the gospel day) when He made up His jewels. Many refer this portion to hereafter, but we feel that verse eighteen proves it was here, while He was treading the wine-press alone, that He perfected forever them that are sanctified.

The tithe, to be acceptable to God, must be a free-will offering. Jesus willingly gave himself. He said to His disciples, "Freely ye have received, freely give." The fact that Abraham paid tithes unto Melchisedec, (Hebrews 7:1-2) and that Jacob, after he had seen the ladder from earth to heaven, (Genesis 28:12) promised that a tenth of all that God had given him should be given unto God, does not at all establish tithing of money in the gospel church, but it does bring before us the needs-be of giving of what God has given us spiritually. David said, "Accept, I beseech thee, the free-will offerings of my mouth, O Lord." (Psalm 119:108) Abraham paid tithes of the spoil taken in battle with the five great kings. As the flesh, which is ruled by the five senses, is brought into subjection to the new man of the heart, it becomes us to speak of these things to one another. None should live to themselves, we need one another; and the command is, bring your increase and tell it to the church. A candle is not set under a bushel but on a candlestick, "AND IT GIVETH LIGHT UNTO ALL THAT ARE IN THE HOUSE." "Let your light so shine before men (in the house) that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

The world will turn again and rend you, but those who love the truth will glorify God; and your testimony of the way the Lord has brought you and of what He has given you in the sight of Jesus, as the ladder from earth to heaven, will be food to them in the house. "Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven." In Genesis 7:11, He opened the windows of heaven to pour destruction upon men; but Jesus, the Lord of Hosts, who ascended into heaven with authority, opened the windows of heaven and poured out His Holy Spirit upon all flesh. (Joel 2:28) The blessing of God's Holy Spirit was essential for men to believe that Jesus is the Christ, for no man can say that Jesus is the Christ but by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; nor can any man preach the gospel but by the Holy Ghost. How true it was and is that there

was not room enough to receive such a blessing; for when, by the Spirit, one perceives that tribulations and afflictions are blessings, — that the flames and floods can only do just what our Heavenly Father pleases, we can say "My cup runneth over." The disciples in the upper room, tarrying until they were endued with power from on high, after the outpouring of this blessing, which filled the HOUSE, spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. They went forth boldly, fearing not what man could do unto them.

Thus, my dear friends, when by the Spirit one is able to present his or her body a living sacrifice, they are paying tithes of the spoil as Abraham did. Abraham, the father of the faithful, paid tithes to Jesus, for Jesus declares that Abraham saw my day and was glad. Melchisedec met him as he returned victor over the five kings, and fed him bread and wine, a type of the body and of the blood of Christ, which only those who are victors over themselves, (their five senses) through the Spirit's outpouring of God's love in their hearts, ought to partake. "'Tis his love his people raises over self to reign as kings, and as priests his solemn praises, each for a thank-offering brings.'' In I Chronicles 26:27, we read, "Out of the spoils won in battles did they dedicate to maintain the house of the Lord."

Here then, to our understanding, is the true place for tithes and what they really mean, of what the Lord has given us; for grace is the gift of God, and it becomes us to take of what we have received, to his house, where our real friends are, as Jesus said, "Go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee." To them (thy friends) it is food of the best kind, it stimulates and strengthens, it refreshes and encourages, it is like good news from a far country. The Church, in every age, has been a little flock, a chosen few. Many are called, but few are chosen. There were ten lepers healed, but only one returned, a tenth, to give glory unto God. How favoured those are, who, by the Spirit, offer unto God the sacrifice of thanksgiving and declare His works with rejoicing. The Jews failed, they fell in the wilderness, under the condemnation of a broken law, through unbelief. Jesus and His disciples never commanded tithes of money, seldom was money mentioned, and Jesus put a thief to carry the bag. The disciples worried about money, but Jesus multiplied the bread, and sent Peter to cast in a hook, and the first fish that he pulled out had the money for their taxes, — teaching dependence upon divine Providence. The demand of worldly organizations today for tithes shows very clearly where they are looking and what they are after. The twice that Jesus referred to tithes were in reference to the Pharisee's boastful prayer, (Luke 18:12) and when He said "Woe unto you Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God." (Luke 11:42)

God grant that His people today shall trust in the Lord and leave all their cares in His hand. Let those who have a humble hope, desire an increase in the corn and wine and oil that comes from above; let them see the fellowship of those who in themselves have confessed themselves to be but as beasts before Him, that they may grow as calves in the stall. Let them go forward without the camp, bearing His reproach, offering themselves willingly, as Ruth did of old. These, and such of like precious faith, do pay that they have vowed, they pay the tithes unto the Lord and not to man. Has not the One who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords said, "I will give you the good of the land?" Trials of various sorts may come: are they not to keep us from settling on our lees? He has said "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose." Let us arm ourselves with the same mind as Christ had, — be willing to suffer with Him and bring the tithe

of homage and gratitude into His house, "Whose house are we if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

In writing the above, we do not intend to impress upon brethren that they are not under obligation to give of their earthly substance. If they have been blessed with spiritual increase, they will want to give of the natural, and will labour with their hands, if need be, to supply the needy among them. When they do so, they will not blow a trumpet to proclaim their kindness, they will do it as unto Him. Paul tells the Corinthian brethren in relieving afflicted saints, "Everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." He certainly did not tell them to tithe, which he would have done, if tithing were to be literally continued under the Gospel.

Written in love,
(Elder) George Rustin

Box 312,
Golden, Texas.

Dead Editors:

I received the Signs of the Times, and enjoyed reading it very much. I am almost eighteen years old, and was baptized about three years ago by Elder W. W. Taylor into the fellowship of Mt. Zion church.

Elder Taylor is our pastor, and I receive many wonderful and encouraging letters from him. I am enclosing one, and if it meets with your approval, I will appreciate it very much if you will publish it. I feel it will help many sinners as myself and encourage them in their fight. Remember me in your prayers. I remain,

An unworthy sister in hope,
Mary Hukill

1216 S. Brighton
Dallas, Texas
Oct. 20, 1953

Miss Mary Hukill
Golden, Texas
Dear Sister Mary,

Your comforting and encouraging letter received and was very glad to hear from you and to learn of your welfare, both spiritual and temporial; was also glad to see you dear ones at church last Sunday; but was very sorry that your father was not feeling well, surely hope he is much improved by now.

My dear child, you spoke of the comfort that my letters have been to you. It is very encouraging to me to know that you have been comforted through my efforts to write, as I feel so unprofitable and so often cast down; but I do hope that neither of us forget where all goodness comes from. For we only do good as we are graced to do so by the God of Heaven. (James 1:17.)

If I am not deceived, I feel the responsibility of my officeship, as pastor of the little church which you are a member. I seem to think of it like the tender care of the shepherd; as the Elder of a church is a watchman to feed the church of God which He has purchased with his own blood. (Act 20:28.) But I want it clearly understood that if it be so that the tender care of the shepherd be manifested in the services which the servant of the Church renders, it is because the tender care of the chief shepherd, Christ Jesus, is working in the heart of the little servant.

The above scripture shows that God purchased the church with His own blood. Therefore, it is most surely the church of God that is under consideration.

Now I would like to draw your attention to Isaiah 40:10, 11: "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hands, and his arms shall rule for him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs in his arms and carry them in his bosom and shall gently lead those that are with young." We would also like to have Jeremiah 3:15 in the foundation of our subject. "And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding."

Now we see the work of a pastor is to feed the church of God with know-

ledge and understanding; and the prophet, when prophesying of the coming of the Lord Jesus, said that he shall feed his flock like a shepherd. Yes, the flock which he purchased with His own blood.

We have a great subject before us. One that is too great for me to go into the depths of and make an exposition to the children of God; but it is not too great for the shepherd, the Lord Jesus. Behold the shepherd's tender care! "And he is made unto us wisdom, righteous, redemption and santification." (I Cor. 1:30).

So now, as we feel the responsibility of our office, may we also feel the necessity of the grace of God to qualify us to fulfill the duties of it.

If one be called to watch over the flock for the purpose of feeding them he must also be graced with the love of Christ in his heart, and thereby be given the desire to walk as He walked, so as Christ may shine in his very life. "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your father which is in heaven. (Matt. 5:16.) Yes, he must be graced to feed them with knowledge and understanding, having Christ implanted in his very soul and be given to speak of him with knowledge and understanding, so as to comfort and edify the flock.

To be concluded

PLEASE NOTE

We are always glad to publish Obituaries, but we find it necessary to request that they be made as brief as possible — yet giving all necessary particulars.

If you use typewriter, please double space the lines in articles for publication. This will often save us considerable time and work.

Editors

MEETING AT SLATE HILL

The yearly meeting of the Old School Baptist Church of Slate Hill, Orange County, New York, will be held the first Saturday in June. This is June 5th. The meeting will begin at 10:30 A. M., DST.

Members and friends are invited to attend at this historic meeting house.

William D. Chapman, Clerk

EDITORIALS

Danville, Va. June, 1954

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EDITORIAL

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." (Acts — 20:28)

This admonition is similar to the one with which Paul charged Timothy, when he said, "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, exort with all long suffering and doctrine." (2 Timothy 4:1)

The apostle admonished the elders, whom he had called from Ephesus, to meet with him at Miletus, as it was his mind to bypass the church at Ephesus so as to be at Jerusalem the day of Pen-

tecost. When they were assembled, he called upon them as witnesses of his conduct from the first day that he came into Asia at all seasons, and that he had kept back nothing that was profitable unto them. "Wherefore," he said, "I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."

To these elders, with whom he was assembled, he said, "Take heed unto yourselves." Paul knew if they continued in the doctrine, order and ordinances of the church, as established at Ephesus, that the same tears and temtations which had befallen him would befall them if they continued to serve the Lord. I am satisfied that there are many today who are as the Romans were, to whom Paul wrote, and said, "For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." It is necessary, therefore, that those who have been made overseers of the flock take heed to themselves, first.

While I was in school I learned to add, subtract, multiply and divide. When these fundamental principles of mathematics were acquired, then I could work out examples and get the right answer. So, if we understand that the Almighty God, the ruler of the Universe, is omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient and a Sovereign over all, then the overseer can do as he is supposed to do; rightly instruct them that are under him. Long before I began to speak in public, I was much wiser in my own opinion than I am now. When I was asked about this or that Scripture, I would offer some kind of an explanation without taking heed to myself. As the years come and go, I find it much more serious, and wonder if I darken counsel with words without knowledge. May all the ministers of the gospel take heed to the gift that is within them. May we take heed to ourselves when out of the pulpit, as well as when in the pulpit, doing all for the comfort and edifying of the flock: all the flock — rich and poor, high and low-over, which the Holy Ghost has made us overseers. May the doctrine we proclaim be according to the teaching of God's word, that our enemies may have nothing to gainsay. Paul said, "This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." I have felt to question the motive of some, whether their desire was for the work or for their own personal profit, and therefore, feed themselves and not the sheep. The desire of the pastor should be the prosperity and edification of the flock.

"How beauteous are their feet,
Who stand on Zion's hill!
Who bring salvation on their tongues,
And words of peace reveal!"

In my early ministery, I remember using as a text the 13th and 14th verses of the 14th chapter of ST. LUKE, "But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompence thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." The next week after I spoke from this scripture, a deacon in the church gave a supper, but didn't invite any that was in the position to recompence him, or reciprocate in any way, just the poor of the flock. This deacon was wealthy and could have had those of culture and high finance. I fear that all of us are a little neglectful at times of those who are not as fortunate as others. Jesus said, "For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always." I've heard some complaints of pastors not visiting those of the flock who were not blessed with the things of this life, as many others are; but they were rich in faith. Pastors should not prefer one above another in the line of duty. I know that they have their preference and perhaps the right to choose those

with whom they prefer to associate in a social way, but when it comes to the service to be rendered to the flock of God, there should be no preference. The shepherd should look after the weak of the flock as well as the strong; the lean as well as the fat.

The shepherd is not only to take heed to all the flock, but to feed the church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood. The church is composed of the same flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made them overseers. The food or bread with which the sheep of God's pasture are to be fed, is not made of edible grain such as corn and wheat. This, of course, is necessary to sustain the physical body, but the church of God has learned that they live not by this kind of bread only, "But by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God doth man live." The bread, called manna, with which the Lord fed the children of Israel in the wilderness came from above. So, Jesus is the incarnate word of which the spiritual family of God by faith eat, and are satisfied. The overseers of the flock are commanded by one of authority to feed, not themselves, as the shepherds did in the days of Ezekiel, but the church of God. "I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God." By the gift that hath been given to men, called bishops, overseers and elders to expound the word of God in such a way that it will become food, comfort and strength to the household of faith. This will strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Not the hand by which we take hold of visible things, but the hand of faith, by which we lay hold of invisible and eternal things. Not something that we feel that would be pleasing to the flesh, but with the pure and unmitigated truth, which will feed and build up the church in her most holy faith.

The overseer or shepherds are not to rule the flock by force, but by ever instructing them in doctrine and order, and always looking for false teachers who seek to destroy the unity of the flock, and feed themselves instead of the church. I am persuaded that there is nothing that does the true minister more good, than to see the sheep eating of that food which the Lord hath prepared, and enabling them to dispense and to impart to them that which has been infused and revealed to their soul. Some times I think one of the best evidences I have of my call to the work, is when I see them feasting and rejoicing in the proclamation of the gospel. It is hard to feed a sheep that is full, and has plenty of green grass around it all the time upon which it may nibble. Sometimes I fear that the hungry are not always careful enough about their food, and take in something that afterwards they find they can't digest. Therefore, the minister should make sure the food he hands out to the flock, is specially prepared and seasoned with the grace of God.

The salvation of the church has been procured by the blood of Christ. And this blood cleanseth from all sin, past, present and future. Peter said, "For as ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God." To redeem is to procure the liberty of a captive. Death and the grave held us as lawful captives, and the blood of bulls and goats could not redeem or take away sin. Therefore, the righteousness of God required that a lamb without blemish and without spot make the sacrificial offering. Such things as silver and gold could not redeem, because they are corruptible and must perish. The blood of Christ was not contaminated because His conception was not of man,

but of the Holy Ghost. Therefore, He could make an offering acceptable to God. If silver and gold, the most valuable medium of exchange, could have redeemed from sin, death and the grave, then God would not have sent His Son into the world to shed His blood. If then, the church is bought with a price, and that price is the blood of Christ, may we ask what is the church? Is the church the whole of all the orders of the earth which are denominated churches, or is it all those for whom this blood was shed? I am persuaded that many of those composing the church are not members of any denomination, but are members of the church which has been redeemed with the blood of Christ. These buildings in which we meet to worship, are not churches, but meeting places where we are permitted by the laws of the land, to worship under our own vine and fig tree. Wisdom hath builded her house, and every piece of material composing it, is placed in it by the great architect. The church is a congregation of believers called out of the kingdom of the world, into the kingdom of Christ. Paul said to the church at Corinth, "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours"; and then the apostle pronounced upon these saints a wonderful benediction, "Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." All the elect of God, of every nation from the beginning to the end of time, will be called because they are sanctified in Christ. How good it is for the church to assemble at its meeting place in peace and tranquility. May we hear again the proclamation of the angel, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

H. O. Nash

Dear Brother Spangler:

I have my January Signs. I am always glad to get each issue for each is like a sermon from a far country. I am all alone in my home with no one to talk to, so I have lots of time to meditate on the things of the present day.

I want to tell you what I believe by quoting from the eighth chapter of Romans:

"For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

But if we hope for what we seen not, then do we with patience wait for it.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethern.

Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

This is some of my belief. I am a sinner, and I hope some day to see my Saviour — Bless his dear name. It is mail time, so I will say farewell.

Mrs. Jennie Clifford

The opinions and doings of men are of no value unless motivated by the Spirit of Truth; if otherwise, they "darken counsel by words without knowledge".

WE QUOTE:

"Ask almost any man, "Whether he

hopes to be saved eternally?" He will answer in the affirmative. But inquire again, "On what foundation he rests his hope?" Here too many are sadly divided. The Pelegian hopes to get to heaven by a moral life, and a good use of his natural powers. The Armenian, by a jumble of grace and free-will: human works, and the merits of Christ. The Deist, by an interested observance of the social virtues.

"Thus merit-mongers, of every denomination, agree in making anything the basis of their hope, rather than that foundation which God's own hand hath laid in Zion. But what saith scripture? It avers, again and again, that Jesus alone is our hope: to the exclusion of all others, and to the utter annihilation of human deservings. Beware, therefore, of resting your dependence partly on Christ, and partly on some other basis. As surely as you bottom your reliance partly on the rock, and partly on the sand; so certainly — unless God gives you repentence to the acknowledging of the truth — will your supposed house of defence fall and bury you in its ruins, no less that if you had raised it on the sand alone." TOPLADY'S "WORKS"

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

KEYS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

(Matthew 16:19)

As we are not informed of the number of keys, we will not attempt to speculate on that question; but let it suffice that our Lord has spoken of them in the plural number, and to our mind the figure seems to imply all the gifts of the Spirit which Jesus gave to Peter, and to all his inspired apostles, to qualify them to lock or unlock authoritatively, to the saints in all ages, the things of the kingdom which, at the time these words were spoken, was soon to be set up in gospel order; all the laws, ordinances, doctrine, rules and regulations that should be binding on the churches and the saints throughout all time.

We are aware that on this, as on many other figures which are used by our Lord, many good brethren have honestly differed in their understanding of its precise application. While we feel bound to respect the judgment of brethren, we do not feel at liberty to withhold our own views, especially when called for; but we give our views, with our reasons for entertaining them, with due deference to the superior judgment of others, and sincerely desire that the Spirit may so open the scriptures to us all, that we may be of one mind, and all be led by the one Spirit into all the truth.

The promise made in our text to Peter, related to the future qualifications he should receive of the Lord for the apostleship. Neither Peter nor any of the apostles had yet received the keys which are spoken of, nor could they ever receive them only from Christ, their Lord and Master. No earthly thrones or governments could qualify them for the important positions which they were to occupy in the kingdom which was about to be set up; and even after the resurrection of Christ, he and they were still to tarry in Jerusalem, until these keys of the kingdom should be given them, whereby they should be endued with power (authority) from on high, whereby they should, in the regeneration, or resurrection life of the kingdom, sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. It is true, that although the other disciples were present, and Jesus asked them, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am? and Peter answered, and said, Thou art the Christ, (Anointed,) the Son of the living God, Jesus replied to him personally, saying, "I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto **thee** the keys of the kingdom," &c. But still we find that

all the other eleven, in this regeneration, did also and still do sit upon thrones of judgment, having the same power to bind and loose all that is bound by the laws of Christ, and release the saints from all that the laws of Christ do not require of them: and from their decisions in judgment, officially given in the Acts of the Apostles, and in their several epistles, there is no appeal. All that they have expressed in judgment is bound in both heaven and earth, and can never be revoked or rescinded. And in them do we find fulfilled the prophecy, "Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment," &c.—Isa. xxxii. 1.

Let us notice as we pass, that even the enthroned apostles were not to reign in legislation, or to make any laws for the church of God; but they were to sit on thrones of judgment, to judge and decide conclusively, finally, authoritatively and irrevocably of the ordinances, doctrine, faith, practice, and everything required by the laws of the great King of saints, and by their decisions in judgment bind all that Christ enjoins, and loose the saints from all the laws, usages, rites, ceremonies and traditions from which Christ has made his people free. All, therefore, which Christ by his laws, as adjudged and expounded by his apostles, has not bound upon the saints, he has virtually forbidden; and we are commanded to "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."—Gal. v. 1.

Brethren, bear with us, if we call your special attention to this admonition. Does it not become us, as churches and as individual christians, to examine carefully and diligently, and see if we are holding anything as religiously binding on us that Christ our King has not by his laws, as interpreted to us by his apostles, enjoined; or neglecting anything which he has by the same inspiration enjoined? Is it not to be feared that some of our churches or brethren have from expedience, convenience, or conformity to the rules, creeds or usages of others, adopted, accepted, sanctioned, or at least tolerated, rules or traditions which have not been made binding by the recorded decisions of the apostles of Christ? Is it right for us to be wise above what is writen, or, in other words, to be governed by our own judgment, instead of the judgments and decisions rendered in the New Testament by enthroned apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ? Let us beware how we attempt to amend or improve upon his laws, lest we, like the ancient Pharisees, subject ourselves to the charge of making void his laws by our traditions. Why were his laws given to us, and apostles clothed with authority to expound them to us, if we, after all, are to judge for ourselves, without regard to what they have written? The first Baptist Church which was established at Jerusalem on the day of pentecost, continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship; and we, without regard to any departure of the professed church throughout the intervening ages from that to the present time, are to regard that as the model gospel church, and steadfastly abide in the same doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.—Acts ii. 42.

But to return to the promise made to Peter. "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," &c. This investment of the apostolic gift fully recognizes Christ as the "blessed and only Potentate," the reigning King, who alone has either the right or the power to give gifts unto men; for he has led captivity captive, ascended up on high, and received for and given to his church all the gifts requisite for her perfection, edification, and final triumph. He gave some apostles; but he has appointed none to succeed them in the apostolic office. So long as the Son of Man in his Mediatorial office shall fill the throne of his glory as the King of saints, his princes, the apostles, shall rule in judgment; and although they are not with us in the flesh, yet they are with us in

the spirit, and their judgments and decisions and all the laws of the kingdom are just as accessible to the saints now as though they were still with us in the flesh. Our blessed Lord is not with us in the flesh, for he has ascended up where he was before he came in the flesh; but he says, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth: the flesh profiteth nothing." A long succession of popes, who claim to be successors of Peter, and to hold the keys of the kingdom, are but impostors; they hold only the keys of Mystery, Babylon the Great. They are strangers to, and utterly ignorant of, the kingdom of heaven.

If we are correct in understanding the keys of the kingdom of heaven to be the apostolic gifts of infallible inspiration and apostolic authority to set all things in order in the church of God, then not only Peter, but all the other apostles were also, and equally endued with that power from above. The end or design of their investment of authority was that what they officially bound on earth, when speaking and writing as they were inspired by the Holy Ghost, in all cases were the decisions of God himself; God spake by them to the gospel church, as he had at sundry times and in divers manners spoken to the patriarchs of the former dispensation by the prophets. And although Peter was the first, after the induement of power on the day of Pentecost, to proclaim the gospel with power, and with the Holy Ghost which was poured upon him and them at that time, yet we are told that Peter, with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and addressed the multitude on whom the Spirit was poured out; and the doctrine advanced, and the order and ordinances proclaimed by him, were and are called the apostles' doctrine, which was gladly heard and received by, and steadfastly continued in by, those who were pricked in their hearts. And Peter was the first to open the gates of the New Jerusalem to the Gentiles, when he preached Christ at the house of Cornelius; but this did not imply that he only had the keys of the kingdom, for all the other apostles of Christ were baptized with the same Spirit, spake with the same other tongues, performed the same miracles, and were indued with the same infallible inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and occupied their several thrones of judgment with him.

The fitness of this figure is worthy of especial consideration; as keys are used to unlock things which are hidden, shut up and inaccessible, until unlocked and made manifest.

One of the apostles, who, although as one born out of due time, was not a whit behind the chiefest of them, and who was more prominent as an apostle to the Gentiles, and who labored more abundantly than they all, says, "Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God: even the mystery which hath been hid (or locked up) from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest (or unlocked) to his saints; to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of the mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you the hope of glory."—Col. i. 25-27. The only keys that can unlock the mysteries of the kingdom of haeven, and reveal to us poor Gentile sinners the wonderful mystery of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, is the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, by which the inspired apostles declared among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ.

Not only by these keys, or gifts of the Holy Ghost, is the way of life and salvation unlocked and opened to the understanding of those who are born of God, but the precepts and ordinances of the kingdom, by which the gates of Zion are opened for their entrance.

The voice of God in prophecy has foretold of the day when the song of salvation shall be sung in the land of Judah, and the command be heard and obeyed by the apostles, "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in."—Isaiah xx

vi. 1, 2. And under the gospel day and dispensation the exalted Savior, from his high, imperial throne in Zion, has proclaimed, "I, Jesus, have sent mine angel (or Spirit) to testify these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."—Rev. xxii. The gates which were once locked and barred against us, and the way of the tree of life which was kept by cherubim and a flaming sword, are now unlocked and thrown open for the nation which keepeth the truth, and these gates shall never be shut by day; for there shall be no night there. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of this city, whose appointed and supplied walls are salvation, and whose gates are praise, shall never be closed or locked, so as to hinder the entrance of the redeemed whom God has blessed, and who, by virtue of his blessing, do his commandments. By the keys of the kingdom the way into the holy place is opened, and life and immortality are brought to light through the gospel.

But in the immediate sense of our text, the keys seem more especially to set forth the power of immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost given to the apostles, to bind and to loose, to lock and to unlock those things which should be enjoined upon the kingdom of heaven, as being irrevocably established as the order and doctrine of the church of God; and to unlock, unfetter, and forever liberate the saints from every yoke of bondage, and from the observance of everything in doctrine or practice that Christ has not commanded. The Spirit of truth, which the world cannot receive, is the blessed Comforter which Jesus promised to send in his name, who should bring all things to the remembrance of the apostles, whatsoever he had commanded them; and they were commanded, as apostles, to teach all nations, baptizing them in the name (not names) of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them; that is, all things which Christ had commanded the apostles, they were commanded to teach the baptized nations to observe. Nothing more, nothing less. And lest they might forget or neglect anything that he has commanded them, he promised to send the Spirit of truth, that should bring everything that he had commanded to their remembrance; and to crown the whole with infallibility, he added, And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world. Therefore, all that they have bound on earth is bound in heaven, and all that they have loosed on earth is loosed in heaven. Woe to him who shall add to, diminish from, alter, change or pervert what God our Savior has said by the mouth of his holy apostles.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, October 1, 1878)

We were glad when we read the above, for we found that Elder Beebe expressed what we have been contending for concerning the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.

— J. D. W.

OBITUARIES

MRS. BULAH STRUBE

With a sad heart I shall endeavor to fill the request to write the obituary of Sister Bulah Strube, who was born June 28, 1878, in Ouachita County, Arkansas; the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. F. Kinnedy. She was married to Mr. O. E. Burke December 12, 1896, and to this union one son was born, who died in infancy.

Sister Strube received a hope in Christ in the year 1898, and was batpized by Elder J. H. Danel, near Honey Grove, Texas. She moved to Dallas, Texas, in 1908, and her husband having died, she married Mr. H. A. Strube June 13, 1934, and made her home on Melbe Street until her death November 3,

1953, in a Dallas hospital. She was over seventy-five years of age.

Sister Strube was a beloved sister in Christ; she was sound and well established in the doctrine of God our Saviour, and was faithful to see after the needs of the church and those who were in need. She was a wonderful singer, and is greatly missed by all at Saints Rest Church. She was not well for the last few years, but remained strong in the faith; and when she was able to go, the writer would go by for her and carry her to church, which she did enjoy so much. Her seat is now empty and her sweet treble voice will be heard no more in our little band, which makes us very sad; but may we be given to submit humbly to the will of the Heavenly Master, and to realize that she is better off than we. Her spirit has returned to God who gave it, and her body lies sleeping in hope of the glorious resurrection; at which time we all hope to be gathered around the throne of God to part no more.

Surviving are her husband, Mr. H. A. Strube; one step-son, Herman Strube and one step-daughter, Mrs. Eva Quarrel, both of Dallas. Also two sisters, Mrs. J. L. Allison, Stamps, Arkansas, and Mrs. W. E. Perkins, Texarcana, Arkansas; and a number of other relatives and friends.

Funeral service was conducted by the writer at Stamps, Arkansas; after which the body was laid to rest in the Shilo Cemetery by the side of her father, to await the coming of her Lord and Master, and to be with him where all will be peace and joy.

Her unworthy pastor,
(Elder) W. W. Taylor

W. T. HICKS

W. T. Hicks was born February 3, 1792, and departed this life November 15, 1953; making his stay on earth nearly eighty-two years. He was married to Nettie Jane Luther in 1892, and to this union were born eight children: Mrs. Betty Taylor, Mrs. Fred Wray, Jack Hicks, Mrs. Guy Vincents, Mrs. Jess Goodwin, Cay Hicks, Mrs. Lubie Breedlove and Arthur T. Hicks. His first wife preceeded him in death (1915), and he was then married to Nancy Ann Mathis, who survives.

Brother Hicks united with the Primitive Baptist Church at South Mount Zion, in South Graves County, Kentucky, in 1914, and lived a faithful member until death. He was a true believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone. He raised a noble family, and lived to see them all married and have homes of their own. Brother Hicks was well known among the people of his county, and was held in the highest esteem by all the Old Baptist for his being sound and unwavering in what he believed. I knew Brother Hicks for several years, and I loved him, and loved to be with him and talk with him on the doctrine of God our Saviour. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

The funeral was conducted from South Mount Zion church at his request (which was the only funeral ever held there) by Elders R. L. Harrison, who offered prayer; Elder E. C. Lowery, who read the obituary and part of the eighth chapter of Romans and made appropriate remarks; and the writer spoke, using for a thought: He became us, that we might become him. There was a large congregation present. Burial was in Dodson Cemetery by the side of his first wife, to await the call from on high.

May God comfort and reconcile his wife and children, and save them, is the prayer of one who loved Brother Hicks and his family.

(Elder) O. W. Perkins

A. J. (JOBE) CHILCUTTE

A. J. (Jobe) Chilcutte was born January 22, 1877, and departed this life February 21, 1954; making his stay on earth a little more than seventy-seven years.

He was married to Ester Chilcutte, who preceeded him in death thirty-two years; to this union were born twelve children: John (deceased), May, Ruth, Cora, Woodard, Bessie, Andrew, Verner, Porter, Fred, Myrtle and Finis. He was married to Mrs. Ollie Oliver, December 8, 1934, who survives; also one brother Bob and two sisters, Mrs. Hilda Mabre and Mrs. Gertrude Sturdevent; and forty-two grandchildren and forty-two great grand children.

Brother Chilcutte will be greatly missed in his neighborhood. He was known all over West Kentucky and Tennessee among the Old Baptists, and was greatly loved by the brethren. He was always on hand for the meetings when possible, and I loved to be with him. He was a lovely man, and Oh, so sound in the doctrine, if I am a judge. He enjoyed talking of the things that he hoped for when this life was over. Last fall, when the Soldier Creek Association was held in Mayfield, Kentucky, he came home with me; and while I was busy with my evening chores he came out to the barn where I was and asked me to preach his funeral when he should go. So, when he passed away in February, his daughter came after me, and I tried in my weak way to comfort his wife and children and friends, using John 6:37-39. Then he was laid to rest on a Pleasant Hill overlooking the Tennessee River in Henry County, Tennessee, there to sleep until Jesus comes the second time without sin

unto salvation, to gather his children home to be with him, and to be like him in his image, to praise him forever.

May the mercy and blessings of God be upon and with all those who mourn, is the prayer of one who loved Brother Chilcutte.

(Elder) O. W. Perkins

DEACON W. M. PILGREEN

On motion and unanimous vote, Union Primitive Baptist Church of Christ adopted a resolution of respect for Brother Bill Pilgreen, Marion, Louisiana, who died March 11, 1954. Brother Pilgreen was born February 7, 1885, and was married to Miss Ada Booth, January 31, 1909. He was reared in the vicinity where he resided.

Brother Pilgreen united with the church in September, 1935, after showing much interest before that time. He was much devoted to the church and its welfare; and was firm and unwavering, yet very kind, in the affairs of the church, and the doctrine and order of the Lord's house. He was loved and held in high esteem by all brethren and friends who knew him, for they observed his sincerity and devotion in the things which make for peace, order and sound doctrine.

Dear brethren, we will greatly miss him in these things; and were it not that we feel that our loss is his eternal gain, then I am sure it would be much harder to give him up. But the abundant evidence that he left us causes us to feel that he is far better off than we; for he is beyond the trials, sorrows and heart aches of this stormy life. We are admonished not to sorrow as those who have no hope, but to look forward to that glorious day when the Lord shall come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, to call the saints from their sleeping dust and set them on his right hand in his eternal kingdom, there to praise the Lord forever.

Brother Pilgreen is survived by his wife; two sons: G. W. Pilgreen, Fairbanks, Louisiana, and Marvis, Ruston, Louisiana; five daughters: Mrs. Bertie Henry, Mrs. Gertie Shadic, Mrs. Ida McKinnie, and Mrs. Marie McKinnie, Marion, Louisiana, and Mrs. Peggis Feazel, Farmerville, Louisiana. He is survived also by four sisters: Mrs. Donie Roberson, Monroe, La., Mrs. Mary Tucker, Farmerville, La., Mrs. Annie Love, Marion, La., and Mrs. Susie Henderson, Lillie, La. There are also sixteen grand-children, and a host of other relatives.

I would say to his lonely companion, may the Lord sweetly and graciously verify his promise, that he would be a husband to the widow; and to the children, where he says, that he would be a father to the fatherless. May the Lord bless, comfort and sustain each of you, and give you great peace which none but he can give. You will miss him but God is able to lead and direct you that you be reconciled to his holy will.

Funeral services were conducted in the Liberty Baptist Church in the presence of a very large congregation, by the writer and Elder J. L. Smith. He was then laid to rest in Liberty Cemetery.

Yours in hope,
(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, Almighty God, in His infinite wisdom, has taken from Good Hope Primitive Baptist Church of Christ, one of its highly esteemed members, Sister Rachel Elledge; and

WHEREAS, She was blessed to be a faithful member of the church for fifty years, rendering a spiritual service as God graced her. Now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That we express thanks to God for having blessed us with the gift of grace manifested in her walk and conversation; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That we express our deep felt sense of loss in her passing, and pray that God reconcile us to his will; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That we include this brief obituary in this resolution: Sister Rachel Rhoades Elledge was born February 19, 1886, and became a member of the church in 1904. She was married to H. F. Elledge, of Scroggins, Texas, October 18, 1906. She died at her home there December 29, 1953; and is survived by her husband and two sons, George W. and Cleburne H., Scroggins, Texas; and also by four grand-children, and numerous other relatives and friends. The funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder E. J. Lambert, at Good Hope Church, and her body was laid in Good Hope Cemetery, awaiting the resurrection; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be given her husband; a copy filed with Good Hope Church records; and a copy be mailed to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

The above read and adopted by Good Hope Church, Scroggins, Texas, while in regular conference, Saturday, January 23, 1954.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Moderator
Gertrude Rhoades, Asst. Clerk.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 122 DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1954 No. 7

THE CHURCH REDEEMED

Jesus left his Father's throne
And he came to earth alone,
Where he walked with men on this terrestal ball;
It was then he shed his blood:
Washed her in the crimson flood;
It was then he tasted the wormwood and gall.

Jesus is her righteousness,
All her peace and all her rest:
May all her prayers and her songs be to him.
How he loved his chosen race —
Bought for them a holy place;
And took upon himself all her guilt and sin.

Blessed day: he bade me look —
All my sins I hope he took
When he bled and when he died upon the tree.
There he drew me to his side,
Washed me, cleansed and justified;
And there redeemed a poor, lost sinner like me.

When he comes to earth again,
To take his bride home to reign:
All her sorrows and her toils will she lay down;
Take her with him far above,
Where's no sorrow — all is love:
There she'll wear her crown, her lovely golden crown.

Warden Lewis
Lowland, N. C.

Marysville, Calif.

Dear Editors:

"Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." (John 4:48.)

Just before opening my Bible and reading the above Scripture, I had been wishing for some signs of guidance, something like a dream or a special revelation to solve a problem. I did not know I was going to read the above verse until I came to it, then I felt condemned for my unbelief. I started asking myself some questions. Does the sun not come up each day, just as the Lord fixed it? Does not the spring follow winter and then summer, as always? When I go into my garden, do I not see the little plants springing up from seed which have been kept alive during the dormant months by that Almighty Hand that made this great universe? Do I not see the insects come to life, despite what man may have done the year before to destroy those that are pests to him? Yes, everything is in its place and after its own kind, just as He fixed it in the Creation. Are these not signs enough to know that there is a great all-wise being who governs and controls everything from the sun to the little insect? Yes, I know there is a God. I do not need any special wonder to teach me that.

But, the next question is, am I his or am I not? Has he taught me to hate the things I once loved? Has He taught me to beg Him for mercy because He has shown me what a great sinner I am? I can answer, I hope so. Has He taught me that I cannot have my way, that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Verily, yes, many times. It is a lesson I must learn over and over again. Am I kept by the power of God? If not, then I am not kept at all, for I cannot keep myself, not for one hour. Has He ever comforted me? Oh, so many times! When I lost my mother, a sweet calmness came over me just before the funeral that I didn't know could be possible at such a time, but nothing is impossible with our God. Has He taught me that "all things work together for good to them that love God"? Yes, it had to

come from Him or I couldn't have believed it. Even yet, my daily walk and talk do not prove that I believe it at all times. It is only when I can look away from myself and to Him that I know it is true. But when I can, Oh, what a sweet rest and comfort to my soul it brings! Then for a fleeting moment, I can say with Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

Dear ones, if I have not given God all the honor and praise, this is all vain and just like the writer. I have never done one good thing in my life, and if indeed I am one of His chosen ones, I am a miracle of grace.

In hope,
Mrs. T. R. Jefferson

Huntington, W. Va.
November 3, 1953

Mrs. Mary Claggett — Mrs. Louise Ball,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sisters in Christ:

Your letter of September 30th has not been answered on paper, but has been many times in our minds and prayers. Unworthy as we are, we do not forget them that are of like kindred faith, and who have a good hope in our Lord. We are way past many of our brethren in years, and we have only one beacon light which burns ahead of us showing the way — Jesus. Not only does he show the way, but he leads us in the path of righteousness for his name's sake.

How pleasant it is when we look back over our experience and recall the many times we rebelled against Him, and He would answer: I went through all your trials before you; even down in death I made a way for you; now I will never leave you or forsake you, for I paid the price and redeemed you. You are mine — I have saved you by my grace.

How many times we have prayed him to take away our troubles, that we might sail the seas with ease. And Jesus would say, "My grace is sufficient for thee." We stop and think: Did he say that his grace is sufficient for me? Then we are made humble at his feet — made willing in the day of his power. O happy thought! What more can I ask; what more do I need! As the heavens are parted, and we catch a view of him in his perfection, high and lifted up, and his train fills the temple, there is no more room, for the temple is filled. All the called of God are there, and not one is left out.

While I am writing this, I hear a noise at the door; as the mail man pushes the Signs for November, 1953, through the door, and I declare a recess of one hour. I scan its pages, and my heart overflows. I read an article by Elder Arnold H. Bellows, whom it was my pleasure to help ordain some years ago. He is led deep into the scriptures, and I am thankful for his gift. Then the experience of Elder W. R. Utley. I have never met him to my knowledge, but I feel he is my brother and I would like to shake his hand.

Then comes a request of Martha Herndon Bond, widow of Elder Wesley Bond, of Island City, Oregon, to publish an old letter to Little Flock Church by Elder Dudley. This seemed near to me, for I have heard the brethren speak of Elder Dudley. He and Elder Bond were both ordained at the same time at Little Flock Church, Anderson County, Kentucky. Sister Bond was at my appointment in September, this year, being on a visit from Oregon. It all brought back memories to me. Then the letter from Hubert T. Faulk; he wrote on a subject that I have talked on many times. He is a stranger in the flesh, but I read his lines with much enjoyment. Then Elder Schenck's article concluded. We are about the same age, and have corresponded with each other.

I felt the same as Elder C. U. Landers in commenting on the Signs. Then I began an article called the "Power of God"; I read the first paragraph and thought that some things sounded familiar — I turned the page and, to my surprise, saw my own name. It was an article I had written some years ago.

Then followed the letters of Deacon H. L. Rogers and his niece Kathryn; both were at our meeting at Lost Creek church last Sunday, November 1st.

Both Editorials were good reading: sound doctrine that cannot be denied. Then, in "The Voices of the Past," an editorial by Elder H. H. Lefferts, published in October, 1915. I had read this article nearly forty years ago, but I had forgotten about it. (Like Jude would say, I will put you in remembrance of these things) It seemed that he was talking to me as we used to talk about the mysteries of God. "He being dead yet speaketh."

This letter is long, but I send it on to you; do as you wish with it. We are well as common, and hope you are much improved by this time. May God bless you both. Sister Weaver joins me in love to you and all the dear ones in your place.

A poor sinner with a hope in Him.

(Elder) George L. Weaver

Granite City, Illinois

Dear Brother Wood,

Inasmuch as I have been requested from time to time to explain what I feel the Bible teaches pretaining to the observing of the sabbath day, and why we as a people give all praise, honor and glory to the Lord God through His Son Jesus Christ, acknowledging salvation to be eternal and that only of the Lord; yet, why we are not observing the sabbath day literally as laid down in the Bible: (Exodus 20:8) "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy."

Feeling that we who profess to be believers in the finished work of Christ, should, as near as possible in a Church capacity, follow the teachings as laid down in the Scriptures of God's eternal truth, as recorded in the Bible. Therefore, we should have a, "Thus sayeth the Lord," for our reasons for not literally observing the sabbath day.

In turning to the Bible: (Mark 16:1-2) "And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Salome, had brought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun." From this we readily see that it was the FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK that Christ's resurrection took place. Equally, we notice that the early church set up by Christ, was given to meet after His resurrection, but they ceased to observe the literal sabbath. They met on the first day of the week with joy and thanksgiving, and that in public worship of Christ as their Saviour. We have no record where they called it the Sabbath, but refrred to it as the Lord's Day.

We are given to read for our comfort and enjoyment in Mark 2:27-28, "And he said unto them, the sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath." From this we clearly see that we are not to worship the sabbath as many over the world do, or appear to do. To idolize one day above another is contrary to what the Apostle Paul tells us in Galatians 4:7-11, "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son, and if a son then an heir of God through Christ. Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain." Again the Bible forbids us to observe one day more than another literally, as all are of the Lord, — thus the Lord's days. We do attempt to meet and sing praises and speak, giving honor where honor is due, in most Old School Baptist Churches on both Saturday and Sunday. Sunday as far as our calendar is concerned is the first day of the week. Christ should be first in our hearts, worshipping the Lord of the sabbath

and not the day. We should not idolize the sabbath or observe it in the oldness of the letter, with pharisaical rigidty, as many do in our day. The sabbath should be remembered to be a type and shadow which Christ is the substance. Wasn't it Christ who rose on the first day of the week? The Lord's Day.

Acts 20:7:"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." Again we notice when the disciples or church came together it was not on the sabbath, but on the first day of the week, which is Sunday as we know it today.

John, 20:19: "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, "Peace be unto you." There we read from Holy Writ where Christ the Son of God visited the Church on the first day of the week.

I Corinthians 16:2 "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." From this we see that the Apostle Paul instructed them to meet and not wait until he returned. Not to wait for a gathering when he returns but meet on the first day of the week and worship the Lord. Yes, ever since the resurrection of Christ the Church has met on the first day of the week praising the Lord, and that in spirit and in truth; and that through Christ who rose on the first day of the week and who is ever sitting on the right hand of the Father making intercession for all whom the Father giveth Him, and all for whom His blood was shed.

Revelation 1:10. "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet." We notice where this dear saint of God was blessed with such wonderful divine blessings, and he did not call it the sabbath but the Lord's day. The sabbath was kept holy unto Him from the beginning and under the law and prophets, until being fulfilled by Christ by His resurrection and by His appearing with the disciples and His followers. The first day has been observed since the resurrection of Christ, it is not the sabbath day but the Lord's day. Thus that which is old has been done away and is no longer kept in reverence as the sabbath day, but to worship the Lord of the Sabbath which is Christ, the Son of God.

Turning to the natural calendar in general use today which is known as the "New Style." The Gregorian Calendar, named due to a change in 1582 by Pope Gregory XIII of the Catholic dominated countries, when he ordered October, 1582, should have twenty-one days instead of the usual thirty-one days, dropping ten days, the 5th through the 14th of October.

The English nations in 1752, of which the United States was a part, dropped eleven days from their calendar. This was ordered by the Church of England. September having nineteen days instead of the usual thirty. The 2nd which was on Wednesday was followed by the 14th, Thursday. The Greek Orthodox in 1923, dropped the first thirteen days of October, 1923.

Why all the changes in the calendar? Simply in the weakness of the calculation of time. Julius Caeser set a solar year as having 365 days and 6 hours. Wherein modern calculation list 365 days, 5 hours and 48 minutes. Thus they had made the year eleven minutes longer than it should have been. The churches found themselves in a state of confusion with reference to Easter. The Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D. had established (by man) the rule for Easter. Easter should be the first Sunday after the fourteenth day of the moon (full moon) upon or next after March 21st. In other words, Easter is the first Sunday following the first full moon after the vernal equinox (March 21) except when the full moon falls on Sun-

day as this year, 1954, then Easter falls on that particular day. This clearly shows us that Easter is a man-made day.

We find, as far as the calendar is concerned, in counting days back to Christ the true Sabbath has been lost. Saturday as we know it is not the true Sabbath, as eleven days were dropped, an uneven number, adding more confusion to the day worshippers. I have often wondered and attempted to think how confusing it would be to drop eleven days out of our calendar. How it would interrupt church days for the month, and particularly in our times many associations as we know them. As an example, Washington had the confusion of being born on the 11th day of February and celebrating it until he was a grown man, then having it changed to the 22nd day of February, as we know it today.

This being some of my understanding for our observing the first day of the week in lien of the sabbath.

A brother in Christ, is my humble hope.

(Elder) John F. Simpson

Webber Falls, Oklahoma.

Signs of the Times:

Enclosed is a check for the Signs for two more years. Thanks to the editors for such a wonderful paper. It doesn't make one a child of God, but it strengthens the believer: It is food for them, and they enjoy reading it.

Farewell in the Lord,
H. C. Harkey

EXPERIENCE OF BROTHER KINLEY

My reason for writing this, as once expressed by dear old Elder Gilbert, is that it has been the leading of my mind for several years; so that when I am gone my children and others who may read this may know some of the travels of my life while here on this earth. I am now seventy (70) years old and realize my days on earth are not long, according to nature.

I was born in Carroll County, Virginia, May 29, 1883. My parents moved to Floyd County, Virginia, where I grew up to manhood near Old Indian Creek Primitive Baptist church. I do not recall that I have ever questioned the doctrine set forth by those dear people: their doctrine has always been dear to me. I want to make it clear right here that my belief, and the doctrine that I so much love, I had no control of.

At approximately the age of 21, I was married to Lizzie Gardner, and to this union were born one daughter and two sons. We entered the mercantile business near Willis, Virginia; and three years later we sold our business there and bought at Pilot, Virginia. We were rooming with a family, "The Wright's" when one night we had retired and an undescribable fear pierced my body with such force that my soul and body cried within me, "Oh Lord Have Mercy on me." The power of this I have never been able to understand. It made my natural body to quake and tremble. We stayed at Pilot about eight years and this fear continued with me. It would leave at times and then come back very suddenly and pierce my body like a dagger.

We sold out at Pilot and moved to Roanoke, Virginia. I spent one miserable winter there. We sold there and moved to Christiansburg, Virginia; but this fear followed wherever I went. All this time I believed that it was caused by some physical disorder of body or nerve system. Therefore, I began going to different doctors, seeking relief. I tried the medical doctors in Christiansburg, but no relief. Then I tried several doctors in Roanoke and still no relief, then our family doctor took me to a nerve doctor in North Carolina, but no relief found there. Our family doctor sent me to one of the examining doctors of Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Md. I stayed there about two weeks, with different doctors examining me and one day the doctor in charge of my examination asked me to report to his office the next

day at a certain time; which I did. He told me that he had all the reports of the different doctors and that he had gone over them very carefully and he could not find anything to send me to the hospital for, but for me to return home and to eat more good nourishing food and take more rest. At these remarks something seemed to cry out loud within me, "Doctor you do not know anything about my condition." I returned home with my same fear and misery and I still believed my trouble was physical. We lived about twelve years in Christiansburg and this piercing and dreadful trouble stayed with me.

I was in the furniture business in Christiansburg, and during the twelve years there I had been trying to attend to my work there. Many times as the sun began to sink in the western horizon, Oh, that dreadful fear would come over me with such force that my very soul would be crying with in me, "Oh Lord what will happen to me this night." Will I be locked up in the insane asylum before day comes again. It was talked in the town of Christiansburg that I was loosing my mind and I did not find fault with any one for making such remarks. I felt such remarks were true. I regret to admit it, but I got to the point that I felt nothing, no power, could remove this fear from me but death. It grew to the extent that I was afraid that I would take my own life. I instructed my wife to keep the butcher knives hidden from me. Many, many times I have looked up into the sky and it seemed that the sun and the elements were turning dark. It looked like the sky had become black. I have gone from place to place seeking relief, but it was nowhere to be found. It is a mystery to me to think over those fifteen or more years. Customers have come into our place of business and, while looking at the merchandise we had for sale, pass remarks that everything was so beautiful and my feeling would be, Oh, if you felt like I do nothing would look good to you. I have roamed the woods by myself many times looking into the elements trying to see beyond the horizon — trying to see if I could anything that might give me any relief.

I have looked at the cattle in the fields and wished so much that I could exchange my life for theirs. During all these long years, Job's Comforters were telling me many things to do to get relief. Some said not to think of my condition to keep my mind off myself; which would have been as easy as it would have been to have picked up a red-hot rod of iron and carried it around, and not to think of what you were carrying.

I wish to mention one occasion when I was with our truck driver coming in from making a delivery; and hoping so much for relief, it seemed that there was a prayer, or something, that went out of my breast with such power that it seemed it would pull my heart out of my body. It seemed that I could realize the force of same go right up into the elements. After this, my trouble gradually left me, but always fear that my trouble might come back. Since then I have experienced many strange things. I have waked up at night, realizing the need of being kept by the power of God, and not being left to walk through this life by myself, with such force that my whole body was made to fear and tremble.

Here I am seventy years of age and my travels are yet a mystery to me. I hope I fully realize that I do not know to-day what tomorrow holds for me. For the past several months I have been blessed to walk in tears almost day and night pleading with the Lord for mercy, begging with all the power that is in me that he will condescend into my heart with love. If not deceived, I desire so much that he bless me with love. These few months have been the most happy period of my life, but, oh, how quick I am to forget his mercies. Dear blessed children of the most high and precious God, I feel that I want to mention prayer. If I know anything

about prayer, it comes of necessity and it does not have to be a multiplication of words. My soul has been made to cry within me many, many times: "Oh, Lord, save for I am perishing." I needed help at once and did not have time to multiply words. Much of my life has been a cold state. I hope I have been brought in full fellowship with Apostle Peter when he said he did not know Jesus.

By my experiences, the only time we know him is when he brings us in fellowship with himself; and this we have no control of. I am so glad the plan of salvation is like it is, and that we have no control of it. I am glad that we are made to stand still and realize the salvation of the Lord. Yes, made to realize that salvation is of the Lord, and not by man. I do not want it changed in any way and I feel that it is perfect as it is.

I hope I have been shown many times the danger of traveling thru life without the leading hand of God. I hope my continual prayer is to always be led by the mighty hand of God, and that he will never leave me to walk by myself. Oh, Lord, lead, guide and direct me all the days of my life. If my travels in this life have anything to do with an experience of grace, no wonder one of the writers said it was a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

I have laid in my bed at night, and my mind made to expand on the beauties of the Scriptures, and they would come into my mind and connect one to another until they would weave an endless chain reaching out in all directions.

I will have to bring this to a close but I have only touched on the many experiences of the travels of this life. My travels have not been of my own choosing; if so, I would have chosen an easier road. So that those who may read this might know my feelings on the purposes of God, my travels have taught me to believe he is absolute in all things in heaven and earth. This belief is not of my choosing, but I hope it is the Lord's teaching; and thereby, if not deceived, I am made to love the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things, for it is precious to me. In conclusion, I wish to say that I do not claim this to be an experience of Grace; the reader will have to form his own opinion. It is some of the travels of a sinner on this earth.

Yours in hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Blessed Saviour.

P. L. Kenley
30 Whealton Road
Hampton, Va.

TOLERANCE

The word "tolerance" is defined by our lexicographers as being "a disposition to be fair and patient toward those whose opinions and practices differ from one's own." No one can say he does not understand the meaning of this definition of the word. But let's be honest with ourselves. How many of us can truthfully say that we are tolerant or that we are patient and fair with our brother whose opinions differ from ours? Will you not agree with me that the sad plight of the Primitive Baptists, scattered, divided and subdivided as they are today, is a living testimonial to the shameful but established fact that far too many of us are sadly lacking in the spirit of tolerance; that all of us know the definition of the word "tolerance" or "tolerant" but we are so blinded by prejudice that we do not know how woefully poor we are in so far as possession of that attribute of godliness is concerned? I am constrained to believe that our ever-loving, just and righteous God was rebuking those preachers of all times who were not, are not now, and never will be willing to concede that it is possible that the Holy Spirit may have led, is now leading and will in the future lead the minds of those who differ with the preachers. I feel God was speaking too through the prophet Jeremiah when he said "Woe unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture." (Jer. 23:

1) Let me ask you this: How many times have you gone to a spiritual feast (where the gospel was preached) and when your portion was served to you, you threw both the fishes (which were delicious to a hungry soul) and the bread in the garbage because in your mind the bread was not made according to the recipe your preacher uses? If my readers are given the grace to be honest and fair, too many of them will be found admitting that they have done that very thing and too many times. How many times have you gone for weeks and even months without hearing the gospel preached and for which you hungered, when within a short distance or a few miles at the most, services were held and the preaching was done by a minister who was sound and deep in the doctrine of Election; sound and deep in the doctrine of Salvation By Grace and likewise on other doctrinal points regarded by you as fundamental, yet on one or more points he did not cut his sermon by the pattern your preacher uses and for that reason you stayed at home and starved though the fishes were good but the loaves were a little under standard? I am made to wonder sometimes just how much dissension and strife the Apostle Paul would stir up were he to come back and go into our Associations and on being put up to preach he should preach as he wrote to the saints at Philippi in these words: "And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife and some also of good will. The one preaches Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds; but the others of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel. What then? Not withstanding every way, whether in pretense or in truth Christ is preached and I therein do rejoice; yea, and will rejoice." (Phil. 1:14 to 18).

So far as I have observed Primitive Baptist ministers of all factions, sides and divisions, are in accord and see as one on the fundamental doctrines of Election, Salvation by Grace and the Resurrection. Then it seems to me that when two or more of them come together, though they differ on some one point not of a fundamental nature, they could spend hours of sweet pleasure and in an atmosphere of heavenly bliss, in a discussion of those doctrines on which they are agreed. But invariably it is not so. One or the other will skillfully but intentionally raise some question which he knows will provoke an argument; an argument he feels sure he can win to the embarrassment of his preacher brother.

I hope I have written this in all humility and I know it will accomplish its purpose to some degree if God be in it; otherwise it will not. I have not written it for the purpose of stirring up a controversy and if anyone believes I have just let him answer me and see how quickly I shut up and say no more. However, I know that I have written it at the risk of having preachers, one or more, from all factions and sides, to tell me "Mr. Smarty, you keep out of this. It is our fight."

Hubert T. Faulk
325 West Missouri St.;
El Paso, Texas.

Warsaw, Missouri

Dear Brethren:

It is in much weakness and fear that I make this attempt to write you; and if my pen is not guided by inspiration of God, all will fall short of his glory.

First, I think it wonderful, by the grace of God, that the Signs of the Times has been advocating the same doctrine that it advocated one hundred twenty-two years ago. That has been a long time; and changes have come by many, but God has preserved it and suffered it not to change in the doctrine once delivered to the saints, viz: Foreknowledge, Election, Predestination, salvation by grace, etc. There is a sweetness in all the attributes to the redeem-

ed child of God that the world knows nothing about. Foreknowledge, how sweet and restful the word: to know that nothing can come to pass, good or evil, that our Heavenly Father did not know.

Election, O, so sweet to know that our Father chose us in Christ Jesus before the world began, and said of Jacob and Esau, Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated before they were born, neither having done good or evil: that the doctrine of election might stand. Yes, it stood then; it stands now, and will continue to stand throughout eternity.

Predestination: dear friends, the beauty of this word is more than I can tell. Is it not as cement to the whole scriptures? Some say that if God predestinated the bad things, that would make him the author of sin. Is not this expression blasphemy? Predestination did not influence those wicked men who crucified the dear Saviour; neither did they know that he was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.

Salvation by grace, and grace alone. It can't be bought — it is a gift of God direct to us through Jesus Christ our Lord. God gave us him, and there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

I would like to give a brief sketch of my experience. If I have an experience of grace, it is so little at times I almost lay it aside, then again I derive much comfort from it. I was young in years when I saw myself a sinner in the sight of God, and became concerned about my salvation; I mourned at times because I could not get free from sin and rid of the trouble. I would sometimes pray, but my prayers were so futile I obtained no comfort of relief. This trouble came and went for at least two years. One day, while feeling very burdened and heavy, I opened a closet door and stepped inside and sank to my knees; and it seemed I kept sinking down, deeper and deeper —it seemed I could feel the very walls of the bottomless pit, and, O, so dark. I don't know how long or low, but next I knew I was standing singing that beautiful old song, "O, how happy are they who their Saviour obey." I sang it through, and the farther, the sweeter it was; seemed every word was meant for me — it suited my case.

Three years prior to this, my parents took me from Missouri to Texas to stop a courtship with the man I loved better than life. I was young, I knew, and didn't blame them for he was ten years my senior; but the fatherly counsel and advice he gave me I can never forget; and his character was spotless. My parents and I thought I could forget him; and I tried so hard to do so. Two long years passed — and I had not forgotten. In the meantime, I began to pray, hoping God would help (here is where my experience began, if I have any); and the cords of love grew stronger, and I said, I would not marry until my parents were reconciled. Our correspondence was lost; I could not hear from him nor he from me. I grieved and became wan; then they said, "Your age has set you free." When we met, I felt that earth had nothing more dear — this proved true. And shortly there was spiritual love also manifested; I was spiritually in love with him, am yet, and hope to ever be. This was over fifty years ago, and my dear husband has been gone eight years; and were it not for this hope in Jesus, I would be of all men most miserable.

My mother was the late Mrs. E. C. Fogerson, a strong Primitive Baptist. She wrote to the Signs and loved and enjoyed the paper so much. Her obituary appeared in the January, 1926, issue.

Dear editors, if you see anything in this to warrant an experience of grace, you may publish it; if not, cast it aside and all will be well with me, for it is so far short of what I had hoped for. I wanted a bright experience like Paul — one I could not doubt; even the shouting of the glorious praise of my blessed Redeemer. This kind is what I have long

sought for, and prayed for; fearing the above was a delusion of the mind. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace are ye saved)." Grace the marvelous goodness of God!

May you be spared many, many years to proclaim His goodness to weak and undone men, is my sincere desire. Another little sister from Texas, saved by grace if saved at all.

Fare you well,
Mrs. George Turner

(There are many, many experiences in our lives which confirm each of us in the faith; and we are enabled to run the race with patience, ever looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith. J. D. W.)

Memphis, Tennessee.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

You will find enclosed a check for $8.00; three dollars for renewal as noted, and five dollars from my father, W. G. Anderson, Hickman, Kentucky, as a donation to aid in sending the paper to others. His eyes are failing till he can't read much any more. He loves the doctrine the Signs sets forth, and continually talks and writes it with the ability that God gives him.

He is past eighty-seven years, and has been reading without glasses for a long time; but now his eyes are failing, together with his body. He says he feels as good as anybody but has no strength to work much; and he longs for the day when he is called from this life to the great beyond, where he hopes to be with the Lord, and to sing perfect praises forevermore. He often says, Oh, won't that be grand: where congregations ne'er break up and sabbaths never end.

May we all be kept by God's grace while we have to linger here below: to run with patience the race that is set before us, ever looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Jesus said he would supply all our needs, and I believe he will. We don't know just what our needs are, but in Christ all fullness dwells.

I'm so glad he said he would be merciful to our unrighteousness, for if it was not for his mercy that endureth forever, we would be lost worlds without end.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Mrs. Luther Campbell.

ELDER TAYLOR'S LETTER
(Concluded)

Christ came into this world and purchased the church with his own blood and set up his church here on earth; set the officers in it and gathers the little lambs with his arm, — the strong arm of his never dying love; and he feeds them, giving them pastors according to his own heart, graced with love for the flock and ability through the spirit to set forth Christ with knowledge and understanding, that the little flock may feast upon the living word of God.

Yes, they must have this grace to take heed unto themselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made them an overseer to feed the church of God. To take heed unto themselves: always being mineful of themselves, realizing that they need the same things which the flock needs, and is nothing in and of himself and must fully depend upon Christ to grace him with knowledge, wisdom and understanding. Also be graced to take heed unto all the flock, to pay close attention unto them, to be mindful of the things which are profitable unto them. Some of them may be weak in faith and understanding, therefore, the pastor, or watchman, needs to take heed unto them, that he may bear with them, stretching forth his hand of love and helping them along, by encouraging them, speaking words of kindness unto them, ever showing them that he loves them with a godly love for Christ's sake, and their good. Yes, he must feel for them as the Shepherd, for he is performing a work under him. How is this

going to be done? Well, if Christ be in the pastor's heart and in the heart of every one of the flock, it is the grace of God's love that is in the heart of the pastor that is loving the flock, and the same love graces the flock to love their pastor and each other. Therefore, if I labor in the gospel, it is not I, but the grace of God that is with me, as the Apostle Paul says.

Now dear sister, I believe that grace will make itself manifest in the very lives of those who are exercised thereby.

If one be graced with the qualifications of a pastor, he will love the flock and will willingly labor for them, not for worldly gain, nor vain glory, but for the good of the flock and the glory of God; and that with a ready mind. (I Peter 5:2). Yes, ever willing to bear with them and help share their burdens what ever they may be, for the spirit of the shepherd (Christ) is in his heart and goes out with tender compassion to the same spirit that is in the heart of every one of the little flock.

Now may we consider the fact very carefully that the pastor or watchman is to take this heed in regards to feeding the flock. What do we see here? Well, to feed them "well", he must consider what they need. Some may say, "They need the truth"; which is right, they do. But, it is also true that they may not all need the same feed of truth. A little tender lamb must have milk, the sincere milk of the word, that he may grow, (I Peter 2:2), while others of the same flock may desire and need the strong meat of the doctrine. So here we see a greater responsibility placed upon the feeder.

What is a pastor going to do if some of his flock are strong sheep, — strong in the faith and well established in the doctrine and have a deep understanding of the same, and thereby desire the strong meats of the doctrine to feed upon; while others are young, tender lambs and may be very weak and cannot feed upon the strong meat of the doctrine, their understanding just would not reach it? To my mind he must bear with and support those little ones who are not strong. (Act 20:35, I Thes. 5:15) Yes, take heed unto them to feed them. If he properly cares for his flock, he, with a desire to do as Christ, having the love of Christ implanted in his heart, will bear with the weakest little lamb that might be among his flock and will support them, being patient with them, always willing to spend more time with them, to give them a more thorough explanation of the things pertaining to the doctrine which they may not fully understand; and to talk upon the things which their understanding will reach, ever willing to encourage them when they are feeling cast down and alone. Much of this must be done out of the pulpit; but while in the pulpit, if he be graced to be a good pastor (feeder), he must speak and use careful, wholesome words. (Proverbs 15:4, I Timothy 6:3) Therefore, when he goes into the deep things of the doctrine, he will give a careful exposition of them, so as his strong sheep will be fed and his little lambs also, and none of them be offended. He must preach the gospel indescriminately, not leaving off a part of the true gospel of Christ; but must carefully set it in a well explained manner, an acceptable manner, a godly manner.

Now dear Sister, God forbid that we loose sight of Christ the Good Shepherd. He it is that knows the every need of every one of his little lambs and strong sheep, or weak and weary ones. Therefore, he will lay it upon the heart of his servants, who serve under him, to feed the flock. But let us look further at the different kinds of feeding and the difference between the weak and the strong. The little tender lambs not only need the sincere milk of the word; but they also need it often for they cannot take much at a time. Therefore, I feel it to be very profitable that a pastor keep in close contact with his flock, over which the holy ghost hath made him a

watchman to feed. For many times a little lamb or a tired and weary sheep may be down in a low valley feeling to be alone and cast down and cast away, suffering afflictions and distress of mind, etc. Then it is these many times an hour's visit of their pastor, or a letter from him, would be much comfort and food for the weary and hungry soul. Therefore, I feel that the night should not get too dark or the journey too long for me to go unto one of my little children, yes, mine to watch over, to feed; neither do I feel that I should ever get too busy to write to them in their weary hours, if I feel the spirit of love guiding me to do so.

Now if I know anything about this matter I realize that man cannot fulfill the duties of a pastor in and of himself, he must be graced with the love of God in his heart; and God is love. (I John 4:8) So, as he worketh the works of love, it is God working in him both to will and to do. (Phillipians 2:13) Therefore, may God be praised and not man, may we all ever look unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith and run with patience the race that is set forth us, what ever it may be. (Hebrews 12: 1, 2)

Now, my dear Sister, I realize that I have not perfectly set this matter forth, but trust that is not all amiss, and will be a bit of comfort and a crumb of food for your weary and hungry soul. I hope you will cast a mantle of charity over my mistakes and remember me in prayer.

Now may the love of God, the communion of the holy spirit and the power of Christ be with you now and forever more, Amen. In Christian Love and Sweet Fellowship,

Your unworthy pastor,
(Elder) W. W. Taylor

ASSOCIATION NOTICE

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will meet with Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, on Wednesday and Thursday, August 18 and 19, 1954; convening on Wednesday morning at 10:30 A. M., DST. The meetinghouse is located on Highway 222, and is about one-quarter mile of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line. Lovers of the truth, ministers and brethren of our faith, order and fellowship are welcome.

Those who arrive on Tuesday will stop at the church and read chart on the gate giving directions where to go; or, for information write the undersigned.

Charles B. Osborne, Church Clerk,
Quarryville, Pennsylvania

PLEASE NOTE

Church Notices, usually published in July issues, will appear next January. This omission is in order to have space for Obituaries and other articles.

Editors

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

The annual three day meeting of Bethel Church of Predestination Baptists, at Riffe, Washington, will begin, the Lord willing, on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1954. For information write the Clerk at Riffe, Washington.

(Elder) D. C. Davis, Pastor
Rosa Coleman, Clerk

APPOINTMENTS FOR ELDER
R. W. RHODES

Dan River Church. Wednesday, July 14th at 11 A. M.
Reidsville, N. C. Wednesday night at 7:30
Bush Arbor, Thursday at 11 A. M.
Greensboro, Thursday night at 7:30 P. M.
Gooch Memorial, Friday at 11 A. M.
Durham, Friday night at 7:30 P. M.; and then to the Upper Country Line Association. I hope our people will attend these services.

D. V. Spangler

UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

The Upper Country Line Association will convene with the Prospect Hill Church, Prospect Hill, N. C., beginning July 17th at 11 A. M. and continuing three days. The church is located just off of the highway leading from Danville, Virginia, to Hillsboro, N. C., and near the Prospect Hill school building. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend with us.

D. V. Spangler, Clerk

EDITORIALS

Danville, Va. July, 1954

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EDITORIAL

GOLDEN CHAINS OF DIVINE TRUTH

"According to a well-ordered and unbroken chain of Thy providence" were words used in the introductory wording of a prayer by Eld. J. L. Smith of Lillie, Louisiana that stimulated a sweet chain of meditations on the subject of this treatise. These inspiring thoughts were so sweet and sublime to me that I trust they were God-given. May God grant you to share some of them with me.

We read in I Kings 6:21, where Solomon used "Chains of Gold" in the interior decorations of the Temple. Golden necklaces, or chains of gold, have been worn about the neck by women throughout the ages. We read in Genesis 41:42, of Joseph wearing "A gold chain about his neck." The lover spoke concerning the beauty or comeliness of His beloved in Songs of Solomon 1:10, thus: "Thy neck with chains of gold." Chains of gold have been used to confer honor and as a token of love from the beginning of time until now. It is a custom that has not been broken and is yet being used today. The significance of interlinking chains of gold demands awe and amazement from those who seriously consider it! Let us consider the different phases of Truth Divine as golden chains so interlinked together that they cannot be broken nor separated.

A sister said to me some time ago, "A brain is as strong as its weakest think." I thought, "How weak my brain must be!" It is just as truly said, "A chain is as strong as its weakest link." All natural and carnal chains are broken because of weak links. If the chain of salvation were contingent, depending upon the volition of righteousness of any carnal natural man as one of its links, it would certainly be broken. Man in his best state is but vanity and the best of his righteousness are as filthy rags in God's sight, according to the Bible. This certainly would not be golden! The chains we want to consider consists only of GOLDEN LINKS.

Gold is considered a precious metal. It is pure because it has been refined and all dross has been burned from it. We want to think of it as lasting. It is figurative of something Divine. It is figurative of something very valuable which is to be greatly desired.

A chain is composed of links interlinked one with another. Each link is endless and so intertwined that each affects the other. One link cannot be moved without moving others. The chains of divine truth are so interlinked that one phase of truth embraces another so that none can be separated. We want to think of chains strong enough to reach down deep into the miry clay of sin and vileness and rescue helpless fallen sinners from their just condemnation. We want to think of chains having their existence in eternity as coming through

time and into eternity. We want to consider the Golden Chain of the God-head.

Three golden links compose the chain of the God-head. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are so interlinked that they cannot be separated. "For there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and THESE THREE ARE ONE." (I John 5:7) They are one in purpose, power, and authority. The co-ordination of the God-head is so perfect that whatsoever the Father determined concerning the salvation of poor sinners the Son accomplished completely and the Spirit reveals. The Spirit is just as able to bring to poor sinners the knowledge of the truth as the Father is to determine and the Son to accomplish. They are in strict agreement. Do you think the Holy Spirit could fail in any degree to translate from darkness unto light anyone for whom Christ died? If there should be any failure in any sense it would manifest a weak link in the chain. The Father determined certain ones to be saved; the Son was endowed with power to save; and, the Spirit makes the application. These are golden links that cannot be broken or altered. You may ask, "How can poor sinners be encouched in this golden chain?" Let us consider the interlinking of God's children.

We call your attention to the prayer of Jesus as recorded in St. John 17:21 "— As Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be ONE IN US —" Here is a three link chain so interwining the children of God with the Father and Son that it would be just as possible to dethrone God as it would to pluck one from salvation. "I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be made PERFECT IN ONE" (St. John 17:23.) This was the prayer of Jesus for those who were chosen IN HIM. We are in the Golden Chain now by being in the link of Jesus. We were chosen IN HIM before the foundation of the world. The answer to this prayer shall have been made manifest to His saints when God shall have perfected the revelation of "CHRIST IN YOU THE HOPE OF GLORY." (Col. 1:27) Much dross must be burned in the fiery furnace of affliction before Jesus takes up his abode in us and we experimentally become a link in this golden chain. Our trust of being in the chain is to be in the link of Jesus. Our hope of being a link in the chain is through the merits of Jesus. When we shall have been purified as gold is purified we shall shine as gold and be a link in that chain.

We are interlinked with God and the son by being in their Hands. Jesus said, "**Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand, My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (St. John 10:28-29) I want to ask the question Paul asked in the 8th chapter of Romans, "If God be for us — WHO CAN BE AGAINST US?" May we examine the Golden Chain of Salvation as recorded in Romans 8: 29-30.

"For whom He did FOREKNOW, He also did PREDESTINATE to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also CALLED: and whom He called, them He also JUSTIFIED: and whom He justified, them He also GLORIFIED." This could be properly called the five interlinking golden links in the chain of salvation. Foreknowledge, predestination, effectual calling, complete justification, and ultimate glorification are the five golden links of the strong chain which reaches from before time in eternity embracing all events relative to salvation in time, which continues on into eternity with the final glorification of His saints. Each link is so intertwined that there can be no idea entertained of contingency. This is a perfect chain of salvation with no missing links to be added. It is strong because God is in each link. No link is dependent upon the volition or acts of puny man. It is God who predestinated, foreknew, called, justified,

and glorifed. Is there anything else necessary? God foreknew them by choosing them in His Son. God predestinated their salvation by decreeing all things necessary thereto. God calls by the direct operation of His Holy Spirit. God justifies through His son. God glorifies by the work of His Spirit. This Three-one God perfects salvation for each and every subject of His Love. We stated that God decreed all things necessary unto the salvation of His people. Can you tell me one thing that has been, is now, or is to be, that is not necessary? This question brings me to consider this chain of salvation interchaining with the "well-ordered, unbroken chain" of ALL THINGS.

Permit us, Lord, to glance at THE GOLDEN CHAIN EMBRACING ALL THINGS. Rom. 8:28 reads, "And we know that ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose." All things are linked together, so we must consider them as in the chain. Some people suggest that if we add anything to the five things mentioned in the next two verses we are liable to the plagues mentioned in Revelations 22:18. May I suggest to those who would try to take away the remaining things catalogued in the remainder of the 8th chapter of Romans that they read Revelation 22:19. Paul is showing here in the 8th chapter of Romans the interchaining of all things with the Golden Chain of Salvation that we treated upon in the paragraph above. We have briefly considered the things mentioned in the 29th and 30th verses. Let us catalogue the remainder. They are tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword, death, life, angels, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height, depth, and any other creature. These are all specifically mentioned. Can you think of anything else? These are all included in the chain of all things. They all work together for good. Let us prove it by taking up one of the things mentioned in the 35th verse that man would surmise as being terrible and able to separate us from the love of Christ. Tribulations (which are severe afflictions) becomes a golden link in the Golden Chain of Experience according to Paul in Romans 5:3-5.

"— We GLORY IN TRIBULATIONS also: knowing that TRIBULATIONS worketh PATIENCE; and patience, EXPERIENCE; and experience, HOPE: and hope MAKETH NOT ASHAMED —" One is necessary unto another. One is the effect of another. One works another. This is a five linked golden chain of experience in which the link of tribulations is glorious or golden because it is ncessary in order to affect the other links. Space will not permit giving the many passages of the Bible that prove each and every child of God shall have tribulations. Have you ever been brought to thank God for these severe afflictions and fiery trials, knowing they were necessary in order to turn your trust from self unto His righteousness? When they have been revealed to you as blessings in disguise, you are made to glory in them and consider them golden. Just as certain as tribulations are experienced by a child of God, patience will be realized. They cause you to submit your case into His hand, and make you realize He is able to save. They cause you to "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." This effects an experience of grace. Through much tribulation you are made to be patient. In this state of patience Jesus comes to you as your Saviour. He takes up His abode in you. This surely is a gracious experience. When this is your experience you are made NOT ASHAMED. You are not ashamed to own Him as your Lord. You readily and anxiously confess Him as your Hope and salvation. This Hope has been wrought in you by this experience. Is not this a golden hope? A hope that is based upon the finished and complete work of Christ is wonderful. A hope that is not dependent upon the puny

works of a sinful man is an "Anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." (Heb. 6:19) You just as surely confess this hope as you are possessed with it. This chain cannot be broken. You must be brought through all five stages. Do not tell me that the link of confession is based upon the option of the creature. It is a certain work of the Holy Spirit. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Romans 10:10) "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." (Prov. 16:1) Then, surely the Lord is in each of the five links in the golden chain of experience and must each be wrought by the God of Heaven! Is any part of the blessings relative to salvation dependent upon the option of the creature? Your answer is, "No." It is grace from eternity; it is grace in time; and, it is grace unto eternity. You sing praises unto Him for every particle of your experience realized here, and for the hope you have of being ultimately delivered from sin.

We would like to think of the chain of fire for a few moments. Seven interlinking experiences that are grievious while being evperienced, prove glorious and golden for the purpose God has in them. Seven stages of the fiery furnace is mentioned in Romans 8:35. Tribulations, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and sword are all links in the chain of fire which are decreed to burn the dross from His people, — "Purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus 2:14) Jesus is to purify unto himself this peculiar people. He gave himself for this purpose and the application will surely be made. All dross shall be burned from them. These severe afflictions work a distress. God's people are persecuted while distressed. This brings about a famine. Have you ever been in this famished condition when you could find nothing to quench your hunger and your thirst? Figuratively speaking, all children of God come to this stage. The reason why they bccome so hungry and thirsty for righteousness is because in this condition of distress they can find no righteousness of their own to satisfy. This famished condition is necessary in order to cause you to look to Him for food and drink. He is the bread and water that quenches their thirst. You must not only be brought into this famished condition but you must also be stripped of your clothing. A man clothed with his own righteousness is clothed with filthy rags. These distresses burn these filthy rags from you and you find yourself hungry, thirsty, distressed, and naked. This indeed brings about a peril. You are in close contact with the sword. The sword kills. Paul said, "We are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." He said again, "The commandment came, sin revived, and I died." (Romans 7:9) We must be brought by the way of the sword. No wonder it is contrary to the will of the natural creature to come unto Jesus, because the flaming sword is turning every way. It is placed at the entrance gate which makes it a STRAIT GATE. Jesus said, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." (St. John 6:44) They must be drawn through the sword. In the song of Moses recorded in Deuteronomy 32:39, we read, "I kill, and I make alive: I wound, and I heal." The sword is necessary in order to be made alive in the Spirit. Sword of man cannot frustrate nor separate us from His Love. Granting that man can kill the body, he cannot kill the soul. The soul of man is solely in the hands of God and cannot be touched by any other; but He is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. God operates upon the soul in the transition of His children from walking after the flesh to walking after the Spirit. The work of God upon the soul of a child of God causes it to faint. (See Psalms 107: 5.) Then He restores the soul as we find in the twenty-third Psalm. My son pre-

faced a statement not long ago with, "When God saved my soul." It is indeed a glorious experience of the soul to be delivered from death unto life immortal! There must be a death experienced in the STRAIT GATE. This strait gate and narrow way leadeth UNTO LIFE. (Matt. 7:13-14) The chain of fire is certainly necessary in applying the Life of Christ to his people. This chain is necessary in order to bring about REPENTANCE FROM DEAD WORKS, which is the first link in the chain of the first principles of the oracles of God.

The golden chain of the principles of the doctrine of Christ is composed of the following links: Repentance from dead works, faith toward God, the doctrine of baptisms, Laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. (See Heb. 6:1) These six principles are so interlinked that one is intwined with another so that one begets the other.

The golden chain of baptism consists of: baptism of the Holy Ghost, baptism of fire, baptism of repentance, baptism in Jesus, baptism in His death, baptism of the soul, and baptism of the body. We were all baptized by one Spirit into the body of Jesus when we were chosen IN HIM. We are baptized by fire in the Furance of Affliction. We were baptized into His death by being in Him and going into the grave with Him — being crucified with Him. The Spirit envelopes or baptizes the soul while being born of the Spirit. The Spirit will baptize the body in the resurrection from the dead. We are baptized with repentance when God grants or gives us repentance. You see this golden chain of baptism begins before time in eternity when God's people were imersed, enveloped, submerged, elected, chosen, or baptized in Christ; experienced by His people from the beginning of the work of the Holy Spirit upon them in time unto the end of their sojourn here; and, finally completed when their mortal bodies are baptized with immortality in the resurrection. This is the chain of ONE BAPTISM because it is performed by God with ONE spirit into ONE body. Each link (or phase) is golden because it is the work of God. Baptism in water is figurative of this ONE baptism which is essential unto salvation including all the links or phases. This chain of baptism of the Spirit interchains with the Golden Chain of the Fruits of the Spirit.

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." (Galations 5:22-23) This nine linked golden chain of fruit is manifested in the walk and conversation of all who have been wrought upon by the Spirit. Each are golden because it is the work of God's Spirit. God's Love given unto us produces this chain: love of God — love to God — love to the brethren. This great godly love produces joy unspeakable and full of glory. This produces peace that passeth understanding. It is a peaceful calm following a surging storm. The peace treaty that God stamps with the seal of the Holy Spirit makes manifest this chain: peace from God — peace to God — peace to the brethren. The undeserved peace from God begets longsuffering. We for-bear because God has been so forbearing with us. We endure injuries for a long time because we found that God has been more merciful to us than we could be to others. This is interlinked with gentleness. If we love our brethren — if we manifest the joy that is in our soul, if we strive for peace; if we are in possession of a forgiving, forbearing, longsuffering spirit, surely, we are gentle, kind, not harsh in our dealings, — turning away wrath with a soft answer. This is good. The character so inspired manifests a good walk and conversation, because God has been pleased to work the chain of TO WILL AND TO DO OF HIS GOOD PLEASURE in this character. All this results in the chain of faith: faith in God — faith in Christ — faith in the brethren as being objects of God's love. This abiding faith in God's

mercy and grace begets meekness. One so possessed is made to be humble, submissive, and not proud nor haughty in his dealings and conversations. Our walk and conversation has been tempered with the work of the Holy Spirit. Our disposition has been decidedly affected. One is not radical nor fanatical but moderation is evidenced in his demeanor. His temperament has been changed from serving the law of sin to crying for and desiring the law of the Spirit in Christ which is the law of LOVE.

Time and space forbids us writing our thoughts on the chains of the law, love, steps of a good man, growth in grace, deliverance, and other GOLDEN CHAINS OF DIVINE TRUTH that have so flooded my mind for the past few weeks. I trust God will bless the reader with GOLDEN CHAINS OF SPIRITUAL THOUGHTS to meditate sweetly upon His wonderful care for you.

— E. J. L.

N. B. I have had several requests to compile my writings and publish in book form. I plan to do so when I have had sufficient requests to justify. E. J. L.

"THERE IS A SIN UNTO DEATH: I DO NOT SAY THAT HE SHALL PRAY FOR IT."

(I John 5:16)

We have a request from a reader for explanation of I John 5:13-21, who said that she is disturbed concerning it. She did not mention just which part was disturbing her, but we suspect that it is, "There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it."

We are glad to give such thoughts as we have concerning this for the consideration of all who are interested. In doing so, we call attention to that which is evident: that no teaching or doctrine of the Scriptures is contradictory, either when written by one writer or another. Anything which may seem at varience with the expression of another writer, can seem to be only because of our lack of understanding. For it is quite contrary to the character of the Holy Ghost to teach one person one thing, and another something different. If there were "uncertain sounds" given by those who have "the keys of the kingdom," who "sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel," (Luke 22:29) where would be the "earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints."

In the subject before us, it is likely that some have thought that the Apostle was teaching that some of the brethren (for John says, if a man see his BROTHER sin) might be so far carried away in sin that they would bring themselves outside of the redemption of Christ, — and therefore would sin unto death. This, if true, would plainly be a "falling from grace," — a being lost after being saved. It is needless to say, however, that there is not one bit of evidence in all the scriptures to support such a thought. Rather, it is plainly taught that all that the Father gave unto Christ should come unto him, and that they should in no wise be cast out, but should be raised up again at the last day. (John 6:37)

We are, therefore, to particularly notice what John was saying in the matter before us. In the 13th verse, John said, "These things have I written unto you THAT BELIEVE on the name of the Son of God: that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." He had just affirmed that, "It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." And that there are three that bear record in heaven: the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost; and that there are three that bear witness in earth: the Spirit, and the water, and the blood. And also (which is so important to each of us) that, "He that BELIEVETH on the Son of God hath THE WITNESS in himself, but he that believeth not God hath made him a liar, for he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son: and this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and

this life is in the Son."

So, John was writing to those who had the witness in themselves — to those who had the Son, and consequently had life. He was confirming their faith that they had eternal life in the Son of God; and confirming their confidence in God, that if they asked of Him anything according to His will, they were heard. (14th verse)

There is a closeness, a fellowship, a kinship, and a bearing of each other's burdens, among those who have the witness in themselves that is unlike anything else in all the world. They are one in Christ — they have such a unity that whatever is joy to one is joy to the other; and whatever is sorrow to one is sorrow to the other. Each one knows of the warfare of the other, and that each are sinners in the flesh. Each one knows that with the mind they serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin. (Romans 7:25). There is, consequently, a bearing with and a praying for each other, that the Lord may forgive when they are led away of the lusts of the flesh. There is an exhorting: "Lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today, lest any of you be heardened through the deceitfulness of sin," as is mentioned by the Apostle Paul.

What a wonderful experience it is to be given to pray for ourselves and others! What a joy it is to behold one converted from the error of his way (James 5:20) with the earnest desire of forgivness of God, and of the brethren! When such is the case, the Apostle makes mention of the spirit which is given the brethren when he said to the Galatians, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." And also to the Hebrews, "Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but rather let it be healed."

But on the other hand, have not many of us had the painful experience of seeing some in whom we have had every confidence that they were subjects of grace — with whom we walked in fellowship in the Lord, who are turned aside after things which cannot be tolerated in the walk of those who are members of the church; and with whom exhortation and counsel fall upon deaf ears and hardened hearts. What else is such by a sin unto death which brethren cannot pray for!

Paul found fornication among the Corinthians, and instructed them: "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." And again wrote to the Corinthians, "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called A BROTHER be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no NOT TO EAT. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? Do not ye judge them THAT ARE WITHIN? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore PUT AWAY from among you that wicked person." (I Corinthians, 5th chapter). To Timothy he wrote, ". . . . which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme."

What we have written above is precisely what we understand John to be saying in the subject before us. That is, if a brother sinned a sin not unto death (concerning which a godly sorrow and repentance was manifest) the brethren having confidence that God hears their petitions, ask of God and the offender is given life (forgivness); forgivness not only of the brethren, but in his own consciousness of the mercy of God. And

this is in such a way that there is a continuation of love and fellowship, and a continued walking together. On the other hand, there are sins which are unto death, which John says, "I do not say that he shall pray for it." Which means that there are sins which are of such gravity, and sometimes notorious, and in which there is a continuation, coupled with a haughty and unbrotherly spirit, so that brethren just cannot find in their hearts to pray. The only thing then that is in order is to "put away from you that wicked person."

To us, there is no intimation that such an one was once of the family of God, but now, becausing of sinning a sin which is unto death, they are no longer of that family. This, if it were possible, would be contrary to all revelation of grace, mercy and long suffering of God; and would say that some for whom Christ died would not be saved. The facts are that such sinners, being turned over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, as the Apostle expressed it, shall receive the judgment of God in whatever way He is pleased to give it; yet he is not in any sense turned away from the eternal life which he has in Christ. This, of course, applies to those who are chosen in Christ Jesus; should any have come into the church who did not belong there at all, it is a very different matter.

We might say that such as are turned over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh may be, and often are, in the mercy of God brought to godly sorrow and repentance, so that they are restored to the fellowship and privileges of the church. And we give it as our experience that if we once have fellowship for a person, this fellowship is never lost as it pertains to the hope of eternal life; but is lost only as it pertains to a walking together in church ordinances, etc.

These are serious and important matters in the churches, and we trust that the Lord may be pleased to lead and direct us in all things.

J. D. W.

THESE THINGS CANNOT BE FORGOTTEN

In this issue we begin publication (and concluded in the next) of an article on the "History of Obion Association," in Tennessee, by Brother John Franklin Lax, 64 West Randolph Street, Chicago, Illinois. This was written, we observe, primarily for the purpose of distinguishing between the Primitive Baptists and the Missionary Baptists, which distinction was not made in an article appearing in a Henry County, Tennessee, paper.

We feel that publication of this article will prove interesting to brethren in general, since there are many things mentioned which may not be generally known—but which are pertinent in the history of Primitive Baptists.

At this late date (as it has been in the past), it is easy for some to minimize the importance of events, and departures from doctrine and practices, which impelled declaration against such things by those who have remained faithful in the old and original order of things. There are many (especially among those not designated Primitive or Old School, as well as among some who designate themselves as such) who are not at all informed as to the events, and changes in doctrine and practices, which have led to separations.

We are not disposed to revive these matters, except to state that it is our position and contention that departure from Bibical doctrine and order, and the addition of those things which are the result of the doctrines of men, cannot be substantiated as being of divine origin; and consequently have no legitimate place in a church which is apostolic.

We do desire, however, to say to all who claim the name of Primitive or Old School Baptists, that this name was given to (and assumed by) those who stood in opposition to the departures of many who were desirous of being like other people in doctrine and practice, both before and after the beginning of the year eighteen hundred; and that this name

should designate those today who are yet continuing in the doctrine and order of those who were first designated Primitive or Old School, since the doctrine and order of those who were thus designated was clearly understood and is a matter of record in their writings.

It is the privilege and duty of each one of us to take heed in the matter; and it is important since the Apostle clearly said, "According to the grace of God which is given me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he built thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."

— J. D. W.

The opinions and doings of men are of no value unless motivated by the Spirit of Truth; if otherwise, they "darken counsel by words without knowledge".

WE QUOTE:

"It is certainly no less important that the children of God should walk worthy of their high and holy calling, than that they should hold sound and scriptural views of the doctrine of the gospel." Elder Gilbert Beebe.

"All that we are able to perform acceptable to God is by the power of the new man working in us to will and to do of God's good pleasure." Elder R. C. Leachman.

"He is the ablest minister who is soundest in doctrine, deepest in experience, and most godly in practice: for he preaches with heart, tongue and feet." **J. C. Philpott in, Meditations.**

"I often seem to know what the scriptures teach, both of sin and grace, as if I knew them not: so faint and languid are my perceptions. I often seem to think and talk of sin without any sorrow; and of grace without any joy." John Newton.

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303 E. 20th St.
Jasper, Ala.

Dear Eld. Spangler and Associates:

Please find inclosed check for renewal subscription for one year. I hope never to be without our good paper for as long as I live. There is such a feast of fat things in every issue that I read and re-read every one of them. I love Eld. Griffin's writings just as much as I do his preaching, and he is certainly one who is not afraid to declare the whole council.

May God bless all of you to continue in your work, for the papers that stand for the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus mean so much to those of us who are not able to attend our meetings as we once could. It is "Good News from a Far Country" and certainly something that can't be taken away from us by the world.

A Sister in Hope,
Mrs. W. A. Bearden
Auburn, Washington

OBION ASSOCIATION TRACES ITS HISTORY TO EARLY 1700's

By John Franklin Lax

The Parisian
Paris, Tennessee
Dear Editor:

The article in the August 27, 1953 edition of the Parisian, entitled, "Union Baptist Church Filled as 100th Anniversary is Observed Last Sunday," was very interesting, and you are to be congratulated for showing these old landmarks of the county. I do not know who wrote the article. However, there appears one statement in it that might be misleading to some of the readers and confuse some of the old timers as to the Obion Association, in that it states, "The church soon after organizing petitioned the Obion Association of Primitive Baptist for membership and was received. The one hundred twenty-fourth annual session of that association was held with Union

church."

The Obion Association held its 124th session at the Hephzibah church, 3 miles northeast of the Y at the Mouth-of-Sandy, Paris Landing Bridge toward Murray, Ky., the 3rd Sunday in October 1952, and will hold its next regular convening meeting at Beaver Dam church, about 12 miles northeast of Paris, turning north off the Austin-Peay highway at Simmons (Noble) Store on October 16, 17 and 18, 1953. Am inclosing a copy of the last minutes of that association.

I had the privilege of speaking at the Centennial of that association held at Hephzibah church in October 1928, on the History of that association, its churches, and of the Baptist generally. Elder Wyatt from Salem, N. C. came as guest speaker, with letters from his association; Elder Chester from Soldiers Creek, and many others were there from sister associations. If I am not deceived, there are but three churches left in the Obion association; Walnut Fork, near Cottage Grove, R. L. Veazey, Sr., Clerk; Beaver Dam in the Delno community, before mentioned, J. E. Lemons, Clerk; and Hephzibah, above mentioned, Gentry Townley, Paris, Clerk. There was a church at Puryear, but I do not know if it still exists. R. L. Veazey is also clerk of the Obion Association. I do seem to recall that Union church was at one time a member of that association, but the more than 50 years I have attended, I do not recall their messengers being present.

In order to put records straight I will give a little of the History of the Primitive Baptist, as it developed, and as it affected the Obion association. As pointed out in Benedict's History of the Baptist, the early history was preserved during the dark ages in the trials for heresy, which reached high in continental Europe. These folks were never Protestants, but instead, came up from the Greek side, and were labeled Anabaptist; Pedobaptist; Waldenses; ets. They accepted the King James version of the Bible, and when Luther and Henry VIII broke with the Roman church, these heretics enlisted their forces on the Protestant's side, but were later persecuted by the Protestants. Both Wales and Bohemia were noted for their heretics, and England and Bohemia were in good graces in those days, so that the Bohemian Brethren had a great influence on England but in England and Early America these heretics were persecuted for heresy and witchcraft. No associations existed in these early days and there was some confusion as to their doctrines at times. Milton, the poet, was of this faith, and tended to crystalize some of their doctrine in his writing.

The oldest Primitive Baptist church in America was founded in Wales in 1703, and these Welch folk, when they set up their church known as the "Welch Tract church," found that other Baptist were here long before them. Roger Williams and Anne Hutchins and their followers left their trail of followers, but early there were differences arising on doctrinalism. Both Benedict and Hassel, in their histories, detail these breaks and refer back to Mirrors Martyrs, and the trials for heresy in showing these confusions. The Philadelphia Confession of Faith was designed to overcome this confusion. Many breaks had come such as the Mennonities, etc., and these articles of Faith did bring about some unity, but then the Church of Christ broke away and others after the beginning of the associations.

While I have no clear history of the associations, they began forming and their records go back to the early 1700. I am led to believe they developed from the old Welch clans. The Baptist had spread in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, but the Welch predominated in that faith during this period. In the British Empire the associations grew so rapidly that they later held a general assembly. The one thing that was notable about the associations was that they not only established a pattern, but created fellowship between the churches, just as the church had created between its members. These associations took root in America long before the American revolution about the middle of the 1700's. While many of the liberals of both Europe and America had found refuge among these people, such persons as Spinoza and Tom Paine, they were not of that faith, but Paine loved these people and patterned much of his book "Common Sense" after them. A Democratic Convention, today, is patterned in detail after their association, except instead of using the term "moderator" they designate him "chairman," and the term "messenger" they designate as "delegate."

The whole way of life and thinking of these people differ from the Protestant world. There are no "Reverends" among their set. The Elders and Deacons are the servants. All power is in the members, or demos, not only to chose their ministers, but to receive new members or discipline them. Joining the church was no soul saving process, but like "Adoption," becoming a member of the household of faith; one of the church family. A person who asked to be received, joins by what they term "experience," and must state their experience in open church so that the other members of the church family may decide therefrom if he is a child to be received by them, and is of their faith. If he is received, each gives him the right hand of fellowship, endorsing him as one of the family.

(To Be Concluded)

OBITUARIES

SISTER MERAB WORRELL PARKER

Many hearts filled with deep sorrow when they learned of the passing of our much beloved sister, Merab Worrell Parker, who died at her home at Delight, Maryland, February 9, 1954. To many of us she was known as "Mother Parker"; for surely she was a "mother in Israel." Her home was always open to all those who came her way, especially the Primitive Baptists, for she lived and died in the faith once delivered to the saints. She loved to talk of the wonderful works of grace which God hath wrought in the hearts of his loved ones. She believed in the resurrection of the body of the saints and the immortality of the soul. She was looking for that day when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. This promise was sweet to her. She used to say, "Give me the flowers while I am living"; and if ever a child of grace received flowers while they lived, surely it was "Mother Parker," not only from those of like precious faith, but from all who were blessed to know her, for she was kind and lovely to everybody who came her way. She was blessed with the Spirit to "look over all for good, and not for evil." Her home was a haven of rest as far as this world is concerned, as there was no better place to visit. She loved everybody and always had a kind word for every one; yet she was firm in the doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, having no fellowship with the works of darkness, but rather reproved them.

Sister Parker was confined to her room for the past seven years. She would have been eighty-eight years old if she had lived until the 29th of May. She was born in Reistertown, Maryland, May 29, 1866. Her maiden name was Merab Keturah Worrell. She was married to Brother Alfred Parker in 1889. Five children were born of this union: Sister Asenath (now Mrs. Thomas Small); Barbara, who passed away about nine years ago; Sister Evelyn (now Mrs. James Mason, of Motorul, Virginia); Sister Emma, as she is known by the Primitive Baptists, and Thomas, who lives at the home.

Brother Alfred Parker died April 18, 1939, and, had he lived one more week, they would have celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary. The funeral services for Sister Parker were held at her late home on February 12th, by her pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows and Elder John D. Wood. The burial was in the church cemetery at Black Rock Church, Butler, Maryland. There were many floral offerings, reflecting the high esteem in which "Mother Parker" was held by her many friends. During her long illness she manifested much patience and always seemed reconciled to God's will. She was tenderly cared for by her son Thomas, and her two daughters Sisters Emma and Asenath who ministered to their dear mother's every need with thoughtful, loving care, sparing nothing in the way of personal sacrifice that would contribute to their mother's comfort.

Sister Parker and her husband, were baptized into the fellowship of Ebenezer Church, Baltimore, Maryland, August 26, 1906, by the late Elder Joshua T. Rowe and were among its most faithful members. She loved the assembling together of the saints and freely and lovingly gave of her substance to the cause of the church and to minister to the needs of the brethren. He home was a real home for the Primitive Baptists and friends. It was the writer's privilege for some time to conduct services at her home and to observe her face light up at hearing the preached word.

Besides her children already named, she also leaves several grand children to mourn their loss. Yet we all can say that their loss is her eternal gain, for she is now in the Paradise of God with her Saviour and Redeemer, never to suffer pain in her body again. The church of her membership is made poorer because of "Mother Parker's" passing, but her Christian life, strong character, and deeds of kindness linger in sweet recollection of all the pleasant experiences of the past. We hope to meet her on the "sunny banks of sweet deliverance."

(Elder) Arnold H. Bellows

MRS. G. W. McLEMORE

This sketch is written as our last tribute of respect to our departed sister, Mrs. G. W. McLemore, of Shreveport, Louisiana, who died March 25, 1954.

Our limited information is that Sister McLemore was a native of Mississippi, of the vicinity of Meridan; and was given a sweet hope in the Lord at an early age, and joined the church at Old Antioch, near Newton, Miss. She moved to the vicinity of Fryburg, Louisiana, many years ago, and had her membership with Mt. Olive Church in the Louisiana Association. I do not recall having met her, but from the information of those who knew her, she was a consistent member and had the love and fellowship of the Lord's people. The Lord blessed her to live here in this world of sin and sorrow, with all its sufferings, for the lengthy period of ninety-three years; but now her spirit has returned to God who gave it, and her body lies in the silent tomb, awaiting

the coming of the Lord.

Sister McLemore is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Georgia Viers, Fryburg, La., and Mrs. Mae Pollock, Alexander, La.; also thirty-seven grand-children, thirty-eight great grand-children and five great great grand-children, and many other relatives.

The writer conducted grave side funeral service at the Mt. Olive Cemetery in the presence of a large and attentive congregation; after which she was laid to rest in this old and beautiful cemetery.

May the Lord bless, comfort and uphold all those who mourn, is my prayer, I trust, for Christ's sake. Your unworthy brother.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

MRS. M. GERTRUDE PYATT

"The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?" (Psalm 27:1)

God in his infinite wisdom saw fit to call our dear wife and mother, M. Gertrude Pyatt, from our midst on March 26, 1954. Born September 11, 1882, in rural Hunterdon County, New Jersey, she was the daughter of Ephriam R. and Cornelia Fox Myers; and had been married to Edward U. Pyatt for fifty-two years.

Mother was baptized July 13, 1930, by Elder H. C. Ker, and had served as Clerk of the Kingwood Church since November, 1949. A firm believer in the doctrine of Salvation by grace, she remained steadfast in her faith until the end. A great void is left in our lives by her passing, but memories of her generosity and warm heartedness are very sweet.

She is survived by her husband, Edward U. Pyatt, Flemington, N. J., and four daughters: Mrs. L. C. Webb, Scotch Plains, N. J.; Mrs. B. N. Carter and Mrs. Elizabeth Rippert, Flemington, N. J.; and Mrs. M. R. Darago, Whitehouse Station, N. J.; also seven grand-children, and four great grand-children, and a sister, Mrs. Martha Dean, Trenton, N. J., and a brother, C. R. Myers, Philadelphia, Pa.

Funeral services were conducted in the Holcombe Funeral Home, Flemington, by Elder Harold M. Bennett, Mardella Springs, Maryland. The body was laid to rest in Prospect Hill Cemetery, Flemington, on March 29, 1954.

"O happy soul, who safely past,
Thy weary warfare here;
Arrived at Jesus' feet at last,
And ended all thy care!

No more shall sickness break thy rest,
Or pain create thee smart;
No more shall doubts disturb thy breast,
Or sin afflict thine heart.

Delightful concord always reigns
In the fair realms above!
There hymns are sung in rapt'rous strains,
With ceaseless joy and love!"

Her daughter,
Abbie Pyatt Webb

JOHN P. MURPHY

This sketch is in memory of our beloved brother, John P. Murphy, of ElDorado, Arkansas, who passed away in a local hospital from a heart attack. He was born near Lisborn, Arkansas, February 6, 1875, and died March 31, 1954; and was the son of George and Sarah Cook Murphy. He was a retired business man since 1941, and had lived all his life in Union County and ElDorado, Arkansas, and was well and favorably known throughout this vicinity.

Brother Murphy was blessed with a sweet and bright evidence of a hope in God through the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, and was a well beloved member of Rehoboth Primitive Baptist Church, near ElDorado, for four or five years. He was always in his seat when he was able to come, being brought by some of his daughters, where he manifested a deep interest in the doctrine of God our Saviour. Dear bereaved ones, I would comfort you with the evidence of his faith and love of God. So weep not as those who have no hope, but let us look forward to that time when he shall live again beyond all trials and afflictions; when heaven, and all that it means, will be his, together with all the redeemed throng.

Brother Murphy lost his dear wife and companion several years ago, and made his home among his children since that time. He is survived by five daughters: Mrs. Frank Reed, and Mrs. Homer Bird, of ElDorado, Arkansas; Mrs. Nannie Harrell, Dallas, Texas; Mrs. Lee Rian, Urbana, Arkansas; and Mrs. C. H. Weeks, Shreveport, Lousiana. He is survived also by one sister, Mrs. Daisy Beltz, Leesville, Lousiana; and eleven grandchildren and fifteen great grand-children, and many other relatives. We believe our loss is his eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Sam C. Reeves and the writer, at the Funeral Chapel of Rumph Funeral Home; and the body was laid to rest in the Woodlawn Cemetery, till the Lord comes again. Eight of his grand sons acted as pall bearers. The large congregation and the many florial offerings gave evidence of the great love and respect in which he was held.

May the Lord bless and comfort those who mourn, and cause you to look yonder to the time when the Lord shall say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 122 DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1954 No. 8

P. O. Box 51 Basset, Va.
June 5, 1954

Dear Brethren in Christ:

We have been reading the good letter by Sister McDaniel in last issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and agree with her in that, "Things of our experience should be shared with others of like precious faith." However in this I have been negligent until now in my eighty-seventh year I will endeavor to set forth some of what I hope has been the dealings of the Lord with me, and my belief in the way of life and salvation.

My vision is impaired to the extend that I can no longer see to write, but as I dictate to another my mind goes back to a time when on the sick-bed of affliction I visioned myself in line with a throng ascending up to the top of a gaping mountain which was as a horrible, burning hell inside. As each one would come to this fiery brink they would be siezed by devils and cast headlong into its awful depth.

When it came my time to be siezed upon I cried piteously unto the Lord and he heard me. Immediately I was delivered across this abyss onto a peaceful shore where everything seemed to be joy and happiness. My burden of sin and fear of the Devil was gone never to return again. I seemed to be gliding along as light as a feather without any effort on my part, until I came into the presence of Jesus. He was most lovely to behold with a heavenly smile on his serene face. There was a little child in his arms and other children about his feet. When I approached him he beckoned to me.

This was many years ago, but I am still able to shed tears of rejoicing when given to think upon it. I have experienced much sorrow and many afflictions in this life; having borne thirteen children and have been a widow thirty-nine years. But the Lord has been merciful unto me and I can truthfully say with the Psalmist David, "Surely goodness and mercy has followed me all the days of my life", and my hope is, that I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

The only religion that I know anything about is a heart-felt religion. Unless one comes telling of the work of grace wrought in their heart by the power of God, I have no fellowship for them.

The work of God in the heart of a sinner is comprehended in the following verse of a song:

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear
And grace my fears relieved:
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed.

I have never felt to boast of my hope, but have craved more evidence. However the Primitive Baptists received me into their fellowship many years ago and I have lived peaceable and happily with them ever since. They are the dearest people on earth to me; and as Ruth said, "Let thy people be my people and thy God my God." I realize that my journey on this earth is about complete and I too must go the way of all earth. But as my frail body lies molding in the clay my spirit shall be at rest in the sweet Paradise of God, awaiting the summons from on high. When King Jesus descends from heaven bringing all the holy angels with him, I hope to

be in that number who shall come forth, but with a glorified body like unto that of my Saviour; then to enter into that celestial city to enjoy all the grandeur of Heaven and immortal glory with the Saints of every generation.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Bettie Bryant

Bastrop, Lousiana

Dear Household of Faith:

If one so puny as I may have his say, here I am.

I remember my dear mother reading from the good old Signs of the Times sixty-five to seventy years ago. Its tenets and doctrine were sacred to me then, and I feel the same is sacred to me today; for I believe that the doctrine of free grace will stand the test of all ages. But let us not try to stretch this doctrine by adding to or taking away that which is already laid.

We stand in awe and wonder at some of the practices of our people today. When man through his egotism begins something new in the church that smacks of Armenianism, I feel he is treading on dangerous ground. Let us search the Scriptures and ascertain full authority for all we do and practice. We know that there must be a falling away — and we see the scattering of the sheep; but let us remember they are sheep, and not goats. Also let us remember the woe that is pronounced upon those who do the scattering.

I feel that the Signs has brought God-sent messages to me: especially the one republished in the February issue by Elder H. H. Lefferts. I had been visited by a dream which had me somewhat beset. My dream was in three parts, and its revelation was in three parts. Brother Lefferts' article seemed to complete the third or last revelation to my dream.

I feel that God sends ministering spirits to his children in their dire distresses. To me, this is the coming and going of the angels, — it is Christ unto Christ; He being the mediator between God and man, it is his promise to usward in the sixth and seventh troubles. Oh, how we do enjoy reading after and to such Elders as H. O. Nash, W. O. Beene, and others, when lifted up. They may preach over the heads of some, but it is the real meat of the Word — the real honey in the comb, that we desire. May we have more of such.

Should this find its way into the waste basket, I shall not be peeved, since I feel to be one of the greatest of all sinners.

Your brother in hope,
Van B. Morgan, Sr.

Evandsville, Indiana

Elder D. L. Clark,

Dear Brother Clark:

Your letter is at hand, and I was glad to receive it; but I know, Oh, so little pertaining to spiritual things that I am almost afraid to try to write. But knowing you will consider my weakness, I will try to answer your questions, if God will refresh my mind with the Spirit that I may speak that which is truth.

Let's use the language of the Psalmist of old: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?" With our conception of the vastness of the universe today, and the hope we have of a vaster and grander realm than this, we are many times made to ask the same question as the Psalmist in the above quotation. When we consider the universe and the vastness of it, it all gives evidence of such infinite wisdom that our minds are filled with awe; and we are made to bow in wonder before so great an architect. But when we are made to realize that a single atom of substance is built

on the same plan as a solar system, then we begin to realize that there is a design in all creation. And the universe and all creation testify to the existence of one God. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Surely unless God was one, the world (or universe) could not have been created, and preserved as it is today; for it takes an infinite mind to create.

I know that some men today (some wantonly perhaps, and many through ignorance) conceive of many gods; but the universe, or the nature of the universe itself, testifies of the truth that there is one God, for by one mind creation was perfected and is preserved. God, whose inmost being is Love, created all things unto himself that his glory might be manifested. He revealed himself to Moses in the flaming bush, and when Moses would know his name, he told Moses: I AM THAT I AM; tell Israel that I Am has sent thee.

Dear Brother, are there not sweet evidences and consolation, when we are bowed in grief, to think that the God of love is mindful of us in that he visits us in seasons; for I fear it would be harmful should we be permitted to bask in his continual presence. Many times I have wet my pillow with tears when He had (seemingly) withdrawn himself from me; but my hope is that it was for my good, and for His glory. God is all wise and all powerful, everywhere present. He was before time. He is: He always will be. He is infinite because he is eternal; and in wisdom he knows the path of every star, and causes each to travel in its own orbit; and He knows the thoughts of every human mind, and the path we must tread. He is unconditional. He fills all time and space. No man has the right to say, Why hast thou made me thus? But there is a glorious crown of righteousness for those who endure to the end.

Yours in sweet fellowship,
Wade Y. Chandler

Dutton, Ontario.
November 11, 1953.

Dear Brother and Sister Merigold,

I will try to reply to your request that I write and explain I Peter 4:6, "For this cause was the Gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." You are not the first person, nor will you be the last, who has found this Scripture rather perplexing. It, like most Scripture, should not be considered by itself, but in connection with the context. Peter tells us that the Spirit of Christ was in the prophets, testifying beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow, (I Peter 1:11) and these are the dead spoken of in our text. We will, in speaking of the context, confine ourselves to a portion of chapter 3 to verse 6 of chapter 4. In chapter 3:18, Jesus is said to have been put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, by which, that is, by the Spirit, He went and preached to the spirits in prison. Some have misconstrued this to mean that while Jesus was dead, His Spirit went to hell and preached to those who had been long dead. Others have built up an imaginary place called purgatory where those who have been good, need to still be spiritually cleansed. Of course there is no such place, for all of God's children were perfected for ever by the offering of His only begotten Son. Jesus' Spirit did not go down into any place that man may, in his ignorance of the truth, imagine, but He cried "Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit." He and the dying thief, that very day, both went to Paradise, which is Heaven. Nor does this Scripture mean those who had died and were in hell, for verse twenty of Chapter three tells who and where they were. They were those under condemnation of the law, held as prisoners of hope before the flood, and the Spirit of Christ in Noah, who is declared to be a preacher of righteousness, while the ark was a preparing, preached Jesus, just as His Spirit spoke through all the

prophets, telling of His suffering and glory.

Peter perhaps mentions those at the time of the flood, to bring to the reader's mind the subject of baptism. While Noah built, some laughed and scoffed, yet we are sure there were those who heard the voice of the Son of God, and believed the things that Noah declared. Verse 20 speaks of a period of time during the building of the Ark in which God was long-suffering. Peter, in his second epistle, speaks of God's long-suffering to usward, during this Gospel dispensation, not willing that any (that have obtained like precious faith, 2 Peter 1: 1.) should perish, but that all should come to repentance. It was in the flesh that men sinned, therefore they are now, and were then, judged in the flesh, and brought in guilty before God. The Spirit of God led holy men of old, and gave them such instruction that they, by faith, not having received the promises, but seeing them afar off, were persuaded of them and embraced them, "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ GREATER RICHES than the treasures in Egypt."

It was this same blessed Spirit that preached Christ to the dying thief, convincing him of his guilt, and of the greatness of such a Saviour, even though, to the natural eyes of the dying thief, Jesus hung on the cross a spectacle of woe.

We cannot therefore approach our text in verse six of Chapter four with any other thought than this, that all the saints that have died from Adam until now, have had Christ preached unto them by His Spirit, for Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. Some twist this Scripture, changing the meaning by putting "is" in the place of "was". It reads "for this cause 'was' the gospel preached to them that are dead." They would put "for this cause "is" the gospel preached to them that are dead," implying that the gospel should be preached to dead sinners, who know not anything. The dead in trespasses and sins, who cannot see or hear or speak, are not here under consideration, but those who had died in the faith, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit. One who was judged said "Behold, I am vile." Another said rottenness entered into his bones. As we read Peter's epistle, we can see that he is preaching Jesus as the One who opens the prison to them that are bound. Isaiah 61:1. He would declare that those who are dead, from our first parent until now, who heard His voice, to whom the Word of the Lord came, had a spiritual walk. They suffered in the flesh in measure, according to their relation to Christ Jesus, and were moved by the Spirit of Christ to testify of His sufferings. The wonder of all this is great when we read of their travail in groans and pain, (Romans 8:22) and we are convinced that they would have known nothing at all of this travailing together in pain, had not the Spirit that quickened our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, gone and preached unto them in their captivity.

I do not feel that I can close this letter without using Peter's words. "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind." Let us desire henceforth to live according to the revealed will of God which He hath revealed by His Son. (Hebrews 1:1-2) "For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought THE WILL OF THE GENTILES, (notice here carefully that Peter does not say the will of God, but the will of the Gentiles) when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings and abominable idolatries: wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you. (I. Peter 4:3-4) When one has been truly convinced of sin by the blessed Spirit, those sensual things become distasteful, and one with a tender conscience will dread them as a

burnt child will dread the fire. If one is in love with such things and is running after, instead of away, from them, if he is a church member, he ought to be disciplined. By being baptized, he has confessed himself dead to the world. He is like a dog turning to his own vomit. A person ought not to be received as a candidate for baptism who still loves to do the will of the Gentiles. If the Spirit, that wrought in Jesus when it raised Him from the dead, has convinced him of his sins, the knowledge imparted would make him desire to run from, instead of running after, such things. Naturally it would seem a terrible thing to bury a live person, but how many have been buried in water who have shown by their after walk that they were not dead to the world?

Peter says eight souls were saved by water, they had been convinced of the wickedness of the world that then was. As they stepped into the ark, they stepped out of that world, and it was no more to be their home as it once was. The Spirit that taught them this, sustained them in the ark and shut them in. A final separation that perished. John Bunyan, when he found a few such folks at Bedford, said "They discoursed of their own wretchedness of heart, and of their unbelief: and did contemn, slight and abhor their own righteousness, as filthy and insufficient to do them any good, and methought they spake as if joy did make them speak; they spake with such pleasantness of Scripture language and with such appearance of grace in all they said, that they were to me, as if they had found another world; AS IF THEY WERE PEOPLE THAT DWELT ALONE, AND WERE NOT TO BE RECKONED AMONGST THEIR NEIGHBOURS."

Almighty God raised them above the waters that welled up from beneath and the rain that came from above. The Ark was their preservation, by the mercy of God, from the flood that destroyed the world. Noah had good reason to sacrifice of all the clean beasts and fowl, for as he looked upon that Ark, he could see how it had endured the flood for them. It is Christ that must sustain us in making a good confession in baptism, which should be an outward and visible evidence of an inward and spiritual grace. Baptism is a solemn separation from the world, just as surely as when a person is lowered into his grave, he is cut off completely from the world he once lived in, and is gone to another world. Here we all have reason to stand and question ourselves and ask where we really belong. Paul says "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a LIVING sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." This, if we are enabled to do, will be an answer of a good conscience towards God, just as baptism is declared to be.

Written with a sweet remembrance of our fellowship in the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Elder) George Ruston

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124 South B Street,
Madera, California.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I wish very much to tell you and all the dear people who have been so wonderfully blessed to have a part in the Signs of the Times, how much I enjoy it. I feel it a great privilege, as well as a great blessing, to have it come into my home. I read every line of it — some in sorrow and some in pleasure, for I know so many of the dear ones that it makes me feel that I have had a heart to heart talk with the dear people of the Old Baptist faith. The time seems so long to me from one year to the next; for once a year is as often as I can make the trip around to a few of the dear humble homes, and go to their church with them. The more I read my bible and the dear Elder's letters to the Signs, I see the close connection and proof of the real doctrine that Paul preached; also, the Old Baptists give proof of the one church that Christ spoke of when he told Peter that, "Upon this rock I will

build my church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." (Matthew 16:17-18).

Christ did not mean that Peter was the Rock, as so many think. Christ is the Rock, the corner stone and the foundation of the one and only church, if I have been made to see and understand it right. He is the way, the truth and the light —no one enters the heavenly Father's house, the one church, only by Christ; and that is through faith in Christ, by the grace of our Lord, who does all things well. The one church does not mean some building. To me, it means a spiritual body, or God chosen people, who will be the Bride of Christ. If the word of truth be rightly divided, we are made to see who is the Rock and who is the Church.

If I have been given to see or understand this deep subject, it has been through Christ; for of myself I am nothing: I am the chief of sinners, the least of the least, if I be one at all. I have been given a little hope in Christ our great Redeemer, if I have any hope at all. I have seen things which seem to be so clear in my mind, but am not able to put it in writing, it is so deep. But I love to listen to the dear elders preach it; and I love to read their writings. This gives me comfort, for there has to be something to make us poor sinners love it; for we would be into things not good, and love things that have no good in them, instead of Christ and his people. There is something about the Old Baptists that makes me dearly love them and the word of truth I believe they preach.

If you think this would be of comfort to any one, and fit for the Signs, you may publish; if not, please cast it aside. I only hope to be given to do what is pleasing to our dear Lord — if I be wrong in trying to write my heart feelings, please forgive me. I wish to thank you for the copy of the Signs; and for Elder T. R. Jefferson's name and address. I wrote him at once, and he answered at once; and gave me the location of the churches. The nearest one is one hundred miles from me, and since I have to work on Sundays, I can't get back home in time for work. So I will just have to depend on the Signs of the Times for my comforting words. When you dear elders and friends are at the throne of grace, if not asking too much, please remember this sinner in your prayers. I hope to be a sister in Christ, with love to all. I hope to be bound in love with all, and pray for the light and the way that lead to the heavenly Father's house. I feel unworthy to be called a sister in Christ, but hope to be.

Mrs. Craig Cunningham.

2015 Shortal Drive,
Dallas 17, Texas

Dear Brethren:

Enclosed you will find money order for $5.00 to renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times, the dear old family paper I love so much. I am past eighty years of age and live alone, so you may know how much I enjoy the dear old paper. I also read the Old Faith Contender, which subscription was given me by a dear old brother in the Lord. I love him dearly, as I do all of the dear brothers and sisters: How I do love to meet with them and hear the gospel of our dear Redeemer proclaimed in its strength and beauty; but I can't go often on account of my feeble health and the distance to my church. I try to be reconciled to my Father's will, and I believe it is his will, or he would change it.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Mrs. Sallie Neel Luce

Bomartin, Texas.
R. F. D. I.,

Dear Editors:

I have changed my address and will ask you to change it so the Signs will come to the above.

I enjoy reading the Signs of the Times very much, for it is the only true gospel, or good news, to my heart and mind, if I am not deceived through the weakness on my vile body. I am made

to wonder whether I am one of the number: I belong to no church, and never have; though I have gone to many different churches, I just can't believe their doctrine. I seem to enjoy the Old Baptist doctrine, for I believe it is the only truth that is spoken, and that it is sent down from God the Father, and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, unto man. There are no absoluters in this part of the country, so I must get my food through the reading of the Bible and the Signs, as the Lord sees fit to reveal the light to me. I am asking you brethren to pray for me a poor sinner — if saved, it is by the grace of God.

You brethren speak of dreams, so does the Bible; and I believe the Lord visits you in dreams, so I am asking someone to interpret a dream I had about thirty years ago, for it has often bothered me. My dream was: I was traveling West on foot. I met a man going East with a herd of sheep, and a donkey with a heavy load on his back. There were ten or twelve sheep some distance from him; so he called them — and I repeated his call, and they came running up to me, looked me over, then left and went on to the flock. Then I awoke; then whether a vision or I fell asleep again, I do not know, but I saw the Lord Jesus standing in the eastern part of heaven; he had the Bible in his hand, and a sheep walked up to his left side and looked up at him. Then the Lord opened the Bible and looked down at me: he did not read any scripture, or say a word. So that is the shape that I am left in until this day. I am living in hope that I am one of those sheep, and that the Lord will give me more and more of his light, and not leave me to sleep in darkness of his wonderful purposes.

Just an old sinner, living in hope,
C. L. Ely

Black Springs, Arkansas

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Our subscription expired in November; please forgive our delay in renewing. We love the paper more than any religious paper we ever read; it gives us more comfort spiritually than anything outside of the Bible. My father took the Signs when I was a little girl. His name was M. C. Cox; and after he passed away. my mother continued to subscribe until she passed away in September, 1937. Then my oldest brother, J. L. Cox subscribed; and when he left for California a few years back, he left the Signs in our care; and we have been taking it for several years. So we have been reading it a long time.

We heard Elder W. W. Taylor preach the first predestination sermon we ever heard, at Dallas, Texas, May 7, 1950, at the church called Saints Rest. We liked it so much that we would gladly welcome some of your kind to preach for us in our community. We hope the Lord will put it into your hearts to preach for us in the near future. We are poor, sinful creatures, craving to hear the gospel preached. My husband, J. H. Head, in whose name the paper comes, is eighty years old, and I am seventy-one. We know, according to nature, we won't be here much longer, but we hope that after we are gone, some of our children will subscribe for the Signs of the Times, and that it will be kept in our family on and on.

We send greetings to the editors and readers.

Mrs. J. H. Head

Maben, W. Va.

Dear Brethren:

I am enclosing $5.00 to renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times. I have enjoyed reading the editorials and the letters for a good many years; and I hope you will be blessed to stand for the truth in the future as you have in the past.

If I have been blessed to understand the truth, the Signs stands for it. May the Lord bless you to carry on for many years to come. If I am saved it is by the

grace of God.

Z. R. Canada

REVELATION 1:1-2

"The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John; who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things which he saw." (Revelation 1:1-2)

Revelation is the process whereby God makes himself known to men. The author here is named John; he calls himself a servant of Jesus Christ, and a brother and companion in tribulation. This writer no doubt had suffered great persecution, since he said he was in the isle called Patmos, for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. John was commanded by the Spirit to write this revelation unto the seven churches of Asia, which were under bondage of the imperialistic government of Rome at that time, according to history. These churches were sorely persecuted and going through great tribulation, for John said, I am your brother and companion in tribulation. (Rev. 1: 9)

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice. (Rev. 1:10) Every day is the Lord's day, but in this vision which John had of Him was His glorious day; for he came as conqueror of the grave, having the keys of death and hell. John saw Him standing in the midst of seven candlesticks, representing the seven churches; and having seven stars in his right hand, representing the angels of the seven churches. (Rev. 1:20) These angels are the ambassadors of Christ: they feed his flock, and he holds them in his right hand.

Seven is the number which symbolizes completeness. In the vision, yet probably unaware to him, John saw the beginning of the end of the church here on earth. In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished. (Rev. 10:7)

It is not speculation to ascertain historical events at the time of christian persecution: from the crucifixion of Christ, the stoning of Stephen (in which Paul took part), Peter put to death by Nero (requesting that he be crucified head down because he was not worthy to be crucified as our Lord) Paul beheaded by Nero, and many others. We cannot begin to record the suffering and tribulations that the followers of Christ had to endure under Roman law, and for three hundred years afterwards. John believed that God was about to intervene in human affairs: this was the basic conception of the Apocalyptic thought of the early church. A catostrophe, or final event, would take place which would bring the existing world order to an end, and usher in a new age. John wrote to prepare his fellow christians for these terrors, which he believed were already beginning, and to assure them that the outcome would be the triumph of Christ and his Church. Let us quote: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophesy, and keep these things which are written therein; for the time is at hand." (Rev. 1:3)

Beautiful beyond description is the last book of the Bible; it represents the beginning and the end of the whole Adamic family. Yet, before we are led into the knowledge of these deep and glorious mysteries that God has hidden from the world, there must be a knowledge of former things. We go back to that primitive scene of the patriarch of the twelve tribes: dying in a strange land, his sons gathered around him as he braces himself upon the edge of his couch and leans upon his staff, and worships the God before whom his fathers Abraham and Isaac walked; and his dimmed eyes brighten with the vision of the future. We hear him say with the confidence of a seer to whom the vision is a reality, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from be-

tween his feet, until Shiloh shall come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."

Hardly is David seated upon his throne in Judah, and the ark that had rested in Shiloh brought up to Zion, when the Psalmist prophesied the coming of the Lord's anointed; who would have the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. Isaiah then lifts up his voice like a trumpet, rallying the discomfited and despairing people: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of peace." And Zechariah, making the hills of Palestine vocal with the welcome to Messiah, sings: "Rejoice greatly, O, daughter of Zion, O, Daughter of Jerusalem, behold thy king cometh unto thee." Micah reaches forth the prophetic benediction to Bethlehem: "Though least among the thousands of Judah, yet out of her shall come forth that is to be the ruler of Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Paul, in his exhortations, represents all things celestial and terrestrial, physical and moral, visible and invisible, from the first conception of the creation to its final consumation: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world."

And John, exiled to the Isle of Patmos for spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ, sets forth the final exhaultation of the elect of God: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and Christ." (Rev. 20:6)

Henry H. Townsend, Sr.

Bloomsbury, Texas.

Dear Signs of the Times:

I am very thankful to be permitted to read this good paper, and I hope I can read it all my life. I love to read the editorials; and good letters and precious experiences which God gives his dear people to travel through in this life. Which things are through His everlasting love and mercy; but I am such a sinner and so unworthy I cannot make a step to write of my travels from dark hours, to rejoice in God's great love and mercy, and hoping to be carried safely home when my time here is over.

I enclose $10.00 for my renewal for one year; the balance to help this good paper carry on. I hope God sees fit for the Signs to continue throughout all time.

A little, unworthy sister, if one at all,

Mrs. Maggie Simmons

Ramer, Alabama.

Dear Children of God:

"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord harkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." (Malachi 3:16)

"And I saw the dead small and great stand before God, and the books were opened, and another book was opened which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books according to their works." (Revelations 20:12)

The fifteenth verse reads this way: "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." I thought these passages might be comforting to the dear people of God. Of course, only live people can hear and fear the Lord. If God be for us, who can be against us. The salvation of the Lord is so wonderful, but I am so prone to sin I fear that I am not born again.

What an amazing thing for Christ to come to this low ground of sorrow; to be mocked, spit upon and scourged. He sweated, as it were, great drops of blood, but when this happened, I think

the Scriptures say that the angels were with him.

It speaks of the expensive perfume that the woman put on him for his burial. They tried to make him like the two thieves but they could not do it. Amazing to them, I imagine, the odor of that fine perfume. I can also imagine the expression of his face when he said, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do."

Oh, that I the least of all, if at all, may be included in that number whose names are inscribed in the Lamb's book of life.

Mrs. M. C. Story

Newport, N. C.

Dear Readers of the Signs:

I find much comfort in reading the Signs and the other papers. They make my lonesome hours which I spend by myself more pleasurable. I look forward to their coming with great pleasure, and read and re-read them for company.

I don't see any of the household of faith except when I go to meetings, and that is not so often these days. Yet I think of them often, and still love them: I just am not weaned away from them as a baby is weaned from its milk and soon forgets it. I've always loved these people — God's elect I hope, from childhood until the present time; and hope that same love will continue.

I feel my weakness and inability to express my thoughts, but I will say that I feel we are living in a world of perilous times; yet God is merciful to the weak as well as to the strong: a Saviour of the whole world, and especially to those who believe in Him, and put their trust in him as the author and finisher of our faith. We can do without things for a season, but not without God; for he has to be with us all the way through this life — let us think that it is easy or hard, full of sunshine at times and then again dark and dreary, He is always near. Sometimes we feel to be soaring on the tops of the mountains, yet how quickly we can be cast down in the valley of despair and feel He is so far off; and that we are too unworthy to be noticed. As the poet says: "Mixtures of joy and sorrow I daily do pass through."

The Lord knows all that are his, and when all are gathered together, they will be like him and be satisfied. What a blessed thought: To have a hope (though it gets little sometimes) and assurance that there is a place prepared for those who love Him, and whose trust is in Him as their Saviour; and know that they can't do anything without Him.

I didn't intend to write this much. Enclosed you will find cash to pay for the paper another year. Feeling to be the least among you, yet I love you one and all.

Your little sister,
Mrs. W. H. Cannon

INDIGENT FUND

(Indigent Fund contributions to help send the Signs to those unable to pay. These contributions are appreciated by all concerned. The list following is to June 1, 1954:)

Ethel Werner, N. J. $2.00; Madera Gibson, Okla. $1.00; Mrs. Carrie Hodgins, Mich. $1.00; Mrs. Jennie Clifford, Wash. $7.00; Amy S. Hewitt, N. Y. $7.00; M. L. Lucas, Ala. $4.00; Hubert Falk, Tex. $2.00; Mrs. J. W. Grimes, Ala. $1.00; Bertha Hanly, Md. $2.00; Harry Ward, Md; $2.00; D. B. Thomas, La. $2.00; R. S. Jarman, Del. $2.00; Bert Knox, Wash. $5.00; Franklin Lax, Ill. $1.00; Mrs. Maggie Simmons, Tex. $7.00; Mrs. C. B. Gordy, Mich. $2.00; Joe McKenzie, Canada, $7.00; Mrs. Geo. L. Beebe, N. Y. $25.00; Annie Love, La. $2.00; David Wyatt, Mo. $1.00; A. W. Mariner, Va. $5.00; Lula Dennis, Tex. $2.00; Mollie J. Long, N. C. $5.00; Mrs. D. P. Farmer, Md. $1.00; Mrs. H. M. Taylor, N. C. $2.00; A. B. Yelverton, Fla. $1.00; Wm. D. Chapman, N. Y. $10.00; R. D. McGough, Ala. $5.00; John Franklin Lax, Ill. $7.00; T. C. Simpson, Calif. $5.00; R. A. Mathis, Ala. $1.00; H.

E. Hawkey, Okla. $1.00; Mrs. Blanche Gillum, Tenn. $1.00; Joseph A. Johnson, Tenn. $1.00; J. Y. Vanhook, N. Y. $1.00; Mary S. Sauer, Ohio, $10.00; R. T. Lester, Ga. $5.00.

ASSOCIATIONAL NOTICE

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will convene with the Olive & Hurley Church at Shokan, New York, (on Route 28, thirteen miles North of Kingston, N. Y.) Wednesday and Thursday, September 15th and 16th, 1954.

Services will begin at 10:30 (DST) Wednesday morning. A cordial invitation is extended to all ministers and brethren of our faith who are in order and fellowship with us, and all friends are welcome. Those coming on Tuesday will stop at the Ruckert Tourist Home, which is next to the Meeting House, and they will be cared for.

(Elder) Amasa J. Slauson, Pastor

YEARLY MEETING

The yearly meeting of the Welch Tract Old School Baptist Church will be held the second Sunday in September (the 12th). All lovers of the truth are invited to attend.

D. V. Spangler, Pastor

PLEASE NOTE: The editors have found it expedient to leave out four pages in the August and September issues. Brethren and friends can help us much by sending new subscriptions, and those in arrears by sending their checks.

PLEASE NOTICE

Please watch your expiration date and renew promptly. We depend on renewals and new subscriptions to carry on the work — we have no advertisement to help pay the bill. Thank you. — Editors

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Why not mention the Signs of the Times to brethren and friends — maybe they would also like to read it.

EDITORIALS

Danville, Va. August, 1954

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TO

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FELLOWSHIP

If we could be blessed of the Lord to sit at his feet clothed in our right mind, it would be sweet to contemplate the beauty of that fellowship that is prevalent among the Lord's humble train of followers. This sitting at his feet tells the whole story of fellowship. How many are satisfied to sit at his feet and be taught of him? Just as many as are in fellowship with him, just that many, no more, no less. I cannot but wonder at the bickering and backbiting among God's people, for if we are at his feet, learning from him, having been previously clothed by him, and having been put in our right mind by him, it is not easy to understand why there could ever be anything among us except sweet fellowship.

Are we in fellowship with the doctrine of total depravity? We say we are. It

has been said, and it is still being said, among every faction of Primitive Baptists that "we held to the doctrine of total depravity" and "that man is incapable of recovering himself from that condition." What is it that is depraved? Is it not the faculities of the natural man? What is our fellowship in? Is it in this doctrine? If it is not, our statement of our belief should be consistent with that that we are in fellowship with. If we have fellowship for the things of the Spirit, then we do not have it for the things of darkness. I counsel you dear ones that you may be given, under the guidance of the Spirit, to examine our position just here. If we, as a people, believe, and are in fellowship with, the doctrine of total depravity, let us hold to it as a tenet of our faith. But if we do not believe it, it certainly should be removed from our articles of faith.

After the fellowship of the earthly man and woman for earthly things has been crucified within us, there is set up a fellowship for a new and ruling principle. The bringing under subjection of this fellowship for earthly things means that we, as new born babes, do not have it anymore for those earthly things. This being brought to the feet of Jesus is complete. Every thing that is a thing, and every power that is a power, has had to be counted off as loss. Name just one of the things of this world that can be brought to his feet. Name just one power of the human being that can be brought forward to keep along with the power of Christ. Name just one golden calf of whatever kind it may be, that a poor sinner can bring as a delivering god to the feet of Jesus. If total depravity is true, there is not a gift of nature that can be brought here. Then what are we in fellowship with when we are at the feet of our Redeemer? Then we must agree that when we sit at the feet of Jesus we are in mutual fellowship with his saving grace.

This fellowship is as universal as the kingdom of God's dear Son. It is mutual fellowship, there being but the one kind in all the realms of grace. It is the same in every clime, and in every age, and among all peoples. This causes us to contemplate the election of God. Do we believe in election? Do we believe that God, the Father, chose us in Christ, the Son, before the world began? Where are we? We are at the feet of Jesus. How come us here? If we are in fellowship with the things of the Spirit, we know that we did not get here by efforts of our own. We were lost, and Jesus drew us to him. When we were shown our lost condition, it was because of sin revealed in us. We were shown that sin had permeated our earthly frame to where we could not throw it off; we could not turn and do good. Now I hope that I hate sin, and I hope that I have been made to hate my faulty ways, but I also hope that I have been made to love those that are like me. I am in fellowship with the helplessness of God's family. What made this? From whence did this fellowship come? It has come, as I hope, because God has wrought it in us. To be lost, is to be helpless. To be unable to come, is helplessness. I have fellowship for that condition, and having that fellowship, I am in complete harmony with total depravity.

But here we are, as we hope, at the feet of Jesus. Somebody has brought us. That 'somebody' is the sovereign power of God. Here is fellowship for the sovereignty of God. We get this by the work of God. This God did not need any carrying around on our shoulder; he did not have to be stood until we got ready for him to be removed. He became our God in our experience, and having become our God in manifestation, we meditated with sweetness upon his matchless grace (Psa. 104:34) and found him to be One first in everything. This being first in everything means just that, no more, no less. If first, then not second; if first, independent, not dependent; if first, then always, and certainly no antecedent; if first, then all things subordinate to him. This then will bring us in fellowship with the oneness of his mind. Thus here is election. Are you in fellowship with it? You got that fellow-

ship at the feet of Jesus, right at the same place that you got the first sweet taste of heavenly fellowship. You did not know the mind of God first, you were first taught of God by his bringing of you to Jesus, and this sovereign work caused you to contemplate the eternal mind of this Sovereign. You found out that that he does, he first determined to do.

If you have fellowship for election, for the total depravity of the fallen creature, for his inability to come to Jesus, for the effectual calling of God, you got it at the feet of Jesus. These things do not come by hearing Elder Doe preach; they do not come by reading after men, however much the Spirit may have adorned their writing; they do not come from any source whatever except the learning we receive at the feet of Jesus. However, this does not mean that our faith must not be tried. This trial of our faith is not to enrich Jesus so that he could be a better teacher, but it is to enrich our fellowship one for another. The wandering sheep could have been kept in the fold, but the rejoicing in the 'finding and bringing' work of Jesus would never have culminated in sweet fellowship; the Apostle Peter could have been kept from denial, but if so, he would never have preached to the comfort of his brethren, and he would never have written the good epistles that were sent to us.

What are you driving at? Do you mean that he lets us get up and away from sitting at his feet? Do you mean that he lets us do that, knowing that we will run after idols? What does your fellowship for the salvation that is in Jesus tell you? Have you at any time left your first love? Have you ever looked upon the tree of the knowledge of good and evil with desire; have you ever danced around a golden calf; have you ever denied your Lord; have you at any time been guilty of neglect and indifference and, seemingly, do-not-care-what-happens? If this is your experience, then who have you got fellowship for? Is it for the ones that confess that they are strangers and pilgrims? Is it for the ones that feel too unworthy to be called the children of God? Is it the ones that declare that in their flesh dwells no good thing? Is it the ones that feel that they are fit subjects for throwing overboard? Is it for those that feel that the things they would do that they leave them off? These feelings in the children of God; these experiences of the Bible characters come about by attempting to travel in their own strength. We must remember that the honor and glory of our Redeemer God will not be divided with anyone. To try us, to prove all of our own works, to establish in our lives and being the sovereignty of Jehovah God, we are often left to travel in our ways and works.

Now comes fellowship for the preservation of the saints. This is another step into the perfecting love of God: this is another scene wherein we find that the best resolutions and efforts of our own will fail and fade; this is another lesson that we must learn at the feet of Jesus, and that after we have been found and brought back by him; this is where we are shown again and again that everything pertaining to life and godliness was given in Jesus Christ. We launch out on our own; we take a ship to Tarsus; we leave the blessed Lord to face the death of the cross alone: we leave Jerusalem and journey **down** towards Jericho; we find the way of the Lord too straight; we leave the doctrine of grace and go into finishing in the flesh. But as we venture on these ways and paths we soon find ourselves in trouble. While we were just starting it was alright to flex our fleshly powers and to look with pride and gladness on our newly found strength. But when the going got rough and we begin to wither and fade from our former splendor, we begin then to think of the days when we were safe in the finished righteousness of Jesus, and it was not long until we begin to pray for a restoration of the joys of the salvation that is in Jesus. Right about here in the experience of the Lord's entire family comes the

time when we do not have any confidence and fellowship for such poor and undone creatures as we have found ourselves to be. Ah, how we love the sight of the Tree of righteousness that we might rest in its shade; how fondly we think of days of yore when we sat under the banner of his love and ate at the table prepared for his people; how we did yearn for the living water that our tired and thirsty soul might drink and bathe in its swelling plentitude. But how can we ever hope for those days again, seeing that we have sinned against heaven and in his sight, and that we have wandered round and round searching for our beloved until we are hopelessly lost from sight of him. And the truth of it is that we would not had it not been that:

"Hark it is the Saviour's voice I hear,
Come, trembling soul, dispel thy fear;
He saith — and who his word can doubt?
He will in no wise cast you out."

And this love "that in no wise casts out (John 6:37)" will come in power and great glory and will find the lost and wandering sheep. There will be no consultation held with him that has already lost his boasted pomp and splendor and strength, but there will be a gentle placing of nail pierced hands under us, a lifting up from our fallen state, a bringing us back to the fold. Oh, how sweet once again to sing in full fellowship with (not only the household of faith, but) with the death and suffering of our dear Lord. You will never, no never, while life endures, while tossed to and fro on this rocky shore, see and feel such an assembly and have such complete confidence and fellowship for our dying Lord as here.

Closely, oh, so closely interwined with this preservation of the saints you will experience and fellowship another, and the grandest, principle of all. You that have gone into the hinder part of the vessel to sleep and to finally go down into the depths; you that have gone down to Jericho; you that have left the glorious company of the Lamb for the company of swearers and profane babblers; you that have had a wonderful deliverance in the Spirit but have gone off after fleshly works, you, together with all the blood washed throng, must here experience the resurrection of the dead. We will not attain unto this culmination of our hope here, but we will press on and on, and in this pressing on, we will feel and enjoy the fellowship of the **power** of his resurrection. And the power that we feel, the power that causes us to believe, the power that lifts us up when we are down, is the power, the same power, that was wrought in Jesus Christ when he was raised from the dead.

This fellowship for the doctrine of grace is something that is given to us in our experience. Experience is something that we pass through as it comes to us. A dead man would not seek an experience; a helpless man would not come into this state; it is the work of God from beginning to end. In some the work of God and the gift of grace is so great that the recipient leaves all and follows into the water in baptism; in some it is so great and forceful and consuming that they are made willing to preach the glorious gospel of grace; in some it is so all prevailing that they are willing to die at the stake, or to die on the cross, or to lay down their church life for the sake of Christ; while in some the gift is small and you may find them the hindmost ones in Israel, but as they come, this glorious train of followers, you will find them in fellowship as far as their revelation goes of these things. And today it may seem to them, and it may seem to others, that they know but little, but the fellowship that they have enjoyed — and it may be as clear and full as Paul's, or as little as the blind boy whose eyes were opened — will keep them forgetting the things that are behind. Nor will it stop there. No, sir, none of that stopping in this kind of fellowship. But it will keep them pressing onward and upward towards the prize of the mark of the high calling (fellowship) that is in Jesus Christ our Lord. Being refugees from a build-

ing on a sandy foundation, they are going to a city whose maker and builder is God; and, as they journey, the farther they get from that perishing land and the nearer home, fellowship for one wanes, — for the other increases.

— W. D. G.

1700 Garrick Building
Chicago, Illinois
January 17, 1954

Dear Brother Spangler;

In the December, 1953, edition of the Signs, there appears an article by Brother H. L. Rogers, in which I wonder if he is not somewhat confused over the term "secret orders". I would appreciate your interpretation, if you so feel disposed to commit yourself.

In the early days of the Baptist, and even before they were called "Baptist", as shown in the trials for heresy. (Benedict's History of the Baptist) there was grave danger of secret plotting against the heretic Christian sects, and secret orders became almost a taboo to those sects who opposed the Roman Church. Masonry had sprung up possibly before Christianity, and for a time, was allied to the Roman order, but later broke away. The Spanish Inquisition had brought forth a new tyranny, and much bloodshed. Both the followers of Luther, and the heretic organizations feared betrayal into the hands of their enemies, and forbade their members from joining secret orders.

In reviewing the records of the Obion association and some of its churches, I have been able to follow it for more than 125 years. I find that "secret orders" referred to therein have always turned out to be the Masons, but there are some instances where other associations referred to other secret orders. In each instance where a new member came from the members of such a society, if accepted, he was not asked to give away or reveal any secrets, if he had insurance benefits or other benefits of a monitary nature, he was allowed to make his payments, but was required to give up and forego his further participation.

From secret orders, the Brother, in his article, proceeds to include "institutions of men," unions, etc. I do not believe the records will bear him out on this, as school boards, political bodies, community clubs, veterans organizations, farm bureaus, hospital clubs, and untold forums and social groups are all institutions of men, and many members of the Old School Baptist belong to them. In fact, should they find employment in many of the industrial institutions today, they are required to join the union within 90 days, and refusal will result in automatic dismissal. The head of a business, director of a bank, and all that goes to make a worldly society, such as a state, body corporate, etc., are all of men. The Old School Baptists have learned to distinguish between "worldly institutions" and "spiritual", and everyone must face some worldly form of society, but it does not mean it is "secret", nor does it affect the church. The Brother may be thinking of unionism as it once existed in the old crafts, where the trade was guarded and the group kept secret, opening only to apprentices. The quotation, "Give unto Caesar that which is Caesars, etc.", is illustrative of this ability to distinguish between worldly and spiritual. The only illustration that has any bearing on Brother Roger's stand during this 125 years history, was a question raised early in Hephzibah church over one of the brethren of this church "playing the fiddle". While the church never had instrumental music, and this question was never raised in the association, the church did decide it was "worldly"; but no discipline, nor other mention was made. Denominational schools, social, political, and other orders are all worldly, and the Old School Baptists have so treated. We are all worldly, — of the flesh, and it is only where the worldly

order becomes a part of the church, itself, or pits brother against brother, that I have found reference to a spiritual significance.

I feel partially to blame for Brother Rogers' article, and the question arising, as some years ago I sent an Elder from Chicago (Elder Jones, now deceased) on his way to the Obion Association, but before he got there he stopped to attend the Soldiers Creek association, where he became entangled over an earlier fight arising out of the coal fields, resulting in some division. He never reached the Obion Association and reported to me the results of his trip. I was later informed by members of both associations that the churches and association in question had members who were openly and actively members of "secret orders", in which it was necessary to give a "pass word" to enter.

By the Brother's statement, "I pray that He will keep me separate from worldly institutions of ungodly men", I am sure he does not have in mind the common Roman Catholic idea of entering a monastery and secluding himself from the world. I believe that the Brother will admit that the "family" to which he belongs, is a part of the world, flesh, adam, and only by rebirth does he claim kin with the brethren of the spirit; but this does not, in this life, destroy his fleshy nature. One difference between the Old School Baptist and the Quaker (Friends) is on this issue of being a member by natural birth and by re-birth, while the Baptist, only by re-birth. I wonder if the Brother is not confused between what is "spiritual" and which is of the "flesh", "Adam"; also between what is a "secret society" and a limited or restricted membership. Most unions today hold an open meeting. The outside world are as welcome as to a Primitive Baptist church. Their participation, such as voting, taking the floor on resolutions, is by nature, limited to the membership.

As I feel that I may have either directly or indirectly caused Brother Rogers to have some doubts along these lines, and the confusion rests on my shoulders, I welcome a discussion. I was of the opinion that Soldiers Creek Association went on record on this question, but after inquiry, I am sure that it was Soldiers Creek church, which I visited after going to the Obion Association, that raised the question of secret orders, again reciting they could not maintain fellowship with members of a secret society, but in so doing specified that they were not against labor unions.

May some of you, in the light of your experience, aright the wrong, if any has been created, so that each may see more clearly, and with better understanding.

Sincerely,
John Franklin Lax

REPLY

Having been requested by Brother Lax to express my views in regard to Secret Orders, I offer a few thoughts on the subject.

The term, "Secret Orders", as understood by our people, usually has reference to institutions of a spiritual nature, who hold secret meetings; and whose Rules, Order and Practice are not in accord with the order, doctrine and practice of the Church of God, — regardless of their merit as a worldly order. No doubt many of them do much good morally, but if any part of their rules, or practices conflict with the Church of God, and her profession of faith in Jesus Christ, then church members should abstain from taking part with them.

The grounds for following such procedure would be the Word of God. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? or what communion hath light with darkness." This being unequally yoked with an organization whose membership include many who bear no mark of the grace of God, and whose rules and prac-

tices are in conflict with the rules laid down by Christ the King and Lawgiver, would be galling to one whose desire is to walk only in obedience to the commands of the Lord. The question is also raised in the Word as to how can two walk together except they be agreed.

We do not consider the word "secret orders" to have reference to institutions wherein the daily order of business, etc., is carried on.

All orders constituted by men will perish with men. If it is a worldly order, regardless of its merit, it will die when men die; but the Church of God was not constituted by men, and will not die with men. Those who walk in the faith of God's elect should come out from among them, and be a separate people.

D. V. S.

OBION ASSOCIATION HISTORY CONCLUDED

Tennessee, west of the Tennessee River, did not open for land grants until 1820, but some few pioneers had pitched tent shortly before. Soon afterwards, these folk from western North Carolina and Virginia, whose membership had been predominantly Baptist, began erecting churches. In 1823 or 24, the Western District Baptist Association was formed. Beaver Dam and Walnut Fork, I believe, were charter members. This association covered all western Tennessee and Kentucky, and was too large a territory for the means of transportation these people had. Also, too many churches were now amassed for active participation, so in 1828 the Obion Association was organized covering most of the territory from the Obion River north. This soon proved too large a territory, and too many churches to serve well. In 1825, at a conference at Nashville, the "Missionary Branch" of the Baptist broke away. This was the first schism to take the name "Baptist." Its aggressive nature soon engulfed over half the churches in the Western District Association, so that association became affiliated with or taken over by the Missionary Baptist and still exists as such today. This increased the territory of the Obion Association so it became necessary to create new associations. In 1844 the Soldiers Creek Association was organized covering churches in Calloway, Marshall, Graves, etc. Counties in Kentucky. Today this association takes in churches in Southern Illinois. These two sister associations have sat together in peace and harmony continuously since that day to the present time. Bethel, Hatchie, Mississippi River, and other associations were formed to cover this western district. Other breaks in the Bapist did not affect the churches in the Obion Association or Henry County, until the late '90's, when followers of Sam Kirkland broke with the Primitive or Old School or Absolute Predestinarian group. They were called by some, as Kirklandites, although they term themselves as Primitive Baptist. Practically all the different schism from the Baptist have originated over what they term "Conditional Salvation" and a literal interpretation of the Bible, now often termed "Fundamentalist Doctrine." Although the branch away from the Old School Baptist by this group does not keep them from using the same name, they are not in fellowship with, nor do they hold to the doctrines of this group.

Most of them recognize this difference, and many have tried to effect a reconciliation, but this is impossible on their terms. As the little group of Old School Baptist here in Chicago some years ago disbanded, I visit the Kirlandite branch ocassionally. They call our group "absolute." I am inclined to believe that Union went with that group. Also, the Primitive Baptist church at India in Henry County, went with that group.

I have all the minutes of the Obion Association from 1828 to date, and there is no record contained therein of any break in the association, but some of the churches did break away. The late Elder Edgar, of Henry County, shortly after the Civil War compiled the minutes of the Obion association into a History. I have a copy of Edgar's History.

In further considering the Henry County churches and the Obion Association, it is necessary for me to set forth with whom the association keeps fellowship, for this fellowship is deepset and extends from coast to coast. The oldest secular paper in the United States is the "Signs of the Times" edited continuously since 1832. A reprint of Elder Gilbert Beebe, then Editor, (Its first.) of an article on Absolute Predestination, written in 1855 is in the August issue of the Signs. The churches and associations that support that paper keep fellowship, both in the East and West. They include the Welch Tract, Lincoln's father's church in Indiana, and many others, as well as the three churches mentioned in Henry County.

At Rock Springs church near Harrisburg, Illinois, I attended the Soldiers Creek Association last October 11 and 12 and seated were delegates from Ohio, Bethel, Little River, West Tennessee, and Hopewell associations. At Hephzibah church the same except members of the Mississippi River were seated, and Elder Smith from the South Ouachita association near El

Dorado, Arkansas, and from Northern Mississippi were there. When Dad was living he attended the Ouachita association, and there delegates from associations in Texas and Oklahoma were seated.

Let us look at the sister associations of the Obion and Soldiers Creek associations; Bethel, Obion, etc., counties; Little River, Trigg, etc., counties; West Tennessee, in the Nashville vicinity; Flint River, Northern Alabama; Hopewell, northern Alabama; Mississippi River, Memphis and environs; besides visiting ministers last year from Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, Alabama, Mississippi, West Virginia, Louisiana and Ohio. It is because of this close fellowship and continued brotherhood; its long duration of their meetings, etc., that I write this article. If there has been formed another association of churches taking the name Obion, some designation should be made so as not to confuse these old people and their meetings each Fall, for I have many letters from various places inquiring of them and their meetings. These meetings sometimes appear in the Signs, and for several years the Obion association has been exclusively a Henry County association, so far as its churches are concerned, and people come long distances to it. I do not in any way wish to deter or detract from the Union church, for I wish it continued success, as I do all the churches in Henry County. But I do wish to prevent confusion, as I love the Obion association, its churches, and feel that I know every member.

John Franklin Lax

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

I notice that every token of the Lord's favor is received by me with surprise. I find myself delightfully surprised when the Lord's people manifest love and fellowship for me, as though I had no right to expect it; and I wonder still more when, as is sometimes the case, I do feel the sweet assurance that this great blessing does truly belong to me. I am surprised every time that a portion of the Lord's written word comes to my mind with power and sweetness, and when there springs up in my soul a feeling of praise and thanksgiving to his holy name. It would almost appear as though I were expecting evidences of his displeasure on account of the evils and disobedience in my heart and life, rather than tokens of pity and love. It is such a wonder and delight to me when those tokens come, and when he sheds his love abroad in my heart. It is a wonder to me that I have a place in the church; that I am allowed, not to stay constrained, to preach the gospel of his grace, and that some of his dear children give me evidence that he blesses that preaching to their profit and comfort. I find myself astonished and very thankful that I desire to give him praise and glory, and to devote myself wholly to his service, and more than astonished when I am assured that he will receive praise and devotion from one so unworthy as I.

Therefore the words of David are very sweet to me when he and the people rejoiced and thanked the Lord because they had offered willingly unto the Lord of all their precious things: "Now therefore, our God, we thank thee and praise thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee. For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding." (1 Chron. 29:13-15)

It would be a carnal spirit that would prompt one to offer of his work and gifts unto the Lord with the expectation of being rewarded for them. The Spirit by which David was led moved him to thank and praise the Lord because they were able to offer willingly unto him. — ELDER SILAS H. DURAND in FRAGMENTS — 1902

The opinions and doings of men are of no value unless motivated by the Spirit of Truth; if otherwise, they "darken counsel by words without knowledge".

WE QUOTE:

"Travelers inform us that in Turkey the partisians of the several denomina-

tions there are distinguished by the color of their shoes: so that, if you meet any person in the streets, you need only look at his feet to know of what religion he is." — Augustus Toplady, in 1770.

"If a minister has not been made poor in his own soul, he will not be much of a preacher to those who have been made poor in spirit. He that would bring forth the riches of the gospel must be made poor in soul — if not poor in pocket; made poor in spirit — if not poor in substance." — Philpott's SERMONS.

"AMENDMENT PROVIDES AUTHORITY OF CHRIST: A Senate Judiciary Sub-committee yesterday heard a delegation of California women testify in favor of a proposed 'amendment to the Constitution of the United States recognizing the authority and law of Jesus Christ'.

"The proposed amendment, sponsored by Sen. Ralph E. Flanders (R-Vt.), would add a new article to the Constitution, providing in part: 'This Nation devoutly recognizes the authority and law of Jesus Christ, Saviour and Ruler of nations, through whom are bestowed the blessings of Almighty God'." — WASHINGTON POST, May 14, 1954.

(We rejoice when we see evidence that these things are "written in the hearts and put in the minds", which is something that legislation can never do. J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

ELDER W. T. CLAYTON

With sorrow and a deep feeling of loss I write of the passing of my precious father, Elder Wright Turner Clayton, who passed away at his home in Providence, Kentucky, February 21, 1954.

He was the eldest son of John and Sarah Miller Clayton, born September 13, 1874; making his stay on earth more than seventy-nine years. He was married to Miss Genoah Townsend, November 22, 1893, and they lived together for over sixty years. No family was ever blessed with more loving and kinder parents than our family. He is survived by the wife and four daughters and five sons: Mrs. Finis Hinkle, Providence, Kentucky; Mrs. John Fike, Detroit, Michigan; Mrs. S. G. Harralson, Nebo, Kentucky; Mrs. D. L. Ball, Oak Park, Illinois; Otis, Oak Park, Illinois; Wallace, Nebo, Kentucky; John, R. G. and Raymond, Providence, Kentucky. Also two sisters: Mrs. Robert Duncan. Daytona Beach, Florida; Mrs. W. T. Mitchell, West Point, Kentucky; and one brother: J. P. Clayton, Dixon, Kentucky. There are eighteen grand-children and ten great grand-children.

Dad professed a hope in Christ at an early age, and joined the Primitive Baptist Church; he was soon afterwards ordained to the full function of the gospel ministry, and was a minister for over fifty years. He had just returned home from attending meetings in Arkansas and Texas when he was stricken with coronary thrombosis, and suffered severely for sixteen weeks. All was done for him that doctors, nurses and loving hands could do. He was perfectly reconciled to God's will, and believed that every pain was just and right — he believed in the predestination of all things. He could say with Paul, "I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

He always preached the weakness and depravity of man, and his own unworthiness, but a sovereign and all powerful God. He sat on the side of his bed and preached for half an hour just a week before he died, after which his voice was very weak. He had many trials and persecutions, but by the grace of God he stood firm in defense of the glorious doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He believed in the resurrection of the dead, and looked for a city which hath foundation, whose make and builder is God. He fulfilled his course and his labors are over. While we are so sad and lonely, we have the sweet consolation that he will not suffer again; and we feel our loss is his gain.

The funeral was conduced at Tirza Church by Elder L. P. Harris, Duquoin, Illinois, who spoke sweet, comforting words to his loved ones and a large concourse of friends. His body was laid to rest in Tirza Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the second coming of the Lord and Saviour, when he will be raised in glory and be fashioned in the likeness of the blessed Saviour, and shall ever be with the Lord. This was his hope.

A sorrowing daughter,
Mrs. S. G. Harralson.

MELVIN R. MILLER

Melvin R. Miller was born August 26, 1893, in Edella, Penn., the sixth child of Mr. and Mrs. Chas. E. Miller. He died January 27, 1954, at his home in Dalton, Penn.

Melvin was not a member of the visible church, but always was in attendance at the Abington Old School Baptist Church, where he was first carried in his mother's arms. His parents had united with this church a few years before his birth. We all felt that brother knew the truth. He was of a sweet disposition, and generous to a fault. He was outstanding in his community in every way, and had been Fire-chief of his borough nineteen years before being called away. Everyone helped the family in many ways during the last three weeks, and many fire companies showed their respect by being present at the funeral. This was held in the Baptist meeting-house near his home, Elder C. E. Benson trying to speak words of comfort to the mourning ones.

Melvin is survived by his widow, and by a son, Elvin, of Redbank, New Jersey; Mrs. Lois Barnes and Miss Mabel, both of Dalton; and three grand-children. Also three brothers, Burdic, Dalton, Penn.; Marvin and Howard, Clarks Summit, Penn.; and one sister, Mrs. Maude Miller, Binghampton, New York.

Amid mounds of flowers, he was laid to rest in "The Miller Cemetery," which was deeded to his descendants by our great grandfather previous to 1862.

In deep sorrow,
Mrs. Maude A. Miller

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, In the providence of almighty God, Sister Linnie B. Easton Mullins has been taken from our midst by death; and

WHEREAS, She was blessed to be a faithful member of Paran Primitive Baptist Church of Christ, near Hawlins, Texas, rendering spiritual service to the brethren as God graced her with his spirit with a godly walk and conversation; be it therefore

RESOLVED, That Paran Church thank God for having so wonderfully blessed us with the gifts of his grace as manifested in her life, and the comfort we enjoyed in her company; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That we express our deep felt sense of loss in her passing, and pray that God reconcile us to his will, and make us content with our loss; and cause us to highly treasure the remembrance of her; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we include this brief obituary in this Memorial: Sister Mullins was born October 20, 1875, and became a member of the church in 1906. She died at Tyler Hospital, Tyler, Texas, January 16, 1954. She is survived by her husband, Mr. Julius Mullens, of Tyler; also, one brother, B. R. Stone; two stepsons, Jack R. and John M. Mullens, and two step-daughters, Mrs. Boyce Balfour and Mrs. Malcolm Stripling; and seven grand-children.

Funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder E. J. Lambert, at Carroll Baptist Church; and interment was in Dover Cemetery, awaiting the resurrection; be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be given to her husband; a copy filed with Paran Church records; and a copy mailed to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Read and adopted by Paran Church in conference February 7, 1954.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Moderator
W. M. Harriss, Church Clerk

MRS. ANNIE PAXSON DOVE

Many relatives and friends of Mrs. Annie Paxson Dove were saddened at her passing from the scenes of this life, at a Washington hospital on April 11, 1954. She was well known and loved in her community, where she and her husband were engaged in the merchantile business for forty-five years, until their retirement a few years ago. She was seventy-nine years of age.

She was a daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Calhoun Paxson, Waxpool, Virginia; and was married to Mr. Peter Dove on December 23, 1897, who survives. To this union were born two sons: Jether, Herndon, Va., and Paul, Arlington, Va. She is survived by these and four grand-children and four great grand-children; and also by three sisters and one brother: Mrs. Grace Langford, Arlington, Va.; Mrs. Minnie Hurst and Mrs. Mattie Moreland, and Charles Paxson, Washington.

The faith of the Old School Baptists was dear to her, and for many years she was a constant attendant of Frying Pan Church. She was ever ready to assist the brethren in any way she could, and often entertained them in her home.

Funeral services were conducted from Reed's Funeral Home, Herndon, Virginia, by the writer, where many came to pay their last tribute of respect. Burial was in the Herndon Cemetery. The numerous flowers sent by friends bespoke the high esteem in which she was held.

Thus another, who gave evidence of the grace of God sustaining her through life, is now resting until her Saviour comes again; when she shall be conformed to His image, and be with Him and all the redeemed of God forever.

May all those who mourn be give sustaining grace, and be enabled to say, "Thy will be done."

John D. Wood

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 122 DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1954 NO. 9

(This poem was composed about two o'clock one morning, after being pressed in spirit to arise and pen these thoughts. I have had several requests to re-publish it.)

When the moon in all it's glory,
Cast it's brilliance o'er the earth,
Then I thought of Jesus, Saviour,
And about his humble birth.

Soon I saw him in a manger,
Glory shining all around;
By a heavenly host surrounded,
Shouting, glory to his name.

Then I saw him meek and lowly,
Walk the earth in grief and shame,
All to save poor, wretched sinners,
Who will ever praise his name.

Next he bows inside a garden:
Sweat like drops of blood flow down;
All the earth about him silent,
As he kneels upon the ground.

As he prays in solemn anguish,
For the cup to pass away;
Yet he knows that he must drink it,
To prepare the glorious way.

Then upon the scene most softly,
Came an angel dressed in white,
Touched him gently, said, look upward,
Soon the darkness will be light.

Soon the scene of darkness changes;
Darkness breaks, the light appears —
Heaven opens to receive him,
Never more to bow in tears.

He appears in heaven for sinners,
Who were purchased with his blood:
All his intercession for them
Is because his life is love.

Then dear God, may all his suffering,
Guide me on this heavenly road;
May I never, never murmur,
As I think about my God.

Though my soul is oft in sorrow,
Soon these things will pass away.
Sickness, sin and all my trials,
Will be over in that great day.

Then our garments will be spotless
As we gaze upon his face.

We will need the Moon, no never,
For the Sun will take it's place.

When his children all shall meet him
On that bright and shining shore,
Where our sorrows, pains and trials,
Will be over, ever o'er.

Soon, my brethren, we shall meet him,
May his love be all our guide,
And his grace and tender mercy,
Land us safe on Heaven's side.

D. V. Spangler

BORN OF WATER AND OF THE SPIRIT

(John 3:5-8.)

"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

"Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whether it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

The scriptures under consideration are a key that unlocks the door of salvation by free and unmerited grace in the revelation of God to every heir of grace and glory. Man born under the condemnation of a just and holy law, which he transgressed in Adam, is dead in trespasses and sins, having the nature of his father Adam, — a sinful nature, from which he is, as unable by any effort of self to free himself, as a corpse in the grave is dead to all things of nature; and unable to think a thought or move a muscle, or manifest any na-

tural life whatever. Every person born in this world partakes of the sinful nature of his parents, and having the nature of sin, will act out that which is within. The carnal mind is enmity to the law of God and can not be subject to it, for the natural mind receiveth not the things of the Spirit and can not know them. Man may justly reason that there is a creator back of creation, as there must be a designer back of that which is designed, and may call that power God, and rightly so, but that is not knowing God as the Father of Jesus Christ and the author of eternal salvation. That which is natural is one thing and that which is spiritual is entirely something else; therefore the carnal mind can not perceive the things of the spirit of God nor rejoice in the felt presence of Jesus Christ.

The case of Nicodemus illustrates the total depravity of man by nature. He was an educated man of blameless character and a ruler of the Jews and a member of the Sanhedrim and a teacher of the law. Therefore he was acquainted with the teaching of the prophets of old and familiar with many of the precious promises of the Old Testament Scriptures, as far as the letter of the word was concerned. He was a man of honor and held in high enteem and had heard of miracles performed by Jesus, — mighty works which had greatly im- Signs of the Times ....Motley pressed him. Yet he was in total ignorance of the requirements necessary for eternal salvation, and desired wisdom from God. In this very desire was manifested a spark of spiritual life, and he came to Jesus by night. It is when one realizes the darkness that surrounds one's life that there is given a desire to know the light and to be delivered from the darkness of one's natural birth. Pride and the nature of his high office probably prevented Nicodemus from coming to Jesus by day, which would have marred the typical significance of his nightly visit. Nicodemus was a Pharisee, which means separatist, and it may denote by antithesis the children of God who are separated from this world in their calling and profession. The name of Nicodemus is suggestively important as it signifies "victor of the people," as it is through Jesus that victory is obtained by the people of God through the atonement of Jesus Christ. One begins to seek salvation as he realizes his need of it, and realizes the darkness that is by nature round about him. One does not approach Jesus in the capacity of teacher, so it was necessary that Nicodemus be taught the necessity of the new birth and its supreme importance. One must be spiritually alive to receive teaching and this is typically true of Nicodemus, who realized that it was night and was able to go to Jesus. The weary and heavy laden are bidden to come to Christ for rest as they labor under the law whose demands they can not fulfil. Nicodemus was to learn not so much at first how men are to live who profess Christ, but how men are made alive spiritually and the means employed to give them that life which is hid in God by Christ.

Jesus at once informed Nicodemus that unless a man be born again he could not see the kingdom of God, and answered a further inquiry by saying, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." This leads us to consider what it is to be born of water and of the Spirit. While these two are associated in the birth of every child there is a wide distinction. Water often signifies the word of God, as we read of the washing of water by the word; and also the statement by the apostle Paul, "Husbands love your wives as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it that he might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing by the word." In nature water cleanses and the word of God coming into the heart of a sinner quickens and purifies as it is applied by the Holy Spirit. Water is necessary for life in nature, and so the word of God is absolutely necessary in the birth of

a child of God, for, "The word is nigh thee, even in thy heart and in thy mouth, the word of faith which we preach," as declared by the apostle Paul. Water causes growth in nature and the word of God causes a growth in the experience of a child of God. Water refreshes in nature, and the word of God refreshes and enlightens the child of God. Water in nature comes from the heaven above and the word of God comes from the heaven of eternal glory. The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity and is just as much a person as God the Father, or God the Son; and this Holy Spirit takes the word of God and applies it to the subject of God's redeeming grace in showing him the need of salvation: his lost condition, his just condemnation, and his utter helplessness to save himself. It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing, and each one who has eternal life is born not of the will of man nor of the will of the flesh nor of blood, but of God. The Holy Spirit imparts life through the word of God, which is Christ who is the Eternal Word, and who was made flesh to assume the condemnation of his people, and take away their sins by his obedience and death and resurrection.

The word of God shows the quickened sinner his heavenly inheritance and gives him an earnest of it and guides and instructs him in the things of righteousness as the Holy Spirit takes these things and applies them in his experience. The Holy Spirit is the person and the water is the instrument, and must work together. In the seventh chapter of John we read that Jesus said of the believer, that out of his inward parts should flow rivers of living water. "This he spake of the Spirit which they that believe on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." This living water of the word is given and applied by the Holy Spirit: therefore a saved sinner is born of water (the word) and the Holy Spirit and is kept by that power through faith unto salvation. The word and the Spirit are alike the gift of God and can not be obtained by human effort.

Another figure used in Scripture in reference to the operation of the Holy Spirit is wind. The wind is unseen by man and the Holy Spirit is invisible in all its work of salvation. The Spirit is an indispensable necessity in the life of a child of God, just as wind is necessary in natural life to bear the clouds that drop rain upon the earth. Where there are no clouds there is no rain, and a desert results. One can not control the wind naturally, and so the Holy Spirit is not governed by man in any sense (nor responsible to man), but blows where it listeth (where it pleases), and comforts with its invigorating effect the child of God who needs consolation.

Water in the scripture quoted above has no reference to baptism by immersion, as many are saved who never were immersed. The woman at Sychar's well was told that the water given her by Christ would be in her a well of water springing up into eternal life. Belief, or faith, is as necessary to salvation as the operation of the Holy Spirit, and the water of the word imparts that faith which is accounted for righteousness, in all of its effective and invisible work.

No man can enter into the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and of the Spirit, and his state there after his new birth depends upon the application of the cleansing water of the word. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from sin judicially, so that the saved sinner is released from the penalty of sin, as his standing before God depends upon the blood and righteousnesn of Christ; but he needs to be cleansed from the daily defilement of sin that he may be presented holy and without blame before the Father in love. Therefore the cleansing water of the word must be applied daily by the Spirit to insure his state in the sight of God. The feet or walk of the Lord's people need to be washed, as emphasized by the fact that Jesus took a basin of water and a towel and washed his disciples' feet. The shed

blood of Jesus testifies to the efficacy of his atoning death in the justification of his people; while the operation of the Holy Spirit denotes the state of the saved sinner in his experience and life after he has been born of an incorruptible seed by the word of God, and his soul cleansed when he is defiled by daily sin. Even the thought of foolishness is sin, therefore the water of the word is necessary to a new birth and for the maintainace of the redeemed sinner's state before God.

(Elder) Arnold H. Bellows

Montgomery, Alabama.

Dear brother Spangler:

I do not recall having met you at our Association held with the Hopewell Church in Pike County, Alabama, October, 1953, but I do know that I heard some of the pure Gospel of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, which was preached by you then. You recall, I am sure, our beloved brother and elder, J. W. McLeod, who was Moderator on that occasion.

In that afternoon of June 12, 1954, the good Lord called him home, and we, the deacons and members of Cottage Hill Primitive Baptist Church, 25 Oklahoma Street, Highland Gardens, Montgomery, Alabama, feel that a tribute of our love and esteem for our departed brother and elder should be published in your Times.

The following is a transcript of part of our letter to our District Meeting, which will be held with the Church at Elam, Pike County, Alabama, July 17 & 18 of this month.

"The Faith he kept, his course was run,
Peace troubled soul, the struggle's done,
Thy good work finished, Oh Faithful one,
Rejoice in the mercies of thy Lord."

Kindly incorporate this in whatever else you wish to add to his obituary in order that all who knew him will be advised of his passing.

May the good Lord continue to keep you and bless you while sojourning here below.

Your brother in hope,
E. L. Croxton

(It was my privilege to visit Elder McLeods association in Alabama last fall. The brethren there have lost a faithful soldier of the cross, and he will be greatly missed by his churches, brethren, and associations who knew him. D. V. Spangler)

Kingston, N. Y.
June 16, 1954.

Signs of the Times:

Enclosed I am sending a letter I received from Sister Mildred Adkins a few years ago. To my mind it is good reading matter for the Signs, as a sweet experience of grace. Sister Slauson and I enjoyed it very much, and I feel others will also; so we are asking to have it published.

(Elder) Amasa J. Slauson

Mt. Herman Road,
Salisbury, Maryland
October 6. 1949

Dear Elder Slauson:

You will never know how much it meant to me for you and Elder Bennett to be here Sunday night. It seemed that my whole being was athirst for spiritual food. After every one had left, I did not feel tired at all; it was as though my cup of joy had been filled to overflowing as I thought of the many wonderful things that had been spoken of.

Oft times I have wondered if I really loved the church as much as I think I do. Sunday morning, as I thought of the meeting, I saw her in her beauty and wanted to be there — I could have emraced all of them. It was three years the second Sunday of last March that I was shown that what I had trusted in was gone; that is, my works. I had no hope in this condition: I wept bitterly. I saw myself condemned to die, — no hope of eternal life. My lips were sealed; not a word of prayer could I utter. That night these words came to me: "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen

you." Then, as I thought of the people at the church where I had attended since a child, these words came to me, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." Elder Slauson, at that time I did not know these words were scripture.

The following Thursday, as I was preparing supper, these words came to me, "Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering from the fold of God." I stopped my work, and thought, that is exactly what happened: he sought me; I did not seek him. I had gone to Indiantown the Sunday before just for respect, with no thought at all for the preaching; and to this day I do not remember any of the preaching except the words: The spirit itself maketh intercession for us. I saw the truth of it, — that man could not intercede in another's behalf. That Thursday afternoon, when I was given the words of the hymn, hope came. As I looked out of my kitchen window, I could see all nature praising its creator: the sun shined brightly; the grass was a brighter green, and I could hear the birds singing. Suddenly I was singing, "Come thou fount of every blessing." For days I was on the mountain top. It was wonderful indeed! Then I thought of the Old Baptist people, and I loved every one of them. At this time I had no thought of being in the church — I was happy because I had been given a hope.

As the following second Sunday drew near, I began to have thoughts of the church. I wanted to wait, for fear I might be misunderstood; but the Lord's time had come. I just had to go and ask for a home with them. I was baptized that same day, April 14, 1946.

I really had not intended to write all of this, but I just got started and could not stop. Give my love to Sister Slauson. With love from a sister in a precious hope.

Mildred Adkins

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Bowdoinham church at Bowdoinham, Maine, September 11, 12 and 13, 1953: to all associations and meetings with which we correspond:

Dear Brethren:

Another year has passed, and through the providence of Almighty God we have been permitted to meet again in an association at Bowdoinham. Your minister, Elder John D. Wood, came to us preaching the gospel as only they can who have been taught and inspired by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Your correspondence and messengers were gladly received. May it be the Lord's will that love and fellowship continue among his people.

While world conditions today are not encouraging, we believe that our God still rules in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth: that all events take place according to His will. May we be given grace to run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. May we each feel to say with the Psalmist, "Bless the Lord, O, my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

The next meeting of our association will be in September, 1954. Notice as to time and place will appear in the Signs of the Times.

Elder John D. Wood, Moderator
Sanford S. Bartlett, Clerk
(see notice in this issue)

Tahlequah, Oklahoma

Signs of the Times, Inc.,
Dear Brethren:

. . . . Also please find enclosed a letter from our dear brother, Elder W. D. Griffin, to wife and I. (My wife had a stroke on the 24th of last July (1953) and has been in a very bad condition since. However, I am very happy to say that she is improving some each day, although it is very slow.)

This letter is so rich and full of the

things that give my poor, hungry soul comfort, that I have asked for, and receved, Eld. Griffin's consent to send it to you for publication in the Signs. So, if you think it to be of interest to the readers of the Signs as it has to me, please publish it; if not, please return to me.

Wife and I are members of the Little Flock Church, Altus, Oklahoma. May the Lord give you grace to continue the work you are so ably doing. Your little brother, if one at all.

R. H. Hauk

Covin, Alabama

Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Houk
Altus, Oklahoma
Dear Brother and Sister in Christ:

Your precious letter, heavily laden with the drippings of the good things of our heavenly kingdom, came a few days past. We have shared, as we hope, the joys that you have experienced in this wilderness road; we have drunk with you the cup of sorrow which has been so brimming full to you. We have, dear tried ones, a fond hope that our hearts beat in perfect unison with yours.

Dear sister Fay we know something of your bodily ailments, for we too have felt the afflicting hand of our heavenly Father. To our dear brother Henry we know what it is to be kept from making anything for the daily needs in a natural way, and we know something of how sad it is to have to stand helplessly by and see our dear ones sick and unable to lift our hand towards healing them.

These things all happen to all the race of Adam. We cannot take courage, nor can we have faith, when we are sick just because it is common with the sons of men. Nor can we be comforted when in the throes of pain and suffering, just because the Bible speaks of the suffering with him having a reign going on. For the intensity of our daily warfare gets so trying and exacting that we just do not see how we can be a child of God. All the outward marks and rites and ceremonies of men are not enough to convice us of our acceptance with him. All the comfort that is lasting and worthwhile is that work in the heart — that still work that comes unsought and unlooked for.

It gives us great regret that it will be impossible for us to visit you all this year. The calendar just does not have enough days, and the days just do not have enough hours for us to get around to seeing all the dear saints, and doing all the many things that are demanded at our hands. Work keeps mounting up, and while the work and demands on my body mounts up, my physical powers are on the wane. Not too much time is left I am sure, speaking from a human standpoint; but plenty left for every step from the standpoint of divine and eternal things, for did not David say that all his times were in His hands; and did he not also say that all his springs were in the Lord. If all of our times are in his hands, then we are safe and heaven will be ours when we have waged the last conflict with the ravages of sin. If this is so (and it is), then when we are well it is in the Lord, and when we are sick it is in the Lord. When times are good it is from the Lord, and when we fall into evil days it is from the Lord. To the little gods of this world who the times may look bad now, and if there is such a thing as the independent creature to any extent whatsoever, then to that much, no more, no less, a time comes when God is not in our times. But this is not so, for he has declared the end from the beginning. This being so, you do know that your trials are now, and always have been, included in his eternal will.

If all of the springs of the child of grace are in the hands of God, that is plenty to bring us to silence before the throne of his grace. Now springs rise in the valley, do they not? And a valley is a low place between two hills, is it not? Now who can make a hill? The ones that He had made when the oldest country in the world was first discov-

ered are still there. The valleys are still in their place. Out of the valleys comes the spring, and that to water the low spots. Do you often feel to be excluded from communication with him? Is your view often cut off that you cannot behold the glorious countenance of his face? This is the valley that you are in, but in the valleys shall arise a stream out of what you thought was an affliction. It comes from under the throne of grace, and it is a stream that breaks down every barrier and comes in to water the little plants of the kingdom of our God.

We feel to know that the Lord displayed his sovereign power to you both. Oh, dear ones, what a comforting thought it is that we have, as we hope, a great high Priest who can be touched with the feelings of our infirmities, if your body becomes broken and feeble, may God give you to stop just a moment and think upon the body of another dear one. No suffering of ours is ever worthy to be compared to that that he did in his body. And here is another precious thought: if we are his, we never suffer alone, but in his suffering he went up the hill to Calvary's rugged tree alone. Not a friend to lend a helping hand; not a cherishing word spoken to him; even deserted by his own Father. Oh, little ones, if I could just feel the accompanying power and assurance that my bodily pains were given me as a token of reigning with him, I feel that I would be happy indeed. And, sometimes I feel this, and there steals across my mind the most solemn and serene peace that this world has never been able to copy.

Dark clouds often hover close o'er me. The hand of Saul often seeks my poor life, and if it were not for Jonathan, who knows all about me, and knows my enemies as well, I would have fallen long ago. But David and Jonathan alone knew the matter, and as they are the Christ and the Spirit in type, just so does he know all about Saul's maneuverings, and a city of refuge is always near at hand. So far he has led me on, as I hope, and my song today is the song that I learned in the school of grace long, long ago. When these scenes arise, fellowship for the sufferings of my Redeemer God are sweet, and I am given, as I hope, to believe that his feet were broken that I might walk; his hands were broken that I might handle the Word of life; His brow was caressed by a crown of thorns that I might wear a crown of righteousness; his side was opened that my running sore might be healed and closed (Psalms 77:2); he drank the bitter cup of the wrath of God, that I might drink the water of life; he dies that sinners like us poor ones might live; he was buried that just such poor and afflicted ones as we feel to be might be justified.

What is the connection? What does it teach us concerning these things? Just this, dear ones; That through the fiery trials of life the gold may be tried and made fit for the Master's use. Cheer up in the Lord, and rest assured that not one sorrow will be given you but what there will be an equal joy. Why? Because the day of prosperity is set against the day of adversity. Write when you can. May the Lord lead and guide you in the way of all truth.

Yours unworthily
(Elder) W. D. Griffin

R. F. D. 3, Box 26C
Sulligent, Alabama

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing $5.00 to renew my subscription to the Signs.

I enjoy the many sweet letters and editorials. So many can tell my experience that it causes me to feel that, at least, I am not traveling the road of doubts and fears alone, as I so often feel that I am. It fills my heart with joy to know that the children of God feel little and unworthy and that they are willing to fellowship such an unworthy sinner as I.

As far back as I can remember, I re-

spected the Primitive Baptist people because a lot of my relatives were members. Yet I didn't know anything about the doctrine they loved and advocated, until, if I am not mistaken, God saw fit to open my blind eyes and show me where the church was. Then I could understand why the dear old gray-haired people I once knew were often made to rejoice as they knelt washing each other's feet.

As sinner, saved by grace if saved at all.

(Miss) Tennie Egger

"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." (Matthew 4:10)

No doubt we have all wondered and asked why his first trial after his baptism was to be led of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil. We often forget that it was according to God's eternal plan that Jesus, our Saviour, must suffer and die for the sins of his people. That which the Father sent him to do must be done.

A duel was fought in the garden of Eden in the beginning, and from that time the Devil showed himself a liar, and the Lord showed his power over all things: "And the Lord said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this thou are cursed above all cattle and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shall thou eat all the days of thy life; And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." (Genesis 3:14-15)

"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil." (Matthew 4:1) We read about Jesus being baptized by John; and the evidence which was given him of the approval of God as the voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." Jesus did not go up to the city to advertise his coming, but was led into the wilderness. As head over all things to the church, he that knew no sin was made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He had to undergo all temptations which all his people are heir to. Satan waits for forty days, during which Jesus fasted, then in words of doubt and suspicion, said, "If thou be the Son of God, command these stones to be made bread. Notice that Satan did not ask Jesus to ask his father to turn these stones into bread, but for him to command that these stones be made bread. Jesus answered, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

The words, "It is written," have been a great comfort to me in my years in the ministry. When I could turn to the Scriptures and prove my point: Thus sayeth the Lord.

The object of Satan was to get Jesus to sin against God, and so render him forever incapable of being a sacrifice for the sins of his people. In this the tempter failed. Here in the wilderness a battle was fought, and a victory gained: The devil's head was bruised. It was not for himself but for his people that he tread the wine press alone, and a fountain of blood was opened for sin and uncleanness to the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem; which means to me for the elect of God. They are the members of the body of Christ, and are heirs of God, and joint heirs of Christ: no, not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God. May his name be praised! All His suffering, trials and temptations, and death, was for his chosen people. They were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love.

"Submit yourselves therefore to God; Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you." (James 4:7) And He tells us how: humble yourself in the sight of God. He that dwelleth in the temple not made with hands will lift you up. Paul tells

us in Ephesians 6:12, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with Truth, and having on the brestplace of Righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; Above all taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of Salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit; and watching thereunto will all perseverance, and supplication for all the saints."

Take courage, brethren, our Lord has crushed the serpent's head. I have only touched on the first temptation, the stones and the bread; maybe, if it is the Lord's will, I will take the others up later. Grace to all who know the Lord as the Son of God.

(Elder) George L. Weaver

Bassett, Va.

Dear Elder and Sister Spangler and Editors of the Signs of the Times:

I notice mother's subscription to the dear Signs is past due, so please credit her with the $5.00 enclosed.

I feel so vile, wretched and undone, I wonder if it is wrong for me to call the dear children of God, Brother and Sister. Yet I feel I have a love of them which I can't describe, which I hope it is of the Lord. If he has given me a love for his little ones, it is real and wonderful. I often wonder do I love the Lord or not. He has been so good to me a poor needy, wretched sinner: and I am not worthy of his notice. Oh, may he renew the right spirit within me, and create within me a pure heart. Oh, God, bless me with the sweet spirit of prayer; let me look unto the hills from whence cometh my strength: my only hope — my all, if it by thy blessed will.

I would live in the way that is pleasing in his dear sight, but we cannot do anything that is pleasing to him unless he blesses us to do it, — it must all come from our gracious Lord, who is Lord of Lords and King of Kings. The following verse of a sweet hymn tells my feelings better than I can:

"O, for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame;
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb!"

May He keep me at the feet of his little ones; and may we grieve over our own faults and many sins, and look over our precious brethren for good and not for evil. I feast upon the good news in the dear Signs of the Times and the Old Faith Contender; they and my Bible are so wonderful to me, yet I feel too vile at times to read them.

May the Lord bless the dear Editors to earnestly contend for the truth in love, to the honor and glory of His name, and may He bless Brother and Sister Spangler with his sweet presence; and may he keep all his little ones in loving mercy. Your least and most unworthy sister, if one at all.

Callie Clark

Hermleigh, Texas,

Dear Editors:

Enclosed you will find $3.00 to renew my subscription to the Signs. I have received the January issue, and it alone is worth much more than the price of the paper. However, the Signs of the Times is not valued as to dollars and cents, but according to the spiritual food contained in each issue.

It is very comforting and edifying to read an experience of grace written by a brother or sister, realizing that it corresponds with mine to a great degree, if I am not deceived in the matter. But so much of the time I fear that

Satan, by his cunning craftiness, has shown me that I am deceived. Then again, when that still small voice speaks to my troubled soul and gives me sweet peace and rest for a while, I can say, "Give thanks, O, my soul." I have been so richly blessed all of my sinful life, even during my physical afflictions, that I can say, Surely the Holy Spirit has been ever near to protect and to comfort me.

May the dear Lord richly bless the editors, the many readers of the Signs, and God's saints everywhere, is my humble prayer.

Minnie Lee Williams

Delmar, Delaware

Dear Elder Spangler:

For some time I have been impressed to write to you, so today I am making the attempt. First, I want to mention the January number of the Signs, in which there is a prophecy written in poetic style by Elder Perdue. I think this is wonderful. Then the experience and obituary notice of Brother Rounds were of special interest to me.

Now, I want to present a few thoughts on a verse of scripture found in Canticles 4:16, which reads: "Awake, O North Wind; and come thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits." We will first notice the word, "Awake." For one to awake, he must first be asleep. Spiritually speaking, all of Adam's race are asleep in the matter of understanding spiritual things. Yes, they are dead in trespasses and sins. So to understand the things of the Spirit, a revelation must come to one; and this revelation comes from the Holy Spirit. The Holy spirit quickens, or makes alive. The words, "Awake, O north wind," I understand to be symbolic. Let us consider the nature of the north wind. In winter it is cold and chilling; but winter is necessary. There is more oxygen in the north wind than there is in the south; so we sometimes say when the wind is at the north: "The air is brisk this morning." What we mean is, the air is full, or well filled with oxygen. Oxygen is a gaseous element, forming one-fifth of the atmosphere we breathe. I mention this to show the great wisdom of the great Creator. Just think for a moment about his great wisdom, and we are lost in rapture and praise.

I said I understood the words "North wind" to be symbolic. What then do they symbolize? When the Holy Spirit descends upon one, and shows such an one what he is by nature, there is coldness in the soul. His or her sins appear before them like mountains. Every sinfulful act and every evil thought comes up before them: They are giving an account of their deeds before the great Judge of the Universe, even before the great white throne. My understanding is, the great white throne for the Lord's people is set up in their hearts. Thus when one of God's children does something wrong, such child gives an account of the wrong done right then and there. They abhor themselves and repent in dust and ashes. The only torment the Lord's people will ever know anything about, is what they experience right here in this time state; and surely they are tormented because of their sins. The feel to say with the Psalmist, "Create within me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." This prayer they offer because they know they have no power to accomplish this.

We have been speaking of the North wind, and what it symbolizes; now we come to consider the South wind, and the effect it has upon the earth, including man. "Awake, O North wind, and come thou south; blow upon my garden that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden and eat his pleasant fruits." The south wind has a very different effect upon the earth than that of the north. The

south wind is balmy when the Spring arrives. We previously mentioned the condition of the soul under condemnation; now we come to the time of deliverance therefrom. You were mourning because of your sins; you were ready to give up, and say, "If my soul be sent to hell, thy righteous law approves it well." Then suddenly, in a moment — in the twinkling of an eye, your burden was gone; you were astonished, or rather, I should say surprised. There may have been an impulse to reach out your hand and try to get this burden back, that you might know how it went; but you could not get it back, it was gone. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof. But ye cannot tell from whence it cometh, or whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." How beautifully this illustrates the New Birth! So the cold north wind has now ceased to blow, to chill the soul; and the warm South wind has come, and there is warmth in the soul. Even the birds sing with an enchanting melody — a melody which we had never noticed before.

Since I have been writing about this garden, as mentioned in the beginning of this article, my mind has been going back to an old fashioned garden at the old homestead where I was reared. In this garden there was a little ditch in the rear. On the banks of this ditch there was a shrub bush, a goose berry bush, and peppermint and spearmint. Shrubs, as you perhaps know, exudes a very pleasant odor. I used to pluck a shrub from this bush and carry it in my pocket for awhile; and the warmth from my body seemed to add to the fragrance of the shrub. And the gooseberries were used in making pies; and peppermint and spearmint are useful in flavoring and for their aromatic qualities. In this garden there was a walkway, and on either side of this walkway, garden vegetables were planted. But the important thing about this old fashioned garden — it was enclosed. In other words, there was a fence around it. This fence was put there to keep out marauders, including dogs. "For without are dogs." etc. In this old fashioned garden there were several beehives. It was a great pleasure for me in those days to watch the little busy bees come and go from these hives; they attend strictly to their own business and will allow no outside interference. I want to notice briefly the wisdom manifested in these little creatures, to show the great wisdom of an alwise God. These little creatures know how to make a capsule, fill it up with nectar, and then seal it up. Only the fool can say in his heart there is no God.

You have, perhaps, noticed that I have been calling this garden an old fashioned one. It was an old fashioned one. Times have changed, but not for the better; in these days these old fashioned gardens are scarce. Gardens are not enclosed anymore, but seeds are planted out in the open space, thus giving dogs and other maurauders opportunity to trample upon them. Here is a comparison: churches of certain denominations are out in the open, so to speak; all one has to do to become a member is to sign a pledge and say that he accepts Christ as his personal saviour, then they are full pledged members. This kind of a church, or garden, is very different from the one we are considering. In verse twelve we read, "A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." Since this is getting lengthy, I will make no comment upon these words, except to say that they show a special kind of a garden, or church. Only the elect of God can occupy a place in this special garden. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal: the Lord knoweth them that are his."

I hear one saying, "Am I one of His?" There are times when we are in serious doubt about our standing before God. Let us look at the evidence that we are one of his: Do you hate sin? Is there a desire in your heart to be free from these evil thoughts that torment you? If you can answer yet to these ques-

tions, you need no further evidence.

A. T. Benson

(To be concluded)

Mangum, Oklahoma

Dear Editors:

My subscription expires with the February issue, and lest I put it off too long, the enclosed is for another two years of good reading. The little extra may be used in any way you see fit.

I do love to read the letters and the Bible when the good Lord gives me a mind to view the wonderful works of God that are spoken of and shown through the experiences of many brethren. Surely it is manna from Heaven, when the food tastes so well. Hope I am thankful when permitted to feast; and also for the daily blessings received.

May the Lord continue to bless you and others to write many more comforting editorials and letters.

An unworthy sister,
Madora Gibson

SPECIAL NOTICE

WELSH TRACT CHURCH HISTORIES

Because of a continued demand, we have published 100 additional copies of the WELSH TRACT CHURCH HISTORIES. (The oldest Old School Baptist Church in America) When these are gone there will be no more, so order at once, if you desire one. Price $1.00.

SHOWERS OF RAIN

We have about fifty copies of an excellent pamphlet, SHOWERS OF RAIN, by the late Flossie I. Faulkner, of New York. This booklet contains the experience of Sister Faulkner, and twenty-five spiritual poems. You will enjoy reading it.

While they last, we are giving one for each new subscription to the Signs, or will mail one postpaid for fifty cents.

SEND ALL REMITTANCES, AND CORRESPONDENCE FOR PUBLICATION, TO SIGNS OF THE TIMES, Route 5, Box 332-F, DANVILLE, VIRGINIA. PLEASE WATCH YOUR EXPIRATION DATE AND RENEW PROMPTLY. EDITORS.

ASSOCIATIONAL NOTICE

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will convene with the Olive & Hurley Church at Shokan, New York, (on Route 28, thirteen miles North of Kingston, N. Y.) Wednesday and Thursday, September 15th and 16th, 1954.

Services will begin at 10:30 (DST) Wednesday morning. A cordial invitation is extended to all ministers and brethren of our faith who are in order and fellowship with us, and all friends are welcome. Those coming on Tuesday will stop at the Ruckert Tourist Home, which is next to the Meeting House, and they will be cared for.

(Elder) Amasa J. Slauson, Pastor

MAINE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Maine O. S. Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, September 10, 11 and 12, 1954. Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Sanford S. Bartlett, Clerk

WELSH TRACT MEETING

The yearly meeting of the Welsh Tract Old School Baptist Church, Newark, Delaware, will be held the second Sunday in September (the 12th). The church is located one mile South of Newark. Our brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

D. V. Spangler, Pastor

VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with Frying Pan Church October 13, 14, and 15, 1954. The meeting house is located on Route 15, between Chantilly and Herndon, Virginia. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren of our faith and order, and all friends are welcome. Further information may be obtained from either of the undersigned.

Arthur L. Carter, Clerk
Manassas, Virginia

ASSOCIATIONAL NOTICE

The One Hundred Eighty-ninth annual session of the Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association will be held with the church at Tarboro, North Carolina, on Highway No. 64, the first Sunday in October, Saturday before and Monday following.

Elder J. D. Fly was appointed to preach the Introductory Sermon; Elder R. B. Denson, alternate.

We extend an invitation to our visiting brethren and ministers in order. Those desiring to come the day before notify R. B. Denson, Rocky Mount, N. C.

Elder A. B. Ayers, Moderator
Elder R. B. Denson, Clerk

EDITORIALS

Danville, Va. September, 1954

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TO

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EDITORIAL

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: we have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer." (Hebrews 8:1, 2, 3.)

In the first verse Paul says, "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: we have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens," meaning the greatest and most important, not only of what he had spoken, but all that he or anyone else would speak in the future. He is the sum and substance of all the ceremonial offerings and sacrifices made under the law, above all the high priests that were before Him, and has sat down at the right hand of God as the greatest Priest of all, whose offering has been accepted by His Father. Well could the apostle say, "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." He is, "Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." This high Priest hath been "appointed heir of all things, by whom he also made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they." To this name every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess to God. God hath anointed Him with the oil of gladness above all others.

A sum is the result of putting two or more things together. We read that Jesus, "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," and when we add all these together, we have a complete Saviour as the result. He is our high Priest; He is our elder brother and the captain of our salvation. "We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens," that is, at the right hand of His Father to make intercessions for the household of faith. The word "such" means the exact kind of priest described or implied in the preceding portion of this epistle. In the preceding chapter Paul says of this priest, "Who is made not after the law

of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life." Then Paul quotes from the 110th Psalm and says, "For He (the Lord) hath sworn, and will not repent, thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." This Melchizedek, who was without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, was a type of the Son of God, who as God, is without mother, and as man without father; the high Priest over the house of God, and whose Priesthood will never end, nor His law ever change. He is not like the Levitical priests who continued their offerings year after year for the people; but His one offering which He has made, and is accepted by His Father, is not only adequate for the past and present, but for all succeeding generations. He has therefore, sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens permanently. He is a Priest in another since. Paul tells us "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." If He had not suffered and been tempted as His people are, He would not be able to succour them that are tempted. If He were not a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, He would not be touched by the feeling of the infirmities of His people. It is good to know when doubts and fears arise within us, adversity and disease befall us, sins arise before us like mountains, when persecution arises because of the word, and we feel to say with the apostle Paul, "In me that is in my flesh dwelleth no good thing," that we have one unto whom we can go, who hath a hearing ear and an understanding heart.

We are not inclined to call upon a physician until we feel the presence of some disease or infirmity in the body. We may have some malignant disease that is eating and sapping our vitality and not be aware of it, until it has weakened us beyond that of anything more than a temporary relief. So, sin may reign in our mortal bodies and we not be aware of it, until it begins to prey upon our consciences and manifest a disease that we were not before aware of. Just as sure as this disease is manifested, we will call upon the Great Physician for the disease of the soul, as we call for the family physician for the infirmities of the body. This Great High Priest — this Great Physician is touched when His children cry unto Him by reason of the feeling of their infirmities. When the men of Gennesaret had knowledge of Him, "They besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole." (Matthew 4:36.)

"A minister of the sactuary" is a minister of heavenly and spiritual things from where He sits at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. Where He has immunity from the ceremonial law, and is under no obligations to administer daily and yearly offerings as did the Levitical priest. A minister is one who waits on, or serves another. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." While on earth He healed the sick, unstopped the deaf ear, opened the eyes of the blind, caused the lame to walk, and raised the dead, prayed for Peter that his faith fail not, and that His people be kept while in the world. Jesus is a minister to all those who are sanctified by God the Father, and unto whom He is made "Wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." To these He ministered when on earth, and now He is in heaven as their minister and intercessor. "Wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;" and then Paul tells us what these gifts were for, "For

the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Each of these gifts and the effectual exercise of them in the position for which He has qualified them, are according to His ministration. He is minister of good things, and these gifts are good gifts, because they come from above.

"And of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Some believe that heaven where Jesus is at the right hand of God is the tabernacle meant in the expression, "true". A tabernacle is a place where people meet for public worship, and in this sense, the church is a tabernacle of which the Jewish tabernacle was a type. The tabernacle of Moses was a type of the gospel church, the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched (built) and not man. "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of host hath sent me unto you." (Zechariah 4:9.) Jesus asked His disciples saying, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And Simon Peter answered and said, thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock(the same principle that Peter knew Him) I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

I think it better however, to consider that the human body in which the Son of God walked on earth — and still occupies — is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; the true tabernacle, the conception of which, man had nothing to do with; and according to the two men in white apparel; "Which also said, ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." We assume therefore, that as He left this earth in this tabernacle, and is coming again in like manner, that is, in the same form in which He left, He still occupies it as the Great High Priest over the church of God and minister of the sanctuary. And the fullness of the Godhead dwelleth in Him bodily, He has in His possession all the gifts and qualifications that His people stand in need of and, as the ministrator thereof, He will supply them in due season.

"For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer." The sacrifices under the Levitical priesthood would not suffice, because they could not take away sin. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin, and as the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin, it was necessary to look to another source. The Son of God was God, and as God in the abstract, that is apart from any other object, did not possess that which the law required for an offering. God is a Spirit and blood. After Jesus arose from the dead He appeared to His disciples, "But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, why are ye troubled? And why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."

Many doubt the eternal Sonship and argue that there was no Son of God until Mary conceived and brought forth a Son. But the person, or body that Mary brought forth, was the child that was to be born, in whom the Son of God was to be manifested. The child Jesus was born, but the Son was given. Paul says, "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham."

H. O. Nash

The opinions and doings of men are of no value unless motivated by the Spirit of Truth; if otherwise, they "darken counsel by words without knowledge".

WE QUOTE:

"You may be outwardly very consistent; but if you are harsh, censorious, self-willed, obstinate, unforgiving; if you would sooner see the church torn to pieces with strife than give way on some point which involves neither truth nor conscience, but merely some concession of opinion, you are breaking the precept as much by your disobedience to its spirit as others to their disobedience to its letter. God, who searcheth the heart and reads our inmost thoughts, feelings, and motives, descries with unerring eye our spirit as well as our conduct; and if, indeed, we see light in his light, we shall read our own heart too, and distinguish between the proud, obstinate, self-willed, contentious spirit of the old man and the humble, forgiving, affectionate spirit of the new." J. C. Philpott in, MEDITATIONS.

CAN YOU IMAGINE?

1. The early Christians seeking an evangelist who could "pull the crowds!"
2. The apostle Paul using wire pulling methods to get into a coveted pulpit?
3. Philip the evangelist depending upon the Samaritan Gazette and catchy window cards to advertise his evangelistic campaigns?
4. The Thessalonian Church off to the bathing beach for their annual picnic?
5. The early preachers giving one another flowery introductions to new audiences?
6. The Jerusalem Church putting on a cake sale to make up the preacher's back salary?
7. The Ethiopian eunuch or the Philippian jailer being satisfied to sign a card indicating their faith in Christ?
8. The early preachers having an eye to salary, popularity, and advancement, when going to a new field?
9. The Church at Antioch putting itself under a burdensome indebtedness in order to erect an up-to-date house of worship?
10. The apostle Paul closing a service with a modern invitation?

—Selected.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ROMANS II. 12.

"For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law."

By request, this quotation in Paul's letter to the Romans is presented to the readers of the Signs. We feel to say that the one who made the request is better qualified to write upon this subject than we are, yet we will give some expressions of our mind in answer to the request.

Paul in thus addressing the church at Rome was teaching them relative to Jew and Gentile. First, we will remind you that God created of one blood all nations of the earth, and the first Adam, who was of the earth earthy, was the first of all men, and God gave him a law which was his government while in the Garden of Eden, and was the strength of the conviction of Adam in transgression, and all nations of the earth being in Adam's loins were involved in Adam's transgression and became dead in trespasses and sins, and must remain there until One stronger than he, who had the power of death, delivers them. Israel (or the Jews) was given a law written upon tables of

stone, and when Moses saw the children of Israel worshipping idols he threw down the tables of stone and broke them. This proves to our understanding the impossibility of man to keep the spiritual law, for his carnal mind cannot behold the spiritual import thereof, and the written commandments are all he can see, and in the services under the law they transgress instead and are therefore judged by the law, while the Gentiles are not judged according to the law of Moses. Jew and Gentile are alike under the law of sin and death. The Gentiles having sinned without the law of Moses must perish without it, and the Jews having the law must be judged accordingly. Christ coming in the flesh was the end of the law for righteousness. Those who worship God in spirit and in truth are judged as sinners after the first Adam's transgression, and as the saved of the Lord, and are judged in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Jesus made the twain one new man making peace, bringing Jew and Gentile to the knowledge of the truth as it is in him, and causing them to see eye to eye and speak the same things and behold Jesus as their Savior. The child of God has the manifestation of God's word spoken by the prophet Jeremiah in the covenant he said he would make with the house of Israel after those days: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts: and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." — Jeremiah xxxi. 33. Also, Hebrews viii. 10, says, "I will put my law into their minds." As all are condemned by one law all must be justified by one law, which is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Those justified in Christ live by faith and are doers of the law, for he works in them to will and to do of his good pleasure. The child of God is not a hearer of the law only, but the doer as well, and is justified. (Romans ii. 13.) When brought in such realizations they have the experience that Paul spoke of when he said, "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." — Rom. vii. 33. Just preceding this expression he says, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man." He realized the dying to the things of the flesh and the desire to live unto God, and not being able to do the things he would he exclaims, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Having such depression of spirits we find Paul saying, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." What wonderful words the apostle Paul has written in all his epistles to the churches and ministers to encourage, teach and exhort them according to the grace given him by the God of heaven. He fully realized that he stood before God in the immediate presence of Jesus. This was why he felt to be wretched, as all children of grace desire to be Christlike. When the sunshine of God's grace shone in Paul's heart he could say, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority." — Titus ii. 11-15. The law of the Lord put in the inward parts and written in the minds causes deep thinking, and close watch on our conversation and deportment of life lest we dishonor God. The truth we feel to stand for as it is in Jesus, and in our daily vocation of life the truth must come either to justify or condemn, and we feel the children of God will triumph over the powers of darkness, for Jesus is their Savior, and he bringeth them off more than conquerors. Truth is mighty and will prevail, and when the truth is spoken men may rise up against it, but nev-

er to the crushing of it. Having this grace teaching us, we desire to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. Dear reader, does the law of the Spirit of life teach or uphold evil speaking, backbiting, strife, envy and malice, or does it rather condemn? By this law we are either justified or condemned, and in the language of Paul to Timothy, "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality." — I Tim. v. 21. Paul, having this law, could not face condemnation and sow to his flesh, neither can any other called man of God, unless the Lord suffers the devil to take him, as he did Peter, but he told him, "When thou art converted strengthen thy brethren." Peter's confession of his sins was strengthening to them, and we do believe when any of God's children walk in forbidden paths of unrighteousness the brethren are strengthened when they see the humiliation manifested by the spirit which abides upon them and they come to the church desiring to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world with the brethren, and not as Orpah who turned back, but like Ruth cleaving unto Naomi. This truth lives in the heart of every member of the bride of Christ, and they will stand and contend earnestly for the truth and order of the house of God.

(Editorial by Elder C. W. Vaughn, January, 1930)

OBITUARIES

MRS. ALICE HANSON

WHEREAS, It was the will of almighty God to remove from this natural life our beloved sister, Mrs. Alice Hanson, in March, 1954; and whose funeral was held in Oklahoma, with interment in the same state, which had been her home for a number of years, and

WHEREAS, She united with the Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, near Cash, Texas, in August, 1932, and remained a faithful member until death, though she lived too far away to attend meetings; be it therefore

RESOLVED, That we, in humble submission, bow to the divine will of God, who doeth all things well; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Adopted by order of the church while in conference, Saturday May 21, 1954.

(Elder) W. W. Taylor, Moderator
R. O. Tidwell, Clerk

SISTER BELLE BARNES

Sister Belle Stover was married to I. A. Barnes, November 1, 1899. She united with Mt. Parren Primitive Baptist Church, near Fordyce, Arkansas, and was baptized the 4th Sunday in October, 1916, by Elder V. R. Harris.

She was the mother of four children: one daughter, Mary, passed away in 1913, and one son, Nuel, passed away in 1943; and her husband passed away December 16, 1934. She is survived by one son, Newman; and one daughter, Sister Erma Broach, both of Fordyce. She made her home with Sister Erma and her husband, Mr. Henry Broach, and their son, Henry, Jr. after the death of Mr. Barnes. She was tenderly cared for, with much love and devotion during her long illness. She passed away March 14, 1954.

Sister Barnes was settled and grounded in a living faith in the power of the living Word of God and his never failing promises. Her funeral was conducted by the writer and Elder W. A. Speer, who tried to comfort the bereaved family and friends, at Stony Pt. Church; after which the body was laid to rest by the side of her husband in Stony Pt. Cemetery, near Fordyce, Arkansas.

Sister Barnes leaves to mourn, besides the family, a host of relatives and friends, who feel that their loss is her eternal gain. She will be missed by the membership of Pilgrims Rest Church, where she had moved her membership; but we desire to bow to the will of the God of eternal love, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. May He sweetly reconcile us all to His will.

Written by her pastor,
(Elder) J. T. Everitt.

GEORGE LEE RICHMOND

God, in his infinite wisdom, saw fit to remove from our midst our brother, George Lee Richmond, on Sunday, January 3, 1954, after an illness of three years.

Brother Richmond was born in Caswell County, N. C., on April 4, 1876, and was the son of James Lee and Mary Dammon Richmond. He was united in marriage on December 25, 1903, to Nannie Lee Gammon, who remains to mourn his loss; together with five daugh-

ters: Mrs. Gladys Mize, Mrs. Gertrude Adams, Mrs. Clara Fletcher, Mrs. Ola Rackley, Mrs. Kate McKee; and one son: George D. Richmond. Also fifteen grand children and fifteen great grand children.

Funeral services were conducted from the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, of which he was a member for many years. Elders S. M. McKinney, assisted by Elder E. H. Birchett, conducted the services. Both being blessed to speak of the goodness and mercy of our Lord. He was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful blanket of flowers, there to await the second coming of our Lord.

We, the members of Dan River Church, extend our heart felt sympathy to his family, and request that these few words of respect to our departed brother be included in our church minutes; a copy be sent to the family, and a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times and the Old Faith Contender for publication.

Written at the request of the church while in conference, Saturday before the fourth Sunday in January, 1954.

Sister Lucy V. Davis
Sister Beulah Cox

MRS. ODESSA CLEVELAND KINCAID

Sister Odessa Cleveland Kincaid was born October 13, 1880, and departed this life May 3, 1954. She was married to Veet Wilkinson, March 24, 1901, who died in 1912; in 1916 she was married to Glaspie Kincaid, who died in 1939.

She is survived by the following: two stepsons, Gilmer B. Kincaid, Dunbar, W. Va. and Earl Kincaid, of Ohio; two stepdaughters, Mrs. Goldie Shaffer, Dunbar, W. Va., and Mrs. Martha Hill, Charleston, W. Va.; one foster daughter, Miss Clemon McClanahan, Lanham, W. Va.; one foster son, Joe McClanahan, U. S. Army; eight brothers, Oscar, Estil and Jess McClanahan, Lanham, W. Va.; Boyd McClanahan, Nitro, W. Va.; Homer, Ferrell and Okey McClanahan, Poca, W. Va. and Freeman McClanahan, Charleston, W. Va.

She was a faithful member of Flatwoods Primitive Baptist Church, and was at her meetings as long as she was able to attend. She bore her afflictions with patience and longed to be with Jesus, her blessed Saviour.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders J. C. Hammond and H. J. Bird, at which there was a large congregation. We feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

(Elder) J. C. Hammond

JOSEPH W. MINTER

By request, I write the obituary of our much loved brother and deacon of North Fork Church, Joseph W. Minter. He was the son of Joseph and Matilda Bocock Minter; born in Henry County, Virginia, in 1869, and departed this life November 1, 1953; making his stay on earth eighty-four years.

He joined Reed Creek Primitive Baptist Church March 10, 1895, and was baptized by Elder Z. T. Turner. He later moved his membership by letter to North Fork Church, where he remained faithful until the Lord called him home. He was united in marriage to Miss Lucy Franklin in April, 1892, and to this union eleven children were born. One child and his companion were taken from him before his death. He is survived by ten children: Mrs. Posey Eanes, Mrs. Paul Wyatt, Mrs. Aubrey Wells, Mrs. Norman McGhee, and Archie Minter, of Martinsville; Mrs. Boyd Minter, Mrs. Claude Horsley, Paul and Gold Minter, Draper, N. C., and Tommy of Axton, Va. and thirty-eight grand children, twenty-three great grand children, and a host of friends.

He was honest in all of his dealings with his fellow man, labored hard, and ate bread by the sweat of his face. He provided bountifully for his family, and had much sickness in the family. As for himself, he was a very strong man until his last sickness of seven or eight years duration. His children were all good to him, and was especially cared for with loving kindness by Mrs. McGhee, her husband, and his son Archie, with whom he made his home.

Brother Minter loved the church devotedly, and was faithful in every particular as a deacon, and for the cause of the truth. He was sound in the doctrine of the sovereignty of God, and salvation alone by the grace of God. I spent many hours in his hospitable home, and enjoyed conversing with him on the Scriptures, and the goodness and mercy of God. He was always delighted to have the brethren visit him, but in his last days was not conscious of their presence.

His funeral was conducted at the home by Elders D. V. Spangler, P. E. Ingram and J. E. Burgess; and was buried by the side of his wife in the cemetery near the home. The beautiful florial offerings attested the high esteem in which he was held, and a large concourse of people gathered to pay their last respects to their friend.

To all the bereaved the sympathy of generous hearts is extended. Written by his humble pastor.

(Elder) John E. Burgess

WILLIAM K. TRUITT

Mr. William K. Truitt, son of Handy I. and Charlotte M. Truitt, was born September 10, 1871, and died at his home in Snow Hill, Maryland, January 22, 1954, after a lingering illness.

He was married to Sister Gertrude W. Hearn, March 20, 1895; and to this union three children were born: Elijah, James and

Mrs. Gertrude Mariner, who survive him. His wife passed away September 6, 1949. She was a most faithful and steadfast member of the Snow Hill Church, even though the last years of her life were hindered by illness. Mr. Truitt was not a member of the visible church, but was well established in the faith and doctrine of the Old School Baptists.

Their home was always open to the Baptist people, and it seemed to be a pleasure to entertain even after they had to depend on their children to help them. His funeral was conducted in the Snow Hill meeting house, where he attended the meeting regularly for many years, and was very helpful. His body was interred in the adjoining cemetery.

(Elder) H. M. Bennett

WALTER E. BRYANT

Brother Walter E. Bryant was born to John and Octavia Mullins Bryant, October 14, 1874, and departed this life April 18, 1954.

He had been a faithful member of Town Creek Primitive Baptist Church for about thirty years. During his life he had procured a good name among those who knew him. He worked fifty years for a railroad company; but for the last ten years he devoted his time unselfishly to his home, church and community. As his pastor, I can say that his outstanding characteristic as a Christian gentleman was his love for his fellow-man.

His remaining family consists of his wife, Alza; two daughters, Mrs. Jeff Philpott, Philpott, Virginia; Mrs. C. W. Southern, Walnut Cove, N. C.; and five sons, H. D. Bryant, Fairfax, S. C.; Newton Bryant, Salem, Virginia; Glen A. Bryant, Rocky Mount, Virginia; Everett Lee Bryant, U. S. Army, and H. Grey Bryant, Henry, Virginia.

His funeral was conducted amid a host of sorrowing friends by the writer and Elder Randolph Perdue at his church. Burial was in Town Creek Cemetery.

(Elder) P. E. Ingram

ALIZA ADAMS DODSON

With much sadness and deep sorrow I will try to write a few lines in memory of my very dear companion, who passed away on the first day of November, 1953. She had been in declining health for several years, but her death was unexpected and was a great shock to all the family. We cannot express how much we miss her in our home; we had been married for nearly fifty-three years. It is hard to give her up but we hope to meet one day where there are no sorrows, trials or troubles, or sad farewells.

No companion and mother could have been more faithful and devoted to her family than she. We were blessed with a large family of eleven children, and blessed of the Lord to raise them to be highly respectful citizens of this great country.

She was a member of the church, feeling her unworthiness; but was a strong believer in the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists, and was always ready to defend it when necessary. So with the evidence she left us we feel that she is now resting in Paradise. I have just passed my eightieth birthday, and will soon follow her into the great beyond.

Written by her unworthy companion,
Thomas D. Dodson

IN MEMORIAM

L. R. Moore, the son of Haywood and Darkis Green Moore, was born April 2, 1869, and passed quietly from this life August 26, 1952.

He was first married to Lucy Lassiter, of Johnston County. One son, David A. Moore, now deceased, was born of this union. He later married Frances Tindal, who survives. Also surviving are two brothers, two stepsons, five grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren. Funeral rites were conducted in Durham by Elders N. D. Teasley and F. W. Rhodes, followed by interment in Woodlawn Memorial Park.

Brother Moore united with Clement Church, in Johnston County, North Carolina on the second Saturday in May, 1896, was baptized by Elder Lewis Adams, and in 1929 was ordained deacon. After moving to Durham County in 1933, he was united by letter to Ross Church. On October 20, 1934, having been granted a letter for convenience from Ross Church, he united with Durham Church where he served faithfully as deacon until his death.

Brother Moore was a soft-spoken, unassuming man whose life was ornamented with a meek and quiet spirit. His humble demeanor and his constant devotion and faithfulness to the Church will be remembered with tender love and respect by his many friends and brethren. He possessed an abiding faith in the promises of God, steadfastly manifesting that "he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

"Servant of God, well done;
Rest from thy loved employ;
The battle fought, the victory won,
Enter thy Master's joy.

The pains of death are past;
Labor and sorrow cease;
And life's long warfare closed at last,
His soul is found in peace.

Soldier of Christ, well done;
Praise be thy new employ;
And, while eternal ages run,
Rest in thy Saviour's joy."

Submitted in love,
Catherine M. Copley

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 122 DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1954 NO. 10

I WILL SING OF MY REDEEMER

Jesus left His home in Glory,
Came to die for you and me:
None can tell how Jesus suffered,
On the cross of Calvary.

(Chorus)
I will sing of my Redeemer,
Till the day He calls for me:
To be with Him up in Heaven,
Through out all Eternity.

Praise His name, His name forever,
Lift your voice in happy song,
Tell the world of Christ our Saviour,
Sing His praises all day long.

Now my heart is filled with gladness,
I rejoice along my way,
Help me Lord to do thy bidding:
Till I reach my home some day.

Go on brethren, go rejoicing,
For this life will soon be o'er,
Then we'll meet the one that loves us,
On that bright Eternal shore.

I believe my precious brethren,
Some glad day we'll all arise:
To be with Him in His likeness,
Then we'll all be Satisfied.

I am only crossing over,
Passing from this desert cold,
There to be at home with Jesus,
Safely sheltered in the fold.

Stella Caudell

FROM GRANDMOTHER TO GRANDDAUGHTER

Ramer, Alabama.

Dear Faye:

Your letters are such a pleasure to me. When I think of my girl grandchildren as being good wives and mothers, that is the best life for them. Of course, both girls and boys should learn a trade, so that they can make an honest living. The Bible says something like this: "Work willingly with your hands that ye lack nothing."

Should you learn all the things that a good wife and mother should know, you can certainly make a living should anything happen to your good husband.

You should try to keep the commandments in the Old Testament. I think you can find them in the twentieth Chapter of Exodus. The New Testament teaches that the, "Law is a schoolmaster unto Christ." In the old covenant, they had to sacrifice an animal without spot and without blemish. Over and over again they had to keep making these sacrifices, for they had disobeyed the commandment of God. Because God knew how weak and sinful mortals were and are, he sent his only Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be the perfect sacrifice: "A lamb without spot and with blemish." He made a New Covenant (in part as follows): "I will put my law in their hearts and write it in their minds, and I will be unto them a God and they shall be unto me a people." No failure there, you see. It says in another place, "He doeth his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say what doest thou."

God has a people zealous of good works; they are called a peculiar people — each esteeming the other as better than themselves. "For all of us have sinned and come short of the glory of God." "By this shall men know ye are my disciples, because ye have love one for another." In another place it says, "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." How careful we

should be that this should not be in everything we do.

God sees and knows all things: "Our righteousness is as filthy rags before God." But when we can claim Jesus as our surety, he is our righteousness. He paid such a price for the sins of his people. He lived and died for them. He sweated, as it were, great drops of blood. There appeared an angel strengthening him, "He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thous dash thy foot against a stone." They mocked him; spit on him and put a crown of thorns on his dear head. "He was numbered among the transgressors." But thank God for the precious ointment that was put on him for his burial. There was a great difference between him and the transgressors. He prayed for his enemies: "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." "I came not to destroy the law but to fulfill it." Even on the cross, as I remember, he left his mother in John's care; and from that hour John took her to his own home.

Lovingly,

Grandmother (Mrs. Nannie Story)

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE MAINE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

(Written by Sister Menerva Dunlap)

The churches of the Maine Old School Baptist Association, meeting at Bowdoinham, September 11, 12, 13, 1953, to the other churches of our faith and order with whom we correspond: Greetings.

In Malachi, the last book of the Old Testament, we read, "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." This book of remembrance is the New Testament written for the edification of the children of God: for their comfort, for the strengthening of their faith, for reproving and admonishing toward a godly walk; all expressed in messages most precious and beautiful to those who think upon his name and understand his language.

We are told in this book, that, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the kingdom of God; neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned." (I Corinthians 2:14) This spiritual discernment comes from above and cannot be passed along by any man. The natural man may have great learning and sit among the mighty of the earth, but we are told, "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen; yea, and things which are not to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence." (I Corinthians 1:27-29) But however high and mighty his position on earth may be, the man to whom God reveals his power and glory, love and saving grace, feels himself no longer high and mighty, or wise and prudent, but is made to realize his helpless state, his baseness and his dependence upon God. He becomes as a babe under the power of revelation. In Matthew, Jesus said, "I thank thee, O, Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes." These babes are the "vessels of mercy prepared unto glory," and are separated by the miracle of spiritual discernment from the "vessels of wrath fitted unto destruction," spoken of by Paul in Romans. Having been prepared by the Holy Spirit, they are ready to respond to the call of the Spirit; "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. "Take my yoke upon you and learn of

me, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.' "Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened." These are directions from the Shepherd to his sheep, and they do as he bids.

To these same sheep, those of the faith of God's elect, and in language ever sweet and precious to the ear awakened to spiritual discernment, other directions are given in this book of remembrance: "That, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Admonishing this same peculiar people, Paul speaks in Romans and Ephesians: "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world." "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another." "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

No matter how low his estate, or how helpless and discouraged his spirit, or how sunk in the mire of sinful thoughts and evil ways he may feel himself to be, such messages from this book of remembrance will always come with a precious and healing balm to the weary traveler who thinks upon the name of his Lord. The hearing ear which understands such messages, the ability to receive their joyful sound, is that unspeakable gift for which God alone is to be thanked; and those who have it are the ones of whom he said, "They shall be mine in that day when I make up my jewels." (Malachi 3:17).

Elder John D. Wood, Moderator
Sanford S. Bartlett, Clerk

Editors: Signs of the Times:

We are distressed to learn that it became "expedient" to leave off four pages in two issues of our dear paper. It is a shame that thru the negligence of a few to pay their dues promptly that we all must suffer. However, we mortals are prone to be forgetful and neglectful and there is no exception with us.

However something must be done to counteract the possibility of an occurrence of this kind any more.

You have suggested sending in new subscriptions and the thought occurred to me that if a number of us would send in a Gift Subscrption to a few of our dear ones that we think will be subscribers themselves once they have observed the contents of such a wonderful paper.

We are sending a few names and addresses of such that come to mind with check covering same.

Hoping this plan meets with your approval and the readers of the SIGNS.

Your unworthy brother,
(Elder) P. E. Ingram, D. C.
Martinsville, Va.

(This letter from Elder Ingram is greatly appreciated by the editors, and we would be glad if others might feel to do as he has done. We depend, of course, on new subscriptions, renewals and donations to the Indigent Fund to keep the paper coming to our brethren and friends. IF YOU ENJOY READING THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, WHY NOT SPEAK TO THOSE WHOM YOU FEEL WOULD BE INTERESTED IN RECEIVING IT TOO! — J. D. W.)

Greenfield, Tenn.

Dear Editors:

I am taking time to say that I am receiving and reading each issue of the old reliable Signs of the Times, and I really believe it gets better each issue.

I am enclosing a fine letter which you may deem good reading for others: It was to me.

Unworthily,
W. F. Stafford

Vandervoort, Arkansas

W. F. Stafford,
Greenfield, Tenn.
Dear Kindred in Christ:

I have had company almost continually since May 30th, so I've been very busy, but I think the real cause that I have not sooner complied with your request, is the feeling of blankness, and I am sure I could not have written to edify you, or exalt our God. I think I know, too, at this time that unless He is pleased to open his storehouse to me, it would be better for me to keep silent.

I've been in the valley lately, with deep shadows overlapping my pathway, and the path has seemed long and dreary. However this is not new to me. I can truthfully say I am much in Egyptian darkness, or nearly so; though one ray of light is more than I deserve. I can't even pay for that. My best righteousness (if it can be called righteousness) is as filthy rags — not rags, but filthy rags. And when I have done all that I am capable of, it is still just what was my duty; and when we have just done our duty, we do not earn reward. I can't see where reward would come in. Now what have I said! You will think I am a "can't help it." And so I am. I was not consulted when I came into this world. So I couldn't help it. Neither will I be asked about my departure. I imagine I would just stay here if it were left to me; for I know nothing of the world to come, only by faith; and, O, how little of that I have! So when I go hence, it will be because I can't help it. I couldn't help who my parents were. (Wouldn't if I could) They were poor, and that I couldn't help. They have been taken from this world, and I couldn't help that. On my journey, I've done some unbecoming things: I suppose I couldn't help that — anyway I didn't, which proves to me that I couldn't. So, after all, it does not offend me to be called "a can't help it." That is what the conditionalists call the Signs of the Times Baptists. I've tried not to do many things that I somehow did; then I've tried to do things and failed. After all, the name suits me quite well.

I appreciate your kind words about my article in the Signs of the Times. If there was any comfort to anyone therein, the praise belongs to Him who inhabits eternity. Without Him I can do nothing. In him I live, move and have my being. How thoughtless and careless I am, when, if I could, I should ever be mindful that His power is upholding me. Human nature is such a strange thing. Someone said, "The thoughts of our hearts are only evil continually." When we are given to look into the matter, we wonder why it is thus: why we can't think always along right lines. It is then I try to persue a line of thought, try to improve my thinking faculties, only to be immediately lost in turmoil and all my good intentions are gone; completely off my subject. Which proves me unable to control even the leadings of my own mind.

How immense is our Lord! How past finding out! Millions of humanity people the earth, yet, his watchfulness embraces all even to the most minute detail, yet does not stop there: Not a sparrow (surely the most worthless of birds) fall without him; further still, the hairs of our heads are numbered. When He assures us of his care in such detail, how can we doubt his power and wisdom, and that he knows each step before we take it: also directs that step. My words are so inadequate. How I would like to magnify His name in a manner complimentary to him; but it is just not in me. Words do not convey such majesty, glory and honor as belongs to his holiness and supremacy. I become completely lost is wonder when He gives me just a little insight into his beauties. But sometimes I really believe that he gives me a view of it, when I am lifted up for a few brief moments: when

from the mountain top I am allowed to peep over into Canaan. Even though Jordan is rolling furiously between, still when the promised land is in sight things earthly are dispelled for a moment, and I can say with Job, "I know that my Redeemer lives." But I do stagger at calling Him mine, though I much desire to do that; and sometimes have a little hope that He is mine. Such ecstacy is fleeting, and a fall has always followed such blessed moments. I expect a long sojourn in the valley after each brief trip to the mountain top; but the joy outweighs hours, days, even months of aimless wanderings.

Do you suppose I really have a hope, or does Satan keep me thus decoyed. Of course, you see readily how weak is my faith: when I can so soon pass from one state of mind to another. This, too, proves that I am not my keeper, and do not direct my own thoughts. They would always be pleasant thoughts, could I send them forth to my own liking; but while thus engaged in rapture and thoughts of sublime nature, something immediately changes them to meditations of an entirely different, or perhaps conflicting course. Complexities of complexities! But I am thus fashioned because it pleased Him to thus form me. I have no right to inquire, "Why hast thou made me thus?" Desiring, therefore, to be submissive, I hope I trust His grace, for it is sufficient for those whom he arose to justify. Not one of them will fail to enter the realms of bliss.

May all be included in that number, is our carnal desire; and while in the flesh we shall not understand why some are left out, but He knows. It seemed good in his sight. That is enough.

I hope this writing won't be too much of a disappointment to you. I wrote as it came to me. In a blessed hope.

(Mrs.) Nancye Johnston McDaniel

A VERY PLEASANT TRIP

I have been requested to give a sketch of my visit in Eastern Carolina, in April, 1954, and I will endeavor to do so.

Leaving our home on April 26th., wife and I motored to Autey's Creek Church, near Rocky Mount, N. C. for an eleven o'clock service. There we met with Elders J. E. Mewborn and R. B. Denson, the pastor, and a number of brethren and friends. Monday night was spent in the home of Elder Mewborn, and a very pleasant home it is. His wife and son, John, joined with him in entertaining us. How pleasant it is to visit in such lovely homes.

Monday night we endeavored to fill an appointment at Greenville Church. The Pastor, Elder J. B. Roberts was unable to attend because of illness. We visited him the following morning and found him very feeble, but strong in the faith, and manifesting a great desire that the Lord would soon take him. He has been an outstanding minister of that section, and his brethren love him very much. At this appointment we met a young minister by the name of Mewborn, a relative of Elder J. E. Mewborn.

Tuesday an appointment was filled at Upper Town Creek. Here we met Elder Owen, and had lunch with brother Smith, deacon of the church. Tuesday night was spent in the home of Elder R. B. Denson, of Rocky Mount, N. C. and a meeting was held at the Falls Of Tar River Church where Elders P. D. Gold, and A. B. Denson served so many years. Elder J. D. Fly is their efficient pastor, and we met with a large gathering of brethren, sisters and friends. We were favored to visit with Elder Fly and his wife in Elder Denson's home for some time in the afternoon.

Wednesday we visited with the church at Flatty Swamp. Here we met with Elders Ayers, Grimes and Denson. Each one spoke, and it was a heart warming meeting. After the service all the ministers, and others visited with Deacon Jenkins; and then left for Providence Church, at Kitty Hawk, N. C. Here we spoke Wednesday and Thursday night to a very attentive congregation. Surely

this is a pleasant place to visit. They appreciate having service, and manifest a very spiritual condition.

On Friday night we met with the church in Norfolk, Va. Elder R. B. Denson is their pastor, and the church has prospered very much under his ministry. A very lovely body of members and friends are there.

Elder R. B. Denson and Elder Mewborn arranged the appointments. Elder Denson's home we found, as we have in the past, to be truly a hospitable home. His wife always entertaining with much kindness and consideration.

We shall continue to remember this trip pleasantly. The brethren of that section we found continuing the doctrine of the Apostles, removing not the ancient landmarks, but contending earnestly for the Faith once delivered to the saints. The Kehukee Association is the Oldest Primitive Baptist association in America, and have been, and are now, favored with able ministers of the Word. Elder A. B. Ayers is the present moderator, and Elder R. B. Denson, the clerk.

D. V. Spangler

Covin, Alabama
July 9, 1954

Mrs. Effie Bowden & Brother Gus
Benton, Ky.

Dear Brother & Sister Bowden; —

For some reason you good people have been present in my mind for several days, and I don't know why, unless it is to remind me that I never answered your last letter. Now of all the things I am good at, that is one of them. We always are glad to have a letter, but, oh, how we do hate to write one, for most every time we try to write we find that when written and read it just looks and sounds too much like us.

Our District meeting convenes this next Friday at Zion Church and we would be glad to have you and all those good preachers to come and be with us. How about it? We certainly will be rejoiced to have you.

We have sustained the loss of several of our brethren and sisters in death this year, and we feel that loss very much. I would begin to fear that we would soon be extinct, were it not for the fact that I hope that I believe that our God is not only able to raise up others, but that he has been doing just that since time began, and we don't believe that he has changed as of yet. Our hope for our continuance as a church is certainly in Him, and not in the puny arm of the flesh. This carries me to 2nd. chapter of Jeremiah and first and second verses. "Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying, Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousal, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in the land that was not sown." I would like for you to read the first chapter, and then to think of that word Moreover in the beginning of this second, which signifies to me that there is more yet, and I am so glad of the more yet. I don't understand that this old prophet was seeking after this instruction or desiring to Go or Cry; and surely he must have not known where to go or what to cry, or else the word of the Lord would not have instructed him to go, and what to cry. I understand that the place to Go and what to cry was not of Jeremiah, but of the Lord. If of Him, then it must have been of and with him always, or else something new had come into his mind, and if so then he (God) must have changed. There was, as we note, a certain place to go, and a certain place to cry, which was in the ears of Jerusalem. It seems strange to man that this Jerusalem had ears, and that it was in these ears he was to cry. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. Ah, yes, it was in the ears of the church that he was to cry, and I am sure that the ears were, as a matter of fact, a part of the body, and the purpose of them was to hear. That it was God that placed them there and his grand and glorious purpose for them was to hear. So this brings me to

the point that I must admit that it was God that said to Go, and Cry, and what and were to cry.

Now if God has not changed, then it must still be by His own directing hand as to the going, crying, and what and where to cry. Now there is, as you know, an inner and an outer ear, I am therefore persuaded that it was this inner ear in which he was to cry, and surely this is the ear of the hidden man of the heart. If so, then it is an internal deliverance to that internal or inward man of the heart, who is Christ Jesus formed in you the hope of Glory.

Now what did He have instructions to cry? "I remember thee." God being my director, I want to take notice of this in particular. Does God remember the church to-day? I know he does. Could God have forgotten the church, then most certainly he had every reason to forget them, as they had so many times gone after other gods, and worshipped false gods. Yes, to bring this home to me and my experiences, God has had every reason to have forgotten me, if indeed he has ever had the first thought of me. I find I do not remember things unless they are weighty, and have made impressions on my mind that time and the weakness of the flesh do not erase. Tell me, will you, who made this impression on God's eternal mind? Will time or weakness erase this from His mind? Ah no, "I remember thee." To me it would not be any more consolation to have said I did, I do, and I will yet remember thee. God Almighty is such that nothing is erased from his mind and nothing in the common course of human events has made a new impression on His eternal mind and purpose. There have been (and are now) things that are new to us, but not so with God. Surely He remembered them in eternity in His electing love, and choice in the Lord Jesus Christ, and unto salvation by Grace. Yes he remembered their sins and laid them on one who was and is able to bear them; who did put them away to be remembered against them no more.

No he will not remember their sins anymore, but, thanks be to God, he still remembers them just as he did of old. He so graciously remembers them that He quickens them when dead in sin, Yes, he puts his law in their heart and writes it in their mind. He is to them a God and they shall be unto Him a people. Why? Because God remembered them.

Now some critic may say that because God remembers their sins against them no more that he has definitely changed His mind. We cannot agree, because justice has been satisfied by Him whom God ordained to save His people. It is therefore the consumated end of the eternal purposes of God Almighty that they be put away, to be remembered no more. Thank God for such manifested love and mercy to such an unworthy and sinful man as I feel to be. I see now that I have too much in mind to even try to go further with this text; to treat upon the kindness of thy youth, and the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me through the wilderness, in a land that was not sown.

We are having the worst drought here that we have ever seen. Crops, especially the old corn, are litterly burned up. there is no hope for it to make anything. Cotton is the smallest I have seen. Hope that you are no so dry there. Our family is well as far as I know. They are scattered over this country and Puerto Rico. The crippled boy is in Va. and the last report he was doing reasonably well. He had made no improvement as far as his feeling coming back, or the use of his legs, but still has a very strong determination, and really believes that he will walk again. It seems that he has been very greatly blessed in this respect, Elcie and the little boy, and I are the only ones at home at this time. You know that it is very quiet here.

We hope that you are both well and enjoying your meetings wherever you are associated with the brethren and sisters. Give our love to all as you see

them.

Your brother in bonds,
(Elder) H. M. Brock

LETTER TO ELDER SPANGLER CONCLUDED

Now, Brother Spangler, I will cease dwelling upon the words at the head of this article, and speak directly to you. I am about to relate to you a personal experience. Why you are the one to whom I have been impressed to relate this experience, I do not know at this time, but I may know hereafter: A short time after my baptism, I retired one night in perfect health so far as I knew. Sometime after midnight, I think about one o'clock, I awoke with a very strange feeling, — there was a very unusual silence in my room. I thought I was going to die there alone. I remember thinking to myself, isn't it strange that I have to die since I have been in the church such a short time. Then the four Old School Baptist preachers, I knew at that time came into my room; namely, Elders Durand, Chick, Francis, and Poulson. Elder Durand came in hastily; sat down in a chair by the bedside and held my hand. Elder Chick stood very close to Elder Durand; Elder Francis next to Elder Chick, and Elder Poulson stood in the doorway looking on. The next thing I remember, a bright light flashed upon the wall at my right. Within this light there appeared a building, having the appearance of a meeting-house. There were benches in the building with people sitting thereon. In front of these benches there was a table; and behind this table stood the form of a man: the most perfect looking being my eyes ever beheld, who held a book and was speaking to the people. His hair came down to his shoulders and was well groomed, having the apperance of fine flax. His countenance was stern, yet back of that I could also see compassion. How long this scene lasted, I do not know; but when he had finished speaking, he turned his face to me and spoke words which I feel I must forever keep a secret. They were solemn words, and yet have a comforting effect upon me at times, especially when I am in the valley of despair.

Not long after this experience, I began to feel that I would sometime in the future have to make an attempt to speak in public. I don't feel to use the word "preach," for that word is too solemn for a sinner like me to use. When certain strange feelings would come over me, feelings which I could not understand, I would write Elder Durand, and ask him if he ever had such feelings. I well remember how he would sometimes say in reply, "Indeed I have." I also got one of his books, in which he related about the same experience that I had. So you can see why Elder Durand was the first one to appear to me in the vision. (I call it a vision for I don't know what else to call it) Elder Durand understood my case better than anyone else; I corresponded with him as long as he was able to write. When two persons have the same experience, there naturally springs up a close fellowship between them. That is why we feel closer to some than we do others.

Getting back to the words spoken to me in the experience related: I supposed these words were in the Bible, so I searched diligently, but did not find the exact words. The nearest I found were in John 1:8: "He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light." The life of John the Baptist is an interesting one. I want to notice how he typifies Primitive Baptists today: He baptized no one who could not give some evidence that they had repented of their sins; and again, he was a doubter. Yet it seemed he had no reason to doubt, for when he saw Jesus coming, he could say, "Behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." Then he saw the Spirit descending from heaven and abode on him (Jesus). But hear him when he is cast into prison: "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another." Remember, this was after he had baptized Jesus, and had unmistak-

able evidence that Jesus was the Christ who had come in complete fulfilment of prophesy. Is this not like genuine Baptists of today? They are often in doubt as to the genuineness of their experiences; and especially ministers who often fear their call to the ministry is not genuine. So they, like John the Baptist, have to be shown again and again.

Now, my brother, I bring this strange letter to a close. It was written by a strange person. Inclosed find money order for three dollars to renew my subscription to the Signs. I am, I hope, your brother in Christ,

A. T. Benson

New Edinburg, Arkansas

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood:

May one so little and sinful as I address you as brethren. You have been so good and kind to me, for which I fear I can't thank you enough. But I know that I am glad that the Lord has shepherds who are feeding his little sheep and lambs the unadulterated spiritual bread of life. Oh, how thankful we should be.

I am nearly seventy-six years old, and am afflicted and not able to go to church very much now; but, Oh, the comfort and consolation I get from reading the good old Signs of the Times. If I am any judge, you have some of the most gifted writers. I read and re-read all I get, and it contains food for my hungry soul.

Brother Walter Keith and I get to go to old Antioch Church at association times and District meetings about once a year. He carries me in his car. Please pray for me. The Lord has been so good and merciful; praise his holy name.

George Gray

Stuart, Oklahoma

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Am sending $3.00 for my subscription. May God's richest blessings rest upon you dear editors and the Signs. My mother, Mrs. E. F. Little, took the Signs when I was a little girl; now I am sixty-six years old, and in very bad health. I haven't heard an Old Baptist sermon in nearly four years. The Signs and the Old Faith Contender are all the preaching I get. The Lord has so wonderfully blessed us with these good gospel papers.

If anyone cares to write to me, my address is Stuart, Oklahoma, Gen. Delivery. Please remember me and my loved ones in your prayers. May God bless you and your good paper.

Mrs. J. T. Black (Minnie Little)

Dudley P. O., Muskoka,
Ontario, Canada

Dear Brethren Editors:

Please find enclosed ten dollars for two two year renewals of the Signs of the Times for my daughter, Mrs. Ivy May Quinn, Box 659, Parry Sound, Ontario, Canada, and for myself to the above address. Kindly throw the mantle of charity over this late renewal, as writing for a long time has seemed beyond me, and even now my words must be few regardless of how I would like to express my love and fellowship for those of like faith, from whose pens I have received much comfort, edification, and sometimes a gentle rebuke for not writing and sharing with my kindred in Christ those precious morsels occasionally dropping as manna to my soul — confirming my faith and hope; and learning from experience our dear Lord is a present help in time of trouble, and that he does direct our path and makes crooked places straight, even though he waits to be gracious, for he will be inquired of.

Remember me in prayer. Written in love by one of the least, and a sister in the faith.

Alma Viola Mortimer

"If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels of mercies, fulfill ye my joy that

ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord of one mind."
(Phillipians 2:1-2)

In all our warfare, the flesh against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh; In all our travels through the valley of death, I shall fear no evil. Isn't this a consolation in Christ. Even though we are lame and have to sit at the Gate called Beautiful, we are made to arise and enter into the Temple. It must have been a great consolation in Christ to be made to go leaping. Our hearts many times, when we have been through a season of deep sorrow for our sins, have leaped within us: what a consolation in Christ it is to feel and to know that Christ through his great mercy has lifted us up out of the horrible pit, and set our feet upon a Rock and established our goings. He has put a new song in our mouths even praises unto God. None can sing this song but the redeemed of the Lord. It is not for anything we have done, for all our righteousness is but filthy rags. It is Christ who has consoled us and has given us comfort of love, and fellowship for the dear saints of God.

If you love not your brother whom you have seen, how do you expect to love God whom you have not seen. Dear saints of God, the fellowship we have for each other; the love that is manifested and flows from breast to breast, is the evidence that all are changed from nature to grace. The old man is dead: he has been crucified. We no longer have love for the things that the old man loved before he was put to death. Now we are New Creatures, seeking the things above; and are seeking better evidence that we have been resurrected from the dead state of sin and have become living sinners, to know what sin is. How sin grieves us at the heart! Yet we do know that Christ ever liveth, which is a great consolation.

The writer says, "Fulfill ye my joy that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." Dear people of God, the second verse is not addressed to the dead sinner, nor is any other verse of the Bible. Holy Writ is addressed only to the Church, and is not an invitation but a command. If there be any consolation in Christ, if and comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, then you are fulfilling the love of Christ. If you receive the joy, you are likeminded having the same love; and being of one accord, of one mind, you have the mind of Christ.

You desire to live a better life, and often ask yourself the question, Why am I thus? Dear people of God, I am glad that I have been brought down to know that I am nothing, and less than nothing; that I have been made to realize that I am a transgressor. Not glad that I am a sinner, but glad that I have been made to know, and realize that the only true healing remedy is the grace of God.

(Elder) Luther W. Turner.

Note: the above article was written by our beloved brother who is now deceased. It was found among his papers. His trials and conflicts were many, and he could witness to the word: "They that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." His trials and battles are over. The cause of truth has suffered a great loss. D. V. S.

"And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." (Isaiah 35:8)

This is a very special highway that is under consideration in this text. It is built for a special purpose, and for a special people. As I vision this highway, it is straight and narrow, and few are traveling thereon. Only the redeemed of God can travel this road, and they are not traveling it by choice of their own, for Christ said to his disciples, "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he

shall give it you." So we see those as chosen of God to walk this road, and those whom he has chosen cannot walk any other place. For he said, "The redeemed of God SHALL walk there, the wayfaring men, though fools SHALL not err therein."

There are no side roads going out or coming in on this highway, but just one straight and narrow road. No way for a redemed soul to lose the way, or fall from grace, as the saying goes. For the redeemed SHALL WALK THERE. Why? For they are kept by the power of God; and all powers that be are ordained of God. They are hedged in on the right and on the left, without a way to go astray; for God is leading them with love, and driving them with fear; and both his love and his fear have the same effect. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn them."

And an highway shall be there, and a way. In John 13:5, we read, "Thomas saith unto him, Lord we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way. Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." Christ did not come to make a way, as the world teaches, but instead, He came THE WAY, and has ever been the way.

He is the way the prophet was given to see no clearly hundreds of years before he was manifested in the flesh. He also stood a lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

This highway has a special name, for a special purpose. It shall be called the Highway of Holiness, for only those who are made holy by the death, burial and resurrection of Christ shall walk there. No lion or ravenous beast shall enter thereon. So it is fenced from both sides, and the same fence (the power of God) that keeps the lions and the ravenous beasts out, also keeps the children of God in.

I see also another highway leading in the opposite direction, and we enter it by choice. "Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy that it cannot hear, but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil."

This highway is wide and broad, and is decked with flowers and beautiful buildings. Everything that pleases the natural eye, and, if it were possible, would deceive the very elect. There is a way that seemeth right to man, but the end thereof is death. This road leads to certain death, and Satan is its overseer. Many are traveling this road, because it seemeth right. But God has blinded their eyes, and deafened their ears, and caused this road to seem right to them. Why? For the self-same purpose that he placed the flaming sword to keep the way of the tree of life: because it seemed good in his sight. The lions and ravenous beasts have free access to this road, and travel it at their own volition. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

David Hyatt,
Lubbock, Texas

There will be an all day meeting of the Old School Baptist Church of New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, on the first Saturday in November. This will be November 6th.

All members and friends are invited to at-

tend the meeting.

Mrs. Addie M. Hoyt, Clerk.

VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with Frying Pan Church October 13, 14 and 15, 1954. The meeting house is located on Route 15, between Chantilly and Herndon, Virginia. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren of our faith and order, and all friends are welcome. Those who may come on Tuesday will please phone Brother C. W. Norman's residence at Herndon and they will be cared for. Further information may be obtained from either of the following:

Arthur L. Carter, Clerk
Manassas, Virginia

Grover C. Spindle, Asst. Clerk,
914 9th Street, N. E.,
Washington, D. C.

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The 1954 Session of the Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association will convene with the church at White Oak, beginning at 11 A. M., Friday before the fourth Sunday in October and continue through Sunday.

White Oak Church is located on Highway 222 just outside of the town of Saratoga, between Saratoga and Fountain.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth, and especially to our ministering brethren.

Elder W. E. Turner, Clerk.

ASSOCIATIONAL NOTICE

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Salisbury Church, Salisbury, Maryland, Wednesday and Thursday after the third Sunday in October, 1954.

Those arriving Tuesday will call the home of Brother Ananias Hastings, Salisbury, and they will be cared for. An invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

Mrs. Maude Laws, Clerk

EDITORIALS

Danville, Va. October, 1954

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EDITORIAL

PREACHING THE CROSS

Paul says in his first letter to the "Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctfied in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ:" "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God." (I Cor. 1:18) The preaching of the cross is far more extensive than proclaiming that Christ was crucified on a cross on Golgotha Hill almost two thousand years ago. May God reveal unto us and inspire us to grasp a little of the "greatness" of the subject of the CROSS.

The construction of two pieces of timber so that one crosses another results in a cross. Two lines drawn so that one crosses another is said to be a cross.

Figures of the cross both in nature and craftsmanship are too numerous for you to count — even from where you are now sitting. One principle contradicting another principle creates a cross. Trials and tribulations are crosses because they are the result of conflicting principles. When life comes into contact with death there is suffering which manifests a cross.

Proclaiming the contrasting characteristics of Christ would be preaching the CROSS OF CHRIST. The subject of the CROSS OF CHRIST would necessarily embrace all his life from the time he was born as Son of man until the time he was resurrected from the tomb. Paul was inspired to write in Ephesians 2:15-16, "For to make in himself TWAIN one new man, so making peace: and that he might reconcile both unto God BY THE CROSS, having slain the enmity thereby." It was befitting that the final climax of Chirst's sufferings be on a cross. He took up his cross when He was made lower than the angels. When the Son of God took upon himself the character of the Son of Man the cross was made manifest. The NEW MAN was the cross-breeding of God and man. We must proclaim the dual characteristics of Christ to preach the cross. When we preach him as God-man, Divine-human, King-priest, master-servant, abased-exalted, and crucified-resurrected, we preach the cross. When we declare Him to be possessed of both strength and weakness; flesh and Spirit; us and Him; and, the Creator and creature we are preaching the cross.

He being both Divine and human was possessed with the cross of wills. The human will prayed, "If it be possible let this cup pass;" yet the divine will said, "Not my will but thine be done." Jehovah was the father of Jesus and Mary was His mother. As the Son of God He lives eternally; as the Son of man he had a timely existence which began to be made manifest when he was born of the virgin, Mary, and ended when He died on the cross. Did the body of Jesus come to an end when it was placed in the tomb? No!!! No!! No!

There was a dissolution of his body and Spirit on the Day of Crucifixion. His Spirit was commended unto his Father; the body was laid in the tomb. This same spirit raised Jesus from the dead on the third day. He became the "first fruits." His body was the first human body to be clothed with immortality. The Man, Christ Jesus, was raised from the dead! This was accomplished in his resurrection. He being a cross of himself and us, we being in him — He being raised from the dead — gives us the basis of our hope of the resurrection of our bodies by the same Spirit. (See Romans 8:11)

Jesus Christ was King-priest. He was ruler over his own body. He was the first and only one born of woman who was able to keep his body under subjection to such extent that he did not sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. His composition being such, his body was an acceptable sacrifice and gift to the Father for his people. We find in Hebrews 5:1, that the duties of a high priest was to "offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins." This High Priest forever perfected his people in the sight of God by offering his own blood as a sacrifice and his body — the life He lived here — as the acceptable gift unto his Father. He is our King-priest. He is the sole head and governor of the church — those called out by Him —. His divine generation, his royal descent, his perfect nature, his wonderful offering, — all this well qualifies him to atone for his people. It further qualifies him as the perfect King and Priest to illuminate His people with his light and nourish them with his wonderful gifts of grace and peace. He blesses them with that consoling peace that the world knows nothing about. He orders his people to walk in paths of righteousness. He leads them and holds them steady with his hand. When they falter and fall by the wayside his eye is ever on them and his hand beneath them so that he gently picks them up and encourages them with the wonders of his power and

grace. He purifies their souls with the washing of regeneration and promise purification of their bodies. He intercedes for them to the Father within the Holiest of Holies. Priests before him could only offer sacrifice of the blood of animals — he offered Himself. It was necessary for high priests before him to offer sacrifices daily; he offered himself once. They offered for their own sins as well as the sins of the people. He being without sin could offer himself for the sins of his people only. He entered ONCE into the Holy Place and obtained eternal redemption for us by his own blood which could take away sin; they could only enter into the shadow of the Holy Place in the worldly sanctuary by blood of goats and calves, which could not take away sin. The maneuvers of the high priests of the Levitical Priesthood were only shadows and types; His was the real and true.

We must preach Him as being both master and servant if we preach the Cross. As master, his demands were that the law be kept to a jot and tittle; as servant, he perfectly fulfilled the law. As master, he demanded that the sinner be punished; as servant, he took upon himself this punishment in behalf of his people. As master, he instructs his people; as servant, He comes into their hearts and enables them to carry out his instructions. He orders them to perform, and performs for them that which He orders.

He is great and small. He is so great that all his people are in him. He is small enough to dwell in the heart of one of his little ones. He is strong enough to have power over all flesh, yet weak enough that he said while upon earth; "The Son of himself can do nothing." "The Father worketh hitherto, and I work." He was rich and poor. He was so rich that he owns all things; so poor that he said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." (Matt. 8:20) He experienced all the crosses of opposing characteristics and experiences. We must preach this in order to preach the cross.

Dear ones, is it not a comfort to you to realize that your Saviour knows how to sympathize with your cross? You have never felt grief more than He? Your temptations have never been greater than his temptations. You have never experienced being forsaken to a greater extent than he experienced. Is he not a wonderful sympathizing Saviour? He knows by experience your every trial and sorrow.

Preaching the cross includes not only the Cross of Jesus Christ, but also the cross of His people. We read in Matthew 16:24, "Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, TAKE UP HIS CROSS, and follow me. The cross of two opposing characteristics consisting of the flesh and the Spirit must have been the cross under consideration. Each child of God "takes up his cross" when he is born of the Spirit. He is not familiar with the cross before this time because all he knows is his carnal natural desires, thus he is in fellowship with himself. He is in perfect agreement with himself before this miraculous work of the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit takes up its abode in the soul of an individual he begins to experience the cross the world knows nothing about. A child of God soon learns, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh: and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit." (John 3:6) We learn by sad experience that we cannot spiritualize the flesh nor "fleshilize" the Spirit. (Pardon the newly coined word but this is the only way I know to make it plain.) There is no blending the two together in this world — thus THE CROSS. The flesh shall be spiritualized in the resurrection. The soul is spiritualized in being born of the Spirit in this life. We cannot reform nor renovate the flesh so that it can agree with the spiritual — neither can we bring the Spirit down so that it can agree with the flesh. Paul said in Galatians 5:17 — "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and THESE ARE

CONTRARY THE ONE TO THE OTHER: (THE CROSS*EJL) so that YE CANNOT DO THE THINGS THAT YE WOULD." Those born of the Spirit are possessed with dual contrary characteristics and experiences. No wonder we are strangers to ourselves!

The Spirit is spiritual and the flesh is natural. The flesh is carnal and the Spirit is holy. The Spirit is immortal and the flesh is mortal. The Spirit is righteous and the flesh sinful. The Spirit is living and the flesh is dying. The regenerated mind serves the law of God, but the flesh serves the law of sin. We experience the cross of life and death, joys and sorrows, good and evil, abased and exalted, humility and pride, forsaken and owned, and many, many other conflicts too numerous to mention.

Hart was inspired to write many hymns in harmony with the strange conflicting crosses of a child of God. He wrote:

"How strange is the course that a Christian must steer,
How perplexed is the path he must tread!
The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
And his life he receives from the dead.

His fairest pretensions must wholly be waived,
And his best resolutions be crossed;
Nor can he expect to be perfectly saved,
'Til he finds himself utterly lost.

When all this is done, and his heart is assured
Of the total remission of sins,
When his pardon is signed and his peace is procured,
From that moment his conflict begins.
(Beebe's Collection 1037)

How strange that one must lose his own life to find it! He must feel himself to be lost before he can be saved. He must die in order to live. He must fear before he hopes. The righteous views himself as sinful and the greatest is made to feel "less than the least." The way up is down.

The text says, "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness." It has a reverse effect upon those who perish. Those who are not born of God cannot receive the things of the Spirit. Preaching the Cross "cuts them to the heart" while it "pricks us in the heart." It antagonizes them and comforts us. It drives them away while it draws us. It edifies us and confuses them. It is to us — "the power of God;" to them — "foolishness."

It is foolishness to them because they feel capable of performing righteousness, atoning for their little mistakes, reforming and renovating themselves, dedicating their lives to God, and making Heaven their home; so — why the cross? Why was it necessary for Christ to perform righteousness and it be imputed to them? Why was it necessary for Christ to die on the cross, considering they are able to take care of themselves? Why is it necessary for the Spirit of God to directly work in their hearts when they feel capable of performing the work required with the spirit they naturally possess? Why is the Spirit of God a cross to the spirit of the carnal or natural mind when the natural mind itself seems to them to be sufficient to choose God and work righteousness? Why are they not in strict agreement?

The aforestated questions I know to be in harmony with the thoughts of the unregenerated mind. Preaching the cross was to me foolishness for years after I was ordained by man to preach! I religiously preached the power of man and the wisdom of man to make Heaven his home! I have no stones to throw at them because I was as conscientious and honest in my convictions as anyone could be. I had not experienced the cross; therefore, I could not preach it. I know that something occurred to me one night as I closed a discourse on the subject: "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." This mighty something that took hold of me crossed everything I had ever known and brought to nought all I had thought myself to be. I trust this was the Holy Spirit that manifested my righteousness as filthy rags in His sight. I trust that I was given the Holy Ghost Conscience, which was a cross to my natural conscience. My life since that time has been full of conflicts and

crosses. I have been convinced that it is through hell we enter heaven, and by the cross we obtain the crown.

"But unto us, which are saved, it is THE POWER OF GOD." God's power caused us to look to the Cross of Christ for remission of sins. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. It is through the power of God that our sins are remitted, because it required the blood of His own Son shed on the cross to justify the remission of our sins. It is through the power of God that we are given his Spirit, which is so contradictory to our natural carnal spirit that it is neither desired nor can be obtained by our power. The things we naturally love, the cross causes us to hate. The things we naturally consider wisdom, the cross manifests it as foolishness. What a cross between the natural and spiritual mind! What a rugged cross experienced by those upon whom the power of God hath wrought a work!

Sometime ago at a funeral the choir sang, "The Old Rugged Cross." As they sang the words, "I'll exchange it some day for a Crown," my mind was deeply impressed upon that grand exchange. A crown of immortality awaits the mortal. A crown of Righteousness awaits the enlivened sinner. A crown of glory is laid up for those who feel so low and insignificant. A crown of Eternal Life will swallow up those who die in the Lord. The incorruptible crown shall clothe the corruptible body. We experience the cross here, but beyond this sphere of time we shall realize the crown.

It was said of Jesus in Hebrews 12:2, "Who for the JOY that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the Throne of God." We are to follow Him. Because of his accomplishments that joy is set before us. We press towards the mark of the prize of the high calling, when we shall be called upon high to sit with Him. Should we not be emboldened to endure the cross, and be encouraged to run the race that is set before us, seeing that such a crown is our reward and prize at the end of the race? May God give you strength and courage to endure the cross with patience and persevere in the race with faith. May He grace you with the gifts of his Spirit so that you can fight as a good soldier the foes that dwells within. May you be supplied with all your need so that at the end of the way you may say with Paul, "For I am now ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me A CROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: not to me only, but unto them also that love His appearing." (2 Tim. 4:6-8)

May God bless these thoughts to your comfort and edification.

E. J. L.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth forever." (Psalms 111:10)

Having been requested to write on this important subject, with fear and trembling, I shall endeavor to do so.

There are many kinds of fear: the fear of man is one of them. We can see daily the evidence of this fear in its restraint upon society. Another fear is the fear of the devil. The fear of those who never learned that God is stronger than Satan — who have never heard the word, "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." The fear of death has plagued many of the dear saints as they were brought to see the holiness of God, and his demands in his holy law, and realize they were ruined because of sin. This fear is associated with the fear of Hell and the just wrath of God. The world is full of fears too numerous to mention, for people are acquainted with it in their daily lives. Even whole nations often live in fear of war and its consequences. The fear of

hunger, of poverty, of sickness, accidents, old age, and many others could be mentioned as plagues of the human race.

The subject we would like to treat upon is the fear of God, for we are told it is the beginning of wisdom. So this fear is to be greatly desired, and is a mark of a child of God. We find in the word of God that much is said about the fear of God, and its effects upon those taught of God. It is one sure mark of the work of grace in a person. It is a mark of wisdom from above to fear God, and keep his commandments. The keeping of the commandments of God, and his fear, are coupled together. It is not a slavish fear, but a fear that manifests a desire to walk in his commandments — the commandments of one who loved them and gave himself for them.

This fear is called "Godly Fear;" and those who are blessed with it can witness with David in the fifth Psalm, "But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple."

This fear that singles out the subjects of grace, is an enduring fear, and is described as clean. "The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgements of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." Where there is this fear, the heart has been cleansed, and the desire for holiness has been implanted. It continues with one day by day. It is not a kind that is obectionable to God, but rather well pleasing in his sight. "In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death."

Concerning this fear, the Lord said to Jeremiah, "And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me forever, for the good of them, and of their children after them. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good: but I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me."

One of the marks of this grace is set forth to us in the lives of the Old Testament saints, wherein there was manifest a desire to communicate with one another, and to speak of God's dealing with them; for in Malachi it is said that they that feared the Lord spake often one to another.

The word of God is sent to them of a fearful heart: those who tremble at his word — to the poor and needy; to the ones who can walk by faith alone, who have learned by experience that if kept, it must be by the power of God; the ones who have learned that their feet are prone to wander, and that they must look to a higher power for all spiritual blessings. In the fear of God we find those who seek the face of the Lord: that desire a token of his approval in all their goings. What a solemn matter to one thus led; how acceptable are the words of the prophet Isaiah, "Say to them that are of a fearful heart, be strong: behold your God will come with vengence, even God with a recompense he will come and save you."

Paul was with the brethren at Corinth in weakness, in fear and much trembling. Though he was an apostle, he continued to experience a warfare in his life: the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that he could not do the things that he would — fear and trembling because he knew it was a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. This fear and trembling go together. Where you find one, you find the other principle manifest. It not only affects individuals but is also in the church as a body. What a blessing when we are blessed to walk in the fear of God, separately or collectively. The church at Phillipi was exhorted by Paul to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, assuring them that if they were so favored to meet each problem that came to them as a church, in fear and trembling, it was evidence that God was working in them both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. When a church has problems

to settle, you may know that the Lord is in the camp, if it is manifest that the first desire of each one's heart is to please the Lord: that they are loth to provoke his wrath. When they come together in such a frame of mind as a church, they are qualified to work out their own salvation (church problems), knowing it is of God. This fear and trembling is applicable to the church as a body of believers in church capacity.

In the fear of God the mind and affections of one is raised above the earth, and they are made to know that whatever grace they have is the unmerited favor of a holy God. They are enabled to behold the manner of God's love to them — that he has exalted them in his Son to reign as kings and priests unto him; they are made conscious of their high calling in Jesus Christ; and with it all, there is a fearfulness that they will dishonor their blessed God. They realize that if they walk about Zion it must be from Him: they desire not to provoke his anger.

This is not the mark of one who fears as a convict fears the stripes of his master, for such fear is not provoked in love. This is a slavish fear, and bears no mark of grace.

The eminent apostle shows when and where there is evidence of this great work that gives wisdom. "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For God is a consuming fire.

D. V. S.

The opinions and doings of men are of no value unless motivated by the Spirit of Truth; if otherwise, they "darken counsel by words without knowledge".

WE QUOTE:

"The great chain of causes, which, linking one to another, even to the throne of God himself, can never be unraveled by any industry of ours." — Burke

"Morality is but nature at best, it does not amount to grace. Heat water to the higest degree, you cannot make wine of it — it is water still; so, let morality be raised to the highest, it is nature still." — Watson's BODY OF DIVINITY.

"Men begged to be tolerated long before they learned to tolerate." Quoted by Blackburn, in his HISTORY.

"We cannot make our election sure unless we first make our calling sure; for, though election is the cause of calling, calling is the only evidence of election." — Philpott's SERMONS.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

WHAT IS DONE FOR THE ADAMIC MAN IN THE WONDERFUL ECONOMY OF SALVATION?

This question has often been asked by those who object to our views of the doctrine of the New Birth, and some have charged that we deny that anything is done for the Adamic man. Some have presumed to represent us as holding that the spirit of Life which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, in time comes down from heaven and enters into the sinner, and there remains as long as the sinner lives, and then goes back to heaven, leaving the sinner to perish, or cease to be. Whether any **sane** person has ever honesty believed that we hold such sentiments or not, we will not attempt to say; we leave those who make the charge to settle the matter between themselves and the heart searching and rein trying God, who judgeth righteously.

If we may be allowed to speak for ourself without any gratuitous interpreter, to distort or misstate our views, we will say in answer to the question at the head of this article, that in the election of grace the sinner who was created in Adam of the dust of the ground, who

sinned and fell in Adam, is a chosen vessel of mercy, predestinated to the adoption of a child, redeemed from sin, death and hell by the precious blood of Christ, washed from all pollution, guilt and wrath, by the washing of regeneration, freely and fully justified through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, and in the new birth he is the recipient of a new, spiritual life which was treasured up in Christ Jesus for him from everlasting, and in the development of this new life he is sealed unto the day of redemption. This seal of the Spirit when received is an earnest, a sure and certain pledge that this chosen vessel, this now Adamic man, this vile body, shall hereafter be changed from a vile, sinful, mortal, corruptible, natural, earthly, depraved body, to a pure, immortal, incorruptible, spiritual, heavenly, righteous body, and shall in the resurrection bear the image of the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, as he has, and does now, bear the image of the earthly Adam. In all candor we ask, is not this doing something for the Adamic man?

We hold indeed that all that is done in the great and marvelous work of redemption and salvation was and is done for the sinner who is first born into this natural world, of the flesh, who develops the nature of the earthly Adam. In that nature all the redeemed of the Lord were dead in sin, and children of wrath even as others; in that earthly Adamic nature we all sinned, were all condemned by the righteous law of God, and we all were dead in trespasses and sins. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." This, we think, is doing something for the poor sinner. In view of this, the Psalmist could say, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare where he hath done for my soul." Psa. lxvi. 16. "I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined unto me and heard me cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings; and he, hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." — Psa. xl. 1—3. All this has God done for poor lost, helpless and guilty sinners of Adam's race. He has chosen them unto salvation, redeemed them from sin, death and hell, called them by his grace, quickened them by his Spirit, given them eternal life, and declared that they shall never perish. And Jesus has given his word that he will raise them up at the last day, and that in their resurrection they shall put on immortality and incorruption, and reign with him in glory.

All this, and much more than we can express, has God done for poor sinners of the race of Adam. All this we believe and contend for, and yet because we do not believe that by the new birth our vile body is changed to a spiritual body, as it would be if it were born of the Spirit, (for that which is born of the Spirit is spirit) we are charged with denying that anything is done for the Adamic man. We hold that our birth of the flesh has produced or developed a fleshly nature which was provided for us in the earthly Adam; and that this fleshly nature, even after the new birth has developed in us a new and spiritual nature, is still flesh, not spirit, is still mortal, not immortal, still corruptible, not incorruptible; nor will it be, until God shall change and fashion it like the glorious body of our risen and glorified Redeemer. It is charged that we deny that anything is done for the Adamic man. Why, dear reader, when by the new birth Christ was formed in us the hope of glory, we were sealed with the holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession. It is the infallible pledge that this body in which the Spirit of God now dwells, and has sealed, shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption; and though it be now mortal, it shall put on immortality, though it be now corruptible, it shall

be raised from the dead in incorruption; and then, not till then, shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, that death is swallowed up in victory. The apostle John says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God," for we have in the new birth received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Yet, the body (which is born of the flesh) is dead, because of sin; but the spirit (which is born of the Spirit) is life, because of righteousness. Therefore John adds, "And it doth not yet appear what we shall be." This would certainly appear now, if the new birth which we have experienced had effected that change, from a natural to a spiritual body, which we are assured shall be effected by the resurrection of our bodies. "But we know that when he (Christ) shall appear we shall be like him." — 1 John iii. 2. Brethren, do any of you feel as though your mortal bodies, your natural minds, your disquieted and restless spirits are yet like the body, mind and Spirit of your risen and glorified Redeemer? Do you see this longed-for conformity yet perfected in you? If you do, you are far, very far in advance of Paul and John and the primitive saints. Paul says, "We who have received the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, **to wit,** the redemption of our body. For we are saved (or sustained) by hope; but hope which is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." — Rom. viii. 23—25.

That which do not not see, but hope for, John says, doth not yet appear; and that is the reason we cannot yet see it. Still we know we shall see it, and fully realize it: when Christ shall appear, when we shall see him as he is; for then we shall be like him in all respects. "For whom God did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren." — Rom. viii. 29. John says, "we shall see him as he is." And the psalmist says, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." — Psa. xvii. 15. But not till he should awake from the slumbers of death would he see thus, and be satisfied.

We have tried to make ourself understood in this article, in regard to what is done for the Adamic man; but if either from misapprehension, or design to misrepresent, any of our readers shall persist in saying that we believe that nothing is done for the sinner in the work of salvation, may God give us a heart to pity and a spirit to pray for them, and grace also that we may bear with patience whatever we may be called to suffer of reproach for the truth's sake.

We claim for ourself no infallibility, we do not even desire that one word of what we say or write should be received as truth, unless it be fully sustained by the scriptures of truth. We have a very high appreciation of the approval and fellowship of our brethren in the Lord; nothing short of the approval of our heavenly Father is more dear to us; but it is too late in the day with us, our sun has declined too low in the evening tide of our mortal pilgrimage, for us to be to any great extent elated by flattery or depressed by frowns. The time of our departure is at hand, and we shall soon be numbered with the departed.

"Soon the joyful news shall come,
Child, your Father calls—come home."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe — October 15, 1875)

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

May 16, 1954

Union Parish, Louisiana

Pursuant to call heretofore sent out by Union Church for a Presbytery to meet on above date for the purpose of the ordination of Brethren Smead Roberson and John Smith each to the office of Deacon of Union Church, the following Elders and Deacons met and organized themselves into a Presbytery: Elders R. W. Rhodes, John Lee Smith and W. A.

Speer, Deacons W. A. Josey, T. P. Wilson, E. H. Chandler, A. O. McLeod and M. F. Smith.

The Presbytery organized itself by electing Elder R. W. Rhodes, Moderator, and Elder W. A. Speer, as Clerk. Brother J. B. McKinnie was appointed as spokesman for the church who presented Brethren Roberson and Smith to the Presbytery.

After due examination of each as to deportment, qualifications, and the state of God's gift to each of them as a Deacon to the satisfaction of the Presbytery, the Presbytery proceeded to ordain Brother Roberson and Brother Smith, as follows; the Presbytery selected Elder John Lee Smith to word the prayer and Elder R. W. Rhodes, to deliver the charge.

Thereupon the Presbytery then and there proceeded with the ordination by the laying on of hands of the Presbytery, and in prayer by Elder John Lee Smith, and then by charge delivered by Elder R. W. Rhodes.

We the members of the Presbytery commend Deacons Smead Roberson and John Smith, to all orderly orthodox Primitive Baptist as being sound in doctrine, careful in deportment and humble in the display of God's gift of the office of Deacon.

The right hand of fellowship was given Deacons Smead Roberson and John Smith by the members of the Presbytery, Union Church and brethren, sisters and friends. Deacons Smead Roberson and John Smith, were then delivered back to the church each duly ordained by the Presbytery and received by the church.

Minutes of the proceedings were read and approved and the Presbytery was adjourned in order, with prayer by Elder W. A. Speer.

Elder R. W. Rhodes, Moderator
Elder W. A. Speer, Clerk

MINUTES OF ORDINATION

Pursuant to proper arrangements, the following ordained elders and deacons assembled into a presbytery — being duly invited, and authorized by their respective churches, and properly seated in a presbytery — by Saints Rest Church, 4614 Sylvester, Dallas, Texas, this the 31st day of January, 1954:

Saints Rest—Elder W. W. Taylor and Elder C. B. Teague; Shepherd Fold—Elder W. O. Beene; Good Hope—Elder E. J. Lambert; Pilgrims Rest—Elder C. M. Haygood; Fellowship —Deacon G. C. Burgin; Pleasant Hope—Elder T. A. Wall, Deacons L. S. and H. S. Hill; Whitewater, of Arkansas—Deacon Ross Watson.

1. The presbytery was organized by electing Elder W. W. Taylor, Moderator, and Elder E. J. Lambert, Clerk.

2. By motion agreed that Elder C. M. Haygood voice the ordination prayer, and Elder W. O. Beene deliver the charge.

3. Moderator called for candidate; whereupon Brother T. H. Graham, church spokesman, presented Brother John T. Beene to presbytery.

4. Spokesman was questioned and gave satisfactory answers relative to quatlification of Brother John T. Beene as a deacon.

5. Sister Beene was invited to seat with her husband by the Moderator.

6. Qualifications of deacon were read from the Scriptures, and commented upon.

7. Brother and Sister Beene were duly questioned by members of the presbytery.

8. Presbytery, being fully satisfied, proceeded to ordain Brother John T. Beene to office of Deacon, by laying on of hands and prayer by Elder Haygood.

9. Deacon John T. Beene was charged by Elder W. O. Beene of his duties.

10. By motion, Deacon Beene was delivered to Saints Rest Church as properly ordained, and the church charged of her duties by Elder W. W. Taylor.

11. Right hand of official fellowship was given Deacon Beene and wife by the members of the presbytery.

12. Right hand of fellowship, sanctioning the act of Presbytery, was given by members of Saints Rest Church, visiting brethren, and friends.

13. Minutes read and adopted, and Clerk ordered to prepare sufficient copies to supply each church participating for filing, and a copy sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

14. Presbytery dissolved.

We, the members of the Presbytery, witness our signatures:

Deacon G. C. Burgin, Deacon H. S. Hill, Deacon L. S. Hill, Deacon G. W. McDuff, Deacon Ross Watson, Elder W. W. Taylor, Moderator, Elder E. J. Lambert, Clerk, Elder D. B. Teague, Elder J. W. Shipman, Elder W. O. Beene, Elder T. A. Wall, and Elder C. M. Haygood.

OBITUARIES

T. L. ROBERSON

A tribute of respect to our beloved and precious brother T. L. Roberson, who passed away at his home in Monroe, Louisiana. He was born September 21, 1865, in Union Parish, La., and died June 8, 1954, after a lingering illness. He was a prominent farmer the greater part of his life.

He united with Union Primitive Baptist Church, near Linville, La., more than forty-five years ago, and remained a beloved member of this church the remainder of his life. He moved to Monroe several years ago, but on account of his afflicted condition, he could not attend his church services much. He gave great evidence of that sweet and abiding hope

that the Lord graciously given him, yet he expressed his much felt sense of sin, and his unworthiness, which identifies the humble children of God as long as they live in this tabernacle of clay. He was humble and outstandingly loving in his deep affection for the brethren; he was quiet and unassuming in his manners and liberality, and was influentially engaged in the things that make for peace in Zion.

Brother Roberson was married early in life to Miss Donie Pilgreen, who survives. He is also survived by the following: three daughters, Mrs. K. H. Young and Miss Inez Roberson, Monroe, La. and Mrs. J. R. Williams, Sterlington, La.; one son M/Sarg. T. M. Roberson, Shreveport, La. (one son, Lonnie, preceeded in death); four grand-children, and three great grand-children.

The funeral was conducted by the writer at Liberty Church, near Linville, La., and the remains were laid to rest in the cemetery at Liberty, there to await that great day when the Lord shall come again without sin unto salvation.

May the Lord bless and comfort you dear sister Robertson, and all the family. Your loss is his eternal gain.

Your brother in hope,
(Elder) R. W. Rhodes.

SUSIE JOHNSON GALE

Mrs. Susie Johnson Gale, wife of Charlie Gale, was born at Wango, Wicomico County, Maryland, December 31, 1888. She passed away at Salisbury, Maryland July 20, 1954.

Mrs. Gale was the daughter of Rufus and Tabitha Davis Johnson, and a sister of the late Chief Judge Benjamin A. Johnson.

Surviving her is her husband, Charlie Gale, two nephews and two nieces: Dr. Rufus C. Johnson, Salisbury, Maryland; Wm. B. Johnson, Philadelphia, Pa.; Mrs. Wm. Lentz and Miss Mary Jane Johnson of Baltimore, Maryland.

Mrs. Gale's life was spent in the vicinity of Salisbury, Maryland, where she was well known. She was a friend of the Old School Baptist church, and manifested her interest in the cause of truth by attending the services, and contributing to the church in a material way. She was unassuming and quiet, and by her various manifestations of love for the church proved that she, "Knew him whom to know is life eternal."

At her request, her funeral was conducted by the writer, from the Wallace Funeral Home, Salisbury, Maryland, July 22, 1954. The many floral offerings, and the attendance of her many friends, spoke of the high esteem in which she was held.

Her body was interred in the Parsons cemetery, Salisbury, Md. to await the coming of him, who knows them that are his.

D. V. Spangler

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, Our Heavenly Father, who doeth all things well, has called from our midst our highly esteemed brother and deacon, R. H. Cobb, by death; and

WHEREAS, Brother Cobb was so firmly established in the doctrine of salvation by grace, enabling him to render a spiritual service to the brethren in sound counsel and advice; and whose walk and talk demanded the respect of all, manifesting the Spirit of God as the Lord blessed him; and

WHEREAS, The memory of his counsel, advice and life will be treasured highly, be it therefore

RESOLVED, That Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church of Christ, Winnsboro, Texas, express our thanks to God for having blessed us with his life, and for the comfort and edification of his counsel and advice; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we pray God to bless us, his family, and friends to be reconciled; and that God's Holy Spirit comfort the bereaved; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we include a brief obituary in this Memorial: Brother Cobb was born December 14, 1878 and died February 5, 1954. He became a member of Hopewell Church September 24, 1910, and was ordained deacon July 24, 1926. He married Ella Wilson September 1, 1899. Surviving are three children, Wylie and W. V. Cobb and Mrs. C. C. McElyea; three brothers, Lonnie, Tom and Ocie; two sisters, Mrs. Lizzie Henson and Mrs. Ida Price; ten grand-children and eight great grand-children. Funeral services were conducted by Elder E. J. Lambert and Elder D. C. Davenport at Hopewell Church February 7, 1954, and interment was in Hopewell Cemetery by the side of his wife, who died December 25, 1949, to await the glorious resurrection; and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this be given the family; a copy filed with Hopewell Church records; and a copy mailed the Signs of the Times for publication.

The above read and adopted by Hopewell Church in regular conference February 13, 1954.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Moderator
J. J. Mills, Church Clerk

CHARLES N. CLAY

This sketch is in memory of Brother Charles N. Clay, of Monroe, Lousiana, who was born in 1880, and who died May 20, 1954. He was first married to Miss Bettie Cooper, Jonesboro, Lousiana, who died October 16, 1942; He afterwards married her sister, Miss Hattie Faith Cooper, who survives.

He is also survived by two sons, Jimmie B. Clay, Denver, Colorado, and Charles L. Clay, U. S. Army, somewhere in Missouri; and six daughters: Mrs. H. C. Fain, Polock, La.; Mrs. W. R. Easterling, Huntsville, Ala.; Mrs. H. H. Robinson, Winnsboro, La.; Mrs. Joe R. Lingo, Hot Springs, Ark.; Mrs. R. L. Fuller, Sterling, La.; Mrs. G. B. Brown, Monroe, La.; and five sisters: Mrs. Jim F. Wyatt, Jonesboro, La.; Mrs. Bessie Mercer, Mrs. Lum Fox, Miss Rose Smith, Miss Lonie Smith, Winnfield, La.; and two brothers: Bunion Smith, Winnfield, La. and Pete Smith, Atlanta, La. There are also nineteen grand children and two great grand children.

Brother Clay was a devout, sound and humble brother. His membership was at Liddieville Primitive Baptist church, near Winnsboro, until that church disintegrated; he then joined Union Church, near Hale, La.; where his membership was until his death. He was at his meetings as often as his health and circumstances would permit. He enjoyed the meetings, and to visit and converse with the brethren of the wonderful and glorious power of God, His tender mercy, and the Saviour of sinners.

Brother Clay passed away peacefully at a hospital in Monroe, La. The writer knew him well for thirty years. His walk, talk and devotion bore evidence of the faith of God's elect. The devoted members of his family did all they could for him during his short illness, and the beautiful flowers manifested that he had many, many friends.

The writer had the privilege of baptizing his first wife, whose membership was at Zions Rest, near Crowville, La. Funeral services were conducted at his home in Monroe, La., by the writer May 21, 1954. Burial was in Antioc Cemetery, near Quitman, La., till the Lord comes to raise the dead, and fashion these vile bodies like unto his glorious body; when he will say, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," where they will praise and worship him forever.

May the Lord bless and comfort all you dear bereaved ones, and cause you to trust in Him and look to him as you journey through this land of sorrow and darkness. Your very unworthy brother, and servant through Jesus Christ our Lord.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, Our heavenly Father, in his infinite wisdom and mercy, has removed from this mortal existance our dearly beloved sister, Edna Webb Hughes, of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, who passed away April 8, 1954, after a short illness. She was born March 2, 18 82. Her husband, Claude Hughes, preceeded her in death only a few months. She is survived by two daughters: Mrs. Bess Newcomb and Mrs. Billie Davison, and two grandsons, Webb Newcomb and Jimmy Davison; and two brothers, T. C. and Glen Greer; two sisters, Mrs. Ann Glitch and Mrs. Clara Freeman. She will be remembered as the sister spoken of in the Memorial to Sister R. L. Kelly, published in the April number of the Signs. Their father, W. M. Greer, and wife joined Little Flock Church in 1901. Sister Edna joined this church, at Altus, Oklahoma, May 12, 1934, and was baptized by Elder W. N. Green, pastor. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and was loved and respected by all who knew her.

Little Flock Church extends heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family and friends.

Resolved, That a copy of this Memorial be made a part of our church records; a copy be sent to the sorrowing family; and a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Little Flock Church while in conference, April 10, 1954, at Altus, Oklahoma.

(Elder) W. W. Taylor, Moderator
Mrs. Lou Kester, Church Clerk

IN MEMORIAM

David W. Overman was born July 31, 1888 in Wayne County, the son of the late Richard and Penny Moore Overman, and passed from this life on April 23, 1954. He was first married to the late Nellie Collier, who died in 1921. On September 5, 1924, he was married to the former Annie Frances Redmond, who survives. Also surviving are seven children, seventeen grandchildren, and one sister.

Funeral rites were conducted at Hudson Funeral Chapel by Elder J. W. Gilliam assisted by Mr. C. Nixon Royal. Interment followed in Woodlawn Memorial Park.

Brother Overman joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Wilson, North Carolina and was baptized by the late Elder Hooks. In August, 1923, he joined Durham Primitive Baptist Church by letter from the Church at Wilson. Of his faith, it is enough to say that he believed in salvation by the grace of God alone, and he had been given a precious hope that he was one of those for whom Christ died. Those who knew him appreciated his sincerity and his humble — yet forthright — manner of

speech. During his illness, especially, his mind was continually exercised in the Scriptures. In his afflictions he was wonderfully favored with patience and submission to the will of God. Shortly before his death he stated to his loved ones that he did not fear death and we feel that he passed from this life in joyful anticipation of everlasting life beyond the grave.

"The memory of the just is blessed." (Proverbs 10:7)

Submitted in love,
Catherine M. Copley

DELIAH PRATT FLIPPIN

On motion and unaimous vote Bunker-Hill primitive Baptist church adopted a resolution of respect for sister Deliah Pratt Flippin. She was born Jan. 19, 1873, the daughter of William and Susan Atkinson Pratt, and passed away December 15, 1953; making her stay here on earth 80 years, 10 months and 26 days. She spent her early life in Stokes County, North Carolina; then lived 13 years in Surry County, and moved to Winston-Salem, N. C. twenty one years ago. On March 25, 1894 she was married to the late Brother R. A. Flippin. In 1923, she united with Primitive Baptist at Flat-Top, in Surry County, N. C., moving her membership to Bunker-Hill Church three years later; and and was a faithful member. Sister Flippin was much afflicted in her last years but she was nearly always present at her meetings until a short while before she was called home. She had much exercise in mind and soul in singing hymns of praise, and expressing her hope in the blessed redeemer.

The church at Bunker-Hill will greatly miss her presence with us, but our hope is that our loss is her eternal gain. We desire to be thankful to the giver of every good and perfect gift for the grace he bestows upon and manifests in his little ones while they sojourn here in this low ground of sin and sorrow. The funeral was conducted by her pastor Elder Z. L. Rhue, and her body was laid in Bunker-Hill cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

Surviving are three sons, W. S. Flippin, Winston-Salem, N. C.; R. R. Flippin, and A. J. Flippin, Pfafftown, N. C.; four daughters, Sisters Claudie James and Maggie Kiger, Winston-Salem, N. C.; Mrs. Sidney Sutphin, Walkertown, and Mrs. Lyre Brown, Low-Gap, N. C.; one brother, J. W. Pratt, Ararat, N. C.; twelve grandchildren, including two whom she reared, Mrs. Raymond Hege and Mrs. Posy Branscombe, and nine great grandchildren.

Resolved, That a copy of this obituary be given her family and a copy be filed in our church record; a copy be sent to the Old Faith Contender and to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Committee:
Elder Z. L. Rhue, Moderator
Minnie Parrish, Church Clerk
Lillian Rhue

BROTHER B. P. WHETSTONE

Our last tribute of respect to our beloved Brother B. P. Whetstone, who was born near Bastrop, Lousiana, in the year 1872, and passed away June 15, 1954, at his home in New Orleans, La. He also lived near Monroe, La. for quite awhile.

Early in life he joined one of the churches in the New Hope Association, near Crosset, Arkansas, and remained a consistent member as long as he lived. He was an enthusiastic believer in and defender of the doctrine of God our Saviour. He visited the Baptists far and near, and was well known and liked among the dear children of God. He was very liberal in his help to the ministers, and his assistance was highly appreciated. He was a great talker on the doctrine, and gave good evidence of a good hope in the Lord. He had no confidence in the flesh, or the works of the creature.

Brother Whetstone was married twice (we do not know who his first wife was, since she died many years ago), and is survived by his wife, the former Miss Allie Patterson. Also surviving are four daughters: Mrs. Bobby Galloway and Mrs. Ralph Armstrong, Monroe, La.; Mrs. Emly Petri, New Orleans, and Mrs. Lissa Martin, Little Rock, Arkansas; and one son, Bernard P. Whetstone, an attorney, El Dorado, Arkansas. Also one sister, Mrs. Annie Walsh, Crosset, Arkansas; and ten grand-children.

For about forty years Brother Whetstone was a merchant at Crosset, Arkansas, but retired several years ago. He suffered a stroke and developed pneumonia and did not live long.

The funeral was conducted by the writer and Elder J. L. Smith at the Mulhearn Funeral Chapel, Monroe, Lousiana. Burial was in the Pugh Cemetery, seven miles north of Crosset, there to await the glorious resurrection when the Lord shall come again.

Dear bereaved sister and family, our loss is his eternal gain. He suffered much in this world, and had many troubles and heartaches; but in that glorious and eternal city, whose builder and maker is God, there will be no more sorrow, trouble or death. May God comfort and console all the bereaved, and cause you to look to and trust in him who is able to lead, care for, and save his own.

Your brother in hope through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 122 DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1954 NO. 11

FOR ME HE DIED

Oh Lord, if I could come to thee
And feel thy mercy is for me,
I would rejoice to love thee more,
When on that bright and shining shore.

Suffer me not to go astray,
But keep me in the narrow way.
My little strength is almost gone:
I know not how to carry on.

I find I know not how to pray;
But teach me Lord from day to day
That I may look to thee alone
For mercy in thy blessed Son.

May thy rich grace instill my heart
To feel how strong and great thou art.
And when the time rolls on apace,
Grant to me Lord, thy saving grace.

I know that I am growing old,
But may I have thy story told
Of Jesus and of his great love,
And sing thy praises up above.

O, give me now to trust in thee:
That I may ever conscious be
Of my dependence in thy power
To keep me in the trying hour.

And when this parting soul of mine
Shall enter in the house of thine,
To dwell with Jesus ever more,
Then grief and sorrow will be o'er.

Then I shall know as I am known:
When all the heirs around the throne
Shall, Lord, forever be with thee
In glorious immortality.

The heavens declared the glory of God,
And all creation obeyed His word:
The sun and moon did shine so bright,
And all the stars did blend in light.

In wonder and in majesty
They all show forth his deity.
God is above this so high
His glory shines beyond the sky.

Thy power and glory is not known —
And only little to us shown.
I fain would quit this mortal frame,
And wholly trust in Jesus' name.

Let all things else become as dross,
But let me view Him on the cross,
That I may touch his bleeding side,
And feel, as Thomas, for me he died.

Elder T. W. Walker (written shortly before his death in 1948).

Spokane, Washington

To the Signs of the Times:

I want to write a letter to someone. I have just read my last Signs, and it was very good. I feel that I would like to talk to some of the people; maybe there is one who reads it that sometimes feels as lost and undone as I do. Not all the time, but most of my life I have felt as if I were the last of the lost tribe of Israel.

Yet I went to Riffe to meeting this month, and surely had a season of rejoicing. There seemed to be a sweet fellowship that I (we) haven't experienced for years, and the preaching was surely given of God — at least it seemed so to me. Of course, I was very hungry; and the simplest meals are good and nourishing when we need it so badly. Just the same, I think God surely talked through the mouths of the two servants in the pulpit; and not only they but every word was in accord to me. There were four sisters baptized, and I surely hope the blessed Lord and Saviour will be with them unto the end of the world. What more can we ask for anyone?

I have had quite a season of desolation, when I felt to be lost indeed. Surely cursed is man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm. It is so hard to be so low naturally and spiritually too. All during my heart operation I had no feeling of God's presence at all.

Oh, how I hoped I'd die and be done with this rotten old world, but no I could not. I had to live, and I felt angry with God. Why do I have to stay? And was it my anger that removed Him from me? Oh no, for if so my anger is more powerful than He. Yes, stubborn as I am, I know He was there; bless His holy name. But for some reason known only to Himself, I couldn't feel Him.

I was in this awful state for some time: about four or five months. Then one day He seemed to be at my bed, right over the foot; and He said, "I am the resurrection and the life." And it seemed that we talked. I say, it seemed like, because I still can hardly believe it. I have tried to write on the way I believe the resurrection will be, but I'm not sure I ever will again. As we talked, I was more firmly established in my belief than ever before. It just seemed that He poured oil on the troubled waters of my poor soul; and when I knew He was gone, I reached out my hands and cried aloud.

It was no dream, for I was not asleep, just had my eyes closed. It seemed that it lasted quite a while, and the last thing He seemed to say was, "He that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and he that liveth and believeth on me shall never die. And then I was left as with the question, "Believest thou this?"

Sometimes I am made to rejoice in Him whom my soul loveth. For a long time now the words of the song keep coming to me:

"Thy ways, Oh Lord, with wise design,
Are framed upon thy throne above;
And every dark and bending line
Meets in the center of thy love."

No matter how dark the lines are to us, they truly do meet in the center of His love. But it is impossible when we are in the pit of despair, to realize these things. I know from experience that we can only look to him when the Spirit directs us to do so. As everything brings forth after its kind, we can only expect carnality from the flesh and heart of man.

Surely, who can deliver me from the body of this death? Someday that glorious resurrection will: that Lamb who has stood as one slain from the foundation of the earth. "I am the resurrection and the life." Not will be or has been, or can be, but is. "I am the way, the truth and the life." That truth that is the word of God, who was made flesh and dwelt among us — altogether lovely, and perfection itself; for in him dwells the fullness of the God head bodily. If it is all the fullness, it must be Father, Son and Holy Ghost. I in Him, and He in me. Oh, what a great and glorious mystery! What majesty! No wonder the redeemed sing, "Great and marvelous are thy works Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways thou King of Saints." If only we could always sit at His feet and adore Him.

I must close now. Do with it as you see fit. If any don't agree with me, maybe their walk is closer than mine; maybe their eyes see clearer and their hearts to understand. For myself, I know I am a sinner, and only God's grace and mercy and the love of a blessed Saviour can make me see and understand.

As ever,
Mary L. Eckard

Dutton, Ontario
January 6, 1954

Dear Brother and Sister Jefferson:

Your card with the enclosed note with kind loving wishes was very welcome. It was nice to know that we had those in California who thought of us. We often think of you, especially since Brother Jefferson came so far to look us up and behaved himself as becometh a servant of God amongst us. What a wonderful household is the household of faith! What a glorious, gracious loving Father we have! And what a wonder-

ful, wise and thoughtful elder brother we all have in Jesus! What a Holy Spirit pervades this wonderful household when he sheds abroad his love in our hearts, and just think of this great family and what they have done in the strength of their Lord. (Hebrews 11.) We, of course, are, I hope, some of the very little ones of this noble and heavenly family. Our Father is so old and so wise, if it were not for His demonstrations of His love to us, we should dread Him coming in to see us or to speak to us. But His love is such that it begets love. Our Brother John tells us that we love Him because He first loved us; and Brother Paul says, even when it is our Father's will to chasten us, He speaks to us as His children and says, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him." Paul has been a very good brother to us. He wrote and told of the goodness and mercy to him while He was living in this life so as to encourage us little ones in the way. We have had a lot of good brethren. I have felt that John Bunyan was a very dear brother, and some things that he wrote about the way have been a help to me.

Dear brother and sister, I have often had a feeling come over me that I hope the Lord has given me, that there isn't even one of all this great household of God that we can do without, and sometimes I have truly felt that if there was any one of this dear family unfit to live in this household it is George Ruston. Oh, how this thought has been with me ever since I have been, as I trust, in the house. My Father and Elder Brother and my Mother have often drawn me to their very breasts and enclosed their arms about me when I have even expressed with a word or a look or even a tear my unworthiness and unfitness. Many a time they have, as it were, kissed away such a thought from me and made me to feel quite at home with them. Of course, I have learned, and I am sure you have, that we cannot be at home with the world and with God at the same time. This lesson has often been very hard to take, for by nature this world was all we knew about and all that we wanted, and it seemed very hard to receive the cousel of our heavenly Father until He gave us a willing mind, until that day we fought hard to have our own way.

> "Against the God that rules the sky,
> I fought with hands uplifted High;
> Despised the mansions of His grace;
> Too proud to seek a hiding place."

I found James a good brother to me after that the Lord Himself had said to me, "Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean, and **I will receive you**, and will be a Father unto you and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." I thought when that word was given me, that the matter was there and then settled, but such has been my worldly-mindedness that in myself there has been for years a fight, a warfare, which will end, I suppose, (yes, I am sure it will be ended) when I leave this world. Yes, James has been a good brother, and he has said to me many times that the friendship of the world is enmity with God. Whosoevtherefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God," (James 4:4.) We have learned this then about the family to which we hope we belong, that they are not of the world, although they are chosen out of the world. That the world knew not our Elder Brother when He was here and therefore the world knoweth us not. Let us not murmur; but just here, Brother Paul's kindly counsel comes to mind. Let me give it to you just as he said it because while I do but seldom know what spirit I am of, I know he was in the spirit when he said this. "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and **did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink**: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. But with many

of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, **The people sat down to eat and drink,** and **rose up to play.** Neither let us commit fornication as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. **Neither let us tempt Christ,** as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. **Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples:** and they are written **for our admonition,** upon whom the ends of the world are come." I have started a theme that I can never finish, but there is one more thought about this family, the household of faith, that I will mention. It is that they are children that will not lie. They are often ashamed of themselves, but God is not ashamed to be called their God. (Hebrews 11:16) In some unmistakeable way they show who they belong to. In some way they have a reflection of God's beloved Son. In Isaiah 63, God said, "Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so He was their Saviour. In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them: in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old." Can we wonder that one of the family said,

> "Jesus, the very thought of thee
> With sweetness fills my breast,
> But sweeter far thy face to see
> And in thy presence rest."

As I have heard them sing of Him as the babe of Bethlehem during this season of the year, "Oh, come let us adore Him," I have felt I wanted in a childlike way to adore Him. Yes, to glorify Him in my body, soul and spirit, which are His.

Dear brother and sister, excuse my pen, my hand is too slow to put on paper what my heart feels when I think of His name, but as a family let us keep in mind always what He is to us, what He has done for us and how near to God He has brought us who were so far from God through wicked works. Let us always remember that His name Jesus is very precious. Isaac's and Jesus' name were given by an angel from heaven and therefore His name is as ointment poured forth. May you, dear brother, desire each time that you speak in His name to pour forth to those in the house, but let me tell you from experience that the earthen vessel must be broken that His name be poured forth, (Mark 14:3) just as the earthen vessels in Gideon's little army had to be broken if ever the light shone. God bless you both with enabling grace. With love from us both.

Yours in sweet fellowship,
George Ruston

Ingalls, Ark.

Dear Editors:

Please find enclosed money order for renewal subscriptions, for my mother, Mrs. E. C. Purvis, 701 Dusy St. Dothan, Ala. and myself. I hope never to be without our good paper as long as I live. There is such a feast of good things in every issue, that I read and re-read every one of them. I love Elder Griffin's writings; he seems to be one that is not afraid to declare the whole counsel.

May God bless all of you to continue in your work, for the papers that stand for the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus mean so much to those of us, that live in more or less isolated places. It is "Good News from a Far Country," and certainly something that can't be taken away from us by the world.

A friend,
Mrs. Charlie Harrod

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30 Wheaton Road
Hampton, Va.

Editors, Signs of the Times:

I am enclosing herewith a letter that the late Brother A. D. Alston wrote me

February 6, 1951, while he was stationed in Korea.

I have always considered him an able writer. He was blessed to go into deep matters and write so comforting. If this letter meets with your approval wish you would print same in the Signs of the Times.

Yours in Hope,
P. L. Kenley

Korea,
February 6, 1951

My dear Brother Kenley:

Allow me to express my appreciation for your kind letter of December. The little meditations that you referred to were not written with any thought of being published, but were sent to Brother Adams by some of the brethren. If they were worth anything at all, may the Lord be praised. Every acceptable thing comes down from Him, for indeed He will accept nothing that comes from the vile and sinful flesh.

Dear Brother, my cry is so often that of barrenness and deadness. A letter from Elder Ruston yesterday referred to the 120 Psalms. I turned to it and read it; and it seemed to be my cry. "Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar."

Mesech was the son of Japhet, who was a son of Noah. Mesech's brothers were Tubal, Magog etc., settling the nations of the north and west of the Promised Land. Kedar was a son of Ishmael, who was the firstborn of Abraham by the Egyptian concubine, Hagar. They fled to the desert land and became a great nation as promised by God. Kedar is the name of a great tribe of Arabs, but were not the chosen sons. "The glory of Kedar" is mentioned in Isa. 21:16; it is the most conspicuous of all the tribes of the Ishmaelites. Both of these names refer to the peoples that settled the lands around the Mediterranean Sea, and to the north and west of the Promised Land. They refer to the uncircumcised nations and those who came often against the Israelites. They were nations and tribes of renown and glory, but were the enemies of the children of the Israelites.

Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar! Woe is me, that I sojourn and that I dwell in the lands of the enemies of my Lord and His peoples; and in the lands that are beyond the borders of the Promised Land. The reborn soul is killed to the love of and desires after the ways of sin; it is born of the Holy Spirit and it would seek after the things of the Spirit and the righteousness of Christ. The new will is always on the side of its Savior and its Parent the Holy Spirit of God. Yet that new will dwells in the tabernacle of this body, which is the old man and has the will for sin. When the reborn soul speaks, it speaks of itself as on the side of its Savior. The "I" in this Scripture is the new spirit that longs for the righteousness of its Parent, the Holy Spirit. "Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!" Woe is me that I dwell and live in this sinful flesh, and within the very enemy of my spirit. Is not this flesh the untamed and the uncircumcised and the unruly? Is not the flesh the enemy of the spirit, and that which is constantly at war with the spirit, the one lusting against the other, so that neither can freely do the things that it would? (Gal. 5:17). "My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace. I am for peace, but when I speak, they are for war." Does not Mesech and Kedar have the part of the flesh of this body? And do they not represent the enemies of the soul and the spirit born within us of the Holy Spirit? When we sojourn in Mesech and dwell in the tents of Kedar, are we not dwelling in the glories of the world and the flesh, and among the enemies of the soul and the spirit? Are we not then, at home in the body and absent from the Spirit? Then, Woe is me, for lo, I am so often found there! Paul said, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Also, "For the good that I would I do not; but the evil I would not,

that I do." That is two ways of expressing the same thought. Dear Brother, I would praise God with a pure heart; but I am in this body of sin, dwelling in the tents of Kedar; when I sit in church and under the sound of the precious gospel truth, I would worship indeed and in truth and with a pure heart, but I do not — because this flesh presents before me the most vile and evil thoughts. Not for one moment can I truly worship indeed and in truth without some fleshly and carnal and evil thought flashing before my mind! Woe is me! Who shall save me from the body of this death? "Me" is the reborn spirit and that which seeks its God; it is that little hope, that little spirit within, crying, Woe is me! Lord have mercy and save me! Rescue me from this land of Mesech and these tents of Kedar!

"The good that I would, I do not —." I would read the Scriptures with understanding and with spiritual light; but alas, that which I would I do not. I would always speak the truth, the whole truth and nothing more than the truth regarding my dearly beloved brethren and church and all its affairs; I would not shade one thing in the least or add or take away one iota; but alas, this old vile flesh finds its way into the matter and that which I would, I do not. Woe is me, for I sojourn in Mesech and I dwell in the tents of Kedar! I would turn the other cheek when slapped; I would submissively be corrected by my brethren; I would be obedient and submissive in afflictions; I would not doubt but ever trust in the Hand of my Savior, knowing that what He does is ever best, but alas, those things which I would, I do not; and the evils that I would not, that I do. I would not be envious or jealous, or critical or ever speak against any one of my brethren, but alas that which I would not, that I do. Woe is me, for I dwell in this flesh, and in the tents of Kedar! I would not complain, but I do; I would go on to face the very death of this flesh ever trusting in the wisdom of my Lord, but I am weak in the flesh, and I sojourn in Mesech and dwell in the tents of Kedar!

This flesh is vile and lusteth after sins; it is the enemy of the spirit, and is not to be trusted. But we have a promise; my hope is resting in the "seal" (Eph. 1:13) in the heart. He says "ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise." Oh that sealed promise may dwell within the heart of this body, but bless the Lord, it is sealed! And that seal is put there by the Holy Ghost, that seal designates ownership of the Savior; and there is no power in heaven or on earth that can break that seal put there by the Almighty sovereignty of the Triune God! Dear Brother, the dead soul does not seek after the righteousness of Christ; indeed, it does not seek at all, and flesh has its way. But when life is born within, then there is a crying and a seeking after its parent and that one who has given it life. Would or could one seek after something he had never known or loved or tasted a blessing from? Would you or I seek after a stranger which we had never known? Then is not the very crying and seeking after, an evidence that we have previously tasted a sweetness, been given a blessed hope, and thus made to long for and to seek after again? The Lord, our Saviour is mighty to save, and I know that He can reach with a long and mighty arm into the lands of Mesech and Kedar to save one of His little ones! In myself, I am hopelessly lost in these lands of the enemies; but I must hope and trust is One that is mighty to save.

I must close, I did not think to write all of this. In your letter you addressed me incorrectly; I am only a brother, one of the least if one at all, of my Father's house. My cry is to be with my dearly beloved brethren and church; but I am here in this most barren land, and my Saviour knows best; He is merciful and He is kind.

Yours in hope of His care,
A. D. Alston

"NUGGETS IN THE CLOSET"

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I doubt if you ever read an article carrying the above caption, but if it will hold your attention for two minutes reading time it will have served its purpose.

While visiting a very dear aged Sister the other day, she exclaimed, "What am I to do with my religious periodicals, now that I can not see to read anymore." "Throw them away, I guess," I replied. Then after some meditation I told her that I would look over her collection and probably select a few copies for myself. She went to her closet and asked me to lift out a tin box. Out of this box I lifted fifty-seven copies of yellow-backed Signs of the Times. "I'll take everyone of them," I said. "I wish you would," she replied fondly.

When we returned home I drew from the bottom of the pack and the 1st "Nugget" to attract my eyes was a poem entitled, "The Old, Old Story" by Elder L. L. Schenck. (March issue 1947) My wife and I enjoyed this immensely. The contents of these precious volumes never grow old, but why should we "hole" them away like a squirrel his acorns for the winter. We feel that God, who is ever gracious will provide for his people and supply us in time of need.

I have a box beside my desk and keep a supply of good reading matter for distribution. Whenever a person manifests in our conversation that he or she is of "Like precious faith" I pass along something that I have enjoyed, with the request that he do likewise. In this way we are in a small measure, "Letting our light shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father in Heaven.

Humbly submitted to the Household of Faith,

(Elder) P. E. Ingram

CORRESPONDING CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

(Written by Arnold H. Bellows)

The fifth verse of the second chapter of the first epistle of Paul to Timothy reads as follows: "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." There could be no salvation for the church of God either in time or eternity if it were not for the mediatorial office of the unchangeable one, who is both the son of God and the son of man, the one man Christ Jesus, who is a priest forever after the order of Melchizdec, after the power of an endless life. He is our prophet, priest and king. As a prophet he represents God to man and as a priest he represents man to God. Because of these two offices he is enabled to reign forever as king of righteousness, entering upon his unchangeable priesthood by his resurrection from the dead. Scripture tells us that Jesus Christ is a man in heaven, the first fruits of them that slept, and they that are of the election of grace shall dwell in fadeless glory with him during the eternal ages, being like him and seeing him as he is in their glorified state, being preserved body, soul, and spirit unto his second coming.

God is a spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth, and this very God created man of the dust of the earth and made man a flesh and blood being and gave him a law, which when transgressed, placed man under the righteous judgment of God, with the penalty of death in the flesh, separated from God, and subjection to the awful curse of God with eternal conscious wrath to follow. Man became unholy by transgression and helpless to save himself by any means of his own. A holy offering for sin, and a holy offerer, were necessary for man's redemption; that is, a holy man must die for man's sin and suffer in full the penalty. God as a spirit could not die, therefore man must be saved by a sinless man who could die and rise from

the dead. So the eternal Son of God assumed human flesh by the miracle and glory of the virgin birth in the person of Jesus Christ.

In assuming human flesh Christ was sinless because born of God, and being made under the law, being the seed of the woman, was enabled to fulfill its just demands in every jot and tittle, sympathize with the infirmities of his brethren, being tempted in all points like unto his brethren, and die on the cross, and suffer on that cross in finite time the eternal consequences of the sins of his bride, the church. Being infinite as God but finite as man in being subject to death and the curse of sin, and so being infinite as the God-Man, — Diety and humanity being one, he could save his people with an everlasting salvation by enduring the penalty of sin for them. As they were chosen in Christ before the world began, he alone had the right of redemption.

He came forth from the grave as a man, showing that a spirit had not flesh and bones, and ascended to heaven as a glorified man, and was seen in heaven by the dying Stephen as a man. He did not leave his blood, which was the life of the flesh in the sin-cursed earth, because he said that he had power to lay down his life and power to take it again, having received this commandment from the Father. He took not him the nature of angels but the seed of Abraham in his earthly ministry, and as his holy humanity must endure the curse of the sins of his people, he could not be glorified in that humanity as the son of man until after he had atoned for the sins of his people. He did not lay aside his glory as the eternal Son of God while he was on earth, but he veiled it in his humanity to that his eternal sonship and divine essence were hidden from the eyes of men in nature. He prayed in the garden for the Father to glorify him, that is, the man Chirst Jesus; that is his humanity, with that same glory that he had with the Father before the creation of man. John the Baptist beheld him on earth as the Lamb of God and the apostle John saw Jesus as the Lamb in heaven, as we read in the fifth chapter of Revelation. He ceased in no sense to be a man and the Lamb of God when he ascended to heaven.

He could not be a high priest touched with the infirmities of his bride if he were not in heaven as a man. Neither could he represent man to God as a mediator between God and man unless he were a man in heaven. He and his Father are one and inseparable. Because he was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief and subject to temptation he is able to minister unto them that are tempted. Having atoned for sin as a man, he is qualified as a man in heaven to present his people before the throne of God, holy and without blame in love. When we feel the need of him, we are assured that we have a sympathizing high priest in heaven who can save us to the uttermost. His blood cleansed us from sin because through the miracle of the virgin birth it had divine power and efficacy, and it saves for time and eternity.

It has been a pleasure to entertain the visiting friends and brethren and to enjoy the fellowship of our dear kindred in Christ. The next session of the Lexington-Roxbury Association will be announced in the Signs of the Times as to date and place.

Durham, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

My subscription expired with the August issue of the "Signs of the Times", and I find I am a little tardy in renewing. Enclosed herewith is a money order for renewal of my subscription for one year. This is to notify you also of my change of address from 520 Gordon Street, Durham, North Carolina to 412 Edward Street, Durham, North Carolina.

The last issue of the "Signs" was excellent — especially the lovely poem you wrote and the article written by A. T. Benson on the scripture taken from the Song of Solomon. If I have a favorite book in the Bible it is the Song of Solomon. The very first verse of this book speaks of it as "The song of songs, which is Solomon's." I do not know how many songs Solomon wrote, but I am sure according to this testimony that this one is *the* song of songs. I love the beautiful expressions of Christ's love to His church and of her love to Him, and trust that I have received much comfort from reading this particular book for it contains some of the most sublime descriptions on record of the reciprocal love between Christ and the elect family of God. It is a great blessing to be enabled to feel even a small portion of the marvelous assurance of His tender love and care toward His people. I cannot now know whether I belong to Him or not; but whether I be included in that number or not, it is wonderful to contemplate the ultimate joy, happiness, and peace of those who do belong to Him . . .

Yours in hope,
Catherine M. Copley

Ruffin, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler:

Am enclosing check for two years renewal subscription to our good paper. We hope never to be without it: both husband and I read and enjoy it very much, and find a feast of good things in every issue. We love Elder Griffin's writings, and so many more of the able writers, who are not afraid to declare the whole counsel.

May God bless all of you to continue in your work for the paper which stands for the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, which means so much to us.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. G. F. Pruitt

Dear Brethren Wood and Spangler:

My last article on page 196 of the Signs on the subject of the temptations of Jesus, having touched only on the first temptation, — the stones and the bread, I wish, if the Lord will guide my pen, to speak of the other two. (Matthew 4:5.) "Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, — and saith unto him (still under doubt and suspicion) if thou be the Son of God cast thyself down; for it is written: He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone."

Jesus knew his people would at times be placed in high places; and he also knew that high places are dangerous places. Some of our brethren have not thought of it in this way, but it is so. When our Lord sends us a minister, and we feel that he has been sent as a watchman on the walls of Zion, the church lays their hands on him. This elevates him to the highest places, and the devil is testing him all the way trying to get him to tempt his master; watching his walk in the church, his conversation in the church, also in the world. Of old it was the rulers who caused the people to err. It is so often spoken of that a sound pastor has a sound congregation for they believe in him. His preaching is sound, his footsteps make a straight path, his conversation and manner causes the church to look to him, to adore him, pray for him, and be proud of him. They can depend on him and they do not ask unreasonable things of him. When we have one to go in and out before us that our God has sent, we are anxious to go to meeting. There is something sacred there, and we are thankful to the Father for the gift he has given us, and we worship him in spirit and in truth. The minister is a target for the devil to shoot at, and he is often wounded in the house of his friends: and when the devil can not get him in that way, he will try to exalt him

above measure, telling him he is a wonderful preacher, the best there is. And by boasting, and lieing to his conscience, he will soon believe it himself, and he will try and put more worldly ways about him (it is an old saying that when the devil wants to get a man and can't get him, he sends a woman and she gets him). What a blessing for his chosen people, that Jesus told the devil, "Thou shall not tempt the Lord thy God."

The devil is not satisfied with the first and second temptation. He taketh him up in a high mountain and showed him all the greatness and glory of the world, and told him all this I will give you if you but fall down and worship me. Think of this great temptation: all the world, all the riches and all the glory. What does that mean to one that has struggled along in life trying to have a home for his wife and family, to have offered to him by the devil all you have to do is fall down and worship me. None but the elect can overcome this temptation, and they not of themselves, but through Jesus who overcame this temptation over the devil, saying, "Get thee hence Satan: For it is written. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

Now that the temptations are over, and the devil was defeated, angels came and ministered unto him. All true ministers of God know of the wiles of the devil, they know he is a lying spirit, and they also know that they cannot of themselves combat with him. "Yet Michael the arch angel, when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee." (Jude 9) It is not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Not by tempting God but fearing him, that is wisdom, and wisdom teaches us not (especially in high and dangerous places) to tempt God.

Not for riches, and glory, and possession of worldly things, but in humble submission to every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, Jesus gained the victory over Satan, not for himself alone, but for all the members of his mystical body, the church. May the Lord be praised, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and HIM ONLY SHALT THOU SERVE.

(Elder) George L. Weaver

"WITNESSES"

Embracing all human creation, we are either true or we are false witnesses; for we bear about in our bodies by action and words of expression the testimony of a witness; or, in other words, the creature that we are. Therefore, to be a true witness you must know God: you must have seen and heard him, to testify of him. Now the Scriptures say to know God is eternal life; and also say that by searching you can not find him out. You might be able to recite the complete letter of the Bible, yet this would not make you a true witness, as it would be only relating the testimony of others.

Except you be born again you cannot see His kingdom. You must, therefore, be begotten of him to be born of him. Then he becomes your Father, and you become his son. God, as any father does, loves his own children (and much more so), and with loving kindness draws them and leads them, teaching them to know him; and teaches them to know themselves by revealing to them that they are sinners, and are guilty of all manner of transgressions. They find themselves unable to meet the demands of the law; therefore, they become not only guilty of transgression, but in the fulness of disobedience, they become helpless and hopeless, falling by the way.

Then, after heaven and earth has been searched for relief, Christ, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, prevails to open the seals, that they may look thereon and read. Then they flee for refuge to lay hold of that hope that is set before them. Being the anchor of the soul, it is both sure and steadfast; and enters into that within the vail, which Christ the forerunner has already entered.

Therefore, you not only become a witness, but an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ. And your testimony is in Christ for life and salvation in time and eternity, and you have lost all confidence in the flesh: you live in and by that hope; and you become that peculiar and afflicted people which the world does not know. The world knoweth us not because it knew Him not. God willing more abundantly to show his counsel unto his heirs of promise, confirmed it from eternity, and it must come to pass, as he cannot lie. His children are all taught of him, and great shall be their peace. Although, as Paul said, we die daily; and we find that we never fully recover from these afflictions, as we so much desire. But His grace is sufficient, and he supplies all our needs according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ.

"Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen"

R. L. Harrison
Rives, Tennessee

Canyon, Texas

Dear Brethren:

I see I am behind with my subscription, so am sending check for $10.00 for two years. Please use the balance for the Indigent Fund.

I have been reading the Signs for over fifty years, and I trust that our God will cause it to continue to feed the souls of his people. My race is about run; I have passed my three score and ten years, and my health is failing fast. But I know that my time is set and that I can't go until that day arrives; nor can I stay any longer when it arrives, but I am longing for that day. For twenty years I have read the Bible daily, and it means so much to my hungry soul. I have been blessed for many years to go to church three times a month — twice a month out of the state. We have small memberships at these churches, but God said that where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them. That is God's way of taking care of the church — He will not give his glory to another. It is by grace we are saved, through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God and not of works.

May it be God's holy will to bless you in this great work you are doing. I am a poor sinner in hope of mercies.

C. M. Presley

ElDorado, Arkansas

Editors of the Signs of the Times:

I am enclosing a little mite. I still receive the Signs and I enjoy every line of it. I have been reading last year's numbers and it seemed that I had never read them before. I feel to be so mean and unworthy of such blessings. Seems that I grope along in the darkness to such; my burdens are so heavy: a few moments of pleasure I enjoy, then I have hours to complain.

Wish I could tell you just how much I appreciate the Signs, but words cannot tell it. Wishing you all success and happiness in this life.

Unworthily yours,
Mrs. E. M. Cameron

Fort Worth, Texas

Signs of the Times:

Enclosed you will find check for two more years. The Signs has been in my grandfather's and father's home for over one hundred years; and I hope to continue to receive it as long as I can pay for it. I'll soon be seventy-one years old, and a widow of eight years. Have been a member of our little church in Ft. Worth since 1910, and was baptized by Elder J. C. Sikes.

In hope,
Mrs. Camella Sammons

EDITORIALS

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EDITORIAL

"Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sesthenes our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours: grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; that in everything ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: so that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." (1 Corinthians 1:19)

Recently while attending a communion meeting at Lick Creek church near the village of Charleston, Kentucky, I spoke from this passage of Scripture. I was requested to write upon the things that I brought out. This would be impossible for me to do, as I am not given to preaching and writing more than once on the same text. If I am ever given liberty of expression on a text I am through with it, until something new is given upon it. However, I feel to make an attempt to comply with this request.

How did Paul get to be an apostle? This he tells us: by the will of God. If every body believed the account of how Paul became an apostle, every body would believe Old Baptist doctrine. That is how simple it is from the standpoint of this world. They say that they, and we, can all believe the truth, and, as a result, be saved. But it will not work out. What they say they can do, they do not do. One, any one, does not become an apostle, minister, or, even child of God, by the will of men as they teach, but by the will of God. They quote, If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land (Isa. 1:19) not knowing that this is law, and that being a reward for a willing and obedient walk, it is only the good of the land, and in no sense of the word, heaven. Even in promise it was given to the children of Israel that God would have mercy on whom he would have mercy (Ex. 33:19), and that was enlarged upon by Paul (Rom. 9:16). Not only did Paul tell us that he DID NOT RECEIVE THE GOSPEL HE PREACHED FROM MEN (Gal. I:2) but he tells us that it, that is, the obtaining of mercy, IS NOT BY ANY WILLINGNESS WE MAY PRODUCE OR ANY RUNNING WE MAY DO (Rom. 9:16). If language means anything, then Paul had a clear case to lay before the Corinthian brethren of his being called by the will of God. Furthermore, he told the church at Galatia

that if any man preached any other gospel unto them other than what he had preached, to let that man be accursed. How good it is that we are still blessed to continue in the Apostolic doctrine.

"Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours." Much confusion has existed among theologians as to what the church should be called. Here it is called the church of God. If merely names get us anywhere it would be perfectly alright to call it the Church of God. The term 'church of God' and "churches of God' is found much more in the Bible than the term 'church of Christ' and 'churches of Christ.' In fact, with all the boast of certain churchmen, the term "church of Christ' is not to be found in the Bible. Since the Son declared that He and the Father were one, we may rest assured that the church of God at Corinth was, and still is, the same as the 'churches of Christ' (Rom. 16:16).

In modern days a people have come up proclaiming themselves to be the 'church of God.' Still another people have come up calling themselves the 'church of Christ.' The people that denominate themselves "The Church of God" are a by-product of Methodism. John Wesley preached sanctification of the flesh in his day, and the various branches of the sanctified people all got the theory from him. This denomination calling themselves The Church of God cannot qualify as being in fellowship with this church at Corinth. This we will, God willing, presently show. The people denominating themselves as The Church of Christ cannot qualify as being a continuity of the church that Jesus founded. In the first place they were unknown for over eighteen hundred years after Pentecost. In all the pages of history there is not a single reference made to The Church of Christ at any named town in the whole world. In the time of the Apostles there is no reference made to The Church of Christ at Corinth or any other of the varieous names given churches. This people got their doctrine from the Catholics, were spawned in the Presbyterian denomination, and hatched in the Old Baptist church. It cannot be evaded that the Catholics first preached water regeneration; it cannot be denied that Thomas Campbell first was a member of the Presbyterians where he begin to advocate the spurious claim of baptismal regeneration; it cannot be denied that Alexander Campbell became identified with the Old School Baptists, was a zealous advocate of that doctrine, often debating with objecters; that he later left them so as to sow the seeds of the newly found doctrine, and that he ended his connection with time by being buried in an Old Baptist cemetery.

This 'church of God' at Corinth and various other places mentioned in the Bible is the same church that is denominated "the churches of Christ," "the churches of the Gentiles," "the churches of Asia," as well as the church at various places. That Jesus our Lord and Saviour founded the church we all admit; that it is, and always has been, his church we do know, but that it has been called by one name, to wit, The Church of Christ, it is not true. If wearing the name constituted one a member of the church of Christ, then wearing the name 'Church of God' would be just as biblical and it would carry just as much weight and it would insure heaven for the wearers just as much as wearing the name 'Church of Christ.'

Since it is a fact that the names "Church of God" and Church of Christ" were unknown as the name of the church which Jesus founded for over eighteen hundred years, that within itself, refutes, and removes all evidence, that either of these two bodies which have taken these names as their only prerogative to being called the church that Jesus built, can be the true church. Anything that cannot be found in the Scriptures by that specific name; anything that cannot be found in all the pages of profane history; anything that never was known or heard tell of until

a little over one hundred years ago, certainly cannot be the church that was set up by Christ and that the gates of hell were not to prevail against. But not only that, they have now become well known. They now hold respectable places among the religious bodies of the world. This eliminates them from being prospective churches of Jesus Chirst. They have also become quite numerous, and are making the most rapid advances in all religious bodies. These things remove these bodies from serious consideration as the Apostolic church.

But let us pause a moment. Let us leave the question of names for a moment. This letter is, primarily, to the church at Corinth. These people at Corinth are addressed as being sanctified in Christ Jesus. This word 'sanctify,' and its derivatives, all mean to separate or to set a part. Thus in every instance that this term is used in the Bible, it is used in connection with something being set a part. The thing set a part is spoken of as being handled by the greater. In time, there is not an instance in the Bible where the lesser set a part the greater. There is not an instance where the strong bound the stronger. However, this setting a part is a work done before the world began to pulsate with life. These people at Corinth, as well as the people at Ephesus, together with God's people now, were all, all, chosen in Christ before the world was. This choice of God is synonymous with God's setting a part. How beautiful this election becomes as we examine false positions. Set a part or chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. So sure is this election that all the religious world has never added one to the number, and all the satanic powers that be, have never erased one name from the Book of Life.

These people were called saints. **They did not call themselves Christians or saints but they were called saints.** How grand and glorious and wonderful that they were called saints at Corinth. Every church that Paul wrote to, is tied to this doctrine. They are all united in the high calling that is in Christ Jesus. This call is not an afterthought with God. This calling is not according to our works. Of two things I am sure, and Satanic powers of every hue and brand may rage and persecute the saints of God with their vituperative spleen, but these two things remain until now. These two things are these: Our calling, whether timely or eternal, whether in the beginning of our experience or in the middle or at the end, is all according to the purpose of God as purposed in him (Christ) before the world began. Our salvation, whether now or yesterday, whether in the beginning of our experience or at the end of it, that in every phase of it, it is according to the purpose of God in Christ Jesus before the world began.

But does that cover me? And the things that were applicable to the saints at Corinth likewise applicable to me? Why not? He spoke of you just as truly as he spoke of them. Not the first thing is spoken of the church in this early day that is not also spoken of the church in this late day. This letter is addressed to characters that are accurately described, and the Holy Ghost is delivering these precious things to every one of the saints in this day, as He delivered them to all that came before us. Thus, dear children of God, our calling and our salvation is according to the purpose and grace of God which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Saved and called, both being in the past tense, and both being the work of God, AND ALL HE DOES BEING DONE FOR EVER, it follows that these two things are settled.

So many times I have had these near and dear to me by the ties of nature, and the dear friends that often hear me at my appointments, tell me that the doctrine the Old Baptists preach is so limited, so narrow, so selfish. Is it? This letter includes every praying character. These kind of characters all enjoy the things of the Spirit. The gospel is sweet to the children of God; it is good news to every hungry and thirsty soul; it is

comforting to every disconsolated soul; it is food and drink to every living child of grace; the letters written, the journeys made, the hardships and sorrows shared, the joys and pleasures mingled in, all are to the children of God — to all the children of God, to all that fear God, to all that call upon his name in every place. We stop here — the world goes on, the whole world goes on. They preach to the unregenerate, they preach to the dead, they preach to these unborn, they preach to those THAT DO NOT CALL UPON THE LORD.

"Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." If I could write in a way that all of our people could understand that these people of Corinth were already children of God by birth, by regeneration, by choice, by purchase, it does seem that the quibbling about conditional time salvation would cease. That grace certainly had been given them in the outset cannot be denied, nor is it wished denied. The grace that regenerates, quickens, borns again, or any other way you have of saying something about our beginning in the kingdom of heaven, is the same grace, the same kind of grace, that Paul prayed for for the Corinthians. This grace was bestowed upon them without merit. If by merit, how could we ever get a measure of it for the performance of good works? We found out that we could not perform good works; we found out that everything we had ever done was not beneficial towards procuring salvation. If grace, this timely grace prayed for by Paul, and bestowed upon the Corinthians by God, was a conditional grace, the gift of which was predicated upon our obedience, how did they, and we, get the first supply after regeneration? If we got it by obedience, then we wrought without grace and without faith. If we wrought one thing without grace, then a part of the life that Paul lived in the flesh, and he being a pattern to us, then us also, was not by grace at all. Thus, when Paul declared that he was what he was by grace, he did not tell the truth, for, this grace being pay for service rendered, he must have got the first supply without service rendered, or, not getting it that way, he wrought without grace.

That is not all. If service had to be rendered for the first supply of this grace then the first supply of grace was gotten by sinning, for if the thing done is not in faith, it is sin. If the faith that we get to do good after regeneration is gotten by exercise, then what right have we to shoot arrows at the world for talking about the sinner exercising faith in order to have it?

This grace is for the present time. Where is it from? Had the earth a source of this? We often hurl epithets at the world for their colleges and seats of learning. Are we any better than they? Haven't we left our first love and gone to preaching that a sinner has a reservoir of grace (?) and strength and ability to save himself in this vile and wicked world? This grace is from God. It is grace, the same grace, the same sovereign grace, whether at the first movement in our heart and mind and soul or on our death bed. It is from God and it is to us.

W. D. G.

APOSTASY

This article has to do with those who, though they have once known the way of salvation, fall away from the first principles of their profession and become renegades, so far as the faith of God's elect is concerned. An apostate is one who ceases to walk in conformity with the principles of doctrine he once believed, and so falls away. As a basis for what we shall write, we want to use the second chapter of second Peter, which gives as good a description of apostasy from the doctrine, faith and order of the apostles as can be found anywhere in the New Testament. It is impossible for any child of God to fall away from the covenant of election which was made in Christ Jesus before

the world began. Once in the love of God, always in the love of God. There cannot possibly be any apostasy so far as one's falling out of the hand of God and being finally lost. Not a drop of Jesus' blood was shed in vain. All that the Father gave him shall certainly come to him, and there is no power sufficiently able to pluck one of them out of the Father's hand. This is proved by the line of thought in the sixth chapter of Hebrews, where it is shown that if it were possible for any of God's people to fall away from God the only way they could be renewed again to repentance would be for the Son of God to be crucified anew for them. This could not be, because such a repetition of the crucifixion of the Son of God would be putting him to shame, in that it would be a confession on his part that the work which he did the first time was not satisfactory, or was not perfect enough to eternally secure those given him to redeem. Thus, inasmuch as it is impossible for Christ to be crucified afresh, just so it is impossible for the redeemed to ever fall away so as to be finally lost. But the second epistle of Peter, especially the second chapter thereof, treats of the falling away of those who depart from the principles they once professed to believe, and though they are still the children of God, and cannot ever be cast away so as to be finally lost from Jesus Christ, they do in this earthly life become followers after their own lusts, or become bewitched of their own theories and opinions so far as to preach for doctrines their own inventions, thus departing from the old paths of apostolic doctrine and order which they once professed. All such characters are anathema to the true church, and are not to be fellowshipped by those professing the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. The gospel procedure of the church of God as set forth by Christ and the apostles condemns all such, and they are not to be received into our houses, neither are we to bid them godspeed, lest we, too, be partakers of their evil deeds. We cannot understand how any one can read the second chapter of second Peter and conclude that these false teachers are not children of God. The description of them given in this chapter cannot be made to fit any but those who have once known the way of salvation but have fallen away from the professed faith which rightly becomes those who walk in that way. In the first verse, these false teachers are to secretly bring in among the saints awful heresies, even going so far as to deny the Lord that bought them. This shows clearly that the Lord bought them; that is, had redeemed them with his own blood, but that they afterward denied him. If the Lord ever bought any with his own blood except those chosen in him before the world began, we have never seen it anywhere in Scripture; and we believe Christ suffered for the elect only, therefore these must have been among the elect. By bringing into the church these heresies, these who forget and deny the Lord who bought them bring destruction on themselves; that is, they bring upon themselves the swift judgment of those who desire to continue steadfast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and become destroyed to the love and fellowship of the church here in the world. We have not time and space to comment upon each one of the verses in this chapter, but our readers will note that Peter described the safety of the true church in the midst of these false teachers by showing how Noah was saved from the wickedness of the antediluvian world, and how Lot was delivered from the wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah. Just so will God spare his remnant now in these latter days when the little flock is so terribly beset with apostate men who have fallen away from the advocacy of the principles which they once professed, and have gone after their own vain tradi-

tions and imaginations. Just as God in the old dispensation was determined that his servant David should always have a light before him in Jerusalem, and so spared Judah from the general falling away which befell Israel, so now God has purposed that the spiritual David, Jesus Christ, shall until the end of time have a remnant loyal to him, even though they be scattered and peeled. It is not to be wondered at that some fall away from the gospel order and principles, the great wonder is that all of us do not fall away, and that any are left to hold aloft the banner of truth, for surely were it not for the grace of God there would be no steadfastness in any one anywhere. These apostates are called in the thirteenth verse "spots" and "blemishes," and sport with their own deceptions, even while they associate with the children of sound doctrine and order, their deceptions not yet being uncovered sufficiently to bring down upon their heads the swift destruction which shall cut them off from the fellowship of the church. In the fourteenth verse these who fall away are called "cursed children." Children, therefore, even yet, but children under condemnation, for "cursed" means "condemned." These are under condemnation, not by the law of Moses, nor yet by the law of sin and death, but are condemned by that law of Jesus Christ which dictates the order and doctrine of the church here in the world. Every principle of gospel doctrine cuts off from fellowship with the visible church all who fall away from following in the principles of that doctrine, and all who disobey the order of God's house. Coming down to the twentieth verse, we find that the children of God, even though they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, do sometimes become again entangled therein and are overcome. In such a case as that, the latter end is worse than the first; also that it were better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than afterward to have turned from the holy commandment delivered unto them. These, being the children of God, shall in the end be saved, but it shall be as by fire, and through such a terrible refining that they shall wish they had never been born. These are those who have sinned wilfully after having come to a knowledge of the truth, and for all such there remains a fearful looking for of judgment and of fiery indignation which shall deovur the adversary. Thanks be to God, it is not the wayward child who shall be devoured, but all those things adverse to his peace which have caused him to wander, those things shall be devoured, and the child brought at last to his eternal home in the bosom of the Father; but no words can express, nor shall be ever be able to describe, the awful anguish and bitterness of soul which all apostates must eventually be brought through in order to purge them of their dross. Their latter state of humiliation and condemnation at the end of this gospel age shall be worse than at their beginning, and it shall be awful for them to have to blush for shame when Christ comes in his glory to be admired in all them that believe. Christ is the avenger of his people's wrongs, and no one who has ever offended one of his little ones can escape in the end. God is not mocked, and there is sure to be a time of restitution for all these things. The doctrine of Jesus Christ and the simplicity of the order of the apostolic church have been fiercely assailed from the first, and never more so than by those who are themselves the children of God. The creeping in of false teachers leads away those who are unstable souls, and the time comes when even believers will not stand for sound doctrine, and insist on easy or smooth things.

Time and space will not permit us to mention all the heresies that have from time to time assailed the church, but we cannot forbear to mention a few that are bewitching some of the Lord's people today. One of the ways in which

believers today deny the Lord that bought them is when they teach that eternal salvation is all of grace, but that time salvation is conditioned upon one's obedience to gospel precepts. This is a cunning deception and has led away many. The salvation of the believer here in his journey through time is all of grace, and if he walks obediently to the gospel that very obedience is of grace and is the fruit of the Spirit, and not of self. Another deception today prevailing among the Lord's people is that which teaches the purpose of God comprehends all good things, but not the evil things. It is an attempt to limit the sovereignty of God over all worlds, principalities and powers, and as such, it is a denial of the Scriptures and an insult to God Almighty, an insult which shall be well taken care of when Christ comes. Another very dangerous inclination abroad at present among God's people is the tendency among many preachers to over-spiritualize the Scriptures. Now, all of us must know that the Bible is a spiritual book, but we must not go so far as to think it not literally true. To preach Adam as the figure of Jesus Christ is correct, but to go so far as to say there never was any Adam, and never was any garden of Eden; that the Genesis record of creation merely teaches a spiritual lesson, and did not actually take place, all this is exceedingly dangerous. To set forth the spiritual meaning of Noah and the ark is exceedingly edifying to the saints of God, but to say there never was a flood, and never was a literal ark, is to bring in what is not true. Some have even gone so far as to say that a virgin never did give birth to a child, and that the story of Christ's birth is only a spiritual allegory. This is being preached among Old Baptists in some sections. It is well that we beware of all such. Then, too, there is that dangerous heresy regarding the resurrection of the dead, whereby some have spiritualized it into an ethereal nothing, that it loses all sense of power to edify and becomes a fantastic unreality which the faith of no child of God can lay hold of. There is an experimental knowledge of the resurrection which God's people have here in this world, and it is very comforting and instructive to hear that phase of the resurrection set forth, but when one goes on to give the impression that there is no resurrection to be experienced by the Lord's people, except what they have already obtained, when the future resurrection of the body is ignored or openly denied, then it is time to call a halt, for then spiritualizing becomes a dangerous menace to the church.

Finally, there seems to be a growing disposition on the part of some to deny the actual coming of the Lord at the close of this gospel dispensation, and to preach the coming of Christ as a purely spiritual and experimental thing within the range of the church's life today. We have no wish to deny that Christ did come in the Spirit to set up the gospel church at Jerusalem at the time of Pentecost; we further do not deny that Christ is coming now in the Spirit to quicken his people, each in his own order, from death in sin to life in righteousness, but we do most positively affirm, according to the Scriptures, that Christ is yet to come as he has never come before, and that he will consummate the expectations of this gospel age when he appears to raise the dead, and when those who shall remain alive unto his coming shall not die, but shall be caught up together with the risen dead to meet the Lord in the air. We hope all of us may, by the grace of God, beware of over spiritualizing the sacred Sciptures and thus becoming apostates ourselves. None of us can keep alive his own soul, and only the Lord is sufficient for these things.

L.

(By request we re-publish the above editorial of Elder H. H. Lefferts, which appeared in the December 1, 1922 issue. We believe it will be of interest to many brethren, since the subject is timely.

— J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

BLACK, BUT COMELY

It affords us great pleasure at all times to give such views as we have upon the Scriptures to those who sincerely love the truth; for we feel perfectly confident that all who sincerely love the truth, are born of God, and taught by his spirit. To love the doctrines of men who have stolen the livery of truth to disguise their deformity, and deceive the simple — although error so disguised may become popular in the world — requires no gracious operation of the Spirit to make me love it: for all men, in their native enmity to God, love error; but none can either know or love the truth sincerely until they have felt its power, and tasted its sweetness. The truth as it is in Jesus, always magnifies and honors God, and at the same time abases the creature. Hence, whatever men may profess or pretend, until they are born of God, and know experimentally the power of God's love shed abroad in their hearts, they are inwardly opposed to the truth. But to the subject. *"I am black, but comely."* This seemingly paradoxical expression is made by one who is called the fairest among women; an enquirer after the truth; one who is seeking for the place where her Beloved feeds, and where he causes his flock to rest at noon. Although we presume the personage thus describing herself as both black and comely, was undoubtedly intended to represent the Gentile church, we see no impropriety in applying her language, as expressive of the sentiments and experience of every individual child of God, whose heart the Lord has inclined to enquire the way to Zion, with his face set thitherward. The spouse of the Redeemer; the bride, the Lamb's wife, and all the individual members of the body of the Lord Jesus Christ, when filled with the love of God, are, as in the text, drawn out to seek him whom their soul loveth; and diligently to enquire for the footsteps of his flock. But the mystery of the complex character of saints, or the church, is the subject of the present enquiry. How can she be black, and yet comely; as her complexion would indicate that she was uncomely in the extreme, and so very black as to seem to challenge nature to produce a parallel. As black as the tents of Kedar, which were probably the most unsightly and black of anything that could be named as a comparison. Yet, while thus hideous and ugly, at the same time as spotless white and pure as the curtains of Solomon.

When the church, or when the individual Christian is heard to speak of their blackness, we understand them to speak of their earthly, depraved, unrenewed nature; and surely there is nothing that looks to them so hateful. They are truly amazed that God should have set his love on sinners of so deep a dye. While they can see nothing in their nature but vileness, or in their conduct but sin and transgression against God; their heart, the cage of every hateful and unclean bird, deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. O, how black and lothsome they appear to themselves to be. It is true they were unconscious of their vileness until the Sun had looked upon them; or until a revelation of Christ is made: as in the absence of the Sun, we are in total darkness, and cannot tell how disgustingly black and vile we appear until the light comes, which makes manifest: but then we felt the weight of our depravity. And as in nature, the more a person is exposed to the burning rays of the midsummer sun, the blacker they grow; so with the Christian; the more thoroughly they are made acquainted with the righteousness of God, the more effectually they become convinced of the guilt

and pollution of their own nature, and the wretched pollution of all human righteousness; until at length they become fully convinced that there is nothing short of the dirty, smoky tents of Kedar, to which they can compare themselves. This is the effects of the Sun's looking upon them. Take, for an example, the prophet Isaiah. Hear him exclaim. — "Wo is me; for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. —" Isa. vi. 5. And Peter, when the Sun looked on him in the palace of the high priest, went out and wept bitterly. And was it not even so, when God looked upon us, in the righteousness of his holy law; when the commandment came, and light broke forth in which we saw our own vileness that we could say we were black indeed, because the Sun, which is the fountain and source of all true light, had looked on us. How did we then cry out, Wo is me, for I am undone! And from that moment on, every one who has been enlightened to behold the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, will say with Job, — I have heard of thee O God, with the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee; therefore I abhor myself, in dust and ashes. Truly the more we know of God, the more we enjoy of his presence throughout our whole pilgrimage, the greater will be our sense of our own personal vileness; until like Paul we shall exclaim, — O wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from the body of this death. Surely I am as black as the tents of Kedar; but at the same time, — *Comely as the curtains of Solomon.* While all our earthly nature is black with sin and depravity, from the sole of the foot even unto the head, we are bruises and wounds and putrifying sores, so that there is no soundness in us, we have nevertheless, a life which is hid with Christ in God, which is all fair. That which is born of the flesh is *flesh,* and "All flesh is as grass, and the goodliness thereof is as the flower of grass;" it fadeth and falleth away. But that which is born of the Spirit is spirit; for it is born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. — It cannot sin because it is born of God, and the seed abideth in it. This spiritual life in us is as pure as the fountain from which it emanates; for it is Christ in us, the hope of glory. It cannot be contaminated or defiled with sin, or stained with guilt; and it is therefore whiter than snow, and unblemished as the curtains of Solomon. In ourselves we are black as the tents of Kedar; but in our Lord Jesus Christ, we are fair as the moon, clear as the Sun, and terrible as an army with banners. We have no comeliness but that which our Redeemer has put upon us. He found us in our blood, left in the open field to the lothing of our persons; and the Lord says to Jerusalem, Ezek. xvi. 1-14. — "Now when I passed by thee, behold thy time was a time of love: and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine. Then washed I thee with water; yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee, and I anointed thee with oil. I clothed thee also with broidered work, and shod thee with badgers' skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and covered thee with silk. I decked thee also with ornaments, and put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on they neck. And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and ear-rings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head. Thus wast thou decked with gold and silver; and thy raiment was of fine linen, and silk, and broidered work; thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil; and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom. And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect *through my comeliness, which I*

had put upon thee, saith the Lord God." To all of which Jerusalem responds, (Isa. lxi. 10.) "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels."

"Defil'd and lothsome as we are,
He makes us white, and calls us fair."

"My filthy rags are laid aside:
He clothes me as becomes his bride.
Himself bestows my wedding dress,
The robe of perfect Righteousness."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, January 1, 1862).

The opinions and doings of men are of no value unless motivated by the Spirit of Truth; if otherwise, they "darken counsel by words without knowledge".

WE QUOTE:

"The real hyporcrite before God is one who is confiding in his own merits, who pretends to a holiness which man cannot possess in himself, nor attain to by his own works, who professes to have the Spirit of God and to be approved in His sight, while he speaks false doctrine. He may be sincere in his belief, but it is a vain and ignorant sincerity, and he is deceived as well as deceiving." Elder Durand in his, "TRIAL OF JOB".

"Religious education is not the new creature. Education doth much cultivate and refine nature; education is a good wall to plant the vine of grace against, but it is not grace." Thos. Watson in "BODY OF DIVINITY".

"We are like trees, which, though alive, cannot put forth their leaves without the sun. They are alive in winter as in summer, but how different is their appearance in these different seasons." John Newton

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THE 6 VOLUME SET OF GILL'S COMMENTARY NOW READY FOR DELIVERY

This work is now ready for delivery. The price is $32.50 per set instead of $40.00, as originally announced, post paid. This is your opportunity to secure this valuable work at a reasonable price. Order from the SIGNS OF THE TIMES office, Danville, Virginia.

IS IT TIME TO SEND IN YOUR RENEWAL?

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106 Campbell Street,
Winnsboro, Texas

Dear Brethren:

Will you please say through the Signs that I desire copies of the Advocate of Truth for August, 1905; September, 1910 and August, 1912. These will complete my file. Anyone having these, I would greatly appreciate getting them.

Unworthily,
Mrs. J. R. Hardy, Sr.

PLEASE NOTE:

The Postoffice Department notifies us that we have insufficient address for delivery of the Signs to SGT. Clinton N. Barron, Washington, D. C. Should one of our readers know his correct address, we will appreciate the information.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God in his infinite wisdom has been pleased to call from our midst our beloved sister, Sarah Bird Sumner, be it therefore

RESOLVED, That we, the Old School Baptist called Providence, tender our Resolutions of Respect. We desire to bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Father's will, acknowledging that he doeth all things well. Sister Sumner was an humble, faithful member of our church. Our loss we feel keenly, but our loss is her eternal gain. For her to die was gain — she had suffered long. On the morning of January 25, 1954, it pleased God to call her from her sufferings here, to his beloved embrace. Be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be tendered the bereaved family, a copy spread upon our church records, and a copy

be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication. Done by order of the church.

(Elder) H. J. Bird

OBITUARY

MRS. SUSAN MARSHALL TURNER

Mrs. Susan Marshall Turner was born in Patrick County, Virginia, March 5, 1878 and departed this life December 14, 1953, making her stay on earth 75 years. She was the daughter of the late Elder Z. Taylor and Nannie Turner, and the grand-daughter of the late Elder Elkaney Turner.

She was married to George Waller Turner on December 13, 1894, by whom she is survived, together with one brother, Z. Cook Turner, Martinsville, Va., and the following children: Mrs. Pete Parcell, and Mrs. Forrest Flora, Roanoke, Va., John A. Turner, Gastonia, N. C., Joseph S. Turner, Salem, Va., Mrs. F. E. Broadwell, Raleigh, N. C., Z. Taylor Turner, Paul L. Turner, G. Hugh Turner, and Mrs. J. L. Goggin, Rocky Mount, Va.

She united with the Knob Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by Elder P. H. Johnson on June 12, 1909. On February 9, 1918, she moved her membership to the Rocky Mount Primitive Baptist Church, where she remained a loyal and faithful member until death.

Her funeral was conducted at Lynch's Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder Randolph Perdue, amid many sorrowing relatives and friends, with interment in the High Street Cemetery, Rocky Mount, Va.

She was a loving and faithful mother. Though we miss her, we are submissive to God's will and realize our loss is her gain.

Written by her daughter,
Mrs. J. L. Goggin,
Rocky Mount, Virginia

ALIZA ADAMS DODSON

Dear Editors:

Please publish the following additional information (and correction) in connection with my wife's obituary appearing in the September issue: She was not a member of the church, always saying she was not fit to belong, but she was a strong believer. The funeral was conducted by Elders C. E. Turner and J. R. Hollandsworth, who spoke many words of comfort to the bereaved family and friends.

May the Lord bless you and others to continue to write many more comforting editorials and letters. If the Lord wills, may the waste places of Zion be built up, and peace reign in her borders.

Thomas D. Dodson

IN MEMORY OF A DEAR FRIEND AND NEIGHBOR MRS. ELLA ADAMS LEFFERTS

Mrs. Ella Adams Lefferts, age eighty-two, widow of the late Elder H. H. Lefferts who was pastor of Old School Baptist Churches in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania, passed away January 10, 1954, in Arlington Hospital after a brief illness. A resident of Leesburg, Virginia, Mrs. Lefferts had been visiting a son Miles, in Arlington, Virginia, when she became ill. She leaves four sons and one daughter, and ten grand-children.

Her many Leesburg friends and neighbors miss her very much, since she had lived in this town about forty years and had endeared herself to all of us. Mrs. Lefferts was not a member of the church, but that was her belief; and she was ever faithful to attend meetings with her husband, and to entertain the brethren in their home.

Her body was brought to the Leesburg Funeral Home on Tuesday the eleventh, to lie in state that her many friends could pay their last respects to one they loved. Then on the twelfth the body was taken to Southampton, Pennsylvania, Church where Elder George Ruston had services, with burial in the William Penn Cemetery, Somerton, Pennsylvania, beside her husband.

A friend of the family,
Mrs. David Farnie,
Leesburg, Va.

LEWIS EGAN

Lewis Egan, son of Cornelius and Virginia Egan, was born October 1, 1884, near Shackleford, Missouri, on the lovely farm home where he died July 18, 1954. After having finished the elementary school, he was graduated from Missouri Valley College at Marshall, Missouri, and then attended Missouri University, at Columbia. He finished his schooling at Effingham College, Effingham, Illinois, in 1910, having majored in photography. On March 4, 1910, he was married to Miss Bessie V. Copeland at Independence, Missouri, and to them were born two sons, J. C., now on an adjoining farm, and Harrison of the home, who with their mother survive in addition to five grandchildren.

Mr. Egan's mother was a Missionary Baptist, and his father a Catholic, and he was baptized into the Catholic Church when an infant. His wife's parents were Old School Baptists, and she, blessed with that belief, had always attended with them. She had asked Mr. Egan to go with her but he would not, saying "They all preach alike." Finally he consented to go with her to an Association. Here Elder Walter Cash preached on Special Election, and Mrs. Egan said, "Lewis never took his eyes off

him," and on the way home he told her that was what he'd always believed, but didn't know anyone else did. From then on he never missed an opportunity of attending and in late years they had driven ninety miles each month, when weather allowed, to the meetings of Little Flock Church, Pleasant Hill, Missouri, to hear the pastor, Elder L. L. Schenck. Although Mr. Egan had not been well since suffering a heart attack some two years ago, in May he had expressed a desire to hear Elder Schenck one more time.

On Sunday A. M., July 18, he arose, seemingly as well as usual, and assisted his wife with breakfast. He then walked out for the morning paper, remarking on his return that he didn't see how he could live through another day of intense heat. He looked over the paper, then lay down, as was his custom, and was soon gone to his eternal rest. His wife, who was alone with him at the moment, spoke to him but he did not answer.

He had once expressed the desire that Brother Schenck preach his funeral, but the heat and the distance being so great, Mrs. Egan felt it would have been too hard on Brother Schenck to come. They then tried to reach Elder John F. Simpson in Granite City, Illinois, but were unable to do so. The funeral was held at the Sweeney Funeral Home, July 20, with Dr. D. K. Furguson of the First Presbyterian Church, Marshall, Missouri, in charge. The large crowd attending the services was an eloquent testimony to the nobility of the Egan family. Mr. Egan was laid to rest in the beautiful cemetery in Marshall beneath a bower of flowers, there to await the Resurrection Morn.

He was a subscriber to and loved the Signs, deriving much comfort from reading it. Our hearts go out to his dear companion and sons in this their loss. (Written by one who loves them.)

Mrs. J. W. Taylor

DELILAH WILLIE LUPTON

God has seen fit to remove from our midst our much beloved sister, Delilah Lupton. She was born February 12, 1876, and died June 11, 1954, making her stay on earth seventy-eight years.

She leaves one daughter, Mrs. Herbert Dickinson, two sons, John and Harry Lupton, all of Sea Level; also a host of relatives and friends to mourn her loss.

She united with the Primitive Baptist Church on the fourth Sunday in August, 1898, and was baptized by the late Elder John R. Roe. Her greatest desire was to be faithful to her church, to visit the sick and afflicted.

Surely she was a Mother in Israel, and sound in the faith. We have great hope that her spirit has gone where Jesus is, to enter the joys of her Lord. Oh, the happy place where Jesus is! The place where Christians all shall meet, in everlasting bliss.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder Eddie Humphrey assisted by Mr. T. C. Smith, her children's pastor, at Bay Sea Level Primitive Baptist Church.

RESOLVED:

1. We bow to Him who rules in the armies of Heaven and the inhabitants of the earth.

2. We extend our sympathy to the bereaved ones.

3. That these resolutions be recorded on our church book and a copy be given to her children, one sent to **Signs of the Times**, and one to **Zion's Landmark.**

Written by request of the Church.

Lula T. Mason, Clerk

SISTER ADDIE RANDOLPH

Sister Addie Randolph, wife of our beloved Elder A. T. Randolph, was born October 6, 1870, and departed this life June 13, 1954. She was married to Elder Randolph September 8, 1892. To this union were born two daughters, one preceeded her in death in 1911. She is survived by her husband, one daughter, one sister, six grand-children and ten great grand-children.

She was baptized into the fellowship of the Liberty Grove Primitive Baptist Church, Nauvoo, Alabama, together with her husband, the fourth Sunday in September, 1900. It was the writer's sweet privilege to have visited their home time and time again: to know her was to love her. She was a faithful member of her church as long as health and strength would permit. Her doors were always open to the Old Baptists and her many, many friends.

She was a true Old Baptist and a strong believer in predestination and salvation by grace. We feel that our loss is her eternal gain. May God be with her husband and children in their trouble, and lead them by his grace and comfort them by his presence.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer and Elder H. M. Brock. Feeling that God does all things well, and works all things after the counsel of his will, let us bow in humble submission to his will. Written by her pastor,

(Elder) J. W. McCool,
Gordo, Alabama

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 122 DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1954 NO. 12

"THE ROUGH WAYS MADE SMOOTH"

325 West Missouri Street,
El Paso, Texas.

The two articles following my few remarks, are copied from the December 1, 1908, issue of Advocate of Truth of which the lamented Elder J. R. Hardy was the Editor. The paper from which I have copied this is too fragile for me to risk sending it through the mail. Elder H. B. Jones passed on some years ago but he will live long in the memory of those with whom he was so long associated. The sister to whom he refers, is the wife of Elder S. C. Davenport, now of Mineola, Texas. He is now eighty-five and she is seventy-five. The forty-six years intervening since these articles were first published have in nowise weakened their faith. On the contrary, time's passage and the events of those years seem to have strengthened them. In a strong hope that I may in this manner preserve for posterity their memory and that of Elder H. B. Jones, I am submitting these articles for re-publication.

Hubert T. Faulk.

Mt. Vernon, Texas.
October 30, 1908.

Dear Brother Hardy:

I had the pleasure of baptizing the dear sister whose experience I enclose, at Oak Grove church a few weeks since. One month after her baptism I went home from church with her husband, brother Davenport and he showed me this letter which she had written to her father. I asked her consent to send it to you for the Advocate. She did not give her consent at the time but afterwards did, and her husband handed it to me a few days ago. Sister Davenport was a member of the Missionary Baptist order for a number of years and her father is a preacher of that order.

Your brother in hope,
H. B. Jones.

Quitman, Texas.

Dear Papa:

I seat myself to write you some of what I hope to be the Lord's dealings with me. In March of my 16th year, I was sitting and listening to you and Mama talk. I do not know who you were talking about. You spoke about them being condemned of their sins. I thought how could one be condemned of sin? I went out of the house and as I walked out I saw what a dreadful sinner I was. I wanted to get out and cry to the Lord for mercy; and then the thought came to me, how foolish I am. I would try to throw it off of my mind but I could not get rid of it. It seemed as if I was one to myself; that there was no one in the world who had such thoughts as I. So I went on wondering about myself. At times I would try to pray but it seemed that that there was nothing I could say that would help me. About all I could think of was, am I condemned of my sins? So, I troubled about myself; at times it would seem darker than at others.

In August, the meeting (not Old School Baptist—Ed) started at Pisgah. On Sunday the preacher (who was the blind man Tucker at the time) in his preaching said, "Resist not the Spirit, but yield to him now." Well, I thought, is it I that has resisted the Spirit; if so, how have I? I had tried to pray but could not; there was nothing I could say that would help me one bit. So I went on until Tuesday, and I had company

that day. I tried to be cheerful, and it was a try for it was all forced: my condition was all my thought. As we started back that night I spoke to this friend and said, before I hardly had time to think, "I am going up to be prayed for tonight." So I went on feeling some gladness, but more sadness. I tried to hear what was preached but I could not understand it. When the opportunity was given for mourners I saw many of my friends going up. I felt like I wanted to get out to myself and cry, Lord have mercy on me. I felt so mean I got up and went to the door and sat down on the steps. I felt like I wanted to pray, but not a word could I say except, Lord have mercy on me. Preaching broke and I went home, but there was no sleep for me until after midnight. Oh, I was in perfect agony. Next morning you wanted to scold me, and you said you thought I had more respect for you than to go out of the house during services; and I told you I wanted to get out and try to pray, and you told me some of your travels and I had heard Mama tell some of hers, so it gave me some relief to know that someone else had been like me. I thought all I had to do was to go to the church and be baptized, so I joined that night. I don't think I went in under any excitement, but was under conviction. Before I got home that night I was sorry I had done what I did; that was only deceiving the people.

I went on and was baptized but my burden was not lessened any. I would try to read the Bible but it was a sealed volume to me. I could not understand it. I went on for months. It seemed like I had tried to do, — but God had done nothing for me. In the winter Mama was taken with pneumonia and she was so low we thought we had to give her up. One night I was standing over her and thought: Oh, so much better she than I; she is prepared and I am not. I walked out of the house and sat down on a large rock that lay in one corner of the yard and thought die I must, and if I should be cast into everlasting punishment it would be just; then these words came to me: "The eyes of the Lord are upon them that fear Him." If I ever saw or heard these words before I knew not when. Oh, it was me; surely it seemed that I feared the Lord and not the devil at that time. All at once it seemed that a bright candle was lighted in my face. I felt like shouting and singing praises to His name. I felt like going in the house and embracing you in my arms and trying to talk to you, but thought you would think I was just excited about Mama, so I choked it back the best I could. My burden was so light, but it seemed it would be lighter if I could tell someone about my feelings. I thought I could never doubt again, but soon felt it was all imagination of my own.

Well, after Clarence and I were married I would go with him to his meeting, not that I ever intended to believe as he did, for I knew I never would. There was nothing too hard for me to say to him about his belief. I went on in this way for six years when I began to feel the nearness and dearness in my heart toward those people and I knew not why it was; certainly not because I wanted to. I would go among my people (as I then thought) but I could not feel at home. I tried to keep it hid. I did not want Clarence to find it out. It did me so much good to read their literature that Clarence was a subscriber to that I would slip it out in his absence and read it.

In February of 1906, I was taken very sick and had a dream that bothered me very much. I dreamed that our dear pastor, Elder H. B. Jones was sitting on our gallery and I was carrying about with me a gourd that was filled with soap; and the gourd was cracked all on one side and I was trying to hold it together to keep it from leaking out, and it would leak in spite of me; and he, turning to me said, "You and your gourd remind me of a true child of God who feels and knows what his duty is; he tries to close it up and conceal it to himself but it will leak out." It bothered me so much I awoke and found it to be

a dream but I could never throw it off. Well, I made up my mind to go to the church and tell them some of my troubles but I got out of the notion when I would go to meeting. In July of 1907, they had such a good meeting I felt I wanted to go but something held me back. I could not go home satisfied. I was bothered all night. (This was on Saturday before the second Sunday). Sunday morning came and I thought I would offer myself for membership if the privilege was extended, but it was not. That was discouraging to me and I thought I would just make up my mind to stay where I was.

So the meeting started at Pisgah in August and I wanted to go and did go one time; it was no enjoyment to me. I felt like I was there more as a pretense than anything else, so I was in trouble again. I had no one to go to, and I thought, If God be with me one time why would He forsake me at another? Oh, I was so low down at one time I felt like going to Clarence's mother and talking to her. I made an excuse to go, and when I got there they were going to a baptizing. One of her children was going to be baptized and she asked me if I was going. I was so full I could say nothing but wanted to get out and pour out my grief to myself, which I did. It was such an enjoyable time with them all, but none with me. I felt my home was with the old Primitive Baptists but how was I to get there. They gave me no encouragement as I then thought, but I felt that they were my people and that some day I would go to them. On their last meeting they were to have meeting on Thursday instead of Saturday and Sunday, and as many as wanted to and could, were to go on to the association. They met, but Brother Jones could not be with them; his wife was sick. Frank was sick and Clarence could not go and leave him and they arranged (over 'phone) to have preaching at usual time; and on Saturday, when the time came, I felt like I wanted to go to meeting but tried to make an excuse to keep from going, but I had none.

I went on, not thinking anything about joining that day, — not being a suitable time I thought; but when the opportunity was given I could have moved a mountain as easily as I could keep my seat. It seemed that I had so little to tell them I feared they would not receive me, but to my surprise I was received. But before I got out of the house I felt I wanted to be ashamed for I had gone and joined a people I once hated and these words came into my mind: "I am the Lord your God and none else, and my people shall not be ashamed of me." I went to the water Sunday morning and was led down into the water with that heavy burden, but when I came out my burden was all gone. I felt such an ease of mind I thought I would never doubt Him again; but I still find myself filled with doubts and fears.

Now, dear Papa this may trouble and grieve you as it did me. When I was fixing my clothes to be baptized, the thought arose before me that I was going to separate the relationship that existed between you and me in the church; and I thought, Oh, that if I had died in my infancy I would not have to suffer so. If I had given away to my old fleshly nature, I would not have gone one step further, and these words came to my mind: "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." I felt as though I was trying to turn back and tempt God. So, you see it is a mixture of joy and sorrow I have passed through; but it seems we learn from reading the Bible that it is through trials and tribulations that we enter the kingdom, and as the Lord has faithfully led us we should walk faithfully. His are mysterious ways. He leads in ways we have not known.

Fearing I may weary you, I will close. Oh, how I shrink for I know you must be burdened so. Oh, what a change, forsaken and alone. I am away down in the deep, hardly a ray is left. I look back to what I have written and I am unable to gather anything from it. Oh, why should I write to you; you cannot help me any

but it gives me some relief to pour out my grief to you. I sometimes think if I could die and be at rest it would be a great relief to me. Now, papa, if you become worried in reading this, just lay it aside; if it grieves you, I hope the Lord, who is King and Ruler over all, may comfort you in your sad hour. I am made to fear yet, at times, that it is all of self and not of the Lord. I remain as ever your loving child, if saved at all, by grace through faith and grace alone.

Lena.

Misella Park, N. Mexico

Dear Elder Spangler:

I notice that I am delinquent with my subscription to the Signs of the Times. My father read the Signs for many years, or as far back as I can remember. When I was a very young man, the wrath of God and condemnation seemed to overcome me, and I would steal away and read the Signs. I was very careful that none of the family would see me, as the tears would stream down my face as I read the articles. It seemed they were writing to me, saying the very things that were troubling me; and I would wonder how those people knew my feelings, who had written many years before.

I united with the Primitive Baptist Church during my twenty-first year. I resisted all of it until I could resist no more; and when I offered to the church the thing that bothered me most was my unworthiness. Those old brethren and sisters seemed so Christ-like, so humble and good, that I felt I was an impostor, and verily felt that they would not accept me as one of them; but at the same time I knew I could not but love them. But to my surprise they voted me in, and not long afterwards I was baptized.

When I came up out of the water, I had a feeling I had not had before, nor since. An old brother came to me and shook my hand and said, Brother Jim, I know how you feel. That gave me courage, for I believed him. I was with the church from 1922 to 1937, or until I came to New Mexico. Those first few years in the church: how sweet their memory still. At this time I have an aching void that the world can never fill.

A few years after uniting with the church everything was fine until other things overcame me, even worse than the experiece I had before uniting with the church. I came to this country fleeing from the ones I love. One of the first things I did was to inquire if there were any Old Baptists around: and I could not fine any. Many times have I awakened, still remembering the things I had spoken to his children. I hope I know how you preaching brethren feel when you are led by the Spirit of God to preach Christ our all and in all. At this time of my life I still have that burden with me, believing at His appointed time, if my impressions are of the Lord, he will prepare me and make me willing to go and say those things that are honouring to him and edifying to his children.

Brother Spangler, I must be mistaken, for I feel to be so vile, so wicked and so weak for so great a task. I am not even worthy to have the crumbs from the Lord's table. When I look back on those peaceful years before this came upon me, I have a desire to throw this off, and be able to sit in some corner and feed on the crumbs.

I have wandered along here, saying things I had no idea of mentioning. I sat down to re-write a letter I had written several days ago.

Back to the Signs of the Times, for fifteen years I heard no preaching, or had the Signs to read. I was so starved to read or hear some one speak the things I hope I love. In the papers my father left me was an old Signs printed thirty or forty years ago. I wrote you a few lines and addressed it to the old address in New York, with the request that you send me the Signs, and it came. It has been like a messenger from afar, declaring the love, pity, and longsuffering the Son of God has for his people, and always giving Christ all the praise,

declaring his wonderful works, and not man's. I begin to look for it several days before it arrives. The first thing I do is to look to see who has written the articles, especially the editorials. I well remember visiting with you at Brother Faulk's home in El Paso, Texas. Talking with you and reading the Signs has meant so much to me. I believe it was the purpose of God for you to come this way. I have many doubts and fears as to myself; at the same time believing He will feed his sheep through his called ministers at his appointed time. All things work together for good to them that love God, and who are the called according to his purpose. Maybe not to make us famous, popular or rich, but he will give us what we are in need of. I believe he will cause us to ask for what we are in need of: asking it according to his will, as he taught his disciples to pray.

My desire is, I hope, that he might give us wisdom and understanding, and give me grace that I might always give Christ all the praise for our salvation here in time and in the life to come. For it is the work of His Son that our feet were taken out of the mire and clay, and placed on a rock. It is through the finished work of the Son of God that our robes are washed white as snow; and his finished work will keep them white at his appearing. Christ is that love in us; he is our faith and hope and resurrection: our all and in all now and forever.

Brother Spangler, tell your brethren wherever you go, **to forsake not the assembling themselves together.** I hope I know by experience what it means, for it is there He has purposed for us to be fed that bread the world knows not of. The world insists that we go to some so called church, and quotes the above. There is no other place to compare to the feeding ground of our Lord. The kind of food the average religion has to offer does not fill me — it has lost its savor, for food is not appetizing without salt, or Christ.

May it please God to give us of his grace that we may praise him in spirit and in truth.

Your unworthy brother in hope,
James A. Bell

Athens, Texas.

Dear Editors and brethren:

Enclosed you will find our check to cover two year's subscription. I'm late sending this, but only claim negligence. I wish to say that it appears that the Signs grows in interest to the readers, rich in spiritual nourishment, strengthening and encouraging to those denied the personal enjoyment of visiting the meetings, and the closer relations so much enjoyed in being with those of kindred faith and belief.

Owing to ill health in our family, we are denied much of the joy and happiness we once enjoyed with our churches and brethren; but we are not complaining, for we, we hope have been made to feel resigned to our lot, and that this is some portion of the cross we are appointed to bear. It has proven to be a cross; and if so, and is of the Lord, may we rejoice that the hand of God is in the matter. Our hope rests in the fact that the Everlasting Arm is under us, and that we shall not be utterly destroyed nor discouraged beyond that which we are able to bear.

I have just read the beautiful and comforting article in the October issue, "Preaching the Cross," by Elder Lambert, which causes me to personally commend him for this splendid article. Am sure it has tended to strengthen and encourage the little way-faring pilgrim in the travel of his or her experience in this day of falling away from the ancient paths marked out by our Divine Leader, King and High Priest; who, as the article sets out, is at all times found interceeding, watching over tenderly, and lovingly devoted to each and every one whom the Father gave him in covenant with the Son. Indeed it was a perfect work. The cross had to be bourn; the offering had to be made. It had to be an endless offering once and for all.

The word had gone forth; it could not return to him void, but had to accomplish that which he had purposed, and prosper in His hand.

As a people, which I believe compose the church, we believe that the work of Christ, from his first appearing to the last act performed and the last word spoken, embraces perfection — every word, every act, was perfect, because it issued from a perfect being. And because of this, He was chosen of God to make this great, glorious and last offering for the sins of his people, — and his precious blood has redeemed them from all iniquity. As the gift to his people was perfect, appointed to the cross, appointed to die, appointed to be raised from the dead, appointed to sit on the throne at the Father's right hand, all believers in God believe all this issues from a perfect source, and believe this will result in the perfect redemption of all His people.

I beg to remain your humble brother, in hope of life beyond.

L. D. Rose

Hattiesburg, Miss.
October 5, 1954.

Signs of the Times:

Enclosed is three dollars for my paper, the Signs of the Times.

I have been through much lately, having broken my leg and was in the hospital nearly four months, and am still in a wheel chair. The good Signs is all the preaching I get. I know my trials are for a purpose, and that the Lord will not put more on this old sinful body than I am made able to bear. So I'll bear my troubles with a sweet hope to be with him someday when my trials here are over.

I am sending a letter from our pastor, Brother S. A. Bradshaw, which we received while I was in the hospital. I want you to publish it, if you feel to do so.

A sister and brother in hope,
Susie and D. B. Parker

Taylorsville, Miss.
April 25, 1954.

Mr. and Mrs. D. B. Parker
Dear loved ones:

I heard of, what is termed in the world, a misfortune which came your way a short time ago. However, these things, notwithstanding the suffering, sorrow and expense which accompany many of our trials and tribulations, bring to our heart comfort, joy and peace, wherein our hope is strengthened. I admit that not always can we abide in this consolation, but only in the hour when the grace of the Lord manifests his wonderful works to the praise and glory of his grace; in which abounds the manifestation of his great love to us, even in the midst of our afflictions. In the humbleness which is ours to enjoy usually in our greatest afflictions, come the closeness of the Lord which we so often long for. At which time we are made to praise him, praying in spirit, thinking not of our uncomfortable situation, but of the glory which shall be revealed in the day when our Lord will come and receive us to himself in Glory.

Our Lord suffered not for any sin he had committed, but for ours. Then how can we, who have been sinners all the days of our lives, think strange concerning our afflictions, even though we be handicapped all the days of our lives? At times I feel that had it been God's will for me to have suffered sore afflictions all the days of my life, I could never offset even a part of my wickedness; but my hope is that God who made us and all things that were made, did provide a sacrifice by the preparation of a body, even the Son of Man, the body of Christ, to offer a perfect sacrifice acceptable to the Father as a ransom for our sins. God manifested his love for those whom he had loved with an everlasting love by sending his own dear Son into the world to be crucified by wicked hands, according to his predeterminate counsel, wherein he became our redemption, sanctification and justification; that through him we might

have life both in this time world and the world to come. This comes not by the works of the creature, but through the tender mercy of God; for if we be the children of God, we were chosen in Him (Christ) before the world was, and that it should be revealed to us at this time, to the honor and glory of God who has called us by the word of his mouth.

I will stop before you become tired, by saying that I hope and believe that I have been impressed of the Spirit to pray for your comfort while in your distressed; for which I hope I am thankful to the Lord for his remembrance of you and myself also. May the Lord bless and keep you is my desire.

Your brother in hope,
(Elder) S. A. Bradshaw

VISIT TO THE UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

It was a great pleasure and privilege to attend the forty-eighth session of the Upper Country Line Association held with the church at Prospect Hill, July 17, 18, 19, 1954. I hope that I am thankful to God for making it possible for me to attend this Association. The congregation was estimated at from five to seven thousand people, and almost all of the congregation was very attentive to the preaching. The Glorious Doctrine of Salvation by Grace through the finished work of Jesus Christ was proclaimed throughout the session, and no criticism of other denominations was made. Elder W. C. King was the Moderator of this Association and Elder David V. Spangler, Clerk, and Elder J. W. Gilliam, Assistant Clerk. They are to be commended on the way they conducted the affairs of this Association. They were careful to thank the people for their help and assistance and contributions to the Association. They were kind and courteous to all. The Spirit of Christ was very much manifested all through this session of the Association. I was glad to find this Association contending for Apostolic Faith and Practice. We should be thankful to God for power, strength, and courage to contend for this Faith and Practice; for it is through Him that all our blessings come, both temporal and spiritual. God is the Absolute Sovereign of the Universe and He holds the destiny of all worlds and all creatures in His hand, and all of our Salvation for time and for eternity comes through the finished work of Jesus Christ. The Gospel is a declaration of this.

It was a great pleasure to meet the Moderator and Clerk of the Kehukee Association and to hear them preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ in its purity. I am glad that God is still giving the Kehukee Association bold and fearless men such as Elder Ayers and Elder Denson, and others, men who are not afraid to contend for the Apostolic Doctrine and Practice regardless of all opposition. This Association was organized in 1765, and has stood through the storms for 189 years, and through them all has stood firm for the Doctrine, Faith and Practice. It has had to contend with almost every kind of false doctrine and practice that could arise; but it has overcome them all, and is now standing with the three hundred men of Gideon's Army. We feel that the Kehukee Association and all that are in line with it in doctrine and practice can be compared to the three hundred men of Gideon's Army that lapped water, putting their hand to their mouth. Hassell's Church History was written by two able moderators of this Association, Elder Sylvester Hassell and his father Elder C. B. Hassell. All Primitive Baptist who have read this Church History know that it contends for the Doctrine and Practice of the Apostolic Church. I was glad to find the Upper Country Line Association in line with the Kehukee Association in both doctrine and practice. I think that all churches and associations that are in line with the Kehukee and Upper Country Line Associations can be compared with the three hundred men of Gideon's Army, who are giving God all the Glory for their Salvation,

both for time and for eternity, and for all temporal blessings also.

I wish to thank the people of the Upper Country Line Association, and those who were not members of any association for their kindness showed me while visiting them. Every comfort was provided; plenty of food was provided and everything that could be done, was done for our comfort.

Milton M. Absher

Van, Texas

Dear Editors of the Signs:

. . . In writing, I want to say we love to read the dear old paper, and have received much joy and comfort from it.

I would like to state some of the comfort and consolation I have received from the blessed book of Ruth: that beautiful little book of love and mercy. Only four chapters long, but, as I see it, it fore-shadows the ushering in of the Gentile nation. To me this little book seems out of place, coming as it does just after the book of Judges where Israel was in the midst of wars and famines, and troubles of all kinds; but the first verse proves that it belongs there, for it says, "Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled that there was a famine in the land." The last verse of the book of Judges tells why there was a famine, for it says, "In those days there was no king in Israel, every man did that which was right in his own eyes." Now, of course, we have a spiritual famine under consideration and, God willing, of spiritual things we will try to write.

The Book of Ruth continues, "And a certain man of Bethlehem-Judah went to sojourn in the land of Moab; he and his wife, and his two sons; and the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi; and the names of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehem-Judah, and they came into the country of Moab and continued there."

All characters portrayed in this book, as well as the names of the people and places, are types of things that have been, of things that now are, and of things to come. To define the names of the family that came into the land of Moab: the name of Elimelech means, "God is King"; the name Naomi means, "Pleasant"; and the names of the sons Mahlon and Chilion mean, "Sickly and Pining." The name Moab means, "From Father"; the land of the Moabites: the descendants of Lot by his eldest daughter. So this was not a natural journey, having gone from the Father, but spiritual, like the man that had gone from Jerusalem to Jericho. The family of Elimelech had gone to sojourn from the Father, and the book of Ruth says, continued there.

I think of how the world has gone into the land of Moab today, which seems to them a prosperous land, thinking that they are sowing to the Spirit and reaping bountiful harvests. As I sit here in this little town this Sunday morning, I can hear the bells of the Armenian churches, and see the people going in in great numbers, exchanging large sums of money for that which is neither food nor raiment; but their eyes are blinded to the things of the Spirit.

Ruth 1:3, says, "And Elimelech, Naomi's husband died." Yes, Elimelech (meaning God is King) died. In other words, God ceased to be king to these people who had gone away from the Father. Not that I believe his people can go away forever, but Romans 9:7, says, "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they called children, but in Isaac shall thy seed be called."

Now the woman Naomi, as I see it, represents the law: the old Mosaic Law that was given to the children of Israel back there in the desert of Zin, and the name Naomi meaning "Pleasant," takes us to the 133rd Psalm of David: "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." And I am sure that if the children of Israel could have kept the law they would have dwelled together in unity; but the law is a school-master to bring us to Christ. Naomi did just that to her

daughter-in-law Ruth. In Ruth 1:21, it says, "Seeing the Lord has testified against me and the Almighty hath afflicted me." Now the Lord testified against the Law, as I see it, where he said, "Esteem not one day above another, but keep them all holy." And the Almighty did afflict her when his beloved Son fulfilled the law to a jot and a tittle, and brought in the day of grace.

To continue: Ruth 1:3-4, "And she was left and her two sons, and they took them wives of the women of Moab, the name of one was Orpah (one that would turn back), and the name of the other was Ruth (meaning female friend)." And we remember that Christ called them friends when he was here on earth.

Now the first woman is like all those where the seed was sown in shallow soil or stony ground, it sprang up, but for lack of depth of soil it withered away; and when the sun came up, or the offence came, they turn back to their own people and gods. The other woman, Ruth, represents the elect according to promise. "As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved." (Romans 10:25) Ruth 1:4, says, And they dwelled there about ten years." "Not this amount of time represents the extent of the famine; but how much time? Let us turn to Psalms 16:4: "Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god." So let us multiply the time of that other famine, the forty years the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness after having turned back from where they had come up to cross into the promised land: forty years multiplied by the ten represented here gives us four hundred, or about the time of the last old prophet to the coming of Christ. This is what this famine represents, as I see it.

Ruth 1:5, says that Mahlon and Chilion died and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband. Yes, these sickly and pining sons of the Law died, or there would have been no need for the Christ to come to earth. The Scriptures say that by the law no flesh is justified; and Paul says that the commandment that was ordained unto life I found to be unto death. Now I believe Mahlon represents all those encouched in the covenant of redemption, and Chilion, the outcasts.

Am sorry that I have made this so long, but take your Bible and read the book of Ruth in this light. The man Boaz represents the Christ.

Roger B. White

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

(Written by Elder D. V. Spangler)

To the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association in session with the Salisbury Church, Salisbury, Maryland, October 20 and 21, 1954; Greetings:

According to our records, this is the one hundred seventy-first session of this association — one of the oldest Old School Baptist associations in America. In our assembling together for the meeting, we are again reminded of the goodness and mercy of God in the continuation of his work of grace in our midst.

I will call your attention to the 23, 24 and 25th verses of the Tenth Chapter of Hebrews: "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised); and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

The profession of one's faith is manifested in various ways. One of which is in meeting together in these meetings. Your presence here, both members of the visible church and those who are not members, is evidence of faith in the things proclaimed here. The holding fast the profession of our faith is not only in our assembling together, but also in our adhering to the doctrine and order of His house. The faith of the saints is described by the Apostle Peter

as, "PRECIOUS FAITH"; and the holding fast the profession of it, is in walking in the good ways of the Lord, and not removing the ancient landmarks our fathers have set.

One of the ways one would fail to hold fast the profession of their faith, is in forsaking the assembling of himself together with the saints. This is described in the Word of God as sinning wilfully. When one has made an open profession of his faith in Jesus Christ, and been baptized in his name, he has entered into a solemn covenant with the church to attend unto the things enjoined upon him, as well as to enjoy the privileges attending thereunto.

In these associational meetings, it is not only to hear the gospel preached but also to provoke unto love and good works by the manifestation of love one to another. These meetings from year to year of the blessed of God from far and near to associate with each other, even during the middle of the week, is part of the holding fast the profession of our faith. The manifest desire to entertain the brethren; to distribute of our carnal possessions to the necessity of the saints, and to fill our seat in the church, is a mark of grace and an adorning of our profession, and holding fast to it.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Maude T. Laws, Clerk
William Adkins, Asst. Clerk

Storm Lake, Iowa.

Signs of the Times:

We have just moved, so are sending you our new address so we won't miss any issues of our loved paper. We have no church of our belief in this area, so we truly depend on the Signs for our preaching. I was brought up a Catholic, but became a doubter at about sixteen years of age; and it was not until my husband told me of his belief that I knew that was what I sought.

After fifteen years of searching, unbelief and sadness at not finding, I was truly overcome with joy at finding a truly spiritual group. Now I know I am not saved, but surely do live in hope as never before. I am so happy to read all experiences, and find peace in little things not of worldly importance. Our time is so short, what does money matter when we can love each other and have peace in our own hearts, knowing that God loves us? Our subscription first came through my husband's sister, but we never want to be without the Signs again.

Living in hope, and in praise of His goodness to us.

Mrs. T. L. Stanford

As wondering if any of our readers have a copy of the first bound volume (1832) of the Signs of the Times which they would be willing to dispose of; also any copies of the paper between 1836 and 1850. If so, please let me know. I need these to complete my files. I desire also a copy of the proceedings of "The National Convention of Primitive Baptists," held at Fulton, Kentucky, in November, 1900. Any information will be appreciated.

John D. Wood,
Manassas, Va.

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EDITORIALS

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EDITORIAL

"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." (1 Corinthians, 15-26)

Death is repugnant to the whole human family. It even caused Jesus in His human nature to cry "Cry with a loud voice, saying E-loi, E-loi, lama-sabachtha-ni? which is, being interpreted, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He was even willing, had it been the will of His Father, for the cup to pass. But it was not His own will that He came to do, but the will of Him that sent Him.

In addition to death, the children of God have many enemies. They have those who would destroy the doctrine they preach, and in this, if they fail, would destroy, if it was lawful, those who advocate this doctrine. Fortunately, in this country, all have freedom of speech even if what they preach is false. It seems to be the very nature of both men and beast to destroy their enemies. Enemies can be reconciled, but not death, death must be destroyed. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." (Romans 5-10.) Being reconciled to God by the death of His Son, did not destroy death. Death was destroyed by the resurrection of Him who died by taking away the power of death, thus giving us victory over the grave. If Jesus had not risen from death, then the power or effects of death, would not be destroyed and we would have no victory over the grave. Whatever reference David might have had of himself in the 18th verse of the 118th Psalm, being in many instances a type of the Lord Jesus, applies more to the human nature of the Lord Jesus than it does to David. The verse reads, "The Lord hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death." The writer of the Acts of the Apostles said, "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God has sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption." (Acts 29, 30, 31)

Death, the last enemy, is not only destroyed in the resurrection of Jesus, but there must be a resurrection of every member of His body. If there was one of them left in the grave and under the power of death, then death would not be annihilated. The inspired word of God tell us that death shall be destroyed, and shall, being a future tense, means that just as sure as the head has risen, the body of which He is the head will also rise. Paul says, "Behold I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a mo-

ment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where in thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Corinthians 15-51-57) The apostle also says, "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him." (Romans 6:9)

It is said that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. So let us call on two or three in order that every word may be established. The angel that descended from heaven, said to the two women on that memorable morning, "Go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: Lo, I have told you. And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word. And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him." (Mat. 28:7, 8, 9) He was also seen on the mount called Olivet by His apostles, and they witnessed His ascension into heaven. Stephen also bore witness of Him, "Being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."

Now to prove that death shall be destroyed let us pursue the subject of the resurrection a little further. The fact that death shall be destroyed, assures us that there will be a resurrection. Without a resurrection there could be no overcoming of death. For as much as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Hebrews 2:14, 15) The children under consideration evidently are the ones for whom He died, and are partakers of flesh and blood. These are also the ones He prayed for when He said, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; and that they behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world." (John 17:24) Paul says, I Corinthians 15:13, 14. "But if there be no resurrection of the dead then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." I understand this inspired word to mean that, just as sure as He is partaker of the flesh and blood of these children, and just as sure as He is risen, just that sure they will be raised incorruptible, and their mortal bodies will put on immortality. When this is done, Paul says, "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory."

If we knowingly had an enemy, and knew that when we came in contact with him that he would take our life, we would not, if we could help it, make a single step toward him. But this enemy (death) is one toward whom every step we have made from our birth is made in his direction, and when we have reached him, he will sap the breath of life from our nostrils. If it were not then, for our faith and hope in one who died that we might live, and says, "because I live ye shall live also," we would be of all men most miserable."

The dominion of the world and every thing that breathes the breath of life are given unto the Lord Jesus Christ,

the seed of the woman that shall bruise the head of the serpent. The devil, who had the power of death, and who held these children of flesh and blood lawful captives, will give up his empire when death is swallowed up in victory. Paul says, "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So is also the resurrection of the dead." No matter what our natural reasoning is regarding the resurrection, I have no desire to argue with the inspired word of God.

The apostle tells us, "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." The firstfruits are evidence that there will be a harvest; so the resurrection of Christ is evidence that there will be a resurrection of the body of which He is the head. Jesus cried out on the cross and said, "It is finished." The work of redemption is finished, but His work as the second person in the Godhead will not be finished until He has disinhabited deaths empire, and delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death." When the effects of death is overcome, and the grave has been robbed of its victory, then He will appear before His Father with all the fruits of His love, and say, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me." (Hebrews 2-13)

H. O. Nash

Close of Volume 122

This issue will complete the one-hundred and twenty second year of the "Signs of The Times", and we take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to all who have contributed to it in any way. We need the support of the brethren in many ways to carry on the work.

Our associate editors have been blessed to write much to the comfort of Zion during the year, and have supported the paper in many ways by sending in new and re-newal subscriptions. Without this valuable assistance we would have been handicapped, and this labor of love on their part has been a strong support.

The many who have contributed to the Indigent Fund have helped us send the paper to a large number who are unable to pay for the paper. Without this help we necessarily would have had to cancel them out. A number of them are shut-ins who receive the messages of love and comfort, who are unable to attend services, and the Signs is their only preaching.

To those who have written for publication, we would say, continue to write as we depend on the correspondence of our readers for much of the material that is published. To others who have not written, we invite you to write, as we need good articles, that others may share your spiritual meditations.

To our ministering brethren we solicit your writings for the paper, and your support of it by sending in subscriptions.

The paper belongs to our readers. It was willed to the Old School Baptist, by Elder Dodson before his death, and a Board of Trustees was set up for its management. The paper is not operated for the profit of anyone, as it is a non-profit organization.

The hundreds of messages we have received from our readers, of encouragement, and commendation have humbled us very much. Though they have not been acknowledged personally, every one of them has been appreciated, and caused us to desire, more and more, that God will give us wisdom to continue to send forth a paper truly representative of the doctrine and order of the Old School Baptist. We realize that the Work is in the hands of almighty God who rules over all. As long as God has a purpose in it being sent forth, it will continue.

As to the financial status of the paper

we can say, "Having obtained help from God we continue to this day." We have lost some subscribers, but have been blessed to replace every one that has died or cancelled with a new one. The paper for 1954 has been self supporting, with the exception of a few months during the summer, and this loss has been taken care of now.

We desire to bring you a paper truly setting forth the doctrine and order of our people. These two cannot be separated. Good doctrine and good order go hand in hand. If the doctrine we hold does not contain the order for the house of God we do not know where to find it. They are inseparable.

In conclusion, may we ask an interest in your petition, that we may be blessed to be faithful to that which is committed to our trust, ever desiring to know nothing among his people, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified; to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, and to have a, "thus saith the Lord," for what we advocate and practice.

The editors

"Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." Heb I Ch., 2nd. V.

For some time past I have had a desire to write an article upon each chapter of the book of Hebrews. Whether the Lord will bless to that end, I must leave with him. I realize it is an undertaking that must be guided by the spirit, if it is of comfort to our many readers.

This book like others of the new testament directs our attention to the blessings found in the new covenant. The writer directs us to the excellency of the work of Jesus, and his preeminence over all the old Testament writers, in his work; also his being the perfect antitype of all the types of him in the old Testament.

The apostle Paul, who is considered as the writer of this book, has, from the beginning, throughout the entire epistle, pointing out a higher order of life for the people of God than they could ever receive under the old, or law covenant. This writing to his own nation, the Hebrews, described in the word, as the lost sheep of the house of Israel, by the apostle, was to present him as their Prophet, Priest and King; as one who was the substance of all the types and shadows foretold.

The introduction of Jesus and his work shows that God had spoken to the fathers by the prophets, at different times, and in various ways. It was a reminder that it was God himself who had spoken, and it was truly the word of God unto them in the Old Scriptures. Nothing that he here says detracts from the surety of God's word unto them in the times of the fathers, but now he hath spoken unto us by his son.

This speaking unto us by his Son is suddenly, and not as they had been accustomed to receive his word at various times. All that God would say unto them was said in the sending of his own Son, for the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily in him; truly when he appeared, he was, "God manifest in the flesh."

He who came from heaven, as the Saviour of sinners, was truly, "The word made flesh, and dwelt among us". God in sending forth his own Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the law, did not send him as a multitude of words, but as THE WORD, because all the will of God concerning the salvation of his people, was treasured up in him, and was manifest in his glorious work of redemption.

We cannot think of God speaking by his Son to be limited to the words that Jesus uttered, while here upon the earth. Neither would we limit this speaking to the miracles that Jesus wrought among the people. These are but part of the ways, wherein God has

spoken unto us. How blessed we are if we are led to see that all the work of Jesus was the speaking of God from heaven.

His advent into the world, was the speaking of God from heaven. He became poor that we might become rich, in Faith, and heirs of the kingdom. The message from heaven attends his appearing. "Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour". God speaks always in a positive way, declaring by an angel that he is a Saviour, and not born to become one. Was he not to be born in Judea, as the prophets promised? Was there not to be a certain City in which he was to be born? And was it not necessary that his father and mother go into that certain city at a certain time to pay taxes, and the time be fulfilled for his birth while they were there? Does not God speak by him, in the fulfilling of all prophecy concerning him at the very time and place foretold by the fathers. These things surely show the definite way, and the fixed time, that God has had to speak unto us in these last days.

Is there a more sure word of prophecy unto us, than the fact that God in speaking unto us by his son, presents him in his glorious work as his Word. The prophets had promised a King that would reign in righteousness. When he comes he is described as the "King of Kings." The promise had been, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged". Does not the gospel present him as one who has finished the work the father gave him to do? In the coming of the Lord Jesus, as the embodiment, and fulfillment of every precious promise to the fathers, by the prophets, it is God speaking unto us by his Son. His work was truly, the revealed will of God the Father concerning the salvation of his chosen people. No where in the promise of his coming, was there any question left unanswered as to the merit of his work, when he should appear. When he was promised as a Tree, he comes as The Tree of life, whose leaves shall not wither, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. Where he is seen of old as the Sun, he appears as the Sun of righteousness, with healing in his wings.

Many, many places in the old Testament he is promised as the husband of his bride, so Paul could say to the church at Ephesus, "Husbands love your wives, even as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

God speaking from heaven, was through the work of his son. The man of God, to-wit Job, saw him as his redeemer who should stand upon the earth at the latter day, and in the speaking of God unto us by him, he is one who has redeemed us unto God by his blood, and has obtained eternal redemption for his people.

Surely we cannot have a glimpse of him, and the full salvation he has wrought for rebels such as we, without beholding him as the chiefest among ten thousand, and one altogether lovely. It was the father's pleasure that in him all fullness should dwell. He was not only manifest to glorify the father, but he was the brightness of his Glory, and the express image of his person. He is truly "THE WORD," wherein God has been pleased to speak unto us a word of reconciliation.

All the radiance of God's wonderful glory shines in the face of Jesus Christ. His wonderful love wherein he speaks unto vile sinners by him only reveals his purpose to glorify himself.

He was truly, "The express image of his person", in various ways. He was made sin for us who knew no sin; his full redemption; his effective intercession; his perfect righteousness; his being raised from the dead by the glory of the father; his ascension into heaven to appear at the right hand of God,

speaks unto us today in such a way that, "he that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father." In the last hours of Jesus he could say to the father, "I have glorified thee on the earth".

As Jesus upheld all things by the word of his power, he purged the sins of his people (put them away) and sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Help was laid upon one, who was mighty and able to save. He did not try to purge our sins, neither did he put part of them away, but by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. He hath appeared once to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and by so doing God hath spoken unto us: To every believer in him.

What a joy it is to have Jesus introduced in this chapter as one who has been anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows. The sending of him as one who delighted to do the will of him that sent him. "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of Gladness." None could have been acceptable unto the father to bring salvation, unless it had been one who loved righteousness, and hated iniquity. The Oil of Gladness was manifested in the word of the apostle where he says, "For the joy set before him he endured the cross, despising shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.".

The comfort of salvation is not complete unless we are favored to see all the work of Jesus as a manifestation of an eternal and everlasting love for the election of grace. "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full".

If we are so highly favored to have salvation from sin, we cannot think of it as a dole system; as something God bestows upon sinners grudgingly, but as something flowing unto poor sinners from the eternal purpose of him who doeth all things according to his own purpose.

God has given his Son pre-eminence over all creatures, for though he was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, he has highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name.

On the Mount of Transfiguration, when Peter, James and John were taken apart into a high mountain, and Jesus appeared in his glory unto them, they were taught that he had the pre-eminence over Moses and Elias. As Jesus appeared with Moses and Elias, the apostle decided to make three tabernacles, one to Moses, one to Elias and one to Jesus, but this could not be as God spake to them and said, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." As one is led to rest their weary soul in the finished work of Jesus, and to behold his glory, as the only one suited to save ruined sinners, then the merits of all others fade away when compared to him, and they see no man save Jesus only.

Truly the first chapter of this epistle is a book within itself, and we cannot close this article without referring to the closing verses of the chapter. "And, thou, Lord, in the beginning hath laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of THINE HANDS:

THEY SHALL PERISH: BUT THOU REMAINEST: and they shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."

Here we behold the work of him who spake from heaven as standing forever; that regardless of the changes that come to this world, "THOU REMAINEST". His word that has gone forth shall not return to him void; his speaking by his son shall remain effectual until all the ransomed church of God be saved to sin no more. Hence we can sing;

"This truth like its author, eternal shall stand,
Though all things in nature decay;

Upheld by Jehovah's omnipotent hand,
The righteous shall hold on his way."

The Lord willing I shall treat upon the next chapter later.

D. V. S.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

GENESIS I. 27; II. 5.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Will you or brother Leonard Cox, Jr., give your views either privately or through the SIGNS, on Gen. I. 27, and also on chapter II. and last clause of the 5th verse? and may God bless you, my brother, and oblige yours,

New Hope, Ky., Jan. 8, 1861.

J. E. SETTLE

REPLY

There is probably enough in the Scriptures proposed for consideration to engage the best abilities of all the brethren. We do not wish to prevent brother Cox giving his views on the subject, but will leave enough for him when we have said all we can upon these Scriptures.

Gen. I. 27: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

Gen. II. 5th verse, and last clause: "And there was not a man to till the ground."

Some have supposed that after the Lord God had created man, there still was not a man found to till the ground, but we should observe that in the first of these passages we have an account of the creation, and in the other, of the generations of the heavens and of the earth. Although a record of the creation is fully given in the first chapter, in order to relate the generations of the heavens and earth, it was necessary to recapitulate the origin of man, which in the second chapter fully accords with the record in the first. That the man formed, Gen. II. 7, is the same man created, Gen. I. 27, for the Lord God blessed him, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, &c. That this man created and formed is the same of whom it is written, "This is the Book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him. Male and female created he them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created."—Gen. v. 1, 2. The terms, **created, formed** and **made,** are used in ascribing the origin of man to the creative power and workmanship of the Lord God. God who had the power to create, form and make man of the dust of the ground, had power also to give to him the decree, multiply and replenish, &c. He spake the word, and it stands fast; he commands, and it is done. This man was by the order of his Creator to multiply, and accordingly without any further creation has been constantly multiplying, and all the millions of his posterity for nearly six thousand years are but the multiplication of the one man which God created, formed and made out of the dust of the ground. In mathematics, multiplication differs very widely from addition. Man has accumulated nothing in the six thousand years of his history, but has been from the birth of Cain constantly developing what was embodied in him at his creation. And this principle of multiplication is exemplified in every part of the vegetable creation. Every green thing which God caused to grow out of the earth, contained in it the seed for its propagation. How awfully grand and sublime is the contemplation of the infinity of God, displayed in his perfect knowledge of all the myriads created in the one man, Adam, embracing all nations of men who dwell on all the face of the earth, and he hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation. (Acts XVII. 26.)

But we are not only informed that the Lord God created man, and in him created all the human family, and appointed each descendant of Adam, the bounds of his habitation, and time of his development, but we are also told that the Lord God created man in his own image and likeness. From this declaration some have inferred that man was like

God in regard to the perfections of the Deity. But although man in his creation was without sin, until he transgressed the law of his Creator, his sinless innocence was not to be compared with the immutable holiness of God. Man was capable of sinning, as his history has painfully demonstrated, while his Creator's perfections are unchangeable. Not only so, but the wisdom, power, truth, justice, omniscience and independence of God were and are peculiar to himself, and have never been found in any of his creatures. What is an image? It is something visible, that can be seen. The supreme and eternal Godhead is invisible to finite beings, and he is called the "Invisible God." No man hath seen his face at any time. But we read that "God was manifest in the flesh," and that our Lord Jesus Christ, in his Mediatorial relations, is the image of the invisible God. That he, being in the form of God, though it not robbery to be equal with God. That he is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, and as God only reveals himself to us in and through Christ, and as the Father is in Christ, and Christ is in the Father, he that hath seen him, hath seen the Father also. Every perfection of the Father is fully deliniated in him who is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.

We speak of Christ in his Mediatorial glory, as the image of the invisible God, while at the same time we hold that he, in his essential Godhead, is the very Lord God, whose attributes are so clearly portrayed in him as the divine Mediator. He is as truly God, as he is truly Mediator between God and man, hence the creation of the world, and the salvation of his church, are both ascribed to him. See John I. 3, "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." Also, Col. I. 15-17, "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature; for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers; all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Hence he is the very Lord God who created man, as declared in our text; while as the Mediatorial Head of the church, he is the image or perceptible manifestation of the eternal Deity, which is in every other sense invisible to us.

If, then, we hold that Christ is, as the Scriptures declare, the express image of the invisible God, how was man created in the image and likeness of the Creator? To our mind the explanation of the inspired apostle, Rom. v. 14, is satisfactory. In this text Paul declares that Adam is the FIGURE of him that was to come, and in the connection shows that Christ was "Him that was to come." And as we have shown that Christ is the Lord God who created Adam and all things in heaven and in earth, it is enough to know that Adam was constituted in his creation, the figure or image of Christ, to show that he was created in the image of his Creator. A sculptor may from a block of marble carve a perfect image of a living man, but he cannot inspire it with the life or animation of a living man, and so there were many images or figures of him that was to come, contained in the Old Testament types. So Adam, though a mere creature, wholly dependent on God for support, and liable to fall, to sin, and then to die, still "is the figure of him that was to come," that is, Jesus Christ our Lord.

It is not necessary that we should now attempt to trace the analogy of the type and anti-type, the figure, and the body which it represents, the image and the original, designed to be represented. Look at man, as presented in the character of an image, and what do we see?

First. In the earliest presentation he stands a unit, embodying a multitude which no man can number, thus an emblem of the Mediator which is One, and but one, and yet in him God has secured a people which were chosen in him

before the foundation of the world.

Second. Adam was the federal head and legal representative of all the human family, before Eve was formed, or any of his posterity born, and in that unity and identity of human life, in his transgression they all were made sinners, even so do we find in Christ the spiritual life of all the spiritual seed, so identified that he is emphatically the life of all his people, and the unity and identity so perfect that by his obedience to the law, all that he embodied in his Mediatorial headship of the church, are made righteous. See Rom. v. 14-21.

Third. As our text says, "Male and female created he them." And in Gen. v. 1, 2, "This is the Book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them, and blessed them, and called **their** name Adam, in the day when they were created." Then turn to the Book of the generation of the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, and read, Psa. XXII. 30, "A seed shall serve him, it shall be counted to the Lord for a generation." Also, Psa. CXXXIX. 15, 16, "My substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest part of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy Book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." "Lo, I come, in the volume of the Book it is written of me to do thy will, O God!" Psa. XI. 7; Hebrews X. 7-9, compared I Pet. II. 9.

Again: Who can contemplate the creation of the bride, and all the posterity of Adam in him, to make their development in his own likeness, their future destiny established in him, and then when Eve had received her formation, was beguiled by the serpent, was in the transgression, and read the account of Adam following her in the transgression, receiving the fruit at her hand, that he might legally share the penalty with her, and fail to see in all this that Adam is the figure of him that was to come?

We have not time nor space to devote farther to this subject now, but trust we have left ample room for the more able comments of brother Cox, or any other brother who may do better justice to the subject.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, January 15, 1861)

The opinions and doings of men are of no value unless motivated by the Spirit of Truth; if otherwise, they "darken counsel by words without knowledge".

WE QUOTE:

"The word "Economy" means literally, "the management of a house or household," and as the church is the house of God, the term is applied to the order of God's dealings with the church."

Philpott's — MEDITATIONS

"How can we flee from the wrath to come if there be no sight or sense of that wrath; or how beg for mercy, if no guilt lies hard and heavy on the conscience."

Philpott's — MEDITATIONS

"We read and examine the Word of God, not to find arms wherewith to defend our sentiments, but to know whether they are defensible or not."

NEWTON

"I leave all difficulties with Him. It is sufficient for me that Scripture as serts, and experience proves, that it is thus in fact."

NEWTON

IN MEMORY OF
ELDER L. W. TURNER

It is sad to lose our friends whom we have learned to love for Christ's sake; yet it is pleasant to think of our past relationship and fellowship as brethren in the church.

The passing of Elder Turner saddened our heart seemingly deeper than it ever had been before, for he was so near to me. In a measure, for many reasons he seemed closer to me than any minister I knew. I was pastor and moderator of the church he joined. I have looked back with a spirit of rejoicing to the Saturday in June when he united with the church at Black River, Dunn, North Carolina. Seems that I can remember the most of what he said: the humble expression upon his face, the sincerity of the manner in which he related his experience in giving the reason for his hope and the love he had for the church. There was one expression he made in telling his experience which deeply impressed me, and which I saw come true. He said there was a large tree before him, which the Lord commanded him to trim up and get out of the way. The way and manner he made his expression impressed me that he was a chosen vessel to preach His gospel. That impression was so strong that it never left me, and in time it proved true.

It was a beautiful Sabbath morning in June, 1932, that we went into the water. I verily felt that I had baptized a preacher; and I felt a love for him that never left, and has not yet, though he has passed on into the glories he hoped to receive. Not long after he united with the church the brethren felt that they saw the gift of a deacon in him, and they set him apart to that office. I assisted in the ordination, feeling, however, that he would have to preach. Some months after being ordained he arose in the conference meeting and made known to the church the impression of his mind. I do not remember that I ever told him what I saw the day he united with the church, and that I felt to pray that the Lord would bless him.

Brother Turner grew in the hearts of his brethren at home and abroad; and it was not long before the ministers of his association and others, began to ask when the church would call for his ordination, and I answered, When you are ready to receive him as a minister. The church and they were satisfied, and by unanimous vote his ordination was called for. Now I had seen come true what I felt the Lord showed me when he united with the church; and I was in the presbytery that ordained him.

I feel that God blessed him to this work. He was sound in faith, doctrine and discipline. I do not recall ever hearing him set forth anything that would gender strife or confusion. He was loved by all who knew him, and our love for each other lasted until death. I was his pastor for a number of years, when I voluntarily tendered my resignation as pastor that he might have the pastorial care of his home church, to which he was unanimously called, and which he served until his death.

May his companion be given grace to bear her loss, and to feel that it is her eternal gain; and may his sons and daughter be given grace to remember their father as he lived and died, and grace to follow in his footsteps. I have written this by permission; an obituary will follow.

By one who loved him,
(Elder) E. C. Jones.

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Bethel Church
Ouachita County, Arkansas.
Sunday, October 10, 1954.

Pursuant to invitation sent out by Bethel Church to Elders and Deacons to assemble for a Presbytery on the above date for the purpose of the ordination of Brother J. P. Gardner to the office of Deacon of Bethel Church, the following Elders and Deacon, Elders John T. Everitt, W. A. Speer and Deacon Ross Watson, met and organized themselves into a Presbytery and elected Elder John T. Everitt as Moderator and Elder W. A. Speer, Clerk; Elder W. A. Speer to word the prayer and Elder John T. Everitt to give the charge.

The Presbytery called for the candidate and Brother Henry Gardner, Spokesman for the church, presented Brother J. P. Gardner to the Presbytery.

Sister Gardner was invited to be seated with her husband.

After due examination of Brother and Sister Gardner, and as to the state of God's gift

to Brother Gardner as a Deacon to the satisfaction of the Presbytery, the Presbytery proceeded to ordain him by the laying on of hands of the Presbytery and in prayer by Elder W. A. Speer, and then the charge delivered by Elder John T. Everitt.

Thereupon the right hand of fellowship was given Deacon J. P. Gardner by members of the Presbytery commending him to all orthodox Primitive Baptists as being sound in doctrine, careful in deportment and humble in the display of God's gift to him of the office of Deacon, and delivered him to Bethel Church duly ordained; and the act of the Presbytery in ordaining him was sanctioned and received by the church and the right hand of fellowship was given Deacon J. P. Gardner by the members of Bethel Church and brethren, sisters and friends.

Minutes were read and approved and the Presbytery dissolved in order with prayer by Elder John T. Everitt.

Elder J. T. Everitt, Moderator
Elder W. A. Speer, Clerk

OBITUARIES

IDA ELIZABETH WILSON

Ida Elizabeth Wilson was born May 30, 1875, at what was then Barren Creek, Maryland, and passed away at Mardella Springs Maryland, on June 1, 1954; age seventy-nine years and one day. She was the eldest of three children of the late Benjamin Handy and Virginia Caroline Graham.

She was united in marriage to Samuel J. Wilson on December 23, 1891, of Barren Creek, Maryland, who survives. To this union were born six children — four daughters and two sons. Edna L., the first daughter, passed away October 9, 1895. Those surviving are: Bessie L. Wilson, Mrs. Ernest L.. Cooper and J. Ewell Wilson, of Mardella Springs; Mrs. Alvie S. Bennett, Salisbury, Maryland and Paul M. Wilson, Takoma Park, Maryland. Also, fourteen grand-children and eight great grandchildren; one sister, Mrs. Lena E. Wilson; one niece, Bernice G. Mason, Salisbury; two nephews, Robert Graham, Wilmington, Delaware, and Glen G. Wilson, Reids Grove, Maryland.

She was blessed with a good hope through grace many years ago, as was her late mother, Virginia E. Graham. They were both baptized by the late Elder A. B. Francis on May 7, 1907 into Rewastico Old School Baptist Church, and remained faithful and steadfast in the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone until the end. Her health had been waning for the last three years, and she was not always well enough to attend her meetings regularly, but did if she could possibly sit up that long. She endured her sufferings with patience and never, never complained. She was a devout wife, and never was there a more kind, loving sympathetic mother. Among some of her many outstanding qualities was her humbleness, and her unselfishness to the end. Whatever worldly goods she possessed, she also wanted her family and friends to have, and seldom did anyone come to see her that they departed empty-handed. She lived entirely for her church, family and friends, and often gave them her all and did without herself.

Whatever her children are, be that in character or accomplishment, they owe to her hard work and the influence she exerted. She did for all even when so unable to do so physically. She possessed a sweet disposition and a sense of humor, and the sacrifices she made will always be remembered. Her place in the home can never be filled; she is sadly missed by her family, friends and church, and her life will remain an inspiration to her family, and worthy of emulation — no greater heritage could be left by a mother.

The funeral services were conducted from her late home which she loved so well, on June 3rd, by her beloved pastor, Elder H. M. Bennett. He used Romans 16:25, for comfort and consolation of her family and many friends. Her body was laid in the Mardella Cemetery amidst a beautiful mound of flowers, her spirit having entered into the beyond; and we feel sure is at rest with God her Heavenly Father forever. Written by her daughter,

Bessie

Following is a letter to Sister Wilson by Elder A. B. Francis — Editor)

Delmar, Delaware
April 23, 1907

Mrs. Ida E. Wilson
Mardela Springs, Md.

My dear friend and I hope sister in a precious Saviour:

It gave me great pleasure this afternoon to receive your very welcome letter of this date. I had been thinking of you and your mother, (I find both of you associated together so intimately that when I think of one I think of both) and have thought to write a letter to both of you, as you are both under similar exercises as regards coming to the church.

As you relate the travel of your mind, I can see the mark of the Lord's work. Your own way was to be a Methodist, and work out your salvation along the lines prescribed by them, but God's way is different and when he took hold, he undid all that you had done,

and showed you how black and vile you were in his sight, and in your own sight now, causing you to abhor yourself in dust and ashes. It is no wonder that you did not feel good enough to join with a people whose entire hope is fixed on their ability to be good and do good. All the teaching of the scriptures is to the effect that it is not those who are good in their own eyes, but those who feel that they are sinners whom Jesus came to save, and all their cry is, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

The Old Baptists are that kind of people, all feel that they are unworthy, and are all fearful that they may do wrong in seeking a home in the church, and yet feel that they cannot have peace and remain outside.

There is no doubt in my mind that the Lord was pleased to show you in a dream the road to your heavenly home. The road is rough and thorny, beset with difficulties, and you are meeting these things constantly, but it is the way that leads to life, to heaven, to God, and to eternal joys. The water you saw, and found you must go through, represents the waters of baptism through which all must pass to enter the church and find a city of habitation and those who are truly companions of all them that fear God.

I am glad it is your mind to offer to the church at the next meeting and I would advise you not to delay. Not that your eternal salvation is to be secured thereby, but for your present comfort and peace of mind. I will be prepared to go into the water with you, and hope neither ill-health or other circumstances may interfere to hinder the fulfillment of your desire.

Please show this letter to your mother and say to her that I believe the Lord has set before you both an open door, that no man can shut, I am sure you would both meet a hearty welcome at the hands of all the church. I will try to get off in time to call and see you on my way to sister Bailey's on Monday afternoon.

Sincerely yours,
(Elder) A. B. Francis

KATIE PEARL WHATLEY

Sister Katie Pearl Whatley, age 71, passed away Sunday, July 11, 1954, at Hope, Arkansas.

She was born in Union County, Arkansas, December 30, 1882, the daughter of Joe and Susan Hardin Dumas. Her husband, M. D. Whatley, preceded her in death in 1943. Sister Whatley was a faithful member of Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church and manifested her love for the doctrine of God our Saviour, His cause and the people of God.

She is survived by six sons, Dorsey and Andrew Whatley of Hope, Arkansas, Robert A. Whatley, of Houston, Texas; Johnny Floyd, M. D. and Roy Whatley of El Dorado, Arkansas; eleven grand children and three great grand children; one brother Organ Dumas of Los Angeles, Calif.; two half brothers, A. G. and Hudie Dumas of Houston, Texas, and two half sisters, Mrs. Dessar Grider of Chattanooga, Tenn. and Mrs. Ollie Smallwood, Beaumont, Texas.

Her funeral service was conducted by Elder E. J. Lambert and the writer at Rehobeth Church July 12, 1954. The floral offerings and the attendance of brethren, sisters and friends gave evidence of the high esteem in which she was held.

Her body was laid to rest in Rehobeth cemetery beside that of her late husband to await the glorious resurrection when the Lord shall come again without sin unto salvation.

May the Lord bless and comfort all that mourn her passing.

(Elder) W. A. Speer

CORDELIA HENNINGAN McMILLIAN

Cordelia Hennigan McMillian was born January 25, 1881, and was suddenly taken by death August 15, 1954.

She was married to J. Paul McMilliam February 14, 1901; to whom six children were born. One, John Paul, Jr., passed away May 13, 1942. She is survived by her husband and five children: Mrs. Virgie Marze and Ray McMilliam, Merryville, Louisiana; Mrs. Myra Cryer, Frierson, Louisiana; Mrs. Betty Kildair, Greens Bayou, Texas, and Captain Wm. F. McMilliam, Ocean Side, California. Also thirteen grand-children and eight great grandchildren; one brother and three sisters, and a number of nieces and nephews.

Mother joined the Primitive Baptist Church September 21, 1921, and was baptized by her father, the late Elder H. F. Hennigan. She was a strong believer in salvation by grace alone.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Hamp Newton in the Cooper Community Building, on the DeRidder-Merryville Highway, and her body was laid to rest in the nearby cemetery. The beautiful floral offerings attested the high esteem in which she was held, and a large crowd was present to pay their last respects to her.

The family is left mourning, but we trust our loss is her gain. Written by her daughter in sorrow.

Mrs. Virgie Marze

IN MEMORY OF
MY DEAR COMPANION, CORDELIA

In the month of August, 1954, on the 15th day,
It pleased great Jehovah, God,
To call my darling companion away;
Now her sweet body lies beneath the cold sod.

Oft' I have heard her say,
In much agonizing pain and woe,
"It may be wrong to talk this way,
But I long to see the day I am called to go."

Her moldering body lies beneath the cold ground
But her soul rests in the care
Of Jesus Christ, by whom she was found,
Her dear merciful sinbearer.

It was hard, dear darling, to see you go,
But I have been made to rejoice
That God, who all things knows,
Has embraced you in His choice.

O that I could only know
That when my pilgrimage on earth is done
That I, too, could cross o'er
And that the Son of man had fought my battle and won.

Written by her sorrowing husband,

J. Paul McMillian
Merryville, La.

ELDER WILLIAM ISAIAH WADE

Elder William Isaiah Wade was born June 11, 1876, and departed this life September 18, 1953. He was the son of William and Mary (Hale) Wade, born in Franklin County, Virginia; and moved to Lincoln County, West Virginia, at twenty years of age. He was united in marriage to Madora Belle Harless in February, 1896. To this union nine children were born. Two sons preceeded him in death; those surviving are Rader, Clay and Paul, Yawkey, W. Va.; Mrs. Daisy Stephens, Yawkey, W. Va.; Mrs. Ruby McClanahan, Lanham, W. Va.; Mrs. Virginia Smith and Mrs. Helen Stickler, South Charleston, W. Va.

Elder Wade at an early age (I do not have information available as to dates) was brought under the labor and weight of conviction of sin. In a rich experience of grace he tasted peace and pardon, and given a sweet hope in the Redeemer's blood; and united with the Primitive Baptist Church (I think Bethel Church, of the Pocatalico Association of West Virginia). The burden of the ministry was laid upon him, and the church licensed him to preach, and soon called for his ordination. His services in the ministry was spent mostly among the churches of Pocatalico Association, serving churches as pastor during his active ministry. His first wife was also a faithful member of the church for many years. She departed this life June 13, 1937. He married Maude Radford December 8, 1939, who survives to mourn with the children of the first union.

Elder Wade was faithful in his ministry. His services were not for filthy lucre's sake, but of a ready mind. He was firm and uncompromising in his convictions. He reared his family as a farmer, laboring hard in the field to come home at night during his burden of mind, to sit by his faithful wife who assisted him in reading the Bible. Under her tutorship, it may be said that he learned to read almost entirely from the Bible. In his ministerial labor he was well versed in the Scriptures. This spelling and reading his way in the Scriptures, was the answer of the humble searching of his mind after the truth. Later in life his financial straits were eased by the smiles of a kind providence when natural gas and crude oil were developed on his land. He lived however until the production was almost nil. He was inactive in the latter years of his life, and his suffering was of many years standing. He bore his afflictions with fortitude, always acknowledging the Lord's hand and will in his afflictions.

The unworthy writer was called to conduct the funeral. I felt moved to declare in a feeling of love some of the fundamentals of doctrine which were Brother Wade's meat and drink during his stewardship. It was Elder Wade who buried me in baptism, and served my home church (Providence) as pastor so many years.

Left to mourn besides those already named are: one sister, Mrs. Polly McClure, Tango, W. Va.; one brother, S. F. Wade, Garrettsbend, W. Va.; thirty-seven grand-children and twenty-eight great grand-children. We grieve not as those who have no hope.

May the Lord comfort the mourning ones. Written by request.

H. J. Bird

CLARA NEWBERRY BARNES

Clara Newberry was born September 18, 1882, and died September 6, 1954, making her stay on earth seventy-one years, eleven months and twelve days. She was married to J. W. Barnes May 13, 1906.

She was received into the fellowship of Richland Primitive Baptist Church, in Humphreys County, Tennessee, about fifty-five years ago. In 1910 she was received into the fellowship of Cane Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Obion County, Tennessee, and died in

full fellowship.

Her remains were laid to rest in Cane Creek Cemetery in the presence of her many friends, surrounded by a very beautiful arrangement of flowers, which was an expression of the love that her friends and neighbors had for her. Services were conducted by the writer, who had been her pastor for more than seven years. She bore the evidence of a true witness of Christ, believing in the grace of God for life and salvation both in time and eternity.

May God's Holy Spirit fill her vacancy in her home, and in the hearts of her family, her brethren, neighbors and friends.

(Elder) R. L. Harrison

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, Our dear sister, Carrie A. Keenan, was called to her eternal home June 25, 1954;

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in submission to our gracious Heavenly Father's will, feeling that we have lost a very precious member and friend, for she was a very precious person naturally as well as spiritually, and was a devoted member of the church, and

BE IT RESOLVED, That we send a copy of these Resolutions to the Signs of the Times, of which she was a subscriber; and a copy to her bereaved family.

Done by order of the Ft. Worth Church while in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in July, 1954.

Elder C. Y. Osteen, Moderator
Minnie Luite, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association has lost several members of her body since we last met, to-wit: Deacon Benjamine McGhee, of Broad Creek Church; Deacon Henry Rounds and sisters Fanny Francis and Annie Burton, of Salisbury Church; brother Isaac German and sister Mary Ann Hastings, of Little Creek Church; sisters Martha Jones and Ida Wilson, of Rewastico Church; and sister Ella Gordy, of Nassaongo Church, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, First, that we leave upon our records some mention of our love and fellowship for these faithful ones whom God, in his infinite wisdom, has removed from these mortal shores. Their memory will live in our hearts, as we believe our love and fellowship for them was that blessed tie that will not let us part.

Second, We desire to bow in humble submission to God's holy will, and truly say, Thy will be done.

Third, That we extend our sympathy to each family, hoping that God will reconcile them to his will.

Done by the unanimous voice of the Association in session with Salisbury Church, Salisbury, Maryland, October 21, 1954.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Maude Laws, Clerk
William Adkins, Asst. Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, The time allotted by God to Sister Elizabeth Cobb Hinson to stay in this world ended April 6, 1954; and

WHEREAS, She was a member of Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church of Christ, near Winnsboro, Texas, for forty-four years, and firmly established in the doctrine of grace and especially blessed with being content with her lot and reconciled to God's will, and whose life was a blessing to this church; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we record an expression of thanks to God for having blessed us with her companionship, godly walk, and conversation; and further

BE IT RESOLVED, that we express our grief and a word of sympathy to the bereaved; and that we encouch a brief obituary for record, to-wit: Susan Elizabeth Cobb Hinson was born June 12, 1868, the daughter of Thomas and Sarah Cobb; was married December 12, 1886, to E. E. Hinson, who died March 13, 1925; became a member of Hopewell Church in 1910; and is survived by three children: Mrs. B. T. Green, Winnsboro, Texas; Mrs. L. L. Chambers, Dallas, Texas, and Palmer Hinson, Winnsboro; and died April 6, 1954. She is survived also by three brothers: Tommy Cobb, Canton, Texas; Lonnie and Ocie Cobb, of Winnsboro; and one sister, Mrs. Ida Price, California, and nine grand-children and six great grand-children. Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder E. J. Lambert, and interment was in Hopewell Cemetery, awaiting the resurrection; be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be given to the family, a copy filed with Hopewell records, and a copy sent the Signs of the Times for publication.

This Resolution of Respect read and approved by Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church while in regular conference August 7, 1954.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Moderator
J. J. Mills, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 123 DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1955 NO. 1

"If these should hold their peace the stones would immediately cry out." (Luke 19:40)

Most precious children of our God
These lines I pen to you,
While thoughts so sweet of you I think
And hope seems good and true.

I long to see you face to face,
Tell this to all around:
There's mercy in the Saviour's love,
No dearer name is found.

Then Jesus' name I long to sing
Melodious songs in heart.
How beautiful the calm blue sky
When raging storms depart.

I love to praise his precious name
With loosened stammering tongue;
In face of all this world's cold wrath
My harp to praise is strung.

The tune I sing: Hosanna Lord;
Oh, blessed be the King
That cometh in our Lord's dear name:
In heaven peace doth reign.

Should all the world deride me now,
Scoff at the way I feel,
I treasure close within my heart
My Lord, his way revealed.

Now as I view his body slain:
For sin he shed his blood,
I would to God that I could live
The way a Christian should.

I love the songs of grace we sing;
I love election, too;
Though vile and sinful, yet I hope
That I am one with you.

In bonds of love,
Mrs. Fred Cobb

R.F.D. 1,
Ruffin, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

Have been impressed for some time to write something of what God has done for this poor sinner. The scripture, "He sent his word and healed them", (Psalms 107:20) has been much on my mind of late. There are many ways, I feel, in which he sends his word to comfort and heal his people. In 1943 I was baptized into the fellowship of Pleasant Grove Church. The morning after I was baptized, as I walked into the meeting house, they were singing: "When the storm in its fury on Galilee fell." The lines, "Fear not trembling one it is I" was lifting to my poor soul. I have heard it many times since, but it hasn't meant as much as it did that day. The month before the 3rd Sunday in April I had offered to the church, shortly after I suffered a nervous breakdown; my nerves were in a bad way and I couldn't sleep. One day, as I was lying in bed sick, as in a vision, I saw Christ in the garden of Gethesemane, and it seemed I could hear him saying, "My God, My God why hast thou forsaken me." I felt then that if Christ felt forsaken of his Father, then it wasn't so bad if I felt that way.

I began to improve and shortly was on my feet again. Once when riding along the road with my brother, feeling very cast down, he turned on the radio, and they were singing, "Safe in the arms of Jesus." Truly, for a short while, I felt safe in his arms. Once at a funeral I was feeling depressed, and at the graveside service the minister read the 103 Psalm; the waves of sorrow left me and again I was healed. But this healing goes on and on, daily it seems, for many times since I have had to be healed.

While in the sanitorium, I read some books: one was the experience of a young Presbyterian minister, and it was comforting to me. I know many books of fiction are not fit to read, yet God sends his word and heals his people.

Brother Spangler, I didn't intend to

write this much, but if what I have written is all right to publish, you may do so. We enjoy the Signs very much — to us it is a sound paper. Am sending a poem written by my dear companion. We enjoyed your discourse today very much: it was sound doctrine. Pray for us.

In hope,
Fred Cobb

Troy, Alabama.
August 29, 1954.

Dear Brother Spangler:

On August 8th, of this year, Elam Church of the old Conecuh River Association baptized four new members into full fellowship. One of them (his wife joined also) submitted a letter to the church setting out his experience. As Clerk of the church, I was directed to send you a copy of the letter for publication, if you think it worthy of that consideration.

A. C. Carter

Troy, Ala.
Rt. 1

Elder Gibson, Deacons and Members of Elam Church:

I come before you feeling unworthy and out of place, without wisdom or divine guidance and not fit to come in your presence.

I have a sweet wife and five fine children of which I'm proud and I pray God will direct them in the way they should go. As far as things of this life is concerned, I have more than I deserve.

I always thought a person to join the church, should have an experience of grace; something to tell, that the Lord has done for him. The most I could tell would be to say, the love I have for you here at Elam, and maybe a scattered crumb here and there as I was able to gather them. I don't have any doubts about you people at Elam, it is I that I'm in doubt about. Sometimes in a little way I know you know the truth and the truth will make you free. Paul had an experience of grace you couldn't doubt, and in no more uncertain terms he went about declaring his Lord liveth. I know that within me there is nothing good, and if ever saved it will be by grace and God's tender mercy for a poor sinner like me.

Five years ago I had a dream. Since that time my heart and mind is continually brought to Elam Church.

Should I take up your time to tell this?

I was in a dungeon or long endless tunnel, and it seems that I had gone just as far as I could go, and was made to fall on my knees and cry out "Lord have mercy on me a sinner," and after that I was able to go on; and when I awoke I was completely given out, and I want you to know I'm still tired and completely given out, so far as works of man.

I know this don't mean a thing and sounds simple to you who have an experience, but to me it has stayed with me all the way since. When I'm reminded of this dream, I think of Elam Church. I had made the remark that if ever I offered to the church, I would be made to do so; that I never wanted to bring hurt to the ones I thought were God's people. The scriptures say of God's people, that they shall be a willing people in the day of his power; also the preparation of the heart in men, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord, and it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps; they are all ordered of the Lord, his down sittings and his up-risings, all working together for his good and God's glory; Christ being the way, the truth and the life, he is made of God unto his children, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, let him who glories, glory in the Lord. The praise is his. Jeremiah says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and with loving kindness have I drawn thee." John says, "Behold what

manner of the love the father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God.'' Then Paul says, "There is no power but of God." May peace and love be with you all. If you see fit to give me a home I want to live with you, and when I'm called I want to die with you.

May we bow in humble submission to God's holy will, desiring to be reconciled and given grace to press forward to the mark and the prize of the high calling, ever looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

M. C. Carter

Tuscaloosa, Alabama

Dear Elder Wood:

I wish to express my deepest appreciation for your selecting and republishing Elder Gilbert Beebe's editorial on, "The Keys of the Kingdom," in June, 1954, Signs.

I could never express in words my heart felt thanks to our Father in heaven for such writing. It give me much consolation, confirming, as you said, the doctrine I humbly hope God has revealed to me by his Spirit. My precious brother, it is the doctrine that has been hated and abused in all ages, and this age is one of them. In fact, in this age you hear little of it, and see a lot less observance and taking heed thereunto.

The martyrs of Jesus, and Jesus' true and faithful witnesses, prove the difference between this present evil, self-sufficient and so called religious world, and that of the meek and lowly Lamb of God. Why? Simply because they are of two different natures — countries — worlds. God said he would put enmity between the two, and they are opposite one to another, and man can't change it. If man could change the nature of God, and the things God has made, then he could make an agreement; but until then he cannot. The same goes for His doctrine, laws and ordinances in every sense of the word. The man that tries to change them and substitute others, only manifests the opposition of his own depraved and cursed nature to God and godliness: thereby professing to be wise, he only manifests himself to be a fool, and all that hear him.

If God willed any addition to his word, laws and testimony, as given in the Holy Scriptures, then that which is given is not true. Therefore, every addition reflects upon the infinite wisdom, power and understanding of God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Dear Brother Wood, I'm often brought in great trials and tribulations. The opposition between that which I understand taught in the Scriptures, and that practived and put over the children of God in this day, brings me to search deeply in my soul for the true witness of the one Spirit of the living and true God. We hope our spirit, soul and mind is made to search diligently for the hidden treasures, the fruits of the divine Spirit, which has already been testified of, and promised to all the heirs of promise in God's revealed word. His word is perfect, his testimony sure: promised by him, sworn to and sealed with his own blood.

May He be our sufficiency in every good and acceptable way in His holy and righteous sight. Your very poor and unworthy brother I truly hope in Christ Jesus.

J. L. Saunders

1516 Rutland Street,
Houston 8, Texas
June 12, 1954.

Dear brethren in precious hope:

I have just finished reading the June Signs and I truly enjoyed every word, especially the editorials. And I enjoyed the article, "The keys of the kingdom of Heaven," by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe: it is food for the hungry soul.

When the Signs arrives I rush through it, then later re-read taking more time.

For several days I have wanted to

write, but what can I write? Unless the Lord is with me I cannot write anything; I am so ignorant both in learning and spiritual things, I cannot write anything of much interest to anyone. I live alone and get very lonesome, especially for the brethren and sisters — to listen to them talk of the scriptures. My health is such that I have been unable to go to church but twice since last October, but we have had meeting twice in a sister's home only three blocks from me; both time the ministers were given sweet liberty to speak with power, and I was fed to the full.

"Thou preparest a table before me, . . .". To sit at this gospel table and partake of the Lord's bountiful provision of grace, is my meat and drink. But how unworthy I feel to be of any of God's blessings. I feel my nothingness, feel to be the very least and most unworthy one there; and I often remember Mephibosheth and feel to say with him, "What am I that he should look upon such a dead dog as I am." If He will only give me the lowest seat, or even the bare floor, in the fartherest corner, — just to lie low before him in the dust as nothing, no more than a feeble little worm — to feast upon a few fallen crumbs which God has prepared for all them that love him, which I hope I do, I shall be thankful and satisfied.

Last night was very warm yet beautiful, and, since I could not sleep, I went outside and sat on the door steps. My mind seemed to be on things above, and I could not help but look upwards. There came into my feelings so sweet a sense of the glorious majesty and grace of God that I know not how to express it. There seemed to be a calm, sweet appearance of divine glory in everything: God's excellency, his wisdom, his purity and love seemed to appear in the moon, the stars and sky, even in the few fast moving clouds; and in the chirping of the little crickets, and in the little breeze that occasionally rustled the leaves on the trees: all seemed to be a soft song of love and praise to His most holy and glorious name, — and I seemed to see and feel the glory of God in all. Oh! is He not to be respected, revered and adored in all the works of his hands: the glorious work of providence and in creation.

Absolute sovereignty is what I love to ascribe to God. His absolute sovereignty and justice, is what my mind seems to rest assured of as much as anything. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork." (19th Psalm) "And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thine hands." (Hebrews 1:10) "All things were made by him and without him was not anything made that was made." (John 1:3) "Oh, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgements and his ways past finding out." (Romans 11:33)

God is eternal: all his purposes or decrees are eternal, most wise, absolute and unchangeable. I am glad it is so. Could we put our trust in a God who cannot accomplish or carry out his own will? If he failed in one thing, he might fail in all things. But, no, he has never failed, and he never will. "He hath sworn, surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed so shall it stand: for the Lord of hosts hath purposed it, and who shall disannul it." (Isaiah 14:27) I hope I believe in the absolute sovereign power and predestination of God. This doctrine is exceedingly pleasant, bright and sweet to me. I believe that his eternal purpose includes everything that takes place in this world: that nothing takes place that he did not foresee and purpose; that this old world and all events — all things are just as he intended it should be. Our true and blessed Saviour has said he would not fail, and we (if I am included) who have that precious little hope, are assured by his holy and righteous word that he will not fail. Often we are cast down and go groping in darkness, feeling forsaken of everyone,

even God; and we cry, am I mistaken; am I deceived? Then sometimes we are made to remember the words of the Apostle Paul, "And lest I should be exaulted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exaulted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." (2 Corinthians 12:7-9)

How comforting to know that while His little ones are being tossed to and fro in this sinful world, and being buffeted about by the messenger of satan, that we have One whose grace is sufficint for all our needs; and will be sufficient to raise his people from the dead and take them with him into that heavenly kingdom where all is love, peace and glory forevermore. He has told us he would do it, and he shall not fail.

When he bowed his head on the cross of Calvary and gave up the ghost with these never-to-be-forgotten words, "It is finished," then indeed it was finished, and he did not fail. Praise his precious and holy name: let us rejoice and sing praises to God, the one and only living God, who recorded our names in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world. If my name is written there, I know it is safe; for this precious book is sealed, to be opened only by the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. All the redeemed shall be with him — not one missing. We can describe it? Perhaps I can visualize a wee bit of what it must be: I feel to know that all of God's children will be there and see Jesus as he is, and be like him. For the scriptures say: "Who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself.

Since reading this scribble, I find it to be more sadly "put together" than I thought. Even so, it is something of what I believe. I would enjoy an article on Exodus 28:33-34, about Aaron and his robe with golden bells. When a young girl I read an article on this in one of my father's old papers. Being alone and unable to get about very little, I would appreciate letters from any who feel like writing me. May God bless you all, and bless you to carry on with the blessed paper. Love to all from an old sinner.

Harriett Little Gray

THE CHURCH IS MORE THAN A BUILDING

Exeter, California

Dear Editors of the Signs:

This beautiful Spring morning here in California, as I view the handiwork of an allwise and merciful God. I see people going to and fro semingly unconcerned of everything that pertains to God and godliness, and having nothing in mind but gain of worldly things. My Bible tells me to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added. Brethren, I am not writing for publication because I feel important or that I am a good writer, for I feel my weakness; and I know that without the guiding hand of God, my writings would all be unnoticed. Soon after my last was published, I received two letters from brethren asking that I write again, since they enjoyed my article.

Since I began writing this, my mind seems to dwell on, The Church. I realize this is a big subject. The church of the living God is the greatest organization on earth — and should be to all of God's elect. If they have tasted that the Lord is gracious, that he is a God of love and mercy, the church is something more than a beautiful building where people gather to worship. Unless we worship him in truth our efforts are mouldy and polluted. It was necessary that the church should earnestly contend for the faith while the inspired apostles of our

Lord were yet living; and how much more does it behoove us in these perilous times to be found contending for that same faith and standing in the old paths. The whole world is reeling like a drunken man because of the fear of what might come upon them.

These are perilous times with the church because of a falling away from the holy oracles and divine principles of the church of God. This departure from the faith culminated in the present deplorable cold and weakened condition. For several years we have been viewing the condition of professed religion, and particularly among the people we believe to be a remnant of the visible church here on earth: which the gates of Hell have not, and will not prevail against. We see her today on a stormy sea, her sails have been rent by a multitude of evils; many of her sons being tossed about by strange doctrines and practices, have led many astray, and continue to cause trouble in the camps of Israel.

Men are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God: they are ever learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Their philosophy is: we will fill ourselves with strong drink, and tomorrow shall be as this day and much more abundant. (Iasiah 56:12)

How is it among the professed followers of Christ: these things do have their effect on the flesh. We cannot pass them off as being of the world and not related to us, because they are affecting our homes and our children. Why do the ways of Zion mourn? Why is there no power? How have the mighty fallen and the strong become weak? What is the matter when church members prefer to stay at home, go to work, or attend a ball game, instead of worship? What is the matter? The ministry is much to blame: there has been for many years a decay in the testimony of the gospel in power and demonstration of the Spirit. The pastors have shunned to declare the whole counsel of God; they have avoided any thing that would be hurtful to the flesh. With religion at such a low ebb, and so little concern for godliness among those who should be bulwarks of truth, there is a lack of sound conviction of a religious nature. "By their fruits ye shall know them." You just don't see people with a fervent zeal and unwavering conviction, who are more interested in worldly matters. "For where your treasures are there will your heart be also." (Matthew 6:21) It is so easy to fall into the world's way of living.

Brethren, I hope I haven't said anything that will hurt anyone. Sometimes I think that if the truth hurts, just let it hurt. But such is not the truth today: truth has to be handled carefully or somebody's feelings will be hurt. Pride has taken the place of pure genuine religion. I am sure everybody would like a nice place to worship, but I had much rather have a common place and love be manifested toward each other, than to go to the polished house filled with pride and vanity, with no love manifested.

I have sometimes been to just such places, and I would not be misunderstood, but if people love just such things, I say get your fill, but please remove the word Primitive from your name: do not dishonor the Apostles and the true followers of our blessed Lord with your folly. I love the children of God for the truth's sake, and I do not want to be one of the seven women that are hanging to one man's coat tail. I want the unadulterated truth, and I just can't think too much of a preacher who wears two coats. We have a lot of that kind, and this ought not to be. Our dear pastor is getting up in years - past three score, and I honestly believe he would stand alone before he would sugar-coat just one passage of scripture; although he isn't so wrapped up in himself that he won't reason with a brother on the scriptures.

I have written my feelings and some of my experiences. I believe the true church will stand as long as time lasts,

and that there will always be a people who will declare the whole counsel of God. There was a time when men had to preach in caves, and there might be such times again; if so, I believe God will prepare the cave, and also prepare the man who will not be afraid to declare the whole truth. If not deceived, I love the people of God above all; I love my blessed Redeemer who shed his precious blood that I might live, and I love "hard" doctrine. I was rocked in the cradle by parents who loved it, but thanks be to God I was not taught it by my earthly parents. They brought me up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, but God alone is the only one that can take away the stony heart and give us a heart of flesh. Pray for me. Submitted in love.

Mrs. G. W. Atkins

BIRTH NOT THE BEGINNING

"Marvel not that I said unto you, ye must be born again." (John 3:7)

These are the words of our blessed Saviour to Nicodemus, which seemed to astonish him and caused him much wonder. This is something that the natural, or carnal, minds of men all through time have never been able to understand; and of course, never will.

Nicodemas asked the question, How can a man be born when he is old? But Christ told him that without this no man can see the kingdom of God.

In nature no one can see this earthly kingdom until he is born a natural birth; so it is in a spiritual sense. But the birth does not gives the life. If there is no life before birth, there is none afterwards. We are not born to make us a child, but we are born because we are a child; as I heard an old brother say one time, that if a child was not a child before it was born, he could swear that it wasn't ours after it was born. So it is with the children of God. The birth is not the beginning of the children of God, as the world seems to think; but the beginning was when they were chosen and created in Christ Jesus before the world was, and their names recorded in the book of life. And these only are the subjects of regeneration and birth of the Spirit. Christ, speaking through David, says, "My substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." (Psalms 139:15-16) That is, none of them in a material sense. Yet in the mind and purpose of our God, they were complete in the person of his blessed Son. However, by the disobedience and transgression of their first and natural parents, they became dead in trespasses and sin, and alienated from their heavenly Father. But God forseeing and purposing all of this, prepared for them a redeemer before they fell, and laid on Him all their sin. And at the appointed time of the Father he sent his blessed Son to suffer and die in their stead. So it is said, while we were yet sinners Christ died for us, and bore all our sins in his own body on the tree of Calvary. The prophet said, "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." (Isaiah 53:5-6).

"Us all," means only those all who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world was, and their names written in the book of life. But for them to see the kingdom of God, and what he has done for them, they must be born again, not of a corruptible seed but of an incorruptible seed by the Word of God (which is Christ), which liveth and abideth forever. Those that are born of the flesh shall die, but those born of the Spirit of God shall never die. He that believeth in me though he were dead yet shall he live; and he that liveth and believeth in

me shall never die: no end to that life which is born of the Spirit of God. God is his life and he cannot fall away from that life. Men, with only the carnal mind, will tell us that they do not believe this: We do not expect them to believe it, for we know that they cannot believe it since we know more about them than they know about themselves. We know the reason that they do not believe it — and they do not know. The reason they do not believe is because they have not been born again. They look upon this birth as being just something imaginary, something which they can bring about themselves, such as voluntary believing and accepting, and being dipped in water, which is called baptism of the Holy Spirit. They do not know that there is just as much reality in the spiritual birth as in the natural, and that the subject being born has just as little to do in his spiritual birth as he does in his natural birth: he is perfectly passive in each, he knows nothing about it at the time of his birth. The birth is a manifestation of the life which previously existed in darkness and in bondage; and while in that state of darkness and bondage, they do not and cannot know anything about the kingdom in which they are to be born. Their eyes and hearts are sealed in darkness. So our blessed Lord has said, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of heaven. The wind bloweth where it listeth, but ye cannot tell from whither it cometh nor whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit. We have no more control over the Spirit than we do over the wind that blows.

So, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." Notice he says, "Ye must be" — in positive terms. John, in speaking of Christ, says, "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:10-13)

We see from the above scripture that man's will had nothing to do whatever with his being born. As we have said above, he has no knowledge of the kingdom which he is to be born into, even the desire to be born again. He is satisfied with his present state until birth takes place. It is then that he begins to see and believe in his blessed Lord. Before this, he has no action or conscience of life to believe with: he has nothing but the carnal mind, which the scriptures say is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

The only reason I know that all men were not made subjects of regeneration and birth of the Spirit, is that it did not please God to choose them in Christ before the world was and provide for them a saviour and redeemer. The question was asked, Has not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and one unto dishonour; and has the thing formed the right to say unto him, Why hast thou made me thus. So, no one has the right to question God as to what He does. But the mystery is, why has he chosen me with the few, as the scriptures teach; that is, if he has, which I hope and have reason to believe that he has. So many seem by nature to be much better than myself. It seems that it has pleased our God to hide this wonderful truth from many and reveal it unto a few; and our blessed Lord thanked his Father because he had hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes, even so, for it seemed good in his sight. (Matthew 11:25-26)

This is the only reason we know to give, and we do not desire to apologize for our God. He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. The world by wisdom knows not God, for the preaching of the cross is to them that

perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. "For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." And continues, "That no flesh should glory in his presence." (I Cor. 1:18-29)

We find a description of the worldly wise, and of the weak or foolish, as the world would call them, in the two men who went up into the temple to pray: the one a Pharasee, the other a publican. The wise Pharasee stood and prayed this within himself, saying, God I thank thee that I am not as other men, etc.; while the publican stood afar off, and smote upon his breast, saying, God be cerciful to me a sinner. (Luke 18:10-14) Here is some of the confounding of the wise, for the publican was justified rather than the Pharasee. The Pharasee's trust was all in himself in what he was doing, as are all the religious world who are confounded and know nothing about the sinfulness and weakess of the human flesh; and so their sin remains. But the poor publicans to whom God reveals the sinfulness of human nature feel wretched, and unworthy of God's mercy and grace. These are the babes unto whom these things are revealed. What a blessing it is to know and experience these things, for no man by his own searching can find out God. The more these little ones learn about their God through the revelations of the Spirit, the less they see themselves to be, and the less confidence they have in the flesh.

My sincere prayer is that God will bless and preserve these little ones 'til time shall be no more, and then house them safe in heaven where all shall be well. Amen.

H. L. Rogers

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EDITORIAL

"HITHERTO HATH THE LORD HELPED US." (1 Samuel 7:12)

We are again blessed to greet the brethren and all lovers of the glorious gospel of the Son of God at the beginning of another new year; and we trust that we, as well as they, are not unmindful that it is by His grace that we are yet in the land of the living, and that we yet continue in hope of being delivered from the body of this death after we have finished the race set before us. Our desire is that we may be enabled to run with patience, and ever to look unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.

As they are given to review the way they have come, whether of many years or few, each of those who are begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, know that they have been led and kept by the gracious and mighty hand of their God; and, while they decry themselves, they know that it is by the grace of God that they are what they are, and that the Lord has been merciful to their unrighteousness. All the wealth, comforts and blessings of this life are not to be compared with the greatest of all blessings — the hope of eternal life. All things earthly shall soon pass away — shall soon perish with the using, for they are not ours to accumulate and keep, as though we should remain in this life forever. Many of our fellowmen seem to have no thought that the days of the years of our lives are few and evil, and that the things they have in this life are according to the providential dealings of the Lord: They are not at all thankful to the giver of all these things, but rather feel that they have every right to them because of their own prowess and abilities. But what a difference there is in those who have their understanding enlightened to know that all things are of God.

According to the faith of God's elect, we view ourselves as having been brought into the world, each of his proper parents at the proper time; and that our days and years are set before us; and the pathway we tread, with all the joys and sorrows — all the trials and troubles, are our portion according to the eternal will and purpose of God. We are glad that it is so. We are not resentful, but glad that we have such a God who brought us into earthly existance, and has cared for us all our days, that He might at his own time during our pilgrimage, reveal to us his eternal love and the eternal choice of all his saints before the world began; and the provision he has made that each should be redeemed by the atoning sacrifice of his own Son.

So our earthly life and being is but a part of the eternal purpose of God in making manifest his own power and glory, and to manifest his mercy to all those who were chosen in Christ before the world began. These are unfathomable things to carnal minds; but God reveals that it is true, no only through and by those who wrote by inspiration, but to individuals who are heirs of promise. We care not, therefore, for the opinions of men who have a way of their own, and who's ways seem right to them; because we know that God reveals HIS OWN WAY to HIS OWN BELOVED FAMILY, and that it is pleasing in his sight that the wise and prudent should not know the truth.

What we preach and contend for is not, therefore, just because we want to be different or contentious, but because of an unction which is deeper seated than all the opinions of men, and which all their aspersions cannot dent. So real and true are these things that we care not how much our names may be cast out as evil, nor how much behind the times we may be considered to be. Our greatest desire is that we may be kept in the faith, and the we may be given grace to contend earnestly for those things which God has revealed, though they seem but foolish and impossible to wise men.

As we come to the beginning of another year in our journey, we know not how much longer we shall continue here below, but we do know that the grace of God shall be sufficient for us in the days to come: it has been in the past — it shall be in the future. We are continually led in a way we know not. But we know that it is the right way, for it is the Lord's way; and being the Lord's way, we shall not be consumed, for he is unchangeable and all his promises are sure. Just as certain as we are of that number who were given of the Father to the Son, and which the Son has redeemed, just that certain shall heaven be our home. It is all of his grace; and we are glad that we have learned that

it is, "By grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."

With the appearance of this number we come to the beginning of the 123rd volume of the Signs of the Times. As far as the lives of men are concerned this is a long time, but the good Lord has sustained its publication; and we rejoice that today it is still standing on the same foundation on which it began in 1832. Many and terrible storms beat against it in its infancy, as well as through the years; but each of the editors, from Elder Gilbert Beebe to the present, were given to cry unto the Lord as did Samuel when the Phillistines came against Israel, and each have felt that "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." The Lord has caused the Signs to be comforting and edifying to the saints scattered abroad during all its years, and we feel that it is no less so now. It is very humbling to all the editors when they hear from brethren and friends, and they say how much they enjoy and appreciate their writings, and the writing of those who contribute to the columns. May the Lord continue his blessings both to the writers and the readers.

These are serious time both in the world and in the church. Serious, that is, as far as our present experiences are, but we rejoice that there is One who rules over all, "And that he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth." (Daniel 4:35) May the Lord revive his work in the midst of the years, and impress the hearts of his servants and enable them to be found faithful ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. May we suggest that careful consideration be given the article under, "Voices of the Past." J. D. W.

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"I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHICH STRENGTHENETH ME."

(Phillipians 4:13)

Did you ever try with all your strength for days to do a certain thing and utterly fail? You tried so persisttently that you became mentally and physically exhausted to such extent that your hope fainted? If so, you know what I have gone through in an attempt to write an editorial. I concluded this morning that it had been proven I am a

miserable failure and all my exercises of preaching, praying, singing, writing, and conversation with saints were vain imaginations and hypocritical actions which had come to an end! The fact that I had failed in this attempt climaxed the proof. Deep grievious heart-searching meditations proved that I did not have one qualification that I had been called into this work! No one has ever been so weak as I. Then, as lightning suddenly flashes into darkness, came these startling words, "WHEN I AM WEAK, THEN AM I STRONG — I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHICH STRENGTHENETH ME." The words of Christ followed, "My strength is made perfect in weakness." This soothed my aching heart and calmed my troubled breast. It needs be that I be shown many times, "That the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." (Matt. 11:5) It does not suffice just to tell the children of God these things. They must be shown again and again. They must experience it time after time.

I cannot see when left to my own natural resources. When Christ opens my blind eyes and gives me spiritual sight then I CAN SEE. The fact that I can see now does not suffice for tomorrow. Today, I may see that all things work together for good, including my troubles and trials. Tomorrow, I may be persuaded that all things are against me. Yesterday, I was persuaded that my entire life had been wasted, all my efforts useless, and that it would have been better had I never been born into this natural world. Today there is new light to light my pathway so that I have hopes for the morrow. I trust Christ has opened my eyes to see how that God has provided for me all through my life, sustained me with his grace, and will not let me fall finally away; but will uphold me with His Hand through the severest of trials and finally raise me triumphant over it: all through Christ which strengtheneth me.

I cannot walk upon volition of my own will by my own ability but must realize that I am lame. I must be shown that the lame walk through Christ which strengtheneth. I CAN WALK THROUGH CHRIST WHICH STRENGTHENETH ME. "A man's heart deviseth his way but the Lord directeth his steps," is not learned by reading the 16th chapter of Proverbs but by actual experience. When the strength of Christ is imputed to the individual he is not lame but strong in the Lord, walking, taking the steps that God directs certainly and steadily. His strength is not somewhere afar off just being accredited to our account but it is imputed to us, strengthening us to walk in paths of righteousness. He has placed our feet upon the rock and ESTABLISED OUR GOINGS. We are far from sitting on the stool of "do-nothing" when we are blessed to be in this state. We are walking in His steps. We suffer, become humble, believe, confess, pray, repent, love, and hope through Christ which strengtheneth us. I can do the seemingly impossible through this strength which is imputed to me.

A few months ago I was deeply impressed to accompany Elder Rhodes on a tour West to visit Eld. T. R. Jefferson and wife and the brethren in Washington, Oregon, and California. I was unable financially, physically, and in every other way to make the venture. It seemed as though I was pressed against a wall that could not be pierced. I was depressed and everything looked so gloomy that I said to my wife before leaving, Dessie Mae, let us ask Eld. Rhodes to pray for us. We knelt in our home and Eld. Rhodes was wonderfully inspired to pray God to divinely strengthen, direct, and protect us on this trip. While he was praying the wall disappeared, my troubled breast was calmed, and I was strengthened to such extent that I enjoyed that trip as much as any other venture I had ever made. I have

gone into the sacred stand many times trembling because I was so weak, being void of spiritual thoughts, that I could not see how I could speak intelligently on anything. My mind would be so confused that I would think it impossible to have connected meditations on any subject. I verily believe the mind of Christ has been imputed to me on such occasions that the meditations of the mind and the flow of words came calmly and fluently with all ease. I CAN PREACH THROUGH CHRIST WHICH STRENGTHENETH ME.

Some time ago a church called me to serve it in the capacity of Pastor. The first thought came into my mind, and I expressed it thus: "I cannot serve you." A thought followed and I expressed it also, "I can serve you as Pastor through Christ which strengtheneth me." Is it not a wonderful, mysterious thought that it is the blind who are blessed to see; the lame are blessed to walk; the unclean are cleansed; the dead are raised; the deaf hear; and the poor have the gospel preached to them? Jesus performed all these natural miracles here while in this world as types of miracles more sublime. The imputation of His spiritual strength by His Word is much more sublime! "The words that I speak unto you, they are SPIRIT, and they are LIFE;" says Jesus, as recorded in St. John 6:63. When Jesus speaks directly to you, it enlivens you because He imparts to you His Spirit and Life. It works in you BOTH TO WILL AND TO DO. It is Christ in you who walks.

A sister, whom I was blessed to baptize in the state of Washington, wrote me an inquiry on the subject of predestination relative to the objection that it tends to suppress action. The fact that some who professed to believe in the doctrine of predestination were at ease, being content to sit on the "do-nothing stool," and justifying their inactivity upon this point of doctrine, disturbed her because of her impelling desire to study the scriptures and tread the steps of the faithful. I quote a part of my reply.

"Did you know that the idea of predestination has spurred people to action in the face of many difficulties? Instead of causing them to be content to sit on the stool of "do-nothing" it has rather encouraged them to persevere to action to make their desires a reality. You feel impressed to do something — you feel this impression is from God — you undertake it with the thought that you can because God has predetermined that you should do it regardless of so many obstacles that seem to be in the way. You are impressed that God is for you and nothing can be against you. If God be for you, you will realize your ambitions. Your desires and your actions are as much predestinated as your home in Heaven as one of God's elect family. In Romans 8th chapter, the thought expressed is, that God has predestinated to conform us to the image of Jesus. He does this partly in this life by conforming our desires and characteristics of the inner man to that of Jesus. He will perfect it in the resurrection when the outer man will be adopted into the family by the immortalization of the mortal body. May I add, this conforming to the image of Jesus is the imputation of His strength to us.

When our natural thoughts are brought to a state of confusion and vanity it is an appropriate moment for Christ to strengthen us by imputing His thoughts to us. When this is done our thoughts are conformed to the image of Christ, — our minds are upon godly things. Our desire is for a closer walk with Him. I can think through Christ which strengtheneth me. These thoughts are sublime. These thoughts conform the will to the will of Christ because this will is worked in us. I CAN WILL THROUGH CHRIST WHICH STRENGTHENETH ME.

God's people must learn by sad experience that the will alone is not sufficient. If you read the account of Peter's denial of Christ you will find that he had to be converted to this fact. You

must be converted in the same manner of Peter's conversion. Did you ever have a godly desire and find that all your efforts were unsuccessful and vain? Were you ever fully persuaded in mind to do something that would be becoming to a child of God and then have your thoughts entirely changed so that instead of doing that which you were impressed to do you did the opposite? My experience is such so much of the time that I have been made to know many times the necessity of the DO being worked also. Many times I can say with Paul, "To will is present with me but how to perform that which is good I find not." Do you know why Paul said this? He had searched and tried all of his resources and all of them had failed. All our resources must be tried out and proven vain before Christ imputes His strength unto us. When He imputes His strength, is when I can truly say from the heart, "I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHICH STRENGTHENETH ME."

It is Christ who strengthens the weak hands, confirms the feeble knees, and says to them of a fearful heart, "Be strong; fear not." He says to the fearful, "Fear not." He makes the lame men to leap as an hart and the tongue of the dumb to sing. (See Isaiah 35) If Christ be speaking through me, then I can say to you as the writer to the Hebrews said, "Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees. Make straight paths for your feet." You can lift up the hands that hang down, confirm the feeble knees, and make straight paths for you feet lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, when Christ imputes His strength to you. I have often been so low and discouraged that I could not go on. A brother would notice me when in this condition. He would say comforting words of kindness and encouragement to me and I would be immediately strengthened. My hands would be lifted up and my feeble knees confirmed by these words of my brother. Could it have been Christ in my brother speaking to me? The words of Christ are SPIRIT and LIFE. The words of Christ are strengthening. I have been persuaded that Christ speaks often to me through my brethren because of the strength that has been imputed to me while under the influence of these words. Have you ever visited the sick and see their countenance brighten when you enter the room? Have you ever visited people and hear them say so enthusiastically; "I am so glad you came, your visit has meant so much to me." You have administered to those who were in need and have witnessed their being strengthened by this administration. They have seemed to want to give you the praise for it and you have conscientiously told them that no praise was due you and advised them to thank God for any benefit they had received. Your kindness in deed strengthened them, and the appreciation manifested by them strengthened you. I CAN STRENGTHEN OTHERS THROUGH CHRIST WHICH STRENGTHENETH ME.

David prayed, "Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, uphold me with Thy free Spirit; then, will I TEACH TRANSGRESSORS THY WAYS; and sinners shall be converted unto Thee." (Psalms 51:12-13) One great epoch in my experience came to me while being enhanced by the preaching of an Elder who was blessed to teach me how mercy could be given and justice satisfied. One of the qualifications of an elder is, "Apt to teach." If there be no evidence that God's little children have been taught through a man's preaching, I am persuaded — that the man ought not to be ordained as an Elder because he is lacking in qualifications. Paul was blessed to "teach in every church." (I Cor. 4: 17) Paul taught Timothy, his son in the ministry. He commanded Timothy to "Command and teach." I CAN TEACH THROUGH CHRIST WHICH STRENGTHENETH ME. I have been encouraged by many who have come to me and convinced me that many questions had been

cleared up through my preaching. Does this have a tendency to exalt me in my estimation of myself? NO! No! No! It humbles me instead. The thought that God has graced me, "who am less than the least of all saints," with such ministration causes me to realize more fully my littleness and dependence upon Him. I have heard brethren discourage others from expressing to a minister their appreciation and enjoyment of his sermon on the basis that "It might puff him up." If such would "Puff" one up, it would be better for the church to "puff" him up until he bursted. I say, give vent to your feelings. If you have profited in a sermon and enjoyed it, express your sentiments to the speaker. Many of God's ministers, who grope along battling with many doubts concerning their call into this position, have been strengthened by words of encouragement from the hearers. You, no doubt, have felt impressed to go to your pastor and let him know how much you appreciate his efforts in visiting, preaching, advising, praying, laboring for unity and peace among brethren, and his readiness in administering in all other duties of a Pastor. You may have failed to do this, excusing yourself with the thought, "What I may say to him would be of no benefit." Your Pastor is your servant. A servant is always benefited and strengthened by kindness of his master! A true Pastor considers himself less than the least; thus, esteeming the least as greater than he. He sees Jesus in you but cannot see Him in himself. I CAN STRENGTHEN MY PASTOR THROUGH CHRIST WHICH STRENGTHENETH ME.

It pleased God to give us each other. The words that we speak and the things we do have their effect upon each other. Words and deeds are not without effect. They either discourage or encourage, please or displease, lift up or cast down; yea, weaken or strengthen. Jesus said, "Who so shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone be hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." (Matt. 18:6) May we be given to pray God that we be strengthened in conversation and deed, that we may say appropriate words and do the things that are becoming to God's little children, lest we offend one another. May we be strengthened to give thanks unto God for each other. Paul was bound to give thanks unto God for his brethren. My brethren mean so much to me. I have been made to thank God for their "labor of love," seeing their labor is stimulated by love instead of hope for reward. The doctrine John talked about was the doctrine of love. The commandment received by the direct operation of the Spirit of God is, Love Him and Love one another. This commandment comes to us by the imputing of Christ's love into our hearts. When we are strengthened by the Love of Christ we can love Him and our brethren. I CAN THANK GOD FOR MY BRETHREN AND LOVE THEM THROUGH CHRIST WHICH STRENGTHENETH ME.

Space will not permit us to write upon the many other things that have come into our mind relative to this great text. I trust God will strengthen the reader to enlarge upon these gleanings with many precious thoughts of Christ and His imputed strength unto us. Bear in mind that it is the WEAK WHO ARE STRENGTHENED BY CHRIST. If we felt we had the ability to perform anything of ourselves we would not feel the need of the strength of Christ for this thing. If we felt we could do ONE thing without Christ then we would be strong enough that the language of Paul as expressed in the title of this article could not apply to us for we would have to say, "One thing I can do of myself but can do all OTHER things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Realizing my weakness to so great extent that I cannot do just one thing Godly of myself then I must depend upon Christ's strength to perform ALL THINGS. I CAN DO ALL

THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHICH STRENGTHENETH ME. E. J. L.

The opinions and doings of men are of no value unless motivated by the Spirit of Truth; if otherwise, they "darken counsel by words without knowledge".

WE QUOTE:

"In the weediest fields the corn must suffer by the culture which saves it." Blackburn's, HISTORY.

"All that we are told of Melchisedec is but what is necessary to present in our view of him a type of the royal priesthood of Christ." Elder Durand in, TRIAL OF JOB.

"It is the peculiar character and blessedness of divine truth, that it will bear the strictest examination." Philpott's, MEDITATIONS.

"Having had so much forgiven us, we should freely forgive our offending brethren; and feeling ourselves to be the chief of sinners and less than the least of all saints, we should rather wonder at their forbearance of us, and admire their kindness to us, than cherish a resentful, unforgiving spirit, even against those at whose hands we may have suffered real or imaginary wrong." Philpott's, MEDITATIONS.

"One insiduous foe is worse than a dozen open enemies." Elder James Osbourn in, A CLUSTER OF EVANGELICAL TRUTHS.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

AN APOSTOLIC CHARGE TO THE ELDERS WHOM GOD HAS CALLED TO FEED HIS FLOCK.

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood."—Acts. xx. 28.

This solemn charge was given in a most impressive manner by the apostle Paul to the Elders of the church at Ephesus, in the last interview he was ever to have with them personally in the flesh, for he knew that they would see his face no more. This was a most solemn and interesting time; when with the inspiration of a true prophet of our God, he foretold them of the sore trials they should be called to encounter after his departure, when grievous wolves should enter in among them, not sparing the flock; and what was still more appalling, of their own selves should men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. And after having faithfully warned and charged them, he closed his valedictory, commending them to God and to the word of his grace, and knelt down and prayed with them all. So affecting was the scene, the Elders all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him; sorrowing most of all that they should see his face no more.

We cannot for a moment believe that this charge is any less applicable to the Elders in the church of Christ today, whom the Holy Ghost has made overseers, than it was to those of the church of Ephesus, or that we have any less occasion to heed the admonitions and accept the charge. None but those whom the Holy Ghost has called, qualified and made overseers, have any commission from God to feed his flock, or church. Men may be qualified in the schools of men to feed the swine, and may, like the prodigal, hire themselves out to citizens of the world for that purpose; but our God has entrusted the feeding of the sheep and lambs which he has purchased with his own blood to none but those who are qualified by the Holy Ghost. It may be well for those of us who hold the office of Elders in the church of the living God to examine this apostolic exhortation, and to examine ourselves and our ministry, and to prayerfully inquire wheth-

er we are abiding steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship; for as far as we depart from their doctrine and admonitions, so far do we depart from their fellowship.

The first of all we are charged to take heed unto *ourselves*. This charge was also given to Timothy, 1st Epistle iv. 16: "Take heed unto thyself," and then to the doctrine, and to continue in them; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee. No man is to rush heedlessly and uncalled into the work of the ministry. "And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." — Heb. v. 4. Is it not to be feared that many even of God's children have heedlessly assumed the work unto whom God has given no ministerial or pastoral gift, and involved themselves and their brethren in much trouble and perplexity? But those who have the most unquestionable evidence that they are called to the work, are to take heed that they obey the high and holy calling, and give themselves wholly to the work, and suffer nothing of worldly profit, pleasure or opposition to keep them from the faithful discharge of their work whereunto the Holy Ghost has called them.

Again, they should take heed that their life and conversation before the world and before the church be such as becometh the gospel of the grace of God. "For a bishop (Elder or pastor) must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, temperate, holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." — Titus i. 7-9. "A bishop then MUST be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, APT TO TEACH." "Not a novice, (or one who has come newly into the faith, see margin,) lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, HE MUST HAVE a good report of them which are without, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." — 1 Tim. iii. 2-7. No minister of Christ has a right to be heedless or indifferent in regard to these indispensable qualifications, or careless as to whether his calling, gifts and deportment are in conformity with these rules.

By a heedless disregard of this solemn charge, a minister may so far forget himself as to attempt to feed the swine, the children of this world, or to bestow his ministerial labors in chaplaincies for armies, navies, legislative assemblies, or to regulate the politics and secular affairs of the world. A due attention to the divine rule will lead the ministers of Christ to "Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness," and in that kingdom they will find the flock of their special and exclusive charge. Not only are the Lord's bishops to take heed unto themselves, but they are commanded also to take heed to *all* the flock. If the Holy Ghost has made us overseers of the flock or church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood, how great is the responsibility which rests on us? Can we, like Paul, take the people of our charge to record or witness that we are pure of the blood of all men, and that we have not shunned to declare all the counsel of God? Paul did not hold himself responsible for the blood of any but those of the church of God, and in the application of the figure, which he borrow from the ceremonial dispensation, in which the watchmen whom God commanded to give due warning to the Israelites when their enemies were approaching, or to faithfully warn them when God had said they should die, &c; if they neglected to warn them, and through their neglect an Israelite perished, their blood was required at the watchmen's hands,

or they were held responsible to God for the consequence of their heedless neglect. Paul had faithfully warned the brethren, publicly and from house to house, and had kept back nothing that was profitable for them; therefore he was free from any responsibilty arising from their failure to be profited by his labors. He was pure from the blood of all men.

Having therefore the apostolic example as well as precept, how important it is that the ministers of Christ should in like manner "feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." The manner in which the ministers of Christ should take heed, is shown by the manner in which Paul had acquitted himself in his work. From the first day he came into Asia, or among these Gentile saints, his manner of life at all seasons and on all occasions had been an open epistle of instruction for all the saints to feed and feast upon. Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears. Not in heedless and vain jesting and trifling levity, as some of us in the present day are too much addicted to; but under all his many temptations, and the lying in wait of the Jews, watching to find occasions to accuse and harrass him, he was neither allured by flattery nor intimidated by fear of persecution, and his indefatigable labors were unremitting in looking up and feeding the church of God, teaching them publicly and from house to house. And as a pastor after God's own heart, he fed the church of God with knowledge and understanding. — Jer. iii. 15. Testifying to both Jews and Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Feeding all who were born of incorruptible seed by the word of God, on the sincere milk of the word.

In feeding the Lord's flock, constant care and unremitting heed should be taken that we feed them only on such food as the great Shepherd and Bishop has provided. When they ask for bread we are not to give them a stone, or if they ask for an egg to give them a scorpion. Timothy, as we have shown, was admonished not only to take heed unto himself, but also to the doctrine. It will not answer to heedlessly mix up our own vain speculations with the doctrine of Christ. Great care should be taken that we know nothing among the saints save Jesus Christ and him crucified. It is on his flesh they shall feed, and his blood in the New Testament they must drink; and they must live on every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

The old man, or carnal nature of Christians, may be fed on doctrines of men, and even on doctrines of devils. Their depraved nature will receive and eat it greedily, and it will inflate and puff them up with pride and vain glory. Their carnal passions may be excited by what is called emotional or sensational preaching, but such food is unwholesome and poisonous to the flock of God, and woe to heedless pastors who teach for doctrine the commandments of men.

The Savior charged his apostles to teach the saints to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them; no more, no less. His laws and ordinances are perfect and complete; they need no amendment, modification or improvement. Take heed unto the doctrine, and remember that Christ has said through the mouth of his apostle, "But through we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, led him be accursed."—Gal. i. 8, 9.

The great object of the gospel ministry is to feed the church of God; for this purpose all the gifts requisite are supplied to those whom the Holy Ghost has made overseers, according to the measure of the gifts of Christ. "Where-

fore he saith, When he ascended up on high he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers," (and what were they given for?) "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." — Eph. iv. 8, 11-13. This scripture defines the object and design of all the gifts which Christ received for and gave to the church when he ascended up on high, and sat down upon his Mediatorial throne at the right hand of the Majesty on high. These gifts were none of them designed for nor given to the world, but exclusively to the church, which is the body of Christ, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. The Elders, in taking heed to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers, should not heedlessly forget that their holy vocation is for the edifying of the body of Christ, to feed the church of God. The Holy Ghost has not made them overseers of the world, nor called them to feed the world. They are not qualified to give life to the dead, but to feed the living. The quickening power belongs to God, it has never been given to men; but when God by his Spirit has given life to the subjects of his saving power and grace, then let the ministers of Christ take heed that none of them be overlooked or neglected. "Feed my sheep, and feed my lambs," is the command of the great Shepherd and Bishop of Israel.

The solemn charge to *take heed,* implies a constant watchfulness that no part of the flock suffer through our neglect to feed them with the wholesome food of the gospel, rightly dividing the word, and ministering to each his portion in due season. Great care should be observed lest we as Elders, evangelists, pastors or teachers should heedlessly feed the flock on any other food than the provisions which God has abundantly blessed, and with which he will fill his poor.

The necessity of a vigilant watchfulness is suggested by the warning given to the Elders, of grievous wolves and sad apostacies that should distress the flock or church in the last days, when many should depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. The faithful watchman MAY ~~may~~ not sleep at his post. As Paul said to Timothy, so he says also to each of the ministers of the word, "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and good doctrine." —1 Tim. iv. 6.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, August 15, 1877).

OBITUARIES

MRS. ELLA ADAMS LEFFERTS

Ella Adams Lefferts, widow of the late Elder Horace H. Lefferts, who died August 18, 1949, was born November 18, 1871, near Covington, Georgia, and died January 11, 1954, in the Arlington Hospital, Arlington, Virginia. She was the daughter of William and Susan Frances Hurst Adams. Her father was an Old School Baptist minister for a great many years. She was a twin daughter, next to the youngest of sixteen children. Her oldest brother was Elder James M. Adams, also an Old School Baptist minister. She was married on September 24, 1903, to Elder Horace Hogeland Lefferts. She was the mother of six children — one girl and five boys — one son, Henry H., died in 1950. Her married life was spent in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Warwick, New York and Leesburg, Virginia, living at the later place forty-two years.

She is survived by her twin sister, Mrs. Emma Davis, of Atlanta, Georgia and her youngest brother, S. H. Adams of Orlando, Florida; and four sons, William G., Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Hurst A., Pleasant View, Kentucky; Horace L., Wilmington, Delaware and Miles S., Arlington, Virginia; and one daughter, Mrs. Sarah F. Ramsey, Miami, Florida;

and ten grandchildren to mourn her loss. Funeral services were conducted by Elder George Ruston, in the Southampton Meeting House, after which she was buried beside her husband in the Wm. Penn Cemetery near Southampton, Pennsylvania.

Mrs. Lefferts (Cousin Ella to me) was widely known, and dearly loved by many who will greatly miss her and her hospitality. She and brother Horace entertained in their home many of the Old Baptists, and traveled and visited extensively among them. Cousin Ella never joined the church, but she loved the Old Baptists and the truth they believed, which her husband and other Old Baptist ministers preached. We believe she has entered into that sweet eternal rest in Heaven.

Casper G. Fetter

SARAH BELLA MEREDITH

Sister Sarah Bella Meredith, the daughter of John A. and Pamelia Jane Hadden (both deceased), was born December 1, 1868, in Henry County, Tennessee; and died May 30, 1954, at the home of her son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Marshall Stockton, Creal Springs, Illinois, at the age of eighty-five.

She and her late husband united with the Primitive Baptist Church called Rock Spring, near Simpson, Illinois, in May, 1906; and were baptized by the late Elder J. M. Perkins, Mayfield, Kentucky. She was united in marriage to James T. Meredith on September 16, 1886; and to this union were born eight children: all preceeding her in death except one daughter, Zetta Stockton. She leaves to mourn also two grand-children, Mrs. Ada White and Eldon Leon Stockton; six great grand-children; three sisters: Mrs. Maggie Carrington, Jeffersonville, Indiana, Mrs. Judith Simmons and Mrs. Irene Berndt, of Elgin Illinois; and several nieces and nephews; and a host of friends and neighbors.

Sister Merideth was a loving mother, and was loved by all who knew her. She was faithful to her church as long as she was able; and always welcomed everyone in her home. Her door was always open to Old Baptists: she wanted them to feel welcome. She will be missed by her church and all who knew her. She was a lover of salvation by grace and grace alone, trusting in an all wise God, realizing that he does all things well. She often spoke of her hope, and would say, "If I am saved it will be by grace — nothing I can do." She showed evidence of one who was born of the Spirit of God and an heir of promise.

Her funeral was held at Rock Spring Primitive Baptist Church, East of Simpson, Illinois. The services were conducted by Elder O. W. Perkins, Mayfield, Kentucky, in the presence of a large congregation of friends and neighbors. The floral offerings were profuse, showing the esteem in which Sister Bella was held. Her body was laid to rest in the Kerley Cemetery by the side of her dear husband and their deceased children, to rest in that blessed sleep; in hope of that glorious resurrection when we all hope to meet around the throne of God where all will be peace and joy.

May God reconcile all who mourn. Written by request of her daughter by her unworthy sister.

Mrs. Willie Irene (Kerley) McGregor,
Church Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT
DEACON DANIEL C. WOOD

WHEREAS, On July 14, 1954, it pleased almighty God in his infinite wisdom to remove from our midst by death brother Deacon Daniel C. Wood; he united with the church at Roanoke, Virginia, on July 7, 1912, and was ordained deacon on April 4, 1914. He was a faithful and active member, always to be found at his church meetings as long as he was able. For several years before his death his health was such that he was unable to attend. He was sound in doctrine and firmly believed in salvation by grace.

We shall miss Brother Wood, but we know that our loss is his eternal gain.

THEREFORE, We the Primitive Baptist Church at Roanoke bow in humble submission to the will of God, knowing that he does all things well.

Done by order of the church in conference October 2, 1954.

Elder C. E. Turner, Moderator
F. G. Holcomb, Clerk

SUSAN JOYCE STEWART

God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to call to her eternal home another one of our beloved members, Susan Joyce Stewart. She was born in Stokes County, North Carolina, September 7, 1876, and died at the age of seventy-seven. She had been in declining health for more than a year before passing away at the home of her daughter, Mrs. J. G. Wyrich. She was united in marriage to the late Samuel L. Stewart in the year 1890, who preceeded her in death several years. To this union were born twelve children; eleven of them survive, together with thirty-two grand-children and twenty-six great grand-children.

Sister Stewart received a hope in Jesus and

joined Dan River Church September 25, 1949, and was baptized by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler. She was a faithful member and a firm believer in salvation by grace, and attended her meetings regularly as long as her health would permit. We feel that another one of the Lord's redeemed has finished her earthly journey and is peacefully awaiting the coming of her glorious Redeemer. We have lost a precious sister in Christ, but our loss is her eternal gain. The funeral was held at Dan River Church, where a host of relatives and friends gathered to pay a last tribute of respect to one whom they loved. Her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

May God's richest blessings abide with all who were near and dear to her, and may it please the Heavenly Father that we meet again in the world that knows no end.

Written by request of Dan River Church while in conference Saturday evening before the fourth Sunday in June, 1953. It is resolved that a copy be placed in our church records, a copy be given to the family and a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Mrs. G. F. Pruitt

J. T. WORD

Again it has pleased our Heavenly Father, who doeth all things well, to remove from our midst our beloved brother and Deacon, J. T. Word, who had been a faithful member of the Primitive Baptist Church since 1899, and a member of this church fifty-three years: he and his wife having joined Little Flock Church in 1901. He was born December 18, 1861, and passed away September 2, 1954, at the age of ninety-two years. His wife passed away thirteen years ago.

Brother Word was always in his place at his church meetings until about five years ago when his health would no longer permit him to attend regularly, but he came as often as he was able. He was born in Tennessee, and moved with his parents to Arkansas, where he grew to manhood and married Fannie Edwards. To this union were born two sons, Lee and Walter, who survive, and who have reared fine families in Friendship community where Brother Word lived and had his home.

Brother Word was quiet, unassuming and loyal to his church and family. He was honest, and was loved and respected by all who knew him. Little Flock Church feels a deep sense of loss at his passing, and extends heartfelt sympathy to his bereaved family. Funeral services were conducted by Mr. Guillingham, at Friendship Church; and burial was at Altus Cemetery.

Done by order of the church while in conference September 11, 1954, Altus, Oklahoma.

Brother. C. M. Tolar, Mod. Pro. tem.
Mrs. Lou Kester, Church Clerk.

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Saturday, 11 A. M.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 11 A M.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

WRIGHTS' CREEK CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday, 11 A. M.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday, 11 A. M.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., six miles SE. of Sulligent, Alabama.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each Saturday before the fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Alabama.

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles SW. of Fayette, Alabama.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

BEULAH PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Troy, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday, South end of Three Notch Street.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

MT. PLEASANT PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located two miles South of Dothan, Alabama, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before.
E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

MT. GILEAD PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles North of Hartford, Alabama.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Pratt City, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. Meeting place at Alder Street at top of hill, first car going into Pratt City from Birmingham.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

LIBERTY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., eight miles South of Gordo, Alabama.

O. G. GARVER, Pastor

MT. CARMEL CHURCH, Coffee Springs, Alabama, meets each first Sunday 11 A. M.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Tucson, Arizona, meets on third Sundays and Saturday before at 134 E. Prince Road. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

T. J. ROBINSON, Pastor
MRS. J. H. DAY, Clerk

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

W. S. SPEER, Pastor

REHOBETH OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located five miles North of El Dorado, Arkansas. and half-mile West of Highway No. 7, meets second Sunday in each month and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

R. W. RHODES, Pastor,
W. A. SPEER, Clerk

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Pomona, California, meets each fourth Sunday at 12812 Williamson (or write A J. Taylor, 932E Monterey).

LITTLE FLOCK CHURCH, Miami, Florida, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before, SW. 29th Avenue and 6th Street. We extend an invitation to any interested to visit us.

Mrs. J. M. Futch,
7005 SW. 21st Street,
Miami, Florida

SALEM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Panama City, Florida, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., North end of Harrison Avenue.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Weise, Idaho, meets each second Sunday at 5th and E. Park Street.

PLEASANT VALLEY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas, meets the first Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (January, March, etc) at the home of Sister Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C.

MRS. PHEBE CATES, Clerk

THE LOST CREEK CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, meets first Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Kentucky, ten miles South of Grayson and two miles from Denton, on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

C. H. EVANS, Pastor

NEW HOPE CHURCH (better known as Lick Creek) meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., five miles North of Dawson Springs, Kentucky.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE ZION CHURCH OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS, Mayfield, Kentucky, meets first Sunday each month at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M., on South 7th Street.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Baltimore, Maryland, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Street, near Calvert.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on Falls Road about twenty miles North of Baltimore.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, New York City, meets every first and third Sundays at Parkside Hotel, 18 Gramercy Park South, one block east of Fourth Ave. and 20th St., near 23rd St. Sta. Lexington Ave. Subway. Take Elevator to Park Room second floor. 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets each 5th Sunday and Saturday afternoon before, from May through September, with two days meeting the 1st Sunday in May; and meets at Needmore, Pa, on 5th Sundays and

Saturday afternoon before, from October through April, with two days meeting the 2nd Sunday in October.

John D. Wood, Pastor
Orien Mellott, Clerk
McConnellsburg, Pa.

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, Houston, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M. Church is located on Little York Highway, four miles North of Houston, and one mile East of Highway 76.

W. O. BEENE, Pastor

BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin, Oregon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes.

R. R. WOLF, Pastor

MT. ZION CHURCH, Weslaco, Texas, meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 and Saturday before at 11 A. M., at the home of E. B. Ault, on Progresso Highway, three and one-half miles South of Weslaco.

E. B. Ault, Pastor,
Bessie Chambers, Clerk,
Rt. 1, Mission, Texas

SARDIS CHURCH, Amarillo, Texas, meets first Sundays at 10:30, in the home of Deacon C. M. Toler, 119 S. Bowie Street.

C. E. TURNER, Pastor

THE OLD ORDERLY MT. ZION (CASH) PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Campbell, Texas, meets on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in each month at the home of Bro. J. J. Darnell.

SISTER SIMMONS, Clerk

PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, 1211 8th Avenue, meets first Sunday in each month at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, go one block North to meeting house.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor,
W. A. LITTLE, Asst. Pastor

THE ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST CHURCH, Lawn, Texas, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
MRS. NOLA STEWART, Clerk

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30, at the home of M. J. Culpeper. Lovers of the truth invited.

E. B. AULT, Pastor

THE OLD SALEM CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS, four miles South of Teague, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

SAINTS REST OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday evening before at seven-thirty, at 4614 Sylvester Street.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
JOHN T. BEENE, Clerk

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
C. E. TURNER, Co-pastor

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday afternoon at 2:30.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor

THE PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Memphis, Tennessee, meet in the Primitive Baptist Church, corner of Getwell and Fizer Streets, on second Sunday in each month at 11 A. M. and Saturday evening before; also on fourth Sundays at 11 A. M.

H. G. Brown, Pastor
791 Watson Street.
L. C. Campbell, Clerk
3347 Tutwiller Street

LITTLE FLOCK PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Cass County, Missouri, meets on fourth Sundays in the Memorial Building, Pleasant Hill, Missouri. We invite brethren of our faith and order to visit us.

L. L. SCHENCK, Pastor
MRS. J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2:30, Fairmont Park, 3023 Cottage Toll Road.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Richmond, Virginia, meets each fourth Sunday in their new meeting house about ten miles South of Richmond, just off

of highway 360 South.

R. S. PAYNE, Pastor

DAN RIVER CHURCH, between Danville, Va. and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday night before, on Bradley Road.

W. R. DODD, Pastor

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2 P. M., and is located on Route 28, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2 P. M., each second month (February, April, etc.), and is near Lucketts, about eight miles North of Leesburg, Virginia.

BROAD RUN CHURCH, Poolesville, Maryland, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. each second month (January, March, etc.)

MT. ZION CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2 P. M., and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, Virginia, on Route 50, between Washington and Winchester, Virginia.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are always glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Deacon G. C. Spindle, Lincoln 6-5091.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

LITTLE ZION PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Chehalis, Washington, meets in the home of Sister Effie Parke, 1360 First Street, the first Sunday of each month at 11 A. M.

C. M. FISHER, Pastor

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, near Yakima, Washington, meets at 11 A. M. each second Sunday by appointment at the home of one of the members living in Naches, Washington.

A. D. Hughett, Pastor,
Beatrice Haan, Clerk,
Star Route, Naches, Washington.

HARMONY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, about four miles East of Huntington, W. Va., near Route 60 at Russell Creek, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 3 P. M.

R. C. Bell, Moderator,
B. G. Bird, Clerk,
211 3rd Street, Altizer Add.
Huntington, W. Va.

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Stockton, California, meets second Sundays at Fairgrounds Community Bldg. All loves of the truth invited. Please note change of address from Sacramento, California.

T. R. Jefferson, Pastor
Wm. Echols, Clerk
Chowchilla, Cal.

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, about one mile South of Newark, Delaware, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

The **WALNUT FORK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH,** near Cottage Grove, Tennessee, meets on the second Sunday of each month.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor
R. L. VEAZEY, SR., Clerk

The **WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,** Warwick, Orange County, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are at 10:30 A. M. DST.

The **MIDDLETOWN AND WALLKILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,** Middletown, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday from April to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. Meetings are at 2 P. M. DST.

ELAM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, two miles North of Goshen, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

J. R. GIBSON, Pastor,
A. C. Carter, Clerk

ROCK SPRINGS OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, meets each first Sunday at 10:30. The meeting house is located on highway 222, about one-quarter mile of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line.

John D. Wood, Pastor,
Chas. B. Osborne, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 123 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1955 NO. 2

Show pity, Lord, O Lord, forgive,
Let a repenting rebel live:
Are not thy mercies large and free?
May not a sinner trust in thee?

My crimes are great, but can't surpass
The power and glory of thy grace;
Great God, thy nature hath no bound,
So let thy pardoning love be found.

O wash my soul from every sin,
And make my guilty conscience clean;
Here on my heart the burden lies,
And past offenses pain my eyes.

My lips with shame my sins confess
Against thy law, against thy grace:
Lord, should thy judgment grow severe,
I am condemned, but thou art clear.

Should sudden vengeance seize my breath,
I must pronounce thee just in death:
And if my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well.

Yet save a trembling sinner, Lord,
Whose hope still hovering round thy word,
Would light on some sweet promise there,
Some sure support against despair.

Watts

(published by request)

ANOTHER ONE LED BY THE WAY * SHE KNEW NOT

Manheim, Penn.

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

I want to write of a few of the things God has done for me, and I hope the Holy Spirit is guiding me in everything I write. It is so wonderful when I think of all He has done: His grace and mercy, and the precious blood he shed when he died on the cross for his chosen ones: He was raised from the dead, and is now sitting on the right hand of the Father interceeding for us, and has all power in heaven and in earth.

I was born in a little town in Illinois, near Danville, January 19, 1904. When I was about two years old my parents (Sherman and Eliza Austin Shaw) came back to Virginia and settled near Roanoke; and my mother united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Roanoke, and was baptized by Elder J. C. Hurst. We then moved to Franklin County, about twenty miles away, when I was five or six years old; and when I was nine or ten we moved to West Virginia, where we lived until the death of my mother. I was then fourteen, and had four sisters and one brother. While we lived in Virginia we attended Little Creek Church and others near by, but in West Virginia we did not attend meetings for there was no church near us. When mother died we moved back to Virginia; and then, when I was nineteen we moved to Manheim, Pennsylvania, where I was married and had five children.

I never thought of joining a church in all those years; then I began to get afraid: If I saw the sky red, or anything unusual in the elements, I was afraid the world was coming to an end, and everyone would be burned, and the souls of the saved would go to heaven. I did not know anything of the resurrection then for my eyes were not opened to the truth, though I had heard preaching many times. I got so afraid I put the Bible where I could not see it, and I did not want to hear a sermon on the radio, for I was afraid they would talk about Jesus and the world coming to an end. (What a difference now! Just the name of Jesus fills my heart with joy) One night I had a dream which I can never forget. I was in a wilderness with nothing around me but tall, slim trees: they were all bare — not a leaf on any of them. Everything seemed black all around me; yet I could see the bare

wilderness and those slim, bare trees. It seemed I could see for miles but could see no one; and yet I knew someone was there, for I could just feel a presence there with me. Then suddenly I heard the most awful sound which I can not describe. It seemed to be coming out of the ground on my right side, and sounded like people moaning, and it seemed that I could just see them wreathing in agony. I could not move or speak, but finally I asked the presence beside me what it was, and he said, That is the pit of lost souls. I then awoke; and I feel sure that nothing could ever convince me that there is no hell — I saw it.

After that, I told myself that I must change my ways, but of course I could not do anything, for a dead person can do nothing, and I was dead in trespasses and sins with no hope of eternal life. It was not long after this that my little boy got sick, and when we had to take him to the hospital, I just seemed to know that he would not get well. While he was sick and before he got so bad, he tried to sing: "Ask the Saviour to help you, Comfort, guide and protect you; He is willing to aid you, He will carry you through." He always wanted me to sing that to him. "A little child shall lead them." Who knows the wonderful things in store for us but God! Everything is determined before the foundation of the world. He has predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will; and he breaks us and melts us until we are poured into the mould of his eternal purposes.

After my baby's death, I got the Bible out of hiding and began to read. I went to Bible Study classes, and different churches; and then joined one, and went there for ten years, and to others also, but was not satisfied. But God works in mysterious ways his wonders to perform — his ways are deep. He reached down into the miry clay when I was struggling about, took my hand, and put my feet upon a rock, even Christ Jesus. Yes, I now have a hope of eternal life; for we are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for. But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. It is a wonderful thing to be given that hope.

There was a little meeting house we passed every week or two in the summer, and I often wondered what denomination it was. Then one evening we were at a friend's home and began talking about churches, and someone said the one I had often noticed was an Old Baptist church. I could hardly believe it for I did not think there were any around close. Well, we began to attend. The preaching was so different from anything I had been listening to. At first, when I would go and hear a sermon, I would think, It can't be that way; it is just too different. But I believe the Holy Spirit was revealing to me the truth: All grace, and not works. Even the verses in the Bible that I had read before were opening up to me in a way that I did not see before. They had an altogether different meaning, and I began to realize that the key that unlocks the truths of the Bible is the Spirit of God.

One Sunday at meeting they sang, "Cast down but not destroyed," and I thought I must get up and tell them what God was revealing to me; but like Jonah, I still tried to run away, so I kept my seat. But when it is God's time for us to do something, there is no use trying to run away. We returned home, and I fought; but we wrestle not against flesh and blood, for if God is for us, who can be against us. One day, as I was standing in the kitchen, all at once I felt a weight being lifted from me. It was so wonderful that it can't be explained, but the ones who have had that experience know. I began to sing:

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost but now am found,

Was blind but now I see."

I knew then what it meant when the Saviour said, "For my yolk is easy and my burden is light."

I went to the Delaware Association (held with Rock Springs Church where I had been attending) the following week, and when the doors were opened for membership, I went up, but I could not say much. I felt that I was not worthy to even be there with those people of God, but they took me in, and I was baptized by Elder John D. Wood the first Sunday in September, 1954. I felt I was at home at last after all those years of wandering — at last I am satisfied the Lord knoweth them that are his. We can't even believe unless it is given to us. I know, for I tried. At times I think as one of old, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever." (Psalms 73:25-26). If God has given me salvation, it is not because of anything I have done: it is because he has chosen me. I don't know why — I know I don't deserve it. But some day, when God is pleased, I hope to be with the ones who have gone on before, where there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, for the former things are passed away. (Revelation 21-4)

But if there were no pain, or sorrow, or tears here, to what would he be looking forward? God purposes these trials in our lives to draw us closer to his loving side. If his little children did not get tired, would they want to go home? God's purpose for all his children can never be changed: He never makes a mistake, for he is God.

A sister in hope of eternal life,
Mrs. Edgar Mackley

(What a joy it is to brethren when one comes before the church and gives evidence that he or she has been brought to the knowledge of the truth, and is given grace to find their kinsmen, and to desire a home with them. It is not just joining "some organization," but a being led by the unerring Spirit of God to the church. Each of these know that, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." And each one feels that they fall short of being able to tell the circumstances, or experiences, of how they have been brought. But this is common with all, for there are things in our experiences which are "unlawful" to be uttered; that is, they are impossible to be described with mere words. There is, however, no mistaking the language and actions of one who has learned that salvation is by grace alone. — J.D.W.)

"TO MAKE READY A PEOPLE PREPARED"

"And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; TO MAKE READY A PEOPLE PREPARED FOR THE LORD." (Mark 1:17.)

"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him and saith BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD WHICH TAKETH AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD." (John 1:29.)

"For God so loved the world that HE gave HIS only begotten Son that whosoever believes IN HIM should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16.)

Those of my readers who know me personally may well wonder and no doubt will wonder why I did not take just one simple little passage of the scriptures to write on instead of what appears here. My answer to that is that in my opinion of myself I am no better qualified to handle the smallest of texts than I am to ferret something out of a more complicated one. It just came to pass that I seemed to see something running through all three of these passages of scripture and I do not know what else to do than get it off my mind.

The first quotation is speaking of John The Baptist yet to come, and what his mission would be. That part of the quotation reading "To make ready a people prepared for the Lord" is what I am interested in so far as that quotation is concerned. Ordinarily, we think of the two words **"ready"** and **"prepared"** as being synonomous or meaning the same thing. But here we discover that a people already prepared for the Lord are yet to be made ready for him. It is my conclusion that the Lord, as used here, is our Lord, Jesus Christ. It is significant that the scripture reads **"A people"** and not **"The people."** In this instance God has prepared A people for HIS Son Jesus Christ, and the mission of John The Baptist was to make that people ready. Today, the theologians and doctors of divinity are endeavoring to make ready THE people for the Lord. The events then present and those to come, that is, the making ready of a people prepared for the Lord, are spoken of in the physical sense, but they, to my mind, say this: John was to make them ready by preaching the baptism of repentance — not a physical feat or performance — but a condition or state that must and will come upon everyone of that people prepared for the Lord, in the new birth and regeneration which precedes the coming in of the Spirit of Christ to take up its abode in the individual. It was not John's mission to preach to them that they must repent in order that they might be ready when Christ came. He did not make them ready by baptizing them. As I understand the matter, the physical act of John baptizing the people was but a recognition and seal of the manifested repentance of that people prepared for the Lord. Though **A people** was prepared for the Lord, they remained in ignorance of their election and of that great salvation to be purchased for them years later on the cross of Calvary. That they might know and have some degree of appreciation of the purpose of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ when HE did appear in the walks of men, John made them ready by bringing them knowledge of salvation by the remission of their sins through the tender mercies of our God. (Luke 1:76, 77, 78) A salvation that was theirs because the love and mercy of God was so unfathomably deep HE would give HIS Son as a ransom for HIS lost people. Knowing this then, John prepared A people against the time when the Lord would come. And when HE did come John was heard to say "Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world." That people whom John was to make ready was ready when Christ did appear. As HE appeared to that people to lift from their souls a deep felt sense of guilt and condemnation, so has HE ever and will ever appear to HIS little ones who have experienced a baptism of repentance on account of their guilty, sinful and condemned condition. That John did not mean that Christ would literally take away the sin of the world or of all the people of the world, is proved and demonstrated by the fact that sin has remained and increased in the world to this day. So then, it was only the sin of that people whom John was to make ready, that people that would ever be made ready by the baptism of repentance, that had their sin removed and blotted out from the remembrance of God when Christ paid the cost of their redemption by giving HIS life on the cross. Sin is the transgression of the law. Christ appeared for the purpose of atoning for the transgression of the law by A people prepared for HIM, and for the purpose of fulfilling that law which A people prepared for HIM could not keep. Christ came because God so loved the people that HE had prepared for HIS Son, that HE, God, was willing to and did give HIS Son in order that A people who had been prepared for the Son and who would in time believe IN the Son, might not perish but have everlasting life. I have heard preachers in quoting John 3:16 quote it as "whosoever believes ON Him" shall not perish, etc. My

Bible, and all the other bibles I have read, use the words "whosoever believes **IN HIM,"** instead of **ON Him.** There is quite a difference in the meaning of the two terms.

Without tiring my readers with so many words to say what I wanted to say, I probably could have stated it substantially in these words: "A people prepared for the Lord and made ready for HIM believe IN HIM because in being made ready and prepared they were born again IN Him and being IN Him, they believe IN Him and will have eternal life in and with HIM. They will not have eternal life because they believed but they believed and will believe because they have eternal life."

Hubert T. Faulk
325 West Missouri St.
El Paso, Texas.

Dear Brother Spangler, and
Readers of the Signs of the Times:

If not crowding out better material, and if you think what I have to write is upheld by the scriptures, I would love to express a few thoughts, the Lord being my guide and dictator, on a subject concerning which I feel I have been misunderstood. I have been accused of advocating a "hollow log" doctrine.

We know that to be carnally minded is death (Romans 8:6), for, the carnal mind is not subject to the laws of God, neither indeed can be; so they that are in the flesh cannot please God. So, I contend that without the Spirit of almighty God, it is impossible to have a pure thought. "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwell IN YOU. So man, by any effort of his part, is left out.

"There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death: and there is no discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it." (Ecclesiastes 8:8). The way I see it, the Adam man, spiritually speaking, is just as dead to spiritual things as he was to natural things when God formed him of the dust of the ground, before God breathed the breath of life into his nostrils. In answer to Nicodemus' question, God said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3) God did not say the Adam man must be changed into something else. The Adam man (carnality) cannot see the kingdom of God; but the spiritual eye can. Listen what sayeth the scriptures, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." (something that is no part of the Adam man) "And I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh." I understand this is what He was referring to when he spoke to Nicodemus. I can't believe that God does a half-way job; He did not leave him half spiritual and half carnal. Adam was made subject to vanity; not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. (Romans 8:20)

Yes, I am persuaded that God made Adam just like he wanted him to be, and I do not believe he has ever varied from the course that God laid out for him to take. When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace; but when a stronger than he shall come upon him and overcome him, he (the stronger man) taketh from him all of his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoil. (Luke 11:22-23)

Dear reader, have you ever been left in such a condition? Please note that his spoil was divided. His Adam nature was left, which causes a cross: the thorn which beset the Apostle Paul. Here the Lord is made manifest again, — "My grace is sufficient for thee." (2 Cor. 12:8-9) The same writer declares: "I know that in me, that is in my flesh (Adam), dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me,

but how to perform that which is good I find not." (Romans 7:18) Paul had two minds: the flesh still striving in the way of carnality, so that he could not do the things that he would. When we are blessed to worship God, the strong man is bound, and we are made to rejoice. Our walk and our talk is different from former days. If it is left up to Adam and to do good, the Armenians have it. In days past I handled wild steers: when one was bound head and feet he was very humble, but when the ropes were taken off him, it was time to get out of the way: he was the same old steer — his nature hadn't changed one bit. So it is with man when he is led by the Holy Spirit, but when that spirit is withdrawn, he is the same old Adam. When Adam is left to himself he will go astray just as far as God will permit the devil to lead him.

Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own. (1 Cor. 6:19) Please note that this body is no part of the Holy Ghost.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Timothy 3:17) Now the old apostle goes on instructing the young minister, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15) The truth wrongly applied will change the meaning of a sentence. Some claim the "Adam" is changed here on earth. If so, there is a possibility of perfection here, and then the Holiness have it. Peter says, "The dog is returned to his vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." (2 Peter 2:22) Some say that the denial of a changed Adam here on earth, is a denial of the resurrection. What God does is done forever. How often have you seen a child of God go astray and bring shame on the church; but when led and bound by the stronger than he, his walk and talk is different.

Now, dear readers, here is where I think the Adam man is changed: Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. (1 Cor. 15:50) When a man has spent his days on earth, his body, IT, is sown in dishonor, IT is raised in glory; IT is sown in weakness, IT is raised in power. Read 1 Corinthians, 15:36-50. So I hope it can be seen that I believe that this body is raised and purified in the ressurection, and not part pure and part corrupt here on earth. Paul says that we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumphet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. (1 Cor. 15:51) These are some of the things Paul said are hard to be understood.

Your unworthy brother, I hope,
J. Paul McMillian

"ADD TO YOUR FAITH VIRTUE"

If I can, I would like to pass along some beautiful thoughts given me by a servant of God when I asked about the above Scripture.

It seems my mind had been clouded up to this time about how the many admonitions such as the above Scripture could be accomplished by one so weak and vile as I. I even refrained from reading them for some time. But as the truth was rightly divided and the Lord blessed me to see it, the beauty, rest and comfort I saw and felt were unspeakable.

As it was explained, the faith spoken of was already there, and who gives us faith? — God does. And since we do not and cannot mix our works with God's works, we must add those things of like denomination. "Add to your faith virt-

ue" — not your virtue, which is as filthy rags, but the virtue of Christ.

As we read on "And to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity," we may think it is still up to our own works to add these things, but read what Peter said in the third verse. "According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue." If His divine power has given us **all things** that pertain to godliness, then what could there be left for us to add by our own works of the flesh?

The word "add" is a verb and denotes action, and the child of God who bears fruit is active, the will and the do are both there, and instead of proving we are sitting on the stool of do-nothing, it disproves it. "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." Yes, it is true that there are those who do not bear fruit, their light is under a bushel. The Lord in His wisdom has not seen fit to give them these attributes. Perhaps, I am one of them.

We may be asked the question, why, if we have all these graces, was it necessary for Peter to write as he did. He tells us in Verse 13, "Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance;" and again in Chapter 3, Verse 1, "I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance;" also Paul said "Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith." Is is necessary for this weak one to have her mind stirred up and be put in remembrance by hearing the gospel preached. It seems to me I must need it more often than anyone for I am forgetful and so prone to wander. But how sweet it is to rest in the thought that I no longer have to look to my own self for virtues, godliness, etc., but can give God all the praise.

Mrs. T. R. Jefferson
Marysville, Calif.

Marks, Miss.

Dear Elder Spangler:

It would not be really appropriate for me to try to offer an apology for this delay in remitting, as there has been no excuse.

I enclose Money Order for $10.00. Use the amount needed for the current year and the balance for your general program.

I want to tell you that I have so much enjoyed the October issue of the Signs. All the articles are good, but I will refer to that by Elder Beebe, partly because I knew him slightly while I was still a small boy, and also because of what my parents used to say about his preaching and writings. That he was very deeply doctrinal and so often used the Old Bible in so many ways. In this one he referred to the Old Testament once only. This letter was written the year before I first saw him.

The general run of the articles in all the Signs and the comments and interpretations covered, remind me of what I have missed in not for many years being able to attend services and hear the kind of preaching that I think I can appreciate. They partially constitute a substitute for the instruction and education that I feel we all need, and which can be had only by the privilege of hearing doctrinal sermons and converse with inspired men and women. I am so nearly wholy alone with my thoughts on these things.

I want to thank you for telling me about the Memphis Church. I have met with them and had expected to be with them for their August meeting when they expected to have visiting ministers, but circumstances prevented. I am expecting to attend again in November, weather permitting. As I am past 84 years of age I cannot take long trips

alone at all times, or I might say conveniently.

The very kindest regards for you and yours,

Very truly yours,
W. R. Wallis

ElDorado, Arkansas

Dear Elder Spangler:

I have a mind to try, if the Lord willing, to express my meditations on what kind of a God I believe in.

The God that I hope I am taught by, is unchangeable; he does not ask or consult with puny man for anything: he gives him his life and being, and does not say I will give your life and being if you will accept: try it out, if it does not suit you I will give you something that is better. No! No! But some would have us believe that we owe ourselves a choosing part to take in the accomplishment of etenral life. I am glad, if not deceived, that I am taught of a God that has all power, allwise and unlimited: he is everywhere present and no where abset; he is unlimited in all of his works and dealings with all of his creation, for he says, I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. (Marachi 3:6)

I believe almighty God brings about all the natural and spiritual needs of his people: they cannot bring them about within and of themselves, but they are supplied, for Paul says, "But my God will supply all your needs according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ." He not only supplies their needs, but he gives and imprints spiritual knowledge in their minds and writes them in their hearts, making see their sinful selves as poor helpless, depraved and dependent creatures before Him. When we are brought out of the camp ground of sin and corruptness for a short moment of time, then we see and realize it is not in the scope of man to receive such knowledge of ourselves. We see ourselves filthy, guilty and vile: this seems to be our lot as we travel through this life of toil and trouble, until the times we are given to meditate upon spiritual things. These come to me more when I retire at night. I am reminded constantly of being minus of faith and patience. As I think upon this, my mind is brought to the patience of a family dog, he being a large and vicious type: as the owner and I sat at his table, partaking of natural food, this dog was sitting on the floor right near his owner, and there he waited patiently for a crumb that would fall from the table. As I noted this, my mind was drawn to the question: will the great God of heaven be pleased to give me faith and patience to wait on him for a crumb to fall from his righteous table, to give me joy and comfort in spiritual things. These thoughts were comforting to me. The dog seemed to have faith that a crumb would fall; and so it is with God's people: they are satisfied when they are wrought upon by the Holy Spirit, which gives them faith and patience. Paul says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." And James says, "Faith worketh patience."

So patience comes by the working of faith, and this faith is given His people solely upon the merits of Jesus Christ, and not for anything they are of themselves. He keeps and leads them about in his never dying love. We are what we are only by and through the grace of God: whatever we possess or inherit will be given us through his grace and atonement. May the Lord bless and keep us in humbleness.

J. J. Davis

LITTLE FOXES

1360 First Street,
Chehalis, Washington

Dear Readers of the Signs:

This morning, knowing that there will be no service within reach of me today, I feel lonely. My mind is (as is usual with me at such a time) drawn to the

churches everywhere, and especially those where I have attended services at different times.

I long to be with them and my heart aches with lonliness; for as age grows upon me, I find there is a constant desire to mingle with God's dear saints. This hunger and thirst for their companionship is seldom absent, and nothing else can take its place.

This morning I have been awake since day-break, so I have read the Songs of Solomon, the book of Joel and the book of Amos. Verse 15, of the 2nd Chapter of Songs of Solomon, and verse 1, of the 6th Chapter of Amos have taken hold in my mind. I pray the Good Master may guide me while I try to write some of the thoughts that have rushed into my mind.

I am not at ease: I am often uneasy. Once I was at ease in Zion. Looking back upon those days of careless ease, I am amazed to remember how I rested in my ignorance and spiritual leanness. One reason I feel to be no longer at ease, is the fact that I have been awakened to the many little foxes that are spoiling our vines: for our vines have tender grapes, and the gnawing of even one little fox can bring about a withering and cessation of growth. In my mind I see the vines as perhaps our visible churches, and the tender grapes as the individual members, and would be members (or interested believers, if that term is preferable).

The Book reads: Little foxes. However, little foxes can do much harm if there are many of them. "Take us the foxes, the little foxes." By this is meant, I believe, to catch and destroy, or control them. For unless this is done the tender grapes will be so damaged that our vines will be hanging with withered grapes and dried tendrills.

The foxes represent to me many different things. First, I will mention our ministers. I speak of them first because they are the overseers of our Lord's vinyards; and because they are to me a very dear and precious part of our church. They seem so because they are so important to the welfare of the churches, and perhaps because there are so few of them left to us. There is one class of our ministers that is inexpressibly dear to me, and that is the very few who live the gospel as well as preach it; and the few who are willing to spend and be spent in the cause of Christ. I have heard it said that God's children are a willing people: a few are willing to do it all, and the rest are willing that they should. To which group do you belong?

Those of our Elders who are truly willing to spend and be spent, and who live the gospel as well as preach it, are, I repeat, inexpressibly dear to me, and are not in any way to be considered as little foxes. But there are others I must also speak of, who, I think, are some times a spoiling factor on the tender grapes. For instance, one who becomes exalted above measure, and takes to himself more authority over his church than the scriptures allow; or, one who fails to rightly divide the word: one who preaches a so called "hard doctrine" (thought to me it is all easy and beautiful) to the neglect of the sweeter portions, (thereby failing to serve enough milk for the growth of the babes who cannot yet, and maybe never can be able to, digest the "strong meat", so called) is likely to become as a little fox. On the other hand, meat is necessary to many, and a failure to serve it at all would lead to starvation; so we have the admonition to "rightly divide", and to feed both sheep and lambs.

A sister or brother who carries tales maliciously, or in a spiteful spirit meddles or tattles, is no doubt also one of the little foxes. This does not mean that all unpleasant things should be kept hidden. Indeed many should be brought to light and, like the wedge in Achen's tent, be exposed and justice dealt. This, I think, is a necessary unpleasantness among our people which is often left undone.

The most serious and damaging of

all the little foxes is, I fear, the brother or sister, and most certainly the Elder who stands in disorder, or even excluded, in his own church, and yet goes into new territory, and there keeping silent about these things, he poses as being in order, and thereby deceives the orderly ones who can have no immediate way of learning the truth in the matter.

Orderly members can also bear the marks of a little fox by remaining away from their church, and being so worldly that, except for their name on the church roll, no one could tell they were members; or by failing to contribute to the upkeep of their church.

I need say no more: you can look about yourself, and count many little foxes that are certainly doing the tender grapes on our vines a great deal of damage. I am a small child, not a strong one at times, yet I pray to God to grant me strength and wisdom to help take the little foxes. If it be his holy will to grant me so great a privilege, beginning with myself I do pray with tearful eyes and aching heart that He will keep me in the paths of righteousness that I may in some small way help to nourish the tender grapes, and never in any way bring blight upon them. May we read carefully and prayerfully the blessed Book which tells us our duties as well as our privileges, and instructs us how to act and what to do.

I see in the book of Amos much admonition on repentance, and many promises of calamities also. How I wish I could understand more of it. May we, through Him by whom we can do all things, and without whom we can do nothing, turn more to repentance and cease to sit at ease in Zion so much of the time.

May God bless his suffering saints every where with his boundless love and mercy according to his divine will and purpose. Yours in hope of eternal life in glory.

Effie Parke

FAITH AND PATIENCE ANSWER TO A QUESTION

Dear Brother Gold:

If a church has no pastor, and they call one, and the majority vote for him but some do not vote at all, should he accept the call? If he does accept and serve some time and some of the members can't be satisfied, what would be the proper step for them and the pastor to take according to gospel order?

A little one, if one at all,

Remarks — If the brethren are not satisfied with him as pastor they should tell him so, and he will resign, and that should end the trouble.

Why should a gospel preacher desire to lord it over a church? Surely if a church does not desire my service, and I am humble, if they will let me know, I will relieve them and be glad to do so. We should not desire to burden our brethren. Love is the one needful, indispensible thing in this matter.

But sometimes a majority of a church is very devoted to a preacher and greatly desire his service, but a minority of the members do not want him, and are opposed to him. What shall the preacher do in that case? He should advise his friends to be quiet and bear with the others, and he should decline to serve as pastor, for to serve them would divide a church, and no right minded man wishes that.

Self-denial is a very important thing to have. Prefer the good of others and you will in the end seek the good of all.

P. D. G.

(The foregoing article was written by Elder P. D. Gold, and published in Zion's Landmark of July 1, 1909, and is republished by request.)

"WALKING ABOUT ZION"

Dear Readers of the Signs:

Monday night, November 15, 1948, was a night long to be remembered. I had been sick for several days, and that

night I could not sleep until about four o'clock in the morning. I tried to be as quiet as possible, not wanting to awake anyone. Until about twelve o'clock the hours were lonely, but from then until four was but a fleeting moment, although I still could not sleep. The moon was shining very brightly, and from my window I could see one street light, and it looked as lonely as I felt for the first few hours. It seemed that everyone in the world was at rest but me.

Then old things passed away and all things became new. I believe I had a calm and serene walk about Zion; not alone, for it seemed that God was so near he was leading me by the hand: I felt his nearness so much that I could touch the hem of his garment. This was so real to me that I could not help but believe it; and what one believes gives much satisfaction. I am now living in hope that this beautiful scene was shown me by the great God of heaven and earth. I desire to write a few things which I hope were given me to enjoy in the scriptures. "Walk about Zion, and go round about her; tell the towers thereof, mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following."

The first word of this scripture denotes life and action in an upright position. If we walk we must have life and be capable of walking. So it is spiritually. "He spake and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast." So, we conclude the walking was done, is done, and will be done in Zion. Let us notice that Zion is a feminine character. "There are three score queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number. My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her." This is the city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel where stands the tower of the flock — beautiful is her situation, she is the joy of the whole earth. "Mark ye well her bulwarks." They are the shalls and wills contained in the fore-knowledge and predestination of the Almighty God that stayed Satan, and lifted Jesus on high. It is indeed a wonderful gift to be privileged to behold this beautiful city, whose maker and builder is God; and to walk in her glorious habitation. Great and marvelous are thy works, O God! Thou that hast wrought the great wheel of time so that one little wheel revolves opposite another, yet is controlled by one balance staff for the purpose of bringing all things whatsoever they be, as the effect of one great cause. Man can by no means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him. The heavens declare his righteousness, for God is judge himself. He owns the cattle of a thousand hills: every beast of the forest and field. If you tried to give him something, dear child of God, what would you offer him? Job said, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither." "The Lord gave and the Lord taketh away." Job distinctly tells us he owned nothing; that all he had always belonged to God, and he could give it or take it at his will.

The kingdom of God is not in word but in power; so Paul's preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power, that our faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. "He shall say to the north, Give up; and to the south keep not back: bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him." "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah, We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." This God is our God forever and ever. He has built this Zion for no other purpose than a palace for his beloved; so it is theirs to enjoy.

"Consider the palaces." I believe that to consider the building we must by the grace of God be given knowledge to ex-

amine it, and be well acquainted with its formation from the laying of the foundation to the setting of the cap-stone. Consider the stability of her foundation: The Rock of Ages, which is immovable, and cannot be destroyed. Her body is of numerous stones hewn out without the sound of an iron tool; and so fitly framed together that no separation can come. And last, but not least, is the Capstone: though the rains beat hard, the winds rage, the waters roll, and the fires blaze, none of these nor any other thing, can come beneath the Capstone to destroy one of these little stones of the body. If I have one talent, it is enough. How many times, children, have you digged deep into the earth trying to hide your talent? It is hid from the natural sight, but the Lord of that servant knows where it is; and when he is brought face to face with his Lord, the unprofitable servant must confess:

"Nothing, Lord, I can give thee,
All I have you gave to me;
I have tried from day to day,
To hide my talent beneath the clay:
The work of wisdom hath brought to naught
The very work my hand hath wrought."

Every child of God gladly confesses his nothingness when he is permitted to walk about Zion, the finished city; where the beasts have been slain, the wine mingled, the table decked with food, and the robe woven by Jehovah God. What can you add to a finished work? This outward body must grope about all the time in outer darkness, and cannot dwell in the inward light — it is only led and instructed by the inward man (light) until we are raised from the tomb in the resurrection: then, behold, all old things shall be done away, and all things shall become new. Therefore, we WAIT until Jesus comes. The working and prosperous class just get more work to do, — the great God of heaven and earth has designed them a work in a remote place, while the saints of God walk about Zion unmolested; while they, on their business journey, sing. "We will WORK till Jesus comes."

For several days this hymn has been on my mind:

"O land of rest, for thee I sigh.
When will the moment come,
When I shall lay my armour by
And dwell with Christ at home.

No tranquil joys on earth I know,
No peaceful, sheltering dome —
This world's a wilderness of woe,
This world is not my home.

To Jesus Christ I sought for rest:
He bade me cease to roam,
And fly for succor to his breast,
And he'd conduct me home.

Weary of wandering round and round
This vale of sin and gloom,
I long to leave the unhallowed ground,
And dwell with Christ at home."

We will wait till Jesus come, and we'll be gathered home. This song is written two ways for two different classes of people. One class is basking in the sunlight of this beautiful finished city, waiting for Jesus to come and gather his jewels home to Zion; while the other class is working on the tower of Babel, trying to get to Jesus. There is a vast difference in the two classes, yet both live together in the world. "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hath set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and avenger." When I am given to consider the work of God's hand in building the city of Zion, which he has ordained for a covert and a resting place for the saints, I must say with David, "What is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that visitest him?

"I want to rest on Zion's reef
While in this world I stay.
Dear Lord do help my unbelief,
And bid me not dismay.

The finished work give me to sing,

As boldly as a lion.
Dear Jesus, be my everything,
And take me home to Zion."

Mrs. Maggie Lee Hayes,
Vernon, Alabama.

Vernon, Alabama

Dear Editors:

I enclose $5.00 to pay for the best Baptist paper I know of. I don't want to miss a single copy for I like to read the many good letters the brethren and sisters write.

I want to thank you for sending the paper on after my subscription ran out. I am sorry that I didn't send it in sooner, for I want to receive the Signs as long as I live. I hope I believe the truth set forth in it, and as it is in the Bible.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

A. J. Griffin

PLEASE NOTE:

If you have a copy of "Biographical History of Primitive or Old School Baptist Ministers of the United States", by R. H. Pittman, which you are willing to dispose of, please write the undersigned.

Mrs. R. L. Ballance,
R.F.D. 2,
Fremont, N. C.

"Go to now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get grain: Whereas ye know now what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, if the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that." (James 4:13-15)

EDITORIALS

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EDITORIAL

"Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Chirst Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours: grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; that in everything ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: so that ye come

behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." (I Cor. 1:1, 9)

Once while laboring under the weight of the ministry with its attendant trials and afflictions, when, seemingly, Satan would certainly triumph, a dear saint was giving a word of encouragement and left me with this precious thought: I am making mention of you in my little talks with God when at a throne of grace. Ah, how precious were those words and how they did sink deep into my poor laboring heart. Just to have the assurance that somebody cares, that somebody is sharing our burdens and cares. I am writing about a praying people, a people that everywhere, in every place, in all ages, have come boldly to a throne of grace for help in time of trouble. The people that need to pray more, that ought to pray more, that are neglectful about prayer, I feel to stay as far from them as I can. I want, O Lord how I do desire, to live in fellowship with that people who are the Lord's people, but the people that can become his, and that have the ability to get close to him, and to act in a way that they can bring him to them, I feel that we have nothing in common in the religion of the Lord Jesus Chirst.

There is not any way to remove the Lord's people from the ones mentioned in the text. There is not a people, in an organic sense, that this scripture will fit except the Old Baptists. If we removed everything from our list of many reasons for saying this was the doctrine of the Old Baptists, except the grammatical reasons, it would still fit our people, and it would not fit any others as long as we stood strictly on good grammar. In every way, be that way whatever it is, the Old Baptist people carry off all honors through the glorious grace given in Jesus Christ our Lord, and the providential blessings of God Almighty.

I feel sometimes the triteness of my writing, especially from a literary standpoint, but if I do not continually write about grace, pray tell me what am I going to write about. If Jesus is not found in every text; if he is not the glorious center of all our preaching and writing, then we have found another name under heaven to save sinners, and another gospel to preach. If grace, all grace, eternal and timely, (and if more kinds than that, then they too) does not come from Jesus Christ to us, where does it come from?

The best news that a poor struggling sinner ever heard about is the grace news. Not the news that God needs help (whether that help is to make laws or enforce them, to set up churches or to keep them, regenerate a sinner or keep him afterward) and that we are letting our end of the work drag to the anxiety of God and the detriment of ourselves. No sir, none of that will comfort one who has spent all he had, who has done all he could. Grace is the best of all, for it enriches in everything. Who is it that embraces this? Who is it that believes this? It is those (that many, none less, none more, than those) denominated in the text. How much ground does it cover? What is the scope and reach of the doctrine of the church? The doctrine of God our Saviour, which is the doctrine of grace, enriches in everything. Truly, it is in Jesus Christ that we live and move and have our being. Grace enriches us to live. Living on grace, having our lives enriched by the living grace of God which grace comes by the ever living Head. Whatever it is that the saints need, it comes by the enrichening of this grace. It enriches them to that end. It is not that spurious kind of grace (as though such would be grace) that we hear right much about, which grace is said to bring us to where we can, if we just will, do the commandments of God.

"In all utterance." Ah, how often have I groped for words; how often have I

tried to preach Jesus as the way, the truth, the life; how often have I tried to lisp his name in a word of prayer, but in all my efforts I have failed. Some may acknowledge that in a sadder frame of mind than I, for, I tell you here and now, that could I one time stand, that one time would be standing without the grace that comes by Jesus Christ. The very best that I can do is a failure. The reason of this is found in the fact that I am not good. There is nothing in my flesh that is profitable in the service of God. In Jesus is found grace to enrich in everything and I am glad that this covers our utterances in the kingdom of heaven. Thus, it is grace that enables us to preach: it is grace that enables us to pray; it is grace that enables us to sing in the spirit and with the melody of God in our hearts. These utterances are the same words that David spoke of in the 139th Psalm. Not the first one of the saints at Corinth would attribute any of their words of praise to any other source than the grace that comes by Jesus Christ, and equally true, none of them would attribute any of their ungodly conversation to this grace.

"In all knowledge" What these people knew about God; what they knew about the religion of Jesus Christ; what they knew of anything pertaining to the glorious liberty of the children of God, they got it from grace which comes by Jesus Christ. That is New Covenant writing — all thy children, all the saints, all those sanctified in Jesus Christ, all those in every place, shall be taught of God. If you, dear child of God, feel to examine the things that the New Testament children of God knew, then remember that that knowledge is by the grace given in Jesus Christ.

Now let the objector talk for just a moment. He says "I like what you have presented as it concerns the children of God. But this is talking about what we get in the new birth. This is by this grace that you have been speaking about, but since this work of grace gave us the ability to acknowledge him in regeneration, and gave us a working knowledge of him, we now have many things to work out, the leaving off of which will bring us much grief." O, no, you do not. This is not talking about the gift of grace in the bringing us to birth. No sir, you never did see such a monstrous doctrine promulgated in the scriptures. The apostles addressed the children of God. In no place do they tell them that they **were** saved by grace and **are** saved by works. From the time this church was established unto the time of this epistle, the apostle had been thanking God on their behalf that the grace of God was given them. This grace that they had been receiving was given with the same power and the same success as the testimony of Christ had been confirmed in them. Mark that well, and put a good stake down deep by it. In these United States the tenets of faith read like this: We believe that the work of God in the heart in regeneration is irristible. That is good and sound and reliable. **But do you believe it?** Do you believe that the work of God in the heart or mind or soul is always effectual in bringing to birth a child of God? This grace that came to these people (and us, and all that are children of God) came in such a measure that it enriched in all utterance and in all knowledge, even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in them. As effectual as the testimony was confirmed in them, to that end, that far and no further, was (and is) this grace given. We know how poor and helpless, how weak and gullible, a child of God is when first born of God. He is a little child and feels that he knows nothing as he ought. But in the same way, only in a heavenly and far above way, as a mother begins to teach and lead her child after birth, so does God, by the grace given in His Son Jesus Christ, teach and enrich us in everything. This grace confirms in regeneration; it enriches in everything to the end that ye come behind in no gift.

Anybody, anywhere, at any time, under any circumstances, that preaches a

doctrine that leaves the children of God behind in any gift, is not preaching the gospel of the Son of God. Our people have always been quick to criticize our Methodist friends for saying that into (eis) could be used in the same way as near by, but how rediculous the shoe looks on us. To say that this grace brings us in striking distance of obedience; that is, a gift to get us ready to where we can if we will; to say that the grace given the saints at Corinth was a gift to get us in a position to where we could use the necessary means that we got in the new birth, is certainly begging the question. For here is the surest, the purest, the most wholesome doctrine that ever was sent forth — in fact it is the only doctrine sent forth from this wonderful source.

Everything necessary for walking in obedience. No lack of grace for enrichening; no lack of grace for our godly conversation, for preaching, for praying, for singing; no lack of grace for knowledge in every way that knowledge is a fruit of the Spirit; sufficient grace that the testimony of Jesus was confirmed in us in the beginning of our experience, and while we are waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; grace that will confirm at the end as it has confirmed you between the beginning and the end. This grace given to the church at Corinth (and to us, if so be that we are the faithful in Christ Jesus) begins the good work in them and us, and it keeps all this family faithful unto the end. And it is such a good, and grand, and glorious doctrine, and it is such effectual grace that it keeps them in such a way that when the Lord comes the second time without the death of the cross to face, that we all, the Corinthian brethren, those before them, those after them, the faithful in Christ Jesus, the saints, shall all be blameless in that day.

May it please God to keep one and all in remembrance of this one thing, to wit, that the grace that came by Jesus Christ enriches in everything to the extent that while on this journey through this dark and thorny road we shall not come behind in any gift to the end that at last we shall be blameless. And may it please God that the Signs be kept contending earnestly for that and that alone; that the Editors, the Associates, the contributors, the readers, yea, the saints, the faithful in Christ Jesus, be kept exactly in that precious God given faith that our brethren at Corinth knew and loved.

— W.D.G.

The opinions and doings of men are of no value unless motivated by the Spirit of Truth; if otherwise, they "darken counsel by words without knowledge".

WE QUOTE:

"If it be asked why some few men only are thus marked by the grace of God, and not all the human family; we would reply by asking the inquirer a similar question, which, if he will judiciously answer, then will we answer his question: *Why was it that the God of heaven so peculiarly distinguished the ancient Israelites by favoring them with so many blessings, and yet passed other nations without thus distinguishing them?* God is just and right in all his ways, and it becomes us quietly to submit to all his will, for he, the Judge of the whole earth, must and will do right, let men say and do as they may.

"This sovereign and almighty grace in thus marking and discriminating some men from others, is that very thing or work which constitutes a poor dead sinner a true and a living saint; and also proves that persons thus discrimiated are bound up as one man in the bundle of life; and hence Paul speaks of them all as being one bread, one lump and one body. And the souls of men thus discriminately marked, are cemented together with a divine cement more durable than mortality itself; for under all the storms of time it is there, and in the wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds, it abides the same;

and death itself effects not its dissolution, but just opens a way whereby it may increase beyond the grave and live forever. Feigned friendship must expire, — a false profession of Christianity must become extinct, — prophecies shall fail, — tongues cease, — knowledge vanish away, — the heavens pass from view with a great noise, — the elements melt with fervent heat, — the earth also and the works that are therein may be burnt up, but this divine cement must and will continue, to show that the Lord is the same increated and unchangeable Being, yesterday, today and forever. With this cement in our hearts, which is what Paul calls *the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace,* it cannot fail to go well with us both in life and in death; and with this in view we certainly have little or nothing to fear either from men or devils." Elder James Osbourn, in A CLUSTER OF EVANGELICAL TRUTHS — 1845

"The talebearer is an assassin. An assassin is one who kills — not in open battle but secretly. Those who repeat an unproved tale which is told to discredit someone, and which, if circulated, would cloud his reputation, are talebearers; and the result of their work, if carried far enough, will kill someone. Would you be an assassin? If not, do not be a talebearer." "The person who believes and accepts the stories of a talebearer, and circulates, them, is just as much of an assassin as the talebearer." Selected

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

IDENTITY OF THE CHURCH

(Following is an Editorial by Elder Dodson of August, 1950, and is republished by request. This is an important subject, and should concern every member individually, and every church as a body. — J.D.W.)

We have been asked by a sister in Texas to offer some thoughts on the above subject for the consideration of our readers. As we attempt to aproach the subject, we are almost overwhelmed with the enormity of the field into which we are liable to find ourself. In a true and final analysis of the spiritual church we must confess that it embraces each and every member of the mystical body of Christ, which, like the grains of sand by the seashore, are innumberable. We have assumed that our inquirer has reference more particularly to the militant or visible church here in the world, which is but a small remnant of that group which no man can number. Our understanding of the meaning of the word church is "called out," separated from the world; or as Jude says, "them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ." This implies to us that God, by the mighty workings of his power in the hearts of his people, sets them apart to serve him. God spake by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah, saying, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." The church of God is a living body of baptized believers, and there are certain spiritual laws and principles by which she is governed. She worships the true and living God in spirit and in truth, and absolutely refuses to bow down to graven images or worship inanimate idols. Divine inspiration has employed different similes for presenting, in type, the visible church, and for the moment we shall consider it from the point of view of a building. We would say, first, that in order to clearly establish the identity of any specific edifice or structure, it is necessary to furnish some descriptive marks which are peculiarly applicable to the object in question, and which are not applicable to other structures.

A very important part of any building is the **foundation.** Unless this is solid, secure, and durable, it will not withstand the assaults that will be made against it. In this respect, we could ask for no higher authority than the One

who has been declared to be the head over all things to his church, which is his body; and he said to Peter, "Blessed art thou Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matthew 16:17-18) We cannot conceive of a stronger or more sure foundation for the church to rest upon here in this world than that of the revelation of God to his people. So long as he sits upon his eternal throne, doing his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and is pleased to condescend to make himself known unto those he foreknew and chose in Christ in the counsels of eternity, just that long will men and women of Adam's race believe on and confess him whom to know is life eternal, despite all that men and devils can do to prevent it. The apostle Paul said to Timothy, "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

We are definitely persuaded of the fact that one of the distinguishing marks of the true church of God is her belief in his **sovereignty**; and another one of these marks is that God reveals himself unto each and every one of his little ones before they can have a true conception of him who hath made all things for himself, and know that he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that they may even ask or think. Since it was God who created the heaven and the earth and all that in them is, he is most certainly able to do all his pleasure, not only in heaven but in earth as well; and none can hinder him in his work or stay his hand. Paul spoke concerning the church when he said, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2:10) He also said, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new, And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation: to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

We also like especially that scripture where Paul said, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." This declares plainly to us that God not only begins the good work in his people, but that he also will perform, or perfect, his purpose in them. The church, which is composed both of Jews and Gentiles, embracing every race on earth, is "Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone: in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." How unmistakably clear this sets forth that it is all God's work, from beginning to end. The Psalmist, many centuries before our Lord came into the world, said, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that built it." We are, indeed, glad that we are one who, if not deceived, has been taught both by the Scriptures and our own experience that the building of the church has not been left to poor vile and puny man; but we are persuaded that God works in his people both the will and the to do of his good pleasure. We hope the prophecy of Daniel has been fulfilled in us where he said, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."

God's church and kingdom are syno-

nymous, and Jesus told his disciple that his kingdom was not of this world. We would like to emphasize the fact that God's church is composed of living characters, witnesses who will not lie, nor will they give his glory to graven images. Peter said, "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." We like the manner in which Solomon described this work of God when he said, "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn **out** her seven pillars; she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table." In other words, nothing has been overlooked or neglected by God in either establishing his house here in the world, or in providing for her every need. Isaiah foretold what would come to pass in the last days by saying, "The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." She is above the earth, and the serpent with all of his deceivableness and unrighteousness is unable to do her real harm, for her life is hid with Christ in God, and when he who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory. Notwithstanding the fact that we by nature are vile and corrupt, and cannot even think a good thought, yet God draws his chosen race by his rich resistless grace, for he who loved them with an everlasting love, draws them, and they come from the North and the South, the East and the West, and they all go up that highway which is not seen by the vulture's eye nor trodden by the lion's whelp, unto Mt. Zion, the Holy City of our God. She is declared to be the perfection of beauty, and God dwells in her, for it is said, that out of her the perfection of beauty God hath shined.

This city is also said to be, "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion, on the sides of the North, the city of the great King. God is known in her palaces for a refuge." And we are told to, "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnites: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ships pass thereby." How good and how pleasant it is when we are enabled by God's Holy Spirit to, "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death."

This city is also well watered, for "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the most High." In this city there is law and order, for the government is upon the shoulders of her King, and she delights in the law of her Lord, after the inward man. She is a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." The Lord has given unto her his word, which is a lamp unto her feet, and a light unto her path. It is written that, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."

Those who profess to be followers of

our Lord should certainly search the scriptures most diligently, for they testify of Jesus and instruct us in the way of righteousness. Jesus said unto his disciples, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven (the church): and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Here, it seems to us, we are told that **anything which is not according to the scriptures, whether it be doctrine, order, or keeping the ordinances, should be bound, or not permitted;** while that for which we have a "thus saith the Lord," is to **be maintained and earnestly sought after.** The scriptures clearly set forth that the door by which one is to enter the visible church is baptism, which means immersion in water, not something else. Baptism is significant of death, burial and resurrection; therefore, in order to be eligible for it, one must first be killed to the love of sin and the works of the law as a means of salvation; he must be buried or completely separated from his former life, and have a love for righteousness and true holiness. Jesus said to those who followed after him, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another." We believe this to be one of the most outstanding marks by which the true church can be identified. Where love abounds there will be the desire to walk softly and humbly before God, and a taking heed unto doctrine and to one's self, lest one of His little ones be offended. There seems to be a great turning away from the old paths today by many who choose to call themselves the true church, and we are referring particularly to those identified as Old School Baptists. They are introducing music, Sunday Schools, and pleading unduly it seems to us with the unregenerate to join the church. Such things, in our opinion, are gross departures from what the scriptures approve. In the days of old it is said that God added to the church such as he would own and have to be saved. We believe in encouraging to the fullest extent those who give evidence of having passed from death unto life, but at the same time we also believe in requiring that every man who seeks admittance to the church give a reason of the hope that is within him.

We fear the present trend is to let down the bars all along the line: to become careless and indifferent with regard to both doctrine and order, as well as the kind of life we live. **Membership in a sound and orderly Old School Baptist church should be a badge of honor, so to speak, in our walk among men.** Where one does not live an honest, upright and moral life, the light that is in him is being hid under a bushel, and we are told by our Master that it should be placed in the candlestick where all that are in the house may see. We would like to see a striving to enter in at the strait gate, to observe all things whatsoever God hath commanded, especially on the part of Old School Baptists. We would also remind our readers that when Israel of old borrowed trinkets of gold, etc., from the Egyptians and made gods of them, they brought sorrow, sufferings and death upon themselves, and we would strongly urge that Old Baptists be satisfied with the things of God's house and not borrow or adopt the methods of other people. The true church, in order to maintain her identity, must be kept separate from the world and all of its allurements; and, "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."

We have often thought of the prophecy of Isaiah as being fulfilled in this day, when we see those who profess to be God's people turning away from the things of his kingdom. Isaiah said, "Seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." A careful reading of the fourth chapter of his prophecy will show that he was talking about the daughters

of Zion, and not, as frequently applied, about other so called religious orders. Isaiah also, however, gave us a wonderful picture of the true church by saying, "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel."

How good to behold in our time those branches which are abiding in the true vine, and see them bearing forth the fruits of righteousness. It is, indeed, a beautiful sight to behold churches not only earnestly contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, but at the same time adhering to the order of the house of God, and keeping his commandments by manifesting their love for another.

We have endeavored to present some of the marks by which the true church can be identified here in the world today. Action speaks louder than words, and unless we believe and maintain the doctrine and order of God our Saviour, we have no right to make any claim to being the true church of God.

— R.L.D.

NOTICE OF ORDINATION

The Predestinarian Baptist Church of Jesus Christ called Salem, met this 30th day of November, 1954, at her meeting house in Weiser, Idaho, for the purpose of ordaining brother Ernest J. Attebery to the full work of the gospel ministry.

The church elected Deacon Archie Turnidge spokesman for the church, who in this capacity acted in the Presbytery, which was composed of the following ordained Elders and Deacons of the Predestinarian Baptist faith and order:

Elder T. R. Jefferson, Providence Church, Stockton, California; Elder D. C. Davis, Bethel Church, Riffe, Washington; Deacon Archie Turnidge, Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho; and Deacon Lloyd C. Spikes, Big Spring Church, Elgin Oregon.

1. The Presbytery elected Elder Jefferson, Moderator, and Deacon Lloyd C. Spikes, Clerk.
2. By agreed motion, Elder Davis voices the ordination prayer and Elder Jefferson is to deliver the charge.
3. By Elder Jefferson delivering the charge, the laying on of hands by all the ordained help, and prayer by Elder Davis, Elder Ernest J. Attebery was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry; and thus delivered back to the church.
4. While singing a song of praise, the right hand of fellowship was given Elder Attebery by the Presbytery and all members of Salem Church present and by visiting brethren.
5. The minutes were read and adopted, with the Clerk instructed to prepare a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.
6. Presbytery dissolved by prayer.

Elder T. R. Jefferson, Moderator
Deacon Lloyd C. Spikes, Clerk

OBITUARIES

JOHN CALVIN PURDY

John Calvin Purdy, 87, retired farmer, died at 1:30 A. M. Saturday, August 21, 1954, at his home in Utica, Ohio, after a six-weeks illness.

Born in Harrison Township, Knox County, he was the son of Richard and Rachel (Babcock) Purdy. He was baptized into the Primitive Baptist Church by Elder George Tullos in July, 1885. He was a faithful and loved deacon of the St. Louisville Primitive Baptist Church.

His first wife, who was Lesta Oldaker, died in 1916; and in 1919, he was married to Harriet Roby, who survives. Besides his widow, he leaves four sons: Archie, of Port Isabel, Texas; James, of Bucyrus, Ohio; Oley, of Burlington, Kentucky; and Byron Purdy, of the home. Also eleven grandchildren; one brother, E. E. Purdy, of Snohomish, Washington; and a sister, Mrs. Julia Lybarger, of Mt. Vernon, Ohio.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder James Bibler, his pastor, in the Law and Sons Funeral Home, Utica, Ohio, August 23, 1954.

MISS EMMA D. CAREY

Miss Emma D. Carey died at her home at Indian Orchard, Pennsylvania, February 17, 1954. She was born in Scranton, Penn., July 6, 1899, the daughter of Charles and Grace Wheat Carey. Her grandparents were members of Slate Hill Old School Baptist Church many years ago. Some years ago she suffered an attack of polio, from which she never fully recovered. She had taught school in Newark, N. J., and also had lived in Pine Bush, N. J. In the later place she worked as a nurse.

Miss Carey was a strong believer in Old Baptist doctrine, and attended meetings whenever possible. The last association she attended was the Delaware River Association at Southampton, Penn., in June, 1952. She thought she had been wonderfully favored to attend that meeting. If her life had been spared, I believe it was her hope to ask for a home

in the church. She had often spoken to me on that subject. A cousin, Mrs. Daicey M. Rumsey, of Port Jervis, N. Y.., was her only survivor. Mr. George W. Linhart, of the West End Reformed Church, Port Jervis, conducted the funeral services, and burial was in the Pine Hill Cemetery, Middletown, N. Y.

At this time, when so few know or care anything about Old School Baptist doctrine, the passing of a believer seems a loss indeed.

Deacon Wm. D. Chapman

MARY TABITHA VAUGH BRANN

Mary Jabitha Vaugh, wife of the late Elder R. M. Brann, was born January 27, 1873, and departed this life May 9, 1954; making her stay on earth eighty-one years and a few months. I do not have the date of her marriage to Brother R. M. Brann, but to this union were born five boys and two girls. Sister Brann and her husband joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Sandy Branch about the year 1889. Her husband died January 2, 1942, and after his death she lived with her children until she passed away at her daughter's home, Mrs. Clover Walls, in Weakley County, Tennessee.

It can well be said that Sister Brann was a true Old Baptist, being sound in the faith, doctrine and practice of the Primitive Baptists. She often visited in my home, and would stay with us for a week or two. The last time she visited us, she said when her time came for her to leave this world she didn't want to linger, but hoped that she could just fall asleep — and the Lord granted her her desire.

She went with her daughter and son-in-law to Walnut Fork Church the second Sunday in May, to hear Elder R. L. Biggs preach, and came back home rejoicing over the good sermon she had heard that day. She took her Bible and went to her room to read a while before retiring. When her daughter went to her room to see if she was all right for the night, she found her lying on the bed, seemingly to have passed away without a struggle, — she just fell asleep in Jesus.

She will be greatly missed in her neighborhood and in the Bethel and Soldier Creek Associations. She was well versed in the Bible, and well grounded in the doctrine of God, our Saviour. May I say to her children and friends who are left behind: Weep not for her, for I feel that she fought a good fight and kept the faith without wavering; and her Captain gave her an honorable discharge, and took her home to rest from all her labors. Her memory will live with all who knew her. The writer and Elders E. C. Lowery and R. L. Harrison conducted the funeral services; after which she was laid away to rest beside her husband.

(Elder) O. W. Perkins

ELDER LUTHER WILSON TURNER

It is with deep sorrow and a keenly felt loss that we record the passing of our esteemed brother and yokefellow in the ministry, Elder Luther Wilson Turner, who passed into his eternal rest while a patient in the Good Hope Hospital, Erwin, N. C., early Tuesday morning, June 1, 1954, at the age of 62 years.

He was the son of the late Elder William G. Turner and Carnelia Williams Turner who survives him, having attained to an age of 94 years.

He was married Dec. 22, 1912 to Leona Stewart, to which union was born four children, the first of which died in infancy. The others, together with his wife, survive him, as follows: Luther Turner, Jr., of Dunn, N. C., Watts of the home, and Mrs. Jessie Dixon of Rocky Mount, N. C.

He served as Agent for the Durham & Southern Railroad Company at Erwin, N. C., since March 1, 1926, and before that he was with the Durham & Southern at other points, making a total of 33 years of service with the Company.

The third Sunday in June, 1932, he was received into the fellowship of the church at Black River, Dunn, N. C., on relating an experience of grace, and was baptized by Elder E. C. Jones who was at that time serving as pastor.

Not long after he united with the church he began to exercise, and the church being satisfied he had a gift, liberated him to exercise publicly. On the third Sunday in July, 1937 he was ordained to the full work of the ministry.

During his ministry he pastored several churches, viz Sandy Grove, near Angier, N. C., Benson, N. C., Old Harnett, Sampson County, N. C., Sandy Grove, Nash County, N. C., Tar River in Granville County, N. C., until that Church disbanded on account of its location on the land which is now Camp Buckner, near Durham, N. C.

In his preaching he set forth a sound and comforting doctrine of election, foreknowledge, predestination and final perseverance of the saints. He stood for order and discipline in the same exacting manner as his doctrine was sound.

A few years prior to his death he developed leukemia which continued to draw upon his strength despite the fact that all was done for him that medicine could do, which necessitated his relinquishing his services to many of his charges. However, he still served Old

Harnett and Black River Church as long as he was able to go. The latter church for many years was pastored by our father, Elder William G. Turner.

He rendered a faithful and consecrated service to his churches, oftimes sacrificing his own feelings in his faithfulness to serve. Though his afflictions were of a very distressful nature, he was, nevertheless, cheerful. His great delight was in heavenly conversation.

He exemplified a noble and sublime patience in his sufferings, which he seemed to accept in all humbleness and meekness.

Besides his family already mentioned, he leaves behind his mother, Cornelia Turner, four brothers, Walter G., Elder C. D. Turner, both of Dunn, N. C., R. M. of Erwin, N. C., and Elder W. E. Turner of Wilson, N. C., two sisters, Mrs. Laura E. Barbour of Fayetteville, N. C., and Mrs. Paul Turlington of Dunn, N. C.

We shall all miss his wise counsel and the comfort of his preaching. The Lord graciously blessed him in the use of his talents both natural and spiritual to good of his community and the Church. Therefore, we have every reason to believe he has been translated into the marvelous kingdom of the dear Son of God, eternally separated from dying mortality, and with the Apostle, we can say: "It is far better to depart and be with Christ." We bow in humble submission to Him who knoweth best.

A BRANCH OF THE TRUE VINE

A branch of the vine of the main vein in the vineyard, whose root thereof and substance of food, water and care, to plant, prune, purge and protect; who gives and takes, whose fountain-head of the winepress is GOD, our Creator.

This branch of the vine of God's marvelous fruition of Spiritual words and deeds has served his purpose. What a glorious privilege to be allowed to be used to speak in the edifying of His Lordship. Many years his words of Spiritual Wisdom has distilled as the dew; the fruit of his season is plentious and ripe with songs and praises of the Father. The Harvest is gleaned, the season is over, now, for a time of rest.

With the sweet chords of His Love God has tied off this branch, for another purpose, known only to Him. The wine made from the fruit of this branch has been made pure by the fermentation and processes that is the exclusive work of the Holy Spirit by the direct or permissive Will of the Father and Son. It is miraculous as the five loaves and fishes and has fed multitudes. The fragments are gathered together and are being used over and over again by those that love Him in Communion and fellowship to commemorate our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ — The Substance of which is the Spiritual Nourishment of that Manna from Heaven which is a Hope to our mortal bodies and mind, in that we are among the few chosen to be blessed with carrying a small cross a part of the way, in the fulfillment of His Glorious Purpose.

The vine, from which this branch grew, his father, is at rest also. He was very fruitful, being of the true blood of the House of David. He was the fore-runner of the vine or the father and first-born of many brethren in this community. He was as a voice in the Wilderness crying, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight".

The mother of this branch and wife of the father vine, remains to be a living storehouse of good things to see and hear to the remaining branches of the vineyard. She is housed in the Mother Church and is kept by the Promises of Christ, Our Savior, also, the love and fellowship of Kindred in love. Her days are many to reap the harvest of their fruitful seed.

With the same Grace and Love of the Doctrine of Predestination and Foreknowledge of God the branches that remain are healthy and fruitful. They are spreading out to take up the same purpose and services in the love of the Gospel as those that now rest — until the appointed time the Master speaks deliverance to their Soul.

A branch in the vineyard of God is now at rest. One who felt to be a tiny branch, not as much as the shadow that is made by that branch. He will ever be a warmth in the hearts of those who knew him; a warmer, brighter light that glows to those that loved him and to us who were privileged to have him grace us with his presence, to enlighten us with his knowledge and lead us with wisdom in traveling the straight and narrow way that we live in hope is predestinated for us to walk therein.

He was truly a son of the Father; a loving brother to the Son of God Jesus Christ; a loyal servant to his Lord and Master; a Shepherd whose heart did bleed for the flock entrusted to his care. His life was freely given for a Hope in Christ.

DEDICATED TO
ELDER LUTHER W. TURNER

THE SHEPHERD

A Shepherd's life is one of fears
With etheral joys and earthly tears.
The profit gained is not of gold
That's held in hands, but of the Soul
In heavenly wake before the Throne
The Master's glowing countenance shone.

"Well done, well done, ye son of man!
A seat well earned at my right hand
To hear thy earthly deeds extolled

By songs of sheep within thy fold."

"The widows, orphans, aged too,
Your Father's footsteps follow you.
The tearful eye, the hungry feed
With words thy wisdom knew to need."

"The weary steps thy sheep to herd.
A bleeting lamb, yon distant word —
A voice; the wilderness, a star to guide —
Love to hasten, Faith by thy side;
Safely enfold the little one mine
Kept by the powers of Thee Divine."

"My sheep thou fed on morsels rare.
Thy tongue did speak of no despair.
Chastened with kindness the strength to win
The struggle on earth — temptation and sin."

"No color, race nor distinction tread —
'Tis for all, as one, my blood was shed.
Well done! My faithful servant — good!
Enjoy the feast by hands that would
You know their love! Thy inheritance due
Before the earth a foundation knew."

"Thy hallowed presence the heralds sing!
Reap the bounteous love of thy King!"

Done by order of Black River Church, in conference July 24, 1954.

W. E. Turner
Nettie Turner Turlington
Margaret Baggett Lassiter

MOLLIE LOUISE GOODMAN

Mollie Louise Goodman was born March 11, 1859, and passed away June 22, 1954, making her stay on earth more than ninety-five years. She was married to Sanders H. Goodman in early life; he preceded her in death about two years. She leaves two sons, three daughters, several grand-children and great grand-children, and a host of friends to mourn her passing.

Sister Goodman was a member of the church more than sixty years, moving her membership from Burlington to High Point, N. C., December 17, 1910. She was a faithful member and was loved and respected by all. She lived near the church for many years, and filled her seat regularly. She took great pride in keeping the meeting house and grounds in order. We have missed her at the church meetings for a long time, since she was an invalid for about twelve years; she suffered much, but without complaining.

Yes, we have missed her at the church, but now we will miss the pleasant visits we have enjoyed with her in her home. To the writer it was uplifting and inspiring to talk with her about God and his Christ. May we be given to say, O Lord, they will be done. She would often say, "This is such a beautiful world; I want to live in it as long as the good Lord will let me." She was blessed to stay here quite a long while; we believe God called her at his time. May we be blessed with the faith and understanding we feel Sister Goodman had, and bow in humble submission to God's will, knowing he does all things well.

BE IT RESOLVED, First, that a copy of this resolution, with our sympathy, be presented to the family; and a copy be written in our church records, and a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times and the Old Faith Contender for publication.

Written by the clerk at the request of the church, and read and approved August 15, 1954, while in conference.

Elder D. A. O'Bryant, Moderator
Mrs. H. M. Taylor, Clerk

LELA MAY SNIDER MOTSINGER

Lela May Snider Motsinger was born May 1, 1904, and died June 17, 1954. On March 7, 1931 she was united in marriage to J. C. Motsinger. She leaves one daughter, Rebecca Jane Motsinger Bishop, one grand-child, one brother, three sisters and two half sisters to mourn her passing.

In December, 1935, she joined Bunker Hill Primitive Baptist Church, moving her membership to High Point Church October 14, 1944. She was a faithful member, filling her place at all church meetings when she was physically able. The writer had the pleasure of talking with her many times, and can say that she was strong and steadfast in the Primitive Baptist doctrine, that God works and none can hinder — hinders and none can work. Sister Motsinger has been taken from us and we shall miss her; but we feel that our loss is her gain.

May God reconcile her family, and all of us, to bow in humble submission to his will. May we be given to say, Thy will be done. She has paid a debt we all must pay some day. May it be as well with us as we feel it was with her, when the time of our departure arrives.

BE IT RESOLVED, First, that a copy of this resolution with our sympathy be presented to the family; a copy be spread on our church records, and a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times and old Faith Contender for publication.

Written by the clerk at the request of the church. Read and approved August 15, 1954, while in conference.

Elder D. A. O'Bryant, Moderator
Mrs. H. M. Taylor, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 123 DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1955 NO. 3

PRAYER FOR A MINISTER

With heavenly power, O Lord, defend
Him whom we now to thee commend;
His person bless, his soul secure,
And make him to the end endure.

Gird him will all sufficient grace:
Direct his feet in paths of peace;
The truth and faithfulness fulfil,
And help him to obey thy will.

Before him thy protection send;
O, love him, save him to the end:
Nor let him, as thy pilgrim soar
Without the convoy of thy love.

Enlarge, inflame, and fill his heart:
In him thy mighty power exert,
That those who hear thy word may praise
The wonders of redeeming grace.

Mrs. Jennie Clifford,
Auburn, Washington

MY HERITAGE

I'm now a child of the King!
His only Son did call me in —
An adoption was made!

I have a secret within this veil;
To tell it's nature the charm would fail —
A Family trade.

To use the riches that's mine by Birth
I'm to live as He while here on earth —
In a manger born.

At first I could not understand
Until He had me try the plan —
His Doctrine adorn.

Not His Immortal Glory feign
But drink the cup that He did drain —
As mortal man.

He gave me the Book of Family Script;
Travels of Kindred for these riches to dip —
A Treasure Van!

Margaret Baggett Lassiter
Fayetteville, N. C.

EXPERIENCE

If indeed I have ever tasted the goodness of God and made to realize his mercy, his love and kindness, it brought me down in dust and ashes; and caused me to see myself a poor, helpless creature, begging for mercy: I didn't want justice. I was caused to see my awful crimes, the guilt of which was pressing me down beneath its weight. All I could cry was, O Lord, be merciful to me a sinner. I began to look to see if I could find someone that could tell me something, but it seemed they were all gone. So it went on — I not knowing what to do; afraid of my own case, I felt to know the verdict: "Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting punishment."

All manner of sin and guilt rolled up before me; Oh, the dark clouds that enveloped me, which I tried to fight down. I launched against them all my best efforts: still higher and higher they became, and I lost all my strength. What will I do? I stole away, I thought for the last time, to pour out my soul once more before I died, to an ever merciful God: O Lord, think upon me when thou comest into thy kingdom. But still I must find someone that could tell me something. This was in the Summer of 1914.

Not far away there was a protracted meeting in progress, and I, just as the world does today, thought if there was anything that one wished to know in this respect, they had to see a preacher, — it didn't matter what kind, but "a preacher". As I was passing this place of meeting, I noticed a sign which read, "All Welcome". Upon seeing this, I attended. I had a longing desire that this preacher would tell, or say, something that would bring relief to my benighted soul. To my dismay, the first thing he said was, All under the sound

of his voice he would admonish to read their Bibles. This killed me stone dead. I had worn my Bible out reading it, and had laid it aside not to read it any more; for everywhere I read, it tore my fig leaf apron up until it refused to hide me: my sins were still boiling up.

Right at this time, something seemed to say, You had better tell it yourself; and so, in my little weak way, I have been trying to tell it ever since, but not as an ordained minister. And still I went on searching, going to different kinds of meetings; but they didn't offer me any relief — it was of no comfort. Since I was reared by Primitive Baptist parents, I thought I would try them out. I didn't like the idea, for they were not popular, and the people generally did not seem to like them. But soon I went to their meeting: and I thought at last I have found my whole heart's desire— and I continued to go. Their preaching I thought had the old time ring, and they were my people. I offered for membership, and to my surprise, they received me. But not long after they began to preach as though God was God of the hills, but not God of the valleys; and as I could not so understand it in this sense, I, in a peaceful manner, got out of their way. I next offered myself to Old Salem Church, in Freestone County, Texas, and was received and baptized by Elder W. O. Beene. I now belonged to a body of people that believed as I did — in the absolute predestination of all things. As Elder Beene went into the stand, he went in quoting the text: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people saith the Lord." The thought came to me: "Must I do that", — No, I would die before I would do that. And in my little experience in this respect, I am of the opinion that all these little things called preachers, have got to go through the belly of hell every now and then, lest they become puffed up, and exaulted above measure.

Just why I am writing in this light I can't tell. For some cause a portion of my little travel came up before me this morning, and I just began writing it down. I have in my weak and stammering way made so many blunders, and have been made to feel so cast down so many times. Often I have spoken out: if the Lord would forgive me, I would never try it again. My preaching territory is like unto myself, of small size; but seemingly something has taught me that minnows stay near the bank.

This is Xmas day, 1954. I was born May 3, 1883, so it can be seen that I am past three score and ten. Before I go home, I would like to speak my views through the Signs on the purpose of God in all things, if after presenting them, the staff conclude them to be orthodox. I would ask all the household of faith to remember me a poor sinner in their prayers, and that the Lord in his goodness and mercy may watch over all of us, and according to his holy and righteous will, unite broken Israel into one body of peace, love and fellowship.

Yours in bonds,
(Elder) W. A. Little
1008 E. Allen Avenue,
Ft. Worth 4, Texas

(Note: When we read the above by Elder Little, the following lines by Hart came into our feelings:

"How strange is the course that a Christian must steer:
How perplexed is the path he must tread!
The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
And his life he receives from the dead.

His fairest pretensions must wholly be waived,
And his best resolutions be crossed;
Nor can he expect to be prefectly saved,
Till he finds himself utterly lost.

When all this is done, and his heart is assured
Of the total remission of sins,
When his pardon is signed and his peace is procured,
From that moment his conflict begins."

— J. D. W.)

THEY WERE YET WITH THEM IN SPIRIT

Baker, Oregon
May, 1908

To the Church at Little Flock:

As it is impossible to be with you at your yearly meeting this month, we take this way of reminding you that we are still with you in spirit. Though mountains, and rivers, and deserts, and plains intervene between us, there are many things we have in common which bring us together. When we look at the sun at noonday and are made to rejoice in its heat and light, just think we may do the same things and receive blessings from the same source at the same time. Should clouds hover over us in one place, still this great light penetrates enough that we know we are living in the day, and do not walk in darkness, even though the brightness may be hidden.

In this same way the Son of Righteousness is shining on us all: only, His dominion and influence extends to all the ends of the earth, and is not limited by times nor horizons. His brightness penetrates the clouds of life, and sends life giving principles to all his creatures: and it is received when it is sent. When we behold His brightness, it is the glory of the Creator himself; and we rejoice that this brightness is the same, whether those who have the eyes to see it are in Kentucky, or the far off valleys of Oregon. Then we rejoice to know that the eyes that behold this wonderful brightness never grow dim or fail from use or age; but, as Moses of old, they behold from the heights on this side of the Jordan of death, the uttermost limits of the Land of Promise to which the great Captain of their salvation is leading them. Those eyes are the eyes of faith, and they all look on the same Sun from all parts of the universe: and it looks the same to them all — in shape, size and beauty. In shape, He is that of perfection; in size, He fills the universe, and enters with fulness into the hearts and lives of his blessed subjects; in beauty, He outshines the natural sun. So, no mortal can behold Him with the natural eyes, but now, as though a glass darkly, they behold His glory. But after the things of this life are fulfilled, they shall see Him as He is and be like Him.

We know that we walk in the light of day, because we see all things about us: the evil of our hearts; the lusts of the flesh; the providence of God. If we had no eyes, we could not see these things; if we had eyes and there was no light, we could not discern them. But as we see and know them, we are sure we have both the eyes of faith, and that the blessed light of the gospel is shining on us. May this blessed light continue to send His life giving rays into these benighted hearts of ours, and illumine our lives, that location, nor distance will ever be considered as interfering with the sweet fellowship we have in Christ Jesus our Lord.

As you sit in your accustomed places at meeting — and ours are vacant — let no tears of sadness fill your eyes; but look upon us as filling other seats in the kingdom of God, and as yielding to Him the same obedience and reverence, and drawing our supplies from the same storehouse of grace.

"The steps that I take, and the station I fill,
The Father determined and wrote in His will."

In your prayers and supplication remember us, and ask that our paths be made plain before us, and that we be given strength at all times to walk in them. May the God of love and peace bless you with his presence, and unite us again in his kingdom — if not in this world, then in that blessed eternity where we shall see him as he is, and praise him for his redeeming grace. Mizpah.

Your brother and sister in hope,

C. W. and Martha H. Bond

(Note: this was the first of a number of letters written to Little Flock Church in Kentucky, after we moved to Oregon. — Martha Bond)

"PERHAPS HE IS DOWN IN THE VALLEY SOMETIMES"

Cameron, N. C.

Elder R. W. Rhodes,
Dear Brother:

I received your books a few days ago; and you will never know how much I appreciate them, and your kindness in sending them to me. I love every word in the Gospel Comments, because that is just the way I believe; and it is indeed a comfort to know that someone far superior to what I feel to be believes the same way I do. "By their fruits ye shall know them"; then love ye one another. I believe that Primitive Baptists have a love for each other that is so different that the world cannot understand it; for God has hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed it unto babes. I also enjoyed the Jones-Rhodes Debate; I have read it through, and your side is grand, but I did not read one point that he brought up that makes sense to me. "Why do the heathen rage and the people imagine vain things?" Perhaps to be seen of men, as if God was not seeing them also. Dishonoring words were spoken against the blessed God of heaven and earth.

God has a people who know the joyful sound, whether I am one of the number or not. I have only a humble hope that I am: I sometimes feel that I have had sweet evidences enough to make me believe that God is alive, and is watching over his little ones today. His sheep know the joyful sound, and they will not follow a stranger. So I cannot follow what Mr. Jones said.

If I am not a Primitive Baptist, I am nothing, because I am not anything else; and what I am was not taught me of man. I believe the Lord showed me the church when I was determined never to join the Primitive Baptists. I dreamed that I went to the church that my mother belonged to, and there was not a vacant seat. She was sitting on the edge of the pulpit, and was crying; and she made room for me, and motioned for me to come and sit by her. I thought that she was dirty and common looking: and I felt myself so dressed up and so nice, that I was ashamed of her, and I would not go to her. I started to walk out at the side door, but I turned and looked back at her. She was still crying: and a feeling came over me that I had never had before. I thought, she is my mother, and I love her, and I am going to her even if she is dirty. I turned around and went to her, and sat down by her; and she laid her head against my breast, and I felt that I had never known such love for her before. I believe she represented the true church of the most high God, set up before the dust of the highest hills was formed; and that it was sent to me from heaven, to show me that even if the church is persecuted on earth, she is my mother, and I love her. I love her walk; I love her ways; and I am not ashamed of her. Neither am I, "Ashamed to own my Lord, or to defend his cause; maintain the honor of his word: the glory of his cross."

Still at times I feel to be the poorest of the poor, and not worthy to even call upon his great and holy name; then at other times, I feel that if I can receive only a little crumb or two from the Master's table, it is enough.

> "Precious memories, how they linger;
> How they ever flood my soul:
> In the stillness of the midnight
> Precious sacred scenes unfold."

Brother Rhodes, please pardon me for writing such a lengthy letter. I intended only to let you know that I received the books, and do appreciate them. May the Lord ever be with you and yours, to guide you on your way, and at last may you hear him say, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit a home prepared for you before the foundation of the world.

I do not feel that I have said anything that is worth much, and I am tempted to burn this, but something seems to say, Perhaps he is down in the valley sometimes, as I am, and maybe he might like to get a few lines from

me as much as I liked to read his books. Who knows! I would like to meet you and hear you talk; but if I never have the opportunity, I hope to meet you in that home above where we shall praise his name.

Lucy Collins

SISTER McPHAIL A SUBSCRIBER FOR SIXTY-TWO YEARS

Dear Brother Spangler and
Brother Wood:

I am reminded of sending my remittance for another year: it will be the sixty-second year that I have subscribed for it, and have enjoyed its many sweet articles. It won't be any — or many — more years that I shall need the eyes to read, or the heart to understand, or the comforting influences of the Signs of the Times, or the rest in Christ the Ark of Grace here in this beautiful yet wicked world. I live in hope of the better life beyond this wilderness of woe, as it is described and felt by the Lord's chosen, redeemed people. As David said, and as is my hope and prayer: *"I will bless the Lord who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night season. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh shall also rest in hope."*

I have in my possession a sketch of the founding of the church in Canada, and I enclose it for your judgment as to its being inserted in the Signs. It is lengthy I know; so use your judgment in inserting the account of the Covenanted Particular Baptists meetings for one hundred years after its planting upon Canadian soil. I talked with our pastor, Elder Rustin, as to the advisability of sending it, and he encouraged me. It may be interesting to all readers — I know it will be to all Canadians, though few are living who heard any of those preach.

I remember my grandfather McColl coming to our home eighty-four years ago. I am now in my eighty-ninth year; and thus far the Lord has led me on, thus far his power has prolonged my days. By the grace of God I am what I am.

Your unworthy sister in gospel bonds,

Sarah B. McPhail
Dutton, Ontario, Canada

(We wonder if any one now living has been a subscriber longer than Sister McPhail. — J. D. W.)

ONE-HUNDRED YEARS OF THE PARTICULAR COVENANTED BAPTIST CHURCH OF CANADA

To the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada and its congregation, and all that are present at this meeting, which is one-hundred years since the planting of this vine of the Lord's right hand upon our fair Canadian soil:

Our assembling here today is not to celebrate in any way, but with sacred memory and with thankful hearts, to commemorate the preaching of the gospel to the Lord's poor and afflicted people whom he has chosen in Christ before creation's dawn; and who are found in every nation, kindred and tongue under heaven. God, in his all wise providence, has divinely arranged that He will not leave himself without a witness; and has also promised that he will not leave his people comfortless. Though all ages, and especially since the coming of our adorable Redeemer and the establishing of his Kingdom, he has been pleased to raise up laborers in his Vinyard, and to send them forth in every nation, kindred and tongue under heaven: fitting and qualifying them, not in the schools of men, but in the school of Christ, which rests upon the solid foundation of divine revelation.

We that are assembled here today do with thankful hearts and with gratitude to the God of all grace, feel to worship and adore his matchless name for his wonderful works among the children of men, in still maintaining and upholding the vine of his own right hand's planting, through all the trials and many hardships of life which our

forefathers have passed through, until the present day; and who by the teachings of his holy and ever blessed and unchanging Spirit, has enabled us to continue steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and of breaking of bread, and in prayer. Amen.

It becomes our pleasant duty to address you on this occasion, with the hope that we may transmit to you both valuable and interesting information regarding the life, the trials and prosperity of this church since its organization one-hundred years ago. Its life has been varied, mixed with joys of prosperity, and days of adversity. Its pathway has not always been a smooth one, but, upheld by sovereign grace and the infinite love of God shed abroad in the hearts of its many members, they have been enabled to struggle on through these one-hundred years, adhering closely to the Articles of Faith which were adopted in its organization, and following its order without any marked change.

At the close of the 18th century a young man named Donald McArthur, of Cowell, Scotland, was wrought upon by the Spirit of divine grace, which brought him from nature's darkness into the light and liberty of God's dear Son. He, not only feeling the power of salvation flowing into his soul, was soon impressed to publish the name of his blessed Lord who had done wonderful things for his soul. He began preaching the gospel in his native country. Guided by divine providence, he with four others found Elder McFarland, pastor of an English Calvanistic church in Edinburgh, who was in accord with their views. McFarland baptized them, and ordained McArthur an elder. He went about preaching, and under his ministry several churches were organized: one at North Knapdale, Scotland. Douglas Campbell, of Knapdale, who was a deacon of the church of North Knapdale, with five others emigrated to this country in 1818, and settled in the township of Aldboro.

Deacon Campbell was ordained to the full work of the ministry by Elder Charles Stewart to the pastoral office of the Regular Baptists of Canada, many of whom at that time were sound in the faith; but after some time they departed from the gospel order and sentiment. He withdrew from their communion and organized what is now known as the Covenanted Particular Baptist Church of Canada, in the year 1820. The first fruits of Elder Campbell's labors after the organization of the Covenanted Church was Mrs. Duncan McCallum, who, with her husband, emigrated to this country in 1819, and settled in the Township of Aldboro. The second one to be baptized by Elder Campbell was Elder Thomas McColl, in 1821. The baptism took place in Lake Erie. The third one whom it was the privilege of Elder Campbell to baptize was Deacon Duncan McCallum. Thus the Lord blessed his labors, and added to the church daily such as should be saved.

We now relate an incident in the life of Elder Campbell: While plowing in the field with a yoke of oxen, and while busily engaged in his arduous labor, he in mind and heart was in communion with his blessed Master, and was irresistibly impressed to visit his friends in Lobo, who came from the home land of Knapdale. On the following day Elder Campbell, in company with Deacon Thomas McColl, started on foot some forty miles through the forest, to preach the gospel of their blessed Master to their friends and neighbors. He seemed to be inspired with a double portion of the Spirit, and the power that accompanied his preaching was great. A great awakening followed; and later a branch church was organized (in 1837) at Lobo. A log building was erected on the South-east corner of Lot 9, Concession 6, Lobo, which was their meeting house until 1854. Elder Campbell's labors came to an end in the Fall of 1857, the Lord, having prospered his labors in this country, gathered him unto himself as a sheaf fully ripe for the harvest.

Elder Thomas McColl was born in March, 1791. He came from Kilberry, South Knapdale, Scotland, to Caledonia, New York, in 1817; and to Aldboro in 1819, where he taught school for a time. He was baptized in 1821 in Lake Erie. On Friday, the fifth of November, 1852, the church met in the present building for the purpose of examining brother McColl, who was then serving in the office of deacon, and setting him apart for the work of the gospel ministry. After relating his experience and call to the ministry, he was approved of and ordained by the laying on of hands of the presbytery, which consisted of Elder Douglas Campbell, Elder Neil McDonald and Deacon Duncan McCallum. This was done on Saturday, the sixth day of November, 1852. After a few years, Elder Campbell's health became so impaired that he could not attend the meetings; and Elder McColl was called to the pastoral care of the church, which consisted at that time of five branches, viz: Aldboro, Dunwich, Lobo, Ekfrid and Duart.

The church here stood alone and would not fellowship any known in the country; and it was supposed that there were none on the continent of America that it could fellowship, until Elder McColl received a number of the Signs of the Times from Jane McGregor, a friend with whom he corresponded in Delaware County, State of New York, who was a hearer of Elder Isaac Hewitt. She kept sending the Signs of the Times until the account of the ordination of Elder William Pollard was published which took place in Dundas, Ontario, Canada, in 1854.

Elder William Pollard was born in England in 1825, and came to this country with his parents in 1833. They settled at Stony Creek. His parents were Strict Baptists in England. Elder Pollard began to be troubled in mind in the year 1851. In the Spring of 1852, he was set at liberty by these words, "Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee." He was ordained in the year 1854 by a presbytery consisting of Elders Gilbert Beebe, Johnson and Dudley. Elder Pollard's first visit to the Covenanted Baptist Church was by invitation of Elder Thomas McColl, who was then pastor of the church, and who wrote him, inviting him to visit the church at their Quarterly Meeting the first Sunday in February, 1857, at Lobo. The doctrine he preached was well received by the church. The following Spring, 1858, Elder McColl invited Elder Gilbert Beebe and others, to attend the Quarterly Meeting in June, which was held at Ekfrid. Elder Beebe came, accompanied by Elders Thomas Hill, E. A. Meadows and William Pollard. All the visiting Elders preached during the meeting, and the truth proclaimed by them was cordially received by the church here; and an unbroken fellowship has existed between them and the church here ever since. Elder Campbell was still living, but so infirm that he was not able to attend the meeting. Upon hearing of the truth preached by the visiting Elders, who were strangers in the flesh, he wept tears of joy. Elder Thomas McColl continued in the pastoral office until he became so infirm that he could not serve the church in administering the ordinances, when he resigned his charge, with the unanimous consent of the church, to Elder Pollard in the year 1868. Elder McColl departed this life in full assurance of faith on October 17, 1870. Elder Pollard moved from Michigan in the Fall of 1868, and began his labors as pastor of the church; and for thirty-three years he labored in word and doctrine among the people whom the Lord had given him oversight. His labor was blessed of the Lord, and during the thirty-three years he was privileged to baptize one hundred and sixty-nine persons into the fellowship of the church. On the 24th day of January, 1901, the angel of death claimed his mortal body, and he fell asleep in Jesus. Elder Pollard was baptized in the Spring of 1852, at Beverly, by Elder George Patton.

Among those who have labored in the Lord's vinyard in the history of the

church are Deacon Duncan Lamont, who was born in 1802, and died February 22, 1867. He came to Lobo from near Tarbet, South Knapdale, in 1820. He was not an elder, but preached in Gaelic exclusively for thirty-seven years in Lobo and Cardodoc; at first in houses, and in the Summer time, in barns and groves. John McGugan's barn, Lot 23, Concession 7, Cardodoc, was for years the meeting place every second Sunday during the Summer. Also Deacon Bateman labored among the different branches of the church in word and doctrine until called to his eternal home. Elder W. I. Carnell labored among the people as pastor for five years, and his labor was blessed of the Lord in many being added to the church.

We will now bring this to a close, not having access to the church record, hoping that what we have written may be of interest to all present. We will just state that the first communion was held in Duncan Peterson's house, three-quarters of a mile from Eagle. The first meeting house was built of logs, and stood where the village of Eagle now stands. Here the people met to worship God until 1844, when the present building, in which we are assembled, was erected.

And now we feel that the highest tribute that we can pay to the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, is that we continue steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine, and in breaking of bread, and prayer. Amen.

(Note: it is not clear to us just who prepared the above; but we asked Elder Rustin to bring the history to date, which he has done as follows: — J. D. W.)

The above meeting took place in October, 1922. Elder J. B. Slauson was pastor at the time, and Elder P. W. Sawin, of Kentucky, was the visiting minister.

Elder Thomas McColl used to say that the church was called Covenanted Baptist because the members covenanted together to watch over one another in the fear of God, and to walk in love one toward another. On another occasion he said it was also so called because they believed in the Covenant of Grace, ordered in all things and sure.

Elder W. Pollard was ably assisted for some years by Elder W. L. Beebe, who resided in Canada for several years, coming from Georgia in 1877.

In 1901, Elder W. I. Carnell became pastor, and was ably assisted by Elder H. M. Curry. They both resigned and returned to the United States in 1906; and for some years the church was without a resident pastor. Elder H. C. Kerr served them as a yearly pastor for three years, coming to Canada for their Quarterly Meetings each year, and aided them in getting suitable supplies.

Elder J. B. Slauson became their pastor in 1914, moving to Canada from Halcottville, New York, that same year. He served them until his death in 1925. The church was without a pastor for nearly four years, but during that time they were visited by Elders from the United States, so that they were fed and kept together in sweet fellowship and peace.

I became their pastor in August, 1929. When I came most of those lovely brethren were graying with age. One of them, Brother Levi Pollard, said, "Elder Rustin, you have come here to bury us all." Years later, when news came of his death, I thought of his words; and I believe I was encouraged by these words being given me: "Instead of the fathers shall be the children." Many times I have felt, "The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places", and to this day I love nothing better than to visit among my friends and brethren in Christ, who are my companions in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.

May I say that we, as a people, rejoice in the love and fellowship of our brethren of the same faith and order in the United States, who have faithfully visited us, laden with the word of our God. Our prayer is that God will ever maintain us in the faith of those who first organized the church. — (Elder) George Rustin.

WE SEE THOSE THINGS WHICH CANNOT BE HID

Poolesville, Maryland

Dear Elder Wood:

Your letter of December 30th, was received in due time. I would have you know that I am favored in being kindly remembered.

We see each other from the outside, but ourselves from within; and I view myself as being so little and unworthy, and entirely undeserving of our Heavenly Father's love and mercy. Bles't be His unlimited wisdom, in that which we receive of him is his free gift to his chosen few, whom he is purifying to himself.

In the past few days before receiving your letter, I have been thinking of the beauty of our dear Saviour's love. Is there anything more beautiful? "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." As I see it, we must love him, that is, those who are born again, In the Book of Remembrance we are told what our love for the brethren means to His children, seeing in them that which cannot be hid.

I have reason to regret that I did not see you and your fellow travelers when you were led to come to see me before the hour of your meeting at Broad Run Church. I was so sick that day, and am not very well now. My heart does not function normally at times, and I suffer discomfort. My prayer is, "Thy will be done; may I be given patience."

I thank you for sending the copy of the Minutes of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting. When I read G. C. Spindle's Circular Letter, my comment was: This is not of the flesh.

If I live to February 5, 1955, I will be ninety-one years of age. I feel to be more feeble day by day; and I hope, more thankful to my Lord. I sorrow in not being able to attend the meetings — I believe our dear Saviour is there; and the desire of my heart is to live in that kingdom where Christ our Saviour reigns.

I hope to see you sometime; and I will add: Bles't be that never ending love that will not let us part.

Sincerely,
(Dr.) S. B. Milford

UPON WHICH IS OUR HOUSE BUILT: SAND OR ROCK?

New Bern, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

. . . I have been impressed to write you several times since I met you at the Contentna Association, and heard you preach on Saturday October 9, 1954; but each time after I would write and then read my letter, I would not mail it. Each time I would attempt to tell you some of the precious thoughts that have come to me from time to time, and each time I would decide that the thoughts were not fit to be told to the people of God. But since I am still impressed, I will try to write some of the thoughts that invade my mind at this time. These thoughts are in connection with Matthew 7:24-27, which reads: "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rains descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon the house: and it fell: and great was the fall of it."

We see in the natural man, as he lives in this world, that he understands only natural things; and all his actions are by the works of his own hands: he has to help God save himself (the man), for we hear them say, "If we don't meet God half-way, and accept Christ, and be baptized, God cannot save me." Is not this building on a foundation of sand:

man making himself equal to God in power and in righteousness (which things are also made of sand, or the works of men)? These things are in for a fall, and great shall be the fall of it.

Now for a few thoughts of the man that build his house on a rock. The man that built on the sand heard the preaching of the gospel of Christ, but could not understand the word of God because the Spirit had not entered into his heart to prepare him for the kingdom. But when that still small voice of God speaks to the soul (or heart), then it is that the foundation of self-righteousness (sand) which he had been building on, begins to fall: for no man has ever entered into the kingdom of heaven (church) by works of his hands, or the carnal mind. Saul of Tarsus, when he was on his way to Damascus to hinder the work of God, was building his house on sand, trusting in the works of the law to save him; but when that light shined around him, his house (self-righteousness) began to fall, for he could not stand before God. He fell to the ground, and was not able to rise of his own power; but God lifted him up, and sent him on his way, which God had prepared that he should walk. And from this time on we find Paul building on the Rock, which is Christ: and he was blessed by the grace of God to the extent that, in one place in his writings, he speaks of being a master-builder, but the foundation was Christ.

Now when this building is complete, which is built upon the rock, then the church will be one body, forming the bride, the Lamb's wife; which is, to me and in my experience, the completed building (church) of our God, the Holy Jerusalem, the City of God, which John saw coming down out of heaven adorned as a bride for her husband.

I feel that this may not be interesting for the people of God to read, but a heavy load has rested on me ever since I met you at Contentna Association and heard you preach a wonderful sermon, which comforted me more than I can tell. Thanks be to God for his blessing to you, and I hope that he has blessed me to hear and understand a small portion of the gospel of Christ. I am mailing this, hoping that the desire to write will be lifted from me.

Brother Spangler, remember me in your prayers, for I feel so sinful and so small that there seems to be no place for me in the church of God. I hope a brother in Christ, saved by the grace of God.

S. R. Boykin

Toney, Alabama

Dear Editors:

The November Signs of the Times is so good — every article from the longest to the shortest.

...I wish I could hold to the great happiness it brings me in reading the writings of our kindred in Christ. It is wonderful to be given a heavenly mind to write, pray, sing, preach, meditate, or even think at all, on our God's great and adorable name. It is so deep to me at times that my pen can't write it, or my tongue can't mention it, yet I desire to be in close contact with our blessed Saviour; but it seems that I am like Sister Mary L. Eckard, I have seasons of desolation and feel I'm surely lost. Yet I know that God is never slack concerning his promises, as some men count slackness; and I know the Lord knoweth them that are his. So when we are in the valley, He is there too.

In the church the gospel is to be preached; and preachers are not hatched in man made incubators, but they go to the school of grace. Sometimes this school is in the corn field, sometimes in the jail house, sometimes on the bed of afflictions, sometimes beside the roaring waters, or the briny deep. Oh, there are so many unpleasant places to name: yet God kills and then makes alive. He makes crooked places straight, and rough places smoothe.

Enclosed is $5.00 to cover the years

1954 and 1955, subscription. Thanks for sending it on. We desire all of God's children to pray for us; we are so few and so poor and helpless, and have no preacher in our association. I feel the good writers should know how we readers feel about their writings, and there is no way but to write to the Signs and tell our editors.

A poor sister, if one at all,
Mrs. Reemer Reece

SORROW TURNED INTO JOY

Collinsville, Virginia

To the Signs of the Times:

Dear ones, I have enjoyed reading the Signs. In the December issue in the article written by Brother Nash, the same words of our Saviour, "My God, My God, why has thou forsaken me", have touched my feelings in the past. I believe that all of God's people feel that at times; and it is good to feel that way, knowing of ourselves we can do nothing without his help. The only way we can keep his commandments is to first learn this: then we can love all those who believe and know it. The only good works we do is when God works in and through us; then we give him honor and praise.

I rejoice in these words: Being saved before the foundation of the world; and, By grace through faith in Jesus Christ; and, The cross. I have felt to be a sinner, and if I could have saved myself, I would be my own saviour; and never could have thanked God as my Saviour. The Apostle Peter said, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings: that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." (1 Peter 4:12-13) In the 16th chapter of St. John, we read, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice, and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy."

The things I have suffered, and the things I have rejoiced in, at home and places of worship, in the night and in the morning, I would not exchange for the world and what is in it; and wonder why we can't be satisfied now and forever.

With love,
Mattie Underwood

THE LORD HAS ALWAYS MADE A WAY

Merryville, Louisiana

Dear Household of Faith:

While sitting and meditating this lonely afternoon, I am reminded that we have turned another page in history. Our mistakes and shortcomings of the year 1954 are behind us, and no man can change them. Just what 1955 will bring is beyond human wisdom.

The Lord has blessed me in many ways beyond what this unworthy worm deserves: I have reasonably good health for a man of seventy-nine years. It has been my happy privilege to mix with and enjoy the company of the brethren and sisters for the past few months. I have been made to taste the bitter as well as the sweet. It has pleased God to lay a heavy hand on me by calling my dear companion to her long wished for reward. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be his just and holy name.

O, let it be far from this sinful mortal to try to change His eternal plan. He rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? His mighty hand has laid the foundation of the earth and commanded the waters, "Thus far shalt thou go." He holds the winds in his fist, and calms the raging seas. He declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things not yet done,

saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all of my pleasure.

We poor worms of the dust are as clay in the potter's hands: he makes each vessel as it seems good to him — some to honor and some to dishonor. My fear is that I am to dishonor. Yet I have a sweet hope that nearly thirty years ago He raised me from a bottomless pit, and placed my feet upon a rock. It was then that I could sing praises to his matchless name. This was in a vision, but many times, when bowed down with an almost unbearable burden, I have been carried back to this scene; and my God, I hope, has always made a way for my escape. The God in whom I hope is above all other gods. We are told that there are lords many, and gods many; but unto us there is but one true and living God. I have a hope that I am one of the US.

The angel spoke unto the virgin Mary, saying, Thou shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins — positive terms. No room for conditionalism to creep in. We hear this same Jesus saying: I came down from heaven not to do mine own will but the will of the Father who sent me. The Father has said that he would do his own will, and none can stay his hand. That being true, there is no chance of a failure. The Son said that of all that the Father gave him, he should loose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day. And, My Father who sent me is greater than all, and none can pluck them out of my Father's hand: I and my Father are one. So we see there is a oneness that is as strong as God himself.

Dear ones, if I have a hope, I have tried to give you a reason for the same. I have been taking the Signs for nearly thirty years and have been greatly comforted. I can't recall that I have ever missed a copy.

Yours in hope,
J. Paul McMillian

Hermiston, Oregon

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed you will find an obituary of our beloved Sister Williamson, which I would like published in the Signs.

We do enjoy the writings of our brethren so much, and hope that the dear Lord will continue to bless them with the ability and will to keep it as it has always been: the soundest paper published. With much love and I hope sweet fellowship, I remain

Just a little brother,
(Elder) Ernest J. Attebery

Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing $4.00 to renew my subscription and for a copy of the Welsh Tract History.

I have just been reading some of the good letters in the Signs of the Times, and find great comfort in doing it. I frequently see myself so unprofitable and worthless, and, when in that frame of mind, I often turn to the Signs. As I read the sweet experiences of others, I can see the wonderful love of God working in them: They are going through sufferings or being down cast, but still giving thanks and praise to the Lord. My heart goes out to them, and I wish I could be like that. That desire is my prayer; and I feel uplifted, wanting to give thanks and praise to the Lord myself.

May God bless you, and sustain you in your good work of compiling the paper for our comfort.

Your unworthy brother,
T. C. Koch

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." (Ecclesiastes 12:1)

Huntington, W. Va.

Mrs. Mary Claggett and
Mrs. Louise Ball:
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sisters in the faith of God's elect:

I will try to answer your welcomed

letter of October 27th. As you say, age is telling on us, and we do well to look back to the days of our youth. I take comfort in reading the last chapter of Ecclesiastes; so open your Bible to the last chapter, and let us reason together. First, think of the time when the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shined in our hearts above the brightness of the mid-day sun, when we received the spark of hope; and remember, the Apostle Paul always went back to the time when he was delivered from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God. You and I will always remember the days of our youth, or the time when we saw ourselves a miserable sinner, — not just a little sinner, but the worst that ever lived. We uttered the first prayer unto Almighty God to be merciful unto us. How amazing was that grace that was given us, and how precious it appeared to us the hour we first believed. We who have passed the four score years, remember how good and merciful he was to us; and now that we are old and grey-headed, he will not forsake us.

I can look back to my youth, over sixty years ago — a young man, stout and hearty, when the burden was laid upon me. I remember distinctly that even before I was ordained, they used to call me the boy preacher. Now as I look back over the many years, I often wonder if I am the same man that I am talking about. Old age has slowly come upon me, and upon you; and we are getting forgetful, full of pain, nervous and unsteady, and I am required to put on my glasses to look out of the window: I take my cane to steady this mortal frame. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth", and we can cry unto Jerusalem that her iniquity is pardoned, and her warfare accomplished. When the trials are all over, and my work is done, then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit unto God who gave it.

Soon, according to nature, we will be gathered to our fathers, and mourners shall go about the streets. In the silent city of the dead they lay this natural, corruptable body at rest; mark the place with a marble slab; make a note in our church book; and we shall soon be forgotten. But thanks be to our God, in the book of life our names are written; and all of his elect, all that Jesus died for, every one, will hear his voice; they that sleep in the dust of the earth shall arise. There will be the resurrection of the just and the unjust, but the dead in Christ shall arise first. This is a great mystery. No one has ever experienced the final resurrection: we rely on what the Scriptures teach us about it; and we have a witness within ourselves that He who is the resurrection and the life will come again, without sin unto salvation; and they that are in their graves will hear His voice and come forth: That which was sown in corruption will be raised in incorruption; that sown a natural body will be raised a spiritual body; that sown in weakness will be raised in power. And we do know that when Jesus comes again, we shall see him as he is, and be like him, and be satisfied. Let us thank our Heavenly Father that there is a resurrection, and thank him for giving us a good hope in Him, and the evidence in us that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren.

Thank you, my sisters, for thinking and writing to us. We are semi-shutins, but hope some day to visit you dear people again, if it is His will. All things are in His hands, and everything will be all right, for it is God who works all things in heaven and in earth. To him and him only do we give all praise. Give my

love to all the Corresponding Meeting brethren. May the blessings of God be upon you. Sister Weaver sends her love and fellowship along with mine. Do with this whatever you have a mind to. Write again.

Yours in hope,

(Elder) George L. Weaver

Box 251
Lufkin, Texas

Dear Editors:

I have just read VOICES OF THE PAST in the January issue of the Signs. I can now realize what it meant to my father when he received the issue of the Signs which reported the death of Brother Beebe. I remember very well that when he got the Signs and saw the announcement of the death of Elder Beebe, he called my mother — and he was moaning as if some of the family had passed on. (I believe now that it was one of the family.) Our saviour said that those that do the will of God were his brother, his sister and mother.

My purpose in writing this letter is to inquire if there is a collection of Elder Beebe's editorials compiled in pamphlet form; if so I would like to get them. If you know of such a copy, please advise me.

My father read the Signs of the Times as far back as I can remember, and I became interested some twelve or fourteen years ago. I get great pleasure out of the paper; and find more in one issue than it costs me.

Yours in hope of a life beyond this veil of tears,

Otto Brittain

EDITORIALS

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EDITORIAL

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away." Matthew 13-47, 48.

This is one of the many parables used by the Saviour to convey to the multitudes Spiritual things by the use of earthly objects and miracles. He used the sower, to set forth the Son of man, who is the Son of God manifest in the flesh. The One who hath declared by the prophet Isaiah, that "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good

tidings unto the meek." This is sowing good seed in the field! And unto them He says, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Luke 12-32.

The net, mentioned in the parable at the head of this article, depicts the gospel net which is put forth by those whom He has called to preach the gospel, and by which, men and women are caught and brought into the kingdom, which is not of this world, but in the world. Fishermen cast their nets into the water to catch fish and to bring them out of the element in which they are; and when they are caught, they are drawn up to the surface where they can be seen. So it is with the preaching of the gospel, when it is applied by the Spirit, it catches men and women and brings them out of the kingdom of this world, into the kingdom of heaven which is the gospel church.

There is one thing noticeable when fish are caught, they wiggle about in an effort to free themselves from the net in which they are caught. So it is with the children of God. They do their best to keep any body from knowing that they are entangled. Many of them try to hide the tears that flow when they are under the sound of the gospel; but in spite of this effort to hide, there is a source of complacency that shines. Candles are not lit and put under bushels, but on candlesticks; and they give light to all that are in the house. Fish caught in a net wiggle until they are drawn from their own element and die. So it is with those caught in the gospel net by those whom God has sent forth as fishers of men. They also must be brought out of self and die to self righteousness and the law.

Jesus said unto His disciples, "Children have ye any meat? And they answered Him, No. And he said unto them, cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread." These fish were already prepared for them when they reached land. Fish are no good raw, they must be cooked and prepared for use and enjoyment. So are men and women, they must go through the fire and be purged before they are meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work. The disciples did not have to prepare the fish after they came to land, neither do those whom God has made fishers of men have to prepare souls for the Master's use. We find Paul, "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son."

The gospel is the net and bait with which men and women are caught and brought out of the kingdom of this world into the kingdom of God, which is not of this world. Many fish get the bait from our hook without being caught and brought to land, but they are fed just the same, and God has called men to feed as well as catch. Fish don't bite every day and at all seasons. Sometimes these men toil through a long period of darkness without any results, and have to be told by the Saviour where to cast the net. To me, there is nothing more discouraging than to fish, and fish, and fish without any luck, but I am sure that the One who commanded the net to be cast, will in His own time, bring about the desired results. All fish are not caught with the same bait, nor in the same depth of water. Some are caught in deep and some in shallow water. "When Jesus had left speaking, He said to Simon, launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon answering said unto him, Master we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net." Some men are caught by the mere preaching of the word. Others by experimental preaching. But some require deeper doctrine, such as the wonderful and glorious attributes of God. Some like milk, others strong meat. If we feed a child milk all the

time, he will grow up without much firmness. It requires meat to build strength and strong bones. It takes strong doctrine as well as experimental preaching in order that the children of the kingdom may grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The gospel net, like the fisherman's net cast into the sea, catches and brings in all kinds. That is, those of every nation, kindred and tongue, for there is no respect of persons with God. When Peter came before Cornelius, Cornelius said, "Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God. Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, of a truth I perceive that God is no respector of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."

Again this gospel net is like the fisherman's net, it gathers into it both good and bad. Some of the bad continue in the church until the day of harvest, others find out that they are in the wrong place and excommunicate themselves. They start out with much interest and enthusiasm, whose duration is very short, because their enthusiasm soon burns out and they forget their meetings. Jesus in speaking to the Jews, said, "I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him. They understood not that he spake to them of his Father. Then said Jesus unto them, when ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me: The Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him. As he spake these words, many believed on him." Now comes the test of their belief; "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed." But Jesus said to those Jews that believed not on him, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the works of your father ye will do." Many claim to believe, many claim to be disciples of Christ; but by their works they deny Him. James says, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works."

There are many moving expressions in the word of God which men may enjoy, and take great delight in without any revelation by the Spirit. There is much in the reading of the Scriptures and the preaching of the gospel, which has a tendency to induce men to become entangled in this gospel net, without knowing any thing of the power of the Spirit. Those who think that by natural wisdom alone, they understand the true teachings of the Scriptures, and the preaching of the gospel, are deceived, and from these God has hid these things; and sooner or later they will become separated from the good.

Paul speaking of this class says, "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." Hebrews 6:4, 5, 6. I am persuaded that many have, and many are now doing the work of God whose souls have never been regenerated. For instance, Balaam by the Spirit of God prophesied many wonderful things, and admitted that he could do nothing except what the Lord told him to do, yet he was no more regenerated than the animal he rode. Judas Iscariot was numbered with the twelve apostles and partaker of the apostleship, and sent out with the other apostles, and all told to "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give." But who would say that Judas

was a regenerated child of God. There is good and bad caught in this net that is cast. I don't know how far one may go in profession, and still be destitute of that faith which justifies in the sight of God, and that hope which is as an anchor to the soul; and that love which passeth all understanding.

There is nothing I think, that does these fishers of men more good than to see something besides empty benches, for the congregation to be enlarged, and all gathered around the table that God has spread for a feast of fat things. To me, this is the greatest place on this earth.

H. O. Nash

ERRORS CORRECTED

We greatly desire to keep errors from our columns, but they often get by us nevertheless. In our quotation of James 4:13-15, in the February issue, there are two errors which we desire to correct by re-publishing these three verses. Please note this, since the entire meaning is lost as previously quoted. — J. D. W.

"Go to now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get GAIN: Whereas ye know NOT what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that." (James 4:13-15)

PLEASE NOTE

We have had several inquiries for the two volumes of Elder Beebe's EDITORIALS. If you have one or both and are willing to sell, please write me, giving price and condition.

John D. Wood,
Manassas, Va.

We often receive notices of meetings, etc. too late to insert in the month of issue requested. Please send them in early and we will hold until the proper time. — Editors

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RENEWALS, NEW SUBSCRIPTIONS, AND DONATIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND ARE ALWAYS APPRECIATED.

WHAT AND WHY BRIEFLY STATED

While searching through some old copies of the Signs to find what we felt would be an interesting and suitable article for "Voices of the Past", we found the one which is re-published in this issue, by Elder Gilbert Beebe.

While reading it, the language of Jeremiah came, and seemed to apply as an illustration of our thoughts: "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may they also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." We know it is not considered polite in these days to speak against any man's doctrine or way of worship, for it is generally agreed among the various denominations that all of them will arrive at the same place (heaven), only in different ways and manners. We have no objection whatever to anybody worshiping how or what they please, believing this should be the civil right of all men — and we are glad of this freedom, and could wish that it were world wide.

Then, it might be asked, why be such a stickler? Why not go along with them?

And we answer: If not entirely deceived, we have been commissioned to preach the gospel; and in doing this we are deeply impressed with the exhortation of Jude, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, ...", etc. We are entirely concerned, therefore, in contending for this faith.

But to know this faith and to be enveloped in it, is an amazing experience. It is as mysterious as it is real. Well might one ask, "How can these things be?". He was told, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest

the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." This should be enough to inform all that such is beyond the reach of carnal action; and yet to be absolutely necessary else no man can see the kingdom of God.

That there was a change wrought in me (and that without desire or work of my own), I humbly believe; and I was turned away from things that seemed but right before. It was so wonderful that I stand in awe to this day, and often question, could it be possible? But surely old things had passed away, and all things had become new. Instead of an abiding trust in self and works, I found that there was absolutely nothing good in me. My foundation had given way, and I was sunk into a horrible pit; and all my struggling for relief only increased the misery. No one's condition could have been more hopeless than mine. Then, suddenly, there came a peace and calm never known before: My cries had been heard, and He who died for sinners was manifest as my Saviour. The impression to publish abroad what had been done for me was in my thoughts day and night. I was received as a member of the church and soon was asked to speak, and after a short time, I was given license. But the matter was too high and holy for such as I, and I just could not continue. For about ten years I ran away from it, going to Florida for two or three years where my impressions were not known, and tried to loose the impression by close application to business, and often remained away from meetings lest I be asked to speak again, — all of these things and many more; yet the the time came, undesigned by me, that I began to speak again, was ordained, and by the sustaining power of the Lord have continued to this day, though with much weakness and many doubts.

What do I preach? Why, the things I was taught — the things I learned — in these sore trials. The Scriptures confirmed the things I found experimentally true. These, and these only, do I earnestly contend for with such ability as I have; and I hope to know nothing else among the Lord's people.

What do I preach? Had I found that salvation came by my own works and efforts, I would preach that; and would tell all men that they could have it the same way. Had I found that God was not a God of purpose in all his works, I would preach that: and contend for conditionalism. Had I found that the will of men controlled their eternal salvation, I would preach that; and urge every man to exercise his will. Had I found that the election of grace was something that men could come into merely by the effort of believing, I would preach that; and urge all men to believe. Had I found that God wants all men of the Adam family to be saved, I would preach that; and urge all men to accept salvation. Had I found that men who were once saved could fall away and be lost, I would preach that; and warn all men to keep themselves in the way. These and many other things would I preach, had I found them true in my experience, and in the testimony of the Scriptures.

But what do I preach? Why, that salvation is entirely by the grace of God, and that the Spirit alone is effectual in bringing the elect of God into the knowledge of their election, and into their hope of eternal life. That men are not able to discover this themselves, nor to someone else. That the family of God, the redeemed, are those who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and to these their redemption is sure and certain, and this because Jesus completely finished the work his Father gave him to do. Yes, I preach that Jesus is the author and finisher of their faith, and that they are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. I preach that these walk in obedience when their flesh is subdued and they are led by the Spirit in the paths of righteousness. I preach that God's grace is sufficient for

us, and that He never leaves us nor forsakes us; and that our pathway is laid out before us, and that our trials and troubles, doubts and fears, are designed in the eternal purpose of God to keep us humble, and to learn over and over again that all our strength is in the Lord, for the Lord's strength is made manifest in our weakness. I preach that we are awaiting the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body, and that which we have given us in this life is a sealing with the holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possesion, unto the praise of his glory.

Yes, these things I preach; and many others relating to them, which ascribe all power and glory and praise to our God, and declaring, with the Apostle, that it is by the grace of God that we are what we are.

I have stated briefly what I preach and why I preach. The matter is too sacred and holy to be trifled with. I feel that I know what is the doctrine of men, and why it is their doctrine, but, having been brought the way I have, I hope that I may be kept in the faith once delivered without waivering either to please friends or foes. There is no middle ground between truth and error. "Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid." (Isaiah 8:12)

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

The occasion on which our Lord spake these words, is stated in the preceding connection. After he had called Matthew, who was a publican, it came to pass that he sat at meat in the house, and behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, "Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?" When Jesus heard **that**, he said unto them, namely, to the Pharisees, "They that be whole need not a physician," &c.

In the figurative language of our Lord, he assumes the character of a Physician, and in that character came to cure those who were diseased and unable to cure themselves, but the Pharisees of that day, like those of our times, supposed that his mission was to them that were whole—to receive the complimentary greetings of the pious, the self-righteous, and those who had never known the exceeding sinfulness of sin, nor felt themselves guilty and helpless sinners against God; and to bestow on them high encomiums for their zeal and piety. As a Physician, they felt no need of him. They were Abraham's seed, and never in bondage to any man, and indignantly spurned the idea of being made free by him. They, like their brethren of the present age, no doubt held the doctrine of **Free Agency**; and being totally ignorant of their leprous and diseased condition, gloried in their own conceited righteousness. But our Redeemer informed them that his object in coming into the world, was to seek and to save that which was lost. He had come to display his power and skill, and healing medicines on those who knowing their malady could appreciate them.

"They that be whole need not a physician." Jesus had come down from heaven for the benefit of the needy, and not for any who were able to dispense with his services. It would be a waste to bestow skill, labor and healing medicines on those who being whole do not need them; but the work of the Savior was not to be wasted, nor misapplied. Having thus reproved their blindness and

ignorance of his character, object and work, and thereby justified his course in associating with publicans and sinners, of which they had complained—he bade them "Go, and learn what this meaneth; I will have mercy, and not sacrifice; for I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Although more than eighteen hundred years have elapsed since he gave this task to the scribes and pharisees, and although they have monopolized all the Colleges and Theological Schools which have existed in the world from that day to this, for the purpose of teaching religion as a science to men, they have not to this hour found out the meaning of our Savior's words. Not because of any ambiguity or want of clearness in the words; for no language could be more plain, simple and emphatic; but because the words referred to the Mediatorial work of Christ, and therefore involved a spiritual subject, of which no natural man can possess any knowledge. Up to this day, all pharisees, well-worshipers, free agents, workmongers and arminians in general, suppose that Christ came not so much to minister, as to be ministered unto, —to receive gifts, sacrifices, honors and fame, as though his object was to enrich himself. But they did not then understand his character nor his object; neither do they now; for the same description of religionists to this day, prove by their doctrines and their works that although they have been "ever learning, they have never been able to come to a knowledge of the truth." In this their speech betrays them, when they talk of coming to the help of the Lord against the mighty, as though it were the Lord who stands in need of help, instead of his coming to the help of Israel, against the mighty; hence they talk of being co-workers with God, and engaged in the enterprise of converting sinners to God, in order to give Christ a kingdom, or to enlarge his dominions, and add to his triumphs. Still farther, it is very common for them to represent the Lord as being bankrupt, in every sense of the word; his treasury empty, his power exhausted, and his cause languishing for the want of human aid! The people are called on to contribute funds to replenish his empty treasury, and to aid in means and **instrumentalities,** to bring subjects under his government. Dead sinners are gravely told that he has exhausted his resources on them; that he has done all he can for them; and the next move must be made by them, or they will certainly be lost forever. They must **minister to him** something, if it be only to give him their deceitful and desperately wicked hearts, or his work will fail for want of such ministration. They represent him as standing and knocking at the dead sinner's heart for liberty to come in, until his head is filled with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night; but all availing nothing until the sinner can be induced to minister to him, or offer some sacrifice to give efficiency to the Savior's blood and righteousness.

But all this Ashdod jargon would cease forever, if they knew what this meaneth, He will have mercy and not sacrifice. But this is hidden from their eyes. That he will have mercy, on condition that the sinner will approach him by sacrifice or gifts, conditions and terms, they believe; but that he will have mercy and reject all sacrifices, is a matter they have not yet learned. That he has had mercy and not sacrifice, every heaven-born sinner knows; for he has been taught it experimentally by the Spirit. When stripped of all their works, means, and instruments,—when naked and bare, destitute of a particle of righteousness in themselves, guilt stricken, helpless and sinking in their sins, having nothing to offer, and deeply sensible that if they could command the cattle of a thousand hills or ten thousand rivers of oil, the offering of all would avail them nothing, in their extremity, they learned, that He would

have mercy and not sacrifice,—mercy without an equivalent either in works or in gifts.

For I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. If men were truly righteous, they would need no repentance or change; but there are none righteous, as the scriptures positively testify; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Every mouth is stopped, and all the world is guilty before God; but if we were indeed righteous, as the pharisees of ancient and of modern times claim to be, or as they would represent to the unconverted that they must make themselves before they can become recipients of God's saving mercy, they would be beyond the reach of salvation: for Christ came not to call such, and there is salvation in none other than Christ.

This doctrine of God our Savior, while it disconcerts the proud self-righteous pharisee, and boasting arminian, is happily adapted to the case of the lost, the helpless, the guilt-burdened, weary and heavy ladened sinner. Here is just such a Physician as he needs to cleanse him of his leprosy. He can speak the words, "I will; be thou clean," and a perfect cure is effected. As a Physician he understand the case of all his suffering dying patients; and he is able to cure them all. And as they are too poor to offer him a fee, for his official services, how consoling to learn that he will have no sacrifices; it is without money and without price; without fee or reward. The quickened sinner who knows that he is lost, wretched and undone, rejoices in him who came, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. This is not calling them to produce repentance, nor to bring him repentance as a condition or means of obtaining his saving grace, but he has repentance to give them, and with it the forgiveness of sins; for he will not be ministered to; but he will minister; because he is exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel and the remission of sins.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, May 15, 1858).

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"As Christians would not themselves bow to pagan rites, so they were alike careful to prevent any character, however exalted, realizing the privileges of their communion, without a strict conformity, **in spirit and in conduct,** to the requirements of divine revelation. They, consequently, at times, became the objects of the most unrelenting fury, for maintaining, in their ecclesiastical community, **purity of principle, and purity of practice."** — ORCHARD'S HISTORY, in commenting on the christians of the First and Second Centuries.

We were much interested in the following portion of a deed conveying a plot of ground for a meeting house:

"..... Trustees of the Primitive Baptist Church at ....., also known as Old School Baptist, Predestinarian Baptist, etc., and their successors forever, holding and believing the doctrine of predestination, election, final preservation of the saints to glory, etc., and worshiping God in the old and simple time honored way, unmixed with the religious practices of modern times, such as Sunday Schools, instrumental music in church, modern mission system of sending paid missionaries among unwilling people who will not support them, etc.; and the minority thus holding and practicing shall not be divested of this property rights, parties of the second part:"

The last clause interested us mostly: "The minority thus holding and practicing shall not be divested of their property rights."

—J. D. W.

OBITUARIES

DANIEL CRAWFORD WOOD

Daniel Crawford Wood was born in Summers County, West Virginia, June 26, 1866, and died July 14, 1954. He was the eldest son of John Wesley and Celia (Lily) Wood. His first marriage was to Mary Griffith, and after her death he was married to Margaret Frances Jackson, who survives. One child, Fred, of the first union, died at an early age; to the second union nine children were born — one, Wesley, died in infancy, and Carl died in 1953. He is survived by his widow and the following children: John D. Wood, Manassas,

Va.; Paul A. Wood, Roanoke, Va.; Jesse C. Wood, Flint, Michigan; Mrs. Otto Davis, Roanoke, Va.; Mrs. J. V. Webb and Mrs. Leslie Foltz, Waynesboro, Va.; and Miss Doris E. Wood, Washington, D. C.; and by eleven grand-children and eight great grand-children; and also by the following brothers: Joseph P. Wood, near Beckley, W. Va.; and Posie J. Wood, Flat Top, W. Va.

He received a hope early in life, and like his father and mother before him, was sound in the faith. He united with the church at Roanoke, Virginia, July 7, 1912; and was ordained a deacon April 4, 1914. He was a faithful member, and was always found at the meetings as long as he was able to attend. About fifteen years before his death he suffered a broken hip and other injuries, which confined him much of the time. Grace, and grace alone, was his theme; and he was an ardent reader of the Signs of the Times. I shall not forget his advice to me when I became one of the editors of the Signs: Never let anything unsound appear in the columns of the paper.

Funeral services were conducted at the church in Roanoke by Elder J. P. Helms and Elder Randolph Perdue, and burial was in Evergreen Cemetery. The evidences he gave of a hope of eternal life remain with us, and we weep not as those who have no hope.

"Death is no more a frightful foe;
Since I with Christ shall reign,
With joy I leave this world of woe:
For me to die is gain."

John D. Wood

MRS. DONIE ROBERSON

Sister Donie Roberson, who was formerly Miss Donie Pilgreen, was born March 19, 1874 and died August 29, 1954. She was married to T. L. Roberson July 26, 1896. To this union were born several children. Those surviving are: Mrs. Olevia Young and Miss Inez Roberson, Monroe, La.; Mrs. Martha Willia, Sterlington, La.; and Marshal Roberson, Shreveport, La. There are several grand-children, as well as the following sisters: Mrs. Susan Henderson, Lillie, La.; Mrs. Mary Tucker, Farmerville, La.; and Mrs. Annie Love, Linville, La.; and possible one other sister (I do not have complete information); and several nieces and nephews. Her husband preceded her in death only a few months.

Sister Roberson was born and spent most of her life in the vicinity of Linville, La., where, as a hard working housewife and mother, she reared and educated her children. She and brother Roberson were well respected citizens and neighbors of this vicinity. They both joined the Primitive Baptist Church called Union about 1911, and they were loved and widely known, and highly esteemed among the Lord's people. Their home was a home for Primitive Baptists any and all times they could be there. The writer served this church for a number of years, and spent many nights in their home. Scriptural and experimental conver ations were uppermost in their home.

Dear bereaved children, I would comfort you by saying that I feel that our loss is their eternal gain. The sweet evidence of their hope of heaven and immortal bliss was vividly manifested in their lives and conversation, and I strongly feel that they are better off than we, being at rest until that glorious day when the Lord shall call them from death and the tomb, into that everlasting and glorious home. May the Lord bless you to take comfort in these grand truths.

Sister Roberson's funeral was conducted by Elder J. L. Smith, who serves their church in that community; the writer was in California at the tme, and could not be at the funeral. She was buried beside her husband in Liberty Cemetery, near Linville, La. to await the glorious resurrection, when the Lord in the brighteness of his glory comes again without sin unto salvation.

May the Lord bless and comfort all these who mourn. Your very unworthy brother in hope of mercy and grace through our Lord Jesus Christ.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

ELIZABETH BOND BADSKY

Elizabeth Bond Badsky was born in Anderson County, Kentucky, April 10, 1897, and was called from this life June 30, 1953, in LeGrande, Oregon. She was the daughter of the late Elder C. W. Bond and Martha Herndon Bond, and moved with them to Oregon in 1908.

In her young womanhood she was a much loved rural school teacher, giving this up to be married to V. R. Badsky in 1921. A son, Ted Alvin Badsky, was born to them in 1929, and he is now in the Naval Air Force. When the son was four years old, she became afflicted with Multiple Scarosis, from which she suffered the rest of her life. In health she was active in school and neighborhood affairs. Around her house was a garden of flowers, which she tended as long as she was able. She said, "When I work with nature, I work with God." She was confined to a wheelchair, and then to her bed for several years, but bore it all with patience and resignation, believing in a God, "Who is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind."

She never united with the visible church. She liked for me to read the Signs to her, and her favorite scripture was the 23rd Psalm, which she often repeated. Her husband preceded her in death some ten years ago. Though she was afflicted for so long, we still miss her from our family gatherings; yet, if we could, we would not call her back to this world of pain and sorrow.

"But Jesus wept, so we may weep. Our tears cannot disturb the sleep He giveth his beloved." Written by her mother.

Martha H. Bond,
Island City, Oregon

DEACON HARRY T. WEATHERFORD

Deacon Harry T. Weatherford, of Pittsylvania County, Virginia, was born June 17, 1895, in Rockingham County, North Carolina. He was the son of the late Charlie T. and Hallie Faulkner Weatherford. He departed this life September 12, 1954, at his home near Danville, Virginia.

He was married to Miss Beulah Dix, and is survived by her and the following children: Larry G. Weatherford; Harold Weatherford; Billy Weatherford; and Mrs. Curtis Hanks, all of Danville and vicinity.

Brother Weatherford united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Dan River in October, 1931, and was baptized by the writer the fourth Sunday of the same month. Soon there was manifested to the members a gift of a deacon, and he was chosen to that office. He was blessed to fill this office well, manifesting throughout his membership with the church his great love for her, by ever laboring to fulfill the duties that befell him. I have never known one who loved his church better than he; and I do not remember a single meeting after his baptism that he was absent from the service.

Brother Weatherford was blessed with a companion who walked with him in the things of the Lord, being baptized the same day he was. He also leaves a family of children who manifest a sincere interest in the same doctrine that he loved so well; and who, by their attendance at our services, honor the memory of him whom they loved. His passing is not only a loss to his family and church, but to the community in which he lived as an honorable citizen.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder W. R. Dodd and Elder S. M. McKinney, from Dan River Church, September 14, 1954; after which his body was laid to rest in the church cemetery, to await the coming of the Lord, who will descend from heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the Arch-angel, to raise the dead and present them unto himself a glorious church, not having spot, wrinkle, blemish, nor any such thing.

"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, sayeth the spirit, they do rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

Done by order of Dan River Church.

(Elder) D. V. Spangler, Moderator
C. S. Carroll, Asst. Clerk

MRS. SALLIE W. SIMPSON GAINES

Mrs. Sallie W. (Simpson) Gaines died at her home in Washington, D. C., September 8, 1954. She was born August 16, 1868, a daughter of the late Henry Clay and Angeline Simpson. In 1914 she was married to William E. Gaines, who died several years ago. Of her immediate family, she leaves only one first cousin, Mrs. Betty Richardson, to mourn her passing.

Mrs. Gaines was not a member of the church, but was sound in the faith of the Old School Baptists. She was most interesting to talk with, for she had experienced that the Lord was gracious, and we doubt not that she had a hope in his mercy. For some years she was closely confined to her home, having the responsibility of caring for her invalid sister, Miss Virginia Simpson, who died in 1952. Before this time, it was her joy to attend the nearby meetings, and she often entertained the ministers and members and friends. It was our pleasure to stop by and talk with her whenever we had opportunity.

Funeral services were conducted at the Lee Funeral Home in Washington by the writer and interment was in the Congressional Cemetery.

John D. Wood

NAOMA BURCH WILLIAMSON

Naoma Burch Williamson was born December 4, 1871, in Knoxville, Iowa; and departed this life February 12, 1954, at the Mercy Hospital, Nampa, Idaho.

She was united in marriage to R. S. Williamson April 15, 1891; and to this union four children were born — one daughter, Ruby G. Turnidge, of Weiser, Idaho, preceded her in death October 30, 1936. She leaves to mourn her passing, her husband, R. S. Williamson; a son, Asher D., of Nampa, Idaho; two daughters, Mrs. Estel Welch, Nampa; Idaho and Viola Turnidge, Weiser, Idaho. Also three sisters

and five brothers.

Sister Williamson was the eldest daughter of Hezikah and Sarah Burch, who were members of the Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon. She united with the Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, October 12, 1917, and was baptized by the late Elder G. E. Mayfield, of Big Spring Church. She was a patient and devoted wife and mother. She has finished her course, she kept the faith, and we feel she is at rest awaiting the resurrection, when we shall see Him as he is, and be made like him, and be satisfied. What more can we hope for!

Written by request of her children.

(Elder) Ernest J. Attebery

SISTER NEELEY NEWMAN

It is with much sadness and sorrow that I write a few lines in memory of Sister Neeley Newman, who passed away July 31, 1954. She was born October 1, 1881, making her stay on earth a little more than seventy-two years.

She was married to Joseph M. Newman in the year of 1900, and was the mother of eleven children, six girls and five boys. Three of the children preceded her in death. Those surviving are: J. L. Newman and J. M. Newman, Memphis, Tenn.; G. T. Newman, Staunton, Tenn.; Mrs. Jack Atherton, Pittsburgh, Penn.; Mrs. J. E. Cox, Memphis, Tenn.; Mrs. S. C. Forsythe, Ripley, Tenn.; Mrs. W. B. Arnold, Memphis, Tenn., and Miss Dorothy Newman, Memphis, Tenn.

Sister Newman lived a useful life, bringing up her children well and in the fear of the Lord. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church, at Memphis, in 1941, and was a devoted member, always attending when possible. She was in ill health about a year before her death. She is greatly missed by all who knew her, especially at the church.

Her funeral was conducted at Grace Baptist Church, near Ripley, Tenn., where she had spent the greater part of her life. A very large congregation of friends and relatives had gathered to pay their respect. Her pastor, the writer, spoke from the words of Christ, "I go to prepare a place for you." Her body was laid to rest to await the trumpet sound, when the dead in Christ shall arise incorruptible to be with the Lord forever.

May the Lord comfort the sorrowing ones. Her little church bows to the sovereign will of God, who is too good to do wrong, and too wise to make a mistake.

An humble servant,
(Elder) H. G. Brown

REBECCA AYERS

God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to call to her eternal home another one of our beloved members, Sister Rebecca Ayers. She had been a widow for several years, her husband, Johnie Ayers, died in the year 1903.

Sister Ayers was a faithful member and a firm believer in salvation by grace. She attended her meetings as regular as it was possible. She lived a long way, but was there when it was possible for her to make the trip. We will long miss her, and feel that another one of the Lord's redeemed has finished her earthly journey, and is peacefully awaiting the coming of her glorious Redeemer. We have lost a precious sister, but feel that our loss is her eternal gain. Elder Biggs was her pastor.

They had moved to Bowling Green, Kentucky, since she had been sick; and it was so far away that the members of the church could not visit her as they would have liked to. She made her home with her two daughters, Nimma and Limma Ayers.

May God's richest blessings abide with all who were near and dear to her. May it please the Heavenly Father that we may meet again in the world that knows no end. We miss our dear sister, but bow in humble submission to the will of our God, knowing that he does all things well.

Mona McGregor

CHURCH NOTICES

(The following changes in the Notices were received too late for insertion in the January issue of the Signs:)

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Compton, California, meets each fourth Sunday at the home of L. W. Langwell, 12812 S. Williams Street.

BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin, Oregon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes.

Ernest Attebery, Pastor

AN ARM OF PILGRIM REST CHURCH, meets each second Sunday and Saturday night before at Earth, Texas.

C. M. Haygood, Pastor,
A. A. Chambers, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 123 DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1955 NO. 4

THE EMPTY TOMB

What if the tomb had not been empty,
On that morning long ago,
When the Marys, in their sorrow,
Came to weep o'er Christ once more?

In their hearts a question pondered
As they walked along the way:
He's in the tomb, a stone upon it,
Who will take the stone away?

What a world we'd have to live in,
If his body had been found
Cold and lifeless, stilled in death,
Sleeping in the burial ground.

But alas! the tomb was empty,
And his body was not found;
So they, in sorrow and disappointment
Knelt, weeping there upon the ground.

Then they heard an angel's voice,
As he in triumph to them said,
"He is not here: He is risen,
Why seek the living 'mong the dead?"

Yes, thank God, the tomb was empty,
Because our Lord was not inside;
And today, he lives and speaks,
As by faith He in believing hearts abides.

Had they found our Saviour's body
In that cold dark tomb of stone,
All the joys of Christian faith-life
Would today be lost: Unknown.

Selected
(By request)

Ruffin, N. C.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Am enclosing money to pay for one year's renewal. May it please God to continue to bless our paper in the future as he has in the past, to remain sound in doctrine: its writers and Editors ever looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

May it please God to draw us to meet often with one another in the New Year, in praise to him who hath redeemed us with his blood, — dear is every drop he shed. We hope, the Lord willing, to go to New Hope tomorrow: have felt hungry for several days to hear Elder Paschal preach. I dreamed of hearing him talk, and it was a comfort to me at the time. I had the same feeling for over a week before the fourth Sunday in October to go to Dan River to hear Elder Spangler. I couldn't put this feeling away, and when we were blessed to attend Dan River meeting, I believe I shall never forget what a wonderful meeting it was to me. What a feast to hear such words of wisdom as was preached by Elders Ingram and Spangler. Elder Spangler preached about the difference in law and gospel. It seems that there are some who preach more to my comfort than others, and I can't help it being that way.

If I know my heart, I love "hard doctrine": it can't be too hard when it comes to things pertaining to truth. I can't believe it is because some are bigger preachers than others, is why we enjoy hearing them more than others, for it all comes from the same source. Our hearts must be opened to receive it, as well as our ears before we hear: we will never miss anything God has in store for us.

How I do long to live a better life. So often I fear I have caught the shadow and missed the substance — I have such evil thoughts, and I seem to do such foolish things; and I wonder if there is anyone like me, so sinful. I am glad the Scripture says, In due time Christ died for the ungodly. If it had said that he died for the godly, then I would have no hope of heaven. Maybe that's why the doctrine of grace, gospel grace, means so much to me. We just can't mix law and gospel and come forth

with grace; that would be leaving mercy clear out. Christ kept the law to a jot and tittle, making every provision for the cure of sin for his elect loved ones. Thus he ushered in the gospel dispensation, and now we are no more under the law, but grace. When the gospel is preached, we hear, "Christ the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth". He did so much for sinners such as I: The half has never been told. Do hope you and yours are well as usual.

Thanking you for your kindness to us. May God keep you preaching and writing the truth, to the praise of Jesus' name — the sweetest name I know.

A little sister in hope of mercy,
Mrs. Fred Cobb

"WHOM THE LORD LOVETH HE CHASTENETH"

Vandervoort, Arkansas

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood:

In conversation with Old Line Baptists a few days since, on the subject, "Do we suffer for our sins?", I was requested to write, submitting my views to the Signs of the Times.

I understand the idea that we suffer for our sins to be foreign to Bible teaching. Paul, in 2 Corinthians 1:5, says, "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."; teaching we neither suffer for sin nor are we rewarded for our obedience. Our trials are teachers: teaching us humility, patience, and like virtues. Our consolations and manifold blessings come without works, and when least expected, — many times when we are ready to give up in despair, proving it is by free grace alone, unmerited. Thereby is our hope renewed, and we are taught what is that good and acceptable will of God.

There has been, I think, from apostolic times some rather diverse opinions among those, who, as a whole, believe Bible doctrine. Minor differences have generally been tolerated. To this I do not object, as there is, I believe, some darkness and misunderstandings in all of us. I am, however, opposed to Armenianism even in her mildest form; and if any degree of conditionalism is not Armenianism, then I am wrong. The least condition is just that much short of God's predestination of all things.

If we admit of one condition, then why not two? etc. Taking the New Testament as our guide, let us investigate. That we do not suffer for sin is not new among Predestinarian Baptists; furthermore, it is taught throughout the New Testament, which is our New Covenant counsel.

That it is not new among us, let us refer to Dr. Gill's Body of Divinity, Page 341, Chapter 13. Dr. Gill departed this life in 1809. I suppose all informed Baptists will agree that Bro. Gill was perhaps the best educated man ever among the Baptists, the eminent Apostle Paul not excepted, and in inspiration was much favored. He says "The elect, as considered in Christ the head of the Covenant of Grace, are not subject or liable to any punishment here are hereafter. **'There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.'** Their afflictions are not punishments for sin; nor is corporal death inflicted on them as a penal evil; nor will any curse befall them in a future state. But my concern is with men considered in Adam, as the head of the covenant of works, and representative of all mankind; as they sinned and fell in Adam, and were involved in the guilt of sin; and as they are actual transgressors in themselves; and as they are chargeable with sin, according to the declaration, sanction and tenor of the law; and all descendants of Adam by ordinary generation without exception or distinction, are subject and liable to suffering."

Dr. Gill's believing it, does not make it truth, but does help to show it is not a new doctrine; with New Testament helps proving the, Not I will, if you will, but I will and you shall, for my name's sake.

Now, if it is possible to obtain punishment by disobedience, why not go conditional and obtain blessings by obedience? I find the latter impossible to do. My righteousness is as filthy rags; therefore, I cannot exchange it for blessings. This doctrine is Armenianism in miniature — the theory: do and live; only it says, Do and be punished. Is there any difference? None!

We are chastised, surely; but for our own good, not for disobedience in sin. "But if ye be without chastisement, wherof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." (Hebrews 12:8) Therefore our chastisement is because we are children, not to make us GOOD children. The next verse teaches that chastisement produces reverence to a father, instead of being for disobedience. "Fathers chastise for our profit." (Hebrews 12:10) Likewise our heavenly parent for the same cause; and while for the present it is not joyous, afterwards it yieldeth the peaceful fruits of righteousness. "In the world YE SHALL have tribulations." (John 16:33) Why? It seemed good in his sight. He said, "If ye live godly in Christ Jesus, ye must suffer persecution." (2 Timothy 3:12) Not to suffer if we disobey, but if we live godly. The great head of the church taught this when he said, "I send ye forth as sheep among wolves." Sheep are attacked by wolves without provocation; just so suffering is our lot, not because of our evil, — we must be taught, humbled. Following this declaration, He admonishes, "Be ye, therefore, wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

The indelible mark is, "They that live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution." Here, again not for disobedience, but for godly living. The church has been persecuted since the days she was set up, by scribes, Pharisees, priests, pagans, Papists and Protestants, but thanks be unto God who giveth the victory, we are still extant — still one in our Saviour and Lord, who has promised to bring us out of these tribulations with robes made white in the blood of the Lamb.

"Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." (Matthew 10:22; Mark 13:13; Luke 21:17; John 15:18) Is this hatred (that leads to persecution) because of disobedience? No! Jesus says, It is for my name's sake.

Paul, in Romans 5:3, says, "We glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience." Again, in Corinthians 7:4, this same apostle says, "I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in tribulation."

Chastisement also is that thorn in the flesh, whereby we become not puffed up, but at each other's feet — know our littleness, know we are dust. Left without this humbling rod, we could not know this, human nature being what it is. By the rod we realize how frail we are, how prone to stray, how unacceptable even our thoughts unless indited in our hearts from above. Something other than blessing is necessary to keep human nature from soaring aloft. Always on the hill-top, how could we know the depth of the valley, the utter darkness of the shadows? How could we know the travail of His soul, were we "carried to the skys on flowery beds of ease.?"

I have been wonderfully blessed, though disobedient beyond measure. If ever I were obedient, I was BLESSED TO BE OBEDIENT, not in obedience. I understand blessings and sufferings come when it is His blessed, holy will to thus visit his children, in his own good time; not for works, but according to his abundant mercy. So merciful has He been when chastising me that I am often made to wonder if really I have been chastised, or if my chastisement or suffering is just that which is common to all humanity. It is common knowledge that all humanity suffers — high and low. Therefore my sufferings come not on the merit or demerit system. With Paul I can say, "Not according to works of righteousness," etc. (Titus 3:5) My desire is

that neither blessings nor sufferings be meted to me in payment for works, but, as heretofore, according to his bountiful mercy and unfailing grace. (Titus 1:16) If paid for by works, my blessings would be less, my punishments more. I have been blessed in many ways beyond many of my sojourners here: to never have known cold or hunger; whole in person; all things necessary to my existence bountifully supplied; labored, but not excessively; trials common to humanity. Why thus? Merely because of his love and abundant mercy, undeserved. Surely I desire it thus continued, God willing.

The most bitter and malignant persecution and suffering ever witnessed in the world, has been heaped upon upright followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God; but just the amount of suffering necessary to our good (all things are to this end — our good) will be meted, — destroying false doctrines, practices, self, and the ego of worldly wisdom in us; and the remainder He will restrain. Ordered of him who keeps us as the apple of his eye, it can do no more to us than He pleases.

We must suffer reproach because we trust in God. (I Peter 4:14; Matthew 5:11) Disobedient? No! It is our privilege not only to believe but to suffer. (Philippians 1:29) "If we suffer with him, we shall also regin with him," etc. (2 Timothy 2:12) Here we are promised a reigning with him rather than punishment for sin. "He learned obedience by the things he suffered." He was our pattern. Without sin, he suffered in the flesh: a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, though of a seed royal in no way connected with the transgression of Adam. He had no sin to suffer for. Though we suffer for his name, yet in it all we have the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth, together with great and precious promises to sustain us. The world sees us cast down, thereby the cause of truth and God has no charm to the eye of the hypocritical worlding. The truth, and the church that holds to it, loses respect in the opinion of fashionable religionists. They see us smitten, still not left without comfort; cast down, we are not destroyed. We see ourselves, "Chosen in a furnace of affliction." (Isaiah 48:10) We then have fellowship with His suffering.

Under the law, some sins were punished to the fourth generation. Under grace, Christ said, Neither the man nor his parents had sinned to cause the affliction. (John 9:3) Since all Canaanitish doctrine must be eradicated from believers, chastisement seems necessary; without it, Christianity becomes fashionable religion, and nominal professors would enter the church of the living God. But, with persecution prevalent, they vanish. In this sense persecution purges.

Saith the Scriptures: all sin must be atoned for; and Christ did just that, no less — all the sins of his people. Persecution nor suffering can never be atonement. The blood of Christ only atones for sin. To hold that anything else can, is error; and is the basis of other errors. Being free from sin, we are free also from its consequences, and its punishments. (Romans 6:22) This being free does not mean that we do not sin in the flesh; but that sin has no dominion over us, Christ having put it away. The wages of sin is death — the wage He paid on the tree. From Adamic sin Christ redeemed us. That we should be punished for the least sin, denies the efficiency of His atonement. His expiation removes every whit of sin from us, as far as the East is from the West, as to our punishment for it; and they will be remembered no more.

If ye do well, and suffer for it (1 Peter 2:20); If ye suffer for reighteousness sake (1 Peter 3:14); It is better that ye suffer for well doing (1 Peter 3:17); If any man suffer as a Christian (1 Peter 4:16); suffer according to the will of God (1 Peter 4:19); Those things thou shalt suffer (Revelations 2:20) That I may know the fellowship of his sufferings (Philippians

3:10). Paul was shown, "What great things he must suffer for His name's sake," (Acts 9:16) — not for disobedience. If any man sin, instead of punishment: "He hath an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous." (1 John 2:1)

What intense suffering the dear mother of Jesus must have undergone when she saw her innocent Son led to the slaughter. But had not old Simeon told her, "Behold this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be spoken against; yea, a sword shall pierce through thine own soul also." (Luke 2:34-35) Because of her sins? A trillion times, no! It was her privilege to suffer with him. It had been her exalted position to be his mother. How changed now! Crushed beneath a weight of mental anguish, to which none other torture can be completely comparable, methinks. Being yet in part under the law, not fully free from it, she must have been confused, and well nigh hopeless; for as yet He had not seen the travail of his soul, nor awaken from the sleep of death. Mary saw him as her innocent Son, pure, harmless, undefiled, meek and humble; his deeds of love and devotion fresh in her memory. How very great must have been her suffering: not for her sins, but for the love she bore this Holy One, this blessed, adorable ROCK OF OFFENSE.

Away with Armenianism in all its aspects. Let trials teach me the way of my Lord more perfectly. In our humanity we are so misunderstanding. Why should we love Christ? For the same cause we love our companions in the flesh. First, we were attracted to them, then believed that they loved us — not for what they had done for us. The impelling force should be love, and not because of our release from eternal woe: Because He loved us first. (1 John 4:9). In Revelation 3:19, "As many as I love, I rebuke." Since I understand the sublime truth that our sins are by him completely covered and that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, I no longer try to mix a little works in the pot, realizing fully that my remorse of conscience, and shame for sin, is in no way suffering or atonement for them — it in no way pays for my folly. The motive I should have in this world for loving Him and his cause, is, I hope, because He is the adorable Lamb, and not for fear of punishment. I believe every cross, every trial, is given for spiritual instructions, and will produce clearer understanding of our Lord, and his working in the soul. For me, life's severest trials have been followed by the fullest, sweetest enjoyment of God's revelation and peace of mind, together with the most sublime reconciliation to his holy will, and the clearest views of his holy intentions, graciously administered to me; and instead of being angry because I have sinned, He is most tenderly leading, and teaching me of the pitfalls, and to know — and more dislike, the deceitful hideous monster, sin. In every chastisement, every crisis, there is some deep design: something we must be taught, that Satan's lures, wiles, nor the dread thunderings within or without, shall not sway us.

David said, "Many are the trials and afflictions of the righteous." (Psalms 34:19) True, we shall be beaten with many stripes, not in wrath nor for punishment for sin, but in love, for our learning and as an evidence that we are children of God.

"Ere first I drew this mortal breath,
From nature's prison free,
Crosses in number, measure, weight,
Were written Lord for me.
But thou, my shepherd, friend and guide,
Hast led me kindly on:
Taught me to rest my fainting head
On Christ, the corner stone.

So comforted, and so sustained,
With dark events I strove,
And found them, rightly understood,
All messengers of love.
With silent and submissive awe,
Adored a chastening God;
Revered the terrors of his law,
And humbly kissed the rod."
(Lloyd's Hymn — 385)

Wishing for all the blessings of peace

and privilege of freedom of thought, this is humbly submitted, in hope.

Nancye Johnston McDaniel

Bellingham, Washington

Dear Editors:

I have a letter I am sending you to publish, if it meets with your approval. It is written by a very dear one who, I truly believe, has had an experience of grace; and her letter is so good I feel it should be published for others to enjoy as I have. It may cheer some weary soul along the way.

I have been reading the Signs for over thirty years, and it seems they get better, and I do enjoy them so much. I don't get much preaching, and the crumbs I get from the Signs feed my soul between meetings.

This dear girl is a great comfort to me: she joined the church last August. So I feel my cup of blessing is full, and I can only say, Praise God from whom all blessings flow. I cannot praise him enough.

A little sister in hope of His mercy,
(Mrs.) Blanche B. Brown

BOUND WITH THE CORDS OF HIS LOVE

Bellingham, Washington

Dear Mother:

I have prayed many times for the Lord to show me in some way that I truly had the Spirit within my heart. God has been with me very close all this day; seems as if he is showing me, "in answer to earnest prayer."

For days now I've been singing the Old Baptist Hymns: singing them inwardly. I would do my housework, and be singing; talk to Chet, hold a conversation, and be singing every minute. The revelation God chose to give me this afternoon, was in this wise:

I had been trying for years to see why the "Christian Churches" believe as they do. My neighbor lady wanted to know why I couldn't see. I can truthfully say I tried to see and understand their way. But God would always make me in doubt: For one thing, I could not say, I am saved. I do have a precious hope more solidly than ever now. (Acts 5:39) "But if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it." I was given the light to apply that to myself. If she, my neighbor lady, had not been able to change me in those years, "I had the true way." Then the Spirit within me told me to apply the same Scripture to the neighbor lady's belief, and as she was seeing me. She couldn't change the light as God has given me to see it. I believe in the wisdom and power of God — not mere words. I believe in predestination: God's own were his chosen before the foundation of the world; and for mere man to help God bring people to be saved — well, I just can't see it. His glory is his, we have nothing to say or do about it.

So, I've been thanking my Lord and Saviour all day long. This is the first time God has let me know and feel the power of the Spirit. It's now I'm thankful, and, praise God, my faith has been proven to me to be the only one. I feel as if God has tied a cord around me, and over miles and miles has tied that same cord with the members of the Old Baptist Church. Those songs were singing inward in me; and I feel that they are singing with me — those members of the Old Baptist Church, groups of people scattered over miles, yet close in the fellowship of the chosen ones of God. How wonderful and precious to one, to feel the realness of the Spirit! I see now why God's Spirit lives with us: He tells us, teaches us wisdom of the Word of God.

I have a feeling that a great thing has taken place in my heart — and greater things in time are sure to come. My Bible has become precious to me — a jewel. Blanch has been a blessing. But Lord knows I need her; and I thank God she lives close enough to comfort me.

I'd walk to see her, I believe, if I couldn't get there any other way. Everything has been with me and the Lord: no one else is the cause of it. God has directed my path all along, sometimes warning me. I couldn't do at time what I thought I wanted to do. He has moulded my life even to unpleasant things, to a point where I should call upon Jesus for forgiveness and help and guidance.

The morning of September 17th, I felt I could not go on: I gave up in helplessness. I needed Spiritual help, though I didn't know where to go or what to do. I never combed my hair, or thought to look nice: I couldn't. It was just that I couldn't do anything. I called the neighbor lady, and we went to town. I had no thought of seeing a minister — I just went along because she was going. It was an opportunity for her to ask me if I would like to see a minister. I told her, No. She did some shopping, and an hour or so went by. Then she asked me again if I would consent to see a minister. I told her, perhaps some other time. But before the day was over, she asked me again. I said it really didn't matter. She wanted to know if I had any preference of three different ministers she knew; and I said it mattered not which one: proving that God led me.

We came to the minister's home, and I was introduced to him and his wife. He asked what the trouble was. I told him I really didn't know, only that I needed God's help, or my home, my life, and my family would be broken: I needed spiritual guidance, but how to find it I knew not. He asked me to kneel and repeat after him. Which I did: words I cannot remember even now — as I said my own prayer in my heart at the same time, for I couldn't help it: Lord forgive me, forgive me; come into my heart and forgive. My own guilt was heavy — I gripped my fists and cried unashamed. When I looked up at my neighbor lady, the minister and his wife, their faces were as strangers to me. I thanked them, but with no feeling; **it was just the Lord Jesus and I.** He gave me peace abundantly thereafter, and I am blessed with a great feeling of peace; at times more so than at others, but always there. I have believed in God always, but now I know the power and wisdom as given us by the Spirit within.

After all this happened, I prayed God many times to give me the truth, the right way, the one and only way: knowledge and truth, as the other beliefs were too shallow for me. When I couldn't see, He has made me see anew, and I am thankful. My only hope is that He never leaves me. I hope the Lord has appointed a time, someday, somehow, for me to be baptized in the same church as you, Mom. Though I'm sure I do not feel worthy of it — only by God's graciousness I am what I am.

Oh, that I could have had you and Mrs. Brown close today. My heart was full of blessings, Mom. Piling wood in the sunshine, I told my husband, I'm singing inside: the old hymns, God's word came, then songs, and the word again — truly they were coming in my heart every minute.

I don't want to impress you that I am good, because I am not; neither am I lying — it's the real truth. I've cried with thanks to my Lord and Saviour today. For even the tiniest bit my heart sings praise.

I'll always believe God sent Caroline here — He knew I needed her. Her Old Baptist faith was so well grounded in her, Mom, the Lord sent her to help me see clearly. She fanned the spark into reality. I had the spark of the faith I believed in left, and, God working in her, made me realize how close I'd come to doing the wrong thing — joining a church I didn't believe in, and fellowshiping with people I had nothing in common with, and studying the Bible in mere words. I could feel no comfort with them, and God, through Caroline, brought me back to the depth of the faith I had always had, and made me

realize the smallness of other beliefs.

God's love to you,

Dorothy

Seagrove, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

We hope we love our brethren and sisters but feel they are so much better than we are. We don't see how we could get along without the Signs, for we surely enjoy them, and read them over and over. We get to go to meetings only once a month at Suggs Creek Church, and we enjoy the preaching of our pastor. We know that no man can preach the gospel of himself, for it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

There is nothing new or old with God for he declared the end from the beginning; so we believe the predestination of all things. One of our boys is also a subscriber to the Signs and enjoys it. We have six boys and five girls, but all of them do not see as we do, and we know that we can't change them. We cannot do anything without the Lord being our helper.

My husband and I joined the church in 1916, but we don't feel worthy to be with the good brothers and sisters. They could make out without us, but don't see how we could do without them: for we get so low sometimes that we feel that if they knew how sinful we are, they could not fellowship us. I have been sick a lot and have had two operations, but the good Lord was with me all the time.

If you see anything in this worth putting in the Signs, you may, so our children can see what we believe. I am sending my father's experience for publication, if you feel to use it. His name was Ira Freeman and he died in 1928. My husband joins me in this. In hope of a better world.

George and Laura Davis

HE DID NOT FIND WHAT HE EXPECTED

Steeds, N. C.

I have been confined to my room for some time. Since I began to improve I have a mind to write. When about ten years old I was very much alarmed about my condition. My parents were of the Primitive Baptist faith, which, as I grew up, I hated worse than all other principles; and I felt it to be my duty to oppose my good father's and mother's faith. I begin to read my Bible, and kept one in my pocket part of the time; and I would often read to my school mates and try to teach them, and my parents, that the Baptist doctrine was the most dangerous thing on earth — until I was about sixteen or seventeen years old. I had not yet made a profession of religion, so I set about at a protracted meeting to get religion, and did so. (At the same time there was another one trying to get religion, and found that he could not and left the meeting. He is now a precious brother Baptist).

Having religion, I verily thought I must get about the work of the Lord. I organized two Sunday Schools, one at 10 o'clock and one at 3 o'clock; I helped in the revivals, and I verily thought I was doing God's service. I remember one dear Baptist who lived near one of the Sunday Schools, and we had some (we called them) big meetings, but he would not join in with us. I thought he was one of the most dangerous men I ever saw: He had a family of fine girls, but he would not let them get religion. I knew he was one of our best citizens, and I loved him and had all confidence in him as a neighbor, but the very thought of that dangerous doctrine — that was all my study. I thought that when the (I called them) "Hard Heads" were all gone there would never be any more, for the world was now being taught, and the people now knew better.

Hating that doctrine so badly, I decided to make a preacher, and set out for that purpose; for I thought I must do more for the Lord than I was doing. I had heard one of my school teachers say time and again that he had heard an Old Baptist preacher preach infants

to hell; so to be well up to my job, I went to hear him preach, expecting to hear him preach infants to torment. I placed myself near so I could hear all that he said.

When the dear old man arose in the stand, it seemed to me that then was the first time I had ever heard the voice of the Lord God. Like Adam when he heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden, he was afraid, for he was naked, it seemed to me that that was the first time I ever knew that I was naked — and I was afraid. That was the most miserable day I had ever spent, and I would have given anything in this world if I could have been away from there; but I was there — a poor, condemned, wretched sinner. I was so miserable I don't remember one word the dear man said; but, Oh, how guilty I felt. I probably thought that I never would go there again. About that time, I had a vision in the night. I called it a dream, but I feel to say if just a dream I remember it longer, and think more of it, and it has left the sweetest memory of any dream.

In my vision, I was standing in a door of a building, and there was a throne in front of me, and three people: not people, for they looked like angels. They all looked alike, but the middle one was taller than the ones on either side; and they were brighter than the noonday sun. The house was brighter than gold: the most beautiful sight I have seen before or since. The middle one had a glass in his hand, as bright, and shining as they were; and a bunch of grapes held over the glass as if to mash grape juice in the glass. And he said to me, "This is the wine that will be drunk in the New Jerusalem." I don't think I will be able to tell of the beauties of the vision this side of heaven.

I was then confined to my bed, and was afflicted I verily thought unto death. Then is when trouble covered me, and I thought I would be bound for eternal woe and misery. I was afraid to beg the Lord for mercy, yet all the while I was saying, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner." I don't know how long I was in that condition. There was a window by my bed, and I could see that the trees were covered with ice — the most beautiful sight; and it seemed that the trees, the birds, and all God's creation were praising him. Now, brethren, this was the first time in my life that I could say, "The will of God be done." I still thought I must die; and while in this condition, I loved that dear man of God above all other men — the man that I went to hear preach infants to torment. I wanted to see him above all others, and to hear him talk, but I felt to unworthy to be in his presence; and I verily thought that I would never let those Baptists people know that I loved them. I did not feel worthy of the honor of loving them. Where they were was where I wanted to be, and where they went was where I wanted to go.

In a few days I believe the Lord sent a dear sister, and I was so glad to see her. Unexpectedly to her, and before I thought, I had betrayed myself. But when she was gone, I thought I would never do so again. Yet to other Baptists, before I realized what I was doing, I had done the same thing. I would tell them of the mercies of God; and how glad I was that God had all power in the heavens and in the earth. And to my surprise they would listen to me. Unworthy as I was for them to pay any attention to me, they seemed to be glad that I trusted in the eternal God, and had laid aside the covering of fig leaves that I had made to try to cover my nakedness with, and was publicly declaring that the only way for poor, unworthy, guilty, wretched, and condemned sinners to be saved, was not by works of men, but by the precious blood of Jesus, our blessed Saviour. By this time my poor soul was filled to overflowing with praise and honor to the merciful God that had let me live, and had been so merciful to me.

By this time, I began to have trouble about having a home with the family

of dear Jesus — beautiful family! How they loved each other! It filled my soul with joy to see them meet and sit down together in their beautiful home, the church, whose Ruler, Builder, and Maker is Jesus Christ. I could not find a seat that was humble enough for me. I could see how they could do without me, but I could not find a way to live without them.

It is now about forty-seven years since I begged a seat with them, and they granted it; and I have never regretted it. Dear, good family, blessed of the Lord, my prayer is that the eternal God will keep us for Jesus' sake.

Ira Freeman (died 1928).

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46 Cedar Street,
Kingston, N. Y.

Signs of the Times:

Enclosed I am sending you a letter received from sister Gertrude Secor, of New York City, which I feel will be good reading for the brethren. If you should feel to publish it, I would be glad to have you do so.

(Elder) Amasa J. Slauson

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216 East 175th St.,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Elder and Sister Slauson:

I am sorry I was unable to meet with you the third Sunday. I trust you had a good meeting. How good it was to be able to meet with you people once again at the association at Shokan. I did enjoy it. I cannot find words to express how much I love to be in the company of God's people. "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." What a privilege to be able to enter His banqueting house and be able to partake of the heavenly manna. How unworthy I am to be fed with even the smallest crumb from the master's table, but this is the food I crave and hunger for. It is good that we cannot store up this food, for if we could we would not hunger for it. Then we would not be made to search the scriptures, or question "what saith the scripture?" As we need natural food daily to live, I feel I need this heavenly food daily or I perish. We do not go to hear anything new but to hear that which we know already. We need our pure minds stirred up.

I rejoiced to hear the subject of prayer discussed. This is a subject very close to my heart. I feel I know something of true prayer because God has answered my prayers in times past. When I was a child not seven years of age, I remember praying for something and my prayer was answered. I felt this belonged to me because I asked God for it and he gave it to me. This verse comes to my mind, "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." Oftentimes we do not know how to pray as we ought. We are told, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

One night this week I awoke several times, and each time I was praying. One morning recently on my way to the office, I was unaware I was on a crowded subway train and I was praying, asking God to be with me during the day I was just starting. I was praying for patience, and also that God might guide my tongue among some that I have found to be deceitful. It is my nature to answer these folks letting them know that I find them deceitful. Immediately a sign came up in front of me and the words seemed twice their size. The verse read, "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed." I felt as if that verse was just put there for me. I was ashamed and felt that worldly things and tasks meant

too much for me. Then in another dream a woman came to me and said, "A lady wants you to visit her." When I visited this person she said, "I called for you because I wanted you to come pray for me." I was very touched as this person was not a believer, and was not a person I had seen before. In the dream I recall that the lady said to me "When you pray please do not pray for worldly things but for those better things which you have partaken of." When I awoke, I thought that the dream was a hint to me that the affairs of the world meant too much to me. I can say with the poet:

"Once a sinner near despair
Sought thy mercy seat by prayer;
Mercy heard and set him free:
Lord, that mercy came to me.

Many days have passed since then;
Many changes I have seen;
Yet have been upheld till now:
Who could help me up but thou?"

Thou hast help'd in every need;
This emboldens me to plead;
After so much mercy past,
Canst thou let me sink at last?

I did not mean to ramble on like this, please forgive me. I have had so much pleasure and new light it seems reading the Acts I thought I would pen a few thoughts on some of these verses but you see the Lord did not direct my pen along that way.

Please forgive all you see that is amiss. Just consider the weakness of the writer. Love to you both.

Gertrude Secor

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EDITORIALS

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EDITORIAL

GOD'S METHOD OF ADDING BELIEVERS INTO THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE CHURCH

An editor forwarded a request to me from a reader in Alabama to write a treatise on Romans 10:14, which reads, "How then shall they call on Him in Whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" I attempt this fully aware of the fact that I must be especially inspired with divine qualifications for this special venture or this attempt will be vain.

We cannot lift a verse of scripture out of its context and treat upon it independent of its setting and hope to derive a true conclusion. Neither can we come to a true conclusion without considering all the Scriptures lest there

be a contradiction. The fact that this verse is written using all pronouns in third person we must consider who is writing, to whom it is addressed, of whom he is speaking, and what is the subject under consideration.

Paul who was a "servant of Jesus Christ," "Called to be an apostle," "Separated unto the gospel of Jesus Christ," did this writing. He had "received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations." Let us see how Paul was led into this condition. Read the ninth chapter of Acts relative to his conversion. Paul was one of the Elect Family, "A chosen vessel," beloved of God, and was chosen in Christ before he had this experience. He was full of zeal toward God, but not according to knowledge, when the light shined about him. He had breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of Christ and had obtained authority from the high priests to bring men and women bound to Jerusalem, who were disciples of the Lord. He was persecuting worshippers of the Christ when he was stopped by Him. We see, then, that Paul was ordained beforehand by God unto the position he was in when he wrote this letter, but it took the direct operation of God's Holy Spirit upon both Paul and Ananias, a preacher, to perfect this ordination. He assented to believe in God, but not that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. He possessed zeal toward God but not a ZEAL TOWARD Jesus Christ. He was a chosen vessel, but had not been separated unto the gospel of Jesus Christ.

When you read this account of Paul's experience as recorded in the ninth and twenty-second chapters of Acts, you will find that Paul HEARD the Voice of the Son of God. This Voice had its effect as always. This Voice ordered him to go to a certain place, "and there it shall be told thee of all things which are APPOINTED for thee to do." (Acts 22:10) At the same time God was working directly upon a preacher, Ananias. The Lord said unto Ananias, "Go into the Street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for, behold, he prayeth; and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight." "Go thy way: for he is A CHOSEN VESSEL UNTO ME, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: for I will show him how great things he MUST suffer for my name's sake." (Acts 9:11-12-15-16) Read the record. You will see that both obeyed and met. The result was that Paul HEARD the preacher because God had prepared the heart of Paul and had sent the preacher. Paul BELIEVED the preacher because God had and was directly working upon Paul and the preacher. Ananias laid his hand upon Paul; Paul received his sight; Ananias baptized Paul, and ordained him a preacher, as ministers are ordained today. Paul abode there certain days and straightway preached Jesus in the synagogues as Christ, the Son of God. He had now received grace and apostleship. We see that Paul knew by his experience what he was writing in Romans 10:45-15. He knew that God had sent and used a preacher in bringing him into the fellowship of the Church, and in ordaining him as a minister. God hath ordained that a FEW of the many for whom Jesus died will be added to the Church in this way.

Paul is particularly addressing those who have already been added to the Church in Romans 10:14. He is primarily addressing the Gentiles, who have been endowed with the Holy Spirit, who have heard and believed gospel preaching. These have the faith in their hearts that Jesus is the Son of God. These have confessed with their mouths and have been baptized. They knew from experience that there had been a miraculous working. They had heard and believed God sent preachers. God uses Paul in his letter to preach to them, as well as unto us, to their edification and comfort. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preach-

ing to save them that BELEIVE." (1 Cor. 1:21) God is saving them as well as us from erroneous theories and vain practices through Paul's preaching. We want you to understand that Paul is writing to BELIEVERS IN CHRIST JESUS. He is writing OF A PEOPLE OF GOD WHO HAVE NOT YET BELIEVED THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST.

Paul had under consideration the children of God among the Jews who have a zeal toward God, but not according to knowledge. His heart's desire and prayer to God is that they might be saved. He bears record of this zeal in trying to establish their own righteousness, not submitting themselves unto the righteousness of God. The zealous law worshippers of this day are in the same category, especially those who are not satisfied with their righteousness but go about trying to establish their own righteousness. I think it is evident that many who are born of God do not yet believe that Jesus is their Christ. They are yet under the law and worshippers of it. One truly born of God finds by sad experience that his efforts to establish his own righteousness is not successful, seeing he falls short of meeting its demands. Paul says in Romans 10:4, "Christ is the END OF THE LAW for righteousness to EVERYONE THAT BELIEVETH." There is no difference between the Jew and the Gentile, for the "same Lord over all is RICH UNTO ALL THAT CALL UPON HIM." Then he quotes: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Romans 10:13)

In response to the quotation, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," Paul asks a number of questions which verifies God's method of saving his people in the sense expressed in the quotation. May we think of this as a golden chain God uses in especially saving a remnant of His elect from the dominion of the law and sin experienced in time. It is His way of bringing some of His children into sweet fellowship with one another. Through this chain He makes them fit and proper subjects for baptism. Those of you who are "Called to be saints," who are members of the Church, know that you heard the truth preached by, or rather, through a preacher. Because that your heart was prepared to hear the preached truth, you heard and believed the truth. You assented to this truth by confessing with your mouth, using words of the tongue which were prepared by the Lord. You were received by the church and was baptized by a preacher. All members of the militant church have heard and believed the preaching of a God-sent minister, and have been baptized in water by a God-sent and properly ordained preacher. These expressions are in strict accord with all cases cited in the ACTS.

We want to call your attention to Paul's discourse on Mars Hill in Athens. The people Paul addressed there had an altar having this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. "As I passed by, and beheld your devotion, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye IGNORANTLY worship, HIM declare I unto you." (Acts 17:23) These were ignorantly worshiping God. Therefore, they were proper subjects of gospel address. Paul preached that God was the Lord of the heavens and of the earth, and that in Him we moved and had our being. He, also, preached Christ unto them, and some believed. These people were subjects of gospel address because they ignorantly worshipped God. They had been born again but had not yet believed in Jesus Christ. God was directly working with Paul and some of these people in order to bring them into the knowledge of the TRUTH. The result was that "Certain men clave unto him and BELIEVED." (Acts 17:34) You will notice that it was CERTAIN men. It was certain men who had godly preparations. Let us pass to Philip and the Eunuch of Ethiopia, as recorded in Acts 8:26-39, and see if we do not have the same procedure as indicated in Ro-

mans 10:14-15.

Here we find that a preacher was sent. Philip was sent to the Ethiopian. The Ethiopian was a worshipper of God because he had gone up to the temple at Jerusalem to worship. The Eunuch was interested in the Scriptures because he was reading the prophecy of Isaiah as he rode along in his chariot. He read but did not understand what he read. He wanted to know of Philip if Isaiah was speaking of himself or of some other man. The Eunuch was reading the 7th and 8th verses of the 53rd chapter of Isaiah. Philip began at the same scripture and preached unto him JESUS. When they had come to certain water the Eunuch asked, "See here is water. What doth hinder me to be baptized?" Philip answered, "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest." The Eunuch answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Philip baptized the Eunuch. The Eunuch was born of the Spirit and his heart especially prepared by God to hear and believe the preaching of Philip. Philip was especially sent to preach Jesus to the Eunuch. When the Eunuch assented to the belief that Jesus is the Son of God, the Eunuch was a fit subject for baptism. The Eunuch was born of God and in possession of godly zeal — he was ignorantly worshipping the symbol at Jerusalem and was interested in the scriptures before Philip preached to him. The Eunuch was — being in that condition — a subject of gospel address. He was alive spiritually but needed guidance because he couldn't understand what he read. The Ethiopian did not know whether Isaiah spoke of himself or of some other man. God used Philip to preach Jesus unto him that he might understand that Isaiah was prophesying of Jesus and not of himself. What was the result? The Eunuch believed that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and was given a desire to follow Him in baptism in water. The Eunuch was added to the church in fellowship one with another. Now, read the 2nd chapter of Acts.

You will find that Peter was especially sent and qualified to preach that sermon by the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. You will see that it especially pricked the hearts of those individuals whom God had prepared their hearts to receive it. They yet did not understand what to do. They realized they must do something but did not know what they MUST do, so they inquired, "Men and Brethren, What SHALL we do?" These were proper subjects to receive God's commands, exhortations, and testimonies through the mouth of Peter, that they might be saved from "this untoward generation" and be added to the church. They who gave evidence that they had gladly received His word were baptized. The command to repent and be baptized was the command to outwardly make manifest the repentance that they already experienced in heart by the direct operation of God's Holy Spirit. This was a command to come out from among them and be separate.

Read Acts 10, for an account of Cornelius' conversion. Cornelius was already born of God before God gave him the special vision recorded because he was "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people and prayed to God always," God dealt directly with him by commanding him specifically to go to a certain place and call for a certain MAN who would tell him what he ought to do. God, also, directly qualified Peter for this special occasion. NOTE THAT IN ALL CASES GOD DIRECTLY PREPARES BOTH THE HEARER AND THE PREACHER, AND IN ALL CASES CITED HE USED PREACHERS IN THIS SPEIAL SALVATION UNDER CONSIDERATION! You will find that Cornelius told his experience, Peter preached JESUS unto the hearers who had been gathered by God's providence. After seeing the evidence that the gift of the Holy Ghost had been poured out on them, Peter commanded them to be baptized.

You who read this may ask, "Does

faith come by the preacher?" Paul must have surmised such question in treating upon this text for the reasons that they have not all obeyed even though the sound of gospel preaching has been literally heard by them. Then he quotes a question from Isaiah 53:1 — "Who hath believed our report?" He answers by saying, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by THE WORD OF GOD." (Rom. 10:17) Spiritual hearing does not come by the preacher but by the word of God. God must speak to each and every individual that hears spiritually. This faith is directly imparted to His people as a great gift from Him. Some phases of this faith come to a few THROUGH a preacher but not by a preacher. I have heard it said by ordained brethren, "There will be no preaching unless the preacher comes." Jesus Christ is the preacher that was anointed for this particular work. He was ordained to preach the gospel to the poor. Unless Christ preaches through an individual there will be no preaching. Unless He preaches to an individual there will be no comfort and spiritual strength experienced. Christ is the Word. Every time you are given to hear Christ preach through His ordained ministers your faith is strengthened and your hope renewed. You are not given to thank the preacher but to thank God for the preaching that you so joyfully received. You admire the minister and thank God for him.

"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things." (Romans 10:15) Have you been deeply impressed with the readiness of your pastor to come to you in times of distress when you call upon him? Have you notice how persistently he goes among his scattered flock to administer words of comfort? Have you ever experienced a peaceful calm as you watched a minister walking toward you? When your troubled heart has been calmed as you listened to gospel preaching you have thought, "His feet were guided and directed by the providence of God that he might bring glad tidings of good things to ME." You have noticed that his walk is graced with humility and meekness. You observe that his steps and actions are carefully and prayerfully taken. His feet are not swift to run into trouble and confusion, but he walks beside the still waters. "Surely," you say, "God is guiding his footsteps for he walks in paths of righteousness."

You listen at the words he speaks. They calm your troubled breast and soothe your aching heart. They are words of peace that settles your confused mind. He tells you of good things — that our God reigns in providence and grace, and that Jesus saves you from all your sins. He cries that God is MERCIFUL to your UNRIGHTEOUSNESS, and is a present help in time of trouble. He preaches that it is through the merits of Christ that we have hope of Heaven and immortal glory. You desire to be in complete fellowship of the Saints. You are made willing to come out from among this untoward generation, follow your Lord in baptism, and be numbered with this peculiar people who trust only in the Lord. May God enable those of you who are not numbered with those who have believed with their hearts and confessed with their mouth to do so. May He give you strength and courage to, "Go home (to the church) to your friends (those who feel little but trust in God) and tell them how great things the LORD HATH DONE FOR YOU AND HAD COMPASSION UPON YOU." (Tell your experience.) Those of you who are numbered with the church, may God bless you to thank Him for the fellowship of your brethren. May God sanctify these meditations to your comfort and edification is my prayer.

E. J. L.

MEN HAVE A WAY OF THEIR OWN

It is very grievous to those who know something of the working of the Spirit

in their hearts, and are brought into the realities of true spiritual worship, to read in the public press and to hear through various mediums such as we have quoted in this issue under the heading "WE QUOTE". To say that we may not expect anything else of men does not alleviate the distress. We are reminded of the feelings of Lot, as stated by the Apostle Peter: "And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked. For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds."

For more than forty years we have been reading and hearing, and sometimes seeing, the various doctrines and ways in which many present what they call the gospel, and the manner which they proclaim men are brought to Christ. With all this, we ask ourselves the question, How can men profess that the Bible is their authority — their only authority — and yet believe and proclaim as they do. Surely it is demonstrated that there are yet those whose eyes have not seen, ears have not heard, neither have entered into their hearts, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

What child of grace, who sees and hears these things — these melodramatic methods of stirring up the flesh to fear and profession, does not realize the travesty upon wonderful and serious matters!

To some extent we were partaker of these things in our youth; so we can testify that men believe and practice only what they know. And it must be remembered that there is a way which seems right to them. But it also must be remembered that these things are always contrary to the revealed things of God; for, The carnal mind is enmity against God.

Perhaps there are not many who are insincere in what they do. But sincerity of purpose can never be held as authority for transcending the very fundamentals of revelation. Evidently there are not many who *actually believe* the Bible to be the written word of God — the revelation which God has given of his decrees and purposes. How many profess that it is, and at the same time believe and teach contrary to it! How many profess a zeal for the glory and power of God, and yet would limit the accomplishment of his purposes to the *will and desire of men!*

We are satisfied that the reason for such is that men neither know God, nor themselves — neither know the power and majesty of God, nor themselves as dead in trespasses and sins. But whether they know it or not, these things are true. To be dead in this sense is to be dead to all things spiritual, and to be without means or ability to rise above the things they have by the "spirit of man". In this condition men have only a natural religion; and while they profess to believe in and worship the true and living God, they have their own notions about the matter, and are at varience with the things God has revealed.

It is impossible to reconcile their belief and practices with the plain import of revelation. And we may be sure that God makes no compromise with them. When God told Moses, "See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount", he was explicit. (Hebrews 8:5) When Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out", he was explicit. (John 6:37) So was the Apostle when he said, "As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." (Galatians 1:9). And do we not read, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

So, all truth is laid before us by the voice of authority: and no man can go

beyond (or fall short of) these things without disclaiming himself.

There is a stiuation which is not recognized by many, but which we must call attention to. And that is, the departure which began even in the days of the Apostles and grew step by step during the years. These things the Apostles warned against. They renounced the new things and those who taught them. Nevertheless, under the leadership of those who were far removed from the teachings of the Spirit, during the second and following centuries many things were added both in doctrine and practice, until those who retained the name of Christians were so far removed from the pattern that scripture criterion meant little to them. Yet with all of this, it must be remembered that there were many who stood firmly against these new things; and that these, and those who followed them, are the ones who preserved the true doctrine and order of the gospel; and that these and these alone are they who worship God in spirit and truth.

It is often stated by them that we need to return to the "old time gospel". But in returning, they must not stop at the things of the Nineteenth Century, nor at the so called Reformation, nor at the Third, nor yet at the Second Century, but all the way back to the Apostolic teaching, before there could be a returning to the old time gospel. Our readers may easily trace these departures in any of the many histories available, such as, Hassell's, Mosheim's Neander's, Jones', Orchard's, and many others.

We have often pondered over the fact that a great majority of the members of religious bodies today (and during the centuries) are not concerned any farther than the teachings of their own leaders. They are followers of men. They are not interested enough to inquire into matters of doctrine and practices; and even if any are interested, they can find nothing wrong unless stirred up of the Spirit to make an honest inquiry. Such is the darkness that prevails in the hearts of both teachers and pupils.

These teachers would have us believe that we are not dead in trespasses and sins: not dead to spiritual things in our Adamic life, but that we have it within our ability to go far beyond the realm of nature and enter into the things of the Spirit of God. And this is in spite of the declaration of inspiration — by Jesus himself — that men cannot see the kingdom of God except they are born again; and who declared it to be beyond the natural abilities of men by saying, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the spirit." So, being born of the spirit does not mean that by exercise of their natural wills men may bring themselves to this birth. It does not mean that a person may decide to change his ways, "accept Christ", and go through a form of baptism (baptismal regeneration), and are thereby born of the spirit. Thousands have done this who show no fruits of the spirit; and we may safely say that thousands have "accepted Christ", whom Christ has never known in a saving sense, and who are as graceless as they ever were. Their very walk and talk proves it.

So, what do we have in today's "Return to Faith"? Why, it is the same they have ever contended for. Thousands flock to their revivals — and what do they hear?: God sent his Son Jesus Christ into the world to save the fallen race of Adam, and that He has sent preachers, evangelists, etc. to present it to all men, and to use every means possible to persuade all men to accept the salvation offered; for God requires that men renounce the devil and the ways of sin, and believe on Jesus Christ; which they can do if they will. Men can be born again (which many will admit is necessary) by showing their willingness, by prayer, by being baptized and joining a church, etc. And that they can keep themselves in the way of salvation

by keeping the faith, supporting the cause, and being full of good works, until they will finally inherit their reward for well doing when they leave this world.

That the above is the substance of modern preaching cannot be denied. We have ourself heard the terrors of Hell described before unregenerated people with such agonizing fury that they have become so afraid of the Devil that, in order to escape, they will attempt to do anything they are told to do. Their fear is such that they grasp at a straw; and the straw is nothing more than human will and effort. They make a profession, but many of their professions amount to nothing more than, If they will do the best they can — the best they know, then God will reward them for their good intentions. Do not these say that God can do nothing for you unless you will let him; do not they say that you must choose whom you will serve; do they not contend that God has done all he can, but that he wants every body to be saved?

But we forbear to pursue the subject further, except to say that when the end comes, when Christ shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father: when he shall have put down all rule and all authority. (for he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet), and the last enemy, death, is destroyed, then every one of these whose names are written in the Lamb's book of Life will be safely in the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world; and there won't be a stranger to the amazing grace of God among them.

How clearly the Apostle summed up the faith of God's elect in the eighth chapter of Romans when he wrote: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

We would not have any feel that we are opposed to moral teaching for the betterment of human society. We are as much concerned about juvenile delinquency, etc., as anybody. But we do wish to be understood as saying that human agencies, acting on human intellect and conscience, go no further than human capacities for reform; and cannot be rightly called religion — that is, of the Lord Jesus Christ. Nor is this sort of reform a worshiping of God in spirit and in truth.

J. D. W.

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115 N. O'Neal Avenue,
Hopkinsville, Ky.

To the Editors of the Signs:
Dear Brethren:

Although I am unworthy to address you so. It is not that you need me, but the thought oftimes come to me, What could I do without you, the Old Baptists; for I have no where else to turn. I feel to know that they have the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. He told his disciples, saying, I am the way, the truth and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me. And no man cometh unto me except my Father which sent me draw him. Brethren, I hope I have been brought as is recorded in the forty-fifth Psalm, and am drawn nigh unto Him.

I haven't time to write as I feel I would like to, but only intend to renew my subscription. Am sending $10.00; please renew my subscription for one year. Am also sending obituary of my mother, and I would appreciate it if you will send me five copies of the issue in which it is published; and use the re-

mainder of the money as you see need.

Yours in hope of life beyond this veil,

(Elder) W. Y. Chandler

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD"

Thus spake the Son of God when, mantled in the flesh, he stood arraigned at the bar of Pilate; and when, if there had been anything in the elements of this world which could contribute to the defense or benefit of his kingdom, they must have been called forth into action. All the interests of the kingdom which he claimed as his own, centered in him, and the destiny of that kingdom, for weal or woe, was at that important moment hinged upon the result of what was at that time progressing. None of the princes of this world knew him; he had not made a revelation of what he was, even to those who sat empowered to deliver him to death. He had not labored in his ministry to make himself familiar to the crowned heads of the nations of the earth; he had proposed no treaties or terms of alliance with them; nor had he called on them, or any of them, to propose terms for his acceptance; for the nature of his kingdom was so radically different from every other kingdom under heaven, that it was not possible that an alliance could be entered into that could subserve the true interests of either party.

His kingdom truly was destined to encounter the violence, enmity, wrath, strife, and persecution of kingdoms and men, both in her King, and in the subjects of her government. The powers which should oppose him in person and in his people, were not such as he was compelled to succumb to for want of power to resist, for he reminded Pilate that he would not have had any power if it had not been given him; and on another occasion he declared that he was able to call on his Father, who would instantly honor his requisition for more than twelve legions of angels — a force sufficient to overwhelm all earthly powers engaged against him; but how, in that case, could the scriptures be fulfilled? Not an intimation was made of raising up an earthly force to resist the assaults of the enemies of his kingdom — even if a force had been requisite, he would have called them from the heavenly world. We may well conclude, that if in that most trying hour, when his holy soul was pressed within him, he had nothing to ask of the rulers of this world, there never could a period arrive when the powers of earthly princes should be required to defend him or his cause. To those who tempted him with their questions concerning tribute money, he said, Render unto Caesar the things which belong to Caesar, and unto God the things which belong to God; thus clearly intimating that the governments were not only distinct from each other, but that the distinction should be perpetual; and that the requisitions of Caesar, or of the governments of the nations, had to do with men, as citizens of the world, and that their obligation to earthly magistrates and rulers was not relaxed nor abolished by the administration of his laws. And again, that the things of God were not to be rendered to Caesar, but unto God.

Things of a civil nature, relating to the natural rights of men, were to be settled by God's own providential appointment, by human legislation; but the things aside from a respect for and obedience to earthly potentates, in natural matters, belonging to God, such as matters of faith, of conscience, of religion, were not things over which the kings of the earth had any supervision or power, and things in which his subjects were not at liberty, under any circumstances, to submit to the dictation or legislation of any other than God himself.

The kingdom of Jesus is not of this

world, in its origin, elements, provisions, policy, protection, government, or destiny. Its origin is heaven — it is a heavenly kingdom. The King is the Lord from heaven; he said, I proceeded forth and came out from the Father; and again, "What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before," etc. The subjects of his kingdom are of the same origin; for, "Both he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren;" and he said, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world," etc. The laws for the regulation of this heavenly kingdom are not of earthly enactment. Christ, the anointed of the Father, is the sole Legislator, and he, by his Spirit, writes his law upon them, and sets it up in the hearts of his children. The elements, or component parts, viewed separately or collectively, are all of God, and every plant that the heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up. The provisions on which this kingdom is sustained, were give us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and being prior to, could not be of the world. Grace, mercy, peace, righteousness, and truth, with all things else necessary for the consumnation of the everlasting and unchanging decree of God, were treasured up in the Head of the church before the world began; and all the provisions of his spiritual house on which his poor are fed, were brought down from the abounding and overflowing fountain from which every good and perfect gift cometh. And he will abundantly bless her provisions and fill her poor with bread.

The policy of this kingdom is from above, "For our conversation is in heaven," and it is therefore as becometh the children of God. All earthly religions have to depend on human policy, human wisdom, and humanly devised means: but not so with the kingdom which no man can see except he be born again.

The protection of that kingdom is of him who is a wall of fire round about it, and the glory in its midst. All antichristian religious establishments desire the arm of human government — regal power, and human means, for their protection; but not so with the kingdom of Jesus Christ, — the eternal God is the refuge of his people, and underneath them are the everlasting arms.

All provision on which the subjects of the kingdom of our Lord are fed, comforted, instructed, and secured, are spiritual, and therefore cannot emanate from any other than a spiritual fountain. Although the world, the flesh and Satan have volunteered, like the aliens about Jerusalem in the days of Nehemiah, to furnish God's people with food, the order of the government forbids the traffic with them; and it is impossible that the children of the kingdom should be fed with any other food than that which God has graciously provided, and abundantly blessed.

Should the government of the kingdom of our Redeemer be to any extent divided with angels or men, whatsoever part or portion these should administer, must necessarily detract so much from the power and glory of Christ. "The government shall be upon his shoulder; and of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." So stands the record of the Holy One. The subjects of his government are forbidden to call and man **master**, or **father**, as their Master and spiritual Progenitor is in heaven, and nothing can be born of the flesh but flesh; so that without being **born again** no man can see the kingdom of God. A legislature of unregenerated men who cannot see the kingdom, would be very poorly qualified to legislate for a kingdom which is to them absolutely invisible; and if there were none but regenerated men seated in legislation, they being by the new birth qualified to see the kingdom of God,

would to a man know by the same illuminating work of the Spirit, that they could do nothing to aid in the legislative or executive departments of the Messiah's kingdom.

The destiny of the kingdom of which we write differs essentially from that of all other kingdoms. The best systems of human government are destined to crumble to the ground. In the providence of God, empires are founded, kingdoms and republics are raised up, they reach their climax, and then decline, and finally cease to be reckoned among the things that be; but the kingdom of Jesus is an everlasting kingdom, and a dominion that shall never end. It shall never be changed, superceded, or transferred to other hands. The mountains shall depart, the hills shall be removed, the earth and sea shall pass away, and all the elements of this world shall be dissolved; but the kingdom of our God shall survive them all, and flourish in eternal bloom. How presumptuous, then, for monarchs of the earth, whose transcient glory is as a withering flower, or human legislatures, which God shall obliterate, to prepare the way of the rising empire of his Son, to reach forth the guilt-polluted fingers of their power, to point out the course in which God requires his children to move.

Seeing, then, that we look for such thing — seeing that we have received a kingdom which is not of this world, which cannot be moved — let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, November 1, 1845; republished by request)

The opinions and doings of men are of no value unless motivated by the Spirit of Truth; if otherwise, they "darken counsel by words without knowledge".

WE QUOTE:

"Mass evangelism, which only a few years ago was thought outmoded, is reappearing with dynamic impact.

By brilliant salesmanship, moving preaching, capable management, the arts of the hippodrome and amphitheatre are again winning men and women to Christ. Those who find God by this method, and who resolve to live a new life, are being integrated into the churches by the most skillful educational evangelism yet developed.

God speaks to each generation in its own terms, thru the language of the day. In this television age of glamor and drama, He has placed His hand on three winsome personalities of extraordinary personal appeal: Billy Graham, Charles Templeton and Fulton J. Sheen." — Quoted from *Washington Daily News*, under caption, *"Graham, Templeton and Sheen lead the Return to Faith."*

"This is the era of the post-Christian, the man who has had religion, gave it up and is now coming back to it, a Catholic Bishop from England said here yesterday.

The phenominal success of the Billy Graham revival meetings in England in recent weeks was in part due to the new "hunger for religion" that Englishmen are experiencing, the Most Rev. T. Leo Parker, Bishop of Northampton, said.

But he described the revival type of experience as "a flash in the pan" that creates a great sensation but provides no lasting spiritual support.

The lack of religion and the great numbers of post-Christians have combined to make England into a "missionary country", he declared." — Quoted from a Washington newspaper.

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT
SISTER SUSAN M. MOORE

WHEREAS, It pleased our Heavenly Father on December 7, 1954 to call from earthly life Sister Susan M. Moore, a member of this church. She had continuously been a member since placing her membership here by relation on July 9, 1948. Although we feel our loss, we are persuaded that our loss is her Eternal gain and we feel that her Spirit is sweetly in perfect peace with her blessed Redeemer, and that her body is resting in sweet sleep in Jesus awaiting His second coming and the

glorious resurrection to be raised fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

THEREFORE, Be it resolved by Rehobeth Church, that we bow in humble submission to God's Sovereign and righteous will who doeth all things well. To her bereaved and lonely children and other relatives we extend our heartfelt sympathy. May the Lord comfort and sustain them in their sorrow and give them a sweet Spirit of reconciliation to His blessed and Holy Will is our humble prayer.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be placed on our church record, a copy sent to the Signs Of The Times, and a copy sent to the family.

THIS written by order of the church in conference on December 11, 1954, and read and approved in conference on January 8, 1955.

Elder R. W. Rhodes, Moderator.
Elder W. A. Speer, Clerk.

OBITUARIES

EARLY LINWOOD ROBEY

Early Linwood Robey was born in Fairfax County, Virginia, November 24, 1870; and died February 3, 1955. He was a son of the late Lewis Henry and Charlotte Hunt Robey; and was united in marriage to Beatrice Thompson McCarty April 18, 1900. To this union were born the following children, who, with his widow, survive: De Orman L. Robey, Chantilly, Virginia; Mrs. Gladys R. Embrey, Herndon, Virginia; Louis E. and De Lano L. Robey, Washington, D. C. He is survived also by one sister, Mrs. Lulu Freiss, Washington, D. C.; and one brother, Irving Robey, Arlington, Virginia; and by two step-children, Arthur McCarty, Washington, D. C., and Everett McCarty, Manassas, Virginia; and by seven grandchildren and eleven great grand-children.

Brother Robey lived his entire life in the vicinity of Navy, Virginia; and attended the services at Frying Pan Church, going in his youth with his parents, they being members at Frying Pan. On August 10, 1946, he and Sister Robey united with this church, and were baptized by Elder H. H. Lefferts. Brother Robey was firmly established in the doctrine of God our Saviour, and would speak of the goodness and mercy of God in His many providential dealing with him. He loved the assemblings of the brethren and was found among them at every opportunity. The last few years were happy ones in the church for him; and his home life was a happy one, for he had the loving care of all the members of his family.

The Lord who had sustained him in life was manifestly with him to the end. He regretted to leave his family, but, knowing that his departure was at hand, he said all was well; for he spoke of the Lord talking with him and assured him that He would not forsake him. He asked those about him to tell the writer that all was well with him. His last expression was, The Lord is in his temple, waiting to receive me. Such dying faith is strengthening to all of us — surely we weep not as those who have no hope.

The funeral was conducted at Frying Pan Church by the writer, where the large number of brethren and friends assembled gave evidence of the love and respect in which he was held by those who knew him; as did the abundance of beautiful flowers. Burial was in the Chestnut Grove Cemetery, Herndon, Virginia.

May the Lord comfort all who mourn with the assurance that all is well with our dear brother.

John D. Wood

JAMES THOMAS GORDON

Brother Gordon, after a long illness and much physical suffering and affliction, passed away at the home of his nephew, William Gilbert, with whom he had made his home for several years, in the Liberty community, near Hope, Arkansas, on July 13, 1954. He was born January 7, 1869, in Jones County, Georgia, but had lived most of his life in the community where he died.

Brother Gordon united with New Hope (Arkansas) Primitive Baptist Church at an early age. He was a faithful member until his death, and attended regularly during the approximately sixty-five years of membership, until his health prevented. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace and grace alone, through the redemption that is in Chirst Jesus; and he rejoiced to hear the doctrine of God our Saviour proclaimed.

He is survived by one brother, W. S. Gordon, Patmos, Arkansas; and the following nephews: William and Frank Gilbert, Washington, Arkansas; Gerald Gilbert, Exeter, California; and one niece, Mrs. Cecil Weaver, Hope, Arkansas.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer, his pastor, at Herndon-Cornelius Funeral Home, Hope, Arkansas, on July 14, 1954; and his body was laid to rest in a cemetery near where he had lived, to await the great and glorious day when the Lord will come again without sin unto salvation, when the bodies of all saints that are asleep in Jesus will be raised glorified.

May the Lord bless and comfort his brother, nephews and niece, and other relatives, the

brethren and sisters and all that mourn his passing: Your loss is his eternal gain.

(Elder) W. A. Speer

MRS. MARTHA ANN WILKES

Mrs. Martha Ann Wilkes, daughter of Joseph Burton and Mary Francis Cook Matthews, was born December 16, 1861; and departed this life August 27, 1954, making her stay on earth nearly ninety-three years. Her father, Elder J. B. Matthews, was born in North Carolina April 9, 1822, and went to Georgia in later years, where he met Mary Francis Cook, of Griffin, Georgia, and they were married. They came to Arkansas in the year 1856.

Martha Ann was reared in the home of Primitive Predestinarian Baptists of the old School. Her grand-father, Elder Joab Cook, was among the ones who organized the Providence Church in Lincoln County, Arkansas, before the Civil War; which was the church she attended until her health prevented her from going. For seven years or more she was confined to a wheel chair, and her suffering was at times very severe. Yet she said it was the love and mercy of her Saviour Jesus Christ that held her up in her afflictions. The last few months her mind began to get weaker, and at times she did not know who or where she was, but her children and relatives did all that could be done for her comfort. She longed to go to the heavenly home on high, having a hope that she was in that number.

She was united in marriage to James Caswell Wilkes in 1879, who died in 1889. She was left with five small children, and she labored hard to rear them. She united with the church in 1935, and was a regular attendant as long as she was able. After being confined, The Signs of the Times was her only comfort, except when her pastor, Elder H. H. Phillips, or a visiting minister would go to her home and have services. This she appreciated and enjoyed very much. She was the last of eleven children to go.

One daughter, Mrs. Naomi Flynn, died in July, 1927. She leaves to mourn her passing the following children: Carrie C. Wilkes; Bessie E. Wilkes; Mrs. Lutie E. Womack; and James Caswell Wilkes, Jr.; together with nine grand-children and two grandsons, and a large number of neices and nephews.

Her pastor, Elder H. H. Phillips, conducted the funeral service at Providence Church. She was laid to rest in the Jones Cemetery, near Star City, to await the coming of the Lord and Saviour. Though we mourn her passing, we would not want her back in her suffering. We feel our loss is her gain in that heavenly home where there is no pain or sorrow. Written by a daughter,

Mrs. W. A. Womack

MRS. ADAH (VEASEY) CHANDLER

I desire to write in memory of our departed mother, Mrs. Adah Veasey Chandler. Mother was born near Madisonville, Kentucky, June 25, 1869; the daughter of George and Elizabeth Veasey. She professed a hope in Christ in October, 1887, and was baptized by Elder Ben Pullam.

She was married to Elder L. Chandler, February 6, 1898; to this union five children were born. Father passed away in 1931, and the five children are left to mourn their loss, with four half-brothers and one half-sister. Mother always said she could not tell the difference between us children. Her children are: Miss Sallie Chandler and Mrs. Eulua Bagby, Louisville, Kentucky; Mrs. Queen Clark, Henderson, Kentucky; Mrs. Robert Satterfield, Eugene, Oregon and George Chandler, Bedford, Indiana. The step-sons are: Joel Chandler, Dallas, Texas; Jack and John Chandler, Henderson, Kentucky; Wayde Y. Chandler, Evansville, Indiana; and step-daughter, Mrs. Rudie Taylor, Sturgis, Kentucky.

I would say to my precious brothers and sisters of the flesh (and I hope in the spirit of Christ), weep not for mother as for one who had no hope; for her hope was in Him whom God raised from the dead, who even now is sitting at the right hand of the Father making intercession for us. But look to Him for comfort, for he, and he alone, can comfort in times of stress when his angel brings the shadow of death to the home. We know that mother was faithful even in death, for her prayer was that Jesus would come and take her home to himself.

It was mother's request that I preach her funeral, but the burden was so great that I thought it best to get someone else. So by request of the children, her funeral was preached at the Maas Funeral Parlors, Louisville, Kentucky, by Elder R. L. Biggs, of Nashville, Tennessee, assisted by the writer.

My prayer is that God may give peace to all that mourn, for He is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. Written by one who loved her not only for herself but for the truth's sake.

W. Y. Chandler

SISTER SUSAN MOORE

Mrs. Susan Moore was born January 21, 1870, and died December 7, 1954. She was married to Cilfton Moore, December 13, 1888.

To this union were born sixteen children, seven boys and six girls: Judge Morris Moore and Anderson Moore, Dardanelle, Arkansas; T. O. Moore, Fort Smith, Arkansas; Perry H. Moore, Des Moines, Iowa; Philip Moore, Tulsa, Oklahoma; and Bryan Moore, Little Rock, Arkansas; Mrs. C. C. Grace, Mrs. Millie Carroll and Mrs. Ira Barnette, Dardanelle, Arkansas; Mrs. John D. Craven and Mrs. William A. Cox, Benton, Arkansas; and Mrs. E. V. Sellars, Fort Smith, Arkansas. Her husband and three children preceded her in death. There are forty-four grand-children and thirty-two great grand-children.

She was born in Yell County, Arkansas, and spent her entire life in and near Centerville and Dardanelle, Arkansas. She was a devoted mother and wife, and was very highly respected by the many who knew her. She was very energetic, and continued to maintain her country home until almost eighty-five years old. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Dodson Springs, fifty-five or more years ago, and was probably baptized by the senior Elder West. She was a loved and faithful member of that church as long as it stood in the faith and order, but it divided; and six or eight years ago she was received by the Rehobbeth Church in the South Ouachita Association. She was wonderfully blessed with the gracious evidences of the light and leadership of the Spirit of God, and, in spite of her age, she visited several of the churches; which showed her love for the church, and the doctrine and order of God's house. To know her was to love her; and to behold the true love and affection of her and her family, was a living testimony that she was a real mother in Israel. The Primitive Baptists of this part of the country became acquainted with her through Brother C. B. Britt, who with the writer and several of our ministers, visited and preached in her home: where she made every effort to entertain them. She loved to talk and communicate with the children of God of the precious faith and experience which is common among the Lord's people. She was a lover and constant reader of the Bible, and had a deep understanding of the mysterious things in it.

I would say to her family and loved ones, weep not as those who have no hope; but rejoice that she sleeps in Jesus, her precious Saviour; and that the time will soon come when He shall call her, when he shall say, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matthew 25:34) May the Lord comfort and console your hearts with these great things, together with that sweet hope that you will be partakers with her.

Funeral services were conducted at Pisgah Church, near Centerville, Arkansas, December 8th, by the writer, with a large congregation of relatives and friends in attendance. She was laid to rest in the Ard Cemetery, with Cronwell Funeral Service in charge. May God bless all who mourn.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

MARY MALINDA GALLOWAY MILES

Mary Malinda Miles was born in Denton, Texas, January 7, 1867, and departed this life May 13, 1953, after an extended illness of several months, making her stay on earth eighty-six years and five months. She was the daughter of the late John Galloway.

God has called home sister Miles, and we, the members of New Providence Primitive Baptist Church deeply feel our loss and humbly bow in submission to God's will. We dearly loved sister Miles, and shall always miss her gentle, loving, faithful advice. She was most efficient and generous of all her time and of her material possessions in helping her church. New Providence Church suffers an unexpressible loss in her going.

Malinda married the late W. E. Miles on January 30, 1887, who proceeded her in death several years ago. He was also a member of this church. To this union were born seven children, of which three boys and two girls are still living. A host of grand-children are left to mourn her death as well as many relatives and friends.

We cannot fill the vacancy left by her going, but we pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit to enable and help us to fill our place and fulfill our duties in the church as sister Miles did.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Paul Poyner and Mr. M. M. Hampton, and her body was laid to rest in the Sinking Spring Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers. She is missed by all who knew her, but we realize our loss is her gain.

Therefore, be it resolved that New Providence Church express to the family and children our sympathy, and pray that God's tender mercy and richest blessings abide with them. A copy of these resolutions will be sent to the family, one copy recorded on our church record, one copy sent to the press of OLD FAITH CONTENDER, one copy to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication. This was adopted while in conference this nineteenth day of September, nineteen hundred and fifty-four.

Moderator,
(Elder) Paul Poyner
Prepared by a committee
Owen McKinney, Clerk
Basil Hutchens
Lenard Pascha, II
Mrs. Zetta Grogan

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 123 DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1955 NO. 5

FAITH

"Faith isn't some sort of mystical thing,
Or the words of a beautiful creed;
Or prayers that are penned by talented souls,
That people stand up to read.
For faith is the power that prompts us to go
And give to the hungering, bread —
Oh, faith means more than a doctrine or two —
For faith without works is dead!

And faith doesn't mean to be kneeling all day,
With a lifting of prayerful hands.
And faith isn't something that makes the great God
Comply with our mortal demands.
And faith ties its girdle and goes out to
To the masses that need to be fed.
Oh, faith means more than a murmered prayer,
For faith without works is dead!

Faith doesn't pass by on the Jericho road
When a brother lies bleeding and hurt,
But stoops and pours oil and wine in the wounds
And lifts the poor man from the dirt.
And faith doesn't sit in the synagogue seat
With glittering gear on its head,
Or strutting garments with widened hems —
For faith without works is dead.

Then give us, O Master, the faith that will go
And minister day after day;
Will even accept the arms of a cross,
If best it may serve in that way:
A faith like the Shepherd's who went for his sheep
Though red were the rocks where he bled.
Oh, faith means more than a doctrine or song —
For faith without works is dead!"

(Selected)

Published by request

EXPERIENCE *

Dudley, Muskoka, Ontario.
August 16, 1934.

Dear Elder Ruston,

The Lord helping me, I will now try and keep my promise made to you in Toronto, by writing my experience, and give the reason of the hope that is within me, which I sincerely hope is not the hope of the hypocrite, which at times I am tempted to fear is the case; but bless the dear Lord, there is usually a little word from Him to keep me from altogether thinking it is. I was born in London, England, on January 28, 1855, of godly parents, although at that time they were freewillers, and remained so for a few years until the scales were taken from their eyes, which happened when I was about three or four years old.

They tried to bring their children up in the fear and admonition of the Lord, which convinced us at least, that they were children of God. All their friends were the same type, and I do not remember ever hearing any conversation but religious; and I many times would go into the room unnoticed and sit on the floor behind my father's chair to listen to them, although I knew not why. The first time I ever thought seriously about death was when my father was a London City Missionary. At the time I was between six and seven years old, when one of my father's hearers died, he having been brought to know the truth under his preaching.

I wondered so much whether he was saved or lost, but it gradually wore off, although whenever I saw a funeral it always reminded me to a certain extent that it would be my turn after a while, and when we were old enough, my sister and I used to often go to the churchyard to read the gravestones which we enjoyed more than anything else. In 1869 we came to Canada, I being fourteen years of age at the time. In the year 1877 I was married, my brother also married my husband's sister at the same time.

In the year 1885 the Lord saw fit to send death into the family. There were eight grand-children belonging to my parents, and within five weeks, six had been carried out from that terrible disease, diphtheria, — two of my brother's children out of three, three of my sister's, (all of hers) and one of mine out of two, varying in ages from two and a half to eight years, each one saying something to enable us to believe they were safe, which was indeed a great comfort.

To say we were about heart-broken is putting it lightly, but not a bit of rebellion seemed to possess any of us, through mercy. Well, one afternoon my sister and her husband came to visit us and she was telling us about different things that her little girl had said when dying, and how strong the child's faith was in Jesus, although blind at the time from the disease. She also told us that as soon as she had taken her last breath, my sister said, "There, if that had been me, I should have been lifting up my eyes in hell now, but she is in Heaven." I replied to my sister, "Well, I always seem to feel that I shall go to Heaven when I die, although I cannot tell why," but I had no sooner said it than something within me said, "What right have you to think that?" and from then on, for between three or four months, my agony of mind was indescribable.

No matter where I looked I could see nothing but hell and the judgment day, and if any poor wretch prayed without ceasing, I did, but all seemed of no avail. I really thought I should go out of my mind. Father used to say "There is a set time to favour Zion," which I firmly believed, but was I included with the inhabitants was what I wanted to know. I was quite sure God would do what seemed good to Him, but that did not give me any relief, and I was almost afraid to continue begging for mercy, and yet I felt I could not stop, for sure I was that Christ alone could save me.

When working about the house one time, deciding that I was shut out, and being in an agony of mind too terrible for words, suddenly my mind was relieved by someone speaking in a kind clear voice into my ear, the words, "Daughter, thy sins which are MANY are all forgiven thee." and for a little while my joy seemed to know no bounds, but only for a short time, for being reminded that my sins were many, kept me in check quite a lot; nevertheless it was a wonderful deliverance. Previous to this, I was afraid to use the prayer of the publican, for fear I did not feel to be such a sinner as I ought, and yet I could not see any good in myself; but the longer I live, the more I realize my sinfulness and helpless condition apart from Christ Jesus.

Sometimes I fear all I have gone through is simply a delusion of Satan, but I have no idea that he ever tries to comfort them that mourn, by pointing them to a crucified Saviour, for one day several years ago I was lying on my bed feeling far from well, when Christ Jesus was shown to me on the cross in the corner of my room, although not a word was spoken to me, yet His look so overcame me and filled me with such intense love as I never experienced before. I seemed to be drawn quite away from this world. I think it was the kind of look that He gave Peter which so overcame him at the time. I do hope I am not deceived, for at times I am tempted to think it is all a delusion of Satan's; for I know quite a lot of his working within me to try to deceive, enemy that he is to all those who look to Christ alone for redemption.

But sure I am that "Whereas I was blind, now I see," and have been made to love all them who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth, and esteem them very highly, feeling to be the least of all God's children, if one at all, which I humbly hope and trust I am. More and more do I realize that if ever my poor soul be saved 'tis Christ must be the way; and I am no less a beggar than I was when the

Lord opened my eyes forty-eight years ago.

My father baptized my sister and me in Lake Muskoka about sixteen months later, and we were two of the few members who formed the little church here at that time, but "Ichabod" now, for all are gone the way of all flesh, or most of them. There were several hunreds of people present to witness it, but if all the world had been there I do not think it would have disturbed my peace of mind at that time. The church is now a thing of the past, I am sorry to say, and the fine gold has become dim. I feel sad, at times, when thinking how fearlessly the Truth of God was declared in its purity at Bala, and fain would I have it so again were it the Lord's will. "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." "Lord, undertake for me." "Abide with me, for it is towards evening, and the day is very far spent," are often the prayers of my heart, and I am no less a beggar than ever I was.

Oh how I long for the courts of our Lord, that I could assemble with the children of our Lord to worship Him here below, for I can truthfully say I love the brethren, although I feel unworthy to mingle with them, — they are to me the excellent of the earth. What passing trifles are all things connected with this world. Surely all is vanity and vexation of spirit, but what have we that we did not receive? What a mercy to be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. Surely it is all of grace that we have been snatched as brands from the terrible wrath of an angry God. How to be thankful enough I know not, it seems too good to be true at times. I do wish I could live more to His honour and glory who has done such great things for me.

I enjoyed the letters written by your dear wife to Sister Jessie Gillis, giving her experience; and after reading them felt guilty that I had not done likewise, so concluded, if the Lord would help me, to write to you. God grant that you may be spared for many years to blow the gospel trumpet on the walls of Zion with no uncertain sound, and may all flies be kept out of the ointment poured forth by the dear ministers of our beloved denomination, for I do love the work of God as proclaimed by them in the Signs. The different writings often lift me up when cast down, for which I thank God and take courage. Alma and I often speak of you all and wish we could mingle with you.

I noticed Sister Stevenson's obituary in this month's Signs. I met her at Sister Gillis's when up there forty years ago. I believe she had just joined the church militant, and I believe she has now joined the church triumphant. What a glorious thought to think that worms of earth should ever be one with Incarnate Deity. The thought is simply overwhelming at times. But the God we adore has given His word for it, and being a God of truth and love we have this hope within us as an anchor of the soul sure and steadfast; as dear Newton says in his hymn, "And can He have taught me to trust in His name, and thus far have brought me to bring me to shame?" No, never!

May the Lord increase our faith and love is my earnest prayer, for I do need His Holy Spirit so much, for without Christ I can do nothing, and He is my only hope and trust, and would to God I could love Him more and serve Him better, for my desire is towards Him. We send our warmest love to your dear wife and all the sect everywhere spoken against, also remember us kindly to your family. Ivy is still in a poor condition physically, she has had a long trying time of it. I hope your patience will not be tried too much in reading this, as I seem to write a lot and only say very little.

From one who is hoping in the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ alone for salvation.

Susie Pauline May

ELECTION

My mind has dwelt on the words

spoken by inspiration in the Bible on the subject of Chosen, or Election of Almighty God. To me, the words Chosen, Election, Chosen in Christ, For the Elect's Sake, Ye are a chosen generation, Who can lay anything to the charge of God's Elect, etc., are all synonymous terms; and pertain to the salvation of every heir of God. We hear nothing about this in the religious world, only in contempt; and sad to relate, some of our own ministers will pass over the subject lightly for fear of offending someone. But the writers of the Bible were not so.

Jesus said, "— But for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen. ." (Mark 13:20) And Peter said, "But ye are a chosen generation. ." (1 Peter 2:9) And Paul said, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect." (Romans 8:33) This is God's work — it is surely his work, we had nothing to do about it: It was consummated in Christ before the world was made. So it is an eternal election, and concerns all His people whom Jesus died for on the cross. All the elect in olden time looked for the Saviour to come, just as the elect look back to him that has come, and they had a message of love and security, and grace for His elect. With the poet:

"Away back there removed from sight,
Where everything that was, was right:
God all around, below, above,
Unlimited in power and love."

"Who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect." — "Who can say what doeth thou." Is it not lawful for him to do that he will with his own? Has not the potter power over the clay, to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? Can anyone dispute his right? None of them who have the evidence in them will, for the great God has revealed it unto them by his Spirit. I have showed by the Scriptures that God has an elected people; that he has chosen them in Christ before the world was made, and that it is an unconditional election. Man never had anything to do with it: man was not consulted in the matter. It is a personal affair, and concerns each one of the Lord's people: the election has obtained it for them, for he chose them for his habitation; and Jesus has told them that he would never leave them, nor forsake them. They are builded together for this purpose, and are kept by his power. Think, dear brethren: His is talking to you personally. If we do not believe the truth spoken by the Apostles and prophets; if we do not feel the influence of the Spirit in our hearts, we are none of his. His grace is sufficient for us, and by his stripes we are healed. "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that you shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." (2 Peter 2:9)

The doctrine of God's eternal, unconditional election has been my meat and my drink for over sixty years. I have only hinted at some of the highlights of it: maybe some of the elders will be given to write more fully on it. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." (Jude 24-25)

(Elder) George L. Weaver
2802 Marcum Terrace,
Huntington 5, W. Va.

LET THE CHIPS FALL WHERE THEY MAY

Swan Quarter, N. C.

Elder D. V. Spangler —
Dear Child of God, and Servant of the Most High:

My pen has been silent for twenty or thirty years; yet in 1906, the year I united with the children of God at the age of sixteen, I did much writing. Privately and publicaly I had a large spiritual correspondence, but they have passed to their reward, and there are so few

left today who know me, or I know them.

Yes, forty-eight years ago; yet it seems that there are times today that I have a desire to write to the children of God, and let them know that I am still standing fast in the faith unshaken, as I was the day I was received. But for this faith, surely I would not have gone among a people when I was so young; a people who are hated and despised by false professors as the Primitive Baptists are. I just could not understand why the Lord should make choice of me, when there were so many of my school mates who were much better than I; or so it seemed. He told me it was to show forth his power; and so it has been with much tribulation I have come.

I tell you, whenever and whereever there are any among the children of God in name only, yes, professors and not in possession of the profession, there will be persecution. They come in to spy out the liberties of the children of God, and use it to their own advantage to destroy the peace and fellowship, and to divide. The children of God are commanded to watch, as well as pray; and there is a woe pronounced, yes, fixed upon and against all those that are at ease in Zion — the church of the true and living God.

One thing is lacking: we have weak pulpits. It did not used to be so. Oh, no! They cried aloud and spared not. Yes, they lifted their voices as trumphets, fearless of friend or foe; for they were not seeking to please men for advantage: they had no person nor persons in admiration. Such as Elder E. E. Lundy, Elder Sylvester Hassell, Elder Gilbert Beebe, and so many others who have passed on. Why can't they be today? has God changed? Oh, no! I hope the time is not far distant when the servants of God will throw off, and away, everything that would wound the cause of Christ and the Truth; and with the two-edged sword — the law and the gospel — one to kill and the other to make alive, apply it, letting the chips fall where they may. Let it never be said that the banner of Truth has been lowered for fear of offending. If the truth offends, let it offend. Truth is the testing rod, for no one who knows the truth can be offended at the truth. The servants of God are not sent to preach to them on the outside. Oh, No! But to them on the inside. And by preaching, those who are fit for the inside are soon discovered.

If you deem this worthy, you may publish it. May God keep you, and all His servants, as he did Paul, crying, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel." And as you grow in years, may you grow stronger and stronger, more fearless in the gospel.

Your sister in hope,
Effie H. Carawan

"There is a river the streams whereof make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most high." (Psalms 46:4.)

The writer has read the above passage of scriptures many, many times over a long period of time, and each time I felt that there was something in the language that did not appear on the surface; that a literal expression covered something of a spiritual meaning and value. But until last Sunday morning I was never able to make anything of it. On that occasion I had no more than read the last word of it until these two words instantly came into my mind: "The Ministry." With that as a beginning the whole thing seemed to become perfectly clear to me; yet I may be as wrong as wrong can be.

I now understand the "river" to be the ministry, the streams thereof to be the God called ministers and their various and varied gifts, and the City of God to be the Church. We know that in nature, a river is a large stream made up of smaller streams merging into one stream. There are creeks, brooks, rivulets, branches, and in this Southwestern

country, arroyos — dry gullies, which become swollen by flash floods and discharge their waters into still other streams. The Mississippi River is not just one big river. It is a combination of all the other rivers and smaller streams which discharge their waters into one common stream which becomes larger by reason thereof. In Ephesians 4:7, 8, 11 and 12 we read: "But unto everyone of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore, he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." It may be that all the fault lies in me but I have heard ministers speak eloquently and seemingly with knowledge of what they were speaking about, and still I got nothing from their sermons; when I would hear still other people talking about how much that sermon, or those sermons, meant to them. On the other hand, I have heard preachers who held me spell-bound and who really lifted me up while the brother on the seat right by me went to sleep because he was getting nothing from the sermon but a soothing noise. When we go to our associations, I feel that the reason we seem, all of us, to get so much good from the preaching is because of the variety of gifts in the great number of preachers we hear. The sum total of these varied gifts among our ministers is the "river." All of them together is the "ministry." The individual gifts are the streams of that river and they make glad the City of God which is the church. From the time Christ said "On this Rock will I build my church" the Holy Master has furnished HIS people, the members of that church, with such gifts as apostleship, prophecy, evangelism, teaching and pastoral qualities. No one single gift has made glad the individual members of the City of God (the church) but all of the gifts have and will continue to make glad the City of God (the members of HIS Church). How they make them glad is a subject for hours of preaching which I will not undertake to do. What I have here undertaken was more than one of my ability should assume the liberty of doing. All I have said might well have been put in these words: "There is a river (ministry) the streams (the various gifts) whereof make glad the City of God (the church).

Submitted in humility,
Hubert T. Faulk
325 W. Missouri St.
El Paso, Texas

San Juan, Texas.
January 27, 1955

To the Household of Faith:

I would like to address all who sent us post cards, and get well cards. I was taken very sick two weeks before Christmas, and have now been able to sit up about five days; so could not answer your sweet messages of love and friendship. We received cards from many whose names we did not remember. For the last three years we have been attending the good associations, sometimes being nine hundred miles from home, and away seven or eight weeks at a time; and, of course, met so many of the dear brethren and sisters in Christ. I do not have language to express the joy and comfort of being with you, and hearing the wonderful messages of love and comfort of the ministry. We started on the same trip last year, but my husband, Elder Reid, was taken very sick while we were at Gladewater, Texas; so we had to turn back homeward. It was two weeks before we got home; he had a long siege of sleeping sickness, from which he has not entirely recovered. But we hope we are thankful to the alwise God, whom we feel to knew does all things well. We devise our way, but God directs our steps.

Dear brethren, it seems we have enjoyed the writings in the Signs more this winter than we ever have —

though it seems it is as good as can be. It may be because we have been mostly shut-in since last September. We look forward to each issue with the comforting letters. Oh, that I had language to express to God's people, the love I hope I have for them. It seems that I have been shut up so long, and when the light is turned on for just a few minutes, I feel to know I love them whereever they be. My greatest desire in this life is that God in his mercy will make me submissive to his holy and righteous will; and cause me to say, Lord, not my will but thine be done; and in all my trials and tribulations, let me bow in humble submission.

Well, dear saints, one and all, I only wanted to thank each of you who remembered us with their cards during Christmas and our sickness. We have not been able to answer you, but have written this to the Signs of the Times to thank you, and hope the dear editors will publish it soon. Pray for us.

Elder J. B. Reid and wife.

Pilot, Virginia

Signs of the Times:

Enclosed find check to renew my subscription. I am also sending a copy of some of my mother's writing which I found in her home after her passing a little more than four years ago. Would like to see it in the Signs, if you care to publish it.

Sincerely,
Mrs. A. R. Reed

EXPERIENCE ✦

When I was but a child I began to be troubled about myself — I was such a sinner. I do not remember just my age, but will say ten or twelve. I would go to bed at night and could not sleep, but would cry and beg the Lord for mercy. I would often turn my pillow over when I would get up in the morning, to keep anyone from seeing it was wet with tears. I would try to pray and beg for mercy, but it seemed that my words would only leave my lips.

I was in this condition for several years. When the preachers would be in my father's home, they would sit and talk of God and of his goodness; and I would listen to them until I could not hide the tears. Then I would leave the room, yet desiring to hear them talk.

But when it was God's will to deliver me, he came to me in a dream. I dreamed that God was to preach at a certain place, and I went to hear him. When I got there, there was a crowd of people, and they were all robed in white. I thought I was not fit to sit with them, and expected to take my seat to one side; then my Saviour turned to me and told me to come up in front with the rest. If he has ever spoken to me, it was in this dream. Sometimes I am so doubtful whether I am one of these little ones or not. I have no doubt as to the doctrine of the Old Baptists being the true doctrine, when I hear them give God all the honor.

After the dream my burden left me and I had a desire to be baptized — and often dreamed of being baptized, but I did not feel that I was worthy to be with such people. I would go to preaching, and when they would sing and shake hands, I would think, Oh, if I could be with them. They were the sweetest people I ever saw; and are yet when I have the spirit to see them as I did then. I went on with this desire for several years, until the time came that I felt if I did not go, I could not live. I went to the water where a dear sister, Minnie Cole, was to be baptized, and told them a part of what I have written; and was received there at the water and baptized by Elder Amos Dickerson. (October, 1909)

It was a calm time for me for some time after that; but I have had many doubts since that time. And I feel that I will as long as I remain in this world of trouble. But I feel sometimes that when this is all over, I will see Him as

he is and be satisfied.

Your sister in hope,
Ibra Martin,
Pilot, Va.

R. F. D. 3,
Wadesboro, N. C.

Dear Kindred in both flesh and spirit:

As I am a shut-in today with another attack of bronchitis, I thought I would express a little of what the Lord has done for me. As dear sister Harriett Little Gray wrote in the last issue of the Signs, "What shall I write," I too dear one am in the same condition. So often I have felt so low and alone, and have been made to beg the Lord for mercy; and would say, "O, Lord, if only I could pray, but I know not how to pray or what to pray for, for I don't know my needs." It is the spirit that prayeth — Christ maketh intercession for the saints.

The same day that I received my last issue of the Signs, I also received a small gift of money from one of my brothers and his wife; also a little gift from my oldest nephew for Xmas. After opening the letter and Xmas cards from my loved ones, I picked up the Signs and started reading my brother's (Fred Cobb) and his dear wife's letter and poem. Then I began to read sister Gray's good letter. I thought, how sweet to be remembered by loved ones, and I must confess that the tears flowed freely. I am not ashamed to confess it — what a relief our tears are sometimes!

O, what wonderous love is this! Dear ones, how I wish that I could express my love for God and his little ones, as some can. But I do desire to write a little now and then to be left on record after I am gone, hoping that my dear companion and precious son may read it some day and rejoice.

Not long ago I dreamed that my dear companion and I were at an association, and among other things, I saw him weeping freely, and was just as anxious to sing the good old hymns as I. His name is with the Missionaries, but he never goes to hear them now. He goes with me often to hear the Old Baptist and seems to enjoy it more and more. As sister Gray said in her letter, I believe that God predestinated all things to be just as they are coming to pass. He has all power over all things — praise him to whom all praise and honor is due.

Brother Spangler, please excuse this scribble. I have a growth under my right arm, and my arm and hand is getting so stiff; I know I use it too much, but we are poor and afflicted, both husband and I, and I desire to help all I can. I know it could be worse with us though. God never makes a mistake — he does all things well. If not mistaken, I've been made to feel that my afflictions are blessings in disguise. He knows our every need: he casts down and he raises us up.

If this is suitable for the Signs, then use it; if not then cast it aside. I love to hear from friends and loved ones. I beg an interest in your prayers. I surely appreciate the Signs, for I enjoy it.

Your unworthy sister,
(Mrs.) Melba Vaughn

OUR EXPERIENCES MEAN MUCH TO US

Burlington, N. C.

Dear Readers of
The Signs of The Times:

If I can, I would like to write a few lines, since I have been asked several times to; but you and I know that without the help of the good Lord I can do nothing.

I can truthfully say of these fifteen years I have been with the Primitive Baptists, that I have spent some of my happiest days; not that I feel that I mean anything to the church, but you good people mean so much to me. I think I can truthfully say that I wouldn't want to live any longer if

I couldn't live with the church. I look forward from one weekend to another to go to meetings and being with the brethren, even if I don't get something out of the preaching every time I go.

I tried so hard to stay out of the church, but was shown that in my weakness I could do nothing. The struggle I went through none but the good Lord knows; and I will be able to tell you only a little. I was under such a burden for several years that I felt I just couldn't live much longer: I felt that I had stood all that I could stand, and I was not fit to live and not fit to die. But early one morning, I don't know whether asleep or awake, I saw someone come and stand by my bed, and spoke these words, "The Lord will put no more on you than you can bear". It seemed that all my troubles left me, and everything was all right; and I thought I wouldn't have to join the church. But it wasn't very long until my troubles were worse than ever; and my daily cry was, Lord have mercy on me.

Many times I would dream the same thing over and over; I dreamed I was up in the sky trying to fly to heaven. I would fly and fly, but just couldn't make it all the way; something black was flying behind me, and I was badly frightened. I thought it was Satan, and would wake up and turn over, hoping that I would not dream it again; but I would dream the same thing over again. After so long a time, I do not know how long, I was still trying to fly to heaven and the black thing was not behind me, and I got to heaven. I thought it was the most beautiful place I had ever seen for it was lined with gold. It seemed that it was too good a place for me; but it is a dream I will never forget.

One night I awoke, and it seemed that I was saying over and over again: God's people are a willing people; and I think they are the most willing people in the world. I am fearful of calling myself a child of God, — I only hope that I have a hope, but what I do have only the good Lord could have given it; and, if I could, I would not exchange it for ten thousand worlds like this.

I must close, but I haven't told half of what I would like; it can't be put in words. You good people know that it is better felt than told. May the good Lord bless all of us as he sees fit. A little sister in Christ Jesus, I hope,

Mrs. A. W. Chandler

EXPERIENCE

As a child I loved the Old Baptist hymns; and felt that anyone who was an Old Baptist was alright and the best of person. When I became a young woman, I had no young folks of my age who believed the Old Baptist doctrine. They were either Methodists or Presbyterians. Sometimes religious conversations would come up, and I would argue for my belief, and I would be accused of thinking I was an Old Baptist because my folks were; and I would be told that if I went to their church, I would find this to be true. I seldom went to any other meetings except our own church, and when I did go, it was only to be with those of my own age. I shall never forget the one time I went to Sunday School; I never did want to go because the young folks were put in classes, and I wanted no part of that — they had to be occupied with no time for fun. When asked by a boy friend how I like Sunday School, I told him I would rather go sit by the swamp and listen to the frogs, for I'd get more sense out of it.

I decided that possibly I'd better attend other churches and see just what they did hold to. I pretty well knew what they believed from the young folk's arguments, but decided I'd check what their preachers had to say, and see if I could find the reasons for their remarks. I'd go and listen very closely, then go home and read my Bible and

try to find out why they thought they were preaching the truth. I seldom found any scripture for anything they said: what part they would quote correctly, they would finish by denying the precious truth. After I was married, I continued to go to different churches and organizations, searching, searching for one which had Bible for their teaching. Every different one I would hear of I would visit, but it all boiled down to the same result. I found by investigation that there was only one that stood firm, and the Bible their full foundation. It was as I had thought, the Primitive Baptists.

During the time I was visiting the various churches, my husband (whose parents were strong Methodists) would not go with me, saying that I would find them all about the same as the Methodists, and that there wasn't anything sound about any of them except the Primitive Baptists. About that time he was much cast down and troubled about his own condition. I did not know about it for many months; then one evening he told me his experience and asked me not to tell anyone. This I didn't mention until my father, Elder Jonah Murphy, came to spend some nights with us. He told me of a most beautiful dream (or vision) that he had about my husband, and asked me if he had been troubled. I then told him all, and he was much pleased. I told my husband about our conversation, and asked him why he did not go to the church. He said, I shall wait for you. I replied, "You probably never will go if you wait for me (although I had been in much thought). I will never be good enough to ask for a home with the Old Baptists." For I had firmly thought one had to feel himself fit, to be among them.

I tried very hard to not let any one notice that I was concerned about the church. Over and over I tried to get away from myself, and the cause that was tightening me down and showing me myself as I really was — a sinner, full of vanity. I tried to shut it all out and stick to the world and its many pleasures. I'd even find excuses, against my own heart, not to go to church; at the same time have a burning desire to go, which, try as hard as I could, I could not wipe out. I'd take my little girl and go to the movies on meeting day, and many times in the midst of the show, I would be thinking of the wonderful sermons I was missing. Yet, I'd tell myself, You are of the devil, and are not fit to be at church among those good people; you had better stay with your kind. I don't think anyone ever felt to be so low and sinful. I saw many about me that had done worse things than I had ever done, but I thought I was in the same class, and too late to turn back, and that I was doomed to utter destruction. I'd known of some Old Baptists feeling unworthy, but my case was so different. I felt to know I was much worse than any of them ever had been — there was nothing good in me, and never could be. I felt to be so afraid at times. Knowing my lost and ruined condition, I was miserable, and resolved to be on close guard at all times. Many times in the night or when alone, I would try to pray, and asked God to forgive me of all my sins, and guide my feet in the straight and narrow path. Then I would feel desperately ashamed that I had ever ventured to call upon the Lord.

I thought many times that I would try to explain myself to my sister Bessie, and see if she thought I was out of my mind, but could not find the words to even start with. After some years of this, my sister Bessie's husband passed on, and she came to live with us. She was a good and faithful member of the Primitive Baptist church, and went to all the meetings she could get to; and would often ask me to go with her, and on some occasions I would go, but safeguarded myself to not let anyone know my feelings. I'd sit among them, and wish so much to be one of them, but felt very guilty to be there, for I felt I was deceiving to even go. One dear old brother, Elder

Harvey Bird, at different times would call me Sister. The feelings I would have at those times were almost unbearable, and I felt like running away and never showing my face again in such a sacred place. From time to time I would let the meetings slip by and not attend.

One meeting to be held at a member's house, two were to be baptized in a stream nearby on Sunday. My sister asked me to go, and, as many times before, I refused, still wanting to go very badly. The desire got so strong on Saturday evening, that I made up my mind that if I could at all find the way, I would be there for church on Sunday morning. (My sister had gone on alone, and I had not even bothered to ask her any directions, for I was sure I would not go) I called brother John Smith's home, and he was going on Sunday. I took my daughter and Bessie's adopted daughter and went to St. Albans, which was several miles from where the meeting was to be. Brother Smith was there, and we took a taxi out to the place. When we got there, the singing was so beautiful I couldn't get in the house fast enough. After meeting was over, the congregation went to the water's edge where the baptizing was to be. I felt the two being baptized were so wonderfully blessed, and somehow I was glad to be there. It was a beautiful day, and the water was as clear as crystal. They (Elder Bird assisted by Brother Smith was doing the baptizing) baptized one, and came for the other one, and the water seemed to sparkle when the second one was baptized. Another one came forth, and was received and baptized. There seemed to be an extra brightness in the form of a beam which centered directly upon the two Elders. I thought it was the most beautiful sight I had ever beheld, and as the Elders moved back to the bank, this beautiful beam followed. As they were nearing the bank, my voice become stronger and I sang louder than before. I felt I was being drawn, not as if making a step, but moving; before I knew what I was really doing, I was almost to Elder Bird. I felt I wanted to go into the water and be baptized — I had no thought of clothes, or anything else. I suddenly came out of what seemed a beautiful dream, and was frightened for what I had almost done: I had almost deceived the whole congregation, and the Elder I was now facing. I felt like pouring out my trouble and confess my worthless life, but I couldn't — I was about to cry. I wished I was anywhere but where I now stood, and I couldn't completely hide the tears. I tried to get away through the crowd unnoticed as fast as I could; and the rest of the time before we started home, I made every effort to appear not concerned; and on our arrival home I told my sister that I would never go to an Old Baptist meeting again. She was married sometime after this; then I thought I would not always be mindful of meeting time, and could possibly get out of going easily. Again I was mistaken, for it didn't relieve me — I still had a yearning to go, and that wasn't easy to get rid of. The association was to be at Flat Woods, and I wanted to go more than anything; the closer the time came, the stronger the desire. I got ready and went on the bus, and found the association was held in a grove about a mile from the church. When I saw the friendly faces I loved so much, how it did cheer me. When the meeting started, I seemed to forget there was anyone about me; the sermons were wonderful. Elder Helms preached on the resurrection and explained it so beautifully, and I was so lifted up. When I looked about me, I scarcely saw a dry eye; and again I felt my terrible unworthiness, and I just had to get up and leave. I went to the outside of the crowd and waited there until all was over, and then went home. I was sure this would be my last time to go to the Old Baptist meetings, but soon afterward I was going again. I would leave soon after the meetings were over, so that no one would suspect what was going on in my troubled mind. At one meeting, dear Old Elder Tackett,

from Kentucky, was visiting Flat Woods church, and I went. I don't recall his text, but it seemed he was preaching directly to me — it was a beautiful and inspiring sermon, and I was completely lost as to my whereabouts; and I was aware of nothing but his voice and the beautiful truth he was explaining. When he came to a close, it was like suddenly being dropped out of a cloud; and then I was again aware of the dear ones around me, and I felt so condemned. I could hardly wait until the last hymn was sung, so I could get away. I hoped I'd never let my unworthy person ever come among them again. I was sure by now that my mind was out of balance, and it was making me worse by going to the Old Baptist meetings. I did not go back for a long time.

Mrs. Beulah Weese

(to be concluded)

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE INDIGENT FUND

(These contributions help send the Signs to those unable to pay. This list is to February 1, 1955.)

Middletown and Walkill Church, N. Y., $25.00; a friend, Kansas, $25.00; Mr. and Mrs. Handy Truitt, Md., $5.00; G. C. Chandler, La., $2.00; Mrs. Ida Martin, Texas, $5.00; R. B. Wall, Texas, $5.00; C. B. Teague, Texas, $1.00; Catherine McKenzie, Canada, $4.00; Lula Dennis, $1.00; Junius Gilliam, N. C., $5.00; James L. Howell, Del., $5.00; C. D. Scott, N. C., $3.00; Alice E. Roberts, Miss., $3.00; Miss Ida Brock, Texas, $5.00; Basil Hutchens, Ky., $2.00; Edna Bellis, N. J., $1.00; Mrs. Luther Campbell, Tenn., $1.00; Mrs. Jennie Clifford, Wash., $2.00; Joseph A. Johnson, Tenn., $10.00; Harry T. Vories, Mich., $20.00; Allie G. Reid, N. C., $2.00; Elder George Ruston, Canada, $3.00; Mrs. P. I. Froude, Mich., $2.00; W. Y. Chandler, Ky., $3.75; Mrs. Ellis Hodgins, Canada, $4.00; H. L. Glass, Ga., $10.00; Durwood Dradley, Texas, $25.00; Mr. and Mrs. William Holloway, Md., $7.00; George Mariner, Va., $5.00; Mrs. Maynard Finch, N. Y., $2.00; Elder R. L. Biggs, Tenn., $2.00; N. Y. friends, $100.00; Mrs. Edgar Mackley, Pa., $3.00; Victor D. Borst, Jr., N. Y., $5.00; Mrs. Milton Tipton, Jr., Ala., $1.00; Mrs. H. D. Nelson, Texas, $25.00; L. W. Langwell, Cal.. $2.00; W. G. Gillispie, Kansas, $1.00.

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DELAWARE ASSOCIATION

The Deleware Old School Baptist Association, appointed to beheld with the Welsh Tract Church, has been **changed from the second Sunday in May, 1955, to the second Sunday in September, and Saturday before.** Welsh Tract Church is located one mile South of Newark, Delaware. All lovers of truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

(Elder) D. V. Spangler, Pastor
Mrs. Ruth Lucht, Clerk

MEETING AT SLATE HILL

The yearly meeting of the Old School Baptist Church of Slate Hill, Orange County, New York, will be held the first Saturday in June. This is June 4th. The meeting will begin at 10:30 A. M. DST.

Members and friends are invited to attend at this historic meeting house.

William D. Chapman, Clerk

DELAWARE RIVER
OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, New Jersey on Thursday and Friday, June 2 and 3, 1955. Services will start at 10:30 on both days.

A cordial invitation is extended to all ministers and brethren of our faith who are in order and fellowship with us — and all friends are welcome. Those coming from a distance, and wishing to remain over night, please contact Mrs. Thomas L. Darby, 192 Main Street, Flemington, N. J., so that arrangements may be made. If possible a communication to the above named prior to the meeting, would be appreciated.

Further information regarding transportation and driving routes may be obtained from Mrs. Darby.

Cornelius Hoff, Church Clerk

Watch your expiration date and renew promptly.
Thank you.

EDITORIALS

Danville, Va. May, 1955

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EDITORIAL

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come into the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." — 1 Timothy 2:1-5

A brother in Texas has asked us to comment on the above scripture.

This epistle was written by the Apostle Paul to Timothy, who is spoken of as his son. We understand this reference to Timothy as his son, has reference to him as his son in the ministry; as we have no record of Paul ever being married. The two epistles to Timothy embrace much instruction and exhortation to Timothy, such as pertain to the doctrine and order of the Lord's house. These include a charge to Timothy to preach the word (which is Jesus); to study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth; to avoid vain jangling, and striving over words of no profit; to take heed unto himself and unto the doctrine, and continue in them; for in so doing thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.

These divine instructions also include the order of services; the qualifications of Deacons and Bishops, and their wives; the order of the sexes as to their adornment in apparel, and their proper places in the church; the instructions to both servant and master pertaining to their relationship with each other. It is also pointed out that in latter times some should depart from the Faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils. These are pointed out as perilous times that would come, when men would be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy. Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good; traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.

All in all, we know of no other two epistles that cover the field of instruction to both minister and church as to doctrine and order, and embracing so many things that affect both minister and church, as these two.

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men." It appears here that the apostle is giving us the order of the service. The service by the ministry usually include prayer and the preaching of the Word. The preceding chapter relates to the things to be taught; the second is an exhortation as to who are to be

prayed for; and it is apparent that the apostle considered these things important. We will notice that these things are mentioned in the plural: as supplications, prayers, etc. And these expressions seem to cover the entire field as to our intercourse with God as to our needs. They embrace the desire not only for spiritual things, but also for our natural welfare; and the intercessions for those who are bound.

The word is, to intercede for all men. This would include all classes of men: rich men, poor men, those that are bound, and those that are loosed; for the Jew as well as the Gentile. The tendency of man is usually to pray for those of his own nation, or community, or household. No doubt many of the Jews felt that they were so highly favored above other nations, that all others were considered as heathen, and had no place in such prayers.

"For kings, and for all that are in authority: that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." We are commanded to be subject to principalities and powers, for they are ordained of God; to be subject to magistrates and those who rule over us — being reminded that the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord as the rivers of water. God has placed kings on thrones, and removed them at his will. He has raised up wicked kings to show his power, as he did Pharoah; and also set on the throne of Israel a wicked king, Saul, as a punishment to his people, because they desired to be like other nations round about them.

In the exhortation here, it is for those who rule over them, that they (the church) may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty; that God will bless those men who rule in such a way that the church may not be molested in their service; that their rule will be such that they can worship under their own vine and fig tree. Their prayers for all that are in authority, are to one end mainly, and that is that their freedom be not removed; and that God will direct those in authority in their lives in such a way that religious freedom be not interfered with; and acknowledging that all these things are in His hand.

"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour." This is well pleasing unto Him when we are so directed. It is a blessing for us to be made conscious of the fact that our religious freedom is a blessing from almighty God; and to give thanks for all who are given us, who manifest that they are God-fearing men and who uphold justice and righteousness.

"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." This could not have reference to God as desiring to save all of Adam's race eternally, as it would be contradictory to many other portions of His word. It would not be in harmony with such expressions as, "A remnant shall be saved."; "It is not of him that willeth, or of him that runneth."; "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me."; also, that he, "Sends a strong delusion that they should believe a lie, that they might all be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness."

These "all men" include both Jew and Gentile, both bond and free, rich and poor, who are embraced in his covenant of grace: the all mentioned so many times in the Scriptures, as, "All that the Father hath given me"; the Elect according to the foreknowledge of God; the chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began; the Elect Lady; the Bride; the Lamb's wife.

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." There is only one to whom men can turn to be blest: the true and living God, the God of the whole earth; the one who upholds all things by the word of his power. He is the only one who can bless kings and magistrates, and those who are in authority, to grant us quietness in our religious freedom. Even as there is one God, there is only one Mediator between an offended God and an offending people:

only one who could reconcile us unto God; and that by His death. Here the apostle points out that even as there is none but God to save, this salvation which the prophets waited for, could come only by one sent of God to be the propitiation for our sins; and not our's only, but the sins of the whole world (both Jew and Gentile), even as many as the Lord our God shall call. A seed shall serve him; and in Isaac the seed is called (Jesus Christ).

These all men mentioned, are the ones signified in Matthew, where He says by an angel, "He shall save his people from their sins." "The Lord's portion is his people", and are the all men mentioned.

In conclusion, may I remind our people, who hold this precious truth, of the great blessings we enjoy in being enabled to live a quiet and peaceable life. Most people have a way to attend their meetings, and, with all, we are highly favored in such blesssings. May He so lead us that we shall be mindful of them; and grant us to pray for them that are in authority, that we may continue to be so blest.

D. V. S.

WE HAVE A FRIEND ALL THE WHILE

For sometimes I have been in attendance to an old man as he struggled in the throes of death. I have not witnessed, as yet, his demise, but the sitting on the sidelines as he slowly loses in the battle, has oftimes reduced me to utter dispair. At times the conflict of the struggle has been so intense that it has seemed that it was I that was in the grip of death. Ah, the agony and the pain as he and I measured arms.

The old man has had a right good reputation. He has had as many friends as he has had acquaintances. He was a good provider up until several years ago. To be sure, he did not lay up anything for future use, but when you come to know the old fellow as I have, you will readily understand about that. He had thought for years that he could match wits with anything or anybody. In former years he was a very proud, aristocratic, independent man, and he did not see a day coming in which he would lose any of his capacity for ruling things and carving out his own destiny. The old fellow has always put a lot of stock in his family tree and the inherited prowess of them to carry him along. He, having had eyes only for the things that he produced and the immediate surroundings of his premises, had not thought of a time coming when he would not be the same fat, well secured man that he was in the beginning.

I became acquainted with the old fellow in the month of December, 1924. The beginning of his downfall and the struggle with death began about that time. I was caught in the field of this battle, and while I live I will never forget that first round of his beginning demise. It was a bitter conflict, lasting over hill and down vale, at work and play, day and night. The first round was bitter and filled with shock. He gave ground, but it was with dispute every step of the way. I became him at times, and then the agony and pain and sorrow was more than a poor wretched sinner could bear. Yet, it did not lessen, and it raged until he and I both became worn to exhaustion. Yet the old fellow was not killed nor made submissive in meekness. He became subdued but it was not bacause that he recognized the superiority of his antagonists. He still had a lot of fight left in him, and, in subjection, was looking for another and better round.

In earlier years he was given to boasting of his skill. However he was very cunning and if it would serve his purpose better to put on a wounded, conscience stricken look, he had that about him. He was wise above what had been written, and, if it suited him, he was very religious, oftimes speaking in the name of a God. He had as much formality about him as any one I have

ever known. He copied a lot of the ways of others, even walking in their ways and talking like them. It seemed, however, that he never did get back to his former standing before the first round of this conflict. He still acted as independent as ever; he still was given to pointing to his walk and talk as being the cause of what he had, and yet you could tell that he had lost **something.** It was not a change in him. He has always been the same old man that he is now. His habits and mannerisms have been in these trying times of late (as I have been in attendance in his death struggles) just like they were at the beginning. I used to think at one time that he would learn a few things; that surely each succeeding round would give him a little of the qualities of his antagonist, but such has not been the case. While I had known for some time that he had had some of his ability trimmed away, I had also suspected that his desires were just like they had always been.

He has been a very dangerous character. It has been best to watch him at all times. This I have tried to do. Living so close to him, and knowing his cunning, sly ways I have thought this the best thing to do. He has always been a slick worker, oftimes coming up from an unsuspected side or angle. It has seemed that he has enjoyed coming on the scene unexpectedly and unlooked for, and sometimes of adopting the role of injured innocence, making one to drop their vigilance until he had led them captive again. There has not been a moment since I became acquainted with the old man that you could trust him. Having anything to do with him, putting any confidence or reliance in him has always proven to be quicksand.

I have been fleeing from him since I first became acquainted with him. The very first introduction was painful. I fell out with him and all his promises the very first day. But go where I would, he has been my shadow, always at hand. A few times I have felt that he was lost and gone forever to me, but again and again he has put in his appearance; maybe to torment me in more ways than ever before. I have sought the Lord for his removal, but I have sought in vain. Of late he has molested me much of the time. But, while I have been tormented and made sad at his ways many times, I have had, as I humbly hope, a Friend all the while. I got acquainted with him at the same time that I first met the old man. The old man has made me miserable many times, but my Friend has always cheered me with his appearance. Time was when I wanted him to come to my rescue and get me from the clutches of the old man; and he tarried his time of appearing, assuring me that his time and manner of dealing with me was for the best.

I have never been able to tell the wonderful manner in which I became acquainted with the old man and my glorious Friend. I had heard of them both, but only by the hearing of the ear. I am not able to clarify the time of the introduction, nor am I sure which one I met first. Methinks now, at this late date, that they must have made their appearance about the same time. Yet, in reminiscing about my acquaintance with them both, I am constrained to believe that, while it was my Friend that revealed the old man to me, I really did not know my Friend until the old man had almost driven me to distraction. Strange as it may seem to the reader who has not been acquainted with the devastating work of this old man, I had seen this old man at work all the time. But, until I was given a closeup of his underhanded work, I had thought him quite a nice fellow. He always had acted nice enough to please me and give me a glow of satisfaction and pride in his accomplishments. I was astonished when I first saw him. What a cruel, arrogant look he had; how malicious he acted in all his ways; Oh, how he crossed up my best intentions.

For some time I have not been able to

write. I have gone about my various duties in a mechanical way. The old man was pestering me and trying to lure me to believe in the days of yore, telling me that if I would just listen he could do wonders for me. Oh, I knew not which way to turn. I longed for peace, and I had none; I longed to write and I could not write; I wanted to serve and give my time and timely gifts with cheerfulness of heart, but my service had become a task; I wanted to live with Christ and I had a dead body in the way **and it professing to be my life.** The old man grew bolder; his mockings became unbearable; his promises became more rosy and alluring. I was doing battle with him again, and I was losing all the time and all the way.

My Friend had delayed his coming so long. I made inquiry concerning him (S. S. 3) but none knew his whereabouts. But when the winter ended and the time of singing of birds had come, my Friend was there also; and my battle became his battle. The conflict was severe but my Friend has always vanquished the old man and taken over the field. It has been so sweet since Jesus my Friend has been dealing the death rending blows. I have been on the sidelines as the victory has been gained, and my Friend has given **me** the victory through him over my old enemy, the old man.

I look back at the battlefields with all of their gory and desolation. Why have I had these conflicts? Why has my passage on the King's highway been so disputed by this old man? Why has he delighted in making forays on the premises of another? Why has he delighted in tormenting and belittling my hope in my dear Friend? And now, as I rejoice in the appearing of my Friend and his work in clearing the field and in giving the death dealing blow to the old man, I also am made to rejoice that I must bear about in my body the dying of the Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. 4:10) "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus." He died in the flesh, the flesh must be crucified with him — this old man must be vanquished time and again and finally lose in death. (Rom. 6:6) But, some would say, That is not a comforting doctrine, to be speaking of a continual dying. But it is. This is one of the things that must be — the dying of the Lord Jesus must be borne in our body that we might have the life of Him made manifest in our body. This is all felt in our experience — at least I have felt it many times, as I hope; and the feeling of this old man becomes my feeling as he is being put to death. I feel that it is me, the poor hoping, doubting child of God, that is being put to death. And then, when the decree of Jehovah — God has come to pass, to wit, that I must bear this about in my body, and the more pleasant decree that I have the life of him made manifest in my body, has come about, I am made to say "Great and marvelous are thy works God Almighty." (Rev. 15:3)

"For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus's sake." How many does this doctrine cover? How broad and long is the purpose of God concerning his people? Well, dear child of God, it covers those that are alive. Not a word said about covering the dead. How absurd it sounds to make the apostle say, The dead are always delivered unto death for Jesus's sake. In every way, in the Bible and human courts, **in every way,** it is the living that are delivered unto death. The church of Jesus Christ has always preached to and about the living child; to these living children instruction and admonition has been dealt out; to them chastenings have been administered by their Father, and the Apostle confirms our manner of preaching to be correct, for he declares that, "We which live (but none of the dead) are always delivered unto death for Jesus's sake." This manner of preaching by men of God will always comfort one who has

been on the gory field of battle, being delivered there to death. But there is a prevalent notion going around that you can avoid the awful scene of this death; but that will never suffice the dear child of God. He is a delivered character. Who would preach a doctrine that gives a child life based upon him volunteering to go to death? A volunteer to death! What! Is that what men preach? Is that satisfying to them? Yes, it is what men preach, and it does satisfy them, for they do not want to do it, and do not intend to do it, and moreover, cannot do it. But it will not suffice for one of the living.

I cannot tell who is alive. I do not have any way of knowing by outside measurements and features who are the Lord's people, but how wonderful it is to stand in the pulpit before God's dear family and speak of them being delivered unto death for Jesus's sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal body. It makes but little difference who she or he is; their age and social and racial standing will make no difference; their being entangled in the clutches of workmongers will not keep them from rejoicing in the truth. The one that comforts is not the one that can split hairs over technical questions, but gives the precious assurance that "we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus sake." How would it sound to say, "We are delivered unto death because of our own sake?" Now since it does not sound right, it could be **because it is not right;** so let us quit it, if so be that we are guilty. Now did you see that little word, "also" that the Holy Ghost moved the apostle to write? The bearing about always, **and by all,** the dying of the Lord Jesus Christ is a sad state indeed; to be watching **and feeling** the dying of the old man is lamentable to those thus exercised, but following this decree comes still another decree most precious. Every one that has the bearing about of His dying, that feels the crucifixion of the old man with Him, will certainly show forth His life: will certainly "also" have His life manifested in his life, yea, in his mortal flesh.

How joyful it is to anticipate the day when the finale of this conflict shall end in the complete putting to death of this old man, and his ungodliness. The work will go on until that day. In the meantime the life of Jesus Christ will be made manifeste in the mortal flesh of all the people of God.

W. D. G.

The opinions and doings of men are of no value unless motivated by the Spirit of Truth; if otherwise, they "darken counsel by words without knowledge".

WE QUOTE:

"No person can embrace error who knows anything of the presence and power of God in his soul, or has ever seen anything of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; for all error is apposed not only to God's truth, as revealed in the word, but to God's presence, as revealed in the heart. And this is true both as regards individuals and churches. God will never sanction error as held by either. He will never bless with his manifested presence any erroneous man, be he minister or private individual, for he never honors or blesses any thing but his own truth, and those who believe and hold it. "Them that honour me I will honor." This is a very important point, for you will often hear erroneous men speak as if they knew spiritual things by divine teaching and by divine testimony, and will often boast confidently of their comforts and enjoyments, as if they had got their views from God himself, though they turn the truth of God into a lie. But be not deceived by these men or their false pretensions. They have only kindled a fire to compass themselves about with sparks, that they may walk in the light of their fire, and in the sparks which they have kindled. The spirit of truth guides unto all truth, and cannot and will not countenance or bless error. The Lord's own prayer to his heavenly Father for his disciples was: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." (John 17:17) The soul never was divinely sanctified by a lie, nor the heart truly comforted by error." — Quoted from a sermon by J. C. Philpot in 1869.

"Carnal reason always traces everything from God to second causes, and there leaves them floating upon un-certainties; but faith traces them up to their first cause, and fixes them there; by which means God's hand is

known, and himself glorified." — William Huntington, in THE BANK OF FAITH.

HAVE YOU SENT IN A NEW SUBSCRIPTION LATELY?

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

TRIALS

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happend unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." — 1 Peter iv. 12, 13.

The children of God are all "beloved," in his beloved Son, and are blessed with faithful Abraham — with faith and hope and love, yea, with all spiritual blessings in Christ; yet their faith must be tried, as Abraham's was, that it, "being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." Among men, very precious metal and stone is submitted to a test trial, that its purity and richness may be proved, and its beauty appear. The object of the severe trial is to take away the alloy, dross or foreign and gross materials or particles which are interwoven with and adhere to that which is tried. And so the Lord "shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord." — Mal. iii. Therefore through trials the Lord purifies the precious sons and daughters of Zion, comparable to the most fine gold, that they may be thoroughly separated from all their own unrighteous offerings and dead works, and offer a pure whole sacrifice unto the Lord, an offering in righteousness. And so, to be thus made "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints **in light,**" is the highest honor and richest blessing that God himself has bestowed upon any of the corrupted children of men, even though the vessels of mercy must walk through the heated furnace of affliction and pass through the deep waters of tribulation, before they are prepared unto praise, honor and glory. It is well, then, yea, and a blessed favor, that our God hath chosen the children of his love in the furnace of affliction, that, when he has tried them, he may bring them forth as gold. It is because God has set his love upon the people of his choice that he thus refines them, that they may be holy and without blame before him in love. For while he has loved them with an everlasting love, their sins are offensive unto him, and therefore he will thoroughly purge and purify them from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and take away all their idols, "that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life" — an endless life. Such is God's holy and gracious purpose in the many sore trials and heavy afflictions of every child whom he loveth and receiveth. The **loving** mother will not suffer the dear little one to remain filthy and sick, though the cleansing and restoring causes much suffering and crying. And though a **mother** may forget the child of her bosom, yet God will never forget nor forsake one of his little children for whom Jesus died. For God so loved them that he "spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all." And O to what unexampled trials and sufferings was the beloved Son of God delivered up! Yet it was his own holy Father that delivered him up to the smiters and mockers, and to all the deep, dark, overwhelming trials, woes and sorrows which were in his cup of suffering and baptism into death. Why was the blessed lamb of God thus delivered up, to suffer and groan,

bleed and die? The answer is, "For us all;" "for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father." So the term, "us all," embraces all of whom it may in truth be said that God is their Father; that is, "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, (for) they are the sons of God." — Rom. viii. All who receive the Spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father, are reconciled to God by the death of his Son; and, being reconciled, they shall be saved by his life. — Rom. v. Their reconciliation to God is made by **death**, and their salvation is accomplished by **life.** The death and life of the Son of God. But how is it that his death reconciles and his life saves us? Only by their being fulfilled **in us.** We must die and live with him, or receive his death and life in ourselves. Therefore we must, in our experience and inmost life, be partakers of the sufferings of Christ, die with him unto sin, and be crucified with him unto the world, that we may also live with him unto God, and be glad with exceeding joy when his glory shall be revealed. For in our sinful state we were without Christ, and afar off from God, and it is by the blood of Christ that we are made nigh; and it is Christ the good Shepherd who brings us back. He who knew no sin was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. But when he bowed the heavens and came down, to seek and save that which was lost, O into what inconceivable depths did he descend! that he might take us up out of the horrible pit and miry clay. The precious suffering Christ thus came and put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself, and so fulfilled all righteousness through his baptism into death, and brought in an everlasting righteousness by his glorious ressurrection unto life. And now the redeemed of the Lord must be made partakers of all this rich grace of life and righteousness of God in Christ. But in thus returning with that which was lost, and saving his people from their sins, Jesus leads them back in his own footsteps, calling them to bear the cross and follow him, and they, as the members of Christ, are made perfect through his sufferings, which are filled up in the members of his body, which is the church. But O how trying and wonderful this way of holiness is! For it is coming into peace through tribulation, into joy through sorrow, into honor through reproach, into riches through the loss of all things, and up into glory, immortality and life, down through shame, corruption and death. O such trials of soul as are thus given to those who shall walk with Jesus in white, are inexpressibly bitter to the poor, afflicted, sorrowing child, who is suffering here in the days of his flesh, and offering up unto God the sacrifice of a broken heart and a contrite spirit, with strong crying and tears. Yet the feet of God's own beloved Son walked here in all these paths of unutterable sorrow and trial. But he patiently endured it all. When a loving disciple and friend would have screened him from the last and most dreadful trial, with what meek and touching reproof he said, "The cup that my Father giveth me, shall I not drink it?" O that I may possess his sweet submissive spirit in this, as in all the acts of his sorely afflicted, deeply suffering, yet blessed and beautiful life. "How can I bear revenge or pride with Jesus in my view?" When his bitterest and deepest sufferings were upon him, into what a sacred nearness with, and fervent, earnest prayer unto God they brought him! How very sweet and precious then were the visits and loving ministrations of sympathizing angels! Surely such holy communion with God, and such sweet consolation from him, made the trial and suffering sanctified blessings. And it is thus with every tried and afflicted, reproached and suffering child of God. And while their sufferings abound in Christ, their consolation also aboundeth by him.

And when the trial was ended, when he had drunk the cup, and it has passed

away from him forever, O then how superlative was the heavenly glory with which Jesus was crowned! Ascending up into heaven from near the scene of his great sufferings and the conquered grave, the triumphant Son of God was received into glory. But again, he shall so come, as he went into heaven, to reveal his glory unto all his now suffering and sorely tried followers, who come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, when they shall be glad also with exceeding joy.

"In hope of that immortal crown
I now the cross sustain,
And gladly wander up and down,
And smile at toil and pain.

I'll suffer on my three score years,
Till my Deliverer come
And wipe away his servant's tears,
And take his exile home."

Truly your brother and companion in trial,

(Elder D. Bartley — Signs of the Times, April 1, 1876)

ORDINATION OF ELDER McGOUGH

Nauvoo, Alabama
January 30, 1955.

We, the undersigned elders and deacons (all having been duly ordained by our respective churches) having been called as a presbytery for the purpose of looking into the qualifications of Brother W. Garnsey McGough, and if found orthodox, to ordain him to the work of the ministry, came together at Liberty Grove church and proceeded as follows:

1. Elected Elder R. L. Biggs as Moderator and Elder W. D. Griffin as Clerk.

2. Elder R. L. Biggs examined our brother's qualifications as to his having the scriptural marks of a minister. This was done by a careful examination of the scriptures and then asking the spokesman for the church as to whether our brother measured up to them. Then, using the Articles of Faith of the Lost Creek Association, upon which this church was founded, inquired into his doctrinal beliefs.

3. The entire presbytery being satisfied with this examination, proceeded to the ordination by the laying on of hands and prayer by Elder H. M. Brock.

4. Charge delivered by Elder W. D. Griffin.

5. All the members of the presbytery gave hand of fellowship to the newly ordained elder.

6. By move, second, and unanimous vote, turned the newly ordained elder back to the church as being duly ordained and qualified to render her any service that goes with the work of the ministry.

7. By move, second, and unanimous vote presbytery dissolved.

Elders: R. L. Biggs, Moderator; W. D. Griffin, Clerk; H. M. Brock, W. R. Utley, J. W. McCool, A. T. Randolph.

Deacons: M. G. Hand, J. A. Owen, Houston Pitts, D. D. Ray, T. M. Parham, O. B. Norris, David Hyatt, G. L. Blalock, O'Neal Mathis, Charles P. Hayes, R. V. Edwards.

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Deacon Robert N. Walton was born at Whitmell, Virginia, October 24, 1882, and departed this life November 5, 1954; making his stay on earth seventy-two years. I do not have the date of his marriage, but he raised a large family.

Brother Walton joined Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church in July, 1919; and was ordained deacon in August, 1946. He was a faithful member, and sound in the doctrine; and was loved by his church and his many friends. His family has lost a good father and husband; and we will miss him in our church, but we believe our loss is his eternal gain. Our Lord called him at his appointed time, to be with him, where there is no more suffering, pain or death, in his eternal home.

We wish to extend our sympathy to the bereaved family: may the Lord be with them and reconcile them to His will, and give them grace and guidance through this world of trials and troubles.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be sent to the family; a copy put on our church book; and copies sent to the **Signs of the Times**, and the **Old Faith Contender** for publication.

Written by Mattie B. Williams at the request of the church in conference December meeting, 1954.

(Elder) O. K. Tench, Moderator
Kate Dodd, Clerk

MEMORIALS

DEACON JAMES T. GARNER

The all wise God, our Father has seen fit to remove from our midst our beloved brother and deacon, James T. Garner, who passed into that great beyond February 10, 1955.

His life was a monument to his faithfulness, as he lived it in the love and service of his church. Being ever mindful to minister unto his brethren and to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

We feel our loss is his gain, for we sorrow not as those who have no hope, but believe he

is at rest and peace and his dormant body will be raised a glorified body on that great day of the resurrection of the saints.

May the God of all comfort, comfort the bereaved family, and reconcile us all to His holy and righteous will.

also

SISTER WILLIE FLORENCE

Almighty God, in His infinite wisdom, has removed from our midst our beloved sister, Willie Florence, who passed away January 16, 1955.

Her dear pleasant smile will be missed by all the congregation who knew her. Always willing and eager to help in anyway she could, she will be greatly missed.

May we be reconciled to her passing, feeling her hope was anchored in the finished work of our God, and may He comfort those that mourn is our prayer for Christ sake.

also

DEACON HORACE H. CANNON

Almighty God, in His infinite wisdom, has removed from our midst our beloved brother and deacon, Horace H. Cannon, who passed from this life January 18, 1955.

He was greatly loved and esteemed by the brethren everywhere. His friendly and courteous manner endeared him to his church and friends. Always willing and eager to help in anyway he could, he will be greatly missed.

May we be reconciled to his passing, feeling his hope was anchored in the finished work of our God, and may He comfort those that mourn is our prayer for Christ sake.

Done by order of the church of East Atlanta, Georgia, while in conference February 19, 1955.

(Elder) H. O. Nash, Moderator
J. Q. Adams, Sr., Clerk

OBITUARIES

CORA E. PLYBON

It is with a sorrowful heart that I write of the death of our beloved sister, Mrs. Cora E. Plybon, who departed this life January 22, 1955; her stay on earth was seventy-eight years, five months and twenty-nine days.

She was the daughter of Stephen and Julia Altice, and was born in Franklin County, Virginia, August 23, 1876; and was married to T. R. Plybon August 9, 1900. To this union fourteen children were born — ten now living: Mrs. E. W. Howell, Mrs. G. T. Giles, Bassett, Virginia; F. T. Plybon, Mrs. W. M. Martin, Roanoke, Virginia; Mrs. Leonard Cannaday, Mrs. W. C. Campbell, Rock Mount, Virginia; S. H. Plybon, Penhook, Virginia; E. R. Plybon, Salem, Virginia; R. D. Plybon, Mrs. Nancy Martin, Martinsville, Virginia. She leaves also one brother, B. L. Altice, Waynesboro, Virginia.

She received a hope in God's mercy and united with the Primitive Baptists at Gills Creek Church in 1898; and was baptized by Elder S. O. Plybon. She remained a faithful member to the end. She was afflicted for many years, but went to church when able to go.

She leaves in addition to the above mentioned, her devoted husband, thirty-four grandchildren, and thirteen great grand-children; and a host of friends. She will be greatly missed by her loved ones, and the church. She was a woman of rare qualities as a wife and mother, always giving her children good advice; and was a friend indeed to those in need; was hospitable in her home; was firm in the doctrine; and her walk attested the genuineness of her faith and the strength of the hope that was hers to possess. We believe our loss is her gain: she is not dead but sleepeth.

Her funeral was conducted at Old Center Church by Elders D. P. Helms, Randolph Perdue, J. E. Burgess and J. P. Helms; and she was buried in the church cemetery nearby, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the coming of the Lord to call her sleeping dust from the grave. Written by her pastor by request.

(Elder) J. E. Burgess

MRS. ROXIE RANDOLPH

Mrs. Roxie Randolph, wife of the late Elder J. T. Randolph, was born February 29, 1876, the daughter of A. G. and Jane Williams. She departed this life September 12, 1954, making her stay here on earth more than seventy-eight years. She was married to J. T. Randolph on November 10, 1892; and to this union fourteen children were born — eight of which preceded her in death. Those surviving are: Mrs. Etta Free, Jasper, Ala.; Mrs. Kersey Harris, Jasper, Ala.; Mrs. Pearl Stephenson, Navvoa, Ala.; James A. Randolph, Jasper, Ala.; C. J. Randolph, Peopia, Illinois; and Mrs. Moddie Miller, Manchester, Ala.

She united with the Old School Baptists in the Lost Creek Association in June, 1896, and later moved her membership to New Hope Church of the Five Mile Creek Association. She was a faithful member, but for the last four years she was able to attend meetings only a few times. We greatly miss her, but our God knows best. We can only say, Sleep on dear mama, take thy rest.

Her funeral was conducted by her beloved pastor, Elder H. C. Moon and Elder H. M. Brock, at Baldo, five miles East of Jasper; and she was laid by her husband in a flower covered grave. There was a large congregation of relatives and friends, and the Elders spoke comforting words to them.

The writer was a member with her in the church for forty-three years, and misses her so much at church, and in hearing her sweet voice in the singing. May God ever guide, guard and take care of all of us through life. Written by her daughter,

Etta Free

February 20, 1955.
Perrin, Texas.

Dear Editors:

I am sending you a notice of the death of our dear sister, Minnie Little, who passed away Thursday night. It was sad to all that ever knew her. She was a faithful member of the Fort Worth church. I was called with our beloved Elder Landers to speak words of comfort to the bereaved family.

Sister Little was known by many Old School Baptist everywhere. We will prepare a Memorial later. The following was taken from a newspaper:

Mrs. Minnie C. Little, 67, died early Friday at her home, 1008 E. Allen, after a long illness. She had cancer.

Mrs. Little was a native of Grayson County and a resident of Fort Worth about 35 years.

She was a member of Primitive Baptist Church.

Survivors are her husband, William A. Little; two brothers, John Fisher of Fort Worth and A. H. Fisher of Portland, Ore., and two sisters, Mmes. Blanche Free of Los Angeles and Rhoda Jones of Fort Worth.

Funeral services were conducted Saturday in Owens-Brumley Chapel with burial in Laurel Land.

(Elder) C. Y. Osteen

SISTER DORA BENNETT

Sister Dora Bennett was born in Stokes County, North Carolina in the year 1882 and departed this life June 20, 1954, at the age of 72 years. She was, before her marriage, Miss Dora Pulliam. She married Brother O. M. Bennett in 1904. To this union, was born six children, four sons and two daughters. All six children and her husband survive.

Sister Bennett united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Pine Grove in Stokes County, North Carolina in or about the year 1918 and moved to Hillsdale about four years later and was a faithful member until her death. It has been my pleasure to visit with Sister Bennett and her husband in their home many times and always enjoyed her sweet fellowship.

The funeral service was conducted by Elder D. A. O'Bryant, pastor of Hillsdale Church, and she was laid to rest in the church cemetery, there to await the second coming of the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

I, together with the membership of the church, her family, her neighbors and her many friends, feel a great loss in her passing, but feel to realize that our loss is her eternal gain. We do not mourn for her as for those who have no hope but feel that she is resting in the peaceful presence of God. "Asleep in Jesus, blessed Sleep, from which none ever wake to weep: A calm and undisturbed repose, unbroken by the last of foes."

Written by request of Hillsdale church while seated in conference, July 10, 1954.

J. M. Denny

ETTA V. SIMPSON

At the request of Hillsdale Church, I will try to write a few lines in memory of our dear Sister Simpson whom God in his providence has removed from us.

Sister Simpson was born December 26, 1874, and departed this life June 18, 1954, making her stay here on earth seventy-nine years, five months and twenty-two days. Sister Etta V. Everett was the daughter of the late John Everett of the Hillsdale community, and he was a member of the Hillsdale Church for many years and greatly loved by all that knew him. Sister Etta was married to P. D. Simpson December 26, 1896, who survives her. To this union was born several children. Some of them have preceded her to the grave, but she leaves behind eight boys and four girls to mourn her departure; but I would say to the dear children, weep not after mother, for mother is resting now, sleeping in Jesus, sweet sleep; so sleep on dear mother and take your rest. We know that you wanted to go home and be in peace and out of misery. Some day we hope to meet you there and join in the sweet anthem of heaven and to enjoy the fullness of the glory of it with you.

We, the brethren of Hillsdale Church, do humbly bow in submission to the great Providence of God. We feel to say, Thy will be done. We hope to have thankful hearts to Him for giving to the church such precious gifts. We feel that we all have been greatly enriched by having her fellowship and her life with us in the Church. She loved the Church and proved it by her faithfulness to it. She always filled her seat when she was able and loved the singing, and always took part in it. We will miss her very much but could not wish her back. She, as a good soldier of the Cross, has been discharged from the battlefield of life. The fear and the hardship of battle is over with her. A blessed one, how good it is for them. May the good Lord give us all grace and faith to fight the battle of life, as she has. We desire a copy of this be placed in our church record and a copy sent to the family,

and that it be published in the Signs of the Times and the Old Faith Contender.

Written by her pastor,

D. A. O'Bryant

CARRIE ALICE KEENAN

Carrie Alice Keenan was born February 12, 1887 in Webster Parish, Louisiana, and departed this life June 25, 1954. Her earthly journey lasted sixty-seven years, four months and thirteen days. Her parents were Old School Baptists. Her mother, Susan E. Hawkins, passed away when sister Carrie was only eleven years old. Her father, Elder E. A. Moreland, moved to Texas shortly thereafter, where he continued his preaching and shepherding of churches. He was pastor of the Primitive Baptist Church on Eighth Avenue in Forth Worth, Texas at his death in 1929. Our beloved sister united with this church later that year and was baptized by Elder J. C. Sykes.

September 1, 1903, sister Carrie Moreland was united in marriage to Thomas Alford Keenan. There was born to this union, five children, three girls and two boys. These two walked together for over fifty years, having celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary less than a year before her passing away. She is survived by her loving husband, four children and three grandchildren.

All who knew this believer in Christ testify as to the purity of her character and the sweetness of her personality. Those who knew and loved her best will always remember her child-like trust and her faithfulness to her church. Many times during the last two years of her life, she attended the services when she was too sick and weak, physically, to go, but her strength in the Lord carried her on. The hope in Christ of this dear one was manifested throughout her life by the many acts of kindness to the least of His little ones. The tender watchcare of the Father toward her was revealed through the providential circumstances governing her welfare during the last years of her life.

Although she has gone to dwell with Him forever in the celestial land which He has prepared for those who love Him, the sweet memory of her life will linger on and inspire her loved ones to cherish evermore the source of her victory — Amazing Grace.

"Through many dangers, toils and snares
We have already come
Tis grace hath brought us safe thus far
And grace will lead us home."

MRS. SALLIE BELL STANLEY

It is with sorrow and a lonely heart I write of the death of our loving and precious mother, Sallie Bell Stanley, who passed away March 29, 1954. She was born February 24, 1879; making her stay on earth a little over seventy-five years. She was the daughter of John C. and Emma Hubbard; and married Felix E. Stanley, December 4, 1895. To this union were born twelve children, five preceding her in death; and father died January 28, 1932. Surviving are three daughters and four sons; thirty-five grand-children and eighteen great grand-children; one sister, Mrs. Lula Grubb, High Point, N. C.; and two brothers, of High Point.

It is hard to give up our loved ones, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. She suffered severely for three weeks; and all was done for her that could be done, but the good Lord saw fit to take her from us. We could not wish her back, since her suffering was so great. She would often say that her trust was in the Lord, and not in anyone here. She told my sister the night before she passed away, that she was going home. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church at an early age, being a member for about forty years. She was a strong believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone; and attended her meetings as long as she was able to go. Her home was a welcome place for the Baptists, and she loved to see them come. She was blessed with the spirit to "look over everone for good, and not for evil." Being firm in the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ, she had no fellowship with the works of darkness, but reproved them. We fully believe that she is resting where there is neither sickness, sorrow, nor death, but how hard it is to see death claim our dear one; yet it is right, for "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

May God, in his tender mercy, remember her children and loved ones, and enable them to be submissive, and to trust in the mercies of Him who hath and will do all things well. Funeral services were conducted by Elder G. W. Hill; and her body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Wolf Island Church, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers; to await the coming of the Lord; when she shall be raised in glory and ever be with the Lord. This was her hope.

Dearest mother is gone but not forgotten;
Never will her memory fade:
Sweetest thoughts will always linger
Around the grave where she is laid.

Written by her heart broken daughter,

Mrs. Jesse R. Somers

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 123 DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1955 NO. 6

BLESSED LORD

Oh, blessed Lord, my all in all,
On Thee, dear Lord, I'm made to call;
None else can help, just Thou alone;
For Thou doth sit upon Thy throne.

All of my needs Thou canst supply;
On Thy free grace I can rely.
When in distress, to Thee I turn;
For Thy sweet love my soul doth yearn.

My ways are wrong; my thoughts unclean,
Unless dear Lord Thou intervene —
To Hell I'd go, and justly so,
But Thou hast planned diff'rent I know.

I'm poor and weak and full of sin,
But Thou art strong and pure within,
Thy cleansing power can make me clean,
On Thee dear Lord for strength I lean.

Thy power is great: Thy love sublime.
Thy mercies rich, Thou art Divine;
Most Holy Lord, I love Thee so,
Because Thou loved me first I know.

Oh blessed thought dear Jesus mine
Sweet peace and rest in Thee I find.
'Tis good to know for me Thou cared
Oh blessed Lord Thou art most fair.

All glory to thy precious name,
Thy love and power art e'er the same.
We look to thee for grace divine,
Thy light of love doth ever shine.

So blessed Lord, I'll trust in Thee
'Till Thou do come to ransom me.
Then I shall sing Thy worthy praise
Around Thy throne thru endless days.

Minnie Lee Williams,
Snyder, Texas

LIFE

A wearisome struggle is life
When viewed from the dark side;
And our thoughts bitter with strife,
When we are rowing against the tide.

Sometimes storms visit life's ocean,
And its turbulent billows roll;
But God set the storm in motion,
As trials to the faithful soul.

For those whom he loveth he chaseneth,
And trouble will come without fail;
But whose trust on Jesus fasteneth,
Shall have peace at last in the vale.

Then why complain of your sorrow?
But rather look up with a song:
For joy may come on the morrow,
And the longest life is not long.

We tarry a moment only,
Here on this wild rocky shore;
And people will not be lonely,
When they know us again no more.

But then, if we run the Christian races
And look to the helpless one's needs;
The world may forget our faces,
But it will not forget our deeds.

And while we are marching onward,
To that beautiful city of Gold;
There's a brother walking downward,
We may bring him back to the fold.

And though our troubles may not cease,
Not while we here may live;
We often find that sacred peace,
That faith alone can give.

We are walking in the steps of Jesus,
As thousands have done before;
Soon times and places that have known us
Shall know us again no more.

We soon shall cross to the other shore,
That rises just over beyond life's sea;
There we shall rest forever more,
From our troubles and trials free.

Composed by,
Thomas G. Ingram

Basset, Va. May 21, 1901

HERE IS FAITH

Signs of the Times,
Dear Editors:

I am writing you that I have no income now, and I don't want you to send me the Signs when I can't pay for it. After its being in our family over a hundred years, I just can't express my regret to have to write you to discontinue it.

If at any time I get in a position to pay for it, I will subscribe again; for I love the truth it stands for. I will read and re-read the back numbers, as

I have them for a good many years. I realize that at the age of seventy-nine years, I may not be here many more years, but that is with my God alone. He has blessed me so wonderfully, I can't complain; and like Job, Will not God do as he wills with his own?

May God continue to bless you to publish the Signs for the comfort and edification of his dear children. Pray for me, for I feel the need of the prayers of God's humble servants. I love the writers of the Signs for the pure doctrine they set forth — the "Voices of the Past", and every one who has a part in the paper. I did enjoy Sister Effie Park's article on, Little Foxes; so true, yet sad. Oh that each one of us could live our lives as Jesus taught us, and always praise God for his wonderful works to the children of men.

I'm sad, but my faith is not lessened in my God.

A little sister in hope, through the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

(We want our sister to know that she will continue to receive the Signs. It is a pleasure to the Editors and those who contribute to our Indigent Fund, to be able to send the paper to her; and we pray that she may be blessed to continue to enjoy reading it. — Editors)

Jasper, Alabama.

Editors of the Signs of the Times:

I am sending an obituary of my mother for publication in the Signs so that her many brothers and sisters in church fellowship may read it.

I am often so cast down, but I do believe that the dear Lord has been merciful to me; and I have been made to look to him who is merciful to poor sinners. I feel to be too unworthy to be permitted to be called a child of God, or to be numbered with the Primitive Baptists. But I don't want them to cast me out, for they are the only ones with whom I get any comfort. I get lots of comfort in reading the Signs; and when my dear husband, Elder J. W. Free, feels like talking, we have a good meeting here at home. He has not been well since the last part of October, with hardening of the arteries and enlarged heart. He has about the same condition as my mother had for four years; so you see I still have my worries, and I ask the prayers of God's children that I may be upheld and reconciled to His will.

A little unworthy sister,
Etta Free

Adams, Tenn.

Dear Brothers Spangler and Wood:

You will find enclosed five dollars for the continuation of the Signs of the Times. I hope to be able to take it as long as I live. I am seventy-eight, and it has been in our family over one hundred years.

The Signs is all the preaching I get, and it is good news from a far country. I know I do not deserve the blessings that have followed me all the days of my life. Thanks for continuing the good Signs.

Sincerely yours,
T. G. Duff

EAGER TO MEET WITH THE LORD'S PEOPLE

Island City, Oregon.

Editors of the Signs of the Times, and All the Household of Faith:

Many times in my long life I have wanted to tell of what I hope the Lord has done for me, and I have tried more than once to put it in writing; yet it seems there are not words enough, or at least the right words, to express the half of it. As early as I can remember, I believed as much as a child could that God was everywhere, and in everything.

I grew up in a family of thirteen, the fifth; and my duty in the family program was to care for the younger

children. I would lead them deep into the forest in search of ferns and flowers. I never felt the least fear, but had a feeling of trust that there was a power watching over us, and that no harm could come. I told this to no one, for fear they might not understand and would ridicule the idea. I learned to read from the pages of the Signs of the Times (then published in sheet form, and the pages had to be cut apart). When my eldest sister joined the church, I had the feeling that I'd like to do that, but I didn't have any experience such as she told, and was doubtful if I knew anything about the church, except as I had heard it talked about in my home where so many Baptists visited. I liked to hear them talk of the power and goodness of God, and the predestination of all things; yet I did not feel it had anything to do with me. I knew I was a sinner in God's sight — that all the human race were sinners, but I had never felt the condemnation so many speak of; and when we sang the hymn, "And if my soul were sent to Hell, his righteous law approves it well", my thought was, "Yes, that is the way it is, nothing takes place without His approval."

When the church folks noticed that I seemed interested, they began to talk to me about joining the church. This put me further from it. I thought I would just be doing it because they told me I should. Yet, I am made to believe "there is a time for all things." For one day after Elder P. G. Lester had preached, I found myself offering him my hand. I could not tell them anything; I did not know where to begin, and I could only say that I wanted to be with them. It seemed that what the Lord had done for me began before I was born. They received me into the church, and I was baptized the next day.

When giving me the right hand of fellowship, Elder Lester said, "May you be a blessing to the church, and the church a blessing to you." I don't feel that I have ever done anything for the church, but the church has surely been a blessing to me. I have been blessed to hear the gospel preached from childhood to the present day — eighty-three years. Surely the Lord has blessed me with all spiritual blessings. My greatest cross is that I forget to remember the promises he has given to comfort his people. Yet who am I to be granted the privilege of trusting and believing that He does his will in all things. A poet has said, "God sifted three kingdoms to gather the wheat for this planting; then sifted the wheat for the living seed of a nation." I believe he is still "sifting the wheat", and putting each grain just where he wants it. Then, "Trust ye in the Lord forever; for the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

These are perilous times, but not the first; and I expect not the last for this old world. We read in His word that, "Unless the Lord keeps the city the watchman waketh but in vain." He appoints the watchmen; he knows if they are true or false, just as he knew Judas. I can only say in all things, "Even so Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight." I believe, as the hymn says:

"The steps that I take and the station I fill,
The Father determined and wrote in his will."

Else I would never be in Oregon. Yet who am I that He should stoop from heaven and choose a path for me. And all along the way He has blessed me with those good and perfect gifts, such as faith, hope and love, which can only come from above. Are not the temporal and natural blessings from the same source? Such as good health, a wonderful and devoted family, and, for over fifty years, to live with a dear husband, the late Elder C. W. Bond, who was called to preach this same doctrine of man's weakness and God's power. What have we that we have not received? Yes, it is all a gift from the "giver of every good and perfect gift".

" 'Tis Jesus the first and the last,
Whose spirit will guide us safe home.
We'll praise Him for all that is past,
And trust Him for all that's to come."

Yes, even through these "perilous

times." Some months after I was baptized, a dear brother, Elder T. C. Herndon, visited our home. He asked me to tell him my experience; and I said, "Brother Herndon, I don't think I have an experience." And he said, "Then why did they take you into the church?" I said, "I just don't know: I didn't tell them anything." He quoted this scripture, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, thou hearest the sound thereof but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the spirit." So that is the way it is; and that is why it is such a mystery to my poor, weak mind.

One scripture I love to think on — and I think I can understand: "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." Yes, I believe I know that as much as a person can really know anything. Else, why am I so eager and ready to travel so far to meet with them. I thank thee, O Father, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes, such as I. Your sister, I hope,

In gospel bonds,
Martha H. Bond

Russellville, Kentucky

Dear Editors:

Please find enclosed check to bring my subscription up to date and pay for another year.

We appreciate the Signs of the Times, and don't want to be without it; for it is all the Bible truth we get without going a long distance, which we are not able to do as often as we would love to. So we would say to the editors and all others who write, to continue to do so for the comfort of those like ourselves. Your brother in Christ; if one at all, I am the least of all.

Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Cabbage

Covin, Alabama.

Dear Brother Spangler;

The following two letters speak for themselves. They also speak the pure language of the Lord's poor and afflicted people. Up and down this country of ours such living witnesses to the saving grace of our God are to be found. It is comforting to find these people in the secluded and remote regions of the earth; to find them among the leaders of our nation; to find them in every walk of life, and when and wherever found, that they are trusting in the power of God.

To Sister Mcgregor and others that have voiced a feeling that I was not writing much, I feel to say that I have come before you in my turn each time since my name has been on the staff. I feel that my writings have been too voluminous in the Signs, yet I hope that I am thankful to our God if I have been blessed to give a cup of water in His name, and I do not hesitate to say that I had much rather be *gladly* missed from its pages than to be *sadly* noticed.

W. D. G.

HOW QUICKLY BRETHREN BECOME ACQUAINTED

962 W. Washington Rd.,
East Point, Georgia.

My Dear Brother and Sister McGregor;

Your letter of several days ago came as a glad surprise, and I had intended to answer it at once, but that week I was expecting company, and that, with many other things, took up my time and mind so that I could not get down to writing. It is such a pleasure to know Old Baptists like you all, although we have been strangers in the flesh until recently, it now seems that I've known you all of my life. Your experience is so much like mine, and was so sweet to me, that it seemed that I was communing with you in spirit as I read of how great things the Lord has done for you. O, my hope is that he showed me along those years some of the things you mentioned. That is what draws us together, seeing that He is one mind in dealing

with his children, and that from that he cannot be turned. He does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

It does not matter how far the distance apart, He teaches his children the same thing; and when they come together, they come declaring his fulness in all things pertaining to the Lord's people; and that we have all received of that fulness, and grace for grace. The trip among you dear ones was so wonderful, as we heard Elder Biggs tell so beautifully of this fulness. When I am given of this fulness (as I hope), I can feel what the dear Lord has done for me, a poor, hell-deserving sinner, who deserves eternal banishment from his presence. I was brought to the place, seeing myself as all unfit and unclean in his holy sight, that I could say in my anguish: "If He sends my soul to hell, his righteous law approves it well." But, praise his holy and righteous name, He showed me a way, a way of holiness, the Lord our righteousness. I had none of my own, and this is the way of all the little ones of his glorious kingdom. We had none of our own, and, helpless, we had to come to him for dress. O, bless his holy name, He indeed put his robe of righteousness on this poor sinner, as I hope, for it is too much for me, a poor sinner, to claim. Yet, in some measure, we do know that we are his and He is ours; for He has so graciously and wonderously poured out his love and mercy in our poor souls, causing us to live and feast on his blessed word of truth, even though we often go with bowed down heads, almost in despair, and often asking the question in our hearts: Do we love the Lord or no, am I his, or am I not? I am glad when I am enabled for a season, to rest in the sweet promises (knowing that He is faithful that promised and not slack concerning them) that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord and who are called according to his purpose. O, how sweet indeed to get even a glimpse of his greatness in power, feeling that He is all powerful. The human mind cannot comprehend the greatness of such an Almighty God as this; a God of love and mercy, the Saviour of sinners and so merciful to our unrighteousness. His grace is so enrichening, and his love so great, that He gave his life that we might have life and have it more abundantly. O, dear sister, that I could praise him one time, as I would, for his goodness and graciousness to my soul.

It was such a wonderful feast to me to be among you dear people this Fall and hear the blessed truth declared so beautifully by so many of the ministers whom God has called to feed his sheep. These sheep are the chosen ones of God, and they hear his voice and they do follow him, and the voice of a stranger they will not follow. O let us praise the Lord for such a resting place, a place of sitting and resting in heavenly scenes in Christ Jesus our Lord. There is nothing in all this world of strife and confusion that is worthy of being compared to such blessings. Yet, we would not be found murmuring at his appointment of this world and its varied movements, for everything has a place in the alwise arrangements of the God of all purposes and grace. We are so weak that we can never understand all of his purposes concerning us; yet we are often given to join in with one who said, "O Lord, I adore thy purposes without knowing them." I hope that I do believe in the God of Israel, and that He, in his infinite mind and eternal wisdom, did have a purpose in and for everything that He created in the earth, in the seas, and in all deep places; and that as the rain and snow cometh down from heaven and watereth the earth, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall his word be that goeth forth out of his mouth: it shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish what He pleases and shall prosper in the thing whereunto it is sent. There is no such

a thing as failure in His work. There is so much of his goodness and mercy to poor sinners, we all being astray, that we cannot do anything but hint at the theme of grace; and I have often thought and said that eternity will be too short for his children to render unto him all the praise that they feel is due him for his work towards them. Ah, what manner of love He has bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God, and in this we see that "great is the mystery of godliness, God being manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." Our God will not give his glory to another, nor his praise to graven images, for it all belongs to him. O, dear sister, may He keep us bound together in one bundle of love, and enable us to meet again to worship and adore his lovely Name by whom our free salvation came.

"He paid whatever his people owed and
cancelled all their debts."

What a wonderful song, and O, what a price to pay for our debts. Thanks a new day is coming when we shall see him as he is, and praise him as we ought.

May this be our happy lot.

Your unworthy sister in love and hope,

Mrs. Esta Ivey

St. Charles, Ky.

Dear Brother and Sister Griffin;

I cannot get over the impression to write to you dear ones again. At one time I was afraid of you and afraid to voice my feelings in your presence for fear that you would laugh at my feeble thoughts. That fear is now gone, yet I still feel that I would like to be in the background, but still privileged to ask questions. Your articles have been missing from the Signs so long. We enjoy them all and I often feel that they are to me; and they are, too, if I am one in the church here on earth, although I often doubt this, and spend many hours in the darkness of the night, wondering if I am one of the chosen ones. I do not have the bright evidence that I would like to have, yet some little things have taken place in my life that my mind often goes back to.

One of the best things that I have experienced is this: I feel to know that I love the brethren and sisters in the Lord. It gives me hope, for when we are all together, we enjoy the same doctrine. I know that there is no comfort in any doctrine other than the doctrine of God our Saviour. This doctrine embraces the new covenant that He made with his people, wherein they shall all be a willing people in the day of his power. He is the One in whom all power dwells, and He is the Saviour of every covenant child of God. He is **now** the dear Saviour; He did not have to save in order to be a Saviour, but He came to earth the Saviour of his chosen people. The wisdom of God our Saviour embraced all time, He seeing, and declaring, the end from the beginning. All has to come to pass as He saw it from the beginning, his predestination unfolding day by day a beautiful chain of strength and comfort with not a weak link in it all —

Keep silent all created things,
And wait your Maker's nod;
My soul stands trembling while she sings
The honors of her God.

Sometimes, when I am alone and at my work, I am made to sing out loud and to feel that maybe I am one. At other times I am down, and wonder if He loves me at all; and yet I know, through all these doubts, that if He has ever loved me, He loved me before the world was, and through all of my years of sin and shame. It is indeed a wonderful love; and even our having been shaped in iniquity and conceived in sin, did not swerve him from his eternal love which was bestowed on us in Chirst. This kind of doctrine is truly humbling to the Lord's people, and how I would

like to walk in this humbling way of grace and mercy and to sing.

If He sends my soul to hell
His righteous law approves it well.

Well, I just wanted to talk with you all for a little while. I like Job do a lot of talking, and I am afraid mine is without knowledge. I wanted to share with you a good letter from a sister in Georgia, and if you think proper, to share it with the Baptist family. If you feel to do so, you may send it to the Signs.

We hope to see you before the Summer is over this year.

In precious hope,
Mrs. Mona McGregor

EXPERIENCE OF SISTER WEESE CONCLUDED

I developed a terrible smothering, which, after husband took me to several doctors, was found to be cemical asthma. It was severe and often seemed I was close to the end of this mortal life. Sometimes I would be terribly frightened; other times it seemed I wanted to die, and felt very calm and unafraid. I couldn't understand how I could feel so much at ease and unafraid some of the time; but I felt I was forgiven and Christ had washed me of all my sins with his precious blood, and felt so happy that he was about to relieve me of this sin cursed world. Many times I was sure that my time here in this world was near its end; but to stay with this forgiven feeling was not possible, and I would fall right back into terrible fear. But, Oh those beautiful moments, when I felt God was so near: I seemed to feel his very presence. Night after night I would be up with those severe attacks alone, begging the dear Lord to relieve me one way or another: it didn't seem to matter which way it was part of the time. After months of this, the doctor said I would have to leave town, and move thirty-five miles out, which would be miles away from the meetings; but, of course, in my present condition I could not go to church anyway. But I resented having to move, for occasionally some of the Elders would drop in to spend a few moments with me — and those minutes meant much to me. We moved, and had to stay out for a year before I was well. During the time, I had a message that my dear sister was unconsious and in the hospital. I rushed to her bed side, but she could not speak; and a few hours later she left this vain world. I felt she was better off than I. Oh, how I did wish I had confided in her. Now that she was gone, I felt I could never tell anyone of my troubles. She was sadly missed in many ways.

Some months later, I dreamed I went a long rocky road, climbing over mountains to the gates of heaven; and I heard an hymn being sung, and among the sweet voices, I heard my sister's voice. It seemed all the way I had my daughter with me, and I said to her, "Dorcas, this is heaven, and I hear Aunt Bessie." As we stepped through the gates, the sweet, smiling face of my mother and sister were the first I saw, and they both held out their arms welcoming us. The only words spoken were when Bessie said, "I knew you both would come." The happinees was so great I awoke, weak with the rapid beating of my heart. I lay there thinking and reliving the beautiful dream, until day-break, when I told my husband about it.

The time finally came when we moved on the outskirts of the city, and I seemed to be about well. We got to attend church occasionally, and I tried to be prepared and ready to go; but most of the time I still had the same unworthy feeling. But from time to time after I'd hear a sermon, I was not afraid and felt so much better. I was still waiting and hoping that the day would come when I would fear no more, but that time never has come.

One meeting that was to be at our old home church, we had all planned to

go, but the day before my baby became ill; and I told my husband to go and I would stay with her. He went; and on Saturday asked for a home with them, and was received and baptized. My older daughter, Dorcas, said, "Mother, it would have been nice if we could have all gone, and the three of us baptized." I knew of her thinking seriously of church and since a child loved to go to meetings, and had gone many times when I did not go. She had told me of some of her experience, so I wasn't too much surprised at her remark. We both sat and cried together, and I said, "Maybe some day the Lord will open up a way and guide us into the water too." On the next meeting day we got to go, and when the doors of the church were declared open for the reception of members, there were four who went forth and were received. Then Dorcas got up and went. I felt glued to my seat — still I wanted to go. Of all times I never felt lower in my life. I raised up and went. (My father, the pastor of the church, had for some time been bedfast with a broken hip, and meetings had been held at my sister's home where he was confined). I didn't think I could speak when seated before them, but said a few words, but to this day do not remember what they were. I remember my poor old father saying, "You are alright." I did not feel fit to sit among the rest. At the water, after all had been baptized, they seemed to be so happy, yet I was cast down and felt I was the very least, if one at all. It was after I had gone home that I felt happy, and had a wonderfully calm feeling possess me. I have from time to time rejoiced that my name was there on the dear church book. But I still have the fear I have deceived the good members.

I have never told anyone of my travels along life's weary road; and have only sketched over about fifteen years of my life. I have thought that I would show this to someone someday, and ask them if they thought I had done wrong in asking for a home among the Primitive Baptists. When I attempt to talk, the words just won't come; and I feel so guilty and alone so much of the time.

"My nature is so prone to sin,
Which makes my duty so unclean,
That when I count up all the cost:
Without free grace, I know I'm lost."

This hymn so often comes to my mind, and seems to apply to my case completely.

Mrs. Beulah Weese

We have met Brother and Sister Weese, and are glad to know more about the things she has experienced. — J. D. W.)

"AND THEY BROUGHT LITTLE CHILDREN UNTO HIM . . ."

Denton, Kentucky

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am impressed to write some of my thoughts on infant salvation, or redemption. Many Baptists in this part of the country seem to believe that all those who die in infancy, are the Lord's people, or the elect of God; and that the non-elect cannot die in infancy, but all live to maturity. I am not able to harmonize this idea with the scriptures or my experience. I cannot fix this idea or theory out without basing the salvation of the Lord's people on conditions. If God did choose, elect, and create his people in Christ Jesus his Son before the world was, and left the remainder of the human race to perish in their sins, then the eternal destiny of both was fixed before they were formed of the dust of the ground; and what difference would it make at what age they died; and just how much more helpless is the infant in saving himself than a man one hundred years old? Neither can do anything in the way of inducing God to give him eternal life: the infant knows just as much about God and spiritual things as a dead sinner

does at one hundred years old. The old man is just as much dependent on God to regenerate him and bring him to spiritual birth as the infant is; and the infant is no better in its fallen human nature than the adult: both are of the same nature. The young lion seems very innocent in its infant stage, but as soon as it is developed, it is as vicious as its parents.

It is natural for us to love our little ones — and right that we should, but it is a natural love. The natural love will fade away with age and die with the natural body, but the spiritual love is a different love: it is of God and shall never die. Far be it from me to point out any infant or adult and say that he is bound for destruction, or everlasting punishment; not even one who may be said to be the meanest man in the world. Neither would I say positively that one who may be said to be the best man in the world, was sure for heaven; for that I do not know. I am glad to leave all with God, for that is his business, and he will take care of it.

If the non-elect cannot die while in infancy, then there would necessarily have to be a time set before which they cannot die. The world says at twelve years; and if so, then conditionalists have it, and they would be right in setting a time limit. Then all would be the Lord's people until they passed the limit, and came to accountability, as the world claims they do.

I think that Christ's words are being misinterpreted where he says, "And they brought little children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." We notice that Christ did not say that they were the kingdom of God, but such were of the kingdom of God. We think he was speaking in the way of comparison, as God's spiritual children are all little children; and as the natural child is wholly dependent on its natural parent for its life, support, care, and sustenance, so are the little children of God.

I think by examining Christ's words closely, we will see more plainly just what he meant. The above scripture is recorded in Mark 10:13-15. Matthew, in recording Christ's words on the subject, says, "At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he was drowned in the depth of the sea." (Matthew 18:1-6) Notice that he brings it down to the little ones which believe in him. He uses the natural child in a way of comparison, saying, As a little child; except ye be converted and become as dependent on your heavenly Father for his grace to save and preserve you, as this little child is on its natural father, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. Mark says, "And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such children (notice that he says, one of such) in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me."

Paul says, "Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men." (I Cor. 14:20) We pray that we might be kept as humble and dependent

as a little child is on its parents, yet be given the understanding of men. This is the lesson which Christ, as we think, meant to teach his disciples. To take it otherwise, I cannot see how it would harmonize with so many other scriptures. When we put an application on any portion of scripture which would make it conflict with plain declaration of scriptures, we evidently are putting a wrong application on it.

Let us see how it would compare with other scriptures, to say that all those who die in infancy are the Lord's people. First, we will quote the words of David in the Psalms; in speaking of the wicked, or the ungodly, he says, "The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies." Notice how he says this: "The wicked," which implies there are others which are not the wicked under consideration, which we will see by quoting further, "Their poison is like the poison of a serpent: they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear: which will not harken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely. Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth: break out the great teeth of the young lions, O Lord. Let them melt away as waters which run continually: when he bendeth his bow to shoot his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces. As a snail which melteth, let every one of them pass away: like the untimely birth of a woman, that they may not see the sun. Before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living, and in his wrath. The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked." (Psalms 58:3-10)

So it is plain that David was talking about the non-elect, the worldly wicked, his enemies. And when Christ told those unbelieving Jews that they were of their father the devil, and the lust of their father they would do, he being a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth because there was no truth in him, and when he speaks of a lie he speaks of his own, for he was a liar and the father of lies, would you not suppose that these unbelieving Jews were the children of the devil when they were born, and if they should die while in natural infancy, would they still not be the children of the devil? Pray tell me where is the scripture that tells us that they cannot die in infancy as well as the elect children of God?

We will ask again, where is the scripture that teaches that God only allows his chosen people to die while in infancy, while he allows the wicked, or non-elect, to all live to maturity? Would he not be having respect to persons in nature? But, no, they have things in common: he sends the rain on the just and the unjust alike; they suffer alike in nature; they die alike at all ages. When God was ready to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham inquired of the Lord, "Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? The Lord assured him he would not destroy the city for the sake of the righteous. The Angel took Lot and his wife and two daughters by the hand and led them out of the city, saying, "I cannot do anything till thou be come thither." And the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven, and destroyed the cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of those cities. He assured Abraham he would not destroy the righteous with the wicked, so evidently those infants were not righteous.

Also, when the death angel entered every house of the Egyptians and took the first born, many of whom were undoubtedly infants, it was indicative of their destruction; while the passing over of Israel meant her salvation, and their deliverance from bondage. When Joshua led them into their promised land, the Lord gave commandment to destroy everything in the land, both man and beast, young and old, except Rahab and her family, she being saved we are told by faith. Could we think that the Lord would destroy his elect

with them that believe not?

I believe that every one who was chosen in Christ Jesus before the world was, will be born again before they leave this world; because God has only one way of saving his people. He does not save the infant because it is innocent, and the adult by the birth of the spirit, for Christ says, Except a man (and that means every man, woman and child, for they are all man) be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. So, he says, "Marvel not that I said unto you, ye must be born again," without exception of age, station or time. While the infant is not able to demonstrate the spiritual birth, yet we believe it takes place in every one of the Lord's choice before it leaves this world. No doubt many are born of the holy spirit while yet in their mother's womb. John leaped for joy in his mother's womb; and the Lord said unto Jeremiah, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou cameth forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee and ordained thee a prophet unto the nations;" and Isaiah says, "Listen, O Isles, unto me, and harken, ye people, from far; The Lord hath called me from the womb: from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name;" and the angel said in speaking to Zacharias regarding John the Baptist's birth, that he should be filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb. It is not by any acts which we have committed individually which have brought us under sin and condemnation and death, but we are born under sin and brought forth in iniquity. We were just as much dead in sin when we were born into this world, as we were when we grew up. It was the sin of the one man Adam that brought sin and death on all his posterity; and it was by the obedience of one, even Jesus Christ, the Lord, that many are made righteous — righteousness imputed upon them, they have none of themselves. Nature has nothing to do with the work of the holy Spirit of God. I have been accused by some that I believe there will be infants in Hell not a span long, but this is a mis-representation, for all will be of the same stature, and all the same age: nature will not be there — it will cease with the death of the body, and the body will be raised a spiritual body with no nature or natural qualities about it. My earthly father will not be my father there; neither my mother nor my children. This relationship is of the earth; while the spiritual relationship is not of the earth but from above, and shall never die or fade away but is everlasting as God is.

I would like to relate some of my early experience, which seems to date back as far as I can remember. The fear of God was always present with me even in my childhood days. I believed there was some supreme ruler of all things to whom I must give an account for my every evil act, and that my very life depended on him. I was continually saying in my mind secretely, Lord have mercy on me. I was considered a very moral boy, and would often hear of the neighbors saying that Hi Rogers was a mighty good boy. It would humiliate me and make me ashamed; and I would say to myself: You do not know me as I do — you cannot see what is within me, as I felt to be the most wretched being in the world.

Will come to a close now. Would appreciate it if some of the editors would write on the subject and give their understanding, for the subject is an important one. If I am wrong in my ideas on it, I would like to find it out. I have thought that good brethren who hold different ideas are sincere, but probably have not searched the scriptures closely on the subject, and probably believe as they do more by tradition than anything else. I do not wish to wound anyone's feelings, and it does not affect my fellowship for them. May the Lord give us light and guide us in all truth, is my sincere prayer.

H. L. Rogers

"I REMEMBER"

2720 Cove Road, N. W.,
Roanoke, Virginia

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

For two days now, you both have been on my mind, and before me continually. Partly, I suppose, from reading the last issue of the Signs of the Times.

Chiefly, I keep saying these words over, "I remember." And, as I remember, it seems that both of your faces are so kindly disposed toward me; and I remember the times I noted the understanding and love of God in its shining in your faces.

If I have any inkling of what it is to be like the Publican standing afar off, not able even to lift his eyes to heaven, that has been my feelings. I hope also I am not deceived when I say, I felt that my eyes were lifted to Jesus in hope. I have had cause lately on several occasions, to remember a scripture I heard my father read when I was about six years old. This scripture was, "And hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." (Rev. 6:16) I felt it was God that was on the throne, and I was frightened; for even then I felt his wrath toward me. Even then, I had some idea that I was a sinner; for I was afraid. I realize that eventually I sought to appease that wrath, thinking it took goodness for God to look upon me; and that he would, if I was good enough — and the Devil would get me if I continued bad. Queer, but that was how it was. I was in my late teens before I really realized what I was doing, and that I was not, and could not be nor do good. The fear of the Devil has been removed — the fear of God is still with me, though in a different way. Realizing I need mercy, I hope that I have tasted it in the appearing of Jesus as my hope of salvation.

You know, I do not remember ever having heard Elder Cole say, "Salvation is of the Lord," without feeling that he felt something of its living truth; especially since he spoke of it at Mama's funeral. The words were life to me then, and I cannot get away from that thought: it has come into my heart many times with joy. And why shouldn't it, for Jesus is the joy of my salvation!

Another thing I meditate upon much, is, when reading of the travels of those gone on, and of some of the brethren and kindred in the Kingdom of God today, that they speak of being led — of being kept; they do not manifest any ability to be able to do anything right without His leading, guiding, and keeping. That was what drew me, I think, in the beginning, for I certainly felt a drawing towards Old Baptists; and certainly I must have been led to them, for, as in the beginning, I found I could not do anything good or right. Oh, I tried! Did you ever try to do things — only to get worse and worse? The Church, these people, have carried me; they have cared for me; they have shown love to me; and, since I love them, this love for them seemingly is greater as I go along a path that's by no means smooth or easy. I feel I can say with some knowledge of what the word means, when thinking of the church: "Beloved."

We read in the scripture, ". . .and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." With this thought, one must remember the pit from which we hope we have been lifted; as well as, remember He who is mighty and able to save. Having been thus humbled, we can understand the error of the ways of the world; and thankful to Him who made us to differ from that error, according to our precious hope. I would not kill; I would not add to their uncertainty, or in any way judge, for it is He that has already passed judgement in condemning sin in the flesh. Knowing my own inability to help myself to understand, or see, I know I have to be granted these things. I do not feel that to hear what the world is doing, is any food, comfort or consolation to me. "Turn me, O Lord, and I shall be turned."

The gospel, being the power of God unto salvation to them that believe, does the pointing out of the great, gracious, and precious truth of the right way; and He is the way I want to hear of, see manifested, and proclaimed. What the world believes, does not honor nor glorify God. As it is He who says, "Let,' so the light must "So shine," that it glorifies God. Without him we can do nothing.

I would learn of Him — not of the world. And what shall I learn of Him: That his mercy is unending, and very gracious; His power great, and is yet accomplishing that whereunto it is sent, and that I am given to feel it in His presence when He appears. His love is so wonderous in its wonderfulness and beauty. Yes, I would learn of Him who is meek and lowly in heart. To have eyes of understanding is wonderful; and I would rejoice, but I cannot boast, for, was it not given. Therefore, I have nothing of myself to boast of over anyone. Even the "eyes of our understanding" must be enlightened, and there is only one able to do so.

I hope this finds you both, and yours, all well, and feeling His presence in his appearing as you feel to need Him.

Humbly,
Catherine A. Houchins

Rising Star, Texas.

Dear Brother Wood:

Sister McPhail's letter, and the History of the Church in Canada, are so very interesting; and bring to my mind so many long ago memories that I feel that I must tell you and her how very much I have enjoyed them. Perhaps she has been a subscriber longer than anyone — a wonderful record; and such a good letter.

I have read the Signs of the Times for almost seventy years — am now eighty. My mother was a subscriber almost as far back as I can remember. Father was a minister of the long ago days in Texas: the late Elder J. C. Kilgore; days when Texas was truly a country of vast distances, with no means of transportation except horseback, or in a wagon. He would be away from home often, and we spent many lonely days and nights. Mother depended on the Signs for company and consolation — she would work, and I would read to her.

All the names of those valiant soldiers of the cross come back to me as such pleasant memories, but I knew none of them in person except Elder Curry. He visited here in Texas once many years ago, coming to the New Harmony Association, of which father was moderator. Indeed he was a wonderful preacher. Down through all the years I have been blessed in knowing, and reading in the Signs, the articles of so very many consecrated men of God.

The Lord is good to his poor and a afflicted little ones, in that we still have such able ministers and writers to carry on the work that has continued throughout all these centuries. My humble prayer is that you and the other beloved editors may be given grace and strength to carry on the good work.

Please cast a mantle of charity over this. From one who loves you for the truth's sake.

Lizzie Kilgore Foster

A WALK IN THE GARDEN OF MEMORIES

Island City, Oregon

Dear Brother Wood:

I thank you for printing the letter and obituary in the Signs. The family enjoyed them so much: both the Herndon and Bond families are subscribers to your paper. There is only one member left of the dear old church, besides myself; that is H. L. Vawter, Shelbyville, Kentucky; whose wife is my sister.

Our letter to the church, and the one from Sister McPhail, started a train of memories — some sweet, some sad. In the record of the one hundredth anni-

versary of The Particular Covenanted Baptists, Elder P. W. Sawin mentioned therein was pastor of Little Flock Church for a number of years, and a regular visitor at my father's home. Elder Wm. Pollard visited Little Flock several times; and one of the ministers named at his ordination, Elder J. F. Johnson, was pastor of Little Flock at the time of his death, which I well remember. He was the father of Elder Dudley G. Johnson, whose letter was printed in the Signs a short time ago; he and Elder Bond were ordained at the same time.

I don't remember having met either of the Elder Beebes, but Elder W. I. Carnell and wife spent several days at our home before I was married; also Elder H. M. Curry was a welcome visitor at our home and church.

On March 8th, I passed my eighty-third birthday; and in all that time I have never lived in a home where the Signs of the Times was not a welcome and monthly visitor. Elder Bond was a subscriber when we were married — and we were married fifty-two years. When we moved to Oregon, the Signs came to our new address; and since he passed away, it comes in my name — and will as long as I am able to read it, or hear it read.

The W. R. Wallis, whose name appears in the Signs, is a friend of my youth, as his father was a deacon in Little Flock Church until he moved to Mississippi. So, you see, the paths in "My Garden of Memories" are long and winding; and shows, in a measure, how the salt of the earth is spread.

Your sister, I hope, in gospel bonds,
Martha H. Bond

Martinsville, Va.

Editors of the Signs:

I am enclosing a poem written by my elder brother who died of a brief illness at the age of twenty-six years.

He had never professed a Hope in Christ, but this poem found in his papers after his death gave our hearts much comfort.

If you think it would be interesting to the household of faith and worthy of space in your good paper; you may publish it.

Yours in fellowship,
(Elder) P. E. Ingram

Lind, Washington

Dear Editors:

My time is out for the Signs, and I don't want to miss a paper. Have been away from home since December 4th and have been sick. Am sending check for two years, and a dollar to help on another's paper.

My grandparents (James Deal) was a reader of the paper; and my parents (Jim Deal) took it for years, and after they passed on, I have been a subscriber. My dad and I joined Bethel Church, Bellingham, Washington, February 28, 1920. I do not get to church very often, but did get to go twice last year. We live so far away from a church; and I get so hungry to hear a good sermon. My husband is almost eighty-six and I am almost seventy-four. My paper is such a comfort to me, and I don't want to miss any of them.

Your little sister,
Mrs. Daisy Olson Yeisley

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Staunton River Association convenes July 8, 9, 10, 1955 with Strawberry Church.

The church is located on Highway 750, one mile off of Highway 41, at J. H. Wood's store.

W. J. Oakes, Assn. Clerk
Josephene Dodd, Church Clerk

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HYMN & TUNE BOOKS

An order has been placed with the printers for an edition of the Durand & Lester Hymn

& Tune Books, in the shaped notes. Delivery of part of the books is promised by July 1st. Prices: $2.00 each; or $22.00 per dozen, delivered. Send orders to:

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A PRAYER

O, that my eyes might closed be
To what concerns me not to see;
That deafness might possess mine ear
To what concerns me not to hear;
That truth my tongue might always tie
From ever speaking foolishly;
That no vain thought might ever rest
Or be considered within my breast;
That by each deed, and word, and thought
Glory may to my God be brought.
But what are wishes! Lord mine eye
On this is fixed; to thee I cry:
Wash, Lord, and purify my heart;
And make it clean in every part.
And when 'tis clean, Lord, keep it too,
For that is more than I can do.

— Thomas Elwood, 1639

(Requested by Howard Miller, Clarks Summit, Pa.)

MEETING TIME CHANGED

The Little Flock Predestinarian Baptist meetings, Cass County, Missouri, are now being held on the 2nd Sundays instead of the 4th.

Mrs. J. W. Taylor, Clerk
604 Lexington Road,
Pleasant Hill, Mo.

PLEASE NOTE

All articles for publication, and all remittances, should be sent to The Signs of the Times, Inc., Route 5, Box 332-F, Danville, Virginia. When renewing, please use the same name your paper is coming in; if the paper is addressed to "John Jones," and the renewal is in the name of "Mary Jones," it is confusing to the editor.

Copy for each issue of the Signs goes to the printer five or six weeks before publication date. If you want your notices of meetings, asociations, etc., in a certain issue, please remember this.

Elder Dodson left his library to the Signs for the use of the Editors. If you have suitable religious books, and care to add to this library, they will be appreciated. We will gladly pay postage on them.

Editors

Watch your expiration date and renew promptly. Thank you.

EDITORIALS

Danville, Va. June, 1955

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"As thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all." (Ecclesiates 11:5)

In the sixth verse of this chapter the preacher says, "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." And in the first verse, he says, "Cast they bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days." The farmer knowest not when he sows his seed, whether it will bring forth fruit or not. He can't afford to judge the future by the present, for if he observes the wind and the clouds he shall not reap. He that sowest should sow in hope, but hope that is seen is not hope. None know what providence

holds in store, either in nature or grace, and if we knew what was to confront us in the future, without divine knowledge, we would be ignorant of the way of escape. Thus our ignorance of the future is no worse than our helplessness to prevent that which fate and providence have determined. For instance: I once lived near a grocery store where many high classed persons failed in business. But after a few years a man who knew not how to express himself without an oath, who would curse his family in the presence of the customers, opened in the same location and was very successful. "Who knows the work of God who maneth all?" Had I made the choice in this instance, I would have selected one of the more polished and cultured. But God's way is not every time our way, nor our way God's way.

"As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit" or, what the mind of the spirit is in the work of God, we are therefore, liable to take evil for good, and good for evil. Why God permitted the good, speaking after the manner of men, to fail, and the evil, speaking after the manner of men, to succeed, we cannot tell, no more than we can tell how the bones do grow in her that is with child.

Nicodemus said to Jesus, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This explanation of the birth was not clear to Nicodemus, and he asked, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the secon time into his mother's womb, and be born?" Jesus answered and said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." The Spirit is as free in regeneration, as the wind is as to where and upon whom it bloweth. The wind bloweth and carries all trash and rubbish before it. So the Spirit is just as irresistible and destroys all the works and self-righteousness of the creature, lying in its path.

If I had any experience in the new birth, it was in May 1907. I was invited by my sister, who lived out of the city a few miles, to come and spend Saturday night, and meet a few young people whom she had invited to spend Sunday at her home. I had carried a burden of conviction for a long time, but was, I hope, relieved of it on Sunday morning when I was awakened by my neice playing on the piano, "I'm living where the healing waters flow." I arose from the bed feeling as light as a feather. I dressed and walked out on the front porch to find a big oak tree doing what seemed to me, praising God. The sun was shining brighter than I had ever seen it before, the birds singing sweeter than I had ever heard them sing before; and all nature seemed to be aglow with music. I didn't know that this was the way of the Spirit to roll away my burden. Instead of enjoying the company of the ones that came to meet and be with me, I felt to hide myself where the tears, without notice, could flow freely. Had I been consulted in the matter, I, perhaps, considering the occasion, would have asked to put if off until another time. But we "know not the way of the Spirit, nor the works of God who maketh all." This is the best I have to offer as evidence of the new birth, but would like to have this sweet experience once more.

Solomon tells us that, "The Spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly." God has given to some men an enlightened mind, so that they can dig into the belly of the earth and find out many inventions. Without this inventive skill, which God alone can give, such inventions as the radio, television and the atom bomb would still be in the quarry of nature. Men however, like to approp-

riate this skill to themselves. We do not know how the bones do grow in her that is with child; we do not know how the soul is separated from the body when this old tabernacle of clay returns to mother earth, but because we do not know and cannot explain it, we are not going to deny it. Men are inclined to deny many literal and biblical facts because they cannot explain them according to their natural reasoning. For instance: Some years ago there was a convention of a religious sect held in Atlanta, in which a minister made a move to take from their article of faith, the doctrine of predestination, because he said, "their ministers could not explain it, and it caused them embarrassment." I know that I can see, but I cannot explain it; I know that I can think, but I cannot explain it; I know that I can talk, but I cannot explain it, but because I cannot explain it, I am not going to deny it.

Men did not know what the mind and purpose of God was in the crucifixion of Christ, but it was the work of God, and a good work too. The brethren of Joseph did not know that their selling Joseph to the Ishmaelites was the way of the Lord to provide for them during the seven years of famine. And when they went to Egypt for food, they did not know that the one from whom they received it was their brother, until he stood in their midst, and said in all the love and affection, "I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt." They would have never known from whom this food came, if he had not made himself known to them. Had they waited to be assured that they would receive corn in Egypt, they perhaps would be still waiting. But they went and received that for which they were sent. This encourages us when in need and impressed by the Spirit, to go to our Spiritual Joseph.

We know not the works of God who maketh all. Men do not understand many of the works of nature, providence or grace. But we should be content, knowing that there is one who knows our needs, and unto whom all things are open. When we go to our meetings we like to see some fruit of our labor, some evidence that the word spoken had found fertile soil, and that an abundant harvest was evident. But Paul says, "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." Many seem to select the subject they think will best suit the congregation, without any consideration of Him who giveth the increase. But it is only bread that is cast upon the waters that shall be found after many days, and not trash that will float away with the tide. Sometimes I feel very much discouraged because I can't see that my labor in the vineyard is productive. But I know that there is one, "Who works all things after the counsel of His own will." He will cause the seed sown to take root and bring forth fruit in its season. With this knowledge, we should be content.

H. O. Nash

HAVE YOU SENT IN A NEW SUBSCRIPTION LATELY?

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

PRAYER

Prayer is a privilege of inestimable worth to all the children of God, and it is solemnly enjoined on all the saints to pray without ceasing, and in all things to give thanks unto God. But for the enjoyment of this privilege, and obedience to this injunction, the inspiration of the Spirit is indispensable. "We know not how to pray as we ought." This lamentable truth is apparent when we ask and receive not, because we ask amiss. If all our prayers were indited by the Spirit, they would all be acceptable unto God, and would invariably be answered and granted. But such are our

infirmities that, when left to vent in prayer our fleshly, selfish desires, we ask for things to be consumed on our lusts, which God in mercy refuses to grant. But the apostle assures us that the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, and maketh intercession for us according to the will of God, and that this intercession of the Spirit is with groanings that we, by reason of our infirmities, cannot utter; or that such desires are awakened by the spirit of prayer in the hearts of God's people as they have no adequate words to express.

But while all the children of God are admonished to pray, notwithstanding their infirmities and ignorance, God has graciously provided, and promised to pour out upon them the spirit of grace and supplication, and give them the preparation of the heart and the answer of the tongue, that they may draw nigh unto him, with a true heart, and in full assurance of faith; and with the preparation of heart and spirit which he gives, they come boldly to the throne of grace, to ask for mercy and find grace to help in every time of need; and they find access to the Father by the new and living way which our God has consecrated for his children, through the vail, that is, through his flesh, who was made flesh and dwelt among us; for he is the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto God but by him.

Public prayer is not enjoined upon any of the saints, either male or female, by any express command or instruction found in the New Testament. The special instruction given to the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ in his sermon on the mount, is this: "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which seeth in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them; for your Father knoweth what ye have need of, before ye ask him."—Matt. vi. 5-8.

Ostentation and public parade in prayer, to be seen by men, belongs to those whom our Lord calls hypocrites; but God's children are expressly forbidden to pray as they do. All the modern organized **Praying Bands,** who parade in the streets, and gather at the Drinking Saloons and other public places, to be heard of men, whatever may be their plausible pretext, are in open defiance of the command of Jesus Christ to his disciples, and openly display the characteristic marks of hypocrisy.

The public invocations of professed Evangelists or Revivalists, who **get up** religious excitements to order, and take their position at public altars, front-benches, or elsewhere, for the purpose of offering their mediatorial intercession for the conversion of sinners, bear the same indelible marks which our Lord has branded as hypocrisy. When God's children are drawn out in fervent desire to God, to revive his work, prosper his cause, and quicken and gather into his fold his chosen and redeemed vessels of mercy, whom he hath afore prepared unto glory, let them retire from the gaze of the multitude, enter their closet, and in secret pray unto their Father who seeth in secret, and as far as their prayers are inspired by his Spirit they will certainly be heard in secret and rewarded openly.

These instructions in regard to secret prayer, in our understanding of them, apply to all the saints individually, and are binding on them throughout all time.

But while all the saints are to observe these rules in their private or individual devotion, there are special gifts of prayer bestowed upon the church for the social worship of God. In the instructions given in the sermon

on the mount, directions are given for both private and social prayer. When **thou** prayest, the personal pronoun is in the singular number, and applied to each individually; but in the form for social worship it is said, After this manner therefore pray **ye: Our** Father. Give **us** this day. Forgive **us our** debts. Lead **us** not into temptation, &c. Thus showing by the plural form of the pronouns that more than one unite in the prayer.

We have numerous instances on record where the primitive saints met together for social devotion, and in their prayers there were special gifts bestowed whereby one was mouth for all. When the church was organized at Jerusalem, on the day of Pentecost, they that gladly received the word were baptized, and they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. This was the order of the primitive church, and it is the order of the church of Christ now, and shall so continue to the end of time. But in these more public exercises the women in the church did not, in any example we can call to mind, lead in being mouth in prayer. These gifts, like those of preaching, teaching, exhorting, &c., were, so far as we can find, confined to the brethren whose gifts qualified them specially for that exercise. But while one was the mouth in prayer, all the members were uttering from their heart the prayer as uttered by the voice of him who was their mouth in the articulation of their prayers.

While treating on the subject of prayer, it may be proper to call the attention of the saints to the instructions given us in the New Testament in regard to the order of prayer. All our prayers, whether private or social, should be addressed to our Father in heaven. We approach him as the FATHER, through and in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Son of God and Mediatorial Head of the church, whose name we are permitted to plead as the ground of our hope to be heard and answered, and it is by the **Spirit** that we are led to call on the Father, in the name of Jesus, who is our Advocate with the Father. We have no instruction to transpose this order, by addressing our prayers to the Son, or to the Holy Ghost; but while we truly recognize these Three, as the only One true and living God, we can only pray acceptably as moved and led by the Holy Spirit, by whom we are taught to know experimentally that it is only through Christ as our Mediator that we can approach unto God. It is true that in the form given in the sermon on the mount the name of Jesus is not mentioned; but Jesus was then with his disciples in the flesh, and under the law; he had not yet borne the penalties of our transgression, or ascended his Mediatorial throne; but afterward he told them, when about to leave them, and go to the Father, "And in that day, (when he should come by his Spirit to sit in the throne of his glory, the gospel church,) ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."—John xvi. 23, 24.

The popular delusion cherished by worldly religionists is, or seems to be, that prayer is what they profanely call "A lever, by which men can move the power that moves the world." Or, that by the prayers and invocations of men God can be persuaded to do what he would not otherwise do, and so far lay aside his own purpose as to adopt such plans as they may urge in their prayers. And they seem to think that the Lord estimates and is moved by the quantity of words and arguments urged in their invocations, and they will be heard for their much speaking; or, like the worshipers of Baal, their loud voices, and agonizing, and cutting themselves with lancets. But the true worshipers of God know their prayers are only acceptable to God so far as they are in harmony with his immutable will, and that only the Spirit of God can inspire

in them prayers and intercessions according to the will of God.

The need of the Holy Spirit to indite our prayers is not known or felt by those who call on graceless sinners to pray. The experts who assume to engineer the sensational motive power of what are in modern times called revivals, frequently urge on the infatuated multitudes that God desires to save them, the Holy Ghost is striving with them, and knocking for admission into their bolted hearts; that Jesus died for them, and is beseeching them to consent to be saved; in short, that God has done his part in the work, and all that he can do, and now all depends on their doing their part. Well, when the sinner concludes to permit the Lord to save him, he asks, What is my part—what am I to do to secure my salvation? He is at once told to **pray.** Go up to the altar and pray, or be prayed for. Pray to whom? If it be true that God has done all he can do, is it reasonable to pray to him to do more? If God has not done all he can, why tell sinners that he has; and if he has, why tell them to ask him to do more? Again, If God really desires to save them, and cannot without their consent and co-operation, is it certain that he has more power to damn them without their consent, or that they will be more willing to be damned than to be saved? How preposterous!

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe — March 15, 1876)

The opinions and doings of men are of no value unless motivated by the Spirit of Truth; if otherwise, they "darken counsel by words without knowledge".

WE QUOTE:

"A Christian man is never long at ease,
When one fright's gone, another doth him seize."

— John Bunyan

"Through many years of active life, and the observation of many kinds of people, I have found that the strongest, wisest, most competent and reliable man is also the first to admit his inadequacy.

Contradictory though it may sound, he is strong **because** he is humble — and remember always that man is the creation of God. No rule of life is more basic.

When man "leans on his own understanding. . ." when he lives by his own strength. . . when he boasts of probing the mysteries of the atom, the depths of the sea or the secrets of outer space — he forgets God and claims he is his own master. The result is untold suffering.

Even though one's position is maintained, even though material wealth increases, success quickly turns to failure when God has been forgotten. There is no peace of mind, no personal satisfaction, no personal experience of inward joy." — FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover.

ORDINATION OF DEACON

The Dry Creek Church of the Little River Association of Old School of Predestinarian Baptists, while in conference the second Sunday in August, 1954, unanimously voted to ask the ordained brethren of the corresponding associations, with her own, to meet for the purpose of ordaining Brother Sank Carr to the office of deacon. The following Elders and Deacons met, and organized themselves into a Presbytery: Elders Paul E. Poyner, J. T. Henson, J. N. Darnell, and O. W. Perkins; Deacons Bunyan McGregor, Sam McGregor, Jessie Moore, W. A. Bowden, W. A. Perkins, and Forty Morgan.

The Presbytery was organized by choosing Elder O. W. Perkins, as Moderator; and W. A. Bowden, as Clerk. Elder Paul Poyner opened by prayer. Deacon Jesse Moore, being appointed by the church as Spokesman, presented Brother Carr to the Presbytery. After due examination of Brother Carr as to deportment qualifications, and the state of God's gift to him as a deacon to the satisfaction of the Presbytery, they proceeded to ordain Brother Carr, as follows: laying on of hands, with prayer by Elder J. N. Darnell; Elder O. W. Perkins delivered the charge; the right hand of fellowship was given by the Presbytery, Dry Creek Church and the brethren and sisters; and Deacon Carr was delivered back to the church as duly ordained.

We, the members of the Presbytery, commend Deacon Sank Carr to all Orthodox Primitive Baptists, as sound in doctrine, careful in deportment, and humble in the display of God's gift.

Minutes of the proceedings were read and approved; and the Presbytery adjourned in order with prayer by Elder J. T. Henson. This

29th day of August, 1954.

Elder O. W. Perkins, Moderator
W. A. Bowden, Clerk

OBITUARY

ROSA MAY HYLTON

Sister Rosa May Hylton, wife of brother Charles Amos Hylton, Route 1, Centerville, Virginia, departed this life March 17, 1955. She was born in Floyd County, Virginia, May 19, 1891, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Dalton; and was married January 23, 1911, to Charles A. Hylton. To this union were born four sons and two daughters, as follows: Odis Wade, Cecil Don, Raymond Douglas, and Joyce Norvell Hylton, Centerville, Virginia; and Beulah Lorraine Hylton, Arlington, Va., and Mrs. Mary Frances Bishop, Centerville, Va. These all survive, together with her husband, her aged mother, and four brothers and one sister: Lonnie A. Dalton, Indian Valley, Va.; Arnold B. Dalton, Norfolk, Va.; Leslie W. Dalton, Bluefield, W. Va.; Kermil C. Dalton, Catawba, Va.; and Mrs. Clydie Quesenberry, Indian Valley, Va. Her father and one brother preceded her in death.

Sister Hylton received a hope in Christ, and united with Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, the fourth Sunday in August, 1943. She was a faithful member, always attending the nearby meetings with her husband when not providentially hindered.

Funeral services were conducted at Mt. Zion Church, Sunday afternoon, March 20th, by her pastor, Elder John D. Wood; where a large congregation of relatives, brethren and friends were gathered to pay a tribute of love and respect; as did the many beautiful flowers. Burial was in the Stonewall Memory Gardens, near Stone House, Virginia.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to our brother, and all the family.

John D. Wood

MINNIE C. LITTLE

By request of Mrs. Minnie C. Little, wife of the writer, W. A. Little, I will try to note a portion of her life in this time world. First, she was the fourth child, and third daughter of Elder J. H. and Mary B. Fisher; born in Grayson County, Texas, January 7, 1888. We both had been formerly married, but by the death of our companions, we were both lost to ourselves, and were joined together in wedlock, August 19, 1945; and lived a happy life until she passed away February 18, 1955, having sealed up her testimony in this time world — aged sixty-seven years, one month and eleven days.

She leaves to mourn her demise, two brothers: Mr. Guss Fisher, Oregon City, Oregon; Mr. John "J. H." Fisher, Ft. Worth, Texas; two sisters: Mrs. Blanche Free, of California, and Mrs. Rhoda Jones, Elkhart, Texas; a deeply grieved husband, and many relatives and friends; and her brethren and sisters in the Spirit, the Primitive Baptists. She cast her lot with them the third Sunday in October, 1921; and was baptized by Elder E. A. Moreland, and lived a faithful and devoted member the rest of her days. She was ever ready to spend and be spent for the welfare of her brethren — the church. Her presence and influence will be greatly missed; however, we hope our loss is her eternal gain.

All was done for her that could be done, but to no avail — the Lord in his goodness and mercy called, and she answered. I sat by her side and saw her life yield to the article of death. She was a strong believer in the doctrine of God our Saviour; and her hope was founded in the resurrection. Her whole strength and trust was in the sacrifice of her Saviour; and in the hope of what he had done for her. All who knew her feel to believe that she is now basking in the sweet fragrance of God's love, free from further troubles, trials and tribulations, and singing the sweet song of Zion:

"Dear name, the Rock upon which I build,
My shield and hiding place,
My never failing treasury, filled
With boundless stores of grace."

Often she would repeat the language of Job: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in him." And also, But whatsoever my portion be, just and right is He; for the Lord is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works. She by no means feared death, but rather, prayed for it. Praising God in the singing of the old songs was uppermost in her mind all the while, till the end came.

Services were conducted by Elders C. E. Landers and C. Y. Osteen, and she was laid to rest in Lauralland Cemetery, to await the coming of our Lord in the fullness of his glory, to gather his church unto himself, and present it to the Father pure, holy, and without blame before him in love.

At her request, I send this to the Signs, our family paper.

Yours in sorrow,
W. A. Little

IN MEMORY OF MRS. ALICE AKERS

She was born January 2, 1879, in Floyd County, Virginia; and departed this life October 20, 1952. She was married to Henry Frank Akers in November, 1910; and to this union two sons were born; one died young, and the other, Lloyd, survives.

At the tender age of thirteen, she joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Greasy Creek, Floyd County, Virginia; and some years later she moved her membership to the Roanoke Church. She remained faithful to her belief — salvation by grace, to the end. By her walk and her conversation, it was easy to know who her first love was. I believe there are others who will witness with me that she lived as close to her Saviour as was in her power. She was a good wife and mother; she was a good neighbor; she was a good sister; yes, and she was a good sister-in-law. We loved her, and regretted to give her up, but God loved her first.

I believe that, instead of leaving home, she has gone home, to await that great day when she will come into her inheritance, which was prepared for her from the foundation of the world. May God keep us close to him.

Written by one who loved her very much — a sister-in-law.

Mrs. Pearl Akers Law

T. O. TURNER

T. O. Turner was born June 20, 1872, and died February 1, 1955; making his stay on earth eight-two years, seven months and twelve days. He was married to Miss Laura Ladd, and to this union were born two boys, who died in infancy.

Brother Turner received a sweet hope in Christ in early life, and united with Muddy-fork Old School Baptist Church, Cerulan Springs, Trigg County, Kentucky; and was a strong believer of the doctrine. He was active in business until six years ago, when he retired, continuing however to look after his farm. He served as State Senator for twelve years, yet he never asked anyone to vote for him. He will be greatly missed in Frankfort, as well as in Trigg and Callay Counties.

When asked if there were certain scriptures or songs he wanted used at his funeral, he replied that he desired that the writer make his own choice. He desired that his body lie in the Funeral Home at Murray, and the funeral be preached by the writer there, with a short talk at the grave near his old home place at Cerulan, Kentucky. Brother Turner's wife was in a hospital at the time of his death, not knowing that he had passed away; so some of the relatives had a Methodist minister, assisted by me, at the Funeral Home. I tried to talk at Cerulan, and was assisted by Elder Paul Poyner.

Brother Turner was very dear to me. The Little River Association has lost a dear father in Israel; but we weep not as those who have no hope. Written by one who loved him.

J. N. Darnall

LESLIE B. CHILTON

It is with a sad heart that I chronicle the death of Leslie B. Chilton. He was born in 1873, to W. H. and Lucinda Chilton; and was married to our sister in the Lord, Birdie Barnett, January 30, 1896. To this union were born two sons: Linden, of Turners Station, Kentucky; and Edward, of Covington, Kentucky, who survive. Also surviving are two brothers: Elzy C. Chilton and Edward Chilton, both in the same neighborhood; and several grand-children, to mourn his passing.

I have this to say of him, that their home was truly an Old Baptist home — many times have I been entertained there. He never made a profession, or belonged to any church; and it was on account of his feeling of unworthiness, not feeling fit to join with those that he felt were the children of God. Leslie had poor health for several years, and was almost blind and deaf. We all feel that he has entered into his rest; and while we regret his passing, we feel it is his gain — he has gone on before, and we are left a little while longer. May the Lord be praised. May the good Lord bless the lonely widow and give her strength to carry on; also the two children, and the grand-children. May He grant them living grace to live by, and dying grace in that hour of need.

Services were held at the church house by two resident ministers, and the body was laid to rest in the Turner Cemetery. (Old Faith Contender please copy)

(Elder) George L. Weaver

W. F. CORTNEY

With sad hearts, we the members and congregation of Mt. Zion Church, humbly bow our heads in submission to the will of The Heavenly Father in His calling from our midst our dearly beloved and highly esteemed brother, W. F. Cortney.

Brother Cortney was born October 31, 1883 in Union Parish, La. In 1886, he moved with his parents to Holly Springs, Arkansas; and in the year of 1890, the Cortney family settled in Hunt County, Texas, where brother Cortney spent the rest of his life as a farmer and carpenter; and widely known from boyhood as a sound and strong believer in the doctrine of election, salvation by grace and absolute predestination. In the year of 1903 brother Cortney married Lucy Ussery who passed away in 1920. On June 25, 1922 he married Allon Wilson Smith.

Brother Cortney, was well known and much loved as a Christian man, a lovely husband, a good neighbor, as well as a honorable, trustworthy friend. He was well established in the doctrine of God our Saviour, and strong in the faith, loyal to his church, his family and

friends until death called him away.

For more than a year Brother Cortney was ill, but bore his afflictions with patience, fully trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for all things.

On Easter Sunday, 1954, while visiting at the bedside of brother Cortney, the unworthy writer was asked to hold preaching services for him and the relatives and friends who were present. Upon the close of the sermon, from the text, "My grace is sufficient for thee," (2 Cor. 12:9.) the dearly beloved and long time believing man asked for a home in the church. There being a quorum present he was received with joy after hearing his sweet experience.

Oh, what a sweet experience brother Cortney did tell. It was so heart touching to hear him, as he lay upon the bed of afflictions, speaking so wonderfully of God's dealing with him; convicting him of his sins while yet a boy, bringing him down so low that he fell to the ground in the barn hall and lost consciencness of every thing round about. Yea, words will not allow me to express the beauty, splendor, and heart felt impression we felt as the tears flowed down our cheeks as dear brother Cortney lay flat of his back, telling how God raised him up in hope and graced him to press on with courage, faith and hope until that very day. And I will add that such faith, courage and hope did not leave him as long as he lived.

On November 6, 1954, this faithful and courageous soldier of the cross passed from this world of suffering; which suffering had been great with him for more than a year. There are left to mourn brother Cortney's passing, his wife, who was so good and kind to him and stood by to the end, doing all that human hands could do; also one step-son and grand-daughter; eight brothers: C. C. Cortney, Jessie Cortney, Jim Cortney, Fred Cortney, Earl Cortney, Lee Cortney, Will Cortney and J. T. Cortney; three sisters: Mrs. Clara Coats, Mrs. Hattie Word, and Mrs. Tima Hamm. Two brothers and one sister preceded him in death.

After a funeral discourse was delivered to the family and a large crowd of brethren and friends by his pastor, brother Cortney's body was laid to rest in the Simmons Cemetery beside his first wife, to await the glorious resurrection morning; when we hope to all meet around the white throne of God to forever bask in the sunlight of God's eternal love, where sorrow, pain, and death will never be known.

O Lord, comfort the bereaved family and the sorrowing band of brethren, sisters and friends, with thy spirit, gracing us to press on in brotherly love, faith, courage, and hope, to the end. Amen.

Written by request of the church while in conference, and submitted in love and respect, by his unworthy pastor.

W. W. Taylor

MEMORIAL

WHEREAS, It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst the wife of the Moderator of our Union, Elder E. C. Lowery; and while she was not a member of the body, she put forth every effort to entertain her husband's brethren and friends. Therefore, we keenly feel our loss, and pray the comforting Spirit of our God to abide with her husband, to comfort and uphold him in his great loss and sorrow; and that he may continue to visit us, and deliver the message God puts in his heart, that we may be encouraged and strengthened to know that our Redeemer liveth, and shall stand upon the earth in the latter days. Then all His children shall bow before His throne and look to Him for redemption, and He will hear. Praise His holy name.

(Elder) R. L. Harrison, Moderator
J. B. Collier, Clerk

STEPHEN THROWER STORY

Stephen Thrower Story died at St. Jude's Hospital, Montgomery, Alabama, February 23, 1955. He was born in Montgomery March 24, 1901; making his stay on earth nearly fifty-four years.

Tears and joys today are blended:
Tears for loss, and joys for gain.
Thrower's stay on earth has ended —
God has called him from his pain

Vain the tribute we would tender;
Words of ours can ne'er express,
Nor the flowers that loved ones sent him,
All he was of loveliness.

Proud we are that God has loaned him,
Though it seems so short a while;
Proud to think that we have owned him,
And have seen his blessed smile.

Anywhere we ever found him —
Seemed like sunshine from above —
Spreading sunshine all around him,
Blending happiness with love.

Thanks to God who gave him to us,
As we lay him 'neath the flowers;
Such a gift was never due us,
As that Thrower dear of ours.

Mrs. M. C. Story,
Ramer, Alabama

IN MEMORY OF
ELISHA L. SIMMONS

Elisha L. Simmons was born November 7, 1875 and passed away on January 15, 1955

at the age of 79 years, 2 months and 8 days. He was a son of the late Sidney T. Simmons and Martha Oakley Simmons. He was born in Caswell County, North Carolina.

Brother Simmons united with the church at Bush Arbor in August, 1939, and remained a most loyal and faithful member until his death. His wife, Sister Simmons, passed away several years ago. To this union was born 6 daughters and 10 sons as follows: Mrs. C. C. Roberts, Reidsville, N. C., Mrs. Henry Tate, Graham, N. C., Mrs. Alfred Shambley, R-2, Elon College, Mrs. Alton Page, R-2, Elon College N. C., Mrs. R. L. Gilliam, Jr, R-2, Burlington, N. C. and Mrs. Tommie W. Joyner, Bristol, Tennessee. Messrs. Roy Simmons, R-1, Yanceyville, N. C., Otis Simmons, R-3, Burlington, N. C., Luther Simmons, Beuna Vista, Va., Porter Simmons, R-2, Burlington, N. C., Ben Simmons, R-2, Elon College, Robert Simmons, R-2, Elon College, N. C., Clyde Simmons, R-2, Elon College, N. C., Felix Simmons, R-4, Burlington, N. C., and Leonard Simmons, R-6, Burlington, N. C., and Augrum Simmons, R-2, Elon College, N. C. Also surviving are two sisters; Mrs. Ada Rice, Burlington, N. C. and Mrs. Davie Rudd, R-1, Yanceyville, N. C., and one half-sister, Mrs. O. A. Rudd, R-1, Yanceyville; one brother, Mr. George Simmons, Axton, Va.; 43 grandchildren and 16 great grandchildren.

Brother Simmons was a hard-working man and believed in earning his living by the sweat of the brow. We know of no one who was blessed to raise a more congenial and loving family in this community. We indeed feel that he fought a good fight, that he had finished his course, that he has kept the faith and that there is a crown of righteousness laid up for him. Therefore, we, the church of Bush Arbor, wish to bow in humble submission to the will of God, who does all things well.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we extend to the family our sincere sympathy in this bereavement. That a copy of this resolution be given to the family; to the Signs of the Times; to the Old Faith Contender, and that a copy be spread on our church records.

Done by order of the Bush Arbor Church in conference on March 12, 1955.

Elder W. C. King, Moderator
J. D. Simmons, Clerk

IN MEMORY OF
LESTER WILLIFORD

It is with a sense of sadness as well as joy that we attempt to write the notice of Brother Lester Williford's passing from this life, at the age of 68 years, on January 12, 1955, at his home in the Olive Hill community, Person County. It indeed brings to us a sense of sadness to be separated from one whom we loved and respected as Brother Williford. Yet, there is a joy for us to believe that he has passed from a life of suffering and affliction to that of eternal joy in the Lord.

Brother Williford had been afflicted with a heart ailment for several years, spending much of his time in the hospital, suffering great pain; yet his faith was never shaken in God. On the second Saturday before his passing away, he almost reached Bush Arbor Church but was forced to return to his home without attending because of his heart condition. On Sunday morning following, he did attend, and we shall never forget the manifestation of love he expressed at the close of the meeting, stating that the trip could not hurt him because of the great joy he had received in being there.

Brother Williford united with Tar River Church at the association which was being held with the church at Surl in August 1923. In October of the same year, he was ordained as a deacon.

The funeral services were held in the home for Brother Williford, attended by a very large collection of loved ones and friends; the body was buried in the Surl Church cemetery to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour, who will call the quick and the dead at His appearing and make them like unto His own glorious body.

Brother Williford is survived by his wife, Sister Lillie D. Williford; 6 daughters, and two sons, as follows: Mrs. Wilson Clark and Mrs. Macon Daniel of Oxford; Mrs. Hones Day, Durham, N. C.; Mrs. Charles Howard, Jr., Philadelphia, Pa.; Miss Janie Williford and Miss Celia Williford of Durham, N. C.; two sons, Victor and John Roy Williford of the home; four sisters, Mrs. F. P. Dean and Mrs. David Bullock of Fuguay Springs; Mrs. William Clayton and Mrs. Jake Matthews of Angier; four brothers Johnny, Ira and Ollie Williford of Angier, and Eddie of Fuquay Springs; and five grandchildren.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That we the church of Bush Arbor, knowing that God does all things well, desire to bow in humble submission to His will.

First, That we extend our sincere sympathy to Sister Williford and the children. May the Lord supply them with every needed grace in this life.

Second, That a copy of this resolution be given to the family, a copy to the Signs of the Times, a copy to the Old Faith Contender and that a copy be spread upon our church record book.

Done by order of the Bush Arbor Church in conference on March 12, 1955.

Elder W. C. King, Moderator
J. D. Simmons, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 123 DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1955 NO. 7

GREAT WAS MY FEAR

("When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child.")

Taught by a loved one whose word to me
Was accepted as the only way to be —
A Christian.

Hell-fire and brimstone each night, each morn;
Don't do this, don't do that — Hell will be your home.
No chance, not one.

I couldn't fight, I couldn't quell
This mounting fear of self-righteous shell —
No victory won.

My desire to be a perfect son
Compeletely left this erring one —
Tempest tossed.

I tried with all my wits to be
A top-scoring one in deviltry —
Completely boss.

Nothing too daring, nothing too bold;
Impudent rascal — my strength, behold
No one dare cross.

Vile oaths did speak and God to dare
My body with a witness ware —
A mighty hand,

Did grasp my throat. I must say
My life was ebbing fast away —
A tragic man.

"Have mercy, Lord, I did not know
That you would my spirit draw,
A wandering one."

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me;
The Master's voice, my faith and guide —
A work begun.

And how to perform or what to do
My stammering tongue will be
At His command, His word to speak —
Thy will be done.

("But when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." — 1 Cor. 13:11-12)

A loved one's experience — told by
Margaret Baggett Lassiter,
Fayetteville, N. C.

ELD. GRIFFIN TO ELD. McGOUGH

Covin, Alabama

Elder and Mrs. W. G. McGough,
Nauvoo, Alabama

Dearly Beloved Brother and Sister:

I am mailing you the minutes of the church conference and the work of the presbytery on the day of your ordination. I will, as I am blessed of the Lord, get your credentials to you as soon as I can get them signed by all members of the presbytery.

I am still rejoicing that the dear Lord has called you into the work of the ministry. I feel to know that many trials and affliction await you. But be of good cheer, my brother, for they awaited your Saviour, as well as the eminent apostle Paul (Mat. 16:21; 20:18, 19; Acts 20:22, 23). There is no calling of earth that is worthy of comparison to this calling of God. Every calling and vocation of the earth has to do with the handling of perishing objects, things which are seen, things which do not have anything at all to do with the kingdom of heaven. But your new work is taking from the hand of Christ the things of his, and giving it to the sheep. May the Lord bless you to remember that your preaching must all come from him before it will prove comforting and profitable to the household of faith.

While I am glad that God has verified his promise to his people of sending them servants, I have a tender feeling for you as you go into the work. Many times you will come in home with a heart broken by unthinking people — the very people that you are striving to serve with the ability God has given you. The word of thoughtless brethren and sisters will often pierce your heart to the quick. I feel to exhort you carefully to bear hardness as a good soldier

(2 Tim. 2:3). I do not mean to tell you that it will not hurt; I do not mean to hint that it will not make any difference. It will hurt; and sometimes you will feel that your misery is more than you can bear. But if the Lord gives you this grace to think, always remember that it is the greatest of blessings to be counted worthy in the Lord Jesus Christ to bear persecutions and to suffer for his sake.

The minister finds himself in a quandary many times. The flesh will rise up for sympathy and for the mastery. It is deceiving — slipping up unawares and making sly suggestions to you. Watch this, dear brother, and should you get up on Sunday morning and something suggest to you that but few will come today, and perhaps it will be alright for you to go to this singing or to that picnic, may God give you grace to say, Get behind, Satan. Be alert for these thoughts, for I assure you that they will arise, but never give them place. Just here is another deadly suggestion that will come your way: often somebody is going to praise some elder in your presence. Sometimes it will be done with a seductive intention, but whether thoughtlessly or intentional, never let it upset you. Always remember that if your brethren think more of themselves than they ought; that if the Old Baptists are knowing some men after the flesh, that God will take care of the matter and sift out all ungodliness and fleshly works; and remember, if the Lord has been pleased to grace your yoke fellows to preach to the satisfaction of the flock more acceptably than yourself, that they, as well as you, are in his hands to do with as seemeth good to him.

I do not hesitate to tell you to avoid arguments. They have never settled anything. But here is another place that calls for extreme carefulness and watching. Always be ready to give a reason of your hope, but let it be in the right place. You do not want to be found in a saloon or like places defending the doctrine of God our Saviour; you do not want to be heard crying on the street corners; you do not want to try to mix your religion and your call to the ministry with your daily business life. No, none of that at all. But if you are accosted at your work; if you are run down by men; if any inquirer comes asking of you; if, in any way, as long as you have a right to be where you are, always step right up and give a reason for your hope. I do not believe in debates that Old Baptists seek out, and where they accost other people and hurl challenges in their face, but neither do I believe that the Apostles would have run from any assailant of the doctrine of God our Saviour. I would admonish you to be careful about this.

You have a fine trio of children. It is wonderful that the Lord has given them to you. Carry them to church with you, but do not be a despotic about it. Remember that you are still in the world, and that an Old Baptist should be a good citizen. Your children must go to school, and they need to be a part of that school to get all the benefit. Do not try to force Old Baptist doctrine on your children, but do teach them obedience and good morals. Never, dear kindred, advocate in the presence of your children, nor of anyone else, that indifference to right standards of living as a part of Old Baptist doctrine. It is not the truth. And by all means, cultivate the friendship of the young, teaching them good behaviour always, and admonishing them carefully in clean habits and moral and upright thinking. Urge Old Baptist parents to carry their children to church and admonish the children to honor their father and mother by going.

My brother and sister, remember that you will have false brethren to contend with. The church of Jesus Christ has always had some deadweight or deadwood it it. This is an inert load that must be carried along, and I warn you that it always has a tendency to pull down the balance of the church. Watch this, and be aware of its slippery attention to you. Oftimes it will pay you lit-

tle notice until it sees an opportunity to use you. Do not be a tool of anybody; do not carry a torch for another; do not take up with a brother's hobby and support it for him. Be as careful as you can; but when you are mistaken, take steps to correct your behaviour, but do not go around trying to prop yourself up before brethren. If you are guilty of a wrong, **quit it at once;** if you are not guilty, **live in a way that the Old Baptists will know that you are not guilty.** Never go around with a pocket full of letters trying to bolster up your position or to establish your faithfulness.

I feel again like telling you to not be sorry for yourself before your congregations. Do not run yourself down before them, telling them that you are a wild desperado. **An humble confession of your sins is commendable anywhere, but belittling yourself is not preaching the gospel of peace.** And above everything else, **do not boast of your ignorance,** nor slyly hint at the learning of an educated brother, I have always felt that I would like to know more about the grace of God, and about good language and good manners. I would admonish you, sister McGough, to watch your husband's manners in the pulpit, and if he develops a bad way of expression or an ungraceful gesture to tell him so.

If you go to church anywhere, other than to one of your own appointments, you must wait the pleasure of then about going into the house to start the song sevice. Then wait their pleasure about when preaching service starts, but when you are asked into the pulpit, get up and go forward in an orderly manner. Do not use too much of the pastor's time, especially while you are young in the work of the ministry. I do not mean by this that you must be forward, but I mean to tell you that it is not becoming in a minister to be slothful about his Master's call to this work.

In conclusion, I do not tell you these things because I know how to preach. I am just as helpless as you are in the matter. I tell you these things because I love you. I know by bitter experience what you will face time and again. When I began to exercise in public. I got very little notice from the older brethren. I have noticed this all along that the older ones seemed to resent the presence of a boy in the ministry. I have felt to encourage, rather than to discourage. I do not feel that God will ever call a man to preach, and then call me to help qualify him by ignoring him, or by indifferent treatment. Rather, I feel like that you are my yokefellow, and the load will be heavy to both of us, and that it is easier pulling together than it is working at cross-purposes.

May the God of all grace be your daysman, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight.

Lois joins me in love to you both.

Yours in a precious hope,
William D. Griffin

New Boston, Texas

Dear Brethren:

I don't know why it seems necessary for me to write concerning my faith and hope in Jesus Christ, as I send remittance for the subscription to the Signs.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Prospect, Old Union, Texas, was kind enough to give me a home with them, who am the chief of all sinners. I have the will to do right, but how to perform that will, I find not. Dear brethren in the Lord (I sincerely hope I may address you as such), I never knew one could have such wonderful, divine, abiding love for the members until being united with them. "But as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." (I Thes. 4:9) To have one's hope strengthened as the Holy Ghost speaks through his humble servants, is to receive joy unspeakable. I feel so unworthy to even be in their midst. I pray, it being the Lord's will, that I will always be at their feet.

I believe we have an alwise God, who has laid our path out, and it is impossible to err from it; that we are saved by grace, not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works lest any man should boast. Also, that anyone is a thief and a robber, if he tries to get to heaven any other way, except through Jesus Christ; that one has to be born again, becoming as a little child, before entering the kingdom of God; and has to feel his unworthiness as the sinner who cried, "Lord have mercy on me a sinner." Believing, too, that man is altogether vanity — we are proud until the Lord sees fit to humble us.

Dear brethren, after having been in the valley two or three weeks recently, if I be not deceived, I was lifted up, and made to sing, "Glory to God in the highest;" and seemed to be as light as a feather. I wouldn't trade sweet meditations like that for ten thousand worlds like this.

My aunt gave me several Signs of the Times several years back, and I received such joy and comfort from them, I knew I must subscribe and receive them regularly. If you have a mind, pray for this unworthy sinner. May the Lord bless you and keep you safe in his love, is my prayer.

A little sister, if one at all,
(Mrs.) Ozella Jones

Ascom City, Korea.

Dear Editors:

Here is a scripture that has been on my mind, and I have felt to express my views on it: "But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." (James 3:8) To me, this verse shows the weakness of man — that a man is as a baby, and can't do anything without help.

It is written, "Without me ye can do nothing." Christ spoke these words, and I have found them to be true in my heart. Of myself, I find that I can do nothing. I have tried to do good: I have tried to stop myself from speaking such vain words, but I find that all my efforts are in vain. Many times I have tried to tame my tongue; and once I thought I had it tamed. In fact, I bragged about it; but no sooner than I was through bragging, then I would cut my toe, or bump my head, etc., and speak those terrible words of vanity. I am brought to believe that, if I do any good and tame my tongue, then it is only through the Lord.

"For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body." (James 3:2) Notice the words, "We offend all." The we refers to the children of God. If there is a man who doesn't offend, then he is a perfect man; but this is not possible, for no man is perfect. The only one who has been on earth, and who is perfect, is Christ.

"When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? But Christ beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible." (Matthew 19:25-36) If a man could be perfect, then nothing would be impossible with him. But, on the other hand, man is weak, and sinful, and carnal, and can do nothing of himself.

"We put bits in the horses' mouth, that they may obey us; and we turn about the whole body." (James 3:7) "For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind. But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." (James 3:7-8) "Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter." (James 3:10-11)

A strange thing, but this little tongue can speak very kind and comforting words, and develop a great friendship. Also, this tongue can speak very harsh, bitter words of cursing and fire. This tongue can cause great trou-

ble, and develop many enemies, and hurt many people. These words of blessing come from the Lord above — it is only through the Lord that we can speak these kind and comforting words. The words of cursing come from the carnal nature of man. Man was born in sin, and man lives in sin: "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." (Romans 8:8) "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." (Romans 8: 5-6) Remember, "Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing." Therefore these words of blessing are of the Spirit, and these words of cursing are of the flesh.

In closing, I want to bring out this scripture, "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his own tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." (James 1: 26) To me, this scripture points out that men who claim to be religious, or seem to be, but don't control their tongue, are deceived, and their religion is vain. Does this scripture contradict the text? No! I believe that the Lord tames or bridles the tongues of his children, as he works the good works in them. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Philippians 2:13)

In hope,
Woodrow W. Hudson, Jr.

(We were favored to have Brother Hudson with us so often during his training at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, and are glad that he is impressed to write some of his feelings since going to Korea. We give his address for any who may feel to write him:

PFC Woodrow W. Hudson, Jr.
US54135300
97th ENG. CO. (Depot)
APO 971, San Francisco, Calif.

— JDW)

HE IS ALL IN ALL

Fort Carlson, Colorado

My dear Sister Tuck:

I received your good letter sometime ago, but I have been in the hospital and unable to answer it until now. I hope this finds you all well, both in the flesh and in the Spirit. I don't know whether I'll be able to write anything to your consolation, and to God's glory, but I feel that I should attempt to; and if it be His will to give me words to write, then I'm sure it will be to his praise.

I know that I am insufficient in myself, but I sincerely believe the scripture which says, "In me all things are possible." So, as I have said, if the Lord be with me, I will write. I am only flesh, and the weakest of all, therefore I am prone to making all kinds of mistakes, but I sincerely hope that I make no mistake in interpreting the scriptures. If I write anything to your good, don't give me the praise, but give it to God; and if I write anything contrary to the doctrine, please excuse me. I have only one desire, and that is to write in praise of God.

Oh, how wonderful it is when we are made to see God as the Almighty, the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, the Father of all Israel, — the God of our Fathers, who has been from everlasting, and who shall be unto everlasting, the only God; one who needs no help of any man, and the one who, through his love for the house of Jacob (being his church), sent his only begotten Son into this world, to take upon himself a body of flesh, in which he bled and died on the cross of Calvary; and taking upon himself the sins of His people, that all the Father had given him should be saved, and none should be lost. Yes, not only did he die, but he also arose again the third day, and ascended to that glory which was his before the world began; and is now on the right hand of God making intercession for the saints. He has blessed us with all blessings, both natural and spiritual; he sought us out when we were dead in

trespasses and sins, and brought us into his marvelous light, and gave us life, and that more abundantly.

I love to think of the 23rd Psalm — how it starts by saying, "The Lord is my Shepherd." This to me, means that the Lord is with us. He watches after us and keeps us from going astray, — we shall be given any blessings we really need. So many times we think we need something which the Lord knows we are better off without; and he shows us later that it is better that we don't receive everything that we want naturally. So he doesn't give us everything that we want naturally, but he does give us everything that we need. So many times we pray for things that we shouldn't, and I ask the Lord to forgive me; for we know not what to pray for, as we should, but the Lord knows what we stand in need of before we ask of him. This proves to me that his words are true when he said, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." I know that if he would leave us without his Spirit to lead us, then we would fall — we are helpless, unable to make one step without Him.

May we be made to look toward him, and thank him for all that he has done for us; for if it had not been for his love and tender mercy, we would long have been cast out of this life into outer darkness. Even when we are in deep distress, He stands by us; when we are sick both naturally and spiritually, He comforts us and heals us; when we are in the valley of the shadow of death, we fear no evil, for He is there to comfort us; when all our friends seem to have forsaken us, He is there with us, and comforts us. He watches after us both night and day — He never slumbers nor sleeps; he leads us in the straight and narrow way and keeps us from falling by the wayside. When we become tired, He rests us; when we become weak, He gives us strength; when we think we can go no farther, He gives us the desire and the power to go on. When we think He has left us and we feel ourselves slipping, He always comes more powerfully than ever, it seems, and straightens us out. When we see one of his little ones come singing His praise, He makes us to rejoice and sing with him.

To sum it all up in a few words, we can say that **HE IS ALL IN ALL.**

Sincerely,
Cpl. Melvin R. Shelton

ELDER LEFFERT'S REPLY TO DR. MILFORD

Leesburg, Virginia
January 5, 1942.

Dr. S. B. Milford,
Poolsville, Md.
My dear Doctor:

So far as I have any understanding of your questions propounded to me, as to, **"our blessed Lord's way of bringing about the final innocence of His chosen people,"** I am ready and willing to let you consider what I may now be able to submit to you for your meditation and reflection.

How was the innocence and purity of God's elect lost in the first instance? Was it not through being made flesh and blood in the first Adam, who was of the earth earthly, and in whose sin and transgression of God's law, they were plunged into death and alienation from God?

Hence, the first step in extricating the elect out of this condemnation would be by their Head and Surety, Christ Jesus, coming in the likeness of their sinful flesh to be made a curse for them in their stead, and to suffer the judgement rightly due them for their sin. This is what Christ did. He himself became sin for them that they might be made the righteousness of God in Him. He redeemed them from death in his dying for them; and justified them before the Father in his being raised from the dead for them.

The next step is for this work which Christ has done for the elect, to be made known to them by the Holy Spirit's applying it to them personally, by

the revelation of it to them. **This is the work which the Spirit of God is now doing for the elect in their experience:** Bringing them to believe it, to hope in it, and to look forward to the actual consummation of it in their ultimately being brought before God without spot, wrinkle, or any blemish whatsoever.

The final stage in this blessed work will be in the future at the second appearing of the Lord from Heaven; at which time the Lord will change their vile bodies and fashion them like unto His own glorious body. Then shall the whole family of the redeemed be eternally in the image of their glorious Lord, established forever in innocence and purity and holiness, in such eternal security that they can never fall from it, or lose it, any more forever.

Those who now sleep in Jesus are waiting in the Paradise of God until the rest of us numbered among the elect shall be manifested and brought to the knowledge and hope of these things. Then the whole body, or number, of the elect, being perfected in godliness and holiness at one and the same instant, shall appear with Christ when he himself appears, and shall see Him as he is, and be forever like him.

Your question opens up a wonderful field for contemplation. I have but touched upon it, but I trust sufficiently so for you to get my meaning. Whether this answers your query, I cannot tell; but such as I have give I to thee. The Lord be praised! Whatever we truly know of these things, it is by His making them known to us. Such knowledge is too high for the natural man — he cannot attain unto it.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

(Elder) H. H. Lefferts.

". . . but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience." (Romans 5:3)

3347 Tulwiler,
Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

It is now time to send in payment for our much loved paper. Enclosed is check for two years, and $1.00 to help send it to others. To us, it is the best reading except the Bible; for it contains letters from all parts of the world, filled with the truth drawn from the heart and pens of those who believe in a God of power, purpose and love: one that speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast.

We believe that all things work together for good to those that love the Lord, who are the called according to his purpose, and not according to our works. We believe our walk is according to his will, else we don't walk (by faith). His believing children walk in good works, for they were created in Christ unto good works, in which God before ordained that we should walk. So we have nothing to boast of. God, in his wisdom, knew exactly what man would do, so he established their goings and set the bounds of their habitations. Man in nature is altogether vanity. We can only see through a glass darkly, so we can only hope that we have tasted that the Lord is gracious; can only hope that we love the brethren, by which we are told we know we have passed from death unto life. We hope we've been killed to the love of sin, for we are made to hate our very life on account of the sin that dwells in this old flesh, which causes us grief and bitterness. We desire to live righteously and soberly in this world, but find we are too ignorant, weak and blind. It seems Peter must have forgotten the words of the Saviour when he began to deny that he knew him until the cock crowed: and it seems we have done so wrong before we can see how wrong we are. We then see ourselves all undone and helpless; and wonder sometimes how long will the Lord be merciful. We are made to know then that we can but hope in the finished work of Christ. Paul prayed for relief, but was told, "My grace is sufficient for thee." This thorn that was given him in the flesh was for a purpose, and was not removed; for it was one of the things that was for his good,

and he was told why: It was to buffet him lest he become exalted above measure. We hope we see the need of it sometimes when we are lifted above the things of this world for a season, and see the untold riches of God's grace — things that are impossible to tell. How safe, secure and satisfied we then feel for awhile.

Afterwards we are brought down again, else we would not suffer again; for if we shall reign with Christ in glory, we must also suffer with him. Our Lord knows what we stand in need of, and supplies it in due time. We find ourselves shut up in prison, where we can't feel the warmth of the sun; can't see and understand the truth, for it is dark there; can't see to read, and meditations are gone from us. The talk of brethren and sisters sound like words we have heard over and over, and we find ourselves wondering, and asking questions which add up to the same: Is this the Christ, or shall we look for another? Sometimes we see our loved ones trying to reach us, but, alas, to no profit; our hearts seem so hard and cold, and unkind, and we fear we have been deceived all along, and have not known the love of God. We are as water poured out on the ground. God's unmerited grace and mercy is all that can help us, and we know we are unworthy of the least of his blessings, and our hope is so little. But thanks unto Him, when we have suffered long enough, he commands the darkness, and it flees from us, and all is love, peace and joy. We then can say, "Salvation is of the Lord"; and, "I know my Redeemer liveth." His wonderful blessings are sent in supply — and at the appointed time. I don't believe his children miss one of them.

I greatly desire to be found walking in obedience to our God: of ourselves we can do nothing, but can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. So, to me, it is all of grace that is stored in Christ for us. "Grace has brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home."

I wish I could write as others do, but that too is a gift, and is given to whomsoever He will. I'm made glad, and I hope thankful, that I am given a hope in these things; and to believe on his name, which is the work of God. I humbly hope I've tasted that the Lord is gracious; and I hope I have at times been given to see the hand of God working a marvelous work in our day in the hearts of his little ones. We had a glorious day last fourth Sunday, baptizing three: brother and sister Ernhart and sister Opal Arnold. Seeing them walk into the water that cold, windy day, following their Lord and Saviour in baptism; each having faith in Him, were not afraid, and declared they were not cold. Another one, as we were leaving, weepingly fell on the neck of a sister, saying, Oh, how I wish I had gone with them. May it be God's will to bring her and others soon, who believe the doctrine and have expressed themselves many times that they desired to come.

I must close; may God bless you in basket and in store to carry on with our dear paper for many years to come. Seems to us it is filled with the sweetest and most edifying articles, especially the editorials. We hope the Lord will continue to enable you to select the best of reading for its pages. Do not let my writing crowd out better reading, for many are edified and comforted in the silence of their homes, who are not able to go to meetings. My husband joins me in this letter.

Mrs. Luther Campbell

Mesquite, Texas

Dear Elder Spangler:

I am enclosing money order for renewal of my subscription to the Signs for 1955.

I have been a reader of the good paper since the year, 1913, and have enjoyed the Editorials and many of the good letters. I find that the paper still sets forth the doctrine which was re-

vealed to me in 1913. As time goes on, the doctrine is made plainer, and I love it more. I am often made to wonder how the Lord can be so merciful as to unfold such beauties to such an unworthy sinner as I.

I am glad when I see articles printed in the Signs of the Times, written by many of those whom we loved for the truth's sake, and who have passed on — those who could endure sound doctrine, and loved it. I am glad to see that the Lord has kept many in the way of the old paths, even though Satan has confused and divided our dear people. May the Lord sustain you in your labor of love in publishing the Signs for 1955.

Your little sister in Christ,
Mrs. F. A. Dean

"OUR FAMILY PAPER"

505 Houston Street,
Levelland, Texas

Dear Editors of the Signs of the Times:

I feel I can truly say, Our Family Paper, as it has been a regular visitor in our home since my marriage in 1897. My husband was a subscriber at that time, but I fail to remember for how long.

I would love this morning to express my appreciation to the Editors and all who contribute such wonderful articles to its pages. Since I have passed my three score and ten years, plus six, and have never been very strong, I am not physically able to attend church as regularly as I would love to. The church of my membership is more than two hundred miles from my home, and I have not been able to visit with them since September; however this church has extended an arm to a little church in Earth, Texas, which is within sixty miles of my home here, and I have been blessed to attend two associations.

In looking back over my somewhat long and uneventful life, I feel to know that God has been wonderfully gracious and kind to me, who, if a child of grace, am surely the very least and undeserving of all, for I am unworthy, unholy, vile and unclean. My daily prayer is, Oh, great and allwise God, keep my mind free of evil thoughts, and my tongue from speaking guile.

We have been wonderfully blessed the past year with visitors to our little church in Lawn, Texas; among whom were, Elder Davis, Sister Davis, Sister Schoonover, and Sister Rosa Coleman, of Riffe, Washington. Also Elder Berry, Sister Berry and son, of Elon College, N. C. And from Texas: Elder Lambert, of Winsboro; Elder Beene, of Houston; Elder Walston, of Kenwood; Elder Shipman, of Cisco; as well as visitors from New Mexico and Louisiana. Their coming means so much to us, and we earnestly desire that it may be the Lord's will that they come again; and to all others who may feel to come, I am sure you will receive a cordial welcome.

I am too nervous to write with a pen, so for fear you may find it difficult to read this, I will close with a prayer in my heart to our wonderful God, to bless his people everywhere: Thou knowest who they are; and wherever they be, may it please thee, Holy Father, to bless them with such things as thou seest they need. Let thy sustaining grace ever uphold them, and thy love and tender mercy ever be over and around them; we humbly ask in Jesus' name and for his sake.

Once again thanking the Editors and contributors to our dear family paper for the many articles, from which I have received joy and comfort. I am enclosing a hymn composed by Sister Minnie Lee Williams; she is indeed a faithful and lovely sister. Am also enclosing check for $5.00, for which please extend my subscription one year, the balance to be used as you think best.

Hoping I am a sister in Christ,
(Mrs.) Ida Bowers

"A DAY OF SALVATION"

"Thus saith the Lord, In an accept-

able time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee . . ." (Isaiah 49:8)

For many days this scripture has been on my mind, and, like much other scripture, clearly explains to me that all things must be at the exact time which pleases God. How regretfully we remind ourselves of the time in our lives that we had no thought of life beyond this world.

All people, even a child of God, are blind from any truth, or knowledge of the power and love of God until it pleases Him to move the darkness from before them, that they may know of his power and grace. And, of course, all this must be in an acceptable time with God. All of God's people are carefree, and only look for another day and the expected pleasures they may bring, until He visits them with the day of salvation. Then they look for THE DAY; that is, the day when they hope to be among that number in the kingdom of God. And all of this is of no volition of their own, but according to the effectual working of the power of God. When the Lord told Zacchaeus to come down from the tree, and that He must abide at his house that day, we can see Zacchaeus a poor repenting sinner, standing before his Saviour and begging forgiveness, saying he would amend all his wrongs four-fold. But the Lord calmly told him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham.

So we see that Zacchaeus knew nothing of God until He revealed himself through his holy Son Jesus; and it is perfectly evident that Zacchaeus had no previous knowledge that that was to be his day of salvation. To me, he had climbed the tree for no other purpose but sight-seeing, which, of course, was worldly. But at God's command light and understanding was brought to him; and, of course, the day of salvation which God had appointed, and not Zacchaeus.

The purpose of Paul's journey to Damascus was completely changed (that is, the purpose Paul had in it) while on his way to arrest the saints of God. Was it changed by Paul? No! No! But by the power and grace of God through his Son Jesus that met him on the way. Did Paul have any pre-vision of this experience? He did not; which makes us know beyond any doubt that it was the appointed time of God for Paul to know the truth of the way of God. He was told to complete his journey; that is, to go on to Damascus, and there it would be told him what he must do. In this lesson we can see the church of Jesus Christ in its infancy, and declared by the Holy Trinity before the world was; for we hear the Apostle saying he was made a minister according to the gift of the grace of God, given him by the effectual working of His power, and that he should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world had been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ. To the intent that now unto principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God; according to his eternal purpose in Christ Jesus our Lord. Notice, dear people, who is to know this mystery; and how it is to be known. All of which makes infallible proof that all things are done at the appointed time of God, and there is nothing added to or taken from God's plan, for it is all purposed in Christ Jesus before the world was.

After David's victory over the Philistines in the Valley of Rephaim, the Philistines assembled themsleves together again for battle against David; and David inquired of the Lord as to what he should do. The Lord told him not to go up against them to battle, but fetch a compass behind them, and come upon them over against the mulberry trees. And when he heard the sound of a gong in the tops of the mulberry trees, to bestir himself, for then shall the Lord go out before thee to smite the host of the Philistines. This is clear and positive

evidence that God has his way and time for all things; and all earthly powers combined cannot hinder or deter God's purpose in anything.

David was blessed with spiritual light to ask God for guidance, knowing that God alone ruled in heaven and earth. In his supplication to God, we find him saying, In thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there was none of them. (Psalms 139:16) David knew he could trust in no other guidance than the hand of God; and that God had his purpose in all things, and his time for all things.

I might write on and on, but I have already found myself in fields of thought that I have no words to express. This is enough for now. In hope of eternal life.

H. S. Grimes
R.F.D. 2,
Elba, Alabama

EXPERIENCE OF SISTER ROBERTSON

Burlington, N. C.
April 21, 1953.

I feel to write some of my feelings, since I haven't been blessed to tell them. Years ago, when we lived on Country Line Creek, I began to see myself a sinner; and I would go down to the spring where we obtained water, and try to pray. A few times I felt my prayers were answered. When my mother-in-law was sick, I tried to pray that she would leave some evidence, since she had never joined the church, and I feel that she did. A few hours before she passed, she spoke of a beautiful light that she saw, which we did not see; and just before the end, she said she heard singing.

A few months later my own mother passed away. She had been a member of Pleasant Grove Church since before I could remember, and I tried to pray that her passing would be easy, for I felt that I knew that God could make the dying bed as soft as downey pillows. She was living at my brother's home at that time. I had never thought that it was a beautiful place, but the morning she passed away it seemed like heaven. Everything I looked at was praising God, and the sun shined differently than I had ever seen it, and I felt to know that God had all power in heaven and in earth, and that his will was done.

A few years later I was going to the hospital for an operation, and I wasn't worried about dying. The night before I dreamed of Elder Gilliam and Elder Berry: I dreamed I was on a sick bed, and there were a lot of people there whom I did not know. I looked up at Elder Berry, and he looked well and healthy; and then at Elder Gilliam, and said, "You are on a solid rock you are preaching sound doctrine." There are so many things I can't understand, and I feel much of the time that I can say:

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear I'm not born again."

I get so hungry for one little crumb. Sometimes I think I will never go to church again, for I don't feel like I am fit to go into the building and sit down under the sound of God's servants. At other times, I feel that I love the church and the doctrine the Primitive Baptists preach. I was reared in a Primitive Baptist home — my father was a deacon of Pleasant Grove Church, and passed away when I was twelve years of age. My mother was a widow twenty-six years, and now three of her daughters are widows. I can remember my father having family prayer on Sunday nights, and how sweet it was to me at that age. They were reading Zions Landmark at that time, and I would hide away and read them.

I lost my dear husband September 14, 1950. His funeral was preached at Bush Arbor Church. It was one of the saddest times of my life, but when I walked into the building, I saw heaven, and all the people looked like angels to me. I cannot express my feelings in words, but I know the Lord can cause us to re-

joice in the deepest of sorrows. Praise his holy name!

Last Fall, I dreamed of a place that was as white as snow — the most beautiful place I had ever seen. I looked one way and saw my husband, who had passed on; and I looked another way and saw my mother. Then I looked and saw Elder Curry King; and when he stood to speak, my mother started talking in a language I did not understand. The dream was sweet to me, and I couldn't go back to sleep for rejoicing.

I feel that I love old Bush Arbor Church. On some meeting days I feel that I can't leave without asking for a home; and then think how vile and sinful I am. I wouldn't want to deceive the church — I crave more evidence.

(The following was written nearly a year later.)

May 20, 1954

I united with the church at Bush Arbor the 9th of May, 1954; and about two weeks later I had so many doubts and fears concerning my unworthiness. I tried to pray that the Lord would be pleased to give me a little more evidence. Then I dreamed I was crossing a bridge; the water was deep and muddy and running swiftly; and the planks in the bridge were rotten, and I thought I was sure to fall through, and I was not prepared to be baptized. I thought that Sister Alice Smith was helping me get ready, and I crossed the bridge and got within sight of the pool and saw Brother King; and my husband who had passed on, was by my side. It was a beautiful place, and I thank God for this dream; I can never put in words what this meant to me.

When they gave me the right hand of fellowship, I felt so much love for them. They are the dearest people in the world to me. May God forbid that I will ever cause them any trouble, but keep me humble, living at their feet.

Fannie A. Robertson

807 Pope Street,
Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Editors, and readers of the Signs:

I hope that what I am about to write will be sane and sound.

I have been trying since Christmas to write a few lines to send in with my remittance. But last week, in desperation, I tore up the pages and threw them into the waste basket. I knew I was helpless and without the spirit, and couldn't even try anymore— when, and what I would write (if anything) would have to be given me.

Yesterday we planned to take our eighty-eight year old father back to his home in Kentucky, and were to leave early in the morning. I went to bed with a sad and troubled heart, barren of spirit, and there seemed to be no good anywhere. I awoke about three o'clock, and lay there thinking with a peaceful mind; and the church and the sweet band of members and followers came into my mind's view. My heart was filled with a warm feeling of love as I thought of them, and the things we believe, trust in, and hope in: The Lord, the great cause that makes us love one another, desiring to be together in one accord; and to believe that Christ died and is risen, and that he justified all that should be saved, not losing one of them; and in due time is making himself known to them by his spirit, that they are of God. "Because ye are sons, God sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

I notice then that a sweet song was flowing through my mind. It was the sweetest thing, and the melody seemed to fill my very being. I wish I could tell the things that came to me, but I cannot. The last thing I do remember was, "Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." I cannot describe the feeling the words gave me. The song was, "Jerusalem, my happy home".

This morning I was sad and depressed after taking papa home yesterday. My heart was heavy, and I thought, Oh,

for just another little season of sweet comfort, as I felt night before last. I had looked through the April Signs, and felt that it would be rich in comfort and truth, if only one might be blessed with the spirit to understand. I tried to pray, as I sat down to read, that I would be blessed to that end.

Oh, dear Lord, it was so much more than I expected, or could even ask for, that I wished I could pass away from this world. The truth was so glorious I could hardly stand it — I wept aloud for a long while, so full of the glory of it (if that is what it is), and felt that I must tell someone about it. I thought of the paper I was holding — now is the time, I will tell it to the ones who were blessed to write to my comfort. I was almost afraid to attempt such again, and afraid of losing the sweetness of this feast.

Now that I have told this much, I don't know any more to say. It is strange to experience something so wonderful, and can't find words to describe it. I do wish that I could tell plainly what the reading of each article meant to me. I read one, and had such a feeling of awe at the wisdom and power it set forth; I turned to another, and it was much more so, if possible; and another, and another, until I felt that I had received as set forth in the verse of this song:

"Let me attest thy power;
Let me thy goodness prove,
Till my full soul can hold no more,
Of everlasting love."

Lord forgive me, if I am too forward or bold in telling this, and hinder me from mailing, if it is amiss. I cannot explain the many sweet, and sometimes bitter, experiences in my life. I know not why such great blessings are bestowed on one like me. Oh, how marvelous are his judgements and his ways past finding out! Even his chastisements, the rod of correction, carries a blessing, though it is very grievous and hurtful. If I am not mistaken, I've suffered them in the past few months; but I do hope and pray that it has taught me lessons that will cause me to be more fearful and careful, patient and longsuffering, when things do not go to my liking, or things that I cannot understand. Oh, Lord, may I ever be kept by thy love and mercy — kept down at the feet of thy people, and walk not after the flesh but after the spirit, bearing fruits of the same. May the Lord bless the editors and writers of the Signs to continue to set forth the truth as it is in Christ. I felt after finishing the reading, that I'd love to take them all in my arms, embracing them in love of the truth; and would like to write each one and tell them what it meant to me, but now their letters have flowed into one, so that I wouldn't know what to write, if I tried.

If my experiences are not of the spirit, then I have no hope; for my hope is based upon just such experiences. These words filled me with the sweetest love, gave me the sweetest words to live with, and hope in: "You've been baptized with the Holy Spirit; you've been washed in the blood of the Lamb." These things are mysterious, and I cannot explain them; but I cannot deny them.

A sister in hope of eternal life,
Mrs. Lucille Young

NOTICE OF CHANGE OF DATE OF SLATE HILL MEETING TIME

The yearly meeting of the Slate Hill Old School Baptist Church, Orange County, New York, has been changed to the first Saturday in August (August 6th). The meeting will begin at 10:30 A. M., D.S.T.

Members and friends are invited to attend at this historic meeting place.

William D. Chapman, Clerk

WATCH YOUR EXPIRATION DATE AND RENEW PROMPTLY.
THANK YOU

The Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with Bush Arbor Church, beginning on Saturday 16th and continuing three days.

Bush Arbor Church is located on highway no. 62 leading from Burlington, N. C. to Danville, Va. and about 10 miles north of Burlington.

All Lovers of the truth are invited.

D. V. Spangler, Clerk

EDITORIALS

Danville, Va. July, 1955

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EDITORIAL

THE PORTER OPENETH

I had been blessed to enjoy many hours of sweet and glorious meditations upon the wonderful words of Jesus recorded in the tenth chapter of St. John before the words quoted in the title of this article had any special significance. I shall never forget the joy experienced the first time this grand statement took possession of my mind. I had been content with the thought that the shepherd and porter were significant of the same person, Jesus. Let us read St. John 10:2-3: "But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine." in John 10:14. This being true, it would be proper to restate verse 3 like this: "The porter openenth to Jesus, the shepherd. The sheep hear Jesus' voice. Jesus calls each of his sheep by name, and leads them out." Now, the question: who is it that opens to Jesus? Who is the porter?

When we examine 2 Samuel 18:26, 2 Kings 7:10, 1 Chronicles 9:22, and 1 Chronicles 16:38 we find that the duties of porters were to keep the gates, not a carrier of burdens. The porters opened and shut the places of entrances at the command of the ones who were in authority. Ports are openings or places for entrance and exit. A porter, then, would be one who opens and shuts these doors, gates, ports, or any other term we might use for places of entrance and exit. There are many sheep who are to enter into the sheep-fold but only one place of entrance. This way of entrance is called the door by Jesus in John 10; and He emphatically states that He is the door. There is only one shepherd who can bring the sheep into this fold, and He, Jesus, is that Shepherd. Jesus mentions only one porter who opens to Him and the sheep. Who is the porter? He does not say He is the porter, but does say He is the door and the shepherd.

If God should see fit to reveal unto us that which opened the way for Jesus' entrance into this world, we would see the porter. If we could determine that which opened the tomb that contained the body of Jesus and raised Him from the dead, the porter would be determined. If we could understand that which opened the body of Jesus before the foundation of the world so that all God's Children could be immersed, or baptized in Him we could understand who is the porter. Jesus enters into the hearts of His people by this same porter. We are enabled to converse with our Lord only when the porter opens at the command of Him. This same porter shall quicken our mortal bodies in the resurrection.

According to the record of the conception and birth of Jesus, as recorded

in Matthew's and Luke's writings, the opening was by the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit is that one Spirit, or porter, who opens the entrance into the one body in which God's children are baptized. (See 1 Cor. 12:12-13) God raised Jesus from the dead by the Spirit; Jesus dwells in His people by the Spirit, and will quicken our mortal bodies by this same Spirit in the resurrection. This same Spirit dwells in His people now, opens an intercession unto the Father, and bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. (See Romans 8:9-16.) Now, we see the Holy Spirit is the opener or porter.

I have said many times, "God, the Father, chose His people unto salvation, God, the Son, saves, and God the Holy Spirit reveals." A covering must be removed in order to bring to view something that is hid. A revelation is experienced only when the opening is made that removes the obstacle that hides so that the thing or person hid is revealed. This is the work of the porter. This being the work of the Holy Spirit, it will do no violence to use the word PORTER in this treatise as we make reference to the Holy Spirit. There is only ONE PORTER in the sense that we shall use the term.

We want the reader to keep in mind that the Porter is always under the absolute control of the Master, and is in strict agreement with His orders and is able to perfectly perform all the openings required of Him. Any time a person is to be conveyed from one state into another state of being, the Porter is always employed. Let us proceed with this in mind.

Jesus was to be transformed from His glorious state into the state of being upon this earth. The Porter opened the way. The Porter opened the door, the glorious portal of heavenly bliss, that Jesus could come from within the Holiest of Holies out into the outer court that He might become acquainted with grief, sorrow, poverty, temptations, and all the other tribulations of God's people. He opened the door that Jesus might be born of a woman and be truly called the Son of man. The door was shut as Jesus prayed in the garden with so great anxiety that He sweated so that the sweat was as great drops of blood, that the cup might pass. But I am persuaded that the Porter opened the door at the bidding of the Father to reconcile Jesus to His Father's will, as He prayed, "Not my will but Thine be done". The door was shut as Jesus was in the hour of crucifixion, to such an extent that He cried, "My God, My God, Why hast Thou forsaken me?" The Porter opened the door that Jesus might commend His Spirit into His Father's Hand before He gave up the ghost. The Porter must leave Jesus in order that death might be experienced. Three days after this time the Porter opened the tomb that held His body, and Jesus was raised from the dead. Jesus was transferred from the state of mortality into the state of immortality when the Porter opened the door that the transfer be made.

This same Porter that opened unto Jesus in His entrances and exits from one state unto another is used to open unto His people. The Porter opened that a new heart be given you. He opened this heart that the law of God be indelibly written therein. The Porter opened the door unto yourself that you might see how vile, dependent, and unworthy you really are. The Porter opened your heart that Jesus might dwell therein. The Porter opens that you may be transferred from being dead in sin to the state of being alive. The Porter must open your ears before you can hear the truth. He must open your eyes or you cannot see spiritual things. He must open your mind before the Mind of Christ can be imputed unto you. An entrance to the Throne of Mercy must be opened to you by the Porter before you can pray aright.

The preacher can preach only when the Porter opens. When the Porter opens, preaching is easy as thoughts and words flow through the mind and from the tongue to the glory of God

and the comfort of His people. Have you ever tried to preach without the Porter? I have tried with all my might with no relief. I have learned that I cannot command the Porter at my will. My experience teaches me that the Porter cannot be retained at will. But God, the Father, and God, the Son (both of whom are in strict agreement), Who are ONE, is the sole authority to command the Porter. The transfer is made from the finite mind to the infinite mind when the Porter opens. When the tongue is transformed from the tongue of men to the tongue of angels the Porter must open.

The Porter must open for one and all these different transfers. There are many and varied gifts but all by this one Porter. There is a continual shutting and opening in all the experiences of a child of God. Have you ever been so depressed in mind that you were without hope? The mercy and goodness of a loving Father were not yours to behold. You could not see anything but darkness and despair. You, then, saw the Light and felt the presence of the Porter who had opened the door for you to a renewed hope. Is not the transfer made many times from darkness to light? When in darkness you cannot behold your Saviour; the Porter opens and you behold Him. When in darkness your will is stubborn, the Porter opens and Jesus subdues this stubborn will by supplanting the will of God. You are weak, Jesus commands the Porter to open: the Porter opens, and Jesus imputes His strength unto you. God uses the Porter to open unto repentance, faith, belief, confession, love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, and temperance. When the door is shut the works of the flesh are manifest. These are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkeness, revellings and such like.

Little ones, can you open the door and transfer yourself from the works of the flesh to the fruit of the Spirit? Do you ever experience two contrary principles in you so that you CANNOT do the things that you would? (See Galatians 5:17) I am persuaded that these experiences are necessary that we may realize our need and dependence upon a higher power to make the opening for us. The Porter opens.

The theory that there is always an open door for all people into the spiritual realm is not according to our experience. Isaiah 22:22, agrees with our experience: "... He shall open and none shall shut; and He shall shut and none shall open". Our experience and this scripture is sufficient evidence that the Porter is yet in use. His work was not ended when the church was instituted. We read in Job 12:14 — "... He shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening". The quotations given above were written before Jesus came into this world. Let us prove by Revelations 3:7, that the work of the Porter is yet being done: "... He that openeth, and no man shuttesth; and shutteth, and no man openeth". This is written in the present tense. Our experience and this scripture verifies that no man can either open or shut, but Jesus using the Porter opens and shuts.

When Heaven is opened, the things of the earth are shut. When Christ is opened unto us, we are shut off from self. When the Porter opens the scriptures to our understanding, false opinions and speculations are closed. When our ears are opened to the truth, they are closed from error. During the wonderful moments that the Love of God is opened unto us, the door is closed to hate.

The Porter opens unto His people, and shuts off from the world. We read in Isaiah 44:18 — "They have not known nor understood; for He hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand". Could we glory in ourselves because we see? Could we boast because we understand? No, this would be VAIN glory. Could we censor them be-

cause they do not see nor understand in the face of the fact that God has shut their eyes and hearts? Can we understand why He shuts their eyes and hearts? Can we rightly judge God as unjust when He hides from some and reveals to others? Let us see what Jesus considers as the sufficient reason for God hiding the things pertaining to the kingdom from some and revealing them to others. Even though Jesus had done great works in the cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum; the wise and the prudent were not affected. While He was pronouncing the woes upon them He was given to rejoice in Spirit. When the Porter opened to Jesus the reason why these people did not repent He was given to thank God, "That Thou hast HID these things from the wise and the prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: EVEN SO, FATHER; FOR SO IT SEEMED GOOD IN THY SIGHT". (Luke 10:21)

This is reason enough to satisfy those who are made to rejoice in Spirit. It seemed good in the sight of God to hide from some and reveal to others. The Porter must open because flesh and blood does not have the power to reveal. No man can say truthfully and sincerely from the heart that Jesus is the Son of God unless the Porter opens that the revelation be made. When Peter said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"; Jesus did NOT say it was because Peter was wise and prudent. He did NOT say it was because men had taught him. Let us consider what Jesus DID say to Peter as recorded in Matt. 16:17 — "...BLESSED art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood HATH NOT REVEALED it unto thee, but MY FATHER which is in Heaven". He said it because he was divinely favored by a revelation from the Father in Heaven through the Porter.

The Porter will continue to open and shut through-out time, and climax His work with the grand and eternal opening from time into Eternity. Are you not looking forward to this grand opening which will be forever? Are you not yearning for the final abode of God's children when all your sins shall be shut out of your life? Now, we die each day; then, we shall never die. Sorrow, grief, temptations, and tribulations have access unto us intermittently while we sojourn here; but then, the door will eternally be closed to them. If we know anything about the experience of God's children here, we are constantly experiencing transfers from one state to another. We are up and down, over and under, back and forth, to and fro, in and out, and all such reverses. Thanks be to God for the thought: Someday these reverses shall end and we shall ever be with our God in that Eternal City. Time shall be closed; Eternity opened. Heaven will be shut to mortality, and opened unto immortality forever. The Porter will close forever all things that tend to mar the enjoyment of God's children and open unto us perfect peace, wisdom, and love which will endure unbroken forever.

May God consecrate these thoughts to your mind to the extent that THE PORTER OPENETH.

E. J. L.

Elsewhere in our columns will be found a letter from Elder Griffin to a recently ordained fellow-laborer, Elder W. G. McGough. We are happy that Brother McGough sent the letter to the Signs, for we are glad to publish it for all to read. Indeed, when we read it, our first thought was that we wished every elder, every deacon and every brother and sister among us could read it with thoughtful consideration and reflection; and be enabled of the Spirit to feel the weight of the matters presented, and consider the portions applicable to each, as a charge, and sincere counsel, and admonition.

Is there anyone who can deny that there has been a woeful lack of such as is contained in Elder Griffin's letter in many places among our people? From our own experience, we know the value

of the advice and counsel of brethren; the counsel of those, ". . . that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." (Hebrews 5:14)

What a blessing it is to have fathers in Israel who are gifted with wisdom; and what a blessing it is to have brethren who feel the need of counsel, and who are not only willing, but desirous of seeking their counsel.

J. D. W.

1549 Broadway,
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Dear Brethren in Hope:

Enclosed you will find a check covering two subscriptions.

The Signs of the Times is my only way of hearing from the brethren, since I live far from a church of the Old School Baptists. I am thankful for the privilege of reading your paper.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. H. G. Flourney

OBITUARIES

C. M. KESTER

Sadly I move with heartfelt condolence with the family of our departed friend, Mr. C. M. Kester. He was much loved and respected by all of us of Little Flock Old School Baptist Church, of Altus, Oklahoma, where Mr. Kester so faithfully attended services for many years.

Mr. Kester was born December 7, 1875, near Terre Haute, Indiana, and moved with his parents while yet a small boy to near Vernon, Texas, where he grew to manhood. On January 4, 1900, Mr. Kester married Miss Lue Starr; and in 1902, they bought a farm in the Odell community North of Vernon, where he and Sister Kester reared their family, and lived until he died December 29, 1954. He is survived by his widow, Sister Lue Kester; three sons: J. C. Kester, Springfield, Oregon; C. M. Kester, Jr., and Emil Kester, Odell, Texas; and two daughters: Mrs. Anna Lou Stultz, Ft. Worth, Texas, and Mrs. Fern Burnett, Lawton, Oklahoma; also an orphan boy, Jimmie Kester, whom he reared and loved as his own son. Surviving also is one sister Mrs. Otto Harland, Terre Haute, Indiana; and twelve grandchildren, four great grandchildren. One infant son preceded him in death.

For many years Sister Kester has been a member of Little Flock Church, and has served faithfully as Clerk for about seventeen years. Her kind hearted husband was always very faithful to bring her to meetings, and showed much interest in the church services; as well as the welfare of the church, and its pastor, and supported the church's needs in every way possible. While Mr. Kester was not a member, he showed by his life that he was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone; always showing much love for the Saviour and the people whom we feel to be the children of God.

Mr. Kester (Charlie, as he was widely known), was well loved and respected as a neighbor, as a friend, as a father, and faithful husband; as well as being faithful and loyal to the Old Baptist church. Surely he will be greatly missed, but while we bow our heads in sorrow over his passing, we are consoled with these thoughts: We had him for seventy-nine years; his illness was short; and most wonderful of all, we believe he will arise with all the heavenly host in glory to be forever with the Lord. Now, while we press on to the time when we shall follow in like manner, may we remember the many kind deeds which he did, ever proving his faith, love and confidence in God, and his respect for God's dear people.

The writer tried to speak comfortably to the bereaved family and the large crowd of mourning friends, from the text found in Colossians 3:3; after which his body was laid to rest to await the resurrection, when we all hope to join with him to meet the Lord in the air, and be with Him forever in that fair land where sorrow, pain and death will never come. Amen.

May God bless his dear family and mourning friends with the spirit of reconciliation, as he spreads his loving care over them day by day, enabling them to say from the heart: Thy will be done, O God.

His unworthy pastor,
(Elder) W. W. Taylor

MARTHA HERNDON BOND

I am sending a notice of my mother's death. An obituary will be sent by Elder Ernest Atterbury, who was her pastor and very dear friend.

Mrs. Martha Herndon Bond, wife of the late Elder C. W. Bond, of Island City, Oregon, died in a La Grande Hospital May 1, 1955, of an heart attack. Burial was in Mt. Hope Cemetery, Baker, Oregon.

Mrs. Princess Ledridge

ANNIE H. MILLER

Sister Annie H. Miller, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Lynch, was born September 1, 1883 in the state of Delaware. She was baptized into the Salem Church, Philadelphia, Penn., October 7, 1906, by the late Elder B. F. Coulter, and she passed out of this life March 17, 1955, after a short illness. She was the wife of Frank B. Miller, and is survived by her husband and children.

At the time of her passing, she was living in Philadelphia, and attended her church regularly. She was a very faithful and devoted member, and was loved very much for the truth's sake. We shall miss seeing her at the meetings, but hope to be reconciled to God's will, realizing that it means her eternal gain.

Her funeral service was conducted by her pastor, Elder H. M. Bennett, at the Kester Funeral Home, in Philadelphia. The love of her brethren, sisters and friends was manifested by the lovely display of flowers. Interment was in East Cedar Hill Cemetery, Philadelphia.

(Elder) H. M. Bennett

EARICK A. SMITH

Sister Earick A. Smith was born September 27, 1862, near Pittsville, Maryland; the daughter of John and Nancy Tyler, and died January 25, 1955, making her stay here over ninty years.

She married Allison Taylor Smith in August, 1888, and was baptized in July, 1888. They were both members of Forrest Grove Church, near Parsonsburg, Maryland, Brother Smith having united with the church in October, 1899. He died February 25, 1916. They both loved to entertain the ministers, brethren and friends as long as he lived, and she was able to keep her home; but she was crippled and walked with crutches almost thirty years, and was an invalid the last ten years. As long as she knew her friends, brethren and sisters, she loved to talk of the Lord's love and mercy to her. She had many trials and heartaches, both natural and spiritual, but she bore them bravely, saying that the Lord gave her the strength to bear them.

Sister Smith longed to leave this body of clay, and go to her home not made with hands, which the Lord has prepared for his chosen people.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder H. M. Bennett, and interment was in the forrest Grove burying ground. Written by

Pearl McNelia

PRICE STONE WILLIAMS

Price Stone Williams was born April 6, 1882, and departed this life March 16, 1955; making her stay on earth seventy-two years, eleven months and ten days. She became a member of the Primitive Baptist Church the third Sunday in August, 1914, and remained faithful until her departure.

She is survived by her husband, G. W. Williams; five daughters and four sons: Mrs. Estell Mason, Plevna, Alabama; Mrs. Annie Lou Brewer, Birmingham, Alabama; Mrs. Lorene Isbell, Hazel Green, Alabama; Mrs. Gladys Watson and Mrs. Lavonia Lee, Huntland, Tennessee; Alvie and Maloy, Huntland; Kenneth, Dallas, Texas; and Ralph, Mobile, Alabama. Also, three brothers and one sister; twenty-seven grandchildren and twenty-five great grandchildren, and a host of relatives and friends.

Elder R. L. Biggs, of Nashville, Tennessee, was wonderfully blessed to speak comforting words to the bereaved family, and brethren and friends. We feel that our loss is her gain.

May the mercy and blessings of God be with and upon all those who mourn. Written by her nephew,

R. C. Simmons

ALICE FRANCIS MAY

Sister Alice Francis May, widow of the late Deacon W. A. May, was born September 28, 1874, and passed away March 17, 1955. Brother May passed away several years ago.

Sister May leaves to mourn her passing the following children: one daughter, Mrs. Myrtle Rothwell, Fordyce, Arkansas; and six sons, Frank, Tom and Henry, Dallas, Texas; and Edgar, Curtis and Homer, Fordyce, Arkansas. She was a devoted mother and a faithful companion; and her home was a place of welcome to their loved ones, who were so carefully looked after, and entertained by the dear family.

Sister May will be sadly missed in the home and in the church; but we feel that our loss is her eternal and glorious gain. She has made her home with her devoted daughter for some time, since becoming too feeble to keep house. The daughter was so good and kind to her, always seeing that she had a way to go to church regularly as long as she was able; and all of the children did all for her they could. Her membership was with Pilgrims Rest Church, Fordyce, Arkansas, where she united in August, 1938.

Just one week after Sister May passed away, her son, Jesse Peter May, of Fordyce, followed his mother in death. He was born July 18, 1897, aged fifty-eight. He leaves his wife, one son and one daughter. Jesse was a firm believer in salvation by and through grace and tender mercy of a covenant keeping God.

Since these have gone to their eternal home, we would say to all the sorrowing ones, may God in his tender and loving mercy fill the

absence of your loved ones with his spirit of love, and sweetly reconcile you to his holy will; and give you courage and a living faith, to go forward in the discharge of your duties, honoring and glorifying your heavenly father.

This written for publication in the Signs of the Times, as requested by the family, by her pastor

(Elder) J. T. Everitt

DEACON RICHARD PHILIP EATON

Almighty God, who is the giver of every good and every perfect gift, called from our midst, Deacon Richard Philip Eaton, on October 15th, 1954 aged 84 years. He was born December 2nd, 1869, the son of Philip Eaton and Eliza Corneil.

He was married to Miss Kate McAlpine, October 12th, 1898; to which union were born five children, Mrs. Anna Andrews, Appin, Ontario; Philip Hugh, Havana, Cuba; Lawrence Whitney, Chatham, Ontario; Oscar St. Clair, Detroit, Michigan; and Gilbert Owen, Bridgewater, Nova Scotia. Eight grandchildren, and one brother, Fred Eaton, Appin, Ontario and one sister, Sister Lettie Wrinn, Detroit, Michigan, also survive.

His funeral services were held at the Covenanted Baptist Meeting House, Ekfrid, October 18th, 1954, conducted by his pastor, Elder George Ruston, with interment in Mayfair Cemetery.

Brother Eaton united with the Church in October, 1932, was appointed Church Clerk in October 1937, and Deacon in June, 1943. He was highly esteemed among his brethren. He was a very humble and good brother, and his advice in church matters and doctrine was very sound. He was indeed a faithful and hospitable brother, and I feel to say that what is our loss is his gain. My feelings towards Brother Richard are expressed in the following hymn: —

"How bright these glorious spirits shine!
Whence all their bright array?
How came they to the blissful seats
Of everlasting day?

Lo! these are they from suff'rings great
Who came to realms of light,
And in the blood of Christ have wash'd
Those robes which shine so bright.

Now with triumphant palms they stand
Before the throne on high,
And serve the God they love, amidst
The glories of the sky.

His presence fills each heart with joy,
Tunes ev'ry mouth to sing;
By day, by night, the sacred courts
With glad hosannas ring.

Hunger and thirst are felt no more,
Nor sun with scorching ray;
God is their sun, whose cheering beams
Diffuse eternal day.

The Lamb that sits upon the throne
Shall o'er them still preside,
Feed them with nourishment divine,
And all their footsteps guide.

'Mong pastures green he'll lead his flock,
Where living streams appear;
And God the Lord from ev'ry eye
Shall wipe off ev'ry tear."

He was quite frail for several years, but rarely missed attending metings until weakness rendered him entirely unable to be present.

Eldon Gilbert, Asst. Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Brother Mack Leland Fowler passed away February 13, 1955. Funeral service was conducted February 15th. by Elder Cecil Turner of Bassett, Virginia, in the absence of his pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler.

Brother Fowler was born August 19, 1901. He was married December 28th. to Lillian Gooch. To this union, two daughters were born — Mrs. Alice Frances Gordon and Mrs. Edith L. Averett; and one son, Bryant Fowler, who survive. Also surviving are his widow, Mrs. Joe Fowler of Stem, N. C.; two sisters, Mrs. Otis Stem of Creedmoor, N. C. and Mrs. Nelson Coley of Stem, N. C.; two brothers, Mr. Mallory Fowler of Durham, N. C. and Coy Cortez Fowler of Stem N. C.

On August 13, 1938, Brother Fowler joined the Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church, at Stem, N. C. He was a lover of peace in his church, home, community and a lover of sound doctrine. The church has suffered a great loss by the death of Brother Fowler, but we feel our loss is his eternal gain.

Therefore, be it resolved. We, the church of Gooch memorial knowing that God does all things well, desire to bow in humble submission to his will.

First, That we extend our sincere sympathy to Mrs. Fowler and the children. May the Lord bless them with every needed grace in this life.

Second, That a Copy of this resolution be given to the family, a copy to the Signs of the Times, a copy to the Old Faith Contender, and a copy to be spread on our church book.

Done by order of Gooch Memorial Church Conference, May 7, 1955.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
O. Y. Clayton, Assistant Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 123 DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1955 NO. 8

Steens, Mississippi.
October 26, 1952.

Elder C. M. Haygood,
Ballenger, Texas

My precious and highly esteemed brother;

If such as I might be allowed to address one of God's ministers. I have thought several times of writing to you, but how or what to say I cannot find words to pen what I hope my heart holds for you, as well as all of God's dear children.

I hope, if not deceived, I was blessed to receive every discourse at the Hopewell Association. But, oh, my precious brother, how I would desire to be blessed with words to pen the beauty and the comfort in your preaching and prayers, and the few words in conversation.

My wife and I enjoyed a great feast with the brethren, sisters, and friends, meditating on the wonderful blessings of Almighty God. But then came the great enemy, and he said to me. Who are you to be thinking of these precious people? What did you say, and what were your actions while in their presence? Oh, the weakness of this carnal wretch, and how it does trouble my uneasy breast. It has been my lot to stand in that sacred stand before God's dear children a very few times in the past year, but with no deliverance to speak to the satisfaction of my mind. Oh, the downcast hours that have been my lot to go through for the past sixteen years.

My experience came, if indeed I have any, in the year 1936, in the month of November. I do not remember the exact date of the month. Prior to that time I was a Campbellite, or, as they would prefer to be called, The Church of Christ. To my shame, I was an enemy to this precious truth that I humbly hope that I now believe.

As I look back at the many trials and conflicts that I went through, what thoughts enter my mind. My mother was sick and in bed during that time. Almost two years she was in this condition before her death, and, she being a Campbellite also, the other Campbellites, finding out that I had given up their way of believing, began to persecute, — even telling that I had gone crazy, and many other accusations. They came to her and in her weak condition caused her to make it more miserable for me. They were all miserable comforters, as it was with Job.

That summer before my experience, the thought of losing my mother came before me so great that I went back to the Campbellite meeting and tried to get right with God, as I thought that I had backslidden; but after a while I found myself in the deepest of my sins and it was so great that I could not see any way out. One night, while in this disturbed condition, I found myself on my way down to see Brother and Sister G. L. Blalock. They lived next door, and they had been Campbellites until about four years before that time. I had watched them through their experience and I had thought it awful for them to believe such doctrine, for I had known them all of my life and I had a great respect for them. When I got down there to their house that night, they had gone to bed, it being around nine o'clock. I called them up and told them that I wanted to talk to them about my troubled condition. Having always been very kind, they now got up, and I begin to tell them about my awful condition that I was in. It had seemed to me that I was forsaken by all, without a

friend in the world, even my own loved ones had forsaken me. But they, in their kindness, tried to comfort me. I thought about this for a day or two: that I had gone down there and deceived those people, and had admitted to them that I believed their doctrine, the very thing that I had been hating. Thus I found myself in a worse condition than ever.

On Saturday evening, following this, I stopped at their home while coming from town. I was after correcting the mistake I had made. I told Sister Blalock I did not know what was wrong with me; that I did not believe such a doctrine, and that I did not want them to think that I was trying to deceive them. As I finished talking, she said, "Yes, I think I understand." I went home, thinking that I had fixed it all up. That night, after I had been in bed five minutes, I started to pray one of my "so-called" prayers, asking the Lord to forgive me for admitting to those people that I believed such a doctrine. No sooner had I said those words than a terrific power went over my body; and it shook me as though a full current of electricity had gone through me. Had it lasted another moment I would have been swept from the face of the earth. As the awful power left my body, the face of Jesus appeared before my eyes and the tears came freely; and I hope then and there I was given to see where my salvation was. And from that time on, for seven long years. I went journeying around from one place to another, not having any peace anywhere. After seven years of being burdened with fears, I was made willing to go ask a home with this people that I truly believe are the children of God. It was not my lot to be blessed with the peace of mind that I hear so many of God's dear children express in their experience, after joining the church. My discontentment still hovered around me. One year ago last week I was stricken with a serious back condition. I had been bothered with it for many years. I was carried to Columbus hospital and my doctor found that I had a bone almost in two. He told me, after ten days of living there, that I would have to go to Birmingham, Alabama, for an operation by a bone specialist.

Oh, the burden of soul and mind that surrounded me. I was carried to Birmingham, and it pleased the Lord to lift this awful fear from me. When I was carried into the operating room I was calm. Little did I know that for many days to come I would feel the chastening rod of the Lord. As I lay there struggling between life and death, as it seemed to me, our beloved pastor, Elder W. D. Griffin, and I hope my brother in Jesus Christ, came to see me unexpectedly, while the suffering was almost unbearable. I hope that I was given by the mercy of God to grasp his hand in sweet fellowship and to cry out, as did Jonah from the whale's belly, that if it pleases God for me to live I will go to that precious spot, our little church, and before those precious people and confess my God and my innumerable sins. That I tried to do, but, oh, the fear of such a thing, being helpless and not able to speak one word with any meaning to it.

My precious brother, I had no thought of writing this much when I started. I realize that it is like me, very imperfect. In all of my sojourn in the past sixteen long years, it seems that it is all unprofitable. The many mistakes that I have made, even from a financial standpoint, are many; but through it all, even in going from job to job and doing no good anywhere it seems, they are all my mistakes, for I am the guilty one.

Please pardon this poorly composed letter for my learning is limited. I am poor in this world's goods, and I hope in spirit; and if not asking too much I desire to be remembered in your prayers, although I know that I am not worthy of notice from the Lord's dear children. My wife sends love and best regards to you and yours. She is not a member of the church but she loves the doctrine. It causes me to often groan for her sake, knowing what she went

through during the time I was in the hospital and since that time, as I am still unable to do but little work. But my lot is in the hands of Almighty God and he alone is able to deliver me. Oh, that I could be reconciled to his will.

I fear my brother than I have written too much. I hope that you and yours are well. Our hearts were with you and your little family, wondering if and when you got home safely. Again I want to say that I will be looking forward to hearing from you.

Your little brother for Christ's sake I hope,

Hodie D. May

I have the consent of the writer to send the above in for publication. Our brother's companion has joined the church since the above was written.

W.D.G.

EXPERIENCE

Brown Summit, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I enclose three dollars, for which please send me the Signs of the Times for a year; the few copies I have read have been of much comfort to me. I've felt for some time that I would love to write you and Sister Spangler, and try to tell you in part how good the Lord has been to me.

First, I will say that none of my family are members of the Primitive Baptist Church; however, I have respect for everyone's belief, for I have no right to judge, lest I be judged. In Acts 10:35, I find these words, "But in every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." One of my sisters has been so kind and good to come with me over to Reidsville Church quite a few times; she, too, enjoys the services very much.

When a teen age girl, I united with what is called the Christian Church, near my home in Guilford County. For a few years I enjoyed meeting with them; yet I found that something was missing — I just couldn't find the comfort and happiness I thought was in store for me. Later on I was married and moved to Monticello; and after living there for awhile, I began to attend the Primitive Baptist Church with my mother-in-law, Mrs. Gordon. I learned to love to meet with them, and hear the preaching and beautiful old hymns they sang; yet there was so much I couldn't understand, and I felt to be a stranger much of the time.

Almost three years ago I came to the Reidsville Church for the first time; and, Brother Spangler, I don't know how to begin to tell how much I enjoyed it all, and how deeply my heart was touched. Oh! I saw a most beautiful light I'd never seen before. I believe it was the spirit of the Son of God. For the first time in my life I was the end of my good works, so far as my salvation is concerned. I saw Jesus as the only name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved; I saw our blessed Saviour as my Shepherd, as a Saviour of sinners (even for me), my only hope. I had never seen a group of people that seemed so happy — and such love and fellowship manifested one for another.

I didn't know before that such love existed in this world. I thought of some scripture I had read: "For we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Oh! how I longed for a home with you good people. At the close, you announced an open door to the church, and you all sang, "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love." I thought I just couldn't keep from offering to the church at that time; but the Lord made me willing to wait on him. Then I realized above everything else I did not want to deceive one of these little ones which believes in Jesus' name.

My sister and I talked all the way home of what a good time we had (she knew how happy I was); and I could hardly wait to get home to tell my good

husband how much I enjoyed meeting with you dear people. I felt that I loved everyone, and I wanted to tell everybody; yet realizing that such a few could understand. From that day on, I looked forward to the fourth Sunday — and I haven't missed many meetings since. I have had a few beautiful dreams of the church, which have meant much to me. In one of them, I saw the church, as it is, and as I see it now, on a high hill, so high above the world; and so beautiful. I had hope of having a home with the church some day.

I had the pleasure of talking with Sister Mary Sumers a few times: I just had to talk with someone that I thought would understand me. She has always been so kind and good, and seemed glad to share my many burdens with me. She once told me that she had great confidence in me, and that she was confident that He who had begun a good work in me, would perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Then she said it was so good to have a small seat in the church — I wasn't certain then that I knew what she meant; but, Oh! I do now. The Lord is so good to me.

From the first time I went to Reidsville Church, until the time I offered, I often wondered if I really loved the church as I should; and I couldn't help but wonder if my hope was only my imagination. But again and again I've been shown that it was real; so real, that it seems an anchor to my soul both sure and steadfast.

The morning of the fourth Sunday in July, I thought of the church; but I did not feel so well, so I thought I would just wait and go the next meeting day. However, two o'clock came, and I found myself gettting ready to go. I enjoyed the singing and the sermon so much — I felt that you were preaching for me. When you announced an open door, and all began singing, it seemed that I heard a voice within my heart saying with power, yet so gentle and sweet, "Come unto me all of you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The next thing I knew, I was walking down the aisle. The Lord's time had come; I just couldn't go home without asking for a home with you dear people. I remember so well, all I could say was that I loved the church, and I wanted a home with you; and that salvation was by grace, and grace alone. I felt so unworthy and poor, with nothing to offer. I thought of a passage of scripture that is in Hebrews, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." I'll never forget how kind you were, and how kindly the church dealt with me. I remember you saying it wasn't so easy to come before the church. Brother Spangler, it wasn't easy, for I knew I was in the sight of Almighty God, and in the presence of a people that are taught so well of Him. After the church received me, I felt I wanted to be baptized that day, but you asked if the next meeting day would be alright. The good Lord gave me patience, and made me willing to wait. The following month, I know, was one of the happiest of my life. Everything was more beautiful than ever before — the trees, the flowers, the birds, and even the good earth, seemed to be singing praises to our Saviour's great and holy name. My husband and all my folks seemed to understand, and were so kind and happy for me. I hope I am as thankful as I should be for the many blessings I enjoy so much.

The fourth Sunday in August came, the day for me to be baptized; and I was still so happy. Everything you said before I was baptized was so good for me; and as I was led into the water, I remembered our Saviour had gone before me. In Revelation 22:14, we find these words, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." I love to think of that city not made with hands. Then, as you all gave me the hand of fellowship, I saw that great love one for another manifested again. (My cup runneth over) I saw the marks of grace in all your faces. Brother Spangler, its all so sacred and wonderful to

me. So much more than any words can express. After services were over, I didn't want to leave the church as long as anyone would stay and talk with me.

On the way home, I thought of our Union meeting which was only one week off. I felt that I would enjoy it too; and I found that to be another one of the happiest days of my life. I enjoyed all the preaching and singing — it was good food for my soul. Now I am looking forward to our next meeting and communion service. As you know, I've never taken part in that before, but I'm sure it must be a sacred and solemn service. I hope I may be able to prove my love for our church in some small way — I realize any and everything I might do, will be such a little. All I want is to be the least among you, and I know that will be plenty good for me.

Brother Spangler, I don't expect to always be as happy in this life as I have the past few weeks. Its alright, if I am not; for I know the way is rugged, and that I must suffer at times. If I can only suffer for Jesus' sake, I know it will be good for my soul. I believe He cares for me; and, if I am his, I know He will never leave nor forsake me, and will be a present help in time of need. It's hard to understand it all times, yet I am made to believe, ". .that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord; to them who the called according to his purpose."

In closing, I would like to tell you a little about my husband: he is a believer, and feels dependent on the Lord for all good and perfect gifts. He has shown an interest in the church, and has helped to make it easy for me to attend. I feel sure he would like to attend with me, but his health isn't very good, and it makes him so nervous to be in crowds. I often try to pray, the Lord willing, that he may be able to come to meetings with me. I feel that he is missing so much.

May God bless you and yours always; and please pray for us, if you feel to do so. In humble love, and with a precious hope.

A little sister,
Mrs. Leara Gordon

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: It is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9)

Dear Brethren: readers of the Signs, and the many shutins, who like myself, are not now able to travel and mingle with the brethren; which I was blessed to do for fifty years gone by. Greetings in the Lord:

It is my desire this beautiful morning, (the sun is shining and the weather is warm) to write upon this wonderful subject: The Grace of God. I opened the Hymn and Tune book to No. 169: Amazing Grace; and I feel to follow Newton in the wonderful exposition, from our earliest experience, through the walk and trials, as we are led along this strait and narrow way. Not in the way that seemeth right to men, which leads unto death, but the way that leads unto life. The hymn commences:

Amazing grace, (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

We were all just as blind to spiritual things as the man that Jesus met. He had been born blind — he had never seen light, and did not know what it was; and he did not ask for light. The disciples asked him, Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither this man nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. And Jesus spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and annointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and sent him to wash in the pool of Siloam; and he washed, and came seeing.

Here is an example. All the children of Adam were born spiritually blind; and none of them has ever seen a ray of light spiritually until Jesus opens their eyes. All those whose eyes have been opened, can say with the blind man, I know that whereas I was blind, now I see. All of them, no matter how

young or how old, have passed through the same experience. Paul, who had all the learning possible to get in the school of men, realized after the light shined upon him above the brightness of the midday sun, that he was once blind, but that he now saw; what a miserable wretch he felt to be when he remembered that he had persecuted the saints and wasted them.

How miserable were we all; yet how thankful to the giver of all good, that he appeared unto us. "How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed." Though our years be few or many, we always go back to the place, and say with the blind man, I know that whereas I was blind, I now see. It is the starting place of our religious life; no more can we roll sin under our tongue as a sweet morsel. Our natural associates think it strange that we run no more with them in rioting and drunkedness, and shun our company. I can look back to the time that I had many friends, most of them called religious people; when they heard of me being baptized, leaving the city and going away out into the country, they felt sorry for me, thinking surely I was crazy. In a short while I was liberated, when I began to tell the story as I saw it. Most of them said: Foolishness. They knew I had nothing further than the eighth grade in school, and no training of how to preach. One asked me, who was a visitor at our meeting, what college I went to. I told him, the one that Jonah went to. He asked what I learned there. I told him I learned more in my three days than one could learn in an hundred years in the colleges of men: I learned that salvation was of the Lord. He said, We all know that, but we have to work and give our hearts to God first, and be baptized. I said I was taught salvation was of God, and all His people were saved by his free grace before the world began. He said it's foolishness. A few years afterwards, one came to me, and said, Brother George, I want to ask your forgiveness for talking and thinking about you as I did — I didn't see it then, but I do now. I said, the Lord be praised, you have been to the same school. I have nothing to forgive you for, because I believed as you did at one time, and but for the grace of God, I would believe it yet. Salvation is not something handed out subject to the will of the sinner: It is the act of an omnipotent and immutable God; and there is none other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved.

Then the hymn says:

"Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

Let us think of the promise. It is not a promise of man, which can be easily broken; nor of the traditions of men. But for the promise of our Lord, who died for us. Jesus is the truth, and he has given us faith to believe in him; and a hope to sustain us in our travels. He will be our shield. A shield is a barrier to deflect the arrows of Satan. The Lord's people are the ones that Satan, as a roaring lion, goes about seeking whom he may devour. When he shoots his arrows at one of God's little ones, it strikes the shield; and God says to him, Put up thy bow, you cannot stretch thy hand against mine annointed. If it were not for this shield, we would be an easy prey for the devil; but our God, whom we worship, is greater than all. While we of ourselves can do nothing, we can do all things through our Lord.

Thus far the hymn gives us things to think about in this life, but it goes farther than this life:

"Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the vail,
A life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine;
But God, who called me here below,
Will be forever mine."

Yes, my dear ones, something better remains for those whose sins He bore; for the one who cannot lie, promised it to them, saying, I will never leave nor

forsake you. In that place of eternal rest, where sin and sorrow and pain is forever banished, all but love will be left behind; for the love wherewith he loved us is an eternal love, and will go on, and on forever.

Now, dear brethren, grace is fast being forgotten among the religions of the world, but with the sons of God, it shines forth in a splendor that is ever new, the same yesterday, today and forever. It is without works, lest man shall boast. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and present you faultlessly before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory, majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

(Elder) George L. Weaver

"LET US WORSHIP AND BOW DOWN"

"O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker." (Psalms 95:6)

Dearly Beloved in Christ:

I know not how to approach so great a people: I know that unless the Holy Spirit directs my pen all that I can or ever will say is worthless, and without weight or power. Nevertheless, I feel to bow down and kneel before the Lord our Maker in humble submission, and give thanks.

Dearly beloved, if I know anything about it, we cannot come before Him, neither can we bow down, or kneel, or see him as our Maker, of ourselves. But, if brought by his power to this humble state, we can truthfully say, O come, let us give thanks unto the Lord our God. Truly we ourselves cannot bow down, much less lift up our faces to love and adore him: He is our all in all, and without him we can do exactly nothing. Who hath known so great a love!

He has indeed been a merciful God to me the ugliest and most deformed creature of his creation, to sometimes have a small glimpse of his shining countenance, and feel his loving embrace for a few fleeting moments of time. If I thought one drop of his blood wasn't sufficient to cleanse the blackest of sinners, I wouldn't have any hope of a better life than this; but thanks to Almighty God for this great and abounding love that is able to melt the hardest of hearts, and make crooked things straight. There is no end to his love, nor of telling what he has done for his people. May it be the Lord's will to preserve us unto the day of his coming, for there is no other way.

When made to bow down before him in prayer, remember this needy creature.

Hopefully your kindred,
Hallie Taylor
Fayette, Alabama

CIRCULAR LETTER OF MAINE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

(Written by Sister Minerva Dunlap)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, meeting in Whitefield September 10, 11, 12, 1954, sends greetings to the churches with whom we correspond:

We read in 1 John 2:15-16, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

The people of God are a peculiar people, chosen of Him before the foundation of the world. They are in the world, but not of it. They are human, and the human flesh desires the riches and high places of the world; the natural man covets fame and fortune, and feels discouraged and downhearted when he fails to secure them. But those who have had an experience of grace know that there is no happiness in accumulating the riches of this world. When the law of God is put in their minds and written in their hearts, the children of God know that they have something better than earthly posses-

sions: A new life, a hope of salvation, eyes opened to see the things that are not perishable, and which passeth not away. The love of God implanted in the heart crowds out worldly desires; but, when the Spirit is not present, how bitter the loss of treasured possessions and loved ones can be — the flesh cries out against being deprived of the things it loves. But, in 1 Timothy 6:8-11, is written, "And having food and rainment, let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things: and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness."

These things are the fruits of the Spirit, and they are the treasures which the child of God should lay up. And the love, patience and forbearance should be shown not only to friends, but to enemies also. For the world does not love the children of God — it does not understand their faith; and it is natural to hate what can't be understood. John says, "Marvel not my brethren, if the world hate you." (1 John 3:13) And in another place, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." (John 16:33) Again, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John 15:18-19) In James 4:4, we read, "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

So, if one is a child of God, he cannot expect to be loved by the world, or to love the world or its possessions. But he is loved by the Father, and by the Son; and his joy is in heavenly places, and in treasures of heaven, where neither moth nor rust corrupts, nor thieves break in to steal.

(Elder) E. C. Jones, Moderator
Sanford S. Bartlett, Clerk

CORRESPONDING LETTER MAINE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

(Written by Brother Sanford Bartlett)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church at Whitefield, Maine, September 10, 11, 12, 1954, to the meetings and associations with whom we correspond, sends greetings:

Dear brethren, another year has passed, and through the merciful providence of our God we have been permitted to meet again in an association. Your correspondence and messengers have been received with gladness, and we pray that they may continue. Your ministering brethren, Elders E. C. Jones and B. O. Thompson, came to us preaching Jesus as the only name given among men whereby we must be saved.

While the Maine Association is one of the smaller associations, we feel that the Lord has not been unmindful of us. We say, as did Ruth of old, "Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee, for thy people shall be my people and thy God my God." As God gave faith to Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and others written in the eleventh and twelfth chapters of Paul's epistle to the Hebrews, may he also give us faith to run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, dispising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

The next session of the Maine Association, God willing, will be in September, 1955, when we hope to meet you again. We hope to have a notice in the Signs of the Times stating time and

date.

(Elder) E. C. Jones, Moderator
S. S. Bartlett, Clerk

ORIGIN OF BELIEF

"This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him" (John 6:29)

If we were to trace the religious history of mankind from Adam to the present time, we should discover that man has always sought some means of approaching a god. It seems to be a part of man's nature to worship something. This desire to find and worship some deity doubtless originates in two main elements of his human nature, appreciation and fear. Man appreciates many of his natural blessings and desires to express his feelings toward his benefactor. He also has many fears and realizes his need for protection. And so wherever a human culture exists, or has existed, some sort of religion usually predominates that culture.

If unable to find the true God, man figures out a god as best he can. Primitive man usually chose some natural phenomenon such as the sun. Considering it to be the source of his most necessary blessings, such as heat, light, and other essential forms of energy, he has worshipped it as a supreme god.

With the passages of time, however, man was able to add greatly to his stockpile of knowledge, so that he began to question the simplicity of his earlier forms of pagan religion. A spiritual diety seemed to provide a better solution to his religious needs. This new type of god seemed to provide a better solution to his needs and also could be more easily fashioned to suit every ingenious imagination of the more fertile human minds. But most convenient of all, it could be changed at will to suit either the individual taste, or the taste of a sect, nation or culture. Old attributes could be changed; new ones could be added as the occasion demanded.

But no matter what the form of religion, man strove with ceaseless effort to approach what he thought was the true God. In this effort, Paul found the Greeks to be outstanding, having not only set up every conceivable god, but also had erected a shrine to an unknown god, lest they should miss one. But when he told them of Jehovah, the Greeks only mocked him and called such religion foolishness. The only gods that they knew were creations of human imagination. Notwithstanding all their learning, their religious experience and zeal, they could not know Him or, much less, contact Him. And so it has ever been with natural man throughout the ages.

"No man can come unto me except the Father which has sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:44)

Both Cain and Abel sought to find God, but Cain was not able. Esau tried and failed. He even cried with an exceeding great and bitter cry (Gen. 22: 34). Both Nebuchadnezzar and Saul (later Paul) were fanatically, violently religious, hard workers, but neither prevailed. Judas walked with Christ and performed all approved outward forms of worship and ordinances as did the other apostles, but it neither saved him nor provided for him an access door to the presence of God. Although he had seen and heard all of Christ's miracles, yet he was unable to believe. Why?

"He hath blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts that they should not see with their eyes nor understand with their hearts and be converted and I should heal them" (John 12:40)

"Every plant which my Heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up" (Matt. 15:13)

Some could not believe even when they saw Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead (John 11:46). Instead, they conspired to put Jesus to death, and also to kill Lazarus, the latter being a living testimonial of Jesus's great power and divine origin. (John 12, 10-11).

Even Israel, God's chosen, could not through his own efforts obtain what he sought. Instead, "election" obtained it for him, and the rest are blinded. (Ro-

mans 11: 7-8). "If God were your father, ye would love me". Why do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye **can not** hear my word. Ye are of your father, the devil. Why do ye not believe me? **Because ye are not of God."** (John 8:42-47)

Many, no doubt, are ready to say that it was an injustice in the God of Heaven to show disrespect for Cain and his offering, that if God doesn't give all a chance, then he is unjust. But do they not forget that God's ways are as far above man's ways as are the heavens above the earth"; as also is his knowledge of justice (Isaiah 55:11)?

What shall we say then, is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith unto Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and whom I will, I harden" (Rom. 9:11-12). "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor yet of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. Hath not the potter power over the lump of clay to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor"? (Rom. 9:11-21).

We are not trying to deny that to the average unregenerate sinner this is a hard doctrine. It is unpopular because it does not give everyone a chance to be saved; there is nothing left that man can do for himself about his eternal destiny. "The scriptures speak of God as full of love, full of compassion, and generous with grace, yet this hard doctrine would make him the greatest monster in existence" some will protest. "It would make him the arch enemy of mankind", even the devil would have to take a back seat", declare others. From their standpoint, or point of view, these opinions might seem to be correct. But the trouble lies in their assumption that they know as much as God knows, and are just as good and perhaps better judges of what justice is and of what God's policy should be with regard to humanity. They would make supermen of themselves, - rivals of God himself. They are a law unto themselves, even as their father, Lucifer, and, of course, are enemies of God.

Notwithstanding, it is written, "Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated. For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth" (Rom. 9:11-13). Jacob, apparently, was a child of the promise, one of those "which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:13). Esau, on the other hand, was one of those spoken of by Solomon: "The Lord hath made all things for Himself: Yea, even the wicked for the day of evil" (Prov. 16:4); and also by Peter, "But these, as natural brute beasts, **made to be taken and destroyed,** speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their corruption". (2 Pet. 2-12) And again by Jesus: "I told you and ye **believed not, because ye are not of my sheep"** (John 10:25-26); also "Ye **generation** of vipers; how can ye escape the damnation of hell? (Matt. 23:33). Who then can believe?: "And as many **were ordained** (not **are** ordained) to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:48)

When Peter answered, "Thou art the Son of the Living God", Jesus replied, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee but my Father which is in Heaven" (Matt. 16:17). Jesus expressed it in this manner, "All that the Father giveth me **shall come** unto me, and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:34-37). But he cautions: "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him" (John 6:44). "For it is God that worketh in you both **to will and to do** of his good pleasure" (Phil 2:13). "For we are **his workmanship,** created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:8-10).

In this connection, two facts stand out: Those who can believe are few in number, and they are also predestinated to do so, according to the predetermined counsel of our Triune God before the world began. "Even so at this time

there is a **remnant,** according to the election of grace". (Rom. 11:5). "For wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat, because strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it". (Matt. 7:13-14).

"The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you because ye were more in number than any people, for ye were the fewest of all people" (Deut. 7:7). "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the **election** of grace" (Rom. 11:5). "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. For whom he did **foreknow** he also did **predestinate** to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might become the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also justified: and whom He justified them He also glorified. He that spared not His own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with Him also freely give us **all things"** (Rom. 8:28-32). Does the expression "All things" not include "belief", "conviction", "acceptance", and "repentance"? Quoting Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ: "Looking unto Jesus, **the author and finisher of our faith"** (Heb. 12:2).

Now we find the vast majority of so-called Christians of today believe and teach that salvation and the Holy Ghost can be obtained by anyone. They claim that the means to salvation simply lies in certain human acts and sheer will power. Or they insist that the first essentian act is performance of the baptismal ordinance. Some claim that a mental acceptance of Jesus as one's personal Saviour is all that is necessary for communion with God. In either case the act or thought is simply the product of the flesh, inspired by the fleshly mind and emotions. It is one way of saying that human flesh is possessed of such mighty powers that it can either obligate God to open the doors of Heaven for its entrance, or it can force God to cast it into Hell against his will. Not even Satan, with all of his delegated powers, can lay claim to powers equal to these. Shall we call this kind of religious philosophy "the natural approach to religion"; "the fruitless attempt to attain to righteousness"; or "the everlasting task of the Armenians"?

With the above theories, we cannot agree, since the Scriptures plainly teach that God has all power both in Heaven and in earth, and that none can stay His hand. Further, the scriptures also declare that the fleshly mind is enmity against God, not subject to His laws, nor neither indeed can be; also they teach it is not of him that willeth, nor yet of him that runneth (willing to "accept God" and willing to "run" after an imaginary god), but of God that sheweth mercy.

We feel that this is sufficient evidence to completely exhaust any possibility of the flesh, or any of its products, being able to approach God. And, of course, this also goes for any soul not motivated by the second birth, not quickened and made alive by the saving grace of our Lord and Saviour. Jesus declares very plainly that no man can come unto him unless God first draws him, — leads him to Jesus, makes him willing. "For all shall be willing in the day of my power", saith Jehovah. This, we believe, is the spiritual approach to Christ. Saith the Lord to His people: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee" (Jer. 31:3). Is this not the reason that the redeemed can sing: "Oh, love that will not let me go", "Where He leads me I will follow, and go with Him all the way", And is it not why Ruth, who typified the whole church of God, was constrained to plead, "Where thou goest, I will go"? Where, then, does the natural approach lead? The scriptures reply: "Can the blind lead the blind? Shall they not both fall into the ditch?" (Luke 6:39). Does this mean that whole churches (sects)

are destined to fall?

We believe that any soul or any sect of souls, whose foundation is "natural faith" is destined to perish, and that it is the house referred to in the scriptures as having been built upon the sand. "And the winds blew, and the rain fell, and great was the fall of that house" (Matt. 7:27). When Jesus spoke, as He often did, of Jerusalem the Holy City, we believe He was referring to "spiritual faith," and the true spiritual church. But the Jews thought He meant the magnificent temple built by Herod and the Jewish church. To them the temple represented a means of approaching God through human efforts. It really typified their faith. Its mighty walls presented an impressive representation of strength and security, while its interior appeared quite appropriate and altogether pleasing to the natural eye and mind. And so the Jews were naturally outraged when Jesus told them that not one stone would be left upon another. This was the same as saying that their faith was about to crumble in ruins. This was the house built upon the sand, representing "natural faith", built entirely by men. God had not wrought upon the temple of their hearts, so that their faith was hollow, the kind that men have in this world only.

"If in this life, only, we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable" (I Cor. 15:19). "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" (27 Psalm 1).

But Christ has a house "not made by men's hands" nor by men's minds, but built upon a rock (Christ), "the giver of every good an perfect gift": belief, faith, acceptance, repentance, salvation, sanctification and redemption. "And upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18).

And finally, brethren, Jesus tells us: "This is **the work of God, that ye believe on Him"**, and not the work of man. Most certainly, neither "belief", nor "acceptance" are products of the carnal mind, for the apostle of Christ declares: "The carnal mind is enmity against God, not subject to His laws, nor neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7). "It is God which worketh in you both **to will** and **to do** of **His good pleasure"** (Phil. 2:13).

D. E. Cole
Cheyenne, Wyo.

Salisbury, Maryland

Dear Elder and Sister Bellows:

Thank you so much for your nice letter and for your concern for me in the trial through which I have been and am going. It is such a comfort to know that there are those of our kindred in our Lord Jesus, who are bearing our burdens with us, and it is the greatest of all comforts and blessings to feel the presence of the Lord with us in these trials of our faith. These trials of our faith which James, I believe, says is more precious than gold. I have been greatly blessed during this affliction, to feel that the Lord was with me and that His grace was sufficient for me. At times I have had such times of rejoicing in Him that I would not have changed one thing about it if I could, and while I do not know what lies ahead for me, I am persuaded that "He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

I am still very miserable, although I am trying to work, but I have to drive myself almost every moment or I would give up and stay home. I expect that Bertie has written you that the nerves in the whole right side of my face and head had to be killed, so that there will never be any more feeling there. Of course on the face of it, that does not sound so bad, but while there is no feeling on the outside, there are all sorts of terrifying sensations on the inside, except of course there is no pain.

My right eye is also badly affected and everything seems blurred before me, so that it bothers me very badly to read or to do any work. I am expecting to

go back to the Philadelphia surgeon on May 24, for a check-up, I suppose, and if further treatment is needed, to get it. I am anxiously awaiting the time for this appointment, as there are many things I want to tell him and find out if there is any help for it.

I am hoping that different glasses will help the eye condition, and feel I should not do anything about it until the surgeon examines me. I hope it may be the Lord's will that my sight might not be taken from me, so that I cannot read, for that is one of the few things I have to enjoy, and too, if I could not work, I don't know what I would do, but again the Lord knows and will supply all my need according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. So, if I am only given grace to wait upon Him and the faith to ever look unto Him, everything will be all right. That really is my great need, for most of the time I am of little faith. I know that I need the hand of the Lord upon me to work patience in my heart, and oh, the sweetness when we are given to see in all its beauty that "In faithfulness thou hast afflicted me".

When I was being prepared for the operation I was given such sweet peace, and the words "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee", came like a sweet, tender message to my heart; and immediately after that, the words of Paul in the closing verses of the 8th chapter of Romans. It came with such assurance that I felt at that moment that "for me to die is gain," and I know nothing but the great love wherewith He loved me, flowed over my soul like a mighty yet gentle wave — great love that saved my poor sinning soul from eternal death. It was a wonderful experience and one which I shall never forget. If only I may be so blessed when my earthly journey draws to an end, nothing else matters much.

With my love and fellowship in our Lord Jesus Christ, I humbly hope I am your sister,

Mildred Dykes

EDITORIALS

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EDITORIAL

HOPE-KNOWLEDGE

This is a subject that I have been interested in for more than thirty years, and I find that is fraught with much interest for every child of God. It seems that some have more than the inspired writers meant for us to have about each of the two. Usually, I have found that those who put all of their stock in the one do not have much, if any, use for the other. This is not as it should be. I feel my lack of ability to deal with the different phases of the two in a way that will be enlightening to the Lord's people.

We cannot find a subject that covers any more of the struggles of God's humble poor than is covered here. The two are important, one no less so than the other. Faith (knowledge) and hope abides. It is not that faith stays and

hope flees away; it is not that hope stays and faith flees away, but the two, along with charity, stays. Faith is in measure; hope is in measure; charity is in measure; in fact every gift of the Spirit is in measure. Faith is given in a proportion to keep us from despair; hope is given in a proportion to keep us from being puffed up. But never let it be said that the Lord's people do not know anything; equally so, never let it be denied that they are often just barely alive, just existing and holding on to the promise by hope, just a bare hope.

The new birth is cogent with argument that the subject of it is in a hopeful stage. The Saviour's comparison of that birth to the action of the wind is enough to convince him that has faith (knowledge) that this is true. The person that does not have any use for a hope, does not have knowledge (saving knowledge), and makes it certain that he knows nothing as he ought.

Moreover, this "again" birth carries such far reaching weight. It is not being born over, nor a renovation of the first. I must insist that the first birth continues the first birth with all of the faculties intact. If I do not do that, I will be writing about the other fellow's experience and not mine. My nature is as it first was; there is no change, there is not a shred of improvement in it for the better. The language of the Saviour is full and complete. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh" is as much the truth now as it was when he was on earth. I hear it said that the old man groans for deliverance; it is widely accepted that the old man is hoping, but I do not know anything about this. I have an experience that is widely different to anything like unto that. My old man would not be troubling me if it was living in hope; it would not be a dead weight, an emcumbrance unmanageable, if it was yearning to be delivered from itself. But in my nature I am satisfied with this world; I am satisfied to drink in worldliness and to follow a life of ease and pleasure in the flesh. If it was not for the second birth from above; if it was not for the presence of the leading and influence of the Sovereign Spirit of God from which this new creation receives every component part and quality, I say, without hesitation, that the life of every chosen vessel of mercy would be no different than others.

The warfare of the children of God is mysterious. Only those that have a warfare know the terror of it. To speak of the ravages that accompany battle means nothing to those not affected except that that comes by observation, and to those not directly experienced in it, the telling of those moments of anxiety will produce nothing but derision, for they cannot see any of the telling effects of the battle. There is no action of the wind to the dead, no gentle breeze, no swiftly moving blows of destruction. So, also, to the same extent, there is no action of the Spirit on the dead in sin.

The dead do not have any doubts; they know absolutely nothing about the fears of him who witnesses and experiences the awful accompaniments of the warfare. They are not dead to the things of nature, for in that they are at home. The only way that they are dead is in sin — which is a complete separation from God and godliness. Nature measures God by its arm — and this measurement brings him (to them) down to where he is commensurable with them. The nature of man, having nothing to challenge it, has nothing to cause a doubt to arise. Everything goes along on an even keel. It is in command of every situation that arises.

The children of God — those that are born of the Spirit — are all complex beings. The first man born is still there; he has not given up the field; he has not surrendered; he is as much alive as he ever was. Being born again, there is another Man that has come into the same building formerly occupied alone by the first man. This is the child of God. He is a child with two distinct natures, each dwelling in and on the

same premises. As the Apostle clearly shows us, the two 'I's' are at variance with each other. One does good; the other does not.

How vexing, how tormenting it is to be at home in the body. To feel this cold lifeless frame is so blasting to a hope in the Lord. Oh, how exacting it is to be carrying this old nature (bed) around. Travelling with this excumbrance gets so tiresome. We look and see so many moving in freedom from all of the problems that perplex us. There is nothing that will cause the taking of an inventory like coming face to face with the problems of keeping an even keel on the road of travel. When one is in business and he takes an inventory of his goods, he is delighted when he shows a goodly profit. But if, when he takes stock, he finds that he is losing out in the venture, he is thrown into doubt as to whether he should continue. Perhaps he spends many moments in fear and anxiety as to his retaining a standing in the business world. The children of God are commanded to examine themselves, to take heed to themselves (1 Cor. 11:28; 2 Cor. 13:5; 1 Tim. 4:16), and just as sure as this examination is done, it will find that the true aspects of a child of God are indeed low.

How poor one is that has made a profession and then finds out the lack of the qualities that go with that profession. Ah, how he loathes the empty shelves, the unkempt appearance of the quarters where he lives; how he looks in sadness at the breaks in his fences and the misuse that he feels he has made of that that he possessed. How did this character ever think in the first place that he was fit for such a work? How did he ever see any quality in himself that would have given him to feel that he was one apt to be called a companion of the fellow travellers? Yet, he goes back, and he thinks of days of yore; he remembers some of the times when everything was lovely, and he finds sweetness and satisfaction in regleaning in those fields. Finding so many days back there when he met often with his fellows, when he was led into fruitful valleys, in green pastures, beside still waters, he looks again at his present standing. Ah, how precarious it now is, how lacking in the marks of one of them now.

Every one of these travellers sometimes has these times. We cannot escape them, for this is the work of our God. Being thus wrought upon, we begin to look for a reason of our acceptance with the Lord. Was that the Lord when the stormy season came and our fragile vessel was tossed to and fro? Was it the Lord when the gentle breezes blew across our path, bringing us to gradually fall in love with the gospel of grace? Whether it was in a storm that threatened our every vestige of future calmness, or was only a heavenly breeze of love, it is now gone. How we search for a way to know what we once felt; how longingly do we go backward searching for a place that we could say with assurance that the Lord was there; moreover, how we look at present surroundings to see if there is a thing that we could call a reason for us hoping.

So many of the Lord's dear children (yea, all that I have heard express themselves) feel that their case is an outside case. They feel that it is indeed a miracle of grace that they are saved at all, and the so-called bright cases that we speak of the others having all fade away when we examine the feelings of our fellow travellers. The "not being meet for an apostle" and "being the least of all" and "O wretched man that I am" all show one that has no right on the premises of the kingdom of heaven.

This is applicable only to the children of God. They, and only they, hope in the righteousness of the Lamb. No one, no one at all, has ever searched for a hope until he had a hope. No one, not the first one, has ever wanted a hope until he already had the hope. Hope carries a world of weight in itself. It is not knowledge, it is hope, and it is alive, and it saves. It is still hope, and hope

is hoping for a brighter hope. I remember the very first preaching I ever heard in my life, although I had been hearing the sound of the minister's voice all of my life. I had spoken of salvation by grace; I had been born and reared to manhood in the atmosphere of the Old Baptist church, but I was five hundred miles away from the environment of youth, and here was somebody that I had never known before that day "telling me all the things that I had ever done" yet making no accusation towards my manner of life. It was the most wonderful event of my life. I have known many miraculous things since I was baptized twenty-eight years ago, but there has never been a moment as glorious as was that first message of comfort and cheer to my sad and broken heart. I could no more stem the tide of tears than I could have made a world, for I had been given the winter before a precious hope in the shed blood of my Redeemer God. When the service was concluded he said to me "I can see that you have a hope".

If such this is, then for these thirty years I have had a hope. At times it would seem that the star of it had set never to rise any more; at such times causing me much casting about in my mind as to my ever having a hope. I have scanned the past at such times for a place that I could lay claim to some evidence for my hope, and the things that I thought at the time were the sweetest were too small to call evidence; I have tried to scale the mountains that had me walled in, but I could not find a gap to get in the sunlight of hope; I have gone forward, looking and examining my inward thoughts and ability and there was nothing that indicated that I would ever be able to hope again. I have had to wait for his return, for the reviving my hope. Have you travelled here?

Knowledge is the one thing that we have tried to evade; some even spending time in berating those that use the word, going to great effort to prove that we do not know anything. The apostle that spoke the most about hope also spoke often about what the church of God knows. Many times we have heard able sermons on the church knowing that all things work together for good, and perhaps before conclusion *we found out that we did not know it at all.* We have heard wonderful discourses about knowing that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren, and then the speaker use the last few minutes of his time telling us that he did not know anything. *The church does know things.* If Old Baptists do not know anything it is conclusive evidence that we are not the church of Jesus Christ, for His church is taught things. He teaches, *but definitely does not "teach at".*

I have written this at the request of Brother P. L. Kenley of Virginia.

W. D. G.

Marion, Iowa

Dear Editors:

Am enclosing money order for one year's subscription to the Signs.

I am ninety-one years old; and the Signs has been in the Gott family since first published.

David Gott

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

UNEQUALLY YOKED

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" — *2 Cor. vi. 14.*

In faithfully defining the law of our Lord Jesus Christ for the government of his church, the apostles have recorded all the directions which can ever be needed to the end of time. As their decisions cover the most difficult and complicated cases which can arise, so

those which seem so plain as to be manifest to the weakest intelligence are also included. In this adaptation to all circumstances and all the vicissitudes of time the perfection of the divinely inspired law appears.

The commandment enjoined in this text is one which to reason seems to be so evidently right and consistent that it might be considered needless for the apostle to have recorded it; but infinite wisdom has not left anything for the followers of Jesus to want in their experience which is not provided in the Scriptures, in which "the man of God is perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." — 2 Tim. iii. 17. Paul says, "I kept back nothing that was profitable." — Acts xx. 20. It is equally true that nothing is enjoined in the law of Christ but that which is profitable to the saints in their experience here in time. The use of the two negative terms, "not unequally," does not imply that there is a possibility of being equally yoked together with unbelievers.

The same form of expression is used Ephesians v. 11, "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." It is no more implied in our text that believers may be equally yoked with unbelievers, than in this text that there are some fruitful works of darkness with which the saints should have fellowship. The use of the two negative terms is not to be understood as in opposition and canceling each other, as is evident from the context in both these instances. In the Greek language, in which Paul wrote, there is a rule that "Two negatives strengthen the negation;" and this is the evident meaning in these texts.

The apostle was addressing the church of God at Corinth in this letter; and in his first letter to this church he had corrected the error which had prevailed among them, by which they had perverted the observance of the ordinance of the communion of the Lord's supper so grossly as to confound it with those heathen feasts to which they had been accustomed before they knew anything of the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God through our Lord Jesus.

This will readily be seen by reference to 1 Corinthians xi. 17-34. In their failure to recognize the ordinance as restricted to the church, they had lost the true observance of it altogether, as he declares in the twentieth verse referred to. Now, in this second epistle to the same church he admonishes them against such unequal yoking together with unbelievers in their organization as a church, or in professed fellowship. This understanding accords with the connection in which the verse under consideration is recorded, and is in harmony with other expressions addressed to the same church, as in 1 Corinthians v. 11-13.

"For what fellowship hath righteousness and unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" These questions, with those following, clearly imply the application of the direction given in the sense of that yoking together in which fellowship and communion are involved. In worldly association as fellow-citizens, or in social or business relations, no such tie is professed as fellowship or communion. A man may be an honest and honorable citizen, while manifesting no knowledge of the grace of God. In the relations of this world it is not forbidden the saints to associate with such even though they give no evidence of faith in Jesus Christ; but to be united in professed fellowship with such in an organization assuming to be the church of Christ, is clearly inconsistent with that allegiance which every redeemed subject of grace owes to the precious Redeemer as the King whom God has set upon his holy hill of Zion.

Hence the command is addressed to all who are involved in such an unholy alliance as recorded in the verses following the text. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and

will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." In palliation of their neglect to obey this plain commandment of our Lord as written by the apostle, it is frequently suggested to those who feel its application to themselves that obedience would involve them in consequent difficulties which they feel to be insurmountable. Perhaps the most frequent form of this temptation is the suggestion that it will not be possible for one feeling unworthy and sinful to live so as to honor the profession of faith in the salvation of God. This fear is confirmed by the conscious weakness of the subject of it, and reason decides that it is better to disregard the commandment entirely. Surely the eyes of those who arrive at such a conclusion must be blinded to the gracious promise in this last quotation. If the Lord Almighty is a Father unto you, can any good thing be withheld from you? It is not required of the obedient child to keep himself by his own strength. His Father is able to keep him; and this is just what is promised here. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." — Rev. xxii. 14.

(Editorial by Eld. Wm. L. Beebe, Oct. 1, 1883.)

The opinions and doings of men are of no value unless motivated by the Spirit of Truth; if otherwise, they "darken counsel by words without knowledge".

WE QUOTE:

"As it is the purpose of God that his redeemed, justified, and saved people should glorify him here below, he has most graciously revealed to them how they shall learn to know his will, and do it. This is the end and object of the precept." — Philpott's MEDITATIONS

"What is fruit? Is it not inward and outward — the inward fruits of the spirit in the heart, and the outward fruits of godliness in the life? — Philpott's MEDITATIONS

NATURAL WAYWARDNESS

"The Bible has a great deal to say about sheep, and because of this continued reference, people often get the idea that sheep are lovely, docile, and intelligent creatures. The truth is that they are very stupid, dirty, and particularly given to straying away. Hard as it is to comfort, these characteristics make sheep a particularly fitting symbol of the weak and erring children of God.

Shepherds tell us that sheep have to be carefully herded because if they once spy a path, they will start down that path and sometimes trot along for miles, just because it is a path. Behind this reality lies the parable of the lost sheep. That particular sheep found itself in a pathway and kept on going.

The Bible declares that "all we like sheep have gone astray." In the case of both sheep and humans, the disposition is to get into a pathway and follow it, simply because it is a pathway. The neighbors make a pathway, or the fashion designers, or the smart set at the country club, or Hollywood—and down that pathway rush millions of people, from bobby-sockers to grandmothers, from toddlers to industrial executives — little lambs and old sheep running along the pathway just because it is a pathway.

"All we, like sheep." The Bible emphasizes the need for a Shepherd and the watchful car of One who regards our waywardness with understanding and love." — Selected from Frederick (Md.) Post

(Maryland)

ASSOCIATIONAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Original Little River Association, meets with Dry Creek Church, Trigg County Kentucky, 4th Sunday in August, and Friday and Saturday before.

Elder J. N. Darnell, Moderator,
Cadiz, Kentucky

Original West Tennessee Association, will not convene.

Original Bethel Association, meets with Bethel Church, Graves County, Kentucky, 1st Sunday in October, and Friday and Saturday before.

Elder R. L. Harrison, Moderator,
Rives, Tennessee

Original Soldiers Creek Association, meets with New Providence Church, Calloway County, Kentucky, 2nd Sunday in October, and Friday and Saturday before. (Church is 15 miles West of Murray)

Elder Paul Poyner, Moderator,
Murray, Kentucky

Original Obion Association, meets with Hephzibah Church, Henry County, Tennessee, 3rd Sunday in October, and Friday and Saturday before. (Church located on Murray-Dover Road, one mile Northwest of Y with Austin-Pea Highway, near bridge at Mouth of Sandy)

Elder Paul Poyner,
Murray, Kentucky

Pigg River Association, meets with Thompson's Grove Church, Roanoke County, Virginia, on August 5, 6, and 7, 1955.

Elder Randolph Perdue,
Moderator

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, September 9, 10 and 11, 1955. Lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Sanford S. Bartlett, Clerk

The Annual Three Day Meeting of the Old School or Predestinarian Baptists of Riffe, Washington, will be held with Bethel Church at Riffe, beginning August 19th, and continuing the two days following, the Lord willing. All the lovers of the truth are invited to attend. For information write

Mrs. Rosa Coleman, Clerk

The annual meeting of the **Lexington-Roxbury Association** will be held, the Lord willing, at the Old School Baptist meeting house in Halcottville, New York, Wednesday and Thursday, September 14th and 15th, 1955. The meeting will open on Wednesday morning at 10:30, DST. Ministers and brethren of our faith and order in fellowship with us and all lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Those coming to Halcottville on Tuesday evening before the meeting will go to the Grange Hall near the meeting house, where provision will be made for their entertainment. Those arriving Wednesday morning will go to the meeting house.

(Elder) Arnold H. Bellows, clerk

MEETING TIME CHANGED

Pleasant Grove Church, near Yakima, Washington, meets at 11 A. M. each third Sunday, by appointment at the home of one of the members living at Naches, Washington.

A. D. Hugett, Moderator
John Simpson, Clerk,
Outlook, Washington

HAVE YOU SENT IN A NEW SUBSCRIPTION LATELY?

OBITUARIES

DEACON JAMES E. WEST

Deacon James E. West was born April 14, 1875; and departed this life January 19, 1955, at the age of seventy-nine years. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Ethel Parsons West, and two children: Mrs. Neva Cornine, Salisbury, Md., and Mrs. Elijah Truitt, Snow Hill, Md.

Brother West lived his entire life in and near Salisbury, Md., and was well known and highly respected by those who knew him, as a quiet, unassuming person. He went before the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church for membership on Saturday before the fifth Sunday in August, 1952, and was received into their fellowship. He had manifested for many years his great love for the church by his faithful attendance and his interest in the gospel of Christ. He was baptized the following morning by the writer. He was chosen deacon of the Salisbury Church May 29, 1953, and was faithful in the Lord's house, quietly going about his work pertaining to that office. It can truly be said that he filled the office of deacon well.

There is an incident in the life of our brother we desire to mention. The day he was received into the fellowship of the church, immediately after being received, he joined in the singing of the hymn at the closing of the service; and on Sunday morning at the water's edge he again joined in the song service. Someway, it left a lasting impression with me that the Lord blessed him to so humbly and quietly join in the service at that time. He left evidence with us that his faith, which is the gift of God, was the fruit of the Spirit - a divine work.

The funeral service was conducted by Elder H. M. Bennett; and his body was laid to rest, awaiting the coming of the Lord; who will descend with a shout and raise his people unto everlasting joy and praise, to be with Him forevermore.

Written by his pastor,
(Elder) D. V. Spangler

WILLIAM P. NESBITT

William P. Nesbitt was born September 25, 1864, in Cecil County, Maryland; and died December 9, 1954. He was united in marriage to Addie E. Runner on December 8, 1897; and to this union were born two children: Mrs. Eva L. Jones, Chester, Pa., and Earl F. Nesbitt, Wilmington, Delaware, who survive. Also surviving are his widow, one grandson, and one great grand-daughter.

He was baptized unto the fellowship of the Welsh Tract Church on September 21, 1947,

by Elder Wood. He was a faithful member and was always present at his meetings unless prevented by illness. He was a kind husband and father, and was loved by all in his community.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Winchell Funeral Home, Chester, Pa., with interment in the Little Britain Cemetery, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

(Elder) John D. Wood

MRS. LEONORA T. GENUNG

Sister Genung, nee Tuthill, was born August 31, 1876 and passed away April 9, 1955. She was a graduate of the New York Normal School and taught until she was married April 20, 1904 to Mr. George Gunung who passed away in 1928. She resumed her teaching career in 1921 and retired in 1941. The last few years of her teaching she taught crippled children.

She was a very worthy member of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in New York City. Always present at meetings, a member of the Board of Trustees and interested in the welfare of the church. She leaves to mourn her loss three children, Miss Elizabeth Genung, Horton T. Genung and Mrs. Earl Thompson, in addition to her church and other friends.

She left the following letter to her children: "Dear Children: For a long time I have had it in my mind to write a little about my spiritual life. As a child I always had a feeling of fear that if I did wrong I would be punished by God. As I grew older I felt prayer would help me and I did pray often. In fact my earthly trials were helped by my praying.

When my mother passed away there seemed little comfort for me. I opened the Bible to read and found that salvation was not of myself but of God. Then I realized there was little I could do of myself and that my hope was in God.

In June 1903 I went before the church I love and stated my case. It surely was of God and not of myself for I have always been reticent about speaking before people. The days following this before my baptism were very uncertain and full of doubts. I was fearful I had given the wrong impression and was not worthy to be baptized, and would pray that if it was not right something would happen to prevent it.

I feel I have never done one thing to deserve God's mercy, but I do feel His need in my travels in this life. My wish to you, my dear ones, is that you will be given the desire to look to God for counsel and comfort. All my love. Mother"

She was baptized June 21, 1903, by the late Elder John McConnell. The church will miss her greatly as she was a much loved and valued member.

Funeral services were conducted by the under signed on April 11, 1955. Interment was at Waverly, N. Y.

(Elder) A. J. Slauson

MRS. ELLA F. O'NEAL

The subject of this notice is Mrs. Ella F. O'neal, who was born August 11, 1879, and died April 3, 1955; making her stay on earth seventy-six years. She leaves her husband and five children to mourn her departure. Three sisters and one brother also survive.

She united with the Providence Church at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, 1897, and her heart remained with the cause until her death. She was a faithful member, with a deep heartfelt regard for the church and the Word of Truth. Her courage was such that it gave comfort to all who knew her in her last years of life. She suffered immensely from her illness, but was always cheerful. Those who knew her loved he dearly.

We feel our loss is her eternal gain. May God in His tender mercy remember her children and loved ones, and enable them to be submissive to his will.

Funeral services were held at the Austin Cemetery April 8, 1955. We believe she is at rest with he Heavenly Father.

Written by order of conference.

(Elder) J. P. Tingle, Moderator
Nellie Perry, Clerk Pro. tem

MEMORIAL

DEACON RICHARD P. EATON

In the purpose of our God, it has pleased Him to take home to himself our dearly beloved brother, Deacon Richard P. Eaton; and we, as a church, desire to bow in humble submission to the will of God, feeling that our loss is his eternal gain.

Brother Richard was appointed Clerk of the Church in October, 1937, and Deacon in May, 1943. In both offices he manifested the true spirit of Christ in service to his brethren. His memory is precious to us all, and our sympathy goes out to his widow and children. We desire that the Lord my bless them in all things, and reconcile them to His will.

We resolve that a copy of this memorial be sent to his widow and children, that a copy be recorded in our minutes, and that a copy be sent to The Signs of the Times.

Done in behalf of The Covenanted Baptist Church at her Quarterly Meeting, May 19th, 1955.

(Elder) George Ruston, Moderator
Eldon Gilbert, Church Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 123 DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1955 NO. 9

ELDER BEENE 90 YEARS OLD

Houston, Texas
July 3rd, 1955

To the Editors of the Signs:

Greetings in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who is the hope of my salvation, if not deceived. Enclosed is a copy of verse this unworthy writer composed and sent to Elder W. O. Beene on his 87th birthday — and today, July 3rd, 1955, our regular meeting day at Shepherd Fold Church, here in Houston, Texas, we commemorated this dear old soldier of the cross and our beloved pastor's 90th birthday.

It is indeed inspiring to see this dear old servant at this ripe age kept by the power of Him who has all power in heaven and in earth, given strength and grace to stand in the pulpit and speak in the great and adorable name of our great and glorious God, — God the Father God, the Son and God the Holy Ghost; quoting the scripture from the Bible, and at the same time bearing witness within that he has experienced the things contained in this Holy writ, and sets a living seal to the truth of it.

Brother Beene has been and still is a faithful watchman upon the walls of Zion, where the gracious Master placed him when He called him out and qualified him to do the work of an undershepherd — Confessing his nothingness, his sinnership, and his inability to do anything of himself; he at the same time, by God's grace, sets forth the precious doctrine of salvation by grace in Our Lord Jesus Christ, to the comfort and consolation of those who have been taught likewise.

It is indeed inspiring and strengthening to the poor, weak and feeble child of God, (which this writer is if one at all), to hear Brother Beene speak of the travail of his soul and of the Lord's dealing with him, as he affirms and reaffirms the infallibility of the Great Omnipotent God; and of His faithfulness, love and mercy, and watchcare over His chosen ones. To see him and to hear him proclaim this glorious truth at his ripe old age, we are bound to say, it is marvelous in our eyes; and are persuaded it is of God and not man.

And we would give thanks to God for this gracious gift — this dear old father in Israel, who is as gentle as a lamb, yet as bold as a lion to proclaim and declare the truth as set forth by our Saviour, and revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit. In his preaching he knows no man after the flesh, and only sets forth that which has been given him, which he has tasted, touched and handled, so to speak.

This is not written to eulogize the man, for all men are nothing, and I less than nothing, but to this unworthy writer the preservation of Elder Beene's life to this age; his health, the soundness of his mind, the strength of voice, and the stability and firmness of a living faith testifies of, and magnifies God's holy name, and works among the children of men. To Him belongeth all the praise forever and ever. Amen.

To our beloved pastor, Elder W. O. Beene, on his 87th birthday:

To an aged soldier of the Cross,
A dear father in Israel, too;
By the grace and love of our dear Lord,
We pay this tribute to you.

A minister of God, called out and sent,
To preach His Holy word;
By his grace and power, in thy weakness and toil

Thou hast been held up, through thy span of years.

God hath clothed you in his armour,
And by His grace thou hast fought a good fight
But thy course is now almost finished,
And the time of departure draweth nigh.

Many times you have come to us,
Laden with food from our Master above;
And our hearts have leapt in exultation,
When by His power, you proclaimed His dying love.

Many times our souls you've comforted,
Many a time our hearts you've cheered;
As you preached a crucified Saviour,
And the pure Gospel of His Word.

Through thy long and weary pilgrimage,
He hath kept thee by His grace,
Now, not much longer here to tarry,
Soon you will see Him face to face.

There to receive the crown of righteousness,
Prepared and laid up for you above
With His saints and holy angels,
You will bask forever in His love.

And when you are gone, the saints here will miss you,
But their loss will be your gain;
For while their sorow yet remaineth,
Thy soul at peace, with God shall reign.

By one that loves you for the Truth's sake
B. V. Wright. June 30, 1952.

East Point, Ga.

Dear Brother Wood:

I am sending a letter from Elder Lefferts which you may use in the Signs of the Times if you see it is worthy.

I began taking the Signs 49 years ago, and began writing for it 41 years ago and began corresponding with brethren over a wide territory. I have nearly all these letters, some of which I think worthy for others to read.

Prayer has been on my mind many times, and I have seen or felt, I hope, some sweetness in prayer that I would love to tell. I am not a speaker but I desire to write. When I wrote you last, I was writing a lot, and seemed to see a lot to write about, but for some reason I have been under a cloud for some time. Have tried several times to write, but seemed to go blank and have to quit. You have tried to pray and could not, and you have prayed without trying, when you could no more keep from it than you could fly. David said it is good to be afflicted, and Paul rejoiced in tribulations, or in Christ through tribulations. An old sister was shocked by lightning several years ago which left her in affliction. She saw Christ in it and was able to rejoice, for it drew her near to Him. The last time I talked to her, she was still suffering, but would not have it otherwise.

The time was when I could not understand these things, but, since I have been brought down in affliction, I hope I have felt a nearness to Christ, and a sweetness in suffering far beyond any earthly joy. I can't keep from believing the Lord has been with me once in awhile, for I felt the spirit interceding with groanings that cannot be uttered. It seems that I have more fellowship and love for the poor and afflicted of the Lord that I did not feel when all was well with me in a worldly way.

Many years ago an aunt died in early life. She left good evidence of a sweet hope in her Saviour, and prayed for her little children. I was much impressed. I wondered if God indited her prayer, would He answer it? If not would it not be contradicting Himself? My pastor agreed with me. Since my affliction I am much tried, for some of my prayers are not answered, though they were from the depth of my soul, and came without words. Would He indite a prayer and not answer it? Christ was submissive to the Father's will, but this old stubborn flesh cannot submit until brought down in humility by His spirit, then we can say, "thy will be done;" and rejoice that He knows best and will care for us in all our trials. If we have the faith as a grain of mustard seed we can remove mountains in prayer.

I must acknowledge I do not have that faith. Some people say, "Exercise faith." How can I exercise that which I do not have? To be afflicted is a cross,

but nothing to be compared to that of one or more of the family, and the best doctors say there is nothing that can be done for them, but they will continue to grow worse. Do you wonder that I try to pray. Some people say the days of miracles are past, but God is the same: has the same power, speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. If it is His will He can cure my dear one, and if I had the faith he would do so, but He has not given me that faith. Israel went so far in sin at times that God told them He would not hear them but would bring judgment on them. I believe this is why I do not have faith, I am such a sinner He will not hear me; still I cannot help but try to pray.

I sorrow much over the condition of Zion, and I feel to pray for the Lord once more to show her her sins, and bring His people closer together in love and fellowship; and keep them as the apple of His eye.

With love and fellowship,
Geo. W. Jackson

PRAYER

Leesburg, Virginia
August 5, 1932

George W. Jackson
East Point, Ga.
Dear Brother Jackson:

Your recent good letter has afforded me much food for thought. The matter of prayer has been one of great concern to me, and I should hesitate to give you or anyone advice as to your way of going about it. We know that without the Spirit of God, we cannot really pray; yet how are we to know when we have the Spirit. We cannot let our feelings be the guide in this matter. One may be praying when there is no sensible feeling, one may not be praying even though we may feel that we are. Hence, frames and feelings are not to be one's dependence in this matter.

There are times when one would not go to meeting if he went by his feelings; there are times when the preacher would not go into the pulpit if he were to be swayed by his feelings. We are commanded to preach the word whether in season or out of season with us. Also, Jesus said that men ought always to pray and not to faint, and Paul exhorts the brethren to pray without ceasing. It seems, therefore, that the children of God should not hesitate to ask their Father for what they desire whether they feel they have the Spirit or not. The proof that we have the Spirit is when our prayers are answered.

If they are not granted, then we know we did not have the Spirit; but if we receive the things we ask of Him, then we know that our petition was of the Spirit. We know that our Father has already judged what is best and right for us before we ask Him, but we also know that *He has willed that we shall ask Him for those things which he has ordained to give us.* The Spirit, who knoweth the mind of God, inspires the believer to ask for these things. Sometimes we may feel that we have this inspiration, again we may feel that we have it not; but no matter what our feelings may be, we should bring all our wants to Him. He will sort them out and give us the things that are right for us to have, and he will ignore those petitions of ours, which, in His sight, are not right. Not to pray is to ignore the fact that God is Judge. If we sort out our own prayers ourselves and decide to ask for this and not to ask for that, that is taking judgment into our own hands and is robbing God of His prerogative of Judge in that matter. We should not do so.

Prayer is asking. Inasmuch as God is our Father, it not only ignores him as Judge when we try to be our own judges in the matter of what we shall pray for, but we ignore God in His Fatherhood not to pray to Him. If one of my children, instead of coming to me for what it wanted, should go down the street and ask a neighbor, I should feel that child ought to be punished be-

cause he had ignored me as his father. It is the child's right to bring its wants to the father, it is the father's prerogative to hear that child's petition and to decide whether it is for the child's good to grant it or not. Thus, for us to seek counsel of ourselves or of others rather than to lay our case before God, is to ignore His Fatherhood.

Further, suppose you had a friend and suppose you were in need and refused to let that friend help you, would you not thus despise the friendship of that friend in thus setting him at nought in your time of need. Now, God is our Almighty Friend, He through Jesus Christ sticks closer than any earthly friend or brother. The Bible tells about a friend who went to another friend at midnight and asked for help; for some bread, I think, to give one who had come to him for bread. This one to whom the one came asking for bread, had no bread to give: therefore, he went to his friend at midnight to get bread. This friend was in bed with his children and did not want to be disturbed to get up to give the bread, nor did he want to disturb his children in order to grant this plea.

However, because the friend at the door kept begging for bread and would not go away, the friend in bed arose, even though he had to awaken the children, and gave the man at the door bread. This parable is spoken by Jesus, I think, to teach the value of prayer and that it is the duty of friend to answer friend. You will remember that Simon Peter was once lodging in Joppa at the home of one Simon, a tanner. While there, three men came begging him to come down to the house of Cornelius the Gentile. Previous to this, Cornelius had been praying to the Lord for light. In order to grant the prayer of Cornelius, Peter had to be disturbed in his rest by the seaside to go and preach to this Gentile. Thus, sometimes the children have to be disturbed, they have to be put to some inconvenience, in order that some other child of God may receive the answer to his prayer for bread. Thus, you see for us not to go to God in prayer not only ignores Him as our Father and as our Judge, but sets him aside as our Friend. We cannot afford to do this.

Now, as to the manner of prayer, I cannot well tell you what to do. I cannot tell you how often to pray or when to pray, or whether to get down on your knees, or how to do it. I can only say as Jesus did, that we ought always to pray and not to faint. Sometimes, I have had to get down on my knees, couldn't feel satisfied not to do it. Other times, I have prayed as I lay on the bed in the silent hours of the night. Again, I have many times sent up a cry for help right in the midst of the day's business while in the midst of the world's people. So, in this, you will have to do as you think best for you in your case. In any case, don't stop praying whether you feel you have the Spirit or not. Take all your wants to Him who knows all things, and who alone can do you good and can save you to the uttermost.

Yours in Christian fellowship,
H. H. Lefferts

Kingston, N. Y.

Signs of the Times:

Enclosed I am sending copy of a letter received from Sister Gertrude Secor soon after the passing of her mother, which we feel is good reading and food for the hungry soul. If you approve, we would be glad to see it in the Signs of the Times.

(Elder) A. J. Slauson

A PRESENT HELP IN EVERY TIME OF NEED

216 East 175th St.
New York, N. Y.

Elder A. J. and Sister Slauson,

Dear kindred and dearly beloved: First I would like you to know I appreciate your many kind thoughts and deeds more than I can find words to ex-

press. I was glad to receive your nice letter.

My cold is better and I hope I am thankful to the Giver for His many blessings! My greatest trouble now is the shocks I have had and my doctor says they have surely taken my strength which it will take time to overcome. I am fortunate to have such a fine physician naturally, a kind and understanding man with good judgment, willing to take his time to advise me. He was so good to me the morning mother passed away telling me exactly what I had to do and how to do it. He said: "Gertrude I am as shocked as you are. This is the last thing I thought would happen to your mother as she was getting along so well," but he said "You know what will be will be."

Dear ones I am so happy that I have a still greater Physician, that Great Physician who is able to do more than our natural minds can comprehend, able to do more than we might ask or think. Yes I have a great Comforter, and without Him I am sure I could not carry on. Did not Jesus say, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." Notice he did not say I might or maybe but said *I will not leave you* and *I will come.* I love the wills and shalls of my God — they leave no chance for doubt. I feel He has been and is with me during my present struggle. If I had the strength and courage and the Lord would direct my pen, I am sure I could write a volume of the many blessings He has bestowed upon me during these days of trials, and the many thoughts and verses He has spoken to me.

So you see, although naturally speaking I am alone, I do not feel that I am alone spiritually — I feel the Lord's presence. What a blessing this is, and how undeserving I am of the comfort He has given me. Again, I feel I have experienced what is meant by praying without ceasing. How strongly I have felt the arms of my dear Savior holding me up. Truly I know "that my redeemer liveth." "How can I sink with such a prop as my eternal God?"

When my dear mother died in my arms, I was praying all the time in my weak way, "God give me strength, O Lord help me." A voice said to me, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." I could truly feel and say my Father's will be mine. May I at all times be resigned to His holy will. I am sure that it makes our burden lighter when the Lord has reconciled us to His will. I feel the Lord was good to me that it was so arranged I would be at home. When I think how much worse it might have been, it makes me shudder. How thankful I am too that mother did not have to suffer. I have so much to be thankful for it makes me ashamed that I weep.

That still small voice said to me, "Sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." This has bothered me too. I shall never forget the beautiful expression on mother's face when she said, "Gertie, I am going to go." She felt the presence of the Lord with her so strongly. She spoke often of her unworthiness. She said, "I am a poor one to pray for anybody when I am the worst there is." Oh, if I could be more like her and have half of her patience and goodness. It is very difficult for me to write, my heart is so broken and my head feels as if it would burst when I try to write or think.

The many assurances I have received are so precious to me. Had the Lord not pitied the state I am in, I do not know what I would do. The words of the poet have been spoken to me over and over with much comfort.

"When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow;
For I will be with thee thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress."

We are told, "Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read: no one of these shall fail, etc." What better advice does one need? I get much advice today but so much of it reminds me of what Job said, "I have heard many such things: miserable comforters are ye all." Psalms 121:2 reads, "I will lift up mine eyes

unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth."

Dear folks I had to lay this letter aside and will try to add more at this time. When I try to think or concentrate it bothers my head. Last week when I tried to do a little writing it made my head ache for a week. My doctor said by mother going as she did, it was one of the greatest kind of shocks and no wonder you cannot concentrate. Since then I fell, spraining the instep and pulling the ligaments and tendons. He said I was fortunate not to have broken any bones. So you see once more I have been shown "A Sovereign Protector I have, unseen yet forever at hand." I am reminded of the words of Jesus when he said, "Go and show John again those things."

I think it best I bring my ramble to a close for this time. Please forgive all that is amiss considering the state I am in, and also my weakness. I think so much when I am down, "O ye of little faith," but still I want to cling to this little faith and never have it taken from me or I would perish indeed. Much love to you both and continue to remember me in your prayers. The prayers of the righteous availeth much. May the God we love continue to bless you in all things both temporal and spiritual. Write when you feel so to do. Much love.

Gertrude Secor

SAVED BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH

Denton, Kentucky

Dear Brother Wood:

It seems that I am impressed to pen a few of my thoughts on the following portion of scripture, and if you think they would be of interest to your readers, you may publish them; if not cast them aside and all will be well with me.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: It is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9)

What a blessing it is for one to be a witness to this experience by feeling and understanding; and also by knowledge of the blessed truth which is contained in this portion of sacred scripture. I very often wonder if many of the Lord's dear and afflicted people are given to seriously consider this portion of scripture in its fulness, and to see just what is contained therein. Please notice the first words of the sentence, "For by grace are ye saved" — not were ye saved only, but are ye saved, in the presence tense. That is, if I understand just what the apostle meant, that the children of God who were chosen in Christ their blessed Lord by grace before the world was, and that that grace did not cease there, but follows on through time to eternity; so they are daily being saved from the errors of the world, and from their trials and temptations, and from the snares of their enemies, and the snares of Satan. They are daily preserved, and where sin abounds in them, grace does much more abound in them.

Webster defines grace, as an unmerited favor and love of God. I do not know whether this definition of the word does justice to the word scripturally, or not. But, anyway, if we had to do as much as raise our heads and look unto the firmament of heaven in order to obtain this grace, it could not be said that grace was an unmerited favor; and so we would have that much to boast of. But boasting is excluded. Before the saving grace was made known to us we were dead in trespasses and sins, and totaly passive. "But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved); and hath raised up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." (Ephesians 2:5-6). Having love his own which were in the world, he loved them to the end. God did not begin to love his people, neither will he ever cease to love them, for his love is everlasting: As he says, "I have loved

thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." And we read, "And you hath he quickened (gives life) who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we all had our conversation in time past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath even as others." So, as far as nature is concerned, there is no difference between the children of God and the children of wrath; but as far as the spirit is concerned, they, the Lord's people, have always been his beloved people, and preserved by his grace, unmerited on their part.

The next portion of our text which we will consider is, Faith; "By grace are ye saved through faith." Webster defines the word faith as, Belief; trust in the honesty and truth of another; the assent of the mind to divine revelation; etc. But it seems to me that this definition does not harmonize very well with the definition given by the Apostle Paul; he says, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." The substance of this faith, which is the spiritual evidence which the hope of the people of God is founded on, has strengthened and given them courage to yield to the block, or be burned at the stake, rather than to recant the principles of the doctrine which they have been taught, and experienced by the revelation of the Spirit of their God. And through this faith they are saved here in time from the snares of false doctrine, and deceivings of the evil spirit. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it he being dead yet speaketh." Please keep in mind that it is said in the Holy Scriptures that, without faith it is impossible to please God: and it is also said than all men have not faith. And it is said that faith is the gift of God; and the fruit of the Spirit. So no man has this faith except those who have been regenerated and born of the spirit of God. Those who are dead in sins have no faith, therefore they cannot please God. But the children of God have by grace through faith been blessed to do wonderful things: By faith Noah being warned of God of things not seen, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by faith Abraham when he was called to go out into a place which he should afterwards receive for an inheritance, obeyed, and he went out not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, for he looked for a city which hath foundation, whose maker and builder is God. Through faith Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised; therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promise, but having seen it afar off and persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. To them Christ had not come in the flesh on earth, and had not suffered and died on the cross — had not as far as they were concerned, redeemed them from the curse of the law which they were held under. Yet with God the work of redemption was already completed, for his beloved Son stood with him as a lamb slain from before the foundation of the world. They had received the promise which was made to Abraham their father, that Christ would come and redeem them from the bondage of the law; and so they staggered not at the promise, but firmly believing

through this faith, which is the substance of the things they hoped for, that God would keep his promise. So by faith they had no fear of the misery of an everlasting destruction.

I heard a Baptist preacher say in his preaching that the old patriarchs went to heaven on a credit; and afterwards Christ, their surety, came and paid the debt which they owed and could not pay themselves. I do not know whether this was a proper expression as an illustration of the redemption of our blessed Lord or not, but that was the way he put it.

By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: he that had received the promise offered his son, of whom it was said, In Isaac shall thy seed be called; accounting that God was able to raise him from the dead, from whence also he received him in a figure. This was a figure to those who were blessed by faith to see and understand their blessed Lord, who was to come and be put to death for their sins, and raised again that they might live forever. By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith Jacob when he was dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph, and worshiped. By faith Joseph when he died made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave commandment concerning his bones. By faith Moses when he was born, was hid three months by his parents because they saw he was a proper child, and they were not afraid of the king's commandement. By faith Moses when he was come of years, refused to be called the son of Pharoah's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible. Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of the blood, lest he that destroyed the first born should touch them. By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, which the Egyptians assaying to do, were drowned. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were compassed about seven days. By faith the harlot Hahab perished not with them that believed not, when she received the spies with peace. Time would fail me to tell all of these. Read the eleventh chapter of Hebrews.

All these things which were done, they were blessed by the power of God to do through faith: by grace looking forward to the coming of their blessed Lord, who is the substance of their faith and hope; which hope they had as an anchor of their soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.

Let us now consider briefly the last portion of our text, "And that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works lest any man should boast." First, we believe that the Lord's chosen people have good work to do as God works in them to will and to do of His own good pleasure. But they must first have life — life preceeds all action — so they must first be born again. (Not work in order to be born) And even after they are born again of the spirit, they cannot do anything of themselves. Christ, our Lord, said, "Without me ye can do nothing." So, if those who have been born again can do nothing, then why, Oh why, should we think that a dead sinner who knows not God, could do anything to bring himself into favor with God.

There are five senses of life: seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling and tasting; and so long as a man has even one of these senses, it cannot be said that he is dead. Before a man can have these senses he must be born into this matural world; then he is capable of seeing, hearing, feeling, etc, the things of the kingdom which he is born into: he must be born a natural birth before he can see this world or kingdom. He is born with a natural or carnal mind only, which mind cannot see beyond this na-

tural kingdom; and he knows nothing about this natural kingdom whatever before his birth. So, to have the spiritual senses of a spiritual life, he must be born again, not of corruptible seed, but by an incorruptible seed by the word — which is the Son of God. But if a man has none of these senses of life, and only has a mind which is enmity to God, and not subject to his law, neither indeed can be, how in the world could he believe, or accept? Such a thing would be absurd.

We see from the above truth that no man can have a spiritual life except as a free gift of God; and it is to those to whom it pleases God to bestow it: which is a certain remnant of the human family; as the Apostle Paul says: "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." And if by grace it is no more of works — it is not part works, and part grace. The two belong to different covenants. It we had to believe, or accept, in order to be born again, that would be of our own works; and our salvation would depend on our believing and accepting, without which we would not be saved; and salvation would not be a free gift, but would depend on us: and if we failed to do that which is required of us, then God would fail to do or comply with his part of the contract, and so, no salvation. If all should fail (which they certainly would) then Christ died in vain, and Heaven would be empty; and the place called Hell would not hold them. Grace would be no more grace. Paul continues by saying, "But if it be of works, then it is no more of grace, otherwise work is no more work." Meaning that if it is of grace, there are no works in it. If it be of works there is no such thing as grace in the matter.

Please remember the text, which reads, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." Paul says in his epistle to Titus, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." And in Romans 4:4, "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace but of debt; but to him who worketh not but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." When he says, "To him that worketh not," he means, as we think, He who is not expecting to receive eternal life by his own works; but who's trust and faith is wholly in God. If it were of works, it would be a debt which God would justly owe him for his work; as a debt, it would not therefore be of grace. He also says, "If Abraham were justified by works, he had whereof to glory, but not before God." So no man can glory in his own works before God. He may glory before men, but not before God. All of man's works of righteousness before God are but filthy rags: to be ragged looks bad enough, but to be ragged and filthy too, looks very bad indeed; and that is just what every man is before God. God only can take away man's filthy rags, and cloth him with the righteousness of our blessed Lord; he only can change our garments — and at his appointed time. Zechariah says, "And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said to Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan: even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, "Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment."

He did not tell Joshua if he would believe or accept, or do anything, that he would cause his iniquity to pass, and give him a change of raiment. So God can, and does, give us a change of heart, and take away our filthy garments

without requiring anything in exchange for it. His grace is free to those of his choice: if it were not free, it would not be of grace. When God reveals to one of his little ones his lost and ruined condition, Satan always stands by and whispers that God will not save unless he does something for God: that God does not save lives for nothing. He tells him the same falsehood that he told Eve in the garden of Eden: that God does know that ye shall not surely die, but that you have become as gods, knowing good and evil; and that it is up to you to choose between them; and except you choose the good, and do and be good, God will not save you. This causes him much anxiety and misery for a season, until his blessed Lord comes and reveals himself, and tells him to, "Fear not little one, for it's your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." It is the gift of God — not of works, lest any man should boast.

Yours in a blessed hope,
H. L. Rogers

Ridgeway, Virginia

Elder D. V. Spangler,

Dear Brother in Hope, and to the Household of Faith Everywhere:

After eleven long years, this poor wanderer is back home again — back as a member of my old home, North Fork Church, in the Pigg River Association. And I'm glad to be back; desiring of God to prepare a thankful heart within me for this blessing; this gracious privilege of being at home again.

There is a scripture that has been following me for days; and I desire to write concerning it, hoping God will see fit to guide my mind and pen, and realizing that if he doesn't, what I would write otherwise wouldn't be worth the paper it is written on.

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." (Psalms 19:1-2)

I will have to write just as my mind is lead; asking all who read this, to measure what is written by that infallable rule: "Thus saith the Lord" - both in the written Word of God in the Bible, and the Word of God written in our hearts by experience. And, if what I write doesn't measure up to these two witnesses, cast it aside for it is worthless.

The word "heavens" means to me, to be above the earth. Just as the natural sun is the light of the earth, Jesus is the light of the Spiritual. When the sun is shining, the terrain, or earth we travel on, is plainly seen, with its hills and valleys. Allow me now to come to the part that is mainly on my mind.

"Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." - children of God, living either in the Law Covenant Day or the Gospel Covenant Day, calling back and forth to each other: Day unto day; see? This, to me, is the predominant theme of this scripture. We read in Ephesians, 2nd chapter, of the church being "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone." What is this foundation upon which the apostles and prophets stood, according to, "Thus saith the Lord"?

"When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Phillippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some Elias; and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and

whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shalled be loosed in heaven." (Matthew 16:13-19)

To me, in brief, the foundation of the apostles and prophets is Jesus. He is mentioned as the Rock of Salvation in various places, both in the Old and New Testaments; and is our hope of glory, by the divine revelation in our hearts by the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost. This is the foundation the church stands on. Jesus is the Rock. The old apostles and Prophets experienced him; and wrote that experience. And we, in our day, have also experience Him. Thus, both we and they, being children of the Day, being taught by the same Teacher in the same School of Divine Grace, which God has set up in our hearts, have these blessed spiritual things revealed to us by the Holy Ghost.

And God, being unchangeable in all his works and ways, the passing of time doesn't cause his work, his doctrine, to grow old; so then, we can read our experience in reading the experience of the prophets and apostles; which when we are blest in the Spirit to really feel it, calls to us over the hundreds of years intervening, calling forth our love and fellowship. Yea, like experience manifests brotherhood, begets fellowship and causes our love to flow; so much so, that sometimes we can reach back the hand of fellowship in spirit, to those long gone on before, and call them brethren. This is the spiritual interpretation, to me, of this scripture. "Day unto day uttereth speech; and night unto night sheweth knowledge."

Now, the keys of the kingdom: three, representing Father, Son and Holy Ghost, in some way I am not able to explain. The Kingdom of God is set up in our hearts by divine power, divine revelation — Jesus is the theme, the sum and substance. In first Corinthians, thirteenth chapter, it tells what these keys are: Faith, Hope and Charity. The children of light, children of God, children of the day, have all three, being the blessed possessors of Jesus formed in them the hope of glory eternal. In the past, more than once, I have been hundreds of miles from home, going among the churches and brethren, meeting strangers, people whom I had not met before; and when blessed to tell of the goodness and mercies of Israel's God. this would unlock the doors of love and fellowship, and they would receive me into their heart's embrace. See the keys in action!

Oh, how earnestly do we seek for evidences of being true children of God! We have experienced day in the night-time, night in the day, winter in the summer, and summer in the winter.

> "The midsummer sun shines but dim,
> The fields strive in vain to look gay;
> But when I am happy in him,
> December's as pleasant as May."

Do not these words explain what I mean?

"Day unto day uttereth speech; and night unto night sheweth knowledge." Consider Jacob. I remember what I heard a precious elder preach once concerning Jacob's vision of the ladder reaching from earth to heaven - the angels of God ascending and descending on it. He said, and I believe, that the ladder represented Jesus; and the angels represented the children of God in their experience: up and down — first one then the other. A few years ago my mother had exzema on her hands, near blood poison; and my wife had a deep cold, near pneumonia. Oh, how fearful I was of death taking them both! One day, while they were in this condition, I was riding the tractor back to the fields to work, and, looking down at the house where we lived, my tears began to flow; and I began to sing a song of lamentation from my soul: "When sorrows encompass me 'round, and many distresses I see; astonished I cry, can a mortal be found, surrounded with troubles like me."

Surely, brethren, I was down near the bottom rung of the ladder. Another time, years ago, for several days I felt draped in mourning — felt fearful that I had caught the shadow and missed

the substance; felt fearful, sad, alone, and forsaken, grieving over the manner of my life falling so far short of the way I desired to live; and was fearful I was a deceiver. I felt as David expressed it in the twenty-second Psalm, "My God, My God, why has thou forsaken me." I started to work, and these words came rushing in with power, "With my mind I serve the law of God; but with my flesh, the law of sin." Instantly, I was caught up, lifted from the sorrowful valley of despondency to the high mountain top, and tears of joy flowed forth. My soul began to singing praise to God, and I could hardly see to drive. Back over the years, in spirit, I extended the hand of fellowship to two who had gone on before: David and Paul — one in the law day, one in the gospel. To David, when he said, "Praise the Lord, Oh, my soul! let all that is within me praise his holy name." And to Paul, when he expressed the words already quoted.

"Day unto day uttereth speech; and night unto night sheweth knowledge." Yes, we have dark seasons also; seems to be much more of this than the other - times when our sorrows come rolling in like a flood; times of doubts and fears, when we understand more clearly the language of the old writers. I have seen the time more than once, and like Job, that I wished I could have died while a babe in mother's arms.

But in all these things we are led and taught. Allow me to mention one more thing. Near where I now live, there is a mountain called Chestnut Mountain. One day while coming home from work, coming over the mountain (it was summer, and a thunder storm had shortly before passed over), in the far distance I saw a dark cloud; but between me and that cloud was a rainbow, seemingly pinned against the cloud. The rainbow: symbol of promise, figure of Jesus being with us in the depths of our troubles. "When thou passeth through waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee. When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." (Isaiah 43:2) Remember, O, household of faith, this promise of God who cannot lie, when you have to walk the dark and lonesome valleys.

When driven to your knees by the knowledge that you have no where else to go, I pray remember me.

Humbly, your brother in hope of mercy,
(Elder) Layton Wingfield

Signs of the Times:

Enclosed is check for $3.00 for the Signs another year. I like the good old doctrine — it is as sound as it was seventy years ago. I am six months along on my ninetieth year. Love.

James F. Staggs

ASSOCIATIONAL NOTICES

The **Salisbury Old School Baptist Association** will convene, the Lord willing, with the Forest Grove Church, one mile south of Parsonsburg, Maryland, October 19 and 20, 1955.

All ministers of our faith and order, and all lovers of the truth are invited. Those coming by car on Tuesday will go to the home of Sister Ethel Holloway, 508 E. Isabella Street, Salisbury, Maryland. Anyone coming by bus or train will please phone Sister Holloway, Salisbury 2-2526, and they will be called for.

Elder H. M. Bennett, Pastor,
Ethel Holloway, Clerk

The **Virginia Corresponding Meeting** will be held, the Lord willing, with Mt. Zion Church, on October 12, 13, 14, 1955. Mt. Zion meeting house is on Route 50, about a mile east of Aldie, Virginia. An invitation is extended to ministers and brethren in fellowship with us, and all visitors are welcome.

Arthur L. Carter, Clerk,
Manassas, Virginia

The annual meeting of the **Lexington-Roxbury Association** will be held, the Lord willing, at the Old School Baptist meeting house in Halcottville, New York, Wednesday and Thursday, September 14th and 15th, 1955. The meeting will open on Wednesday morning at 10:30 DST. Ministers and brethren of our faith and order in fellowship with us and all lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Those coming to Halcottville on Tuesday evening before the meeting will go to the Grange Hall near the meeting house, where provision will be made for their entertainment. Those arriv-

ing Wednesday morning will go to the meeting house.

(Elder) Arnold H. Bellows, Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To July 1, 1955)

Cleone E. Taley, N. J. $5.00; Homer Bailey, Del. $5.00; Mrs. Pattie Dean, Ga. $2.00; Elder A. D. Hughett, Wash. $10.00; Mrs. E. K. Morris, N. C. $2.00; Robert G. Singleterry, Tex. $6.00; D. B. Thomas, La. $1.00; Mrs. T. L. Rakes, Va. $3.00; L. G. Lambert, N. C. $3.00; A. C. Morton, N. C. .50; Mrs. Lunah Hudson, Calif. $5.00; Mrs. Cornell, N. Y. $1.00; Mr. Paul Miller, W. Va. $5.00; Mrs. Amy S. Hewitt, N. Y. $10.00; Dosia Deal, Mo. $2.00; Mrs. L. P. Anders, Ala. $1.00; Mrs. L. M. Lucas, Ala. $4.00; Mrs. G. E. Rogers, Canada, $7.00; Mrs. Jennie Clifford, Wash. $1.00; Mrs. C. E. Lawrence, Mass. $1.00; Mrs. S. L. Mathews, Tenn. $1.00; W. W. Yeisley, Wash. $1.00; Mildred Gordy, Mich. $2.00; Mrs. J. B. Simmons, Tex. $7.00; J. P. Gardner, Ark. $1.00; John F. Dean, La. $5.00; Lester A. Phillipps, La. $2.00; R. D. McGough, Ala. $5.00; G. L. Reaves, Fla. $5.00; Gilbert Sullivan, Ga. $2.00; Gertrude Barnhill, N. C. $5.00; Mrs. V. W. Free, Tex. $5.00; Mrs. James Young, Tenn. $2.00; R. D. McGough, Ala. $5.00; Mrs. Eugene Poland, Ala. $1.00; Mrs. Mary Mills, Calif. $5.00; Mrs. Luther Campbell, Ark. $5.00; J. E. Jones, Ariz. $2.00; Mrs. Mattie Folmer, Ala. $4.00; Ethel Werner, N. J. $5.00; Joseph Johnson, Tenn. $1.00; John F. Lax, Ill. $7.00; W. B. McGregor, $5.00; J. E. Lynch, Tenn. $1.00; Dozzie Casey, N. J. $1.00; Mrs. Clem Little, Ala. $2.00; W. D. Griffin, Ala. $1.00; James W. Black, Canada, $2.00; Harry T. Vories, Mich. $20.00; Mr. and Mrs. Annias Hastings, Md. $5.00.

WATCH YOUR EXPIRATION DATE AND RENEW PROMPTLY.
THANK YOU

EDITORIALS

Danville, Va. September, 1955

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EDITORIAL

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." (John 15:1, 2.)

"I am the true Vine, and my Father is the husbandman." The fact that Jesus designates Himself as the true vine, indicates that there is a vine that is not true, and the fruit of which is distasteful to those who know the vine of truth, as compared with the vine of deceit. The sons of the prophets were sitting before Elisha, "And he said unto his servant, set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets. And one went into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full, and came and shred them into

the pot of pottage: for they knew them not. So they poured out for the men to eat. And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, O thou man of God, there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof. But he said, then bring meal. And cast it into the pot; and he said pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was no harm in the pot." There was no healing or purifying characteristic, or virtue in the meal of itself, but the power of God to make the bitter sweet, was manifested.

"Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and went three days in the wilderness, and found no water. And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah. And the people murmured against Moses, saying, what shall we drink? And he cried unto the Lord; and the Lord shewed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them." This tree, evidently represents Jesus Christ the tree of life, the true vine, and when His hand is seen in the bitter experiences of His people, it takes bitterness and death from the pot.

"My Father is the husbandman." It is the work of the husbandman to trim from both vine and branch all fungus growth which serves only to add weight and burden to vine and branch. When the true vine becomes overburdened with professors, it is the duty of the husbandman to prune from the vine, all such professors, and He does it by proving them, by the trying of their faith. "And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." (Matthew 3:10.)

"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." We may ask, "What are these fruits that some branches fail to bear, the absence of which causes the husbandman to take them away?" I think the apostle Paul has given a good description of these "fruits" in his epistle to the Galatians. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lust. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another."

The ones then, in whom evidence of these "fruits" are not found, are the ones that the husbandman taketh away. But who are they that are in Christ that do not produce these "fruits?" Evidently, they are those who are in Him by profession only! They have no direct union or communion with the vine; they draw near Him with their mouth, but their heart is far from Him. They know nothing of the love of God, which passeth all understanding. They know nothing of the joy of the presence of His Spirit. They know nothing of that peace that comes to those who feel that the blood of Christ has washed their sins away, and made them kings and priests unto God. They have not crucified the flesh with the affections and lust. They have not yet learned as the apostle Paul did, "In me, that is in my flesh dwells no good thing." They cannot say with David, "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandeth my thoughts afar off. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, Lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." In the absence of these "fruits" of the Spirit, they are just a nominal branch.

But how are they in Him who produce this "fruit?" They are in Him by choice, they are in Him by election; they are in Him by creation; they have direct communion with Him, and receive their life from Him, and their

hope is in Him, and their fruit by Him, as the Lord said to Israel, "From me is thy fruit found." The true branch comes from the inside of the true vine. I once heard of a conversation between an old colored man and a college professor on the doctrine of salvation. The professor said to the colored man, "Joe," pointing to a limb on a tree, "you know that that limb can die and fall off of that tree" Joe said, "Yes sir, I know that that limb can die and fall from that tree because the limb is on the outside of the tree, but the children of God are not on the outside of Chirst, but in Him, therefore not a one of them can fall away."

Evidently, the professor was arguing that a branch could attach or detach itself from the vine at its own will, but the colored man refuted this argument with a fact, that could not be denied. All who bear fruit in this vine are grafted in by the husbandman. All true branches were chosen in the true vine before the foundation of the world, and because of the union they have with the vine, are born again, "Not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."

But these living branches that are in the vine, being grafted in by the Father, do not bear fruit all the time. The natural branch does not bear fruit at all seasons of the year. The watery solution which circulates through the vascular tissue in the natural plants, descends to the roots of the plants at certain seasons of the year. At which time the branches, though living, do not produce any fruit. The sap must come up again through the stock and infuse itself into the branches before they can produce any fruit; and that only, at certain seasons of the year. The spiritual plants have summer, winter, cold and heat to contend with, just as do the natural plants. Neither can bring forth fruit out of season.

"Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." God does not purge the nominal branch, He removes it out of the way. He removes him who has a name to live, but is dead. He purgeth the living branch that beareth fruit, that it may bring forth more fruit. The nominal branch cannot be pruned, because there is no soundness about it. It is rotten from one end to the other. Therefore, the whole must be removed. The living branch can and must be pruned. Otherwise, it would become top heavy, overloaded with self-righteousness and pride; which in the sight of God is as filthy rags. And God does not approve of His people going around in filthy garments. The ones that have been washed and cleansed by the blood of Christ, are more approbate and pleasing to the eye of God and His people.

"Dressed uniform the soldiers are,
When duty calls abroad;
Not purchased by their cost or care,
But by their Prince bestowed.

Tis wrought by Jesus' skillful hand,
And tinged in his own blood;
It makes the Christian gazing stand
To view this robe of God.

No art of man can weave this robe,
Tis of such texture fine;
Nor could the wealth of all this globe
By purchase make it mine."

The doubts, fears, afflictions and adversities through which the people of God are called to pass, is a great pruning knife. No one enjoys being pruned, and Paul says, "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." I once heard Elder Jim Adams say that he had been passing on his way to one of his appointments what seemed to him to be a beautiful peach orchard. But one day he passed and thought it was the worst looking orchard of stumps that he had ever seen. It looked to him that which was left standing, would never bear any more fruit. But he passed the same orchard the next year, and those trees were full of beautiful peaches. So when the children of God have been pruned, they feel,

I imagine, about like that pruned orchard looked.

May God reconcile His people to whatever pruning that is necessary to keep them at His feet. It would be superfluous to say, that all of God's people feel at times, that they have an excess weight of pride and self-righteousness that needs to be cut off from day to day. But the great husbandman knows where and when to prune the plants of His garden. I desire to quote two verses from Hymn No. 570 of the book of Benjamin Lloyd.

"Surely once thy garden flourished,
Every plant looked gay and green;
Then thy word our spirits nourished—
Happy seasons we have seen.

But a drought has since succeeded,
And a sad decline we see;
Lord, thy help is greatly needed,
Help can only come from thee."
Lord revive us!
All our help must come from thee.

H. O. Nash

OUR APPRECIATION

Your editors appreciate the many letters and articles which are sent in for publication, and they hope the brethren will continue to send them. Our desire is to publish them as early as possible, and endeavor to do so as we have the opportunity to prepare the copy for the printer; and as we have space for them in our columns. It is necessary to take the length of articles into consideration when making up the paper, and it is often necessary to publish shorter articles first, since we do not like to continue an article in the next issue. Articles of not over three or four double-spaced typewritten pages seem to be about the ideal length, but we realize it is not always possible to hold them to this length. Those preparing obituaries can help us by making them as concise as possible.

We also appreciate the new subscriptions which the brethren are sending in, and the prompt renewals. These, together with the contributions to the Indigent Fund, make it financially possible to continue our publication. We hope the brethren will continue to realize that we need their help in these matters. Thanks.

J. D. W.

CHANGING OF MEETING PLACE

Because of conditions beyond our control which has left the brethren at Nazareth Church unable to care for the **Hopewell Association** this year, it becomes necessary to change the place. The Lord willing, the association will be held with **Zion Church**, eight miles north of Gordo, Alabama, at the usual time: third Sunday in October and Friday and Saturday before. Our brethren are welcome.

(Elder) H. M. Brock, Moderator
(Elder) W. D. Griffin, Clerk,
Covin, Alabama

"THE LORD REIGNETH"

A very good pamphlet, entitled, THE LORD REIGNETH can be purchased from the author, Mrs. Helen R. Smith, Windsor, Missouri. The price is twenty-five cents. I would recommend this booklet of 47 pages to our readers as interesting and edifying. —D.V.S.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

FISHERS AND HUNTERS

"Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks."—Jere. xvi. 16.

Under the prophetic dispensation the Lord spoke to the nation of Israel by his chosen prophets, denouncing judgments against their idolatry and disobedience, and visiting upon them terrible punishments; but in all the severe displays of his vengeance upon their iniquities he left them a remnant to perpetuate their nationality, and to verify his promise as expressed by Jacob in the blessing of Judah, "The

sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." — Gen. xlix. 10.

In this respect the type is accurately true to the substance of which that entire record is the shadow. To natural reason it often appeared that Israel was hopelessly destroyed, and that they could never again be restored. It is not proposed now to review all the history given of that people; but in their captivity in Babylon, when their useless harps were hung upon the willows, and in utter helplessness they could only weep when they remembered their own Zion, Jeremiah was inspired to speak comfortably to them of the thoughts of peace, and not of evil, in which their faithful God would display his mercy to them, and give them an expected end. — Jer. xxix. 11. Among the illustrations by which this wonderful favor was definitely foretold Jeremiah was inspired to record the text above quoted.

While this promise was literally fulfilled in the restoration of Israel to the land given to them by their God when he brought them out of Egyptian bondage, as accomplished under the reign of Cyrus, there can be no doubt that the real substance typified in this whole transaction is found in the church, which as the body of Christ is the true subject of all inspired prophecy.

While the redemption of all his people from legal bondage and condemnation is clearly expressed in the wonderful deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage, in the subsequent history of that nation is faithfully portrayed the continual deliverance out of all their distresses which is experienced by the saints while they remain subject to vanity in the body of this death. Often they are made to groan, being burdened, and bemoaning their wretchedness they cry for deliverance; but their Redeemer is strong, and will not leave nor forsake them. As he declares the end from the beginning, he has ordained every supply which they ever shall need to sustain them in all their affliction and trials.

Of these provisions of his grace he has revealed the assurance in the inspired Scriptures, which confirm the manifestations of the same goodness and mercy as testified in the experience of each of his saints individually. So that while by the witness of holy men, who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, the tried saints are confirmed in their faith, each of them has the same testimony within by which they are qualified as witnesses to the truth of salvation by the sovereign grace of God.

In sending for many fishers the Lord is not to be represented as liable to disappointment and uncertainty as to their coming. He never sends by an inefficient messenger for the execution of his will. His sovereign Word with irresistible power is the only Messenger of the covenant. Therefore he does not send in vain either for fishers and hunters, or for the hidden ones for whom they are to fish and hunt.

In one sense the infallible testimony of the inspired prophets and apostles may be regarded as represented by these fishers. So they were named by our Lord himself when he called Peter and Andrew from their nets and commanded them to follow him. — Matt. iv. 19. But it was the doctrine of Christ, which by divine grace they were enabled to preach, which constituted them "fishers of men." This gospel of the kingdom is desirable food to every one who has heard the voice of the Son of God and lives by its quickening power.

As in the illustration used it is not expected that any but living fish will be caught by fishermen, so none are attracted by the joyful sound of the gospel but those who are living subjects of the grace of God. And as those who are sent to preach know not who is prepared to receive and love the truth, they are authorized to go everywhere preaching the word for a witness, which will infallibly discriminate

between those who know it as the gospel and others to whom it is a stumbling-block and foolishness. Brought to this test, every one is manifested by the effect produced in his heart by the testimony of Jesus. The minister of Jesus is authorized to use no other net and present no other bait but that which is furnished by the inspiration of God; and all such fishing is truly done by the apostles and holy men who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. We understand these to be the "many fishers" spoken of in the text.

By the many hunters may be understood those prophets, pastors and teachers whom God has called and sent forth to publicly proclaim the glad news of salvation, who are set in the church as "after" and secondary to the inspired writers; and in addition to these every subject of grace may be considered in some sense a hunter to find the hidden ones who are scattered upon every mountain and every hill and in the holes of the rocks. This expressive simile is well suited to describe the scattered condition of the little ones whom the Lord has chosen as his own afflicted and poor people. It is not simply that they are thus dispersed abroad in their temporal location, though it is true of many of them that they are literally secluded from those of their spiritual kindred in Christ Jesus. Such should be hunted and comforted by the preached word whenever it is practicable.

But in a more extended application the declaration of the text is that those shall be hunted who are disconsolately wandering on the mountains of legal requirements, and the hills of self-righteousness, and out of the holes of the rocks where they have sought to conceal themselves in assumed indifference to the precious truth of the gospel. In this hunting the work of the ministry is not fully accomplished when the gospel has been publicly proclaimed from the pulpit. Personal attention is implied in the idea of hunting. One could not be said to *hunt* scattered sheep who merely spread food within the fold where they might find it if they should come into the inclosure.

Like our great Shepherd, we should seek them even though they may have wandered away into the mountains of will-worship and sin. This will not require that we should court the favor of wolves, and endeavor to persuade them to become sheep; but it is certainly the duty of the true minister of the gospel to seek to bring every lover of the truth to walk in the footsteps of the flock. It has the appearance at least of indifference to the welfare of the saints, if not of presumption, when we say of one who manifestly loves the truth, yet does not obey the Lord, "Let him alone; the Lord will bring him to the church in his own time." Is this "teaching them to observe all things," as commanded Matthew xxviii. 20?

It is the duty of a servant to obey the command of his Lord; and when one of the saints takes the liberty to act upon his own judgment instead of implicitly obeying the revealed direction, he is exposed to the terrible judgment visited upon the wicked and slothful servant. — Matt. xxv. 24-30. But it may be asked, Will not every saint come into the church in the Lord's appointed time? Unquestionably they will. But we do not know when that time is until he is pleased to reveal it; and we are not to be guided by our own presumption relative to the times before appointed. All that is required of the servant of the Lord is to obey him. To do more is to charge him with failing to give a perfect law; to do less than he enjoins is to treat his authority with contempt. Well might David pray, "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins." — Psalm xix. 13.

The servants of Christ are not authorized to substitute their own deductions from the truth of divine sovereignty in the place of obedience to the express commandments of the Lord. It is not given even to his chosen apostles to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power. — Acts 1.7. Therefore even they were

not at liberty to disobey their Lord upon the presumption that they knew he would bring in his own sheep at the appointed time. Jonah reasoned on this principle, but it brought him to the bottoms of the mountains, where he learned that "They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy." — Jonah ii. 8.

While the law of Christ requires that his servants shall diligently hunt the hidden subjects of his grace, it is not obedience to his command when they attempt to bring into the church such as do not love the truth of God. Enticing wolves is a very different thing from hunting sheep. Only such as love the truth are to be hunted. Those who do not possess this seal of the Spirit would not be happy if nominally gathered into the church.

But within those sacred gates there are mansions of everlasting rest and peace prepared of God for all who love his appearing. Too much diligence and earnestness cannot be manifested by the servants of Christ in hunting them "from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks."

(Editorial by Elder Wm. L. Beebe — Dec. 1, 1883.)

ORDINATION OF ELDER JOHN HALL

The Predestinarian Baptist Church of Jesus Christ, called Salem, met the second Sunday in June, 1955, at her meeting house in Weiser, Idaho, for the purpose of ordaining Brother John Hall to the full work of the gospel ministry.

The church elected Deacon Archie Turnidge spokesman for the church, who in this capacity, acted in the Presbytery, which was composed of the following ordained Elders and Deacons of the Predestinarian Baptist faith and order: Elder T. R. Jefferson, Providence Church, Stockton, Cal.; Elder D. C. Davis, Bethel Church, Riffe, Wash.; Elder Ernest J. Attebery, Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho; Deacon Archie Turnidge, Salem Church, Weiser, Idaho; Deacon Lloyd C. Spikes, Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon.

The Presbytery elected Elder Jefferson, Moderator; and Deacon Lloyd C. Spikes, Clerk; and Elder Jefferson to deliver the charge; and Elder D. C. Davis to offer the ordination prayer.

By the delivery of the charge by Elder Jefferson, and the laying on of hands as Elder Davis offered the prayer, Brother John Hall was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministery. While singing a song of praise, the right hand of fellowship was given Elder Hall by the Presbytery, all members of Salem Church, and by visiting brethren.

The Clerk was instructed to prepare a copy of the minutes to be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication. The Presbytery was dissolved by prayer.

Elder T. R. Jefferson, Moderator
Deacon Lloyd C. Spikes, Clerk

OBITUARIES

DR. LEE W. WARREN

The subject of this sketch was born in Wicomico County, Maryland, April 10, 1886, son of the late Mr. and Mrs. John S. Warren, and died at his home in Berlin, Md. May 12, 1955.

After graduation from Maryland Medical College, he practiced medicine for about three years in Fruitland, Md. After that he engaged in various businesses, some of them located in Florida, where he lived from 1905, until 1932. From 1932 until his death he resided in Berlin, Md., where he was engaged in fruit growing, farming, and other business activities including a directorship in the Calvin B. Taylor Bank, of Berlin.

His first marriage was to Georgia B. Staton, of Newark, Del., who passed away in 1933. Later he was married to Mary Holloway of Newark, Md., who survives; also one daughter by his first marriage, Mrs. Walter W. Tilghman, of Palatka, Fla., and four grandchildren; also a number of great grandchildren.

On May 31, 1947, the Lord led him to manifest fully his love for His church and people, by presenting himself before the Old School Baptist Church of Snow Hill, Md. for membership. He was made to desire more than just a place in the congregation, and was led to follow the Lord in the ordinance of baptism, and be numbered with his visible church. He was joyfully received, and baptised by the writer June 29th. December 6th. 1947 he was appointed deacon of the Snow Hill church, which office he faithfully filled until God called him away.

Funeral services were conducted May 14th. by the writer, assisted by Licentiate Arthur Warren.

Our brother manifested in many ways his great love for the church, and those who attended there. He was a very active man in every thing he engaged in; and the family, church and community has suffered a great loss in his passing, but he has left evidence

that he had an interest in better things than this life can afford.

"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

Written by his pastor,
D. V. Spangler

MRS. ELIZABETH PHILLIPS

With sad and lonesome mind I endeavor to write of the passing of our dear companion; Mrs. Elizabeth Phillips was born April 12, 18 82, in Fannin County, Georgia, the daughter of George and Martha Patterson; and departed this earthly life July 13, 1954, making her stay here 72 years, 3 months and 1 day.

She married H. H. Phillips, November 10, 1901. To this union was born 12 children - 6 sons and 6 daughters. One son preceded her in death. Those surviving are her husband, Eld. H. H. Phillips; 6 daughters and 5 sons: Mrs. Gracie Crawford, Mt. Holly, N. C.; Mrs. Bessie Shook, East Point, Ga.; Mrs. Madola Moore and Mrs Nannie Cruce, Monticello, Ark.; Mrs. Oais Jeter, Pine Bluff, Ark.; and Mrs. Ella Cunningham, St. Louis, Mo.; Posey and Thomas, Monticello, Ark.; Elroy, W. Helena, Ark.; and Lester and Howard, Attalla, Alabama. Also, 33 grandchildren and 11 great, grandchildren.

She was a member of Mt. Pisgah Church of the Old School or Primitive Baptist. She was given good hope in the mercy of God in Christ in young womanhood, and joined the old line Primitive Baptist in Georgia. She was a strong believer in salvation by grace alone, never being willing to divide the living child or keep back part of the price, but ascribing unto Jesus her all in all.

Her great joy was attending her church and having the brethren and sisters in our home and never tired of waiting on them. She loved to hear them sing the old hymns. While she could not sing, she enjoyed so much reading the hymn. Her favorite being:

"How did my heart rejoice to hear
My friends devoutly say,
In Zion let us all appear
And keep the solemn day!"

A daughter requested that Eld. Sanders read the above hymn at the funeral. "Mother is gone," a son-in-law standing by her casket said, "she is better off, and we are not."

Being poor in wordly goods, I worked a great burden on her. And feeling impressed to go and preach, I left her with all the burdens of home, which she bore without complaint. When I would feel cast down and hunting excuses not to go, she would work up some plan for me to go.

Now she is gone, two of the boys and I are left alone at the old home,but we would not wish her back in her suffering. While we are letf to mourn, we feel that we do not have to mourn as those that have no hope; but believing she has eternal life into that rest that awaits all the little children of God, that He loved with an everlasting love before the world was. Believing also, that when heaven and earth pass away and time is no more; that when Christ comes for his own and raises them from their sleeping dust, it will be our own wife and mother that will be raised, changed to a glorious body liken unto her Saviour, Jesus Christ - Sleep on dear one. Oh Lord! forgive us for weeping.

Written by her unworthy husband, in sorrow and afflictions.

(Elder) H. H. Phillips

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Whereas, God in His infinite wisdom has called from us by death our beloved brother and deacon, Claude Garner, who calmly fell asleep in Jesus on April 26, 1954.

Brother Garner united with the Primitive Baptist Church of Newport River at our March Quarterly Meeting, 1913, and was baptized by his pastor, Elder Isaac Jones. After living the life of a faithful Christian and manifesting his love and faithfulness to the Church for several years, he was ordained a Deacon of the Church, which office he filled faithfully until death. Funeral service was conducted at his home by his pastor, Elder W. W. Roberts, assisted by Elder M. L. Simmons. We pray that the good Lord will be with the bereaved widow to comfort, strengthen, and enable her to bear her sorrow with patience. We pray that his good counsel may be followed by his children. While his brethren and many friends miss him so much, we hope that his passing from us will be his eternal gain.

Therefore, Be it resolved First, that we bow in humble submission to him who doeth all things well and we trust that God will in His infinite wisdom and grace fill the vacant place in the Church with His presence. Second, that a copy of these resolutions be entered on our Church record. Third, that a copy be sent to the bereaved widow.

Done by order of conference, June Quarterly Meeting, 1955:

Elder M. L. Simmons, Moderator
G. C. Garner, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 123 DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1955 NO. 10

EXPERIENCE

New Boston, Texas

Dear Brother Speer:

I have thought for a long time I would write you the good news, but the time never seemed right.

When I was about fifteen I feared that I did not believe the bible, but was finally convinced that I did believe. In my early twenties I joined the Missionary Baptist because it was proper for school teachers to do so. May the Lord forgive me. I have always done things I shouldn't do though. My conscience condemning me all the time. After I married a Methodist I joined with him. Had a desire to attend church regularly and believed that I could worship in any church, I felt that I was doing pretty good and even felt myself better than my neighbors that didn't attend. "Whosoever exalth himself shall be abased." Since my childhood I had believed the "Old Hardshell Doctrine" but didn't understand some of it. (or rather had some questions about tithing and Sunday Schools). I took an active part in Sunday School, and last June was asked to teach my age group. I couldn't refuse. Wanted the praise of men; and too, thought it was my duty since I was on their church roll. So I attemped to teach the wonderful, blessed word of God of which I am so ashamed of doing or rather trying to do. After having taught the class about three and a half months, I had the wonderful privilege of hearing you feed the sheep at Old Union. (Prospect Church) You told me I was one of them. Such comforting words I have never heard, but my burden remained heavy. On the following Saturday night, I couldn't sleep for worring about teaching the class on Sunday. You see the scriptures stating that women should be silent in the church was giving me considerable trouble. I couldn't think of giving the class up, as I thought every one would turn against me, but I became so disturbed that had decided I would tell them on Sunday that I would leave. Instead, I seemed to enjoy trying to teach it. On Monday when I would pick up the book to prepare the Sunday School lesson, I would become physically ill. Could hardly eat or sleep. Went out to Dad's and talked to them. They were and are always such a comfort to me, but this time could get no lasting comfort from any one. For months I had great desire to discuss and read the Bible. On Thursday decided to go see Bro. Malcolm and his mother, and told them my sad state. When I started home it seemed that I was about to burst. After I reached home I picked up the Sunday School Book and returned it to the President of the Class. The tightness left and I could sleep again, for a time, at least.

Started going to Primitive Baptist Church at Old Union (Prospect Church) regularly, and thought surely I would go right up and be admitted, but soon found out I could do exactly nothing, and became so burdened that I would burst into tears while doing my housework. Had decided I would never have the pleasure of being a member of "Dear Old Hardshells." I said I didn't deserve any blessings anyway. I couldn't pray, only to ask the Lord to have mercy on my soul; and my sins were always before me. "Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden. I will give you rest." "Seek and ye shall find."

On Saturday at Old Union, (Prospect Church) my beloved sister Opal, Uncle

Henry Tidwell and I were admitted. I was in the depth of despair but Brother Wall, (Elder T. A. Wall) that saintly brother to me, said comforting things to me. After the services I was so blue that I didn't care to be associated with any one. Always before I just loved to be near anyone connected with "Hardshells", but felt so unworthy now. The Sunday before I had told Mama and Aunt Mary that I would probably never join the Primitive Baptist Church.

Bro. Malcom had hardly started talking when I became as light as a feather, and wanted to shout "Glory Hallelujah". I could hardly wait until Bro. Wall finished his sermon to go up. When I started up something seemed to say "No"; but something seem to pull me on, and I took Bro. Wall's hand with the most glorious feeling I had ever had. When I sat down though it seemed that I was surrounded by enemies on every side. I feared that I had done the wrong thing and wondered if I should be baptized. Bro. Wall (Elder T. A. Wall) then told of a vision of our being admited. Those comforting words encouraged me to be baptized. I prayed as I went into the water that my burden would be removed, but not believing it would be. "Oh ye of little faith."

That afternoon after leaving the pool, when we were driving home, I was light as a feather again and started singing the praises of God again and was unable to sleep that night for rejoicing. For years I had waked up with the fear that I wouldn't be saved, but the next morning it was gone and stayed gone for a long time; but it came back two or three mornings again, and have never had it since. For a long time I had been so weak that I could hardly get the house work done and had to rest two or three hours every day. After being baptized I have been so much stronger and do my house work and even extra duties. Enjoy every thing so much more, and Barry, 3, and Debline, 4, are cared for with ease. Oh, the wonderful healing in the wings of the Eagle.

How unworthy I feel to be associated with the "Saintly Old Hardshells". The church is such a sacred place to me now and have such a deep love for the members, if I am not deceived. So often I feel as if I didn't know God, and then again I seem to be lifted up and made to rejoice. Say, is it thus with you?

Bro. Speer, I hope I haven't said the wrong things. Forgive me if I shouldn't have written at all. Aunt Mary said today, how she would enjoy hearing you preach again. We all agreed of course. Bro. Wall is in Ellington Memorial Hospital at Atlanta with flu. Sister Wall is not well at all, either. Bro. Lloyd Wall preached such a wonderful sermon this morning. We would love to have you visit us just any time. If you have a mind to pray, pray for this poor worm of dust.

Your Sister in hope, if one at all.

Mrs. Leroy C. Jones
(Ozella Daniel)

Elder and Mrs. H. M. Bennett,
Mardella Springs, Md.

Dear Brother in a Precious Hope:

Last Sunday was our meeting day, but I could not be there in body; but in mind I thought of you. I am sure you all felt it was good to be there, for the Psalmist says, "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity;" — and in the bonds of peace, 'tis manna to the hungry soul, and to the weary rest. If I could be directed by divine guidance, I would like to write some of my thoughts; but it seems when I start to write, then I am shut up, and I know how useless my words must seem to one like you who has been given much light and understanding of the sacred Scriptures; wherein is the glorious doctrine of the Son of God proclaimed. John was not that light, but he was sent to bear witness of that light; and Jesus is the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. Are not all of God's

called ministers sent to bear witness of that light? He is a light unto our pathway, and a lamp unto our feet, and what I want to be is a true disciple of our Lord and Saviour. I know if it is not grace — free grace, I am left out, for it is by the shed blood of the righteous Redeemer that saves his people from their sins. And he sends forth his ministers to proclaim the glorious salvation of his saints. How beautiful are the feet of them that publish peace, and say unto Zion, thy God reigneth.

I will bring this poor undertaking to a close — if you see anything in it, give the praise to Him who never makes mistakes. I hope to see you all soon. In hope of his mercy.

A sister, though an unworthy one,

Eva Brittingham

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Elder George Ruston.)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, New Jersey, June 2nd and 3rd, 1955, sends greetings to the associations, churches meetings with whom we correspond.

Beloved Brethren:

The trying times through which we as a people have been, and are still, passing, being blessed unto us by the Holy Spirit, draw us closer together, and in this our Circular Letter our ardent desire is that we might be helped to give expression to those things that might be profitable to us all. To many of us it is a day of mourning, even though love and sweet fellowship abound among us; yet, as we think of our beloved Zion, and the wonderful days that are past, we feel that we must cry unto God daily that He visit His people with a Godly increase and cause His face to shine upon them.

In the several communities where we meet and where we have many friends, our desire is that the Lord will preserve unto Himself a people, that He shall bring one of a city, and two of a family. That we know how helpless we are and that only the Lord can give us a Godly increase, is a mercy in itself. Of Jerusalem, in the days of Jesus, we see that judgment, came upon her because she knew not the time of her visitation. Jesus wept over her and said, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes."

We are thankful that our poverty of spirit is not hid from us, and though few in number, we hope we do love one another, and we desire to be found in the path our fathers trod. The Psalmist, in Psalm 126:6, says, "They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy." There is a sowing to the flesh as well as sowing to the Spirit, and we do not see many tears when men sow to the flesh, but it is very different in those who sow to the Spirit. The burden of the Word of the Lord, which is laid upon His humble servants, causes their brethren to feel for them and pray for them, that God shall strengthen them for their task. God is with a people who carry their ministers in their hearts' desire, and who pray that God will bless the word spoken. The writer of this letter remembers well the time that the Church set him aside to the work of the ministry, tears were his meat both day and night.

Lord, I am not fit, I am a child, I am the least in my father's house. What if I should be left to myself and my own wisdom? What a woe would be mine if I deceived the people of God? It is indeed a time of tears to God's servant, and it makes him shun the world and the things he once loved. It makes him desire so to behave that he shall not bring a reproach upon the dear people of God who have manifested such loving desires towards him. A minister is close to those he loves, he weeps with those that weep and rejoices with those that rejoice. Sowing to the Spirit, daily his exercise is that the Lord would

guide his ways. His eyes are unto the Lord and his expectation is from Him. It matters little what man may say, he seeks "Well done" from his God. Such of God's children who sow in tears, find often to their surprise, that the Lord has heard their cry, they reap in joy. There is a joy when two poor sinners see eye to eye and speak the same things, to know that God has answered their prayers that goeth not forth out of feigned lips.

Sowing in tears will be accompanied by a desire to walk in love, love to Christ and love to our brother whom we have seen. We have lived long enough in this troubled world to realize the wonderful comfort there is in the Church of God when we can shed tears over each other. "When each can feel his brother's sigh, and with him bear a part, when sorrow flows from eye to eye, and joy from heart to heart." Yes, that is just what we mean, sorrow from eye to eye, and joy from heart to heart. What a blessed people, who forget their own cares and troubles in thinking for others. This is, of course, not always the case, for it is often that they realize their own to be weighty, especially so when we consider that each has a body of death, the flesh, to contend with. Yet in this, at times, painful experience, we are made to prize highly the love and fellowship of God's humble poor, and through such travel we are made a comfort to them. It makes us that we cannot travel faster than our brethren, if we could we would not be any help to them, also it makes us cry daily and hourly to be kept from ourselves.

Where people are so led, they reap the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law. Such sowing, we believe, we have amongst us, and such reaping also, so that we delight in praying for the peace and prosperity of Zion, and one has said, "They shall prosper that love thee." Such can say, "Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thy hounor dwelleth. Gather not my soul with sinners nor my life with bloody men; in whose hands is mischief."

Of those who come home to the Church, which is the Zion of our God, Jeremiah says, "They shall come with weeping, and with supplication will I lead them." Without the Holy Spirit's work, the tears will be natural, but where the work of the Spirit is manifest, like the fire lit upon the altar, it may be in a low condition, but it will never go out, and like the Holy Oil with which Moses touched the vessel though with but one drop, it never needed a second touch. Such who are touched by the Spirit of truth have an unction from the Holy One, and by that same Oil are sanctified and made meet for an eternal inheritance. Looking unto Jesus, we see that He went forth weeping. We would fellowship Him, and we must fellowship the cross before we fellowship the crown. That same Psalm, 126th. says, "He that goeth forth and weepeth." To the writer that is Jesus spoken of in prophecy. He went forth weeping as a "Man of sorrow and acquainted with grief," bearing precious seed, bearing us in His own body. How humbling to know that He looked upon us as being so precious to Him, that He left His glorious home because He loved us. We were given to Him by our Heavenly Father, and He bare us and carried us all the days of old. By His own blood He redeemed us, and we are not our own, we are His. "Thou art mine, When thou passeth through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flames kindle upon thee."

This same Jesus shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing His sheaves with Him. What rejoicing that day will bring, when death shall be swallowed up in victory and God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes. Brethren, this is a glorious hope, and may the God of Hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may

abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Elder H. M. Bennett, Moderator
Casper G. Fetter, Clerk

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association now in session with the Kingwood Church at Locktown, New Jersey June 2, 3, 1955 sends greetings to her sister Associations and Meetings with which we correspond.

Dear Brethren:—

Psalm 122 the 1st verse says: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." Truly is has been good to be here and His presence has been felt in each and every service.

Through His abundant mercy and love our Association has been able to sit together in peace and unity. How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear, and each minister has been blessed to preach Him and Him crucified. We feel to be thankful unto Him for the many blessings and great love manifested during this meeting.

May we, if it be His divine will, meet again next year through this Association, is our earnest prayer.

Yours saved by grace if saved at all.

Elder H. M. Bennett, Moderator
Casper G. Fetter, Clerk

Salisbury, Md.

Dear Editors:

My Signs came this noon, and as I relaxed a few moments, I started reading. Every letter seemed so good I could hardly bring myself to stop reading and go back to the housework.

So often mention was made of the tongue and what an unruly member it is. No one knows this better than I; and just how much trouble and heartache it causes me. I try so often to pray that God will give me strength not to say hateful, mean things, but to praise him for his wonderful works. But, if I am left to myself for even a minute, it is the same old story, and I must worry and suffer because of another thoughtless word spoken.

As one sister wrote, the hymn, "I am a stranger here below", seems to be my experience, for without free grace I know I'm lost. O, what a blessing to believe in a Saviour who has the grace, mercy and power to save such a sinner. It is comforting to know others who are blessed to write such good things, still have trouble with this little part of our body.

I am enclosing a notice of the Salisbury Association, and hope it can appear in the September issue of the Signs of the Times. I have enjoyed so very much my visits to the different places, and received such a gracious loving welcome, that I hope, as the Lord gives us strength, we may be able to return it in a small measure. The Lord has been so merciful to me, I would like to be able to praise him, if I could only find the words. Often when I am low and feel I cannot go much further, it is Sunday and time to go to meeting again and hear the wonderful truths He has prepared for us through the dear elders; or the Signs comes, as it did today.

I am enclosing a check to renew my subscription for two years.

May God bless and keep us all in love and fellowship.

A sister, I hope,
Ethel Holloway

1237 Perrysville Ave.
Danville, Ill.

Elder W. D. Griffin
Colvin, Ala.

Dear Brother Griffin:

It is in much weakness and fear that I attempt to write you; and if my pen is not guided by inspiration of God, all will fall short of his glory.

I think it wonderful, by the grace of God, that the Signs of the Times has been advocating the same doctrine for over a hundred twenty-two years. That has been a long time, and changes have come to many, but God has preserved the Sings and suffered it not to change in the doctrine once delivered to the saints. There is a sweetness in all the attributes to the redeemed child of God that the world knows nothing about. Foreknowledge — how sweet and restful the word; to know that nothing can come to pass, good or evil, that our Heavenly Father didn't know.

I would like to give a brief sketch of my experience. If I have an experience of grace, it is so little at times I almost lay it aside; then again I derive much comfort from it. I was young in years when I saw myself a sinner in the sight of God, and became concerned about my salvation. I tried to pray often but I could find no relief. For five years this troubled feeling stayed with me. Then one day about a year ago, I felt very burdened while at work in my home, and I fell on my knees — it seemed I kept sinking down deeper and deeper, and I could feel the very walls of the bottomless pit; and O, so dark. I don't know how long it was, but the next I knew, I was standing, singing that beautiful old song, "My grace is sufficient for thee." I sang it through, and the farther, the sweeter it was; seemed every word was really meant for me — it suited my case.

My mother was the late Mrs. Sarah Rich, a strong believer in Christ, her Lord. She received the Signs of the Times for forty years or more, I know; and she read each copy several times. I don't think her obituary appeared in the Signs, but she passed from this life May 4, 1953, yet we can say that our loss is her eternal gain; for she is now in the paradise of God with her Saviour and Redeemer, never to suffer pain in her body again. The church of her membership is made poorer because of her passing, but her Christian life, strong character, and deeds of kindness linger in sweet recollection of our pleasant experiences of our life together. She never missed an opportunity to read her Bible, to learn more of God's great love for his people.

Dear editors, if you see anything in this to warrant an experience of grace, you may publish it; if not cast it aside and all will be well with me, for it is so far short of what I had hoped for. I wanted a bright experience like Paul — one I could not doubt, even the shouting of the glorious praise of my blessed Redeemer. This is what I have long sought and prayed for, fearing the above was a delusion of the mind. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace are ye saved) . . ." Grace, the marvelous goodness of God.

May you be spared many, many more years to proclaim his goodness to weak and undone men, is my sincere desire. Another little sister from Illinois, saved by grace, if saved at all.

Fare you well,
Mrs. Theron Uthy

Newport, N. C.

To the Signs of the Times:

I am a little late in sending in my remittance for another year's subscription to the dear old Signs. I get much comfort in reading each and every piece written by the many writers. If it were not for the papers that I am blessed to receive, surely I would be more lonesome than I am; for all other papers which come to my home are usually unnoticed by me. But when my papers come, sometimes I have read all of the contents before I lay them aside. They are my meat and drink, and life too, in a spiritual sense. If if were not for God's little children here on earth for me to mix and mingle with, and get a crumb from the Master's table from their conversation on spiritual matters, and the discourses of the servants of

the most high God, then I would feel alone in this world, and carry a bowed down head and feel more than I do that I am a cast away.

I feel to be one among the least of them, but I love them one and all. I realize that this body of mine has so much vileness and imperfection, and I find myself begging for mercy to keep me humble and at the feet of my brethren. I fully realize that God's dear children are saved by grace and grace alone, and by nothing good that we can do; we beg for mercy to keep us in the way that leads to life, so that when our time here on earth is over, we shall see him, and be like him and be satisfied.

I am sending remittance for my sister, Mrs. B. P. Williams. Elder R. W. Garganus has been sending it in for her in the past, but now he has passed on.

I didn't mean to write so much; please cast the banner of love and charity over me in this hour of trouble and distress, and pray for me that I may be kept humble and reconciled to the will of God.

In bonds of love,
Mrs. W. H. Cannon

R.F.D. 4,
Monticello, Ga.

Editors of the Signs of the Times:

Will you please publish the enclosed in the Signs of the Times, so that my brothers and sisters in the church fellowship may read it.

I so often feel cast down, but I do believe that the dear Lord has been merciful to me. I get lots of comfort in reading the Signs. I ask for the prayers of God's children.

A little unworthy sister,
Ollie Callaway

EXPERIENCE

I've read many Primitive Baptist papers, and have received comfort from them. My daddy took the Gospel Messenger all his life, and I read them as a child and enjoyed them.

I have wanted to try, in my weak way, to write of the dear Lord's dealings with unworthy me. I hope it isn't the carnal mind that leads me to try to write. We are taught that to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. I've had a mind to write for a long time, but fearing it was of the flesh, I have put it off.

I was born in 1882. I was given a home with the Primitive Baptists in Putnam County, Georgia, at the age of fifteen. I don't remember any sudden change coming over me. If there was one it was in my infancy. I can't remember when I first loved, and wanted to unite with, the dear Old Baptists. My father never united with the church, but he loved the Old Baptists dearly. His seat in the church was never vacant when it was possible for him to get there. I often cried to go with him, for I enjoyed the preaching and singing so much. Even as a small child the tears would flow when I walked upon the grounds of old Crooked Creek Church, and heard the voices of the blessed saints singing praises to God on high. I believe I was blessed to understand the preaching when a very small child. The grounds and trees around the dear old church seemed holy to me — I could feel the presence of the Lord there.

I don't remember when I first had a desire to join the church. As far back as I can remember, I felt lost and undone. Sometimes I would wonder why I was born. I had natural friends, but no one could understand my troubled heart. No one could help me; I couldn't even help myself. I would cry and ask Daddy, at communion time, why no one could wash feet with them. The service seemed so sweet to me, and I wanted a part in it. He explained it was an example set by the Lord for his disciples to follow. I didn't feel worthy of being one of His disciples, but, Oh, how I wanted to be! I would often get off by myself and beg for mercy and

guidance: for the Lord to show me the way. I wanted to be good, and love everybody — I wanted everybody to love me, but I was prone to sin, and I didn't feel worthy of the love of the least of His little children. I can't explain the lonesome, sad feeling I had.

My mother was a Methodist, and in our early childhood she would take us to Sunday School, but I never understood their doctrine. In my heart, I knew our God was a great and good God, and if we are saved it is by his grace, not by anything we ourselves, or anyone else, does. I felt too dependent and helpless to feel there was anything I could do to save my soul.

The dear Old Baptists often visited in our home. Oh, how I did enjoy those visits! I loved them so much, yet I felt I wasn't worthy to even sit in their presence and listen to their precious messages of God's grace and love. I remember well Elder Hurst saying in one of his sermons, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." I wondered, "Can I be one of His." I wanted so badly to be.

The next meeting, the second Sunday in June, 1897, my older sister came to the church, rejoicing, and asked for a home. She told a sweet experience: how good the Lord had been to her. I, too, wanted to go, but felt too unworthy. She was baptized the next month by Elder West. To my surprise, my older brother asked for a home at the water. He came telling what great things God had done for him. After he was baptized, they came out of the water singing, "Am I a soldier of the Cross." When they were giving my brother and sister the right hand of fellowship, my great Master gave me courage, and, in spite of my unworthiness, I found myself begging for a home. I tried to explain my love for them, and my desire to live with them. I didn't want to deceive them. I didn't feel worthy of a home with them, but I felt I just couldn't go on living without the church. The precious old brothers and sisters received me with open arms and tear-stained faces. I felt as an orphan who had found a home. Elder Paterson baptized me in August. I came from the water singing, "In all my Lord's appointed ways my journey I'll pursue. Hinder me not ye much loved saints, I must go with you." I left a burden there that has never returned.

For six years I attended Crooked Creek Church, and enjoyed the sweet fellowship of the dear saints there. Then daddy moved to Newton County, and I was given a home in Harris Springs Church, where my membership is today. For several years after I married, I lived close enough to attend regularly; then we moved away, and there wasn't a Primitive Baptist church near. Due to not having a way to get there, and the afflictions of my husband, I was away from the church around thirty years. I couldn't attend in body, but my heart was always there. My love didn't weaken, but, if I know my heart, I grew to love them more and more, and my thoughts were often of them. My greatest consolation was in reading the Old Baptist papers, and trying, in my feeble way, to praise God in song as I went about my work caring for my husband and children.

My children are all grown and have homes of their own; my companion has passed on, and I make my home among my children. In August of last year, my son carried me to my home church. It was communion time, and there are no words to express my joy in being back home. I don't think words are necessary — we don't have to, to kindred spirits. They were all just as happy to have me back as I was to be there. Since that time, I have been back every second Sunday, if I could possibly get anyone to take me. Now that I am old, my children are grown and my husband gone on, my little church is all I have in this life.

I am now in my seventy-third year, and I know that my days can't be many here. Oh, that I might live the remainder of my days in such a way that I

can have the love and fellowship of God's little children. I want to live and die with them. I want to sing God's praise around the great white throne, where there will be no sorrow, no troubles, no tears to shed. How sweet that will be. Pray for unworthy me.

A little sister in hope of a better world,

Ollie Callaway

Naches, Washington

Dear Elder Spangler:

I enclose money order for $3.00 for another year of our dear Signs of the Times.

I wish I could say the lovely comforting words, or put them on paper, but I am not gifted as others. But I am one who enjoys what others write or say.

I want to continue to take the Signs as long as I live. I read them when a child, and have taken it for fifty-three years. All my ancestors were Primitive Baptists, who crossed the plains to Forest Grove, Oregan, in 1851. In hope of a life beyond.

Humbly,
Josie C. Mitchell

EXPERIENCE OF FLORENCE MONSEES

(Mrs. T. A. Stanfield — deceased)

Jan. 19, 1915

I have had a mind to write some of what I hope have been the Lord's dealings with me, but, knowing my weakness and inability to express myself, I have put it off from time to time, fearing my attempt would be dishonoring, instead of honoring, to the blessed cause I love so well. I will now make the attempt, submitting it to your better judgment. I can not tell when I first felt myself a sinner, but from my earliest recollections I would have serious thoughts concerning death and felt that if I were to die in that condition I could never meet God in peace. I would often try to pray to the Lord that He might pardon my sins before I was called to die. I would sometimes try to read the Bible, but it was as a sealed book to me. The blessed promises all seemed for others, and did not seem to reach my case.

I would go with my parents to preaching and would sit and shed tears most all the time the preacher was preaching. I felt to be the most despondent poor girl that ever breathed. I would look at the poor beasts, and think, oh! that I could only change places with them, then I would not have any soul to suffer the penalties of sin. I continued in this condition, sometimes better and sometimes worse, until I reached the age of 15 years. On Tuesday after the fourth Sunday in August, I had been trying to read some in Zion's Landmark, when my burden became so great that it seemed I could bear it no longer. I left the house and went some distance down into a deep ravine to try to beg God, if it could be His will, to pardon my sins. I fell prostrate upon the ground begging God to be merciful to me a poor sinner. I don't know how long I remained there, but I thought they would miss me at the house and seek to know the cause; So I got up with a heavy heart and went back.

Father and brother came in about that time from the Abbott's Creek Association and began to talk about what a good meeting they had. But I felt completely cut off like one alone. I felt so badly I retired very early. I lay there studying about my sad condition. I had closed my eyes, but was not asleep when the most beautiful light shone around about me. I opened my eyes to see if it were really a light, and my burden was gone and in its stead joy unspeakable illuminated my soul. I felt that Jesus had borne my sins away in His own precious bosom. I felt so happy that I could hardly compose myself. I wanted to call the family and tell them what a dear Saviour I had found, but as they had retired I would not disturb them.

I lay there repeating that dear old hymn:

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound.
That saved a wretch like me."

I was too happy to sleep for some time. The next morning when I went out everything seemed to wear a changed appearance. My mind was at once directed to the church. I did not have any trouble in deciding where the church was, for I have always believed that the Old Baptists were the true Church. I thought I would offer at our next meeting, which was the third Sunday in September and Saturday before, but when the time came I thought as I was so young — only fifteen — I would put it off for sometime; when an opportunity was given I could not keep my seat. I went forward and said only a few words, but was received amidst much rejoicing, with two other young girls, and baptized next morning.

After I had been received and baptism appointed for next morning, I began to feel very much clouded in mind and was afraid I had deceived those good people. But when I was raised up out of the water the clouds rolled away. It seemed that the heavens were opened and Jesus descended in a bodily shape like unto a dove and lighted in my soul. Oh, the happiness of that moment I shall never forget while memory lasts. Many of my dear young friends met me with tears streaming down their cheeks. I have had many doubts and fears since that time, — sometimes almost ready to despair; and if it were not for that little hope I surely would have fallen by the way.

Here, I wish to relate a dream that I had several years ago, which has been a source of much sweet meditation at times: I dreamed that two companions and I were traveling the most beautiful road I ever saw; it seemed to be perfectly smooth and straight. We were decorated with beautiful golden ornaments, and seemed to be traveling with perfect ease. Presently we came to a beautiful gate which opened unto us and revealed the most beautiful place. There were multitudes of lovely people who seemed to be very happy and praising God. I saw Jesus in the midst of these people and began to shout, "I see my blessed Jesus!" He seemed to smile and bid me welcome; we met and embraced each other. I did not recognize any of the people, and I feel sure if I am ever permitted to enter that beautiful city there will be no recognizing of friends; but we shall all be as one in Christ Jesus.

I realize more fully each day of my life that there is no real satisfaction in this life. And if in this life only we had hope in Christ, we would be of all men most miserable; but thanks be to God who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, there is a house, a building not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, which He has promised to all those who love His appearing. "For I reckon the sufferings of this present time are but for a moment and not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us."

Then, let us press on a few more days; bear a few more pains, crosses and heartaches, ever looking unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of the Christian's faith. And at His own appointed time He will come and gather His own into that upper and better kingdom, where there will be no more trials nor troubles, sickness nor death, losses nor crosses, no end of days nor coming of nights, but it will be as one eternal day, where we shall see Him as He is and be like Him. Then shall we be satisfied. Please pray for me that I may ever be found in the paths of duty, and that I may never bring reproach upon the blessed cause of Christ. Your little sister who feels to be the weakest of the weak.

(Published by request)

Martinsville, Virginia

Signs of the Times:

I do enjoy reading the good letters, and I don't want to miss a copy of the

paper. My subscription is due, and I am enclosing $3.00 for another year.

My husband is in bad health, and I don't get to attend meetings as often as I once did. I joined the church at Leatherwood, October 24, 1917; and am now seventy years old, my husband is seventy-one. The sixth day of May we will have been married fifty years, if we are blessed to see that day. We have reared two boys, whom we love dearly. They both married young, and we are blessed to have twelve added to our family, which we greatly appreciate. I am in very good health at this time, for which I am thankful.

Mrs. A. C. (Sadie) Minter

"BE YE RECONCILED TO GOD"

Leesburg, Virginia
November 24, 1933

Mr. George W. Jackson,
Fayetteville, Georgia
Dear Brother Jackson:

Let me commend to you the words which the Holy Spirit inspired our brother Paul to pen for our comfort and admonition, "Be ye reconciled to God." 2 Cor. 5:20. Your letter telling me of your great perplexities touched me deeply. But, dear brother, how much more do your sorrows touch the great High Priest of our profession, the Lord Jesus Christ, who even now lives for us at the right hand of God! No matter what the trials we undergo, we are told to be reconciled to them. Just think of the condition of the church at the time Paul wrote those words above. The church at that time was being bitterly persecuted from without, many were shedding their blood in defense of the truth. Besides that, there were divisions within the church as noted by Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians.

Yet all the things the brethren suffered then were not by chance or happen-so, but by God's will. Therefore, he told them to be reconciled to God. Many years ago, I knew an aged sister who was becoming blind, losing her sight. She was blind for five years before the Lord took her to Himself. At the beginning of her affliction, she felt very rebellious about it. One day, in words of living light across her room appeared these words as though written by an unseen hand, "Be ye reconciled to God." From that time, she never murmured again but was reconciled to her affliction and bore it patiently and resignedly the rest of her days.

I am sure that the larger part of our troubles comes from our trying to resist God in having His way with us. We want so very much to have our own way, — we want God to do our way. These kind of prayers or desires never avail anything. Our only rest and peace comes when we are able to let God have His way with us, — when we stop struggling and give up to Him completely. I think this is largely your trouble. You need not be at all afraid to trust the Lord entirely in all your concerns. He will take care of you, and will do it far better than you can do it for yourself. But, let it be remembered: He will do things in His way, not yours.

Paul was brought down to where he said, "Lord what will thou have me to do?" Up to that time, he had been going his own way. Now, he finds out his way is wrong and the way of death. At his wits' end, he cries, "Do Lord thy way with me." What a blessing when we can say, "Lord have your way about this," "Do, Lord, your will with me." When we come to that place, we find what perfect peace is. We wear ourselves out in struggling against Him. Learn not to worry. Worry does no good at all. Did not the Saviour tell us not to take thought for the morrow? He did not mean we were not to think about to-morrow, but he meant we are not to be anxious about it, not to fret about it or worry ourselves concerning it. What matters it what our circumstances may be, God can attend to all that. Our circumstances are His matter anyway, not ours. It is ours to wholly trust and look to Him, it is His part to work the circumstances that environ our lives.

Did it ever occur to you to think why

it was that God would not let any window be put in the sides of the ark, but only in the top? This was to compel Noah to look up, and not to look around. If Noah had been allowed to look out of the sides of the ark, don't you think he would have been distressed at seeing all his fellow-men going to destruction? This he could not see. This was not his business. It was his business to be occupied with looking to the Lord, God would attend to all else. What a lesson we ought to learn from all this! "Look up, my soul, to Him."

You will remember that when Jesus was telling His disciples of the things that should come to pass before He would return again, He said that there would be distress of nations, men's hearts failing them for fear for looking after those things that should come after, the seas and the waves roaring, etc. But did he tell the disciples to be scared or frightened by these things? No, he did not. He told them that when they should see the beginnings of these things, they were to lookup, lift up their heads because their redemption would then be drawing nigh. Are we not right there now? Do we not see the beginnings of great sorrows that are coming upon the earth? Should we be discouraged or cast down by these signs? Indeed we should not. We should rejoice. Why? Because by these things we know our Saviour cannot be far away, that every day brings that much nearer His coming for us to gather us to Himself.

The N. R. A. is not, of course, the mark of the beast, but is it not a shadow of that mark? I indeed think so. Not only the N. R. A., but many other things transpiring now are so many shadows stretched out across the evening of this age betokening the things that are to come upon the earth when the Lord shall have descended to take His church away, and after that to pour the vials of His wrath upon an ungodly world.

The Lord may come for us at any moment. Not until He does, can Rev. 13 be wholly fulfilled, because none of those things in Rev. which speak of the judgments to be visited upon the earth can take place in all their fullness so long as the church is here. But when He shall have removed His church, then will the iniquity of the "man of sin" be wholly unrestrained. Then will the "beast" come to his full power, then will he compel all to receive his mark in order to buy or sell, etc. Just now, the things we behold are not the fulfillment of these things, but the shadows which betoken those things. "Coming events cast their shadows before," someone has said. It is true.

You ask me what Paul means about speaking as a fool and as foolishly in 2 Cor. 11. If you will read the rest of the chapter, he means being a "fool" is to talk about himself. Others have talked about themselves, he says, and about what they have done and what they have gone through, so he goes on to "speak foolishly." He reminds the brethren that whereas others have boasted about what they have been through, therefore now will he, Paul, boast of those things which he has gone through for the truth's sake. The chapter goes on to recite these sufferings of Paul. All this he considers speaking foolishly.

As a general thing, Paul had little to say about his personal experience. He didn't consider this preaching. He desired to know nothing among the people but Christ and Him crucified, and to keep himself in the background, out of sight. The apostles were called fishers of men, and Paul especially desired that he might be all things to all men so as to by all means win some. In order to do this, he preached not himself but Christ. However, in this 11th chapter of 2nd Corinthians, he speaks as a "fool" and "foolishly" — he talks about himself. He is very honest about it, and in verse 17, he is careful to tell the brethren, "That which I speak I speak it not after the Lord." He wants the brethren to know that this is himself speaking and not the Lord.

Have you not heard some of our

preachers take up time in the pulpit talking about themselves and their affairs and the things they have been through. This is not preaching, but as Paul would say it is speaking "foolishly." No fisherman can catch fish unless he keeps quiet and out of sight. The fish will not bite while he is thrashing around, making a noise, and calling attention to himself. The preacher must be out of sight, must be forgotten by his audience and Christ Himself be seen and felt before there is any comfort or edification to those who hear.

Dear brother, I know your burdens are heavy, your trials severe. Yet there is not one of us but who has his or her problems and difficulties. Let me beseech you to be not so much occupied with the circumstances of your life, as with the God of those circumstances. May you look beyond the seen things which are merely temporal, unto Him who is eternal and invisible and for whose blessed soon-appearing we do continually hope.

Yours in God's abounding mercy,
H. H. Lefferts

3347 Tutwiler Ave.,
Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Editors:

You will find enclosed a check for $3.00 for one year's subscription to the Signs of the Times, to be sent to Mrs. W. B. Arnold, 3651 Philwood, Memphis, Tenn.

Sister Arnold was baptized last November, with two others, into the fellowship of our church here in Memphis. She handed me the money and asked if I would send it to you for her.

We feel the Lord has graciously blessus with his loving kindness in giving us another one to set apart to the full work of the ministry. The church has called for the ordination of Brother Herbert Prince. He has served as deacon for a few years, and was liberated to speak for about a year, and its plain to see the gift in him, which satisfied the church to set him apart to the full work of the ministry. They also called for the ordination of Brother Job Kerley to the office of deacon, who is also liberated to speak as God prospers him. We desire to be careful to praise our God for the many gifts given unto men. The ordinations are to be the 5th Sunday in May, the Lord willing. We hope the Lord will put it into the minds and hearts of brethren to come and be with us on this occasion.

May God, who is able to keep us, be pleased to lead and guide us in paths of righteousness, to his own honor and glory; that we ever be kept humble, and free from envy and strife; and that his banner over us be love, meekness, and peace, causing us to ever look to him who is the author and finisher of our faith. Pray for us; and visit us if and when you can.

Unworthily,
Mrs. Luther Campbell

ASSOCIATIONAL NOTICES

The *Salisbury Old School Baptist Association* will convene, the Lord willing, with the Forest Grove Church, one mile south of Parsonsburg Maryland, October 19 and 20, 1955.

All ministers of our faith and order, and all lovers of the truth, are cordially invited. Those coming by car on Tuesday will go to the home of Sister Ethel Holloway, 508 E. Isabella Street, Salisbury, Maryland. Anyone coming by bus or train will please phone Sister Holloway, Salisbury 2-2526, and they will be called for.

Elder H. M. Bennett, Pastor
Ethel Holloway, Clerk

The *Virginia Corresponding Meeting* will be held, the Lord willing, with Mt. Zion Church, on October 12, 13, 14, 1955. Mt. Zion meeting house is on Route 50, about a mile east of Aldie, Virginia. An invitation is extended to ministers and brethren in fellowship with us, and all visitors are welcome.

Arthur L. Carter, Clerk
Manassas, Virginia

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The **Staunton River Union Meeting** will meet with the church at Gallilee on the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in October, 1955. The church is located about four miles west of Chatham, Virginia. Follow the hard surfaced road to the right. All lovers of the truth are invited to attend.

J. W. Towler, Clerk

EDITORIALS

Danville, Va. October, 1955

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

EDITORIAL

A DEACON'S DUTIES

We have been requested by one of the brethren to present our views as to the duties of deacons, and will endeavor to do so with such understanding as I have. This is an important church service, which is sometimes abused by those who hold the office — it is an important office in the church, when administered in accordance with the Word of God, and the Spirit of the Lord.

Our first thought in this matter is an inquiry in the Word of God as to the reason the church needed deacons. In the early days of the apostolic church, we find a unity in the church that has not been equaled since: "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul, neither said any of them that ought of the things he possessed was his own: but they had all things common. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostle's feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need."

Hence it fell to the apostles to distribute to each one according to their several needs. It was part of the work of the ministry to administer to the needs of widows, whose whole support was probably from the treasury—at least the aged ones who were unable to work. Among these widows were two classes: the Hebrew and the Grecian—the Hebrews who lived in Judea, and worshipped in the synagogues at Jerusalem and vicinity; and those Jews who lived outside of Judea, and who were accustomed chiefly to the use of the Greek language, into which the Scriptures had been translated. As the number of the disciples multiplied, we are told in the sixth chapter of Acts that, "There arose a murming of the Grecians against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them ,and said, "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Phillip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: whom they set before the Apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them."

Here we have the scriptural reason for the first church at Jerusalem ap-

pointing deacons. The primary reason was to relieve the ministry of serving tables. We will do well to keep in mind that the reason these men were chosen was that the Apostles might give themselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

The qualification required by the Apostles was that the ones appointed be of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom. This was enlarged upon by the Apostles in his epistle to Timothy: "Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also be proved: then let them use the office of deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling the children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus."

The epistle to the Phillippians is addressed to all the saints in Jesus Christ which are at Philippi, with the bishops (ministers) and deacons; showing that these were the only ones recognized as composing the church, and officers, at that place. And today, these are the ones that are recognized as the church and her officers.

The Apostle Peter made use of the expression "serve tables", showing that there was more than one table to be served by deacons. It has been considered in years past that there were mainly three tables to be served by deacons. First, the serving of the poor of the flock; which would embrace widows, and all others that might at any time be in need of help. Second, seeing that the minister is receiving from the flock the things that are necessary for him in a material way, that his hands will not be tied in his serving the church; that he will be free to visit the sick, and attend to any other duties that falls on him in his ministry. The deacons should know at all times what a church is doing in financial matters; and all funds, whether for the poor of the flock, or the help of the ministry, should pass through the deacon's hands, so they may know how much each one is doing toward relieving the needs of the church. A deacon cannot faithfully perform the duties of his office unless the church holds up his hands in his work; and this responsibility falls to the church. It is commendable indeed when deacons are favored to administer their office according to God's word: to remind the church of the duties of members; and to see a church responding to the requirements of the church, not from a dead letter but out of a ready mind, and in love one to another. "But whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him: how dwelleth the love of God in him." The third table is the Lord's supper: it falls to the deacon to administer this ordinance to the church from the hands of the minister.

We have tried to briefly set forth, first: the need of deacons; second, the qualifications of deacons; and third, the tables they serve. When summed up, we would describe a deacon as an office bearer charged with the temporal affairs of the church.

If deacons be filled with the Holy Ghost and wisdom, as required in the scriptures, then they are qualified to attend to any matter the church appoints them unto. Yet, we are to remember that they are servants of the church, and whatever work falls to them is by the voice of the church, and not by reason of their office, when it relates to the fellowship and discipline of the church.

We will now show some of the things not required of deacons, and unscriptual for them to assume as power that belongs to their office: They have no power to dictate to a church, or usurp authority over the body; they have no power to call, or dismiss, a minister; they cannot act for a church in citing a member to the church unless the

church authorized them to do so. There seems to be in the minds of some in some sections that their office is to rule the church —nothing could be farther from the Word of God than such a practice.

In 1st Timothy 5:17, it is said, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they that labor in word and doctrine." This "ruling well" has reference to the minister whose lot is to see that the order of the house according to the word of God, is maintained. He is forbidden to lord it over God's heritage, but is to be an example to the flock. He is required to be faithful as a steward in the house of God, and to serve in the sense that he is the servant of God unto them. No where in God's word does it say, the deacons that "rule well", but it seems that the rule is sometimes reversed.

The office of deacon is indeed a high office, and one of the great blessings to the church, when administered according to the Word of God. There is, indeed, a close tie between pastor, deacon, and church; wherein there should be mutual love and confidence, with all our service overshadowed by the spirit of humility and meekness, that the Lord's house be found the house of prayer and supplication.

He that has used the office of deacon well, has purchased to himself a good degree, and great boldness in the faith.

D. V. S.

SALVATION BY GRACE

"Though boards and conventions exist,
And vanity towers are built;
Though money is sought for extending
The project that is certain to wilt;
Though thousands are crying to dead men,
Who lie in depravity's morgue;
Though robbers may speak of their converts —
Salvation is still of the Lord.

Dead sinners may sit where pure rivers
Of gospel in torrents descend;
And yet, till the heart has been opened,
They will not, they cannot attend.
Then tell, if thou canst, what advantage
The civilized have over them
Who dwell where the idol is worshiped,
Or civilization is dim.

Because there are people in darkness,
Is that any reason men should
Profess to be modern apostles,
And leave the old paths that are good?
Not one of that blessed assembly
Composing the glorified fold,
Can ever ascribe their redemption
To either man's efforts or gold.

(Selected by Nancy Johnston McDaniel)

SUPPING WITH HIM

This morning about 3:00 A. M. I feel that I experienced the power of the words of Jesus, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he with me." (Rev. 3:20) I was so startled with the force accompanying the statement that I immediately was graced to open the door with all ease, sprang from my bed, and began supping with Him. The knocking came during sleep. The first word, "Behold", caused me to immediately take notice. I am fully persuaded that any man will heed the knocking of the Lord, Jesus. He speaks with authority and power that begets results. I was given to read and to sweetly meditate upon the first three chapters of Revelations. I trust that I read experimentally the words of John, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice". (Rev. 1:10) This is Thursday but to me it is the Lord's day as I feel the presence of the Spirit. I pray that while you read this it will be the Lord's day with you as we attempt to write to the angels of the churches and to— "He that hath an ear, let him hear, what the Spirit saith unto the churches". May His right hand be upon me as I attempt to obey His orders, "WRITE" (Rev. 1:17,19)

In order to rightly understand Rev. 3:20 we must consider that the words of Jesus was directly written to the "**Angel of the church of the Laodiceans". It was not addressed directly to the church but was addressed to its angel or minister for the benefit of the church there. We read in Revelations 2:

24, "But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira"; which shows that the primary one of address was the angel in these letters. Each and every one of these statements did not necessarily apply to the church as a whole. He said to the ministers of the Laodicean Church, "I will spue thee out of my mouth". Even though He was to spue its minister out of His mouth there were those in the Laodicean church whom He loved. It was for the comfort of the church that He said to its minister, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten". (Rev. 3:19) Even though He would spue its minister out of His mouth He would not leave them without a minister. He promised to come into another man and minister to them. He might spue the church out of His mouth to the extent of not blessing its activities as a body; He would come in to the hearts of the individuals He loved, and bless them personally with sweet communion.

Revelations 3:20, has been wrongly applied by many. When you are given to understand the language used, you will find it to be out of place for a man to use it in addressing alien or dead sinners. These letters were addressed to the ministers and were ordered written for the benefit of those professed believers who were united with organized churches. Let us see if we can picture like conditions in local churches today. Let us consider the attitude of some ministers and compare with the pretensions of the angel of Laodicea. Let us, then, get a true picture of them from the words of Jesus as recorded in Revelations 3:17.

Have you heard them say in essence, "I am rich?" They urge they are rich in knowledge of the doctrine and practice of the church. They profess to know the actions that would be proper and improper. They profess to be rich in knowledge of the Bible and God's "plan" of salvation. Have you heard them say, "I know who are the wolves"? They felt to be rich in wisdom and judgement, setting up standards of their own making for the flock to follow. They say they are rich in good works, trying to purify the church according to their own ideas. They claim to be rich in Spirit and that the church ought to listen to them and always heed their advice. To such a one Jesus would say, "Thou art poor".

Have you heard them say, "I am increased with goods?" "Churches prosper under my care?" Congregations were small when I first went there, but now have large attendance every meeting time?" "They did not know how to carry on an orderly conference until I instructed them; now, everything goes along smoothly and orderly?" Yes, when you hear them criticising all others and boasting of their own accomplishments, you may know their true state to be, "Thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." (Rev. 3:17) Unless they be given to buy GOLD TRIED IN THE FIRE they will not be rich but will be spued out of the mouth of Christ, as His ministers.

The Lord said to one of His ministers, "These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the KEY of David, He THAT OPENETH, AND NO MAN SHUTTETH, AND SHUTTETH, AND NO MAN OPENETH; I KNOW THY WORKS: BEHOLD, I HAVE SET BEFORE THEE AN OPEN DOOR, AND NO MAN CAN SHUT IT." (Rev. 3:7-8) The angel at Philadelphia was wonderfully blessed of the Lord. It is just as true today as then that the Holy and True One has the only key that opens and shuts the door of revelation to his ministers. If the Lord has set before me an OPEN DOOR things will be revealed to me. When He shuts it I cannot pry it open to gaze within. No man can prevent me from communing with Him. No man can help me to commune. He holds the key. Should the key be in our hands we could open and shut at will. We need to learn through sad experience that we do not hold the key. I have stood at the door for a long time and tried to open but could not. When I was thoroughly convinced that no key of mine would do I had learned

how vain my efforts were. Then, what a joy it was to me to hear the key turn in the door, and hear Him say, "Behold, I stand at the door". My heart immediately opened to His intructions. My ears were opened to hear His words. My mind was opened for His thoughts to be imputed to me. My mouth was opened to speak the words of Him. He knocked, and I opened my heart and ears to His speech. I opened my mouth in praises to His gracious name for the mercy, grace, light, and truth displayed. "He came in to ME". I did not go to Him, but He came to me. I cannot go up, but He comes down. He comes in to us and shares with my temptations, trials, persecutions, and poverty. We share with his riches, honor and glory. He not only comes down to us, but is with us. He is with us when we are hungry, naked, poor, and in prison. What a supping together we experience!!

Jesus said, "I will sup with him, and he with me". The rebuking and chastening of the Lord is in the cup of which we sup. When we suffer with Him we are supping the bitter. We are not worthy to entertain such a King. We have no provisions to offer him. Is it not wonderful that He makes this supping such a heavenly feast by bringing His own provisions to share with us? He comes in to us bringing both bread and wine. We are not dressed fit to entertain Him because the best of our righteouness is as filthy rags in His sight. However, He has provided for us the best robe which is His righteousness. Our filthiness must be cleansed by His blood before we can be clothed with the garment He has prepared. We are too ignorant to prepare the table for this feast, but He prepares it. We are too poor to hire maidens to wait on the table, but Wisdom hath sent forth her maidens. Should we attempt to mingle the wine it would not be properly mixed. Our guest has even provided for this by mingling the wine of the kingdom of which we sup. Beasts have to be killed before we can enjoy such wonderful supping. The beasts of self-sufficient pride, false professions, and ungodly doctrines and practices must all be killed before there can be real and true worship and feasting in an organized church. He does not leave that for us to do. He does it Himself.

Even though He should give us "space to repent" as Jezebel was given, it is not sufficient. The opportunity alone will not suffice for a formal professional dead church to repent. Even though a church may be in a "luke-warm" condition- having no zeal either ungodly are godly- a space or opportunity given for repentance will not result in repentance. There must be a rebuking and chastening by the Lord himself, before repentance is affected. It is the will of the Lord that His ministers, churches, or people be hot or zealous in a godly manner. I am persuaded that no organinzed body of professed christians will be allowed to continue drifting with the tide for a long time in a luke-warm condition. Either the church as an active body will be spued out of His mouth or so rebuked and chastened by Him that the body will repent from their unconcerned and easy state of being. Because Christ wills that a church be either hot or cold there is woe pronounced upon those who are at ease in Zion. (See Amos. 6: 1) The Lord will make manifest that He is one that "searcheth the reins and hearts" by bringing out into the open the evil of the ungodly inhabitants of the church so that His children, who have been given a godly heart, will not be long deceived. God has decreed that the ungodliness of false churches will be made manifest so that, "All the churches shall know that I am He which searcheth the reins and hearts". Please open your Bible and read Revelations 2:20-23. I am persuaded that sleeping churches shall soon be awakened from sleep as result of a powerful knocking from our Lord. This knocking will make manifest the false professors as well as the true possessors in the churches. Such rebuking and chastening of those whom the Lord

loves will cause His people to be zealous in a godly manner. This knocking will be such a shaking that all that is not built upon a firm foundation shall fall. This will result in the removal of all that the Lord hath not built.

The truthfulness of Psalms 127:1, must be made manifest. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it". If the Lord is building the church of your ministration, your labor is not in vain. He is jealous to the extent that he will not allow the praise due him to be given to another. God gives the increase whether your ministration be planting or watering. God has laborers in his vineyard whose labors are not in vain, because he gives the increase. The minister must understand, "Neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase". (I Cor 3: 7) When one of his laborers begins to think himself to be something because he plants or waters, or performs in any other ministration, he may expect a fall which will remind him that he is nothing—it is God that giveth the increase, or buildeth. Paul was blessed to plant in the church at Corinth, and Apollos to water. Some of the Corinthian brethren seemed to want to give them credit to the extent that some said, "I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?" (1 Cor. 3:4) Their carnality was made manifest in that they attributed to men that which belonged to God. It is God who builds; it is God who keeps; and it is God who giveth the increase. All true additions and prosperous growth, as well as the various gifts in the churches, come from the same source.

"Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain". (Ps. 1 27:1) The pastor or watchman must realize the necessity of a continual supping with Jesus. Unless the Lord keeps the church, the pastor's waking is in vain. Dear pastor, have you not found yourself depending too much on yourself in solving the problems in your church? Often we find the vanity of our efforts in depending too much upon our own ability to solve difficulties in the church. We must be rebuked and chastened by Him in order that we see how "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" we are without supping with Him!

"He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches". This expression is given many times in the letters to the different churches writen to by John. The term "churches" in the plural shows that every one of the seven letters which were written to individual churches could be profitable to those with an ear in all churches in all times. Of course, the ear under consideration was not a natural ear. It requires a spiritual ear to hear the things of the Spirit. When Jesus stands at the door and knocks, He makes the deaf to hear. If you have been given a spiritual ear, you can hear what the Spirit says unto the churches. Heeding and obeying is evidence that you hear. If you do not heed, you do not hear. I have seen the shining radiance of the Holy Spirit in the countenance of naturally deaf people which proved that they heard even though they were naturally deaf. Oh! that God would give us an ear that we might hear what the Spirit says unto the churches!

May He come in to us, be with us, and sup with us, and we with Him. May we have no other gods before our eyes! May we worship no other idols! May we sup with Him only! May we eat His bread and drink His cup! May we wear His garment, and be washed with His blood! May we eat from His table and be satisfied with His goodness! May we drink the wine of his mingling and not complain! May we be satisfied with the goodness of His house to such extent that we will not attempt to add to the simple way of worship that He has instituted in order to please the fancies of the world! May the periodic suppings with Him be climaxed with an eternal supping without interruption in the sphere of eternal bliss in Heaven is my

sincere desire—if not deceived.

E. J. Lambert

HAVE YOU SENT IN A NEW SUBSCRIPTION LATELY?

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

REMARKS ON PSALMS XI. 3.

"If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?

Our brother wishes to know why the plural number is used in this text, and the singular number used in other passages, in speaking of the foundation which is so indispensable to the security and comfort of the righteous. God has said, by his holy prophets, "Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a trid stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation:" &c. — Isa. xxvii. 16 And the apostle by divine inspiration, declares that "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." — 1 Cor. iii. 2. And again, 1 Tim. ii. 19. — "Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." In these scriptures, as we understand them, our Lord Jesus Christ is set forth as the only foundation on which salvation rests; neither is there salvation in any other. He is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father but by him. In this sense, there is no plurality; for there is none other name given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved." But while it is indisputably true that the salvation of all the people of God rests exclusively upon our Lord Jesus Christ, as the only foundation, it is also true that in the organization of the Church as the kingdom of Christ, the apostles are figuratively presented as pillars and foundations, while they, with all the prophets, rest upon Christ as their only foundation and chief corner stone. So we are told that all those Jews and Gentiles who are of the household of God, are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ himself being the chief corner stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into a holy temple in the Lord."—Eph. ii. 20-22.

Now this chief corner stone, underlies the apostles and prophets, and it encloses or embodies them, for they with all the saints are builded together, and grow up into a holy temple in the Lord, who is their foundation and chief corner stone.

This building of God, which is founded on Christ, in her gospel organization as the city of the living God, as the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, hath twelve foundations. "And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."—Rev. xxi. 14. In the organization of the gospel church, the inspired apostles of the Lamb, sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel: and when, and where ever the King reigns in righteousness, those his princes rule in judgment (not in legislation) for the King himself alone has the power to legislate.

His law is perfect, but his princes shall rule in judgment. They are called foundations of the wall which environs that place called the holy city; for protection and comfort, because what they have established in doctrine, order, or ordinances, is established in Jesus Christ as the chief corner stone; for they have spoken and written as they were inspired by the Holy Ghost. Not as men, are they foundations; but as apostles of the Lamb, and they are no less apostles and foundations now that they are no more in the flesh, than they were at the day of penticost when endued with power from on high. Jesus said, "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up whence he was before". Would that diminish his power to reign? Certainly not: for he adds, "It is the Spir-

it that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." That is, it could add nothing to his ability, if he were now personally here in his fleshly body, for he holds all power in heaven and in earth, and his kingdom is spiritual, and he rules and governs his spiritual subjects by his spirit. So the personal continuance of his apostles in the flesh, would add nothing to the weight and validity of their apostolic power to judge the spiritual tribes of the chosen generation and royal priesthood which compose the household of God, which are built upon the doctrine of the apostles, and in the fellowship of the apostles.

When the gospel church was organized, on the day of penticost those pricked in their hearts, and quickened by the outpouring of the Spirit, gladly received the words of the apostles, and were brought into the church by baptism, and "they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship," &c. Showing in what sense the apostles were foundations in Christ the chief corner stone. To them was given the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and what they bound on earth is bound in heaven; and whatsoever they loosed on earth is loosed in heaven.

This wall which surrounds the gospel church, seems figuratively to represent the doctrine of the apostles, and the order established by them. Only they who continue in the apostles' doctrine can be retained in the fellowship, or in the inclosure of her walls, and the apostles' names are inscribed upon the foundations of the walls, and only such as are included within the apostles' doctrine, are held in their fellowship. Only those who do his (Christ's) commandments can enter the enclosure, through her gates, or have a right to the tree of life, the privileges of the church of God and the commands of Christ enjoin upon those who love him, to abide in the doctrine, as taught by the apostles. So the doctrine and order of the church of Christ rests upon the inspired word as laid down for our observance by the apostles as the twelve foundations of the wall which marks the boundaries of the holy city New Jerusalem.

Now then, if these foundations should be destroyed, we may well ask what can the righteous do? None but the righteous are built upon these foundations, nor would any others be discommoded by the destruction of the fundamental principles laid down by the apostles of the Lamb. Destroy the foundations of the unrighteous, and Edom will say, "We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate place. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the Lord hath indignation forever." —Mal. i. 4. Christ, who is the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, is a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to them who stumble at the word; and he is the stone which was and is rejected of men; but chosen of God and precious unto the righteous. Antichrist, both modern and ancient, build their religious theories on the wisdom of men; and they have in all ages labored to destroy the foundation of the righteous. When they had nailed the dear Redeemer to the cross, and plunged a spear into his side, they flattered themselves that they had destroyed this foundation. But when the apostles were endued with power from on high, to declare that God's foundation was still in the holy mountains, that our Lord was risen from the dead, and this stone which the builders rejected, was made the head of the corner, their bitter persecution was leveled against the apostles — and since the martyrdom of the apostles, all the powers of darkness have been constantly engaged in vainly trying to destroy the doctrine and order of the apostles on which the righteous are founded.

The standard by which the righteous test their religious sentiments is the doctrine of the apostles. If what we believe and practice is not founded on apostolic authority, it cannot be right,

and if what we believe and practice, as disciples of Christ is not right, it must be wrong; it cannot be righteous; nor can we be righteous in believing or practicing what is wrong. Whether we be right or wrong religiously, depends on whether we adhere steadfastly to the doctrine and fellowship, in which the primitive saints continued.

If then, the foundations should be destroyed, who would be the sufferers? Not the unrighteous, for they do not build on them; but the righteous have no other support to rely upon. What could they do? They could not replace them by raising up other apostles, or by procuring apostolic gifts from the schools of men, by the outlay of money: for the gifts of the Holy Ghost cannot be bought with money. The gifts or qualifications for an anti-christian ministry can, and are so procured, because "they are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them." But the apostle says, "We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us. He that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error."

As a building cannot stand securely without a foundation, so, neither can our religious opinions, beliefs, hopes or anticipations stand in the trying day unless they are based upon a "Thus saith the Lord."

(Editorial by Eld. Gilbert Beebe, March 1, 1874)

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Sister Mary Ann Chattin passed away April 18, 1955, at the age of seventy-three. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, at Malmason Primitive Baptist Church.

She was born in Henry County, Virginia; the daughter of Hiram and Kitty Bray McDanial; and was married to Raleigh Byrd Chattin in 1912, and made her home in the Malmason community until the death of her husband. Since then she has lived with her daughter in Danville, Virginia. She united with Malmason church in June, 1954. She loved the church, but her health kept her from attending much of the time. We feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

THEREFORE, Be it resolved that we desire to bow in humble submission to the will of him who doeth all things well; and that we extend our sincere sympathy to the family. May the Lord bless them with grace and strength to say, Thy will be done. Be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be sent to the family; a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times, and a copy to the Old Faith Contender; and a copy be put on our church book.

Done by order of Malmason Church in conference, July 3, 1955.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Kate Dodd, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It has pleased our heavenly father, according to his divine will, to remove by death our beloved Sister Callie N. Perry. THEREFORE, Be it resolved that we bow in humble submission to God's holy will, desiring to be reconciled and given grace to press forward to the mark and the prize of the high calling, ever looking to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.

RESOLVED, That the Yellow Creek Church has lost a faithful member, but we feel sure our loss is her eternal gain.

RESOLVED, That we the Yellow Creek Church extend our sympathy to the bereaved family and may the grace of God enable them to look to Jesus for comfort in their hour of need.

RESOLVED, That we send a copy of these resolutions to the *Signs of the Times* to be published, a copy made a part of our church record, and a copy be sent to her two sons. This done and signed by the order of the church on the third Sunday in April, 1955.

Elder R. L. Biggs, Moderator
Katie Ragan, Clerk

OBITUARIES

DEACON LEMUEL MARTIN BAKER

Deacon Lemuel Martin Baker was born January 20, 1878, and died at his home near Ladelle, Arkansas, at 3:55 P. M., June 12, 1955, at the age of seventy-seven years, four months and twenty-three days. Survivors left to mourn his passing include his wife, Mrs. Mellie Myers Baker and four daughters: Mrs. Fred Flemister, of North Crossett, Mrs. Cecil A. Goyne, Little Rock, Mrs. Arthur Lloyd, Jr., of Monticello, and Mrs. John W. Daniels, of Alberquerque, New Mexico. One step daughter-in-law, Mrs. Marvin Jaggers, of Bastrop, La. Seven grand children, two step grand chil-

dren; and five sisters: Mrs. Hattie Glover, of Star City, Mrs. Ollie Moore, of Lake City, Mrs. Fannie Daniel, of Joiner, Mrs. Effie Johnson of Hamburg, and Mrs. Norman Johnson of Ladelle.

Brother Baker united with Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church, near Ladelle, Drew County, Arkansas, on the fifth Sunday of July, 1934, and was ordained a deacon by said church on October 5, 1935. He remained a consistent and faithful member and deacon of Ephesus Church until his death. He was highly esteemed by his brethren and was well spoken of and respected and admired by his neighbors in the vicinity in which he had lived for many years. There was a large crowd of his many friends and neighbors, besides the brethren and sisters, in attendance at the funeral service, attesting to the high esteem in which he was held by all that knew him. He was a firm believer of the doctrine of God our Saviour. He believed in salvation by the grace of God through the merits of Jesus Christ for both time and eternity.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer and Lic. Earl Wilson June 14, 1955, and his body was laid to rest in Lone Sassafras Cemetery, near where he had lived, to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour; when the bodies of all the saints that are asleep in Jesus shall be raised like unto His own glorious body.

May the Lord comfort his bereaved companion, his children and other relatives, brethren and sisters together with all that mourn his passing.

Elder W. A. Speer

AMANDA J. BENSON

It is with a sad heart I write the obituary of my dear wife, Amanda J. Benson. She was the daughter of the late Thomas W. and Julia Middleton Hearn. She was born November 23, 1877, and passed away from earth June 9, 1955, making her stay on earth seventy-seven years, six months and sixteen days. She was not a member of any church, but was a firm believer in the doctrine contended for by the Old School, or Primitive Baptists.

She had been an invalid for about ten years. Eight years ago this last June, on advice of her physician, she was sent to the hospital for, as he thought, an operation. But after a diagnosis there by the attending physician, it was found that an operation was not necessary. She was very weak for awhile after returning from the hospital. And on the third Sunday in February, 1951, she suffered a light stroke, but was able to get around by using a cane. The doctor said she had three more light strokes before the fatal one came on June 2, 1955. With this last storke she went into a coma and never regained consciousness so far as we could see; and on June 9th her spirit took its flight to be with God who gave it. At that time I just spoke the belief and feeling of my heart, and said to those present, "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep."

It is a pleasant experience for me to recall the good deeds she did for others. I never knew her to turn away a wayfaring man from her door. She never know, and I will never know, how many sandwiches and cups of coffee she gave to these men. But it makes no difference about our knowing, the comforting thought is, the Lord knows. She may have entertained angels unawares. So while she was not a professor of religion, she was a doer of it, which is far more important.

She was also a patriotic American. On Sunday mornings she would always ask me to turn on the radio to hear the news. They would always start the program by playing the Star Spangled Banner. I have seen her weep as that was being played. So you see she was blessed with all those fine qualities which go to make up the noble Christian woman.

She always looked forward to Elder Bennett's visits on the fourth Sundays to his appointment here at Delmar. She would also mention the times when he was to preach at Philadelphia and Hopewell. Also she would mention when Elder Spangler was to be at Salisbury and Snow Hill. So we can readily see that her mind was upon the Lord's people.

Her funeral was held in the O. S. Baptist meeting house here, where we were married July 14, 1897, by the late Elder A. B. Francis. The service was conducted by Elder H. M. Bennett, who spoke words of comfort to all assembled. She was laid to rest beside our two children, who died in infancy.

There is one more event I feel to mention. It was a rainy day for the funeral, which was Saturday, June 11th, but as we started for the cemetery it began to slacken, and as Elder Bennett was pronouncing the benediction, the sun shone out for a few minutes, then it was soon cloudy again and rained. I had to believe, as did some others, that the hand of the Lord caused that phenomenon to appear in the sky.

Now I will just repeat what I said when Amanda passed away. "Asleep in Jesus, Blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep."

By her unworthy husband,

A. T. Benson

MRS. CALLIE NORA McNEELY PERRY

Our dearly beloved Sister Callie N. Perry was born June 2, 1871, and departed this life May 28, 1954, making her stay here on earth 82 years, 11 months and 26 days. She was a

native of Wingo, Kentucky, and was educated in the Wingo schools. She was the daughter of James Yeates and Rachel McNeely. She was married to the late Louis Dalton Perry about the year 1894. To this union were born five children, two of them survive, Willie D. Perry, of Nashville, and Fred Perry, of Detroit, Michigan. Two brothers, George McNeely, of Wingo, and Malcolm McNeely, of Dyersburg; ten grand children and eighteen great grand children, and a host of relatives and friends survive.

She united with the Yellow Creek Church at Seals School House on the first Sunday in August, 1911, and was baptized by Elder L. D. Seals. She was a faithful member until the end. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of God our Savior, ever contending for the faith that was once delivered to the saints. Sister Perry had many friends not only among her brethren but was loved by all that knew her. To know her was to love her. She will be greatly missed by her church and all her friends and relatives.

Her funeral was preached at the Cosmopolitan Funeral Home in Nashville on Monday, May 31, 1954, by her beloved Pastor Elder R. L. Biggs, who was enabled by divine grace to speak words of comfort to the bereaved family and relatives and friends; after which her body was conveyed to the Pleasant Hill Cemetery in Sylvia, and laid to rest by the side of her dear husband under a profusion of beautiful flowers, showing the love and respect in which she was held. I would say to the sorrowing ones, do not grieve for her: she is sweetly sleeping in the arms of her dear Savior awaiting the resurrection where she will be with the Lord forever, where there is no sin nor pain nor sorrow, but all is love and joy and peace. We feel our great loss is her eternal gain.

Written by one that loved her,

Katie Ragan

DEACON JAMES LEE HAMMONS

Deacon James Lee Hammons, born March 6, 1891, in the State of Nebraska, departed this life June 29, 1955; making his stay on earth 64 years. He was the son of the late Elder James and Delilah Hammons. He is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Laverta Hodgman, of Redding, Calif.; five sons: Aubrey of Chico, Calif., Forrest, of Seattle, Wash. and Don, Arlie and Floyd, all of Oregon. Also two sisters, Mrs. Carrie Burnett, of Chico, Calif. and Mrs. Etta Jones, of Durham, Calif. Also two brothers, George, of Colusa, Calif., and Pearl, of Los Angeles.

Brother Hammons joined the Old School Baptist Church in 1947 and was baptized by the writer. He was ordained a deacon in 1951. During the last few years of his life he was in very poor health. However, his death was due to burns received when his home burned. He was burned so severely that he only lived a few hours. He was a strong believer in the doctrine that God saved His people both in time and in eternity by His grace.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at Ulrey's Memorial Chapel in Yuba City, Calif. and his body was laid to rest in the Sutter Cemetery to await the morning of the resurrection. May the comforting spirit of an all-wise eternal God be with all those who mourn his passing.

(Elder) T. R. Jefferson

MRS. JANE MELEAZY HENSON

Mrs. Jane Meleazy Henson died February 25, 1955; aged seventy-nine years. Aunt Leazy, as she was lovingly called by friends and relatives was the wife of Elder J. T. Henson, moderator of the Soldier Creek Church, where she had been a member with her husband for the past several years. She was always in her seat when able to be there, for the old church was her home, and the members were her kindred in Christ Jesus the Lord, which she adored until the last breath left her body.

Her husband and I were near her bedside a few hours before her Heavenly Father said, "Child come home," and we were speaking of the beauties of holiness, and the working of the Spirit in the children of God, when she opened her eyes and said, "If all things were not in God's hands, wouldn't it all be in a pitiful mess." With a smile on her lips, she again closed her eyes, so peacefully resigned to that will.

Six children were born to this family: one son died in infancy, and a daughter, Bessie Henson Myers, died in her early forties at the home of her father and mother where she had lived with her family several years, helping her parents, and taking the lead when the mother's health was declining, and her father was gone to fill his appointments at the several churches. Other children now living are: Ambrose and Edward Henson, Benton, Kentucky; Jamie Henson, Paducah, Kentucky; and a daughter, Mamie Edwards Benton; also several grand-children and great grand-children.

Aunt Leazy died at the home of her son Ambrose Henson, where kind hands administered to her every need. But God called her away from this earth, saying by his calling, "Its enough child, come home."

Elder Paul Poyner conducted the funeral, and she was laid to rest in the cemetery close by where she was reared, and had reared her family; there to await the day when Jesus shall come to gather his jewels home. Written by a sister in the church.

Effie Bowden

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 123 DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1955 NO. 11

AT HOME WITH THEE

Lord, I want, and want and want,
And often try to search,
To find if I'm a member
Of thy holy, sacred church.

I want to hear thy soft whisper,
O, what a sweet joyful sound;
And when in darkness I linger,
How it often lights things around.

I want to stand on the mountain
Where thy voice can be heard,
And rejoice in the music
That comes through each little word.

I want to be born of the Spirit:
To wear a robe of pure white;
Be a sheep to be placed
At the hand of thy right.

I want to be in the garden
Where the sweet flowers grow;
And be blessed, kind Redeemer,
Of their fragrants to know.

I want to feed from thy table;
Though the crumbs may be small,
They are rich and refreshing
In each place where they fall.

I want in all of my weakness,
When in this flesh my race is run,
To accept what pleases thee, and say,
Not mine, Lord, but thy will be done.

I want this sin wrecked ship to sail
Across life's stormy sea,
And anchor safe beyond the storm,
At home, dear Lord, with thee.

Iona Pilchard
Stockton, Md.

PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS

The burden of the word of the Lord is upon me, and I feel it my duty to write on a subject that is dear to the Lord's people, and to them only. Over sixty years ago this subject was plainly shown me, and I have always esteemed the works of God perfect, alwise, immutable and omnipresent. I do not expect the conditionalist, nor the means, nor those who believe in the work system, to pay any attention to it. If only I have the approval of God, I feel my labor is not in vain. It is my desire to quote from the Scriptures. (King James) I hold no one but myself accountable, and I ask my brethren to mark well what I say, and correct me if I am on the wrong track.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." (Genesis 1:1) "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." (Psalms 33:6) "Oh, Lord God! Behold thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power, and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee." (Jeremiah 51:15 and 32:17) "He hath made the earth by his power; he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding." "Thou art worthy, Oh Lord, to receive glory and honor and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." (Rev. 4:14) "For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible; whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him." (Col. 1:16)

So the fact is established by the Scriptures that there is one God, "who is the only Potentate, THE KING OF KINGS, AND THE LORD OF LORDS." (I Timothy 6:15)

"Almighty God! Eternal cause
Of earth and seas, and worlds unknown,
All things are subject to thy laws;
All things depend on Thee alone."

According to his sovereign will and pleasure, all things are according to his wise counsel; and who are they that can say that the record given by inspiration

is faulty, and say, "What doeth thou;" for it is God that doeth it.

Little things have slowly crept in, setting up a system among some of two ruling powers that govern us in this time state: the one for good, the other for evil — that God predestinated all the good things, but not the evil ones. Devils, or men, saying, God does not know about, nor can do anything about it. As it was said from the beginning, "Thou shalt not surely die," bhasphemy against God is not a new doctrine. Men from time of old have hated the doctrine of God's election, predestination, decrees, and right to govern his creatures as he sees fit. "Can the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus." God's predestination over all things is plainly shown in the heavens above, and the earth below: the stars in their orbit, the moon with its borrowed light, the sun that sheds its beams through space, show His power in the heavens, and for thousands of years have traveled their orbit in an exactness, or perfection, which only God holds in his hand.

That God works in his creatures to will and to do of his good pleasure is plainly shown in the Scriptures. He chose his people in Christ before he made the world; they fell when God's righteous law was transgressed, and the sentence of death was placed upon them. All had sinned and come short of the glory. God had decreed a remedy in advance of the disease, and at the appointed time sent forth his Son to redeem his chosen people that he had predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son. Jesus, the Lamb of God, fulfilled the law in every jot and tittle, and brought his own from under the law into gospel liberty; and has commanded them to stand fast in the liberty wherewith He hath made them free. He has also made them a willing people, and built them together for his habitation. The rest of his creatures he has left in their sins — a just and holy God hath spoken. Along comes a man that knows not God; he objects, and curses God, for he cannot see the justice of it all. And like the men in the land of Shiner, will build himself a tower with his own hands, that will reach to heaven. Men could not understand each other in their confusion, and the building stopped. But men are just as eager as they were in the land of Shiner, and today they flourish in all countries; but they are yet confused — they cannot understand each other, all claiming they are free agents and can accept salvation at any time; not knowing that it was never offered. God has never offered any man anything: he hath saved his people from their sins. According to the Scriptures, he has never offered to, but has done it.

What a gloomy picture it would be to think that God predestinated some things, and the rest were by chance — evil men and seducers roaming around under no restraint, killing, robbing and stealing, unknown to God. What would be your security in a chance world? How glad I am to believe that there is one God who rules all things; that he knew all things, and uses the wicked for his sword, and by his power controlls the hearts of all his creatures. God did tempt Abraham to slay his son, to prove his faith; Joseph's brethren through jealously cast him in a pit, and dipped his coat in blood to deceive his father, then selling him to the Egyptians, saying we will see what will become of his dreams. They did it for evil but God ordained it for good. David passed sentence upon himself, and said, I have sinned against God. That child died, but the next child was Solomon. God was surely with Samson when he killed hundreds with a jaw bone, and more at the destruction of the temple. The hardening of Pharoah's heart is evidence of God's power over the wicked king; and his power over fire is shown when it did not destroy the three children cast into it, and it so hot that it destroyed those who threw them in. The dumb ass speaking and rebuking the false prophet; closing the lion's mouths so that they could not harm Daniel; command-

ing the ravens to feed Elijah; preparing a great fish to swallow Jonah, who was put overboard by the sailors, and the sea was quiet; Jesus rebuking the wind, and there was a great calm; and his love was so great for his chosen people that it caused the unregenerated ones to resent God's love to them that they were called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not because it knew him not. "What if God willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction; and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which were afore prepared unto glory." (Romans 9:23-24)

His watch care over the sparrows is such that not one of them can fall to the ground without him. The very hairs of your head are numbered. Paul speaks to the people on Mars Hill: "God that made the world, and all things therein, hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the time before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." Now as predestination, or the determination, or the purposes of, or the decrees of God all go together, they are established by him before the world began, according to the blue print in the archives of God; and in it that he hath declared the end from the beginning, in the minutest detail of every act of men. God being immutable, everything has worked out to his glory, according to his purpose; and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose. Salvation has the Lord appointed for walls and bulwarks around Zion — like a garden enclosed, guarded by the flaming sword to keep intruders out. There is no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God.

For fifty-eight years, I have taken great comfort in the predestination of all things that come to pass. It has given me courage to stand firm on the promises that are given me all through my life; and now that I am old and gray-headed, he will not forsake me. I know my time is short in this life, and my pen will pass to another and I hope ablier writer, but I am confident that the doctrine of predestination of all things will go on and on forever. And I am glad that man, and the devil, and the do, do system will fail, for they are built on the sand; but the temple of our God is holy, it is built on the rock and will weather all the storms, for God is at the helm, and his righteous will is done, all to the praise and glory of God. In hope, I am a weary traveler.

(Elder) George L. Weaver
2802 Marcum Terrace,
Huntington 5, W. Va.

A LITTLE FORETASTE

1148 Falls Terrace,
Union, N. J.

Dear Brother Spangler:

"How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
When those who love the Lord
In one another's peace delight,
And thus fulfill his word."

What a blessed privilege it is to be given a desire to meet with those of like precious faith and mingle our voices in hymns of sublime adoration and praise of Jesus, our blessed Redeemer. This privilege has been mine for a number of years, and I feel I have been blessed far more than I deserve, having attended so many sweet and lovely meetings during the past five or six months. I have been carried back to an experience of my early association with the dear brethren. While attending college a distance from my home, it seemed I could hardly wait for the time of meeting at my home church in West Virginia, at that time. I found myself traveling quite a distance every fourth Sunday to be present at the meeting. As I looked around me at all the other people attending the same school with me, who were going to church just around the corner, and seeming to enjoy it, I often wondered why I didn't do the same. Except for the grace of God, I was no different than all

the others. One night, after thinking about this for months and months, asleep or awake, I don't know, but I could take you to the exact spot in the hills of West Virginia where I was carried, as it seemed, on the wings of an angel above the clouds to the gateway of heaven. There the door keeper opened the gate and let me look inside — there are no words that could describe what I saw. He then said, You are not ready to go home yet, but that is just a foretaste of the glory that awaits you in that world beyond. Then his parting words were, That is the reason you enjoy meeting with the brethren here in this world; it is just a foretaste of the joy that awaits you when you leave this world of sorrow and tears.

I have never forgotten that most glorious sight. Then I was completely satisfied to travel any distance necessary to hear the glorious doctrine of salvation alone by the grace of God. How thankful we should be for a desire to secure peace and rest in the Father's love: a love that will not let thee go, a love bestowed on those chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, a love that far surpasses anything in this world. We hope we love him because he first loved us, and shed his love abroad in our hearts, giving us the precious faith and hope to know and understand that it is alone by the grace of God that we will ever enter into that rest in the world beyond this vale of tears.

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." The greatest comfort of all is when the still small voice speaks to our weary, heavy laden soul, saying, Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord — be still and know that I am God. There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. "My grace is sufficient for thee" — enough to wipe away the sins of his people; their robes shall be washed and made white in the blood of the lamb. None is able to pluck them out of his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou. God is all powerful; with him all things are possible. He created all things from the beginning to the end; is the ever gracious, ever wise supreme being over all, having predestinated all things according to his own counsel and foreknowledge, without any help for poor finite creatures as we are. He who clothes the lilies of the field, will not leave or forsake any one of those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. Of one thing I am sure, if he has begun a work of grace in my heart, he will be with me to the end: Then when I awake in thy likeness, Oh, Lord, I shall be satisfied.

Through the dark and stormy road we travel, he speaks peace to us by the vessels of mercy he has sent to comfort his people, by proclaiming aloud the glorious doctrine of everlasting truth. Praise him for his loving kindness and tender mercy to us, when we feel cast down but not destroyed; praise him for giving us faith and courage to struggle on amid the trials, sorrows and cares of this world, ever looking unto him as the author and finisher of our faith. Without him we can do nothing. The earth is his, the world and they that dwell therein. He speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast, saying I will do my pleasure in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. I want to worship a God who has all power — not even a tiny blade of grass can fall by the wayside without his knowledge of it. "Not a single shaft can hit, 'till the God of love sees fit."

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened." How can we ask, how can we seek, how can we knock, except the Lord gives us tongues of utterance and ears to hear? He does it all; all to him we owe. We know not what to ask or seek for, but he knows our every thought and movement even before we do. We are only poor worms of the dust,

not able to utter one word of praise without him. When he gives us a hearing ear and a heart to understand, then we are made thankful to sit at the feet of our brethren, and gather a crumb as it falls from the Master's table. We then search the Scriptures for further encouragement, for they testify of the eternal truth of salvation; for Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life." He is the only way from earth to heaven. Praise his holy name for revealing this truth unto babes. He has hid these things from the wise and prudent; which makes me rejoice, for if one at all, I am less than the least. How could his grace ever reach one so vile, so full of sin, as I am? Yet I know with God all things are possible. How can I sink with such a prop as my eternal God? His everlasting arms are underneath, leading, guiding and directing us in the way we should go, giving us strength to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Though my faith be as a grain of mustard seed, I would not exchange it for ten thousand worlds such as this. Grace, mercy and truth are sent to us to revive our spirits by the way; without these we would sink to utter despair, when trials and sorrows meet us in the way, but God is able to speak peace when all human comforts fail. He is precious to our souls, and none except the redeemed of the Lord will ever be able to understand that, "Love is the golden chain that binds." This love must be experienced, we must have handled and tasted of the better things of life. It cannot be explained, but each can feel his bosom glow with love. This is the greatest evidence we have of being one of the redeemed — our love we hope we have for the brethren. Nothing could be sweeter in this world than our meeting to sing and hear the hymns of praise, and salvation proclaimed by some dear brother whose hope the Lord is.

We know that all things work together for good to those that love the Lord, but we like to have our faith strengthened by having this truth told over and over again: the story that is old, yet ever new. When we are given a desire to listen, it is joy to our ears to hear the profound truth explained in such a way that it is meat to our hungry souls, and drink for the thirsty, parched throat. Where your treasure is there your heart will be also; and, as Ruth of old said, "Entreat me not to leave thee, nor return from following after thee; whither thou goest I will go, where thou lodgest I will lodge, thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." There is nothing left in this world for me but to enjoy the pleasures of my church. I feel God has been so very good to me: may it be his will to give me strength to live true to the profession I have made, giving thanks to him for his many, many blessings, which are far more than I deserve. May I have faith and hope to say at all times and under all circumstances, "Father, not my will, but thine be done; give me strength not to murmur or complain though the way be rough. May it be thy holy will to make the rough places smooth and the crooked paths straight. Father, be it as thou wilt at all times. In sickness, sorrow, adversity, pain or death, may thy right arm ever be underneath, causing the burden, which may seem heavy, to be light, giving strength and encouragement to those whose paths seem to be more that they can bear. We know, Oh, Lord, that thou wilt give strength sufficient unto the day: thou wilt not leave us at any time with more than has been prepared for us, whose hope the Lord is. We know not what we should pray for, but we know when thou shalt give us heart to pray, thou will incline thine ear — our thoughts and intents were known to thee before time began."

"Bless the Lord, Oh my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name." Praise him for his many blessings bestowed on us day by day. I feel I cannot praise him enough for all he has done for me. His praise shall continually be in my mouth. Could it be possible there is hope for one like me?

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought:
Do I love the Lord or no,
Am I his or am I not."

Sometimes I think it is just my vain imagination, and that I have never tasted of the better things of the grace of God. I can only leave the matter in the hands of an alwise God, who knows all things.

It is past time to renew my subscription. Enclosed find a check to renew for another two years. You may publish these rambling thoughts, if you think they will be of any comfort to anyone; if not they may be consigned to the waste basket. Cast the mantle of charity over what I have written, giving all praise, honor and glory to the giver of every good and perfect gift. If it be the Lord's will, I hope to see you at your Welsh Tract meeting in September.

In bonds of love,
Elsie Loeffel

EXPERIENCE

Redwood, Virginia
September, 1955

Elders Spangler and Wood:
Dearly beloved in the Lord:

Back eight years ago, at the age of sixty-seven, (I am now seventy-five years old) I began writing this sketch of what I hope is part of my experience, both carnal and spiritual, to Elder Dodson, whose voice has been silenced in this life, but his memory lives on. I have been of late impressed to re-write this, and add more to it, desiring that my gracious Lord will enable me to write in part my testimony of what I witnessed, felt and went through. I hope the dear Lord dealt graciously with me in the forgiveness of my wretched sinful crimes. Through school age and on, I've never enjoyed life like my associates seemed to, which troubled me very much. For more back-ground I will mention my parents and some of their grevious troubles, and also mine. My parents were very poor in this world's goods, but by their fellow citizens they were esteemed respectful, honest and truthful, and they tried to teach their children as best they could, there being twelve of them. The oldest one, an infant, died before I was born; five of them died in childhood from four to seven years old; the remaining six grew to manhood and womanhood. I being the second child, and the oldest one living, Oh, the grief and sorrow I witnessed from seeing my dear little brother and four little sisters pass away in death. This brought me to many serious thoughts about dying, and what would become of me should I die in my sinful condition. With much seriousness, I would try to pray; and as time passed I had much worry of being the black-sheep in the family. When I was around sixteen years of age, father and mother united with the Primitive Baptist church. Seeing them and many others baptized and going to their meetings, I could see their walk and conversation was so much different than before. I wondered seriously how such things could be. I had dreams that kept me frustrated. In my teen age I would read of the ancient martyrs, and also the Bible — partly for arguments with those who opposed the Primitive way. These mysterious things gave me much to wonder and think over.

I verily thought if any people on earth were right, it was the Primitive Baptists (I still believe they are right); and I desired to be one of them, as I thought religion was a practical theory. (which was and is strict Armenianism) The years passed and I came into manhood; and at the age of twenty-six years I was married to my dear and faithful companion. About two years later, my long, distressing sentence of conviction began; and for around ten years my trials seemed to be comparable to that of Jacob in the waste howling wilderness — even in a famishing and desert land, to perish without mercy. In my ravenous condition I sought relief, finding none. My friends would tell me to be patient, but they failed to comfort me — no man could tame me;

had it not been for the goodness, mercy and the restraining power of an alwise God, I would have been a violent, outbreaking criminal. Near the end of this long, dolful sentence, my trials only grew worse and more vile, until I felt unfit to live — and I feared to die. For two long nights I sat erect in my bed, expecting my sins to choke me to death before the dawning of another day. I felt while in this condition I had not a friend on earth, nor in heaven; and that I was justly doomed to die and go to eternal hell. My hopeless case seemed to be an outside one. My prayer was, Lord save or I perish. Then, as though a whisper, words of sweet consolation were spoken, saying, "Stand still and see the salvation of God." This was great relief to me for awhile; and thanks and praise to my glorious Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, at the age of about thirty-eight years, I believe that typically the Lord led me out of the captivity of Egyptian bondage, the hands of the devil, the law of sin and eternal death, into sweet deliverance of peace in my dear Saviour.

Oh, my soul, unexpectedly, to my great joy, on that memorable morning of May 20, 1918, I believe my dear Saviour came down my poor soul to greet, and glory crowned the mercy seat. This miraculous change took place as in a moment — instantly my whole being was illuminated in the glorious light and liberty of my dear Saviour. This happy change took place in the field: my dear children, even my team and all nature seemed to be helping me to praise my Lord. Oh, the sacred love, sweetness, joy, peace and happiness that was mine no mortal tongue can ever tell. Manifestly to me all things had become new — there was a new heaven and new earth, and I felt to be a brand new creature. My heart did leap for joy, and my soul did magnify the Lord. Then I could say, "What wonderous love is this, Oh, my soul." My fervent prayer was, Dear Lord have mercy on me; my sweet song was, "I am a stranger here below, and what I am 'tis hard to know." I could joyfully sing the sweet songs of Zion on the house tops, in my feelings. I loved, praised and glorified my dear redeemer as though with ten thousand tongues: then in a nobler sweeter song I could sing his power to save. I truly felt that my beloved had taken me to his banqueting house, and his banner over me was love. Then, seeing and feeling my great vileness and unworthiness, I felt as though I had stolen something that didn't justly belong to me. I felt to be so cheap, shameful and worthless, not even one farthing to pay, or even to offer.

In a few days my lovely feast abated, and darkness and sadness prevailed again over me. In great sorrow I felt to be ruined forever and mistaken in the whole matter. In grief and sadness I begged the Lord again to restore unto me this new love and joy I had felt. Once in a while my former love and joy would return. I soon learned I was still a vile sinner, and I failed to get along on flowery beds of ease. This new love soon began to grow and thirst for the dear old Primitive Baptist church. Oh, how unworthy I felt as I kept going among them, yet I loved them dearly. My burden grew strong to unite with them, and I tried to beg the Lord for guidance in this matter, as I felt my nothingness so much, fearing that I would deceive these dear people. Then I dreamed of having to go to the army. I said in my dream that if I go in the army, I will have to be drafted. I hope I was drafted into the Lord's army, a true soldier of the cross. Later I had another beautiful dream of standing on a wall of the loveliest fountain of pure, clear water that my eyes ever beheld. This dream was with great concern and deep affection. I hope that lovely fountain represented the water of the pure river of life proceeding from the throne of God. After this dream my troubles came with double force to unite with the church. I felt very certain that if the church knew me as I knew myself, they would never receive nor fellowship me; yet to unite with them was my

greatest desire night and day.

On the second Saturday in September, 1919, my dear companion united by experience with the Gill's Creek Church in the Pigg River Association, Franklin County, Virginia. The next morning the congregation met at the river for her baptism, when the unworthy one asked for a home with them by giving them my reason of a hope. To my great joy they received me, and we were baptized by our beloved Elder J. T. Brown. That happy, peaceful, pleasant day is one long to be remembered by us. We had found new joys and a new home. My overwhelming love, joy and praise for my Redeemer increased each day; Wednesday seemed to be one of the happiest days I had ever spent. That day I felt so light, it seemed as if I were walking on feathers all day. (In those days my fruitful joys seemed to know no bounds) That night I heard the sweetest music and singing I ever heard, which seemed to be singing in my heart and soul, and it seemed that my full soul could hold no more. My new found love and joy seemed to be a flowing fountain of everlasting love, sweetness and mercy in my poor heart. Dear kindred, this may seem strange to relate among the wisest and dearest people on earth to me, but for around four months after my baptism my almost continual abounding love, joy and praise did fervently flow for my dear Redeemer God. I, like Peter, being on the house-top, I boasted. I said to some of my older brethren that I believe my flesh was changed. They said that they didn't think so. I so nearly quit my work in the field that I feared I would let my family suffer for bread. But, Ah, I was soon taught that I was still a vile sinner, and a poor begger.

I hope this little sketch of what I witnessed, and felt, and went through, is a living testimony of the hope of glory shed abroad in my heart. My dear kindred in Christ, since becoming one among you nearly thirty-six years ago, I am still hoping and longing to know that I am one of you, for to know God is eternal life says holy writ. We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. One of my reasons why I am a Primitive Baptist (that is, if I am one) is because I love them, and can't help it; neither do I want to help it. I believe I love most dearly thy holy statutes and thy loving precepts, Oh, Lord, because the doctrine I have hope, faith and love in, is the doctrine that the prophets, Christ and his beloved Apostles set forth and taught. Of a surety their doctrine is absolutely right, and no other is. I believe that all of God's chosen, when born again, will be Primitive Baptists in holy faith and principles of doctrine. It matters not who they are, nor where they are, because there is but one true exprience of grace (not graces) and that all of the children of God have and will have God's grace. I believe that his grace will be identically the same for each heir of promise, for there is but one Lord, one faith, and one baptism — the heirs are one in him. His heritage is reckoned unto him as the speckled bird, and all others are against her.

My precious brethren, if this scribble should ever get into print, I humbly beg your forbearance; if not deceived I have manifestly received a little foretaste of God's love, goodness, mercy, grace and glory. If our profession is true, we have greater riches than the Indies of gold, which can neither be mortgaged nor sold. I hope what I have written is embraced in the predestination of God our Saviour in all things whatsoever he purposed to bring to pass — by him all things consist, and he works all things after the counsel of his own will, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure.

Should this be published in the Signs of the Times, I wish a copy for each of my seven sons and three daughters, that they may have to look over after I have passed on.

There is much more I would like to say of this blessed theme of salvation by grace — it is an endless theme. I have hinted a part of my hope and fears before this, but more fully this time.

Though the world may think these things very strange, I would not exchange with the world. I hold and esteem the fruition of my hope precious and most dear to me; as I feel that God's little children are waiting with joyful anticipation his redeeming love, and to hear from their dear Saviour the royal proclaimation, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Allow me to say, my precious brethren, that many times we have met together in bonds of love and sacred union of sweet fellowship, to perhaps meet no more here below; but, Oh, may we meet above in a glorious immortality, where all cause of parting is past, and our social feast will ever last. May the gracious Lord keep the inhabitants of Zion in the way that seemeth good in his sight, is my prayer. Farewell. A brother, I hope, in hope of a glorious immortality.

J. A. Perdue

SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST

Dallas, Texas

Dear Editors and Friends:

Having been asked by many to give my views on what is known as the unpardonable sin, or the sin against the Holy Ghost, I shall endeavor to do so; trusting in God for wisdom, and praying that he will guide my thoughts to truly expound the truth to the comfort and edification of his dear people, and to his own glory.

The text is, "Wherefore I say unto you all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, except the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." (Matthew 12:31) We also need the 32nd verse in our explanation: "And whosoever speaketh a word against the son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh a word against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in the world to come."

In the above we have the Saviour's words as to what shall not be forgiven unto men, and what shall be forgiven unto men. First, I would like to call attention to the certainty of both what shall be forgiven and what shall not be forgiven. They are both certain — one shall be, the other shall not be; and remember, that SHALL is a positive declaration. Therefore, sin against the Holy Ghost is the only thing that condemns a soul to hell, for all other sins and blasphemy shall be forgiven.

Oh now! dear readers notice the blessed truth as it is in Christ Jesus, the grand old doctrine of election and salvation by grace, and grace alone; as well as the certainty of all things in the works of a three one God.

Second. Let us look to Matthew 12:30: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." — The Saviour speaking. Next, he said, "Wherefore" — giving the reason for saying that all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven, etc.

Now there are some who are against him and not with him, but are scattered abroad; and they are the ones who sin and blaspheme against the Holy Ghost. Then surely there are some who are with him and not against him, and are not scattered abroad, whose sins and blasphemies shall be forgiven. SHALL, not may be, or might, or can, but shall be forgiven. Who are those that are gathered with him, etc? We find them spoken of in Ephesians 1:3-4, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Also, let us consider Ephesians 2:10, "For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." So, surely if we be created in Christ Jesus, and chosen in him before the foundation of the world, we are not

against him, neither scattered abroad; but gathered with him.

Well, what does this have to do with our subject? Christ Jesus is the second person in the Trinity: the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost constitute the three-in-one-God. So, in the above quotation, we see the salvation of God's people, his chosen people, standing out most clearly: having never sinned or blasphemed against the Holy Ghost, because they were with the Son and not against him, and were gathered with him and not scattered abroad. The three being one, we cannot be against one without being against the other; and cannot be gathered with one and not the other, etc. Here we see plainly that those who are not gathered with Christ, but are against him and scattered abroad, are sinners; and every sin and blasphemy they commit is against the Lord Jesus, and also against all three personalities of the triune God; and there is no forgiveness for it. While, on the other hand, if we were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and are created in him, we certainly are not against him. Therefore our sins do not offend the Holy Ghost, because we are in Christ; and in him we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins through his blood. (Ephesians 1:7) "We are chosen in him." (Ephesians 1:4) "We are created in him." (Ephesians 2:10) So, in him we are chosen, created and redeemed, having the forgiveness of our sins through his blood. Yea, our guilt is laid upon the shoulders of Jesus, "Well," one says, "does that not put our sins against the Son of God, and thereby put them against the Holy Ghost?" No, it does not. If we are with him, we are not against him. When we are against someone, we are against what they are, what they stand for, etc. The Son of God, the blessed Lord Jesus, the second person in the trinity, stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (Revelations 13:8) Yes, he was standing in purpose, covenant and everlasting decree slain for the redemption of his chosen people: the church of the Living God, which is his bride.

So, if we were chosen in him from the foundation of the world, we were chosen in him for redemption — to obtain forgiveness of our sins through his blood. Therefore we are not against him, but are gathered with him; and our sins do not go against the Holy Ghost. So what does go with them, if they do not go against the Holy Ghost, neither the Father, or the Son? (the Son of God, the divine character) Certainly they do not go against either of the three divine characters, as we have established the fact that if they go against one, they go against all three.

Now, if Jesus Christ did expiate our sins by giving himself to die upon the cross, how did our sins not go against him and offend him, and thereby offend the three one God? Remember the dual personality of Jesus Christ: begotten of God, and born of a woman, which is mankind. Now let us look unto Matthew 12:32, "Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him, but whosoever speaketh a word against the Holy Ghost, It shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor the world to come." Who is the Son of Man? It is a male that is born of mankind. And we see Jesus, the son of Mary, born of a woman. So, surely, scripturally, the flesh of Jesus is the Son of Man; but the divinity of him is of God.

Therefore we see him as both God and man, and if we speak a word, or sin against the manly part of him, it shall be forgiven unto us; but if we speak a word against the divine character, it shall not be forgiven us. Every person who is chosen in the divine person of him unto redemption, his sins will be placed against the flesh of Jesus by the divine power of God Almighty; for Jesus suffered under the penalty of the law for us — in our room and stead. Yes, he took our place: all the demands of divine justice which would have otherwise been made against us, were made against him. So here we see the divine character taking the flesh and

giving it a ransom for his dear people, offering it upon the cross a sacrifice sufficient to bring about redemption for the church, his chosen people; for this offering was equal to the demands of the law, for it was kept pure by the divinity that dwelled in it.

No, the sins of his dear people did not and will not ever go against the Holy Ghost. They only go as far as the fleshly Jesus on the cross: the cross is as far as they ever get. When his precious blood poured forth from his side, it washed all the sins of his chosen people away, and they are remembered no more. (Hebrews 8:12)

The only way we are ever to come to the Father and the Holy Ghost is through the Son by the way of the cross; and coming in such a manner and way, we will come also through Jesus' blood; and as we pass through it, it cleanses us from all sin, iniquity and unrighteousness. For by and through the mercy and grace of God, they were all charged to Jesus, the Son of Man.

Yes, he that speaketh against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven unto him. Not can be, may be, or might be, but shall be the only ones that are forgiven. What do we mean by speaking a word against the Holy Ghost? Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh. (Matthew 21:34) Let us notice that all the thoughts of the imagination of man's heart is only evil continually. (Genesis 6:5) So out of an evil heart is where the sins and blasphemy proceed. When the spirit and power of God the Father, the divinity of the trinity, left the flesh, the Son of Man: to wit Jesus, on the cross, those words, deeds, etc. of sin and blasphemy came against it to the end that it suffered and died to carry them away, and to make the comers thereunto perfect. (Hebrews 10:14) And all the sins and blasphemy that was not washed away in his blood went on against the Holy Ghost and offended it, and the performers were condemned thereby. Therefore, we say to sin or blaspheme against the Holy Ghost is to do or say anything sinful or blasphemous that goes against the Holy Ghost or offend the Holy Ghost; and everyone of us is sure to do so if we are not gathered with Jesus Christ spiritually, and not against him. Gathered by the arm of the Lord. (Isaiah 40:11)

We have heard it said that many things are sin against the Holy Ghost — such as unbelief. If that were true, where would the Apostle Paul have appeared when he persecuted and wasted the church of God, and did it ignorantly through unbelief. (I Timothy 1:13) Then we hear it said that it is denying the power of God. What about Paul again? When he was a full fledged Pharisee, verily thinking he was doing God's service, no doubt he did not believe in the power of God, for he was trusting in the power of the law. Now, someone says that it is crediting God's works to Satan. Well take Paul's case again: when he was persecuting and wasting the church, and verily thought it to be God's service, no doubt he thought it to be the work of Satan when God worked in the heart of his dear people to serve him in deed and truth. Surely, he thought it the work of Satan when the disciples would preach Jesus Christ the way, the truth, and the life, the resurrection from the dead, and performing the works of healing the sick and raising the dead, etc.

Furthermore, while we are in our unregenerated state, may I ask just what we are likely to do, say or think? Surely we will do, say and think all manner of evil because we have only a carnal mind, which is enmity against God, not subject to the laws of God, neither indeed can be. (Romans 8:7)

The Apostle Paul (Saul) bound and cast into prison, and had the dear saints of God stoned to death; and did not believe in Christ. Yet all the time he was with Christ and not against him, in a spiritual sense, for he was a chosen vessel. (Acts 9:15) Yes, chosen in Christ Jesus unto good works, etc., but it had not been made manifest to him. Christ had not come unto him to manifest what

was in store for him: to give him the hope of glory through Christ, and cause him to hate those evil things. When Christ came unto him, he confessed, believed on him, and declared the power of God; making it clear that we have redemption in Christ, the forgiveness of sins only through his blood. (Ephesians 1:7) Therefore, he made manifest a reverential fear of God, a love for Christ and his people, and showing a hatred for sin. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously in this present world." (Titus 2:11-12) So, surely none of the sins of Paul ever went against the Holy Ghost, neither the sins of any of God's chosen people.

Surely, we can see nothing in this text contrary to the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone. For herein we see Christ in the person of the Son of Man, in the form of an offering, washing away the sins of every individual that composes the church of God — every one of them. Their sins were atoned for when the Son of Man was offered upon the cross. Therefore their sins will never go any farther then the cross; and the Father looks upon the church, the Lamb's bride, through the righteousness of the Lamb, his dear Son; and the Holy Ghost never becomes offended by any of their sins, for they stand before the Father holy and without blame in love. (Ephesians 1:4) And this was done according to the covenant which the three divine personalities agreed upon and made before the world began — the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost all having part in it; therefore, neither of them ever become offended by it. And everyone of the children of grace, the components of the church of God, was gathered in Christ Jesus in this covenant of redemption, being chosen and created in him from the foundation of the world.

Now where do we find anyone committing sin and blasphemy against the Holy Ghost; and who do we find committing it? We notice when the Pharisees were talking with Christ, they said, we have one father, even God. Christ told them that if they were of God, they would love Him; "But ye are of your father the devil," said he, "and the lust of your father ye will do." Oh no, they were not with Christ, but against him; not with him, but scattered abroad; not of God, but of the devil. Everything they did sinful was against the Holy Ghost, for Christ in the person of the Son, the Son of Man, did not take their place and wash their sins away in his blood; but let them go, and they offended the Holy Ghost, and thereby brought about their condemnation by coming before the Holy Ghost without any atonement for their sins; having nothing but their own works to present before the judgment bar of divine justice, which were carnal and motivated by the carnal mind, which is enmity against God. (Romans 8:7)

Are we any better than they? In and of ourselves, no. We are by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Therefore, while we are in our unregenerated state, we will follow after the things of the flesh, which are sinful and opposite to life and godliness; doing and saying (also thinking) the same things as the children of the devil. So what is the difference in the children of God and the children of the devil? In nature they are all alike, having the same thoughts, doing the same acts, etc.; but in grace we find a great difference. For by the grace of God we are taught to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and to live soberly and righteously in this present world. Also, made to hate the things we once loved, and to love the things we once hated; as well as being made to serve the law of God with our mind. (Romans 7:25) Therefore, when we are brought into the knowledge of the Lord Jesus, it makes a difference in our walk and conversation. We then try to walk in respect unto the Lord of glory who brought us with the price of his blood; and no more want to walk after the things of the flesh,

but ever endeavoring to follow after the things of the Spirit through Christ who strengtheneth us — in him, not in the flesh.

We also see that God made a new covenant with his people, according to his mercy, and remembered their sins and iniquities no more. (Hebrews 8:12) Yes, they were washed away in the precious blood of Jesus as he died on the cross; and they were justified by his resurrection; (Romans 4:25) and also glorified by his righteousness, which we are now hoping and waiting to experience by being raised in his likeness — in his glorified image.

Surely, we can see nothing in this text but the doctrine of election, special atonement, salvation wholly and solely by grace; and that streaming unto the children of God through their interest in the trinity, being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible seed by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. (I Peter 1:23)

I hope, my dear readers, you will cast a mantle of charity over the foregoing, and forgive me of my shortcomings and imperfections, casting aside anything that might be a miss, and praising God for the truth; and pray for me a poor worm of the dust.

May God's love, mercy and peace be multiplied unto all. Amen.

(Elder) W. W. Taylor

BUT ONE THING NEEDFUL

"And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat a Jesus' feet, and heard His word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to Him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Marthan, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." — (Luke 10:39-42.)

Many times in the past I've heard it said that Mary chose the better part, but that Martha's part was necessary too, and I accepted it as the truth because it was what I believed. The interpretation was that Mary had chosen to walk more closely with God but that Martha had to do the serving; and in our natural life this is necessary. But, while looking for another Scripture, I came across this one and I noticed it said, "But ONE thing is needful." If only one thing is needful and Mary chose it, then Martha's part was not necessary; and since serving our natural wants is necessary, then this Scripture does not have reference to natural things.

One thing is needful (not two things) and Mary chose that good part. (not better part) Now the question is, what is the "one thing"? What is it that we need when our works fail? What is it that we need every day, every hour of our lives? It is Christ and Him alone — His grace, mercy and righteousness. But Martha thought she needed to help out and was cumbered about many things. She had set a standard of works, not only for herself, but for others. She complained when Mary was indifferent to her (Martha's) works. There was so much to do. She was sincere in her serving and she couldn't understand why others couldn't live up to her standard. Did Mary condemn her for her works? No, I do not find where she did. There was no room in her heart for condemning others. She was at the feet of Jesus. Was she any better in the flesh than Martha? The Bible doesn't say so. Yes, it does say that Mary chose that good part, but our experience tells us why she chose it. It was because God had put it in her heart, made her give up all her works, made her to see herself as nothing and less than nothing. There was only one hope, one thing needful, and that was Christ and His righteousness. She was made to put all her trust in Him and none in herself.

Do I condemn Martha for her concern over serving? No, a thousand times no, for if I know my heart, I, too, was much concerned at one time. But I failed so utterly. Not only was I concerned over

my own serving and very zealous in it, but I, too, was impatient with my sister, my brother, who seemed so indifferent. I took delight in advising them about their duty. How blind I was to my own inability to perform that which was good! It pleased the good Lord to show me a true picture of myself. Oh, how black, how utterly devoid of strength to do anything! I couldn't even keep my steps in the narrow path one hour without help. My righteousness was all filthy rags. My fig leaves were withered and falling apart. On the other hand, when I was made to look up, what a wonderful, all powerful, loving, merciful God I saw — able to create the whole universe and keep everything in its place, as well as govern even the falling of one hair from my head; able to clothe me in His righteousness and make me praise Him for it; able to cause me to choose that good part, which shall not be taken away from me. This "one thing" is sure and steadfast. "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in **one.**" And now when I observe others still working and serving, how could I condemn them for doing the very thing I would still be doing if it were not for God showing me my true self.

Dear brethren, if this does not harmonize with your experience, do not receive it. You have been charitable toward me in the past, and I will need charity the rest of my days. I have no confidence in the flesh.

Mrs. T. R. Jefferson,
Marysville, Calif.

SACRED THINGS

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." (Genesis 1:26)

Is it any wonder the saying that man is wonderfully made? Man was made of the dust of the ground; he is of the earth and earthy. All of Adam's race were born in sin: dead in trespasses and sin. They had no spiritual life — Ye must be born again, born of the incorruptible seed by the word that liveth and abideth forever. They were deep down in the miry clay with no sufficiency of themselves to change their state. In our dear supreme God dwells all knowledge, and he knew man's need of a Saviour; and because of his divine unchanging love for his people, he sent his only begotten son to save his people from their sins.

God's angel told Mary a child would be born, and his name should be called Jesus, for he would save his people from their sins. God is not slack concerning his promises; his people live by his given faith. He is their surety, and they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. He was given all power over the flesh, and because of his mercy we have life. Pure and holy is He.

Our dear Jesus came on earth in the form of the flesh, and shed his blood for the washing away of every speck of the clay, and make them ready for that seamless garment of righteousness that no man can put on — they are adorned in God's righteousness by a merciful God, because of his love.

I fear and tremble, knowing that these fleshly fingers of mine are not fit to hold the pen that writes of that which to me is so scared. I humbly ask that all errors be corrected, and that nothing but the truth be offered to those who love the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Sincerely,
(Dr.) S. B. Milford,
Poolsville, Maryland

(We are glad that Doctor Milford is exercised in the glorious things of the gospel. He is above ninety years of age and no longer able to attend the meetings of Broad Run Church at Poolsville. He is an interesting talker, and we love to stop by and see him when we have opportunity. During our last conversation, he made the statement that, "The past does not endow the present with any degree of perfection." And we feel that it is a true observation. J. D. W.)

Stuart, Oklahoma
Rt. 1.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

My subscription is past due; you will find enclosed $5.00 for another year, for I don't want to be without the paper. My mother, Mrs. E. F. Little, was a faithful member of the Old Baptists for more than seventy-two years. She was more than ninty-five years old when she died in 1939. Should anyone care to write me, my name used to be Minnie Little. Mother was a subscriber to the Signs for many years — it is a wonderful paper.

My papers and my Bible are all the preaching I get, for I haven't heard an Old Baptist in five years the last of this month. My poor soul gets so hungry to hear them preach, and to meet with them and talk with them. They are the dearest people on earth to me — they mean so very much to me, though I am not worthy to be with them. The dear Lord has been so merciful to my unrighteousness; he has been so good to me, how can I thank him.

Yours unworthily,
Mrs. J. T. Black

Auburn, Washington.

Dear Signs:

Readers, I would like to say a few words: the September Signs has so many things that I believe so strongly — Saved by Grace through Faith. (Ephesians 2:8-9) These words are so dear to me. I have always been a believer in my Bible — since a young girl; and I have just passed my eighty-third birthday. I believe that if the dear Saviour had not sustained me, I would have fallen a long time ago. I trust him for his mercy to me, a poor weak worm of the dust.

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling"

I love the dear saints of the Lord: I must close, but remember I think of you always. Your unworthy sister in a blessed hope.

Mrs. Jennie Clifford

Martinsville, Va.

Elders Spangler and Wood:

I notice I have overlooked payment for renewal of the Signs of the Times. I would greatly miss getting a single issue, and I wish to thank you for sending it regularly.

I wish to express my appreciation and love to you both, and all the contributors to your valued magazine. Surely the Lord must be in the matter for you and your staff of writers to be able to speak and write with knowledge and understanding, as you do; and I sincerely hope He will continue to bless each and every one of you to continue to declare the whole council of the Lord, and to earnestly contend for the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. If the Primitive Baptists do not set forth the true doctrine of salvation, I have no hope of eternal salvation.

I am enclosing check for two years' renewal. I desire an interest in all your prayers, when you feel impressed of the Spirit of God to do so. With best wishes, I am a friend in hope.

B. L. Snyder

BROTHER AND SISTER R. L. DADE EXPRESS THEIR APPRECIATION

Jefferson, Md.

Dear Bro. Wood,

Will you kindly spare a space in the "Signs" to thank all the dear ones for their cards and letters of love and sympathy. We deeply appreciate all the kind thoughts and prayers at this most distressing time and I am not able to write each one.

Bro. Dade is slowly improving, we hope, but the worry and strain has been too much for me so I have been ill, but am a little better now. I am with my darling children who are taking care of me. Praise the Lord for them.

Love to you and Sister Wood and all the household of faith.

Your weak little Sister in need of your prayers.

Thanks again to everyone.

Susie Dade

(Brother Dade was in an automobile accident and seriously injured along with others. Since writing the above Sister Dade has had an operation and is improving. J. D. W.)

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

EDITORIALS

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EDITORIAL

"And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt. Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltiness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another." (Mark 9:43-50)

By request of Brother P. L. Kenley, of Virginia, I will give my opinion on what is meant by the Saviour. I give my views as did Elihu, (Job 32) knowing that many of the aged and venerable soldiers of the cross have thought differently about what is contained in this Scripture. I have often told you that I am ready at all times to give such as I have pertaining to the things of the kingdom; and, while I am always busy, that is what I am busy at — the things that interest my dear kindred in the Lord. But if I could write intelligently, and spiritually, and profitably on all the questions and Scriptures that are propounded to me, it would take all my time and would give you a very concise commentary on the Bible. This I cannot do, and much of the time when I have done the best I could, I think that I have run without being sent.

To tell what the text means is one thing; to tell what it does not mean is something else. It is not of so much interest to know what it does not mean, and yet there is always a false teacher lurking in wait to seduce some of the Lord's humble train of followers. Perhaps it is not amiss to notice that it does not mean a command connected with this natural body. If so, none of the sacred writers understood it that way, for there is no record of them obeying the command that way. It does not mean our natural hand and foot and eye, but we must not fail to note that it does mean the hand and foot and eye of **some** kind of body. The body under consideration is as much a body as it would be if it did mean our natural body; and it is as complete in its functioning as is our natural body.

The subject matter of the text begins at the 33rd verse. The disciples were giving to much thought about who was who in the kingdom. Of one thing

we must always remember: The followers of the Lord are men and women of Adam's family, and truly there is no difference in them and other members of the family, save for the difference made in them by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It seemed to them that there would, and ought to be, a difference in the various members of his followers. Men by nature think that our standing before him, our salvation now, our present justification, is predicated upon our present conduct. This conception of our place in the kingdom necessarily carries the thought of small and great. This is not allowed in the economy of a grace system.

Two thoughts are presented in the treatment of this subject. First, there must not be any offense given to any one that bears the mark of a true and humble follower. This phase of the matter does not mean that any compromise shall be made with error; it is not a cover up for allowing any shady proceedings in the church, for the direct commands in the verses quoted above will forever sound the death-knell for any of that. However, since all of the subject reaches back to the beginning of verse 33, it must be remembered that the "not giving offense" is of equal importance; is just as binding; the ground covered by the cutting of a hand and foot and the plucking out of an eye, is coextensive with the not offending one of the little ones. Second, "If thine hand and foot and eye offend thee," is just as rigid as the giving offense to one of the little ones. Each has an awful penalty attached to it. To offend one of the first class, carries with it that something worse than being cast into the sea with a millstone around the neck would result; to fail to carry out the "cutting off and plucking out" of that which offends us, carries the dire promise of being cast into hell.

The thought presented is this: The Lord's people are required to treat each other as we would be treated. Whatsoever ye would that men would do unto you, do ye also unto them. (Matt. 7:12) If our dealing with the little ones is predicated upon a desire to know no man after the flesh — to do all in His name — it will not offend one of the little ones. Just as long as a child of God is as the little one, they will never be offended at any dealing of the church with them. The little ones can be hurt, but never offended in the sense of being mad. The word "offend" as used in this lesson is literally "make one stumble." Its use is not, to make mad or angry.

The body of Christ is the church of Christ, and each member is fitly set in that body as it pleases the Maker. This body is not an after-thought. Before the eternal and alwise God, he always had this body. God saw it before it was. (Ps. 139:16) He did not come and then decide on the body, and its many members, and its various functionings. Every member of that body was chosen in Christ the head before the world was; and they all received the life of Christ, which is reckoned as eternal life, and they all are made to approach unto him. (Psalms 65:4) The goings and comings of all members of this body were determined before time was. The careful observing of the things found in the text will not bring anything about that God has not predestinated. This church is alive because she is joined to her head. He is joined to her by the work of God (manifestly) and not she to him by works of her own. Her food comes by way of the head; the head thinks for her, thus it is his arrangement that gives her her balanced food. Every member of this body is set in the body, and they are all members in particular. The Head loves them all just a like. In this body every member, and its functioning, is essential to the welfare of the whole. However, I want to urge that the Head of this body is not dependent on any individual member in the body. I preach and write **(if I preach and write the gospel)** an independent God and a dependent people.

I would press the matter carefully and point out that the people of God

must not offend or cause one of the little ones to stumble. Yet, it is done sometimes, and just as often as it is done "the thing that is worse than being cast into the sea with a millstone around our neck" happens to us. I do not know what it is, but it is worse than that. The language is simple, for simple readers; (Proverbs 9:4) it is easily understood, because it is spoken by the Teacher, and taught by him who meant what he said, and said what he meant. What is said? Who is it said to? Who does it include? He is talking to his disciples about his disciples. The "whosoever" does not take in any save disciples.

To get the proper perspective of this hand and foot and eye, it is necessary to remember that none of them have life in themselves. They are each as dependent on the head as are all the other members. No one of the three are more useful than the other, or have whereof to boast over the other, or to set in judgment as to the scope of usefulness of the others. This is completely illustrated in the 12th Chapter of First Corinthians. If some one thinks that I am wrong in my application of the text, I would call attention to the strong application made by the inspired apostle on this matter. He speaks of the eye, hand, foot, ear, and lesser members of this body of Christ. Where did his speaking of it come from? By inspiration, yes, and the source of inspiration also gives this body instruction as to the correct procedure in dealing with one another.

The hand is the member used to do things. It may do things that are wrong; it may become a busybody in other members affairs; it may do when not called. The foot is the member used for travel; it may go where it should not; it may run when not sent; it may walk in a manner unbecoming. The eye is used to behold things; it may look for the perishing things of time; it may see faults when there are none; it may wink at things that it should see. (Proverbs 10:10) In every case of this kind, there is room for the injunction of the Saviour being carried out. But this hand and foot and eye trouble gets worse than all this. Perhaps there is not a tangible, visible fault to be found in them, until they have dictated the church to the brink of ruin; they have become conscious of their being depended on; they have had the church come to them until they think that they must come in order for order and discipline to be maintained. Now the time is ripe for the measures given by the Head of the church to be enforced.

"But, dear brother, let us grant that your application of this matter is correct. What are we to understand about the being cast into hell where their worm dieth not, neither is the fire quenched." Now I know dear saints that I can never hope to remove all skepticism about what is said. **May God rule by grace and triumphant faith in our hearts to see what is said, and not what Elder John Doe said it said, nor what we wanted it to say.** If we are to the place that he does our reading and thinking, we are in the place that our eye or hand or foot needs removing. Hear the injunction again: If thy hand or foot or eye offend get rid of it. It is better to get rid of it than to have both cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched, where the worm dieth not. I can hardly believe that any of us think what some commentators think, viz., that some for whom Christ died will be cast into that eternal damnation, eternal hell fire spoken of as the abode of those that he never knew. It is better to do this. One of the things that is better is that he said do it. That makes a thing right; that makes it better. Yet, we may lose sight of this better way; we may forsake our first love so that the salt has lost its saltiness, has lost its salty, tangy taste, and then it is much better to get rid of the unruly member than to have all in hell fire.

But as we look into this, we find opposition to it. Why oppose the plain stated word of the Lord? If this does not have to do with the eye and hand and foot of the church, what does it have to do with? If not the human body,

then what body? Is it speaking of the functioning of some body other than the human body? And also other than the body of Christ? If so, what body? This opposition to the present application also is very prevalent to the hell fire embraced in it. However, it is still there, and unless it has reference to some part of our natural body being cast into hell fire in the hereafter, or some members of the body of the Head being cast into hell in the hereafter, then it has reference to hell fire in the church in time. We do not feel inclined to cater to an open, belching pit of flame and brimstone here on earth and in time, so we will have to take this in an allegorical sense. The apostle treats it that way. "Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth. And the tongue is a fire. A world of iniquity: so in the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell." (James 3:5, 6)

Ah, how much of this has been in our midst. The pain and sorrow, conflicts and death that has been among us. If the awful, devastation will not cause a pause, what will? If the work of the hands and feet and eyes had been carefully examined, and where needed, they put out, some of this widespread desolation would have been avoided. I cannot say experimentally how long church trouble will last when once it has gained a foothold, but in the cases that have come up in my lifetime, it has indeed been hell fire, and it has not been quenched. Families have been divided, neighborhoods torn asunder, brethren murdered, the poor and afflicted children of God scattered. This has prevailed among us from coast to coast, from section to section, from association to association, from church to church. Elder Beebe found this true in his day; it has been found true in every age in the past back to the apostles; it is a prevalent condition among us today.

In this hell fire the worm dieth not. This worm is a maggot. It continues to live in the midst of this continual fire. This worms grows in that which it has caused; it is in a continual work, keeping alive in the outgroweth of its own nefarious schemes.

May the rich and reigning grace of the dear Bishop of our souls keep us faithful, not shunning to declare the whole counsel of God, which is a full-time work; may He keep us from idols, which, if not kept, we would pay homage to all the time; may He enable us to depend on Him, and Him alone, keeping the hand and foot and eye in humility and subjection to His rule; and if not, to give us a faith that will not hesitate to apply discipline with all firmness and without partiality to the same.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE AUTHOR AND FINISHER OF OUR FAITH.

(Hebrews xii. 2.)

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

These words of admonition, instruction and encouragement are addressed to "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling," compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses, called to run a race which is set before them, yet burdened at times with weights which impede their progress, and sins which easily beset them, and sometimes bewilder them, insomuch that their eyes are diverted from steadfastly beholding and pressing toward the mark of their high calling. None can look unto Jesus as the author and finisher of their faith whose faith is not from him, in him and by him as its author, center and finisher. None whose faith is from any other source can justly claim Jesus as its author; nor can any whose faith requires to be perfected by any other than

Jesus have a right to say that Jesus is the finisher of it. The preceding chapter (Hebrews xi.) defines the vital principle of the faith of which Jesus is the author and the finisher, and demonstrates its matchless power by a cloud of witnesses, extending from righteous Abel down to the time when this epistle was written. The Holy Ghost testifies that this "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." And we are also informed in the sacred volume that it is the fruit of the Spirit and the gift of God.—Gal. v. 22; Phil. i. 29.

In the absence of this faith no man can be looking unto Jesus, for no light of nature, of reason or science can reveal him. Only the faith which is the evidence of things which are not seen can look unto Jesus. And unto those who by faith can behold him who is invisible, Jesus has said, "Blessed art thou; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."—Matthew xxi. 17. Who else can reveal him, since Jesus himself has said, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father, and no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him?"—Matt. xi. 27. Only the living, who have eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to understand, can look unto Jesus and see in him the author and finisher of their faith. To know him is eternal life; and they who truly know him, know also experimentally the power of his resurrection, the fellowship of his sufferings, and are conformed unto his death.

As in the figure of running a race, he who runs should have his sight directed to the objective mark, so Jesus, who has finished his course of suffering in the flesh and entered within the vail, is the mark which is set before his followers, who are to be constantly and steadfastly looking to and considering him who endured great contradiction of sinners against himself, lest they should be weary and faint in their mind.

To be looking unto Jesus is to be looking away from themselves, and away from everything else as objects of attraction. The world, the flesh and Satan are to be opposed, denied and resisted, and every weight which is calculated to burden and impede progress in the divine or spiritual life is to be laid aside, with every besetting sin; and being thus stripped for the race, they are exhorted to run with patience the race which is set before them. In looking unto Jesus the enlightened follower of the Lamb sees in him a perfect pattern of patient endurance. Although the blessed Jesus encountered all the opposing powers of wicked men and devils, those never did or could for a moment divert him from the course in which he was engaged, nor could any amount of ignominy or shame slacken his onward progress. If briars and thorns were put in array before him, he went through them, "traveling in the greatness of his strength, mighty to save." When led or driven by the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil, he was tempted in all points as his followers are, and yet without being to any extent overcome by the tempter. Among the temptations which he then and there encountered was that in which all the glories and treasures of this world, with all their alluring and fascinating charms, were in one moment of time, in all their concentrated power, brought to bear upon him, to turn him aside from the race which was set before him. In the infirmities of our nature, which he had taken on him, he experienced the feelings of our infirmities in the endurance of temptation, for he was tempted in all points as we are. On the one hand was arrayed all the glitter of wealth, fame and allurements of the world, while on the other stood the racking cross, the shame, the malignant spite, malice and scorn, with bitter reproaches and envenomed persecution of all the powers of darkness. The painful agony wrung from his tortured heart the sweat which like great drops of blood fell to the ground, and in that inex-

pressible ecstacy of anguish the piercing cry breaks from his sacred lips, "Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt."—Mark xiv. 36. Thus, in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared, though he were a Son, yet learned the obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.—Heb. v. 7-9.

Looking unto Jesus, who endured all this, we behold a most wonderful example of patient endurance in suffering and perseverance in him, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame. All this the suffering Lamb of God endured for the joy that was set before him, not for any comfort the world could supply; for no affliction for the present is joyous, but sanctified sufferings afterward yield peaceable fruits of righteousness to them who are exercised thereby. The joy which was set before the blessed Jesus was set forth in prophecy: "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities."—Isa. liii. 10, 11. "Thus it behooved him to suffer, and to rise from the dead on the third day," when he should be raised from the dead by the glory of the Father. When the eyes of our understanding are enlightened, we "may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."—Eph. i. 18-23.

Thus we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, now crowned with glory and honor. The once humiliated, patient, suffering Lamb of God is exalted and set down with the Father on his throne of transcendent glory; having risen from the dead and ascended up on high, and having led captivity captive, he has a name and glory which transcends every name that is named in heaven or in earth, in full possession of all power in heaven and in earth. To him every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear.

"Behold he mounts his throne of state,
And fills the Mediatorial seat,
While millions bowing at his feet
With loud hosannahs tell —

Though he endur'd exquisite pains,
He led the monster, Death, in chains;
While seraphs in their loudest strains
With music fill bright Eden's plains —
He's conquer'd death and hell."

To this once suffering but now triumphant Savior the eye of faith in all the saints is directed to look, and in him they see the Captain of their salvation, who has led the way through great tribulation up to the joys at God's right hand. The joy that was once set before him is now set before his followers; and as thus it behooved him to suffer, so now it behooves his followers to suffer for his sake. And the same joy that was before him is now before us, if we are his people; and as he endured the cross and despised the shame, the bright example is presented to our faith, for unto us it is given on his behalf, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake; for if we suffer with him, we shall also be glorified together. And as he has overcome and sat down with the

Father, so shall we overcome and sit down with him in his glory, when all tears shall be wiped away, and sighing and sorrowing shall be known no more forever. No one had led the untrodden pathway before him; but he has led the way for us, having made the passage through death up to the immortal realms of his supreme glory. He is the first begotten from the dead, and the first born among many brethren, and the way is open. He has entered as our High Priest within the vail for us; and although the intervening vail now hides from us the ineffable splendor of his glory, so that it doth not yet appear what we shall be in the consummation of the glory which is held in reserve for all who love his appearing, yet the golden bells of his priestly robe are heard, giving the cheerful assurance that he ever lievth by the power of an endless life, and because he lives, we shall live with him, if we now are of them who love his appearing.

Followers of our God and Savior, as dear children, it becomes us to lay aside every weight; we cannot bear the crushing weight of the tables of the Sinai law which Moses brought down; how can we run a race with such a load? Why attempt to run with a yoke upon our neck which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear? The law is not destroyed, but it is fulfilled, and its righteousness is fulfilled in all who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. We are no more to serve in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the spirit. Nor can we run well if we indulge in making provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lustings. Self and selfishness is too much of a load for us to carry if we run in this race; let self be denied, avarice curbed, fame and worldly honors be resigned, and laying aside all malice, and all guile, and all hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby. These weights are serious hindrances, and from them we need to be relieved, in order that we may so run that we may obtain the prize, and not be as they who beat the air. Christians find themselves annoyed by so many besetting sins, that they are sometimes perplexed to know what is their most besetting sin. It seems to us that the Hebrew disciples were more easily beset by the sin of legalism than any other. It seemed hard for them to see how they were to be saved without being circumcised and keeping the law of Moses. Some of the Gentile churches became bewitched with that heresy, and it seemed hard to wean them from it. But this race which they were called to run was not set behind, but before them, therefore they were to look unto Jesus, not to Moses; for "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." To run this race the runner should suffer no attraction to allure or draw his eyes away from Jesus. As the eye of the faithful servant is unto his master, and the eye of the maid is unto her mistress, so should all the followers of Jesus be looking unto him, and to him alone, as their pattern and forerunner; looking to him for grace to keep them in the way, and finally to give them the victory over sin, death and hell, and to receive them into the full fruition of their reserved inheritance at the right hand of the awful majesty of his throne above.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, written shortly before his death, and published August 1, 1881)

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to call to his eternal home one of our oldest members, Brother Lewis Apple. He joined the church at Lickfork at our September meeting, 1905, and was baptized by Elder C. F. Denny. He departed this life March 19, 1955, at the age of seventy-five.

He was a good and faithful member, having served as clerk of the church for a good many years. The funeral service was conducted by Elder J. W. Gilliam at the City Funeral Home, Reidsville, N. C.; and his body was laid to rest in the family cemetery there, to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We feel in his death we have sustained a great loss, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, First, that we submit to the will of God who doeth all things well, feeling that our loss is his eternal gain.

Second, That we extend our heart felt sympathy to the bereaved family.

Third, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication, a copy recorded in our minutes, and a copy to the family.

Done by order of the church at our June, 1955, meeting.

Charles L. Saunders, Clerk

ORDINATION OF A DEACON

Reed Creek Church, Virginia
July 9, 1955

Pursuant to a call of Reed Creek Church the following Elders, C. E. Turner, R. A. May, J. R. Hollinsworth and P. E. Ingram met to inquire into the qualifications, and ordain if found qualified, Brother Jamie E. Cooper for a deacon. Elder C. E. Turner was chosen moderator and P. E. Ingram as clerk. The first thing done by the moderator was to call on Elder J. G. L. Hash, a visiting Elder, to offer prayer. Then the choosing of clerk; then the visiting Elders and Deacons were invited to become a part of the Presbytery. Elders R. A. May and Layton Wingfield were chosen to lead in questioning, and Elder J. R. Hollinsworth to offer the ordination prayer in the laying on of hands and Elder J. G. L. Hash, to deliver the charge with Elder J. E. Burgess to speak for the Church.

Elder C. E. Turner proceeded to read from Acts of the Apostles and 1st Timothy as to the appointing of the early deacons and their qualifications. Elder Burgess gave a good report of Brother Jamie Cooper. Upon being questioned by Elder R. A. May, Brother Cooper expressed his willingness to fill the office of Deacon, if ordained, to the best of his ability.

The moderator then questioned Brother Cooper concerning his ideas of the meaning of Predestination. His answer met with the satisfaction of the Presbytery.

All questions being fully satisfied, Brother Cooper was asked to be seated for the laying on of hands. Prayer followed by Elder Hollinsworth. Elder J. G. L. Hash delivered the charge. Those included in the laying on of hands not already mentioned included Elder Tom Turner, Deacons: Homer Minter, T. D. Dodson, L. A. Perdue, Tom Turner, John Turner and N. G. Brammer.

The Presbytery being fully satisfied, Deacon Cooper was delivered back to the Church as their ordained Deacon. Minutes were read, and approved.

(Elder) C. E. Turner, Moderator
(Elder) P. E. Ingram, Clerk

OBITUARIES

AMERICA JOHNSON PETERS

America Johnson Peters was born October 28, 1869, in Pike County, Kentucky, and died in Chehalis, Washington, July 29, 1955; making her stay on earth 89 years, 9 months and 1 day.

She had lived in Centralia 10 years. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church in young womanhood and remained a faithful member until death. She was buried in Greenwood Memorial Park on August 1, 1955.

She left to mourn her one son, George S. Buchanan, Centralia, Washington; one daughter, Amanda J. Frost, Portland, Oregon; three grandchildren; five great grandchildren; one brother, K. F. Johnson, Dayton, Tennessee; one sister, Mrs. Celia Newsome, Stamford, Connecticutt; one stepson, Milo Peters, Bremerton, Washington.

She was a firm believer in salvation by grace. She lived a virtuous life. To know her was to love and honor her. Her mind was clear and bright. She remained a help in all the church work and services until her last meeting day. As she was taken to her room at the last service she was blessed to attend, she raised her small aged hand heavenward and said, "Good night. God bless you all with love, peace and union." We felt it to be the benediction of a brave, true soldier of the cross.

Services were conducted by her pastor, Elder Howard Eason, who spoke comfortingly to us, using as a text, St. John 12:24. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

We as a church miss her greatly. She was to us a jewel. We feel our loss is her exceedingly great gain.

May God comfort all who mourn.

Elder Howard Eason, Pastor
Little Zion Primitive Baptist Church
Chehalis, Washington
Mrs. Effie Parke, Church Clerk

LILLA DAIL BRADLEY HELMS

Our loving darling Mother Lilla Dail Bradley Helms, died August 3, 1955, in the hospital at Lewisville, Arkansas, at the age of seventy-seven years. She was born near Andalusia, Alabama, and she was the daughter of Irvin P. and Annie Rhody Bradley. She

moved to Patmos, Arkansas, November 8, 1920; and in April 1929, she moved to Henttar, Oklahoma, to live with her daughter, Eva.

In May 1934 she united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Sandy Springs, Oklahoma. In April 1936 she came back to Patmos, Arkansas, to live with her son. In 1953 she moved her membership to Friendship Church near Rosston, Arkansas, where she was a devoted member until her death.

Mother was married in March 1896, to Pinken Lee Helms, who predeceased her. To this union were born three children: one son and two daughters. One of the daughters died in infancy. She left surviving a son, Edward Helms, Lewisville, Arkansas; a daughter, Eva Biddle, Patmos, Arkansas; and nine grandchildren and sixteen great grand-children, other relatives and many friends to mourn her passing.

Funeral services were conducted by her Pastor Elder Clayton at Friendship Church at Rosston, Arkansas. She will be missed by the Old Baptists, and by her son Edward Helms and daughter Eva Biddle and son-in-law, Charley F. Biddle, and the grand and great grand-children and friends.

The writer is her daughter Eva Biddle. It is so hard to give up our darling Mother, but our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is our giver and taker.

Mrs. Eva Biddle

MRS. ROENA BARRINGER

The passing from this life of Sister Roena Barringer at the Benedictine Hospital in Kingston, N. Y., August 21, 1955, following an operation, brought sorrow into many a home. The funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Old School Baptist meeting house in Shokan on the following Wednesday. The interment was in the Palentown Cemetery near Samsonville, N. Y. Among the surviving relatives are one son, Floyd, a daughter, Mrs. Delia Lewis, of Olive Bridge, N. Y.; also a brother and one sister.

Sister Barringer was born December 16, 1878, near Samsonville, and spent most of her long and useful life at that place. She was united in marriage to Arthur Barringer, to whom she proved a loyal and able helpmeet, residing all their married life at Samsonville. After her husband's death in 1950, she remained at Samsonville except at intervals when she made her home with relatives.

Thirty-two years ago she united with the Olive and Hurley Primitive Baptist Church and was one of its faithful members. Sister Barringer was an outstanding character in many respects: her unassuming ways, her hospitality, pleasing personality and notable qualities as wife, mother, neighbor and friend, greatly endeared her to those who knew her. She leaves in their hearts a shrine of cherished memories.

(Elder) Arnold H. Bellows

MRS. ELIZABETH GRAFTON

Ebenezer Church of Baltimore was made poorer by the death of Sister Elizabeth Grafton, who passed away at Union Memorial Hospital in Baltimore, June 8, 1955, a few days after her eighty-fourth birthday. Her illness was comparatively brief, and all that medical science could do to relieve her physical sufferings was brought into requisition, but in vain.

Her pastor, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, of West Hurley, being unable to be present, the funeral services were conducted by Elder John D. Wood of Manassas, Virginia, at the late home of the deceased in Harford County, Maryland. She was laid to rest in the cemetery of the Episcopal Church of Rock Spring, Maryland.

Five children survive as follows: Mrs. Fred R. Tucker, Mrs. Ethel G. Bronson, Forest Hill, Maryland; Mrs. Charles Cruikshank, Almiran Grafton, Baltimore; William Grafton, California. Among other survivors are four grandchildren and nine great grand-children.

Sister Grafton was a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Kean of Forest Hill, and was born June 4, 1871. Her early life was spent in Virginia; and in 1888 she was united in marriage to Almiran Durand Grafton and made their home in Baltimore many years before his death. She united with the Old School Baptist Church in 1904, and was baptized by the late Elder William Grafton. She was an unusual character in all those splendid qualities which make for noble and unselfish womanhood and for devotedness in her home as wife and mother. She did not forsake the assembling together of the saints at the meetings of her brethren unless prevented by circumstances over which she had no control. She led an active life almost to the time of her death and loved to minister in any way to her friends and brethren.

(Elder) Arnold H. Bellows

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 123 DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1955 NO. 12

Jesus, blessed Jesus, my all,
Upon thee dear Jesus I call;
None else can help, just thee alone,
For thou dost sit upon my throne.

All my needs thou canst supply;
Upon thy free grace I can rely.
When in distress to thee I turn
For thy great love my soul doth yearn.

I am poor, weak and full of sin,
But thou art strong and pure within.
Thy cleansing power can make me clean —
I'm made strong when on thee I lean.

Thy power is great, thy love sublime,
Thy mercies sweet, thou art divine.
Most holy Lord I love thee so,
Because thou loved me first I know.

Oh blessed thought! dear Jesus mine,
Sweet peace and rest in thee I find.
It is sweet to know thou doth care;
Blessed Jesus thou art most fair.

My ways sinful, my thoughts unclean;
Unless Jesus thou intervene
Hell is my doom and justly so,
But thou didst otherwise, I know.

Blessed Jesus I'll trust in thee
'Till thou dost come to ransome me:
Then I'll sing thy redeeming praise
Around thy throne thru endless days.

Minnie Lee Williams
Snyder, Texas

THINGS PRESENT

This is one of ten things which the apostle Paul says he is persuaded shall never be able to separate the saints from the love of God. He names them thus; "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus." — Romans viii. 38, 39. I am thinking now of one of these wonderful things in this most wonderful list: "things present," and am asking myself, Is there not a sense in which any one, or all, of these most remarkable things becomes to us "things present"? At whatever point in time or space we begin our contemplation of any one of this striking list of things we find ourselves engaged with "things present." Let us call up our powers of thought, and force our minds to take hold upon any one of these subjects presented to us, and we shall still be dealing with "things present." We cannot get away from this in any direction. It is only through "things present that we can think of anything. By "things present" only can we know of the past or touch the "things to come." One moment only is ours, and that is constantly with us, and yet always flowing by, never away from us. And what is beyond? "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." — Psalms cxxxix. 6.

What a mystery is memory! By that peculiar power I am looking upon the dear faces of loved ones long gone from me, and listening to pleasant voices long since silent unto me. Memory is bringing unto me things belonging to my spiritual childhood, youth and manhood, things and people connected with my early spiritual experience, which become sweet "things present" to me.

Just now, sitting here alone, I have been thinking of those who have been with me in the things of the kingdom of God, and have felt a desire to write something of my present condition and exercise of mind to the "brethren scattered abroad," with whom I have been associated and in correspondence for the past fifty-three years. How good and pleasant the thought of them seems to

me at this time. I have always had some of those dear, exercised people of God in my mind when writing, as I do when speaking. But now how many are gone home of those I loved to talk with of spiritual things. So many I never knew, except through their letters, but whom I dearly loved. How kind and loving they have all been to me, from the very first of my poor and feeble efforts to preach, wherever I have been with them in all our wide country. I have always felt so unable and unworthy, and as "less than the least of all saints," it has really been very wonderful to me that I should have been made to feel such a kind and sweet reception among the dear kindred in Christ. Now as I meet them, and correspond with them, and try to preach, I feel the absence of so many to whom I have felt so near that I cannot but feel lonely. But wherever I meet with those who "know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge," it seems that I feel at home in a measure with them. But can I write anything that will be profitable or comforting to them? Of late I have written but little; it has seemed to me that I could not write, my mind has not been led that way. I have loved to write when I could feel the presence of the dear Savior. I have not satisfied myself when preaching or writing, but have written out of my own heart, and that is why so many precious responses have come to me. That which comes from the heart will reach the heart.

I am looking back to the bright morning when I wrote to Elder Gilbert Beebe, a few days after he had baptized me, my heart full of gladness and rejoicing. My new life was just begun at that time. I lived that spiritual life, while my hands and my mortal powers were going on in my daily work. But this was only for a time. I seemed to be traveling rapidly in these new and glorious things. I appeared to be one with the people of God, and did not know or understand the new life I was living. If ever I have preached the gospel I must have been preaching then without knowing it. I had no thought of preaching, but was talking of the one thing all the time, when the thought came suddenly to my mind, and I spoke aloud while alone, after having heard a sermon of false doctrine: I must preach. I immediately wrote asking Elder Beebe what this exercise meant. He replied that the church had for some time thought I had a work to do, and were waiting until He would show it to me. It was surprising to me that the Lord would call one so unable and so unworthy as I to so holy a work, and I feel that very deeply to the present time. I have so often felt that I had to say, "I abhor myself." There is much pain and distress in that experience, and it sometimes causes doubt and fear, and yet when brethren have told me of such painful exercises I have been led out in love and fellowship to them.

In those early days I wrote much because I had to write; it was a relief. I cannot but feel lonely as I think of things past, and the solemn mystery of memory causes them to become "things present" to me. Those who made up my congregations during so many years, and over so wide an extent of country, and especially the faces of those who manifested spiritual love and fellowship, surely it is a blessed and sweet memory that places them among "things present" to me. In memory I see them now, see them before me, and feel that we are one in the unity of the Spirit, and in the love of the dear Savior, in whose presence there is fullness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

When I began to try to preach and serve churches there were few ministers who were over eighty years of age. Elders Thomas Barton, Samuel Trott and I think Thomas McColl are all I can think of now, beside one or two in the far west. There were many who were but little short of that age, who would not have objected to being called old. They seemed to me then much older than I seem to myself now. I will name a few: Elders Gilbert Beebe, Conklin, Hartwell, Rittenhouse, Dudley, Leach-

man, Grafton and Hassell. But I must not undertake to name them here, for I would be omitting some of the best and sweetest gifts, most dear to the brethren.

How I did love to hear those old and faithful soldiers of the cross preach the gospel, contending earnestly for the faith, and tracing out the exercises and experiences of the people of God. It was very animating and comforting to hear them preach and listen to their conversation, which, both preaching and conversation, was concerning the experience of grace and the beautiful order and ordinances of the gospel church. I am glad to say it is the same to-day by those dear brethren who are laboring among the churches now. I love to think of them; it is a comfort to me to merely write their names as I think of their work and their steadfastness in the truth of the gospel.

Of those who were ordained at the time of my ordination, Dec. 8th, 1864, I do not think of any who are left with us at this time; but of clear minded, true and faithful ministers of the gospel we are favored with a goodly number, and for such gifts we have reason to thank the Lord. The wise man said: "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." To my mind this is true concerning the faithful work of the Elders in the church, the elder among the ministers of the gospel, and of the effect of their faithful work among the brethren and churches over whom they have rule. (Heb. xiii. 7, 17.) Members and ministers do not teach each other in regard to what and how to preach, nor can spiritual knowledge be given on these subjects, yet there is a sense in which the ministers and pastors have the rule over the churches, which is very important. See the last chapter of Hebrews. The churches of this country and of England, about the time of the division in 1832, were favored with most fatherly and profitable gifts, and were trained up in the order of the gospel. Elder Conklin was called among the brethren the "peacemaker." Elder Barton was another most fatherly and quieting and nourishig gift. Elder Trott had great learning (though never displayed), and he was as a little child in simplicity. When I was under great exercise of mind and in deep trouble I went about one hundred and fifty miles to meet him, of whom I had heard, to ask him some "hard questions," and I think the spiritual Solomon answered them. Elder Leachman was a man of peculiar power in preaching. It seems to me now that I never heard a more powerful man in the pulpit. I would love to write more about these men, because they were "sons of thunder," and also "sons of consolation," and the latest of our ministers and churches show the effect of spiritual training up and instruction is spiritual things.

I count myself as one among the youngest and least of those among whom I am thankful to have a place. We surely have had most excellent examples and training, such as the apostles teach in all their epistles. We also have been favored with a periodical that has most clearly and unwaveringly presented and contended for the doctrine of salvation by grace during all the years of our standing as an organization separate and distinct from the doctrine and order that has not the inspired Scriptures of truth for the guide of their faith and practice. The Signs of the Times has a right to be known as the organ of the Old School Baptist Church, as its publication began about the same time as the separation of the church from all worldly doctrine and organizations. To me it appears that the present editors are following the example of all the former editors, and fully sustaining the gospel character of the Signs as it was under the work of the first editor and publisher, Elder Gilbert Beebe, in 1832. It appears to me that their work has been most excellent, and profitable to the churches and brethren, and I earnestly hope the Lord will be pleased to so uphold them that they shall not become disheartened or dis-

couraged. So far I regard every assertion made in the editorial department upon important points of doctrine, order and experience as being fully sustained by the inspired Scriptures of truth. It appears to me that the ordinary way in which the Lord feeds his flock is by the public preaching of the word. But the holy men of old wrote gospel truth to be read in the churches, and this form of administering the word was recognized by the apostles as edifying to the churches and brethren. I desire the welfare and good effect of all periodicals in which the unadulterated truth of the gospel is published.

In the love of the truth, and in the precious hope of the gospel, which was given me fifty-three years ago,

SILAS H. DURAND.

(The above was written in December, 1915. It is republished by request.)

Huntington, W. Va.

Dear Sisters Ball and Claggett,
Washington, D. C.

Your welcome letter is at hand, and I try to answer this beautiful spring morning. You spoke about a lot of people in your locality who believe, or claim, they are saved; and that all anyone needs to do is to go to the great company and tell them what great things they have done for the Lord. I have been told many times that God cannot save you unless you let him, and give him a chance to save you — that he has done all he can, and now it is up to you to let him. This is blasphemy; they underestimate the power of God; they make God a liar, and claim if you are saved and I am not, he is an unjust God. The devil is a slick creature. We find in the garden of Eden he persuaded our mother Eve, and told her you will not surely die; and had not Jesus crushed his head and ovecome him, we would still be in a state of death like the millions that know not God.

It is much easier to follow the course of least resistance, and we would all follow the Devil; but here comes in the love of God for the people he predestinated unto glory, and wrote their names in the Lamb's book of life before he made the world. The people who claim they are saved have nothing but a distorted natural mind. Yes, they believe it. It comes from nature and is nothing more than the teaching of Satan.

Election is the doctrine of the Bible — who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect. Jesus says, I go to prepare a place for you, and if it were not so I would have told you. I have always preached that god has a **prepared people** for a **prepared place.** It gives us great pleasure and hope when he says that after those days, I will write my laws in their hearts, and put them in their minds; and I will be unto them a God, and they SHALL be unto me a people; they shall all know me from the least to the greatest; I will be merciful to their unrighteousness and their sins and iniquities I will remember no more.

Grace is fast becoming a nonentity among the called religious world, and works is substituted; and Election is foolishness to them. The cunning works of the devil is fast becoming the blasphemous doctrine of the world; and if it were possible they would deceive the very elect, but thanks be unto God, it is not possible.

Let us leave the God dishonoring, chance system doctrine, and have only the doctrine laid down in the Scriptures — this **do religion** for a **done religion.** We know that life preceeds action; and we know that except a man be born again (or from above) he cannot see the kingdom of God. We also know that there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God; and we know that God is a God of purpose, and that all things work together for good to them that love God; and we love him because he first loved us.

It is written, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." All his chosen people that have the law of God in their hearts will not serve any other; they know him; they

have seen him, and felt his presence in them; and nothing can give them more comfort than to hear of him. His servants are commanded to speak comfortably unto them, and tell them that their warfare is accomplished, and they have received double for all their sins. We know him not only in our earthly life, feeling our sins are all forgiven, but have the good hope in him that after this life is ended we have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

We sing, "How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in his excellent word." Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will towards men. May the Lord be praised.

Thanks for thinking of this poor old sinner, who has a hope in Him.

(Elder) George L. Weaver

EXPERIENCE

Floyd, Va.
November, 1912

Dear Brother Branscome:

I will try to tell you how I have lived and of some of the dealings of the Lord with me. From childhood I have had serious thoughts about death; and when I saw anyone baptized, I wished I was as good, and fit to be baptized with them. I did not know how to obtain this fitness, but decided to do the best I could, hoping to be fit someday.

When only sixteen years of age, March 7, 1907, I was married. I would become so troubled I could not stay in the house, and nothing was a satisfaction to me. I wanted to cry as hard as I could and beg the Lord to help me. This severe trouble would sometimes last more than an half hour, and then I felt alright till the trouble returned. At each returning they seemed harder. When in trouble, I remember going into a room of the house and closing the door, fearing someone might see me. There I begged the Lord to help me, for I felt that each breath might be the last one, I was so smothered. Over and over I would repeat these words, "Lord help me; forgive me of my sins." I did not know what ailed me and did not want anyone to know that I was in this trouble. I felt that no one was ever as I was. I remember again when this trouble was upon me, how I walked the floor, wringing my hands, and could not work, for all I did was done wrong. I laid my work down and cried, saying, "Lord, have mercy on me! Lord, what shall I do?" I did not want anyone to come and find me in that condition. One day a good Old Baptist woman told me of her troubles, and it helped me so much, for she seemed to tell my feelings; but, again, I would think, Surely I am mistaken. When in my deepest trouble, I was confined to my bed and could not get away from my dear husband and good people. I felt to be choking and had to lay there begging the Lord in silence, with every breath, to help me; but it seemed to do me no good. I tried to keep my feelings concealed: for, if I cried, they would want to know what was the matter with me, and I could not tell them. But it was late in the evening and soon all went to bed. Then I cried and begged the Lord to help me. I felt that I wanted to pray as I never did before. But I felt ashamed to try, for I did not know how to pray, nor what to say; but I got out of bed, knelt and did the best I could. But I could only say, "Lord, have mercy on me; Lord, help me and forgive my sins." This, or similar words was all I could say, but I repeated them over and over. Then my troubles left me and I rested well the remainder of the night. I felt pleased over this, for I felt the Lord has heard me and helped me.

Then, thinking over my life, I felt as though I had committed some great crime, causing such a burden in my heart greater than I could bear. I felt I had done worse than anybody else. But I could not see what it was. I would look at other people, how mean they had done, and they were still enjoying themselves, while I had done nothing and was in so much trouble.

At this time my husband was away

from home, and I wrote him to come home. I felt that I did not have long to live, and thought we ought to stay together while we lived. I thought I would not be so troubled when he came back, but it was the same. I did not tell him of the trouble I was in. I went on in this trouble for five years, till I was twenty-one years old. In December, 1911, I was sick of typhoid fever. I cried and begged the Lord to show me whether my sins had been pardoned or not; and, if not forgiven, that he would forgive them. I grew worse, and the doctor gave me up. I thought there was no chance for me to get well, that I was bound to die. I told my dear husband to care for my two children, for I could not get well. I took three spells in which I was speechless. When I revived the first time, I thought I was going to die and going to torment. What an awful thing to die and go to torment. I begged the Lord as long as I had breath to help and save me. I then felt to be gone forever. Then I was made to feel that I would die and go to heaven. I told them to let me alone and not revive me again, for I was easy and going to rest. Then my breath left me again. It seemed that I had died three times, and the third time, while I was gone, a voice spoke and said to me — it was Jesus that spoke, and said, "You shall live and get well, and be baptized." Then I spoke out and said, "Thank God! thank God!" I was then given strength to rise upon my arms and call my dear husband to my bedside and told him to give me his hand, that I wanted to tell him what Jesus had told me, I said, "Yes, I am going to get well, and I am not going to have any more bad spells." O, how happy, how happy I was! No tongue can express it. I praised God all day and all night; and it seemed that everything was praising God. It seemed that I had died and awaked in another world, where everything seemed brighter and sweeter. I wanted to see everybody, and tell them what great things Jesus had done for me. I thought, If I were only able to be baptized I never would see any more trouble. I thought I loved the Old Baptists before, but I have the love for them now that I never had before. I talked much about Brother Hash and they sent for him, and he came to see me. I was so glad to see him and did not want him to leave me. I was so weak that I could not talk much to him; but I told him what Jesus had told me. He said that was enough, to believe in Jesus, for he was the one to look to. He told me, if I did not get well, he was satisfied I would wear a crown in heaven. His talk helped me so much.

In about six weeks I was able to walk, and on the 4th Sunday in April, 1912, I went to County Line Church to preaching. My aim was to offer to the church, but when the door was opened for the reception of members, I did not go. When preaching was over I did not want to leave. I wanted to go up to Elder Asa D. Shortt and tell him I wanted to talk with him. But I did not; and when I started home, I felt that I would never get home. I promised myself, if I lived till next meeting, I would not let the opportunity leave me. So, on Saturday before the 4th Sunday in May, 1912, I told a part of what I have written and was received; and the 4th Sunday in June, I was baptized by Elder H. V. Cole. That was a happy day for me. All my troubles had left me, and I felt so much better satisfied. My little hope seems small at times, and again, it brightens up and I would not take anything in this world for it. Probably this will be some benefit to some of the readers of the Messenger, for the Messenger of Truth has been a great help to me. I had never heard anyone talk and tell their feelings to the church.

I have made my letter too long, but will hand it to Elder Shortt, who can do as he thinks best about having it published.

Your sister in hope,
Drusiler Smith Gillispie

(Sister Gillispie is now a member of Black Rock Church. The above is republished by request. J. D. W.)

Aldie, Virginia

Dear Elder Spangler:

I regret that I neglected to renew my subscription before its expiration date; however, I appreciate your continuing to send it regularly as I enjoy reading the wonderful doctrine and messages that fill the Signs of the Times. I have found from my personal experience and belief that the Primitive Baptist have the only soul satisfying religion in existance. I don't mean to cast a reflection on any denomination. The Lord has led me this way, and I rejoice in his works. I am an unworthy sinner — helpless to do anything myself, totally depending on Him every breath. He has promised us to provide our needs, and through his great love, grace and mercy, they shall be supplied.

It is such a comfort to a poor sinner's soul to know that the blood of Christ is sufficent to cleanse every stain of sin. The children of God know that of themselves they can do nothing to merit heaven. Salvation is by the grace of God: through faith we receive a blessed hope.

Mrs. Julia T. Sowers

Monticello, Georgia

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I would like this morning to express my appreciation to the editors and all who contribute such wonderful articles to the Signs. It is truly welcomed in my lonely home.

My dear husband departed this life in 1947. We were blessed with four children — all married now, and I am left alone. I live from one to the other.

I deeply appreciate this good paper, and the beautiful words of truth contributed by our dearly beloved ministers and gifted writers; and the church news. My little home church and the good papers are the greatest comfort and pleasure I have here: I am not able to go to my church regularly, due to my health, and a way to go. Oh, what a great Master we have, to give us poor sinners so many great blessings here. Bless His holy name!

In reading these good papers, we are lifted in spirit, grow in grace, keep informed of good meetings, and general news of our many kindred in Christ. I enjoy the sweet experiences; and I rejoice to hear of the dear little ones coming home, telling of His great love and mercy. I often find myself weeping, and rejoicing at the sweet words which come to my poor heart — makes me wonder, and hope I am one of His little ones. I am often cast down, but I do believe that the dear Lord has been merciful to me, and I have been made to look to Him who is merciful to poor sinners. I don't feel worthy to be called a child of God, or to be numbered with the dear Old Baptists, but, if I know my heart, I love them better than anything on earth — one of the greatest evidences I have.

I have been blessed to hear the gospel preached from childhood to the present day — seventy-three years. May the Lord bless the editors and writers of the Signs to continue to set forth the truth as it is in Christ.

Mrs. Ollie Callaway

AND THERE SHALL BE NO MORE CURSE
(Revelation 22:3)

Delmar, Delaware

Dear Brother Spangler:

Two readers of the Signs seem to want me to write again for the family paper. And as the words at the heading of this letter have been sounding in my ears for several weeks, I will make the attempt. At this present time, these words seem to be the most important of all the words in the entire Bible. For anyone to receive comfort from the Scriptures, all must be given faith to believe what the Scripture saith.

In order for us to know why a curse was pronounced against the human race, it is necessary, I think, for us to go back to the book of Genesis and learn

the reason for this curse. Of course the transgression of Adam and Eve was the reason for the curse. In Chapter 3, and Verses 17 to 19 inclusive, we find these words: "And unto Adam He said, and because thou hast harkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree which I commanded thee not to eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat of the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." So here we find the reason for the curse.

Someone may say it was only Adam and Eve that disobeyed. Why, then, should the curse be upon their children? They law of nature is, "Like begets like." So you see, since Adam and Eve had both become sinners, their posterity would also be sinners. The Apostle says, "Death was passed upon all, because that all have sinned." Ah, that awful word Sin! And how we long to be free from it. It is the worst of all diseases. Oftimes we are like the Psalmist. "Innumerable sins get hold upon us, and we cannot look up." Adam and Eve were both told before they partook of the forbidden fruit, that in the day they did they would surely die. Well, eventually they did die, and people have been dying ever since, and will continue to die until the curse of death is removed.

But there is a time coming when the curse that is now upon the earth will be removed. To prove this, let us turn to Revelations, Chapter 21, and Verse 4. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." We are to remember that the book of Revelation is the last book of the Bible. With the closing of this book, the writing of the Bible was finished. Since that time there has been different opinions as to what the book teaches. Some believe that Revelations is a progressive history of the Church from the first century to the end of time. Another believes that almost, if not altogether, the book has already been fulfilled. Another class believes that most of the book at least, refers to events yet to come.

But we want to know who is right. We want to write the truth, or we don't want to write at all. Anything which is written which is not the truth should not be written. The thoughts which I have in connection with this subject seem to be the truth, but you be the judge. "And there shall be no more curse." When will that time be, we feel to ask? Surely that time is not now, for disease and death, thorns and thistles, pests of various kinds, are still here to plague us. So the curse is still upon us.

But, my Brother, I tell you this curse is going to be removed! Why do I believe this? The reason is simple. The Bible says so. The Bible is not just an ordinary book. It is a book written by the inspiration of God, who is the source of all wisdom. There is no higher authority than He. The Bible is a guide book for God's elect people. I also call it a law book for this elect class.

"But there shall be no more curse." These words are assuring. By an eye of faith we will now look into the future for a moment. At the day appointed, the change will come. A day of tranquility will cover the earth. Christ will have returned to call the dead from their long sleep in their graves; then shall corruption put on incorruption, and mortality immortality, and then shall be brought to pass the saying, "O death where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Oh, what a subject for a mortal man to think about! But God's people must be comforted from time to time. They must be told that "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." They must be told that the man

of sin has nearly come to the end of his reign. But how much more power will be given him, we do not yet know.

Let us now turn to Matthew 24. We will commence quoting at verse 36. "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of Heaven, but my Father only." We see in these words that Christ has returned to the direct question of his disciples as recorded in verse 3 of this 24th chapter. Now we will quote from verses 37 to 39, inclusive. "But as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away: So shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Now my friends, let us pause for just a moment and just think. Christ makes it plan to His disciples that the time when the end of the world be, was known only to His Father. The inference is that He did not know Himself at that time. But He does give us a picture of what the time will be like just prior to His return. He says it will be like the time was in the days of Noah. They were eating, drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away.

If we take time to think for a moment, we will see that the majority of the human race is about the same as it was in the days of Noah. The people are eating and drinking, marrying, and, I will add, getting divorces, and I suppose they are having what they call a general good time. But a change is coming in world affairs, I tell you! In verse 22 of the 24th chapter of Matthew, we have the words of Christ Himself; and here they are: "And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

I am aware of the fact that some believe that the words of Christ in Matthew 24 were all fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus A. D. 70, and all spoken by Christ relating to the temple and Jerusalem, were fulfilled during the generation of those living at that time. But, as I see it, Christ was looking beyond that present generation. Let us now notice verse 14 of this 24th chapter. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." The disciples did preach unto all the nations that existed during their day, but other nations, or one nation at least has come into being since the days of the apostles, and the nation to which I am referring is the United States.

This continent was not discovered until 1492. Christ said this gospel of the kingdom would be preached in all the world for a witness, etc. The United States is now a part of this present world; and the gospel is now being preached both by tongue and pen within her borders. And my personal opinion is that the United States is the last nation for the gospel to be preached into. Jerusalem was to be trodden down by the Gentiles until the time of the Gentiles be come in. And I think the time of the Gentiles has come in, or is coming in. I have been silently watching developments in Palestine since the year 1920. During that year, General Allenby led his troops into Jerusalem, meeting no resistance. Since that time the Jews have been returning to Palestine, and in recent years in vast numbers. And this is in accord with the prophecy of Ezekiel, which prophecy we will now consider.

Beginning at chapter 36 and reading on to chapter 39, we have a very vivid account of what the Lord is going to do for His people during the latter days. He is going to do better for them in the end than He did at the beginning. Among other things He is going to take away the heart of stone, and give them a heart of flesh. Stone has no feeling; but flesh does. No need to try to explain what these words mean, for they are easily understood. But the Lord makes it plain He is not going to do these things for His people for their

sake, but for His holy name's sake will He do them. He is going to fulfill every promise made.

Now, we will notice briefly chapter 37 of Ezekiel's prophecy. In this chapter the prophet says: "The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones." As we read on, we find the prophet was compelled to take a good view of these bones, and upon completing this view, he says there were very many in the open valley; and lo, they were very dry. We are now beginning to see what the purpose of the Lord was in leading His prophet out to view these dry bones. He is going to demonstrate His almighty power right before His prophet. So the Lord asks His prophet a question. "Son of man, can these bones live?" Of course the prophet did not know, so he gave a very good answer. "O Lord God, Thou knowest." Now the prophet is commanded to prophesy upon these bones and say until them, "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord." So in the vision the prophet saw Israel restored and brought back to her own land. But Israel's troubles will not be over after they are brought back to Palestine. For a mighty foe awaits the time to come upon them.

Before proceeding further, I will say I fully realize I have launched out into the deep, but it is calm out here. The reader may ask, "Why are you going so far back in the Old Testament, and connecting the prophecy of Ezekiel with Revelation?" My answer is, because as I see it, Ezekiel harmonizes well with Revelation. You will notice that after the Lord has brought back His people from the countries into which they had been driven, that He is going to bring the forces of anti-Christ against His people Israel. These forces are mentioned in chapters 38 and 39. In chapter 38 the prophet is commanded to set his face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Mescheck, and prophesy against him. Then follows what the Lord is going to do to Gog. He is going to turn him back, put hooks in his jaws (highly symbolic language), bring him forth and all his horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords: Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them, all of them with shield and helmet: Gomer and his bands, the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands: and many people with thee.

As we read on, we see that after many days Gog is to be visited. "In the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them." Lest I forget, the name Gog means, high, exalted, etc. So there is going to be one who the Lord will bring against the land of Palestine, and against His people, and there Gog and his forces will be destroyed. They will unwittingly be committing suicide.

I must leave the prophecy of Ezekiel now, and glance at the prophecy of Daniel. The first thing I feel to call attention to in the book of Daniel, is the words recorded in verse 36 of the eleventh chapter. The words follow: "And the king shall do according to his will; and he will exalt himself, and magnify himself above every God, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of Gods and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done." Now, just a brief thought in connection with these words. You see something is determined to be done. What is it? And by whom came this determination? The Lord has determined beforehand exactly what this wicked king should do. And when this wicked king has done all that is ordained for him to do, he will be stopped in his tracks.

But someone may say, "Thus speaking, you are making God the author of sin." I don't hardly think so. Let me explain. You see, a parent has a right

to punish his child when it disobeys him, even if he hates to do it. In like manner the Lord has a right to punish His people when they disobey Him. In the book of Ezekiel, which we previously considered, we learned why the Lord punished His chosen people. Now I think it important to notice Second Thessalonians, chapter 2, to where we find the connection to Daniel: 11-36. It will be necessary to quote several verses in this chapter.

The apostle starts this chapter by saying, "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; So that he as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth will let until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."

You will notice that the apostle says there will be a falling away before the day of Christ. Well, there has been a falling away, and it is progressing steadily. This brings to our mind what is written somewhere in the Bible, and it goes something like this: "In that day seven women shall lay hold on one man, and shall say unto him, we will eat our own bread, wear our own apparel, only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." What a striking illustration that is of what we see today among many who profess to be following Christ, but in reality are not. They still want the privilege to attend card parties, attend theatres, listen at programs over the radio, some of which are sickening. We want to do all these things, but we want to be called Christians, or followers of Christ. Well Christ knows all about this, and He will render His judgment in the matter at the time appointed.

Now a glance at Daniel, chapter 12. I think it necessary to quote three verses from this chapter, verses 1 to 3, inclusive. "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." And now Daniel is told to shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. So the labor of Daniel is completed when he is told to go his way till the end be: "for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."

I have referred to the prophecies of both Ezekiel and Daniel because their prophecies harmonize so well with Revelation, from which the subject at the heading of this article is taken. But just one more quotation from Daniel. In verse 7 of chapter 12, we have the following words: "And I heard the man clothed in linen which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth forever that it shall be for a time, times and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy

people, all these things shall be finished." That is to say, all the things that were previously prophesied of, would be finished.

Now we come to Revelation for the conclusion of this subject. It seems necessary to quote seven verses of chapter 10. "And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud; and a rainbow upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire; and he had in his hand a little book open; and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth, and cried with a loud voice as when a lion roareth; and when he had cried seven thunders uttered their voices. I was about to write, and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered and write them not. And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth forever and ever, who created heaven, the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer. But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begun to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets."

So now all can see why I have referred to prophets Ezekiel and Daniel. The quotations from Revelation simply confirm what the old prophets have written. And when what we call time comes to an end, then eternity in all its majestic splendor will be ushered in, and such rejoicing as this world has never seen, will take place. Then the words at the beginning of this article will be fulfilled: "And there shall be no more curse."

A .T. Benson

Greenfield, Tenn.

Dear Elder Rogers:

I feel like writing a few lines to you since reading your excellent article in a late issue of the Signs of the Times. It suited me so well I was given a desire to let you know that I enjoyed it.

I hope I love the gospel truth as is printed in the old reliable paper, the Signs of the Times, which I have read since June, 1910. I am not a member of the Old Faith Baptists, or any church whatever — just an outsider, but go sometimes to hear their preaching, which I most assuredly love and do believe in. I am ageing some, and most worn out; only do a little gardening. Have spent my life on the farm and have only had a hard livelihood. Have been called queer or strange, and am, I reckon, but have loved honesty and industry; do not endorse any free will doctrine such as is broadcasted so much.

I trust you will please pardon the liberty I am taking in addressing you these few lines in regard to your recent article. Would be glad to have a few lines from you, if you feel I am worthy of your notice.

Unworthily,
W. F. Stafford

DESIRES THE LORD'S WILL BE DONE

Danville, Virginia

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am sending three dollars to renew for the Signs for another year. I love to read the good writings that it contains, and I hope to be able to keep taking it as long as I live.

I regretted so much not being at the last meeting at Reidsville. I know if the Lord is willing I will be there next time. I am in a extremely nervous condition, and cannot attend as often as I wish. I always love to go to Dan River to meeting, as it seems to be such an humble place; and I always think of the scripture, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tiding of good things. I can just feel that the gospel is being preached there also, and I am given an understanding heart for a little while; but the doubts soon return and I am made to wonder, for I feel to be so different from everyone else, have I ever

known anything at all about it. But always whenever I get to the end of the way and think that hope is almost vanished, some sweet scripture will come to my mind to keep the little hope alive. This scripture has been such a comfort to me of late: "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

Such comfort and such love is beyond this world. I have cried and sung the old hymns until there are no tears, yet hope springs up in some wonderful way that I can see the wonderful hand of the Lord, and I do not have a desire to tarry here long. But not my will but the will of Him who never has, and never will, make a mistake.

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" (Psalms 27:1) This has been on my mind for some time. Hope all you are well. Betty Mae Bradner

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Walkers, Ontario, Canada R. F. D. 1

Dear Elder Spangler:

Enclosed you will find obituary of Sister Belle Ferguson; also money order for renewal of my Signs of the Times for two years — use the remainder as you see fit. I desire to take the Signs of the Times as long as I can see to read, as there are so many writings that tell of the way I travel, which encourages me to press onward, ever looking to the author and finisher of our faith.

May God bless you and your fellow laborers in the position He has placed you, that you may be enabled to rightly divide the word of truth, and show forth that which serves God, and that which serves him not.

May the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Your sister in a blessed hope,

Mrs. George Bishop

Rising Sun, Maryland

Dear Editors of the Signs of the Times:

I have been impressed for sometime to write something of what I hope is an experience of grace. My parents were Staton and Sarah Slusher, and I was born at Willis, Floyd County, Virginia, June 23, 1887; and was married to Eugene Bryant in 1904. I had serious thoughts of death quite often from childhood. For two long years I was in much trouble and would tremble when I would pick up the Bible; and I would make sure that no one saw me reading it, for I was such an awful sinner. My prayer was to the Lord day and night that he would have mercy on me. When I would lie down at night I could see a great gulf burning black with smoke. On the other side I could see a few Old Baptists; they were singing those sweet old hymns of Zion. Oh, how I wanted to go to them — the birds would fly across, and I wished I could exchange my life with a bird; for I felt it would be better to be with them for a little while, than never.

I felt I could not live from one day until another. One morning in April, 1909, I felt that death and hell drew near. I had two small children; so I fixed the fires and everything I thought might injure them, and put them to bed, hoping they would sleep until their father came from work; for I laid down never more to arise — I became blind, and Oh, how I prayed that God would open my eyes that I might see. Then I heard a voice say, What a change in you? I said, Yes, I do believe my sins have been forgiven; and as I opened my eyes I saw my mother holding a most beautiful light that outshined the sun. I arose, singing:

> "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
> That saved a wretch like me;
> I once was lost but now am found,
> Was blind but now I see."

When my dear husband came in, he did not find me dead — I hope I was spiritually alive, singing praises to His holy name. He said, God bless your

sweet soul, I knew what your trouble was. He passed away December 5, 1921, and was blessed with a sweet hope. I was left with seven children — the youngest seven months old. It seemed that the responsibility of rearing and caring for the children all alone was too much for me; when I saw as in a vision, my dear husband standing at a gateway in a beautiful white wall; he looked at me and smiled, and said, Fight on, you will gain that peaceful shore. I never felt that way again; and a voice said, The Lord will not put more on you than you are able to bear. I feel that He has been with me, and has given me peace and comfort as it seemed good to him. Oh, may I be blessed to fight the good fight of faith, though I am unworthy of the least of his blessings.

I feel that three of my children are with Him at rest — Estell, in 1924; Clement, in 1926 and Crystal, in 1944. I was married to David P. Farmer in 1927; and he passed away in 1944. He also had a hope in Christ. There was one son by this union, David.

In May, 1932, a neighbor asked us to take them to an association at Rock Springs Church, in Pennsylvania. As we entered the building, they were preaching; and I said, I know the joyful sound. We went back again the first Sunday in June. I did not recognize anyone there, but the time had come — I could not stay away any longer. With much fear and trembling, I went before the church, feeling that if they turned me down, I had no where else to go. To my surprise they received me. The Lord said, "My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power." Brother Charles Osborne and I were baptized the first Sunday in July, by Elder D. L. Topping, our much loved pastor; whom the Lord has called home. We have been wonderfully blessed to have Elder John D. Wood for our pastor since; he shuns not to declare the whole counsel of God. He and Sister Wood are much loved among us.

The day I was baptized was one of the happiest of my life. As we came out of the water they were singing, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," and I joined in the singing. And I went about my work singing praises to his holy name. I was not long on the mountain top, for I know what it is to be cast down with trials and tribulations, doubts and fears. Sometimes I wonder if He is gone forever; then he comes again with healing in his wings.

I feel that I have been of no value to the church, but the church has meant so much to me. Sweet fellowship you do not have on the outside; but fellowship satisfied my longing when nothing else would do. I dreamed of being in the middle of the ocean, and it was frozen over — the ice I was standing on broke loose; and as I rocked to and fro, having no other refuge, I cried unto the Lord, saying, I will put my trust in God, he will hold me up and not let me sink beneath his everlasting arms. Then it seemed that I was in a room where there were only a few; and a man handed me a paper which looked like a certificate, saying, This is yours; your name is written in the Lamb's book of life. Sometimes I have a sweet hope that it is written there; if so, it is like a nail driven in a sure place, and nothing present or to come can ever erase it.

I beg to be remembered when at the throne of grace; surely none needs it more than I.

Yours in a blessed hope,

Mrs. D. P. Farmer

"HE MAKETH THE CLOUDS HIS CHARIOT"

February 6, 1952

Dear Mrs. Pilchard,

Last night I was reading your letter in the "Signs" which had just come. It made me feel very close to you. What you said about the clouds made me want to tell you of something about the clouds as they affected me. My son was overseas flying a P-38. The flyer is all alone in this type of plane. When I thought of his being up there in the stormy sky hidden from earth by the clouds, I tried to pray for him; but I

felt I was so unfit, so far from God that he would never hear my prayers. I found myself thinking, "Oh, if my father were only here, God would hear his prayers."

That summer I went to Canada to a Quarterly Meeting. There was a stranger there, a sister, Mrs. Virginia Duncan. When I met her after the morning service, she told me that she had heard my father (Elder Durand) preach years ago in Kentucky. She said that he preached from the words. "He maketh the clouds His chariot." She was so carried away by the preaching that she felt she was right up there in that chariot, and she had never forgotten the feeling in all these years. I had the strangest feeling that God had sent her there that day to give me that message. Time seemed to be wiped out. It is impossible to put into words the feeling that I had, that my father had sent the comforting words to me. We learned afterwards that about that time my son was flying back to England alone after a mission. His plane was damaged, the communication system had been shot away, and the fog was heavy. He could not get the guiding message from his base. As he was flying so alone, the words came to him, "The people that sat in darkness have seen a great light." These words kept getting brighter and brighter in his mind, and he felt a presence near him and soon he saw the coast of England and made a safe landing. How true it is that:

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea
And rides upon the storm."

During a long period when we heard nothing from him, I had a feeling of seeing him safe under the shadow of God's wing. Whether he was coming home or not I did not know. But I knew that wherever he was he could not "go beyond" God's love and care. Day after day the words stayed with me;

"Under the shadow of Thy wing reposing,
I feel that all is best which comes to me;
I see Thy circling arm my way enclosing
And know that e'en my life is hid with thee."

I felt this as an assurance for him, that his life was safe with God.

I am very sorry that your sight is failing, and I do hope it may be the Lord's will to restore it to you. There was a deacon in our church who was going blind. He said he had always looked forward to old age when he would have time to read. That was denied him; but he bore his afflication beautifully, and said he had learned many things he would never have known if he had not had this cross to bear.

I wish I could make you know how much your letter meant to me.

With very best wishes for you.

Lovingly yours,
Mildred Durand Gordy

Mardella Springs, Md.

Signs of the Times,
Dear Editors:

Find enclosed check for ten dollars; please renew my subscription for two years, and my sister, Mrs. Ruby Parsons, Salisbury, Md., is adding five dollars to help send the paper to others.

May God bless you all; we hope to be thankful for the blessing of the editing of, and the inspirations of the many good writings, and of being able to read, and we hope understand and be comforted thereby. It is much comfort to a hungry sinner to read and know that so many others feel as we do: that salvation is by grace and mercy, and by nothing good that we can do; for there is nothing good in us.

If God wills, we hope to meet with all of you in the Salisbury Association. Until then, may we all rest in his love and mercy. A little sister saved by grace, if at all. Fare thee well, my dear brethren.

Mrs. Minnie Gambrill

PRIDE HUMBLED

The following is told as part of the traditional history of Elder John Leland:

During the latter part of his life Mr. Leland traveled much over the country on preaching tours on foot. On one occasion he had been warmly solicited in writing by a widow lady, to visit the part of old Virginia in which she lived, and preach, telling him to set his time and her house was at his service, both as a place of abode, and also a place to hold his meetings. Mr. Leland replied by setting a day that he would preach at her residence, at 10 o'clock a. m. The lady was a wealthy planter in Appomattox valley. She regarded herself one of the most pious and exemplary persons to be found anywhere.

She had been raised in the high circles of life, and knew nothing about poverty, nor had ever associated with laboring classes. She was at this time about thirty five years of age, and had been a widow two years, but knew nothing of the privations commonly attending the life of a widowed mother. She took much pains to appear pious, and her chief object in inviting Mr. Leland to preach at her house was that she might make a display of wealth, and thus have the applause of her associates; not only to show her wealth but her piety as well; so she went to a great trouble and expense in preparing for the meeting. The appointment had been spread far and near, pressing solicitations had been sent to numerous friends to attend the meeting; no expense or pains had been spared, not only to have the best and the finest of everything, but to have everything in the best style.

On the evening preceding the meeting several carriages had already arrived, to be in good time and enjoy the hospitality of the hostess. About sunset Mr. Leland came up to the mansion on foot. The day was quite warm and dusty when he made his appearance. The walk had caused a free perspiration, which ran down his cheeks, making roads in the dust which had settled on his face during his day's walk. He walked up to the door of the large stone mansion, and his rap was answered by a black servant, of whom he inquired for the landlady; the servant ran down the broad carpeted hall to a door, from which proceeded the talking and laughing. In a very short time a lady, very richly attired, made her appearance, walking briskly and lightly toward the door, where Mr. Leland was standing. He had a fair view of her person, and at once saw in her physiognomy and deportment something of her leading traits of character.

His intention had been to introduce himself, but before he had time to speak, or before she was near enough for him to address her, she spoke in rather a harsh tone; "Old man what do you want here? I have nothing for beggars."

Mr. Leland, in a very soft and unasuming tone, said, "Please excuse me, madam; I do not wish to beg for money, but I am very tired from a long walk, and called to know if you would do me the kindness to allow me to stay under your roof during the night."

Viewing him hastily from head to foot, she very positively answered: "No; I have company now, and tomorrow the Rev. Mr. Leland is to preach at my house; so I can't take in poor stragglers."

"Well," said Mr. Leland, "I am too much fatigued to travel further tonight, will you allow me to stay in one of those cabins?" pointing to a row of negro houses just outside the mansion yard.

After a moment or two of reflection she said, "Yes, you may stay there with the negroes if you want to."

He bowed a very polite thank you, and turned toward the row of huts. He proceeded to the farthest one from the mansion before he found anyone to whom he could speak, to ask permission to stay, but came at last to the smallest but neatest of all the huts, where he found seated at the door an old negress, who was fanning herself with the wing of a fowl.

He spoke to her very gently:

"Good evening, aunty."

His greeting was answered with "Good evin, mosta."

"Well, aunty," he said, "I have come

to ask a very uncommon favor of you."

"Bless de Lord, mosta, what can that be, fo' please God I'se got nuffin to give you?"

"I am very tired from walking all day. I called at the house of your mistress, but she says she has no room for me in the great house. I am too much fatigued to go further, and so have come to see if you can allow me to shelter in your house."

Bless de Lord, mosta, I got no 'commodation for any one; but 'fore a fello' mortal shall stay out doo's, I lets 'em stay in my cabin sho,' ef da can put up wid my plain hut. Uncle Ben be in drecly; den he can keep you company while I fixes you sumpen to eat, for you looks as tho you had not a morsal for a long time," and at the same time, pointing to a three-legged stool by the door, saying, "Set down dar and rest yourself, for you looks so worn out."

Mr. Leland took the seat as directed, saying, at the same time, "I am sorry that I am compelled to put you to so much trouble, as I have no money to pay you."

"Please God, mosta, Aunt Dilsey never charged any one yit for sich commodations as I could give'em for God knows its poor enuff at best. You say, mosta, you call on missus at de ouse dar, and she can't take you in. Well, you must 'cuse her, for she's looking for a mighty heap o' company tomorrow; dar's a great man to be dar tomorrow. what's gwine to preach in her house, an' a good many folks done come a'ready an' heap mo' comin', tomorrow, so missus is mighty busy fixin' for 'em. But here's Uncle Ben," she continued, as an old grey-headed negro came around the corner of the cabin, muttering to himself about the carelessness of some of the other negroes.

This old couple, Uncle Ben and Aunt Dilsey, as they were familiarly called by all who knew them, both black and white, were an old couple who, from age, had for a long time lived in a small, but snug cabin at the far end of the row of huts occupied by younger and more active slaves. Although Uncle Ben was not required to do any labor, yet he voluntarily took a kind of supervision over the farm, stock, etc. When he saw Mr. Leland he stopped and gave him a scrutinizing look when Aunt Dilsey spoke, saying: "Uncle Ben, don't stare your eyes out at a stranger; dis ole gentleman was out travelin', and come to stay in our cabin, kase missus can't let him stay dar, as she's got a heap o' company now."

"Well," said Uncle Ben, "We's commanded dat if a stranger comes along we's got to take him in and give him sech as we have to set before him."

While Aunt Dilsey was preparing supper, Mr. Leland learned much about the lady of the mansion from Uncle Ben; he learned, with other things, they were a very religious family, but the hostess had been raised in the city of Richmond and had imbibed all the fashionable ideas of religion with but very little of its true principles, and none of its humility. Soon after Mr. Leland had finished a very good coarse supper, he told his host that he was very much fatigued from a long day's walk, and would wish to retire for the night and that he felt like he wished to return thanks to his Creator for the blessings of the day, and invoke his protection through the night; that if it would annoy them, he would retire to some place out of doors.

"Bless God!" said both old folks at the same time, "we allers like prayin' in our house, and nebber goes to bed 'thout one of us tries to pray."

Mr. Leland then took an old worn Bible out of his bundle, and read in a very solemn tone the one hundred and second Psalm. During the reading the two old blacks often said in a low voice, "Amen, bless de Lord." When the Psalm was ended Mr. Leland fell upon his knees, and poured out his feelings in such an outburst of reverential eloquence as was seldom ever equaled, and never supassed by mortal lips. His host and hostess were so affected by his reading and prayer that they could do nor say any more than to fix their eyes

on their guest, as though they felt that he was something more than mortal man. He retired to a clean pallet in one corner of the cabin, where he soon fell asleep.

When morning came he was up early; Aunt Dilsey soon had him a good, plain repast, after which he seated himself to read, telling his hostess that he felt too much fatigued to travel, and if she was willing, he would rest there until afternoon any way; and then, if he felt better, he would go on his way.

Aunt Dilsey said, mosta, stay jest as long as you want to; we be glad to have you stay with us a fortnight, if can put up with our far."

Mr. Leland seated himself under a shady tree in the cabin yard, with his Bible, waiting to see what the finality would be.

About nine o'clock everything was in a bustle at the stone mansion; all the servants were called in to dress in their very best. Carriages began to arrive by the dozen, until the hall and every part of the large and elegant building was crowded to overflowing; but to their dismay no preacher made his appearance, for the last carriage that came in sight had been scanned to get a glimpse of the minister. No one in the large congregation had ever see him but all had heard of him. So every one was full of anxious expectation, supposing that when he came he would be drawn by two or four horses, driven by a servant.

The company by this time had become restless, and were about to disperse, when Aunt Dilsey went to her mistress and said: "Bless de Lord, missus, why don't you git dat ole man who stayed in our cabin last night to come here to de door and pray, 'fore de folks all go home; he prayed in our cabin last night and dis morning, 'a 'fore God, in all my born days I nebber heard sich prayin' afore. He's settin, dar now, under de tall pine tree; ain' as de preacher's not come, if you'll let him pray, I'll go right now and fetch him down."

The lady consulted with some of the company, the matter was talked of among the congregation, when it was agreed to have the straggler, as they called him, to come and pray before the congregation broke up. Aunt Dilsey went where Mr. Leland was sitting and said, "Mosta, de folks all dispinted bout de preacher coming: he am not cum and da wants you to go down and pray for 'em, 'fore de all breaks up. Masta, I wants you to pray jis like you did las' night."

Mr. Leland walked down to the front door, and, standing on the steps, repeated a hymn from memory, sang, and then he engaged in prayer, and by the time his prayer was ended, all eyes were fixed upon him with amazement. He then remarked that as there seemed to be a disappointment, that if it would not be assuming too much, he would talk to them a few minutes; and as a foundation, or starting point, he would read a short passage from the word of truth, which they would find by reference to the thirteenth chapter and second verse of Hebrews: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." When he had spoken for twenty or thirty minutes, the hostess, who had refused him the hospitalities of her house the evening before, became so deeply affected that she ran and prostrated herself at the feet of Mr. Leland and would, had he allowed her to have done so, have washed her feet with her tears.

It was said that she was so overcome and affected, from that time forward she was a changed woman; so much so that she threw off all her jewelry and ornamental dressing, and became an humble and plain Christian. Though she was a professor before, her whole deportment underwent a complete change. Her house became a place of divine worship, where she delighted in making all, no matter how plain or how poor, as happy as kind attention could make them, in fact it was said that, if preference had to be given to any, it was always in favor of the poor and needy.

(The above is republished at the request of one of our readers).

EDITORIALS

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HAVE YOU SENT IN A NEW SUBSCRIPTION LATELY?

EDITORIAL

CHURCH ORDER

In the first chapter and first verse of Ruth it is said, "Now it came to pass in the days when the Judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land." National Israel was always under rulers. First, they were under Moses, then under Judges, and then under Kings. And today Spiritual Israel is also under a ruler, the Lord Jesus Christ, from whom they receive their law. It is necessary that every organization, whether it be a secret order, or an organization of individuals, who denominate themselves a church, should have their by-laws for the regulation of their own internal affairs. This is necessary, so that brother Brown can't say things should be one way and brother Smith say it should be another. This is the reason the church and associations have their articles of faith, form of government, and rules of decorum. But we find that there are many who are great believers in the association, and who support it morally, and financially and go many miles to attend them, until the association has ruled in a way that doesn't suit them, then, to them, the association is unauthorized and unscriptural.

Some will argue that, even though, a church in the association has become unsound in principle or immoral in practice, that none of the churches of the association has any authority to interfere in the internal rights of the guilty church. They say that we don't like for our neighbors to interfere in our business. I have heard of neighbors circulating petitions to have undesirable families moved from the neighborhood. But the churches in an association see fit to deal with one of their sister churches it is not a neighbor with whom they are dealing, but a member of the family. Their argument is of course, that the churches have no right to send a committee to the guilty church, unless that church asks for it. Did you ever hear of any one who was guilty of a crime, asking the police to take out after him and run him down?

They also argue that a church is a sovereign and no one should interfere with her sovereignty. The fact is, that no church is any more sovereign than the individual is, because the church is composed of individuals. Therefore, when a church is wrong, she is just as responsible for her wrong, and just as much subject to be disciplined, as the individual is. Let us admit for the sake of argument, that a church is a sovereign, and that she has disorder among her, even a habitual drunkard, would you still say that she is a sovereign? Would you want this individual to represent you as he went from church to church and from association to associa-

tion? Every organized body, whether it be called a church or not, loses it's sovereignty when it fails to execute it's discipline and order. And in my opinion, every one who abets, or countenance such disorder, is as guilty as the one who committed the crime. John says, "For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

To say that the churches of an association have no right to send a committee to one of her sister churches that is immoral, especially upholding a minister in drunkedness; is one of the most juvenile expressions that I ever heard of coming from any one of any maturity in the church of God. I've heard where there were two churches in disagreement over the receiving of a member or members, that they would ask other churches to come and advise with them, but I've never heard of a church asking for help to handle a member who was immoral in practice. Our decorum reads as follows:

First, to provide for a general union of the churches.

Second, to keep up a correspondence with those associations of the same faith and order, that a chain of communications may be preserved amongst the churches.

Third, to give the best advice they can in matters of difficulty; and if the communion should be broken between any of the sister churches of the union, inquire into the cause of the breach and use their best endeavors to remove the difficulty, but if the breach cannot be healed, to withdraw from any church or churches which they shall look upon to be unsound in principle or immoral in practice, till they be reclaimed.

This paragraph gives the churches the right to inquire into anything that affects the general union of the churches, without waiting to be invited to do so.

"The associations shall have no power to lord it over God's heritage; nor to infringe upon any of the internal rights of the churches." But they have the right to keep disorderly churches out of their union. To deny the association this right, would be to deprive the association of her prerogative to keep a clean house. If the association has the right to investigate a church before receiving it into the association, certainly, it has the right to say what church it shall retain in her union. If a church in her union becomes disorderly, then the association has the same right to investigate this disorder, and if found unsound in principle or immoral in practice, to drop that church from her fellowship. And until the association has the opportunity to act, the deacons have the right, and not only the right, but it is their duty to see that no questionable character occupy the pulpit.

Another question arises regarding the forgiveness of a brother. I will quote from Matthew 18:21, 22. "Then Peter came to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not until seven times: but, until seventy times seven." This has no reference to church offense. This is a personal matter between two brethren. If a brother sin against another brother, and the one sinned against has evidence that the one that sinned against him is really penitent, he is commanded to forgive him. The meaning is, I think, that we should be willing at all times to forgive those that sin against us, and that acknowledge their fault. But this has nothing to do with a public offense against the church.

When an officer of the church, whether it be a deacon or minister becomes immoral in his practice, it ceases to be an internal affair. Deacons, as well as ministers, go from church to church, serving in their respective positions, and therefore, are not private, but public property. And if this officer continues in his disorder, and the church, to which he has his membership, refuses to deal with him, then it becomes the duty of the sister churches in the union to deal with that church. This must be done in the interest of peace and fellowship, not only at home, but

with all their correspondence.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." GALATIANS 6-7, 8.

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

H. O. Nash

DID THE SUN STAND STILL?

One of our readers requests us to answer the following question: Did the sun stand still one whole day as Joshua commanded it?

We know of no better answer than to quote the reading of the Word of God, which is as follows:

"Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.

"And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Josher? So the son stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.

"And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord harkened unto the voice of a man: for the Lord fought for Israel." (Joshua 10: 12-14)

We know of no spiritual or speculative answer beyond the Word of God in this matter.

D. V. S.

Kilgore, Texas

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing $5.00 to renew my subscription to the Signs. We hope we will never be without it as long as we can see to read.

Thanks to the editors for such a wonderful paper. May God's richest blessings rest upon you dear editors of the Signs.

Mrs. G. W. McDuff

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

(Written by Elder H. H. Lefferts.)

The Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, in session with the Bethlehem Church, Prince William County, Virginia, October 11th, 12th and 13th, 1911, to the several churches and associations with which we correspond, sendeth Christian greeting.

Dearly Beloved Brethren:—This Circular Letter, though written by one appointed by this association to this duty, is not a vehicle for the expression of individual opinions, ideas and views, but, being adopted by this association, is the voice of the churches composing the same, and declares what we as a body believe and stand for. Inasmuch as the space allowed us in a letter of this character is not sufficient to cover the whole ground of our faith and practice, we shall endeavor to address you now upon but certain phases of these matters, and as a basis for such remarks as shall be written, call your attention to 1 Corinthians xiv. 40: "Let all things be done decently and in order."

We believe that associational meetings of this character are profitable and beneficial to the churches composing them. Thus is afforded to churches an opportunity of hearing and enjoying ministering gifts that otherwise could not be heard. The custom of each church in an association addressing its sister churches by letter, informing them of its condition, is a good one, for while no church has dominion over the faith of

any other church, yet by standing together in an associational bond they become helpers one of another, and have the benefit of one another's interest and counsel. Sometimes the writing of church letters degenerates into a formality, but this can be avoided by using every effort when preparing them, to have them tell the truth as to the condition of the church, and to not say that unity and peace prevail when such is not the case. Addressing sister associations by Circular Letters, when such are written in the spirit of sincerity and truth, is beneficial, for thus we hold up the hands of churches of our faith and order far and near, and keep them advised as to our position in matters of doctrine and order. We think that all who have carefully watched the history and travel of our associations will agree that churches standing together in this relationship have been better able to protect themselves from disorder and heresy from without, and have thereby been enabled to better preserve the integrity of their own churches. To this end, associations should be careful as to who they send out as messengers to represent them in other associations, and we would suggest also that a too extensive correspondence be guarded against, as it is apt to become unwieldly if carried beyond the point where we can assure ourselves of the soundness in doctrine, faith and practice of those with whom we correspond. Then, too, in opening correspondence with any association we should take pains to satisfy our churches that such body is really with us in doctrine, faith and practice. In all this, churches find that eternal vigilance is the price of safety, and that our natural powers are not sufficient for these things, but that we need to be strengthened by grace in the inner man. Orderly churches make an orderly association. A chain is no stronger than its weakest link, so any church that is weak in doctrine, or slothful in keeping its house clean, may act like unholy leaven to permeate with confusion and strife a whole association. As to what constitutes sound doctrine, this association understands the following to be essential: (1) The absolute sovereignty of God over all affairs in heaven, earth and hell. (2) The perfect fore-knowledge of God of all events, men, minds and things, thoughts, imaginations and impulses, from the beginning even unto the end, and for evermore. (3) The total depravity of the whole human race by the disobedience unto the law of God of the first man Adam, so that all mankind are dead in trespasses and in sins, being thereby rendered unable to save themselves from condemnation by their own efforts, or to even desire salvation. (4) God before the world began chose a definite number of Adam's race unto salvation and eternal life in his Son Jesus Christ, and predestinated them unto himself according to the good pleasure of his will, and not according to any virtue he foreknew would be in the elect, and that his rejection of the wicked was not because of any evil he foreknew would be in them, for in Adam and according to the flesh, both elect and nonelect are alike, so that by nature one is no better than another. (5) That this covenant of election made in Christ before the world began was actually accomplished in the manifestation of the Son of God in the flesh in the person of Jesus, the Son of Mary the virgin, and that by his life, obedience, death, burial and resurrection, redemption. justification and sanctification are assured to all the people of God. (6) In this present gospel dispensation the Holy Ghost is at work in the hearts of the elect eevrywhere, bringing them to an experimental knowledge of these blessings and truths of God before mentioned. (7) Finally, that the culmination of all God's plan and purpose is the resurrection of the dead, the judgment of the wicked unto eternal punishment and of the elect in Christ unto life eternal.

Inasmuch as God has by the operation of His Holy Spirit given to his church here in the world a visible organization among men, what is its purpose and what its order and practice?

The divine purpose in visibly instituting the church in the world is to afford a spiritual home for weary pilgrims, where they have communion and fellowship with their kindred spirits. It is a shelter from the cold, unfriendly world of infidelity and antichrist, a place of safety from persecution and from the errors, delusions and traditions of men. Being in the membership of and in fellowship with the church visibly, we are saved from the untoward generation without. One's place in the church in glory is not enhanced by being a member of the church visibly organized here in the world, but one's peace of mind, comfort of soul and growth in grace and knowledge of spiritual things are certainly increased. The Holy Ghost has delivered to the church certain ordinances, ministering gifts and rules of practice, all designed for the "perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Thus speaking the truth in love, we may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ. The ordinances of the gospel church as practiced in this association are baptism of believers by immersion, the observance of the Lord's supper at stated intervals, the setting apart of the brethren to the deaconship whenever they are manifestly qualified to that office, and the ordination of men to the gospel ministry by the laying on of hands whenever the Holy Ghost has manifestly set them apart to that work. We believe that churches should exercise the watchcare over their members, and should labor to restore such as show a disposition to stray away from the path of order, decency and rectitude. Whenever a brother is overtaken in a fault, they that are spiritual should labor to restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering themselves lest they also be tempted. But nowhere does the New Testament warrant a church in tolerating heresy, fornication, drunkenness, or other evils, beyond the point where they threaten to disease the whole church and become a reproach in the eyes of the world without, a stumbling-block in the way of our friends who are interested in the truth and in the welfare of the church. Any member of any church who persists in living a disorderly life, and to whom the Holy Ghost does not grant repentance in enabling such an one to turn from his evil course, should be excluded from its fellowship, delivered over to "Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." The pastors of the several churches should seek with all the diligence and earnestness in them to maintain a godly walk and conversation, to be ensamples to the flock of right living, should study to shew themselves approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed of their handiwork, rightly dividing the word of truth; and as it is only through self-denial, trials and afflictions that pastors can faithfully discharge their duties to the churches of their care, it behooves the several churches to look after the temporal needs of their pastors, and to assist them financially in the bearing of life's burdens, that they be not unduly weighted with the affairs of this life, and thus be enabled to give themselves wholly and unreservedly to the work of the ministry. All the above expressions regarding the doctrine and order of the house of God are the sentiments of the churches of this association, and may the good Lord in his mercy, love and infinite compassion give us strength equal to our day, minister grace sufficient to our needs, for without him we can do nothing; and if he enables us to do all these things yet are we unprofitable servants, for it is not of ourselves we do it. "Therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and

Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory, both now and for ever. Amen."

J. N. BADGER, Moderator.
S. B. PAXSON, Clerk.

(The above was written by Elder H. H. Lefferts and adopted by the Virginia Corresponding Meeting as their Circular Letter in 1911.)

OBITUARIES

ISABELLE MADDOCK FERGUSON

It pleased our Heavenly Father to take from our midst our precious sister, Isabelle (Maddock) Ferguson, on March 22, 1955; aged ninety-two years and five days. She was born March 17, 1863, in Brooke Township, Lambton County, Ontario, Canada; and was married to Brother Daniel Ferguson, November 5, 1919. They much enjoyed entertaining those of like precious faith in their home. Sister Belle was left a widow May 3, 1938, but continued to entertain during the Quarterly meetings in Duart until afflicted with a broken hip, after which she was unable to live in her own home; but God provided for her in his own marvelous way. She was cared for by Miss L. K. Graham for several years; after which her nephew and wife, Deacon Milton and Sister Mary Maddock, of Strathroy, Ontario, took her into their home, where she much appreciated their loving care and to talk on spiritual things. She realized what a wonderful God we have, who watches over and cares for his children in providence as well as grace; and was blessed with a strong faith to trust in the Lord whatever her problems were.

Sister Belle was baptized into the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, at Lobo, on October 4, 1913, by the later Elder J. B. Slauson, and was a devoted and faithful member. Her chief joy was to attend her meetings, and to have her pastor and church friends visit her.

On her ninety-second birthday, Elder and Sister Ruston took Sister Sarah McPhail and myself to Brother Maddock's to commemorate the anniversary. We found her very weak, and she expressed her longing desire to go home. She was carried to the table in a chair, and ate supper with us; then asked to be put to bed, where she passed peacefully away five days later.

Her funeral was conducted from Brother Maddock's home by her pastor, Elder George Ruston; who spoke comfortingly from Romans 8:38-39, as requested by the departed several years before. Her body was laid to rest beside her husband in Gosnell Cemetery, Ridgetown, Ontario, until Jesus comes the second time to raise our corrupt bodies in incorruption, when death shall be swallowed up in victory.

While we miss our precious sister, we also feel to thank our Heavenly Father for taking her to himself. Written in loving memory.

Mrs. Flossie Bishop

MOLLIE BERTHA FRAZEY BURCH

Mollie Bertha Frazey Burch, daughter of James and Julia Frazey, was born July 21, 1868, in Brighton, Iowa; and passed away May 3, 1955, at Bellingham, Washington. She leaves to mourn her passing five children: Hattie J. Clements, Wapato, Washington; Blanch G. Brown, Bellingham, Washington; Ethel P. Weatherby, Arcata, California; Roy R. Burch, Bellingham and Ted F. Burch, Monterey Park, California; also twenty-seven grand-children, fifty-six great grand-children, and twenty-two great great grand-children, making one hundred and eight living descendents. Our dear father, Davis Burch, preceeded her in death. (Many have read his good letters in the Signs.)

We cannot say that we are sorry that she is gone, as her life was very lonely after father passed away in 1943. We know she is at rest. After a brief illness, she passed away in her sleep, which she often said was the way she wanted to go. She read her Bible, but was one of very few words concerning her experiences and hope, but we feel she had a hope in Christ, and often said she wished the Lord would take her home.

She, with her parents and two sisters and three brothers, moved from Brighton, Iowa, to Alton, Kansas, by covered wagon, in 1885. She married Davis Burch September 1, 1886. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church in 1889, and was baptized by Elder Nicholas S. Burch. Her funeral was conducted by a Missionary Baptist minister, as no Primitive Baptist minister was near. He spoke very comfortingly from the 23rd Psalm and the 91st Psalm, upholding the faith of the Primitive Baptists.

We laid her to rest in the beautiful Woodlawn Cemetery beside our dear father, to await the resurrection, when we all hope to meet around God's throne, when our bodies are raised in the likeness of His body, where there will be no more pain, tears or trials. Written by her daughter.

Blanche B. Brown

WATCH YOUR EXPIRATION DATE AND RENEW PROMPTLY.
THANK YOU

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 124 DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1956 NO. 1

A CHRISTMAS THOUGHT

You talk of Santa Claus and Christmas,
Of gifts and presents too;
But do you think of Jesus,
The God given gift to you?

Remember He's your Saviour,
Your gift and present too,
May He on Christmas Eve and morning,
Forget not, but remember you.

He washed us in His cleansing blood,
And made us white as snow;
He leads us all in pastures green,
The way that we should go.

He teaches us to watch and pray,
And keep the solemn day;
When brought before the kings of earth,
He'll teach us what to say.

He'll ne'er forsake His children here,
But keep them by His side,
He'll watch and pray for them,
Until they reach the other side.

Many are the carols that are sung,
And prayers offered on Christmas day,
But none of them are like the ones,
He teaches us to say.

He came to seek that which was lost,
And raise them from the dead;
To present them to His Father God;
Where no more tears are shed.

And when He comes to earth again,
He'll call His children up,
And set them at His Father's throne,
Where they may sip the cup.

H. O. Nash

Geneva, Ala.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I should have complied with my promise to write for the Signs, but many duties have prevented. First, I would like to say that I greatly enjoyed my recent visit to Reidsville and Greensboro Churches, and the spiritual association with those people. All were so very kind to me in many ways that shall remain as fond memories in spiritual paths. I trust that I was added to Mt. Gilead Church in the Western Primitive Baptist Association, of Alabama, forty-one years ago last September, and began speaking there in my feeble manner in March, 1918. It has fallen my lot to try to serve as pastor at Mt. Gilead, Mt. Moriah, Mt. Carmel, Wrights Creek, New Hope, Hopeful, Ramah and Bethlehem Churches. Several years I went to six of these churches regularly, and now to five. I am thankful that there has been little trouble in any of them while I was pastor, and may the Lord continue to direct us in the paths of peace. I am so glad that He has added four able young ministers to these churches during my pastorate, and that they are seeking the peace and welfare of Zion. First, there was Elder W. A. Williams of Mt. Carmel, Coffee Springs, Alabama. He is now their pastor, a prominent teacher, Clerk of the Claybank Association, and pastor of several of its churches. Next, Elder A. B. Chumney, of Madrid, Alabama; pastor of some churches in the Chipola Association. Then, Elder William H. Smith, Graceville, Florida; also pastor in the Chipola Association, and an able teacher in our schools. Last June I baptized Brother John F. Tisdale, of Ozark, Alabama; and he has since been licensed to speak at Hopeful Church, and is proving a blessing to the church. May each of these continue in the paths opened by the Lamb and trodden by the apostles and succeeding ministers of the true church of the ages.

Among the principles I believe to be paramount in the church is sovereignty. I humbly believe that each member of the vine should have sovereign rights, and keep its house in order, watching over each other for good. I feel that God

called ministers should obey the heavenly edict, "Go ye into all the world preaching the gospel to every creature," and cry aloud unto Zion that her warfare is accomplished, her strife over. Such ministers should study to show themselves approved unto God, rightly dividing the word of truth, and feeding sheep and lambs. Too many in the past have gone scattering the sheep. All should preach the word, be instant in season out of season, reproving, rebuking and instructing in righteousness. I never want to scatter trouble anywhere. I want to walk in the paths of peace. Great and mysterious is thy way and past finding out. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love," saith Jeremiah, and he surely meant it. May such love abound everywhere in Zion today. It is pitiful to see brethren divided over minor issues. May peace be restored and brethren dwell together in unity.

Another terrible thing in the church is preacher jealousy. Some evidently think that they are all that can preach. I feel that the Lord has a purpose in the setting apart of every minister, and has a specific field for him to occupy. He makes no mistakes anywhere, so all ministers fill their particular sphere. Some members think that only one or two can preach the unsearchable riches of Christ: I wonder if such know what the gospel is.

It fell to my lot, along with Mr. J. P. Davis, and Elder E. R. Sorrells and F. A. Collins, to conduct the funeral of Elder J. J. Smith, who was truly a gospel minister. Elder Smith went quietly home on March 6, 1955. He was eighty-eight years of age, and has been active in the church for about sixty-five years; and served as minister for about fifty years. His wife preceeded him in death about ten years. Both lived model lives. Final services were conducted at Ephesus, his home church, Slocomb, Alabama, on March 7, with interment in Pleasant Hill Cemetery. He served as pastor at Mt. Carmel, Mt. Gilead, New Hope and Ephesus, and perhaps other churches. Truly a good shepherd has gone to his home.

On Saturday, as the evening shadows were falling, the writer spoke in memory of Sister Ida F. Thomley, a devoted member of Mt. Gilead Church for some fifty-five years. She reached the age of four score years and two, but the noblest act of her life was when she followed the Lamb of God in Jordan's stormy billows. Jesus said, "Suffer it to be so, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness;" and your Lord and mine was buried beneath the turbulent waters. It is precious to the believer to follow Jesus in baptism.

Brother Spangler, I remember quite well meeting you at the Staunton River Association, at Springfield Church, in 1940; and then two weeks later at Bush Arbor Church, in the Upper Country Line Association. It seemed that glory shone around and that peace and unity abounded in Zion. May the Lord lead us in the paths of peace and love, and may all wounds be healed. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them." I believe that I love my Saviour Lord because he first loved me.

May the Signs seek peace and order everywhere in Zion. May love always abound. I hope to meet you somewhere soon, and the dear saints in your section.

Yours in bonds of love,
(Elder) J. J. Collins

ST. JOHN 3:16 — 6:44 — 14:6

It may be that most people are so well satisfied with their faith and belief that they no longer search for the truth. I am not that well contented. Above all things, I desire to know the truth as it relates to GOD and the Holy Scriptures. Therefore, it is a daily occurrence with me to explore so far as I can, every angle of my faith. I try to appraise for its full value the faith of those opposite me in belief. I weigh the basis, premise or reason for my belief as to what the scriptures teach. I honestly try the faith of those who hold op-

posite views from me, by the scriptures on which my faith is founded. I try my faith by the scriptures on which is based the belief of those holding views opposed to mine.

There is no conflict of the scriptures on which my faith rests, with the scriptures on which is based the views of those opposite me. There is simply and certainly no conflict to be found in the Bible. The conflict is one of interpretation, or of views of people growing out of the application of the scriptures. There are in these United States according to one encyclopedia, two hundred fifty seven different religious denominations. Search as one may; look and read, and you will find two — only two — schools of thought or teaching, as to how man becomes a child of GOD, or comes into possession of eternal life. The Primitive Baptist family constitutes one of these schools and the other two hundred fifty six denominations make up the other school. If numbers counted for anything in this matter, the Primitive Baptists would have to give up.

The two viewpoints on how man becomes a child of God or attains unto eternal salvation and eternal life, may be stated thusly:

1. Christ died to redeem from sin the Elect of the Father, chosen in Christ before time began or ere the world was fashioned, and these will inherit eternal life.

2. Christ died to make it possible for all men to be saved, God wants all men to be saved, and all who will accept the offer of salvation and take advantage of the opportunity for them to be saved which opportunity was supplied by the death of Christ, will be saved.

The first viewpoint or doctrine, as is known, is sweet, yea, sacred to Primitive Baptists. There is nothing uncertain under this doctrine because man has no part in it. The second viewpoint or doctrine is embraced by the other two hundred fifty six denominations. Weekly and sometimes more often, ministers in thousands of pulpits throughout our land, representing two hundred fifty six denominations, exhort sinners to believe, have faith, accept Christ as their personal saviour and be saved eternally. The basis for this exhortation generally is ST. JOHN, 3:16 and a total disregard of all other scriptures which in reality tie in with JOHN 3:16, but which to the exhorters, conflicts with it and with their teaching. Arrayed against such exhortation is the beautiful and glorious language of the Blessed Saviour whose power is belittled by the exhorting of modern preachers.

"Jesus said unto him, I am THE way, THE truth and THE life. No man comes to the Father but by me. No man can come to me except (unless) the Father who sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day." JOHN 14:6 and 6:44. I do not feel that I have done violence to the scripture when I run these two verses of two different chapters together as I have done here. Christ never at any time made one statement that was not in harmony with all other statements made by Him. We need not search any further than the scripture just quoted, to find scripture to refute and rebut the teaching that the alien sinner, devoid of and lacking spiritual life, can of his own free will go to Christ, accept HIM and HIS offer of salvation, and thereby come into an inheritance of eternal life. Christ IS the LIFE, therefore, man must have Christ in order to have life (spiritual) before he can move; and being powerless to move so as to be able to accept Christ, it must be the other way round: Christ must accept the man and impart life to him without man being consulted in the matter. This language of our blessed Lord is sufficient in itself to refute or rebut the doctrine that man can voluntarily accept or reject Christ's proffered salvation and be saved or be forever lost. No man comes to Christ unless he, the man, be drawn to Christ by the Father, and if man be drawn to Christ, his coming to Christ is not a voluntary act on his part. No man can come to the Father except by Christ who is THE

way, and the sinner has to be DRAWN into that way by the Father; and after he has been drawn into THAT way he still has no choice, though he goes gladly. The way under consideration here leads in but one direction. So, to me, it is just as ridiculous for a preacher to exhort the alien sinner devoid of spiritual life by saying "Come on; get in this way, be saved and lets go to Heaven," as it would be for that same preacher who, on his way to market and seeing a corpse by the side of the road, to say to it "Come on; get in this road with me and we will go to town."

The two verses of two different chapters of St. John in no way conflict with the 16th verse of the third chapter of St. John which reads as follows: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life." The natural man from whom has gone natural life cannot believe even on natural things. The alien sinner or natural man having no spiritual life likewise cannot believe on spiritual things. Therefore, all who believe on Christ have life (spiritual) before they believe — and in order to believe. These are they who have been DRAWN into the way (Christ) by the Father. There are not volunteers marching in his way. They are all draftees. The cause of Christ is not defended by volunteers but by drafted soldiers. The volunteer system cannot bring in one soldier.

Hubert T. Faulk
325 West Missouri St;
El Paso, Texas.

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Western Primitive Baptist Association, now in her seventy-ninth annual session, extends greetings to the associations with whom she corresponds:

Through the tender mercies of an all-wise God we have been permitted and blessed to meet at Salem Church, Panama City, Florida, in peace and sweet fellowship. Your ministers came preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ, in that he was crucified for our sins, and rose for our justification. In this salvation we glory together, ever looking to him, the author and finisher of our faith, to come again and take us home with him, where we shall ever be with the Lord.

Your correspondence has been reasonably full, and we desire a continuance of the same. Our next session will be held at Hopeful Church, Ozark, Alabama, on the 3rd Sunday, Friday and Saturday before, in October, 1956; where we hope to meet you again in love and fellowship. Until then, farewell in the Lord. (Written by Deacon H. T. Collins, Slocomb, Alabama.)

Elder F. A. Collins, Moderator
Elder J. J. Collins, Clerk

APPRECIATION

(The contributions to the Indigent Fund make letters like the following possible:)

Dear Brethren:

I was indeed made happy when I read your good letter in answer to my letter, stating, "This is to let you know that we are sending the Signs of the Times on to you free." Oh, how I do thank the good Lord and you for this undeserved favor; and how obligated I feel to be to you dear children of God. It makes my poor heart tender to all of the dear saints to know and feel their love and kindness toward unworthy me: I have nothing of myself to offer as a reason the Old Baptists are so kind to me. I wish I was able to write an interesting letter explaining my feelings, but my mind and strength are not sufficient.

I have been in poor health for several years, and have had surgery at different times, and am to have an operation again next week; wife also is in poor health, and scarcely able to be up.

When you are before the throne of

God's rich grace, please remember me and mine in your petitions, for I need your prayers. I hope I am a brother; if so, I am the very least. Thanks again.

ORDINATION MEETING

Have you ever been lifted up from this world, together with a host of your brethren and friends, and blessed to soar on the wings of God's wondrous Love into the heavenlies? Have you ever witnessed the Power and Love of God permeating the atmosphere and filling each heart to overflowing with unspeakable joy and love? Have you ever been amazed with the sacredness and solemnity of each and every word spoken and act performed? Have you ever been in a meeting when it seemed that each and every one who spoke was blessed to fitly speak the right words at the proper time throughout?

If not deceived, this was witnessed by the writer and those present at the Ordination Meeting held with Pleasant Hope Church near Atlanta, Texas, October 29th and 30th, 1955. This meeting was called for the purpose of ordaining Lic. Lloyd Wall, of Bivins, Texas to the officeship of elder.

This was truly an ordination meeting. It pleased the Lord to manifest His mercy and grace and make His power known throughout this meeting. The central theme throughout was the duties, qualifications, responsibilities, and importance of a god-called minister. No one sitting through this series of sermons could lightly consider the high and grave vocation of preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ and pastoring churches. This so impressed me that my constant prayer since has been, "Lord, qualify me for this exalted position and enable me to walk worthy of the vocation!"

The appropriate climax was Sunday. Bro. Lloyd Wall was assigned to occupy the pulpit. He called upon Elder J. T. Everett to word the Introductory Prayer. Fitly spoken words stimulated by the powerful love of God flowed fluently from Elder Everett's mouth as he expressed thanksgiving to God for such manifestation of His loving kindness and earnestly beseeched the Lord for a continuation of His loving favors upon each and every one — especially to bless Bro. Lloyd Wall in his endeavor to speak in that trying hour. Bro. Lloyd Wall then arose and began giving an interesting account of his experience and call to the ministry. The Holy Spirit seemed to envelope him so that his countenance shined and his voice mellowed as he gave a detailed account of this wonderful experience. At the proper time he told how and when that his mother informed him that God had revealed to her before he was born that he would be a man-child and would preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.

When sufficient time had been devoted to his experience and call to the ministry God blessed him to gracefully express his conscientious convictions and belief in the power and wisdom of God relative to the complete salvation of His people. He proclaimed that the wisdom of God was complete in eternity before time began, ordaining all things to fall out in their proper time and place so as to work together for good to them who are the called according to His purpose. Bro. Wall was blessed to treat upon the fundamental principles of the doctrine beginning with predestination and closing with a full explanation of his belief and hope in the resurrection of these bodies into life immortal. When he finished speaking several minutes were used in making manifest the love, fellowship, and endorsement by the elders, deacons, brethren and friends present in clasping hands with Brother Wall.

When Brother Wall had taken his seat, we sang a hymn, and opportunity for membership was announced. Whereupon his wife, Ruby Wall, came forward asking for a home with the church. Amidst great rejoicing she was received as a worthy candidate for baptism.

I deem it proper here to insert some instances to prove that God was reigning in this affair and making manifest

His providence. It pleased the Lord to make it known to a young son of a deacon that Sister Ruby would become a member of the church that day, before He revealed it to her. I quote two different conversations in order to prove this.

A little boy startled his parents at the breakfast table Sunday morning by saying convincingly, "Miss Ruby is going to join the church today." His parents inquired, "How do you know?" The little boy answered, "I dreamed it last night." Another conversation took place during the lunch hour at church. The baptism being scheduled so early in the afternoon my wife felt that Sister Ruby possibly came prepared for the baptism. She asked, "Ruby, did you bring your clothes, or will you have to go home for them?" Ruby answered, "I will have to go get them as I did not know I was going to do this." How mysterious is the working of God to prove that He is at the helm!

The elders and deacons present organized themselves into a presbytery to ordain Lic. Lloyd Wall to the office of elder immediately after Sister Ruby had been given the right hand of Christian fellowship. The ordination proceeded in an orderly manner including laying on hands and prayer, thus ordaining him to the full work of a gospel minister. His father in the flesh as well as in the ministry, Elder T. A. Wall, calmly gave his son the grave charge including good advice and proper counsel relative to the walk and conversation becoming to a young minister, Elder T. A. Wall also warned his son of certain evils to be shunned and unpleasant experiences to be endured as a good soldier.

At two o'clock the same afternoon Elder Lloyd Wall performed his first official act as an ordained minister when he led his wife, Ruby, down into the water and baptized her in the liquid grave. This was performed in such calm and graceful manner that it is agreed by all who witnessed that he performed as though he had baptized many.

I have assisted in the ordination of eight elders but this was the most inspiring and solemn occasion I have ever witnessed. Other young men are being brought into the ministry in this section by our God. He will not leave Himself without a witness. We shall not die. God has ordained that the true doctrine of salvation by grace through the merits of Christ will continue to be preached. Our enemies continue to say, "It will not be long until there will be none left." They wish it could be true but we CANNOT believe it.

E. J. Lambert

Gilmer, Texas
November 4, 1955

Signs of the Times,
Dear Editors:

Am enclosing check for five dollars for two years subscription, but several months have already gone on this year's subscription. I appreciate your kindness in sending the dear old paper.

If you have not already heard of the wonderful meeting we were blessed to attend last Sunday, I am sure some one will soon write you something for publication, so I will tell you only a little about it. It was the ordination of Brother Loyd Wall as a minister. His mother was shown before he was born that he would be a male child, and that he would preach. She was blessed to hear him preach; and, as he said Sunday while telling of his call to the ministry, by faith she was given to see him ordained. (She passed on in June)

After he told of some of his travels, he then preached a very comforting sermon. An opportunity for membership was extended, and his wife was joyfully received as a candidate for baptism. After the ordination it was announced that she desired her husband to baptize her that afternoon. So we witnessed something we had never seen before — a minister administering the rite of baptism the same day of his ordination.

I especially appreciated the Editorial on, Duties of a Deacon.

May God's love and mercy continue to abide with you.

Yours in hope,
David C. Shelton

Ruffin, N. C.

Dear Editors of the Signs of the Times:

Am sending you a copy of a letter I received from my dear companion recently while I was at the bedside of my sick child. This letter I read in tears. God has promised to supply our every need, and in my hour of sorrow I was brought to feel the need of the, "help of the helpless", to abide with me.

It is indeed a sweet comfort to feel the great omnipotent God has promised grace sufficient when that old thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, buffets his little ones. Oh, dear ones, how Satan dogs my footsteps, and I am tried as in a furnace of fire. So often my little hope seems so near gone that I just have to hope I have a hope in Jesus' precious name. How our trials and afflictions bring us down to beg deliverance of him who is able to deliver. God is not slack concerning his promises as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

I am made to believe every cross we bear is needful, and a part of the *all things* working together for our good and God's glory, honor and praise, — our disappointments being only the appointments of an ever loving, merciful Father, whether we be enabled to see this or not. All our times are surely in his hands. "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee", the Lord has promised. To me, it is the most important of all things: am I his or am I not? I hope so. He brings me down to feel as one of old: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." For he brought me up also out of a horrible pit, and out of the miry clay; he hath placed my feet upon a rock and established my goings; and he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praises unto God.

May I beg all the household of faith to remember me and mine in your prayers. My moments of praise seem so few.

Dear ones, I feel you know what the truth is, so if you find this letter I am sending to bear witness with what is truth experimentally or doctrinally as taught in the Bible, and set up in the hearts of God's elect family, you may print same. To me it is evidence of grace wrought in the life of my dear companion, and was so good to me that I felt it was not only addressed to me, but also to all the household of faith, and I desire to share it with them.

In love and hope,
Mrs. Fred Cobb

Ruffin, N. C.

Dear Ones and Fellow Pilgrims:

It's 10:25, and I had to get out of bed, the urge to write you was so strong upon me. So much of my time lately I have felt so cold and hard, so unfeeling and unsympathetic — have felt so selfish. The scripture, "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds", has been on my mind. It seems that so much of the time today we are trying to fight our battles with carnal weapons, such as malice, hate, jealousy, discord, greed, etc. If only God would give us weapons of faith, hope and love, these would pull down the strongholds of non-fellowship, discord, envy, and such, which are of the flesh. When we can feel deep love for the brethren, then we are supplied with such weapons that we fear no enemy, not even the monster death.

I have thought of the scripture, "Lord I believe, help thou mine unbelief", and wondered what it meant. Tonight it means to me that when we are blessed to really believe — the times when we are on the mountain top — then it seems we are all right, feeling his presence. But our unbelief is what bothers us so

much: Lord help us in unbelief when we are down in the valley; and even doubt that we have a conscience, we feel so cold and hard. Then, Oh, Lord, we pray take us up as little lambs in thine arms so we can rest in thee once again.

I go back to some of my experiences. It seems there have been a few times in my life when I thought of anybody but self. When papa was suffering agonizing pain just before he went to Duke hospital to have his eye removed, I went out to the stable to fall on my knees to pray for him. It was my first time to go down on bended knees in supplication.

Another time when I believe God gave me real sympathy for others, you, Louise, Sister Mabel Harrelson and myself went to Dan River meeting one night to hear preaching. There I heard dear Mr. Page, Sister Mamie Aldridge's father, tell what heartache and suffering she was going through since her son was killed. On the way back, as I was driving along, I was made to think of this sister, and shed tears. I was glad it wasn't light enough in the car for you all to see me. Some might think we can feel for others anytime we want to; but no, self "our worst enemy" stays in our thoughts so much of our time, (or I should say my time).

(I have seen this dear soul, Mr. Page, most every time I've been to town lately. It is such a comfort to talk to such a dear child of God as I feel he is. I saw him today, and he asked about you and how your poison ivy was.)

Then again I had heard one of my friends was to be sent to a mental hospital. I went to the field that day to plow, tears streaming down my face. As I was plowing, these words came to me, "Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted." Shortly after we had been up to Brother Brown's and the Pigg River Association, we had been talking how much we enjoyed being in their home. After we went to bed, I lay thinking about that I had given Joe and his little sister some change, and I didn't give Tom anything, and I shed tears over it. The next morning you said you gave Tom something, and I was greatly relieved.

This is the way I travel. If it wasn't for such experiences to look back to, I wouldn't have one ray of hope — the Bethel spots are comforting many times. So much of my time I feel to be so lacking in courage, faith and everything pertaining to godliness. God help us all, is my prayer. Amen.

Fred

SHOWERS OF RAIN

BY

FLOSSIE FAULKNER

We have on hand a limited number of these books by Flossie Faulkner, of New York. This is an excellent book and we believe will be of interest to every reader of the SIGNS. It contains the personal experience of the author: how the Lord brought her in a miraculous way from another faith into the Old School Baptist Church. Also twenty-five excellent poems, composed from the Psalms and Paraphrases. This book will be of special interest to lovers of good poetry.

For a limited time, we will give a copy to anyone sending in a new subscription; or it will be mailed postpaid at the price of fifty cents. After receiving the book, if you do not deem it worth the price, return it to us, and we will gladly refund the purchase price.

"TRIED IN THE FURNACE"

This interesting book by Elder Lambert is yet available. The price is $3.00, and may be had by addressing:

Elder E. J. Lambert,
306 Richardson Street,
Winnsboro, Texas

EDITORIALS

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A REMINDER

Knowing the zeal our late editor, Elder R. Lester Dodson, had for the continued publication of our family paper, the Signs of the Times, Inc., we quote from an article by his pen in 1949:

"In order to perpetuate, as far as it is humanly possible to do, the continuance of our family paper, during the year we formed a non-profit organization known as the "Signs of the Times, Inc., Established 1832, Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause," and henceforth it is intended that the management and control of the paper shall be vested in a Board of Trustees, empowered to choose successors as occasion may arise. Some of our good brethren have felt that it would be wiser for the control of the paper not to be vested solely in one individual person, so through the foregoing organization, we have endeavored to perpetuate the control in a Board of Trustees. This should make the paper more of an official organ for the Old School Baptist Cause than heretofore and we hope as the years pass it will also insure the full benefit of all funds which may be contributed, either during the lifetime or upon the decease of any subscriber or readers to donate or bequeath such funds as they may see fit to the cause.

Inquiry has been made of us as to how funds should be left in Wills for the benefit of the SIGNS, so for the information of those who wish to so provide, we would simply say all that is necessary to do is to authorize and request one's executor to pay the amount desired to the Signs of the Times, Inc., Established 1832, Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause."

This fund has been started, and it is hoped it will grow to the extent that the income therefrom will in various ways aid in the publication of the paper.

Editors

EDITORIAL

A NEW YEAR — A NEW VOLUME

We are spared to again come to the beginning of a new year, and a new volume — number 124 — of the Signs of the Times. We trust that we, and the brethren and friends who read and enjoy the Signs, are not unmindful of the fact that we have been sustained alone by the hand of our God, according to his mercy, and according to the accomplishing of his purposes in each of us.

In the face of many disconcerting things — in the national and inter-national situation; in the churches, and in our own hearts — we would approach the new year with a great deal of apprehension, were it not for the faith which assures us the Lord our God is yet ruling as he always has, and is "doing his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth."

Since we are finite beings we know

not what a single moment shall bring forth; but our Father is infinite, and we have nothing to fear.

We had purposed to pursue these thoughts further, but upon reading the article by Elder Chick, which is published under "Voices of the Past" in this issue, we felt satisfied to direct attention to what he has written; and to conclude this with an expression of appreciation to all who have in any way contributed to the publication of the Signs during the past year, and to say that we hope the Lord will be pleased to enable the brethren to continue to write for the comfort and edification of the brethren; and that it all may be to His praise, honor and glory.

J. D. W.

WHY NOT GIVE A SUBSCRIPTION TO THE SIGNS —

LIVING WATER

Jesus told the Samaritan woman who had come to Jacob's Well to draw water, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, 'Give me to drink'; thou wouldest have asked of Him and He would have given thee LIVING WATER." (John 4:10) The woman evidently did not know either the gift of God or who He was because she began to reason with Him on procuring natural water from a deep natural well. Her reasoning and questions were based on the same principles as that of Nicodemus as recorded in the first part of the third chapter of John relative to being born again. Nicodemus thought Jesus was speaking of being born again naturally. The woman thought He was speaking of natural water. Our natural finite minds can only conceive of that which is natural. Until we are born of the Spirit we cannot conceive that which is spiritual. I am thoroughly convinced that when Jesus told Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of WATER and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;" He was speaking of this same LIVING WATER that was under consideration in His conversation with the Samaritan woman. What is this LIVING WATER? What is its source? Through Whom does it come? What does this LIVING WATER do for its beneficiaries? These are a few of the questions in my mind. May God give us the answer in sweet meditations while we work through this treatise.

Jesus said, "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a WELL OF WATER SPRINGING UP INTO EVERLASTING LIFE." (John 4:14) This well of water is placed in the individual. It springs up. Sometimes in our experience we may feel that it has dried up to the extent that our hopes are blasted — then, it SPRINGS UP to revive us again, which strengthens our faith, and our hope is renewed. Have you not experienced many times the SPRINGING UP of this well of water?

We read in Isaiah 12:3 "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the WELLS OF SALVATION." "This LIVING WATER comes from the wells of salvation. It brings joy and gladness to those who drink it. The Psalmist said, 'There is a river, the streams whereof, shall make GLAD the City of our God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High.'" (Ps. 46:4) This LIVING WATER makes glad the grieved heart and brings joy to those who mourn because of their sins. It saves us from despair and gives relief to our parched soul. This water is soothing and enlivening. It is that Fountain that is opened to the Lord's people for sin and uncleanness. (See Zechariah 13:1) It proceeds from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Has God ever showed you what He showed to John as recorded in Revelations 22:1-2? Have you seen this pure river of water of life flowing from the Throne of God through the Tree of Life? If this Tree of Life stood in the midst of the street of that River and on either side of it — surely, the river

flowed through the tree. Every stream of mercy that has ever reached you came through Jesus Christ who is our Life. Yes, this LIVING WATER, or water of life, comes from Heaven. These gifts of His grace come down from the Father through the Son to us. Every comfort received by the child of God is because of this LIVING WATER.

We have concluded from our meditations upon this subject thus far that this LIVING WATER gives to us the glorious and joyous portion of our experiences of grace. Many of the Lord's people who have been born of the Spirit have not yet rejoiced in these wonderful revelations. The first experiences of those born of the Spirit are grievous and condemning. Jesus cited two facts that must be revealed to an individual before they would ask Him to give them to drink. These two facts are that the person must know what is the gift of God and that Jesus Christ is His Son and Saviour of His people. A person learns much through tribulations after He is born of the Spirit, before he experiences these joyful experiences. A child of God must be born of the Spirit before he can SEE the kingdom of God. He must be born of the WATER before he can ENTER into the kingdom of God — before he can really experience the joys of Eternal Life. Jesus said, "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matt. 7:14) It is a painful entrance into life. It is through much tribulations that we enter the kingdom. As the new-born babe comes forth into the natural realm crying; so, the new-born spiritual babe comes crying and lamenting into the spiritual realm. What does it require to constitute ETERNAL LIFE? Let us ask Jesus what is Life Eternal and listen at His answer as recorded in His prayer to the Father in St. John 17:3 — "And this is LIFE ETERNAL, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." There are two lessons to be learned in this ordeal of ETERNAL LIFE. The first lesson brings the bitter experiences; the second lesson reveals the sweet. We learn the vengeance of an Holy God upon an unholy creature in the first lesson; we learn of His mercy and grace in the second lesson. We stand condemned creatures before a righteous Judge in the first lesson; we are freed from this just condemnation in the second lesson. We learn in the first experience that we are unable to lift ourselves from the pitfalls of sin into which we have fallen; we see Jesus lifting us out without any effort of our own in the second experience. We are tried in the fiery furnace and suffer great tribulations before we come to the position to ask Him, "GIVE US TO DRINK?"

Our first lesson has been such an ordeal that we are indeed THIRSTY. We have been made willing to be a beggar at His footstool and plead to Him for mercy and grace — for LIVING WATER to cool the fiery indignation! Hungry and THIRSTY our soul faints in us. Then, we CRY to the Lord in our troubles, and He delivers us from our distresses! (See Psalms 107:5-6) How soothing is that first LIVING WATER experienced by a parched soul! Do you not remember when you plead with Him, "GIVE ME TO DRINK?" Do you recall the first time you experienced that sweet inviting command, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, COME YE TO THE WATERS, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price?" We learn in the first lesson that we have nothing with which to buy, barter, or trade. The imputed righteousness of Christ becomes that with which we buy wine and milk without money and without price.

Let us turn to Isaiah 40:6-7 for a scriptural explanation of the effect of the Spirit so that we might better understand the need for this LIVING WATER. "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass WITHERETH, the

flower FADETH: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass." The Spirit of the Lord causes our flesh to wither and our goodliness to fade away. There is exceeding dryness experienced by everyone upon which the Spirit of the Lord comes. It withers the works of the flesh to such extent that we have no confidence in it. Our faith in our merits is so withered that we can see no evidence of life. Our righteousness fades to such degree that instead of righteousness the very best becomes as filthy rags. This is the proper and appointed time for us to beg of Jesus, "GIVE ME TO DRINK."

Have you ever looked upon grass and pronounced it dead because of its withered condition? A shower of rain comes and you behold greenness and see its drooping blades begin to raise up. Life is manifested in that which YOU thought and considered to be dead. This LIVING WATER enables you to lift up arms that hang down. It steadies the feeble knees. It causes the lame to walk. This LIVING WATER gives power to the faint, and to them that have no might, it increaseth strength. It causes His people to run and not be weary; to walk and not faint.

When we are blessed to drink His righteousness it revives our drooping spirits. What a blessing to drink down greedily the streams of the Lord's mercies and to realize that the fountain can never run dry but endures forever! Yes, we drink His blood to cleanse our sin-sick soul. We drink the wine of the kingdom which stimulates us to press forward regardless of difficulties, and run with patience the race set before us. We desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby. Drinking from this fountain of LIVING WATER causes us to GROW in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour. It saves us from despair and from sinking into oblivion.

Never shall I forget the hour that I was made to vehemently cry, "Give me to drink." My faith in self was shattered and my hopes were all blasted. I felt that I was forever doomed with the offcasts of the earth. I felt that hell was my eternal abiding place. One night God was pleased to bless one of His ministers to give me just one small ray of hope when he was blessed to preach Jesus as a complete saviour. I immediately grasped at the straw and began to plead to the Lord to have mercy upon me. I began crying, GIVE ME TO DRINK. The Lord had mercy upon me and showed me that His Holy arm was so mighty that it could reach down into the terrible pit-falls of sin and rescue a vile sinner like me, make him holy, and safely secure his final abode with redeemed sinners! He showed me that His right hand was sufficient to keep secure from all harm so that nothing could pluck me from His hand. His minister was blessed to WATER so that my hope became anchored in that which was sure and steadfast. I trust that I drank many times from that Fountain through His ministers while they were being blessed to preach the comforting doctrine of the Love and amazing grace of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We read in 1 Corinthians 3:6, that "Apollos watered." Seeing that it is God that gives the increase through the minister it must be this LIVING WATER coming from the throne of God and the Lamb. Your thirst has been quenched many times under the dripping of the sanctuary while feasting upon the preaching of a God-called minister. Were it not for the grand experiences of drinking this LIVING WATER while speaking from the pulpit, I feel, I would die in despair. It is an unspeakable wonder to see Heaven opened, to hear the Voice of the Son, and to feel the soothing effect of this LIVING WATER as it is calmly and sweetly applied to your soul. Oh how it does lift our drooping spirits and encourages us to persevere on our journey. Even though we feel to be lone pilgrims trodding in a desert land where there is no water — the Lord is gracious to us sometimes in directing us to an oasis where there is LIV-

ING WATER for us. Could we enjoy these precious drinks as much as we do if this water could be at our command each and every step of our pilgrimage? It is glorious when all of us can drink of the same spiritual drink — when we can drink of that spiritual Rock, Christ Jesus.

I am persuaded that it has pleased the Lord to bless us often with this LIVING WATER when we are congregated together in church capacity to worship God. Could that be the reason the Lord's people are so anxious to meet together regularly with one another in their church meetings? I have seen them from several states convened together in associations eagerly drinking that LIVING WATER as it flowed from the mouths of His ministers in such grand meetings. Such love and joy can only be experienced by the Lord's humble poor who are made to depend upon Grace for salvation to be experienced here and for eternity. I praise God that He has so arranged that His children can meet together from the different parts of the United States and worship together the King in such a demonstration of the power of the Spirit of God in these associations. God forbid that anything shall come among us to mar the chain of correspondence that exists with our people interlinking them together with the whole of the United States and the British Isles. It is my trust that before the end of our sojourn here that this LIVING WATER will draw together all the nations of the earth in such unity that it can indeed be said of us, "The Lord has done great things for them! The Lord has done great things for us whereof we are glad."

I appreciate very much the love manifested for me by the Lord's children from the rivers to the ends of the earth. My interest is in the remote places from Canada to Florida — from Washington to California — All over the globe where those of like faith and order resides.

Please pray that this LIVING WATER will be enjoyed by me and mine as the Lord sees fit to distribute it to us. My wife asks an interest in your prayers. The churches of my pastorate need your prayers. If you could stoop so low as to remember an insignificant think like me — remember me when you are at the throne of God's Grace from which this LIVING WATER flows!!

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

PSALM XXXI. 15

"My times are in thy hand."

DEAR BRETHREN:—As a traveler upon a journey often when he reaches a mile-stone will pause and look back over the way his feet has trodden, and then forward, if perchance he may gain some view of what yet lies before him, so it seems natural that when the yearly mile-stones of our lives are reached we should reflect upon the past, and think of the future, and of what may lie before us in our journey. This is true of all men in every age and clime; but it must be specially true of the christian pilgrim. He has so much more than unregenerate men to reflect upon in the past, and so much more to anticipate in the future. But whether he thinks of the past or of the future, the believer sees one thing along every step of the way that no one else sees, and that is the hand of God guiding and the will of God ordering his steps. His journey has been no uncertain wandering of a blind man groping in the dark, but the ordered pathway of a father safely, wisely and lovingly guiding or bearing his child. The Bible teaches us that no more surely is it true that God appoints and controls all the coming and going and changes of the natural elements of the world, as the seasons, day and night, cold, heat, clouds, storms, sunshine, appointing to all their times and places, than it is true that he is equally sove-

reign in all the providences of our lives, and what is still more precious to be believed, in all the spiritual mutations through which we pass.

It is sure that the child of God has a providential pathway in which to walk, as well as a spiritual travel. It is equally sure that his God has appointed the one for him as well as the other; and we have but to read the life of David, together with his Psalms, or the life of Paul in connection with his letters, to see how our providential life is bound up with our spiritual life. God has ever made the former subservient to the latter; and in the latter no more than in the former does his sovereign will and eternal purpose appear.

I have felt moved for a few years past to insist upon a "God of providence" as well as a God of grace, because there has seemed to me to be a tendency to ignore this side of the matter, to throw out of the calculation our providential surroundings, doings, willings and sufferings, and to present exclusively our spiritual exercises, wherein God leads us with sovereign wisdom and power. It is sure that holy men of old counted it joy to believe in a God of providence as well as of grace. In their view his providence entered into and appointed the minutest step of their lives. Naturally as well as spiritually they believed that they lived, moved, and had their being in God. No matter by what channel sorrow or joy came to them, they always said, "It is the Lord." Now it has seemed to me that we are in danger of drifting away from this. Instead of seeing God in all our lives, both providential and spiritual, we are prone to put him far off, and consider him not. Holy men of old rejoiced that the God whom they worshiped had ordained all their paths for them, and why should not we?

At this end of the old year I have been looking back and striving to look forward. I see much that looks dark and devious in the past, and much that seems threatening in the future. Personal trials in the past, personal anxieties for the future; and what is worse, church trials in the past, church trials for the future. Now it has seemed to me that underneath the throne of God I can see nothing to rest in; but by faith beholding the divine rule I can rest. "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof." —Psalm xcvii. I do not know what may be in all the future of God's providence or grace toward me, but I am sure that he—his will, purpose, love and grace—will be everywhere. "Not a sparrow falls to the ground without him;" and surely if, as the Lord said, we are of more value than many sparrows, we cannot take one step without him. Whatever may be unexpected to us, we may be sure that nothing is unexpected to the God whom we serve; for "known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world." So that from the beginning our God has not done one thing that from the beginning he had not appointed. With him there are no new purposes caused by changing and unforeseen circumstances. In this we may rest. We seem to be tossed by varying winds upon a restless sea; but he holds the winds in his fists, and "the sea is his, and he made it." In the midst of these various reflections upon the past and present, called up by the advent of this new year, my mind has been led to these words of David, "My times are in thy hand," and they have made me glad; and through these words I have been led into some reflections which I desire to pen down and submit to you.

First, these words of David are not only the expression of his personal faith, but are the words of divine inspiration as well. They are not only the expression of that which David most certainly believed, but are the words of God to us, so that we may count them as being most certainly true. They are the expression of the sovereign, overruling and faithful care of Jehovah for his believing child David every moment of his life. They declare that God has appointed the variety and number of

his times, and that they are measured out to him according to the one supreme will. This affirmative implies a full negative also. Our times are not in our hands. It is not ours to bid our seasons come and go at will. We cannot command the darkness nor the light, neither can we influence their coming or going. Who can bind either leviathan or the sweet influences of Pleiades? Let it be borne in mind that I speak here more especially of the providence of our God, but let it also be remembered that this is all true of the spiritual life as well.

Now, secondly, David speaks these words as though he were glad above measure. It seems to be a sort of exultant cry. The words are not the language of one who submits to the inevitable, to which he is opposed, but they express a great joy. David must have learned two things ere he could utter these words as he did. He must have learned that he could not guide his own feet safely, that he could not be trusted to measure out his own times, that he had not to look to blind chance in this matter; and on the other hand, he must have learned some things about the God whose sovereign appointment he confessed and rejoiced in. Many of the heathen believed in a blind fate; but it was David's joy, and it is ours also, to believe in an all-seeing and all-ruling and all-appointing God. In order to rejoice and exult that he—his times—were in the hands of God, David must have learned that here was to be found almighty power, supreme wisdom, infinite love, and unchangeable purposes. Leave out any or all of these things, and there could be no room for rejoicing that "his times" were in the hands of God. The word teaches us that our minds are finite, while all the attributes of Jehovah are infinite. The finite cannot comprehend the infinite, and at best it can but dimly apprehend infinite things. How much we must believe of which we can see but a dim outline or shadow! So omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, eternity, holiness, heaven, are all words expressive of truth which we must believe, and yet we do not begin to grasp the meaning of one of them; and yet it is such a Being who reigns, and of whom David could rejoicingly say, "Many times are in thy hand." Right here I am reminded that another and a greater than David, "he who was David's Lord," also said, "The Son of man indeed goeth as it was written of him" (Mark), or "as it was determined."—Luke. This he said specially of his betrayal. His God had determined the fact, and the time and the way of his betrayal. Jesus confesses this, and declares that all must be as it was written in the prophets. Jehovah had decreed this time for the dear Savior, and that Judas should sell his Lord just then; and yet Jesus said, "Woe to that man by whom he is betrayed. It were good for that man had he never been born." Concerning this I will only remark further that two things meet us in the text, viz., that God had determined beforehand that Judas should betray Jesus, and that Judas was condemned for doing this act.

But Satan may take hold of the natural unbelief of our hearts, and tempt us after this fashion. David was a great man, and he had a great work to do in the world, and therefore his times were of vast importance, and therefore God held his times in his hand, and measured them out to him; but I am but a worm, a babe; I am of little use in the world; it matters little whether I live or die; and I cannot suppose that what was true of David is true of me. But this is truly a temptation of the evil one, and is met by the testimony of Jeremiah when he said, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." This is true of all men; and so by this testimony we learn that the times of the very least as well as the greatest are in the hands of God.

But now the question comes up in my mind, What does David include in this expression? Does he leave anything out? Does he say that any of his times

are not in the hand of God? Who would venture to say that David made any exception? Who could point to any period in David's life and say, That time was not in the hands of God? From the time when he kept the flocks safely from the bear and lion, to the time when God called him home, was there one spot when it could be said, This did not come from God? The words of the text might present to our minds the picture of a child who stands waiting with expectancy the appointments of a father or guardian. All that this child can hope for or dread, that guardian has in his own control; but the child has no fear, and is well content, for he has learned to believe that his guardian is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. So he comes or goes, studies, works or plays, eats such food and wears such apparel as his guardian appoints; and because of his faith in and love to his guardian, he confidingly and joyfully confesses, "All my times are in his hand. He orders all my ways, and I must and do leave it all with him." So our sovereign Guardian and Friend holds our times, of whatever sort they are, in his absolute control. O that we may, like David, have a heart to praise God that it is so!

If we turn to this Psalm, we learn (verse 4) that men were covertly seeking David's overthrow, (verse 7) that he had been having trials and adversities, (verse 8) that he had been assailed by enemies, and (verses 9 and 10) that he was filled with trouble and grief. Such times as these he had met with, and of them he said, They are in God's hands. Also, all through the Psalm he prays for deliverance and salvation; and these times of deliverance are also in the hands of God. David by this could learn submission under the afflictions, and patience while waiting for relief. Once he said, "I was silent, because thou didst it." And Job said, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." So we learn that our times of trial, in whatever garb they appear, are all in the control of the Almighty. He measures them out to us at his will; and so also the joy comes when and how he pleases. Nothing in our lives is left to chance. With Jehovah there can be no contingencies. "Known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world." He does nothing that he did not purpose to do ere time began. He works "all things after the counsel of his own will;" all things, without exception. Unless David had believed all this he could not have said, "My times are in thy hand."

How exactly similar to this confidence of David is the language of Paul in portions of the eighth chapter of Romans. In verse twenty-eight of that chapter we hear him saying most confidently, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Paul here takes strong ground: "We know." He takes broad ground: "That all things." He takes comforting ground: "Work together for good." He takes discriminating ground: "To them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I have just said that Paul takes broad ground. He says, "All things." Down in verse thirty-seven, in this same eighth chapter of Romans, he says precisely the same thing in other words. He enumerates tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and the sword; and then he says, "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." We are "more than conquerors." That is, we turn even enemies into our service; and thus all things work for our good, as he said in verse twenty-eight. God works secretly, and often we cannot see his hand, and still oftener we cannot trace out how good is to result from many providences; but his word says it all does work for good, and can we not believe his word, and trust him even when we cannot trace him?

To the sick ones this applies. Much is

said in these days about health and cure-alls, mind cures and faith cures not excepted. Much is said also about the care of our bodies, and sanitary regulations for houses and cities; but I notice that men suffer and die everywhere alike. After all is said and done, it still is true that our times of sickness are in his hand. If there be sickness, it is from his hand; and the same hand makes us well again. Each in its place and time is fulfilling the purpose of God, and working for good to his loved ones. In this faith, patience and cheerful resignation are to be found; but if sickness does not come from the hand of God, and is not meant for our good, then it is vain to speak of resignation, for we have a right to murmur at what comes from the devil, or grows out of our own folly. May God help each sick one to say, "My times are in thy hand." The faith of Job is the best faith. In his losses and afflictions he saw neither Sabeans, nor Chaldeans, nor wind, nor fire, nor Satan himself, but only God himself. My brother or sister, whatever your afflictions may be, and however long they may endure, "it is the Lord." All is in his hand.

To those who are passing through the sorrows of bereavement these words apply. A dear sister whom I know had lost an only child. While the child lay dead in the house she was filled with great bitterness, and would not be comforted, and could not weep. As the hour of burial drew near an uncle came to her as she sat alone in her room, and said to her, "Think who has done it." Her heart responded to this, and all the bitterness gave place to submission at the thought, "The Lord has done it." This time of her trouble was in the hands of God.

This word suits those who are persecuted or slandered, or whose names are cast out as evil; those who are poor and needy and distressed. On the other hand, if we are well and happy and strong, if we have friends and prosperity, if a good name and riches be ours, these words are still just as true as before. Our times are in the hands of God; and if we believe these words we shall not be in despair when sorrow comes, and neither shall we be exalted above measure in the day of our prosperity. We receive either one or the other according to the sovereign will of God.

Our circumstances may change, but there is no change with him. With him there is nothing new. He has no new knowledge, no new purposes, but all was fixed in the infinite mind from vast eternity. He who created the ponderous world also created the mote that we see floating in the sunbeam; and so he who set bounds to nations also ordained the feeble steps of such finite worms as we. Just as carefully and omnipotently as he struck out the track of worlds in space, so accurately and omnipotently has he from the beginning struck out our pathways of joy or sorrow. Our times are in his hand.

I said in the beginning that I had been striving to look into the future, but I am glad that I cannot pierce that vail. I am also glad that all my ways of word or thought or deed, all that I shall do or suffer or enjoy, are in God's hands.

"The steps that I take, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will."

My brethren, I send this as a sort of New Year's greeting. I wish for you all, if it be God's will, a Happy New Year.

As ever, I remain your brother in hope of life,

F. A. CHICK.

Reisterstown, Md.

(We enjoyed reading the above so much that we felt our brethren would enjoy it too. It was written by Elder Chick and published Feb. 1, 1888. — J. D. W.)

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pleasant Hope Church,
Cass County, Texas
October 30, 1955

Pursuant to call by Pleasant Hope Church for a Presbytery to meet on the above date for the purpose of the Ordination of Brother Loyd Wall, to the full work of Gospel Minist-

ry, the following Elders and Deacons met and organized themselves into a Presbytery; Elders T. A. Wall, R. W. Rhodes, E. J. Lambert, J. T. Everitt, C. M. Haygood and W. A. Speer. Deacons L. S. Hill, H. S. Hill, David C. Shelton, J. B. Burkhalter, A. L. Rowell, W. B. Burkhalter, J. W. Johnson, J. H. Johnson, C. E. White and G. C. Burgin.

The Presbytery elected Elder R. W. Rhodes, Moderator and Elder W. A. Speer, Clerk. L. S. Hill was appointed spokesman for the church who presented Brother Loyd Wall to the Presbytery.

After due examination of Brother Wall as to deportment, qualifications and the state of God's gift and calling in him to the Gospel Ministry to the satisfaction of the Presbytery, the Presbytery proceeded with the ordination as follows;

The Presbytery selected Elder E. J. Lambert, to word the prayer and Elder T. A. Wall, to deliver the charge. The Ordination was then conducted by the laying on of hands and with prayer by Elder E. J. Lambert, and then by charge delivered by Elder T. A. Wall.

We the members of the Presbytery commend Elder Loyd Wall, to all Orderly Orthodox Primitive Baptist as being sound in doctrine, careful in deportment and humble in the display of God's gift to him as a Minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The right hand of fellowship was given Elder Loyd Wall, by the members of the Presbytery, Pleasant Hope Church, and Brethren, Sisters and friends, and he was then delivered back to the church a duly ordained Minister of the Gospel by the Presbytery and received by the church.

Minutes of the proceedings read and approved and the Presbytery was dissolved in order with prayer by Elder C. M. Haygood.

Elder R. W. Rhodes, Moderator
Elder W. A. Speer, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, since we last met The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association has lost five members, to-wit: Deacons Eddie West and Alvin Powell of the Salisbury Church; Deacon Lee W. Warren of the Snow Hill Church; Sister Mildred Adkins of the Indiantown Church, and Sister Ella Le Cates of the Little Creek Church therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that we bow in humble submission to our gracious Heavenly Father's will, desiring to be reconciled to the loss of very precious members from our midst, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Salisbury Association extend it's sympathy to the bereaved families, and may the Grace of God enable them to look to Jesus for comfort in their hour of need, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we send a copy of these resolutions to the Signs of the Times for publication, and a copy made for the minutes.

Done by the order of the Association, now in session with the Forest Grove Church, Oct. 20, 1955.

Elder H. M. Bennett, Moderator
Maud T. Laws, Clerk
William Adkins, Asst. Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

At the meeting of the Middletown and Walkill Old School Baptist Church, Sunday, August 28, 1955, the following resolution was offered by Deacon William D. Chapman:

It is a sad duty to announce the death of Sister Minnie E. Hyatt, a trustee of this church for many years, and a member of the Middletown and Walkill Church for more than sixty years. We thank God for her long, useful life. She was most helpful in carrying on the work of the church; and her passing leaves a vacancy hard to fill. Her life was wrapped up in her devotion to the church, and, above all, her love for the dear Saviour.

We wish to bow to God's will in Sister Hyatt's departure; and hope and believe she has entered into the rest that remains to the people of God.

"Methinks we see her now at rest
In the bright mansion love ordained:
Her head reclines on Jesus' breast,
No more by sin or sorrow pained.
Fearless she entered death's cold flood —
Her only trust was Jesus' blood
In sure and certain hope to rise."

It was resolved that this resolution be placed on the church minutes; and was adopted.

OBITUARIES

MRS. LAURA LEE KEELER

Mrs. Laura Lee Keeler, of Middleburg, Virginia, departed this life on September 17, 1955, at the age of eighty-seven. She was the daughter of the late Francis Marion and Mary Matilda Cole. On October 26, 1892, she was united in marriage to William Ryan Keeler at Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church by Elder J. N. Badger. Mr. Keeler died in 1912. She is survived by two daughters: Mrs. Frank Brittlebank, The Plains, Virginia; and Mrs. Edwin C. Reamer, Middleburg, Virginia; also by two sisters and a brother: Mrs. W. Fielder Norman, Purcellville, Virginia; Mrs. Henry H. Rogers, Arlington, Virginia; and James M. Cole, Hughesville, Virginia.

Mrs. Keeler was one of Middleburg's oldest residents, having lived there almost her entire life. She was greatly beloved in her community, and for about seventeen years was postmistress. One has said of her that she grew old gracefully, and became gentler, sweeter and lovelier as the years slipped by.

She had attended Mt. Zion Church from childhood, and rarely missed a meeting unless prevented by illness. She was firmly established in the faith, and gave every evidence of a good hope in Christ. She is now at rest from the trials of life, and though she will be greatly missed by her family and friends, we are assured that our loss is her gain.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer from the home in Middleburg, where many friends were gathered, evidencing their high esteem; as did the many flowers. Several portions of scripture had been selected by the deceased to be read at her funeral, each of which had given her comfort while she lived. Interment was in Sharon Cemetery, Middleburg.

May the Lord give grace to reconcile us to his will.

John D. Wood

MRS. MILDRED ADKINS

Sister Mildred Adkins departed this life August 17, 1955. She was born July 3, 1915, the daughter of Berry and Dora Morris, near Salisbury, Maryland. She was married to William S. Adkins, of the same community, December 23, 1936; and to them were born four children: Richard S., Francis A., Ernest W., and Ethel E., who, with her husband, father and mother, and three sisters and one brother survive her.

Sister Mildred united with the Indiantown Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Church April 14, 1946, of which her husband was a member. Their home was a home for all Old Baptist at all times, and they entertained many with pleasure, and everyone was made to feel welcome. She and Brother William have meant so much to the church; for their love for it was manifested by their faithfulness and support. No matter how much they were involved in their livelihood, they always had time to render whatever service might be needed toward the maintenance and welfare of their church, and sister churches also.

She has been missed by many, yet we all hope to be reconciled to the will of God, and pray his will be done. The cause of her passing was the outcome of an automobile accident; after which she lived about twelve days.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder H. M. Bennett, assisted by Licentiate Arthur Warren, in the Forrest Grove Meeting House. Interment was in the Forrest Grove burying ground.

(Elder) H. M. Bennett

MINNIE E. HYATT

Sister Minnie E. Hyatt, of Warwick, N. Y., was born January 6, 1868, and departed this life July 31, 1955, making her stay on earth more than eighty-seven years. She was the daughter of Thomas and Mary Elizabeth Dolson Hyatt. Surviving her are two neices, Mrs. Ruth Robinson, Middletown, N. Y., and Mrs. Rodgers Huston, Cold Springs, N. Y.; one nephew, Robert Gravel, Key West, Florida.

Sister Hyatt was a member of the Old School Baptist Church of Middletown, N. Y. for over sixty years, of which she faithfully filled her place as a faithful witness of the cause of Christ, and gave much evidence of her being called by the grace of God. She often remarked it was all of grace from first to last; and was ever ready to give the reason of her hope, and, as we see it, she bore much fruit of the Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith and meekness; which is the fruit that is manifested in the heaven born soul, produced by the divine nature of the grace of God in the creature. She is greatly missed, for she always was at meeting unless hindered by something beyond her control. She was much loved by her brethren and church friends who knew her. Her love for Christ and his gospel was a deep heartfelt matter with her — it was meat and drink to her, for her soul was ever hungering and thirsting after the precious doctrine of Christ as the only salvation for poor lost sinners.

She was treasurer and clerk of her church, which offices she very ably filled. We feel it a blessing to love her as we did, for we feel it a blessing to have love for God's little ones — it gives us comfort to be in possession of this love. We often felt that her home, though she lived alone, was a palace, for the king's daughter lived there. Her passing is a great loss to the church brethren and friends, but we feel our loss is her eternal gain: to have her hope and faith become a reality, being with her Lord, to see him as he is, and be like him.

Her funeral was held from the funeral parlors in Warwick, conducted by the unworthy writer, her pastor. "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." (Matthew 7:20)

(Elder) Amasa J. Slauson

ELDER J. J. SMITH

The subject of the obituary was born in Dale County, Alabama, January 30, 1876; and married Julia Gray early in life. To this union were born five sons: Bennie, Lee, Howard, Aaron and Lehman; and three daughters: Mattie, Sarah, and Alma — who were most dear to their parents. Both were members of Ephesus Church, Slocomb, Alabama, at the

time of their deaths, and were ever faithful to its tenets. Sister Smith was called to her heavenly home December 15, 1947, and greatly mourned by her husband and children.

Elder Smith united with Consolation Church, Coffee County, Alabama, in early youth, and immediately took an active interest in the church. He began serving as a messenger to the associations in 1892. He was soon burdened with the duties of the ministry, but fled from it. The Lord ever completes his work, so in a distant state Eld. Smith was ordained — in Desoto Parish, Louisiana, by Elders D. W. Stanley, C. Thomason, W. C. Foshee, and Clerk C. C. Owens, at Cool Springs Church in October 1908.

He was soon called to serve churches, and was a conscientious pastor and a great experimental minister of the gospel. Among the churches he served were: Mt. Carmel, Goshen, Mt. Moriah, Bethlehem, Mt. Gilead, Ephesus and New Hope — ever watching over them for good, and living an exemplary life. He was a great believer in the resurrection, and scarcely ever closed a sermon without referring to this fundamental principle.

He died March 6, 1955, and funeral services were conducted at his home church, Ephesus, by Elders F. A. Collins, J. J. Collins, E. R. Sorrels and Mr. I. P. Davis, with interment at Pleasant Hill Cemetery. Truly a great minister of the Primitive Baptist faith has gone to be ever with the Lord.

(Elder) J. J. Collins

MRS. ELLA M. BOGART

Mrs. Ella M. Bogart, widow of the late Brother Walter Bogart, was born December 15, 1869; and died April 11, 1955. She was the daughter of Catherine and John Swarthout, of Boiceville, N. Y.; and was twice married, first to Orlando Perry, and then to Walter Bogart. Both husbands preceeded her in death. She leaves the following to mourn her passing: Three daughters by her first marriage: Mrs. Raymond Markle, South Gate, Cal., Mrs. Nelson B. Huatt, Pleasantville, N. Y., and Mrs. Henry B. Wesley, Norwalk, Conn.; three stepdaughters: Mrs. Francis H. May, Bronx, N. Y., Mrs. Ralph Snyder, Kingston, N. Y., and Mrs. A. W. Stevens, Portland, Maine; A step-son: Marshall W. Bogart, Yonkers, N. Y. (one stepson, Chester Bogart, Kingston, N. Y. preceeded her in death); nine grand-children and seven great grand-children; also two sisters: Mrs. Berlin Weeks, Kingston, N. Y., and Mrs. Benjamin Terhune, Poughkeepsie, N. Y.; and two brothers: Herman and Emmet Swarthout.

She was a life long resident of Shokan, N. Y., except the last few years since Brother Walter's death she made her home with her daughter, Mrs. Nelson Huatt, Pleasantville, N. Y. She was in a boarding house in Kingston at the time of her death. She was a member of the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, Shokan, N. Y., and was baptized by Eld. George Ruston, December 17, 1916 — at the time of year when the water was frozen, so that the ice had to be cut for her to take the sacred step to be buried in the liquid grave; but that mattered not to her, for she must be buried from the trifling things of this world, and rise again to walk in newness of life because of the love she had for her Lord. Her faith was steadfast to the end. Funeral was held from the Connor Funeral Parlors, Kingston, N. Y. Interment was in Winchell Cemetery, Shokan, N. Y. Funeral was conducted by the writer.

(Elder) Amasa J. Slauson

THOMAS WALTER PRINCE

Thomas Walter Prince was born November 1, 1889, in Union City, Tennessee; and died May 7, 1955. He was the son of John D. and Mary M. (Norris) Prince, deceased. He was united in marriage to Minnie Bell Richardson on September 24, 1910; she died in 1919, leaving five children. He was united in marriage to Mary Francis (Cambell) Richardson on June 23, 1921; she died September 1, 1951. He married Maude (Floyd) Abbott on July 14, 1952; who survives. Other survivors are: two sons, John Arvin Prince, Mt. Vernon, Ill.; Clarence Hubert Prince, Bakersfield, Calif.; two daughters, Mrs. Virgil Dubois, Shreveport, La.; Mrs. Lester Harlow, Mt. Vernon, Ill.; two sisters, Mrs. Lyman P. Badgley, Mound City, Ill.; Mrs. Sam McGregor, Dawson Spring, Ky.; twenty grand-children and two great grand-children, and nieces and nephews.

He professed a hope in Christ in June, 1939, and united with Rock Spring Church, Johnson County, Ill.; and was baptized by Eld. Paul Poyner. He loved his church and lived faithful to it, attending the meetings at every opportunity; and was sound in Old Baptist doctrine, in an alwise God who rules and super-rules all things from the least to the greatest. He had many sorrows and afflictions, but God directed his steps and lifted him over the rough places, and bestowed his mercies on him. He enjoyed reading the Bible, and the Signs of the Times; and loved to sing the old songs. He has left a vacant seat in Rock Springs Church, and will be greatly missed, but our loss is his gain.

Funeral services were held at Myers Funeral Home, Mt. Vernon, Ill., by Mr. Ross Partridge; with grave side services in Golconda, Ill., by Elder Paul Poyner. He was laid to

rest in the Golconda Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers. He has entered into his rest; may God comfort all who mourn his passing, and guide us all to the end. The above prepared from information furnished by a sister,

Mrs. Sam McGregor.

WILLIAM J. BENSON

I now write the obituary notice of my brother, William J. Benson. He was the son of the late John W. and Leah Jane Benson; and was born October 19, 1869, and passed away September 5, 1955; making his stay on earth nearly eighty-six years.

He was not a member of the visible church, but was a believer in the doctrine of the Old School Baptists, and a regular attendant of the meetings at Delmar and Smith Mills for many years. He was of a jovial disposition, endearing himself to all who knew him. He was custodian at the Maryland high school for thirty-two years, resigning because of his age. After that he spent most of his time gardening, at which he was an expert. I have often wondered if he did not often think of the words, "A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed."

He suffered an heart attack August 7th, and passed away the fifth day of September. His nurse said he passed away like one falling into a peaceful sleep. I think he realized he would never be well again, for he said he had only one time to die, and if his time had come, he was willing to go. I hope I will be able to leave behind such a testimony when my time comes. At the viewing, the people just kept coming and going. Many came to have a last look at Grandpop Benson, as he was affectionately called. One of his noble traits of character was visiting the sick. If anyone in the neighborhood was sick, he would visit them, regardless of creed; thus showing that he was in possession of pure and undefiled religion. I am not writing in this manner to exalt him, for I know he would never allow this to be done; but, like all in whom a good work is begun, he confessed that by nature he was a sinner: the righteousness which he manifested was imputed.

The funeral was largely attended, and was conducted by Elder H. M. Bennett and Elder C. E. Benson, his nephew. He leaves his widow, Ida B. Benson, and one brother, the writer of this notice; and several nephews and nieces.

So, another has been taken from this evil world to rest until Christ descends to call his people from their graves: changing their vile bodies and fashioning them like unto his own most glorious body.

A. T. Benson

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Saturday, 11 A. M.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 11 A. M.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

WRIGHTS' CREEK CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday, 11 A. M.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday, 11 A. M.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., six miles SE. of Sulligent, Alabama.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each Saturday before the fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Alabama.

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles SW. of Fayette, Alabama.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

BEULAH PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Troy, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday, South end of Three Notch Street.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

MT. PLEASANT PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located two miles South of Dothan, Alabama, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before.
E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

MT. GILEAD PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles North of Hartford, Alabama.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Pratt City, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. Meeting place at Alder Street at top of hill, first car going into Pratt City from Birmingham.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

LIBERTY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., eight miles South of Gordo, Alabama.

O. G. GARVER, Pastor

MT. CARMEL CHURCH, Coffee Springs, Alabama, meets each first Sunday 11 A. M.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Tucson, Arizona, meets on third Sundays and Saturday before at 134 E. Prince Road. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

T. J. ROBINSON, Pastor
MRS. J. H. DAY, Clerk

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

W. S. SPEER, Pastor

REHOBETH OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located five miles North of El Dorado, Arkansas and half-mile West of Highway No. 7, meets second Sunday in each month and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

R. W. RHODES, Pastor,
W. A. SPEER, Clerk

LITTLE FLOCK CHURCH, Miami, Florida, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before, SW. 29th Avenue and 6th Street. We extend an invitation to any interested to visit us.

Mrs. J. M. Futch,
7005 SW. 21st Street,
Miami, Florida

SALEM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Panama City, Florida, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., North end of Harrison Avenue.

F. A. COLLINS, Pastor

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Weise, Idaho, meets each second Sunday at 5th and E. Park Street.

PLEASANT VALLEY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas, meets the first Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (January, March, etc.) at the home of Sister Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C.

MRS. PHEBE CATES, Clerk

THE LOST CREEK CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, meets first Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Kentucky, ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton, on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

C. H. EVANS, Pastor

NEW HOPE CHURCH (better known as Lick Creek) meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Kentucky.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE ZION CHURCH OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS, Mayfield, Kentucky, meets first Sunday each month at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M., on South 7th Street.

O. W. PERKINS, PASTOR

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Baltimore, Maryland, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Street, Near Calvert.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on Falls Road about twenty miles north of Baltimore.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, New York City, meets every first and third Sundays at Parkside Hotel, 18 Gramercy Park South, one block east of Fourth Ave, and 20th St., near 23rd St. Sta, Lexington Ave. Subway. Take elevator to Park Room second floor. 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets each 5th Sunday and Saturday afternoon before, from May through September, with two days meeting the 1st Sunday in May; and meets at Needmore, Pa., on 5th Sundays and Saturday afternoon before, from October through April, with two days meeting the 2nd Sunday in October.

John D. Wood, Pastor
Orien Mellott, Clerk
McConnellsburg, Pa.

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, Houston, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M. Church is located on

Little York Highway, four miles north of Houston, and one mile east of Highway 76.
W. O. BEENE, Pastor

BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin, Orgon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes.
ERNEST ATTEBERY, Pastor

MT. ZION CHURCH, Weslaco, Texas, meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 and Saturday before at 11 A. M., at the home of E. B. Ault, on Progresso Highway, three and one-half miles South of Weslaco.
E. B. Ault, Pastor,
Bessie Chambers, Clerk,
Rt. 1, Mission, Texas

SARDIS CHURCH, Amarillo, Texas, meets first Sundays at 10:30, in the home of Deacon C. M. Toler, 119 S. Bowie Street.
C. E. TURNER, Pastor

THE OLD ORDERLY MT. ZION (CASH) PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Campbell, Texas, meets on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in each month at the home of Bro. J. J. Darnell.
SISTER SIMMONS, Clerk

PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, 1211 8th Avenue, meets first Sunday in each month at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, go one block North to meeting house.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor,
W. A. LITTLE, Asst. Pastor

THE ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST CHURCH, Lawn, Texas, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.
C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
MRS. NOLA STEWART, Clerk

AN ARM OF PILGRIM REST CHURCH, meets each second Sunday and Saturday night before at Earth, Texas.
C. M. Haygood, Pastor,
A. A. Chambers, Clerk

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.
C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30, at the home of M. J. Culpeper. Lovers of the truth invited.
E. B. AULT, Pastor

THE OLD SALEM CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS, four miles South of Teague, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before.
MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

SAINTS REST OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday evening before at seven-thirty, at 4614 Sylvester Street.
W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
JOHN T. BEENE, Clerk

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30.
W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
C. E. TURNER, Co-pastor

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday afternoon at 2:30.
W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor

THE PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Memphis, Tennessee, meet in the Primitive Baptist Church, corner of Getwell and Fizer Streets, on second Sunday in each month at 11 A. M. and Saturday evening before; also on fourth Sundays at 11 A. M.
H. G. Brown, Pastor
791 Watson Street
L. C. Campbell, Clerk
3347 Tutwiller Street

LITTLE FLOCK PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Cass County, Missouri, meets on second Sundays in the Memorial Building, Pleasant Hill, Missouri. We invite brethren of our faith and order to visit us.
L. L. SCHENCK, Pastor
MRS. J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk
Pleasant Hill, Mo.

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2:30, Fairmont Park, 3023 Cottage Toll Road.
R. B. DENSON, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Richmond, Virginia, meets each fourth Sunday in their new meeting house about ten miles South of Richmond, just off of highway 360 South.
R. S. PAYNE, Pastor

DAN RIVER CHURCH, between Danville, Va. and Reidsville N. C., meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before.
D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville, Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday night before, on Bradley Road.

W. R. DODD, Pastor

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2 P. M., and is located on Route 28, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2 P. M., each second month (February, April, etc.), and is near Lucketts, about eight miles North of Leesburg, Virginia.

BROAD RUN CHURCH, Poolesville, Maryland, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. each second month (January, March, etc.)

MT. ZION CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2 P. M., and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, Virginia, on Route 50, between Washington and Winchester, Virginia.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are always glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Deacon G. C. Spindle, Lincoln 6-5091.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

LITTLE ZION PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Chehalis, Washington, meets in the home of Sister Effie Parke, 1360 First Street, the first Sunday of each month at 11 A. M.

HOWARD EASON, Pastor

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, near Yakima, Washington, meets at 11 A. M. each second Sunday by appointment at the home of one of the members living in Naches, Washington.

A. D. Hughett, Pastor,
Beatrice Haan, Clerk,
Star Route, Naches, Washington.

HARMONY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, about four miles East of Huntington, W. Va., near Route 60 at Russell Creek, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

J. R. LANE, Moderator,
Mildred Stanley, Clerk
Rt. 2, Huntington, W. Va.

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Stockton, California, meets second Sundays at Fairgrounds Community Bldg. All lovers of the truth invited. Please note change of address from Sacramento, California.

T. R. Jefferson, Pastor
Wm. Echols, Clerk
Chowchilla, Cal.

The **WALNUT FORK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH,** near Cottage Grove, Tennessee, meets on the second Sunday of each month.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor
R. L. VEAZEY, SR., Clerk

The **WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,** Warwick, Orange County, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are at 10:30 A. M. DST.

The **MIDDLETOWN AND WALLKILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,** Middletown, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday from April to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. Meetings are at 2 P. M. DST.

ELAM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, two miles North of Goshen, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

J. R. GIBSON, Pastor,
A. C. CARTER, Clerk

ROCK SPRINGS OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, meets each first Sunday at 10:30. The meeting house is located on highway 222, about one-quarter mile of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line.

John D. Wood, Pastor,
Chas. B. Osborne, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Compton, California, meets each fourth Sunday at the home of L. W. Langwell, 12812 S. Williams Street.

WHITE WATER OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located about one mile Northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

W. A. SPEER, Pastor

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in the United States), meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is located one mile south of Newark, Delaware, just off of Highway 896.

D. V. Spangler, Pastor

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 124 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1956 NO. 2

A COMFORTING DOCTRINE

403 Monticello Drive
Wilson, N. C.

Elder Geo. L. Weaver
Huntington, West Virginia

Dear Bro. Weaver:

I have had an impression for some time to write you in reply to your precious letter which I received several months ago, but which was lost in my files and has not yet been found. I offer my profound apology for neglecting to write you at an earlier date.

When I read your recent article, "Predestination of All Things," in the Signs of the Times, a very deep impression came over me to write you in regard to your thoughts on that sacred subject.

The older I grow, and the more I see and observe the order, mystery, and nature of created matter, the more thoroughly I am convinced of the predestination of all things. With you, I share the comforts of such a divine and sacred doctrine.

You gave many beautiful and supporting scriptural references as a basic foundation for your belief. One cannot read your article without being struck with the perfect order of all things, both in heaven and in earth, for David expressed the precious thought in the 148th Psalm, "Let them praise the name of the Lord: for He commanded and they were created"—i. e., sun and moon and stars of light. Also, note in the 8th verse: "Fire and hail; snow, and vapors; stormy wind fulfilling His word." Since tempest, destructive floods, and earthquakes abound is it not an unspeakable comfort to know they are controlled by the omnipotent power of a merciful God?

In the last words of David as recorded in 2 Samuel, 23rd Chapter, 5th verse, "Athough my house be not so with God; yet He hath made with me an evelasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although He make it not to grow." Even though David could see the church as it stood in his day was not made perfect by the continual sacrifices under the ceremonial law, nevertheless he could by faith see and feel the predetermined covenant, ordered in all things and sure. David felt assured that his salvation was in the everlasting covenant; it was all his salvation and all his desire. Even though he could not see the expansion and growth as he desired, yet it was all he had. It seems the older we grow the more we behold the imperfections of our old and decaying nature. A growth in grace will surely discover more of the sinful nature of fallen man.

We behold God as set forth in the scripture as an absolute God, in an unapproachable supremacy and of an unexampled love. The dictionary gives the meaning of the word "absolute" as free from imperfection; complete; perfect and free from limitations or restrictions; not comparative or relative to any other power.

When we find such meaningful and comprehensive illustrations as set forth in His blessed word as recorded in Gen. 50:20, "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive," we behold the providence of God in transforming evil into good.

One cannot pursue the thought of Joseph and his brethren as recorded in the Holy Scriptures without seeing the purpose of God transforming their evil deeds into an incalculable blessing.

There is no evil that is beyond the range or control of God. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee: the remainder of wrath Thou shalt restrain." (Ps. 76:10) It praised Him on Calvary, for though He died by wicked hands, yet in His death He destroyed the "last enemy which is death." (I Cor. 15:26) "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." (Acts 2:23) Shall we apply foreknowledge and predestination to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ only and leave all else to gloomy chance, or the fate of men? No, indeed. Solomon speaks in majestic solemnity, "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die." (Ecc. 3:2) Is it not plainly set forth by such powerful and extraordinary declarations that all things are under a perfectly ordered and controlled divine economy? "It must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh." (St. Matt. 18:7)

We are all aware of a perfect physical law of gravity that absolutely governs the universe, for the inventive genius of man has so far never been capable of forming anything that could sustain itself against this law. The latest development in aeronautical mechanisms may soar out of sight and sound but finally must return to the earth. So is it with every child of the covenant race of God; it matters not how low in the earth he may fall, the spirit of life in Christ will take him or her back to the source of all comfort, the heavenly kingdom. "For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." (Rom. 8:2) The law of sin and death pulls down but the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus lifts the weary soul up and gives it access to a throne of grace.

So, Elder Weaver, I join you in the comforting doctrine of the predestination of all things. It is a doctrine that humbles the brokenhearted sinner, causes the true child of God to desire to flee from sensual pleasures and fleshly lust, **and in no wise will one of His little ones resort to predestination of all things as an excuse for sinful practices.**

May His rich and reigning grace keep you and yours, together with the sacred household of faith, is my humble prayer.

(Elder) W. E. Turner

HE KNOWS HOW IT IS WHEN ONE CANNOT ATTEND MEETINGS

Mesilla Park, New Mexico

Dear Brother Spangler:

I have noticed that my subscription to the Signs of the Times is past due, so I will write a few lines and send in my subscription. Enclosed is a check for $50.00 — $25.00 to be applied to my subscription, and $25.00 to apply on subscriptions of brethren and sisters unable to pay. The Signs of the Times has been so much comfort to me the last few years, that I feel I know what it would mean to me not to be able to have it, when I call to mind brethren scattered from one end of the country to the other, who are old and perhaps poor in this world's goods, but who are rich in the faith of the Son of God; and who may be shut-ins, not able to attend any of our churches, but who look forward to receiving the Signs that they may be able to glean from the truth contained therein.

I do not have the opportunity to attend meetings very often, as the nearest church is around 300 miles from my home. I attended church at Altus, Oklahoma, in June of this year (1955); also a little church in Riffe, Washington, and in California, in September. I met some wonderful brothers and sisters while in Washington and California; and had the pleasure of hearing Elder Lambert for the first time at Riffe. I feel that churches are wonderfully blessed when they have someone who can so ably declare the truth as is taught in the scripures.

The thing that troubles me the most of late, is trouble among churches and pastors. If it were not that I know it, I just couldn't believe it; when we are taught in the scriptures to love one another: love is not puffed up, love is not envious, etc. The scriptures teach us to remove the beam from our own eye, so we can see clearly to remove the mote from our brother's eye. He that is not guilty, let him cast the first stone. We are all weak in the flesh, but do not all have the same weakness. I see among the churches how they bite and devour one another, especially some preaching brethren. The scriptures teach us how to conduct ourselves toward our country, and toward our church and brethren. In our own family, if we had a son or father who had contracted leprosy, we would not want to destroy him, but help him; and when the time came for him to depart from the family, there would be much sorrow manifested in the family. When one of our brethren have to be removed from among us to protect the whole body from being destroyed, we should feel the same way. I believe that if the love of God abounds in us, we won't have a feeling of destruction, but the opposite.

The greatest blessing that has ever been bestowed upon a man, is to be quickened, or made alive by the Spirit of God: for our perfection is in Christ, and him alone. All that ever came before him, or after, are thieves and robbers. Cursed is man that trusts in man and makes flesh his arm; the opposite is, Blessed is the man to whom God will not impute sin. The Son of God is the difference between the natural and the heavenly: it is by him, and to him, and through him, are all things pertaining to eternal life.

My prayer is that I will at all times, through the Spirit, give Christ the honor and praise that is due him. I will close, hoping the contribution is through the spirit and not the flesh.

Your unworthy brother,
James A. Bell

Ingalls, Arkansas

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed you will find check covering two subscriptions: renewals for myself and my mother . . .

I wish I could say lovely, comforting words, or put them on paper, but I am not gifted as others. But I hope I am one who enjoys the Signs — the letters of the many gifted writers, who so ably explain the scriptures. I have been reading the Signs practically all my life, and find that I enjoy each copy more than I did the previous one, if possible. Surely the Lord must be in the matter for you and your staff of writers to be able to speak and write with knowledge and understanding as you do.

I sincerely hope the Lord will continue to bless each and every one of you to continue to declare the whole counsel of God, and to earnestly contend for the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. If the Primitive Baptists do not set forth the true doctrine of salvation, I have no hope of eternal salvation.

I desire an interest in your prayers, when you feel impressed of the Spirit of God to do so. With best wishes, I am

A friend in hope,
Mrs. Charlie Harrod

ELDER AND SISTER NEAL CELEBRATE THEIR 75th WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

2430 Lincoln Ave.
Granite City, Ill.

Dear Brother and Sister Wood and readers of the Signs:

In order to let you and the brethren and readers of the Signs know and rejoice with us, praising the Lord for His kindness to our Brother and Sister in Christ, Elder John and Sister Mary Neal, 420 South 17th St., Mt. Vernon, Illinois, who observed their 75th wedding anniversary, on December 9, 1955.

Brother Neal is a constant reader of his Bible and loves to talk on the scriptures, and has a clear mind and strong

voice, and is very active in the scriptures. It is indeed inspiring to visit and hear both relate the Lord's merciful kindness to them.

They are both nearing their 95th birthdays and are both active and enjoying comparatively good health. Elder Neal was born March 11, 1861 and Sister Neal was born March 18, 1861.

Elder Neal was ordained to the work of the ministery in 1903, but due to distance and advanced age he has not been very active in the church the past few years. The last time Brother Neal preached, he spoke from Jeremiah 10: 23: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." He was given liberty and preached more than an hour, proclaiming all glory, honor, and salvation to be by free grace and free grace alone, and that not of the creature but by the finished work of Christ alone through the operation of the Holy Spirit.

This is not written to eulogize Brother or Sister Neal but merely to let you, the readers of our family paper, know the dealings of the Lord with our dear brother and sister in Christ. They live with their daughter, Mrs. Mary Neal Warren, who administers to their every worldly need. Should any feel to write then, kindly do so, as it would encourage them in their declining years.

(Elder) John F. Simpson

THE CLEFT IN THE ROCK A SAFE PLACE

1360 First Street,
Chehalis, Wash.

"And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock, and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by; and I will take away mine hand and thou shall see my back parts, but my face shall not be seen." (Exodus 33:21-23)

Dear God,
Let me not see behind the curtains of tomorrow
Where may be blessed joy,
Or deepest, crushing sorrow.
Behind it may be the rosy dawn of gladness,
Or the salty tears of a dear one's
Farewell sadness.
I need not see it then, and see it also today:
I'll wait thine own good time, dear Lord,
While I watch and pray.
I'll ask for strength and wisdom, Lord,
To greet the unknown morrow;
And ask of thee to share with me
Its certain joy or sorrow.
I would not see the mystery
Far beyond the wall;
Nor the loads of sorrow there
Than may upon me fall.
With thy grace my portion I'll bear well,
Be it joy or sorrow.
Please keep the curtain drawn, dear Lord,
Between me and tomorrow. Amen.

I first wrote these lines some years ago, and found no use for them; but laid them aside with other unfinished, useless bits of verse and thoughts. Then on Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in August, 1955, my pastor, Elder Howard Eason, spoke in Sister Rosa Coleman's home to a few of God's believing children, so beautifully on the above scripture. While he was speaking with such liberty, and, it seemed to me, with great clarity, a great many thoughts were presented to me, and these lines above returned to my mind. I have combined the verses with the beauties I saw in his sermon, and, if it seems worthwhile, I would like to see it in the Signs.

How many times in our foolish lives do we wish to see ahead; how often do we ask in our inquiring mind, "What will heaven be like?" Will we know each other there? What is God's purpose for me? I have even heard one say, "I'd like to see God;" yet she knew as well as one could know anything, that the scriptures tell us that we cannot see God and live.

We find a great example of this in the thirty-third chapter of Exodus. To me it is an example of God's blessed predestination; for here he hid his face, his appearing, and, until He had passed by, Moses was not allowed to see him; anymore than we can see and know what God has predestinated until it has already been fulfilled. We do not know

what God has purposed until it is fulfilled, (though sometimes we dare to claim such knowledge); then, when he removes his hand, we see after it is past. This is God's way of protecting us from what we could not bear.

A cleft in a rock would seem a hard place, a cold place, a dark place; but with His hand covering us, **it is a safe place** — such a safe place. Then when the glory of his wisdom is accomplished, we often can see what his purpose it. No one could see all the future as it is purposed, and live. So, I conclude that all that is foreknown and purposed by Him is hidden from us, as we safely wait in the cleft of the Rock, covered by the hand of our blessed God. The Rock I understand to be the Lord's Christ.

How good our God is to us! What a great preparation he made for us when he prepared this cleft in the Rock, placed us in it, and holds his protecting hand over us while his great glory passes by. We cannot know what God has predestinated, except the places in the scriptures where it so plainly tells us; and that is sufficient for us, both in time and eternity. It assures us of all we hope for.

Let us bow in humble thankfulness to God for the Rock, the Cleft, and his protecting hand over us, that we may not see all his glorious wisdom as it comes to pass, but only afterward when we can bear the back parts.

Yours in hope of God's mercy,

Effie Parke

Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Editors:

I am sending you enclosed my renewal for the Signs. I am always looking forward to the coming of the dear family paper, and find much comfort in reading the letters and articles for God's chosen children.

I feel myself so wild, and my whole life so unprofitable, that I dare not count myself as one of them; but with them is where I love to be. I want to join them in singing praises to God's marvelous love. If saved at all, it is by grace and grace alone.

Your unworthy brother,
T. C. Koch

A LETTER TO ELDER FUGATE FROM HIS GRANDSON

Dearest Papa and Mom:

I received your most wonderful and welcome letter the other day. Reading it was like pouring a little water in a large sponge — it was all soaked up, and could have taken more. It was so good to read things that I have to believe is the truth. I say, have to, because I can't believe any other way; nor do I have any desire to. What is strongest in a man's heart, that will he strive after. If God be in his heart, then he will try to follow after the ways of God. If God is in his heart, how, then, did he get there? Did the man command God to enter in that he might believe and have eternal life? God speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. But I do not believe that any man has, or ever will, tell God what to do. "I shall work, and who shall let it." If God be in a man, then He put himself there as a free and undeserved gift. Not until then did man have any desire after the ways of God. After the gift, the man's faith is increased through experience of the beautiful blessings the Lord gives his little children. This is the way I believe, and I hope it is the truth.

Oh, the wonderful ways in which our Lord gives us faith and strength. In the fartherest corners of the earth, the Lord is with his own; there is no hole deep enough, or dungeon black enough to hide the light of God's almighty truth from one of his children. It is not necessary for two of them to be together in order to taste the honey of His word; and when it is given, it is taken gladly and hungrily, with a heart full of thanksgiving and praise to God.

Oh, if I could only write some of the glorious things He has given me in my

heart, and share them with a brother or sister. Sometimes I feel that it is more than I can retain, and the abundance is too great for me alone. I must make a loud noise, it seems. I am swollen inside, and I can not hold back the tears of rejoicing. The Lord is indeed merciful to give so much food to one who deserves nothing.

I heard the chaplain say the other day, "We shouldn't have doubts about God, because that only lessens his power to help us." **It was just about more than I could stand.** When the Lord confounds a man, he surely does it up right! If I understand anything about the scriptures, then none can stay the hand of God. If a man's doubts could weaken the Lord any, then He would be in a pretty bad shape for strength. It amazes me how they can be so blind — or is it I who cannot see?

Edythe and I were going to visit you the Saturday before we left, but we got a telegram from the navy that morning, telling me to report back immediately: so I had to spend all the rest of the day, part of the night and next morning getting ready to go. It just didn't work out like I had planned — and a good thing too, as I am not too good at planning. We had too little time to do everything that needed to be done. Time is a mysterious and thought-provoking thing, isn't it? We have more of it than anything else, yet, when we really need it, there never seems to be enough. That is the story of my life.

Your grand-son and little brother in hope,

Victor
(Victor D. Fugate ATI
V-F-61, USS Lake Champlain,
Fleet P. O., New York, N. Y.)

WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH SHALL HAVE ETERNAL LIFE

Dothan, Ala.

Elder D. V. Spangler,
Dearly beloved in the Lord:

. . . For sometime it has been in my mind to write a few thoughts on John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

First, let us notice when Paul in Romans 11:33, says, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out." Our God is a God of purpose: he has a purpose in all things. This everlasting life, as referred to in our text, (also referred to as Eternal Life in other passages of scripture), is life that has been stored in Christ before the foundation of the world for the objects of his love — those whom he loves with an everlasting love, and whom he draws with loving kindness.

The two verses preceeding our text reads: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life." Then comes our text. Moses was a type of Christ; and the children of Israel looked to him as their leader. They brought their desires or complaints to him, and he interceeded for them. When they spoke against God and against Moses, the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, and much people of Israel died. Therefore the people came to Moses, and made their confessions and asked him to intercede with the Lord. Moses therefore prayed to the Lord for them, and the Lord said unto Moses, "Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that everyone that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live."

Moses did as the Lord commanded him; and if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived. It is a fact that none except the children of Israel, those chosen of God to be the beneficiaries of all the blessings, both natural and spiritual that were in store for them in that promised land, were ever bitten by these serpents. Also, none except those bitten

had any need or desire to look upon the brazen serpent. It was for their healing that the serpent was lifted up; so it was for the healing of those chosen in Christ Jesus, that the Son of Man was lifted up. None but they will ever believe on him; and they don't believe until they are born again of that incorruptible seed by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.

We notice in reading to the 18th verse: "He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already." God's knowledge was so great that it was no surprise to him when our federal head, Adam, ate of the forbidden fruit, and therefore came under the condemnation of death; even so all the posterity of Adam are under the same condemnation, because we are only Adam multiplied. Almighty God, having a people chosen in Christ before the world began to be the beneficiaries of eternal life, had already prepared a sacrifice. The objects of his love are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and called: Called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. "God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together.

Every heir of promise was created in Christ, and while he was here in person, and known as Jesus, he said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." When He was raised up, and nailed to the cross, that is when we were all raised up, (if I be numbered with them). He did this for us (because in our depraved condition we couldn't do for ourselves), because of his love, and the richness of his mercy; and all this, that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace toward us.

He is continually doing that. First, Christ Jesus is revealed to us as our redeemer; then, as our merciful High Priest, always ready to intercede for us, and make us want to sing:

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me:
I once was lost but now am found;
Was blind but now I see.

Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved:
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed."

I feel that I have just touched upon this subject, but will close by saying, as did the prophet of old, "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness; according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions."

(Elder) J. A. Tew

"TO THE STRANGERS SCATTERED . . ."

Lillie, Lousiana

Dear Children of God,
Through the medium of the Signs of the Times:

Since I have not written you in quite some time, I have felt to do so for the last two days; from what source this feeling comes, I will have to submit that I know not whether it is of the fleshly mind, or whether it is influence of the Spirit of the Lord. If it is from this blessed source, then the Lord and his mercy and grace be praised for it.

I desire to ask the dear children of the Lord to turn and read the first five verses of the Apostle Peter's writings. The Lord has in Romans 15:4, set forth the inspired fact that whatsoever was written aforetime, was written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope; so, I trust that the language of the Apostle Peter which I have asked you to read, will be of comfort to you, as it seems to me to set forth very vividly the most gracious, eternal and unchangeable purposes of God, through covenant relationship, in the unfailing election of

God to the eternal inheritance, which is incorruptible and undefiled, and fadeth not away.

The Apostle begins this wonderful and very beautiful epistle by introducing himself as Peter, and as an apostle of Jesus Christ. His apostleship was of Jesus Christ — no other source or means are mentioned; no mention is made of his apostleship of any school of earthly learning. We know according to the Bible that the Lord chose and called Peter, and that he left his occupation and followed the Lord; and that he and the other apostles began to preach and to fulfill the ministry they were called unto, as is shown in Luke 6:14-15. We also notice that the Lord testified of Peter and his apostleship in Matthew 16, 17 and 18th chapters, and in other places; showing that the Lord was the author, the teacher and the revealer to Peter and the other apostles, as well as to the Lord's children all through the scriptures.

Not only is it true of Peter and the other apostles, and all the humble ministers of God, but Peter's confession that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God, was not by revelation of flesh and blood, but by revelation of, "My Father which is in heaven." And this revelation from the Father that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, is that rock upon which, "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." So, truly everything Peter was as a child of God, and as a minister and an apostle, was of Jesus Christ.

After his introduction, Peter makes a full statement as to whom he is writing, by saying, "To the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia." They were scattered among those nations then, which, to my mind, is significant of all the different nationalities of the world; as we are told in Revelation 5:9, and 14:6. The fact that Peter called them strangers is significant, for the people of God are strangers in their belief, understanding and experience, to other people; that is, the belief and understanding of the Lord's people is strange indeed to this world. Not only do they seem strange to the world, but they are often made to wonder strangely of themselves; as the poet described when he wrote:

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile so prone to sin,
I fear I'm not born again.

And there are many places in the Bible where the Lord's people confess to being strangers, as did David in Psalms 119: 19, "I am a stranger in the earth." So we conclude that Peter's language, calling them strangers and as being scattered, serves to identify them as the People of God.

Then in the second verse, Peter completes their identification, saying, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." Much of the doctrine of election is opposed, but it is very evident in all parts of the Bible; if not as The Elect, or Election, then some other title or word just as strongly teaching the same doctrine. They are called Heirs of God, Heirs of Promise, the Promised Seed, the Chosen of God, and many other terms which indicate the same doctrine and relationship that the word Elect does. So Peter most certainly was writing to the Chosen people of God; calling them the Elect according to the foreknowledge of God. Then, dear brethren, I do not think that Peter meant in any way to indicate that it was fore-guesswork, but the certainty of their election, their salvation and redemption, and final deliverance. Now, what does the word Foreknowledge mean? Would, or could, anyone doubt the certainty of the foreknowledge of God? Will anything that God foreknew fail in any sense of the word? Certainly not. Then they are the elect, as Peter calls them, according to the foreknowledge of God. Peter addressed the Elect, and all inspiration is directed to the Elect, and not to anyone else, because Jesus says in Matthew 11:25-26, that these things are hid from everyone else, but are revealed to the Lord's little,

helpless and dependent ones, "Even so, Father for it seemed good in thy sight."

I would like for us to closely consider what Peter meant by the term Foreknowledge. Did he not mean that the Father knew before hand, before the world began, or before the foundation of the world, or from the beginning, as is stated in 2 Thes. 2:13, "But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth." This quotation proves that the reason Peter used the term Foreknowledge, is that God knew from the beginning, and chose them from then to the gracious and glorious eternal inheritance and salvation. So this election through the foreknowledge of God, even before the world began, is how old in the eternal purpose of God the election of God's people is. It is too old for man, or anything he has, can or will do, to have had anything to do with it, in the way of producing it. Then it is certain that it is fixed, established, settled, and will be fulfilled, because this election is through and by the foreknowledge of the Father.

Now I know that those who believe in and contend for Election, and the effectiveness and certainty of it, are often accused of advocating that the subjects of this election are saved without any of such necessary and effective means as Faith, Belief, Repentence and Obedience, and the Blood of Christ. But all such are misrepresentations, for Peter not only set forth that they were elect according to the foreknowledge of God, but they are such through Sanctification of the Spirit; which indicates, as Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Marvel not that I said ye must be born again." So the elect MUST BE born again; and the reason they are born again is that their being born again is just as certain as their being Elect was through the foreknowledge of God. Therefore, their election cannot fail, nor be thwarted in any sense of the word; neither can their sanctification of the Spirit fail in any of the gracious work that is ordained for it to do. Neither can their obedience fail, because it all goes together with their election, sanctification, obedience, as well as the sprinkling of the blood of Christ.

Then Peter, after going through and climaxing the children of God through their electionship, their sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, further says of them (because they are the ones, and the only ones he is writing to), "Grace unto you." Then the grace of God is unto the elect; and it shall not fail, because it has an effective part to play in the salvation of the elect. Paul says, "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." Then this grace comes from the same source that all the other prearranged benefits, blessings, and gracious provisions come from; and we know from Peter's language in 2 Peter 1:3, that all things which pertain to life and godliness come from the divine power of Christ.

Then there is also included, with the grace that Peter proclaimed, Peace; and it multiplied, to the Elect. By multiplication, even of small numbers, there is a great sum total reached very quickly; and in these Great Numbers, so to speak, of Election of God's people to and through these great Graces and provisions and qualifications, by multiplying them there is the grand sum total of the final eternal glorious inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, but is reserved for the Elect in heaven. All these gracious provisions do multiply that Peace of God in the hearts of the Lord's people when he makes it manifest to them.

Then, in the third verse, it is shown that these Elect are begotten unto a lively hope, according to God's abundant mercy, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Then the great and glorious climax of the hope of God's people comes through the abundant mercy of God, through Jesus Christ and his

resurrection from the dead. Then, dear humble child of God, let me ask if there is one single hint that there is one thing that caused it, or assisted in all this multiplication of grace and peace, except the mercy, yea, the abundant mercy of God through our Lord Jesus Christ and his resurrection, together with the shedding of his blood to cleanse them from every sin. The elect are the happy recipients of all these heavenly blessings.

The inheritance of the saints is incorruptible and undefiled, and fadeth not away, — it cannot be corrupted or defiled, and fades not away, because it is all the eternal and perfect work of God our Saviour. It is not left to the keeping of any earthly being, but is reserved in heaven for you. Who is it reserved in heaven for? For the Elect, and no one else; and Peter says of these, "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

Now dear child of God, to whom all these gracious things are addressed, could these things have been any more fully and assuredly spoken to you than they are? First, they are Elect (before they had any existance) by the foreknowledge of God; even though they are strangers, and scattered throughout every kindred, nation and tongue, they are the Elect, through the perfect sanctification of the Spirit, unto the obedience, and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ — which brings them to that grace and peace which is so greatly multiplied; and they are blessed and established in hope through the mercy of God, which is unfailing, abundant and complete, through the righteousness of Christ and his resurrection from the dead.

Now the next thing in the complete chain, is that all this leads to, and completely accomplishes, this inheritance — which is undefiled, incorruptible and which fadeth not away, but is reserved in heaven (which is a good safe place), for the Elect; who through this sanctification of the Spirit, and obedience and cleansing blood of Christ, are fully and completely brought to the final and eternal deliverance into that glorious inheritance in heaven. And these Elect are also completely kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Dear humble and trembling children of God, is not this emphatic and assuring testimony, and of much comfort to all those who have been given to see their own weakness, sin and defilement, and who often weep and sigh because of a deep felt sense of guilt and unworthiness: all of God's elect are sinners by nature the same as all others. But Jesus assures us that he came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. Those who feel to be righteous as the Pharasee are not the Elect to whom these things are promised, but all the real children of God are brought to feel as the poor Publican did, who could not so much as draw nigh, nor lift his eyes toward heaven, but stood afar off, and smote upon his breast, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." So then, the Elect, or the Lord's people, to whom all these things are promised, all feel to be dependent, unworthy and sinful; but they are Elect by the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; and grace and peace are multiplied unto them; and they are begotten unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

All this leads to and fulfills that inheritance, which is incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away, but is reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Oh, my precious brethren, can you immagine any thing that is not amply provided in all these promises? Dear ones, do we need more than these eternal and unchangeable promises and provisions; can we need or want more than this grand and glorious inheritance? I say no! God has promised that he will supply all our needs, according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ.

Oh, how I do long for that incorruptible inheritance that is reserved in heaven for the Lord's people! They are kept ready by faith unto salvation which is to be revealed in the last time. What a sweet and glorious heritage this is; and how long it seems to the Lord's people as they are traveling here below until the glorious Redeemer comes to call his loved ones to himself, where there can be no trouble, sickness, sorrow, nor death, but everlasting peace and joy.

Every earthly inheritance so easily becomes corrupted, and fades away, and is no more. To the richest of people, with all their money, property, pomp and show, their earthly inheritance fades away; but not so with this inheritance which is reserved in heaven — it fades not away, and is to be for the Lord's dear children forever. It is theirs as a free gift, and they shall bask in his smiles forever.

Yours in a sweet hope,
(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

AN INTERESTING LETTER BY THE LATE ELDER H. B. JONES

Winnsboro, Texas,
Sept. 9, 1934.

Mr. Geo. W. Jackson,

My Dear Brother in the fellowship of a precious hope of life eternal through Christ our Lord: — I will try to answer your most welcome letter which came a few days ago. I often feel wholly unworthy of such letters, but it is a pleasure to receive them and to try to answer them, if I could write something that would be of some comfort and encouragement to my correspondents. My heart responds, and I hope sincerely, to your experience relative to the deadness, blindness and utter depravity and helplessness of human nature to view and grasp any of the glories of Christ Jesus our Lord, and the beauties of His Kingdom; and especially I get a little comfort out of the thought that, " A dead or blind person cannot see, nor the dead feel; so it must be a live person who sees and feels." This is certainly true, for we know that the dead know not anything, as the scriptures tells us. So the depravity, vileness and corruption of human nature must be a revelation as well as the source of salvation from it, but these two things I feel are revealed to me only in part. As I grow older, day by day, or rather, night by night, more and more of the vanity and depravity of my human nature is revealed, but I hope that also I am made to see more and more that, "Where sin hath abounded, grace hath much more abounded." But, O, when it comes to the beauties and glories of that kingdom wherein grace reigns triumphant, how little I do know; yet that little makes it seem wonderful to me.

"O, the depths both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable his judgements and his ways past finding out." How wonderful and mysterious is the love of the blessed Master, the Bridegroom, for His bride (which is His elect people in the world, embracing all of them from the beginning of time to the end of time.) How he finds them and manifests His love and tender compassion for them and to them, is beautifully, prophectically, and figuratively expressed in the 16th chapter of Ezekiel, as well many other portions of the inspired testimony of God. Thus saith the Lord God unto Jerusalem, "Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; Thy father was an Amorite and thy mother an Hittite, and as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all; none eye pitieth thee, to do any of these things to thee to have compassion, but thou wast cast out into the open field to the loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born. And when I passed by thee and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live, yea, I said unto thee, when thou was in thy blood, Live."

"Now when I passed by thee and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee and covered thy nakedness; yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine." Read the chapter. How beautifully He clothed her and decked her with ornaments. He said those things to Jerusalem, which I understand, in the whole of its meaning, embraces the whole of His redeemed family, and these things are true of each one of them, as well as of the body collectively.

I am now thinking of your question; Did you ever undertake a job too big for you? I guess I have just done that, and so will leave the subject, with the addition of one or two more thoughts. In our experience of our nativity, when we are brought to, "Look to the hole of the pit from whence we are digged, and to the Rock from whence we are hewn," each one is led in the particular path appointed for him. The Lord hath said, "I will bring the blind by a way they knew not, I will lead them in paths they have not known, I will make darkness light before them and crooked things; these things will I do for them and not forsake them." (Isaiah 42:16) Although each one, in a sense, has a different path to travel all his own, yet the end or design is the same; that is, they are all taught the same lesson, and all are inherent to the same sorrows and comforts, the same joys and griefs, each in his measure.

One of our poets aptly sings:

How hard and rugged is the way,
  To some poor pilgrim's feet,
In all they do or think or say
  They opposition meet.

Others again more smoothly go,
  Secure from hurts and harms;
The Saviour leads them gently through
  Or bears them in His arms.

Faith and redemption all must find,
  But yet, we daily see
They differ in their time and kind,
  Duration and degree.

Some long repent and late believe,
  But when their sin's forgiven,
A clearer passport they receive,
  And walk with joy to heaven.

Their pardon some receive at first,
  And then compelled to fight.
They feel the latter stages worst.
  And travel much by night.

But be our conflict short or long,
  This commonly is true,
That wherever faith is strong,
  Repentance is so too.

May the blessings of the Lord rest upon you and yours. When it goes well with you, remember me, and write again.

Yours in humble hope,
(Elder) H. B. Jones

THE SAINTS ARE PRECIOUS TO HER

Decature, Ala.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Our subscription is a little past due, so am enclosing $3.00 for another year's subscription. Although we are blessed to attend meetings two or three times each month, we do so love to read the Signs; for we find its pages full of the wonderful things of God, which we hope to believe and love.

I was baptized into the fellowship of the church last July; and the only joy and comfort that I have is when I am among the Old Baptists. I feel to love them so, if not deceived; but, oh, how unworthy I feel to be. I often wonder if I have an experience of grace, and if I have a place among the saints of God; but I just can't stay away from them, they are so precious to me. I love the truth they preach and contend for.

Please overlook my imperfections and mistakes, and pray for me.

Your little unworthy sister,

Mrs. D. T. Leonard.

WHY NOT GIVE A SUBSCRIPTION TO THE SIGNS —

516 E. Avenue C.,
Kingman, Kansas.

Dear Brother Editors of the Signs of the Times:

It has become my sad duty to write and send you an obituary of my sister in the flesh, and I hope in the spirit also; to be published in our family paper, the Signs of the Times. Also the ordination notice of our deacons.

As my subscription to the Signs is due the first of the year, I am sending a check for ten dollars: five for two years subscription, and five for any need that appears. It seems our paper gets better every issue.

I do praise the One to whom praise is due, and try to thank Him for his most abundant blessings. May He keep you and direct your way for many more years, is the wish of a little sister in hope.

Mrs. Verda Machesney

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND — TO HELP SEND THE SIGNS TO THOSE UNABLE TO PAY.

(To December 1, 1955)

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BY

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EDITORIALS

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TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 5, Box 332F **Danville, Va.**

EDITORIAL

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." (Philippians 2:12-13)

Recently I have had a request to write an article on this subject. We have, especially of late years, been inclined to ascertain whether a scripture is addressed to a church of organized believers, to individuals as believers, or whether it has reference to those who know not the truth. We cannot truly expound a subject, unless we know to whom the scripture was addressed. Sometimes a scripture would apply to a church as regularly constituted the church of Jesus Christ, and we could not apply the interpretation to individuals: some portions of the word would apply both to individuals and churches.

The afore quoted portion of the word is part of an epistle to the church at Philippi, and was especially for their comfort, and instruction. If we examine the salutation, "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the Bishops and Deacons." Then the writers assure the church, together with the Bishops and Deacons, of their joy and confidence in them. The prayer of the apostle was that their love might abound, more and more, thus showing that they were a church blessed with the fruits of the Spirit, and walking in the Commandments of the Lord. To try to apply this portion of God's word to unregenerated people would be a gross error, though this scripture is often quoted by workmongers to try to prove that an individual is commanded to work out his eternal salvation.

The text first shows conclusively that Paul was addressing a people that were beloved. Second, that they were a people who were already obedient. The epistle was a letter of instruction and assurance, and they are assured that in the absence of the writer, they would have problems that would require the same obedience as that already manifested. Yet he exhorts them to work them out with fear and trembling. He has reference to things they will be called to meet as a church, Deacons and Bishops. Their own salvation has reference to the peculiar problems the church may have: the trials they may be called to undergo, and their church relationship one with another. All churches at some time or other have problems and trials, and this church had been blessed more than many to obey from the heart that form of Doctrine delivered to them, yet he knew sooner or later there would be in his absence their own salvation to work out. Paul had been present with them to counsel and advise, to admonish and exhort, and in his absence, he gives them explicit instructions of what they would

need.

Work out your own salvation, (that which belongs to you as the church of Jesus Christ) with fear and trembling. How true this is that the only true mark of grace manifest in a church, is when they are favored to work out their problems, with fear and trembling. No church is prepared to transact the affairs of their body, and to judge matters among themselves, unless they are blessed with fear and trembling, knowing what a solemn thing it is to have the ordinances of God delivered to them. Surely it calls for fear and trembling, as those so led know that worldly wisdom will not supply their needs: that they must look to God for guidance and seek to know, and do His will.

If they are blessed with fear and trembling, unwilling to look to their own wisdom for guidance, but to God, they have assurance that it is the Lord working in them both to will, and to do of His good pleasure. The Lord must work the will in us before the doing is acceptable in His sight. When a body of believers are found who, both laity and minister, enter into their duties with fear and trembling, it is evident that they are a God fearing people, seeking to honor Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvelous light. This fear and trembling is not the fear of men, but the fear of God. May God bless us to not look to self, or human wisdom, in our church affairs; not to the preacher, or any certain member; and to follow no man any further than he follows Christ, that we may be found among those who tremble at His word.

D. V. S.

LAYING UP TREASURES IN HEAVEN

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Matthew 6:19, 20, 21)

As the pattern or rule of action for Israel under the law was received at Mount Sinai, so spiritual Israel gets a greater portion of her instruction from the Sermon on the Mount. The church is not in a position to dissect this sermon and say what she shall accept; for, under the ministration of the Spirit, it is all fit for use.

This commandment of the Saviour has been mishandled and misapplied by false religionists until the church of Jesus Christ has been hesitant and reluctant to do anything with it. Just because the world of unbelievers say a thing, that does not take away our privilege of saying it. The fact that subverters twist the precious things of the Spirit does not take away our right to the enjoyment of what it does say and teach. In dealing with this scripture, the world thinks that we have a source of good works that we can, in some mystical way, lay in heaven. But all that they have said to the contrary not withstanding, we do not have any riches here to lay in heaven. We have Christ here. That is, we have Christ, if we are born from above (John 3:36; 5:24; I John 5:12), but we cannot lay in heaven a supply of anything that takes it all for the present. Our need is supplied, but the lesson in the wilderness forbids us to lay up the present supply (Exodus 16), for we never get more than our daily bread (Matt. 6:11).

Faith looks forward to a better day than this. In the midst of our hope we are busily engaged in laying in heaven these treasures. Herein is present salvation enjoyed. We are saved by hope, but this hope is not seen. No one is hoping for that that he already sees. Our hope in Christ is not in this life. The unbeliever has a much more rosy existence in this world than the believer. His treasures are all in this life; his heart is all in the things of this ungodly world. He may, at times, become stimulated by

the seed sown in the preaching of the gospel; he may talk about the work of grace in the soul; he may associate with the saints of God, yes, all that and even more, but his heart is not in it, for his future is based on what he can see. Only he whose heart has been wrought upon by the power of the Holy Ghost can live on hope that is not seen. Why? The Worldling, lacking faith, must lay treasures upon earthly wisdom, power, righteousness.

This character has plenty here; why should he lay treasures in heaven? In fact, this scripture does not have the least bearing on those that have God under obligation to save them; it does not apply to that professed class of believers who have the power of acceptance or rejection at their finger tips; it has nothing to do with those than can get acquainted with God and thus bring great gain to themselves (Job 22:21). If peace can be had by the sinner getting acquainted with God, we cannot lay peace in heaven, can we? All of this world is preaching exactly what Job's advise-giving comforters were giving to him. You must remember, reader, that this sermon was rigid and much to the point. Treasures were not to be laid on the earth. We readily see what happens when we lay them there. These comforters did not preach to Job: "Lay up treasures for yourself in heaven." No sir, not that at all, but they said, "Look to your earthern arm of flesh and use it to get acquainted with God and then you shall have peace **here**; you will have much good to happen to you **here.** If you will return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up **here**; thou shalt put iniquity far from thee **here**; and thou shalt lay up plenty of treasures of gold and silver **here** etc."

Ah, my dear brethren, this is the substance of all the preaching in this world; lay up treasures **here** and use them here, for here is your treasure. It is not what heaven means; it is not that our dear Redeemer is at the throne of His Father making intercession for us, no, if you lay your hope of the treasures there on His intercession for you, you will certainly have no treasures there at all. You must lay your treasures on the earth first, and if you lay them there **well enough,** you will then have a solid foundation for carrying them to heaven. How different is the preaching of Jesus Christ and him crucified. It does not mean anything to any except those that have already laid treasures on the earth. Do you remember the years of your life when you laid treasures in the earth? Was your treasure in heaven or earth? Where was your heart? Oh, I know, or I think I know, that you sometimes had a spell of half-heartiness towards the things of the Spirit, but you could not throw yourself into it whole heartedly. It was because your heart was not in it to begin with. They, who were in the Spirit, spoke of how blighted timely and earthly things were for them, and of how they longed to be delivered from the bondage of this earthly house that was fast falling down. But things have changed. Now the heart is not in the earth any more. You have been brought to the end of the earth; you have seen and **felt** the ravages of lurking moths (lawyers and doctors) that have wormed themselves into your best clothing (self-righteous robes). But you put your trust in them. You had put treasure after treasure into their keeping; you had laid treasure after treasure in the secret recesses of your closet (heart); you had come out time and time again shrouded in the gorgeous garments that you had so skillfully woven in the powers of the earth, and hid them in the secrets of your earthen faulty heart. But moths have done their work. They have cut to shreds our gaudiest treasures. And you have watched and **felt** the cankering effects of rust as it silently and relentlessly consumed your treasures. You had tried to ward it off; you had tried to remove this consuming and pursuing power that kept boring in and taking the choiciest treasures that you had laid up in the earth and reducing them to a nonenity. And you had

felt so deeply the loss of what you **thought** you had stored up, as the thieves of the law came and stole it all away. Rest assured that the exposure of your state has been the work of God. It has ever been His glorious work in preparing his people for a reception of the gospel. That that we thought was alright has become our undoing; the place that we thought was safe to lay treasures in, has become a place of deserts and wildernesses. And since this is the work of God to show us the folly of our hearts, we must remember that He never leaves a work unfinished. His steadfastness keeps moving on to perfection in his saints. He having started the work, will finish it.

Yes, dear brethren, the world will continue to preach an earthly treasure laying. And the earth will open its mouth and receive it (Rev. 12:16); for none of it can ever hurt those that have already experienced the fallacy of earth laid treasures. But the church of Jesus Christ will both preach and receive the Mount doctrine; to wit, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on the earth," etc. **The hearers, and doers, of the gospel will not lay these treasures on the earth.** They have already done all of that that they have any desire for. They are fit subjects for gospel address.

Are you a poor sinner? Have you tried to arrest the work of a carnal heart? Your experience is such that you know you will never get rid of sin on the earth by any earthly treasure. Lay that expectation in heaven, lay that treasure up for enjoying in heaven. Oh, the joy and unspeakable wonder to look forward to that city where love is known in the fullest way. No rust, nor thief, nor moth will ever be there to destroy our treasures, for the law will have wrought all of its power; it will have accompanied us all the way to Christ, laying waste all of our best laid treasures, but now dead forever and left behind. I tell you dear ones that it is safe and good to lay this fond treasure in heaven — to look forward by faith to a better day than this. Every where I turn sin is at work. It is still a principle of contrariness in me; it troubles me everywhere I go; it is mixed in my best efforts in this life. I have not found any solution to its presence, nor any defense against it towards getting rid of it. Every intention towards quitting it has failed; every aid I've sought has been helpless in giving aid. But there is no sin to be in heaven; so dear saints we have a promise that the blood will free us from sin. But the power of this blood is not completed in this life. It is at work, yes, bringing us off more than conquerers through him that loved us, and teaching us **not** to lay our treasures in a broken law, in a corrupted sinful man, in the perishing things of earth, but **to** lay them in heaven where the things of earth are not known.

Are you tired of the warfare of life? Have you sought for rest here and found that

> This world is not your resting place,
> This world is not your home?

and that every time you have tried to erect an edifice to rest in on the earth, that rust has eaten it down; moths and their devastating, silent work, working in unison with thieves, have laid it low in the earth? If this is your lot, and the only rest that you have ever known has been in one that came from heaven and has now returned, then lay your treasures there; for I am sure that, since you have beheld him rise **from** the earth, and have received his promise to come again for you and to take you home to heaven, you will never desire to lay treasures in the earth; for you just do not have the heart to trust in the earth, but your heart is bound to that city whose maker and builder is God, and the binding is none other than the silky cords of the love of God.

Are you acquainted with grief and sorrow? Do you know tribulation and persecution? Has it abated? Are you becoming free from its course? Now if these things mean nothing to you, then I am not writing to you? For my mission, if I am not mistaken, is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ; and the gos-

pel declares to an eminent apostle that sufferings shall attend his way. It declares today, as it was declared from the Mount, that no reaping will ever come from treasures laid in the earth. Those to whom this address is delivered, are today, as they were of that former day, a poor and afflicted, scattered and desolate people, whose earthly condition and life were surrounded by trials and sorrows. If you can lay treasures on the earth, you will not have this suffering. The ungodly know nothing of sorrow, as do the godly. Their sorrow is all of the earth, for they are earthly; but, oh, what sorrows and vexations do the saints have! How good that God has determined in his will, that his own should be shown the fallacy of laying treasures on earth; and how grand and glorious that the manifestation of that will in completeness is also shown us to lay our treasures in heaven. And the gospel assures us that we will do this, for this treasure laying in heaven is wrought in us (not by the earth, and in the earth, but) by the power of God, causing us to believe in him, to desire him, to desire his presence and his likeness, which are treasures unmeasured, and yet to be enjoyed in heaven in fulness; and this power is the power that God wrought when he raised Jesus Christ from the dead. And there was not a treasure of earth that assisted in the smallest way. Thus, if we are subjects of gospel address, we are subjects of that upper and better kingdom; and this world is not our home, nor our resting place, nor the cure for our sin and our sorrow. Nor does it, nor any part of it, (including these our natural bodies) contribute anything to this laying treasures in heaven. It is all done by faith. Faith is looking ahead. Faith embraces that that is hoped for. Faith is actively engaged in laying treasures in heaven. We are enjoying them now by faith, it being the substance of hoped for things; but the actual attaining of them is at the end of faith, and that end comes after this life. May God bless us to lay all of our treasures and expectations where our heart is.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

HATING HIS BROTHER

Will Elder Wm. L. Beebe give through the Signs his views on First John iii. 15? Who is his brother? And how can a child of God hate his brother?

H. J. Redd

REPLY

While ever wishing to be ready to comply with the requests of those who ask for our views on the subject of the revealed will of our Lord in reference to the church of his redeemed people, it is always with much hesitancy that we would express our understanding of any point on which one of the ministers of Christ professes to need instruction. In attempting to comply with this request of our esteemed brother, Elder Redd, it is not an exception to this usual feeling of insufficiency. Yet, as he only asks for such views as we have, we are willing to submit our thoughts to be examined by him and all our readers, and only ask that what is written be strictly compared with the inspired test, and received or rejected as it may be approved or condemned by that only standard of divine truth. Very little value attaches to our views, or to the sentiments of any mortal, unless they are sustained by the infallible testimony of the inspired Scriptures.

The subject of the whole epistle from which our brother has selected this text is that heavenly love which identifies those in whom dwells the Spirit of Christ. In the verse immediately preceding the text this love is declared to be the evidence that we have passed from death unto life; and it is said that "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." As death can present no action nor motion of life, so the existence of this vital manifestation of love is often the only tangible evidence which the saints can see to confirm their claim to the possession of the life of Christ.

When they live after the flesh they may be so brought into bondage by their carnal mind that they may not be able to find any evidence of the existence in their hearts of that infallible witness of their vital unity with Christ; and then they must feel the reigning power of death as holding them captive. In this bondage they do abide in death.

"Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." In view of this strong expression of the righteous judgment of God, it does seem incomprehensible that any one who has ever known the power of diving grace should be found in the awful condition described. Well may our brother ask, "How can a child of God hate his brother?" Certainly there is nothing in the work of the Spirit to produce hatred. Yet it is plain from the declarations of the inspired Scriptures that the chosen disciples of Jesus are they who are liable to this death; and they are the only people to whom the language of this solemn admonition can apply. It would be very absurd to admonish those who are dead in sin with such an appeal. As well caution the dead bodies in the cemetery against the dangers of a contagion. According to the natural idea that the saints are freed from the law of sin which prompts to all iniquity, there could be no propriety in addressing to them such a warning as is here recorded for the learning of all who have fellowship with the apostles. But to those who have to mourn their subjection to the vanity of the body of this death, the inspired declaration is but the expression of what their own experience continually teaches them. The first born son of the fallen Adam fully displayed the principle which is condemned in this expression of the word of the Lord. His example is cited in the immediately preceding context as in contrast with that message (or, commandment), which is in the law of Christ enjoined upon his followers. Judged by the law of a carnal commandment, no man was a murderer until some one had been killed; but by the law of infinite justice the thoughts and intents of the heart are discerned and condemned before they are devloped by actual commission of the sinful action contemplated. This condemnation is felt by the living children of God in that death which they endure when they live after the flesh. It was to those whom he recognized as "brethren" and the "beloved of God, called to be saints," that Paul said, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." — Rom. viii. 13.

This language can apply to none but those who are led by the Spirit of God, yet who have a continual war in their members against that holy guidance. They are admonished to "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." And "Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" — Rom. vi. 12, 16. This is addressed unmistakably to those whom the apostle recognized as "children of God." It could not apply to either the natural man or the Spirit of Christ in the saints, as separate from the sinner who was subject to be led by the Spirit, or to yield himself to the service of sin. When the saints yield themselves to the service of sin, they manifest the works of the flesh, prominent in the enumeration of which is this very principle of hatred. — See Gal. v. 19-21. In the divine judgment this is the spirit of murder; and they who are governed by it are already guilty of the sin when the principle dwells in their hearts. While in the sight of men they may be guiltless, the light which shines in their heart shows all the sin which is embodied in that root of evil. They feel that all their secret thoughts are known unto their Judge. "For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow; and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." — Hebrews iv. 12. This

is the judgment seat of Christ, before which all his people must appear; "that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." The perfect righteousness of Christ justifies all his redeemed people, and no charge can ever be brought against any of them by the infinitely holy law of sin and death. Yet they are under law to God in their Redeemer. In their individual experience here in time they must reap that which they sow. With unerring exactness in every thought and deed they receive that measure which they mete. "All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." If the spirit of hatred rules in the breast of any saint, that terrible fire will burn to his own destruction. If covetousness controls one of these who are under law to Christ, the very object coveted will certainly prove the destruction of his comfort, and bring upon him the fearful rod of divine chastisement. When any professed disciple of Christ can continue in devotion to the gratification of his carnal mind without experiencing the rod of severe chastening, there is good reason for apprehension that he is not recognized by the Lord as one of those children whom he loves. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." — Heb. xii. 6. Those who have felt the rod of this divine chastening can testify that it is indeed "a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

According to the limited thoughts of man there are differences in the degrees of sin. While it seems to be acknowledged that all the family of Adam are sinners, it is quite startling to find the charge of murder embraced in the dreadful indictment which is recorded against every one who is involved in sin. This appears the more wonderful when this terrible charge is recorded against one who is included in the number of those whom the Lord has recognized as his redeemed people. Yet it is to them that James is writing when he says, "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not; ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain." There is no limit to the development of the evil which is in the carnal mind; and when the saints live after the dictates of that mind they are found guilty of all the works of the flesh. The severe charge quoted from James was against those whom he called his brethren, and to whom God giveth grace. It is not to be applied to such as never knew the love of God. The same development of the sin which doth so easily beset us is designated in the warning, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." — Heb. iii. 12.

One very definite mark of distinction between those who have the Spirit of Christ and all others consists in the cause of their trouble. While the true subject of divine teaching has continually to mourn the evil which he sees in himself, they who have never seen themselves as helpless sinners are deeply grieved because of the sinfulness of others. The fleshly mind of the saints has abundance of the latter kind of sorrow; while that repentance which Jesus gives to his Israel always shows them so much sin in themselves that they have no room for mourning over the sins of others.

"Who is his brother?" In reply to this question it might be sufficient to refer to the answer of the Lord to the parallel question of the lawyer, "Who is my neighbor?" — Luke x. 30-37. But we would rather refer to the experience of brother R., and see if he has not a perfectly conclusive solution of the inquiry in his own heart. Unto whom does your helpless soul cry out of the depth of every distress and trouble? Even when your sinfulness seems to forbid all hope for his favor, you call upon him who is that Friend who loveth at all times, and the Brother born unto you for adversity. — Prov. xvii. 17. The same bond by

which you are held in fraternity with him, also includes every one who is led by the Spirit, which is his abiding presence in each of his saints. It is not possible that they who are born of God should be led by that Spirit to hate their brethren. When the current of brotherly love is interrupted, it is always by reason of the sin which dwells in the members of the saints. It may be that the obstacle which forbids the continuance of love is in the carnality of both him who should love and him who should be the object of that love; or, it may be that the carnality of one member forbids that love. In any event there must be a departure from the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus when hatred can exist between brethren. As declared in the last preceding expression of the apostle, "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death."

No clearer explanation of this truth can be given than that which is taught in the experience of the saints. When under the direction of the fleshly mind the saint has been brought to feel that he is alone in the path of obedience, and that they whom he has loved as brethren are all in error, however much he may seem to succeed in vindicating himself, he will abide in death as sure as God deals with him as with a son whom he loves. Even though the judgment of all the brethren should sustain him who is governed by a carnal spirit, he must still feel that he "abideth in death." So David says, "God setteth the solitary in families; he bringeth out those which are bound with chains; but the rebellious dwell in a dry land." — Psalm lxviii. 6. The deadly drought of this wretched land is known only to such as have felt the consuming power of the desert sands, where there is no cooling fountain to quench their thirst, nor refreshing dew to afford relief from the burning atmosphere, in which the fire of torment is mingled with every breath. How can one whose vital element is love endure the stifling air of hatred? Well does the inspired word describe the condition of the saints under this dreadful power as being under "the bondage of corruption." And yet it must be that they are subject to be brought into such bondage, or they could not be delivered from it. If there were no possibility of the saints being governed by the carnal mind, they would have no need for the admonitions and exhortation with which the New Testament abounds. Yet it is not by the direction of the Spirit of Christ that they walk contrary to his commandments. With the mind which God works in them they serve the law of God, but with the flesh (that is, with that mind which is born of the flesh) they serve the law of sin. — Rom. viii. 25. It is in their effort to walk in obedience to the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus that they find the perpetual warfare to which they are called. Such is the deceitfulness of sin in misleading them that the saints often suppose that they are following the law of Christ, when they are directed by their own sinful inclination. So long as they are under the power of this delusion they cannot believe that they are guided by anything but the desire to obey the commandments of their Lord. By its fruits only is the true character of this deceitful spirit exposed. False spirits as well as false teachers are to be detected by this divinely authorized test. — Matt. vii. 16. Genuine love is always discriminating. It cannot recognize a brother without the evidence that the Spirit of the Redeemer dwells in him. That evidence does not consist in any form of words, nor yet in any prescribed duties to be performed by the sinner; it is the direct revelation from faith to faith. Hence, when one is assured that the Spirit of Christ dwells in his brother, it is equally certain that the same Spirit dwells in himself. The love which goes out to embrace a brother is the present evidence that both are born of God; for none can love the saints but those who know them; and none can know them as saints but those who have obtained like precious faith with them. All such are brethren by birth of the same Holy Spirit. When one of these holy brethren

is so controlled by his fleshly mind as to hate his brother, he not only "abideth in death," but he is "a murderer." The spirit which governs him in hating his brother is the same murderous spirit which was in Cain when he committed the first murder. Hence, in the judgment of that God who tries the heart, every one who is actuated by that spirit is guilty of the sin of Cain.

We have endeavored to show how in our view it is possible that a child of God may hate his brother in the sense of this text. It is not in conformity with the Scriptures to construe this expression of John as implying that the Spirit of Christ can ever produce hatred of those who present its own fruit as evidence of their being truly brethren. But it is in perfect harmony with the whole testimony of inspiration, and also according to the experience of the individual saints, to understand the admonition as declaring just what is the result of yielding to the promptings of that spirit within us which lusteth to envy. — James iv. 5. While under the control of that murderous spirit we can never have the experimental sense of the presence of Christ is us as our eternal life. In this sense we die in our departure from the path of life in obedience to the law of love, which is the whole law of Christ. This is all in the present experience of the saints as sojourning in this world of sin and tribulation. Since their eternal life is hid with Christ in God, nothing which they do or fail to do can affect that life. That is as far above all possibility of being affected by their actions in time as are the stars which are set in the firmament beyond the reach of any earthly power. The whole context shows that this text refers to the practical deportment of the saints. "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."

(Editorial by Elder Wm. L. Beebe, May 15, 1888)

ORDINATION OF DEACONS

The Pleasant Valley Old School Baptist Church met at the usual place on the third Sunday in May, 1955, with Elder Rhodes, of New Hope Church, Lillie, Louisiana — South Ouachita Association; Elder L. L. Schenck, of Big Walnut Church, Williamstown, Kansas; and Brother Barney Evers, deacon from Bethel Church, South Ouachita Association, Union County, Arkansas. They were called together for the purpose of ordaining Brother H. F. Cate and Brother W. A. Winfrey to the office of deacon. They proceeded as follows:

Elected Elder R. W. Rhodes as Moderator. After inquiry as to qualifications, Brother Cate acted as spokesman for the church regarding Brother Winfrey's qualifications, and expressed that the church was satisfied with his gift and qualifications; and Brother Winfrey was spokesman for the church on behalf of Brother Cate, and expressed the church's satisfaction with his gift and qualifications. Whereupon the Presbytery, consisting of the above named elders and deacon, proceeded to lay hands upon them, with prayer offered by Elder Rhodes. Elder Schenck was appointed to deliver the charge, and proceeded to deliver a beautiful and scriptural charge to them jointly.

In token of acceptance of the church of this work, each extended the right hand of fellowship to the two deacons, as well as to the members of the Presbytery.

Elder R. W. Rhodes, Moderator
Elder L. L. Schenck, Church Pastor,
Bro. Barney Evers, Deacon Bethel Church

OBITUARIES

MRS. F. N. MORGAN

Mrs. Essie Best Morgan, age 68, daughter of the late Elder J. D. Best, died at her home near Fountain Hill, Arkansas, April 4, 1955. She was a native of Alabama. Lived near Fordyce, Arkansas, in her youth but later in Ashly County, Arkansas. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church on Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in March, 1921, and lived faithful to the cause as long as she lived. She is survived by her husband, Floyd N. Morgan, two sons, F. K. and L. M. Morgan of Crossett; a daughter, Mrs. G. W. Sanders of Monticello, Mrs. Beulah Ward, of Albuquerque, N. M., Mrs. Missie Ward, of Kedron, and six grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at the home Tues-

day, April 5, 1955, conducted by Elder W. A. Speer. Burial was in the Carter Cemetery, near Hamburg, Arkansas, with Jones Funeral Home in charge. A few days after her death a poem was found which she had recently written, as follows:

Across that dark and mystic vale,
Borne on angel's wings and sail,
Into that land of endless day;
Lord, open wide thy door for me.

Into that land of pure delight
Where comes no sorrow and no night;
Where streets are paved with purest gold,
My Lord and Saviour I will behold.

"I go to prepare a place for you,"
Said Jesus in his blessed truth:
I am coming now dear Lord, to see
That glorious place you have for me.

Of friends and loved ones it is farewell;
Grieve not for me, nor in sorrow dwell.
The road is narrow and the way strait
That leads to heaven's golden gate.

But somewhere in the vast beyond
You'll find me when this way you come.

Written by her husband,
Floyd N. Morgan

MRS. LAURA POWELL ROUNDS

The subject of this sketch, Sister Laura Rounds, was born near Powellville, Md. January 29, 1873. The Lord took her unto Himself on October 30, 1955, at her home near Salisbury, Md. She was married to E. Henry Rounds November 4, 1891, and to this union was born six children, five of whom survive: Mrs. Emma Benson, of Wilmington; Mrs. Lida Twilley, of Quantico, Md.; George Rounds, Harry E. Rounds, and Joseph Rounds of Salisbury, Md.

In 1896 or 1897, Sister Rounds united with the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church, and was baptized by the pastor, Elder T. M. Poulson. She later moved her membership to the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church, and remained a faithful member until death.

Our beloved Sister died in the faith she embraced many years ago, adorning her profession in Jesus, with an orderly walk, and a Godly conversation. The home was indeed a pleasant home to visit, both before her husband's death, and afterwards. Her delight was to hear the Gospel of Jesus, to converse in the Word of God, and to join in singing the songs of Zion. Many pleasant hours have been spent in this good home, and on each visit one felt amply repaid in a spiritual way.

She will be greatly missed by her family, church and friends, but we believe for her it was far better to depart and be with Him whom she loved so well.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer from a funeral parlor in Salisbury, Maryland, on November 1, 1955, after which her body was laid to rest in the City Cemetery, to await the coming of the Lord.

D. V. Spangler

Dear Brethren:

The following notices were written at the request of Sister Bessie Lewis; will you please publish them. She has lost by death her husband and son in a very short time.

Viola Lewis

WARDEN RUFUS LEWIS

It is with a sad heart that we attempt to make a few remarks concerning the death of our beloved Brother, Deacon and Church Clerk, Warden Rufus Lewis. He was born April 20, 1886, the son of Darcus and Benjamin Lewis; and was married to Bessie A. Cayton June 21, 1908. To this union were born ten children, four sons and six daughters. His wife, Sister Bessie, and nine of the children survive; also many grand-children, and one brother, W. D. Lewis, Elizabeth City, N. C.

Brother Warden united with Goose Creek Island Church in August, 1926; and was set aside for deacon in May, 1929. He suddenly fell asleep on August 27, 1955, while at the church. He was laid to rest in the family cemetery near his home, after the funeral services by Elders James Gaskill, Carl Edwards and W. B. Barnes.

We believe that he was much wrought upon by the divine spirit of God in his last years; also that he is asleep in Christ Jesus, and that our loss is his eternal gain. He had a well ordered walk and a godly conversation.

also

IVAN OTTO LEWIS

Ivan Otto Lewis was born October 15, 1913; son of Warden R. Lewis and Bessie A. Lewis. He was married to Ruby Grant in 1943; and to this union were born two children — one son and one daughter.

He passed away November 12, 1955, after a long illness, and was laid to rest in Fox Hall Cemetery, Norfolk, Virginia. He is survived by his wife and children, his mother, and three brothers and five sisters.

He was a loving, devoted son. Sweetest thoughts will always linger. Everyone who visited him during his illness spoke of how patiently he bore his afflictions.

Viola Lewis

MARTHA HERNDON BOND

Martha Herndon Bond, wife of the late Elder C. W. Bond, of Island City, Oregon, passed from this life May 1, 1955. Sister Bond was born in Alton Station, Kentucky, March 8, 1872; making her stay in this world more than eighty-three years.

She was married to Elder C. W. Bond in 1894. She was a member of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church since the month of December, 1893; and was baptized by the late Elder P. G. Lester. Sister Bond moved to Oregon, near Baker City, in 1908; lived on a homestead, and reared her family. Then moved to Island City where she spent the remainder of her life. She leaves four sons and two daughters: Champ and Lester, Haines, Oregon; C. W., Jr., Island City; Turner, Ontario, Oregon; Mrs. Princess Ledridge, Island City; and Mrs. Joann Boyer, Haines, Oregon. (One daughter, Elizabeth Badsky, was called from this life June 30, 1953.) Surviving also are two brothers and three sisters: John F. and Bayard Herndon, of Kentucky; Mrs. Sue Gritton; Mrs. Nan Vawter and Mrs. Essie Martin, all of Kentucky.

Sister Bond was a member of Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, since 1935. She will be missed very much by the little church, and especially by the writer, who was very dependent on her as an adviser. She was greatly blessed in spiritual understanding, as well as natural; and was enabled to be reconciled to God's holy and divine will in all things. We feel that she could have said with Paul, for it was plain to see that she had, "Fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." We feel that she shall receive her promised inheritance.

Written by one who shall miss her very much.

Ernest J. Attebery

MARTICIA (HARDY) FOX

Marticia Isabelle was born June 25, 1875, in Crittenden County, Kentucky, near Salem; the third daughter and eighth child of Elder James B. and Wilabour Jane (Wood) Hardy. When she was nine years of age, her father moved his family to Kiowa County, Kansas, where she grew to womanhood, and married Winfield Scott Fox on December 27, 1893. To this union were born a daughter and a son: Marticia Eva, and Winfield James. They lived near her old home until their children were through grade school, when they moved to Emporia, Kansas. After the children had finished their schooling, they moved to Hodgeman County, Kansas, near Burdett, where, on January 10, 1940, her husband passed away; after some years she moved to Burlington, Colorado.

On Saturday before the 5th Sunday in August, 1936, she asked for a home in the Pleasant Valley Old School Baptist Church, of Kingman, Kansas; was received and baptized the next day by her brother in the flesh, Elder J. R. Hardy, then of Dallas, Texas. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone.

On August 18, 1955, she wrote an unusually cheerful letter to the writer, and that night she was stricken in her sleep, suffering a light stroke; but complications developed and the end came quickly on September 14th, at the age of eighty years and nearly three months. Funeral services were conducted by the pastor of the Methodist church, Paul E. Holland, at Burlington, Colorado. She was laid to rest by the side of her husband in the Haviland Cemetery, Haviland, Kansas, after a graveside service by Brother Wm. A. Winfrey, a licentiate, who gave a good talk on John 5:24-30.

She leaves to mourn their loss, the daughter, of Sheridan, Wyoming; the son, of Denver, Colorado; six grandchildren and fifteen great grandchildren; three brothers: J. E. Hardy, Inglewood, Cal.; J. B. Hardy, Perryton, Texas, and H. M. Hardy, Lamar, Colo.; two sisters, Mrs. Bertha Clark, Edinberg, Texas and Mrs. Verda Machesney, Kingman, Kansas.

It is so hard for the flesh to give her up, but the spirit rejoices that the Lord called her quickly to come up higher where there is no more trouble nor pain.

Our sister has gone to her rest,
Where suffering and cares are no more.
Her spirit has gone back to Christ,
Where it was hid so long before.

Her flesh will go back to dust;
"For unto dust shalt thou return."
But some day she'll come forth, we trust,
From the grave, without our concern.

And we shall e'er long meet again;
Where parting and sins are no more.
It will be all praise and rejoicing,
With the Lord on that heavenly shore.

When on that bright and joyous day,
And we from the dust shall arise,
And victory o'er the grave is won;
We'll meet our sister in the skies.

What a glorious time that will be,
When we together our praises sing,
To the One we've longed to see:
Our God, our Saviour and our King.

Written by her sister,
Mrs. Verda Machesney

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 124 DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1956 NO. 3

THOU ART THE WAY

Thou art the Way; to Thee alone
From sin and death we flee,
And he who would the Father seek,
Must seek Him, Lord, by Thee.

Thou art the Truth; Thy Word alone
Sound wisdom can impart;
Thou only canst inform the mind,
And purify the heart.

Thou art the Life; the rending tomb
Proclaims Thy conquering arm;
And those who put their trust in Thee
Nor death nor hell shall harm.

Thou are the Way, the Truth, the Life;
Grant us that Way to know,
That Truth to keep, that Life to win,
Whose joys forever flow.

(Selected by Sister McPhail, of Canada)

McLeod, Texas

Dear Signs of the Times:

I am enclosing a letter I received from Brother Taylor of Dallas, Texas, when I was burdened over the death of my daughter. She was killed in a car wreck. I would like for Brother Taylor's letter to be printed in the Signs. It was so comforting to me, someone else may get comfort from reading it.

I am very thankful to be permitted to read this good paper; I hope I can read it all my life, for I love to read the good letters and precious experiences which God gives his dear people. I hope God sees fit for the Signs to continue throughout all time.

A little unworthy sister,
Mrs. Bylla Taylor

COMFORTING ONE IN DISTRESS

Dallas, Texas

Dear Sister Taylor:

Greetings in the faith and comfort of God's love through Christ unto his dear children.

Having heard of your recent sorrows, I have had you on my mind almost continually since; though I know not why, as I feel too weak and insignificent to give any help. While I feel a sense of condolence, yet knowing that I am not able of myself to comfort you, I shall endeavor to commend you to God who is able to care for all of his people, creatures and things: As Paul said, "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

What had Paul committed unto him? Yea, his gospel labor, or rather the results of it, as well as his life and soul. Oh, how sweet it is to be given to feel the keeping power of God's love at any time, and especially in time of trouble. It was a time of trouble with Paul: he was a prisoner, persecuted beyond measure. Therefore it was a wonderful experience to be given to feel that God was able to keep that which he had committed to him.

Is it not just as sweet to us today as it was to Paul then? Oh, yes, just as sure as we believe as Paul did, just that sure we have the same assurance. Now, Sister Bylla, I feel that I do know something of the uplifting power of God's grace of love and mercy, as he has lifted my weary head many times; Yea, called me to look far beyond the things of this life, and see the sweet comforts of saving grace through Christ, if I am not deceived. Wherefore, I try to speak unto you, trusting that God will show forth his gracious care leading you to the fountain of comfort.

This thing which you have been called upon to undergo, is surely grievous, but

surely we can still say that God knows what is best; and is too wise to error, and is too good to be unkind. I feel sure that your daughter had finished her course here on earth, whereupon she departed this life at the call of the death angel, which God does command. Now, shall we be reconciled unto God's holy will? Oh God, give us of thy Spirit that we may see and understand why, and be conformed unto thy will. Amen.

My mind has wandered back over the days gone by — back to 1941, when I first met you people. I visited in the home of Mrs. Land and her husband; and I shall never forget the kindness they showed me, a poor worm of the dust. I also spent the night in your home during the same meeting, the association at Pleasant Hope. How pleasant it was then! I served on the presbytery in the ordination of your beloved husband. It was a time when joy seemed to fill the air. Now many events of time have passed, and we have all met with many a change in this life, and conditions in general. I was then a young, dark haired single man; but now my hair is well sprinkled with gray, and I have traveled many a mile; and have met with many a heart-ache, trial, persecution and woe. You too have met with many sorrows and changes of conditions, but there is one thing we must surely know, and that is that God has not changed, and never will change. He is a present help in time of need. So, may we turn unto him for aid, trusting in him for all things.

I know that the comforts of this life are but few, and I would to my God that we could look away from this life, yea, the things of this world and this carnal nature of ours, and see the glory of God shining forth in all his works and ways. Though many times we may feel cast low, and feel forsaken, remember that, while our trials are fiery and our afflictions are great, they only serve to burn out more of nature's dross, and give room for more of the grace of God.

Would we have ever known the joys of comfort had we not known the distress of suffering? Would we have ever known the glory of exaultation had we not been debased? Could we have ever enjoyed the grace of God's love had we not felt distressed and forsaken? Surely, we could have never known the glory of being carried away into the mountain of the Spirit had we not been cast low in the dark valley.

I know it does hurt to have the ties of nature broken, but they must be broken. If we could always have and enjoy the ties of nature, we would never want the grace, mercy and love of God.

Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, "Show me thy way, O Lord, that I may know that I have found grace in thy sight." Another writer tells us that we are made perfect through suffering. So, surely our sorrows, pains and woes are needful, if we could only understand it; and God alone can give us such understanding. Many times he teaches us by experience; yea, I feel that I know by experience that the bitterer the suffering, the sweeter the deliverance through the grace of God.

Now, I cannot write as I would like, and must come to a close. I hope I have not worried you with this. I do not want to trouble anyone, but want to quietly live in the spirit of meekness and humility, serving God's people; for when I serve the children of God, I serve my Lord. "Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me." So, surely the way I treat God's people, is the way I treat my God.

May, God take you into a sacred nearness with him, teaching you, guiding you, and protecting you according to his will, as long as you travel life's road. Let me hear from you when you feel like writing. Farewell for now — may God bless you. Written in Christian love, if not deceived.

Unworthily yours in hope,
(Elder) W. W. Taylor

(We regret the delay in publishing the above — Ed.)

DO WE HAVE GREATER THINGS TO TALK ABOUT?

Redwood, Virginia
June 28, 1955

Dear Brother Spangler:

It being time for me to renew again for the Signs, and am sending a check for $5.00 for two more years. Sister Perdue and I have become greatly attached to the Signs. We love and esteem the contents of this book as being very dear to us, and feel its value to God's children is next after the Bible.

Believing the experimental truth and fundamental principles of the doctrine set forth by the Signs is according to a "thus saith the Lord", we feel well persuaded that you dear editors, together with the host of able contributors to its pages, will feed the flock of God. We greatly enjoy reading the many good experiences of grace that are being published in the Signs; as we believe our testimony bears witness that all born again children of God, when clothed in his Holy Spirit, greatly enjoy the fruits of reading one another's experience — both their joys and sorrows. While in this life, will God's little children ever have greater things to converse and comment on than their experiences of grace? We may have all things else, and be void of this gift (grace), and we have nothing; for it is by grace, and grace alone, that the Lord's people have divine stability. We are glad also to read the good ancient editorials and experiences of grace in the Signs.

Oftimes we have been made reconciled in our feelings as to our much certainty in the grace, loving attributes, and testimony that we have in our dear Saviour; but many times do we fall into great doubts and fears as to whether we have ever known the joys of the Lord. We, like Paul, can't go beyond hope in this life; unless it be in our last moments as in Paul's dying declaration, he used hope no more; for he said, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing."

With Paul, I certainly do believe that all of God's saints will pass from this life in glorious triumph of faith, even without fear of death or hell. For the Lord has sealed so many sweet and lovely promises unto his little flock: He will never leave them, nor forsake them; and he will be with them even unto the end of the world. He says, "Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Which will be a magnificent home in eternal heaven, with all of its grandeur and everlasting beauty: the new Jerusalem, and blessed abode of our dear Lord and Saviour, perpared only for them that truly love and fear God.

In conclusion, dear Elder, please cast a mantle of charity over this imperfect scribble. May the Lord bless you and all his dear saints everywhere,

I hope, a brother in bonds of love,
J. A. Perdue

(Since writing the above, Brother Perdue has passed away. See obituary and his "Requests" in next issue.)

HOPE; AND THINGS WE KNOW BY REVELATION

Quite a few of our people seem to be more or less anxious as to our hope, and the things we do know by revelation from God; and seem to fear that if we know a thing, it would destroy the hope we had for the very thing hoped for.

Now, as I see it, it does destroy the hope as and when we come to know a thing — the hope for that very thing most surely ends. But that is just what we wanted it to do; so at God's own good time, he gives us to know what we hoped for; and we like that. The knowledge of, or to know things is the assurance that our hopes have come to

be realities. So knowing what is hoped for never makes us unhappy — it always makes us happy, if so be that the things hoped for were motivated by the Spirit of God.

Now the Holy Spirit's revelations to us are perfect always as to the mysteries of heaven after death. Yet, being human and sinful creatures, we are compelled to look darkly through the glass; therefore we do not in these revelations see the mysteries of God in its fullness as it is in heaven. And in our inability to see clearly through the glass, we do not see these revelations as we will see them in heaven after death. Therefore, the part we do not see of these revelations in this life, we do hope for; but will not see the fullness of these hopes until after death. We do get all the knowledge of our hopes here in this life that is good for us: the balance is retained with God until after death. At death all the fullness of heaven is made known to us: because we will be like Jesus — He being the head of the body, and we being the other parts of the body. So, being like Jesus, that will be heaven to us; as we will see Jesus and know him as we are known of him.

Being very much interested in Hope, and what we do know, I wanted to speak of the matter as it is to me; knowing, too, that I could be mistaken, but I do not think so. Now, I feel sure we do know (in the Spirit) the things that the Holy Spirit reveals to us, as is good for us in this life. Yes, we do have doubts, but they are not of the Spirit but of the flesh; and is very poor evidence that we do not know what the Holy Spirit reveals to us: so poor to me that it is not outstanding or reliable at all. Therefore, I do know what the Holy Spirit reveals to me, because that is what God gave me to know; and I feel sure that I do know in that light. And I feel that I get much rest in this knowledge. Surely this knowledge is of and through the great mercies of God. Otherwise we could not get anything out of our hope and knowledge of these things.

At times, I feel so sure that the whole machine is perfect; and has, will, and is now working for the child's good. Why? Because God told me he would do all things necessary for the good and comfort of his children; and I trust that I believe what he said. As long as God gives me grace and mercy, I feel that I will on through life want, and be delighted in, all things just as God hands them out. Yes, I feel to be in love with all that God does; let it be chastisements, or on the mountain top of his love, I feel to rejoice in all of it.

G. A. Paul,
Homewood, Ala.

DIVINE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

I lay down the following position: God is, and always was, so perfectly wise that nothing ever did, or does, or can elude his knowledge. He knew from all eternity, not only what he himself would do, but also what he would permit others to do. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." (Acts 15:18) Therefore, God knows nothing now, nor will know anything hereafter, which he did not know and foresee from everlasting. All things, past, present and future, are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. (see Hebrews 4:13)

The foreknowledge of God is not uncertain; if so then it would not be foreknowledge. Whatever he foreknew to be in the future shall come to pass; for his foreknowledge can no more be frustrated, or his wisdom deceived, than he can cease to be God. The Deity is possessed not only of infinite knowledge, but also absolute liberty of will: so that, whatever he does, or permits to be done, he does and permits freely, and of his own good pleasure.

Although the will of God, considered in itself, is simply one and the same; yet in consideration of the present capacity of men, the divine will is properly distinguished as secret and revealed.

Thus, it was his revealed will that Pharoah should let the Israelites go; that Abraham should sacrifice his son; and that Peter should not deny Christ. But, as was proved by the event, it was his secret will that Pharoah should not let the children of Israel go; (Exodus 4:12) that Abraham should not sacrifice Isaac; (Genesis 22:12) and that Peter should deny his Lord. (Mat. 26:34) The will of God respecting the salvation and condemnation of man, is never contrary to itself: He immutably wills the salvation of the Elect, and **vice versa.** Nor can He ever vary or deviate from his own will in any instance whatever, so that anything should be done which he willed not, nor anything not be done which he willed. "My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." (Psalms 46:10) "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations." (Psalms 33: 11) "He is in one mind, who can turn him? And what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him." (Job 23:13-14)

Abraham would have committed sin had he refused to sacrifice Isaac, and (looking at God's secret will) would have acted contrary to His revealed will: So Herod, Pontus Pilate, and the reprobate Jews, were justly condemned for putting Christ to death, inasmuch as it was a most notorious breach of God's revealed will that, Thou shalt not kill. Yet, in slaying the Messiah, they did no more than God's hand and counsel (secret will) determined before should be done. (see Acts 4:27-28)

God's hidden will is absolute, and therefore cannot be hindered from taking effect: every man may do things contrary to God's revealed will, but so great is his wisdom and truth, that he directs all things into those channels which he foreknew.

No free will of the creature can resist the will of God, for man cannot so will as to obstruct the divine determination, or overcome the power of God. It cannot be questioned but that God does all things, and ever did, according to his own purpose. The human will cannot resist him so as to make him do more or less than it is his pleasure to do, since God does what he pleases even with the will of men. Whatever comes to pass is by virtue of his absolute omnipotent will. ". . . for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." (Rev. 4:11) "He doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" (Daniel 4:35) The will of God is so the cause of all things as to be itself without cause, for nothing can be the cause of that which is the cause of everything.

So, the divine will is the object of all our inquiries — when we ascend to that, we can go no further. Hence, we find every matter resolved into the mere sovereign pleasure of God. "Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." (Matt. 11:25) "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." (James 1:18) "Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:13)

God has no other motive for what he does than his own free will. Which will is so far from being unrighteous, that it is justice itself, since the determining will of God, being omnipotent, cannot be obstructed or made void. If follows that he never did will that every individual of mankind should be saved. If it were his will, not one single soul could ever be lost, (for who hath resisted his will), and he would surely afford all men the effectual means of salvation, without which it cannot be had. This mightily offends our rational nature: that God should of his own will leave some men to themselves, harden them, and sent them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they might be damned who believe not the truth, etc.

(2 Thes. 2:11-12) And, (verse 13) "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." So, He has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

As God did not will that each individual of mankind should be saved, so neither did he will that Christ should die for each individual of mankind. Yet, had God willed it, his blood would have been sufficient for the redemption of all men; but in consequence of his Father's appointment, he shed it for the Elect only. All those for whom Christ died are saved — only the elect are saved.

The apostle in the eighth chapter of Romans wrote, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect: it is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died." etc. The plain meaning is that those whom God justified, for whom Christ died, are redeemed and cannot be condemned.

In consequence of God's immutable will and infallible knowledge, whatever comes to pass come to pass necessarily. Though, with respect to second causes, and to us as men, many things are unexpected, and seemingly accidental. Whatever man does, he does necessarily, though not with any sensible compulsion: he can only do what God from eternity willed and foreknew he should. Which will of God is effectual, and his foresight certain. The absolute will of God is the cause of his people's salvation. Such was his eternal choice of them to eternal life, that the eternal covenant of grace was entered into by the Trinity in their behalf. The incarnation, obedience, death and resurrection, and intercession of Christ for them, are so many links in the great chain of causes, that not one of them could be taken away without marring and subverting the whole purpose of salvation in Jesus Christ.

We see then that the free, sovereign will of God is the root of the tree of life, which bears so many glorious branches, which yield their delicious fruits. He loved the elect, and ordained them to life; having predestinated them according to the good pleasure of his will. (see Ephesians 1:5) God's covenant for his people, and promises to them, comes in the infinite merit of Christ's righteousness, for we were chosen to salvation in him as members of his mystic body; and through him as our surety, and by his obedience to the law, and submission to its curse and penalty, all whose names are in the Book of Life, are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because he sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him. (see I John 4:9) Since this will of God is both immutible and omnipetent, we know that the salvation of every one of the Elect is most certain, and can by no means be prevented.

The whole of what I have set forth fortifies the people of God against the attacks of unbelief, and the insults of spiritual wickedness in high places.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

(Elder) B. B. Walston
Kinwood, Texas

FROM THE LATE BROTHER DOUGLAS ALSTON TO SISTER McPHAIL

Atlanta, Ga.
March 20, 1950

My dear Sister McPhail:
Dutton, Ontario, Canada

Your very sweet letter written to Carolyn and myself was received by her and forwarded on to me here in Atlanta. I have always hesitated to think that anything I have written is fit for publication. I have always feared that I might have said the wrong thing and that some dear saint might be disturbed by it, or be misled. But, you may be the judge in the matter, and you may ask anyone else there about it, and if you see fit and think it alright, then you

have my permission to send it to the Signs for further screening, and publication, if they see fit.

I am so very full of errors, and I am so ignorant of the things of God and of His Word. However, I feel to know that if there is any good in what was written, then it was the Lord who gave it, and it is His and not mine. Therefore, I am disposed to say, let it be in the hands of the brethren to judge, and let me be at their feet and be judged by them.

My dear sister, if we have been so blessed as to be given a second birth, a spiritual birth, then we have a natural and a spiritual being. And they are ever at enmity the one with the other. As Paul expresses it in Galatians 5:17: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Every child of grace is brought to feel this conflict within himself; and to feel Godly sorrow because of it. Jesus cried unto the Father three times in the garden "O my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." How can we understand this, when we are told that God cannot deny himself? Let us remember that Jesus on earth was the Christ-Man: He was both God and man. When we are born again of the Spirit, we partake of that same state in a small way. A small portion of Him and his Divinity dwell in us, and is the Living Bread spoken of in John 6:51, which is the Life within us that keeps alive our souls. When Jesus prayed the Father that the cup might pass, it was the man that was crying, and not the Spirit. Indeed, He came upon the earth for that purpose and to that end. The Spirit, in the same breath, was praying "not as I will, but as thou wilt." Again, as He hung upon the cross, wearing the crown of thorns upon his head, and bearing the chides of men, it was the man that cried out: "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The man part of Him would have come down from that cross and that suffering. But the Spirit came to that end and the Spirit never flinched. I would thank God for these things; for this night I would pray the Lord for a peace of mind and a relief and an ease in the matters of the church; but straightway and in the same breath, I have to pray, Nevertheless Lord, if it means a deadness of soul and a leanness of Spirit, I would not have it. Is not this both the body and the Spirit speaking and fervently crying unto the Lord? The body crying for release from its burden: the soul praying for its very life? There is the conflict: and they both express themselves in the same breath. As our Saviour came on earth in this dual nature, so are we here in like manner.

In obedience to the command of God, Abraham took two servants and his son Isaac and went to make the offering. The servants went most of the journey, but they could not go all of the way. When they came to the foot of the mountain, and Abraham looked and saw the place from afar, he told the servants to wait here with the ass, while I and the lad go yonder to worship and return. (Gen. 22:7) "And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together." There they went climbing up the mountain; it is a struggle to climb up a mountain empty handed, for it was "afar off." (verse 4) They had a long way to go. But Isaac could not go up empty handed or unburdened: he had to carry the load of wood. The wood was his burden; and that load of sin under the just and holy law of God which would have burned him to destruction. He had to bear his burden of guilt up the mountain. A sacrifice had to be made; someone had to bear the flames, which is the wrath of the broken Holy Law of God. The ram, caught by the horns, represents the Lamb of God, the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who bore the flames, who paid the penalty for our guilt that we might go free. At the passover, Pilate would release one, and so he asked,

"Shall I release unto you the King of the Jews? But they all cried, Not this man but Barabbas. So Jesus was crucified and the robber Barabbas went free. Now this robber, Barabbas, represented you and me. Jesus died, paid our penalty under the Law of God, and we go free from that guilt and that eternal death.

But, I must close. I would pray that the Lord's richest blessings, his love and mercy, rest with you and the brethren there, and with your dear Pastor who goes in and out among you. I wish that it might be my privilege to know you people better than I do, but I trust that we are one in the Spirit of him that liveth forever, eternally in the heavens. May that Spirit keep us, direct our every step, and finally bring us unto Him whom to know is life eternal. Yours in that sweet hope,

A. D. Alston

VIRTUE OF KEEPING QUIET

Covin, Alabama
June 15, 1955

Elder and Mrs. C. M. Haygood,
Ballenger, Texas

Dearly Beloved Brother and Sister;

If I know my heart I would always do those things that are well-pleasing to our heavenly Father. Thus we feel a desire to communicate with you two dear pilgrims. "For to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." (Heb. 13:16) I want to keep in contact with the children of God, for we are on a long journey in a long, wearisome wilderness road. How sad and weary it can become when we are left to travel alone without the companionship of our blessed Redeemer and his chosen people.

I do not believe that a child of God can hate his brother or sister. Hatred of sin wherever found is right, for every quality of God is to be found in his offspring. Likeness begets likeness. God has eternally hated sin, and every son and daughter that has ever been begotten by him, has had instilled in them a hatred of every evil and lustful principle. The thought that God's people love sin as well as they ever did, is not only of the devil, but it is repulsive to every heaven born soul. The Spirit has not given us directions to let our sins be an excuse to wink at the sins of our kindred in the Lord. We have all heard it put this way: "I can not afford to raise any charge against my brethren because I am so sinful myself." Did the apostle use that as an excuse? No! No, not at all. He said that he was the chief of sinners, but he never did use that as a deterrent to severely rebuking sin wherever he found it among the churches. But this hatred of sin in our brethren will not cause us to hate them. Our efforts to discipline erring members of the church must be done in love for them.

We love one another for we are born from above. God is love and we cannot help but love him that has begotten us from the dead to life in Christ; neither can we help loving our Father's children, our brethren and sisters in the Lord. This kind of "can't-help-it" doctrine will never harm anyone. If this love of God is born in us as fruit of His spirit, it will show. You cannot hide love. You may try to hide it, but it will show in your eyes, your words, your actions. A love that can be suppressed is of the earth, for the love of earthly things, including men and women, can be broken by other earthly things, but not so with the love of God. It is from above, and things below cannot stop or deter things from above. The Bible decree is "that the elder shall serve the younger" and it has not been abrogated by the Lord, much less by earthly vessels of wrath.

If I know my heart I desire to love my Father's children. I am sometimes afraid that I do not love them with that devoted, fervent, enduring love of God; and then again I feel that "I have passed from death to life because I do love the brethren," and that I desire them before myself: that I desire their welfare and happiness ahead of my own.

Joseph has ever been intent on the welfare of his brethren, even though they have ever been intent to destroy him and his possessions. (Gen. 37) And the true Israel of God have ever loved one another and have ever endeavored to serve one another.

It was soothing and relaxing to sit down together and talk of the things of the kingdom. I hope that I did not come among you sowing any discord in doctrine and practice, neither to lay waste the borders of the kingdom by slaying her watchmen. I do not remember of a single conversation on the whole trip that was derogatory in any way to a child of the heavenly Father. It should always be thus, but I am guilty of it not always being so.

I may be wrong in what I think that I see, but right at this time I think that the ministry in the lower Southeast and Westward is at a oneness in the things pertaining to the Old Baptist church. It is true that things have happened that are unpleasant, and things that ought not to be among the saints, but it appears that the brethren are showing themselves to be good soldiers of Jesus Christ and are bearing hardness for his name's sake. I well remember our old father in Israel here in the Hopewell Association, Elder G. W. Berry, who told us boys in the ministry one time, "Boys do not fight when you are evil spoken of. If somebody tells the truth on you about your wrong conduct, quit whatever you are doing that is wrong, and be quiet. If they tell a falsehood on you, just live quietly and peaceably with one and all, and prove that it is a falsehood. If you are a fighter, you must remember that the goat gets his head down in the mud to attack. Keep your heads up, boys, keep your heads up." I feel that I have too often talked back when I have been falsely accused, but I hope that I have been given a stronger desire of late "to keep my head up" and let things go as they are, if I am sure that I am not guilty of the accusation.

Dear ones, we have something to be joyful about, and it is so wonderful that the Lord God Almighty, the Holy One in Israel, imputed our sin to Jesus Christ our Redeemer. It is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them"; and surely, surely, none of us have done that, all having sinned and come short of the glory of God, but let not your heart be troubled about this, for verily God has raised up a Prophet of ourselves and every child of God has heard him. (Deut. 18:15) It was an awful night when Sinai was shrouded in smoke and flames and the Lord God of heaven and earth thundered his righteous and holy law in our frightened ears. We knew that it was more than we could measure up to. We said so, and entreated Moses to go and hear and receive it for us. God told Moses, "They have well said, they cannot hear it and live." Isn't it something to be glad about that we are the anti-type of that people that said well, and that our saying received the approval of God Almighty. The curse never was on us; the sins of a broken law never were imputed to us; our sins and iniquities never were remembered against us. Our Prophet was made a curse for us. He, being made a curse for us, has redeemed us from the curse of the law. We were due by the law to be forever cursed; he by transgression was not due to be thus cursed. It is thus so wonderful: the just dying and becoming a curse for us, the unjust; and we going free. It was us that were due to hang in ignomy on a tree, vile transgressors to be ridiculed and made a public gazing-stock; it was he that inhabited eternity as the eternal Son of God, that, in a prepared body of flesh and blood, pulsating with the life and blood of the heirs of promise, suffered the pangs and agony of a broken law, hanging in our place, bearing all of our jeers, our tauntings, our railings.

Every pain that we have ever had; every falsehood that has ever told on us; every loss and cross that we have had to count before him and in his pre-

sence, is in no sense worthy to be compared to the suffering of the lowly Christ Jesus. My, dear companion in the ministry, and your helpmeet in this world and in the church, suffer a word of exhortation: Never open your mouth when you are evily spoken to, OR ABOUT, for there is no sin as the sin of retaliation and vengeance taking. The creature is to be replied to, **and will be replied to,** in every petition at a throne of grace, or every departure from the truth, or every step in wrong doing, by our God; but there is never, NEVER AT ALL, a time when we are to reply against the trials that we are brought through; against the providential and parental care of our heavenly Father; against those that persecute us for Jesus's sake. Before we can have a good case for replying to those that despitefully use us, we must remove from the Bible the fact that he opened not his mouth. I have never known a case where a persecuted child of God held his peace that it did not bring him or her in sweeter fellowship among the saints. It WILL NEVER GET YOU IN TROUBLE, DEAR BROTHER, TO KEEP QUIET, but it will always increase your trouble to do a lot of talking in defense of yourself in the midst of persecution. I have always felt that the child of God that made a lot of noise when persecution came (as he or she would call it), was not being persecuted at all for righteousness sake, but that his or her sin had found them out.

Dear saints let us press on and up. The children of God must go on to perfection. Where else is there to go? Surely we do not need to go towards imperfection, for if we are what we sometimes hope, we are imperfect in all of our ways, and have had a fill of that.

We hope that you all can come to see us at some future date.

Write when you have time and a fruitful mind.

Your brother and sister in precious hope,

W. D. and Lois Griffin

Farmerville, La.

Dear Brother Wood:

I hope you find the enclosed writing is the truth. If not, please correct me in the matter. If it is the truth, then I feel to say that the Lord guided and directed my pen to write; and that all praise belongs to the Lord, and not to this poor, vile sinner.

I am going through many trials and tribulations these days. I thought I would find relief by writing, but no relief has come.

If you feel to do so, please remember this poor one in prayer.

An unworthy sinner,
Woodrow W. Hudson

(We take the liberty of publishing the above, along with the following article Brother Hudson has written, for our people are much interested in the exercises of our brethren. Brother Hudson is a young man, and has recently completed his military service. We are glad he is home again and can be associated with his brethren, and hope he will find much comfort and consolation in the further dealings of the Lord with him. — J. D. W.)

SO GREAT A SALVATION

Farmerville, La.

Dear Editors:

My mind has been on this text for the past few days: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." (Hebrews 2:3) But the question is, will the Lord bless and guide me to write on this Great Salvation.

I want to say, dear children, that this is a great and wonderful and glorious salvation — a salvation that is of the Lord and not of man. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12) I pray, dear ones, that we do not

neglect this great salvation: A salvation that shows the power and wonderful works of the Lord; a salvation that shows that the Lord is almighty and just concerning his promises; a salvation that shows that the Lord's council shall stand forever; a salvation that shows the weakness and sinful nature of men, and that it is beyond their power to perform.

There seems to be many salvations preached today: that salvation is made possible by man's good works, and certain conditions to perform; a salvation that claims that God wants people to be saved, if they will just let him into their hearts; a salvation that claims that man has the power to save himself, or that the preacher has the power to save.

I want to ask, if man had the power to save himself, who would he praise when he entered heaven? Why, of course he would praise himself for his good deeds and his ability. But all the praise will be the Lord's for this Great Salvation. "With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the King's palace. Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth. I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever." This salvation, dear brethren, is the work of the Lord. It is God that works the good works in you.

Wordly churches preach that salvation is made possible by performing certain conditions — they believe that man can perform these conditions of himself. But I believe that God performs these unto his little children, and I desire to point them out: works, faith, hope, repentance, love, belief, baptism of the Holy Ghost and confession.

James said on one occasion that, "Faith without works is dead." And I want to say that these works he is speaking of, are not of man's carnal nature. They are the Lord's works. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10)

Man cannot get faith himself, because it is the gift of God. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." (Ephesians 2:8) "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1) Since faith is the gift of God, I must say that the Lord gives his little children a hope of this Great Salvation. This hope seems to get very small at times, but it still clings on; and, as Paul says, "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul."

Man cannot seek repentance of himself. Esau sought it carefully with tears, but he couldn't find repentance. "For ye know that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." (Hebrews 12:17) Repentance comes from the Lord. It is only through the Lord that repentance is made possible. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." (Acts 5: 31) Therefore I conclude that repentance is a gift of God.

Can man baptize himself with the Holy Ghost? Can a preacher baptize anyone with the Holy Ghost? "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:37, 38) Note that Peter was talking to those who were pricked in their heart. And notice that there are no "ifs" in this scripture. Peter did not say, "If you repent and be baptized, then you will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost"; but Peter said, "Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Where does the gift of the Holy Ghost come from? I believe that it comes from the Lord. "Unto whom it was revealed, that

not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven: which things the angels desire to look into." (I Peter 1:12)

Can a dead alien sinner believe the truth? Christ said, "Ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep." A man who does not believe cannot come unto the Lord. Christ said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:44)

Can a man love the Lord of his own carnal nature? If it were so, then love would come from man. But love comes from the Lord: "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." (I John 4:7) Can a man refuse to love if he chooses? The answer is, "And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you." (I Thes. 3:12)

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness: and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Romans 10:9, 10) I ask, dear children, how can a man confess if he does not believe, and how can a man believe unless it is revealed unto him? How can a man confess that he is nothing and less than nothing, and that he is vile and sinful, and that his good works are as filthy rags in God's sight, and that he is doomed unless he is saved of the Lord, except these things be revealed to him?

Dear ones, I hope and pray that you have been made to believe that these things: faith, hope, works, repentance, love, belief, baptism of the Holy Ghost, and confession, are all of this Great and Wonderful and Almighty God; who said, "I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." And again, "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof." (Psalms 50:12)

Is not this a great salvation! The world is doomed because of sin. But God has a people whom he sent Christ to redeem. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21) While Christ was dying on the cross, he said, "It is finished." His work is finished: his people are saved from their sins.

Man is sinful and wicked in his carnal nature; therefore, all men walk in the ways of the world, and are dead in their sins. But, God has a people whom he quickens and works the good works in them and gives them salvation. "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses." (Col. 2:13)

Dear children, have you experienced the fact that you are nothing and less than nothing, and that your good works are as filthy rags in God's sight? Have you felt to be in that horrible pit, and stuck in that miry clay? Have you felt to be the chief of sinners, and dead in your sins; and that Hell will be your doom? Have you felt that you couldn't do anything good of yourself, and everytime you tried to do good, evil was with you; and felt too unworthy to pray, and all you could say was, "Lord have mercy upon my soul"? Have you felt to say, as David said, "Save me, O God: for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God"? (Psalms 69:1-3)

But, when you felt all was lost, this almighty and wonderful God lifted you up, and put your feet upon a Rock, and put a new song in your heart, did you not sing praises unto Him who was merciful to you? Then you could say with David, "I waited patiently for the Lord: and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an

horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." (Psalms 40:1-3)

Is not this a great salvation!

In hope,
Woodrow H. Hudson, Jr.

Ballanger, Texas

Dear Brother Spangler:

Just a few lines along with our subscription payment. We feel God is surely in the matter of preserving the Signs through the many years of publication.

We are sending a letter from Elder W. D. Griffin for publication if you see fit; also a little writing of a sixteen-year old boy whom we feel the hand of God is directing, and who in due time will be a blessing to God's humble poor.

We had looked forward to meeting you at the Sulphue Fork Association last fall. We hope the Lord will direct you this way sometime.

In bonds,
(Elder) C. M. Haygood

WEIGHTY THINGS FROM A YOUNG MAN OF SIXTEEN YEARS

What are the bare facts about Adam? When God created the world, did he ask any architect just how he should build it, or did he just speak and it was done? When God created man, did he say, Adam, do you want to be created; or did he just speak and it was done? Did God confer with man about anything He did? Is there any place in the Holy Writ that God got together with man and did anything? Can you find it?

Is man responsible for being here, or was it God's eternal purpose? Does God have an eternal purpose, or was creation just guess work? If a person is trying to live right, is he trying to be a part of any kind of gamble?

Modern Christendom is teaching that God has no purpose, and that the death of Christ on the cross was that some might be saved; not that a multitude would be saved. Are you are a part of this blasphemy? Or do you believe in an alwise God, an omnipotent God — a God with an Eternal Purpose?

Dan Simmons,
Midland, Texas

BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST

In so far as blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is concerned, or any other manner of sin, it doesn't confine itself to any one certain people. There never was, nor will there ever be, a sin committed but what will not be against God; and God is the Holy Ghost. So, if blasphemy be a manner of sin against the Holy Ghost, every human being in the world stands guilty. The mountains that one must surmount to prove that blasphemy is more than any other ordinary manner of sin, is to prove that it is no sin at all. And when it's once discovered that it can't be done, I am going to contend it to be a manner of sin; and Jesus says all manner of sin shall be forgiven the sons of men (elect). The children of God are forgiven all their sins, be it blasphemy, or what not. The Elect have never committed a sin of any discription, nor never will, but what Jesus has atoned for; and there is not a sin, regardless of it's name or nature, that the children of God have not committed. Every sin they ever did or ever will committ, will be directly against the Holy Ghost. God, and God only, is all that sin in it's every propensity of nature, can be against. Sin, or sins, are all just one sin, and is only of one nature; and all it produces is that which is wrong — and the wrong is the fruit of every shade of sin, and covers no more ground.

God saw no difference in the nature of Esau and Jacob. Both were sinners, and their sins were alike against God the Holy Ghost. God didn't choose Esau as a figure of the non-elect because his sins were more repulsive than Jacob's;

but he said he did it that, according to his purpose, election might stand. If this be true, then it is indifferent with God which is the greater sinner; because the sins of either were not the issue in this election. The defeat of Esau in this election didn't cause his sins to become any greater or more powerful against God. The choice of Jacob did not by any means cause his sins to become more acceptable with God.

In short, the result of the election did not destroy one sin from Jacob's allotted number, nor add one to Esau's. In the sense in which it reads, the children not yet being born, neither having done any good or evil, justifies the conclusion that God had nothing against either one of them, save only in their sins as being against God. But now, since the election, God requires nothing from the hands of Esau, not even obedience or disobedience; for he is clean out of the picture — the election doomed him; he's no longer in the picture — never was.

Was it thus and so with Jacob? No! Jacob was held accountable for his sins, as every other child of Grace is, but since Jacob couldn't meet the account, there had to be an envoy sent down from the high court of Heaven, and take upon himself the sins of Jacob; (Israel, the Elect) and bear to the cross; and there in death satisfy the account (the demands of the law). But he didn't bear Esau's sins to the cross. It would seem God was a little partial herein, as there was no difference in the nature of their sins. But Jesus saved His People from their sins; that is, from the punishment: taking all their punishment upon himself, and thereby separating them from their sins as far as the East is from the West — to be remembered against them no more forever.

Yes, He took all (before, after and ever onward) their sins in their every name, sense and hue, and placed it behind him in a land of forgetfulness. They still sin; but He is standing between them and the bar of justice; for he says, All manner of sin shall be forgiven the sons (elect only) of men. As in the case of Esau and Jacob, not one sin was added to Esau's portion, nor one deducted from that of Jacob's; even so it was with the death of our Lord on the cross, it didn't erase one sin from His people, or by any means block it's further progress. So all humanity sin against the Holy Ghost; and if blasphemy is not a manner of sin, please explain "why and how."

But the Elect are forgiven of all their sins, past, present and future; and in addition, have an attorney at law standing at the right hand of the Father in their behalf. But the sins of the non-elect against the Holy Ghost have never forgiveness neither in this present world, nor in the world to come, due to the fact that they were not chosen unto salvation. In other words, they were not subjects prepared for salvation; which brings us to the two worlds under consideration, but I am going to quit right here.

(Elder) W. A. Little
Fort Worth, Texas

ATTENDED THE HOPEWELL ASSOCIATION

Pleasant Hill, Mo.

Dear Kindred in Christ:

I have wanted to write you ever since my husband and I returned from Texas, where we attended the Hopewell Association of Old School Baptists, near Winnsboro; and where Elder E. J. Lambert and wife reside, and also where sister J. R. Hardy lives, and in whose home we were so lovingly entertained. It seemed so wonderful to be among so many lovely Baptists — all a oneness in the faith of our fathers which we are taught in His word, and not shunning to declare it in love.

There were fifteen ministers present. Elder A. D. Wall is the Moderator, Brother Green, the Clerk, and Elder Lambert, Assistant Clerk. On Friday there were an estimated five hundred-fifty in attendance; and on Saturday and Sunday, six and seven hundred, respective-

ly. The singing was beautiful, and the preaching all in harmony.

We were blessed to hear Elder W. D. Griffin preach the Introductory Sermon, and it was wonderful; as were the following: Elder W. A. Speer, Eldorado, Arkansas; Elder R. W. Rhodes, Lillie, La.; Elder Haygood, of southern Texas; young Brother Wall, son of the moderator, who has since been ordained to the full work of the ministry; Elder McCool, of southern Alabama; and Elder E. J. Lambert, and others in opening and closing. Truly a lovely band. I could but wish that our pastor, Elder L. L. Schenck, of Williamstown, Kansas, could have been with us to hear and also be heard. So we are never satisfied in this life, but I did wish to be, for we were so wonderfully entertained and cared for.

I felt the dear Lord guided our footsteps, taking us safely there and returning us safely home; and I did feel such a desire to thank and praise Him, but it is so short lived. I can't control my thoughts, and that being so, how can I control anything? So, all is of Him from first to last: who works and none can hinder, commands, and it stands fast. "The steps that I tread, and the station I fill, my Father determined and wrote in his will."

May he ever keep me mindful and humbly at his feet, and at the feet of my brethren. I so enjoy all the letters and articles I read in the Signs. May it be His will for it to continue. With love to all the household of faith, I am

In an humble hope,
Mrs. J. W. Taylor

Kilgore, Texas

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing $5.00 to renew my subscription to the Signs. We hope we will never be without it as long as we can see to read.

Thanks to the editors for such a wonderful paper. May God's richest blessings rest upon you dear editors of the Signs.

Mrs. G. W. McDuff

EDITORIALS

Danville, Virginia **March, 1956**

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EDITORIAL

We are re-publishing in this issue, under "Voices of the Past," an article entitled **Retrospection,** by Elder Gilbert Beebe. This was written at the close of the 44th volume, and published in December, 1876.

Should there be any among our readers who are not familiar with the circumstances under which the publication of the Signs of the Times was undertaken in 1832, this article will acquaint them with those trying times among the Lord's people. They were not trying to them because there was any indecision or doubt as to the truth of the doctrine and order which they firmly held, but because there was a distinct departure from this doctrine on the part of many who were among them.

Those who stood firmly against such innovations believed, as do we, that to

know the truth, and to be firmly established in it, is the work of the Spirit in the hearts of men and women. For this reason those who do not believe the truth, or who apparently depart from it, do so for the lack of such teaching of the Spirit. So it was indeed trying to those to whom the doctrine of the Lord meant everything, to see that there were those who had risen up among them who were contending for things entirely foreign to this doctrine — men who taught new things; men who would have the church be conformed to the world. No wonder, therefore, that those brethren were sorely tried, and could no longer remain silent and passively give their consent to such things.

This, of course, was the reason for the meeting which was held at Black Rock Church, near Baltimore, Maryland, in 1832, where the brethren opposing the innovations issued their "Black Rock Address" — in which they clearly stated their position against the new things. The outcome was as stated by Elder Beebe in his **Retrospection.** We sincerely believe that the spirit that motivated the brethren at Black Rock was the same spirit that the apostle had when he said to the Roman brethren, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." (Romans 16: 17-18)

(The writer has been trying to serve Black Rock church since the death of Elder Topping in 1947, and while the membership is small, the congregations are faithful, and the many friends have united in keeping the building and grounds, including the cemetery, in excellent condition. Many of these are descendants of those who took part in the Black Rock meeting in 1832. We are glad to say that the doctrine and order is yet maintained there.)

The church from the beginning has been troubled with men rising up among them who brought in strange doctrines, properly called heresies; and she has been tried as by fire. But the Lord has preserved the truth in every age, so that it is far from being extinct in the world. Pelegianism (the holding and maintaining the doctrine of free-willism and its connected principles), later called Arminianism, has never had its place in the doctrine of the church. We readily understand that such belief is a part of the "way that seemeth right unto men," for such is the belief of an unregenerated person, but no person can hold to such who has been brought out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God; and experimentally brought to the end of his own strength.

We feel it well to mention these things again, since we know that there are many who are not familiar with these facts; and especially, many among those who hold to free-will doctrines who have had no opportunity to know whether there be any other doctrine, or that there ever was a separation among the Baptists; or, if perhaps they have heard of it, to know the true causes of separation.

Elder L. H. Hardy once wrote, "A grayheaded wrong is not right." Just as traditions among the Jews at the time the Lord was on the earth, had great weight with them, superseding much that the Lord delivered unto Moses, just so do traditions in doctrine hold first place in the religious world. There is much said about "old-time religion" in these days, and the need to return to it, but old-time religion was not based upon "decisions for Christ," or "dedicating one's life to God." Rather, it was based upon, "how great things the Lord has done for us." David said in his 66th Psalm, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and **I will declare what he hath done for my soul."** And the language of Jesus to the man "clothed and in his right mind" was, "Go home to thy friends, and **tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."** But it is not

to be supposed that any can give a reason of their hope, if they have no hope. (see I Peter 3:15)

To affirm the continued stand of the Signs of the Times on the first Proposals for its publication, we quote Elder Beebe: ". . . maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. The existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omipotence and Eternal Perfections of the Great Jehovah — the Revelation which God has given of himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." (I John 5:8)

2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.

3. Eternal, Unconditional Election.

4. The Total Depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the Elect only.

6. The Sovereign, Irresistible, and in all cases, Effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in Regeneration and Quickening the Elect of God.

7. The final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God, by Grace.

8. The Resurrection of the dead, and Eternal Judgement.

9. That the Church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers — that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God.

10. That there is no connection between Church and State, and as touching the proposition for a marriage between them, the Hon. R. M. Johnson, in his Report on the Sabbath Question, has expressed our faith.

The Signs of the Times will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath Schools, etc., making war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of Institutions."

J. D. W.

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2-15)

There seems to be a fanciful notion among many that the above admonition of Paul to Timothy, meant for him to study books as a Doctor would the science of medicine, or as one would study the legal profession in order to become proficient in his line. This kind of a deduction seems to me to be foreign to what the Apostle meant.

The Apostle John said, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." If we preach that which we have read in books, and not "That which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;" then we are preaching the other fellow, and I feel sure that would not meet with the approval of God, because it would not be our work, but that of another.

Paul said to Timothy, "That from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." This is the Book of all books. It is the Book that God's people, and especially the ministers of Christ should read and study as God gives them light. And I'm persuaded that the Spirit will impress all called ministers to read this book, and if they are impressed by the Spirit to read, there will be a little light given, a little crumb dropped, the crumb may not be very large, but it will suffice for the time and circumstance. This book is given to God's people to read, and is a book of knowledge, but the Spirit must give an understanding of it.

Preaching of the letter is becoming

more and more commercialized. Men are becoming more of the opinion that by the art of study they can teach others to know God and the gospel of Jesus Christ. Men are trying, they say, to so simplify the wording of this book, that children may understand it. I say, that if they ever get to where even adults can understand it without the Spirit of revelation, then it will cease to be the word of God.

Preaching of the gospel is a work. And Paul said to Timothy, "This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." Then the apostle lists some of the qualifications that fit him for the work he is to do. Read the third chapter of first Timothy.

One of the qualifications that the apostle list is, that the bishop must be apt to teach. God could reveal to men and women His entire word and work if it was His will to do so, but it has pleased Him to call men and place them in His vineyard to work and to cultivate the plants which He has set out in it. If there were no work for the minister, then there would not be any called to the ministery, and no qualification given.

The Eunuch had been to Jerusalem to worship, and as he "Was returning, and sitting in his chariot reading Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, go join thyself to the chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, how can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him." Philip did as the Eunuch desired; "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." Many of the children of God can not interpret their experience, and thus "oppose themselves." But God sends a workman in due time to help them lay in place their diversified experiences, thereby, giving strength to the weak hands, and confirming the feeble knees.

The same one that said to Timothy, "Study to show thyself approved unto God," also said to him, "I Charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure affliction, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministery."

The study that Timothy was to do, was not just to show what he knew, but to prove what kind of a workman he was by the proper division of the truth. Both the law and the gospel are Scriptural truths, but they are to be placed in their proper category. The ministers of Christ are not to be like the Ninevites, "That cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand." The right hand signifies strength and the left hand weakness. The left hand the law and the right hand the gospel. And the minister who makes the proper division proves himself to be a good workman. But if he seeks to please men, then he is not the servant of Christ. Paul says, "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Paul meant, I think, the same as John when he said "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

I do not feel that we would do any harm to the subject if we extended this study to the household of faith, especially to the ministers and deacons. We

would do well, I think, to familiarize ourselves with the articles of our faith, gospel order, decorum of our church, and the constitution of our association, so that when any thing came up among the churches and associations, we could give documented advise. If all would familiarize themselves with these fundamentals, no doubt, many of our local disturbances could be nipped in the bud, and gospel order maintained.

Some of our ministers fail to hold communion at the regular time because of the absence of a deacon. There were ministers before deacons, and there is no Biblical reason with which I'm apprised, that the ordained minister should not pass the bread and the wine.

A workman is known by the kind of work that he does, just as a tree is known by the kind of fruit it bears. However ambiguous the word "study" may seem to some, I trust that if I haven't said any thing to clear up, if there be any ambiguity of the phrase, that what I have said will, perhaps, cause others to study and search for its right interpretation.

To divide the word of truth is to make the right application of the word of truth. Many seem to think that by the distribution of the Bible, and the reading of it, that men and women could come in possession of Spiritual life. But Jesus said to them who so thought, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." He didn't say that eternal life would be found in the scriptures, but that they thought it could.

To rightly divide the word of truth, is to give the true meaning of the subject from which we are speaking, without taking any thing from it or adding any thing to it, but to declare the whole counsel of God. Not holding back something that we fear might offend some one, but to hue to the line and leave the results to the Lord. Some say that we should feed soft food to the weak, and hard to the strong. But if they grow up without any solids, they are liable to continue in their weak state and have no firmness about them. We should not try to make the Scriptures mean what we would like for them to mean, but to present them in the light which the Lord gives us of them, and not wrest the Holy Scriptures unto our own destruction: but give full proof of our ministery. I am glad however, that our misinterpretation and application of them does not change the true meaning of them. If so, I doubt if we would have one today that could be relied upon. And without the grace of God, and the Spirit of revelation, no one will ever be able to present them with any understanding. And may God, "Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness," shine "in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Without this knowledge, no man will ever be able to comfort the children of God, or rightly divide the word of truth.

We say in our articles of faith, that, "We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the word of God, and only rule of faith and practice." Let us study them with the ability that God gives. Paul said to Timothy, "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all." May God give us grace and a mind to heed this admonition, that we may not be ashamed.

H. O. Nash

ADDITIONAL CHURCH NOTICE

OLIVE AND HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Shokan, N. Y., meets each 2nd Sunday at 1:30 P. M. Also meets each 4th Sunday at 1:30 P. M. from December through February.

A. J. Slauson, Pastor
Mrs. Neva Brooks, Clerk

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

RETROSPECTION

It has been our practice at the close of every successive volume of the Signs of the Times to review the way in which the Lord our God has brought us, and to call attention to the preserving goodness and tender mercy which have followed us all our days. Prophets and other inspired men have frequently recorded the former loving-kindnesses of the Lord to them, and it certainly becomes us to bless the Lord, and forget not all his benefits.

Forty-four years ago, under very trying circumstances, with much fear and trembling, we were induced to issue proposals for publishing the Signs of the Times, to be devoted to the Old School Baptist cause. A brief summary of the leading sentiments of those who at that time were so called, was published in our Prospectus, and cordially indorsed by the Convention of Primitive Baptists that met at Black Rock, in Baltimore County, Md., in the same year, who recommended our proposed paper, a specimen number of which had been issued, and was then and there carefully examined and approved, and commended to the patronage of all Baptists who desired to maintain the ancient doctrine, order and ordinances of the gospel, as established by Christ and his apostles on the day of Penticost, and who repudiated all the religious institutions of men, including numerous organized societies which professed to be auxiliaries to the church of God, and to have in view salvation of souls.

From the time, early in the present century, when the heresies of Andrew Fuller began to be disseminated in the United States, and to be entertained by such Baptists as could not endure sound doctrine, it became clearly apparent that there were two discordant, conflicting and irreconcilable elements in our churches; and while the one party contended earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, and continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, the other party embraced Fuller's theory of an **indefinite atonement, offered salvation,** and **gospel condemnation.** This last item was explained to mean that the atonement provided salvation for all the human race who would accept it on certain conditions to be by them performed; that these conditions embraced faith and repentance, and that the ministry of the gospel commanded all sinners to repent and believe the gospel, as conditions or means by which they could secure salvation, and that this they must accept and perform on pain of damnation. Thus representing that sinners are condemned and damned, not for being sinners, condemned already by the law of God, but for refusing to repent and believe. This delusive but plausible doctrine, being of the world, the world and all worldly religionists were ready to receive it, and it soon became exceedingly popular. Moreover, it opened the way for the introduction of Mission, Tract and other kindred societies, with Sunday and Theological Schools, as a sort of machinery for converting sinners and for evangelizing the world. It was not claimed fifty years ago, by even the most zealous advocate of these institutions, that there was any authority or precedent for them in the bible, or in the former practice of the Baptist Church; but it was claimed that as the world was making great advancements in arts and sciences, that the church must keep pace with the world by improving on the institutions of our Lord Jesus Christ; and all such Baptists as would not patronize the new improvements were reproached as **old fogies,** as clogs and hinderances to the advancement of religion, and of the salvation of souls.

The spirit of this new departure from the ancient doctrine and usages of the Baptists spread like a pestilence throughout the breadth of our land, and in every church and association that

was not fully given to the idolatry, divisions and contentions ensued. Numerous professedly religious societies, in the name of benevolence, and as auxiliaries to the church, were formed, offering memberships, directorships and life memberships for money to all, without distinction of character, who would pay the amounts demanded; and even successful horse-racers were politely solicited to invest of their illgotten gains for prominent offices in the directorship of these new institutions; while the poor only were excluded from a place among them. This new policy found immense favor with the world, and the churches governed by it were soon filled up with a most graceless and carnal membership. The pulpits of churches who adopted the new order were soon filled with graduates from Theological Schools, and the doctrine which had formerly distinguished the Baptists no longer rang out from them. Doctrines of men, suited to the taste of the world, now became popular, and no other would find favor with them.

Under these circumstances the remnant whom God had reserved to himself, as in the days of Elijah, who could not be induced to bow to this modern Baal, were stigmatized as enemies to the spread of the gospel and to the salvation of sinners, and they were denounced as clogs and hinderances to the evangelization of the world.

At the time of the commencement of the publication of the Signs of the Times, the new order had in the field a large number of periodicals, in all of which the position, doctrine and order of the Primitive Baptists who protested against the new doctrines and practices of the popular party were misrepresented, ridiculed and persecuted; and those who stood fast in the truth, being few and far apart in their localities, having no medium of general correspondence, and being denied the columns of the New School, in which to repel the false, malicious calumnies of their enemies, or to publish words of cheer and encouragement to their persecuted brethren, who were so greatly scattered at that time as to make them, in many instances, fear that the few in their own respective localities were all that had not bowed to the modern Baal, and that their lives also were sought by all the well fed prophets that ate at the table of their pious Queen Jezebel.

At this trying time there was not an Old School or Primitive Baptist paper published in the United States, nor was there any Baptist of our order found that could be induced to undertake, in the face of fiery persecution, and with very faint prospect of being sustained pecuniarily, the seemingly hazardous task of publishing a periodical devoted to the Old School Baptist cause, and to be used as a medium of communication and correspondence among those who could no longer hold in, even a nominal or implied fellowship, those who had so greatly apostatized from what they once had professed to believe and practice.

The issuing of our proposals to publish the Signs, with a plain, emphatic declaration of our religious sentiments, and of the object of the publication, and our determination to oppose all innovations on the doctrine and order of the Primitive Baptists, together with the whole brood of the modern religious societies, brought down on us such an outburst of wrath and storm of denunciation from all the New School papers and associations, conventions, etc. as served to thoroughly publish our proposals where we had not the means to publish them, and by the aid of our bitterest opponents, whose indignation was turned in our favor, we were encouraged to begin publication; but not without many fears on the part of our friends and hopes of our enemies that it would prove an utter failure. Our circulation soon arose to about six hundred copies in the year 1832, and gradually increased from year to year, checked from time to time by the publication of other papers in various localities, dividing the patronage and reducing our circulation.

Those who have read our paper for the past forty-four years, and those who have seen the first and second volumns of our reproduced Editorials, will not need to be informed that we have encountered no small amount of opposition from the open enemies of the cause we advocate; nor have we been able to give entire satisfaction to all our friends. That our enemies have denounced us, was no more nor less than we expected; but that the friends of truth and righteousness have found occasion to blame us, is to us a matter of deep regret; yet, knowing our own weakness and imperfection, we have no cause of surprise that dear and loving brethren should detect imperfection in our best performance. But we have received from time to time the most cheering assurances of the hearty concurrence of a very large majority of our brethren and sisters, which have been fully appreciated by us.

Brethren, we have spent much the greater part of our life in trying with such ability as God has given us to make our paper edifying and profitable to you. We have not knowingly shunned to declare to you all the counsel of God, so far as that counsel has been made known to us. And now, after forty-four years of incessant labor, it is a comfort in our declining days to recall the wide acquaintance we have formed with those of the household of God throughout our extensive country, and the thousands also whose faces we have not seen in the flesh, whose correspondence has assured us of sweet and delightful fellowship in the doctrine of God our Saviour, and in the order of the gospel of our Lord. Now our personal labors are drawing to a close. The vigor of youth and manhood with us is past, our sun is declining, soon to set, when we shall cease to labor, and we hope to rest from all labor, and to be with Jesus in the realms of immortal glory. Of the seventy-six years of our mortal pilgrimage, sixty-five have been spent in the fellowship of the saints, as a member of the Old Order of Baptists, and about fifty-eight years in the work of the gospel ministry, and forty-four in editing and publishing the Signs of the Times. We have great reason to thank God that our health and activity are well preserved, and we are still able to labor in the good cause.

We have, as our readers are aware, associated with us in the publication of the Signs and the general business of the office, our youngest son, Benton L. Beebe, who is also a member of the Old School Baptist Church, who, having spent his lifetime in the office, is perfectly familiar with every department of the duties and labors of the work. This arrangement, while it greatly relieves us from much of the pressing care and toil, gives assurance that the work will still go on, and with greater facility for improvement, both in the mechanical and editorial departments.

(The above is an editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, published December 15, 1876.)

ONE SOLITARY LIFE

"Here is a man that was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman.

He grew up in another village. He worked in a carpenter shop until he was 30; and then for three years, he was an itenerant preacher. He never wrote a book; he never held an office; he never owned a home; he never had a family; he never went to college; he never put his foot inside a big city; he never traveled 200 miles from the place where he was born; he never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness, — he had no credentials but himself.

While he was still a young man, the tide of public opinion turned against him; his friends ran away; and he was turned over to his enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial, and was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While he was dying, his executioners gambled for the only piece of property he had on earth — his coat. When he was dead, he was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.

Nineteen wide centuries have come and gone; and today he is the central figure of the human race, and the leader of the column of progress. I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched; and all the navies that were ever built; all the par-

liaments that ever sat; and all the kings that ever reigned — all these put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as that one SOLITARY LIFE."

Selected by Elder O. J. Croker, Hiram, Ga.

OBITUARIES

MRS. MARY LUCRETIA DRAKE CARTER

The Lord was pleased to take another one of our good friends and strong believers unto himself, Mrs. Mary Drake Carter, on September 26, 1955. She had lived in Leesburg, Virginia, since 1910, when she was united in marriage to Mr. Paul H. Carter. She was born near Woodsville, N. J., May 9, 1886, the daughter of the late Elisha Hunt and Lucretia Phillips Drake. As a young woman she attended Hopewell Old School Baptist Church with her father and step-mother.

She is survived by her husband, one son and five daughters: Richard, L. Carter, Leesburg; Miss Mary V. Carter, Leesburg; Mrs. James B. Blitch, Springfield, Va.; Mrs. Ira D. Hudgins, Franklin, Va.; Mrs. Milton A. Nichols, Purcellville, Va.; and Mrs. Joseph Taylor, Falls Church, Va. Also by eleven grandchildren, and a brother, Joseph Drake, Boonton, N. J.

Though she had not united with the church, Mrs. Carter was a strong believer and was a regular attendant of the meetings near Leesburg; and she is greatly missed in our congregations. When she was hospitalized at the beginning of her illness, she remarked to us, that if she did not live to get out of the hospital, that all was well. This assured us of her faith and hope in the Lord, the Saviour; and we feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Funeral services were held at the Colonial Funeral Home, Leesburg, by the writer and her son-in-law, Mr. Ira Hudgins; and she was laid to rest in the Union Cemetery at Leesburg. The large concourse of friends at the funeral and burial, and the many beautiful flowers, attested to the high esteem in which she was held. May the Lord give reconciling grace to all that mourn her departure.

John D. Wood

MRS. CATHERINE MARTHA SHOCKLEY

Sister Shockley, at the age of 67, passed away on July 21, 1955, after a long illness. She was born in Hot Springs County, Arkansas, July 7, 1888, and lived there all her life. She was married in 1930, and was a member of Macedonia Primitive Baptist Church at Malvern, Arkansas, and had been a faithful member for many years. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace for both time and eternity and rejoiced in the Doctrine of God our Saviour. She was survived only by her husband T. F. Shockley of Rt. 1, Malvern, Arkansas.

Funeral services were held at Lono Baptist Church, Sunday, 3 P. M., July 24, 1955, conducted by the writer. Her body was laid to rest in a cemetery near Lono, there to await the coming of the Lord when He shall descend with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, when the bodies of the dead in Christ shall be raised in His glorious image.

May the God of all grace bless and comfort her bereaved husband and all who mourn her passing.

(Elder) W. A. Speer

JAMES PAUL AVERILL

Brother Paul Averill was born March 29, 1894, and died September 17, 1955, after several months of illness and confinement to his room at the U. S. Public Health Service, in Memphis, Tennessee, Hospital. He had been in the U. S. Service for several years.

He was married to Clara, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Floyd, of Golconda, Ill., by Elder C. O. Kerley, Moderator of Rock Springs Church in Illinois, March 16, 1945. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Soldier Creek, Marshall County, Kentucky, near Benton, July 10, 1948; and was baptized the following day by Elder O. W. Perkins. He lived very close to his brethren and sisters — not only filling his seat at his home church, but each Sunday he and his dear companion, an ardent believer in the same faith and doctrine, would drive mile after mile to some meeting of the same faith, and mingle with the saints of God in sweet fellowship. One could not be with him many minutes without knowing what he believed and in whom was his hope. It was a great joy to visit in their home, where prayer, singing and divine services were often held and enjoyed.

His funeral was held at his home near Golconda by Elder Paul Poyner, assisted by Elders J. T. Henson and O. W. Perkins; after which he was laid to rest in the family burial plot near the Old Grand Pier Primitive Baptist Meeting House. His parents had passed away, and he had no children; he is survived by his wife. The presence of his brethren and sisters of the different churches testified that he had a lovely family in the Lord, who would sadly and sorrowfully miss him.

Peace be to his memory, which will live long in the hearts and lives of those who called him brother. We know our loss is his eternal gain. To his beloved and dear companion, we would say, may God give you grace, and extend his loving kindness to you. Brother Paul wanted to live only for your sake, yet believing that God would be your father, and keep and guide

you through your journey here in the world. Written by request of his wife, Clara Averill, by a sister in the church:

Effie Bowden

MRS. MATTIE MORRIS

Mrs. Mattie Morris died April 24, 1955. She was born February 14, 1858 near Fryeburg, Louisiana. She lived in the vicinity where she was born all her life. She was blessed to live a long and beautiful life and died in a good old age, full of years and gathered to her people, being 97 years, 2 months and 10 days of age at the time of her death.

The information is that in early life she united with a Baptist church that long ago ceased to exist. She never placed her membership elsewhere but by her walk and her conversation she was a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus and rejoiced in the doctrine of salvation by grace. She was loved and highly esteemed by all who knew her.

In her life time, and not long before her death, she selected and requested three hymns for her funeral service; "Amazing Grace;" "How Firm a Foundation," and, "On Jordon's Stormy Banks." (Number 3, 411 and 275 of Lloyd's selections): A wonderful manifestation of her belief in salvation by grace through the merits of Jesus Christ and her hope of Glory.

Survivors include one son, Martin J. Morris, Dubberly, La.; a daughter, Mrs. Effiie Garrett; six grandchildren; three great grandchildren; a brother, Lewis Jones, and one sister, Mrs. Oliver Stewart, of Sibley and a niece, Mrs. W. I. Bobo, of Ringgold, Louisiana. Funeral services were held at Madden Church, near where she lived, Tuesday, April 26, 1955 at 11 A. M., conducted by the writer. Her body was laid to rest in Madden Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection when the bodies of all the saints shall be raised in the glorious image of the Redeemer.

May God bless and comfort her loved ones and all that mourn her passing.

(Elder) W. A. Speer

JOHN CALVIN LITTLE

My precious brother in the flesh, and I hope in Christ, departed his earthly home July 14, 1955, to be with the Lord for evermore. John was the third son and sixth child of nine children born to Elder William M. and Nancy Morton Little. He was born March 10, 1879, making his stay here more than seventy-six years. He was born in the vicinity of Egypt, Mississippi; and in December, 1890, the family left there and settled in Texas.

On December 20, 1903, he was married to Miss Dora Tacker, who passed away August 16, 1936. He leaves one son, Bunyan Little; and one daughter, Mrs. Lila Barger, of Teague, Texas; six grand-children and three great grand-children; two sisters and one brother; Elder W. A. Little, Fort Worth, Texas; Mrs. Naomi Weatherby, Shreveport, La.; and the writer of this notice, to mourn his absence.

John was strong in the Old Baptist faith, believing in the doctrine of predestination of all things, the absolute sovereignty of God, and that we are saved by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves but the gift of God — that indeed salvation is of the Lord. He received a sweet hope in Christ many years ago, and I once asked him (not long ago) if he had ever had a desire for a home with the Old Baptists. His answer was, "Oh, yes, for forty years; but I am not fit: too mean and vile to even ask for a home with them, and fear I'd feel more unworthy should I be received. No, no! so great a blessing is not for old John Little." He was known far and wide for his sweet, melodious voice; and about three weeks before his passing he led a song at church, saying that he had led his last song.

Except for two or three years he had made his home near Teague since a boy of eighteen, and was well known and respected and loved by young and old. He was honest and upright, meek and humble, and loved the brethren. He had been sorely afflicted for many years; and on the 14th day of July, 1955, God's purpose for him here in this world was finished. Oh, how we miss him, but we feel that our loss is his eternal gain. He has but gone on before, and is sleeping in the tomb until Jesus, who is the resurrection and the life, comes again: 'till He raises these vile bodies and forms and fashions them like unto His own glorious body. Then we shall be like him and be satisfied.

Funeral services were conducted by two ministers, their names I failed to learn. We would liked to have had an Old Baptist minister, but were unable to reach one. The floral offerings were abundant and beautiful, showing the love and esteem in which this dear one was held. He was laid to rest by the side of his beloved companion in the Union Cemetery, near Teague, Texas.

May God comfort and reconcile all who mourn; may his richest blessings abide with all who were near and dear to him. And may it please the Heavenly Father that we meet again in the world that knows no end, and ever be with the Lord of Glory. Written in deep sorrow by his little sister who loved him so deeply — to whom he was precious.

Harriett Little Gray

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 124 DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1956 NO. 4

A PRAYER

Thank you, dear Lord on high
For all the evil deeds that try
To crush my heart and make me cry,
And protest to them that I would die.

And thank you kindly that I see
It's not my body that would glee
Nailed to a cross or rugged tree,
But thy Spirit you gave to me.

Most kindly thou hast been to cheat
These evil deeds, that seek to reap
My soul in utter misery, and treat
Them by thy vengeance sweet —

As jewels in peace and morsels rare
Of thy protection and loving care.
Thank you for this flaming sword I heir
By thy promise to me in prayer —

That keeps without the things that trod;
And keeps within the things of God:
By thy bounteous hand of love
Double you give from heaven above.

Thank you, Amen

Margaret Baggett Lassiter,
Veterans Hospital,
Fayetteville, N. C.

THERE IS NO GREATER LEGACY THAN THIS

O'Donnell, Texas,
March 10, 1952

To my children in the Lord:

I know that I must soon quit these mortal scenes and go the way of all the generations before me, and you and your children will be the only witnesses that I ever lived in this world, after the little estate the Lord blesses me to accumulate shall have been distributed, and merged into your own earthly possessions.

When I think of giving up the course of life I have pursued over a long period, I am not sad, but desirous that the pride and joy of my life shall know a secret which has been ever present with me in all the tribulations and joys of these past years; and as I venture across the dark river of death, it points the way to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for me. In life I tried to set an example of honesty, thrift and industry, which all of you are wisely following; but these only build for you the temporary blessings of worldly independence which tribulations and age cannot ward off.

First of all, I commend to you the Bible, the Sacred Scriptures; and not as the various religious sects interpret them, but as God himself applies them to his saints. He is the same yesterday, today and forever; and holds the destiny of everything in his hand. In his Son Jesus Christ He has chosen all his saints to be heirs of salvation; and through the power of his Holy Spirit, He makes this known: and no heart is too hard for His power to penetrate and bring to repentence. The knowledge we have of him, and his mercy and grace bestowed upon us, are his teaching, and not something we have thought up ourselves, or that some person has taught us. The greatest falsehood of the many religious preachers and teachers of the so-called churches today, is that God is waiting, pleading and drawing mankind, but it all depends on man's acceptance and choice whether he is to be an heir of salvation.

This is not the God I worship: my God speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. He rules on the throne of Heaven, and his power reaches to all the ends of the earth. He doeth his will at all times, and no one can stay his hand, or say unto him, "What doest thou?" This has been my faith for several years now as you all know; and

your dear old Daddy stood rooted and grounded in this same faith: We walked together in this faith as long as he lived — walked and rejoiced in the same truths, and worshiped the same God. And I am hoping today that all my dear children will some day stand free in the same faith; and trusting you may know the truth which God alone teaches his children; and that the light of this truth may shine out to the glory of our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, who is our Redeemer and Elder Brother.

I feel a desire to admonish you in many things, but space will not permit to remind you of all these desires. I am persuaded that you all know the truth which is in Jesus Christ who loved us, and called us with an holy calling, that we, his children, might believe his truth and have everlasting life. I know the Signs of the Times is a wonderful church paper which has stood for over an hundred years. I would like for all of you to read it — I always find comfort and consolation in reading it. The Bible should be your chief counselor. Let no man, or preacher, mislead you by false teaching. Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man to God. I commend you all in hope of a blissful immortality, the wish and blessing of your mother; and if your daddy could speak, it would be his the same as mine.

Now dear children, one and all, as you know, this is my belief as it was your Daddy's. It has been my meat and drink, and I hope the dear Lord will feed, and direct my feet and mind to the blessed truth until the day He calls me to leave this low ground here below; and my hope is that I am one of his chosen people, and that He will say to me, and all his chosen, "Come — blessed are those who die in the Lord;" and will lead them to that blessed home forever and ever, is my prayer.

Now dear children, this blessed truth is my meat and drink; but my little hope gets awful dim at times. Yet the little ray of light he showers on me at times is so sweet I wouldn't give it for all this world — I wouldn't give it for the world and all that is in it. My hope, and the love I have for the saints, is something no man can take from me.

Now I bring this to a close. There is so much of this blessed truth that, once you get started, there is no ending to it. It is like Jesus himself: it is the beginning and ending of all things. Now and forever, fare you well, my children. Grieve not for me when I am gone, for my hope is to be at rest with our blessed Lord and Father forever. Wishing for you all that God's love and guidance be with you all through time and eternity. May He bless you is the prayer of your sinful mother. My love I have had for you all through this sinful world is one of the jewels I have prized in my poor heart. May God bless you to believe in the Lord, the only one who can save. May he be your guide here, and land you in his rest at death. So fare you well, my children.

Yours, Mother
(Mrs. Callie Rushing)

P. S. This is poor writing — if you all think it worth keeping, each can copy it. (See obituary this issue — Ed.)

THEY ENJOY THE SIGNS

San Juan, Texas

Very Dear Editors of the Signs:

Received your card asking if I was still getting my Signs. Yes, I have not missed a single copy; and you can never know how much I do appreciate it. I know I should have written you before this, but five years ago I fell down some steps and have been so crippled since then, and so nervous I could not do much toward writing to the dear old Signs, which to me is the best paper printed. I do ask your forgiveness for not writing. It is not because I do not care, for I feel like I would be lost without it. I read it through before putting it down, when I get a number. May God's richest blessings be to you, and may He enable you to keep it up. We are getting to be

old and cannot get out to our meetings like we used to.

I would like to tell you of our last meeting, which was on Christmas day, Friday and Saturday before. Two young preachers were ordained on Christmas day: one of them a member of our church here, and the other brother lived 250 miles from here. Both churches came together and ordained them. It was surely a beautiful sight. We are having some wonderful meetings here in the Valley — another brother has been liberated to preach. We live within three miles of our church; our meeting time is Saturday before and the fourth Sunday in each month. We have brotherly and sweet fellowship one for another, for which we hope we are thankful to the giver of every good and perfect gift. I only hope I am one among them, but they all seem so much better than I am that I fear to claim brother or sister with God's people. I fear so much of the time that I have deceived them. I know they can live without me, but what would I do without them. When God renews his salvation to me, then I can say as did one of old, "My soul doth magnify the Lord."

When you are at the throne of God's rich grace, please remember us, for we need the prayers of the righteous. An enclosing $1.00 for the use of the Signs, and wish it could be more. My husband is in very poor health; he sends his love to the household of faith. Yours in hope of a better life beyond this vail of tears.

Mrs. J. B. Reid

ABOUT ALL THE PREACHING HE GETS

320 E. Beckham Street,
Sulphur Springs, Texas

Dear Editors and Readers of the
Dear old Family Paper:

Just a few lines to let you know that I am still getting the Signs, and appreciate it, as it is just about all the preaching that I get. My eyes have gone back on me, and I have to have someone read it to me, but I surely enjoy it very much. I am now eighty-three years old; and my health is good except I have rheumatism in my left arm — I lost my right arm forty-two years ago.

I feel, dear readers, to write a few lines for publication. I want to say that I believe in the God of all power: a God who doesn't want for anything. I hear some say that God wants you to do this or that, and you just won't do it; or that God wants to save you and you just won't let him. But I believe in a God that has only to speak, and it is done — a God that commands and it stands fast; and who does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. I believe that Jesus saved his people, for the angel told them that they should call his name Jesus, for "He shall save his people from their sins." He did just that, and did not fail in anything. I believe that he saved every one that was in the covenant of redemption; and that in due time it is revealed to the elect or chosen people.

I do not know whether this meets with your approval or not, but I don't believe that anyone is being saved nowadays, but that God is only revealing his salvation to his chosen. Some ask, if preaching does not save any, what do we need with a preacher. Well, I reply that it is to comfort His children. We notice in the 40th chapter of Isaiah that the Lord says, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." I am glad that the Lord said he would do all his pleasure, and I feel that if God wanted everybody saved he would do it.

There are a lot of people who are still trying to build that tower — trying to work their way to heaven; and I guess they just can't help it, for they have ears and can't hear; eyes and can't see, hearts but can't understand.

I have written more than I thought.

Please remember a poor sinner when at the throne of grace.

J. J. Sanders

Ruffin, N. C.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed you will find check for $3.00 to renew my subscription to the Signs for another year. We have enjoyed very much many of the Editorials, articles and letters which we have read. We heartily agree with Elder Weaver's article on "Predestination." It was, as we hope we believe, to the praise of the God of all power.

I am also enclosing a poem written by my companion in memory of Elder Sam McKinney. You may publish it, if you think it worthy of space.

Here's hoping for many more years of your publishing the Signs of the Times containing the truth.

In hope,
Fred Cobb

Stockdale, Texas

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am sending $5.00 for subscription which is overdue; this is just some more on the shortcomings with which I am filled.

I would like to extend an invitation to any Old Baptist in this part of the country to come and meet with us. Elder E. B. Ault is our pastor, and our meetings are on the third Saturday night and Sunday in each month. Mt. Olive Church will be one hundred and one years old the 4th Sunday in June this year (1956). She has never been a big church, and has had her trials and tribulations along the way. Sometimes it has seemed as if she was about gone: older members would pass away, and only a few remain; then quite unexpectedly, some more would come to take their places. Sometimes she would be without a pastor, when visiting ministers would be sent us; and so she has held out by the Lord's help to this day.

We have lost several members in the last few years: Elder J. B. Bowden; Deacon J. W. Culpepper and sister Alice, his wife; Sister Nannie Culpepper; Sister Ollie Culpepper and Sister Elizabeth Boyd. These deaths have left a void in our ranks: and my mother, Sister Mattie Hawk, is now almost ninty-three years of age, and very feeble.

We have our encouragements too: the fourth Sunday in December 1955, Brother H. L. Ballard was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry; and on Sunday, January 1st, an arm of this church at Justiceburg, Texas, was constituted into a church with eight members. Elder J. W. Shipman and Sister May Shipman are charter members with them. They (Brother and Sister Shipman) have been with us a few years, and we love them very much for the truth's sake, and regretted to give them up. They have promised to keep visiting us when they can. An arm of Shepherd Fold Church at Houston, located at Marysville, Louisiana, has been constituted into a church, also. Another encouragement to us was the ordination of Brother W. W. Fleet to the ministry at Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas. We are glad to see these younger brethren taking up the work to which their Lord and Master has raised them up.

I must close, asking anyone who so desires to come to see us, and come to meeting. Do not let this crowd out better matter, I just wanted to send my renewal, and ask the Baptist to visit us.

May the Lord's richest blessings abide with all, for Jesus's sake.

Mrs. Lela Culpepper

THE GREATEST OF ALL SUBJECTS

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the

vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." (Daniel 9:24)

Inasmuch as information is essential if we are to understand the Bible, the Scriptures of God's eternal truth, we clearly see that the Bible is not silent but plainly gives us the source of the correct interpretation, since it tells us it was written by revelation; and must be received as did the Apostle Paul. (Galations 1:12) "For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." We readily see that we come far short of God's holy requirements, as the law demanded a perfect obedience to a perfect law which they could not render in and of themselves.

It is clear beyond all dispute, that God is eminent over His creation. (Psalms 33:9) "For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." The same God is today ruling in the armies of heaven and amongst the inhabitants of the earth; and the Scriptures tell us, He changes not. Therefore, without a shadow of doubt, God determined in the annals of eternity these things to come to pass at His appointed time, and the manner of its fulfilment and all in his own appointed time and way. It gives us a profound respect for our Creator and the wonderful kindness of our God when we are brought to read or meditate upon his Holy Scriptures, or, in our weak way, brought to remember the persecutions of Christ on whom all our hope, faith and trust depend. Yet He tells us for this cause came I unto this hour.

The wonderful exposition of the predestination of God, and the manner of its fulfilment, is foretold; and is no different to the hidden mysteries of our God which are brought before our eyes, and our hearts given to understand by faith, how Christ died on Calvary's rugged cross for the sins of all whom the Father gave Him.

Many have undertaken to explain the "SEVENTY WEEKS" and have given different versions, but one thing we do know: It has reference to the greatest of all subjects, that is, the coming of Christ, his rejection, crucifixion and resurrection.

If we but study the Scriptures, we find this to be one of the many prophecies foretelling the coming of Christ; even as to the length of time it would be, and to where his coming would be; and to His fulfiling each of the SIX requirements, one as important as the other. If one was not fulfilled, all were not fulfilled. We have proof, for Christ tells us in Matthew 5:18, "For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Then we must acknowledge Christ to be spoken of; and Christ to be the one, and only one, with power to save to the uttermost. We see that God has given us the time and given the measure of it, and the fulfiling by His Son, our Lord and Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

From this portion of Scripture, we at once notice there are **SIX** predictions and each are to be fulfilled, and each prediction is bound to each other by the cunjunction "AND", clearly signifying the connecting requirements in the fulfilment by Christ the Son of God.

First, "TO FINISH THE TRANSGRESSION." If we go back to our federal head, we find Adam and Eve transgressed God's holy law by their disobedience, as God had plainly told them. (Genesis 2:17) "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Adam and Eve transgressed God's holy law and died in trespasses and in sin: thus all the offspring of Adam and Eve are of the earth earthly and dead in trespasses and in sin.

The commandments were given by a perfect law giver; and God's law being perfect, as it came from God a perfect law giver, it equally demands perfect obedience. All the Old Testament prophets were made to confess as did Jonah: "Salvation is of the Lord." May it ever be brought in our hearts to re-

call the words "IS OF THE LORD." (Daniel 9:10-11) "Neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets. Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him." Daniel acknowledged all Israel to have transgressed God's law. Do we believe that? Not only believe, but to acknowledge it in application.

The unbeliever is like the Pharisee in Matthew 23:28, "Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocricy and iniquity." From this we see all who deny God's work, and His plan of salvation, which is finished by his Son and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Man is still attempting to establish his own righteousness by his own goodness (of which there is none, as all man's righteousness is as filthy rags). The more of man's righteousness, the bigger the pile of filthy rags.

Beginning with, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight," the Bible tells us that John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb; and he was sent in spirit and in power of Elias to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

Christ was born under the law to redeem from under the curse of the law. (Romans 8:3-4) "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Again, turn to Galatians 3:21, "Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." The Scriptures plainly declare Christ the Son of God to be born under the law, yet without sin, but He became a sin bearer and took upon himself under the law all their sins and has redeemed from under the curse of the law all whom the Father giveth Him. They are not under the law but under grace, as the law is fulfilled in them by Christ. They are dead to the law but alive in Christ; they are new creatures by being born again. Not a physical birth, as in our physical birth we become partakers of human nature, but a new birth born of God, partakers of Divine nature; a new birth, not of this world but of God. We see it is in Adam we died, but in Christ we are born again. Thus the transgression is finished in being born again in Christ.

Second, "TO MAKE AN END OF SINS." Under the law there was a perpetual sin offering, which was yearly by the sacrificial offering of the blood of bulls, and of goats, etc., but Christ came after the order of Melchesedec, not an earthly priest as was the priest under the law. Christ the Son of God, by the shedding of his own blood, made a perfect offering which was accepted by God the Father. Therefore, no more offerings are required. Christ made one offering, and that perfect. Christ's offering was for each of God's children: all whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world. Where Christ is, there is no sin.

Third, "AND TO MAKE RECONCILATION FOR INIQUITY." Christ the Son of God set up his kingdom to bring pardon, and to reconcile all his people in his kingdom as a willing people in the day of his power, atoning for their sins. Christ the Son of God without sin, yet taking upon himself all their sin and bearing them to the cross and was crucified for the sins of His people. Christ said, "My kingdom is not of this world;" thus it is a spiritual kingdom and not tangible, and it cannot

be imparted from one individual to another. One must be born in God's kingdom, not of flesh but of the Spirit — born of God. They are new creatures, bought with a price and that price is the shed blood of Christ. Christ is their hope, faith and trust. In Christ they are brought back to God and reconciled by His manifesting love in their hearts; giving them to cry, Abba Father.

Fourth, "AND TO BRING IN EVERLASTING RIGHTEOUSNESS." God being perfect in all his attributes, he demands perfection in his presence. For the want of perfection our federal head Adam and Eve were driven from the Garden of Eden. (Romans 5:19-20-21) "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered, that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." From this we see that where Christ is, there is righteousness. Christ in you the hope of glory: our hope, our faith, our righteousness.

Fifth, "AND TO SEAL UP THE VISION AND PROPHECY." To seal up is to make secure. Noah was made secure when the Lord sealed him in the Ark. He was in the Lord's hands and like Noah of old, if we be of that lot for which Christ shed His blood, we are secure since we are kept by the Lord's power through faith unto salvation. The truth as it is in Christ as recorded in the Bible, is sealed. The world cannot understand it as their eyes are blinded to the truth. (Acts 28:26-27-28) "Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it."

Sixth, "AND TO ANOINT THE MOST HOLY." It was Christ that anointed the eyes of the blind man and said unto him. "Go wash in the pool of Siloam;" he went and came seeing. (2 Cor. 1:21-22) "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." The anointed one is Christ the most Holy. It is Christ, which sends the Holy Spirit with power from on high. (2 Peter 1:21) "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Isn't the Bible holy to us today? A book written by numerous men, written on two continents, in three languages, and written over many centuries. Yet, in spite of all these, we find God to be sovereign over his creation. The individuals could only write as the Spirit of God moved them. Therefore, the Bible is in perfect harmony, and every question necessary to our salvation is asked and answered in the Bible, if we are blessed to have the eye of faith and the heart to understand it. Thus the Holy Bible tells us of the Most Holy One: Christ the Son of God and the only name given among men whereby we must be saved.

Having been brought by experience to believe that the Lord God of heaven and earth brings his will to pass at his appointed time and way, the Spirit of God bears witness with our spirit, giving us to be acquainted with Him, by being brought to depend upon Christ the Son of God for our every need, whether they be temporal or spiritual.

May our hope of eternal life rest ever in the finished work of Christ, who was foretold by the prophets, and is today made manifest in believers; who acknowledge Salvation is of the Lord, through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

(Elder) John F. Simpson
Granite City, Illinois

"HOW STRANGE IS THE COURSE A CHRISTIAN MUST TAKE"

1720 North I Street
Fort Smith, Arkansas

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is check for a year's subscription to the Signs of the Times, which I enjoy reading. I receive comfort from so many of the articles and experiences. I have many copies of mother's papers. She was the late Susan M. Moore, who died December 7, 1954; she had a hope of eternal life through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as Elder R. W. Rhodes said at her funeral. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." Oh, how I miss her! But am made to feel that my loss is her eternal gain. How wonderful it must be: sweet peace after this sinful world, where there is no more sorrow, sickness, disappointments, etc., if we are God's chosen. I do have that hope but feel so unworthy. . .

Ever since I can remember, mother was an Old School Baptist; and I used to, as a small child, enjoy going to meetings and hear them sing, and hear the preachers. We would go several miles in a wagon. There was a large family of us, sixteen children; of course by the time I was seven or eight years old some of the older ones were married, or in service, or school, or working. Those sweet memories still linger, and how well I remember mother singing those sweet songs.

I have been an awful sinner, and still am, even though I don't do some of the things I used to do, drinking, dancing and such worldly things. It seems that when I would do good evil is present, as Paul said. "In me, that is in my flesh dwells no good thing." If I have ever done good, it was through the grace of God; and he is to receive all the praise.

In March, 1948, I was called to Memphis, Tenn., for the funeral of one of my nephews, who died from injuries in an accident. It was a sad occasion, as my sister and her husband had lost their only other child a few years before. After I came home, all the next week it seems these words were before me, "Seek ye the way of the Lord." I was working at a soda fountain, and worked on Sunday, and went to church that night — a Missionary Baptist church. When the preacher asked for new members, I joined, for it seem then that it was the thing to do. Afterwards I was not satisfied, and would lay awake at night, crying and praying; and felt that I was lost forever, and would surely die in that condition, for it seemed that no one in my condition could be saved. But I kept on going to church and reading the Bible. I enjoyed part of their sermons; but when the preacher would get down to the last part, sometimes he would say, "Give the Lord a chance to save you." Then the scriptures would come to me that God has all power on earth and in heaven, and did not need any help. I kept on in this way five or six years, but quit going to church for about a year. When I would go down to mother's, she would ask me if I was still going to church out there, as I had told her how I felt. When I started going back to church, some of the members wanted me to go to Sunday School; and I thought maybe I had better, since the preacher was really "pouring it on," saying that the ones who were not attending were not much Christians. One Sunday morning, our lesson was on "Hope." I spoke up and said that I had that hope of eternal life. The teacher said that if we were true Christians we didn't have to have hope, that we knew we were saved. I thought, well I don't know, so I guess I am doomed; and I thought I would not go back any more, but something seemed to say, Go back and let them know how you feel. . .

Now, during the years I had been a member of this church, I would go down to mother's, close to Dardanelle, Arkansas, to preaching at her home: she being old and not close enough to the meeting house so she could attend often, some of the brethren would come

up once or twice a year — Elders Rhodes, Britt, Smith, Speer and others, and mother enjoyed it so much, and was so thankful to the Lord the giver of all things. I don't believe that I missed a one of these meetings, and I would sing, and cry for joy. What a blessing! It seemed the true gospel to me. I would talk to mother about how I felt and about joining, and she would smile — but I did not know whether they would have me.

Then on June 6, 1954, after preaching by Elder Rhodes and Elder Britt, Elder Rhodes asked if there was anyone present who desired to unite with the church. I offered, telling them that if I was accepted I desired my membership with Rehobeth Church, near El Dorado, Arkansas. I was accepted, and after lunch we went to a creek for baptism. That was the last time mother ever went with me anywhere. She had to sit down, as she was not well. I cannot remember the song she suggested they sing, but it was sweet to me. Afterwards I wondered, Have I done wrong? It seemed to me that everything would be alright; but later my troubles and sorrows were many. However, I am made to believe that they are for a purpose. Once when it seemed when my troubles were so great that I could not stand them longer, and as I was lying on the bed crying, I spoke out, "Lord have mercy on me." Afterwards the scriptures came to me where Jesus and his disciples were in the ship, and Jesus was asleep. The waves were almost covering the ship and the disciples were afraid, and they came to Jesus and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. And He said, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then Jesus rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. So, no matter how great our troubles are, there is one who can calm them, if it is his will. I thank and praise him that things are calm for me at present, and that His grace is sufficient.

I have been led to search the scriptures and have been comforted in them; and in Brother Rhodes's letters, in which he quotes the scriptures and gives words of kindness and advice. It seems that my tribulations were a blessing, for, "All things work together for good to them that love the Lord, and who are the called according to his purpose." I do not get to attend meetings very often, but was blessed to attend at Rehobeth last February; and in September to attend the association at Bethel Church, and hear some good preaching. It was good to me, and my cup runneth over; it was a heavenly place with the brethren and sisters. Remember me when at the throne of grace.

Yours in hope,
Ellen M. Sellars

"I WAS GLAD. . ."

Farmerville, La.

Dear Editors:

Here are some thoughts that came to me a few days ago. I feel that it would be selfish of me to keep them to myself.

"I was glad when they said unto me, let us go unto the House of the Lord." (Psalms 122:1) This scripture sounds sweet to my poor soul.

Dear children, isn't it wonderful to go to church and sing praises unto this Almighty God and eat and drink of that Spiritual food and water? During these precious moments all of our troubles and sorrows are left behind, when we go unto the House of the Lord.

Many times I feel to be lifted up and I can hardly hold back my tears, when the dear brethren and sisters are singing, and when the preachers are preaching by the direct operation of the Holy Ghost.

Oh! How those wonderful songs seem to fit my experience. Many times I stop trying to sing, and listen; and, oh, how sweet the singing sounds to my poor soul. During these times, it is very hard for me to control the flow of tears. I don't believe any musical instrument could make the singing sound any sweeter.

Many times I feel to be spell-bound by the preaching. It seems that I see a light above the preacher and I feel that this light is the Spiritual light and this light is putting the words into the preachers' mouth. The preacher doesn't seem to be preaching of himself, but he seems to be preaching by the Holy Ghost.

The only church I can get any comfort in going to is the Primitive Baptist. I was in Korea for 16 months and oh how I missed the meetings! I didn't get any comfort into going to any of the worldly churches.

How wonderful it was to my soul when I went to church at Spearsville, La. on the first Sunday in November, 1955. It was the first time in 18 months that I had been to a Primitive Baptist church. I was very glad and wanted to sing praises unto the Lord because I had the opportunity to go to the House of the Lord!

In hope,
Woodrow W. Hudson, Jr.

To the Redeemed:

"Look unto Me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God and there is none else." (Isaiah 45:22) "He brought me also up out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet on a Rock, and established my goings." (Psalms 40:2) "As ye have therefore Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." (Col. 2:6)

Dear little child of God, how did you receive Him? When I was young, I heard a preacher tell of a young, rich man who was very proud, wore fine clothing and high priced jewelry, became converted, joined the church, and still wore fine clothing. Some of members told him, that now being a Christian, he should not be so proud and wear such high priced goods. He quoted this scripture saying, that this was the way he received Christ, so he was going to walk in him this way. Do you agree? I did not; but I did not know what this scripture meant until I asked my pastor.

Then how are we to walk in Him? When the spirit of the Lord enters a sinner's heart, it shows him that he is a sinner. Before this he thought he was a pretty good person: some think they are real Christians, but, oh, what a shock! All his good works are as filthy rags, his best righteousness is as black as the darkest night, he is lost without any hope, sinking down under a heavy load of sin. He feels to deserve banishment from God, and that he is just in sending him to eternal torment. But, with all this in mind, he cannot keep from begging for mercy. After doing all in his power to work himself into God's favor, he sees his strength failing, till it seems that he is at the door of Hell: all strength gone, he gives up. cannot pray, but he tries once more to beg for mercy. How does he do this with all his strength gone? "His right arm is under my head, and His left arm doth embrace me." His everlasting arms are always under his people, but they did not know it. Here the spirit intercedes, and with Christ's spirit, he cries, "Lord, have mercy." Here, He lifts the lost one out of the miry, noisome, clay pit and sets his feet on a Rock. It would take a lot of water and soap and scrubbing to get all the sticky clay off, but God lifted him out clean, washed whiter than snow in the blood of the Lamb.

When He set the child upon the Rock, He did not say, "Now I have saved you with an everlasting salvation, now you can work out your own salvation, obey my commands and enjoy the blessings I have stored in Christ for you, or disobey and lose them." Could you love, trust and worship such a God as this? I could not. He never leaves nor forsakes His children. Now how do we receive Him? "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God and there is none else." (Isaiah 45:22) Your strength is gone, your earthly strength at the ends of the earth, so you cannot look anywhere but to God, you are a new born infant. Now, as you have received him, so walk ye in

him. You have not done anything for yourself: he has done all for you. Now you can see how He can be just and save the worst sinner. You want to praise him the balance of your life. You are still helpless to control the spirit, and must look to Christ to lead you, keep you, and help in all your needs.

He has set your feet on a Rock. What next? "Established my goings;" The everlasting arms are still under and around you, supporting you, and leading you in the way of truth. "I am the way, the life and the truth." "Follow thou me." "I in you and you in me and I in the Father." Can there be a safer place? "This is the way, walk ye in it." Dear little child, do you want to walk in that way? Then read your Bible, notice carefully the way in which our Saviour walked. He and the disciples lived separate from ALL worldly innovations, institutions and orders. Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest to your souls." (Jer. 6:16)

Christ has never led one to walk in the wrong way, and there was never an humble child, desiring above all things to live in honor and praise to His holy name, who bowed on his knees and asked God to lead him, that ever went into any worldly institution for worldly gain and popularity. He feels that, "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand." "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." (Psalms 84:10) Christ taught His disciples to pray for their daily bread. I believe He meant natural bread as well as spiritual. Lay not treasures up on earth. "Having food and raiment, be therewith content." He knows our every need and has promised all these things that we need, not all the luxuries we want. When we want more than he promised, and told us to pray for, we have to go elsewhere for them. We cannot go to God for them for he has not promised, so there is no other place to go but to Egypt — the world, darkness. When we are not content with the things He gives us, we are guilty of coveteousness, which is idolatry. This is not walking in the old way — the Way, Truth and Light; not walking in Christ as ye have received Him.

Many saints who walk in him are poor, looking for bread day by day, going hungry much of the time, but they love their saviour too much to look to the world for bread. Many children have been put to bed, crying with hunger. The parents would tell them, that God will send us food. Then get on their knees and beg the Lord for his love and mercy, and to be submissive to his will. Soon there was a knock at the door, and they would have a feast, then their hearts overflowed with love and praise, and they went on knees again to thank Him. How many of God's people are walking in Christ as they have received Him? How many are praying each day for daily bread, rather than dwell in the tents of wickedness? How many suffering persecution for walking in Christ? There has never anything caused me more sorrow than to see the Lord's people walking in forbidden paths. May He yet visit us to draw us closer together in the way, the truth and the light.

In hope of rest in the beyond, but unworthy,

George W. Jackson
East Point, Ga.

AN INTERESTING LETTER BY THE LATE ELDER JAMES W. LINN

Hammond, W. Va.

Elder J. R. Hatcher,
Lyles, Tenn.

Dear Brother:

We still agree. I will write you a few lines on the Scriptures, and my subject shall be: "Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts as in the provocation, when your fathers tempted Me in the wilderness."

They provoked God to anger back in the wilderness, and He destroyed many of them because of their unbelief. Now remember, this was done in unbelief and under the law of Moses. But listen. Yesterday is past, and today has come. Yes, today is the day of salvation. Yesterday was the day or night of works. The law covenant. But the law covenant is past. Well, today, if ye will hear His voice.

This address is made to the hearer, and the hearer is His sheep, and His sheep follow Him. So you see the command is not to harden their hearts. And when He speaks it is done, and when He commands it stands fast.

Then harden not your hearts as your fathers did, when they tempted me in the wilderness. Oh, no; this is the day of salvation. It is not the night of works; for the law is put under the woman's feet, and ye are no longer under the law of works; but ye are under grace; and grace has freed you from the law.

Now, when you hear His voice, harden not your hearts, for today is the day of salvation. I will bring My salvation nigh; yes, place it within you; and I will take away the stony heart, and give you a new heart, a heart of flesh, which is tender. The stone is hard material.

So you see that the law could not do this, it was weak; but Christ came to do for us that which the law could not do; therefore, I will put My Spirit within you, and it shall lead you and guide you into all truth. It shall teach you and you shall follow Me; for TODAY is the day of salvation.

Now is the accepted time. Not yesterday, under the law; when your fathers tempted me to anger; for mine anger is turned away. I have established a better covenant with you, O house of Israel. I will be merciful to your sins, and your unrighteousness. I will blot out, and remember them against you no more forever. Now is the accepted time. I will accept you now. The day of salvation is come. The year of Jubilee has come; return, ye ransomed sinners, home. This is the accepted time. Jesus died for you, and the GOSPEL day has come. The new covenant is here, and you have heard His voice, and now the accepted time has come. You are made fit for My use. My Son did the work. He died for your sins, put them away by the sacrifice of Himself. You are now reconciled to Me by My Son, and I will accept you.

Oh, see that the Arminians are not in this matter. It is the sheep that hear, and Christ said of the others, "Ye are not of My sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear My voice, and follow Me; and ye hear not, as I said unto you. Ye hear not because ye are not of My sheep, and My word has no place in you."

Now, then, your fathers tempted Me. I gave them the law covenant, and they did not keep it. I did not write My law in their hearts. I did not give them a new heart; but I wrote their law on the table of stone, and that law was: if you will do, I will do also; but if ye refuse, then I will turn you away. The soul that sinneth, it shall die.

But in that day I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel. I won't make it like the one that I made with your fathers; but I will write this covenant in your hearts, for I will give you a new heart, and ye shall be My people, and I will be your God. And this shall be My covenant with you: I will be merciful unto your sins. Ye shall live, and not die; for I shall give unto you eternal life, and ye shall never perish.

Oh, dear brother, this is not the teaching of the Arminian, and this is not the teaching of their god. Oh, no. for all people shall (not may), but all people shall walk in the name of their god; but we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever. That word "we" implies all the children of God; but we know that we are of God, and that the whole world lieth in wickedness. This is the whole entire world: the whole world of the ungodly.

There is the godly world and the ungodly world, the righteous world and the unrighteous world; and John said, "We

know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. The "we" here is the church, the children of God. As I have said, John was moved by the Holy Ghost and could say that we know "this."

Like when Christ came and demanded baptism. When John saw Him coming he said, "Behold the Son of God, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." He did not say, take away the sin of this evil present world; but the sin of the world. Did not say, to take away the sins of the ungodly world; but only the sin, in the singular; because the sins of the whole ungodly world, of the unrighteous world, were not taken away; because they still lie in their wickedness; but He did put away the sins of His people.

Well, then, there is no redemption for the disbeliever, or in other words, the unbeliever; because John said again, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, also must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish." Now, notice what Christ was lifted up for! He was lifted up for the believer, that he, the believer, should not perish, but have everlasting life. Who is a believer? Well, it is the living, and not the dead.

Now turn back to where Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. What did he lift it up for, and to whom did he lift it up for? Now, though the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea shore, yet a remnant shall be saved; for they are not all Israel who are of Israel; for Isaac was the promised child; but Ishmael was the son of the bondwoman, and these who are born after the flesh are not the children of God; but they who were born after the Spirit, like Isaac was. He came by promise, and not by a fleshly birth only.

Now, the children of Israel yonder in the wilderness murmured and complained until God sent fiery flying serpents among them, and many of the children of Israel died.

Now, remember, it is always the living that is the believer, and remember now that many of the children of Israel were already dead. Then those who were still alive came to Moses and said, "We have sinned. Pray ye the Lord to take away the serpents, lest we all die."

Now they all had sinned, but all were not dead, and now after they had all sinned and many were already dead, it was then, Moses lifted up the serpent on the pole; those who were dead could not look up and see the serpent, for they were dead already, before the serpent was raised up.

So you see that there are some dead Israelites as well as the living Israelites. These dead Israelites had eyes and ears; but their eyes were closed in death. They could not look upon the serpent, and they could not hear, for life was not in them. So these represent the children after the flesh, for they have eyes and see not, ears and hear not, and hearts and understand not.

But the living here, who cried to Moses, saying, "Pray ye to the Lord to take away these serpents from us lest we die," are the living Israelites, born after the Spirit, and they have eyes and they can see, hear and understand.

So it came to pass that when any of them that were bitten looked upon the serpent, they were healed and did not perish, but had life. They lived and were healed. So you see that all Israel are not alike. Now if God had treated them all alike, they would all be dead.

Oh, see His electing grace and love. They were preserved, and Moses lifted up that serpent right before their eyes, where they could see. So also the Son of man must be lifted up in the same manner and purpose. It is to the living Israelite. The quickened sinner feels his need; feels he has sinned, and for fear that he will die also, he cries out. So you see that there are two classes. One class claims that they have a chance to be saved.

They claim that they can see. But Jesus said unto them, "Ye say ye see; therefore your sins remaineth." You have no cloak for your sins. Now you see that they are still in their wickedness,

in their sins and have no cloak for their sins, but their sins still remain; but you see, the living sinner, the children of Israel who were living, they cry out for fear that they will die also, and their cry is for mercy, for to be spared. Yet they do not feel like saying, "We see. We can go to heaven! We do not fear death! We have a spark of life in us, and all we have got to do is to kindle it into a flame!"

Oh, no! This is the Arminian theory; but it is not the Bible teaching; for ALL thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and they ALL shall know Me; and to know God is eternal life, and no man can say that Jesus Christ is the Son of God but by the Holy Ghost. And John says again, that whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God — is already born of God.

Then it is too late for him to believe in order to be born again; for people naturally do not believe until after they are born. So you see that the Arminian god is not OUR GOD; and they SHALL, not MAY walk in the name of their god, while WE will walk in the name of the Lord OUR God. Is not this true?

Don't we see this all around us everywhere? All denominations have their way of worship, saying their gods need more money and more works to Christianize the world! Indeed this is true; for they have all failed to Christianize the people, and they all will fail! Forever fail; for their gods have failed to Christianize their own worshipers; for their worshipers are the children of hell. This is plain language, but listen: Jesus said, "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when ye have made him, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves."

So you see THIS is plain language. Jesus did not say of them that they were CHRISTIANIZING the child, but PROSELYTING it; and He did not say that when the proselyted one that it was a child of God! Oh, no! but a child of HELL.

So you see that all have failed to Christianize the people, yet they say, "We lean upon the Lord." But Jesus said of them, "Ye say, but do not." And James says of the doer of the Word, that this man shall be blessed in his deeds. And Jesus said that "whosoever doeth the will of My Father in heaven, the same is My mother, My brother, and My sister."

Now, the doers of the Word, these are the children of God. These are the Christians; for Christ and the church are one. If they are one, and Christ being the Head and the Bride the body, then life comes to the body through the Head, and from the head is where life springs, and Christ worketh both the will and the do in us; so THIS man shall be blessed in his deeds. Yes, Christ is blessed over all forevermore. Christ, the Son of man, Christ the Son of God. Then Christ is in you the hope of glory.

God working in us that which is well pleasing in His sight. So we then are blessed in Christ Jesus the Son of God. So when Jesus speaks, His body hears, and when Jesus was blessed, His body was blessed.

"According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world; that we should be without blame before Him in love." Then if God works the will and the do of His own good pleasure, and works in us that which is well pleasing in His sight, it is no wonder then that we are a doer of His Word; for Christ is the Word of God.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. That which was from the beginning, and we have handled the Word of life." And Christ is our life.

"Ye are dead, and your life is hid in God, and when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then ye also shall appear with Him in glory." So today, if ye hear His voice, harden not your hearts. Then if God works in us that which is well pleasing in His sight, we surely will obey Him; for He works both the WILL and the DO of His own good pleasure, and not BY us, but IN us.

Then no wonder John said, "I, John, saw a great wonder in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet." Now the LAW is compared to the moon, and the sun represents Christ. So the woman is the church, His Bride, His Wife, and John saw her clothed with the sun.

Yes, Christ clothed His Bride like God clothed Adam and Eve. He clothed them with His own righteousness. And John saw this woman clothed, having a crown upon her head, and in the crown twelve stars. Oh, see Jesus as the Head of the Bride, as a man is the head of the woman. See, the crown was upon the woman's head, and in the crown were where those twelve stars were. Here are the twelve tribes of Israel. The twelve apostles here is the Spiritual Israel. Now, these twelve stars were in the crown, and the crown was on the woman's head. So Christ, when crucified, wore a crown with thorns; but NOW He wears a crown of glory with the stars in it.

When Christ, who is our life, appears, then we shall also appear with Him in glory, a crown of glory, and we appearing with Him in glory. John saw this.

Now, listen. John saw another wonder in heaven. Yes, THIS woman was in heaven, and this great wonder is in heaven. A great red dragon, and the dragon drew the third part of the stars with his tail when the war went on; but the dragon was cast out of heaven.

Oh, now, says the Arminian, here we have you! Yes, WE believe THIS. That there was war in heaven around the throne of God, and that this dragon once was a true angel, in higher order than the rest; but he kicked up war; for he wanted control. Now, let us see if this war was in heaven, around the throne of God. John saw this woman and dragon were in heaven. But listen! The dragon stood before the woman, ready to devour her child; but as soon as the child of the woman was born, it was caught up to God and His throne. Now was THIS war around God and HIS throne? Or was it only in heaven?

There are three heavens spoken of in the Scriptures. There has been war in the church, which is called heaven, and there was where these stars were. It doesn't say these stars were in the crown; but the THIRD part of the stars of HEAVEN.

Jesus said in Revelations that there were some who were in the church (a heavenly place), where they say that they are Jews, but are not; but they do lie; for they are of the synagogue of Satan, where Satan's seat is. See the dragon with his seat. See his angels claiming to be Jews.

Now Jude speaks of some, and says, "Wandering stars they are." Yes, there are STEADFAST stars, and there are WANDERING stars. The steadfast stars are in the crown, while the wandering stars are only in heaven part of the time, and in the earth, and wander about, are drawn away by the dragon's tail. What is the tail? The false teacher that teaches lies. He is the tail. So you see he drew them with his tail. There shall be false teachers among you, and they shall draw away disciples after them.

Now Paul said, "I knew a man above fourteen years ago, whether in the body or out of the body I can not tell. Such a one caught up to the third heaven" — to His throne, the Paradise of God.

So you see that this man child was caught up to God and His throne. No war there. No, never! All is light, joy and peace. No confusion there, but all as the angels of God. Satan is not found, no place for him there, and he was not there with his war, drawing the stars with his tail; for no unclean thing shall be found there for this is God's place and His throne. Satan has no right there.

He steps in among the saints in the lower heaven, comes right up with Job, and the worshipers of God in their presence; and God said unto him, "Whence comest thou?" etc. And after Job was tried, Satan failed.

But his ministers, the false stars, wandering stars, which wander about

from house to house, from place to place until cast down to earth, where they must abide; for there is no more place for them in heaven; there where they were drawn from by the dragon's tail any more. Oh, how often do these false teachers draw those disciples after them! Those who are not of that remnant that shall be saved.

"I have reserved to Myself seven thousand, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal." "My sheep hear My voice, and they follow Me," are not drawn away.

So today if ye hear His voice, harden not your hearts. You are not of them that go back. These others have not My Word in them. My Word hath no place in you. Ye have not seen My Father's shape nor heard His voice at any time. It is My Father's sheep that hear My voice. It is My sheep that have seen my Father's shape, and God is the Lord God. He is all-powerful, all-wise, has all knowledge, wisdom and understanding. His shape is everywhere, in all places. Yes, the deep places of the sea. He is known by His mighty voice, and His wonderful works, and is felt by His presence, and in His presence there is fulness of joy, and at His right hand pleasures forevermore.

David said, "If I ascend up to heaven, He is there; or into the deep, He is there; or if I had wings and fly away, THERE His right hand would lead me."

So you see His voice and shape fill the earth, sea and air. Ah, what a God we have, and He is higher than ALL. He filleth all. So harden not your hearts. Oh, such voice melts the heart, takes away the stony one, and gives a tender one.

No, no; little Ruth did not harden her heart. No; Boaz did not harden his heart. No; the maidens did not harden their hearts. No; the reapers did not harden their hearts; and no, the city of Boaz's people did not harden their hearts; the city was moved at Naomi and Ruth's coming.

Yes, Zion is moved at Thy coming; for the Lord moved His children. Notice THIS, dear Brother Hatcher, when Jesus rode into Jerusalem the people were moved, and some wanted Jesus to command them to hold their peace; but Jesus said, "If these hold their peace, the stones would cry out."

Boaz was this little city which was moved, and when they heard this, that God had poured out His Spirit on the Gentiles, they glorified the Lord. It is always the believer, and not the unbeliever. Now when the Gentiles heard this, as many as were ordained to eternal life believed, and they were glad also.

So you see that both Ruth and the city were glad. The night is past, and the day cometh. Weeping endures for the night, but joy cometh in the morning.

Read from Genesis to Revelations, and it is only God's children. Jacob's name was changed to Israel, and Abram was changed to Abraham. A new name they shall be called by — yes, a new name. Ruth's name is no longer a Moabite, but an Israelite.

All one in Christ, My Bride. Her name is one, the ONLY daughter of her mother. Yes, I read your letter on the types, and the lineage, and it is all a unit, one link could not be left out of the chain. The whole remnant is alike.

Oh, no. We don't make Israelites out of Moabites: God changes the name. I am writing on the same subject, March 1st.

Now, dear Brother Hatcher, when Ruth came into the land of Boaz, she being a stranger, the question might be asked, Was it not night with her?

The question was asked once by someone, "Watchman, what of the night?" Oh, did not Ruth in substance say, What of the night with me? I am a stranger. What about my case? I am not like thy maidens. They have the law and the ordinances, and I am but a Moabite, too unworthy to be like one of thy maidens.

But Boaz had heard all the news, and he was a man of great wealth, as you said in your letter, and therefore he could divide with her of his bounty, and

have plenty left for himself and his maidens; for the wheat was ripe unto harvest, and the reapers were in the field reaping, and letting those handfuls fall of purpose for Ruth, which Boaz was dividing for her of his bounty; which was right for him to redeem her inheritance, or Naomi's inheritance, and Ruth being her daughter, he could marry her; for she was a virtuous woman.

Oh, then, watchman, what of the night? Well, Ruth, lay down till the morning and then I will tell thee. Oh, yes, I will tell thee. You lie still till morning. Don't tell that a woman was at my feet, but wait till morning. And then Boaz went and came to Ruth, and broke the good news to her, I will marry you, and you shall be my wife.

Oh, dear Brother Hatcher, don't we at night wonder about the night with us? Why am I thus? Why so dark and lonely? I fear I am wrong. I fear I am not like God's children. I fear I am deceived. O watchman, what of the night?

Come, tell me, is it thus with you? Boaz was a watchman. He was watching over Ruth, and therefore he could tell her. Well, Christ is our watchman, and He knows best, and in the morning is when He shows us, what of the night. That all things are working for our good. So you see all things work for the good of God's children. So now I leave this subject with you. Read my writings and see if I have hit the mark or missed it; as I have written much on this subject, and only hinted at it at best. I think we have been in the same school, the oldest school in the land, and Christ, I hope, is our Teacher. Write again.

(Elder) James W. Linn

(Published by request of a friend in West Virginia.)

Lebanon, Mo.

Dear Editors:

The Signs is the best paper that I have ever read; and I would like to tell you how much I enjoy it but I am at a loss for my mind is as blank as can be. I often read the Word of God and know that it is true, but seem to get no comfort. You know, it says that Christ was tempted in all points as his children, but it seems that I am such a sinner that I am tempted in ways that Satan did not tempt Christ. While brooding over my sins, I was made to remember the words of Christ, "Father, why hast thou forsaken me." I am like Thomas, I must see the print of the nails and thrust my hand into his side before I can believe. What the Apostles were telling Thomas was true, but it has to be revealed to Thomas before he could say, "My Lord and my God".

I can see my own faults, and cry as did Job, wishing I had not been born. Then I am made to realize that this is a sinful wish; but when we are in the ditch, don't we have to wait until we are pulled out. I want to mention a dream I had about four years ago: Someone walked upon the porch, opened the door and came in, and said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." I cannot keep this out of my mind; and sometimes I wonder if I am hearing the words of Christ, but setting up idols in my heart, and am not at true follower of the Lamb of God. I can only cry and say, Lord save or I perish. Please pray for one who is often in darkness.

Your brother, I hope,
W. W. Kenaly

STANDING ALONE — BUT NOT SHAKEN IN FAITH

R.F.D. 1,
Delaware, Ohio.
August 14, 1955

Eld. D. V. Spangler,
Dear Brother:

I hope I believe in God, and his Son Jesus Christ, the only Mediator. How can anyone believe in Him, and at the same time believe in the works of the flesh?

I have my paper and pencil to let you

hear what a forgetful, poor wretch I am. I have read in the Signs of so many aged ones, and felt like I ought to send in a little to help send the paper to the aged and poor. But I have to confess my plain neglect that it has been so long since I have sent anything. I reckon that I am no longer in the class of the youngsters, for I am half past eighty-seven.

I am sending check for $10.00. I have been seeing the Signs ever since I can remember, for I remember my mother reading it something like eighty years ago. The regular predestinarian Baptists I was with in my young days are most all gone in these parts, and I am almost alone from that kind. My wife died in May, 1954, and I am living here alone; and am the only one of the members left of Pleasant Hill Church. The meeting house is about eight miles from me. There are some who profess to be Old Baptist, but they hold to things that prove they are not just our kind. I have been trying to get in touch with some of our kind who would feel to cast their lot in with me, and have meetings. But unless the Lord builds the house, we labor in vain. I firmly believe that God is able to build up up again, but I cannot do it myself. So, it will be just as He thought before the world began. All the powers of darkness cannot overthrow one of God's purposes.

I have written differently than I had thought to write; I only thought to write and send in a little mite that would help a wee bit. Hope you have had patienec to read all this, and have a bit of charity for my imperfections.

Yours in hope of a better life beyond. May God bless you and all the others of the Signs.

(Elder) L. E. Stephens

TRIED IN THE FURNACE

This interesting book by Elder Lambert is yet available. The price is $3.00, and may be had by addressing:

Elder E. J. Lambert,
306 Richardson Street,
Winnsboro, Texas

EDITORIALS

Danville, Virginia **April, 1956**

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EDITORIAL

ANNUAL MEETING AT SLATE HILL N. Y.

We are endebted to Brother William D. Chapman, Bloomingburg, N. Y. for a copy of the Middletown Times-Herald of August 8, 1955, in which was carried an account written by one of their reporters of the annual meeting at the Slate Hill Baptist meeting house, Slate Hill, N. Y.

We have sometimes stopped in Slate Hill to have a look at this historic building but have not been favored to attend one of their annual meetings. Often when visiting such places as above, and such as Welsh Tract, Hopewell, Southhampton, Black Rock, etc. where the brethren of old worshiped, (and yet worship), we are lost in reverie; and as we recall some of the names of those old fathers who worshiped at these plac-

es, and the faith they held, we feel to be thankful for the same faith in our brethren in these days, and have assurance that the Lord will not leave himself without a witness as long as the world stands. Such places are not shrines to be adored: their intrinsic value is on a level with all things else natural; rather, we reverence the name of Him who gives us monuments of his grace.

We feel the following excerpts from the above paper will be interesting to our readers:

"The sturdy white doors of the Old School Baptist Church in Slate Hill opened and closed on another year for the historic county landmark Saturday. The church, now living mainly on memories of its flourishing youth in the post-Revolutionary War era, got a new injection of life when 25 members of its foster-congregation met for an annual day of worship and festivities.

The one-day service each year satisfies two purposes . . . keeping in existence the church society which was founded in 1783 and preventing the half-acre property from reverting back to the heirs of the original donor.

With no members of the church's last congregation now alive, Baptists from as far away as Maryland who have adopted the old church for the annual service converged on Slate Hill Saturday morning for a day of worship, business meetings and lunch.

Once again, echoes of the 163-year history of the structure resounded throughout its austere interior as Elder Harold M. Bennett of Mardela Springs, Maryland, began the day's worship with a sermon on the Holy Scripture.

No Change from Original

A vase of pink and white flowers, freshly cut from a nearby garden, gave the old building its only modern note Saturday. It still stands just as it was built in 1792, tribute to the ingenuity and ability of early American settlers. The structure with its square white steeple rising out of a grove of pine and maple trees which cover the surrounding burial grounds has been called by architects, "the finest piece of Colonial architecture in Orange County."

Unpainted wooden pews and family boxes once occupied by the 1700 household and its slave-servants were used again by Saturday's worshippers. Rough metal hinges fashioned by early American blacksmiths still swing open and closed with very little squeaking to disturb the preacher. The annual summer meetings no longer necessitate bringing along the usual foot warmer which accompanied the early parishioner.

Surprisingly, the steep stairs to the balcony have no creaks in them yet. It seems even more fantastic when one sees the antique hand tools and rough implements used by the colonial builders and stored yet in the church attic. Ceiling beams are fastened together with large wooden pegs instead of metal nails and show no signs of weakening.

A candlestick pulpit, first occupied by Elder Labeas Lathrop, pastor of the church when Slate Hill was known as Brookfield, stands as a level with the balcony. A dozen steps carry the minister, who is the lighted taper in the candlestick structure, to his preaching heights. A copy of the Bible printed in New York City in 1803 by Sage and Clough rests on the pulpit desk.

Below the pulpit on a small rostrum lie composition books from the 1800s listing visitors to the church, among them six Middletown residents who commented on its fine appearance on July 18, 1886.

So the church appears much as it was erected in 1792 when John Hallock, reportedly a descendant of one of the thirteen original Pilgrim fathers who landed at Plymouth Rock, donated the site to the Brookfield Old School Baptists.

The latest repairs which church trustee Fred Kirby of Kirbytown was authorized to carry out by the meeting Saturday are new roofing additions. Other action at the meeting which followed a morning worship was the election of Edward K. Adsit, of Shokan in Ulster County, for a three-year term, the hearing of last year's minutes and a treasurer's report, and establishment of next August as the 1956 meeting time. Elder A. J. Slauson of Kingston conducted the business meeting and William D. Chapman of Bloomingburg served as clerk.

The congregation ate a picnic lunch on the shady church grounds during a noontime intermission. The well-worn church steps became a table as volumes of food and drink were brought out of cars. Sermons by Elders Slauson and Bennett in the afternoon closed the annual service.

So, as the church doors were locked for another year the old building, like a fragile and valuable antique, settled back to its memories once more, weary but happy."

J. D. W.

WHY NOT GIVE A SUBSCRIPTION TO THE SIGNS

MANY OTHERS ARE GLAD ALSO

Ringgold, Virginia

Signs of the Times:

I am enclosing money order for $3.00

to pay for my subscription to the Signs for another year. It is a wonderful paper — how could we make out without it. Elder Lambert's piece about the ordination service was worth the price. The best part of it is that it reaches those who are unable to attend church, as well as those who can.

I do enjoy reading the good pieces; and am so glad that my brother, Lester (Elder Dodson), left the Signs like he did. He wanted it continued after he was gone; and I believe he had a warning that his time was near.

Keep up the good work all you dear people who write for publication, especially the dear ministers, feeding the Lord's people.

Sincerely,
Sister W. L. Ferguson

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Revelation 22:2-3

"In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bear twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

"And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall dwell there."

In this connection we have an illustration of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, as a holy city, New Jerusalem, coming not up out of the sea, like the seven-headed beast described in chapter xiii. 1, or the two-horned beast which came up out of the earth, in the same chapter, nor like the scarlet colored beast ascending out of the bottomless pit, described in chapter xvii.; but in this vision the church of God, as the Bride, the Lamb's wife, is seen coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. All her preparation, and all her adorning comes with her from God—from heaven and needs none of the trappings of earth to make her the perfection of beauty. Under the similitude of a city, her foundations, gates, streets, light, and all her internal glory, order, provisions, security and happiness is beautifully described in chap. xxi., and the description is continued in the xxii. and last chapter of the New Testament. The pure water of life flows clear as crystal from the throne of God and the Lamb, for her abundant supply. And, "in the midst of the street of it." That is, in the midst of the street of the holy city, or church of God, and on either side of the river was the Tree of Life. A street is a thorough fare, a way, a passage by which the citizens have intercourse with each other, and enjoy the privileges of the city. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the way, and all the citizens of the New Jerusalem abide in him. He is the Truth, and they all walk in him. In the midst of this street, that is in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God and Man, and Mediator between God and men. His Mediatorial identity being the centre or midst of him, in which dwells all the fulness of his Eternal Godhead, and in which the entire church of God is complete. By the Tree of Life, we understand the whole church in her vital and Eternal Union with Christ, for he is the Root and the Off-spring of this Tree of Life, while the Church and all her branches are brought into manifestation by their vital union with the Root. He is the true vine, and his members are the branches. Centering in him all the family of God exist.

And on either side of the River. Not only subsequently to his advent into this world, but throughout the patriarchal and prophetic ages, and even from everlasting this Tree of Life has existed; and subsequently to his manifestation in the flesh, this Tree of Life has been revealed in her gospel organization. As in Zech. iv. 3—Two Olive trees supply the bowl of the lamp or branches of the golden candlestick, with golden oil; the one on the right side of the bowl, and

the other on the left side thereof—so this Tree of Life is on both sides of the River of Life, which John saw. This tree, as we are told, bare twelve **manner** of fruits, and yielded her fruits every month. The number twelve agrees with the number of months in a year—also with the number of the tribes of Israel —Apostles of the Lamb, of the gates and foundations of the city, &c. By the twelve **manner** of fruits we do not understand a difference in the nature or quality of the fruit; for our Lord has informed us that a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; and as this is a good tree, a Tree of Life, all its fruit must be good and vital. But in **manner** its yielding is adapted to the varied circumstances and condition of the citizens of the New Jerusalem. As the seasons of bearing, **every month,** shows that there is no time or vicisitude of the Church, or of her members, in which this Tree of Life fails to supply with the fruits of immortality or life. These fruits, the Apostle informs us, are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, &c., against which there is no law. God has his set, or appointed times to favor Zion. She has her winter and summer, her seed time and harvest; but she has never yet found a time or season in which the Grace of God has not been sufficient for her.

"And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." The leaves, as well as the fruits of a tree, are the productions of the tree, and show that the tree is in a healthy and vital state, and that the life or sap from the living Root is diffused throughout the tree, and all the branches where the leaves appear. The tree is clothed in verdure and beauty. So the Church of God, in her living union with Christ her Root, from spiritual life derived from him, is invigorated and made to flourish like the Palm Tree, and to grow as the Cedars of Lebanon. While the exhibition of truth, righteousness, and purity in doctrine, order, ordinances, and in all her practice resists the corruptions of our fleshly nature, reproves the disorders and abominations contracted from the world, and heals those who are made partakers of its medicinal virtues, of those inordinate affections, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife and seditions, wherein we once walked, and produce in them a love of holiness, a desire to be more and more conformed to the image of their Divine Lord—to mortify the deeds of the flesh—to put off the old man with his lusts, and to put on the new man, which after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. The kingdom of Christ is indeed but one nation. "A chosen generation, a peculiar people, a holy nation." But her members are redeemed out of every nation and kindred, and require the healing virtues of the leaves of the Tree of Life.

"And there shall be no more curse." The holy Jerusalem is the Vision of Peace. No wrath can enter: For this, saith the Lord, is as the waters of Noah unto me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.—Isaiah liv. 9, 10. Although the Lord has chosen his people in the furnace of afflictions, and ordained that in the world they shall have tribulations, and although he rebukes those whom he loves, and chastens every son whom he receiveth, yet it is always in love, never in wrath. His word, his oath is pledged that he will not be wroth with them; therefore it is impossible that there shall be any more curse. All things do work together for good to them that love him.

"But the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it." The throne is the place of power, and the throne of God must be the place of Almighty power, of Divine Omnipotence, the power by which he governs the armies of heaven

and the inhabitants of earth, while the throne of the Lamb more immediately refers to his spiritual dominion over his subjects as the King of saints; still, as all power in heaven and in earth to reign in providence and in grace, is vested in our risen and exalted Redeemer, and as he is ever in, and inseparably identified with his church, the throne of God and of the Lamb is in this holy city. Whatever, therefore, the saints may need in providence, or to protect, support and defend them in temporal matters, as well as all the spiritual government of the church is in him, and her with all powers and grace is in the midst of Zion, so that she shall not be moved. Truly he is the head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

"And his servants shall dwell there." Happy then to be a servant of the dear Redeemer. All his subjects are children, but the relationship of a son is demonstrated by birth, that of a servant by obedience. His servants ye are to whom ye obey. Neither obedience, nor any act of ours, can make us sons. But if God has made us sons and heirs, is it not our duty and privilege to obey him? We enter in through the gates of this city, and have a right to this Tree of Life, by our obedience, if we are subjects of his grace; for he who proclaims himself Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, says in verse 14 of this chapter, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." Those who obey are his servants, and they shall dwell there; Jerusalem shall be their abiding place, and they shall go no more out forever.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, October 15, 1859.)

The opinions and doings of men are of no value unless motivated by the Spirit of Truth; if otherwise, they "darken counsel by words without knowledge".

WE QUOTE:

"**What true prayer is:** Prayer is a sincere, sensible, affectionate pouring out of the heart or soul to God, through Christ, in the strength and assistance of the Holy Spirit, for such things as God hath promised, or according to the Word, for the good of the church, with submission, in faith, to the will of God." — Bunyan, **On Praying in the Spirit**

"All religions except that of Jesus Christ, concur to place self-righteousness as the ground or condition of obtaining the divine favor. Paganism, Popery, corrupted Judaism, Mohametism, Armenianism, differ they ever so much in some respects, most cordially agree in representing man as a helper, if not as a principal, in his own salvation." **Toplady**

"The first work of grace is to kill rather than to make alive; to wound rather than to heal; to bring down rather that to lift up; to reveal the law rather than the gospel." **Philpot**

OBITUARIES

MRS. BETTY THOMAS HIXSON

Funeral services for Mrs. Betty Thomas Hixson, widow of the late Claude T. Hixson, were held at Mt. Zion Old School Baptist church, Loudoun County, Virginia, at 11 o'clock, January 27, 1956, conducted by Elder John D. Wood, pastor of the church. Burial was in the adjoining cemetery.

Since Mr. Hixson's death seven years ago, Mrs. Hixson was so nicely taken care of by her old friends Mrs. Vida Lee Lacy and Mr. and Mrs. Berkley Lee, who live not far from Leesburg. Two weeks before her death her condition was such that her doctor advised placing her in the Clopton Nursing Home, where she passed away on January 24th.

She had been a regular attendant at Mt. Zion Church for many years. She was not a member but was very staunch in her belief, and was greatly loved and highly respected by all who knew her. She was the daughter of Griffith E. and Rebecca Wright Thomas, and was born in Loudoun County August 1, 1862, living in the county all her life. Her closest living relatives were nieces and nephews; six of the nephews served as pall bearers. Written by her niece

Mrs. David Farnie

(In the passing of "Aunt Betty" we have lost another dear friend and firm believer, who will be greatly missed by all of us; but it is comforting to recall her faith and the marks of grace which were manifested in her, and we are encouraged as we run the race that is set before us. — J. D. W.)

THOMAS D. RHUE

Thomas D. Rhue, son of the late Reuben and Rebecca Garner Rhue, was born February 4. 1867, and died August 9, 1955. His stay on earth was a little more than eighty-eight and one-half years; and he was a life-long resident of Carteret County, North Carolina. When he was about twenty-four years of age, he was convicted of his sins, and in due time Jesus was manifested to him as his Saviour. On Saturday before the first Sunday in June, 1891, he related his experience of grace to the Hadnotts Creek Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized the following morning. He was soon chosen to serve as Clerk of the church, and served in that capacity. On Saturday before the first Sunday in July, 1897, his wife joined the church.

On January 29, 1896, he married Miss Noma Agnes Prescott. To this union were born nine children: Jesse R. Rhue, Fayetteville, N. C.; Joseph R. Rhue, who died in 1946; Elder Zennie L. Rhue, Winston-Salem, N. C.; Mrs. John A. Weeks, Swansboro, N. C.; Mrs. C. C. Norris, Newport, N. C.; Jaby J. Rhue, Swansboro, N. C.; W. Redford Rhue, Fort Lawn, S. C.; Roy T. Rhue, Winston-Salem, N. C.; and Mrs. Prentice Vinson, Stella, N. C.

His religious experience was very positive, and he had a child-like faith in God, His goodness, mercies, and omnipotence. He had no confidence in the goodness of man, except as God worketh in him "both to will and to do of His good pleasure." He was always uncompromising toward whatever he felt was wrong or unjust. He loved the Church, and his mind was constantly occupied with the Bible and spiritual matters. He enjoyed having his friends visit him, and Primitive Baptists were at all times especially welcome.

He was confined to his room for several years, often expressed a desire to pass from this life. He died in the faith and hope that Jesus has suffered and died for him, and would receive him unto Himself, there to dwell throughout the endless ages of eternity in the glorious presence of God and His Son Jesus. We are confident that he is sweetly resting with Jesus, and that our great loss is his eternal gain. He has only gone home where there is no more sorrowing, suffering, or heartaches. He is greatly missed; yet we could not wish him back.

His sadly bereaved son, Jesse R. Rhue

801 E. 9th Street,
Coleman, Texas

Dear Brethren:

Enclosed is the obituary of Sister Callie Rushing, and a letter written by her, which her children found after she passed away. This letter speaks more than any man can say. (see letter published elsewhere in this issue — Ed.)

It was a comfort to me to read this letter, as I believe it will be to all those who love the truth and who have the opportunity to read it. Sister Rushing was kind and considerate, not desiring to hurt anyone, yet desiring to earnestly contend for the faith, doctrine, order and practice. She was indeed a mother in Israel, who has left us an example that all would do well if we observe.

The writer conducted the services, and she was laid to rest beside her husband in Lamesa Memorial Park to await the coming of our Lord and Redeemer. Written by her pastor at the request of her children.

(Elder) C. U. Landers

MRS. CALLIE BROWNLOW RUSHING

Sister Callie Brownlow Rushing was born in Tennessee December 2, 1882, and died October 31, 1955. She had lived in Texas since 1925, and a member of the Primitive Baptist church for fourteen years.

She is survived by the following: Daughters — Mrs. Arthur Kinsey, Athens, Texas; Mrs. Walter Brownlow, Paducah, Texas; Mrs. E. L. Pierce, Lamesa, Texas; Mrs. W. T. Parker, Muleshoe, Texas. Step-daughters — Mrs. Howard Eason, Washington State; Mrs. Ellen Rushing, Denver, Colo.; Mrs. Omer Bessire, Muleshoe, Texas. Sons — L. E. Brownlow, O'Donnell, Texas; Earl Brownlow, Morton, Texas; Carl Rushing, Anton, Texas; Wesley Rushing, Plains, Texas. Step-sons — Hulon Rushing, O'Donnell, Texas; Orbin Rushing, Comanche, Texas; Carey Rushing, Phoenix, Ariz.; Preston Rushing, Andrews, Texas. Sister — Mrs. Elizabeth Bradley, Olney, Texas. Half-sister — Mrs. Willie Lambright, Lamesa, Texas. Step-sister — Mrs. D. Holman, San Angelo, Texas. Brother — Eddie Brownlow, Athens, Texas; and step-brother — Homer Cunningham, Paducah, Texas. Also surviving are forty-one grand-children and thirty-eight great grand-children.

Funeral services and burial are mentioned above.

J. A. PERDUE

By request I write the obituary of our dear brother and deacon J. A. Perdue. He was born

in Franklin County, Virginia, July 5, 1880; and died December 13, 1955; making his stay here more than seventy-five years. He was united in marriage to Mary S. Blankenship on January 16, 1907; and to this union were born twelve children — two of which died in infancy. He is survived by his wife and ten children: Mrs. J. T. Eanes, Union Hall, Va.; Mrs. J. C. McGuire, Hardy, Va.; Miss Annie Perdue, Roanoke, Va.; W. T. Perdue, Newport News, Va.; C. A. Perdue, Dair, Va.; J. R. Perdue, Hurt, Va.; Henry Perdue, Redwood, Va.; Paul Perdue, Bassett, Va.; Ben Perdue, Hampton, Va. and Posy Perdue, Roanoke, Va. Also by three sisters: Mrs. J. T. Blankenship, Mrs. Mose Eanes and Mrs. J. H. Brown; and one brother: G. C. Perdue; and twenty-two grandchildren and five great grand-children.

Brother Perdue united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Gill's Creek, September 13, 1919, and baptized the same day; and was chosen Clerk of the church January 10, 1920; and ordained to the office of Deacon on May 8, 1920. He was a deacon indeed, filling the office faithfully, always striving for the peace and welfare of the church. He was a faithful member and enjoyed attending his meetings. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace alone, and greatly enjoyed talking with his brethren on this theme. He enjoyed going to the sister associations whenever he could, and was known and loved by many.

The funeral was conducted at his home church, Gill's Creek, on December 15th, by Elder Randolph Perdue, Brother Rufus Brown, and the writer; and he was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the great day when those whose names are written in the Book of Life shall come forth and hear the voice of the King say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

We will all miss him very much, but we hope our loss is his eternal gain. We believe that his troubles and sufferings are over. He was a good writer, and wrote much for publication. We hope to meet him in the Heavenly home which is prepared for the children of God. Written by his pastor,

(Elder) P. L. Plybon

(The following was written by Brother Perdue in September before his passing;)

A Request: I desire this to be read at my death, as though my dying declaration. To Whom it may Concern:

As I am in a frail condition and now past seventy-five years old, I am not expecting to be here much longer in this troublesome world; and so, to my dear family, when I pass away in death, O, may our Glorious Lord direct you all to carry out my request. Now, feeling my great unworthiness, I desire all things done in common for putting me away. My funeral (if any) in my home church, preached by Elders Randolph Perdue, P. L. Plybon and Brother Rufus Brown. Should any of these pass away before I, get the remaining ones — and, especially, have no mixed doctrine over this old frame of mine. Choose enough of my beloved brethren for pallbearers; and my burial beneath the sod somewhere in the Gill's Creek Church cemetery — and no flowers. To my dear and faithful companion, if remaining when I am gone, my prayerful desire is that the dear Lord will be a husband to you, and that we will soon meet above where abounding love and peace dwells forever. I say to my dear children, I have tried many times to pray for you all, that, if it be God's holy will, to save you in the peaceful realms of eternal glory.

J. A. Perdue

IN MEMORY OF ELDER SAM McKINNEY

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not unto me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Timothy 4:7-8)

Dear brother McKinney we miss you
While traveling along life's way:
We feel our loss is but your gain
To that brighter happy day.

You have gone to rest we have no doubt;
To us you can not return:
Yet memory sweet will linger here —
And for this rest we yearn.

While given precious thoughts to think
Of how you preached and prayed:
Your labors weren't for earthly gain
While amongst us you have stayed.

You told us why our Jesus came;
The cause: he loved his bride.
He paid our debt — we never could;
The door he opened wide.

All his shall call upon His name:
In Him they all are blessed.
You were to us a brother dear,
And now you've gone to rest.

Mrs. Fred Cobb
Nov. 20, 1955

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 124 DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1956 NO. 5

PRAYER FOR FAITH

Oh, that I could spend my doubting hours
In constant words of prayer —
Words that would relieve my heart
Of the sin that lingers there;

That I could feed within thy pasture
Where the grass is always fresh and green,
And feast upon its wonderous riches
That my natural eye has never seen.

On the solid Rock of Ages:
That I could have a place to stand,
Free from every little tremble
And from the fear of sinking sand.

Oh, that I could see that lovely city
Where the jewels brightly shine,
Sending forth the radiant beauty
Of the sacred things of thine.

In the shadow I often ramble:
Seldom through the lattice see,
Still I'm hoping, through thy Spirit,
To have faith dear Lord in thee.

Mrs. Ina Pilchard,
Stockton, Md.

FAITH

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jocob, the heirs with him in the same promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (Hebrews 11:8-10)

The multitude of Abraham's seed was for number as the sand of the seashore, and they died not having received the promise, but by faith they were blessed to see and embrace it afar off in the Son of God: which caused them to seek a city eternal in the heavens. This was their desire, as it entered into them by faith in the Son of God; for they confessed that they were pilgrims and strangers on the earth. "For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country." (14th verse)

The people of God in Abraham, Isaac and Jacob's time were caused by the Holy Spirit to walk by faith, and to see by an eye of faith the promises of God to his people after the death of this mortal body: that the body would come forth on that great day of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, when he should come to earth and gather the Jewels of God's mercy to that eternal city. Which city the Revelator spoke of when he said, "I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

This is the city that all the people of God are looking and hoping for. And this hope comes by faith; and through faith, and in our experience, we feel to be a part of that city, because it is, "The bride, the Lamb's wife." In our experience, we have a desire to reach that city; for when one is born of the holy Spirit of God it is manifest that they are heirs, and joint heirs with Christ. Therefore, we are given hope of eternal life, and the love of God is shed abroad in our heart; and we know that he has, "Saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

As we journey the road of life here in the world, we sometimes feel as one of old said, "I know that my redeemer liveth. . ." And that, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pasture: he leadeth me beside the still waters."

This is a wonderful feeling, when we can witness with these two writers, being able by the Holy Spirit to have faith in God that he is all our salvation; and blessed to give him praise and thanks, who has kept us all of our life, and provided us with all our needs. Sometimes, however, he withdraws his Spirit from us: then it is that the flesh begins to boast itself, saying, "I am something." And sometimes the devil begins to tell us that all the hope we had, or have, is in vain. If we were left to ourself always, we would follow after the flesh. But thanks be to God that he comes back to us at his time, causing us to see the corruption of the flesh again, and our sins; and causing us to weep and cry, and again fall down even to the ground, and beg for mercy. How often we beg that he would, "Restore unto us the joy of thy salvation."

So when we are blessed of God to have faith in his dear Son, we feel that surely he has prepared for us a city; and that, when He appears, we shall appear with him in glory, and be in that eternal home beyond the grave, to sing undivided praise to God the Father, God the Son and the ever blessed Holy Spirit, in a world that has no end. Amen.

May the great and holy God continue his blessings with us as he has in the past, is my prayer for Christ's sake. Written by a brother in hope of eternal life, and saved by grace, if saved at all.

S. R. Boykin,
1702 Tryon Road,
New Bern, N. C.

Palestine, Texas

Dear Editors:

Enclosed you will find check for $5.00, for which please renew our subscription for two years.

We have both been readers of the Signs for many years; and we especially enjoyed the January issue. It is good to feel that God is raising up younger ministers to fill the pulpits when the older ones pass on. It is, indeed, refreshing to the spirits of the old soldiers of the cross when these younger gifts are made manifest unto the churches — this is God's work, and He does all things well. May His tender mercy rest upon each one of his gifts, that they may grow in grace and knowledge of the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. May they shun not to declare the whole counsel of God, to the comfort and edification of god-fearing believers; that these little ones, who hunger after the hidden manna that comes down from heaven, may eat of it and rejoice, and give God all the praise. God seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth.

I have had several requests from Primitive Baptists in different states for me to continue to write for publication. But since my marriage to Elder Fugate, I have not had much time for correspondence. I am thankful that I have been blessed with good health, and with the privilege of going with him to his appointments at the four churches which he serves; and to corresponding meetings. I not only enjoy these services, and meeting with the dear brethren and sisters, but I can relieve him of the strain of driving to and from these meetings.

After years of lonliness, we both feel that we have been wonderfully blessed with the privilege of spending our evenings together, reading and discussing the Bible and other Primitive Baptist literature and periodicals. Our hearts have been lifted up in thanksgiving to our God for his tender watch care over, and his love to such sinful mortals as we feel ourselves to be — less than the least of all, if we are numbered among God's people.

May God's blessings rest upon all his believing children, is the prayer of

Your little "sister from Texas,"

Velma J. (French) Fugate

EXPERIENCES WE CANNOT FORGET

Glade Hill, Virginia

Dear Sister and Brother Wood:

By request, I will try to write some of the dealings of the Lord with me, if he will guide my pen. Sometimes I think he has been with me all my life, and then I think I am mistaken in it all.

When I was about eight years old, I spent the night with my grandmother, and in the night sometime, she called her son to get up, that there was a light at the barn; and he said that he could not see any light. But I could see it, for it looked like a light hanging up in the air about the top of the barn — then it just disappeared. When I was ten or twelve, I would read papa's Baptist papers and the experiences in them: and would wonder if I would ever be as good as they were. In my seventeenth year, I was walking along, when I heard a voice ask, "Is there a God?" I stopped and looked around, but there was no one in sight; and I began to wonder, What is this? I began to read the Bible, but could not understand it, for it seemed a sealed book to me. My prayer was, Lord have mercy or I perish. This went on until I was married in the spring of 1908. I dreamed of Elder Randolph Perdue and my husband (Elder George Dyer) and I standing on the bank of a branch; we had met there for Brother Perdue to baptize me, but he said he could not do any baptizing for there was not enough water. I believe this was to show me that Brother Perdue was one of God's servants.

We went to Canton Creek to meeting once, and my husband preached; his text was, "I am the light of the world." That night after we retired, I saw a light upon the wall which looked like gold. A voice spoke and said, "This is the light he was talking about today". And the whole room was light. Again, I dreamed that Brother Tom Eanes and wife, and my husband and I spent the night at my father's, and about midnight Sister Eanes and I were out in the yard and it was the darkest time one ever saw. Then, all at once, it was light; everything was sparkling like diamonds. I said to Sister Eanes, surely the world is coming to an end. It seemed that everything was love and peace. As I looked toward the sky, a man's head and shoulders appeared in white clouds, and I said, that is Jesus coming to gather his people home; and everything was peaceful and lovely.

When I was baptized, it seemed that everything was peace and love, and I loved everybody. God is love: I hope he loves me. If not, I am gone worlds without end. I love to read the Signs. Pray for me, if you can pray for a worm like me.

May God keep, lead and guide you all in truth; may he keep us all at his feet, is my prayer. We are saved by grace if saved at all: the Lord does it all, we can do nothing. A poor little sister — the least of all.

In hope of a better world,
Mrs. George F. Dyer

A WONDERFUL FAITH MANIFESTED

Lubbock, Texas.

The Signs of the Times:
Dear Friends:

Once again the time is here to renew my subscription.

. . . I wish I could make it possible for every one who has been born again, and has a sweet and precious hope of life beyond the grave, to receive each month the dear old Signs of the Times. Why? Because I believe it contends for the faith once delivered to the saints: the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. It contends for salvation by grace, election, predestination, the resurrection, and final preservation of every one of God's elect — without the loss of a single one.

This doctrine will comfort, uplift and edify a poor sinner, because it gives God all the glory, praise and honor; it exaults his name above all names. And that is as it should be, for all life, spiritual and natural, is absolutely dependent upon the true and living God. He is not dependent for anything from man or

any other creature, because he is the only supreme being; and rules all things in heaven, on earth, and in hell. All times and seasons, all life, all light and darkness, all love and mercy; in fact, every thing both visible and invisible are his to do with as he pleases.

These are parts of his ways. Who can change them or disannul them? None, no not one.

Here is my check to renew my subscription, and that of my sister. The rest of the check you may use to send the Signs to any believer you may know who is not able to pay the subscription fee.

In hope,
Durwood H. Bradley

OF HIS MERCY WE ARE NOT CONSUMED

Houston, Texas

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am overdue with my renewal of the Signs, which I am enclosing herewith.

I hope my desire is to pray for the poor and afflicted ones of Zion, of which I am the poorest, if one at all. I feel to be an utter blank to all that is spiritual, yet feel a yearning that the glorious Day-star will arise with healing in my heart, and dispel the gloom and darkness that now prevails in my soul. I have to say with one of old, "My sins have procured this." I have forgotten Him days without number, and gone out after the vanities of this world to my own shame and sorrow. Oh, that in his ever enduring mercy He will give me a heart to repent and return to my first love: "What happy moments I then enjoyed; how sweet their memory still, but they have left an empty void the world can never fill."

I know that it is of his mercy I am not consumed; I know that his power sustains me, preserves me, and his long-suffering bears my wayward sinful soul along, and that these wonderful blessings are the fruits of the terrible suffering and shame wrought out on the cross by His own Son, Jesus Christ, in whom he was well pleased. Yet this knowledge cannot touch this dead and lifeless heart of mine until the blessed Holy Spirit calls: Come forth. I am bound in darkness and cannot break my bonds.

I desire to be remembered by his blood-bought people when they are at the throne of grace.

Yours by his grace,
Buena V. Wright

CROWNING HIM LORD OF ALL

In Ecclesiastes 7:29, we read that God made man upright but they have sought out many inventions. Where can we find more inventions of man than in the "business" of religion? Business of religion applies only to worldly people. With God's people, religion is not a business, but service to our adorable Saviour; and this service is joyful, not for expected and coveted gain, but in love; because we realize He has done for us what we tried to do and failed, and gave all up for lost. When we are blessed with His presence and love, our whole desire is to worship and praise Him without any thought of any recompense; but to be blessed to live at His feet, and to realize our nothingness and dependence on Him for all things.

How different with the world, and their business of religion, in which there are many inventions! Look at the many denominations, and many different ideas in each denomination, which are innumerable.

Sometimes God's people become dissatisfied with the order and doctrine of His house, and want to invent some new device to benefit the church: It is too old fashioned for these up to date times. They forget that Christ said, the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against the church, and He will never leave nor forsake us. A church in my old home community is in a weak condition. It

has been suggested they employ some inventions of men to build them up, such as a musical instrument. Do these people want to join the church that Christ built, or the organ and other things? Why do they want to join? Is it love for Christ? There is nothing that will kill a church quicker than worldly inducements. People drawn by these things are not joining for the love and honor to God, but for some worldly inducement. It is evidence they are not ready to forsake the world, deny themselves, and want only Christ and His glory. There is nothing but the work of love and leading of the Spirit that will draw His little ones to the church. These do not want anything of the world in the church to attract their attention, they want only Christ.

"And I, if I be lifted up I will draw all men unto me." Is there not another way in which He can be lifted up except on the cross? When we realize that there is none other name by which we are saved, and preach his sovereign power over all things, not looking to the world for any help, is this not lifting him up above the world, and all powers? This is crowning him Lord of all. If we had to look to the world for anything connected with our salvation, or help to build the church, where would our hope be? We can not trust a God that is not a sovereign above all worlds, and above help from any source. His right hand is under my head and his left hand doth embrace me; and his everlasting arms are always under us, and he never sleeps. He is caring for us at all times, even in the deepest distress, and under the heaviest load of sin. It is for our good, and He is there and will carry us all the days of our life, and be with us when we leave this old sinful body. May His grace abide with all His people.

Geo. W. Jackson
East Point, Ga.

Millport, Alabama

Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed find check for $5.00 to pay our subscription for two more years. It seems that we cannot be without this paper. There are so many times that we are in the "Slough of Despond," and God in his tender mercies, through the columns of the Signs, seems to lift us up and guide us on life's toilsome journey.

May you be blessed in carrying on the publication.

Yours in a sweet hope,

Mrs. R. A. Mathis

Box 136, Bala, Moskoka, Ontario

My dear Brother and Sister Risler, in the Faith of God's elect:

Although I have been unable to write a letter, my thoughts are often towards you and those of like faith. How my heart went out in love and fellowship to Sister Loeffel when I read her God honoring letter in the Signs of the Times. How true the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him — who are the called according to His purpose; and regardless of our lack of understanding of many things which happen along life's pathway, we know by the faith given us, together with our experiences, all things do work together for good to them that love God; and brings to our remembrance that the wisdom of this world is foolishness to Him. Safety is of the Lord who neither slumbers nor sleeps, and will in His own way and time provide all the needs of those who hope in his mercy.

Dear Brother and Sister Risler, may you continually be blessed in providence and grace, and, if the Lord wills, continue with the church below for some time yet.

Hoping you are well and with love and fellowship to all of like faith, your lone sister,

Alma Viola Mortimer

Salisbury, Md.

Dear Brother and Sister Spangler:

It seems a long time since I have heard the gospel word spoken — and yet some time to wait.

I just want to say what I was trying to tell: I had not seen the evidence of the light by reading the scriptures like others had — I just could not understand; but when that power did loosen my feet, I could not stop or turn back. I still did not feel I would be received, for I had nothing to say, but could see that those who were woven together with love, were so by the strength of the Lord and Saviour, the giver of all good gifts. It made me see my sinfulness, and showed me his good mercy; and made my heart rejoice in his blessings, and my cup runs over.

"Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest; take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light." This is the way it came to me after the baptizing, and I did rejoice. I thought, God has brought me safe thus far, and God will lead me home. If He is with me, what can come against me. Time was when I would fear and tremble when I heard the gospel, but you were made able to declare it so clearly.

I have told this in a broken way; maybe you can read between the lines what I have tried to tell. I hope you are both well, and to see you both soon.

With much love,
Mrs. H. O. Hall

Box 717
Smackover, Arkansas

Dear Editors of the Signs of the Times:

Enclosed find three dollars for my Signs another year. I have been confined to the V. A. hospital in Memphis, Tenn., for the past year with TB; and I must say that I have gotten much comfort and consolation from reading the wonderful truths which the Signs contain. I hope I love this grand old doctrine of salvation by grace, and all of God's people who believe and teach it everywhere. May it be His blessed will that I may continue to ever look to him, and to praise him for his loving care and watch over me while on the bed of affliction. Thanks be to Him that I am now able to be released from the hospital, and be back home united with my loved ones. I wish to ask the prayers of God's people everywhere.

Please change my address from the hospital to that shown above.

George E. Murphy

Bassett, Virginia

Dear Editors of the Signs:

. . . I hope to get the dear Signs of the Times as long as I live. I subscribed for it in my mother's name for she enjoys reading it also.

I have received sweet comfort in reading the Editorials, Voices of the Past, and the Experiences of the little children of God, which He has blessed them to write. I long for an humble, meek and thankful heart from the Lord, for giving me strength to read the sweet, soul cheering writings of his precious little ones; and Oh, how sweet to my soul to read the blessed Bible.

May the blessed Lord, if it is his will, give you dear Editors of the Signs, a mind to pray for me, a poor sinner. I so much feel the need of the prayers of God's humble little ones. The reason I call them little ones is that I feel his saints are little children; and though the world may think it strange, they would not with the world exchange.

Oh, gracious Lord, wilt thou in mercy take our minds from the vain and perishing things of this world, and place them on heavenly and divine things in praise and glory to thy blessed name. Love to all His little ones.

Callie Clark

Exeter, California

Editors of the Signs:
Dear Brethren:

I have a great desire to write, for my mind is constantly on the church and the love and mercy our God has for his people. I am surrounded with good neighbors, although they do not speak my language — they believe in a God that will save you if you will let him. So I can't talk the things which interest me most. They remind me of the brother of the prodigal son. The prodigal son represents the true believer, for we have to be brought down to hunger and be destitute, and to know that God our Father rules and super-rules; and that his store-house is full for his children. When we get to the end of our own strength, and He gives us a little foretaste of heaven, it is then we go to him as the prodigal son went to his earthly parent, begging just to be a servant. The elder son, to my mind, represents the Armenian world — do and live. I believe we live before we can do. Can the world console a sin sick sinner? Can it receive him in glory after death?

God not only designs the end, but the means to accomplish that end in his infinite wisdom and power. If God promises riches, the way thereto is poverty. Whom he loveth, he chasteneth; whom he exalts, he casts down first. He does not build on man's foundation. When we have tried our own strength and know that we can no longer survive without help from a supreme power, it is then we begin to beg for mercy. It is then we are like the prodigal son, we are not worthy to be called a son.

My dear Christian friends, my desire is to live at the feet of my brethren and sisters. I love the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone, for I claim no merit of my own. If I do a righteous act, God be praised not me. If I walk in paths of unrighteousness, it is I, this Adam multiplied, when I am left to myself. It is so natural for men, when they do things they know they shouldn't do, to lay the blame on someone, but God forbid that I ever accuse any except myself. Rather, I would beg God for mercy and pardoning love.

I haven't made myself as clear as I would like to, but will say I am happy to know and feel his pardoning love. It is so wonderful to have a throne of grace to go to in time of trouble — and better still, to have grace to go to that throne.

Submitted in love, and trusting that your God is my God.

Mrs. G. W. Atkins

New Market, Alabama

Dear Editors:

Would like to have my address changed from Huntsville, Alabama, to Route One, New Market, Alabama; and to write a few lines on the scripture that is found in Jude, 4th verse: "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

I would like to say first, there are some who say that the Spirit does not strive, or lead, men of today as it did the apostles; and there are some who say they can deliver themselves from the dead state which they are in by nature, into the marvelous light. These bring in damnable heresies: they speak evil of those things which they know not, but what they know naturally as brute beasts. In these things they corrupt themselves.

But, beloved, we have a strong consolation, for we are told to remember the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: how that they told you there should be mockers in the last times, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. (Jude, 17 and 18th verses) "These are they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit."

We find in First Corinthians 2:11-12, "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God: that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." But these men who have gone about to establish their own righteousness, woe unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain, and have run greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsayings of Core — clouds they are without water, trees who's fruit withereth, raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame.

These men, by their natural minds, say they know the things of God; but we find that they cannot, for they are foolishness unto them. May the Lord bless and keep us who have not errored from the truth, but who are kept by the grace of Almighty God, who is able to keep us from falling and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

A brother, I hope,

Harless Hale

Arkansas City, Ark.

Signs of the Times:

"And it shall come to pass."

These words are true, because at no time since the beginning has anything happened by chance: the cycle of time revolves for a thing or event predestinated by the counsel of the Father's holy and righteous will to come to pass; and that event materializes.

So my time to the Signs of the Times has expired, and I enclose money for another two years. I do not ever want to miss a single copy, for, aside from my Bible in which I truly love to meditate on the testimony of holy truth, coupled with hope and experience of the precious gift of grace and love of truth, the Signs comes next. What a wonderful gift the editors and associate editors and various writers of our paper have. Each and every one to me stand so far ahead of the poor example that I find myself to be that I am brought so low and humble that I can only beg and plead for a small place among the dear saints of God. Yet when I can see the light or truth made manifest, immediately a kindred spirit, which is beyond this vale of sin and sorrow, comes forth. What a manifestation of joy! This I find to my comfort in the Signs of the Times.

If a child of grace, it is beyond the wisdom or power or anything else this poor worm has ever and can ever do.

Ben Parrish

Bivins, Texas

To the Editors and Readers of the Signs:

I am sending a letter written to me after the death of my companion June 24, 1955, by Elder E. J. Lambert. It was of so much comfort to me that I would like for the readers of the good paper to read it too.

(Elder) T. A. Wall

Elder T. A. Wall and Family,
Bivins, Texas

Dear Brother Wall and family:

Words cannot express our deep felt sympathy for you in this time of bereavement, caused by the departure of your devoted companion and mother. Brother Wall, the words you used last Saturday when you told me the grand experience of your wife, left such deep impression on my mind that they still ring as clearly as when you spoke them. Your talk to your children as you were taking the last view of the body of your wife and their mother, was so touching that it will long be remembered. Your reasons for the selection of "How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds," and "O, For a Closer Walk with God" to be sung in the order they were sung at the funeral, shall be treasured long in our hearts. Even though I felt so unworthy, I appreciate the high honor bestowed upon me to have a part in paying the last tribute of respect to Sister Tiny

while her body was in our midst. The large concourse of people present at the funeral showed the high admiration and love the brethren, relatives and friends had for the noble, graceful life she was blessed to live while here in this world.

Brother Wall, it is wonderful indeed that she was blessed with such reconcilliation to the will of God, that she did not murmur or complain at her lot. Even though her body is gone, she yet lives in your heart, and the hearts of her children and many friends. Your many lovely conversations will be rehearsed in your mind, which will prove comforting to you. Her acts of kindness bestowed upon you will be so cherished in your hours of sadness, that the memory of them will be almost a visit from her. Admist all this, may God give you courage and strength to press on in the vocation of your calling in mixing with the brethren, feeding the flock of God, giving counsel and advice to those who need it; and being helpful to your children and community. Many times interest and concern for the welfare of others prove to be the healing balm for our heartaches. If God could be pleased to grace you with a deep concern for the welfare of others, you would not have much time to think of your own troubles, and it would prove consoling to you and those with whom you come in contact. Visit as much as you can, and converse upon the current problems that concern us in the church and our everyday affairs. This would be the desire of your wife. She would not have you grieve over her. Her love for you was the type of love that would desire you to be mindful of your great work as a minister of the gospel, instead of taking all your thoughts in memory of her, May God grace you with a courageous mind and active body, is my sincere prayer.

Children, spur your father on, as your mother would. Do not allow him to give up, but encourage him to go in the path of duty in administering to the welfare of the churches over which the Holy Ghost has made his overseer. Your mother's work here is at an end, but your father's work is yet unfinished. Be patient and kind in your dealings with him, that this may not be so burdensome. My acquaintance with each of you has made me to believe you are noble children, having high and noble ideals. May God consecrate this act of providence to strengthen your faith in a God who worketh all things well.

Come visit us when possible, and call upon us anytime we can be of service.

(Elder) E. J. Lambert

Ruston, La.

Dear Editors:

Am enclosing letter from Elder Rhodes for publication. I have his consent.

A sinner, in hope,
C. B. Stokes

HATING UNGODLY THINGS

Lillie, La.

Mr. C. B. Stokes,
Ruston, La.,

Dear Brother in Christ:

I received and appreciate your good and very encouraging letter today, and was glad to hear from you. I also appreciate your very kind commendation of the article I had written and was published in the Signs of the Times. Although I feel very ignorant, weak and unworthy, yet I hope that the Lord has blessed me in a measure to write and speak his holy, comforting and edifying truth.

I feel very inadequate and weak to undertake to write on those deep and mysterious scriptures you request me to, yet I do desire, the Lord willing, to comply with your request. I feel that in order that I write to the praise and honor of the Lord and to the comfort of the Lord's children, I must be guided by the light and leadership of the Holy Spirit. I hope that I may be blessed to

this end.

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I come not to send peace but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household." (Matthew 10: 34-36)

Think not that I am come to send peace, but a sword. I feel that the Lord means to convey this idea by this teaching: He did not come to cause anyone to love him and his doctrine, and his kingdom, except his chosen people. Whoever they are, when one is born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the word of God, then they are made to see and understand and love the doctrine and people of God above everything else — even better than father or mother, son or daughter, etc. And, if they do not love these heavenly and divine things above everything else, it only proves that they are not in reality one of His.

Anyone thus wrought upon by being born of the Spirit, is so different from even those of his own household, that there is division, (or sword) in opinion between he and his household concerning these blessed and sacred truths of the gospel of God our Saviour; and oftimes one who is thus wrought upon by the Spirit of God is compelled to suffer in his own family, the persecutions, afflictions and sorrows that come about as a result of the Lord sending light, life and truth. So, instead of it having a tendency to promote peace it has the opposite effect, and brings a sword of division even in the household of those who are made to know, love and contend for the truth of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In my opinion, these scriptures teach that when the love of God is shed abroad in one's heart, it produces a great sense of hatred and resentment even in one's own family against the truth, and against he who holds to the truth; and is true with anyone else who has not been enabled to see, hear, feel, understand, and love these sacred and heavenly things. Nothing can affect this love in those who have not been thus wrought upon, so as to keep them from separations and division from those whom the Lord has blessed with a knowledge of the truth. So when one is born of the Spirit of God it brings about this division — the sword that the Lord has related in these scriptures. Thus, instead of peace being the result, what the Lord gives his people in regeneration produces a division and separation, at least to some degree, between those who are born of the Spirit and those who are not.

So we can see that the Lord's people are given different and stronger love than that of nature, to the extent that they can and will endure persecution even from their closest ties in nature.

When Christ was born in Bethlehem of Judea, he was sought by those who had no insight through the Spirit, that they might kill and destroy him; but, on the other hand, those who were led by the Spirit sought him that they might worship and administer unto him. So we see the difference from the very first: His coming did not produce peace between them who were his people and those who were not. But it brought a sword — division, persecution, trials, and differences. It is the same today, and always will be while human depravity and sin continues on this earth. Jesus said, "He that is not with us is against us; and he that gathereth not with us, scattereth abroad." He also said that he that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love.

In Luke 14:26, Jesus said, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." Now I do not think that this hatred is that which is of malice. No, not at all. "And his own life also," in the above quotation, gives the meaning of the hatred under consideration; that is, anything ungodly that is in them and

us. Not with malice and envy, for Jesus commanded us to love our enemies, and to do good to them that hate you. (see Luke 6:27-29) God's holy word does not contridict itself, so we conclude that when Jesus spoke of those who came to him and hated not those of their closest ties, Yea, and His Own Life Also, he meant the hatred of anything ungodly in them, or his own self.

So, dear brother, I feel that this teaching and admonition is to instruct us that the affections and ties of our closest loved ones, who are not born of the Spirit of God, will separate and divide from us, when we are given to see and understand these truths. No matter how much we love their persons, we cannot love their lives in sinful and ungodly things — neither our own lives in this sense. Jesus said in John 12:25, "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." So we can see from this and the other things taught, the type of hatred that is under consideration: that the man of whom it is said, except they hate father, mother, brother, sister, etc., he cannot be his disciple, he is not to hate them anymore than he is to hate his own life.

So that the Lord's people are not only to hate the ungodliness, sin and depravity that he is blessed to see in himself, but also to hate it in his closest ties; and he is to do good in return for persecution, hatred and all evil and abuse that is heaped upon them. And I believe that by the influence of the Spirit of God working in the Lord's people, this hatred for all ungodliness and sin, both in ourselves and our closest ties, will be there in manifestation.

There is no conflict in any of the inspired and sacred teachings of the scriptures. Paul said, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."

I hope, dear brother, that what I have written is at least right in a measure; if not, then I hope you nor anyone else will receive it. From the last scripture quoted, we know all scripture is good and profitable to the man of God. I don't know that I am, but I hope that through the grace and mercy of God that I am one of them who is given to love the Lord, his doctrine, his church and people, above my own father, mother, wife, sister, brother, son or daughter; or anything else in this old sin cursed world.

I sometimes long (if I am not deceived) for the time when our Lord shall come again, and call his humble, trembling ones to himself; where there will be no more sin, sickness, sorrow, pain or death, but where peace, love and everlasting joy, and eternal praise shall be engaged in forever.

May God bless and lead us in the way of truth and righteousness, and cause us to trust in him who works all things after the counsel of his own will and purpose. May we be weaned away from all the doctrines and commandments of men and devils, no matter whether they be manifest in our own lives, or in others; and be enabled to follow him and love and obey him in all that he has commanded.

Thank you again for your letter of comfort and encouragement. May the Lord be with you, and bless, lead and comfort you and yours, and all the dear household of faith everywhere, is my prayer. Come to see us, pray for us, and write us anytime you feel to do so.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

TRIED IN THE FURNACE

This interesting book by Elder Lambert is yet available. The price is $3.00, and may be had by addressing:

Elder E. J. Lambert
306 Richardson Street,
Winnsboro, Texas

EDITORIALS

Danville, Virginia **May, 1956**

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EDITORIAL

A MESSAGE TO OUR READERS

Since the March issue carried a reprint of the Prospectus of the Signs, and a review of what the paper has stood for throughout its 123 years of publication, we believe it is also timely to remind our readers of some of the things we do not hold with or encourage through the paper.

We have no desire to attack associations, or their Articles of Faith, or Rules of Decorum. Associations have been a source of much comfort to our people. Many of them have looked forward to meeting each other, and to hear the gospel preached by the various gifts. Ministers have had the privilege of associating with each other at these times who are not favored to meet with each other otherwise throughout the year. These assemblies have often been a spiritual strength to our churches and friends. We know there has been at times an exercise of authority by some which was not good; but, from a general standpoint, we are sure they have been a great blessing.

Good doctrine and good order are inseparable; and we are sure that where gospel order and practice abound in an association and among the churches, there will be peace and prosperity abounding in the association. Associations have Articles of Faith and Rules of Procedure. These are usually in accord with the Rules of Decorum and Articles of Faith of the churches. The Rules set forth their order of procedure, and the Articles of Faith the principles of doctrine they believe; and are a product of the churches represented in the body. A church is under no compulsion to belong to an association; and when a church believes she would be best served by standing independent, it is their privilege to do so. If a church is convinced that the association she belongs to has departed from the faith and order of the gospel, she should sever her ties with the association. But when they are continuing in peace and order, we believe she is best served by continuing with her sister churches in an associated capacity.

Whether a church belongs to an association, or is an independent church, when a sister church persists in holding in fellowship a minister or member whom Paul describes as a drunkard, idolator, extortioner, covetous, or a railer, the church or association should withdraw fellowship from such church until gospel order prevails. Paul's direct command to the church at Corinth, was not to keep company with such characters, and not to hold such churches in fellowship and communion in keeping company with the transgressors. Whether this withdrawal is by an association or church, it is in keeping with the express command of the Scriptures.

This paper has not been the means of attacking the Rules of Decorum and

Articles of Faith of our churches. From the time of the early churches in America, they have had Rules and Faith Articles; and our desire is to walk in the old paths of our forefathers and not seek strife and confusion among our churches and people, as the good old way is good enough for us.

We believe the church we are identified with is the church of Jesus Christ, and we have no desire to continually find fault with her, and persist in trying to tell her how to conduct her affairs. If the time should come that we believed that everything was wrong with the church we belong to, we would certainly leave it.

There arose in the Baptist ranks about the year 1823, a man by the name of Alexander Campbell, who dissented from the Old Baptist doctrine. He, and his followers, persisted in the plea for the restoration of original Christianity. In 1827 the Baptist churches withdrew fellowship from him and his followers, and they organized what became known as the "Campbellites." Today they are known as, "The Disciples of Christ." We ask the question: did they return to primitive Christianity? This is related only to remind us of the course usually followed by those who claim that the Primitive Baptists have departed from primitive Christianity.

It has not been the policy of this paper to re-print articles from Armenian papers, except when it was necessary to comment upon them in defense of the truth. There may be articles in their periodicals that have some truth in them, but the doctrine and practice of such sects that we know of, is certainly not the doctrine and order maintained by the Signs.

Dear readers, to sum up the whole matter, we would set forth the object of the Signs of the Times as follows:

To defend the doctrine of the Old School Baptist Church, which is the doctrine of free and sovereign grace; believing her to be the Church of God.

To serve as a means of communication among our people, and to be ever mindful that we are the servants of his people, and not their overlords.

We have not followed the policy of trying to tell our ministers how many churches they should serve; how to conduct associations; attacking the propriety of Rules of Decorum and Articles of Faith; or any such things.

We know that this paper goes into the homes of some brethren who are separated from other brethren, but we believe it serves to comfort all His dear people who read it — and that is our desire. We do not expect to enter local controversies through the paper; believing that all local troubles should be settled by those who are near by, and who understand them.

We ask an interest in your prayers, that we may be found faithful as your servants, ever contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, and holding fast the profession of our faith without wavering. We humbly solicit the support of every reader who subscribes to these things, wherever it be your lot to dwell.

D. V. S.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

8881 Calico Avenue,
Garden Grove, California

Dear Editors and Brethren:

. . . Would like for someone who lives near here, and who knows the closest place where we may attend Old School Baptist meetings, to write us a card.

Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Stephens

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

(Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause)

My dear Brethren;

I am glad that our dear and esteemed Elder John D. Wood has been blessed to write his current editorial and to reproduce the splendid and timely article of the lamented Elder Gilbert Beebe. It has seemed to me that this has need-

ed saying and reproducing for some time.

There has not been an era in the church that has not produced staunch defenders of the truth; neither has there been an era in the time of Babylon that she did not produce many zealous defenders of her spurious and confusing doctrines. These two principles — truth and falsehood — have ever been debated by the adherents of each, the contention growing bitter at times, coming to a lull at other times, and at still other times a coming closer in union to each other, only for the breach to become wider and the intensity of conflict more fiery.

These conditions have come about in varied ways. At times the ungodly professors have come up with new colored schemes to catch the church unawares; at other times the church has grown lukewarm and sleepy at the post of duty, thus giving the alert followers of Satan the opportunity to drive their wedge into the followers of the Lord. Every new departure has brought a new crop of bitter enemies. And every new defense that has been set up, has brought out new and amazing qualities in the soldiers of Jesus Christ.

When an unlooked for approach is made on the encampments of Israel there are always those ready to spring to defense. If the enemy is bringing in damnable heresies there will always be sharp reproof from the defenders of the fort. Believing, as I hope, that God not only raised up Pharoah, but all other men in this world to fill certain positions, and that those certain men, and the filling of their destined places in the world, to be for the good of His people, but more important, that every soldier in the ranks of the followers of Jesus Christ, is a conscript and a trainee of Him, and that he is peculiarly and particularily qualified to carry the fight to the enemies of the truth — it follows that Elder Beebe was, according to my understanding, raised up in the church at the exact time to fill the exact place, even to every word and every article.

At that time, (as well as any given time before him, and as it will be at any given time in the future) there was a body of people to which God directed Elder Beebe to. He did not call him to a dilatory examination and consideration of **what** body of the church to join; He did not place before him all of the religious world and tell him that the church was hid among all of these professors; but in the providence and grace of God he was directed to the Baptist church. He did not direct him to an intangible church; nor was it a nominal church. But it was to the Baptist church, with **vital, fundamental, living** principles.

At that time, as well as at any time before him, and as it will be at any time in the future, the church was contending for the doctrine of God our Saviour. There is not a doctrine in keeping with the vital, fundamental, **living** religion of Jesus Christ, that was not being contended for at the time of Elder Beebe, and the beginning of the Signs of the Times. But, around the year 1790, there was a new dress of unbelief arose. It was not the **first** dress of unbelief, for many fanciful dresses had been worn by this Great Woman, but since new and attractive ideas are used to catch the unwary, she often come up with a brand new idea. It met opposition in England at once. However, this Woman that had slipped in among the poor and afflicted people of God, was so enamored with the new dress that she pressed forward, treading under foot the poor and afflicted adherents of the true faith, besmirching the fair names of true followers and even the Lord our precious Saviour, belittling the good and wholesome doctrines that had been a bulwark of defense for those defenseless little ones in all ages before her. She was not satisfied to wear her gorgeous garment in Europe but she came to the land of freedom and soon was in an arrogant march against the true faith here.

Brethren were thunderstruck; they were amazed; they were at first shaken and demoralized. This condition did not

exist long, for our God has promised long before this that he would come with vengeance and a recompense and save the fearful in heart; and, while the primary meaning of this may have been the promise of the Saviour's coming in the flesh, it certainly also carries with it that there shall be an experimental phase of this in the life of God's people, and here it is being verified. Stalwart men begin to appear; able ministers of the New Testament begin to join ranks with the faithful from Maine to Georgia, from the East Coast to the almost impenetrable West.

Under what banner were they gathered? Was it some of the orders of the day? If so, which one? Or was it that they did not take a specific stand with any of the orders of the day, choosing, rather, to devote their time to a nonsectarian cause? My readers know to what assembly they came, to what cause they sprang to the defense of, and what name they gladly wore.

I do not believe that the Apostle Paul conferred with flesh and blood; and since his day men that have been called to preach the gospel have not debated where to cast their lots, or, having cast them, to look back with regrets and spend their time bemoaning the fact that the church has become a haven for crooks and politicians. Today we have had a great change come about. This change has been only outwardly, for I assure you that those that God calls and qualifies and sends forth in his kingdom are today what they were yesteryear. When a man or woman is given a desire to unite with the church they come (not as a critic and regulator) but as a begger for a home. They are not commanded to try the Old Baptist church for a resting place, and, finding it insufficient, go to something else, flitting about as a bee goes from flower to flower seeking honey. But they first try other things, and, finding them lacking in rest, are given to come to the church for rest and a home. You had as well tell me that God had been dethroned as to tell me that a child of God can find rest and peace and satisfaction outside the church of Jesus Christ, **after** having been sent and directed to go home to their friends.

It is true that many find the church of Jesus Christ a galling burden; it is true that many leave the church for more lucrative fields; it is true that many find every thing wrong with the church and nothing being done right. But I say to you that such characters were not closely related to the poor begging Publican, but rather that they were thankful that they were not like the Publican. So I want to repeat: That a great change has come about. Many have come to the church with great swelling words in her defense; with many denunciations of themselves as being poor sinners; with begging entreaties for a home and for mercy. But what do we find? We find that, instead of being beggars for mercy, they have become critics of everything that we have thought was very precious to the Lord's people; that instead of defending her as the true Israel of God, that they are using their resources, time, talents and all other things at their command to rend, to destroy, to undermine, to belittle, to cast suspicion upon her fair escutcheon.

The articles of faith of our people are good. Our practice and order, as a whole, is good. It is true that we have had departures; it is true that decency and order have been discarded at times; it is true that associations have usurped authority that did not belong to them; it is true, and will continue to be true as long as men are in the flesh, that some have used the doctrine to further their own evil schemes; it is true that we have stressed one point of doctrine and ignored others. Yes, it is true that we are not a perfect people. I do not think that we are justified in glossing over these things. It is true that many ungodly expressions and practices have come in from time to time. It is true that we have had too much drinking of strong drink, and other forms of riotous living. But are our people, as a whole,

like this? Has our ministry sunk to this level? This I resent as being an untruth.

The Signs of the Times are now what they have always been. The grievous wolves were to enter in **after** the departure of the apostle. They have been entering in since his day, not sparing the flock. Men have arisen in the church for nearly two thousand years seeking to carry us back to something, seeking somebody to follow them into perverse things. This has been going on all the time. The signs are clearly seen as we look backwards; they are being posted along the way now. Every single reformer of yesterday, where are they? Every cause that they have espoused, what has become of them? They all, one and all, without a single exception, died out of the church of Jesus Christ. What about their cause? If they did not die a-borning, they soon withered away, or if not that, they are today well known as one of the brood of Arminian churches.

Signs of the Times, the periodical begun in 1832, to point out the signs of the times, is today contending for the doctrine of God our Saviour. "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon" is still on the masthead of the dear family paper. The aim is still a sound and true devotion to the Old School Baptist. Our founder believed that it would be sustained as long as God had a purpose in it. And as long as he lived he devoted his time and means and life to the good of the Old Baptist cause. Through the weakness of the flesh I have wavered many times, and will again if not kept by grace, but as of today, I want to say that I desire above everything else to devote all that I have, and all that I am, to the Old School Baptist cause, knowing full well that it is, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake." My hope to our Heavenly Father is that He will keep us and bless us to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and that we will be blessed to contend earnestly for the ancient doctrine of salvation by grace; and believing that as long as it is His purpose for the paper to go forth laden with the good news of the kingdom, it will do just that.

Let us watch as well as pray. Let us be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let our requests be made known unto God (Phil. 4:6). May God give us an humble and sound devotion to the Old School Baptist; and in that, a feeling of love and reverence to our family paper, to the end that if we are about some meddling business that threatens the welfare of our people, and of our family periodical, that we quit that immediately. A zeal to destroy can be called a godly zeal, if we have not discernment. May it please God to give us a discerning mind and a godly zeal. As sure as we are blessed with a godly zeal, we will not be pushing our opinions forward to the destruction of fellowship. Let us, as blessed of God, write the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Let us contend for the faith; let us preach the word; yes, let us console, for there are now, as always, the disconsolate; let us teach, for there are now, as always, those that oppose themselves; let us rebuke, for there are now, as always, those that are headlong; let us, as blessed of God, be ready for ever good work, spending and being spent in the service of God.

Ah, my brethren, how fondly many hundreds have reached for their Signs back through the years. Many have found in it their only communication with the saints; many have feasted on the good things of kingdom through its gospel message. This is enough to cause devotion; this is enough to make us want to press on and on, knowing that the goal is ahead, and that swiftly the race is coming to a close. Let us devote our time and our means to the dear paper that has meant so much. But most important of all, let us devote all that we are and all that we have to the Old School Baptist cause.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

QUICKENED SPIRITS

It has been slanderously said of us, and some have affirmed that we have said, that in the new birth, only the spirit which is born of God is quickened, and that only quickened spirits are saved, or will be received into heaven. — That these quickened spirts are sent down from heaven, and when we are born again they enter into the man and remain there until the death of the body, and then go back to heaven, and that nothing is done for the Adamic man.

Who has ever heard us advance such absurdities, or in what volume or page of our publication has anything of the kind ever appeared? We challenge our most inveterate foes and malignant slanders to prove that we have ever held or uttered a sentence in the forty-six years of our editorial life, that can by any fair construction, or without a willful and studied perversion of our words, convey to the weakest mind anything to justify the charge. Yet, if it were not that some of the Lord's dear children are liable to be misled by the false reports which are being circulated, we would not waste our time in repelling the vile aspersions on our own individual account. Truly, we think we can say, none of these things move us, neither count we our own (natural) life dear to ourself, so that we may finish our course (which is now near its termination) with joy, and the ministry which we have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. We have to some extent realized, that "If any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution;" and if not deceived, we have known something of the blessedness of suffering persecution falsely for Jesus' sake.

We have indeed differed with some brethren whom we highly esteem and love, in our understanding of the new birth, as to what it is, what is produced or born by it, and as to what are its effects on those who are the subjects of it; but we have not denounced them as heretics, nor harbored malicious feeling against them. If we are right in our views, and they are wrong, yet what have we that we have not received? and if light is given to one and withheld from another, is it not that the light so given should be set upon a candlestick, that it may enlighten all who are in the house? Surely, there is no cause for anger, vindictiveness or vaunting.

Now to those honest inquirers after truth, who wish to hear and to judge candidly of our views in regard to the spirit which our Savior told Nicodemus is born of the Spirit, and therefore is spirit, we will say that we understand it to be a quickening spirit, because it is life; but it is not a quickened spirit, because it never was dead, nor in a condition requiring to be made alive. It is communicated to those who receive it by a birth; but we trust there are none so dull as to need to be told that a birth is not a quickening of that which is born. Nothing in nature receives life by birth; for unless that which is born was alive before its birth, it would be stillborn, for the birth can only develop or bring into manifestation a life which existed before the birth. The natural life of all the human family was created of God, and given to us in the earthly Adam; were it not so, the offense of Adam could not have caused death to pass upon all his posterity. Only on this ground could many be made sinners. Only on this ground could Levi have paid tithes to Melchisedec, when in the loins of his great-grandfather Abraham. The life of all mankind was embodied in Adam, when "man became a living soul." — Gen. ii. 7. And an apostle has assured us that Adam is the figure of him that was to come. Also, that the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam a quickening (not quickened) Spirit. And as all natural or earthly life of all the earthly descendants of Adam was embodied in him

who is the figure, so all the spiritual, eternal and heavenly life of all the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty was given them and secured to them in Christ, the second Adam, who is the Lord from heaven, before the world began. The origin of this spiritual, eternal life of all the saints was with the Father, and was manifested. — 1 John i. 3. "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." — 1 John v. 11. As the earthly Adam is the seminal head and progenitor of all that ever have or shall descend from him, so the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, is the seminal Head and embodiment of that seed which shall serve him, and be counted to the Lord for a generation. — Psa. xxii. 30. God, by the prophet, has said, "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." — Isaiah liii. 10. We all know that Christ was not the natural parent of any fleshly seed; but his seed is "a chosen generation." — 1 Peter. ii. 9. And when made manifest by the new birth, they are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. — John i. 13. For "That which is born of the flesh is flesh;" it is like its progenitor, of the earth, earthy, descending from an earthly parent, and involved in that depravity and death into which Adam by transgression fell. Thus our earthly, depraved nature was and is born of the flesh. Now, as the seed of Christ are partakers of flesh and blood, to redeem them from the sins in which they were involved in their fleshly nature, he, their spiritual progenitor, also likewise partook of the same; he took on him the seed of Abraham, was made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. And as Christ, to redeem us, partook of our nature, and was put to death in the flesh, (not in the Spirit, for that could not die,) so we, to participate in his glory, are made partakers of the divine nature. — 2 Peter i. 4. As we are made partakers of the fleshly nature by being born of the flesh, so we are made partakers of the divine nature by being born again, of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. All that is or can be born of the flesh is Adam, in his multiplication, and all that is born of the Spirit is Christ; for, "for me to live is Christ." "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I," (my "body is still dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." — Romans viii. 10,) "but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." — Gal. ii. 20. Now if this spiritual life which is in us by virtue of the new birth is Christ, then it is not Adam revised and improved. Our flesh is still Adam, with his mortality and opposition to the spirit still retained and still warring against the spirit; and still "In me, that is, in my flesh, there dwells no good thing." I am still being brought into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

Now this spirit which is developed in us by the new birth is not a quickened spirit, for it never was dead; but it is a quickening spirit, for it is Christ, the last Adam, the Lord from heaven, who is a Quickening Spirit, as saith the apostle, 1 Cor. xv. 45. By this spirit which we received by the new birth, after we believed, we were sealed; for it is the Holy Spirit of promise, and this sealing is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. — Eph. ii. 13, 14. This purchased possession we understand to be the possession which by a redemption purchase Christ has bought with a price, or redeemed from under the law, with his precious blood, and which is sealed unto the day of redemption, or unto the day of perfect deliverance from mortality, as it shall be when raised from the dead in the likeness of Christ's glorious resurrected body; and then our mortal shall put on immortality, and our corruptible

shall put on incorruption; then shall the last enemy, which is death, be destroyed, and the saying which is written shall be brought to pass, Death is swallowed up in victory.

Our blessed Savior has attributed a quickening power to the Spirit which was in him in the days of his flesh; but he has nowhere called it a **quickened** Spirit. He says, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth: the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are life." — John vi. 63. These words which are spirit and life, Christ has given to his heaven-born children; for he has said to his Father, "For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them." — John xvii. 8. These are "words of eternal life." — John vi. 68. All who are born of God must have these words of eternal life, which are spirit and which are life; for, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you," (by his Spirit,) "the body is dead because of sin," (it has not yet put on immortality, but still retains all the elements of the old, carnal, earthly nature; and the death which by the offense of one man, Adam, has passed on all his posterity, still holds possession of the old, Adamic nature, and will continue to lust against the spirit until it shall be changed from corruptible to incorruptible, and from mortal to immortal,) "but the spirit is life because of righteousness." Both of these elements, with all their antagonism, dwell in the saints, as they dwelt in the apostle Paul, while here on the earth, and are called flesh and spirit, old man and new man, outer man and inner man. The old man, which is carnal and corrupt, with its affections and lusts, is born of the flesh, and is flesh, and as such, cannot inherit the kingdom. But the new man, which after God, not after the earthly Adam, is born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Everything that is born must develop a life and nature which was in the parent of whom it is born before it was made manifest by its birth. The personal pronouns, **I** and **me**, are used by the apostle to identify each of them respectively, and sometimes both elements as existing in the same person. For example, read, "For I know that in **me**, (that is, in **my** flesh,) dwelleth no good thing; for the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Here are two personal pronouns, **I do**, and yet it is not I that do it. Now, how can this be? Let Paul explain: "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present. For I delight in the law of God after the inner man: but I see another law in my members, (of the flesh, in which he could find no good thing; the members of his outer man,) warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. So then, with the mind, I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh, I (the same 'I myself') serve the law of sin." — Rom. viii. 15-25. Thus Paul was in possession of two identities, to both of which the Holy Ghost, by whose inspiration he wrote, applies the personal pronouns, **I, me**, and **I myself.** And in all his writings he is careful to distinguish the one from the other. Hear him again, "For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." — Gal. ii. 19, 20. "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." — Phil. i. 21. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." — Col. iii. 4. "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints; to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you the hope of glory." — Col. i. 26, 27. Thus we find the children of

God, while here in the flesh, have two natures, Adam and Christ: the flesh, which is born of the flesh, and the Spirit and life of Christ, which is born of God; and with the one nature they serve the law of sin which is in their members, which are upon the earth, and with the other they serve the law of God.

Now we are called on to say what is done for and what will become of the Adamic man. So far as the children of God are concerned, we reply, It was and is in their Adamic nature that they have all sinned, and in that nature are children of wrath, and required to be redeemed with the precious blood of Christ. They were predestinated "to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasures of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved: in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: that we (who are called from the Jews) should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye (Gentiles) also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest (or pledge) of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." — Eph. i. 5-14.

That eternal life which was with the Father, and was given to and preserved for the children of God in Christ, was not defiled with sin, and needed not to be redeemed; but it was in their earthly nature they transgressed the law of God. They are not redeemed out of Christ, but out of every tribe and kindred of men; and to accomplish this redemption, Christ, in his incarnation, took on him the seed of Abraham, and suffered for them in the flesh, and was put to death for them in the body of his flesh, and was quickened from the dead for them in the spirit, and was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, and exalted far above all principalities and powers, and above every name that is named, either in this life, or in that which is to come. The redeemed sinner of Adam's race, who by his first birth is a partaker of flesh and blood, and a child of wrath, being redeemed by Christ, is, by being born again, of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, made a partaker of that divine nature which is born of God. In this new and spiritual birth he receives the Spirit of Christ, as by his birth of the flesh he had received the spirit of the flesh, and is sealed by this heaven-born spirit, until God shall change his vile body, and fashion it like unto the resurrected and glorious body of his risen and exalted Redeemer. This spirit and life which is developed in the saints by the new birth, is called the Spirit of adoption, implying that vital relationship whereby they cry, Abba, Father, and it is called the first fruits of the spirit in them; and Paul says, "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, **to wit,** the redemption of our body." The bodies of the saints are not yet adopted, but those of them who are born of the Spirit are sealed to this final adoption. "For we are saved by hope; but hope which is seen is no hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." —

Romans viii. 22-25. The first fruits clearly imply a subsequent harvest; and we are told in the same chapter, at verses ten and eleven, "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren." — Rom. viii. 29. "And he is the Head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence." — Col. i. 18. Hence the apostle John says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God," (having already received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father,) "and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him." — 1 John iii. 2. This we think will be enough; it will fill the measure of our desire, when we shall behold his face in righteousness, and awake with his likeness. — Psa. xvii. 15.

This, we think, is doing something for the redeemed sinner, the Adam man of the saints. The spirit within them, which is born of the Spirit, is the Spirit of Christ, is born of God, and dwells in those who are the subjects of that new birth; and it is not a quicken**ed** Spirit, but it is a quicken**ing** Spirit, for it is the same S p i r i t of immortal life which quickened and raised from the dead the crucified body of Christ, and by which God shall quicken into immortal life the bodies of all in whom it now dwells.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, November 1, 1878)

The opinions and doings of men are of no value unless motivated by the Spirit of Truth; if otherwise, they "darken counsel by words without knowledge".

WE QUOTE:

"It has been well and wisely said that though God saves by "the foolishness of preaching," he does not send fools to preach." — PHILPOT

"The church under the two covenants, or testaments, are the first and second heavens, but the third heaven has reference to the place and condition of the church in her triumphant glory." — ELDER GILBERT BEEBE

"It was wrong in old times for men to sow their field with mingled seed, and to let a garment mingled with linen and woolen come upon them, and to plow with an ox and an ass together, and the son of the bond-woman was not to be heir with the son of the free-woman. But these things, in a gospel sense, have not been properly attended to of late years." — ELDER JAMES OSBOURN, in **Religion of New England Portrayed** (1836)

ORDINATION OF ELDER BOCOCK

The church at Thompson's Grove, (Roanoke County, Virginia), met January 28, 1956, with the following named elders present. They were called together for the purpose of ordaining Brother Julius Bocock to the office of minister.

Prayer was made by Elder J. R. Hollandsworth; then Brother Bocock was called to the stand to speak to the people. He spoke from Jeremiah 18:18, and was blessed to speak in demonstration of spirit and power. Then Elders S. L. Moran, C. E. Turner, J. R. Hollandsworth and B. O. Thompson organized the presbytery, electing Elder J. R. Hollandsworth, Moderator, and Elder B. O. Thompson, Clerk.

Elder J. P. Helms was chosen spokesman for the church regarding Brother Bocock's qualifications; and expressed that the church was satisfied with his gift and qualifications. After which Elder Helms was chosen as part of the presbytery.

Elder C. E. Turner was chosen to lead in questioning. The presbytery, consisting of the above named Elders, then proceeded to lay hands upon Brother Bocock, with prayer by

Elder S. L. Moran. Elder J. P. Helms was appointed to give the charge — which was very impressive.

Brother Bocock was then delivered back to the church a duly ordained minister of the gospel of Christ. We do most heartily recommend Elder Bocock to the brethren wherever our God may cast his lot.

Elder J. R. Hollandsworth, Moderator
Elder B. O. Thompson, Clerk

OBITUARIES

DEACON ISAAC TIMBLE LONG

Deacon Isaac Timble Long, of Herndon, Virginia, was born in Page County, Virginia, May 16, 1866; and died February 9, 1956; making his stay on earth almost ninety years. He was the son of the late Isaac and Elizabeth Mohler Long. His first marriage was to Miss Ada White, daughter of the late Elder and Mrs. E. V. White, in 1892; after her death in 1907, he was married to Miss Lillie Ballard, who survives. Brother White is survived also by the following children: Mrs. Inez Norman, Herndon, Virginia; Mrs. Ada Piggott, McLean, Virginia; Isaac A. Long, St. Louis, Missouri; and Garland Long, Arlington, Virginia. (one son, Elijah, died in 1936) He is survived also by two sisters, Miss Bessie Long and Miss Fannie Long; and twelve grand-children and fourteen great grand-children.

Brother Long united with Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church June 9, 1895, and was baptized by the late Elder E. V. White. On November 7, 1931, he was set apart as a deacon. He loved the church and was faithful in his attendance until the infirmities of age prevented him from attending regularly. He was loved and highly respected by his townspeople, his brethren, and all who knew him.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at Frying Pan Church, and interment was in Union Cemetery, Leesburg, Virginia. In spite of the inclement weather, there was a large number of relatives and friends gathered for the services. These, and the numerous flowers attested the high esteem in which he was held.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to all who mourn his passing.

John D. Wood

MRS. NANNIE HOLLOWAY HASTINGS

Mrs. Nannie Grace Holloway Hastings was born in Wicomico County, Maryland, October 5, 1885; and departed this life February 3, 1956, at the "Holloway Homestead", near Salisbury, Maryland, where she had lived since she was three years old.

In October 1927, after hearing a discourse by Elder G. E. Coulbourn from the text, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest", she went before the Old School Baptist Church in Salisbury, and was received into fellowship. She was baptized by the pastor, Elder G. E. Coulbourn; which was his first baptism.

Sister Hastings was united in marriage to Deacon Ananias Hastings in August, 1934, and was blessed with a very happy married life. This union was blessed of the Lord to their spiritual comfort and joy; and to the edification of the churches, as they attended services somewhere almost every Sunday. In 1946, she was elected Treasurer of the Primitive Baptist Home, and served several years with the ability of a good business woman, and one devoted to the cause she served. She also served for a time as Assistant Clerk of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church.

Our beloved sister will best be remembered by the church for her quiet, yet active membership. Her faithfulness and loyalty to the church in every way, was an encouragement to others; and her activity in visiting the sick and older members was of much comfort to them.

She is survived by her husband; one sister, Mrs. C. M. Richardson, of Newport News, Virginia; and a number of devoted neices and nephews.

Funeral services were held in the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church, conducted by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler. Interment was in Parsons Cemetery, Salisbury, Maryland.

We believe she has departed to be with Him who said in her heart, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Written by her pastor,
Elder D. V. Spangler

ALLEN LEE WARE

Brother Allen Lee Ware was born January 21, 1877, in Alabama, and passed away at his home in Rising Star, Texas, August 26, 1955.

He is survived by his wife, Ida Pearl Ware, and the following children: E. D. Ware, Midland, Texas; O. S. Ware, Rising Star, Texas; and Mrs. C. E. Smith, Rising Star; and five grand-children and four great grand-children.

Brother Ware was a strong believer in salvation by grace; and believed in the God who works all things for good for them that love the Lord. It was good to visit in his home and listen to him speak of his hope of a life beyond this life, which he hoped to attain unto. We shall miss him at church and in visiting in his

home.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer, and he was laid to rest in the Rising Star Cemetery, to await the second coming of our Lord, to gather his saints unto himself. To be among these was Brother Ware's hope.

(Elder) U. C. Landers

MRS. ELLA WREN PERKINS

Mrs. Ella Wren Perkins was born February 10, 1877, in Cape County, Missouri; and departed this life June 6, 1955, in St. Louis, Missouri. She was married to the late Jacob Perkins May 9, 1894. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Mayfield, Ky., in 1895, and was baptized by the late Elder J. M. Perkins. She lived a devoted member and loved the doctrine of salvation by grace without wavering. She lived with her children but would come back to the association each fall, if possible. Oh, how she did enjoy meeting her brethren and sisters, and to hear the preaching, and the singing of the songs of Zion. She will be greatly missed by her church and her children.

She is survived by the following children: Lera Murray, Essie Johnson, Gertrude Murray, Mildred Nallman and Edna Meyer, all of St. Louis, Mo., and Vera Veach, Southgate, California; also a sister, Lucy Stoddard, St. Louis, Mo., and eleven grand-children and seventeen great grand-children.

Funeral services were conducted by the children's pastor, Mr. E. N. Rodgers, and burial was in Memorial Park Cemetery, St. Louis, Mo.

Aunt Ella was a sound Baptist on the doctrine of predestination and salvation by grace unconditional; and she loved to hear it preached in its purity. I will miss her in our little church at Mayfield, and in her coming to our home. She reared a noble family, and I know they will miss her very much; and I would say to the children, Weep not for mother for she is at rest. She fought a good fight, and kept the faith, and finished her course; a crown of righteousness is laid up for her, which the Lord will give when he comes to gather his children home. May God in his love comfort and bless all that mourn her passing.

(Elder) O. W. Perkins

MRS. MOLLIE MADREN

Sister Mollie Madren was born in Caswell County, N. C., April 18, 1880, and died November 5, 1955, at the age of 75 years, 6 months and 17 days. She was the daughter of the late George P. and Elizabeth Oakley McKinney, and wife of Fletcher Madren, who preceded her in death a number of years ago.

Sister Madren united with Bush Arbor Church on the Second Saturday in September, 1936, and remained a member until her death. She was a loyal and faithful member. She was a very aggressive woman, a loving wife, a devoted mother and a kind neighbor, loved and respected by all who knew her. These traits of character were demonstrated and made known by the large floral offerings and the number of friends who paid their respects to Sister Madren and her family in her death and burial.

The funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder W. C. King, and Mr. Crutchfield, pastor of Bethlehem Christian Church at Altamahaw, where her body was deposited in the grave beside her late husband, to wait the coming of her Lord and Christ, who at his coming, we have ample proof to believe, will cause her to arise in that immortal state to be presented to her Father, where sickness and death will never come.

Sister Madren leaves the following members of her immediate family to mourn her departure: Three daughters, Mrs. Jesse Paschal of Danville, Va., Mrs. E. B. Tate and Mrs. G. Asa Danieley, both of Route 2, Burlington, N. C.; three sons, Raleigh Madren of Norfolk, Va., Almond and George A. Madren, both of Route 3, Burlington; one sister, Mrs. M. P. Roberson of Burlington; two brothers, G. W. McKinney and S. D. McKinney, both of Route 3, Burlington; 12 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

We, the Church of Bush Arbor, therefore do bow in humble submission to the will of God, who makes no mistakes; and we desire to extend our sincere sympathy to the family of Sister Madren in this hour of bereavement; and resolve that a copy of this resolution be spread on our church records, a copy be sent to the family, and copy sent to the Signs of the Times, and Old Faith Contender, for publication. Done by order of Bush Arbor Church in conference on February 11, 1956.

(Elder) W. C. King, Moderator
J. D. Simmons, Clerk

WILLIAM D. ROGERS

I am sending the obituary of Brother William D. Rogers to you to be published at your convenience.

Brother William D. Rogers was born December 28, 1882, and died December 22, 1955. Making his stay on earth 73 years. He left 6 children to mourn his passing, his wife having passed away some 8 years before. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Kitty Hawk, April, 1950. He was a faithful member and loved the cause till his death. He had a deep heartfelt regard for the word of truth,

and was loved by all who knew him. He suffered very much from ill health in his last years but was always cheerful; and was usually the first one to be in the meeting house for services.

We all feel a great loss at his passing but hope to feel that our earthly loss is his eternal gain. May God in his tender mercy remember his children and loved ones and enable them to be submissive to his will. We believe he is at rest with his heavenly father.

This was written by order of church in conference.

J. P. Tingle, Pastor
Nellie Perry, Clerk Pro. Tem.

WALTER HARRINGTON

It is with great sorrow that we report the death of Walter Harrington, one of the oldest and most highly respected citizens of Halcottville, New York, which occurred at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Alfred Mead, at West Conesville, New York, on October 11, 1955. Mr. and Mrs. Harrington were visiting there when Mr. Harrington suffered a stroke and died after an illness of but a few days. He was eighty-eight years old and had enjoyed excellent health until he passed his eighty-sixth birthday. The body was taken to Herrick's funeral home in Margaretville until removal for the funeral services October 14, at the Halcottville Old School Baptist meeting house. The writer conducted the services and spoke from the words, "It is finished," which had been previously chosen by the deceased for a text for the occasion. The interment was in the Vega cemetery. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Sena Harrington and two daughters, Mrs. Harry Hubbell of Kelly Corners and Mrs. Alfred Mead of West Conesville, N. Y., also several nieces and nephews.

Walter Harrington was born at Phonecia, New York. His parents were Aaron and Elizabeth (Frank) Harrington. At an early age he removed to the town of Roxbury and was engaged several years in farming, at which occupation he was notably successful. He subsequently sold his farm and followed the avocation of a stone mason in which line of work he had no superiors. His services were in demand over a large section of the country. He helped rebuild the locally noted Galli Curchi Theatre at Margaretville. He was united in marriage January 30, 1890, to Miss Sena Slauson who proved a most loyal and helpful wife and companion. They celebrated their sixty-fifth wedding anniversary at their late home in Halcottville.

After the disposal of his farm in Vega he resided at Halcottville, New York. He was broad minded in his religious viewpoints and was a faithful attendant at the meetings of the Old School Baptists and gave generously to the support of the cause. He was generous to all who requested his aid, and no man in his community was more respected and loved than he. His upright walk and sterling honesty combined, with his noble qualities as husband and father, as neighbor and friend, to endear him to the community where he lived. His life has left an indellible impression upon those with whom he associated. Mr. and Mrs. Harrington were especially noted for their hospitality and many acts of kindness.

(Elder) Arnold H. Bellows

ELDER SAMUEL McKINLEY

Elder Samuel McKinley was born in Rockingham County, N. C., August 19, 1883. He died November 13, 1955, after suffering a heart attack.

He was received into the Danville Primitive Baptist church in May 1918, and baptized by the pastor, Elder J. F. Spangler. He later moved his membership to Dan River church, in Rockingham County, North Carolina. He remained a faithful member of this church until death.

A short time after being received into the church, the Lord manifested in our brother a gift to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. He was licensed to speak wherever God cast his lot, and a few years later was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry.

It was my pleasure to be associated in this ministry over twenty years with our beloved brother. I have never known a more humble, loyal and faithful minister. He was sound in the faith, and was blessed to comfort the household of faith in his humble and God fearing ministry. He was held in high esteem by his church and community; and it can truly be said that he fought a good fight, and was ready to depart when the Lord called him home. The church, family and community have suffered a great loss, but we believe he has been called to a better world, where sickness, sorrow, sin and disappointments are no more —to forever be with the Lord.

On November 19, 1905, he was united in marriage to Lena Dix who survives. Also surviving are one son, Grover C. McKinney, and six daughters; Mrs. A. W. Strader, Mrs. C. B. Steliff, Mrs. G. B. Page, Mrs. C. D. Hoskins, Mrs. C. L. Walsh, and Mrs. J. R. Hill.

Funeral services were held in the Dan River Church, conducted by his pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, assisted by Elders W. C. King, W. J. Berry, and J. W. Gilliam. Interment was in the church cemetery.

May the Lord reconcile all who mourn, with the consolation that he has gone to forever be with him whom he loved so well.

D. V. Spangler

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 124 DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1956 NO. 6

1516 Rutland Street,
Houston 8, Texas

Dear Brother Spangler:

I appreciate your writing me, and sending me the dear old paper. I do hope I am thankful for such a rich blessing.

The dear Lord knows our needs, and has promised to supply them; and I do so much need the scriptural heavenly manna which the dear old Signs furnishes. We have to wait upon the Lord, for the precious things of our God are not ours to reach out and grasp. If they were, we would never be lonely and cast down, with a feeling of being a castaway without a friend on earth. It is only by revelations of our Lord that we know (if I am included) anything of his goodness and mercy. He has promised us so much, and his word and promises are absolute: sure, for he is an unchangeable God. He says, "I am the Lord, I change not."

By experience, I know our way to be dark and rugged; for in this world we must have tribulations, trials, and sorrows. And I believe this needs be, to keep us humble. But He will never put more upon his little ones than he will make them able to bear. So much of the time all things seem to be against us, but we look upward and desire to travel on. If we could direct our steps, our pathway would always be bright. He said that he would lead them in paths that they have not known; and that he would not forsake them. And, "I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness;" and, "Lo, I am with thee always, even unto the end of the world."

All these sweet promises of our God are comforting when we are given a seeing eye, a hearing ear, and a heart to understand. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" How wonderful is the love of our God for his little ones! This love the world knows nothing about; neither can they give it to us, nor can they take it from us. "For we are persuaded that neither life nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, things present nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." It is from everlasting to everlasting, but we get only a glimpse as we journey along, and as He makes us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

I believe these heavenly places are when his children are given a foretaste of what he has prepared for them. When they come into the fulness they will be like him, and be satisfied. Our Lord says, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." He is a faithful friend to his people; he does not deceive, as the world, by promising and not fulfilling. He has not left his little ones comfortless, but has sent the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, but his people know him; for he dwells with them.

Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." (John 14:27) The world cannot give peace of mind and soul, but Christ Jesus our Lord gives sweet peace, righteousness and lasting riches which remain with his little ones for ever; for he never takes them away. He has promised, and his word shall not fail but shall accom-

plish that which he pleases.

We hear of so much confusion: divisions and non-fellowshiping. Brethren what aileth Zion? It seems that old Satan is going to and fro in the earth taking pleasure in these things. Oh, may it be the Lord's will to pour out his richest blessings on the church, that Zion may rise and shine. May he lead the sheep and lambs who see eye to eye, to lay down all personal ill will and stubborness, and as humble children of God's love, be joined in sweet unity to declare and sing songs of praise to Him who has loved them and redeemed them by his own precious blood.

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments: As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." (Psalms 133)

My precious ones, I will now close. This scribble is very scattering, and, I feel, as imperfect as I am, and perhaps it will not be of interest to anyone. Yet I felt as though I would perish if I didn't talk with someone. May the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ be with you all. And may the good old Signs prosper, ever adhering to the truth and contending for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. I hope some sweet day to meet all of you in that home not made with hands, to ever be with our God and Saviour. An old sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all.

Harriett Little Gray

Walstonburg, N. C.

Dear Editors:

I wish to write a little of my experience. The latter part of August, 1951, I was sent to the hospital in Wilson, N. C., for a dangerous operation. On the day I was to be operated on, the doctor came into my room and said that he would do it, if I was willing. I told him that I had confidence in him, and that the good Lord would bless him with every thought that he needed, and would guide his hand in performing the operation; and it would be just like the Lord wanted it done, for the Lord was right in the room with us, and that I would get well. I did get well and back in perfect health.

I have just finished reading the article by Elder Silas H. Durand, published in the December Signs of the Times. This writing of Elder Durand's on the subject of things present, past and future, is as near my experience as I could tell. It is a great consolation to read God's word, and the experiences of Paul and others; and to read the articles published from the old papers.

Will close by asking my brethren and friends to pray for me, and to come see us when they can.

Your little brother in hope,

W. J. Dupree

Newport, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

I note that my subscription is due, so am enclosing $3.00 for another year. I am alone much of my time with an afflicted husband, so find time to read my papers; and sometimes over and over, for rest, strength and comfort. They satisfy my poor hungry and thirsty soul for food that I would have to do without were it not for them; for I don't see the people I hope I love with the love that never dies. So I feast from the printed word of the papers: from the writings of such able gifts. I hope the Lord will enable more of them to come forward and express their feelings and experiences; for poor worms like me are fed from time to time with the crumbs which fall from the Master's table.

We are told that man shall not live

by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. It seems to me that I get hungrier for spiritual food than I do for natural. I get all undone, upset, and cast down, with an emptiness about me that natural food can't satisfy. Then is when I have to fall on my knees and bow my head, and ask God to keep me and take away that empty feeling, and satisfy my longing for spiritual food. I know that such comes from him, and that he knows our needs much better than we. What a blessing it is to have such a Saviour as the author and finisher of our faith.

In bonds of love,

Mrs. W. H. Cannon

DO WE LOVE GOD?

A good test for trying our love for God is to ask ourselves a few questions: Do I always do what I would want to be doing when Jesus comes? Do I go to places where I would not want to be when Jesus comes? Is my conversation always what I would want Jesus to hear?

God sees every action we make; he hears every word we speak; and he knows our every thought. The God we love is always right beside us. If we feelingly realize this, we will treat our brethren as brethren.

Here is a verse in Proverbs 3:6, which would be well if we could remember: "In all the ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

W. J. Dupree

1214 W. 132nd Street,
Gardena, Calif.

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood:

I would like to write a few lines but have not been given the spirit to do so. I have had the pleasure of meeting and hearing Elder Spangler when he visited our little church a few years ago. I enjoyed his short visit very much, and we would like to have him, or any of the brethren, visit us anytime. We feel it would be a great blessing to us.

I notice my subscription is past due, so am sending check for $10.00. Use $5.00 for any purpose you see fit. I hope to visit you good people some day, God willing.

T. C. Simpson

BROUGHT OUT OF EGYPTIAN BONDAGE

"How strange is the course that a Christian must steer:
How perplexed is the path he must tread:
The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
And his life he receives from the dead."

How expressive is the above verse of the experience of the children of God of their warfare and journey through this life. What a strange course is theirs. They are born into this life as the seed of Adam — conceived in sin, shapened in iniquity. They are of the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Sold in sin. Sold as slaves into the land of Egypt. How terrible was their lives there, what hardships they passed through while under Egyptian bondage. Many times they must have asked; Would there ever be an escape from this bondage? Would it not seem that their daily prayer would be for a way to open up for their escape? They did pray God for deliverance, and in time God raised up Moses to lead them out from under the Egyptian bondage. But this journey was a long one. They were led forty years through the wilderness in their journey out of Egypt. Hunger, thirst and starvation overtook them, and many times they grumbled and complained and asked, would it not have been better to have stayed in Egypt than to starve in the wilderness? Then when they came to the Red Sea and the Egyptian soldiers following close behind them, and the mountains on either side of them, and the sea before them and all escape seemingly gone, with the Egyptian soldiers pressing upon them, "They were so afraid and cried unto the Lord, And

they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? Wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? Is not the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness. And Moses said unto the people. Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them no more forever." All our sins, all our enemies against us, God will destroy. All of God's people must be brought out of Egypt and their enemies destroyed. Each one of God's children have to go through the Red Sea: forced into it with the enemy approaching from the rear and seemingly death before them in the depths of the terrible Red Sea.

Yes, each one of God's children are forced to go forward into the depths; and as great walls of the sea rise up on each side of them seemingly to fall upon them causing their destruction, they are made to cry out, "God be merciful to me." And, Lo, God is there, and there is a great calm. Fear is taken from you and you find the bottom of the sea a dry and firm foundation, which firm foundation is Christ within you, your hope of glory, your eternal salvation. This was not your choosing. You were forced into this way, forced through the Red Sea: The Way, the Truth and the Life. You entered into this new life, while your enemies were consumed: — drowned in the Red Sea. What was a way of life to you, was a way of death to your enemies who tried to overtake you and put you to death. Yes you must go through Jordan. You must walk where Jesus leads. To follow him you must go where he went. You must go through trials, tribulations, persecution and death and arise again into newness of life. "Ye must be born again." How the Church watches God's little children who have been quickened into newness of life. Watching them in their travail until they are born again. Many times it is a long growth after they have been quickened into this new life before they are brought into the light — born again. — Like it is with a mother when conception takes place, life begins, but the child is not born for quite a length of time afterwards. So with a child of God after having been quickened by the Holy Ghost they pass a long experience through growth until the set time comes when God says come forth. They then are born into this spiritual life, and fleshly man has had nothing to do with this wonderful work. It all has been of the Spirit and Power of God.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

Casper G. Fetter

Southampton, Pa.

Dear Brethren Editors: — You both have asked me to write something for the Signs. And today as I was not able to get to the Saturday Church Meeting at Hopewell, N. J. and while thinking of them with a desire in my heart to have been with them, I sat down and wrote the above. Dear Ones, if what I have written is not in accordance with God's truth, do not publish it, but cast it aside and I will thank you for doing so, for I would not want to see anything published but the truth. I have not written anything for the Signs for a long while, and may never write again. In two months, if I live, I will be eighty-two, and it seems the time must be drawing near when I shall be numbered with those who have departed this life and gone home to be forever with our Heavenly Father.

A lonely pilgrim nearing his end, but who still longs to hear from his brethren.

Casper G. Fetter

THE GLORIFICATION OF JESUS
(John 17:5)

"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory that I had with thee before the world was."

The above words were uttered by Jesus Christ just before he crossed the brook Cedron to enter Gethsemane, where in unutterable agony, he sweat, as it were, great drops of blood. He had just referred to his finished work which found its consumnation at Calvary where on the cross he hung a suffering, bleeding spectacle to men and to angels; where he offered up his holy humanity on the altar of his divinity. Though verily the son of God, he must suffer for the sins of his people and endure the awful penalty as their Surety, by being the Son of Man in the mystery of the divine incarnation. As man he was subject to death and must endure the curse that would otherwise have come to all the members of the election of grace because of their transgression in Adam. Because of the divine essence which he possessed, he could lay down his life and he could take it again.

It is important to remember that Jesus in his prayer, as recorded in the 17th chapter of John, asked to be glorified with the Father's self with the glory that he as Christ had with the Father before the world was. Jesus asked, "Glorify thou me." And the expression "me," embraced his holy humanity as the son of man. Jesus was the God-Man but he had not become man until he became incarnate by virtue of the virgin birth, when the prophecy was fulfilled which reads, "The Lord hath created a new thing in the earth; a woman shall encompass a man." Then Jesus as the Son of Man was that new thing in the earth, for God had never before been manifested in the flesh, as the word had not until then become flesh. As the eternal Son of God, Christ had a glory with the Father, being as one brought up with him and dwelling in the Father's bosom as a spirit, for God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. But when he was born of a woman, that eternal word became flesh as the Son of Man: holy, human flesh made under the law and subject to the penalty of the law and its awful curse because of the church he came to redeem, and which was chosen in him before the foundation of the world. The flesh of Jesus Christ must be subject to death and to have the sins of all the elect people laid upon him by imputation so that he, "Became sin for us who knew no sin that we might be the righteousness of God in him." As he was bruised for our iniquities and beaten with many stripes, and was forsaken by the Father for a time on the cross, who could not look upon sin, Jesus hung there taking the place of his bride the church as though he had done all the sinning for her and was bearing all her guilt. Though he was holy, harmless, and undefiled, he was taking the place of his people who transgressed in Adam; and so was made sin for his people that as their sins were imputed to him, his righteousness might be imputed to them. Therefore while a sin bearer, the flesh of Jesus could not be glorified, for that flesh was offered in his holy body as a sacrifice. He was the sin offering for his people. That is why he prayed to the Father to be glorified in his humanity which did not exist before the creation of the world.

Christ did not lay aside his glory which as the eternal son of God he had with the Father as being one with him, but he veiled that glory within his holy humanity, so that unbelievers did not discern his divine essence, his eternal sonship, nor the Godhead that dwelt in him. On the Mount of Transfiguration, Peter, James and John beheld his glory when divinity shone through his humanity, so that these disciples fell down and were so afraid. The humanity of Christ was glorified when he entered into heaven as the man Christ Jesus, for we have one Mediator in heaven, the man Christ Jesus. He is touched with the feelings of the infirmities of his people because he is a man, and therefore, can represent God to man and man to God, in a glorious priesthood after the order of Melchisedec.

Let us ever remember that God made man of the dust of the earth and breath-

ed into man the breath of life and man became a living soul. Also that unto man was given a law, the transgression of which must be followed by a dreadful penalty that can never be set aside. Man in the flesh became unholy by sinning, and therefore subject to death and the endless wrath of God. A spirit cannot die and so man could not be redeemed unless a holy sacrifice was made by a holy man. The eternal word must become flesh and be subject to death in the person of Christ Jesus in order that the law might be fulfilled, and its penalty endured. That is why Jesus Christ was both Son of God and Son of Man — verily the God-Man, that he might atone for sin in his holy human flesh, and, possessing power to rise from the dead, bring his people off more than conquerors over death, the grave, and hell's unspeakable torment. There is no redemption provided for a fallen angel, for those fallen and wicked spirits are reserved unto the judgement of the great day. So without the incarnation of Jesus there could be no salvation. The greatest conceivable need of man is to be saved from the inconceivable wrath of God. Jesus in his humanity under the law endured that wrath, being under the judgement of God for all true believers; and so while in the flesh here on earth before his death on the cross, his humanity could not be glorified; therefore he prayed to have the glory that he had with the Father to glorify his flesh. Therefore as Jesus is a glorified man in heaven, he will glorify his church in the mystery of the resurrection and crown her with a blessed immortality.

Humbly submitted.

(Elder) Arnold H. Bellows

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172 Emery St.,
London, Canada

Dear Bro. Hudson,

"Children of the heavenly King as you journey sweetly sing." These thoughts came into my mind this morning, after reading your article, "So great a Salvation" in the **Signs of the Times.** Yes, it is so great a Salvation that we want to tell it. Yes, tell it. When the new song is put in our mouths, then we will sing his praises and tell of his wonderful love to the children of men.

How often when I have seen the marks of grace in a man or woman, I have wished that their cup might overflow, that they might be given to own their Lord and to defend his cause. But it is only the wish of a carnal mind. I think not but that we must abide the Lord's time and way to bring this about, and be still and know that he is God. He works and none can hinder. He commands and it stands fast. There is no tarrying with him. For his little children he makes safe places for their feet. How often we fear that we may fall by the wayside, and we are made to plead that he will guide us in all things.

"The Lord is thy keeper. The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil. He shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth and even forever more." Surely our times are in his hand.

I rejoiced to know that in your youth, you were made to know that Salvation is of the Lord. How greatly blessed you have been to be taught in your youth and carried in his arms thus far. If once his child always his child. He will never leave or forsake you.

I trust I have known of his love and guiding power for many years. I was twenty when I was given a hope and received into the visible church. Now I have passed my three score years and ten. He still is my all and in all, and I rejoice and try to praise him.

We do see as through a glass darkly, and sometimes he hides his smiling face and we become disturbed and fearful and are made to cry: "O Lord, why has thou forsaken me!" It is to teach us how frail we are and our constant need of him. We have to become as little chil-

dren to enter his kingdom.

Your article brought back many sweet memories of his guidance in my youth and all my blessings along the way. I was made glad that you are being taught by the same Lord and Master.

It is a great Salvation. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given and the government shall be upon his shoulders. And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Almighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end. Upon the throne of David and upon his Kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will preform this."

May He ever bless you as his little child.

Humbly your little sister in a precious hope.

Lollie M. Campbell

Farmerville, La.

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing a letter I received from Sister L. M. Campbell of London, Canada. It was very comforting to me, and I felt that someone else might get comfort from it too.

Yours in hope,
Woodrow W. Hudson, Jr.

Bloomburg, Texas

Dear Signs of the Times:

I am late in my subscription, but I hope I desire to continue to receive the good paper. It contends for what I believe. I enjoyed the March issue very much, for dark shadows had been leaving me blank.

I enclose $10.00 for another year's subscription; the balance to help in any way needed. Just a poor sinner, saved through God's great love and mercy, if saved at all.

Mrs. Maggie Simmons

A SURPRISE VISIT

Union City, Tenn.

Signs of the Times,
Dear Brethren:

Just want to send report of a meeting that took place at my humble home yesterday, February 19, 1956. My brethren and sisters in Western Kentucky and Tennessee got together and meant to surprise me with this visit and dinner. About forty of them gathered at my home, bringing baskets and boxes of food — and their hymn books. After singing several songs of praise to the matchless name of their God, Elder E. C. Lowery was called on to preach; which he did to the comfort of his brethren. Then Elder O. W. Perkins was called on; and all you that know dear Brother Perkins know what a feast we had. I know that each one present was filled. Then our pastor, Elder R. L. Harrison was requested to speak; and I must say it was a continuation of what had gone on before.

Brethren, I know that a lot of your readers know these three elders who preached at my house yesterday, and will rejoice with me when they read of this meeting; for a lot of the readers of the dear old Signs have visited in the Soldier Creek and Bethel associations, and they know and love our people. We hope they will have the desire to visit us again — and not only those who have visited us, but other true Primitive Baptists who are in order at home, bringing the doctrine of salvation by grace for both time and eternity. If any have anything else for salvation, or are not in order at home, they are not invited. We are in order, if I am not miserably mistaken.

Brethren Spangler, Wood, Nash, Griffin and Lambert, we love your writing in the Signs, and would love a visit sometime by any of you. I think all of you know our people in Western Kentucky and Tennessee, and I know you love them and the doctrine and practice we hold. I am giving the names of those who met with me Sunday, and, if it is

not too much to ask, please publish this together with the names, so that I will have a permanent record of this meeting that I can look at in days that are dark and when I am lonely: H. L. Collier, Presley Moore, F. A. Chappel and wife, Chester Bennett, Elder E. C. Lowery, Hester Bennett and wife, H. M. Olive and wife, Albert Casey and wife, Elder O. W. Perkins and wife, Martin Moon and wife, O. C. Croft, J. E. Jones and wife, Preston Jones and wife, J. R. Davie, B. P. Moon, W. G. Anderson, J. R. Newberry, Mrs. Sophia Price, Burnal Lowery and wife, Elder R. L. Harrison and wife, J. B. Collier and wife, Mrs. Hershel Priest, Charles and Larry Priest, Mrs. T. R. Poyner, and Kathy Priest. If any names are omitted, please pardon me, for I wanted all the names in the Signs. May I say to these dear friends, God bless each of you — come see me again.

May the God of all grace bless and keep all of you humble, and at each other's feet — which is order.

Your most unworthy brother,

J. W. Barnes

Perrin, Texas

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am sorry that I have failed to send in my renewal for the Signs but I am eighty-six years old and am so forgetful lately. I don't want to miss any one of the Signs, for the last few have been so full of real gospel truths, and I surely did enjoy them.

I am sitting here this cold day thinking over some of the past, and wondering can it be possible that our people that believe alike will ever be to where they can bear with one another in love. I have just read a letter from my great niece: it seems that the good Lord has begun a good work with her, and carrying it on. She seems to be in great trouble of late. "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." I know she has never lived where she could be taught the truths of the scriptures; but God can give them eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand. I believe this is the only way we can know these things. Paul never learned these things by man, but by the revelation of God; for God's Spirit is the great revealer of the great secrets of heaven. Our people preach these blessed truths to the comfort of God's little children, who do hunger after righteousness. I want to say that I sure did enjoy the last Signs: I was so hungry for that bread that comes down from heaven.

I have a hard time in life. My wife fell and broke her hip seven years ago, and has not walked a step since; and unless I can get some one to stay with her, I can't go to meetings. But I feel it is the good Lord's will.

I feel so sad about Brother J. A. Perdue's death, for I had some fine letters from him; and I learned to love him for the truth's sake. May God's richest blessings rest with dear Sister Perdue.

Your unworthy brother,

(Elder) C. Y. Osteen

Lawrenceville, Ga.

Dear Brother Spangler:

Enclosed please find three dollars to bring my subscription up to July, 1956.

I wish the Signs of the Times another good year in bringing instruction and spiritual food and comfort to the children of God. In spite of all the variableness of men, God changeth not. He has not remembered us according to our iniquities but his arm of love and mercy is stretched out still. He is the same forever. Let us all hope that we may be led by his Holy Spirit to lay aside all the weights and the sin that so EASILY besets us as we enter into the new year. Let us hope to be living epistles, willing to be known and read of all men; and let us hope to be prompted to love one another with a pure heart fervently.

All that Old Baptists have got, is one another. Nearly all other people can interchange their worship but we can not interchange with them nor they

with us. Our heritage is unto us as a speckled bird; the birds around about us are against us. Therefore it is needful that we strive together for unity at all times. Let us resolve in our hearts that we will henceforth give due respect to our every brother, learned or unlearned, rich or poor, small or great. If any be strong let him bear the infirmities of the weak. Let those who are ordained to govern do so in the fear of the Lord. Let them take care to direct their own ways in righteousness, that none can have cause of offense against them while they judge others. Let us not coddle or condone unrighteousness in a brother, but let us **not** think within ourselves that whatsoever **we** bind on earth, is necessarily bound in heaven; any anything we have evidence of having been loosed in heaven, if we are what we profess to be, we ought to be willing to loose it in earth.

Only God knows what lies ahead of us in the New Year, but I am praying for myself that I may have a reconciled mind to all of God's appointments for me, acknowledging to Him that I am wholly incapable of judging what is for my good or my evil by what lies before me; leaving all that to Him where it justly belongs. If I could have only one prayer for this new year it would be; Lord teach me how to do justice; cause me to love mercy; let me walk humbly with Thee all the days of my life. Time is so fleeting, very, very soon we shall be called into eternal judgement. I know that if I am ever raised to the resurrection of the just it will be because of the LOVE and MERCY of God.

May it please God to give to our people a greater desire to read the scriptures for instruction in all things pertaining to righteousness, and to wait daily at the posts of WISDOM'S door.

Your brother in hope,

J. B. Dunagan

Vernon, Alabama

"This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you." (Luke 22:20)

This is the text the Elder D. V. Spangler used at Hopewell Church, Fayette, Alabama, February 19th of this year. If I know what preaching the gospel is, it was a wonderful discourse. In the face of such a gracious display of truth, I hesitate to try to write on this subject, but it has been on my mind for some time, and I can't seem to push it off. If what I write is like myself, it will be imperfect.

In the beginning all sacrificial offerings were bulls, sheep, pigeons, etc.: none without giving life by shedding of blood. Moses was commanded to make an altar to a certain specification, making a horn upon each corner. "And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horn of the altar once a year, with the blood of the sin offering of atonement once in a year throughout your generations: it is most holy unto the Lord." His sound will be heard as he goes in and out before the Lord: that he die not. I would love to know if I know just what this sound is. Aaron's sacred robe was adorned upon the hem with a golden bell and pomegranate in succession. I can imagine the congregation hearing these golden bells and pomegranates as they swung together by the movement of Aaron: typifying to me the gospel of each dispensation meeting together in a joyful sound and a sweet savor.

Those wonderful old patriarchs rested in the wills and shalls of Almighty God, and gleaned, through the types and shadows, the beauty of the cup of the new covenant in Jesus' blood given to their sons and daughters many days hence. I believe it was David who said something of the binding of the sacrifice to the four horns of the altar. How unworthy and little we do feel when we hope to believe that our Saviour was bound to the four horns of the altar for our sins. The unworthiness is beyond any definition that has ever been given by man. "For the love of Christ passeth all knowledge." "O, the depths of the

riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgements and his ways past finding out." Jesus said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day." He saw it and was glad. The unbeliever believed him not and took up stones to cast at him. He said to them, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am." He spoke to them, and yet did not reveal himself to them, for he hid himself and went out of the temple through the midst of them. Unbelievers today are not one bit different than they. Jesus said on the cross, "It is finished." Do they believe it? No! He does not alter his words, but hides himself from them: and the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing.

How gracious it is to be given to believe the words of Jesus, and he does not hide himself and pass you by, but covers your defenseless head with the shadow of his wing. Sometimes it pleases God, for your good and his glory, to bring a cloud between you and the brightness of the sun (Son), but every cloud has a silver lining, and when the fulness of God's time comes that you have walked in darkness long enough, the cloud begins to break, and the glory begins to shine brighter than before. You see again the New Testament in Jesus' blood that was given to all the redeemed of Israel.

It pleased God for Israel to go down into Egypt and be there 430 years, and be in bondage to Pharoah. When the fulness of time came for their deliverance, God instructed Moses and Aaron to kill a lamb of the first year without blemish, and sprinkle the blood on the door posts, and eat with loins girded, shoes on, staff in hand — eat it in haste: "It is the Lord's passover." That same night the Lord smote all the first born of Egypt, but not one Israelite was even hurt. Why? Because of the blood on the door posts. "And it shall come to pass when ye come to the land that the Lord will give you, according as he has promised, that ye shall keep this service." (Exodus 12:25) If this inheritance is by the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise. "Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid. For if there had been a law given that could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe."

"Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the Passover must be killed." This law must be fulfilled to a jot and a tittle: Jesus being the only one that could keep and finish it, was there to eat the last Passover supper with his apostles. This fleshly body that he had taken upon himself through the Virgin Mary, was approaching the time when it should be taken and by wicked hands slain. After supper, this passover supper, the Lord took the cup, saying, "This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you." This must be the time recorded by Jeremiah, when he said, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts: and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jeremiah 31:31-34) "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which

doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach." (Romans 10: 4-8) "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness came by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." (Galatians 2:21)

This cup, the New Testament, is so full of the wills and shalls of the predestinated purpose of Almighty God, there is no room for folly: Jesus fills it to the brim. It pleased God, the Father, that in him all fullness should dwell: He is in his people the cup of blessing which is the communion of the blood.

In types and shadows Jesus shone
To light the pathway dim:
He sat upon the great white throne,
And sheltered every gem.

The time has come, he must descend,
And leave his Father's throne:
His bride on earth he must defend,
For she is prone to roam.

The covenant made long e'er the sun
Shot forth his golden ray —
(No man did for this mission run,
For he was dormant clay).

Alone the hand of our great King
(For man the goal had lost)
Made way for Jesus' blood to bring
Salvation by the cross.

He came to bear his last ordeal:
It set man's heart on fire;
He ate with them the Paschal meal,
And was betrayed for hire.

He then was nailed to Calvary's cross
For sins man could not sup.
How can you say his elect are lost:
He gave to them the cup.

(Mrs.) Maggie Lee Hayes

DELAWARE RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Delaware River Association will be held at the Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J. June 6, 7 and 8, 1956. All brethren of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us.

Those arriving in Hopewell on Tuesday will stop at the home of Mr. and Mrs. George Genther, on West Prospect Street; or Sister Letha Blackwell, Lafayette Street, Rosa Acres, Hopewell, and they will be cared for.

Letha A. Blackwell, Church Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Association is appointed to be held with the Primitive Baptist Church in Danville, Virginia, beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in July, and continuing three days (July 6, 7, 8). The meeting will be held on Friday in the meeting house on Bradley Road; Saturday and Sunday's service will be held in Ballou Park, on West Main Street.

Wyatt Oakes, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ENDOWMENT FUND

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, New York City, in memory of Elder R. Lester Dodson	$1,000.00
Elder and Mrs. D. V. Spangler, Va.	50.00
Mrs. Wm. Beebe, New York	25.00
Mrs. G. E. Rogers, Canada	50.00
L. D. Duke, West Va.	10.00
Mrs. Amy Hewett, New York	40.00
Wm. D. Chapman, New York	100.00
Total to date	$1,275.00

(See "A Message To Our Readers" on page 132)

"TRIED IN THE FURNACE"

This interesting book by Elder Lambert is yet available. The price is $3.00, and may be had by addressing:

Elder E. J. Lambert,
306 Richardson Street,
Winnsboro, Texas

WHY NOT GIVE A SUBSCRIPTION TO THE SIGNS

EDITORIALS

Danville, Virginia **June, 1956**

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Route 5, Box 332F **Danville, Va.**

EDITORIAL

A MESSAGE TO OUR READERS: WE NEED YOUR HELP

We have stated before in these columns that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES truly belongs to the Primitive Baptist people. Elder R. L. Dodson, former owner of the paper, incorporated it into a non-profit organization and gave it to our people. When he purchased the paper, he received only the subscription list; and from then until now the printing of the paper has been contracted to various printers.

Last year we failed by a few dollars to meet expenses; and in March of this year, we were notified of an increase of 10% in the price of printing, effective immediately. With this increase of cost we are faced with a number of problems: We must raise the subscription price, or raise sufficient funds to take care of this heavier burden.

Our readers in the past have been very generous in their kind remembrance of us in every way, and we hesitate to bring our problem to you, but believe they will understand and be willing to lend a helping hand.

At a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the paper, held March 9, 1956, it was decided to make an appeal to our readers. We have no printing equipment of our own, so it was decided to appeal to our readers and friends to donate towards an Endowment Fund; and when sufficient amount is raised, to buy a press provided satisfactory arrangements can be made for the operation of it. If enough is not raised for the press, or proper arrangements cannot be made for its operation, the funds will be invested in an Endowment Fund, and the income used to help offset our additional burden. We will need about $6000.00 for this fund. Any help brethren and friends may feel to give will be much appreciated by all connected with the paper. Donations are deductable from Federal Income Taxes.

We solicit the help of our ministry and churches, believing that many in their congregations will gladly contribute, if mention is made of it.

All donations will be acknowledged through the paper each month.

D. V. Spangler
J. D. Wood — Editors

A BOUQUET OF WORDS

An expression I had never heard, read, or thought about suddenly awakened me from sleep some time ago — as if some one had spoken them audibly to me. This phrase, "A Bouquet of Words," has continually been deeply impressed upon my mind since then. The two vases that have graced the pulpit of Paran Church filled with fresh fragrant flowers almost every time I have gone behind the sacred desk have been more impressive since then. The many flowers sent by loved one to the

sick and bereaved have had a new significance. The other day I witnessed the expression of love and gratitude and deep devotion as one sister greeted another with a bouquet of beautiful, fragrant flowers. I wish that I could record the "Bouquet of loving words," spoken by each in this greeting.

I am now thinking of the "Bouquet of Words" spoken as recorded in the Song of Solomon, chapter 2, verse 1; "I am the ROSE of Sharan and the LILY of the valleys." Solomon being a type of Christ, this dialogue surely could be rightly used as a conversation between Christ and his Church. These words void of the Love of God and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, would produce no good effect but would be dead and meaningless. If it pleases God to cause these words to bud by the power of his Love in our hearts, and through the radiating influence of the Holy Spirit make them unfold their petals, they will, "Blossom as the Rose." "It shall blossom abundantly," (See Isaiah 35: 1-2). The eyes of the reader may fall upon these words and his finite mind consider them as words irrelevant, immaterial, uneventful; thus, unimportant. He may hear them quoted in the pulpit without effect. They are as small as the seed that is sown in the ground. When the Spirit of the Lord applies them to your heart they become enlarged. Your mind becomes absorbed in the expression. All other phrases go into the back-ground and this one phrase becomes most beautiful, lovely, sweet, and pure. You see Jesus, in this sweet hour of devotion, swelling your heart as a bud. Further revelations unfold the petals of the ROSE and you are enabled to behold beauty as you have never before. As your thoughts become more engrossed in the ROSE, each petal as it unfolds has a more wonderful significance than heretofore. The sweet fragrance of his graces permeate your troubled soul with such sublime calmness. The purity of his love inspires your mind with adoration and devotion. You are made to say, "He is the ROSE of Sharan and the LILY of the valleys."

When you are given to behold the imputed righteousness of Christ in the walk and conversation of your brethren, you see them as the ROSE of Sharan, and the LILY of the valleys. When you see the Church as a LILY among thorns, it is awe-inspiring: You see the devotion of one to the other and the union of the members of the household of faith as they form a cluster, being bound together with the strong cords of His love, you are amazed. When you behold the effects of the God-given graces upon the lives of those who possess that precious faith, you are astonished. As the Heavenly gifts are made manifest by lovely administerings to one another, you are convinced that such fellowship cannot be severed. You have seen the Church withstand severe persecutions and come out victorious through great tribulations, until you have been made to say, "She is the Rose of Sharan, and the Lily of the valleys." The children of God are as a bouquet of roses clustered to the center ROSE, Christ Jesus. How beautiful they are when compared to the thorns, or enemies and persecutors, that surround them. How pure their motives when contrasted with the selfish motives of the world. How lovely is their devotion when considering the selfish love of worldly minded people.

Have you ever been so depressed, worried, and famished that you felt you would sink into despair, when an encouragement from a dear friend gave you a new lease on life? The words of your friend became as a bouquet of inspiring words which gave you fresh courage to press on. Your friend's manifest interest in you relieved your loneliness and assured you that there were others interested in your welfare. Many times in my despairing tribulations, angelic messages, as from guardian angels, came in due season to strengthen my feeble knees and to lift up my hands which hung down.

We read in Proverbs 15:23, "A word spoken in due season, how good is it."

The season must be right in order for the word spoken to be good. It must be properly timed in order to result in good effects. The word spoken must fit the occasion and be joined in good order to produce good. Many bouquets of inspiring words have been given when the one who spoke them was not aware of them being so properly timed and fitly placed. Our God, who reigns supremely, and has complete control of our thoughts, words, and actions, knows how to arrange the circumstances so that our conversations become "words in season to him that is weary." (Isaiah 50:4)

How good is the word, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9) This is a bouquet of words to those who have worked out of both tools and timber, and have found all their efforts vain. These words are not good to the self-righteous boaster. The due season for these words to be good, is when the one spoken to has fully realized that the best of his own righteousness is as filthy rags in the sight of God. When these words bud in the heart and the warmth of the loving Spirit of God cause them to gradually unfold their glorious meanings until they blossom into a full flower, HOW GOOD IS IT. When grafted in the heart that has been well prepared in the furnace of affliction and seasoned by the gift of God's revelation, these words become beautiful, delightfully fragrant, pure, and lovely in your meditation. This wonderful unfolding of God's loving kindness cannot be comprehended by the carnal, finite mind. It requires the imputed mind of Christ to understand the magnitude of these glorious mercies.

I am thinking of a beautiful BOUQUET OF WORDS that now abide in the vase of our hearts. "And now abideth, FAITH, HOPE, CHARITY, these three: but the greatest of these is charity." God has placed this bouquet in our hearts. He has given it to us. Sometimes our hearts are so cold that the bouquet closes up its petals so that we do not behold their beauty and fragrance. Sometimes FAITH withers so that we are not aware of its presence. HOPE becomes blighted so that it needs to be renewed by Living Water. Sometimes the weeds of jealousy, envy, and selfishness hide CHARITY from our view and regard. Oh, how good it is when the Lord in his mercy eradicates the weeds through judgment and persecutions and brings the bouquet to our memory and view! How good it is for FAITH to be strengthened by the word of His power. How sweet it is for the veil that has blighted HOPE to be removed so that it becomes as "An anchor to the Soul, both sure and steadfast."

Has FAITH been sometimes so withered in your experience that you were made to cry out, "Lord, help thou mine unbelief." Even though it be so small as a grain of mustard seed, you have felt it bud in your heart and be enlarged so greatly in your meditations that it strengthened you for the severest afflictions. As you behold its purity and beauty, it encourages you to press on toward the mark of the high-calling. As it blossoms in your mind it overshadows all your mis-givings and assures you that God is for you and nothing can be against you. It refreshes your discouraged heart as the petals of its wondrous effects unfold in your soul.

Surely, the disciples of our Lord saw a wonderful bouquet of living words when they said to Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE." (St. John 6:68) Jesus had just finished a discourse on THE BREAD OF LIFE. He had told them plainly that he was the bread of life. He had informed them that he was the LIVING BREAD. He pointed out in this discourse that the flesh profiteth nothing, and that no one could come to him except it were given him of his Father. Many of his disciples forseek him when he told them plainly that, "No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of My Father."

(John 6:65) After they turned away, he said unto the twelve, "Will ye also go away?" The twelve wanted to know, "To whom shall we go? THOU HAST THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE." What a bouquet of words!! — WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE. These words had life. They were refreshing. They were pure and holy. No other words could give life eternal except the WORDS of our Master. What a beautiful bouquet are the words of ETERNAL LIFE spoken by our Master. We read in St. John 6:63, "The words that I speak unto you, THEY ARE SPIRIT, AND THEY ARE LIFE." Words that have Spirit and Life certainly are a BOUQUET OF LIVELY AND SPIRITUAL WORDS. When He speaks life into you it becomes a beautiful bouquet. When He speaks the Spirit blossoms as the bouquet.

I am thinking of a beautiful bouquet of words that Jesus speaks to those who labor and are heavy laden, when he says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you REST. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30) These words do not sound like they would heap burdens. They do not tell of a heavy yoke. They are words to the contrary — thus a BEAUTIFUL BOUQUET OF RESTFUL WORDS TO THE WEARY SOUL. When a person is convinced that his Master is just as lowly and meek as one who feels to be less than the least of all saints, it gives him courage. Jesus realized that of himself he could do nothing. The Father worked hitherto, and He worked. When he reveals this relationship to the meek and lowly, it truly is a bouquet of inspiring words.

Surely it was a BOUQUET OF WORDS that Jesus had under consideration in his prayer recorded in St. John, when He said, "For I have given unto them the WORDS that thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send Me." (St. John 17:8) If Jesus had to depend upon his Father for the WORDS to give his disciples, is it a great thing if we must depend upon the WORDS being given us? Any time words come from a heavenly source it certainly proves to be a bouquet of words fitly spoken in due season. We are made to cry out, "How good it is." These words convince us that He is the Christ!

The last BOUQUET OF WORDS spoken by our Saviour before his death, was spoken on the cross of Calvary. These words were, "IT IS FINISHED." He had finished the requirements of the law by fulfilling its every requirement. He had finished the works His Father had sent Him to do. The task his Father had placed upon him was that He should save His people from their sins. He had saved them from the penalty of the law. This indeed is a wonderful bouquet of words: to realize that we have been taken from the burden of the law, and have been delivered from its requirements into the realm of salvation by grace through the merits of Jesus Christ. Those of you who have been convinced that you cannot save yourselves, this is truly a BOUQUET OF WORDS.

If the words of Jesus are a BOUQUET to the believers, surely, their words to one another fitly spoken in due season are as a bouquet. Many very simple expressions spoken by the children of the Kingdom have had their deep and lasting impressions upon me. I am deeply convinced of the importance of words of encouragement that we speak one to another. I would like to be enabled by the grace of God to speak words of encouragement to those who are down in the slough of despondency. I would like to lift a hand up that hangs down. I would enjoy strengthening feeble knees. I do not want to offend or cast down. I want to speak words of comfort. Jesus said that it would be better that a millstone be hanged about our neck and that we be cast into the

sea than for us to offend one of these little ones. How careful ought we to be in our conversation with each other! When we meet with our friends and our conversations prove to be an exchange of bouquets of words, we are brought closer together. When we part we are made to thank God for such friends. These precious words linger in our minds. They are enlarged as they bud and blossom in our heart. The fragrance of them inspires us to greater heights.

When I was fifteen years of age I entered a poetry contest in our home town. My poem on the subject of "Home" was selected as the best and published in our weekly periodical. The next day after its publication one of the bankers in the town halted me on my way to school. He said, "Son, I read your poem. You are as a diamond in the rough. With a little polishing you will accomplish much." These words coming from the mouth of a man whom I felt to be so superior to me, were so astonishing to me that I made no reply. He probably could not remember saying them the next day, but they have rescued me thousands of times from despair. Yes, they were simple and common words. Yet, when they began to swell in importance to me, they were not idle words. The power of refreshment that they have afforded me so many times through my life, causes me to believe that it pleased God to give me a beautiful bouquet of inspiring words through Elder J. Travis' mouth when I was fifteen years of age.

Sometimes I like to stroll back through Memory Lane and note the many beautiful BOUQUETS OF WORDS that have been handed me through the years. When I am given to take this stroll and view the many bouquets that have been mine to enjoy through life, the thorns become little and insignificant. I am now thinking of November 18, 1928. When I awoke that morning I found a new Bible beside my bed, opened to Proverbs 15:1. This was a wedding gift from my father and mother. I knew when I beheld the brackets scrawled on the right and left of this verse that it was my father's marking. I hastened to read: "A SOFT ANSWER TURNETH AWAY WRATH; BUT GRIEVOUS WORDS STIR UP ANGER." I cannot begin to enumerate the many times that this verse, enclosed with brackets, came visibly in my mind and softened my answer. Many times I have thought to speak words that would stir up anger, and would be prevented when the verse my father had marked would suddenly appear in my mind. Grievous words cannot be a bouquet. They cannot gladden the hearts of the hearers. They do not send forth a pleasant fragrance. They cannot soothe the troubled breast or heal the aching heart. They stir up anger, strife, and confusion. They cause divisions and further heartaches.

Time nor space will permit me to tell you of the many comforting thoughts I have had in this stroll back through memory lane, in again viewing the many bouquets of words that have been mine to enjoy through my short life. Suffice it to say that I trust the Lord will bless these meditations worded in this article to be a BOUQUET OF WORDS to each and every one of you who reads this.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Washington, D. C.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Having been requested by Miss Sallie Woolford, of Dorchester County, Md., to give my views upon the following portion of Scripture: "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins," James v., 19 & 20, will you again indulge me by publishing another communication?

Immediately preceding the text which is quoted, it is said by the inspired Apostle, that "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months; and he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit." He being subject to passions like other men, was as liable, as a man, to err as any other child of God; but when he prayed **earnestly,** it was not an impulse of human nature that caused him thus to pray; for, viewed in that light, it would seem that a spirit of revenge was occupying his mind, and that he sought to gratify the same by imploring the judgment of God upon the Israelites, as well as others, in having the earth cease to yield her fruits, by having the "bottles" of heaven stopped.

Elias stood in a very peculiar relation to Israel, and as God often frowned upon that nation, it was revealed to Elias concerning the drought that was to come upon the earth, and he, being thus inspired by God, prayed exactly according to the will of Jehovah, which harmonizes with the declaration of the apostle Paul, concerning prayer, for, said he, "We know not what to pray for as we ought; but the spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered; and he that searcheth the heart KNOWETH what is the mind of the spirit, **because** he maketh intercession for the saints according to (the will of) God." Now, does not the language of Paul show conclusively that the prayer of faith is the **intercession** of the spirit, and that **that** intercession is according (leaving out the supplement) to God?

Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth. James, after setting forth in his epistle the vast importance of adhering strictly to the commands of Christ, as found in the precepts of the Gospel, positively avering that such precepts, being complied with by the professed votaries of the dear Redeemer, were the effects of the new heart, or the fruits of grace; and that pure and undefiled religion was known from false, by producing such results, so salutary in their nature, upon the lives of the children of God, when under the immediate exercise of the same, closes with a direct address to the **brethren.**

We discover, by comparing the commencement of his epistle with the closing address, that it was restricted **entirely** to the brethren; and these were not simply brethren by the ties of consanguinity, or the flesh, but the relation was of a higher and more noble character, heavenly in its origin, divine in its nature, and eternal in its duration; and, it being of such a nature, these brethren had powers of comprehension which are not possessed by natural men; they had eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to understand divine truth, so far as it might please God to give them a knowledge of the same; therefore, lessons of instruction given them were of lasting benefit, being designed for their good; otherwise they would not have been given; consequently, we have **no liberty** to apply any portion of this text directly or indirectly to unrenewed men.

Said James: "If any of you do err from the truth," &c. Were it not possible for God's people to err, the apostle would not have used such declaration; but the expression shows very plainly that Christians err from the truth. (Notice—James does not say they err **in** the truth, but FROM the truth.) There are many ways in which christians err from the truth, some of which become so dear to them that they cling to them with great tenacity; but sooner or later, not merely by profession and a visible standing in the Church, but by POSSESSION, and are united to him, being members of that mystical BODY, they are separated from the errors into which they may have fallen. The most devoted followers of Christ that ever have lived, when left measurably to themselves, fell into error; and we will adduce Scripture proof to sustain us in the assertion.

Israel, as a nation, was God's chosen

people, and they were miraculously preserved and delivered from their enemies; yet, when Moses was called up into the mount, and tarried long, they had a golden calf made of their jewelry, and, strange as it may appear, after seeing such displays of Almighty power in their behalf, they were found dancing around the calf, the work of their own hands. The man Moses, who was their leader, fell into error, and was not permitted to go into the promised land. At a later day an Elijah was sure that he was left alone; but God made known to him that he had reserved **seven thousand** who had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Still later, a Peter and a John fell into error—the former by making a rash promise in his own strength; and the latter, by desiring, while in prison, that Christ would inform him certainly whether he was the Christ, or whether he should look for another?

Now let us notice some of the errors into which Christians fall in this day, when suffered to confer with flesh and blood. At the time Christians, in their experience, are brought to know their lost and ruined condition by nature, every hope of being saved by any deeds of theirs is taken away; and when brought to deliverance, it seems that a complete deliverance from law and sin has been accomplished; and they then think that the way of life and salvation will always appear plain, and that they shall never doubt the reality of their interest in Christ; that the trials and conflicts, of which they hear others speak, shall never be permitted to disturb their peace; but when the dark clouds of doubt and sorrow obscure the sun of their hope, and the storm comes on in the soul, and satan comes to buffet them, they think certainly that they must be deceived; because, if not deceived, they would enjoy peace of mind, and that a **real** Christian could not be thus tempest-tossed. Though they thus exclaim so bitterly against themselves, God has designed it for their good; and the direct tendency of such conflicts **is** to make them humble. Again, Christians sometimes become so led astray as to think that the **proclamation** of the Gospel is the **means** of awakening dead sinners: and some (lamentable to state) think that though the doctrine of eternal predestination, definite atonement, effectual calling, and final perseverance of saints, **are all true,** and sustained by the Scriptures, yet they ought not to be publicly preached. All such ideas are the results which follow the **erring** from the truth; and they are not only unsound positions, but anti-scriptural.

And one convert him—In treating upon this clause of the text, it is of vast importance to keep in view the difference made in Scripture between CONVERSION and REGENERATION. Conversion literally means a change from one state to another, or to turn from one use or destination to another, without changing the **inherent** principles of a person thus converted; or if it be immaterial substances, without imparting any new material to the substance thus converted.

Regeneration signifies, according to Scripture testimony, the begetting of the church from the dead, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.—(See 1st Peter i., 3.) By virtue of that regeneration, the vessels of mercy, in God's time, have divine life communicated, or are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.

A man may be converted from a drunkard to a sober man; from a thief to an honest man; from a liar to a man of truth; from a tale-bearer to a peacemaker; yet that does not regenerate such person, neither does it give divine life; but if a person experiences the work of grace in the heart, by heavenly and divine life being implanted, conversion will certainly follow. And if the person has been addicted to the preceding named vices, he will be led to shun them as a deadly poison. The rock of the quarry may be broken up, and prepared by the artisan, and erected into a spacious temple, yet it is the **same** material

as when imbeded in the earth.

When we view this clause of the text relative to conversion, we see how far God's dear people, by him, and under his power alone, can go, and **no further.** They are his instruments (thus to speak) at times to convert a brother or sister from error—not directly, nor indirectly, to give divine life, for that emanates from Jehovah. Said the Redeemer to Peter: "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."—Luke xxii. 33. Furthermore: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul."—David. Now, it must be distinctly borne in mind that the conversion to which we have referred, by quoting the language of the dear Redeemer and David, has reference to the **living**—not the dead.

We will now briefly notice what construction natural religionists, of every class, put upon the term conversion, as found in the Scriptures. They teach that man by nature, possesses a principle which is just and holy, which they can foster at pleasure, or let lie dormant, it being perfectly at their control. Now, what does that lead to, when a person can wrap the mantle of self complacency thus around himself, by saying I can be a Christian when I please—can obtain a conversion in a few minutes, or hours at most. According to that doctrine, the bloody sacrifice of the Son of God on Calvary, **long time ago,** can be made effectual or not, just as man pleases. O, how monstrous! how God-dishonoring is such a system! But, if any arminian should read this, it will be said we mean no such thing! Well, whether you mean so or not, you **both** preach and practice it. But, as it is often said, the doctrine of grace leads to licentiousness, we must trace this system of self-will a little farther, and see which of the two leads to looseness of character. If a man fully believes in his own power to obtain what he calls a conversion, and feels envy and revenge prompting him onward; suppose he is permitted to carry that into effect by taking the life of one of his fellow beings, he concludes there will be ample time to make his peace with God before he receives his just deserts. It is certain that such a system leads directly to such a result, notwithstanding it may be denied; but the doctrine of grace leads to the restraining of the passions, and making its recipients honest, upright, and strictly moral. But I may be asked: "Do you think that some true Christians have not been led astray?" Most certainly; and that is the very point more directly involved in the text; for if they did not go astray, the inspired apostle would not have used such language. I may be asked still further: "Do you doubt the fact, that murderers may have been the real children of God?" Not by any means; but I have but little confidence in State prison and gallows repentance.

There are but few, if any, of God's people now upon the earth that have not experienced **many** conversions, and sometimes they are of daily occurrence; for that, which to the careless observer is of little or no consequence, is to the humble follower of the adorable Redeemer of vast consequence. This train of reflections leads us to the great usefulness and benefit derived from the organization of Christians into churches, and of their frequently assembling themselves together, and freely and faithfully warning each other of the dangerous nature of false doctrine; of its sorrowful effects upon members of churches, and **entire** churches; and, when assembled as members of the same church, contending for the same faith, if need be, they must warn and **rebuke** with all long-suffering and doctrine. When such a course is manifested, it shows a desire to contend for the truth in sincerity, and that the children of God are **knit together;** and being thus united, they are to contest every **inch** of the ground with anti-Christ, and make no compromise with error whatever.

"We, then, that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and

not to please ourselves," is often referred to, I fear, to sustain or tolerate error amongst God's people, so that the mantle of charity should be so broad as to conceal what is known to be contrary to Scripture. Now, I wish to be distinctly understood to say that true charity, or the real love of God, shed abroad in the heart, **never** leads to the free tolerations of error amongst God's people; but directly the reverse; and when a strong member (in the faith) beholds another in error, at the proper time he strives to CONVERT such one from (not in) error. Perhaps the erring member thinks it would be better to make a **little** compromise with the enemies of truth, and, by so doing, it would be an advantage to the church; but **when and where** this feeling is made manifest, TRUE CHARITY meets it in the spirit of the gospel; and, after the fallacy of such course is pointed out, and its pernicious consequences set forth, and Scripture testimony adduced to substantiate the same, the erring member may see the error so plainly, and feel the force of Scripture testimony, as advanced and advocated by the faithful brother, that he becomes converted (convinced) from the error—not regenerated—and saved from death—not eternal, but a death of brotherly love, union and fellowship of the church, &c.; but when all admonitions fail, all warnings become fruitless, and every Scriptural injunction produces no change, the discipline of the church must be enforced; and if such person is truly a child of God, a death then takes place in the soul that words can never express; and it may be possible that some of God's dear people are now suffering that very death.

There is another error into which I think it quite possible some of God's dear people fall; and that is after they are experimentally brought to a knowledge of the truth, and feel the obligations binding upon them, as his children, to follow him in the commands of the gospel, they bring up many excuses for not obeying, such as the following: I am not worthy of a place amongst God's people; I possess such a wicked heart; if I make a public profession, I shall soon dishonor the same; and many other similar excuses. I am not able to say but that my friend, who has requested me to write upon the text now under consideration, may be in just that condition; and if so, may I be allowed to ask a question? Do you expect, dear friend, that your nature will ever be any better while you sojourn upon earth? Were you to hear a person, in relating the exercise of the mind, tell how well he had lived, and how well he intended to live, after joining the church, would that be satisfactory to you? Well, if that would not be satisfactory in others, **why** look for and desire the same in yourself? Do you not discover an error in that?

A faithful exposition of Scripture, and an enforcing of the injunctions of Christ, in power and demonstration of the spirit, by a faithful servant of God, oftentimes is designed, in the counsel of God, to **convert** some out of just such errors as the last named class of persons are sometimes in.

Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death.—I need to say but little concerning this cause of the text, having already spoken of the death as being a separation from the love, union and fellowship of the brethren, and an awful conflict of soul, which, it is to be feared, many of God's dear people, for some wise purpose, are now suffering.

And shall hide a multitude of sins.—The one, under God's special guidance, that thus converts the sinner from the error of his ways, saves the soul from death, and HIDES, does not destroy, human nature, or remove the corrupt fountain whence issue the streams of error; but it is **hidden,** for the person being thus converted, feels to restrain the carnal inclinations of the mind; therefore, does not go so far, nor so zealously, into error as he felt to before being convinced; consequently, a multitude of

sins, in the **absolute** sense of the text, are hidden.

The sinners of whom James speaks, I understand to be living children of God, who have ears to hear, eyes to see, and hearts to understand; and the conversion of which he speaks, **follows** being born again, instead of preceding it, as all natural religious teachers advocate; and, also, that regeneration and conversion are not only different in signification, but vastly different in their effects upon the children of men.

I am not prepared to say whether my manner of treating upon the text will be satisfactory to my friend or not; but I have briefly expressed my understanding of the text.

(Elder) WM. J. PURINGTON

(Copied from Signs of the Times of May 1, 1858.)

OBITUARIES

LAVINIA ELLA LECATES

Sister Lavinia Ella Lecates was born June 2, 1873, in Salisbury, Maryland, and passed away October 9, 1955; making her stay here eighty-two years, four months and seven days.

She was the daughter of the late Levin S. and Julia Anne Hitchens. On October 31, 1889, she was united in marriage to Joseph E. Lecates, who passed away February 19, 1911, at the age of forty-four years. To this union were born four children: Marion H. Lecates, Delmar, Delaware; Anna M. Davis, Washington, D. C.; J. Edward Lecates, Salisbury, Maryland; and Lydia V. Holloway, who passed away June 4, 1928, at the age of twenty-two years.

Sister Lecates was baptized into the fellowship of Little Creek Church in October, 1895, where she remained a true and worthy member until death. After the passing of her husband, Sister Lecates lived with her children, and at the time of her death was living in Delmar, Delaware.

In the passing of our dear sister the Little Creek Church has lost a faithful member, not claiming any merits of her own, but a firm believer in the predestination of all things, and salvation by grace alone. This was the doctrine she loved and trusted in. Her work is finished here, and she has now entered into the fullness of the rest which remains for the chosen people of God.

The funeral was conducted in the Marvel Funeral Home, in Delmar, by the writer, and interment was in the Lecates burying ground near Delmar.

(Elder) H. M. Bennett

A. M. PAYNE

By request of the church, I attempt to write in memory of our beloved Brother Payne, who has been called home after his stay on earth eighty-six years and nineteen days. He has left behind a host of relatives and friends to mourn his departure. We feel sure he is at rest now, and that our loss is his eternal gain; so we do not wish him back.

Brother Payne was born May 13, 1869, and departed this life December 2, 1955. On December 24, 1891, he was married to Nancy Louella Burton, who preceeded him in death about ten years. To this union were born four sons and five daughters, who are noble citizens, and much loved by his brethren. We, the church, are certainly grateful to God for the wonderful evidence that the same faith of our brother lives in his offspring. Oh, how encouraging it is to see them interested in the church of their parents, and prove it by their attendance. Brother Payne united with the church at High Point, N. C., October 10, 1915; and after seventeen years of faithful attendance, he was called to the deaconship of the church, in which he served faithfully until death. How we miss him when we meet, and he doesn't fill his seat in the corner where he always sat. But we bow in submission to the will of our heavenly Father, and desire to thank him for such a gift as Brother Payne was to the church. He was sound in doctrine, humble in spirit, slow to speak, and uncompromising when his mind was settled on a matter. He was a great soldier of the cross, already to take his post, not flinching from his duties. He was honorably discharged from the field of battle.

"O land of rest, for thee I sigh;
When will the moment come,
When I shall lay my armor by,
And dwell with Christ at home?"

So dear young soldiers, face the battle with courage: just a few more days to spend, then you and I too shall be discharged from the post of duty, and have that blessed peace that remaineth for the children of God.

Written in love,
(Elder) D. A. O'Bryant

This memorial read and approved February 18, 1956, while in conference: A copy to be sent to the family, one to the Old Faith Contender, one to the Signs of the Times, and one placed on our church records.

Mrs. H. M. Taylor, Clerk

LESTER BELL

On April 4, 1956, death removed from life's activity and usefulness Brother Lester Bell of Phonicia, New York, after an illness of four years at a nursing home in Willow, N. Y., at the ripe age of ninety years. The funeral services were conducted at the Gormley Funeral Home in Phonicia April 7, by the writer. The interment was in the Mount Tremper cemetery. The immediate survivors are a brother, Loren, of West Shokan, and a brother, Lester, Jr. of Phonicia. He had been a member of the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist church for nearly fifty years. In 1895 he was united in marriage to Miss Martha Krum, who died six years ago. Brother Bell was a hard working man noted for honesty and many neighborly qualities that won him many friends. For several years his hearing had failed him in part, but he endured this affliction with much patience and resignation to his lot in life, and worked at various occupations until the infirmities of age impaired his usefulness as a laborer. He was widely known in the vicinity of Phonicia and will be long remembered by his many friends and brethren.

(Elder) Arnold H. Bellows

MRS. ELLA BOUTON

The sudden death of Mrs. Ella Bouton, wife of Marshall Bouton of Halcott Center, New York, which occurred Tuesday, March 13, 1956, at the Margaretville Hospital in Delaware County, N. Y., cast a gloom over the entire community where she was so well known and deeply loved. Death was due to coronary thrombosis. The writer conducted the funeral services at the Halcott Methodist meeting house, assisted by Lawrence Zellers, pastor of the M. E. Church. The body was placed in a vault to await interment later.

Mrs. Bouton was seventy-three years of age and is survived by her husband; two sons, Carson and Donald of Halcott center; and two sisters, Mrs. Blache Peet, now in Florida, and Mrs. John Walker of New Kingston, N. Y. She was the daughter of Orrin and Melissa Craft Slauson, and was born in Vega, New York. She was united in 1912 to Marshall Bouton of Halcott, and proved a most loyal and capable helpmate. She possessed the noblest qualities of character and never failed to minister to her neighbors and friends in an hour of need. Whether as wife or mother or neighbor, she failed in no sense whatever, and her memory will be cherished by all who knew her. She believed the doctrine of the Old School Baptists, but never felt worthy of self to ask a church home with them. In all her illnesses her husband did all that loving care could do to provide for her comfort. Her death is a great loss to her neighbors and friends and family.

(Elder) Arnold H. Bellows

MRS. BEULAH COBB COX

It has been our heavenly Father's will to remove from our midst another beloved sister in Christ, Beulah Cobb Cox, who passed away June 16, 1955, at Memorial Hospital in Danville, Virginia. She was born July 14, 1891, making her stay on earth almost sixty-four years. She was the daughter of Melbane and Lucy Ann Cobb, and lived her entire life in the vicinity of her birth, and was widely and favorably known.

She was married to W. A. Cox November 22, 1914, who with the following children survive: Mrs. E. M. Hurd and Mrs. L. P. Richmond, Danville, Virginia; Mrs. R. L. McAllister and Mrs. E. E. Stone, Reidsville, N. C.; Mrs. J. E. Cardwell, Atlanta, Ga.; and W. P. Cox, Ruffin, N. C. Also surviving are ten grand-children; one sister, Mrs. A. L. French, Ruffin, N. C.; three brothers: Ernest, George and Willard Cobb; and one half-brother Irving Cobb, Reidsville.

Sister Cobb received a precious hope in Christ and united with Dan River Church the fourth Sunday in August, 1930, and was baptized the following meeting by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler. She was firmly established in the doctrine of grace, and was faithful to her church, attending regularly as long as her health would permit. She suffered much the last two years, much of that time being spent in a hospital. No one ever had more loving care than our sister during her illness — day and night loved ones were with her to attend her every need. She will be greatly missed at home, at church, and in her community. We can but feel that our loss is her eternal gain. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Funeral services were conducted at Dan River Church by Elder D. V. Spangler and Elder S. M. McKinley, and was largely attended by loved ones and friends. The florial offerings were many and beautiful, and bespoke the high esteem in which Sister Cox was held. Her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the glorious appearing of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and be forever with him in peace.

May God's richest blessings abide with all who were near and dear to her; and may it please our Heavenly Father that we meet again in a world that knows no end.

Written by order of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church while in conference Saturday before the fourth Sunday in August, 1955. Submitted in love and respect by

Mrs. G. F. Pruitt

MARY CATHERINE MARTIN

Sister Mary (Mollie) Catherine Martin was born near Charleston, W. Va., December 18, 1865 and departed this life January 15, 1956, age 90 years, 27 days.

On December 20, 1883, she was married to William E. Martin, who was a grandson of the late Elder William Martin, who with a few others organized Hopewell Old School Baptist Church of Kanawha County, W. Va. in 1823. Elder Martin served as pastor of this church for 40 years.

Sister Martin's husband preceded her in death 12 years. She is survived by: one son Lester Martin, Dunbar, W. Va.; six daughters: Mrs. Eva Dunlap, Dunbar; Mrs. Goldie Tinsley, Mrs. Lula Tinsley, Mrs. Sylvia Casdorf, Mrs. Clarice Gullian, and Mrs. Catherine Stonaker, all of Charleston; two sisters, Mrs. Rose Huston and Mrs. Leona Wheeler, Charleston; 18 grandchildren, 31 great grandchildren, and 6 great, great, grandchildren.

In October, 1904, Sister Martin united with Hopewell Old School Baptist Church and was baptized by Elder James A. Matherly. She was wonderfully blessed with spiritual light and understanding of the scriptures. Her greatest delight was to hear the gospel of Jesus preached, to join in singing the songs of Zion, and to visit with those of like faith conversing on the things of God. By her orderly walk, faithful attendance, and godly conversation she proved a great inspiration to the younger members, and especially to this unworthy writer.

This beloved mother in Israel will be greatly missed by her family, church, and friends but it is my fervent hope and conviction that her body is now resting in the tomb and her spirit has returned to God who gave it; and on the morning of the resurrection she will arise in the likeness of her Saviour to be with him forevermore.

Her funeral was conducted by Elders J. C. Hammond and Harvey Bird from The Cunningham Funeral Home, Charleston, after which she was laid to rest in the family cemetery to await the coming of her blessed Lord.

Nanna M. Carney,
Clerk of Hopewell Church

ARCH EVANS

Dear Brother Arch Evans was born in Union Parish, Louisiana, in 1875; and was reared, and lived and died in and around Oakland and Marion, Louisiana; and was buried in the cemetery of Good Hope Primitive Baptist Church, at Oakland.

Brother Evans was a hard working man, and was blessed to have a large family. He and his wife had a hard struggle to rear and provide for themselves and family by their earnings on a poor farm through hard times. He fell on the ice and snow about ten years ago, and was so broken up that he could not walk any more. This made it very hard on dear Sister Evans and the members of the family to care for him; and although Sister Evans is aged and greatly afflicted, she was so faithful and attentive to Brother Evans as long as he lived.

Surviving are his wife and the following children: Johnny Evans, Mrs. John Baker, Mrs. J. C. Stanford, Mrs. J. H. Plair, Mrs. Whet Baker, all of Marion, Louisiana; Mrs. A. C. Dopson, Strong, Arkansas; Mrs. William Teel, Pineville, Louisiana; Mrs. Walter Manning, Winnsboro, Louisiana; and seventeen grandchildren, and twenty great grandchildren.

Brother Evans and wife joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Good Hope several years before he was crippled. They were faithful and loving members; and although aged and much afflicted, Sister Evans is yet faithful. May the Lord bless and comfort all, and enable them to look to the glorious resurrection, when the Lord shall raise these vile bodies and form them like unto the glorious body of Christ. Then there will be no more sickness, pain or death, but peace, love and sweet rest forever, for those who are embraced in the unchangeable promises of God: "In hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began." So, dear ones, weep not as those who have no hope in that glorious resurrection.

The writer tried to speak to the comfort and consolation of a goodly congregation; who showed great respect by their presence on the sad occasion. The funeral was held at Good Hope Church. May God comfort and sustain all for Christ's sake, Amen.

An unworthy brother, in hope,

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

MRS. JENNIE McKINNEY BYRD

Sister Jennie McKinney Byrd was born in Caswell County, N. C., on January 6, 1875, and died at her residence on February 8, 1956, at the age of 81 years, 1 month and 2 days. She was the wife of the late W. E. Byrd, who preceded her in death on September 10, 1951; and is survived by four daughters: Mrs. Zeb Delancy, Columbia, S. C.; Mrs. A. H. Massey, Route 1, Yanceyville, Mrs. S. D. McKinney, Route 3, Burlington, Mrs. W. M. Kimbro, Route 1, Yanceyville; six sons: Mr. J. E. Byrd, Route 2, Burlington, Mr. D. A. Byrd, Route 2, Burlington, Mr. L. J. Byrd, Route 1, Yanceyville, Mr. J. P. Byrd, Route 1, Yanceyville, Mr. B. B. Byrd, Route 1, Yanceyville, Mr. A. C. Byrd, Route 3, Burlington; one sister: Mrs. Mollie McKinney Oakley, Route 3, Burlington; thirty-seven grandchildren and twenty-five great

grandchildren.

Sister Byrd united with the church at Bush Arbor on the Second Sunday in July, 1924, and was a most loyal and faithful member. We do not recall having ever seen two people, who lived to old age, who were more devoted to their church than Brother and Sister Byrd; nor do we recall ever having visited in the home of Sister Byrd during her confinement, which was over a period of years, but that she expressed her regret that she was unable to attend her church meetings. Sister Byrd was given much tender care and love during her illness, but all of the earthly hands and skill of the physicians could not stay the hand of her Lord to call her into the glorious inheritance which He had prepared for her. The funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Church by Elder E. F. Oakley and Elder W. C. King, and her body was deposited by the side of her husband in the church cemetery. The esteem which she was held by her church and community was demonstrated by the large crowd in attendance and the floral offerings that were made. Be it therefore

Resolved, First, that we at Bush Arbor Church, in regular conference meeting on March 10, 1956, convey our sincere sympathy to the family in this bereavement; feeling that we should not weep for her as those who have no hope. Second; that a copy of this resolution be placed upon our church records. Third; that a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times and a copy sent to the Old Faith Contender for publication.

Done by order of Bush Arbor Church in conference.

(Elder) W. C. King, Moderator
J. D. Simmons, Clerk

IN MEMORIAM

In sadness we record the death of another of our beloved members, Brother Robert Lee Oakley, who "fell on sleep" at his home in Stem, N. C. February 20, 1956, after a long illness and trying suffering.

He was born January 2, 1880, the son of Yancey and Laura Duncan Oakley of Granville County. On December 6, 1903 he was married to Luna Oakley, who with four sons, Otis of Greensboro, N. C., Rufus, Raymond and Clarence, of Granville County, and one daughter, Mrs. Ethel Blalock of Stem, survive to mourn their loss.

On May 18, 1919, he was baptized into the fellowship of Tar River Old School Baptist Church by Elder B. F. McKinney, remaining a member there until Memorial Church in Stem was organized nearer his home. His membership was transferred by letter to this church on February 2, 1924, where it was retained until his death. For years preceding his death he was seldom able, on account of affliction, to attend church services.

His humbleness, meekness and patience during his long and trying illness was an example of what the grace of God can do in a poor sinner's heart, and a lesson we would all do well to heed.

The funeral service was conducted in the church of his membership, by Elder Cecil Turner, of Pigg River Association, and Elder W. C. King, Moderator of Upper Country Line Association, after which the remains were laid to rest in the church cemetery. Be it

Resolved, First, That we submit in patient resignation to this dispensation of the Lord's will and providence, and strive to emulate the virtues bestowed on our deceased brother, believing that our loss is his eternal gain,

Resolved, Second, That a copy of this Memorial be inscribed on our Church Book; a copy sent to the bereaved family, and a copy sent to "Signs of the Times" for publication.

Done by order of J. H. Gooch, Memorial Primitive Baptist Church in conference assembled this Saturday afternoon, March 10, 1956.

Laura Reed Gooch, Church Clerk
Otto Y. Clayton, Asst. Clerk

JOHN W. STEWART

The subject of this sketch was born in Dale County, Alabama, near Ozark, in November, 1867: the son of C. J. and Julia Stewart. When he was about twenty years of age, the family moved to Geneva County, Alabama, where he soon met and married Matilda Adams, with whom he lived sixty-four years. In early life she united with the Primitive Baptists, but Uncle John stayed out of the visible church until late in life, when he became a member of Mt. Giliad Primitive Baptist Church at an impressive home service conducted by Elders F. A. and J. J. Collins.

He lived a devoted life to his family, his community and his church. The death angel called January 30, 1956. Funeral services were conducted at the home by Elders F. A. and J. J. Collins, with songs from Lloyd's Hymns led by Deacon A. E. Sorrells.

Uncle John is survived by his wife, one son, W. J. Stewart, of Hartford, and two daughters, Mrs. Troy Hall, of Panama City, Florida, and Mrs. Ralph Reynolds, of Arizona.

Interment was in the Hartford Cemetery, where he was buried beneath a mound of most beautiful flowers.

(Elder) J. J. Collins

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 124 DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1956 NO. 7

IN HUMILITY AND HOPE

O Lord, remove this slumber from our eyes —
We have thy warnings written in the Book —
Give us grace to become awake, and rise
Above the sordid things of earth; and look
Unto thee, precious Lord: Thou art our all.
Awaken our hearts and mind — on thee we call.

Lord, give me of thy grace to travel on.
My journey's end to thee, dear Lord is known.
O, let me feel assured that thou art near,
And this road will be bright, — I'll have no fear.
Though storms of troubles rage around,
In thy precious care sweet rest is found.

O, let me feel each hour thy guiding hand,
As I travel on through this desert land.
This world is cold — dark clouds arise;
But soon we hope for clearing skies.
Lord, no power but thine can peace supply;
No foes we'll fear if thou art nigh.

Mary Lancaster
Cuba, Alabama

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ENDOWMENT FUND

We wish to acknowledge, with much appreciation, the whole hearted support we have recevied in our efforts to raise a fund to purchase a printing press, or sustain the Signs by an Endowment Fund. We promised to acknowledge each donation, and are pleased to publish the following received during the month of May:

Previously received	$1,275.00
Eld. Arnold Bellows, N. Y.	2.00
H. W. Bumpus, Illinois	10.00
Charlie Hopkins, N. C.	5.00
Miss Myrtle C. Lefferts, N. J.	10.00
Viola L. Turner, Va.	20.00
T. C. Koch, Penn.	5.00
Clara L. Quesenberry, Va.	5.00
Miss Blanche Dolson, N. Y.	3.00
J. F. V. Conner, Va.	3.00
Carl P. Bennett, Maryland	25.00
Rosa Ellis, Tenn.	1.00
Mrs. Forest Rainey, Tenn.	1.00
Katie Ragan, Tenn.	5.00
Mr. and Mrs. Harry W. Ward, Md.	25.00
Mr. and Mrs. C. M. Richardson, Va.	500.00
Mrs. Willie B. Tosh, Va.	1.00
S. B. Doncan, Maryland	15.00
Mrs. Ethel Johnson, Maryland	10.00
Mrs. J. M. Sawyers, Va.	10.00
Miss May Morris, Maryland	25.00
M. S. Thomas, Va.	10.00
Mrs. Ruth Twilley, Md.	100.00
Mrs. Geo. M. Beebe, N. Y.	25.00
Eld. Chas. M. Harris, Ill.	5.00
Harry A. Young, Canada	5.00
Mrs. S. E. Goard, Va.	1.00
Maude Webb, Ill.	10.00
W. F. Stafford, Tenn.	1.00
Total to June 1st	$2,113.00

PARABLE OF THE SOWER

Lillie, La.

Dear Household of Faith:

Have been impressed to write upon a most sacred and solemn subject, and am attempting to do so, hoping that the Lord will strengthen and mercifully sustain me to his name's honour, glory and praise, and to the comfort of his people.

The subject is the parable of the sower, as taught in Matthew 13:3-9, and Matthew 13:18-23. The same subject is also contained in Mark and in Luke. This solemn subject is part of the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ, and though he was not taught in the schools of men, he possessed wisdom which could not be gainsaid, nor overthrown by the wise and prudent of this world. They tried to prevail against him as soon as he was born in the world, and continued until the time the Father had appointed that all things before determ-

ined should be accomplished. (Acts 4:-27-28)

Jesus begins this parable by saying, "Behold, a sower went forth to sow; and when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up." This is exactly what is reasonable to expect to occur; the seed, or word, has no access because the ground was not broken up and prepared, and consequently there could be no fruit expected as a result of this sowing. The most ignorant farmer knows from a natural standpoint the result of sowing of seed on unprepared ground.

Yet the wise, learned and mighty of this world, in their teaching and practice as to preaching of the word, claim that it has access to any and all kinds of ground, and, consequently, they seem to expect a full crop, or harvest, even from that which is sown by the wayside. But Jesus said that the fowls of the air came and devoured it up. We know that the land cannot break up and prepare itself to be good ground; and we also know that, "The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is of the Lord." (Psalms 16:1) So, if the ground represents the hearts of men, which I think is certainly taught, then we know that this preparation to make the heart the good ground that it may bring forth fruit, some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold, must be broken up and made good ground by the Lord himself. It is said by inspiration that, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of waters he turneth it whither-so-ever he will."

Some fell upon stony places where they had not much earth, and forthwith sprung up; but the sun arose and they were scorched, and withered away. This was not proper or good ground; and no matter how much sowing men may do on such stoney places, there will be no crop.

And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up and choked them. Then, dear reader, who would expect a crop by sowing seed among thorns? We know that literally the ground cannot be expected to rise up and rid itself of the thorns. So we know that where the word is sown among thorns there can be no crop.

"But others fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold." Please remember, dear ones, this was good ground before the seed was sowed, and that it was the only ground that produced fruit. And I think that from a natural standpoint of thinking, it was the only kind of ground that could have been expected to bring forth fruit. Jesus said to his people, who represent the good ground, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." (John 15:16) So we see it is clearly shown that the good ground was before ordained to bring forth fruit. Evidently then, the Lord, who worketh in his people both to will and to do of his good pleasure, worked in their hearts to take away the hard and stony heart, and gave them a heart of flesh, which is soft; and is the good ground into which the seed of the sower falls, and brings forth fruit.

After finishing the telling of the parable, Jesus said, "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." This certainly shows that one must have something done for his ears, which men, nor churches, nor ministers cannot do. I would like for the reader to read the 14, 15 and 16th verses of this chapter, concerning hearing and understanding. Jesus says, "Blessed are your ears for they hear, and your eyes for they see."

In order to show that everyone is not alike in this capacity, I desire that you read what Jesus says in John 10:26: "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." And the next verse, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life. . ." Then it is a gift, a blessing, and the work of God that his people hear, and have eternal life, and that they

bring forth good fruit. Jesus told them that he chose and ordained them to this end, that they bring forth fruit; and they do.

Then, dear reader, the seed sown is the word of God, the preached word. The ministers of God, who are called and qualified of God, sow the seed. They themselves are finite and dependant beings, and they must be blessed of the Lord to thus sow the precious seed. The result of their sowing is always in the hand of the Lord. Peter said, "We preach the gospel by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." So the Lord has it all to do with the sower who sows the seed; with the preparation of the heart of his people for the deep and effective planting in this good ground. And he chose and ordained them to bring forth this good fruit: and they will not fail to do so just to the extent that he has ordained, whether it be, thirty, sixty, or an hundredfold.

Dear brethren, does not the teaching of our Lord most positively show that the sowing of the precious seed of the word of God, the state of the ground, and the bringing forth of this fruit, is all of the Lord from first to last. He prepares the good ground, which was once as void of any good qualities as either the stoney ground, or the wayside, or the thorny. The second chapter of Ephesians certainly shows that those who are the good ground were in times past just like all the rest of Adam's race by nature; were children of wrath even as others, but through the gracious process of the Lord in his goodness and mercy, are raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Then, and then only, do they bring forth this fruit, thirty, sixty, or an hundredfold.

If I know anything at all about what is said about the stony, the thorny and the wayside ground, it certainly relates to all men in the depraved nature of our federal head Adam; and the only reason that there are any of the Adam's race who are brought in the category of good ground, and bring forth fruit to any extent, is through the grace, and love, and mercy, of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now dear reader, I am sure that the preached word is what was under consideration: certainly the preached word of God's truth is for a grand and glorious purpose. Glorious indeed, both to God's glory, and the nourishment, comfort and consolation of God's people. This process of sowing, or planting of the seed or word in the different types of ground, is of the Lord; and we are admonished in the language of the Saviour to Peter, to feed my sheep, and feed my lambs. This, to me, is teaching and setting forth what the sower does: He is not to make sheep out of goats; neither does the sower have anything to do with what kind of ground they are of; neither does the seed sowing process have anything to do with the condition of the ground it falls on. The seed sowing does not change the ground from hard, stony, and thorn growing, into good ground: The only ground that the sowing does any good, is that which is already broken up and prepared.

Dear humble child of God, do you love the sowing of this precious gospel word? Does it give you love, joy, hope and consolation? Does it feed your hungry soul? Does it often bind up your broken and mourning heart? Does it strengthen your sweet hope, and give you courage and strength to endure the trials and tribulations and heartaches? If so, then you are the good ground; you are the one that the called and often castdown ministry is sent to. Then you have every reason to rejoice in the sweet hope that you are the good ground spoken of in this parable, and the precious fruits spoken of are being brought forth by you through the Lord. You are his, if your heart has been broken up, and prepared. Jesus said in the first sermon recorded of his earthly ministry, "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall

be filled." Etc.

To those who are called in the parable good ground, it is said, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." (Psalms 89:15) Then we have the very joyful doctrine of the prophet in Isaiah 40:1-2, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people sayeth your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Oh what a joy and comfort it is to the Lord's people — those whose hearts have been made to see, and mourn because of their sins, to hear the joyful news that they have received of the Lord's hand double for all their sins. So dear, precious ones, you are the Lord's portion; you are that good ground, not of your selves, but through the gift of the righteousness of Christ Jesus our Lord; and you are made clean through his precious and cleansing blood.

Then the fruit that you are blessed to bring forth, dear child of God, is love, joy, peace, faith, belief, and obedience through him who loved you and gave himself for you; and washed you in his blood from all your sins. When the Lord comes again without sin unto salvation, then he will call you from the sleeping dust of the tomb, saying, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matthew 25:34) How sweet is the thought and meditation of that grand and glorious day when he calls his prepared bride to the heavenly mansion, where there will be no more trouble, pain, sin nor death, but joy, peace, love and everlasting pleasure.

Your brother in hope,

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

Huntington, W. Va.

Mrs. Mary Claggett,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sister in Hope of an everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Lord:

Your welcome letter came today and was read with interest, even though some of it was sad news. Your remarks at the close of your letter caused me to wonder what sort of a creature I am: that one so established in the doctrine and order of the Bible as you are, would ask of this poor old sinner for words of comfort. It stirred up my mind to what Peter said when Cornelius fell at his feet and worshiped him: Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I myself also am a man." (Acts 10:25-26)

Now I am fully aware that if I were able to speak comforting words to you, it would be through the Spirit of Almighty God; as he is the only comforter, and the only one who can still the angry waves. When he is pleased to take this broken pitcher and water his flowers, who am I to rebel against it? Often we are made to smile through our tears; and to sweat and wipe our brow, as we tread out the corn. We learn obedience by the things we suffer: our Lord has so arranged it that through great tribulation we should enter the Kingdom of Heaven. In order for me to be of any comfort to you, sister, first you and I must be in fellowship: or, in other words, we must both be in the spirit. Then we must have confidence in each other, for there must be fellowship and unity. The Lord has spoken by the prophet Isaiah, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." This is a command of God; and he tells his ministers how and what will comfort them. They are his chosen people. They are not to be told what to do, but told what the Lord has done for them. All down through time they have liked to hear the old, old story; for it is a comfort to them to be told again that their warfare is accomplished. Think of it! The war is over, the victory won: Their iniquity is pardoned, and they have received at the Lord's hand double for all their sins.

What a comfort it is for us poor mortals to be given a hope. Oh, that little hope! Sometimes I am ashamed to call my hope a little hope, for it is what

the good Lord has given me: The assurance that all my sins are forgiven and my iniquity is pardoned. Oh, happy thought!: "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

'Tis a comfort to know our Redeemer below: To know him here in our corruptible state, and to feel his presence in us as he leads us beside the still waters. He is our life; he is our way; he is the truth; and there is nothing too hard for him. "Comfort ye one another with these words."

Now let us look a little on what we call the dark side of the picture. There are dark, dismal days; and there are sunny days: days we suffer with the heat — and days we suffer with the cold. The sun that gives us light and warmth is always shining, but there are sometimes clouds that the sun does not penetrate. Above the clouds, however, the sun is always shining. It is the same in our experience, for we are led to believe that in our darkest hours the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, is dimmed by the sin and iniquity of our natural mind, causing us to look back over our lives and look for something to cling to; only to sink deeper in the mire of dispondency. Then, low and behold, a hand, seemingly from no where, reaches out and brings us out of this condition, and places our feet upon a rock, and establishes our going, with a new song in our mouth, even praises unto God.

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal: the Lord knoweth them that are his." It is a comfort to know that all things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose. I do not believe that anyone who is not born of God can understand or find comfort in these things; for light preceeds action, both natural and spiritual. May the Lord be praised; and may you get some comfort in these imperfect lines.

I hope, your unworthy brother,

(Elder) George L. Weaver

Monticello, Ga.

Dear Editors:

I certainly enjoy reading each article as they come every month. They are filled, as it were, with that hidden manna of love. It seems as I read each article, I have a desire to reach out over the miles and clasp the hands of the gifted writers. Surely the Lord of grace is with each one, filling their minds and hearts with his love and Spirit; and guiding each one with wisdom to write things comforting and upbuilding to his little children, who are tossed to and fro.

I often wish I could write as others, for I would like to say or write something that would be of some benefit, in a small way, to some wayfaring pilgrim. How helpless I feel: when I think of trying to help others, I feel the need of help myself. I know my help must come from the Lord of wisdom and love.

I have been thinking this morning how glad I would be to see one of the Lord's people come to visit with me, that we might talk of heavenly things. "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear." I get much comfort in reading the Signs. If it were not for the papers I am blest to receive, I would be more lonely that I am; if it were not for God's little ones for me to mix and mingle with, and get a crumb from the Master's table, I would feel alone in the world, and cast away. I feel to be one of the least, if one at all; and I ask the prayers of God's children.

May God continue his grace and mercy to you. Enclosed you will find $5.00 to renew my subscription one year. Please use the remainder as you see fit — maybe it will help someone else to receive the Signs.

A little sister in hope,

Mrs. Ollie Callaway

Wirtz, Virginia
August 30, 1955

Dear Editors,

I will try to write my experience.

My father and mother were Primitive Baptists. My father, S. O. Plybon, was a preacher when I could just remember. They would sing and papa would pray before going to bed. We children would sit down and be just as still as we could be. They told us there was a good place and a bad place — the good went to Heaven, and the bad to hell. My mother died when I was 15 years old. I thought she was so good, she had gone to Heaven, and I wanted to go there too. I was so miserable — all I could do was weep. My burden was so heavy I could hardly bear it. This was March 5, 1893. I went on in this state until in the fall. There was a Methodist meeting going on in a half a mile. My brother, T. R. Plybon, and I went several nights. But, oh, I felt to be such a sinner. My burden was so heavy. They finally got me to what they called "Mourner's Bench". I was there several nights. Seemed the rest could get relief, but no pardon for me. One night while kneeling there, I hope I was lifted up. I didn't know when I got up, but I was standing, and seemed my burden was all gone, and I felt so good. I went home. Papa was asleep, I went and kissed him and went on to bed. Next morning everything looked so pretty, and I felt so light. But t'was not long until I felt that I was deceived, and had deceived everybody else. One night I had a dream. I dreamed of walking on the prettiest stream of water, and I thought of how good to have faith to trust in the Lord. That stream seems just as plain to me sometimes as it did then.

I hope I have always loved the Primitive Baptists. They are the dearest people on earth to me. I had another dream. I dreamed I was going up a hill, the path was narrow. I could hardly walk. There was someone with me, and when we got on top, there were two buildings, one was an old building and the other was the prettiest, nicest, cleanest building I ever saw — not a bit of dust, dirt, or anything about it. They said this is the way for you to live. Oh, I thought, how could I live as clean as that was.

I went to preaching the second Sunday in June, 1896. I was received into the Church and baptized that day by my dear Papa. That seemed a good day and I felt so light.

But I feel so lonely now. I have lost two of my children, and my dear husband. But I hope they are resting sweetly. If I can only meet them, but I feel so low down so much of the time. I think if I were as good as the rest of the Baptists I would not fear. But the Lord is so good. He is everything to a poor sinner.

I have nine living children, seven boys and two girls. They are so dear to me, and so good to me.

If you think this worthy of a space, I wish you would publish it, so my children can see it. If not, cast it in the wastebasket, and it will be all right.

I am a poor reader and writer, with not much education. I am now in my 78th year.

An unworthy sister, if one at all
Mrs. J. P. McGuire

New Boston, Texas

Dear Editors:

I hope to be thankful for having access to the Signs this past year, and for its continuation for two more years. If not deceived, I have been blessed and made to rejoice as I read the wonderful articles. "O, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out." Once again our hope, which grows dim at times, is revived, and we are lifted out of the miry clay, our goings established with a new song in our mouth.

So much of the time I am fearful that I'm not one of the elect. Is it thus with you? "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I seem to know that it is nothing but Jesus and him crucified.

It has been good above measure to have been associated with the dear brothers and sisters in our home church, and the associations this past year. How beautiful to have seen the mingling of the wine — and such liberty manifested, saying with gladness, "Salvation is of the Lord."

That no one can say to the Lord, "What doeth thou?", has been on my mind so much of late. In Psalms he says, "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: the earth is mine and the fulness thereof." In Isaiah: "He openeth and none can shut; and closeth and none can open." "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."

The above scriptures remind me of a dream I had before being admitted to the Primitive Baptist church: The good were being separated from the bad, and I was lifted high in the air above the giant-like bad ones to the other side. When I got there, I said, "Everything is all right." I saw Jesus — such a sweet feeling of bliss I had never known. We were supposed to make little hats to show that we were the good ones; but, alas, I could never get mine made.

I feel just as helpless now, knowing that if we are saved, it will be by grace and grace alone. All good and perfect gifts are from above. It is not within man that walketh to direct his steps. In Paul's letter to the Corinthians, it is written, "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." And in Proverbs: "Man's goings are of the Lord; how can a man then understand his own way?"

What a comfort in times of trouble for scriptures to come to one's mind with such force that he is fortified, and made submissive to His will, and given that peace that passeth understanding! It is a blessing too to be in the desert, and made to cry out for the "Living Water" to spring up to quench our thirst, which Brother Lambert spoke of so beautifully in his soul reviving article in the January issue.

Forgive these feeble efforts, and cast this aside if not worthy of mention, and all will be well. May His abiding love be with you all now and forever, is my humble prayer. Your very little sister, if one at all.

Mrs. Leroy C. Jones

Fayetteville, Tenn.

Elder A. T. Benson:
Dear Brother:

If one so little, ignorant and unworthy as I may thus address you. I hope you have received many blessings from the hand of the Lord, who can give us strength; if it be his will, to bear up no matter how dark the way seems when our loved ones by the ties of nature are taken from us. There is a comforting thought given us at such times, for it is written, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

I read the obituary of your dear wife in the Signs of the Times. What a wonderful person she was in the family of the Lord's people; as well as in the home. God gave her to you to spend many years together. I know you are very lonely, but how well we know that she is far better off than we are — we who are left here in this old world filled with trials and troubles. I feel much of the time what a happy change it would be for me, if it be God's will to take me home, if my hope of a better world is true.

It is a beautiful day here today, so much like it was thirty-four years ago today when I asked for a home with the dearest people on earth to me. I have always felt my unworthiness to be among them, yet I love them; and where they live, I want to live. And when this life ends, may it be God's will to be near me, and that I will fear no evil.

I wish to thank you for your kind words about my letter. When I got your letter telling me of your loss, I said in

my mind, "Oh, why did I write at that time", feeling you would not be interested in my poor thoughts when you had so much sorrow to pass through. (The letter came just at the right time, and I believe it was God sent. — A. T. B.) So if there was a comforting word in it, I feel it was given me to write you at that time; for without Him we can do nothing, but with Him we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us — Bless his Holy Name. He knows our every need. I don't know anything but to suffer more or less each day of my life; but in all of it I feel it is God's will or it would not be so. I hope your brother was restored to health, but if his time has come to go, then I hope he will be at rest, and that you can be reconciled to all that is your lot to pass through.

The old year will soon be in the past, and a new year will begin. After that the day will come to mark three years since my dear brother, who seemed all I had to live for, was taken from me. O, such a long time it seems! But every day I hope I feel to thank the good Lord for blessing me with a place to live, and food to sustain my natural body; and strength to bear my burdens. "Sorrow endureth for night, but joy cometh in the morning."

I hope you can continue to find a place in your prayers for me, the poorest of the flock, and the least if one at all. Now I am going to stop and not take up any more of your time; and just say, "God who is rich in mercy make his face to shine upon you as you finish your course here below." Then may you hear the sweet call, "Child come home."

"Oh happy day when saints shall meet
To part no more, the thought is sweet."

From one saved by grace, if saved at all.

Willie Sisco

COMFORT IN OLD AGE

Cuba, Alabama

Dear Editors:

In these days I feel impelled to read the scriptures more and more, and I care very little for natural food, yet I don't think my strength of body is less. I get along fine, forgetting the troubles of material things, even the passing of time. I am getting a sweet comfort by reading this book of God's word — have read it many times, but its teachings and promises are sweeter than ever before. This book has no guile — we know it is true.

I find much comfort in the Old Testament. In Isaiah God spoke to Israel, saying, "For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. Fear not thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel." Now I feel that these precious words apply to all of the Lord's people; and I cherish a sweet hope that I am one of them. One night, quite lately, I went to bed craving a brighter assurance that I was one of God's children. At last I slept; and when I awakened it was by a voice sounding like my own, saying loudly and boldly, "The Lord is my shepherd." Just these words; no more. I was immediately wide awake, and strangely comforted. For before, when I was awake, I felt a timidity in making such a bold assertion. But now my hope is brightened, praise his Holy Name. Somehow, it came into my troubled mind that this was His way of assuring me; and his purposes never fails. So, I was made very happy; and every time I think of it, which is very often, I feel that same sweet thrilling joy which is unlike anything of this world. When I experience sweet seasons of rejoicing, it is then that I feel I am one of his children. Oh, how precious are those hours!

Those who are looking forward to the appearing of Jesus ought to fast and pray; and I know it is no hardship. For on whom else can we call for forgiveness, strength and guidance? None but Him! He has the words of eternal life. (John 6:68)

We can see the unfolding of the pro-

phecies; and Jesus said, When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then look up; lift up your heads for your redemption draweth nigh. These are times we should all be thinking with solemnity; it resembles the Bible description of the time before the flood. We have it in Holy Writ to read, as in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew.

Our ancestors have looked for the return of Jesus, and he is coming by and by. Does it fill your eyes with tears of joy? I sincerely hope that every one who reads this, and the poor unworthy writer of this, will rejoice, whether we sleep or whether we be among the living. I will be eighty-six, if I see another birthday.

In humble hope,
Mary Lancaster

LETTING FALL SOME OF THE HANDSFULLS OF PURPOSE

Touchet, Washington
March 2, 1919

Dear Brother Jackson:

I have just read your article in the Signs on LOVE, and it so wrought on my mind that I felt impressed to try and write you, and give you a glimpse at least of the comfort I gathered from it. It seemed the Good Master caused his servant to drop handfulls of purpose. Dear brother, it seems to me that this wonderful love is the very essence of true and undefiled religion; without it this world would be a blank even in nature. While natural love is great, yet it is so far short of the love of God, it is only a faint shadow in comparison to that love, that John calls attention to its manner. It is no wonder the Master said, by this (that you have love one for another) all men shall know that you are my disciples.

God is love, and they that are born of God are born of love. "If you love me keep my commandments". We know that we have passed from death to life if we love the brethren. Love is the fulfilment of the law. "Now abides faith, hope, and charity (love), but the greatest of these is charity." You see, Paul puts love first, for out of it grows all the fruit that characterizes the child of God. We love Him because he first loved us; so you see where there is found the evidence of a child of grace, we can trace it back to its cause. No wonder then that the saints sing that new song that David said the Lord put in his mouth, even praises to his name. No wonder the saint that posseses this love feels in his heart: "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." It is the only cord that can bind poor sinners together. That is the beauty of love — it is so strong it can and does kill us to the love of self, and makes us love the brethren better than ourselves. Is it not a glorious sight to see the church all esteeming and preferring each above themselves?

No wonder Paul would say that they are a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Isn't it peculiar that I can be at your feet, and you be at my feet all at the same time. Such a position is loved by the one who has the love of God, but hated by one who has never tasted the goodness of love. I felt my very soul glow with love while reading your letter. Is it not peculiar that our hearts go out in such love to those we have never seen, neither expect to meet in this world. No wonder our blessed Lord said, Blessed are they who do not see yet believe.

It does not require the vision of these natural eyes to see the beauty of holiness; no indeed! Nothing but faith can penetrate the mist of the flesh, and view the glories of the Kingdom. Faith is the fruit of the Spirit, for the natural man discerns not the things of the spirit, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned. "Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, neither hath it entered the heart of man the things the Lord has provided for them that love him; but God has revealed them to us by his spirit." No wonder

Jesus said that no man knoweth the Father save the Son, neither knoweth any man the Son save he to whom the Father will reveal him.

Now, dear brother, will you pardon a poor sinner for intruding on one of the favored of the Father. I felt even if you are a stranger in the flesh, and living in the far South, the warm rays of the glorious sun of righteousness which illuminated your poor soul to drop the handfull, found a poor little Ruth away here in the north-west part of the United States. I hope the good Lord will command the south wind to continue to blow. I dearly love to read the dear old Signs; while most of the writers are strangers to me in the flesh, yet I feel their God is my God, and they are my brethren. Please accept this as from the least of all, if one at all.

(Elder) J. T. Barnes

(published by request)

Storm Lake, Iowa

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is check for $15.00 to renew our subscription for two years; please apply the balance to the Indigent Fund. We feel there is so little we can do in this isolated area to partake of the wonderful words of God through the lips of the Old Baptist preachers. We desire to aid others unable to renew their subscriptions, and to be blessed to receive more truths in the coming issue of the Signs.

We are poor people in worldly goods but try to keep our eyes upon Him as he watches and guides our sinful path in this world, which is sometimes so very downcast, but then again his light seems to brighten the path. May we ever be mindful of our humble lot, and praise His goodness to us.

With love and faint hope,

Mrs. T. L. Stanford

Hattisburg, Miss.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I notice my subscription has run over a little, but my paper came right on — and did I enjoy reading it! It is so full of truth, and that is what I like. Elder George Weaver's letter in the November Signs was worth the price we pay for the paper a whole year, as were all the rest of them, for they were all good. The more power that is ascribed to God, the better I like it. When God says, "Shall be," I believe it will be just that. "He shall save his people from their sins," and these are the ones who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.

On the other hand, he said, "The wicked shall do wickedly." So you see one of these "shalls" is just as sure as the other, else God's word would not be true.

Am enclosing money order for $3.00 to renew my subscription; and thanking you for sending the paper on. If I am one of His, I feel to me the least of all.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

L. B. Parker

Laird Hill, Texas.

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood:

I am enclosing money to renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times. I feel that it is money well spent, and I would be happy if they could come oftener. Its contents are the experiences of God's people, and not something taught of men.

How I hope that I have faith in the God that Elijah called on; and that when I cry he will give me what I need — not what I want, for he knows what is best for his little ones — and that is what I feel to be, if one at all. My hope is little, but it is worth all the world to me. I get more joy meditating on the things of the Bible, than all the world's pleasures.

I hope the God of all grace will sustain you to send out the Signs.

A sister in hope of the resurrection,

Mrs. C. L. Wilson

CONTRIBUTIONS TO
THE INDIGENT FUND

(To help send the Signs to those unable to pay)

(To March 1, 1956)

Martha Frost, Calif. $1.00; Carrie Hodgins, Mich. $2.00; T. W. Calk, Tex. $5.00; Mrs. Robert Watt, Canada $5.00; Mrs. R. B. Shortridge, Ill. $10.00; P. L. Froude, Mich. $2.00; James A. Bell, New Mexico, $25.00; Harry T. Vories, Mich. $2.00; Joseph A. Johnson, Tenn. $10.00; Mrs. A. T. Jones, $2.00; Mrs. Albert Vail, Sr. $1.00; Mrs. J. O. Morrow, Texas, $1.00; Durwood Bradley, Texas $30.00; J. H. Merrell, $5.00; L. B. Lambert, N. C. $3.00; Victor D. Borst, N. Y. $5.00; Amy Hewitt, N. Y. $10.00; B. O. Wiley, Texas, $1.00; John F. Davis, La. $2.00; G. E. Rogers, Canada, $7.00; Dosie Deal, Mo. $2.00; E. K. Morris, N. C. $2.00.

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PLEASE NOTE: We have on hand a number of copies of the SIGNS dating back about ten years. We will mail them ten or more to one address at the rate of ten cents each. This will about cover the cost of handling and mailing, etc. We cannot guarantee certain copies; and cannot mail less than ten to a subscriber. Orders will be filled as received. 10 for $1.00 — 25 for $2.50, etc.

ASSOCIATIONS

The **UPPER COUNTRY LINE** Primitive Baptist Association is expected to convene with the Big Meadows Church, located 10 miles South of Burlington, N. C., just off N. C. Highway 87, July 16, 17, and 18th.

Our correspondents, brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

D. V. Spangler, Clerk

The **PIGG RIVER** Association is appointed to convene with Little Hope Church, in Roanoke County, Virginia, a few miles West of Salem, Virginia, on August 3, 4, and 5th.

Our brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

John D. Wood, Clerk

Snyder, Texas

Dear Editors:

Enclosed you will find $3.00 to renew my subscription to the Signs.

I enjoy the Signs very much, and don't want to miss a single copy. But if you were as negligent as I, then I fear the Signs would be almost a complete failure. . .

May God bless each one who has a work to do in publishing such a wonderful paper for his dear saints to read, is my humble prayer.

A little sister in hope,

Minnie Lee Williams

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

EDITORIALS

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EDITORIAL

THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST MINISTRY

Recently this question was asked me: "Why did you ever preach for the Primitive Baptist people?" My querist seemed to think that I made a mistake by doing so. May God bless us to study this question of the ministry, for many honest inquiries are being made, and many gainsayers are throwing reflections on those that minister.

Why do I preach? That is a weighty and pertinent question. My experience along that line is somewhat a mystery. I never thought the first thought about preaching the gospel until sometime in December, 1923. I knew that I was regarded and watched in a way that the ordinary boy was not watched. I had been told many times as a school boy that I spoke like a preacher — that I had a manner like one. This amused me, but it did not offend me. I thought well of myself; yes, I would say that I was right much in love with myself. It did not cause any different feeling for me to be told that I had the earmarks of a minister, except that it amused me to have them think that, for, although I did not have a single characteristic of a child of grace, yet I knew that they did not know what I was. I do not mean that I had any spiritual life or knowledge — far from that, but I did know **something** for I knew that it was bordering on the ridiculous to belittle the ministry in that way.

If I am a minister of the gospel, my people knew it for a long time before I knew a thing about God and godliness; about being a child of God, much less, much, much less, about being called to preach. I think that I can put in a claim to having come up **among** the Old Baptists, but I make absolutely no claim to coming up as one of them. I do not think anyone could know any less about the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists than I did; I do not think anyone could care less about the doctrine and welfare of them than I did; I do not think that anyone could be less concerned about my relationship to God than I was. Again, I do not think that I had a single mark about me that would distinguish me as an Old Baptist minister. Yet, I would say, that if I am called to the ministry, that they did know in some way. I think that a church knows before the minister knows. I think that the right way is that the church is to pray for laborers in the harvest. If she is moved to ask for them, she will be exercised to know them when they are sent. This may not be found verbatim in the Scriptures, but I think that is clearly implied. In the kingdom of Jesus Christ there is no gift that we are not to make known our requests unto God. (Phillipians 4:6) Earth, with all of its splendor, beauty, cunning, and intrigue cannot supply the need of the children of God. They have been promised that God will not forsake them; that no good

thing will be withheld from those that walk uprightly; and the apostle is sure that his God will supply all of the need of the saints at Phillippi. The things of God are revealed to us. We will know that much and no more, and we certainly will know that much. We may not know today, but that which is needed will be made known unto us. (Phillipians 3:-15) In the days of the early church God had made known unto them the mystery of his will. (Ephesians 1:9) By revelation things were made known unto them that had not been previously known. (Ephesians 3:3) The manifold wisdom of God was made known unto them. (Ephesians 3:10) Unless the Lord has changed his way of dealing with his church, he is still revealing things to them, and they recognize his handiwork when it is revealed to them. I have said, and it being the truth according to my understanding of the truth, I say again, that when the church needs more ministers, she will be at the throne of grace begging for them. The throne of grace still is, and the access to it is still open to all that rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. (Romans 5:2; Hebrews 4:14, 16; 7:25) The only reason there has not been a groaning and a weeping spirit, an humble supplication at the throne of grace for laborers in the kingdom, is because we have not felt our need. Really there is no need to feel. To be fat and well fed; to be satisfied with our barns, and the goods there (Revelations 3:17); to think that we are able to go on because that we have travelled thus far, certainly does not speak of one in need. God must work the need in us. This inwrought need is ours after, always after, he has stripped us of what we have.

This consciousness of need will be followed by a desire to ask. The travel of God's children is step by step. They would never make a step did He not help, and lift up, and lead. And they, having made a step, which is **not** downward and earthly, but is upward, and forward, and heavenly, they will go on and on; for they are not of them that turn back but that go ahead. The feeling of lack will be followed by an humble petition for help. The petition for help will be followed by a supply for their actual need, and I do not hesitate to say that the church will recognize the supply as being an answer to her requests.

The Lord calls his ministers. The Saviour called the apostles, and I am not aware of any calling power being delegated to them. The apostles uses the pronoun "we" and "us" when referring to the call of God. It sometimes would seem that Old Baptists are busy telling us that Jesus did more for the apostles than for us. I am not denying that, but I most emphatically deny that we, or they, were in the least degree a contributing factor in being called. He called each of them, and each of them responded. Since I am dealing with the church of Jesus Christ in general, and the ministry of him in particular, I must have the names of those that rebelled, and especially do I need the names of those that he called to serve and they did not come at all. One such list will be enough.

Now if we are not mistaken, we are on solid ground. But for fear that we have not made the issue clear and laid down such premises for future consideration of the subject as would be conducive to sound doctrine, let me say again that I have not in any way had a thing to contribute towards becoming a minister of the gospel, provided, of course that I am. I did not decide to become one, and, having thus decided, brought a lot of natural talent, to say less of spiritual, that would help in the least degree, or manner, or way, towards making good at the work. Furthermore, let me say that of those the Saviour called while in person on earth, they all came in answer to his call. Still further, that none of them, (and, incidentally, of us) knew, and did not care, anything about the church and grace, and being called to preach, until they were apprehended of God.

In order to deal more explicit with the

subject of the ministry, it will be best to examine the article of faith that has been our criterion for what we do. This article reads, "We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written word of God and the only rule of faith and practice." Generally speaking, it has been the intention of our people to live up to the thought expressed in that article, but none of us have thought what we meant by this article that we were to do to the letter the things mentioned in the Bible, nor have we thought that we had to do to the letter the things not mentioned. If this has been our thought we have miserably and completely failed, for none of us have done it. If the New Testament writers had meant for us to do word for word, letter for letter, as it was written, there would not have been any expediency with the apostle. Expediency is something allowed under the circumstances. It must be remembered that the letter kills. A strict adherence to the letter is death, but a strict adherence to the teachings and the leading and guiding of the Spirit is life and peace. Paul wrote and sent many precious letters, but he did not claim to be an able minister in those letters, but of the Spirit.

Another thought here. As important as the letters of Paul were, there was still a commandment to do all things in decency and in order. Why the word deceny? Why use that? Why not just do the explicit orders of the apostles? Wouldn't it be alright to do orderly? Yes, it is alright if they are done in decency. Every reader of these lines has known of cases where orders of the New Testament were apparently being carried out, but as you look back at it, you know that it did not have any decency in it. Plenty of order, but little, if any, decency; plenty of letter discipline, letter preaching, letter contending for the faith, but all it produced was death. It will always do that. It always has done that. It is the decree of Jehovah that the letter kills. Nearly always, if not always, every reformer, every splinter or slab off from the true church, has done a lot of talking about order, about a strict observance of the Bible, but up until now, they have all died out, being killed by the application of their letter religion, not having any decency mixed with their order.

I honestly and sincerely hope that you get the drift of what I am trying to present. Let me try this: In the Scriptures there is not any mention made of electing or calling a pastor. Who would say that it is a violation of the Scriptures to do so? Who would say that it was not decent to do so? It does not mention that John Doe was called or elected clerk of the church at Ephesus. In fact, it does not say a single word about a church having a clerk. Who would say that is contrary to the scriptural law of decency to have one? The elders of the early church ordained seven men as deacons. If the scriptures are to be obeyed to the letter, instead of the spirit of them, there is not an orderly or scriptural church in America, and the fact of the business is, that if that rule meant what it said, I think that five-sixths of the Old School Baptist churches would have to disband, for many of them do not have seven male members, much less seven qualified deacons. Now would it be decent and orderly to be satisfied and content with what the Lord had given you, and to keep house and occupy until He returned as best you could, or would it be decent to close the church doors and go home? It is said that it is unscriptural to have a sister serve as clerk of the church. I know of a church in Atlanta, Georgia, that has had seven sisters in it for years and years. If the Scriptures are to be obeyed to the letter, and they forbid a sister serving as clerk, then that church would have had to disband for lack of one, and also because she did not have a single deacon, let alone seven.

Of the stars of the churches of Asia, all were held in the hand of the Head of the churches. These churches all had a pastor, but because they each had a pastor, it does not mean that a star can-

not serve more than one church. If it does, the Apostle Paul was not a star, nor was Peter, nor James, nor Jude. It cannot be proved by the Bible that Paul did any more service for one church than another. He did not say "Besides those things that are without" do I have the care of the church at Ephesus, or Corinth, or any other single church. But he was concerned about his care of all the churches. How pleasant to reflect upon the apostle being so interested in the little circle of churches that he was closely associated with. With long and tedious journeys were his to make. He always made them with joy, not counting his life dear, but going on towards the mark of the prize of high calling that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. It is of the utmost importance to examine ourselves. Are we, too, willing to give our time, our means, our health, our strength, our life, to serve these dear pilgrims? Is there anything, **anything at all,** that has not been counted off as loss than we might win Him? If there is anything, **anything at all,** that we have not laid aside as we were brought into his presence and made to count off our natural life and all that goes with it, we are still not a disciple of His in the truest sense of the word. And if this is true, our preaching will have that much of the world in it. If we have not been brought under the jurisdiction of the reign of the Lord Jesus Christ to the extent that we had to forsake and leave behind the things of earth when we came into the borders of Zion, we will mix that much green gourd in our preaching and attempt to palm it off as the true gospel.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

MATTHIAS: WAS HE AN APOSTLE?

That Matthias was numbered with the apostles, and by them intended to supply the place vacated by Judas, there can be no reasonable doubt, for we are so informed in the scriptures; and that he may have continued to be numbered with them until the calling of Paul, we have no positive testimony; but that he occupied one of the twelve apostolic thrones, is in our judgment far less probable. But as we have no record of any decision made or work performed by him officially as ruling in judgment, it seems unnecessary for us to scrutinize his credentials. But while we are informed that Matthias was numbered with the apostles by the will or election of the eleven, and probably with the concurrence of the one hundred and twenty which were with them at Jerusalem, before any of them were endued with power (authority) from on high, we are informed in the most positive language that Paul (is) an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God.—Eph. i, 1; Col. i. 1. And in 1 Tim. i. 1, it is further written that he is an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Savior; and in 2 Tim. i. 1 we are told that he is an apostle of Jesus Christ, (not only by the will of God, but also) according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus. And in Titus i. he claims to be "an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began, but hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which was committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Savior." These, with many other passages, affirm that Paul is an apostle by the will and commandment of God, while other testimony of the word informs us that Matthias was numbered with the apostles by the **will** and appointment of the disciples at Jerusalem, before they were endued with apostolic power from on high. Paul supposed himself to be not a whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles; but what Matthias supposed on that subject we are not told, nor can we see that it could benefit us in the

least to know. We presume that Matthias, and all the other disciples unto whom Christ appeared after his resurrection from the dead, were competent witnesses that he was so risen, but not more so than was Paul; for although Paul had not been with the disciples from the days of John the Baptist, and in that respect was as one born out of due time, yet last of all he was seen of Paul also, as the risen and exalted Prince and Savior of his people. He said, "For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am; and this grace (by which he was made an apostle, and equal to the very chiefest of them) which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all." —1 Cor. xv. 8-10.

Now, as by far the greatest share of the apostolic **rules** and **decisions** in judgment for the order and faith of the church of God which are given us in the New Testament are from the mouth and pen of Paul, it seems to us of vital importance to know which of the two, Matthias or Paul, was really seated upon one of the twelve thrones. Neither of them occupied one of these thrones at the time when the disciples numbered Matthias among them; for it was not until the regeneration, when the Son of man should ascend and sit upon the throne of his glory, that they who had followed him should sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.—Matthew xix. 28. Therefore, when he gave commandment unto the eleven, he commanded them to tarry in Jerusalem until they should be endued with power from on high.—Luke xxiv. 49. They had no power from on high to elect or cast lots for an apostle, when they took on themselves the responsibility without power from heaven to make Matthias an apostle. Nor had they any authority from heaven to do anything officially, until the King should receive his coronation, and take his seat upon his Mediatarial throne. If they, before they were endued with such authority, could officially act in making an apostle by election and lottery, why have not the disciples of this day as good right to supply themselves with ministers, and so heap to themselves teachers? There were but twelve thrones to be occupied, but twelve stars to appear in the crown of the Head of the church, but twelve foundations in which were the names of the twelve apostles, as the holy city, New Jerusalem, came down from God out of heaven; and if Paul was one of the twelve, as the city came down from God, then Matthias, although numbered with, was not one of the twelve divinely appointed or recognized apostles, which are empowered to rule in judgment in the kingdom of Christ. And if Matthias is seated upon an apostolic throne, then Paul is not what he supposed and repeatedly affirmed that he was. If Matthias, instead of Paul, occupies a throne of judgment, Paul lacks much of being equal to the very chiefest of the apostles, as he, if that be so, neither sits on one of the twelve thrones of judgment, nor is his name in any one of the twelve foundations of the holy Jerusalem (the gospel church) which came down from God out of heaven. And if Paul was not an inspired apostle of Jesus Christ, would not his decisions be stripped of much of their binding authority on the church of God?

The simple word **apostle,** which signifies one **sent forth,** may be applied to any one **sent forth,** whether as an apostle in the sense in which the twelve were, or not. Apollos was **sent forth** by the church to accompany Paul, as the Holy Ghost commanded, and Silas and Timothy also were; but these are nowhere called apostles of Jesus Christ by the will of God. We think there were but twelve divinely endued apostles, clothed with apostolic authority to sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, to whom the keys of the kingdom were given, that what they bound on earth should be final and irrevocable, being bound also in heaven. As nearly

all the judgments, decisions and rules for the observance of Gentile churches were delivered to them by Paul, and as we have not a word from Matthias, it would be a serious thing to divest Paul of his apostolic authority. Judas Iscariot was chosen to take part of the apostleship, and undoubtedly fulfilled the design for which he was chosen; but he fell by apostasy, and went to his own place, before any of the apostles were endued with apostolic power from on high, or baptized with the Holy Ghost, and consequently before the regeneration, in which the Son of man ascended the throne of his Mediatorial glory in the organization of the gospel church, in which the apostles were to sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. So it is clear that Judas Iscariot, though once numbered with the twelve apostles, never sat upon any one of the twelve thrones of judgment. But Paul did fill and magnify his office, and labored more abundantly in the apostleship than all his eleven fellow-apostles, and was not a whit behind or inferior to any of them. All the saints of the gospel dispensation are witnesses of the resurrection of Christ from the dead; but the twelve apostles were endued to rule in judgment, and to sit on thrones of judgment. But even the endued apostles were invested with no power to legislate —to make any laws, but simply to judge, or interpret to us, the laws and ordinances, and to define unto us the faith and practice required by the laws of the King of saints, whom God has set upon his holy hill of Zion.—Psa. ii. 6. God, by his Holy Spirit, could command the church, saying, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them;" but we have no instance recorded of the apostles, after they were baptized with the Holy Ghost, and enthroned in apostolic power, ever attempting to make ministers or apostles or Christians, but their testimony is that God has set the members in the body, the church, as it has pleased him. And that only the ascended Lord, who led captivity captive, received and gave gifts unto men. "And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some pastors and teachers." But all these places and positions shall be given to them for whom they are prepared of our heavenly Father.—Matt. xx. 20-23.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, August 15, 1879)

NEW HOPE CHURCH CONSTITUTED

According to previous arrangements, the arm of Shepherd Fold Church met; and, after preaching by Elders Lloyd Wall and W. O. Beene, Elder R. B. Walston announced that the purpose of this meeting was to constitute this arm into an organized church of the regular Predestinarian Baptist faith and order.

Elder W. O. Beene was chosen moderator, and Elder R. B. Walston, clerk. The other members of the Presbytery were Elder Lloyd Wall, and Deacons H. S. Hill and J. P. McMillian. After finding these brethren and sisters standing in order, they were pronounced to be worthy to be constituted into a church, which will henceforth be called New Hope Church.

Closed by prayer by the Moderator.

(Elder) W. O. Beene, Moderator
(Elder) R. B. Walston, Clerk

ORDINATION OF ELDER JOHN ROSCOE LANE

The Church of Harmony, in Cabell County, West Virginia, met in conference Saturday April 2, 1956.

First elected Elder J. G. L. Hash acting Moderator. Services opened by song and prayer by Elder Julius Bocock; then Brother J. R. Lane preached to the congregation. Then the church delivered Brother J. R. Lane into the hands of the Presbytery as organized by electing Elder George L. Weaver, Moderator, and Elder J. G. L. Hash, Clerk, with Elder J. P. Helms and Elder Julius Bocock. Elder Helms led in prayer for divine guidance. Brother A. A. Easter was chosen as spokesman for the church. The visiting deacons: S. G. Akers, J. I. Terry, W. H. Simmons, J. B. Johnson, and Licentate William Holland to act with us in an advisary capacity.

After questioning Brother A. A. Easter, he answered satisfactorily. Then Elder Helms questioned Brother Lane as to his call to the ministry, doctrine, faith and practice. The Presbytery proceeded to set Brother Lane apart as a duly ordained Elder with the laying on of hands by the Presbytery. Elder J. G. L. Hash led in prayer; and the charge was delivered by Elder J. P. Helms.

Elder J. R. Lane was then delivered to Harmony Church as a duly ordained Elder, and to our people everywhere who are in order with us. Then published an open door for the reception of members. Dismissed in order.

(Elder) J. G. L. Hash, Moderator pro tem, and Clerk of Presbytery

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ORDINATION OF ELDER W. A. WINFREY

I am sending for publication, at the request of Pleasant Valley Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church, Kingman, Kansas, a copy of the proceedings of the ordination of Elder W. A. Winfrey to the full work of the ministry.

Upon authority of Pleasant Valley Church, a meeting was appointed to be held on the 29th day of April, 1956, at the church for the purpose of ordaining Brother Winfrey; a request being made for ordained help for that purpose.

The presbytery was composed of Elder L. L. Schenck, Elder R. W. Rhodes, with Deacons H. F. Cate and Barney Evers; and were organized by electing Elder Rhodes, Moderator, and Brother Barney Evers, Clerk. Elder Schenck was appointed to give the charge. Brother Cate was appointed by the church to be their spokesman.

After due examination by the presbytery, Brother Winfrey was set aside for ordination, and Elder R. W. Rhodes was asked to word the prayer. Then kneeling with Brother Winfrey hands were laid on as Elder Rhodes spoke in prayer.

After the ordination Pleasant Valley Church gave the right hand of fellowship to Elder Winfrey and the Presbytery, thus receiving the ordination. Minutes of the ordination proceedings were read and adopted, and the congregation was dismissed by Elder Rhodes.

We take pleasure in recommending Elder Winfrey to the household of faith everywhere. Although he was a stranger to the writer until one year ago, it was our privilege to hear him speak in prayer much to our comfort; and it was also our privilege to hear him preach the gospel of God our Saviour very ably and edifyingly before the ordination; and also it was noted the high regard and esteem in which he is held by the dear brethren and sisters who know him best.

May the Lord bless and lead and uphold him to preach the unsearchable riches of our Lord and Saviour, to God's glory, and to the comfort and consolation of the hungering and thirsting sheep and lambs of God. We are sure from our own experience, as well as the teachings of the Bible, that Elder Winfrey will doubtless meet with conflicts, trials and tribulations in the way; and persecutions and heartaches no doubt await him. But take courage, dear brother, in the fact that the Lord is Chief Shepherd of his flock, and that he will be with his humble ministers to preach his everlasting gospel to his little flock, which he has purchased with his own precious blood. For without him, Jesus said, we can do nothing; and Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me." We feel the Lord has called Elder Winfrey — may he be strengthened to this glorious end.

May the Lord bless dear aged and faithful Elder Schenck, who has been among the scattered little flock of Kansas and Missouri so long; and may he be rejoiced in heart at the Lord's leadership of this dear young brother, who has just been ordained to the full work of the ministry. And may it please the Lord to bless this young brother, together with His people, in whatever portion of the earth God sees fit to cast his lot.

Your very unworthy brother in hope through our Lord Jesus Christ.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

ORDINATION OF DEACON

Hopeful Church, Ozark, Alabama, chose Brother Frank Bowman to be a deacon on April 22, 1956, and called for his ordination. He is a son of Deacon John Bowman who died two years ago; and grand-son of the late Elder J. F. Bowman.

The Presbytery for the ordination consisted of Elders W. A. Williams, E. R. Sorrells and J. J. Collins; with deacons J. B. Waters and H. T. Collins. Elder Collins was chosen as Moderator, and Brother J. T. Collins as Clerk. Elder W. A. Williams questioned Brother J. F. Tisdale (who served as spokesman for the church) as to Brother Bowman's qualifications as given in Paul's letter to Timothy; and Elder J. J. Collins questioned Brother Bowman on the Articles of Faith. Elder E. R. Sorrells lead the ordination prayer; and Deacons J. B. Waters and H. T. Collins, and Elder J. J. Collins delivered the charge. After which the right hand of fellowship was extended to Brother Bowman and wife, Sister Donie Bowman.

Written by:
(Elder) J. J. Collins

OBITUARIES

DEACON GEORGE A VAUGHAN

Deacon George A Vaughan, Ozark, Alabama, a faithful member of Hopeful Church, was called to his eternal home on Sunday, April 15, 1956. He united with Hopeful Primitive Baptist Church when quite young, and was ordained deacon after the death of Deacon John T. Bowman. He served the church faithfully until his death. His health was poor, but he loved the cause of Zion. He often told the writer that he was ready when the Master

called. He will be sadly missed by his church, companion, children and countless friends.

Funeral services were conducted at his beloved Hopeful Church by his pastor, Elder J. J. Collins, who used as a text, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." He is survived by his wife, Sister Vaughan, one daughter and one son; and four grand-children; together with many other relatives.

(Elder) J. J. Collins

MARY ELIZABETH WRAY

The Church at Reidsville, N. C., having requested me to write the obituary of my sister, recently deceased, I now attempt to do, in my limited ability.

Sister Mary Elizabeth Wray, aged 68 years, wife of O. J. Wray, Sr., of Greensboro, N. C., died Oct. 12, 1955, following a lingering illness caused by cancer. She was a daughter of C. G. and Rebecca Shreve Smith, late of Reidsville. On the 27th day of December, 1914, she was united in marriage to O. J. Wray, then of Reidsville, by the late Elder G. M. Trent; and to them were born six sons, all of whom survive.

She joined the church at Wolf Island, near Reidsville, at the September meeting, 1929; and on the day appointed for her baptism her husband was received into the fellowship of the church, and they had the happy privilege of being baptized together by Elder Trent. At the time of her death she was a member of the church at Reidsville.

She is survived by her husband and the following sons: Burch C.; O. J. Jr.; Hugh, and Louis G., all of Greensboro; Wilmor W. and Haywood W., of Reidsville, and six grandchildren. She also leaves three brothers: John R. and M. T. Smith, of Reidsville, and C. L. Smith of Burlington, N. C.

Her funeral was conducted at Wolf Island by her pastor, Elder David Spangler, assisted by Elders W. C. King and G. W. Hill of Greensboro. Burial followed in the church cemetery.

Sister Mary was blest to bear her sufferings with patience, being mindful always that, as she expressed it, her afflictions were as nothing compared to what awaited her in that new life, soon to be hers. She believed and loved the doctrine of salvation by grace and went to hear it preached as often as she was able. The last service she attended was at the Reidsville church on the fourth Sunday in August, 1955.

The ties linking her with her family and loved ones have been severed and we are saddened by her passing, but to the people of God there is a tie that binds. This tie cannot be broken. And the joy afforded by this blessed truth lessens our sorrow, for by her profession, her love and devotion to the church, and her faith and trust in her Maker, we have good reason to believe that she is numbered with those spoken of in Revelation:

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection, on such the second death hath no power." This is enough to make us submissive to the will of Him who hath given and who hath taken away, and we desire to express to Him our thankfulness for the life she lived among us, but more especially for the life that is now hers with Him in glory.

May the Lord, in his abundant mercy, bless and comfort her bereaved husband and sons, and those near to her by the ties of nature, and enable them to be reconciled to His will in all things.

M. T. Smith

Read and adopted at our January meeting, 1956; and upon motion it was agreed that a copy be given to the family of our deceased Sister, a copy be filled with the church clerk, and a copy be published in the **Signs of the Times.**

Kate D. Mitchell, Clerk

EDD AULDS

We desire to express our love and fellowship, and our Resolution of Respect for dear Brother Aulds, who was born February 22, 1878, and died September 29, 1955. Brother Aulds was an humble and lovely brother in the faith which was once delivered to the saints. He was blessed with a bright experience, and presented himself for membership at Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church about four years ago, and was gladly received for baptism. He had been an interested attendant of this church for a long time, and was given a great desire to go home to his friends, and tell them how great things the Lord had done for him, and had had compassion on him.

He was received in the midst of a bright and heavenly manifestation of the presence of the Lord, as was felt by those present at the time; and was baptized by the unworthy writer. He remained a very faithful attendant as long as he was able, and was loved and esteemed by the brethren. We feel that our loss is very great in his departure, but the Lord saw fit that it should be so, and we desire to be reconciled to his will.

Brother Aulds is survived by his wife and four sons, and eight grand-children, who grieve at his passing. His funeral was conducted by Elder J. L. Smith, and Elder J. Duff Smith at the Baptist Church at Enterprise.

May the Lord bless and comfort his dear companion and children.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

SAM B. ROCKETT

A Memorial of the late Sam B. Rockett, who was born June 25, 1883, in Union Parish,

Lousiana; and died March 22, 1956, making his stay on earth almost seventy-three years.

Mr. Rockett was well known, and had many, many friends. He was a good singer and lover of sacred music, having taught and led in singing extensively throughout this section of the country. He joined the Missionary Baptists in early life, and was faithful to that belief for many years, but was most thoroughly brought to believe the Primitive Baptist doctrine, and was a regular attendant of their meetings and delighted to be with them. He requested that they conduct his funeral at New Hope Primitive Baptist church, near Spearsville, Lousiana. In him was manifested that love and devotion to a sovereign God of all grace and mercy that is characteristic of the experimental regeneration of the Lord's people in every kindred, nation, and tongue. Those who knew him in the faith and belief loved him, and he was devoted to those who loved the doctrine of God our Saviour.

He was a good and neighborly person, and as such was a great help to many people who were in need of neighborly assistance. He was very jovial, but on heavenly and divine things he was solemn, serious and very sincere, thus evidencing his hope and trust in the Lord. I fully believe that our loss is his gain, and while we still suffer here, he is at rest.

He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Artie Rockett, who by her first marriage was Mrs. Marshall Summers, and Miss Sawyers before marriage. Surviving also are two sons: Otis Rockett, Ringgold, La., and Lowell Rockett, Baton Rouge, La.; three daughters: Mrs. Neva Denton, Farmerville, La., Mrs. Mildred Thomas, Lillie, La., Mrs. Fern Harroll, ElDorado, Arkansas. Also surviving are three brothers: Hugh, W. E., and S. H. Rockett; and one sister: Mrs. Etta Barron; one step daughter: Mrs. Annie Vell Courtney; and two step sons: Winnard Summers, and Marshall Summers; nineteen grand-children and four great grandchildren.

The funeral was conducted by Elder J. L. Smith, and the writer, with Mr. Haynes and Mr. Colvin, local ministers, in the presence of a huge crowd of relatives and friends, with many floral evidences of devotion and friendship. He was laid to rest in the Spearsville Cemetery to await the great day when the Lord shall come.

May God bless and comfort all who mourn.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

MEMORIAL

"Asleep in Jesus! Blessed sleep!
From which none ever wake to weep!
A calm and undisturbed repose,
Unbroken by the last of foes."

Our dear sister, Minnie Sula Suitt Thomasson, relict of Deacon Pellie L. Thomasson, was called home in the early morning of March 30, 1956, at her home in Tally Ho, Granville County, N. C. after suffering a sudden heart seizure.

She was born in Pearson County, N. C. the daughter of Mr. Hawkins and Sister Virginia Hobgood Suitt Hawkins, on May 12, 1877. On January 27, 1898, she was married to Pellie L. Thomasson, and removed to Tally Ho, Granville County, where she resided for the remainder of her life and widowhood, her husband passing away Oct. 27, 1925.

They were blest with two daughters, Senie, (Mrs. Joe H. Daniel) of the home, and Harriette, (Mrs. Will Morgan) of Burlington, N. C., who survive to mourn the loss of a dear mother, together with five grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, and one sister, Miss Mollie Suitt, of Oxford, N. C.

On August 23, 1902, she was received into the fellowship of Dutchville Church, and baptized the following day by Elder W. A. Simpkins, living a consistent member there until she and her husband were dismissed by letter to unite in the organization of Memorial Church in Stem on Dec. 31, 1923. She loved the truth, and her church, and was faithful in its doctrine and order. In disposition, she was quiet and retiring, choosing rather to "be" than to "seem". She measured up well to the pattern laid down in Scripture by Solomon when he wrote of a virtuous woman, "She worketh willingly with her hands, . . . in her tongue is the law of kindness, . . . her children arise up and call her blessed."

Funeral service was held in the Meeting House in Stem, by her much loved pastor, Elder David V. Spangler. The subject for his discourse being Psalm 92:12, 13, 14, after which the remains were interred in Elmwood Cemetery, Oxford, N. C. The many floral offerings were a silent token of the respect and love of those who knew her.

As a tribute to her memory, therefore be it . . .

Resolved 1st. That we in patient resignation bow to this dispensation of God's providence, knowing that all His purposes are right.

Resolved 2nd. That we cherish her memory, and strive to emulate the virtues which through abounding grace, adorned her life.

Resolved 3rd. That a copy of this "Memorial" be inscribed on our church record, a copy be given to the bereaved family, and a copy be sent to the "Signs of the Times" for publication.

These Resolutions adopted by the J. H. Gooch Memorial Church in Stem, in conference assembled, this the 7th day of April, 1956.

Laura Reed Gooch, Clerk
O. Y. Clayton, Asst. Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 124 DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1956 NO. 8

OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH MARKS 150TH ANNIVERSARY

The service at Rock Springs Old School Baptist Church of Christ, on Rt. 222 near the Maryland line, last Sunday morning, April 1, 1956, marked the one hundred-fiftieth year of the founding of the church.

There is no other church of this same denomination — the Old School or Primitive Baptist — in Lancaster County.

The church was organized as a Branch of the Church at Little Britain, in 1806, the mother church being the London Tract Church of Chester County. The Church was constituted with these seven original members: Nathaniel Jenkins, Rebecca Jenkins, Sarah Jenkins, Robert Hannum, Martha Low, Martha Hannah, Hannah Jenkins.

This branch of the Church was separated and set apart from the mother church on August 30, 1812.

The ministers who have served the Rock Springs Church down through the years are as follows: Jethro Johnson, who served during the period that the local church was a branch of the church at London Tract, slightly over 6 years; Charles Moor, 3 years; Thomas Poteet, a little less than 5 years; Thomas Barton, over 44 years; William Grafton, 39 years; John G. Eubanks, slightly less than 16 years; Douglas L. Topping, over 19 years; and John D. Wood, present pastor, over 7 years.

Some of these same ministers, and others filled the pulpit as supply during the total of about 11 years the church did not have a regular pastor.

Meetings are held on the first Sunday of each month, at 10:30 a. m., Standard or Daylight Saving Time, whichever is in effect at time of meeting.

Some of the old family or surnames of this community are not in use hereabouts at this time. For instance, the names Lowe, Thomas, Freestone and Whipple. Besides these, the names of Jenkins, Hanna, Reynolds, Gregg, Wicks, Scott, Huff, Weaver, Rowland, Jackson, King, Griest, and others appear in the earlier records — the most predominate being Jenkins and Hanna.

The surnames of the present membership are: Osborne, Farmer, Conner, Anderson, Rakes, Stuart and Mackley.

Half of the present membership are natives of North Carolina and the other half are from the state of Virginia.

This has come about by the exodus North by the Southerners to Maryland and Pennsylvania and other nearby states. This little church, perhaps, is unique in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and — it could well be — in all the states, in having such status of its membership.

(Copied from the Quarryville (Pa.) Sun.)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ENDOWMENT FUND

Amount received for Endowment Fund, or printing press, from June 1, to June 15, 1956.

Total received to June 1st	$2,113.00
W. F. Stafford, Tenn.	1.00
Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Page, N. C.	5.00
Mrs. L. G. Clayton, N. C.	1.00
Mrs. Ida Holloway, Md.	15.00
Mrs. Mattie B. Williams, Va.	10.00
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J. D. Thomas, N. C.	1.00
J. W. Towler, Va.	10.00
Luther C. Campbell, Tenn.	25.00
TOTAL	$4,766.55

Rocky Mount, N. C.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I have thought many times that I would write a few lines and tell you how very much I have enjoyed the dear blessed paper. It is sweet to my soul to lie on my bed and read, for it is nearly all the preaching I get. I am afflicted so that I can't go to church. I am surrounded with good people, but most of them despise the doctrine that is precious to me. So I feel sometimes like one alone — yet not alone, for if Christ be for us, who can be against us. I feel that all my times are in his hands, and he is able to supply all my needs. I am but a poor beggar, always needing God's mercy. What a mercy it was when he made to know his greatness, and my nothingness. May he keep me humble.

I was baptized in icy water fifty-six years ago last January, but that did not make me one of God's people — unless I was in the covenant of Jesus' blood, I am none of his. John in the

3rd chapter, 14th verse said, "We know that we have passed from death to life because we love the brethren." Would like for some of you to write through the paper on the first part of that chapter: "Behold what manner of love . . ." etc.

I am sending with this a piece that Brother Alford wrote. Please send him a copy of the Signs as he has never seen one. Am sending one dollar to cover cost. I am just a beggar in the household of faith, I hope.

(The writer overlooked giving his name.)

TRIBULATIONS AND DARK VALLEYS ARE NECESSARY

Loris, S. C.

Dear Kindred in Christ Jesus:

As I feel to have an impression to write I hope that it is not of the flesh, for if so it will be of no comfort to any one. But if the Lord will bless me with the spirit of understanding and guide my feeble mind, and take my mind off worldly and natural things and place it on Heavenly and Divine things, then I hope that what I may say may be a comfort to God's humble poor.

The Lord is so good, merciful and kind and has always blest his people with every needed blessing. It is our desire to be thankful to him for all the blessings he has bestowed upon us poor, unworthy and undeserving creatures. But he has to bless us with a thankful heart before we can feel thankful.

You remember, my dear friends, that we are told "Honour thy Father and thy Mother that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee". (Exodus 20:12) I do not know whether or not you will agree with me, but I believe this means more than our earthly parents, for God our Heavenly Father is due all honour and praise. And while in our right mind, or the mind of Christ, our dear Savior, we desire to live at the foot of the cross and at the feet of our dear brothers and sisters and shun the very appearance of evil, or anything that would bring reproach or shame on the dear church we have been made to love, — Jerusalem which is the Mother of all.

Jesus said, "Verily, verily I say unto you except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood has eternal life and I will raise him up at the last day." (St. John 6:53, 54) When we are blest to sit down in those Heavenly places with Christ Jesus and his poor and afflicted people, singing praise to his honour and glory, listening to his Gospel as it is dropping like the rain, and feeling his speech as it distills as the dew into our very souls, then Heaven comes down our souls to greet and joy crowns the mercy seat. It is then we are eating his flesh and drinking his blood.

Jesus said, "He that drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." "When the poor and needy seek water and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I, the Lord, will hear them. I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places and fountains in the midst of the valleys. I will make the wilderness a pool of water and the dry land springs of water." (Isaiah 41:17, 18)

My dear friends, I believe in my poor heart that we have learned in our pilgrimage and experiences that the dear Lord has fulfilled the texts given above. O! how many times have we been in those desolate places suffering for that pure water that only God can give, and how we did rejoice when he blessed us to drink. Then we could feel to say as did Job, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth and that he shall stand at the later day upon the earth, and though after my skin worms destroy

this body yet in my flesh shall I see God." (Job 19:25, 26)

If we could have our way we would like to stay on the mountain top all the time. But the Lord of our Salvation knows what is best for his people. And it is necessary that we have to go through those dark valleys and through tribulations, for it is in these that we learn obedience, and we learn to have patience and wait on the Lord; and our hope is strengthened or renewed. Jacob said the Lord found him in a waste howling wilderness and a desert land, led him about and instructed him, and so it is with all of the Lord's people. This old body of ours is the wilderness referred to, and this old body of ours will be a waste howling wilderness and desert place until it is changed at the resurrection of the dead. But the Lord leads his people about and instructs them in the wilderness. "Happy art thou, O Israel who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." (Deut. 33:29) "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord and great shall be the peace of thy children." (Isaiah 54:13) They are all taught alike. This is a sweet peace that the world knows nothing about.

The world says the Old Baptists are away behind the times and will soon be all gone. One of the Lord's prophets may have thought so — "God has not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the Scripture saith of Elias how he maketh intercession to God against Israel saying: Lord they have killed thy prophets and digged down thine altars and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him — I have reserved to myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal." "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." (Romans 11:2 to 5)

John saw that great host that had come up through great tribulations and had washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. It is said they are as the stars of heaven or the sands of the seashore which no man can number.

The world says if they can have more time they will Christianize the world, but that is not in accord with the teaching of the Scriptures. "Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees and hypocrites! for ye compass land and sea to make one proselyte and when he is made ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves." (Matthew 23:15)

Since the time Christ set up his church, there has been quite a few different so called churches organized or set up claiming to be the true church, preaching the commandments and doctrines of men. (Col. 2:22) As was foretold by the Apostle Paul, "Preach the Word; be instant in season out of season. Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine; for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth. And shall be turned into fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." (2 Timothy 4:2 to 5)

Which reminds us the following Scripture: "In that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying we will eat our own bread and wear our own apparel only let us be called by thy name to take away our reproach." (Isaiah 4:1) As long as anyone is trusting in his good works or selfrighteousness for salvation he is eating his own bread and wearing his own apparel. There is only one true church and that is the one Christ set up in the hearts and souls of his people when he said, "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matthew 16:18) We believe the Lord has a people in every nation, kindred and tongue, and at His own good time and

pleasure he will make himself known to every one and that every one will be saved and housed in Heaven without the loss of a single one.

When one is brought to the end of his strength and is made to see that he is doomed to hell and eternal punishment, unless the Lord pardons and forgives his sins, he sees that his bread has become stale and unfit to eat, and his apparel of good works and self-righteousness is nothing more than filthy rags in the sight of God. He is made to beg God for pardon, and when he has pardoned and given him that sweet hope in Christ, he is made willing to ascribe all honor and praise to his name.

"Wherefore seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easy beset us and let us run with patience the race that is set before us: looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Hebrews 12:1, 2.

Please remember me in your prayers.

Yours in need of mercy,
Mack K. Alford

SOME REFLECTIONS

807 Pope Street,
Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Editors and Readers of the Signs:

I am sending a check to pay for two more years of the paper, and, if the Lord wills, I wish to write a few words.

Oh, how great our God is, and how perfect his work. Yesterday at meeting we heard such words of truth — Jesus, the way, the truth, and the life. We heard words that ascribe greatness to our God; and his wisdom declared. They spoke of His great love wherewith he loved his people before they were a people; and of his mercy and loving kindness; and his sovereign power as King and Ruler of his whole creation; and that he is Alpha and Omega: the beginning and the end, the first and the last; and that he knows his people, and formed them for himself.

There was so much said yesterday of the grace covenant, and the precious promises of our Saviour; and how one comes into knowledge of Jesus as his Saviour. The new birth was set forth in such a beautiful manner. I wish it were possible to get it on paper, but I know it isn't, for words without spirit have no life in them. Yesterday they seemed that they had spirit and life.

I thought yesterday, how sure I felt that the truth was being preached; and how beautiful and precious it is to those who believe; and how few they are.

The world seems such a furnace of afflictions at times, and I feel so frail and weak, and the trials seem to grow bigger and more numerous; and I wonder how one such as I can endure. The scriptures speak of those who shall endure to the end. It seems if I could just know without so many doubts and fears that I was one included in the grace covenant, I could bear and endure anything, and all things in this world. But there are times I fear I may be clinging to an immaginary hope, and may faint or be swallowed up by the world, and the doctrines and ways of men. But when I think how great God is, then I know if he be for us, who can be against us; or what matters how many oppose. So we must, and have, to walk by faith and not by sight — and faith is evidence of things not seen. By faith we believe the world was framed by the word of God; and it is by faith we believe He who framed it, upholds all things by the word of his power. We don't know very much, yet I humbly confess that there are times when I feel to know and see so much, and feel to understand the truth, and get a glimpse of God's greatness. Oh, how marvelous are his works! I almost get beside myself — it seems heaven comes

down our soul to meet and glory crowns the mercy seat.

Something was also said about the light that shined in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. But there were some spoken of, and told, they were the children of light. Are they not here today in the very same way: Why were they children of light? Because of the work and purpose of God.

As I lay thinking of all these things this morning, I thought of a metal or magnet that draws all of its kind to it. Is that not right? It doesn't draw wood, cotton or wool to it. The children of light come to the light.

Oh, this invisible kingdom that shall break in pieces the kingdoms of this world. Its painful, but surely and sovereignly it is done. Sometimes the kingdoms of this world are shown us by Satan, and they can appear so nice and harmless, and their filth and rottenness is covered with what is called beauty and harmless pleasure; and for a fleeting moment one might think it was all right. But may all His children be given to pray, "Get thee behind me, Satan."

Not only lust and desire for worldly things and pleasures, but there is spiritual wickedness in high places to be wrestled with. I've wondered about that a lot. It seems there is spiritual wickedness going on all around us, confessing Jesus with the mouth, and the heart far from him. So busy are they in building the building, they have set Jesus aside, and all but forgotten him. May God lead me in the paths of his righteousness, that his Son may be glorified, his name praised, and all honor given him now and forever.

The love of God shed abroad in the hearts of God's people, Oh, how its guiding influence, its teaching, its revelations, brings about or works to the good of everyone of his. It comforts, feeds and strengthens them to lift their heads and face a frowning world; and makes them ready and willing to lay it by, and long to meet the great Head of all these comforts, and be forever with him.

Dear friends of the Father, I hate my ways, myself and all that I do in this life: I hate and despise everything about me except the hope that's in my bosom, which I do humbly pray is that hope that the heirs of the promise were given faith to lay hold upon, which is the anchor of the soul and is entered where Jesus is. That hope gives me the sweetest joys, and causes me to rejoice in truth, and love the people of God. I wish this morning that He would be pleased to fill every heart with love, and an uplifting of their souls in praise to him. In hope of life beyond the grave.

Mrs. Lucille Young

Houston 20, Texas

Dear Editors:

I enclose my renewal for the Signs for another two years. The reading is a great comfort when our Lord blesses us with a hunger and thirst for the truth as it is brought forth in the writings of God's able ministers, and the dear brothers and sisters.

We are in darkness most of the time, and but for the marvelous love and grace of our God, we would never see the light, nor feel the love of his dear saints. His love is ever present and his watch-care never fails, though we are unmindful of his graciousness to usward. He leads us in paths we know not, and though our paths are filled with tribulations and sorrows, he is with us all the way and none but he can carry us through this world of trouble and confusion and bring us safely to the other side. There is nothing we can do within ourselves. It is all of him, who knoweth all things and doeth all things well, and none can hinder.

He has set up his kingdom and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Jesus said we would have much tribulation, and we must. Through much tribulation we enter the kingdom, but he

also says that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord and are the called according to his purpose. So he turns our trials into blessings and our tears into joy.

The world knows nothing of the everlasting and true love of God that he sheds abroad in the hearts of his saints. I hope I love all of God's people, my dear brothers and sisters in Christ. If I am one, it is only through the grace and mercy of our Lord. No merit nor effort of mine. I feel to be the least of all, altogether sinful and unworthy.

I ask the prayers of his people when they feel led to pray.

May God bless the Signs to continue to be published and bring comfort to his dear ones everywhere.

In hope and bonds of love,

Mrs. Irene Wisenbaker

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association convened with the church at Indiantown, Wicomico Co., Md., Oct. 23rd, 24th and 25th, 1901, to the several churches of which she is composed, sendeth Christian salutation in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN :—The time seems to have been short since we last convened in an associate capacity, but we discover that many changes have taken place since then, even in our own midst. Many dear ones have been removed from the militant to the triumphant state, but we still hold them in sweet remembrance.

The question now arises, How can we make this letter to be of the most interest to the churches and all concerned? Shall we call attention to some word of inspiration, with such comments as the Lord may enable us to make? To do this we will refer you to the words of Paul to the church at Philippi, ii. 12, 13: "Beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

It is right and proper that we should always take particular notice in the first place, who the word is addressed to, and second, what was meant. To do this we will try and show first, that the apostle was not addressing the unregenerate, or ungodly, as seems to be the popular notion (for it is only a notion indeed) for when we glance at the first word of this paragraph we see at once that there is nothing to establish but one conclusion, and that is, that the beloved of God was who Paul was writing to, saying, "As ye have always obeyed." From this we see that he speaks to them in the way of commendation and encouragement for that life of obedience which he had discovered amongst them. This must have been very cheering to them, being found much more obedient in his absence than in his presence. Thus it would seem even to them that their obedience was the effect of the grace of God, and not the presence of Paul. This kind of obedience always glorifies God, and magnifies his grace. Not effected from an outward standpoint, but from an inward one, showing that the obedience is first wrought in the heart, then is confirmed by the words and acts of one's life. This being so gratifying to the apostle, he would not have them depart from this rule. So he would say to them earnestly and lovingly, nothing new, but the same, declaring what God had worked in them; that which constituted their salvation, showing forth the praises of him who had called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. Why does the inspired writer call it their salvation? Because God has revealed it to them as a free gift through Jesus Christ their Lord, and he says, "Not as the world giveth, give I unto thee." Then all that pertains to their redemption from the curse of the law, and from the power and dominion of sin, through this entire life, and their glorification for ever, is all included in their salvation, and the poor

sinner has nothing to do with its security but to live it out, which is only another way of expressing, "work it out." No one can in truth, in the matter under consideration, work out that which he or she has not already felt and seen within. The subject of this salvation has many things to experience in this life, and thus they find the Scriptures being fulfilled all along down the line of life. We have no idea that the Scriptures teach but one salvation, but there is a wonderful experience in connection with it. There are times when the joys of that salvation are fully realized, and there are times also when the joys seem to take wings and fly away, where, we cannot tell. And our times of joy and times of sorrow are not under our control. It is not based upon what we do, or do not do, for, "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Darkness or light is not under the control of the subject of salvation. If so, when one is in darkness and cold, why is he admonished not to kindle a fire to warm himself, or to compass himself about with the sparks thereof? He that undertakes this shall lie down in sorrow. How dependent then we are upon the Lord, and we cry unto him as the psalmist did, "O Lord, restore unto me the joys of thy (our) salvation." Not the salvation that remains the same all the while. All the outlets and inlets that are experienced in this life, emanate from, and are pointers back to that salvation which is for time and to eternity, to show that the changes in the experience of this life is not altogether controlled by what one does or does not, for the question of the prophet is, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light?" Now mark, it is the one that fears God and obeys the voice of his servant, that has this experience, and all that he can do is to trust in the Lord and stay upon his God. So when God opens, none can shut, and when he shuts, none can open. We think to speak of any of these things herein mentioned as time or conditional salvation, is a wrong, or is an improper phrase or term. When Peter said on the day of Pentecost, "Save yourselves," he simply meant separate yourselves from this untoward generation, because God by his Spirit had made a separation by giving them a knowledge of that word which pricked them in the heart, while it set others to mocking. So Peter could exhort them to show forth, or work out, what God had shown them, by repentance or turning away and being baptized. And we believe that whatsoever the Holy Ghost teaches or prompts to be shown man, is always attended with fear and trembling, because godliness is a great mystery. Even the highest order of intelligence has to move or walk by faith, and to be stayed by hope, and that not seen. Now all of this is something not worked for, but because of the same being felt or realized within, and it cannot be worked out unless God giveth the will, and also the power to perform. So then this willing and doing according to the good pleasure of God, is not of the creature. We do not think that the people of God work in the divine life for a reward, any more than the sparks go upward by effort; notwithstanding in keeping his commandments there is great reward; not for them, but in them. Some might say, therein is your time salvation; but let us take the Scriptures and our own experience, and see if there is any free agency in the matter of Christian obedience: strength to obey is from the Lord, while obedience to the laws and commands of God is a glorious and an effectual work, but the Spirit of God prompts and leads and gives strength. Peter said, "Seeing ye have purified your souls (or lives) in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren." No free agency in that, for it is the Spirit's work. And Paul says, "We know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I

find not." But the Spirit taketh of the things of Jesus and shews them. While the will may be present, is it possible for the Lord's people to so live as to save themselves from all the consequences of disobedience? If so, what would distinguish them from the religious world, and how could it be true that the lusts of the flesh are so strong that the apostle could say, "That ye cannot do the things that ye would"? and it is virtually saying, that whenever ye do the things that is godly, it is by the help of God, or his grace. Says the apostle again, Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth, and if ye are without chastisements, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons. Then we see our time salvation is not with ourselves, but it is entirely with the Lord, and he will always bear the glory. Our obedience then is the work of grace in the heart first, and he giveth strength to obey. So it is of him, and to him, and by him, to whom be glory for evermore. Amen.

T. M. POULSON, Moderator
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk

(Republished by request)

Orange, Ga.

Dear Sister Ollie Callaway:

I read your article in the Signs of the Times, and was greatly uplifted by it. The love in my heart is tender for the fathers and mothers in Israel who have stood up for the truth for so many years — so many times we fail to show them our appreciation. If I could, I would like to go daily visiting people such as you, for it is an inspiration to me.

I am twenty-nine years old, and have been a member of the Primitive Baptists for five years. I was born and reared in Woodville, Alabama, among them, and I love them with a special love.

May God's richest blessings be with you, is my prayer.

A brother in hope,
S. F. O'Neal

ASSOCIATIONAL NOTICES

The SALISBURY OLD SCHOOL or PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION is appointed to be held with the Nassaongo Church, located on the Snow Hill road, about seven miles from Salisbury, Maryland, on Wednesday and Thursday, October 24 and 25, 1956.

All lovers of the truth are invited.

(Eld.) D. V. Spangler, Pastor
M. C. Fooks, Clerk

The LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION is appointed to be held with the Olive and Hurley Church, September 12 and 13th, at Shokan, N. Y. Invitation is extended to all members, friends, and lovers of the truth.

Those coming Tuesday will stop at the meeting house at Shokan, on Route 28, 13 miles North of Kingston, for instruction for entertainment.

(Eld.) A. J. Slauson, Pastor

The SMITH RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION is appointed to be held with Laurel Creek Church, beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in September, and continuing three days.

The church is located just off of State Road No. 610; if going from Roanoke, Virginia, follow U. S. Highway 221 west to Road 610, near Check, Virginia, then follow said road for about eight miles, and look for markers. If going from Floyd Courthouse, follow U. S. Highway 221 East to said Road No. 610.

(Eld.) S. L. Moran, Moderator
(Eld.) J. G. L. Hash, Clerk

The PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION will convene at New Hope Church, commencing on Friday before the first Sunday in September, and continuing three days. The church is located ten miles west of Derider, La., on Highway 190; and East of Merryville, La. ten miles on Highway 190. All lovers of the truth are invited.

(Eld.) B. B. Walston, Clerk

SPECIAL REQUEST

To enable your editors to publish your notices of associations and special meetings in

the issue you desire, please send them in so that they are received at least five weeks before publication date.

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
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The 1956 session of the DELAWARE ASSOCIATION will be held at the Rock Springs Church, on Route 222, near Maryland-Pennsylvania State Line, Lancaster County, Pa., on Saturday and Sunday, September 1 and 2, 1956, the Lord willing.

Those coming by bus over U. S. Route 1, please write the undersigned for schedules of buses and conveyance to church.

Believers of the truth in Christ Jesus are welcome.

Chas. B. Osborne, Church Clerk
Route 2
Quarryville, Pa.

ANNUAL THREE DAYS MEETING

The BETHEL CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, of Riffe, Washington, will hold their annual three days meeting, the Lord willing, beginning August 17, 1956 and continuing the following two days. All lovers of the truth are invited. For further information write

Mrs. Vernie Schoonover,
Box 612, Morton, Washington

YEARLY MEETING AT
SLATE HILL CHURCH

The yearly meeting of the SLATE HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH will be held the first Saturday in August. This is August 4th.

Members and friends are invited to attend this historic meeting house.

PLEASE NOTE:

We have received several requests for changes and corrections in the Church Notices. We are glad to make these changes in the January, 1957, issue, which is our regular time for publishing the notices. — Editors

EDITORIALS

Danville, Virginia **August, 1956**

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EDITORIAL

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." (1 John 3:1)

In complying with the request of one of our readers, we desire to give a few thoughts on the above.

The Apostle made it very clear that he was declaring things which he had seen and heard, and which he had handled, of the Word of life; also that he was writing unto those whom he called little children, and brethren, — not because they knew not the truth, but because they knew it. And knowing these things, they had fellowship with him. These were they of whom he said, "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things."

It is so very evident that all Scrip-

tures are written unto the children of God only. They are not written promiscuously, as if the matter contained in them was unto everybody. Thus, in his second epistle, John addressed it: "The elder unto the elect lady and her children"; and Jude wrote to, "Them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called"; and Peter, "To them that have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ"; etc. So the Scriptures are written to the sons of God, and is for their comfort, admonition and instruction. They are written unto those who have the same interest in the matter as the writers themselves. We have sometimes read letters and other writings that were not addressed to us, which contained matters of which we had no knowledge. These were of very little value to us because we had no personal interest in them. But letters and other writings which were addressed to us, and which contained matters with which we were at least somewhat familiar, were interesting and valuable. So it is with the writings of those who were inspired of God to write unto His people. These writings pertain to personal matters; things which we have seen and heard, and have handled — have experienced; things which we have rejoiced in, and which are comforting and consoling; and even things which point out our own trials and troubles.

So it is not to be expected that those who have no real, personal interest in the Scriptures can see in them the same things as those unto whom the Scriptures are written.

This is true with the glorious things contained in the text. Who knows anything of the love of God, or the manner of it, except those who have felt its depth, and realize that God gave his own Son for their redemption? Who knows anything of what it means that Christ died for the ungodly — for sinners, except those who have had it discovered to them that they are dead in trespasses and sins? Who knows anything of deliverance, or hope, or peace, except those who have been brought, with the Psalmist, out of a horrible pit and the miry clay; or, with the blind, to see; or with the lame, to walk. Indeed, who can know anything of the love of God except those who have been brought to experience sin and condemnation in their very being, and their helplessness and just condemnation; and yet who have been brought up out of the pit and miry clay, and their feet set upon a rock, and their goings established, with a new song in their mouth, even praises unto their God?

The love of God is so contrary to everything in the nature of men. We remarked on our recent visit with the brethren in Canada, that if God dealt with us as we, in our nature, would deal with men, then when Eve and Adam regarded not God's commandment, he would have cast them off forever. But, rather, God manifested his love and mercy to them when he clothed them with coats of skins, when their own fig-leaf aprons could not hide their nakedness; and when he gave the declaration, "It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." (Genesis 3:14-15)

Who can understand the love of God as it is manifest to sinners, when he gave his only begotten Son that they might live through him? Consider for a moment: Do you have a friend so dear, one whom you love so deeply, that you would even consider giving your own son to take the place of your friend if he were condemned? Certainly not! You just do not have that kind of love. Yet the Apostle Paul in the 5th chapter of Romans says, "For when we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved

from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

No wonder then, that John in statinging, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life", having felt the power of it in his own soul, was constrained to say, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Are we not brought to amazement when the matter is brought home to us? Have we not also felt and expressed, "Behold, what love!", when we have felt that God was so merciful, and manifested his love so wonderfully, that he gave his Son to die for us. Does it not seem almost impossible that God could have had pity and compassion, much less love, for such as we, who were dead in trespasses and sins against him, and were the vilest of creatures. Yet this is what God has done for us: he gave his own Son for our redemption, and so manifested the greatness of his love for us, that we are called the sons of God.

These things are real, not just immaginary, with those who are exercised in them: for the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts. And their faith, of which their Saviour is both the author and finisher, has such a vitality and substantial quality that the Apostle Paul called it, The substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

How wonderful it is to associate with those of like precious faith, and hear them speak of the goodness of God toward them; thus giving evidence that the love of God is bestowed upon them. But how impossible it is to find pleasure in talking with those who know not this love. It is similar to trying to converse with one who speaks a language other than our own: there is no common ground of understanding. We can speak only of the goodness and mercy of God, and of his great love wherewith he hath loved us; while others can speak only as those who know not their own helplessness, but speak of creature ability, etc. These are those whom the apostle speaks of as the world, saying, "Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." Evidently he meant they knew not those upon whom the love of God was bestowed, to recognize them as the sons of God, because they knew not that it was the love of God alone bestowed upon his people, which caused them to be called the sons of God. These can never recognize the true children of God here in this world.

J. D. W.

OUR APPRECIATION

The response to our appeal has been most generous. Words cannot express our appreciation for such a fine spirit of cooperation. We need your help financially, but there are other ways in which you can also support the paper:

1. Re-new your subscription promptly.
2. Help us secure new subscribers.
3. Hand your paper to a friend to read.

When we mailed out the letters of appeal for the Endowment Fund, or for a press, because of the work involved in sorting them, we mailed them to all subscribers. Some of our subscribers, who are on the free list, have been worried because they were unable to help. We want each of them to know that the paper will continue to come to them free; and where they are unable to pay, we do not want them to feel that they are a burden.

Two churches have contributed to the Fund as a body. This is commendable, since it shows that the church as a

whole is deeply interested in continuing the paper as a medium of correspondence, and the communicating of good things among us, — holding fast the profession of our faith without wavering. One of our readers has suggested that some families would desire to contribute to the Fund in memory of some loved one who was a devoted reader of the paper while they lived.

We thank you.

Editors

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Sister Minerva Dunlap)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, meeting in Whitefield September 9, 10, and 11, 1955, sends greetings to the churches with whom we correspond.

Dearly Beloved:

The 19th Psalm begins, "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard."

We think most natural men observe the heavens; admire the color of the sky; the brilliance of the sun, moon and stars, and wonder about their origin, content and meaning. The verses of the Psalm quoted, however, seem to imply knowledge unknown to the natural senses. For how can natural man know of the glory of God, or of his handiwork, or understand the speech uttered day unto day, or the knowledge shown night unto night? Natural man knoweth not of the things of the kingdom of God — only the spiritual man discerns these; and to have a spiritual birth means a revelation from on high when the new life begins. At the new birth comes a revelation of the greatness and goodness of God: an infinite Being who puts into the hearts of his people a love and appreciation of his manifold works. With the new spiritual vision, the infinite depths of the sky become a symbol of the mercy and boundless grace of a God great enough to save the worst of sinners; the stars and moon and sun show the omnipotent power of a hand that guides their courses, just as it guides the path of every one of God's creatures, ruled by divine law to go where he dictates, and to do what he pleases.

What can mortal man do to obtain this ability to see God's glory in the heavens, and his handiwork in the firmament, and to be able to hear the speech of the days and understand the knowledge of the nights? No pilgrimages to sacred shrines are necessary; nor gifts at altars of goats or gold; nor much learning at the feet of great masters. All that is necessary is that touch from the great High Preast when he puts his law into the mind and writes it in the heart. Then are the eyes opened to see the wonders of his creation; the ears enabled to hear the joyful sound of salvation by g r a c e. With repentant heart, the child of God so awakened feels that he is unworthy to stand in the presence of such a power — a God able to save the uttermost. Before that glory in the heavens, he sees himself revealed as the least of all, and can only cry out, "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

How wonderful that this gift to his children to see the glory in the heavens, the handiwork in the firmament, to hear that speech uttered day unto day, to understand that knowledge shown night unto night, can come to the most ignorant person on God's footstool, to the blackest soul, irrespective of color or language: without a priest, without a pulpit, without a price. The sacrifice has been made, and the sinner, sick of his own attempts to merit eternal life by self-righteous works, rejoices that salvation is accomplished, and ascribes praise and honor to Him who created all.

Alone in a dungeon, or in a crowded street; alone in a wilderness or adrift on the ocean, God's people are never

too far away, or too inaccessible, for this saving grace to find them: transforming hearts of stone to living souls. To see His glory in the heavens, His handiwork in the firmament, to know that speech of days, that knowledge of the nights, is His own free gift to those who have been chosen from the foundation of the world. Those chosen ones can see the glory, admire the handiwork, talk to one another with that new speech, and understand according to new knowledge. This unspeakable gift beyond the honors, fortunes and fame of this world, shows a mercy as unfathomable and free as the skys; a grace as glorious as the sunset clouds; a wisdom as inconceivable and unchanging as the orbits of the planets.

"Amid the splendors of thy state,
My God, thy love appears
With the soft radiance of the moon
Among the thousand stars.

Nature through all her ample round
Thy boundless power proclaims,
And in melodious accent speaks
The goodness of thy names."

— Steele

(Elder) E. C. Jones, Moderator
Sanford S. Bartlett, Clerk

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church at Whitefield, Maine, September 9, 10 and 11, 1955, sends greetings to the associations and meetings with which we correspond:

Dear Brethren:

Through the providence of Almighty God we have enjoyed the privilege of meeting again in an association. Your correspondence and messengers have been received with gladness, bringing to our minds that though we may be strangers from the natural point of view, yet close and dear kindred through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The preaching by Elders E. C. Jones and Amasa J. Slauson was a demonstration of the Holy Spirit giving utterance to the truths which are known only by divine revelation — the only preaching that can encourage, feed and help to sustain those who have felt and acknowledge themselves sinners, entirely dependent on a kind and merciful God for their eternal salvation.

We feel the meeting was blessed by the Lord's presence, stirring up our pure minds by way of remembrance of the care and loving kindness of our Lord. On Sunday, the last day of the meeting, Sister Catherine Reynolds was baptized, uniting with the Gardiner Church.

In Micah 5th Chapter, 8th verse, it is written, "The remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles." May it be the Lord's will that we are included in the remnant that God has chosen for his own.

The Lord willing, we hope to meet again in September, 1956. Time and place to be decided later.

(Elder) E. C. Jones, Moderator
Sanford S. Bartlett, Clerk

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

REVELATION XIV. 9-11.

Brother Beebe: — Will you be so kind as to give your views on Revelation xiv. 9-11? and to oblige yours in hope of eternal life,

S. R. Burgess

Conscious of our inability to do full justice to the subject embraced in the text named, we are nevertheless willing to present for consideration such views as we have and submit them to the consideration of brother Burgess and to our readers generally.

Immediately after the vision which John saw of the beast which rose up out

of the sea, and the two horned beast coming up out of the earth, and the image of the beast, and his power, persecution and proscription, as recorded in the thirteenth chapter, he "looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him a hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." And he says, "I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God. And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." Then follows the text on which we are requested to give our views: "And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name."

"And the third angel followed them." Namely, the two preceding angels; the first having the everlasting gospel to preach, and the second announcing the fall of Babylon, and this third angel bearing the solemn admonition expressed in the fearful and startling words of our text: "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand." The beast described in the thirteenth chapter, whether in his dragon form, as set forth in Rev. xii. 3, or as seen rising out of the sea or coming up out of the earth, or as presented in the image, the same principle of idolatry is involved in either case, and the same tremendous consequences must result. In Rev. xiii. 8, it is said, "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." The manner of their worship is stated in verse four of the same chapter: "And they worshiped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshiped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?"

Their admiration of his power, confidence in his miracles, signs and lying wonders, and submission to his assumed authority, and obedience to his decrees, as also their reliance on his power to save, are all idolatrous, and bestowing upon the antichristian beast that homage and devotion which belongs only to God. This homage, whether offered to the papal beast with seven heads and ten horns, or the protestant beast with two horns like a lamb, or to the image made by those who dwell upon the earth, in obedience to the mandate of the two horned beast, the wickedness is the same, and the consequence equally fearful.

"And receive his mark in his forehead,

or in his hand." The mark of the beast appears to be that by which they who receive it are to be known as the worshipers of the beast. As those who are redeemed from the earth have their Father's name written in their forehead, so false worshipers are marked with an imprint of character like that of their mother, a copy of which is given in Rev. vxii. 5. The initiatory mark of a Jewish proselyte was that of circumcision, and the initiatory mark of many of the worshipers of the beast is made by what they have substituted in the stead of circumcision — made by the hand of the priest on the forehead of the initiated, as in their wicked perversion of baptism. The mark of the beast on the forehead may also signify that external display of antichristian spirit which is readily seen as identifying those who bear it as the admirers and worshipers of the beast; and as the hand is the member of the body by which we work, so the hands of all who worship the beast are defiled with blood, with cruelty, with persecution and with oppression. With the forehead they give countenance to the abominations of the beast, and with their hands they perform their works of darkness.

Whether we have a correct view of the mark of the beast or not, it is certainly a mark by which the worshipers are known by their party, for only those who can show the mark are exempt from proscription and bitter persecution, for under the turbulent power of the image of the beast no man shall be allowed to buy or sell save he that hath the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. But their special privileges, in which the worshipers of the beast may revel for a season, are limited, and the day of retribution is hastening on apace, for they "shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation," and they "shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name." These are strong and expressive words, the wrath of an indignant God unmixed and unremitting, for ever and ever. Who can describe the storms of wrath which God has laid up in store against the day of wrath for the ungodly? All nations have drank of the maddening cup of the fornication of the whore of Babylon. Exhilarated and inflamed from its intoxicating power, infatuated, besotted and raving in the delirium tremens of her accursed cup, the earth has been, and is still being, drenched with human blood. But the avenging hand of God is even now uplifted, and the day of retribution is nigh at hand. The scene will soon be changed, and they who have the seal of God upon them, and not the mark of the beast, shall shout an everlasting deliverance, and all the worshipers of the beast receive their irrevocable doom.

In view of the tremendous import of our subject, does it not become us to inquire most seriously and prayerfully, Whose image or superscription do we bear? Have we the seal of God upon us? Are we sealed with the Holy Spirit of God, with the Spirit of promise? For "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." The Spirit of Christ is holy, harmless, meek, loving, patient, forbearing and forgiving, and as many as are led by it, they are the sons of God and heirs of glory. But the spirit and mark of the beast are unholy, malicious, haughty, hateful, overbearing and revengeful.

"Lord, search my heart, and try my ways,
And make my soul sincere,
That I may stand before thy face,
And find acceptance there."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe — August 1, 1864.)

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

Upshur County, Texas
May 13, 1956

Pursuant to call heretofore sent out by Fellowship Church for a Presbytery to meet on above date for the purpose of the ordination of Brother J. W. Attaway, to the office of Deacon of Fellowship Church, the following Elders and Deacons met and organized themselves into a Presbytery; Elders, E. J. Lambert, T. A. Wall, Lloyd Wall. Deacons, B. T. Green, John Beene, G. W. McDuff, D. C. Shelton, G. C. Burgin, H. S. Hill, and L. S. Hill.

The Presbytery organized itself by electing Elder T. A. Wall, Moderator and Deacon L. S. Hill as clerk. Deacon D. C. Shelton was appointed as spokesman for the church, who presented Brother Attaway to the Presbytery.

After due examination of Brother Attaway as to deportment, qualifications, and the state of God's gift to him as a Deacon to the satisfaction of the Presbytery, the Presbytery proceeded to ordain Brother Attaway as follows:

The Presbytery selected Elder E. J. Lambert to word the prayer and Elder T. A. Wall to deliver the charge.

Whereupon the Presbytery then and there proceeded with the ordination by the laying of hand of the Presbytery and in prayer by Elder E. J. Lambert; and then by charge delivered by Elder T. A. Wall.

We the members of the Presbytery commend Deacon J. W. Attaway, to all orderly orthodox Primitive Baptists as being sound in doctrine, careful in deportment and humble in the display of God's gift of the office of Deacon.

The right hand of fellowship was given Deacon J. W. Attaway, by the members of the Presbytery, Fellowship Church and brethren, sisters and friends. Deacon Attaway was delivered back to the church duly ordained by the Presbytery and received by the church.

Minutes of the proceedings were read and approved and the Presbytery was adjourned in order with prayer by Elder E. J. Lambert.

Elder T. A. Wall, Moderator
Deacon L. S. Hill, Clerk

OBITUARIES

ELDER WALTER ROE UTLEY

Elder Walter Roe Utley was born October 13, 1877, in Tuscaloosa County, Alabama; and departed this life January 26, 1956. He married Bama Poe December 25, 1904; and to this union were born six children: Theron, Danville, Illinois; Lee, Panama City, Florida; Howard, Pensacola, Florida; Mrs. R. A. (Agnes) Hocutt, Birmingham, Alabama; Mrs. W. H. (Viva Dean) Poe, Berry, Alabama; and Mrs. W. A. (Christine) Ramsey, Davidsville, Rhode Island. He is survived by his wife and all children, and one sister and two brothers.

Father was reared a Missionary Baptist. He first realized himself a sinner in the sight of God at the age of fifteen, while praying for the restoration of his father back to life. (see experience in Signs of November, 1953) He united with the Primitive Baptist church at Liberty Hill (Hopewell Association now — it was in the Lost Creek Association then). He was a member of the Lost Creek Association at his death. He united on Saturday before the 4th Sunday in January, 1898, and was baptized by Elder W. R. Brown. In April or May of that same year he went into the stand, and was ordained a minister shortly afterwards. He dearly loved the truth, and spent his life in service to his calling, ever proclaiming God as the author and finisher of our faith: ever preaching Jesus Christ, the way, the truth, and the life.

Father was in a car wreck November 20, 1955, and remained in the hospital until his appointed time to cross over Jordan to his home prepared before the foundation of the world. He never waivered in faith, and bore his afflictions with patience, ever proclaiming God's power.

The morning before he passed away that night, he told mother he wanted to talk face to face with his Lord, and that he could not do it while he dwelled in this flesh; and asked mother to intercede for him.

Oh, the wonderfulness of the truth he defended the many years he was blessed to preach the unsearchable riches of God's grace and mercy! We hope we have been made to embrace that same faith and hope. We miss him more than words can express, yet we do not mourn as those without hope; for we truly believe he is waiting for the adoption, to wit the redemption of his body.

We laid him to rest in the cemetery adjoining the church where he first united with the Primitive Baptists so many years ago. Elder H. M. Brock conducted the services, assisted by Elder W. D. Griffin and Elder H. C. Moon.

Written by a daughter,
Mrs. R. A. Hocutt

MRS. HARRIET E. PURDY

In failing health for several weeks, Mrs. Harriet E. Purdy, widow of J. C. Purdy, died

May 27, 1956, at her home in S. Main Street, Utica, Ohio.

A resident of Utica for 12 years, Mrs. Purdy came from Martinsburg vicinity. She was the daughter of John and Rowena (Bibler) Roby, and born in Licking County, Ohio. Her husband preceded her in death in 1954, and surviving are four step-sons: Archie Purdy, Port Isabel, Texas; James Purdy, Bucyrus, Ohio; Oley Purdy, Burlington, Ky.; and Byron Purdy, of the home; also eleven grand-children and eighteen great grand-children; one brother, John H. Roby, of Martinsburg; and two sisters, Mrs. Lester Wilkin, Newark, Ohio, and Mrs. Charles M. Snider, Etna, Ohio.

Mrs. Purdy was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church of St. Louisville, Ohio. Funeral services were held on May 30th, in the C. C. Law and Sons Funeral Home. Her faithful pastor, Elder James Bibler, officiated, assisted by Elder Maurice Chapman. Burial was made in Union Grove Cemetery. (copied from local paper by son, Byron Purdy)

GEORGE WASHINGTON WILLIAMS

In memory of our uncle, and dear brother in Christ our Lord, we hope:

George Washington Williams was born January 13, 1875; and departed this life March 28, 1956, making his stay on earth over eighty-one years. He was married to Miss Price Stone on February 20, 1898, who preceded him in death a little more than a year. To this union were born ten children; one died in infancy, the others are left to mourn their loss. They are: Mrs. Estelle Mason and Mrs. Lorene Isbell, Huntsville, Ala.; Mrs. Annie Lou Brewer, Birmingham, Ala.; Mrs. Gladys Watson and Mrs. Lavonia Lee, Huntland, Tenn.; Alvie and Maloy, Huntland, Tenn.; Kenneth, Dallas, Texas; and Ralph, Mobile, Ala.

Brother Williams united with the Primitive Baptists in June, 1904, and was baptized by Elder M. J. Towery. His membership was at Old Mt. Fork Church, Madison County, Alabama, where he served as clerk of the church from 1904 to 1950.

Elder R. L. Biggs, of Nashville, Tenn. was wonderfully blessed to speak comforting words at the funeral, to the bereaved children, brethren and friends. Uncle Wash, as he was called by all who knew him, was a strong believer in salvation by grace and grace alone. He believed in an all wise and powerful God: one who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. One who says, I am God and there is none like me: declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.

Uncle Wash will be missed by the church, his children, and friends, but let us say that our loss is his gain. "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away: Blessed be the name of the Lord." Written by request of Mt. Fork Church — one copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times, and one to the family.

R. O. Simmons

MRS. LULA BLOW

It is with a sad heart that I endeavor to write of the passing of my dear sister in the flesh, as well as in the Spirit, Mrs. Lula Blow. She was born May 8, 1877, and departed this life January 21, 1956. She was the eldest child of eleven, of Cordy and Mollie Batchelor. At the age of twenty-two, she was united in marriage to Jack Blow; and to this union were born nine children, five of which died in childhood. Her husband preceded her in death a number of years.

She asked for a home with the Old Baptists in 1897, at Crooked Creek Church, Putnam County, Georgia; and was baptized by Elder W. W. West, of Atlanta, Georgia. She remained faithful to her belief to the end: salvation by grace and grace alone. All through life, in spite of her heart-breaking trials, she was cheerful; and would often weep, then smile, and say, "God knows best." She often talked of how great a Master we have, who did all things well; and of how good he had been to her. The last talking she did was of her great Saviour and Master.

She leaves one daughter and three sons to morn her death; also three brothers and three sisters. She lived the last twenty-five years in Macon, Georgia, with her daughter.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Cecil Darity, and she was laid to rest at Mt. Zion Church, in Jones County, Georgia. She fought a good fight, and kept the faith; she finished her course, and a crown of righteousness is laid up for her, which the Lord will give when he comes to gather his children home.

May God, in his love, comfort and bless all that mourn her passing. A heart broken sister,

Ollie Callaway

MRS. TINY WIGGINS WALL

Sister Tiny Wall was born September 12, 1895, and departed this life June 24, 1955 after long and severe sufferings. She was the daughter of J. L. and Mary Wiggins; and was married to Elder T. A. Wall December 2, 1917.

Sister Wall united with the Old Baptist church in 1914, and was blessed of the Lord to live a devoted and consecrated life among the brethren and sisters as long as she lived, being held in the very highest esteem among them. She was the second wife of Elder Wall, and they were blessed with five children, one son dying at the age of sixteen months. Surviving are, besides her husband, the following: Elder Loyd Wall, Bivens, Texas; Mrs. Ellen Dradshaw, Bivens; Mrs. Eddie Hutchins, Atlanter, Texas; Mrs. Evelyn Rhodes, Dallas, Texas; and two step-sons, Willie Wall, Conroe, Texas, and Frank Wall, Odesser, Texas; and eighteen grand-children.

Sister Wall was very kind and congenial with all with whom she came in contact, being a most affectionate and loving wife and mother, and a dear helpmate to her husband, who is an humble minister. When Elder Wall lost his former wife, being left with two small sons, he was greatly worried in considering a second marriage, fearing that he might not get a good mother to his little children. He said that she appeared to him in a dream, and laid her hand on his head, telling him she would be a mother to his children. This Sister Wall proved to be, for Elder Wall says that as long as she lived she never spoke an unkind word to him, and was a faithful, loving and attentive mother to all. She was so kind, thoughtful and helpful to all she was with and around, and many were royally entertained in their home.

Sister Wall was firm in the doctrine of God our Saviour, and was blessed with many gracious experiences; and evidenced great faith in God our Saviour and Redeemer. She related to her husband, and possible others of her family, before the birth of her son, Elder Loyd Wall, that the Lord appeared to her in a vision, and told her she was with child, and that it would be a man child, and that he would be a minister and preach the gospel. This same son began to speak in public among the Old Baptists about a year before she passed away, and was ordained about five months after her death. He is loved and esteemed among our people whereever he is known. Thus Sister Wall was blessed to see the fulfilling of that which the Lord had spoken to her.

Sister Wall was taken seriously ill at the writer's home while attending our association. She was taken to the hospital, and later to several hospitals, and different doctors and specialists; and all was done for her that loving hands could do, but her appointed time to depart this life came on June 24, 1955. Her spirit returned to God who gave it, and her body was laid to rest in Pleasant Hope Cemetery, near Atlanter, Texas.

The writer, Elder Speer, Elder Lambert, and Elder Haygood, participated in the funeral services at Pleasant Hope Primitive Baptist Church. This was a very sad occasion indeed to her husband, children and grand-children, and to the host of the household of faith everywhere; and also to her many good neighbors and friends. There was a large crowd of these at the funeral.

Dear weeping ones, may the Lord bless you to rest in that bright hope and great faith which the Lord gave her; and which he gives to his people. Weep not dear, precious ones, for she is so much better off than we. She is beyond suffering, sorrow and pain; and soon the Saviour will awake the sleeping dust of his dear saints, and they shall come forth in His likeness to be with him and his redeemed forever. Dear, precious brother and family, what a glorious day this will be. Oh, how I do long for that time when I shall see my great and precious Redeemer and Saviour! You know that in Revelation it is said, "And they shall see his face." And David said, "I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness."

So, my dear, precious and aged brother, weep not as those who have no hope, for that bright hope of yours is vividly in evidence. Paul says in Hebrews, "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and entereth into that within the veil, where Jesus has entered for us." May you be blessed of the Lord to look forward to that glorious day when He shall say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

There was great evidence of the deep devotion to Sister Wall in the large and attentive crowd present, and the many beautiful florial contributions. She was laid to rest until the resurrection, when the Lord comes again. I have written at the request of her dear husband.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 124 DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1956 NO. 9

RESIGNATION

Just as Thou wilt, O gracious Lord,
Let my condition be:
I would not raise a murmuring word,
But leave it all to thee.

Just as Thou wilt, though storms may rise,
And clouds obscure my way.
These oft are blessings in disguise,
And bring a brighter day.

Just as Thou wilt, though poor, distressed
While in this vale below,
With boundless riches I am blessed
In climes to which I go.

Just as Thou wilt, and not as I
Would have my blessings come:
Thou knowest best what to supply
While on my journey home.

Just as Thou wilt, and not my will.
Though sore thy chastening rod,
Though hard the strokes, I would be still
And know that thou art God.

Just as Thou wilt, thy time I'll wait
To lay my armour down.
Then at thy word I'll cease to fight,
And fly to take the crown.

Mrs. Sarah McPhail,
Dutton, Ontario

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ENDOWMENT FUND

Previous balance	$4,766.55
Elder and Mrs. T. R. Jefferson, Calif.	20.00
Elder and Mrs. George Ruston, Canada	25.00
Mr. and Mrs. R. S. Jorman, Del.	35.00
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Mrs. C. R. Morgan, Ga.	5.00
L. F. May, Tex.	3.00
Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich.	10.00
Hester B. Thompson, Md.	10.00
A Friend, Md.	25.00
Total	$5,888.55

GOD'S PEOPLE "MUST BE" SAVED

Perry, Kansas

Elders Spangler and Wood:

. . . I have been a subscriber to the Signs for a number of years, and my old father was a subscriber when I was just a little boy. He was an Old Baptist minister, but he passed away when I was about nine years of age. I never knew my mother, as she died the day I was born, leaving two infants (twins) about eight hours old; besides a family of nine children other than myself. My twin brother died at the age of about nine months; and at this writing, all of my brothers and sisters, except two sisters, have passed away. My eldest living sister is now in her ninety-fifth year, and the younger sister is about two years older than I. Perhaps this is enough of my history, for I am sure there is a better theme than my poor, unprofitable life.

I united with the church when I was at the age of about twenty years, and I began to try to speak in public about twenty years later. Thus, it will be noted that I have been a good while in the harness, so to speak. I have never yet put forth an effort that has been entirely satisfactory to myself, but, I am happy to say, my brethren have shown great patience and forbearance with me. My latest effort was the fourth Sunday in May (this month). I used for a text these words, "I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified."

Whether I used these words as a starting point, or not, I must say this has ever been my theme. It is written of him, "He shall save his people from their sins." I sometimes tell my brethren that he saved them — or else he did not. If he did save them, what about all the spurious efforts that are being put forth by the so-called evangelists? For what God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it. On the other hand, if he did not save them, where shall we look for a saviour? We read in the scriptures, "There is no other name under heaven given among me whereby we **must be** saved." Indeed, God's people must be saved, or else Christ has died in vain. Christ poured out his blood for that very purpose; and from the days of righteous Able even until now, the voice of our brother's blood crieth unto God from the ground. That is, indeed, an eloquent voice. The doctrine that God's people were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, is a stumbling block for many. And the doctrine of absolute predestination has been, and is now, a barrier to many; but we believe God declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.

. . . My home is broken up; I have buried two noble companions, and at the present time I am dividing my time between two daughters. Do with this as your judgement may dictate.

Humbly, but sincerely,
(Elder) L. L. Schenck

Seagrove, N. C.

Dear Editors and Brethren:

It is time for us to subscribe for the Signs again, for we don't see how we could get along without them. There are so many good pieces and experiences in them, and we surely enjoy them: we read them over many times.

We would be glad to read more of Elder Griffin's writings, for he preaches so strong, and that is what we love, — the stronger, the better. We enjoy all of the eidtor's pieces; and would like to sit and look you all in the face and hear you all preach. We don't feel worthy of such good people, but that is where our pleasure is. We get so low down sometimes that we don't feel that we have a friend in heaven or on earth; but we don't get so low that God does not lift us up again, and puts a new song in our mouths, even praise unto his name.

We don't want to miss a paper, for they are so much company. We are both old and not able to work much. We hope we will die believing the strong doctrine we hope we now believe. We enclose three dollars for renewal.

Your brother and sister in the Lord, we hope,

George and Laura Davis.

JONAH AND THE WHALE

Dear Editors of the Signs:

If you deem this worthy of space, I would like to relate some of my experience as to the whale, as mentioned in Matthew 12:40, and Jonah 1:17; which reads as follows: "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly: so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Which is in harmony with, "Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights."

In the above, we have the words of Jesus himself; and the words of inspiration of the Old Testament. A friend came to me and told me that they had in their Sunday school lesson the question: Was Jesus three days and three nights in the heart of the earth according to our time? Two things were advanced by the Sunday school teacher (a very learned man): That Jesus was not in the heart of the earth three days and three nights, which proved that Jonah was not in the whale's belly three days and three nights. He said that science taught that it was impossible for a man to be in a live whale's belly that long and not be digested.

He also said that it was impossible for a whale to swallow a man. Is not this teaching infidelity to our young generation? Is not this equivalent to denying that Daniel was in the den of lions? Is it not equivalent to denying that the three Hebrew children were in the fiery furnace? Is it not equivalent to denying that Jesus rose from the grave, and was seen forty days?

Now let me relate what I saw with my own eyes, since it was said by Professor Wiseman that the story of Jonah and the whale was a myth. In 1912, Captain Charles Thompson, of Miami, Florida, with three of his men, lowered a life boat and succeeded in harpooning a large sea monster, that had passed before them in their steam yacht. For thirty-nine hours the monster dragged their life boat, sometimes with terrific speed, he told me, so that the steam yacht could not keep up with them. And when the monster gave up, it was one hundred and ten miles at sea.

This is the story he gave me: this monster weighed thirty thousand pounds; it was forty-five feet long, and eight feet, three inches thick; its mouth was thirty-one inches high, and thirty-eight inches wide, and had swallowed a fish that weighed one hundred and fifty pounds. The skin was enbalmed and mounted with steel ribs for exhibition. Scientists say it is a fish, not a whale. I paid to see it, and to talk with Captain Thompson.

All this goes to prove that incident of Jonah and the fish could have taken place as related, and as stated by Jesus; and He being in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. There is evidence exhibited every day before our eyes that proves that the things mentioned in the Scriptures are true: Every year there is a new birth with the vegetation of the earth. We see the beautiful flowers with their many colors to beautify the earth. Was not this your experience when you were quickened into a new life from your dead state of sin; in which you rejoiced and gave God the glory for his mercy to a poor sinner condemned to death? Yes, we have the evergreen trees as a token of an ever living God, who rules in the chilly winds of Winter, as well as in the sweet Spring, when everything begins to shoot forth its buds in praise to him who rules all things; and to whom belongs all the praise.

Yours in hope,
(Elder) B. B. Walston

Dyer, Arkansas

Dear Brethren:

I am enclosing five dollars to help in any way you need it for the Signs; and five dollars for my subscription. I love the Signs, and my prayer is, if it be the will of the Lord, for it to be continued to the end. I am thankful that it is not ruined by advertising.

I am eighty years old, and hope I can read our good paper the rest of my days here on earth. I can't say that I am a child of God, but I do know that all He died for, He will come and take them home where he is. I just love every one of those who believe that every thing is of the Lord — by him and through him. I can't write as I would like, nor put in words my thoughts and belief, but I can say I believe the Signs is a God sent paper. There are lots of so-called churches, and all of them are trying to save the world for Christ. He did not have to call on anyone for help at the beginning of time, so he will not need any help to bring it to the end.

I know my days are about over on earth, and I hope the Lord bore all my sins, and nailed them to the cross, and saw me when he prayed to the Father for all of them that he had given him, that he should loose nothing but raise them up at the last day. I don't want to worry you with this, so will close by asking to be remembered when you are at the throne of grace. Written with all my love to the household of faith everywhere.

Your unworthy sister,
Mrs. Kate Cottnell

MESSAGE LEFT FOR LOVED ONES

Dear Ones:

As time passes it brings to pass the things which the Lord has purposed to come to pass. He knows all things, and there is nothing hid from him; and he is not disappointed in anything. We find this doctrine in our experience, and we find it in the Bible — and only human nature will deny it. I often feel fearful that I have never been brought to the knowledge of this truth, but, when blessed to consider with understanding, I feel to say as one of old, "Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief." To believe is peace, and rest, and satisfaction, which is worth more to the believer than ten thousand worlds like

this. If not deceived, I have enjoyed many experiences: some were very bitter to the flesh, but to the inner man, it was sweeter than words can express.

I feel glad that, as I hope, the time is near for me to depart this life. A few years ago, I dreamed of being on my death bed, and was perfectly satisfied — not a ray of trouble did I feel. I hope when I pass, I will be blessed to leave satisfying evidence to my kin in Christ, if indeed I be one, that His little ones may feel satisfied that I have been brought into the fold by him. I am not worthy to claim this relationship, and he alone is able to make me worthy. I can't say that I know that eternal rest is mine after death: I only hope that for Christ's sake he chose even me before the foundation of the world, to be raised in his likeness and be satisfied for ever and ever.

There is not much rest and satisfaction in this world for the Lord's people. They are blessed to see the dangers; hear and feel the effects of sin; and feel the fighting within and without, which is more than we of ourselves are able to endure. His grace is sufficient for all his little one's sorrows and heart-breaking trials. When they are tried, they come forth ascribing all power, honor, and glory unto him who has suffered for his children.

My feeble words can only hint at his goodness, mercy and long suffering toward us. The natural world of people are dead sinners, because they have never been quickened, but all the chosen in Christ will be quickened unto life, and are live sinners. Those who were not chosen in Christ will never be quickened — they leave this world dead sinners, and enter into everlasting punishment. Live sinners enter into eternal rest with Christ.

(This was written by my dear wife in July before her death in October, 1955. She did not sign it, so I will add her name.)

Mrs. Mary Smith Wray,
By her husband,
O. J. Wray, Sr.

Lawrenceville, Ga.

Dear Brother Spangler:

Please have my subscription to our paper set up a year; for which I am enclosing the required amount.

In my opinion the way for us to have a good paper is for all of us to purpose to keep out all controversial and debatable matters out of its columns, as much as possible. There are too many things Primitive Baptists are agreed on to waste time with unprofitable matters. Most Old Baptists, I feel sure, are rooted and grounded in the identical TRUTH, but differences arise among them upon the relative importance of what we might call subtruth. In these matters we must bear with one another for the sake of the fundamental TRUTH we are all embraced in, if embraced at all.

I do not advocate the stiffling or supression of any truth through any media, when one feels led by the Holy Spirit to speak or write the truth in love, with the pure intention of strengthening and edifying the Body. If this is not the case, then it should not be spoken or written; and I am willling for this to apply to me as well as any one else. No man, though he be the saintliest of saints, is ever given a possesive monopoly on God's TRUTH: but there is always an opportunity for our already pure minds to be stirred up by way of remembrance of those things with which the writer is then specially moved: our minds being renewed thereby. It is good to have the comforting truth of Elder Beebe and others gone on, as it was given to them in their day and generation, demonstrating that TRUTH does not decay along with the vessel bearing it. The bearer of the truth is of little consequence; but it is of great importance that what is promulgated be true, and seasoned with grace.

I commend these thoughts to your consideration and the consideration of all contributors, to the end that every

copy shall be a welcome visitor and a cherished treasure wherever it may chance to go among the *living* children of a *living* God. Let us not make our paper the clearing house for our petty differences but the storehouse into which we can all bring our common faith and our common heritage which is fundamentally this: Salvation by grace through faith and that not of ourselves; it is a gift of God.

Your unworthy brother, in Hope,
J. B. Dunagan

Los Angeles, California

Dear Brother Editors of the
Signs of the Times:

A book small in size, but mighty to the comfort and peace of countless readers — many of whom depend on the written word set forth by the apostles of our Lord, and by inspired writers who believe in a crucified Saviour, who is able to save by his mighty power without money, and without price.

Salvation cometh through faith, for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." (Romans 10:-15) I thank God that salvation is free, for even when we were dead in sins Christ died for us; and we are quickened together with him. It is by grace that we are saved.

May it please the Lord to enable you to continue putting out this good paper, for many lovers of the doctrine of Salvation by Grace — those whom God has called according to his purpose — depend on this method to keep in close communion with the beloved of like faith.

Your little sister in the love and fellowship of God's beloved, who are heirs of God, and joint heirs with our Lord and Saviour.

Leara M. Willis

GOD'S FOREKNOWLEDGE AND PREDESTINATION

While Christ was here upon earth he often taught his desciples by referring to natural things. Even so in this day, I beleive, his gracious Spirit, the Holy Comforter, comes into our hearts, and teaches us spiritual lessons by directing our minds to things which we can see with our natural eyes.

On last Sunday, while our pastor was preaching, he spoke of our church building, how the architect saw in his mind the completed building before the foundation was laid. Then he spoke of God seeing all things from the beginning. In the twinkling of an eye, I seemed to have been "caught up to the third heaven", and heard "unspeakable" words. Truly it is "unspeakable", and how can I ever write what I saw? Yet I want to tell it.

First, my mind dwelt upon the natural building: how it was planned, the material all carefully selected, the foundation laid—and how important that it should be a solid one; and so on, until the beautiful structure was completed.

Then I had a glimpse of "a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." "Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building."

As the architect viewed the completed building before it was begun, I beleive God, foreknowing all things, did view his completed building. Who but the Mighty God, could "declare the end from the beginning"? If it be true that he declared the end from the beginning, (and who would dare contradict it?) did he not foreknow every step of the way? I feel sure he did. We beleive he is an unchangeable God. Then, if he foresaw all things, how could such a weak thing as man prevent them from coming to pass just as he knew they would? I be-

lieve he knew just what David would do when he was tempted; but David didn't know how frail he was until he passed through the terrible ordeal. Could he have penned that beautiful fifty-first Psalm, if he had never been shown how vile he was? The language of David is, "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."

If all this be true, I can't help but believe in the predestination of all things; which seems to me to be the very foundation of the Christian Religion.

We must admit it is a wonderful mystery. Even such a learned man as the Apostle Paul was constrained to say, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness." The words of the Psalmist are, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." Though I don't understand it fully, yet I love the doctrine of predestination; and when I have been brought to my "wits end", and undergone deep anguish of soul, it has been most comforting to me.

Let us consider more carefully the foundation of that "building of God." "For other foundation can no man lay that, that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Well may the poet say, "How firm a foundation?" The language of Christ is, "I am the way:" and I believe he meant all the way. In other words, He is all and in all, to his people. As the poet beautifully expresses it, he is, "My hope, my salvation, my all.."

Some people object to the doctrine of election. But why should they? If the natural builder should select his material so carefully, is it any wonder the Great Builder should choose his material? "He that built all things is God."

Again, we don't understand these mysteries; they are deep, but we believe the scriptures plainly teach us that it is true. "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Did he not harden Pharoah's heart? Was there not a Divine purpose in the wicked deeds of Pharoah?

"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?" Would we dare say it was not predestinated that Pharoah should act out the wicked principles that were in him? Yet that does not make God the author of sin. Did not all those things work together for good to the children of Israel, and the glory of God?

Paul says, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." And I beieve he meant all things both good and evil. Before the crucifixion of our Lord, he spoke these words of his disciples, "The Son of Man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day." They did not understand what he meant; nevertheless, it came to pass just as he said it would. What could have been more wicked than to crucify the Lord of Glory? "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"

We will now consider how the material of the natural building is prepared. We know it is very necessary to saw the timber so that every piece will fit properly; and how the nails must be driven in to make it stay in place; and so on. Just so, it seems necessary for the material of God's building, which is "fitly framed together." If the material of the natural building had any life, and could feel the sawing and the nails being driven, we believe it would complain. So when His children are being prepared for that wonderful building, "an house not made with hands," they are often found complaining. If they never had any conflicts or heartaches, and never were shown how weak and frail they are, would they really feel that it is by the all abounding grace of God they are saved?

Last of all, we think of the finishing touches of the natural building. As stone is the most durable foundation, it is also beautiful for finishing. So with the heavenly building. As Christ is the foundation, he is also the topmost stone: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end."

The doctrine of the resurrection seems to me to be the completion of the building. A most wonderful mystery; and the language of Christ is, "I am the resurrection and the life."

Paul was brought before King Agrippa, being accused of the Jews because he had a sweet hope in the resurrection, but considered himself happy that he could answer for himself—and a most noble defense he made. His words to the king were, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" Then he proceeded to give a reason for his hope.

I also would like to give my reason for a sweet hope in the resurrection. About six months before my dear father passed into the Great Beyond, I believe the Lord revealed to me in a dream that he was going to die. I dreamed of being on a large white ship in mid-ocean, looking for his body. I knew he was dead, and was perfectly satisfied his spirit had returned to God who gave it, but was so distressed about his body. The scriptures teach us, "The sea shall give up its dead." Finally, after offering a most fervent prayer to God, his body floated near the ship, and I was then satisfied it would be saved: though in the dream I did not see body and spirit united.

Just a few days before he left us, I believe it pleased the Lord to show me how he would look in that great and glorious day when the body comes forth from the grave, and is taken home to God. It was fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ, and he had the sweetest, most serene expression I ever saw. I believe death was truly swallowed up in victory.

When the time of my departure is at hand, I hope to be given that calm resignation, and may approach my grave (as my father did) like one who wraps the drapery of his couch about him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

Lizzie F. Anderson
Wilson, N. C.

(The above is re-published (by request) from Zion's Landmark of February 1, 1924. See the letter which follows, written by Elder Dodson to Sister Anderson, after reading the above.)

ELDER DODSON TO SISTER ANDERSON

Rutherford, N. J.
February 15, 1924

Dear Sister Anderson:

It is my desire that you should know of the satisfaction and comfort your letter in the February 1st Landmark has been to me. Through natural figures, such as the building to which you refer, our pure minds are often stirred up with wonder and amazement as we can contemplate and meditate upon the glorious work of redemption by and through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He is not only the foundation and the cap-stone, but the creator; and the bringing together of the materials and the construction of the building is all the work of God. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Therefore, if we are able to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we have been called and bear forth fruits of righteousness, it is because of our creation in Christ Jesus, and that God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. It is, "By grace we are saved through faith, and that not of our selves: it is the gift of God; not of works lest any man should boast". This is the kind of doctrine which I believe feeds the hungry, and wich is preached to the poor and needy.

The Psalmist did not stop at saying

that the Lord brought him up out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set his feet upon a rock, but he also said he, "established my goings; and he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." This gives glory and honor unto God, to whom it all belongs. If any part of the salvation of sinners is left to the creature, it is a failure to begin with, since no chain is stronger than the weakest link. But Isaiah was told to comfort the Lord's people, "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that the warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Now, this does not encourage us to sin: the fact that our welfare is accomplished and our iniquity is pardoned does not make us indifferent as to how we shall walk; but there is an earnest desire to prove we have a godly sorrow for sin by turning away from it. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

What a comfort it is to those who are altogether unclean to know of the greatness of our God, and that the blood of his blessed Son cleanseth us from all iniquity. In my life there has appeared the blackest of sin, and while I have been made to know, I trust, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and have had to confess my fault before God and men, having been searched out by him with whom I have to do, my only hope of salvation is that in some mysterious way it was according to the infinite purpose and plan of our wonder-working God, and that ample provision was made in covenant relation with his Son to come in the fulness of time, God's time, to pay all the debt I owe, and to cleanse me from all unrighteousness. It has been in this way, if not deceived, that I have been taught in a living way that by nature I am as prone to live after the flesh as the sparks are to fly upward, and my turning, if such there has been, was due to no other cause that the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were enemies to him, being shed abroad in my wretched heart, and I made to know him whom to know is life eternal. Such leadings do not cause us to falsely accuse God, but rather to place our hand upon our mouth, to abhor self and repent in dust and ashes.

My heart almost bleeds at times when I read after brethren who, seemingly at least, try to bring God down to man's level and reason out his works and ways after their manner of thinking. Who can comprehend God? How unsearchable are his judgements and his ways past finding out. Let us go back to the beginning of his creation and ask a few questions with regard to some of his creatures. Did he only make the dove and the sparrow? No. his work did not stop there, for he made the hawk and the vulture, as well. Did he only make the innocent and inoffensive little lamb and the calf? No, as well he made the lion, the bear, the wolf, and other beasts of prey. Why? Who can answer? Also, "And God created great whales, and every living thing that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly; and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good." In the last verse of the first chapter of Genesis we are told, "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good."

Man takes issue with God and tries to divide and separate the good from the bad, etc. But, in the actual experiences of his people, when they are made to witness the coming together of all things, and their working together for good to them that love God, to those who are the called according to his purpose, and behold the lion and the lamb lying down together in the presence of him who doeth all things well, they can say in the Spirit, "God works and none can

hinder; he doeth his will in the army of heaven (the Church) and among the inhabitants of the earth (subjecting wicked kings and rulers unto himself, and causing the wrath of man to praise him)."

My unknown sister in the flesh, these are only some of his ways, which are so wonderful and great and high that we are made to fear and tremble as we attempt to write about them; nevertheless we rejoice in them, since, if there was in all the universe just one creature, however small or insignificent, which God did not create and control, how would any of us know but what that one creature would mean our undoing altogether, and we be left without hope and without God in the world. If there is even one non-essential part or piece in the whole work which does not have a place, and fit into it according to the divine wisdom which drew the wonderous plan, what guarantee have we that the structure will not topple down in total wreck and ruin? There is no comfort in any such speculation, and I believe no such thing. God's work is perfecct and not a hoof shall be left behind or lost.

To refer again to the natural creation as being figurative of that other and spiritual creation, even to the very ups and downs in our lives, the dark season, as well as the light that is brighter than the noon-day sun, all appointed were by him, and not a single shaft shall hit except the God of love sees fit. He sits on no precarious throne, nor borrows leave to be. About one hundred miles North of me are the Catskill Mountains, with their wonderful peaks of green forrest in the Spring and Summer, at the foot of which are to be found refreshing mountain streams, at times teeming with delicious trout for the satisfying of the hunger of man. In the Fall of the year there is presented a picture which, for grandeur and beauty, no artist can put upon canvas, with the different hues of color and the beautiful lakes here and there. These are what might be termed pure waters, and as such they are bottled up and conveyed through a huge pipe, so to speak, to the great City of New York, where millions of people drink and have their thirst assuaged. But when we can go behind the curtains, as it were, and see back of the mountains the great God of creation, that he caps them with snow and ice in the Winter, that the streams and lakes may be fed, the forrest kept alive and made to come forth and bud, with singing birds to rest in the boughs of the trees, their little throats bursting with praise to their maker,—how wonderful to think about. But, in nature, there must be a variety: there must be the low grounds, or fertile valleys, to bring forth for the satisfying of the needs of every living thing. Without such variety, how monotonous the scene would be; and so in the new creation, the Lord hath declared that until time shall be no more, seasons shall continue; and when we are given a view of that upper world, how vain are all things here below, and how imperfect the best of figures. To behold that New Jerusalem, with the King of Kings, as he sits upon the throne, the sovereign over all worlds, principalities and powers; and to drink the pure water from the streams of that river that makes glad the city of our God, how inexpressible and full of glory, and how satisfying to the one whose tongue is parching for thirst. Sometimes we feel we would sit and drink from that pure fountain without ceasing, but the first thing we know, we are in a dry place and there is no water: then we cry unto the Lord, and he hears our cry. He causes springs to spout up in dry places, and makes the desert to blossom as the rose, so that we might be made living witnesses of his mighty power. Sometimes we are led into death and not into life, so far as we can see, and he hedges us about that we cannot come forth. He led Israel of old by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night; and when he brought them down to the Red Sea, with their enemies apparently ready to overtake them, at his command the waters stood back, and his people crossed over on dry land, only to close in

again and destroy their enemies as they ventured their pursuit. What a great deliverer the Lord is? Surely to him belong the Song of Moses and of the Lamb.

My mind seemed impressed to write you along the line upon which you wrote, feeling a drawing to you in the Spirit, and, if the impression was of the Lord, his work will prosper in the thing whereto he sends it; and may all the praise and the glory be his.

Your brother in hope,
R. Lester Dodson

Cuba, Ala.

Dear Editors and Readers:

With troubled heart I will pen a few lines tonight, hoping that someone, whose mind is stirring, will find a crumb of comfort in reading it; for I find no peace in my mind if I do not try to write.

Oh, what a time the present is to all of those who have eyes that can see; and who can understand the hand-writing on the wall. It seems to me that we are all dull and sleepy. Oh, that we may be awakened, and read those prophecies with a whole mind: they were not written in vain. There are a few yet who are calling our attention to them. Many may not heed them, though they are surely coming to pass right before our eyes. We read this, "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." (Zeph. 3:12) God does not say "maybe" about this. He says he will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people; and he uses no "maybe" when he says, "They shall trust in the name of the Lord." His very name revives the drooping spirit of his children — a person can be afflicted when their natural bodies are sound and well. Are the Lord's people at ease? Do they look about them and see harmony and pleasant conditions? The refreshing spots on this desert road is when we feel the comforting, consoling, sweet nearness of our blessed Lord — if it were not so, we would faint and starve. He knows we need these visits: he was visited by an angel sent from God his Father. And now we poor ones get the comforting assurance that He cares for us. He comes in spirit, and we know it is him, and not our immagination. Yes, that is fixed: he plants true recognition in our poor hearts.

I suppose all of God's children have experienced this all along this earthly road. To some of his children, the journey is long, and they bear many severe trials, toiling in cold and heat, and they become tired. Then they begin to look ahead of them with dim, wistful eyes, knowing that their journey is almost through. I read of an aged minister who told his brethren just a few days before he died, that lately he could almost see the Promised Land. He died happy. I have seen him, and heard him preach and pray. His words at death were beautiful and comforting to his loved ones.

We, most of us, find thorns to walk on here: more than ever now than years ago, because there is more opposition to all who desire to live right—to live a life that God approves. If our heart is right, it is a sweet joy to live right, lothing sin also; which is a miracle not performed by man—it is God's work. Christ in one's heart makes them want to do good works daily; but they are as filthy rags when applied to the saving of the soul. When we are tempted to do wrong, grace is needed; and the dear Lord will supply that too. Adam's nature still exists in us, and will until we put off natural life. But we are not like we once were: we hate what we once loved, and the pleasure and delight is gone from it. We are never satisfied with ourselves: we feel humble and can see nothing to boast about that we do.

Yes, there is a striving, because there is a warfare; and the devil is the captain of the army that opposes us. We remember that he tried to bargain with our precious Lord, but he FAILED, utterly FAILED. This was written for our comfort: every word in the blessed book was written for us, and for our benefit. Those who can't read it, can hear it read.

First, they must be a seeker, or it will fall on dead ground; and I can't make anyone be a seeker—the Lord's hand must first be with them, and then they are interested about what the scriptures say.

The temptations of this world are being made more and more enticing each year that passes. I beileve Satan's devices exceed his devices before the flood. I may be wrong, but I believe he is hurrying — he is suspicious that his time is short; and I believe it is. His devices are nearing their pinnacle, from which they will topple with a loud noise, which the whole world will hear.

May the Lord be with us in life, and comfort us at death, is my humble prayer.

In a precious hope,
Mary Lancaster

Fort Smith, Arkansas

Editor of Signs of the Times,

Dear Brethren:

....I enjoy reading the Signs of the Times, and finished reading the July issue yesterday. Elder Rhodes' article on the "Parable of the Sower," was worth the price of the paper (if it could be bought), according to what it has meant to me. It seems it was a gift from above to one so ignorant as I, for I had never realized what fruits we were to bring forth, even though I have read Matthew and other books of the Bible on the subject. So I am made to feel that I was prepared for the sowing through the Lord—or hope I was. It has certainly strengthened my hope, if I am worthy of His grace, goodness, love, etc.

Last week I dreamed of being in a large crowd, and elder was preaching, and it seemed that it was Elder Rhodes, but I was quite a way from him and couldn't hear him well. So I wonder if my reading his article on the sowing of the seed was to come out of that dream. After reading the article, I was filled. So it is clear to me that it must be a gift through the grace of God.

I am looking forward to attending the association down in Lousiana in September, the Lord willing. I am not close to any Primitive Baptists. but have been blessed to hear three good sermons this year by Brother Britt and Brother Simpson. As I have written before, I united with the Primitive Baptists two years ago in June; my membership being at Rehobeth Church, near El Dorado, Arkansas. I was forty-five years old at that time, but failed to mention it in the other letter;

Your sister I hope in Christ,
Ellen M. Sellers

Mesilla Park, New Mexico

Signs of the Times:

Received your appeal for help in financing, and after giving the matter thought, I am enclosing my check for $50.00.

I received the Signs of the Times this morning. I always look forward to its coming, as I always enjoy every bit of its contents. I am so glad we have a medium as the Signs to communicate one with another; for through this medium are many of God's children fed with that food which is not of man, but comes from God through his called ministers, or his children who are led by the Spirit to say those things that are edifying to those who are called of God into the marvelous light of the Son of God. No other paper I know of comes so nearly teaching the truth as does the Signs of the Times.

My prayer is that the editors of the Signs will at all times be led by the Spirit of God to teach the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and be able to give Christ all the honor and glory due him; for in no other name is their hope of eternal life.

You may use this if you feel it has any value.

Your brother, whose hope is in Christ,
James A. Bell

ALL IS WELL

Muirkirk, Ontario
June 15, 1905

Mrs. John McPhail,

My dear sister, in the assuring evidence of those whose life is hid with Christ in God, and when he who is our life shall appear, then we shall also appear with him in glory, freed from this bondage of sin and corruption. it is sown in weakness: it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body: it is raised a spiritual body. — But to let you know how soul-cheering your precious letter was to my needy soul, was my intention when I thought of replying. I received dear sister (I feel to say) Maggie Graham's card, and we were glad to hear John was better. It may be selfishness, but the fellowship of those of like kinred faith is sweet. We had a good visit in their home, and felt the spirit was moving on the waters with power. Not one event is amiss in the great chain of occurances that is directed by the high and all-powerful hand of Jehovah. Not a sparrow falls without him; and the words, "Ye are of more value than many sparrows," came to me with wonderful assurance as I went to retire one night as I looked at my dear companion. It did me good to know the dear Lord had taken from you the sting of death you once dreaded. He alone can subdue our natural will, and be made submissive to leave ourselves, our all in all, in his hands. When one bit of strength is left me, how selfish and fond I am to lavish it on my dear ones; but when I was made to feel that I was bound hand and foot, and all my goods (my power to do or think one good act or thought) was taken from me, all my righteouness was as rags: yes, filthy, disgusting rags. Then my cry was (when of myself I could do nothing), "Lord save, I perish; feed me, for I am starving; clothe me, for I am naked; and lead me in the way everlasting."

In your fellowship with Job, I felt very near to you, for I have been so harassed by sin, sorrows, and the vain annoying vanities of this mortal state, that my cry was, with David, "Oh, that I could take the wings of the morning," the fleeting light of the sun, and be gone from where I am and what I am. Job was my companion in saying, "I am a companion of dragons and owls." The pelican of the wilderness, so alone, was all I could compare myself to. And when I felt His hand was laid heavy upon me, my rebellious nature would cry in the bitterness of my soul: "I wish I were dead," with nearly every breath I would draw. Oh, my dear sister and companion in tribulation, (which a loving hand favors his peculiar care with) it is a fearful thing to fall into the hand of the living God. My natural frame has quivered 'till I grasped for my natural breath; my tongue has cleaved to the roof of my mouth; and I have walked about as one in sore distress while under his convicting power. But He will not afflict above what we are able to bear, and with temptation, send a way of escape. It is all to refine the dross. The words, "Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you," raised me up from my pillow one morning, and I felt they were sent in love and power.

Satan was allowed to vex Job 'till only his life remained; and in one of my sore distresses of mind, the words, "Your life is hid with Christ in God," buoyed me up when I felt shaken over the gulf of black despair; and I felt glad it was so, for if I were not kept by Him, my doom was inevitable.

Your sweet letter of the breathings of a dear child, were so akin to my longing desires to know, "Do all walk thus," or am I alone. "So far from God I feel to be: Oh, is there anyone like me." Truly the way cast up is a wonderful way: bearing in our body the dying of our Lord. Is it any wonder our natural bodies quake, when He sweat, as it were, great drops of blood; and in his weakness He cried, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not my will but thine be done." He for the joy before him set, so generous was

his love, endured the cross, despised the shame, and now reigns above.

Elder Carnell's text last Sunday was about some believed that the resurrection was past, and overthrew the faith of some. It did me good. In the afternoon, it was in Daniel, "For there is a God in heaven who doth reveal secrets." He spoke of the wonderful way the Lord reveals to his people in dreams, and that he often wished he had more of them. I had a dream before I was numbered with those whom I feel are His witnesses. Though my sins often perplex me, and the great Apollyn, the enemy of souls, makes terrible battles with the new man in me, but I am made to feel, as you said, we go on from victory to victory. And the battle is not ours, for he worketh in us both to will and to do; and He giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. I dreamed I was standing by a lovely stream on bright green sod: My mother said to me, "I don't think you will live long." Well, I replied, "All is well." If you could hear the story I may tell some day, you would think it was all well too. I told Elder Pollard, our dear late pastor, how I hoped the same feeling would be with me at my closing moments. One day is with him a thousand years. I never looked or reflected on that dream with fear, but a loving assurance that All is Well. The one thing needful: it did much to take away the sting of death, though the battles and victories have been many in the Lord since then....

We would like to have you visit with us, with your family; and hope you may be given a mind to write again. My love to all the dear ones in a risen Lord.

Mrs. D. T. Gillis

(Published by request)

ASSOCIATIONAL NOTICES

The LEXINGTON - ROXBURY ASSOCIATION is appointed to be held with the Olive and Hurley Church, September 12 and 13, at Shokan, N. Y. Invitation is extended to all members, friends, and lovers of the truth.

Those coming Tuesday will stop at the meeting house at Shokan, on Route 28, 13 miles North of Kingston, for instruction for entertainment.

(Eld.) A. J. Slauson, Pastor

The VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING is appointed to be held with New Valley Church, October 17, 18, and 19th, 1956. The meeting house is located just off highway 15, about 8 miles North of Leesburg, Virginia. An invitation is extended to all brethren and friends of our faith and order.

Arthur L. Carter, Clerk

The MAIN OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION will convene, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, on September 7, 8, and 9, 1956. An invitation is extended to those of our faith and order, and interested friends.

Sanford S. Bartlett, Clerk

The SALISBURY OLD SCHOOL or PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION is appointed to be held with the Nassaongo Church, located on the Snow Hill road, about seven miles from Salisbury, Maryland, on Wednesday and Thursday, October 24 and 25, 1956.

All lovers of the truth are invited.

(Eld.) D. V. Spangler, Pastor
M. C. Fooks, Clerk

SPECIAL REQUEST

To enable your editors to publish your notices of associations and special meetings in the issue you desire, please send them in so that they are received at least five weeks before publication date.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

EDITORIALS

Danville, Va. **September, 1956**

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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EDITORIAL

OUR MOST VALUABLE POSSESSION

We have often asked ourselves—and sometimes the brethren, "What is the greatest or most valuable possession we have?"

All men have a multitude of temporal blessings. The Lord's people are given to realize where these come from, and are often so very thankful for them. These blessings are necessary for their earthly state, for they sustain life and give comfort while we are here in the world. It is true that some have more natural gifts than others; some have more knowledge and understanding than others; and some have more wealth than others. But these serve their purpose, then cease for us when our time comes to leave this world.

We are transients: we travel through a time world from eternity to eternity. That is, we travel from the eternal purpose of God concerning each of us, to the eternal, "Inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away." We refer, of course, to those who are, "Begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

It is because we have this hope, "As an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;" and because, "We have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us;" and because we are, "Persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor power, nor any creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is Christ Jesus our Lord;"—it is because of these things, that we have long since rejoiced that the most valuable possession we have in this life, is not a thing which will "perish with the using," but rather, that which gives assurance of eternal life.

Greatly blessed are we who have "exceeding great and precious promises," and are "sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession."

It is because these things shall not fail, and because the present use and comfort of them is the assurance of the fulness to come, we count this hope and assurance of eternal life to be the most important and valuable possession we have.

J. D. W.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOKS

Those who desire the Lester and Durand Hymn and Tune Books should order them from the undersigned. The price delivered is $2.00 each, or $22.00 per dozen.

P. G. Lester, Jr.
2246 Memorial Ave. S. W.
Roanoke, Virginia

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN

We have been requested to give our views on what constitutes the blashemy against the Holy Ghost, the sin which Jesus said should not be forgiven unto men. Inasmuch as it is necessary to have the scriptures upon this matter plainly before us as we write, we shall begin by quoting those passages that refer to this matter. The first is in Mathew 13: 31, 32, and reads as follows: "Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him. But whosoever speaketh a word against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." The gospel according to Mark 2:28-30 puts it this way: "Verily I say unto you, all sin shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation; because they said, he hath an unclean spirit." Turning to Luke 13: 10 we find it thus: "And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven." Both in Matthew and in Mark this declaration of Jesus concerning the unforgivable sin is in connection with the Pharisees accusing Jesus of having cast out devils by Beelzebub the prince of Devils. This ascription of the work of the Holy Ghost to the devil is what is called the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. To thus ascribe the work of the spirit to the devil is to be guilty of a sin which shall not be forgiven. The period which this sin shall not be forgiven is "never." Matthew puts it, "Neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Mark says "Never." Therefore, we take it that the expression, "Neither in this world, neither in the world to come," is the same as, "Never." That is, whosoever ascribes the work of God's spirit to the devil is a lost soul, there is no forgiveness for that sin throughout all the period of time. As for the heaven beyond this life, there will be no sin in that world, therefore no forgiveness of sin there.

To be guilty of this blasphemy is to be in danger of eternal damnation. In the eternal mind and purpose of the infinite all-wise God from the foundation of the world, God's elect were not, and have never at any time, been in danger of eternal damnation. When the blessed Jesus declared this truth about the unforgivable sin against the Holy Ghost, he was then in the legal or Jewish world. Under that legal covenant, and in that legal world, there was no such thing as forgiveness for blasphemy against God. Witness the scripture in Leviticus 24: 16, "And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well as the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the Lord, shall be put to death." When Jesus further said, "Neither in the world to come," he had no refrence to the world of eternal glory beyond this mortal life. He meant by "The world to come," the gospel world age which was to follow after his resurrection from the dead, when the legal world or age should have come to an end. As there has been no forgiveness in the legal world for the blasphemy against God, so there is not any forgiveness of blasphemy against God in this gospel world. The law of Moses could not forgive that sin, but killed him who commited it; neither does the gospel of Christ forgive blasphemy against God, but excludes from the household of faith one who ascribes the Spirit's work to the devil. Therefore neither in the law world nor in the gospel world is there forgiveness for the sin

against the Holy Ghost. The word "Never" does not mean eternal. It means "at no time," and has reference to the whole extent of time: that throughout the whole period of time there is no forgiveness for blasphemy against the Spirit.

We know that this subject has been a matter of great concern to many of the Lord's dear children, because most of them have at some time in their soul's travels feared themselves to be guilty of the unpardonable sin. That great adversary of the soul's peace, the devil, loves to tease and torment the children of God, and his accusations against the brethren are never so poignant as when he can take the very scriptures of truth and hurl them against the saints. Never is Satan so plausable as when he comes garbed as an angel of light, quoting passages from the sacred book. But while he quotes scripture at times, he always quotes it piecemeal never having any regard for the context; and while he often quotes it glibly, he never construes it correctly. Neverless the pain which Satan causes by his gross misapplications of the Word are terribly acute and give rise to sore doubts and misgivings on the part of the harassed believer. Now we feel to say emphatically that where one has a fear lest they have committed the unpardonable sin, the presence of that very fear is itself an evidence that the unpardonable sin has not been committed. Those who are guilty of this unpardonable sin never have any such fear about it. The presence of this fear proves there exists also a reverence for God. Where reverence is, there can be no blasphemy. A spiritual awakened soul is alive to sin, the unawakened soul is dead in sin. When dead in sin there is no fear of sin, indeed no consciousness of sin at all. To be conscious of sin, and to be in fear of it, is evidence of spiritual life.

We feel to say to our readers, especially to those who may have at times feared themselves guilty of the unpardonable sin, that if you really committed this terrible sin you would not know it, you would be calloused and hardened, and without feeling of any pain about it. The fact this fear of the sin is with you shows your conscience to have been made tender regarding the offensiveness of sin; and this fear of the Lord is knowledge of life to depart from the snares of death. Jesus says in the scripture quoted from Matthew, that a word spoken against the Son of Man shall be forgiven. All the sins that are chargeable to the Second Person in the Trinity are forgiven, it does not at all matter what may be the character or kind of blasphemy or sin committed. If it be an offense against Jesus Christ, it shall be forgiven. Jesus Christ is the Mediator between God and God's elect, and is the elect's Surety for all the debts they owe to divine justice. Almighty God has laid on his son all the sins of his elect children. There is not one which the elect of God have committed, or are committing, at this present time, or that they may or will commit, but that Jesus Christ has atoned for the whole of them. He has washed away all the sins of his people in his own blood. This is because the sins of all God's chosen people come against the Son of Man, Jesus Christ. He is the Scapegoat for all of them, and bears their sins, all of them, away into the land of forgetfulness, whence they shall never return to be remembered anymore: never to be charged to their account. On the other hand, the sins which come against the Holy Ghost are not forgiven. This is because there is no mediation provided in the will of God for these sins. These are the sins for which Jesus Christ was not made responsible, the debt for which he was not made surety.

Suppose Mr. A. gives to Mr. B. his note for $500; and that Mr. A. asks Mr. C. to go his surety on this note. Mr. C. consents to be A's surety. In the event that A cannot pay this note, C will have to pay it, because he is the surety for it. But suppose Mr. D. also owes Mr. B. a note and that D fails to pay it. Now B goes to C and wants C to pay D's note. Will C do it? He will not. Why not?

Because C is not D's surety, therefore is not liable for D's debts. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was from all eternity the predestinated Mediator and Surety for his people who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. All their debts to God he will pay and has paid. He gave his life for them. But Jesus Christ is not surety for the sins of the whole human family. Therefore the sins of those for whom Jesus was not made surety, are not atoned for and never will be atoned for. All those sins are sins against God the Spirit directly, without a mediator to stand between and render satisfaction for them. Therefore these offenses, being against God the Spirit, and not against Jesus Christ, have never forgiveness. There is no sin so terrible, no Blasphemy so heinous, but what it is possible to be forgiven, provided it is against Jesus Christ, that is, provided he is the surety for the transgressor committing the sin; but even it be but a word against the Holy Ghost there is no forgiveness anywhere for it, because it is an offense for which there is no mediation provided, no surety to pay it.

The apostle Paul had at one time been a blasphemer, as witness his first letter to Timothy, thirteenth verse. But this blasphemer found forgiveness. Why did he? Because Jesus Christ was from all eternity predestinated to be his Saviour, therefore the surety who paid all Paul's indebtedness to divine justice, thus bringing unto Paul the forgiveness of all his sins. No doubt there have been many who have blasphemed God who have not found forgiveness as Paul did who were naturally no worse men than Paul had been, but who obtained no forgiveness because Jesus Christ was not from eternity responsible for their safety, was not made of God to them their surety. Therefore their sins were against God the Holy Ghost without a mediator to stand between them and divine justice to make good the debt that they might go free.

From all this line of thought which we have been pursuing here, it will be seen that it is not possible for a child of God to commit an unpardonable sin. There is not one single sin of all the elect of God which Jesus Christ is not the atonement for. If there is anything which he left out or overlooked then he is not the perfect Captain of their salvation, but liable to err, as the rest of us. Since he has however perfected all his set-apart people by the one offering of himself, it follows that not one of them can commit an unforgivable sin. This unforgivable sin is the sin committed by the wicked, or by those who were not included in the covenant of election before the foundation of the world. Their sins have no atonement. There is no mediator provided for them, hence their offense are directly against God the Holy Ghost, and not against Jesus Christ. If they were against Jesus Christ, they would be forgiven.

We hope we have made ourselves sufficiently clear, so that you have grasped our view of this matter. We hope we have been enabled to set at rest your fears as to yourselves being guilty of this unpardonable sin. If you have had a fear within yourselves that you may have been guilty of this, that very fear is testimony of spiritual life within your soul; having this life you must belong to Christ, and belonging to him you have him as your Advocate in the court of heaven to present you faultless before the throne of God. Belonging to him, you cannot sin yourself away from him. "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

(Editorial of Elder H. H. Lefferts in August 1925, Signs.)

OBITUARIES

SARAH GRACE WEBSTER

Sister Webster was born August 21, 1874, the daughter of Henry and Sarah D. Kessler;

and passed away April 17, 1956.

She leaves one daughter, Miss Dorothea Webster; three sisters and one borther. Her husband, Daniel W. Webster, passed away January 9, 1939.

She was received into the fellowship of the Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, in New York City, by relation of experience September 4, 1910, and baptized September 11, 1910, by the late Elder John McConnell.

In December of 1953, she fell and sustained a fractured hip and, while eventually able to walk, she was never well again from complications.

While in the hospital Elder and Sister Slauson called to see her and she asked him to speak in prayer. To the end, she always remained firm in the faith she was privileged to express to the church in 1910.

The faithfulness of her daughter to care for her mother and have her made comfortable in every way, was unexcelled.

The funeral service was conducted by Mr. Raymond Rosche of the Presbyterian denomination, as Elder Slauson, who serves her home church, was unable to attend on account of illness.

Interment in Nyack, N. Y. Written by request.

Cyrus Risler

MIRIAM ELSIE KUNS

Miriam Elsie Kuns passed away in her home at 305 West Highland Avenue, Sierra Madre, California, on January 30, 1956. She was born in Grundy County, Illinois in 1873. She is survived by her two daughters, Ruby Simmons of Sierra Madre, and Opal Eshelman of El Centro, California, and five grandchildren. She also leaves a sister, Mrs. Jennie Ash of Mazon, Illinois. Mrs. Ash is 90 years old and is a member of the Old School Baptist Church.

Sister Kuns, as she was known to her many church friends, had been an Old Baptist most of her life. Her parents George and Sarah Gilbert had belonged as far back as she could remember. When she reached young womanhood, she too felt the call of Grace within her heart, and asked for, and was given baptism in the church of her choice.

Her love and devotion to her church was the mainspring of her life. When it was possible she traveled miles to attend a church of her faith; when it wasn't, she had The Signs of the Times, which was a great source of comfort to her. In 1922, she placed her letter in the Liberty Church in Los Angeles. This was her church home for more than 30 years, and here she found rich spiritual nourishment, and shared communion with beloved ones of like faith and fellowship. She attended as regularly as her failing strength permitted her, until she was called to her final home in Heaven.

Elder Oliver F. Dearing, her pastor from Liberty Church officiated at her services. This was as she had asked it to be. Elder Dearing had been her close spiritual confidant for many years.

Her deep and lasting faith in the saving Grace of Jesus has been like a rock of strength to us all, and it shall remain a guide and an inspiration to us as long as we too shall live.

Her daughter,
Opal Eshelman

MRS. ALMETA HAYNIE

Sister Almeta (Stover) Haynie was born in February, 1857, and passed away March 1, 1956; making her stay on earth a few days over ninety-nine years. She was married to Mr. Lonza Haynie in the year 1880; and to this union were born eight children: Edd Haynie, Memphis, Tenn.; Dewey H. Haynie, El-Dorado, Ark.; Mrs. Mary Johnson, Hot Springs, Ark.; Mrs. J. R. Furr, Alexandra, La.; Mrs. R. L. Coston and Mrs. C. W. Womack, Shreveport, La.; Mrs. H. L. Johnson, Tulsa, Okla.; and Mrs. John Sturdivant, Tulsa, Okla. There are ten grand-children and seventeen great grand-children.

Sister Haynie became a member of the Primitive Baptist Church by experience and baptism April 18, 1918, and was a faithful member until death. She was an aunt of the late Elder V. R. Harris.

also

LONZA HAYNIE

Just six weeks after the death of Sister Haynie, her husband followed her to the great beyond. He was six years younger than his wife. Mr. Haynie never united with the visible church, but was a firm believer in the Old School predestinarian faith of God's elect. They attended Pilgrims Rest Church, Fordyce, Ark. regularly as long as they were physically able.

The writer tried to comfort the sorrowing loved ones at the Benton Funeral Home, Fordyce, Ark. Their bodies were laid to rest in the local cemetery, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the call when their bodies will be made like the glorious body of our blessed Redeemer.

Written at the request of the church by her pastor.

(Elder) J. T. Everitt
Camden, Ark.

MISS BETTY SOMERS

We, the members of Pleasant Grove Church, wish to bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father in removing from among us our beloved sister, Miss Betty Somers. She was born November 23, 1882, in Caswell County, N. C.; and died February 18, 1956, making her stay on earth over seventy-three years. She was the daughter of the later Pharoah and Nannie Walker Somers, and spent her entire life on the Somers' farm, almost in sight of our meeting house. Though she never married, she was a mother to many, helping whenever she could in rearing some of her relative's children. They were deeply devoted to her. She was more than a sister to this poor writer.

Sister Somers was sorely afflicted for twelve years, and bore her affliction with much patience. About two years ago, while in the hospital seriously ill, she called for our pastor, Elder Harvey Smith, and several of our members to come to her bedside; there she offered to the church, giving good evidence that she was a fit subject for baptism, and was received. She was baptized later when her health had improved some.

It was one of our cherished privileges to visit with her, and hear her talk about her hope, her love for her brethren and her pastor. She would say she felt unworthy to be among us: the manner in which she expressed her doubts and fears, gave evidence that she had a good hope of life beyond the grave. She filled her seat on meeting day when able to attend. We feel she will be greatly missed by her church, her sister, relatives and friends, as well as the community in which she lived.

We truly feel her sufferings are over, and she is at rest. Like most of God's little children, at times she seemed to fear death; yet when her Lord said, "Child come home", these fears were removed, and she fell quietly and gently asleep in Jesus. Her funeral was held at the church by her pastor and Mr. Jennings; and her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the resurrection, when Jesus returns to gather his jewels, who shall praise him in perfection.

When mortal toil be finished,
This earthly span shall cease;
Then meet us blessed Jesus
And take us home with thee.

Our bodies back to dust returns
Till the resurrection morn:
Our Lord shall call this sleeping dust,
And change the earthly form.

Like unto the body of our Lord
Immortal shall we shine:
Triumphant grace has won its work.
Oh, Lord, the praise is thine.

Written at the request of Pleasant Grove Church by one who loved her.

Mrs. Fred Cobb

ESLEY ARMINTA POWERS

Esley Arminta Powers was born September 2, 1900, and departed this life March 26, 1956; making her stay on earth fifty-five years, six months and twenty-four days. She was the only daughter of our dear Sister Della Powers Davis. She leaves her mother; two brothers: Walter K. Powers, Chicago, Ill. and Theodore A. Powers, Pocatello, Idaho; her husband: George Shinabagar, to whom she was married June 23, 1952; and a host of relatives and friends.

Esley never united with any church organization, but she was a devout believer in salvation by grace, and, in fact, every principle of the Old School Baptist doctrine. She was blessed with a good hope through grace about 1952, and loved to hear good, sound preaching. She dearly loved to hear discussions on sacred things set forth in the Holy Scriptures. Often in her last illness she expressed a desire to hear once more a good sound sermon. She possessed a good moral character; and her mother says that she read her Bible and the Signs of the Times as long as she could hold them up. And when she could no longer do that, many times she said, "Tell me the good things, Mama; tell me the good things." She suffered a protracted illness, being bedfast eleven months, during which time she could not turn herself in bed, nor raise her head from her pillow, and her suffering was intense. She often expressed a desire to be released and be at rest. The arch-enemy, death, finally prevailed, and she slipped quietly away the night of March 26th.

The writer of this, Elder L. L. Schenck, was the great-uncle of the deceased; thus knew her from infancy up. At her funeral he tried to speak to the comfort of those who are left to mourn, using as a text the sacred words of the apostle, "But I am determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified." This was her theme, and she loved to hear His holy name exalted.

Thus, in a spirit of trust in the great name of Jesus, we laid her away to await the coming of our blessed Lord, who shall fashion the sleeping bodies of his saints like unto his own precious body; when and where we hope to praise him world without end. Amen.

(Elder) L. L. Schenck

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 124 DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1956 NO. 10

HASN'T HEARD PREACHING IN SIX YEARS

Stuart, Oklahoma

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am sending a mite of a donation for your funds, or any way you see fit to use it.

. . . Reading my papers is all the preaching I get. It will soon be six years since I have been to an Old Baptist meeting to hear an Old Baptist preach. Last November a year ago, the Old Baptists had a meeting at Dustin, about fifty miles from where we live; and I had planned to go, but my husband was sick with flu, and I couldn't go and leave him. No one knows how much I wanted to go, but the great God in Heaven, and dear Jesus the Son of God, who came into the world to save his people from their sins.

I do so often wonder, am I a child of God, or am I not. But, dear loved ones, I don't doubt the dear Old Baptists being the church. When the dear Lord revealed himself to me thirty-six years ago, my desire was to follow Jesus, and do his will. This came to me: "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord has done for thee." I said, "Lord, who are my friends?" I could see the dear Old Baptists as they were assembled in a meeting. This was not a dream: it was daytime, about ten o'clock in the morning. I said, "Dear Lord, how can I go? It is sixty miles, and I have no way to go." Then this came to me: Write, write, write. And I wrote a letter to the church and tried to tell them what the Lord had done for poor, unworthy me. When I had finished the letter, everything was praising God: The leaves shined like silver, the birds and flowers were praising God. It was the happiest time in all my life. No one knows anything about this, except those who have experienced it. I will never forget that happy day. How could I be anything but an Old Baptist, when the church was shown so plainly to me.

Please pray for us.

Yours unworthily,
Mrs. J. T. Black

PLEASE NOTICE:

All donations received after November 1, 1956, will be listed under the heading of INDIGENT FUND. — Editors

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CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ENDOWMENT FUND

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TOTAL	$7,163.55

CORRECTION

In publishing our list of contributors to the endowment fund the donation in the name of Helen J. Jones, Calif. should have been listed as a gift jointly from Helen J. Jones, and her mother, Grace E. Jones. The amount of the gift was $50.00. We regret this error very much.

D. V. Spangler

"THE CHURCH" AS FOUNDED AND ESTABLISHED BY JESUS CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES.

To say "the Church" means much more than saying "a Church." We find "the Church" first mentioned in Matt. 16:18. As Jesus came into Philipi, he asked his disciples, saying, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am? They said, "Some say thou art John the Baptist; some Elias; others Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, "But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus said unto him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven. And I say unto thee also that thou art Peter. And upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

We want to notice that Jesus did not mean His Church would be built upon Peter, but upon the Revelation of the Holy Spirit whereby Peter knew him (Jesus) as the Christ of the living God. Also note his Church or kingdom here upon earth was not yet, but he said, "I will build (at some later time) upon this Rock — "revealed truth" by the Holy

Ghost, and no power would prevail against it, which was made manifest when Jesus arose from the dead.

The gates of hell were opened and all its power arose to destroy Jesus, and all his works, by crucifying him, and sealing his tomb with the Roman seal, a large stone rolled to its mouth and soldiers to guard it against the removal of his body. But how utterly it all failed! Jesus came forth, as he said, having subdued all powers raised against him, even death itself. After which we find him making himself known unto his disciples at various times and places for some forty days after his resurrection, when he called his disciples to meet him up in the mountains of Galilee, and Jesus came and spake to them, saying "All power is given unto me in Heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Jesus here gives his disciples instructions or commands them what to preach or teach those who were to compose the Church he had said he would build upon the rock of revelation. Having now conquered and subdued all opposing powers, he was returning to the Father and would soon deliver to Peter the keys as stated in Matt. 16:19. "And **I will give** unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of heaven: (the Church upon earth) and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

We must note here this was a promise Jesus made unto Peter that was later to take place in its fulfillment. For, notice he said, "I **will give** unto you," meaning sometime later. Also, we note Jesus has made choice of Peter as the one of His disciples to use the Keys (revelation by the Holy Ghost) by which the door of the kingdom of Heaven was to be opened, and an entrance way therein provided for all those who would compose the body of his (Christ's) bride.

Now we turn to Acts, 1; and find that Jesus had made known all the things he did and taught by the Holy Ghost. "And gave commandments unto all the Apostles whom he had chosen; to whom he also showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days and speaking of the things pertaining unto the Kingdom of God; and being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they were come together, they (his Apostles) asked: Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel? Jesus said unto them, it is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power. But **ye shall receive** power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; **and ye shall be witnesses** unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." No limitations in power or scope of this revealed truth of Jesus Christ being preached by the Holy Ghost, which was soon to come down upon them, (his Apostles).

In second chapter of Acts we read where this visitation of the Holy Ghost came to pass as promised. "When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a mighty rushing wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together and were con-

founded because every man heard them speak in his own language."

Let us here note it was by the power of the Holy Ghost they were given the cloven tongue by which they were able to speak so as every man heard in his mother tongue, and whereby they marvelled saying, "these men are Galileans, and how hear we every man in our own tongue wherein we were born?" What a miracle was here manifested, being some seventeen nations of different tongues, yet each heard in his own tongue wherein he was born. Now we are coming to the fulfillment of the promise Jesus made unto Peter: "I **will** give unto you the keys of the kingdom of heaven." etc. Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice and said unto them, "Ye men of Judea and all that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you and harken unto my words: for these are not drunken as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that spoken by the Prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my spirit: and they shall prophesy: And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before that great and notable day of the Lord shall come; And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord **shall be saved."**

Peter continues preaching as follows: "Ye men of Israel hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves know: Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." Peter continues by speaking of David who foresaw Jesus ever before his face, and who, though he was to be entombed in death, yet his flesh should see no corruption. He (Peter) pleads with these brethren that they permit him to speak freely of the patriarch David, how he, being a prophet and knowing God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne. Seeing this, David spake of his resurrection, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus God raised up whereof they were all witnesses, therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."

Peter here declares unto them it was all by the Holy Ghost he and the other Apostles had been preaching, wherein they all heard in the mother tongue wherein they were born. And now he says: "Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made this same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" By the Holy Ghost they were given to see the wickedness by which they were guilty of crucifying the Lord of glory, and by a guilty conscience made to cry out, "Men and brethren what shall we do." Here Peter, with the keys that now had been given him as promised by Jesus in Matt. 16-19, unlocked the door to the kingdom of heaven, or the church upon earth that Jesus said he would build. The doorway here was repentance and baptism. Peter then said unto them (those pricked in the heart) "repent and be baptized **every one** of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost: For the promise is unto

you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

This was the beginning or establishment of the "The Church" here upon earth, wherein all God's elect or chosen people in Christ, might assemble together as divine providence might permit, to worship together in praise and thanksgiving unto God for his great gift unto us of his Son as our Redeemer and Way of eternal life. And Peter here declared so it was to ever remain, for this promise was not only to those at that time; but was to their children, and all that was afar off (even us these 1900 years later) and as many as the Lord our God may call, even unto the end of the world. They that gladly received the word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Thus was the Church founded and established here upon earth as a house of God for God's dear children of the Jewish world.

We have now traced the founding and opening up of the Church to the Jewish nation. And we find in Acts, 10th Chapter there was a Gentile whose name was Cornelius, a devout man, and one who feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always. He saw a vision about the ninth hour, as an Angel of God coming to him and saying unto him, "Cornelius." When he looked on him he was afraid and said, "What is it Lord?" The angel said unto him, "thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. Now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon whose surname is Peter; who lodgeth with one Simon, a tanner, by the seashore, he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do." Here we find Peter again appointed to use those same keys as upon the day of Pentecost to unlock or open the door of the Church to the Gentile nation. While the three men sent by Cornelius to inquire of Peter were coming, we find Peter upon the housetop in prayer. And while hungered, a vision as a sheet let down to the earth from heaven wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts, and wild beasts, and creeping things and fowls of the air. And there came a voice saying, "Rise Peter; kill and eat." But Peter said, "Not so Lord, for I have never eaten anything common or unclean." Peter saw many things on that sheet he as a Jew was forbidden to eat, and he affirms he has been faithful in observing the Mosaic law thus far. This same vision and voice appeared unto the third time, and each time Peter made the same reply. At each reply of Peter in refusing to kill and eat of those things he saw in the sheet, a voice said unto him: "What God has cleansed call not thou common or unclean." Then was the sheet received up again into heaven.

The messengers from Cornelius having arrived, the Spirit (notice the Spirit) said unto him (Peter) "Behold three men seek thee. Get thee down and go with them doubting nothing." Which command he obeyed; and when he was come to the house of Cornelius, where he had called in his kinsmen and many friends; Cornelius, realizing how Peter had humbled himself, a Jew, to come unto a Gentile, fell down at his feet and worshipped him. But Peter took him up, saying, "Stand up; I myself also am a man." This act and statement by Peter removes the word as declared by the Catholics, that Peter was their first Pope. No where in the New Testament is it recorded where Peter ever officiated as Pope of the Church. In each of his two letters he introduces himself as "an Apostle of Jesus Christ."

We find Cornelius saying unto Peter: "At once I sent to thee, and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God." Peter opened his mouth and said: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respector of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him (God) and worketh righteousness is accepted with him." Then with those keys

(revelation by the Holy Ghost) Peter preaches unto Cornelius the same Gospel as upon the day of Pentecost, how God annointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. Testifying he was witness of all things which he (Jesus) did both in the land of the Jews and at Jerusalem: whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day and showed him openly: not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us (the Jews) who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is He which was ordained of God to be the judge of the quick and the dead. To him give all the prophets witness that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. While Peter yet spoke these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter (6 brethren) because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost as well as we (the Jews). Therefore could any man forbid water that these should be baptized which had received the Holy Ghost? And he (Peter) commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.

Herein we have by the scriptures of divine truth, the establishment of the Church Jesus said he would build and the gates of hell would not prevail against it. It has stood through the assaults of hell for over nineteen hundred years — which is evidence beyond question it will so continue unto the end of the world. It still stands upon that same Rock, "Revelation by the Holy Ghost" and the entrance is still by the door "Repentance and Baptism." All who thus enter receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, which is the Comforter. This comfort is not promised to those who strive to enter in some other way or means; but to those who come in by the door. Jesus said; "he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." Little children go home to your friends and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you. Take His yoke upon you and learn of Him (Jesus) for he is meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke (way into the Church) is easy, and my burden is light. Yes, dear little ones, Jesus did all the suffering and died that we might through him obtain eternal life in glory.

The Church is the highest order upon earth, being the only one that has anything of lasting comfort either in this world or the world to come. It is the Kingdom of Heaven on earth and Christ is the king and head over it. Also, "The Church" is the bride of Christ, purchased by the righteous blood of Jesus upon the cross and brought forth with him in his resurrection without spot or blemish to be with him in God's Holy presence forever and ever. Amen.

The Lord add daily unto his Church such as should be saved, we pray in Jesus's name and for his sake. Amen.

In Gospel Bonds —
C. E. Benson
Wilmington, Del.

Hobucken, N. C.

Dear Brethren Editors of the Signs:

I am sending you an article which appeared in the Old Faith Contender in 1948, entitled **Baptism in a Boat.** I read it over often for the beauty I see in it, and I thought it might mean as much to someone else as it has to me. I have never seen it in any other periodical, so would like to see it in the Signs.

I am acquainted with this dear old father in Israel, who will be ninety years old in September. Although very feeble, he attends his meetings; and at times the Lord strengthens him to preach the gospel of Christ in its purity. He preached for us at our March meeting, and spent the night in our humble home. We were so glad to have him, and

enjoyed him so much; and pray that the Lord will strengthen him yet to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. We feel him to be one of those dear old saints of God whom the Lord has lengthened his days to bring the glad tidings to some poor hungry souls. "God works in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform."

Dear brethren, we have been taking the paper for several years, and it is a welcome visitor in our home. We don't want to miss any copies because of what it contains. If I could write of His great riches in mercy as I can read what the dear children of God write, what a joy it would be to this poor sinner. We have been blessed as yet to get to meetings, but there are so many that are shut-in, or bed-ridden, so that they never hear the word of God only through the columns of the paper — they who are seeking the blessed righteousness of our Lord and Saviour. We are sending what we can to help on the Fund.

Dear brethren, pray for our little flock; there are just a few of us, and without a pastor. Pray that the Lord in due season will send us one like we need, not like we want; for he has promised to supply our needs, which I believe he will.

So, hoping your spiritual needs will be filled, pray for us both that we might be given faith to press on to the mark of the prize of the high calling as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. May God bless you all in your every effort to get the paper out to the poor and needy, who are seeking His love to know. Oh, if I could only tell it as I feel it in my heart. Sometimes I feel I know that my Redeemer lives, and I am not ashamed to own my Lord, or blush to speak his name. Husband and I ask your prayers that we may live at the feet of our brethren, and not bring any reproach on the church. We want to live and die with the family of God, so as not to be weighed in the balance and found wanting. Please cast a mantle of charity over these scattering remarks, for they are like the writer, imperfect. Do as you wish — just cast it in the waste basket, that will be a good place; but we want to live in sweet fellowship with all our brethren. May the saving grace of our God keep us in the bonds of the gospel for His name's sake. My husband, Elder J. G. Gaskill is very feeble.

Mrs. J. G. Gaskill

BAPTISM IN A BOAT

Grantsboro, N. C.
November 15, 1948

Dear Brother Berry: At your request and the request of others, I will again try to give an account of baptizing an aged invalid brother and his wife in a boat, which was placed in their home for that purpose.

Saturday morning and fourth Sunday in March 1917, was my regular meeting time with the church at Macedonia, near Ernul, Craven County, N. C. That Saturday morning appeared with rain and snow, which caused me to hesitate about going. My wife had said, "Nobody will meet you, for those members are old and live too far away from the church to go out in such weather as this."

Like Abraham's servant, called and bound under oath to seek a wife for his son, Isaac, yet his servant did not like to take that oath, and likely all true servants hesitate to take such an oath. But such an obligation prompted me to go. So I met the train, went to the church, kept a good fire going and truly, no one met me at the church that day. At five o'clock in the afternoon, I hurried through rain and snow, to the railroad station for my return home. There was in my heart a sense of quarrel with the Almighty for weather conditions and the prompting obligation to go at such a time, with a kind of resolve, not to go back the next day, even if the weather should be fair. I wrestled all night with these troublous thoughts. Next morning rain and snow continued to fall. All the time I tried to be quiet, with nothing to say. Soon I heard the train

whistle about three stations below. Here ended my quarrel and perplexing thoughts. I quickly moved to get ready for the train when it reached Grantsboro station. My wife came and wanted to know what I was doing. I told her I was going back to Macedonia, for the obligation impressed me to go, whether the members met me or not. She said, "I think you are foolish, for you know no one will go there in weather like this, and you will be out your railroad fare for both days."

For the time being, I ceased to wrestle with flesh and blood and went. Upon my arrival at the church, I saw the rain and snow had ceased in that section, though it was cold and cloudy. A lively congregation was in the house, sweetly singing, and two young men were the first to meet me on the church ground. They introduced themselves as sons of Mr. Kelly Gaskins. They said, "Our father is 79 years old, very sick, and has been for a long time. He sent us to see if you would go and preach for him this afternoon." I said, "Yes, I will try to do so." The meeting in the house was excellent and the singing was with melody and power. I entered the stand and after a hymn of praise, and prayer, I spoke about fifty minutes upon the great theme of the gospel as the true bread, in every word, proceeding out of the mouth of God. At the close, we announced services at the home of Mr. Kelly Gaskins at two o'clock p. m. We then dismissed with a hymn, and our usual benediction.

The two young men took me to their home, and the bedside of their father. I found him very thin and weak, could talk but little above a whisper and had to be turned in a sheet. To me, he seemed as one of only a few more days.

Soon after the noon lunch, a large crowd was standing on the porch, in the hall and in the invalid's room. Being placed near the foot of the invalid's bed, I began the services with a hymn of praise and prayer to almighty God. Then for a text, I read, "Tell me, O Thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?" Song 1:7. With unusual liberty, I spoke about thirty minutes. Then for conclusion, I turned to hymn No. 201 Lloyd's Selection. Deacon A. P. Whitford led the singing. At the end of the first stanza, he stopped and requested that door be announced open for the reception of members, which was done. The deacon resumed his singing. We saw the invalid raise his hand. I stepped forward and took hold of it. In a low whisper, he said, "I want to be baptized and have a home with you all in the Church." The singing was again halted and I told the Church present what the brother had said. The deacon said, "I have had fellowship for him for a long time, and believe all the rest have perfect fellowship for him too, therefore, I move we receive him," to which all agreed. Then his wife, Rachel, offered herself, with about the same expressed desires, and was likewise received. The singing was again resumed and we all extended the right hand of fellowship to both as candidates for baptism. Every voice seemed full of sweet melody. At the close of the hymn, I announced that I would be back next month and arrange for the baptism. Then the old Brother Gaskins strained up his voice and said, "I want to be baptized now." Now, what shall I say; for I could not believe he would live more than a week. Should we take him two miles to the creek and if he should not die on the way, he surely would die when dipped into the cold, snowy water. With these thoughts, I had to stand still for a moment.

At this juncture, one of his sons stepped up and in a low tone said to me: "I think I know how you feel. Should we start and Father lived to reach the creek, he would die when dipped into the cold water, but I would be glad if he could be baptized, for it has been his talk for more than three months." He then suggested that a boat could be brought and placed in the hall, filled with water, and use it if that would do.

I said, Yes, and explained to the Church and audience the suggestion of the boat, and further said, "Any way just so a person can be buried in the water and raised up again is baptism; for by this act every true believer declares his faith in the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord, which is the capstone of all the gospel."

All present agreed to this plan. Here we adjourned the meeting until the boat and water could be provided. Everyone was quiet, with nothing to say, waiting for the final result. I stepped out in the back yard and saw two large water pots and requested some young men to fill the pots with water and rush a fire to heat it. The boat, which was a nice, clean skiff, was soon placed in the hall. I had rear end blocked up so as to force the water in the bow, which would take less water to fill and partly filled it with water drawn from the well, and finished up with hot water drawn from pots and other vessels for heating, and raised the temperature of the water near blood heat. We then placed a sheet under the invalid brother. I took hold of one corner, the brother deacon the other, with other brethren holding the center and lower corners, then carried him and lowered all under the water except top of his head and face, raised my right hand and said, "In obedience to the command of the Will of heaven, I baptize this our brother in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost," As I dipped and raised him up, I said, "Amen." The baptism was without a strangle and pleasant as any I ever saw. We took him back to his room, placed him on a small cot for an exchange of clothing. Then Sister Rachel, his wife stepped up and said, "Why can't I be baptized in that same water where my husband was baptized?" I said, "You can, if you so desire." She said, "I do." I said, "Get ready." She said, "I am ready." I had her step in the boat and sit down. Then after the same order I baptized her in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, Amen. This also was a pleasant baptism.

When everything was cleared up in the hall, we entered the brother's room. He looked pleasant, and wanted us to sing and we did so long as we could stay. Brother and Sister Gaskins were both filled with joy and gladness at the passing events of the day, and their joy was good, and I could joy with them.

Upon my return home, I soon learned there had been no slackening of the rain and snow during the day in my county of Pamlico. On reaching home, my wife said, "I hope you are now satisfied with another long and lonely day." With a smile, I said, "We have had a good day, two lively congregations, preached twice, and baptized two." She could not believe the report, and turned away as though it was a dry joke. The smile on my face seemed to increase her doubt. The next morning she said, "Tell me the truth, — did you have any meeting yesterday?" I said, "Sure! one at the church, and one at the home of a sick man." I then had a chance to tell her the whole story, which I did.

I expected the next time I heard from the dear old brother Gaskins, he would be dead, but not so. He recovered and was out again.

Therefore a remarkable Providence.

I am as ever, yours in hope,

(Elder) J. P. TINGLE
Grantsboro, N. C.

BEHOLDING THE WORK THAT IS BEGUN

Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Brother Spangler:

My subscription to the Signs is due, and I desire to write a few thoughts, if it is God's will.

I have suffered through many seasons of seemingly utter darkness since hope in Christ entered my heart about eighteen years ago: — only those who have experienced that darkness can know how awful it is. In this state of near despair, far from the help of friends and loved one, this lifeless crea-

ture has been so ashamed and fearful that I had ever dared speak of things too high, and too wonderful, for one like me; much less put words on paper for the household of faith to read, that I determined never again to be guilty of doing it.

But, up to this present time, the Lord (I hope) has always, according to his own time and purpose, brought me up out of that condition, to where I can again read the written word with joy in my heart, and find comfort in the scriptures — thus strengthening my hope, and again view the kingdom. I hope that is not being bold, but I feel to see the kingdom in our brethren and sisters. Yet it is not so when there is darkness within.

For the past few weeks I have had pleasure in reading the scriptures, and in pleasant meditations; and this morning (yesterday being meeting day), there are pictures, or reflections, of faces in my mind's view: faces I love dearly. They are wet with tears, and it seems the sufferings of Christ are written there: the mark is in their forehead. I see them at our meetings, and we talk together at other places. Their questions and their speech betrays them. (I believe the forerunner still works: John came preaching repentance, and to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. I have often wondered about that. Make ready! How? Christ is the true light that shines in the darkness. Does one have to be prepared, or made ready, for Him? The seed that fell on **good ground** brought forth fruit. Had it been made ready, or prepared? — Forgive me, these are just questions that came into my mind) But it seems these loved ones are being made ready — their hearts are being prepared for something, to receive something.

They do not belong to the church, but are waiting: longing for the Holy Spirit to be made manifest in them, setting them free from the bondage of sin. They are believers and lovers of the truth: how my heart does long for the day when Jesus reveals himself to them in power and love, and makes them to know him as their Saviour and Redeemer; and causing them to confess him with joy and love in their hearts. "Love casteth out fear."

The things they tell me bring to mind my own experiences; and, Oh, how I would love to tell them this morning how it was with me. And how thankful I feel to God that its through, and because of, the crucified Jesus, that I can say "how it was with me."

How well do I remember going to church just out of love and respect for my parents, (which is strong), though at times I think I was made to go. Then when I was no longer under their rule, so to speak, I went when circumstances forced me to (because I was ashamed not to go). All through childhood when I thought of these things at all, I was fearful, and wondered if I would ever be saved. About all I knew about it was, they talked of "Hope." Time went by, and no change in me. I began to be worried, and thought seriously of these things, I hope. Repentance was preached to me. "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." I really tried to understand the preached word. I also went to revivals of churches nearby. I tried especially hard to understand the preaching of the Primitive Baptists, but I just heard the sound, and the words had no meaning.

I must have spoken of my fears and uneasiness, for I remember words of comfort from my sister: "The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do his pleasure." I knew that these words were supposed to comfort me; but they didn't mean much to me then.

It seemed that everyone in my family was good, except me. I had heard the saying, "There's always a black sheep in a family," and I knew it was I. I felt sure that nothing would ever so strongly present itself to my mind to make me confess Christ as my Saviour. There

was nothing I knew to do; and, as I would think that, it seemed like a foolish thing to say, for there were people all around me telling me **what to do:** "Seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened." People told me that Jesus was knocking at the door of my heart, if I would only let him in. That sounded strange, for I didn't know how to open the door of my heart to let him in. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." **Just believe** on the Lord and Saviour, and ye shall be saved: it did sound easy, but it had no meaning to me. I was helpless.

Brother Spangler, what I felt I wanted to say to these loved ones, is this: "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven."

The evidence I longed for, and was **made** to wait for, did come: and with it came power to confess that Jesus is the Christ, and, I hope, my Redeemer. The Spirit whispered in my ear, "You have been washed in the blood of the Lamb, and have been baptized with the Holy Spirit. And, God now being my witness, I truly felt it to be so at that time. No use to use mere words to try to describe the feeling. The way these things opened up and were revealed to me, is so beautiful I could write pages, but I must not. I love to think of it, and to talk of it.

At this moment I can say of a truth that: That which they seek; that they so earnestly desire in their hearts, **will come** at God's own appointed time. I do truly believe this. Oh, that it would please God to lift them up, and fill their hearts full of love and praise, that they go home to their friends and tell what great things the Lord has done for them. . .

Brother Spangler, I cannot close without mentioning the Hopewell Association in Alabama. I don't have words to express how much the preaching meant to us. It was strong meat, but, Oh, so palatable and strengthening. How great our God is! I would that I could praise his adorable name. . .

A weak, frail creature of the dust, who, if saved, is by the atoning blood of a crucified Saviour.

Mrs. James E. (Lucille) Young

THE GOSPEL

Exeter, Calif.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I have been asked to write on the subject of the gospel: who it is to, and just what the gospel is for, if it is not to lead people to Christ. So, by the help of the Almighty God, I will do my best with the subject, feeling and knowing my weakness that without his guiding hand, my efforts will all be worthless.

The gospel, to my mind, in every case is to a special people. The gospel is glad tidings; especially good news concerning Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation; it is the teaching of Christ and the apostles as a body; it is the revelation of the grace of God to poor, fallen man through the Mediator. It is taken also for the history of the life, actions, death, resurrection, ascension, and doctrine of Jesus Christ. The Gospel is, without exception, the best and most precious news that the God of mercy ever proclaimed to poor sinners. It contains the precious truths and testament of what Jesus has, in his saving grace, bequeathed to his people, for it declares what he has done for them — not what they must do for him in order to be saved by him. It unconditionally proclaims salvation unto the contrite-hearted, broken spirited, and mourning sinner, who feels in his heart to be lost on account of sin. To all such it sweetly proclaims a gracious and full redemption of an eternal nature. This new-covenant salvation is secured through a full satisfaction for all their sins; and this satisfaction for sin is the saving strength of all the gracious promises of the gospel. The gospel proclaims the wonderfully rich and saving mercy of our gracious Lord to poor, lost, needy

sinners. It was specially designed, and therefore most graciously suited for the spiritually wounded, weary, sick, and helpless; for it wonderfully declares God's wonderful grace, which is so sovereignly free, and infinitely rich to all those given spiritual ears to hear its joyful sound. It blessedly consoles, comforts, cheers, and saves from dispair; for its object is to comfort and encourage the regenerated people of God. So they derive these many blessings from what it proclaim to them, — not what it proposes to them on conditions, as is so often taught. It is the glorious proclaimation of free and unmerited salvation, — not a proposition to people telling them how they might be saved. It is not an offer of life and salvation: it is the sweet message of pardon and deliverance through the unconditionally free and finished redemption wrought out by our glorious and blessed Saviour. Its precious truths give Him all the praise.

Many professors (not possessors) so plainly legalize the gospel, and make it appear to consist of certain terms and conditions, for the performance of which people are saved in heaven. ". . to the poor the gospel is preached," said Jesus in Luke 7:22. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me: because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound," "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." (Isaiah 55:1)

Dear reader, these are to a special people; those that are not a special people have no desire to go in humbleness, without price; but they go in self-righteousness. Therefore they feel their own pride and vinity. The truly regenerated, redeemed of God, whom God has revealed himself to, are those who go in meekness, without price, and rejoice in a Saviour's love. They meet with the saints of God and feast upon the gospel.

If I am not deceived, I love the doctrine of grace, and not works performed by puny man. Farewell in the Lord.

Mrs. G. W. Atkins

LETTER OF THE LATE ELDER H. B. JONES

Winnsboro, Texas,
April 26, 1934

My Dear Brother Jackson:

I feel I must try to answer your last interesting and comforting letter. I often fear that you and others have me much overrated in your estimation, and fear that if you knew me as I really am, you could not fellowship me, and would not care to waste time with me.

While I am now old, nearing my 78th birthday, and have been identified with Old Baptists more than 58 years, and have been recognized as a minister more than 50 years without ever a charge in any church against me, yet I am often filled with doubts and fears, and feel that there is a great reason for being so. Just this morning I have had a long train of reflections over these things, and my past life has been brought in review before me, and I see so many mistakes and blunders that it eclipses all that might seem to others as good. My whole life seems so selfish and unprofitable, and I wonder if I have not really done more harm to God's dear people as a whole, than good. O, these are serious and fearful questions. If I could see and talk to you, I could tell much more and better than I can write. However, I have never questioned the doctrine for which I have contended and hope I love, but, Oh, so often I have mournfully to complain with the poet who wrote, "I find myself out of the way, My thoughts are often gone astray. Like one alone I seem to be, O is there any one like me? 'Tis seldom I can ever see myself as I would wish to be; What I desire I can't attain, From what I hate I can't refrain."

If I did not know from your letter that you know what it is to be in "Doubting Castle," and in the clutches of "Giant Despair," I would not write thus to you. But, O, my brother, may it not be a fact that all this in part at least, identifies us with that class of whom the apostle Paul speaks when he said, "For we are the circumcision which worship God in spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh." The promise of the new covenant is, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities I will remember against them no more."

Again, the apostle John tells us, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us, but if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." How blessed are these promises; how could we do without them? Paul could confidently affirm, "For we know that all things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are called according to His purpose." I believe this is true to the letter, but, O, that painful and sorrowful condition we are in. We are so beclouded with darkness, fear and unbelief, doubtful that we are among that blessed number. If it were not for the blessed testimony left on record by the inspired writers of the scriptures, such as the Psalmist David, and the Apostle Paul in the seventh chapter of Romans, we would, it seems, give up in despair. If you have a mind to, write to me again some time.

Yours in bonds of sorrow and afflictions,

(Elder) H. B. Jones

(We found much in the above which expresses our own feelings much of the time, and are glad to publish it for others to read. It was written to Brother Jackson in 1934 — J. D. W.)

BLACK CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The 1956 session of the Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Aycock's, beginning on Friday before the fourth Sunday in October and continuing through Sunday. The church is located about four and one half miles north of Fremont, N. C., on hard surface road. Those coming via Fremont will turn off highway 117 at second stop lamp, cross railroad, go one block, turn left and follow hard surface to church, keeping left hand at intersection. Those coming via Saratoga and Stantonsburg, turn right at Eureka on hard surface road, go three miles, turn right, one mile, turn left and keep hard surface to church. Those coming via Wilson, take highway 301 South to junction of 301 and 117. Turn left on 117 and follow about three miles, turn left at brick church where highway sign points to the town of Black Creek, go one block in Black Creek, turn left, cross railroad and follow hard surface one mile, turn right and follow hard surface to church, keeping straight ahead at crossings and intersections.

A cordial invitation is extended to our ministering brethren and all lovers of truth.

W. E. Turner,
Clerk.

NEW VERNON CHURCH YEARLY MEETING

The Yearly Meeting of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church will be held on the first Saturday in October. The date is October 6th.

Members and friends are invited to attend this meeting.

TRIED IN THE FURNACE

These books are yet available. Those who desire a copy should order from the author:

Elder E. J. Lambert,
306 Richardson Street,
Winnsboro, Texas

Please Note: On page 168 of the August, 1956, issue of the Signs, we noted at the end of a letter from Rocky Mount, N. C., that the writer failed to give his name. We since learn that it was written by Sister Mary E. Gardner, of Rocky Mount, and are glad to inform our readers. — Editors

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MRS. J. H. GOOCH, OF STEM, N. C. PASSED AWAY SUNDAY, SEPT. 8TH. OBITUARY WILL FOLLOW.

EDITORIALS

Danville, Virginia **October, 1956**

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EDITORIAL

"A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. (Matthew 12:20)

Sometime ago we received a request to write on the above subject. We confess that we have not as clear an understanding as we would desire concerning the subject, yet have some thoughts we will give to our inquirer, and others, that might be interested in the subject. We desire that the mantle of charity be cast over the imperfect work, and hope that some gleaning may be found in our feeble efforts.

The scripture quoted in the text, was a re-quotation of the language found in the 42nd. chapter of Isaiah, which reads as follows, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.

He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law."

As the scripture quoted in the New Testament, refers to the quotations of the prophecy of Isaiah, it no doubt was now being fulfilled, at the time of the writing in the New Testament.

While Jesus was here, going about doing much good among the people, by healing many that were sick, opening blind eyes, restoring withered hands, commanding certain ones to take up their bed and walk, causing the dumb to speak, and many other miracles, he was manifested unto those whom he healed, as a great physician. His work at this time was a manifestation of compassion and mercy for many who suffered with infirmities. The miracles that he wrought were such a manifestation of the power of God, and a work that no others could perform, except himself, and the ones that he endowed with this power, that the enmity of the Scribes and Pharisees was aroused, which caused them to seek some means of condemning his work.

Though the healing of the infirmities of many of the people by the Lord, was a healing of natural infirmities, it also typified the spiritual work of him in the hearts of men, whereby the dead are raised up, lepers are cleansed, the blind are made to see and the poor have the gospel preached to them. All these wonderful things are performed in the hearts of men as they are given a living Faith, to see in him all the virtue they need, and are enabled to believe and trust in his blood and righteousness.

It was a dark time in the world at this time. Men were preaching for doctrine the commandments of men; prophecy had ceased, and tradition had been often substituted for the word of God. Into this PICTURE Jesus comes,

as a light in a dark place, for surely the world was lying in darkness. Jesus is criticized by the Priests and Pharisees, because his work is not according to the traditions they hold. If he heals a withered hand on the Sabbath day, he is condemned for it. Formality, and the observance of ordinances, are more important to them, than the healing of the sick. The scribes love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief seats at the feats. They devoured widows' houses, and for a show made long prayers: Jesus says, "The same shall receive greater damnation." His house, or the place of the Priests service, had become a den of thieves.

It is sometime said that the darkest time of the night is just before day, and the time here mentioned seems to be such an hour. The Jewish priests were living off of an oppressed and downtrodden people. True religion was at a low ebb, for even the people brought torn lambs, and blemished offerings unto the Lord, when the word of God commands them to bring the unblemished offerings unto him, and that his service cannot be a secondary thing. As the Priests sink lower and lower, manifesting greediness, covetousness and many other things contrary to the word of God, so likewise we find the people looking no higher than the Priest, satisfying their souls in bringing into the temple torn lambs etc. As it was then, so it is today; when we see a ministry sinking into worldliness, and the pleasures of the world dominating their life, you will find the people they serve sinking with them in their devotions.

God has in every dispensation an elect people, whom he has taught, and continues to teach by his Holy Spirit. To me these are bruised reeds, and smoking flax. They can find no comfort to their souls in such a religion as is round about them. They have been given to hunger and thirst for righteousness. They are also likened by our Lord to the lost sheep, unto whom the twelve apostles were sent. They are Jews who have been called to forsake father and mother, wife and children to follow the Lord. They are found as lost sheep, in a maze of legalism and tradition. They have been bruised by the knowledge of sin, and found no comfort in a greedy religion. The blessed promise is: "A bruised reed shall he not break." Such characters shall not perish in such a condition, for they are the Elect of God, and have been prepared for the coming of the one anointed to preach good tidings unto the meek: "To bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prisons to them that are bound. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called tress of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified."

Hence we find when Jesus was here upon earth, (before his resurrection from the dead), the bruised reed and the smoking flax. They are his elect people, called out of the Jewish fold. They cannot yet behold the resurrection of Christ from the dead, for it had not yet been accomplished. They cannot rejoice in a finished salvation through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, only by Faith. Though they have been bruised, and find themselves in a forlorn condition, this reed shall not be broken, nor the flax (the life of Jesus extinguished) quenched, until he send forth Judgment unto victory. None of these shall be lost, for the victory is sure. After Christ's resurrection from the dead Paul could say, "Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Jesus came unto his own, and his own received him not (the Hebrew nation), but as many as received him gave he power to become the sons of God, WHICH WERE BORN, not of blood, nor the will of the flesh, nor of the will

of man, but of God.

The judgment unto victory seems to imply that time when Jerusalem would be overthrown by the Romans, the Temple destroyed, with its service, and the Jews dispersed among the nations, because of their rejection of him. Then his believing people among his own nation would be gathered into the Fold, and his victory would be complete. He would search out the bruised reed and the smoking flax, and they would be brought into the Gospel, and walk in the light of his countenance.

"And these all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better things for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."

"With Joy we meditate the grace
Of our High Priest above;
His heart is made of tenderness;
His bowels melt with love.

Touched with a sympathy within,
He knows our feeble frame;
He knows what sore temptations mean,
For he has felt the same.

But spotless, innocent, and pure,
The great Redeemer stood,
While satan's fiery darts he bore,
And did resist with blood.

He, in the days of feeble flesh,
Poured out his cries and tears,
And, in his measure feels afresh
What every member bears.

HE'LL NEVER QUENCH THE SMOKING FLAX,
BUT RAISE IT TO A FLAME;
THE BRUISED REED HE NEVER BREAKS,
NOR SCORNS THE MEANEST NAME.

Then let our humble faith address
His mercy and his power;
We shall obtain delivering grace,
In the distressing hour."

D. V. S.

PSALMS 19

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun. Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it; and there is nothing hid from the heat of it." (Psalms 19:1-6)

It has been said that Napoleon, while on one of his numerous campaigns, listened one night to a group of his officers discussing the existence of God. It seemed that those who did not believe in God had the better of the argument. Finally, the general walked out among them, and, sweeping his arm heavenward said, "Gentlemen, who made all that?" And they, with all other atheists, agnostics, and infidels, have not been able to answer the question.

The "heavens" cover all creation, but the "firmament" covers all the expanse, or all that can be seen. What do they do? What has our God got to do with nature? Has he left the imprint of himself upon it? Is he to be seen in the twinkling of a star, the bloom of the rose, the ripple of the waterfall? Those that know not God are not able to see him this side of revelation; those that do know him, are able to see his work in all things. While the dead do not know God, and thus do not recognize his imprint upon things, yet, if the heathen (which is a man that does not know God) had to have the knowledge of God declared to him before he could become a child of God, he certainly would not have an excuse to stand on, and all of the missionary zeal to carry the gospel would be useless, seeing that the heavens (all heaved up things) declare the glory of God. How precious is the glory of God. While all nature shows forth this glory, yet it is not beneficial to the ungodly to know the Giver of it. This gift of walking out in the open and viewing the hand of God and his glory as we look upwards, is for the benefit of the Lord's people. The precision in the regulation of the heavenly bodies is cause enough for praising the

worthy name of God the Creator. To watch the lightening as it flashes from one side of the world to the other; to see the mellow glow of the moon in all of her transcendent glory rising heavenward; to see the clouds play hide and seek among themselves, and the constant change and swirl and swerve, as they bank in massive formations; to watch the majestic sun as he mounts the sky bringing warmth to the multitude of plants and animals, and causing bread to come to the eater and seed to the sower; to see all this, and to see the kind benevolence of a providential and parental hand of mercy and grace, is to see our God. How wonderful to know him, and to see his handywork in action, bringing us the necessities of nature.

This display of our Creator is as old as creation. The things in which Abel rejoiced, we rejoice; the same kind and beneficent hand of Providence that guided Israel of ancient days, is still guiding his dear people. From day to day it is so, even as in the day a pillar of cloud went before them. This column of cloud had in it the glorious Lord. It is not just nature that acts — it is God in nature. This cloud went before them day by day in the wilderness road. Were there any days in which it did not go before them? What day? how many days? God did not take away that pillar or column of cloud, and today, as yesterday, and as it will be tomorrow, that cloud is rolling and enfolding before the march of God's dear people now. The heavens say something from day to day, and the firmament shows and teaches in the night, even every night. We see sometimes the power in the lightening, but only God's children are privileged to know that the display of that power is not against them but **for** them, and that the splintering, shattering, shaking power is declaring the power of God. This power, as all other powers, are of God and ordained to accomplish his designs concerning his people. Also, we often see fire accompanying this power and consuming things before it, but it never consumes Israel, nor even their hope in God, for it teaches them, uttering the most heavenly and comforting voice, and it shows them things new and old, even knowledge of him and his ways.

This heaven and firmament speaks to one and all. The poorest illiterate is spoken to just as clearly as the most learned man, each of them understanding what is said. The reception of these things raises a servant and slave and peasant to heights of glory and joy unspeakable, and it brings the high and mighty and noble down to a level with those of a broken and contrite spirit. Not only are these things spoken savingly to all of God's children, regardless of their social or economical condition, but the message that they impart has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. And what a fearful shaking and trembling is produced in the earthern vessels as God's sovereignty, as displayed in nature, is sent into all the earth; and how grand and wonderful it is, when at the end of the world, and no salvation and no hope of any to be seen, that the words of God, speaking out of the leaves rippling in the breeze, and the floating of a cloud across the vision, come to us with power.

No, this never effects those that are not being wrought upon by the Lord, but what a precious message of hope and cheer and consolation is found in the comforting thought that God hath set the sun in the heavens and the firmament, not only setting it there, but ordaining an Orbit (tent, See Young's Analytical Concordance) for it to travel in. This sun has never deviated from that orbit; it is the same sun that shone upon the children of Israel; it is the same sun that will shine upon the taught of the Lord on all the tomorrows that will ever come. It has arisen upon all nature with certain results since the morning of creation. Men have not increased its brightness; they have not decreased it one iota; they have not detracted from the curative powers of

warm sunshine as it came up in the heavens. Ah, how precious is our God that all nature sings his praise, and the sun that gives us our light and warmth and health is so irrevocably set for its coming to the earth that it is inevitably sure to come. It comes out and up each morning at the same place; it has the same supreme power; it moves things as a bridegroom would feel to move things before him; it shows forth its readiness to shine upon all with the smile and warmth and joy of a strong man to run a race.

He goes forth from one end of heaven to another, and there is nothing hid from the warmth of it. The sun heals, yes, but often there must be a deep probing and cutting and lancing before the cure, and the sun gets down deep to where there is no light and heat, and with the light and the heat, there is curative powers. How like unto the Sun of righteousness is this type. Jesus is also set for the rise and fall of many in Israel. He came that his people might have light. He did not come as a remedy, and I do hate to hear him referred to as a remedy for the ills of his people. But the Sun of righteousness rises with healings in his wings. There is not any place of the new heavens and new earth that he is not set to rise upon. The heat and light of this Sun is not all for the present comfort of the garden of the Lord; not all of its curative powers are felt and known presently. It must be remembered that there is to be a treading down of the wicked, that they are to be as ashes under the soles of the feet of the Lord's cured people. They are not to do this burning, no, no, for even they must be subjected to its consuming flame. The Sun is to do it, and it rises to do it. He did not rise to see if he could heal and cure, give light and warmth. But the primary object in his coming was to do just that. In all of the new earth there is not a remote region that does not sooner or later feel the power of this Sun. We may have an idol in our heart; it will be found and consumed by the brightness of His coming. We may have afflictions, being poor, and a mourner, and a hungry sheep, but as the Sun rises it will cause the kingdom to be enriched in all things, making rich the poor, consoling the mourner, and feeding those that are hungry.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE BEGINNING OF THE CREATION OF GOD

(Rev. iii. 14; Col. i. 15, 18.)

In a former number of the Signs we promised our esteemed brother Hassell, and our readers generally, that we would, if so permitted and enabled, publish our understanding of the scriptures referred to in the heading of this article; in fulfillment of which promise we submit the following to their prayerful consideration. Having been charged with denying the supreme Godhead of our Immanuel, and of representing him as only a created being, we desire to disabuse the minds of those who have been led by our accusers to misapprehend our sentiments on this most vitally important subject.

The last book of the New Testament is called "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass." As the recipient of gifts from God, our Lord must be regarded in his Mediatorial character; for as the Mediatorial Son of God, and Head of his mystical body, the church, he, in making this revelation, by his angel or spirit, of himself to his servant John, says, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." As this testimony cannot apply to his Godhead, which was never dead, it must refer to him as the once crucified but now risen and exalted Son of God, of whom it is written,

"But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."—Gal. iv. 4, 5. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"—Rom. viii. 32. It was therefore the Son of God, who was made under the law, by being made of a woman, by taking on him the seed of Abraham, and who in the flesh of his people was put to death, and was raised from the dead by the Spirit, that could and did say, "I am he that was dead; and behold I am alive forevermore." Having been "delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and crucified and slain; whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death."—Acts ii. 23, 24. Having done and suffered all that he came to do and suffer in the flesh, he is now risen and exalted far above all heavens; having led captivity captive, he has received gifts for men. He has obtained eternal redemption for his redeemed people, and all spiritual gifts are securely treasured in him which they can possibly need for time or for eternity. Among all the other gifts for the members of his body, the church, is the gift of the revelation of himself by his angel, or spirit, to his servants, as he himself proclaims, "I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." And again, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

This crucified and risen Redeemer, in making the revelation which God gave him to his servant John, who, in writing what is called the gospel and his three epistles, bore record of the Word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all that he saw, and now bears witness of what is revealed to him by the angel or spirit of the risen and exalted Savior, and in obedience to the command which was given him, sends the same to the seven churches which were in Asia, proceeds to reveal himself in some of the expressive titles which he bears as the Mediatorial Head of his church. First, he is described as him which is, and which was, and which is to come, in all the radiant glory of the seven spirits which are before his throne. If we had ability, the limits of this article would not allow us to dwell elaborately on all the titles which are applied to him in this revelation. He is and was and shall continue to be one with the Father, and one with his church. He is and was and is to be the Word of God, the Word which was with God, and the Word which was God. The Son of God, and the Son of man, God and man, and Mediator between God and men. Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of peace. The anointed Savior, the faithful Witness. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."—John i. 18. All we can know of God must be revealed to us in and by the Son of God; for "No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him."—Matt. vi. 27; Luke x. 22. He is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person.—Heb. i. 3. "Who is the image of the invisible God." The light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines in his face, and nowhere else, and all the attributes and perfections of the Father shine in all their resplendent glory in the face of our exalted Redeemer. He who was once humbled in our flesh, and crushed beneath the load of our sins, told his disciples that they should thereafter see him coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory and now verifies the declaration, for it is now said of him, "Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him." And the voice of God sounds out in his identification, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."—Matt. xvii. 5. And through the bright cloud of his witnesses, which he has made his chariot, and in which he

rides upon the heavens in our help, and in his excellency on the sky, he proclaims, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and was, and is to come, the Almighty."

Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, and correspond with the other titles which are explanatory of them, the beginning and the ending. The scriptural import of these two words or titles, as claimed by our Lord, are what we proposed more especially to dwell upon in this article. The frequent repetition of them in this revelation of Jesus Christ as our Lord, is calculated to impress our mind with a sense of their important signification, as applied to our Lord Jesus Christ. Alpha and Omega, Beginning and Ending, are, if we rightly understand their interpretation, explained by the angel or spirit of Jesus to mean that he is the First and the Last in the mystery of godliness, in the purpose and grace of God, and in all that pertains to the salvation of his people and the glory of God. As the First, he is the Beginning. The Beginning of what? Of all things; for it pleased the Father that in him, as the Son, and Mediatorial Head of the body, the church, all fullness should dwell, and that in all things he should have the pre-eminence. The beginning of anything is the origin of it; it is the starting point, beyond which nothing can be traced. And we are informed that the Son of God is the image of the invisible God, in that he is the first-born of every creature. Not that he is a creature, but that he is the first being that was ever born from the dead. Others had been miraculously raised from the dead, or called back to the life which had been suspended for a time; but their resuscitation was not a birth. Christ is the first begotten from the dead, and the first born from the dead; for he was raised by the glory of the Father, in fulfillment of the decree declared in the second Psalm, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." —Acts xiii. 33. "For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist; and he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence: for it pleased the Father, that in him (the head of the church, and Creator of all created things in heaven and in earth) should all fullness dwell."—Col. i. 16-19. He is the beginning of the church of God, which is the church of the First Born, and she has her origin in him as the Son of God; and her origin can be traced no further back than to him. It is by him as the Son of God, and heir of all things, and head of the church, that God made the worlds. —Heb. i. 2. And as "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made," (John i. 3,) he cannot be himself included among the things which were made or created, in that sense of the word; for "he is before all things, and by him all things consist." "For his pleasure all things are and were created."—Rev. iv. 11.

The words addressed to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans, (Rev. iii. 14,) wherein he is called the beginning of the creation of God, we have and do understand to present him as the Son of God, by whom God in the beginning created the heavens and the earth; and that the creation was by the Word of God, which title is given to Christ; and things created cannot be traced beyond him, for he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

The creation of the heavens and earth, with all they contain, in the sense in which we have thus far used the word **create**, with its derivaties, was begun and finished in six days. "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the hosts of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on

the seventh day from all his work which he had made."—Gen. ii. 1, 2. In this application of the word, nothing has been created subsequently to the six days of creation, and all the ages and generations to the end of the world are required for the development of the things, the creation of which was finished from the foundation of the world. But as the things of nature are used in the scriptures to illustrate spiritual things, so it has pleased God to speak of the creation of the new heavens and the new earth; not in the sense of making them out of nothing, as in the creation of the universe, but in a metaphorical or figurative way, by bringing into manifestation that which had an existence in Christ from everlasting. "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people," &c. "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain."—Isa. lxv. 17-19, and lxvi. 22. In fulfillment of this prophecy, John says, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea."—Rev. xxi. 1. And in the same chapter, 5-10, "And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. And he showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." He that sat upon the throne in the new heaven and new earth, which is the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, bears the same titles in the new as in the old creation. "I make all things new." "It is done: I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." The origin of the holy Jerusalem is in him: it can extend back no further, for he is the beginning; and this new creation is not only by, but it is also in him. The inhabitants or citizens of this new heaven are the workmanship of God in Christ. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." As in the creation of the natural world, the life and nature of all mankind were created by the workmanship of God in the earthy Adam, who is the figure of Christ, and ordained to be manifested in the subsequent ages by generation or procreation, so by the workmanship of God, that spiritual, eternal life which was with the Father, and was begotten of God the Father, and given to all the members of Christ in him before the world began, as sanctified (or set apart) by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus, and ultimately called with a holy calling, not according to or by virtue of our works, but according to God's own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

Now, if to assert that the church of God was created in Christ implies that Christ is a **creature,** would not the declaration that the new man is after God created in righteousness and true holiness, equally imply that righteousness and true holiness are creatures which did not exist until brought into existence by creation? That the members of Christ's body did exist in Christ, and were blessed in him with all spiritual blessings, according as they were chosen in him, before the foundation of the world, or in eternity before time began, is clearly asserted in the scriptures, especially in Eph. i. 4; and what we trace back into the ancients of eternity to Christ, we trace to him as the beginning, antecedently to whom the church has no record or history. As Christ in his Sonship is the Mediatorial Head of the church, and as such is, according to our understanding, the only begotten of the Father, and as the begetting of the head is invariably the begetting of the body and members of the head, so we hold that all the body and

members of Christ, as the Mediatorial Head and life of his body, the church, were begotten in him; and their life, sonship and heirship are in his life, Sonship and heirship. While we also firmly believe that in his eternal Godhead he is the supreme, self-existent, independent, underived, unbegotten God, and that beside him there is no God. As the Son, and Mediatorial Head of his body, he is the Word that was with God, and in his eternal Godhead he is the Word that was God. This is what we understand is the true God and eternal life. "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols."—1 John v. 19-21.

These views we have given as the views of a fallible man; we do not present them with any desire that they should be received, only so far as they shall be found sustained by the infallible scriptures of truth. May the word of inspired truth be the man of our counsel, standard of our faith, and rule of our practice, and the angel or spirit of our Lord, which was sent to instruct John, be our instructor, interpreter and guide, and the God of all grace defend and deliver us from all that is contrary to the word and the spirit of truth and holiness, and unto the only wise God our Savior be honor and power, might, majesty and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, August 15, 1879.)

THOMAS P. DUDLEY
A REMARKABLE OLD KENTUCKIAN

A remarkable old man passed through St. Thomas last Friday, over the Canada Southern Railway. His home is in Lexington, Ky. He is in the 88th year of his age. His mind is as bright as a mirror, and his life is part of his country's history. This man is Thomas P. Dudley. He is a Baptist preacher of the Old School, still in the active ministry. He serves four churches, to one of which he drives twenty-five miles; and over one church his father and himself have presided as pastors for an uninterrupted period of almost one hundred years. His father was a soldier of the Revolution, and it was his uncle who commanded the American troops at Dudley's Defeat. His eldest brother was Dr. Benjamin Dudley, the most eminent surgeon of America.

Six out of seven brothers took part in the war of 1812-15. Two of them fought at River Raisin, two at Fort Meiggs, two at Moraviantown, and two at New Orleans. Thomas P. Dudley was at the first and the last. They had a two days engagement at River Raisin, and on the second day he was wounded and taken prisoner. Himself and three comrades were confined in a room of the Red Tavern, in charge of three interpreters. Nearly the whole British force marched off to Fort Detroit, leaving only a small guard over the prisoners. Two days after the battle, (22nd Jan. 1813) the Indians, freed from civilized restraint, began the butchery of the prisoners. They entered the room in which Mr. Dudley was confined, and struck their tomahawks into the skulls of his comrades. No hand was raised against him, but he was stripped of coats and boots and led out into the street, to stand stocking-footed in the snow. "The tomahawking and scalping went on around me," he says, "and I soon concluded that they were reserving me for torture." Two savages came up, pointed to the blood-stain on his shoulder, and walked away. A third one, a young brave, did the same thing, smiled a friendly smile, and said, "Me save you." And he did. He returned in a few minutes, accompanied by his father, and after giving his prisoner a blanket, a pair of moccasins, a red apple and a daub of war paint, marched him off in the direction of Fort Detroit. They walked thirty-six miles, and halted for the night by the British camp fires of the previous night. The evening was spent in dressing six or seven scalps of butchered Kentuckians, which were stretched on small hoops and strung on a stick. In the morning Mr. Dudley was given another daub of war paint, and his head was copiously adorned with eagles' feathers. Thus disguised and made to carry the scalps of his comrades at "shoulder-arms" order, he was marched on to the Fort. "I tell you it was a hard trial, and my temper almost got the mastery over me as I reflected upon what my mother might say to see me bearing such a trophy. The sight of the strong Fort which our General had surrendered, only intensified my feelings; but I was helpless, and with a strong effort I controlled myself." In the Fort his wound was

dressed by a British surgeon, and next day he was removed across the river to Sandwich. Thence he was taken over Longwoods road to Fort George, at the mouth of Niagara River, and parolled after a few weeks' confinement. Subsequently he was included in an exchange of prisoners, and joined the army of the South. He was Quartermaster-General at New Orleans, and took part in the great battle fought there. "I surveyed the field after the battle, and I felt that the butchery of River Raisin was avenged."

Mr. Dudley was for many years the neighbor and the intimate friend of Henry Clay. "As an original thinker in affairs of legislation, and as a shrewd and successful tactician, I consider that he had no equal in Congress; his measures rarely or never failed to carry." The incident of Clay and the hunter was quite fresh in the old gentleman's mind. "It occured on the borders of our county, and the hunter was Captain Miller." The story as he tells it is less polished than it appears in Mallory's biography of Clay, but it is not a little remarkable that precisely the same version of it was given by Mr. Blake in one of his recent campaign speeches. Mr. Dudley was also on very familiar terms with John C. Calhoun, of whose abilities and character he speaks with the greatest respect. He possesed a mind powerful in analysis and intensely logical, and his personal reputation was without a stain. "He was one of the purest of our public men at Washington, and he would any time rather talk farming with a boy of fifteen, than join in a wine supper with the most brilliant men of the capital." Other leading men of the South in the past two generations were Mr. D.'s attached friends, and one of the many was George D. Prentice, the famous Louisville journalist.

Elder Dudley must have been a man of repossessing appearance in his prime. Though somewhat bent, he is still fully six feet in stature. His face is intellectual and finely cast, and he has the bearing and manner of a gentleman. His memory is wonderfully retentive. He has read no book for the past six years, owing to failing vision; but the bible is as familiar to him as household words, and in sermons of an hour's time he quotes book, chapter and verse without a single lapse. In discourse he is vigorous, fluent and logical, he is never involved or obscure, and he says what he intends in polished Anglo-Saxon. He has been a steady and extensive contributor to the publications of his church for almost half a century, and his writings are marked by the same strong individuality as his sermons. He writes and speaks what he feels and believes.

This veteran preached a sermon in the Old School Baptist meeting-house at Duart last Sunday. He spoke for an hour, without the aid of note or reference, in an earnest conversational style, and without a halt or a stammer from beginning to close. We have only space for a brief outline. His text was Rev. xxii. 16, 17: "I Jesus have sent mine angel," &c. Is the gospel, he asked, addressed to mankind indiscriminately? John addresses the seven churches by name. God never required anything of man that he has not qualified him to perform. Spiritual action pertains to spiritual men, and natural action to natural men. Did God make any requirement of Adam when he was a lump of matter? No; not until he breathed life into him did he impose a law upon him. The violation of that law brought sin and its dire consequences into the world. Sin results from our vital oneness with Adam. We are all Adam multiplied. It is said we are not responsible for Adam's transgression. The whole family was there, and I am not responsible for Adam's sin, but for my sin in Adam. The first man was the embodiment of his family; he is the figure of Christ, in whom the spiritual family is created, according to the testimony. As Adam's sons and daughters descend from him by generation, so do the sons and daughters of Christ, and from the earliest period of time there have been only these two families in the world. In Christ dwelleth all spiritual fullness, which is imparted to his children from his mystical body. The heirship descends to us through him, the Head. Deny the oneness of Christ and his church, and by no process of reasoning can the sacrifice of God be justified. The law of Jehovah is like himself, the same yesterday, today, and forever. The law must be fulfilled in every jot and tittle, and Christ only could fulfill it. Christ alone is the source of life and light to his people. John needed the illumination of the Spirit as much as any one to unveil his heart. John was as dependent on the Spirit as any minister or believer of the present time to unfold to him the mysteries of the kingdom of God. The seventy disciples were sent by Christ two and two to the cities where he was himself to go. Their mission was to prepare the hearts of the people for the truth, for the people must be taught in the school of Christ. If you have a knowledge of God as a Being everywhere present, it is a proof that you have eternal life. It is then the christian warfare begins. The spiritual and the fleshy natures are in a state of continuous conflict. The sorrows we undergo are part of our legacy here. The law remains the same as it ever was, and mankind are universally under it. Christ was Mediator under the old as well as under the new dispensation. The law has been fulfilled by the Head on behalf of all the members. The law and justice were harmonized in Christ's death, and we are

quickened in his resurrection. We are utterly unprepared to bring forth fruit unto God until the new life is implanted within us. All that the law can do is to convince and to condemn. It is when you see yourself the chief of sinners that you look to Calvary. The Spirit calls on all the children, and none can hear if the ear is not circumcised — if the ear is not open to hear the glad tidings.

(The above was published in the July 15, 1879, issue of the Signs. It originally appeared in the *St. Thomas (Ontario) Journal.* We found it most interesting, and pass it on to our readers. — J. D. W.)

HYMN AND TUNE BOOKS

Although we have not been asked to do so, we feel to say the following concerning the **Lester and Durand Hymn and Tune Books:** The two sons of Elder Lester incurred considerable expense in getting out the last edition of these books. Many churches and individual brethren have ordered them, but a considerable number are yet on hand; and since it occurs to us that it is not likely that another edition will be forthcoming, it would be well for those who desire them, to order them soon. The price is $2.00 each, or $22.00 per dozen, post paid; and may be had by ordering from

P. G. Lester, Jr.
2246 Memorial Ave. S. W.
Roanoke, Virginia

(J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. AUGUSTA YATES BENNETT

Mrs. Augusta Yates Bennett, an old mother in Israel of the Old School Baptist Church of Christ, at Old Bethel Church, Graves County, Kentucky, passed away after a long illness. She was nearly eighty-six years old. She was married to Rufus Dodd Bennett, and to this union were born three sons: Prester, Chester and Hester Bennett; there were four grandchildren — one preceeded her in death; and a host of other relatives. She reared three noble sons, and lived to see them all have homes of their own.

She was a faithful member to her church, attending as long as she was able. She was the widow of the late Elder R. D. Bennett, who preceeded her in death several years. Sister Bennett was a sound Old Baptist: she loved the doctrine put in its purity, and didn't want any of man's works mixed with it.

Sister Bennett will be greatly missed by her children, friends, and church of Old Bethel. The writer and Elder R. L. Harrison conducted her funeral at Old Bethel Cemetery in the presence of a large congregation of friends — to await the second coming of our Lord to carry his little children home, where there will be no sorrow, nor death, but peace forever. Oh, may God reconcile her children to His will in all things, is the prayer of this poor way-worn sinner. (Written by request)

(Elder) O. W. Perkins

MEMORIAL TO SARAH LOUISE WHITE BALL

Sarah Louise White Ball was born March 30, 1878. She died June 5, 1956, making her stay on earth 78 years, 2 months and 6 days. She was the daughter of Benjamin and Sarah Elizabeth White, and was married to Stephen Matthew Ball, March 21, 1900, who preceeded her in death.

They were married by her uncle, Elder E. V. White, and both were baptized by Elder Lefferts in September 1920, into the fellowship of the New Valley Church. She left five children — John Lee Ball, Anna Ball Curry, Garnett Cawood Ball, Virginia Ball Donaldson and William Matthew Ball. Three other children, Mary Elizabeth, Elijah White and Benjamin, preceeded her in death. She also left eleven grandchildren and five great grandchildren, one brother, Benjamin White, and one sister, Mary White Claggett.

She was a faithful member of her church, which she attended as long as she was able. Her humble spirit showed throughout her life; her greatest delight was to hear the Gospel of Jesus preached, and to listen to those of like faith conversing of the things of God. We believe our dear sister is at rest with the Savior she loved, and in whose trust she lived. During six long months of illness, she was tenderly cared for by her devoted children. All was done that was humanly possible to prolong her life but God called her Home.

We deeply mourn her loss but feel that we may reverently say, "Thy will be done."

Services were held in a funeral home in Bethseda, Maryland, conducted by her pastor, Elder John D. Wood. The wealth of beautiful flowers surrounding her was a testimony of the love and respect of her family and friends.

She was laid to rest beside her husband in Mount Olivet Cemetery, Frederick, Maryland, to await the resurrection day when our Lord comes again.

From one who loved her dearly,

Her Sister,
Mary White Claggett.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 124 DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1956 NO. 11

WHY JESUS DIED

I hope there is a future time
For me to see the face
Of him who gathers home his church
Through the riches of his grace.

Though helpless and unworthy here
I find myself to be,
I'm hoping for the time to come
When his precious face I'll see.

I hope the door has not been closed
And I am left outside,
That I should not be remembered
By him among his chosen bride.

I try to look beyond the veil
Above my stormy plight,
Hoping to catch a lighted ray
From heaven's shining light.

My old home here is so unclean,
Corruptible and vile:
I often feel I have no hope
That I am his redeemed child.

Yet I hope that through the goodness
Of his mercy he'll find
A haven of rest and comfort
For me in that future time.

Where he will let me be among
The Father's heavenly fold,
And give me to fully understand
Why Jesus died to save my soul.

Ina M. Pilchard
Stockton, Md.

Kirksey, Ky.

Precious Editors:

The grand old Signs of the Times has been coming to this old house above one-hundred years. My father built it, and reared twelve children; and lived to see all of us grown and married. I have seen two wives buried, both having died with cancer; and I am near my eighty-second birthday, and live alone.

I can't hope to get this scribble in much shape: my name has been on the Primitive Baptist church book nearly sixty-three years, and I realize that if I ever did a good deed, the grace of God was the cause of it.

I am some behind in my subscription, so am enclosing $20.00. $10.00 for subscription and $10.00 toward the Fund. I will mention a few names of the elders I have been privileged to hear: J. C. Sikes, Griffin, Brock, Biggs, J. W. Wyatt, J. W. Linn, J. M. Perkins, Wade Perkins and Darnell.

It seems that the 14th verse of the 19th Psalm has been on my mind; but I guess the 15th and 17th verses of the 40th Chapter of Isaiah about fits me. I am so scattering, I will close. Please pray for me a sinner saved by grace if saved at all. May God bless the editors of the Signs.

F. S. Chester

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613 18th Street, S. E.
Roanoke, Va.

Dear Elder Spangler:

If the good Lord will guide my pen, and also my mind, I have a feeling to try to write a few lines for publication in the Signs of the Times.

I will start back when I was a boy three or four years old. I would walk three or four miles to hear the Old Baptists preach, but didn't know what preaching was, of course. I have been following them around ever since; and can gladly say that I don't regret one step I ever made in following after them, for I always love to hear them sing, and pray, and preach. I have had many ups and downs in life — was thrown from a horse three times. One time the horse was very quick to start, and before I could get upon her and take hold of the bridle, she, being blind, ran off of a bridge, and fell on top of me. I was made certain that the good Lord took care of me there; and many times and in many ways he has looked after me, when I couldn't look after myself; and for which I feel very thankful.

I have been blessed with the sweet privilege of hearing the Old Baptists preach much down through my journey of life. The Lord has been good to me: bless his holy name. I don't feel worthy of his goodness to me. So much of the time I feel so low down; and sometimes feel He is gone forever. Then again, I feel his presence is with me for a few moments: Oh, what joy when you can feel his presence with you: There is nothing on earth like it. What great love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Isn't that wonderful? I feel that the little word *US* has reference to all of God's elect children, from the beginning to the end. What bothers me most, is, am I in that number. Sometimes I have a little hope that I am. Dear brethren and sisters, I am going to ask that you give this little word *US* deep consideration, and see what it means to you. It is a wonderful word to this poor sinner. If I could write something that would bring tears of joy to you, I would feel that my little writing wouldn't be in vain. I feel so much of my time that I am too unworthy to try to write anything to God's dear children.

I find the word *US* is used in the New Testament 128 times. What a wonderful word it is to God's little children. If we are numbered among those included in US, we will be *there*. I am a poor sinner, and don't know as much as some; and I am getting old. I have been going to associations all of my life, and have enjoyed them very much; and have heard many, many wonderful sermons while attending them.

Sometimes there are those who creep in unawares, and cause strife among us. The scripture says, They went out from us, but were not of us. I would ask all to give this careful consideration. It also says, A remnant shall be saved. Remember this dear brethren and sisters: Life is so short in this wicked world that we have no time to do anything to hurt our brethren's feelings. I beg of you, if you are guilty pray to the God of heaven to take it away from you; and pray for peace among the Lord's people. May he give us to love our brethren more each day we live, and to love the church, and our pastor. I am growing old, and soon will have to say farewell to this vain world, for I am going home. I hope I can say with Paul, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course.

I am all alone; if you have a mind to pray please remember this lonely sinner. Dear brethren and sisters, live in peace and sweet fellowship with each

other. May God bless you all, is my prayer.

W. H. Simmons

EXPERIENCE

My youngest daughter has asked me to write my experience, so I will make the attempt.

Sometime in the year 1898, I dreamed that some school-mates and I were in the woods hunting flowers. I went down in the water to get some flowers, and when I looked to see where I was, I was standing on rocks in muddy water; and the banks seemed to be walls, with no way for me to get out. Oh, how mean I felt to be; and I thought if I died there, I would be lost forever. I got down on my knees and tried to pray, asking the Lord to have mercy, and forgive me of my sins — they seemed to be so many: Oh, what a burden — and if he would, I would try to be a better girl. I arose still begging God for mercy; and I saw a light away off, and it grew larger and larger, until everything seemed to clear away.

I awoke and began to worry about my lost and ruined condition — everything wrong I had ever done or said seemed to come before me. I was still begging for mercy. About two years later I dreamed I was going to the field to work, and I could see fire coming down from the sky, and I could feel it burning my soul. Oh, how awful; Oh, how mean I felt to be! In this I knew that God was just, and I was unjust. I had told God a lie: I had promised to be a better girl, and had not done it.

My troubles seemed to get worse. I would get the Bible, and try to pray, asking the Lord to have mercy, and help me to live a better life. But my prayers seemed to be a mockery before God, and the Bible a rebuke to me. All I could say was, "God have mercy." It seemed I was sinking down beneath God's righteous frown; and it was no more than I deserved — I was justly condemned. I wanted to ask someone to pray for me, but I did not want anyone to know how I felt. I thought that if someone who was a member of the church would pray for me, their prayers would be answered.

The 4th Sunday in June, 1902, I went to meeting at old Elam Primitive Baptist church near our home. Elder S. H. Whatley was pastor there; and while he was praying, I tried again to ask God for mercy. But it seemed there was no relief for me, and I felt I would never have forgiveness, and there was no mercy for me. After preaching, he came down to the floor, and they began to sing: "Children of the Heavenly King." I looked at them, and thought they were the prettiest people I ever saw; and that that song was telling me that they were the children of the heavenly king, and that Christ was their King. It seemed they were up in the air with their King. Oh, how I loved them! This love seemed to be stronger than I. Yes, I loved what I saw there, for Christ had the preeminence there; and Oh, how I loved him. Oh, what an illumination — how gentle and sweet. Oh, what power! It seemed to draw me to them, and cause me to want to learn more about this precious one; and to want to follow him closer and closer. The beauty and sweetness I will never be able to tell. I wanted to shout it out to the church, and to the world; but did not. I went home shouting his praise inside me. It seemed I could not praise him enough for what he had done for me.

On Tuesday, as I went about my work, thanking God, and praising him, something said, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." (John 3:14) I felt that I loved the Lord, and his little children everywhere. And I felt to be singing, "How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed." How precious He seemed to me, and the altogether lovely one. For two weeks I was so happy, singing his praise, and thanking him for what he had done for me: I wanted him to have all the praise and honor.

Now I wanted to be baptized, and follow this blessed Lord. I believed that the Primitive Baptist church was his church, because I had seen them as his children; but I felt so unfit. I felt too, that I might be deceived, and I did not want to deceive them. I knew that God is not mocked — he knows everything, and that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living God.

Baptism became a burden to me. I would go to this little Primitive Baptist church at Elam every meeting, and stand and tremble. It seemed I could not stay away, yet I could not go. I felt it was the only place for me; yet I was afraid I did not have an experience of grace.

One night before I joined, I went to bed, but could not sleep. I got up, and this scripture came to me with great force: "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." I went to my mother's room door and called. The whole family got up. I told them I wanted to tell them my experience; but that I did not know if I had an experience of grace, or not, and I did not want to deceive the church. My father said that if I did not have an experience of grace, he did not know what one was; and that if I wanted to join, to go ahead. I told them I wanted to join Elam Church, and wanted them to join too. They told their experience that night, but said they couldn't join for they did not feel fit to be there, but that they believed the old primitive doctrine.

On Saturday before the 4th Sunday in August, 1903, my mother asked me if I was going to join that day. I told her I did not know. She said, "I thought if you were, I would send some of the children after your grandma." I said, "Oh no, I might not join." In a little while she called us children, and said she saw grandma coming. I felt someone had told her that I was going to join, but she said that she got up that morning feeling that she wanted to go to Elam, so she came over to wait 'till meeting time. My father had to go to Atlanta that morning with a load of vegetables, but he got back home before the meeting closed; and was there when I talked to the church. It seemed that all of them felt to know more about me joining than I did. When I started up to offer, I heard someone say, "Bless the Lord." And another said, "Thank God."

I was blessed to tell the church what I have written; and that if they did not feel that I was fit to be there, I did not want them to take me; I did not want to deceive them, and wanted them to be the judge. To my surprise they accepted me. Some of them said after meeting, that they had been expecting it a long time. I wondered how they knew, for I had not told anyone except our family at home.

I was baptized the next day, which was the 4th Sunday in August, 1903, by Elder Whatley. When I came up out of the water, this scripture came to me: "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." (1 Cor. 15:44) I felt so happy and thankful for everything. We went on up to the church from the water, and when we came to the door, I could see the table. Someone had gone on before and prepared the table for communion, for it was communion and feet-washing day. As I looked at the table, it was the body of Christ lying there; and Oh, how unworthy I felt to partake of that precious one, or to wash the saint's feet. I seemed to be full of thanks and praise to him who had done so much for me.

But a few days later, (I guess I must have felt a little exalted by the sweet things they said to me about joining) I got to feeling that I was just about as good as anybody, and this scripture came into me with such force that it made me feel so helpless and undone, "The servant is not greater than his master." And I have found through this short span of life, that I have to be brought low, and shown again and again, my weakness and inability. I have to be shown that without him I can do nothing.

I feel that I love His precepts and

examples; and I feel sure I still love the little church I saw there more than fifty years ago. Like Ruth of old, I feel sure there is no other field for me to glean in. The Old Primitive Baptists is the only church that drops hands full of manna for me; and I want to live and die with them, if it be God's will. I have been a constant attendant since 1903. As I have been writing, I feel that I am living through all my trials and joys again.

My husband, Claude W. Stewart, died in 1913, leaving me penniless with three little children to rear — the oldest, a boy of four and one-half years, and two girls. I feel that I can say that God has been a wonderful, loving Father, and full of tender mercies to me and mine. They are all grown now. Oh, that I could praise him all the days of my life. I want him to have all the praise and honor, for I feel to know that without him I can do nothing,

Unworthily, yet in hope of a sweeter life with Him, in a home not made with hands.

Mrs. C. W. Stewart
562 N. Highland Ave. N. E.
Atlanta, Ga.

"OUR GOD RULES ALL THINGS"

Denton, Ky.

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am enclosing a good letter which I received from Brother James A. Bell, and which I would like to see published in the Signs of the Times, if it meets your approval. I enjoyed it very much. He and wife, and his sister have just visited our association. There are very loveable people, and sound Old Baptists. They drove about eighteen hundred miles to be with us. He is most interesting to talk with on Baptist doctrine, and experience of grace.

Your little brother in a blessed hope,

H. L. Rogers.

Mesilla Park, New Mexico

Dear Brother Rogers:

Brother Rogers, I am sorry I have neglected answering your letter for so long. I keep all the letters I receive from Old Baptists; and this afternoon I got your letter out of the files and read it again, and enjoyed it again very much.

One thing I want to say here is that the fellowship God's children have one for another, is a mystery to our natural thinking. When I read your letters something within me goes out to you, which I hope is the faith of Christ in me being revealed from faith to faith. I hope I love you, whom I have not seen, more than all of Adam's kindred who have not had the Son of God revealed in them. I believe the thing we love is not the thing we see with our natural minds, but the wonderful works of God in the individual. If we love not our brother whom we have seen, how can we love God whom we have not seen? Let you light so shine, that they, seeing your good works, will glorify God. This is the work of God that you believe on him whom he hath sent. The work of God is what we love in one another.

When I read in your letter where you mentioned about the operation of a piece of machinery: how it functions in percision according to the perfection of its builder. I have thought of the same thing many times. When we go into a plant to see it operate, we see belts running all directions. The man who built the machinery knew all of the functions of the belts before he constructed the machine. The man who knows nothing of the machine would think some of the belts were running in opposition to each other. Our Lord, the Great Architect of all things, was perfect in all things, and made no errors. All things were good, and very good, which were created. There is no unrighteousness with God.

The world believes and teaches that there are two forces which have great power in the earth; and, from what they teach, to them the Devil has more power than God. We believe and teach that

there is no power except of God. Let us examine the accomplishments and see how they compare. Let us take up Adam and Eve first, and see who had the power; and who won the battle. "The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly but by reason of him (God) who had subjected the same in hope." Neither Adam or Satan knew the purpose of God: they neither knew that salvation had been prepared from before the foundation of the world. Here we see man without hope — the devil believing he had won a battle. But he had not won a battle, for at the time of the fall, Christ lay as a lamb slain. Not in reality, but in the mind and purpose of God. "The foundation of God stands sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his."

We see how the power of our God rules all things. All things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Joseph had dreams, revealing to him that God was with him; and his father and brethren should bow to him. Joseph told his brethren of his dreams, and when his father sent him to see about his brethren, they said one to another: "Let us kill him and see what becomes of his dreams." God was working all things; so they agreed among themselves to sell him into the hands of the merchants. But God was with him, and Joseph found favor with the king, and became powerful in the land of Egypt. The Devil lost another battle, in order that God might save much people alive.

We see how the children of Israel were mis-treated, and in bondage to the Egyptians. The king sent out an order for all of the male children to be slain, which would have included Moses. But the king's daughter saw Moses in the river, and loved him. She cared for him as her own son. The Devil lost another battle. When the lice, frogs and locust would infest the land, the king would tell Moses to take the children and move out; then God would harden his heart, and he would refuse to let them go. To the world, God is working in opposition to himself. After going through all of these afflictions, the last was the slaying of all the first born among the Egyptians; but God instructed Moses to strike the blood of the slain animal on the two side posts and the upper door post of the houses of the Israelites, so that when the Lord smote the Egyptians not one of the Israelites should be slain. And it was so. Here we see Satan losing another battle.

The king said to Moses, Get them out; and Moses gathered all up the children of Israel, and marched toward the Red Sea. Then God hardened the king's heart, and the king sent his hordes after them. The sea was in front, the mountains on either side, and the Egyptians at the rear. This looks like a good place for a big revival — but let us see. Moses instructed the children of Israel to STAND STILL, and see the salvation of the Lord. Satan has lost another battle. Man stands still: God does all the moving. "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform."

In the feeding and watering of the children in the wilderness; the Hebrew children in the fiery furnace; Daniel in the den of lions; David and Goliath — in all of these Satan lost the battle. We now come to the last fight: We see the Angel of the Lord appearing to the Virgin, telling her that she should conceive and bear a child, who would save his people from their sins. We know, of course, the trials of the mother and the young child. And we come to the death, burial and resurrection of the Son of God.

We see Judas betraying him into the hand of his enemies; we see them bring him before Pontus Pilate — it looks as if Satan is winning a last battle. We hear the ruler asking Jesus, "Are you the Christ?" And Christ answering, "Thou saist." Then the ruler asked him the second and third time; and Christ did not answer him. Then he said, "Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?

Jesus answered, Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." I will say here that all the world believes just what Pilate believed, except the old Predestinarian Primitive Baptists.

The Jews and Gentiles have gathered together to do whatsoever God had purposed aforehand should be done. Does this make God a sinner? No! There is no unrighteousness with God. If man should do the same thing to his son, it would be sin. God cannot sin; for sin is the transgression of the law. God is the law-giver, and is not subject to any law. God cannot lie but man can, and does. Satan thinks he is winning — he has by wicked men taken him and crucified him, and has placed him in the tomb, with guards to see that he does not rise from the dead. On the morning of the resurrection we see these men becoming as dead men; and the Son of Man coming forth from the dead. "The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder he will restrain." This was the last battle and Satan has lost forever. "But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Cor. 15:57) "Who hath saved us and called us with an hold calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Tim. 1:9) "But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." (2 Tim. 1:10)

May the grace of our Lord and Saviour ever abide with his redeemed, giving them faith to declare the whole council of God: declaring to all that their victory came through the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord; not through their own righteousness, or good works. "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." (1 Cor. 1:30-31)

I have written too lengthy on a subject that I fear I know but little about. I see myself so vile and full of sin, it makes me fear and tremble when I attempt to discuss the wonderful works of God; for I believe I cannot speak the truth as it is in Christ, except the Spirit of Christ abides with me.

. . . I will close, hoping to visit you this year, or some other time. May the grace of God ever abide with you, giving you that spiritual comfort that can come from him, and him alone. I remain

Yours in hope of a perfect life
through Christ our Lord.

James A. Bell

Bassett, Va.

Dear Brother and Sister Spangler:

I hope you dear ones are well and rejoicing in the sweet mercy of the Lord. I often try to beg for mercy; and, Oh, that I might love him who is my sweet hope, my only help, my strength, my all. But how empty and cold my prayers seem. I long to bow in humble, grateful prayer, but I know it must come from our blessed Lord. He has been so good to me, and mine.

I am sending you some letters which I received from a precious sister. Sister Martin I feel the Lord, in tender love, gave her a mind to write to me; and I have received sweet comfort from reading them. I want to share the good news with God's little ones, if you dear editors feel to print them in the precious Signs of the Times.

May the giver of every good and perfect gift, bless you editors to continue to print the truth as I feel the dear Signs has all these years.

Your very least sister, in
hope of mercy,
Callie Clark

Crab Orchard, W. Va.
July, 1955

Dear Sister Clark:

I received your your nice letter, and enjoyed it so very much — it was a very comforting letter, indeed. I am such a poor hand to write, I think sometimes I will lay my pen aside; but then I have, and still do, enjoy the letters from the dear brethren and sisters who have been so good to write to me. Some I've never met, and may never, but I pray that God may be pleased to bless them. My greatest desire is to meet them all on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance; where sorrow, sickness, and troubles will never come.

My dear sister, I want, if the Lord will enable me, to write you of an experience I had about four years ago. I had been very sick for several months, and went to the hospital and spent eight miserable days. I was so weak a doctor and a nurse had to hold me up in front of an x-ray machine to make pictures. I looked like a living skeleton, and I thought I had only a few days to live. But I was perfectly reconciled to go, and told my oldest daughter the song I wanted sung at my funeral. It was, "Asleep in Jesus."

I begged the doctor to let me come home to stay with the children what few days I thought I had. I call them children, but they are all grown. I was so weak I could not stand alone, and my daughter had to lead me. So, while waiting, as I thought, for the call, I will never forget what I saw that memorable night. (I just can't say whether I was asleep or awake, but it seems I was awake). I thought I was standing at my front gate, and a feeling came over me that I was going to faint, and I started to fall. My son was coming toward me to keep me from falling, but before he could reach me, two of the largest hands I ever saw reached and took me under the arms. I felt strength come back to me; but I was so frightened at first, but the fear did not last but a second. I cried out, "It's the Lord's hands."

I did not know I had said it aloud until my son called me to wake me, and asked me what was the trouble. I was so amazed I did not sleep anymore that night; and the following day it was all I could think of. My daughter would bring my meals to my bed, but I was looking off into space, wondering. I would scarcely know she was in my room. For months that was on my mind, and it gave me so much comfort and consolation. I did not know at the time that it meant that I would get better, but I praised his high and lofty name, that he should condescend to one so low and unworthy of his love and mercy. I shouted and gave him all the glory and honor, for it was all due him. I suppose the neighbors thought I was crazy, but at the time it mattered very little to me what they thought. The love of God took away all the fear. I was so happy, it was worth all the weakness and suffering I went through. No wonder Paul gloried in tribulations, and counted it all joy to suffer for his name's sake.

If and when you have a mind, write me, and remember this poor weak one in search of a home in a better country.

In love and hope,
Pearl Martin

Crab Orchard, W. Va.
May, 1956

Dear Sister Clark:

I will, the Lord willing, try to answer your good letter — you are so good to write dear encouraging words of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; the one who remembered me, and I was not worthy of his love and mercy.

I was so glad your daughter was getting so much better; bless her dear soul in Christ to live. We could not live without him. Paul said that if we live we are his, and if we die we are his. Oh, how I hope that includes poor me.

Dear sister, I do hope you and yours

are well. I am not well at all; I never sit up all day; but I try to be thankful to be up some of the time. The Lord is good to us — we know things could be worse for all of us. How I long and hope for a mind of reconciliation. I haven't been able to go to church since the 4th Sunday in September, 1955; but the dear Old Baptist are good to visit me, and we talk of the goodness of our God, and sing praises unto him. When they leave, I feel I have been to church. Where two or three are gathered together in his name, he has promised to be there; and, bless his dear name, he never fails. We are poor weak creatures, but he is a rock in a weary land, and a high tower in times of storms. Yes, we go through storms in a spiritual sense, and famines too, — we have our cold seasons; but how sweet it is when it pleases our beloved to blow his love on his tender plants in his garden. Then they send forth sweet fragrances; to me, that is his love. Not long ago I dreamed of the most pretty white flowers, and I could smell the sweet perfume. I delighted several days in that sweet dream.

With each day bringing its problems and duties on our poor weak bodies, I rejoice in rest and peace for our minds. Sometimes I am made to wonder why I am being left here, (seemingly, I am no benefit to anyone), and then I know that God has some purpose in it, and he knows when I have no more time or place here on his foot-stool, for he holds the issue of life and death in his own hands. Oh, may I be submissive to his will; that is what I desire to do, but my nature is so prone to sin, and, like the poet, "I fear that I am not born again."

Dear sister in Christ, I truly believe you understand what I am trying to say. Sometimes I will say, "Dear Lord, surely this world can't be my home." And then I will look around to see if any one heard me. Not that I am ashamed, but some people, who do not understand, would think I was crazy. I live real close to several houses, and none of those who live in them care for the Primitive Baptists. Most of them belong to something else. They are good neighbors to me, and I like them, and we get along fine; but when it comes to talking about what feeds and comforts me, they don't know anything about it. I don't try to teach them, for I know we can't teach our neighbor to know the Lord. We have scripture to that effect. You remember Paul said that he did not learn it of man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ; and, dear one, it is the same today. God does not have a dozen different ways to save his people, as we hear so much of today. I am happy that it is by grace: and I believe what the scripture says.

If I have written one word of comfort to you, I praise God for it; for I feel to be one of the weakest, if one at all. I want to be kept humble, and found at all times in humility in our Saviour's love. Write when you can: I do enjoy your sweet letters.

In love and hope,
Pearl Martin

"COMPLETELY AND UNCONDITIONALLY"

Aldie, Virginia

Dear Elder Spangler:

Enclosed is a money order for $5.00, to renew my subscription for one year; use the balance for the Indigent Fund.

The Signs of the Times is such a blessing to all who love the Old School Baptist faith and doctrine. To meditate upon the letters and experiences of grace, is very comforting, and seems to bring a joyful calmness amid the whirl of changing circumstances in which we have to live.

We realize that within ourselves dwells no good thing, and we can do nothing to merit heaven. We know that salvation is by grace, and the divine love of Jesus Christ, who died for our sins. This only is our blessed hope of redemption. His last words on the cross

of Calvary were, "It is finished." Meaning completely and unconditionally. If man's works, acts, or deeds had any part, we could not rejoice in predestination, and the sovereign will of God.

Being the most unworthy of all sinners, I trust that I may be kept humble, yet ever thankful and praising his holy name. In the weakness of the flesh we are so prone to forget the giver of every good and perfect gift.

May the Lord's richest blessings be upon you.

Julia T. Sowers

DESIRES TO HEAR FROM OLD BAPTISTS

Box 296,
San Pablo, Calif.

Dear Editors:

The September issue of the Signs came to me yesterday, and I was so low in spirit that it seemed to come at the right time. I read and re-read it from cover to cover. The good letter of Elder Dodson was sweet and encouraging to one so little and unworthy. I had many beautiful thoughts concerning God, and his blessed promises, while lying here in a hospital bed — I had many thoughts on heavenly things: I saw Jesus as he was nailed to the cross for our sins.

My doctor told me I had a big heart; and I thought at the time that it takes a big heart to hold all the love I have for the household of faith, for, if not deceived, I love them beyond words; and while I am permitted to stay here, I want nothing more than a little place at their feet. I wouldn't say or do anything to hurt one of God's little ones for anything in this world; and my prayer is that he will keep me this way.

I don't know how long I will be in the hospital. I hope not long. I would love to hear from any Old Baptists who have a mind to write me.

A sister in hope of eternal life,
Martha Frost

HID FROM US — YET WITH US

Kennedy, Ala.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed you will find $3.00 for renewal of my subscription to the Signs for one year. I enjoy reading the good paper, and hope to have the privilege of reading it as long as I live in this world.

I am enclosing a letter I received from Sister Hallie Taylor. It was so much comfort to this poor sinner, I thought it might be a comfort to others. Please print it in the Signs, if you deem it worthy of space.

Yours in a precious hope,
Charlie Stripling

Dear Myrtle and Brother Stripling:

I feel to express my heartfelt thanks, if not deceived, for the lovely visit with you all yesterday. I cannot express how it makes me feel — so unworthy, and yet made to rejoice that God's little children would be mindful of me: surely the least of the flock, if one at all.

Brother Stripling, your experience you related was beautiful to me. It was so uplifting to hear one of God's humble poor relate experience so much like my own travels. It strengthened my hope very much. For a long time I have felt to be one alone: that no one else, surely, was left to doubts and fears as much as I. I have felt so burdened with my unfitness, and doubts and fears, that I have felt I couldn't go on, if not permitted to talk with someone. I guess I have been afraid my travels were so different, and manifested so much evil, that the brethren and sisters wouldn't claim kin to one so vile as I. It seems that so much of the time I am ashamed of what I have said when I do talk with anyone, that it would be better if I never opened my mouth again to speak. Oh, that I could only walk humbly before my brethren, and speak in a way that would be becoming.

I have not wanted to deceive the dear people of God, and don't feel that I could if I wanted to; but, Oh, how I do wish that I could walk worthy of the vocation wherewith I hope I'm called. I fully believe (if not deceived), that if I am called to be a child of God — to be a follower of Jesus Christ, there is no power in heaven or earth, or under the earth, that is able to remove this calling. God being unchangeable (and what he has done is done forever), if he calls one to be a child, it is sure to be so. Now at times, and almost all of the time, I am in a cast-down state, and feel very forsaken of God. But he has promised to be with us always, and never to leave or forsake us. This being true, I believe he is with us in all our trials and temptations. Even though he is hid from us he is present with us. If not for his protecting hand, I know I would have ceased to be long ago.

I believe that God has a purpose in everything that is. There is nothing new under the sun to him. He has foreordained all things that be, and at his appointed time it comes to pass. Who are we to call in question as to the why of things that he has ordered to be? Yet we are creatures of the dust, and weak; and will portray this weakness as long as we live in the flesh.

I have felt for some time that I wanted to talk with someone concerning my travels; but I couldn't feel it to be profitable to anyone. But rather that it would be sickening, and tend to weaken one's hope instead of strengthening. I don't know, but it seems the longer I live, the more I believe God is praised in our downsittings, as well as our uprisings. In a differerent way, maybe. But to be cast down shows man's inability to do of himself; and, therefore, he is shown that all of his strength is of the Lord. Thus, it seems to me, that it is by our downsittings that we are made able to rejoice in uprisings.

One never knows who he is to talk to, nor what he is to say. I want to beg of you not to hold my imperfections against me, but to remember I am a poor, weak creature of the dust, with no strentgh of my own to do, or not to do. May God be praised for all things, for all things have a good purpose in the sight of him who purposed it.

I want to thank you again for coming to see us, for the words of encouragement. I hope also to thank God for the same. May it please God to send you our way again soon. I am

Your kindred in bonds,
Hallie Taylor

Ruffin, N. C.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am enclosing check for two years renewal to the Signs. Husband and I look forward to the coming of this good paper, which is always so full of the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace (and grace alone) written by those who have been called out of darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of Jesus Christ our Lord.

We so much enjoy the editorials, and the letters of precious experiences which God gives his dear people to travel through in this life; which things are through his everlasting love and mercy.

May the Lord continue his blessings upon you, and uphold you in his love, mercy, and grace; and enable you to continue the paper, is our prayer.

Your unworthy sister in hope of eternal life beyond this vale of tears.

Mrs. G. F. Pruitt

Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Editors:

You will find enclosed a check for $5.00 for two years subscription to the Signs of the Times — a paper which I enjoy reading. It is full of good news to a sinner like me. I have to look to Him that made all things, and who upholds all things by the word of his power, when made to cry out, as Jonah did,

"Salvation is of the Lord." This leaves the hands of puny man out of all of it, as far as help of the man is concerned.

The preparation of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord. We know that in us dwells no good thing, realizing our short comings and unworthiness. We know that we are not worthy to call upon His name, yet we cry. "Lord be merciful to me a sinner."

Yours in hope,
(Elder) H. R. Prince

Vinton, Virginia

Dear Elder Wood:

I've been trying for months to copy my dear Aunt Julia Basham's experience, and at last have it ready to send to the Signs; as I feel, that since Basham meeting house and property (Bedford County, Virginia) was a gift from her to the Baptists, the brethren will be glad to see it in print. I copied it from an issue of the Signs published years ago, which was badly worn.

To me the Signs is the best paper I ever read, and rates next to my Bible. I am enclosing a check to renew my subscription and to help a little on the Fund.

I can't finish this and not tell you how I feasted this afternoon on Elder Lambert's piece in the June number: "A Bouquet of Words." I enjoyed his sermon so much at Bethel, in the State of Washington, last August, (1955), and hope, if it is the Lord's will, to hear him again.

. . . Love and best wishes to you and Sister Wood.

Yours in a precious hope,
Laura C. McCall

EXPERIENCE OF SUSAN JULIA BASHAM

Stewartsville, Va., March 12, 1896.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:— If I may so address you. I have frequently been asked to write something of what I hope have been the dealings of the Lord with me, and at times have much desired to do so, more especially when I would read the experiences of the dear brethren and sisters, and derive so much comfort therefrom. I have often felt, while enjoying that sweet privilege, that it was selfish in me to be thus blessed and not say a word. In fact, almost from the time that I was first blessed with a hope I have at times much desired to do so; but then my feeling of unworthiness, nothingness and incompetency, feeling that I could say nothing that would be of any comfort to any one, and fearing that I might by the misuse of words, or through my ignorance in some way, say something I ought not, thereby making against the cause of Christ; which cause, if not deceived in myself, I so dearly love. Yes, these and other thoughts would present themselves so forcibly that I feared to commence; and if I did commence, which I sometimes did, I would afterward cast what I had written to the flames; and this may meet with the same result for aught I know. However, I feel that it is my duty to begin, praying the dear Lord to be with and direct me. Truly of myself I can do nothing aright; and if I shall in this speak a word of comfort to any one, the Lord be praised.

I was born in Bedford County, Virginia, August 14th, 1834. My parents were Peter M. and Susan Wright. My mother's maiden name was Susan James. They were consistent members of the Primitive Baptist Church from my earliest recollection of those things, until they were released from the trials and cares of this life. My father died about thirty-five years since, and my mother about twenty years since, to enter into that rest that remaineth to the people of God, ever to be with the Lord, as I firmly believe. They were remarkably kind and devoted to their children, and tried to teach us by precept and example to be honest, industrious, sober, upright and useful; but they

never tried to teach us religion, believing from the inspired word, and also from experience, that that belonged alone to the Lord.

Very early in life, when but a child, I had serious thoughts about death and the judgment, which I thought was to take place, our woman servant telling me about it in that way; that those who did good would be saved, and would go to heaven, and that those who did bad would be cast into a lake that burneth with fire and brimstone forever. I much feared the latter place, and wanted to do good to avoid it.

I must pass over several years by merely saying that at times I thought much about these things, and at other times forgetting them, unless I would hear of some one dying, or of some calamity, which would cause me to get down on my knees and try to pray, and would make resolves or promises to myself to do better, to get religion, &c. But when the excitement would wear off I would again forget; or if I thought of it, I would think that when I grew older it would do just as well that if I was a professor of religion I could not enjoy life so well, as I would have to be so particular about what I said and did; yet I fully intended to get religion at some time before I died. I went on somewhat after that manner until I was about seventeen years old, when I thought if I would get married there would be no hindrance, and I would be sure to attend to it, as I believed I could get religion at any time that I made up my mind to do so. I was married to William W. Basham on November 27th, 1851; but after I was married it seemed that there was more than ever to prevent me, as I had so many more cares; yet now, as before, I would often make fresh resolves, and tried to pray, that I might thus bring myself into God's favor. But as yet I was in nature's darkness, my eyes having never been opened to see my lost and undone condition before a just and holy God, as I afterwards saw myself. About the month of May, 1854, a very strange and distressing feeling came over me while looking at a pig which had been bitten, as I thought, by a mad dog; and as I had been feeding and attending to it, I thought I would also go mad; and as I was unprepared for death, I thought I would be lost. I could see no chance now for me to be saved. I thought the time had been when I could have gotten religion, but it was too late now. I was in much trouble, and begged the Lord to have mercy on me. I would read the Bible, but found no comfort in it for me. My health now gave way, and I became very unwell. A while after this I dreamed that the names of those who were to be saved were being written down, but mine was left out. At another time I dreamed I was viewing Christ as hanging on a tree, and as having died for the sins of his people, but not for me. One night I was dreaming and making a noise, and my husband's sister who was in an adjoining room heard me and awoke me to know what the matter was. I told her that I was dreaming that I loved the Lord. She said she hoped I did, and that he also loved me. I thought if I could have heard him say that he loved me, it would have afforded much relief to me, even though it were a dream. This dream, connected with other circumstances, gave me a little hope that it was the Lord's work with me, and several persons told me they were sure it was. Thus time passed with me, at times being very much troubled, and at other times a little easier, until the fall of 1855. I had then been prostrate upon my bed of affliction for nearly twelve months, and my life was despaired of by nearly every one. My physician also said the chances were against me. Through the persuasion of my beloved father and others I was then moved twenty miles by hand, on a litter, to his house, among my old friends and relatives. My father said he wished me to come; not that he thought he could do more for me or better by me than my kind husband had done, as well as my sister-in-law, who was staying with us; but his family physician thought he

could cure me.

Soon after I arrived my dear old grandmother, a sound and faithful Old School Baptist, who had not seen me for a year, and who had long seemed to think much of me, came to see me. She was not with me long until she asked me to tell her something of the state of my mind. I told her as best I could some of my troubles and trials, with an occasional glimmer of hope that it was the Lord's work with me. She said to my beloved Father, who was sitting by, that she hoped it would do. He nodded assent. She then said to me, "Do you think you have ever felt yourself a sinner?" I answered that I thought I had. Those words, "Do you think you have ever felt yourself a sinner?" sank deep into my mind and abode with me. I thought they surely meant something more than I knew anything of. I believed she was a Christian, and did not want me to be deceived, and thought there was something more necessary for me to experience before I could have the evidence of a good hope through grace. So I asked the Lord, and begged him, and continued to ask him in my feeble way, to show me what it was; that if there was anything deeper than I had yet felt that was necessary for me to know, to show it to me. I did not want to be deceived, nor to deceive any one. It was not long until I think the Lord surely did answer that prayer. I thought that of all persons on earth I was the most sinful. My sins like mountains rose before me; and while I knew I had not committed the outbreaking sins (if I may so speak) that many had, yet I thought it was not because I was not sinful enough, for my heart was wicked enough to do anything. Gladly would I have then exchanged conditions with beast or bird, or any living creature that had no soul to be saved, or that had no sin. O the dreadful future I was soon to be plunged into, with no hope of mercy, while the very breathing of my soul was for mercy. I could not see how it could be extended to me. I could not see how God could be just and save such a creature as I was. My bodily afflictions were yet so great that my life was almost if not entirely despaired of by every one; yet they were to me as nothing compared with my sin-sick soul, with no hope of mercy. I then weighed about sixty pounds. The doctors had given me so much morphine and other medicines that I could not remember from one day to the next very many things that transpired. My mind was almost gone. But there were certain circumstances that occurred that seem as plain to me today as if of but yesterday; yet I cannot give the exact dates, nor which of certain ones were first. Well do I remember one day about this time, while prostrate upon my bed of affliction, with no power at all to raise my body. I do not think I could have raised my head off my pillow. My father and mother were sitting near my bedside. Some rice was brought in for me to eat, and my father was begging me to eat, the doctor having told him if they could not get me to eat I could not possibly live, as I would starve myself to death. I took the saucer, but told him I could not eat. I do not know that at that time I expected to ever eat anything more. My distress of mind at that time I cannot express. All at once strength was given me. I threw the saucer of rice aside and arose to a sitting position, clapping my hands, rejoicing and praising God at the height of my voice. Every word was given me just as I spoke them, and as fast as I could speak them. The first were, "Glory to God!" Several other sentences were given me, which, when delivered, I fell back upon my bed, as helpless as before. Now came another severe trial for me. I thought I had worshiped an idol; and of all the wicked things I had ever done I thought that was the worst. I knew that the strength and words were all given me; that it was not my own power at all; but I thought I was so wicked that Satan had caused me to do it, and that it would be that much more sin for me to account for. I had long had a horror of people shouting, because I did not

believe there was any reality in it, but thought it was just put on; so I did not intend to ever do such a thing. Truly I have been led in paths I had not known. My distress of mind for weeks and months after this (I cannot give the exact time) was, if possible, greater than before. I was held tightly in the clutches of "Giant Despair." I did not think that I had the least shadow of hope that it was the work of the Lord, or that I ever could be saved. I was so weak that I could read very little, and if I could have read I felt too sinful to even open the Bible. I thought I had deceived enough already. I thought I had, by rejoicing and praising God, deceived my dearly beloved father and mother, and had made others believe that I had professed religion, when it was all Satan's work. O how I did regret having done it, and how I did wish to forget it, and never think of it again. How I did wish I had not been born. I longed to die. Not that I thought I would be saved, but I wanted to be kept from sinning any more. I felt that every thought and act was adding that much more sin to my sinful life. About this time Satan tempted me to commit suicide. He kept me believing there was no hope of mercy for me; that I was too sinful to even ask the Lord for mercy; that my very looks and appearance showed how sinful I was; that I was a gazing-stock to the world, and was described in the Scriptures as such; that the sooner I ended my life and got out of this terrible condition, the better it would be for me; that although I would be cast into everlasting punishment, yet the longer I lived the more sin I would have to be punished for, and so the heavier would be the punishment; that I better just take my life at once. O how awful to think of! Surely nothing but the goodness, mercy and grace of God could have sustained me through it all. Strange as it may seem, when the temptation was the greatest these words, "No self-murderer shall inherit the kingdom of God," or words amounting to that, would come into my mind, and I thought they were Scripture. While I did not think I had the faintest idea that I ever could be saved, yet these words seemed to prevent my committing the horrible deed. I thank God for delivering me. Yes, I feel that if I had nothing to thank him for but this one deliverance, it would call for constant praise and thanksgiving the remainder of my days. I would that I could praise him as I ought.

Thus time passed on, but I cannot tell how many weeks or months, while I continued to think my condition the most horrible of any one that ever lived, with no hope of relief. My bodily afflictions were yet so very great that all who saw me expected me to die at any time. I thought so too, and O how I did wish I could. But the time of my departure had not yet come, and instead thereof my health began to slowly improve. While yet in this distressed condition, until about April, 1856, I think (as I have said, I cannot give the exact dates), my dear old grandmother sent me a copy of the Signs of the Times to read. Upon receiving it my thoughts were about these, or after this order, O my dear grandmother, did you and others but know how sinful I am you would send me no papers nor take any thought for me. It can do no good. However, I must look at it a little. I commenced to read, and to my surprise and utter astonishment I there read the experience of a lady who had undergone much the same trials and troubles of mind that I had undergone and was still having. Yes, she told my feelings much better than I could, or what they were a portion of the time. A little hope sprang up within me, and I thought, O can it be that there is yet a chance for poor, sinful me to be saved? Again I commenced imploring God's mercy, which I had felt too sinful to do for quite a while, though I cannot say I had not. (to be concluded next issue.)

PLEASE NOTE: Some of the letters we receive and publish do not state the address of the writers. Please remember this when writing. — Editors

EDITORIALS

Danville, Virginia November, 1956

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TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 5, Box 332F Danville, Va.

EDITORIAL

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." (1 Peter 3:15)

We recently wrote that we considered our greatest possession to be our hope of eternal life; and this, because all things else shall fail. While our hope, and all that it comprises, is individual assurance of eternal life, when all things else have failed.

The Old School or Primitive Baptists are the only people that we know of who speak of their assurance of salvation — their assurance of eternal life — by using the term *HOPE*. They do not use it loosly. They use it because they have certain individual reasons why they claim a hope; certain reasons why they rejoice in a hope.

There are many places in the Scriptures where the word is used by the various writers, to express the very same thing that each one does who speaks of a hope. It is to be understood, of course, that the word hope (used as the Lord's people use it) does not imply an uncertain expectation. But, rather, by well ordered experiences, including the gift of Faith, it is an expression of reality. For this reason, the apostle, writing to the Hebrews, said: "Now faith is *the substance* of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen."

When we use the expression *hope,* we always mean, in hope of eternal life — and all things pertaining to it. Note the following quotations: "That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the *hope of eternal life.*" (Paul to Titus); "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." (Again Paul to Titus); "Prisoners of hope." (Zechariah, speaking of the daughters of Zion, and of Jerusalem); "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and *good hope* through grace." (Paul to the Thessalonians); "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice *in hope* of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulations worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, *hope:* and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." (Paul to the Romans); and many, many others.

In the same sense that the effects of faith, as recounted by the Apostle in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, were known by the Hebrews to be real, because they were: "*Also* compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses", so each of those who have hope, have a cloud of witnesses within themselves, which testifies of the certainty of their hope.

These "clouds of witnesses" consti-

tute "an experience of grace"; meaning the experiencing within one's self the grace of God. For it is this manner that the Spirit reveals to us that we are of the elect of God: reveals to us the things that Jesus has done for us, bringing all things to our remembrance. Indeed, without this learning by experience (or revelation) we cannot know of our being chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began. (See Ephesians 1:4; and 2 Timothy 1:9) And we may be sure that these experiences through which the children of God are brought into the knowledge of the truth, and in hope of their redemption, are real; and have the same effect on each individual, as they did on the Apostle Paul when he was stopped on his mad journey to Damascus, and the many other ways and things which he was taught; or on the Apostle John, who testified, "For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us."

So, in the text quoted, Peter said, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts". By this he meant (as stated in the preceeding verse) to be not afraid, or troubled, when called upon to suffer for righteousness sake, knowing that God is set apart (or sanctified) to you as your very present help in time of need.

"And be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." To us, this means that when any man should question our faith, or question what and why we believe what we believe (whether they be men or brethren), then we have that within us (which is called a reason of the hope) which readily testifies, or witnesses for us, that God is our God, and that all our help is laid upon him; and that we are assured of redemption, and eternal life. Men may not understand, or give countenance to such things, but brethren will rejoice with us; for it is because they have the same witnesses within, and this makes them brethren.

"With meekness and fear." This is because the work of the Spirit in giving the reason of the hope to us, is so wonderful and amazing — and we being so unworthy to receive it — that we cannot but speak of it with reverence and awe. We are not boasting when we tell it, but are simply giving the account of the dealings of God with us.

Any man or woman who has a hope, has a reason for it. And in telling it, will recall many things which are not in the ordinary experiences of men. They may seem immaginary or ficticious to those who know nothing about the way God deals with his people. The simple fact is that God's people know much of many things, which the world knows nothing of; and this constitutes the difference between the world and the church.

We have often expressed that no one has a right to membership in the church, who does not have "a reason of their hope"; who does not have evidence of being quickened; who does not know the meaning of, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." (John 3:8)

Since, ". . . I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (Hebrews 8:10-12), those who give a reason of a hope, tell what great things the Lord has done for them.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

EXHORTATION

This is a New Testament word. So far as we have read, it never occurs in the Old Testament Scriptures. The word is never spoken of as emanating from Deity. It expresses always the word of man to man. But it is used to present things which belong to our obligations to God, and to one another. It occurs more than thirty times in the New Testament. Paul uses it more than all the rest of the writers of the New Testament put together. In every instance, but twice, it is from the Greek word **Parakleo,** which signifies literally and primarily, to call near. From this primary meaning other shades of meaning are derived, so that it signifies exhortation, incitement, persuasion, hortatory instruction, entreaty, importunity, earnest supplication, solace, consolation, joy, gladness, rejoicing, and cheering and supporting influence. But all these shades of meaning lead back to the first or primary meaning, which is "to call upon, or to call near."

It is not a command, and therefore it cannot be applied to that which God says to me. He commands, but he does not exhort. The blessed Savior in all his teaching is never said to have exhorted the people or his disciples. But the apostles and evangelists are often said to have exhorted the churches, and their brethren. The word is confined to the Acts, and to the epistles, excepting once (in Luke iii. 18), where John the Baptist is said to have used exhortation. It is then, the word of man addressed to his fellow man. The apostles are said to have exhorted their brethren to all christian duty of every kind, and at all times. We believe that we have scriptural warrant for saying, that it is one of the most important parts of the ministry of the word. It is said that he that exhorteth, let him wait on exhortation. (Rom. xii. 8.) Paul said, that he thought it necessary to exhort the brethren. (1 Cor. ix. 5.) Paul bade Timothy, exhort as well as teach. (1 Tim. vi. 2.) Titus was bidden to exhort, three times, in the short epistle to him. In Hebrews iii. 13, the brethren generally were bidden to exhort one another. So that it is apparent that it is an important thing, which cannot be neglected, without disobedience to God, and great loss and harm to the church.

It would seem also that all things which pertain to the obligations of believers, to live as becometh the gospel of Christ, are the proper subjects of exhortation. Paul exhorted those who were with him on board the ship, to be of good cheer in the hour of their danger. (Acts xxvii. 20.) The brethren were exhorted to continue in the faith. (Acts xiv. 22.) Barnabas exhorted the brethren at Antioch that with purpose of heart they should cleave to the Lord. (Acts xi. 23.) But without consuming space in references, we will say that the subjects of exhortation included making up collections for the poor, that the brethren should walk and abound more and more in that which they had been taught by the apostles was pleasing to God, that they should warn the unruly; that disciples should with quietness work and eat their own bread; that prayers, giving of thanks, and supplications, should be made for all men; that we may lead quiet and peaceable lives; that servants should count their masters as worthy of honor; that gainsayers should be exhorted; that young men should be exhorted to be sober; that believers should earnestly contend for the faith, and all other things which pertain to a godly life among the people of God.

The subjects of exhortation, are the children of God, who have come to know and love him, whenever the subject of exhortation is any spiritual thing, or anything that relates to the service of God. It is true Paul exhorted those on board the ship with him, but this was not to any spiritual service, but only that they should not fear the result of

the storm which lay upon them, nor the danger in which the ship was placed, since the assurance had been given him that they all should escape. In Titus i. 9, where it might be said the children of God were not meant, "the gainsayers" are really those of doubting and questioning mind among the brethren themselves. For they are not only to be exhorted but convinced, as the apostle also says. Men dead in sin, are never in the Scriptures exhorted to believe, or to do any spiritual thing. Exhortation implies an understanding of the thing spoken of, and a heart to love and receive the exhortation. It implies that the one addressed has come to know the Lord, and that he or she is capable of receiving the word which is spoken to them. This is not true of the unregenerated among mankind. It is never of any use to exhort a man to that of which he has no knowledge, and for which he can have no love. Exhortation, to be of any use, must strike an answering chord in the heart of the one addressed. Paul expresses it all, when he says that he thought it meet to stir up the PURE minds of the brethren. It is a bringing to remembrance again, that which we have once loved and followed, when we have, through the stress of temptation, and the cares of the world, and the weakness of our own natures, forsaken the right way. An exhortation to love and serve God, could have no meaning to him who is ignorant of God. Exhortation, to have any force, must appeal to things which we know and feel. It must lay hold upon something which is already within us. Therefore all appeals to natural men to love and serve God, must ever fall upon ears which cannot hear, and hearts which cannot understand. Men are dead in trespasses and sins. It is in vain to exhort the dead. The voice of man can never reach their ear nor heart. Only he whose voice can pierce the regions of death, can do this great work of making the dead hear and live. But the living are the proper subjects of brotherly exhortation. Who among the children of God does not remember how his heart has been stirred by exhortation to that which he has believed and loved, when he has been feeling dull and lukewarm, and as though there was no life in him? In this application of the exhortation to us we come to see how it can have the meaning of solace, or consolation, or joy, or gladness. Because, when we find the heart thus responds to the word that reminds and incites us to our obligations, we can but take hope and courage to believe that the word of God dwells in us, though we feel that it is not richly, but very meagerly and weakly. Thus, exhortation comes with power to comfort, as well as to stir up our minds to that which is commanded of God.

What are the motives to be appealed to in exhortation? Motives are appealed to in the teachings of the apostles. But they are such motives as address themselves to the spiritual mind. They are never low, or earthly, or selfish. They take hold of that in the believer which is Christlike. They stir up his love and faith and hope. They are not of a nature to exalt, but rather to humble him who feels these things. He who has been stirred up by any word of exhortation in his own mind, will never feel that he is therefore to be judged as being better than he who has not been so stirred up. He will know that the word of exhortation has come to him as a blessed gift from God, and that it is something to be thankful for, rather than to be proud of. He will feel to say, Why have I been favored with the ear to hear, and the heart to feel something of the power of the word? He will regard exhortation as one of the gifts of God to him, who is all unworthy of such a favor. He will remember the many times when he has heard or read the same exhortation from the word of God, or from the lips of him who preaches the word, and has been totally unmoved by it, and he will feel that it would have been just so now had not the dear Lord opened his heart, and sent the word therein with power, and fastened it there, as a nail in a sure place. He will feel as though he must

continually call upon the Lord to make the word efficacious in his case, for if he does not, it will pass him by, as it has done before, and he will receive no benefit.

It is sure that exhortation does not imply self-dependence at all. That form of exaltation which does imply this, is not scriptural exhortation. Anything that for a moment causes us to forget the source of all good, cannot be right, nor to the good of those who are actuated by it. If we may speak for ourself in this matter, we have ever felt when the word of exhortation has come to us with power, and we have thereby been stirred up, to go on in the path of our duty, that we have received a great mercy from God, and that all our praise for going on in that path, must be rendered to him. It is most sure, as we have said before, that all exhortation must presuppose grace, in the heart. It is sure also that the word would do us no good, did not the Lord open our hearts, as he did the heart of Lydia, to receive the word. For the exhortation and for a heart to receive it, and for the benefit of it, then, we must praise the Lord. O! may God keep us from any feeling of self praise, for any love, or fear, or faith, or confidence, or any other spiritual gift, which we may possess, and for any obediece which we may render outwardly to his commands. May we never feel, for a moment, that we are any better than that brother who may be far astray. May we feel sure, all the time, that wherein we differ, we must praise the Lord for it. Who hath made thee to differ, comes often to our heart, when we hear of some brother who has grievously sinned. The most awful fear that we have ever known, has arisen out of a sense of our own weakness, and of our depravity of heart, and the thought that we cannot keep ourselves, and the thought that we may also fall. Sometimes this fear has been fearful. We cannot for one moment feel that we can in the least degree boast over the brother who has gone farthest astray. The constant keeping of the Lord of grace must be our sole dependence. For this reason we are glad of that preaching that tells us our faults, that stirs up our minds to that which is commanded of the Lord.

It seems to us that the teaching of the Scriptures concerning this matter is, that those things which the believer has come to love, and to hope in; those things which the Lord has done for him, and which he has promised to do for him, the glory of the Savior, whom we have come to love, and the good of the Zion of God here on earth, are the real and proper motives of exhortation to obedience on the part of believers. Since the Lord has done such great things for us, let us serve him. Since he has shed his love abroad in our hearts, and has bought us with a price, and we are not our own, let us glorify him in our body, and our spirit, which are his. These things are all spoken of in the word. These things are our goodly heritage, and in them let us live. Exhortation is one of the God appointed ways in which these things are to be impressed upon us, and in which our God works in us, to will and to do of his good pleasure.

It has come to our ears, though we are slow to believe it, that there are some of the brethren, in some sections of the country, who deny that there is any such thing as exhortation recognized in the Scriptures. It is said, they claim that if the unlimited predestination of God be true, then there is no room for exhortation, and charge all who do exhort the brethren to the service of the Lord, with Arminianism. We have never met any such brother, though we have dwelt all our life among those who believed in unlimited predestination. If we had met any one who sought to shelter himself from his guilt under this plea, it would not cause us to doubt the truth of predestination, but it would cause us to very much doubt the christianity of that brother. Predestination does not destroy exhortation, nor the guilt of the sinner. In the ninth of Romans, Paul would meet all such assertions with the stern query,

"Who are thou that repliest against God?" Men who denied predestination, urged that it destroyed man's accountability, and asked, Who hath resisted his will, and why doth he yet find fault? Paul said that this was replying against God. If any who believe in this doctrine, say that it does relieve them from responsibility, then they are more guilty than were those to whom Paul replied in this ninth chapter of Romans. They who do not believe in it, may come to the conclusion that they do, that it relieves one of guilt, because he has done the thing which God had predestinated, but it seems sure, that if a man has the grace of God in his heart, and by grace has been brought to believe in, and love the doctrine, he will have such a principle of holiness in him, that he will not seek to shelter himself, or find an excuse for his guilt in it. We should feel like asking those brethren who have been alarmed lest a belief in unlimited predestination should lead to such results as these, Would it be the case with you, if you did believe this doctrine, that you would make an excuse of it for your sins? Men do make a belief in salvation by grace, to be a reason why they would continue in sin, because they are to be saved anyhow, as they say. But we have always contended that this only proved they still loved their sins. So we should think if we heard one say, If I believed in unlimited predestination, I would not feel guilty, and no one ought to condemn me, that he had not yet been washed from his sins, and that he yet loved sin.

Thus we do feel the obligation resting upon us, in all our ministry, to exhort as well as to proclaim salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ, finished and secure. It seems to us unquestionable that if indeed we have been redeemed, we shall desire to so walk as he who redeemed us walked. We shall, therefore, welcome all that helps us to remember our obligations to him. It is sure also, that he that sows to the flesh, of the flesh shall reap corruption. The harvest will be what is sown. We would keep in mind these things, and we feel well assured that we should put the brethren in mind of these things. Fully one-half of all the writings of the great apostle to the Gentiles, is occupied with admonition, and exhortation, and warnings, and reproofs. We should certainly conclude that one was in a bad state of feeling who did not want to hear these things enforced. We should think that minister neglectful of his duty as a minister of the word, if he did not reprove, and rebuke, and exhort, as the apostle has directed. We hope it is not true that any who bear the name of Old School Baptists in the land, deny their accountability to God for all their sins. It is sure that we must all appear, as believers, before the judgment-seat of Christ, to receive the things done in the body. He who has never thus appeared, has not known the Lord at all, or else he is without sin. The last is never true in this life. We can but believe that those who have been thus accused, have been misunderstood, as all who have believed in grace, and in predestination, have always been misunderstood, by all who deny those principles of doctrine. So long as we have any remembrances of our own daily experience, we shall know that our God has held us accountable for our sins, by many corrections and chastisements. We shall also believe in the predestination of God, so long as the Scriptures so declare of him. But the one truth does not destroy the other. Each is of God, and will withstand the attacks of all who may oppose.

(Editorial by Elder Chick, May 1, 1898)

OBITUARY

MRS. SADIE BROWN TURNER

Our beloved sister in Christ, Mrs. Sadie Brown Turner, eighty-five years old, died Wednesday, May 5, 1956, at the New Castle Sanitorium, following an illness of several years. She was the widow of the late George R. Turner, deacon of the Cane Run Old School Baptist Church at Turners Station, Kentucky. This church amalgamated with the Sulphur Fork Church about twenty years ago.

Our sister was baptized about fifty years ago by the late Elder P. W. Sawin, and lived a faithful member, always attending the meetings until her health became so impared that she could no longer attend. She was a great lover of the *Signs of the Times*. She told me that the paper was all the preaching she had had the last few years. She is the last one of a large family; some nephews and nieces survive, and a few of the old members where she belonged are left to mourn. For over thirty years I had been her pastor, and their home was surely an Old School Baptist home.

A local minister officiated at the funeral, and she was laid to rest in the cemetery at Eminence, Kentucky. May the good Lord reconcile the bereaved ones to God's eternal will.

(Elder) George L. Weaver

ELDER SANDY COLLINS

Elder Sandy Collins, 70, of Lester, West Va., died Aug. 3, 1956 in a local hospital, after a months illness.

He was born at Francisco, N. C. Sept. 6. 1885, the son of the late Leuie and Christina Beasley Collins. He went to Raleigh County in 1917 and was employed in the mines until 1937.

He was a member of the Pemberton Baptist Church for 42 years and a minister for 30 years. He was pastor of the Coll Ridge Church at the time of his death.

Survivors include his widow, Mrs. Minnie L. Collins, one son, Dwight Collins, of Lester; four daughters, Mrs. Dorcas Cochman of Lester, Mrs. Desil Winters of Elyria, Ohio, Mrs. Mabel Price of Newport, Va., and Mrs. Mary Lou Stover of Lorraine, Ohio; three brothers, James Collins, of Stuart, Giles, of Francisco, N. C., and William, of Currituck, N. C.; three sisters, Mrs. Millie Beasley, of Francisco, N. C., Mrs. Susie Ella Goard, Stuart, and Mrs. Betty Grey, of Axton, Va.; ten grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted at 2 p. m. at Lester, W. Va. Elders C. R. Rakes, Otto Tilley, and J. A. Martin, officiated. Burial was made in the Martin Cemetery at Maple Meadow. (Copied from local paper)

SARAH M. SMITH

Sister Sarah M. Smith departed this life April 12, 1956. She was the daughter of Abraham and Eliza Ann Simmons, and was born January 27, 1870: making her stay on earth over eighty-six years. She was married to Lincoln Smith November 6, 1887. He preceeded her in death eleven years. Three children were born to this union — one son, Leroy, died at the age of three years, leaving to mourn her loss, two daughters, Mae VanPatten and Ethel Di Lallo, of Schenectady, N. Y. Also surviving are seven grand-children and eleven great grand-children; one sister, Ida Ellington, of Texas; one brother, Laughren Simmons, of Colorado; and a number of nieces and nephews.

Sister Smith united with the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, of Shokan, N. Y., June 18, 1916, and was baptized by Elder George Ruston, who was pastor at that time. Sister and Brother Smith, who was a deacon of the Olive and Hurey Church, lived in Ashokan, a short distance from the church, and their home was a most welcome place for all Old Baptists and friends. Their house was never too full to suit them: we expect few brethren in this part of the country fed and lodged more Baptists in their day than they.

We feel a mother in Israel has fallen. Since her hubsand's death, she was in a nursing or boarding home much of the time. By the grace of God, Sister Smith was ever free to express her confidence and sole trust in the true and living God, and her salvation in the merits of Christ, the Son. For several years she was much afflicted in body; due to several operations, and weakness of joints, she could walk only with the assistance of her cane and someone to aid her. But, regardless of suffering, she was faithful in attending her meetings. and uncomplainingly acknowledged it was her cross, and she was willing to bear it, as her Lord suffered more than she. She most always requested scripture reading and prayer during the many calls the writer made to see her; and requested for a text at her funeral the twenty-third Psalm. The funeral was conducted by the writer, with burial at Woodstock, N. Y., beside her husband, to await the coming of the Lord.

(Elder) A. J. Slauson

JOHN W. CAMPBELL, SR.

John W. Campbell, Sr., was born March 13, 1907. He was a victim of drowning on May 5, 1956. To him and his companion, who survives, two children were born: Mrs. Fay Peck, Hartselle, Alabama; and J. W. Campbell, Jr. The daughter and the following survive: Grandchildren — Larry Campbell and Bob Peck; his mother and father — Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Campbell, of Athens, Alabama; four brothers — Paul, of Florida; Jessie, Hartselle, Alabama; Edd, Decature, Alabama; and Floyd, Huntsville, Alabama; and several nieces and nephews.

Brother Campbell never united with the militant church, but professed a hope in 1946; and

his desire was to unite with the church, but was denied the privilege: Why, we do not know. We, the Primitive Baptists at Kelly's Creek Church, looked forward to his presence on our meeting days, and missed him and his companion, if they were absent. He was a large contributor to the erection of the new building erected in 1953, at old Kelly's Creek. He was always willing to help bear the burdens when the opportunity presented itself. He never failed to esteem Christ as our chief Moderator, and the saviour of sinners; he believed that God gave his Son to the children, and the children to the Son; and that He is the Shepherd of the flock. He contended that salvation was by grace, and grace alone; that the gospel is the power of God, and reaches each child of grace without the aid of man.

His family, his neighbors, and his Baptist friends were all so shocked and heartbroken to hear of his sudden death; and the church feels humbled at the call of our brother to come home. We feel that he has only fallen asleep.

"Asleep in Jesus! Blessed sleep!
From which ever wake to weep:
A calm and undisturbed repose,
Unbroken by the last of foes!"

His favorite song was, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds." This, and, "Sweet Hour of Prayer", was sung at the funeral. The funeral was conducted by Elder H. C. Moon, who was given great liberty to speak of the unsearchable riches of God, and of the confidence he had in the deceased.

The many floral offerings were a silent token of love and respect of those who knew our brother and his son. As a tribute to his memory, BE IT RESOLVED, that we in patient resignation bow to this dispensation of God's providence, knowing that all his purposes are right; and that we cherish his memory, and strive to emulate the virtue which through abounding grace adorned his life.

May God comfort and bless all who mourn. A copy of this is to be sent to the Signs of the Times, and the Old Faith Contender; and a copy to his companion. This approved by the church.

Mrs. Reaner Reece

Brother Campbell's only son was with him, and was drowned also. His funeral was conducted by Mr. Simmons of the Methodist faith, of which he was a member. He was at home only two months after his discharge from the service.

JENNIE P. CLIFFORD

Jennie P. Clifford was born September 5, 1872, and passed from this life on April 1, 1956. She was the mother of one daughter, who passed away in young womanhood. Her husband passed away many years ago.

She was received by baptism into the fellowship of Little Zion Church, of Chehalis, Washington, on July 23, 1939. Soon afterwards she had a stroke, and never felt able to make the long journey alone, so never attended the meetings again after her baptism. Her faith in the Lord was strong, and seemed to be all she needed. I paid her one visit in 1946. Her life in a worldly way was pitifully lonely. All the ties she had were of her husband's family, who were kind and helpful to her. Less than a year ago, I, together with Elder and Sister Eason and other members of our church, visited her home, but she was absent. Sister Cameron visited her often, as she lived nearer than the other members. I feel to say that another of God's believing children is at rest.

Services were held in the Price Funeral Chapel by Mr. Stanley Ledbetter, at Auburn, Washington. The body was laid to rest in the Auburn Cemetery to await the resurrection morn.

May God bless and have mercy on all who mourn.

Effie Parke, Church Clerk

RAYMOND TOPPING JEFFRIES

We are grieved to report the tragic death of Raymond Topping Jeffries, aged nine and one-half years, of Linthicum Heights, Maryland, on August 3, 1956. He was the victim of an accident which occured when the bicycle the little fellow was riding, collided with an automobile as he came out of a side street into the main highway. The badly injured boy was taken to a hospital where all possible was done to relieve his suffering, but he died the next day.

The funeral services were held at the home of his grand-parents, Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Jeffries, on August 6th, in Linthicum Heights; and were conducted by the writer, assisted by Mr. Charles Andrews and Mr. Everett Miller, of the Ferndale Methodist church. Interment was in the Glen Haven Cemetery beside his great grandfather, the late Elder D. L. Topping. The profuse and beautiful florial offerings evidenced the love and esteem in which Raymond was regarded.

Surviving are: one brother, John; and his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Jeffries. The deceased was a capable and amiable boy, and was much beloved. Much sympathy is extended to the bereaved relatives. His death leaves a vacancy in the home that cannot be filled. The memory of his young life, so soon terminated, is enshrined in the hearts of his friends and relatives.

(Elder) Arnold H. Bellows

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 124 DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1956 NO. 12

A NOTE OF THANKS

I was stricken with a heart attack while visiting the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in northern Virginia, three weeks ago. I was removed to Georgetown University hospital, Washington, D. C. From there I was taken to the home of brother Walter Norman, Herndon, Va. One week later I returned to my home in Danville, Va. We shall never forget the kindness of the Norman family, Elder Wood and wife, and others while there.

It is not possible for me to acknowledge personally all the letters, cards and other messages of love and sympathy I have received from brethren and friends. Every message has been appreciated more than words can express. I have been humbled very much in my heart to know that I was being carried so lovingly in the hearts of those I have endeavored to serve. As I have learned of the many prayers that have gone up in my behalf, I could but feel that I would again speak of the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to repeat in my heart:

"My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life or breath remains;
There my best friends, my kindred dwell,
There God my saviour reigns."

D. V. Spangler
November 9, 1956

ALL IS WELL

We cannot ask of thee, dear Lord,
Why things are with us as they are:
We can only look to thee, our Lord,
To be our guiding star.

We beg of thee to lead us on;
Though often dark the way,
Thy love will keep us all to know
Thy strength is ours each day.

Thine arms around us ever more,
Thy hands to gently hold our own,
Thou dost feel our every falling tear,
And hear our sobbing groan.

Let me say, and truly mean;
And to my loved ones tell:
Howe'er it seems to mortal minds,
Our Father doeth all things well.

Effie Parke,
Chehalis, Wash.

THE SIGNS MEANS MUCH TO THE SCATTERED SAINTS

Dear Child of the Living God:

I wrote you awhile back and said to stop sending me the Signs of the Times, if you felt you could not afford to send it any longer. Now I write you to say, Please don't stop my paper — I just can't get along without it. I think I would rather get along without part of my food than to try to get along without the dear old family paper. I have read it more than sixty years; I started taking it when it was a little news-paper. I paid as long as I could, then I asked that it be stopped. Elder Beebe refused to stop it; also Elder Dodson sent all the time he had it, and you have sent it. So, I am sure I never will be able to pay all the back price, but I am sending a year's subscription price, so you can enter me as a new subscriber. I am too old to try to do without it. I love the good letters. I believe the truth it sets forth.

I do not, and never have, lived where I could go to the Old Baptist Church. My folks used to belong, but they are all dead now. I only got to go to your church once in my life; and had one of the elders preach one sermon in my house. I sent a letter to Elder Dodson while he lived, with what I hope was an experience of grace. He published the

letter in the Signs in February, 1943. He also wrote me a letter which is very dear to me.

Will close now, and wait for my paper; so my hopes simply won't die when I think back over the past. I hope to pay as long as I live, but can't say for sure. Love to all the household of God; and fellowship from a sister in a blessed hope.

(The above was not written for publication, but we feel to publish it that our brethren may be more aware of what the Signs means to many of the saints who are aged, or ill, or otherwise not able to attend meetings. — Editors)

TELLING OF THE GOODNESS AND MERCY OF THE LORD

Browns Summit, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler:

It's almost time to renew my subscription to the Signs, so you will find money order for another year.

So much of the time it seems so long from one of our meetings to another, and I cannot find words to express how much it means to have the Signs to read between our meetings. The price is not to be compared with the comfort I receive from the articles written by God's little ones, who are so wonderfully taught of him. The editorials are wonderful, and I am blessed to enjoy most of them to the fullest. I believe I know something about how much the Signs means to the ones who are not able to attend meetings. "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things."

For some reason I feel to write you and Sister Spangler again, and try to tell you a little more of the goodness and mercy of the Lord to me.

. . . I am so happy in my church, and I love it beyond words. I can still see that same precious love and fellowship manifested one for another. My church folks are so good to me; and kind and understanding. Many of them have spoken precious words of comfort to me — always at the right time, when it meant so much to me. "A word spoken in due season — how good it is." I feel so unworthy and that I have nothing to offer the church. However, it is my heart's desire to be thankful to have a home with such precious people. To me, it's so wonderful to be made to sit together in heavenly places. "Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

I shall never forget that this hymn was sung the first time I visited Reidsville church; and it is still precious to me. But, Elder Spangler, I oftimes find the way is still so rugged, and much of the time I am in darkness and feel so cast down and forsaken. Yet I believe with all my heart that it is God's way to keep me humble, and for my good, because sometimes my Saviour makes darkness into a beautiful light for me, and he lifts me up when I am cast down. And when I feel so alone and forsaken, He tells me He will never leave nor forsake me. Oh, how good it is when he speaks to me and blesses me to know the God I love. How do I know him? Because he speaks as no man has ever spoken. How sweet are his words unto my taste: yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth; and sometimes his word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. Oh, that he may keep me in the good way. Yes, I have tasted that the Lord is gracious, even to me. He has proven over and over again that he is a God of grace, peace, love, mercy, truth, and power. He still tells me he is my Shepherd; and sometimes he leads me beside the still waters — and when I would despair, he restores my soul. He does everything just at the right time, doesn't he, Elder Spangler? He is the good Shepherd, and aren't you glad? He is not an hireling, and will not flee when danger comes. His promises truly

are exceedingly great and precious; and it is so good to know that he will fulfill every one of them. Oh, that I knew how to praise him, and to be thankful for his goodness and mercy to me.

I can't forget the wonderful meeting held at Gooch Memorial church, at Stem, the second Sunday in May. That was another happy day for me; and everything (even the very air) seemed to be singing praises to our beloved Saviour's great and holy name. I remember so well Elder Helms spoke from St. John: "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God." I believe with all my heart that he knew what he was talking about, and it was such a blessing to be able to witness with him. And you, Elder Spangler, spoke from Jeremiah: "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." That is so precious to me. My cup ran over; and I felt that even a little child could understand everything. Yet I realize that our hearts must be prepared from on high, to be able to receive these precious truths.

You can see for yourself that I don't know how to express what is in my poor heart, so I will close shortly. But somehow, I know you know what I am trying to say. I have no confidence in myself as to my salvation. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; and against such there is no law." I hope I can witness with the apostle in the above scripture. My only hope is in our precious Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I believe that my hope will serve as an anchor to my soul, both sure and steadfast; and I am hoping someday, in God's own time, to hear our Saviour's voice again, saying, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Then we can praise him with perfect praise, forever and ever. Won't that be a glorious and happy time!

. . . I enjoyed my visit with you all in your home sometime ago, so much; you both were so good and kind to me. May the Lord bless you and your family always. I do hope that you editors may continue with the Signs of the Times as you have in the past — I surely believe it to be God sent, and such a blessing to so many. In precious hope, and love to you both.

Sister Leara Gordon

"HE IS THE LIGHT"

Exeter, Calif.

Dear Kindred in Christ:

As I feel to be on the mountain this morning, conversing with my Lord, my mind goes out to those of like precious faith. As I arose from a night of rest, the sun so beautifully showing forth its golden rays, my mind was so quickly drawn to the scripture in John 8:12: ". . . I am the light of the world," etc.

To me, as I understand the scriptures to teach, he is that spiritual light that shines in our hearts: that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. I agree that it lights every one: in the world he has reference to; and the world he has reference to is the whole house of Israel. The natural sun gives light to all the Adamic family just alike. But not so with the light Jesus speaks about. "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

Our Lord did not say that he would shed some light, that he might enlighten men; neither did he say that he would show them the way to that light, but that **He is the light.** He did not claim that he is a **light**, but that he is the true light — the only light. Outside of him, and apart from him, there is nothing but darkness. The scriptures, both old and new, speak often of Christ as the light: In him was life, and the life was the light of men; and the light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not. John came to bear wit-

ness of the light — he was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light, which was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. (John 1:4-9)

I do not understand this to mean the whole Adamic family; but it does mean, and does include the world which the Father gave the Son in that covenant of grace from the foundation of the world. It is God's world which is under consideration — the church which was hid in Christ, now being revealed in this time world: the ones who are being called out of darkness into his marvelous light. Jesus is that shining light. This world under consideration is the one of which Jesus spoke when he said, All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me, and he that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. No man can come unto me except my Father which sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day. (John 6:37-44 and John 3:17-21)

We read: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil; for every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light lest his deeds should be reproved; but he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought of God." (John 3:19-21) This being wrought of God, is Christ in us, reconciling us to God: they are the ones which have been washed in the blood of the Lamb — they are the ones who tried to hide themselves from the light, because they saw themselves as sinners, guilty before a just and righteous God. But for the drawing Spirit of God, we would have continued to love darkness rather than light. But there was no place for us to hide from his face: we can witness with the Psalmist when he said, "Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, "Surely darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me." (Psalms 139:-5-11)

I believe that is the experience of every new born-again child of God. No poor lost sinner ever came to the light of his own free will and accord, in order that his deeds may be made manifest. My experience is that we will try to hide from the light because of our sinful nature; and we fear the judgement seat of Christ, because we know that if we are judged according to our deeds, that we are lost worlds without end.

Will sum it all up: Jesus is all and in all. We've nothing of our own to plead — we only beg for mercy continually. My prayer to God is that, if it be his holy will, to give his children a clear mind, a pure heart and a forgiving spirit. I feel to be the least among the saints, yet I wouldn't take ten-thousand worlds like this for the hope I have of heaven and immortal glory, for I believe that I have been redeemed by the blood of a crucified and risen Redeemer. My desire is to live at the foot of the cross, and at the feet of my brethren and sisters.

Remember me when at a throne of grace; a sinner saved by grace.

Mrs. G. W. Atkins

1516 Rutland Street,
Houston, Texas

Dear Brethren Spangler and Wood:

God bless all of you. If not deceived, how much I love all of you — all of God's little ones. Even though I may not be one of you, I do believe I sincerely love all Old Baptists: His children where ever they are.

Dear brethren in hope, is the Signs getting better all the time? Or is it that

I enjoy it more? I wish I could tell you how much I enjoy the wonderful enlightening, and edifying editorials, articles and letters. The most I can say, is that they are sweet manna-food from God's table, that nourishes and refreshes my poor thirsty and hungry soul. I hope I am indeed thankful for the privilege of receiving this dear paper which brings to me so many good things.

Last Saturday and Sunday was our meeting days, and I was blessed to attend on Saturday, but became so ill I could not be in the meeting on Sunday. I seldom ever get to meeting now, which is somewhat discouraging: my spirit droops lower and lower, but this battle will not last forever; and the dark and gloomy days — the clouds that hang so heavy over me, will again, I hope, burst with brightness, and I again be made to rejoice in our Saviour's love; and in the knowledge that all these things (afflictions, discouragements, and tribulations) come to us while sojourneying here in time for our good, and God's glory.

I did not expect to write so much, but wanted to ask your views on Matthew 24:19, which reads: "And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days." I have read this many, many times, but never before has it caused me much meditation until now. It is a mystery to me, and I have no light on it. Please, when any of the brethren have a mind, will they please give me their views, or interpretation, on this verse.

May God's mercy and grace abound with you, and enable you to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. May the Signs of the Times live on, and on, bringing good tidings to all that love the precious gospel of Jesus Christ our Redeemer. In bonds of love from an old sinner.

Harriett Little Gray

BLASPHEMY IS NOT CONFINED TO THE PROFANE WORLD

The following is an interesting statement by the late Elder Chick. It was written as a foot-note to a letter published in the Signs in 1897, in which the writer, the later Brother Richard Case, of Canada, mentioned that he had heard some awful language in the profane world, but had heard far worse from the professed religious world, when they say, "the Lord is trying to save sinners; that he has done all he can to save men, and that he cannot save them because they will not give their hearts to God," etc.

"Our brother (Richard Case) has spoken of the blasphemy of the religious world being greater than that of the profane world. This has called to our mind an incident in the life of the late Elder Whitehouse, of Maine, which we heard him relate many years since. In early life, for years he had followed the sea, having, as we recollect, been carried to sea by a press gang when a youth.

After becoming a minister of Jesus Christ many years later, he had an appointment to preach in a town in Maine, near the ocean. He was standing upon the green in front of the meeting-house, conversing with those who were gathering, when two sailors drove by at a somewhat reckless speed; and as they did so, one of them made use of a terrible oath. A man standing by said, shudderingly, "What wicked wretches sailors are!"

Elder Whitehouse felt that this demanded notice and rebuke, and, turning to the man, said, "Sir, you do not know anything about sailors. No class of people reverence the power of God more: they see his wonders in the deep. I have heard the name of God blasphemed more in one hour in that pulpit than I ever heard it by sailors in all the years I sailed the deep; for in that pulpit I have heard the infinite power of God denied, which no sailor would ever think of doing."

We have never forgotten the impression made upon us by this language of Elder Whitehouse. We have given the incident because it illustrates the language of Brother Case."

ENJOYS THE SIGNS

Salisbury, Md.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I feel I want to donate something to the dear old Signs of the Times. My parents, Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin B. Hastings, took the paper as far back as I can remember. The Signs is very precious to me: I hold them next to my Bible. I have been a subscriber since I was first married, to Nora E. Hearn, in 1892. We both were reared by Old School Baptist parents, and not used to going to any other church. We soon began to love the Old School Baptist people and the doctrine they preached; and seldom missed an appointment, as we believed they preached the truth. But we felt too unworthy to be with them, so we stayed away as long as we could; but the third Sunday in March, 1896, we went forward and tried to tell a little of what we hoped the dear Lord had done for us. We were received, and baptized the same day by the late Elder A. B. Francis. That was a happy day to us long to be remembered. But we soon had our doubts and fears that maybe we had deceived the church. That little hope is still with us; though it seems small at times. Yet I would not exchange it for this whole world (if I could).

My first wife passed away in March, 1916, to be at rest. In August, 1917, the dear Lord blessed me with another good companion, Grace Holloway Hastings; and we lived happy together over twenty-one years. She, too, was called to rest February 3, 1956. I am left alone in my old age; and yet not alone, for I feel the dear Lord has blessed me all my life with good health, and two of the very best companions. It seems now that I have nothing to live for, and, if it be His will, I would be very glad to pass on. But not my will but His be done. There is a time to be born, and a time to die. . .

Your little brother,
Ananias Hastings

CAN'T DO WITHOUT HER PAPERS

Rocky Mount, N. C.

Dear Editors:

Please find enclosed three dollars to pay for my next year's Signs of the Times. I feel that I can't do without it. My papers are the most preaching I get; and they are sweet to my hungry soul.

I am nearing my eighty-fourth birthday — can't see very well; can't write very well; but, thanks be to God, He has given me to love very well. For, sixty years ago, when I had come to the end, and felt there was no hope for me: no way to escape the wrath of God, and if I were sent to hell, his righteous law would be right, for I deserved nothing better. But, when I was sinking down in endless woe, unexpectedly Christ Jesus appeared where I was, and had compassion on me; and took the heavy burden off of me, upon himself, and gave to me a lot of love — love that I can feel and see. God is love; he teaches all his children to love, and where love is there is no strife.

A very little sister by the grace of God.
Mary E. Gardner

Editors and Readers of the Signs:

I am sending you a letter written me by a sister who had united with the Old Baptist church, and went away for twenty years; and who now has been brought back to the fold by God's mighty power, love and mercy. By her consent, I am sending it to you for publication, having been requested to by many brethren and sisters.

A poor sinner,
(Elder) T. A. Wall

HAPPY TO BE HOME

Winnsboro, Texas

Elder T. A. Wall,

Dear Brother Wall:

A week has gone by since we had our

meeting, and I have been thinking back to the good preaching done by Brother Lloyd, and thought I would drop you a letter to tell you and Brother Lloyd how much I truly enjoyed it. It was wonderful!

Do hope you had a nice visit with the good folks in Arkansas. We missed you at Providence, but, as I said above, Brother Lloyd did a wonderful job of "feeding us."

Saturday morning when he went up to preach and told us that Brother Heygood could not be with us, I thought to myself, "It is too much for one person to do alone." But immediately I was made to think, "If it is the Lord's will, Brother Lloyd will carry the load alone;" though to me, it did seem too much to put upon one's shoulder. But then we must remember that He called his own servants and delivered unto them His goods; and so, I believe it was with Brother Lloyd. I truly believe the Lord was with Brother Lloyd all the way for he most certainly fed the "little flock," and, it seems to me, we were all made to know it came from above. I believe to, the talk he gave during the communion was the most beautiful I have ever heard.

I also wanted to tell you and Brother Lloyd that this past year of my life has been a happy and contented one; and I am very grateful to the good sisters and Brother White for taking me back home last September — though I know perfectly well how unworthy I am, and that I am not good enough to be counted among them.

I agree with Brother Lloyd when he preached that God created every creature (no matter how small) on this earth and placed each here for a purpose, etc. Still, I do not know **Why** He created this world and things herein, except that it was His own pleasure to do so; for He most certainly did not have to find out anything that man would or could do (as many would have us believe), for He is all wise.

Looking back over the past twenty years of my life, I am made to think He wanted a people with unbounded love to be with Him in eternity, so He created us, making a proving ground here; not to prove to us himself, but to ourselves, that we are **nothing** and all that keeps us is God's infinite love and mercy. You and I know we have to travel the dark paths of sin and trouble until we are made to see His love is for the poor worms of the dust such as we are; and after we have been made to feel and know His love, we are made to see, as I said above, that we are **nothing,** and are kept only by His love and mercy. I know for the past twenty years, I lived in such a state of mind and misery I could hardly stand it. To me, it was a living hell, if I may put it so strongly, but I was made to see that I could not do anything about it, but all that was done, had to come from, and be done by, Him.

You know I was very unhappy all those years, and I kept searching for something, though I could not seem to find it. I went to church seeking, seeking, but it seemed not to be anywhere. One Sunday at church I was asked to teach a "small children's Sunday School Class," and I thought, Brother Wall, perhaps this is what I have been seeking and this is what it will take to make me happy. I tried, but Brother Wall, before the class was over, I was made to know I just could not take that belief any longer. As I was trying to teach the little fellows, I looked into the shining face of a little five year old boy (as long as I live I shall never forget that face) and he seemed to say "what are you doing here and just what are you trying to do — I cannot understand a word you are saying." That was when I was made to cry to myself, "Lord, what am I doing — who am I to try to teach a child of you? I know it has to be You, Lord, who does the teaching and not a black sinner such as I." Do you know what I did Brother Wall? I just closed the book and told the little fellows they could play until the bell rang. I sat there and thought and thought of many things, and wondered what was going to become of me, for I had reached the end

of the rope, so to speak, in trying to find something that would satisfy my soul. For sometime I went on this way, wondering if things would ever be any better with me and then something within began to cry for help from Him, and I was made to ask Him to show me if there was a place for me where there could be a peace of mind and rest to my weary soul. This cry went on for sometime and then it came to me in a dream, "Lo, I have loved you with an everlasting love therefore with loving kindness I have drawn thee." And then I saw a vision of the Providence Church doors opening, and I walked in. I believe with all my heart that He showed me where to go to find the happiness and contentment I was crying for; and on the first Sunday in September of last year, I asked the good folks to take me back — they did, though I am still wondering why — for I am not worthy to be counted among them; but I do love everyone of them and love the doctrine for which they stand, and I am very proud to be one of them, and my hope is that when the Good Lord comes for his sheep, I will be taken into that heavenly home with them.

I hope you understand what I have tried to say here; God is good to me and I know all things good come from him, and to tell you and Brother Lloyd of the happiness I have known throughout the year with God's people and I hope He will always let me remain with them. (These are the things I tried to say, even if it did take two pages to say them in.) Those twenty years away from them were **most terrible,** believe me.

Hope to see all of you the first Sunday of next month.

As always,
Winnie Hammonds

(Note: the Brother Lloyd referred to above is Elder Lloyd Wall — Editor.)

EXPERIENCE OF SISTER BASHAM (CONCLUDED)

It did seem to me that her experience was published for my benefit, being so much like mine; and as she had told it to the Primitive Baptist Church, to the people that I believed to be a part of the church of the true and living God, those I dearly loved, and they had received her into their number, and were now publishing her experience, it was to me good evidence that they thought her's a Christian experience; so why should I not have hope that it was the Lord that enabled me to rejoice and to praise him when I shouted? Then the words, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit," were very comfortingly applied to my poor soul. About this time (I cannot remember exactly which was first, nor how long were the intervals of time) the record of doubting Thomas, and especially the words, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed;" also Christ's temptations in the wilderness, or rather the temptations offered by the tempter; also the words of the blind man, who did not seem to me to understand exactly how it was that he received his sight, but yet could see, whereas he was once blind; also other passages or verses; all seemed to strengthen my hope and relieve me of my great trouble. Thus I may say I was gradually relieved, and a sweet and precious hope was gived me, though often faint, that Christ had atoned for my sins, though so enormous. Precious Savior! What wonderous love!

My physical strength had by this time improved, and my health was improving, though I was yet much afflicted and very weak, being unable to sit up all day, and had been for eighteen or twenty months. As I grew stronger and read the Bible more (I had never read it very much), my desire to join the Primitive Baptist Church and be baptized became very great; but I felt un-

worthy and unfit to ever offer to do so, often fearing it was Satan controlling me and causing me to have those impressions, and that I knew nothing about the love of God shed abroad in the heart, as his children do. I tried to pray to the Lord to undeceive me if I was deceived and if I was one of his children that he would direct and teach me, and brighten my evidence, and enable me to do my duty. As to the denomination to join, I now had no trouble about that. I think it was made plain to me that the Primitive Baptists, or Old School, as they are often called, are the true church. But was I fit to be with those good people? was what concerned me. I longed to be with them; though I must here say that in my girlhood days I fully made up my mind and decided to never be one of them, as the doctrine they held was too unpopular. But now all things had become new. These words were blessed to my comfort, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren," feeling that I certainly loved them. After this, about August, 1856, I had a very comforting conversation with Elder Z. Angel, in which I told him of some of my trials. He gave me much encouragement. He said it was my duty to talk to the church and be baptized. But I still hesitated, hoping for a brighter evidence that I was a fit subject, until (I think) June, 1857, when in much weakness, with fear and trembling, the tears flowing from my eyes, I was given courage and went before the church at Bethel, Franklin County, and told something of what I have here written, when the late Elder J. R. Martin, pastor, said to the church that they could ask me any questions they wished; as for himself he was satisfied; that he had heard me talk before. I was received without a question being asked me, and was baptized on the next fourth Sunday morning. I think I at least felt the answer of a good conscience, and was that day granted the sweet privilege of uniting with the dear brethren and sisters in partaking of the emblems of the dear Lord's broken body, and to sip of the wine, so emblematic of his precious blood shed for poor sinners. O what a great privilege I felt was conferred on doubting; but I thank the dear Lord that he has not left me entirely without hope, but has enabled me to feel that we are wonderfully blessed of him. Praise his holy name. My life since the fall of 1854 has been, and yet is, one of great physical affliction, not having been able to sit up or be up all day during that time. I have been confined to my bed almost constantly for about twenty-three years embracing three different periods, and yet am. I was unable to turn myself or move in bed for about fifteen years of the time, embracing three different periods. I have been, and am now, slowly gaining strength. I can rise, and turn about, and sit up a few moments. I am writing this, and have to do what writing I do, prostrate in bed, little at a time, and only when strongest. Many years of my life I have not only been unable to write, but also to read, or to hear much reading or conversation without injury. But the Lord is good and merciful to us. O yes, I feel that he has been so good and merciful to us all the days of our life that it calls for our constant praise and thanksgiving. But I often have to cry, My leanness! my leadness! and to mourn my unprofitableness and short comings, so often failing to do the things that I would, and doing those things I would not.

I did not intend writing so much. Dear brethren editors, I fear I have made this much too long, and that it will occupy too much of your valuable time to read it. I have tried to be brief, but could do no better than I have, and have left off much that I would like to

have said; but perhaps you will think that I had better have remained silent. If so, cast it to the flames, and all will be right with me. I could not send it were it not for my confidence in your judgment. My dear husband has been a subscriber for the Signs nearly all the time since the year 1857. I cannot express the comfort and encouragement I have received from it, situated as we are, more than twenty miles from the church of my membership, and not having been able to meet with them since 1868. May the dear Lord bless you with grace for every need, and long spare you to publish and send out the Signs, as in the past, if consistent with his will, is the desire of your afflicted, unworthy, weak sister, saved by the unmerited grace of God, if saved at all. I hope that we may be remembered in your prayers.

SUSAN JULIA BASHAM

We expect to publish the further contributions to the Endowment Fund in the January issue. — Editors.

A SUBSCRIPTION TO THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES IS A NICE PRESENT TO GIVE TO SOMEONE WHO LOVES THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE.

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union meeting will be held with the church at Pittman's Grove the fifth Saturday and Sunday in December, 1956. The church is located on highway 222, about two and one-half miles from Kenly, N. C., between Kenly and Fremont, N. C. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of truth and especially to our ministering brethren.

J. T. Ballance, Clerk

EDITORIALS

Danville, Virginia **December, 1956**

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All letters for this paper should be addressed and remittances made payable

TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 5, Box 332F **Danville, Va.**

EDITORIAL

OUR APPRECIATION

We wish it were possible for us to express our gratitude and thanks for the splendid response which has been received from our brethren and friends on our announcement of the need for an Endowment Fund to help defray the expenses of publishing the Signs of the Times, or for the purchasing of a press to print the paper, whichever should be found feasable.

The response to our announcement shows the great interest which is had in the Signs by our people, and their desire that the paper be maintained not only sound in doctrine, but also to present a respectable appearance as it goes out before the public. We know that in some cases the "widow's mite" has been freely contributed; and these added to each contribution have warmed our

hearts, and given us much encouragement.

Your editors, and those who compose the Board of Directors, trust that they have no other desire than that they may be dedicated, as the Lord may be pleased to enable them, to the maintenance of the doctrine of God our Saviour to his honor and glory; and to the comfort and edification of those who have been taught the truth as it is in our Lord.

We suspect that but few of our people know the problems which present themselves in the editing and publishing the paper, and the great amount of labor and time necessary to get each issue into the mail. These things do not appear on the surface, but nevertheless they are there: and we feel that we could not continue, were we not sustained, as we trust, by the grace of our God. When we are discouraged, often a letter or note from someone, expressing the joy and comfort they obtain from the writings of the brethren, will cause us to forget our labor, and be glad that the Lord enables us to be of some benefit to them.

We desire our brethren and friends to continue to write their experiences, and views on the scriptures; and we will do our best to publish those things which are scripturally and experimentally sound — those things which are comforting and edifying to the brethren.

We desire the prayers of our brethren that we may be sustained in the publication of the Signs, and in all our labors in the vinyard; and that the name of our God may always be exalted and praised in everything that appears in our columns. We solicit the continued support in a material way: new subscriptions, re-newals, and contributions to the Indigent Fund.

When it is determined to what purpose the contributions of the brethren and friends will be used, either to the Endowment Fund, or a press, we will announce it in our columns.

Editors

AM I A GOD-CALLED MINISTER?

YOU WILL NOTE from my autobiography that I came under the hands of two presbyteries — being ordained twice by man in each of two organizations to the work of the ministry. One of these acts must have been a mistake, maybe, both of them. The great question: am I a God-called gospel minister? Let us try these two calls by analysis and contrast to determine whether or not either be of God.

I was in my "teens" when hands were laid on me by the first presbytery. I was of the opinion that the plan of salvation was offered to everybody. Each and every one of the family who came to the "age of accountability" possessed equal and sufficient ability to "accept the plan" by complying with certain conditions and thereby earn Heaven as their home by their own merits. I consented to that ordination or "call" upon the following basis of reasoning:

1. I had accepted the "Plan."
2. I had complied with the requirements.
3. I was prepared to teach others these conditions.
4. I was able to speak fluently and interest the hearers.
5. My walk and conversation was more becoming than others.
6. This demanded their high esteem and great respect for me.
7. It gave me opportunity to build a greater reputation by influencing others.

As the reader will note in my other writings relative to my experience, the time came when this was all proved to be vanity. I had greatly deceived myself and others. The thought that I had so vehemently spoken untruths completely banished from my mind any thought of ever again speaking publicly in the name of the One whom I had so greatly blasphemed!

The day I was received into the fellowship of Cedar Hill Primitive Baptist Church of Christ near Amity, Arkansas was one of the greatest surprises of my

life because I realized myself to be the chief of sinners. I was worse than any other because I had used God's name in vain while wearing the cloak of religion from the pulpit! I had pretended to be something when I was worse than nothing! I thought this would forever bar me from such a sacred place as the pulpit. The high privilege of sitting silently with the brethren was too sacred for so great a sinner as I felt myself to be.

Soon after I was received into the fellowship of the Church I was attacked with such despondent and depressed condition of mind that I felt to have but few more hours to live at most. This continued without a moment of relaxation for days and weeks that seemed to be ages. I was so burdened with an unbearable weight that I felt my life was being crushed. Many nights I went to my room convinced that I would never see the sun rise again. Such loneliness and heartache is indescribable. All my dreams were as vexing as my daily thoughts. Groanings and yearnings for God's mercy availed nothing. I was convinced one night that all this was upon me because I had deceived the people of God. I must have fallen asleep, for either in a vision or dream I was standing before a congregation of people preaching upon the text: "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." I received such joy in my confessions that I awoke rejoicing in mind for the first time in weeks and months. I immediately reached for the Bible and searched for some text of Scripture that would harmonize with that expression. I was somewhat surprised when I found it verbatim in Job 42:6. This was the first time the thought occurred to me concerning preaching with the Old Baptists. The thought caused me to shudder and I began to argue my disqualifications. "I am ignorant and my brethren are wise. Their walk is godly and my walk ungodly. They are content and I am disturbed." These arguments became so numerous that the idea of preaching was dispelled from my mind and I was again possessed with the same melancholy state of mind.

I recall one night that I tossed in my bed for hours and tried to pray that the burden be removed. When I became exhausted I was suddenly impressed with the thought, "There is something you MUST do." I asked, "What is it, Lord?" There was no reply, thus no relief. I began to reason. "I am unfit to be a member of the church. I have deceived these good people. I MUST frankly confess to them and ask them to exclude me from their fellowship." "Lord, if this be what I must do give me relief." Yet no relief came! I asked the same question concerning many acts that came to mind. Still no relief. Frustrated to the extent of insanity, I felt I MUST die. The reality of dying in this condition so horrified me that I cried in exasperation, "Lord, anything!" The command came like a thunderbolt, "Preach Christ the Way." I answered aloud, "I will preach." Suddenly my body ceased its trembling. My aching heart soothed. My surging and throbbing breast was calmed. The terrible weight was lifted and the burden removed. I went to sleep praising God for the relief of a troubled mind that had tortured me for many days. I had the first hours of peaceful sleep that I had enjoyed in weeks.

I awoke the next morning as convinced that I would preach as any one has ever been impressed of something they must do. The relief did not last long. My disqualifications came to mind again. Finally I thought of one possible qualification: "You have experience in public speaking." This one sunk into oblivion when I considered:

1. Heretofore you have been sure of yourself concerning the subject matter and preparation; now, you are uncertain and unprepared.
2. Before, you felt to have more knowledge on the subject than your hearers; now you are more ignorant than any one of them.
3. Before, you felt they would listen because they esteemed you as their superior; now, you feel to be less than the least.

4. Before, you were without fear and boldly appeared before any congregation; now, you are even fearful of yourself.

By this time I was strolling down a country road and must have gone into unconsciousness, because when I became conscious, words were flowing with ease from my mouth and a peculiarly constructed pulpit was before me. Tears of joy were flowing from my eyes. I looked out before me for the congregation and could see nothing but a winding road in front and trees on both sides. I reasoned: "This pulpit is an imagination of the mind caused from the tears that beclouded my eyes. I dried my eyes, blinked them, looked again and the pulpit was still there. I was yet walking, but this last sight so excited me that I stood still, closed my eyes for awhile, opened them again, but the pulpit was still in front of me. Something said, "I will put thoughts in your mind and words in your mouth when you are behind the pulpit." Then, the pulpit vanished and I was trembling from head to feet. I was so weak I could hardly stand and was about four miles from home. While walking home I feasted upon this new experience and conclusion that God speaks through His ministers. I thought I would tell this experience to my brethren but soon it seemed so unreasonable that doubts began to haunt me and I have kept it until this day with this exception: once, while speaking for the first time in a meetinghouse, I looked down and saw this peculiarly constructed pulpit in reality and paused in the discourse to say, "I have seen this pulpit before." Even though I have not told this, it has been a great encouragement to me many times when going behind the sacred stand, feeling so unprepared.

A few days later, (September 1930), I attended an adjoining association near Eldorado, Arkansas. It was the first time I had been outside my home vicinity while among this people. They were strangers in the flesh but yet I felt drawn toward them. While there I visited in the home of Elder T. J. Evers where some visiting elders were scheduled to preach. My feeling of unworthiness would not permit me to be in the room during preaching but I listened from the outside. When they had finished preaching, someone called my name, came after me, ushered me inside, and informed me that I was requested to preach. I was never so shocked in my life as I thought no one had any idea that I would ever attempt to preach, especially to make my first attempt away from home among strangers. I had not hinted to anyone of such impression. I do not know anything I said that night. However, I experienced some relief of mind in the exercise. When I finished I walked from that room into an adjoining room to be alone. I was shocked with the sight of gray-headed elders sitting in that room with their heads bowed. I thought, "What a fool I must be to attempt to speak in the name of the Lord in the presence of these great men of God." I was so ashamed of myself.

The next meeting at my home church I was called upon to introduce services with hymn and prayer. Since that time I have attempted many times to speak, accompanied with great fear and much trembling. My deep-felt sense of unworthiness and inability has been so uppermost in my mind that I have wondered much of the time, "Do I have the right to occupy such a sacred position and attempt to speak in the presence of God's people?"

I bored the listeners for months by using much of the time in trying to express my unworthiness and inability. My estimation of myself as being so sinful was so impressed on my mind that many expressions relative to this conviction were made each and every time I appeared before a congregation. It gave me relief but I was not aware of being so boresome to the hearers. God saw fit to use a sister to bring this to my attention. She told me of a conversation she overheard between a daughter and her father. Her daughter announced, "Dad, I am going over to Oakland

Schoolhouse today to church." Her father answered, "What? Do you want to hear that mean man tell of his meanness?" This caused much meditation. I have felt as unworthy, sinful, and unfit since then but have been cautious to brief my expressions concerning it. This conversation proved to be a great blessing to me and (I am persuaded) to those who have to sit under the hearing of my voice.

Many times in the exercises of speaking in the presence of this people I lamented much in the closing remarks upon how God had withheld His Spirit from me and that I had been given "no light" upon the subject under discussion. One day I heard an elder preach. His discourse melted my heart and I experienced exultant joy from the beginning of his sermon throughout. His words were heavenly and the thoughts expressed were rapturous to me. He paused at the end of his glorious sermon and said, "I have had no unction of the Spirit while speaking. What I have said has been wholly formal and strictly mechanical." This was like pouring ice water on me. It made me shudder. Since that time I have not expressed these lamentations in closing — though I have felt it. It may be mechanical and formal as far as the speaker is concerned, but God is blessing the hearer with the unction of the Spirit. Since then I have been more content with the thought that God blesses me to the extent that it pleases Him and consecrates it to the hearers to the degree of His pleasure. Who am I to lament if He holds all joy from me and blesses the hearers with exceeding joy? Sometimes when feeling the coldest in delivery of a discourse I have seen the Spirit manifested in the faces of the hearers. Could such a sermon be classed hypocritical, formal, and/or mechanical?

Praying in public was such a task for me. I felt it to be the greatest sin to utter words intended to be directed to God without feeling to be in the spirit of prayer. I refused to engage in public prayer many times when called upon because of this conviction. I recall once being in the predicament when I could not refuse even though I was convinced it would be formal and hypocritical! Words flowed fluently from my mouth but I was so cold that they seemed to mock me with the cry, "Hypocritical, hypocritical." When I arose from the form of prayer I felt to be the greatest blaspheming hypocrite in the world! I was greatly surprised and astonished when something very unusual took place. One man immediately arose, came toward me with tears streaming down his face, took me by the hand, and exclaimed, "What a wonderful prayer. You worded the yearning of MY heart!" I was then convinced that God was pleased sometimes to put the yearnings in one's heart and the words to express these yearnings in another's mouth. May I ask the reader, "Could this prayer be classed as an hypocritical prayer?" Since that time I have not refused to engage in public prayer when called upon.

My wife was the first one that I baptized. Officiating in the ordinances of the church seemed too high for me. I felt so unworthy to officiate that I felt so weak I could hardly stand and was trembling when I led her into the beautiful Caddo stream near Amity, Arkansas to baptize her. I felt that I could not go through this ordeal. I shall never forget the calmness and strength I suddenly experienced when I began the baptismal ceremony. Some of the most glorious experiences I have had was in the act of putting beneath the water candidates for church membership. God has always come to my rescue and converted the fear into sublime calmness in my attempt to engage in this sacred ordinance.

It seemed to be the impossible for me to be used to comfort those who were bereaved because of a death in the immediate family. I shuddered at the thought of ever being called upon. If not deceived, the Lord has taken care of that also. I have been surprised and astonished at the words that have come

from my mouth that were appropriate on such occasions.

I have had like experiences in visiting, praying for the sick, encouraging those who were so low in spirit, giving solutions to baffling problems, averting brethren from detrimental procedure, and striving for peace among troubled brethren. In every case that my efforts have been successfully used, it has been beyond any question with me concerning the source of strength. In every case all false ideas of authority being vested in me have been burned out through fiery trials and God has revealed Himself as the Author of all good acts which are godly. When it pleases God to work the will in you there is no shifting from His will to yours. His will has been so convincing to me that there has been no halting between opinions when it is placed in my mind. I have learned by sad experience that it is best to do nothing regarding a matter until you are made certain concerning what ought to be done. God has so thoroughly worked the do in me in many cases that I was unaware of what I was doing until it was already done. Could I give myself a pat on the shoulder and congratulate myself for doing something that had been done through me and I was unaware of it while it was going on?

I felt many times in years past that I ought to lay aside my encumbrances and dis-engage myself from the vocations of this world and devote what little strength and mind that God had blessed me with to the service of the churches who were looking to me as their pastor. Circumstances over which I had no control brought me into this position. I was forced to give up my worldly career. I receive no salary nor wage from any one or ones. It has been so for years, but God has taken care to impress the hearts of friends and brethren to freely give of their means to us that we have not suffered in want of the necessary things of this natural life. Funds have come when needed without any solicitation to such an extent that I am fully persuaded that God controls the minds of the contributors even to the amount of contributions.

When I am given to review my life as a minister of God and pastor of churches, I feel that I have been very unprofitable. I have failed in many duties. I have fallen so far short of performing the duties incumbent upon a pastor that I am made to say, "I surely have been mistaken in it all." My brethren have been very tolerant toward me in bearing with my infirmities. Should they have been exacting I would have been severed from their fellowship long ago. I beg an interest in the prayers of each and every one of you who reads this. After writing this imperfect treatise upon this question it remains an unanswered question to me: **"Am I a God-called gospel minister?"**

E. J. L.

(The above is a chapter from Elder Lambert's book, "Tried in the Furnace.")

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Washington, D. C.,
Jan. 24, 1865

BROTHER BEEBE:—In compliance with the request of Nathaniel Hart, of Pennington, N. J., I forward you, for publication in the "Signs of the Times," some remarks upon the following declaration of scripture: "For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle."—1 Cor. xiv. 8.

The apostle commences the chapter, in which the above language is recorded, with an exhortation to "Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy:" then goes on to show the difference between speaking in an unknown tongue, and prophesying; and it seems that the apostle means by prophesying in this

chapter the public interpretation of scripture, from the number of times he uses it, (nine) and the connection in which it stands; and he also dwells with much earnestness and great power upon the distinctions that should be made, so that there should be no confusion in the application of the gifts; and says of himself, "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all, yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that (by my voice) I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." Whatever gifts there might be in the church, whether prophecy, prayer, exhortation, or tongues, he would have them all subservient for the good of the church; consequently every thing should be properly arranged and adapted in the church for the mutual benefit and edification of all the members; but he places prophesying before any other gift, as to its benefit to the church; and the Lord Jesus had blessed him with a deep understanding of the scriptures. He says, "And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air. There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification." After being so plain and explicit upon those matters, he says, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."

My friend, in his request, says: "Give me the certain as well as the uncertain sound." It would seem that the apostle draws a conclusion from the effects of an improper mingling of sounds, by referring to the ancient method of sounding a trumpet when an host was encamped, ready for battle; but it was necessary that a distinction should be made when it was sounded to prepare for battle, otherwise confusion might be the result instead of preparation to meet the foe; therefore the sound to prepare for battle must be different from any other blast of the trumpet. While the apostle brings such an illustration to show the pernicious effects of confusion in the church, we are not to understand him as representing that there is an uncertainty in the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; neither is the gospel of the grace of God, a yea or nay system, but it is yea and **amen**; but he shows the error and inconsistencies that even the children of God, as men, may commit, and the consequences that may result from such a course.

The gospel trumpet is called a great trumpet; and the prophetic declaration was, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcast in the land of Egypt, and worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem." It is a great trumpet, for the redemption of the church, through the sufferings, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is proclaimed; and all other subjects, when compared with **that** are of little consequence, and fade away before it as the stars of heaven do before the rising sun.

When the gospel trumpet is sounded by the servants of Jesus Christ, and they are directed by the Spirit, it is the **same certain** sound wherever given; for in the glorious blast the "keynote," or foundation is, "Salvation is of the Lord." The proclamation of the glad tidings of the gospel is most cheering, sweet and soul-transporting sound to quickened sinners that ever saluted mortals; and David, the king of Israel, said: "Blessed is the people that **know** the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance; in thy name shall they rejoice all the day; and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." The gospel trumpet not only gives a certain sound, but it is a joyful sound. Whatever the gospel trumpet says concerning the finished work of our precious Redeemer is true;

therefore it is a **certain** sound; and not a discordant note will be heard in the soul-cheering, heavenly music. Although many, yea all, of the gospel trumpeters may appear as crooked and insignificant to the religious world as the ram's horns, used by Joshua and Israel, did to the inhabitants of Jericho, it will not make the truth of God of none effect.

Many great and important principles are involved in the salvation by grace, yet they are all branches of the same great truth, proceeding from the same source; and no one of the branches is isolated, but all are united, and make one. There is a certainty connected with every branch of gospel truth; and whatever branch is dwelt upon by a child of God, when led by the spirit, there is a certainty in it; for it rests upon as sure a basis as the Eternal Throne. When the all-important subject of the atonement is clearly and fully set forth, there is no uncertainty in the sound of the trumpet, for it expressly declares that the offering, on Calvary, was for the elect; and **now** in their Head, they all stand justified; also, not one can be added thereto by all the powers of men, neither can one be taken therefrom by all the rage and malice of wicked men and devils. Whenever any doubt is expressed or implied about the finished work of Emmanuel, the trumpet, so far as men are concerned, gives an uncertain sound; because the record shows positively that inspired prophets and apostles gave it a certain sound. (See Isa. 53d Chap. entire.) Throughout the New Testament, not one sentence is recorded to show that any contingency is connected with the crucifixion of our dear Redeemer; and when the blast, upon the trumpet, is given according to the heavenly note-book (if I may so speak) there can be no uncertainty about the matter, whatever branch of truth is dwelt upon whether the atonement, the new birth, the christian warfare, church discipline, the office work of the gospel ministry, or the resurrection; for each and all are recorded **there** in the most positive terms that language can express. It is often the case, with the christian soldier, after hearing the trumpet give the certain sound upon any one of those important branches of doctrine, that he feels prepared to meet a foe of Zion; consequently he is prepared to the battle.

A strong and convincing evidence that the trumpet gives a certain sound is when the blast gathers the children of God together; for the prophetic declaration was that it should be blown, "and they **shall** come;" but we must not understand that the certain sound will gather the enemies of God and gospel truth, on the contrary, the sound to them is repulsive; often they go out from the gospel church that they may be made manifest. John says of certain characters, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would (no doubt) have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us;" and Paul says, "For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one we are the savior of death unto death; and to the other the savor of life unto life; and who is sufficient for these things."

There is so much inclination arising from the fleshly propensity of the old man, with the servants of God, that if they could have their own desires accomplished, they would always sound the soul-cheering and melting strains of jubilee upon the trumpet; but God, in his inscrutable wisdom, sometimes places them in a condition to warn the soldiers of the cross of the approach of the foe, **then** the "war-blast" has to be blown, not to incite to deeds of courage and blood, but to "buckle on" the christian armor, to meet false doctrine in whatever guise it may appear; but if the trumpet gives an **uncertain** sound, who would prepare? When the followers of our Lord and Savior are aroused and summoned to such conflicts, the "Sword of the Spirit" is the only effectual weapon; "For though we walk in the

flesh, we do not war **after** the flesh; for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds." At such times of conflict, with what watchfulness, prayerfulness, and godly fear, should the soldiers of the cross engage in the conflict, as we are so prone to err, and be led astray by our carnal minds.

The true servants of God, in ancient times, had their difficulties to encounter, on account of false doctrines being introduced into the church. Paul, on one occasion, said to a body of professed believers "who hath bewitched you?" and at a certain time, withstood Peter "to the face because he was to be blamed." (See Gal. 2d Chap.) That must have been a grave matter in the eyes of Paul, but he contended for the truth fearlessly, though the error was with and contended for by as eminent an apostle as Peter, and it was no less error because found and advocated by Peter, than though it had been one of the lowliest children of God.

We need not go back into remote ages only to search for times when it was necessary for the servants of Jesus Christ to give the "war-blast," to arouse the faithful soldier of Christ, and warn them of the danger by which they were surrounded; for not more than thirty-five or forty years ago, the doctrines, commandments, and institutions of men had obtained so strong a hold in the visible church, that the old "landmarks" were nearly lost sight of (not swept away) by the larger portion of the **then** visible organization; and, in some instances, no arminian sect upon the face of the earth, went farther in their fleshly systems than the professed Bapist ministers did; but, in the midst of such abominable heresy, God reserved to himself faithful witnesses, who were not swept away by the popular flood of delusion; men who had been taught by the spirit of the living God that the voice of the people was **not** the voice of God; and when the truth, the honor, and the glory of the true disciples of Jesus demanded it, the trumpet sounded **long** and **loud,** and a sifting and separating was the result; and they who could not endure sound doctrine, went by themselves and to their own company. Those true and tried servants of God, who were kept by him from drinking of the cup, filled with wine of Babylon, which caused *them* so much religious intoxication, as well as at the present time, had the blessed consolation of feeling that God had, by his grace, enabled them to raise the standard of truth; many of them have gone home to rest, and some of them still live to share with the church in her trials and afflictions; but they too will soon be dismissed from the conflict.

For if the trumpet shall give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? As has been stated in this article there are no uncertainties in the gospel; but the children of God, as men, often become so darkened and confused in their minds, that when they attempt to speak or write, relative to any branch of God's truth, there seems to be no tangible point arrived at whatever; **then** so far as they, as men, are concerned, there is confusion. If the ministers of the gospel have not their times of sorrow, trials and doubts, feeling often that they are the weakest of the weak, and **in** and of themselves ignorance, darkness and vanity, then the writer of this article is not one of them. Sometimes when a dark cloud obscures the vision of the ministers of the gospel, they ardently desire to give the trumpet the certain sound; but alas! they become so bewildered that they are like a man lost in the forest, and wander round and round and come back to the starting point; but such trials discipline their minds and teach them how feeble and imperfect they are.

But as the old man is not changed, God's servants are suffered, for some wise purpose, at times, to be under the influence of the flesh, so that there is a disposition to keep back a "part of the price;" partly for fear of man, and partly to give no offence; but under such an impulse they do not wish to advance

anything but the truth, but conclude it is not expedient to use the "gospel reed" so fully, as to measure "the building" according to the word of God; and, when fettered by the old man, the servants of God are very apt to "suit" their discourses to the circumstances; but sooner or later they see the fruits of such a course, and their God will chastise them. Paul said, "And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased." Whenever the preaching is pleasing to legalists, the trumpet has given an uncertain sound. If my friend is an experimental man, and I think his iniquity is an evidence of that, he well knows that under such an influence as that of the fleshly mind, the trumpet gives an uncertain sound; and when the literal trumpet gives an uncertain sound, the fault is not in the instrument, but in him who uses it; and when the servants of God talk in such a manner that the church cannot understand them, and cease to be profited by them, the fault is not in the gospel of the grace of God, but in poor, short-sighted, erring, mortal man; for there may be a fountain of sweet, pure water which issues from a rock in the mountain, but after running some distance through low, marshy grounds, it may become muddy from the clay bottom over which it runs, and bitter from the noxious weeds through which it passes; but because there is so much mixture in it, when formed into a stream, it does not prevent the fountain from being pure.

It requires great grace, for the servants of God in a day like the present, to prevent them from manifesting something of a fleshly spirit, when they see so much that they believe to be error, or the works of anti-christ; and it is to be feared that sometimes in their zeal to expose and denounce error, they give the trumpet an uncertain sound; for as surely as the standard is left, and human reason is consulted, the most zealous servant of God will go astray; he may be suffered to go so far astray, as to hold the truth in unrighteousness, that is, he may proclaim the truth, but under the influence of an improper spirit. King David said, "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults." I am convinced that when ministers of the gospel are so under the influence of the flesh, and are so blinded as not to see it, that it is often the case that the "little children" in the kingdom behold it and are led to wonder **why** such is the case; for the trumpet is giving uncertain sounds, and instead of preparation for battle, confusion and dissension are apt to be the result.

If we can take the liberty to apply the apostle's illustration to men who simply profess to know what the gospel is, and are strangers to it, we need expect nothing but a jargon of sounds; but it seems, though I have penned down the preceding remarks, I feel that as much, or more of them, belong to me than to any other mortal professing to love the Lord; and I hope while such awful scenes are transpiring around us, that not only myself, but all of God's professed ministers, may be kept by his grace from imbibing any of the spirit so rife among us; but that we may heed the Savior's injunction, "Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

(Elder) WM. J. PURINGTON

(Since re-publishing (in the October issue) the article concerning Elder Thomas P. Dudley, we have found an article in the May 15, 1859, Signs, written by Elder Dudley in which he gives many very interesting accounts of events in the life of his father, Elder Ambrose Dudley. Because of his association with the early history of our nation, and because of his staunch defense of the "Old School" doctrine, we feel that the article will be found interesting to our readers, so we are re-publishing it in this issue. J. D. W.)

THE LATE ELDER AMBROSE DUDLEY

Near Lexington, Ky., Feb., 1859.

Dear Brother Beebe:

I have had many applications, both from those who cordially received the doctrine propagated, and those from whom I have had no evidence of fealty to our Divine Master, for a biographical sketch of the life of my father, the late Elder Ambrose Dudley, whose name is associated with the early history of the "Old School," or as they were formerly called, "Regular Baptists" of Kentucky, and who was extensively known in the West, for his untirtiring efforts in the cause of truth and godliness. To give a minute history of his life, is impossible — as I write from recollection of what I have heard from him, and other members of his family — without any data (written) to correct that recollection, the sketch must, necessarily, be imperfect. I shall, however, endeavor to give the main features of that sketch, as concisely as I well can. The ancestry of my father, if I am correctly informed, emigrated from England to the then Colony of Virginia. Those of my mother from Wales, to the same Colony. My grand-father had five sons, viz: Robert, who was commissioned a Lieutenant in the army during the Revolutionary War, and died in the service of his country. Ambrose, the subject of this biographical sketch. Peter, who raised a large family, and died in Virginia, an old fashioned Baptist. James, who emigrated with his family to Kentucky at an early day, and is long since dead. William, who emigrated to Kentucky, also at an early day, commanded a regiment in the war of 1812, and was killed at Dudley's defeat on the 5th day of May, 1813, near Fort Meigs, leaving a widow and a large family.

Ambrose Dudley was born in Spottsylvania county, in the then Colony of Virginia, on the 31st day of August, 1752, and at an early age was left, by the death of my grand-father, in charge of his mother and his younger brothers. At the age of twenty-one he was married to Ann Parker, of Caroline county, in the same Colony, by whom he had fifteen children, eleven sons and four daughters, all of whom, except one daughter, survived him and my mother, she died in infancy. His first impressions, with regard to a future state, he dated at hearing the gospel preached through the iron gates of a prison window, at Fredericksburg, Virginia, from Romans viii. 14: "For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Before the conclusion of the sermon, he learned, very clearly, that he was not led by the spirit of God. He became greatly distressed, because of his exposed situations as a sinner against God, deserving his wrath, without a gleam of hope of escape. About this time the Colonies declared their independence of the crown of Great Britain, and the Revolutionary War commenced. During its progress, he was appointed a Captain of the Virginia line, with the liberty of selecting his subaltern officers, by Patrick Henry, then Governor of Virginia.

He ultimately obtained hope of the pardon of sins through the atoning blood of the Lamb of God, and his mind became deeply exercised on the subject of the gospel ministry. Finding great antagonism between the exercises of his mind and a **camp life**, he shortly afterwards resigned his commission. Was baptized by one of the **Lord's prisoners**, and commenced preaching "Christ and him crucified," as the only medium through which sinners can be saved. He was not long engaged in preaching, before his ordination was called for — and he was ordained to the work of the gospel ministry by Elders John Shackelford and Lewis Craig, both of whom had been imprisoned "for preaching Jesus Christ and him crucified." Ambrose Dudley was a real "Old School Baptist" in doctrine, warm and zealous in describing the experimental effects of grace in the heart. He delighted to dwell on experimental religion, in which branch of the christian system he was excelled by few — and earnestly enjoining on the believer the necessity of proving his faith by his works. He was actively and laboriously engaged in the work of the ministry in Virginia, until the spring of 1786, when he emigrated to Kentucky, and landed, with his family, at his earthly home, about one-and-a-half miles from where I now sit, on the 3d day of May, 1786, where, and in the immediate vicinity, he continued to reside, until death terminated his earthly career, on the 27th of January, 1825.

At the first meeting of the Church at Bryans, which had been constituted on the 16th day of April, 1786, "on the doctrine of grace, set forth in the Philadelphia Baptist Confession of faith," he applied for membership, and was received by letter. In the month of October following, he was called to the pastoral care of the Church, and continued as such to the time of his death. He was extensively known to the denomination in the West. His labors seemed to be greatly blessed. Large additions made to the Church by experience and baptism, and by letter and examination. In one year, from August 1800 to August 1801, three hundred and sixty-seven were received into the Church at Bryans by experience and baptism, and a large number the following year. This was called "the great revival." About the close of the great revival, propositions were made for a union between the Separate Baptists, many of whose ministers believed and preached, what was called "general provision," — that is, that provision was made in Christ for the whole human family; and it was left with men to embrace it or

not. Others of their ministry were clear and satisfactory in the doctrine of grace — the irresistible work of the spirit of God in regeneration, &c. That denomination had received large accessions during the revival, and many of their ministers and members were highly esteemed for their soundness of faith and christian deportment by the Regular Baptists. When committees were appointed by each, the Elkhorn Association of Regular Baptists, and the South Kentucky of Separate Baptists, to meet and endeavor to form a union. The committees met and formed what has been known as the "General union of Baptists in Kentucky." These terms embraced ten articles. There was not much difficulty in adopting the articles until they approached the ninth, in which was involved the atonement; whether it was limited to the Church or general, a compromise was effected, and the ninth article adopted to read as follows: "The preaching that "Christ tasted death for every man, shall "be no bar to communion." The tenth and last article reads substantially thus: "The adoption of the foregoing articles is by no means intended to interfere or **remove** either party from their original constitutional privileges." Thus leaving the parties substantially where they began. My father was one of the committee in forming these terms of union, but he very soon learned his error, and to the day of his death, it is believed, decidedly disapproved of the proceedings of the committee. In the year 1808 an occurrence took place in the Elkhorn Association, which resulted in a division — a complaint of our Church against another was brought before the Association, according to a rule then existing in the body. The minister of the Church complained against, arose and made a most violent and abusive attack on my father, who ministered to the Church which lodged the complaint. My father called Elder Corbin to the chair until the case was disposed of. Elder Corbin reminded the speaker that he was out of order. The case before the Association was not between Creath and Dudley, but between Bryans and Town Fork; the speaker, however, continued for about two hours and twenty minutes. Elder Corbin reminding him and the Association that a Moderator was useless unless order was observed, and left the seat. When the speaker concluded, my father arose and remarked, he had been assailed, and claimed the right to reply. He remarked as Elder Corbin refused to act as Moderator, he supposed he must address the Clerk, and spoke two hours and forty minutes in reply. After he concluded, Elder Corbin observed, "If the Association will decide two questions, we can then proceed — the first question is, Is the Association **in order?**" A large majority voted No. "The next question is, Will the Association now return to order?" A large majority voted in the negative. Whereupon several of the old ministers proclaimed publicly that they never would again meet with the majority of that body as the Elkhorn Association, because of their utter disregard of order. A number of the brethren, including Ambrose Dudley, issued a circular to the Churches, setting forth their grievances, and proposing to meet as the "Elkhorn Association on Original Constitutional Principles," at Bryans, on the same day on which the majority was to meet at another place. The day of meeting arrived, when a committee appeared from the majority, proposing an attempt to settle the differences — an attempt was unsuccessfully made — and it was finally proposed by the committee from the majority, that both parties should relinquish the name "Elkhorn," and adopt another, to prevent confusion. On this proposition Ambrose Dudley remarked, "I consider the name Elkhorn contaminated by the disorders practiced at the last session, and am willing to be called by another name." Finally another meeting was had between the parties, at which it was declared by the minority, "Seeing that our brethren of the majority have failed to remove our difficulties, and new ones grown up with regard to doctrine, we consider it best to remain in separate bodies." The minority adopted the name "Licking." The majority still holds the name "Elkhorn." The result of the adoption of the "Terms of General Union," began now to be developed; almost every error has been found in the bodies who sanctioned those terms; and its advocates take shelter under the "terms of general union." In the subsequent divisions among the Baptists, he was uniformily found among those who maintained the doctrine, now maintained by the "Old School" or "Particular Baptists." He ministered to several Churches, from two to four, most of the time after his removal to Kentucky — assisted in constituting several Churches — ordaining a number of preachers and deacons — traveled rather extensively — occasionally to Tennessee and Ohio — always maintaining that God is as sovereign in regenerating the heirs of promise, and preparing them for a future state of blessedness in glory, as he was in creating the world. It is a remarkable fact that the Church at Bryans, which was constituted nearly seventy-two years ago, has had but **two pastors** — my father, and myself. And perhaps, not less remarkable, that the Presbytery who ordained my father in Virginia, were present at my ordination in Kentucky, nearly a half century thereafter.

My mother left us for a higher and holier state of being, as we trust, on the 7th of November, 1824. My father, on the 27th of January, 1825, leaving eleven sons and three

daughters all of whom were grown, and had married. Seven of the fourteen have been called hence by death; and seven remain — the average age of the latter being about seventy-four years. Eleven of the number had professed hope in Christ's blood and righteousness, and joined the Particular Baptists. Since my father's death, attempts have been made to involve his name in the missionary enterprise. While those attempts were confined to irresponsible individuals, the Licking Association took no notice of them, But when, in the year 1843, an Association in Kentucky, the Elkhorn, attempted to fasten the charge on him, and others of our body, who have left us, for the heavenly glory, as we trust, the Licking Association took up the subject — gave all the action that had taken place in relation to missions, in the Elkhorn Association, up to the year 1808 — when the division took place in that body; and the action of the Licking Association on the same subject, up to the year 1825 — proving that there was no foundation for the charge. My father was esteemed a good disciplinarian in his family — the Church and the Association. He was considered, perhaps justly, to be stern in his views of Bible truth, but when convinced of error, was as ready to recant as most men.

Brother Beebe, I do not know whether it is consistent with your views to publish biographical sketches of brethren, in your columns. I have written the above for the **Signs of the Times,** because I have no fears that it will be **garbled** by its editor. I know not what use might be made of it, if placed in the hands of those who are opposed to the doctrine of the Particular Baptists.

As ever, most truly your friend and brother,

THOMAS P. DUDLEY

ORDINATION OF ELDER JOHN F. TISDALE

Pursuant to a call of Hopeful Church, Ozark, Alabama, for his ordination, the following presbytery convened at the church on September 23, 1956. The day was spent in sound preaching, with Elder H. G. Morgan preaching the Introductory; followed by Elder W. A. Williams, and John F. Tisdale. Luncheon was at noon; then preaching by Elder Wm. H. Smith and Elder F. A. Collins.

The Presbytery organized by electing Elder J. J. Collins, Moderator, and Brother J. T. Collins, Clerk. Hopeful church chose Deacon Frank Bowman as its mouthpiece. Elder F. A. Collins examined Brother Bowman on Brother Tisdale's qualifications, as given in I Timothy 3:1-7, and preached an able ordination sermon. Elder W. A. Williams examined Brother Tisdale on the Articles of Faith. Elder H. G. Morgan spoke the ordination prayer; and Elder Wm. H. Smith delivered the charge to Brother Tisdale. Then the Presbytery delivered him back to the church, and the church extended the right hand of fellowship to Elder Tisdale and wife. It was a most impressive service.

The following served on the Presbytery: Elder J. J. Collins, Moderator; Elder F. A. Collins, Elder Wm. H. Smith, Elder W. A. Williams, Elder H. G. Morgan, and Deacons H. T. Collins, J. B. Waters, Frank Bowman, E. E. Gilmer and Clerk J. T. Collins.

J. J. Collins, Pastor
Hopeful Church

OBITUARIES

MRS. LAURA REED GOOCH

Laura Annie Reed, only daughter, and youngest child, of Anselom and Rebecca Watkins Reed, was born at the Reed home, "Hillsdale," Guilford County, North Carolina, on December 1, 1867. In early childhood the family moved to Winston, (later Winston-Salem) where most of her life was spent.

On December 8, 1910 she was married to Jospeh H. Gooch of Stem, Granville County, N. C. who passed away April 6, 1935.

On Monday, May 22, 1899, after service by Elder P. D. Gold, she offered, and was received, into the fellowship of Hillsdale, (formerly known as Hunter's Cross Roads) Primitive Baptist Church, in Guilford County, N. C., and was baptized near by that afternoon by Elder P. D. Gold. This was the church of her father's and mother's membership.

On July 27, 1907, she presented a letter, which had been granted at her request, to unite in the organization of Broad Street Primitive Baptist church in Winston-Salem, where her membership remained until a letter of dismission was granted her to join in the organization of Memorial Primitive Baptist church on December 31, 1923, in Stem, N. C. She remained a faithful member until called away by death, September 9, 1956.

After the death of her husband, Joseph H. Gooch, in 1935, she was appointed clerk of Gooch Memorial church, (named after her husband), and remained faithful in the performance of the duties enjoined on her in this office. She was very particular to see that the acts of the church were duly recorded, and it could truly be said of her, "She was not slothful in business."

She manifested her great love for the church, by seeing that the grass was kept cut around the meeting house, fires built, house kept in good repair, and in many other ways proved her faith by her works, in her devotion

to the church and brethren.

She had a wide acquaintance among the Old School Baptist in the United States, and Canada, where she visited for many years. The Old School Baptist have suffered a great loss, and especially her home church. Her quiet manner, her devotion to her church, hospitality in entertaining her friends, steadfastness in the faith, and many other virtues God manifested in her, will live in the memory of those who loved her for Jesus sake.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder W. C. King, and the writer, according to her request, in Gooch Memorial meeting house, Tuesday, September 11, 1956. Her body was laid to rest in the mausoleum, located on the meeting house grounds, while the congregation sang, "Father we'll rest in thy love."

D. V. Spangler

RUTH HILL

Our beloved mother, Ruth Hill, was born March 16, 1869, in Sumpter County, Georgia; and departed this life August 17, 1956, in Wood County, Texas; making her stay on earth more than eighty-seven years.

She was the fourth child, and the only daughter, of Martha Susan Birdsong and George W. Hammond. Her father died when she was a babe, and her mother was deaf and dumb from birth. She often spoke of the handicap her mother was under in rearing her; and how she felt it was the tender mercy of her Lord and Saviour that shielded her, and constrained her to follow after right morals, and shun the evil.

Mother was married four times. All of her husbands preceded her in death — two in young womanhood, and two in later years after she had reared us children. There are four of us, three of her first marriage, and one, a twin, of her second marriage, (the other twin succumbed at birth). The greater part of her life after marriage was spent in widowhood, and with bare necessities of life during the early years of our lives. She worked and strived long, dark, hard hours to provide for her household, ever looking unto her God for strength and health; and to Him she desired to render all praise. We feel that the one that spoke at her funeral could have spoken nothing more befitting of our noble mother, than to refer to the last chapter of Proverbs, the tenth verse to the end of chapter, which he did.

Mother was convicted of her sins at an early age, and was made to feel the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and her depraved condition. She was drawn by His love to seek mercy in Jesus; and by his grace, her hope of salvation was anchored in him. She united with the Primitive Baptist church at Cana, in 1916; and was baptized by the late Elder R. E. White. She later moved to Louisiana, and put her letter in Pleasant Hope Church, where she sat under the ministry of Elder T. A. Wall for about twenty years, and held him as a faithful pastor. Her membership was at Saint's Rest church, in Dallas, when she passed away, but had been unable to attend for a number of years.

She passed away at noon on Friday, her spirit took its flight back to the God who gave it. In the afternoon of the following day her body was tenderly taken to Concord Cemetery, and laid in the tomb to await the second coming of our Lord, when it will be raised and fashioned like unto His glorious body, and she shall ever be with her Lord. Elders S. C. Davenport and John L. Smith had charge of the funeral service.

The following lines express the feelings of our bereaved hearts:

"In Jesus sleeping 'till he come!
O happy spirit now at home,
Can heart conceive thy wonderous rest,
In peace, at rest on Jesus' breast?
What joys are thine, unknown below;
What nameless bliss, we do not know,
But know thou art with Him we love —
Waiting, O Lord, with thee above."

Written with a sad and lonely heart by her daughter,

Buena V. Wright

MRS. MATILDA WRAY BROWN

Sister Matilda Wray Brown was born in Rockingham County, N. C. March 14, 1877; and died July 6, 1956. She was the first of eight daughters of Thomas R. and Nancy Smith Wray. She lived her entire life in Rockingham Co., and in March, 1902, was united in marriage to A. J. Brown. He died many years ago. She leaves surviving one daughter, two sisters, and three grandchildren, as well as a large number of relatives, friends and neighbors.

Sister Brown united with the church at Reidsville July 14, 1954, and was baptized the same day by her pastor, Elder David Spangler. She was raised in a Primitive Baptist home, her father and mother being members of the church at Wolf Island at the time of their death. Her last years were spent in the home of her daughter, Mrs. Evelyn Dallas and her husband, William Dallas, of near Leaksville. Her devotion to her family continued as long as she was able to render any service to them.

Her funeral was conducted on the second Sunday afternoon in July by her pastor, and burial followed in the family plot by her

father and mother in Wolf Island church cemetery.

The church at Reidsville desires to express its sympathy to her family and loved ones, and we acknowledge our submission to the will of Him whose work is always perfect. May he reconcile and comfort those who mourn.

Approved at our September meeting, 1956, and it was agreed that a copy be given to the family, a copy filed with our church clerk, and a copy be published in the Signs of the Times.

D. V. Spangler, Pastor
Kate D. Mitchell, C. C.

ELDER SETH BYNUM

Elder Seth Bynum was born in Oklahoma, June 20, 1896. In 1912 he moved to Texas with his parents. On November 21, 1915, he was married to Ruby Morton, and to this union five children were born, all of whom are living. He was interested in the church when a very young man, and united with the Old Baptists at Weslaco, Texas in December, 1936, and was baptized by Elder Tatum. He began to exercise in public soon thereafter. In 1939 he brought his family to California and was ordained a minister on September 14, 1941. He was pastor of Bethel Church at Stockton from 1945 to 1949. He was pastor of Hopewell Church, now at Stockton, for one year. At the time of his death he lived close to Portland, Oregon, where he was pastor of New Hope Church.

He passed away on June 24, 1956, at the hospital in McMinnville, Oregon, after having a heart attack on June 20th. He is survived by his devoted wife, Ruby, and three sons: Seth, Jr., Sweeney, Texas; Eugene, Stockton, Calif.; Joel Everett, Bakersfield, Calif.; two daughters, Helen Davis, Conago Park, Calif.; Marzelle Compton, Minneapolis, Minn.; and ten grandchildren.

The writer was intimately acquainted with the deceased for a number of years. I am made to feel that I have lost one of my very best friends and indeed a yokefellow in the ministry. No man can truthfully say that Elder Bynum was not honest in his convictions. He was one of the humblest men I have ever known. At the time of his passing I was confined to a veterans' hospital and had undergone an operation a few days before, but God who supplies us with all our strength enabled me to attend his funeral. I tried in my weak way to speak words of comfort to Sister Bynum, the children and other relatives and friends. I do pray that God will reconcile them in their lot. The Baptists in California will miss Elder Bynum, but we feel sure that their loss is his gain.

His funeral was held in Stockton and burial was in Rural Cemetery.

T. R. Jefferson

JAMES MARION JENKINS

Our dear husband and father was born January 18, 1882, and departed this life February 8, 1956, making his stay on earth 74 years and 20 days.

He was born in Hickman County, Tennessee. The son of Jasper N. and Rebecca Fulmer Jenkins. He lived his entire life on the farm where he was born.

He was united in marriage to Lucy A. White on April 19, 1914, who survives; and to this union were born nine children, two of which died in childhood. Surviving are two daughters: Allene Jenkins and Mrs. Cora M. Evans; five sons: Jasper H., Clayton E., and Gilmon W. Jenkins all of Nashville, Tennessee, David W. Jenkins of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and Grady A. Jenkins, of Lyles, Tennessee; also two sisters, Mrs. Agnes Martin, Lyles, Tennessee and Mrs. Esther Turner, of Youngstown, Ohio; one brother, Amos Jenkins, Centerville, Tennessee; and three grandchildren.

He was not a member of the church, on account of his feeling of unworthiness, not feeling fit to join with those that he felt were the children of God; but he was a firm believer in salvation by grace. The doors of his home were always open to members of the Primitive Baptist Church. His home having been his father's, where many Baptist sermons have been preached, and many Baptist members visited.

He had been in poor health for several years with a heart condition, but bore his suffering with patience, often expressing a desire to be taken on, and that he was ready at the Father's call.

He was widely known and respected and loved as a husband, father, friend, and neighbor. It is sad and lonely here without him, but we would not bring him back if we could, his suffering and sorrows are over and God's purpose for him in this world was finished. Our earthly loss is his eternal gain.

His funeral was conducted at Dickson Funeral Home, February 10, by Elder R. L. Biggs, who made a very comforting talk from the 23rd Psalms.

His body was laid to rest in the Jenkins cemetery near his home, to await the coming of our Lord.

The sadly bereaved family

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 126 DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1958 NO. 1

Shokan, N. Y.

Dear Elder Wood:

I have made a copy of the 100 years old Circular Letter which was read at the 100th Anniversary of our Meeting-House, the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, during the meeting of the Lexington-Roxbury Association, September 13, 14, and 15, 1957. (Copied from the Signs of the Times of 100 years ago — Ed.)

It was good to know that through the precious Signs of the Times, such glorious things are preserved, which serve to prove that God's children still cherish and contend for the same things as the saints of old; and by which the household of faith take courage, when all about them is sin and iniquity, and a falling away. I might copy the 2nd chapter of 2 Thessalonians here, but I believe it would be good for all of us to open the Book and read it, and be edified by it as the Spirit and Comforter may present it to us.

I know that in myself is no good thing, and though my hope seems small, it is all I have to cling to. My wife, and sister in Christ, and I send our love.

Edward K. Adsit

CIRCULATION LETTER OF 100 YEARS AGO

The Elders and messengers of the Lexington Baptist Association convened with the church at Lexington, September 2, and 3, 1857, to the churches of the same, sends Christian salutation; and praying that grace, mercy, and peace through our Lord Jesus Christ may be with you all.

Dear Brethren: According to our custom, we send you this our annual epistle, in which we call your attention to the words of the Apostle in Philippians 3:-2-3: "Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. For we are the circumcision, which worship God in spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

The Apostle says in the commencement of this chapter, "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me is not grievous, but for you it is safe." If then it was safe for the church in Paul's day to know these things, it is equally as safe in this day; for he advised Timothy that seducers should wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

The first thing we shall notice in our text is, **"the dogs;"** and if some of them should growl, we hope none of the sheep and lambs of Christ will be alarmed, or offended. False teachers existed in the days of Isaiah, and even by him figuratively called dogs. He says, "His watchmen (those of the aliens) are blind: that are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand; . . ." **(Isaiah 56:10-11)** Christ admonished us to give not that which is holy to dogs. And Ezekiel has called the same class of deceivers, wolves. "Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, . . ." **(Ezekiel 22:27)** and Zephaniah calls them evening wolves.

Christ has instructed us to beware of false prophets which come unto us in

sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves; by their fruits, says he, ye shall know them. And Paul says, "For I know this, that after my departure shall grevious wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock." **(Acts 22:29)** And adds, "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." He exhorts them, to Watch. And our Lord has said they compass land and sea to make proselytes. We are aware they make high pretensions to sanctity; and make prayers, and are heard thanking God they are not like other men: they pay tithes and fast often.

Paul has warned us that in the last days shall come perilous times, and that men shall have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof; and from such he commands us to turn away. He says to Titus that their mouths must be stopped, for they subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not for filthy lucre's sake. And Peter says that many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. Jude also testifies that they have men's persons in admiration because of advantage; and the beloved John enjoins us to try the spirits whether they be of God, and to beware of them. Paul said to Titus that they profess to know God, but in works they deny him. They preach human works and merits instead of salvation by grace.

"Beware of evil works" God has given us a standard by which we may discriminate between those good works which he has before ordained that we shall walk in them, and those works which are denounced as evil. The Scriptures, which are given by inspiration of God, thoroughly furnish the man of God unto every good work. All religious works therefore which are not furnished by precept or example in the Scriptures, are evil works; and those who perform them are evil workers. They are of the works of the law, and as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; and by its deeds can never be justified in His sight. Their hearts have not been cleansed from dead works to serve the living God. The man of sin, the son of perdition, is identified by his coming: which is with all deceivableness of unrighteousness; with signs and lying wonders after the working of Satan. Beware of them, for if it were possible they would deceive the very elect.

"Beware of the concision". That is, of those who are cut off from circumcision, on which the ancient legalist had so much confidence. They have in modern times substituted sprinkling in its stead. They are to be watched lest they bewitch the saints as they once did the churches of Galatia.

Brethren, have we not those things which we have presented to your notice in every section of our country? How important then that we should try those who would thrust themselves upon us as teachers! "To the law and the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." **(Isaiah 8:20)** Let us hearken to the admonition of our Saviour and beware of the doctrines of the Pharasees and the Sadducees. Paul said to the Roman brethren, "Now we beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them; for by good words and fair speeches they deceive the hearts of the simple." And John says, "Receive them not into your house, neither bid them God speed."

"For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit." Moses said, "The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God." "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." **(Romans 2:28-29)** And Paul says to the Colossians: "In whom ye are circumcised with the circumcision made

without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ."

Those who have been thus circumcised without hands, like Jeremiah, will ever after remember the wormwood and the gall; and therefore like him, they will have hope. This circumcision is what Christ called being born again: being born of the Spirit. Not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Not of a corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. This circumcision is also spoken of by Paul as, being quickened; and as being washed with the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. Being circumcised, or born of the Spirit, they are qualified to worship God in the Spirit; for God is a Spirit, and all true worshippers must, and do, worship Him in spirit and in truth. Christ is formed in, and, by his spirit, dwells in them; and as God works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure, so they work out their own salvation with fear and trembling; for God has wrought all their works in them.

"And rejoice in Christ Jesus", as their Saviour, their Prophet, Priest and King; as the true God and eternal life; as their foundation and chief cornerstone. All their hope for eternal justification rests on him, and on him alone. They rejoice in Christ Jesus as that King whom God has set upon his holy hill Zion, to preside in power and majesty over that kingdom which Daniel prophesied the God of heaven should set up; and that should never be destroyed, nor ever given to other people. They rejoice in his laws and institutions, and delight to obey him as loyal subjects. They rejoice in him as the High Priest who has made a complete atonement for them, and by his one offering has perfected them forever. And they rejoice in him as their Head and Husband; as their righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; as their Advocate with the Father; as their Deliverer who has conquered death and triumphed over the grave, and who holds in his hands they keys of death and hell. They rejoice in him as Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, and everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace; as their Strong Tower, of whom Moses has written, "The Eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath thee are his everlasting arms."

None who can thus worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, can repose any confidence in the flesh. In their circumcision they are cut off from all such confidence: the body is dead because of sin — it is cut off by the circumcision of Christ. They are divinely taught that the flesh profiteth nothing; they know the fearful import of the words, "Cursed by the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm", and have been taught how blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. **(Psalms 17:5-7)** They know that the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that they cannot do the things which they would; and that if they sow to the flesh they shall of the flesh reap corruption, but if they through the spirit mortify the deeds of the flesh, and sow to the spirit, they shall of the spirit reap everlasting life.

Brethren, may we all be found in Christ, not having our own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ; the righteousness which is of God by faith, is our prayer for Jesus sake. Amen.

Isaac Hewitt, Moderator
C. Hogaboom, Clerk

Bivins, Texas

Editors of Our Wonderful Paper:

I am a little late in sending my subscription. I have been reading the Signs over forty years, and I hope it will be the Lord's will that I may continue as

long as I live. May the good Lord enable the editors to continue to carry on this wonderful work.

I am now past seventy-one, and have been in bad health for more than seven years. I had a stroke six years ago, but with all my afflictions, God has not failed to be kind. I am made to believe that all things work for the good of God's people. I don't know whether I am one or not, but I would not give my little hope for all the world.

We were so glad to have Elder Wood with us, for we surely enjoyed his visit; and hope it be the Lord's will for him to come again, and any others from that section. In hope of eternal life beyond the grave.

(Elder) T. A. Wall

THE WILLS AND SHALLS OF GOD

Hopkinsville, Ky.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am writing you to send in my renewal for the Signs, for it is the periodical that holds my interest in regards to salvation.

And I desire to write a few thoughts that have been with me for a good while, and if God is pleased to give me a mind on spiritual things, I would like to write something on the shalls and wills of our God. According to Holy Writ, God in strength and wisdom before ordained and predestinated all things.

In Isaiah 46:11, God speaking by the prophet said, ". . . I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." The world is teaching that God cannot save except men be willing to accept him; but our Heavenly Father has declared that he will do whatsoever his soul desireth; and who can dispute with him. He has declared that his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. In Isaiah 55:11, he said, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." This was spoken in the past tense — **sent.**

Dear Brethren, Christ Jesus was that Word, and the Father speaking by the prophet says, It shall not return unto him void. The Saviour said of himself, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." The Armenian world is declaring that the Word has failed; but the Saviour has declared that, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." Aren't you glad that the word **shall** is used — **shall** come to me. There is no evidence of doubt in the child of God when he is given the Spirit of truth to see and believe that Jesus Christ is our salvation; that in him we have redemption.

In Ezekiel 20:37, God again speaking by the mouth of his prophet, says, "And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant." This signifies that we (if I be included) are already in the covenant, but we are made to pass under the rod of afflictions of the law; for the law is our school master unto Christ. The Saviour declared to Nicodemus that a man must be born again; and Nicodemus asked could a man when he is old enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

Precious brethren, when we stand in the presence of God and his dear Son, and feel the comfort of a zephyr breeze, and say it comes from the West, or in the discomfort of an icy blast, and say it comes from the North, we know not

where it lists; yet we are taught that God holds the wind in the hollow of his hand. If it were possible for us to know of our natural conception, or know of our natural birth, it might be possible that we could know of the birth of the Spirit within us; yet it is impossible for a dead sinner to believe. "You hath he quickened who were dead", etc. (past tense), and we are made alive to something that is strange to us; and we begin to find displeasure where we once found pleasure; and the things we once disregarded, we regard with utmost pleasure. We are made to believe in the power of God to salvation by and through his darling Son, that precious Word whom he sent. Why? Because as John said, "He that believeth is born of God." Belief is not in order to be born, but because of that precious birth.

Isaiah says again that He looked on us in kindness through mercy because of his love; which is an everlasting cord which cannot be broken. In mercy He has shortened the days of our exploits in sin, for except God had shortened the days, there would be no flesh saved. My experience teaches me that except the great Jehovah God had caused me to seek his mercy, and gave me of his grace, I could not have endured to this present time. Why was it made manifest?: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." etc. **(1 Peter 1:2)** Then we were elected unto this birth in Christ according to the foreknowledge of God, to an inheritance of a perfect life in Christ. This cannot be expressed in words, but we live in a sweet hope of that which is reserved in heaven for us who are kept by the power of God through faith ready to be revealed in the last time. Paul says, "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourself, it is the gift of God." God purposed it, he will also do it. It is not of works lest any man should boast, for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus. Is not our hope in Him; and if created in him, is it not a sure place? Yes, dear ones, it is of the sure mercies of David to be created in him unto good works, that God before ordained that we should walk in them. In the 139 Psalm, David said, "Lord thou hast beset me before and behind." (which means to encircle). And Job said, "Thou knowest the way that I take."

Do we believe that we could walk other than the course set before us? I cannot believe so; for my best efforts are as filthy rags, and I am made in tears to beg for spiritual guidance from him from whom all blessings flow. "I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor. Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name: the upright shall dwell in thy presence." **Psalms 140:12, 13)**

The Psalmist speaks of the King's daughter, which to me represents the church. She is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. Yes she is glorious within, for she is filled with the holy spirit of promise, and rejoices in the strength of the embrace of her Saviour's strength. When we walk about Zion, and observe her bulwarks; and have eyes to see and to feel that love which flows from breast to breast, we know that we have seen Zion manifested in this purity here; and sometimes are made to wish that we could keep the sweet presence of that blessed food to feast upon at all times. But the Lord knows the way we take. "She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework", etc. The sisters do lovely needlework, and look upon it as beautiful, yet it is nothing to compare with the beauty wherewith the daughter of the king shall be brought. She is the church that Christ set upon the rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her. "The virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace." **(Psalm 45:14-15)**

I am glad that David said that they shall be brought; for in my weakness I rejoice in His strength. In our precious

little gatherings we have here we are building on the foundation of the power of that Rock, which is the revealed truth of the Allwise and Allpowerful God, who said, I have spoken it, and I will also do it.

I know that I have only hinted at the subject, but if you feel to you may publish it. If you do publish this, please publish the following also, for it is my desire to dedicate it to Brother P. L. Kinley, if he still lives; for he wrote me a letter a good while back, asking that I write on the wills and shalls of God. I do not mean to complain, but at that time I was going through a severe trial, and thought that I never wanted to hear mention of grace again; and I wrote the dear brother a very unsavory letter, for which I am sorry, and would ask him if in mercy he can overlook my weakness and shortcomings. May the grace of God who giveth salvation, abide with all.

In hope,
W. Y. Chandler

Topeka, Kansas

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am sorry for my delinquency in sending my remittance for the Signs. Sickness, death, and tragedy have o'ershadowed my pathway in recent months. Within the space of three months I lost my only brother, two very dear aunts and two cousins; and now in a hospital lies a nephew critically injured with a broken back, broken arm and ribs, internal injuries and multiple lacerations, hovering between life and death, resulting from a car accident. My heart had not yet ceased to bleed from the loss of my precious and only daughter previous to this. But He who is ever mindful of the weakest cry, has mercifully bestowed the needed strength to press on thru darkest hours with the blessed assurance there will not be more laid upon us than we are given strength to bear. But ties of nature are strong, and in weakness we are prone to cry out in distress when they are severed by death and we are left to mourn our loss.

Trusting in your kindly and Christian forbearance,

In hope of life beyond this vale of tears,

Della Davis

P. S. I will add that my beloved uncle, Elder L. L. Schenck, is in failing health — just a gradual decline due very much to old age. He will be 88 years old Nov. 21, 1957. He continues to keep his appointments each month here in my home, but has had to give up his other churches, one at Pleasant Hill, Missouri, and one at Kingman, Kansas. We were blessed to have with us this month Elder Howard Eason, of Amarillo, Texas, and visiting brethren from Missouri. We are few in number and scattered, and these seasons are indeed refreshing when "Heaven comes down our souls to greet, and glory crowns the mercy seat."

"O whither could we flee for aid,
When tempted, desolate, dismayed?
Or how the hosts of hell defeat,
Had suffering saints no mercy seat."

D. D.

---

703 Clark Street,
Rocky Mount, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I am enclosing three dollars for the *Signs of the Times* for another year. I feel that I can't do without it, for it is so full of good reading that is food for my soul; and so comforting in my lonely hours. I am not able to attend meetings as I once did, because of the infirmities of my body. I am nearly eighty-five years old, and have had a precious hope in Jesus Christ my Lord over sixty-five years; and it seems that as I grow older that sweet hope gets stronger in love of my precious Saviour and his dear people.

I was blessed to attend meeting last Sunday; and the text was in St. John where Jesus turned the water to wine. I saw so much beauty in all of it, and my soul was made to rejoice in God my Saviour. We never know what our blessed God has in store for us: it comes

to us in His own time and place. How thankful we are when we are made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and to hear the joyful sound of the golden bells; and to feel that God is working all things according to his will and purpose, and none can hinder him. Some day, not too far off, He will remove the vail and make plain to every one who loves his appearing. These things are hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed to babes. He makes his children to become beggars, not of men, but of God who does all things according to his will.

Dear brother, please forgive so much writing; and if it is in your heart to pray for this poor worm, to ask God through Christ, to bless my eyes that I might see and understand His word. Love to you and family.

Mrs. G. W. Gardner

CIRCULAR LETTER OF 1939

To the ministers, messengers, and chuches composing The Lower Country Line Primitive Baptist Association, convening with the church at Dutchville, Durham County, N. C., July 15, 16, and 17, 1939; and the associations with whom we correspond,

Greetings: With hesitancy and in weakness, but desiring to be submissive to the will of the brethren, I endeavor to comply with their request that I present a Circular Letter at this session of our association. Being more willingly persuaded to make the attempt when their motive was made known as a token in loving memory of my dear husband, (Brother J. H. Gooch — Ed.) whose chief joy was in ministering to the brethren. And trusting the request was made by those too well established in doctrine and order, to ask what would be unbecoming or out of place.
place.

Paul, that great Apostle, who was inspired to write so much for our learning and understanding of the Scriptures, has plainly stated the place a woman should occupy in the church. She should "learn in silence, and with all subjection", and "should not teach nor usurp authority".

Paul also tells us in **Galatians 3:27, 28,** that there is a spiritual sense in which there is neither male nor female in the church of God, but all are as one in the Lord. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

"For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." **(Romans 12:4, 5)** And with, "gifts differing according to the grace that is given us." **(Romans 12:6)** If we are truly members of that glorious body of Christ, each one, even the weakest and humblest, has a place to fill, though it be but the giving of a cup of cold water in His name; and we are wholly dependent upon Him for the spirit to do even that, acceptably.

From Paul's words, our thought is directed to some of the women mentioned in the Scriptures, whom God was graciously pleased to use in types of his church, or things concerning it; and which, no doubt, were "written aforetime for our learning". The first of these is Eve, the bride of Adam, representing the church, as Adam is a type of Christ. Surely the time and place, and characters presented here, seem most fitting — as they are, for the Lord's work is perfect: in a new creation of inconceivable loveliness and purity, fresh from the hand of God, before sin had entered to mar its perfection. A creation which He himself has commended as being "good, and very good".

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created He them." **(Genesis 1:27)** Teaching us that they both were created in Adam, before he was formed of the dust of the earth; and that the church was in Christ, before she was manifest in the world. As

Adam went down into sin and death for love of his bride, it pre-figures the shameful death of the cross which Christ suffered for his bride, the church. "Even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." **(Ephesians 5:25)** "For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." **(1 Corinthians 15:22)**

By woman came sin, but in the purpose of God, woman was blessed to bring into the world the Saviour of sinners, the holy Son of God. Before Adam and Eve were banished from the garden, it was declared the woman's seed should bruise the serpent's head. Paul testified of this when he wrote, that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." **(Romans 5:25)** Besides the beauty, perfection, and security of the church portrayed by Adam and Eve, the glorious doctrine of election and predestination is set forth in the eternal purpose of an eternal God.

It has been said that Eve was not formed of a bone from the head of Adam, to rule over him, nor from the foot, to be down trodden or oppressed, but from his side: under his arm to be sheltered and protected, and near his heart to be loved and cherished by him.

Other women mentioned are Sarah, the obedient and disobedient wife of faithful Abraham; Rebekah, the wife chosen for Isaac, and her part in the blessing of Jacob; Rachel, the much beloved wife of Jacob, and the mother of Joseph, who is one of the most beautiful of all the types of Christ. He, too, was made to endure shame and degradation, and "suffer the just for the unjust".

Ruth, the Moabitess, and her devotion and loving service to Naomi. In Naomi another picture of the church appears: offering no worldly inducement or advantage to those seeking **that;** but when a real love for her is manifested, and a willingness to forsake all else, what an affectionate fellowship springs up, and how pleasantly they dwell together. And does not Ruth express the feeling of every one brought to see and love the church, with a desire to abide therein, when she utters that touching appeal to Naomi, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me." **(Ruth 1:16, 17)** Certainly this expresses a feeling much deeper and stronger than natural affection.

Ester, the Jewish queen of Ahasuerus, a maiden fair and beautiful, and the offering of her life for her people: "So will I go in unto the king: . . . and if I perish, I perish." **(Ester 4:16)** Cannot every convicted sinner witness with these words of hers, paraphrased in the hymn:

> "I can but perish if I go,
> I am resolved to try,
> For if I stay away, I know
> I shall forever die."

Who of us dare say that her beauty, which is not casually mentioned, was not a link in the chain of God's arrangements to deliver his people? And does not the whole account prove it was the purpose of God that she should, "Come to the kingdom for such a time as this"? **(Ester 4:14)**

Job, "a perfect and upright man", had among all his other afflictions, a foolish wife; for, in the midst of his great suffering, it is written that she told him "to curse God and die". "But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speakest. What shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" **(Job 2:-10)** Her foolishness calling forth these words from Job, that have been a stay and a comfort to the Lord's people in their afflictions and adversities through the ages since they were spoken, teaching us that the Lord over rules wicked persons, and their acts or words, to show forth His praise. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."

(Psalms 76:10)

The entire book of Songs of Solomon is filled with an exalted discription of the mutual love of Christ and his church, portrayed as a bridegroom and bride.

In the New Testament we have the account of Martha and Mary, and their brother, Lazarus: a family Jesus loved, and whose sorrow so deeply touched his heart. Most remarkable in this is the raising of Lazarus from the dead, showing forth the certainty of the Resurrection. It was to Martha when she met him after the death of her brother, that Jesus first proclaimed that glorious doctrine in the words, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." **(John 11:25, 26)**

Mary, with spiritual vision, was given to see the coming death of the Saviour, and to bring aforehand the precious ointment to "anoint his body to the burying".

God is not dependent on human agencies to fulfill his purpose, yet he can and does, when he so pleases, use them to do whatsoever his hand and counsel determined before to be done, whether it be the words of a simple servant maid, followed by a cock's crow, to abase the vaunted self-confidence of Peter; or the warning sent to Pilate by his wife in the trial of Christ, to "have nothing to do with that just man". How her words stand out at a time when those nearest the Saviour had forsaken him: bearing witness that she had some recognition of the truth, and was impelled to testify of it.

Mention is made of the women who followed Jesus to the cross; and when he was laid in Joseph's new tomb, there were women who followed after. To Mary Magdalene the Saviour first appeared after his resurrection; and she was commissioned to bear the joyful news to the disciples.

In the closing chapters of the New Testament, the church is again represented as a Bride, the Lamb's wife. Still a bride after all the lapse of centuries between Genesis and Revelation, for, "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." **(2 Peter 3:8)** And Jesus Christ and his Bride, the church, are "the same yesterday, and today, and forever." **(Hebrews 13:8)**

In all these types and incidents there is a "Declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us", and the certainty of things wherein (we hope) through grace we have been instructed. "Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out." **(Romans 11:33)**

May our trust be in Him, "Who is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." **(Jude 1:24, 25)**

Submitted in love.

(The above was written by the late Sister Laura Reed Gooch, of Stem, North Carolina, and we publish it by request. — Ed.)

Alford, Florida

Dear Elder Spangler:

I am enclosing money-order for my subscription. I enjoy the Signs of the Times so much that I don't lay it down until I read it through.

I was born in Coffee County, Alabama, in 1870. My father was Elder H. King, and was strict in his discipline. He was the father of twelve, and I am the youngest in the family; and I will be eighty-eight next January 31st. I believe in the foreknowledge and absolute predestination of all things.

With best wishes to you and all the editors.

Henry P. King

Purvis, Miss.

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood:

You have been sending the Signs of the Times to my mother, Mrs. C. O. Freeman, Minter City, Miss., and it was such a rich blessing to her as long as she lived. She passed away October 15, 1957. Her humbleness during her long illness was an example of what the grace of God does in a poor sinner's heart. She was a true believer in the Old School Baptist faith.

If she was behind with her subscription, please let me know and I will pay it up. For the past year I have been so troubled over the sudden death of my young son in a hunting accident, that I felt I could not bear it; so I told my mother how I felt, and she advised me to read the Signs of the Times to find comfort. It has been the greatest comfort that I have found, and I do not see how I could live without it; so enclosed is $3.00 for my subscription.

With love in humble hope,
Mrs. Mattie L. Hanna

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting in session with the Frying Pan Church, October 16, 17, and 18, 1957, to the churches composing this meeting, and to the associations and churches with which we correspond, we send Christian greetings:

Dear brethren: The duty has been laid upon me to write this Circular Letter, and I pray that it may be the will of the loving Father to guide my pen, for in me dwelleth no good thing: to will is present, but how to perform that which is good I find not. So if not enabled by His Spirit, it will amount to nothing.

I call your attention to John 14:6, "Jesus saith unto him (Phillip) I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." Let us divide the subject into four parts:

1st. "I am the Way", is a statement made by Jesus himself, and shows that there is no other way. He is represented as being the Door, also a Path, and the only name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved — the way that leads to life, the strait (difficult — perilous) and narrow way. The only way to the Father is by Jesus; and no difference what you do, or what you are by nature, you cannot find it. The keen eye of the vulture has never seen it. It is the way unto holiness, and every single one who is able to walk in this way, is led by Jesus the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us. If you are not in the way, you are lost.

2nd. "I am the Truth". Notice that "the" is a definite article, and that He is THE truth. Notice that the truth can be found only among the followers of Jesus. We see in him the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and these three are one. So, dear brethren, if Jesus is not in you, you know not the truth.

3rd. "I am the Life". Life precedes action, both natural and spiritual, and all have experienced the life of nature, but only a few know anything about spiritual life, the quickening power, and being born again not of corruptible seed, but an incorruptible seed, and have Christ in them the hope of glory. If Jesus is not your life, YE ARE DEAD. But Jesus says, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish."

4th. "No Man Cometh unto the Father but by Me." We know this is not popular with the world. They preach that anyone can come; and that all they have to do is to come and give their heart to God, whether they have been born of the Spirit or not. Anyone can come, say the wise men of the day. Which will you have? Do you believe the words of Jesus, or do you look to the teaching of worldly professors?

As far as I know, our little meeting is in peace, and we all love the doctrine which has been revealed to us. We have been in the school where Jonah spent three days and three nights, and have

learned that "Salvation is of the Lord." We bow our heads to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and thank him for all blessings received here in this low ground of sorrow, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. This doctrine we believe, but if there come some with another doctrine, we will not receive it; neither will we give it God speed.

May this message ring in our ears, and our voices be tuned to the Infinite God. May we worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

(Elder) George L. Weaver

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EDITORIAL

2 Peter, Chapter I

(Article Number 2)

And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make (you that ye shall) neither (be) barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these

things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

From earthly wars and contentions there may come cessations and lulls, but in the Christian's race there is no discharge nor grounding of arms. The ending of one duty in the kingdom of heaven is the beginning of the next; the place where the armed conflict ends in one contention for the truth, is the place where a new conflict begins. There is no end to what the Lord has done for us. His salvation begins with his eternal design to save; it will end in eternal bliss and happiness. If you can fathom eternity, either in God's design to save, or our eternal home in bliss and happiness, you can readily see and understand that there is no beginning and no end to what God does for us. It is said that "a seed shall serve him", and since there is nothing said about part time service, I am not scared to say that there is no end to the service of the Lord's people to him. This is service that is acceptable to him, that it has been the inwrought work of the Spirit in the people of God; that it is only those works wrought in us by him; that it is only those things that pertain to this life-in-Christ existence, which things are according to godliness; that it is only spiritual blessings with which we were blessed in Christ before the world was, that are thus enjoined upon us to do.

"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue." We have found out that we obtain faith through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. We found out that he that gave us the faith was to multiply grace and peace unto us. Let me say, however, that the Scriptures teaching that, does not mean a thing to you unless you have an experimental knowledge of this fact. For instance, the Bible emphatically declares that there is no power but of God, and yet how many "power houses" in this world do we have who are claiming that they have got the Lord walking the aisles of heaven wringing his hands in jeopardy because his wants are not heeded? So, if you have an experience of grace, read with us; if you have an experience of works, stop now.

Besides the work of God in design, his sending Jesus in a prepared body to live and die for his people, and working in us that that is well pleasing in his sight, there is the working out of that internal work of the Spirit. In no sense of the word will He work in more than we will work out; in no sense of the word will we have a surplus of grace at the end; and equally so, we will not have accumulated a surplus of works. I do not preach a superior husband and an inferior wife. I do not preach the husband (Christ) walking in us (bride) and there not also be a response from us by a walk in keeping with the accomplishment of Christ. I preach (if I preach the gospel) that Christ made his bride an honorable woman. If he did do that, she will honor her husband.

If Christ is to multiply grace and peace to us, what is going to take place if the adding is not done? And I want to know if it is preaching wrong to say that as he multiplies to her, that she adds to what she has? Who will say that he does not multiply to her? Who will say that she does not add to what she has? But an objection is raised. He does the multiplying, but we do not do the adding. We neglect or we forget, or something else comes along to prevent. Now is that all you have to say? Are you sure that you have a good argument against the surety of the adding being done? Have you not forgotten an important portion of the text? God has given us all things pertaining to life and godliness. If he has, then he has given us the desire, and the grace, and the perseverance, and anything else needed towards the maintenance of this life, and the fruit or godliness of it. You may say that we grow careless, but I say that he gives us carefulness; you may say that we become neglectful, but I say that he makes us prompt; you

may say that we grow lukewarm, yes, but I must say that he sets us on fire with the flame of the Spirit.

There are not any slack times in the kingdom of heaven. You do not, as we say here in the South, lay by your crop. This is not a day when we sow in the spring and loll around for harvest in the fall. This is the day when "the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed", and thus this is a kingdom that is perpetually on the march. **(Amos 9:13).** Serving God calls for diligence, a constant going forward, a constant effort to follow closely in the footsteps of the master, — a vigilance, both in watching and in prayer. We are first given faith, and the other precious things are multiplied to us. *But now do not get too far in that direction:* It is only grace and peace that is multipled to us. I am glad that you thought of that. Do you remember that he hath called us to glory and virtue? Now add. Add the virtue to the faith. You have obtained the faith through his righteousness; you have been called to virtue. Put them together. Show your faith by your virtue (works).

Do not boast about your faith and belittle the virtue, for you are in as bad a predicament without the virtue as you are without the faith. Put them together, add them into one. Now to the virtue add knowledge. Does this divine nature not have any knowledge? Is knowledge not a thing? If it is a thing, it is among the gifts pertaining to life and godliness. If a person has grace, will they be intemperate? Who believes such a blasphemous doctrine? I do not. If grace is multiplied to a poor child of God, they will be temperate, they will have temperance; and having it, they are told to add it to knowledge, and are furnished everything necessary for the addition. If a person has peace multiplied to them, will they not have patience?

Patience flows out from peace. A patient man is a peaceful man, but an impatient man is a starter of wars and confusion. Thus, having peace multiplied to us, we have patience, and we are told to add it to godliness. Now that is the one thing that every other gift is given to bring about. Will all of the gifts fail to bring it about? Is God so poor in the selection of his gifts to us that he gives us that that fails to bring about in us a likeness of himself? No, in no wise! Now this godliness is to be added to brotherly kindness. Who, just tell me who, could be godly and not be kind towards his brother? All of these things then are to be added to charity. This is one of the things that abide and is the greatest of them all. If we have not this, we are nothing, but we have been given everything to make us *something.*

Unless these things are in us we could not add them together. And too, they must abound in us. Sometimes we become listless and slothful in order to teach us our dependence, and while in that condition we would have these things in us, but not abounding. While in this condition we might be manifestly barren or unfruitful (and yet winter might be the very thing needed to bring about a glorious crop), but as certain as they are in us and abounding, they make us neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. No point of doctrine has ever been made any more clear than this abounding work of God in us. If you want to say that we were a contributing factor in having all things that pertain to life and godliness, I do not see anything to be gained by having you in the Old School Baptist church. You are opposed to the foundation principle of our people; you profess that flesh and blood did have something to do with you knowing who Christ was; you propose to us that God did not alone by grace begin the good work in you. If you want to say that we made these things abound **after** His having put them in us, then you could not enjoy the presence of those who are kept by the power of God; you would not find that mutuality that those find in the working of the mighty power of God,

which power is on a common footing with that wrought in Jesus Christ in raising him from the dead. These characters are peculiar ones. They are elect according to the foreknowledge of God. They absolutely did not have **anything** to do with being chosen to salvation. At the same time of thus being elected, they were given all things pertaining to life and godliness. They did not get **anything** except that thus given them before the world was created. All of these things thus given them were brought to them, made manifest in them, made to abound in them — made unto them in such a way as to eliminate all barrenness and unfruitfulness; and being thus sent forth in the spoken word of the King they are made to prosper and accomplish that that he pleases.

Not all of the chosen of the Lord are called forward into the conflict. Just a few are blessed to lap water like a dog. Just a few are watchful for the enemy; just a few are careful about the doctrine they imbibe. All of God's People are citizens of the commonwealth of Israel, but they are not all always healthy and alert. Where a thing is lacking, there is not power to create it; where a thing is dormant, there is no flow of sap to produce action. The result where the lack prevails is blindness. Again, this lack cannot be cured by he that lacketh. If he ever comes into fulness again, it will be by a new supply coming from him that gave the first supply. Our supplies must all come from above, for the Christian cannot long survive on earthly things. He is saved by grace today, as he was yesterday, and as he must be tomorrow.

If we lack these things appointed unto us for life and godliness, we must be in the flesh, there being only spirit and flesh for us to be in. Being in the flesh, we cannot get out until we are removed by the power of God from a fleshly mind, a fleshly walk, into the walk in the Spirit. A blind man cannot see; a fleshly man cannot please God. The Lord must open our blinded eyes, he must renew us by the quickening power of his word. Our experience in these blessed truths are evident from day to day. We cannot come forth into the light and liberty of the Spirit; we cannot take our cross and walk in the light as we would. We feel our lack; we feel our blindness; we feel to have forgotten the wonderful day of the Lord when he purged our sins. It seems that we are readily abounding in the ways of the flesh and the world, and even sometimes we feel our lack so much that we are doubtful of ever having known the purging of the Lord. Again the case becomes so acute that we are not so concerned about it. O how blind we are, and how much that is gone from our mind! Have you ever known dear panting, heaving soul what I am describing? Have you ever felt the lack of a flowing love of God in your heart? Have you lacked all initiative to attend to the spoken word? If so, how helpless you were! and O, the groanings of your poor soul. But the set time to visit Zion came, and the Spirit that first made you alive came with new supplies, a new and complete abounding came, and how easily you ran in wisdom's ways, and what joy it was to count the many blessings of the Lord and to add them together as he multiplied.

In all the Bible there is nothing as precious as multiplication to us by the Spirit, and by it us adding gifts to gifts. **(Prov. 31:27)**

W. D. G.

WE ARE STILL STANDING ON THE SAME PRINCIPLES

The principles on which the Signs of the Times was founded in 1832 have been reiterated many times during the past 125 years: both by their re-statement as first listed, and by their being the very substance of every scriptural doctrine which has been maintained.

As we begin a new volume we want to reassure our readers that we are not the least bit inclined to deviate from them. We believe these principles are

statement of the fundamentals on which all truth is founded; and that they briefly state our own understanding of the teachings of the Scriptures, as well as mention some institutions which teach doctrines which are decidedly un-scriptural.

Why sinners are saved (because God loved them); who are the saved (those chosen or elected of God); how they are saved (by the atonement of Christ); and how they are brought to the knowledge of the truth (by the work of the Spirit in their hearts), are things which God has made known in his word. They are unchangeable things — truths of God; and, while men may teach otherwise, or believe otherwise, they have not, nor cannot, annul in any sense the things of God.

We greatly prefer not to be, ". . . tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." **(Ephesians 4:14)**

J. D. W.

The following is copied from the January 1, 1859 issue of the Signs:

"The same leading sentiments which we published, and to which we pledged our paper twenty-six years ago, are still nailed to our mast-head. We have found no occasion to either change or alter them. They are as follows:

The Signs of the Times—Devoted to the Old School Baptist cause—maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfections of the Great Jehovah,—the revelation which he has made of himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, that these Three are One.—1 John v. 8.

2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.

3. Eternal and Unconditioned Election.

4. The Total Depravity and Just Condemnation of Fallen Man.

5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

6. The Sovereign, Irresistable, and, in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Ghost in Quickening and Regenerating the sons of God.

7. The Final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God by Grace.

8. The Resurrection of the Dead, and Eternal Judgment.

9. The Church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers—that to her is given able Ministers of the New Testament —that the Scriptures are the only infallible Rule of Faith and Practice to the Saints of God.

10. **The Signs of the Times** will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath School Unions, &c., &c., waging war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of Institutions.

With this plain statement of our sentiments, we issued our first proposals for this paper in the fall of 1831; and if at any time or under any circumstances, we have swerved from these leading sentiments, we are not conscious of it. Certainly it has never been our intention to do so. We then believed that the first and sixth articles fully involved the doctrine of the Eternal Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ, and implied his Mediatorial identity as the Head over all things to his Church, and the Eternal, vital union of Christ and his seed, which are a "Chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, and a Peculiar People. A Seed that shall serve him, and be counted to him for a Generation, and a people which he has carried and borne all the days of old."

Such are still our views; and to their defense we pledge such ability as the Lord may graciously bestow on us."

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"And grieve not the holy spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." (Ephesians 4:30)

We have been requested by a friend in Chester County, Pa., to give our views on the above text, through the Signs of the Times. The popular sentiment of Armenians and workmongers in general seems to be that the children of men, even in their fallen condition, have power to inflict upon the eternal and unchanging God, the Holy Ghost, disappointment, sorrow and grief; they have therefore supposed that the above text was designed as an exhortation to unregenerated sinners to beware of their liability to grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by obstinately refusing to be quickened by his divine operation. They hold

that God, the Holy Ghost, operates to some extent upon all hearts, and strives with all sinners to regenerate them; but some sinners are so hardened or careless that the Spirit becomes grieved with them, and gives them over to hardness of heart and a reprobate mind, etc. If by any fair construction of the admonition of the text under consideration, we could arrive at any such conclusion, we would be compelled to yield the ground we occupy in regard to salvation being of the Lord alone, and in this surrender yield also the doctrine of the immutability of God, and of the depravity and consequent inability of men. The absurdity, however, of such notions will sufficiently appear, at least to such as are divinely enlightened, when we present the true meaning of the subject.

In the discussion of this subject, we take the position that neither the above text or any other part or portion of the epistle was addressed to unregenerate sinners. The whole epistle, by authority of the Holy Ghost, was addressed to the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus; such as were blessed with all spiritual blessings, according as they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; predestinated to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. **(Ephesians 1:1-5)** Such as were quickened by the Holy Spirit, from a state of death in trespasses and sins; raised up together with Christ, and made to sit together with Christ, in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. **(Ephesians 11:1-6)** Paul having fully identified the subjects of address, as the blessed, chosen, predestinated, redeemed, called and quickened people of God, organized into a gospel church, as one body, in one hope of their calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in them all; beseeches them to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called. Had their calling, like many professors in modern days, been of men, then to walk according thereto would require them to follow the traditions, doctrines and inventions of men; but their vocation or calling was of God, and that according as he had chosen them in Christ before the foundation of the world; saved and called, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in him before the world began, **(2 Timothy 1:9)**; therefore to walk worthy of such a heavenly calling would require that as they had received Christ Jesus the Lord they should walk in him. Suffer us here to remark, when men exhort unregenerate sinners, they have to present selfish motives, such as their eternal destiny at stake. The terrors of damnation on one hand, and the prospect of eternal happiness on the other, or their exhortations avail nothing; but to the living children of God the apostle would present no more powerful incentive than the nature of their vocation; the eternity of God's love toward them in Christ Jesus, their election, safety and identity with Christ Jesus as the Head over all things to his church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. **(Ephesians 1:23)**

If by **the Holy Spirit of God, whereby we are sealed,** etc., we are to understand God himself, as a Spirit, infinite, eternal, independent and immutable, or the Holy Ghost as God, we would be compelled to consider him susceptible of grief, sorrow, disappointment, etc., which things are quite incompatible with what we have been taught of God; but our Lord told Nicodemus, "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit," as that which is born of the flesh is flesh. So in this text, **the Holy Spirit of God** appears to mean the **spirit of the renewed mind,** otherwise called the "New man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." — verse 23, 24. This Spirit of God, whereby the saints are sealed, is called **the spirit of promise,** and is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory. (Chapter 1:13, 14)

This spirit then we understand to be the spirit of life; the incorruptible seed by the word of the Lord that liveth and abideth forever; the seed that remaineth; the spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead, and which dwells in all that are born of God. It is here called the spirit because it is born of the Holy Ghost; it is called the **Holy Spirit,** for that which emanates only from the Holy Ghost must necessarily be holy; it is called the holy spirit of God because it is of God. That spiritual life which was given to the saints in Christ before the world began is called, when received by us experimentally in the new birth, "Christ in you the hope of glory," for in him, the eternal word, was life, and that life is the light of men. When we receive it we receive Christ; for Christ is our life. "He is the Resurrection and the Life; and when he who is our life shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory." That life which was given us in Adam, and which the apostle here distinguishes from the spiritual by the appellation, "the old man", which is corrupt and carnal, standing connected with law, sin, condemnation and wrath; but this holy spirit or new man is spiritual, incorruptible, undefiled and cannot fade away; for it was and is reserved in heaven for you who by him do believe in God; and earnest of it is given us when quickened, or after that we believe. As the first operation of the Holy Ghost on our hearts bring us to belief, or in other words, convinces us of sin; of the spirituality of the law; of the impossibility of salvation by works of righteousness that we can do; so after this is effected by the exceeding greatness of his mighty power that brought again our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, the struggle, the labor, the travail of regeneration gives place to deliverance of the new man, which, not after Adam is created a natural, carnal or corruptible man, of the earth earthy; but is created after God (Christ) in righteousness (Christ) and true holiness (Christ). By this renewing of the Holy Ghost a spiritual life is communicated to the child of God, which is the spirit of promise (in distinction from law) and whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be made partakers of the divine nature. **(2 Peter 1:4)** This spirit in our hearts exerts a transforming influence, by it the saints are sealed. This metaphor teaches two things; first, as the seal makes its full impression on the wax, and which cannot be counterfeited, so the indwelling life born from above makes an inimitable impression upon believers, conforming them to the image of Christ; and secondly, as the seal makes the instrument, covenant, will, testament or promise valid, so this incorruptible seed implanted in the saints is an earnest of their divine inheritances in glory.

This seal of God, instamped on his children, is to serve as an earnest or assurance to his saints, until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory; or as in our text, **until the day of redemption.** That is, as long as the saints are to live by faith upon the Son of God.

The day of redemption in this text means the same as in the first chapter and 14th verse, viz: the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory. The possession which Christ purchased with his blood is the flock or church of God. "The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." The purchase of this possession was a redemption purchase; not effected with such corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, etc. The day of their redemption, in this case, means their final deliverance from corruption, depravity and death; but our apostle says, even we ourselves, who have received the first fruits of the Spirit, do groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit: the redemption of our body. **(Romans 8:23)** Until, therefore, these mortal bodies of the purchased flock of Christ are arrayed in spotless immortality, until these

corruptibles shall put on incorruption, and the saying is fulfilled, "Death is swallowed up in victory", and the saints prepared to sing the triumphant anthem, "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?", this holy spirit, as the signet of our God, shall be to us an earnest, evidence and assurance that when this earthly house shall be dissolved, and fall, we have a building of God; a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Until that illustrious day shall dawn on us we shall need this earnest, but no longer; for

> "When from the dust of earth we rise,
> To take our mansion in the skies",

we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known. Until then may it be our inexpressible happiness, through grace abounding to the chief of sinners, to stand upon Mount Zion with the hundred and forty and four thousand, and the innumerable multitude redeemed out of every nation, kindred and tongue; having the seal of our Father God deeply impressed upon us in heart, in life, and in practice.

But the solemn admonition of our subject demands our special attention. "Grieve not the holy spirit." While the eternal God is infinitely above being moved by any such passions as grief, sorrow or disappointment, being of one mind, and none can turn him, that spirit begotten in his saints, which is an emanation from him, can be grieved. In Noah it strove with a world lying in wickedness, and devoted to awful destruction. In Lot, his righteous soul was vexed with the ungodly deeds of those among whom he dwelt in Sodom. This holy spirit, as it has existed in all the holy prophets since the world began, has been resisted by the generation of vipers, who do always resist the Holy Ghost; they fight against God, resist God, etc., but they cannot grieve nor change the immutable God, for he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, and God will hold them in derision; but the spirit begotten of God in his people can be grieved, burdened and sorrowful. For example, witness the case of our blessed Lord in incarnation; he rejoiced in spirit, he groaned in spirit, etc. In all the saints also may be found the same **spirit of God** which was in Christ, and that susceptibility to sorrow and grief implied in our subject. From the world the saints expect persecution, and in the world tribulation; it does not grieve them when they realize such opposition from that quarter; but they rejoice and give thanks to God that they are accounted worthy thus to suffer for the sake of Christ. The exhortation in our subject is not therefore to the men of the world; let them rage and waste the fury of their spite; but the spirit of God in the hearts of all his saints is grieved when they witness the departure of their brethren from the simplicity of the gospel of Christ; they are deeply afflicted when they see any in whom they have had confidence as Christians giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; or when any who profess to know and love the truth depart from a gospel walk and correct deportment. Christians too frequently inflict deep wounds upon the hearts of their brethren by an unbecoming course in life and deportment. Indeed, examples have not been lacking within the last twenty years in the church of Christ. An awful disregard of the admonition before us has marked the course of very many who have now gone out from us, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. Christians are often grieved in spirit with the corruptions of their own natures, indwelling sin; and perhaps this is the most prolific source of all their grief.

To avoid grieving the holy spirit, in the sense of this admonition, requires that all the saints should walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. That we be no more children tossed to

and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive. That we walk no more as other Gentiles walk — in vanity of their mind. That ye put off concerning the former conversation, the old man which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts. And putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath, neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouths. By indulging in any of those things discountenanced by the apostle, or by neglecting anything enjoined, will necessarily grieve the holy spirit of God, whereby they are sealed unto the day of redemption.

O that the Lord may enforce this important admonition on all his dear children! We feel our need of its special application to our heart, and we would, in the language of the apostle, beseech our brethren to attend to these things.

Let all our arrows be hurled at Babylon, and our artillery thunder against the hidden things of dishonesty; let us fight the good fight, and never, under the pretension of divine influence, cease to contend against principalities and powers, and spirtual wickedness in high places; but while valiant for the truth, and ever hostile to the spirit of compromise with Zion's foes, let brotherly love continue among all those whose calling is by a vocation from God, to one hope of our calling. And as the apostle closed this chapter, so close we this article in his words; (not that we pretend to write by inspiration as he wrote, but because we wish to be guided and directed by apostolic precept and example;) "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice, and be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, June 1, 1840.)

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517 E Avenue C
Kingman, Kansas

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed you will find ten dollars, five to be used for a two years' subscription to the Signs, and the other for any purpose you have need.

The October number is good reading, as all are, but the September issue seemed to be extra special.

We try to thank our God for the care he has shown for his people in giving grace to the editors and writers of the Signs, to show forth His wonderous works in spirit and in truth. May you be given grace and strength to act in that capacity for many years to come, is the wish of a sister, I hope.

Verda Machesney

REPORT OF A GOOD MEETING

Elder J. J. Collins reports that a good meeting was enjoyed at Bethlehem Church, near Dothan, Alabama, on the second Sunday in October. Present with him were Elder E. R. Sorrells, Elder A. B. Chumney, and Brother W. J. Harrison; and the preaching was by these four. At the close of the morning service Brother and Sister Charles T. Collins were received for baptism; and at the close of the afternoon service Brother Henry F. Mayhair also asked for a home. Bethlehem Church was founded in 1874. — J. D. W.

ORDINATION OF DEACON

According to the call of New Hope Church, Melvern, Alabama, Brother W. F. Casey was chosen a deacon, and ordained October 6, 1957.

Elder J. J. Collins was chosen as Moderator of the Presbytery, and Sister Rilla Mae Hadden, Clerk. Deacon W. O. Williams served as spokesman of the church, and answered the questions as given in 1 Timothy 3:8-13, and asked by Elder J. J. Collins. Elder Wm. H. Smith examined Brother Casey on the Articles of Faith; and Elder E. R. Sorrells led in the ordination prayer. Elder Smith delivered the charge. After which the church and visiting

brethren extended the right hand of fellowship and endorsement.

Elder J. J. Collins, Pastor

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God in his infinite wisdom has been pleased to call from our midst our beloved sister Tency Lucindy Pugh; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the members of Little Flock Primitive Baptist Church, Altus, Oklahoma, bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Father's will, believing that He doeth all things well. Sister Pugh was an humble, faithful member of the church as long as health permitted. On the evening of October 9, 1957, it pleased God to call her from her sufferings here, to his beloved embrace. Be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be given the bereaved family, and a copy be spread upon our church records, and a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Sister Pugh was the widow of the later Brother W. H. Pugh, who died in 1951. Brother and Sister Pugh united with the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church October 26, 1896, in Wood County, Texas.

Done by order of the church October 12, 1957. Written at the request of the church by

Mrs. R. L. Buckner,
Mangum, Oklahoma

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, Since the last session of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, our Heavenly Father has seen fit to remove from our midst, and from the scenes of this mortal life, our highly esteemed sisters, Susie Eleanor Dade, of the New Valley Church, and Beatrice E. Robey, of the Frying Pan Church; and

WHEREAS, These two dear sisters were truly "Mothers in Israel", and were always desiring, above everything else, to entertain the brethren in their homes; and walking and contending earnestly for the faith that becometh saints; and that they are greatly missed among us; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to our Father's will, desiring to be reconciled to our loss, which we feel is their eternal gain: and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we extend our deepest sympathy to these families and that a copy of these Resolutions be given them; and that a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times and Old Faith Contender for publication.

Done by order of the Resolutions Committee of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting held at Frying Pan Church in October, 1957.

Elder John D. Wood, Moderator
Deacon Arthur L. Carter, Clerk
Deacon L. C. Duke, Asst. Clerk

OBITUARIES

SISTER MAMIE DALTON

Sister Mamie Dalton was born January 10, 1881, and died April 30, 1957. She was the daughter of the late Jack and Hester Pickrel Adams; and was united in marriage to C. Douglas Dalton January 13, 1907.

Surviving are her husband and two children: Mrs. Reed Jennings, Gretna, Virginia, and Mrs. Louise Breshner, Pikesville, Kentucky; one brother: Hampton Adams, Danville, Virginia; and two sisters: Mrs. Ethey Bridges and Mrs. Pearl Samuels, Danville, Virginia.

Sister Dalton united with Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, Gretna, Virginia, October 11, 1924, and was baptized by the later Elder J. F. Stegall. She loved the doctrine and order of the Lord's people. To know Sister Dalton was to love her. We feel that our loss is her eternal gain, and that she is now at rest. May her husband and children be comforted and reconciled to the will of our God.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Mr. Lerew and Mr. Lynch; and she was laid to rest in Gretna Burial Park beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, where many neighbors and friends joined her brethren in showing their love for her.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be put on our church records; a copy sent to the family; and a copy sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Springfield Church in conference.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
R. C. Dalton, Clerk

JOHN H. ANDERSON

In the obituary of John H. Anderson, published in the November issue, the names of two surviving sisters were not included. They are: Miss Rachael Anderson and Miss Cynthia Anderson, of Lansing, N. C.

J. D. W.

SUSAN DODSON TWEEDY

Sister Susan Dodson Tweedy, of Lynchburg, Virginia, was born August 16, 1884, and died July 12, 1957, after being injured in a car

wreck with her husband; and from which she never regained consciousness.

She is survived by her husband and several children by two former marriages. Her first marriage was to Oscar Blankenship in 1900; and then to Mr. Martin. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Pleasant Grove in 1904, and was baptized by Elder Price. In August, 1954, she moved her membership to Springfield Primitive Baptist Church at Gretna, Virginia, and was a faithful attendant until death. She was loyal to her church and loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. She had many friends and relatives who mourn her passing. She is now at rest, awaiting the resurrection.

Funeral services were held in Lynchburg by another order; and she was laid to rest there. May the Lord give reconciling grace to all who mourn her passing.

We of Springfield Church extend sympathy to the family, and bow in humble submission to the will of God.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be put on our church records; a copy be sent to the family; and a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of Springfield Church in conference.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
R. C. Dalton, Clerk.
(written by Annie Tosh)

FANNY MABEL GILBERT

Sister Fanny Mabel Gilbert was born January 26, 1880, at Payne's Mills, Elgin County, Ontario, Canada; and passed away August 21, 1957. She was married to Ernest Campbell Gilbert October 7, 1903, and is survived by one daughter, Ilene, (Mrs. Sidney Orchard) and four sons, Eldon, Bernie, Bruce and Douglas Gilbert.

She was a twin daughter of Brother Neil and Sister Mary McAlpine: her twin sister, Mrs. Flora Maud Graham, dying of injuries received in an auto accident July 1, 1947. She was one of thirteen children of a pioneer family of this district, all the others having predeceased her.

She united with The Covenanted Baptist Church at the Lobo Quarterly Meeting the first Sunday in September, 1956. She loved her brethren and looked forward to having them in her home, and to being with them in meeting. Her brethren held her in high esteem. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace.

The evening before she died, she told her pastor, Elder George Ruston, of the joy and comfort she had had with her brethren and how the twenty-third Psalm had meant so much to her; and of how his speaking in London on the forty-sixth Psalm had stayed with her, and said, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea."

Service was held at the Sifton funeral home at St. Thomas, Saturday, August 24, 1957. Her pastor spoke from **Psalm 116, 15,** "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints," also **Revelation 14, 13,** "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

The large attendance of relatives, brethren and friends showed the love and respect they had for her.

We who were near to her would say in the words of her Saviour, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."

May God's grace comfort and sustain us who are left to mourn.

Her son and brother in the Church,
Eldon Gilbert

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 11 A. M.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

WRIGHTS' CREEK CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 11:00 A. M.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., six miles SE. of Sulligent, Alabama.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each Saturday before the fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Alabama.

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles SW. of Fayette, Alabama.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before.

E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Pratt City, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. Meeting place at Alder Street at top of hill, first car going into Pratt City from Birmingham.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

LIBERTY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., eight miles South of Gordo, Alabama.

O. G. GARVER, Pastor

MT. CARMEL CHURCH, Coffee Springs, Alabama, meets each first Sunday 11 A. M.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

W. S. SPEER, Pastor

REHOBETH OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located five miles North of El Dorado, Arkansas and half-mile West of Highway No. 7, meets second Sunday in each month and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

R. W. RHODES, Pastor
W. A. SPEER, Clerk

LITTLE FLOCK CHURCH, Miami, Florida, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before, SW. 29th Avenue and 6th Street. We extend an invitation to any interested to visit us.

Mrs. J. M. Futch,
7005 SW. 21st Street,
Miami, Florida

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Weiser, Idaho, meets each second and fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 5th and E. Park Street.

John Hall, Pastor
Isabel Turnidge, Clerk

PLEASANT VALLEY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas, meets the first Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (January, March, etc.) at the home of Sister Vera Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C.

MRS. PHEBE CATES, Clerk

THE LOST CREEK CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, meets first Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Kentucky, ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton, on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

C. H. EVANS, Pastor

NEW HOPE CHURCH (better known as Lick Creek) meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Kentucky.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE ZION CHURCH OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS, Mayfield, Kentucky, meets first Sunday each month at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M., on South 7th Street.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Baltimore, Maryland, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Street, near Calvert.

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on Falls Road about twenty miles north of Baltimore.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, New York City, meets every first and third Sundays at McBurney Branch Y. W. C. A. 215 W. 23rd Street, corner of 7th Ave. (Elevator to 2nd floor.) 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M. All visitors are welcome.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets each 5th Sunday from May through September, with two days meeting the 1st Sunday in May; and meets at Needmore, Pa., on 5th Sundays from October through April, with two days meeting the 2nd Sunday in October.

John D. Wood, Pastor
Orien Mellott, Clerk
McConnellsburg, Pa.

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, Houston, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before 10:30 A. M. Church is located on Little York Highway, four miles north of Houston, and one mile east of Highway 76.

W. W. Fleet, Pastor
Irene Wisenbaker, Clerk

BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin, Oregon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes.

ERNEST ATTEBERRY, Pastor

MT. ZION CHURCH, Weslaco, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.; and each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday before at 2:00 P. M., at their new location: seven miles West of Weslaco, on highway 83.

E. B. AULT, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk

SARDIS CHURCH, Amarillo, Texas, meets first Sundays at 10:30, in the home of Deacon C. M. Toler, 119 S. Bowie Street.

C. E. TURNER, Pastor

PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, 1211 8th Avenue, meets first Sunday in each month at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, go one block North to meeting house.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor
W. A. LITTLE, Asst. Pastor

THE ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST CHURCH, Lawn, Texas, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
MRS. NOLA STEWART, Clerk

AN ARM OF PILGRIM REST CHURCH, meets each second Sunday and Saturday night before at Earth, Texas.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
A. A. CHAMBERS, Clerk

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30, at the home of M. J. Culpepper. Lovers of the truth invited.

E. B. AULT, Pastor

THE OLD SALEM CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS, four miles South of Teague, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

SAINTS REST OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday evening before at seven-thirty, at 4614 Sylvester Street.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
JOHN T. BEENE, Clerk

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
C. E. TURNER, Co-pastor

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday afternoon at 2:30.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor

THE PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Memphis, Tennessee, meet in the Primitive Baptist Church, corner of Getwell and Fizer Streets, on second Sunday in each month at 11 A. M. and Saturday evening before; also on fourth Sundays at 11 A. M.

H. G. Brown, Pastor
791 Watson Street
L. C. Campbell, Clerk
3347 Tutwiller Street

LITTLE FLOCK PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Cass County, Missouri, meets on second Sundays in the Memorial Building, Pleasant Hill, Missouri. We invite brethren of our faith and order to visit us.

L. L. SCHENCK, Pastor
MRS. J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk
Pleasant Hill, Mo.

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2:30, Fairmont Park, 2023 Tidewater Drive.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Richmond, Virginia, meets each fourth Sunday in their new meeting house about ten miles South of Richmond, just off highway 360 South.

R. S. PAYNE, Pastor

DAN RIVER CHURCH, between Danville, Va. and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville, Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday night before, on Bradley Road.

W. R. DODD, Pastor

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday afternoon, before at 2 P. M., and is located on Route 28, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2 P. M., each second month (February, April, etc.), and is near Lucketts, about eight miles north of Leesburg, Virginia.

BROAD RUN CHURCH, Poolesville, Maryland, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. each second month (January, March, etc.)

MT. ZION CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2 P. M., and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, Virginia, on Route 50, between Washington and Winchester, Virginia.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are always glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Deacon G. C. Spindle, Lincoln 3-3782.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

LITTLE ZION PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Chehalis, Washington, meets in the home of Sister Effie Parke, 1360 First Street, the first Sunday of each month at 11 A. M.

HOWARD EASON, Pastor

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, Naches, Washington, meets at 10:30 A. M. each second Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. DASIE BAKER, Clerk
Rt. 1, Naches, Wash.

HARMONY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, about four miles East of Huntington, W. Va., near Route 60 at Russell Creek, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

J. R. LANE, Moderator
MILDRED STANLEY, Clerk
Rt. 2, Huntington, W. Va.

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Stockton, California, meets second Sundays, 10:30 A. M., at 5620 E. Marsh Street. All lovers of the truth invited.

T. R. JEFFERSON, Pastor
WM. ECHOLS, Clerk
Chowchilla, Cal.

The **WALNUT FORK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH,** near Cottage Grove, Tennessee, meets on the second Sunday of each month.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor
R. L. VEAZEY, SR., Clerk

The **WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,** Warwick, Orange County, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are at 10:30 A. M. DST.

The **MIDDLETOWN AND WALLKILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,** Middletown, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday from April to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. Meetings are at 2 P. M. DST.

ELAM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, two miles North of Goshen, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 11:00 A. M.
J. R. GIBSON, Pastor A. C. Carter, Clerk

ROCK SPRINGS OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, meets each first Sunday at 10:30. The meeting house is located on highway 222, about one-quarter mile of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line.

John D. Wood, Pastor
Chas. B. Osborne, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Compton, California, meets each fourth Sunday at the home of L. W. Langwell, 12812 S. Williams Street.

WHITE WATER OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located about one mile Northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

W. A. SPEER, Pastor

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in the United States), meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is located one mile south of Newark, Delaware, just off of Highway 896. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

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OLIVE AND HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Shokan, N. Y., meets each 2nd Sunday at 1:30 P. M. Also meets each 4th Sunday at 1:30 P. M. from December through February.

A. J. Slauson, Pastor
Mrs. Neva Brooks, Clerk

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Philadelphia, Pa., meets each 5th Sunday at 10:30 A. M., in the Y.W.C.A. building, 2027 Chestnut Street.

H. M. Bennett, Pastor
T. C. Koch, Clerk
514 N. 18th Street, Philadelphia 30, Pa.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 126 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1958 NO. 2

613 Austin Avenue,
Harlingen, Texas

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

Greetings to you. I have often thought of you, and how much I enjoyed talking with you both during the three days meeting at Cana; and of having the pleasure of hearing three sermons by Elder Wood.

You asked me last Summer to write of my experience: I hope this is an experience of grace. It seems far too sweet, pure, and real to come from any source other than God. You may use it as you think best. I know that in my flesh dwells no good thing.

We really do enjoy the Signs of the Times. May the Lord give you grace to continue publishing the truth. I will be glad to hear from you.

EXPERIENCE

My wife and I were married June 9, 1942, at the time I was serving in the U.S. Army. Shortly after my discharge in December 1945, we moved to San Angelo, Texas, where I had been elected football line coach for the High School. My wife and I attended a church where continued pressure was put upon us to join. Several members told me it was my duty as a leader of young men to be a member of a church. They had fully convinced my wife and we both joined in 1946. We attended church regularly but I never was in harmony with the type of preaching I heard. The God they worshipped, in my opinion, was lacking in power and did not have complete control over the individual. After moving to Donna, San Antonio, and to Harlingen where we are now living — the preaching seemed all the same.

One Sunday while we were attending church during the absence of the regular pastor, the pulpit was filled by a visiting pastor. At the end of his sermon, he began to beg the non-christians to come forward and be saved by accepting Christ: "God wants you to, it's up to you, God can't do anything unless you are willing to let Him." This caused cold chills to run over me, and I told my wife that I just couldn't attend a church any longer where a God was worshipped who depended upon the help of man: who couldn't save man, unless man accepted Him.

My mother, a member of the Primitive Baptist Church since 1916, asked me to attend the Primitive Baptist Church near Weslaco, Texas. After a few weeks, we attended and heard Elder E. B. Ault preach; it was the sweetest preaching that I had ever heard. He preached about an all-powerful God, One who spoke and it was done, commanded, and it stood fast. A feeling of sweetness and brotherly love seemed to flow around those present that even a stranger could comprehend.

One morning just before awakening, I dreamed of seeing myself in the midst of many thousands of sinners. We were all black; but all at once I began to shine like unto a light. I awakened at this instant, but was unable to remove the dream from my mind. During this time, every spare minute I had was taken up in reading the Bible, which would continue until one or two o'clock in the morning. For the first time I could see myself as the greatest of all sinners — all my past sins, which were many, seemed to grow bigger and bigger and I was worrying most of the day and night over them. And as each day past, my sins seemed to be as the clouds in the sky as they become bigger

and thicker. One Sunday afternoon I was sitting in our living room reading while the younger children were in the back room playing and my wife was taking a bath. I look back on this now as a perfect, quiet setting for what was to take place. All a once I looked up and saw myself shining in the same way as in my dream, and at the same time all my sins began rapidly to close in on me causing me to become almost hysterical — jumping up and running into my bedroom, I threw myself across the bed with my head in the corner. By this time my sins were crushing me, I was dying — I couldn't even call for my wife — one — two — three more breaths at the most would be my last — Oh, what a terrible feeling to die like this — gasping for breath, I raised up on one elbow and yelled — "God help me — God help me!" In an instant, the Lord entered my room, and as He entered, all my sins vanished. He not only entered the room, but He came right on down and got between my head and the floor. Brethren and Sisters, no words can express the feeling that came over me. The presence of the Lord in my room was almost more than I could bear. I didn't see the Lord with my eyes but I know I felt Him with all my heart and soul. I just lay there on my bed and wept aloud trembling from head to foot. My wife came into the room shortly afterwards and found me weeping like a child. She came over and put her arm around me — I couldn't understand why, after finding me in my condition, it didn't excite her. She asked me in a few minutes what had happened. I told her, God had saved my life. She said that she had also felt the presence of something in the room. She left the room, and as I was ready to get up a Voice spoke to me with great power and authority and said, YOU WILL JOIN THE CHURCH. I jumped at the sound of His voice and answered aloud, "I will, I will!" There was no doubt in my mind the church being the Primitive Baptist Church. I was afraid to go to bed that night not knowing what to expect. The next day it was like walking on air, my every thought was on the Lord, in my conversation with other people, my thoughts were always on Him; oh, how close He seemed to be to me. My prayers seemed to flow directly to Him. I wanted to praise Him to everyone I saw, but felt they couldn't understand. This feeling gradually went away and before another week was over, I seemed to have lost everything — my prayers didn't seem to get any farther than my lips and sometimes I would give up in shame and dismay. The more I tried to keep from sinning, the more I would sin. I began to worry about joining the church, I felt too unworthy to offer myself to such a sweet people as the Primitive Baptists yet the Lord had spoken that I would join. I prayed that God would tell me when. Several meetings past, when on the second Sunday in May, 1957, Sister Ault requested that we sing the first three verses of "Children of the Heavenly King." After singing three verses, I started to close my book, while for some reason the congregation continued to sing; during the next verse, that same strong force with all authority spoke once more. I could hardly get to Elder Ault fast enough, but at the same time possessed a feeling of unworthiness. I was taken into the church and baptized that afternoon.

A short time later, my next experience came. Another Sunday afternoon as I was reading, I looked up to see my future pathway of life open up to me and a great pain come over me. The way that the Lord had shown me was more than I felt I could bear. The pathway was full of ups and downs, and the burden that He placed upon my shoulders was more than I felt I could undertake. For a second my thoughts were: Lord, is it too late to turn back and live the life I once lived and walk according to the course of this world fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind? But oh, how I begged His forgiveness and if this was the way He had chosen for me, it was the way I wanted to go.

My prayer was that whatever that pathway might be — God only give me the courage, strength, and guidance to enable me to walk through it. I am still somewhat perturbed as to the full meaning of this vision, but God has shown me that He has full power in Heaven and earth. "That He shutteth and no man openeth — openeth and no man shutteth" — and that it is only through His grace and mercy that we are given any hope of ever being made to sit together in heavenly places. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus into good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Where would our hope be if God has not sent His Son down to save lost sinners? "For the Son of man has come to save that which was lost."

The purpose of my writing this, if I am not deceived, was to try in my weak manner to give praise to an all powerful and wise God for taking a lowly worm of the dust, dead in trespasses and sins, and giving him a little hope and even though this hope seems at times to all but fade away, it would not be traded for all the gold, silver, and riches of this old natural world. "But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it?"

An unworthy brother in hope of mercy,

Joe Hamrick

A FEW THOUGHTS

I will give a few thoughts on the subject of religion. First, I believe in an allwise God, one who created the heavens and the earth, and the fullness thereof. Second, I believe that the Old Primitive Baptist Church is the true church; though I believe that God has a people in every kindred, tongue and nation, and that we are saved by the grace of God. "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."

I believe that the time is coming when time and timely things will wind up; and, to my judgment, that is when Christ is coming after his redeemed family. "Marvel not at this for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Christ speaking to his children, says, "I go to prepare a place for you, and I will come again and receive you unto my self, that where I am ye may be also." I believe each of Adam's posterity has an appointed time to die, and when that time comes we have to go. I believe that those that will reach heaven and immortal glory, when the time comes that they have to die and breathe out their last breath, their spirit returns to God who gave it. This mortal body goes to the grave to await the second coming of the Lord. I have often heard good people remark that they hoped to meet their loved ones who had gone on before. I believe that when Christ comes the second time without sin unto salvation to gather his people home, that they will all be raised at the same time, and will all go home together never-

more to part. The Bible tells us that these vile bodies of ours shall be changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Son of God. I have thought like this: when the children of God get to heaven, they will know each other, but they will have as great love for one as they do for the other. I don't understand that heaven will be a place of ignorance: as God is allwise, his children will be wise. I have often thought about our loved ones who have passed away from this time world, and have been sleeping in their graves a long time — but time is not reckoned as to them; one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years is as one day with the Lord. There is nothing new, nor nothing old with Him; but all things stand as one eternal now.

I close with these few remarks. I have tried to write what I believe is the truth. If I am saved, it will be by the grace of God, not for anything good that I have done.

S. P. Edwards

(See obituary this issue — Ed.)

Pheba, Miss.

Dear Editors:

Please accept my check for one year subscription to the good old Signs. I have read it most all my life. My father was a Primitive Baptist, and my father-in-law was a preacher, Elder D. T. Moore, Moore's Bridge, Ala.

My husband united with Pleasant Ridge Church at Moore's Bridge, Ala., the 4th Sunday in September, 1957. What a joyous day it was to me! I had united thirty years ago, and had held back a long time, feeling that I was not fit to be among those good people. When I did unite, I was up before them before I knew it.

I wish I could write it as well as I understand it. Nothing gives me so much pleasure as hearing it preached. I hope we are both one of you.

Mrs. Sam Moore

"GREAT IS THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS"

First I want to quote the hymn —

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
He rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy; and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scorn his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

Cowper wrote these verses in the evening of the day he had planned to take his life. He had been under conviction of sin for a long time with no hope that his sins would ever be forgiven. The strain on his mind seemed more than he could any longer bear. He called for a cab and asked to be taken to the bridge over the river Thames where he had planned to jump and end his life. The driver, noticing his upset condition, started driving around the streets of London instead of to the bridge over the river Thames, and finally brought him back to his own door steps; he got out and went into his home and wrote the hymn quoted above.

By carefully reading the hymn we find that the Lord had been most merciful to him, causing him to travel a long and rugged road in search of relief. Yea, to the ends of the earth, the end of his own strength: that there was no help or hope for him, that he was lost, that his sins were pressing him down to hell. Surely in this condition a cry went up to God from his soul; as every

child of God is made to cry in the feeling that their end had come, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Then Jesus so sweetly appeared to him, causing him to feel that his sins were forgiven and that Jesus was his Saviour and Redeemer; and that all this long rough journey and experience was for his good and the glory of his Lord. Every child of God must be quickened by the Holy Ghost, brought through great trials, convicted and made to feel the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and finally through the mercy and shed blood of Christ be made to feel that their sins are forgiven, and that Jesus is their Saviour, before they can know the Lord and are enabled to worship God in Spirit and in truth. The Apostle Paul and John the Baptist, Job, and many others were made to go through great trials before they were made to feel the power, mercy, nearness, and presence of the Lord, and to know that He was God. Paul, when he was Saul of Tarsus, on his way to Damascus to persecute the saints, causing some to be put to death, knew not the Lord. He was to go this way to learn, and to know God. On his way to Damascus, threatening what he was going to do to the disciples of the Lord, God struck him blind, spoke to him, — and he fell to the ground where all God's people must fall before they can know him. The voice of the Lord pierced his heart as it does all God's people before they can know him, whom to know is life eternal.

"And Saul heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, Why persecutest thou me? and he said, Who are thou Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man; but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink. And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias, and he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold he prayeth, And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: for I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales; and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests?"

The world at large would laugh and scoff at you if you said many similar instances are taking place today. They would tell you, you were not right in your mind if you told them of how the Lord had appeared to you in visions as he did to Paul, and spoke to you in dreams; and sometimes spoke to you as

it were out of a clear sky, when you were in trouble, speaking peace to your soul, and causing you to feel his very presence; and you were made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory to God. A glory that the world knows nothing about. Yes, every child of God when he or she has been wrought with, and brought through the belly of hell, knows by experience that these things are true. The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave and bringeth up. The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill. God's people must be crucified in the flesh and to the things of this world. The Lord causes his chosen people to know him and learn of him **through the things they must suffer** as he leads them through this wilderness to their heavenly home in glory.

The Lord caused Jonah to go through a great experience before he could know the power of God, and that Salvation is alone of the Lord. "The word of the Lord came unto Jonah, saying arise, go to Ninevah, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me. But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. But the Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken. Great fear came over each one aboard thinking all would be lost. And they said every one to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah. (Surely Jonah felt the Lord had found him out) Then said they unto him, What shall we do with thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? For the sea wrought, and was tempestuous. And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you. So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea; and the sea ceased from her raging. Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly, And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice." After the Lord had taught Jonah a great lesson while he was in the belly of the great fish, "the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land. And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee." Let me say that the preachers of the Lord are not going to do much Gospel preaching except what the Lord bids them preach, and at places where he sends them. "So Jonah arose and went into Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord." (Jonah 3:3)

Many of the Lord's gospel preachers of today have had many such experiences and were led as Paul and Jonah were before they preached the Gospel. They and those of today must be taught of the Lord before they can preach the gospel of Christ, which is the Power of God unto Salvation. This Salvation must come through the power and Grace of God. "Not by works lest any man should boast." says Paul in Eph. 2:9. Yes, every child of God must come through the belly of hell before they can know the Lord. If they have not been in this hell, then they have never been delivered from it and can know nothing of this great deliverance. Well does this poor sinner remember when the Lord spoke to him. First came the conviction and sentence of death. He felt that his days were numbered, that his sins were pressing him down into a great darkness, where he was lost, and Oh, how he tried to find his way to safety. It was a long journey he traveled trying to find a way of escape and deliverance from the awful place he was lost. There seemed to be no way to get free and out of this great trouble,

his sins kept rising up before him pressing him down to destruction. Many a night he wet his pillow with tears crying for mercy. Day after day he spent in darkness feeling there was no hope for him and no God to have mercy upon him. It was a long, long journey that God led him to teach him there was nothing he could do to save himself; no help in human efforts, no help in weak man. Helpless he lay; helplessly he tried in vain to extricate himself from this awful condition. One night he felt he must try once more to pray and beg God for forgiveness from his sins, and as his cry went up, God be merciful to me a sinner, a voice said, "Be still and know that I am God." It went through him like a great wind of destruction causing him to feel this is the end. He dropped over on his bed feeling he was sinking into hell, Then the sweet voice of Jesus spoke to him saying, "Son, thy sins are all forgiven thee."

Oh, what a sweet peace entered his soul, what joy was his, a breathing of praise and thanksgiving went up to his God. He fell peacefully to sleep. The next morning he awoke hearing sweet music, birds were singing, and the sun seemed to be shinning brighter than he had ever seen it shine before. His whole being was filled with praise to God. He got dressed and came down stairs and went to the kitchen where his mother was getting breakfast. She looked up at him, then greeted him with the sweetest smile that he had ever remembered seeing on her face; a smile filled with joy and gladness for her son, for she saw in his countenance the joy and light that filled his whole being, the great change that had come to him. She knew that he had been under conviction of sin for a long time and had been watching him and praying for him through all this long journey which the Lord was leading him, to learn of Him and to know Him who is life eternal. Yes, every child of God must come through the belly of hell before he or she can know the Lord. If they have not been in this hell then they have never been delivered from this hell, and can know nothing of this great deliverance: nor can they have any sweet fellowship with Jonah when he cried, "Out of the belly of hell cried I, and the Lord heard me and delivered me." God found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness. The Lord said, "He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness, he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye."

Note, it says, the Lord found him: he did not find the Lord, for he was lost, but the Lord found him. He came to Jacob where he was, a lost sinner, he led him about, he instructed him. He taught him as he did Jonah, that Salvation is of the Lord. The Lord delivered Jacob from this desert land, death, and the waste howling wilderness, his lost state. How sweet it is to see the Lord's children being brought home after this long rough wilderness journey, and hear them tell of what the Lord has done for them, how Jesus saved them; telling of the mercy and love of Jesus their Saviour and Redeemer. God's children love to visit with each other and talk and tell of his mercy, goodness, and loving kindness to them; tell of this great deliverance; tell of the times when they felt to be condemned sinners, felt that they were eternally lost and sinking into hell, and how a great cry went up out of their souls to God, begging him for mercy with what they felt was their last breath. Then of hearing the voice of their Beloved, their Redeemer and Saviour say, "Child thy sins are all forgiven." And a Great Light appearing, a light brighter than the noon day sun, Yea, the Son on Righteousness shining in their souls causing them to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Yes, these children of God love to visit with each other, and talk of their wonderful sweet visits from their Lord. It is their meat and their drink to hear God's dear children tell of these sweet and glorious things. The day of miracles, and the appearing of the Lord, and

the day of hearing their Saviour's **voice** is not over with them.

"The power and sweetness of that **voice**
Wrought wondrous change in me:
Made my poor, drooping heart rejoice,
And fears and sorrows flee.

In sweet amazement I came forth;
What wonders met my eyes:
Springs glorious beauty on the earth,
Her radiance in the skies.

Grace fills the garden of the Lord
With blooming joys from heaven
The warm south wind is in the Word
Which shows my sins forgiven."

O the sweet felt power of Jesus when I felt my sins forgiven.

Humbly submitted,
Casper G. Fetter
Southampton, Pa.
October, 1957

Trinity, N. C.

Dear Editors:

I enclose the Experience of Elder Z. L. Rhue, written a few years back, which I would like for you to publish in the Signs. I think many of the readers will enjoy it.

With love,
A. C. Morton

EXPERIENCE

(Written in Summer of 1949)

Dear Brethren:

For sometime I have been deeply impressed to write a portion of what I hope have been the dealings of the Lord with this poor sinner, realizing that I must be blessed to this end by His Holy Spirit: I am fearful to make the attempt, not knowing whether this mind is of the flesh or of the Spirit of the Lord.

I was reared in a Primitive Baptist home. My father and mother, who are yet living, are members of Hadnott's Creek Church, near Stella, North Carolina. I remained home with them until I was twenty-one years of age. My father's health being very poor, I was compelled to quit school before I finished the sixth grade. My parents were not favored with an abundance of this world's goods, as some; therefore we had to work very hard for a living.

Although my parents were poor in this world's goods, I feel that they were, and yet are, rich in faith toward God, realizing that they were dependent upon the God of all grace to supply their every need, both spiritual and natural. How well do I remember the many times during those years my father and mother would call us children in, and my father would read some scriptures and talk to us about the love and mercy of a covenant keeping God, and offer prayer. Sometimes he would appear to be very despondent and have little to say, while again he would be favored of the Lord to rejoice and talk of His goodness and mercy. The chief joy of my parents then, as it is now, was to have their brethren and sisters in their humble home share with them the blessings of the Lord; so it was my lot to be in the presence of these brethren and sisters most of the time, since I had to help wait on the guests. I did not like to do this then, but now I hope I am thankful to the Lord that I was reared by parents who made us observe their order and taught us to respect and serve them. And I must say that even then I had a feeling that they were good people, and would often sit and listen to them talk, confessing their sins one to another and expressing what they hoped the Lord had done for them; and there was a desire in my heart that I would live to see the day when I would be as they were, and could feel that the Lord had forgiven me of my many sins. Yet I did not know the truth or anything about the church, even if I do now. However, I do not believe that all children feel as I did then.

As I grew up, often engaged in the pleasures of this world with my associates, I would feel cut off from them and wonder why I could not go on and have a big time as they did; and many

times after retiring late at night I would shed tears and mourn over my condition. It seemed to me that all I wanted was to get rid of my troubles and I would be all right, but I did not know then (and I do not know now) how to detour around the troubles and trials of this life. My father and mother were regular readers of the Landmark, and I would slip the paper out to some secluded spot, where I felt sure no one would see me, and I would read the experiences of those dear old saints of God and would shed tears with a heavy heart, desiring that I could receive what they possessed. I thought it would not do to let anybody know my feelings, but that when I grew up to be a man I could, and would put away those childish things, as I then thought of them.

My ambition was to go out into the world for myself, and I had the time set for it. Realizing that I had very little education, I felt that I must enter school again, and I was blessed with the accomplishment of these plans. So in the fall of 1923 I entered a junior college owned and operated by the Methodists. After having been there for a short time, they began taking a census to find out how many of their students were Christians. When I was asked, I did not hesitate to tell them that I was not a Christian, just a sinner. Then they began to point out to me the advantages of being a Christian, how much easier I would get along in this world, and what I must do to be saved. After much of this kind of persuasion, they convinced me that I had better put forth an effort to this end. However, there were times when I would remember how my father and mother had instructed us children. They often said that if they could, they would impart such knowledge to us, that we might know something of the weakness of man and the power of God as it is manifested to His people, but that they knew that their arm was too short to help themselves, much less help us children, or anybody else. They taught that salvation is alone of the Lord and that He, God, had the place set and the time appointed to visit each and every one of the objects of His mercy, that we could not receive this doctrine except as we were taught it of the Lord.

I believe now that the Lord did purpose from all eternity the way I should take, that He might at His own appointed time reveal to me, a hell deserving sinner, what I was by nature, and what I must be by His sovereign grace, before I could appear before Him in peace. I united with the Methodists, and was sprinkled, but I am now thankful to say that even then while on my knees at the so-called altar having the ceremony performed by their minister, there was a doubt in my mind as to the reality of this work. I felt though that I must continue in that way, having made a confession and united with them. I must be a good man and take an active part in the church that I might help Christ to save sinners. How little did I know of the truth! Oh, had it not been for the goodness and mercy of our God in separating me from them and the doctrines and commandments of men, I would yet have the same feeling of confidence in myself, trusting in my own work for salvation!

Shortly after uniting with these people, as I stated above, I began taking an active part in their church activities, and sometimes was rejoicing in myself for the good I was doing on behalf of the Lord. An impression bearing on me from early life was that some day in the future I would have to preach, but these impressions had not bothered me for some time previous to this. As I began to make public talks, offer prayer, and discuss my views on the scriptures, these impressions came again with more weight than ever. As there were ministerial students there, they were continually trying to persuade me to take up the study of the Bible with my other subjects. The Bible teacher also begged me to do the same thing, and I was induced to become a student of the Bible. I now feel and believe this was

all in the purpose of God. Still I did not mention these impressions to anybody, for at times I would feel that preaching the gospel was a sacred thing, and that a man called of God to preach must preach the truth, and, in spite of all that I professed, I was fearful in my heart that I did not know the truth; and I would refrain from talking about the Scriptures at times, and yet I could not help it. When I was called upon to make a talk on some Scriptures, something seemed to take hold of me, and I would talk longer than the time allotted for me. Often I was reminded after service that they did not intend for me to preach, that I should not have consumed so much time. This would make me feel depressed, but I realized then that I could not control myself when those feelings came. Yet I would promise myself not to do it again, and then make it worse the next time. My instructor and classmates would often try to correct statements which I had made and would advise me that it would not do to hold such views of the Scriptures. This only made me feel confused and cast down in my feelings, and I would ask one of the preachers why it was that way with me, that I was not satisfied. His reply was that I did not pray enough. I told him that I tried to pray the Lord to give me knowledge and understanding and a satisfied mind as to whether I knew the truth or not. My words seemed to fall to the ground, instead of me feeling that my prayers were answered. He said that I should not feel that way about the matter. They seemed to think that my conversation was foolishness, but were never able to tell me how to prevent those feelings. Since I have received a hope in the Lord, I have felt that the good Lord was with me then as much as at any other time in my life, and that it all was working for my good. Of course, I could not see it then and cannot see it now at all times. It is only when it pleases the Lord to reveal the truth to me that I can understand a little of His ways, and feel with the apostle that, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose". (Romans 8:28)

During this time, when I would visit my people, I would argue to my parents that my ideas were right and that their's were wrong, that in a short time all the Old Baptists would die out and there would be no more of them. My father would say, "Well, I can not show you the truth, but I verily believe the day will come when you will gladly confess the truth, and I long to see that time come, but I must wait upon the Lord". I have wondered why he would permit me to argue such rotten doctrine to him, yet I believe he knew my condition far better than I knew myself. Although we would sit and talk on the Scriptures for hours at a time, I just could not agree with him that God had a chosen people and that He had all power both in heaven and earth and that He sovereignly rules all things after the consel of His own will. I thought I could choose my course in life and walk therein and that I was instrumental in saving souls for the Lord. During this time we made it a practice to hold prayer meetings very frequently in some student's room (one who had not been saved), and pray for him and try to get him to accept the Lord. As I write this, I am made to think just how

> "Blind belief is sure to err
> And scan His work in vain;
> But God is his own interpreter,
> And He will make it plain."

I was led through many experiences which I will not mention here, many of which I shall never forget. Although these experiences, like what I have written here, may not be worth anything to anybody else, they mean more to me than anything else in the world, for if I have a hope and know anything about the dealings of the Lord to a poor sinner, these are some of the things that were ordained for me; and though my life has been full of trials and tribulations from my childhood days even until now, I truly feel there have been a

few times when I have thanked God for them all. I feel that in these things I have been made to know more of the goodness and mercy of our God.

I do not feel that I shall ever forget the morning that I, together with some of my classmates, bowed in a boy's room to pray for him, and as I rose up a voice spoke in me and said, "Who are you, that you should call upon the Lord or take His holy name between your sin defiled and polluted lips?" I was made to fear and tremble before the Lord, feeling that I had taken the Lord's name in vain, and that I was a lost and undone sinner without God and without hope in this world. I hurried back to my room and hardly knew how I got there, closed the door and wept bitter tears of sorrow, feeling my sins so great that the Lord could not remain just and forgive me. After some time I received some relief, enough that I thought that I could brush my troubles aside and not be noticed; so I went on to Bible class. The lesson was concerning the experience of the Apostle Paul as he journeyed toward Damascus to bind and cast in prison all those that called upon the name of the Lord, and as the teacher finished reading the scripture lesson he laid the Bible aside and picked up the text book, read a few lines, and began saying that as Paul journeyed along he began to consider his mission together with his great influence upon man, and what a great co-worker he could be for Christ, helping Him to build up the Kingdom of the Lord. Looking straight at us he said, "I know of no better text for a young minister to use than this, as it would be very touching to people to use the Apostle as an example as to how great men could become greater men, if they would only accept the Lord and do his will."

I believe I had to speak, for I said, "Excuse me, Doctor, I would like to ask you to read the scripture lesson again, for if your Bible reads as does mine, you have misquoted the text and therefore misapplied it." He said that there was no use, but if I insisted he would do so for my benefit. I asked him to excuse me, for I intended to interrupt his reading. He replied, "All right". When he came to the scripture where it says, "And it came to pass as I made my journey and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me and I fell unto the ground and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" At this point I stated to him that I wanted for the benefit of myself and the class to ask him a question. He said, "Well". I said, "I want you to tell me where there is anything said in the Scriptures you have read that would bear out the fact that Paul had anything to do with that great light which shone from heaven round about him, his falling to the ground, and his hearing the voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Do we have any scripture to bear out the fact that the Apostle had any forethought as to what would occur to him as he journeyed?" I paused for an answer from him. He finally said, "Well, when we come to a scripture like this we have to reason it out for ourselves. You know the Lord does not just call a man and cause him to fall to the ground without the man first making the decision to accept the Lord."

Then I asked him, if the Apostle had decided this in his mind before hand, why he said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" I told him that I thought the reason was that he there realized that all he had ever done was a failure, that it would not suffice at that moment, that he was brought to the end of his own strength, and that all he had thought he possessed as merits for all his good work was gone, and his work became as filthy rags before the Lord and to him; that he was made willing by one stroke of God's power for another to guide him and make known unto him what to do; and the Lord received this confession, it being the work of His holy spirit, and confirmed it by saying, "Arise and go into Damascus and there it shall be told thee of all

things which are appointed unto thee to do"; and that Paul was obedient to this heavenly call and went straightway as the Lord commanded him to go.

I do not know what took place, but I was made to forget everything except my feeling of conviction in the Apostle's experience. I do not know that I preached the truth or not, but when I realized what had taken place, I had consumed the forty-five minute period; and the tap of the bell brought this to my mind and I was standing shedding tears with a feeling that the Lord had used me, a poor worm of the dust, to defend his glorious name in the presence of those I felt at that time did not know anything of His truth and mercy. After a few moments of silence one of my classmates spoke, saying, "Doctor, I know the trouble; Zennie is a Hardshell Baptist, and you may argue with him from now on, but you will never change his views on the matter." This seemed to confuse me more, and instead of this experience delivering me from my troubles, it just added more. It seemed to me that I had spoken the truth, but it was all against me, and was to my condemnation; and as I walked out of the classroom I said to several, "I have told you the truth, and unless the grace and mercy of the Lord intervene for us we will die and go to hell for our sins". This I felt with my whole heart. I felt surely there was no one in the world like me. My case was an outside one, and I felt to be without God and without hope in this world, an alien and a stranger to the commonwealth of Israel. I was made to wonder if there was a people who ever felt as I did, or passed through so many lonely hours. I felt to be such a great sinner in the eyes of the Lord, and the very breathings of my soul was, "Lord be merciful to me, a poor sinner". It seemed to me surely I was the worst child my parents had reared, and I would think how sad they would be to know they had a child that would have to go to hell for his sins. It seemed that death was upon me and that I soon would have to go into torment, which was prepared for the wicked; and in this condition I wanted to leave and go where I was not known, that I might die and no one know, especially my dear old Father and Mother — that they might not know the awful condition I was in when I left this world.

So a few days later I went to my room and began to make preparation to leave. My older brother, Joseph, was rooming with me. (He is now sleeping in the silent tomb undisturbed, I feel certain, and sleeping that blessed sleep from which none ever shall awake to weep.) He asked me what I was fixing to do, and I told him in tears that I was leaving, but did not know where I was going. I told him that I could not stay there any longer. When I made it known to the head officials of the school that I was leaving, they said to me very kindly, "We hope you will come back, and the door is open to you any time you wish to return; and we feel that you are making a great mistake in leaving". I felt if I must go down to eternal woe and misery I did not want to die with those people, but preferred to go down to death begging God for mercy and acknowledging the justice of God in my condemnation, that

> "If my soul was sent to hell,
> His righteous law approved it well."

My first stop was at Kernersville, North Carolina, near Winston-Salem, with the thought of spending a short time with my oldest brother, who at that time lived in Kernersville. He continued to insist that I stay with him for a while; and, for some purpose, I could not leave, and for sometime felt a great relief of mind. I do not mean to say that I was not troubled from time to time, and I would try to beg God for mercy. Many were the times after retiring that I could not sleep, and my sins would rise up as great mountains, and my troubles became so great I would shed tears of sorrow and try to beg God for mercy; and many were the times, while others were asleep, that I would have to get out of bed and bow

down on my knees and try to pray to the Lord to just give me a little rest here in time, if there was none for in the hereafter.

After I had been up there for some time, I met the girl who was to become my wife, and while we kept company with each other for nearly three years before we married, we would often read, and talk about our feelings, and would express our views on the Scriptures. Although she was reared in a Methodist home and knew but very little about the Primitive Baptists, yet it seemed that we experienced many things in common, which drew us nearer together in our feelings, — so much so that I often felt that the good Lord had led me to the one He purposed for me to receive as a companion. I most assuredly feel, as I now write, that she was given to me, not as a companion in natural life only, but in all my sorrows, trials, and afflictions, for she has been a companion indeed.

On December 23, 1926, we were united in marriage. Although we were happy together as man and wife, we would at times feel cast down and mourn over our depraved condition. I felt to be such a great sinner and that I would not live long, that I would go about with a longing desire to know how it would be with me in death. Then the thought of having to preach would come very forcibly into my mind; and I would read the Bible seeking comfort, only to feel that all the Scriptures were against me, and that I was a helpless sinner and could not attain unto salvation by my own works. I would try to reason with the Lord and tell Him that I was just a poor ignorant sinner. Then something would seem to say, "Why it can not be that you have to preach, for you are a great sinner and not even a member of the Church." Then my mind would reflect back to the time when I was with those people at school and had to leave them. Then I would have to confess to God that I did not know where the true church was.

(Concluded next issue)

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We trust that brethren and friends will not forget this fund, for by the donations received we are enabled to send the paper to many, — many who otherwise would not have the privilege of reading it. — Editors

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EDITORIAL

We have a communication from a friend in Corpus Christi, Texas, who is disturbed about the opinion of so many people that the entire world can be christianized; and that the entire mater of faith is optional with men. He desires our views as to the will and power of men in these things. He says also that he is sometimes satisfied with his own belief (which is opposite to many things which he hears), but is upset by the various claims. He is quite sure that the Old School Baptists do not profess such a God as many do.

We do not fancy that we can settle

the disturbed mind of our friend on the matter, for our experience has been that the opinions of others are not sufficient to root and ground anyone in the truth; and that this is accomplished only by the one who said, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts", and, "They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." (Hebrews 8:10-11)

However, we will give our views on the matter, and mention some of the Scriptures which support us. It seems to us that the Apostle in the 2nd chapter of 1 Corinthians puts the whole matter in focus when he, speaking of the "hidden wisdom" of God which none of the princes of this world knew, said, "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what things knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him, even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God"; and, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

It certainly is the height of folly to read the above, and claim to believe it, as some do, (and to admit that men are dead in trespasses and sins in their natures), and at the same time to insist that this same natural man can of himself stir up something within himself whereby he can believe and bring himself into the knowledge of the truth, and "accept" the Lord, to the saving of his soul. Yet this is what is done by countless numbers of those who profess to be preaching the gospel. We hold that the dead know not anything: and we are certain that the corporally dead cannot see, hear, think, or move. The analogy is that the dead in trespasses and sins are none the more able to perceive spiritual things, than the corporally dead are to perceive natural things.

This is a point that seems not to be understood at all by most people, and they proceed on a premise entirely contrary; and assume that the dead in trespasses and sins do have, in spite of their condition, the ability to will, or to start something within themselves which will lead to spiritual things. We have before us a book which contains a chapter on **How To Be Saved;** in which is assumed the position stated above. We quote:

"If then I cannot save myself, if I cannot be saved by anything I do, how can I be saved? First, note, God says it is by grace we are saved. Until **I take the position** of a lost sinner, unworthy and undone, a proper subject for grace, there is no hope for my soul. When I humbly take that position, the grace of God which has supplied a Saviour steps in: the gracious words of the Lord Jesus fall on my ears — 'Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out': and God's gracious promise reaches me in all my sins." etc. This is followed by other things, among them, "Faith is the hand that reaches out and takes salvation which is the gift of God. Faith is taking God at His word. Faith lays hold of God's promise and says, 'I believe it'." And, "Dear reader, salvation is the gift of God. Delay no longer. Now as you read these lines, stretch out the hand of faith and grasp the gift of God, then humbly falling on your knees give thanks to God for His marvelous grace in saving a poor sinner like you."

In the above, and in many other such expressions which are prevalent in books and in sermons, is enough semblance of truth to mislead the unwary. The Bible doctrine is that there must be in all cases a work performed by a power outside of the natural man, before the natural man can know anything of himself as being dead in trespasses and sins, and in the need of a Saviour; and before the man can know anything of the hidden wisdom of God.

We are not told of any other power outside of the Godhead that does this. Jesus laid down the unvaring rule: "Ye must be born again." (John 3:7) He expressed the solemnity, as well as the effectiveness of this birth by saying, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is everyone that is born of the Spirit."

And the Apostle Paul told the Ephesians, after reminding them that in time past they walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; and among whom they all had their conversation in times past in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others, "But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved)." etc.

And Peter, and the brethren with him, was plainly told that, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, by my Father which is in heaven."

And John, in his gospel, plainly says, after telling that Jesus came unto his own (the Jews) and they received him not, "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

And Jesus answered those who asked, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God," by saying, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." And also, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him."

The Scriptures are replete with such doctrine, but the following will suffice for the present: "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." (Matthew 11:27) And, "Being confident of this very thing, that **he which hath begun a good work in you** will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Philippians 1:6)

In spite of all this testimony, men teach to the contrary; and continue to change the truth of God into a lie, and worship and serve the creature more than the Creator. (Romans 1:25) They have a better way: a way that seemeth right unto them. It is more consistent with what seems right to them, to say that man must begin the work, and then God takes over; than that God begins the work, and continues to perform it.

God has his own way of bringing each one into the knowledge of the truth who was chosen by him in Christ before the world began. He has left it neither conditional nor uncertain. And regardless of what contrary doctrines may be held, we have this, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." (2 Timothy 2:-19) And, "All that the Father hath given me SHALL come unto me." (John 6:37) As well as, "So it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."

There is **the saving**, and **the calling** with an holy calling, not according to the works of the creature, but according to His own purpose and grace that was given his people in Christ Jesus before the world began. (2 Timothy 1:-9) Every one of those who are characterized as "My sheep", SHALL hear His voice, and they shall follow Him, for it was the Father's will that he should lose none of those given him.

The Apostle Peter puts the whole matter of God's way of saving sinners in one sentence: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."

So, from all the evidence given us,

we need not be concerned that any person in any part of the world, or in any age of the world, who were loved of God the Father and chosen in his Son, will in any wise fail of the salvation which was given them in the atonement made by Jesus Christ for them. God loves those who are in the remotest parts of the world just as much as he does those who are near by us here; and the work of his Spirit is not bound by distances or circumstances, neither is He ever forgetful of them.

God has his own way of doing everything, and he has not left the salvation of his people to the whims and fancies of men. He who said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto me", has his own way of drawing them. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God", said the Apostle. This is their distinguishing mark, both to themselves and others: they have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father.

We do not forget that He has given gifts unto men, having led captivity captive: to some he gave, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till they all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. These are all under his direction; and no man can qualify himself for the work. Each one must be called and qualified, and sent forth by the Holy Ghost (see Acts 13:3-4), and they do the work they are sent and directed to do; and they accomplish that which they are called to do: to feed the sheep and lambs of God, and comfort them with the same comfort wherewith they themselves are comforted; to administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper; to preach the Word and edify the body of Christ with reproof, rebukings, and exhortations, with longsuffering and doctrine — all of these things, but it is not to be supposed that they can go under their own power as men, or can enlighten dead sinners themselves and bring them to Christ; for this is the prerogative of God the Spirit.

God sends his servants where he would have them go, and they preach the preaching He bids them; and it often is that the time of the beginning of the work of grace in one of His children is during the time of preaching, or deliverance then experienced, but it cannot be said that this is by the man. The same Spirit that enables a man to preach with power, is the same Spirit that enables one to hear; and is the Spirit that quickens from death unto life — which enables one to hear the voice of the Son of God, and he lives. It is the Spirit that does the work: it is not limited in its work to the preached Word; else we would conclude that none among the many millions who have never heard preaching are among the redeemed.

God has a people in every nation, kindred, and tongue, and He knows them that are his, and He "searches" them out. Jesus atoned for each one of them, and none of them is lost. No one can scripturally say that He died for the sins of every man; neither can it be rightly said that anybody dies and is lost because he did not hear preaching.

We leave the matter here, hoping that our friend in Texas may receive some benefit from what we have written.

J. D. W.

CORRECTION

In Elder Ruston's Editorial of December, 1957, there is a typographical error on page 280, about the center of the second column. The word **confirming** should be **confining**; and the phrase should read: ". . ., but while the apostles were still confining themselves to preaching among the Jews, we find", etc. Please make the correction in your copy.

We regret such errors, and do our

best to keep them out; and we alone are responsible for them, since it is our duty to type and edit all copy that is published, except editorials which are ready for the printer when we receive them. Much of this work, including proof-reading and making up the "dummy" has to be done when our day's work is finished; and we regret perhaps more than anyone else, when we find errors in the finished paper.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"THE LAW OF FORGIVENESS"
(Matt. vi. 12)

That forgiveness is the most important part of the law of Zion is apparent from the many times it is enjoined upon the people of God in the New Testament, and from the fact that it is one of the things named in what is called commonly the Lord's prayer, upon which we are to hinge our prayer to be forgiven. For this reason let us examine what is meant by it and speak about some things connected with it.

And, first, it is very important that we have a clear understanding of what is the exact meaning of the word itself as used in the Bible. Words are of no value, except as SIGNS of ideas; and so it is requisite that we know just what idea the word signifies. In the Greek of the New Testament the word has precisely the same signification that is given in Webster as the definition of it. And its literal meaning is "to pass over," "to remit," "to put away." This is the meaning of the Greek verb **aphiemi,** translated "forgive," and it may be defined literally as meaning "to send an offense away from an offender," or "not to impute an offense to the one committing it." Therefore, the command to forgive means that we shall not in any way count an offense against him who has committed it. We shall so separate the offense from the guilty one in our hearts, that we shall not think of it in connection with him, nor act toward him as though we remembered it. According to the meaning of the term, we have not really forgiven the offender, so long as we feel that it is any bar to our intercourse with him, or our kind feeling toward him. To feel and act toward the offender as though we are sore or wounded, or resentful, is not to forgive. To say, "I want no more to do with the one who has offended me, let him go his way and I will go mine," is not to have forgiven him. I think, to sum it all up, "forgiveness means that we **feel** and act toward one who has injured us as though he had not done so." To act that way is not enough, but we must **love him as well as ever.**

Second—There is a difference between "being wronged" and **"being offended."** Many a time was Jesus wronged, abused, ill-treated, but where or when did he take offense at it, or exhibit resentment? Stephen was stoned, and yet he was not offended. He prayed for those who so abused him. This was practical forgiveness. Many a man has continued his bounties to the ungrateful and disobedient children, who had despised his bounty and defied his just authority. This is forgiveness. And many a Christian, hated and persecuted by the world, has yet striven to do good to his bitterest foes, praying for them and weeping over them. This is forgiveness. We cannot hinder the wrong that is done us. That is the act of another. But our business is to watch and pray lest the wrong done arouses any resentment in our breasts, lest we take offense. As long as we feel offended we have not forgiven. O for such a spirit in us, leading and controlling us, as would enable us to be offended at no personal slight or injury.

Third—The importance of forgiveness may be seen from the frequency with which it is enjoined, both in the Old Testament and in the New. I have just counted up twelve times in the Old Testament and forty-two times in the

New, that the word "forgiveness" in some of its forms is used. And this is not all the number. But it is enough to show of what importance the Holy Ghost considered it. It is enjoined in the Old Testament as a mutual duty. (Gen. 1. 17.) It is enjoined by the Saviour upon the ground of being forgiven. (Matt. vi. 12, Luke xi. 4, Matt. xviii. 23-35.) It is also enjoined by the apostles. (2 Cor. ii. 7.) Certainly then it is a theme of which we ought to speak and write, and upon which we ought to meditate. And above all things it is important to have this heaven born and heaven sent guest to come and dwell in our hearts. How delightful is the place and the hour when gentle forgiveness makes its presence felt in our souls! Who that has ever known its sweetness would exchange one hour of its presence, for years filled with enmity, ill-will, hatred and revenge!

Fourth—Its origin is not of the earth. Its birth place is in heaven. It is among the fruits of the spirit, and is worthy to stand beside the lovely graces of faith, hope, love, humility, patience, etc. What human face to us is lovely, what human memory is pleasant, if it be not that of one whose heart is ready to forgive and slow to take offense. Who of us all can find pleasure in gazing upon the face of him who is filled with anger and resentment against his enemy? All things beautiful and pleasant, and of good report, are heavenly in their origin, and so forgiveness is from heaven, and is lovely without blemish. The fallen, natural heart of man breathes resentment and revenge when it fancies itself injured. In some cases men have considered revenge a religious duty. And the language of every unrenewed man is, "I will not allow myself to be trampled upon. I will show proper resentment." And the world at large applauds the man who "will not allow himself to be insulted, or injured," and despises the man who bears injury meekly and patiently, and is not provoked. But the things despised by the world are in the sight of heaven of great price. Which are we most anxious to please, heaven or the world? To bring the question closer still, do we in this seek to please ourselves or God? **To revenge ourselves is man-like, to forgive is Christ-like.** As its origin is heavenly, if our conversation is in heaven we shall seek to be conformed to the heavenly in this also. To this end let us consider for a little, some reasons why it should be easy to forgive, and which may incite in us the spirit of forgiveness.

And so, fifth, we may consider the following things: We, as believers, have had the assurance that God has forgiven us. If the one who has trespassed against us be our brother in Christ, how can we refuse to forgive the few pence which he may owe to us, since our Master has forgiven us such a vast debt? If he be not our brother in Christ, is not his doom in the next world fearful enough without our holding resentment against him. It becomes us to pity his fate rather than to revenge ourselves upon him. O that we could feel more deeply how much we have been forgiven! Then should we learn to possess a little more of the spirit of forgiveness.

Consider, also, that we do still sin and still have need to pray "forgive me my trespasses." Can we have confidence to pray "forgive me" when, at the same time, we will not forgive? Consider, also, that we not only sin against God, but we sin against our brother, or against our fellow-man. Have we done another no ill, that we can demand such exact satisfaction from all? Are our hands clean? O, if my brother or my friend can forgive my failures toward him, certainly I can forgive what he has done amiss toward me.

Let us remember again that God, the just Judge, has forgiven our brother **all** his sins. Can we then refuse to forgive the small portion of those sins that were to our harm?

Remember, also, that as he is our brother we expect to live with him to all eternity. In that world there will be no strife nor any revenge. If we now

have the spirit that is heavenly, let us begin to exhibit it while here.

And, lastly, do not fail to consider well that at the worst the injury can endure but a short time, while eternity is unending. The wrong, and the suffering caused by it, is but for a moment's space, and then it will be in our experience as though it had never been. What is the use of a long absent child, when journeying home, stopping to quarrel by the way? Why should he mind the selfishness of a fellow-traveler, or the rudeness of those who hate him and his father? He will soon be beyond it all at home.

Sixth—In the prayer referred to at the head of this article the expression is "forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." And in the comment afterwards made by our Saviour himself, he said that except we should forgive others their trespasses against us, neither would our heavenly Father forgive our trespasses. This is a matter of experience. No one of us, when we cannot forgive our brother, can possibly at the same time feel what sinners we are ourselves. Consequently, in our pride and boastful self-sufficiency, we exalt ourselves above our brother, and refuse to bow with humble confession before God. And as those only who confess their sins find Him faithful and just to forgive them their sins. This one receives no forgiveness and his soul is still in a state of alienation and opposition to God, and he experiences no joy of pardon. God forgives those who confess their sins. Only the humble in spirit ever really confess their sins. And such as these find it easy to forgive others their trespasses against them, seeing they are obliged to count their own so great. If then a man is in such a state that he can forgive others against him, he is also in a proper frame to be forgiven. So we can with encouragement and confidence, rather than with fear, pray "forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." If we can **really** pray for forgiveness, it is in our hearts at the same time to forgive.

Seventh—But if to forgive means to **feel** and **act** toward the offender as though he had not offended, is it not impossible to keep this command? As the Saviour once himself said, "It is impossible with men, but with God all things are possible." And this does not mean that God in his absolute power can do all things, but it means that by his grace we ourselves can do what in and of ourselves we cannot do. God gives grace to help us keep his commandments. And if it were impossible for the believer to forgive, then God would have given no such command. It is true, as Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me." We do despite to the spirit of grace and heap the reproach of ignorance upon the All-wise, and turn the grace of God into lasciviousness when we seek to excuse our hardness and revengefulness by the plea that God has not given us grace to overcome these things. God forbid that the Christian should ever say, "God has not given me grace to forgive." On the contrary, if we realized the enormity of our offense when we do not forgive, we should be found with sighs and tears begging God for forgiveness from his throne, and to create in us a clean heart and renew within us a right spirit.

Eighth—I know as an actual fact of experience that God can strengthen us, so as that we can and do forgive in just the sense I have been presenting. I remember once when I had thought that a brother had not treated me right, I shortly afterwards heard him preach. I desired to hear him gladly and with hearty sympathy, as I had many times before, and I could not. I was conscious of a feeling of resentment within me that would not let me receive the word at his hands. I was ashamed of myself and humbled. I was grieved at my hardness of heart and lack of the spirit of forgiveness. While he was yet preaching I tried to lift up my heart in prayer for us both—for myself that I might be made to feel right, and for him that he might preach with liberty and power, and I was shut up from prayer. I can

never tell how I was ashamed and grieved. I thought, "Is it possible that I cannot forgive?" But yet, hard and stubborn as my heart then was, in less than six hours afterwards I was softened in feeling and felt at perfect peace with that brother, and as entirely one with him as I had ever done. And this feeling lasted, and the next four days were days of happiness beyond measure. And the feeling of oneness to that brother, and of perfect forgetfulness of all the injury which I thought I had received, has never left me, and the next week I heard him preach again with all the joy that I had ever done. So that I know that forgiveness is not a grace beyond what we may feel in our daily experience, the grace of God being our helper.

I will speak of one more instance of the power of forgiveness in the heart, and then close this too lengthy letter. I had preached one Sunday somewhat upon the theme of forgiveness, and among other things had said that some would say when injured, "O I can forgive the wrong, but then I can never have confidence again. I never want to see that one; let him go his way and I will go mine," etc. I said "this was not forgiveness at all. Suppose the Lord Jesus forgave us that way, what should we do? To forgive we must have come to love and desire the fellowship of that one as much as before the wrong was done." Some three months afterwards a sister, now gone to her home, who had been baptized by me six months previous, while riding with me to meeting one day, referred to this sermon. And then she said, "I knew that you did not mean me, because you did not know the circumstances which at once came to my mind, but the sermon was a heart searching one to me." She then went on to tell me about having had a difficulty with a step-daughter a few years previous, when she had felt herself ill-treated, but that (as she supposed) she had forgiven her step-daughter, only, she had said, "I do not care for her to come here often, and when she does come I will see as little of her as possible." "But," she added, "I thought I had forgiven her, else I never could have come to the church when I did; but your sermon has shown me that I have never known what forgiveness means." She then went on to tell me about hours of anxiety and grief over her hard heart and unforgiving spirit, and of the bitter struggle which she had to write to this step-daughter and made confession of her wrong feelings toward her, and of falling upon her knees in prayer one day, and for how long a time she did not know, agonizing there for God's blessing to help her forgive really and truly, and of how God heard her and answered her, and took away all the bitterness so that she felt that she could take the step-daughter in her arms and love her without a hindrance between. And she said, "I can never tell you the perfect peace that filled me when the conflict was ended and God gave me the victory over my hard heart." And she said this step-daughter had visited her since, and the day passed and she never even thought of the old trouble. This seemed to me a wonderful display of the grace of God, and I felt like praising God on her behalf. We have also a Bible example of forgiveness, in the case of Joseph toward his brethren.

But I must close this letter. May God make us willing to forgive and willing **to be forgiven,** which I have found the hardest of all, because that implies three little words that are very hard to say, **"I am wrong."** The writing of this has been profitable, I think, to me, and if published I hope that it may prove so to others also.

As ever, I am your brother in hope of life eternal,

F. A. Chick

Reisterstown, Md., June 6, 1884.

(The above by Elder Chick is copied from **The Gospel Messenger,** of 1884, and we are glad to re-publish it by request — Ed.)

MEMORIAL

WHEREAS, It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from these earthly scenes our beloved and highly gifted brother, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, we wish, as a token of our esteem and great sorrow at his passing, to add a few words to those already recorded to his memory, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we give thanks to God for this humble, unselfish servant of the Lord, who, when he could, served our church and congregation in words very acceptable to us. Our passing great sorrow we must accept, feeling our brother has left this evil world for one far better. We bow in humble submission to God's holy will, believing our loss is his eternal gain. Be it further

RESOLVED, That we, the Southampton Church and our congregation, extend our deepest sympathy to his widow, Sister Florence Beebe Bellows, and forward a copy of these Resolutions to her; and also send a copy to the **Signs of the Times** for publication, and record them in our church book.
November 24, 1957.

Casper G. Fetter, Church Clerk

MEMORIAL

INASMUCH as it pleased Almighty God to remove by death three of our very highly esteemed members of Paran Church within the past year, to wit: Bro. Julius Mullens, Bro. W. M. Harris, and Sister Cora Isolene Burgin; and —

WHEREAS, We feel deeply the great loss of these brethren, and with sadness of heart we must bow in humble submission to God's will. And —

INASMUCH as we desire to place on record a TRIBUTE OF RESPECT, and thanksgiving to God for having blessed Paran Church, Wood County, Texas, with their gifts and graces manifested in their walk and conversation while among us: —

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that we encouch these brief obituaries in this MEMORIAL: —

JULIUS MULLENS, (January 25, 1882-May 27, 1957.) Bro. Mullens became a member of Paran Church August 1955. His was indeed a godly walk. His manner was always pleasant. He was for many years faithful in his attendance, generous with his help, and indicated a belief in the doctrine as set forth by the Old School Baptists long before he became a member. Our sympathy goes to Mrs. Elizabeth Mullens of Rt. 1, Tyler, Texas, and to his four surviving children by a former marriage: John M. and Jack R. Mullens, Mrs. Boyce Balfour, and Mrs. Malcolm Stripling.

W. M. HARRIS, (August 9, 1875-September 3, 1957.) Bro. Harris became a member of Paran Church in June, 1910. He was loyal and faithful in his attendance and the execution of his duty as Church Clerk which capacity he filled for 25 years. He loved the doctrine of salvation by grace. He had been ailing for a long time but his desire to be among his brethren inspired him to attend church regularly even when he was physically unable. He was a very willing helper wherever he could serve. He was loved and respected by the community as well as the church. He preceded his daughter, Sister Isolene Burgin, in death by eight days. Our sympathy goes to the remaining children: Mrs. Opal Burgin, Miss Tessie Harris, and Smith Harris.

CORA ISOLENE BURGIN, (December 3, 1894-September 11, 1957.) Sister Burgin manifested a love for God, our Father and Jesus Christ, our Saviour, at an early age. She became a member of Paran Church August 6, 1910. She lived a godly life and was kind and gentle to all who came her way, especially to the Household of Faith. She put the welfare of the church ahead of her own physical need. Even though her illness had been for several years, she attended church many times when she did not physically feel like doing so. Her desire to help care for our association (September 6th, 7th, and 8th) never slackened even though she was in the hospital under an oxygen tent. Her life, inspired by a God-given hope, was indeed beautiful. Our sympathy goes to her husband, J. H. Burgin, and to her four children: Cleveland, Howard, Herbert and Loretta Robertson.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this memorial be filed with Paran Church records; copies be sent to the bereaved, and a copy be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

The above ordered written by Paran Church in its regular conference November 2, 1957, and the form adopted November 3, 1957.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Moderator
Inez Turbeville, Church Clerk

OBITUARIES

CORNELL HOBENSACK

Cornell Hobensack suddenly departed this life October 31, 1957, at his home in Ivyland, Pennsylvania, as he was about to retire for the night. He had been in failing health for some time. The writer saw him in the hospital on the 27th, where he had been for some days to be checked over. We could see that he had failed and was quite weak. Before we left he asked us to speak in prayer, and he said only

the Lord could help him. We were not surprised to hear of his sudden passing, and were thankful that there was no sign of suffering on his face in death.

He was a son of the late Deacon William and Mary Stout Hobensack, whose home was always open to the Old School Baptists.

He was born April 18, 1888, in Southampton, Pennsylvania, and was married December 21, 1910, to Susan Walker, who was a true helpmate to him, aiding him in welcoming the church friends in their home, and as his health failed, never ceased to minister most lovingly and devotedly to his every need. To this happy union were born a son, William and a daughter, Mary, who, with their mother and four grand-children, survive to mourn their loss. He also leaves a brother, George and four sisters, Bertha, Anna, Clarice and Alice, besides nephews and nieces. They all mourn for him, but we believe that it is well with him. While he never felt worthy to be a member of the Old School Baptist Church, that church was in his heart and his pleasure was in doing whatever he could for the welfare of the cause. For twenty years he was treasurer of the Southampton Church. He was also the senior partner of the William Hobensack's Sons business at Ivyland, and for fifteen years was president of the Hatboro National Bank. He was a man of upright walk and sterling character, and, to the writer, who had known the departed for many years, his love of family and influence for good in his association with his fellow-men was outstanding. In the more than forty years that I have visited Southampton and known the departed, I was made to respect him, but during the last few years, as I have been at the church there more frequently, I learned to love him for his humility and expressions of comfort and joy in the services, manifested on several occasions. The memory of this will be a consolation, especially to those who miss him the most.

The writer was asked to conduct his funeral service, and was assisted by Dr. Swain, who read the Scriptures, the writer speaking from the words, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." (John 14:1) The interment was in Richboro Cemetery.

May the dear Lord reconcile his bereaved wife and family and all of us to His holy and sovereign will.

George Ruston

ELDER T. J. ROBINSON

Elder T. J. Robinson was born at Greasy Creek, Kentucky, August 11, 1885, and died July 21, 1957, making his stay on earth 71 years, 11 months and 10 days. He was the son of the late Harmon and Mary Kendrick Robinson and was married to Virgie Sanders in May, 1906. To this union were born five children: three sons and two daughters, four of whom preceded him in death.

He leaves to mourn their loss his wife, Virgie, a daughter, Mrs. R. E. Senter, and a grandson, Rodney Senter, all of Tucson, Arizona.

He was the oldest of fourteen children. Two sisters and a brother preceded him in death. Four sisters: Mrs. Annie Adkins and Mrs. Lawrence Adkins, of Greasy Creek, Kentucky; Mrs. Tom Compton of Grundy, Virginia; and Mrs. Ballard Looney, of Columbus, Ohio, and six brothers: Aaron and E. M. of Greasy Creek, Kentucky, John, James, Whetsel and Wilson of Akron, Ohio, also mourn their loss.

Except for a year or two in West Virginia, he spent his life in Kentucky until March, 1946, when he moved near Clintwood, Virginia, living there until November, 1949, when he went to Tucson, Arizona.

He joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Greasy Creek, Kentucky, in March, 1913, and was baptized by Elder Whetsel Blair. He was ordained a minister not long after that. Since 1937 or 38 he was pastor of one or more churches. He was pastor of the Little Flock Church in Tucson until his death. He took a letter from the church in Tucson to present to the Philadelphia Association when it convened at the Delphia church, at Hazel, Virginia.

He had been visiting relatives, friends and churches in Ohio, Kentucky and Virginia when he passed away suddenly near Grundy, Virginia. His body was shipped to Tucson, Arizona, where his widow, daughter and grandson still reside.

He put the Church, Jesus Christ and Him crucified above everything else. We feel our loss is his gain.

Written by his wife,
Virgie Robinson

WILLIAM GARDEBER ANDERSON

William Gardeber Anderson, was born Dec. 23, 1866, and died March 1, 1957, making his stay on this earth over 90 years. He was married in 1887 to Allie M. Lewis, and to this union were born three sons and two daughters. His wife and three sons preceded him in death. His daughters with whom he spent the last two months of his life, are Carrie M. Campbell and Lucille Young, both of Memphis, Tenn.

He had been a member of the Old School Baptist church for over 50 years, joining at old Mud Creek Church near Cayce, Kentucky, in Fulton county. He was soon ordained Deacon and filled that office until the end. His mem-

bership was at Boaz Chappel church near Fulton, Kentucky, at the time of his passing.

He loved to talk of God's love and power to save. He had so many beautiful experiences, and often wept when relating them to us. He worked in his garden, orchard and woods until his last year and would often say Oh! Carrie or Lucille (which ever he happened to be talking to) I just wish I could tell you what sweet words and comfort are mine when I sit down to rest sometimes.

In addition to his two daughters he leaves one brother, Joe Anderson, Troy, Tenn.; 19 grandchildren, 23 great-grandchildren, and 3 great-great-grandchildren.

His wife passed away April 30, 1921, leaving him to live alone for 36 years. She joined old Mud Creek church several years before he did, and was a faithful member until she died. She also told us of sweet experiences: one of them was that she woke up just in time to hear an angel go out of the house. We asked her how she knew it was an angel, and she said because she heard the flutter of its wings. When we asked what she did, she said she rolled out of bed on her knees. Oh! the joy of such times are indescribable, but God knows all about them. Many times he sends his ministering angels to bear such joyful sounds to his children and they rejoice in that love that flows down to us from the throne of God. "A river that makes glad the city of God."

Written by his daughters,
Carrie and Lucille

MRS. DIDAMA EDWARDS

Mrs. Didama Edwards was born June 6, 1886, and departed this life May 5, 1941, making her stay on earth almost fifty-five years. She was the daughter of Floyd and Bitha Deel; and was married to S. P. Edwards August 1, 1902. To this union were born ten children — 6 girls and 4 boys, one of whom, Bitha Ann, died in infancy, William J. Bryant, Nora Bell, Franklin Lonzy, Dollie May, Eura, Minnie Delphia, Missouria Elcie, Samuel Jr., and Eugene Pollard.

She had been in poor health for fourteen or fifteen years, and was confined to her bed for three months before she passed away; much of the time in great pain. She was a kind mother, and had great love for her children, giving them good advice.

She leaves her husband, nine children, her step-mother, and three half-brothers: Basil, Arthur and Bruce Deel, and many relatives and friends to mourn her loss. We feel in our hearts that our loss is mother's eternal gain. Before she passed away, she raised her hands and asked the Lord to take her home. When asked if she wanted anything, she replied, "Let me go to sleep".

They that are alive and remain on the earth, shall not hinder them that sleep when Jesus comes the second time without sin unto salvation, to gather his people home. The grave that holds mother out here on the little mound, will no longer hold her; then she will go home together with all the children of God, where sickness, sorrow, pain or death are felt no more.

On her monument the children had these words placed beneath the emblem of a lamb: "Our mother's life of beauty, truth, goodness, patience and love, is living on."

(The above, except the last paragraph, was written by her husband late on Sunday evening before he passed away early the next morning. His obituary follows:)

SAMUEL P. EDWARDS

Samuel P. Edwards was born March 11, 1879, and departed this life August 4, 1941; making his stay on earth over sixty-two years. He was the son of J. T. and Hetty Ann Edwards; and was united in marriage to Didama Deel, August 1, 1902. To this union were born ten children, whose names are recorded above.

He was always good to provide for his family and to give them good advice. Many times he would read his Bible to his family, and most every day would sing Baptist songs. He did not belong to the church, but enjoyed hearing Baptist doctrine preached. He was good to visit the sick, and tried to comfort those who were in sorrow and distress, and to lend a helping hand to the poor and needy. He was especially attentive to his father and mother; and many times he said that he never gave his mother a "short word" in his life.

Besides nine children, he left five brothers and three sisters: Nathan, Ben, Jim, Lewis, and Brice; Rachel, Emma Lynn, and Cora; and many other relatives and friends to mourn his passing. We feel in our hearts that our loss is his eternal gain. Indeed, we have lost a faithful father. We miss his pleasant countenance, his noble spirit, and bright example. He is not dead, but sleeping — in our memory he still lives.

On his monument, the children had these words placed beneath the emblem of the open Bible: "Our father, a believer in Christ, and a friend to his fellow-man, rests in peace."

Written by his eldest son,
William J. B. Edwards

WILLIAM GILBERT LINDSEY

Brother William Gilbert Lindsey was born October 12, 1879, at Oxford, Mississippi; and

died June 15, 1957, making his stay on earth almost seventy-eight years.

Brother Lindsey moved to Oklahoma while a young man, where he was united in marriage to Miss Nancy Lewis, April 23, 1905. To this union were born twelve children: eight daughters and four sons; one son died while a small child. He and his family came to Texas in 1908, where they lived most of the time since. He resided at Channelview, Texas, from 1941.

Brother Lindsey joined the Primitive Baptist church at the age of twenty-five, and his membership was with the Shepherd Fold Church, Houston, Texas, for the past eight years. He lived a very devoted and faithful life to the Primitive Baptists; and his home was always open to them, for he loved their company dearly.

His survivors are: his widow; three sons, James Thomas, Channelview, Texas, William Elbert, Highlands, Texas, and Gilbert Jackson, Globe, Arizona; eight daughters, Mrs. Alice McCutchen, Mrs. Irene Williams, Mrs. Della Ruth Waltman, all of Channelview, Mrs. Virgie Amalong, Mrs. Ellen Winters, of Arizona, Mrs. Emma Hodges, Richland, Washington, Mrs. Ruby Wilson, West Colombia, Texas, and Mrs. Mary Beal, McAllen, Texas. Also by two sisters: Mrs. Florence Shelton, Sacramento, California, and Mrs. Mary Heny, Kermit, Texas; and thirty-six grandchildren, twenty great-grandchildren, and many other relatives and friends who mourn his passing, but we believe our loss is his eternal gain.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer, and interment was in San Juanita Cemetery, near Channelview, Texas. Written at the request of the family.

(Elder) C. M. Haygood

JOSHUA S. ADKINS

Joshua S. Adkins passed away August 3, 1957, after a long illness, at his home on Mt. Herman Road, near Salisbury, Md. He was eighty years and twelve days old. He was the son of the late Joseph James and Catherine Holloway Adkins, who were members of the Indian Town Old School Baptist Church at Powellsville, Md.

Joshua Adkins was united in marriage to Miss Annie Freeney, January 10, 1900; and to this union were born five children. The first born, a son, died at birth. Surviving are his beloved widow, two daughters: Mrs. Margie Holloway, Parsonsburg, Md., and Mrs. Helen Tull, Salisbury, Md.; two sons: Kenneth S., of Ocean City, Md., and Conrad L., of Parsonsburg, Md. Also by six grandchildren [illegible] four great-grandchildren; one brother [illegible] and one sister, Mrs. Annie Adkins, Pa[illegible] burg, Md.; and several nieces and nephews.

Although he never united with the visable church, his walk and talk manifested that he believed in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. He was always happy when he could have those who believed this doctrine in his home; and he loved to attend the churches, when, and as long as his health permitted him to leave home.

Funeral services were conducted at Holloway Funeral Home, by Elders Harold M. Bennett and Arthur Warren; and his body was laid to rest at Forest Grove Cemetery.

Written by a daughter,
Margie Holloway

MRS. MINNIE STANFIELD HARRELSON

We desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our Lord in removing from among us our sister, Mrs. Minnie Stanfield Harrelson.

Sister Harrelson was born August 22, 1878, and died September 29, 1957; making her stay on earth a little over seventy-nine years. She was united in marriage to T. T. Harrelson, who preceded her in death several years. She leaves one son, Wilber Harrelson; three stepchildren: Lester Harrelson, Mrs. Allie Blackwell, and Mrs. Beulah Neighbors; three grandchildren, and one great-grandchild; together with her church to mourn her passing. We sorrow not as some, for several years ago she gave reason of a good hope that Jesus died to save her from her sins; and was baptized into the fellowship of Pleasant Grove Church, Caswell County, N. C., by her uncle, the late Elder T. A. Stanfield.

The last eighteen months of her life was spent in a wheel chair, and she could not attend her church meetings; but she derived much pleasure from reading the experiences and editorials in the Signs of the Times. Each month she looked forward to receiving her paper, and often spoke about how much it meant to her.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder J. Harvey Smith, and Mr. Cecil Callis, at Pleasant Grove Meeting House; and her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a mound of lovely flowers, to await the coming of our Lord. We believe she will be raised to see Jesus face to face, and changed to be like him, and be satisfied.

We desire a copy be sent to the family, one to the **Signs of the Times** for publication, and one be spread on the pages of our church [illegible] Grove [illegible] Cobb

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 126 DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1958 NO. 3

IN GOD'S CARE

Now Israel
May say, and that truly: —
If that the Lord
Had not our cause maintained,
If that the Lord
Had not our right sustained,
When cruel men
Against us furiously
Rose up in wrath,
To make of us their prey,

Then certainly
They had devoured us all,
And swallowed quick,
For ought that we could deem;
Such was their rage,
As we might well esteem.
And, as fierce floods
Before them all things drown,
So had they brought
Our soul to death quite down.

The raging streams,
With their proud swelling waves,
Had then our soul
O'erwhelmed in the deep.
And blessed be God,
Who doth us safely keep,
And hath not given
Us for a living prey
Unto their teeth
And bloody cruelty.

Even as a bird
Out of the fowler's snare
Escapes away,
So is our soul set free:
Broke are their nets
And thus escaped we.
Therefore our help
Is in the Lord's great Name,
Who heaven and earth
By His great power did frame.

— *Psalm 124*

(Selected by Sister McPhail of Canada)

ALL THE PROPS KNOCKED FROM UNDER HIM

Arkansas City, Ark.

Dear Household of Faith:

"I will leave in the midst of thee and afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." (Zeph. 3-12)

It matters not how much silver and gold, or how much learning you may have in this natural world, you are very poor and afflicted when it comes to spiritual things unless you are brought by the price of redemption; and that redemption must come by and through Christ the Lord. The language of Christ to Nicodemus was that except a man be born again he could not see the kingdom of God. How can a man be born again when he is old? "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

Again, "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was in the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan (which is Christ), as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine (which is spiritual comfort), and set him on his own beast (which is the way, as he was entirely helpless), and brought him to an inn (which is the church), and took care of him." Then he gave the innkeeper two pence to care for him. Now the two pence was every bit of expense that was

ever necessary for the poor fellow's care; and was paid by the Samaritan.

Now, dear ones, if at this point you will pardon this poor afflicted worm's own experience, I shall tell it in part. I was reared in a Methodist community where church, sunday-school, and every other kind of so called Christian religion was carried on just like they had down at Jericho; and I, being such a good boy, couldn't miss any church activities. But on a certain day an event came into my life which knocked every prop and ism from under me: I was completely robbed and beaten of every act and goodness of my entire life, and was left helpless and without hope in this world; and all the priests and Levites couldn't help. Yet from a clear sky came along the Samaritan, and placed me on his beast and carried me from my journey to Jericho to the inn, paying the price with his own precious blood for my stay. At this time my association began with the afflicted and poor people of old Antioch Church near Warren, Arkansas. And after a few years I was made by a greater power than anything on this earth (that is, natural or earthly power) to go to them and beg for a little back seat, so I could be near a people who worship in deed and in truth, singing songs and hearing the very gospel of good tidings preached to them. Up until then the manifestation of pure love and devotion had never been witnessed by me. When I asked for a little back seat, I was praying with all my might that some would say, No. I was so unworthy — too much so to be with a dear people who did worship a God of love and peace: yet somehow I was granted to enter the inn by the good Samaritan, and all the price paid.

That has been nearly fifty years ago; and yet by nature I still want to go to Jericho, but cannot get away from the inn.

Again, there was at Jerusalem by the sheep market, a pool, Bethesda, having five porches (the law and testimony), in these lay a great multitude of impotent people, waiting for the troubling of the waters; for he who first stepped into the pool after the water was troubled would be cured of his ailments. A certain man who had been thirty-eight years trying to get into the water (what a natural faith), and when Christ spoke, and told him to take up his bed and walk, the poor afflicted man did not know who it was that told him, but he immediately obeyed the voice — just as every poor helpless creature does.

This is much longer that I had though to write, but so many great and good things come from our Master — so many more wonderful things than we deserve, until I never know when to close. It is time for me to send in my renewal for the Signs. May the good Lord see fit to give each and every one of you guidance to continue writing the same gospel truths, and bless the household of faith everywhere who believe in the doctrine of salvation by grace as taught by all the holy apostles and prophets, to the end that Zion may be comforted and Christ glorified.

Very humbly and unworthy,
Ben Parrish

Elm City, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I am sending you a written prayer of a dear mother in Israel, Sister Mary E. Gardner, with her consent. I feel it to be a God given prayer on Thanksgiving morning. My wife and I arrived at her home, and the first thing she seemed to talk about was the impression she had when she got off her bed — her heart felt thanks and praises to God; which I feel she had most of the time.

Oh, if I could feel as thankful to my God as I feel this dear sister does, what a wonderful joy it would be to me. Please remember me and mine in your prayers. I am sending this prayer, hoping you will publish it in our dear paper that others may get comfort as I feel I have. An unworthy brother in hope of eternal life.

Rossie Williams

A PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING
(November 28, 1957)

Dear God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who has given us all things we have, we do thank thee this morning for all thy rich blessings — eyes to see, ears to hear, the air we breathe, the ground we walk on, and the friends we have; and all things we enjoy in this life, and a heart and tongue to praise thee on this Thanksgiving morning.

Thou art God, and hast given us to live to see this blessed day; and above all, thou hast given us a heart and mind to thank thee for the hope we have in Jesus the Blessed Lamb of God who died for our sins; and hast made known to us that He alone is the hope of our salvation, and that he has all power both in heaven and in earth to save thy people from eternal damnation; and to give them to love and trust in him in all their great tribulations and sorrows while here on earth, and make them willing to suffer for Christ's sake; and in distresses they are made able to say, Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him, for he is my all and in all; and though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for thou art with me — thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

May we praise and thank thee this day and every day, for thy blessed and wonderful gift to the children of men.

Mary E. Gardner

EXPERIENCE

R. F. D. 2,
Ruffin, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

As I am alone so much of the time, I feel that I want to write a portion of my experience. I was reared in a Primitive Baptist Home, for which I am thankful. My mother was a member since my childhood, but my father never united with the church, yet was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. I do not remember a time when I did not love the Old Baptists, and I always went with my parents to the meetings; and many times when mother wasn't able to go, I went with my daddy. Our pastor then was Elder J. F. Spangler, and he and Sister Spangler often visited in our home and would spend the night. I would get around in the corner somewhere and listen to them talk.

When I was in my early teens, I realized I was a sinner, and wondered what would become of me if I should die; and I would often take the family Bible and go off somewhere alone to read it to see if I could find some relief. I went to some parties with my young friends, but it seemed that I could not enjoy them as the others did. When I was about the age of eighteen I was so heavily burdened I could hardly go on: I did not want anyone to see me crying, and often I would go off into a room to myself and shed tears.

I would go to meeting, and when they would break-up singing the closing hymn, the tears would roll down my cheeks and I could hardly stay in my seat. I wondered what my young companions thought of me. I loved those good people and wanted a home with them, but how could I ever ask for it. I went on in this condition, and in the year 1914 I was married at the age of twenty: I thought these things would be erased from my mind, but they never left me. Something would continually seem to say, Go home to your friends. I felt I knew where my friends were, but I couldn't go. I often would take my Bible in the dead hours of the night and go into the kitchen to read it when my husband was asleep. One night I dreamed I saw my dear old grandmother who had passed on. She looked so beautiful, and everything was white as snow. When I awoke an angel passed over my room. I believe the Lord has angels here in this world.

I continued to go to meeting, as it was my only enjoyment here; or at least it was the most comfort I had, to meet with those good people and hear them

sing, and to hear such good preaching. In the year 1918, I became so heavily burdened I did not know what was going to become of me. I wanted to go off somewhere by myself and beg the Lord to have mercy on me a poor sinner. On the fourth Sunday in May the same year, I went with my uncle and aunt to Dan River Church, thinking I would offer to the church that day. I enjoyed the meeting, but when they announced an open door and sang the closing hymn, it seemed I was sinking through the floor; and something told me I was not worthy. What a miserable feeling I was in! Yet some of the members came and shook hands with me. I went home with a heavy heart, and I could not tell my husband or anyone how I felt.

The next morning, while I was doing my housework, I heard a voice as plain as I ever heard anything. It said that if I didn't offer to the church the next opportunity, one of my children would be taken away: It was death if I didn't go. And the voice said, "Your sins are forgiven; go home to your friends." I looked around to see if I could see anyone; and I ran out into the yard. I felt like shouting aloud, for I thought surely this was the voice of the Lord Jesus Christ. I promised that if the Lord would forgive me for putting if off this long, I would not put if off another meeting. I was so happy, and wanted to tell my husband what I had heard when he came in for lunch; and he was happy too.

The next Sunday we spent the day with our dear Brother and Sister T. W. Rice, who have now passed on. After we had dinner, I went in a room alone and was combing my hair, not thinking anyone would notice me. Brother Rice came to where I was, and said to me that he thought surely I was going to offer to the church the Sunday before; and the tears rolled down my cheeks. I told him I felt too unworthy, and that I couldn't go. He said that Satan would tell me that I was not worthy, but that my worthiness was in Christ Jesus; and that he hoped I wouldn't put it off another meeting, for they all knew me and I would be received. These were very encouraging words to me.

On the fourth Sunday in June, my husband took me to Dan River: they had a good meeting, and when the doors of the church were opened, and began to sing the closing hymn, there wasn't anything in the way. I walked up and gave the pastor (Elder J. F. Spangler) my hand; and he said that he had been looking for me for a long time. I told them a portion of what I have written, and they received me into their fellowship; and I was baptized the next day. It was one of the happiest days of my life. The sun was shining so brightly, and it was a beautiful day. I have never regretted that day: I left a burden there that has never returned; though I have been through many trials and sad disappointments since then. As I look back over my past life, it has been a mixture of joy and sorrow, but to me the church at Dan River has been one of the sweetest homes in the world. I know I haven't meant much to them, but they have meant so much to me; and I love them all. Now my husband has passed on, which has grieved me so much; and my life has been so lonely, for we spent many happy days together. The Lord has promised never to leave nor forsake us; and I believe He has been with me in some of my lonely hours.

I have a sweet hope that when my life here is ended, I shall meet my loved ones, who have gone on before, in that upper and better world where there will be no more sorrow, sickness, pain, or death, but all will be peace and love.

Brother Spangler, if you think this worthy of space in our paper, you may publish it; if not throw it aside. I would like for my children to read it when I am gone. I love the Signs of the Times, and hope to take it as long as I live.

A little sister in hope,
Mrs. C. S. Carroll

Odell Street,
N. Wilksboro, N. C.

Dear Editors, and the Household of Faith:

If I know my heart, I would this morning speak a word that would honor our Blessed Saviour, and be a comfort to some traveler along life's weary road. I am thinking now of those who have traveled this road before us, and have left sign posts behind them, showing us, who are coming on behind, that we are not walking a strange road; and best of all, I believe the same road that Jesus trod before his sheep.

Jesus calls his own sheep by name, and goes before them and leads them. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life; and outside of him there is no salvation. He is the great Shepherd of the sheep who are following, being drawn by the mighty power and loving kindness of God. "No man can come unto me," says Jesus, "except the Father which sent me draw him."

I can't read very long at a time, since it causes much pain in my head and shoulders, but I look forward every month for our family paper. I would enjoy seeing it come, even if I could not read a word of it, for I know what it stands for.

May the God of all grace bless you editors to continue faithful in the future as you have in the past.

Yours in hope,
(Elder) Roby Johnson

A THANKFUL SINNER

Dear Editors:

I seem to have a desire I can't get rid of without writing a few lines for the Signs of the Times. I have so many things to be thankful for, I hardly know where to begin; but, first, I will say that I am thankful that I am able to be up and going, and able to write my good brethren a few lines. I missed attending meetings but twice in 1956, and have missed none so far this year (December, 1957), so, brethren and sisters, don't you think I ought to be thankful.

I have had many ups and downs in the journey of life. My mother was sick four years, and I waited on her; and my wife was sick nineteen years, and just before she died, I was in the hospital for five weeks and the doctors and nurses said I was going to die; but thank the good Lord, I am here yet. I see so many things I am thankful for: I have never been arrested, and have not had a fight since I was a school boy. If I live until the next second Saturday in July (1958), I will have been a member of Basham Church (Bedford County, Virginia) for fifty years; and if I have ever given the church any trouble, I don't know it.

One thing that I feel to be the most thankful for, is that I believe that salvation is by the grace of God; and that I have a little hope that I am in the number that Christ died for. When I was young, I became bothered about my salvation — whether there was anything I could do to obtain it; so I asked the God of heaven if there wasn't anything I could do, to still my little finger so I couldn't move it — and I could no more move it than I could fly; and this gave me a little hope. I was made to give up my case to the Lord long ago, and I know I can't help him any. He doesn't need any help, for He has all power in heaven and in earth and none can stay his hand.

I am thankful for the breath I breathe, and the water I drink, and the food I eat, and for everything He has ever done for me, and especially for the hope I feel He has given me, and the grace He has supplied all the days of my life. Bless His holy name.

I have been going to associations for about seventy years, and have seen the brethren and sisters glad to see each other, and meet in love and sweet fellowship. And I have heard much good preaching which the Lord blessed his ministers to preach at these meetings. May we not neglect the assembling of

our selves together, and may we watch as well as pray; and may God's all-seeing eye keep his people everywhere in that narrow path, and give them to love each other more and better the short time they have to stay here in this wicked world.

Dear brethren and sisters, I truly hope the God of heaven will bless you to live in peace, and in love and sweet fellowship; and to be at each other's feet — for that's the place to keep out of trouble. If you have a mind to do so, please remember me in your prayers. If saved at all, it is by the grace of God alone.

W. H. Simmons,
613 18th Street, S. E.,
Roanoke, Va.

(We have known Brother Simmons for more than forty years, and are glad to publish the above from him. We know he is sincere in his feeling of thankfulness for his many blessings, and in his desire for the welfare of the brethren. May the Lord continue his blessings toward him, and give him continued grace for all his needs. — J. D. W.)

ELDER RHUE'S EXPERIENCE
(Concluded)

In the course of time, a son was born to us, and I believe the Lord gave us his name, which was David, and he was to us the most beautiful child in the world and the flower of our home. By the time he was a year old he became very fretful and would have spells of crying and nothing seemed to satisfy him, until one day my wife gave him a small New Testament. He took it and looked at it with an expression of satisfaction and opened it and in his little way would read, then place it under his pillow and go to sleep. He kept this up as long as he lived, and I verily believe that our Heavenly Father in His infinite wisdom and tender mercy revealed the truth to our little babe at tender age. At the age of sixteen months he was taken sick, and just seven days later the Lord took him from us; and when I realized the end was near I walked and cried unto God, begging him to bless the child to get well that he might live with us, yet confessing to the Lord that I was not worthy to be a father to the child and that was why He was taking the baby unto Himself. On the evening that he died, I stood by his little bed and saw him breathe his last, and Oh what agony of soul! What a wretch I felt to be! No mercy for me! I walked into the room where my companion was, and her condition was such that she could not realize that our baby was gone. This added to my grief, and I felt as one alone. The Lord was pouring out His wrath upon me, a vile, hell deserving sinner.

There being a Missionary Baptist minister in the neighborhood where we lived, and he being an acquaintance of mine, we called him to conduct the funeral service, and I requested them to sing **Jesus, lover of my soul;** the first verse of which seemed to express especially my feelings far better than I could, and I well remember when they sang,

> "Hide me, O my Savior, hide,
> Till the storm of life is past;
> Safe into the haven guide,
> O receive my soul at last."

This was the very breathing of my soul: Oh Lord if there be mercy for one so vile as I, turn thy wrath from me, and let me feel thy pardoning grace, for I felt death upon me. I went on in this condition for several months, feeling that every step was bringing me to my destined end, death; after which I would go to everlasting punishment prepared for the devil and his angels. Many days would pass and I would wonder how I had carried on my work in a satisfactory manner, part of the time in such a frame of mind I did not realize what I was doing.

One evening I was returning home from work, something spoke to me and said, "This is the last day for you to live. Your soul will be required of you this night." I was almost overcome and words can not express how I felt. I looked at my companion and said to her in

my heart, "Farewell, I must soon go for my sins, and where I have to go I hope you will never come. I was not worthy of a son and I am not worthy to live with the one I feel that God has given me for a companion." After retiring that night I felt there was no rest for me, and late in the night, I do not know whether awake or asleep, I was traveling in a wilderness with my wife by my side, and there was a great storm raging and destroying everything as it went, and we had no place to go for protection and could not stand still, but had to continue going. I looked just ahead of us and there was a great river which seemed to be roaring as angry waters. Although my wife was at my side, we were not permitted to speak, and it was made known to me that when we reached this river it would be our final destruction. From this point I realized again that I was at my home in bed, and there was little rest for me.

The next morning I would not tell my wife what I had seen. We had reached a place where we could not agree at all in the Scriptures. I told her that I felt God had a chosen people, and I truly felt I was not one of them; if so it would have been different with me. I had tried my own works and they had failed, and I had tried to beg Him for mercy, but He would not hear my cries. She replied, "I hope the Lord will never let me believe such a doctrine as that. God would not be just if He did not give everybody a chance to be saved." I felt that the Lord had shown me that my companion was in the same condemnation that I was in, and we both were without any power to deliver ourselves from this awful condition. I went in this condition exactly one week, feeling every day would be the last; and on Wednesday night I felt I could not live till morning, and I was placed again in the same place I was before: where the storm had destroyed everything, and my wife was again at my side. I began to look around, and I beheld a beautiful scene where previously a storm had destroyed everything. I beheld a beautiful grove of trees all the same size, and a voice spoke and said, "This is the planting of the Lord's hand". A gentle breeze, which seemed to be the Spirit of the Lord, was blowing and causing the trees to continue to bow in praise to this God; and I was caused to think of the river just ahead of us, the one which I saw when there before. I looked just ahead and saw a river, but instead of its being a black and raging water, it was a river of peace, the water clear as crystal; and there appeared a highway upon the surface of this river ascending toward heaven, and by this time my companion and I were on this highway going toward our eternal home. If not deceived, Jesus spoke and said, "This is what I died for, that you might live, and I have prepared this highway for my people". I began praising his wonderful name and began to tell my wife that this which we see and feel is what our blessed Savior has done for us poor, unworthy sinners; and I said, "Oh Lord, how could you come so low in mercy as to reach my case". Jesus spoke and said, "I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."

I awoke in praise to my God, saying, "Bless the Lord, Oh, my soul, let all there is within me bless His holy name." I felt He had forgiven me of all my sins and had justified me before our Heavenly Father by His death on the cross, and had given me a precious hope in Him, that He had taken me into His fatherly care and heavenly keeping and would supply my every need for time, and in the end take me to my eternal home prepared for me and all the redeemed family of God. I was satisfied that my companion was also embraced in the love and mercy of our blessed Savior, and that she would be brought to the knowledge of the truth at His appointed time.

It was not very long before I began to notice a difference in the way her mind was being led, that she was in great trouble over her condition. It seemed to me that everything was in praise to my God, and I felt that He

was no longer just the God of the whole earth, but that He was my Everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace, and I could not praise His name enough for what He had done for me. I was blessed to know, I believe, that He was a God of all power, one that never tried to do anything, never wanted anything, too wise to make a mistake, too good to be unkind — so kind and merciful that He came to me when I could not go to him, and even gave me a will to accept what He gave. He worked in me both the will and the to do of His own good pleasure.

I remember soon after this great deliverance, while at my work, meditating on how good the Lord had been to me, and was yet, that I realized I had not done anything to deserve His wonderful favor. A voice spoke to me and said, "I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." I saw as I had never seen before, how His hand and His counsel had before determined the very road I had traveled, and that it was by His grace that my life from the first up to the present had been preserved and that all my troubles and trials were appointed unto me to bring me to this good end: that I might confess His blessed name as the only name given under Heaven among men whereby sinners must be saved. This doctrine that God hath saved us and called us, not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace, given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, was so plain to me that I thought I could tell everybody, and they would certainly see it and love this blessed truth, but I soon found out there was plenty of opposition to the truth, and this began to trouble me. I could not find anyone who had experienced what I had or believed what I did; so I tried to pray to the Lord to show me the true Church and who His people were. I feel that my prayer was answered.

I believe I could go to the very spot, where I was at work, where my mind for some time was taken from my work and all natural things. I began to hear singing, and it was in praise to the one who I felt had delivered me from my sins and had given me a sweet hope of Heaven and immortal glory. Then as that ceased, I saw an innumerable company of people assembled and an old Elder, whom I knew when I was just a small boy, was standing and preaching to them and to me. We were rejoicing together, and I knew they were Primitive Baptists; and it then all passed out of my sight. I was left standing, gazing upward, shedding tears of joy. I looked around to see if anyone was looking at me, for I felt they would think I was crazy. I was so overjoyed that I went to a private place and there almost wept aloud in praise over how good the Lord had been to me. I wanted to tell my precious father and mother and all God's people that the dear Lord had revealed the truth to me. O how I wanted to confess to them that it was in ignorance that I had argued to them that the Old Baptists were wrong, that instead of that, the Primitive Baptists were the people who by God's grace, and grace alone, believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, and are those who constitute the true Church of God in every nation, kindred, and tongue under heaven. I was given such a great love for these people that I wanted to find them.

So I began to inquire as to whether there were any Primitive Baptists around where I lived. Finally one man told me there were, and that they would hold an association soon in Winston-Salem. I immediately wanted to go and take it all in. After I learned it would begin at eleven o'clock it worried me, for I did not see how I could get off from my work, as I usually had to work until noon on Saturdays; and when the time came, the Saturday morning for them to meet, I did not want to ask to be off to go to the association. Yet I desired so much to go. About ten o'clock my foreman came to me and said, "Well, Zennie, you have everything in good shape for Monday morning. You may go if you wish." I thanked him, and I

believe I thanked the Lord that He had put it into his mind to let me go that I might hear those people preach. As I started out of the department where I worked, he called to me and said, "Zennie, you remind me of a hardshell Baptist preacher." I turned and did not make any reply, but the expression sank deep in my feelings, and as I went up the street toward the place where the association was being held, I would try to keep the tears brushed away, that no one might see me shedding tears. I reached the place, entered, and took a back seat. Elder Samuel McMillan began preaching the Introductory Sermon, and it seemed to me that he was talking directly to me. He told my experience better than I could tell it myself. It was so amazing to me that he knew my travels so well; and it was so wonderful to me. It was wonderful that I had been led to the people who had been taught by the same God that I hoped had taught me. It was a feast to me.

When I arrived home, I told my companion that I wanted her to go with me the next day, that I had found a people who preached what I believed to be the truth, and that I wanted to go and spend the day. She agreed and fixed lunch for us. We went, and I shall never forget, it seems, as long as I live such wonderful preaching that I heard that day, and the sweet love and fellowship manifested among them. It was just as I had dreamed. I was satisfied they were the people of the most high God; and such a love went out for them that I desired to live with them; yet I felt separated from them and that the only way I could feel to be one with them was to be baptized, and I felt this was impossible. There was something about the preaching and mingling of those people that day that drew the affection of my wife to them in feeling. Yet she said she could not believe that God had a chosen people. But not long after that she confessed to me that she felt the Lord had revealed to her that He had a chosen people, and the ones she saw assembled together were His chosen, and had been blessed to assemble in His blessed name. From that day until the present time, she has had no confidence in the works of the flesh. After some time, I feel the Lord showed me that I could not go before His people and ask a home with them until the time appointed by Him.

I would promise the Lord that if He would let me live until the next meeting day, I would go before those dear people and ask a home with them, but when the time would come I could not go; and I was not blessed to go until I was brought again to the end of all my strength. I fully realized that if I ever had a home with this people that I must be led by His unerring spirit. When I was made to know that I had nothing of myself to present to them, the blessed Savior of sinners, who said, "Without me you can do nothing", carried me before them. I remember but little that I said, but they received me into the fellowship of the Church. Then my wife came and related her experience and was received. Two brethren came and related their experiences, and the church received them. This was on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in June, 1930, and we were baptized the next day. As I came out of the water my burden was gone and what a day of rejoicing I felt! Surely the Lord had brought to pass what He had revealed to me long before it was manifested, and I would never doubt any more, and I would never go back to the old sinful world from which the blessed Savior had delivered me. I would continue to feast from the precious hope which my Heavenly Father had given me of Heaven and Immortal Glory. How little did I know the doubts and fears, sore trials and afflictions that awaited me in the future! How well do I remember the words of my father the first time I met him after being baptized. He said, "Son, I am glad for you and your wife, and also sorry for you too. Glad the dear Lord has been pleased in mercy to visit you and to give you a blessed hope in Him; and I am sorry for you, for you

have a hard road before you to travel". But he assured us that Jesus would never leave nor forsake His little ones, but would be with them even to the end, which I feel had been verified in our lives.

Although I have been led through many dangers, toils, and snares, and many times have wondered in my meditation if I was deceived in it all, the Lord has not forsaken us. I cannot separate my experience in receiving a hope from my calling to the ministry. I do not feel worthy of such a call and wonder much of the time if I am deceived. I must say that the way by which I have been brought thus far through life has not been my choice, for in nature I would have had many things different from what it has been. Therefore, I believe that the God of all Grace ordained the very road I have had to travel, that the steps I have tread, and the stations I have filled, my Father determined and wrote in His will; and that my Lord and Master has supplied my every need — not what I have wanted.

I feel tonight, as I write, that if God is mine

"Then from His love
He every trouble sends.
All things are working for my good
And bliss His rod attends."

Now I must come to a close. I have only hinted at what I have desired to write, and perhaps it is not worth the paper on which I have written it, but my experience is all that I have in this world — just a hope which I feel sometimes is sufficient to bear me across death's dark river, and bless me to sleep sweetly in the silent tomb until the glorious day when Christ shall come again to call for the Purchased of His Blood, out of every nation, kindred, and tongue, and people, and they shall come forth in His blessed likeness and be borne away upon His everlasting love to that eternal home in Glory. There He will present her, the Church, the Bride, without spot or blemish before our everlasting Father, to praise Him forever in that world that shall never end.

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

(Elder) Z. L. Rhue
Rhue Road,
Winston-Salem, N. C.

3347 Tutwiler,
Memphis 12, Tenn.

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is payment for the Signs, and also the obituary of our father. He was a lover and reader of the Signs for many years — as far back as I can remember; and I am glad to say that it has been coming to our home all the time, and we hope it will be ours to enjoy the remainder of our time. In its pages we read sweet letters which are comforting, for they tell the dealings of the Lord with the writers; which things so closely connect and are interwoven into ours. We are made to rejoice, and often drawn to send them a line in brotherly love and perfect agreement as to the way the Lord teaches his children. The editorials are so uplifting and strengthening, and full of the doctrine, when it pleases our Lord to give us understanding. Often we feel we can go for days on the strength of them.

How gracious is the Father to store up all the fulness of the God head in his Son toward his children; to supply all their needs in this world, and also in the world to come. How we desire to walk soberly and righteously in this world, but how we groan within when we can only exclaim, I know that in my flesh dwells no good thing; for when we would do good, we find evil present, to present confusion to destroy the doing of them.

I am so glad that it is written that the Lord will divide the sheep from the goats. He said to them on the right, Enter in ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, for I was hungry and ye fed me, and thirsty and ye gave me drink, etc. And they

asked when did we these things? They didn't know they had ever done anything good: but, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." We feel to understand this, but, Oh, we can't feel that we can do anything right. Paul's words along this line comfort me sometimes: "How to perform that which is good, I find not." And, "O, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death."

Thanks be to God for the love that is bestowed in the hearts of His people, of which I humbly hope to have felt when I first felt my sins forgiven, and the smiles of my Lord were upon me. It was so gracious, and I do hope and feel that I have tasted that the Lord is gracious. The exercise of my mind, and the joys and sorrows of my heart, and the sweet meditations that have been mind, as well as the understanding while listening to the preached word, is the reason of the hope that I have. Its worth more than every thing else, yea, more than ten thousand worlds like this; and it is all because he first love me.

May He give us strength for our day, and enable us to run with patience the race that is set before us. Pray for me and mine when at the throne of grace.

In hope of eternal life,
Mrs. Luther Campbell

R. F. D. 2,
Ruston, La.

Dear Editors:

I see my subscription is about due, and I am sending a check for renewal. I like the Signs so much, for I find so many traveling the same road I am traveling. I believe the good Lord does all things for his people as they journey this low ground of sin and sorrow.

I don't have a church to go to, since the nearest church to me is thirty-five miles away — I mean Primitive Baptist Church. There is another church close to me, but I can't go for that kind of preaching. I can't write as I would like to. I am nearing my seventy-seventh birthday, and don't have much longer here on this earth, but I believe the Lord will guide all his people through this old world, and save them in the world to come.

I want the Old Baptists to pray for me. Yours in hope of the better world to come.

C. B. Stokes

Rt. 2,
Ripley, Tenn.

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is check for $3.00 to renew my subscription to the Signs. The paper has been coming to our home for a long time, and my husband and I love to read the letters, and the writings of the elders. It is good preaching to us, for we believe the Old Baptist doctrine is the true doctrine — it gives God all the praise, and none to men. We do believe that all power is of God, and he gives his preachers the food that His little ones must have. When we hear a God called preacher tell our own experience, it gives us strength.

Farewell in the Lord to all the dear editors and writers. Pray for us that we may live faithful to our Lord. My husband joins me in this.

In hope of eternal life,
Joeb and Bessie Kerley

EXPERIENCE

1401 Mill Street,
New Madrid, Mo.

The first memory that I have of anything that befell me in this life, was back in the sweet hills of Alabama (where I was born in 1908) when I had typhoid fever. I was only a small child; and typhoid fever was then almost sure death, and I laid for weeks at the point of death. My parents had to carry water from a well a mile away because the

doctor thought our water was impure. My hair all came out, and my little legs were so weak they would not hold me up; and when I began to get better, I had to learn to walk again. I remember begging for food, but one was not given food then with typhoid fever.

The reason for my telling this is that I wonder why the Lord did not take me at that time; and what have I ever accomplished in this life that He spared me.

When I was about eight years old, serious things began to come into my mind. I would think about dying, and would go off and have a good cry about it, for it bore on my mind so heavily. Yet I went on just a happy-go-lucky little girl for some time; and when occasionally I would have serious thoughts again, I would ask my Dad to read some out of the Bible for me; which he would do. I remember going down in the big valley below our house when I would try to pray; and would also try to sing. The thought would come to me that I wanted this to come from my heart, as I was very sincere; and I would be very quiet not wanting anyone to know of my serious thoughts.

My father seemed to read between the lines, as he always said that I was a Primitive Baptist as he was, but I didn't know the difference between a Primitive Baptist and a Methodist. I went on like this for some time, rambling those beautiful hills and valleys, where nature in its beauty was manifest, and where the handi-work of God the Creator was displayed; and I enjoyed it. It seemed that one could get in close communion with God, and that He came down and walked there among the beautiful flowers; and there was no hindrance when one had a desire to pray — just steal away to some secret place and pour out your soul to the Father.

Time went on until I was about twenty-two years of age, when I really began to have serious thoughts. I had always gone to the Missionary Baptist church and sunday-school, and my mother being a member there, I thought I had better join them; which I did. Then I really began trying to work and do good; and if any poor mortal ever tried, I believe I did. I wanted to stay on my knees, begging God for mercy; and I would try to pray every time I could steal away from my children for a few minutes. I even wished I was a beast of the field, and would not have to be brought into judgement. I saw the bottomless pit in a dream, and I was falling in; but I saw Christ the Rescuer just for a moment. But what a wonderful moment it was!

When I feel distressed out of measure, I recall these things. I searched the scriptures daily. I found that I was not a Missionary Baptist at all, and I believe I have been taught of God: that He is all and in all, and has all power and does his will and none can hinder him; that He is the all wise Supreme Being, and that all my works are as filthy rags before God; and like Paul, I am the chief of sinners. I am made to know that without the Lord's mercy, through his love for his people, the bride, that I shall sink forever into everlasting punishment. I find that the things I would do, I do not; and the things I would not do, that I do.

O wretched person that I am, who shall deliver me except my God: all praise and glory be to his matchless name forever. I feel like a stranger in this low ground of sin and sorrow, but hope to be kept in the strait and narrow way that leads to life.

In a dream not long ago, some people and I were going along, but the road was so rough and rugged; and the question came to me, Am I not one of God's children? Is this the reason the way is so rugged? Then the thought came that the way was not smooth and flowery, but full of trials, tribulations and persecutions. And I awoke to ponder the dream.

Dear ones, I am still struggling on the road, and I am made to wonder how long before the glorious day when the Lord will gather his children home to

sweet peace and rest.

In bonds of love to the household of faith,

Eunice Dean

Birmingham 8, Ala.

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a $5.00 money order; please renew my subscription for two more years. We enjoy the paper very much, and hope we will continue to receive it as long as we live.

Our sincere desire and prayer is that God will lead and direct you ever in the right way; and enable you ever to do what is right for the Old School Baptist. Remember us when at the throne of grace.

Mrs. W. R. Utley

Perrin, Texas

Dear Elders, and Readers of the Signs:

I want you to know that I certainly do enjoy reading your good pieces in the Signs. I am nearly eighty-nine years old, and can't go to meeting like I used to, but when I can, I enjoy everything. We have been having some good meeting lately — all sound preaching, like the Signs of the Times set forth in 1832: preaching a wonderful God, and a mighty Saviour, who is able to save to the utmost all that come to God by Jesus Christ. No man can come unto God but by our Lord Jesus Christ. My desire is that I will always be kept by his power, in the paths of righteousness, for his name's sake.

If there ever was a man in the world that loved Old Baptists, I believe I am one of them. If I know myself, they are my people. They preach salvation in the name of Jesus Christ; and when I hear a man preach salvation by grace, it kindles a love in my heart for him.

I desire to take the Signs of the Times as long as I live, and I enclose subscription price for another year.

Your brother in hope,
(Elder) C. Y. Osteen

1516 Rutland Street,
Houston 8, Texas

Dear Brothers Spangler and Wood:

Sometime ago (in the last letter of mine, published in the April, 1957, Signs) I promised, the Lord willing, to relate a couple of comforting experiences which I feel were of the Lord. I wish I could do so without the use of too many words, but I am so ignorant I must use many words to say so little. At the time of my promise, I referred mostly to, "Peace, be still". But there was something else which occurred several months before this that I would like to mention first.

For about fifteen years after I received a hope in Christ (if indeed my hope is not an illusion), I wanted so badly a home with the Old Baptists; and my desire for baptism was a great burden — and as time went on, the greater the burden. However, I realized my utter unworthiness even to touch the hand of one saint, or even to enter God's house. The nearest church of the absolute predestinarian faith and order was in Fort Worth, (or so I thought at that time), and felt that no other would satisfy me. A niece of mine moved to Houston, and joined the limited brethren, not knowing at the time they were of the limited faith. When I learned that she had been baptized, I felt as though I couldn't live without baptism and a home with the dear Old Baptists. I considered much about asking a home with them, so great was my desire to be baptized. There are several churches near Houston of the limited or conditional faith; and for this reason I thought of asking them to give me a home.

I knew I was just so utterly unworthy of a home with them, as I was with any others; so in my weak way, I begged the Lord God for guidance to direct me in the way He would have me to go — that which would be pleasing in his sight. I would beg, "O, Lord God, I am all undone; I know not what to do. I am so little, weak, and helpless: Have

and shows signs of much more use; but will it lead me to where I wish to go?" Where or what that place was, I gave no thought, but my destination lay at the end of the little, narrow path ahead. This I knew. Yet the other path was so very tempting, and I was in a perplexing situation. Then I heard so clearly, "The old path is the good way; walk therein, and you shall find rest."

I have searched the Scriptures, but have not found these exact words — not together in one verse, but have always felt and hoped that these words were of the Lord; for afterwards I realized I could not be satisfied with any other than the Old School Predestinarian Baptists. The desire for baptism seemed to burden me more than ever before: a great weight seemed to be resting, and crushing down on my head heavier and heavier, until I felt I could not bear it another minute. One day I turned to the 3rd chapter of Matthew and read of John the Baptist baptizing our Lord, and others (I often read of the baptizings); then I turned to the 8th chapter of Acts and read where the Ethiopian was reading of Esaias the Prophet. I read through verse 39; in verse 36 the Eunuch said, "See, here is water: what doth hinder me to be baptized?" So Phillip baptized him.

It seemed that for the Eunuch there was no delay — he was baptized then and there. I could not keep back the tears: "Oh, there is so much water — river, creeks — water aplenty. I, too, believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Then I heard a roaring, boisterous wind; and from out of this wind came a voice that seemed to be far away, yet perfectly clear, which said, "Peace be still". I do believe these words were from the Lord, for afterwards I was comforted, and felt that I would not leave this old low ground of sin and sorrow before being baptized, and having a home with the Old Baptists.

About four months later, the Lord (I hope) led me to the church; and I was received, and baptized one month later. On being raised out of the water, mercy, Lord, for thou knowest; and I know I have no power of my own: I can do nothing without thee."

One afternoon, after such a plea, I fell asleep; and found myself traveling in a very narrow and straight path. I finally came to a place where another path turned off to the left at an acute angle. "Now" thought I, "what shall I do? I know this small path leading straight ahead is the one I should travel, but the one turning to the left is wider, the brothers and sister appeared like angels under the beautiful trees which grew beside the stream — "Spring Creek"; its waters flow from springs, and are clear, clean, and beautiful.

There is another incident I wish I could tell you about: I feel sure I was dreaming. Nevertheless, I found myself walking about and viewing Paradise — or was it Heaven? I wish I could describe or illustrate the marvelous, the extraordinary beauty of this wonderful place. I don't believe the best artist could do justice to that beautiful scene. I have told no one more than I have related here: I know I cannot describe it as I saw it. One precious old mother in Israel said to me, "Maybe it is meant only for you; it seems to be."

I feel the need, and desire the prayers of God's humble poor.

A little sister, I hope, in Him,
Harriett Little Gray

CHANGE IN CHURCH NOTICES

UPPER COUNTRY LINE
UNION MEETING

The **UPPER COUNTRY LINE UNION** meeting is appointed to be held at McCray Church the 5th Sunday in March. The Meeting house is located on Highway 62, 7 miles North of Burlington, N. C. Brethren and friends are invited to attend.

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The **STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING** will be held, the Lord willing, with Springfield Church, Route 29, Gretna, Virginia, the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in March.

Danville, Virginia March, 1958

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INDIGENT FUND

We trust that brethren and friends will not forget this fund, for by the donations received we are enabled to send the paper to many — many who otherwise would not have the privilege of reading it. — Editors

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EDITORIAL

ELDER RUSTON RECOVERING AFTER SURGERY

All of our readers will miss an editorial by Elder Ruston this month due to his illness. He underwent surgery on January 9th, and we are glad to say that Sister Ruston writes that his doctors report that he is getting along fine. All the brethren and friends wish for him a speedy recovery.

Before going to the hospital, Elder Ruston wrote that he was in God's hands. How wonderful it is to realize this, and to be resigned to His will.

Sister Ruston asks that we express their appreciation for all the loving messages they have received from brethren and friends, for it would be impossible to acknowledge each one personally.

J. D. W.

(Since the above was written, Elder Ruston has been able to return home from the hospital, and seems to be getting along fine. We hope he will soon be able to resume his many activities, including his editorials.)

ELDER SPANGLER GETTING ALONG ONLY FAIRLY

Our readers have missed the writings of Elder Spangler since he suffered a heart attack more than a year ago, and many have wondered how he was getting along. He writes that he is getting along only fairly, and having good days and bad days.

His activities are greatly curtailed, and he has not felt equal to trying to write. The brethren and friends join us in praying that, if the Lord wills, he will soon be greatly improved.—J. D. W.

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2 PETER, CHAPTER 1

(Article Number 3)

"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall, For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me."

Shutting my eyes and mind to such

passages of Scripture as this will not remove them from the sacred canon, and it will not relieve the mind of the saints who become exercised about them. Undoubtedly, this is for the instruction of the children of God. I am certain that it is as good for a doctrinal examination of Holy Writ as any other portion of it. It may not sound right to us, and we may dismiss it with a shrug of our shoulders, but it is still there. Telling what a thing does **not** mean, may be, and often is, easier than telling **what** it is about. Yet, that kind of excuse is not sufficient for the yearning soul.

We may find a dozen Scriptures that tell us about our election being sealed and finished before the world was made, but here is one that commands the making of the thing sure. The dozen are important in their places and far be it from me to try to undo them, explain them away, lessen the force of them, or any other way say and write anything that is considered derogatory to the authority and preciousness of the Scriptures. At the same time, this one has as much authority behind it as the others, and, if rightly understood, is as precious as are the others.

I am sure that God is not waiting to see whether we will make our election sure or not. If so, then he has not elected us to salvation in Jesus Christ before the world was created. It will not do to write an untruthful statement in order to sustain another position. God's word is settled in heaven (Psalms 119:89), and in his eternal mind he knows now what he knew before he created the world. To him, our election is as firmly established as is his throne; it is as sure as the pledged blood of Christ until the actual shedding of it, and as much now in looking back to it as when the saints were looking forward to it.

I am not as bitter about secret societies as some are, because the Old Baptist in particular, and God's children in general, belong to a fraternity that far surpasses them all. It has a pass word and a watchword and a handshake that tells more than any learned while twisting the Lion's tail in secret fraternal halls. The methods utilized in teaching the fraternal secrets of earthly organizations are thought out by poor mortal men and thus are marked by failures, limitations, shortcomings. The reception of those secrets and the applications of them in advancing the welfare of the society, are likewise the work of poor fallen men and they are marked by the same marks of earthliness as are the teachers. These secrets have been divulged at times and it has always caused much displeasure when it was done. I write about a kingdom and a secret that none have ever known save him to whom it is revealed (Rev. 2:17). It is so inevitably and inexorably fixed by the God of all creation that none have ever revealed that secret. No man has ever taught this secret to another, although ninety-nine and nine-tenths of the religious world keeps harping on it being that way.

All of the members of His body have the secret. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him (Psalms 25:-14). The Lord puts his fear in them (Jer. 32:40). Fear is the beginning of wisdom (Psalms 111:10). This is so precious to the Lord's humble followers. It is the same doctrine taught in our text, which doctrine ascribes unto the Lord as having given us all things pertaining unto life and godliness. How good the Lord is to usward, in working all things after the counsel of his own will to the end that we have the secret. Again and again let it be said that the giving of the secret, the maintenance of the secret, as well as the keeping of it from being revealed to others, is of the Lord and all is wrought in us by the various gifts of the Spirit, all of which pertain to life and godliness.

This must be made sure in some way and to some one. Unless there is a recipient there cannot be a revelation. The fact that election was in the purpose of God; the fact that we have been elected, must be made sure in some way. Again, let us look to our election and

calling; and in passing let it be said that the calling and the election are of equal importance. Both are to be made sure. In one sense, a thing already done, cannot be made any more sure. What God did in eternity will not do us any good unless it is revealed to us. I will not know that you have the secret unless you make it known to me. How are we to do that? Go back and read, beginning with the fifth verse of the text. That is God's way that he has given you to make your calling and election sure. Sure to Whom? To God? No, for God elected us before the world was and called us in time. Certainly we cannot make it sure to him that did all of the work thereto, but we do make it known to our brethren in the Lord. You cannot know an Old Baptist by the way he ambles down the street; you cannot know one by their disposition and personality; nor can you know them in any other way save by the fruit they bear.

How many have you known that fell during this fruit-bearing? How many have fallen by the wayside that were adding as it was multiplied to them? To me, not any. I have known some who fell in the estimation of the enemies of the truth; I have known some that have been hounded to death by the false brethren (even in the flesh) who tread under their footsteps all that is holy, just and right, but they only fell to the false brethren, not the church of Jesus Christ.

This is God's way of giving you a welcome into the folds of his kingdom. If God has multiplied unto you, it follows as an established fact that you have done the adding together of the various gifts. If God had determined to do the multiplication and had left the addition to the volition of your will, or to any other haphazard chance system, he would have multiplied to you a mass of good things that would have gone to waste. But not by such as that are we known; it is not by a doctrine of chance that we have a door opened to us. We have a door opened unto us, only as we make our calling and election known. I want you to notice the combination of the work of God to usward. This door of entrance is ministered to us. It is ministered to us by the same administrator that begin the first administration to us. It is by him that gave us all things, and put all of these adding gifts in us and caused them to abound. He opens only to those that bear his workmanship. He blesses only those to go among the people of God that show forth the praise of God. If you believe that this is not the truth, I suggest that you see how soon the door will be closed to you after you have begin to talk about your works. I do not know of anything that will cause the closing of an Old Baptist pulpit to a person any quicker than for him to come telling about what he has done or can do for the Lord. You can get into **any** religious body in the world by telling of your ability to perform good works, but you can be shut out of the church or kingdom of Jesus Christ by telling about them.

As I come towards a conclusion of the things found in these fourteen verses of this chapter, I am looking for some instruction concerning what my portion is in this passage. If I am a child of Jehovah, I have, as a matter already recorded, been given all that has gone forth. In this I have obtained precious faith with Peter; grace and peace has been multiplied to me through the knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord; I have added to my faith the other gifts of the Spirit, and this adding, by me, has been because of the things being in me and abounding, causing me to work out that that God has wrought in me. The total result has been that I have not been barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord. My being enabled to do this has resulted in my making manifest or making sure my calling and election (not to God, but) to my brethren. This bringing to manifestation the work of God in my heart and mind and soul has opened a door of entrance among the Old School Baptist everywhere. I say, if I am a

child of Jehovah, this has been done for me and in me. Now is my part ended at the end of the eleventh verse? As a minister (and I am if all of the above has been made mine), does that that Peter speaks of as applicable to him as an apostle and elder, become applicable to me? Am I to do as he did? Am I to be negligent in putting my brethren that have obtained like precious faith with me, in remembrance of these things? Or am I to do like Peter? I am to do one of three things: 1. I am to do all in my power to follow in the footsteps of Peter and the other apostles; 2. I am to ignore the way they conducted themselves as ministers of the New Testament, saying, in the meantime, that the conduct of the ministers in particular, and the children of God in general, does not have a thing to do with the travel of the church in time; 3. I am to hew me out a set of rules that suit me, regardless of how the apostles did. You may say that my logic is not sound nor scriptural. If it is not, why?

Is it right for me to have the desire towards my brethren that Peter had towards his? If it is, is it not also right for me to do as he did about the matter? If it is not, why? If it is right for me to have the same interest in my brethren as he did, and to do the same thing about it that he did, then it is right for me to put them in remembrance of the duties that are enjoined upon the children of God. If it is not right — the very idea of bringing up such a question, to wit, that it is not right for me to do towards my brethren as Peter did his.

Peter met the very objections that I have met when I have encouraged and admonished the children of God, to wit, "There is no use of it for they know their duty; they have the matter in their heart, leave them alone, God will see after them doing his will." Peter knew that they knew these things, and knew that they were established in the present truth, but he thought it meet to stir them up as long as he lived in the clay tabernacle. I think this very thing, also, that it is meet that I stir up the pure minds of my brethren from time to time. I, too, know that shortly I must put off this tabernacle, for I, too, have been shown this, and while I live, and while I have the present mind that I do have, I will, as blessed of God, preach the word, and while doing it, I will, continuing to be blessed of God, be instant in season and out; and I will also, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctine. If any one tells me that it is wrong to reprove, I will, with equal authority, tell them that it is wrong to preach the word; and if anyone tells me that I do not have any authority to rebuke and exhort, I will suggest to them that we not have any more preaching of the word, since the plain unequivocal statement of inspiration would not mean anything anyway.

This is answering the request of Brother and Sister Fred Cobb.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Will Elder Ker give his views upon the subject of having organs in Gospel Churches?

Donald McKay,
Scotsville, Nova Scotia

"Praise him with stringed instruments and organs." (Psalms 150:4)

We quote the above Scripture as a basis of such remarks as we may be enabled to make concerning the request of brother McKay. We want to be sincere in all that we do, and withhold nothing that we may have from those who want to know the truth and order of God's house.

Doubtless, in the minds of some, the text above mentioned would establish their idea of having musical instruments in the house of God. Such was the case in olden times, therefore such Scripture is recorded. But the house of God that had instruments of music in it was the house which was made "a den of thieves" by those who worshiped

with such things but knew nothing of worship in spirit and in truth. That people could not sing one of the Lord's songs in a strange land, neither could they use their harps outside of their own country, because their worship was to be performed there.

When God commanded Moses to make the tabernacle in the wilderness, he told him to make all things according to the pattern shown him in the mount. That tabernacle was constructed in sections convenient for the time that then was; it was put up and taken down as the Lord commanded; its stakes were often removed and its cords often broken. That tabernacle was not the spiritual house of God, but "a wordly sanctuary." It had its own peculiar furniture, and in it God was worshiped in the burning of incense; in it the blood of beasts was offered by the high priest, once a year, for the sins of Israel. After this, David desired to build an house for the Lord, but could not because he was a man of war, but Solomon, David's son, built an house to the Lord. The house was magnificent; that temple, its furniture and instruments of music all filled their place as shadows of better things to come. Therefore that house was not the spiritual house of God, neither was the worship in it spiritual. The temple Solomon built was the pride of Israel, but the time came when they went into captivity, and their beautiful house with all its instruments of music was destroyed; thus was shown that that house, like the tabernacle in the wilderness, was not to abide; it was rebuilt, however, by Zerubbabel, but at last was destroyed in the final destruction of Jerusalem, never to be rebuilt again, because in Christ all types and shadows are fulfilled. And, **now**, instead of the tabernacle Moses made, or the house Solomon built, or the house rebuilt by Zerubbabel, we have the spiritual house of God, built by our antitypical Solomon and Zerubbabel, the Lord Jesus Christ, upon the rock (revelation), "and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Our High Priest does not enter into the tabernacle, made with hands, once a year to offer for our sins, but he has entered heaven itself, not with the blood of goats and calves, which could never take away sin, but by his own blood, "having obtained eternal redemption for us."

The spiritual house of God is not built of such material as was used by Moses and Solomon, which required the work of men's hands, but it is built of "lively stones," (men and women) "for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

As the temple, under the law, was a figure, it was right and according to that law to have musical instruments in the **church** which **then** was. But "the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law." The **law** therefore of **this** dispensation demands no such things as were commanded and observed under the old covenant.

The text at the head of this article was in place, literally, as a commandment of the old covenant. The worship of God in the temple was not complete without instruments of music, but let us remember that all such things were destroyed with the temple in the destruction of Jerusalem.

The church of God **now** would be as justifiable in building altars and offering sacrifices to God, or in establishing a priesthood of men, or in burning incense, or in adopting any other form or ceremony of the old covenant, as it would be to put into service stringed instruments and organs, and call them a part of our worship or a **help** in **any** sense of the word.

The harmonious strains of musical instruments in the temple, under the old covenant, were only a figure of the prayers, and praises of thanksgiving of the spiritual stones. These all sing the same song in perfect harmony of voices, saying, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

The nations round about could not

enter into the worship with Israel under the law, neither can the unregenerate now enter into the spiritual worship of God, or learn the **new** song.

Some say the children of Old Baptist parents go elsewhere to preaching because there is nothing to attract them to Old Baptist meetings, and to counteract this let us have organs in our churches and train our children to sing; this will make it interesting for them. This idea that organs in our churches would attract our children and young people, and thereby give us larger congregations and help to increase our membership, is but a notion of the natural mind; this is conclusive, since everything pertaining to it is **natural.** If this be the kind of interest it requires to bring them in, would it not be better for the church to have them remain outside? In the training and culture of our children, we should take them with us to meeting, beginning in their infancy and continue to take them while they are under our care. This cannot make them the children of God or cause them to love his doctrine, but it will cause them to **respect** the house of God and also the religion of their parents. If a child, even though grown to manhood or womanhood, respects its parents as it should, it will go occasionally to hear the doctrine they love, even though for the child there is nothing of interest in it. In this, we are glad to say, we speak from experience as well as from observation.

If Christ, the truth, the life and the way, who is preached, is not the attraction which brings men and women into the church membership, it is better off without them. Is God as able now to add to the church such as shall be saved, as he was in the days of the apostles? If so, why not trust in him? believing that every plant must be planted by him, and that he waters them every moment lest any hurt them. Surely every plant that he "hath **not** planted, shall be rooted up." Do, brethren, let us be consistent, and not attempt to remove the ancient landmarks, but let us "ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein." O the pride of the heart of man to desire large congregations to preach to; if we should think for a moment we would **know** that unless the Lord brings them in **prepared** to hear, we had as well talk to as many trees in the forest.

Naomi was a beautiful figure of the church, and Ruth was a perfect figure of all who are brought to love the church of God. Naomi told Ruth that there was nothing to be gained in following her, she was poor, had no sons, was a widow empty and desolate, she had no stringed instruments or organs to attract her, and that if she followed her she could only expect poverty and affliction. This did not turn Ruth away, but instead, her **devotion** for Naomi caused her to say, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Thus is the work of God made manifest. (Moses was likewise blessed: he was made to forsake all the riches and advantages of Egypt to suffer affliction with the people of God.) Such was not the case with Orpah, she did not follow Naomi when she learned there was no attraction, nothing to be gained by going with her; no stringed instruments, no organs, no trained choirs where she could make a display of her knowledge and ability. We rather think Naomi was better off without her; what do you think? If you agree with us, then you must also acknowledge that the church of God is better off without those who are brought in by the attraction of the organ.

May the dear Lord enable us to look upon Zion, the city of our solemnites; here we shall see a **quiet** habitation, here we shall see our High Priest, his table spread with his flesh and his blood. Under the law, if a man ate of the flesh of the sin offering or drank of its blood, that man should be put to death, but **now** Jesus, the great sin

offering, says, "Except ye eat of the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." When we look upon Zion we do not see, or hear the sound of the organ or stringed instruments; the attraction there is the "glorious Lord," who is "unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, (creature works) neither shall gallant ship (worldly attraction) pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our King; he will save us."

The apostles entered into these glorious and spiritual things, hence we find no example or authority in the New Testament for instrumental music in the Church of God. Without a "thus saith the Lord," we could as well adopt any other notion or idea of man and establish it in the house of God, as we could the organ.

If we abide in the apostles' fellowship, we must abide also in their doctrine and practice; to forfeit one means to forfeit **all.** Therefore, if the church should institute the organ, sooner or later it would be swallowed up with error; then wherein would we differ from the nations round about?

Our heritage here is affliction, poverty, persecution, hated of all men for Christ's sake, a little flock, our name cast out as evil, not reckoned among the nations of the earth, a peculiar people, doubts, fears, temptations. But the promise is that we shall at last come off more than conquerors, through him that loved us and gave himself for us.

If we could, by changing the order of the apostolic church, become like other people, where would we find evidence that we are the church of God, children of the heavenly King?

In our thoughts of trying to steady the ark, let us not forget the experience of Uzzah, who met death in attempting to **help** the Lord. May the Lord enable us to worship him in spirit and in truth, and to be satisfied with the goodness of his house.

We are glad to say that in our eastern associations the subject of having an organ has not been mentioned by any **church.** May God keep us in the faith, and show others who have been overtaken in the fault, their error.

The church is not to sing **now** "with stringed instruments and organs," but with the spirit and with the understanding also.

(Editorial by Elder H. C. Ker, March 1, 1906; re-published by request.)

MARRIAGE

Joe H. Holton, of Wickesburg, Alabama, and Miss Tillie Messer, of Bonifay, Florida, were united in marriage by Elder J. J. Collins at County Line Baptist Church, November 16, 1957.

ORDINATION OF DEACONS

Martinsville, Va. Jan. 18, 1958

The Church met at Martinsville and after prayer and preaching a Presbytery assembled to look into the qualifications of Brothers Chester Hagood and Arthur Potter for the office of Deacons.

Elder J. P. Helms was chosen Moderator, Elder P. E. Ingram, Clerk, and Brother Rufas Williams to be Spokesman for the Church.

The Presbytery was composed of Elders J. P. Helms, Jim Hollandsworth, Leonard Brammer, and our Pastor, C. E. Turner. Visiting preachers were Elders R. A. May, H. W. Wray, and Licentiate Rufas Brown.

Visiting Deacons were F. W. Prillaman and L. T. Nichols, of Smith River Association; S. A. Slaughter, Boyd Wyatt and W. J. Oaks, of Stanton River Association; Gold Minter and W. N. Tilley of Upper Country Line Association; T. R. Plybon, John Turner, John Clark, T. O. Minter, E. V. Poff, Jamie Cooper, Tom Turner, N. G. Brammer, Jim Perdue, T. S. Dodson and Roy Maxey, of Pigg River Association.

The Moderator opened the procedure by offering prayer. He then expressed his feelings as to the grave responsibility confronting the Presbyttry. Elder Jim Hollandsworth read from 3rd Chapter of 1st Timothy concerning the qualifications of Deacons. He then proceeded to question the Spokesman regarding the candidates.

The Presbytery being satisfied a motion was made by Elder Brammer to proceed with the ordination. The motion being unanimously carried, the candidates were individually questioned at some length as to their belief on points of doctrine and the deportment of a Deacon. Their answers were pleasing and in accord with sound doctrine.

The Presbytery being satisfied, proceeded to lay hands on the candidates. While the hands of the Presbytery were upon the candidates, Elder Leonard Brammer offered the Ordination Prayer. Elder C. E. Turner then delivered the Charge.

The Deacons thus ordained were then delivered back to the Church.

Minutes were read, approved and adopted.

Elder J. P. Helms, Mod.
Elder P. E. Ingram, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, Since the last session of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, our heavenly Father has seen fit to remove from our midst, and from the scenes of his mortal labors, our esteemed brother, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, and

WHEREAS, Elder Bellows was a frequent visitor with us, and was blessed to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; and his passing is greatly felt by us; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to our Father's will, desiring to be reconciled to our loss, which we feel is his eternal gain; and

RESOLVED, That we extend our deepest sympathy to Sister Bellows and the other members of his family; and that she be given a copy of these Resolutions; and that a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by unanimous consent of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, held at Frying Pan Church in October, 1957.

Elder John D. Wood, Moderator
Arthur L. Carter, Clerk
L. D. Duke, Assistant Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God in His infinite wisdom, and according to his most righteous purpose, has called to himself our beloved friend, Mrs. Virgie Harrison, wife of our beloved Pastor; and

WHEREAS, He, by the same wisdom and purpose, has called our dear Pastor, Elder R. L. Harrison, from the lonliness and emptiness of this world, to inherit the kingdom prepared for him from the foundation of the world; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the will of Him who is too wise to err, and too kind to be unjust.

Done by order of the church while in session on Saturday before the 4th Sunday in November, 1957.

J. W. Barnes,
Union City, Tenn.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, Our Heavenly Father, in his infinite wisdom, saw fit to call our dearly beloved sister, Martha Reed, to be with Him, on November 23, 1957. She was a devout Christian and strong believer in salvation by the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, as the Martha Grace Church, bow in humble submission to the will of God, who doeth all things well; and desire to be reconciled to His divine will. And

RESOLVED, That the church extend sympathy to the bereaved family: may the blessed Holy Spirit comfort them in their sorrow. And be it further

RESOLVED, That we send a copy of these Resolutions to the family, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and a copy recorded on our church book.

Done by order of the church while in conference, December 1, 1957.

(Elder) J. W. Shipman, Moderator
Minnie Lee Williams, Church Clerk

MEMORIAL

WHEREAS, Since we last met in associate capacity, it has pleased our heavenly Father in His infinite wisdom to remove from this low land of sorrow our beloved brother and faithful, able minister of the Word, ELDER ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, of the Lexington-Roxbury Association, and

WHEREAS, Elder Bellows often visited with us in our associations and churches, and came declaring, with power and earnestness, the unsearchable riches of Christ, feeding the sheep

and the lambs of the flock with that pure manna from above, accordingly strengthening us in our most holy faith and teaching us the sound doctrine as believed by God's elect, and

WHEREAS, We of the Delaware Association, deeply conscious of the loss to us and to the other associations and churches, whether our brother served as pastor or as visiting minister, in the exercise of the gift with which he was so richly blessed; and bowing in humble submission to the will of Almighty God, thanking Him for the gift of Elder Bellows in the ministry of the Word, and mindful of his interest in the welfare of Zion, his fatherly admonitions, his humble forthrightness, his teaching of the deep things of the gospel of Christ, and feeling our bereftness in the passing of one who has so faithfully served as undershepherd, teacher and minister of the Word, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That we send this tribute, in the memory of him whom we have loved and cherished, to his bereaved companion, Sister Florence Bellows, and that this memorial be printed in our Minutes, and a copy of it be sent to the *Signs of the Times*.

Done by the unanimous voice of the Delaware Association, September 8, 1957.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
R. S. Jarman, Clerk
Charles B. Osborne, Assistant Clerk

OBITUARIES

MRS. VIRGIE CRAVENS HARRISON

Mrs. Virgie Cravens Harrison was born September 20, 1885; and died August 30, 1957. She was married to R. L. Harrison on December 27, 1906; and to this union were born four sons: Boyd L., Rives, Tennessee; R. V., Martin, Tennessee; James, Savannah, Georgia; and Dennis, Memphis, Tennessee. She is survived by her husband, Elder R. L. Harrison, the four sons; and one sister, Mrs. Marie Ludlow, Mobile, Alabama.

After a light stroke, she grew worse for two weeks, and died in the Obion County General Hospital, Union City, Tennessee. Elder J. N. Darnell, of Cadiz, Kentucky, was called to preach her funeral. Her body was laid to rest in the Cane Creek Church Cemetery.

also

ELDER R. L. HARRISON

Elder R. L. Harrison was born May 24, 1887; and died November 8, 1957. In 1906, he was united in marriage to Virgie Cravens (whose obituary appears above).

In 1924, he and family moved from the Harrison home in Obion County, Tennessee, to Martin, Tennessee; and after five years they moved to Memphis, and lived there six years. He first realized himself to be a great sinner at the age of sixteen; and while living in Memphis, he was given a hope in Christ, and asked for a home in the Primitive Baptist Church, and was baptized by Elder J. W. Kirley, the pastor. In 1937, he and family moved back to the Harrison home; and he united with Cane Creek Church by letter. In 1947, the church recognized the gift that God had given him, and he was liberated to preach; and in the same year the church called for his ordination to the full work of the ministry. In July, 1947, a Presbytery composed of the ordained strength of Western Kentucky, and West Tennessee, after careful examination, ordained him to the full work; and the next day, the 4th Sunday in July, 1947, he was called to the care of Cane Creek Church, and baptized three into the fellowship of the church. In October, 1947, he was made Moderator of the Bethel Association; and in 1955, he was called to the care of Boaz Chapel Church, Grove City, Tennessee.

All these charges he faithfully kept until God said, Enough, my son; come home and rest. Elder H. G. Brown, of Memphis, was called to preach the funeral; which he did to the comfort of all the bereaved at Cane Creek, and to those who mourned the passing of our very dear Pastor and Moderator.

May God bless his sons; and may He send us an under-shepherd of His own choosing.

J. W. Barnes,
Rt. 3, Box 169,
Union City, Tenn.

WILLIAM HENRY KILLINGSWORTH

The subject of this sketch was born in Geneva County, Alabama, March 31, 1906; and died near Midland City, Alabama, December 4, 1957, after a brief illness. He is survived by his wife; three sons: Ray, William, and Wilbur Lee; and one daughter: Lenora. Also by his mother and two brothers: John and Adis.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. J. Collins at Goodwater Church, Wicksburg, Alabama. Interment was in the Goodwater Cemetery on December 5, 1957.

(Elder) J. J. Collins

MARTHA JANE REED

Martha Jane Reed was born January 10, 1871, in Booneville, Missouri; and died Novem-

ber 23, 1957, making her stay here nearly eighty-seven years. She was married to Brother John S. Reed, in Grayson County, Texas, September 3, 1885; and to this union were born five children, who survive: Joe, Luther and Lee, of Justisburg, Texas; and Sister Hattie Woodard, Justisburg, and Sister Lillie Contrell, Lubbock, Texas. Also surviving are six grandchildren, six great grandchildren, and two great great grandchildren; and one half-brother, S. L. Rilley, of Oklahoma; five half-sisters: Mrs. Ellis Hardin, of Oklahoma; Mrs. Blanche Davenport, of Oregon; Mrs. Stacy Dobson, and Mrs. Mency Wilhite, of Oklahoma; and Mrs. Lucinda Sewell, of Utah.

Brother and Sister Reed moved to Justisburg in 1905, where they lived and reared their family. Brother Reed died in 1949. They both united with the Primitive Baptist church at Snyder, Texas, in 1899; and were strong believers in an allwise and never changing God. Sister Reed was in a wheelchair for several years before her passing, and for several months had to be lifted to and from the chair. Her sons, Joe and Luther, who lived at home, were faithful in their care of her.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder J. W. Shipman, and Brother L. M. Hammet (? — Ed.) at Martha Grace Church house, Justiceburg. She was laid to rest beside her husband in the Justiceburg Cemetery.

Written by request of the family by one who knew her all her life.

Mrs. J. W. Shipman

NANCY MORRIS CASEY

Sister Nancy Morris Casey was born May 9, 1893, and departed this life October 20, 1957. She was united in marriage to Albert Casey November 24, 1912, and to this union were born one son, George L. Casey, who resides near her home. She leaves to mourn her departure, her husband and son, three brothers and four sisters: William and Frank Morris, Pilot Oak, Kentucky; John Morris, West Point, Miss.; Mrs. Eula Norman, Milburn, Kentucky; Mrs. Mattie Douthitt, Mayfield, Kentucky; Mrs. Eunice McNeil, Wingo, Kentucky; and Mrs. Ruth Moon, Fulton, Kentucky. And also one grand-daughter.

She professed a good hope in Christ and united with Zion Primitive Baptist Church of Christ, Mayfield, Kentucky, the second Saturday in August, 1928, and was baptized by the writer. She lived a quiet and devoted life and will be greatly missed by all. We feel that she fought a good fight and kept the faith without wavering, and has fallen asleep in her blessed Saviour, to await his second coming when he will gather his children from the four corners of the earth to be in his image, and see him as he is, and praise him world without end. This is so wonderful that we sometimes wonder why we should want to stay here in this world of sorrow and trouble; but we are pilgrims journeying in a strange land, looking for a city to come whose make and builder is God.

May God reconcile all those who mourn and fill her absence with His presence. Her unworthy pastor conducted her funeral in the presence of a large congregation, and she was quietly laid away to rest. Written by request of her husband.

(Elder) O. W. Perkins

MRS. MARTHA ANN LEATHERWOOD

Mrs. Martha Ann Leatherwood was born April 1, 1870, at Maryville, Tenn., and passed away October 1, 1957. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Thomas; and was united in marriage to A. Leatherwood on November 27, 1886. To this union were born five children, three of whom survive: Mrs. Pearl Jones, Littlefield, Texas; Mrs. J. C. Hodnett, Rising Star, Texas; and O. Leatherwood, Rising Star, Texas.

Sister Leatherwood and her husband united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Sabine, Hunt County, Texas, November 16, 1890, having come to Texas in 1889. They were the first ones baptized by the late Elder J. C. Sikes. In 1902, they moved to Brown County, Texas, and united by letter with Macedonia Church of Rising Star, where their membership remained until death.

To know Sister Leatherwood was to love her: she was kind, patient and pleasant to talk with, but not afraid to speak her mind. We shall miss her at Macedonia church — her kind admonition and encouragement. In trials and tribulations to see the faith she manifested, was encouraging. A mother in Israel has been called home, where there is no sorrow, sickness, or pain.

May the God of all grace, and the Father of mercies, comfort her children and relatives, and reconcile each of us to His will; and cause us to think upon and remember the example she has left.

Services were conducted by the writer, and Mr. Putnam, a friend of the family; and she was laid to rest beside her husband in Blake Cemetery, to await the second coming of our Saviour. Written by request of the family.

(Elder) C. U. Landers

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 126 DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1958 NO. 4

A PRAYER FOR INWARD LIGHT

Shadow and darkness are unknown
Where'er the light of God has shone;
Spirit of truth enlighten me,
Thou great unrivalled brilliancy.

Shine in me Lord with power divine,
So inner radiance shall be mine.
For God is love and Christ is light,
Where Jesus is there is no night.

Oh light, oh life, oh love of God,
Illuminate each opening road,
Then shall I walk devoid of fear,
Emmanuel himself is here.

O. J. Aston
(England)

PARAPHRASE OF PSALM 23

The Lord, He is my shepherd, I shall not lack supply,
In pastures green and pleasant, content He bids me lie.

Down by the streams He brings me, where waters gently glide,
My soul restores with cordials, whene'er I faint or slide.

In righteous paths He leads me, for His own great name's sake,
And shows my faltering footsteps the road that I should take.

Though through death's gloomy shadow I walk, He's with me here,
His rod and staff my comfort, No evil thing I fear.

My enemies with wonder behold my table spread,
My cup all running over, while oil anoints my head.

On all my life His goodness and mercy He shall pour,
And in His temple grant me to dwell for evermore.

O. J. Aston
(England)

427 Topeka Avenue
Topeka, Kansas
November 1, 1957

To my precious sister in Christ our Lord,

Margaret Taylor
Pleasant Hill, Mo.

Your kind and more than welcome letter came a few days ago. I was so pleased to be remembered by you, unworthy as I am. I have gotten to the stage where it is really difficult for me to wield a pen, and for that reason I have almost quit trying to write, except to my children. I do hope that you and our other good brethren will not construe my neglect to mean that I have lost interest in you. There was a time when I really enjoyed writing and reading, but now my eyes, as well as my hands, are failing me. I do beg the forbearance of my dear kindred in Christ, for if I am not deceived in myself, I love them as much as ever I did.

I am happy to report that I am in my usual state of health, but I get so lonely at times I go and lie down on my couch, just to while the time away; so I spend much of my time in meditation. I am enclosing a poem I composed some few years back. You may have seen it before, if so, I must beg your pardon for imposing it on you again. I would like so well if you and your noble husband could visit us more frequently. We did enjoy Elder Eason's visit so much and also all the other visitors at our last meeting. I regret more than anything else my having to give up my visits among my dear kindred in Christ. Write me again, dear sister, and believe me true if you can count me worthy.

Yours in hope,
(Elder) L. L. Schenck

A POEM

Have you ever heard the story,
(In the Bible it is told.)
How the blessed Lord of glory
Came to earth in days of old.

How He came to save His people
From their sins, the story goes,
And to ransom His disciples
From the world and all its woes.

Have you ever heard the story
Of the suffering of Christ,
And the glory that should follow
When our Lord was sacrificed.

With His garments dyed and gory
When He bowed His head and died.
Have you ever heard the story
Of a Saviour crucified.

Have you ever heard the story
How they laid Him in the tomb.
How He burst death's bars asunder
And asscended from its gloom.

Have you ever heard the story
Of the victory He won
As He rose from earth to glory
When His mission here was done.

Have you ever heard the story
Of a Saviour and His love,
Bringing many sons to glory,
Have you ever felt that love.

Bringing many sons to glory,
How I love that blessed theme.
Have you ever heard the story?
Praise! Oh, praise His holy name.

RESPONSE

Yes, I think I heard the story,
When a lad of tender years;
When it pleased the Lord of glory
To wipe away my tears.

And I think I heard the Angel
When He came to me by night
And lay upon my pillow,
And it filled me with delight.

For His form was robed in glory
And His words were few and sweet,
As He told to me the story
Of a Saviour good and great.

"Lo! Thy sins are all forgiven."
Were the only words He said.
Then He flew away to heaven;
Yea, the blessed scene had fled.

But it was a wondrous story
Comprehended in that line,
All the attributes of glory
Were vouchsafed to me as mine.

And it filled my heart with wonder,
And I never can forget;
And I often sit and ponder,
For it lingers with me yet.

More than forty years have drifted
Since that vision came to me,
But my burden has been lifted
And my spirit now is free.

For those blessed words were spoken
And the story sweetly told,
And the tidings gently broken
To a sinner lost and cold.

I should love to tell the story,
But, alas, I cannot speak,
Yea, my pencil seems to falter
And I find I'm very weak.

It is not for man to utter
Words unspeakable as these;
We can only seem to mutter,
And our efforts cannot please.

But that Angel robed in glory,
He has borne the tidings sweet;
He has told the blessed story
Which no mortal can repeat.

For that Angel, (It was Jesus)
He has paid His sacred vow;
He has died to save His people;
He is crowned with glory now.

(Elder) L. L. Schenck

Rt. 4,
Reidsville, N. C.

Dear Brethren:

Here is a letter I received from a member of Bannister Springs Church. She says, "If you think this letter worthy, I want it published; or enough of it to ask the brothers and sisters to pray for me — all who feel to."

I visited her; and she is unable to attend her meetings.

(Elder) H. W. Wray

Rt. 1,
Chatham, Virginia

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

I hope I am worthy of saying brothers and sisters: I am not worthy of calling the Lord's name. If you think I am worthy of being prayed for, I want all the brethren everywhere who have a mind to, to pray for me. I am afraid I cannot pray, and it seems that the

Lord does not hear me. Ask Him, if it can be his will, to heal me; I have suffered long and the doctors cannot help me. I just want a little rest; but if it is his will, I am willing to take it.

I desire to live right, but so many things step in my way; and it seems that I can't. I have been thinking of good and bad ever since I was eight years old, and I am now eighty; and yet I can't live like I want to. I feel like I am alone in the world; and I want so much to go to preaching and cannot. I desired to write Bannister Springs Church last Sunday, but was too sick.

I cannot say what I want to, so will stop. Hope you will remember me in your prayers.

Your sister in hope,
Emma L. Farmer

1102 W. Clarendon Ave.,
Phoenix, Ariz.

Dear Brother Spangler:

My mind still dwells on sin, but I did have a thought a few weeks ago that I hoped I may be able to write on **faith** before I leave this world. Now, I have to be content, if I can praise Him in this. Of course, this is what has been revealed to me: I haven't communed with anyone, and haven't wanted my mind to dwell upon it so much, but it is His work and it has been with me often; and at times a great deal for several years. Things have come to me from time to time, so I have to tell it the best I can. I have put off writing, but not to write would be quenching his Holy Spirit, and makes me very unhappy.

To start, I don't say God is the author of sin. Why? because I have never read it in the Bible; neither have I read that God is not the author of sin. Both statements are positive statements by man, and hence enticing words of man's wisdom, trying to add something to His Holy Word; therefore, should be shunned. I am interested in what His Word states, and not what man thinks it should state. I love the truth; and the past three Signs are all to His praise: as are all in a general way. I doubt if there is a more sound religious paper to be found. As I am a subscriber, I think I should be able to express myself occasionally, if it doesn't please man. The main thing is to receive peace from Him.

His holy prophets never made either statement; his Son our Lord and Saviour didn't; and his Apostles didn't: so I don't see how anyone in these times can feel qualified. I am not interested in arguing, but I like to read and hear the truth.

As you know the Scriptures, I will not quote much besides that I have quoted or made reference to previously. Part of quotes: "And I have created the water to destroy." "I create evil." "My hand hath formed the crooked serpent." As to man, he created him perfect or upright. Jude says, the angels that sinned left their first estate, but I have never read where Satan, the Devil, or the Serpent, has changed from the original nature. I think the serpent typifies satan's nature; so you can't call either good, and the Bible says what is not good is sin. And John says "For the devil sinneth from the beginning." The serpent blasphemed or lied before Eve ate of the fruit. Matthew 1st chapter says that the angel of the Lord said to Joseph, "For he shall save his people from their sins." The angel didn't say from their iniquities, or anything else but sin. From the way I read the Bible, Adam and Eve had already stopped eating of the fruit, but the sin had taken hold of them. I wanted to say when the Lord spoke to them after the transgression, which is also sin, but sin goes much deeper. David said he was born in sin, or conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity. He wasn't born in transgression — he had to act, or do them.

When I die, I will cease to transgress, but sin will still exist in the world, unless the world should come to an end. Our Saviour could not save us from

nothing, but he did save us from something; and that something was sin. He did exactly what the angel said he would do; and by that we escape the penalty of Hell, at least eternally. Jesus was concerned with sin his entire sojourn here on earth; and dealt with it until all things were put under his feet. When he said, I create evil, it didn't state all phases of it, but covered the entire subject. Many writers write of the power of sin — I don't believe you can take sin out of the power of darkness as long as this world stands. Paul was speaking through the Spirit in Romans 7:23, "And I see another law in my members," etc.; and he was speaking about sin. It was an invisible thing which he was, but he saw it just the same. I can sense it to a degree at least.

No one knows the mind of the Lord, or everything that He did before time — and He needs no excuses made by mere man: his righteousness goes on.

If it is his will, I hope I may be enabled for my mind to dwell on a more beautiful subject. Certainly heard a good sermon yesterday. I feel very fortunate to be able to hear his Word proclaimed, and to get my Signs of the Times. It is wonderful to think that His Kingdom shall never be destroyed. Written in love. A brother, I trust, in hope of a better life.

Harry T. Vories

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6 Brighton Street,
London, Ontario,
Canada

Dear Elder Spangler:

Enclosed is money-order for five dollars; please renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times. I enjoy reading them very much.

I am sending you a letter I received from a young brother. It shows he is being taught by the Lord. The letter was very sweet to me.

For some time my harp has been hung on the willow, and I could not sing the Lord's song in a strange land. How often I wished, "I had the wings of a dove; then I would fly away and be at rest." But, no, we must wait our appointed time to leave this world of sin and sorrow. I had little desire to read my Bible; and when I did, it was a sealed book to me.

"How strange is the course that a Christian must steer:
How perplexed is the path he must tread."

If we know anything of His saving grace, we are taught precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little. Sometimes we are made to thirst and to cry for the living water. "Oh, Lord save or I perish." How wonderful it is when He draws near and feeds us with the bread from Heaven! Then there is peace and joy.

I go back many years when I was first made to hope; and to, "Wait patiently for the Lord. He inclined his ear and hear my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit; out of the miry clay. And He placed my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. He put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." So it is at the years unfold: we learn a little here and a little there. We always cling to our little hope, "Which we have as the anchor of our soul, both sure and steadfast; and which entereth into that within the vail, whither our forerunner is for us entered."

Oh, Lord, keep us from sin and unbelief; make us humble, and keep us at the feet of our brethren. Lead us in the paths of righteousness for thy name's sake. To thy name be all praise, honor, and glory forever.

In a precious hope,
Lollie Campbell

Farmerville, La.

Dear Sister Campbell,

It is through much weakness that I am trying to answer your wonderful letter that gave me so much comfort.

If you got any comfort out of my article in the "Signs", then give the praise to the Almighty God, and not to this poor, vile sinner. I feel that it is only through the Lord that I will ever write or say anything that will be food and drink to God's little children.

I have many doubts and fears, and I have been cast down time and time again, and I wonder if the Lord has forsaken me. This hope I have gets very small at times, and I fear that I have been deceived into thinking I have been given a hope.

Oh! How this song seems to fit my experience!

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

As I think about this song, then I think about all the trials, tribulations, doubts, fears, conflicts, sorrows, and other troubles I go through.

Paul said, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28) These troubles we go through do not seem good to us, but they are good for us. Christ learned obedience through suffering, and so must we. When one is sick, he has to take medicine that doesn't taste good, or be given shots that do not feel good. This may not be good to him, but it is good for him. We have to be shown that God has all power in heaven and in earth, and that without him we can do nothing.

"And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh." (Genesis 6:3) When that Spirit leaves one, then he is helpless, and cannot walk the walk that he desires to walk. Peter told Christ that he would never deny him. But when the Spirit left Peter, then he denied Christ three times. When the Spirit came back to Peter, he wept bitterly because he remembered the words of Christ: "Verily I say unto thee, that this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice." (Matthew 26:34) Peter wept because of his sins and because he couldn't do the things he would. Paul said, "For the good I would, I do not; for the evil that I would not, that I do. Oh, wretched man am I, who shall deliver me from this body of death?" If we could do good works of our own selves, we would praise our selves instead of the Lord. We would pat our selves on the back and boast how good we are. I believe that the Lord works these good works in his little children, and shows his power unto them.

Oh, dear little one, I wonder if you have felt that this earth is nothing but a vale of sorrows and that this earth is not your home. If so, then we both feel the same. This song is very comforting to my poor soul:

"O land of rest for thee I sigh
When will the moment come,
When I shall lay my armor by,
And dwell in peace at home?

No tranquil joys on earth I know,
No peaceful, shelting dome;
This world's a wilderness of woe,
This world is not my home."

So, dear Sister, if we never meet upon this earth, then may we meet in that place where there are no tears, heartaches, pains, sorrows, trials, tribulations, or any other troubles; but where everyone praises almighty God for this great and wonderful salvation.

Oh, how I long for that day when "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (I Thessalonians 4:16-17)

Write me when you have a mind to do so.

Yours in hope,
Woodrow W. Hudson, Jr.

Check, Virginia

Dear Elder Spangler:

I enclose a letter written by Sister Catherine Houchins, which was very comforting to me. If you feel it would be good reading in the Signs, you may publish it.

Yours in bonds,
(Elder) S. L. Moran

"I MUST GO"

2720 Cove Road, N. W.,
Roanoke, Virginia

Dear Elder and Sister Moran:

I think I can rightly say that I begin this letter in considerable fear. Today I have had much to consider and think about. The thought was, how much harm, offence, etc., have I been allowed to do in my talk and conduct — have I made all around me feel bad by appearing in their midst? I know that I have not meant nor felt to hurt anyone in any sense. I worked until 11:30 last night; and I awoke at 6 o'clock and started to arise and get ready to come to County Line, but then I thought, No, I have already said I wouldn't try to go to this meeting. I tried to go back to sleep but something disturbed me so that I had to get up. I ate breakfast, and rushed to catch the bus in order to come. Why? "I must go", I kept saying.

When I got out of the car at the church door, and saw Deacon Nolen moving around, getting the house warm, etc., a feeling that I had come home arose within me. Home! How much it means! My heart began to look at the place anew. As each one came in, there was something that said, Its love and praise to our Redeemer. I was glad I was enabled to come; so if I did hurt any in any sense, it was not because I wanted to hurt.

Since I left all the little things undone that I need to do in order to stay on my job, I came back to work at these. And, as I worked, I looked at the setting sun, and marveled at its beauty. I looked again, and my hands fell idle, for these words appeared: "By His hands and according to His purpose." And what you said that in all your going you felt it had not benefitted any, nor helped anyone: yet you yourself had been the receiver of comfort and consolation. The colors and hues of the sunset changed momentarily, and I again thought, "By His hand and according to His purpose, Elder Moran has been enabled to comfort many." I know you would not have me say it in any other sense, or try to give you credit for it. The sunset became softer and more beautiful; and again, "By His hand and according to His purpose."

The beautiful sunset faded into the darkness of night, but His word fades not away; nor does it become void. I believe I wrote, or told you, once of how the humbleness of your preaching affected me: or I tried to say it. There is much said at times about the preaching of this one, or that one; praising this one or that one, and condemning another. The manner in which preaching is done concerns me. Humbleness is not put on or taken off. We are made humble, or else there is none. It is not in fine clothes, nor in rags. If you pride yourself because of your huble appearance, it is no longer humbleness. I believe it is like one said to me long ago: "If an old feed sack is bragged on as a sign of humbleness, your pride is as much as fine silk you take pride in."

If like the poor Publican, not worthy to even lift our eyes to Heaven; if like John, not worthy to touch the shoe laces of Jesus; if like Jesus, able to reach out and heal the sword's wound, instead of harming worse; if like Paul and the other Apostles, we see and feel our unrighteousness, that testimony of humbleness heals, and causes no hurt to any. Whom did Jesus heal when the sword slashed an ear off? How did Paul testify of his understanding of the unregenerate? What have any of us to boast of? It must not be done in a boasting manner. The truth must be pro-

claimed; and in that proclamation must be confession and testifying, and declaring of God and his wonderous works; but not boasting. Even Jesus boasted not. What have we that we did not receive? It being a gift, what does it do to me, and for me?: "Simply to thy cross I cling."

And I thought, How did I get there? Am I not still just clinging, and cannot let go of it? The Cross — His Cross! There is something here that is not just "a" cross. If I had language at my command, I still couldn't express it plainly, or as I feel I am brought to behold it. How needy am I! The temperance in all the testimony of God and his Son in the Scriptures, is something to think about; or it is to me. Temperance akin to Charity — how much it is needed! It should beautify, comfort and rest the weary and burdened ones that see what harsh, contemptuous, and boastful manner in which the truth is tried to be delivered, by those who do not know the truth. Christ being the Truth, and in him all fulness dwells, yet there was no boasting, no pride in what he was or knew, but went to the Cross with burdens so heavy, and entered into death for us. — "By His hand and according to His purpose."

We spoke of the word, Counsellor. I wish I could tell you how He has appeared to me in that way. Counsellor: I am so in need of counseling so much of my time, and there is none to go to; but He can condescend to my low estate. We read the words as written in the Scriptures; and to me they appear in healing, in mercy, in love, and in power, and fill my hungry soul to the brim momentarily. I cannot keep it — and it is best that I become hungry that I feel my need; which is sure, if we have beheld Him in any of these titles: "And his name shall be called **Wonderful**" Has it appeared that way to me? How did it affect me? Can I boast of it? Does it not overwhelm me? **"Counsellor".** Again I ask the question, "Can I boast? Has it not helped and comforted me? **"The Mighty God."** Oh, doesn't it bring me down to my true level and lumpish condition before Him; as well as enabling me to praise and honor Him! His power, yes, mighty and great; awesome and awful, yes; and glorious in sight. **The Everlasting Father**; the best of all; for "all is combined" in that Everlasting Father. And so "special" to His little children. **"The Prince of Peace."** "My peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth." Oh, that peace! Peace with God, when it was so needed in our despair, and destruction was upon us.

Yes, He is God. He is our life. He is life.

As ever,
Catherine A. Houchins

(As we read the above excellent expressions by Sister Houchins, we were given to consider the admonition of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:28: "But let a man **examine himself**, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup."

If we were given to "examine ourselves" each time we are assembled with the saints for worship; and each time we come to partake of the Lord's Supper; as well as each time we "give our opinion", there would be no one to find fault with but ourselves. — J. D. W.)

1712 Riverview Ave.,
Rocky Mount, Va.

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood:

I am sending a letter that I received from a young man who is in the Service. I think it is worth space in the Signs, and I would appreciate it if you will publish it. I feel that he has a sweet hope in Christ Jesus.

Your brother in hope,
(Elder) P. L. Plybon

THE FUEL — THE FIRE

Onna Point, Okinawa
December 8, 1957

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Plybon:

Thinking of you folks today, I would

like to write a few words. Hope you all are making out and enjoying many blessings. I have thought I would try to write for sometime now, but words seem to fail me to put forth what I would like to, as I feel my own weakness and inability. I have difficulty writing, so hope you will understand what I try to say. I think these matters are of the Spirit and we simply just can not attain unto them with our natural mind. I received a letter from you lately and am glad you are still mindful of little old me. Sometimes along the way I have many tribulations but I'm bound to believe that in some sort of a way that such troubles work something for me that I most need. I know I got sick here the other week, and now I am glad that I did. It made me think of an old song which says, "God moves in mysterious ways His wonders to perform." O how true! If we be His, we need not fear anything but His wrath, for he will not spare the rod on our sins but He chastens us for our own good. If He did not chasten us, how soon we would go astray. I say not long, for in this flesh dwells no good things.

In my recent illness I got to feeling very badly, and I believe, if I'm not in error, I did desire to hear the Gospel. There was none to speak it, but nevertheless I was fed. I continued in a very sad way for several days reading a line or two from the Bible occasionally, but to no comfort. **The Bible is true, but it is just the fuel; and the fire is missing, as it seems to me, if understanding is not revealed.** As I was sitting on the side of my bed, it came to my mind, For His arm is not short that it cannot reach; neither is His ear hard of hearing that He cannot hear. It came to me in such a sweet manner that it made me exceedingly happy for a moment. As I remember I sang a song without sound, but nevertheless it was good and comforting unto me. It was praise unto the Lord, for He is great and kind and merciful. His ear heard my supplication and His arm was not short that it could not reach even poor little me. I've heard that when two or more are gathered in His name that He is in the midst; this time I believe it was just He and I, and that makes two.

If I could describe these things in their fulness, they would be exceedingly beautiful and of such great consolation. But I find myself very weak, and my arm is short that I cannot reach even myself; and since it cannot reach even myself, I am most sure it cannot reach anyone else. But these things concern me very deeply as I attempt to praise His name with glory and honor. I like to tell those that can receive it what great things the Lord hath done for me, whereof I am glad and thankful, I hope. I find no pleasure in discussing such things with people who cannot receive them, for light hath no fellowship with darkness. This is not to call myself light and other people darkness, for I am not the judge, but this is a basic principal that Light, which is Christ, hath no fellowship with darkness, which is nature and carnality.

There is another scripture that I have had in mind for several days, which says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." I believe this is true when love is manifest in its fullness and truth. When one is begotten again unto a lively hope and the spirit of God which is love and truth is manifest within, I believe then we do love the brethren; and while it lasts, though for a season, we can say I know my Redeemer liveth, which is knowledge of salvation. I used to hear people of the Missionary faith say they knew that they were saved, and used this text as proof, saying they loved the brethren; and it looked sensible to me too, but I do not believe that now. In our natural state of mind we do not love one another with that everlasting love as it is in Christ, but when He plants the incorruptable seed within the hearts of His people, and then from time to time for a season quickens it unto a lively hope, this is the true love that is everlasting; and

we (or shall I say His people, since I feel unworthy to claim apart, but yet do wish it could be so) can feel that we know that we are saved, and that our Redeemer lives. This is very sweet to me when I am given to behold it in righteousness. But that is not in my control, so I just have to go along and hope that the Lord is mindful of me, and that I will do nothing that I should not do.

When left to myself I soon find myself out of the way, but for Christ's sake I would that He would chasten me back into the strait and narrow way that leads to life eternal. Much of the time I don't believe that I desire Divine things as I should; but I am hoping some day that this old man, who is so sinful, will be taken away in the matter of death, and then in the last day, when Jesus comes back again to gather His saints, He will fashion this vile body like His own glorious body to be carried into that eternal inheritance which is Heaven: to be at rest and in peace with all the joys of heaven to last forever and ever. That will be all we will ever have need of, or will ever look for, and that will be a plenty.

I used to hear this old doctrine preached years ago, and I just wondered what those old people thought they were doing, but they knew very well, and it was I that did not know. They knew that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out from the mouth of God, but it was I that did not know about that. I've heard Old Baptists criticized for preaching the same thing over often, but I say that truth is truth; and as the stomach hungers for food of its kind, so does the heart hunger for food of its kind. I believe this is true. I would to God that He would make me to hunger after righteousness more, for as sure as one hungers, is how sure he will be fed. As long as one does not hunger there is no need to feed. The whole man needs no physician, but the sick man is he who needs a physician; and this sick man is the one that is aware of his sins, but is unable to help himself. The great physician is Christ who pardons his sins and makes all well with him. What a glorious time then!

Well, Mr. Plybon, I just had an urge to write a little and this is what I've written; so I hope you will understand what I tried to say, and pardon my errors. Hope I may hear from you all again pretty soon. Until then, fare ye well.

I would that the Lord bless thee well.

A friend,
Jimmy Holley

THOUGHTS AT CHRISTMAS

This is written as Christmas Day approaches. It is written with a heaviness of heart and to some degree with shame. For weeks before the twenty-fifth of December, commercial advertisements spread before the people the wares of those who would profit financially by the occasion. Thousands of merchants throughout the land who will tell you frankly that Jesus Christ was an impostor, will still spend thousands of dollars for advertising to get their Christmas goods before the professing and unprofessing people. The echo from the chimes in the churches and from public buildings during this season seems to say "mockery, mockery, mockery."

I would be the last to belittle the person who honestly believes that Christ was born on December 25th, and who sincerely and befittingly observe that day as the birthday of our Lord and Saviour. Perhaps millions of people believe that day marks the birth of Jesus Christ. If they do, their belief is based on tradition and on what generation after generation of their people believed. But the plain fact and truth is that there is no proof to be found anywhere that Christ was born any time near December 25th. The scriptures are silent as to the date, or even an approximate date. It would seem reasonable to assume by the silence of the scriptures as to this matter, that his-

torians of that day did not consider the event of any particular significance; or that there is a significance to it, not revealed in GOD's dispensation of HIS providence, for a wise and holy purpose known only to GOD.

The occasion we know as Christmas, observed as Christ's birthday on December 25th, did not originate as a celebration of HIS birth date. For centuries after Christ's ascension to the climes of glory, there was no celebration of HIS birthday. The Christmas we know originated and had its beginning in paganism a long period of time after Christ had been to earth and gone home to HIS Father. The so-called Christian world may thank the Catholic church, if any thanks be due to any person or group, for ushering in December 25th as the date of the birth of our Saviour and the institution of Christ's Mass; which became shortened to Christmas. The Catholics started it, the Jewish merchants saw its potentiality, and have long financially profited by it at the expense of the gullible Gentiles.

What are we to do though, and where can we stop? Our parents, as loving and kind as we are kind and loving parents, and their parents and grandparents ahead of them, taught each succeeding generation that Christ was born on that date, and felt that some sort of observance was proper and fitting. Today, we do not see how we can tell a three year old child or grandchild that there is no Santa Claus without ruining the child's life forever. Our parents told us there was one; and the day we learned differently some how or other we did not blame our parents, although it seemed like life was no longer worth living. If in some way or other we could divorce Santa Claus and the commercialism that attends his visit at this season of the year, from the celebration of the birth of our Saviour at the same time, the heresy and deceit would not loom so convicting to our conscience; and the little falsehood we tell our children about Santa Claus, because we love our children, would not prick our minds and hearts quite so hard.

This is written a few hours before our President boards his personal plane to fly to Paris where a host of representatives of many European nations, together with our President, will discuss preparation for war on a colossal scale, while the clerics and the choruses from the pulpits of thousands of churches chant, "Peace on earth and good will to all men." No one can doubt that I trust that a loving GOD will safely keep Mr. Eisenhower on his trip there and back; and I assume that no one will do so. But that does not keep me from wondering how long a patient GOD is going to tolerate the world wide mockery engaged in by the higher order of HIS creation, mankind. Realistic looking imitations of every conceivable weapon of destruction are prominently displayed by our merchants to be bought by parents as presents for their boys on the day of the celebration of the birth of Christ. Our President and the representatives of other nations take days for discussion of those death dealing machines of war, of which our children's toys are imitations. The hum of the machinery in the factories where these weapons are made, drowns out and stills the voices of the choirs in the churches as they sing, "Hallelujah to the new born King."

I will agree that this has been an expression of gloomy thoughts on the occasion of another Christmas. Frankly, I am not so concerned as to whether Christ was born on December 25th, or on any other particular date. The only thing that causes me concern, not only at this season of the year but at all times of the year, is "Has Christ been born in my heart?" A faint hope, sometimes brighter than at other times, that HE has been born in me, is all it seems to me, that keeps me from plunging headlong into a bottomless pit of despair.

Hubert T. Faulk
325 West Missouri,
El Paso, Texas

Salem, Mo.

To the Household of Faith:

I wish to be brief in this writing, yet there is so much in my heart I wish to say about the kind, loving, and gentle Jesus that I hope I love and adore. He has done so many things for me, and blessed with blessings both seen and unseen. Yes, this Man-of-God has come to me in times of trouble and filled my soul to over flowing with joy unspeakable. Once He appeared to me and took me in his arms, and we walked and we talked (through the most beautiful fields of flowers and verdure) with the most enchanting words wholy unknown to human speech, or to this world.

Then again, when seemingly I was in great grief (over sin) and lying prostrate, He came to me, and stretched himself beside me, speaking words in a language that this world knows nothing about; yet I understood every word perfectly, and all my cares were gone. I even forgot my companion and my children that were the delight of my earthly existance, for I was living in a realm far superior to this one. When I come to death, if I can only feel His blessed presence as I did at those times (and others), I certainly will be wafted home in the most glorious capacity that mortal man could ever desire.

But today I am near my seventy-eighth birthday, and it seems God has hidden his face, and Satan has come as a roaring lion trying to overthrow my faith in God; often saying, "Is there a God; tell me, is there?" Then it is that I remember the Creator in the days of my youth — Lord of Lords and King of Kings: none like him, none to be compared, but God of all, and over all; and all the power Satan has, is given him from God, who is the power over all powers.

There is no end to this subject, so I submit to the household of faith, and Signs of the Times, my best love. May you live long to edit our most excellent paper. The September number was exceedingly good; and they all declare the whole counsel of God. May God bless the editors, writers and readers.

A needer of mercy, and Christian prayers,

Mildred Turner

Pittsburg, Texas

Signs of the Times:

I am enclosing $5.00 to renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times for two years. Mrs. Hull and I enjoy reading it every month.

We both believe the doctrine of the Old School Baptists; and enjoy meeting and being with them, though we do not feel worthy of their kindness and hospitality. We have never asked for a home with them, but that is our faith; and, if we know anything, we love their doctrine.

We believe that God foreknew all things before the foundation of the world, and believe that He has all power both in heaven and in earth. We often hear Elder Lambert, Elder Rhodes, and Elder Spears, and many other brethren preach; and we enjoy their preaching so much.

May you be given health, strength, and wisdom from above to carry on your good work.

Sincerely,
W. M. Hull and Wife

R. R. 1,
Walkers, Ontario, Canada
December 15, 1957

Dear Elder Spangler:

I have had a strong desire to write you ever since you visited us in Canada at our Lobo meeting, in 1956. The Lord enabling me, I hope to write some of my exercises of mind around that time.

During the Summer I had such a restful mind, I wondered if my pathway was too easy. When at Sister Mortimer's, in Bala, Muskoka, the end of July, where we had preaching by our dear

pastor, Elder Ruston, many of our precious friends were gathered and we sang favorite hymns of those present. Among them was, "Nearer My God To Thee". As we sang, "E'en though it be a cross that raiseth me", I felt that that was the true desire of my heart. At the same time I secretly prayed that needed strength be given me to bear whatever it might be. After my car was stolen the fourth Sunday in August, I remembered my exercise of mind when singing "Nearer My God To Thee", and wondered if that was an answer to my prayer.

Then at our Lobo meeting, which I was privileged to attend through the kindness of a dear sister, each hymn, psalm and paraphrase that were sung, as well as each sermon preached, seemed to be especially for me; which melted me down with gratitude for God's mercy to such an unworthy creature. I hope I was prepared to receive what God had prepared for me. In the morning before the police phoned to say they had located my car, I was secretly thanking God for the exercise of mind that had been wrought in me during the absence of my car. My mind was, "Have thine on way, dear Lord; but do undertake for me." Job was my companion, and I felt to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Also with Eli: "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good."

May our blessed Triune God so bless each of my cross providences to me, that my rebellious nature may not be allowed to harden my heart; for I know rebellion hardens the heart.

My prayer for you editors and associate editors is that God may give you strength to carry your responsibilities, and wisdom to rightly divide the word of truth without the fear of man. Truly we have much to thank God for in raising up those to carry on with our dear family paper. It is such a comfort to so many.

If it is the Lord's will, I hope you may be spared, with sufficient health to visit us in Canada again. If not deceived, I am your sister in a blessed hope,

Flossie Bishop

NOTICE TO THOSE INTERESTED IN THE FUNDS OF THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST HOME

At the annual meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Primitive Baptist Home it was noted that the expenditures during the year 1957 for the Needy Fund exceeded our income from interest and dividends, and it was suggested that the churches, as well as brethren and friends who are interested in this cause, would be desirous of donating to our funds if their attention should be directed to it.

It should be noted that all the trustees and officers serve gladly at their own time and expense, and that all donations, income from trust funds, amounts received under wills, etc. are applied strictly for the benefit of the cause.

All donations should be addressed to the treasurer, John D. Wood, Box 186, Manassas, Virginia.

Have you remembered the Home in your will?

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To February 1, 1958)

Mrs. Robert E. Richardson, Ariz. $5.00; Mrs. Tom Strickland, Ala. .50; Mrs. Ray Hawling, Va. $2.00; Verda Machesney, Kan. $5.00; A. W. Mariner, Va. $6.00; Elmer Hastings, Md. $8.00; W. R. Wallis, Miss. $7.00; Richard Turner, Okla. $2.00; Mrs. Robert Watt, Canada $3.00; Beckie McLaughlin, Canada $1.00; Mrs. David Reid, N. C. $2.00; May Morris, Md. $3.00; Friends, N. Y. $10.00; Lettie S. Jones, Mich. $5.00; Eld. George Ruston, Canada $20.00; Mrs. C. M. Richardson, Va. $5.00; Phyllis McClannahan, W. Va. $3.00; Mrs. John T. Perryman, Okla $2.00; David Turner, La. $7.50; H. T. Faulk, Texas $2.00; Elizabeth L. Froude, Mich. $2.00; Joseph A. Johnson, Tenn. $5.00; Flossie Bishop, Canada $2.00; Durwood Bradley, Texas $25.00; Elizabeth Walker, Canada $5.00; Mrs. Lena Langford, Okla. $1.00; Harry Vories, Ariz. $5.00; Mrs. H. M. Taylor, Sr., N. C. $5.00; Mrs. Eliza Turner, Va. $2.00; Bertha Evans, Va. $1.00; Katie Ragan, Tenn. $2.00; John J. Smith, W. Va. $2.00; Loyd C. Spikes, Ore. $2.00; Mrs. E. K. Morris, N. C. $2.00; Ethel M. Werner, N. J. $7.00; Minerva Dunlap, Maine, $2.00; Ebenezer Baptist Church, N. Y. $100.00; Mrs. Marion Mulholland, N. J. $2.00; Mrs. Jessie C. Jones, Ala. $2.00.

Danville, Virginia April, 1958

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INDIGENT FUND

Contributions to this fund enable us to send the Signs to many who otherwise would not receive it.

ELDERS RUSTON AND SPANGLER IMPROVING

Elder Ruston continues to improve after surgery, and is able to gradually resume the care of his churches. We have an editorial from him which will appear in the June issue. This will be good news to our readers.

Elder Spangler is somewhat improved and has attended a meeting or two, though has not attempted to speak recently. We trust he will soon be able to be active again.

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

"EVERY ONE THAT LOVETH IS BORN OF GOD."

The heading of this article is a portion of the 7th verse of 1 John, 4th chapter. Please get your bible and read the entire chapter before reading this treatise any further. Now, let us meditate together upon the wonderful doctrine of LOVE.

This epistle is written to the BELOVED. Those who are embraced in the dear love of God are the ones addressed. John is writing to them whom he loves. The ones who can hear these admonitions of John are in possession of a love that the world knows nothing about. The world cannot hear these glorious things because they are of the world and not of God. John said, ". . . He that is not of God heareth not us." (1 John 4:6) This is sufficient reason for limiting the subjects of address to the BELOVED. He said in the same verse, "He that knoweth God heareth us." This fact is sufficient to encourage John to exhort his brethren to love one another. He knows that his words will not be in vain because they will heed his admonitions. He is confident that they will be successful in this venture, "Because greater is He that is in you, that he that is in the world." He writes with the assurance that the beloved will be enabled to rightly try the spirits.

The text says, "Everyone that loveth is born of God." He bases this statement upon the glorious truth that, "God is LOVE." He does not leave us to surmise concerning those who love not. He emphatically says, "He that loveth not knoweth not God". When we are confronted with such plain statements we have a well-marked rule to use in trying the spirits. We can do it well when we are provided with the love of God in our hearts which enables us to see the marks. No one who loveth is excluded because the text says EVERYONE. Then, love is the testimony of the Spirit of God. Everyone who is in possession of the Spirit of God loves God and loves those who are begotten of Him.

The text says, "Everyone that LOVETH". Let us, then, apply the well-marked rule to ourselves. Do we love

God and those who are begotten of Him with that perfect LOVE? We must properly examine the term, love, before we can give a true answer to this vital question. Some may consider love as a feeling of warm personal attachment or deep affection for another or others. Others may regard love as outward expressions of benevolence in words and acts which benefits others. Some considers love as the internal emotion, while others consider it as the outward acts. I am persuaded that perfect love, in its full and proper sense, is the union of the two schools of thought. I do not believe that either wishing good or doing good to another could properly denominate perfect love. Some perform outward acts of benevolence only because they see others doing them. They may do these acts in order to gain a higher reputation from their fellowmen. Others may think they are in possession of warm and deep affections for others; yet, this feeling and seeming devotion be so weak that it is not manifest in their actions. Some do good in order that they may receive good from another. Actions motivated by selfishness could not fit in the category of perfect lovely actions.

"The LOVE OF GOD is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." (Romans 5:5) Everyone who is born of God is in possession of this love of God. ". . . God is love: and he that DWELLETH IN LOVE dwelleth in God, and God in him." (1 John 4:16) The love of God is a strong and an abiding love. This love is so strong that it makes us not ashamed to manifest it in our talk and actions. It inspires us to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and visit the sick. It will cause us to surrender personal ambitions in order to devote our time to the welfare of others. The Love of God is the only element that is strong enough to result in the complete abandonment of self in our deep devotion to others. This is in accord to Christ's commandment: "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends". (John 15:12-13) If we love one another as Christ loved us, we will lay our lives down for our friends. This means the complete surrender of our personal ambitions and selfish interests to the extent of sacrificing reputation for the benefit of others.

Do I lay down my life for my friends? What type of questions come to my mind in determining whether or not I shall attempt a certain venture? The following group of questions belong to the category of selfishness: Will I gain a higher reputation by doing this? How will this action affect my prestige? Will it tend to cause people to think that I am careless concerning the class of people with whom I associate? How will this venture help me financially? Will I lose or gain? Will it cause people to consider me unstable or unestablished? How will it affect my reputation of being firm? Such questions are the fruits of pride and have their origin in the carnal mind. This type of reasoning is known by the whole universe. Every intelligent person is acquainted with such questions in determining his actions. There is a love that "passeth knowledge" which puts all such questions as the above in the back-ground. This love will cause you to lay your life down for your friends. It will cause you to love them as He loved you.

Do I lay down my life for my friends? Jesus "made Himself of no reputation." (Phil. 2:7) If I love as Jesus loved, all questions concerning my reputation will be dis-qualified. This love makes me willing to sacrifice reputation for the welfare of my friends. Jesus associated with publicans and sinners, which was certainly against His reputation. When the Pharisees and Sadducees, who thought themselves to be above association with such people, accused Him, He did not cease His attention to them. Even in the house of a Pharisee He gave words of comfort to a woman, who was a sinner, in the midst of a flood of accusations. He made it plain that

He came to save those who were least esteemed among men. God chose the foolish, the weak, the base, and the least as objects of His love. He "took upon Him the form of a servant". I will take a servant's place when I am motivated by that love — even to washing the feet of my friends. I will be found doing the things that servants do for the welfare of my friends. I shall never forget the lasting impression that I experienced when a highly refined lady stooped low enough to shine my shoes. Jesus "humbled Himself" to perform many services to the poor, the halt, the maimed, and the blind. He administered to those who were in prison. Am I too good to visit a prison? Am I willing to lay down my life for the less-fortunate?

I have visited in homes for the poor. My heart has burned within me as I have listened at the experiences of those who have sacrificed their own personal ambitions in order to provide a real home for the poor, the diseased, and the aged. I have lamented my own carelessness while observing the untiring acts of servitude of those who have used all their savings to provide food, clothing, and shelter for the helpless. They have not only laid down their financial security for the less-fortunate, but they have, also, laid aside their occupations and professions in order that they may serve with their hands. They lay down their lives for their friends. Jesus "became obedient unto death."

Those who love will risk their own lives for their friends. There have been those who have died in the attempt to rescue others. Many have gone through flames of fire to keep others from burning to death. Some have run into the path of vehicles to snatch loved ones from their pathway. Some have plunged into dangerous currents of water in attempt to save from drowning. Some have died in battle in order that their loved ones might enjoy freedom. Those who are filled with such devotions will not stand idly by and allow loved ones to be the subject of ridicule. Love flies into action without awaiting decision based upon reason. Good reasoning and sound logic is disregarded when perfect love abounds. When this love is prevalent you will not wait to consider what people will think of your actions. You will not take time to discourse at length upon how much you love before acting. Talking about love and love in action are two different things. You may proclaim from the mouth your great love for others, yet, you prove by your actions that it comes only from the mouth and does not originate in the heart. I have more confidence in the ones who act it out, and is quiet, than I have in ones who uses up his time in talking about it.

You have heard it said, "Love is blind". Actions prompted by love may be rightly considered to be unreasonable, illogical, and unintelligent. They may be considered foolish when measured by the rule of natural reasoning. Did you ever do anything for anyone when afterwards you wondered why you did it? Then, after meditating for a long time, you came to the conclusion that the act was foolish and unintelligent. You pondered the puzzling question, Why did I do it? I am persuaded that it was love, over which you had no control, which prompted you to perform this act for your friend. Can you control love to the extent that you can give it to whom you decide upon after much reasoning? Can you control it to the extent that you can withdraw it from anyone, or ones, that you naturally decide to be to your best interest? Anyone having this idea of love knows nothing of the Love of God. This love controls you. You cannot give or withdraw upon volition of the natural will based upon logic and reason. If you have been born of God you love those who are begotten of Him. He is the one Who determines the objects of your love. You can truthfully say about many persons, I love them, but, I cannot explain why.

This love is strong enough to include your enemies in your embrace even

though they despitefully use you. You pray for them while they are cursing you. It is certainly unreasonable to render good for evil. Love alone could be responsible. Jesus said, "Love your enemies". He could not have meant for you to love them whom you hate. This would be a contradiction and an impossibility. The meaning of this command is that you love those who hate you. Can their be room for hatred in the heart possessed with God's love? If you only love those who love you, your love is no greater than the love the world has. Why? Because the world loves its own. Do you do good only to those who do good to you? Do you speak kindly of those who speak well of you? If your answer is, Yes, to these questions, your love is not the fruit of the Spirit of God. Do you speak evil of those who speak evil of you? Do you attempt to retaliate by severely criticizing the ones who criticize you? If this be your condition there is no evidence of godly love. God said through His inspired writings, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." The Lord does not put vengeance in the hearts of His people to administer to those who deserve it.

The commandment of Love is strong enough to hold up all the law and prophets. Jesus said, "Upon these two commandments hang all the law and prophets". The first commandment was to love God. The second was like the first, "Love thy neighbor as thyself". Then, "Love is the fulfilling of the law". When you love, His commandments are not grievous. Jesus said, "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments". The person who complains of having to make such great sacrifice in order to keep the commandments of Jesus, proves by his complaints that he knows nothing of godly love. Love is the quintessence of all points of the law and prophecy. Love does not teach you to violate, nor lightly consider, any point of the law of God. It rather provides the desire to walk in His statutes. The Ten Commandments, which are negative commandments, are based on the principle of love. Anyone having the love of God in his heart could only desire to keep them all.

The Love of God is so pure that it makes manifest the vanity of pridish natural reasoning. Pride is one idol of the heart that requires godly love to make it manifest to the person who tries to hold on to pride. When it is made manifest, you pray God to "tear it" from my heart. Do you fall back into the rut of inactivity because people censor your actions? I have complained of being illy treated and have tried out for sympathy. I have been hurt and have given vent to my feelings by sitting down and pouting as Jonah did. It took pure love to teach me that all of this was hurt pride. I may cry out that I am forced into the, "rut of sitting on the 'stool of do-nothing', in order to please some of my friends". This is a cry from pride because I was criticized for doing something when I thought they ought to praise me for it. Love has branded my pride as vain. I am thankful to God's love for this lesson. Now, I can rejoice and be exceeding glad when men revile me, persecute me, and say all manner of evil against me falsely. These revilings, persecutions, and false accusations were experienced by the prophets, Jesus Christ, and His disciples. His followers are experiencing them today. If my actions are prompted by love, then, my persecutors are falsely accusing me. If these accusations be false, they can do me no harm; but, rather work for the success of my endeavors for good. If I do things in order to be persecuted I am asking for revilings. Such actions deserve persecutions, and accusations against me could not be considered as false accusations.

Love will not permit us to sit on the "stool of do-nothing". It spurs us on to action in the face of persecutions, revilings, and false accusations. It causes us to do good unto all men, especially the Household of Faith. It will cause us to walk humbly before one

another. Love teaches us to strive for peace. It will cause us to work for the uniting of those of like precious faith. It dispels the idea of setting up bars of non-fellowship because of some trivial difference in opinion or expression. It causes us to look for the good instead of the evil in our neighbors. It enables us to count our blessings instead of thinking upon the things that tend to be against us. Those possessed of the love of God do not have time for whisperings, backbiting, slandering, tale-bearing, and fault-finding. Love prompts positive thinking, talking, and acting for the good and peaceful welfare of Zion and all of its inhabitants. May this love enable us to think upon the true, the honest, the just, the pure, the lovely, things of good report, and also virtue and praise. (Phil. 4:8) May we talk about His wonderful goodness to the children of men. May we converse upon the good characteristics of our associates. If we fail to find something good to say about a person, say nothing. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law". (Romans 13-10) "Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law". (Romans 13-8) May the Lord enable us to try the spirits by the rule, "EVERYONE THAT LOVETH IS BORN OF GOD."

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE GOD, MAN, AND MEDIATOR

"For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.)

In answer to repeated inquiries of brethren who seem to be searching after truth, but without intending to set up our views as a standard of orthodoxy for others, any farther than they may find them in the scriptures of unerring truth, we will offer a few remarks on the text at the head of this article.

We understand the apostle in our text to declare that there is one God, Man, and Mediator in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ; no less, nor any more; and in this declaration Paul is sustained by many other portions of the word of God. But, perhaps in no other portion is the divine mystery more clearly presented in so few words.

First. THERE IS ONE GOD. That this declaration is strictly true, whether applied to Father, son, or Holy Ghost, or to Father, Son and Holy Ghost, we do most solemnly and sincerely believe. But that it is a true and faithful testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ, is what we design more particularly to show. Not that we know or have known any Old School Baptist ever to have denied the position; but rather because the theme is so grand and heavenly, that no saint can fail to feel a vital interest in it. When we declare our faith, that there is **one God** in Christ, we mean **a whole**, undivided and undivisible God; all the fullness of the Godhead embodied; that there is not an attribute or perfection of the eternal deity that does not belong to Christ.

Nor can we conceive, in the absence of any of the essential attributes of the eternal Godhead, how we could either worship him or rely on him for eternal salvation without involving the guilt of idolatry. The scriptures affirm of him, that "God was manifested in the flesh," —That, "In him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,"—That "He is before all things, and by him all things consist." "He is in the Father, and the Father is in him." "He and his Father are one." We no more believe that his Godhead is derived from the Father or Holy Ghost, than we do that the Godhead of the Father and Holy Ghost was derived from his; hence we reject the Arian notion that he is a begotten God; or that he is in any way whatever a dependent God, either for his being, attributes or perfections. To say that his

Godhead is an emanation, creation or derivation, is with us, equivolent to a denial that he is the "True God, and Eternal Life;" for if he be not the **true** God, it must follow that he is either a **false** God, or no God at all. And if he is Eternal Life, he must have eternally existed; and if it be admitted that his existence is eternal, it cannot be denied that he is self-existent, independent and from everlasting.

Second. HE IS ALSO THE MAN CHRIST JESUS. We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ in his incarnation, became as perfectly man, as in his Godhead, he is, and eternally was God. Of the pre-existence of his humanity to that of his advent into our world, we know nothing. We have found nothing in the divine record to convince us that his humanity existed until "he became" (by assumption) "flesh, and dwelt among us." We have read, that "His children being partakers of flesh and blood, **he also himself** took part of the same;" that is, the same flesh and blood that his children had partaken of prior to his incarnation. That "He was made of a woman; made under the law, that he might redeem them that were (not **are**) under the law." That "He took on him not the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham."

And if we be Christ's, then are we the children of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise. Of his humanity, he had a body which was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary, brought forth as a babe in Bethlehem, which grew up to manhood, was susceptable of the feelings of our infirmities, sufferings, sorrows and death—that, so far as his humanity was concerned, he was made in all points like his brethren. In this body he was born, lived, died on the cross, was buried, arose from the dead on the third day, and afterwards ascended up into heaven. And in that identical body was seen of Paul, as one born out of due time; and by John on Patmos, as the very individual that was once dead, "but behold I live forever more, Amen, And I have the keys of hell and death."

Third. We hold that he is, and was, and is to be, the only Mediator between God and men. And that his Mediatorial existence was before there were any fountains abounding with water—before the habitable parts of the earth were made, or the mountains were brought forth; even from everlasting. As Mediator we believe that he existed from everlasting in equal union with the Godhead and the church, and in support of this sentiment we have his own words, most solemnly uttered, **John** xvii. 21, 22, and 23. Our text declares the existence of "One Mediator between God and men," even as it declares the unity and identity of the Godhead. One God, and one Mediator. Without a Mediator between, we can conceive of no connecting link between God and any of the creatures he has made. So inconceivably great must be the disparity between God and men, that there can be no way of access to God, but through a Mediator; and a Mediator must necessarily imply two parties between which he mediates, and our text declares the parties, namely, "God and men."

To represent them both as the central point of union, it behooved him to be made of a woman, for being perfectly God before, he, to duly represent that nature in which his people had sinned, was made under the law which they had transgressed. "His children being partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." Thus as fully identifying himself with men, as he was before fully identified with the Godhead. But from the text last quoted it will be seen that the flesh and blood in the present composition of his children, no more constituted them his children, than his incarnation constituted him the Mediator. His children existed in him as his children, before they partook of flesh and blood, or else he could not **also likewise**, or in like manner, have partaken of the same flesh and blood which they had previously partaken of; that is, previous-

ly to his incarnation.

As a Mediator he existed as early as Job's day, or else Job was mistaken when he said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." If he lived at that day, he certainly existed, and that was more than fifteen hundred years before his incarnation. And if he lived as a Redeemer, or Mediator between God and men fifteen hundred years before his advent to the world, where is the difficulty in conceiving that he filled the Mediatorial office or character at the date of the creation of the world, and as the scriptures represent, before the foundation of the world? That redemption is ascribed to him as the Redeemer, involves his mediatorial character, for it was "to redeem us," (men) "unto God." But in the absence of his Mediatorial existence before the world began, can any mortal tell how the church was saved and called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began?

Do we find it recorded in the scriptures, and do we actually believe that the church was chosen **in Christ Jesus** before the foundation of the world, and predestinated to the adoption of children, and made accepted in the Beloved, and that we received an inheritance **in him**, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will? Can we read and believe this, and yet disbelieve that the Mediator between God and men existed until Christ came in the flesh? Does the name Christ signify **the Anointed of the Father?** and the name Jesus signify **the Savior of his people?** and can it be supposed that he existed as the Anointed, and the Savior, before his mediatorial existence? If these characters do not belong to his Mediatorial existence, in what does his Mediatorial character consist? And yet the express testimony of the scriptures affirm, that the purpose and grace of God, including the salvation and holy calling of the saints was given to the saints, in Christ Jesus, before the world began.

And we are farther instructed, by the same unquestionable authority, that **spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, were given us according as He** (God) **hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.** By this testimony we know that no spiritual blessing was, or ever will be given to men, only as they were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began. If, then, neither Christ Jesus, nor his people in him existed before the foundation of the world, no spiritual blessings ever have or ever will be given to men. But, we are told, He existed as God; very true. This we most sincerely believe; but did he not also exist as Mediator between God and men? Or, is it understood, that God blessed us in God, and that God chose his people in himself, without any reference to a Mediator?

For a thousand worlds we would not utter a sentiment conflicting with the doctrine that Christ is God; but what we wish to contend for, is, that he is also as really "The Mediator between God and men." If we are mistaken in this view, where shall we look for that covenant which is ordered in all things and sure? Who is God's "Chosen," with whom God says he has made that covenant? Where is that man of his right hand, whom God has made strong for himself, and on whom the inspired Psalmist prayed God to look? In whose name was the whole family in heaven and earth named? And how was the New Covenant of grace and salvation ordained in the hand of a Mediator, if no Mediator existed before the world began? Will it be contended that God, in his own Godhead, was the Mediator between himself and men? If so, how are we to account for the language of our text, at the head of this article?

However this subject may appear to those who are more enlightened than ourself, with our limited conception of divine things, it does certainly appear that the Mediatorial existence of Christ

embraces the existence of all the election of grace; so that when God said, "Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth," he spake of Christ as his Anointed, and of all the church in him, as God's elect; who, viewed in Christ, are the delight of the Father. We admit that the term, **servant,** had reference to his revelation in the flesh, when he should come to do the will of him that sent him, and to finish the work; but we cannot view Christ in any sense as the **elect,** separately considered from his people; for we are expressly informed that they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world; so that the terms, **mine elect,** embrace the Head and body of him whom God has given to be the Head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fullness of him who filleth all in all.

Fourth. This divine Mediator **gave himself a ransom for all.** All of whom, or of what? If for all that have sinned, then all men, and all devils are ransomed; and we are assured that the **ransomed** of the Lord shall return and come with singing and everlasting joy unto Zion. But this cannot be, for the scriptures positively teach us that wicked men and devils shall be otherwise disposed of, and where the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever. Yet it is clear that in giving himself a ransom Christ had a specific object in view. He "gave himself a ransom for many." And although he has withheld from us the exact number of persons redeemed from the earth they shall be testified in due time. That is, as we understand our text, all for whom he gave himself a ransom, shall be identified, by the unquestionable testimony of the Holy Spirit, who, in due time, (or at the appointed time) shall quicken, regenerate, and seal them with the Holy Spirit of promise.

But for this **sealing,** or testimony, by which all the residue of the members of Christ's body shall be finally identified, we must wait until **due time,** and we may rest assured that as soon as the time appointed of the Father arrives, or falls due, according to the eternal purpose, the Holy Ghost will search them out, and make them manifest as the ransomed of the Lord, with such demonstrative testimony as shall be convincing and unanswerable. May it be the happy lot of the writer and readers of this article, to stand identified with the ransomed of the Lord, when the Spirit's testimony shall have sealed all the heirs of immortality, and when the Great God, our Savior, shall descend from heaven with a shout, may we be found among them who shall rise first, and meet him in the air. And when the Son of God shall deliver up the kingdom unto God, even the Father, may be found in him, not having our own righteousness, and in full chorus swell the loud notes of that immortal anthem of praise unto God and the Lamb, which shall be the untiring and interminable employment of all the ransomed of the Lord in a world without end.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, November 1, 1851.)

MINUTES OF ORDINATION AT RIVERVIEW CHURCH

In response to request by this Church a presbytery assembled at Bassett, Va. Jan. 25, 1958 to look into the qualifications of Brother Seth Hollandsworth and ordain to the office of Deacon if found qualified. The Presbytery was composed of Elders O. K. Tench, William Holland and P. E. Ingram, together with the Ministers of Riverview Church. They were Elders C. E. Turner, Jim Hollandsworth, P. C. Turner and Leonard Brammer. Elder J. T. Turner of the Smith River Ass'n was also present.

Deacons present were P. G. Divers, E. V. Poff, W. H. Simmons, H. T. Dudley, T. O. Minter, R. P. Maxey, L. C. Hunt, H. C. Brown, D. L. Simpson, R. C. Dalton, L. R. Willis, Perry Stone, Bobby Bernard, Sylvanus Carter, Rufas Stone, Chester Hagood, R. L. Wright, N. G. Brammer, T. R. Plybon and Jamie Cooper.

Deacon N. G. Brammer was selected as Spokesman for the Church; Elder C. T. Turner, Moderator, and Elder P. E. Ingram, Clerk. The Moderator began the deliberations by ask-

ing divine guidance in prayer. Elder Tench read instructions from 3rd Chapter of 1st Timothy concerning the qualifications of Deacons. Questioning of both the Spokesman and the Candidate were led by Elders Tench and Brammer. All questions being answered favorably, the candidate was requested to relate some of his experience and desires to be a servant to the Church. He responded by speaking beautifully on his dreams and visions.

The Presbytery being satisfied, a motion by Elder Tench, seconded by Elder Brammer to proceed with the Ordination, was unanimously carried.

While the hands of the Presbytery were on the kneeling candidate, Elder William Holland offered the Ordination Prayer. Elder Jim Hollandsworth delivered the Charge; and Brother Seth Hollandsworth was delivered back to the Church an ordained Deacon.

The Minutes were read and approved; followed by prayer.

Elder C. E. Turner, Moderator
Elder P. E. Ingram, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It has pleased God to take from our midst, since the last meeting of the Salisbury Association, our beloved brother, Elder Arnold H. Bellows, who visited us many times, preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ to our comfort and edification; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we humbly bow to the will of God, and desire to be reconciled to his holy will; be it further

That we extend our sympathy to Sister Florence Beebe Bellows, and that a copy of these resolutions be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of the Association in session with Indiantown Church, October 23, 24, 1957.

(Elder) D. V. Spangler, Mod.
Maude T. Laws, Clerk
Wm. S. Adkins, Asst. Clerk
Handy B. Truitt, Asst. Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, Since we last met the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association has lost four members, to-wit:

Deacon Ananias Hastings, of Little Creek
Sister Laura Callaway, of Salisbury
Brother Charles M. Littleton, of Snow Hill
Sister Iona Truitt, of Snow Hill

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to our gracious Heavenly Father's will, desiring to be reconciled to the loss of very precious members from our midst; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Salisbury Association extend its sympathy to the bereaved families; and may the grace of God enable them to look to Jesus for comfort in their hour of need, and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That we send a copy of these Resolutions to the **Signs of the Times** for publication; and a copy made for our minutes.

Done by order of the Association in session with the Indiantown Church, October 23, 24, 1957.

(Elder) D. V. Spangler, Mod.
Maude T. Laws, Clerk
Wm. Adkins, Asst. Clerk
Handy B. Truitt, Asst. Clerk

OBITUARIES

MARTHA J. MYERS DEAN

Sister Martha J. Myers Dean passed away November 10, 1957, at the age of ninty-three, at her daughter's home in Trenton, N. J., where she had been living for several years.

Surviving are a daughter, Miss Anne Dean, of Trenton; five sons: Harry F., Trenton, N. J.; Joward A., Atlantic City, N. J.; Samuel E., Flemington, N. J.; Charles L., Belvedere, N. J.; and John K., Harrington, Delaware; together with nine grandchildren, and eleven great grandchildren.

Sister Dean was baptized June 7, 1885, at Welsh Tract Church into the membership of the Salem Old School Baptist Church in Philadelphia, by the later Elder Joseph L. Staton. She remained a true and faithful member for over seventy-two years — until the Lord was pleased to take her home. She attended her church regularly until the last two years of her life. She was strong in the doctrine, and was a great inspiration for those who visited her. Toward the last she was totally blind, but her vision of heavenly things was so great that all who knew her realized a great pleasure in many conversations they had with her. At her passing, many were made sad; nevertheless we desire to say, "Thy will be done."

Funeral service was held in the Holcomb Funeral Home, Flemington, N. J., by the writer; and interment was in Rosemont Cemetery.

(Elder) H. M. Bennett

MARCUS S. SMITH

Marcus S. Smith, of Hartford, Alabama, died suddenly Sunday December 29, 1957. He was a native of Newton, Alabama, and had a large circle of friends. He was most active in educational life, and was a firm believer in Christ.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Mary J. Smith; two sons, Jack and Jerry P.; one daughter, Mrs. Lorene McLamy, of Crestview, Florida; three brothers, Alvin, Sumpter and Marlin; one sister, Mrs. Eula Raines; and five grandchildren.

He held an important position with the Houston Hotel in Dothan, Alabama, and was active in civic affairs. Funeral services were conducted at Hartford Methodist Church December 30th, by Elder J. J. Collins, and the pastor Mr. J. S. Lock. Interment was in Hartford City Cemetery.

(Elder) J. J. Collins

MOLLIE MAE BOYER

Sister Mollie Mae Boyer passed away November 4, 1957, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Edwin Roach, Georgetown, Delaware. She was the daughter of John H. and Sena Rector Hackler, and was born August 13, 1881.

Sister Boyer leaves two children by a former marriage to mourn her passing: Earl F. Chafin, Philadelphia, Pa., and Mrs. Inez Chafin Roach, Georgetown, Delaware; also five grandchildren, and five great grandchilren. At an early age she lived near Roanoke, Virginia. She united with the Salem Old School Baptist Church, of Philadelphia, and was baptized October 13, 1956, at Hopewell, N. J., by the late Elder C. W. Vaughn, the pastor.

She was loved for the truth's sake by all who knew her, and was firm in the doctrine of salvation by grace; and her faithfulness in her love for the church and brethren was well manifested.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer in the funeral home at Georgetown, and interment was in a burying ground nearby.

(Elder) H. M. Bennett

INDIA ROWLAND JARMON

In precious memory of our beloved Sister, India Rowland Jarmon, who departed this life February 24, 1957, after several years of lingering illness. She was born December, 1874, in Liberty Grove, Maryland, the daughter of William Hopkins Rowland and Sarah Margery Hanna, who were members of Rock Springs Primitive Baptist Church, Lancaster County, Pa. Her maiden sister Cassandra, and brother, Doctor William Rowland, preceded her in death.

Having experienced a work of grace by the Holy Spirit revealing unto her Jesus Christ as the way of her soul's salvation, and with it a desire to confess before the world, according to the Holy scriptures, her faith and hope in Jesus as her Saviour, she went before the Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church of Baltimore, Md., asking for baptism and membership. She was joyously received and baptized on Sunday, June 13, 1909, by Elder Joshua T. Rowe.

On November 25, 1912, she was united in marriage to William Jarmon, son of George Warner Jarmon and Sarah Ann Brittingham, near Berlin, Md., who were members of Primitive Baptist Church at Indiantown, Md. To this union was born one daughter, Sarah Margery Jarmon.

Soon after her marriage, Sister India requested a letter of dismissal from Ebenezer Church, for membership in the Wilmington Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by unanimous vote, and remained a true and worthy member until death. Sister India was one of deep conviction in the doctrine of predestination, election, and salvation by grace. She was a sweet singer, having a voice that gave melody rarely exceeded. Her judgments in matters pertaining to the order and discipline of the Church was always sound and reliable. When storm clouds overshadowed, as well as when sunshine prevailed, Sister India stood steadfast with the church to defend and protect her from all evil.

She fell victim to the dreaded disease of cancer quite a few years ago, which required removal of one breast. After a few years, it became necessary for a return to the hospital for more treatments. Slowly but steadily her strength was sapped from her robust physical body for some five years, until she was reduced to a mere skeleton. In all her suffering and failing health, Sister India did not murmur or complain at her lot, but accepted it as being the will of her Heavenly Father, and in a Christ-like manner reconciled herself to endure it, "being a partaker of Christ's suffering, that when His glory shall be revealed, she might be glad also with exceeding joy".

On February 24, 1957, the death angel came to call her spirit home and relieve her physical body of all its suffering. The funeral service was held in the church house, 1304 Jefferson Street, Wilmington, Delaware, conducted by her pastor (and writer of this sketch) concerning one who merited the love and fellowship of all Primitive Baptists, and who died in the faith of a crucified and risen

Saviour. Interment was in West Nottingham Cemetery, Md., only a few miles from her birthplace. May the God of love console and comfort the dear husband and daughter left to mourn their great loss, and all other kindred and friends who share with them this sorrow, we pray in Jesus' name and for his sake.

(Elder) Cyrus E. Benson

ANANIAS HASTINGS

Brother Ananias Hastings was born in May, 1868, and died October 13, 1957; aged 89 years. He was married to Miss Nora E. Hearn, of Salisbury, Md., February 17, 1892; and they were the parents of four children: Elijah W. Hastings, Richmond, Va., Lester F. Hastings, Gunboro, Del., Blanche E. Wallace, Philadelphia, Pa., and Howard B. Hastings, Upland, California. Left also to mourn his passing are eight grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

He lived in Gunboro Hundred for sixty-six years. He and his first wife were members of the Smith Mills Old School Baptist Church, being baptized the same day by the late Elder A. B. Francis. He was a devoted member, always filling his seat unless providentially hindered, and served the church as Clerk for nine years. He was a member for sixty-two years.

His first wife, Nora E. Hastings, passed away March 6, 1933; and in August, 1934, he married Miss Nannie Grace Holloway, of Salisbury, Md. He then moved from his farm in Delaware to live near Salisbury, Md. Sister Grace Hastings departed this life February 3, 1956. She was a member of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church. She and her husband were very faithful in attending church services as long as her health would allow.

Brother Hastings has been missed very much by all of us; nevertheless we hope to be reconciled to God's will in taking him to his eternal home. Funeral services were conducted by the writer, and interment was in Smith's Mill Cemetery.

(Elder) H. M. Bennett

MRS. ANNIE TURNER NEBLETT

Sister Annie Turner Neblett, widow of Thomas E. Neblett, died January 10, 1958, at the age of ninty-one, after a brief illness. She was a daughter of the late Joseph B. and Caroline Ringo Turner, who were early settlers of Turner's Station. She was the youngest of thirteen children. After the death of her husband in 1942, Sister Neblett lived with her daughter, Mrs. Mary Watkins, of Smithfield, until two years ago, when she lived at the Castle Hotel. Surviving are, one son, W. O. Neblett, Waddy, Kentucky; and one daughter, Mary Caroline Watkins, Smithfield, Kentucky; and nine grandchildren.

Our sister received a hope early in life, and was baptized into the fellowship of the Bethel Predestinarian Baptist Church, near Shelbyville; then came to Cane Run Church by letter, where she remained about ten years. Then with the other members of Cane Run she joined the Sulphur Fork Church. She truly was a pillar of the church, and attended regularly until old age and delicate health prevented.

I especially will miss her, for we knew each other well. We lived neighbors for many years, and I was her pastor for over thirty years. We all mourn for her but we do not wish her back. Soon many of us will hear the summons, and bid adieu to this world of sin and trouble, hoping for the home which Jesus has prepared for us.

Her body was taken to the Ricket's Funeral home, where services were held by two local ministers. She was laid to rest in the Cemetery at Smithfield beside her husband, to await the call of the Master in the Resurrection. May the good Lord reconcile all of us; and may peace reign with all the family, and the brothers and sisters who survive.

(Elder) George L. Weaver

MARTHA S. HAWK

Martha S. Hawk, our sister in Christ, was born February 20, 1863, and passed from this life January 14, 1958; making her stay on earth almost ninty-five years. She was the second daughter of M. V. and Sally Ann Dykes, of Grundy County, Tenn. She came to Texas at the age of twenty, where she was married to Wm. L. Hawk, at San Marcos, July 7, 1886.

She and her husband united with the Old School Baptists over sixty-three years ago, and by the grace of God adorned their profession by a godly walk and conversation to the end of their journey. Brother Hawk was called home forty-five years ago. "Aunt Mattie", as she was affectionately called, is survived by the following children: Mrs. M. J. Culpepper, Mrs. V. O. Hatcher, Joe Hawk, J. M. Hawk, H. V. Hawk, Mrs. C. M. Jones, Mrs. Wm. Milligan, and Mrs. Ed. Roberson. Also by one brother, J. M. Dykes; eighteen grandchildren; forty-five great grandchildren; and six great great grandchildren. She made her home with her daughter, Mrs. Ed. Roberson, for many years.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder E. B. Ault, her pastor, assisted by Elder H. L. Ballard, and Brother Gerald Shipman; and

interment was at Stockdale, Texas.

BE IT RESOLVED, That Mt. Olive Church has lost a loved and faithful member; and that we bow in humble submission to our Father's will. We feel that our temporary loss is her everlasting gain; and

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be spread on our church book; and a copy to each of the children; and also a copy to each of the children; and also a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

The adove adopted by Mt. Olive Church February 16, 1958.

Elder E. B. Ault, Pastor

SISTER HAZEL A. KOEHLER

Sister Hazel A. Koehler suddenly departed this life on January 13th, 1958, at her late home in Duart, Ontario.

She was a daughter of Eber and Annie (Gillies) Jeffords and was born May 12th, 1892.

On January 7th, 1914, she was united in marriage to Louis C. Koehler and they were blessed with a daughter, Marion (Mrs. Ernest Guyitt) and a son, Ernest A. Koehler. These, with their father and four grandsons, remain to mourn their loss.

Sister Koehler, like many of the Lord's dear children, had lived without any desire for better things, until the Lord brought her into great trouble of mind. It was then that she began to attend the Covenanted Baptist meeting, humbly seeking and longing for comfort, for she felt that those who met there were the Lord's people. The dear Lord saw fit to deliver her from her burden and among the Scriptures which were given to her were the words in Job 23:6. "Will he plead against me with his great power? No; but he would put strength in me." In the strength he gave her, she came before the church with an experience of grace and she was joyfully received by her brethren as a candidate for baptism. She was baptized by the writer at Tyrconnell, Ontario, on June 8th, 1930.

It was her delight to entertain her brethren and friends in her home, in which she was kindly assisted by her husband and family. Although her health had failed in recent years she was always in her place in meeting when well enough, and sometimes when she was hardly fit. We shall sorely miss her, as will also her dear family. Only God can reconcile them to his sovereign will. Owing to her pastor's illness, Elder J. P. Helms of Vinton, Virginia, kindly came to officiate at her funeral, for which we were very thankful, as he had for years been a welcome visitor in their home. He spoke very comfortingly from Romans 8:28. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Interment was in Duart Cemetery.

"The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

George Ruston

MISS REBECCA LEWIS

The subject of this notice, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Lewis, of Tyler, Texas, was born September 13, 1941; and passed away June 9, 1957, making her brief stay upon earth a little less than sixteen years.

This charming young girl met with a fatal automobile accident at Athens, Texas. She is survived by her parents; two sisters: Penny Jo, and Linda; and one brother, John. Her maternal grandmother is yet living, and also her maternal great grandparents, Elder and Mrs. S. C. Davenport, of Miniola, Texas. All were made sad indeed at her sudden removal from them. The writer, however, trusts (as he has some good reasons to hope) that she has gone from the evil to come; that her spirit now is resting in the paradise of God, awaiting the coming to earth of her blessed Redeemer and Saviour, to quicken her body, together with all the bodies of God's chosen people, out of a state of death into a state of life eternal, and blessed immortality. What a wondrous, joyous, and blessed hope is this!

Rebecca, from what I am told, was an unusual young person. She was blessed with a mind toward heavenly things; it being observed that she had shown no little interest in Old Baptist meetings on several occasions. The Lord doubtless saw fit to endow her with a deep, penetrating mind, with observation that was quite above the average for her age. It is sad indeed to have to give up our precious off-spring, but we feel sure, dear ones, that God both knows and does at all times that which is best. Bless his Holy Name!

Funeral service was conducted by Mr. Shuttleworth at Tyler, Texas; and interment was in the cemetery at Miniola, Texas. This has been written at the request of the deceased's mother; and the writer wishes her dear parents, her brother and sisters, and other loved ones, to know that his heart is with them in the deepest bonds of sympathy and tender feelings; and prays for the mercies of God to be with them all.

(Elder) John Lee Smith

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 126 DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1958 NO. 5

THE ADVENT OF CHRIST

Lord of all lords and King of Kings
What wondrous love is thine;
Of all the songs that angel sings
No theme is more divine.

From heaven's high courts where all is bliss
Thou did'st to earth come down;
And came to such a world as this
To wear a thorny crown.

Here righteousness and mercy meet,
Here hope and peace are found;
Unloose the shoes from off thy feet
For this is holy ground.

Lift up your heads, ye men of earth,
Explore love's boundless sea;
Eternity its hour of birth.
Its limit deity.

O. J. Aston
(England)

BE STILL
(Psalm 46:10)

God is our refuge and our shield,
Our armour on the battlefield;
The universe He does control,
Be still, my restless, anxious soul.

Though hills depart and mountains fall,
Though threatening storms thy heart appal,
Though hope may die, and comforts fail,
Be still; for faith shall yet prevail.

Should deep to deep relentless cry,
On Him whom waves obey rely;
Should fire consume, and fears increase,
Be still; for He shall be your peace.

Let sun be darkened and the way
Be hid — it leads to cloudless day;
Jesus Himself the path has trod,
Be still; and know that He is God.

O. J. Aston
(England)

Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Elder Wood:

It is a little past time to renew our subscription to the Signs; and how thankful I do feel for the truth and doctrine set forth in this best of all papers. It has been such good reading lately; or maybe I have just been blessed with a mind to enjoy it. I am sure it is good reading at all times.

Brother Griffin had such a wonderful editorial in the January paper; and yours in the February was also wonderful. It is such a gift to be able to reason and explain what the Scriptures teach, so that one so weak and ignorant as I can feel and understand, and see beauty and comfort in them. For, Oh, so many times, I read without understanding, and find so much condemnation in them; and there seems to be no beauty nor comfort for me. Yet they are there — always the same scriptures.

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." Often I think: If I were in Christ Jesus, then would I walk after the Spirit, and not after the flesh; and if I were walking after the Spirit, these words of the Apostle Paul would apply to me, and comfort me.

Sometimes I keep right on reading — I read and read as though I think I may find something that will make my heart glad, or see that they do not condemn me. Other times I just close the book, and groan in sadness of heart: desiring to read, desiring the things of the Spirit, but they are gone. Then comes the awful question: "Did I ever have the Spirit?" It is something so mysterious: I never knew how to obtain it; and if I did, (and my hope is that I did), then I don't know how to retain it.

But I am glad to believe that it makes no difference whether we are pleased with our walk, or our ways; or have little or much understanding, if He has ever given us of his Spirit, then we will

receive everything we need in this life, be it little or much. If we need knowledge, we will receive it; if not, we won't. If He has given us Christ, then has He not given us all things that pertain to life and godliness?

I often wonder why I complain, and wish I could know and understand more: If He has given me a blessed hope, it is far more than I deserve; and that hope is everything I need, for it is Jesus.

Brother Wood, we enjoyed the account of your visiting among the Baptists in many states; and we remember your visit here with pleasure. Your text in the 4th chapter of Galatians, concerning "the heir", I think I will always remember. I read it several times afterwards. We hope you all come this way again.

It is wonderful to have such gifts sent our way: Elder Biggs from Nashville, and Elder Darnall from Cadiz, Ky., were here the second Saturday and Sunday in January; and how good it was to hear their words. They were glad tidings of great joy. One of them spoke from the third chapter of Ephesians, and the fellowship of the mystery. And isn't the fellowship of each other also a mystery? Such a blessing: the love and fellowship God's children have for each other.

We had such a good visit from Brother Griffin and Sister Griffin in the Spring. We will never forget the good talk in our home while they were here. And he was so gracious and kind to write us; and we feel that he was lifted up to beautiful heights, and would love to share it with others, if and when you have space . . .

Your sister in Christ, I hope,
Mrs. Lucille Young

Covin, Alabama,
July 17, 1957

Mr. and Mrs. Edward Young,
Memphis, Tenn.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

We have intended to write over since we had the privilege of enjoying the kindness and hospitality of your home and the fellowship extended to us by the little church at Memphis. But procrastination, that arch enemy of the Lord's people, coupled with a busy life, and intermingled with the surging, rolling, smothering waves of this world, have prevented it.

I am sure that it is not for lack of remembrance, as we are often traveling in reminiscence among the saints that we have sojourned with from time to time. What a scene arises to view as we look back among those we have asembled with. Many of the early ones have stepped ahead to that haven of rest where storm clouds never rise; but as we look back at the ones that we have travelled with, it is with fond joy and satisfaction that we view them as one train of followers. As I meet new ones in the family of God, I find myself wishing sometimes that we could all be on a special train traveling to glory, and picking up new ones as we go along. And when I have these thoughts, I wonder if that isn't just the way that it is.

If this is descriptive of our travel, beginning with us it was a lone road. It seems that when God reveals himself to a poor sinner, that he or she does not realize that this has always been the Father's way of dealing with his people, but rather we think that no one has ever been as undone as we. Really, it is the first one to have been dealt with that we know about. We had heard, by the hearing of the ear, that the way of a pilgrim was through much tribulation, but none of it had ever happened to us; and when it did, we thought that none had ever gone over such rough and stormy ground that we were having to traverse. As this is shown to our astonished vision we are made to think that none has ever been here before.

Generally speaking, it is not long until we begin to talk to some one about the way we have come. This is the prevalent way of God in leading us hither and yon among his people. This is our comfort while in this vale of sorrow. What would it be, were we denied the association of the saints? I know that

I am the poorest of all the flock, even if a member of the flock, in expressing my gratitude to our heavenly Father for the wonderful blessing of assemblying together as we do. As we meet together, perhaps for the first time, and begin to go back in retrospection, lo and behold, we find that we all have traveled the same road.

Jesus is at the head of this marching church of God. We are following him. "I give my life for the sheep, and they do follow me," is the word of our Redeemer. I think I know what brethren mean when they say that they do not mind being hailed as the people that sit on the stool-of-do-nothing. But why say that? Our precious Redeemer did not intimate that we do. Why must we adopt as our language, and as our doctrine, **what** the world would put into our mouth and **what** they say is our doctrine? The prophets and the apostles, who were chosen as leaders among the flock, did not talk that way. Why should we? There is a highway, and a way. This highway is to travel on, and Jesus is the Way of our traveling. No matter how good the road may be between Memphis and here, you could never get here unless you had some means of traveling. The same thing is true about that highway. It was as good before I knew it was there as it has been since (as I hope) it has been shown to me. But Jesus is the way, both as to entering it, and traveling home; and I protest most solemnly against **any** doctrine advocated by **any** that we get on the highway by merits of the blood of Jesus and then travel by the merits of our works. This highway stays open all of the time, but I cannot travel without the Pilot directing things.

This highway does not have detours, right and left turns, and absolutely no turnabouts, — no turn tables. It has many places of rest along the way, but the places of rest are in Jesus, and it is he that moves us to sit in the shades of the Rock, to lie in the green pastures, to pause besides the still waters; and it is equally he that says, "Let us go on," for I know that none of these that have ever traveled in this highway have turned back.

This highway is straight in Jesus, but to us it is winding and turning. It has a lot of low places, sometimes a high place, sometimes quick drops, sometimes it seems that we have lost our way; and sometimes we are in doubt as to whether it is the highway we thought it was, but always, ever and always, when we finally emerge into the light again, it is the same precious thoroughfare. It is always upwards, always forward and upward. The thing in the travel that seems to us to be against us (Gen. 42:36) will work around to where everything looks alright. (Gen. 45:28) It, like Jacob's ladder (Gen. 28:12), reaches from earth to heaven and immortal glory. Always going forward and upward (I Kings 6:-8; Ezek. 41:7), knowing that this is not our stay place, this is not our home. This travel is preparatory to glory; this world is the dressing room for the final entry into the heaven of heavens of the Bride of Jesus Christ.

What songs of joy have flown on the heavenly breezes as the children of God have run in this way. They were picked up out of a miry pit, and placed in the way, their goings being established, and the song being placed in their mouths, even praises to his name. As we travel this road we must lay aside the weights and sin that doth so easily hamper our going forward. We may try to carry along a few of the most treasured things of earth and of an arm of flesh, but ere long the voice of our beloved will cause us to count them all as loss that we might win him. As long as we are carrying these weighty (yet worthless) things our concern will be on them. The command is to lay them aside and look to Jesus. Both commands must be obeyed, but not at the same time. The load is first gotten rid of. When the load is gone then the looking begins, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith.

They sang the old song as long as

they could sing it. When the new song is given them they sing about grace. It used to be works, but all of that work and all of that singing never did put a pilgrim on the high way of holiness. Strange as it may seem, when in the old way, singing the old song, they **knew** they were on the glory road, but now having been placed in the new and living way, they often hope against hope that they are on the way home. How strange is the path that a Christian must tread.

We are well aware that:

"A few more rolling suns at most,
Will land us on fair Canaan's coast
And we shall praise him for his grace,
And see our glorious hiding place."

And as we approach the evening of life, the lights of the city show a little clearer. What a wonderful thing it has been, and what joys; and O what fond anticipations await us! Even now, dear children of God, time is constantly enfolding the things of this life and taking them from view. But there is no protest, for heaven is coming a little nearer. The things that one time seemed so important are not now worth retaining; riches of this world are not important anymore, for our time of needing them is so much shorter. As the things we once thought so necessary are being **enfolded** and carried from view, there is a power most glorious to behold that is **unfolding** to our sight things that are not to be revealed — they are only known by he or she that is nearing the portals of rest. As the lights of the city get a little clearer and the things of time a little dimmer, the footsteps hasten towards the last day of dull mortality.

Ah, yes, we are nearing home. A few more days on the toilsome journey and we shall see the King in all his glory. But that is not all. Ah, never, no never. If that were all, I'd have nothing to write to you about. If that were all, I'd never feel any desire to come to Memphis any more. Tears dim my eyes as I sit at the typewriter, but they are caused by joy as my cup runs over at the heavenly prospects in store for the children of God. Not only to see the King in all his glory, but to be like him, to spend eternity in his glorious presence with all of the blood washed throng. There we shall never hunger anymore, never to know the keen anguish of thirst, but to bask in the sunlight of his love forever and forever.

And then we will not long to see each other, and we will not make long visits over the highways of men, but we shall all be together to rejoice in our Saviour's love. As I have typed these words to you, I do trust that I have been getting crumbs and sups at the table of the Lord.

I do not know, as I conclude, whether I have written this letter for your benefit or that this was the Lord's way of giving me a small glimpse into the marvelous love of God. Be that as it may, I felt to write to you.

We would always be delighted to have you people visit us, and when you feel to do so, to write us. When it goes well with you, remember us to the King.

Lois joins me in love and fellowship.

William D. and Lois Griffin

P. S. Do not forget that the time of our association is drawing nigh. It is assigned to our home church, Harmony, and is only about six miles from our home. We are looking forward to seeing a goodly number of the dear saints from Memphis.

It will not be long until the time of the crossing will come, and we will quit this yearly going from place to place. But it is not alarming, it does not throw a damper on our feelings, for if what we preach is so, and it is, it will not be long until we move into an association that will never break up.

I am glad of this. I am glad, as I walk among the city of the dead at times, that they have only gone out ahead of us and that we are coming after them. They have gone home, and we are going home. They have filled the little niche in the time state allotted them; we are filling ours. They have ar-

rived and we will arrive. Their having arrived will not deter our arrival. They have gone to sleep, but it is just a night of rest. We will soon go to sleep also, and it will just be a night to us. We will all awake in his likeness, and there will be no knowledge of a difference in the length of night. May the Lord be praised for his wonderful works to the children of men.

"WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES"

Cadiz, Kentucky

"TEKEL; thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." (Daniel 5:27)

Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Bowden,
Benton, Ky.

Dear Brother and Sister in Christ:

If I had the hand of a ready writer, and the mind of Christ, I would like to go down with you into the deep waters and do business. Your letter, Sister Effie, makes me believe you have been led to do business in deep waters — deeper than I can wade.

Yes, the weights and measures is a wonderful subject. Indeed, I had never had much thought on the subject until I received your letter a few weeks ago; and it has been on my mind ever since. I am afraid to write on it, for I know that unless the Lord God directs my mind, it will be of no comfort to anyone.

Now we know that in the world we have scales to weigh things; and we get the weight from the beam. Without the beam the scales could not, and would not balance. "Tekel; thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." Could the law be the scales, and Christ the beam that gives the answer? By the law we are always found wanting; but when the law is balanced in Christ, the right weight is recorded on the beam (Jesus).

No wonder one of old said, "For the stone shall cry out of the wall (God's power), and the beam out of the timber shall answer it." (Habakkuk 2:11) What is the answer?: Holy Father, "All thine are mine, and mine are thine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world (timber), but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou has given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition: that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

Dear child of God, when you are put on the scales (law) you are always found wanting — the scales will not balance: the only thing you can see is condemnation until your eyes are opened. Then the scales begin to balance and you see the beam clearly, which is Christ Jesus the Lord. And then you can say with Solomon, "A just weight and balance are the Lord's: all the weights of the bag are his work." (Proverbs 16:11) Then Christ Jesus is glorified in you, and his joy is fulfilled in you.

This makes us, if I can be one, want to ascribe the greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are judgements. A God of truth, without iniquity: Just and right is He.

Yes, the stone cried out of the wall. What did it say? "The stone which the builders refused has become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing: it is marvelous in our eyes." (Psalms 18:22) Yes, it is marvelous when the scales balance in Christ; and we hear him say, "I have finished the work which thou has given me to do." What God doeth shall stand forever — nothing is added to it or taken from it; and he doeth it that man may fear before him. "Then cometh the end when

he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him." (1 Cor. 15:24-27)

This is enough, and we can then say with Paul, "who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect." Christ died and rose again: the scale is balanced in Him.

Sister Effie, give our love to the brethren and friends of the Soldier Creek Association. Hope you are much improved by now . . .

As ever, your unworthy servant with a sweet hope.

(Elder) J. N. Darnall

"And it repenteted the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at His heart." (Genesis 6:6)

My attention was drawn to this scripture by one whom I feel is very much exercised in the word of God from the beginning to the end, that is, to find out, and to be comforted with the facts or the truth of salvation by the grace of God. I am sure this is the desire of all the subjects of grace that have had an experience in such. It seems to be a fact, that where there is such an experience, there is a hope established within the being: a hope of salvation by the grace of God. Never before, perhaps, had they ever realized the meaning of the word **grace,** or at least the importance of it.

Right here I want us all to stop and think upon the subject of grace. The first thing we might say while thinking, is that the whole need not a physician. Therefore, if we were whole there would be no reason for thinking about a physician, or his remedies for disease, but if we are attacked with a disease, even in nature, and a doctor administers a remedy for our illness, and it cures, naturally we feel grateful to him. It is possible, and likely probable, that we without such an experience would never have the feeling of faith we have in the doctor.

Now in thinking about our condition in the flesh, as poor sin sick worms of the dust, and having tried every remedy available without any results, if Christ then appears on the scene and says, "My grace is sufficient for thee," then is the word grace a "charming sound, harmonious to the ear, heaven with the echo shall resound and all the saints shall hear." The thought I am trying to present, is that without the sin sick condition we would not know how precious the word grace is. Therefore God, knowing all things before time, and knowing the outcome of everything before it comes to pass, it was that He thought the way of eternal life into existance, just as it has come to pass, that all things should work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called, according to his purpose. They that are called, are called out of darkness into the marvelous light of God, that they should show forth praises unto Him. This is the outcome of the second birth. They that are in the spirit and not in the flesh, praise His name for the works of grace. With all these facts before us, I believe we can say it is good for it to be just as it is; that is, to say the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. "Howbeit, that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." Now we hope we are agreed with God that it is good for us to have things as they are, according to his counsel from the beginning: first of the earth, earthy, then we hope, of the heavenly. Now having our senses exercised, we hope to be able to discern both good and evil, and can say amen to God's ways.

Now as we think of the law having a shadow of good things to come, and

not the very image of them, we can look at the whole book as being a perfect thought of God's before it came out in print, and that there was no mistakes in the making of it that God should be sorry for. Every thought he had fulfilled its purpose. We must not think of the scripture we are using to write about, as setting forth a thought, that God made a mistake in the making of man, because he had turned out to be wicked. The man and everything else God made performed just as he thought he or it would. To my understanding the natural man does not and cannot enter into God's word with a spiritual view or understanding. Therefore, they must try to reason out things by the letter which killeth. We have on record the sickness and death of Lazarus, Mary and Martha's brother. When Jesus asked them where they had lain him, they said unto him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus wept, manifesting a sorrowful or sad feeling, on which occasion he stayed away from them until their brother had died, that the glory of God might be manifested in the raising of Lazarus from the dead. This signifies to me the salvation of dead sinners through Jesus Christ our Lord. Is it not true that we can look back on our subject and see where God brought forth the incident of Lazarus which came to pass in the gospel dispensation, as fulfillment of the shadow? It is true, that Christ as God in the flesh did manifest his love for his people by weeping; thereby signifying he was grieved at his heart. Nevertheless it was for their good and to the glory of God that the Son of God should be glorified thereby.

God signified in the 6th chapter, verse 14 of Genesis, by the building of the ark, the love he had for his people he had made; also carrying out the plan of salvation by the grace of God, which grace Noah found in his eyes. I believe also at the birth of Noah, it was spoken of him as being the one that should comfort them because of the ground which the Lord had cursed. (Genesis 5:29) To me he is a type of Jesus in this day as our Comforter, because of the curse. "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." The result of the law is condemnation, but there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.

As we now think of the subject "And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart," we understand by God's foreknowledge, or as he had thought so it came to pass, that men began to multiply on the face of the earth and saw that the daughters of men were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. Everything worked out just as he thought, or spoke it into existence, that it might work out to this end as having a shadow of good things to come, (which have come to many thus far as we see it). For the good things to come, we refer you to Luke 17:26-30. "And as it was in the days of Noah so shall it be also in the days of the son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed." Which reminds us of the works of God in the day of revelation. Certainly the days of the shadow and the substance must agree that the glory of God is manifested in either day in salvation, by the grace of God.

The word repented means, remembered with sorrow; and as God who is love, and having loved his people whom he had made, it would seem that at the time of their destruction either under the shadow or under grace, there would be a manifestation of sorrow and grief,

even though it was for the good of all his people in every dispensation. Anyway, we find Jesus, who was God manifested in the flesh, weeping at the time of Lazarus's death. And in the subject used we find God in a sorrowful condition and grieved at his heart.

This letter I have written may not be a very plain explanation of the subject used, but I have tried to put my thoughts down on paper concerning it, be what it may. I am trusting that God will at all times direct my mind in the ways of righteousness for his name sake. Amen.

(Elder) H. M. Bennett

Route 2
Farmerville, Louisiana

Dear Children of God,

"My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; the fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise my love, my fair one, and come away." (Solomon's Song 2:10-13)

These are the words of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ speaking to his bride, his church. His church is composed of his children, the elect according to the foreknowledge of Almighty God even before the foundation of the world. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." (Ephesians 1:4-6)

The choice was made by Almighty God, it was not and is not made by man, and was not made according to any good works we have done of our own selves, but it is according to the purpose and grace of God. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain:" (John 15:16) "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." (Romans 9:11) "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it it the gift of God; No of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:-8-10)

Now, back to the text. "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." To me, this text is dealing with the experiences of God's little children. There are seasons of rejoicing and there are seasons of sorrow. There is a winter season and there is a spring season. There is a rainy season and there is a season of sunshine. "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:" (Ecclesiastes 3:1)

"Mixtures of joy and sorrow
I daily do pass through;
Sometimes I'm in a valley,
And sinking down with woe,
Sometimes I am exalted,
On eagles' wings I fly;
I rise above my troubles,
And hope to reach the sky."

Dear Saints of God, can we rise above our troubles and sorrows when we get good and ready? Do we have the power to do that? No, in no wise, no. We can only look to the Lord for deliverance. (Psalm 18:2) When the Lord speaks, it is done; and when the Lord commands, it stands fast. Notice that the words of the text say, "Rise up."

"I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard me cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set

my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God:" (Psalms 40:1-3) Brethren and Sisters, have you experienced this? Have you felt to be sinking in your sorrows and troubles? Have you ever been so cast down, that your strength has failed you, and you felt the end has come for you, and all you can do is beg for mercy from the Lord? Have you cried as David did? — "How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? How long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?" (Psalms 13:1-2) "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?" (Psalms 22:1) "Save me O God: for the waters are come and in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried; mine eyes fail while I wait for my God." (Psalms 69:1-3)

"Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." Come away from what? Come away from your worries, your sorrows and troubles — because "the winter is past, the rain is over and gone." The Lord does not forsake his little children. Christ said, "I will be with you always, even unto the end of the world." "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, **I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.**" (Hebrews 13:5)

Dear ones, you may feel to be in such great darkness that you wonder if you will ever see light again, but the Lord is watching over you, even though you do not feel his presence. "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." (Psalms 139:1-8)

It is through the Love of God that he has drawn his little children from the world, and it is through this love that he always watches over his beloved, his elect; and never forsakes them. There is no love that can compare to the love of God. It is an everlasting love and no man can destroy it. Christ said, "No man can pluck them out of my father's hand." "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." (Jeremiah 31:3) "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed up us, that we should be called the sons of God: (1 John 3:1)

The good shepherd knows his sheep, watches over them, and takes tender care of them. Also, a good husband will provide for his bride and will take tender care of her. Christ said, "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine." (John 10:14) "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." (Isaiah 40:10-11) "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." (Isaiah 41:17-18) — "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be

filled." (Matthew 5:6)

The Lord teaches his people to wait for him. It is through our sufferings, trials, tribulations, etc., that we have been led to wait upon the Lord to deliver us from this valley of afflictions, from the dark and stormy season, or from the rainy and winter season. His children are taught to "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." — "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." (Isaiah 40:30-31)

It is through tribulations that we are taught to patiently wait for the Lord. "And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." (Romans 5:3-5)

The Lord is with his little ones in their down sittings and uprisings; in their seasons of rejoicing and their seasons of tribulations; in the dark and stormy season, and in the season of sunshine; in the winter and spring season; and in the seasons of joy and sorrow. Dear Child of God, be not dismayed, the Lord never forsakes the cries of his people. Remember the words of our Lord and savior, Jesus Christ: "I will be with you always even unto the end of the world." Also, the words of David: "I cried unto God with my voice, even unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me." (Psalms 77:1) — "I waited patiently for the Lord: and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry." (Psalms 40:1) — "In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears." (Psalms 18:6)

"My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone;" Oh! How wonderful and joyful it is to our poor hearts when the winter and rainy season is over, when our seasons of conflicts, sorrows, tribulation, distress, and other troubles are over. (Even though it is for a short while) "The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;"

Naturally speaking, spring is a very pretty season. It seems that everything comes to life again. The plants grow, the trees bud and grow new leaves, the flowers appear upon the plants, and the birds sing.

How wonderful it is to be raised from the great darkness and led to rejoice and meditate upon heavenly things. "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:" (Ephesians 2:6) The singing is very pretty and wonderful, and Oh, What a joyful sound! And how wonderful the preaching is to our poor, hungry, thirsty souls! During this grand and glorious season, we are lifted up above all of our worries, sorrows, and troubles upon this low ground of sin and sorrow, and made to sit together in heavenly places and feast upon these fat things — these things that man cannot attain unto; nor we can receive it when we would, but we can see and know that this spiritual food and water comes from Almighty God. Many times we have begged just for a few crumbs of this mercy, and many times we have felt so hungry, thirsty, and faint, and to be so alone and blue and to be in such great darkness, that we wonder if we will ever see light again; and we wonder if the Lord has forsaken us. It has seemed that our troubles have become so great, that we feel the end is near, and it is time for us to die, and we do not know where we will go. We try to read the Bible, but it is a sealed book; we try to pray, but no words we can find, and all we can do is to cry unto the Lord, and say, "Lord, have mercy upon my poor soul." And when we are raised from this winter and rainy sea-

son, and the Lord says, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise my love, my fair one, and come away." — and he puts this new song in our hearts and leads us to drink freely upon heavenly things, then we love everybody (even our enemies), and we sing praises unto the Lord for his free grace and mercy, and for the many blessings he has given us. We then feel so happy that we do as Paul said, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;" (Ephesians 5:19 And we feel so close to the Lord that we can say as David did even though we are in great danger (naturally speaking), and even though we are surrounded by our enemies and we may even be at the point of death: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a tabe before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." (Psalms 23)

I hope I have written the truth, and if anyone gets any comfort from it, then may the Lord be praised.

Yours in a sweet fellowship,
Woodrow W. Hudson, Jr.

Vernon, Alabama

"And she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." (Luke 2:7)

In this beautiful picture painted by the hand of the Most High God, I see Mary, as mother wisdom, placing upon the Holy Child, the cross he must bear.

"Must Jesus bear the cross alone,
And all the world go free?
No, there's a cross for everyone,
And there's a cross for me."

This is not the cross made of two pieces of wood. He went a mourner all his days because of the polluted and sinful hearts of his loved ones. To even look upon sin was a cross from the most holy place he had descended; much less taking it upon himself to bear it into the land of forgetfulness.

I have heard it said that Mary picked up some of the clothes the servants had washed the cattle off with, to wrap the babe in. Not so to me. Mary was careful about her child, and I believe had prepared that needful wrapping to be used at the time appointed. She had pondered these things in her heart; therefore there was no haphazards about it. The love of a mother for her child is such that she prepares for its appearance, and would not suffer filthy rags to be put upon it. The manifold wisdom of God was such that this Holy Child Jesus was completely protected, nurtured, and fed in the secret of Mary's womb until the time of deliverance, that the mighty and wise of the world knew it not. Neither do they know it now — they just hear about him. Dear Child of God, when your sins have mounted before you as a monstrous cross, and you see no way of escape; then can feel that Jesus has been born to you a Saviour, don't tell me you are not ready to receive him with joy and meekness, and not with filthy rags.

"Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: she

hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table." (Proverbs 9:1-2) All that are blessed to eat at this table are dressed in a special uniform, with all filthy rags left behind. **"And she laid him in a manger."** — the place prepared for him in eternity. "Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation, . . ." Not tossed, but laid, securely in a manger. Can this sinful heart of mine believe He has been laid for my foundation — a precious cornerstone to rest upon? Sometimes I can say with David, "He hath placed my feet upon a rock, he hath established my goings, and put a new song in my mouth". Sometimes I am so shut up in darkness I fear I am on sinking sand. This is the cross we must bear while crossing the desert, and oasis of our voyage. When I can witness with David, I feel to say:

"All ye earth shout and sing,
For Jesus is born our priest and king:
He died, he died to free our soul;
He lived, he lived to make us whole."

"There was no room for them in the inn". The whole family was shut out — they had no place with the high and mighty of this world. He had come to the poor; and the poor he dwelt with, for Joseph and Mary were so poor they had nothing to offer for a sacrifice but two doves. Joseph and Mary were just as secure as Jesus himself, for the whole family must be taken care of, — and was in this instance, for not even a beast rebelled against them. The poor today have nothing to offer but two doves, which automatically separates them from the rich institutions of this world. They still have the same offering this almost two thousand years: that is not what I call progressiveness in riches. Not one enlightened child of God would give this poor offering of two doves for ten thousand worlds like this. It can't be bought nor sold.

"My sheep hear my voice; and I know them, and they follow me." This voice has said, "Fear not, behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." His sheep hear his voice, and the weary child of God receives it as good tidings: If He had said, Maybe it would be good tidings of great joy, it would not have been joy to the helpless one who cannot even lift his eyes toward heaven. That is not the balm of Gilead; but there is balm in Gilead, and also a physician that has never lost a case, no matter how bad the disease. This anointing balm of Gilead is a healing balm, and the myrrh gives a sweet odor.

"The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intends of the heart." (Hebrews 4:12) You would not volunteer to run against a two-edged sword, for fear of hurt; but when it is applied, it does exactly what it says it does — it divides asunder soul and spirit, and leaves a breach no man can span. "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Seeing them that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." We cannot hold fast to this profession until this word, "Let", is spoken unto us; then we can no more hinder than when God said, "Let there be light, and there was light." This "let" is not spoken to everybody. If so, it would be effective upon all in such a manner they could understand: "Unto you this day in the city of David is born a Saviour." Which is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe according to the working of his mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised him from the dead; and set him at his right hand in the heavenly places. And I believe these heavenly places are the sweet meetings with Jesus from time

to time while traveling here in this time world.

Not only was He laid in the manger, He was also laid in the tomb, with no more to molest him than when He was laid in the manger. He was laid in the tomb with power to rise the third day. No more consoling words could have been said to a weary soul than when the angel said, "Come see where the Lord lay." When I am blessed to see where that precious body lay for my sins, I feel to sink to the ground in shame that I have been so forgetful of his goodness to me. He had only to call Mary's name, and she knew he was the Master. What can we answer him when our name is called, but Master?

How heart warming, and soul soothing it is to just feel for a short time that He, the Holy Child Jesus, was laid in the tomb for our sins, and raised into glory for our justification! Not as this gainsaying world would have us believe — that this just man is wooing and pleading with us to believe and be saved. "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." As the poet said:

"A form of words, though e'er so sound,
Can never save a soul.
The Holy Ghost must give the wound:
And make the wounded whole."

Then let us, "press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ." It is certainly not in man. May we be found in Him not having our own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Jesus Christ: the righteousness which is of God by faith. "Faith", we read, "is the gift of God."

In Bethlehem a Saviour born,
Who in the manger lay:
The Son was given to Adam —
The little babe of clay.

Wisdom drew the wonderous plan,
And dressed the little babe
Sufficiently to gulf the span
That mortal man had made.

The gulf not only did He span
But closed the breach between:
Forever then was sealed the plan
That Wisdom had forseen.

Our security rests therein —
With Jesus it's no task:
His grace sufficient for all sin
That you in glory bask.

If I could know he called my name
The day he called all saints,
My soul would no more be in shame,
And I no more would faint.

I have for many years enjoyed the Signs, but since I have been unable to attend meetings since early October, it has been a greater pleasure to me than I am able to tell. Also I greatly appreciate the visits of my dear Baptist friends. God has wonderfully blessed me. I am, as the poet said:

"A beggar poor at mercy's door,
Lies such a wretch as I.
Thou knowest my need is great:
Lord hear me when I cry."

(Mrs.) Maggie Lee Hayes

DELAWARE RIVER ASSOCIATION

The **DELAWARE RIVER ASSOCIATION** will be held with the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church at Locktown, N. J., on Thursday and Friday, the 29th and 30th of May, 1958.

A cordial invitation is extended to all ministers and brethren of our faith and order in fellowship with us; and all friends of our faith will be welcome. All those expecting to attend the full two day session will please notify Mrs. Catharine Darby, 194 Main Street, Flemington, N. J., not later than May 15th ('phone Flemington 313), so that arrangements can be made for accommodations. Upon arrival, or following the afternoon meeting, you may contact Mrs. Darby, who will direct to the family with whom you will stay.

C. S. Hoff, Church Clerk

ANNUAL MEETING

The **ANNUAL MEETING** of the **HARMONY BAPTIST CHURCH** will be held, God willing, all day Saturday and Sunday, June 28 and 29, 1958. Services to begin Saturday at 10:30 A. M., and on Sunday at 10:00 A. M.

The church house is located one mile East of Huntington city limits, on Cedarcrest Drive, about one quarter mile off U. S. Route 60, at Russell Creek.

Elder J. R. Lane, Moderator
Mrs. Mildred Stanley, Clerk
1046 Cedarcrest Drive,
Huntington, W. Va.

Danville, Virginia May, 1958

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EDITORIAL

REVELATION 1:1, 2

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw."

How often, how often, have I put off sending forth anything relating to this Revelation. I have had to think of my leanness and barrenness about the things of the kingdom, and it has often been presented to me that, "It is not for you to know the times, or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power." But as I have contemplated the wonders of the book, another thought has developed in my mind. Someone was blessed in reading, and hearing, and keeping these sublime things. I dare not remain silent any longer. If our heavenly Father will be in the matter in going before, I will not tread in forbidden paths nor will I speak rashly concerning the beautiful things recorded here. I humbly trust that it is He that has brought to bear upon me to write. I do know that unless he has impressed me to that end, and goes before and keeps me in the way of truth that all will be in vain.

We have heard a lot about the Revelation of John, but John did not know anything except as it was revealed to him. The setting of this wonderful event was the work of God. John and the servants which were to be shown these things, would not have made this arrangement. They did not have the wisdom and they did not have the power. This was not according to the designs of any man. John would have much rather had his ministry acceptable to the masses than to have been banished to the lone isle of Patmos. (See Acts 10:26) He was not a contributing factor in the success of this revelation to the seven churches of Asia.

God revealed or gave unto Jesus Christ these things, and he revealed them unto John to write or show to the servants. John does not enter into any lengthy preliminaries nor does he give much of an introduction about himself. He does not mention his abilities for the future nor does he speak about his conquests of the past. He is one of the brethren to these servants and churches; he is their companion in tribulation. Yet he also is their companion in the kingdom and in the patience of Jesus Christ. It is as good for us to acknowledge the work of grace in us as it was John. We would readily admit being a companion in tribulation, but are we bold to say that we are also a companion in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. If we do not have as much right to this boldness as did John, then one of the things that shown in his ministry under this banishment (and yet present with Jesus) does not profit us. And if it does not profit us, then we are not subjects of the seven churches.

While this book is said to be myster-

ious, there are some things in it that are prevalent in nearly every letter that Paul addressed, while founding and strengthening the early churches. Grace and peace is upon these seven churches **from** him which is, and which was, and which is to come, and **from** the seven Spirits which are before his throne, and **from** Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth. Since these servants and these churches were assured of both grace and peace **from** such a dependable source, and it was to be **by** his grace reigning through righteousness unto eternal life **by** Jesus Christ our Lord, it follows that all that both servants and churches had were gifts of God.

If Jesus is not in a text to me, I do not have any use for it. Such a text cannot be found in the lids of the Bible. It was for the word of God (the same Word that was in the beginning, and that was **with** God, and that was God), and **for** the testimony of Jesus Christ, that John was on this isolated ilse. I have as much right to say that God ruled in sending John to Patmos, as Joseph did in saying that God sent him to Egypt. If Joseph's going to Egypt was for good to the Lord's people, then, also, was John's banishment to Patmos for their good. If the sending of Joseph to Egypt was evil (who says it was not?) in his brethren, but meant for good by the Lord, then the banishment of John was evil, but meant for good by the Lord. If not, why not? And if Paul could say, "That we know that all things work together for good to them that love God" and we find that all things did do that in the case of both Joseph and John, do we not have a perfect right to preach that now? If we do not, why?

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." **After** having been put here without being a contributing factor in it, without any forethought, planning, or co-operation on his part, then someone put him in the Spirit on the Lord's day. I do not know what the Lord's day is. If it was Sunday, as we know it, or it was Saturday as others claim, or it was the Lord's day at any time he makes himself known unto us, it does not make any material difference. This 'spirit' that he was in was not the Bible or written word. He did not carry a Bible with him for two reasons. None existed, in completion, anywhere, for, we must admit, this portion had not been written, must less had it been incorporated into the canonical body of scriptures; and, had all of the bookstores been full of them, it would have been the height of folly to suppose that the wicked king that banished him would have let him carry a Bible. What absurdity men will go into to carry forward their spurious doctrines.

While in the Spirit he heard the voice, as of a trumpet, "Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last; and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea." Who is the gospel to? Of late there has been much agitation about who the gospel should be preached to. Perhaps there has always been some difference of opinion. Personally, I see very little, if any, use in becoming disturbed about who we are to preach to because some Arminian challenges us. If I am blessed to preach at all, I want to preach it to one and all of every class of men, but I feel sure that it will never do anybody, anywhere, any good save those that have an ear to hear. This message that John was sent to Patmos to receive and give to the servants and the churches was direct and emphatic. It was not to anybody else; to attempt to reach anybody else; to attempt to make it palatable to the carnal taste of dead men; even to express a hint that it belongs to any others, is expressly forbidden in this book itself. (22:19)

This was a challenging voice. It commanded attention. It had power to turn John. "They shall hear my voice." He

heard, and he turned, and, being turned, he saw the seven golden candlesticks. In the midst of them there was one like unto the Son of man. He was clothed with a garment down to the foot, and he was girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow. His eyes were as a flame of fire. His feet were like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace. They were like that at that time. It was not that they looked like they **had** been burned in a furnace, **but at that time it was as if they burned in a furnace.** His voice sounded as many waters. This voice of the Son of man, and the voice of the multitude in heaven (19:6) are the only voices spoken of in the Bible as the voice of many waters. This is so true of the voice of our Redeemer; it is so true of the voice of his people. The sound of many waters. What a sound it is to he or she that has an ear to hear. How foolish to those that do not. In his right hand he had seven stars. He had them all. He had a good hold on them. He did not have six in his right hand and a seventh running around at his feet or afar. From out of his mouth went a sharp two edged sword. I want you to notice it was sharp and it had two edges. It was not dull and left to John and the servants to sharpen; it was not one-sided and the churches obligated to put another on it. His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. Most of us remember the story in our schoolbook about the effectiveness of the sun to cause a traveller to remove his coat. If we have never felt the effectual warmth of the sun in causing the removal of an excess garment, it would be expected that we talk of our ability to withstand that warmth; and if we do not know the effect of his countenance when it shines as the sun in its strength, we will also be expected to talk of our ability to withstand Jesus.

Seeing this Son of man produced an effect. When the light shined around Saul and the voice spoke to him, it also had an effect. When Jesus stood at the mouth of Lazarus' grave and called to him, it also had an effect. When the two walked towards Emmaus with their eyes beholden that they knew not the Saviour, and Mary beheld him as the gardener, there was no response, but when he revealed himself to them there was an immediate effect. When he rebuked the proud waves, there was an immediate effect. Why should it be different in this case? Why should it be thought incredible today that at the sound of the voice of Jesus there is an immediate effect? Why is it thought to be old-fashioned for God to speak and the effect to be instant and effectual?

John fell at his feet as dead. How long did he remain there? How did he get up? By co-operation? by a decision of his? by some of the servants helping him? by some of the churches lending a helping hand? If it came that way I would not be writing. If it came that way, you would not be listening. It did not come that way. Today, when a poor sinner is brought into the presence of Jesus, it has a similar effect. And today, as with John, it is Jesus that lays his hand upon us, Saying, "Fear not; I am the first and the last."

"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Was any other authority needed? Was any denial or refusal likely? No, no, not that. When this Man speaks there is an effect, there is action. "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter; the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches; and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches."

"Do not I love thee, O my Lord,
Behold my heart and see;
And turn each cursed idol out,
That dares to rival thee.

May this be my song and plea at a throne of grace, and may I be blessed

to know nothing among you, either from the sacred pulpit or on the printed page, save the death, burial, and resurrection of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He has ascended on high and has given gifts unto his people. He appeared to the poor servant on the lonely isle and revealed to him things unspeakable and full of glory. In prophecy it was said of Him that he should open the blind eyes, and unstop the deaf ears. Unless the prophet was false, he has done, and is now doing, just that. If so, somebody has been, and is now, prepared to read and hear and keep these sayings.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Penningtonville, Penn., Nov. 21, 1859

BROTHER BEEBE—Will you please give your views on 1 John ii. 1, 2? "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not: and if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

Yours, in love, JOSEPH HUGHES.

REPLY.—We have scarcely room to express all that might be said on the text proposed for consideration, and must necessarily be brief in our remarks, as we have considerable very interesting matter waiting for insertion in our crowded columns.

The simple, but affectionate appellation, "My little children," frequently occurs in the writings of this beloved apostle, and shows the paternal solicitude which he felt for the saints, to whom his instructions were addressed. "These things write I unto you, that ye sin not." The context shows **what things** he alluded to, not only what he had said of their spiritual, immortal, eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested, and of their consequent fellowship with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ, and their fellowship one with another, but the strife and opposition of their carnal, depraved natures, in opposition to the spirit of life revealed or manifested in them; but also all that the whole epistle contains, was designed, not only that their joy might be full, but that they should not sin. A knowledge of their eternal vital union in and with their Lord Jesus Christ, was calculated to deter them from sinning, and to awaken every heavenly energy within them to holy aspirations, joy, and love, and gratitude to God, for his abounding goodness and grace. The apostle could by no means endorse the foolish theory that a knowledge of the fixed and immutable principles of God's eternal counsel and decrees, would tend to licentiousness, but, as he fully implies, they should be written and read, preached and believed, for the very opposite effect which they were sure to secure, that the saints, or little children, instructed in them should sin not. The mystery should be elucidated, that we all, while in this state of existence, have a depraved, sinful, unrenewed nature, so that if any man shall say he hath no sin, he deceiveth himself, and the truth is not in him. But notwithstanding the indwelling pollution of their nature which makes every saint groan while in this earthly tabernacle, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with their house which is from heaven, or, in other words, that mortality might be swallowed up of life, there is in them who thus groan an inward man that is born of God, and does not sin, "Because the seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." The old corrupt nature is born of the flesh; but the new man is born of the Spirit, and is spirit. For this reason the saints are admonished to crucify the old man with its affections and lusts, and to put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness.

But, notwithstanding the opposition of the inner man to the sins and depravity of the flesh, the children of God are frequently harrassed and perplexed with a consciousness of their short-

comings; to will is present with them, but how to perform that which is good they find not; and if it were not for the happy consideration that they have a divine Advocate with the Father, they would utterly despair. They are too thoroughly acquainted with themselves to allow them to have any confidence in the flesh. But—

"If any man sin, we have an Advocate," &c. Whatever be the condition of others who sin, (and all men are sinners,) **we**, the **saints**, the **little children**, have an Advocate with the Father. Who is he? Jesus Christ. What is he? The Righteous. Then Jesus Christ the Righteous is the Advocate of his people, and this consideration is calculated to fill them with joy and gratitude. He has every requisite gratification to manage their cause with honor to God and safety to the saints. His name is an ample guaranty of this; **Jesus** signifies a Savior, and **Christ**, the Anointed and Holy one. As he is the Savior, he can be relied on, and as he is anointed to preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken hearted, to open the prison to them that are bound, and to comfort all who mourn, &c., no other one could fill the office of our Advocate so well. Possessing in himself embodied all the fulness of the Godhead, with all heaven and earth at his command, and all principalities and powers, thrones and dominions, things visible and invisible under his control, with all the power in heaven and in earth in his hand, and all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden in him, how can he fail to maintain the cause of those for whom he officiates? He is **the Righteous.** He is never wrong. "He is of God, made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption," And not only is he the Righteous, but he is "the Lord our Righteousness." By virtue of a deathless union with all the members of his mystical body, he is their righteousness, and so in the presentation of himself before his Father, he presents his saints perfect and without blame before him in love, Eternal Justice is satisfied with him as the justifying righteousness of his body, the church; the law can ask no more; and the Father is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; but the apostle adds—

"And he is the propitiation for our sins." The word **propitiation** signifies reconciliation, or atonement, satisfaction, &c. He, our Advocate with the Father, by his righteousness, is the reconciliation or atonement for our sins. He gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquities, and purify to himself a peculiar people, &c. Instead then of sinners being redeemed with corruptible things, as silver or gold, nothing short of the precious blood of Christ could propitiate, conciliate, or satisfy the demands of law and justice for our sins. And instead of the pardon of the Pope, or Priest, the absolution of the Bishop, the prayers of ancient or modern revivalists, or the works of our own hands, commending us to the favor of God, he and he alone, is **the** propitiation for our sins, and that on the most sacredly righteous principles, as he is **the** righteous. No sacrifice that we could make, or offering the world could afford, could atone for our sins. The cattle of a thousand hills, ten thousand rivers of oil, or the fruit of our body, or the labors of our hands—all, all would be offered in vain. "Sacrifice and offerings thou wouldst not; neither hadst thou pleasure in them. Then said I, (Jesus,) Lo, I come, in the volume of the Book it is written of me." And it is written in that volume of none other, consequently there is salvation in none other. Ages of penitence, rivers of tears, millions of wealth bestowed for benevolent purposes, with all the reformations, prayers, or voluntary humility that mortals could perform, could make no propitiation for our sins any more than they could make another "Jesus Christ the Righteous." For Jesus Christ the Righteous is not a, but **the** propitiation for our sins. And for any man to attempt to make or offer, or to rely on anything else for atonement, or reconciliation, is to set up another

Christ, which is idolatry.

"He is the propitiation." This declaration is clear, positive and emphatic; it admits of no uncertainty; it rests on no contingent agency or condition. It is not something which may be, or is to be; he already is the propitiation for our sins; and this propitiation is complete, as Jesus is complete; it is righteous, as Jesus is righteous; and it is the only propitiation, as he is the only Jesus Christ.

"And not for our sins only." That is, as we understand the inspired apostle, not only for the sins of those little children, or saints to whom he addresses his epistle, which were scattered abroad, and then in the flesh; but **also,** or in like manner, **for the sins of the whole world.** The enemy has attempted to pervert the terms, **the whole world,** by an unrestricted application of them to the whole material world. But while they thus cavil, they would scarcely allow that it should include the sins of horses, swine, snakes and vipers; but they would rather contend that it means only the human family. They themselves, then, while they condemn the restriction of the application of the words, do themselves what they condemn. But let it be remembered that the apostle John uses the same words in reference to another class who, instead of being reconciled to God by this propitiation, are still in their sins. "We know that we are of God, and **the whole world** lieth in wickedness." Here it is very obvious that John contrasts the condition of those who are of God, with that of the whole world, which lieth in wickedness. —John v. 19.

These words are to be understood according to the manner in which they are used. When used in an unrestricted sense, they mean the heavens and earth, and all that they contain. When used in reference to the saints, they mean all the saints, from the beginning of the world to the end of time; and in this instance it applies more expressly to the saints among the Gentiles as well as those among the Jews. And when used in regard to those who lie in wickedness, it means all sinners, in all ages, and in all the nations and kindreds of the earth.

The plain and obvious sense, then, of the words, as they are used in the text, is that Christ is the only Propitiation in the whole world. That God's elect among the Gentiles are saved in the same way and manner, as are the saved of the Jews. Go where you may, no other Savior of sinners can be found; with no other sacrifice will God be pleased. With no other atonement could the law or eternal justice of Jehovah be satisfied. All, therefore, who are redeemed from among men, in every kindred or nation, are reconciled to God by him who is the only and blessed Potentate, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords, who only hath Immortality dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see, to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen. —1st. Tim. vi. 16.

Nothwithstanding all the caviling of Arminians and General Atonement advocates on the text under consideration, there is not another text in the Bible the plain and palpable meaning of which they have more reason to dread than this. It sweeps away, as with a besom of destruction, every refuge of lies on which they would predicate their cherished theories of salvation, by works, by the use of means, by the labors of good or of bad men. Let the plain import of the text be admitted, and Jesus Christ the righteous will stand alone confessed as the only Savior, the only propitiation, the only propitiatory sacrifice for sin, that the eternal counsel of God has ordained, that the law can recognize or Eternal Justice admit.

The contemplation of our subject is full of consolation for the tried, tempted, troubled and persecuted saints of the Most High God. The inspired words of truth regards them, as they really are and should be, a brotherhood of little children. They do not feel like giants, able to save themselves and aid considerably in saving others. They feel

the necessity of being led by the Spirit, step by step, and instead of eating or earning their own bread or of wearing their own apparel, they desire the sincere milk of the word that they may grow thereby. As the confiding babe relies upon the strength of its faithful nurse, so do they rely alone on the everlasting Arm of their blessed Savior, which is underneath them. They rejoice in their adorable Advocate with the Father. In heaven's high courts they have a reliable Advocate. As Jeremiah said, "Their Redeemer is strong; the Lord of hosts is his name: he shall thoroughly plead their cause, that he may give rest to the land, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon."—Jer. i. 34. Our Advocate knows our feeble frame, he knows the feelings of our infirmities, and well he knows how to succour them that are tempted. Nor is he less familiar with his Father's counsel. The law of God is in his heart, and all that he asks of the Father is granted, for the Father always hears him, and is always well pleased in him. He never lost a case, nor will he ever lose a case. While the presumptuous, who love sin, and find in it a congenial element, are sent empty away, the poor, the broken-hearted, who lament their vileness, and who, above all things, desire to be holy, as their Father in heaven is holy, may rest assured that

"Their cause can never, never fail,
For Jesus pleads, and must prevail."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, November 15, 1859.)

OBITUARIES

MARCUS MELLOTT

In memory of Brother Marcus Mellott, of Needmore, Penn., who died August 4, 1957. He was born January 25, 1869; making his stay on earth more than eighty-eight years.

He is survived by his wife, Sarah, and one son and one daughter: Raymond W., and Mrs. Marea B. Mellott, of Needmore; also by one sister, Mrs. Ella Walters, Altoona, Penn.; four grandchildren and five great grandchildren. The writer knew Brother Mellott as an humble, God fearing, true and righteous lover of the doctrine of salvation by grace. He was baptized August 13, 1913, by the late Elder H. H. Lefferts; and served as a deacon in the Old School Baptist Church at Sideling Hill until his health failed.

Funeral service was conducted by the writer August 7, 1957, from the Sideling Hill Church; and the body was placed to rest in the church cemetery to await the resurrection morning.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." (Rev. 14:13)

(Elder) Charles W. Alderton

MRS. MATTIE ELLA (AKERS) SUTPHIN

Mrs. Mattie Ella (Akers) Sutphin was born May 18, 1884, in Carroll County, Virginia. She was united in marriage to George M. Sutphin by Elder Q. D. Weeks, August 18, 1912. To this union was born one daughter: Lula.

Sister Mattie joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Greasy Creek in January, 1916, and was baptized by Elder Q. D. Weeks. She moved her membership to Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church later.

She died November 2, 1957, at her home 2510 Mass. Ave. Roanoke, and her funeral was preached by Elder O. K. Tench at the Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church. Burial was at Greasy Creek. She is survived by her husband and afflicted daughter, and the following brothers and sisters: Walker, Wiley, and Lonnie Akers, Mrs. Mana Knowles, Mrs. Elena Knowles, Mrs. Mina Quesenberry, Mrs. Ocie Hylton, and Mrs. Lelia Harmon.

During the years of affliction with arthritis she was tenderly cared for by her daughter and husband, with Sister Effie Greer's help. It was all so lovingly done, and so lovingly accepted, it touched us deeply more than once. We feel the sorrow of those who are left is made lighter to bear by the thought of her gain in rest and peace. The love of God she spoke of, and manifested in her life by word and action in all humility, we felt to be a living hope in her breast, truly of God. Her courage in bearing the suffering and helpless bodily affliction, was comforting to us. Indeed, it gave us strength and courage along the way. We never visited her without feeling it was all to our benefit and good. The spirit that showed in her face was of strength in the Lord her Saviour.

Remembering these things, we feel it is yet a living thing to us from time to time, and we trust it also comforts the family. When the Lord appears, the consolation is ours in that salvation: Like the one who took the baby Jesus in his arms, and said, "Lord, now lettest thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes

have seen thy salvation." We wait for the consolation that Simeon spoke of: "The consolation of Israel." He is yet our consolation — without him we can do nothing.

At the request of her daughter, we have written this memorial of one whom we all loved so much.

Catherine A. Houchins
Mrs. Pearl A. Law

GEORGE MARION COLVETT

George M. Colvett was born September 26, 1875, in Carroll County, Tennessee, the son of James and Emma Bennett Colvett. He moved to Crockett County, Tennessee, at the age of 8 with his family, and there he grew to manhood. In August, 1906, he united with the church at Mill Creek near Maury City, in Crockett County, Tennessee, and was baptized by Elder J. W. Kerley. In September, 1909 he was married to Miss Melinda Jane Garrett. To this union was born five daughters. One passed away in infancy. His wife died around fifteen years ago. He moved to Haywood County in 1919, and moved his membership to Old Brown's Creek Church; and was ordained a Deacon many years ago and served until his death September 11, 1957. He was a true believer in salvation by grace and grace alone. He was loved and highly respected by all who knew him. He loved the Primitive Baptists dearly and went among them as long as he was able to travel.

He leaves to mourn his passing four daughters, Mrs. R. L. Williams, Route 2, Bells, Tenn.; Mrs. X. B. Summers, Arlington, Tenn.; Mrs. Charley Laster, 602 Morgan St., Brownsville, Tenn.; and Mrs. J. B. Simpson, Brownsville, Tenn. Also one sister, Mrs. J. E. Trull, who is in her 92nd year, one brother, D. C. Colvett, of Nashville, Tenn., and eight grandchildren, and three great grandchildren.

Written by his brother in the flesh, and, by the Grace of God, I hope and believe in the spirit.

D. C. Colvett

CHARLES ELBERT SHEARER

Charles Elbert Shearer was born August 2, 1876, near Forest Grove, Oregon; and died December 30, 1957, in Sunnyside Memorial Hospital, Sunnyside, Washington. He was the son of Milton and Susan Flannery Shearer, whose parents crossed the plains to Oregon in 1851 and 1864; and who were Primitive Baptists.

Brother Shearer was married in 1897 to Nora Clark, who died October 30, 1915. On October 6, 1917, he was married to Lydia Altice. He moved from Ellensberg, Washington, to Tacoma in 1901. He and his companion joined the Methodist Church in Tacoma, where his membership remained until 1946, when he made a special trip over the mountains to talk to Pleasant Grove Church. His desire was to be a member of the church where his parents had their membership for years. That was Sunday, August 25, 1946. He joined the church, and was baptized the same day by Elder A. D. Hughett. At the same time Sister Mildred Simpson also came forward and asked for a home in the church, and was baptized.

Brother Shearer was ordained deacon of Pleasant Grove Church in May, 1953; which office he filled well and faithfully. He was a meek and humble brother, and will be missed; though we grieve not as those who have no hope.

He is survived by an adopted son, who was his nephew; and with whom he lived after the death of his wife in 1952. And also by one brother, Orin Shearer, of Seattle; two sisters, Mrs. Eunice Byrd, of Yakima, Washington, and Sister Josie Mitchell, of Naches, Washington.

He was laid to rest in the Ellensbury Cemetery, beside his wife, Lydia.

Mrs. D. H. Baker

CONSOLATION

A loving soul has winged its way
To life in blessed glory;
There to praise instead of pray:
There to live the heavenly story.

There he will see his greatest friend;
There he will rest eternal years,
Where joy and peace will never end;
Where there's neither toil nor tears.

So let us say to death, "Amen",
Since God has deemed it best.
And let us pray to meet again.
And with our loved ones ever rest.

Effie Park

MRS. MARTHA SMITH

Mrs. Martha Smith was born in Mississippi February 16, 1871; and died December 29, 1957, at her residence near Liddieville, Louisiana. Her husband preceded her in death, and she is survived by the following: three sons, John W., Jena, La; Henry W., Winnsboro, La.; and B. Taft Smith, Winnsboro, La.; two sisters: Mrs. Ida Brown, Winnsboro, La.; and Mrs. Dan Parker, Newelton, La.; one brother: Charley Tarver, Pioneer, La.; and thirteen grandchildren, and eighteen great grandchildren.

Mrs. Smith was quite aged, and was well respected, as shown by the large group of relatives and friends who were gathered at

the graveside service held at Ogden Cemetery, near Liddieville, La., on December 30, 1957. The writer was not acquainted with Mrs. Smith, and the only hope and consolation that he could give to the bereaved ones, either for her or anyone else, was through the saving grace and cleansing blood of Christ our Lord: If He shed his precious blood for them, then everything necessary for their complete and eternal salvation was done also. The angel is Matthew 1:21, said, "For he shall save his people from their sins." Then, if she was identified with those who constitute His people, she is saved. We hope and feel that she was one of those whom the Lord came to save.

There is absolutely no danger of the Lord failing — He said, "All power in heaven and earth is given into my hands." Then dear bereaved ones, you observed your departed mothed and grandmother in her long and useful life, and we feel that she possessed a sweet hope in Jesus Christ; and if so, it is as the Apostle Paul said, "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope. . . But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Many people say they know they are saved, but Paul said, "If any man think he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know." So I say that a good and humble hope in Christ is far better than for anyone to say they know they are saved.

May God bless you all till the Lord shall come again without sin unto salvation, when he will call from the grave, and from this earth, all those who were made to love and trust him, and will carry them home to himself, there to dwell with him forever.

An unworthy servant of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, I hope.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

WILLIAM MARION HULL

This sketch is devoted to the love and respect to Mr. William M. Hull, of Pittsburg, Texas, who was born March 7, 1878, and departed this life December 17, 1957, suddenly with an heart attack.

He was married to Anna Berta Fleming Novembed 27, 1898; and to this union were born the following children: W. Clyde Hull, Mrs. Eva Fuller, Mrs. Berta Keeling, Cecil F. Hull, Nobel L. Hull, James Travis Hull, Harold Hull, and Mrs. Blanche Haynes; all of whom survive, together with his last wife, Mrs. Hetta Burgess, whom he married in 1943. Surviving also are the following brothers and sister: James Hull, Ross Hull, Grady Hull, and Mrs. Emma Robertson; and two step-children Alton Burgess and Mrs. Imogene Rolston. His first wife died in November, 1936.

He was a prominent business man, engaged in the real estate business, trading in leases, land royalty and timber; and was widely known and respected. He joined the Baptist Church in 1908. He was a noted Sacred Harp singer and traveled far and near to engage in singing. He attended meetings among the Primitive Baptists and was a lover of the doctrine of God our Saviour, and was well posted as to the teaching of the Scriptures. He and his wife drove my wife and I on a long trip two days before he died, and I don't think I ever saw such love and devotion to true gospel doctrine. He appeared so happy as we drove home from a four hundred mile trip to Texas. His soul seemed lifted up in discussing the teachings of the Scriptures, and inquiring of the meaning of deep doctrinal points; thus manifesting his deep interest. He expressed very vividly the sweet hope of the Lord's people, which Paul said was the anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast.

Then dear bereaved ones, weep not at those who have no hope. He is safe in the arms of Jesus our Lord and Redeemer; and his body will be raised in the glorified image of Jesus.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral, together with another minister. The service was held in his large home, and there was a large crowd in attendance, including several Sacred Happ singers. He was laid away in the home cemetery, till the Lord comes to carry his children home.

May God bless you dear Sister Hull, and all the children; and may we be reconciled to His holy will, and be led, kept and sustained by Him, is my prayer.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

SISTER ELIZA WINFREY

This sketch is dedicated to the memory of our dear sister Eliza Winfrey, who was born March 4, 1870; and died December 22, 1957, in a hospital at Perryton, Texas. She had been ill for some time. She was born near Springfield, Mo., and moved with her parents to Varner, Kansas, in 1880, where she was reared to womanhood; and where she married William F. Winfrey. To this union were born five children, one of whom, Mrs. Alma Hardy, died December 25, 1956, after a car accident. Her husband died in March, 1938. The following survive: Gertrude M. Hardy, Perryton, Texas; Fred C. Winfrey, Wichita, Kansas; Inez Robinson, Liberal, Kansas; and Elder W. A. Winfrey, Liberal, Kansas. Also surviving are twenty-four grandchildren, and forty-nine great grandchildren; and other relatives.

Sister Winfrey united with the Primitive Baptist Church in Haskel County, Kansas, in the year 1895, and was baptized by Elder J. B. Hardy, Sr. In June, 1896, a church was organ-

ized near the town of Kingman, Kansas; and she and Brother Winfrey, and Elder J. B. Hardy were in the constitution of this church. At the time of her death, she was the only surviving charter member.

She was a very loving and faithful member, and gave great evidence of her devotion to the church and brethren and friends. Her hospitality was well known, and she often entertained the brethren and friends. Her husband was the faithful clerk of the church as long as he lived. After his death she spent her life with her children, but mainly with her oldest daughter, Mrs. Gertrude M. Hardy. It was my privilege to be with her in two meetings, one when her son was ordained as a minister, and the other when he and Brother Kate was ordained to the office of deacon.

The unworthy writer was called to conduct the funeral at the funeral home in Kingman, where a good congregation of her loving family, relatives and friends were gathered. She was laid to rest in the Kingman Cemetery till the Lord comes again.

May God bless, comfort, lead and direct, and sweetly sustain all those who mourn her passing. And may the Lord bless us with the precious and loving faith of God's elect, which she meekly and humbly manifested. Your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

OSCAR T. BOWEN

This sketch is dedicated to the memory of our beloved and precious Brother Oscar T. Bowen, who died at his home near Farmerville, Louisiana, December 30, 1957, at the age of seventy-one.

Brother Bowen was reared near Okland, La., and was the son of Deacon Lawrence and Addie Bowen, who were members of Good Hope Church. Brother Bowen was a farmer all his life until he retired because of his health. He suffered several strokes which rendered him speechless and helpless for the last three years or more. He joined Good Hope Primitive Baptist Church in his early twenties, and was a very faithful and useful one in the old church, serving as clerk for many years. He also served as Clerk of the South Ouichita Association for many years. He was very humble, meek and loving; and attended his meetings regularly at Liberty Hill Church, where he and his wife moved their membership after they bought a home near that church. He served as Clerk of Liberty Hill Church until he became disabled.

He was very highly respected, loved and appreciated among all the brethren, and it was sad to see him linger so long, helpless and suffering; but his countenance denoted that the Lord surely was with him. He was a firm and staunch believer in the doctrine of God our Saviour, and gave evidence of a sweet and abiding hope in the Lord.

He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Elmiry Bowen, and three sons: S. L. Bowen, McCamey, Texas; O. T. Bowen, Jr., Oceanside, Calif.; and S. T. Bowen, Charlotte, N. C. And by the following brothers and sisters: John Bowen, Joe Bowen, and Seth Bowen, and Mrs. S. V. Jenny, and Mrs. Jimmie Stevens; and by five grandchildren.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral at Liberty Hill Church, which was attended by a large congregation of his family and relatives, and many brethren and sisters and friends. The many flowers denoted the great respect in which he was held. He was laid to rest in the Taylor Cemetery at Liberty Hill Church.

May God bless and comfort all who mourn his passing. I know your loss is great, but he is gone from his suffering, and is resting till Jesus comes again. So weep not, dear ones, as those who have no hope.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

SISTER CARMEN ANTHONY

Sister Carmen Anthony, 315 Mosley Avenue, San Antonio, Texas, was born March 29, 1899, in Karnes County, Texas; and died December 28, 1957.

She leaves her husband, E. H. Anthony, three sons and six daughters; and fifteen grandchildren. Also a brother, Ed Staggs, and a sister, Laura Schumacher. Sister Anthony was a member of Mt. Olive Church, Stockdale, Texas, for many years; and we held meetings at her home many times. During his lifetime, we used to get her uncle from the Old People's Home, and take him to her home for the meetings. This dear old brother would enjoy it so much that when we would take him back to the Home, he would sit there and cry: it would make the writer wish that we had an Old Baptist Home for these old people, where they could be with people of their kind; yes, among God's little ones who understand these spiritual things.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer, and burial was at Stockdale, Texas.

(Elder) E. B. Ault
Weslaco, Texas

MRS. SARAH D. STOKES

Mrs. Sarah D. Stokes, of Graceville, Florida, died January 16, 1958, after a lingering illness. She was eighty-five years of age, and a firm believer in the Primitive Baptist Church.

She is survived by her husband, C. B. Stokes; one daughter, Mrs. T. C. Price; and three sons: Grady and Casper Stokes, and W. J. Collins, of Savanah, Georgia. She was the sister of Elder H. A. Smith, for many years Clerk and Moderator of the Western Primitive Baptist Association; and was married first to W. M. Collins, the son of Elder J. W. Collins, who for twenty-three years was Moderator of the Western Primitive Baptist Association. She is also survived by Elder Wm. H. Smith and Elder J. J. Collins, two nephews, who are Primitive Baptist ministers.

Funeral services were conducted at Whitaker Church, January 18th, by Mr. C. C. Balkcom, Mr. H. R. Carswell, and Elders Wm. H. Smith and J. J. Collins; the later using the text, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." She was tenderly laid to rest beneath a mound of beautiful flowers in Whitaker Cemetery.

(Elder) J. J. Collins

MRS. EUNICE WINTERS DUFF

Adams, Tenn.

Elders Spangler and Wood:

I enclose $5.00 for subscription to the Signs. I have been so bowed down for the past year with grief and sorrow. My wife was found to be suffering with cancer, and two operations did no good. She passed away January 7, 1958. It is hard to give her up, but it is good to know she is out of her suffering. She had a sweet hope of a better world; and loved the Old Baptists, and enjoyed having them in our home, and going to the meetings.

She prayed many times for the Lord's mercy, and for Him to come and take her home, but had to wait for the Lord's appointed time. Following is notice of funeral service taken from local paper:

"Funeral services for Mrs. Eunice Winters Duff, 70, of Adams, Tennessee, were conducted Thursday afternoon. She died at the J. H. Jones hospital after a long illness. The service was conducted at Meggs Funeral Home, and burial was in Adams Cemetery.

"Surviving are her husband Felix G. Duff; three daughters, Mrs. Clayton Rust, and Mrs. W. B. McKinney, of Adams; Mrs. Ernest Wilkerson, Springfield; three sons, Ernest Duff, Goodletsville, Lt. Comdr. Edward A. Duff, San Diego, Calif.; three brothers, Sam and Fate Winters, both of Pleasant View, and Dave Winters, Florida; and six grandchildren, and one great grandchild."

Felix G. Duff

JAMES ALBERT RUSSELL

James Albert Russell was born January 1, 1880, and died at his home in Henry County, Kentucky, October 2, 1957. His parents were of Old School Baptist faith; and he was the grandson of the late Elder A. Humston, one of the pioneers of Kentucky.

He leaves to mourn his passing, his wife, Bertha, and one son James; and two grandsons, Gene and Robert; one sister, Annie Lawhead, of Amelia, Ohio, who has been a member of the church and reader of our papers for many years.

Albert did not unite with the church, but it was evident by his conversation and walk that he believed firmly in salvation by the grace of God: who made all things and decreed their end; and that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Funeral services were held at the McCarty Funeral Home, at New Castle, by Mr. Howard Olive, of Port Royal, Kentucky. We believe that another soldier of the cross has laid his armor down, and is now awaiting in the silent city of the dead for the call of Jesus in the glorious resurrection. May Almighty God, in his infinite wisdom, reconcile all the brethren and friends, that they may say, "Thy will be done."

Written at the request of Sister Lawhead of Sulphur Fork Church, by her former pastor.

(Elder) George L. Weaver

MRS. LUCRELIA KOONCE

Mrs. Lucrelia Koonce of Center Texas, was born September 20th, 1874, and passed away January 11th, 1958. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church while young and lived a faithful member until death called her. She, by the grace of God, was always so humble and sweet in manner, seeming to have the desire to walk softly before God's humble poor, yet loving them and desiring their prayers and loving fellowship. Her price is far above rubies.

Sister Koonce was married to Mr. Burns in early life, to which union five children were born. After his death she was married to R. D. Koonce on July 16th, 1905. To this union one child was born. All her children survive her.

May God reconcile her loved ones to their loss and give them grace to look to Him for all things down this weary road; and give them to know "that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose;" and to feel that Mother is at perfect rest; and that "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." 'Even so Father, for it seemeth good in thy sight."

Written by request of the family of Sister Koonce.

Otto Brittain

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 126 DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1958 NO. 6

PARAPHRASE OF PSALM 121

To the high hills I lift my eyes;
From whence, my soul, does help arise?
E'en from the Lord who spoke to birth
The firmament, the fruitful earth.

He'll suffer not thy foot to move
Beyond the borders of His love;
Lo! He that Israel doth keep,
No sumber knows, nor does He sleep.

The Lord unceasingly shall stand,
A cooling shade at thy right hand.
The sun by day shall not thee smite
Nor yet the lesser moon by night.

He shall preserve thy soul from sin,
Preserve thy going out and in.
The opening and the closing door
Shall watch, and keep thee evermore.

O. J. Aston
(England)

"QUIT YOU LIKE MEN"

1 Corinthians 16:13

For those who make the Lord their choice,
The conflict rages long.
Hear then your mighty leader's voice,
Quit you like men, be strong.

Heed not your adversary's boasts,
Nor let his threats affright.
Your captain is the Lord of Hosts,
Go then in this thy might.

Thy breastplate righteousness shall be,
And truth thy loins shall gird.
For helmet his salvation see,
For sword the living Word.

Let gospel peace thy feet protect,
And with the shield of faith
All fiery darts thou shalt deflect
And triumph over death.

By prayer the tempter's power defeat,
Watch and the foe shall yield.
Thy Saviour's victory is complete,
Thou too shalt gain the field.

O. J. Aston
(England)

IMPORTANT REQUESTS OF THE EDITORS TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

Please watch your expiration date, and renew promptly. If your expiration date shows 5/58, it means that your subscription expires with the May, 1958, issue.

Please renew in exactly the same name you are receiving the paper; otherwise it is confusing.

If you do not plan to renew, please notify us by the time of your expiration date.

If you know of a subscriber who has died, and the paper is not likely to be renewed by anyone, please notify us so we can remove the name from our list.

Should you change address, please write us, giving the old as well as the new address. Your post office does not forward second-class mail, and does not always return the copies to us; hence some have a change of address for quite a while, and we do not know it.

You can help increase our subscription list by soliciting those whom you believe would enjoy the paper.

We thank you.

TIDING FROM MT. OLIVE CHURCH IN TEXAS

Stockdale, Texas

Editors and Readers of the Signs of the Times,

Dearly beloved brethren in a precious hope:

If not asking too much, I would like to send in a sketch of our 5th Sunday meeting here at Mt. Olive Church. It was a little dedication service on the completion of our humble church house, and some of our brethren and sisters from other churches came to be with us; for which we are very thankful.

Among the visitors were Elder and Sister J. W. Shipman, Elder and Sister C. M. Haygood, Elder and Sister W. W.

Fleet, and Sister Lethia Beene. We felt wonderfully blest with the light and liberty that was given these ministers while among us; and we hope they will be spared, and a way made possible for them and others to come and be with us often.

Mt. Olive Church was constituted in Lavaca County, Texas, in June, 1854; which makes her 104 years old. She has had her seasons of prosperity, and seasons of heart-break, but has always been kept by our Heavenly Father's merciful hand. When she had to give up her pastor by death or some other way, another was given — sometimes from a very unexpected direction, (and members in the same way).

Elder J. B. Bowden moved to Texas from Kentucky years ago, not knowing where an Old Baptist church was anywhere near him. He read an article in the Advocate of Truth, written by Deacon J. W. Culpepper on Predestination; which was just in accord with his belief. They were soon corresponding, and made an appointment to go together to a meeting at Martindale, Texas. That day Elder Bowden saw the fulfillment of a dream he had thirteen years before, when he lived in Kentucky, and had no idea of being in Texas.

After than Elder Bowden was pastor of three, and sometimes four churches in this part of Texas; and served Mt. Olive Church until his health failed and he could not go to meetings. Elder E. B. Ault has been our pastor here ever since Elder Bowden passed away. We also have Elder H. L. Ballard, assistant, and Brother Gerald Shipman, licentiate. We feel very encouraged to have younger ones taking up their cross and discharging their duties with the Lord's people.

If these few lines reach anyone who lives in this part of the country who would like to come to see us, or attend our meetings, we would be happy to have them. We are few in number, but are hoping our great Heavenly Father will give us, and all others of like precious faith, sufficient grace to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus unto the end of our journey here, to that blissful home where we hope to be with our precious Saviour forever.

Farewell for this time.
Mrs. Lela Culpepper, Church Clerk

Anabel, Mo.

Dear Editors:

. . . So sorry about Elder Ruston and Spangler's illness, but glad and thankful they are improving. I pray it may be God's will to restore them to health again.

I enjoy the many able articles from the pens of the Editors and all writers of the Signs. I remember reading the experiences of God's little children when I was eleven and twelve years old; then later, when, I hope by God's grace, I was made to understand his work of grace in a poor sinner's heart, it was food and comfort to me. And now at the age of almost eighty-three, I still feast on the precious truths found in its columns. May the dear Lord continue to bless you to send out to comfort and encourage God's little children. I feel so sinful and unworthy of God's blessings to me a poor worm of the dust.

Yours in a precious hope,
Mrs. J. R. McAfee

Marion, Louisiana

Editors of the Signs of the Times,
Dear Brethren:

You will find enclosed a copy of the Memorial in memory of Brother Smead Roberson. Please print it in the Signs.

I certainly do enjoy reading the Signs — it contains some of the most comforting writing I have ever read. Surely the Almighty God is with those dear ones, enabling them to write such com-

forting articles. I do not believe anyone could write as they have unless they were wrought upon by the God of all grace. It must be revealed to anyone before he can understand such glorious truth; and I feel that the reader must be wrought upon by the same power before he can understand and feast upon what is written. When one is wrought upon by the Holy Spirit, then he is made to love and desire it; for it is spiritual food to him.

May the God of all grace enable you to continue publishing this good paper. Farewell in the Lord.

Yours in hope,
L. D. Smith

1215 S. Brighton Ave.
Dallas 8, Texas
January 24, 1958

Dear Editors of the Signs:

May God in his grace and mercy be with you to guide and comfort you as you travel life's road and undertake to preach and write the blessed gospel truth. May God's providence be kind unto you, his grace be comforting, and his spirit be strengthening to you each moment of your travels in this life.

I am enclosing an article recently written by me. You may read it over and if you feel it suitable for publication in the Signs you may publish it. If you do not feel that it is worth taking the space for, or think it not profitable for, the house hold of faith you may return it to me.

Any of my writing which I send to you is at your disposal and I ask you to always watch over me for good and call my mistakes to my attention. I will appreciate it very much. Your comments upon what I write are welcomed. Constructive criticism never hurt any one and I will appreciate you doing just that for me.

May God grace us all to watch over one another for good and not for evil. O Lord give us all the spirit of humbleness that we may each esteem our brother higher than our self.

Let me hear from you any time you have time and feel disposed to write a few lines.

With brotherly love and Christian esteem.

Your unworthy brother in hope,
W. W. Taylor

Dear Editors and Readers of the Signs:

Dearly beloved of the Lord, may the light of God's counsel, the communion of his spirit, and the savor of his grace forever be with you.

As the dawn of a new year appears upon the horizon, let us have a check up: that we may clearly understand what is the condition of our body (the church).

First, we look back and see that God has been gracious, kind, and merciful unto us through the past year. Then we look around and see that never before in the history of man was there a time when the communion of the Holy Ghost, the protection of God's power, and the grace of Christ more sorely needed in the experience of man than now. The world is in a turmoil, and strife, envy, and divisions are on every hand. By the grace of God only are we not consumed. Therefore we all should join in one accord and thank God for his goodness unto the children of men.

When we realize that God has been so good to us, and then read articles and hear conversations which disparage the Old Baptist, we are given a feeling that we should analyze our church situation.

Come my dear Brethren, let us analyze our church which is a body. Let us examine it as a doctor examines a patient. When symptoms of unhealthiness shows up within a person's body, he

goes to a physician. Before the good doctor will treat the patient he wants to know just what the nature of the case is: what part of the body is infected, and what is causing the infection, or disease. This knowledge can be determined by a thorough examination only.

The examining physician needs certain instruments to perform the examination with and he needs a laboratory in which to make tests. When the examination is over and the laboratory tests are all finished, the doctor has found the healthy parts of the body and the diseased ones; he has also found the complaint and the cause thereof. Such an examination shows what the patient needs. It may be surgery, medical treatment, or proper diet, or it could be that all three are needed. To properly assist the one who is still ill there are three things necessary. First, diagnose the case. Second, prescribe the treatment. Third, apply the treatment. These three things must be done if the infected or diseased body is ever to be healthy again.

The Primitive Baptist is a body. The church both visible and invisible is a body. In our body we are and have been for some time having aches and pains which shows us that a check up is needed. The pains are felt throughout the entire body. When the physical body is ill the whole body suffers with the infected member; though it be a foot, a hand, the lungs, or the heart, the head feels the pain, and all the other members sympathize with the infected member and begins to do extra duty to help the afflicted one to overcome its trouble.

Before we start our examination let us ask ourselves if we are as sensible and sympathetic toward our fellow members in the church as the members of our physical body are toward one another. Furthermore we want a capable physician to do the examination. Oh my brethren, are we capable of examining this beloved body, and do we have the proper equipment to do the job?

Come now all true members of the Primitive Baptist body, let us gather around in one accord, all in sympathy with one another. For it is our body that has symptoms of infection. May God qualify us to perform this examination by giving us the Spirit of Christ within our hearts to guide us through the procedure. May we be equipped with hope, faith, and charity that we may perform this scrutiny, hoping for the best, trusting in God for all good things, and showing Christian love and brotherly kindness in every move. We must be experienced in this matter, as well as being close observers, or we cannot properly examine this body. We must realize that we are a part of this body, feeling every pain which it feels. If I know my self I am one of the insignificant members of this body, realizing that the Old Baptist's joys and sorrows are my joys and sorrows. I further realize that this state and condition is my state and condition also. O may God enable us to look upon our beloved body, the Old Baptist church, with sympathy; not in order to find disease and disorder only; but to find what ever there is within the body, good and bad.

Now as we perform our examination we find the Old Baptist to be a people with faults and feelings; but nonetheless a people that we had rather be with than any other people. We find that they have ministers who are preaching the glorious gospel of Christ. We also find among the Old Baptists the warm feeling of Christian love flowing from heart to heart and from breast to breast. Yes, there is also some unpleasant elements showing up among us from time to time. I say among us, for I am one of them. What I say about the Primitive Baptist I am saying it about myself. Some among us say that we are factionized, and have departed from the old order and discipline. Now my dear brethren if the church as a body has departed from something and become divided, it is you and I that have departed and divided; because we are the members that comprise the body. If the body is ill there is disease within its

members. If we are going to find fault with our beloved church, let us consider ourselves lest we also be tempted. (Gal. 6:1) May we also realize that it would be a very poor doctor who always finds his patients to be ill but never locates the cause, or prescribes a cure or treatment for the complaint.

Now let us be honest with ourselves and with our God and admit whether we love the church or not; and if we do love the church we must love one another, for that is what the visible church is. If we do not love our brethren we do not love God, and we lie if we say we do." "If a man say, I love God and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (1 John 4:20) Now with brotherly love in our hearts, faith in our eyes, and hope in the depth of our soul, let us admit that the Old Baptist are divided and that there is envy and strife among us; and let us also freely admit that it is to our shame for it to be that way. We should not get the idea that we are a group of people without fault; but if we are going to diagnose the case we should also locate the trouble and prescribe a cure, or at least a treatment for the complaint. We must also remember that what ever there is wrong with the church the same is wrong with you and me for we are the members of the body (the church). If the body has infection in one of its members, who is it that suffers? It is the whole body.

Now that we admit that we are in pain, are we in sympathy with the infected part? Are we willing to do extra duty to save the diseased or infected member?

Come give ear, O my brethren; and O God, give me power to rightly speak. Is there something wrong with the Primitive Baptist? Are we doing something that we should not do; or are we leaving something undone that we should do? What is wrong with us? O my Lord and my Master! I had better ask what is wrong with me? Yes, what am I doing that I ought not to do? What am I leaving undone that I should do? Yes, I better start this examination with myself. This poor unworthy member of the body may be the very one that has the infection in it.

What would be the status of the Old Baptist if they were all just like me? What would become of the preaching of the gospel if every one of the preachers preached just as I do?

O how sad it would be if every member of the Old Baptist were as imperfect as I am; as full of faults and failings as I am. If all Old Baptists were just like me would there be less envy, strife, and divisions, or would there be more of such? O Lord, let me move away from myself a little while.

Now I see some ministers who are earnestly preaching the gospel with outstanding ability. How sweet and comforting it is to be blessed to hear them preach Christ the way the truth and the life. I also find a band of lovely brethren, sisters, and friends who are endeavoring to walk in the foot steps of Jesus; though they at times make some mistakes, yet they are trying to follow and abide by the teachings of Christ and his Apostles. How happy are the moments when we are blessed to meet with those little groups that love one another for Christ's sake, and are endeavoring to serve him both in word and in deeds, always making a sincere effort to walk in paths of righteousness, praying to God for strength and guidance.

Looking upon our brethren through a microscope of brotherly love, listening to them with a stethoscope of faith, and testing the results in the laboratory of hope, we come out with the manifestations of Christianity, with some trace of infection that cause pain and misery.

What is it that manifests Christianity? There is no vocabulary broad enough to express Christianity. The height of Christianity is Charity: bro-

therly love in the highest degree; and it takes action to set it forth. A God fearing and Christian loving man will see the good in his brethren as well as the bad, and is willing to try to help them over come the bad. A true Christian is eveready to thank God for the good he sees in his fellow brethren. Furthermore he can see his own failings, and is willing to confess his faults to his brethren and ask their forgiveness. He will also willingly go down upon his knees and beg God to forgive him for his sins, shortcomings, and failings.

Now, does our examination show the Primitive Baptist to be a healthy body of Christian people? We have said they preach the gospel of Christ and show the spirit of brotherly kindness, and are endeavoring to follow the teachings of Christ and his Apostles; but we also said that there are some traces of infection within us. Yes, to our sorrow we must admit that we have envy, strife, and divisions among us. Let us every one with an open mind admit that we are factionized, and that it is a shame unto us. Let us also admit that there is envy, and strife among us, and that it is a stigma to our professed Christianity. Because we love this body (the church) so dearly, we are very concerned about our examination showing unhealthiness. Envy, strife, and divisions make it an unhealthy body.

But we have gone no further than the doctor has when he tells a patient that he has a fever, and the fever has made him sick. It is needful to know what is causing the fever. It may be an infection in the blood stream, or an infection in one of the limbs, or some other disorder in the various parts of the body. Whatever it may be, it must be located and a treatment prescribed. If surgery is required the condition is very serious. It may be that the body needs medical treatment rather than surgery, or a careful diet may take care of case. It could be that all three are needful.

We have diagnosed our case as having infections by name, envy, strife, and divisions. Now what is causing the infection? We all know that we are just human, and have our weaknesses and imperfections; but that does not answer our question. The Apostle Paul answers it for us. Let us hear him, "For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envy, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men." (1 Cor. 3:3)

My beloved brethren, carnality is the cause of all of our troubles. It has crept into our members and made the body greviously ill. What are we going to do? One will say: well it is just like God predestinated that it would be. That is true. It is also true that when a man has pneumonia he is just as sick as God predestinated that he would be. (I believe and love the doctrine of unlimited predestination, but I don't have time to discuss that point now.) Another will say, I just don't see why the Old Baptist do not stop doing the way they are doing. Another one will say, well, the Old Baptist are not like they used to be.

Does this type of grumbling help the matter any and does it show Christianity? Do such complaints show real sympathy and brotherly kindness toward our fellow brethren? When we set forth a complaint about the church as a whole we are complaining against every member that comprises its body; our selves included. If the Old Baptist are wrong or in a fallen state, I too am in a fallen state. My name is upon their book and I profess to be one of them.

My brethren, if we are true members of this body we feel every pain and ach^ there is among our members, it matters not which one it is. Our examination has showed us that we are ill. Our symptoms are envy, strife and divisions. It is caused by the dreaded disease of carnality. Now we need to know what part of the body has the infection. Is it the ministry, or is it the deaconship, or is it the membership? What ever part it is we should be very sympathetic toward it, and labor very hard to save

it from amputation; for all of our members are needed. (Gal. 5:15) Can we localize our trouble; that is: can we point out right the very spot that is infected? We read that discipline and order is just about done away with. Well, is there any of us who can go before a local body or church and look them in the face and say you have departed from the old discipline and order; at the same time can we say in detail just why we are saying such a thing? Can any of us go to a local church body and say you have taken in someone that you should have left out, or that you have someone among you that you should cut off? Furthermore can we point our finger at the member of that body that should be cut off or that should have never been taken in?

If we are going to say that there is something wrong, let us say what it is and who it us that is wrong, and then say what to do about it.

Right here I am compelled to look my self over and see just what I look like. Before I undertake to diagnose the complaint of the whole church and prescribe a cure for it, I had better see about this one little insignificant member that is doing this writing. Am I doing all that I do for the purpose of praising God and glorifying his name? Do I love my brethren as myself? Do I treat my brethren as I would like for Christ to be treated? Would I be happy if my brethren should treat me just the way I treat them? O Lord have mercy upon me: carnality is within our members. It is within me. How horrible is this disease which is within our body, the church, the dear Old Baptist. Yea, how painful it is right in my ownself. What is the cure for it? What will cure this dreadful disease, and where shall we apply the treatment? That is, what member of the body shall we administer it unto? I am afraid that all of us have the infection and it must be fought in every individual, beginning with me.

The grace of God is the treatment needed and it must be administered to every one of us by an injection into our hearts, showing forth in the actions of brotherly love in the experience of us all. O God forbid that we fight one another. "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. (Gal. 5:15) No, my dear brethren, we are not wrestling against flesh and blood but against spiritual wickedness in high places. (Eph. 6:12)

O Lord, give us the treatment of brotherly love, which is the quintessence of Christianity. Give us grace to love our neighbor as we love ourself and thus fulfill all the law. (Gal. 5:14) That will stop us from fighting one another and enable us to fight a good fight against spiritual wickedness in high places.

O Lord grace us with the proper equipment to carry on the fight against this dreaded disease we have, and have to face.

We have our case diagnosed, we have the trouble located, the cause determined, and the cure prescribed. Carnality is the disease. We all have the infection about us. The Love of God in an experimental way to the end that we may love one another as we love our selves, is the treatment needed. But now for the application of the treatment. This treatment calls for a cutting off of that which is superfluous, an injection of brotherly kindness, and a proper diet. If those three things are not done the body will never be healthy again and the infection will never be killed.

Is there present a qualified physician to do the operation, and are we willing to abide by his instructions? There can be no question about Christ being the physician; but he is not here in person to treat our case. His followers under the guidance of his Spirit must carry on the works of Christianity. Here we see clearly that we must all enter into this fight against carnality, against spiritual wickedness in high places. We must stand fighting a good fight of faith. To stand and fight we must have

the whole armor of God about us, that we may be able to withstand in the evil day. (Eph. 6:13) O Lord, grace us with thine armor, which is: to have our loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of rightousness; and our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith we shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. May we take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all preserverance and supplication for all saints. (Eph. 6:14-18)

When graced with this armor we have all we need. We have protection, we have the right spirit, and the weapon with which to defend, and we have a proper diet. Let us all feed upon the word of God, and if we must do any cutting off let us do it with the word of God also.

O God, grace us with this armor, that we may not fight a carnal warfare but grace us to realize that the way we treat one another is the way we are treating Christ. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me," said Christ, (Mat. 25:40) speaking unto the sheep. Likewise he spoke to the goats and said: "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." (Mat. 25:45) O God have mercy upon me: The way I treat my brethren is the way I am treating my dear Saviour.

Come, come, my dear brethren, let us all join in with one accord and pray with and for one another. O, let us all look at ourselves and see if we are, personally and individually the member who has the infection that is causing the aches and pains in the body, or perhaps become an irritated sore that will finally have to be cut off by the physician. My Lord and my God, for Christ's sake grant that we be not cut off, but grace us with the treatment of brotherly love and Christian respect that we may fulfill all the law in that we love our neighbor as we love ourselves. (Gal. 5:14)

With Christian love and dear esteem.

Your unworthy brother in hope,
(Elder) W. W. Taylor
1216 S. Brighton Ave.
Dallas 8, Texas

Lillie, La.

Dear Brother Woodrow Hudson:

I have just received, and appreciate your good letter very much. Glad to hear from you again, and hope that you are well and doing well. We are about as well as usual at this time, I believe, although we have had our 22nd grandchild born to Virgil and his wife this week, and they both seem to be doing as well as could be expected. We have also had our second great grandchild, who is about two months and a half old; so you can see I am beginning to feel a little older than I once was.

As to your scriptural inquiry, I feel very unworthy and insufficient and incapable to give the explanation that I am sure could be had from those who have been gifted to speaking and writing the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. I too, do not feel that there is any inspired Scripture that contradicts another, yet there are different phases of doctrine, which may appear to us contradictory, unless it be revealed to us by His Spirit.

Take for an example 1 John 1:8. It says, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." Now look at this one in 1 John 3:9: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." Now I don't believe any one just in a state of nature, without the Spirit of God, could offer any information whatsoever, to show any real harmony between the two. But, I believe in the proper understanding there is perfect harmony. I don't know wheth-

er or not I am blessed to show the harmony between them, but if I am blessed of the Lord with the light and leadership of His Spirit, I believe I can and will do so, otherwise I will just have to go down in the fog of darkness and confusion.

Now, I believe the way to manifest this scriptural solution to the seemingly contradiction between these two passages, which were both written by the Apostle John, is to begin with the new or second birth of God's children, as it is also set forth by this same eminent Apostle John in St. John 3:1-10. Jesus, according to the writing of the Apostle John, said to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Therefore, we see from this that man in his depraved nature cannot see the kingdom of God. It is something that is done for the Children of God, that they are able to see, feel, and partake of those things that pertain to the Kingdom of God.

Even after the Savior had told Nicodemus, he did not know any of these truths as yet, and he did not know how such a state and condition as being born again could be brought about. He could not see anything but natural things, and so he said, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?" Jesus in reply said, "Verily verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." Then He said in the next verse, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." And then next He said, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again." So we must consider the born-again children of God, as consisting of a combination of flesh and of Spirit.

Let's go to Paul's letter to Romans 7:18. "For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Then, Paul here states that this sin and condemnation was dwelling in his flesh, and it was such that he could not do that which he desired to do. Then he says, "For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do." Let's now quote the next verse, "Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me."

Paul makes a peculiar distinction here, which I think will be a great light on the solution of this seeming contradiction. He shows that he is not the one who does this sin, and the things that he would not, but sin that dwelleth in him; and that sin was in his flesh.

So we find that Paul was brought to delight in the law of God after the inward man, and this term, INWARD MAN, signifies that there is an outward man, and he was made to cry out, "O wretched man that I am!" (after the flesh) "who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And, the concluding verse: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with flesh the law of sin."

So we can readily see from all this, that Paul was both a condemned person in the flesh, and one who served the law of God through Jesus Christ our Lord with his mind. But, through Jesus Christ in his mind, he served the law of God; but after the outward man (the flesh), he served the law of sin, and he has already denounced his flesh, with the mind, and has said in and through the Spirit and righteousness of Jesus Christ: "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." So we can see from this that there is in every one who is born of God a very duel personality, called the inner and the outer man, also, the old man and the new man. I quote: "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." (2 Cor. 4:16) We see two men outlined here in this passage: One condemned, and the other renewed day by day. Now I want to quote you Romans 6:6:

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

Let us consider the state of all those for whom the Lord died to save them from sin. Each of them are born again, else they could not see the Kingdom of God. How are they so born? They are born a second time, if you please, and after that birth, they consist of the new man, and the old man; the inner man and the outer man; the flesh and the spirit. One is completely covered under sin, guilt and condemnation; the other is born of God and knows God, when the Lord reveals himself to them. There is also the Natural man (body) and there is a Spiritual man (body). Read 1 Cor. 15:44-45.

Now considering all this, seemingly to me the only solution of it is that the children of God are duel in what composes them: they are condemned in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. They have no hope in anything the flesh has or that it can do, because: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things ye would." (Gal. 5:17)

So then, I believe all the condemnation that the Lord's people ever feel here in this life after they are born of the Spirit, is that of the sin and condemnation of the flesh, which is contrary to that of the quickened Spirit or the inward man, which is born of the Spirit, and which cannot sin, because it is born of God; and the seed of this Spiritual Birth remaineth in him, so that he cannot sin because it is born of God. What a great consolation this is; it is the only basis for a hope, and is through Christ for Heaven and immortal glory.

But the flesh is not born of the Spirit, for it is written: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14) Please read the next verse also, which shows there is a sense in which the children of God have the mind of Christ; and if so, then there is a sweet hope, because this mind of Christ is imputed through His righteousness and justification unto the new man, or the inward man, but the outward man (or natural man or old man) is not subject to the law of God, as I have already shown by reference.

When the Apostle Paul cried, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death," he felt a great state of condemnation, but it was through that body of death. In another place he calls it the dead body. (Rom. 8:10) "And if Christ be in you, the BODY is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness." We can see plainly and scripturally that the bodies of God's children are dead because of sin; but thanks to His precious and heavenly name, the Spirit is life because of Righteousness through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now, here is the text you ask about: 1 John 3:20-21. "For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God." The only solution that I think we are given concerning this matter is in and through Jesus Christ, His blessed righteousness, and His precious and cleansing blood. And the Lord's little children are given a very great and heavy feeling of sin and condemnation when they are quickened into life, and they are also given a sweet hope of that glorious and final and eternal deliverance which is given them in the inward man. True enough, they certainly are brought to the heavy and grievous feeling of condemnation, and are brought to feel condemned, and they realize that God is much greater than their hearts, and that He knows much better than they do as to just how great a sinner we are.

Yet, through Jesus Christ, that perfect Lamb of God, who was crucified on Calvary, they are given this hope

and confidence towards God. For Christ Jesus is the hope of God's people, and is said to be the only Name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. (Acts 4:12) The only access we have towards God is alone through Jesus Christ our Lord; for He is the High Priest, and the one acceptable offering, whereby the people of God are set free; and through and by Him we have confidence towards God.

Now Paul seemingly comes to our rescue on this point, when He says, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." (Rom. 8:1) Paul formerly said, "Who was delivered for our offences and was raised again for our justification." (Rom. 4:25) So we can see from all this (and many scriptures) that Jesus died for their sins, and was raised again for their justification, and it forever excludes eternal condemnation and gives them that sweet and precious hope and confidence towards God through Jesus, the Blessed and all powerful Savior and Redeemer of His people.

(Concluded next month)

DONATIONS TO THE ENDOWMENT FUND

Mrs. Lester Haning, W. Va.....$ 5.00
Mrs. Anthony McClanahan, W. Va..... 1.00
Martha E. MacBride, N. J..... 10.00

UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

The 1958 session of The Upper Country Line Association is appointed to be held with the Reidsville Church, Reidsville, N. C., July 19, 20, and 21, 1958.

The association will be held in Smother's Warehouse. Those coming from the North or South follow the 29 Highway By-pass to the intersection of No. 87 and 29. Those coming from the East or West will follow No. 87 to intersection of 29 and 87. The location is just West of town.

A cordial invitation is extended to our ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

D. V. Spangler, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION will convene, the Lord willing, with Union Church, Pittsylvania County, Virginia, on Friday before the second Sunday in July, and continue three days (July 11, 12, 13, 1958).

Those traveling on Route 29 turn West on Route 40 in Gretna and go to Highway 605, go a short distance and watch for sign on left. Those traveling Highway 220, turn East on Route 40 in Rocky Mount, and go to same sign.

Our correspondents, brethren, and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

H. M. Mattox

UPPER COUNTRY LINE UNION

The June 5th Sunday session of the UPPER COUNTRY LINE UNION is appointed to meet with Gilliam's Primitive Baptist Church, located on Highway 87 between Burlington and Reidsville, N. C.

We invite our sister churches, and those among our correspondence both ministers and brethren to visit with us.

(Elder) J. W. Gilliam, Pastor
Freeman Somer, Church Clerk

CHANGES IN CHURCH NOTICES

The **OLIVE AND HURLEY CHURCH AT SHOKAN, N. Y.** meets each second Sunday at 1:30 P. M. They do not now hold meetings on the 4th Sundays.

The **CHURCH AT FORT WORTH, TEXAS,** has changed their meeting place to 3629 8th Avenue, and meet each First Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Take College Avenue bus to Butler and Ryon, and go one block West, and one block North to meeting place.

PLEASE NOTE

All associational and other notices must reach us five weeks before desired publication date. Please keep this in mind. — Editors

Danville, Virginia **June, 1958**

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 5, Box 332F **Danville, Va.**

EDITORIAL

ISAIAH 45:1.

"Thus saith the Lord, to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut."

Sister Harriett L. Gray of Houston, Texas, has requested we write upon the two-leaved gates mentioned in the above text.

In doing so we shall exercise the privilege of enlarging upon the whole verse at the head of our article. We feel that we have no right to take any Scripture from its context, and therefore must consider the two leaved gates, relative to the conquests of Cyrus. Most ancient cities had gates which were strongly fortified and yet wide enough for the populace and troops to pass in or out of the city. It is said that there were many gates of brass in the city of Babylon. Gates where the river Euphrates entered the city and where it had its exit must have been very wide, and there were gates where streets came up to the river and they all were closed at night or when they were under attack. There were also gates to the palace which must have been guarded at all hours. Babylon takes its name from Babel which means confusion, and to the people of God, when led of the Spirit, it is also a type of destruction. We are told that "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat."

The Lord's people had been carried captive and they had not power to deliver themselves, and would have been swallowed up in their captivity just as the Lord's people would be swallowed up of this world, but for the purpose and mercy of God. THUS SAITH THE LORD cannot be overthrown, and there is a thus saith the Lord concerning His people and concerning all flesh. In our text God speaks of a man who was yet unborn, who would conquer Babylon, and while the Jews were in Babylon, He calls them His captives and that Cyrus would let them go "Not for price nor reward." Isaiah 45:13.

The various names given to Cyrus as, the righteous man from the East, Isaiah 41:2. my anointed, Isaiah 45:1. my shepherd, Isaiah 44:28. and the ravenous bird from the East, Isaiah 46:11. do not make him a subject of grace, but rather set him forth as a man raised of God to execute the righteous judgments of God, anointed a king, not by his fellow-men, but as a sovereign act of God. He was appointed God's shepherd to direct and provide for God's people to leave Babylon and trek about eight hundred miles back to Judah, leaving Cyrus in his natural state, which is spoken of as "a ravenous bird from the East." He was not changed any more than the ravens were changed into clean birds because God caused them to carry, morning and evening, bread and flesh to the prophet Elijah.

I Kings 17:6. God upholding Cyrus's right hand would be enough to keep him

from doing anything contrary to His will. Cryrus had overcome many kings before he came to Babylon, the wealthiest of them being Croesus, who, though not mentioned in the Bible, ruled over the Lydian empire, of which Sardis was the capital, and there were many kings supporting Croesus.

Cyrus had no desire or craving for gold and silver. It was true of him as Isaiah, in Chapter 13:17. says of the Medes, "They shall not regard silver and as for gold, they shall not delight in it." He swept through kingdoms, conquering as he went, until he came with his armies before Babylon, which was a great city, well fortified and capable of standing with confidence a long siege. The Babylonians were able to raise much of their food within their walls. For quite a long time, (some historians say for two years) his armies were stationed around the city. They were laughed and jeered at from her walls, but during this time Cyrus had large trenches dug, and his plan was to turn the waters of the Euphrates from going through the city. "A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up." Jeremiah 50:38. There was a low spot called a morass, perhaps the place from which the material came to build the tower of Babel, and the trenches led to this spot. Surely God had blinded their eyes, or those in the city would have known what was taking place.

In Jeremiah 50:24 God says, "I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and THOU WAST NOT AWARE." How true God's word is "that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." Through their revelry and drunkenness the guards probably forgot to close the gates, for God had said "I will open the two leaved gates before him and the gates shall not be shut." In Daniel 5, it tells "Bel-shazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand." This impious man, inflamed with wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels, taken by Nebuchadnezzar from the house of God, which was in Jerusalem, that the king and his princes, his wives and his concubines, might drink therein. "They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.

In the SAME HOUR came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick, upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, SO THAT THE JOINTS OF HIS LOINS WERE LOOSED, and his knees smote one against another." The king was alarmed and cried aloud, for neither he nor his wise men could, with all their wisdom, read that which God had written, whether it be in judgment or mercy. God had His servant Daniel there who could read it, even though there was nothing but judgment in it. What confusion reigned in the palace! Drunkenness and frolicing had taken full hold of the city. The hour that judgment was pronounced by God's prophet was the hour that Cyrus commanded an advance, the water was turned into its new channels and the troops and horsemen marched into the city up the bed of the river. The two leaved gates were left open that night.

Jeremiah, speaking of this very event, says "One post shall run to meet another, to show the king of Babylon that the city is taken at one end." Jeremiah 51:31. The waters, pouring through the new channel, filled an area of fifty miles in circumference and made it seem to look as in Jeremiah 51:42. "The sea is come up to Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof." Nothing could stop their victorious advance and what had taken place at the palace left them paralysed, and Daniel tells us, "In that night was Bel-shazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain." Thus Cyrus, whose right hand was upheld to

accomplish God's purpose in overthrowing Bel-shazzar, saw that the two leaved gates were left open, and without doubt, was given a mind and determination that the gates should not be shut.

There has much been written about Cyrus that we need not speak of here, but to make it easier for the reader to understand following events, we will say that Cyrus's mother had a brother whose name was Cyaxares, who had thrown in his lot with Cyrus. He, being an uncle of Cyrus, was made king and took the name of Darius the Mede. He was threescore and two years old when he acsended the throne and reigned two years, being in full sympathy with Cyrus in keeping the gates open for the return of the captivity. Brevity demands that we omit many things that can be read in secular history about Cyrus and this period, but what concerns the children of Israel during the reign of various kings from Darius and Cyrus to Artaxerxes is covered by Ezra and Nehemiah and other prophets. During the reign of those kings the gates were left open for the return of the captives. Only during the seven months that a usurper was on the throne (Gomates, who called himself by the name of Artaxerxes) was the work of building the temple stopped.

In the second year of Darius (son of Hyspastes) who had overthrown the usurper, the prophets Haggai and Zechariah encouraged the people to continue the work, which was immediately reported to the authorities by their foes who were always spying on them. Ezra tells of search being made and the written proclamation of Cyrus being found, and so the work went on. Darius not only encouraged them, but also demanded that from the very places of those who would hinder the work, that they supply them with tribute, with cattle for sacrifices and with wheat, salt, wine and oil, and commanded also that whosoever would hinder the work should be put to death. Read Ezra 6. The work went on so that the temple was finished ready for worship in the sixth year of Darius and in the twenty-first year after its commencement.

We have felt for years that Ezra and Nehemiah were lovely characters, and the more we read of them the more wonderful they seem. They were zealous for the worship to be according to the pattern that Moses saw in the mount. They insisted upon Israelites making no affinity with the nations around them. They stand as an example to all true servants of God to-day who would help and encourage God's humble people who would come out of Babylon, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, to go to the Church where God's honour dwelleth. Surely the zeal and integrity of both these men, with their determination to stand and worship according to the word of their king is needed to-day in most places. To return to Cyrus and his proclamation. 2 Chronicles 36:23. "Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and He hath charged me to build Him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all His people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up."

Here in Cyrus we have a type of our Lord Jesus, who is King of kings and Lord of lords, to whom God said "Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Without Cyrus there would have been no deliverance, the Jews, the natural brethren of Jesus, would long ago have been swallowed up among the nations of the earth, but that could not be, for their God was able to perform the things His prophets had spoken. Without Jesus there would be none that could ever sing the song of the redeemed. Our Lord Jesus declared that His Father had given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given Him.

Babylon of old was a type of BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS. Revelation 17:5. This city

seems to-day like a creature from the deep that has its tentacles spread all over the earth, diffusing the poison of error into every corner of the globe. Whether it be in the press or over the air or in public assemblies the name of God is blasphemed. The sacred vessels of the temple, the prophets, apostles and writers of God's word, which were used by God's sent servants to pour out to His chosen people, are now in the public press as well as in public places, claimed by an apostate church, claiming that she alone has the right to be the interpreter of the Word of God.

We would here say that "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." His Son who said "Upon this rock (of divine revelation, not on Peter, who was but a stone) I will build my Church; and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." Whenever our Lord is revealed in a person, wherever they are, they will no more be at home in Babylon, any more than Daniel was. He may be kept there for the purpose of his God, but he will pray and praise his God with his windows open toward Jerusalem, morning, noon and night, and in his worship he will feel that he would rather his right hand forget her cunning than he should cease to remember Jerusalem above his chiefest joy. There were many left in Babylon, and we would not be their judge. None would have found their way out of Babylon of old had it not been God's will and pleasure for them to do so. There are many, as of old, who will live and die in Babylon. That is not our business. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." Paul is not speaking of those who blaspheme the name of Jesus. You may be sure that those whose eyes and ears were open to the name and purpose of Cyrus who were God's children, would realize that when a king who is absolute, says "LET," that word has the power in it of the One who speaks.

Naming the name of Jesus is a sweet and blessed favour that His children alone enjoy. "And they that know Thy name will put their trust in thee." Esther was in Babylon, so was her cousin Mordecai, left there for the purpose of God. How wonderful for such who might be left in Babylon, though they could not sing the Lord's song in a strange land, yet to have evidence enough that their God is a prayer hearing and answering God. That He hears the cry of the destitute and will not despise their prayer. The plan of their enemy Haman was well-laid, he would destroy them all at once, but the Lord controls the lot that is cast into the lap, and while his plan was made in the first month, the lot fell on the last month of the year. Thus, in the meantime, Haman was hung on the gallows he had made for Mordecai, and there was still plenty of time for the Jews, in all the provinces, to be warned to defend themselves. Such evidence of the wisdom and power of a sovereign God "makes e'en the captive's portion sweet."

Those who went on the journey with Ezra and Nehemiah were but a remnant. They seem to us like those few who are chosen to go forward and do the bidding of their Lord. There are many dangers along the road, in professing a hope in Christ they have told what their hope is and have confessed that they are strangers and foreigners, that is, they do not belong to this world.

The 18th chapter of Revelation, which tells of the apostasy and final overthrow of modern Babylon, is not a prophecy given to us by one of the prophets, but it is "the Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto HIM, to show unto His servants things which MUST shortly come to pass." In verse 4 of this chapter, John said, "And I heard another voice (a voice of mercy) from heaven saying, COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE, that ye be not partakers

of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

G. R.

EXPLANATION

We try to avoid continuing an article from one issue to the next but sometimes spacing difficulties make it necessary.

Due to the increasing number of obituaries received, we are somewhat behind in their publication. All will appear, as nearly as we can, in the order received. — Editors

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"And Joshua died, being an hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance, and all that generation were gathered to their fathers. And there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim." (Judges 2:8-11)

Dear Brother Chick: — Please give your views on the above text. Is it of any practical importance now? I have known Old Baptist doctrine and practice to pass away in some communities where the old ministers and members had died and passed away, by the arising of young and PROGRESSIVE men. Please write us a little sermon on the above words. I am now getting old, and will soon be done with these things, but I believe the Lord will ever have men on earth who are opposed to PROGRESSION.

Your brother,
Reuben P. Thompson
Shelburn, Indiana

How is it possible that we should give a better explanation of the above text than our aged brother has already done in the few words he has written? Certainly the things which were written aforetime were written for our learning, upon whom, says Paul, the ends of the world have come. Brother Thompson is right in saying there can be no progression in the doctrine or order of Christ. Progression is deformity, and retrogression is, to be dwarfed. Still, as our brother has desired it, and as the text and connection are full of lessons, we do not feel to decline trying to do as he desires. One thing is evident, viz.: that to avoid the deformity of progression, and the dwarfing of retrogression, it is most needful that we all give earnest heed to the things that are spoken in the word of God, lest at any time we should let them slip. To grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth is not to depart from the truth at any time. This is neither progression or retrogression, but it is to seek to believe and to walk according to the word of God. Both the doctrine and practice of the word are to be diligently sought after with all prayer and supplication at all times. In believing and walking according to the word alone can God be glorified and the good of Zion secured.

The book of Judges is one long commentary upon the weakness and proneness of the Lord's people to depart from him, and the ease with which they are tempted to go astray, and the fatherly chastisements which the Lord deals out to them to restore them, until they are once more humbled and repentant. Again and again they departed, as recorded in this book, and again and again they were brought to cry to God in their distress and captivity, and again and again the Lord sent men to judge them and to lead them out from bondage; still they continued to forget him and his works. The Scripture mentioned by our aged brother records the beginning of these departures. All along through this wonderful history we learn what a complete failure man is in following the Lord when left to himself, and how constantly we all need grace lest we stray; thus the obedient are excluded from all boasting over the disobedient. If Israel at any time walked obediently it was shown that this resulted from no goodness within them at all; they were taught by all these things to know that if obedient it was not of themselves, but of God. Paul could say, "I labored more abundantly than they

all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." All boasting then is excluded, not only as regards the matter of final salvation, but also as regards all our present life of obedience and service. While we, like Israel, eat the good of the land if we are willing and obedient, yet all our willingness and obedience arises from indwelling grace, and is not of our ownselves at all. The good of the land is bestowed as a mark of grace, and the obedience which is connected with this eating and drinking is also another mark of grace.

We are also taught in this wonderful book the dangers of prosperity, of dwelling at ease and safety. When Jeshurun waxed fat he kicked. It was always so with Israel, and it is so now with all the Lord's people, none of us can seem to endure prosperity. In prosperity we forget God, the giver of all. We are not told how it was with Job before he was afflicted, but we do know that after he was afflicted he said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." After he was afflicted still more he said, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Still further on he said in his affliction, "He performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him." David said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." Again, he said, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." Paul said, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen." All these testimonies of holy men of old tell us of the benefits of affliction, and of the dangers of ease. It was said in the old time, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." Still further, we are taught by all this record of the Lord's dealings with Israel that it is with Israel alone that he thus deals. True, afflictions come upon all men, but all men are not exercised thereby. All men suffer pain, sickness, death; all nations suffer calamities of various sorts, but the people of God learn by these things what they have been prone to forget. The Lord dealt, as we are told, with Israel as he did not deal with any other people. Afflictions were chastisements to them; afflictions reminded them of a Father's love and care for them; afflictions brought them to the Lord in confession, and in pleading for mercy and for cleansing; affliction does not thus result with any other people. As the heat of the sun hardens clay and softens wax, so the unbelieving are hardened by affliction and blaspheme, while the child of God is humbled and caused to remember his departures, and to confess his sin before God. They are the wax and the unregenerate are the clay; the one is hardened and the other softened. To one the preaching of the cross is the savor of life unto life, and to the other it is the savor of death unto death. The one is driven away by the affliction, the other is drawn near. One goes out and hangs himself, the other goes out and weeps bitterly. The one says, Turn again with me that I may have favor with the people, the other says, I have sinned. God is in the affliction of the one, he is not seen in the affliction of the other. The one beholds the Father's face in all his sore chastisement, the other though filled with calamity sees not God in it; or if he does, it is as one like himself, angry and acting as a stern judge, and no love can arise in his heart toward the source of his afflictions. But the child of God beholding the Father's love in it, kisses the rod and blesses God.

We see also how needful it is that the people of God should have sound teaching, and sound practice held out before them, by their teachers and shepherds. God has appointed some to go in and out before his people. Timothy was one of these, and to him Paul gave strict charge, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." —

1 Tim. 4-16. Again he said to the same beloved Timothy, "Study to show thyself approved unto God." According to the narrative of which we are writing, we see Joshua and the elders with him leading the people not only over Jordan and into Canaan, driving out all their foes and destroying them, but also teaching them by word and by practice, or example, that God alone was to be obeyed and trusted in. These men whom God had raised up among them were steadfast, and stern, and strict, and allowed nothing that was contrary to God to abide among them. As long as they lived the people followed them, as they followed God. Now Joshua was gathered to his fathers, and all that generation passed away which had with him seen the wonders of the wilderness, and another generation had come on the stage of action; these knew not the Lord or his works, which he had done for Israel. This cannot mean that they had never heard the story, as told by their fathers, but they had not seen these things for themselves. We must see things for ourselves if we are to know God or his works at all. The knowledge of their fathers was not knowledge to them. All that their fathers said about all this wonderful work of God was but heresay to them. They must know for themselves, and they must know in the only way in which any one can know, viz.: by bitter experience of human weakness, and failure, and of the need of God's power and mercy and grace to save. This generation, as their fathers had once done, departed into idolatry. No man can keep himself in the knowledge and love of God; and most surely no man can bring himself into that knowledge and love. Now by failure and by chastisement that generation was brought to repentance once more, and then in prosperity they again departed, and then again chastisement came until God raised up some deliverer to break their bondage. Thus Israel was humbled and abased, and God was exalted. These are most needful lessons. How little could Israel boast over the idolatrous nations around them after such restorations. To God must they give all the praise; his mercy and not their obedience had restored them and made them to differ from others.

What an evil thing it is to depart from the living and true God. This, all these lessons do teach us in this day. There have been departures from God and godliness all the way along. Faithful pastors have passed away, and aged saints have gone home, as our brother has said, and sometimes grievous wolves have crept in, not sparing the flock. Paul saw this, and forewarned the churches. "I know this," he said, "that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock." This was a grief to him inexpressible, and he sought to warn the flock as one who was faithful and would if possible shield them from the inroads that were to come. No doubt this warning thus given did abide in the minds of some, and so these grievous wolves did not harm them. These wolves would seek to devour their faith, their doctrine and their order as churches, and leave nothing that was heavenly among them. False doctrine and practice contrary to the word of God, would be the bait which they would use, cloaked with an appearance of sanctity: wolves, not in their own proper clothing, but in sheep's clothing. These would profess more godliness perhaps than others, but within were only ravenous for the destruction of the flock, and the works of all such would eat as doth a canker, and overthrow the faith of some. These wolves were not so much open persecutors, though they would proceed to this also when the time seemed ripe, but they were false teachers, teachers of false doctrine under the form of true doctrine, of false practice under the form of true practice; that is, we mean they would not openly profess to desire any departure, but rather would profess still greater zeal for the good of Zion and the glory of God. Many, we are told, followed their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth was evil

spoken of. Often has this been repeated all along the ages past. In the text, we have only one instance of what has constantly been occurring among the people of God. Nearly a century ago the same thing began to take place in our churches. That "Baptists might rise from the dunghill and take their proper place among other denominations," the doctrine of general atonement began to be taught, and appeals to the ungodly to come and be saved, and anxious-benches, and protracted meetings, with all the excitement that could be aroused, and then Sunday Schools as nurseries for the Church, and Theological seminaries, and Missionary societies, and Mite societies, and many other things were put in practice. All this was to exalt the church into the minds of men. The teachings of old soldiers of the cross were forgotten and cast aside as being behind the time, progressive religion became fashionable. What was the result? Vital godliness declined, the new birth was seldom mentioned, the atonement was ignored, and the grace of God was but little named. At the end separation could but follow, and the people of God would no longer touch the unclean things.

In these later years other things have sprung up by means of those who have not seen the wonders of God in deliverance of his people from the Egypt of this world. The generation that arose after Joshua, and those who came out of Egypt with him, were passed away and none remembered all the wonder-working power of God. These were they that departed into idolatry then. So, in these later years, men who had never come up out of Egypt, or if they had, belonged to the mixed multitude (see Exodus 12:38; Numbers 11:4) and have not seen the work of the Lord indeed, have sought to build up the church by ways contrary to the simple word of God; and judgments have followed where such things have gained a foothold at all times. The Means doctrine, as it has been called, that is, that the preaching of the gospel is a means of quickening sinners dead in sin into divine life, has been taught, and then Missionism in another form, viz.: that the church is, as a church, called to preach the gospel to every creature; and a federal government of the churches, and a consolidation of all our periodicals under one management, this management to be chosen by the churches of the whole country, have been taught. But we rejoice to be able to say that all these last things have made but little headway among us, so far as we know. We rejoice, too, that stern rebukes have been ministered by many faithful brethren from all over the land. We rejoice that the old soldiers have lived to the present time, so that they could bear faithful witness to the wonders that God hath wrought, and thus warn the people to trust in no other, and to refuse all idols from whatever source they come. We do trust that the faithful Lord of our fathers will still abide with us, and make us willing to be the least of all nations, and to count the favor of God more than all the numbers and riches of this world.

In conclusion we will but add that as Israel suffered when they sought after idols, so shall we when we go after them. Let us beware of all that partakes of the works of the flesh, and be found steadfast in believing.

We leave these thoughts for the consideration of our aged brother. May they do no harm, but rather good, is our desire.

(Editorial by Elder H. A. Chick, September 15, 1905. Republished by request.)

MINUTES OF PRESBYTERY

Pilgrim Rest Church
Taylor Co. Texas
December 15, 1957

Pursuant to a call by Pilgram Rest Church for a Presbytery to meet on the above date for the purpose of the Ordination of Brother L. M. Hammit to the full work of the Ministry, the

following Elders and Deacons met and organized themselves into a Presbytery. Elders: Elder R. W. Rhodes, Elder W. W. Taylor, Elder J. W. Shipman, Elder C. M. Haygood. Deacons: A. A. Chambers, J. T. Beene, J. W. Tidewell.

The Presbytery elected Elder R. W. Rhodes, Moderator, and C. M. Haygood, Clerk.

Moderator called for the candidate, whereupon spokesman A. A. Chambers presented Brother Hammit to the Presbytery.

After due examination of Brother L. M. Hammit as to deportment, qualifications, and the state of God's gift and calling to the gospel ministry to the satisfaction of the Presbytery, the Presbytery proceeded with the Ordination as follows:

The Presbytery selected Elder J. W. Shipman to word the prayer and Elder W. W. Taylor to deliver the charge. The ordination was then conducted by the laying on of hands with prayer by Elder J. W. Shipman. The charge was delivered by Elder W. W. Taylor.

We commend Elder L. M. Hammit to all orthodox and orderly Baptist as being sound in doctrine, careful in his department, and humble and conscientious in the display of God's gift of the ministry in him.

Right hand of official fellowship was given Elder L. M. Hammit by the members of the Presbytery. Also the right hand of fellowship was given by (A) Members of Pilgrim Rest Church, (B) Visiting Brethren, (C) friends. Elder Hammit was then delivered back to the Church a duly ordained Minister of the Gospel by the Presbytery; and received by the Church.

Motion and second made to present each member of presbytery with a copy of the minutes of the Presbytery.

Minutes of the Presbytery read and approved; and the Presbytery was dissolved in order with prayer by Elder L. M. Hammit.

Elder R. W. Rhodes, Moderator
Elder C. M. Hayood, Clerk

OBITUARIES

SARAH E. TRAWICK

The subject of this sketch was born June 25, 1884, near Dothan, Alabama; and joined Pilgrim's Rest Primitive Baptist Church in early life. She married T. E. Trawick fifty-four years ago, who not long afterwards became a deacon. For the past thirty-nine years they had been members of Wright's Creek Church, and were faithful in the cause of Christ. The writer served as her pastor for many years and knew her as a true mother in Israel. Greatly shall we miss her in the church and in the home. She had been in failing health for several years; and the death angel called gently March 8th, and she fell asleep.

Funeral services were held in Bethlehem Church, Dothan, Alabama, by Mr. W. S. Williams and Elders E. R. Sorrells, A. B. Chumney, W. J. Harrison, and J. J. Collins. The latter used as a theme Proverbs 31:20-31, especially, "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all." Interment was in Bethlehem Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of floral offerings.

She is survived by her aged husband; two daughters: Mrs. Eva Culverhouse, and Mrs. Elizabeth Hughes; four grandchildren and one great grandchild; two sisters: Mrs. L. F. Bledsole, and Mrs. A. P. Cobb; three brothers: J. A., J. C., and E. T. Underwood; and other relatives.

Truly a great believer in Christ has gone to the Paradise of God.

Her pastor,
(Elder) J. J. Collins

MRS. J. A. HERNDON

Sister Zilphia Whitley Herndon, the widow of Elder J. A. Herndon, passed away in North Carolina Memorial Hospital at Chapel Hill, N. C., Tuesday, November 12, 1957, at the age of 82. She was born in Johnston County, July 9, 1875, the daughter of Nancy Jane Lane Whitley and William Gillingham Whitley. She was graduated from Turlington Institute in 1895 and taught school for a number of years in Smithfield, N. C.

In February, 1898, she was married to Elder J. A. Herndon and as a bride came from Johnston County to Durham. She moved her church membership from Old Union Church in Johnston County to the Primitive Baptist Church in Durham, September 14, 1899. She remained a faithful member of the church as long as she lived. Elder Herndon preceded her in death in 1952. During his forty-two years service as Pastor of the Roxboro Primitive Baptist Church, Sister Herndon was a faithful companion and devoted wife. When his eyesight failed in 1940, she guided him about in his travels to his churches. In his physical blindness she was his eyes. Her devotion and faithfulness remained during Elder Herndon's long and painful illness. She was at his call and by his side day and night to the end with patience and love. Although physically frail and afflicted, the Lord provided her with the necessary strength. Sister Herndon was modest. She trusted and loved the Lord, and she had said many times, "I am ready to go." In her own last and brief illness, we praise

God for his mercy, that she did not for long suffer pain.

Funeral services were held at the Durham Primitive Baptist Church by Elder D. V. Spangler, Pastor. Burial was in the old section of Maplewood Cemetery, Durham, N. C.

Written by her daughter,
Mrs. Edwin S. Lanier

Sister Herndon was gifted with loyalty and steadfastness which were an inspiration to all the members of the Durham Church, and her modest demeanor and humble spirit were a lovely example to the younger members of the church. We feel confident that the hope of eternal life she carried in her heart has now become for her a blessed reality; and that, even now, her spirit is feasting on the smiles of her Lord.

"The world can never give
The bliss for which we sigh;
Tis not the whole of life to live,
Nor all of death to die.
Beyond this vale of tears,
There is a life above,
Unmeasured by the flight of years,
And all that life is love."

May this bliss be hers to enjoy eternally.

By request,
Catherine M. Copley

DORA M. TINDELL

Mrs. Dora M. Tindell died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Jewell Sorrels, March 4, in Hartford, Alabama. She was seventy-six years of age.

On February 23rd, when the writer came home from meeting, he had a message to visit her and hold a service. At the close of prayer, she asked for a home with Mt. Giliad Church, and arrangements were made for her to unite that night. She lived so happily in her firm belief in One who makes no mistake. On March 4th, the angel called, and Sister Tindell answered the heavenly summons.

Funeral services were held at her beloved Mt. Giliad on March 5th, with Eldres F. A. Collins and J. J. Collins officiating. The body was tenderly laid to rest beside her husband, W. B. Tindell, who preceded her in death about three years. She is survived by three sons: Weldon, of Malvern, Ala., Shelton, of Slocomb, and Jack, of Hartford; three daughters: Mrs. Lola Mae Justice, Mrs. Jewell Sorrells, and Mrs. Inez Fondren, all of Hartford. Also by one sister, Mrs. Kinsaul, Panama City, Fla.; and three brothers: Alto and Homer McGowan, Dothan, Ala., and Charlie McGowan, Samson, Ala.; and several grandchildren and great grandchildren.

She sleeps peacefully beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

(Elder) J. J. Collins

BROTHER SMEAD ROBERSON

Brother Smead Roberson was born October 17, 1901; and was married to Miss Phala DeRossett April 23, 1942. He united with Union Primitive Baptist Church on September 22, 1951.

Brother Roberson was called from the walk of life on November 15, 1957. Besides his wife, he leaves to mourn his passing two sons and one daughter; his mother, Mrs. S. L. Roberson; three brothers, four sisters; and other relatives.

May the grace of Almighty God fill the vacancy so that the bereaved may be comforted, and not mourn for him as those without hope. We feel that Brother Roberson professed a sweet hope of life beyond this vale of sin and sorrow, where he will perfectly praise God in that endless eternity.

Brother Roberson was ordained to the office of deacon May 16, 1954; and performed the duties of this office well, and attended meetings regularly as long as his health permitted: giving God all the praise, honor, and glory. We believe our loss is his eternal gain. He will be greatly missed by his family, and his brethren and sisters. May we bow our heads in humble submission to God's will in time and eternity.

We desire a copy of this Memorial to be given to the family; a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication, and a copy be recorded in our church records.

Requested by Union Church while in conference the 18th day of January, 1958. Written by

L. D. Smith, Church Clerk
Marion, Louisiana

ELDER EMMETT RICHARD BRYANT

Elder Emmett Richard Bryant, aged 66, passed away November 14, 1957. He was the son of the late John W. and Sarah Akers Bryant. There were thirteen children born to this family, nine of whom are living: Mrs. Lucy Via, Miss Cordelia M. Bryant, Mrs.

Madgie Thomasson, Mrs. Algie Byrd, Elisha F., G. Stanton, and Floyd H. Bryant.

Brother Bryant was reared on the farm, and attended school during the Winter months; his education was above the average. At the age of seventeen he received a good hope of heaven and everlasting rest in the forgiveness of his sins, and was made to rejoice and praise God as his Saviour and glorious Redeemer. He could say with the Apostle Paul, "For I neither received of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Galatians 1:12) At this tender age he viewed the church as the beauty of the whole earth, and the ground and pillar of truth. He soon went before the church at Union, Patrick County, Virginia, and was received upon the relation of his Christian experience and faith in God. He was baptized by Elder P. A. Cahill, the worthy, faithful pastor. At about the age of twenty-one he began to speak in public, and was soon liberated to speak wherever God directed. In 1915, he was ordained to the full functions of the gospel ministry.

Soon after his ordination, he was chosen pastor of Long Branch Church, and served them for a few years. Later he was chosen pastor of Charity Church, where he served several years; and after the death of Elder Cahill, the beloved and faithful pastor of Union Church, in 1922, Elder Bryant was chosen pastor, and served this church nearly thirty-five years. His labors were in love and sweet fellowship; and he baptized a goodly number into the fellowship of the churches he served. When Riverside Church was organized, he was chosen their pastor. His labors were here in the mountains of Virginia; and his gift made him an able minister of the New Testament. He had a gift in prayer at times seldom equaled by any.

Brother Bryant was united in marriage to Miss Selma Goode, and to this union four children were born. He is survived by his afflicted wife and the children: Mrs. May Perry, Mrs. Edith Joyce, Mrs. Lorene Pickup and Ermon Bryant.

Brother Bryant was afflicted with cancer of the blood, and his sufferings were severe, but he bore them with patience and faith in God; and expressed at times the sweet presence of Jesus, saying, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." As he realized the end was near, his request was for Elder P. E. Ingram to have charge of his funeral; and on the 16th of November at Union Church, his request was carried out in the presence of a large and sympathetic congregation. The body was buried in Martinsville, Virginia, covered with a beautiful mound of flowers, there to await the coming of Christ, when the dead in Christ shall rise first; then those that remain shall be caught up and changed from mortal to immortality, to ever be with the Lord.

May it be the will of God to raise up others to take our places. Written at the request of Union Church.

Your servant in a blessed hope,
(Elder) J. G. L. Hash

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Resolutions of respect to the memory of Sister Lillie (Gilliam) Wyant as prepared and adopted by Gilliam's Church at her February Conference meeting:

Sister Lillie Gilliam joined the church at Gilliam's by experience and baptism. She offered for membership, and after relating her Christian experience was received at the September meeting, 1908. She was baptized at the October meeting on Sunday morning, and remained a faithful and loyal member of Gilliam's Church until her death, Jan. 7th, 1958.

Sister Lillie Gilliam was married to Prof. Vernon L. Wyant, of Elkton, Va., in September 1913. Prof. Wyant was one of the high school teachers at Gilliam's Academy at the time, and she was a piano teacher in the department of music; and they continued to teach at Gilliam's until the close of the school in 1918. Sister Wyant was a graduate of the department of music at Elon College, and they taught for several years, Prof. Wyant being Principal of the County high school, first at Monticello, in Guilford county and later at Ruffin, in Rockingham county; after which they moved to Greensboro, N. C., and they were living there at the time of her death.

Sister Wyant could not always attend her meetings at Gilliam's, since they were some distance away, and Sister Wyant didn't drive. However, her loyalty and faithfulness was never in question, and she continued to attend as often as she could, and was usually present on Sundays, but she missed some meetings. They lived in Greensboro more than thirty years, and she attended the meetings at the Primitive Baptist church there, from time to time, and they had many warm friends among their membership.

Sister Wyant's health began to fail her three or four years before her death. She had spent much time under the care of physicians and in Long's hospital during the last two or three years. While some of the operations brought temporary relief, the doctors and surgeons soon realized her afflictions were too serious for them to offer much hope.

Though critically ill at times when in the hospital, she would seem to get somewhat better, but this was usually of short duration. She seemed wonderfully composed, and I feel sure she realized she couldn't get well. Before she became so critically ill, and I believe it was in early spring 1957, when visiting with

her at Long's hospital, she told me she had been given some beautiful poems and wanted to repeat them to me. She was very weak and had been in the hospital for quite some time, but these poems had given her much comfort and seem to have brightened her hope. She said, wouldn't you like to hear them, and I said I certainly would. The first, I believe, was on the Easter Morn, and the last on the Resurrection. She recited with a calmness and beauty I had seldom ever heard. I said, Lillie, they are so beautiful, but I can't understand how you can remember them like that. She said it's no trouble when they are given to you like these were given to me. I thought I had never heard anything so beautiful. She soon rallied enough for them to carry her back home; and next time I went to see her at home, she said to me I have written the music to one of those poems and plan to write music for the others. With much difficulty she made her way to the piano, and began to play them for me. I said I want to hear you sing them. She said I haven't much voice as you know, but I will try. Her voice was very soft and low, but sweet and beautiful. The very truth of the doctrine she believed was in those hymns, and there seemed not to be a shadow of doubt of the truth she was singing. I felt that was a manifestation of God's love to her and to strengthen her faith for the ordeal of death, which was not too far away. She had a good hope, and I feel sure she died in the full triumph of a God given faith. She was lovely in life and peaceful and sirene in death.

During her decline in health and her critical illness many of her Old Baptist brethren and sisters and many friends came to see her and others sent her get well cards. Her brothers and sisters realized she was slipping fast, but all had to wait God's time to call her home. Her husband stood by her to the last, and was most patient and loving in his care for her. He was with her the most of the time for the last two or three weeks, day and night, and she begged him not to leave her. She seemed to realize her time was now very short. Her son V. L. Jr., their only child, was with her almost daily for quite some time. Now, that all seem to know the time for her to die was near, her husband and son had completed the entire arrangements for her funeral and burial. Elder W. C. King, who had lived in Greensboro for many years and had been very close to them, was in Florida, and I think he would have been their first choice for the funeral service. They asked me to call Elder Posey Ingram of Martinsville, Va., whom they had heard and liked; and I called him for them. He conducted a very sweet service at the chapel of the Forbis-Murray funeral home in Greensboro, and her body was taken to Elkton, Va., where it lay in state until 1 P. M. Jan. 9th, and was laid to rest in her newly made grave, in the family plot there. They had a short grave side service in Elkton, Va.

Resolved, That in the passing of Sister Wyant, the Church at Gilliam's has lost from her membership a very dear and lovely sister. That we mourn not for her as they that have no hope, but feel that she is better off. That we bow humbly to the will of God, and that these resolutions be spread upon our Church book, and a copy sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Submitted and adopted, at the February Conference of Gilliam's Church.

J. W. Gilliam, Moderator
Freeman Somers, Church Clerk

JOSHUA ENOCH HARDY

Joshua Enoch Hardy was born September 6, 1863, in Crittenden County, Kentucky, and departed this life at Inglewood, California, March 7, 1958, at the age of ninety-four years, six months and one day. He was the son of Elder J. B. Hardy and a brother of Elder J. R. Hardy. At the age of twenty-one he moved to Kansas, where he was united in marriage to Lizzie B. Holder. Two sons were born to this union. He was preceded in death by his wife and by seven of his twelve brothers and sisters. Surviving are his two sons, Ernest, of Oklahoma City, and Lee, of Inglewood, California, two sisters, Mrs. Bertha Clark, of Edinburg, Texas, and Mrs. Verda Machesney, of Kingman, Kanass, and two brothers, Joseph, of Texas, and Henry, of Colorado; also, five grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Although he was never moved to unite with the church, he loved the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God, the predestination of all things, salvation by grace alone, the perseverance of the saints, and all other principles of sound doctrine. During the past eight years he attended regularly the meetings of the Seclusia Primitive Baptist Church in Compton, California. Interment was made in Walker Cemetery, Dacoma, Oklahoma.

Lee Hardy

Our loved one heard the call: "Come home;"
And he was anxiously awaiting the same,
For his burden long had wearisome grown;
So the summons was welcome, when it came.

His years on earth have been many;
The changes he's seen are not few;
But he always has trusted his Saviour
To keep him and carry him through.
His heartaches and cares are now ended.

We'll miss him more than words can tell;
But when the trump sounds, and all have ascended,
We will meet him; and all will be well.

Mrs. Verda Machesney

SUSAN I. MEADOWS

At the request of New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, it has become our sad task to report the passing of our beloved sister and mother in Israel, Susan I. Oden Meadows.

Aunt Dolly, as she was commonly known, was the daughter of the late William and Elizabeth McMillian. She was born March 21, 1866, in Newton County, Texas; and died July 11, 1957 — making her pilgrimage here on earth ninety-one years, three months, and twenty-one days.

She was married to Elder G. T. Oden in 1891. To this union were born three daughters and one son: Mrs. Evie Green, who preceded her in death; Mrs. Thessa Whiddon; Mrs. Lela Cooper; and Thomas W. Oden. After the death of Elder Oden, she married Elder I. S. Meadows, who preceded her in death about forty-three years.

She received a hope in Christ after the death of her first husband, and rode a distance of thirty-five miles alone on horseback to a Primitive Baptist church. She was received, and baptized by the late Elder J. J. Musgrove. Sister Meadows stood firm in the faith; though blind the last few years of her life, she attended her church as often as her health would permit. Sister Dolly suffered many hardships in rearing her family. She leaves to mourn her death, besides her children and grand children, one sister, Mrs. Mary Penny, Oakdale, La.; two brothers: J. Paul McMillian, Merryvile, La., and J. D. McMillian, Woodville, Texas; and a host of neices and nephews and other relatives. We will say to those who mourn their loss that we believe our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder B. B. Walston, and Mr. Lamont Rouse. Written by the request of her church by

(Elder) L. L. Dobbs, and
J. Paul McMillian

IN MEMORIAM

FERDINAND S. SHELTON

On the morning of October 31, 1957, the news was flashed: "Ferd Shelton is dead." Death's cold hand had robbed us — snatched without warning the warm pulsating personality that had endeared itself to the hearts of Primitive Baptists and friends wherever he was known.

An unique individualist and staunch defender of the Christian faith is gone — a niche in our hearts is empty. Our profession has lost one of its ablest defenders of sovereign grace; and we are the poorer.

Always generous of his time, energy and money, he was forthright, fearless and tireless in any cause he thought just. His bright smile, warm handshake, and expansive personality won him friends wherever encountered; especially among the household of faith.

Born in Franklin County, Virginia, March 14, 1874, to Haymond David and Susan Shelton, one of thirteen children, he soon developed patience, perseverance, and the ability to get along with people. In early manhood he was engaged in teaching school, later becoming a successful farmer. His wife was Vinecie Stone, who preceded him in death: they reared seven children.

When he was about thirty-eight years of age, he joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Roanoke, Virginia, and served as Deacon, first at Roanoke, then Bell View, and then he moved his membership to the church of his childhood, Town Creek — all in the Pigg River Association. Among other graces, he cherished the gift of "Discerning of Spirits".

Being large of statue and heavy, he was deprived in his latter years of the agility of youth, and sometimes worried at being thus encumbered, but the Lord showed him in a vision that these things pertained to this life only, and that in the Resurrection all this would be done away.

It can truly be said of Brother Shelton that he lived his eighty-three years and eight months to the fullest; and of him, as of Father Abraham, "He believed God and it was accounted unto him for righteousness", for he claimed no righteousness of his own. His last days were spent in the home of his loving and only daughter, and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. George Tilman Lester, Sr.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder P. E. Ingram; and his body was laid to rest by his companion in the quiet serenity of Evergreen Cemetery at Roanoke, Virginia. May his loved ones think of him as:

"Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep,
From which none ever wake to weep."

May we see Brother Shelton again when King Jesus comes, bringing all that Heavenly Host; for we have this assurance, ". . . them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

(Elder) P. E. Ingram

(We feel a deep personal loss in the passing of Brother Shelton. His friendship meant so much to us in our youth, and in all the years following. It was he who first inquired as to our reason of a hope; and, being satisfied, encouraged our offering to the church. Then a short time afterwards inquired as to our impression to preach, and was instrumental when we were first called on to make the attempt.

We spent many pleasant hours in conversation and shall not soon forget the many scriptural subjects discussed. He was a brother and friend indeed. — J. D. W.)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 126 DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1958 NO. 7

"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power. . ." (Psalms 110:3)

Box 265
Draper, N. C.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

It has been on my mind for some time to try to write some of my experience, and what the good Lord has done for me. I was brought up by a good Primitive Baptist father and mother. We lived in Patrick County near Vesta, Virginia until I was about 14 years old. My father and mother's membership was at Dan River Church near Vesta, where I went with them to church, and I well remember seeing both of them baptized and how happy they looked, and how I wished that I could be like them.

Soon after they were baptized I had a dream. I dreamed that my oldest brother and I were standing in our kitchen window, and mother was sitting by the fire knitting. We looked up at the clouds, and they looked as though they were all on fire. We ran to mother and told her that the end of time was coming, and she just looked at us and smiled. I said, "Oh if I could be like her, I would not be lost". I felt like the Lord had shown me that I was a lost sinner, and from them on until I was about 17, I would go off to myself and try to pray that God would show me in some way that I was saved; but instead, I grew worse. We had moved to Draper, N. C. then, and there wasn't any Primitive Baptist churches near, so I didn't get to go to preaching much, but I still shed tears about every night and I would try to pray that God would take away the awful burden.

One night, I do not know if I was asleep or not; I saw myself flying up in the sky and I looked back and saw that I was leaving this world. I said, "Lord, what am I," and a voice spoke near me and said, "An angel". After that I didn't look back anymore but just kept going; and started singing "Farewell vain world I am going home." Then I woke and was so happy that I wanted to get up and tell everyone what the Lord has done for me. I finally went to sleep, relieved and so happy. When I awoke the sun was so bright and everything seemed to be rejoicing with me. I went to work and the roaring of the mill sounded as though they were saying, "Amazing grace how sweet it sounds that saved a wretch like me." This went on all day and I felt so happy that I thought I would never have to suffer again. But after this wonderful experience I didn't take up my cross and follow my Lord, but soon after I married a man that disapproved of me even going to the Primitive Baptist Church at all. I didn't know it then, but I soon found out. I tried to go a few times, but he would get mad with me and I couldn't have peace of mind, so I gave up trying to go, as I wanted to have peace at home. Oh how hungry I would get to go to church and hear preaching! We got along very well in life and I had six very sweet daughters. My husband went to the Methodist Church where he carried all six of our daughters to Sunday School, and I would get so hungry to hear preaching that I would go with him sometimes; and how disappointed I would be that I didn't hear a word that helped my hungry soul a bit.

I went on this way for about thirty-eight years until all my girls had married except one. She was 16 when I was stricken down with awful pain and affliction. I first felt sad and lonely and

my pain was more than I felt I could bear. All the relief I could get was to lie flat on my back. All that winter I was alone during the day as my youngest daughter was in school and my husband worked, and I spent many lonely hours, except for two of my daughters, living near by, that would come to see me often and help all they could. I went to approximately 12 different doctors, and they all did what they could for me, but I seemed to grow worse, and even got so I could not get up by myself. Soon summer had come and my daughter was out of school and at home with me to help. My husband was good to me and tried to do all he could to help. We bought about every kind of pain relieving medicine there was, but none gave me any relief. I was still going to doctors at this time, and they were quite puzzled with my illness, and finally I was sent to Duke Hospital in Durham, N. C. where I was treated for arthritus, but nothing seemed to help, and finally I got to the place where I was unable to take any kind of medicine for relieving pain as I became alergic and broke out with an awful rash, which troubled me more than the pain. I felt as though I could not stand the pain much longer, and prayed every night that if it would be the Lord's will to take me out of my misery, but it seemed as though it wasn't the Lord's will that I go, and I could not understand why I had to suffer for the Lord had given me a sweet hope of a heavenly home and had answered many prayers for me. Why had he forsaken me? I became weaker and more helpless each day until it wasn't long before I had to use a cane to get about any, and then it was very little. I would try to sit on the porch and read the Bible, but the pain was so severe that I couldn't sit for long. As I read the Bible it made me weap to see how poor Job and others had to suffer and how I could sympathize with them.

Soon it was time for me to have a check-up at Duke Hospital, but I felt it was of no use to go back as I wasn't any better, and there seemed to be no remedy for me. My family doctor finally persuaded me to go back just once more, so I decided to try again. As I went in the hospital everything seemed to look different, and even my doctor looked happy, as he said to me, "I have good news for you". He told me that there wasn't any medicine that would do me any good, and much to my astonishment he said that I was not satisfied in my religious life, and that I should get out more and visit friends. Well I knew it was the truth, but how did he know anything about my life? I did not know for I had never told him anything in that line. It filled my heart with joy, and opened my eyes, and I could see what my Lord had been chastening me for. I knew then I must take up my cross and follow my Lord the rest of my life instead of trying to follow man. All the way back home my husband would say, "How did he know anything about our lives", and I told him the Lord had given the doctor this message for us and that for thirty-eight years I had tried to follow him, and now I was going to follow the Lord for the rest of my life.

I planned to go to Dan River church the very next meeting, where my dear sister was a member. I phoned her and asked if I could go with her the next meeting, and told her what the doctor had said. She was so happy about it, and said there would be a meeting very shortly at Dan River. She said she would be more than glad to take me. With the help of my daughters, I got ready to go to the meeting, and told my husband I was going, even though he was against it. My daughters said they would take care of daddy, so with the help of pillows and my walking cane, I managed to get to church with my sister helping me. As I walked down the isle, it felt wonderful to be in the Lord's house, and as the people were singing it sounded like heaven to me. I looked around. I saw many faces I knew, but they all looked like saints to me. As our preachers, Elder Spangler, and Elder Griffin

preached it sounded so sweet to me with their voices so humble. How they could preach, and tell me far better the road that I had traveled than I could have told it. It filled my heart and I knew the Lord's people were there. When the service was over and Elder Spangler asked if anyone would like to come for membership, I wanted to go, and had promised myself that I would go up the first time I had an opportunity, but I felt as though I was a stranger to all the people because it was the first time I had ever been in Dan River Church. As church was dismissed, Preacher Spangler came to me and asked how I was, and I told him I was in an awful fix. He asked if I would like to talk of my experience to the people, and I told him I would; so he had all the people be seated, and I told them my experience and what the Lord had done for me; and they received me in the church. As the people shook my hand with tears running down there faces and singing Amazing Grace, I felt the Lord's power and the pain was almost gone. Elder Spangler asked when I wanted to be baptized, and then I began to wonder how I would tell my husband, though it didn't seem to worry me, for I was so happy, and felt that the Lord was going to cause me to get better as I felt that I had done his will and I was baptized the following Sunday after I was received a member of Dan River Church. Though my husband disapproved of my doing so, and would not go to see me baptized, my dear daughters, except one, went and carried me, and even my Dad who was about 80, was waiting to see me baptized. Most of my brothers and sisters were there, and also many friends. I was so happy, (they were shedding tears and embracing me) that the Lord showed me the way.

After I was baptized I began getting better. My sister brought me the "Signs" to read, and I read so many good experiences and things that give me great joy, but my husband was not friendly with me. He would come from work and sit on the porch and not even ask if I was feeling better. This went on for about three weeks and I begin to wonder if I had done him wrong. As I began to worry about him, the pain began to come back more severe than ever until one day I was all alone and I thought I could not stand the pain much longer. I phoned the doctor, and asked if he thought there was any doctor that could stop the pain, and he stated he didn't think so, and that it was up to me as to whether the pain would stop. I went back to my bed and prayed to the Lord that if he would just take away the suffering that I would never worry about my husband and our home life again, and from that day on I began to get better; and in a day or so, I could sit up almost all day, and soon was able to do most of my housework and cooking. All my dear sisters and brothers in Christ in the church were so kind to me, and would tell me each meeting how much better I seemed to be getting. They were astonished at how fast I was recovering.

All this happened in 1953 and 1954. I joined the church and was baptized in September of 1954, and it is now 1958. All my children are married and gone from home and my husband and I are getting along very well, even though he has never gone with me to church, and says he never will.

I have many dear sisters and brothers in Christ who carry me to church, and I haven't missed a meeting for the reason of not having a way to go. Yes, I am enjoying life more now than I ever have before. I have been to several associations and union meetings that have been great joy to me. Everyone has been so nice to me and even invited me in their homes to dinner where we would sing and enjoy the evenings together. I have received some wonderful letters from the good people. Yes, I can see so much I have to live for. I am so thankful that the dear Lord made a way for me even if I did have to suffer so to see his will.

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform.
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

"Through floods and flames, if Jesus leads,
I'll follow where he goes;
Hinder me not shall be my cry,
Though earth and hell oppose.

Through duty and through trials too
I'll go at his command.
Hinder me not, for I am bound
To my Immanuel's land."

Now this is my hope, that I may be blessed to do his will until He comes to call his children home. Oh, I hope that I am one!

A sister in hope of eternal life,
Mrs. Sallie L. Gauldin

(It was my privilege to baptize this dear sister, and one of the Lord's great miracles was manifested in her recovery. I am sure this message will be of comfort to many, and especially those who are living under like circumstances. It is a sad condition when we are brought in contact with those who have an unpleasant situation because of the difference of opinion between husband and wife. I have even known cases where a husband had nothing against the Old School Baptist, but manifested that he did not want his wife to become a member. We live in a land of freedom, and it is certainly the personal privilege of every person to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience. If there are any who hesitate about going home to the church, and following their dear Lord in baptism, because of these things, do not hesitate. Our beloved Master has said, that to follow him we must forsake all; and He who suffers not a sparrow to fall without Him, will sustain your cause. — D. V. Spangler)

"WHICH BECOMETH WOMEN PROFESSING GODLINESS"

"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with samefacedness and sobriety; not with broided (plaited) hair, or gold, or pearls or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. Let women learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." (I Timothy 2:9-12)

"Even so must their wives (meaning deacon's and bishop's) be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things." (I Timothy 3:11)

"The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness; not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; that they teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed." (Titus 2:3-5)

"Likewise ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands." (I Peter 3:1-5) Also read I Timothy 3:1-16

Study these scriptures!

I have read and studied these scriptures many times, but had never thought much about the duty and position of preachers' and deacons' wives until I heard of one who claimed to have a special position and special work in the church. After having read them many times, I was surprised, in re-reading them to find only one verse telling the duty of the wives of preachers and

deacons. I have meditated a lot on preacher's and deacon's calling, qualifications, and position in the church. There is more said about godly and holy women than deacon's and preacher's wives. I have known several men who claimed to have the gift of preaching, and were so anxious they could not wait for the church to see the gift, which they seldom did, but put themselves forward, and nearly always caused trouble. I have seen a few who were submissive to the church and were peaceable.

I do not remember ever hearing of but one deacon's wife who claimed a high position and special work in the church, so after much study, I feel impressed to offer a few thoughts, and if I am wrong, I welcome correction. I find only one verse on preacher's and deacon's wives duty, and it does not exalt them more than other godly, humble, quiet Christian women; it says less about them than of Christians in general. They are to "Be grave, not slanderers. Sober, faithful in all things." I consider the calling of a deacon as one of the highest and most honorable calling ever bestowed on sinful humans, and the same for their wives, yet that does not put them above even the least and most insignificant member only as led by the Spirit of God to live a quiet and humble life, being examples to the flock. Some younger ones and weak in the faith, sometimes think deacons and their wives are better than others, and they look to them as leaders, which makes it their duty to do all they can to honor their profession with an orderly walk and godly conversation, and to be a living, walking example to others. When one is qualified for the office of deacon, or deacon's wife, they realize the weakness of the flesh, and feel the least fit for the place, and are not puffed up with pride. They do not want any honor but to be led and instructed by the Spirit, knowing it is by the mercy of God that they are put in that position, and not because of any worthiness in themselves. They fear lest they may go astray and lead others or cause offence in some way; and their continual prayer is to be kept by the love and power of God to never cause trouble nor discord. The wife wants to honor her husband's calling and be a true help and encouragement to him. She has no more authority than any other godly woman, or women of old, full of the Holy Ghost: they are all alike to be in behaviour as becometh holiness; not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; that they may teach the younger women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed, they are not to teach, nor usurp authority over the men, but to be in silence with all subjection etc. Christian women, no matter what position they occupy, should be of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. Now the other side of the picture.

When the wife of a deacon or preacher gets the idea that she is in a position of authority, or is superior to others, she is treading on dangerous ground, and is liable to meddle where she has no business; and as time passes she becomes bolder so as to become a busy body, and spread confusion and discord, and becomes a discredit and dishonor to her calling, and to her husband's calling and office. When she takes it on herself to try to keep others straight, she is sure to cause many more crooked ways than straight ones. There never has been, and will never be, one who feels his importance in the church, but who must be brought down. When led by the Spirit they are not going to be forward in their calling. They realize, unless led by the Spirit they can do nothing to benefit others; and when led by the Spirit, they think well, act slow, looking to God for wisdom, and continually begging for wisdom and strength and courage to go about their duties. The only honor a child of God in any position wants, is to feel that

God is his keeper, and to be kept at His feet; and to be able by the Spirit to give Him all honor and praise. And he realizes he can never praise Him as he desires as long as veiled in sinful flesh.

May He yet bless Zion.

A little unworthy one in tribulations,

Geo. W. Jackson
632 Connolly Drive
East Point, Ga.

ELDER RHODE'S LETTER TO BROTHER HUDSON CONCLUDED

Then, all the hearts of God's dear, cast down, sinful feeling people are brought into the great feeling of condemnation and sinfulness just as Paul was when that light shined from Heaven. And when the Lord spoke to him, that feeling of condemnation was so great that he fell to the ground. Even though he was made to confess his great felt sense of sin and condemnation in the flesh, he was given that great hope and confidence in God through Jesus Christ to the extent that he was given to say in the wind up of his career: "I have finished my course, I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, and not to me only, but to them also who love His appearing." So we can see from this that Paul, even as he had previously given great evidence of a great felt sense of condemnation in the flesh, yet he was given to express great and marvelous confidence towards God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Then, dear and precious young brother, our hearts do condemn us within and of our selves, and we would stay condemned if it were not for the love and mercy, grace and faith, and the marvelous gift of God through Jesus Christ. Oh, what sweetness there is in that precious hope and confidence, pardon, forgiveness, and all other things which pertain to life and godliness, which He gives us by His divine power. (2 Peter 1:3) Without all the precious gifts of God in Christ, there could be no confidence towards God. Even the belief of God's little children in Him, is a gift of God; so is faith, repentance, obedience, and every thing which pertains to life and Godliness.

The Lord gives His people great confidence and hope towards Him and in Him through Christ Jesus, as Paul says in Hebrews 6:19-20: "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus. . ." So this precious hope which is given to God's people is indeed marvelous beyond description, and it is a very sweet and consoling factor in the hearts and lives of God's little ones. And without this precious hope in and through Jesus Christ and His righteousness, what would we have, and what could we do here in our sin smitten condition? Because, Paul says in Rom. 8:24-25: "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for it? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Therefore, this hope and confidence towards God through Christ Jesus is all we have, and it is the gift of God.

So, dear brother in Christ Jesus our Lord, we through the mercy and gift and grace of God, have both faith, hope, and confidence toward God through Him, by Him, and of Him; and within and of ourselves we have no hope, confidence or trust in God; but by and through Him we (if I am included) have a great, sweet and precious hope and confidence towards God.

But if it were not through Him who was sinless, perfectly righteous, holy and all together undefiled and perfect before God as a sin offering in our law room and stead, what hope could we have? What confidence towards God could we have? Because the Scripture has said, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," and that all men are sinners without exception. Jesus is verily God and verily man, yet He sinned not, neither

was guile found in His mouth; and He as an innocent, perfect Lamb of God was offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them who look for Him, shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

Then, dear brother, our hearts do condemn us without Him, but in and through Him, we are given great hope and this precious confidence towards God; and without Him we can do nothing. (John 15:5) So, in and through Him and the gift of God, comes this sweet hope and confidence towards God. Oh, dear and precious brother, how I do long and beg and try to cry for the sweet evidence of this true hope of God's people, for that precious anchor of the soul, in this land of trouble, sorrow, distress, and destruction. I feel to long after and abide in this sweet hope. Yet, I feel to know, if that which I hope as my sweet and precious anchor is not the true and genuine hope and confidence of and through Jesus Christ, then I am of all men most miserable in this low ground of sin and sorrow.

May we, dear Brother, be given sweetly to abide in this precious hope, and confidence towards God, through Jesus Christ, through that precious Rock, as He told Peter: "And upon this Rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." He builds His church upon this Rock, and nothing can prevent it or prevail against it, as Peter tells us that God's people are kept by the power of God unto salvation. God bless you. Write again.

Your brother in hope,
(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

ELDER BENNETT IS QUITE ILL

We have a note from Deacon William Adkins, of Mardela, Maryland, concerning Elder Bennett's illness. He has not been well for several months — since last October when he suffered an attack of the flu, which was followed by severe complications. For some months he has not been able to fill his appointments, but we hope, the Lord willing, that he will soon be able to resume his normal activities.

Elder Bennett wishes us to express his appreciation to all the brethren and friends for their cards and letters which they have sent.

— J. D. W.

BOOKS

The following books may be ordered through the Signs of the Times office (all prices include postage):

Church History, by Hassell — $4.85
Body of Divinity, by Gill — $5.50
Cause of God and Truth, by Gill — $3.00
Commentaries, by Gill (6 volumes) — $32.50

THREE DAYS MEETING

The Lord willing, the Hopewell Church of the Predestinarian faith and order, at 5620 East Marsh Street, Stockton, California, will hold a three day meeting beginning August 8th, and lasting through Sunday the 10th.

All lovers of the truth are welcome.

Wm. Echols, Church Clerk,
Chowchilla, Calif.

UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

The 1958 session of **The Upper Country Line Association** is appointed to be held with the Reidsville Church, Reidsville, N. C., July 19, 20, and 21, 1958.

The association will be held in Smother's Warehouse. Those coming from the North or South follow the 29 Highway By-pass to the intersection of No. 87 and 29. Those coming from the East or West will follow No. 87 to intersection of 29 and 87. The location is just West of town.

A cordial invitation is extended to our ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

D. V. Spangler, Clerk

PIGG RIVER DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

The **Pigg River Association** is appointed, the Lord willing, to be held with the Pigg River Church, in Franklin County, Virginia, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, August 1, 2 and 3, 1958.

A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren and friends to meet with us.

John D. Wood, Clerk

Danville, Virginia July, 1958

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EDITORIAL

DECLARATION OF DEPENDENCE

"When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to —" is the beginning of a very famous document termed, Declaration of Independence. Many unpleasant events stimulated the representatives of the people composing the early American colonies to adopt this declaration July 4, 1776, while Congress was in session at Independence Hall, Philadelphia. This declaration was against a certain political king whose actions indicated that his direct object was to establish "an absolute tyranny over these States".

Since we have an heavenly King, Who sovereignly reigns over all things and events, and whose actions prove to His People that He is all-wise — knowing precisely what is best for each and every one of His People —; we deem it proper to declare our dependence upon Him. Knowing that He has an holy and glorious object in mind, to wit; the salvation of his people —: we feel constrained to write a DECLARATION OF DEPENDENCE. This is not to be construed so that it would tend to cast any reflection upon the document referred to in this article because we have in mind One who is King of kings — not a mere man who is politically exalted to sit on a king's throne and resides in a natural palace. Now, we wish to submit our DECLARATION OF DEPENDENCE.

WHEN IN the course of spiritual experiences, it becomes necessary for one people to admit the power of the spiritual bands which have connected them to their heavenly King and to one another; and, to openly avow to all men the united and certain stations to which the effectual working of the spiritual law of Israel's King bind them; and, a disregard to the assumed powers generally accepted and believed by the world of mankind, as well as the majority of the religious world; — impels them to declare the cause which brought about this humble submission, confident trust, and willing dependence upon our King.

We hold these truths to be revealed by our King to the subjects of His amazing grace only by His Spirit which is agreeable to the testimony contained in the Bible: — that only a portion of mankind was chosen in Eternity to be so highly and graciously favored with Eternal Life; that these certain ones were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world to be in the peculiar relationship to their King as children to the heavenly Father; that this King determined for them certain guaranteed gifts; that among these are His Son, who should save them from their sins —, His Spirit, who should take the things of Jesus and show them, — and salvation, which would be perfectly realized in Eternity. That to secure these rights the sovereign King sent His own Son into the world to merit salvation

for them by accomplishing the law by keeping it to a jot and tittle in their stead, and by taking upon Himself their sins and reconciling them unto His Father by shedding His blood for the remission of their sins, so that mercy could be extended without molesting justice: that whenever a people has been brought to the knowledge of these new and true principles, having been forced to discard each and every principle relative to the power of man to secure these precious rights and gifts of the Spirit upon the volition of his own will by his own ability given him in nature; — it behooves this people to declare against these untrue doctrines and to adopt, as their confession, principles which are most certainly believed by the people who have been mightily wrought upon by the effectual work of our King's power. Prudence will, indeed, dictate that doctrines, traditions, and customs most surely believed and practiced by the majority of the inhabitants of the world, and even held to by this people prior to the mighty work of the Spirit should not be changed for light and transient causes, but rather will hold to them as long as they can. But when a long train of experiences in the furnace of afflictions have robbed a people of every plank in the platform of independence and self-trust, and has built for them in its stead a firm foundation upon which to stand; it is their right, it is their duty to discard such doctrines, traditions, and customs that uphold the power of man in obtaining these wonderful privileges and gifts, and to adopt new principles which most certainly agree with their new experiences and new faith: and such is now in necessity to alter their former doctrines.

The history of our great King is a history of repeated blessings bestowed upon and for the subjects of His Divine Love, all having in direct object the salvation of each and every one of His chosen people by exercising omnipotent control over all things and events so that they all work together for the good of them who are the called according to His purpose. To prove this, let the true principles and facts versus the false doctrines be submitted to all who may be concerned. These facts are based not only upon their experience but also upon the testimony contained in the Bible.

Man naturally believes that he has the power to direct his steps and choose his own paths independent of, and apart from, any other controlling power. The truth is that God, our King, is sovereign, not an arbitrary or tyrannical being, but the reverse; an all-wise disposer of all events, an independent, self existent, and omniscient King; One who holds the eternal destiny of His creatures in His own almighty grasp, working all things after the counsel of his own will, even as he has ordained all things for his glory; and being independent of and superior to all beings in heaven or on earth, has an incontestable right to do His pleasure in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; having a right to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor; to have mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will to harden; to reveal His gospel to "babes and sucklings", and to hide the same from the "wise and prudent"; to love Jacob and hate Esau, to save His people with an everlasting salvation, and to turn the wicked into hell, with all the nations that forget God. (See Beebe's Editorials of Signs of the Times, V. 1)

Man naturally believes that he can change the mind of God towards him, can change God's attitude toward him; that each man, independently, can determine whether God loves or hates him; whether God blesses or punishes him; that God's actions are determined by man's actions. The truth is that God is unchangeable. "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore, ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." (Mal. 3:6) "But He is in one mind, and who can turn Him? and what His soul desireth that He doeth." (Job 23:13)

The declarations of the natural man

indicate that man is king over his thoughts, conversations, actions, and destiny; that God must wait upon man before determining His course of action. The truth is that in the eons of eternity He decreed all things and events, "declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isaiah 46:10) God's people believe in the King, "Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will". (Eph. 1:11) These decrees even embraced the crucifiction of His Son, the Prince; "For of a truth against the holy child, Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together, for to do whatsoever Thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done". (Acts 4:27 — see Acts 2:23) The determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God embraced the deliverance of this Prince into wicked hands which resulted in Him being crucified and slain. God said through the Psalmist, "The wrath of man shall praise thee, the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain". (Psalms 76:10) It is comforting to know that death and hell can do no more than what pleases our King against His people.

The natural man believes that the election to eternal life is in his hands, that he can choose it by casting in his ballot for it at any time he deems proper, that it is conditioned upon his voluntary actions, that man is independent and free to determine whether he chooses to be a child of God or not. The truth is that God, our King, has chosen or elected a people unto eternal life in eternity before the foundation of the world conditioned only upon the mighty effectual and perfect working of Himself; God, the Father; God, the Son; and God, the Holy Ghost — these three are One: that it is not conditioned upon the independent works of the recipient of their own natural free will and accord. "Blessed in the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom He hath chosen. (Ps. 33:12) "And He brought forth His people with joy, and His CHOSEN with gladness". (Ps. 105:5) "But for the ELECT'S sake whom He hath CHOSEN". (Mark 13:20) "But ye are a CHOSEN generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praise of Him Who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." (1 Peter 2:9) "According as He hath CHOSEN us in Him before the foundation of the world —" (Read Ephesians 1) "Because God hath, from the beginning, CHOSEN you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth". (II Thes. 2:13) "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the PURPOSE OF GOD ACCORDING TO ELECTION might stand, not OF WORKS, but of Him that calleth". (Romans 9) Jesus, the Prince, told the truth when He said, "Ye have NOT CHOSEN Me, but I HAVE CHOSEN YOU —" God's children must be taught their dependence relative to this matter. God's people being "CHOSEN in the furnace of affliction", learn well their depraved condition, that justice would demand the condemnation of all men, when mercy does not intervene.

Man believes that he is naturally endowed with the ability to raise himself from any condition in which he is, that he can elevate himself into favor with God; that it would be unjust for God not to give each and every one according to that which each and every one considers to be just and right. Man wants to be the sole judge as to what is right and wrong, denying their King and Creator this right. The truth is that man by transgression fell so low that each and every one of mankind is totally depraved and justly condemned before God; that man's judgment concerning right and wrong is debased to such great degree that he cannot pass right judgment. That "Wherefore as by one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. 5:12)

"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23) "Behold I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Ps. 51:5) "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one". (Job 15:14) "Man in his best estate is altogether vanity". "There is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth. There is none that seeketh after God." (See Romans 3 & Psalms 53:1-3) "The thoughts of his heart are evil, and that continually." John 3:3 says, "He CANNOT see the kingdom of God." He cannot receive the spirit of truth. See John 14:17. He cannot discern the things of the spirit. (I Cor. 2:14) He cannot do good. (See Jer. 8:23) He cannot cease from sin. See II Peter 2:14. He must have repentance given him. (Acts 5:31)

Almost all of those who profess to believe in Jesus believe that Jesus died for each and every one of the adamic family. But the truth is that He died for only the ELECT being delivered for their offence and being raised again for their justification. He gave himself for a certain people that He might redeem them from ALL iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. (See Titus 2:14) By His stripes they are healed. By one offering He has perfected forever them that are sanctified. The angel said that the purpose of Christ's coming was to save HIS PEOPLE from their sins. He gave His life for the SHEEP, not the goats.

Man believes that he can command the Spirit at his own will, that the Spirit does not exercise power sufficiently to effect the regeneration of the subjects of its attack but man must help the Spirit in order for it to be effectual in regenerating man. He naturally denies the power of the Holy Ghost. But the truth is that the Holy Spirit is sovereign, irresistible, and in all cases effectual in the work of regenerating and quickening the Elect of God with eternal life. This new birth is necessary as Jesus said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God". (John 3:3) "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." (John 6:63) Not all the powers that can be, can alter the course of the divine Spirit from the Elect of God to the reprobate part of mankind. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is NOT subject to the law of God, NEITHER INDEED CAN BE." (Romans 8:7) So the Spirit must work irresistibly in order to quicken into Eternal Life. The work of the Spirit must be effectual in all cases for if it should fail in any case to do that which it has undertaken to do, then it would cease to be God. "For as the Father raised up the dead and quickened them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will". (John 5:24) "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out".

Many religious professors believe that it is strictly left to individuals whether or not they live in such a manner as to merit Heaven as their home, regardless of any prior work of the Holy Spirit; that children of God can so conduct themselves independently of the Spirit, that they can either be saved in Heaven or cast into Hell, — all according to their own independent actions. But the truth is that final preservation and eternal happiness shall be the blessed lot of ALL the sons of God by grace. That whom God hath accepted in His beloved, effectually called and sanctified by His Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace; but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved. "And I give unto them eternal life; and THEY SHALL NEVER PERISH, NEITHER SHALL ANY MAN PLUCK THEM OUT OF MY HAND. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and NO MAN IS ABLE TO PLUCK THEM OUT OF MY FATHER'S HAND". (John 10:28-29) The truth is that God does not begin something and then turn from it; "For the gifts and calling of God are WITHOUT REPENTANCE"; and, "Being confident of this very thing, that He which HATH BE-

GUN A GOOD WORK IN YOU WILL PERFORM IT UNTIL THE DAY OF JESUS CHRIST". Peter says concerning their preservation, — "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (I Peter 1:6) God had promised to preserve each and every one of His people in keeping them by His own power, and His people are dependent upon His power to keep them. God's election, His covenant of grace, the union of Christians with Christ, the atonement and justification by Christ, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and the prevalency of Christ's intercessions for them; all infer the guarantee of this consoling promise.

Man naturally cannot believe in the resurrection of the dead because it is such a profound mystery that cannot be logically and reasonably proven by human intelligence. Many of God's children quibble upon the Resurrection of the bodies because it is yet an unrealized experience, an unobserved phenomenon, nor has the identity of these bodies been revealed in minute detail as to their exact appearance, comparable or contrasted with the bodies of clay in which they now dwell. Yet, this is the high goal for which the children of God hope to realize some day in the future. The Resurrection is no more mysterious than God's creation, providence, and grace. It is no more mysterious than the translation of one dead in sins into a state of Eternal Life. Read 1st. Cor. 42-50 to find the following truths expressed relative to the Resurrection: the body is to be the same, though changed in these several particulars, — 1. IT is now subject to corruption, then incorruptible. 2. IT is now dishonored, IT will then be glorified. 3. IT is now weak, IT will then be powerful. 4. IT is now natural, (adapted to present conditions of the soul and constitution of the world); IT will then be spiritual, — (adapted to the glorious condition and environment of a Holy Heaven).

The natural man believes that since man is independent, voluntary, and his own god relative to his walk and destiny; then, various and sundry organizations and auxiliaries are necessary; that united and fervent campaigns for money and means are essential in order to combine efforts in helping God to try to do what he desires to be done. But the truth is that since God is the One who is independent, voluntary, and God of the pathway and destiny of man; then, only ONE organization is authorized by Him. He does not need, nor authorize, any other than His own Church. He builds it; He keeps it; He adds to it each day such as should be saved. He calls, qualifies, sends forth, and uses ministers to preach the Gospel, baptize believers, and to feed the Flock of God which Christ purchased with His own blood.

Since the Bible contains so much that is contrary to the belief of the natural man, he had rather depend upon creeds, confessions, and catechisms written by vain man proclaiming the power of man, which pleases the vanity of man; than to use the Holy Scriptures as the authorized Rule of Faith and Practice. But those who have been taught their dependence upon Him are persuaded that the Holy Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the Saints of God.

Knowing that our King is all-wise, all-holy, all-powerful, loving, merciful, and gracious — perfect in all of His attributes —; then, we are bound to reverently bow in humble submission to His sovereign will. We are pledging our allegiance unto Him with joy and full confidence that whatever He does is best for all concerned. We, therefore, solely depend upon our Eternal King for our lives, our fortunes, our spiritual food and our various gifts of the Spirit. We have been made to trust our King and to depend upon Him for all things. Therefore, we solemnly and reverently publish and declare this DECLARATION OF DEPENDENCE.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ISAIAH LXII. 10-12

"Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people. Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken."

In replying to the inquiry of "A Poor Sinner," on page 259, we will give such views as we have, and leave him and all others to test the correctness of what we may write by the unerring standard — the scriptures. If our correspondent really feels himself to be what his assumed cognomen implies, a poor sinner, earnestly desirous to know the truth, he is one of a numerous class, to whose serious inquiries we delight to respond, to the extent of our limited ability.

The portion of scripture on which we are called to write, with several chapters in its immediate connection, we understand to be a prophecy of the closing of the legal and opening of the gospel dispensation.

The prediction in the beginning of the sixty-first chapter, we cannot doubt referred to the coming of Christ as the Anointed Prince and Savior, for our Lord has settled all doubt by applying it to himself, Luke iv. 17-19, John i. 32 and iii. 34; and from the unbroken connection, our text must point to the command given to John the Baptist, to the seventy disciples, and to the apostles, when they were sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, to preach that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, and to administer the baptism of repentance to those whom God had prepared to confess their sins, bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and believe in him that was to come after John. These penitent Jews, renouncing their legal hopes which they had predicated on being the fleshly descendants of Abraham, were to leave the abrogated ritual of Judaism, and "Go through the gates" of the New Jerusalem, which the prophet speaks of in the first, fifth and sixth verses of this same chapter.

The gates of this holy city, New Jerusalem, as seen by John in his vision on Patmos, coming down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride prepared for her husband, represent the gospel avenues into the church of the First Born; the going through or entrance by them into the city, figuratively sets forth the obedience of the saints in taking on them the yoke of Jesus, by which they acknowledge their allegiance to him as their heavenly King. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." — Rev. xxii. 11.

This city is represented as having twelve gates, yet but one Way; but the gates bearing the names of the twelve tribes of Israel are set as facing the four points of the compass, from whence the spiritual, anti-typical Israel shall come up from all the kindreds of mankind, to worship God in his holy temple in Jerusalem, and these gates shall be open, and never shut day nor night, unto those who have a heaven-granted right to the tree of life.

The opening of these gates to the quickened children of God, seems to us primarily to denote the opening up to the redeemed people of our God the way of life and salvation, by the preaching of the apostles and primitive disciples, from the preaching of John until the day of Pentecost was fully come; and we believe that the preaching of the gospel still makes plain and clear the way into the holy city, to the communion and fellowship of the saints, to all

whose hearts and ears God has opened to receive the testimony which such preaching brings to them. But there seems to us a special fitness of the figures, in pointing to the time when Jesus was with the disciples in his incarnation; when the way of the Lord was in this sense to be prepared by John, as the voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God." — Is. xl. 3, Matt. iii. 3, Mark i. 2, 3. The preaching of John, of Jesus, of the seventy, and the apostles before the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, was a passing through the gates, and the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ was the casting up, or the preaching up, the highway, or an exhibition of the way of deliverance from the law, and entrance into the gospel light and liberty of the sons of God, through the redemption which Christ had come to consummate by being delivered for their offenses, and raised from the dead for their justification. A deliverance from the old and entrance into the new covenant, their redemption from the old Jerusalem which was in bondage with her children, and entering into the New Jerusalem which is above, is free, and the mother of all the election of grace.

The gathering out of the stones, as in the preparing of a way, and casting up of a highway, all impediments are to be removed, and stumbling-blocks are to be gathered out, that the track may be clear and unobstructed.

There were undoubtedly many insurmountable difficulties which those Jewish converts could not understand, and which hindered them from ceasing from their own works and entering into that rest which remains for the people of God, which were explained with comfort to them by the preaching of the word. Even down to the present time, we cannot enter into gospel rest until the light of the gospel shows us how the law can be honored, divine Justice satisfied, and the truth and glory of God sustained, in our deliverance from wrath, and being made partakers of salvation by grace.

But all impediments disappear, when in the glorious gospel of the grace of God, Christ is set up as the Standard for the people; hence the command is given to the watchmen, spoken of in the sixth verse, whom God has set upon the walls of Jerusalem, "Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people." A standard, according to Webster, is an ensign of war, a staff with a flag or colors, a banner; also, that which is established by authority as a rule, a model or criterion, &c. And as such we understand the word as used in our text, and througtout the scriptures generally. "And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own **standard,** with the **ensign** of their father's house." — Num. ii. 2. "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my Standard to the people; and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders." — Isa. xlix. 22. This gracious promise is made to Zion. Again, Isa. lx. 19, 20, "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him. And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and to them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord." "Declare ye among the nations, and publish and set up a standard; publish and conceal not; say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded," &c. — Jer. 1, 2. From these scriptures we infer that the Word of God, Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life, his laws and institutions, are the standard for all his people to rally under, and by which their faith and practice is to be tested, and as such it is peculiarly the standard of God's people, whether Jews or Gentiles; and the watchmen of Zion are to lift up this standard, by publishing, and by concealing not the word of the Lord.

The psalmist says, "Thou hast given a banner [standard] to them that fear thee." And for what purpose is it given to them? "That it may be displayed because of the truth." — Psa. lx. 4. "We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners. — Psal. xx. v. When, as the end of the law for righteousness, the Beloved in the Songs brought his spouse from the shadow of the apple-tree, to his banqueting house, he spread over her the banner of his love. — Cant. ii. 4. As seen in prophecy emerging from the wilderness, in the morning of the gospel dispensation, looking forth as the morning, she is pronounced "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." — Cant. vi. 4, 10. Truly the banner which our God has given us to be displayed because of the truth, is the standard which Zion's watchmen are commanded to lift up for the people; and so lifting it up, they are instructed to behold what the Lord has proclaimed to the end of the world — to Jews and the Gentiles in every nation, and throughout all time — and with a steadfast eye upon what the Lord has himself proclaimed, they are to say to the daughter of Zion, "Behold thy salvation cometh." The daughter of Zion, in this text, we understand specially to apply to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, the remnant of Israel according to the election of grace. Those who came out of Judaism under the ministry of John, and of the disciples and apostles before the extension of the commission to the Gentiles. Say ye unto her, "Behold thy salvation cometh;" as anticipated and predicted in the first and second verses of this chapter, when in the going forth of this salvation the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings, or nationalities, thy glory; and when the church of Christ shall be called by her new name, by becoming dead to the law by the body of Christ, and married to him that has arisen from the dead.

The standard or banner of truth to be lifted up, or unfurled, should proclaim and exhibit the coming of the Salvation of the daughter of Zion, with what he has with him, and the work which he has before him, with the certainty that he will fully accomplish the work of his Mediatorial office, in the everlasting salvation of his people, and in the establishing upon them the names and titles by which they shall be called.

"Behold his reward is with him." It was on no uncertain mission that Jesus came into the world. "The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." — Deut. xxxii. 9. And of them he says, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." This people were "sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and called." — Jude 1. He has been their dwelling place in all generations, before the mountains were brought forth, or ever he had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting. — Psa. xc. 1, 2. "When thou shalt make his soul and offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong," &c. — Isa. liii. 10-12.

"And his work before him." "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold thy King cometh unto thee; he is just and having salvation." — Zech. ix. 9. "And thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." — Matt. i. 21. This work was all before Jesus when he came to do the will of the Father and to finish the work. No part of the work of redemption had been accomplished by the Levitical priesthood, nor by the offerings which were made by them under the law. No amount of blood flowing from Jewish altars

could cleanse from guilt or redeem unto God, only in a figurative or ceremonial sense.

> "Jesus, my God, thy blood alone
> Hath power sufficient to atone."

This was the work of the dear Redeemer himself; he trod the wine-press alone. Hence to the inquiry, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength?" he responds, "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." "I have trodden the wine-press alone," &c. "For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help." — Isa. lxiii. 1-5.

"And they shall call them, The holy people." In their former condition this people was rejected by Moses, as the impersonification of the law, and therefore were desolate and in widowhood, and termed, Forsaken, and Desolate; but now, when married to their risen Lord, and made partaker of his resurrection life, the newly wedded bride shall be called by a new name, which shall express the dignity and glory to which she is elevated in her marriage to her Maker. See verses 2-6. How appropriate is the name, "The Holy People." Holiness here signifies perfect consecration to one Husband, one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. Not simply **a** holy people, but **the** holy people; definitely designated as the only people claimed as the Lord's portion, the sanctified, called and consecrated people of our God. Washed in their Redeemer's blood, cleansed from all pollution, sin and guilt, dead to the law by the body of Christ, and married to him that is risen from the dead, partaker of his resurrection life, and clothed in his spotless righteousness. The tabernacle in the wilderness and the temple in Jerusalem both were typical of this people. They were made holy by consecration from a common to a sacred use, and being thus ceremonially consecrated, were pronounced holy. So this people, being chosen from the beginning unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, are solemnly consecrated, and shall be called The holy or consecrated people. But, lest it should be supposed that their holiness was of themselves, they shall also be called, "The Redeemed of the Lord." This name is suggestive of their former bondage, from which the Lord has redeemed them with his own precious blood. This name ascribes their redemption exclusively to the Lord, and being his work it must be perfect, effectual and complete. They are not redeemed by such corruptible things as silver and gold, good works or bad works by themselves performed, for they shall be called, The Redeemed of the Lord. Their Maker is their Husband, and their Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, The God of the whole earth shall he be called. "For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God." — Isa. liv. 5, 6. All this is fully signified by the name, The Redeemed of the Lord.

And it is still farther provided, decreed, promised and expressed, "And thou shalt be called, Sought Out." This name gives full assurance that the redemption of the people of God secures its application to every redeemed vessel of mercy; however far from God by their own wicked works, or lost and hidden in the deep depravity of their nature, buried in guilt and sin, strangers to God, and aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, they are and shall be sought out; for Jesus has come to seek and to save them, and he knows them that are his; and he will not fail nor be discouraged until all that the Father hath given him shall come unto him. He knows where they are, and where and when to search them out.

The last portion of the name, as expressed in our text, is full of assurance of the everlasting faithfulness and abiding security of this city of our God, whose name and title is, "A City not forsaken." God himself is in the midst

of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early. Glorious things are spoken of her. "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north." The Lord will be unto her "a wall of fire round about, and the glory in the midst of her." — Zech. ii. 5. In the day of the fulfillment of these prophecies, "shall this song be sung in the land of Judah, We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." — Isa. xxvi. 1, 2.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, November 15, 1877.)

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God saw fit to call from his earthly home on February 14, 1958, our good friend and brother, Elder B. L. Swann; and

WHEREAS, We realize his gain is our loss since his presence and influence will be greatly missed; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the will of Him who doeth all things well; and that we extend our deepest sympathy to the family; and that a copy of these Resolutions be placed in our church records, one sent to the family, and one sent to the **Signs of the Times** and **Old Faith Contender** for publication.

Done and signed by order of New Providence Church, Kentucky, in conference the 3rd Sunday in April, 1958.

(Elder) Paul E. Poyner, Moderator
Owen McKinney, Clerk,
Hazel, Ky.

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Little Flock Church
Altus, Oklahoma

WHEREAS, It pleased our Heavenly Father to call from the bosom of his family and his church, our beloved Deacon, R. H. Houk, on February 7, 1958. We depended on him to carry on in the absence of our Pastor. He was one who loved his brethren and labored for peace and welfare of the church. He was a good son, devoted husband and respected citizen. He will be sorely missed by all.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to God's Holy Will, desiring to be reconciled to our loss, which we feel is his eternal gain.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we extend our sympathy to the bereaved family, may the Grace of God comfort them in their sorrow.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we send a copy of these resolutions to the Signs of the Times for publication, a copy to his wife, Sister Phatama Houk, and spread a copy on the Church Record.

Written by order of the Church.

Nina Stallings, Church Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS: Sister Bunie Inman (May 28, 1903-Jan. 25, 1958) was a member of Good Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Franklin County, Texas for several years; being firm in her convictions, frank in her expressions, loving in her deportment, and regular in attendance of the meetings of the church up to, and including the day of her death: and,

WHEREAS: Good Hope Church was shocked and grieved upon the sudden death of such devoted, faithful and conscientious member — and,

WHEREAS: we are convinced that our great loss is in accord with God's sovereign Will, and is to her benefit;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that we bow in humble submission unto His holy will, praying that He make us content with our sad lot in this matter, and that we extend our heart-felt sympathy unto her husband, J. D. Inman, to her son, J. D., Jr.; and also her brothers, sisters, and many friends —

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this RESOLUTION OF RESPECT be filed with our church records; copies be mailed to her husband and son; and, a copy be sent to SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

The above resolution read and adopted in regular conference of Good Hope Church February 22, 1958.

(Elder) E. J. Lambert, Moderator
Mrs. Gertrude Munn, Clerk
Mrs. E. J. Lambert, Asst. Clerk

OBITUARIES

JOHNNIE BRYANT BURKHAULTER

Brother Burkhaulter was born September 22, 1876, the son of the late Eben Maxwell and Sarah Tidwell Burkhaulter, who were well known pioneer residents of Bowie County, Texas; he died March 23, 1958.

Brother Burkhaulter was a farmer in the vicinity of Simms, Texas. He had been a

member of Prospect Old School Primitive Baptist church near Simms (sometimes called Old Union), for 47 years; and was a deacon for 45 years. He was widely known, respected and loved; and was sound and faithful in the order and faith. It was the writer's privilege to know both him and Sister Burkhaulter for many years, having had several pleasant visits with them. From his way of speaking and acting among God's people, surely he was blessed to walk in the steps of that faith which was once delivered unto the saints; and was firmly anchored in a sweet hope which entereth within the veil.

He is survived by his widow, Sister Myrta Burkhaulter, and two daughters and three sons: Mrs. Pearl Barnes, Dekalb, Texas; Mrs. W. C. Barfield, New Boston; J. C. Burkhaulter, Denver City, Texas; V. W. Burkhaulter, New Boston; and W. K. Burkhaulter, Odessa, Texas. Also by ten grandchildren, 13 great grandchildren, and 4 great great grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

The funeral was conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder W. A. Speer, and Elder Lloyd Wall, before a large and attentive congregation, with many lovely flowers. The body was laid to rest in the Old Union Cemetery to await the final and glorious day of his resurrection.

May the Lord bless, lead, and comfort you dear, aged and afflicted sister; and you his dear children. Let us look, the Lord willing, to that grand and blessed day of the Lord's coming, when He shall gather all his people to himself in eternal glory, to praise Him forevermore.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

EVER NORRIS THETFORD

Mrs. Ever Norris Thetford was born at Greenville, Alabama, on November 22, 1872, and died from this old world of sin and sorrow on March 15, 1958, making this little portion of her life nearly 85½ years. Her body was buried at Riverdale Cemetery in Columbus, Georgia, where she lived for the past 60 years; but her spirit was born from above so it has gone back to God who gave it.

She was the daughter of Y. C. and Fannie Lloyd Norris, who preceded her departure many years. She was the granddaughter of Benjamin Lloyd who compiled the "Lloyd Hymnal", a precious book that the people of God have read and sung praises and adorations from for many decades. She was reared in a Primitive Baptist home and it was a heritage that she cherished. She had six sisters and two brothers who survived her. They are Mrs. Kate Alston, Atlanta, Ga., Mrs. H. P. Rodgers, Panama City, Fla., Mrs. Patti Dean, Phoenix City, Ala., Mrs. Thomas H. Hoey, and Mrs. J. A. Mayberry of Orlando, Fla., Mrs. George W. Smith, Columbus, Ga.; and her brothers are Y. C. Norris and Zack Norris, of Glennwood, Ark. and Temple, Okla., respectfully. An older brother, Lloyd Norris preceded her in death.

She was united in marriage to the late Chas. M. Thetford, Columbus, Ga., and to this union were born seven daughters, one having died in infancy. The six surviving daughters are much saddened by her leaving them and yet not as others who have no hope because we have a hope that in the plan and purpose of the Most High and Exalted Jesus, who is the Resurrection and the Life, that we will be called also at God's appointed time to pay the wages of sin, which is to die, that is the flesh or natural, but that we, too, shall see Jesus, the Lovely One, and sit down with Him and mama and all who love Him, all who have been given this heritage. Oh, What a wonderful family that will be there! Dear Old Primitive Baptists, it is just that beautiful now, but we can't see it plainly, now, but darkly as though through a glass. How well mama loved her Savior and the doctrine of "Salvation by Grace and Grace, alone", and as she met with the opposition of this world she never wavered but was given to stand still and see the Salvation of the Lord. She loved His people, the Church of the Living God and the blessed publication of "The Signs of the Times" which lay always open with her Bible near. It was her meat and her drink for her Church was not close by. She wrote a will, to be read after her death, to her six daughters, nine grandchildren and five great grandchildren, and in the expression of the sweetest words that a mortal being could ever write, commending them, each and every one, to the Blessed Savior, that, if it could be in His great will to be also their Saviour and teach them of His name, even Jesus, so sweet a name.

She was a member of New Harmony Primitive Baptist Church at Hiram, Ga., near Atlanta, Ga. and her Pastor was Elder O. J. Croker who spoke sweet words of praise and power of sweet Jesus at graveside services preceding burial of her body on March 17, 1958.

May God reconcile us to His Perfect Way and cause us to know He is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, and enable us to say, "Even so, Lord, for it seemeth good in Thy Sight, Amen.

Written by her daughter,
Mrs. Zula T. O'Neal

ELDER B. L. SWANN

Elder B. L. Swann was born August 7th, 1871, and died February 14, 1958, at the age

of 86 years, 6 months and 7 days. He was the youngest of four children born to William C. and Elizabeth Swann. He was married to Nancy C. Wilson June 15, 1911. To this union was born one daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Parks, with whom he made his home at the time of death. He professed a hope in Christ and joined the church at New Providence the 3rd Sunday in July, 1919, and was baptized the 3rd Sunday in August, 1919, by Elder Hugh Oliver. He was ordained to the full work of the ministry October 8, 1933. He also served as church clerk some several years. All these charges he faithfully kept until God said "Enough my son, come home and rest".

Elders Paul Poyner and W. O. Perkins conducted services at the Max Churchill Funeral Home, after which he was laid to rest by the side of his wife in the Sinking Springs Cemetery to await the second coming of our Savior.

Written by A. H. Summers and
O. A. McKinney, Clerk
(Elder) Paul Poyner, Moderator

WALKER WALTON WILLIAMS

Walker Walton Williams was born August 22, 1877. He was the last living one of ten children born to Thomas Raines and Sarah Ann Garret Williams. Had he lived until August he would have been eighty years old. He leaves to mourn his passing his wife, Georgia Cook Williams; one son, Wallace Hilton; one grandson, Bobby Joe; one granddaughter, Sara Jane; one great granddaughter; seven nieces and five nephews; and a host of neighbors and friends who loved him.

The writer has known him for fifty years, having lived in the same house with him on two occasions. He was a kind and loving husband, father and neighbor. He was one who believed in salvation by grace and could, and did, give a reason for his belief. He often said that he didn't feel worthy to be numbered among the ones deemed God's chosen people. He always seemed to rejoice in the fact that his father was a faithful deacon in Wolf Island church for the most of his life. He enjoyed attending meetings; was a good singer, and always enjoyed the song service.

Written by a friend

MRS. LONA SIMS GREATHOUSE

The subject of this sketch was born in Barbour County, Alabama, August 29, 1884; and for perhaps thirty-five years lived as a close neighbor to the writer. She married M. A. Greathouse about fifty-five years ago; and is survived by two daughters: Mrs. Vera Bell Thomley, and Mrs. Willie Mae Gillman; two sons: Crawford and Victor; two sisters: Mrs. Ida Horton, and Mrs. Pearl Ludlum; 19 grandchildren, and 16 great grandchildren. Her husband died several years ago. She died March 24, 1958, after a short illness.

Funeral services were conducted at Goodwater Church by Elder J. J. Collins. Interment was in Goodwater Cemetery.

also

DANIEL McNEAL BOWMAN

D. M. Bowman, of Dothan, Alabama, died April 2nd in a Dothan Hospital after a long illness. He was a native of Ozark, Alabama, and was a member of Hopeful Primitive Baptist Church for about 45 years. The writer had served as his pastor for about 20 years.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Myrtly M. Bowman; four daughters; nine sons; four brothers; three sisters; two half-sisters; and 16 grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. J. Collins at his beloved Hopeful Church; with interment in the adjoining cemetery.

also

MRS. ANNIE LEE WHITE

The subject of this sketch was born in Barbour County, Alabama, November 4, 1882, and died at Mt. Dora, Florida, April 1, 1958.

She is survived by three sons: Alton Lee, J. C., and J. B.; two daughters: Mrs. Pearl Pate, and Mrs. J. D. Whiddon; two brothers: J. L. and T. G. Hagler; four sisters: Mrs. Pearl Martin, Mrs. E. R. Sorrells, Mrs. H. S. Pippins, and Mrs. Osie Woodham; five grandchildren; and three great grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted at Union Baptist Church by Elders J. J. and F. A. Collins, with interment in the adjoining cemetery.

(Elder) J. J. Collins

WILEY A. CARTER

Wiley A. Carter was born February 16. 1881, and departed this life on December 23, 1957, after a lingering illness of nearly a year. He was one of nine sons and three daughters born to Henry S. Carter and Emmaline (Sis) Bryan Carter to reach adulthood. His entire life was lived in Pike County, Alabama. He was married to Flossie Rodgers, a daughter of T. M. H., and Oliva Rodgers; and to this union was born one daughter, who died at an early age.

He joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Elam on June 12, 1927; and was followed in baptism one month later by his wife. Recognizing a gift, the church ordained him a deacon July 5, 1928. His greatest joy in this world

was his active contention for the doctrine of salvation by grace — the faith once delivered to the saints. Not only was he a Father in Israel to Elam Church, he also supported the neighboring churches and associations with his presence, with his means and with his wisdom. His home was ever a gathering place, and resting place for Old Baptists and Elders from all parts of the country. Not only was he a staunch supporter of the Old Church and its doctrine, he was also a friend to his neighbor and fellowman. He was a source of strength in time of trouble; his means were available in time of need; and his wisdom was sought by many.

He is survived by his widow; four brothers: Cada and Frank, Abbeville, Alabama, and Bryant and Raymond, Goshen, Alabama; one sister, Eva Carter Rodgers, Goshen, Alabama; and a host of nieces and nephews.

The funeral was conducted by Elder E. D. Gafford and his pastor, Elder J. Russell Gibson, Sr., and his earthly remains were laid to rest in Elam Cemetery to await the second coming of Jesus Christ.

He will be sorely missed by his family, his church, his neighbors and by his community, but we trust that our loss is his eternal gain.

A nephew,
A. C. Carter

SISTER A. B. AYERS, SR.

Sister Clara Lavinia Jones Harris Ayers, daughter of Levi Jones and wife Crissie Taylor Jones, was born August 29, 1878. She was a native of Martin County, and spent her life in the Bear Grass Community. She departed this life January 20, 1958, making her life on earth 79 years, four months and 21 days. She was first married to Jesse B. Harris on January 1, 1903, who died January 20, 1908. To this union two children survive, Mrs. Elsie Mae Bailey of Greenville, N. C. and Hubert Staton Harris of Plymouth, N. C. Her second marriage was to Abner B. Ayers, April 24, 1910. To this union three children survive, Mrs. Selma Marie Rawls of Williamston, N. C., Abner Beryl Ayers, Jr. of Bear Grass, and Mrs. Mildred Courtney House, of Robersonville, N. C.

Sister Ayers, together with her husband, united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Bear Grass on the third Saturday in September 1920, and was baptized on Sunday by the pastor, Elder B. S. Cowin. The best years of her life was given wholeheartedly in its service. She was faithful in attendance. giving much time in preparing for the meetings, and her home was a haven of rest to the host of brethren and friends that were made welcome to share of the labor of her hands. When her husband was called to the ministry, she proved to be a minister's wife, giving every encouragement and traveling in several states and Canada with him, and never failed to make friends wherever she went. She was a judge of sound doctrine and rejoiced in the sweet fellowship of the Household of Faith. We feel that a Mother in Israel has fallen, and a light has been removed from the Church, and a good wife and mother removed from the home.

She attended the quarterly meeting at Singleton Church at Washington, N. C. the first Saturday and Sunday in September 1957, where her husband served as its pastor since 1940; this being the last church meeting she attended. She was stricken ill Monday night and soon was moved to the hospital where major surgery was performed by the most skilled physicians. All that doctors, nurses and all the loving hand of family and friends could administer was done. Prayers of husband, children and all the host of brethren and friends could not stay the hand of the Heavenly Father, who doth all things after the counsel of His own will, and who never made a mistake. She said many times that when her husband was called to serve churches, she was called to go with him and became a part of every church he served, and was called blessed among women.

We can say with the poet in the hymn 655 which was read at her funeral, "Come my dear friends and mourn with me in my afflicted state, I am bereaved as you may see of my dear loving mate. My loss is great to lose my mate, I'm like the lonesome dove, I'll go alone and sigh and mourn my dear and absent love."

She leaves to mourn their loss, her husband, Elder A. B. Ayers and the above named children, fourteen grandchildren and four great-grandchildren and a host of brethren and friends in several states and Canada. She served her day and generation and now sleeps with the Father, to await the call from the dead to receive that which God has in store for all that love him.

Her funeral was held at the Church of Bear Grass, with one of the largest crowds in attendance that we have ever beheld at a funeral, many people from two states being present. The services were conducted by Elders E. C. Harrison, of Bear Grass, I. S. Conner of Portsmouth, Virginia, E. C. Stevenson of Hamilton, N. C., W. E. Grimes of Greenville, N. C., A. P. Mewborn of Farmville, N. C., and R. B. Denson of Rocky Mount, N. C. Her body was laid to rest in Woodlawn Cemetery in Williamston, N. C., under a large and beautiful floral offering.

Done by order of Conference, Saturday before the third Sunday in February, 1958.

Elder A. B. Ayers, Moderator
Elder E. C. Harrison, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 126 DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1958 NO. 8

THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

Weary, dejectedly they trod,
Those two along the Emmaus road,
Faded their joy, their hope had died,
Jesus their Lord was crucified.
(They were not near when angels said
"Jesus is risen from the dead.")

And while they talked of all they feared
A traveller at their side appeared.
He read the sorrow in their face
And greeted them with gentle grace.
"What conversation have you had
That makes your countenances sad?"
"We spoke of things," said one of them
"Done lately at Jerusalem."
"What things?" He asks as in surprise.
(They saw, but saw with holden eyes.)

"What, art thou but a stranger then
And knowest not that cruel men
Have scourged. condemned and put to death
Jesus, the Christ, of Nazareth?
We loved Him, and we hoped as well
He would deliver Israel.
Mighty was He in word and deed
And understood men's deepest need;
His every word was purity
From childhood to maturity;
Daily He in the temple taught
And wondrous miracles He wrought.
He cleansed the leper with a touch,
He bade the lame throw down his crutch,
Restored the eyesight of the blind,
Gave reason to the sick in mind.
Two fishes and five loaves of bread
He multiplied and thousands fed.
Young children gathered round His knee,
He blessed them all so tenderly.
But hatred raged within the breast
Of scribe and pharisee and priest;
For He denounced their wicked trade
And the pretence of prayer they made;
Declared traditions that they taught
Made God's commands appear as naught;
Condemned them as a viperous brood
That robbed the widows of their food;
And as their cup of malice filled,
They planned how they might have Him killed.
Then Judas, for a traitor's pay,
Promised his master to betray.

There was a garden there around
Where Jesus often might be found.
One night He went as oft before,
But now He went in anguish sore.
With loved disciples entered He
The Garden of Gethsemane.
Onward He went with laboured breath
Sorrowful even unto death.
Then calling Peter, James and John,
The four of them went on alone.
Then these He left — in utter woe
Christ did a little further go;
Then prostrate prayed "If it can be
Father, remove this cup from me.
If not, then I myself resign,
Thy will alone be done, not mine."

Then through the night, dark as the grave,
Came soldiers armed with sword and stave.
Judas betrayed Him with a kiss.
(No treachery ever equalled this.)

Before the rulers of the Jews
False witnesses the Lord accuse,
But Jesus answered not a word,
It was as if He had not heard.
Then the High Priest interrogates
And anxiously the answer waits.
"Art thou the Christ, this we would know?"
And Jesus answered "Even so."
"And Son of God, is this your name?"
Again He answered "'Tis the same.
Hereafter shall the heavens rend,
In majesty I shall descend,
And then with God, as His own Son
Sit down in glory on my throne."
The High Priest cried "'Tis blasphemy."
The scribes and elders all agree,
And with united voice they cry
"Our law demands that He shall die."

Next day at Pilate's judgment seat
Accused and His accusers meet.
Pilate enquired "Art thou a king?"
And Jesus said, "Thou sayest this thing."
The priests their impious charges hurled
Against the Saviour of the world;
But Jesus, calm and dignified,
Stood, nor a single word replied.
The populace, by priests inflamed,
Him lately hailed, they now declaimed.
"Away with Him, away," then cry,
"Take Him away and crucify."
Then Pilate said "I find no cause
For death, according to your laws."
They answered "If you let Him go
Then even thou art Caeser's foe."
So Pilate bowed to their demands
And yielded Christ into their hands.

He washed his hands before them all
Saying "His blood must on you fall."
"His blood," the people shout, "shall be
On us and our posterity."
A crown of thorns upon His head
They placed, and in His hand a reed.
A purple robe around Him fling
And, mocking, hail Him as a king.
They led Him through the city gate
To meet His ignominious fate;
His heavy cross they made Him bear
Until another came to share,
When Simon took the mighty load
And bore it for the Son of God.

Between two malefactors He
Was crucified at Calvary.
Upon the road the gathering throng
Jeered as they slowly moved along.
"Come down" they taunted, "let this hour
Witness your supernatural power.
You said, though men this temple rase
I will rebuild it in three days.
If you are Christ the Son of God
Come down from off this cross of wood."

His mother and my wife were there,
They heard Him lift His voice in prayer.
"Father in heaven, forgive, I pray
These men the thing they do this day."
One of the thieves beside Him nailed,
Who only just before had railed,
Presents an earnest contrite plea,
"Oh, gracious Lord, remember me,
That when thou in thy kingdom art,
I, even I, may share a part."
No stern reproof or word of blame,
At once the gentle answer came:
"This day thy ransomed soul shall rise
To be with me in Paradise."

The sun, as if ashamed to gaze
Upon the scene, withdrew its rays;
The earth like night was darkened o'er
An earthquake shook earth's solid floor;
The temple veil was rent in twain
And earth reverberates again.
Then as He hung 'twixt earth and sky,
Arose a loud pathetic cry;
"My God," in awful agony,
"Why, why hast thou forsaken me?"
Then from His fevered lips there burst
A plaintive moan, "Behold, I thirst."
And mingled vinegar and gall
They gave to quench His thirst withal,
Which having tasted, Jesus cried
"'Tis finished," bowed His head and died.

At night, one Joseph, reverently
Took down the Saviour from the tree
And in his garden tomb interred
The sacred body of our Lord.

And this is the third day, beside,
Since Jesus Christ was crucified,
And tidings that have reached our ears
Tend only to increase our fears.
Some women, at the break of day,
Came to the place where Jesus lay
And found His body was no more
Resting within that sepulchre,
But they saw angels there, who said
"Jesus is risen from the dead."

The stranger listened quite unmoved,
Displayed no pity, but reproved.
"Oh fools," said He, "slow to believe
Or Scripture teaching to receive.
See what the holy men of old
In prophecy have oft foretold.
Should not Messiah suffer thus
And be transfixed upon the cross.
Should He not bear His people's sin
And to His glory enter in?"
From Moses onward thus He ran
And showed God's purposes to man,
And that these things did but fulfill
The revelation of His will.

By when they reached their journey's end
The stranger had become a friend.
He made as if to further go,
But His companions urged Him "No,
Come in, the shadows fall, come rest
And stay with us, a welcome guest."
So kindly did they both constrain,
That He consented to remain.

Then was the table fitly spread;
The traveller blessed and brake the bread,
And, while He brake, their holden eyes
Were opened — with intense surprise.
They saw that seated at their board
Was He they loved — Jesus their Lord,
And while they marvelled at the sight,
He vanished in the darkening night.

Oh Lord! If it should come to me
To walk some road dejectedly,
Come Thou! Let me not walk alone
Though Thou should be to me unknown.
And ever, when Thy table's spread
Be known to me in breaking bread.

O. J. Aston
(England)

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525 Atlantic,
Corpus Christi, Texas

To the Editors
of the Signs of the Times:

I enclose a letter written by my father, the late Elder W. S. Bourland, of Vernon, Texas, to his daughter, Martha, who passed away June 9, 1931. This letter has been a great comfort to me, and I would like for it to be published in the Signs of the Times for those who be-

lieved as my father and mother did.

The Signs has been in our home since I was a child, and I enjoy the many letters and experiences of the dear brethren and sisters.

Yours in hope,
Mrs. Myrtle McClellan

LETTER TO HIS DAUGHTER

Rockford, Texas
February 14, 1928

Dear Martha (my sweet baby girl):

For a long time I have desired to write you on things pertaining to our eternal welfare, but hitherto I have been hindered; and just now am for a few moments venturing to say a few things which, I trust, you will consider.

First, I want to say how poor, weak, and frail we poor mortals are. Solomon says we are nothing, less than nothing, and altogether vanity. The Prophet says the heart in man is deceitful: it is desperately wicked above all things: who can know it.

So we see man in his natural state a vile, wicked, sinful creature, seeking only the things that will add to his carnal, or earthly enjoyment — lying, stealing, murder, with all the other ungodly deeds which belong to Satan and his children. But, on the other side, which is of the Lord, is peace, righteousness, longsuffering, gentleness, temperance, and faith. These are the fruits of the Spirit; against such there is no law; these are the principles, and the substance by which God's children are actuated. God's children when in the Master's service, and when rendering praises to His blessed name, are not actuated by the spirit of the flesh, but alone by his Holy Spirit which leads and guides them into all truth.

Martha, the flesh is weak; it will follow the dictates of the mind of the flesh, which is earthly, sensual, and devilish. But the mind which is given to the heirs of promise, is the mind of Christ, which constrains them, and causes them to turn from the hateful ways of sin. Dear daughter, Jesus was He upon whom the Father laid all the iniquity of his bride (the church); and He it was that bore her sins all the days of old and put them away by the sacrifice of himself. Then, if He did atone or fully pay for all her sins, what remains against her? What charge can come up against the Bride, when the Son has died to redeem her (the church)? Inspiration tells us that the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin. Again, inspiration tells us: Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect; it is God that justifies, who is he that condemneth; it is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, and is at the right hand of God making intercession for the saints according to the will of God. Mark you, the intercession is for the saints (God's people).

Dear child, we as the children of God, are promised tribulation, but in Him we are promised peace. There is no lasting peace or joy in this life: It is just a little here, and a little there — and far between, but it is our duty as poor pilgrims — strangers sojourning is a wilderness of sin, to pray the guidance of God's holy and blessed Spirit into all truth and righteousness, that we may be enabled through grace divine, to praise his blessed name in all things.

In my meditations, my dear child, I do desire and pray, if it be God's will, that he will in the plentitude of his mercy, be pleased to bless you with an outpouring of his Holy Spirit, that you may understand and know the truths of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that you may be fed, strengthened, and comforted, and that your trust may be implicitly in the power, love and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, and not in yourself; for all our righteousness is as filthy rags in the sight of God.

So, dear child, let me admonish you again, pay no heed to the wisdom of this world, because it shall come to naught (so saith the Lord). Read the Scriptures; compare them with your own experience, and if they agree, you may know you are right. And remem-

ber, Jesus said, "In this world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace."

Troubles, s o r r o w, disappointments, and such like, are a great part of our heritage here; but the conflicts are only fitting and preparing us for the glorious blessings that await us just across the river. So, dear child, don't be discouraged: the Apostle tells us that these light afflictions are but for a moment, and that they work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. He says again, "If God be for us, who can be against us."

In the profoundest depths of affliction daddy remembers you, and would have you like minded. Mama and I are about as usual, and trust that you are well, and that the blessings of God are upon you,

Your father,
W. S. Bourland

3347 Tutwiler,
Memphis 12, Tenn.

Dear Elder Wood:

I am sending the obituary of Sister Dodson to be published in the Signs when there is room.

We feel thankful to God for his blessings upon the wonderful paper, The Signs of the Times, which affords sweet comfort and communication among the household of faith, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We believe it is according to the riches of his grace that was, and is, treasured in Christ for us according to the arrangements of the Father before the world began; and is not given to us according to our works. For if, and when we walk in good works, it is because God ordained that we should walk in them. As he thought so shall it be, and as he purposed so shall it stand. His people are a willing people in the day of his power. His love leads us in gentle paths, and causes us to desire to walk soberly and righteously in this world.

Oh, if I can pray, my prayer is that God give me and mine, yea all his children everywhere, such things as we stand in need of. We don't know just what our needs are, but we are confident that He knows, and is able to give them to us, and they will enable us to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, giving all the honor and glory to God to whom it belongs.

We are so happy to see the announcements in the Signs of Elder Ruston's and Elder Spangler's improvement in health; and we do hope that they continue to improve. We hope you and Sister Wood and others will be given a mind to come our way again soon. Give our love to the Simpkins who were with you.

Our son was ordained deacon the 1st Sunday in June. Elder Brock and Moon from Alabama were with us. We do pray God's blessings upon him, that He will enable him to fill that office well, always being of a ready mind to serve his church in humbleness and love. May we all ever esteem one another better than ourselves, and ever look to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.

In hope of eternal life,
Mrs. Luther Campbell

1247 Flanagan Street
Empire, Oregon

Editors of the Signs,
Dearly Beloved in The Lord,

God has a way of calling believers together, and thought it would seem strange and accidental to a mind of the flesh, we rest assured that it is all in the will of God.

Recently I met a lady, Sister Sarah Law (Greathorn) and she loaned me several copies of The Signs of The Times. It is a real joy to read experiences and the writings of the different Elders.

We have no Primitive Baptist meetings, and, as far as I know, Sister Law is the only one in this area who shows a true belief toward the doctrine advocated in your paper. Some of these

copies are of old date but they are new to me, and of course the doctrine is current as it was before the world began. I live with the satisfaction that it will be current when Jesus comes: Not needing any adjustment to suit our individual needs.

In humility I confess that I have tried home-made religion, where such conditions as, "We must accept", "I found Jesus", "Anyone in the world can be saved", is advocated. These are morally good people, and good to associate with; but no doubt some have never heard the gospel after their years of hearing a preacher.

I would like to know about the paper. Are the subscriptions the same as shown in 1955 copies? How many back copies are available? I was reared in Tennessee, my parents are Primitive Baptist, I have been going to a Baptist Church here who believed in Predestination and Election, but other things have crept in, as Child Evangelism (we do not take part). Too much seems to be taken out of context and used without its designated meaning.

Your kindness and assistance regarding the above questions would be appreciated.

An unworthy creature, living in hope,
C. L. Kemp

St. Charles, Ky.

Dearly Beloved Brother and Editor:

With weakness and fear I would like to write you a few lines. I met you at Nashville, and have often thought of you and Sister Wood, and the pleasure of being with you and hearing you talk. These sweet meetings make us feel highly favored of our God, and we trust we are made thankful that we have been led to where He feeds his little ones — it seems a heavenly place on earth. I don't believe we would get there if we were not led, for "No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him." And if we were there, we would have to be given the love and understanding or it would not mean anything to us. But this glorious blessing is bestowed upon us, we hope, but feel so unworthy of it. He directs all things, and makes them work together for good to them that love God, who are called according to His purpose. It is in spirit rather than in form that we are assembled to feast upon fat things upon the mountain of God's holiness, and partake of the mingled wine, and rejoice together in the things hidden from the wise and prudent of this world, and revealed unto babes in Christ.

Brother Wood, if you see nothing in this, throw it away; but I had a wonderful letter from Elder Griffin which I would like to share with others. We enjoyed it so much, I feel that others will, and that it is really worth the space it fills in the paper.

Praying that God's blessings be with you all, and that he will be with and guide you in your future work on the Signs of the Times.

Your little sister, I hope, in gospel bonds,
Bunyan and Mona McGregor

THE LETTER FROM ELDER GRIFFIN

Covin, Alabama

Mrs. and Mrs. Bunyan McGregor,
St. Charles, Kentucky

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

It has been some time since we have sent anything your way, but it has not been because you were not in our thoughts. The pleasant scenes of yesteryear are not easily forgotten. If they pertained only to this life, we would soon forget them in the press of the daily toil and strife, but they are memories of a little prelude of what is to come. Well, the casual observer might want to know, What is to come? And before I could answer that I would want to know, What has already come?

What has already come? Has something come to pass that is outstanding?

Has something come to pass that is different to what has come to pass with many? When we look back in retrospection, look at those with whom we are surrounded, we are well aware that **something** has come to pass with us that **has not** come to pass with them. If **that** that has come to pass with us is of the Lord, then the world has come to an end for us, but is still standing with them. When the world came to an end it held no more attraction for us. Its glittering joys and objects of time lost all of their luster; the things that we had been doing seemed to matter no more; the things we had been eating and drinking ceased to alleviate our hunger and thirst; the ambitions that pertained to this world were lost in our efforts of survival; our hopes for after life went thru such an abrupt change that we knew that we would never make it by works of righteousness which we had done.

What a vast change all this brought about. To have the world come to an end and yet it be existing as it always had, is a mystery to those that it has not yet ended for. That is the reason Old Baptist doctrine is held in disdain by so many. It is because their world is still standing and ours has fallen. And what vexation of spirit it is to us (as we humbly hope) to yet be in this fallen perishing world. Our affections are set on things above; we are looking (not to this world, but) to that world of immortal bloom, where joys unspeakable and full of glory await all of the redeemed of the Lord.

But, while the change has been wonderful, it has not been as complete as we yearn for. Oh, so much of the time we feel to be at home in the body, and just as often as we feel to be at home in the body, we groan because we are absent from the Lord. How great the change, only those thus exercised know. No need to talk to those that have not had the change wrought in them, for the only thing they know, or can know, is being at home in the body, and how satisfied they feel to dwell there. How restful that is; how free of vexation and toil; how clear of troubles and sorrow; how precious the goods of that vast dwelling place, and how great the hoard of unused riches; how spacious is the room to move around in, and how delightful to have freedom of will to go whithersoever they would therein, and to even boast of ability to leave that dwelling to live with Christ; how high and broad the doors and windows of the dwelling and what streams of light they give.

But when it is shown to the occupant how unstable the dwelling is, and that he that made it is erasing it, taking away all that we had of armour and light and will, and spoiling all of our goods but leaving them and their stink for our now delicate sense of smell, closing every door and window of escape, how sick we became of our bed. We had rested there a long time, but now could not rest there. We had been strong and healthy there, and had held in disdain those that talked of lack of strength, and that could not enjoy the vain and frivolous things of time. What a spell of sickness that was. It will never be forgotten. Sick unto death, and no quickening spirit, no balm for our sores, no wine to cheer our droopiness, no pure water to wash away our filthiness, no bread, no water of life. No physician came our way. We tried all that we heard of and we got worse. We spent what we had, or what we thought we had, and our troubles grew and mounted up as dark clouds of gloom. We watched our supplies dwindle; we watched them used up; we came to the end, our world ended.

Everything ended. We died to it all. But our dying to it was the height of our beginning. Jesus died but he lives, and he, being our Life, we lived again. Alive unto God, alive unto righteousness. He came to us while helpless on our sick bed. He said something. He spoke with power and authority. "Take up thy bed and walk". This has never been said to anybody except God's people. It was a curiosity to the Jews of

that day and this day. That excited them in literal things and it is exciting in religious things now to be carrying this dead world (body) around. Oh, day longed for by the trembling saints of God. That day when the change will be so complete, and we shall see our Lord as he is and be like him forever and forever. How sickening it is to be at home in this body or world. How we long for deliverance from the body of this death. How we do long to ground our arms and go to our long sought home of rest.

God has provided us one pleasant boon while here. It is not any small moment to think of what the Lord has done for us here. Oh, my weary, questioning soul, dry all thy tears, calm all thy fears. He that did not own a home; he that had no place to rest that dear tired body; he that often was alone, and misunderstood by those closest to him; he that was forsaken by his Father and died the cruel death of the cross alone, he it was that gave us a home before he left here. Gave us a place to turn aside from the stench and noise and burdens of a dead world to rest. He gave us that resting place and brings us to see the beauty and joy therein. To insure our final home over the way, the Man Christ Jesus the Lord went into glory there to appear for us, but he sent One, even the Holy Ghost to dwell in this home with us. He, the Man Christ Jesus appears today in heaven for us; the Teacher, which is the Comforter or Holy Ghost, appears to us here and leads us to our home in this world.

I will never forget the restfulness of that home when I got there. I thought I would never make it. I had longed for it, I had hoped that some day I might be one with them, but I did not see any way for a sinner like me to enjoy the pleasures of that pleasant land. Something happened to me again. Everything, wife, darling babies, all, all, left me, and someone brought me nearer ever nearer the church of Jesus Christ. One went away, the other came nearer and ever nearer, until I could think of nothing except to be baptized. I believed that I would die if I did not go and ask them for a home.

In the fulness of time I did go. You cannot know how surprising it was to find them waiting as eagerly and anxiously for me to come as I was to go. It was the sweetest experience I've ever had in my life. Something did come to pass, and so it has been coming to pass in the life of the people of God all the way down the steps of time. That that has come to pass, is the prelude of what is to come yet. We have had the world to end, yes, but we have not been taken out of the world. We have been kept from the evil here, but we have not been delivered from the presence of evil. We have had it made known unto us that the body is dead because of sin that dwells in it, but we have not been delivered from the body of death. The change is not yet full as our desires. But thank his precious name something has come to pass. That which has come to pass is so wonderful that it assures us that something else will come to pass. We have known and felt the image of the earthly, having felt all of its plagues and galling effects, but are assured that we shall also bear the image of the heavenly; we know what it is to be in dishonor and weakness and corruption and dull mortality. Yes, something has come to pass, and it having come to pass, we are looking for a city whose maker and builder is God. We know that we do not have one here. Something has indeed come to pass that is wonderful. We have been taught that we have no continuing city here, and that that has come to pass is **now** causing us to seek one to come. It is a good thing that has come to pass. The world has ended for us. We have lost everything here. But we have been given something else that is much better. We have been made to seek one to come.

Another thing has come to pass. While seeking a city to come, we have a company of kindred spirits on the journey home. I have not, in thirty-five years of writing, enjoyed any more than

to send this little epistle to you. God gave you to me. I needed somebody to talk to this morning, and I do hope that you will need these lines when they arrive, and that they will be as crumbs to travel on and on in the heavenly way.

Something else will take place tomorrow. We will be gone. Others, and on my part, I hope more faithful ones, will have taken our place. But our going will not bring sorrow to those of the household of faith, for it is better to die than to live, for living here is not any longer our joy and anticipation, but going yonder to meet our loved ones is the most desirable thing of all. And as I close my enraptured soul feels that, if I do not see you anymore here, that I will meet you over home. To that end I wait.

We love you for Jesus' sake.

Your little brother and sister,
W. D. and Lois Griffin

---

205 N. College Street,
LaHabra, Calif.

Editor of the Signs:

Enclosed is a check for subscription for one of my sisters. She wrote me for the address of the Signs, desiring to subscribe, but I want to send it to her.

I trust the Lord will enable the editors to continue with the paper, and the writers to continue to write. I surely enjoy reading it when I am given a heart of understanding. The Lord knows our needs, and I am not afraid that one of His chosen will go unfed; but I fear sometimes that I am not one. Yet I would not exchange the world's riches for the hope I have. I feel to be the least, if one at all; and saved by grace, if saved at all. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.'' (Ephesians 2:8-9) I am so thankful I have been given this understanding: Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

I came out to California in June, 1957. Have not been to preaching since I have been here, but feel that I will when the time comes for me to go. The Lord's will be done, not mine.

To the editors and all the household of faith, it is my prayer that the Lord will bless you, and make his light to shine upon you, and give you peace in Christ Jesus. What more could anyone ask for?

Mrs. E. V. (Ellen M.) Sellers

R. F. D. 4, Box 152
Charleston, W. Va.

Dear Editors:

Have been wanting to write since subscribing to the Signs the first of this year. I have enjoyed each issue so much, and look forward to its coming every month. I found the May issue especially good. So many seem so gifted to write their experiences and articles, and the Editorials especially.

I have tried many times to write on what I hope are a few of the things I have experienced along the way, but seemingly have put it off. Why, I do not know, except a feeling of unworthiness and lack of ability to write on these things.

Elder Griffin's editorials reveal much understanding on things I have wondered about, and have brought me much comfort. Also, a little over a year ago (I believe in the March, 1957 issue), I enjoyed the correspondence of Elder Ruston and Katherine Gillies, both the letters and replies. Her experience seemed dear to me.

Somewhere along the way, I believe a few beautiful things have been mine to behold; but I find I have many doubts also. I feel that I received a sweet hope at the age of seventeen. The words, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and ye canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth", came to me in such peace, and in such a sweet manner that I felt I had heard the glad tidings: "For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

Since that time I feel I have been in the desert also, with nothing but sand;

and was made to wonder, "Did I hear the sweet voice of the Saviour." My hope seemed gone, and I was in despair, until one day He spoke, "Stand still"; and He again so lovingly took me by the hand and let me view a few glorious scenes with him.

Quite a few troubles have been mine also: Have I not at times seemed forsaken, and found myself wondering, with burdensome thoughts, and in deep despair? When everything else fails, and we feel that we are weighted down with cares, who comes to us in such a sweet manner, and quiets the storm, walks upon the waves, and leads us on to heavenly places in him?

How sad is blindness! But, "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." (Isaiah 9:2) And, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

I feel my unworthiness in writing on a few things I hope I believe. I feel that it has to be through Him that we are enabled to, for there is no seeking him with the natural mind. I believe, if there is any searching, He does the searching out; and I believe that he alone knows how to turn the darkness into light. "He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." (John 10:1) Then again he says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep."

I send these few lines for you to do with as you see fit. If published, I wish to extend my most humble thanks to those whose writings I have been blessed to read, which have meant so much to me in the last few years; also to Mrs. George Ruston and Katherine Gillies, from whom I received kind letters last year.

Unworthily,
Phyllis McClanahan

Gordo, Ala.

Dear Editor of the Signs,

At the present there is a flood of literature claiming to have scriptural authority for its doctrine and practice but which appears to come from the anti-Christ. The following is a few thoughts on the claims they make.

"And He said unto them, go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:15-16) This was the last command given to His Apostles before His return to His Father. But before His death He prophesied of the events that would take place before the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the Jewish-Mosaic dispensation, which took place about the year 60 A. D. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations and then shall the end come." (Matthew 24:-14) He gave them a sign when these things would come to an end; "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh." (Luke 21:20) As recorded by Matthew, Mark and Luke, Christ gave a list of events which were to take place before the desolation of Jerusalem; and in each account He says, "This generation shall not pass till all be fulfilled."

Paul gives the proof that the gospel had been preached in all the world even in his day. Speaking by the Holy Ghost, he said, "If ye continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister." (Col. 1:23)

The religious world has been for centuries trying to accomplish this last command, which God did in one generation. We also have scriptural evidence that this so-called "gospel" is not of God, for they claim to be sending it to the "lost" to whom Paul says it is hid-

den. "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that **believe not** lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God should shine unto them." (2nd Cor. 4:3) If the "lost" can receive and believe their "gospel", it but proves it is not of God; for those who "believe not" have only the carnal mind, "Which is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." (Romans 8:7)

In the fulfilling of this last command by the Apostles and their generation, churches were established, composed of the baptized believers in all places where the gospel was received throughout the Gentile world; and since that day there has been a removal of candlesticks (churches) and the setting up of others according to the will and purpose of God, and not by any organization of man but by called ministers of God as directed by the Holy Ghost. (Acts 13th chapter) "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." And, "So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost departed unto Seleucia."

Any organization that claims to be sending the gospel is but a branch of anti-Christ, and is claiming to do a work which Christ has reserved to Himself alone.

In hope,
W. L. Crowley

Bala P. O. Muskoka,
Ontario, Canada

Dear Editors:

Please find enclosed $10.00 for subscription renewals.

. . . These are a little late, but many relapses of the Flu have prevented me writing either the Signs, or those of like faith; so surely with me it has been a "time to keep silent". But how good when made to remember that our times are in His hands, and that the Lord doeth all things well, and according to his purpose; also to be reminded that "Everyone that loveth is born of God."

How cheering to read: "Elders Ruston and Spangler Improving". What a prayer of thankfulness I felt go up to the Giver of all good gifts for His goodness and mercy; for, although we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to his purpose, our flesh being weak and our desires so often contrary to His will, if it were not that we know "He will be inquired of", and are told to cast all our burdens upon the Lord, for He waits to be gracious, surely we would often faint by the wayside. But it seems to me that my most frequent request is, "Lord teach me to pray", for it is He who promises to provide all our needs; and these always are, and will be provided to all those who hope in his mercy, but in His way, not ours.

To all of like faith, my love and fellowship.

Your sister I hope,
Alma Viola Mortimer

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The **Smith River Association,** the Lord willing, will convene with the church at Payne's Creek, Friday, September 5th, lasting through Sunday, the 7th. The church is located in Floyd County, Virginia, about eleven miles East of Floyd, on the Blue Ridge Parkway.

A cordial invitation is extended to our brethren and friends to meet with us.

(Elder) B. O. Thompson

LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The **Lexington-Roxbury Association** is appointed to be held with the First and Second Roxbury churches, Halcottville, Delaware County, New York, Wednesday and Thursday, September 17, 18, 1958. All lovers of the truth are invited to attend. If convenient, those expecting to attend the full two days send a card to Mr. and Mrs. James Peet, Halcott Center, N. Y.

Those coming on Tuesday take Route 28 to Fleischmans, then turn right at first Esso Station on right, on Halcott Center Road, and continue about 3 miles to the home of James Peet. Those coming Wednesday go directly to the Meeting House in Halcottville.

(Elder) A. J. Slauson

DELAWARE ASSOCIATION

The **Delaware Association of Old School Baptists** will meet with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, located directly on Route 222, and near Md.-Pa. State Line, on first Sunday and Saturday before in September (6 and 7), 1958, the Lord willing.

Ministers, brethren and friends of like precious faith are cordially invited to meet with us.

Elder John D. Wood, Pastor
Chas. B. Osborne, Church Clerk

MAINE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Main Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, on September 5, 6, and 7, 1958.

An invitation is extended to those of our faith and order, and interested friends.

Mrs. Sanford S. Bartlett, Clerk

ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church of Riffe, Washington, will be held, God willing, the third Sunday in August, and Friday and Saturday before (August 15, 16, 17) to begin on Friday at 11 A. M. We will be glad to have any brothers and sisters with us. We hope there will be some ministers with us at that time. Write Mrs. Vernie Schoonover, Clerk, Box 612, Morton, Washington.

D. C. Davis, Pastor
Ernest Attebery, Co-pastor

PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The 1958 session of the **Pleasant Valley Association** will be held, the Lord willing, with Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, beginning on Friday before the 4th Sunday in August, and continuing three days. The meeting place is located on Highway 83, seven miles West of Weslaco, and one mile East of Alamo, Texas.

Brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

(Elder) E. B. Ault, Clerk

ELDER BENNETT IMPROVING

We were glad to have word from Mrs. Bennett that Elder Bennett is improving, though slowly. He has been in the Fort Howard Veterans Hospital, at Baltimore, for several weeks.

We hope that he will soon be able to return home, and to resume his usual activities.

J. D. W.

Danville, Virginia **August, 1958**

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All letters for this paper should be addressed and remittances made payable

TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 5, Box 332F **Danville, Va.**

EDITORIAL

THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA

The most of the time in the Scriptures we will find that numbers are highly significant. Perhaps it is not profitable to try to spiritualize every time a number is mentioned, but it is profitable to notice that the most of the time a given number constitutes all of anything. Inspiration has given more importance to some numbers than to others. You might select at random many numbers from the Bible and not be able to attend any marked importance to them, but many of them do have an important meaning to the church of Jesus Christ.

The reason that I attach so much importance to the seven churches of Asia is because that they were seven and not six or eight. Undoubtedly it is a complete number, otherwise, if there had been eight, the apostle would have mentioned it. Since he was writing by inspiration an account of what was revealed to him, I am not going to quibble

and say that he imagined and speculated and conjectured the seventh one when he had been shown and told to write about six.

How lacking in wisdom it would be to say that only seven stars or ministers existed in the time of which John wrote; how foolish to imagine that only seven candlesticks, and seven churches existed at that time. We do know, according to the New Testament that many other churches had been founded. Then, to make the book of Revelation a book free from absurdities, we must admit that the sevens are the whole; that they are representative of what is taking place with the church of Jesus Christ in all ages, times, and places of the gospel dispensation. If not, we may lack some of what inspiration intended us to have, or we may have too much. Either theory would be plausible to the unstable, but to those that know and believe the truth, they desire to contend that the Scriptures are sufficient to set forth all of that truth.

It should never be our intention to glorify and place in the wrong position those whom the Holy Ghost has made overseer over the flock of God. That is wrong, and the practice of wrong things will certainly bring downfalls. It is equally wrong, and will bring the same downfall, to take any of the gifts of the ministry away from them. Let us note again, even at the expense of being trite, that each angel was a star and that they were all in the hand of Jesus. However, just because that they were in his hand, does not mean that they did not have a specific place in the churches. He placed them by his hand in their place which was one at each named church. This is still the order of the kingdom; it has not been reversed, and it will not be. All of the talk to the contrary not withstanding, all of the work of seminaries, all of the decisions of men to follow the ministry as a profession, has not, and cannot, and will not, change this divine arrangement.

The ministers, the stars, the angels, have an important place. The best evidence in the world that a man is in the hand of Jesus is that he is doing the work of Jesus; that he is rejoicing in his commands and doing them. No better evidence has ever been had that a man is called to preach than that he preaches the gospel. The minister has certain qualifications, and he has certain duties, or a certain line of work laid out for him. He is constantly in the hand of Jesus, being given every needed grace to minister to the Lord's people. His calling is one thing, his qualification is another, but his calling does not come from one place and his qualification from another. When God calls a man to preach, he certainly is going to take heed to himself, and when he does he is going to find just how little he knows, how unfit he is for the work. And the power that shows him that, is going to show him the beauty in an oxen as he plods along in the road that his Master has set before him. If he is called of God, if he is held in the hand of Jesus, he will have in him a burning zeal to learn the more excellent way, to attain unto the mark of his high calling, to become obedient to commands of he that called and yoked him into the ministry.

The servant of Jesus Christ must be apt to teach; he must be gentle unto all (men); he must be patient; he must in meekness instruct those that oppose themselves. He must be that, and if he must be, he must be in the hand of Jesus, or he may not be any of these things. Jesus said, in speaking of his work, that he must do the works of him that sent him, and if he must do his work, and the ministers of God must have these gifts and qualifications, it must be because of the work of Jesus, as he holds them in his hand.

Where would the five thousand have gotten food if the disciples had held things in their hand? Sometimes we hear a gospel that is indicative of the Saviour being in the hands of his people; that He and his cause and kingdom is hindered or helped by those that have things in their hand. The disciples did

not know what to do with the hungry five thousand. We are not a whit behind them today. We are prone to be Elijah-minded about the number, and we are prone to be disciple-minded about the food for the Lord's people. How beautifully God taught the prophet the very thing that he needed to know, and how gloriously did the Saviour instruct those of his care, that the situation was not out of control.

All of this book was to the seven churches of Asia. It did not belong to any others. These seven churches are the churches of Jesus Christ now. These messages and revelations were as much to the church today as they were then. If not, we had as well throw our Bibles in the trash can, for it is a well known fact that none, none at all, of the churches whose names are recorded in the New Testament are still in existence. Whatever gave them hearing ears, the same gives them today; He that talked to the angels of those seven churches, the same is now talking to us; He that held the stars in his hand, holds them in his hand now; the messages they received, we are receiving today, provided, of course, if we are the church of Jesus Christ.

The things wrong and the things commendable must be the things of all time. The conditions that existed in these churches will be found in ours now, and when we look back in retrospection, we will find them in the churches back to the apostles. According to the question of the Saviour (Matt. 20:15) He has a right to do what he wills with his own. When sin was prevalent in them he charged it to them and commanded them to repent. He told them what would be the penalty if they did not. Everything in them not according to the pattern, he condemned, and I feel like that he still condemns wrong doing in the churches today. If it was scriptural at that time for Him to command a turning away from their evil ways or to have the candlestick removed, it undoubtedly is scriptural to say now that the same rule is over Israel today.

He pointed out the errors among them all, save the Philadelphia church. He commanded repentance or extinction. If the messages to these churches are messages to us, then, likewise, and in the same manner, and to the same extent, we have the same words addressed to us. I suppose it could be said that such a surmise is soft doctrine or conditionalism. However, I am not surmising, for I assure you that I am not making statements that cannot be supported by evidence at hand, nor I am not casting allegations by way of suspicion, nor am I outguessing or making conjectures in regard to what the Saviour had in mind. I am quoting his language to those churches, and I am taking it for granted that they are to us, since we claim that we are the church that He established while he was here in the flesh. Those errors, if continued in, would bring a removal of the candlestick. He said that, I did not. They are all gone. He said they would go if they did not repent. How many churches have we had to become extinct that had continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine? How many have you know, dear brethren, that had followed in the examples and rules and regulations of the Saviour and the apostles to be without a candlestick?

May the Lord give us repentance. I think, perhaps, we may have had in recent years an opening of our ears to hear what the Spirit says to the churches. If so, God does not begin a thing without a finishing somewhere. May the Lord bring us to see the need for a repentance among the Old School Baptists, and that He will give us repenting grace.

W. D. G.

A WORD OF EXPLANATION

We have at hand a number of articles and letters which we have not yet had space to publish. Most of these require editing and typing before sending to the printer, and since we have many other

duties, we are behind with this work. We hope our correspondents will be patient with us, and we will publish each article or letter which is of general interest to our readers. Getting the paper into the mail each month requires more work than many realize, and when our writers can have their articles typed (double spaced) our work is considerably lessened. However, we hope none will hesitate to send in articles handwritten if they cannot type them.

We yet have a number of obituaries to appear as we have the space.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE LORD WILL PROVIDE

"And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah."—1 Kings xvii. 16.

My dear friend:—This morning I turned to this chapter, and my eyes rested upon these words, so full of precious meaning; therefore I will write something upon them and their connection, hoping the God of Elijah may bless the effort to the strengthening of your faith and the comfort of your soul.

If you will read the chapter, you shall see that, according to the word of the Lord by Elijah, a sore famine had fallen upon the whole land of Israel, for the idolatry and wickedness thereof, and that Elijah had, by the Lord's direction, hid himself by the brook Cherith, where "the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook." But "after awhile the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land." Then the Lord sent him to Zarephath, to dwell there, telling him, "I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee." At the gate of the little city the prophet saw the saying, "Fetch me, I pray thee, a little widow woman, when he called to her, water in a vessel, that I may drink. And as she was going to fetch it he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand. And she said, As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it and die. And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said, but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth. And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house did eat many days. And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah."

This interesting event, and its history, are a strong proof of God's almighty power and over-ruling providence, and of his special care for his servants and people, who honor and fear him. And it also shows that, for the gross and persistent wickedness of the people, his afflictive and just judgments fall upon the land. Thus, when Ahab, the wicked king of Israel, said to Elijah, concerning this grievous famine, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" he answered, "I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim."—1 Kings xviii. For while God keepeth mercy for thousands, yet he will by no means clear the guilty.—Ex. 34. May we not therefore fear and tremble, when we consider the gross wickedness of our own rulers and people? But whatever calamities and afflictions may be visited upon us, we may still turn to the Lord in the time of trouble, and with fear and trembling hope that he will feed and nourish our soul in the time of

famine. The faithfulness of our God is here shown, in fulfilling his word by his servant Elijah, that there should not be dew nor rain for a time, but according to his word, and in protecting and sustaining him through the years of consequent famine. For the great wickedness of Ahab, who " did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him," Elijah had said to him, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." And for this Ahab and Jezebel, his more wicked and murderous queen, sinned still more, by seeking Elijah's life. And there was no nation or kingdom whither the king had not sent to seek him, that he might kill him. But the Lord had a work for Elijah to do in Israel, as the subsequent sacred history shows; therefore he led him to a safe retreat, which he had prepared for him, telling him that he should drink of the brook, and he had commanded the ravens to feed him there. Thus he was secure from his ungodly persecutors, and his life was nourished. For he stood before the Lord, whom he served, and did according to his word, obeying his voice; therefore the Lord would neither let him be killed by sword nor perish by famine. From this we may learn that no servant of the God of Israel who does according to his word, as did Elijah, shall be left in the hand of his enemies, nor perish with the wicked; but the Lord will nourish him in famine, and strengthen him in affliction, and cause him to stand, until he, as a faithful servant, has fulfilled the work whereunto the Lord has sent him.

Many a time King Saul would have killed the shepherd boy, but David walked in the fear of the Lord, who always raised him up friends, and made a way for his escape, until he placed him as shepherd over Israel, and honored him as his servant. So Joseph, when betrayed and sorely persecuted by his brethren, found favor among strangers in his affliction, because the Lord was with him. And afterwards, when the whole house of Israel went up out of Egypt, carrying the bones of Joseph with them, they were safe, even while hotly pursued by their cruel oppressors and deadly enemies, and while walking in the midst of the sea, for they were walking according to the word of the Lord. The obedient Son of Man was safe in the terrible wilderness of temptation, though among wild beasts, and enduring the fiery darts of the prince of darkness, (who compassed the destruction of the first Adam,) because the Spirit of the Lord that was upon him led him there. On the other hand, the first man disregarded the command of the Lord, and thereby entailed upon himself innumerable evils. And so, for the sin of Ahab and Israel, in wickedly departing from the word of the Lord, the drought and famine sorely afflicted the nation.

But the Lord did not forget Elijah in his hiding place, before Jordan, for morning and evening came the ravens with wholesome food, while the pure waters of the convenient brook satisfied his thirst. What must have been his reflections in that solitary refuge, and with what solemn and profound emotions he must have regarded all these things! How well calculated was all this to assure him that the God of Israel was to him, as his own name signified, "the strong Lord." When the land of Israel was smitten with the withering drought and torturing famine for the wickedness of its people, who also sought his life because he spoke the word of the Lord faithfully, and there was no human hand to minister to him, behold, Elijah sees the ravens coming with the morning and evening, and bringing him that sustenance which his own land and people denied him, and so becoming God's ministers to him. How strong this must have made him in his trust in the Lord! With Jacob, who was also fleeing from danger, he could say, "Surely, the Lord is in this place!" And like as it was with Elijah, so with the Son of man, whom the Lord made strong

for himself, when the elders and rulers of Israel persecuted and rejected him, the uncircumcised publicans and Gentile sinners came to him, and he ate with them. Still later, when the Jews hardened their hearts, and believed not, nor repented, but blasphemed, and wickedly persecuted the servants of the Lord, Paul said, "Lo, we turn to the Gentiles." And when the priest and Levite left the poor, wounded man who fell among thieves, doing nothing for his relief, a Samaritan came and ministered to him. So ravens fed Elijah. Thus it is seen that the Lord is the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother, and will neither leave nor forsake his people, who put their trust in him; "For the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof," and all things are subservient to him in the good of his chosen. When he commands the wind and the seas, they obey him, and his followers are borne safely through the threatening storm to the desired haven.

"And it came to pass after awhile that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land." Therefore Elijah could no longer remain there, but must go elsewhere. So every earthly source of comfort must fail us, and we must be taught by actual experience that our supplies are from the Lord. To Elijah this was a trying moment, and he could not know whither to flee; but "the Lord forsaketh not his saints." "And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee." How remarkable is this! and how wonderful are the ways of the Lord! First the ravens are commanded to feed his servant, and then a widow woman is to sustain him! Elijah could never have thought of this, for it is above man's ways, and out of his reach; and yet it is a way in which the power and goodness of the Lord is made known and his name glorified. And how timely are the words of the Lord to his persecuted and afflicted servants and people, who wait patiently for him, calling them to the mercies and blessings which he prepares for the poor and needy, who only can appreciate them, and without which they should perish. Thus Elijah's very necessities prepared him to obey the voice of the Lord, who had dried up the brook, that he might go elsewhere as an instrument of good, and find better things. "So he arose and went to Zarephath." How powerful is the word of the Lord when it comes to one of his servants, or to any of his creatures! "For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast."—Psa. xxxiii. 9. When he commanded his servant to go to Nineveh and preach, his power was known in controlling the sea and storm, the ship and crew, and the great fish, in making Jonah willing to obey his word.

So the poverty of the younger son, the famine, and his failure to sustain himself by feeding swine, bringing him into a starving state, were only ways of the Lord's power in his salvation, making him say, with a hearty good will, "I will arise, and go to my Father." The way and means were afflicting and bitter, but O how great is the father's love in bringing home his son! And so it was bitter for Elijah, that the waters of Cherith had failed, that he might willingly be cut off from that lonely retreat, and find a pleasanter dwelling place and better cheer with the widow woman and her son. Moreover, Elijah must not live for himself alone, but be an instrument in the Lord's hand of good to others, even to those who gave him food and shelter; and therefore, through the failure of the waters of the brook, he was sent to the poor widow just before her last morsel of food was consumed, which she and her son were about to eat and then die, as she thought. In this we see how nicely the hand of God fits one event to another in his providence, so that all work together for the good of his chosen ones. And this interesting case teaches us, too, how dependent the Lord makes his people upon one another; for, behold,

when the widow woman has no more than a handful of meal and a little oil, Elijah is sent to her that she should sustain him; yet she refused not to divide with him the little she had, and in doing so, the Lord blessed and multiplied her little store, insomuch that it lasted during all the days of famine, and was sufficient for Elijah and herself and son. Thus she was truly blessed and made rich in poverty and famine. The Lord had sent the prophet to her, with the assurance that he had commanded her to sustain him until the famine should end; therefore, when he asked her for bread and water, and she told him how very little she had, barely enough for one little meal for herself and son, he felt assured that the Lord would increase that little, in obedience to his word, and so declared to her. She feared the Lord, and believed and trusted in his word, as told her by Elijah, and in that faith she complied with the request of Elijah, to the comfort and joy of her famishing household. To herself and son it was a special and wonderful providence in the time of their great need and extreme trial, causing them to bless the Lord because he had sent Elijah to them; and to Elijah it was no less a mercy and blessing from on high that he was sent to the widow woman, who refused not to give him of her little morsel, when she had not enough for herself and son, and he would think of her unselfish kindness with tender gratitude, giving God thanks, who had blessed her little store, so that through her hospitality he lacked nothing. And then, this unfailing provision in famine came in a way that both the widow woman and the prophet would know that God alone gave it, and that they were alike dependent upon him. How blessed were they both in finding such favor with God! when almost all Israel was swallowed up in idolatry and wickedness, and left to the ravages of famine. Herein God's electing love is seen upon those who love, fear and obey him, while they who wickedly depart from him are left to their own destructive ways. For so the holy Savior testifies, saying, "But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow." —Luke iv. 25, 26.

The prophet Elijah, then, as I think, represented God's righteous and elect servants, of whom he said, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold: mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth. I have put my Spirit upon him, he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law."—Isa. xlii. 1-4. For he truly was the strong Lord, the one whom Israel's God made strong for himself.

The widow woman may represent God's elect church; while her son may represent the holy child Jesus in the days of his flesh. For this son of the widow woman afterwards died; but Elijah raised him up again, and restored him to his mother. So Jesus was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, and restored to the church. In the Song the Beloved is represented as eating with his sister and spouse, and she says, "Let my Beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits." When he came to her (and to us) she was in her widowhood, and ready to perish with famine, and he and she and her son were blessed and sustained together.

(Written by Elder David Bartley in 1877.)

ORDINATION OF DEACONS AT UNION CHURCH, PATRICK COUNTY, VIRGINIA

The Presbytery met at Union Church, Patrick County, Virginia on May 24, 1958, by request of said church, for the purpose of examining Brethren Aubry Shelton and Elmer Akers for the office of deacon. The church selected Deacon R. E. Carter as spokesman for the church.

The Presbytery was organized with Elder S. L. Moran, Moderator, and Elder J. G. L. Hash, Clerk; with Elders B. O. Thompson, S. E. Terry, J. T. Turner, J. P. Helms, and Leonard Brammer. Visiting Elders Cecil Turner and Pete Turner. With Deacons F. W. Prillaman, R. E. Carter, Sylvanus Carter, Perry L. Stone, A. L. Barbour, Dillard Akers, D. L. Simpson, S. L. Walker, Chester Haygood, Leonard Nichols, W. H. Simmons, R. F. Stone, and J. R. Clark.

Elder S. E. Terry offered prayer for divine guidance. Elder J. P. Helms was selected to lead in the examination.

Brethren Aubry Shelton and Elmer Akers were delivered into the hands of the Presbytery. After questioning Deacon Carter, the Spokesman for the church, he was discharged. Elder Helms proceeded to question Brother Shelton and Brother Akers as to their impressions to serve the church as deacons; then as to the doctrine, faith and practice of our people.

After finding these brethren sound in the faith, proceeded to lay hands on them, with prayer by Elder Cecil Turner. The charge was delivered by Elder Leonard Brammer. These brethren were then returned to the church as deacons.

We recommend these brethren to our churches, and all with whom we correspond.

Elder S. L. Moran, Moderator
Elder J. G. L. Hash, Clerk

OBITUARIES

EFFIE A. ANDERSON

Mrs. Effie A. Anderson was born June 18, 1889, at Crumpler, N. C., and passed away at her home in Bel Air, Maryland, after a long illness. She was one of nine children born to the late T. Newton and Rebecca Blevins. On November 15, 1910, she was united in marriage to the late John H. Anderson; and to this union were born six children, four of whom survive: Mrs. Horton Stuart, Northbrook, Pa.; Mrs. Reese Jones, Wilmington, Delaware; T. Wilson Anderson, North Wilksboro, N. C.; and E. Ray Anderson, Bel Air, Maryland. Surviving also are twenty-two grandchildren and three great grandchildren, and the following brothers and sisters: G. O. Blevins and Benjamin Blevins, Crumpler, N. C.; R. W. Blevins, Rising Sun, Md.; W. A. Blevins, Bel Air, Md.; Spencer Blevins, Pylesville, Md.; and Mrs. Vilintee Dixon, North East Md.

Sister Anderson united with the Primitive Baptist Church in Ashe County, N. C., when a young woman, and after moving to Bel Air, transferred her membership to Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pa., where it remained until death. She was strong in the faith of God's elect, and attended her meetings whenever her health permitted. She is greatly missed by the congregation at Rock Springs.

Funeral services were conducted at Rock Springs Church by her pastor, Elder Wood, and she was laid to rest in the church cemetery by the side of her husband, to await the coming of her Lord, and the resurrection of the dead.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to those who mourn, that they weep not as those who have no hope.

John D. Wood

MRS. H. L. GRIFFITH

Nannie Dameron Griffith, born March 3, 1872, died in Baptist Hospital, Winston-Salem, N. C., on Februray 6, 1958. She was in declining health for four years, sick in the hospital for two years, and very sick for a few days.

She was born in Caswell County, N. C., the daughter of Elder James S. Dameron and Kate E. Roberts Dameron.

She spent most of her mature years in and near Ruffin, N. C. and married H. L. Griffith, a railroad employee who died in 1944. She had made her home with her daughter, Dr. Mary Griffith since 1935.

She is survived by Dr. Griffith, another daughter, Mrs. Charles M. Freeman; one son, Henry L. Griffith of Ruffin; one sister, Mrs. R. P. Mitchell of Reidsville; four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Of her father's family, the following brothers preceded her in death: James W., John H., Samuel B. and Drury W. Dameron.

She taught school for a number of years, and since she lived a long and useful life we cannot wish for her in this busy, confusing world any longer. We feel keenly that she is at rest.

She wrote some of her experiences (in Zion's Landmark in 1952) but she became too feeble to finish it as she would have wanted it done. She wanted it in rhyme, and her eye-sight was too nearly gone at that time for her to read

or write.

She had read the Bible through thoughtfully more than 25 times before her eyes failed. Her daughter got the Reading Books for the Blind for her and she usually chose records of the Books of the Bible to listen to.

ASLEEP IN JESUS PEACEFUL REST!

MARY L. (MOLLIE) DODSON

Mary L. (Mollie) Dodson was born August 22, 1883, and passed away January 1, 1958, making her stay on earth seventy-four years and four months.

She united with the Primitive Baptist Church March 4, 1916, and was a faithful member until death, always at her meetings unless providentially hindered. For sometime she could not attend regularly on account of failing health, but was always anxious to hear from the meetings, and was so glad to have her brethren and sisters visit her.

Besides her husband, Lonnie Dodson, she leaves one daughter, Margaret Hilburn, of Memphis, Tenn., and two sons, Carl of Jackson, Miss., and Bill of Memphis, and a number of other relatives to mourn her passing; but our loss is her gain. We will always remember her smiling, sweet disposition, and understanding way; ever looking over others and speaking a kind word in their behalf: I never heard her speak an unkind word against anyone. She is greatly missed by her church members and friends, but we desire to bow our heads in humble submission to God's will, and pray his richest blessings upon the bereaved family. May His love watch over and keep us all ready to be revealed in the last time.

Written by order of her church, with a copy recorded in the church book, and one sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Carrie Campbell
Lucille Young

ELDER JAMES WESLEY FREE

Elder James Wesley Free was born July 26, 1878, and died November 23, 1957, making his stay on earth 79 years, 3 months and 28 days. He was first married to Miss Carrie Davis in 1899, and to this union were born thirteen children, nine girls and four boys, to wit: Ola, Lola, Hoyett, Hobson, Mae, Georgia, Ann, Madison, Geneva, Lillian, Irma, Davis, and one died in infancy. His first wife died several years ago and he then married Mrs. Etta Gilmore on July 17, 1945. He left his wife, twelve children, many grand children, great grand children, step children and other relatives to mourn his passing, but we all feel that our great loss is his eternal gain.

He first joined another order of people and was ordained by them to their ministry, but he became dissatisfied with their doctrine and joined the Old School Baptist in 1931, and was ordained by them. He was a humble and true believer in salvation by grace, and contended for it with the ability the Lord gave. He was a good father to his children and a devoted companion. He lived his entire life, until we married, near Gordo, Alabama, rearing his children there. After that, he lived near Jasper, Alabama, until death. He was ill a long time, not being able to talk for six months before death but having a pleasant smile for those that waited on him, being patient in all his sufferings.

He was laid to rest at Sand Springs Methodist Church, near Gordo, Alabama, there to sleep until the resurrection. His funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Elder H. C. Moon, assisted by his step-son, Elder J. C. Gilmore.

Brethren pray for me a poor widow, who feels deeply the loss of my dear husband, but who is looking to the Lord to take care of me as He has in all my many sorrows.

Written by his wife,
Mrs. Etta Free

LUCY TRENT CARTER

Sister Lucy Trent Carter, wife of Brother Thomas O. Carter of Rockingham County, North Carolina, was born in Henry County, Virginia. She came with her parents, Mr. Benj. F. Trent and Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Trent, to North Carolina when quite young. She was born March 2, 1879, and was married to Thomas O. Carter on December 26, 1906. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church of Reidsville by experience and baptism in 1916, and remained a useful and loyal member of that Church until the Lord called her to her heavenly home on February 15, 1958.

It had been my sweet privilege to know Sister Lucy Trent Carter and Brother Thomas O. Carter from my early youth. They were happily married and remained so until her death. Their home and hospitality was always sweet and delightful, and the welcome you received from them was genuine without pretense.

Sister Carter loved her Church, and I mean she had an abiding interest in the cause of her Master, and her life was a living testimony of the pure and undefiled religion she professed. Only those who knew her best, her pastor, her brethren and sisters of Reidsville Church, and her neighbors and friends, and many of the outstanding citizens of her town and community could realize the loss they

feel in the passing of this dear sister.

The snow and the very cold weather at the time of her passing and at the time of the funeral was very severe. Her body was taken from Wilkerson's Funeral Home in Reidsville to the Primitive Baptist Church in Reidsville for the funeral services. Her husband, Brother Thomas O. Carter was too feeble to attend. The funeral services were attended by the writer, and her body laid to rest in their family plot near their home.

Written by request.

Elder J. W. Gilliam

SISTER BETTIE A. GRAY
AND
BROTHER JOHN T. GRAY

Sister Bettie A. Gray ,wife of Brother John T. Gray, was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, on May 17, 1879, and she and Brother John T. Gray were married on March 16, 1895. Sister Gray joined the Primitive Baptist Church in Reidsville in January, 1928. They had moved to Reidsville about 1924, and were living in Reidsville when she joined the church there. After a few years they moved to Monticello, in Guilford County, and Brother John T. Gray joined the Primitive Baptist Church there. Sister Gray remained a member of the Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church until death on January 26, 1958. Neither Brother Gray nor Sister Gray were very well for the last two or three years, and they had come to live with their daughter, Mrs. Roy Citty, of Reidsville, N. C., in February, 1955. Brother Gray preceded his wife in death by about one year and ten months. She died January 26, 1958.

It was my privilege to visit with Brother and Sister Gray from time to time in their home at Monticello, and later at their daughter's home. Brother Gray did not join the Church until late in life, though he attended our church meetings fairly regularly for years before he died. While his health was poor he asked the Monticello brethren to hold a meeting at his home, and they did so, and I tried to preach for him on that occasion, and at the close of the service he asked for a home with the Church and was reecived, and I later baptized him.

Brother and Sister Gray were very humble and sincere, and much beloved. They were tenderly and lovingly cared for by their daughter, Mrs. Roy Citty after they came to live with her, and they continued to live with her until the Lord called them home.

The writer attended their funerals, and their bodies laid to rest in the Reidsville City Cemetery to await the resurrection at the last day. Written by request.

Elder J. W. Gilliam

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, Our Heavenly Father has been pleased to call from the walks of men our venerable brother and companion in tribulation, Brother Sam Walker; and

WHEREAS, This dear brother was born in Franklin County, Virginia on March 12, 1886, and died February 27, 1958; was married in 1908 to Miss Mary Lizzie Harris, who, with a large family of children and other relatives survive him; joined Chapel Church in 1920, later moving his membership to Malmaison Church by letter in 1941, which he attended until health failed him; and his funeral having been conducted by his pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, assisted by Elder W. R. Dodd; be it therefore

RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the will of God who doeth all things well, and may He watch over the family and comfort them; that a copy of these resolutions be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, a copy put on our church book, and a copy sent to the family.

This done by order of the church at Malmaison while in conference.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Sister Kate Dodd, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our beloved sister Lula Perkins; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Church at Pleasant Grove, wish to bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Father who doeth all things well. She was a devoted and humble follower of the Lord until her death. Be it further

RESOLVED, That the church has lost a faithful member whom we miss very much. And be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be spread upon the church book, a copy be sent to the family, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church at Pleasant Grove at her regular session March 15, 1958.

Elder Harvey Smith, Moderator
Mrs. R. F. Walker, Assistant Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 126 DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1958 NO. 9

THE VALLEY OF LIFE

Down from the hills of my childhood,
I come to the Valley of Life.
'Twas filled with pitfalls of corruption,
And crossed by the rivers of strife.

Across this great valley I've wandered,
And often my way seemed slow,
But, ever, I faced to the Westward,
O'er the hills where the sunsets glow.

As I traveled, I often met others;
And together we strolled with the tide.
But always our pathways were heading
Across to the other side.

Sometimes the mire was so deep
We must help each other along.
Sometimes the Valley was smooth
And we filled its air with a song.

The swamps and rivers were many:
The sods and the crossings seemed few.
But ever onward we wandered,
Ever onward to something new.

Up ahead I could see many others,
And it seemed that, as many had passed,
The pathway should be better posted
To guide us onward to the last.

But it seemed that each in passing
Had not left a trail we could see;
There were no marks at the quicksands —
No one had blazed for us a tree.

Now I am nearing the foothills;
Just a few more miles must be trod
To the top, where we are promised
We will meet at the throne of God.

As I start on my climb upward
To the top of the Great Divide,
Which hides the land of the living
From all those on the other side,

I thought the ground would be solid,
That the footing better would be;
That out of heat I could wander
To rest in the shade of a tree .

But when I get to the mountain
There are clifts which I can't climb.
I must detour past the gullies —
My body seems not in its prime.

What is that seen in the distance?
Is that the top that I can see?
Or is it another hill top
Where more of the mountains I'll see?

I turn, looking at the Valley,
I see there my trail of the past;
And see others near the mountain
Up which I am climbing at last.

I look ahead for the summit —
It surely can't be very far;
Over the top I am glimpsing
The light of the Evening Star.

What is there up at the summit?
I am sure that I do not know.
But over its top is shining
A light like the sun's afterglow.

Is the top where I'm standing?
Still there is nothing that I see
But more of tops of mountains
All covered over with the trees.

What is that — that light over yonder,
Is that a haven at the last?
Will it lead onward to glory
As promised the ones in the past?

So on down the road I'm going,
Hoping at the end of the road
I'll find those who have gone before,
And there I may lighten my load.

Westley Bond
Seneca, Oregon

ROMANS 5:10

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

DEAR BRETHREN B E E B E:—By your permission I will speak to the household of faith of some of the precious things contained in the above text of Scripture; and first, in order to a correct solution of any problem, there are three indispensable prerequisites. First, the person speaking; second, the person spoken to; and third, the person or thing spoken of. If these three points are properly considered, then all the obstacles to a correct solution of the problem are removed. But without this,

the best conclusion to which we can possibly come is imaginary.

Therefore let us now turn to the first chapter of the epistle from which the text standing at the head of this article is taken, in order to ascertain those facts that will serve as a light to guide us in the way of truth. "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle." —Verse 1. This is the person speaking. "To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints."—Verse 7. These are the persons addressed, the regenerated persons who are in Rome. And the subject of address is reconciliation and salvation. And first, we notice that the address of the apostle is limited to all the beloved of God; to all the saints of God who are in Rome.

Now, we do not know how many there were in Rome that were not beloved, but we feel safe in saying that there were some; for the language employed by the apostle indicates very clearly that there were those in Rome of a different character, who were not included in the address. The persons to whom this whole epistle is addressed are clearly distinguished from others, by the discriminating terms, "beloved of God" and "called to be saints." And the specification of any one particular thing is at least equivalent to an absolute prohibition of every other thing.

It is evident from the teaching of the Scriptures that those dearly beloved saints of God, whom Paul so tenderly and lovingly addresses, were once the avowed enemies of the faith that now is the only anchor of their souls. They became enemies by transgression in the person of their representative; for "by one man's disobedience many were made sinners." "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." And those saints at Rome are not excepted. They, by the transgression of law, became as great and wicked sinners as any of the sin-polluted family of Adam. They were by nature the children of wrath, even as others; but God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved them, even when they were dead in sins, quickened them together with Christ.—Eph. ii. 3-5.

There is no difference between one man and another, considered as fallen sinners, until grace makes the difference. Grace is divine favor bestowed upon objects previously chosen. If we say that it was bestowed upon all, then we might be asked why it had not the same effect upon all. We are taught that grace is sufficient; and if it is bestowed upon all, then all have a sufficient means of salvation, if grace is sufficient for any. We know that the Scriptures teach that salvation is of grace; and if grace is sufficient to save Mary, casting seven devils out of her, and for the man among the tombs, casting out of him a legion of devils, and in a moment of time saved the thief upon the cross, pray tell us for whom grace is insufficient. Who is it that grace will not save, if for that purpose it is sent into the heart with divine power?

All sinners are alike diseased. The malady of one is just the same of all. The remedy that will effect a cure for one will surely do as much for all, if for that purpose given to all; especially so when administered by the divine Physician, who has all power, and who is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind; upholding all things by the right hand of his power; who spake, and it was done; who commanded, and it stood fast.

Man in his fallen state is in a state of irreconciliation to God, an enemy to God in the most extensive sense of the term, abandoned to the most wretched state of wickedness and crime, hateful to and hated of one another, guilty of infracting the just law of his Creator and benefactor. The law with all its curses is upon him. Poor, helpless vagrant, he is in debt ten thousand talents, and has nothing to pay; deprived of freedom, bound in chains, weighted down with the iron arm of the law, in the prison-house of death, there to re-

main until satisfaction is rendered to the divine law he so willfully insulted. The penalty of that law is death; and in tones sufficient to make creation totter from its center to its circumference, it demands restitution, a debt impossible for him to pay; but his inability to pay is no excuse at all.

The debt is just, and the law in justice demands that payment be made. The justice of the law will not admit of the least addition to or reduction from the debt, but demands payment in full of all its claims; but the poor culprit is wholly unable to pay one mite of the debt, and therefore without the intervention of a power outside of and superior to his own, he is eternally doomed; for he is irreconciled, and without reconciliation there is no salvation or deliverance. The law can grant no pardon or forgiveness, but must take its course in punishing the offender, if his debt is not paid.

And for anyone to undertake to effect a reconciliation, he must be perfectly free in every particular, to be a suitable person for the work. Hence none of Adam's posterity can answer the purpose, because of bondage, being legally bound to a just law. The law is holy, but they are carnal, sold under sin. Heaven and earth may be searched, and but one can be found, and he prepared by infinite wisdom and power. The Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed, by giving himself a sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, for the release of his people. And when he cried, "It is finished!" the law was satisfied, reconciliation was effected; and even at that moment they were his enemies.

Therefore, we who were enemies were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; and now we are no longer under the law, but under grace. We are now in debt to Christ all that we owed the law; but the difference from what it was is very great. The law under which we were could not omit one farthing of the debt; but Christ can and will forgive all the debt, remembering it against us no more forever. His death effected our reconciliation, and we are saved by his life. "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also," says Jesus.

Reconciliation was effected by the death of Christ. Salvation is by his life. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." By the term "reconciled" is meant satisfied, atoned. So the death of Christ perfectly satisfied all the claims of law and justice; and by this act of his, which was full, free and voluntary on his part, and without any merit, past, present or future, on the part of the guilty, he bought them, or redeemed them from bondage.

But redemption makes no change in their condition, but is a preparatory act thereto. By this act of the Redeemer he gains the right to make a change. This change he makes upon or in the sinner while he is yet in bondage under the law, by sending his Spirit into their hearts, by which they are brought out of the prison-house and from the bondage of the law. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." "But now, being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."

W. M. LITTLE

(The above was written by Elder Little in 1894. It is re-published at the request of his daughter, Harriett Little Gray, of Houston, Texas.)

Route No. 4
Monticello, Georgia

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed you will find three dollars for the Signs another year. I love the dear old Signs so much that I do not want to miss a single copy. I find so many travelling the same road that I am. I believe it contends for the faith

once delivered to the saints, the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. It sets forth salvation by grace, election, predestination of every one of God's elect. This doctrine will comfort, uplift and edify a poor sinner, and praise and honor God; and that is as it should be, for all life, natural and spiritual, is absolutely dependent upon the true and living God. He is not dependent on man for anything.

I am near my seventy-sixth year, and I live a good ways from church and cannot get there as often as I desire. It makes me get lonely and hungry, and what a joy to meet again with the people whom I love so well. If my poor heart is not deceived in me, I am never so happy as when I can be at our meeting and see the sweet faces of God's little ones, and hear their voices raise the old hymns in praise and honor and glory to God. How beautiful at that time are the pictures of the old servants of God as they sound the sweet gospel bell.

Dear ones, please look over my poor way of expressing myself. I do not want to take the place of the good writers. Oh, may God be with you all and bless you to continue to send forth the Signs of the Times. I want to ask all of God's little ones to remember this little unworthy one when they are at the throne of grace.

Your little sister in hope,
Ollie Callaway

Rison, Arkansas

Dear Elder R. W. Rhodes:

I will try to answer your kind and much welcomed letter of truth and grace, of the true salvation which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, to the little ones chosen in him before the world was. Grace and love from God our Father be to you and to all believers of the truth as it is in him.

This leaves us doing pretty well at present; hoping your dear old mother is doing well, and that the Lord will comfort her in her afflictions. I heard you preach the Word of God this morning, and thought it was as good as could be. I believe this is the true church and doctrine of Christ. As Bildad and his friends had to bow before Job to be prayed for, so all of false worship will have to bow before Him; for Christ the Lord and Master said, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it."

Self-works are nothing more than pride; and the Scriptures say that pride is of the Devil. Man in his best estate is altogether vanity, and his righteousness as filthy rags before God. A house built upon the sand will not stand the test. But thanks be to the Lord who said that his sheep know his voice, and know not the voice of strangers. I would not judge others, but the Scriptures say that by their fruits ye shall know them. When the Lord sent his disciples out to preach, he told them to be as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves.

Thank you for your comforting words regarding my letter; also Elder J. L. Smith, who has fed me in the way His true ministers can endorse. Yes, Jesus said that in the world ye shall have tribulations, but to be of good cheer, for he has overcome the world. Yes, I believe that the sinner has to see the brightest of all lights, which uncover his sins before his eyes; and feel the sword of God in his heart: that awful condemnation, before he can fall down to the very dust of the earth, and pray for forgiveness as he never prayed before; with tears and a melted heart. So, to me, that cuts out all natural works, for a man by nature is carnal; and the Scriptures say that the carnal mind is enmity against God, not subject to his laws, neither indeed can be.

If I have any hope, it is only through the mercy of God, who has all power in heaven and in earth; who sent his Son to redeem me from my lost state; and who is worthy of all my praise. He is worthy, but I feel my unworthiness; yet I hope he is my salvation, and will

not forsake me. He knows all my thoughts and the intents of my heart. He is my love, my all — my only hope.

Thank you for your good letter.

Your brother in Christ, I hope,
B. L. Fox

New Market, Ala.

Signs of the Times:

I am sending a check to renew my subscription, and the balance to use as you see fit in publishing the truth which is contained and upheld in your paper. I am not a member of the Baptists, but feel that they, and they alone, are the only ones who are contending for the truth once delivered to the saints.

I feel that to preach anything save Christ and him crucified, and risen Saviour; and a reconciler and mediater between God the Father and man, is entirely heresy, and should be looked upon as such. In the beginning the Word was with God, and the Word was God, and the same Word was made flesh and dwelled among men. God the Father made himself a holy and acceptable offering for sin in the person of his Son, and gave him dominion over all the earth, heaven, and deep places. By him and through him is the only way that mortal man can approach the holy Father, since man through the transgression of our parents, fell short of perfection. It is through Him that we are made acceptable in the Beloved, which is Christ.

May God in his grace and mercy guide and direct you to always contend for what the Scriptures teach, as you have heretofore.

As ever,
A. M. Campbell

6915 Laredo Street
Houston, Texas

Dear Editors:

The Signs of the Times is a welcome visitor in my humble little home, and I get great comfort from all the good articles and letters which come our way, when given light and understanding. Without God given revelation, and the love he sheds abroad among his people (if I am one), such reading would be blank pages, and worthless reading; and we would cast it aside. Often in rereading we see more than before.

Enclosed is a money-order, as I don't want to miss a copy.

We of Shepherd Fold Church, of Houston, are in peace and sweet fellowship; and have been having good meetings. We welcome visitors at any time: come be with us. Our meeting time is the 1st Sunday in the month and Saturday before. Meeting time is 10:30 A. M. both days.

From a sinner in hope of a better life; and saved by grace, if at all.

Mrs. Irene Wisenbaker

1360 First Street
Chehalis, Wash.

Signs of the Times,
Dear Children of God:

I find it is time to renew my subscription, and am enclosing $5.00 for two more years. I have a desire to send some good news, hoping that there will be some who will rejoice with me.

Of late years, I have been newly awakened to the mercies and goodness of God to poor me. I continue to be surprised at His many rich blessings to one so undeserving; both spiritually and naturally.

I live in an almost overcoming state of amazement at the many answers to prayers from my sinful lips, that have been answered, and have been made to say, "Why me? Why should one so small, weak, and sinful be made an object of his mercy?"

It seems the nearer the time comes when, "He will call, and I shall answer", the more precious and magnificent to me becomes His precious word, as written in the Scriptures, and as preached by his called and qualified ministers.

The sacrifice of His dear Son, together with the resurrection; and then add to this the promises found in Romans 8, and what shall we say to them? Are they not glorious, far beyond the comprehension of mortal man? If my hope is not in vain, they are for me.

How they glow; how they fill the poor sinner with unspeakable joy; how they lift us from despondency and despair! How they strengthen us to go on; how they encourage His little ones to try as much as in them is, to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world!

These lovely assurances are as a strong hand holding mine, as I am led onward to the end of my sorrowful pilgrimage in time, to a joyful life in eternal glory with my Lord; and a great cloud of witnesses gone on before.

Oh, that I could praise him; that I could thank him; that I could adore him as He deserves! I know that this can never be done through the veil of flesh that intervenes. Nevertheless, as a beacon light, they guide me, and are priceless to me. Oh, these precious assurances which are true earnests to God's little ones! Dear Saviour God, for them we thank thee.

In hope of God's mercy,
Effie Parke

1702 Tyron Road
New Bern, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

I have an impression to write a few words on some scripture which has been wonderful to me. I have tried to speak from it once, and it still remains in my mind. "And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth." (John 11:43)

Jesus spoke to Lazarus whom he loved; and though Lazarus was dead yet he heard the words of his Lord, which were with power, even power enough to cause him to rise from the dead and live again. Now Jesus loved his people when they were dead in trespasses and sin (Ephesians 2:1); and when the time has come in the life of a dead sinner when he is to be quickened by the Spirit of God (God's time), Jesus by the same power by which he raised Lazarus from the dead, speaks to the sinner with a still small voice, and kills him to the love of the carnal things of this world; and makes him alive in Christ Jesus. This is done by revealing to the sinner that he is condemned to death by the holy and righteous law of God, and makes him to know that he is worthy of death. With the burden of sin so heavy upon him he is buried beneath the weight of sin to the extent that he is just as helpless to rise from that condition, and free himself, as Lazarus was to rise from the dead to life again.

So when it pleases God, he sends the spirit of his Son into the heart of one who has been made to know that he is dead (dead in sin), and speaks to him by the power of his Word, which is powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing and dividing asunder the soul and spirit, and joints and marrow; and is a searcher and discerner of the intents of the heart. When this is done it causes the sinner to come forth from the dead to a new life, being born again, not by the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but by the will of God. This is a life that he knows nothing about until he is quickened by the Spirit of Christ Jesus; which brings about an awakening to the light and glory of God. Then it is that he can say, or experiences, as Paul did when he said, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." (Ephesians 5:14)

When Lazarus was raised from the dead, he was bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and a napkin was bound about his face; yet he was alive. To free him so he could be active in life, Jesus said, "Loose him, and let him go." (John 11:44) Now when a sinner is raised (quickened) from the dead, he also is bound hand and foot with the bonds of nature, so that he cannot by

his own power enter into the perfection of Christ Jesus; neither can he speak of the glory of God, nor understand spiritual things until he is delivered by the power of God from the imperfections of the flesh and corruption, and is clothed with the righteousness of the Son of God, shutting out thoughts of carnal and natural things from his mind, causing the mind of the Holy Spirit (mind of Christ) to enter into the heart and soul, giving him faith in the Son of God, and hope of heaven and immortal glory.

This operation in the heart and soul causes one to be delivered in his feeling from under the curse of the law of sin and death. And when this has been experienced, then it is that he is raised up into the perfection of the Son of God, enabling him to worship God in spirit and truth by this spiritual mind that is anchored in the mind and soul, turning him from the evil elements of this world and the love thereof, to a way that is not of himself — to a way that is in Christ Jesus our Lord: a new and living way. In this he is made to feel the power of God, and forgiveness of sin, and is made a new creature in Christ Jesus. However, the time comes when he will again be brought down in low places, causing him to pray to God to be delivered. I believe that each one of God's people who has been born again experiences the need of being delivered from time to time, as Paul did when he said, ". . . though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." (2 Cor. 4:16)

When one experiences the delivering hand of God, he can witness with David in the 23rd Psalm, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." I believe that David, when he wrote this, was lifted up, and made to feel so close a relationship with God that he desired to continue in this state the rest of his life; and I believe that each child of God is at times elevated by the power of God to the extent that he is blessed to feel this close relationship with God, and see with an eye of faith single to the glory of God, and behold some of the promises of God which He has in store for his people beyond the grave — for them that look for his second coming into the world; which coming will not be for sin, but to gather together the jewels of God's mercy, and take them to that eternal home in heaven to ever be with the Lord . . .

In hope of eternal life,
(Elder) S. R. Boykin

McDowell, Ky.

Signs of the Times,
Dear Brethren:

I am renewing my subscription, and sending a little mite to help to give it to the "poor of the flock". I enjoyed the January issue, especially the article by Elder Chick on Forgiveness. It was very timely in these perilous times.

This is a material, unspiritual, mechanical, and ungodly age. Men have made gods of themselves. Hitherto the world has had rafters, and a roof; now it has none, and whirling wings are all aflutter. Man has "subdued" (Genesis 1:28) the air, earth, and water at God's command. What lacks he yet?

He lacks the subduing of a deceitful and desperately wicked heart; Who can know it? says Jeremiah 17:9. It is much easier for a man to fly to the sun in a cub plane than it is for unregenerate man to "subdue" his wicked heart, unaided and undrawn by the subduing grace of God and his undeserved mercy. Yet foolish man, down through the centuries, boasts of being able to ascend to heaven by and through his own inventions and merit; but he hasn't even made a good start to the moon yet. "The eyes of man are never satisfied." (Prov. 27:20) Man wants to dominate (subdue), and when interfered with, starts to destroy. He is the most intelligent of all creatures, yet the most ignorant and wasteful of himself. He is the only

creature who persists in changing the order of the world. One of the greatest defects of human nature is to go to extremes.

Man is anti-christian, and will not be saved "without money and without price", if he can help it. He wants to work and pay for it; and cry, "Half mine!" Hitherto the world has had laws teaching what is good and right morally. Now he has none (as it were), but brute force is replacing reason everywhere as the arbiter of man's affairs. Mercy has long since fled the earth; Truth has fallen in the streets; Justice standeth afar off.

Men have no patience with talk about God. Preaching that which does not make much of man is now despised and rejected: man has now become his own providence and God. The joints of society are loosened; the foundations are out of course, and equity cannot enter. Man has made man his God; and Jehovah is dethroned in his thoughts. The Anti-christ of the New Testament (2 Thessalonians 2:4), with all his mechanical Formalism for the expiation of sin, "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped", is now showing himself that he is God. No wonder the hand of God is heavy upon this proud covetous, and idolatrous nation. "We have rewarded evil unto ourselves". (Isaiah 3:9)

A man who is mean, is mean unto himself. The law of compensation operates inexorably to reward and afflict us by and through ourselves. I verily believe that we are now seeing Daniel's prophesy of the "increase of knowledge", and "The power of the holy people scattered", being fulfilled. Where human pagentry appears in any shape, Jesus Christ is veiled by it; and much of this is found among us. Human wealth, human gradeur, human literature, all naturally producing human loftiness, have almost buried Jesus in these United States. The power of godliness is gone, and the form is scampering after it.

The three most dangerous enemies of Truth among us, as I see it, are: 1. Selfism; 2. Romanism; 3. Communism. Let's beware of any "religion" that robs God of his glory, and man of hope, by Mechanical Formalism. Such religion surrounds and shuts off the soul by the black wall of Tradition, preached by thick-lipped champions of Morality. It squeezes the soul dry of Hope and Vision, and is more subtle and dangerous than Communism, because of its religious garb.

Dearly beloved children of the Heavenly King, this is not written to scare you, but to warn you to put on the whole armour of God; to cry aloud and spare not; to pray without ceasing; to warn the unruly, and to contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. (Jude 3) Speak the truth in love; belong to no "peace at any price" party, but hold to the Truth as did the prophets and Jesus. Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. Remember whilst we are in this sin-loving world, we are never out of gunshot of the devil. Let us take heed to this divine command: "The servants of God must not strive; but be gentle unto all men; apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the Truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the Devil, who are taken captive by him at his will." (2 Timothy: 25-26) Do not let the fear of being called an Armenian drive you from preaching to sinners — the Apostles did not! Though the above scripture shows that the sinner never revolts against the devil, until first given Repentance by God, yet we are not exempt from preaching Christ, and "warning" him night and day. Love the brotherhood; confess your faults one to another.

"The uttermost the law demands,
My glorious Surety paid;
The uttermost of heaven's demands,
He has for me obeyed.

"Upon a life I did not live;
Upon a death I did not die,
Another's death, another's life,
I risk my soul eternally."

Thine in covenant love,
Milford Hall, Sr.

THE FLAMING SWORD

"So he drove out the man; and he placed at the East of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword, which turned in every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

This morning, June 28, 1955, as I awoke, I sat up in bed, and this scripture began to run through my mind; and it came to me with such beauty I didn't want to forget it, so I thought to try to put it on paper.

I was given to see that this tree of life is Christ Jesus — he is our eternal life. The flaming sword was a shadow of the law of sin and death; and it was fixed that the man could not by his own efforts reach forth and partake of the tree of life, lest he should live forever. Just as the law was given us, that in our fleshly nature we could not keep the law, for the natural man is not subject to the laws of God, so by the law, the flaming sword, we were cut off from the works of our own hands. God had it fixed that by the law no one could be saved by the works of the law; for the law was given that it might bring forth death. So by the first man's disobedience, death by sin passed upon all, for all had sinned and come short of the glory of God.

But by one man's obedience all were made alive; and so the law was given to hold us in death until the coming of Christ — until the changing of the Covenants; from the old to the new. Whereas the old covenant was a covenant of dead works, and the new covenant was, and is, a covenant of life. Why do the law worshipers seek the living among the dead? God seeketh such to worship him as do worship him in spirit; and the spirit is life eternal.

Surely Christ, at his coming, by his death, burial, and resurrection, took the law, the flaming sword, out of the way, nailing it to the cross, and has torn down the middle wall of partition. The flaming sword he removed, and now by the renewing of the Holy Ghost by regeneration, we have access to him. He has fixed it that by the hand of his Spirit we reach forth and partake of Jesus, the Tree of Life, and live forever. He is our life, the way everlasting. It is by his obedience, not ours, that we are made alive. By his Spirit we are made partakers of his life. If he is our life, and he is alive forevermore; then are we not also alive forevermore with him?

Oh, dear children, let us rejoice and be glad of the hope that we are alive with him; for God is the God of the living, and not the God of the dead. If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die, but after the Spirit, ye shall live. Under the law we were not able by our natural hands to reach forth and partake of that tree of life and live, but by the mighty hand of God through the habitation of his Holy Spirit, we reach forth by the hand of his Spirit and eat, or partake, of the Tree of Life: partake of the fruits of his Spirit and keep right on living with him. We are they who have heard the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." None is able to pluck them out of his hand.

Isn't it wonderful to have a God in whom is all our confidence? Isn't it wonderful now that we can take hold of that one man, as in Isaiah 4:1, we can eat our own bread, wear our own apparel, and be called by his name. He, Christ, is that Bread of heaven; it is your Bread, for he gave it to you. It is your own, not someone else's. You can wear your own apparel: the robe of his righteousness. It is your own, he gave it to you. Rejoice, dear saints, and be glad, you are married to him — why not be called by his name, like the seven women — the same as the seven churches; which is a

complete number. Taken from law to grace, all have become one in his hand.

Oh, don't we love to go to church and see our people show off their beautiful apparel, their white robes: robes of righteousness. It certainly makes mine look as filthy rags, like pinned together fig leaves. Sometimes I see myself naked, with not so much as a fig leaf to hide my shame.

(Elder) Seth Bynum

(The above is one of the last writings of Elder Bynum, and is published by request. Ed.)

THE KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

The one hundred ninety-third annual session of the **Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association** will be held with the church at Williams, Edgecombe County, N. C., the 1st Sunday in October, Saturday before and Monday following. Elder A. B. Ayers was appointed to preach the Introductory Sermon, and Elder R. B. Denson to be his alternate.

Those coming from the West take Rt. 95 out of Rocky Mount, East, turn left at stop light in Leggetts and go two miles, and take black top road left to the church, one mile. Those coming from the East, turn right at the stop light.

Elder A. B. Ayers, Moderator
Elder R. B. Denson, Clerk

ORIGINAL FLINT RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1958 session of the **ORIGINAL FLINT RIVER ASSOCIATION** is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with Mt. Fork Church, on September 19, 20, and 21. The meeting place is 5 miles North of New Market, Alabama, known as Old Mt. Fork Church. For further information write the Clerk.

Reaner Reece,
Rt. 2,
Toney, Alabama

ELDER GRIFFIN HAS MOVED TO MARYLAND

Elder Griffin has moved from Alabama to Maryland, and is now living at the following address: 511 Kent Avenue, Catonsville 28, Maryland.

He accepted a call from the Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore, as their pastor, and preaches for them each 3rd Sunday. He also preaches at Southampton Church, in Pennsylvania, on the 4th Sundays.

We welcome Elder and Sister Griffin to this part of the country and hope the Lord will be pleased to bless them in their association with the brethren and churches here.

J. D. W.

Danville, Virginia **September, 1958**

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 5, Box 332F **Danville, Va.**

Do you know of someone who would like to read the Signs? He or she would appreciate it as a gift from you.

EDITORIAL

"And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, 'We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach'." (Isaiah 4:1)

We feel that this Scripture should not be taken from its context, giving it a placing entirely out of the range of the subject matter of chapters 3 and 4. No doubt the reader of this article has heard the churches of the world set forth as the seven women who appear in their own righteousness and have a food of their own, but hang on the name of Jesus to take away their reproach. Perhaps they have heard the names of various groups gathered together to the number of seven, when they all are of the same family and go

under the solemn judgment of the Lord himself, "I never know you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Matthew 7:23.

Who then are these seven women? They are the daughters of Zion spoken of in Isaiah 3:16 and 4:4.

In the gospel dispensation, the seven women are a type of the church of Christ as a whole, with Christ standing in the midst. Revelation 1:12-13. The church of God has no light of herself, which is shown in the previous chapter to our text. There the daughters of Zion have walked according to the light of nature, which, by the word of prophecy, was darkened itself. Matthew 6:23.

As we read the distressing state of the daughters of Zion in Isaiah 3:16-26, let us not lose sight of the fact that these, in all their pride and shame, were a type of the church when left to itself. The church today, as the writer sees it, in a number of places, has been brought down, and her gates lament and mourn. There are those walking in the pride of their own wisdom "with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet," to attract the attention of those around them. The writer does not desire to set himself up as a judge, for "God is judge himself, Selah." There have been days in the past when we have seen the behaviour of both men and women showing they were far from being in a low place. It was clearly seen that pride and self-importance were manifest in much that was said and done.

How true it was, as the prophet says in Isaiah 3:12, "As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee CAUSE THEE TO ERR, and destroy the way of thy paths." The church, as we have said, has no light of herself, and those who would judge her according to their own light are just as much in darkness as Peter was when he said, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee."

There is a song written by one in the darkness of Babylon, the Mother of Harlots, "Faith of our fathers, holy faith, we will be true to thee till death." Peter might have sung that before he denied his Lord, but we know that he would not have sung it afterwards. The Lord knows how to bring down into the dust all such proud looks. Years ago, Elder L. H. Hardy said it had been his observation that when one became exalted with pride and self-importance, he could not express himself without finding fault with the people of God. Natural reason has ever been willing to listen to self and Satan rather than to wait upon the Lord. It was self and Satan that made the division a hundred years ago, and wherever there are divisions today, they come from the same source.

God knows how to bring down those who are His, and we believe these daughters of Zion who were loved of their God, were chastened and brought very low, yes, as low as many of us feel that our beloved Zion has been brought in this day, and, like those of old, we can say, our gates lament and mourn, and desolate, or emptied, we sit upon the ground. "And in that day," a day that the Lord, the righteous judge has made, a day, that we in our right mind are thankful for, thankful that we are brought into a low place, so that we can look up instead of looking down on God's humbled and distressed poor. In that day, seven women, the full number of the daughters of Zion, will be brought down to fellowship their Lord who cried, "I am a worm and no man: a reproach of men, and despised of the people."

They "shall TAKE hold of one man." The worldly harlots never could take hold of Jesus. He will say, "I never knew you," but these daughters of Zion are the seven churches spoken of as the seven golden candlesticks with one like unto the Son of man in their midst. They shall take hold of him with the hand of faith, believing that he is a God that can justify the ungodly,

"Saying, we will eat our own bread", the bread of adversity. What was the bread of the daughters of Zion? Was it not the Word of God? In their low condition they could not eat what men have said, unless they too had been brought low like they themselves were.

Thus the testimony of God's Word, which men in their sore trials have uttered, was also the testimony of Jesus, for He was tempted in all points as they were, yet without sin, like David, they could now say, "Hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come unto thee. Hide not thy face from me in the day when I am IN TROUBLE: incline thine ear unto me: in the day when I call, answer me speedily. For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as an hearth. My heart is smitten, and withered like grass, so that I forget to eat my bread. By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin. I am like a pelican of the wilderness; I am like an owl of the desert. I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the HOUSE TOP. Mine enemies reproach me all the day; and they that are mad against me are sworn against me. For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping, because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast LIFTED ME UP AND CAST ME DOWN," Psalm 102:1-10. Such humble souls come in their humility, which is a fitting apparel for them in such a low place, for they have no righteousness of their own to plead. The Church of God, which is made up of the promised seed of Abraham, takes hold of this man Christ Jesus by the hand of faith, which gives them a righteousness wholly divine, for their sins were imputed to him and his righteousness is imputed to them. He was delivered for their offences and was raised again for their justification, and it is they, and they only, who can say, "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom we have access by faith into THIS GRACE wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Romans 5:1-2. He is the Lord our Righteousness, so that after he has brought his people into that desolate place, he will restore them, and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, "The Lord our righteousness," Jeremiah 33:16, and it is this name which takes away their reproach. We have heard this Scripture taken completely from its setting or context and the minister has taken great satisfaction in whipping those of other denominations, asserting that the Baptists are the only people. We have often wondered why such men sing the many lovely hymns written by those who were never baptized in a watery grave. Of course we believe that baptism in water is an ordinance for those who have been baptized by the Holy Ghost into Jesus Christ, his sufferings and death, and have been raised up again by the operation of the same Spirit, but there were many Israelites who remained in Babylon, who looked and prayed towards Jerusalem. These, wherever found, are no doubt a witness, even in Babylon, that their God is the God of Israel. Such are often in the minds and hearts of that highly favoured few, who, led of the Spirit, have come into one fellowship, which stands like the seven golden candlesticks, which were beaten out from one piece of gold. Seven, being a perfect number, reminds us of God's perfect work, which is evidenced in the daughters of Zion and which shows that in them He rests in His love. To those who have been brought low, their one desire is to find Jesus in their midst. In this place there is not one who can boast over another. "Where is boasting then? It is excluded," and there should here be no pointing the finger of accusation from one to another. The Law of faith excludes such things, and it is with the hand of faith that they would hold on to this MAN as Jacob held on to the man who wrestled with him until the breaking of the day. This MAN has become their peace, their light and their salvation, and, through mercy alone, even they, the daughters of Zion, have learned

upon whose head to place the crown. Read Song of Solomon 3, for there you will see that the daughters of Jerusalem are also the daughters of Zion, and the exhortations and admonitions of the New Testament are unto the Church of God in the Gospel dispensation.

Paul's epistle to the Corinthians should often be read among us today. "And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God and they shall be my people." 2 Corinthians 6:15-16.

Let us be mindful that it was after Israel had been so highly favoured, having received the law of God by the disposition of angels, that she was so lifted up by pride and vain-glory, walking in the sparks that she herself has kindled, that the judgments of God overtook her, and she was brought to the dust of self-abasement.

"In that day" when the Lord has washed away the filthiness of the daughters of Zion from the midst thereof by the Spirit of judgment and by the Spirit of burning, then the branch of the Lord will be beautiful and glorious and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.

The daughters of Zion, now clothed with humility and eating the bread of adversity, need no other ornaments than those produced in them by the Holy Spirit, even the ornaments of a meek and quiet spirit. The wayfaring man, though often feeling to be a fool, who has seen the folly of his own carnal mind, is glad to look upon Zion as a quiet habitation and can say of her, "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Psalm 133:1.

G. R.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To July 1, 1958)

Mrs. Marion Mulholland, N. J., $2.00; Mrs. Jessie Jones, Ala., $2.00; Williard Page, N. C., $7.00; Mrs. T. L. Rakes, Va., $2.00; Robert D. McGough, Ala., $5.00; E. L. Bagwell, Ala., $5.00; Lucille Young, Tenn., $2.00; C. B. Britt, Ark., $2.00; Mrs. M. L. Lucas, Ala., $4.00; Mildred D. Gordy, Mich., $2.00; Mosey Hall, Va., $5.00; Milford Hall Sr., Ky., $25.00; J. W. Black, Canada, $3.00; Mrs. R. C. Douden, Va., $2.00; Mrs. Tom Strickland, Ala., $1.00; Elder L. D. Rose, Texas, $3.00; Walter Black, Neb., $1.00; A Friend, Mich., $5.00; Mrs. Ethel Cooper, Va., $1.00; Mrs. Edgar Mackley, Pa., $3.00; Mrs. W. L. Ferguson, Va., $3.00; Laura B. Ditman, N. Y., $1.00; Mertie E. Bailey, N. Y., $1.00; Allen Carroll, N. C., $1.50; J. F. Lax, Ill., $2.00; George Mariner, Va., $5.00; J. A. Owen, Ala., $2.00; Mrs. Joe McKnesie, Canada, $5.00; Mrs. Sarah Burt Welling, N. Y., $1.00; Mrs. Robert Wagner, Pa., $2.00; Elizabeth Voorhes Blackwell, N. J., $2.00; Mrs. Maggie Simmons, Texas, $4.00; L. P. Swinney, Ga., $2.00; Bert H. Knox, Wash., $5.00; Mrs. Mary J. Murphey, Ark., $1.00; Grace M. Yohans, Conn., $5.00; A Friend, Ark., $5.00; A Friend, Canada, $50.00; Lollie Campbell, Canada, $1.00; Harry T. Vories, Ariz., $5.00; Louise M. Beebe, N. Y., $50.00; Mrs. Sanford Bartlett, Maine, $1.00; Meredith Owen, Ky., $7.00; Lula Dennis, Texas, $3.00; Mrs. M. Cornelius, Texas, $1.00; Andy D. Hall, Oregon, $5.00; Mrs. Dosia Deal, Md., $5.00.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

BAPTISM

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." — Romans vi. 4.

Like all the acts enjoined by the authority of our Lord Jesus, the true spirit of this solemn ordinance is infinitely deeper than the outward form. Mere immersion in water is not the whole of this act of obedience, any more than the literal eating of bread and drinking of wine is the observance of the Lord's supper. As it is the remembrance of the death of Christ in the supper which

constitutes that ceremony an act of obedience to his command, so, in the burial in the water there must be that faith by which we really follow him, in order that our act may be true obedience to his commandment, and acceptable in his sight. "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."—Hebrews xi. 6. Then, since "Whatsover is not of faith is sin," it is evident that the mere ceremony of immersion without faith cannot be baptism in obedience to the law of the King who reigns in Zion. Even the sincere design of the candidate will not answer as a substitute for this necessary qualification.

There is another point on which many dear children of God are bewildered. Having received that faith which is the gift of God, they have been immersed by those who claimed to be ministers of Christ, but who were not in the fellowship of the church at the time. The candidates being themselves sincere, supposed they were obeying the Lord in their immersion, and perhaps felt a joy in the act; but on finding that they have been deceived, they are troubled with the suggestion that they have been baptized, and yet they know that they have no fellowship with the people among whom they find themselves.

Many in this condition are robbed of their privileges in the church, and cannot see how they can enter into those joys. Have they been baptized in obedience to the command of our Lord? They have been immersed, but not in the fellowship of the church of Christ. That cannot be Christian baptism, for the same reason that the church cannot accept the immersion administered by Mormons; that is, because it was not authorized by our Lord, nor done in obedience to his word. Those who are at home among the various orders outside of the church of Christ, are not such as are here referred to. But to those who long for the fellowship of the saints, yet feel themselves imprisoned in those anti-Christian organizations, it is important to ascertain whether their immersion was really baptism.

In order to make this matter clear, let us present an illustration. When the Lord commanded his disciples to baptize believers, if unbelieving Jews had voluntarily gone about performing the ceremony of immersion, would their work have been valid baptism? Certainly not; because not being in the fellowship of the saints themselves, they could not be competent to discern that Spirit of Christ in others which is the only source of genuine faith and repentance. Again, being without the authority of the Lord, it would have been mere mockery for them to use his name in the ceremony of baptism.

Now, for the same reason, none but those in the fellowship of the church are authorized to administer the ordinance of baptism in this age; and when any others presume to do so, it is no more in obedience to the word of the Lord than the unauthorized offerings of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, whom the earth swallowed up, just as the earth now swallows up them who treat with contempt the law of the Lord in this ordinance, by imitating its form while denying its substance by "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Such professors may be highly esteemed by the world, but they are never "approved unto God." The church of Christ cannot consistently recognize the action of any but those who act by the authority of her Lord in administering his ordinances. Consequently she must hold the immersion which is performed by those who are not appointed to that work by his command as being no baptism at all.

To constitute baptism there must be a believing candidate and an authorized administrator. Of the mode it is not our purpose now to write more than that it must be a burial and raising up again, according to the pattern given by our Lord in Jordan.—Matt. iii. 13-17. No argument can make the mode plainer than it is described in the inspired rec-

ord. Failure to observe any of these particulars destroys the validity of the ordinance; for it can only be administered "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," when it is done, teaching the observance of all things whatsoever the Lord Jesus has commanded his chosen disciples.—Matthew xxviii. 19, 20.

We have dwelt upon the requisite particulars constituting gospel baptism in compliance with many special requests from believers who have been snared in the net of anti-Christian organizations, who desire to be identified with the church of Christ, but cannot see the necessity of being baptized, as they have once been immersed, as they thought in baptism, by those who were not in the fellowship of the church. We now come to consider the text.

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death." In the preceding verse the fact is cited that as many as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death. This is the reason for our burial in baptism. But in what sense are we thus identified in the death of our Lord Jesus Christ? Certainly not that we were literally nailed to the cross with him. The argument is in support of the fact that we are "dead to sin," as stated in verse two. In this sense all the church whom he redeemed were crucified with him. So Paul says, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."—2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

This "baptism into death" is confessed in the literal obedience of those who are buried in baptism in water in his name.—See Acts ii. 38. This burial declares its subjects to be "dead to the law by the body of Christ."— Rom. vii. 4. They no longer labor to secure acceptance with God by that law which cannot give life. Their burial signifies this death to legal hope, and consequently their deliverance from the dominion of that law of sin and death. As it is written in this connection, "For he that is dead is freed from sin." This comforting assurance being expressed by the act of obedience to their Lord in water baptism, it is as declared by Peter, "the answer of a good conscience toward God." Therefore they who have hope of the salvation which is in Christ Jesus are robbed of invaluable comfort when they are beguiled to disobey the command of their Lord which enjoins upon them the duty and privilege to be baptized in his name.

"That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father." The pattern here presented is not merely a restoration to that natural life which was subject to the law, and consequently under sentence of death. "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse."—Gal. iii. 10. If that were all of the resurrection, the Lord Jesus would not have been "the first fruits of them that slept," since Lazarus and others had been so restored to natural life before our Lord was raised. But the resurrection of Christ was in the power of that glorious life and immortality which is "the glory of the Father," and which had not previously been brought to light.—See 2 Tim. i. 10.

In the flesh he was put to death, bearing all the sins of his redeemed people in his own body on the tree; but in the immortal glory of the Father he lives above the law and higher than the heavens. It is important to observe the fact that this resurrection of Christ is "by the glory of the Father," in distinction from the restoration to natural life which had been effected in previous cases by the miraculous power of God. In those cases no immortality was displayed, but in the raising up of Christ is the manifestation of "the power of an endless life."—Heb. vii. 16. This is the peculiar "glory of the Father," which demonstrates the truth of the unity of our Lord with the eternal God, as he says, "I and my Father are one."—John x. 30. This is the man-

ner in which he was raised up from the dead; and it is a display of that life which is superior to death and above all law. Therefore, he cannot die again, but is alive forevermore, Amen; and has the keys of hell and of death.—Rev. i. 18.

"Even so we also should walk in newness of life." The example presented is accurately exact. It is "even so" that we also should walk. As he was raised up from under the law, just so are all the members of his body in him exalted above that system of legal bondage; and as he can no more come into condemnation, so are we forever free from that law which was fulfilled by him. Walking in newness of life, we are not to seek justification by the works of the law; but resting alone in the perfect righteousness of Christ, we should walk in his commandments and follow in his footsteps.

In that old life the bondage of perpetual servitude required continually perfect obedience, which was more than we were able to render; yet the first failure involved us in condemnation and death. In this newness of life we are called to glorious liberty. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death. All the requirements of this law of liberty is freely given us in the unspeakable gift of God, who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Obedience to this perfect law of liberty is the highest privilege of those who are led by the Spirit of God.

This obedience is the fulfilling of all the injunctions, admonitions and exhortations in the law of our precious Lord and King. Walking in newness of life, we have the witness of the Spirit confirming our hope in the salvation which is in Christ Jesus; and in every act of obedience to this perfect law of liberty there is the answer of a good conscience toward God, whereby we have assurance that our walk is indeed in newness of life. While subject to vanity in the body of this death, the saints will not fail to find another law in their members warring against this law of their mind, and bringing them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members; but while they feel that warfare within, they have the evidence that the Spirit of Christ is leading them; and when they walk in obedience to that Spirit they manifestly walk in newness of life.

By precept and example our Lord has enjoined the ordinance of baptism as the open confession of allegiance to his government; and no service is in order in his kingdom until this requirement is fulfilled in obedience to his direction. In this the humble believer acknowledges his faith and hope to be alone in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, and expresses that he is dead to the law by the body of Christ. It is the first act of obedience to the law of the Redeemer, by which self is denied and Christ is confessed before men. In it is included the putting on of the whole law of our King, which is, as he has said, an easy yoke. It is indeed easy to them who are led by his Spirit to love it, and to desire above all things to follow the Redeemer; but it requires that self be denied and crucified, that Christ alone may be all our trust.

This can be done only by the power of the Spirit of God leading us, and working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Thus walking in newness of life, we glorify God in our body and in our spirit, which are God's. Those who hope in Jesus for salvation are commanded to follow him in this ordinance. Obedience will bring them into the manifest fellowship of the church of Christ. Any ceremony which fails to do this cannot be baptism. Certainly the church cannot regard any act as orderly which is not done in her fellowship and by the authority of her King; and he has never given to any but his own disciples the right to administer this ordinance. Therefore, they who have been immersed out of the fellowship of the church cannot be regarded as having been baptized at all

in obedience to the command of our Lord Jesus.

(Editorial by Elder Wm. L. Beebe, Feb. 1, 1884.)

CHURCH MINUTES AND MINUTES OF PRESBYTERY

Kelly's Creek Church,
September 21, 1957

The Old School Baptist Church, known as Kelly's Creek, was seated in conference after prayer by Elder W. D. Griffin and preaching by Elder R. L. Biggs.

1. Called for the peace of the church. All in peace.

2. Invited visiting brethren and sisters to seats with us.

3. Announced an opportunity for membership. No response.

4. Called for reference. Took up matter of last meeting in which the church had agreed to ordain the brethren as deacons. By move, second, and unanimous vote agreed to proceed with the ordination, and Brother Leonard and Brother Reece were presented to the brethren chosen to compose the presbytery. Sister Julia Hawkins elected mouthpiece for the church.

At Kelly's Creek Church,
September 21, 1957

We, the chosen brethren to compose the presbytery to ordain the brethren as deacons of Kelly's Creek Church, organized ourselves into a presbytery by electing Elder W. G. McGough as moderator, and Elder W. D. Griffin as clerk.

1. Appointed Elder R. L. Biggs to examine the brethren as to their views on the Articles of Faith of this church, and as to their qualifications from a scriptural standpoint, which was done in a satisfactory manner.

2. Proceeded with ordination by laying on of the hands of the presbytery and prayer by Elder W. G. McGough.

3. Charge given to the two brethren and to the church by Elder W. D. Griffin.

4. Gave right hand of fellowship by the presbytery and by all Old Baptist present, after which the brethren were turned back to the church as being duly ordained to all the duties of deacons.

5. By move, second and unanimous vote presbytery dissolved.

Elder W. D. McGough, Moderator
Elder W. D. Griffin, Clerk
Elder R. L. Biggs

5. Called for new business. By move, second and unanimous vote the church agreed to receive the brethren as being orderly ordained as deacons.

Elder W. G. McGough, Moderator
Elder W. D. Griffin, Clerk Pro Tem

OBITUARIES

MRS. JOHN L. HOLLOWAY, SR.

As it pleased God to take from our midst our dear and beloved friend, Mrs. John L. Holloway, Sr., on April 24, 1958, who was seventy years of age, we hope to bow in humble submission to his holy will.

Mrs. Holloway, who was the former Miss Jane E. McAllen, of Snow Hill, Maryland, was married on December 28, 1908, to John L. Holloway; and they had lived at Newark, Delaware, for the past 45 years. To this union were born two sons: John L., Jr., of Wilmington, Del., and William Daniel Holloway, of near Hockessin, Del. There are also three grandchildren surviving in addition to her husband.

Mrs. Holloway early in life joined the Methodist Church, and her name remained there, but for many years she attended the Welsh Tract Old School Baptist Church, and helped in many ways at their meetings. We feel that Mrs. Holloway knew the truth, and her walk in life showed one who believed in salvation by grace. The writer, having visited in her home many times, feels that her pleasant smiles and kind words will linger on in the memory of her many friends.

Funeral services were conducted Saturday morning, April 26, 1958, by John J. Bunting, pastor of the Newark Methodist Church; and graveside services were conduucted at Snow Hill, Maryland, in the afternoon by the writer. Interment was in the Methodist Cemetery at Snow Hill, Maryland.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

NANCY JANE VAUGHN ALDRIDGE

With a sad heart I attempt to write a few lines in memory of our dear mother and grandmother, Mrs. Nancy Jane Vaughn Aldridge. She was born February 4, 1874, and died October 3, 1957, at the age of 83 years and 8 months. She had been in declining health for several years, and critically ill for two weeks. She bore her sickness with patience, in her last days never murmuring or complaining.

She was united in marriage to Mr. John Albert Aldridge in August, 1899; who survives her. To this union were born six children: Mrs. W. W. Chandler, Burlington, N. C.; Mrs. C. B. Stainback, Burlington; Lonnie, of Yanceyville, N. C.; Maynard, of Prospect Hill, N. C.; Amos, of Prospect Hill; and Bunard, of Burlington. Surviving also are nineteen grandchildren, and twenty great-grandchildren.

She was not a member of any church, but attended the Primitive Baptist meetings as long as her health permitted.

Her funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church by Elders Curry King and Harvey Smith; and her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery, beneath beautiful flowers. We feel to say, "Sleep on, dear one, and take thy rest. Oh, how we do miss thee, but the dear Lord knows best." Written by a heart broken daughter-in-law,

Mrs. Bunard Aldridge

SISTER J. B. REID

Sister J. B. Reid (Johnie Magnolia Reid), of San Juan, Texas, passed away June 7, 1958; making her stay on earth 80 years, two months, and one day. She was born April 6, 1878, to Mr. and Mrs. William Downer. She married James E. Berry in 1896, and to this union eight children were born, three of whom have passed away: two daughters, Maxie and Jesie Mae, and a son, Hardy. Mr. Berry passed away in 1915. She then married Elder J. B. Reid in Texas, September 19, 1919, and to this union one daughter was born, Katy.

She leaves in this world her husband, Elder J. B. Reid, two sons: Eugene B. Berry and Jimmie Berry; four daughters, Ruby McGee, Bobby Dobbs, Johnnie Cox, and Kay Lag; also four brothers, nineteen grandchildren, and eighteen great grandchildren.

She received a hope some forty-five years ago, and joined the Primitive Baptist Church forty years ago. At her request, we had meeting at her home about three weeks before she passed away. She rejoiced so much over this meeting. Her request was that we three take part in the meeting: Elder E. B. Ault, Elder Wm. Burkhalter, and Brother Joe Hamrick, who offered prayer and talked some. These three also took part in her funeral service. Her remains were laid to rest in the Valley Memorial Garden to await the resurrection day. Another Mother has passed on to her reward.

Elder J. B. Reid, now eighty-seven years old, requested me to send the above to our papers, which they loved so well.

Elder E. B. Ault
Weslaco, Texas

EDITH LIVINGSTON FARLOW

As it has pleased God to take from our midst, on December 21, 1957, our dear sister, Edith Livingston Farlow, we bow in humble submission to his holy will.

Sister Farlow was born July 5, 1885; her parents were the late John Handy and Gertrude Livingston. She was married March 17, 1909, to George W. Farlow by the late Elder A. B. Francis; and resided on a farm near Salisbury, Maryland. To this union were born three daughters: Mrs. Lawrence Hotton, and Mrs. James Agnew, of Salisbury; and Mrs. Russell Messick, of Hebron, Maryland. There are six grandchildren and one great grandchild. She is survived also by her husband and two brothers: Wm. Irving Livington, Salisbury, and John Livingston, of Delmar, Delaware.

Sister Farlow went before the church August 2, 1948, and was baptized October 4, 1948, by Elder D. V. Spangler, pastor of the Salisbury Church. She was very faithful to attend the meetings as long as her health would permit. She was greatly loved by the church, and many others who knew her. The writer, having visited her a short time before her death, feels to say that she was a strong believer in salvation by grace; and looked forward by faith to a land of rest.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer due to the absence of her pastor because of illness. Interment was made in the Parsons Cemetery, Salisbury, Md.

May the God of all grace and mercy, and the comforter of all comforts, comfort all who are left to mourn the loss of this dear sister and friend; and be given to feel that their loss is her eternal gain.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

GIRVUS LONZO HAMILTON

Girvus Lonzo Hamilton was born January 2, 1886, and departed this life, after a very lengthy illness, December 29, 1957.

His widow, Ina Hamilton; two sons, Lanice and Edgar Hamilton; five grandchildren; one great grandchild; a sister and two brothers, survive him. A daughter died in infancy, and their eldest son passed away at Christmas time in 1955.

Brother Hamilton professed a hope in the Lord in early life, and united with the Primitive Baptist people after some delay, being led about and instructed in the truth by the Three-One God. As he often said, he had to be led and shown every step of the way; for he had said, "The religious world seemed to have the numbers, and they must be right." Yet there was a teaching for him by one who is Truth.

After several years in the Soldier Creek Church, he was ordained a deacon; which took place in the Spring of 1950. The writer could say many wonderful things about this brother: his willingness, when in his best health, to have his home open to the Baptists, and do for them everything he could to make their going along comfortable and easy. We, at Soldier Creek, counted him as one of the sweet singers in Israel. There was not a voice among

us that anyways sounded as his voice for harmony, carrying most any part of the singing.

His funeral was conducted by Elder O. W. Perkins, one of the Soldier Creek ministers, at the Filbeck and Cann Funeral Home, in Benton; and his remains were laid to rest in a country church yard near where he was reared; there to await the hour when the Lord will come in the clouds, to awake the sleeping dust, and mortality will be raised immortal and fashioned like the Son of God. Then Brother Hamilton with all the redeemed, will sing — forever sing, Praise, Praise to the Great I Am, around the throne, where congregations never break up, and sabbaths never end.

Written at the request of a son, Edgar Hamilton, by a sister, I hope

Effie Bowden

NANIE E. DEEL

I will try to write an obituary of my dear sister-in-law, Nanie E. Deel. She was born November 6, 1873, and died March 18, 1941. She was a daughter of Thomas and Matilda Fuller; and was married to William Parit Deel April 20, 1897, and to this union were born six children — Carrie Ellen and Thomas Standford Deel died at birth — leaving her husband and four children to mourn her loss: Mary Jane Deel, Silas Kilby Deel, James Floyd Deel, and Matilda Duty.

She joined the Primitive Baptist Church in September, 1918. Her door was always open to her many, many friends; and her sweet friendly smiles are missed by all who knew her. She lived a faithful member of the church until God called her spirit back to himself. We know that in the resurrection her body will be immortal and she will be taken home to glory and be like Jesus. May God's richest blessings abide with her children and friends.

Carrie Deel

WILLIAM PARIT DEEL

I will try to write an obituary of my dear father-in-law, William Parit Deel. He was born May 26, 1873, the son of Silas and Mary Jane Deel; and departed this life August 5, 1934. He was married to Nanie E. Fuller April 20, 1897, and to this union six children were born; four of whom and his wife remain to mourn his passing.

He was not a member of the church, but lived a good, kind, and honest life, and was a loving husband and father. His belief in religion was Primitive Baptist. He is missed by all who knew him. Through many weeks of sickness he could hardly talk, but he bore his illness patiently. He was not bedfast, and walked around smiling as if he were rejoicing in the Lord. One Sunday morning, suddenly he sunk down on the porch and fell asleep. His wife and son were with him, but they had done all they could do — the death angel had come and born him away. We feel that some sweet day we shall meet this precious one where sickness nor sorrow never comes. Written by his daughter-in-law,

Ethel L. Deel

JACOB HENRY WHITFIELD

By request of the family I will attempt to write an obituary notice of our esteemed brother and Deacon, Jacob Henry Whitfield. He was born Dec. 11, 1873 in Nash County and died July 28, 1957. He was married Dec. 29, 1897 to Emma Robbins. He is survived by his wife, Emma Robbins Whitfield, one son, Fred, of Rocky Mount, N. C., two daughters, Mrs. Mark Calhoun, Rocky Mt., and Mrs. Sam Womble, of Nashville, 8 grandchildren, 14 great grandchildren, 2 brothers, J. W. and B. J. Whitfield, Nashville, one sister, Mrs. C. C. Denson, Red Oak, N. C.

Brother Whitfield united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Nashville, Nash County, N. C., November 4, 1915. He was ordained as deacon Nov. 4, 1921, by a presbytery composed of Elder M. B. Williford, his pastor, and Elder J. T. Williams.

No one was more faithful in the discharge of his duty to the Church, his family and community in which he lived. His faithfulness in discharging his duty as a messenger to the churches, unions and associations was, with one exception, an unbroken record.

In the latter days of his life his health declined and he was confined to his bed for the last few months of his life. He bore his suffering with noble and sublime patience. Faith and hope seemed to be his strength until the end.

He was in all his afflictions surrounded by his loving, faithful wife and children who ministered to him his every need until the end.

Funeral services were conducted from Johnson Funeral Home Chapel, Rocky Mt., by his pastor, Elder W. E. Turner, assisted by Elder J. T. Williams. His grandsons acted as pallbearers.

May the God of all grace and the father of mercies comfort his family and kindred and reconcile each of us ever be mindful of the noble heritage he has left us in an orderly walk and godly conversation.

O. W. Hales

EMMA ROBBINS WHITFIELD

For the second time within a month I have been requested to write an obituary in the same family. Sister Emma Robbins Whitfield, wife of Brother Jacob Henry Whitfield. Sister Whitfield, aged 79, was born Oct. 23, 1878, died April 8, 1958.

She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Nashville, N. C. August, 1913 and was baptized the following Sunday by Elder M. B. Williford. She is survived by one son, Fred C. Whitfield of Rocky Mt., two daughters, Mrs. Sam Womble, of Nashville, Mrs. Mark Calhoun of ocky Rocky Mt., 8 grandchildren, 5 sisters, Mrs. D. Womble of Nashville, Mrs. C. J. Fisher of Whitakers, Mrs. S. T. Stone of Galax, Va., Mrs. E. P. Eframes of Tampa, Fla., Mrs. Katie R. Lotta of Norfolk, Va., one brother, George W. Robbins of Nashville, Tenn.

Funeral services were conducted at the Johnson Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder W. E. Turner, assisted by Elders J. T. Williams and W. J. Berry. Burial was beside her dear husband in Forest Hill Cemetery in Nashville, N. C. Her dear children were so faithful and dutiful to their parents. I have been in their home many times and always wanted to go again because I saw so much love manifested with all the family. I wish we could visit more homes like that.

Sister Whitfield was a kind mother and had great love for her children, always giving them good advice. She was faithful to her church and strong in faith, ever manifesting a godly conversation.

We desire to render thanks to our God for her faithful service during her life in the church.

May the dear Lord bless her children and grandchildren and reconcile them to His will, and may we feel it is far better to depart and be with the Lord.

O. W. Hales

MRS. BERTHA FULLER JORDAN

Mrs. Bertha Fuller Jordan was born February 11, 1884, and died February 15, 1958. She was married to Mr. James Arthur Jordan in 1904. Sister Jordan joined Roanoke Church in 1906, moving to Norfolk in 1909. She served as clerk of the church for thirty years.

She is survived by her sister, Mrs. Carrie Swarington, and five lovely daughters: Mrs. Mildred Speight, Mrs. Ruth Little, Mrs. Virginia Blocker, Mrs. Dorothy Dozier, and Mrs. Lavenia Barnes.

To know her was to love her. She was kind, gentle, patient, and pleasant to talk with, but never afraid to speak her mind. If she differed with brethren, she differed in love. She has merely been transformed by Almighty God from an earthly angel into a spiritual being, and I do believe she is resting in the paradise of God — resting from her labors, and her works follow her. God came to her, and he came for her and took her soul to be with him. We can pay no higher tribute than this, that she lived true and faithful to her church, family, and friends; also earnestly contended for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

We extend to the bereaved family and her dear sister in the flesh, Carrie Swarington, our heartfelt sympathy in the loss of one so dear to their hearts. May the God of all grace, and Father of Mercies, comfort us all, and reconcile each of us to His will; and fill her absence with his presence. Death is the gateway to heaven and immortal glory.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Elder R. B. Denson, her pastor, conducted a very beautiful and affectionate service; and read the hymn, "Jesus, thou art the sinner's friend."

Submitted by one who loved so very much, and I hope for Jesus sake.

Pearl Fickett

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God in wisdom and everlasting love has taken from our midst our dear sister, Nancy Lindsey; who passed from this life May 24, 1958. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." (Psalms 116: 15) Sister Lindsey was a devoted wife and mother in her home, and a true and faithful sister in the church; and her home was a welcome haven to all Old Baptists: many times have we enjoyed meeting in her home, and singing the old hymns with her and Brother Lindsey (who preceded her in death only a short time); therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the church of Shepherd Fold, where Sister Lindsey was a member, bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, who doeth all things well, and

BE IT RESOLVED, That we extend our deepest sympathy to the bereaved ones who survive the loss of their dear mother and father, but we feel that our loss is their eternal gain. May God in his mercy, comfort and sustain them in their loss, and reconcile them to his divine will; and

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be given the family; a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; and a copy be spread on our church record.

Done by order of the church while in conference May 31, 1958.

Irene Wisenbaker, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 126 DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1958 NO. 10

THE END OF THE WAY

The following beautiful lines were written by a young woman in Nova Scotia, an invalid for many years with spinal disease, and a great sufferer, but in whom the Grace of God is most wonderfully manifested.

My life is a wearisome journey,
  I'm sick with the dust and the heat,
The rays of the sun beat upon me,
  The briars are wounding my feet;
But the city to which I am journeying
  Will more than my trials repay,
All the toils of the road will seem nothing
  When I get to the end of the way.

There are so many hills to climb upwards,
  I am often longing for rest,
But He who appoints me my pathway
  Knows just what is needful and best;
I know in His Word He has promised
  That my strength shall be as my day,
And the toils of the road will seem nothing
  When I get to the end of the way.

He loves me too well to forsake me,
  Or give me one trial too much;
All His people have been dearly purchased,
  And Satan can never claim such.
By and by I shall see Him and praise Him
  In the City of unending day,
And the toils of the road will seem nothing
  When I get to the end of the way.

When the last feeble step has been taken,
  And the gates of the city appear,
And the beautiful songs of the angels
  Float out on my listening ear;
When all that now seems so mysterious
  Will be plain and clear as the day —
Yes, the toils of the road will seem nothing
  When I get to the end of the way.

Though now I am footsore and weary,
  I shall rest when I'm safely at home;
I know I'll receive a glad welcome,
  For the Saviour Himself has said "Come!"
So when I am weary in body
  And sinking in spirit, I say,
"All the toils of the road will seem nothing
  When I get to the end of the way."

Cooling fountains are there for the thirsty;
  There are cordials for those who are faint;
There are robes that are whiter and purer
  Than any that fancy can paint.
Then help me, dear Lord, to press onward,
  Thinking often through each weary day,
The toils of the road will seem nothing
  When I get to the end of the way.

(The above came to us in some correspondence from England. — J. D. W.)

EXCERPTS FROM A SERMON OF MR. J. C. PHILPOTT

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb. 7-25.

There are two questions which deeply interest every one who is made alive unto God by regenerating grace. The first is, How are his sins to be pardoned — how is he to stand justified before God? This morning I showed you from the word of truth that a sufficient answer to all charges, true or false, made against the elect of God, and a complete reply to every condemning tongue, were given in that comprehensive declaration which I opened up: "It is God that justifieth;" "it is Christ that died." The second question which deeply interests, and o f t e n painfully exercises every quickened child of God is this: How shall the life of God be maintained in the breast? If he is, as he hopes he is, a partaker of the grace of God, how shall that grace be kept in living exercise that he may be brought through every trial, temptation, and affliction, and eventually landed safe in glory? To that question I shall attempt to give an answer this evening:

You are doubtless aware that the High Priest under the Law had two main offices to perform, and that both of these were clearly and beautifully represented by what he was commanded to do on the tenth day of the seventh

month — the great day of atonement. These two offices were first: to offer sacrifice, and secondly: to make intercession, for his own sins and for the sins of the people. The sacrifice for his own sins was offered when he slew the bullock for a sin offering. This was to make atonement for himself, and for his house, as we read, "And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and make an atonement for himself, and for his house.'' (Levit. 16-6) But to make atonement for the sins of the people he had to perform two distinct things; first, to bring the goat (for there were two upon which lots were cast) upon which the Lord's lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering; and, secondly, to lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, or the scape goat as it is usually called, and confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and then to send it away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness. The other part of his priestly office, that of intercession for his own sins and the sins of the people, he thus accomplished: He took a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small. With this censer he entered into the most holy place, as we read: "and he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not." (Levit. 16-13) Thus, a cloud of perfume filled the most holy place at the same time that he was sprinkling the blood on and before the mercy seat. This was his intercession for his own sins and the sins of the people; and you will observe the beautiful connection between the sacrifice which atoned for sin and the smoking incense which typically interceded for the sinner. It was not common fire by which the incense was lighted, but by live coals taken from off the brazen altar upon which the sacrifices were offered. This established a connection between the sacrifice and the intercession; and the sprinkling of the blood on and before the mercy seat established another. This cloud of incense, then, filling the most holy place with its odoriferous breath, represented the intercession of Christ, which, deriving its virtue, influence, and efficacy from his glorious Person, finished work, meritorious sufferings, and atoning blood, is still ever rising up to fill with its sacred perfume the courts of heaven.

It is clear, then that the high priest under the law performed two works on the day of atonement — sacrifice and intercession. In both these offices he was a type and representative of the Lord Jesus Christ. Incense, in imitation of the Romish usage, is being revived in some of our parish churches; but it should be borne in mind that incense implies sacrifice, and is a part of it. He, therefore, who revives incense revives sacrifice; and he who revives sacrifice disannuls and pours contempt upon the one great sacrifice, and denies the efficacy of the atoning blood and present intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ. To be consistent they should restore circumcision and the blood of bullocks and goats; for the smoke of incense has no more part in Christian worship than the Paschal Lamb or the daily sacrifice. The first part then of his priestly office our gracious Lord performed upon Calvary. There he offered his holy soul and body, the whole of his pure humanity, upon the altar of his Deity; there he put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; there the bleeding victim hung; there the precious blood was shed which cleanseth from all sin; and there the work which the Father gave him to do was completed; for he cried out with a loud voice, "It is finished," and then bowed his sacred head and gave up the ghost. But, in order to carry out the second part of the priestly office, to make intercession for the people, it was needful for him to rise from the dead, to ascend into heaven, and there to enter into the immediate presence of God with the blood and with the incense, that he

might perpetually be at the right hand of the Father as the high priest over the house of God. Our text, therefore, says, "He ever liveth to make intercession for them." And so testifies the apostle elsewhere: "Who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." (Rom. 8-34) John also graciously assures us in almost similar language: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;" and connecting together the two parts of his priestly office, sacrifice and intercession, adds, "And he is the propitiation for our sins" — propitiation past by sacrifice once offered, advocacy present by intercession now offering.

Our great High Priest, is a priest of the order of Melchisedec, of a higher order than that of Levi; his priesthood not ever passing away and transferred to another, as was the case, in consequence of death, with the priests under the law, for he was made after the power of an endless life; and his being made a priest by virtue of an oath of God, which gave a greater sanction to his priesthood than that of the priests under the law who were made without it.

What is it to come unto God by Jesus Christ? I hope never to attempt to impose my views upon any man's faith or conscience simply because they are my views. All I ask is, let them be compared with the teaching of the word without and the teaching of the Holy Spirit within; the testimony of God in the Scriptures and the testimony of God in the soul.

The phrase often occurs in the Scriptures, and has for the most part two meanings, being expressive sometimes of faith and sometimes of worship. Thus our Lord says "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." There it means faith, for we come to Christ when we believe in him. He therefore said to the Jews "Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life," that is, "Ye will not believe in me or come to me by faith." We see this connection also in the words, "He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst." (John 6-35) Here we find "coming to Christ" and "believing" on him to mean the same thing. Bunyan, in his Pilgrim's Progress, puts the same thing very nicely in the mouth of Hopeful, where he says to Christian, "Then I saw from that saying, 'He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst,' that 'believing' and 'coming' was all one, and that he that came, that is, ran out in his heart and affections after salvation by Christ, he indeed believeth in Christ." But sometimes to come unto God signifies access to him in spiritual worship, which is often expressed in the Old Testament, by "drawing nigh unto God," as James also speaks: "Draw nigh unto God, and he will draw nigh unto you." This spiritual worship of God is a drawing near to him with a true heart, having as the apostle speaks "access by one Spirit unto the Father."

One thing is very evident, that no man comes to God of his own free will. A man's own case will decide the matter for him better than a thousand arguments. I neither knew God nor Jesus Christ, and I did not want to know them; for I was very sure that anything like the Spiritual religion which I saw in others would cut to pieces all my worldly plans and all my worldly pleasures; and with these dearly beloved idols I felt I could not and would not part. I had no objection to a religion which left me their enjoyment; but to give up everything for Christ and his gospel lay neither in my will nor power. And is not this the experience of all? For is not this the language of the carnal mind? "Depart from us; we desire not the knowledge of thy ways." Then, surely if we ever come to God by Jesus Christ something must have been done for us and in us quite distinct from all will and power of our own; something in which we had no hand, and yet was not done without our heart. Now we who know anything of divine

things by divine teaching can look back to a memorable period in our lives when a mighty revolution took place, whereby we came unto God who had never come unto God before. Can you not look back upon such a marked epoch in your life, or some such change, if not sudden, more or less gradual in the experience of your soul? It is true that you did not there and then come to God by Jesus Christ, because you did not know Jesus Christ nor the way of salvation by his blood and righteousness; yet there was a coming to God, and after a time, as the way of salvation was opened up to your heart, there was a coming to him by Jesus Christ. Did I not explain that by coming unto God the Scriptures sometimes meant believing in him? "He that cometh unto God," says the apostle, "Must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Now as this is wrought with a divine power in the soul, there is a coming unto God by Jesus Christ. We see there is no coming unto God in a broken law, in the strength of the creature, in our own righteousness. A holy law with a tremendous curse attached to it cuts off all hope and all confidence in the flesh; but as the Son of God beams in upon the soul in his Person, blood, work, beauty, blessedness, and divine suitability, there is such a laying hold of him by the hand of faith, such a looking unto him, believing in him, cleaving to him, that there is a coming unto God by him. God allows himself to be approached unto, believed in, worshipped, adored, and loved in the face of his dear Son.

"To the uttermost." What made the Holy Ghost pen such a word as this? Because he who reads all hearts and knows all persons, things and circumstances well knew what the secret feelings and exercises of the blood-bought family would be, as they travel onward and homeward through their various paths of trial and temptation. Sooner or later, every one who comes to God by Jesus Christ will find in his own experiences the need and the blessedness of the expression "to the uttermost." How it seems to accompany us to the very end of the tether — to the uttermost of despondency, trial, temptation, knowledge of your heart, as experimentally feeling that you are one of the most difficult persons to be saved of all God's people; and that if ever there were a case which seemed to exceed all others in extreme necessity and desperate circumstances, it is yours. But, O, what a mercy it is that God holds the end of the tether fast and firm in one hand, though you hang faint and trembling at the other; that his arm is long enough and strong enough to pull you out even of hell itself; I mean, of course, in soul feeling. "But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation." (Isa. 15-17) "My righteousness shall be for ever and my salvation from generation to generation." This salvation saved our believing fathers, saves us their believing sons, and will save our believing children until the last vessel of mercy is gathered in.

But this thought might occur to your mind: "If Christ put away all our sins by his sacrifice and bloodshedding, and if by virtue of his death all are blotted out and forgiven, what need is there that he should in heaven make intercession for us? Is it not almost implying some imperfection in his finished work — that something remains to be done by him to render it complete in heaven now?" This is carnal reasoning, chopping logic, and arguing as men argue who know nothing and are convinced of nothing except what they learn by reason.

Bear then this in mind, that though God has forgiven all our sins for Christ's sake, and though his work is a finished work, and his precious blood cleanseth from all sin, yet that he is a just God still, a holy God still, and a sin-hating God still; and as being such, our sins, though put away by the blood of Christ, are highly provoking to him. Do you think that God was not highly displeased with David's sin? The Scrip-

tures tell us that "the thing that David did displeased the Lord." And yet upon confession Nathan said to him, "The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die." Thus our sins, backslidings, slips, falls, and transgressions are put away, if we belong to Jesus, by his precious blood; but still God is highly displeased at them, as they spring up in our hearts or manifest themselves by our words and actions. They provoke the eyes of his glory. He must hate sin from the holiness of his nature, and be highly displeased with it wherever and in whomsoever he sees or finds it. Now he has provided a High Priest at his right hand to make intercession for his poor, erring, wandering, backsliding, sinning people, that this ever-living Mediator and Intercessor might be ever presenting before the eyes of his glory the virtue of the precious blood which he shed upon earth, the value of the obedience which he rendered to a holy law, and be thus ever perfuming heaven with the incense of his prevalent and availing intercession. We are therefore assured in the word of truth that "there is one God and one Mediator between God and man, the man Jesus Christ." "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

We may say of the life which the Lord Jesus lives in the courts of heavenly bliss that it is a threefold life. There is, first, his ETERNAL Life, by which, I mean, the eternal life of God in his divine nature. This he lives in himself; for "as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given unto the Son to have life in himself." (John 5-26) He is hereby "Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." And this life is the foundation of all his acts of mediation, as being God over all, blessed for ever.

But there is a life which he lives for himself, viz.: a life of inconceivable glory in his human nature. This is the life which he laid down that he might take it again. This life is the cause of, and is attended with all that ineffable glory which he now enjoys in heaven. This life he lives for himself, his reward, and the glory and honour with which he is crowned; as the Psalmist says: "thou settest a crown of pure gold upon his head. He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever." (Psa. 21-3, 4)

But there is another life which he lives: a MEDIATORIAL LIFE, a life for us. Thus we read, that "He was made a priest after the power of an endless life;" and he says of himself, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and death." (Rev. 1-18) Now this life does not differ essentially from the second life, of which I have spoken, the life of glory in the human nature; but it differs in this point, that when the work of mediation is accomplished, he will cease to live a mediatorial life; for he will then deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. (1 Cor. 15-24)

Now this is the life spoken of in our text: "he ever liveth." This is his mediatorial life; and he lives it as Prophet, in ever sending the Holy Spirit down to testify of himself; he lives it as King, to subdue all our enemies under his feet; and he lives it as Priest, for it is in the discharge of his priestly office that he makes intercession for us.

I must speak, therefore, a few words more about this intercession. I have said before that intercession was a part of the priestly office. The intercession of Christ was typified under the Old Testament in three ways: first, by the living fire ever burning upon the altar, which represented his intercession upon earth when "he offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears;" secondly, by the daily sacrifice of morning and evening; and, thirdly, by the incense which I explained before as burnt in the most holy place. This, then, may give us some idea of the nature of Christ's present intercession.

It consists, then, first, in his continual appearance for us in the presence of God — the presentation of his Person before the throne on our behalf; secondly, in the representation of his death and sacrifice, as John saw "a Lamb as it had been slain in the midst of the throne;" and, thirdly, in actual prayer or intercession.

But let me now apply it experimentally to our own case. If the gracious Lord did not live to make intercession for us, he could hardly be said to save us to the uttermost. But as he ever lives at God's right hand and is ever interceding, ever presenting the perfume of his acceptable mediation, this gives us a certain pledge of his love, his pity, and his power. Is not this very encouraging to all who come unto God by him? and may we not say, "Such are we, O Lord, we do come, we daily come to thee by Jesus Christ?" And do we not need all the encouragement that God may give us out of it? for we often sink very low through temptation and trial and the manifold afflictions of the way. But I say this in the name of God to all you who have already come and are ever coming to God by Jesus Christ: Christ is able to save you to the uttermost, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for you.

July 15, 1866
(Published by request)

THE RESURRECTION

Decatur, Ga.

Dear Brother Croker:

I keep thinking of the sermon we heard Sunday, and things you said concerning the resurrection; and though I feel strongly my weakness and inability to discuss these precious things, yet I love to walk around about the towers of Zion and speak of the things we hope we love.

There is no subject of more vital importance, or sweeter comfort, to me, than the hope I have of seeing and praising my adorable Saviour one day, "when I shall see for myself and not another." There have been a few of our people who do not see this doctrine of the blessed resurrection as we do, yet it is so plainly taught in Scriptures.

Christ shed his precious blood to redeem sinners; and who is the sinner, if not the Adamic man of His chosen people? To whom else could redemption apply? Certainly not to the spiritual man of us, who is the Lord from heaven, who was never under the curse of the law — never sinned, never needed redemption, but from everlasting to everlasting was hid with Christ in God.

This part that fell in sin — created under the law and curse of sin and death — this humanity, is the only part of His elect people that ever has, or could ever need r e d e m p t i o n; which word means, "salvation from sin through the atonement of Christ". To deny the resurrection of the body, is to make His death in vain, and His redemption a failure; for, as said, the spiritual man of us was never a subject for redemption. "He came in the flesh to condemn (censure, doom) sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit."

All flesh is the same as far as our ability is concerned — there is none good; but His grace and restraining power keeps His elect from ever committing the unpardonable sin, and blasphemy. I realize that we are a dual man, and warfare will ever be waged within us as long as we are this side of the grave; yet He does not permit even our bodies to be wholly under the power and control of Satan. St. Paul said, "But I keep under my body and bring it into subjection." So, to some extent, we are subdued here in this life, though very weak, and very subject to sin.

Redemption delivers the lawful captive in a lawful way, and takes the prey from the mighty. I can but believe that the redemption of e v e r y member of Christ, spirit, soul, and body, from sin, death, and hell, from the dominion, as well as the penal demands of the law, is secured, else they could not be legally

married to Christ.

The life which the saints had in Christ required no redemption — it was not lost. It was created in Him, chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, and blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. So being created, elected, blessed, and preserved in Christ, there was never anything from which to redeem them: their life, that is, their spiritual life, being hid with Christ in God. But the human or natural souls and bodies of all men were created in Adam, and were Adam; and as such actually transgressed the law, and fell under condemnation and wrath of that law. And this is the clay out of which God made vessels to honor, and vessels to dishonor — vessels predestinated to glory, and vessels fitted for destruction.

The work of redemption could only have been applied to that which being under the law, was under curse. Both soul and body being cursed by the law, it follows that both soul and body must be redeemed from that curse in order to receive the heavenly treasure of life and immortality, which God treasured up in Christ from everlasting.

Christ came in the flesh to put away sin in the flesh. This is what made it indespensable for Him to come in the flesh. He gave his soul a sacrifice for their souls, his body for their bodies; for God has predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first born among many brethren. The redemption of both soul and body is confirmed by the testimonies of the Scripture s. "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you." "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death, which will be fulfilled when the bodies come forth from the grave; where all corruption, dishonor, and mortality are left.

Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost: He condemned sin in the flesh, He died for sinners and for the ungodly. "Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none (no part) of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the scriptures might be fulfilled." The son of perdition represents the Devil and his angels, and all non-elect, who commit the unpardonable sin.

When talking on this subject, a sister once said to me, "Never let us be found trying to get anything into God's kingdom which he cast out." My reply was, "Never let us be found trying to keep out of his kingdom that for which He shed his precious blood, and redeemed." She didn't believe in the resurrection of the body.

He suffered for the transgression of his people. God sent forth his son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. "And because ye are sons, God has sent forth into your hearts the spirit of his Son, whereby ye cry, Abba, Father."

Don't we all feel and realize a difference: we care nothing for the things we once loved, and hope we love the things we were once unconcerned about. "And by Him, all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." "Whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified." How can any of this apply except to the created man!

I hope it is only His purpose that I love; and I know He is able to make us every whit whole, and fit subjects for his blessed kingdom.

I have written as I have thought. May He keep you always. Much love to you both.

Mrs. K. N. Alston

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Kingwood Church at Locktown, N. J. on Thursday and Friday, May 29, 30, 1958; to our sister associations with which we correspond, sendeth greetings and love in the Lord.

Dear Brethren:

Through the love and mercy of God, we have been privileged to meet again. The ministering brethren have come to us bearing testimony of the Lord Jesus. We have felt blessed in their coming, and rejoiced in the edifying words of the Spirit they proclaimed. We feel it is a blessed occasion when we can gather together in the unity of love and fellowship.

By divine permission we hope to meet together again next year at Hopewell Church, the time to be announced in the **Signs of the Times,** when we trust we may meet your messengers again, and hear your testimony of God's word.

Elder George Ruston, Moderator
Casper G. Fetter, Clerk
Letha A. Blackwell, Ass't Clerk

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association in session with the Kingwood Church, Locktown, New Jersey, Thursday and Friday of May 29 and 30, 1958; to the churches composing the same, and to the sister churches and assocations with which we correspond; sendeth Christian greetings:

Dear Brethren: There are some things that unexpectedly brighten our days and radiate cheer, and an experience of grace or greater revelations of Truth unfolded, could be surely counted as such.

From reading many of the scriptures we can only approach the unknown through the known, and natural things often serve as patterns for things that are to be spiritually comprehended. The Psalms are a joy to read in this respect. They comprise the most majestic poetry ever penned, and surround the church in everlasting beauty.

A portion of doctrine taken here as a subject will embrace the church. And a type used shall be a tree, which is most appealing to a believing sinner because it represents the church of the living God, and also the individual member of that church. Often more than one interpretation can be applied, as it was with Moses. He was a figure of the law in one sense, and again he was a type of Christ as a Mediator for Israel. In Exodus we read that Moses stood by a burning bush, or small tree, which burned and was not consumed, as he received a commission from God to deliver the enslaved Israelites from bondage to Pharoah. While the burning bush in glory blazed on, its leaves did not wither, nor its bark sear, or a twig fall. But we do see our God as a consuming fire, and the dross of human nature being consumed, but not the church, which is purified and made perfect.

In the garden of Eden there were two trees. The tree of life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. By man's disobedience sin entered into the world, and Adam and his mate were made to go from the garden, and a flaming sword that turned every way in the hands of Cherubim guarded the Tree of Life. The sword represents God's wrath and judgement. So the only access to the Tree of Life must be through another tree, and that is the tree of the cross upon which Christ died.

It is interesting to note here that on Calvary where Christ was crucified there were three trees made in the shape of crosses. On one a man dies unrepentant IN HIS SINS, and on another cross a penitent man dies in fellowship with Christ who has said: "Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise." But on the center cross died the holy son of man. The penitent forgiven thief

died TO SIN, while Christ died FOR SIN. So we see the difference in the application of these three trees made into crosses.

The church is spoken of, as regards the members individually, as trees of righteousness, and the planting of the Lord that He might be glorified.

It is said in Psalms, "The righteous shall flourish as the Palm tree." And why the Palm tree? Because this tree grows from within as God's people grow in grace. The nature of its growth is suggestive of eternal life. It's crown of beauty a type of the crown of righteousness.

A tree has a fragrance, sometimes more noticeable than at other times, such as when in blossom, after a shower, or in the morning dew, which symbolizes the sweetness of the merit of Jesus. And in the season's growth we can see how the child of God grows in grace and in the knowledge of the truth.

We leave these thoughts for your consideration, brethren, trusting the God of peace may sanctify you wholly. This is our prayer for Christ's sake. Amen.

Elder George Ruston, Moderator
Casper G. Fetter, Clerk
Letha A. Blackwell, Ass't Clerk

Written by Sister Mary L. Hellings.

EXPERIENCE

1516 Rutland Street,
Houston, Texas

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

For sometime I have desired to write something of what I hope the Lord has done for me. If God be with me, I shall relate it only in part, lest I take up too much of your precious time and space, should you find it worthy of space in our dear paper.

How well do I remember when first my sins rose up before me as great mountains, and I saw myself to be the vilest sin poluted wretch on earth: not fit to live nor fit to die. For the first time I saw myself to be a justly condemned sinner in the sight of a holy and righteous God. I realized I was only a fit subject for the fiery pit, and I was on the very brink of it; and that I, not Paul, was chief of sinners. I felt to be beyond all possibility of p a r d o n. At times I would watch the setting sun, feeling that I could not live to see another. I dreaded to see the night approaching, for they were terrors, fearing to sleep that I would awake in the depths of Hell. And, too, I dreaded to see my children come home from school and work, for I had to hide my grief, to wear a pleasant face, which was so hard to do, while my soul was filled with Egyptian darkness. I felt to know that the merciful God alone could raise my sinful soul out of those dark waters.

Oh, if the God of heaven would only forgive me, and s p e a k peace to my grieved heart and burdoned soul! I felt to be so alone — lost, without God and without hope. I went with bowed head, weeping and begging, ever begging, for mercy. But it semed He turned a deaf ear to all my pleas. One night (as very often) I slipped out of the house and fell to my knees beneath a large elm, and with every breath wept and begged for His mercy. I arose and started back to the house, and the words of the Lord came to me so clearly that I seemed to feel his very presence: "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." For a moment I felt faint. Did I actually hear a voice? No, it couldn't be; it was only the words of the Scriptures that came to my mind — the voice was only imaginary.

But I was reminded of more of His sweet and precious promises and declarations to his children; and of his mercy and everlasting love, and the Comforter he had promised to send; and, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." My drooping spirits and burdens were somewhat comforted, but not for long. I felt I was too wicked to be included with those whom the dear Lord had spoken to, and of. I had always enjoyed reading my Bible, but now I read it more and more, and could hardly lay it aside to attend to my household

chores. I hoped to find something therein which would bring some peace and comfort, but I found nothing that seemed to fit my case, except condemnation.

I did not want to meet my people, for I felt they could see me as the vile thing I was (and yet feel to be). I would close the doors and walk the floor, crying and begging for mercy — His mercy. My grief was inexpressible: it seemed that the very fires of Hell were burning deep within me; and I could do nothing to better my condition. How true are the words of that precious old hymn: "The worst of all diseases is light compared with sin; in every part it seizes, but rages most within."

I felt to know that when Jesus uttered those three never-to-be-forgotten words, "It is finished", that the salvation of his people was finished then and there; and unless my name was written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world, I was doomed. For none can ever be added, nor none taken from this blessed book: it is sealed only to be opened by the "Lion of the Tribe of Judah". I felt that I believed at that time as deeply as I hope I do now, in salvation by grace in and through the merits of a crucified Lord; that we are not saved because of any merits or goodness of ourselves, but through the merit of the Lord our Redeemer. But even this was not much comfort to me (not then), for I felt that one so sinful and vile as I would not be included in that number — his chosen to be with him in eternity.

I read of David and his great sin; of the wicked king Manassah; and of others who did many wicked things. But were they not God's anointed? Who was I but a lowly filthy little worm of the dust? Yes, I meditated much on his sure promises to his people; such as, "Though your sins be scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." and, "Lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world." And many others. But one seemed to be of more comfort than most: "I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." I felt indeed that I was a repenting sinner, but feared my grief, and repentance, and tears might be those of Esau.

For months, yes, near two years, my troubles continued. I lost my appetite; the sight of food was nauseating, and I became thin and pale. My children became alarmed and pleaded with me to see a doctor, but I knew that my worst ailment was the realization of my sins, and that only one, the great Physician, could cure my sin sick soul. I could think of nothing but my sins, which rose higher and higher: dark clouds blacker and more dense hedging me in from every direction. There came another night when I thought I could not bear my burden another hour; and I felt it to be for the last time, I sought the deep shadows of my elm, my hiding place, falling on my knees I poured out my very soul unto God for mercy. After re-entering the house, the words of an old hymn, a favorite of my precious old father's, came to my mind: "Show pity Lord, O Lord forgive; let a repenting sinner live. Are not thy mercies large and free? May not a sinner trust in thee?" Tears flowing, I read through to the end. And I read again the 5th verse: "Should sudden vengeance seize my breath, I must pronounce thee just in death; and if my soul were sent to Hell, thy righteous law approves it well." Yes, if my soul were sent to Hell, his righteous law approved it well, for I deserved no better. And, too, I felt it could be no worse than the agony I suffered then.

I threw myself across my bed, wanting to die then and there. I could not go on. I was tired, so very tired, and there was nothing I could do. I gave up. But portions of Scriptures kept coming into my mind; and again I cried, "O Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean. Look down in pity and have mercy on me a poor sinner." I reckon I slept; I was in a dense wilderness, in the midst of black darkness, with not a sound to be heard. I turned my head around about seeking some way of es-

cape. My eyes could not penetrate the darkness sufficiently to take another step. I could not go backward nor forward; to the right nor to the left. I was lost, and no one would ever find me here. By now I was weeping bitterly again. I raised my eyes upward, and there far above the surrounding darkness I found precious light — an opening about the size of a door or window. How glad I was for this little bit of light.

But thought I, "I cannot get out there, ever, the height is too great." Again I cried out, "O, dear Lord, with thee all things are possible. Help me; save me." Then I heard a voice — it sounded like soft, sweet music — "Come out of the wilderness into the light." At that instant I was in light, bright, glittering light, standing on a great white rock. My old clothes lay near, and I was dressed in a long white robe: in appearance, something like an old fashioned long, white cape. Tenderly I held it close to me. I thought the Lord was out there waiting for me, and I must go to him. I realized the going would be rough, for I could see sharp snags and thorns, briars and other such things in my pathway, I started placing my steps carefully so as not to tear my feet, but go to my Saviour I must. I had advanced only a few steps, when I awoke. My burdens were gone. Peace, sweet, restful peace had been given me. I believed it was the work of the only living God: the almighty, sovereign, merciful, and allwise God.

I felt that He had heard the voice of my weeping, and in love and mercy applied the healing balm of Gilead to my troubled soul. Now my tears were of joy, gladness, and thankfulness, with praises, honor, and glory to my precious Redeemer. "Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God: how unsearchable are his judgements and his ways past finding out."

For some time after my happy experience I seemed to be on the mountain top. I felt that my troubles were gone for ever; that God had blessed me with sweet peace and rest; and that when he called me to cross the chilly waters of death, he would be with me and not forsake me. But, alas, I awoke one morning, and the peace, comfort and joy I had experienced was gone. I tried to reach out to re-capture it, trying to live it all over again. But all my efforts were useless: I was cast down in fear, and darkness, and doubt, fearing after all it was not of God, but only a beautiful dream. I believe I was in as much, if not more, trouble than before. I wept, and tried to pray: Had God forsaken me?

Now more than twenty years have passed since that happy, never-to-be-forgotten night, and I yet tremble, and fear, and doubt. Sometimes I am in darkness, or on the dry desert, seeking water, and finding none. Occasionally I am lifted up and seem to feel His sweet presence and nearness, and am enabled to lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help; and say, "I know my Redeemer liveth"; and am enabled to view the blessed land of Canaan in all its beauty, fruits, and sweet smelling spices.

Beloved saints, I did not consider the sweet peace which I experienced, and have written about only in part, as being "born again" — a spiritual birth, or regeneration (I only knew that things were changed), until a dear Old Baptist minister told me by letter that I had given much evidence of a sweet hope of a spiritual birth. This was indeed glad tidings; also a happy surprise. Several years later I received such a letter from our beloved editor and brother, Elder R. Lester Dodson. He said, "It is difficult for me to understand why one with such an abundance of evidence of having passed from death unto life, still lingers outside the shepherd's fold. May I urge that you go home to your friends and tell them what great things the dear Lord has done for you, whereof you are glad."

Now from 1905 to 1949, I had only heard three Old Baptist sermons: one by my father, the late Elder W. M. Little; one by Elder W. O. Beene (now de-

ceased); and by Elder W. A. Little, of Fort Worth, Texas. During these 44 years I did not know of an Old Baptist church nearer than Fort Worth, but in December of 1949, I learned of a church much nearer. I begged for a home with them; was received and baptized. But discovered that was not the home desired. This was very grievous to say the least, for I loved those brethren and sisters, as I hope I love all God's people, unworthy though I be of their slightest notice. Yet, however painful, I felt I had to depart from them, for I was most unhappy. I hope it was of God; and I hope it was He that led me home. I am now at ease, satisfied and happy. How good of those precious saints to let me in. I begged to be allowed the fartherest corner of the house, else even to sit under their trees, only that I might see the faces of the dear saints, and in hearing distance of the joyful sound of those gospel bells. O, how good God is to me; I who merit no good thing from him, the giver of every good and perfect gift.

Dear ones, if what I have written herein is not sufficient evidence for a little hope, then I have no hope; but indeed a poor lost soul. I would be glad to hear from our brothers and sisters and readers, especially from Brother and Sister D. C. Colvett of Nashville, Tenn. I wrote them twice, and my letters were returned marked "insufficient address".

Please remember this old sinner when at the throne of grace; and may the Signs of the Times ever prosper, adhering to the truth once delivered to the saints. Now may God's everlasting love and peace abide with you all, and guide you in the way of truth, is the feeble prayer of a little sister, I hope, in Christ.

Harriett Little Gray

HYMN AND TUNE BOOKS

We inquired of Brother Lester and found that he has a good many of the Lester-Durand Hymn and Tune Books on hand. It was because many wanted these books that the last edition was undertaken at considerable cost to the Lester family; so we would suggest that those who desire one or more copies, to order them. The price is $2.00 each, or $22.00 per dozen postpaid. Address the orders to

Masten H. Lester
814 30th Street, N. W.
Roanoke, Virginia

ANNUAL MEETING OF NEW VERNON CHURCH

The **Annual Meeting** of the **New Vernon Church,** New Vernon, Sullivan County, New York, will be held the 1st Saturday in October; which is October 4th.

All members and friends are cordially invited to attend.

VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING

The 1958 session of the **Virginia Corresponding Meeting** is appointed to be held with Mt. Zion Church on October 15, 16, and 17. The meeting house is located on U. S. Route 50, about three miles East of Aldie, Virginia. Those arriving on Tuesday will please get in touch with Deacon Walter Norman, Herndon, Virginia; or Elder Wood, Manassas, Virginia, and they will be taken care of.

A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends to meet with us.

Arthur L. Carter, Clerk
Manassas, Virginia

SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

The **Salisbury Old School Baptist Association** will be held with the Delmar Church, in Delmar, Delaware, on the corner of Jewell and North Second Street, October 22 and 23, 1958.

All ministers, brethren and friends of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us. Those arriving on Tuesday please go to the Delmar meeting house, and we will meet you there and see that you have a place to stay. Those arriving on Wednesday go directly to the meeting house, and they will be cared for.

Elder H. M. Bennett, Pastor
Bertha White, Clerk

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The eighty-second session of the **Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association** will be held with the church at Nashville, N. C., beginning on Friday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1958 and continuing through Sunday. The church is located just off highway 58 on the south edge of town. A special invitation is given to all lovers of truth and to our ministering brethren.

W. E. Turner, Clerk

Danville, Virginia October, 1958

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EDITORIAL

"HE RESTORETH MY SOUL"

My soul has been the battle-ground of many conflicts in life. The constant warfare engaged by the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh in my soul has caused it to faint many times within me. Were it not for the restoration of my soul by the merciful and mighty Spirit of Almighty God, I feel, I would have sunk into despair and oblivion long ago. The flesh has succeeded many times in gaining ground in its carnal reasoning until I was almost persuaded to meet the terms of surrender and give up entirely. I trust that God has been pleased each time to come to my rescue and deliver my soul from death by the direct operation of His Holy Spirit.

Perhaps the reader is wondering what I mean by the term, SOUL, because of so many and varied conceptions of what the soul really is. Since this is true, it behooves me to define what I mean by the term before my treatise on this text could be rightly understood.

There is a difference between the body and the soul as we shall see by considering the following scriptures: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the SOUL: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both SOUL and body in hell." (Matt. 10:28) "And I pray God your whole spirit and SOUL and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thes. 5:23) Man may kill the body but he cannot kill the soul. Even the soul of the spirit of natural life goes back to the God who gave it resulting in the death of the natural body. That which God breathed into the body of Adam, which resulted in Adam becoming a living soul, was at His command to take when it pleased Him.

The work of the Spirit does not change the mortal bodies of God's children in this life. We are all subject to the same physical pains and diseases whether we be dead in trespasses and sins or walk in newness of life. Our mortal bodies are not promised this quickening until the resurrection. We grow old, suffer physically, and die the same as others. We do not experience the change of body here but we hope to realize this grand blessing when we enter the portals of glory beyond this timely sphere.

The work of the Spirit does change our souls which are our hearts and minds. The heart which is changed is not the physical organ composing our natural body. The mind which undergoes the change is not the natural composition of the brain. Our hearts are the seats of affection and our minds are the seats of knowledge. Our natural minds are only capacitated to receive or comprehend natural knowledge pertaining to this natural world. The heart of man before being wrought upon by the Spirit

is only capable of loving self and the things of this world.

The capitol of the soul is the heart which judges, reasons, determines, and weighs the thoughts of the mind. The center of the mind is the heart in the land of the soul. The heart is the judge of the mind. As long as "Stony-heart" sits on the throne wrong judgment proceeds and unrighteous thoughts prevail. This has been true with all mankind since Adam fell under the curse — apart from the mighty direct work of God. "Stony-heart" will not have God rule over him; neither will "Carnal mind" be anything but an enemy to Him. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." (Romans 8:7)

Battles do not rage in the land of the soul until something mightier than "Stony-heart" and "Carnal mind" take over. The love of God is far from the desires of "Stony-heart". The knowledge of God's laws are foreign to "Carnal mind". When God begins His operation in the land of the Soul there is a change of government such as "Stony-heart" and "Carnal mind" could never see nor appreciate. Furious battles rage in the regions of the soul that result in such disturbance and unrest. Both heart and mind faint as result of such disturbances. Then, we cry unto God and He delivers us. (See Ps. 107:5)

The first act of God upon the soul is to take "Stony-heart" out of the king's chamber and put a new heart in the land. (See Ezekiel 11:19) He writes His laws in this new heart which results in a new desire toward God. His desire is to do the will of God but he finds his mind so possessed with evil thinking and knowledge. This new heart judges the mind to be altogether carnal and ungodly. This first work in the heart of the soul causes the man to be broken-hearted. He feels that if he could just know what the commandments of the Lord were — he could keep them. This first work of God has given him the DESIRE to keep the laws of God, but his mind is void of this knowledge. Man still feels he is capable of keeping these laws if he could just know them. The next act of God is to pervade the mind of this creature with the knowledge of His laws. He does this by directly putting His laws in the man's mind. This act gives the man the KNOWLEDGE of the laws of God. Man momentarily feels that he is in excellent condition because he has the desire to keep the law of God as well as the knowledge of His laws. Now, he has a zeal of God and begins immediately upon the task to establish his own righteousness. He does not have the knowledge that this new principle in his soul is the work of God apart from himself. Man still has faith in himself notwithstanding the fact that he has this new desire and knowledge. What he does not know is that he does not possess the ability to perform these laws. He must learn that the new desire and new knowledge does not qualify him to perform. There is yet lurking about in the soul these old principles. He must learn. He must yet learn that the implanting of these new principles did not destroy the old.

The soul now has become a battleground for these opposing principles. A terrible warfare has begun in the soul. The desires of the flesh and the desires of the Spirit interchange the reigning power in the soul so fast and furious that the soul begins to faint within you. "For the FLESH lusteth against the SPIRIT, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other: so that YE CANNOT DO THE THINGS THAT YE WOULD". (Gal. 5:17) You see and experience the same thing the apostle Paul experienced when he said, "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me." (Rom. 7:21) This causes your soul to faint within you.

Have you ever experienced the fainting of the soul? If you have experienced a broken heart and a confused mind to such extent that your hopes were blasted — you realize what the fainting of the soul means. When you became so

exhausted from trying to do the things that were godly that you gave it up as a hopeless task — you know what it means. Never shall I forget the fainting of my soul within me experienced in the years spent in the Slough of Despondency. I was convinced that I was chief of sinners and justly deserved being cut off from the favors of God. Doubts and fears so reigned in my mind that I felt that God would cast me into hell. I became so hungry for the bread of Life and so thirsty for the wine of the kingdom that my soul was famished. I felt that God had cast me off forever. I found that all my efforts to right myself accomplished nothing. For months, which seemed like years, my experience and prayer with groanings which could not be uttered can best be expressed in the language of the Psalmist, "My SOUL is also sore vexed; but Thou, O Lord, how long? Return, O Lord, deliver my SOUL; Oh save me for Thy mercies' sake. I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim: I water my couch with my tears''. (Psalms 6:3-6)

Never shall I forget the restoration of my fainted SOUL! What healing balm that was applied to my broken and wounded heart! What calmness to feel the embrace of my Father's love and mercy. What an ease of mind to have Jesus come to dwell in my heart!

"He restoreth my soul". When Jesus comes to reign in one's soul a new principle or law is learned and appreciated that the little child of God has not learned heretofore. "For the LAW of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the LAW of sin and death". (Rom. 8:2) Such freedom cannot be experienced during the primitive work of the Spirit. Paul said, "For I was ALIVE once without the law: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I DIED". (Rom. 7:9) This did not free him from the law of sin and death but wrought death in him. He found in this experience that the law could not give life. It took this experience to lead him to Christ. "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith". (Gal. 3:24) The primitive work of God in our souls was necessary in order to banish our faith in self. When faith in self was killed the soul fainted. Then, faith in Christ is supplanted that we might trust in Him and not in ourselves. When our souls are restored by the God-given faith in Christ we become new creatures because our souls have been rescued from death. Our souls have become immortalized by the Spirit of Eternal Life. Our souls have been delivered from eternal death — or, from being eternally banished from God. "Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy: to DELIVER THEIR SOUL FROM DEATH, and to keep them alive in famine. Our SOUL waiteth for the Lord". (Psalms 33:18-20) The deliverance of the soul from death is experienced by the Lord's people here in time. The deliverance of the body from eternal death is hoped to be experienced in the transition from this timely sphere into that eternal abode after this life is over.

"He restoreth my soul". When the child of God first experiences the reign of Jesus Christ in his soul, he thinks his troubles are over. He learns that he can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth him. However, it is necessary for him to learn that Jesus Christ is not always manifestly ruling and reigning. There is yet a warfare because the carnal mind has only been suppressed for a short duration. He has tasted of the reigning power of Jesus but He finds that he has the desires of his flesh to come again into power to the extent to bring him into captivity of the LAW of sin, which is in his members. This warfare keeps him tossed to and fro. This keeps him praying constantly for the Lord to have mercy upon him. This keeps him meek and humble. This keeps him realizing his wretched condition. We are made to cry out constantly of our wretchedness as the Apostle Paul: "O wretched man that

I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death". (Rom. 7:24) Then, you thank God that this deliverance will come through Jesus Christ, your Lord. When you are given to sum it all up you find that you serve the law of God with your mind but that your flesh is still contaminated with the law of sin. So, then, it is no more you that do it but sin that dwelleth in you.

"He restoreth my soul". How wonderful it is to trust in the promises of God. How comforting it is to rely upon the finished work of Christ in accomplishing the law for you and paying the penalty for your sins with His own blood. How sweet it is to meditate upon the mighty work of the Spirit in regenerating each and every one of the trophies of His grace. How edifying it is to learn that He will keep you from falling finally away by His hand of grace and mercy which He dispenses to you at His will. How resigned you are to His will when you are made to know that He providentially cares for His own in guiding and directing their steps. How safe you feel when you realize that He has the supreme control over all of your enemies to the extent that none can rob you of the least of His blessings that He intends for you to have. How hopeful you are of being the recipients of the crowning work of this wonderful salvation which is reserved in Heaven for you. What a restoration of the soul to meditate upon the wonderful works of God to the children of men.
"He restoreth my soul".

E. J. Lambert

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE HOUSE OF GOD

Among the worshipers of every grade of idolatry it has been customary from early ages to build houses devoted to the supposed deities to which adoration was rendered; and these houses, or temples, were as magnificent as their devotees could make them, in order to express their regard for the objects of their reverence, for their zeal in this work was supposed to be gratifying to their idols. The most stupendous works of ancient art are relics of religious edifices, and in modern times untold treasures are expended in the erection of similar temples which are miscalled churches.

But while the pride of their builders is flattered by the gorgeous appearance of their structures, the awful voice of God has rejected all those dwellings, and reproved the presumption of their builders. "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my world."—Isaiah lxvi. 1, 2. This man who is accepted of God is no other than Christ Jesus, who is anointed with the Spirit of the Lord God as "Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." In this temple God will dwell forever, for it is his own chosen habitation, whose builder and maker is God.

There can be no earthly house worthy of comparison with this dwelling place of the Most High; yet the natural man can see no beauty in the church. The gaudy show of worldly institutions is far more attractive to the carnal mind than the afflicted and poor little flock of the people of God. Still does the world love his own, and hate the chosen people of our Redeemer. This peculiar mark is one evidence which God has given to assure the saints of their claim as heirs of that inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, which is reserved in heaven for them.

It is very important to the afflicted and poor children of grace that they should consider the inspired testimony

in regard to the house of God, where he has given them an abiding home as sons and daughters; for every correct view they have of this safe abode will assure them more fully of the perfection of every appointment of infinite wisdom for their comfort and protection while sojourning in this enemy's land, and confirm their hope of the everlasting bliss which they shall certainly enjoy in the presence of God when they shall be released from this bondage of corruption. As their rest is not here, they can only enter into their sure retreat by the faith of the Son of God. The natural man cannot receive this evidence of things not seen, and that is the reason why the carnal mind of the saints continually doubts the testimony of faith on which their whole confidence is founded. This produces that warfare which disturbs their peace while they remain in this world. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other."

While the whole church of his chosen people constitute the house of God, which is the pillar and ground of the truth, and as the fullness of the body of Christ the special care of her Creator is her continual preservation and support, it is also recorded for the comfort of the poor, the needy and the destitute that he dwells "with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." As the Lord has been the dwelling place of his saints in all generations, so his chosen abode is in them. "As God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."—2 Cor. vi. 16. They are the temple of God, both as the whole church, and each of them as his redeemed individually. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"—1 Cor. xii. 27; iii. 16.

This is a house composed exclusively of living material, the life of every stone being in Christ the foundation and chief corner-stone. Nothing like this was ever built by created beings. God alone is the builder and maker of this glorious house, and he has ordained it for the dwelling place of his own children. No others can even see it, much less can they enter its sacred portals. The Lord Jesus is the door as well as the foundation, and his life is the vital principle which animates the building.

Every stone which is built upon the living foundation of his house, is thoroughly purged so as by fire. Only the chosen material which is kept by the power of God can endure this severe test; but each of the lively stones which are of the house is made to glorify the Lord in the fires. Chosen in the furnace of affliction, they are there purified and brought to know that all their righteousnesses are as filthy rags; then they are prepared to receive the perfect righteousness of God which is treasured in Christ as their sure foundation. As this is all they can claim as commendable in the sight of God, each of these lively stones must glory in the Lord.

The severe experience through which their confidence in the flesh is consumed, leads them often to feel that they are ready to perish; but they shall come to the place prepared for them in this temple of God, and the very ordeal of fiery trials through which they have passed shall serve to manifest more clearly the glory of that divine grace by which they have been kept. While passing through the fires it seems that they must be utterly consumed; but when they are fully tried they shall come forth as gold. As their God has chosen them to declare his own glory in salvation, they are secure in his keeping. Neither fire nor floods can destroy them, because God is their refuge and strength.

It is not possible that one of them should perish, for that life which animates them is the same eternal life which is in Christ their living foundation. He says to them, "Because I live, ye shall live also."—John xiv. 19. All

these lively stones must therefore ever live while God, who is their life, shall not perish. There can never be any defective material in this glorious house, nor shall there be any vacant place in consequence of the failure of any stone to be made ready for the building. Infinite wisdom has appointed for every stone its own place, and fitted for every place the chosen stone.

In the development of the eternal purpose of God they who are elected to be manifested as comprised in this glorious house are not only brought to their places in the church of the living God, but they are "builded together" so wonderfully that they are vitally united as members one of another. The apostles and prophets are not more closely connected with the living foundation than are the feeblest of the little ones which tremblingly believe in Jesus as their only hope of salvation. If one of these could perish, the house would be incomplete, and the will of the Father would be defeated.

But there is no possibility that such a terrible thing could be as that the most unworthy one should fail to be made perfect and blameless, for any defect in them would detract from the glory of the Redeemer. Their own merit is not the ground of their election, for they were the objects of the great love of God even when they were dead in sin. That love chose them in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. And as they were chosen without regard to their own merit, so their unworthiness cannot separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. The exceeding riches of his grace is shown in his kindness toward them through Christ Jesus, in that when they were enemies against God by wicked works, they were reconciled to him through the death of the Son of God.

In consideration of this wonderful display of the love and mercy of God, the final salvation of these subjects of his grace is assured. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." —Rom. v. 10. So, there can be no contingency which might result in the failure of one of these chosen lively stones to occupy its place in this house of God. Sin, which is their most cruel tormentor, is washed away by the precious blood of Jesus, and cannot separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jcsus; and though they feel its power still working in their members, it is a conquered enemy, from which they shall at last be triumphantly delivered. Then in the perfect likeness of their Lord they shall see him as he is, the inconceivable glory of the house of God shall be clearly revealed to their unclouded vision, and the full mystery of redemption shall tune their song of never-ceasing praise and thankful adoration to God and to the Lamb that died for their redemption.

This house of God is not a mass of incongenial material brought together by the efforts of zealous mortals. It is composed only of those who are "sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." These are lively stones quickened by the Spirit which is in Christ their living Foundation, and so completely united that they are "one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."—Romans xii. 5. "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it."—1 Cor. xii. 26.

This perfect unity is unquestionable evidence of the fact that the Spirit of Christ dwells in those who are so builded together, for this is the fulfillment of the word of the Lord concerning his people. "And they shall be my people, and I will be their God: and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me forever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they

shall not depart from me."—Jeremiah xxxii. 38-40. Truly, the glory of this house of God infinitely surpasses that of the typical house of natural Israel, as the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus excels in glory the law of sin and death; and all the glory of this spiritual house is borne by the great Builder.—See Zech. vi. 12, 13.

The perfection of this glorious house forbids that any pollution should defile its sacred precincts. Hence, full instruction is given in the inspired rule for the conduct of the favored inmates, who both constitute the living building and are its only inhabitants. In telling Timothy how he ought to behave himself in this house of God, Paul explains that it is "the church of the living God, the pillar and ground (or stay) of the truth."—1 Tim. iii. 15. And as it was needful that Timothy should attend to that instruction, so must it be essentially important to all the saints. Carnal reason may suggest that it does not matter how they walk, or what their conversation may be, since their final salvation is secured in Christ; but those who are led by the Spirit of God desire to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, for it is God which worketh in them **both to will and to do** of his good pleasure.

With Paul, they may find a law, that, when they would do good, evil is present with them; but the leading of the Spirit must ever be in perfect accordance with the instruction written by inspiration of God in which the man of God is thoroughly furnished unto all good works. However it may seem right and commendable, no work can be good for the saints which is not included in this perfect rule; and nothing therein enjoined upon the disciples of our Lord can be disregarded without loss to them, even to the extent of feeling themselves shut out from the privileges of their home in this house of God, and carried into captivity. For even the dear children of God must experience the rod of chastening if they forsake his law, and keep not his commandments.—Psalm lxxxix. 30-32. If one who claims to be a child can walk in forbidden ways without receiving this chastisement, the Lord does not deal with him as a child.—See Heb. xii. 5-8. But the inspired benediction secures the peace of God upon as many as walk according to this rule.—Gal. vi. 16. The house of God is the happy abode of all such. Here they rest under the shadow (that is, the protecting are) of the Almighty; for this is the secret place of the Most High.—Psa. xci. 1.

In the confusion of this enemies' land, where they sojourn as strangers and pilgrims, these lively stones are often allured by the vanities of earth to forget the glorious house which is their home. The gaudy toys of wealth or fame seem desirable, and ere they are aware they are pursuing these delusive shadows, to the neglect of their nobler privileges in their Father's house, the church of God. The friendship of the world offers ease and honors, while the tempter cunningly suggests that there can be no harm in such innocent enjoyments as are accounted respectable and refined in the religious world.

Especially attractive do the benevolent inventions of men appear, which are professedly religious. Often even the eyes of true believers are dazzled by the false lustre of these vanities. But they cannot bring these things into the house of God. They are forever excluded by the law of the Lord. Consequently they are unprofitable to the people of God, whose dwlling is in this holy house. The deceitfulness of sin may present the glittering bait of pride to draw away the heart from this glorious rest of the saints. Of course, like all other devices of the enemy, this does not appear in its hideous character as the concentration of selfishness, but it claims perhaps to be a burning zeal for the Lord. Yet the real motive is exposed in anxiety to let that zeal be known of men, as in the case of Jehu.—2 Kings x. 16. Instead of following after "the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another," those who are allured by this false zeal will be puffed up

with vain imaginations of their own importance and ability, and resentment will be aroused whenever their vanity is crossed.

The rod of chastening will humble the saints when thus exalted, and they must learn the lesson of their own nothingness before they can enter into the house of God. While mansions of everlasting rest are prepared in this house for all the innumerable company of little ones who believe in Jesus, there is not an apartment in the whole building of God large enough for one who is grown so great as to be satisfied with himself. Except such be converted and become as little children, they shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven, which is the house of God, the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

By the power of God alone the saints are kept from falling into the snares of their crafty adversary, for they are so weak that they cannot keep themselves even for an hour. The love of God has provided for them not only their mansions in the house of God, but also the abundant grace which preserves them from all their enemies, and will not fail to bring them to their everlasting rest in the spiritual church of God; and all will be done "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved."

(Editorial by Elder Wm. L. Beebe, June 1, 1884.)

OBITUARIES

DEACON C. T. ECHOLS

Deacon C. T. Echols, of Corpus Christi, Texas, passed away May 31, 1958. He was born in Freestone County, Texas June 12, 1872; making his stay on earth nearly 86 years. He leaves his wife, Alice Gertrude Echols; two sons: W. C. and J. E. Echols; three daughters: Taleth Echols, Edith Echols, and Jenneive Echols; one brother, William Echols, Chowch, Calif.; two sisters: Virginia McMinn, South Gate, Calif., and Mrs. Mary Tubb, Tahlequah, Okla.; and six grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Brother Echols was a member of Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, Weslaco, Texas, and will be greatly missed. He fell and injured his chest and lungs, which caused his death. The following is a letter he addressed to Elder E. B. Ault, and filed it away at the bank with other papers. The date was September 14, 1954, and requested that it be read at his funeral:

"First, I want the hymn Amazing Grace recited, not sung; as I have heard the angels sing in four voices, baritone, tenor, soprano, and alto. This was in a vision about 9 o'clock in the morning. Say what you please, you can't hurt me. I have heard singing over the radio; I have heard all manner of singing in nearly all languages, and none of them compare with it in the least. The ones that come nearest are the hymns sung by the church established on the day of Pentecost.

"I have no enemies, unless it be some hate me for being a member of the only church ever established by our Saviour. They stoned some of them; some they beheaded; and they crucified our Saviour. I can't compare myself with any of them. If I am saved it was a gift, and I personally had nothing to do with it; only to accept, which I did by his grace. This is my last prayer:

"May the Lord through our Saviour Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost, guard, guide, and direct those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life from the foundation of the world; and if it be his will have mercy on them whose names are not written in the book. I love the One in Three, and the Three in One; and all others according to his will. Goodby, I hope not forever. In hope of eternal life,"

C. T. Echols.

The above was read at his funeral services June 1, 1958, conducted by Elders E. B. Ault and W. W. Fleet.

Elder E. B. Ault

SISTER EDITH SHOWALTER

Edith T. Showalter is gone, but not forgotten. She passed away at her home February 24, 1958, at the age of 77 years, after a lingering illness. She was the wife of Charles W. Showalter, and they made their home for the last five years in Hillsboro, Oregon. Previously they lived at Othello, Washington for many years, and were well known and had a host of friends.

Mrs. Showalter was the daughter of Elder and Mrs. J. T. Barnes, who preceded her in

death. Elder Barnes was the minister of the Old School Baptist Church at Touchet, Washington, many years; and baptized Mrs. Showalter and her husband June 23, 1928. She loved serving her Lord, and was a true and faithful servant. She had a sweet smile and a kind word, and a helping hand for anyone.

She was laid away by the side of her first husband, Bruce Adams, and two sons, Frankie and Marvin, in the Touchet Cemetery, Touchet, Washington.

A precious one from us is gone,
A voice we loved is stilled;
A place is vacant in our home,
Which can never be filled.

God in his wisdom has recalled
The boon his love had given,
And though the body slumbers here,
The soul is safe in Heaven.

Vesta Showalter, grand-daughter, and
Charles W. Showalter

SISTER HESTER SHORT

Sister Hester Short was born May 14, 1880, and departed this life January 1, 1958; making her stay on earth seventy-seven years. She was the daughter of John and Sallie Dalton; and was married to John H. Short September 4, 1901. To this union six children were born, two boys and four girls, who cared for her very tenderly through all her sickness; also her neighbors and friends did all they could. She was a kind loving mother, and a good neighbor.

Sister Short joined Springfield Church in 1909, and was a faithful member; always filling her seat when she was able. She will be greatly missed by her children, neighbors and friends, and by Springfield Church. However, we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be his holy name."

God knows how we all miss her;
Never shall her memory fade.
Loving thoughts will ever linger
In the spot where she was laid.

Written by one who loved her,

Annie Compton

RESOLVED, That a copy of the above be placed on our church records; a copy sent to the family; and a copy sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

By order of the Church in conference.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
R. C. Dalton, Clerk

JESSIE LEE SAUNDERS

In the month of December, 1957, Deacon Jesse Lee Saunders was called by the Saviour he loved so dearly, to come to him in that heavenly home on high, where suffering and sorrow are no more.

In the passing of Deacon Saunders, the Primitive Baptist Church at Monticello lost one of her most beloved and highly esteemed brethren. He loved his church and attended all services when able. During the last three or four years he was ill quite a lot, sometimes critically, but as soon as he was able, he was back filling his place as deacon, looking after all interests of the church; never wanting any praise for anything he did. His services were a delight rather than a sacrifice. He was a very humble servant of his Lord, a pillar in the church, a great strength and comfort to his pastor, and loved by all who knew him. No one could doubt his sincerity.

We, the church at Monticello, feel most keenly the loss sustained in the passing of a dear brother, but fully believe the Lord does all things well. We feel that the Heavenly Father called him at the appointed time, and in death his spirit returned to God who gave it, and that Brother Saunders is occupying one of those beautiful mansions, which the Saviour said is in my Father's house. We would bow humbly and reverently to His will in all things, and be reconciled in his passing.

He served the City of Reidsville many years as a police officer, and was greatly loved and respected as a citizen, and all he came in contact with. The city police officials and administrative officers of Reidsville, paid a tribute of great respect and honor to Deacon Saunders, by attending his funeral in a body, along with a host of friends. The funeral was held at the City Funeral Home, and the body laid to rest in the family plot of the City Cemetery.

We, the Church at Monticello, resolve that copy of this be sent to the family of this dear brother; and a copy be spread on the church records.

He had a lovely wife and family, who always extended a welcome hand to his pastor and friends. To these the Primitive Baptist Church members at Monticello extend our deepest sympathy.

Elder J. W. Gilliam, Pastor
Sister Vallie Chrisman, Church Clerk

JENNIE McTAGGART WILLEY

Sister Jennie McTaggart Willey, beloved wife of the late Albert Willey, was born at Melbourne, Ontario, and died March 22nd, 1958.

She leaves to mourn her loss, a son, D. A. Willey and a daughter, Cassie, (Mrs. Basil Stoner) both of Melbourne, Ontario, also seven grandchildren, along with one remaining brother, Cyrus McTaggart.

Sister Willey united with the Covenanted Baptist Church by relating an experience of grace in May, 1917, at the Dunwich Meeting and was baptized by the late Elder John B. Slauson and was for almost fifty years a consistent and worthy member, strong in the faith; and her home was ever open to those who came in the name of Jesus her Lord.

We who knew her well were often refreshed in body and spirit by her kindness and love, and while it was her eternal gain to be taken, her dear family and brethren and friends are saddened as they know they will see her face no more on earth.

For many years she was afflicted with arthritis and her suffering at times was severe, yet through it all she could say, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want."

The writer officiated at her funeral, where many of her friends and brethren came to show their sympathy towards her bereaved family and respect to our dear departed sister.

George Ruston

JAMES LUTHER TURNER

James Luther Turner was born Nov. 15, 1891, in Cook County, Texas. He was called home to glory April 30, 1958, while in the Veteran's Hospital, Amarillo, Texas. He is survived by his widow, Ida Mae; sons: Arthur S., Clifford O., Donald W., and Elder Clarence E., all of Amarillo; brothers: George G. and John A., Ft. Smith, Ark.; and sister, Mrs. Bonnie Braswell, Dennison, Texas; and a host of other relatives and friends.

Although Brother Turner never united with any Church, his love and devotion for the Primitive Baptist belief was one to be commended and well to be followed by the baptized brethren.

The writer was only associated with Brother Turner for a little over a year, but he learned to love and respect him as a believer of the truth, and his reflections showed clearly his belief and interest when God's word was preached from the stand, or talked among the brethren, before and after the meeting.

Having selected a text from 1st Corinthians, the writer hopes he gave the family and friends a few words of comfort; and if so, all words spoken were from God, and the hearts that received the words were prepared of God.

Luther Turner will be sadly missed at our regular meeting time in Amarillo, and he will also be missed by all who knew him, because to know him was to love and respect him for his kindness and love of the Word.

God has finished His righteous purpose with this lump of clay and received his spirit unto Himself where all the cares of the world have been left behind. His fruits bore him out as one having life eternal, and one to receive the reward of heirship through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

We would pray that all His loved ones will realize his rest is in his Savior's arms, and is one far better than his sojourn in this vale of tears and low ground of sorrow.

Elder W. A. Winfrey

SARAH CAMPBELL McPHAIL

Sister Sarah Campbell McPhail, beloved wife of the late John McPhail, departed this life June 3rd, 1958, in her ninety-second year. She was a granddaughter of the late Elder Thomas McColl, who was the second pastor of the Covenanted Baptist Church. She leaves to mourn her loss, one son, Elmer McPhail of Hollywood, Florida, and a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

She united with the church in June, 1958, and was baptized by the late Elder William Pollard, so that she had been a worthy member for nearly sixty years. Her letters began to appear in the Signs before she was a member, and she kept up a correspondence with not a few of its subscribers. Many will remember her for her kind hospitality, for it was her joy to entertain the Lord's people.

She was the oldest member of our church in years of membership, and never gave up her interest in those things which concerned the welfare of the church and its members. For several years she longed to be taken home, and could say what she had often sung, "O land of rest for thee I sigh, when will that moment come, when I shall lay my armour by, and dwell with Christ at home?"

She, like many others, had her dark seasons and her bright ones, and was often exercised in soul and mind as to her acceptance in the Beloved.

She gradually grew weaker the last few months of her life. Her dear son came to her bedside a few days before she died, as she had wished for him to do. Her end was peace. She had expressed the wish a number of times that we sing the hymn "Asleep in Jesus" at her funeral, and the writer spoke from I Thessalonians 4:14. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

May God give us all a reconciled mind to His sovereign will in all things.

George Ruston

SARAH (BIRD) McCALLISTER

Sarah (Bird) McCallister, our dear sister in Christ, was born October 11, 1881. She was a daughter of John W. and Lurecy (Meadows) Bird. She was united in marriage January 1, 1902, to Boyd McCallister; and to this union were born eight children: four sons and four daughters; four of whom preceded her in death. In January, 1916, her husband passed away, leaving her a widow to struggle against the odds of life, often in destitution and poverty to hold her children together, and toil for their support.

On September 13, 1941, she professed a hope in Christ, and united with the Providence Old School Baptist Church, of Putnam County, West Va., and was baptized the same day by the unworthy writer. Sister McCallister was faithful in her attendance of the church, and her high joy was in the house of the Lord in humble worship. Her convictions were deep seated; her hope was grounded in the finished work of Jesus; in the doctrine of salvation alone by the grace of God; in atonement for sins in the blood and in the imputed righteousness of Christ. She was blessed with virtues, a quiet unassuming manner, a well bridled tongue, charitable, and of a forgiving spirit. Well do I remember her willingness to be spent in behalf of others.

She quietly departed this life August 8, 1956, after a lingering illness. In her passing the church has sustained a great loss, and, as her pastor, I greatly feel this loss, yet we grieve not as those who have no hope. It is our conviction that she fell asleep in Jesus, therefore for her to die was gain.

She leaves to mourn: two sons, Clyde, of St. Albans, W. Va. and John, of South Charleston, W. Va.; Two daughters: Mrs. Thala Blankenship, of Edmite, W. Va. and Mrs. Mary Bowles, of Little Valley, N. Y.; also 33 grandchildren, and 33 great grandchildren; two sisters: Mrs. Rhoda Johnson, Hurricane, W. Va., and Mrs. Rosa Spurlock, South Charleston, W. Va.; and one brother, Creed Bird, Hurricane, W. Va. Her funeral was conducted by the writer, and she was laid to rest in the Bird Cemetery, to await the Heavenly Master's call. May God comfort the mouring ones.

Elder H. J. Bird

Editors of the Signs:

It has been the good pleasure of our God to remove from our church at Soldier Creek, five members, elderly ones, who had lived their lives in the fellowship of the church, and with the believers in Christ Jesus for their salvation and rest eternal.

The church agreed to write these resolutions of respect in their memory, and send them to the Signs for publication. The paper has been a welcome one in all their homes.

In hope,
Effie Bowden

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It has pleased God the Father to remove from our midst our aged sister, Rebecca Gregory (on February 26, 1958), from suffering here, to rest eternal, as we hope; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Soldier Creek Old School Baptist Church, bow in humble submission to the will of our God, believing that our loss is her gain; and that her family's loss is gain to this wonderful sister, after this life of suffering.

RESOLVED, That we send a copy to her son and family, in whose home she passed away; and place a copy on our church book; and send a copy to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

also

WHEREAS, It pleased our Father to call home from the walks of this life, our oldest member of Soldier Creek Church, Aunt Emma Lou Mathis, on Christmas eve, 1956; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we desire to thank God for the life she lived among us, and for her fellowship in the truth; and

BE IT RESOLVED, That we send a copy of this Resolution to her daughter, Meta McPherson, Owenton, Ky.; and place a copy in our church book; and send a copy to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

also

WHEREAS, It has pleased the Heavenly Father to remove from us our brother, S. J. Rudd, age 84, on April 12, 1958, who was a faithful member for many years, though in declining health and through many adverse circumstances; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow to the will of God in his pleasure to carry him away from sufferings and sorrows of this life, to a rest eternal; and

RESOLVED, That we send a copy of this Resolution to his family in the person of his brother; and place a copy in our church book; and send a copy to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

also

WHEREAS, It pleased God to remove from us our brother T. S. Chester, on August 17, 1957; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow as humbly as we have ever learned to the will of our God, in removing this our brother and long time deacon; and desiring to be reconciled to this thought, that God will, according as it pleased him, raise up others if needs be, to aid us as this brother so willingly did; and

RESOLVED, That we send a copy of this Resolution to his family in the person of his son; and place a copy on our church book; and send a copy to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of the church, the 2nd Sunday in April, 1958.

also

WHEREAS, It has pleased our Father in Heaven to remove from our midst our brother and deacon at Soldier Creek, G. L. Hamilton, who passed away December 29, 1957; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in submission to the will of our Father, hoping that in Him we will receive strength to say, "God's will be done, not ours." And be it further

RESOLVED, That we extend our sympathy to his bereaved family, believing that God will reconcile them to his will; and

RESOLVED, That we send a copy to the family; and place a copy in our church book; and send a copy to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

MRS. NANNIE GRIFFITH

Mrs. Nannie Dameron Griffith, born March 3, 1872, the daughter of the late Elder James A. Dameron and his wife, Kate Elizabeth Roberts Dameron, died February 6, 1958 — age 85 years, 11 months and 3 days.

To this union of Elder and Sister Dameron were born six children, four sons and two daughters, and with the passing of sister Griffith only one survivor, Sister Kate Mitchell of Reidsville Church. While it was not our privilege to know two of the sons, John Henry and Drury Washington, we have known well and for many years James W. and Samuel B. Dameron and the daughters, Sister Nannie Griffith of Lickfork, one of the mother churches of the Upper County Line Primitive Baptist Association and a Church her dear father Elder James S. Dameron served many years as Pastor 1875-1900, and her mother too was one of the faithful attendants there and the memory of "Mr. Jim" and "Mr. Sam" is most sweet. Sister Nannie Griffith was the oldest member of Lickford Church at the time of her death and seemed to belong to a galaxy of older members like Sisters Bettie Stacey, Kate Hooper, and Mary V. Saunders and others, the fragrance of whose lives still linger to sweeten the lives of others.

Sister Nannie Dameron was married to Mr. Harry L. Griffith of Ruffin, N. C. on October 4, 1904, who died July, 1944, and to this union was born four children, one son, H. L. Griffith of Ruffin, N. C. and two daughters, Mrs. Charles M. Freeman of Charlotte and Dr. Mary I. Griffith, of Winston-Salem, N. C., and Katherine, deceased.

Sister Nannie Griffith joined the Church at Lickfork at her December meeting 1912, when she was received subject to baptism, and her Pastor Elder O. J. Denny, baptized her at the May Meeting 1913.

We could hardly say too much concerning this lovely and greatly beloved sister, Lickfork Church like one's own home, seemed to be among those places nearest to her heart. Her heart was so full of love and good will and sisterly kindness to every one she was an inspiration to all. She loved her meetings and her faithfulness and zeal seemed to be of that kind that was according to wisdom. She was too gracious to be unkind and her love for her brethren and sisters was such, as would hide a multitude of faults. She delighted in serving others who needed a helping hand, but she was too modest to let others know it. She looked over her brethren and sisters for good and not evil. Lickfork Church sustained a great loss in the passing of this dear Sister in Christ, but we know this world was not her home, and although the dear Lord gave her to her Church and to her dear family and friends for many years, the time seemed far too short. She, like many of the dear people of God, had her afflictions in her last days, but they seemed only to make her sweeter and lovelier in spirit.

The greater part of the last three or four years of her life was spent in the tender and loving care of her daughter, Dr. Mary I. Griffith, of the Baptist Hospital, Winston-Salem, N. C.

Mother Griffith was so sweet to all and every one loved her and the God in whom she trusted and walked by faith in him, provided all the good things for her.

After a short service in Winston, her body was brought to Ruffin, N. C., where she was known and loved by all, and where her body was soon to rest beside her husband in a newly made grave. There to await the voice of the Arch Angel and the trump of God. Her funeral was conducted by her former pastor Elder J. W. Gilliam, in the presence of a host of sorrowing brethren and sisters, and friends.

Written by the request of Lickfork Church.

Elder J. W. Gilliam
Charles L. Saunders, Church Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 126 DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1958 NO. 11

LETTER FROM ELDER SLAUSON

46 Cedar Street,
Kingston, N. Y.

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

Just a few lines to express to you our association (the Lexington - Roxbury). We were so glad that you and the other brethren from so far away, were given the mind to come and be with us poor few back up here in the mountains; though I lost out on a lot of it, not being able to be with you dear brethren at Sister Peet's home in the evening, and not being able to have my sick companion with me for the Thursday meeting. I could hardly keep the tears back all day, having to stay away and not being with my brethren, whom I love so much. I felt that I was made to realize more than ever how much I love my brethren and kindred in Christ.

There are such a few of us up here, and we so scattered over so many miles, and we see brethren come so many miles, as some of you people did, to meet with us, I want you to know that words fail me to tell you how very much I appreciate it; and desire to thank the blessed Lord for giving you love enough for us few, to take the time and effort to come so many miles to meet with us, that we could have the blessed Gospel of the Son of God preached once more among us, with the demonstration of the Spirit and the power of God. Our people up here have such a poor, weak gift as I am to go in and out among them, I feel such meetings are needed, and profitable for the little ones. It is as showers upon the grass, and as water upon the tender plants.

Those who were at the second day of the meeting, report very good preaching; and even though the weather was dark and gloomy on the outside, we feel the Son of Righteousness was shining in the hearts of the Lord's servants. Also that the seed sown, some of it fell on good ground, and brought forth a growth as it gave new courage and added strength to the feeble knees, and lifted up the hands that hang down; as the pure minds were stirred up in the way of remembrance of the things they have tasted and handled of the word of life; and as their souls were fed of the pure manna from the throne of God and the Lamb, so it became as the light of another day, or morning in their souls. We feel that many of them can go on the strength of this meat for many days.

It sure was good to me to hear preaching from others, or a voice other than my own; which has not been my privilege much of late. I feel it very much that it is well in the evening of time in my life, and that I have been such an unprofitable servant, if one at all. But I crave a place in the hearts of the Lord's people, equal to the place they have in mine, if they can bear with me.

Sister Slauson is just about the same as she was at association time. Will not ask for more of your valuable time for my scribbling, so will close.

With much love from both of us.

A. J. Slauson

(We have been highly favored of the Lord to meet with the brethren in three associations so far this year: the Pigg River, the Delaware, and the Lexington-Roxbury (which is mentioned by Bro. Slauson above). To us the meetings were outstanding in the love and fellowship manifested; and the preaching was in power and demonstration of the Spirit; and in doctrine, the voice of one man.

Several have written or spoken their enjoyment of these meetings.

In reflecting on the preaching and the fellowship we enjoyed, something says within, The Lord has not forgotten or forsaken is people. We rejoice to have an humble place with them. Sister Wood and I were accompanied by Sister Carter, of Roanoke, and Miss Clara Stuart, of Northbrook, Pa. to the Lexington-Roxboro meeting.

We regret that Sister Slauson remains very ill. May they be comforted in the assurance that His grace is sufficient; and that He does not leave nor forsake his little ones. — J. D. W.)

EXPERIENCE

112 Exum St.
Durham, N. C.

Dear Children of God:

If it be the will of the Lord, I shall endeavor to tell what I hope to be the dealings of the Lord with me. When I was a child oftimes I would have thoughts of what would become of me when I should die. I was very naughty at times and disobedient as other children are, and people would tell me if I didn't do better the "old bad boy" would get me. This lay on my mind. As I grew older it seems that I became entangled with the ways of this world, and for a space of time did not think of the Lord. Then after a while I began to meditate and promise that if he would forgive me for what I had done, I would do better, but they were all false promises. I got to the place I would not attend church with my mother, so she would go to church alone. However, one night when she came home from church she told me that she had joined the church. Instead of being pleased I was troubled, for she told me that they asked her to talk to the church. I felt that if the Lord were in the matter He would send her without persuasion. When I retired that night I tried in my weakness to ask the Lord to show me whether it was His will for her to join the church or not. There came a calm feeling upon me. Something seemed to speak in my heart and say, "Go to sleep. You will be shown." In my dream mother and I were out looking for the rainbow. It seemed that a terrible storm had passed over. I saw the lightning as it was going farther away. I saw written in the clouds these words: "Come in, ye blessed of the Lord, for as the lightning shineth in the east and is seen even in the west, likewise you arise and be baptized straightway." So I awoke. My feelings were changed about my mother's baptism. I saw her baptized and thought it was as pretty a baptism as I had ever seen. Dear ones in the Lord, my troubles had just then begun. It seemed to me that I could enjoy nothing anymore of the world.

Christmas had just passed and I had lots of toys, but I gathered them all to be put away, not feeling that I should ever care for those things again. I told my sister, who was younger than I, that she could play with them if she liked. From then on I would ask Mother all kind of serious questions concerning God and she didn't know what to tell me. I went on in this way until one night I dreamed that Mother and I were out in our back yard. It seemed to me that the grass was mowed evenly and beautifully. All kinds of trees were on the lawn. I lay down on this grass, put my hands back of my head, and looked upward. I saw the Lord's face come from out of the cloud. I saw that His eyes were love; I saw what I might have had — but I thought for me it was everlastingly too late. My mother was standing by my side and I saw her ascend to the clouds where He was; then His face disappeared. It was then that I began to try to pray for the rocks and the mountains to fall upon me. However, in my sleep that night this dream came back to me the second time. I saw Mother but she was not in the flesh; she was a bright shining angel. I asked her did Jesus love me. She moved her head slowly as though to say, "No." I almost lost my breath but it came to my mind that my

faith was not strong enough — also the Scripture which says, "Without faith it is impossible to please God." I awoke. Again this dream came to me the third time, and I saw Mother still in the spirit; and I saw one of the members of Durham Primitive Baptist Church. They were sitting side by side. I was standing up in the middle of the floor telling how great things the Lord had done for me and trying to explain the eternal fire with which I believed the world would be destroyed. So I awoke. I was feeling no better. There was nothing in this world that I knew of for enjoyment and I was not satisfied, for I was afraid the Lord did not love me. I went on in this way for a time, and I had another dream. In this dream Mother and I went to town and went into a store. For some cause I came out of the store. I looked up and there was the Lord right before me. This time I saw His shoulders, long arms and large hands. I remembered that I had seen His face before in a dream but this was no dream. He held his arms out to me as though he would take me, smiled, gave me a nod of His head and disappeared.

Dear children of God, when I awoke on that memorable morning I was in another world. It seemed the birds, and things that had no breath even, were praising God. I, too, was endeavoring in my heart to praise his holy name, feeling at that time I would never have any more troubles. However, I have been in despondency oftimes since then.

In hope,
W. A. Reaves

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Pleasant Valley Association of Predestinarian Primitive Baptists in session with Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, August 22, 23, and 24, 1958, sends Christian greetings to the churches with which we correspond, and to all who are in fellowship with us;

Dear Brethren:

While we are few in number, we have the assurance that God is still mindful of us. Jesus said, "Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Through the tender mercy of our God, we still continue to meet.

In Matthew, first chapter, 20 and 21st verses, an angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph, saying, "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." Brethren, who are these people whom Jesus came to save? They are those that the Father gave the Son; for Jesus said in St. John, "As thou has given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."

We are told in Romans, "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." We know that God sent his only begotten Son to this earth of sin and sorrow, to fulfill the law to a jot and tittle; and to shed his precious blood upon the cross of Calvary to redeem his people from their sins. We believe that in due time each of these chosen vessels will be born of the Spirit of God; for in St. John, Jesus answered and said unto him, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. Marvel not that I say unto you, ye must be born again."

We find in the 6th and 7th verses of the 40th chapter of Isaiah, "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass."

Yes, don't we believe that when the Spirit of God blows upon one of his

little ones, it causes the flesh to wither, and our self-righteousness to fade away, leaving us to realize that in our flesh dwelleth no good thing; and we sink into that pit of sin and corruption until all hope has vanished, leaving us in the hands of an all-powerful God? We are made to cry out, "O wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from the body of this death." and, "O God, have mercy upon me a sinner."

As the Scriptures are searched to try to find some relief from the pit of sin and corruption, we find in St. Matthew where Jesus said, "For I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." And do we not all feel that we are the chief of all sinners? In St. Luke, Jesus said, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost." Do we not believe then that when the Spirit of God has blown upon us, and we have been born of the Spirit, God starts us on that road — the only road that leads to heaven; but a road with many rough and dark places, with many sharp turns and steep hills? Do we not believe that this is the same road the Apostle Paul was traveling when he said in Hebrews, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." But we have the sweet assurance, as recorded in Samuel, that the Lord will not forsake his people.

David said in the 23rd Psalm, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." We have a hope of being one of these sheep that are being led this only road that leads to heaven by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, being stripped of all our self-righteousness, but hungering and thirsting for righteousness, and not being able to find one good thing in ourselves. Could these be the same sheep that Jesus was talking about in his Sermon on the Mount, when He said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."?

Does a person who has never been stripped of his self-righteousness, hunger and thirst, or mourn, or is poor in spirit? I believe that the brethren attending this association were hungering and thirsting for that righteousness which comes only from God. In 1 John 3:14, we read, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." If not deceived, that love has flown from breast to breast among the brethren during this association. Our preachers have been blessed to preach grace, and grace alone, for the salvation of His people. And we feel that we have been greatly blessed with the privilege of meeting here with Mt. Zion Church in an association.

We have received your letters and messengers, and have had much joy in their company and communion. We are closing the twelfth annual session of the Pleasant Valley Association in peace and order. The Lord willing, our next association will be held with Pilgrim Rest Church, Lawn, Texas, Friday before the 4th Sunday in August, 1959.

Elder C. M. Haygood, Moderator
Elder E. B. Ault, Clerk

(Written by Brother Joe L. Hamrick, who's experience was published recently in the Signs.)

Dear Brother and Sister Croker:

I have you folks on my mind this morning; and was with you in mind on Sunday, but absent in body. If the Lord would just bless me enough to be able to go to our little church every meeting day, I would not ask for more; for, to me, that little church is a heaven below. I do love every one of the members so much.

No one knows why I have to be afflicted so, but I'm sure God has a purpose in it, and it is serving the very purpose that he purposed in himself before the world was ever spoken into

existance; and all of it is for the honor and glory of God. I believe that I have been made to see that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are the called according to his purpose. And he said, "I leave with you an afflicted and poor people"; and every word he spoke, he will bring it to pass, for he is God and beside him there is no God. None can stay his hand, or question him as to why he does these things. All power in heavne and earth belongs to him, and there are no powers that be, except the powers that are ordained of God. In him we live, move, and have our being. Jesus said that I of myself can do nothing; my Father that is in me he doeth the works. Every good and perfect gift comes down from the Father of lights, in whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning.

I feel to be one of the least of his creation: so helpless, so dependent upon him for everything. In all my pain and anguish, He has never forsaken me; but I have been made to feel sometimes that he was clean gone forever — but after awhile I had to say the Lord was in this place but I did not know it at the time. I think this must be the back part of him that we see, just as Moses did when God hid himself in the cleft of the Rock. I only hope that he has hidden me in the cleft of the rock, and that Rock to me means Jesus Christ. He being the chief corner stone; and a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious. Those that have tasted that the Lord is gracious, can truly say:

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear;
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fears."

May the Lord keep us from doing things to be seen of men, but rather let it be the hidden man of the heart in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of God, of great price. I think I have seen this quiet, humble spirit manifested in you every since I have known you.

I will tell you a little about myself. I just can't seem to get any better. My doctor came out yesterday and put traction on my head. I sit in a chair and the traction pulls up on my spine. He said it would take another major operation on my back to do any good; and they don't think I could stand it.

I will close, hoping to hear from you soon. Give my love to Brother and Sister Ragsdale — hope to see them soon. Remember me in prayer. A very unworthy sister, if one at all.

Georgia McGinnis

"But the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord: He is their strength in the time of trouble. And the Lord shall help them, and deliver them: He shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in Him." (Psalms 37:39-40)

As we think of our salvation, and at the same time viewing ourselves in nature and seeing our righteousness as filthy rags, we are made to wonder if the subject above where it says, "The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord", can be applied to us.

The chosen or elect people of God, I believe, have an experience in this world, that is, an experience of God's dealings with them in manifesting himself to them in the Spirit, that they might know the power of God unto salvation, which is the gospel. As the gospel was set forth in the Old Testament, as well as the new, we want to call your attention to Isaiah 54:17, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." I believe that when one has been born of the spirit he is made a new creature in Christ Jesus and then is in possession of the things of the spirit; and as Paul said, "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the

spirit, if so be the spirit of God dwells in you."

Now all that have been made to believe the truth I am sure you will find them interested in God's word concerning their salvation. They are in possession of something they had not, while in the flesh. First, the knowledge of God — or understanding, his power, love, salvation and righteousness toward his people. Then the question arises, "Am I one of his people?" I am afraid if this question did not arise, which makes one to hope, we could not fellowship Paul's writing, "For we are saved by hope". I am sure I can say for you all, there is nothing in existence that you would exchange for your hope. Praise the Lord for this hope, — "For of him, through him and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever and ever, amen."

Now as we hope our righteousness is of the Lord, and we have been born of the spirit, let us continue to wait upon the Lord for a little evidence here and there, now and then, that we can apply the word in the subject, "But the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord," to our salvation.

We now desire to call your attention to the above portion of the subject. In Luke's gospel 25:44-45 — it is recorded as follows: "And he said unto them, these are the words which I spoke unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures." In the fulfillment of what was written of him, I believe the chosen or elect people have access to the throne of grace and the knowledge of their salvation by the grace of God. First, we refer you to scripture, Genesis 22:18, "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." As we think of the seed, being Christ, we fully believe the blessing of being born again and having the knowledge of our salvation by the grace of God, came in the fulfillment of what was written in the law of Moses. Again, as the prophets prophesied the coming of Christ in the gospel age to make known unto his people their way of salvation, we believe it to be that way and hope we have heard with our ears, seen with our eyes and have an understanding heart, of the word of life, and thereby are made to rejoice as one in Christ Jesus: realizing that he is our strength in the time of trouble, as is quoted in the last part of the first verse of our subject.

The second verse of the subject is, of course, also prophesy that was to be fulfilled in the gospel age, or at the end of the law, by which Israel was condemned. For the law entered that the offence might abound but where sin abounded grace did much more abound. So then in the last verse of the subject, we find the results of the fulfillment of the things that were written of our Saviour. First, because our help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth, that we are delivered from the wicked, and are saved because we are made to trust in Him, as there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

Now that the things which were written of our Saviour have been fulfilled, we find in the earth those that have been quickened, enlightened and reconciled to God's ways, for which they are glad, and are made to rejoice in the land as a people saved by grace.

We might here remind you of the 34th verse of Psalms 37: "Wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: When the wicked are cut off thou shalt see it." I believe the wicked must first be cut off before we will ever wait on the Lord and keep his ways. When the wicked are cut off then we sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb saying, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints." I hope we can say we have seen this, and have been led in paths of righteousness for his

name sake.

We have tried to write our thoughts upon this subject, as we hope God directed them. Last Sunday we used the two first verses of the same Psalm for our subject. We desire now to call your attention to all in between the two subjects, and ask you to read it with one thing in mind, that is, to note how that the Holy Ghost moved the writer to present to the people of God in this age their salvation in a shadow. It seems to me as we read, that we are reminded of the time we were under the law and robbing God of the glory that belonged to him, for the way of salvation. It also reminds us of the destroying of the old man, or the wicked one, as we often say, passing from death unto life.

I might now call your attention to the 17th and 18th verses. "For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but the Lord upholdeth the righteous. The Lord knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be for ever." There is a thought brought out by the arms of the wicked being broken, which to us means we can no longer do for ourselves, but must look unto the Lord to uphold us, or we perish; and at such a time as we are given the word of our inheritance through Jesus Christ our Lord, we are made to rejoice. It is also said such an inheritance shall be for ever, and they shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

I wish to say in closing that I believe everyone that God has dealt with, in cutting off the evil doers and drawing them to Christ, have been given to love the word of God, for it confirms their experience in God's dealings with them in their salvation. In this experience they are made meek; and as the 11th verse says, "The meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." May such peace reign in our midst, is my prayer.

Amen.

H. M. Bennett

Athens, Texas

Dear Brethren Editors:

Our subscription is due, so we are enclosing check for two more years. We heartily agree with many other readers of the Signs that it appears the paper is growing with the age; or rather improving with its general contents each month: graciously holding steadfastly to the doctrine and principles upon which the paper was founded more than an hundred twenty-six years ago. Especially do we appreciate the articles appearing under "Voices of the Past" ("He being dead yet speaketh"). The elders at present connected with the paper continue to bring forth these beautiful truths in some little different language, but in no way improving on the fundamentals of the doctrine, order, and fellowship of the church; in fact, a very definite sound, and concurrence appears to characterize the unity of our present day writers with those of yesteryear.

May we briefly notice the short announcement in a late issue of the Signs, calling attention that due to the many announcements, obituaries, etc., as well as general writings, which come to your files, asking brethren to be patient in seeing their writings delayed, that they will appear in line with those on file, and in their turn. I believe we speak for the great majority who contribute in any way to the paper, that we are indeed happy to leave this matter entirely with the Editors; as evidently they are well equipped and capable in their line of endeavor. So long as they continue to issue out to us in this form the "Bread of Life", no criticism is due, or offered.

Permit us also to say, having noticed the removal of Elder Griffin from among our southern churches, to Maryland, that we brethren in the south will miss him in our associations very much; but feel that his decision to make his home among our northern brethren, is of the Lord. May his labors among them be fruitful, to the edifying of the saints,

and to the glory of God, is our humble prayer.

Yours in precious fellowship, and in hope of immortality.

(Elder) L. D. Rose

BOOKS

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MARRIAGE

By Elder W. D. Griffin at Southampton Old School Baptist Church, on Saturday, August 23, 1958, Mr. Julius Elko, Jr., and Miss Norma Linthicum, both of Philadelphia.

MEETING AT LONDON TRACT

Elder W. D. Griffin will preach, the Lord willing, at **London Tract Meeting House,** the second Sunday afternoon, November 9th, at 2:30 P. M. He will also be at **Welsh Tract** at 10:30 A. M. the same day.

All brethren and interested friends are cordially invited to attend.

J. D. W.

COPY OF HISTORY WANTED

We have a request for a copy of the History of Mt. Olive Old School Baptist Church, Philippi, W. Va. Anyone having a copy please write Sister Elsie Loeffel, 1158 Falls Terrace, Union, N. J. — J. D. W.

REQUEST

Will any reader of the Signs that has any information pertaining to the church at Messongoes, near Oak Hall, Maryland, please communicate with me?

W. D. Griffin
511 Kent Avenue
Catonsville 28, Md.

Danville, Virginia **November, 1958**

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A WORD FROM ELDER BENNETT

Dear Readers of the Signs:

I want to thank you all for remembering my wife and me during my illness, with cards, letters, and other ways.

I am home now, and hope to see all my church people and friends as soon as I am equal to it.

Yours in hope,
H. M. Bennett

EDITORIAL

I CORINTHIANS 15:57, 58

"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Once and a while I think that surely no one will question the doctrine of our people any more. Beginning with the apostles and continuing to the present

time, we have been defending the articles of faith of the church of Jesus Christ. So far it has not all been told. As often as it is defended, there will be new onslaughts against it. In the travel of the church, enemies have often brought their weapons to bear against the citadel of truth. As often as they have come, they have been vanquished, but a new horde will arise, storming again and again the impregnable bulwarks of Zion. Zion, the city of our God, is impregnable to the attacks of her enemies because God has placed many towers around about her, each having a watchman in the tower (Psa. 48:12; Isa. 62:6).

As I am blessed of the Lord, I will deal with the text under four heads, to wit:

1st. The victory.
2nd. Its source.
3rd. Our work.
4th. The result.

It seems strange that anything be said about this phase of the text. Yet, it is the most denied by the greatest portion of the religious world. The flesh profiteth nothing, and still it gains the victory; we are not able to do anything without Jesus, and still we can get the victory; he works in us to do his will, and yet our will is active in accomplishing the will of God. I do wish that it was not necessary to be comparing false doctrine with the truth, but if you have a mind to look for yourself it can be readily seen that the truth and falsehood are locked in mortal combat here. God has given us the victory in one sense of the word already. The first fruits of the victory was gained when Jesus was raised from the dead. The fact that Jesus was raised proves conclusively the resurrection of the dead. I do not have any other proof than that; I do not need any other. If Jesus arose from the dead, then there is a resurrection of the dead. If he did not arise from the dead, then there is not any resurrection of the dead. The outcome, in one sense of the word, was questionable to his people until Jesus arose.

When the followers of Jesus turned from the grave and started home, it is certain that there was not any sign or hope of victory. They had lost everything. If, in the history of the church of God, the conflict had been lost, it surely was here. I want to know if there was any hope in that sorrowing group of people. I do not know who will read this, but who ever does, it is sent to you. This question is asked you. Did they have any hope of victory as they turned towards home? Did the two have any as they walked towards Emmaus? Did Mary have any as she made the inquiry as to where he had been laid? Did they have any hope as they journeyed towards the tomb to anoint the body? Go with me a little further: Were any unnoticed, unsought, covered, clues to victory around? I hope that I will never need to ask this question again. Will any one come forward and tell me the source of any hope or sign of victory in the family of God? Do not crowd, take plenty of time, hunt as long as you please, but tell me the source of any hope or sign of victory among the Lord's people.

The enemies were all engaged in preventing victory. While the Lord's people were all sorrowing because of the loss of everything, the enemies were all engaged in seeing that they never win. I want to know the name of the enemy that **decided** after Jesus was dead, that he needed to turn over a new leaf and help the cause of Christ. If one enemy did this it will silence me forever about salvation being by grace. If there was one of the followers of Jesus that stayed behind and had a part in the resurrection, I want to know it. Now we have **all** of the enemies trying to prevent the victory, and we have **all** of the followers that had already conceded the loss of victory.

What do we find? O, dear brethren and sisters, what a glorious wonder in Zion. All of those engaged in destruction were as dead men at the gaining of victory; all of those that had lost everything were at home or at least

away from the place. Who gave the victory here? God gave the victory here. If there is not to be a victory like this for us, why was one given to the first born among many brethren? If there is a victory over death and the grave for the Son of Man, and there is not an equal victory for his brethren, how will we be conformed to Him? God gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The victory is ours; the source is the Lord. We are given this victory, and it comes through Jesus Christ. We are the recipients of his work; we are given the victory through Him who is our victory. Do you wonder why Old Baptists talk about Jesus so much? Do you wonder at them sitting up long hours and speaking to one another about the tender care of the Lord for his people? They have one reason for doing this. They are thankful to the same one that Paul and the church at Corinth was. But God be thanked not only for bringing forth Jesus from the tomb, but for having given all power into his hands in such a wonderful way that all the victory we will ever know proceeds from and through our Lord Jesus Christ.

I want now to go into our work as the beloved brethren whom Paul is addressing. I want to notice the kind of brethren it is doing this work. I want to notice again the word "therefore" although I know the most of my readers know more about the force of the word than I do. If the victory came through the followers of Jesus, then, but only then, does the work come through them. Now let us put our first stake there for we will want to use this as a rallying place again and again. However, I trust that I love the doctrine that is as safe at one end as the other, as good in the middle as at either end. Not only do I want a doctrine that insures me getting there, but I want it to be so good that it will keep unbelievers away. The one that gives the victory not only became the victory for all his people, but he as successfully non-plussed all the enemies. Only in this way did the apostle have the right to use the word "therefore" and only upon the basis of this kind of a foundation could he admonish them to stedfastness and unmoveableness.

The meaning of these two words suits some Old Baptists right well. There is not any way to make them mean other than being absolutely still and in one place. Their meaning and the command to be abounding in the work of the Lord, lends force to the paradoxical and mystical understanding (or misunderstanding) of the religion of Jesus Christ. How can one be stedfast and unmoveable and abounding at the same time? In connection with this let us look a little further at some paradoxes. The Lord found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness and in a desert land; we must cease from our labors and then labor to enter the rest that remains for the Lord's people; we must bear about the dying of the Lord that his life be made manifest in us. These things are true as they can be, but I want to call attention to this thought, to wit, both are true. Splitting off that which does not suit me will not speak well for me as a servant of Jesus Christ.

I want to be stedfast and I want to be unmoveable. I want to be that way because of the victory that is mine through Jesus Christ. I do not want to be stedfast nor unmoveable in order to get the victory any more than I want to abound in the work of the Lord to get it. The victory is ours through him, and having the victory, we are to be stedfast and unmoveable. The victory over the devil gives us the settled condition that makes for stedfastness. Only the Lord can make a sinner settled and grounded in the truth. Settling and grounding will make a post stedfast in the earth, and settling and grounding in Jesus Christ will make a stedfast and unmoveable watchman in Zion.

From this stedfast position a beloved brother will abound out into the field of service. This abounding is to be done by he who is stedfast and unmoveable. These servants are specialists in the

kingdom of heaven. They have been given the victory of the resurrection of Christ. That victory has established them in the doctrine of God our Saviour. Before this victory was given them, they walked toward Emmaus, they had lost all, they were without a Daysman, they had lost their stability. But what wonders it done for them when the victory was given them. Now he that had denied him could stand up in the face of all and declare that the whole mob had been gathered together to do whatsoever his hand and counsel determined before to be done; he that said he would not believe without putting his hand in the nail holes, is immediately a believer when Jesus appeared.

From this stedfast and unmoveable position the servant of Jesus Christ goes forth to service. The abounding does not do away with the stedfastness. The more he abounds the more it is Christ and grace in him. He never gets the abounding before the stedfastness. That person has not seen the beauty of the text that does not see the abounding in the work of the Lord. That person that has not seen as well as felt the necessity for stedfastness and unmoveableness first, has likewise missed the beauty.

What is the work of the Lord? I want you to notice that Paul is admonishing us to abound in the work of the Lord. The abounding is in the Lord's work. What gives us the abound? It is the Lord's work. It is not that we are doing the Lord's work just here. Our abounding is in his work. We are zealous because of his work in gaining the victory; one to whom the victory has been given is stedfast and unmoveable in the glory of Jesus Christ. Regardless of what is brought to bear in the way of false doctrine, they continue stedfast and unmoveable. They abound in the work of the Lord. They meet together often, confessing their faults; they go far and near to meet the Lord's people. The work of abounding grace has set them in motion in the service of the Lord. It being inexhaustible, the abounding power of it moves the beloved brethren onward in the work of the Lord.

This abounding in the Lord's work will show in their works. The things that Jesus did will become theirs to do. He laid down his life for the brethren, and the brethren will lay down theirs for the brethren; He forgave us all and the brethren will be forgiving towards one another; He was kind towards his people and the brethren will be kind hearted towards one another; He went many long journeys to see some one of his little ones, and the brethren will go a long ways to see one of his chosen lambs; he sought the wandering, the lost, the weak, the poor, the blind, the halt, and the brethren will be looking for that kind too; He gave the Gentile woman's daughter to be whole, although she was a dog to the Jews; He gave water to the Samaritan woman although the Jews had no dealings with them, and the brethren will be just as ready to go anywhere for the sake of a child that has wandered into Babylon. However, in the same way that He did it, they will do it. He did not go to any save those that were His, and neither will we. He did not have anything to do with the Gentile congregation; He did not have anything to do with the Samaritan congregation. If we go and partake with one and all we may be doing a good deal of abounding but it is not in the work of the Lord.

This work of the Lord are those things that he taught and did while here in the world. In short, they are nothing more nor less than good works. The laboring in the Lord is after the abounding in the work of the Lord. I may not be able to get it across to you, but to me there is a lot of difference in abounding in the work of the Lord and our laboring in the kingdom. There is not any laboring until the abounding in the work of the Lord. After having been made stedfast and unmoveable by the victory which Jesus gives, then grace abounds in us and we abound by

grace, and thus we begin to labor in the Lord.

This laboring in the Lord is effectual. It is not in vain. I will get all of my preaching done. Bad health and afflictions and death will not cut it short; I will preach in every place that I have the victory for. The victory gives us the right. If we get negligent and careless we did not have the victory to begin with. If Satan gives us trouble and we are not allowed to preach one of the sermons, then Jesus did not win the victory.

We have the victory gained in the outset, and given to us. It is such a victory that gives us stedfastness, makes us unmoveable, causes us to abound and joy and glory in the work of the Lord and so fills us with delight that we are willing to labor in his kingdom, being assured that it will not be in vain.

W. D. G.

GALATIANS 4:1-7

Now I say, that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: but when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."

Many can appreciate the beauty of scriptural language, but how much more wonderful it is to have evidence that the things written were written to us personally — that they belong to us just as truly as they did to those whom the writers addressed in their day and time.

Those who belong to the one family of God have an intimate and vital interest in the things spoken by the Spirit of God. These are family matters, and are so written as to confirm the secrets carried in the hearts of each member; for, without question, God directed all the scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, at the hands of his holy men of old; and has preserved them for the comfort and instruction of his people. The knowledge of the truth comes to them by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit; and, as they are given to understand the scriptures, it is like receiving news from home: "As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country." (Proverbs 25:25) These matters are so intimate that none outside of the family can know the real import of them.

In the text, the Apostle is illustrating by a natural truth, easily understood, the way in which God is pleased to bring his own children from bondage to freedom — from servants under sin and condemnation, to their standing as a son. The first two verses scarcely need any comment. In our own families the same circumstances prevail; in which our children, or heirs, are under our parential care and instruction until they become of age. (How important that each parent be mindful of his obligation in this respect; yet which is so sadly neglected in many cases.)

There is an analogy between the children of natural parents and the children of God; yet with the children of God the analogy comes short. It is evident that we have no children until they are born to us; then they are manifested as being our children. (We believe that in the wisdom and purpose of God, each natural child will be born into the world who was included in his purpose — no more, and no less; yet they are not our children — and we know not the number we shall have, until they are born to us.) But God knows all of his children before they are manifested in birth (spiritual); and he certainly knows them before it is discovered to

each of them that they are God's children — while they are still under bondage of the elements of the world. And he blesses them according as he has chosen them in Christ before the foundation of the world, and has predestinated them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself. (Ephesians 1:3-5) Thus the wisdom of God concerning his children is not to be compared with ours towards our children.

Those who know the secrets of this family rejoice in the ancient wisdom and love of their Father. They are not concerned at the taunts and criticisms of others. What their Father has revealed of himself, and of his love towards them, they hold dear; and consider far better and more precious than the things which seem right to men.

Those who are afterwards manifested as the children of God, are born, of course, as natural children of Adam. They have all the characteristics of Adam's children; and, as are all of Adam's children, dead in trespasses and sins. They walk according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom they have their conversation in the lusts of their flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and by nature are the children of wrath, even as others. (Ephesians 2:2, 3) In this condition, it is evident, that they differ nothing from their natural kinsmen; and would, of right, remain that way: under the sentence of death and condemnation. Yet, because they were beloved of God, it was determined by him that they should be delivered from that sentence, and should be manifested as the redeemed of the Lord.

The manner of this accomplishment is revealed in the Scriptures, and experienced by each one of them. It is not accomplished in such a way as those outside of the family have mistakenly devised to bring themselves into the family; which devise is an utter failure. We must remember that the promise of God unto Abraham, and his seed, was before the law was given. When God gave the law, it was not a law unto life; but, rather, unto condemnation, that all should stand condemned. It was added because of transgressions. If a law had been given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. (Galations 3:21) The promises of God stand above and beyond the law. Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness; and they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. These children of Abraham (spiritual) are they unto whom the inheritance is promised; and though they are shut up under the law until faith is given them, their's is a sure inheritance, because it is ordained in the hands of a Mediator.

What, therefore, is the purpose of the law? Paul had just written the Galatians in the 3rd chapter: "But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed." He also wrote, "When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." Died to what? surely unto trusting in the works of the flesh under the law as a means of being justified before God. He describes the law, a schoolmaster unto Christ. And it is just this unto the family of God as long as they are "children". (3rd verse)

They are shut up under the law, travailing to be delivered. When the holiness, and justness, and goodness of the law is held up before them, their sins and iniquities are cast about them as the waves of the raging seas: their righteousness, which they have been trying to produce, are as filthy rags. "The soul that sins shall die." And they are brought face to face with the awful fact of their condemnation in the sight of God. Thus the law brings condemnation; not righteousness. This is the being under bondage of the elements of the world; and it continues until the fulness of time has come (in each one's life and experience), when God is

pleased to send forth the Spirit of his Son to manifest in them that He has redeemed them from under the curse of the law; and that they might receive the adoption of sons. And by this Spirit they cry, Abba, Father.

This is the first knowledge that they have that they are of the family of God; though God has known it all the time, having predestinated them unto the adoption of sons. Thus they are born of God — born again; not of corruptible seed but incorruptible. No wonder it is, Abba, Father. They are born, not of the will of the flesh, nor of man, but born of God. They are then and there set free from the law they were under (as a schoolmaster unto Christ) while they were "children"; and are no longer "servants", but sons; and have received the "liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free".

This is their Father's way of bringing them to utter helplessness in themselves; and they no longer have any strength or faith in themselves. But they are given faith in the Son of God, and are manifest as a child of promise in Abraham. Faith has now come; they see Jesus as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world — their sins, and has reconciled them unto God, and nailed the handwriting of ordinances to his cross.

What a glorious experience it is to thus be led, and have the assurance that, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death! For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit." Thus the children of God who walk after the Spirit, are turned away from the things they once loved when they were without God, and without hope. They can no longer enjoy the things they once enjoyed: they hate their own lives in their flesh; and being dead to sin (no longer dead in sin), they can no longer live with pleasure therein.

What person who has thus been led, has not found it true, that, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men (all classes and conditions), teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

It is assuring evidence to be thus minded, and desiring to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called; and it is evidence to the brethren when we are found thus walking, showing forth the fruits of the Spirit. How true it is that a tree is known by its fruit. We cannot but say, if any who claim to be of the family of God, are not thus minded above all things else, they have no evidence of their sonship; and are not worthy of the fellowship of the brethren. If any who claim this sonship, feel that it is all right to do as they please, and walk in ungodly things, they should be turned over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, as Paul said.

At the same time, we cannot forget the trials that we have in being unable to do the things we would. In our remarkable deliverance from the law, we find that these treasures are in earthen vessels, that we should learn that the excellency of the power is of God and not of man. We have an almost continual warfare, and as a battleground, we suffer the flesh lusting after the spirit, and the spirit after the flesh; which shall continue while we are in the body of this flesh.

All the above things are real, not immaginary. It is because we have not yet been brought into the fulness of our inheritance; but God has predestinated

us to be conformed to the image of his Son. We in this life receive only the spirit of adoption; the hope of eternal life; and are kept by the power of God through faith ready to be revealed in the last time. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. If our hope did not extend to things beyond this life; or, as the Apostle said, "If in this life only we had hope, we would be of all men most miserable." As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall bear the image of the heavenly; as we are mortal now, our mortality shall be swallowed up of life; and as our natural bodies shall be sown, we shall be raised a spiritual body. Predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, we shall be conformed to his image. All the promises of God to his children shall be fulfilled, for God is faithful.

Thus God does far more for his children than we can possibly do for ours. The comparison of the two families in the text, leaves the one in the world; and the other heirs of God through Christ.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

JOEL III. 14-17

"MULTITUDES, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more."

In the connection of this text, we have a prophecy which was quoted by the apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost, and applied to the outpouring of the Spirit on the Jews and Gentiles on that remarkable occasion. See Acts ii. 16-21, compared with Joel ii. 28, 32. From the application made by the inspired apostles of the prophecies of Joel, we are fully authorized to regard them as relating to the present dispensation, and especially relating to things which transpired on and subsequent to that day. The outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh, or on those out of all nations, was to precede what was called by Joel, and also by Peter, "the great and terrible day of the Lord," which day probably had reference to the day wherein God's judgments should be visited upon Jerusalem and the cities of Judea, in the terrible execution of which we have a striking type of the final overthrow of mystery Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and the abominations of the earth. "For," says the Lord, by the mouth of Joel, "Behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land." The valley of Jehoshaphat and the valley of decision, evidently are the same. The valley of Jehoshaphat literally is a deep, narrow glen, which runs from north to south, between the Mount of Olives and Mount Moriah. But as the name Jehoshaphat in the Hebrew signifies the judgment of God, it is probably used in this case symbolically to signify the place of judgment, or where the Lord would execute his judgment on the enemies of his spiritual Jerusalem, and as his judgments are final, allowing no appeal from them, they are consequently decisive, and in our text the place of them is called the valley of decision. It was near Jerusalem, and so may set forth the scriptural idea of the mediatorial throne, in the true and spiritual Jerusalem, where God has set his king upon

his holy hill of Zion.

"Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision." These words present to our mind the same that was expressed by our Lord in the parable of the sheep and goats, Matt. xxv. 31-46, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats," &c. In the exaltation of our Redeemer to his mediatorial glory, he is crowned with a royal diadem, and power is given him over all flesh, (multitudes truly) that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him. The place of his throne is upon his holy hill Zion. The valley of Jehoshaphat, or of decision, is at the base of Mount Zion, and may signify not only the exaltation of Christ in his government, but the humbling of the nations before him. All things are put under him. (1 Cor. xv. 27.) The multitudes are in the valley, but Christ is exalted, and sits upon the throne of his power. The Lamb stands upon Mount Zion.

"For the day of the Lord is near," &c. The day in which he should display his power in judgment, in decision, and in separating between the precious and the vile. When the temple worship should be abolished, the building thrown down, and the old Jerusalem should be destroyed; when he whose voice once shook the earth, should also shake the heavens, and in which the things that can be shaken should be removed, as things that are made, and the things that cannot be shaken should remain. (Heb. xii. 27.) The day of the Lord, in which the saints should receive a kingdom that cannot be moved, and have grace whereby they may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. In this valley of decision we may contemplate all the nations of the earth, including all the children of men of all the tribes and kindreds of mankind before the throne and power of the exalted Son of God, to be separated the one from the others, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. No place but the valley of Jehoshaphat, or of God's judgment, will answer the purpose. The Lord alone knows them that are his, and he therefore alone is competent to judge and make the decision, by calling his own sheep by name, and leading them out. This discrimination is final and decisive, and it is made in the judgment of the Lord, in the valley of decision.

"The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining," &c. The old heavens and earth with their luminaries should pass away, their elements should be dissolved, they should be rolled together as a scroll, and like a vesture they should be laid aside. But the Lord maketh all things new. The new heavens and the new earth appears, wherein dwelleth righteousness, or wherein Christ, who is our righteousness, dwelleth. The Lord God himself, and the Lamb, are the light of this new covenant dispensation. All the legal lights are put out. This holy city, new Jerusalem, which comes down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride for her husband, needs not the sun for a light by day, for there shall be no night there. The law and the prophets which were until John, they have attained their designs, and passed away with the receding heavens and earth; the types and shadows no longer aid the vision of the saints. The Lord God is the light, and in his light the saints have light. The perfect day is ushered in, for the Day Spring from on high hath visited us. The people which sat in darkness have seen a great light, and to them that dwelt in the shadow of death, a light has sprung up. The Judge descends from heaven, the throne is set, power is given him over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. Judgment proceeds; he calleth his own sheep by name. The dead head the voice of the Son of God and live. His sheep hear his voice; he knows them, and they follow him, because he

gives to them eternal life; and this is life eternal, that they may know the true God, and Jesus Christ our Lord. His own sheep are put forth, and he goeth before them, and they follow him. Thus the decision is made, and the line is drawn with infallible accuracy between the precious and the vile.

"And the Lord shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem," &c. Zion was the city of David, and the place of his royal palace in Jerusalem, and denotes to us the place of the mediatorial throne of the king of righteousness. His voice, which once shook the earth, shall again not only shake the earth, but also heaven, and effect the removing of everything that can be shaken, that the things only which cannot be shaken may remain in the kingdom which he came to set up and preside over. His voice is figuratively presented in many parts of Scriptures in a variety of modulations. When on Sinai he spake in trumpet tones, and the thunder of his voice shook the mountain; and the mountains skipped like rams, and the hills like lambs. He spake to the prophet Elijah in a still small voice, or sound. And in a voice familiar to all his flock, he calls his own sheep by name, and they know his voice, and they follow him. The hour cometh, and now is, in which the dead shall hear his voice, and they that hear shall live. His voice has power to allay the fury of the tempest, and allay the raging tumult of the sea. With his voice he speaks the word, and it stands fast; he commands, and it is done. And the hour shall come in which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life eternal, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation. But in our text it is said that he shall **roar** out of Zion. This figurative term seems to agree with the account given by John, Rev. i. 15, "And his voice as the sound of many waters." Also Rev. x. 3, "And cried with a loud voice as when a lion roareth; and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices." As the multitudes, nations and tongues of the universe are figuratively called waters, the voice of our God, when sounded through his saints in all the various languages and tongues of the nations where they are located, though the voice be the same, yet uttered through the gifts bestowed on Zion, resembles the sound of many waters. Roaring and unintelligible to the enemies, but known and well known by his saints. This figure also indicates power to send terror and consternation to the enemies round about Zion, as when a lion roareth. But blessed are they who know the joyful sound. "And he shall utter his voice from Jerusalem." In the proclamation of the everlasting gospel, especially through the inspired apostles, they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and preached his gospel to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

"And the heavens and the earth shall shake." This shaking, at the introduction of the new heavens and new earth, as we have seen by reference to Heb. xii. 27, 28, signified the removing of the covenant which waxed old, with the things which could be shaken, which were not immutable; and it may also relate to the breaking in pieces all the kingdoms of this world, as set forth by the prophecy of Daniel in the interpretation of the king's dream of the stone taken from the mountain without hands, &c. Not only in the abolition of Jewish rites and ceremonies, in the introduction of the gospel ministration, but throughout all time where a vestage of legality is found, it is shaken by the voice which the Lord utters from Jerusalem through all his saints. It may also relate to the judgments of God by which the man of sin and the powers of darkness shall be shaken, and finally consumed by the Spirit of his mouth.

"But the Lord will be the hope of his people." Under all these trying circumstances, God's people shall not be left without hope, nor shall they be sustained on a false or precarious hope. The Lord himself, who is the hope of Israel, and the Savior thereof in time of trou-

ble, shall be the hope of his people in the day referred to in our text. They shall see the folly of hoping in anything else. All other hopes must utterly fail; but the hope of his people is like an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and entering into that within the vail, for it is no less than Christ in them the hope of glory. Well did the apostle say, "Who hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace." Though the earth be shaken, and the heavens also, though the mountains be removed and cast into the sea, and the waves thereof roar and be troubled, though the nations of the earth be, as they are at this day, convulsed with war and carnage, though the thrones of mighty monarchs crumble and totter to their fall, and though even the church of the living God be afflicted with wave upon wave, God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early. The shaking of the earth and heavens shall remove every refuge of lies, and take away every other dependence, so that the hope of God's people shall center in the Lord alone. This hope is among the things that cannot be shaken, and which shall remain in that kingdom which cannot be shaken; for it is in God, and full of immortality, and confirmed by the immutable promise of God. We can then adopt the words of Paul, "In hope of eternal life which God that cannot lie promised before the world began."

"And the strength of the children of Israel." God is no less the strength of Israel than the hope of his people. They are truly in themselves considered a feeble folk, but their house is in the eternal Rock of Ages. The Lord has been their dwelling place in all generations, before the mountains were brought forth, or the world formed, or the earth, even from everlasting to everlasting. (Psalm xc. 1, 2.) They have no other strength to rely upon. He is their strong tower, and their trust is in the shadow of his wing. While their enemies trust in horses and chariots, and go down to Egypt for help, and while they rely upon their own will and power for salvation, and upon their men and money, their schemes and plans for the conversion of the healthen world, and they look to the power of earthly kings and legislatures to defend them, God is the strength and salvation of his children. He is a wall of fire round about, and a glory in their midst. He is the sword of their excellency and the shield of their strength. They cannot be surprised by an enemy, because they dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

"So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain." In the execution of all that is embraced in these predictions, God will instruct his children, for it is written, they shall all be taught of the Lord. He teaches them effectually, for, "Every one that hath heard and learned of the Father (says Jesus) cometh unto me." They shall know that he is the Lord, the Jehovah, the self-existent God, by the fulfillment of his word, in which he has declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. To know him is eternal life, and that eternal life they shall possess. They shall know him by his voice, for however terrible his voice may be to the enemies, his sheep know his voice and follow him; they are the blessed people which know the joyful sound; and they shall know that their deliverance and salvation is of him, and of him alone. But they shall not only know that he is the Lord, for they shall also know that he is their God, according to the express provisions of the new covenant. "I will be their God, and they shall be my people," and they shall all know me, from the least of them even to the greatest. And they shall also know the place of his abode, and where to find him. "Dwelling in Zion." This is the place of his rest, and here he will dwell forever, for he has desired Zion for his habitation. He will abundantly bless her provisions, and fill her poor with bread. They know him in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, as God

manifest in the flesh, and it is only in Christ that they can know him, for no man cometh unto the Father but by him. He is in the Father, and the Father is in him, and all who have seen the Son have seen the Father also. He and his Father are one.

"Then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more." When the old Jerusalem, which, like Hagar, was in bondage with her children, should pass away, and the holy city, new Jerusalem, should descend from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride for her husband, then should she be holy and without blame or blemish before God, who is her Judge. Christ is her wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, and she is freely, fully and forever justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Strangers and aliens sometimes passed through the old Jerusalem, broke down her walls, and defiled her sanctuary, but no stranger can enter this holy Jerusalem. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. And although we were all strangers and foreigners once, we are now made nigh by the blood of Christ, and are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God. The kingdom of God spoken of to Nicodemus, and this holy Jerusalem, means the spiritual kingdom which is not of this world, which cometh not by observation, and which flesh and blood, even the flesh and blood of the saints, cannot inherit, because corruption cannot inherit incorruption. We all know to our sorrow that carnal professors who are strangers to God by wicked works, do make profession of religion, and sometimes have a form of godliness, and that they are nominally regarded as members of the church. But although they may have a name to live, they are dead, and they remain as ignorant of the kingdom while nominally members of it, as those who make no profession. They cannot see it without being born again; they cannot enter it except they be born of the water and of the Spirit. This spiritual Jerusalem is the mystical body of Christ. Every member therefore has life in Christ in common with all other members. There is one body and spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. We therefore know no man after the flesh in the kingdom, for we are all one in Christ Jesus. These mortal bodies which are born of the flesh are flesh, and their inheritance is in the earth. They are under the irrevocable sentence of death. They must be sown corruptible, in dishonor, &c., but they shall be quickened and raised up by the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead; they must put on immortality and incorruption, and be raised spiritual bodies, and brought in by adoption, but not in the relations and distinctions which now exist, for in the resurrection they shall not marry nor be given in marriage; they shall not be distinguished as male or female, young or old, bond or free, as now, but all conformed to the image of the Son of God, who is the firstborn among many brethren.

Middletown, N. Y., Nov. 15, 1855.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, Nov. 15, 1855.)

THE KITE — or
PRIDE MUST HAVE A FALL

My waking dreams are best concealed — much folly, little good they yield. But now and then I gain, while sleeping, a friendly hint that's worth the keeping. Lately I dream't of one who cried, "Beware of self, beware of pride. When you are prone to build a Babel, recall to mind this little fable:

"Once on a time a paper kite was mounted to a wondrous height, where, giddy with its elevation, it thus expressed self-admiration: 'See how yon crowds of gazing people admire my flight above the steeple. How they would wonder if they knew all that a kite like me can do! Were I but free, I'd take a flight and pierce the clouds beyond their sight. But, ah, like a poor prisoner bound, my string confines me near the ground — I'd brave the eagle's towering wing, might I but fly without a string.'

It tugged and pulled, while thus it spoke, to break the string. At last it broke. Deprived at once of all its stay, in vain it tried to soar

away: Unable its own weight to bear, it fluttered downward through the air; unable its own course to guide, the winds soon plunged it in the tide. Ah, foolish kite, thou hads't no wing, how could'st thou fly without a string?"

My heart replied: "O Lord, I see how much this kite resembles me. Forgetful that by thee I stand, impatient of thy ruling hand, how oft I've wished to break the lines thy wisdom for my lot assigns. How oft indulged in a vain desire for something more or something higher. And, but for grace and love divine, a fall thus dreadful had been mine."

(From a small hymn book or book of poems carried by Elder John G. Eubanks through the Civil War; some of which he sang while a prisoner (about ten months) in Fort Delaware the last year of the war; which place is located about ten miles from where he is now pastor of the Old School Baptist Church, foot of Iron Hill, near Newark, Delaware. — Copied by the late Brother John B. Miller, 11-23-1919)

ORDINATIONS

Ordinations of Brother Malcom Burkhalter to the ministry, and Brother Joe Hamrick as deacon, as follows:

At the request of Mt. Zion Church, of Weslaco, Texas, Elder J. W. Shipman, Elder W. W. Fleet, and Elder E. B. Ault organized themselves into a presbytery; with Elder Shipman, Moderator, Brother Joe Hamrick, Clerk. Prayer by Elder Fleet, and Elder Ault to give the charge. Sister Ault to act as spokesman for the church.

After questioning Sister Ault, the presbytery called for the candidate and Brother Malcom Burkhalter was presented to the presbytery. The ordination then proceeded by the laying on of hands by the presbytery, with prayer by Elder W. W. Fleet; and Elder Ault gave the charge. The right hand of fellowship was then given by the presbytery to Elder Burkhalter. He was received by the church a duly ordained minister of the gospel.

Then Brother Joe Hamrick was presented to the same presbytery to be ordained as a deacon. Elder Burkhalter was appointed Clerk. Sister Ault to act as spokesman for the church. The ordination proceeded by the laying on of hands by the presbytery, and prayer by Elder Fleet. Elder Ault gave the charge; with Elder Shipman making additional remarks regarding the duty of a deacon and his wife. Then the right hand of fellowship was given to Brother Hamrick, and the church received him as a duly ordained deacon.

Elder E. B. Ault
Weslaco, Texas

MEMORIAL

WHEREAS, It has pleased our heavenly Father, in His infinite Wisdom, to call from our midst by death our beloved brother, Alfred Truitt, on July 1, 1958.

BE IT RESLOVED, That in the passing of Brother Truitt, Hopewell Church has lost from her membership a very faithful and highly esteemed brother. That we mourn not for him as they that have no hope but feel that he has entered his eternal rest. May we be enabled to bow in humble submission to God's holy and gracious will.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That these resolutions be filed with our church records, and that a copy be sent to his wife and family, and also send a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of Hopewell Church, Flatwoods, W. Va., August 2, 1958.

Elder J. C. Hammond, Moderator
Nanna M. Carney, Clerk

OBITUARIES

CORA KNOWLES STONE

Sister Cora Knowles Stone was born January 24, 1884, and departed this life June 16, 1958, in a Lynchburg, Virginia hospital after a short illness. She is survived by her husband, Rufus F. Stone; four daughters: Mrs. J. V. Harman and Mrs. I. L. Bolton, of Lynchburg, Mrs. C. B. Blankenship, Washington, D. C., and Mrs. C. P. Garber, Camden, S. C.; four sons: Bernard, Claude, and John Knowles, of Lynchburg, and Harry, of Atlanta, Georgia; two brothers: A. D. and Vester Purdy, of Leaksville, N. C.; and nine stepchildren, and a host of grandchildren.

Sister Stone was the daughter of the late Elder Green and Matilda Purdy. She was twice married, first to the late John W. Knowles, of Lynchburg, who died in 1938; and then to Rufus F. Stone, of Bassett, Va., in January, 1948, where they were making their home at the time of her death.

She was a firm believer in a sovereign God, and felt that His way was unquestionable. She was very spiritually minded, and her conversations and writings were of divine things; and her delight was in the church, and attended her meetings until the end. She will be greatly missed by her numerous friends, the church, and most of all by her companion and children, who did all they could for her comfort; and she often spoke of their loving kindness to her.

Funeral services were held in Lynchburg by Mr. Ernest Cochran, Mr. Robert Ramsey, and Brother Rufus Brown. She was laid to rest in

Fort Hill Memorial Park in Lynchburg, by the side of her first husband to await the coming of the Lord, who will descend with a shout, and raise his people unto everlasting joy and praise, to be with Him forevermore. Written by one who loved her,

Annie Tosh

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of the above be spread on our church records; a copy be sent to the family; and a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
R. C. Dalton, Clerk

ALDA E. (STALNAKER) POLING

Alda E. Poling was born September 4, 1876, and departed this life November 21, 1956, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Ruth Lutz, at Belington, W. Va., where she was residing.

She was united in marriage to Elder J. J. Poling, June 26, 1896, by Elder S. D. Lewis. To this union were born four children, who survive: Wyatt F., Belington, W. Va.; Waitman A., Weston, W. Va; Mrs. Ruth Lutz, Belington, W. Va.; and Mrs. Ruby Poling, Montrose, W. Va. Her husband, Elder J. J. Poling, preceded her in death by 13 months.

Sister Poling united with the Old School Baptist Church on September 4, 1920, along with her husband. She was a true and faithful companion to her home and church, and served as a comforting one in the role of a minister's wife. Her cheerfulness, soundness in doctrine, and views on what she felt the Bible sets forth, were certainly a part of her everyday life, making her home welcome to many.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder V. B. Linn, and she was laid to rest in the Little Bethel Cemetery, near the church she loved so much. Written by request.

Elder V. B. Linn

ELDER JEROME JACKSON POLING

Elder Jerome Jackson Poling, of Belington, W. Va., our dearly beloved brother in Christ, was born August 12, 1870, and was called to his eternal rest October 24, 1955, at the home of a son, Wyatt F. Poling, with whom he was residing at the time.

He was the son of Abraham and Margaret (Thompson) Poling. On June 25, 1896, he was united in marriage to Alda Stalnaker; and to this union were born four children, who survive: Wyatt F., Belington, Waitman A., Elkins, Mrs. Ruth Lutz, Belington, and Mrs. Ruby Poling, Montrose, W. Va.; Also surviving are three brothers: Haskel, Parsons, W. Va., Worthington and Daniel, of Belington; and one sister, Mrs. Frances Poling, of Belington.

Elder Poling joined the Little Bethel Old School Baptist Church on September 4, 1920, along with his wife, who served as a true and faithful companion in her duties at home and in the church. They were baptized by Elder J. S. Murphy. On October 2, 1920, he was liberated to preach in the gospel field; and was ordained into the full work of the ministry on June 4, 1921; where he labored these many years until death. He traveled a great deal among the churches in his own and sister associations, and loved the Primitive Baptist people, and the doctrine they embrace.

We feel that he was a great blessing to the churches which he served, and will be greatly missed by his family, and throughout the Tygerts River Valley Association; and by a host of friends far and near. It was witnessed and confirmed by many that his gift increased in his latter years, as his mind was directed to speak on the experimental travels of the dear children of God. He was serving as pastor of the Little Bethel Church, near Meadowville, and as moderator of the Tygerts River Valley Association at the time of his death.

The funeral was conducted by Elder V. B. Linn (who had been called for a similar duty just three days before for one of his fellow yoke-bearers, Elder James W. Linn). The funeral was largely attended by relatives and friends, and he was laid to rest in the Little Bethel Cemetery, to await the awakening by his Redeemer. Written by request.

Elder V. B. Linn

ELDER JAMES W. LINN

Elder James W. Linn, at the age of 86 years, 7 months, and 4 days, passed away at his home at Fairmont, W. Va., on October 20, 1955. He was born March 16, 1869, in Marion County.

He first married Tabitha Henderson, who preceded him in death. To this union were born one son, Floyd, and one daughter, Mary; both deceased. Later he married Jemima Henderson, who survives. Also surviving are two brothers: Joseph, of Fairmont, and Samuel G., of Florida; two grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Many of the records were not available, but it was learned that Elder Linn labored in the gospel field for over 50 years, and had many friends who esteemed him highly as God's humble servant, both within, and beyond the limits of the Tygerts Valley River Association.

He had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for about 60 years, having joined early in life, after being brought to a convicting knowledge of where he stood in weakness before an almighty God. His peace and hope were founded upon the finished work of Christ, which was his staff, and an anchor to his soul to the end of his pilgrimage here below. He served as pastor of the Amnon Church for several years prior to his death.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder V. B. Linn at Glade Creek Church; and interment followed in the Glade Creek Cemetery, in Marion County, W. Va.

Elder V. B. Linn

CATHERINE E. COLLINS

Sister Collins was born in Barbour County, Alabama, October 25, 1871, and died at Hartford, Alabama, June 9, 1958, after a long illness. She was the daughter of Deacon and Mrs. J. W. Bledsole, of Bethlehem Church, Malvern, Alabama; and she married Elder J. W. Collins in June, 1893, and shortly thereafter was baptized into the Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church. For about twenty years she had been a member of Little Vine Church; so she had been a Primitive Baptist for nearly sixty-five years. Her husband was pastor of Mt. Gilead for thirty-five years, and moderator of the Western Primitive Baptist Association at twenty-three sessions.

She is survived by a son, Joshua W., and a daughter, Mrs. Sarah Sammons; and several grandchildren, including Elder J. J. Collins; a nephew, Elder J. A. Tew, who is pastor of Pilgrims Rest Church; and one brother, M. R. Bledsole, of Graceville, Florida.

Funeral services were conducted at Little Vine Church, June 10th, with Elder S. J. B. Dallas in charge. Interment was in Mt. Gilead Cemetery. Truly a mother in Israel has gone home to be with the Lord.

J. J. Collins

SARAH MEREDITH CUBBAGE BENSON

In sorrow I now chronicle the death of my dear wife, who departed this life on Saturday, March 8, 1958. She was born March 1, 1875, near Petersburg, Delaware, the daughter of Jacob and Catherine Frazier Meredith, the fifth child in a family of six.

She was received and baptized in the fellowship of Cow Marsh Primitive Baptist Church the 4th Sunday in August, 1894, by the late Elder Ephraim Rittenhouse, where she remained a faithful and devoted member until death; and in which cemetery her body now rests among many of her relatives and church members gone on before. From her early life in the Church, she was ever ready to render whatever aid or assistance she could for the good and welfare of the church, and a strong defender for the doctrine and discipline thereof as she saw it.

She was married late in life, having the care of keeping house for her father and brother during the invalidism of her mother. Her first marriage was to Willard S. Cubbage, in 1910. He died in 1919. On November 14, 1926, she married Cyrus E. Benson of Wilmington, Delaware, and with whom she lived a devoted, faithful, and worthy companion until death. After the ordination of her husband in 1936, it became necessary for them to move to Clark Summit, Pa., to accept the call from the churches formerly pastored by the late Elder D. M. Vail.

She was ready and willing to go and share the ups and downs which accompanies the life of every minister and wife. Many times her encouragement given in these trying days was helpful and gave the courage to press forward for the prize of our high calling of God through Jesus Christ, our Lord. She was a close observer of things said, and her criticism was generally well founded.

One more vacancy down here; one more place occupied up there. Our hearts are sad, and life has grown more lonely and void of companionship. Thus must it be for those who are left behind. But as we meditate the happiness for those who are resting in the sweet presence of their God and Redeemer, we can say, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them". (Rev. 14:13)

She leaves to mourn her loss, her husband, one sister, Martha Wilson, of Houston, Del., one niece, one nephew, stepchildren and stepgrandchildren. May the Holy Spirit rest and abide with these to comfort and console as they continue to travel the rugged highway of life, we pray in Jesus' name.

C. E. Benson

CHESTER McADAMS PRESLEY

In the Divine Providence of the Almighty God, Chester McAdams Presley has departed this low ground of sorrow by reason of death. Brother Presley was born October 20, 1883, and passed away June 27, 1958. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church November of 1938, at Altus, Oklahoma, at which time Elder W. N. Green was Pastor, and baptized Brother Presley. His membership was at the Sardis

Primitive Baptist Church in Amarillo, Texas, at which place he has not only been a faithful member, but a teacher of the holy testimony. We do not mean to praise the man when we say that Brother Presley was wonderfully blessed with a gift that few men are ever in possession of, but we praise God from whom all blessings flow; and through his imputed righteousness he bestowed upon this man the gift of teaching and an understanding of the scriptures that was widely known by all who knew him. He believed in the absolute sovereignity of God and the absolute predestination of all things, and had little use for any doctrine that did not teach this belief. The writer was permitted to meet Brother Presley in 1957, and from the moment of introduction, for anyone loving the truth, there was no doubt as to Brother Presley's depth and understanding of the unsearchable mysteries of the holy testimonies.

He was a faithful member of the Amarillo Church, but attended the Altus Church and the Church at Mangum, both of Oklahoma, and also the Church at Earth, Texas; and attended as many associations as God would enable him to. In October, 1950, Brother Presley wrote (and it appears in the Signs of that issue) a beautiful experience, one which can be read and re-read, getting an insight of some of the beliefs of this dear Brother. One of the quotations used in this experience is, "God is a sovereign God and works all things after his own will." He talked this with intent and deep conviction.

Brother Presley will be missed and mourned by his many brethren, as well as friends and relatives. As for me, not having known him any length of time in days and in months, seemingly it has been a lifetime, and it will be with a great void and an emptiness that I will feel as I stand before the Church in Amarillo and notice his absence.

His funeral was conducted in his home town, Canyon, Texas, by the writer, and it is hoped that by the grace of God, those who were left behind received a little message in the few words that were spoken.

Brother Presley married Beulah Foreman May 29, 1904. He moved to Canyon, Texas September, 1930. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Beulah Presley of Canyon, Texas; and 4 daughters: Mrs. Don Trolinger, of San Bernadino, California, Mrs. H. D. Klein of West Liberty, Iowa, Mrs. Oscar Ekeland of Houston, Texas, Mrs. Hatcher Brown of Canyon; 6 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren; 2 brothers, Abb Presley, of Wichita Falls, Texas, T. I. Presley, of Fort Worth, Texas; a sister, Mrs. Minnie Summerford of Hamilton, Texas; as well as a host of friends and other relatives. He was laid to rest in the Memory Gardens of Amarillo, Texas.

Elder W. A. Winfrey

ROBERT HENRY HOUK

Be ye reconciled unto God, for he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind; therefore we pray for strength, faith, and courage to face and bear our sorrows when one of our loved ones is called from our midst. The love of God was manifested on November 5, 1888, by the birth of brother Robert Henry Houk, near Greenville, Texas, who, on June 12, 1912, was married to Miss Phaty Mae Tatum, of Davis, Okla. After settling in Oklahoma Brother Houk united with Little Flock Primitive Baptist Church November 8, 1924. On May 11, 1944, he was ordained to the office of deacon. From that day forward Deacon R. H. Houk proved very faithful and profitable to the church, both as a member and as a deacon. He always took his place in the church, in the community, and in his home with humbliness, and in the reverential fear of God.

Deacon Houk's godly deportment, kindness, and faithfulness gained the respect and love of all who knew him. For the last several years of his life his health was not good, and in the year of 1953 his beloved wife became an invalid, but Brother Houk bore his afflictions with patience and great courage, shouldering his responsibilities, and with loving care looked after his afflicted wife and his aged and afflicted mother. The loyalty, gracefulness, and sound counsel of this lovely man of God will never be forgotten by his brethren, friends and family. The kind, and useful life of this faithful servant of God was ended with a heart attack on February 8, 1958, in an Altus, Oklahoma hospital. He leaves to mourn his passing his beloved wife of their home 419 Live Oak Street, Altus, Oklahoma; his precious and afflicted mother who is 92 years old residing at Snyder, Okla.; one brother, Mr. W. L. Houk of Oklahoma City; and two sisters, Mrs. Robbie Boyd of Snyder, Okla. and Mrs. M. L. Hammond, Ringling, Okla. Also his church people and a host of other relatives and friends.

On February 9, 1958 Brother Houk's body was laid to rest near Snyder, Okla. after a brief message from his pastor, Elder W. W. Taylor. We all know that our loss is great; but we pray to be reconciled, feeling that God is too wise to err and too good to be unkind; therefore may we all say, "Thy will be done, O God." We pray God's blessings upon the bereaved family one and all, especially his dear mother and his beloved wife who are both faithful members of Little Flock church. May we all lift our weary heads with hope and press on toward the mark of the prize of the high calling, hoping to meet around the throne of God to forever praise God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, on the sunny banks

of sweet deliverance, where sorrow never comes and joy never ends: Amen.

His unworthy pastor,
W. W. Taylor

MRS. H. A. CHANCE

May God in his grace teach us to not murmer or complain, but rather bow in humble submission to his holy will, for we feel He is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. Altho our hearts were saddened on January 6, 1957, when God called our beloved sister and mother in Israel away, Sister H. A. Chance. She was born January 27, 1875, and was married September 1, 1892, to Brother H. A. Chance. On December 18, 1899, Sister Chance united with the Primitive Baptist church and remained a faithful member until her death, which occurred at the home of her daughter, Sister Oza Hill, 1021 Main St., Sulphur Springs, Texas. Her husband preceded her in death in July, 1942.

Sister Chance was a very kind and lovely sister, quite unassuming and did enjoy hearing the gospel preached. The doctrine of salvation by grace, electing grace through Christ was her meat and drink. In her declining years she could not attend her church as she would have liked, but her love for the truth and her longing for the association with the people of God remained lively. The unworthy writer was asked to preach for her in the home, which request was always answered to the joy of dear Sister Chance. Her hope and faith remained strong to the end. The last several years of her life she was afflicted with a heart ailment, but she bore her afflictions with patience, looking unto the Lord, and trusting all things in his hands.

On Sunday morning December 6, 1957, the noble life of Sister Chance quietly ended with her kind and faithful daughter standing by. She left to mourn her passing: three daughters: Mrs. Oza Hill, Mrs. Bob Riddle, and Mrs. Paul Davis. Six sons: Clyde, Dorman, Lloyd, Urban, Spencer, and Cecil; also 25 grandchildren and 40 great grandchildren, and 3 great-great-grandchildren, together with three sisters and her church people and many other relatives and friends.

After a brief funeral discourse by Elder W. W. Taylor, her body was laid to rest in the Richland Cemetery beneath a beautiful blanket of flowers, to await the glorious resurrection morning when we all hope to meet around God's throne to eternally praise the three-one God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in a land where joy never ends and sorrow never comes. Amen.

W. W. Taylor

SISTER LENORA DANIEL HALES

By request of our church, we will try to write a few words in memory of our dear mother and sister, Mrs. Lenora Daniel Hales, who was born January 24th, 1871 and departed this life June 24th, 1957, making her stay in this sinful place eighty-six years and five months.

She was married to Calvin W. Hales December 20, 1891. To this union were born five sons and three daughters. Her husband and one son preceded her to the grave. Surviving are four sons, C. H. Hales and Daniel Hales, Middlesex, N. C., Oren Hales, Wilson, N. C. and Joseph P. Hales, Zebulon, N. C.; three daughters, Mrs. J. B. Kemp, Zebulon, N. C., Mrs. H. W. Kemp, Farmville, N. C. and Mrs. Robert Strickland, Middlesex, N C.

Mother was blessed with a sweet hope in Jesus and was a firm believer in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. She united with the church at Healthy Plains Saturday before the second Sunday in August, 1911, and was baptized the next day by her dear pastor, Elder George W. Boswell. She lived a faithful member, always attending church when she could, but, due to the distance she lived from the church, she did not have the privilege of entertaining the brethren and sisters in her home as often as she would have liked.

Mother was sick for almost two years, and confined to her bed for one year but God gave her patience to bear her afflictions and she did not complain.

Her funeral was conducted in the Middlesex Baptist Church by Elder W. E. Turner, Wilson, N. C., Elder A. P. Mewborn, Farmville, N. C. and Mr. Puckett of Smithfield, N. C. Her body was laid to rest in the Middlesex Cemetery.

We feel sure that, while her body is resting in the dust, her precious spirit is resting with God who gave it; and on the day of resurrection will come forth with praise. May He reconcile us to His perfect way and cause us to know He is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, enabling us to say "Even so, Lord, for it seemeth good in thy sight.

More and more each day we miss you,
Some may think the wound is healed,
But little do they know the sorrow,
That is in our hearts concealed.

God knew that you were suffering,
And the hills were hard to climb,
So he closed your weary eyelids,
And whispered, "Peace be thine."

Written by her son and daughter,
Oren W. Hales and Mrs. H. W. Kemp

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 126 DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1958 NO. 12

THE SCHOOL OF SORROW

I sat in the school of sorrow:
The Master was teaching there;
But my eyes were dim with weeping,
And my heart oppressed with care.

Instead of looking upward,
And seeing His face divine
So full of tender compassion
For weary hearts like mine,

I only thought of the burden,
The cross that before me lay,
And clouds that hung thick above me,
Darkening the light of day.

So I could not learn my lesson,
And say, "Thy will be done",
For the Master seemed not near me,
As the heavy hours went on.

At last, through grace, I lifted
My streaming eyes above;
And I saw the Master watching
With a look of pitying love.

To the cross before me He pointed,
And I heard him sweetly say,
"My child thou must take thy burden,
And learn thy task today."

"Not now may I tell the reason:
'Tis enough for thee to know
That I, the Master, am teaching;
And appoint thee all thy woe."

Then kneeling, my cross I lifted;
For one glimpse of that face divine,
Had given me strength to bear it,
And say, "Thy will, not mine."

And so I learned my lesson;
And through the weary years
His gracious hand sustained me,
And wiped away my tears;

And the ever glorious sunlight
From the heavenly home streamed down:
Where the school tasks are all ended,
And the cross exchanged for the crown.

(The above was handed to Elder John G. Eubanks by Sister Maggie Campbell, of Welsh Tract Church, while he was pastor from 1902 to 1926 — copied by the late Brother J. B. Miller.)

I WOULD NOT LIVE ALWAYS

I would not live always
Amidst life's endless woes.
Time's ever winding onward
Along this rugged road.

I would not be numbered
Among earth's noble men:
Not temp'd to walk with them,
For I belong to Him.

I build not my house here,
For this is sinking sand:
My hope is more secure
In that celestial land.

I make not friends below
With those who hate my God:
I will endure their scorn,
Supported by His Word.

I would not live always
To watch the fading flowers.
God's house is strongly built
With everlasting towers.

Why should I want to live
Within a house of dust:
In that city I'll find
Communion with the just.

I know it won't be long
Until I'll venture o'er,
To view His shining face
On Canaan's happy shore.

Not temp't to linger here
With countless bags of gold:
Though poor and weak and frail,
I'll have there riches untold.

Myrtle Cross
Glendale, Calif.

PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD

We believe our readers will be edified in reading the following work, under the above title, by Elder David Bartley. It was published in 1900; but, as far as we know, is not now obtainable. We expect to publish a portion of it each

month until concluded. It consists of an Introduction; 12 Chapters; and Conclusion.

Those who are acquainted with Elder Bartley's writings know that he was blessed with deep understanding in the Scriptures; and that he was a frequent contributor to the columns of the Signs of the Times. He died in 1906.

If our readers enjoy this work as much as we, it will be well worth the space in our columns. — Editors

THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD

By Elder David Bartley

INTRODUCTION

"JESUS THE CHRIST" is as well the High Priest of all the true worshipers of the true and living God as he is their Prophet and King; and his priesthood is absolutely essential to his success in his prophetic and kingly offices. As their Prophet, he must open their blind eyes, turn them from darkness to light, and make them wise unto salvation; and as their King, he shall reign over them in righteousness; but he does both only because he has made reconciliation for their sins, and thus brings them nigh unto God as the holy people. And so God has said to his holy Son, "As for thee also, by the blood of the covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water." (Zech. 9:11) The blood of this covenant belongs to his priestly office; therefore without the shedding of his precious blood their sins could not have been remitted, but his prisoners must have remained in the prison-house, the pit of iniquity, and perished in their sins, as guilty, and separated from God and holiness. So the streams of mercy, the wells of salvation, and the river of life flow out from the smitten Rock, "the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus", to all who worship God the Father in spirit and in truth.

Thus may be seen the great and vital necessity of the abiding priesthood of the holy Son of God, and the deep importance to us of a true understanding of it, as the Holy Spirit has revealed it in the Scriptures, which are able to make the spiritual and true worshipers wise unto salvation. This divinely given and gracious knowledge is essential to our abiding comfort and peace, and to the establishment of our hearts in the full assurance of faith and hope in Jesus, who is our salvation.

In view of all this my mind has long been exercised about the sacred work of writing upon this heavenly and sublime theme, as a work of faith and labor of love, if our Divine Prophet will graciously open my understanding in the Scriptures, and give me a commandment to write "the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ"; for without this preparation and unction from the Holy One the attempt must be futile, but with it the labor will be made a blessing to the household of God, and to all who may read it who feel too sinful to draw near unto him, and know not how to order their cause before him; yet desire to find favor and acceptance with him.

To me it has been a surprise or wonder that the priesthood of Christ has been so little dwelt upon by the able ministers of the New Testament, either in preaching or writing; for in my extended ministry of forty-five years, having heard thousands of sermons, very many of them good gospel sermons, yet in none of them was there more than an incidental allusion to our Lord's priesthood; neither has it been my privilege to read but little upon it from the pens of our ready writers, with the exception of an able editorial by our beloved Elder Gilbert Beebe, which was recently re-published in the Signs of the Times. My spirit has yearned for a more perfect understanding of this glorious mystery of the acceptance with God of a sinful people as spotless and holy. For this underlies the entire work of salvation, and without it no sinful being could be sanctified unto the acceptable service of the blessed and Holy Father, nor worship him in the beauty of holiness;

for without holiness no one shall see the Lord.

It will not be regarded, therefore, as either needless or presumptous that now at last, though late in life, my seeking spirit is led to enter into an investigation of the eternal priesthood of the beloved and holy Son of God. Yet it is with profound reverence, fear and trembling that I approach upon this holy ground, and write of those things "which the angels desire to look into". For the subject includes the fearful temptation in the wilderness, the infinite suffering in the garden, and the awful scene on Calvary. It leads us down to the mournful sepulcher, where they laid the crucified Son of man, "a man of sorrows", thence up the peaceful Olivet, where stood the Living Son of God; and still up and away into the glory of the "world to come", the blissful realm of immortality, the eternal home of the Father Almighty, who is Love. O how may one so low rise to a theme so lofty and divine?

It is cause for abounding gratitude to God that, though the priesthood of Christ has not received very special attention from the ministry of our own time, yet in the book of remembrance that was written before the Lord for them that fear him, and that think upon his name, he has given us the Hebrew epistle, which is largely devoted to the wonderful priesthood of our great High Priest, in contrast with the typical Levitical priesthood of Aaron, who stood at the head of that priesthood as the first high priest. Therefore, in entering upon this solemnly wonderful part of revealed truth, it will be in order to first briefly consider the priesthood of Aaron under the old covenant, the dispensation of the law given upon Sinai, before specially dwelling upon the priesthood of Christ under the new and better testament, established upon Sion the mountain of God's holiness, and upon better promises. God himself has in infinite wisdom and purpose given to his people the dispensation of the law and its ministration first, to convince us of the absolute necessity of a better and perfect way, and to prepare us for it, unto the end that we may offer unto him an offering in righteousness by faith in Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant.

May the Spirit of revelation and truth guide both the writer and reader in this humble effort to look into the everlasting priesthood of our Lord.

CHAPTER ONE

THE NECESSITY OF A PRIESTHOOD

MAN, sinful and guilty, could not make an acceptable offering for his sins, neither free himself from his guilt; for he had broken the righteous law of his infinitely holy Sovereign, and only a perfect offering and holy service could fulfill the divine law. It is righteous, and hence it requires righteousness from all the children of men. "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled", is the word of the King who reigns in righteousness, and who came not to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfill them. It is impossible, therefore, for the sinful world to meet and satisfy the outraged law of God, and approach unto him in holiness; yet in no other way can any one come to him and be accepted with him.

This solemn truth was shown by all the sacrifices and offerings under the Levitical dispensation and divine priesthood of Aaron; for all those sacrifices were required to be faultless or without blemish, or else they were rejected. Both the priests and the worshiping people were likewise required to be ceremonially sanctified and holy in all their service and worship, or God would not accept them. All this rigid ceremonial purity enforces the awful fact that Sin separates all sinful beings from the presence and worship of God, who is HOLINESS itself; therefore all who enter into his presence must also be holy and without blemish. So, when the high priest of Israel went into the presence of the Lord in the Holy of Holies, he

was not only sanctified and clothed with the holy vestments, but upon his miter or crown he wore a plate of pure gold engraved with "HOLINESS TO THE LORD", that the people of that priesthood might be accepted before their holy God. It was only as thus ceremonially purified from their sins, by a divine atonement and consecration, that the children of Israel, the people of that priestly covenant, were accepted in their divine service and worship.

From all this we learn the absolute necessity on the part of the children of men, who would come and worship before the Lord, of a mediator between God and men; and he who mediates must be able to put away their sins, purify and make them holy, and thus make them nigh unto God. All this he must do for them by himself, by his own holiness and power; thus making a sinful people a holy priesthood, washed and sanctified and justified in the sight of God; that they may come and worship the Father in spirit and in truth, and in righteousness make their offerings of peace and praise unto him. For both nature and revelation prove that the bitter fountain cannot make itself sweet, nor the guilty soul make itself righteous. "The ungodly shall not stand in the judgement, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." (Psalms 1:5) To Moses, upon the terrible Sinai, the Most High said that he would by no means clear the guilt. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." (Galatians 3:10) No son of Adam has ever thus continued in righteous obedience, but "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God", is the divine testimony of the word. The holy law is the ministration of justice, without mercy; but there is no hope for sinners, only according to the rich mercy of God.

Cain, the first born of Adam, labored to make an acceptable offering unto God for himself, but sin laid at his door, and he and his offering were justly rejected. So it is with all the offerings that men can make for their sins, or the sins of others. The defect, however, is not in the law of God, but in sinful man, whose unholy sacrifice and selfish service cannot fulfill the righteous law, nor please the Holy One.

To the Hebrew people God gave excellent laws, sacred oracles, a priesthood, and sacrifices; but none of these could take away their sins, nor make the worshipers perfect. The Holy One said he had no pleasure in them. All was a woeful failure! All flesh had become corrupt. Man had sinned, hence he was driven out from the presence of the Lord, and Eden was lost to him. "Death reigned from Adam to Moses", and from Moses to Jesus, and the grave boasted of the victory. The religious history of the first four thousand years is God's great object-lesson, as a wonderful panorama, standing out so plain that "he may run that readeth it"; and the lesson is, "By man came death." Hence, sin and death run through all his offerings and works, and they are "dead works". "There is none righteous; no, not one", of all the children of the first man.

How vain, then, are all the expectations and boastings of men, who think to find acceptance with God and obtain his favor and blessing by what they do! This was the fatal error of the Pharipeople of God in the old covenant; but sees, a very zealous religious people, the they trusted in themselves, depended upon their services and works, and went about to establish their own righteousness. Multiplied thousands are doing the same now. From all these things we must be separate and turned away. For the prophet of God said to his people, "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." (Isaiah 54:6)

Therefore, of all the sons of Eve, the mother of all the children of men, there is only One Righteous Man, and there is no other righteousness save his; and so no man can come unto God, and receive his salvation and blessing, only

in this Divine Man and his righteousness. Every spiritual and heavenly blessing is in him, and of his fulness must all we receive, and grace for grace. In him only are we accepted as righteous before God, and for his sake alone are we saved and blessed, both now and forever.

Now, all this presentation of the children of men in their sinful separation and guilty alienation from God, and their utter unrighteousness and hopeless insufficiency, prepares us to see and realize the necessity of the bringing in of a better testament, and a far more perfect priesthood, by which we may draw nigh unto God and be accepted with him.

(Chapter 2 next month)

Kealy, N. C.

Dear Editors:

. . . I am enclosing my check for two years re-newal.

I enjoy the articles in the Signs very much, and often wish I could express my feelings as some of the dear brethren and sisters. However, I will have to be content with my lot. It has been my pleasure to meet, and to hear Elders Wood and Spangler preach; it was a joy I shall never forget. The Signs seems to bring their words right into my home.

May God's rich grace rest on all of you, and restore the ministers to their health, that they may be able to come our way again, and to write articles which contend for the Truth as it was once delivered unto the saints.

Yours in hope,
Mrs. John Edd Pope

CORRESPONDING LETTER OF THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION — 1958

(Written by Elder D. V. Spangler)

"The song of songs, which is Solomon's" (S of S 1:1)

It will be noticed that this book is not titled Songs of Solomon (in the plural); but Song of Solomon (in the singular). The entire book is one Song; and this song is The Song of Songs — showing that this song exceeds all other songs. And it should be considered as embracing all the book.

When we are gathered in these meetings, one blessed part of the meeting is given to singing the songs of Zion. How important it is that we consider what we sing as most important! It is important that we sing sound doctrine, as well as preach sound doctrine. To preach sound doctrine and then sing hymns that are not in harmony with the doctrine, would indeed be inconsistent. What a blessing it is when the dear people of God are enabled to sing with the spirit, and with the understanding also.

Regardless of the hymn we use, or whether we pray or praise God, there is the Song of Songs sought after; and this seeking is the desire of the Lord's dear people: for a view by faith of Jesus and his great love. All of our hope in Him is founded upon our spiritual view of Him, as given to us by the faith that is once delivered to the saints. Whatever growth there is in grace, we are told by Peter, that grace and peace are multiplied unto us through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.

It is a poor hymn or sermon that does not bring Jesus, and his great love for us, to view. How wonderfully the writer brings out that union of Christ and his Bride. He not only shows the great love our Saviour had for his bride, but also shows that the application of that love to the heart of a poor sinner, causes him to seek the Saviour's face; that this union of the Bridegroom and the Bride (Christ and the Church) has a drawing influence on the Bride that causes her to make mention of the loving kindness of the Lord.

Let us examine some of the expressions of the writer of this book, as a view is given him of Christ, who had not yet made his personal advent into the world: "Draw me, and we will run after thee; Because of the savour of thy good ointments thy name is as an ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee." The name of Jesus

is as ointment poured forth, because it makes the wounded spirit whole, and calms the troubled breast. "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is Jesus Christ among the sons." We may enjoy the beauty of the forests, as we do at this season of the year, but when we are hungry, all the beauty of the forests would mean little to us if there could not be found one that supplied us with fruit; and supplied our needs. Then one can sit down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit is sweet to his taste; for Christ is as the shadow of a great Rock in a weary land to those who have been made to hunger and thirst after righteousness. This sitting down under his shadow, is also likened to being brought to his banqueting house, where his banner over us is love. How great are the tender mercies of a covenant-keeping God! He not only brings poor hell-deserving sinners to taste that the Lord is gracious, but he also shows them that the banner over them — the protecting hand of Almighty God — is a banner of love.

How wonderful is this union between Christ and his Bride, who is called the Lamb's wife.

"In union with the Lamb,
From condemnation free,
The saints from everlasting were,
And shall forever be.

Its bonds shall never break,
Though earth's old columns bow;
The strong, the tempted, and the weak,
Are one in Jesus now.

Here let the weary rest,
Who love the Saviour's name;
Though with no sweet enjoyment blest,
This covenant stands the same."

Is there any greater union than this: Chosen in him before the foundation of the world; given grace in him; called by his grace, and kept by his mighty power through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time? In this wonderful relationship, "We are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. No man ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church." It is indeed a strong embrace wherein Christ embraces his bride. "Of his fulness have we received, and grace for grace."

"His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me." This great manifestation of everlasting love causes one to exclaim: "My beloved is mine, and I am his." This great love when shed abroad in the heart, causes one to seek him; and how often one finds that He is not to be found in the streets, and in the broad ways; but must often go beyond the watchman to find him whom our soul loveth.

The song of Moses and the children of Israel, after being delivered from Egyptian bondage, was, "The Lord is my strength and my song, and he is become my salvation; He is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him."

Whether we join with David in describing the mighty work of God in bringing him up also out of miry clay, and putting a new song in his mouth; or join with the host that John heard singing a new song, saying, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Whether we sing one hymn, or another, if we sing the Song of Songs, we will sing praise and honor to our adorable Redeemer; and this glory and honor will never be divided with man, if we truly sing the Song of Songs.

THE PROMISE UNTO ABRAHAM

Denton, Ky.

"For if the inheritance be of the law it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator." (Galatians 3:18-19)

Abraham was first named Abram,

and the Lord changed his name, and called him Abraham; and he received from God the promise of the blessing to all nations in his posterity when he was ninty-nine years old. His father was Terah, and he was born in Ur of the Chaldees, B. C. 1996. He had two elder brothers, Haran and Nahor, and a half-sister, who was his wife and the mother of Isaac.

The spiritual element in the life of Abraham is the chief topic in the Bible narrative; very few incidents of his natural life being recorded. He was sixty years old when his father's family left Ur and went to Haran, where his father died at the age of 215 years; Abraham being 75 at the time of his father's death.

When the promise was first made, and when, as directed, he entered Canaan and fixed his camp under a sacred oak near Shechem, he built an altar and worshiped God; and received a promise of the inheritance of the land by his descendants. He seems to be the first recorded worshiper of the one true God. The promise made to him was twofold, temporal and spiritual: that his descendants should be many and prosperous; and that by him all the families of the earth should be blessed. Besides Sarah, he had a wife named Keturah, who bore him several sons; but the promised seed was to come through Isaac and Jacob. Little is said about the sons which he had by Keturah.

When Abram was ninty and nine years old, the Lord appeared to him, and said, "I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shalt thy name anymore be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a father unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." (Genesis 17:1-8)

The land of Canaan included all the land or country between the Jordan and the great sea; extending from Hamath on the north, to the desert below Beersheba on the south. I think it was the country which was to flow with milk and honey, as one of the blessings promised to national Israel, or Israel as a nation; and was typical of the spiritual Canaan to the faithful children of Abraham, or elect of God. To the unbelieving Jew it was only a natural blessing, consequently the promise did not mean much to them; but the faithful children of Abraham looked through the promise to the coming of a Saviour, or Redeemer who would redeem Israel. God redeemed them from the Egyptian bondage by Moses, and led them through the wilderness for forty years; in which many of them died. Suffering much from hunger and thirst, they complained against Moses and God; and said to Moses, "Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness?" They would have sought opportunity to return to Egypt, if they had known the way back.

So it is with spiritual Israel: when they are led through the wilderness of sin, and hunger for spiritual bread and water which comes down from heaven, and death and condemnation is staring them in the face, and justly so, they often murmur against God; and wish to return into their former state of bondage when they were at peace with their goods; but they know not the way back, since they were brought by a way they knew not, and led in paths which they had not trod before. So the children of Israel began to go after idol gods, which they made themselves; and

transgressed against the God of heaven. Because of this, God called Moses into the mountain top, and gave him a law to govern them; which was written on tables of stone, and which was to serve as a schoolmaster until the seed should come to whom the promise was made. It was a just, holy, and perfect law; but man was a sinner, and could not keep a holy law which demanded perfect obedience (but which could not take away sin). But by it was the knowledge and imputation of sin. Before the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed where there is no law; for sin is the transgression of the law. It was by the disobedience of one man that many were made sinners; and so by the obedience of one man many were made righteous. It was not so much the suffering, nor the dying, but the perfect obedience He rendered to the law's demands. The suffering and the dying would not have been enough without the perfect obedience. Being found fashioned as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (Phil. 2:8)

All His life here on earth was a life of obedience — he never disobeyed in the least point; and he suffered as no man on earth ever suffered. In my opinion, he suffered that which was equal to what the reprobate will suffer; as the people for whom he suffered were equally guilty of transgression with the reprobate. Nothing short of the same suffering could redeem them, they being equally guilty. They had all gone astray, and the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all: All, that many which were to be made righteous by his obedience. Isaiah says, "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." (Isaiah 53:5-6) He paid all that the law demanded of us, and took it away with all its ordinances and demands, nailing it to the cross; and now hath obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if the first covenant had been faultless then should no place have been sought for the second, but finding fault with them he saith, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws in their minds, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest; for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Hebrews 8:7-12)

Notice please, the law of this covenant, which is a new covenant: I will put my laws in their minds, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. This is on positive terms; and God does not speak anything but the truth, and it stands fast. Then he says, And they shall not (notice the shall) teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. (I am afraid those people who try to teach others to know the Lord, do not know him themselves, neither have they the laws of this new covenant written in their minds and hearts).

So we need not be uneasy about any of God's chosen people: He will make himself known to them at his appointed time. He knows where they are, and

who they are, for their names are all written in heaven; and none will ever be erased, neither will there ever be one more added. The law of this new covenant also forbids his covenanted people from yoking with, or taking part with the false worship of the people who trust in themselves — who believe their salvation depends on their acceptance of Christ, and volunteered belief, and their self-righteousness. These that have the law of their Lord written in their life, hear ringing in their ears, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the people of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Cor. 6:14-18)

The Spirit of God dwells in them, and teaches them in the way of all truth, so that they declare that their salvation (as Jonah did) is all of the Lord. Let us see if we can't prove this: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, (in whatever sense a thing is said to be dead, in that sense it is void of all faculties of life; it has no knowledge, no power; consequently cannot know or act in any capacity) hath quickened us together with Christ, (to quicken means to give life to something which has not the life which is under consideration); (by grace are ye saved), and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2:4-9)

A gift is free without any consideration whatever on the part of the receiver; so that he cannot boast of anything he has done to entice the giver. So God gives life and light to whomsoever he will; and whomsoever he will, he leaves in death and darkness. "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"

I have drifted away somewhat from the text — I have followed the lead of my mind; which was the only thing I could do. Probably I haven't written anything that will be of any interest to anyone. I am most always dissatisfied with my feeble efforts to write, or in trying to preach; and I think sometimes that I will never try again. If I could get rid of the impression, I would not; but soon find myself trying again. I hope the brethren will overlook all my imperfections in imposing my feeble efforts on them. May God bless all his jewels with his richest grace. I had hoped in my younger days, that as I grew older, I would find myself more humble and obedient to my God; but it seems that I get farther away, and feel more and more the need of his mercy and grace.

H. L. Rogers

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church at Whitefield, Maine, September 5, 6, 7, 1958, sends greetings to the associations and meetings with which we correspond:

Dear Brethren:

Through the mercy of our God we have been blessed to meet again in an association.

Your correspondence and messengers have been gladly received. Elder Helms, Elder Warren, and Elder Croker have come laden with the truths of God. They have preached in power and demonstration of the Spirit, feeding His sheep, of which, I hope I am.

How wonderful to be made to sit together in heavenly places! "Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." We have come again in weakness and poverty, knowing the flesh profiteth nothing; but we feel that we know of the love that passeth all understanding. God loved us from everlasting; therefore with loving kindness hath he drawn us unto himself.

Sometimes we are encompassed by darkness: cut off, alone, without God; then sometimes this darkness of night is followed by the bright sun of the morning. The works of the flesh have failed us, and we behold Him. How beautiful! The wonderful love has brought us all the way. I wish I could always have faith and assurance that, "As thy days thy strength shall be." Without his mercy and help, I would surely faint.

"O that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still.
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do His will."

The Lord willing, our next association will be held in Whitefield on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday before the second Monday in September, 1959.

Elder Arthur Warren, Moderator
Mrs. Sanford Bartlett, Clerk

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Sister Minerva Dunlap)

The Main Old School Baptist Association, convened at Whitefield, Maine, Sept. 5, 6, 7, 1958, sendeth greetings to the churches and associations with which we correspond.

Many years ago the psalmist sang: "God is the Lord, which hath showed us light." Today this same light that shines into the heart of the child of God is the foundation of the belief of our church. Revelation of the truth from the God of Heaven to those called according to his purpose is the rock on which our faith is based. Matthew writes, speaking of Jesus, in Chapter 16:15-18. "He saith unto them — But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said: Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him: Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto Thee, but my Father which is in Heaven. And I say unto thee that thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Nothing that Simon had done, nothing that anyone had told him, gave him the knowledge that Jesus was the Son of God. But the light had shined from above to open his eyes, to place in his heart the love that drew him to his Savior, to write in his inward parts the law that caused him to recognize the truth. All this was prophesied in Jeremiah 31:31-34. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquities and I will remember their sin no more." So the people of God are not dependent upon men, missionaries or ministers to be shown the truth, for their faith and belief is the gift of God.

Because they are shown the truth from above, our members and ministers do not acquire the knowledge at the feet of Gamaliel or attending theological seminaries or reading the opinions of learned Scriptural researchers who study the word but may know nothing of

the spiritual meaning. As Jesus says in Matthew 11:25, 26, 27: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and the prudent and hast revealed them unto babes, even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father, and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Without this revelation, then, this light that shines in the heart, no amount of studying the scriptures will assure knowledge of the truth. One well loved minister of our faith, when asked why he held certain views of the scriptures, explained simply: "All I know is what I have been shown." Knowledge that is brought to the child of God by this light that shines in the heart is of the kind that can never be doubted.

What are the truths that this light teaches? That God is great beyond our utmost ability to fathom; his thoughts are as far above our thoughts as Heaven is above the earth; He is able to do all things; his creatures are as nothing before Him and as prone to sin as the sparks to fly upward; He loves his children with an everlasting love and sheds abroad in their hearts the love of God "by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

This light, too, brings a love of our brethren. As expressed in John 3:14. "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." It teaches us our helplessness to save ourselves, it shows us our unworthiness for the least of his favors, it makes us fearful of taking one step lest we offend; it gives us a great desire to walk in that narrow way, humbly, at his feet, a wish to honor and praise his name and a desire to thank him for his unspeakable gift. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. 4, 6.)

This was the same light which came to Daniel with the interpretation of a dream and caused him to praise God in these words: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are his! And he changeth the times and the seasons; he removeth Kings and setteth up Kings: He giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding. He revealeth the deep and secret things; He knoweth what is in the darkness and the light dwelleth with him."

This light that shines also came to Saul, a man highly educated for his time, who was serious in his belief that he should search out and destroy the sect called Christians. He had secured papers from the high priest to the synagogues at Damascus giving him authority to bind any worshippers of Christ he might find and bring them to Jerusalem. "And as he journeyed he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." From that time on, Saul worshipped Jesus as his Savior and obeyed his commands. The light that shined in his heart was so powerful that he was blind for three days and without desire to eat or drink. After that he was baptized, preached Jesus in the synagogues, edifying the churches he was sent to serve and increasing in zeal for the cause he had hated.

Who are these that have known his power and seen his glory; that have felt, in his presence, weak and as worms in the dust; that have rejoiced when his ministers bring the glad tidings; that have burned in their hearts when they hear a brother tell of an experience of grace?

These are, we believe, those to whom the light from Heaven has shined: his jewels, spoken of in Malachi, who fear the Lord, think upon his name and

speak often one to another.

Elder Arthur Warren, Moderator
Mrs. Sanford Bartlett, Clerk

Winnsboro, Texas

Dear Brother and Sister Ault,

I have been intending to write you every day since we came from down there; something is always coming up that I have not gotten around to it.

Trusting you both are about to get rested up after your lovely association — how we did enjoy it. Oh! that great love that seemed to penetrate from the depth of our heart to one another, it could be **felt** so deeply — What wonderous love — What a Great God we have that can draw his children from every direction and make them sit together in Heavenly places. It is a Heavenly place to be together and feel the spirit of Almighty God in the midst. Oh, how unworthy I feel to even be among them: the most precious people on earth.

My only hope — My only trust, is in the shed blood of our precious Saviour Jesus Christ.

I am **made** to cry day after day — Did he die for a poor hell deserving sinner like me? Was he nailed to the rugged cross for my sins? Did he wear the crown of thorns that I might wear a crown of glory? Was he given the bitter cup to drink that I might drink the sweet? What he said when he was hanging on the cross between heaven and earth, "It is finished." Did he mean he had finished the work His Father had given him to do — "To save his people from their sins" — Did he do this for me? When he was layed in Joseph's new tomb and in three days rose again and ascended into heaven to make intercessions for the saints of God. Was I in that number? Is it the love of God we have in our hearts that we love our brethren, or do we just trust we love them? Is ours a selfish love? I believe God's love is so strong and works so mightily in our hearts and minds we can't retain that love. The same love that God loved us with goes out and loves the brethren — I think we show our love more outwardly to some than we do to others, but the Godly love, I am speaking of, is the same for one just as it is for the other. We just don't manifest it as much.

Dear Brother and Sister, sometimes I get down so low and despondent and my heart gets so heavy, it seems God has completely forgotten me. We are made to know day to day. We can not reach up and draw Him near to us, we must wait upon Him. We are promised not to be completely forsaken. If we be one of his little ones, He knows just what we need and what is best for us — we don't. When we need trouble, trials and temptations, he gives us our supply. Just enough; no more, no less. When it pleases Him to raise us up out of the miry clay, places our mind, our trust, our all in Him, then, and only then, can we praise Him from whence all blessings come. Then and only then can we say, "Not my will but thine be done, Oh Lord."

Dearly beloved ones, I'm looking forward to the time when I can hear my Saviour (I trust) say, "Come home." In that dying hour may it please Him to take my hand and walk with me through the valley of death to that blessed mansion that awaits his children. When my eyes close in death not to see this old world any more, may I be carried to that beautiful city not made with hands.

There I hope to meet the loved ones that I have to be separated from here on earth, and be with them and my Lord and Saviour in that endless eternity. Oh! dear ones, won't that be a wonderful time?

"We speak of the realms of the blest,
Of that county so bright and so fair,
And oft are its glories confessed,
But what must it be to be there?

We speak of the pathway of gold,
Of its walls decked with jewels so rare,
Of its wonders and pleasures untold,
But what must it be to be there?

We speak of its freedom from sin,
From sorrow, temptation, and care,

From trials without and within,
But what must it be to be there?

We speak of the service of love,
Of the robes which the glorified wear,
Of the church of the first-born above,
But what must it be to be there?

Dear Lord, amid sorrow and woe,
My spirit for heaven prepare;
That shortly I, also, may know
And feel what it is to be there.

There anthems of praise we will sing,
When safe in that haven of rest,
To Jesus, our Saviour and King,
Who reigns in those realms of the blest."

Dearly beloved, I have written some of my thoughts this morning while alone, however, my mind has run much faster than my pen; and I feel a sweet calmness in my breast. Oh, if I could always have this feeling of love in my heart, I don't think I would ever be troubled again. From somewhere I can hear a small, sweet voice saying, Peace, sweet peace.

With Christian love to you both, I remain a sinner, saved by the mercies of God, if saved.

Dessie Mae Lambert

APPOINTMENT FOR ELDER GRIFFIN

Elder W. D. Griffin expects to be with the brethren at Harmony Church, near Atlanta, Georgia, the 1st Sunday in December.

FURTHER WORD FROM ELDER BENNETT

Since Elder Bennett wrote the note published in our last issue, he has been very ill again, having suffered a stroke. But we are glad to learn that he is greatly improved at this writing, November 10th.

— J. D. W.

BEWARE

Our brethren will probably do well to beware of anyone claiming to be an Old School Baptist from a distance, who seeks financial aid under one pretext or another. We know of two places in the past few weeks where such has occurred, and by all accounts by the same man using a different name. We are afraid that it is another case of preying upon our people.

— J. D. W.

Danville, Virginia **December, 1958**

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EDITORIAL

COMPLETION OF ANOTHER VOLUME

This issue completes another volume of the Signs; and we sincerely hope that there are many brethren and friends who have been comforted and edified in reading its columns. We would affirm again that, with the sustaining hand of the Lord, the Signs is dedicated to continue in those principles upon which it was founded 126 years ago; for the Trustees and Editors are thoroughly persuaded that the doctrine which is maintained, is Bible doctrine, and, being that, ought to be cherished and contended for by those who have been brought out of darkness into light. The unadulterated Bible doctrine is the only doctrine which ascribes all honor, praise, and glory unto our God; and gives account of what great things He has done for his people. Those who know that "by the grace of God they are what they are", want nothing else but those things which were given by inspiration;

for they know that they are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17)

We express our appreciation to all those who have made it possible for the Signs to continue to circulate among the Lord's people, whether by writing for publication, by subscriptions, by donations, or words of encouragement; and we desire that we may have your continued support. We welcome articles dealing with the experiences of grace of the Lord's people, and upon subjects of interest to those who love the doctrine of God our Saviour.

J. D. W.

GALATIANS 6:14

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

This testimony of the Apostle Paul has been much on our mind, especially of late, and with the desire that God will, in His kind mercy, help me, I will endeavour to put what I have on paper, conscious that I, in and of myself, have nothing but shame and confusion of face, but even here, I am encouraged to hope that in all ages, God's humble poor have come through great tribulation. "When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." Romans 7:9. This holy law of God which at one time we thought was unto life, we found to be a ministration of death, and it was a bitter lesson to learn, as Paul also learnt, so that he could say, "For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." Romans 7:18.

Looking back now upon that experience, we know that it was good for us to pass through it and to learn the vanity of a circumcision of the flesh made by hands, even though there were many then with their bewitching doctrine, who would substitute reformation in the place of regeneration. Galatians 3:2. We know that the flesh profiteth nothing, and that what we sing is true, "Vile and full of sin I am, Thou art full of truth and grace."

Leaving the thought of our own experience, our mind goes back to the solemn scene at Calvary, where the Lord of all, willingly went to the cross, despising the shame, out of love to poor vile sinners. Paul in Philippians 2:5, speaking to the brethren there says, "Let this mind be in you, WHICH WAS ALSO in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

By nature we were all conceived in sin, shapen in iniquity and went from the womb speaking lies, born under a curse. Moses, the law-giver, gave a commandment unto Israel nearly fifteen hundred years before Christ suffered, saying, "If a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day (FOR HE THAT IS HANGED IS ACCURSED OF GOD)." Deuteronomy 21:22-23. We see here why they brake the thieves' legs to hasten their death, but when they came to our Lord, He was dead already, so they brake not His legs. They knew not that they were fulfilling prophecy, "A bone of Him shall not be broken." John 19:36. No one, of himself, would willingly go to the cross, for it was a cursed thing to be dreaded. The soldiers compelled Simon of Cyrene to bear the cross of Christ, but Simon, though suffering under the tyranny of forced labour, knew nothing or the awfulness of the solemn transaction that was then taking place. As a lamb to the slaughter, Jesus went willingly to the cross, and

they crucified Him between two thieves. We read in the gospels how the chief priests and elders reviled him, and the two thieves did the same. "He saved others; Himself He cannot save, If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God, let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him: for He said, I am the Son of God. The thieves also, which were crucified with Him, cast the same in His teeth." Matthew 27:42-44. Those two thieves were under the same condemnation and represent the whole of the human race who are under the curse that sin, through disobedience, brought into the world. Those thieves were suffering the just reward of their deeds and would both have died as they had lived, had not the amazing grace of God been shown to the one. Though as guilty and unworthy as the other, the light of God shone in his heart, the same light that shone into Saul's heart, that must shine into ours if we be His, and what a change took place in the thief who was enlightened, he rebuked his fellow thief, saying, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? and we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss, and he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into Thy kingdom." Luke 23:-40-42. This was God's work, as Jesus said to the people during His ministry, "This is the work of God that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." John 6:29.

It is clear that of those two thieves one was a gracious and the other was a graceless character. So it is with the whole of the human race. The Grace of God, which is a sovereign act manifested by the work of God's Holy Spirit within the souls of those who are His, worketh IN THEM TO WILL and TO DO of His good pleasure. The very God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shined in the heart of that poor thief, to give him "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Corinthians 4:6. Yes, it is an amazing grace that could give this dying thief a knowledge that can never be understood nor imparted by this wise world. This knowledge, imparted to Saul, wise and learned as he was, made him to count all his ambitions and attainments as loss and of no more value than dung, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. Thus Saul, as the thief, and as we also, must come in that way. "Sovereign grace o'er sin abounding," The thief's prayer was to Him as God, when He, Jesus, was dying as a man. Then, as now, He was a prayer-hearing and answering God. Dear John Newton sang, "The dying thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day, O may I there though vile as he, wash all my sins away." From the moment a person is illuminated from above, he is made to differ as the one thief differed right there from the other. It was the same difference as there was between Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob and Ruth and Orpah. Here we see the doctrine of Election in its purest rays, a doctrine very unpalatable to the natural man, yet lovely and satisfying to those who have experienced the power of Love Divine. By this divine illumination Saul knew under what a curse he had been, just as did the dying thief, neither could boast one over the other. The Jews boasted that they had Abraham to their father, but they were told that God could of those very stones raise up children to Abraham. How little they understood, for Abraham was their father after the flesh and obtained from above that excellent knowledge which enabled him to believe in a God who could justify the ungodly.

The thief knew that his cross and suffering were his just desert, and from the moment grace came to him, Christ and His cross and suffering were his to think upon and glory in. The other thief would now reproach him, but there was another kingdom, another world, opened to his view, that made the world he was leaving dark and dead, in fact he knew, through Christ Jesus, of a home above

and wished and prayed to be remembered by Him there. Paul knew he was dead to the world by the body of Christ, for he was taught by the same teacher as the thief was, that through the merits of his blessed Lord, who died for sin, he was dead to sin also. The love of Christ constraineth us and love doth every sin control in those who are the favoured recipients of Divine charity. Such loving-kindness awakes the soul in joyful lays to sing our great Redeemer's praise. The poor thief, dying in his sins, could never understand what had suddenly changed his companion, and no doubt the poor man in his dying breath would express the same enmity to him as he did to his Lord. On the other hand how should a consideration of these solemn things affect us who profess to be God's dear children by faith in His Son? One has said, "So let our lips and lives express the holy doctrine we profess." Toplady, in one of his pithy sayings, said. "The reason why there is not so much persecution now as there was in primitive times, is not because the world is better now than it was then, but because professors are worse, let us once get a primitive spirit and we shall meet with primitive usage, and apostolic treatment."

There is, however, the taking of the spoiling of our goods joyfully. Even if our houses and goods remain untouched, there is in the cross to-day a trial as acute as they had then, for the cross of Christ is a reproach. The world looks upon our doctrine as a curse and that we are cursed in holding thereto. Especially in this believed by the religious world. To bear the cross and despise the shame is the desire of God's people to-day, and how can they do this but in looking unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of their faith?

While I have quoted Toplady, I know that it is the same Spirit that wrought in the thief and in Saul who works mightily in His people to-day. These are different times to those in which the apostle lived. It is fashionable to have a religion, the name of Jesus is on most people's lips, but is it the Jesus in whom the dying thief believed? of whom it is declared by the unalterable Word of God, "For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that SHALL be destroyed is death." 1 Corinthians 15:25-26. "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another." "Let us not be weary in well doing." "'Tis my happiness below, not to live without the cross." is still a song that we love to sing, and we know of One who can, and does, sanctify crosses and losses to our good and His glory, and how wonderful, in this dark and cloudy day, to know and feel what Paul felt when he said, "I am crucified with Christ; (he must have felt very close to his dear Lord there, yes, as close as the thief was on that solemn day when Jesus became "accursed of God" for us. Deuteronomy 21:23.) nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ LIVETH IN ME: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Galatians 2:20-21.

This means in simple terms, that wherever Christ's Spirit dwells, the soul is exercised daily by the trials and chastening of the Lord which is often not joyous, but grievous, nevertheless the peaceable fruits of righteousness are manifest in those that are exercised thereby. To those who are dead and do not know it, there is not found in them this exercise, but Paul, speaking to the brethren said, "Ye are dead," and they knew it, having come into a living experience of Christ and His cross, as the thief had.

Now henceforth we owe nothing to the flesh that we should live after the flesh, for we have died to the flesh as we have seen Christ as our life, and the life we now seek, is to live unto Him, and it is faith in Him, by the operation of His blessed Spirit that enables us to so do and to face a frowning world, believing that if we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him. The devil,

who is an enemy of the truth, is still that crooked serpent, who is transformed into an angel of light and would turn us from what Christ has done, to what we ought to do. Living in those things that the flesh can do religiously, is returning to a circumcision in the flesh made with hands. No wonder that Paul said to the Galatians, "Who hath bewitched you?" They had begun in the Spirit and before their eyes Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth, crucified among them. "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain?" He who has had a living experience wrought in him by the Holy Ghost and has been shown that the body is dead because of sin, can be assured that Christ liveth in him. He knows also that he is so dead that of himself he can do no spiritually good thing, but he is also favoured to believe that it is God who worketh in him TO WILL and TO DO of His good pleasure, and this work is the work of a risen Christ in us, the hope of glory. Why then should not a believer here in this world glory in the cross of Christ Jesus? by which he is crucified unto the world and the world unto him.

G. R.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE TEMPLE OF GOD

"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." — *1 Cor. iii. 17.*

These fearful words were spoken in admonition to the branch of the church of God recognized as the very temple of which the apostle speaks; and if applicable to the church at Corinth, is it not also to every branch of the church of God throughout all time? Both temples, the first and the second, were typical, and are in the New Testament used as being figurative of Christ, as that antitypical temple in which all the fullness of the Godhead and the complete fullness of all his church meet, and where God is worshiped in spirit and in truth.

But the admonition of our text does not allude to the temple as directly figurative of Christ; because Christ, as the true temple, cannot be defiled. His church is also compared to a temple, in several instances in the New Testament; and in the present case the apostle leaves no room for doubting that he used the term to signify that temple which the saints are, namely, the church of the living God, the ground and pillar of the truth. Into this temple God collects all of his chosen, redeemed, quickened and justified people; and in this temple he meets with them, and communes with them from his mercy seat, and from between the cherubim. His train, or elect, fills this temple, and his presence makes the place of his feet glorious.

Holiness becometh the house of the Lord forever; for it is a holy temple in the Lord, and not to be defiled with impunity. Let us inquire,

1st. In what respects is the temple or church susceptible of defilement?

2d. By whom?

3d. In what sense shall they be destroyed?

First. The church cannot be defiled, in a legal sense; for by one offering Christ has established her perfection forever. She is redeemed from the dominion as well as from the curse of the law; and where there is no law there consequently can be no transgression. Hence the apostle triumphantly demanded, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" Her justification by the blood and righteousness of Christ cannot be tarnished, sullied or defaced. Heaven has graciously provided against such a catastrophe, and the blood of Christ has cleansed her from all sin and guilt, so that God will behold no spot or blemish in her. Yet, notwithstanding

the immutability of that righteousness which God has put upon her, there is a sense in which she is susceptible of defilement; not in her Head, but in the deportment of her members, as we shall endeavor to show.

In regard to doctrine, every departure from the doctrine of Christ as set forth by the apostles is a defilement of the beauty of the church in her militant state. Contrast the appearance of the church in her primitive purity of doctrine with those professed branches of the church which have departed from the faith and given heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, and we shall see that Ichabod is written upon the deserters of the gospel simplicity, for the former glory has departed. If this view of the subject be correct, he that would introduce into the church of God any doctrine that is not clearly authorized by the authority of Christ, and warranted by the New Testament, is guilty of defiling the temple of God. As no human tool could touch the altar which God commanded to be built in the wilderness without polluting it, neither can the slightest touch of human improvement be applied to the doctrine of God our Savior without defilement to the church. "But though we," said an inspired apostle, "or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

In regard to the order of the house of God, the church or temple becomes defiled by us when we lay aside the laws of Christ and substitute in their stead such expedients as may seem good in our eyes. As nothing can appear more beautiful in the order of the church than a strict adherence to the divine rule, nothing can obscure her real glory more than a departure from that rule. The admonition of our text should warn us against all corruptions of, or innovations upon, the rules of order laid down by Christ and his apostles in the New Testament.

The general deportment of those who stand connected as members of the church of God, their walk and conversation in the church and before the world, has much to do with either adorning the doctrine of God our Savior, or defiling the temple of God. And it is evidently in reference to this that the admonition of our text was written, and upon this point more especially we felt impressed to offer a few remarks. The apostle alludes to the divisions in the Corinthian church arising from preferences expressed by the members for Paul, and Apollos, and others, as indicating a carnal state, calculated to defile; and also of an inclination to the wisdom of this world, by which members are liable to deceive themselves. This he shows to be inadmissible, because it is foolishness with God; and what God does not approve must have a defiling tendency.

In the fifth chapter he speaks of corruptions of a more flagrant nature, such as fornication, covetousness, extortion, idolatry, railery, drunkenness, &c., which some that are called brethren may be quilty of; and he shows that to retain such in church fellowship, or to give them any countenance, even so much as to eat with them, is to defile the temple of God. And, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, he, with his apostolic authority, commands that when they be come together they shall deliver such to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh. From the solemn admonitions given, it appears that it is not enough that Christians shall themselves walk circumspectly, as individuals, while they wink at the disorderly deportment of those with whom they may stand ostensibly connected as brothers, or fellow-members of the temple or church of God. Our own skirts cannot be clear if we neglect the order of discipline which Christ by his apostles has established.

It is worthy of notice that the apostles have classed covetousness and railing with fornication and drunkenness and heresy. To suffer any of these in the church is to defile the temple; and

how awful is the responsibility! We can scarcely flatter ourselves that there are no defilements in regard to these things among the Old School Baptists. The church at Corinth was an Old School Baptist church, and she was infested with some whom Paul consigned to Satan. Indeed, we have thought much on this subject of late, and to us it seems that the severe trials through which our God is causing his people to pass at this time is, under his mighty hand, to sift them as wheat, and to purge and purify them as gold.

In regard to the modern church and worldly societies, the Old School Baptists have taken a noble stand; they have generally come out boldly and clearly in defense of truth in regard to the doctrine of Christ; in this, however, there are exceptions. The temple is still soiled with the dirty doctrines of the "Two Seeds," so-called, of "Means," in quickening the dead, and a denial of the scriptural doctrine of the resurrection; still, as a general thing, there is a good degree of unanimity and harmony of sentiment among them.

Second. The purging process which our God has commenced will be carried on, and he will purge away all the filthiness of the daughters of Zion. But is it not equally as important that we should be circumspect in our walk and conduct, as that we should be sound in the doctrine of our faith? What will the one avail where the other cannot be found? Will a sound profession of doctrine atone for a licentious course of conduct, or a form of godliness in practice, where the faith of the gospel is denied? To admit either of these positions is to consent to a defiling of the Lord's temple. Yet, humiliating as it may be, have we not witnessed instances of defilement in both cases?

Are there not those who are willing to be called Old School Baptists, and to walk very sanctimoniously in their external deportment, make long prayers, and go into the very tithing of mint, &c., if we will not question them too severely in regard to the doctrine of the gospel? And, on the other hand, are there not those who make a great noise about orthodoxy, can toe the mark, and subscribe to the most clear and emphatic declarations of truth for which the people of God have always been persecuted, and even preach these distinguishing and discriminating sentiments, with extravagant zeal, who, after all their bustle, show that the love of holiness has no governing influence over their walk and conversation? Are there none justly chargable with covetousness, uncleanness, intemperance, extortion and railing, who talk much about the safety of the church, the covenant faithfulness of God, the sure mercies of David, and the certain preservation of all the saints in grace to eternal glory?

By reason of such discrepance between profession and practice, the temple is and has been defiled, fellowship marred, peace interrupted, and the enemy led to charge that we hold that we should sin that grace may abound. The spirit of holiness in God's children will certainly cause them to feel and to mourn over the corruptions of their nature, and the defection which they find in all they do; but it can never lead them to indulge in sin because they are sure of the power of grace to deliver them. The very devil himself suggests such a course. If thou be the Son of God, or, if thou art a subject of grace, cast thyself down from the pinnacle; because God has promised to give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest thou dash thy foot, &c. Christians may be thus tempted, for their glorious Leader was thus tempted; but if the Spirit of Christ be in them, it will direct the same course that Christ pursued when he in like manner was tempted.

If in searching Jerusalem with lighted candles, these spots in our feasts of charity are found, what is the course pointed out for us in the "law and the testimony?" Shall we offset these abom-

inations by saying that we are ourselves poor, imperfect creatures? Or shall we say in our practice, what we deny in our theory, that a sound and orthodox profession of faith is sufficient, without purity of life and deportment? Or shall we, as Old School Baptists, say that we have at great sacrifice taken our stand on the old apostolic doctrine, withdrawn our fellowship from the New School, protested against the new religious inventions of antichrist, and now we will not be as particular about practice as we have been in regard to doctrine? Brethren, can we take such ground, and not defile the temple?

"If any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy." This is a fearful declaration, and it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Third. But how shall they be destroyed? We do not feel warranted to believe that they are to be annihilated, or that God's children are to cease to be his children; but the instruction intended may be understood by the many examples which now stare us in the face. Take, for example, those churches which once stood on the old apostolic platform in doctrine and order; we see them defiled with all the new religious inventions of the age, and as churches of Christ they are destroyed. Having departed from the doctrine and order, they can no longer be recognized as churches or temples of the Lord; and in many cases they have, like their type, become dens of thieves, places for merchandise, for changing of money, and stock jobbing in religious speculations. The same is true in regard to individuals who have departed from either the faith or order of the gospel. Examples are not few of those who have imbibed the popular heresies of the age; and, so far as relates to their connection with the temple or church of God, they are destroyed, have become "castaways," or, like the salt that has lost its savor, "good for nothing but to be cast out (of the fellowship of the people of God), and trampled under foot of men."

Others again who strenuously oppose all the new religious inventions of the times, zealously contend for a form of sound doctrine, but by looseness of deportment, licentiousness of their practice, carnal indulgence of the flesh, &c., are delivered up to Satan for the accomplishment of this destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.—1 Cor. v. 5.

It is indeed a comfortable reflection to the saints that all the trials to which the church of God is exposed are working for her good and his glory, and even the defiling of the temple shall be overruled by his mighty hand to the accomplishment of good. As when, in the vision of the prophet Ezekiel, the men with slaughter weapons were commanded to "Slay utterly old and young, both maids and little children, and women; but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men, which were before the house. And he said unto them, Defile the house, and fill the courts with the slain."—Ezek. ix. 6, 7. Even so will God purge away the corruption of doctrine and practice from his spiritual sanctuary. He will cause the sinners in Zion to be afraid, and fearfulness to surprise the hypocrites. The exhibition of gospel doctrine shall disconcert all such as love not the truth, while the discipline of the kingdom shall search out such as possess not the love of holiness. If God has suffered heretics to infest his temple, it is that they may be exposed, detected and expelled after they have sufficiently tried the patience of his children; and if any have gained admittance by consenting to the truth while they love sin, they shall be made manifest in due time, and perhaps by the indulgence of their unhallowed propensities, and fall under the condemnation of the laws of Christ.

May the Lord grant us all that grace we need as Old School Baptists, and enable us to walk worthy of the high vocation wherewith we are called; and

while we refuse to countenance the new, fashionable and humanly devised religious operations of new schoolism, let us see that we act consistently, by withdrawing ourselves also from every brother that walks disorderly. It can avail us nothing, either in promoting the honor of our Lord or in contributing to the peace of the saints, that we have withdrawn our fellowship from the new order, if we retain in our embrace and fellowship those who by their general walk show that they love the gratification of the flesh more than the course of holiness marked out by the Head of the church.

We are aware, dear brethren, that many of the weak and trembling lambs of the flock may feel ready to write bitter things against themselves, and ready to inquire, "Lord, is it I? Am I not one of those defilers whose end is destruction?" But such as feel the plague of their own nature, who groan being burdened, who sigh and mourn over their short comings, and for the abominations that are committed in Israel, are not the characters denounced. Weak, tried, tempted, harassed, perplexed and tempest-tossed as they may be, God has good things in store for them. The love of God, and consequently the love of holiness, dwells in them. They shall not be ashamed nor confounded in a world without end. God's promise and grace secures them. We have not designed to be personal in our allusions; but if there be any who find themselves portrayed, let them not be deceived; God will not be mocked.

We close our remarks on this subject with the words of admonition used by the apostle, Heb. xii. 12-19, "Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. Follow peace with all, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe—April 1, 1847.)

OBITUARIES

REBECCA GREENE SLAUGHTER ARRINGTON

Our dear Sister, Rebecca Green Slaughter Arrington was called home Sunday evening, September 7, 1958, after a long illness, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. W. O. Wilson, of Oxford, N. C. She was born April 12, 1863, the daughter of Soloman Green Slaughter and Sarah Philpot Slaughter. At the age of 27 years (April 23, 1890) she was married to Thomas Marcus Arrington, who passed away in 1932. They were blessed with 5 daughters and 2 sons: Nancy Carolyn (Mrs. C. J. Wilson), Oxford, N. C.; Harriet Theresa (Mrs. W. O. Wilson), Oxford, N. C.; Verna Pauline (Mrs. W. L. Dean), Norfolk, Va.; Patricia Green Arrington, at the home; Sarah Thomas (Mrs. N. E. Harris), deceased; Richard Solomon Arrington, South Norfolk, Va.; and Robert Alexander Arrington, Oxford, N. C.; also a number of grandchildren and great grandchildren to mourn her passing.

In October, 1897, she was received into the fellowship of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church, and remained a member until dismissed by letter to become a charter member of Memorial Primitive Baptist Church, at Stem, N. C. (which later became known as J. H. Gooch Memorial), where she remained a member until death. This made a total of 61 years as a faithful member of the "Old School Primitive Baptist Church". She loved the truth, and her sisters and brethren, and her church; and was faithful in its doctrine. She was very familiar with her Bible, and had a most wonderful gift as to its contents.

Funeral services were held in the meeting house at Stem by her pastor, Elder J. Harvey Smth, assisted by Mr. Eugene Usry, a close friend. The subject of his discourse was from Revelation. She being the last charter member of our church, the pastor read the hymn that was used in the opening service when the church at Stem was organized; after which the remains were interred in Elmwood Cemetery, at Oxford. The many floral offerings were a silent token of the respect and love of those who knew her.

As a tribute to her memory, be it

RESOLVED, First, that we in patient recognition bow to this dispensation of God's provi-

dence, knowing that all his purposes are right; and

RESOLVED, Second, that we cherish her memory, and strive to emulate the virtues which, through abounding grace, adorned her life; and

RESOLVED, Third, that a copy of this memorial be inscribed on our church record; a copy given the bereaved family; and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Adopted by the J. H. Gooch Memorial Church, Stem, N. C., in conference this the 13th day of September, 1958.

J. M. Daniel, Asst. Clerk

RICHARD WILLIS

We, the members of Reedy Prong Church, bow in humble submission to the divine providence of Almighty God in removing Brother Richard Willis from us. He was born in Johnston County, N. C., November 11, 1889; and passed away at his home near Clinton on May 26, 1958, having been in failing health for several years; and critically ill for two weeks. He is survived by his widow, the former Sarah Langdon; two daughters: Mrs. Euada Tart, and Mrs. Beatrice McGee; four sons: Rupert, Edgar, James and Burklis; and several grandchildren.

Brother Willis joined Reedy Prong Primitive Baptist Church on the fourth Saturday in May, 1957; and was baptized by his pastor, Elder Lester E. Lee. He was a faithful member, and attended the meetings regularly as long as his health permitted.

Funeral services were held in Rose Funeral Home, in Benson; conducted by Elder Lee. The beautiful floral offerings showed the high esteem in which he was held.

BE IT RESOLVED, First, that we extend our heart felt sympathy to the bereaved family and loved ones. Second, That a copy of these Resolutions of Respect be written in our church book; a copy be mailed to the family; and that a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church the fourth Saturday in June, 1958.

Elder Lester E. Lee, Moderator
Brother H. E. Smith
Sister Thelma Smith
Sister Hazel Dunn, Committee

ELDER LLOYD LUTHER WILSON

Elder L. L. Wilson was born in Mississippi on May 15, 1878, and departed this life on June 7, 1958, making his stay on earth 80 years. He joined the Old Baptist Church in 1915, and in 1922 moved to Louisiana where he joined the old Louisiana Association and was liberated to speak in the same year. A number of years later he moved to California and the latter part of his life was spent among the Baptists here. He was ordained to the ministry at Bethel Church, Stockton, Calif. Shortly after the organization of Hopewell Church in 1950, he served as pastor for two years. At the organization of Little Flock Church in Bakersfield, Calif. he was chosen pastor and remained so until death. He was also serving Seclusia Church, Compton, Calif. at the time of his death.

Brother Wilson was indeed an humble and God-fearing man, and was one of the best fireside preachers that I have ever known. Wife and I had the privilege of having him in our home on numerous occasions, and they are remembered with pleasure. He was kind to everyone, never speaking harm of anyone. He was very feeble during the last year of his life; but when we visited him he always spoke of the love and sweet fellowship he had for his brethren.

His wife having preceded him in death, he left to mourn his passing two daughters, Alma Smith and Thelma Bridges, of Bakersfield, Calif.; seven sons, Earl, Melvin, Alvin, Emmett, Paul and Lester, of Louisiana, and Alton of Bakersfield; also four sisters, three brothers and several grandchildren.

Several years ago, Brother Wilson requested me to speak words of comfort to his dear children and friends at his passing, so on June 11, 1958, at Greenlawn Chapel, Bakersfield, Calif., I tried, in my weak way, to point out his strong belief in God's will in doing His pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; also that he firmly believed in the predestination of all things whatsoever comes to pass. Oftentimes in his preaching he would make the assertion that God has no need for time, except to carry out His purposes and His will. He believed in the salvation by grace of God's people both in time and eternity. He believed that God chose His people in Christ before the world began, and in the final preservation of the saints, and that Christ arose from the dead for the justification of His people.

May it please the dear Lord, if it could be His will, to comfort his dear children, and may his brethren realize that their loss is his gain.

T. R. Jefferson

OUR DARLING MOTHER

Peaceful be thy sleep dear Mother:
My heart aches with loneliness;
God only knows our cares and sorrows, —
Mother dear, it is you we miss.

It is sweet to breathe thy name;
In life I loved you dearly,
In death I do the same.
Oh! it would be so precious,
Could I but hear your voice again.

You are gone, but not forgotten;
We know your sleep is peaceful,
At rest in heaven forevermore.
Yes! Mother it was you we did adore.

May we look to Jesus, our Saviour,
To embrace us in our great grief,
Helping us to go on; and look forward
To meeting you in that heavenly place,
Where we will know joy and not sorrow.

Mother dear, we miss you so:
There's a vacancy that can't be filled.
It has pleased our Saviour, we know,
To call you: so we'll say: It was His Will.

In prayer we would ask our Master
To guide and keep us to live right;
Hoping to meet you in heaven
Where no sorrow, no grief can blight;
But all sweet joy, sweet peace, and delight.

(Written by: Mrs. J. M. Brown. In Memory of My Darling Mother, Mrs. R. D. Koonce, Age 83, Center, Texas. Who passed away January 11, 1958.)

JOHN F. DAVIS, SR.

The subject of this sketch was born December 23, 1878, in Webster Parish, Louisiana; and died July 25, 1958, at his home near Ringgold, La. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Eunice Thomas Davis; three sons: John F., Bobota, Columbia; Z. T., Houston, Texas; and James M., Ringgold, La.; five daughters: Mrs. Nelder Parker, Natchitoches, La.; Mrs. Hazel Ford, Houston, Texas; Mrs. Nancy Pullig, Lake Charles, La.; Miss Mary, and Miss Annie Davis, Ringgold; four grandchildren; two brothers: G. B. Davis, Clarence, La., and Berry Davis, Elm Grove, La.; and one sister, Mrs. Will Perry, Ringgold, La.

He was not a member of the visible church, but he was a very strong and interested believer; and he was well posted in the doctrine of God our Saviour. He attended Old Baptist meetings often, far and near; and was liberal in helping to take care of Old Baptists, and loved for them to visit in his home. He was well liked and highly appreciated by all who knew him. He and his dear wife and family attended Old Baptist meetings and enjoyed them very much.

To his dear loved ones may I offer a few words of comfort. He is now gone from us; yet according to the many sweet evidences he left us, he is now at rest: until our Lord and Saviour comes again to gather his saints home to himself, where there will be no more sin, sickness, pain, nor death; but love, joy, peace, and everlasting praise to His precious name. May God bless and comfort you, dear Sister Davis, and all the dear children; and give you love, belief, and trust in the Lord, who is the only Saviour of his people.

The unworthy writer conducted the funeral on Sunday, July 27, 1958; and the body was laid to rest in New Providence Church Cemetery. There was a large congregation of relatives and friends, and many beautiful flowers. May the Lord bless you all, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

R. W. Rhodes

DEACON JESSE H. DANIEL

Deacon Jesse H. Daniel, age 65 years of Simms, Texas, passed away at his home on Friday night, September 20, 1957. He left surviving him to mourn his passing his wife, Sister Ruth Daniel, five sons, Harldson Daniel, of Texarkana, Texas, Paul Daniel of New Boston, Texas, J. R. Daniel, of Simms, Texas, Jesse Daniel of Denison, Texas, and J. Harvey Daniel, of Merced, Calif. Six daughters, Mrs. Leo Hall, Hooks, Texas, Mrs. Leroy Jones, New Boston, Texas, Mrs. Sam Hayes, Chickasha, Okla., Mrs. R. V. Miller, Hooks, Texas, Mrs. Raymond Pate, Texarkana, Texas, and Miss Wanda Daniel, of Simms, Texas, twelve grandchildren, seven brothers and four sisters.

Brother Daniel was a life long resident of the vicinity of Simms, Texas, and had a host of friends and acquaintances by whom he was highly esteemed and respected. He was a faithful member and Deacon of Prospect Primitive Baptist Church near Simms, Texas, and will be greatly missed. He loved his church and was faithful to it. Some months before his death, seeing the need of remodeling and refurnishing the building of the church he set out to get it done. With the help and cooperation of the brethren and friends the same was accomplished and it was practically finished at the time of his death.

Funeral services were held at the church and conducted by Elders T. A. Wall and Lloyd Wall, pastors of the church and the writer on Sunday at 10:30 a. m., September 22nd, 1957, in the presence of a large crowd of brethren, sisters and friends. The large crowd and beautiful floral offering attested the love, respect and high esteem of the brethren, sisters and friends of that vicinity. His body was laid to rest to await the glorious resurrection.

May the God of all grace comfort his loved ones and all that mourn his passing and give us all a sweet Spirit of reconciliation to His Sovereign Will in all things.

Elder W. A. Speer

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Whereas, Since we last met, The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association has lost two members, to-wit:

Sister Edith Farlow, of Salisbury

Brother William Henry Hastings, of Delmar, therefore

Be it Resolved, That we bow in humble submission to our gracious Heavenly Father's will, desiring to be reconciled to the loss of very precious members from our midst; and

Be it further Resolved, That the Salisbury Association extend its sympathy to the bereaved families, and may the grace of God enable them to look to Jesus for comfort in their hour of need; and

Be it further Resolved, That we send a copy of these resolutions to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication and a copy made for the minutes.

Done by order of the Association, now in session with the Delmar Church, October 22, 1958.

Elder Arthur Warren, Moderator
Maude T. Laws, Clerk
Wm. Adkins, Asst. Clerk
Handy B. Truitt, 2nd Asst. Clerk

MEMORIAL FOR
DEACON HEWITT OSBORN

Whereas, It has been the will and purpose of the eternal God of Heaven to call from the shores of time and the labors of this earthly life, our beloved Brother and Deacon of the Olive and Hurley Church, Hewitt Osborn, at the good age of 89 years. He had been a faithful member and Deacon for a number of years and was steadfast and unmovable in Salvation by the grace of God, and the will of God and the power of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Always giving God all the praise and all the honor and all the glory for his hope, and always able to give a reason for his hope: that it was by the grace of God that he was what he was in knowing the truth as it is in Jesus.

We desire to bow in humble submission unto Him who is to wise to err and to good to be unkind.

Be it Resolved, That we humbly thank God for having this faithful gift with us these many years, and that we extend our sympathy to his children.

Be it further Resolved, That this memorial be spread upon our Church Minutes and upon the Minutes of the Lexington-Roxbury Association and copies be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and the OLD FAITH CONTENDER for publication.

Done by order of the Olive and Hurley Church, September 14, 1958.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to call to her eternal home one of our beloved members, Sister Lola M. House. She was the daughter of the late Ransom and Annie Katherine West. She was married to Brother J. F. House October 27, 1907, and on the fourth Sunday in October, 1957, they celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary. She is survived by her husband, two daughters: Mrs. Norvie Westbrook, Dunn, N. C., and Mrs. Claude Ellis, Clayton, N. C.; one son: Ransom House, of Newton Grove; and three grandchildren.

Sister House joined the church at Seven Mile in September, 1923, and was baptized by the late Elder L. A. Johnson. Later in life, she had a desire to join Reedy Prong Church. At this time, Sister House being afflicted and unable to attend church, an impressive service was held in her home in March, 1958. She and Brother House were received into the full fellowship of the church at Reedy Prong.

Sister House's pleasure was in the church. She was a strong predestinarian. She was greatly afflicted during the last years of her life, but she seemed to bear her afflictions with patience. During her suffering, her faith in God never failed her. She will be greatly missed in her home, church, and community, having been so friendly and hospitable. One of her greatest pleasures was entertaining Primitive Baptist in her home.

Sister House departed this life November 17, 1957, at the age of seventy-two. Funeral services were held in her home, and were conducted by Elder Lester E. Lee and Elder Dewey Turner. The many who attended the funeral and the floral offerings showed the high esteem in which she was held.

Be it Resolved

1st. That we be submissive to the will of God who doeth all things well; and that we extend our sympathy to the family.

2nd. That a copy of these resolutions of respect be mailed to the family, that a copy be written in our church book, and that a copy be sent to **SIGNS OF THE TIMES** for publication.

Done by order of Reedy Prong Church the fourth Saturday in June, 1958.

Elder Lester E. Lee, Moderator
Brother H. E. Smith
Sister Thelma Smith
Sister Hazel Dunn, Committee

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 127 DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1959 NO. 1

Mt. Hermon Road,
Salisbury, Md.

Beloved Elder and Sister Spangler:

I was disappointed that you did not stop after the funeral Sunday, as you thought you would, but I knew you were very unwell, and it was late, so I understood. I hope you experienced no injury to your health as a result of your trip.

It was so good to be at the meeting again! It had seemed such a long time, and the preaching was so spirit-refreshing. Elder Griffin laid the foundation, and you placed the capstone thereon; and it was so lovely. How my heart cries out in gratitude to my God for you and Elder Griffin! Truly the Lord has supplied all my need in these years since I received the promise, and He is still supplying them abundantly; and I'm strengthened by the sure knowledge that he will continue to supply them in whatever He knows is for my eternal welfare. My cup runs over as I contemplate the fact that, although I'm poor in this world's goods, and many of the comforts and joys of this life have been denied me, and although I'm sometimes lonely, I am never desolate; and the lack of many things in life have been far overshadowed by glimpses of the Shekinah glory which once filled the tabernacle, but in these latter days is shed abroad in the hearts of his elect people.

I wish I could fitly put in words some of the experiences I've had in the past six or eight weeks away from the office and the activities of life — too sick to work, but not too sick to read my precious Bible. His love-letter to me and all His people whom He redeemed: to eat his body, and drink his blood, and to meditate upon the manifold benefits showered upon me by and from his loving hand. In the busy days of life when my time is so filled with my job, keeping my home, having company, and all the other details which fall to my lot, I find so little time, and I'm afraid desire, to meditate upon these precious things. Of course, none of us want to be sick, but I can clearly see how good it is to be arrested in the performance of these things which "perish with the using", and made to dwell upon the eternal.

As I have often told you, it has pleased the Lord, over the years, to speak to me, to instruct me and sustain me through his written word; and it seems to me I have never known the riches of it as I have in these past few weeks. I have been made to witness in my soul to the glorious doctrines and experiences of the New Testament writers, especially Paul: to whom was revealed "the mystery hid in God through the ages", how that of Jew and Gentile He would call out a people for His name, and form that new creation, the Bride of Christ. Paul, who was "given this grace that he should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ", that he (and all the Lord's people) might know the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings: our dear Redeemer, whom it became to make the Captain of our salvation perfect through suffering; and Why? That he who sanctifieth and those who are sanctified might be one, to the end that He is not ashamed to call us brethren. What a most glorious doctrine is this! To even think upon such a marvelous thing, fills my soul with wonder and awe; and I am made to cry out, "Oh my God, hast thou made me — even me — a partaker of such riches? And, if so, why, Oh why, have I found favor in thy sight?"

Another thing, in reading the New Testament, and especially the Acts, I have been struck and amazed by the great stress laid upon the personal second-coming of Christ, and the resurrection of the body. I believe that Paul, in every instance when called upon for the defense of the Gospel, gave this simple defense: how that Christ died and rose again. Never did he leave Him in the grave. Some may ask why the resurrection of the body is so important. Well, if Christ arose, his people too shall rise, because he is the first-fruits of them that slept. Moreover, our forerunner, even Jesus, has entered into that within the veil, and made a priest forever after the order of Melchesidec — after the power of an endless life. If Christ's body did not arise, he is not now at the right hand of God with the glorious wounds, which evidence victory over death and the grave; proving that it was not possible that he should be holden of death. If He is not there with these "infallible proofs", then we have no great High Priest, no Mediator between us and the judgement of a justice demanding God — and we are yet in our sins. To me, this is the heart and core of the Gospel; this is that blessed hope, this is the earnest of our inheritance, until the adoption.

In these days of study, meditation, and communion, I have been drawn away from things of earth, and have been made to feel deep in my being the feelings expressed by Paul in Philippians 1:23. Many things are sweet and pleasant here: there are our dear ones according to the flesh; there are our precious brethren, and the meeting together, but all of these fade away at the view of Jesus. And there are many times these days when I desire, yes, long to lay it all down: "To depart and to be with Christ." These desires are not natural; and if I told them to most of my friends, I would be considered neurotic. But we who hope we have so much more to die for than to live for, understand. These things are "the secret of the Lord", and are with them who fear or reverence Him, whom, having not seen, we love.

The doctor thinks I may return to work tomorrow, and with the resuming of earthly things, I know the glory of these experiences will somewhat fade; and I'm afraid that some great trial either natural or spiritual, awaits me, as has usually been the case following these times of unspeakable joy; but these experiences do leave their mark, and the memory of them is as anchor during the trial of our faith.

One more little experience, and I will stop. While reading the Scriptures much of the time for many days and nights, my afflicted eye, which hurts all the time, hurt me much less than usual. Then, one night during a lapse of faith, I picked up a magazine and read a right long story. The next day my eye ached and hurt to the extent that I could hardly read at all. The story was clean and fine, one which would seem to be no harm to anyone; but "that which is not of faith is sin". So I resolved, if the Lord will only give me that measure of grace, I will spend what is left of my precious eyesight, seeking to learn more of Him. I trust I may be given that measure of grace. If you feel so inclined, please seek the Lord in my behalf.

Elder Spangler, I did not write this letter for publication, but you did ask, if I felt to do so, that I write something for the Signs. . . . If you feel there is anything in this letter which might strike a responsive chord in someone's heart, and you wish to publish it, you may; but it was not written with that thought in mind. I simply felt, as I did not get to talk with you, and it may be a long time before I do, I wanted to tell you some of these things while the sweetness of them is still with me. I've not written them as they were, but I cannot express these things as I would love to.

With my love to you both, the family, and the precious brethren there, I humbly hope I am

Your sister in Him, Mildred Dykes

PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD

By Elder David Bartley

CHAPTER TWO

THE first testament had its priesthood; Levi and his sons, one of the twelve tribes of the people of Israel, were set apart to that sacred office, that they should minister about the sanctuary of the Lord for all the people of the covenant, who were their brethren. For the people themselves could not approach unto God in the holy sanctuary, only by their consecrated priests, who represented them and presented their offerings unto the Lord. Those offerings were made for their sins; and the officiating priests were ordained and sanctified of God unto that divine ministry, to stand between him and his people, their brethren. This was therefore known as the Levitical priesthood, in which all the twelve tribes of Israel were equally represented and interested, for they were brethren; therefore all the people of that covenant belonged to that priesthood as a family and kingdom of priests, and as such they were united in the divine worship of the Lord God. They could not otherwise approach unto him in worship; but thus coming by their consecrated priests, their sins being atoned for and themselves ceremonially purified, God accepted them in worship.

Moreover, of the family of Levi, Aaron was called of God and made the high priest of all that priestly people, and his sons after him, to enter alone once every year beyond the second veil into the most holy place of the sanctuary, to make an atonement for all the sins of all the people, his brethren, and then to make intercession for them; for the Lord came down between the cherubim upon the mercy-seat, accepted the atoning blood, heard the intercession, and blessed all the supplicating people who worshiped in the court of Israel without. He saw all their names upon the sacred robe of their high priest, engraved in the twelve precious stones; for they were a people dear to him, and he viewed them in the sacred person and offering of their atoning high priest, and heard, accepted and blessed them in and with him. Thus, as the Lord's covenant people, and for the sake of the atonement which he appointed for them, he accepted and blessed them. No other people on earth were so highly favored and blessed of God, as the Scriptures show. For Abraham alone, the Hebrew, with his sons Isaac and Jacob and the children of Jacob or Israel, did the Lord choose and call out from the nations that they should be a peculiar people unto himself, the children of his covenant, a family of priests, to offer sacrifices unto him, his redeemed and sanctified people. With the one wonderful exception of Melchisedec, this family of Abraham, "the friend of God", was the then only great priesthood unto the Most High, to worship him acceptably as he had ordained; for all other peoples were ignorant of the right worship of the true God, but they offered sacrifices to idols, and worshiped the works of their own hands, for he gave them up to their own evil ways.

A rapid review of this kingdom of priests — from the time Abraham was a stranger in the land of promise, with Isaac and Jacob, until Joseph was sent down into Egypt, followed by all his father's house, and Moses led them out to Sinai, where the law was given, the tabernacle set up, Aaron and his sons consecrated, the solemn worship of the Almighty God established, and the Lord came down between the cherubim and his glory filled the tabernacle — will overwhelm the understanding beholder with awe and wonder, and he will feel his spirit bow low in reverence and worship. Moses, after reviewing all the way the Lord had led his redeemed people out of Egypt to the borders of the good land which he gave them, said: "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before

thee; and shall say, Destroy them. Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved of the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places." (Deut. 33:26-29)

All this was typical of "better things to come", and pointed the true children of Abraham away to "a better testament", a far more enduring and glorious priesthood, in which the worshipers are verily all righteous, and are called, "The holy people, the redeemed of the Lord." Of all this worship under the first testament, says Paul: "Wherefore the law was our school-master to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith is come, we are no longer under a school-master." (Gal. 3:-24-25) And Paul therefore says: "For sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace." (Rom. 6:14)

For, let it be rememberd, those sacrifices which were offered by the law, throughout the Levitical priesthood, could never make the worshipers perfect, nor take away their sins; but they must be repeated daily, and from year to year, in which there was a continual remembrance of their sins. This solemn fact is clearly presented in the epistle to the Hebrews, wherein we have a vivid comparison between the priesthood of the Old Testament and that of the New Testament, and a strong contrast between the old covenant of legal works and the new covenant of gospel grace, showing the infinite superiority and divine glory of JESUS the Son of God over Moses the servant of God. Yet some of the Hebrew believers were zealous for the commandments of Moses, while they professed to believe also in Jesus; therefore they sought to mix the works of the law with the grace of the gospel. For they were Israelites, the people of the first covenant, the worshipers under the ceremonious priesthood of the showy temple, all of which had a show of great sanctity, and they were attracted and charmed by all this. It is much the same yet among all superficial worshipers under the priesthood of Catholicism, and the ministry of Protestantism, who make a pompous show of much sanctity and zeal.

Indeed, so tenacious and zealous were the priesthood and people of the old covenant for its shadowy form and typical sacrifices that they desired nothing better, but would have perpetuated it, and never have given it up for the new and better testament. For, failing to look beyond and above it, because of their legal blindness, they depended on and trusted in the works of that covenant, more than in God, who gave them the covenant with all its provisions and blessings; and so "they worshiped and served the creature, more than the Creator." Thus did they pervert those divine ordinances, which God gave them as "shadows of good things to come", and made an idolatrous use of them, by trusting in them, rather than looking through them to the Redeemer that should come and make one perfect sacrifice for sins forever, and turn away ungodliness from his people. It seems strange that the people of God, all along down the ages, have shown a proneness to thus corrupt his divine ordinance and service, by looking to and depending on the gifts more than the Giver; thus making their salvation conditional upon what they do in the way of serving God, instead of attributing all their devotional service, with every salvation and blessing, to his special qualification, mercy and grace. This fact not only shows the prevailing legal tendency of the human mind, which all are reluctant to give up, but also our selfish ingratitude toward the Father of all our mercies and blessings. Surely, we all need "a merciful and faithful High Priest" to atone and intercede for the selfish imperfections of our best efforts to serve our God; and it is well for us

that he "is rich in mercy", and is merciful to our unrighteousness, or we should receive no blessing from him.

This legal blindness and selfish pride was so strong and active in the priesthood of the old covenant, that it culminated in their rejecting, seizing and crucifying the Lord of life and glory, the harmless and holy High Priest of the new and everlasting covenant. How fearful! As though this were not woe enough against them, their false zeal hurled them on to madly seek to defeat his priesthood and destroy his kingdom; first, by preventing his rising from the dead, which their own prophets and himself said he should do; next, by persecuting and killing his ministers. Thus did they fearfully prove in themselves the utter weakness and failure of a conditional covenant of divine service and worship, which depended upon the faithfulness and works of the people themselves, to their own just condemnation and terrible overthrow. And thus did the just God and Saviour make it fearfully manifest by them, that there is no perfection by a covenant of works, nor justification by the deeds of the law, as performed by the people who are under it. So the wrath came upon that priesthood and people to the uttermost, and they went out in awful failure and darkness, as a divine warning to all worshiping peoples not to trust in themselves or rely on their works. The same hand-writing of God is written upon the wall of Time all along the succeeding ages, as plainly manifested by ever religious establishment among men; and it is the voice of the Almighty, saying: "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. (Jer. 17:5)

This is sadly a dark history and painful religious experience, and it fills the world with woe and the heart with mourning; yet God saw that it was necessary, and so ordained it; for in no other way will the children of men be convinced that there is no help in man, and be taught to "trust in the Lord", in whom alone is righteousness, salvation and life, favor and blessing. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." (Jer. 17:7) It is sad that all those whose entire trust and hope are in the Lord have ever been misunderstood, reproached and opposed by those who trust in man, and depend upon the outward obedience to the forms and ceremonies of religious service, looking more to the letter than to the spirit of the worship; but this has ever been so, as seen in Abel and Cain, the Publican and Pharisee, Mary and Simon, the younger and elder sons.

Men either forget, or do not know, that "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit"; that "Blessed are the poor in spirit; that "God hath respect unto the lowly"; that "the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life."

But in the infinite wisdom of God, who is holy in all his ways, and who knew what is in man, he purposed all this experience of trial and suffering as needful to bring the true worshipers "to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant", and to make them "the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Therefore Paul wrote to the brethren in Christ, "That no man should be removed by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto."

"The law and the prophets were until John", the forerunner of Jesus; then they ceased, God having accomplished his purpose in them. All the Scriptures of holy men of old, from Noah to Malachi, testified of Jesus the Messiah; and every bleeding sacrifice and sin offering, from Abel's offering by faith until the angel Gabriel was sent from God to Zacharias the priest in the temple, typically testified of and pointed to the Lord Jesus Christ, as so many prophesies and promises that he should come to his temple at the time appointed of the Father, in the end of the law and all its ministrations, which could never take away sins, when all things were ready, as "the Messenger of the cove-

nant", and should "purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness", and testified by the last prophet under the first testament.

"Darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people", the long and dark legal night grew more fearfully dark as it neared its close; men's hearts were failing them for fear; all, all had proved the wretched failure and frightful guilt and ruin of all the sons and daughters of men. This is the humiliating and bitter lesson of the law and its priesthood, and by it our God and Father has taught us the dreadful necessity of "a more excellent way".

(Chapter 3 next month)

Statonsburg, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I enclose money order to renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times. I enjoy the paper very much: it is a good religious periodical, and I have not yet found anything in it but sound doctrine, as far as I have been able to observe; and very little of passed troubles, and I think that is the way it should be. The less reference there is to the passed, and the less those things are talked about, the earlier they may come to peaceful conclusion, if the Lord will it to be so.

I hope you, your wife, and all who are near and dear to you by the ties of nature, are well and enjoying the richest blessings of God our Saviour. I also hope Elder Wood and his dear companion, together with all the associate editors are enjoying those blessings with you.

I have attended six associations, and every one of them were good. It seems to me they get better each year. Peace and love has been manifested, and fellowship seems to prevail; which, to me, is most wonderful, and a great blessing from on high.

Brother Spangler, sometimes I have an impression to try to write something for publication, but when I try it seems I cannot think of anything that I can put into words that would be food to the hungry and thirsty saints of God. I am just an unprofitable servant, if one at all. Sometimes I am made to wonder if what I believe to be the dealings of the Lord with me, is just an imagination of this foolish heart of mine; or do I believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God because I read about him in the Scriptures. If so, then it is nothing and of no profit to me or anyone else. But, my dear precious brethren, sometimes I am made to witness with Job of old, when he said, "I know that my Redeemer lives." The only reason Job could say this was because of the witness within him. Though he was afflicted with sores from the sole of his feet to the crown of his head, his faith was in God; and he believed that at the appointed time of God he would see Him for himself, and that he would be like Him. The witness within prompted, or caused, him to believe this. My humble hope is that God our Heavenly Father, purposed in himself my salvation and redemption, and that I should be drawn to Christ by Him; for we read that Christ said that none, or no man, can come unto me except my Father which sent me draw him.

Jesus said, "I am the door of the sheep"; and, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." I do not understand that Jesus meant that some of these will enter into the glorious presence of the Father in eternal heaven, but that it is possible for some to enter into the militant church. Jude said, "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." According to my understanding, these are the same characters Jesus spoke of as thieves and robbers.

Hope some of you editors will write on this subject sometime.

A poor, unworthy servant, if one at all. May God bless Zion.

(Elder) W. B. Barnes

Woodward, Iowa

Kind Friends and Loved Ones:

I see I am in arrears in my subscription to the Signs. I had not forgotten but have just been neglectful. I am sorry, and I should be; but it is just another one of my many faults.

My one big fault (? — Ed.) is loving to hear the "old hardshells" preach salvation by grace, and all that goes with it: the predestination of all things. I guess I am an old absoluter, but I can't help it. I know I can't say anything but what you already know; unless it is what you don't know about me. I am one of the worst deceivers that was ever born: I want to do certain things, and can't; and I don't want to do other things, but can't help doing them. If I were like some people, I could be a good little fellow, and have a good time. But I find no enjoyment in the pastimes of this world; and will leave home and go some 600 miles to hear the Old Baptists preach. I live where you never hear anything but work and do, and that doesn't fit me at all: all my works were stored up in Christ before the foundation of the world, and are being manifested here in time.

I got to attend one association this Fall, but had to go to southern Illinois, to attend. It was a feast of fat things for me, if I know anything about such things. It was well attended, to be in such a remote part of the country. I feel so ignorant of the things of God, that I am afraid what little I know will only make you smile in pity at my ignorance. But I love the doctrine, and I love the brethren, if I can call you such; and I love everyone who loves the doctrine of Salvation by Grace, and the predestination of all things. I only ask that I be allowed to go along behind and pick up the crumbs you leave, for they are a feast to me.

Enclosed is a money-order for the paper another year. I want you to know that I love to read the articles it contains. I have met many of the writers, but only one of the editors. I met Elder Griffin at Soldier Creek Church in Kentucky, at the association; and I enjoyed his preaching so very much.

With all good wishes for the building of Zion here in this time world, I am, I hope, a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

W. J. Kimbro

Gretna, Va.
March 12, 1957

Dear Brother Spangler:

We were so happy to have you and Sister Spangler visit us Sunday. What a joy it is to know you are well enough to get out again and preach. I am sure that your exercises are those of a subject of grace.

I want to tell you what I hope is the dealings of the Lord in my heart and soul. My trials and tribulations have been so great for such a long time, and I have been so very low, miserable, and undone; and having so many doubts and fears. The little hope I tried to cling to, seemed to be gone forever. I had prayed day and night for a long time for God to give me a little more evidence of my hope, in a dream, vision, or anyway He saw fit. But nothing happened, and I gave up, not thinking that I would ever have this desire fulfilled.

When I saw you go up into the stand, I said to a sister, "We have a treat in store"; and I just trembled with joy. I was blessed even before you spoke. And every word you said seemed to be directed towards me. You preached my feelings better than I could ever dare to describe them. You pictured Zion as I have never seen it; and I was so happy I wanted to weep for joy, and could hardly keep from shouting. I felt this is surely enough.

Then Sunday night I had the most glorious dream anyone could have: I dreamed the entire sky was as black as the blackest smoke I had ever seen; and

I felt sure this was the end. But I waited to see what would happen. The black cloud disappeared and I saw the most beautiful sight I had ever seen: Beautiful mountains, green with shrubbery, and houses all exactly alike. I didn't see anything that wasn't beautiful and complete. I started to pray for my eldest son — I don't know why, I was just trying to pray for him, and no one else; not even the rest of my children. But, as I started, I saw the Lord my Saviour, appear in his beautiful white robe. Every care in the world, every burden, and every pain vanished; and instead of praying, I repeated these words over and over: "Lord have mercy." His mercy was being showered upon me, and I had no desire to pray any more, for I had everything my heart desired, and what was there to pray for.

As I was lifted up, I was transformed without tasting death — changed in a moment, and made whole. I was floating to meet Him in the cloud. I can't find words to describe the unclouded, undisturbed, serenity of peace and happiness, as I floated to meet my Saviour; with all my trials and tribulations gone forever.

I was shouting, when my husband awoke me and asked what was wrong: I couldn't stop crying for a few moments, to tell him. I am not sure whether it was in my dream, or when I first awoke, but I saw you, Sister Gilmore, (from Roanoke) Sister Annie Tosh, and Brother Matthew Pickrel. And I felt that I must talk with the two from here, and write you and Sister Gilmore. There is more I would like to say, but this is getting lengthy, and you must be getting tired.

Please look over all my mistakes. I desire that you write and tell me if you think I am deceiving myself and God's little flock, or is this evidence of a hope. I hope this is an anchor to my soul, both sure and steadfast; and I trust He will give me grace through the doubts and fears to come.

An unworthy sister in hope,
Mrs. Myrtle Shelton

CIRCUMCISION AND BAPTISM

To the People of God — Dear Saints:

A friend of our people, with a devoted wife and two baby boys, has requested me to give my views on Circumcision, and Baptism. A woman told this family that if these infants were not circumcised and baptized, hell would be their doom.

My desire and prayer to God is for divine guidance; may my mind be directed by his Holy Spirit to rightly divide the word of truth, and speak the truth in love. (see 2 Timothy 2:15; Ephesians 4:15) My aim and desire is to honor God, and praise his great and good name as the Saviour and Redeemer of sinners. "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:-12) I desire to tell the truth, with no intention of pleasing the flesh; and set forth the doctrine of salvation by grace as purposed of God before the world began.

Webster gives in part the definition of circumcision to be: 1st, To cut off, as the foreskin; 2nd, In scripture, to purify from sin. As I recall, the first mention of circumcision was after God said, "Neither shall thy name be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee." "And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; every man child among you shall be circumcised. And you shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall

be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant." (see 17th chapter of Genesis)

We have no direct reference in which Jacob and Esau were circumcised. In the 34th chapter of Genesis we find, after Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor deceitfully (verse 13), "But in this we will consent unto you: If ye will be as we be, that every male of you be circumcised", that Simeon and Levi took each man his sword and slew all the males, including Hamor and Shechem. It seemed circumcision proved a curse to the Shechemites, as they were slain by Jacob's sons. So far as I am able to find, circumcision was kept up under the law until the children of Israel were in bondage.

After Israel was delivered (Ex. 14:-22), and in the wilderness, Israel failed to do this duty as was given Abraham in his covenant. See Joshua 5th chapter, when circumcision was renewed, and required to be kept in that day. John the Baptist was circumcised the eighth day (Luke 1:59); and Jesus was circumcised the eighth day (Luke 2:21). Jesus said, "Think not I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am come not to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled." (Matthew 5:17-19; Luke 16:17) It was needful for Jesus to be circumcised in the flesh, for in this every jot and tittle of the law was fulfilled, which Jesus came to do for fallen man. Paul had his son in the ministry, Timothy, circumcised to satisfy the Jews. (Acts 16:3) There rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying that it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. (Acts 15:5)

This sect believed but were not fully established in salvation by grace: part law and part grace, to please the carnal mind. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. (notice: nothing) For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law: ye are fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love. (Galatians 5:1-6)

"Paul, and apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother" (Col. 1:1): "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism . . ." (Col. 2:9-12) When we are born again, we are cleansed from all sins; hope springs up, for we are saved by hope. "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." (Gal. 4:19)

We have this hope in the forgiveness of all our sins, and made to love the church; also to believe that Jesus is "the Christ the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1:29) If not deceived in this hope, we are fit subjects for gospel baptism. It is the one born again, with the love of God in his heart, and who has repented of all his sins, that is a fit subject for baptism, as the Scriptures teach. "One Lord, one faith, and one baptism." (Ephesians 4:5) Read Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; and John 1:33: These tell us that Jesus will baptize his people with the Holy Ghost and with fire. This prepares us for heaven, whether infant or adult, and takes place when we are born again. (read the 3rd chapter of John)

". . . when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away if the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 3:20-21; Genesis 6:-7-8)

Should any man or woman come to you with such deception, with such heresies, as circumcision and baptism will save infant or adult, may the God of all grace give you to tell such unbelieving Pharisees, that Jesus Christ is the saviour of sinners. And that, "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12; also read Matthew 3:11, and Luke 3:16)

When Mary the mother of Jesus went to see her cousin Elizabeth, at the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost. John was baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. We have no record that he ever was baptized in water; while John baptized Christ in the river Jordan. This is the duty of the believer to be baptized into the fellowship of the church. We have to deny self: it is a cross contrary to the flesh. In fact, the flesh must be crucified and killed to the love of sin before we are fit subjects to come to the church, or be baptized in His dear name. The dying thief on the cross was not baptized in water, nor circumcised by the hand of men. To his prayer, Jesus said, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." (Luke 23:43)

It will be enough, for sinners saved by grace to be with Jesus. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." (Ephesians 1:3-7) "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." (Ephesians 2:8)

May the Lord keep us as little children, with sustaining grace to adorn the profession we have made, by an humble walk and godly conversation; and ever deliver his children from such silly women, who would deceive the very elect, were it possible. (Matthew 24:24)

Pray for our people everywhere, not only the children of God, but our enemies, and say, "Lord forgive them; they know not what they do." Sift out all the faculty grains, and receive nothing but the truth as it is in Jesus Christ our glorious Redeemer.

In a blessed hope, with love
(Elder) J. G. L. Hash
Ferrum, Va.

Pocomoke City, Maryland

Brethren and Friends,
Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

In trying to put my thoughts on paper, I hope the Lord will direct them in the way they should go.

When I read the Bible there are many verses I don't understand; and there are others I hope I have some understanding of. Here are some verses I love to read: "And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him." (Matthew 4:18-20)

In these three verses I see a beautiful picture: I see two men, ordinary men, going about their work. It doesn't say

they were righteous, rich or poor. I take it that they were men such as the average men of Bible times, or even today, (for what was true then is still true now) going about their work. Probably the Lord had not crossed their minds. What would we do if some man in the flesh came up to us while we were working, and said, 'Follow me"? We would probably laugh at him; and surely we would not follow.

When the Lord says, "Follow me", we will drop everything we are doing and follow him, just like Simon and Andrew. Jesus was in the flesh when he came to these two men; and when they saw and heard him, they knew who he was because he revealed himself to them. He is just as much with us today as he was then; and he gives us grace to know his work today the same as yesterday and always, because all work is done by him; and without him we are helpless.

An unworthy brother,
Frank Holland

THE TRUTH AND POWER OF GOD AND TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF MAN

The doctrine of Cause and Effect has been sadly neglected by some Old Baptists. Knowing that there cannot be an effect without a cause, I speak of the first cause of all causes — God. "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." (Acts 17:24-26) All creatures are the work of God, both man and beasts, but not all men are the children of God. That God has a chosen people is so plainly spoken of in the Bible, that without fear, we speak of Election; that is, it was an act of God before the world began. His predestination is unlimited and absolute; and the cause of all things is God.

Total Depravity. Total means to me, entire, whole, complete. Depravity means, moral evil, void of righteousness. Total depravity is a doctrine of the Bible. I call your attention to the following: "God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back: they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Psalms 53:2-3) "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." (Romans 3:19) "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Romans 5:12)

"There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God." (Romans 3:11) The following I quote from an old elder: "Dead in sin, enmity against God, in love with sin, drinking down iniquity as an ox drinketh water, raging and blaspheming, condemned and under the curse of a righteous, just, and inflexible, we find the human race." There is no exception whatsoever. Justice has demanded that the soul that sinneth shall die: "For I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." (Math. 5:18)

"Therefore, by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin." (Romans 3:20) The law points out the sin, and gives the penalty, but cannot forgive, nor heal. Jesus talked with his disciples about how hardly a rich man could enter the kingdom of heaven; and they were amazed, and said, Who then can be saved? And Jesus said, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible. (see Matthew 19:25) It is impossible with men because all are totally depraved;

and all they know is of man — the things of God are known only by the Spirit of God.

What a dark, dismal picture is here presented: the law is just, holy, and good, and justice has declared with a voice of thunder, that the soul that sins shall die — and death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. This makes man totally depraved before a holy God: wholly incapable to even think a good thought, or perform a good deed — he cannot even pray.

One more thought to show the imagination of man: Soon after God had destroyed man from the face of the earth, Noah and his wife, and his three sons and their wives, began to multiply; and they were all of one language. They took it upon themselves to build a tower that would reach to heaven; and the Lord came down to see the tower which the children of men had built. And the Lord confounded their language, that they could not understand one another's speech; and scattered them. (Gen. 11:1-10) This building stopped, but to this day men are working on this imaginary tower, claiming to build their way to heaven by their own works.

But the children of God are not brought that way: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again (from above), he cannot see the kingdom of heaven. Life preceds action. (I have proved that all men are in a state of total darkness; and have spoken of Election, so will not repeat) The salvation of the Lord's people is surely by the grace of God, freely given without help from depraved creatures. For his great love wherewith He loved them, even when they were dead in sins, He has quickened them to life, and made them to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. He has given them hope, the anchor of their souls, sure and steadfast. This doctrine was stamped and sealed by God himself before the world began; and in his eternal book their names are written, as exact and certain as He is omnipotent, that the Apostle Paul was persuaded that "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come; nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:38-39)

Now to the many brethren that it was my pleasure to meet this year (1958) at the five different associations it was my pleasure to attend, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. We greet you all; and may the great God still keep us humble, clothed and in our right minds, is my prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen.

(Elder) George L. Weaver

FROM A LONELY SHUT-IN

965 Pioneer Avenue
Turlock, Calif.

Elder D. V. Spangler,
Dear Child of the Most High God:

This is to let you know that I am still in the land of the living; and am still receiving the dear old Signs of the Times, which I surely do so much appreciate. It is all the good news I ever get. I have passed my eighty-third milepost, and live alone; and know of no one anywhere near me that believes as I do. I have been to the Old Baptist church once, and had one sermon in my house. If the "Valley of Dry Bones" was any deader spiritually than I am, I can't realize it.

I am reading a lot of my old Signs over, and O, how I appreciate the good experiences! Some tell of hearing the voice of God, and I so much long at times to hear that dear voice. And I long for some of the true believers to come to see me. I might be called a shut-in, for I am lame and can't walk anywhere. I am very hard of hearing, and my eyes are not too good, but I still read a lot.

What I hope was my grace experience, was published in the February,

1943, Signs. I sent it to Elder Dodson, and he published it. I never saw him, but surely my heart ached at his passing; but never would I call a child of God back to this old world. I am just waiting His call; it can't come too soon. When I look within, doubts and fears arise, and I wonder, Am I His, or not. One thing I can say, I am not afraid of the devil, but I fear God.

I appreciate receiving the Signs; I have read them since they were a little newspaper. The experience of Elder Childers was in one of those papers. It was the first I had read, so I have never forgotten it. I was a young girl at that time, and was just awakened to the fact that I was a great sinner. One writer told of her prayers being answered; I also have had many prayers answered: a few outstanding, but I won't mention any here.

I won't be here a great deal longer. . . . There is much I would like to write, but maybe better that I should not; so will say please forgive all mistakes, and know I am just dust. With love and best wishes to God's children — all blessings on you and yours.

Marion S. Brooks

(We feel sure this sister would appreciate a letter from any who should feel to write her. — J. D. W.)

NOTICE

FUNDS RECEIVED UNDER THE WILL OF DR. MILFORD

The editors have received the sum of $6,243.75, under the will of the late Dr. S. B. Milford, of Poolesville, Maryland, to be used to help the needy among Primitive Baptists. Further announcement will be made as soon as necessary arrangements have been completed.

Danville, Virginia **January, 1959**

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TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 5, Box 332F **Danville, Va.**

EDITORIAL

As we come to the threshold of another year, we send greetings to our brethren and friends throughout the land. We would first give thanks to our Lord for his mercies and blessings bestowed upon us, not only during the year past, but through the years each one has been manifested as the children of men in this world; and not only this, but the faith given us of our Lord, makes us mindful that our standing in Him goes back much further than this: It goes back into eternity when we were chosen of God in his Son. This is what God has revealed in his word, and confirmed in each one by the working of his mighty power, when he makes manifest in each one that he is a child of God by God's choice.

Our standing in Him therefore, is not just merely as an Adam sinner saved, but as a chosen child of God, redeemed according to His eternal purpose; for each one for whom Jesus came into the world to redeem, was a member of the

eternally loved and chosen family.

How far beyond the comprehension of men are the ways and purposes of God! Without the revelation that God has given us of things eternal, we would know nothing beyond what we know by "the spirit of man": We would know nothing beyond our conscience existence as adamic creatures.

But because God has revealed glorious things in his word, and, by his Spirit, in us, our comfort is not in the fact that we are children of this world, but, rather, being in this world, we are not of this world. We, therefore, have, after we are brought into the knowledge of the truth, a panoramic view and understanding of things from eternity to eternity, and not just merely of things of time only. This view and knowledge is that which accompanies faith; and without faith, real God-given faith, there is no knowledge of it at all. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen", said the Apostle.

It is because we have this knowledge, brethren, that we rejoice in the purpose of God in all things; for all things comprise the fulness of God's wisdom from beginning to end — or eternity to eternity, and are so working together as a harmonious whole, that God's will is done, and his pleasure is fully accomplished.

We are thankful therefore, not only for our hope and assurance of eternal life after we have finished our days in this world, but we are thankful for his mercies and the manifestations of his love while we live in this world. We haven't a thing which we have not received from him; and we are different from the men of this world in our hope and knowledge, only because He hath made us to differ.

We look back, therefore, over the days which are past, and make mention of his loving-kindness toward us; and look forward to the days to come, whether few or many with us individually, with the full assurance that God is unchangeable, and that "his purposes will ripen fast, unfolding every hour", and that we shall be preserved by him in his own way and manner all of our appointed days. We are assured that his grace is sufficient for us, and that he will continue to provide all things both natural and spiritual for each of us; so that whether our days should end either in this year, or another, we shall receive all things appointed for us in his infinite wisdom and loving-kindness towards us.

Doesn't it mean much to us, that it is not only in this life we have hope? If hope did not go beyond this life, we would be indeed of all men most miserable. Each hour brings us nearer and nearer to the time of our departure from the scenes of this life; and also nearer and nearer to the end of hope, into the possession and enjoyment of things hoped for.

May we therefore, as possessors of hope, be given grace to run our race with patience, and to ever look unto Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith. And may we by his grace, be given to realize more and more, that, "If Christ be in us, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness": so that we shall not live after the flesh, but through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, and thus live in Him.

We believe that the Lord's people know that it is not in the flesh that they worship or serve the Lord, but that through the Spirit the flesh is subdued, and its deeds mortified. They know that there is no such thing as a "progressive sanctification" in the flesh — that men get more holy in this life. Their experience teaches them differently; and they are waiting for the "adoption, towit, the redemption of their body", when mortality shall be swallowed up of life.

It is into this glorious state that they desire to come; and not only desire to come but shall come, because God has predestinated them to be conformed to the image of his Son. He has begotten them again unto a lively hope by the

resurrection of Jesus, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (1 Peter 1:3-5)

To those who have this hope, we send greetings in the Lord; and would say that though they have many afflictions, doubts and fears, these are but little things in comparison with the glory that shall be revealed in them.

To those who are comforted and edified in the things published in the Signs, we ask an interest in your prayers; and trust you will feel to continue to support the paper. Your subscriptions, donations, and writings are necessary for its continuation. Love to all the household of faith.

J. D. W.

2619 S. Street,
Sacramento, Calif.

Dear Editors:

Please accept the enclosed for two years renewal of the Signs.

. . . Sometimes I read the Signs from cover to cover the day I receive it; but at other times my state of mind is such that I can hardly open it. And I ask myself, Why is it? and I cannot find the answer. Why was I born? Why was the heaven and earth spoken into existence?

The Bible tells us that God created everything that is, and for his own purpose and glory. Yet the world says, "Give God a chance". A God of that nature is less powerful than I; and it seems the utmost folly to me, that anyone could imagine a God who needs to be given a chance.

May God bless you in the publishing of the Signs. I know it is a task, but am sure that as long as God has a purpose in it, he will give you strength to carry on.

Humbly yours,
Herman Buckner

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

New York, N. Y.
December 1, 1900

My dear Sister Rowland:

. . . The opportunity to write you now arises through my confinement at home in sickness. I have not been well for some time, and hard work, insufficient rest, exposure and other evils, have resulted in laying me up for a time. I am in poor condition to write to anyone, and quite incapable of properly answering your good letter, but I will at least acknowledge its receipt, and try to tell you something it suggests to me.

I am glad you wrote as you did, and I can sympathize with your feeling of hesitancy to ask questions concerning things which we believe the children of God have more light on than we. But I do not think we are justified in this hesitancy, for it is a good thing to speak often one to another concerning our hopes and fears; we are helpers of each other's joy in so doing. There is comfort to me in witnessing the groping in darkness of an afflicted and poor child of God. Their sensible ignorance, blindness and almost helpless despair, speaks more convincingly than ever lips could of their being kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. Boasting is excluded where grace reigns; the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit and contrite heart, such he will not despise. It is a good thing to realize our ignorance; when we think we know something, then know we nothing as we ought.

I would be glad indeed to answer your questions in such a way that every fear and doubt would turn to you for a testimoney that your dwelling-place is the house of the Lord, a house of prayer, but this is not in my power; except the Lord give the word, none can publish it. Your trouble, in that sin is mixed with all you do, is the common

experience of all saints. No temptation hath take you but such as is common to them all. Temptations put nothing into a man, but only draw out what was in him before. "Every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil continually." This heart of ours is the citadel where this enemy, sin, dwells and maintains rebellion against God all our day, and it is a deceitful heart, deceitful above all things, who can know it? Its deceitfulness in our dealings with others is as nothing compared to its deceitfulness towards ourselves. It abounds in contradictions, sometimes easily entreated, and again very neglectful. The frame of the heart is ready to contradict itself every moment; it is not constant to itself, and has no certain conduct that is stable.

A deceiving and a deceived heart, who can deal with it? I do not understand that "The sin which doth so easily beset us," is to be regarded as some special individual weakness, nor that "a thorn in the flesh" has similar import. I do not think that Paul, who made use of these expressions, had in mind anything but a sense of the total depravity of his fleshly nature. He found it totally irreconcilably enmity against God; that in his flesh dwelt no good thing. In his letter to the Romans, seventh chapter, he declares this law of sin to be an indwelling law; it is present with me, "it is in my members." It dwells in us, it is never absent. If it were only in us at times, we might accomplish some obedience in its absence, but it is no wanderer. Whatever we are about, wherever we are, the law of sin is always present, in the best we do, or the worst. Not only does it dwell in us, but "when I would do good, it is present with me." Would I pray, would I hear, would I meditate, this hateful indweller proves itself present. "The sin that doth so easily beset us," applies itself with great ease and readiness unto its work.

When I want to apply my mind or understanding to spiritual things, there it is, in ignorance, darkness and folly. When I wish for my will to be engaged, there it is also, in spiritual deadness and stubbornness. Do I want my heart and affections set on things above? there it is, in inclinations to the world and present things. It insinuates itself into all that I do, hindering good and furthering evil. Many there are who find not this law in themselves, who have no spiritual sense and experience of indwelling sin, and this is because they are wholly under its dominion. They find no darkness or folly in their minds, because they are darkness itself, and darkness will discover nothing. They are at peace with their lusts, being in bondage to them.

I think it was John Warburton who once said, "It is a great mercy to know we are sinners," and so it is. In just the measure that we find this law of sin dwelling in us, in just such measure do we abhor it and ourselves, *and no more*. And to just the extent we find it, proportionately will be our longing for deliverance, *and no more*, and our watchfulness and obedience will be accordingly. Upon this one thing of finding out and experiencing the power of this law of sin, turns the whole course of our lives. Our sinful nature is not changed in the new birth, neither does it pass under any change. The carnality and enmity of our old nature is just the same as it was before we were created anew in Christ Jesus. Our Adam nature was a body of sin and death prior to a work of grace, and it is a body of sin and death now, and will continue to be so for all time.

Our experience proves there is not a feature of the old man defaced, nor a limb of him taken away. His offensive breath and unpleasant voice is just the same; his vital powers are as strong as ever, he is not in a declining state by any means. There is not one word of authority in Scripture to support the sentiment that one born of God becomes more pure and progressively holy, and that the corruptions of our sinful nature are driven out little by little. The truth is, "Whosoever is born of God sinneth not." As members of the

body of Christ there can be no growth in the principle of union; only in perception can they grow. That which God hath joined together no man can put asunder. The subjects of grace cannot be more united to the Lord than what they really are. They cannot grow in God's favor, nor can they grow in the nature or principle of sanctification and holiness. There is undoubtedly a growth in a spiritual perception of these things, and in proportion to it in experience our consolations will abound. But the principles of truth and grace in the new believing heart are immortal principles, and never can be in a declining or dying state. It is the life of Christ, which is immortality. If this life be in us, we are completely sanctified and justified in Christ Jesus our glorious head, and are as holy as Christ is holy, by virtue of our mystical union with him. We are a part of Christ; our natures and desires are one. We delight in each other, and the Father delights in both, because he has loved the members with the same love wherewith he hath loved Christ; thus the Lord said unto his Father, "And thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." Imputed holiness and righteousness are inseparable, there cannot be one without the other. "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

What a wonderful work is this finished salvation of the Lord's people. Because they have everlasting life in Christ Jesus, they never can be in a state of condemnation, for the seed of God remaineth in them. It is not possible for them to lose their adoption or heirship. No, there is nothing present, or to come, that can separate the subjects of grace from the love of Christ, for he has given unto them eternal life, and they cannot perish. Every transgression of the Lord's people received a just recompense of reward in the person of Jesus, so there can be no such thing as God ever having any controversy with one of his children for sins which Christ died for on the cross. Neither does he remonstrate with them in displeasure, or find fault with them on account of their frames of mind. "Our times are in his hand, and he knoweth our frame." We are apt to think sometimes that afflictions and tribulations are signs of God's displeasure against us on account of sin, but if such could possibly be, just think what it would imply. It would appear that Christ's sufferings were not satisfactory, and so make that satisfaction a mere verbal shadow. I have heard it said by those whom I gave credit for knowing better, that God afflicts and tries his children because they merit it by their unfaithfulness. Such a sentiment is the rankest Armenianism. It is in fact saying that God is not a Sovereign, and that mutable creatures have it in their power to make him change.

But I am making this letter too long, and must bring it to a close. Before you have read thus for I imagine I hear you saying, Yes, all this is true, but what evidences have I of acceptance in the Beloved? Let us look for some of these evidences.

All the promises of God are yea and amen in Christ Jesus; he is the amen, the faithful witness, and it is he who testifies concerning our condition as it is indeed. So it is in the manifest life of Christ in us, whereby our consolations shall abound. We may be mistaken, and be troubling ourselves in vain, or flattering ourselves upon false grounds, but when Jesus, the faithful witness, speaks of our state and condition, that it is indeed. He judges not by outward appearances, but judges as it is indeed. As the interest we have in his salvation is given us in Jesus. Grace is *given,* never earned or merited. The Spirit is *given,* pardon is *given;* faith is the *gift* of God; the promises are *given,* exceeding great and precious promises, that by these the elect might see and experience that they are made partakers of the divine nature. (2 Peter 1:4) Eternal life is *given,* and heaven is *given.* It is all *gift,* from first to last, in Christ Jesus our Lord. These things

we seek for, as for hidden treasure, but never are they discovered except in the revelation of Jesus; he is the embodiment of all.

When the word of God speaks in us, the word is made flesh, or in other words, Christ is come in our flesh, and when God speaks it is always in the declaration of his sure covenant, and it fills us with shame for all the ways whereby we have been alienated from him. We certainly speak peace to ourselves, when our so doing is not attended with the greatest hatred of our sin. This is healing ourselves, and not being healed of God. When we do truly look upon Christ whom we have pierced, we will "mourn" for him on this account, and will detest the sin that pierced him. When we go to Christ for healing, faith views him as one pierced. It looks especially on the blood of the covenant, on his sufferings, for with his strips are we healed, and the chastisement of our peace is upon him. When we look to him for healing, his strips are to be seen; when we look to him for peace, his chastisement is manifest. An evidence of the Spirit's indwelling, is godly sorrow on account of sin, and of desire toward God. A sense of the vileness and poverty of human nature, causing us to sigh and groan before the Lord, demonstrates where our affections are set. And to only such is the gospel preached.

I will close with just one thought: "It is *given* unto you in behalf of Christ, to suffer for his sake." The gifts of God are without repentance, he can never turn from his pourpose, so you must needs suffer. And is it not comforting to remember that our God is the giver of every good and perfect gift, and to suffer is to reign with Christ? So we do glory in tribulation, knowing this, that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost, which is *given* unto us.

No, my dear sister, while you are in time you will never be free from the hostility of the flesh against the Spirit. This is your portion, and by grace you are saved. Jesus hath a kingdom in the hearts of all his children, and his people also are his kingdom. He reigns and rules in his saints, with his sceptre of righteousness. Christ hath no kingdom in the soul of a poor sinner till he breaks into the soul with his precious love, then the redeemed and heaven-born soul says, Let Jesus be King, and none but him. He is our desire, and the desire of a soul is a demonstration of the state it is in.

Remember me in love to all the dear ones at Rock Springs, and especially remember me to your pastor, who is to me a father in Israel.

Forgive my wordiness, and believe me your brother in the hope of the gospel.

(Elder) John McConnell

OBITUARIES

DEACON JAMES H. JOHNSON

Deacon James H. Johnson, age 59, of Hooks, Texas, passed away at his home Friday night, September 20, 1957. He left surviving him his wife, Sister Bessie Johnson; one daughter, Mrs. Pat Holden; one son, Noel Don Johnson, all of Hooks, Texas; four brothers and five sisters.

Brother Johnson was a faithful and devoted member of Prospect Primitive Baptist Church, near Simms, Texas. He had served as a Deacon of Prospect Church for several years, and at time of his death he was Clerk of the church. Brother Johnson was dearly loved and highly esteemed by the brethren and sisters and by a host of neighbors and friends in the vicinity of Simms, Texas, of which vicinity he was a life long resident. The large crowd in attendance at the funeral and the beautiful floral offering, attested to the high esteem in which he was held by the brethren, sisters and friends.

Funeral services were conducted at Prospect Church by Elders T. A. Wall, Loyd Wall, and the writer, on Sunday, September 22, 1957, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon; and his body was laid to rest in Old Union Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

May the God of all grace comfort and console his loved ones, together with all that

mourn his passing, and give to each one a sweet spirit of reconciliation to His sovereign will in all things.

ELDER W. A. SPEER

MRS. N. E. M. REGISTER

Sister Register died August 22, 1958, at the age of seventy-six, after a short illness, at her home near Graceville, Florida. She was a firm believer in Christ, and affirmed her faith to the writer a short time before her death. She was the widow of the late Brother N. E. M. Register, who was Clerk of Pilgrims Rest Church for many years.

Sister Register is survived by three daughters: Mrs. Dellie Garner, Mrs. Ester Simmons, and Mrs. Alice Peacock; five sons: Vinson, Gordon, Reece, Hubert and Earl; one brother: T. J. Kyser; 24 grandchildren; 48 great grandchildren, and one great, great grandchild.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. J. Collins, assisted by Mr. C. C. Balkcom and Mr. Trim Finch, at her beloved Antioch Church. The writer used as a text, "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all." Interment was in the adjoining cemetery.

J. J. Collins

SAMUEL DUNCAN CAMPBELL

Our dear husband and father was born November 22nd, 1867 and departed this life March 9th, 1958. He was born in Elgin County, Ontario, the son of Malcolm and Janet Campbell, and lived most of his life in London, Ontario.

He was united in marriage to Henrietta L. MacAlpine on September 13th, 1899, who survives him. He is also survived by his 3 children, Dr. Mac D. Campbell, Katherine V. Campbell, Jean H. Campbell; 3 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren.

He was not a member of the church, because of his feeling of unworthiness, but was a believer of salvation by Grace, and friends of the Covenanted Baptists were always welcome in his home. He was a faithful adherent to the Gospel. He had a heart condition but was active for his age to the last. He was widely known and respected and is sadly missed but our earthly loss is his eternal gain.

His funeral was conducted by Elder George Ruston who spoke very comfortingly from the 23rd Psalm and his favorite hymn, "Nearer my God to Thee" was sung at his service. His body was laid to rest in Fairview Cemetery near the home where he was born.

Written with love by his bereaved family.

EMMA CHAROLETTE LAWRENCE

My mother, Emma Charolette Lawrence, was born June 19, 1873, and died May 20, 1958, making her stay on earth 84 years, 11 months, and 29 days. She was married in 1888 to Bedford Brown Lawrence, who died January 16, 1957, at the age of 88 years. To this union were born eight children, of which three survive: Brother Sylvester W. Lawrence, Otway, N. C.; two daughters, Sister Beulah Weaver, of the home, and Mrs. Cora D. Gillikin, Norfolk, Va.; also 14 grandchildren, and one great grandchild.

She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and attended her church meetings as long as her health permitted. She was afflicted with asthma for about fifty-five years, and confined to her bed for about thirty years of that time. When not suffering, she was very cheerful, and loved to see her friends come in and talk with her. May the good Lord bless and comfort all of her loved ones who mourn her passing.

Written by one who stood by her until the last minute. The funeral was conducted at her home by Elder Eddie Humphrey; and her body was laid to rest by her husband in the church cemetery.

Done by order of North River Church in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in July, 1958. The church orders that a copy be kept in its records; and a copy be sent to the *Zion's Landmark* and the *Signs of the Times* for publication; and a copy be sent to the family. Written by a very sad hearted son, Sylvester W. Lawrence.

Elder Eddie Humphrey, Moderator
Sylvester W. Lawrence, Clerk

SISTER MARTHA HEAD

Sister Martha Head was born January 8, 1887, and died August 14, 1958. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John L. Goodwin, Sr., and was united in marriage to Brother Edd Head, who preceded her in death several years.

She is survived by three sisters and three brothers, and a number of nieces and nephews.

Sister Head was a lovely and faithful member of Rehobeth Church for a number of years. She loved the brethren and sisters and friends, and her love and affection seemed to grow stronger as she grew older: proving that she loved the Lord, and the Church of God. We feel that she is much better off now, since she is through with suffering and great afflictions which we are subject to in this low ground of sin and sorrow. So, dearly beloved

ones, let us not weep as those who have no hope: the Lord is coming again soon to gather his precious jewels unto himself. What a sweet hope we have that we shall be with him forever.

The writer was assisted by Elder W. A. Speer and Elder J. L. Smith in conducting the funeral. She was laid to rest in Rehobeth Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection. The very large congregation and the many beautiful flowers denoted the great love and respect in which Sister Head was held.

May the Lord keep and sustain all the dear bereaved ones who were devoted to her, and did all they could for her.

Elder R. W. Rhodes

SAMUEL MATTHEW KUYKENDALL

Samuel Matthew Kuykendall was born September 4, 1877, at San Saba, Texas, and passed away at his home 727 S. Third Street, Chickasha, Oklahoma, February 15, 1958.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Pearl, one daughter, Lena, and one son, Thadas (who passed away one day before his father, in Ontario, Calif.) He is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Ruby Bonine, Boulder Creek, Calif.; three sisters: Mrs. Elizabeth Slusser, Chickasha, Okla., Mrs. Dollie Roberts, Big Lake, Texas, and Mrs. John Waldron, Cement, Okla.; five grandchildren; and ten great grandchildren.

Sam was about eighteen years this writer's senior, the family having known each other in Texas before moving to Oklahoma in 1912 and 1913. He, with his wife, joined the Primitive Baptists in his early thirties. He believed in a sovereign, eternal, immutable God, who ruled all things, and caused all things to work together for good to them that loved God; and declared that if he be housed in heaven and immortal glory, it would be by God's grace and mercy, through the imputed righteousness of Christ Jesus our Saviour. This was his hope; he died in this faith.

A true friend and brother has passed on, as we all must do at God's appointed time. Several years ago he asked the unworthy writer to conduct the services if he passed on before the writer. God granted his request. He was laid to rest between his wife and daughter, in the Cement Cemetery, at Cement, Oklahoma, to await the morning of the resurrection.

May the God of all grace, and the Father of mercy, comfort his family, and those of us who are left, and cause us to remember that we too must soon go the way of all men. "Dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return."

C. U. Landers

MR. ELLIOTT SCARBOROUGH

Mr. Scarborough, who was reared and spent his entire life at or near Farmerville, La., died April 30, 1958, at the Confederate Memorial Hospital, Shreveport, La., at the age of 79 years. He was blessed to rear a large family, and was well known and well thought of in his community, being a good neighbor and a good citizen.

He was not a member of the church, as were his father and mother, and his wife and one of his daughters, but he manifested a great interest in the doctrine which Primitive Baptists believe, and he and his wife were regular attendants of Liberty Hill Church; where her membership is. He enjoyed the services very much, and expressed himself in such a way that it was evident he loved the doctrine of God our Saviour. He was in bad health for some time, having had a leg amputated close to his body. He has passed from his sufferings, and dear ones, we feel that your loss is his eternal gain. So let us weep not at those who have no hope, but let us look for that blessed day when all God's children shall go home, to die no more.

He is survived by his widow, Mrs. May Scarborough, who is in feeble health; and by four sons: George, Bastrop, La.; Shadelee, Farmerville, La.; Bruna, Jacksonville, Fla.; and Sim, Los Angeles, Calif.; three daughters: Mrs. Woodie Albritton and Mrs. Haywood Taylor, Farmerville, La., and Mrs. Ira Matthews, Linville, La.; and by eleven grandchildren, and four great grandchildren.

The writer conducted the funeral services at Liberty Hill Church, with Brother J. Duff Smith, assisting. There was a large crowd and many nice flowers, showing the respect and friendship that many had towards him. He was laid to rest in the Taylor (or Liberty Hill) Cemetery.

May the Lord bless, comfort and console dear Sister Scarborough and all the children.

R. W. Rhodes

IN MEMORY OF
BROTHER J. B. OVERFELT

WHEREAS, Our Heavenly Father has been pleased to remove from our midst our beloved Brother, J. B. Overfelt. He joined this church September 5, 1937, and was baptized the same day. He was 87 years old, dying September 17, 1958. He leaves his wife and several children to mourn his death. He served his church well, always at the meetings unless providentially hindered; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That, we the church at Little Creek, bow in humble submission to God's will; and express our sympathy to the family; and order a copy of this resolution be

spread on our minutes; and a copy sent to Mrs. Alice Kingery, his daughter; and a copy sent to the *Sgns of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference October 5, 1958.

Elder J. P. Helms, Mod. pro tem.

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Whereas God in his infinite wisdom has called from us by death our beloved brother Henry D. Garner, who calmly fell asleep in Jesus on April 5th, 1958.

Brother Garner united with the Primitive Baptist Church of Newport River on Saturday, September 16, 1905, and was baptized the next day by the pastor, Elder W. W. Brinson. Living a devoted member and able defender of the cause he so much loved for 52 years. The Church feels it's loss in his passing but we realize that we must bow in submission to Him who doeth all things well. He leaves a bereaved widow; one daughter, Mrs. Thelma Thompson of Durham, N. C.; three sons, Alvin and Vernon (Ted) of Morehead City, N. C., Owen of Bridgeton, N. C.; 7 grandchildren, 6 great grandchildren and many friends.

May the dear Lord in his mercy fill the place made vacant by his passing with his presence in his home and in the church.

THEREFORE, Be it resolved that we look to Him for comfort who knows all our sorrows. Resolved that a copy of these resolutions be sent to the bereaved widow, a copy to *Signs of The Times*, and a copy recorded in our church record.

Done by order of the church while in conference Saturday before third Sunday in September, 1958.

Elder M. L. Simmons, Moderator
G. C. Garner, Clerk

ELDER J. RUSSELL GIBSON

Elder J. Russell Gibson was born on 26 October, 1893, and departed this life on 1 September, 1958. His parents were Van buren A. Gibson and Ida V. Russell Gibson. Both of his grandparents were ministers in the Primitive Baptist Church. They were Elder M. V. Gibson and Elder J. T. Russell. Elder Russell was also a medical doctor.

Elder Gibson was married on 1 April, 1915, in Galveston, Texas, to Buelah Rollins, and to this union were born eight children namely: Mrs. J. E. Hall, Anderson, S. C.; Mrs. B. R. Wells, Madison, Ala.; J. Russell Gibson Jr., Troy, Ala.; Mrs. H. H. Blanton, Crawfordville, Fla.; Mrs. A. B. Cardwell, Montgomery, Ala.; Gussie Gibson, Troy, Ala.; John W. Gibson, Troy, Ala.; and one child who died in infancy. He is survived by his wife, the above named children and 15 grandchildren.

He first joined another religious order, but being impressed with the power of an all-wise God and the doctrine of Salvation by Grace and Grace alone, he asked for a home with the Primitive Baptists, and was baptized into the fellowship of Elam Primitive Baptist Church by Elder J. W. McLeod on 22 October, 1953. He was impressed so strongly by the doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God and not by the works of the creature that he was made to stand on the walls of Zion and cry aloud and spare not. He was licensed to preach within 3 weeks after his baptism, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry on 30 May, 1954. Elder Gibson succeeded Elder J. W. McLeod as Moderator of the Conecuh River Association in 1954, and continued in that office until his death.

Brother Gibson was recognized and highly respected by his neighbors and fellow citizens. He held elective offices of public trust for many years in Pike County, and was elected to every office for which he offered himself to the people. He was Probate Judge elect of Pike County at the time of his death.

Brother Gibson was laid to rest at his beloved Elam Church with consoling remarks by Elders E. D. Gafford, Sam Dean, and Warren King amid the greatest floral display the writer has ever seen.

Done by order of the Conecuh River Association while in conference 11 October, 1958.

Elder Warren King, Moderator
A. C. Carter, Clerk

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M.

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M.

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 11 A. M.

WRIGHTS' CREEK CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 11:00 A. M.

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., six miles SE. of Sulligent, Alabama.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each Saturday before the fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Alabama.

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles SW. of Fayette, Alabama.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before.

E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Pratt City, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. Meeting place at Alder Street at top of hill, first car going into Pratt City from Birmingham.

H. C. MOON, Pastor

LIBERTY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., eight miles South of Gordo, Alabama.

O. G. GARVER, Pastor

MT. CARMEL CHURCH, Coffee Springs, Alabama, meets each first Sunday 11 A. M.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

W. A. SPEER, Pastor

REHOBETH OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located five miles North of El Dorado, Arkansas and half-mile West of Highway No. 7, meets second Sunday in each month and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

R. W. RHODES, Pastor
W. A. SPEER, Clerk

LITTLE FLOCK CHURCH, Miami, Florida, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before, SW. 29th Avenue and 6th Street. We extend an invitation to any interested to visit us.

Mrs. J. M. Futch,
7005 SW. 21st Street,
Miami, Florida

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Weiser, Idaho, meets each second and fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 5th and E. Park Street.

John Hall, Pastor
Isabel Turnidge, Clerk

PLEASANT VALLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas. For information please write Mrs. Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C, Kingman, Kansas.

THE LOST CREEK CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, meets first Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Kentucky, ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton, on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

C. H. EVANS, Pastor

NEW HOPE CHURCH (better known as Lick Creek) meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Kentucky.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE ZION CHURCH OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS, Mayfield, Kentucky, meets first Sunday each month at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M., on South 7th Street.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Baltimore, Maryland, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Street, near Calvert.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on Falls Road about twenty miles north of Baltimore.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, New York City, meets every first and third Sundays at McBurney Branch Y. W. C. A. 215 W. 23rd Street, corner of 7th Ave. (Elevator to 2nd floor.) 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M. All visitors are welcome.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets each 5th Sunday from May through September, with two days meeting the 1st Sunday in May; and meets at Needmore, Pa., on 5th Sundays from October through April, with two days meeting the 2nd Sunday in October.

John D. Wood, Pastor
Orien Mellott, Clerk
McConnellsburg, Pa.

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, Houston, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before 10:30 A. M. Church is located on Little

York Highway, four miles north of Houston, and one mile east of Highway 76.

W. W. Fleet, Pastor
Irene Wisenbaker, Clerk

BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin, Oregon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes.

ERNEST ATTEBERRY, Pastor

MT. ZION CHURCH, Weslaco, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.; and each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday before at 2:00 P. M., at their new location: seven miles West of Weslaco, on highway 83.

E. B. AULT, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk

SARDIS CHURCH, Amarillo, Texas, meets fourth Sundays at 10:30, in the home of E. J. Parsons, 1711 Lincoln Street.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, has moved their meeting place to 3629 8th Avenue. They meet each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Take College Ave. bus to Butler and Ryon; go one block West, then half block North to church.

C. U. LANDERS, Pastor

THE ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST CHURCH, Lawn, Texas, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
MRS. NOLA STEWART, Clerk

AN ARM OF PILGRIM REST CHURCH, meets each second Sunday and Saturday night before at Earth, Texas.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
A. A. CHAMBERS, Clerk

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30, at the home of M. J. Culpepper. Lovers of the truth invited.

E. B. AULT, Pastor

THE OLD SALEM CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS, four miles South of Teague, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

SAINTS REST OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday evening before at seven-thirty, at 4614 Sylvester Street.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
JOHN T. BEENE, Clerk

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
C. E. TURNER, Co-pastor

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday afternoon at 2:30.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor

THE PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Memphis, Tennessee, meet in the Primitive Baptist Church, corner of Getwell and Fizer Streets, on second Sunday in each month at 11 A. M. and Saturday evening before; also on fourth Sundays at 11 A. M.

H. G. Brown, Pastor
791 Watson Street
L. C. Campbell, Clerk
3347 Tutwiller Street

LITTLE FLOCK PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Cass County, Missouri, meets on second Sundays in the Memorial Building, Pleasant Hill, Missouri. We invite brethren of our faith and order to visit us.

MRS. J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk
L. L. SCHENCK, Pastor
Pleasant Hill, Mo.

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2:30, and is located at 3032 Tidewater Drive.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor
MRS. RUBY COWARD, Clerk

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Richmond, Virginia, meets each fourth Sunday in their new meeting house about ten miles South of Richmond, just off highway 360 South.

R. S. PAYNE, Pastor

DAN RIVER CHURCH, between Danville, Va. and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday night before, on Bradley Road.

W. R. DODD, Pastor

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located on Route 28, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. each second month (February, April, etc.), and is near Lucketts, about eight miles north of Leesburg, Virginia.

BROAD RUN CHURCH, Poolesville, Maryland, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. each second month (January, March, etc.)

MT. ZION CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, Virginia, on Route 50, between Washington and Winchester, Virginia.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are always glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Deacon G. C. Spindle, Lincoln 3-3782.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

LITTLE ZION PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Chehalis, Washington, meets in the home of Sister Effie Parke, 1360 First Street, the first Sunday of each month at 11 A. M.

HOWARD EASON, Pastor

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, Naches, Washington, meets at 10:30 A. M. each second Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERRY, Pastor
MRS. DASIE BAKER, Clerk
Rt. 1, Naches, Wash.

HARMONY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, about four miles East of Huntington, W. Va., near Route 60 at Russell Creek, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

J. R. LANE, Moderator
MILDRED STANLEY, Clerk
Rt. 2, Huntington, W. Va.

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Stockton, California, meets second Sundays, 10:30 A. M., at 5620 E. Marsh Street. All lovers of the truth invited.

T. R. JEFFERSON, Pastor
WM. ECHOLS, Clerk
Chowchilla, Cal.

The **WALNUT FORK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH,** near Cottage Grove, Tennessee, meets on the second Sunday of each month.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor
R. L. VEAZEY, SR., Clerk

The **WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,** Warwick, Orange County, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are at 10:30 A. M. DST.

The **MIDDLETOWN AND WALLKILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,** Middletown, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday from April to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. Meetings are at 2 P. M. DST.

ELAM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, two miles North of Goshen, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

J. R. GIBSON, Pastor
A. C. CARTER, Clerk

ROCK SPRINGS OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, meets each first Sunday at 10:30. The meeting house is located on highway 222, about one-quarter mile of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line.

John D. Wood, Pastor
Chas. B. Osborne, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Compton, California, meets each fourth Sunday at the home of L. W. Langwell, 12812 S. Williams Street.

WHITE WATER OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located about one mile Northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

W. A. SPEER, Pastor

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in the United States), meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is located one mile south of Newark, Delaware, just off of Highway 896.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

OLIVE AND HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Shokan, N. Y., meets each 2nd Sunday at 1:30 P. M.

A. J. Slauson, Pastor
Mrs. Neva Brooks, Clerk

THE WILSON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Wilson, N. C., meets each second Sunday at 3 P. M., and Saturday evening before at 7:30 P. M. The location is on the corner of Green and Jackson Streets.

R. B. Denson, Pastor
Mrs. Bettie Richardson, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 127 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1959 NO. 2

A HYMN

By Daniel Herbert

What is this point you long to know?
Methinks I hear you say, 'Tis this,
I want to know I'm born of God,
An heir of everlasting bliss.

Is this the point you long to know?
The point is settled in my view;
For if you want to love your God,
It proves that God has first loved you.

I want to know Christ died for me;
I want to feel the seal within;
I want to know Christ's precious blood
Was shed to wash away my sin.

I want to feel more love to God;
I want more liberty in prayer;
But when I look within my heart,
It almost drives me to despair.

I want a mind more firmly fix'd
In Christ, my everlasting Head;
I want to feel my soul alive,
And not so barren and so dead.

I want more faith, a stronger faith;
I want to feel its power within;
I want to feel more love to God;
I want to feel less love for sin.

I want to live above the world,
And count it all but trash and toys;
I want some tokens of God's grace,
Some foretastes of eternal joys.

I want — I know not what I want;
I want that real special good;
Yet all my wants are sum'd up here,
I want, I feel I want my God.

Is this the point you long to know?
The dead can neither feel nor see;
It is the slave that's bound in chains,
Who knows the worth of liberty.

So where a want like yours is found,
I think I may be bold to say,
The Lord has fix'd within that soul
What hell can never take away.

However small thy grace appears,
There's plenty in thy precious Head;
Those wants you feel, my Christian friend,
Are never found amongst the dead.

(We copy the above from the Signs of May 15, 1895 — J. D. W.)

TARRY WITH ME

"Tarry with me, O, my Saviour
For the day is passing by;
See the shades of evening gather,
And the night is drawing nigh.

Many friends were gathered round me
In the bright days of the past;
But the grave has closed above them,
And I linger here at last.

Deeper, deeper grow the shadows;
Paler now the glowing west;
Swift the night of death advances —
Shall it be the night of rest?

Feeble, trembling, fainting, dying,
Lord, I cast myself on thee;
Tarry with me through the darkness:
While I sleep, still watch by me.

Tarry with me, O my Saviour!
Lay my head upon thy breast
Till the morning; then awake me —
Morning of eternal rest!"

(Selected by Sister Watt, of Alvinston, Ontario, Canada)

THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD

CHAPTER THREE

By Elder David Bartley

"GOD SENT FORTH HIS SON."

WHEN "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God," and said, "They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one," he did not shut them up in the horrible pit, to perish without mercy; but to his Annointed he said: "I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them

that sit in darkness out of the prison-house." (Isaiah 42:6-7) So the Lord is longsuffering, merciful and gracious unto the children of men, as said Elihu: "Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, 'Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom.'" (Job 33:24) "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass. . . . And he shall speak peace unto the heathen, and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.

As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope; even today do I declare that I will render double unto thee. . . . And the Lord their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people; and they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land." (Zech. 9) O how rich in mercy is our God! for he is the God of salvation.

"When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal. 4:4-5) Of this wonderful advent of the beloved Son of God to the earth, John says, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth. . . . And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (John 1:14-17) Thus is the Advent of the only begotten Son of God profoundly declared.

His Incarnation and Birth was the most marvelous event of time, and of infinite interest to lost men; and second in important wonder to his birth was his Death, and thirdly his Resurrection. Without these three most wonderful events in the universe of God, no flesh could have been saved from sin and death. But God declared to Moses that he would keep mercy for thousands, and forgive sin, iniquity and transgression; therefore, "Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy Salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." (Isa. 62:11) "Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon One that is mighty; I have exalted One chosen out of the people. I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him: with whom my hand shall be established: mine arm shall also strengthen him. . . . He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation. Also I will make him my First-born, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven." (Ps. :89)

This David (beloved) or Son of David is the man Christ Jesus, the Son of Abraham and Isaac, David and Mary, and therefore chosen out of the people of Israel; yet he was also the holy Son of God, while he was verily a man, and called himself "the Son of man," but at the same time he dwelt in the bosom of the Father, whom he revealed and declared. This is most wonderful, that the "holy child Jesus" should be one with God and one with men! As a man, Jesus dwelt among men in the days of his flesh, and at the same time he was in heaven and reigned upon the throne of glory. Truly did Paul say, "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." A most wonderful mystery, that God himself, whom heaven cannot contain, would condescend to bow the heavens and come down to earth, and dwell among men in the likeness of sinful flesh as a man, unto the end that the children of men should be exalt-

ed to dwell in heaven with God! This glorious mystery is embraced in the incarnation of the Word, and the holy priesthood of "the man Christ Jesus", whom God made strong for himself, and gave him power or rightful authority to lay down his righteous life, and power to take it up again, according to the commandment of his loving and holy Father. This was in fulfillment of his holy office and consecrated work as the High Priest of all his people.

There is a most solemn and sacred necessity that the Word that was in the beginning with God, and was God, should be made flesh, take upon himself the form of a servant, and be made in the likeness of men, as stated in the following Scripture: "For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: who can have compassion on the ignorant, and them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. And by reason thereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for our sins. And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an High Priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee." (Heb. 5:1-5) For the people whom God gave to the Son of man in the new covenant, that they should be his brethren and be with him in glory, are the children of men, "partakers of flesh and blood." and so sin and death stood between them and the life of holiness and glory unto which God in his everlasting love had chosen and predestinated them. These enemies must, therefore, be destroyed and taken out of the way: "that we, being delivered out of their hand, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life" — an endless life.

But our Deliverer must come to us in our nature and as our near kinsman, for he must be our Brother in the flesh; yea, he must be one with us, that we should also be one with him in true holiness. In no other way could he be qualified as the High Priest of his people to meet and receive the sword of divine justice, fulfill and satisfy the holy law and redeem them from its curse, suffer and die for their sins, then rise up out of death, above the law and the dominion of sin, justify them unto righteousness, and save them by his life. "For since by man came death," it follows that this penalty of death was against man only, not against angel or spirit; so it is equally true that, "by Man came also the resurrection of the dead." (Cor. 15)

So it is written: "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of d e a t h, crowned with glory and honor: that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect t h r o u g h sufferings." (Heb. 2:9-10) For in no other way could the sinful people of the covenant of life and peace be made perfect, and "grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life" over them. "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." (Gal. 3:21) "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." (Gal. 2:21) "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Rom. 8:3-4)

All this divine testimony fully shows that the Anointed Christ, the one Mediator between God and men, was truly a man in the flesh and the Son of man; that he died in the flesh as a man, and for the children of men; that God raised up from the dead the MAN Christ Jesus, to die no more, and anointed him with the fullness of the Holy Spirit of life

and peace the glorious High Priest of all his people forever.

The descent and parentage of the risen, ascended and coronated Son of man, whose name is "Wonderful", will further show the real humanity or manhood of our High Priest unto God, and his true Divinity as well. "The angel Gabriel was sent from God" to a virgin of the royal family of David the king, saying unto her, "Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. . . . Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt bring forth a son, and shall call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke 1) Mary was given faith to joyfully believe this wonderful annunciation, and she said, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoiced in God my Saviour."

More than seevn centuries before the time of Mary, a prophet said, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold, a virgin shall bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." (Isa. 7:14) The interpretation of this name is, "God with us." Jesus, his personal name, means the same; that is, Jesus is God with us, for he is the God-Man, or God-and-man in his one person. All the perfect attributes of the incorruptible God and of uncorrupted man were verily his. As well in his manhood as in his eternal Godhead, Jesus was sinless and divinely holy, and is God's "holy child." "Jesus Christ our Lord was made of the seed of David according to the flesh. and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." (Rom. 1:3-4)

It was absolutely necessary that the holy and blessed Jesus should sustain this twofold relationship — to his Father and brethren — and possess all this divine fulness of perfection and power, to constitute him our sufficient and successful Prophet and Priest and King, and bring all his people into the glory and bliss of the Father's presence and love, sanctified and holy, and say, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me." Unto this merciful purpose and work of full salvation Jesus came. How rich the mercy and divine the blessing, that our God would thus glorify the children of men, in the person and exaltation of the holy Son of man, and make them in and through his Son the children of the Most High! What infinite love that God came to us as Man, that lost men should be saved! This was compassion like the blessed God, and it verifies the ravishing truth that "God is Love"!

The angelic salutation to the mother of Jesus proclaims him King, as well as Priest; for, on his mother's side, he was the Son of David and heir to his throne of Israel, while, on his Father's side, he was the Son of God and heir to his throne of heaven. This is very wonderful! David was king in Israel, but he could not also be a priest; for the priestly line was in the family of Levi, while the kingly line was in the family of Judah, and so the two sacred offices were distinct. It were death should a king of Israel thrust himself before the Lord in the most holy place of the sanctuary. On the other hand, neither Aaron nor his sons, though consecrated to officiate in the holy office of high priest, could not reign upon the throne of Israel.

A very instructive and important lesson is thus taught us; that is, that neither Aaron nor David were complete types of our adorable Priest and King, because neither could represent him in both these divine offices; yet each partially, Aaron as high priest, and David as king. In the complete Bible we shall find a more perfect typical person, therefore, of him "that is born King of the Jews", and was also "the Apostle and High Priest of our profession"; and this better type has God given us in the remarkable person of Melchisedec, who

was "king of Salem, priest of the most high God." By interpretation his very name signified "King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually." (Heb. 7:-1-3) That is, Melchisedec was the only priest of his order, and therefore he was without descent in his priestly office, and his was an abiding priesthood in which he was a true type of the Son of God, who abideth a priest forever.

Melchisedec was also king of righteousness and peace, and in this he fitly represented the King who reigns in righteousness, even Immanuel, whose "name is called the Word of God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." (Rev. 19) How wonderful was this man Melchisedec as type of the Son of God! At once perfect and alone as both priest and king, no other man in the wonderful Bible so truly personated the man Christ. So it is written of Jesus, "The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." (Psalms 110:4) In Hebrews 7, we learn that this man was so great that Abraham paid tithes to him, and that thus did Levi and Aaron and all that priesthood, who received tithes of their brethren, the people of Israel, pay tithes to the better and greater priest in the person of their great patriarch Abraham, who honored Melchisedec as superior to himself. In this we connect Melchisedec with Jesus, who said to the Jews, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. . . . Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I AM." (John 8:56-58)

"If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change of the law." (Heb. 7:11-12) Thus it is very evident that the priesthood of the Son of God belongs to a new and better testament or covenant than the Levitical priesthood, and is entirely different and distinct from it, which difference will be considered hereafter.

A further notice of the fleshly lineal descent of the holy Son of man is of vital interest to all who earnestly desire kindredship and union with him, without which we have no representation or interest in his priesthood, for he is the High Priest of his brethren only, and they shall for this reason be joint-heirs with him in all the fullness and blessing of his successful and glorious priesthood. First, then, the precious Redeemer unites in himself the three-one office of Prophet-Priest-King, not as arbitrarily thrust in either, but rightfully, as born unto them. For his genealogy on his royal mother's side, as given in Matthew 1, shows that the prophets and priests and kings of Israel united in his "precious blood". Yet his patriarchal line is reckoned from Judah, from whom the scepter should not depart, said the dying Jacob, "until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." The meaning of Shiloh is, "resting-place", and Christ gives rest unto all the people that come to him.

But Jesus is the salvation of God unto the ends of the earth, and Simeon said of the infant Redeemer, "A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." So, though Jesus was born of the Jews, it is equally important and interesting to the Gentiles, to whom God grants repentance unto salvation, to know that no less than four of our Lord's maternal ancestors were Gentile women, whose husbands were sons of Israel, which the record plainly shows David the king, of whom Christ came, was the great-grandson of the interesting Ruth, a daughter of Moab, and beautiful type of the Gentile church. The kings of Jerusalem were likewise descended from the mother of Solomon,

a Gentile woman. It will interest the Bible reader to trace the other Gentile women of faith, from whom came our Brother-Redeemer. How wonderful this is, that the man Christ, the Anointed of God, our Prophet and High Priest and King for ever, is our near kinsman in the flesh, though we were lost sinners of the idolotrous Gentile race. In this is seen the riches of God's mercy, and the much more abounding of his grace, reigning by our Lord Jesus Christ.

This overflowing of salvation to the Gentiles, who were outside the walls of the first covenant, is beautifully expressed in the typical blessing of the dying Israel upon his son Joseph, saying, "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall." So it is indeed true of the spiritual Joseph, whose "bow abideth in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; from thence is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel. . . . The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors, unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph." (Gen. 49) "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell." "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace."

(Chapter four next month)

ELECTION: A GRACIOUS ACT OF GOD

325 West Missouri St.
El Paso, Texas

The doctrine of salvation by grace is so inextricably tied in with the doctrine of Election, the New Birth, Regeneration and the Resurrection, that the wisdom of man had to devise and design some other method of eternally saving man in order that none need be lost and left out when the final day of reckoning comes. It became necessary to dilute the doctrine of salvation by grace by throwing in a little works of human effort, and still label it "salvation by grace." In this way, no man woman, or child need be eternally lost, as must be the case under the doctrine of Election and the pure, unadulterated doctrine of salvation by grace.

We not infrequently hear someone who does not want to risk offending another, say "We are all wanting to go to the same place, therefore, it does not make so much difference after all what church we belong to, just so we live up to the teachings of the Bible. This attitude does not help matters, but on the contrary makes them worse; it places the emphasis on church membership rather than on the work of the Holy Spirit in the individual. Since the Election of a definite number of the human family to be the children of GOD and the recipients of eternal salvation, was the work of GOD in eternity before there was a man, woman or child, there could have been exterted no human effort; no act of the individual. Therefore, the Election was a gracious act of GOD, unadulterated and undefiled by any work or effort on the part of those individuals so elected to eternal salvation.

Of course, there are those, and their numbers are as the sands of the sea, who adulterate, and mingle works with grace, and deny the doctrine of Election, either expressly or by implication. We who disagree with them should not quarrel with them. Neither should we spend precious hours in trying to convert them. That is the office of the Holy Spirit. We cannot do the work of the Holy Spirit, neither can we undo what the Holy Spirit has done. We should be ever zealous in our walk and praise of GOD, but not so zealous that we are afraid one of His little ones will be led astray and possibly be lost, by being contaminated with the grace plus works doctrine; and in our zeal offend those with whom we disagree. GOD has been too good to the undeserving and Christ suffered too much for the hell-deserving, for them to waste one second of precious time that should be devoted to

praising HIM who graciously planted in us a hope that, despite our vileness and unworthiness, we are members of the family of GOD. To argue and dispute, except in an humble defense of our faith, with those who feel that they must have some part in their own redemption and salvation, is a waste of that precious time.

We have been taught that GOD chose for HIMSELF a people, and that they will be eternally saved BECAUSE Christ died to save them. We have not been so taught by man. We do not find that this teaching is anywhere contradicted by the scriptures. On the other hand men teach, and many believe, that man is saved BECAUSE Christ died to save all sinners; and BECAUSE sinners, some of them at least, accept Christ as their personal saviour. By this teaching, the effectiveness of the first BECAUSE is made to depend upon the second BECAUSE; the effectiveness of Christ's dying to save sinners depends upon whether the sinner wants to be saved and will accept and benefit by what Christ did.

We have no quarrel with those who believe that way. They can no more help believing as they do than I can help believing as I do; and I would not want to be chastised or criticized by them because I believe as I do. We do not walk in the same light, and thus we go our separate ways so far as our convictions regarding the teachings of the scriptures are concerned. I am constantly reminded by the words and actions of those who are zealously engaged in bringing lost souls to Christ, that Christ Himself said, "No man cometh unto me unless the Father which sent me, draws him"; and that Paul, who was taught a memorable lesson by no other teacher than Christ, said that, Salvation is by grace and not of works.

By the language of these two no encouragement is held out to those who, though feeling no drawing power tugging at them, try to approach Christ with an offering of the flesh in exchange for spiritual balm for an already contented mind. But I would not try to lift the fog through which they travel. That is again the work of the Holy Spirit; and just as surely as Christ accomplished all that HE came to do, that sure the Holy Spirit will accomplish its work at the time appointed of GOD.

So, with that HOPE, which never dies though often it may become dim, to light our paths as we travel toward life's western horizon, and the port of embarkation for the journey to the climes of eternal glory, we may be and are assured that, come what may, trials tribulations, sorrow, suffering and persecution, none of these can separate us from the love of GOD who so graciously chose us and draws us to HIM and gave for us hell deserving creatures, HIS only begotten Son, Christ Jesus. Bearing in mind that Christ was so considerate of our faults that HE gave HIS life to redeem us, does it not behoove and become us to be more considerate of the faults of each other?

Hubert T. Faulk

CHRISTMAS GREETING

My Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

While the sun slowly sinks in the golden West, the nocturnal breeze blows down the streets, and the shadows of night creep slowly o'er the town, and the stars twinkle in the heaven above, it tells us that the toils of another day are done. But a new day will break forth at dawn, to give us new experiences and many unexpected events.

Now we see more than a day coming to an end: the year of 1958 is swiftly coming to a close, and the dawn of 1959 will soon be here, to bring us new experiences, exciting events, and many unexpected things — because God does not let us know all the morrow will bring.

While we look upon the shadows of night, and the eventide of the old year, may our minds go back to many days gone by when God's people were wan-

dering in darkness. For more than four hundred years they wandered with no new prophets with whom to speak: and no great spiritual light could they find. Only the traditions of the law remained, and a little spark of hope in the hearts of some few scattered about. But God had not forgotten the objects of his love.

One quiet, still night while the shadows hovered over the land and the stars twinkled above, the angel of the Lord broke the good news to shepherds watching their flock by night: "I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

Now, nearly two thousand years later, while spiritual darkness once more hovers over us, let us remember that that notable event came to pass according to God's promise; and that God promised Christ would come again and carry his people to glory. May we celebrate that memorable night, the night the angel brought the good news, by singing with the spirit and understanding, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." And looking forward to the second coming of Christ, when a new day, an eternal day, will dawn with everlasting praise, eternal joy, and peace forever. Amen.

With brotherly love and Christian esteem, I am

Your unworthy brother in hope,
(Elder) W. W. Taylor
1216 S. Brighton,
Dallas 8, Texas

Perrin, Texas

Dear Editors and Readers of the Signs:

I see that my renewal is due, so I enclose payment for another year. It seems that I could not do without them, for I get so much lovely preaching out of them.

I want to tell the brethren of our association which was recently held. There was much love manifested, and the preaching was all of one accord; salvation by grace and grace alone, and each one believing in good works produced by the Holy Spirit. We are made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. I feel that it was a God sent meeting: all were in one accord; and the singing was wonderful. Our minds were lifted from earthly things, and we were enabled to praise God from whom all blessings flow.

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17) What a wonderful God the Old Baptists have, for he saves to the utmost all that come to him by Jesus; and no man can come to him except by Jesus, and he that cometh, he will in no wise cast out, but will raise him up at the last day. Is it not wonderful to feel God's presence? There is not a day that he doesn't give some pleasant thoughts on the Scriptures. Oh that I might praise Him with all the power that is within me.

May God be with all that read the Signs; and all who write for it, is my prayer. I was eighty-nine the 13th of June (1958), and I can't think as I used to.

Your brother in hope,
C. Y. Osteen

FINAL PRESERVATION OF THE SAINTS

We have a request for an article on the above subject, which we feel a desire to comply with as best we can.

Surely no subject should more vitally concern the redeemed of the Lord or afford them more ground for everlasting gratitude and thanksgiving than to be assured that their eternal happiness has been secured to them beyond a possibility of a miscarriage. But to proceed to examine the grounds for our hope,

let us examine this subject both negatively and affirmatively.

If the final abode of the redeemed depends unon their goodness or upon them keeping themselves from the evils of the world and the powers of Satan, then indeed is their hope resting upon a precarious foundation; for without holiness no man can see God (Heb. 12:14); and he that keepeth the whole law and offends in one point, is guilty of all (Jas. 2:10); and there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not (Eccle. 7:20); and if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. (1 John 1:18) Therefore there are none that are able to clothe themselves with the holiness necessary to come into the presence of God, and if their hope rests there, then instead of there being final happiness for some, there is certain damnation for all; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. (Rom. 3:23) Again Paul says that he and the Saints at Rome were no better than those whose damnation is just. After refering to certain characters who had slandered him, he declared their damnation is just; then he asks, "What then, are we better than they?" and answers, "No, in no wise." (Rom. 3:9) Now, we reason, if the damnation of the wicked is just, and the righteous are no better (considered in themselves) than the wicked, their damnation is just also, if their own righteousness is all they have to secure them from damnation.

We deem the foregoing sufficient to show the futility of any man or of all men's efforts or claims to a state of final happiness upon a basis of their own merits or good works. This is the grounds upon which the great masses of professing Christians are resting their hope of heaven, and we are not surprised they stand in doubt as to what the final results will be. But the redeemed of the Lord whose hope the Lord is have a more sure word of prophecy; they whose trust is in the Lord for righteousness have the sure mercies of David vouchsafed unto them by the immutable promise and oath of Jehovah; and all the divine perfections of the Three-One God are engaged to bring them to this expected end. Let us consider briefly some of those promises which are said to be sure to all the seed. (Rom. 4:16)

The inspired apostle unto the Gentiles said: "Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. 1:6) Here we should be willing to rest our case were there no further testimony, for this assurance to the apostle was given by the inspiration of God, and no amount of adverse statements and arguments that man can make should be sufficient to move our hope from this sure foundation; but before we conclude we shall see that a cloud of witnesses, equally creditable shall add their testimony to this blessed confidence of the apostle Paul.

We said that every divine perfection of the Deity was engaged to accomplish the final and everlasting salvation and deliverance of all the chosen vessels of mercy, and so they are: Infinite wisdom, omnipotent power, eternal love, immutable justice, everlasting goodness and mercy, each and all must exert and exhaust their utmost force before one for whom Christ died shall fail of final and everlasting deliverance. Shall we conclude that the Father, who, rather than see the objects of His love perish everlastingly, delivered up His beloved and only Son to die for them; and the Son, rather than be separated from those whom the Father had given Him, and whom He promised the Father to keep, laid aside the glory that He had before the world was created, accepted the curse of an offended law and became obedient unto death, that they might be delivered from the curse of the law and from the power of death and live and reign with Him for ever and ever. And He in His conflict with death and the powers of Satan, charged their ramparts, broke down their bulwarks, grappled with death, sin and

Satan in their strongholds, gained a complete and decisive victory over them all, delivered the objects of His love from the prison of sin, from the bondage of the law and from the power of the grave; a victory which cost Him His precious life: We repeat, shall we now conclude that after the Father and Son have paid so stupenduous a price for the liberty of these captives, have engaged to accomplish their final and everlasting deliverance, that They may yet surrender all They have accomplished to an inveterate and conquered foe, and acknowledge the shame of defeat? Or worse still that the creature for whom all this was done should bring them into disgrace by frustrating all their plans and setting at naught all past achievements, and then flaunt in the face of Jesus His own words? "This man began to build and was not able to finish." (Luke 14:30) But as truly as God is God this shall never obtain, for He not only delivered them from all iniquity (Tit. 2:15), but they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. (1 Pet. 1:5) If they are kept by the power of God, in order that they be destroyed, there must be a power superior to God's power brought into action, which is able to set aside the power of God. But we are told that there is no power but of God; that the powers that be are ordained of God. (Rom. 13:1)

Again, we hear the Son himself say, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand. My Father which gave them Me is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (Jno. 10:27-29) Is not this a sweeping and convincing declaration of the perfect safety of the sheep, those for whom Christ laid down His life? (Jno. 10:15) He asserts that He gives unto them eternal life, places them in a state of preservation and declares that they shall never perish; and then to give unto them greater assurance of their complete safety, He declares that they are in the hands of He and His Father, and that none is able to pluck them out. Could their security be more certainly declared? The blessed Savior showed His solicitude for the safety and final happiness of His people in His prayer to the Father when He said: "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am: that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given Me; for thou lovest Me before the foundation of the world." (John 17:24) What shall be our conclusion? will the Father answer the prayer of his Son and grant his will that those the Father has given him be with him where he is? On another occasion, in prayer to the Father, Jesus said, "And I knew that thou hearest Me always." (Jno. 11:42) Jesus never asked anything of the Father that the Father did not grant, is the meaning of the words above, therefore those whom Jesus prayed to be with him where he is will be there in answer to that prayer.

Paul said the believer is "sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession." (Ephe. 1:13-14) The earnest of the inheritance is the advanced payment, or that which is given in advance to assure the consummation of the promise. There is no way by which the one receiving the earnest can abrogate the promise or nullify the contract. To illustrate: I contract to sell my farm; all the terms are considered and agreed to by both myself and the purchaser, the price is agreed upon; and in order to assure me of his good faith, the purchaser gives me $500, which I receive. This $500 is the earnest of that purchase price, is a part of it, and I am bound by law, when I receive it, to fulfill my part of the contract, and make a good and sufficient title to the property contracted. So it is in the divine transaction between Christ and His purchased possession, His covenant children; when they have received the earn-

est of the eternal inheritance which assures them of the good faith of Christ, they have received a part of the inheritance itself, and this places it beyond their power to vitiate the promise or nullify the covenant. If Christ does not bring them into a full realization of that inheritance of which they have received a part, it will only be because He does not choose to do so, as the consummation of the promise rests wholly in His pleasure as in the case of the purchaser cited above, but in neither case can the purchaser recover the earnest. In the eyes of the law that would be liquidated damages against the purchaser for his failure to faithfully perform his contract or promise. But God, "Willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner has for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." (Heb. 6:17-20)

So not only is God's promise given as assurance to the heirs of promise of the certain and final fulfillment of His purpose to deliver them from every foe, and bring them home to glory where Jesus is, and prayed that they should be, but He has confirmed that promise with an oath. Paul said that he was in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; (Titus 1:2) And again he said, as quoted above, that it was impossible for God to lie; and for one to believe and teach that there is even one for whom Christ died, and to whom the promise of eternal life has been made, will fall short of the fulness of this promise, is to believe and teach that God has not only lied, but has perjured Himself. This no devout child of God can afford to do. Both God's promise and his oath are immutable, and whatever He has promised must come to pass without the possibility of failure; therefore, those who have Christ as their hope have strong consolation, knowing their hope will never end in disappointment; while those who build their hope of eternal life and eternal happiness upon their own supposed righteousness and good works, must content themselves with strong anxiety with no grounds of consolation. It is a significant fact that only those who deny the finished righteousness and complete salvation of Christ call in question the final preservation of the saved; and well they may question the final preservation of all who are not included in this complete salvation, for the apostle declares, "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12) So if their salvation does not rest in the finished work and righteousness of Jesus Christ, then indeed they will not preserve, for they have only been wrapped up in "filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6), and filthy rags were never known to preserve anything.

Finally the solution of this subject rests in the correct answer to the question, Did Christ save His people from their sins, as the angel which heralded His birth declared He should do? If He did, then their salvation is complete, and their preservation sure, if He did not, then they are not saved, and their damnation is certain. The angel said of Christ, (Matt. 1:21) "He shall save His people from their sins." If he did this, then their sins cannot be the cause of their damnation, because they are saved from them. If Christ undertook to save His people from their sins, and it finally results that their sins damn them, it is conclusive evidence that Christ did not do what He undertook, but made a failure. But the prophet Isaiah, (42:4) says: "He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till He hath set judgment in the earth." The blessed Savior himself said of his mission on earth, "I am come that they (His sheep) might have life, and

that they might have it more abundantly." (Jno. 10:10) Again, "For the Son of Man is come to seek and save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10) Again he says, "For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." (Jno. 6:38-39) We are not left to guess at what the work Christ undertook was, for it is abundantly and clearly declared in His words and in the words of all who told of His coming. Did He accomplish the work which He came down to do? We will rest upon His own blessed testimony. Hear Him as He reverently addresses his Father who has confided so sacred a trust in His hands, "I have glorified Thee on earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest Me to do." (Jno. 17:4) Again, as He hung suspended upon the cross he cried out, "It is finished." We bow in reverence and again declare our implicit trust in the finished work of Jesus; to question which would be to call in question the dying testimony of the blessed Lord of life.

The apostle Paul, in adding his testimony to the truth set forth above, declared that those whom God foreknew he predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son; and those whom he predestinated; he called: and those he called, he justified; and those he justified, he glorified. (Rom. 8:29-30) Notice these verbs are all in the past tense and represent all this work as completed in Christ who is the Head and Representative of his people. If those foreknown and predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ have been called, justified and glorified as the result of what Christ has done for them, will someone pray tell us what now can intervene to defeat the purpose of God to bring them into final happiness. But the apostle did not stop here; he asks, "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 31:32) As much as to ask, If God has performed what, to man, would appear the impossible task of delivering up his beloved and only Son to die for sinners, and that too while they were his enemies, (Rom. 5:10) how could it be thought possible that he could now refuse or fail to give them all things freely, which would include eternal happiness which was secured to them in the gift of His Son? The seemingly difficult task is finished when God delivered up His Son; the gift of all other things is of minor significance compared to the gift of Christ. So all for whom Christ was delivered up have been given with him perfect and perpetual immunity not only from the consequences of sin, but also from all charges of sin; for hear the apostle in the next verse of the same chapter from which we were quoting: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." This is equal to an interrogative affirmation that none can lay anything to the charge of God's elect. It is certain if they cannot be charged with sin, they cannot be condemned for it. It would be ridiculous to attempt to condemn a man by the law when he has not and cannot be charged with an offense; and so it was said by the prophet, "Every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn." (Isa. 54:17) The reason why those for whom Christ was delivered up cannot be charged with sin, is because their sins have all been charged to Christ, and He paid it all for them; and as the same account cannot be charged to two persons, nor collection of it forced twice, neither can the sins of those for whom Christ was delivered be charged to their account. God says, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. 8:12)

When Christ took the sins of his people upon himself, he imputed his righteousness to them, without any consideration of works on their part, (Rom. 4:6) He gives unto them eternal life

and says they shall never perish. In consideration of all of the wonderful works which Christ performed for his people, and the manifestations of his everlasting love for them, the apostle Paul affirms their eternal security and preservation in these words: "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, no angles, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 8:28-29) This is sufficient to establish beyond any possible conjecture, the abiding love of God for his people. Nothing can separate them from his love; death nor life nor anything that intervenes between can come between God and the objects of his love. Their everlasting happiness is so inseparably connected with God's glory, that he has pledged the honor of his own word and oath to accomplish this for all that he has given to his Son.

We would like to examine some of the scriptures that are sometimes introduced to prove apostacy, but time will not permit; suffice it to say that every scripture correctly understood and interpreted must be in perfect accord with the numerous passages quoted in the foregoing, and an interpretation of any scripture which would place it in conflict with a plain statement of inspiration is an erroneous interpretation. May the Lord enable us to accept his truth and rejoice in it.

(The above is an editorial by Elder J. R. Hardy in Advocate of Truth, March 1, 1914; and is published by request.)

THERE THEY ENCAMPED

Benton, Kentucky

Dear Elder Wood:

Recently I was reading Exodus, 15th chapter, and when I read the last verse, something caused me to meditate on the *beautiful place of encampment:* twelve wells of water were there, and three score and ten palm trees. What a beautiful place to encamp! There they encamped.

This Summer, in August, Friday, Saturday and the 4th Sunday, 1958, was the time for the Little River Association to be held. The place where the association was held, was a beautiful lawn, with two rows of maple trees: their branches lapping and intertwining around each other 'till the rays of summer sun could not shine through the foliage; the moss around the tree roots had formed a soft, plush, green carpet. There the seats, row upon row, had been placed by dutiful hands; and the benches arranged for the preaching brethren, and a table for the stand. There were not twelve wells of water — but a well of water in the side yard, which was clear and cold, for the natural thirst.

There we encamped the three days of Little River Association, close to Cadiz, Kentucky. The brother, Lucien Dunn, the only member of Long Creek Church where the association was scheduled to meet, finding the old house in bad condition, decided to have, or try to have, the Lord willing, the meeting at his home — using the lawn for the services. Several unusual incidents took place. Brother Dunn fell from a scaffold while fixing something about the residence, and spent several days in a Nashville hospital, but was released in time to finish preparations for the meeting. Elder Darnell was expecting visiting ministers from different states and associations. They arrived, and were wonderfully cared for; and were there seemingly by appointment of God, and not of man. Their understanding was enlightened, and their minds led in a straight line of truth as it is in Jesus. Surely they were called and chosen.

On Saturday night a heavy rain fell so very near our out-door, unsheltered meeting place, which caused many to say, "We will start for home, but will go by and say, Good-by, to Brother Dunn," who had made it possible for us

to meet at his home. But on arriving a few yards from the place, they found that the rain had not fallen at our meeting-place during the night: the seats were dry on this sunny Sunday morning, and services continued till the close of the association.

"What wonderous love is this, oh, my soul." Sufficient for us to say, "Who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him?" And we might well add, He leads us about and instructs us in his ways. From the very beginning of the meeting, many of us said, "It can't be done out on the lawn; the weather will interfere." Nothing is too hard for our God. "Thou hast shewed us hard things." (Pslams 60:3) "And we drink the wine of astonishment."

How astonished we were, naturally speaking; but how astonished we were when we were led out of nature's darkness into his marvelous light of truth, and to see the "hard things", as we hope, our God has showed us in all the way he has led us. If some super-natural thing did not break forth into view, we would be bragging, "We arranged it so." But He delivers; He shows his children!

Although that place mentioned in Exodus 15, the last verse, was so beautiful for situation; and our place of meeting the three days was beautiful for situation, it is a light thing compared with what we hope we see in the strength of our God: his power to keep, to save, and to lead. How he speaks in holiness, and it is done!

I promised Brother Darnell I would try to describe the meeting, if I had a mind. This is my mind now.

In hope,
Effie Bowden

1355 Fernwood Circle, N. E.,
Atlanta 19, Ga.

Dear Friends in Christ:

The check is for subscription to the Signs of the Times, which I value very highly, and enjoy very much. A church paper such as the Signs of the Times, stands next to the Bible. The Bible is the greatest reading in the world: every believer should have both in his home.

Your paper is a need for present day information, and I sincerely hope that the Lord continues to bless you in its publication.

Yours in fellowship,
(Elder) Ples M. Watkins

Brampton, Ontario

Dear Elder Spangler:

Am enclosing money-order for my renewal and for a new subscription.

. . . Elder Ruston, our dear pastor, asked me to try and write my experience, and I still hope and pray that I can. Reading some of the experiences in the Signs I feel others have described my feelings better than I can.

My grandma and my mother always had the Signs in their homes, and I always want them in mine. The Bible is the most wonderful book. The Signs has much scripture quotations in it, and is a means of corresponding and mingling of our precious belief in an all Sovereign God. I would not want to be without a single issue.

May the Lord bless all the editors of the Signs, and that it be His will that it continue to be published, and expound the power and glory of God. To me, it is a privilege and a blessing to receive it.

Yours in a precious hope,
(Mrs.) Verna Carscadded

OUR APPRECIATION

We wish to express our thanks to the brethren and friends for their cards and letters received during the holiday season; and since we would not be able to acknowledge each one individually, we address this note to them in the Signs, desiring each to know that we highly value their love and fellowship. May the New Year bring renewed evidence of the goodness and mercy of the Lord to all the household of faith.

John D. Wood

Danville, Virginia **February, 1959**

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EDITORIAL

"So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." (Romans 1:15-17)

I do not make any claim towards being equal with Paul, but if I have been called of God to preach the gospel, I have the same feeling about preaching the gospel that he had. Since he sent this forth by inspiration I do not think any fault can be found with his experience in these things. I am not Paul, and I am a laggard when it comes to having his zeal and interest in the kingdom, yet, I cannot understand that we can have a different experience than he had and be able to substantiate our claim to be called a minister.

We have all neard the old adage that "the best evidence that a man is called to preach is that he preaches." The commandment to those the Saviour sent out was, "As you go, preach"; and if there is a better criterion by which to judge the matter it has not yet been given us by the Master. I have often felt that I was a failure as a minister; I have even called in question many times my being called in the first place; I have gotten home a lot of times and felt that it would not do the Old Baptists any harm for me to quit. *But I have not tried to quit.* I have been trying to preach for more than thirty years, but after the Lord liberated me, as I hope, having brought all my rebellion to an end, I have not tried once to quit. I have tried each time that I have been placed by my brethren in the pulpit to preach Jesus as the only salvation of sinners. Only once in all this time have I refused to go forward in a preaching way. I hope that I have been told *not* to cast pearls before swine, and on that one occasion I did not see anything except the *snout* and the *grunt* and *squeal* of swine, and if not that, then I did not see the quality of sheep but rather the *butting* and the *fighting* and the *smell* of goats.

I hope that the commandments of my Master are precious and worthy of the closest adherence of every servant of his. But I do not want to preach so bad that I want to put words in his mouth. That he has commanded the feeding of sheep I freely and readily admit; that he has sent ministers to comfort Israel, to preach the word, to rebuke, to reprove, to exhort, I think I know right well. That he has commanded us *not* to cast pearls before swine; that he has *not* taught the group with the apostle while on the Damascus road; that he did *not* command Peter to do anything, nor say anything to the ones *not* cut in the heart on the day of Pentecost, I emphatically accept as Bible teaching.

I do not come before you to tell you what the "Hardshell" position is in regard to preaching the gospel. I do not know too many of that class. The name

is not the name of God's people (see Isa. 33:16). All of them that I have known say that the Lord has commanded his servants to preach to people that are dead in sin, commanding them to repent and come to God even though he knows they cannot do it. If there is such a thing as the "Hardshell" position in regard to preaching the gospel, that is about as hard a position as one could find. The position of the Primitive Baptist church is much better than that. Her Master has not given her a set of ambiguous and superfluous directions for carrying on his work. Her Master has not needed to initiate something so as to be excused before men. He did not do anything in vain and I am sure that he has not commanded her to do something that was useless. He *may* have commanded the "Hardshells" to do that but that he has commanded the Primitive Baptists to do that, I deny.

The way of the Lord has always been too hard for men. It has always found repugnance in the carnal mind of men. The crookedness of men is opposed to the straightness of God; the religion of men is opposed to the straightness of God. Every departure from the truth has been because men were not in harmony with what the Lord has said. Look back through what little history we have of the so-called dark and middle ages and in every case it has been a lack of knowing the will of God, and of setting up their own will in matters pertaining to the faith.

In the present day the great question over missions was brought to the front by men who did not know the sovereignty of God in salvation: *What He did* was all right, but *more* could be done. Or, to put it another way, he at least would be excused because he did not do more. Jesus is the Saviour of his people, or he is not. If not, then it behooves us to preach (not Jesus, but) the law of Moses. If Jesus did not save them from hell, neither did he procure the good of the land for them, and if Jesus did not save his people, perhaps some of them might stumble upon compliance with the law of Moses and would thus be able to salvage at the least the good of the land. My Jesus (if I am his, he is mine) redeemed his people, and is now saving them from all of the things that the law of Moses could not save them from.

Fuller and his associates not only wanted more saved than Jesus saved, but they also wanted to exonerate the Lord. Although he did not choose them, and did not die for them, and did not promise them any blessings and revelations and gifts of the Holy Ghost, yet, to allay suspicion, and to clear him of injustice, they concocted the thought of preaching to both the dead and the living; of commanding both of them to do what living men only could do. Then we have had several minor controversies here in America since the mission question, all of them brought about by the same question, to wit, that it is our duty to preach the gospel to all men. At the beginning of each controversy about the same reasoning was used, to wit, that it rendered the man without an excuse for *not* complying with that which only living men could comply with. It has always been said in the beginning of these departures that dead men could not comply with them, but it has also been soon followed with the assertion that they could.

We, as a people, have spent a lot of time shooting arrows at the denominations. We have said that they believe if they did not get the gospel to the masses and give them a chance to be saved that the going to hell was because of that failure. But the thing has now come to us in a new way. God has made it obligatory on us to give every one a dose of the gospel, even though it doesn't do them any good, and yet, if we have thus failed in doing all this that does not do any good, then God will hold us responsible because we did not do more that would not do any good.

More than that, if preaching the gospel to all men is to be done so that men would not have an excuse for not com-

plying with the gospel, then what sluggards we have been, and how many poor deluded sinners are in hell that do not have an excuse for being there, and how awful it is that the Old Baptists have had an opportunity to remove a stigma from God because that it did not suit him to choose them in eternity, nor was not in the eternal purpose of God for Christ to die for them, and that Jesus did not send the Comforter to them, but that God, seeing he had left his name to these folks as being a little forgetful or unmindful, later decided to relent a little towards them and have the gospel preached to them, even though he had it fixed to where dead men could not hear it. Again, that may be the "Hardshell" position but it is not the position of the church of Jesus Christ, which I believe with all the powers of my being is the Old School or Primitive Baptist people.

There is more than one kind of Hardshells. Some of them do brag right much about themselves. They do seem to think that no one has any knowledge of the wonderful works of God except an exclusive few. They are determined to have just as few in the organic kingdom as they possibly can. Sometimes you will hear them say, "We have got to be careful who we take in, for we will get somebody in that has not got any business in the church." That is a hard position to take. But it can be harder than he that takes it intends for it to be. If they have got to be careful who they take, will they not sometimes make a mistake and keep out one who should be in? Or does this carefulness only work one way? It behooves us to be careful in all things, but if it is one sided, and works only half way, or if it takes care about who gets in but does not about who is left out, then it is, to me, a "Hardshell" position and I do not want any part in it.

I believe, if I believe, that Jesus Christ set up his kingdom here and that organically, it is the Old Baptist church. If I did not believe that; if I was not fully persuaded of that, I would search for somebody that fit the bill for me, but I would not do my searching under the auspices of the Old Baptist church. That too, would be the "Hardshell" position. I preach to all that are in my audiences, but I have not, and do not expect to begin, to call on dead sinners. John Gill, Dr. Watson, and all of the learned of the day can talk about the scriptures teaching such a monstrosity but I beg to be excused from falling for it. I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. Why? Because it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. It is not the power of God for salvation, but unto salvation to all of the believers. If it is the power of God unto the believers, then it does not have any power in it for the unbeliever. I would not belittle the gospel nor the preaching of it, but I do think it is my duty to warn our people in regard to the extensiveness of that gospel. I would be ashamed to say that the gospel was the power of God to the unbeliever; I would be ashamed to say that the gospel did not reveal righteousness from faith to dead works but that it was the Lord's appointment to preach it to the possessors of dead works that they might not have an excuse and that God would be exonerated from the calumny of carnal men.

I hope that I have a desire to reach the children of God. I would be zealously engaged in preaching to every creature under heaven for among them are many of the children of God. That is the purpose of the gospel to find the little ones. If they are weak, then I must come as one who is weak; if they are under the law, I must come as under the law; if they are without law, I must come as one without law. Why? Not too long ago I said that the gospel saved the children of God. I knew that saying a thing like that was not going over too much, but let us read carefully the words of the apostle (I Cor. 1:21, 24). Now here we see him coming to men of all classes as he finds them. Why? What did he do that for? That he

might by all means save some (I Cor. 9:20, 22).

May the Lord bless us to discern the truth, to love the truth, and to believe the truth. Further, if need be, may he give us grace to die in the truth, and and for the truth.

Written at the request of a little child.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do." — Luke xvii. 10.

The lesson taught in these words of our Savior to his disciples is that in nothing can we be of profit to the Almighty; and some reflections growing out of this are in my mind this morning to speak about. It seems exceeding hard to divest our minds of the idea of human merit in what we may do or say. We even turn the special gifts of God into occasions whereby to exalt ourselves, as though we had originated them, and out of our own storehouses had offered gifts to God whereby his infinite fullness had been added to. And so again and again we are reminded in the Scriptures of our dependence and unprofitableness, that our pride may be humbled and our vainglorying silenced.

Jesus had just before spoken to his disciples of faith which could work miracles; and faith always does work miracles, in the sense that it always does what sense or reason or human power can never accomplish. But though faith is itself the gift of God, the fruit of the Spirit, and being of divine origin works with divine power, so that human power is all excluded from any participation in the matter, yet we are all the time saying, "My hand hath wrought this great work, and my wisdom hath planned it;" and therefore Jesus proceeds to remind the disciples that after having done the mightest works which faith can produce, they were not to boast themselves, as though they were thankworthy, or were in any way profitable to their Maker. Yea, more than this; so far would they be even then from putting God under obligations to them, that he would have a right to demand still more service at their hands. After they have plowed the ground or fed the cattle, he still has a right to demand that they shall gird themselves and wait upon him at his table; and even then they deserve no thanks. If afterward they sit down and eat, it is of his bounty, for which they are bound to return him thanks.

It must not be forgotten that this parable was spoken to eastern people, the whole structure of whose society is different from ours. Their idea was and is that servants are bound to render all demanded service to their masters. In our day and land, where the relations of men to each other are different, any such service rendered from one to another would most frequently be met by the courteous phrase, "I thank you." But such an expression would be entirely foreign to all the ideas of eastern nations. There, a master would never think of thus acknowledging a service rendered by a servant. The master does not consider himself under any obligations to the servant, but the servant owes all his life and powers to him; and it is of his bounty if the servant recieves his daily bread. Now the Savior uses this condition of things as a parable, and by it presents our relation to God. So likewise ye, after that ye have done all that is commanded you, count yourselves unprofitable servants.

1st. We are the creation of God. He has made us, and not we ourselves. He is the only self-existent Being, the only Being of whom eternity can be predicated. We owe our existence to his will. We are, because he is, and because he willed that we should be. Surely the creature must receive all. He can by no means render anything to his Creator. Therefore, when we have done all his

will, we have only answered the end for which he created us; we have only rendered back to him that which came out of his own hand. In the Scriptures man is often said to have robbed God, but never to have added anything to him. He said, "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine and the fullness thereof." — Psalm 1. 12. See also the connection. As God has made us, we ourselves are his; and as he has created every power within us, and all that we have, these things are also his; and so neither our persons nor our works can profit him anything, or deserve any thanks from him.

2d. It is God that upholds us and preserves us. "In him we live, and move, and have our being." — Acts xvii. 28. He gives us our breath, and upholds us by the word of his power. — Acts xvii. 25; Hebrews i. 3. How little conscious of all this are we! Yet he is so close to us that we exist in him, act in him, and without his presence we should perish. He has made us in order to do his will in us and by us, and daily he renews our strength. Each daily breath is proof of his continued sustaining power. If he withdraw, we shall cease not only to live, but we shall cease to be. Therefore all our service of praise and obedience is only the expression of power from God, every instant imparted to us, that we may be kept in life. We have therefore put him under no obligation to us.

3d. Not only has he created us, and daily preserved us in existence, but he gives us all things. Man in his vanity gathers the fruits of his husbandry into his barns; with the profits of his labor he builds houses, and purchases the comforts and luxuries of life. By his learning and wit he gains a great name among men, and he says, "See what my power hath wrought!" Vain thought! Who gave him mental and physical power? Who sent down the heat of the sun and the showers of the early and latter rain upon the seed which he has sown? Who gave life to the seed, and prepared the soil in which it grew? Who saved it from mildew and rust and blight? Who gave favoring gales and smooth seas to his ships? Who kept his houses from the storm or fire? What has he that he has not received? — John iii. 27. Why boasts he as though he had not received it? How little we live in a realizing sense of the constant providence of God! He is the Giver of all. If any streams flow back to him, they are but seeking the place from whence they came out. If every river flows into the ocean, wherein is the ocean profited? Does it thank the rivers? Their cheerful and mighty and beneficent flow can continue no longer than old ocean wills. God in his immensity is the ocean, and all we do and say in his service are but the return to him of what he gives; therefore he owes us nothing. We cannot borrow from him to pay the debt which we already owe him. Therefore, from these three considerations it is manifest that we can yield him nothing. We are unprofitable servants if our whole lives are his.

4th. But we have to do with sin and sinners. We have not rendered him his own. We have denied his power and goodness, and set at naught his authority. We are in debt to him. We have failed to obey his commandments. We have fallen from our uprightness, and are enemies to God. As such the Bible speaks of all men. In connection with this also, some reflections grow out of these words of our Savior of which I wish to speak. Could an unfallen man, who should perfectly do God's will, have any merit before God? Could such a man present any holiness to God that would place him under any obligation in return whatever? A man can render service to his fellow-man that can rightly demand reward, because he meets his fellow-man upon an equal plane; but can he render any such service to God? It is manifest that the first essential quality that must belong to any meritorious work is that it shall be "self-originated;" that is, that it shall be performed entirely out of a man's own self, without being originated from any

source outside of himself. If it be originated from any source outside of himself, it is to the praise of that source, and not himself. A man may demand praise or reward from his fellow-man for service rendered, because with regard to him the act was self-origniated — it was performed from an equal to an equal; but we are not in any sense equal with God. It has been before proved that we must receive all from the Creator. No good work is from self. All our good works, if we have any, must be from God. We cannot take one thing which God hath wrough in our hearts and make it the ground of a demand for more. If God originates our good works, they cannot constitute any merit in us. If God has originated them, they must be to his praise forever. Can we then originate any good works, such as faith, love, obedience, &c.? In answer, let us first consider that the Scriptures teach that man is wholly unclean, and his heart wholly evil. It must be manifest that evil cannot originate good. Evil only originates evil. To this the Scriptures and reason both agree. Let us look at the testimony of the Scriptures for a little. "A good tree cannot bring forth corrupt fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." — Matt. vii. 18. "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." — Matt. xii. 34. That all men by nature are sinful altogether, is declared again and again. See the first three chapters of Romans, in which Paul draws up an indictment against the whole world, and declares that none are exempt from the condemnation there pronounced. Sin and death are the condition and doom of all men. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one. God only can work good or originate it in us. If any man does work good works, it is because God has created him to good works, and foreordained that he should walk in them. — Eph. ii. 10. Every good and perfect thing is declared to be the gift of God, and to come down from him. — James i. 17. Repentance is his gift. — Acts v. 31. Faith is his gift. — Eph. ii. 8. Love, hope, faith, and all the Christian graces, are declared to be the fruit of the Spirit. — Gal. v. 22, 23. Our good works he is declared to be the author of. — See again Eph. ii. 10; Isa. xxvi. 12. From all these scriptural testimonies we may surely conclude that in point of righteousness we deserve no thanks, and cannot be profitable to God.

5th. From all this it is manifest that we cannot make an atonement for our sins. If any price can be rendered to justice, it must be a holy ransom, such as justice can approve. But we have before seen that holiness is not in man except God create it there; and it is manifest that we cannot render to God his own work as our merit. Because I have one good thing from God I cannot rightly say, "Therefore I deserve another." Our works, which God has wrought within us, cannot atone for past sins; and all in fallen man is sin, except the works which God works within him. Redemption therefore must be of God; it cannot be of ourselves. Of myself I can neither pay the debts I owe, nor lay up treasures of righteousness after my debts are paid. Human merit is excluded from redemption, both as regards the atonement for sin and the sanctification of the sinner. Salvation must be of divine grace, and not of creature works. Even the works wrought within us, of faith, love, humility, &c., are not capable of paying the debt which we owe to divine justice, because they are the fruit of the Spirit; and the Spirit is not given until after Jesus has paid all the debt we owe, neither could it be given until after the atonement was made. In salvation, atonement for the sins that are past must precede all else. To this agrees the type. The people could not come near the sanctuary, and no worship could be offered there, until it was sprinkled with the blood of atonement. To this agrees all Christian experience. No man has ever yet felt that he had one spiritual blessing from God, until he has felt himself sheltered by the

blood of the atonement. If our works were perfect they could profit God nothing; they could not atone for sin. They must be created in us of God.

6th. But our works, even the best of them, are not perfect. Imperfection is true of all Christians and of their best works. To this the Scriptures agree. Disciples are taught to pray, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive," &c. — Matthew vi. 12. Paul complains that he sins, and does what he would not. — Rom. vii. — John, in his first epistle, first chapter, says, "If we say that we have (present tense) no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." The record of the lives of holy men of old shows that they were imperfect, and they did not hesitate to confess their sins and failures, as did Noah and David. Christian experience and Christian testimony to-day are the same. Not only do we positively and willfully sometimes go astray, but even when we are striving to do the will of God with the most earnest desire, we have to confess that there is often a mixture of wrong motives. Selfish desires arise and spoil our best work. There are often flies in the most precious ointment of the apothecary.

> "If I pray, or hear, or read,
> Sin is mixed with all I do."

If this be true of the Christian, the renewed man, certainly the unregenerate man can do no better. If the best offering of him in whose heart Jesus abides needs the cleansing blood to make it acceptable to God, surely the work of the unrenewed man must be wholly hateful and horrible in the sight of God. If he that does all is unprofitable, where shall he stand who never has known what love to God and obedience to his law mean? Surely from all this the exceeding riches of the grace and kindness of God take on a new meaning, and must appear immeasurable. If a man is saved, how great is the exhibition of the love of God to him!

7th. From the text we may learn humility toward God. Humility is one of the graces of the Spirit. It is not a thing that can be created or called into exercise at our own will. As a principle, God himself creates it. It is not a subject of exhortation when we consider the principle in the heart; but it is scriptural and proper to exhort Christians to put it on in their life. As a principle in the heart, it springs out of right views of ourselves and just conceptions of God and of our relations to him; and what would be better calculated to increase a feeling of humility in our hearts than a consideration of the text at the head of this article? To feel that our God does not need us, that we can add nothing to him, but are unprofitable at the best, and must receive all from him, is a most soul-humbling consideration. And accompanying this grace, we shall also be humble in our deportment toward all our fellow-men. Since we ourselves are of no profit to the Almighty, none can be behind us. We are better than no one else; and the feeling of the heart will be, Surely I am most unprofitable of all. It will not be hard then to esteem others better than ourselves. This also will make us lenient and forgiving to the faults of others. Ashamed of our own shortcomings, we shall feel how little right we have to judge others. The humble man is slow to condemn. He judges himself by a far sterner rule than he does any one else.

8th. From a consideration of the text we may also learn gratitude to God, the Giver of all. He does not exact from us even that which it is his right to demand; and, all undeserving as we are, he never wearies of supplying all our needs. We owe no thanks to him who pays a just debt; but how grateful should we be to him who, being under no obligation to us, yet does us a thousand favors, knowing that we can never by any means recompense him again.

9th. The text is also well suited to stir us up to obedience to God. Thus, and thus only, can we exhibit our gratitude and love. We know that we can be of no profit to God, but yet humbly and lovingly we desire to acknowledge his favors in the only way possible to us.

Here speaks the spirit of the true Christian. The spirit of the flesh says, If I can put God under no obligation to me, so that I can secure some favor from him for what I do, what is the use of serving him? But the spirit of love and gratitude speaks another thing altogether. It says, "What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits toward me?"

Thus I have suggested some things that seem to me pertinent to the text. Many precious truths I have not alluded to. I have found profit to my own soul in these reflections, and I hope they will profit some one else.

I remain, as ever, your brother in hope of life through Christ,

F. A. CHICK.

(The above was written by Elder F. A. Chick, Feb. 11, 1885.)

OBITUARIES

DEACON HEWITT OSBORN

Deacon Hewitt Osborn departed this life July 10, 1958; he was born February 14, 1869, making his life here more than eighty-nine years. He was united in marriage to Elizabeth Lane, April 4, 1888, who departed this life July 25, 1921. To this union four children were born, one having passed away. Surviving are: Floyd, Syracuse, N. Y.; Scott, of New York City; and Mrs. Ethel McCormick, Middletown, N. Y. Also surviving are four grandchildren and eight great grandchildren. On January 3, 1932, he was united again in marriage to Miss Margaret VanWoert, who preceded him in death on January 5, 1952.

Brother Osborn united with Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, at Shokan, N. Y., on July 3, 1925, and was baptized by Elder George Ruston; and was later set apart as a deacon. He was a faithful member, steadfast and unmovable in Salvation by Grace, and the will and power of God through the Lord Jesus Christ: always giving God all the glory for his hope,and always able to give a reason for his hope — that it was by the grace of God that he was what he was, in knowing the truth as it is in Jesus. He loved to hear the gospel preached in demonstration of the Spirit and the power of God, by the under-shepherds. In his younger days he traveled many miles to the different associations to hear Jesus preached, which was precious food for his soul. He was able to drink of the fountain of the water of life freely.

Funeral was held at Lasher's Funeral Home, Woodstock, N. Y., by the writer; and burial was in the Woodstock Cemetery.

(Elder) A. J. Slauson

LEE HODGES

Funeral services were held at Antioch Church, Graceville, Florida, for Lee Hodges. He died November 1, 1958, after a lingering illness, at the age of 66. He was a prominent farmer and civic leader of this section; and a firm believer in salvation by grace.

He is survived by his wife, one son, Bill, and four daughters: Mrs. Millard Snell, Columbus, Ga.; Mrs. John R. Armstrong, Tallahassee, Florida; Mrs. Grady Campbell, Tacoma, Washington; and Miss Martha Hodges, Graceville, Florida. Also by two brothers and three sisters: Ed and Charlie, Mrs. Early Williams, Graceville; Mrs. A. W. Miller, Geneva, Alabama; and Miss Lillie Hodges, Fort Walton, Georgia; and several grandchildren.

He was a dear lover of the Primitive Baptist Church, and helped many in distress. Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. J. Collins, and Mr. C. C. Balkcom, with interment in Antioch Cemetery, near his farm.

J. J. Collins

MARY ELIZABETH STEWART JONES

Sister Mary Elizabeth Stewart Jones was born November 22, 1869, and departed this life September 17, 1958. (She was often called, Aunt Mollie) She is survived by three daughters and one son: Mrs. Tressie Maxwell, Mrs. Leona Anthany, Mrs. Myrtle Chapman, and G. W. Jones, all of Delhi, La.; and by forty-two grandchildren, seventy-one great grandchildren, and one great great grandchild. She was the widow of J. B. Jones, who preceded her in death by nineteen years.

She was so blessed of the Lord that she was a strong believer in the doctrine of the saving grace of God, through the Lord Jesus Christ; that the Lord's people are completely saved through the Saviour and Redeemer of His people. This is evidence that she was embraced in this salvation; so, dear ones, weep not as those who have no hope. May we be given to look to, and trust in, the one she believed and trusted in. It is a great consolation to those who survive, to know that she had a precious hope in the Lord. "Which hope we have as an anchor of our soul, both sure and steadfast; and entereth to that within the veil." (Hebrews 6:19)

The writer, together with Elders J. L. Smith, and David Turner, conducted her funeral at the Lamar Baptist Church, in the presence of a very large congregation, with many flowers; and she was laid beside her husband in the Davidson Cemetery, to await the glorious

morning of the resurrection.

May the Lord bless each one who mourns her passing.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

SISTER ADDIE M. D. HOYT

Sister Addie M. D. Hoyt, of Middletown, N. Y., was born May 20, 1873; and passed away September 28, 1958. She was a faithful and devoted member of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church, New Vernon, N. Y. She lived most of her life on a farm a short distance from Middletown, and most always filled her place at the meetings. She bore much of the fruit of the Spirit: love and charity. Kindness to everyone was her motto, and she was dearly loved by all her brethren and friends.

She leaves to mourn her passing, no relatives nearer than cousins, besides her church brethren: who feel that their loss is her eternal gain; for to depart and be with Christ is far better.

Funeral services were held at the Applebee Funeral Home, Middletown, conducted by the writer. Burial was in New Vernon Cemetery, New Vernon, N. Y.

(Elder) Amasa J. Slauson

L. H. WEEKS

L. H. Weeks, of Geneva, Alabama, was lost at sea June 20, 1958, off the coast of New Orleans, in a storm on the Gulf of Mexico. He was 37 years of age, and an excellent student of the writer. He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Sollie Weeks, and is survived by his wife, and three sons: Michael, Richard, and Gregory.

Memorial services were held for him by Elder J. J. Collins at Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church, Wicksburg Alabama, on July 20th; attended by a host of relatives and friends. The Coast Guard and other agencies had made an extended search for his missing body.

(Elder) J. J. Collins

SUMPTER SMITH

Sumpter Smith, a close friend and lifelong associate of the writer, died June 17, 1958, after a short illness. He was a native of Geneva County, Alabama, and had resided in the Wicksburg community all his life; and was a prominent citizen and official.

He is survived by three sons: Harvey, Homer, and Luther; and two daughters: Maudie Lee and Sonja Faye; his wife; two brothers: A. J., and Marlin; one sister, Mrs. Eula Raines; and by eleven grandchildren. One brother, Marcus, died suddenly a short time ago.

Funeral services were conducted at the residence by Elder J. J. Collins and Mr. James Branch, on June 18th; with interment in Goodwater Cemetery.

(Elder) J. J. Collins

SISTER EMMA McLANEY

Mrs. Emma McLaney, of Coffee Springs, Alabama, died May 26, 1958, after a lingering illness. She had been a member of Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church for about 64 years, and was devoted to its principles and doctrines. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Childs, of Hartford, Alabama, pioneers in this section of the deep South; and also members of Mt. Gilead Church.

Her first husband was Mr. Kelly, who died many years ago, being survived by one daughter, Lonia, and two sons, J. M., and Boss. Soon after his death she married H. C. McLaney, who passed on several years ago. To this union were born Alfred, Tillis, Essie, George, and Dugan McLaney. She was also the step-mother of several children of Mr. McLaney by a former marriage. Sister McLaney was thus the mother of three sets of children; and a mother indeed.

Most of all, she was truly a mother in Israel. For 96 years she lived as an active citizen of her section, her home and her church.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. J. Collins, at her beloved Mt. Gilead, on May 27th; with interment in the adjoining cemetery, where she was tenderly laid to rest beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, in the presence of a vast host of friends and relatives.

also

MRS. MARY C. HARRISON

The subject of this sketch died May 28, 1958, at her home in Columbus Georgia, after an accident. She was the daughter of Elder and Mrs. J. N. Purvis, who were members of Bethlehem Church; and the former most active among Primitive Baptists in Alabama.

Sister Harrison and her husband joined Bethlehem early in life, and remained true to its principles to a ripe old age. For many years the writer served as her pastor; and what a faithful member she was.

Sister Harrison is survived by Elder W. J. Harrison, and three sons: J. N., of Columbus, Georgia; C. P. and J. F., of Birmingham, Alabama; five daughters: Mrs. Eula Leger, Dothan, Ala.; Mrs. Willie Smith, Reidsville, N. C.; Mrs. Mary Bland, Mrs. Jessie Davis, and Mrs. Alice Watkins, of Columbus, Ga. Also by three sisters; 19 grandchildren, 23 great grandchildren, and three great great grandchildren. Truly a sincere believer in Christ has gone home to paradise.

Funeral services were conducted at her beloved Bethlehem by Elders A. B. Chumney, E. R. Sorrells, C. C. Hornsby, and J. J. Collins; with interment in the adjoining cemetery, in the presence of a great concourse of relatives and friends.

(Elder) J. J. Collins

WALLACE LEE HOLLEY

Mr. Holley was born in Wood County, Texas, February 27, 1881, and passed away June 10, 1958, at Winnsboro, Texas, where he had lived for a long time.

He is survived by his saddened widow, Mrs. Sebrina May Dykes Holley, and the following children: Jones Holley, Lovington, N. M.; Mrs. B. B. Smith, San Antonio, Texas; Marion Eastridge Holley, Mineola, Texas; Julious Holley, Warrensburg, Mo.; Mrs. M. J. Pasko, Sagatuck, Mich.; Mrs. Arian Crow, Winnsboro, Texas; and Mrs. Murrel Morrison, Hobbs, N. M. Also surviving are the following brothers and sisters: Frank Holley and Parks Holley, Winnsboro, Texas; Tom Holley, Globe, Ariz.; Mrs. Sol Turner, Winnsboro; and Mrs. Ray Turner, Dallas, Texas; and by nine grandchildren and other relatives.

Sister Holley is a member of the Primitive Baptist Church at Hopewell, and Brother Holley, though not a member, manifested a great interest in the church, and gave evidence of a good hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. He has passed from earthly afflictions and sorrows, and his body will rest in the gave till the Lord the Redeemer shall come and call his redeemed from the silent tomb to himself and everlasting peace and joy.

The writer was called to conduct the funeral at Hopewell Church, in the presence of a very large congregation, and many flowers, showing the regards in which he was held.

May the Lord bless, comfort, and lead each of those who mourn in their trials and afflictions.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

JAMES B. ROBERTS, SR.

James B. Roberts, Sr., was born September 13, 1881, in Brown County, Texas; and passed away April 15, 1958, at a hospital in Odessa, Texas.

He is survived by three sons and three daughters: Cary A., Coleman, Texas; J. B., Jr., Marfa, Texas; Ralph L., U. S. Air Force, Yuma, Ariz.; Mrs. W. C. Cate, Jr., Odessa, Texas; Mrs. Claude Cunningham, Chickasha, Okla.; and Mrs. Wilburn Kunkel, Irving, Texas. Also by four sisters: Mrs. M. A. McDougal, Bronwood, Texas; Mrs. Thomas Lilly, Bangs, Texas; Mrs. Maude Cellars, Ector, Texas; and Mrs. Allie LeSuer, San Beneta, Texas; and thirteen grandchildren, and one great grandchild.

He did not unite with the church, but was a strong believer in salvation by grace; and professed a hope of a life beyond this life. The writer has heard him relate his experience, and speak of the wonderful works of God. He didn't believe in the works of man, or the doctrine of the world, but said, "I hope I am one of those Christ came to save."

The services were conducted by the writer, and he was laid to rest beside his wife in the Coleman Cemetery, Coleman, Texas, to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

May the Father of mercy comfort his children and relatives, and endow each of us with wisdom to remember and understand that which is written: "There is a time to be born and a time to die." and, "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." Written by request of his children.

(Elder) C. U. Landers

REUBEN AUSTIN DENSMAN

Reuben Austin Densman was born in McClellan County, Texas, August 2, 1882, and died August 2, 1958, at the age of nearly seventy-six years.

He was united in marriage to Miss Mary Magdalene Haynes, June 7, 1907. There were no children born to this union. He is survived by his wife, of Rising Star, Texas; three brothers: James Franklin, Corpus Christi, Texas; Dave, Brownwood, Texas; and George, May, Texas; two sisters: Mrs. Ida Wood, Brownwood, and Mrs. Evie Hawkins, Corpus Christi; and several nephews and neices.

Brother and Sister Densman united with the church in 1920, and he was ordained deacon in 1947. He was a man who lived what he believed. He was bedfast the last six months of his life, but he bore his sufferings with patience, and manifested that he was reconciled to the will of God. He was a staunch believer in Salvation by Grace, and that Israel's God controlled all things; and caused all things to work together for good to them that love God.

His brethren and sisters miss him, and look with a sad heart on his vacant seat at church; yet we are comforted that the God of all grace will bring his people together at his appointed time, in that "world to come", where there is no sin, sorrow, or death; and where they will see him, be like him, and be satisfied.

May it be His will to increase our faith, and strengthen our hope, and give us grace to walk in an acceptable manner in His sight. Written by request of Sister Densman.

(Elder) C. U. Landers

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 127 DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1959 NO. 3

A PRAYER

Great God I know that Thou art good,
That Thou art wise and strong;
I know that Thou art merciful,
Even when I am wrong.

Thy mercy and thy tender care,
Has oft' caused me to kneel
In thankfulness to thee dear God:
Thy promises are sealed.

If there were something I could do
To merit thy good favor,
Why should I need the blood of Christ
And regard Him as my Saviour?

If I am of that chosen few,
And do a work that's good,
It is because of leadership
Of Thy dear Son, my Lord.

When Christ the Shepherd leads me
I cannot go astray.
Oh God, help me to follow,
And teach me how to pray.

Amen.

Mrs. W. W. Taylor
Dallas, Texas

Scotch Road, Rt. No. 1,
Titusville, N. J.

Dear Brother Wood:

Time for the yearly subscription, and soon Christmastime too; a season when the heart of every Christian is stirred and diffuses spiritual fragrance. It makes itself manifest in their walk and conversation, and the way they share their gifts. Some dear believers may not be gifted in expressing themselves in comforting words of wisdom and truth, but if we see them walking in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with them.

One thing which held much meaning when the Christ-child was born, was the light that shone 'round about him. No evil could penetrate within the protecting halo of this light, we are told, because it was above the LAW. It reflected the glory of God's salvation — pure and holy, and without sin. A light that still shines forth in the hearts of His people. Have you not sometimes felt His presence within you, and how an inner serenity of hope asured you that you were not alone in some dark valley?

With the coming of the wonderful message of Hope, God made his presence felt in the hearts of his people. And whenever that comes to them, they rejoice and make glad the day. It gives peace to the soul; and they walk joyfully, treasuring up the glory of their blessed experience, like good fruit from the vineyard, to share with their brethren along life's pathway.

Christ in his coming was our first bearer of Light, and as many as his Father has chosen in him, are also bearers of light — a testimony shining out in the darkness of the world, breaking forth as the morning.

In prayer and service may we share our blessings, and with God's help, may we observe the season fitly, remembering it is to Christ our Redeemer we offer our gratitude.

In first John, first chapter, we read: "And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." Such beautiful words! I feel God has placed a broad margin on every leaf of our book of life, where many notes of kindred spirit and love are recorded by those who feast with thankful hearts upon His word.

May God bless you and all the other editors of the Signs, and their families, is my prayer. May he bless all of you

with an increase of spiritual gifts, and bless one and all with strength and courage to meet each new day. May he keep all of you in his divine care, and guard and guide you lovingly in the ministry.

With a sincere wish for a bit of good cheer today, and everyday throughout the New Year.

Sister Mary L. Hellings

Princeton, W. Va.

Dear Brother Wood:

I read your editorial in the last Signs, and enjoyed it very much. . . . I have been reading the Signs for many years, and have been given a lot of comfort from them, and I hope to take it as long as I live. I have had many afflictions, and the older I become the more vanities I see, and the less I care for the things of this world. But I believe that as the Adam man perishes, the inward man is re-newed day by day, and we are brought to see more and more of heavenly things, and view the deep things of God; for, "Wisdom hath builded her house."

Somehow I believe we are given to go from strength to strength; and I believe we receive all the spiritual blessings that were given in Christ before the world began. He is our store-house; and is made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption. The Spirit subdues the flesh and brings it into subjection, therefore it mortifies the deeds of the body. In His light and life we are given to meditate on the deep things of God — for we are subject to the Father of lights. No wonder we are strangers to the world: for the world by wisdom knows not God.

Everyone that hath hope purifieth himself, even as he is pure, for Christ is in him the hope of glory, the anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, which enters into that within the vail. But sometimes he hides his face, and storm-clouds arise; and we wonder when he will appear again. We have learned that we have to wait upon him, for we are left beggars, and mourn as a dove. Sometimes he waters the garden, and it flourishes like a rose.

I would love to see you and Sister Wood again while I remain in this earthly house, but, if not, I hope our hearts are knit together in Christ — which is not bound by space or time, nor customs: although we are separated in body, we are not in spirit.

I desired to write you after reading your editorial; it was comforting and edifying. I hope the Lord will spare you many more years to set forth the unsearchable riches of Christ to those who mourn in Zion. I desire to be remembered in your prayers.

Your sister in hope of eternal life,
Mrs. W. G. Pritchett

THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD

By Elder David Bartley

CHAPTER FOUR
OUR BROTHER HIGH PRIEST

AARON, the first and greatest high priest in the old covenant, was a type of JESUS, the great High Priest in the new covenant; and Aaron was the brother of Moses, by whom the law was given, and as well the brother of all the people of that covenant, whose high priest he was. As often as he entered within the second veil of the holy sanctuary with the atoning blood, to appear in the presence of the Lord, the twelve precious stones in his breast-plate reflected the names of the twelve tribes of the people of Israel toward the mercy seat before him, while the two precious stones upon his shoulders also reflected their names heavenward, and all these were his brethren, no less than his fellow-citizens in that kingdom, and it was for their sins that he made the atoning sacrifice there in the presence of their covenant-Lord, and for them only he interceded. Being their brother, they were near and dear to him, and he could be touched with the feeling of their necessities and infirmities, be-

cause he was in this close relationship and sympathy with them. Moreover, they were not only his own near kindred in the flesh, but they were the people of the Lord his God, and their merciful God had ordained him their high priest, to appear in the Holy Presence and typically put away their sins. All this appointment, and the very constitution of this brotherhood, was of the Lord, for he had ordained it thus. This is instructive and very wonderful, for our God thus teaches his spiritual Israel a divine truth. For all this pointed to and was typical of the greater High Priest than Aaron, even "Jesus of Nazareth, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write", and dimly represented his diviner priesthood and priestly people.

For, as pointed out in the last chapter, the Son of David the king, as born of his blessed mother Mary, was Brother of all his people in the flesh, as well the Gentiles as of the Jews; for his God and Father gave them all to him and him to them in the everlasting covenant of life, and ordained Christ and his people to be one in the covenant, one in the flesh, one in death, and one in life. Therefore, it is verily true that the holy Son of God is our Brother in the flesh on his mother's side, and we are his brethren in the Spirit of life on his Father's side. This blessed and divine reality is clearly revealed by the Spirit in the holy Scriptures, and witnessed in the hearts of the people of Christ's holy priesthood, after they are born of the Spirit. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." (Rom. 8:16)

"For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." (Heb. 2:11-12) This is the church that Christ loved, "and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." (Eph. 5:25-26) So at the conquered grave, the newly risen Christ said to Mary: "But go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." (John 20:17) Here our First-born Brother from the dead preciously owns his brotherhood with all his people, the children whom his Father gave him, and is not ashamed to call them brethren, notwithstanding he had passed through death and stood victorious on heaven's side of the grave and, they yet sorrowed on earth's side.

O, how highly favored are the people of God's covenant-mercy, since his exalted and glorified Sons calls them, "My brethren"! "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!" (1 John 3:1) While this sonship embraces sinful people of the Jews and Gentiles alike, it is in the sonship of the Son of man, and in his holy life and divine nature; for the sinless Jesus is "the only begotten Son of God," and in his life and righteousness only are we the sons of the Father who is holy. That the people whom the Father gave him in the perfect covenant should be made "The holy people", the holy Son of God came to them in the flesh and under the law; and thus is he their near kinsman and beloved Brother, and in him was the right of redemption. The noble and compassionate Boaz, the near kinsman of the widowed and impoverished Naomi, who represented the state of the Jews, and as betrothing Ruth unto himself, as representing the Gentiles, thus redeemed them both and made them rich, in which he is a beautiful type of our spiritual kinsman, of whom Paul says: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." (2 Cor. 8:9)

It was thus, as the Son of man in the flesh of his people, that the holy Son of God was one with them under the law, and therefore lawfully and right-

eously represented them as in covenant and life union with them, so that their sins were righteously imputed to him, and his righteousness likewise was theirs in and with him as his brethren and members. This is divinely and wonderfully true and comforting, because in no other way could sinners be saved and made holy. It is this sacred and endearing oneness with our Beloved that makes him so unspeakably dear and precious to every humble believer in him; for he is our All-in-all. It was in these sacred bonds that Isaiah said of the holy Lamb of God, "and he was numbered with the transgressors," and that Paul said, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. 5:21)

God did this in his infinite holiness and wisdom; therefore Peter said of Christ, "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God." (1 Peter 1:20-21) So Paul also: "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him." (1 Thes. 5:9-10) So the death of Christ for his people was according to this appointment of God, which proves that he died righteously, and in his death fulfilled all righteousness, made an end of sin, abolished death in its sting and power over his people, and brought life and immortality to light in his resurrection unto God and glory. He did this as our Brother and for his brethren. The sufferings unto death of the Anointed man Christ in the flesh were because of his sacred relations to his people, whom he should save from their sins; therefore he neither represented nor died for any others.

In the absence of this brotherhood that made Christ and all his people one, as Head and body and members, his death could not have fulfilled the righteousness of the law for them, nor put away their sins; because he would not have had the just right to redeem them, neither could the righteous claims of the divine law against every transgressor have involved him with and for them. This principle is established in equity, and it obtains as well in nature as in grace, for the just God has so ordained it. And because this is true, the atonement of the holy Redeemed is necessarily special, and it could not possibly be general or universal. For, before there could be the imputation of our sins to the sinless man Christ, or the imputation of his perfect holiness to us, he must be one with us and we one with him. No truth is more clearly revealed in the inspired testimony than this, and it is only in this sacred and divine union with him who is righteousness and life that "ye are complete in him which is the head of all principality and power."

"It is because God ordained that "they two shall be one flesh", that the husband is justly obligated with and for the wife in law, and his payment of her debts justifies and acquits her equally with him. Without this union and unity, he could not be justly held to satisfy any law for her. It is so with straying and trespassing sheep; for the shepherd and owner only is under a lawful obligation for them, just because they are his. "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep", is the precious word of Jesus. For no others did he give his life, neither could he righteously do so, and for the sheep only because the Father gave them him and they were his. "My Beloved is mine, and I am his." "The one thing needful, dearest Lord, is to be one with thee."

It is most wonderful and blessed that the "one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus", is at once one with his brethren and his Father. And because he is, he raises them above sin and death and uplifts them to his Father, and to their Father! In view of this, a poet sang:

How great the grace, how sweet the song!
"Hail sacred union, firm and strong!
That worms of earth should ever be
One with incarnate Deity!"

But our present consideration is, the grace that brought Christ down to us, in touch and sympathy with us in our sinful estate of suffering and death in the flesh. In Psalms 40, David testifies that the Lord went down to him in a horrible pit, brought him up out of it, set his feet upon a rock, established his goings, and put a new song in his mouth. Of the priesthood of our compassionate Redeemer, another says, "Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." (Heb. 2:17-18) Thus it is shown that the people of this priestly covenant are also the brethren of their High Priest, and that, as merciful and faithful, a sacred obligation was upon him to bow the heavens and come down to them, and be made like them in all things; for otherwise he could not have suffered and died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring them to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. As distinct from his people in the flesh, who were appointed of God to be "an holy priesthood", Christ could not have suffered and died for them, neither could they have been washed and purified from their sins. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Heb. 2:14)

Thus and in this way only was Christ qualified, clothed and consecrated unto the office-work of the ordained High Priest of the people for whose sins he should atone, and who should be his brethren and royal priesthood for ever. For they are the children of men in the flesh, sinful and under the sentence of death; for this cause the Redeemer must himself be a sinless and perfect man in the flesh, and as a man obey the law for them, suffer its sentence of death against them, fulfill it, redeem them from its just and fearful curse, by being made a curse for them, then, rising up out of death, destroy it and the devil; for in no other way was it possible for him to reach them, or for them to rise up out of death, living and holy, and be with him as his sanctified and holy brethren and priesthood, to praise God forever. O how awfully solemn and dreadful was all this on the part of the dear Son of man!

(Chapter five next month)

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729 Allston Street
Houston, Texas

To the Signs of the Times,
and the Loved Ones who may read:

I have a desire to write some of my experiences. When I was nineteen years old, and a married woman, I had much trouble, and I thought much on my life at the time. I had two children, but it seemed so dark at times I couldn't see my way. It just seemed that if I was out of the way, all would be better. I thought that if I were one of God's little ones, I didn't know it; so if I were bound for hell, it didn't make any difference what I did, or how I left this world.

But about that time I had a beautiful dream; my mother had passed on to another world some six years before. As I laid on my bed, this dream came to me: It was very dark where I was, and all at once I saw my mother come in at a window; and there was a dim light around her. She moved my children and me, and the bed, out of the darkness to a gloomy light. It seemed so easy for her to move the bed with the children and me on it. Then she stood up and backed toward the win-

dow; then she looked out, and then back at me, and smiled; then she was gone. And I knew it was my mother who had come to relieve me; and from then on, I felt that I could wait on the Lord, and all my earthly troubles were removed from me, and didn't bother me any more.

As time went on, I read my Bible more, and lots of nights I would read until midnight, and I was comforted. Again I had another dream: I was still in semi-darkness, and went to a church — I had a great desire to go to this church. When I walked inside I was still in semi-darkness, but I kept walking, and saw Jesus seated. He turned his head to look out the window; and I seemed bound to look the way he was looking. I beheld a beautiful lake, shining like gold, and a beautiful light shined over it. I don't have words to explain the beauty.

From then on I had a desire to go to the church and be baptized; which I did, and have had lots of happiness with the brethren. I have had other sweet dreams since then, which makes me believe my Lord is with me. I am more than seventy-two years old, and not in very good health, but able to go to meetings some; and I am thankful for the sweet privilege of meeting with the brethren and sisters. My husband, Elder W. O. Beene, passed on in 1956.

My Christian love to all Old Baptists.

Mrs. W. O. Beene

Route #2
Elon College, N. C.

Dear Elder Griffin:

For many years I have read lovely articles from your pen and have also heard you preach from time to time the wonders of God's grace in a most comforting and refreshing manner, so that the poor hungry and famishing souls might be given freedom to eat and drink at the King's table. When we are blessed to behold Zion, sometimes we are given to realize there are many lame and halt, even as Mephibosheth, lame on both feet, but by the tender mercy and grace of God — the wonder workings of his grace — they are blessed to eat at the King's table continually. The Lord directed the prophet Isaiah to strengthen the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees; to say to them of a fearful heart, be strong, fear not, behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, the ears of the deaf unstopped, and the lame man leap as an hart and the dumb sing.

Jesus sets forth in the 10th chapter of John, a parable concerning the sheepfold. This parable seems to be directed to the Pharisees, but they understood not. "Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep." I am thinking that the sheepfold for natural sheep was used in this parable to represent the church, the spiritual sheepfold for the children of God, the sheep of his own pasture, whom he designates "my sheep". In verse 7 he says, "I am the door of the sheep." Sometimes he is spoken of as the door, and sometimes as the way.

The church of the living God is mysteriously contrived, and has only one foundation and but one door, for another foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Christ the Lord. (I Cor. 3:11) The church militant is set up here on earth. Christ told Peter, and all the apostles, on this Rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. In the parable of the sower (Matt. 13), not all seed fell in good ground. When before him all nations are gathered he shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. Jesus said, "I am the door; by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."

The natural sheepfold is a place where the sheep are folded together for safety, and the shepherd led them

forth to green pastures and streams. He who is the good shepherd of his sheep giveth his life for the sheep. He redeems them from bondage and death, conquers death and hell, and is today their Intercessor in heaven. The Psalmist David said, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me besides the still waters. He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake," etc.

I have thought Christ leads his sheep, having gone before them into death, the just for the unjust, and now leads them to fountains of living waters, to deep wells of salvation, and into the green pastures of covenant mercy and doctrinal truth; and are fed by his undershepherds, as they take the oversight of the flock of God over which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers.

Please remember me through the Signs to our lovely brethren and sisters there and in Georgia. I would like to call them all by name if I could. I tried to tell my wife what a wonderful visit we had with Elder Croker's family, his church at New Harmony, his sister and husband, the Ragsdales, the wonderful meeting at our precious Sister McGinnis' home.

I want to say to you, to Sister Griffin, Brother and Sister Gladding, I had never seen your face shine as it did in that meeting. There was a glow of light on your face so bright that all your complexion seemed to be gone, and a beautiful light shining and your face glowing so bright I could hardly look at you.

This was one of the warmest, sweetest meetings I have attended in a long time. Fellowship so sweet and lovely with all. Elder Croker was wonderful in preaching — never better to me, and Sister McGinnis and every one so sweet and tender. I felt the Lord was in our midst.

With love to you and Sister Griffin, Brother and Sister Gladding, and all of our folks among you.

Yours in Hope,
J. W. Gilliam

PRAISE THE LORD FOREVER

1158 Falls Terrace,
Union, New Jersey

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

What a wonderful blessing to have been shown the sovereign existence of an alwise God, one who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, a God who reigns and rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, one who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands still. He has declared the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand and I will do all of my pleasure." The wills and shalls of Jehovah are everlasting, for "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal the Lord knoweth them that are his."

This God has all power in heaven and earth and none can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou; he is all powerful for not even a tiny blade of grass can fall by the wayside without him. He is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent, and he is everywhere the same yesterday, today and forever. Not a sparrow shall fall to the ground without the will of the Father, for he has power to protect every living creature be they great or small, even the very hairs of our head are numbered.

All power, honor, praise and glory belongs to God who is our present help in trouble, a never changing God who is able to pull our feet out of the miry clay and place them upon a rock, the solid foundation of salvation alone by the grace of God. He is the shadow of a great Rock in a weary land; he can speak peace to the weary, heavy laden soul, a peace that passeth all understanding, a peace that none but the redeemed of the Lord can understand. When all human comforts fail, there is

a place of refuge for the weary sinner in the arms of the blessed Redeemer, who has promised never to leave or forsake his own. The winds and waves obey his will:; the lion was not able to touch Daniel because his jaws were closed by the almighty power of God; the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace were unharmed because of the same almighty power. Can you think of anything not controlled by the merciful God that we worship?

There is nothing in this world without his knowledge; he created all things for a purpose and without his knowledge there was not anything created. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein." It is all his; we cannot escape that fact, and we would not want to think of a God who did not control all things. He is so precious to our weary, heavy laden souls when we can look to him for comfort and consolation when all other helpers fail. Our hope is built on the shalls and wills of an alwise God; a God who cannot be moved, who has promised grace sufficient for all our needs and we are made to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him," and this trust is for all our needs in this world and for a home in heaven. We are made to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. "Be still and know that I am God;" wait on the Lord, be of good courage and he will strengthen thine heart.

He has a people in every kindred, tongue and nation, an elect people, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. "If God be for us, who can be against us"; what man may say or do can do us no harm. Praise his blessed name for the promise that "he who hath begun a good work in you, will preform it unto the day of Jesus Christ." If we have tasted the goodness and mercy of God, it can never be taken from us, for there is no power in heaven or earth able to pluck these little ones from the everlasting arms of the Almighty Father, the Prince of Peace, the One altogether lovely. He is ever underneath giving the needed strength to carry us through the trials and tribulations of this world. "Great and marvelous are thy works Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

He has predestinated all things (not just part of them) and he will bring them to pass at his own appointed time. We may not be able to understand the why or wherefore of many things as our poor finite minds think we should, but "Not Gabriel asks the reason why, nor God the reason gives." We are made submissive and can see that it is all according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and that it is all a part of his eternal plan, for "we know that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

How and why do we know all of these things? Because we have been born again, born of the Spirit; the truth has been revealed to us, not by man's teaching but by the Holy Ghost we have been shown of the Lord, taught to know there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, except by the shed blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Our eyes have been opened, our ears have been unstopped, we have been given a heart to understand the things the Lord has prepared for those that love him because he first loved them. We know our feeble efforts have all been in vain, and we now look only to the giver of every good and perfect gift, knowing that his grace is sufficient for all our needs. Our works have all become as filthy rags, and he has become our all sufficient aid, for in and of ourselves we can do nothing; without him we are lost and ruined forever, but with his rich mercy and grace (the unmerited favor of an alwise God) we are able to press onward and upward, ever looking unto Jesus the author and

the finisher of our faith.

When we have been given this sweet hope of life eternal, we are then made willing to take up our cross, go home to our friends, telling what great things the Lord has done for us; then, oh how sweet to be lowered into the watery grave of baptism as an answer of a good conscience toward God, and to be taken into full fellowship with those we hope we love for the truth's sake! Sometimes, in our weakness, we think if those feeding on the outside of the visible church in this world only knew the joy of being numbered with the flock, they would come asking for a home, yet we know it is all in the hands of an alwise God who can bring them home at his own appointed time. May he give us grace to pray for strength to be submissive to his will, knowing that he has power to add to the church daily such as should be saved, and knowing that he will not leave himself withwithout a witness.

I often think of a scripture given me one night on a bed of restlessness, "Happy art thou, O Israel, saved by the Lord." There is no people like the people who have been given a hope of life eternal; and "This is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." How sweet the hope that we know him, for if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable, but 'tis sweet to rest in his love and to know that he will never leave or forsake his own.

Why are we happy? Because we have a hope that we have been saved by the shed blood of our blessed Redeemer; we have been given a hope that there is atonement for us, a hope that our sins were washed away, and our robes have been made white in the blood of the Lamb; we have been given a foretaste of the joy that awaits beyond this life; we have been made to hunger and thirst after righteousness, knowing that our cup has been filled to overflowing as we listen to some dear soldier of the cross expound the theme of salvation alone by the grace of God. At times our eyes have been melted to tears when alone, communing with the dear Saviour who is able to do abundantly more for us than we are able to ask or think. There comes a rest and peace that we are not able to describe; we are made willing to leave all things in the hands of an alwise God, knowing that he doeth all things well.

We then can rest as no one else can. "Father, we rest in thy love." Oh, what a place to rest. None but those who have experienced this rest can understand the sweetness of the feeling that all things are for our good. Our blessed Father will never leave or forsake us and we know that he is able to give us strength, courage, wisdom and knowledge to endure the trials of this world. God is our ever present help, his mercy endureth forever, his truth is everlasting, and "his love in times past, forbids me to think he'll leave me at last to sink." Oh, no, never will he leave one who has been given a hope of heaven and immortal glory; and how thankful we should be that God is all powerful, and, as with Job, our enemies can go just so far and no farther.

Praise his holy name for redeeming love, for grace sufficient for every need, for his mercy which endureth forever; praise him for blessings in this life; praise him for a home with the dearest people in the world; praise him for the desire to meet and mingle our voices together. It seems that I could praise him forever.

Please forgive me for any errors in these rambling thoughts, and give all praise, honor and glory to God.

Your sister in Christ and a sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

(Mrs.) Elsie Loeffel

2901 Avenue T,
Snyder, Texas.

Dear Brethren Editors:

I feel very unworthy to address the Lord's servants as brethren, but if not

badly deceived, I have been wonderfully blessed with that kinship through the shed blood of our blessed Lord.

It is a glorious feeling when I am lifted up above the earth and earthly things, and can say, as did Job, "I know that my redeemer liveth." But, dear brethren, so much of the time I am in the "valley of despondency", and feel that my blessed Lord has forsaken me: but we know that he has promised that he will never leave nor forsake his little ones.

Sometimes we look about us and see others so happy and carefree, seemingly, that we wonder why we have so many trials, troubles, and heartaches. Paul taught the disciples to glory in tribulations; knowing that tribulations worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. The Lord promised in the beginning that we would have trials and heartaches in this life. If we didn't have, I fear we would fail to call upon the blessed Lord; and we wouldn't have a longing desire to leave this old sin filled world, to live with our blessed Redeemer. One moment of time spent with our Lord near, is worth far more than a lifetime of worldly pleasures.

I did not intend to take up so much of your time to read my letter, but merely meant to say that I am enclosing $5.00 to renew my subscription of the dear Signs for two more years. I enjoy it more than I can find words to express; and hope the Lord will continue to bless you dear brethren to edit the paper. And also that He will give the many brethren and sisters minds to fill its pages with their wonderful experiences, and their interpretations of the Scriptures, to feed our hungry souls.

May the God of all grace and mercy, bless and comfort you editors, and all who contribute in any way to help make the Signs a paper of which to be proud, is my prayer. Pray for this unworthy one when at the throne of grace.

A little sister in a sweet hope,
Minnie Lee Williams

CORRESPONDING CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Eld. A. J. Slauson)

The Lexington-Roxbury Association now in session with the First and Second Roxbury Churches at Halcottville, Delaware County, New York, Wednesday and Thursday, September 17 and 18, 1958, to the churches and associations with whom we correspond;

Dearly Beloved in the Lord: We will now attempt to address you again with a message called the Corresponding Circular Letter, as has been our custom for many years.

God through his abundant mercy and goodness to us few has sustained our faith and courage in the true and living God and his blessed Son Jesus Christ. Words fail us to express to you how very thankful we should be, and do desire to be, to the Lord of all mercy that it has been his good pleasure toward us to bring us out from this wilderness world and cause us to love his great name. He has given us faith in the God that none can control, who works and none can hinder, and when he hinders, none can work. The Word tells us that, "Faith is the gift of God, and without faith we cannot please God." Faith which worketh by love brings us at the feet of our Heavenly Husband for all our needs; and none has such a Husband as the bride of Christ, the Church. He has provided, and will provide all that she will ever need for time and eternity, for her good and His honor and glory.

We trust it is through this God given faith that has been given us that we are coming together, and are bound together in bonds of love through Jesus Christ our Lord, who draws his children by the cords of his love: all being of like precious faith in God. We love to think of this precious faith as God

given wisdom. This faith provides wisdom to the foolish and unlearned, enabling such ones to know, like Solomon, how much they are in need of wisdom, and to know that they have no other source to obtain it from — only God and the teaching of the Holy Ghost whom Jesus has sent to teach his people all things. So at the ushering in of this most holy faith, by the teaching of the Holy Ghost and the revelation of Jesus Christ, poor ignorant sinners as we are by nature, are made wise unto salvation, or to know things we did not know before. God is made known unto us as God, or as our God. We are made to fear God. The Word says, "The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom." Hence, such wisdom causes or enables such ones to love God and to hate evil; to have a heart feeling knowledge of good and evil; and they hate evil or sin, and love Christ and his followers, and the fruit they bear.

The more of the precious fruit of the Spirit there is among brethren, the closer and dearer they are to each other. Where plenty of this fruit or love is among brethren, there is a oneness that is God honoring. Then, "Each can feel his brother's sigh, and with him bear a part; and sorrow flows from eye to eye, and joy from heart to heart", for love binds together. Love makes many members one perfect body: perfect in Christ. Love will watch over each other for their good. Love will bridle the tongue from speaking evil or hurtful things of brethren. Love will cause one to do all they can to help a brother. The Word says, "He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love."

It was because of this love that God chose a people in Christ before the foundation of the world. It was because of this love that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary. It was because of this love that Jesus was put to death on the cruel cross. It was because of this love that Jesus rose from the dead. It was because of this love that Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father on high, to make intercession for poor sinners — for us, dear brethren and kindred in Christ, if we are his. It is because of this love that Jesus is coming again to make up his jewels. It is because of this love that his children's vile bodies shall be fashioned unto his glorious body, and they shall see Jesus as he is, and be like him and be satisfied. It is because of this love that his children shall be before God the Father without blame in love.

It is too much for poor finite minds to fully understand such love — love that will erase, forget, and not remember sin. So, as we see it, it was love in the beginning, love all the way through, and love at the end — for God is love. God's love! What a golden chain that none can break! None can change one single purpose of God's plan in his love; cannot add anything to his love or take anything from it. Dear brethren, if we have been delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the Kingdom of God's dear Son, it is because of this love.

Dear brethren, to whom this epistle of love and fellowship is addressed, we feel to say that you are no more strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and that God dwells in your hearts by faith, and that you are rooted and grounded in love, having one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above and through all in you. All having been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ, and are fellow citizens of this great city, Zion — city of our God; and have love and fellowship for those who dwell in the city (Church).

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

Elder Amasa J. Slauson, Moderator
Elder George Ruston, Ass't. Mod.
Deacon Edward K. Adsit, Clerk

ENJOYS READING THE SIGNS

545 N. 6th Street,
Fairfax, Okla.

Dear Editors:

May 1959 be a happy one for each of you. I have now been reading the Signs of the Times two or more years; up to that time I did not know about it. I don't know how to put it on paper but I would love to thank all for the paper. I have just read and re-read the January, 1959 issue, and to say that I enjoyed it, the half isn't told.

I can sympathize with Sister Marion S. Brooks: I too am alone, hard of hearing, and crippled enough that it is hard to do my everyday work. I am the only Primitive Baptist in this town, and only get to go to church once in awhile, at a distance of 139 miles, but go whenever I have opportunity.

I want to say that I get great comfort from all the letters in the Signs, and keep each copy, but let others read them if they desire. I wish I could take each writer by the hand, and say, "write on, you are feeding some hungry soul: like the sister in California and myself." I haven't much, but am sending a wee bit to help.

May God bless and keep each of you, and enable you to contend for the truth, so that others may read and be fed. May I ask to be remembered when you pray. I am not worthy, but I hope I am a child of God, saved by his grace — not by giving him a chance, for the God I love does not do anything by chance.

Yours in hope,
Mary E. Hendricks

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God." (Rom. 8-14.)

We can easily see that we are sons of Adam by the first birth, who is a figure of the Second Adam, a Quickening Spirit. Each Adam is head and father of all the descendants that each will bring forth. The Second Adam, the Lord from heaven, contained in Himself the eternal life of all His seed, the elect Sons of God, the chosen of Adam's race. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father." (Gal. 4-6.)

Many, who seem to have the letter of truth on other portions of the Scriptures, so twist the Scriptures relative to the second birth and the future status of the children of God, that their reasoning really contradicts the truth; being masterpieces of Satanic theory. For example, "the new birth" is represented as a "new principle" instilled in the creature, denying that "It is Christ in you the hope of Glory." To quote another, "In 2nd Pet. 1-4, the regenerated are said to be 'Partakers of the divine nature' which does not mean of the very essence or being of God, for that can neither be divided nor communicated. In heaven itself there will still be an unmeasurable distance between the Creator and the creature; otherwise the finite would become infinite." Another Scripture quoted to support this is found in 1st Tim. 6-16, "Who (God) only hath immortality, dwelling in the light, which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen nor can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting, amen."

It is a fact that it is impossible for a man to approach unto God, but it is not impossible for God to beget sons in his own image with this immortality, the very nature of God himself. If they are sons of God, they have to be partakers of his nature else God has lied, which we know is an impossibility. Paul, writing along this line in Eph. 5-30, says, "For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones." If this be true, then His sons in the resurrection will be completely (soul, body and spirit) clothed with immortality, the very image of God Himself. (1st Cor. 15:53-54), "For this corruptible shall put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality; so when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall

have put on immortality then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory." Since, the flesh and blood of his sons cannot inherit the kingdom of God, (1 Cor. 15-50), neither doth corruption inherit incorruption, there must be a change. "We shall all be changed." How? By this corruptible putting on incorruption and this mortal putting on immortality.

When Christ came to his own (Jews) and they received Him not, it is written, "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on His name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, but of God." How this cuts out all claims of sonship by works, acceptance or surrender by the creature!

"As we have borne the image of the earthy (1st. Adam) we shall also bear the image of the Heavenly (2nd. Adam) the Lord from Heaven." Scriptures testify of the oneness of Chirst and His elect as joint heirs, not ashamed to call them brethren, Christ being the first fruit of them that sleep. Christ's last prayer was "That they (sons) all may be one; as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." All show that there is not the great distance between the Creator and the creature.

The glory of that Eternal paradise is an inheritance which the heirs inherit as sons, whose births are from above, and who will in the resurrection have their bodies quickened by the Spirit (of Chirst) which dwelleth in them now.

It appears from the Scriptures, that the one grand purpose of the Eternal God manifesting himself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit is to bring many sons to glory, making the Captain of their salvation perfect thru suffering and bestowing this perfection upon His sons.

W. L. Crowley, Gordo, Ala.

Danville, Virginia **March, 1959**

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TO

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Route 5, Box 332F **Danville, Va.**

EDITORIAL

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:1

The beginning here has reference to God's creation, as verse three clearly implies. The spoken Word is here under consideration, as it was nearly fifteen hundred years after that Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible called "The Pentateuch." Moses was a prophet, but in these five books he wrote the history of creaton, the disobedience of man and its result, the destruction of the world by a flood and the salvation of Noah and his family in the Ark; also the dispersion of man after the confusion of tongues at the tower of Babel. The first book contains the history of mankind until the death of Joseph. This book, covering that which took place before Moses was born, was given to Moses to write, not from folklore, as some might imagine, but by divine inspiration, for in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with

God and the Word was God. Moses not only wrote that which had been, but that which was and that which was to come, the Word, the same yesterday, today and for ever.

Our thought at this time is solely to encourage our brethren and friends to read carefully and prayerfully the Word of God, especially the first five books, for therein is contained the substance of all that follows, whether it be in the prophets or in the New Testament itself. We find Father, Son and Holy Ghost engaged in this wondeful revelation that was given to Moses to write, and in it is revealed a purpose, the purpose of God which was purposed in Christ before the foundation of the world.

The Word is the manifestation of a purpose, and is the expression of a mind back of that purpose. What the Almighty thinks, the power of the Almighty brings to pass. How grand the language! "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," and the spoken Word said, "Let there be light: and there was light." We believe David by inspiration tells us in Psalm 33:6. "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth." Peter also tells us, "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the Word of God the heavens were of old." I could wish that none reading this will show that they are willingly ignorant. What a great sin is willing ignorance, men ignoring God's Holy Word and showing by their desires and practice that they are content to seek this world and its vanities, rather than to read the revealed will of God, who made the worlds and all things therein. Let us not forget that Paul says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." Peter also tells us that, "The prophecy came not in old time by the will of men: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

Men might ask what proof have we that Moses wrote the Pentateuch. Jesus, who is the Word of God in the flesh, began at Moses, meaning the first five books of the Bible. (Luke 24:27) Abraham, in the parable, said, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." From God's word it seems clear that God had a definite purpose in all things whatsoever come to pass. The Apostle puts it beautifully in Ephesians 1:9-11, "Having made known unto us (by the Word) the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated ACCORDING to the purpose of Him who worketh ALL THINGS after the counsel of His own will."

This great Architect purposed the glorification of His Son, who, though equal with God, would at the fulness of time, be found in the fashion of a man. (Philippians 2:5-11) It is as sure and certain as if the Almighty took a seed and planted it in perfect soil which He chose, and also controlled every breath of wind and storm, with the determined purpose that the tree in its perfection should be manifest at the time appointed. After the earth was made, He commanded it to "bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind;" also fish of the sea and fowl of the air. After this, "the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground," and He did something in making man which He did not do to the lower creatures. He "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul."

We have quoted Psalm 33:6, that God made the host of the heavens by the breath of His mouth, and we would here quote the Psalmist in another

place. "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour." Angels cannot die, God's breath, like Himself, is eternal, and man had, in the breath of God, that which distinguished him from the beasts that perish. We believe that the quotation, though not Scripture, is true. "Dust thou art, to dust returnest, was not spoken of the soul," and our Lord, in Matthew 10:28, says, "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

Man had glory and honour above the beasts of the earth, and when men have made him just a beast of the earth, we have wondered how they could think that he could walk with God in the Garden of Eden. He was made a little lower than the angels and he was the figure or the likeness of Him that was to come; and in considering that likeness we would first notice that Eve was in Adam in creation. "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept: and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the Lord had taken from man, made He a woman and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man, Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Here we see the figure of Jesus, the second Adam the Lord from heaven, sleeping the sleep of death, and from His side coming, as He awoke from that sleep, a bride, the Lamb's wife, who was bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh. Let us, in face of a cavilling world, here say that the above-quoted Scripture is the Word of God. Read Paul in Ephesians 5:22-33, and notice how the Word of God has not changed, though man becomes more debased as he, in his folly, thinks he is more enlightened.

How long this first man and woman, who were the only two who were never children, lived in innocency and found pleasure as they walked in the garden with God, Eternity only will disclose. It is recorded that Adam gave names to the cattle, and to the fowl of the air and to every beast of the field. It is said by some that God made a covenant of works with Adam, but we read, "The Lord God COMMANDED the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Eve was in Adam, and the whole of the human race was in his loins when this commandment was given to him, so when Eve partook and gave to Adam, he knowingly came under condemnation and all his posterity with him. Here again we see the Church, the bride of Christ, chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, and Christ willingly taking upon Himself her sins by imputation. As soon as sin was manifest judgment came upon all. Adam did not then and there die a corporeal death, but he died to that innocence in which he was created, and from that day he lived under condemnation, having marred by sin the likeness in which he was createde. From that day on he begat children in his own likeness. (Genesis 5:3) His disobedience affected not only himself and his posterity, but the ground and all that it brought forth.

"O thou hideous monster Sin, What a curse hast thou brought in!
All creation groans through thee, Pregnant cause of misery.
Thou hast ruin'd wretched man, Ever since the world began;
Thou hast God afflicted too; Nothing less than that would do."

There is one verse we would mention here that must have given encouragement to our first parents. God said to

the serpent, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." A judgment yet to come! We also find Election and Redemption here revealed in the Word. Of the first two sons born to Adam, one was taken and the other left. Abel took a lamb of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it, he being dead yet speaketh." (Hebrews 11:4) The Word was light to Abel, he was illuminated from above, for God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, had shined in his heart, "So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." (Romans 10:17) Thus Abel was taught to do the Word before Moses lived or wrote God's revealed order of sacrifice.

Abel, conscious of guilt, took an innocent lamb and slew it, the innocent for the guilty, no doubt believing in a God who could justify the ungodly, for only in this way could he be said to be righteous. This imputed righteousness did not free Abel from sorrow and trouble while in the flesh: he, like Jesus, the seed to come, was hated and died a cruel death at the hand of his brother. Soon after, we see a sovereign God blessing Enoch with the same God-given faith and sparing him so that he did not go down into death, for "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death, and was not found, because God had translated him, for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." (Hebrews 11:5)

No doubt from the record given, the wickedness around him made this world a wilderness of woe to him, and our Lord gave him the favour of His presence so that while he filled his place in this world and had a family, yet it is said that he walked with God three hundred years. It is true that during those years wickedness increased, but those to whom the Word of God came are in Genesis 6:2, called the sons of God. These were not angels, as some have supposed. Our Lord has given the key to this Scripture in John 10:35, "He called them gods unto whom the Word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken." We also conclude from Mark 12:25, that angels neither marry nor are given in marriage. To those also in the New Testament to whom the Word of God came, the Word declares, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." (1 John 3:2) Then, as in the days of the prophets, who were mighty in word and truth, as His servants have been in all ages, the older they got, the smaller and more dependent they felt to be. Paul, in one of his last epistles said, "This is a FAITHFUL saying and worthy of all acceptation that Christ Jesus came into the world to save SINNERS; of whom I am chief." (1 Timothy 1:15)

We believe the giants were natural men who could look down upon God's humble people, and were leaders in those things which were contrary to the teaching of the Spirit of God. Wherever such are, and there are many in these days, the wickedness of men will increase upon the face of the earth. The ones to be dreaded to-day are the religious giants who ignore God's Word and defy the armies of the Living God.

From the Scriptures in Genesis 6:1-8 we have at times seen a parallel between that day and this. The sons of God, following their natural desires and taking wives of all they chose, seemed to be acting contrary to the Word of God. Many have been given love one for the other, and afterewards the Lord has sometimes called husband or wife as it has pleased Him. A believer, whether man or woman, to whom the Word of the Lord has come, should lay their case before the Lord, asking guidance. Especially do we, in this day, feel a needs-be for this, as those who profess this doctrine are considered so peculiar that it becomes them to make such important things a matter of prayer and

supplication. We do not consider it exactly right to restrict believing members to marry only church members, for one can marry in the Lord without their companion being at the time a church member.

Prayer is the exercise of a soul who feels his or her dependence upon the Lord. Solomon, though wise, was led astray by outlandish women, women who were idolaters. When Paul said "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," he was not considering marriage, for he said, "Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord." (2 Corinthians 6:14-18) He means false or disorderly organizations, whether it be churches or secret societies. This is to us an admonition to the church of God and to every God-taught person to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. Where there is a running after, instead of a running away from, the world, there is a grieving of the Holy Spirit, "whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." (Ephesians 4:30)

In Genesis 6:5 we see that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. When such a day comes and God withdraws His Spirit, destruction is at the door. How merciful God was even then to the few. He blessed Noah to find grace in His eyes and Noah was a preacher of righteousness, for Christ was there in Spirit with Noah to preach to the spirits in prison, "which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water." (1 Peter 3:19-20) Space does not permit more, how solemn are God's judgments and how fearful it is to fall into the hands of the Living God. G. R.

BRETHREN ARE JUDGES OF GIFTS

We are requested to write something of our call to the ministry; and, with the request, the question asked, "Does the Lord call a man to preach, and then withhold the fact from the brethren, so that the man has to take the initiative in trying to impress the brethren that he is called; and feels hurt because the brethren are slow in their actions towards him?"

We are glad to answer briefly our brother's request as to our impressions to preach, and also to give our answer to his question: which will be as we have felt about the matter for many years. There is one thing certain: If the Lord calls a man to preach his gospel, that man will preach, because all apparent obstacles will be removed; the necessary qualifications given; the way opened up, and he will go where he is sent; and the brethren will not only recognize the gift, but will be edified and comforted in his preaching. There can be no volunteers in the gospel ministry, though there are impersonators — and this is what causes searchings of heart by those who are not volunteers.

If we have a call to preach, it came with the irrepressible feeling that we must declare how great things the Lord had done for us, and that salvation was not obtained by the works of men (as we had been taught, and once believed), but was alone by the grace of God. His mercy had been such that He had brought a condemned sinner out of the prison-house, and spoken pardon and peace to his soul; and opened up the truth that this is the very thing the Scriptures declare — though men were preaching to the contrary.

The brethren received us into their fellowship when we told them some of the things the Lord had done, but not a hint of the impressions to preach escaped our lips, for this seemed an utter impossibility — we had no qualifications; and besides, the Lord would not call such as we were to such a sacred office, so surely the impressions were nothing more than vain imaginations.

Much to my surprise, however, shortly after being baptized, one of the dea-

cons called me aside and said that he felt that I was burdened about preaching, and asked if it were not true. There are those, I am sure, who know something of my astonishment that anyone even suspected my secret feelings. How could I say yes, and how could I say no! I was afraid to say either. After we had talked for awhile, I reluctantly said it was true.

The result was that I was asked by the brethren to speak, which I did briefly that day; and continued to have something to say before the brethren until my work took me out of town to West Virginia. I spoke there a few times; and, in the meantime the brethren gave me license to exercise wherever the Lord should lead me. But the impossibility of my preaching the gospel grew more and more in my feelings, until I resolved not to attempt it again. I often stayed away from meetings, and, if I went, refused to have anything to say.

After returning from West Virginia, I went to Florida, where I felt that I could forget the whole matter, for nobody down there knew me, or of my impressions. I remained there for more than two years, but my impression would not leave, and I was sorely perplexed what to do. After returning to Roanoke, I continued to refuse to try to speak, and often would not go to the meetings for fear of being asked. All of my running lasted for more than ten years; yet some of the brethren still felt that I would preach. Finally, on a Saturday meeting in my presence, our pastor, Elder P. G. Lester, simply announced that they would expect Brother Wood to speak for them on the morrow. Again, some of the brethren will know my feelings, and what I went through from that afternoon until the next day. The result was that I did try to speak, and have been at it ever since.

I have often marveled at the patience of the brethren, for I have had many reasons at times to feel that I was mistaken in the call, and that I have been running without having been sent. I have not gotten to the place that I can go into the pulpit without a great deal of fear; and I am conscious of the fact that my way and manner of presenting the glorious things of the gospel, is very weak in comparison with what I hope I have seen and felt of the power and glory of them. My flesh and carnality says I am a failure, and I have often felt that I can go no more, yet I find myself doing the things I know I cannot do. There is a, "Woe is me, if I preach not the gospel."

These are some of the things I have lived with. But I do not want to leave the impression that I feel all should be brought this way: I am glad that they are not; but this is my experience in these things. If any can witness with me, then I shall be encouraged.

As stated above, if the Lord calls a man to preach, he will certainly do just that. But where there are those who appear anxious to stand before the brethren, but in whom the brethren cannot feel there is a gift, there is evidently something amiss. It is better evidence by far to see a man drawing back, than to be ever ready and anxious to go; there is more evidence of growth in humbleness than there is in forwardness; and there is more food for the brethren in deep spiritual exercise than there is in a multiplicity of words. Those who are spiritual are judges of gifts, and they are most tender and patient with those in whom they recognize a gift. He who is anxious to show the brethren that he is a preacher, has much to learn — either that he is not called, and cannot preach to the Lord's little ones, or will experience many sore trials before there is a sign of growth in the ministry.

No doubt there have been occasions when brethren have become too hasty in ordaining ministers and deacons, and proceeded without being fully satisfied in the matter. This is hurtful both to the brother and the church, and affects adversely his home church and the sister churches. Full satisfaction should be had as to the Lord's calling and

soundness in faith before sending one forth in the name of a Primitive Baptist minister. This is a very serious matter, and should not be hastily done. Mere ordination by a presbytery never has qualified anyone a gospel minister, or qualified one a deacon. Both, in every case, are called and qualified of the Lord alone; and we believe the brethren will be given to recognize and appreciate the gifts.

In our own case we were blessed to have faithful brethren to give advice and counsel as we came along; and it is our feeling that brethren should not fail to admonish their ministers if they take up habits in their manner of speaking, or appearance before them, which are detrimental to the cause, or cause them not to present their preaching clearly so as to be understood. He who has the cause at heart will surely appreciate such admonition.

There were those in the days of the apostles who preached false doctrines and greatly disturbed the churches, and brethren were led astry. The apostles warned against such, for they knew that men would rise up in the churches in the days to come who were not true servants of the Lord. History has fully justified the apostle's warning. So it is important that the brethren try the spirits to see whether they are of the Lord. Those who are of the Lord will be made manifest — as will those not of the Lord.

"A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men. He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him." (Proverbs 18:16-17)

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

INDEPENDENCE OF CHURCHES

Much has been said about the independence of churches, and we would infer from the position taken by some that they regard the churches absolutely free and independent, as a sort of free agents, having an unquestionable right to do as they please, without reference to the judgment and concurrence of sister churches or aggrieved brethren; and they regard it as an infringement of their independence for any to question the validity of any of their proceedings. But to us it really appears that the saints of God, whether considered individually or collectively, are the most dependent of all beings.

Not only are they dependent on God for everything, but they are by his wisdom and grace so peculiarly organized as to be dependent one on another, so much so that no one member can be independent of any or of all the other members belonging to the body of Christ. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles; whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?" — 1 Cor. xii. 13-16. Can the ear perform the office of the eye? Or is the hand independent of the foot? Are not all the members dependent one upon another? How vain to talk of independence!

It is true the church of God has all her resources in Christ her exalted Head, so that she needs not the legislation of the princes of this earth to make laws for her government, nor their armies for her protection, nor the schools of sciences of this world to instruct her in divine things; nor does she need the dictation of councils claiming ecclesiastical power to preside over her. For as the body of Christ, in vital union with him as her Head and Lord, she has everything amply provided; she need not go outside of her gates, or le-

gitimate boundary, for any aid. It is not of this independence of the world and dependence on Christ that we object; for although God has ordained that sometimes the "earth shall help the woman," it is not the earth, but our Lord, that she depends upon to bring about such results.

As in the structure and organization of our natural body, the head, the heart, the hands and feet, and every member, however small, is indispensable to make the body perfect, even so in the body of Christ there is a mutual dependence of the members one on another. The eyes, however necessary to see for the whole body, cannot chew or masticate our food, and prepare it for the stomach; and while the ear can do the hearing for all the other members of the body, it could hear nothing if it were cut off from its connection with all the other members. There must needs also be harmony in the body. The feet cannot go one way, and the body another. In the body of the church God certainly has not been less wise in setting the members than in the organization of the natural body. He has set all the members in the body as it has pleased him. To attempt, therefore, to make any change or transposition, cannot please him nor profit us. How awkward and inconvenient, should the body attempt to make improvement by any change of the arrangement of the members.

The necessity of a clear understanding of the relationship of churches of the same faith and order, or branches of the one church which is the body of Christ, bear to each other, and what obligations that relationship involves, is sometimes but too painfully felt by those who sincerely desire to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. If all the local branches of the church bear the same relationship to each other, as so many members of one body, can they then be so independent of each other as that they may disregard the concurrent judgment of their fellow-members in their proceedings? Are not the commands given to all, to be of one mind, and of the same judgment, and to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit, and to follow the things which make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another, as binding on all the branches of the church as upon individual members of any one branch?

We think it will be readily admitted that the whole church of God in all her branches — the entire body of Christ in all its members, are under the one and the same law of Christ; and what that law says to one it says unto all, commanding all, both individually and collectively, to watch and be sober, to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded. If all the members of a body are supplied with the same vital blood which flows from the same heart; if all are animated by the same vitality; how then can they be independent of each other, or say to any part of the body, We have no need of thee? The interest is identical; and what concerns one branch or one member, also concerns all. Can this position be scripturally controverted? We think not. If we are not mistaken, the word and the Spirit confirm the position; and the experience of the church in all her history proves that the relationship of sister churches cannot be sustained if any of the branches declare independence of the others. How can two or more walk together except they be agreed?

Some churches who in faith and practice, and in almost every other particular, agree, have objected to associations, on the alleged ground that an associational relationship infringes on the independence of the churches. This objection is based upon the fact that with the New School Baptists, and perhaps some others, associations have usurped an undue authority over the churches, and come to be but little short of legislative councils, assuming the right to enact laws, levy taxes, and in every way domineer over the churches. Now, while we solemnly protest against all usurpation of authority over the churches, and while we hold that

the church of Christ, when in gospel order, governed by the laws of Christ, and led by the spirit of the gospel, is the highest court under heaven, still we deny that the church and her branches are either infallible or independent. Just so far as they are governed by the word and Spirit of Christ they are approved of God, and what they bind on earth is bound in heaven. But just as far as they diverge from the word and spirit of the laws of Christ, and make laws and regulations for themselves, or are swayed by human policy, prejudice or ignorance, their acts are unjustifiable by the divine standard.

But while we should studiously guard against any departure from the laws of Christ, or yielding of the authority which he has vested in the church to any ecclesiastical organization, the relation which sister churches bear to each other calls for the association, correspondence, love, fellowship and union of all the branches which compose the one body or church of God, which is the ground and pillar of the truth.

There is seldom, if ever, any difficulty or disagreement among churches when they are led strictly and exclusively by the divine rule; and then they are not only willing, but desirous, that all their sister churches and all who fear God may behold and know of their order. As "he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." — John iii. 21. The union and fellowship which should characterize all churches of the same faith and order imperatively demand this open, frank and unreserved readiness to come to the light, especially where the propriety of the course pursued by any one church is questioned by others. But the declaration of our Lord is broad enough to include both churches and individual members of churches, in which he says, "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."

When churches become disorderly by any departure from the letter or spirit of the word, they are apt to grow heady and high-minded, and to place themselves upon their dignity, and claim that they are independent, and have a right to do their own business in their own way; and if any of their sister churches ask for an explanation, they are considered inquisitive and obtrusive. But how else can union and fellowship be preserved?

Suppose one church in our connection should introduce infant sprinkling for baptism, or to receive to their communion without scriptural baptism those who have been sprinkled or immersed by those with whom we have no fellowship, and say, We are an independent church; you have no right to interfere with us. It is true we have no power to forbid them, but are we not commanded in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to withdraw from all who walk disorderly? Others may claim a right not only in the reception of members, but also in putting them away, to depart from the order held and practiced by apostolic churches, and under some excessive excitement make fearful slaughter of those who in the judgment of unbiased brethren and churches are not lawfully put away, and yet refuse to submit to a calm, dispassionate investigation, on the assumed ground that as independent churches their acts are not to be questioned: can such claims of independence be sustained without destroying the union and fellowship of the churches?

Or where churches of our order have excluded members, and challenge an investigation, and are ready and willing to have the whole matter fully investigated by any of the brethren or sister churches who entertain fears that such exclusions have not been perfectly justifiable, for other churches or individuals, without asking for such investigation, to pronounce upon the merits of the case, without asking for an investigation on the plea of being independent, and to extend their fellowship to the excluded parties, do they not in doing so identify themselves with the excluded, and become partakers of their dis-

order?

Such cases as we have supposed have actually been sadly witnessed in the history of the churches of the saints; and frequently the error has grown out of a mistaken understanding of what has been called the independence of churches, or of ministers or members.

In our estimation and understanding of the subject, a member cannot be either received or excluded from any branch of the church of Christ on the face of the earth that all the branches are not interested in, any more than an extra member could be added to or a living member taken from our natural body without affecting all the body. None properly belong to the church of Christ but those who are baptized into his body; and all such are members of Christ, and members one of another. However remotely these members may be located from each other in the flesh, the body is one, for Christ is not divided; and so vital is their union that no one member can suffer without the sympathy of all the other members.

Whatever may be said about independence, the church of Christ is the most dependent of all bodies; and whatever may be said of our rights, our rights extend no further than to do right: we have none of us a right to do wrong. The only reliable standard by which our rights and our wrongs are to be weighed and measured is the law of Christ recorded in the New Testament, and written also, if we are the true members of Christ, in the fleshly tables of our heart.

A few questions which seem to us very important suggest themselves, which we will submit to the prayerful consideration of those who are of the household of faith.

Can any branch of the church of Christ be in a healthy condition, and at the same time indifferent to the approval and fellowship of her sister churches? Has any branch of the church any rights, gifts, doctrine or ordinances which do not belong alike to the whole church and all her members? What has the church of Christ that she has not received of God? If she has anything that she has not received from above, would she not be better off without it? We are informed that every good and perfect gift cometh from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. If then the church or any of her branches has in possession anything which has not come from the Father of lights, it can be neither good nor perfect, and she has no gospel right to entertain it. Admitting then that all the gifts, rights, power and authority are the gifts of God to the church, are they not the common inheritance and property of all the church? If so, how can any branch or portion of the church of God be independent of all the other branches or parts which make up the whole church?

If our view of this subject be correct, all the branches of the church, which are members of the body of which Christ is the Head, are interested in the general welfare of all the body, and have a right to inquire into the faith and order of every religious organization that claims to belong to the same commonwealth of the spiritual Israel of our God; and under no assumption of independence or exclusive rights has any branch of the church a gospel right to refuse to let their order be known. And further, it does appear to us that any professed church refusing to have her acts scrutinized by her sister churches must necessarily be dropped from the connection of recognized churches in fellowship, for Christian and church fellowship cannot work in the dark. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." — 1 John i. 3.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe)

OBITUARIES

DAISEY PLEASANT (TITUS) McINTOSH

On the morning of December 2, 1958, at her home in Leesburg, Virginia, Sister McIntosh

came to the end of her pilgrimage in this world. It began March 23, 1874, in Loudoun County, Virginia, where she was born a daughter of John H. and Hannah Brown (Williams) Titus. Her years were almost eighty-five.

She was united in marriage to Bruce McIntosh on October 20, 1879; and to this union were born two children: James L. McIntosh, and Mrs. James di Zerega, who, with their father, survive. Surviving also are two grandchildren and four great grandchildren; one sister, Miss Mary L. Titus; and two brothers: Harvey T. Titus, Brooklyn, N. Y., and T. Alvin Titus, Ocean City, Maryland.

On October 20, 1912, Sister McIntosh was baptized into the fellowship of New Valley Old School Baptist Church by the late Elder H. H. Lefferts; and she lived a consistent and faithful member all her life. No one could have been held in higher esteem than she, for all who knew her made mention of her gentleness, and the evidences of grace in her walk and conversation. She loved the church and her fellow-members, and she will be greatly missed in their congregatings. Yet each one knows that she has but gone a little before, and is now at rest; and they weep not as those without hope.

Funeral services were conducted at the home by her pastor, where many friends had come to pay a last tribute of respect; and where the many flowers silently spoke of their love. Interment was in the Union Cemetery at Leesburg, where she shall rest until the coming of her Lord to fulfill his promise in the resurrection.

May those who were devoted to her in life, have grace to realize that she is yet in the hands of a covenant-keeping God.

John D. Wood

WILLIE D. BURCH

Brother Willie D. Burch passed away at his home on September 2, 1958, at the ripe old age of 73 years. He was a faithful member of Prospect Hill Primitive Batpist Church for more than 42 years, having united with the Church in May 1916, he was baptized by the late Elder B. F. McKinney.

Brother Burch will be greatly missed by the members and friends of the church at Prospect Hill. He occupied the same seat for many years and as we look at the place he sat, we realize that he has gone on to be at rest with all the saints of God.

The funeral service was conducted from the Church by Elder W. C. King in the absence of the Pastor, on September 4, 1958, and the body was laid to rest in the Cooper Burial Grounds to await the resurrection of all the saints of God.

Written by his Pastor,
(Elder) W. B. Stadler

SISTER IDA FREE

Sister Ida Free, daughter of Deacon James Edward and Frances Ann Shelton, was born September 18, 1876, in Smith County, Texas. She later moved to Upshur County, living many years in the East Mountain community, where Fellowship Church is located. After her health failed, she moved to Gilmer, Texas, but continued to attend her services as long as health permitted.

She was married to Mr. James F. Bland, December 8, 1895, and to this union was born one son, James F. Bland; who survives. Mr. Bland, who was a firm believer in salvation by grace, was called home August 8, 1898. Later she married Mr. J. W. Free, and one son was born to them. He died at the age of nine.

Sister Free received a hope and united with Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church, and was baptized by the late Elder W. W. Slaughter on June 14, 1914. She remained a faithful sister until the Lord called her home on April 23, 1958, at the age of over eighty-one years.

The funeral was conducted by her pastors, Elders T. A., and Loyd Wall, at Fellowship Church, in the presence of a large congregation. Her body was laid to rest in the East Mountain Cemetery, to await the coming of the blessed Lord.

Besides her son, who lives at Greenville, Texas, she leaves to mourn her passing, three brothers: C. T., A. L., and David Shelton, all of Gilmer, Texas; two sisters: Mrs. Elizabeth Pettis, of Gilmer, and Mrs. Beulah Westerman, of San Antonio; one granddaughter, Mrs. Jimmie Lawrence, Denver, Colo.; three great grandchildren, and several neices and nephews.

Dear loved ones, our loss is great, but it is to her eternal gain. We cannot mourn as those who have no hope. May we all be given grace to bow to God's will.

Submitted by her pastors, who loved her very much, we hope, for Jesus' sake.

(Elders) T. A. and Loyd Wall

CEVERIA ROSS HOLLANDSWORTH

Brother Hollandsworth was born March 29, 1902, in Floyd County, Virginia, the son of Elder John and Amanda Hollandsworth; and departed this life October 28, 1958.

He was united in marriage to Hattie Phillips on May 9, 1925; and to this union were born four children: Mrs. Verlie Whitley, Lake Charles, La.; Captain Victor R. Hollandsworth, Reno, Nevada; Phillip Hollandsworth, (died in 1936); and K. Winston Hollandsworth, Leesburg, Virginia. Surviving are his widow, Sister Hattie Hollandsworth; three children; and the following brothers and sisters: Mrs. Gervase Duncan, Mrs. Emmitt

Mitchell, and Mrs. Fletcher Phillips, of Radford, Virginia; Mrs. Denver Wade, Greenville, S. C.; and Taswell and Collie Hollandsworth, of Indian Valley, Virginia.

At the age of twenty-one, he united with Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Indian Valley, Virginia, and was baptized in March, 1922, by the late Elder John Sumner. He moved to Loudoun County, Virginia, in July 1925, and placed his membership with New Valley Church; and was later ordained a deacon. Brother Hollandsworth was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and was faithful in his attention to matters pertaining to the church. After moving from the farm to Leesburg, he took an active part in the affairs of the town, and was serving his second term as a member of the Town Council; and was a member of the Planning Board.

Funeral services were held in Leesburg, conducted by his pastor, and he was laid to rest in Union Cemetery, to await the resurrection. The many friends who were present, and the many flowers sent, testified of the high esteem in which he was held.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to Sister Hollandsworth, and her family, and find that He is a present help in every time of need.

John D. Wood

DEACON JAMES HENRY SWAIM

On July 27, 1958, the Lord saw fit to remove the spirit of Brother Swaim to be with Him, at the age of 63 years. He had just returned from the hospital the day before. After being told of his condition, he wanted to go home, realizing that his condition was beyond the hand of medical skill. He had spent several weeks in three hospitals. All that loving hands could do could not stay the call of his Heavenly Father.

Brother Swaim was married to Bettie Batts on June 9, 1919. To this union were born one son, John A. Swaim of Raleigh, N. C., and three daughters, Mrs. Alfred Corry and Mrs. Marion L. Oakes of Greensboro, N. C., and Mrs. J. R. Medlin, Rural Hall, N. C. He also had eleven grandchildren, and two sisters.

Brother Swaim received a hope in the Lord when he was a young man and spent much of his time visiting among the Primitive Baptists. He was well established in the doctrine of salvation by grace, realizing his total dependency on God for all blessings. He requested a home with the Primitive Baptist Church at Greensboro on the first Sunday in March, 1951, and was gladly received after hearing him relate what he hoped the Lord had done for him, causing him to love the church. Soon the church recognized the gift of a deacon in him and requested his ordination the first Sunday in September, 1952. He filled this office with much humbleness and faithfulness as long as his health would permit, always asking about the meetings and associations during his confinement.

We remember him telling of a dream or vision he had during his confinement of seeing a great number of sheep which no man could number that were as white as snow, all content, headed in one direction. This was much comfort to him, believing that the Lord had showed him of the future rest and contentment of His people.

On another visit with him at Duke Hospital in Durham, N. C., he asked me to pray with him, stating that he wanted to pray first. I have never heard a more fitting petition to his Heavenly Father than the one he prayed, asking that his faith fail not and that God would take care of him in the weakness of his flesh. Sister Swaim, his wife, was present. I felt surely the Lord was in the place.

Funeral service was held at the Lambeth-Troxler Chapel by the writer, with a large crowd from far and near to pay their love and respect to him and family. Burial was in Guilford Memorial Park.

Brother Swaim had many friends in Guilford County and Greensboro where he had spent most of his life. He established a lumber and contracting business some 35 years ago and enjoyed a host of friends in the business world, who showed him great respect by their presence and floral offerings.

May God's blessings rest upon his dear wife and children and the church, that they may be made reconciled to His will, knowing that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called, according to His purpose.

By his pastor at the request of the family,

Elder W. C. King

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the Staunton River Union convenes with the church at Strawberry the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in March, 1959.

The church is located on highway 750 one mile from J. H. Wood's store, which is located on highway 41, thirteen miles from Danville, Va. north.

All orderly Baptists are invited to be with us, especially the ministers.

(Mrs.) W. R. Dodd, C. Clerk

The Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Union Meeting is appointed to be held with the New Hope Church about ten miles south of Reidsville, N. C. the fifth Sunday in March.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us, especially visitors.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 127 DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1959 NO. 4

PRAYER

Prayer is said to be, "a sincere desire of the heart". As applied to the Christian, Webster says it is a supplication to God; a solemn address to the Supreme Being.

Today my mind has been drawn to prayer; and in my meditations I wonder if I have ever been made to pray. I think on my past life and try to look to the Giver of all blessings for the answer to the question, "Have I ever really prayed?" James says, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." I know my own righteousness is but filthy rags in the sight of God; and since it takes the prayers of a righteous man to be effectual, I have to look outside myself for both the righteousness and the prayer.

Peter, in his second epistle, wrote, "To them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." If I am encouched in that precious faith, then my prayers would spring from the righteousness of God, or his Spirit dwelling in me. My heart trembles and fears to lay claim to such a blessing to an underserving wretch as I know myself to be; but hope makes me bold to search out these thoughts, longings, and desires of my life in its daily walk.

When I read of the sufferings of the saints in our periodicals, and see the sorrow and sacrifices around me, I know that if I am what I hope to be, God has blessed me abundantly in his providence in this timely world. However, providential blessings do not satisfy the hunger and thirst for the spiritual comfort, which cannot be found in the material things around me. I have been made to beg for mercy, and, at times, hope to have been fed following these supplications. The table of God's love has been set before me many times when I was not allowed a crumb. At other times I have been carried as an eagle above the mountains and valleys, to soar so high I would forget the rocks and crags below.

What has all this to do with prayer? It is the substance that bridges the gap, the great gulf of utter despair, from a desolate, hell deserving creature, to its Creator, through the mercy and love of Christ. Christ who is at the right hand of the Father making intercessions for his sheep, left a comforter in this world for them.

At seasons, along the way in my life, the wilderness was so deep, and the desert was so dry, my heart would near burst for longing for deliverance. I would cry (physically), searching here and there for deliverance. When I was made to stay my efforts, because nothing I did helped, only carrying me further away, it was then, and only then, I could beg the Lord to teach me to pray, and to say, "Thy will be done." Sweet deliverance would be mine for a time, and I could sing with the birds, dance with the wind, and smile with the sun: all nature nourished me with its bounty.

My mind is usually so wrapped up in my own troubles, I seldom find a heart to remember anyone else; even though we are exhorted to pray for one another. (James 5:16) Once when our son was in service, he was making a hazardous drive across the continent, (he was alone and had just left the funeral of his granfather, whom he loved dearly), my thoughts were with him constantly, and I tried to beg the Lord to protect him. At the end of the journey, he sent a telegram, "Arrived safely,

all is well." I was keyed up to such an extent that, when the message was read to me on the phone, I said fervently, "Thank God." There was a moment's silence at the other end of the line, and then the man said, "I believe you really do, lady." I had forgotten he was there.

My life is filled with such incidents, interspersed with desires that I thought to be prayers, but were only lusts of the flesh. We are taught that faith the size of a mustard seed can move mountains. I believe that faith moves the mountains through the prayers of the faithful: and faith comes to his people as a gift of God. Without this gift, we cannot pray. It is God working in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. When we pray, "Thy will be done", it is a prayer of faith. When we pray for anything selfishly, without considering the will of the Lord, it is not the kind of prayer he taught the disciples to pray; therefore it is not prayer at all. To be able to pray "Thy will be done", is to be taught of the Lord, and is truly a prayer of the Spirit. To beg for wants and desires that are selfish, is only the lust of the flesh, and is worldly. Every mother and father with a son on the battle front prays for their son to be spared. Somebody's prayer has to be unanswered, else there would be no battle. So our flesh cries out for the loved one. Can we be submissive, and say "Thy will be done"? Only when taught of the Lord and led by his Spirit.

We are urged by the flesh to submerge ourselves in the world around us, to do this or do that, so that we might find favor in His sight. Our sins of omission heap around us in mountains of selfishness. We promise ourselves to help a needy brother or sister, or visit the sick, but, as the hymn says, "So many things get in my way." We grow colder and colder, and our thoughts wander away from the things of the Spirit and become entangled in the lusts of the flesh. Then, suddenly, we are stopped in our mad rush, and are afraid to take a step this way or that. We know in our hearts that our self-righteousness led us into the night, and we are afraid. It is then that we are made to know that we are nothing and less than nothing in the sight of the Lord; and we are made to cry as the poor publican of old, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Oh, the peaceful rest brought to us when that prayer is heard! We are brought into the light of God's love. We stand still and see the salvation of the Lord; and can say with David, "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry."

Lord, teach me to pray, if it be thy will. Keep me humble. Lead me to the feet of my brother or sister. Have me pray for my sons, that they may be brought to the footstool of thy mercy; and not as the woman who asked that her sons be exalted one on the left and one on the right hand of the Father. Drive away my worldly desires for the forbidden fruit. Place my feet upon the Rock so that they will not rove into the paths of self-righteousness. Let me sing the song of Zion with thy saints, and keep me from straying into the streets of Babylon. Oh Lord, I pray to be kept praying for thy mercy, even though my sinful life can claim no merit, save through the blood of Him who died for sinners that they might live.

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Lillie, La.

THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD

By Elder David Bartley

CHAPTER FIVE

CHRIST'S PRIESTLY OFFERING

"FOR every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins." (Heb. 5:1) "For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this Man have somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that

offer gifts according to the law: who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things. . . But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the Mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second." (Heb. 8:5-7) This most conclusively shows that the mediatorial covenant, priesthood and ministry of the holy man Christ is new, and not like the first covenant and priesthood under the law of Moses, and far better than that, for it was faulty, in that it was conditional and depended upon the people to keep it; therefore it was so unreliable that it made nothing perfect. And so radically different is Christ the High Priest of the new covenant from those high priests, that, whereas death put an end to their priesthood, it was through death that he was perfected and established in his priesthood forever. For by his one offering, he perfected forever them that are sanctified or set apart and consecrated as his priestly brotherhood. This was the offering up of himself through death.

Until Christ made this one offering for all the sins of all his people, he was one with them in his and their flesh under the law, the first covenant; but he was not a priest under the law or of that first covenant, after the order of Aaron's priesthood: therefore it was necessary that he should die in the body of his flesh as the victim and sin-offering under the law, then rise up from under it in "the power of an endless life", and ascend up into his spiritual, new and heavenly kingdom in the fullness and perfection of the new and better testament, and in the unveiled presence and glory of God, that he might perfect his eternal priesthood. This is the meaning of the clause above: "For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest." Thus does the inspired writer on the priesthood of the holy Son of God strongly contrast between the two covenants and priesthoods, the first and the second, proving that they are as distinct and separate as death and life, and showing that while the old is burdened down under sin and imperfection, bounded and ended by death to all its people and worshippers, the new is so perfect and abiding in its blessed fullness that in it sin is ended, the burdens of the law taken away, the power and victory of death and the grave destroyed, and all its people and worshippers are alive from the dead, clothed with priestly robes of righteousness, and "shall never die."

Is it any wonder, then, that our inspired writer has so fully and clearly pointed out to the Hebrew brethren in Christ the weakness and folly of turning away from the fullness of the new covenant in Christ, to the emptiness of the old conditional covenant, that made nothing perfect? Nay, is it not a strange delusion that, until this day, any of the people of the new covenant of grace and life and peace in Christ Jesus will have a proneness of mind and heart to turn away from the fullness of grace and truth in him, to the ever-failing conditions of a covenant of works? This is because the people of God are first born of the flesh, under the conditional covenant of legalism, to which they naturally cleave in their fleshly mind; therefore all fleshly religion and service and worship is always legal or conditional in its nature and motive. They look to themselves and their works of supposed prevailing obedience to supply the lack or insufficiency of grace in the gospel of full salvation in Christ, seeming to forget that there is no acceptance and no perfection in the sight of the just and holy God only in his righteous and beloved Son, by whom alone our very prayers acceptance gain with God.

Christians should remember this Scripture: "For Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." (1 Peter 3:18) The simple truth in this testimony is, that we must suffer for sins in the flesh unto

death, so long as we are in the flesh, as Christ did, and that all spirituality and holy devotion and service in us arises from the quickening Spirit. This truth is also fully presented by Paul, in Galatians 5, showing an entire separation between the works of the flesh, which are corrupt, and the fruit of the Spirit in those that are Christ's, also saying, "But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law." It is evident, then, that all who are not led by the Spirit, but by the fleshly mind, are under the law.

The holy Son of man, spotless and undefiled, was the Lamb of God, and by faith Abraham spoke of him to Isaac, saying, "My son, God will provide himself with a lamb for a burnt offering", and it was so. On turning, Abraham saw the typical lamb held fast in a bush; he, at the command of God, loosed Isaac, the heir of promise, from death, then sacrificed the divinely appointed lamb upon the same altar. The lamb yielded up its innocent life, that the bound and unresisting Isaac (type of the children of promise) might go free and live. The forerunner of Jesus pointed to him and said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Jesus calls his people lambs and sheep, the "little flock", and himself their good Shepherd, who "giveth his life for the sheep."

How inexpressibly wonderful is "the Man of God's right hand, whom he made strong for himself", that he was at once the Lamb and the Shepherd, the Offering and the Priest. No other high priest was like him in this; no, not even the great Melchisedec: for neither they nor he offered up themselves unto God as an atoning sacrifice for sins, because they themselves were sinful, and needed a more perfect sacrifice. So God in his mercy provided them with lambs without blemish to offer to him in sacrifice for themselves and their people and brethren. Yet those sin-offerings could never take away their sins, (except ceremonially and typically, as pointing them to the Lamb of God), nor make the worshippers perfect. In this fact we are taught the necessity that the High Priest unto God of the better testament should be prepared to make a better offering for sins than had ever been made, or else no flesh could be saved from sin.

"Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me), to do thy will, O God. . . He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. . . But this Man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool." (Hebrews 10) In this sacrifice of the holy Lamb of God upon the burning altar of the fiery Law of eternal Justice, the infinite mercy and compassionate love of the Father and grace of the suffering and dying Son were most richly and blessedly manifested toward all the people of the everlasting covenant, whose glorious High Priest the precious Christ is. O how deeply mournful, that the Holy Son of the holy Father must be sacrificed! — sacrificed on the accursed Roman cross! and sacrificed that guilty sinners, such as we, might plead his gracious name!

"This was compassion like a God!
That when the Saviour knew
To ransom us required his blood,
His pity ne'er withdrew."

The loving and faithful High Priest unto God well knew that no other offering than himself, his precious blood and holy soul and body, as a whole burnt-offering, would take away our sins and make reconciliation for us; therefore when his soul was troubled, he submissively said, "But for this cause came I unto this hour." And when the priests of the law had delivered him up to Pilate, Jesus said to him, "To this end

was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth." (John 18:37) He had before this time bore witness that he came to fulfill the law and the prophets. One of the prophets had said of us and Christ, "All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter. . . He was taken from prison and from judgement; and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken." (Isa. 53) Another thus wrote of him: "What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." (Zech. 13) This seems O too dreadful! But to reconcile and comfort us in this great sorrow, let us hear the lamb-like Shepherd himself say, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." (John 10:17-18) Finite language is too weak to express the strength and perfection of the infinite love of the obedient and suffering Son of God thus spoken by him — love to his Father, and love to his flock. It is surpassingly sublime, divinely beautiful, lovely and holy.

Come with me, you whose hearts overflow with sorrowing love for him, and let us further consider him as the High Priest of our profession, the beloved of our souls: He was a young man, perfect in divine excellence, faultless in person, surpassing the holy angels in purity, no guile in his mouth, lamb-like and full of heavenly goodness, ever ministering to and relieving the afflictions of all who came to him, so divine a man that his blessed mother Mary adored him, and his disciples worshipped him; yet he was "meek and lowly in heart", sought not honor of men, made himself of no reputation, was so poor that he had no home of his own on earth where to lay his head at night, but wearily travelled on foot with his little flock, that he might bear consolation and blessing to the suffering and helpless, and finish the work which his Father gave him to do. O thou lowly "Man of sorrows", thou immaculate Lamb of God, and lovely Prince of peace! thou blessed Son of the Highest! we do not wonder that thy Father-God, when he brought thee into the world, said, "And let all the angels of God worship him." Yea, we too would weepingly kiss thy dear feet, with sorrowing Mary, sinful and needing thy cleansing blood and free forgiveness as much as she, and with the angels lovingly worship thee. But we sorrow most of all, dear Master, that thou must die, must die because we have sinned against thy holy Father and thee, must die for us! O thou self-sacrificing Brother, born for adversity, how shall we ever requite thy redeeming love?

"For such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself." (Heb. 7:-26-27) "And as it is appointed unto men once to die: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." (Heb. 9:27-28) Death, therefore, is the appointment of God unto all men, because of sin, and the just wages or penalty of it. For this cause, Christ, though a sinless and divinely holy man, even ascending up to oneness and equality with the infinite God, was yet appointed, ordained and sent of God to be offered

up in death, bearing the sins of many, a countless number, yet all known of God, and all their numerous sins known as well, that by his death as a man and as God's ordained and consecrated High Priest for his dying people, he might make the full atonement or reconciliation for all their sins to the holy Law of divine Justice, which called for satisfaction by full and faultless obedience. Death only could now fulfill the holy law, since man had sinned against God, who gave the law.

But the death of all sinful men could never remove the guilt of their sins, nor make one sinner righteous in the sight of the Holy One. Yet he who atones for the sins of men, and redeems them from the curse of the law, must himself be a man, perfectly holy, and possessing all the excellence and merit that were sufficient to "magnify the law and make it honorable." It must be a man with whom the righteous God himself is "well pleased." Abraham's strong faith in God convinced him that God would provide himself with such a Lamb for an offering, when by faith he saw the day of the Christ-man, and rejoiced in him. So also did the faith of tried Job, when he said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand in the latter day upon the earth."

"E'er since, by faith, I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die."

Yea, shall be when I meet the Lord in holy heaven with all his saints.

The solemn words, "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many", presents a solemn fact; that is, "the sins of many" were all known to God and numbered in his omniscience so definitely that he imputed them every one to Christ, to bear them and put them away by the one whole and perfect offering of himself. For unless every sin of the many whose sins Christ bore were known and determined, to the last and least sin, he could not have borne them when he was offered. But if only one sin of the many for whom the Lamb of God was offered was left out of God's account and not imputed to the Surety of a better testament, then the atonement and redemption could not have been complete and perfect, therefore not accepted, and all must have been a failure. This is inevitable. But the Omniscient One, who has numbered the very hairs of our heads, has not omitted the least or last sin of all whom he appointed to obtain salvation from their sins, by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. And this certainly establishes the fact that God, in his infinite counsel and eternal purpose in Christ, reckoned up all the sins of all his people whom he foreknew and ordained unto eternal life.

Hear Paul, therefore: "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus 2:13-14) Redemption from all iniquity, and purification from all sin and unrighteousness was the divine purpose for which Christ gave himself for his people, that they should be holy and blameless before God in love, unto which end God both chose and predestinated them, that they should be conformed to the perfect image of his holy Son. It was not possible, therefore, for one chance or stray sin to be committed, which was outside of the counsel and purpose of God, and for which Christ did not offer himself and make full atonement. "And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin," says John. And therefore the suffering Redeemer bore all the sins of all his straying sheep, and perfectly atoned for them when he poured out his precious blood unto death. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." (1 Peter 2:24)

The healing is the sure benefit of his

stripes; and his death in his own body on the tree for the sins of his brotherhood unfailingly secures their death in sin, and their life unto righteousness; for with the offering and sacrifice of our holy High Priest God himself was well pleased, and his holy law asked no more. "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the Mediator of the new testament, that by means of death for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." (Heb. 9:13-15) Thus the perfect accomplishment of the mediatorial work of the Redeemer, in the redemption of his people from their transgressions, and their purification unto the service of God and possession of the eternal inheritance in Christ, the Son and heir of the Father, is as absolutely sure as his death for their redemption. With Christ, our perfect High Priest, who is now glorified in the presence of God, there is no possible failure, but all is complete.

The baptism of Christ in Jordan, and his temptation in the wilderness, after he had fasted forty days and nights, were solemnly important events in his priestly office, and were a part of his preparation and consecration as the Apostle and High Priest of his beloved people. He walked from Galilee to John the Baptist, who was baptizing penitent sinners in Jordan, to be baptized of him. "But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and, lo, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased". (Matthew 3:13-17) Thus did God bear witness to his obedient and lowly Son, and honor him in anointing him in his holy office of High Priest with the fullness of the dove-like spirit, symbol of innocence and peace — for this Anointed One, the Christ-man, is the Prince of peace and the peace-maker of his people. His baptism in the water of Jordan was a solemn and suitable symbol of his death; "for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness", he said, and thus he perfectly fulfilled. This anointing with the Spirit of holiness was unto his priestly offering upon Mount Calvary, near where Abraham unbound his son Isaac, and offered instead the lamb that God provided. And as faithful Abraham did not withhold his son as an offering to God, neither did God withhold his well beloved Son as an offering for Abraham and all who are blessed with him in the covenant that God made with him, saying, "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." (Genesis 32) "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise." (Galatians 3:29)

"Jesus of Nazareth", the dearly beloved son of Mary, had left his sorrowing mother's humble but divinely blessed home to abide in it no more, only in spirit and love; for he went forth from his baptism to fulfill his ministry, and finish the work which his holy Father gave him to do. O with what sorrowing sympathy we by faith follow this now homeless young man as he goes alone away into the terrible wilderness, to be with the wild and savage beasts. Yet his loving Father sent him there. The devil had compassed the ruin and death of the first man and all his people, through his subtility and temptation unto sin, and Eden was lost, and all men as well. So now the devil, "that had the power of death", must himself be destroyed; therefore this guiltless

youth, "the second man", must needs go into the wilderness, just as his type, the youthful son Joseph, must leave his father and mother and go down into Egypt, that his father's family should not perish, but be saved. O how solemnly wonderful are the ways of God! At times the lines of his providence seem densely dark to finite vision, and men will cry out against him as though he were both unjust and cruel. But not so did either Joseph or Jesus; no, nor tried and suffering Job, who said, "For though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." So it was but a triumph of the infinite goodness, compassion and mercy of God to countless millions of his predestinated sons and daughters, who had sold themselves for nought to sin and Satan, that the Captain of their salvation went into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, at the end of his long fast, when he was hungry and weak in the flesh. It was a fearful trial, but the issue was not doubtful in the least; for the fierce conflict ended in the overthrow of the prince of darkness, who then left Jesus, "and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him." This was the most wonderful and blessed victory ever won for righteousness, and in it God and his Son were glorified, and all the people of the second Adam were delivered from the destructive power of the devil.

And so our conquering Christ said, "I saw Satan as lightening fall from heaven." Therefore, for our consolation, it is written: "For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin." (Heb. 4:15) And in his complete victory over sin and Satan is the divine assurance of the full salvation and triumph of his tempted people. "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." (Heb. 2:18) The Lord will not suffer his tried brethren to be tempted above that which they are able to bear, but with the temptation he will make a way for their escape or deliverance. Therefore Paul says, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." (Romans 8:37) This was secured to us by the conquest of our tempted Christ over the devil, which makes manifest the rich mercy and boundless love of God to his people in sending his Son into the world, and into the wilderness. For it is not the will of the Father in heaven that one of his little ones should perish; but perish should the devouring enemy of righteousness and their sins; yea, death and the grave.

The same guiding hand of the loving Father that led the dear Son of his delight down into Jordan's flood, and out into the wilderness, also led him up into a high mountain, with three of his apostles, where the Father himself met them, withdrew briefly the fleshly veil, and gave them a glimpse of the awaiting eternal glory of his beloved Son, again testifying that in him he was well pleased, and commanding, "Hear ye him." But Oh! in the midst of his glory appeared Moses and Elijah, talking with Christ in the hearing of the apostles, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. (Luke 9:28-32)

The time drew near, which the Father had put in his own power, when, "The Christ of God" should be offered up, as spoken of at his transfiguration on the holy mount; and he said to his little band of followers: "The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day." Thus, knowing all this solemnly fearful suffering and sacrifice that his Father had appointed him, and that he came into the world as a man to accomplish, O how needful and sustaining was the loving Father's revelation of his future glory upon the mount; and the comforting voice from the excellent glory: "This is MY beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." He knew every step of the suffering way, and all the solemn and mighty work and closing conflict before him; but the dear

Man of sorrows knew as well that the Father had made him strong for himself, and had given him power over all flesh, and that when he through the eternal Spirit had offered himself spotless and holy unto God, he should again arise in triumph over the last enemy, and his blessed Father would welcome him home and all heaven should shout with joy.

Thus armed and consecrated, the obedient Son and faithful Brother "set his face to go to Jerusalem", which his fearing and sorrowing friends would have prevented. O how full the gloom and anguish all now was to them! They could not understand it, and sorrow filled their hearts. It was the sorrow of Christ's sufferings in the flesh that thus overwhelmed them. And has it not also filled each one of us with unutterable sorrow, even the sorrow of death? Yet it must be met and borne, and this meek and lowly Man alone was sufficient to bear the burden, drink the cup of woe, meet the awaking and smiting sword of sin-avenging Justice, and he knew that to do this he must lay down his life; yet he faltered not, but meekly went on, as a lamb to the slaughter, because it was his Father's will, which he came down from heaven to do. When the time drew near he said to his apostles, "The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. . . . Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." (John 12:23-28) Of this infinite trouble and conflict of soul, it is written of him, "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; called of God an High Priest after the order of Melchisedec." (Heb. 5:7-10)

"And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer, for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: for I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table. And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed! (Luke 22) No word of complaint against his righteous Father, who, in his counsel and purpose, determined that thus he should go, did the betrayed Jesus speak or feel, but in holy anguish he pronounced a fearful woe on Judas.

The sleepless and dreadful hours of his last night on earth in the flesh wearily wore away. The midnight hours and the three apostles who witnessed his glory on the mount, now witnessed his infinite anguish of soul and his entreaty, as he laid prostrate at the foot of Mount Olivet, crying, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." "And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." This amazing suffering of his holy soul, even unto death, as he had just said to the three witnesses, was the smiting of the sword of Justice for the sins of the flock of slaughter; and thus "He was bruised for our in-

iquities, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him." O the holy example of patient submission to the Father's will he thus left to us! It was the precious Christ-man, the Anointed Jesus, the meek and lowly son of Mary that thus agonized in the garden in prayers and cries, tears and blood, under the shadow of Mount Calvary, to his holy Father and God.

All was finished now, except to be offered up in sacrifice the next day. The dear Master and Teacher had, in this solemn night of death-sorrow, lovingly and comfortingly talked long to his sorrowing disciples; then, in their hearing, he prayed to his Father for them: "And lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou has given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John 17:1-5) When Peter drew his sword to defend his Master from arrest, Jesus said to him, "Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father giveth me, shall I not drink it?" To the officers and band sent by the chief priests to seize him, and led by the traitor, he said, "If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: that the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none."

"And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children." When they lifted him up on the cross, he said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." To the dying, penitent and supplicating thief he said, "today shalt thou be with me in paradise." "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Oh! this was the deepest trial of all, and he could not endure more; yet God saw it needful and best. The suffering High Priest had now made the full sacrifice, drained the cup of woe, poured out his blood on the altar, and made his soul an offering for sin. He cried with a loud voice, then said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit"; and again said, "IT IS FINISHED: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." "And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."

Even the Roman officer, who conducted the crucifixion, said, "Truly this was the Son of God."

(Chapter six next month)

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800 Lexington Road
Pleasant Hill, Mo.

Editors of the Signs,
Dear Brethren:

I want to tell you how pleased I was with, I trust, a sacred deep pleasure, when the December Signs came, and I saw you were publishing the "Priesthood of the Son of God", in the Signs. I have the book.

Elder Bartley was my uncle by marriage. His wife was my mother's eldest sister, and he baptized my father and mother before I was born. I have heard my mother tell of it. He died shortly after his last publication, "The Christman in Type." It, too, is a wonderful work. . . .

His widow, Aunt Salley M. Bartley, as we called her, made her home with us after his death. My parents were Elder Wm. M. Startzman and Cornelia

M. Startzman.

I feel that all who read the Signs will look forward with pleasure to each copy in 1959. I am reading J. C. Philpot's "Memoirs and Letters", and "Gospel Pulpit", and am enjoying them so much. He tells my travels, trials and temptations, joys and sorrows, so much better than I can; and it gives me courage when I see that the saints of old traveled the same road, though I feel to be the least of all, if one at all, so much of the time.

I am enclosing a letter I had from Mr. John Chapman, editor of Zions Witness in England. If you care to publish his letter in the Signs, I feel he would not object. With love to the household for the Truth's sake.

I am sincerely,
Mr. J. W. Taylor

LETTER FROM MR. CHAPMAN

Suffolk, England

Mrs. J. W. Taylor,
Pleasant Hill, Mo.
My dear Friend,

I was very pleased to receive your kind letter this morning, and thank you for the 5 Dollar Note enclosed. I appreciate very much your generous subscription.

It is very encouraging to know that you look forward to receiving your monthly copy, and that you enjoy reading its contents. I am pleased to know that the Annual Address was appreciated.

Like you, we are favoured to have the unadulterated truth still preached to us, and we do receive many helps by the way. What a mercy that we are still enabled to meet and worship God without hindrance, which is denied those in many countries. We have much to be thankful for. I can quite endorse what you have written with regard to the writings of those who have gone before, and it is confirming to know that they have travelled in the same way and at times I have found they have expressed my own feelings much better than I could have put on paper.

You have done some travelling this year, 7,000 miles looks a lot to us here in this country. I can see that you are travelling the same road as all the saints before you, they all experienced the warfare of which you speak. We can endorse the language of Paul that when he would do good evil was present with him. We have to prove that we still have the old Adam nature, but what a mercy "grace shall reign", and a blessed future to look forward to when there will be no more sin, but in His presence fullness of joy and pleasures for evermore, with a spiritual nature capable of enjoying this blessed state.

I was very interested in how you felt when you were baptized, and it was a very blessed spot. When we are born again of the Spirit of God, it is indeed a newness of life, and although there is the warfare, yet there are those seasons of spiritual enjoyment which the world knows nothing of.

I shall have to close, may the Lord be with you and cause His blessing to rest upon you, even that blessing which maketh rich, and with which no sorrow is added.

With Christian love.

Yours sincerely,
John Chapman

New Church, Virginia

Dear Brother and Sister Griffin:

Meant to write you before this, but so much to do I did not get to it. Bill appreciated his card yesterday. He is doing fairly well, not in any pain now, as he has been, and still has to use crutches to get around. He went up to the hospital and they put his leg in a cast up to his knee, and he will have to wear it for six weeks. He thinks he can not be still that long, but it will be good for him to take it easy for a while, even though it had to be this way.

We have thought so much about you both and want you to know that we love you dearly and are interested deeply in

your welfare. We know that since the passing of Brother Calvin (Holloway — Ed.) it has brought about such sudden changes, it almost overwhelms us to think of it. But we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, and we are made to stand still and wait upon the Lord who knows the end from the beginning; who makes no mistakes, and doeth all things well. If only He will grant us grace to be able to be reconciled to His holy will. Of our own strength, we are not able to stand, but when He looks down on His little ones and sees their weaknesses and helplessness, He reaches out His hand and arm of love, and sustains them and gives them needed strength to be able to say, "O, Lord, not our will, but thine be done."

What a merciful Saviour to us poor worms of the dust. What a blessed people we are (if I am one), to be blessed to have a few crumbs that fall from the Master's table. I believe there is plenty at this table, and never any lack, and if we are favored by our precious Saviour to have tasted that the Lord is gracious and to know that in Him is life eternal; that in Him we live, and move, and have our being, surely then we are highly favored by our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. When we have been brought and led into the marvelous light of the knowledge of these wonderful truths (if not deceived in our hearts), then only are we enabled to say, "My strength cometh from the Lord." This is our Prophet, Priest, and King. Praise His holy name.

Before this, we walk in our own strength, and the arm of flesh will fail us, but the everlasting arm of Jesus is safe, secure, never-failing. It is sure and steadfast. What a comfort to His little ones, when they have exhausted all their strength and seemingly have come to the end, that they are blessed to feel that arm of love underneath, holding them up, giving them a place to rest in while the storm clouds rage overhead. What a sweet repose. What a shelter of safety. These blessings are not something we can reach up and pull down when we desire, but rather they are given us in the hour when our Father knows our need of them. They are a gift from above by One who is the giver of all good and perfect gifts; who, because of His great love for His people, he gave His only begotten Son to die on the cross of Calvary, that we, through Him, might have eternal life. Is there any greater love? No, a thousand times, no. Oh, if only I could feel that I am one of that number. I am so afraid I am not. If I am, it is by His grace, nothing else,

> Nothing in my hand I bring,
> Simply to thy cross I cling.

After reading this, I am wondering if I should burn it up, it is such a rambling of thoughts, but that is the way my mind has run. Please forgive me for such. As I said before, Bill and I wish only the very best for you dear people. Feel free to call on us for anything, and come to see us while Bill is confined to the house.

Your little sister, if one at all.
(Mrs.) Evelyn Davis

(We feel to share this letter with the household of faith. It is proof that miracles are still taking place. Not too long ago this dear sister was bitterly opposed to Old Baptist doctrine. — W. D. G.)

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388 McPhail Street
Lebanon, Mo.

Signs of the Times,
Dear Brethren:

It is time for me to send in my renewal for another year.

I am past eigthy years of age, and can say as did Jacob, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been." What is better for one than to acknowledge his sins? David acknowledged his. The God of heaven knows whether I come before him as his servant David did: I can only hope that I am not acting a hypocrite.

I will be satisfied when I awake in his likeness, but now I can only say,

"Like one alone I seem to be; O, is there anyone like me." He came to condemn sin in the flesh, and it is in his light that we see our own heart, and cry, "O wretched man that I am." I would like to live a life above sin, but sin is only condenmed in the flesh. From a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

Your brother in Christ,
W. W. Kenoly

Martinsville, Virginia

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am enclosing renewal for the Signs. I have greatly enjoyed reading the good pieces of the many writers in the Signs, and the editorials. Have been shut in much of the time, but have been blessed and enabled by the great I Am, who is still ruling and controlling all events of time, to get out to many of the good meetings we have been having in this part of the country. I was at a wonderful meeting at Martinsville Church last Sunday. Elder Cecil Turner was blessed to speak words of comfort and edification to the believing ones, who have been brought into the knowledge of the truth of the great and wonderful mysteries of our God and of his kingdom.

I will soon pass my eigthy-fifth milestone, if I live a few weeks longer. I cannot expect to be meeting with the dear ones much longer, but am hoping and looking forward to being in that great gathering that will never break up. May the richest blessings of our God rest upon all who are looking unto our God for all things.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
T. D. Dodson

---

789 E. Paxton Street
Danville, Va.

Editors of the Signs,
Dear Brethren:

Am enclosing check for two years' renewal of the good old Signs of the Times. My greatest joy and pleasure is the reading, and going to church and hearing the word proclaimed of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

My membership is at Malmaison Church, and we are wonderfully blessed to have as our beloved pastor Elder O. K. Tench. We feel that he is a God sent man to proclaim the truth in our hearing.

I get so much comfort from your writings: the editorial in the January issue is beautiful; I have read and reread it several times. I go to Dan River Church right often, and enjoy Brother Spangler's preaching so much. If the true doctrine of salvation by grace isn't preached by the Primitive Baptists, I know not what the truth is.

. . . As I stated before, reading the good writings in the Signs, and going to church, is all I can expect to get out of this life here in this old world of sorrow, trials, and tribulation.

May God bless you and yours. A poor, unworthy sister, if one at all.

Mrs. Mattie B. Owen

ENJOYED THEIR PREACHING

545 Greenwood Ave.
Atlanta 8, Ga.

Dear Brethren:

The members of New Harmony and Elam Primitive Baptist Churches are thankful to the good Lord the creator and controller of all things, for sending Elder and Sister Griffin and Elder Gilliam down to preach for us the first Sunday in November, 1958.

Surely we were made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. We hope they can visit us again soon. We are few in number but always so thankful for them to visit us; and hope others will be coming our way any time they can.

Georgia McGinnis

NOTICE OF MEETING OF PRIMITIVE BAPTIST LIBRARY TRUSTEES

By request of the Trustees of the Primitive Baptist Library, a meeting of the Trustees is hereby called to meet at the Library on Friday before the third Sunday in May, 1959, at 10 o'clock A. M., to transact any business that may properly come before them. All Primitive Baptists are invited, and especially those with whom we correspond directly or indirectly.

J. P. Helms
Chairman of the Board

NOTICE

Under the will of the late Dr. S. B. Milford, of Poolesville, Maryland, the sum of $6,243.75 was left to the editors of the Signs of the Times as Trustees, to be distributed among the needy and unfortunate members and friends of our people.

Any request for help from this fund must be made through the pastors of local churches, who will write the Trustees at the business office of the Signs, Route 5, Box 332-F, Danville, Virginia, explaining fully the need of the party, and giving his name and address.

The distribution of this fund is entirely at the discretion of the Trustees, who will decide from the information given where actual need exists, and the amount to be contributed. The fund is limited to the above amount, and we desire the cooperation of the pastors in helping us to help those in need.

We are sure that our people appreciate the kindness of our departed friend, Dr. Milford, and, as Trustees, we will do our best to help the needy and unfortunate among us, as he desired us to do.

D. V. Spangler
J. D. Wood
Trustees

ADDITIONAL CHURCH NOTICES

NEW HARMONY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Hiram, Ga., meets every 1st Sunday at 11 o'clock.

O. J. Croker, Pastor
J. F. Jordan, Clerk

ELAM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located at Forrest Park, Clayton County, Georgia, meets every 3rd Sunday at 11 o'clock.

O. J. Croker, Pastor
Malissie Stewart, Clerk

Danville, Virginia **April, 1959**

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PLEASE NOTE

Some of our subscribers do not understand that their expiration date is shown just after their name and address on each copy they receive. If the date shown is 1-59, it means expiration date is January, 1959; 2-59, means February, 1959, etc. Changes in these dates show you have been credited with renewal to date shown. — Ed.

BOOK NOTICE

Those who desire a copy of Elder Lambert's book, TRIED IN THE FURNACE may obtain it by addressing him at 306 Richardson Street, Winnsboro, Texas. The price is $3.00 postpaid. — Ed.

EDITORIAL

TERRIBLE SHAKINGS

"For thus saith the Lord of Hosts: yet once, and it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill

this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts."

The above quotation is found in Hagai 2:6-7. I want you to also notice Hebrews 12:26-28, which verifies the shakings of all things created by the Creator: "Whose voice then shook the earth: but now He hath promised, saying, 'Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.' And this word, 'Yet once more', signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be removed, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and Godly fear." We expect to prove in this treatise that all things made have, or will, be shaken and be removed from their seeming stability by the only One who can shake both the heavens and the earth, even to the shaking of the soul of man. He causes all to tremble and quake.

Unless you have experienced within the very depths of your souls these terrible shakings, quakings, and tremblings, you cannot discern the meaning of the terms here used. If you have been so shaken, I want to comfort you with the thought that it requires greater power to shake a thing than the power possessed by the thing shaken. If you have been shaken and made to tremble, this is evidence that a greater power than you is working upon you. If the power of God is the only power that can shake the soul, surely it is God Who has shaken you. If God has shaken you He means to subdue you and bring about the desired results.

The whole mount of Sinai quaked greatly and it was as a burning furnace on that memorable day when God descended upon the mount to make known His power and instructions to the children of Israel. The lightnings flashed, the thunders roared, clouds thickened, dense smoke soared, and the trumpets sounded exceedingly loud on the eve of the new day of the Levitical dispensation. All these terrible shakings were so great and forceful that it resulted in the trembling, or shaking, of all the Israelites. All this shaking shook up and brought to naught all things that they had formerly trusted in and replied upon as stable. They were made to know that their objects of worship and reverence were not to be replied upon.

David speaks of these terrible shakings recorded in Exodus 19th chapter as we shall see by reading Psalms 68:-7-8: "O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness; the earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God; even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel." He refers to it again in Psalms 77:18: "The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven; the lightnings lighteneth the world: the earth trembled and shook." By this and other great and terrible shakings of the Lord, David is convinced: "Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known. Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron." (Ps. 77:19-20) These shakings and removals are necessary in order to perfect His effectual leadership and to command His rightful reverence and praise.

Terrible shakings were again very evident in climaxing the change from the law dispensation to that of the dispensation of grace. "When he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened; and many of the bodies of the saints which slept arose." (Matthew 27:-50-52) The shaking of the earth and the tearing to pieces of rocks were terrible; but, the renting in twain of the veil of the temple was much more terrible to those who worshiped the natural temple. These great and terrible shakings took place when Jesus yielded up the ghost on the cross.

Paul confirms an established principle that that which is shaken or may

be shaken, is to be removed, as already quoted from Hebrews 12:27. We all agree to this naturally concerning natural things. When a storm shakes the foundation of a house to the extent that it becomes tottery, we consider it dangerous and ought to be removed. When a bridge shakes as we pass over it we immediately reason that the bridge ought to be taken down and replaced by one that is steady. When earthquakes rent buildings, plans are made for their removal. We look with fear upon a dead tree that is being shaken and we conclude that its removal is necessary. All these shake our confidence in their steadfastness: but, O, how much more terrible are the shakings within us! Our bodies quake with diseases and finally die. How great the pains of these shakings! Yet, there is a shaking which is more terrible than the shakings of natural things, including our natural bodies. The shaking of homes by the removal of loved ones; the shaking of confidence in our greatest friends; the shaking of the reputation of fine moral characters; yea, the shaking of great minds and noble intellect: will all be so terribly shaken as to become wrecks and ruins — fit only to be removed and taken away like the remains of a fallen tree. Yet all this is mild to the shakings of a legal religion, pharasaic self-righteousness, formal lip-service and natural faith. All these must be shaken and removed from the children of God.

Regardless of whether your natural faith be Calvinistic or Armenian, sound or unsound in the letter; it is a dead faith, and must be shaken and removed. This is necessary in order that the spiritual and living faith may have its rightful place in your heart and mind. Man's own religion that is made to order by the works of himself has no place in the kingdom of God. Therefore, it is to be shaken, taken away, and destroyed. The destruction must be thorough. The whole vine must be shaken to pieces, branches cut off, destroyed to its roots: — yea, the roots thereof must all be shaken to pieces and destroyed. What terrible shakings that must go on in the depths of a man's soul in order to plant the Kingdom of Grace in the heart!

God's work upon the soul by these terrible shakings is for Eternity. It cannot be shaken by the things of time. Storms of doubts, fears, temptations, nor any other shakings, cannot shake what God is doing for your soul. You may be shaken as to the reality of your faith but that does not shake faith itself. Doubts and fears come forth from an unbelieving heart but every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. The things shaken are those which are made. The things given are unshakeable and will remain.

I stated in the above paragraph, "YOU may be shaken as to the reality of your FAITH but that does not shake FAITH itself". You may fear that a bank in which you have deposited all your savings will fail but your fears do not cause the bank to be insufficient to take care of its depositors. Your fears and misgivings do not change or shake divine realities. Sometimes your faith seems to be shaken, but this seeming shaking of your faith comes from the unbelieving heart which is subdued by the faith from God. God's faith abides forever. I mean, the faith God has given to you by the mighty operation of his Holy Spirit. It shall never be removed but shall abide forever. "Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it." (Eccles. 3:14)

The everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, is another one of the things that can never be shaken. This everlasting covenant is made secure by the decrees of God embracing all things so that all times and circumstances are so minutely fixed that everything will fall out in its proper time and place exactly to the perfect and complete accomplishment of this covenant. It shall never be shaken and

removed. Our unbelief in this vital fact does not alter the fact in the least. This covenant is everlasting, sure, and ordered in all things so that it will perfectly reach its glorious and holy climax to the complete salvation of each and every one of its beneficiaries.

The finished work of Christ can never be shaken or removed from any one for whom He died. His accomplishments of the law is forever for those for whom He lived. The penalty for their sins are forever paid. Suppose someone should pay a great debt for you and inform you that he paid it. Afterwards you would begin to ponder over it and possibly fear that the debt was not paid. Your doubts and fears concerning the payment of this debt would not shake the fact that the debt was really paid. You may doubt that God has ever begun a work in your soul. Your doubting it does not shake or alter the fact that He has begun this work — if He has.

There are many things that remain, abide, cannot be shaken, nor removed. Not only this God-given faith, the everlasting covenant, the finished work of Christ cannot be shaken; but also, the smiles of His countenance, the application of His promises, the testimonies of His grace, the experiences of His love and mercy; — yea, the gifts of God, which are too numerous to mention, CAN NEVER BE TERRIBLY SHAKEN, NOR BE REMOVED. If God has given you faith, hope, and love, he has given you these graces of the Spirit. You may sometimes be not aware of the presence of this faith; yet, it is there. Even when it seems so weak to you, you would not trade it for another world like this old world. Your hope may be so blighted that you almost despair, but you do not despair. Sometimes you are cast down but not destroyed. Your godly love may seem to have waned away but there is yet a spark which is inflamed into manifestation when blown upon by the grace of Almighty God. These precious things abide. If He has given you just one grain of faith that is no greater than a grain of mustard seed, He has given you something that will remain. If He has given you just one ray of hope, it is SOMETHING precious that can never be terribly shaken to the extent of its final removal. If one beam of his love has been given you, it is something that can never be taken from you. Your eyes may be dim so that you cannot see it, but never-the-less, it is there. You may look toward a mountain that you have been able to see day after day. Some day when there is a dense fog you look again for the mountain, you do not see it. Can you truthfully say that the mountain is not there because you cannot see it? No. Your not seeing the mountain did not remove it. When the sun shines it will stand forth with all its grandeur and beauty.

All this goes to prove that all good is of grace. The same grace which gives faith must maintain it. The same grace that inspires hope must keep it. The same grace that sheds love in your heart must keep it warm and glowing. These terrible shakings within your own soul are for the purpose of making you to know that you cannot upon the volition of your own will keep these precious things. These precious things are allowed to be obscured from our view and wane so that we may be given to pray, "Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." These terrible shakings are experienced daily within our souls to keep us humble and constantly praying for a continuation of His loving favors, mercy, and grace. Yes, the heavens and earth will be terribly shaken and removed so that they will pass away, but His Word will not pass away nor be marred in the least degree. His promises will not fail. His mercy and grace will endure forever. His love will not cease. His covenant will not fail. Jesus will not lose one for whom He died. All will abide and remain forever.

May we reverence the Name of God, the Father; God, the Son; and God,

the Holy Spirit. May we trust in the things that cannot be terribly shaken. May we serve God with REVERENCE and GODLY FEAR. Do you see and feel the difference between you, a vile and polluted sinner, and Him, a pure and Holy Jehovah? If you do, you reverence Him. Do you not fear Him rather than men and devils? If you do, you fear God. May His grace keep us serving Him acceptably even if it takes the terrible shakings to the extent that we are ALL SHOOK UP.

E. J. L.

HOME AFTER A MOST PLEASANT VISIT

We have recently returned from our visit with brethren in the South, where we spent about five weeks among them. Sister Wood and I felt the need of a vacation, and it was a pleasant one indeed. We were cordially received everywhere we went — in their homes and in the churches, and everyone was so nice to us. We regretted that we could not visit in the homes of all to which we were invited. To each one we express our appreciation, and will try to give an account of the trip a little later.

We will mention now, however, that we were greatly impressed with the great interest which we beheld among the brethren, in their desire to talk of spiritual things. Many times the brethren came together in the homes and discussed things which pertained to the doctrine we hold so dear. Many questions were asked, and many portions of the scriptures were inquired into, and we feel it was profitable to all of us. We thought at the time of the language of Malachi: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another", etc.

May the Lord continue his lovingkindness unto his people, and draw them that they may run after him; and keep them that they may, "Hold fast the profession of faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." (Hebrews 10:23-25)

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

SPIRITUAL ADOPTION

"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children." (Eph. 1:5) "That we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal. 4:5)

God's servants of the ministry, as well as others, are required to be faithful in all things, and to show themselves approved unto God, in contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, and in rightly dividing the word of truth. There are several grand and glorious principles of doctrine set forth in the sacred oracles, as demonstrating the relation sustained by God in Christ to his believing children. Conspicuous among them is "Adoption," as set forth in the text at the head of this article. God has been pleased, in the revelations of his grace, to use phrases easy to the comprehension of his believing children, and illustrations common among men.

We have no difficulty in ascertaining the significance, literally, of the term, "adoption." We know that it means the taking of the child of another, of whatever rank or class, however degenerate or clever, and raising and educating the same to all the privileges and immunities of one's own child by blood and birth — even of one's own legal begetting. We will suppose the child adopted, to be of the very lowest, abandoned and degraded class, and the adoptor to be of the very highest in wealth, splendor, and earthly glory and magnificence. We readily discover the disparity between the parties in the beginning, and just as readily may we discover the great and essential change of state and char-

acter of the adopted, in the end, when the design of adoption is accomplished.

And, following up this thought in the application of the subject, we are enabled by faith to get a glimpse at least, of the great disparity between God the great Jehovah, as the Adoptor, and the wretched and ruined sinner, of Adam's polluted family, as the adopted. Our finite minds utterly fail to measure the absolute distance between the parties to this adoption. But the reign of God's grace, by faith, enables us to see from the center, as it were, gradually, and to some extent, down this line of disparity — at least, to the state of the just condemnation and vileness of the sinner; and by the same grace of faith, to look up this same line of disparity, and behold the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him, and so rejoice in hope of the glory of God, through the blood of the once crucified, but now risen Lord and Saviour. "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God."

Our text reads: "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself." But there are other principles of doctrine vitally connected with that of adoption, as going before and in order to the adoption of children. There must, necessarily, be a choice made by the adoptor, of the person or persons to be adopted, and a determination to carry out the choice or election thus made, to its full and thorough completion in adoption. And hence we read in the context: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself." (Eph. i. 3, 5) Thus we see the identity of the subjects, so chosen or elected in Christ, and by him adopted; and so leads on, in the same identity, to redemption by the blood of Christ (as in verse 7): "In whom we have redemption through the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."

So we see a direct and immediate connection between Jesus Christ as Mediator and Saviour, and all three of the doctrinal principles of Election, Predestination and Adoption, and the identity of the subjects in Redemption; and, therefore, all four of these principles of doctrine must, of necessity, be principles of the gospel, to be inculated by a faithful ministry; and the three first of which, to be regarded as belonging to the everlasting covenant of Grace, ordered in all things and sure, and among those spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus with which the Church of Christ is blessed (as presented in the 3rd verse.)

Surely this is sufficient ground upon which to base the right of redemption, as according to God's good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself (as seen in verse 9); the more especially when we discover that these subjects, which were predestinated unto the adoption of children, were the gift of the Father to the Son in the same covenant of grace, and by him redeemed from the condemnation and curse of the violated law of God. We see, then, God's eternal purpose in his election unto salvation, his predestination unto the adoption of the heirs of his electing love, and so far in their redemption, in fulfillment of his purpose in himself and in and through Christ Jesus. As seen in Eph. iii. 11: "According to his eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." But does this exhaust his purpose in fulfillment? Surely not. The child must be prepared and made sensible of his adoption, and put in possession of the inheritance. Redemption truly has opened the way to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and all uncleanness, but not provided the principle of the preparation of the heirs of promise.

The sovereign reign of grace must not, can not stop here. The way is open-

ed, but the prisoners not yet delivered. We read of "three that bare record in heaven, the Father, the Word (or Son), and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one;" and the three in one God are harmoniously engaged in the work of human redemption and salvation. The electing love of God the Father hath chosen the vessels of mercy to the end that they should be holy and without blame, and determined upon their future adoption. God the Son, by his sufferings, death and resurrection, hath paid the debt due to their transgressions, and thus met and satisfied all the claims of law, in all of its jots and tittles, in full satisfaction to the justice of the divine throne. But have we no work for God the Holy Ghost? But our second text comes in: "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons; and because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son in your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Here the Holy Ghost comes in for his share of the works of the preparation of the heirs of adopting grace. An eminent apostle seems to glory in this work as under the inspiration of the Spirit, when he says: "I am bound to give thanks always unto God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." And Peter speaks of these adopted children as "elect of God according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." What a demonstration of the work of the three in one God, is found in this text!

But the doctrinal principle of Sanctification seems to be set forth as the peculiar work of God the Holy Ghost, in fulfilling the eternal purpose of God in the preparation of the vessels of mercy in regenerating and adopting grace; even as it is the peculiar work of God the Son to redeem, and as it was the peculiar work of God the Father to choose and determine upon the subjects of adoption, of redemption, of sanctification, of pardon and justification, and eternal salvation. But, notwithstanding the peculiar work of either one, the unity of divinity in the three is so closely allied and united, that wherever and whenever the one is engaged in his peculiar work, the three are present. "And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh." Let the faith of every adopted child of God bow in humble submission to the truth of the great mystery.

Jesus the great Saviour was made of a woman for a specific purpose, and we are told that in him, as Mediator and Head of the Church, dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and we read further, that "as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will;" and "it is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." And our Saviour Jesus hath said: "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." Again: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

We are on the hunt, now, of the subjects receiving that adoption to which they were chosen and predestinated from before the foundation of the world, as under the reign of sovereign grace; and I don't know that we can do any better than to consult the Book of Ephesians, though other portions of scripture give abundant testimony. The saints at Ephesus had received abundantly of the fruit of the Spirit of sanctification unto the adoption of the children of God, which made them what they were not before, to wit, the "workmanship of God created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them: wherefore remember that ye, being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by that which is

called the circumcision in the flesh made with hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope and without God in the world; but now, in Christ Jesus, ye who were some time afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ." (Eph. ii. 10, 13)

Thus we get a glance at the children of God, under the sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, receiving their adoption to the extent that they are enabled by grace (the grace of faith) to cry, Abba, Father. But let us go back a little, to the first of the chapter. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins, and (though dead) were walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; and were by nature (by sin and transgression) the children of wrath, even as others." This was the condition in times past of the saints at Ephesus, and before they received the adoption of sons. But what is this we hear: "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus?" This is the result so far, of the work of the Spirit in sanctification, in regenerating and adopting grace, in fulfillment of God's purpose in adoption. Just here, not only the Spirit of adoption is received, but the adoption of sons, and heirs of immortality — heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, the only begotten Son of the Highest, to that glorious "inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in heaven for you (all the subjects of adoption), who are kept (and they shall all be kept), by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

Here a wide field opens, which space will not admit even an effort to explore. But only let the sinner, as made a saint, under the power and efficacy of the Spirit in adopting grace, just go back in the retrospect five, ten, twenty, or fifty years, or longer, to his first espousals to Christ — when, by faith, he first discerned the broken body and spilt blood of Christ, as shed for many for the remission of sins — and at or about the same time feel the burden of sin and condemnation rolled back into the sea of God's forgetfulness; for that Jesus hath done all things well, and God is well pleased for the righteousness' sake of his dearly beloved Son. Was it not a raising up, indeed, and most truly, a heavenly place in Christ Jesus? Would we not then, for a season at least, substantially claim our adoption, as by faith, through grace, and that "not of ourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." But I must leave this experimental and delightful branch of the subject for the children of the regeneration, and adoption, to preach out, each for him or herself, according to their respective experimental exercises in all their great variety of detail — from their first taste of the wormwood and the gall — and remembering the rock whence they were hewn, the hole of the pit whence they are digged, indicating a state of conviction and repentance toward God, against whom they had sinned. "For then shall they remember their own evil ways and doings, which were not right, and shall loathe themselves on account of their abominations." But let these remember that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath abounded unto death even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

So it is that grace, sovereign grace, reigns throughout the whole gospel system, even to the final resurrection of these vile bodies. The bodies of the saints, being the subjects of redemption, must also follow as the subjects of regeneration and adoption, and resur-

rection as well. "Waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

Elder E. S. Dudley
Yours to serve,
Hutchison, Ky.

(From the Gospel Messenger of April, 1883.)

OBITUARIES

ELDER J. T. HENSON

Elder J. T. Henson departed this life at the age of nearly 86 years, at the home of his granddaughter, Mary Ford, on October 16, 1958. His funeral was held at the Collier Funeral Home, Benton, Ky., on October 18th, with Elder J. N. Darnell, of Little River Association, in Kentucky, and Elders Paul Poyner and O. W. Perkins, of Soldier Creek Association, conducting the services.

He leaves to mourn his passing a daughter, Mrs. Cliffton Edwards, Detroit, Mich.; three sons: Jamie, Paducah, Ky., Edward, Hardin, Ky., and Ambrose, Benton, Ky.; ten grandchildren, sixteen great grandchildren; and a host of other relatives and friends, and beloved brethren in the faith once delivered to the saints. His wife preceded him in death about two years.

Elder Henson professed a hope in the Lord in his early manhood, and after many experiences, united with the Primitive Baptist Church. He was ordained a deacon soon afterwards, and then the church saw that he was fighting a call to the ministry. He was liberated to speak in his Master's name, and soon afterwards was ordained to the full work of the ministry. This was more than fifty years ago. He served churches in the Little River, Obion, and Soldier Creek Associations. His membership was at Soldier Creek Church, where he was Moderator for several years, with the assistance of Elder Paul Poyner most of the time. He was Moderator of the Soldier Creek Association many years, and was kept by that body long after he was unable to serve them, calling on other Elders to help him.

He often related an experience while he was tossed about with his call to the ministry: He was shown a herd of beautiful, contented sheep, grazing in a green pasture, and a book was handed him, and a still, small voice said, "Feed my sheep", and then repeated, saying, "Feed my lambs." These words were astonishing to him, for he had very little schooling. Obedience to follow the call came with the call and understanding was given him in the Scriptures; and God supplied all his needs as it pleased Him. His delight was to speak in his Master's name about "God's doctrine", not some man-made creed, and to know nothing among the children (my Father's children, as he always addressed them) but Jesus Christ and him crucified.

The church has lost a loving, kind brother and friend, and our correspondence has lost a noble advocate of truth; his children a wonderful Dad, and his grandchildren a precious Granddad. Elder Henson was so anxious to go home and be with the Lord after his wife's death, and his health would not permit his going among the brethren.

His earthly tabernacle has fallen, his body is laid low in the tomb: It was laid there a mortal body but will be raised immortal, and fashioned like the Son of God, Jesus Christ, his Redeemer, Intercessor and High Priest; which was his hope while journeying here. We desire to be made submissive to his going.

Elder J. N. Darnell
Elder Paul Poyner
Elder O. W. Perkins

W. A. BOWDEN

W. A. Bowden was born April 5, 1880, the son of the late William and Leeannie (Ridgeway) Bowden, both of who were Old School Baptists. He was reared with four brothers and two sisters. He was first married to Bula Puryear, and to this union four sons and two daughters were born. After her death, he was married to Effie Whitenton August 23, 1942, who survives. There were no children to this union. Also surviving are three sons and two daughters, and three brothers: Edd, Bonnie, and Venus Bowden.

Brother Bowden joined the Primitive Baptist Church, and was made Clerk in 1936, of the church called Zion, in Mayfield, Kentucky. He was baptized by Elder O. W. Perkins, and was soon made deacon. He was also chosen Clerk of the Soldier Creek Association in 1939, and of the Union meeting, and served until his death. He suffered a light stroke in March, 1958, and a severe stroke on October 16, 1958, dying in the Mayfield Hospital October 22nd, at the age of seventy-eight.

Funeral services were held at Byron Funeral Home in Mayfield on October 24, 1958, conducted by Elder Paul Poyner, with the following elders present: O. W. Perkins, W. Y. Chandler, Elzo Lowery and J. N. Darnell.

Brother Bowden was a member of Zion Primitive Baptist Church in Mayfield for twenty-five years. He was given a gift to speak in the church, but was never ordained. He was a good leader in singing, and a good mixer; and his and Sister Effie's home was always a home for Primitive Baptists and their neighbors and friends. Brother Gus, as he was called, will be missed in many ways: for his loving kindness, and his readiness to help

his friends in time of need. Our heart goes out to his dear wife in her loneliness, and to all his loved ones. May God bless all who mourn. Written by request.

Mrs. Willie Irene McGregor

DICK BROWN

It has been the will and purpose of the eternal God of Heaven to call from the shores of time and labor of this earthly life, our beloved brother, Dick Brown, at the good old age of eighty-eight years. He was a faithful member, and loved his church. He was very solid in his belief that salvation was by the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ; and always gave God all the praise, honor, and glory for his hope, saying that it was by the grace of God that he was what he was in knowing the truth. He said that he believed in the biggest God of any body; meaning that all power was in His hand.

We thank God for having him with us in our church and homes. He manifested that spiritual things were his meat and drink.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be written in our church book; and that a copy be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of Lick Creek Church, December 21, 1958.

Elder R. L. Biggs
Sam McGor
W. B. McGregor
Willie Essie
Mona McGregor

VIRGINIA FRANCIS (BRUMFIELD) DOSS

Sister Virginia Francis Doss was born July 10, 1870, and departed this life November 13, 1958, in Memorial Hospital, Danville, Virginia, after a long illness. She was born and reared in the Brights, Va. community, and was the daughter of Benson and Millie Bobbett Brumfield. She was united in marriage to Ulysees Doss about the year 1886, and to this union were born nine children. Surviving are the following sons: Lester and Lundy, of Gretna, Va., and Goldie, of Alexandria, Va.; and one daughter, Mrs. Minerva Bolling, of Gretna, Va. Her husband died November 7, 1945.

She united with Springfield Primitive Baptist Church October 11, 1919, and was a faithful member, always filling her seat when able to come. She loved to tell of the goodness and mercies of God toward her, and wished for the brethren and sisters to come and sing for her after she was unable to attend meetings; and preaching services were held for her several times during the year, which she enjoyed so much. She was given strength to sing a few lines of the hymn, "Dark and thorny is the desert", a few days before she died.

Sister Doss was a good neighbor and greatly loved by many. She will be missed by her friends and the church, but may we bow in humble submission to God's holy will in taking her from her suffering and sorrow. She was laid to rest in the Gretna Cemetery beside her husband, to await the resurrection; when we feel she will hear the welcome voice, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Funeral services were held at Springfield Church, conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench. Written by request by Annie Tosh.

RESOLVED, That a copy of the above be put in our church records; a copy be sent to the family; and a copy sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Springfield Church in conference.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
R. C. Dalton, Clerk

SHORTY SMITH

Funeral services for the above were conducted at Goodwater Church, at Wicksburg, Alabama, on December 7, 1958, by Elder J. J. Collins, assisted by Mr. Garland. Brother Smith was killed instantly near Chipley, Florida, on December 6th, in an automobile wreck. He was thirty years of age, and the third member of the family Elder Collins has officiated within recent weeks.

He is survived by his parents, Alvin Smith and wife, of Hartford, Alabama; four sisters; five brothers; his wife and two sons, Andy and Alton, of Panama City, Florida.

(Elder) J. J. Collins

MEMORIAL

God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to call to her eternal home one of our beloved sisters, Nora Williamson, at the age of eighty-four years, and ten months. She was the daughter of Brother Lendo Wood.

She united with the church in early life; and was a widow for many years. She had no children, and lived a lonely life, and greatly afflicted in her last days, but her faith in God never failed: she believed that God predestinated all things.

The last member of Ceruland Springs Church, in Christian County, Kentucky, is gone; and now the old church building stands as a monument of the many spiritual feasts we have enjoyed there.

Mona McGregor

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God has seen fit to remove from this walk of life our sister, Dollie Godwin, on the morning of September 18, 1958, at the age of more than eighty years. She had been a member of this church, Zion, Mayfield, Kentucky, for fifty-six years, coming to the church by letter from South Mt. Zion Church in August, 1902. She spent her active years with this church, seeing and hearing the special gifts this church has been blessed to have during this period of time. Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That this church willingly and humbly bow to this sister's passing from her pains and sicknesses (which were many for the past few years), into rest from earthly sorrows and into rest eternal; and

RESOLVED, That we extend sympathy to her family, daughter, son, and brothers; and that we spread a copy of these resolutions on our church book; and send a copy to her daughter, Mrs. Ray Roberts, Mayfield, Ky.; and send a copy to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done bp order of the church the first Sunday in December, 1958.

Elder O. W. Perkins, Moderator
W. T. Chester, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God in his wisdom and love has removed from this church, Zion, Mayfield, Ky., our brother, W. A. Bowden, on October 22, 1958; after a stay on earth of seventy-eight years, and a member of this church for more than twenty years; and a deacon for several years.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we humbly bow to the will of our God in taking unto himself our brother, from mortal to immortal life; and further

BE IT RESOLVED, That we extend sympathy to his family and friends for Christ's sake, believing that their loss is gain to him, and that God will in his mercy heal their wounded feelings in their grief; and

RESOLVED, That we place a copy of these Resolutions in our church book; send a copy to the family in the person of his widow, Sister Effie Bowden, Benton, Kentucky; and send a copy to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of the church this first Sunday in December, 1958.

Elder O. W. Perkins, Moderator
W. T. Chester, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

God in his infinite wisdom has been pleased to call from our midst our beloved friend, Mr. Milton R. Foster, who was born March 3, 1885, and died October 13, 1958; the funeral services were held in Altus, Oklahoma, conducted by Elder W. W. Taylor.

Mr. Foster was united in marriage to Sister Willie Green Rose on January 19, 1924. He was not a member of the militant church, but manifested much interest in the Old Baptists, and attended meetings as often as he could, having livd 165 miles from where his wife had her membership.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the Heavenly Father's will; and that the Little Flock Church, of Altus, Oklahoma, extend our deepest sympathy to the bereaved family; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we place a copy of these Resolutions on our church record; send one to his wife; and send one to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Elder W. W. Taylor, Moderator
Nina Stalling, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, Our Heavenly Father, in his infinite wisdom and according to his most righteous purpose, saw fit to call our dearly beloved sister, Isabell Turnidge, from this low ground of sorrow on December 26, 1958. And

WHEREAS, This dear sister was truly a "Mother in Israel", and was always desirous to entertain the brethren in her home; and contended earnestly for the faith that becometh saints; and is greatly missed among us, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to our Father's will, desiring to be reconciled to our loss, which is her gain; and

WHEREAS, She was a member of the Salem Predestinarian Baptist Church, at Weiser, Idaho, for thirty-six years, and was steadfast in the faith, and was submissive to the will of God, who does all things well; and we desire that He watch over brother Archie, her husband, and his family, and comfort them; be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of these Resolutions be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication; a copy be put in our church book; and a copy be sent to the family.

Done by order of the Salem Church, at Weiser, Idaho, at her regular session, January 24, 1959.

Elder Ernest J. Attebery, Mod.
Flossie Attebery, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 127 DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1959 NO. 5

ADDITIONAL VERSES OF
"TARRY WITH ME"

Tarry with me, O, my Saviour,
Leave me not 'till morning light;
For I'm lonely here without thee —
Tarry with me through the night.

Tarry with me, O, my Saviour,
My head has long been gray;
My loved ones thou hast taken
To my home that's far away.

Tarry with me blessed Jesus,
Thou art all in all to me;
All my hope is in thy person,
Now and through eternity.

Tarry with me, O, my Saviour,
Wipe the tears from off my face;
Closer, closer hold me to thee:
Let me feel thy sweet embrace.

(The above should be added to those published in the Feb. 1959 issue, and were submitted by Sister Watt also.)

EXPERIENCE AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY OF ELDER S. L. MORAN

December 30, 1959

I have had a desire to leave something with my people in regard to the Doctrine that I have contended for from a child.

I had serious thoughts about things of God and I was made to know without a doubt there was a God in Heaven, and that he loved me and that I loved him. And I felt that love fill my soul, and if I had to throw that away it would leave me with nothing.

I was very young but that stayed with me. I grew up as other boys and as wild as any of them, but when I did wrong it would hurt me, and I would say that I would not do that anymore. I would find myself going on in the same way and continued to make the same promises but never able to keep them. I went on in this way until I was a grown man. I thought I could live a different life, but the more I promised the worse I got. I thought I could do better but found I was a failure.

After my first wife died, I felt she was saved, and I had a feeling I wanted to be prepared to meet her. I got down on my knees and tried to pray, and of all the wretches that ever made the attempt, I was the worst; and said in my mind I would never attempt such a thing again.

I went on in my wild way until I married again and I felt the Lord had give me a help-mate. Everything seemed to be getting along well with me until suddenly there was a change took place in my life. One night after going to bed, sometime during the night I was brought up before the Great God of all the earth. He was taking the Righteous on the right and the Sinners on the left. I was wondering what would be my doom. When I was brought up, I thought I would make some plea, but before I could speak I was taken on the left, and then I knew I was a lost sinner, justly condemned before a just God; and if all the world had told me there was a chance for me, it would not have done any good. My life had been so wrong and sinful. I knew there was no hope for such a sinner as I. And from that time on for months and years I went begging for mercy. I would go in the mountains to try to find peace of soul. I had to give up all for lost and thought I would not try any more, but I was still begging in my mind. I felt I must try one time more. I went to the lowest place I could find and fell on my face and put my mouth in the dirt and all I could say was, "God be merciful to me a condemned sinner." And when I got up everything was new and that burden

of sin and condemnation was gone. I felt to be in a new world, and made to praise God from whom all blessings flow. I thought I would go to the house and tell my wife, but I did not. I was afraid I was mistaken.

I went on sometime wondering what all of this meant. I had never heard any preaching for I had not attended any church, for I was not interested in church matters, and I had no thought of where the church was. I thought anywhere they claimed to worship was the Church.

There came a time I felt I wanted a home among God's people. I went to the Methodist to find a home. I went with full intention of joining them. But lo, when the preacher begin his sermon everything he said was against my hope. When he got through he left me without any hope. I went home and felt then I would not go to church anymore, but I soon got restless and it came in my mind to go to Laurel Creek Church and see what Elder Cole would say. I went and when he began preaching, in the place of condemning me, he told my troubles better than I could. And when he got through I knew he had told the truth, and I did not have to look for the church anymore. Since that time I have not searched for the church. I have no doubt where the church is, and no desire to find any other.

I went on for a year or two going to hear the Baptists preach. The more I heard the more I loved them. I did not feel I would ever join the church. But there came a time something took place very unexpected to me. The 4th Sunday in Novmber, 1910, I told my wife that morning I was going to Laurel Creek Church to hear Elders Cole and Spangler preach. She said, "If you are going to join the church, I want to go with you." I said, "If that is all you are going for, don't worry I have no thought of that, and I don't guess I ever will. I know not today." I went to church and both preachers preached. Elder Cole gave invitation for members and when they begin singing to dismiss, something took hold of me with such power it caused me to tremble. I said, "I am not going," but getting up and starting to the pulpit still saying, "I am not going." But went on and begin telling what I felt the Lord had done for me. They received me and I rejoiced.

Then came a question in my soul, "What kind of a man have you been?" I answered that question, "Very bad." Then, "What have you done? Can you do any better?" and I said, "No." "You know you will have to be turned out — they will not keep you in the church." I went home with a greater burden than I have ever been able to tell in words.

Elder Cole asked when I wanted to be baptized. I replied, "I don't know." He said, "That is unfinished business." I went on until the next meeting, which was the 4th Sunday in December, 1910, and yet I had no desire to be baptized. But one night in the same month — if I have been called to preach it was the 25th of that month. I had gone under a great burden since joining the church and had no thought of preaching until during the night. I saw a cloud come over me. I felt it was the power of God; and the weight was so powerful it was pressing my life out, and a voice spoke out of that cloud and said, "Take up thy cross and follow me." I said, "Is it to pray?" And the power got heavier. I said, "Is it to preach?" The weight was lifted off me and I sat up in bed, and I felt a power over me that I never will be able to tell. I felt to know that it was the power of God. I had no doubt at that time, and I commenced speaking with as much assurance as I ever have since; and I said, "I will go where ever I am sent, for the God of heaven has called me." I did not have any doubt at that time, but when I came to my self I knew that was impossible. I told my wife not to tell of what I had said, for I can't do that. I felt I would not go to church for the January meeting — I still had no feeling to be baptized, and I thought they would think strange of me for not saying anything about being

baptized.

I had some work to do that day and started out to get some help. I was stopped on the way, and this Scripture come into my heart, "He that forsaketh not father, mother, house and land, wife and children for my name sake is not worthy of me. Take up thy cross and follow me." That turned me around, and I went back to the house. My wife said, "I thought you were going to haul hay." And I said, "No, I am going to church." I went; and after meeting was over, invitation for members was given. Henry Board came forth and gave a good reason of his hope, and was received. He said, "I want to tell a dream I had. I was baptized in a pretty pond of water, and there were two fishes one on each side of me, and I loved them." Elder Cole said, "When do you want to be baptized?" And he said, "This evening." I felt I was bound to be baptized with him. I said, "Brother Cole, I want to be baptized tomorrow." And Brother Board was willing to wait until the next day.

The next day it was raining. I thought there was not any reason in going out on such a day, but fixing all the time to go. When we got to the place they were coming out of the house to go to the pond. Elder Cole had told me to tell my wife to bring her clothes and be baptized with us. I told her; and she said she couldn't do that. I said, "He told me to tell you, and that is all I will say." My wife went and was received. Elder Cole took me in and baptized me first, then took brother Henry Board, and than my wife. Brother Board said, "I see my two fishes and I love them."

That was the happiest day I ever saw and there was not a thing stood against me. I felt I was in a new world.

I thought all my troubles were over but in this I was sadly mistaken. I had to go down; so much so, I felt I had deceived the church. I felt I had to go to the church and tell them I was mistaken, but before the next meeting, I was more satisfied when Paul's writing came in my mind so sweetly, "There is a thorn given me in the flesh to buffet me lest I become exalted above measure. I besought the Lord thrice that it might be removed from me. The Lord said, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." That was my case; and when that came in my heart, I had read the Bible but very little, but I knew that it was Scripture. I went to the house and opened the Bible, and it opened at that place without turning a leaf. That gave me great consolation.

After then my burden became the same as it did that night when the Lord said, "Take up thy cross and follow me." The same voice said, "You have lied to God." I awoke my wife crying aloud. She asked me what the matter. I told her I had lied to God, and it was more than I could stand. I went on wondering what to do.

Sometime after that I had a trip to make. I had to go in the mountains, and as I was walking along thinking of my troubles, it came in my mind that all I had seen was in the night. Maybe it was only a dream. That same voice came in my heart and soul, "You have lied to God." I fell on my face and made a promise to God if he would let me live I would preach, if I was ever called on. I thought that would let me off for I was not going to tell anyone, but it was not long until I told a brother and told him not to tell anyone. It was not long after that, Elder Sumner came to our house. We were talking over many things, the first thing I knew, I was telling him but told him it was impossible for me to ever preach.

I went to Pine Forest Church. Brother Sumner asked me to go home with him, and I went that night. He asked me if my impression were with me as much as they had been, and I told him not as much as they had been. We went back to the church the next day and he told me he was going to call on me. It shocked me so I could hardly speak. Then I remembered the vow I had taken, and said, "If it don't make any difference with you, don't call on me, it will embarrass me for I just can't go." I will

never be able to tell the feeling that I had in my heart and soul. I could not stay in the house. I walked below the church and stood for a few minutes, and, if I know my heart, I asked the Lord to take my life for it was more than I could bear. It was not because I did not want to preach — I would given anything if I could, but I knew I could not. I thought I would go to the woods and try to ask the Lord to let this cup pass, but I was unable to even bow. A voice seemed to say, "You fool, why stand you here?"

I went back to the house. Elder Sumner was in prayer. I slipped in the house and got in behind someone. Elder Sumner saw me, and said, "You just as well come on up here, you will have to anyway." I went and stood on the steps of the stand. I spoke a few words, but in the place of getting relief, I felt I had brought disgrace on my people, but the worst was, I had disgraced the church.

When I got home, I told my wife she could be getting things in shape for I was not going to stay in this country, and I certainly meant every word at that time. The next Sunday was the 4th Sunday, which was Laurel Creek meeting. Elder Cole hearing I had gotten up at Pine Forest, asked me in the stand. It seemed I had no resistance and went on, and that was still worse than the first.

My wife and I started to Brother Board's to spend Saturday night. As we went I told her that was the last time I would ever go, and I verily thought I was telling the truth. That night at Brother Board's, something took place with me, I will never forget. After retiring, I will never know if I was asleep or awake, but let that be as it may, all at once I was in a strange country and I wanted to go home. I came out to go home, but found myself in a wilderness. I could see a narrow path. I would follow that path until it would come to a solid wall. I would have to turn back and try another path it seemed. I continued trying and felt I would have to give up, then I saw a narrow path leading up a hill. I knew I would have to go that way. And when I got to the top of that hill, I looked across a Beautiful Valley and saw a passenger train, and I was glad for I knew I would be able to get home. When I got to the train the first thing I knew I was in a buggy with a young man, and I will never be able to tell the sweetness I felt in that ride. But it soon came to an end. All at once we came to a wide river and there was a covered bridge. When we got to the bridge, a shutter came down and cut us off. The young man was gone, and I was left alone. I wondered what to do. I walked around the end of the bridge and looked at the river. It looked deep but I knew I had to go that way. I dreaded it but it was not as deep as I expected it to be. Then I got in the same road, it was a plain old road. When I got in this road I looked ahead of me, and I saw an old-like woman walking ahead of me. She wore an old time slat bonnet like my mother used to wear. I thought if I could catch up with her she could tell me of my troubles. But when I caught up with her, and began telling her my troubles, she began kissing her hand and laid it on my cheek, showing the love she had for me.

When I came to myself, I never doubted she was the church, for the church had shown me all the kindness I could ask of them. That vision caused me to go, and I went to some church every week-end, but felt to have no liberty to preach, until I got to the place I lost all hope of ever being able to preach. I feel the Lord gave me endurance and I feel that it was his time.

I went to Old Pine Creek Church. As I walked around the cemetery, there was a scripture that came in my mind, and it was sweet to me. I was not in the habit of reading a text, but as Elder Cole passed by me he dropped the Bible in my lap. I turned to the text that was on my mind. I read it and then began talking, I felt, with another tongue, for it was altogether different to me. I looked over that crowd of folks and they all looked good to me. I spoke for about

30 or 35 minutes, and felt satisfied that the Lord turned me loose; and I would go and preach the rest of my time just like I did then — only I would preach longer.

That was the first Sunday. The next Sunday there were meeting at Old Salem Church. That was the longest week I thought I had ever known, but when Saturday came I went: but not to preach, for I knew there would be more people there on Sunday, so I refused to speak on Saturday. An old brother said to me, "Go with me to my nephew's." And I said, "Alright." That night after retiring, whether asleep or awake I cannot tell, but I was in a room, and the man that kept that room had to keep everything just right in that room. I used to dance, and I thought I had not tried to dance for a long time, so I began dancing over the floor; and the man that kept the room begin whipping me with fire. It came around my waist and began taking my breath. I looked back over my shoulder to see who it was whipping me. I saw no one, but I was picked up like a feather; and there was liquid fire in front of me, and I was thrown in that fire and consumed. And a voice came into me, "God is a consuming fire." I wondered what that meant.

When I got to the church that morning, I found out what that meant, for instead of preaching, if I ever opened my mouth I never knew it. I sat down crying, longing to get out of that church and never to be there any more. When I was leaving I was bidding every thing good by. But before I got out of sight of the church something took place with me. This sentence of scripture come into my mind with sweetness, "We rejoice therefore in tribulations, knowing tribulations work patience, patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, for the love of God is shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost which is given us." So I was made to rejoice and to shed tears of joy. I was made glad the Lord had shut my mouth and taught me some sense.

The next Sunday was the third Sunday and I went to Pine Forest. I went in the fear of the Lord, and he gave me liberty to speak; and I have been going every since. I know I am about through, for if I live until February 22, 1959, I'll be 82 years old; and I can't expect many more years. The Lord has been wonderfully good to me, and my brethren and friends have shown me all the kindness I could wish for. They are bound to see something in me I can't see in myself, for I see nothing in my vile flesh that is good.

I hope I have not set forth anything in this writing to give myself any honor, for if I have been shown anything, it is the rottenness of my nature. It makes no difference how much the Lord has shown me, I still see nothing good in my flesh.

There was a period of time in my ministry that the sweetness of the Gospel seemed to be completely taken from me. I felt I would have to give it up, but at that time I had a dream: I was traveling a road that was muddy, and I was so worried on my journey, I felt I had gone as far as I could go, and had given up. Then I viewed a road in front of me that was so beautiful I can't describe it. When I had put my feet in that road, I felt as light as a feather, and I began leaping and jumping and quoting one Psalm after another in praise to God; and I wondered how long that would last. When I awoke, I told my wife I had been seeing something wonderful. And from that time on for a few years I had sweet liberty continually for a while, baptizing six or eight. Then I could see what that beautiful road meant.

The longer I live the more of my vileness I see in the flesh. And I can say of a truth, "In my flesh dwelleth no good thing."

S. L. Moran
Check, Va.

THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD

By Elder David Bartley

CHAPTER SIX

CHRIST'S INTERCESSION WITHIN THE VEIL

"COMFORT ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her welfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD'S hand double for all her sins." (Isa. 40:1, 2) For now that was accomplished of which an angel, a man clothed in linen, spoke to Daniel, the prophet, saying, "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even unto that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." (Daniel 12:1) "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them." (Rev. 12:-7-12)

This is the glorious victory achieved by the hard fought battle with the powers of darkness, and the accomplished warfare, and the divine triumph fills all heaven with great joy, melody and praise, saying, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." (Rev. 1:5, 6) Thus when Christ our passover was sacrificed for his people, did he make peace for them by the blood of his cross. "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." (Eph. 11:14-18) Through Christ only both Jews and Gentiles have access unto the Father, and both by one Spirit; therefore, by the Spirit of life, all are one in Christ Jesus, and their life and rejoicing are in him and are spiritual.

Let us again in mind stand in Jerusalem and behold the solemn scene at the crucifixion of our atoning High Priest, especially when he bowed his head in death. At that moment the earth itself was shaken and rent as a torn garment, even to the rending of the great rocks, and the opening of the vaulted graves; but more eventful still, the strong veil of the temple was torn open from top to bottom, which the hands of men could not have done, thus making an open door out of the first sanctuary into the second, the Holy of holies, type of heaven, so that the people of that priesthood could then have access into the most holy sanctuary. Before this deeply wonderful event, no Israelite could enter within that veil, for he must have died before the Lord, save the consecrated high priest alone, and he only once a year, and with the divinely appointed atoning blood for the sins of the people and himself. Now, let us see the meaning of this, for it is wonderful and precious to us. And in this, as in all

else, the Scriptures are profitable for instruction, that we may have hope. "Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: the Holy Ghost thus signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience. . . But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands; . . . by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. . . For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." (Heb. 9) "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." (Heb. 10:19-22) This is the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, by which God saves us according to his mercy. Thus are we comfortingly shown the divine meaning of the rent veil of the temple; that is, that the death of Jesus in the flesh had opened the way for his people into heaven, which was closed against them by sin, and had given them access unto the Father. This solemn lesson is, that there is no other way for us to come unto the Father with acceptance and blessing, only by the death of Christ and in his holy obedience. It has been said that the veil of the temple was so strong that seventy men could not have rent it; but at the dying words of the suffering Man on the cross, "It is finished", the separating veil felt the infinite virtue and almighty power of him who conquered death, and gave way; yea, death and the grave and the sleeping bodies of the saints, all felt the power and merit of the crucified Man of God's right hand, and yielded. Verily, in all the infinite universe there was no power that could resist the efficacy of Christ's dying cry; for in his death was the infinite value and dignity of the Almighty God, who made and upholds all things. He ordained that wondrous veil, made "of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, of cunning work, with cherubims", typical of the body and blood of Christ; and he also ordained Christ the High Priest of his people, that he should consecrate himself unto God through the veil of his flesh, and thus take away the strong separating veil, showing that death is abolished, and his sanctified people may now come unto God and worship him in true holiness. The rent veil proved, also, that the priesthood of Aaron and the ministry of Moses and the law were taken away, that the old covenant and the temple service were finished and ended; for their great antitype and fulfiller, God's eternal High Priest, had come and taken all things out of the way of the return of his people.

How vain, therefore, the blinded rage of the priesthood of the old temple, in their effort to still defeat all this mighty work of the greater than Moses, by the sealed sepulcher and the strong Roman guard. It is just as impossible yet for men, in their self-trust and false zeal, to either defeat the success of Christ's finished work, or to add to it.

"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. . . There-

fore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." (Acts 2) The apostle Peter thus spoke to the Jews in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, fifty days after the crucifixion of Jesus. He quoted from David, and said of him, "Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool." Thus was fulfilled the word of the angel to the favored mother of Jesus, saying, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Thus did the Almighty Father exalt his holy Son to the throne of glory, and crown him with unlimited dominion, putting all things under his feet. Of this glorious power, Paul says, "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." (Eph. 1:19-23)

This was the blessed fulfillment of the dear Son's prayer the night of his soul-sorrow, when he said, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Of him Paul said, "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto d e a t h , even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. 2:8-11) For this also the humbled and suffering Man entreated his loving Father, saying, "Father the hour is come: glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." O how divinely was the Father glorified in his Son, and how gloriously the Father exalted his meek and lowly Son! And O, how unspeakable the honor and blessing, that this glorified and "h i g h l y exalted" Son of man is not only a man, and our perfected and accepted High Priest unto God, but our very Brother! Yes, the Son of God on high, with all things put under his feet, is verily a glorified and divinely glorious MAN! — the "Man of God's right hand".

He had passed through the veil of his and our flesh, thus through suffering being made perfect, by perfecting the redemption of his people and brethren, that they might be perfected in his righteousness, and sanctified in his life, and now he was in the unveiled presence and glory of his Father. Thus was Jesus the Christ, the Anointed of God, the High Priest, who had passed into the heavens, "to appear in the presence of God for us." Let us remember, it is the man Christ Jesus, who is the one Mediator between God and men. Of him God said, "I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him." "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed," etc.

"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." (Heb. 1:8-9) "Thy fellows" evidently refers to his people and brethren, and the word means an equal, an associate or companion: so, indeed, Christ was made in all things like unto his brethren; yet "he thought it not robbery to be equal with God." And so the sword was commanded to "awake against the Man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts." This is very wonderful. "Christ" signifies the Anointed of God, and it is the official title or sacred name of the holy Son of God, as the Christ-man and has special application to his priestly office.

The perfect atonement being made, which was equal to all the requirements of eternal Justice and Righteousness, in behalf of all his holy Father's predestinated children, the entire brotherhood of Christ, he arose from the dead, as was typified by the release of Isaac from the altar on which he was bound as unto death, and then he in his risen body, which saw no corruption, ascended up to God and the Kingdom of glory in the power of an endless life, our eternal High Priest, where he ever liveth to make intercession for the saints according to the will of God. It was by the infinite merit of his own blood that Christ entered in once into the holy place, to appear in the very presence of God, having obtained eternal redemption for all his people.

The typical high priest of the Lord's covenant people first made the atonement for their sins, as the Lord appointed; the Lord accepted the atoning sacrifice at his hands; then, by virtue of the atonement, the high priest interceded in the most holy place at the mercyseat and before the Lord for the people; and the Lord heard him, and blessed them. So did our great High Priest pass through the veil of his suffering and dying flesh, and then ascend up on high to the mercyseat and the throne of heaven, where he, in robes of holiness and immortality, intercedes as our Advocate with the Father, who always hears his beloved Son, and Christ prevails. In this the wrestling Jacob was a type of Jesus, for he as a prince had power with God, and with men.

The divine testimonies that have been given show that when Jesus, who was God manifested in the flesh, was received up into glory, and sat down on the mediatorial throne, God the Father anointed and crowned him both High Priest and King, in fulfillment of the angelic annunciation to his mother Mary. David had long before prophetically said, "Arise, O Lord, into thy rest; thou, and the ark of thy strength. . . . The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David, he will not turn from it; of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne." (Psalms 132:8-11) David again testified, saying, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." (Psalms 110:-1-2) Thus was the command of the Most High fulfilled, in which he said, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates: and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory." (Psalms 24:-7-10) By faith David saw this glorious ascension and coronation of his Son, the King of glory, and rejoicingly said, "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men; yea for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." (Psalms 68:18)

All this wonderfully makes known the infinite perfection, power and glory of our successful High Priest and King, as

well as the sovereign goodness, rich mercy and abounding grace of the Almighty Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, "whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." (Heb. 1:2-3) It was most worthily said of our blessed Brother and Redeemer, "He hath done all things well."

When he had swallowed up death in victory in his triumphant resurrection, our Lord said to his apostles, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." His Father and God gave him this fullness of power and dominion, and crowned him with glory and honor. Therefore Jesus himself said, "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgement unto the Son; that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which has sent him. . . For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgement also, because he is the Son of man." (John 5) Thus is the precious Christ, God's holy child Jesus, whom he hath anointed the High Priest and King of saints, given power with God and over men, even unlimited authority and dominion; therefore God always hears him, and gives him everything that he asks for. So true is this, that Jesus, in the time of his deepest humiliation and betrayal to his enemies, said to Peter, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" (Matt. 26:53-54) These words of the betrayed Master teach a most instructive truth, and solemn admonition; that God's established purpose in all things must be; and that as his innocent Son, though persecuted unto death, would not resist, but meekly submitted, saying, "Thy will be done", so it becomes us to be still, and know that he is God.

We have now seen how divinely and gloriously the Christ of God was qualified and authorized to successfully intercede in the behalf of all whom his righteous Father gave him in the new and everlasting covenant, and for whom he had freely and righteously given himself in sacrifice, whose sins he had thus made reconciliation for, and had put them away for ever. For thus he had redeemed them unto himself, from sin and law and justice, so they were and are righteously his own; for he had — wondrous to tell — even given himself a ransom for them. O how righteously and with what divine authority our Advocate says, "Deliver them from going down into the pit." So now it is declared, "And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous, and he is the propitation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2:2) The term "whole world" refers to all that the Father gave him in all the Gentile world; while by "our sins" is meant his people among the Jews; and "the propitation" is the reconciliation, the atonement for our sins. "Jesus Christ the righteous" is this himself for all his covenant people. Thus he has the most sacred and holy right to plead and intercede for them, that they should be forgiven and saved, although they are a sinful people; and his holy Father always accepts the intercession of his own beloved Son, and not only pardons all for whom Christ died, but also justifies them unto life and eternal glory. And so, when Jesus was about to call Lazarus back from death unto life, he said, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always; but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe

that thou hast sent me." (John 11:41-42) O how all this should fill us with unwavering confidence and unquestioning trust in the faithfulness and sufficiency and perfect success of our Divine Intercessor, who is in the presence of God in the glorious robes of his eternal priesthood. For the Father himself hath borne witness of him to us, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And God has authorized our beloved Redeemer to ask, saying to him, "Ask of me, and I shall give the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." (Psalms 2:8) Accordingly, our holy Advocate with the Father asks for all that his Father gave him, and says on their behalf, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." (John 17) This is most heavenly and blessed, because there is no opposing power that can defeat it, or prevent its perfect fulfillment. O how divine the glory and infinite the holiness! With adoring gratitude, let us repeat the transporting assurance, so full of infinite blessedness, of our Beloved: "That the love wherewith thou has loved me may be in them, and I IN THEM!" For all that the Father of love gave him, our Intercessor asks this immortal heritage of the fullness of perfect Love and Life!

"We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens."

(Chapter seven next month)

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325 West Missouri Street
El Paso, Texas

Dear Brother Spangler:

I enclose herewith renewal of my wife's subscription to the Signs of The Times for another year, and I want to take advantage of this opportunity to express our appreciation of the very fine articles in the last issue of the Times, especially those of Elders Hardy and Chick. We seldom hear such good preaching any more, or maybe it is because these two articles were as voices coming from the tomb of those sainted brethren, one of whom baptized the wife and me.

Some of the readers might be interested to know that the doctors who examined me on January 5, 1959, said they could see no evidence of my cancer returning. Many of the readers, especially in East Texas, know of the operation I had last spring and summer in M. D. Anderson Hospital, Houston, Texas, to remove a cancer from my mouth. It was quite a shock to my family when the doctors here told us that I had a cancer in my mouth, but they discovered it early and by going immediately to the best hospital and best doctors in the country, they were able to cure it. At least the doctors are persuaded that they have it cured. I will have to go back from time to time for a checkup. I was by the grace of God able to say in my darkest hour of trouble, "God's will be done for I know HE is just and more merciful than I deserve."

Your unworthy brother,
Hubert T. Faulk

Box 186
Naples, Texas

Dear Editors of the Signs:

This morning I feel so little and undone. Once in a while I am made to say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth", and then I sink lower and lower. But thanks be unto the great I Am, I believe the good old Baptist doctrine, if not deceived about the whole teaching of God.

I was baptized December 14, 1957, into the dear Primitive Baptist Church at Prospect Church, Old Union, Bowie

County, Texas, but how unworthy I felt when I went into the water, and I have had many trials since; and have learned that I can't add one cubit to my stature. How often we come almost to despair and realize how helpless we are. I know that if my name is not written in the Lamb's book of life from eternity, I'm lost world without end. . .

Everything is fitly framed together, and they all fall right in place — not a thing out of place or amiss. I believe we are saved by God's love and free grace: it has to be that way, or else we would all be lost. I do not believe that any would seek God of themselves, if it were left to them, because God's ways are not our ways. We are vanity and nothing but vanity.

I was reared in a Primitive Baptist home, but my parents didn't say yea or nay about what church I should go to. My mother was Maggie Lou Tidwell who united in 1948 with the same church that I did; and my father, Henry Tidwell, united sometime in 1954. Mother passed away March 19, 1954, and my father and I are the only ones of our small, happy family left.

We have two able preachers, thanks be unto God, at our little church: Elder T. A. Wall, and his son, Elder Loyd Wall, of Bivins, Texas. As unworthy as I feel, I hope I am included in God's holy calling.

Grace Tidwell Eaton

ANNUAL MEETING

The **ANNUAL MEETING** of the **HARMONY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH** will be held, God willing, all day Saturday and Sunday, May 30 and 31, 1959. Services to begin Saturday at 10:30 A. M., and on Sunday at 10:00 A. M.

The church house is located one mile East of Huntington city limits on Cedarcrest Drive, about one quarter mile off U. S. Route 60, at Russell Creek. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

Elder J. R. Lane, Moderator

Mrs. Mildred Stanley, Clerk
1046 Cedarcrest Drive,
Huntington 5, W. Va.

NOTICE

We are trying to get the history of the Delaware, Delaware River, Lexington, Lexington - Roxboro, Roxboro, Warwick, Baltimore, Salisbury, Virginia Corresponding Meeting. As you know the Lexington and Roxboro combined years ago. If you have minutes of these bodies and you do not want to give them up, please let me have them to make copies from them. They will be returned in good condition.

W. D. Griffin
511 Kent Avenue,
Cantonsville 28, Md.

NOTICE OF MEETING OF
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST LIBRARY TRUSTEES

By request of the Trustees of the Primitive Baptist Library, a meeting of the Trustees is hereby called to meet at the Library on Friday before the third Sunday in May, 1959, at 10 o'clock A. M., to transact any business that may properly come before them. All Primitive Baptists are invited, and especially those with whom we correspond directly or indirectly. The Library is located on Route 87, about 10 miles North of Burlington, N. C.

J. P. HELMS,
Chairman of the Board

DELAWARE RIVER OLD SCHOOL
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the **DELAWARE RIVER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION** will convene with the church at Southampton, Penna., Wednesday and Thursday, June 3 and 4, 1959.

Those who are in fellowship with us are invited to meet with us.

Casper G. Fetter, Clerk
1256 Second Street Pike,
Southampton, Penn.

DELAWARE OLD SCHOOL
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The **DELAWARE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION** will, the Lord willing, be held with the church at Welsh Tract on the 2nd Sunday, and Saturday before, in May, 1959.

Our brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

R. S. Jarmon, Clerk
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EDITORIAL

ACTS 18:23

"And after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples."

This is an account of the ministry of one that attributed his coming from his mother's womb, his call to the ministry, his life that he lived in the flesh, all that he was, and all that he hoped for, as coming from the Lord. This dependence on the God of all grace and on the grace of God, is the crowning gift of one who is called to preach the gospel. It is the greatest shame for one that has professed to be called by the Lord Jesus Christ as an apostle or minister, to go off on a tangent of claiming that he is what he is, and that he has what he has, by works of his own. It is either by grace that we are what we are, and have what we have, or it is by works. It cannot be by works, for he that attributed what he was, and what he had, to the grace of God, said that it was not by works, and that it was by grace.

It would be a singular statement to make if any of us said that we as a people are not at a low ebb as to our numbers. I suppose that we all realize that, and I suppose that it is a grave matter to us as we view the statistics of our people. The annual closing of church doors, never to be opened any more, is well known, or, if opened any more, it is by someone that never did have any right there as the followers of the Lord. That whole states are left without a minister of our faith, or, if any, he is almost past serving because of age and affliction, is, I suppose, well known. That several associations in the United States are reduced in number so that officers can not be had that are capable of moderating, is well known. These sad things we all know. If we are of that faith which is of God, we are gravely concerned about this matter.

We are not truthful when we say that it does not make any difference to us how few we become; we are not faithful when we say that it does not make any difference whether our people attend church or not; we are far removed from apostolicity when we are indifferent to the walk and talk of ourselves and those that we serve. Our interest in our congregations, our efforts in their behalf, our zeal as to whether we are in the faith, and acting in that faith, shows most conclusively whether we are men of God or men led about by silly women.

When men have been called into service as a soldier, our soldiership is put to a test when we come out of a losing battle finding fault with our comrades. The morale of any army is not built by faultfinders. This is as true of the soldiers of the cross as it soldiers of the crown of England. Faultfinders are men who are, in their opinion, more or less immune from the faults that are charged upon others. The brethren who seem to be contentious have forgotten or never did know, that we do not have any such custom (that is, an inspired

custom), neither among the churches (1 Cor. II:16). Contentiousness is finding fault with all that our fellow soldiers are doing. As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire, so is a contentious man to kindle strife (Prov. 26:21). A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike (Prov. 27:15). Finding a fault with his soldiers will never get the co-operation of them in battle. A continual nagging at the faults of comrades is not the way to win a battle, and it does not have any morale building, and it is not strengthening.

In recent years there is not a principle, or a doctrine, or a practice of the church of Jesus Christ that has not come under the satirical, caustical ridicule and faultfinding of men that profess to be soldiers of Jesus Christ. I am not talking about the denominations that we are surrounded with, but I am speaking of our people. I have done too much throwing of stones into Babylon, and I would to God that I not spend too much time at that poor diversion.

I sometimes get low spirited, and when I am I will do foolish and forbidden things. It is a hard matter to talk to empty benches; it is discouraging to see our people not as attentive to their duties as the written word would set forth. These things are a matter of concern to us all. The apostolic churches had all of these things to confront in their day. There were false prophets in the prophetical dispensation. In the apostles day, false teachers, false brethren, heretics, and many others tried the churches. They were sore spots to the called ministry. They spoke out against these things, but they did not unchurch any of the churches, and they did not use wholesale slaughter of the ministers that served. They got low, yes; they spoke out against departures, yes; they pointed out the right way, yes.

It is a point well worth remembering that no one of the apostles wrote a letter to individual churches except the apostle Paul. The work of Peter and James and Jude and the others I would not take from them, nor would I minimize it by placing a value on Paul's letters that does not belong. I do mean to say that no one sent any letters to the individual churches except Paul. This is not an accident; it is not something that Paul thought out for his glory, nor is it something that the other apostles thought out in order to escape responsibility or persecution or work. This is divine arrangement. If we believe in divine arrangement, we will be willing to be guided by the apostle in our work among the churches.

Strictly speaking, the church is not losing ground. We are not losing battles. No one has the Head of the church on the run. I think that I want to say that we are winning all the time. Our Head came down from heaven not to lose anything. I think that it would be as much a reflection on our Master to lose one of those people given him in a covenant before the world, as it would be to surrender one of the fundamentals of His church and people to the devil. If He loses anywhere, He is a losing Saviour. From the time that Jesus was born, the enemy set out dogging his footsteps at every turn. It looked to believer and unbeliever alike, that at times he was losing. Now was He? Did his mission in the world seem at any time a failure. Was the position of Jesus, as the Builder of the church, and the Saviour of sinners, at any time, precarious? If anything happened that was not for the lifting of Jesus on high, pray what was it? Did Almighty Love and the unchangeable sovereignty of Jehovah God, win all the way for the Saviour of sinners, and now is failing to win all the way for the church?

Being poor frail sinners we are often cast down, and our faith and our courage is often low. How we do need the fellowship of one another! What a precious boon it is to the church that some are still taking lessons from the apostle, and are going from place to place strengthening the brethren. Paul, like Peter, had to be converted before this strengthening could be done. How we

need this strengthening today! We have had too many and too much tearing asunder. Aggravating old wounds will not cause them to heal. Caustic criticism of brethren who might be wrong will never get a listening ear from them. Strengthening from one who is a poor sinner will often give us to see the error of our ways and to mend them. The wholesale denunciation of godly brethren who are as zealous for good order and doctrine and practice as we are, will never build up the churches. Telling God's children how sinful and low down mean they are will never make for a forsaking of those things, but a tarrying a while among them, speaking often to them of the love of God, talking to them of that mutual faith, will be a strengthening to them, and if wrongs prevail, there is nothing that will cause the forsaking of those ways like genuine old fashioned strong doctrine. I want to make this statement just here. I am a firm believer in admonition, encouragement, exhortation, and rebuke. This is teaching; this is doctrine. If I have been called of God, I am as much a teacher as I am a preacher. Sound doctrine never made a man or woman do wrong yet. Admonition, encouragement, exhortation, and rebuke never made a conditionalist yet. It is something beside preaching the truth, however hard and flinty that truth may seem to the carnal man and woman, that makes men and women sin. It is something beside giving advice, admonishing the saints, making inquiries as to where and when and how to walk, that makes men and women conditionalists.

Paul did not, and no minister does now (that is, no one that God calls), strengthen the brethren to sin. Nor do they strengthen them so that they will not need the advice, the admonition, the encouragement of the ministry. They serve one another, and this is a mutual strengthening of one another. May the Lord deliver us from that day when we are independent of each other. Closing ranks in the day of adversity is characteristic of those that feel the depravity of their own heart. Gathering into a huddle is sheeplike; scattering the sheep is hireling-like. How tenderly will that pastor gather and strengthen his churches with that strength wherein he himself is strengthened. One who scatters the churches, making them a likely prey to the common enemy, is not a sheepherder. How the little churches need their undershepherds; how they need their tender care; how they need overseers that are watchful for the best interests of them, even sacrificing their own health, life, time, natural welfare, family, to watch and strengthen the ones whom God has sent them to!

I will never forget what a man told me one time. I was fretful and serving (?) about many things. I brought up a faulty doctrine and the fault of those that advocated it. This man is not in line with our people, but I will love him as long as I live. As quietly as though he was talking to a little child that was sleepy, he says to me, "It is not your job to eliminate false doctrine, nor is it your job to root up and pull out these that advocate those things. Your job is to preach the gospel of the Son of God, which is the gospel of peace." I was young then, and fiery, as young oxen often are, but those words have lingered with me over the years. I do not want a correcting job in the church of Jesus Christ. If the Lord has given me anything, I feel like he gave it to my brethren. It belongs to them, and it will be strengthening to them. The straightening out I will leave in the hands of God. As far as I remember, he has not said anything about us ministers straightening out folks, except where we have first straightened ourselves out by getting the beam out of our eye. He has commanded us, when we are converted, to strengthen the brethren.

We are commanded not to cast our pearls before swine. It would seem also that we are commanded not to find fault with everything and everybody, and especially not to drag the faults of our brethren before an ungodly and gain saying world. It would be a wonderful

thing if our people were conscious minded about their own faults, and being found so, that we would begin then and there to strengthen the brethren, to strengthen the things that remain. If we are watching, and strengthening these many wonderful things that remain, we will also be found with a thankful heart that we saw and heard and received, and the stream of given grace will ever flow on, giving us to hold fast, and to repent of the imperfect works that the Lord has found in us (Rev. 3).

Being given a flock to look after, we will be interested in that flock. The interest will be so keen that it will be wholeheartedly employed in strengthening that flock. The flock will have pastures, and those pastures will have a fence or border. The overseer will be found strengthening those borders. He will be willing to spend and be spent in serving those sheep. He will not stand off with a holier-than-thou attitude towards the erring, but he will strengthen them by an humble helpful understanding, realizing that he himself is also a man of like passion and also subject to err, and that he himself needs the help of each one of them.

He will stop here with this one who is still leaning towards circumcision; he will tarry a while with he or she that is tied in with too many things of the world; he will offer a brotherly admonition to those that would imbibe false doctrine; he will lend a word of consolation to they that feel to be poor undone sinners; he will labor diligently in love to build up the waste places; he will encourage the weak, and strengthen those that are ready to perish, but denounce the flock, never; link his brethren with the ungodly practices of others, never; seek to remove the ancient landmarks, never; find fault with every sheep, and the manner of his speech, his walk, his talk, never.

What a precious thing it would be if we that minister could stay among the brethren a while and strengthen them.

W. D. G.

BRIEF ACCOUNT OF OUR VISIT IN THE SOUTH

It has been suggested that we give an account of our recent visit among the brethren in the South, and this we gladly do, and especially since it would be impossible to write to each individual who helped make our visit so pleasant.

Sister Wood and I left home on January 12th, driving to Roanoke, Va., where we spent the night with her sisters, Sister Susie and Miss Viola Carter; then we drove South and arrived at the home of Elder and Sister Lambert in Winnsboro, Texas, on Thursday. There we were joined by Elder and Sister W. W. Taylor, Brother and Mrs. Dean Connell, of Dallas, Sister Cooper and Mrs. Thompson. On the 3rd Saturday and Sunday we attended the regular meetings of Cana Church, of which Elder Taylor and Elder S. C. Davenport are pastors; and had dinner with Brother and Sister C. B. Hamrick on Saturday.

On Monday, accompanied by Sister Lambert, we left for the Rio Grande Valley, going by way of San Antonio where we visited the historic Alamo, and arrived at the home of Elder and Sister E. B. Ault, at Weslaco, on Tuesday. We enjoyed about two weeks of their hospitality and various health foods, of which Elder Ault is an advocate, and a producer and marketer of honey, Royal Jelly, etc. While with them we visited across the Rio Grande River into Mexico. On the 4th Saturday and Sunday we attended the regular meeting of Mt. Zion Church, of which Elder Ault is pastor; and also during the week had a meeting in his home. During this time we spent two days with Brother and Mrs. Joe Hamrick and family in Harlingen, Texas, where we enjoyed their hospitality, and other visit into Mexico.

On returning to Elder Ault's, we were again joined by Elder and Sister Taylor and others, and had another meeting in his home. During the time we spent a night with Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Merrill, and had dinner the following day with his brother, Mr. and Mrs. M. D. Merrill.

Leaving the Valley on Friday, we drove to Houston, where we had supper with Sister Beuna Wright, and spent the night with Mr. and Sister Mack Kelley; then attended the regular meetings at Shepherd Fold Church, of which Elder Fleet is pastor, on the 1st Saturday and Sunday, spending Saturday night with Mr. and Mrs. C. A. McCullar.

Leaving Houston on Sunday afternoon, we drove back to Winnsboro and spent several days with Elder and Sister Lambert again; and attended the regular meetings of Hopewell Church, of which Elder Lambert is pastor, on Saturday and 2nd Sunday. During the week we had dinner with Brother and Sister J. M. Rhodes, and spent a night with Mr. and Mrs. E. E. Evers, and had dinner on Sunday with Brother and Sister B. T. Green.

Leaving Winnsboro on Monday, we drove to Minneola, Texas, where we spent the night with Elder and Sister S. C. Davenport. Elder Davenport is 90 years old, and somewhat feeble in body, not being able to attend the meetings, but his mind is very active. It would be impossible to describe our feelings as we enjoyed their hospitality, and listened to him talk of his experiences, and as he spoke so clearly and emphatically of the doctrine of God our Saviour, which he has preached for many years. It was a visit we shall not soon forget.

On Tuesday we drove to the home of Brother and Sister George McDuff, where we spent the night and following day; after which they accompanied us to the home of Elders T. A. and Loyd Wall, at Bivens, Texas, where we had dinner, and filled an appointment at Pleasant Hope Church, and spending the night with Brother and Sister Hardy Hill. On Thursday we drove to Lillie, La., spending the night with Brother and Sister Cisco Barron; and on Friday we were with Elder and Sister R. W. Rhodes, spending the night with them, and filling an appointment at New Hope Church, of which Elder Rhodes is pastor. On Saturday we rode with Elder Rhodes to El Dorado, Arkansas, for the meeting at Bethel Church, of which Elder Lambert is pastor. After dinner with Brother and Mrs. C. E. Copeland, we rode with Elder and Sister Lambert to the home of Brother and Sister O. G. Hix, where we had supper, and attended a meeting that evening at Liberty Hill Church; then spent another night with Brother and Sister Barron.

Next morning (3rd Sunday) we drove back to El Dorado in time for the broadcast, and then went to Bethel Church again for their meeting. After this meeting we started towards home, spending Sunday night with Brother and Sister A. W. Glass, at Haile, La.; and left next morning for home, arriving on Wednesday February 18th, and found all well.

This visit with the brethren was most enjoyable all the way. Everyone made us feel welcome, and did everything to make our visit with them pleasant and comfortable, and we express our appreciation to one and all for their kindness and hospitality. We met many brethren whom we had not met before, including several Elders; and we were glad to find great interest among them in talking of things pertaining to the doctrine of God our Saviour. Many places where we were staying found the brethren and sisters gathering for conversation, and to ask questions concerning many portions of the Scriptures. It was truly delightful to be in their company, and to see the evidences of the grace of God in them, and to know that they stood firm in the faith once delivered to the saints.

May the God of all grace continue his loving kindness towards them, and keep them in this world; and then bring them into full possession of their inheritance.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

APOSTOLIC ADMONITION

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them; for they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." — Rom. xvi. 17, 18.

When we consider the beseeching appeal of the apostle in connection with the express declaration of the Holy Ghost, in 1 Tim. iv. 1, warning the saints of the dreadful apostasy in the latter times, in which some shall depart from the faith giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils, does it not become us to make diligent inquisition to see whether these very times indicated by the Spirit are not already upon us? The imploring tone of the apostle, and the "express" manner in which the Spirit in prophecy speaks, recalls to our mind the warning admonition, "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven, whose voice once shook the earth; but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven, (the church.) And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." — Heb. xii:25-27.

It is of vital importance that we should know who the saints shall mark and avoid, lest they by mistake should mark and avoid those who are of their own kindred and household, and who, being weak or lame, should be turned out of the way, but rather let it be healed. The apostle has not failed to describe them in unmistakable terms, both by character and by their works, or fruits. — See 2 Tim. iii. 1-8.

In character, they are selfish, carnal, dishonest, deceptive, seductive, specious, and in all respects calculated to deceive the simple or unsuspecting, and so causing them unwittingly to offend, and thus occasion offenses as well as divisions, where the pure, peaceable, gentle, meek and humble spirit of the gospel would lead them to follow after the things which make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another. By **marking** them, we understand the apostle to mean that we closely observe and scrutinize them, so that we may readily distinguish them from the orderly servants of Christ. For he says, They that are such, as should be marked and avoided, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, consequently are not his servants; but serve their own carnal appetite. We are to observe the marks which the apostle has put upon them, and the mark by which our Lord has described them; for by their fruits, Jesus has said, his disciples shall know the false prophets which come to them disguised in sheep's clothing. They can no more promote the peace and harmony of the saints, than thorns or thistles can produce figs and grapes. This mark is plain and indelible, and as prominently stamped on them as was the mark which was put on Cain. They invariably produce disorder, divisions and offenses whereever they by their good words, fair speeches, plausible pretenses and deceitful workings, can gain the confidence of the guileless and simple of the children of God.

Paul has marked them in our text so plainly, that those who heed his admonition can scarcely fail to recognize the mark or description he has given.

They cause divisions. Now this is not all, for the truth itself will cause divisions, and divisions between truth and error, between Christ and anti-Christ, which must come; but the divisions which shall be caused by those whom the apostle has marked to be avoided by all orderly disciples of Christ, are divisions which are contrary to the doctrine which the saints have learned under the teaching of Christ and his apos-

tles. The primitive church, when organized at Jerusalem on the day of pentecost, continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, for only in continuing in their doctrine could they continue in their fellowship; and the apostle John commands, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds." — 2 John 10,11. This apostolic doctrine is the doctrine of God our Savior; it is spiritual, and can only be learned by those who are born of God, and taught by the Spirit. The natural man cannot discern it, for it is spiritually discerned. It is written of the bride, whose Maker is her Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name, "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord." — Isaiah liv. 13. And Jesus says, "Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." — John vi. 45. The word **doctrine** means teaching, or that which is taught; and all that we have learned or can know of spiritual things, is what we have heard and learned of the Father by the teaching of his Holy Spirit in our personal experience, and through the gifts of the Spirit bestowed on the apostles, and those who by the same unerring Spirit are qualified to teach the quickened saints to observe all things whatsoever God our Savior commanded the apostles to teach them in his name. All other religious teachings are but the doctrines of men and of devils. The doctrine which the disciples of Christ, to whom this admonition is addressed, are to receive, is clearly and exclusively the doctrine of God our Savior, which they have learned in the school of Christ, under the tuition of Christ and his apostles. Now, if any cause divisions contrary to the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, as contained in the holy scriptures, they are to be marked and avoided.

Not only divisions, but also offenses, are caused by any and every departure from what we have learned of him who is meek and lowly. Those who imbibe error, depart from the faith, give heed to seducing spirits and to doctrines of devils, do thereby offend against the laws of Christ, the cause of truth, and the peace of the church of God; and such offenses are caused by those who are to be marked and avoided.

Not only are those who are led into error by artful and wicked men, themselves captivated by the slight of men and cunning craftiness of those who lie in wait to deceive, but they are unwittingly drawn into the ranks of those who oppose the truth, so that, by reason of them, the way of truth is evil spoken of; and those who are contending for the truth are persecuted, falsely accused, and those who honestly desire to know and walk in the truth are prejudiced against it, and also against those who teach it. How fearful the exposure of the unguarded or simple who are drawn into antagonism with those who are suffering reproach and persecution for contending earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they had known it to turn away from the holy commandment delivered unto them." 2 Peter ii. 20, 21. "Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." — Matt. xviii. 7. How important it is that in approving or rejecting the doctrine held by our brethren we should be sure that we comprehend what they hold, and not be biased by favoritism or prejudice, and that we try what they teach by the unerring standard, the scriptures of truth. Never accept for the truth what we do not find fairly sustained by the word of God, nor reject as heresy what the scriptures do not condemn. We may not at all times

be prepared to judge and decide understandingly; in that case, let us wait and ask counsel of God, but never endorse as truth what we do not understand, nor denounce as heresy any sentiment, merely because we do not understand it. The most enlightened of the saints have still much to learn; we only know in part, and therefore it becomes us to be "swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath." — James i. 19. Still we are not to be unstable or vacillating; but "Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good."

It would seem that the merest child in the kingdom may discern something of the spirit and tendency of those who minister to them, at least, whether their ministry has a tendency to edify, instruct, comfort, unite and promote the peace and fellowship of those who love the Lord; or, on the other hand, to produce discord, divisions, hard acrimonious and bitter feelings, alienation and prejudice against the servants and sons of God. A spirit that can make a brother an offender for a word, seize him by the throat, denounce him as a heretic, call him hard names, and labor for years to vilify and malign the character of all who differ from their peculiar views, cannot promote peace and harmony. When one can spend a lifetime in misrepresenting, distorting and censuring what another is said to hold, instead of preaching the truth in love, is it not clearly perceptible that such a course is calculated to cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine of peace and good will which we have learned in the school of Christ?

Perhaps on close examination we all may be found faulty when weighed in an even balance. It is more than possible that we have none of us been as careful of the reputation of brethren as we are admonished to be. Have we each and all of us esteemed others better than ourselves? Have we all been perfectly sure that our eye has been free from a beam, when volunteering to remove the mote from a brother's eye?

Is it not possible that much of the divisions which are now rending some of our churches and associations, has its origin in a misapprehension and misstatement of each other's views? Brethren who agree substantially in doctrine, do not always express their views in the same words. Some of our best brethren have but a limited or imperfect understanding of the exact lexicographic meaning of some words which are used in theological discussions; should their words be criticized severely, or should we not ascertain their exact meaning, before we denounce them as heretics and enemies to the truth?

We are strongly inclined to believe that much of the dissention that has disturbed the peace and fellowship of the brethren has been produced by a few mischievous, indiscreet persons, who seem to think they can elevate themselves by raising a prejudice against others, being envious of those who are held in higher esteem than themselves. These are described by the apostle as being "heady, high minded, FALSE ACCUSERS OF THE BRETHREN, and of the sort which creep into houses and lead captive the silly;" and like Jannes and Jambres, who withstood Moses, "men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith." Yet we are told they have a form of godliness, and are therefore the more likely to deceive.

We do not, we cannot believe there would be any radical difference among the experienced children of God on the subjects of the eternal vital union of Christ and his church, or on the subject of the new birth, or what is born again, on the Christian warfare, between the flesh and the spirit, on the resurrection of the dead, or on the eternal Godhead and begotten Sonship of our Lord Jesus Christ, or on the doctrine of means and anti-means, if Christians could perfectly understand the real sentiments of each other. We do not mean to say there are no wicked, heretical doctrines held and preached by those who profess and have a form of godliness; but we speak of those who honestly love and desire above all things to know the truth.

Very many have been alarmed, confused, misinformed, and thereby prejudiced against those whom they would truly esteem, love and fellowship, if they could correctly understand their real sentiments. Some, it is to be lamented, have darkened counsel on these subjects by words without knowledge, or by attempting to advocate what they do not themselves clearly understand; it would better subserve the cause of truth for such to refrain from the discussion until God shall give them clearer light, lest they undesignedly be found among those who cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which they have learned.

What we have contended for as the eternal vital union of Christ and the church, has not been that there was a vital union or union of life between Christ and the earthly nature of his redeemed people before their earthly nature existed; but rather, that the eternal (not Adamic or mortal) life of the church was with the eternal Father, as a unit, as one, and the self-same life eternally; and that this life which was with the Father was given to the chosen people of God in Christ Jesus (not in the earthly Adam) before the world began; and that none of the chosen people of God receive this life manifestly until they are born again, nor can they know anything of its power and blessedness until Christ who is their life is formed in them. As the scripture declares that this life is in Christ, and together with all spiritual blessings, was given to God's chosen people in him before the foundation of the world, hence the spiritual life and seminal existence of the whole elect was in Christ as a unit before the world began. This is what we have understood to be the meaning of our brethren who have contended for eternal vital union; and this unity of life and identity of Christ and his people are so fully and clearly stated in the scriptures, that we do not feel willing to believe any intelligent child of God will dispute or object to it. Yet, when our views are distorted and misrepresented by others, the children of God may be disturbed and alarmed.

So also the subject of the birth, so far as the quickening power of the Holy Spirit and experimental development of it are considered, admits of no dissension. All understand the experience of it alike who are the subjects of it. We all know that we possess a nature that is born of the flesh, and if we are born again, we possess a nature that is born of God; that the one is depraved, conceived in sin, and is of the earth, earthy; and the other is born of the Spirit, and is pure and holy; that the flesh cannot produce spirit, nor does the spirit produce flesh; that the life which is born of the flesh is mortal, and must die, and that life which is born of God is immortal, and cannot die; and that all the chosen people of God are brought into manifestation by a first and second birth. Not **a part** of the man, but the same man who has been born of the flesh, must be born again, or he cannot see, enter in, or enjoy the kingdom of God. The first, or fleshly birth, has brought forth the fleshly nature which we all have in common with all mankind; and the new birth of the Spirit brings forth that spiritual life and nature which was given us in Christ before the world began. What is there in this sentiment that conflicts either with the scriptures of truth or with the experience of the children of God? Yet when this doctrine is distorted and misrepresented by designing or ignorant men, some are confused and alarmed, while their own personal experience demonstrates its truth. How important then that we mark the men who cause divisions and offenses contrary to this doctrine which every heaven-born child has learned, and avoid them.

Upon perhaps every point of the doctrine which the children of God have learned, cavilers may speculate, and display their fondness of controversy, by volunteering to explain to the world what others hold, preach, or believe, and scatter firebrands, arrows and trouble among the children of God. The admoni-

tion of the apostle in our text is that such men, whether preachers, or only retailers of scandal, be marked and avoided; and let us judge candidly of the truth or falsity of every one's sentiments as announced by himself, and approve or reject according as they are sustained or condemned by the scriptures of truth; and in forming our conclusions, it becomes us to consider whether the course pursued by those of whom we judge is calculated to unite, edify, comfort, build up and promote peace, harmony, love, fellowship and godliness among the saints, or to cause divisions and offenses. A fearful responsibility rests on some who have recently made themselves unenviably conspicuous in their persistent efforts to disunite and alienate the churches, associations and brethren who for many years have been unitedly endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Many who have long borne the marks by which the apostle has identified them, as causing divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which the saints have learned, are to-day mustering their forces for the avowed purpose of breaking the ranks of the Old School or Primitive Baptists, are even now calling for and crying, "A Confederacy!" But thus saith the Lord concerning them, "Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces." "Take counsel together, and it shall come to naught: speak the word, and it shall not stand; for God is with us. For the Lord spake thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying, Say ye not a confederacy to all whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid." — Isaiah viii. 9-12. Read also Isa. liv. 15-17: "Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me; whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake. Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, Jan. 15, 1878.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. W. J. PAGE

Mrs. Mamie Page was born in Caswell County, N. C., the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Z. Gwyn. She passed away September 26, 1958, in Annie Penn Memorial Hospital, Reidsville, N. C. She was united in marriage to Mr. Willard J. Page in 1895, and they reared two sons and six daughters, who survive. Besides her husband and children she leaves nine grandchildren and ten great grandchildren.

Mrs. Page spent most of her life in Caswell County, but lived in Reidsville, N. C. for thirty-two years. She was a woman of quiet dignity, but with a ready and cheerful smile; a good wife, a good mother, a good friend, a strong character. She believed in salvation by grace, and possessed a hope of life everlasting. She loved to speak of the wonderful works of her Saviour, and was strong in the belief that the God of all grace controls all things, and causes them to work together for good to them that love him.

May faith comfort and sustain her husband, children and friends, causing them to feel that, "His grace sufficeth". Let us look forward to the appointed time when sorrows will cease, and all of the redeemed will be forever with the Lord.

"Through many dangers, toils and snares
We have already come.
"Tis grace has brought us safe thus far,
And grace will lead us home."

(It was my privilege to know this departed friend for many years, and we believe she departed in the triumph of a living faith in the Lord Jesus. She knew the God she worshiped, and worshiped the God she knew. May the dear Lord comfort the family who cared for her so tenderly. — D. V. Spangler.)

CHARLES THURMAN RIFFE

Charles Thurman Riffe was born May 23, 1889, in Greenbriar, West Virginia, and departed this life June 10, 1958, at his home in Chehalis, Washington.

He had lived in the State of Washington since September 1893. He had made his home in Chehalis, Washington, since 1952, having

lived in or near Riffe, Washington, the greater part of his life. He was a member of the Bethel Predestinarian Church at Riffe. He was the son of the late Elder Floyd L. Riffe and Ameda Riffe, who preceded him to their eternal rest.

Brother Riffe is survived by his wife and three sons: Quenton Riffe of Chehalis, Washington; Maurice Riffe, Chehalis, and Leslie Riffe, of Castle Rock, Washington. Three daughters: Agnes Riffe, Chehalis, Washington; Mrs. Dorothy Bakehorn, Peru, Indiana, and Mrs. Beulah Cooper, Kosmos, Washington. One stepdaughter, Mrs. Florence Beck, Moses Lake, Washington, two stepsons, Del Schoonover of Seattle, Washington, Elmer Schoonover in California. Also by one brother, Jesse Riffe, Renton, Washington; four sisters, Mrs. Rosa Coleman, Riffe, Washington, Mrs. Vernie Schoonover, Morton, Washington, Mrs. Maude Schwartz, Riffe, Washington, and Mrs. Elizabeth Collins, Tacoma, Washington; and twenty grandchildren.

During the few years that I had known him, he had been very much concerned for the welfare of "The Old Church" and seemed to feel a thankfulness for the memory of his faithful father and mother. One could discern his appreciation of being blest by the power of Almighty God to have been born in such a home, for he spoke frequently of the many trials and tribulations his father and mother bore so calmly. It was his last request to the writer of this sketch to stand firm and serve the old Church that he loved so much. So we must be reconciled to God's will, for he is only gathering his jewels in his arms of love; and there they sleep in peace until that glorious morn when they shall all be awakened to be made like him and see him as he is and be satisfied. And then, and only then can we say, "Oh, death, where is thy sting; Oh, grave where is thy Victory!"

"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Written by one that will miss his counsel and love in our little church.

Elder E. J. Attebery
Box 92, Route 1
Hermiston, Oregon

MARY ELIZABETH CHEATHAM KELLY

My mother, Mary Elizabeth Cheatham Kelly, was born September 2, 1871. She passed from this world June 12, 1958, making her stay here 86 years, 9 months and 12 days.

Mother was married to Curtis Calvin Kelly October 2, 1890. To this union, five children were born, and all survive. They are: Mrs. Vera Davis, Greenville, Alabama; John Curtis Kelly, Birmingham, Alabama; Mrs. Charles Porterfield and Mrs. Nannie Cassady, Fort Deposit, Alabama; and William Jackson Kelly, Mobile, Alabama. She had twenty grandchildren, thirty-three great grandchildren and two great great grandchildren.

She was a firm believer in salvation by grace and grace alone. She attended her church meetings as long as health permitted, was cheerful and enjoyed her friends and relatives to the end.

The funeral was held in the Moriah Church where she had been a member for 52 years. She was laid to rest by the side of her husband, who preceded her to the grave 31 years.

BE IT RESOLVED: That a copy of this be placed in the Church books also that one be sent to the **Signs of the Times.**

Elder Sam H. Dean, Moderator
Sister Enna M. Porterfield, Clerk

MRS. LOUJINNIE F. H. BISHOP

Mrs. Loujinnie Frances Hunt Bishop, of 836 Hamilton Ave., Roanoke, Va., was born April 1, 1872, at Glade Hill, Virginia. She was the first of 13 children born to Andrew Hopkins Hunt (Nov. 30, 1845-Jan. 5, 1918) and Wilmoth Frances Perdue Hunt (Feb. 5, 1855-Jan. 16, 1939), of Glade Hill, Va.

Mrs. Bishop united with the Primitive Baptist Church of Bethel in Franklin County, Va., in 1889, at the age of 17 years. She moved her membership to the Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church November 2, 1901, and lived in sweet fellowship with her church for 69 years. She lived with her parents at Glade Hill until her marriage to John Marcellus Draper on January 20, 1897, at the home of her parents, by Elder John C. Hall. During the ten years of this marriage to Mr. Draper there were five children born, four of whom survive: Mrs. Hilda Whitley, St. Petersburg, Fla., Asa Hunter Draper, Roanoke, Mrs. Beatrice Johns, Blacksburg, Va., and Mrs. Janie Pannell, Roanoke. This marriage ended with the death of Mr. Draper on March 17, 1907. She remained a widow for four years, then married John Francis Bishop on September 27, 1911. There were no children born to this marriage. After twenty-seven years of their married life together, Mr. Bishop passed away February 21, 1938, and she remained a widow the rest of her life; and made her home with her youngest daughter Mrs. (Janie) Norman S. Pannell.

Mrs. Bishop was visiting her daughter, Mrs. Sidney Whitley and husband, in Florida, when she was suddenly stricken with a cerebral hemorage, and died six hours later. During this time she seemed to be in heaven, talking with her Saviour, and repeating scriptures until the last. This was April 16, 1958, at the age of 86 years, 15 days. Her body was returned to Roanoke, and her funeral was held

at the Roanoke church April 19, 1958. Services were conducted by Elder Randolph Perdue and Elder O. K. Tench, with interment in Fairview Cemetery.

Mrs. Bishop left a beautiful letter for her four children, and instructions for her funeral and burial, naming the following deacons of her church for pallbearers: Landon Hunt, Cleve Turner, Dan Lynch, Robert Shelton, Norborne Akers, and P. D. Divers.

Besides her four children, Mrs. Bishop is survived by the following sisters and brothers: Mrs. Ella Dillon, Roanoke; Ben Hopkins Hunt, Ennis, Mont.; Mrs. Muzetta Ashworth, Lashmeat, W. Va.; Isaac Hunt, Red Wood, Va.; Isa Maude Byrd, Matoka, W. Va.; Mrs. Clara Harrison, Glade Hill, Va.; and Buchanan Hunt, Roanoke; also John Andrew Hunt, Missoula, Mont., who died the day she was buried.

DEACON C. E. EVANS

The Lord has removed from our midst Brother C. E. Evans, he having passed away December 11, 1958. He was the son of the late Elder C. T. and Emma Tolbert Evans; and is survived by his wife, two daughters, one son, six grandchildren, and one great grandchild. Also by four sisters and two brothers.

Brother Evans united with Malmaison Church in August, 1908; and upon moving to North Carolina he was granted a letter, and united with Pleasant Grove Church. Upon coming back to Virginia he united with Fairfield Church, and later Strawberry Church in 1939; and at the June meeting in 1946, he came back to Malmaison, and remained there until his death. He served as a deacon for many years.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and interment was in the family cemetery near Malmaison Church.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we extend our sympathy to the bereaved family, and pray that the Lord may be pleased to bless his family and give them strength to press on, and to know that He doeth all things well; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication; a copy be placed on our church book; and a copy be sent to the family.

Done by order of the church at Malmaison at her March, 1959, meeting.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Kate Dodd, Clerk

NANNIE BELL (PERDUE) SMITH

Nannie Bell (Perdue) Smith was born January 21, 1893, and died December 16, 1958. She is survived by her husband, Pancey Monroe Smith, and six sons and one daughter: P. D. Smith, Bill Smith, Randolph Smith, Reuben Smith, Frank and Alfred Smith, all of Roanoke, Va., and Mrs. Kenneth Long, Charlottesville, Va.; also by eighteen grandchildren, and one great grandchild.

She was not a member of the church but was a strong believed in salvation by grace, for she had had a hope for many years.

She will be greatly missed by her family and friends.

Her neice,
Mrs. P. G. Divers

LYDIA MATHIAS MEADS

My dear mother, Lydia Mathias Meads, was born May 17, 1874, and died January 14, 1959, making her stay on earth 84 years, 7 months, and 28 days. She was married on October 2, 1893, to John Stanton Meads, who later was ordained an Elder in the Church, and who died on February 12, 1911, at the age of 63 years. To this union were born eleven children — eight sons and three daughters, all of whom survive her. She is also survived by one stepson, two stepdaughters, sixteen grandchildren, thirty great grandchildren, and other relatives.

She joined Flatty Creek Primitive Baptist Church, by letter from Elam Church in Currituck County, June 22, 1895, and remained a faithful member thereof until death.

Mother was not a great talker on religion, and much of her time during her last days was spent alone. However, I heard her say that she was not afraid, that she felt that Jesus was with her. In the writing of my dear father's obituary, she evidenced a firm belief in the finished work of her risen and glorified Redeemer, who is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high. We are satisfied that it is well with her soul, and that our loss is her eternal gain. So we feel to say, "Sleep on, dear mother, until that blessed morn, when thou shalt hear that sweet voice calling thee to come forth, and when we hope to meet thee again to dwell with thee forever in that happy home of the blessed."

May the Lord bless each of the children, and give them faith and hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, whom to know is life eternal.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders A. B. Ayers, I. S. Conner, and R. B. Denson, who spoke words of comfort to the bereaved family. The hymn, "Why do we mourn departing friends?" was read. The body was laid to rest in the family burying ground to await the coming of the Lord of glory to raise the dead, "When all His saints shall see the glory of their living Head," and reign with Him eternally.

Done by order of the church in conference, January 24, 1959.

Catherine M. (Cartwright) Vass

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 127 DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1959 NO. 6

My Father, how I long to be
From sin and earth's afflictions free.
Oh send Thy Spirit from above
And draw me with the cords of love.

Thou knowest all my grief and care,
Oh give me strength my cross to bear.
All things are possible with Thee,
And Jesus is my only plea.

A monument of grace I stand
Though dwelling in a barren land.
Come Heavenly Father from on high
And hear my supplicating cry.

There is a field of pastures green,
The vulture's eye hath never seen;
The Lion's whelps have never trod
The glorious path that leads to God.

That blessed path I fain would tread
When by Thy Holy Spirit led.
Help me, dear Saviour, Thine to be,
And evermore to dwell with Thee.

A stranger and a pilgrim here,
I oft-times shed the secret tear.
May I in Thy dear image shine
And realize that Thou art mine.

Oh may I closer walk with God
And meekly bear the chastening rod;
Thy word of love in me fulfill
And reconcile me to Thy will.

Give me the ear of Samuel, Lord,
Alive and quick to hear Thy word.
Help me to answer at Thy call,
Be Thou my strength, my stay, my all.

And when I tread through death's dark vale,
Let sin no more my thoughts assail.
Oh wash me in Thy precious blood
And save me through a Saviour's love.

The time of my departure's near,
With Christ my Lord what need I fear?
He'll bear me to that world above
Where all is peace and joy and love.

The sting of death He hath destroyed,
The saints in Him are glorified.
Redeeming love shall be my theme,
That saved me from the power of sin.

'Twas Christ began the work of grace,
And saved me from a fallen race.
In gratitude my prayers ascend
For grace will keep me to the end.

And if my Lord hath made me free,
Then who shall lay a charge at me?
The Son of God for me was slain
That I, though vile, with Him should reign.

Oh may I then with loved ones meet,
Who bow before Thy mercy seat.
I'll leave behind the things of time
And feel and know that Thou art mine.

My children, Lord, I leave with Thee,
Oh may they humbly follow Thee.
Help them, dear Lord, when in distress
To plead a Saviour's righteousness.

I'll praise the Father, praise the Son
And Blessed Spirit, three in one,
Who saved me from my lost estate
To see the joys that there await.

Ada J. Saunders (Deceased)

(Written while in great sorrow)

R. F. D. 6,
Fayette, Alabama

Dear Brethren:

Enclosed you will find $5.00 for the renewal of my subscription to our paper. We have been reading the Signs for a number of years, and find that we get a great deal of comfort from the many good articles recorded therein. Hope that the Lord's blessings may provide in such abundance that our paper will continue to be sound, and a source of communication to be desired by all Old Baptists, who are lovers of the doctrine of God our Saviour.

The brethren in this section are but few in number, but we believe that they are at this time continuing to contend for the same doctrine and practices they have ever contended for; at least we know that as far back as we have personal knowledge of their beliefs and practices, they are the same today as then.

We trust that when you are given a mind, you may remember us in our section as poor, dependent and unworthy creatures of the dust, in hope of life and immortality through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Your brother in humble hope,
(Elder) H. M. Brock

THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD

By Elder David Bartley

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE ORDER OF CHRIST'S PRIESTHOOD

"THE LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." (Psalms 110:-4) "I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." (Psalms 2:7)

So the Son of God is a priest after the order of Melchisedec, a priest forever, and made such a priest by the solemn oath of Jehovah, who will not repent. The Son of God is, therefore, unchangeably established in his priesthood, and all pertaining to it is likewise ordered and sure. Nothing whatever belonging to this priesthood shall ever be disannulled, changed or amended, but all is "ordered in all things and sure." The oath of the Lord God, who changes not, nor repents, has made it as firm as his holy throne. "Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven."

"This day have I begotten thee", is the day of Christ's resurrection and triumph over all the power of darkness, and which perfectly qualified and prepared him to be crowned with glory and honor as the Son of God with power, and Priest and King forever. Paul says of the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord, that he "was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." (Romans 1:3-4) Paul also said, "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David." (Acts 13:32-34)

So the man Christ Jesus was the manifested Son of God with power as begotten from the dead, to die no more. Of Christ's resurrection from the dead as the declared Son of God, it is written again: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren." (Romans 8:29) "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell; and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." (Col. 1:18-20) In support of all this divine and glorious truth, the Son of God in his glory said to his servant John, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." (Rev. 1:18)

Now, all this revelation or manifestation of the Man of Nazareth in his finished work in the flesh, and resurrection unto an endless life and glory as the Son of God with power, was in fulfillment of the above decree and immutable oath of the God and Father of our glorified High Priest. Our merciful God has thus made his exalted Son a priest after the order of the priesthood of Melchisedec, which is very unlike the order of Aaron's priesthood. And now, therefore, it will both instruct and comfort us to seek a true understanding of

the order and nature of the priesthood of Melchisedec, and its difference from the order of Aaron's priesthood, both being of Divine appointment and order, and also somewhat typical of the divine priesthood of the holy Son of God, as has been pointed out.

"A priest forever." This is the special and divinely excellent feature of Melchisedec's priesthood; and this was one signal weakness of the Levitical priesthood; for it was not enduring, but so transient that it has long since passed away forever, because it was only a shadow. But, strange as it may seem, many devotees of religious worship have ever preferred ceremonious forms and unsubstantial shadows, rather than that which is real and abiding. For this cause the religious world is carried away with showy rituals, worldly wisdom, human philosophy and outward morality, which may gratify and please the fleshly mind, even of some who have fled to Christ for refuge, but all of which are as chaff to the wheat. But the priesthood and ministry of the Son of God are abiding, divinely substantial and perfect, and also perfecting in all the true worshippers in this priesthood; for Christ's priesthood is as enduring as the days of heaven, and it has no end. Death soon removed Aaron as high priest, and also his successive sons after him, until Christ came, when that entire ministry and its corresponding covenant vanished away, as the fading stars and moon when the sun mounts the skies and darkness flees.

So superior was the priesthood of Melchisedec to that of Aaron, and thus it stands out alone in the typical heavens as a faithful and true witness to the everlasting priesthood of the Son of God, who abideth a priest forever. "And being made perfect, he became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; called of God an High Priest after the order of Melchisedec." (Heb. 5:9-10) "And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: but this Man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." (Heb. 7:23-25) The priesthood of the first covenant had not this power and glory, for it could not put away the sins of the people, nor save them from death.

Another divine excellence of the perpetual priesthood of the Son of God is, he was made High Priest forever with an oath, "in which it was impossible for God to lie," repent or change; and thus Melchisedec, the wonderful type, was "priest of the most high God; . . . having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God: abideth a priest continually. . . (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.") (Heb. 7) Thus it is proven that neither sin, nor Satan, nor the law of sin and death, can ever possibly defeat, change or cause to fail the holy priesthood of the Son of man, who with the righteous oath of the unchangeable Jehovah is a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.

Still another most wonderful and essential peculiarity of Melchisedec as a sublime type of our High Priest was, he was King of righteousness, and King of peace. He thus united in himself this twofold office and ministry, with all the dignity, power and divine excellence and success belonging to them in their fullness of perfection. After this order the oath of God consecrated his Son our Priest and King forever. In this both the power and love of God towards the people of his covenant are richly and mercifully made known to us, even beyond the reach of finite thought.

"Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will."

The high priest of the first testament was divinely appointed to make atone-

ment for the sins of his people, and then to intercede with God for them, in which he was a type of Christ; but he had no authority to reign over his people, neither could he bring them into the heart-given love and service and worship of God; for he was neither a king of righteousness, nor righteous himself. Thus he was imperfect.

In all these things Melchisedec was a far better type of the Son of God, and the order of his priesthood much nearer the perfection of the everlasting priesthood of him who has swallowed up death in victory, and reigns over the house of Jacob forever. For our successful High Priest sits at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, and is crowned the King eternal and immortal, and all the angels and saints of God serve and worship him. Our Redeemer's kingly office and work, then, support and give success to his perfect sacrifice and intercession in his priestly office; while his finished reconciliation in his priestly office supports and gives virtue and right to him as King upon his holy throne of power, so that it was long written of him, "A King shall reign in righteousness." And now, as the anointed High Priest and crowned King, the adorable Savior, the crucified Man of Nazareth, the Son of Mary, the Son of David, the Son of the Highest "must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet."

In the full accomplishment of the salvation of "his people from their sins," and in making them wise unto salvation, that they may know "the only true God, and Jesus Christ," whom the Father sent, our blessed Lord, in whom all fullness dwells, is as well the holy Prophet of his dear people as he is their atoning Priest and reigning King. This is divinely and joyfully wonderful and blessed, and it worthily entitles this child that was born unto us to be called, "Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." (Isa. 9:6) "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Therefore Jesus is the Three-One-God, the Father and Son and Spirit, in the one Person of the God-Man, who reigns upon the meditorial throne of his glorious power. And so he is three-one in his glorious work and dominion as Prophet-Priest-King, in which he is the infinite fullness of Wisdom and Righteousness and Power — is SALVATION.

Christ, the glorified Man, as the Prophet, was neither represented by Melchisedec nor Aaron, and we must look away from them for a typical prophet, and this one is Moses, who prophesied of the Messiah to his brethren. For they entreated that they might not again witness the great fire upon Sinai, nor hear the voice of God; therefore Moses said to them, "And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him." (Deut. 18:17-19) For God had made Moses very great in Israel, as his prophet unto them, their law giver and mediator; and through Moses he revealed and made known to them his covenant, and laws and counsel. Thus Moses ascended up to God and God came down to him on the holy Mount, showed him his glory, and talked with him as a man to his friend. This was very wonderful, and thus Moses was more highly honored and favoured than any other man on earth, except the man Christ, who was "like unto" him. Moses also was the meekest man on earth; and in this he was like unto him who said "I am meek and lowly in heart." Neither did Moses seek honor of men, in which he was like Jesus; for the God of his people called and sanctified Moses, at the burning bush, clothed him with dominion and power, gave him Aaron his brother, as his mouth and minister — as he gave the Spirit to reveal the things of Jesus to his brethren — and then sent him down into

Egypt to free his enslaved people, and lead them up into the goodly inheritance. Thus was the faithful Moses a prophet like unto Jesus the Son of God, who said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.'' (John 6:38-39) "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this Man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honor than the house. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a Son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." (Heb. 3:1-6)

Thus truly did the servant Moses typify the Son Jesus in his prophetic office and its successful fulfillment, and also largely in his mediatorial office and work. In the infancy of Moses he was a striking and touching figure of the infant Jesus, for each of their lives were sought by the rulers; and it is a striking coincident, that as the infant Savior of his people was sent down into Egypt for personal safety, so Moses, the typical infant deliverer of his people was likewise divinely sent into the house of Pharoah for personal safety. And of Moses and the house of Israel the word of God was as true as it was of Jesus, "Out of Egypt have I called my son." And so Jesus followed the typical Moses from Egypt up to Canaan; but as the typical deliverer must die, before his people could be led through the bold Jordan and be saved in the typical kingdom of God, so also must Jesus die without the gates of Jerusalem, that his people should enter into his Father's kingdom and be saved from the hand of their enemies. Moses beautifully represented Jesus in the days of his flesh unto death; then, succeeding Moses, Joshua (meaning Jesus or Savior) was a type of the risen Savior, and he led his people through Jordan into the kingdom God gave them.

(Chapter eight next month)

LETTERS OF A CANADIAN SISTER

January 27, 1951

Dear Friends:

It would appear that I've not been appreciative of your letter, replying to my inquiry of the Scripture, "Occupy till I come." It gives me thoughts, going back over the road, gathering up the fragments, reviewing, as it were, and being "almost persuaded" that it is God working in me both to will and to do of His good pleasure. I recall now when I feel it must have been the hand of the Lord upon me, and when He puts His hand upon one there is no resisting. I was brought down, down. I struggled against it, shrugging my shoulders, as it were, saying I would not have this bothering me, but the more I tried to rid my mind of these thoughts the deeper depths I went down into, until I was made to know and feel the very thickness of that Egyptian darkness, to know what it was to be crushed between the upper and nether millstones, until all I could say was, "Where shall I go and what shall I do?" I was brought to the end of the road, all undone and was made to cry out, "God be merciful to me a sinner." As time passed on I have felt too that I was brought to the place where I was given peace, a "Peace that passeth all understanding." I rested in that for such a long time, being satisfied just to rest in peace and love, having no other desires. After awhile a desire came to me that I wished to tell the friends that I could say, "I know

that my Redeemer liveth," that my Beloved was mine and that I was His. Something said, "What more do you want besides." I replied "What more?" I think I told you once before how I felt the singing of the birds throughout the land, that I was leaping over the mountains and skipping over the hills, running and not weary, walking and not faint.

Thus the years have passed. I never can forget the travel and suffering from the darkness of mind, neither can I forget the joy in peace of mind.

For the past couple of years I find myself so restless and at all opportunities am reading and searching the Scriptures. As I've re-read the Scripture, "And you hath He quickened," and on down through the chapter it says "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." At one time I had been given a desire to go to the Church. I felt myself running, but when the time came to go, this desire was all taken from me. Often have I questioned why I have been led to the banks of the stream, then left standing there all these years. It makes me full of doubts, that this has not been a work of grace within my heart, yet I cannot give up crying, "Oh that the Lord would guide my ways. Lord, undertake for me, Lord, help me." Friends, Why have I written this? Perhaps, Elder Ruston, because you are my Pastor, and Mrs. Ruston my Pastor's wife.

With love,
Flo Fegan

Dear Pastor and Mrs. Ruston:

Ever since my baptism I've been wanting to write you, as my mind is being occupied with the wonders of the day, July 1st. My little hope was from the June Meeting until the day of my baptism, in the words you had preached from, "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed." It was a trying week of tossing to and fro with no definite place to stand. All the way home from the June Meeting our conversation was that I might be given courage to go to the Church, telling me "to go home to your friends." I felt I could not. Wednesday I felt much the same, yet something seemed to be urging me on and by evening I felt I must telephone you. Then when the arrangements were all made, that night I became full of confusion. During the night I had a nervous chill, as I thought I had done wrong in allowing you to make these arrangements, and now, what was I to do? I consoled myself with the thought that others were going before the Church, therefore the preparations were not in vain. Saturday, although still fearful, I felt that the word had gone forth and I must go on, but my mind was so barren and empty, I did not know how the Church could receive me. Sunday came with me still having an empty mind, and if anyone went forward and spoke in an awkward stumbling way, that person was me, yet the Church took me in! To me my baptism was beautiful. I had no fear nor nervousness, rather I went down into the water gladly and willingly with my back to all former things, having no thoughts for those upon the shore, only walking to that place to be buried in baptism and to be raised to walk in newness of life. Since, my days have been happy and peaceful, not a cloud in my sky, all the day long singing in my heart, making melody, communicating with my Saviour. The hymn, "Down to the sacred wave," stays with me. Then the other morning I woke singing in my heart, "Father, we'll rest in Thy love."

As I look back over the years, it has been a long, long road of doubting, sometimes hopeful. It is years ago that the words, "Thou shalt be willing in the day of my power," came to me; then in the evening of the same day the words were added, "Lo, I am with you alway." For some time I was reconciled to wait, but as the years passed by, I thought I had just applied those words to myself. It was after the May Meeting of this year that I again became exer-

cised about going to the Church. I wanted to go at the June Meeting, then be baptized at Lobo in July. I kept those thoughts to myself, fearing as always before, likely I would come away again and not go before the Church. I did not want to keep on deceiving the people. They showed such fellowship for me, for which I was not worthy. Then when you expressed your thoughts, which were also mine, it broke me up, that I felt it must be from the Lord. In all I was strengthened and encouraged and went forward. Now my prayer is, "Lord, keep me and guide me, let me stay in the skies as it has been such long years of doubting." To me it seems as though the fulness of my time came, in the end, suddenly, and the only way I can express it is in the Scripture, "The wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Also my mind is busy going back all the way, picking up the fragments as I journey along, having forgotten some, which are now brought back to remembrance, giving me enjoyment. I must close, I just wanted you to know how happy I am.

With love,
Flo Fegan

EXPERIENCE

I humbly hope that what I am about to write is an experience of Grace. As far back as I can remember I wanted to be a Primitive Baptist; and asked the Lord to guide me in writing about the little hope I hope I have.

When I was around 22 years old, I dreamed that someone got after me and chased me across a wide river. It had a narrow bridge, just wide enough to walk over. They ran me to the end of the bridge, and when I got there, there were two big doors: I couldn't open them, but the doors came open, and behind these doors were two little iron gates. They seemed to be about large enough for a baby to go through; and behind these gates were two bright lights — the brightest lights I ever saw. I knew I couldn't get through those gates, but I heard a voice say, "There is the way, the truth, and the life; but no man can enter except by Jesus Christ." I turned around, and thought I would go back, and saw a man standing there. I asked him if he was a Primitive Baptist, and he said, "Yes". In the dream I thought the man was Dr. Hurst; and then I awoke.

Some years later my husband was running a threshing machine, and was away at nights. I had three or four small children, and was afraid to stay at home without him. Something awoke me one morning, and I said, "Lord have mercy on me; what will I do? I don't have a friend in the world, everyone has forsaken me, even my husband." It seemed there was something hovering over my head, and I heard these words, "I the Lord watch over you as a mother would her little babe." I did not know what to think about it, but I wanted to tell someone about it.

Several years after this, before one of my babies was born, I got in so much trouble I thought I would die. When my baby was delivered, death was all I could think about. I went to sleep thinking about it, and awoke thinking about it. I thought I could die at no other time than when my baby was delivered.

One night I asked the Lord if he didn't promise to watch over me; and I heard a voice say, "Let the grace of God be shed abroad in your heart." This time I went to my brother Lewis and told him what I had heard; and he tried to console me, and said that it was the working of the Lord. As I traveled along, troubles seemed to get worse, and it seemed I couldn't bear them. I thought I was loosing my mind, and my husband's people thought I was losing it too. One night after I went to bed (it seemed I always tried to pray after I went to bed), I tried in my feeble way to pray. I asked the Lord if it be the grace of God working in my heart, to

show me in a dream. I went to sleep, but did not dream anything. I went to sleep again, and I thought I was at my father's house. My brother Lewis and I were together coming down a steep hill at the back of the house. I saw my mother and grandmother, who were dead, in the back yard. My mother was in the form of an angel: she was white as snow; and my grandmother was lying down, and she was in the form of Jesus Christ. I ran, leaving my brother, and fell down at my grandmother's feet. I thought I said, "Lord save this little damsel." And my grandmother said, "Why it has been saved." Then mother said to me, "Aren't you in great trouble." And I said, "Lord, mother, it is worse than being in prison." Then my grandmother said, "Why, it is the Spirit of the Lord."

When I awoke, I thought my prayer had been answered, and that I would not have any more trouble; but I was wrong, for the next morning I awoke as troubled as much as ever. But sometime during the day, I picked up the Bible and opened it, and the first thing I saw was the Book of Psalms. It seemed that I read these words, "A man under conviction is likened to a man in prison." I will never forget them, though I was not able to find them again. When I saw those words, it seemed that something was hovering over me, and it left and went up. I felt better, and said surely there will be peace, but there wasn't until my baby was delivered, and I was so happy, I felt like I was flying.

And I said, "Lord, if I die, let me die; I will die happy." I have never been as happy in my life. I have had troubles since, but they are not the same. I do not think we ever get rid of our troubles. I know I said to my father that I would gladly give the world, if I had it, to just go back and feel like I once did. He said that we all would if we could.

(Written by Nannie Bell Smith of Roanoke, Va., January 16, 1954, and left to her family. See obituary in May issue — Ed.)

321 25th St. S. W.
Birmingham 11, Ala.

"And I say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Mat. 16:18).

This being a most positive statement spoken by the One who possesses all power in heaven and earth, we then can be sure this church was established and, unless the gates of hell have prevailed against it, surely it is in existence today. I think that it would be safe to say it stands separate from all the other isms that are so prevalent in the world today.

Even though these isms have divided and subdivided into so many different names, they all hold to the same principles or doctrine, which is based almost entirely on the good works of the creature and have been incorporated into the mode of practice by almost, if not all, of the modern religious world. They gladly admit adherence to their freewill ism, chance isms, and all other isms which seems to me to be in direct opposition to all scriptures pertaining to the true church. Since it is impossible to hinge any conditions on the wills and shalls of God, surely these doctrines have their origin in the natural mind, based entirely on carnal reasoning. This kind of doctrine is attractive to those who are looking to an arm of flesh for their salvation.

We find that Jesus is "to save his people from their sins", and since there is not any mention made of saving part of them, we believe they shall all be saved. In order for this to be true there must of necessity be a salvation that would reach to all the ends of the earth, one that does not stop when the money runs out, is not hampered by political or other difficulties that arise from time to time which would keep the salvation from reaching those in remote regions and those that were unlearned. Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, "Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone,

a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste." (Isa. 28:16).

This is a solid foundation, indeed. Have you not found it so? A tried stone, not one that we have to try out from day to day, but tried and found to be solid, for "this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," and His building is fitly framed together, and those embraced in this work are secure indeed, and they are made to observe its bulwarks and to know and see that there are not any weak spots that their flimsy props would help or make more secure.

We would be in a pitiful condition indeed if we were left to attain eternal life by the works of the law since it demands perfection, seeing that man at his best state is altogether vanity and all of our righteousness is as filthy rags in His sight. Thanks be unto God, in due time the Saviour came and satisfied to a jot and tittle, thereby freeing his people who were so helpless to recover themselves. "And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land, and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods, and I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessings." (Ezek. 34:25, 26)

Yes, they shall come down in his season and there are other times when it seems we feel to be cast down and to be strangers wandering around in a strange land, seemingly with no sense of direction, with destruction on every side. It is then that we are forced to say with Job, "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I can not perceive him; on the left hand, where he doth work, but I can not behold him; he hideth himself on the right hand, that I can not see him; but he knoweth the way that I take; when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." (Job 23:8, 10) There is always that little hope, that enables us to look forward. Job's travels, to me, are a good picture of God's people in a spiritual way, for it seems at these times, when we are so low in the valley of despair that this little hope takes on a new value, more precious than anything else in the world.

May the great God of heaven make us always to realize that it was He that took on the likeness of sinful flesh and went to the cross in our stead and hath saved us and washed us in his own blood, whereby we may be where he is forever. My heart's desire is to always give all the glory to whom glory is due, and to keep constantly in mind the source from which all blessings flow. I do not feel myself in much of a condition to do any trading, for if there is indeed and in truth one that feels as was the servant who found himself ten thousand talents in debt and nothing with which to pay, it is I. Yet, I am glad, when God makes me glad, that God's people were not tried in a court of justice but rather that God had mercy on them.

I see that I have written too much. I do not want to worry any one. You may do as you see fit with whatever I have said.

Remember me at the throne of grace, for I am a needy creature.

Love to all,
Claude Hand

PLEASE NOTE

Mrs. W. D. Fooks, of Salisbury, Md., lost a coat at the Salisbury Association in October, 1958, while attending the Association at Delmar, Delaware. The coat was taken by mistake by someone at the restaurant where lunch was served. Someone left their coat and took hers. Will the one who made the mistake please contact the office of the Signs, and the exchange will be made. — Ed.

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The Staunton River Union Meeting is appointed to be held with the Banister Springs Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in May. The church is located on Highway 29, three miles South of Chatham, Virginia.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. J. Oaks, Clerk

Danville, Virginia June, 1959

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EDITORIAL

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matthew 11:28-29.

Our Lord, in the three verses preceding our text, clearly declares, firstly, the Sovereignty of God in hiding the truth from some and in revealing the truth to others; secondly, showing Himself in full accord with the will of His Father by a dutiful submission expressed in the verse, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight," and thirdly, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him."

In John 17:1-2 our Almighty Saviour said, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given Him." In John 5:25 Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: AND THEY THAT HEAR SHALL LIVE." It is this same person who in our text says "Come unto me." This is not an invitation, but it is the Word of Him who said "Let there be light: and there was light." It is a command to certain characters, and it is given at a certain time. Those to whom this word comes are heavy laden under condemnation of God's holy law, a law that was given that the offence might abound, it said "do, do." All that ever came into this world, born of a woman, except Jesus, were conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity. The Word rightly says, they are dead in trespasses and sins and are led captive by the devil at his will. Our Lord Jesus is stronger than the devil, and the devil's slaves have no will that they can call their own.

Our Lord read His commission in Luke 4:18-19. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord." These are led of the Spirit and are made to see their lost condition. They may, for a wise purpose, be left to follow blind guides, and to try remedies that are of no avail. Luke 5:25 tells of a woman who had an issue of blood twelve years. The life of the body is the blood and so she was dying and fearing death for twelve long years. She "suffered many things of many physicians and had spent all that she had, and was nothing b e t t e r e d , but rather grew worse." What a case hers was for the Great Physician! While it says she came after she heard of Jesus, we know and believe that it was Jesus who said to

her, "Come," and gave her faith to believe that He could make her whole. Jesus has the commission to say "Come" and His come will bring them to Him for what He alone has to give, "I will give you rest."

While under the law there is no rest, the sinner quickened to see his state by nature will labour hard, and as light shines upon the way he has come, the iniquities of his heels (past life) will encompass him about and Satan will tempt him to despair. Such a person might have been under the sound of the gospel all his days, yet never understood what the servant of God was talking about, and now that his eyes are opened he knows what the hymn means which says, "I go and come, see others blest, pity myself and mourn." Jesus came to save such and did save them, but they must wait the appointed hour. Men may say "Jesus saves," he does, but a true-born child of God knows that he has no right to take the letter of the Word as his, unless Jesus speaks it to him. Our Lord has many ways of saying "Come unto me," and when He speaks, it accomplishes what He pleases and prospers in the thing whereto it is sent. Isaiah 55:11. He who became a curse for them, gives them rest from the curse of the law, He commands deliverance to the captive. How sweet are the words from His mouth, "I will give you rest."

How well the writer remembers, while a student in London, England, many years ago, burdened and distressed above what he felt he could possibly bear, when all hope that he could be saved seemed cut off, Jesus Himself said, "Thy sins WHICH ARE MANY are all forgiven thee." What joy and comfort came with those precious words. I could stand up straight, for my burden was gone and my heart was filled with songs of praise. I sang "Thy mercy in Jesus exempts me from hell; Its glories I'll sing and its wonders I'll tell: 'Twas Jesus my friend, when He hung on the tree, Who opened the channel of mercy for me." "On the wings of His love, I was carried above all sin and temptation and pain; and I could not believe that I ever should grieve, that I ever should suffer again." This surely was a time of love, and one could say with Simeon, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy Word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." We soon found that we were still in a world that we had to face, a world that knew Him not, but this season of joy was a sweet foretaste of a life to come.

We have been writing of a rest that Jesus gives, but from here on we want to speak of a rest that we find unto our souls, as we are, by grace, enabled to take His yoke upon us and learn of Him, for although He, by His mighty power, has delivered us from Satan's yoke and the demands of a just and holy law, that liberty He has given us is not a license to do as we please and live as we list. No! for our Lord's commission is still in force, "Take my yoke upon you and learn of ME." "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price." He has delivered us from the curse of the law by fulfilling it Himself, and let us remember that that law is kept in Him as the tables of stone were kept in the Ark. I know some distinguish here between the sacrificial and moral laws. I humbly desire to see both fully kept in Christ the Ark of Grace. The law was given by Moses, and we have learnt what a taskmaster Moses can be, but now I want to speak of a New Covenant, in which our Lord says "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." Jeremiah 31:33. This law is that law spoken of by David in Psalm 19:7. "The law of the Lord is perfect, CONVERTING THE SOUL." It is the law of the SPIRIT OF LIFE in Christ Jesus which hath made me free from the law of sin and death, THE LAW OF LOVE.

His yoke is not then the law of Moses, which legalists would put upon their fellows with the cry of "Do, do," blindly thinking in such a way to do the work of God. Some, of course, do this sin-

cerely, not having their eyes opened to see that they are condemned by Paul in Galatians 3:1-3. One who has experienced the rest that Jesus gives, learns often to his sorrow that he is still in a body of flesh and has to live in a carnal world. He knows too that he was once alien to the commonwealth of Israel and a stranger to the COVENANT OF PROMISE, but now through the mercy of God and the power of grace he is turned around, so that he becomes a stranger to this world, seeking a better country, that is, an heavenly.

God's Word, in the Gospel of His dear Son, is God's Law, and the yoke that fitted Jesus must fit those that are His. It is written, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Here then we have a view of His yoke, it shows self-denial, and taking His yoke upon us will not lead to loose living, neither will it tolerate contention and strife, it will rather encourage us, as we learn of Him, to take the spoiling of our goods joyfully. As we learn of Him bearing our sins and carrying our sorrows, we shall be slow to sit in the "judge's seat." It is not easy to be reviled and not to revile again, to give our back to the smiter and our face to those who would pluck off the hair. Learning of Him who was crucified for us will in turn fill us with a desire to crucify the old man and his lusts, and as we love Him for His precious grace to such wretched creatures as we feel to be, our desire will be in line with His, to do the will of God and not our own. Our Lord, while here, spent much time in prayer, and His blessed Spirit helpeth our infirmities, and we find encouragement often to take up our cross and despise the shame. We live in a day when we are in contact with a world of profession, and it is well for us if we can say with our true yokefellow Paul, "Being reviled, we bless, being persecuted, we suffer it: being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day." Here we find rest unto our souls, "Content and pleased to live unknown till Christ our Lord appear."

While Christ was with His disciples, they learnt in a limited way, but they had many contrary notions of Him. When He was crucified they all forsook Him and fled, yet love remained and they showed their love by going to the place where He was laid, and women took sweet spices to anoint Him. It was His yoke that brought them there to learn of Him. Two others went in their sorrow to Emmaus, communing together and reasoning over things that had happened, and there He was found of them, yet for a while their eyes were holden that they should not know Him. As He talked with them their hearts burned within them while He opened to their understanding the things concerning Himself.

Paul beautifully expresses the same to the Ephesians, praying "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIM: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe according to the working of His mighty power." After His appearing unto them, we find Him several times teaching His disciples lessons. Read John 21. "Peter said unto them, I go a fishing, they say unto him, we also go with thee." There they had a lesson that without Him they toiled all night and caught nothing, and that the love of natural things is not to be compared with the love of Christ. Peter was told to feed His lambs and sheep, and he was given

to know from whence that food, the hidden manna, must come. David, when fleeing from Jerusalem before his son Absalom, had surely learnt of Jesus, for "he went up by the ascent of Mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered and went barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up." When Shimei cast stones at David and at all his servants and cursed him, Abishai said, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee and take off his head." David said "Let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David, Who then shall say, wherefore hast thou done so? — It may be that the Lord will look upon mine affliction and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day, and the king and all that were with him came weary and refreshed themselves there." 2 Samuel 16:9-14.

It is in such distressing and humbling experiences, when our eyes are opened to see that the Lord holds, in His own hand, the wicked, which are His sword. Psalm 17:13, that we find rest unto our souls. Learn of Jesus that we are to ask "if it be God's will," for did He not say, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." Paul was ever learning of Him and finding rest unto his soul. It was through the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord that he suffered the loss of all things and counted them as dung that he might win Christ. This yoke of Jesus is something that fits Him and must fit us if we are His. It is a humble submission to Him as our husband, brother, friend, it is an ASSOCIATION with Him in the afflictions of the gospel, in the trial of faith, for let us remember that it is said of Him, "In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them: in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bare them and carried them all the days of old." Isaiah 63:9. How restful it was in the furnace for the three Hebrews when the Son of God kept company with them there. "Take my yoke upon you," walking according to His Word, desiring His Spirit to bring both exhortation and precept to our attention that we shall take heed thereunto, not trusting to any duties we may perform, but thankful for His grace which enables us so to do.

As we learn of Him and see how unlike Him we are, let us ask God to stop our mouths from speaking evil of those who have espoused His cause. I have said that this yoke is an Association, it is the cross of Christ Jesus my Lord, and our true yokefellow Paul says "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world." In the light of His sufferings and death and His self-sacrifice, ought we not to loathe ourselves, our self-interest, our callousness to the suffering of others, our indifference to the distress of churches, and the disunity of brethren who profess to love Him. "For I am meek and lowly in heart." He was despised and rejected of men; are we despising Him in our brother? Did He retaliate against those who misunderstood or resented Him? Why are souls so restless to-day? Is it not because they are labouring for that which is not bread? the bed is too short to find rest upon it and it will continue that way until God's blessed Spirit brings the Word with power to their souls.

"Take my yoke upon you and learn of me." There are those who have a zeal of God but not according to knowledge. Christ's yoke lies not only in what we think or do, but in fellowshipping Him in trials and fastings and cries and supplication. Read David's Psalms and see how much of your exercise finds expression in them. Can we say with David in Psalm 119:24,

"My comfort and my heart's delight thy testimonies be,
And they in all my doubts and fears are counsellors to me."

If we can, we have found rest unto our souls. "And as many as walk ac-

cording to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." Galatians 6:16.

The fear of man bringeth a snare, but Jesus says "Fear not." Our youth, in a world of error, among whom they have their conversation, find themselves in Egypt or Assyria, with no strength of their own to deliver them from such a multitude, but the Spirit of God can. In Isaiah 10:27, the burden is taken away from the shoulders and the yoke from the neck and the yoke is destroyed because of the anointing. In our extremity God's blessed Spirit is poured upon us. "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." 1 John 2:27. In a family where love reigns how easy it is to do what has to be done. In the family of God, when love reigns, it makes our cheerful feet in swift obedience move. Paul says "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," and we too, prove abundantly, that "His yoke is easy and His burden is light."

G. R.

R. F. D. 2,
Hampstead, Md.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

My subscription to the Signs of the Times has expired, and I am enclosing renewal for 1959 and 1960.

Black Rock Church was organized March 28, 1828; of which Elder John D. Wood is now pastor. At the beginning Moses Peregoy was a close relative of the Kelleys. My grandfather and grandmother Kelley, born in 1790, united with Black Rock in 1833; and John P. Kelley and Sarah J. Kelley, my parents, united with Black Rock in 1869.

I think the Kelleys' have been subscribers to the Signs nearly its entire life. It is a very welcome guest once a month, and we just can't do without it.

Yours unworthily,
Horace F. Kelley

ISAIAH 22:22-25

"And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons. In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the Lord hath spoken it."

"And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder." There can be no question as to whom the prophet has reference to. The prophecy of Isaiah is a wonderful book, for there is given to you and to me the beauty of Christ. This prophet was one among the many who presented, even before the birth of Christ, Christ in his humility and Christ in his glory. The gospel of Christ would be incomplete, wherever preached, if we did not present Christ both in his humiliation and in his glory. Those who fail to preach a fullness of the doctrine of salvation by sovereign grace, fail to present Christ in his glory — in his glory in the sense that when he entered heaven it was with a finished work. Among the last words the Saviour uttered before he died, as he bowed his head on the cross, were, "It is finished."

In the courts of the land it is customary to accept the testimony of dying people: much more would we accept the testimony of the Son of God when he was dying. Whatever he had under consideration when he bowed his head and said, "It is finished", was finished. In another place Jesus said, "I have finished the work thou gavest me to do"; and the work the Father gave the Son to do, was to save his people from their sins.

I awoke this morning with this scrip-

ture: "He shall save his people from their sins" — a message brought to a fearful person when Joseph was questioning about taking the virgin Mary as his wife, knowing she was a virgin, and with child; for God sent an angel to Joseph, and said, "Fear not Joseph to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." So the work of Christ was to save his people from their sins; and, if there had been one sin against any for whom he died that was unatoned for in his redemptive work, his work would not have been finished, and he would not have saved his people from their sins.

Here the prophet presents him as having the key (not keys, but key) of the house of David upon his shoulder. This was an important key, wasn't it? the key to the house of David. It was said, "In that day," speaking of the day of Christ when he should come, "In that day shall there be a fountain opened to the house of David" — the same house we are talking about here. A fountain shall be opened for sin and uncleanness. The fountain that is spoken of to be opened to the house of David for sin and uncleanness, was the blood of Christ that was to be shed on Calvary's cross: wherein the fountain would be opened, opened to the house of David, to the Church of God, to the ones for whom Jesus came into the world to redeem. It is the same fountain mentioned in the hymn: "There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emmanuel's veins; and sinners plunged beneath that flood, lose all their guilty stains." Isn't that the kind of salvation we long for, rejoice in, and glory in? It is the kind wherein Christ has been presented, and is presented, as the one who has the key to the house of David laid upon his shoulder.

In this same prophecy Isaiah views the work of Christ (before Christ was born) as if it had actually been accomplished. He said, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." The son was given before the child was born, for Christ existed from all eternity: ever one with the Father. "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace." Isn't this a wonderful description of Christ? Do you know anywhere in the Bible where there is any description that exceeds this discription which Isaiah gives of him even before he is born? "Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace."

I think that if we could just read that in the scripture sometimes, you and I, it would help us. Wouldn't it? — that the Son of God was all this. The prophet doesn't stop there, but says, "The government shall be upon his shoulder." The government of his people shall be upon his shoulder — and he has never divided that authority. "And of the increase of his government there shall be no end." This same prophet, in speaking of Christ with the key of the house of David on his shoulder, said he shall not fail or be discouraged 'till he sends forth judgement unto victory. No, Christ was to never fail or be discouraged until he sent forth judgement unto victory. These things are described of him before he even took a body of flesh.

In the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, the prophet brings to us Jesus in his suffering and in his glory. "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" Christ is the arm of God; for God has made bare his arm, and has said in his word, "Mine own arm shall bring salvation." Then he describes Christ in which he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, as a root out of dry ground to his own nation; that, when they should see him, there was nothing about him that they should desire him. He was despised and rejected of men, but he said again that it pleased the Lord to bruise him. "He hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all". Laid on whom? on Jesus Christ. "And with his stripes we are healed." And that is the only thing I have ever

known that would heal our great disease of sin — the stripes of Jesus Christ.

"All we", the prophet said, "like sheep have gone astray; every one turned to his own way; and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all." He does not leave him there, but he shall see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied; and by his knowledge shall he justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities.

"And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open and none shall shut; and shall shut and none shall open." I wonder how often you and I, in our daily life here, pause to think about the greatness of the power of Jesus. I wonder how often we realize that Jesus Christ has the keys to death and hell; but on this as this prophet presents Christ, it is as God laying upon Christ the key — laying on his shoulder the key to the house of David. A key is something by which we obtain an entrance into a building. And the key to the house of David (there is only one key), man has never had. It has never been laid upon the shoulder of a man; but this key was laid upon the shoulder of Jesus Christ. What do we mean by the expression, the key was laid upon his shoulder? we mean that all the power to open salvation to lost and ruined sinners, rested on the shoulder of Jesus Christ. He said in the word of God, that God looked, and of all the people there was none to help: Not that he needed any help, but there was none to help because God had plenty of help. Therefore, he said, "Mine own arm has brought salvation; and my fury has upheld me."

Should not each of us have in our heart this morning the deepest interest in one who has the key to salvation; who has the key to death; who has the key to hell? The prophet is speaking here of salvation, when he said "I will lay upon his shoulder the key of the house of David." No one has entrance into that house only as is provided by the one who has the key; and he shall open and none shall shut — he is the only one who shuts this door, and he is the only one who opens it. He is just as sovereign in one as he is in the other. If God has purposed salvation for a sinner, no power under heaven can prevent that sinner from having that salvation; for he shall open and none can shut. "I am the good shepherd of the sheep." "The good shepherd layeth down his life for his sheep." He doesn't only have the key to the house of David upon his shoulder, to open and none can shut, and shut and none can open, but he himself is the door into the house of David.

"And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place." I have seen people drive nails into the wall of the home, and sometimes they don't find a piece of solid timber to place the nail. Put a little weight on the nail, and down comes whatever is hung upon it. For a nail to support a burden, the nail must be fastened in a sure place. And God said of Jesus Christ, "I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place." I will fasten him as a nail where I can hang all the glory of heaven upon him. What a wonderful thought! I will fasten him; I will fix it so that he will support all that I lay upon him: I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place. I will fasten him in such a way that not one whose salvation depends upon him will ever fall. I will fasten him in such a way that every sin of his people shall be completely put away in his atonement. Have you seen Christ as that, my friend? Has God given you a faith to see all you need in this world; to keep you; to guide you; to save you in heaven in Jesus Christ?

I like to preach Jesus Christ. I have been trying it a long time. I feel to those who are called, that time is too precious for us to talk about anything but the Lord Jesus Christ. I want to preach him; I want to sing to him; I want to pray to him. "I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place." I will fasten him in such a way that he will support all I lay upon him. God has determined that wherever salvation comes to a sinner, it comes from a sovereign God, and is given him graciously, g l o r i o u s l y

through the merits of Jesus Christ. I would like to talk about a few of the things set forth in the scriptures wherein Christ is fastened as a nail in a sure place.

Do you remember when Jonah was commanded to go to Nineveh and to cry against the wickedness of that city? Jonah in his trip to Nineveh, was to be a type of Jesus Christ; for Jesus said in the 12th chapter of Matthew, "Ye wicked and adulterous generation, ye seek after a sign, but no sign shall be given you but the sign of the prophet Jonah, and as Jonah was in the belly of the whale three days and three nights, so must the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights." Jonah was a type of Christ: the type whereof Jesus referred to even before he died and went into the grave; but as he said Jonah was in the belly of the whale this number of days and this number of nights, so must the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth this number of days. You know that when Jonah started to Nineveh, he had decided he would go his own course. He had decided that he wouldn't go to Nineveh where the Lord had commanded him to go; and he entered a ship, and God sent a great storm upon that ship; and the waves tossed the boat to and fro. Why was the storm sent? because Jonah was there; and Jonah was to be the deliverer of all the people upon that ship, wasn't he?

The first thought of these people when the storm overtook them, was that we will just toss out the heavy material on the boat, and we will be alright. There are a lot of people who feel in the first work of grace, that if they just had time things would be alright: they'll live a better life, they'll accept the Lord Jesus Christ, they'll turn over a new leaf; but if Jonah's people travelling with him could have taken the heavy things out of the ship and lightened it, and taken care of the situation, it wouldn't have been like it was. But they lightened the ship, and it did not take care of the situation, for God's eye was upon Jonah. Finally, when they couldn't take care of the situation, they cast lots to see what the trouble was; and, you know, the lot fell on Jonah — and it didn't fall by chance, either. Jonah is a type of Christ. The lot fell upon Christ to die for us: I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; I will lay the key of the house of David upon his shoulder — and there the lot falls upon Jonah. He's fastened as a nail in a sure place. They looked for Jonah, and he's asleep: he wasn't worried; and they awoke him. You know Christ was asleep on the boat when his disciples were on the sea of Galilee, and they awoke him, and said, Master, don't you care if we perish? And he just rebuked the waves, and there was a calm. They ask Jonah, "Who are you?" "And he said unto them, I am a Hebrew; and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land." I'd like to say that truly in my heart this morning, (and you would more than anything you know), I fear the Lord; I fear God. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom; and people who have the fear of God, have some knowledge of God. He's a type of Christ; and he said if I'm causing all the trouble on the boat, just pitch me overboard: The storm couldn't cease until he went overboard.

"For I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place." Peace couldn't come to us until Christ goes down into the deep; until the grave received him. Until death receives him, no peace can come to you and me. I must go overboard before the winds will cease blowing, and the tempest is calmed. He said, Put me overboard, and it was calm. "I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place." He fastened Jonah there in the right place. He handled all the situations: everything was in the hand of God. It even tells us that he had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah; and as Jonah went down into the deep, so Christ our Lord went into the grave three days and three nights.

"And he shall be for a glorious throne in his father's house." It is not natural

for us to think of a throne as being a person, is it? We think of a throne as a place where the king sits. But Christ is presented here as a nail fastened in a sure place: he shall be for a glorious throne to his Father's house; and I will hang upon him all the glory of his Father's house. "Whatever the Father's house is, and wherever it is, God has said in his word that he would hang all the glory of that house upon Jesus Christ. If this could be divided between him and men, then he would not have all the glory of his Father's house. The gospel of Christ — wherever men preach it, he is preached as the one who has accomplished the work his father gave him to do; he is preached as the one who has accomplished a finished salvation, and entered heaven: been crowned with glory and honor, and been seated at the right hand of God. "And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his Father's house."

"In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in a sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the Lord hath spoken it." There was a day that that nail was to fall, and was to deliver all that hung upon it; and that day was when Christ died upon Calvary's cross. He was cut down, and all that hung upon that nail, all the depended upon it, are delivered from condemnation. No wonder, then, the prophet could say, "I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place."

If a man owned ten thousand dollars, and he paid every penny of that ten thousand dollars but one dollar, he would still be in debt. If Christ redeemed his people from every sin except one, that sin that is left unatoned for will sink us into hell. It's either eternal redemption accomplished through the blood of Christ, or there isn't any redemption. It's either a doctrine that Christ has saved somebody, or nobody is yet saved. Which doctrine do you believe? Do you believe that Christ has made an atonement and an offering for salvation, and nothing is sure about it yet? If you believe that doctrine, I want somebody to tell me what glory he has in heaven. Tell me what glory the Son of God has in heaven, if nobody has been completely saved yet: if his blood hasn't atoned for sin; if he hasn't put away sin. Suppose we started out to do a job of some kind, and it took fifty years to do it; and after forty-nine years the job was given up. The work is as incomplete, in one way, as it was when we started it. But, "I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place."

There are only three theories in the world that men accept religiously: that Christ has completed a complete atonement for the sins of his people and put them away with the sacrifice of himself, and is in heaven and has been crowned with the glory of a conquering king; or that sin has not yet been atoned for; or that if He saves sinners, they will be saved if they accept his work of atonement. If you believe a doctrine like that, there is a possibility that all the blood of Christ was shed in vain, and that not a single sinner would ever be saved in heaven. The gospel of Christ presents him in his glory. "And I will lay on him the key of the house of David, and he shall open and none shall shut, and he shall shut and none can open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place —" He shall be cut down; and when he is cut down those who hang upon his atoning work, are delivered from bondage.

I want to exalt his name, and you who have been taught of him, you want to feel the preciousness of his love in your heart. You want to feel that assurance that he died for you. You want to feel that renewal of your blessed hope that he has given you, day by day. You want to feel what the world cannot give you, and that's the peace that he sent.

When we shall come to quit the walks of men — we don't know when it will be. When we see each other here, we don't know we will see each other any more. How often it is when I go to church, and before I go again, someone

is gone. But, my friend, let me say this to you: you will fall where it is the Lord's will to take you, and when it's his will; and if you have that blessed faith, that blessed hope in him, all is well. If your soul is resting alone in the merits of Him, nothing shall harm you.

(Sermon by Elder D. V. Spangler, Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, February 22, 1959.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

GENESIS 32:27

"And he said, What is thy name? and he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince thou hast power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."

This Scripture, like all others, shows the mercy of God to poor, unworthy sinners. Jacob had twice sinned against his brother in taking undue advantage of him. Esau was so enraged at the second offence that Jacob fled to his kindred in another land. Esau said, "He is rightly named Jacob for he has supplanted me these two times." His name therefore signifies his true character, to which he confesses in his struggle with the man that wrestled with him.

In his first offence he took advantage of his brother at a time when he was least able to resist him. Esau was ready to faint with hunger, and he said, "If I should die what good would this birthright do me?" and for one mess of pottage he got the birthright. Jacob here shows his evil nature in this undue advantage of his suffering brother, but we hear no complaint from Esau about this. He sold out to him, but by and by, when Esau had gone for venison for his father, Jacob brought him meat, and when questioned by his blind father, he said, "I am thy very son Esau;" and lied not only in word, but also in actions, for he covered his hands and neck with the skin of the kid that his father might take him for Esau. I once heard the idea that Jacob did not lie, because in a law sense he was Esau, since he had obtaned the birthright. This might answer to the law, but not his father, for he said, "Art thou my very son Esau?" and he said, "I am." In truth he was no more Esau after he had obtained the birthright than before, and he knew that his father would not recognize him, and his arrangement to appear as Esau, and deceive his father, who could only judge by feeling, for Esau was a hairy man. Jacob obtained the blessing, and Isaac said, "He shall be blessed."

Esau was now enraged, and he comforted himself saying, "When my father is dead then will I kill Jacob." So Jacob fled as stated above; and notwithstanding the fact that he had so grievously sinned the Lord showed him mercy in the land to which he went, and protected him against Laban, who changed his wages ten times, seeking the advantage of him each time. The Lord turned the intended curse into a blessing to Jacob.

Here we see some of the great mercy of God who has said of his people, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and will remember their sins no more forever." How true that the ways of our God are past finding out. Why such mercy to a sinner? Here Jacob prospered and increased in goods. His family also; for it is here that God began to fulfill his promise to Abraham that his seed should be as the stars of heaven for multitude. But the Lord's time came for Jacob to return to the land from whence he came, and he told him to return, and it should be well with him. At God's bidding Jacob returns; (for his word must be obeyed). But he was afraid of Esau, although God has said, "It shall be well with thee." This shows that the poor sinner not only needs the promise, but its fulfillment in order that he may feel safe and rest from his labor. Is it any wonder that Jacob should be afraid of Esau? He well knew that he had greatly wronged him,

and he felt that it would be no more than he deserved if Esau should meet and destroy him and all he had. This gives us fellowship for Jacob, for we too well know that God would be just should he turn us away forever; and who is it, seeing he can claim nothing on his own merit, that is not afraid to meet him against whom he had sinned? Is it strange that Jacob would conceive the idea of appeasing the wrath of his brother with a present? Do we not try this time and again, vainly hoping by some good work of our own to obtain the favor of God?

Although Jacob has the present made up, and on its way to meet Esau, he is not at rest, for he has heard that Esau is coming, and four hundred men with him. He now realizes that Esau is prepared to destroy him and all that pertains to him, and he can see no reason why he should not feel like doing so. Is not this our experience, dear brethren? This is because of sin — a fearful looking for of judgment, and the suspense is awful. And now Jacob sends all before him, and tarries behind, all alone. How like the humble, sin-sick soul; no one like me, no one so great a sinner; but he remembers the promise of God that it should be well, and he calls up the fact as though he would remind the Lord; but he makes no claim upon him; but says, "I am not worthy of thy mercy which thou hast shown thy servant." How like you my brother and sister, asking protection purely upon the principle of mercy, acknowledging that he is afraid of Esau.

O how dark the night, and how full of gloomy forebodings to Jacob, who had so greatly sinned, and now felt his guilt and shame. And there wrestled a man with him, and this man was Jesus, for he says, "Before Abraham was I am," the root and the offspring of David. And he prevailed not until the breaking of day he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh, and his thigh was out of joint as he wrestled with the man. Now Jacob is helpless, for no man can wrestle with his thigh out of joint; and the man said, "Let me go, for the day breaketh." But Jacob said, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." This does not argue that Jacob could hold the man, or that the sinner of today can hold Jesus when he desires to go, but shows that the sinner who realizes his own helpless condition will not cease to cry to God, who alone can save him from that of which he is afraid. And the man said, "What is thy name?" and he said "Jacob." (a supplanter — a sinner). These are my people, children that will not lie. It has been a characteristic of the people of God in all ages to confess their sins; so Jacob confessed, I am a sinner, unworthy and without strength, all alone with no one to call upon but he against whom he had struggled all night.

So with us, we have no one to look to for mercy but the blessed Jesus against whom we have sinned all our days. Justice would say, "I know you are an unworthy sinner, and I will put an end to you right here." But mercy says, "Thy name shall no more be called Jacob, but Israel. For as a prince thou hast power with God and with men and hast prevailed." As Jacob he has done nothing but sin; he could not overcome the fear that he felt, for he knew that he deserved death.

It is only then as a prince or son of God, chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began, that he has power to prevail. Because of their being chosen in him, Jesus has given to poor sinners eternal life, and this life is power, and by it Jacob and all the chosen prevail.

But notwithstanding he has prevailed he goes halting the remainder of his life. Any wonder? His thigh is out of joint, his greatest strength is gone, and all of God's children are poor and halting, because their great strength is taken away; for the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God. So they go halting because their own strength is insufficient for them, and they need the staff of God's promise to lean upon, all this alone holds them up.

When Jacob meets Esau he finds that

his present does not appease his wrath. It is already appeased, and he says of the present, "I do not need it. I have enough." So the Lord says of sacrifice, "I am full of these things, and have no pleasure in them." His wrath against the poor sinner is already appeased through the precious blood of Jesus. Esau accepted Jacob's sacrifice only as a token of his joy in meeting him in peace, and so the Lord does not need our works to appease his wrath, but accepts them as a thanks offering which we render in the blessed hope that we have met the Lord, and he was pleased with us.

Now Jacob's sufferings was in the fearful looking for of that which he felt was justly due according to his deeds; but he found it better than he feared. And is not this our experience, dear ones? Have we not been blessed above merit, and beyond what we could expect? The awful judgments and fiery indignation for which we have often looked have not come, but mercy instead, thanks to his holy name.

I once heard a comment upon the saying of Paul, That if we sin willfully after we receive the knowledge of the truth there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries, in which the party said that the blood of Jesus washed away all our sins up to the time we receive the knowledge of the truth, and that the sins committed afterwards were remitted through our sufferings, the judgments and fiery indignations which the Lord sends upon us because of our sin. This cannot be true, as we are not partners with Jesus in the work of salvation, for he trod the winepress alone. Of the people there was none to help, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his son, cleanseth us from all sin, and salvation is wholly by the grace of God.

Jacob was not accepted by his elder brother because of his good works, or his suffering the night before, and so our elder brother does not accept us because of goodness in us, or because of our suffering the just penalty of our sin; but because of his everlasting love wherewith he hath loved us before the foundation of the world, and the salvation of the sinner from first to last is entirely by the grace of God through Jesus Christ. That which we merit we may justly claim; but Jacob, with all of God's humble poor, confesses that he is not worthy of all the blessings which thou hast shown thy servant. Thou hast not dealt with us according to our iniquities.

May I now say something about Jacob and Israel, for the man who wrestled with him said that his name should no more be called Jacob but Israel. Why? Because as a prince he has power with God, etc., and God afterwards said to him, "Thy name shall be no more Jacob, but Israel shall thy name be." But later on we find that when he was on his way to Egypt to meet Joseph, God appeared to him (Israel), and he said, "Jacob, Jacob," and he answered to his old name, saying, "Here am I."

Now, what shall I say, for I find that he is spoken of and spoken to as Jacob, after it is said that his name shall be no more Jacob, but Israel. The thought comes to me this way. The man said his name is Israel because as a prince he has power with God and with men and has prevailed. I notice that when spoken to or spoken of in times of trouble or distress he is called Jacob, but when he has power to overcome he is called Israel. See for instance when his sons return from Egypt, and tell him that Joseph, his beloved son, is yet alive, and governor over all the land of Egypt, Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not. But when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to take him home to himself, the evidence was assuring, and the spirit of Jacob revived and now he is a strong prince, and Israel said, "It is enough; Joseph, my son, is yet alive. I will go and see him before I die."

I want to say just here that he is not another man since the change of his

name, neither is he two men, but one and the selfsame, having another name only because of his power as a prince, or son of God. Neither are the Lord's people today another, or two, but the same as one in nature, and different only they have the power of a prince, or the presence of the spirit of God, by which alone they can overcome the evil of their nature.

I remember that the apostle Paul speaks of the old man and the new man, but he means only the two natures or spirits that are now in the one man; and the old man is the fleshly nature, and this is weak and sinful, and therefore always Jacob, and can never overcome. The new man is the spirit or life of Jesus, and therefore is a prince having power, and when revived says, It is enough, it is alright, the evidence is sufficient, and I will go in response to the call of Joseph, or the loving Jesus, who hath said, Come to me and I will feed and give you rest. Jacob seemed to forget his age and weakness in the joy of seeing Joseph. The destitution in his own land, the plenty in the land of Egypt, coupled with his greatest of all desires to see Joseph, sweetly forced him, not in any sense against his will, but with joy and gladness of heart; and not in his own strength or means, for Joseph sent all the means necessary to his coming to him. And when he met Joseph his desires were fully satisfied, and he said, "Let me die since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive," showing that the poor sinner finds his whole desire satisfied in Jesus who so richly provides for him of whom Joseph is a figure.

But I remember that this Israel is called the spirit of Jacob. The spirit of Jacob revived and Israel said, "It is enough." How will this hold with the idea that the name Jacob represents the fleshly nature? It is the sons and daughters of Adam that are saved. It is the sinner to whom Jesus give eternal life. This gift of God is the life or spirit of the sinner (Jacob) because God gave it to him, and when exercised by the power of this life he forgets his weakness and fear of going down to the grave in sorrow, and is now a strong prince believing the things of God in his heart, and confessing them with his mouth before men. And prevails, having power with God and with men; and through this spirit of Jesus which is also the spirit of the man (Jacob) or sinner (for Jesus prayed that they may be one in us, as thou Father and I are one) they are able to endure hardness, suffering, and persecution that is a marvel to the world, many sealing their faith with their blood, and today being counted as the offscouring of all things, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season, showing that the man of God can do that which is impossible to the world; but all by the power of the spiritual life which Jesus has given. Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," and his abundant labor in the vineyard of the Lord was by the grace of God which was with him, and this I feel sure is the faith of all well established children of God, but I wish to impress the fact that it was Jacob who sinned, it was he who fled from the wrath due to his sin, it was he who received mercy instead of justice, it is he who mourned for his absent son, it is he who is hungry because of the famine, it is he who faints for lack of faith in the words of those who like himself are sinners, and does not believe until he sees the evidence sent by him against whom they sinned, it was revived by this undeniable evidence, it was he who met and rejoiced in the presence of Joseph, it was he for whom Joseph cared so long as he lived, it was he upon whose eyes Joseph laid his hand when dead, and it was he whom Joseph carried and buried in his own land. He now sleeps with his fathers notwithstanding his acknowledged unworthiness, and this proves to you afflicted and poor ones that all that Jesus did is for you.

The same man who is a sinner by nature, is a saint by the grace of God,

that he who mourns in afflictions shall rejoice in health, that he who is weak in himself is strong in the Lord, that he who is poor in spirit is rich in the gifts of God, that he who faints because of unbelief shall be revived by the sweet evidence of salvation from hunger and thirst. He cares for you while you live. By Jesus the governor of all the land he will close your eyes to all that is mortal and vain, bury you with your faithful fathers, and wake you up in that beautiful city that needs neither the stars, moon nor sun to light it, but in which the Lord God is the everlasting light; and the days of your mourning shall be ended, and so the saints shall be ever with the Lord; and to his gracious name be all the praise both now and forever.

Your brother in this precious hope,

(Elder) J. T. Rowe
Baltimore, Maryland

(In Landmark, June 1, 1903 — republished by request.)

OBITUARIES

T. H. SALYER

I was born September 21, 1876, in Elliott County, Kentucky; and was married September 7, 1899, to Sarah E. Johnson, of Elliott County. Lived two years on a rented farm in Elliott County, and leased a farm in Carter County, Kentucky; then bought a farm in 1904, and lived on it until 1950; then moved to Ashland, Boyd County, Kentucky. There were twelve children born to us — nine living; thirty-six grandchildren, and seven great grandchildren. I was seventy-six, September 21, 1952; and my wife seventy-six, February 7, 1953.

I joined the Old Grace Baptist Church in 1912, and was baptized June 22nd; wife was baptized 4th Sunday in September, 1933: both baptized by Elder John E. Thornbury. We have traveled a rough road, but the Lord has preserved our life and liberty. We hope and believe that He will deliver this body from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God, by his great wisdom and mighty power, and grace given us in his Son from the foundation of the world. He says he will never leave nor forsake us, but will give us grace to help in every time of need.

I want Elder C. H. Evans, of Enterprise, Ky., and Elder H. L. Rogers, Denton, Ky., to preach my funeral. In case they can't come, have Elder J. S. Hunnicutt, of Webbville, and Charlie Parsons, of Wheelersburg, Ohio.

T. H. Salyer

(Note: the above was written June 3, 1953, with date of death (January 9, 1959), and age (82) to be filled in by others. He was a member of Lost Creek Church — Ed.)

WALTER H. BEACHAM

Walter H. Beacham, a deacon of the Providence Primitive Baptist Church at Kitty Hawk, passed away November 6, 1958. He was considered by all to have been one of the ablest gifts to the church and community of our times. He was a retired Coast Guardsman, a member of the Fort Raliegh Post of the American Legion, and a member of the Dare County Board of Elections.

He was a staunch believer in Salvation by Grace, and grace alone; and the total depravity of man. Surely the fruits shown in his latter years were a testimony of the inward working of the true spirit of God's grace; and we feel great hope that his departure from this life is his great gain.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Bertie Beacham, and three sons: Calvin, Alvis and Glenn Beacham; one brother, Clyde Beacham; two sisters, Mrs. Joe Perry and Mrs. Ethel Guard. He was the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. John Beacham, and was a lifelong resident of Kitty Hawk. He was baptized in September, 1950. The church and community mourned his passing, for he was esteemed by all.

Written by order of the church in conference.

Elder G. G. Travathan, Moderator
Milton Perry, Clerk

SALLIE GOODSON

Sister Sallie Goodson, age 84, of Pleasant Ridge Primitive Baptist Church, Victora, Alabama, died peacefully at her home April 8th, after a lingering illness. The writer conducted her husband's funeral about 3 years ago; and was called to her service Thursday, April 9th, at her beloved church. She was a dear lover of the principles preached by Elder J. J. Shields for half a century in Coffee County, Alabama.

Sister Goodson is survived by five daughters, and three sons; and a host of other relatives and friends. She was laid to rest in her beloved cemetery, beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

J. J. Collins

MRS. LENORA H. TILLETT

Mrs. Lenora H. Tillett, age 73, died November 10, 1958, in the U. S. Public Health Hospital, Norfolk, Va. She was a native and life long resident of Kitty Hawk, the widow of

Alfonso Tillett (known as Uncle Fonnie), and a member of the Primitive Baptist Church since August, 1944.

She is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Harry Hamilton, of Sea Level; three sons: N. Avery Tillett, Kill Devil Hills, B. Allen Tillett and Clay Tillett, of Kitty Hawk.

She was a faithful wife and mother, and always attended her meetings when her health would permit. Her home was always open to those who believed in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace alone. She was much loved by members of her church and community. Many mourn her loss, but hope her departing is to be with the Lord, which is far better.

Written by order of the Providence Church in conference.

G. G. Travathan, Moderator
Milton Perry, Clerk

SISTER R. D. NEWMAN

God in his infinite wisdom has been pleased to call from our midst our beloved Sister, Beulah Newman. While it grieves us much, we desire to bow humbly before God in recognizing his will. We have missed her so much, and will continue to miss her — she meant so much to all of us; yet we know the good Lord knows best, and we humbly bow in submission, desiring to thank Him for her life while she was with us. Oh, how sweet it was! We prized very highly the sweet fellowship and communion we had with her.

Sister Beulah was the daughter of the late William H. and Louella Workman, who preceded her to the grave; and who also were members of the church. She was born October 11, 1903, and departed this life October 15, 1958. She was united in marriage to R. D. Newman on December 25, 1927; and to this union were born two sons, R. D. and Boyd. They, together with her husband, are left behind to remember the many pleasant moments spent together, and to miss the many kind words and motherly care she gave them. Yet, dear ones, do not grieve after mother: she is resting with her dear Saviour, and will arise in His righteousness to praise him forever.

Sister Newman united with the church at High Point, N. C., March 21, 1954, and was baptized on Easter morning, together with her dear husband. She remained a faithful member as long as she lived. She was unusually interested in the welfare of the church, and we pray that the Lord will be pleased to give us more such members as she. Written at the request of the church by her pastor,

D. A. O'Bryant

SUSAN ADA SNIDER

It has pleased the Lord to take from us our dear Sister Susan Ada Snider. She was born May 15, 1870, and departed this life February 26, 1959. She was born in Arkansas but moved in her early life to Oklahoma when it was known as the Indian Territory. She was married to Robert Snider who preceded her in death several years. To this union were born two sons: Jimmie Snider of Bakersfield, Calif.; Loran Snider, Buena Park, Calif.; seven daughters, Watie Gill, Clara Clour, Jewel Garland, Bertha Wright, all of Bakersfield; Etta Walker, Duarte, Calif.; Thelma Strickel, Huntington Park, Calif. and Elbie Hilton, Lubbock, Texas; all of whom survive her, together with 17 grandchildren and 36 great-grandchildren; also one sister, Mrs. Ida Hale of Arkansas. Sister Snider lived to see her children take their places in society and become good citizens.

About fifty years ago she united with the Primitive Baptist Church near Maud, Oklahoma, and was baptized by Elder Will Snider, who was a very able advocate of the doctrine of truth. She and her husband moved to California fifteen years ago, and she became a charter member of Little Flock Church in Bakersfield, Calif. when it was organized in 1951. The church met in her home until her death. The writer has had the privilege of visiting this church on numerous occasions and each time we were made to feel that surely the Lord was with us. Her favorite song was "Amazing Grace." She was always looking forward to her meeting days, and never complained although at times she had to bear most of the burden of preparing for the meeting. She will be greatly missed by the church.

The writer was called on to speak words of sympathy after reading Thess. IV. 13-18. I tried in my weak way to point out some of the fundamental principles in which this dear old sister was so strongly established. I did not feel I could do her justice without referring to her belief in the sovereignty of God, and his predestination of all things that come to pass; that He executed his will in all things. And to point out Jesus as the way, the truth and the life.

We feel that a dear mother in Israel has fallen. Her children will miss her but we are made to believe she is at rest. We pray if it could be God's will to give her children and all those who were near and dear to her a spirit of reconciliation. May God's richest blessings rest with them is my humble prayer in the name of Jesus.

T. R. Jefferson

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 127 DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1959 NO. 7

2768 Clifton Ave., N. W.
Roanoke, Virginia

Dear Elder Spangler:

The enclosed issue of Zion's Landmark (February 1. 1899) was handed me recently. There is something expressed in a manner that did me so much good that I wondered if others might not enjoy it also. I am referring to the writings of my grandfather, Elder Asa D. Shortt; and I would appreciate it if you see fit to reprint it in the Signs.

. . . I do not remember my grandfather too well — just that he was an old white-haired man sitting in a wheel chair, and that our mother always had us to shake hands with him. I did feel that I loved him and that he loved me. Now I love to read his writings, and am glad he expressed these things that are of such vital interest to me, so clearly and simply. Sometimes it is so restful to read things of this nature that are not full of trying to impress someone how strong we believe, or see, or feel, but with a simple honest expression that it is in and of Jesus.

This song has been impresed upon my mind for several days:

"While in the vale of vision dead,
The house of Israel lie,
Jesus to the Prophet said,
'Go thou and prophesy.'

Go thou, nor reasoning scruples make
Because the bones are dry;
My voice shall bid the dead awake —
'Go thou and prophesy.'

I'll bid the dying sinner live
To lift my name on high;
Eternal life 'tis mine to give —
'Go thou and prophesy.'

Preach Jesus, as he's brought to view
And thither point their eye;
'Tis I must give to will and do —
'Go thou and prophesy.'

From stones, to celebrate my grace
While mercy's tidings fly,
My arms shall arise a numerous race —
'Go thou and prophesy.'

Let Zion's watchmen ne'er refrain
Her silver trump to blow;
For Jesus can, with feeblest strain,
His richest grace bestow."

I was glad to hear this song sung after my mind had been on it so long. I was also glad that one spoke of what Ezekiel answered in Chapter 37, verse 3: "O Lord, thou knoweth." I am deeply impressed in reading the Scriptures that so many were given to say in similar language, "Thou knoweth." We must be given to feel that He knoweth all things, and that we know nothing, to appreciate the testimony of those in the Scriptures, as well all of these that have left this testimony on record. As the song said, "Preach Jesus as he's brought to view."

My mind also dwells upon the Scripture that reads, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto thee." That I might first seek his kingdom and his righteousness, is a desire that rises above all things else; that in all things that come before me, I might "first" seek his kingdom and his righteousness, and be willing to leave all else to be added. I cannot seek Him, his kingdom, his righteousness, if I cannot believe that all these things will be added. Do I recognize His kingdom? Do I want his righteousness? I hope, I sincerely hope, I do.

I enjoyed your preaching at Roanoke on Sunday; I did not hear you Saturday night. Unworthily I feel to take up your time.

Catherine A. Houchins

ARTICLE BY ELDER SHORTT

"Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable." (Luke 2:17)

Elders Gold and Lester: The above scripture was spoken by John the Baptist when he came in the wilderness of Judea, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." The militant kingdom was ushering in, and the people were musing in their hearts at this strange doctrine and practice; and many of the people came to John and demanded baptism of him. And he said, "O generation of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come. Bring therefore fruits meet for repentance."

None were baptized but those that gave testimony of their acceptance with God. For it is said that John was sent to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. I conclude that those that were baptized by John, were born of God, and John made them ready by baptism. Among them that were baptized were the apostles; and Jesus also came and was baptized in the river Jordan by John. And then Jesus began more fully to make known his power. His fan (power) is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor. To purge is to cleanse. The floor is the church. The wheat is the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace and long-suffering. The chaff is the imperfections of the children of God.

The garner, I think, is heaven. There is nothing pure that originates in this world. Everything that is pure is in Jesus. There is nothing pure in God's children but Christ formed in them the hope of glory. It is very necessary that they should be purged from dead works to serve the true and living God. Christ sits as a refiner's fire to purify his children that they should offer an offering in righteousness. It is said the Lord is our righteousness.

In time past we were carried about with divers lusts, living without any hope in Christ. Before our sins were revived our hearts and minds were as a cage of unclean birds, something very hateful; and this is the condition of the sinner before he is cleansed from sin. I do understand that there is something done for the sinner, and that is, to take away his hard and stony heart, and give him a heart of flesh. Except a man be born again he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven; and what constitutes a man if it is not his internal faculties? I understand that it is these inward emotions that mourn over a life of sin, and this sorrow is produced by the light of the Spirit shining in the heart of the sinner; and then he sees the justice of God in his condemnation. And while these exercises are going on he is realizing a foretaste of an awful eternity. For it is said that to them that sat in the region and the shadow of death, light has sprung up. So, vital sorrow for sin is a foretaste of an awful punishment beyond the grave; but the deliverance from sin is a foretaste of the perfection that awaits the children of God.

I understand that the sinner receives the truth of this scripture in his experience. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life. The children of God realize this death in part while under conviction, and occasionally while on their pilgrimage. When the sinner is quickened he is alive from that very time, though first to his condition as a lost sinner; and then he is made alive to the knowledge of Jesus in the pardon of sin. Old things are passed away and behold all things are become new.

Sometimes the sinner thinks when he is pardoned that he is perfect, and that he will never see any more trouble; but he is sadly mistaken. For then he is fully entered into the field of battle, and the warfare will continue as long as life lasts. Notwithstanding the sinner is purged from his old sins, yet there is a fleshly mind in him; and there is a renewed mind also. Paul describes them thus: I with the mind serve the law of

God, but with the flesh the law of sin. So there are two natures in the child of God, and that is the reason that he cannot serve God perfectly in this life. So there is more or less striving with all the children of God. Sometimes envy, hatred and evil surmisings get the upper hand of the child of God. So it is very necessary that this evil growth should be purged out that the fruit of the spirit might be made manifest to the praise of God's grace. Satan has more or less control of this fleshly mind, and might be still the captain of the same, but Jesus has created his throne in the mind that serves God; so he is the captain of our salvation. And this is the reason that Satan cannot prevail, for Jesus is stronger than the strong. I think Paul specially has reference to this internal warfare when he said, "I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith." He also said that he kept under his body, lest after he had preached to others, he should become a castaway.

When we are enabled to keep our evil desires under control, then we are in part bearing the image of the heavenly. Then we are as a city set upon a hill whose light cannot be hid. When this is the case the world cannot prevent this light from shining through. In the days of persecution, when God's children had to suffer martyrdom, this light shined to a fuller extent than it does now.

But the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable. The fire represents the judgement of God which is to purify his children. In this sense God is a consuming fire, and he also is a refiner's fire, and a fuller's soap, to purify the sons of Levi that they should offer an offering in righteousness; and this began to take place at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is as natural for the children of God to be encumbered with imperfections as it is for the wheat to be surrounded with chaff; or the gold or silver, while in a crude state, to be mixed with dross. The more we see of the purity of God, the more we feel the need of Jesus, for we then can see that the contrast is as great as it is between light and darkness; and all the light we realize spiritually is of the Lord, for it is said that ye who were sometime darkness are now light in the Lord.

God's children today are in as much need of the teaching of the Holy Ghost as the disciples were of the need of the teaching of Jesus. In a sense the Scriptures are a teacher, for they are the words of inspiration; and it is said, The words that I speak unto you are spirit and life. All of the teaching of the Spirit of God is in harmony with the word of God; and if we were to profess to have a revelation, and it did not agree with the Scriptures, we should take it for granted that it is false; for there is harmony in all of the work of God. When the Spirit applies the words of Jesus unto us they are as much life unto us as when Jesus spoke them.

Because the Lord changes not, is the reason that experiences of God's children in all ages of the world harmonize in substance with another; and this is the reason that we can see eye to eye and speak the same thing in regard to our salvation.

Asa D. Shortt
Turtle Rock, Va.
(Feb. 1, 1899)

THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD

By Elder David Bartley

CHAPTER EIGHT

CHRIST'S BETTER TESTAMENT

THE PRIESTHOOD of Christ was not after the order of Aaron, nor by the law of Moses, as has been seen; therefore he is the High Priest of another testament, or covenant than that of Moses and Aaron, and according to a different law. The inspired writer on our Lord's priesthood, (believed to be the Apostle Paul), is very plain upon this point, saying, "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law." (Heb. 7:12) He further says, "For it is evident

that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. And it is far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life." He then says that the commandment going before was disannuled, being weak and unprofitable; and that the law made nothing perfect. The priests of the law were made priests after this law that made nothing perfect, and without an oath. Thus is shown the weakness and failure of that first covenant and its corresponding priesthood; and the great superiority of our Lord's perfect and eternal priesthood. The writer then says, "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament." (Verse 22) As surety, Jesus makes the better testament sure, unfailing and perfectly good, because he faithfully and righteously fulfilled it in all its provisions and promises, as its bondsman or mediator. Therefore it is certain that all the people and heirs of the better testament of Jesus are just as secure in their inheritance as his brethren and joint-heirs as he is their faithful surety; and since he is made all this to them by the oath of God and after the power of an endless life, their inheritance of life and holiness in this better testament with Christ is forever sure.

Now, therefore, forasmuch as both the priesthood and the law have been thus changed from Aaron to Jesus, and from the first testament to the second, it will be profitable to understand this change, and its nature and extent. We should know whether the two testaments or covenants have been united or blended together, so that the new retains much of the old, or whether they are radically different and distinct. In this investigation, as in all things pertaining to salvation from our sins, we must rely alone on "Thus saith the Lord;" for, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." Of Christ as our High Priest it is thus written: "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second." How evident this is, for there would have been no room or need for the second. "For finding fault with them he saith, Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." (Heb. 8:6-13) This was written to the churches in Judea a very few years before the total overthrow and dispersion of the Jews, and the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, by the Roman armies, at which time that faulty, old and decayed covenant did vanish away, as a wornout garment. Its priesthood was taken away, its sacrifices and temple service ceased for ever, and thus it was made fully manifest that Christ "blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." (Col. 2:14, 15) That is, in death by the

cross. The necessity and purpose of this is thus written: "And for this cause he he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgression that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead, otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." (Heb. 9:15-17) And so it is written of Christ and the two covenants: "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." (Heb. 10:9 "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." (Gal. 3:12)

All this revealed truth very conclusively and strongly shows us, not only that the old covenant does not enter into or form any part of the new and better testament of our successful High Priest, and is not according to it, but also that the old has been fulfilled, ended and taken out of the way of his people by the Surety of the better testament; so that it no longer has any dominion over them, nor power to either reward or curse them, because they are not under it, and it is dead to them. Yea, more; for the Scripture says, "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that ye should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." (Rom. 7:4-6) The old covenant, then, was unto death, and its awfully solemn ministrations were sacrifices of blood and death, thus ever teaching with fearful emphasis that its people and all else belonging to it must end in death. But the death of its last and consummating sin-offering, to which all others had pointed, made an end of it all, and of sin and death as well. So unlike this is the new covenant, that it is unto life — endless life! and all its ministrations are life and peace! How true, then, that it is "not according to the covenant" that made nothing perfect, and which the people continually broke. Most surely therefore, was Jesus made the surety of a better testament, which was established upon better promises. For of him and his people the Lord of hosts said, "My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips; he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity." (Mal. 2:5-6) Behold, this is an everlasting covenant, that shall never wax old nor vanish away, as did the first which is therefore called the old covenant, while this is forever new. "And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write; for these words are true and faithful." (Rev. 21:5)

The new covenant is not according to the old in another essential part, its Mediator; for while Moses the servant of God was the mediator of the old, Jesus the Son of God is the mediator of the new. Moses was the mediator of the law, which ministered justice, and therefore condemnation unto death; but Jesus is the mediator of the gospel, which ministers mercy and grace, and therefore justification unto life. It is written: "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. The man that doeth them shall live in them." (Gal. 3:10-12) Neither Moses, nor Aaron, nor any of the people of that legal covenant ever thus continued in perfect obedience in that covenant, which was thus conditional, and cursed the disobedient, while it rewarded the man that lived in obedience; but they

all failed, and were under its curse. This is the woeful defect and weakness of any conditional covenant, which in its nature necessarily requires full and continual obedience to its righteous conditions, before any one can live in it or be saved by it, or receive any blessing according to it. But since "there is not a just man upon the earth that doeth good and sinneth not," as many as are of the works of a conditional covenant are under the curse according to it, and shall receive no blessing unless he faithfully continues in all its conditions. But so entirely unlike this is the new and better covenant, which God has established upon infinitely better promises, that one of its rich provisions is, "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more," saith the Lord. For the Mediator of this covenant hath redeemed his people from all their sins and iniquities, and his blood of the new testament, which was shed for the many people, washes them from their sins. And so this covenant is based upon infinitely better promises.

The primary principle in any conditional covenant is full obedience to its requirements, without which none of its provisions can be received, for they are bestowed as rewards to the obedient only; therefore no blessing in a conditional covenant can be received otherwise than as a conditional reward, and the conditional consideration or price paid is righteousness, or perfect obedience; for the conditional demand must be rightly fulfilled, before the recompence can be received. Such was the nature and spirit of the old covenant, according to which the good and obedient only could be rewarded with its conditional promises of good; for its very nature was yea, and nay, blessings and curses, and all the good things in it depended upon the righteousness of its people. The same is necessarily true of every conditional covenant, whether it be claimed under the law or under the gospel; for there cannot be any more than the two covenants, with their two principles and ways of salvation, which are either the mercy and grace of God in Christ, "not according to our works," or "by works of righteousness which we have done." All religious and religionists belong to and are either the first or last of these two, for there is no union or concord between them. For mercifulness to the unrighteousness of a people who are under a conditional covenant or salvation is forbidden and impossible, because the conditions are righteous obedience, and mercy to unrighteousness is forbidden. So the moment mercy is admitted, conditional salvation is destroyed, and the new covenant established. And the better promises upon which the Lord has established the new are, "it stands from all condition clear," and is not yea, and nay, but yea and amen, to the glory of God in Christ.

For the Lord himself makes this new covenant with the true and spiritual house of Israel, in which he is their God, and says they are his people; that he will put his laws in their minds, and write them in their hearts. And still another better promise of this new testament in the atoning and pardoning blood of its High Priest and Mediator is, "And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me from the least to the greatest." So in all the tables of this better testament of Jesus, the Lord says, "I will," and "they shall." This makes it and all its provisions, mercies, blessings and promises positive and sure, as long ages ago promised, saying, "I will give you the sure mercies of David." And so David himself said, "Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he maketh it not to grow." (2 Sam. 23:5) Israel was his house or people, who were as the sand of the sea, but of them it was written, "Yet a remnant shall be saved." For as a house or body, they trusted in the old covenant of conditional righteous-

ness and rewards therefore; therefore they had no place in their hearts for the promise of God in the new covenant of Christ, that he would be merciful to their unrighteousness, and would blot out their sins and iniquities in the blood of the High Priest of the better testament. O no! for this principle of salvation and blessings according to absolute mercy alone, and this to offset their unrighteousness, rather than to reward their obedience, was too humiliating for them, so long as they esteemed themselves able to keep the commandments of God; therefore they adhered to the rewards of the old covenant, rather than flee to the sure mercies of our spiritual David in his new and better testament. It would seem to them, no doubt, to make void the necessity of good works, and take away the incentive to obedience, if the Lord must be merciful to their unrighteousness, and they must rely alone upon his grace in the new covenant for all their salvation and every blessing.

But to the contrite and poor in spirit, the sick in sin, the lame and helpless, who have to sorrowfully confess, "How to perform that which is good I find not," the absolute promises of the Lord's mercy and grace, pardon and full salvation in the new covenant, is all their salvation, and all their desire. This was the dying testimony of David the king, and it is likewise true in the living and dying experience of every one who has been made to truly know the daily need of salvation from sin, with whom the God of salvation has made the new covenant. How good and blessed to all the new Israel that the Lord himself makes the new covenant with them; that he writes his laws in their hearts, is their God and Father, makes them his people, says they shall all know him; that though they are sinful and unrighteous, and have to confess that "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags," yet he is ever merciful and gracious, and remembers their multiplied sins no more! This is the only covenant that will save and bless the sinful and unrighteous, such as Isaiah and Paul. It is as far removed from the old covenant of conditional blessings and curses as life is from death, and salvation from condemnation; therefore the Lord says the new is not according to the old. Moses was the representative of the old, but "the man Christ Jesus" is the very embodiment and soul of the new testament in his precious blood; therefore all its sure mercies, promises and blessings are yea and amen in and by him. Yea, to him God said, "I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." (Isa. 42:6, 7) Thus the new covenant embraces all the fullness of its Mediator and High Priest, who ever liveth to make intercession for all that the Father gave him, that they should be with him.

(Chapter nine next month)

Charlottesville, Va.

Eld. P. E. Ingram,
Martinsville, Va.

Dear Brother Ingram:

While here in the hospital for treatment, I have an urge to write you something of my experience, if I have one, since I have never discussed it with anyone before.

For quite awhile before I united with the church, I felt cast down, and a lost sinner. My constant prayer was, "Lord save me". One night when I felt that I could not last much longer in this state, something seemed to say to me, "This night you will be delivered from sins." I awoke at about 3 A. M., praying that my heavy burden of sin be lifted. At that moment my whole body began to writhe and twist like a dismembered serpent. I spoke aloud, saying, "I must be dying, for no human body could be twisted and contorted

like this and live." When the contortions ceased, I fell in a deep sleep from utter exhaustion. When I awoke my burden was gone, and I was praising the Lord. The old heavy burden of sin has never returned; although I often feel that I am not worthy to be in the church.

I had been debating for some time whether to offer to the church, until I saw Jesus in a dream, beckoning me to come. When I went forward and asked a home with the church, a bright, golden light seemed to illuminate the whole building; and I looked around to see whence the light came, but saw that no extra lights had been turned on.

I was received into the church Saturday, October 5, 1958; and was baptized on Sunday morning. I feel relieved to write you something of what my hope is based upon, even though it isn't much.

Your sister in faith,
Cora Lee Ross

Ruffin, N. C.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

We see by the date on our paper that it is time to renew our subscription. The letters of experience, the articles on doctrine as it is taught among the Old School Baptists, together with the very good editorials, are worth far more to us than the price of the paper. Such precious things cannot be bought with gold or silver; nevertheless it is understood there is cost in editing the paper, and we only wish that we were able to contribute more than we do.

We love the doctrine the Signs sets forth, if we are not terribly deceived. And when we are blessed to hear the ministers in our association preach this same doctrine, together with others in different parts of the country where we have visited, we are ready to cry, "Praise the Lord, Oh, my soul; praise the Lord all that is within; sing praises to his holy name."

We are told and believe that deceivers shall come, saying, "Lo here, and lo there", but if any man come among you declaring any other gospel than that which you have received, to bid him not God speed, lest we be partakers of his evil deeds. I humbly believe that God taught me to love salvation by grace. "Grace has brought us safe thus far, and grace will lead us home." When one comes claiming they're taught to love sovereign grace, and then mixes law works in order that they may receive blessings here in time, I do not love that kind of doctrine. That's conditional time salvation. I am made to believe that if we can do one thing to merit blessings of God, of ourselves, then couldn't we do more — and more, and then do all that is required. What need have we of Christ, were such the case? We do hope that we have not so learned it.

If I am wrong in what I have felt the scripture means, "Ye are fallen from grace", I hope someone will explain the true meaning. I understand that Paul in this scripture, was exhorting the Galatian brethren to steadfastness in the gospel: they were begun in faith, now they were bringing in law doctrine. It seems plain to me that Paul told these people plainly that Christ is become of no effect to you, whosoever of you are justified by the law. Then he says, "Ye are fallen from grace." I hope I honestly desire to know the truth, and do not desire to misapply a scripture. Paul knew by experience and revelation that one cannot hold on to law doctrine to merit blessings of God. Those that do cannot claim Christ as their Saviour. Has he not said in another place, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes"! The law was given by Moses. Why? It was added because of transgressions, and was our schoolmaster unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. Faith is the gift of God; then where can one bring in self-works in order to salvation?

I just do not believe that the Spirit of God teaches a lie; nor does it preach a man in false doctrine. My dear brothers

and sisters in bonds of love, it is according to the shed blood of Jesus Christ: he was raised for our justification, and is now at the right hand of God making intercession for the saints according to the will of God. Then it has been made known to us that grace and truth came by Jesus Christ; and how we desire to render praise where praise is due! I am made to believe that grace means divine favor, free and unmerited, bestowed on unworthy creatures; and once when it is at work in the life of a sinner, it is impossible to fall from grace. The grace of God was never shed on a chosen vessel of mercy in vain. Where Paul said, "Ye are fallen from grace", I believe he meant that if one claimed justification by the law, then they are come short of grace: were not in possession of the grace of God.

I remember Elder Spangler using as his text sometime ago, The law, verses the gospel (I believe it was); and how comforting the sermon was to me. I was made to shed tears of joy while he was preaching such wonderful things. How glad I was to hear him declare that we cannot mix law worship and the gospel, and call it the grace of God. I hope I have been taught in the school of grace that Christ is the obedience of his chosen children. They are not blessed for their obedience — the grace of God is not hinged on conditions. It is grace that calls us, grace that saves us, and grace that keeps us a willing people in the day of God's power. Then grace will safely carry us home to be with our Lord and our God, when we have completed our life here, and Jesus comes to carry his to be with him forever. He was made of God unto his people, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption; as it is written, let them that glory, glory in the Lord.

If you find these things herein written to be in praise of Him who called us (I hope I am one) out of darkness into the marvelous light of his dear Son, you may print it in our dear paper. I have no desire to crowd out better things. A little sister saved by grace, I hope.

Mrs. Fred Cobb

P. S.: Yes, dear ones, it was Jesus who kept the law for his chosen bride: he kept it to a jot and tittle. We could not keep it, the flesh being weak, but God sent his only begotten Son to do for his bride, the church invisible; to take her place; to satisfy the demands of the law; and now we are no more under law, but under grace. "The Son shall make you free, and ye shall be free indeed."

THERE IS A TIME TO EVERY PURPOSE

R. F. D. 2,
Ruffin, N. C.

Editors, Signs of the Times:

"When God revealed his gracious name,
And changed my mournful state,
My rapture seemed a pleasing dream
The grace appeared so great."

My hope is that I am not deceived, for I do believe God has revealed himself to me. I have never been one to attend church regularly, but during the past forty years would go off and on; and once joined a Sunday School class. In going to different churches, it seemed to my mind there were only two schools of thought expounded from the pulpit; one was that God had a people, and these people were taught of God, and He had the power to save them from their sins — and He promised he would do so. The other way, or the way I heard it, was that God was able to save, but only those who would accept him.

Around six or seven years ago it seemed a desire to be one of his, began to bear on my mind; and I began to go to church more often. My loving wife belonged to a Missionary Baptist church, and I seemed to want to go with her to preaching, thinking maybe I could be satisfied; for I had a desire to become a Christian, and if I could help the matter along, well I would try. The more I went it seemed the preacher would take up the few minutes of his time talking of worldly things — poli-

tics, cosmetics, money, etc. Then would come the invitational hymn, and if nobody came, the preacher would ask the congregation to bow: If a timid one wanted to come, he or she would be able to come unseen. That made me wonder if anyone could steal into God's kingdom; and I would think of the passage in the Bible about Christ when he said that he was the door, and the way also.

I had been to Old School Baptist preaching more than all the others put together, and their invitation was as much different as day and night — no thoughts like tomorrow might be too late; no bowed heads that one might come unseen. They believe that one came to offer to the church, he or she would only see the mercy-seat prepared by God for poor, unworthy, vile sinners. Oh, how true it was when, by the grace of God, the way was opened for me to offer. One, or one thousand, would not have made the slightest difference, for I only saw the mercy-seat for a poor, vile, helpless one. I saw myself as the vilest among them, and still do. It thrills deeply for one to seem to want to shake my hand, the hand of one as unworthy as I. I didn't go accepting Christ. I went wondering if he had accepted me; for I realize that if he had not accepted me, all the power I could muster to accept him, would profit me nothing, and I would still be lost and helpless. Wanting to be a Christian had been on my mind a long time. The burden really began to bear down about three years ago, and I wanted to unite with the Primitive Baptist faith. During those three years I was made to suffer terribly, for I wanted to offer, but couldn't. I would go to meetings, and the happy, contented faces I saw there would appear before me during the weeks to follow, and I would become so hungry to be counted among them.

I would think that I would offer next meeting, but come next meeting I would not, or could not, go at all. It seemed that instead of wanting to offer, I was afraid that if I went I would offer; and if I was accepted, one such as I would only mar the beauty I saw there.

I tried to live a better life, but seemed to get nowhere. I had a dream one night; I dreamed Brother David Spangler and I were in an apple orchard, and the ground was covered; a few seemed to be the most beautiful apples I ever saw; the others were in different stages of decay, with some of them almost dried up. Brother David and I did not speak. I don't think I told anyone of the dream, but it made me wonder, and I could not see anything in it for me. The dream slipped my memory until a year or so later when I had another dream: I had three young calves; and had a water fountain that would bring water when the calves put pressure on it, but when I went to the barn the calves were starving for water. I pressed on the fountain but no water came. I found the pump was alright and was running, but the well was dry. Then I said the well is dry and I can't get water for them, so they will starve. Then I awoke, and I must have been crying for a long time, for my pillow was wet. Immediately my dream of sometime ago came back to me, and I could see myself as the worst of the rotten apples I saw in that dream. I believed the two dreams, although far apart, had a connection then. The one in the orchard to show me the state of decay I was in; and the one about the calves, to show me my helplessness to do anything about it. Whatever the meaning they seemed to give me a greater desire to offer to the church; and I thought now that I have been shown these things, it would be no trouble at all to ask the church for a home. But I soon found out that it was not that simple. I would go to meeting with full intention of offering, and would pray for strength to offer; but I found that the prayers of the wicked did not avail anything. I wanted to go so bad, but couldn't move. On Saturday night before the second Sunday in August, as I had long before considered Dan River Church as my home, whether I ever became a member or not, I was

up front with Brother Minter in connection with the building fund, and as I turned to leave, the dear pastor, Elder Spangler, said to me, "Mr. Carter, why didn't you come with them tonight." My heart seemed to swell to the bursting point, and I don't believe I could have spoken if it had meant my life. I wanted so badly to tell him that I wanted to come, and the tears began to flow as I tried so hard to keep them back.

The next day there was to be a baptizing, and I planned to go. It seemed that morning the presence of the Lord was everywhere — in the trees, in the water, and it was wonderful to my soul. After prayer, and the doors of the church were announced open, and a way was opened for me by the grace of God to get to Brother Spangler. I was received and baptized.

One thing I know that when I came out of the water a great weight that went into it with me, did not come out with me: I felt to be walking on a cloud. As I did not go prepared to be baptized, I had to go home to change clothes. The only time the silence was broken on the way home, was when I remarked to my wife that I wondered if I had done the right thing, for I had wanted to do this for so long, and it seemed so easy this morning. She answered that she hoped so. A burden was left in the water, but my doubts and fears still follow me.

Your humble brother, I hope,
James Carter

A CANADIAN SISTER TO HER PASTOR

Lambeth, Ontario
March, 1958

Dear Elder Ruston:

Such a lovely surprise when I received your most precious and wonderfully enlightening letter. For some days I had been much depressed naturally and so very much oppressed spiritually, and on the day I received your letter I had felt absolutely crushed, and all forenoon had kept calling on the Lord to send relief to my soul, if it were His will to notice such a worm of the dust.

When at noon I saw that I had a letter from you, I said to myself, "This is SURELY an answer to prayer and the Lord IS a refuge to the oppressed and troubled in mind, and He DOES NOT FORSAKE them that seek Him." I rushed to a quiet spot and tore open the letter to devour its contents as ravenously as a starved wolf his prey, then to read it more leisurely over and over again, so as to enjoy its contents and, as it seemed, to bask in its warmth, tenderness and sunshine.

It is by far the most wonderful letter I have ever received, and words cannot express my gratitude to you, so all I can say is "Thank you," and I thank the Lord for directing your mind toward me at that particular time of my great need for encouragement. How true! "God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform." As you say, "All of God's works to praise Him, even the birds praise Him in song," and, "Oh; that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!"

I have always taken delight and enjoyed sweet meditation when walking in the fields of corn, and to note how even the ears seemed to bow their heads nearer the ground as they ripened for the harvest, and I would think as I wandered down the long rows of corn, so it is with believers, when they see more of their imperfections, yet they seem to trust and hope with a growing confidence in the love of God through Christ Jesus our Lord. It seems the nearer the people of God advance to their Eternal Rest, the more humble and mellow they become, and seem to feel anxiously desirous of improving their talents to the glory of God, knowing that Time is running short. How we see His handiwork, not only in everything that grows, but also in the heavens, and as the Psalmist says: "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; These see

the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep. For He commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths:" and they are made to "cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm so that the waves thereof are still, so He bringeth them unto their desired haven." How like this life, which we live in this wilderness of woe, through which we are made to travel! Sometimes peace and calm, then sometimes in the very depths.

"If sometimes I strive, as I mourn,
My hold of the promise to keep,
The billows more fiercely return,
And plunge me again in the deep."

I was very pleased to read what you wrote regarding the temples, particularly "The temple of Solomon." I turned, as you suggested, to the second chapter of Ephesians to read of the true temple which is there spoken of, and found I had already, at some time, marked verses 18-22 inclusive, probably meaning to ask you some question or questions regarding that very Scripture, and now, by the will of God, I hope, I have been shown and it is made plain (from your precious letter) through you, who are a servant of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, showing how we, as a people or a church are fitly framed together, and our hearts knit together in love and understanding, "to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Colossians 2:2)

I have now come to the part of your good letter where you speak of Satan's temptations. Many times I seem to experience such temptations and it seems "The tempter suggests with a roar, Thy God hath forsaken thee quite; Thy God will be gracious no more." Such was my mind the day your letter was received, and at once these words, with comfort and sweetness, dropped into my mind, "And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." It seemed sweet and refreshing as "like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest." (Isaiah 18:4)

It is indeed, a terrible fear filled with shame, when one is made to feel untrue and a deceiver. I have seemed to experience that so many times, yet, my desire is, that I, a weak vessel of His grace, if one at all, may glorify His name for His goodness towards me. It appears to me as I read the Scriptures, that "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty." (I Corinthians 1:27)

Jesus came into the world to save sinners, and when Divine Grace renews the heart of the fallen sinner, it seems Paradise is regained and much of its beauty restored to the soul.

I feel to thank the Lord for His love and the tender mercy He has bestowed upon us in restoring you, our precious pastor and friend, to us, and I pray God that a double portion of His grace and Holy Spirit may rest upon you and yours from day to day, and that His blessing may attend all your faithful labours, and may we find the truth of His word assuring us that wherever we assemble together in His name there is He in the midst.

"And if our fellowship below,
In Jesus be so sweet,
What heights of rapture shall we know,
When round the throne we meet?"

May He safe into the haven guide and receive our souls at last! Pardon all you see amiss in this, and if I need reprimanding please do so, as I know myself how vile and full of sin I am, and always in dire need of direction.

May the good Lord continue His watchful care over you and your dear companion, and "unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus through all ages, world without end, Amen!"

Your sister in Christian hope and love,
Minerva McLean

807 Sycamore
Mineola, Texas

Elder John D. Wood,
Dear Brother,

In hope of eternal life that God promised in the person of his precious Son before the world began. O, that I could praise Him as I ought, but my mind is so much on the foolish things of the world; and I have learned that I cannot control my mind.

I am writing you to enclose a letter that was written by a sister of Cana Church to my husband on his 90th birthday, on April 20th. He has been her pastor for over 25 years.

My husband joins me in love and sweet fellowship to you and yours. You all seem so near and dear to us. May grace, mercy and peace be with you, together with all the household of faith.

When at the throne of grace, remember us poor sinners saved by grace, if at all.

Mrs. S. C. Davenport

TO ELDER DAVENPORT ON HIS NINETIETH BIRTHDAY

To Elder Davenport:

Dear faithful servant of a merciful God, and brother in Christ, I hope.

You have been blessed again to reach a milestone in your very profitable, but weary and toilsome journey through this life. It has been through the merciful providence of a wonder-working God; and yet we wonder at times why we are spared these many years.

Your life in service has been a great inspiration to many of God's poor and afflicted little ones; your humble, meek and gentle admonition has strengthened many a weary pilgrim, and caused us to have courage to press on a little further. My humble hope is that God will bless you with all needed blessings; and keep you ever looking to Him from whom comes all our help.

May the sweet smiles of God's grace be yours to enjoy as long as you sojourn here below.

Beuna White

LIKE A SERPENT UPON A ROCK

Snow Hill, Maryland

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

I would like to put some thoughts on paper, if the Lord directs my mind.

I have never had a dream worth speaking of, or a vision of any kind; and I have said that I have never had an experience. But when I look back over the years, maybe I have had an experience.

Last summer Elder Griffin was speaking of a serpent upon a rock. His text was, "The way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the midst of the sea; and the way of a man with a maid." (Prov. 30:19) In a serpent upon a rock, I see myself a rock I had built for myself. God gave me strength to go about my work in my own way — I was building a place in the world for myself in vanity and greed. I built my own rock, and was coiled on top, lifting my head like the serpent; and defying any man to touch me. I was satisfied with what I had built, and going about my work (my work came ahead of everything else). I did not go to any church or meeting-house, feeling there was no need, for I was doing all right — I was as good as any man.

There was no food on the rock for the serpent; and when the demands of his stomach drove him from the rock in search of food, I was like the serpent: I was hungry for food from heaven. I feel that when the time came for the darkness to be lifted (I hope it has been lifted), the Lord took me by the hand and led me off of my rock, and placed my feet upon the Rock that has a solid foundation, a rock that is not made by hands.

If any of you dear readers have ever had a like experience, you will know what it is to wake up and find all you have ever wanted (and worked for), is nothing; and your sins are all that you can see. If you have had this experience, you will know how I felt.

One Sunday I took my family and went to the meeting-house my mother took me to when I was a child. I had not been for about ten years, but the brothers and sisters had not forgotten me. I was treated as the Prodigal son. Elder Spangler was there that Sunday, and I will remember him and the dear brothers and sisters as long as I live, I hope.

I am still in the flesh, for my mind wanders off on things I would rather not think of, and I still find myself saying and doing things I would like to stop, but I suppose it is a cross I have to bear. My prayer is that the blessed Lord will direct my hands, my feet, and my mind to better and higher things; and give me strength to attend the meetings and hear the dear elders, and be able to understand a little of what they preach; and be with the dear brethren in peace and fellowship.

Frank Holland

"BLESS THE LORD, O MY SOUL"

216 East 175th Street
Bronx 57, N. Y.

Dear Elder Slauson:

I had hoped to be able to attend our meeting today, but found I was much too weak to go; needless to say, I was there in spirit though absent in body. "A man's heart deviseth his way but the Lord directeth his steps."

The Lord has blessed me with a plentiful season both while in the hospital and since I have been home. I shudder to think what it would be like if I received what I deserve: He does not deal with us after our sins, nor reward us according to our iniquities, for as the heaven is high above the earth so great is his mercy towards them that fear him; and his mercy endures forever. I can say with the Psalmist, "Bless the Lord, O my soul."

I was thinking of Samson and the lion the other evening: had it not been for divine power, the lion would have devoured Samson, but the Lord enabled him to slay the lion, and on his return journey, he found honey in the carcass of the lion. I feel that I have tasted some honey in this illness. "Pleasant words are as honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones." (Prov. 16:24)

The Lord was with me on the operating table, and gave me much scripture for my encouragement. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The Lord has given me a calm and patient spirit, and reconciled me from the first that no matter what the outcome should be, it would be according to his will. "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

My friends have been most kind to me, and there isn't anything they have not offered to do for me; and I appreciate all their thoughtfulness.

. . . I don't want folks to worry about me because I live alone. "A sovereign protector I have, unseen yet forever at hand." I hope dear Sister Lizzie will keep on improving; give her and Sister Elnora my love. May God continue to bless you.

Yours in hope,
Gertrude Secor

Iago, Texas

Dear Old Signs of the Times:

I want to tell you of some things that have been of great comfort to me. Several years ago I was sick and staying with a daughter and her family. They were planning to go to a show, and said they hated to leave me alone; but I said that I wouldn't be alone: the dog would be with me, and I hoped the Lord would be with me; and he was. He and a great host of angels were there with me all night, and it was one of the sweetest nights I ever spent, and I wished it had not ended.

At another time my husband, Elder W. O. Beene, was ill with pneumonia, and I was worried because he was old and I was afraid he would not pull through. I had to lie down for some rest, and a sweet dream came to me: The Lord sent two guards to watch — one at each end of the house, and I knew

they were there, but I got up in my dream and looked out at the window to see them; and there they were walking back and forth. So I slept on and had a good rest. I felt sure my husband was going to get well, and I told him about it when I got up; and he felt a sense of relief. I feel sure the guards were there to watch over him: he was old (87) and I knew he couldn't stand too much. He lived until he was past ninety-one. He was faithful to his churches and went when his meeting days came: the weather did not get too bad for him to go to his appointments; and he lived and practiced what he believed.

I am now nearly seventy-three, and very lonely. My husband received the Signs of the Times as long as he lived; and I pray the Lord will be with the editors to keep the paper going on and on. There is so much good reading in it.

In Christian love, I hope,
Mrs. W. O. Beene

PIGG RIVER DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

The **Pigg River Association** is appointed to meet with River View Church, Bassett, Virginia, beginning Friday before the 1st Sunday in August, and continuing through Sunday. (July 31, August 1 and 2)

Our correspondents and all interested brethren are invited to meet with us.

John D. Wood, Clerk

ANNUAL MEETING AT SLATE HILL

The Annual Meeting of the **Brookfield Old School Baptist Church** at Slate Hill, New York, will be held the 1st Saturday in August. This is August 1st.

Members and friends are cordially invited to attend at this historic meeting-house.

Wm. D. Chapman

UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

The 1959 session of the **Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association** will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Gilliam's, on highway 87, leading from Reidsville to Burlington, N. C. The association will convene on Saturday morning at 11 A. M., and last through Monday, embracing Saturday, 3rd Sunday, and Monday in July, 1959.

Our correspondence and visitors welcome.

Elder J. W. Gilliam
(for Gilliam's Church)

Danville, Virginia **July, 1959**

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TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 5, Box 332F **Danville, Va.**

EDITORIAL

We have a request which reads as follows:

"I've always believed in the Old Primitive Baptist doctrine, but I've heard different opinions from the Old Baptist people about joining the church. There are some who believe a regenerated child is led into the church by God at an appointed time; while there are others who believe it is the child's duty to go in on his own decision to fellowship with his brethren. I would like your opinion on the subject, which has me confused."

We are glad to give our views on the above, and at the same time say that it is strange that there should be two opinions on the subject, for we have always thought that all who are experimentally acquainted with the dealings of the Lord with them, and with the express teaching of the Scriptures of the power and purpose of God in all things, should feel that any of these things are left to the "decision" of the

subject. This savors of conditionalism, and would deny what the Lord's people believe: That not only is it the work of God that they believe on him whom he has sent, but also that it is God that works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Solomon declared that, "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven. A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted", etc. (Eccl. 3:1-11). This we firmly believe. All things are in the eternal arrangement of God, so that all things are working together to accomplish his purpose.

In the "all things working together" there is a set time when the children of God individually are brought into the knowledge of the truth. None of them can say that they made a decision in anything relative to this. There is a time when each one is born again, being brought out of darkness into light by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost; a time when each is given to know for the first time that they are loved of God, and were chosen by him in Christ Jesus before the world began. Although each was included in the election of God, they have no knowledge of it until the work of grace is wrought in them, and there is a revelation that Jesus has redeemed them from all sin.

We again say that it is the Lord's time for each, and there is no way under heaven for any one to bring himself into this knowledge. Flesh and blood had not revealed things to Peter and the brethren; and of course not to Paul. "It is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he has sent." Until this time (before faith comes) each one is ". . . kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed." (Gal. 3:23)

We have every right to believe that all who have been brought into this knowledge understands this, for it cannot be otherwise according to the way God deals with his people.

But the question is, "Are they led into the church by God at an appointed time?" Our answer is, Yes! Those who unite with the church are led at an appointed time. Some are so led that they are constrained to offer to the church; while many who have qualifications for church membership, are not thus so exercised by the mighty power of the Spirit, and consequently are never members of what may be called the visible church. And it is all according to the eternal purpose of God concerning them. Many brethren testify of their exercises in their desire to offer to the church, and how they are restrained by the fear of deceiving the brethren: They love the church and the doctrine of God their Saviour, and often feel that they will offer at the next opportunity, but something prevents them; then, with many of them, the way is suddenly opened and all fear is removed, and they offer to the church. Could any of these feel otherwise than that the time was come for them to become members of the church?

We know of many who are exercised greatly in their love of the doctrine and of the church, and in speaking with them, they say that they have not been greatly impressed for church membership; while others say that they desire above everything else to be members, but hitherto have been prevented by their felt unworthiness; and others are led almost immediately after receiving their hope to ask for a home in the church.

Are these things according to the purpose of God? We say, Yes! — for we cannot reconcile the thought that some things are according to His purpose, and others are not.

We have often felt to encourage those whom we know are greatly exercised, not with the thought that they were to, or could, come to the church of their own decision, or that it would be outside of, or contrary to the Lord's time for them to come, should they come; but that all these things work together in the purpose of God, — as surely they

do.

We remember hearing it said at a funeral many years ago, that the departed was not a member of the church, but that she should have been; and that she was not encouraged enough. It might as well have been said that she died an untimely death (as far as we were concerned), as to say what was said. We did not agree with the elder then, and we do not agree with the thought now; for it was never the Lord's will for the departed to be a member of the visible church, as was evident. If it had been His will, the same power that brought her into the knowledge of the truth, would have further led her into the church.

We are glad that salvation is not contingent upon church membership, and that baptism of water, and having a name upon a church book, is not something required in order to be saved. It is evident that many have been baptized and become members of organizations who do not know the first thing about salvation being entirely by grace unto those chosen in Christ Jesus, and redeemed by him. But it is certain that all who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and redeemed by his precious blood, (whether ever led into the visible church, or not) will be among the redeemed with whom heaven will be filled.

Some might feel that when Jesus said to the Gadarene, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee", that he was speaking to all; but these things are individual matters. We doubt not but that this man obeyed, and told his friends from whom he had been separated, the wonderful things done for him.

There are many things in the faith of the Lord's people which makes them a peculiar people; and they are this because their faith is of him who is both the author and finisher of it — of him who gave himself for them that he might redeem them from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Their peculiarity is not in dress and outward appearance, and their good works are not in order to obtain the favor of God; but their peculiarity and good works make their appearance as the fruits of grace and evidences of the Spirit of God in them.

One of their peculiarities is that they know that they have an inheritance only because they are predestinated to the obtaining of it, according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will (see Eph. 1-11); and that they are begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to this inheritance; and that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this they greatly rejoice, though often in heaviness through many temptations. This makes them peculiar in their faith (or doctrine), for it is contrary to the belief of many.

They are assured that they are kept by the power of God according to his purpose concerning them, and that He works in them so that by their works, as fruits of the Spirit, they glorify God. They have no confidence in their flesh, knowing that it is contrary to godliness; and are kept in humbleness to look to and trust in their God to lead them and keep them in all their life's journey; and they know that He will provide all things in nature and grace that are his will for them to have, and then will surely bring them to their eternal inheritance.

With all the assurance that God's grace is sufficient for them, they cannot look to themselves for some things, and to God for others; for such is contrary to sound doctrine.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

WHAT WILL YE SEE IN THE SHULAMITE?

Is the love of sin destroyed in the fleshly nature of the children of God, and are the faculties and propensities of their earthly nature so changed by the new birth, that with their flesh they can serve the law of God? Some have contended that such is really the case; but among them who so contend, we find none of the inspired writers of either the Old or New Testaments. Prophets and saints have groaned, being burdened with the corruptions of their carnal propensities. Isaiah, when he in the spirit saw the glory of God, cried out, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I **am** a man of unclean lips." — Isa. vi. 5. Not because **I was once,** but because **I am** so now, or when he saw the vision. And what Christian can in truth deny that the more he is permitted to see of the glory of God, the more sensibly he feels the corruptions of his earthly nature? David, though a beloved child of God, and a man after God's own heart, and a prophet of the Lord, and the sweet singer of Israel, whose Psalms have so clearly portrayed the experience of all the children of the living God, still found in the unslain propensities of his carnal nature unhallowed lusts of his flesh, warring against the law of his spiritual mind, captivating him, and plunging him into the most aggravated transgressions. Jonah was greatly swayed by turbulent, unsubdued passions and rebellious propensities of his earthly nature. Was he not a child of God, and a prophet of the Lord? Even poor old Job, though a perfect man, who feared God and eschewed evil, and whose patience was proverbial, broke down under the weight of his distress; and something like unsubdued passions of his carnal nature gained such ascendency over the spirit of meekness and submission, as to make him curse the day of his birth.

If there were among the holy men of God under the old dispensation any whose carnal nature was so radically changed by the spirit of Christ that dwelt in them, as to cause the same carnal faculties of their nature in which they had formerly loved sin, to subsequently love holiness, we have not been favored with a record of who they were, or when or where they lived.

Nor can we with any better success search for them under the gospel dispensation. Can we reasonably claim that Christians of the present age are more effectually killed to the love of sin than were the holy apostles and primitive saints? After God had revealed his Son in Paul, and called him by his grace to be an apostle, did he find nothing in his flesh warring against the law of the spirit which he had received in his heavenly birth? What made him groan, being burdened? What made him a wretched man? If all the elements of his earthly nature had been killed to sin, or to the love of sin, and made to love holiness as they had formerly loved sin, why did he groan — what was the matter? whence the conflict between his flesh and his spirit? It is very certain, that if there was any love of holiness or of spiritual things in the elements of Paul's fleshly nature, he could not find it; for after the most diligent research he testified that there was no good thing in his flesh. But he did find a law in his members warring against the law of his mind, bringing him into captivity to the

law of sin which was in his members, and when he would do good, evil was present; and these turbulent faculties or elements of his flesh were so far from having been killed in him, that he was by them disqualified to do the good he would; for to will was present with him, but how to do that which is good he found not.

If the love of sin had been killed very dead in the apostle James, and the beloved John, would they have aspired to secure for themselves distinguished places at the right and left hand of their Lord? Were all the carnal elements of Peter's fleshly nature dead, when with wicked profanity he denied that he had any knowledge of his imprisoned and insulted Lord and Master?

But where shall we stop our researches among the people of God? Can we find any one of them whose carnal elements have been changed from hatred to the love of holiness? If the declaration so frequently made, that in the new birth the elements of our nature are changed from the love of sin to the love of God, be the true standard by which we are to determine who are and who are not born again, we must leave out Isaiah, Job, Jonah, David, Paul, James, John and Peter, but certainly would be grieved to part with them; yet if the position contended for by some of our cotemporaries be true, it rules them out, and it rules us out also with them.

Clearly unscriptural as the sentiment is, it is one of the devices of our adversary, the devil, and one of his most fiery darts with which he assaults the weak and trembling saints of God. When in their experience the strong man (the "old man") armed, which has kept the palace without resistance, until the stronger comes and binds him, and spoils his goods, the subject of this gracious deliverance is very apt to think the old tyrant is dead; they feel that a wonderful change has indeed taken place in them. A sweet sense of pardoned sin, deliverance from death and fear, is sweetly felt, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost fills them with sacred delight, and the love of God is richly shed abroad in their hearts; and the very element into which they are brought is love, joy and peace. Now for a season perhaps, in the ecstatic transport of their early love, they feel no desire to sin, no relish for what they had formerly delighted in; and while in this happy frame it would be hard to convince them that their whole nature was not changed, and that they would no more be inclined to seek after the vanities of this world. But it is not long before the motions of sin are felt, vain thoughts intrude, darkness beclouds their skies, and strange temptations, such as they never felt before, are presented, and to their terror and dismay they find in themselves something that is easily beguiled by the tempter. Their songs of praise become less animated, and their prayers more formal and less frequent. Now the cruel tempter hurls his piercing dart, Where is now your hope? If you were truly born of God, all the faculties of your nature would be changed; the love of sin would not exist in thought, word or deed, in body, soul or spirit. No vain thoughts would find a place in your mind; for "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God." Those who know the depth of Satan, know how artfully he will pervert the scriptures to distress the people of God. Alas! how fiery are his darts. In dread alarm the assaulted child feels unequal to the conflict. The suggestions of the tempter seem very reasonable, his own carnal mind endorses all that the sly tempter has suggested, and is ready to conclude that he has been most sadly deceived in all the hopes which he had so fondly cherished. Sometimes he feels inclined to make a diligent search for something within himself wherewith to shield himself from these fierce temptations. He says, If I were in all my nature dead to sin and alive to holiness, if in my

whole being there remains no unhallowed love or lust for what was formerly my element, what is this that allures and draws me from my spiritual enjoyments? Would sinful thoughts, foolish and vain things, have any attraction, if I possessed nothing in my nature that is not truly born of the spirit of the living God?

How many of God's dear children have been made to write bitter things against themselves, because they could find no good thing in their own fleshly nature; especially when it is constantly preached to them by Satan, and perhaps by mistaken brethren, that the new birth forever kills, in all who are the genuine subjects of it, all relish for sin and folly. How many of us, including the writer of these lines, would be compelled to say, If it be true that the new birth changes the fleshly nature, kills all the lusts of the flesh, and leaves within us only a love of holiness, we must give up all hope that we are the subjects of it.

The new birth is not a reproduction of the former birth, nor a change of the nature of anything that is born of the flesh. If it had changed the nature of that which was previously born of the flesh, and converted that flesh into spirit, it would no longer be flesh, but spirit; and in that case our fleshly nature, becoming spirit, could no longer feel the infirmities of a fleshly nature, no longer require to be fed on the productions of the earth, but would be capacitated to live alone on spiritual food. But this we all know is not the case with us.

But while every one who is born of God painfully feels that the whole force and current of his carnal or fleshly nature is still prone to sin as the sparks fly upward, and that they require constant, vigilant and perpetual watchfulness and incessant prayer, that they should not gain ascendency over us, still it is a most heart-cheering, God-honoring, and hell-defying truth, that a new heart is given to us, and a new spirit is put within us; not made out of the old heart and the old spirit, but **new** in all respects, and altogether unlike the old; and in this new heart the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus is indelibly written, in which we recognize the Lord as our God, and he recognizes us as his children, with the blessed assurance that he will put his fear in our hearts, that we shall not depart from him, and that he will not turn away from us to do us good. By the new birth, which is not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, which new birth is not of corruptible seed, as was the fleshly birth, but of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, a love of holiness and a loathing of sin and folly is produced in all who are the subjects of it. But we should be careful to observe that this hatred of sin and love of God are the fruits of the Spirit, and not the elements of a carnal nature. "The carnal (fleshly) mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." There is nothing in the fleshly nature even of Paul, or any other Christian, with which they can please God. "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead (having no spiritual life, or God-serving faculties) because of sin, but the spirit (of Christ, which is begotten of God and born of the Spirit) is life because of righteousness." — Romans viii. 7-10. This spirit of Christ, which by a heavenly birth dwells in the saints, is the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, and if it dwells in us, he that raised up Christ from the dead by it, will also quicken our mortal bodies by it; but this will not be done until our bodies which now, notwithstanding all the mortal powers, passions, faculties and earthly elements which now animate them, are dead, shall be quickened by the spirit which by the new birth now dwells in them. Then they will be no longer dead because of sin; for in the

resurrection this corruptible shall be raised in incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality, and death shall be swallowed up of life.

Now if our earthly nature is not changed, nor any of the elements of that nature capable of serving God in spirit and in truth, it may be demanded, Who then can serve God acceptably? To this inquiry Paul responds, "I myself serve the law of God. Yea, I delight in it." Pray tell us, Paul, do you serve the law of God with your flesh? O no; with my flesh I serve the law of sin. But do you not serve the law of God with some of the powers, faculties, or some reformed or revised elements of your flesh? To this inquiry Paul responds, saying, "In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth **no** good thing." But, Paul, with what element do you love holiness and loathe sin? Paul replies, "I delight in the law of God after the **inward man.**" But, Paul, you have told us that with your mind you serve the law of God; do you mean your carnal mind? Answer: By no means; "For the carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." With what mind then do you serve the law of God? But, says he, "We have the mind of Christ." And this mind of Christ, begotten and born of God in the saints, is spiritual, and not carnal or fleshly. It is the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which God has given them. This mind of Christ, in his saints, always serves the law of God, and cannot serve the law of sin. But while with this mind the inner man serves the law of God, the saints, in whom this mind of Christ dwells, to their sorrow find another law in their members, which serves the law of sin, and cannot serve the law of God, because it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. The law of God is spiritual; but, says Paul, I **am** (not I was) carnal, sold under sin.

There is evidently a three-fold sense in which the apostle applies the personal pronoun **I** to himself, and in which it is in like manner applicable to all the saints while in the flesh. A Christian in his complex being is composed of an earthly, carnal nature, which is born of the flesh, and this he denominates the old man, the outward man, the natural man. He also embodies a nature which is by the same authority denominated the **new man,** which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness; which is born, not of blood, nor of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. This is also by divine authority called **a man,** a **new man,** the inner man, a spiritual man, yea, and the hidden man, &c., as the embodiment of the two natures, and to each of which he severally applies the personal pronoun I. As when he says, "For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now, if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man." — Rom. vii. 15-22.

Would not these emphatic declarations appear paradoxical, if the pronouns **I** and **me** were confined in their application to a single identity? He says, "The things that I do," it is not I that do them. He acknowledges that he does them, and in the same sentence denies that he does them. But let it be clearly understood that Paul sometimes uses the I as applicable to him as a Christian, possessing an old man and a new man, and embracing both men, old and new, as a complex being; as, I with my mind, and I with my flesh. At some times he uses the I as identifying his inward, and sometimes as identifying his outward man, and the otherwise seeming para-

dox or contradiction disappears. Who is this old man? It is I in my fleshly nature, in which I can find nothing good. Who is this new man? It is I in my spiritual nature, which is born of God. And who is this wretched man, dragging about a body of death, groaning, and waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of his body? This also is I, Paul, possessing these two natures in deadly conflict. For example, hear him say, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ (or the new man) liveth in me." "For, for me to live is Christ." — Gal. ii. 20; Phil. i. 21. This tri-personality in the Christian assimilates to Christ as he appeared in the days of his flesh; being as the Son of God, one with the Father, as the Son of man, one with his people whom he came to redeem, and in the union of the two natures, the Mediator or Days Man between God and men. As the Son of God, he could say, "I proceeded forth and came from God." — John viii. 42. And, "I and my Father are one." — John x. 30. While as the Son of man, nailed to the cross, and suffering in his flesh, he could say, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" "He is God, Man, and Mediator." — 1 Tim. ii. 5.

In conclusion we will remark, that while the law of sin still remains in our members, and no good thing can be found in the flesh of the children of God, the indwelling of the new man, which is no less than Christ in them, sets up a standard against all the corruptions of their carnal nature, and every one of them can say, I, with my flesh, serve the law of sin, while with all the powers of the new man I delight in the law of God. The old man is born of the flesh, and is flesh; and in that flesh there is nothing good, because it is born of corruptible seed, and continually lusts against the spirit, which dwells in them who are born of God. While the new man, born of incorruptible seed, cannot sin, because it is born of God; therefore it wars against the flesh. And these two natures, one of heavenly, the other of earthly birth, are contrary one to the other, and so much so, that the Christian who has them both cannot do the things that he would; for he would, in the spirit of his mind, rise above all the corruptions of his sinful nature, and be governed only by the divine nature of which the grace of God has made him a partaker. To will is present with him; but how to perform that which is good, he finds not. And in his conflict he can exclaim, with the poet,

"What jarring natures dwell within!
Immortal life, remaining sin;
Nor can this reign, nor that prevail,
Though each by turns my heart assail."

These opposing natures which dwell in every one who has been born of the flesh, and born again, of the Spirit, are by divine inspiration called **men;** the fleshly nature is called the outward man, the other is called the inner man, and Peter calls it "the hidden man of the heart, in which is no corruptible," &c. No man can see the kingdom of God who does not possess them both. Legalists, Pharisees and Arminians may boast of perfection in their flesh, of a fleshly nature so purged from all that is vile and sinful that they have no warfare, no carnal mind, nothing in them that loves sinful gratifications, that the love of sin in them is dead and gone; but in the **Shulamite** is seen as it were the company of two armies. And every saint, before he has traveled long in his experience, will raise the inquiry,

"Why should a son, redeem'd with blood,
Born first of man, then born of God,
Feel a perpetual war within
'Twixt reigning grace and striving sin?

"'Tis but to make him every day
From self to Jesus turn away;
His very falls shall make him wise,
And teach him where his victory lies.

"Who but the one who feels his woe
Will to the blood of sprinkling go,
And seek salvation only there
From all that he shall feel or fear?

"What though he finds himself depraved,
Yet he's in Christ, a sinner saved;
And 'tis a sign of life within
To groan beneath the power of sin."

Our design in this article is not to provoke strife with those who oppose our views; for we believe much of the opposition arises from a failure of many of the saints to understand more clearly that their love of holiness is because God first loved them, and has shed his love abroad in their hearts, and the love which they have is a fruit of the Spirit, which is given them of God, and is the first named in the cluster described as fruits of the Spirit. — Gal. v. 22. And their loathing of sin is because they find it in their earthly nature, dwelling in them as it did in Paul. And for the comfort of all who feel and mourn its existence in their members which are upon the earth, who so frequently give place to fear that they cannot be entitled to the privileges and consolations of the gospel, or proper subjects for gospel ordinances and church fellowship, because they so groan daily because of the vileness of their earthly nature, despite of all their efforts to reform it; we wish to assure all who thus mourn that none but God's quickened children really know the evil and burden of a sinful nature, a wretched, wandering mind, and an abiding sense of their utter unworthiness of any of the blessings of the new covenant.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, May 15, 1879.)

ORDINATION OF DEACONS

May 2, 1959

Pursuant to the request from the Church of Christ at Long Branch, Franklin County, Virginia, for a presbytery to examine brethren Amos I. Hash and W. G. Parsons for the office of deacons, and ordain them if found qualified, the church met. After singing and prayer by Elder R. S. Payne, Elders S. L. Moran, Randolph Perdue and J. P. Helms preached for the large congregation. The church selected Brother G. H. Bowling as spokesman for the church.

The presbytery was organized with Elder S. L. Moran, Moderator, Elder J. G. L. Hash, Clerk, and Elders B. O. Thompson, S. E. Terry, J. T. Turner, and Licentiate J. L. Carter; when Elders Randolph Perdue, J. P. Helms and Wm. Holland, from the Pigg River Association, and Elder R. S. Payne, from the Staunton River Association, were associated with the presbytery; and included the following deacons: F. W. Prilliman, R. E. Carter, P. L. Storee, Rufus Stone, L. L. Nichols, Harry Cannady, S. L. Walker, Peter C. Vest, W. M. Graham, S. G. Akers, Bobby Bernard, H. C. Johnson, Sylvanus Carter, M. C. Sumner, A. L. Lester, C. E. Butcher, W. J. Oaks, J. H. Perdue, and W. H. Simmons.

Elder Moran led in prayer for divine guidance in the meeting. Elder J. P. Helms was selected to lead in the examination. After questioning Brother Bowling, with satisfactory answers as to the character and standing of these brethren, they were delivered into the hands of the presbytery. Then Elder Helms questioned these brethren as to faith, doctrine, and practice among our people. The presbytery was unanimous in setting these brethren apart as deacons, with prayer by Elder B. O. Thompson, and laying on of hands by the presbytery. The charge was delivered by Elders R. S. Payne and J. P. Helms. Upon motion with second, and carried, these brethren were delivered to the Church as deacons; and we recommend them to all our churches with whom we are in fellowship.

Elder S. L. Moran, Moderator
Elder J. G. L. Hash, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It has pleased the Heavenly Father to call from our midst our beloved sister, Delila Martin, in January, 1959. She was strong in the faith, and attended her church meetings when at all possible; and will be missed by her church, family, and friends. Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to God's holy will; and that a copy of this resolution be sent to the family, a copy be placed on our church records, and a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of Hopewell Church of Kanawha County, W. Va. April 4, 1959.

Elder J. C. Hammond, Mod.
Nanna M. Carney, Clerk

OBITUARIES

FREEMAN McCLANAHAN

Freeman McClanahan, aged 55, died January 28, 1959, at his home in Charleston, W. Va., of an heart attack. He is survived by his wife, Ernie; a daughter, Barbara; seven brothers: Oscar, Estell, Jess, Boyd, Homer, Ferrel, and Okey, of Poca, W. Va.

Freeman was the youngest son of the late V. F. (Tobe) and Dillie McClanahan, and a grandson of the late Elder William A. Melton, who for 30 years was pastor of Hopewell

Primitive Baptist Church, of Kanawha County, W. Va. Although Freeman was not a member of the militant church, he was a consistent believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, the total depravity of man, and a God of mercy and love, whose power is supreme in every detail. He was well versed in the scriptures, and blessed with light and understanding, and never tired of conversing with those of like faith. He always displayed great humbleness. By these evidences, and his faithful attendance of the churches and associations, we feel that he was a chosen vessel unto his blessed Saviour.

In his work as a laundry salesman, Freeman came in contact with many people in all walks of life; and the profusion of beautiful floral offerings and the large attendance at his funeral, was a manifestation of the high esteem in which he was held.

His funeral was conducted by Elders Harvey Bird and J. C. Hammond at Hopewell Church, January 31, 1959; and he was laid to rest in the family cemetery, to await the second coming of his blessed Redeemer.

Elder J. C. Hammond, Mod.
Nanna M. Carney, Clerk

MRS. ANNIE UNDERWOOD HODGES

Mrs. Annie Underwood Hodges was born December 31, 1878, and was a dear lover of the Primitive Baptists: her family had been identified with Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church since its founding nearly a century ago, and she loved its principles. After a lingering illness, she fell asleep in Jesus March 18, 1959, at the age of eighty years.

Funeral services were conducted at Bethlehem Church by Mr. M. W. Hash and Elder J. J. Collins, and interment was in the adjoining cemetery. She is survived by a son, Barnie Hodges; a daughter, Mrs. Mittie M. Hockaday; two sisters, Mrs. Jennie Trawick, and Mrs. Emma Reese; eleven grandchildren and twelve great grandchildren.

She was a dear lover of salvation by grace, and the final perseverance of the saints.

J. J. Collins

MRS. ERNIE NULL

Mrs. Ernie Null, aged 79, of Route 4, Charleston, W. Va., died March 6, 1959, after an extended illness. She united with Hopewell Primitive Old School Baptist Church when quite young, and was a faithful and devoted member for over 50 years. She was the daughter of the late Elder G. B. McClanahan.

So long as Sister Null was able she was prompt in attendance of her church meetings; and her home was always open to those of like faith and order. She wrote some inspiring scriptural articles, some of which were published in the Signs of the Times. Sister Null was a precious mother in Israel.

She leaves to mourn her passing: seven sons, Andrew, Barberton, Ohio; Leonard, Poca, W. Va.; George, Milton, W. Va.; Lee, Marvin, Guy, and Elton, Charleston, W. Va.; four daughters: Mrs. Letha Miller, Bancroft, W. Va.; Mrs. Anna Dolin, Alum Creek, W. Va.; Mrs. Marie Dolin, Detroit, Mich.; and Mrs. Ruth McClanahan, Charleston, W. Va.; also one brother, four sisters, forty grandchildren, and fourteen great grandchildren, a host of friends, and we of the Church. May God keep us in humble submission to his holy will.

Her funeral was conducted on March 8, 1939, at Hopewell Church, by Elders J. C. Hammond and Harvey Bird. Interment was in the family cemetery near her home.

Elder J. C. Hammond, Mod.
Nanna M. Carney, Clerk

SISTER BETTY PICKERAL

Sister Betty Pickeral was born December 25, 1875; and departed this life December 30, 1958. She was united in marriage to William Pickeral on August 6, 1891; and to this union was born one daughter: Mrs. Eliza Toler. She is survived by Mrs. Toler, six grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

Sister Pickeral united with Springfield Church (Virginia) on October 8, 1927, and remained a faithful member until death. Although she was not able to attend her meetings for some time, being confined to her bed for several months with a broken hip, she enjoyed the brethren and friends visiting her; and never complained of her afflictions. To know her was to love her.

Her funeral was held at Springfield Church by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and she was laid to rest in the family cemetery beside her husband. She will be greatly missed by her church and friends, but may we bow in humble submission to God's holy will in taking her from her suffering and sorrow. When Christ comes to call his loved ones, she will hear his welcome voice, Come, ye blest of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be put in our church records; a copy be sent to the family; and a copy be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of Springfield Church in conference.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
R. C. Dalton, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 127 DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1959 NO. 8

"By whom was David taught
To aim the dreadful blow
When he Goliath fought,
And laid the Gittite low?
No sword nor spear the stripling took,
But chose a pebble from the brook.

'Twas Israel's God and King,
Who sent him to the fight,
Who gave him strength to sling,
And skill to aim aright;
Ye feeble saints, your strength endures,
Because young David's God is yours.

Who order'd Gideon forth,
To storm the invader's camp,
With arms of little worth —
A pitcher and a lamp?
The trumphets made his coming known,
And all the host was overthrown.

Oh! I have seen the day
When, with a single word,
God helping me to say,
My trust is in the Lord,
My soul has quell'd a thousand foes,
Fearless of all that could oppose.

But unbelief, self-will,
Self-righteousness, and pride,
How often do they steal
My weapon from my side?
Yet David's Lord and Gideon's Friend,
Will help his servants to the end."

Gadsby's Collection

THE CARPENTER

Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, was by trade a carpenter: "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary," etc. (Mark 6:3) He was not a farmer, a sailor, or other tradesman, but a carpenter — a builder. This was not a coincidence, but fulfilled the purpose of God; as did all other incidents in his life as he sojourned in this world.

A carpenter is a builder, or one who fits timbers into a building. We hope to view through the eye of faith, Christ, the carpenter, and the house he built.

Christ made known to his disciples, as well as others, that his interest was not of this world, but with the Father. He came not to do his own will but the will of his Father. He told his parents at the temple when he was only twelve years old, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Luke 2:49) Any business or interest he had to do in this world was his Father's business; so any building he constructed was according to the Father's will, and had to do with things of a heavenly nature. ". . . We have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." (2 Cor. 5:1)

We think of a building as a place of refuge in the time of storm; a place of rest for the weary; a place with food for the hungry; a place with water for the thirsty; and a place for the comfort or general well-being of the needy. So Christ prepared a building that would answer all these needs. He fixed a place for the poor in spirit, they that mourn, the meek, they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, the persecuted and reviled for His sake. All these find housing in the building of the Lord." (Matthew 5:3-12)

Man, in his weakness, tries to build a sanctuary; and bids the wayfarer to turn into his house. But, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." (Psalms 127:1) The vain attempts of men to usurp the Master Builder, only results in a building whose foundation is on the sand, and sinks to destruction. Man's good works lay a foundation of self-righteousness and boastfulness: as the Pharisee who bragged of his good works. The only true foundation of the building is already

laid: "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 3:11)

God in his providence guides the steps of those who, through his grace, will inhabit this building in heaven. Christ rightly fits them for the building as a carpenter fashions his timbers of wood. These timbers are inanimate, and react in the carpenter's hands as does the clay in the hands of the potter; who makes some vessels to honour and some to dishonor. (Romans 9:21) He hews these timbers by imparting to them through his mercy such attributes as faith, hope, and love. Timbers treated with these preservatives are made fit to occupy their places in the Son's house; and to say with Paul, "But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house we are, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." (Hebrews 3:6) He fashioned all these lesser stones, and made them worthy, through the shedding of his blood, to fit into the building with the chief cornerstone. "And the king commanded and they brought great stones, costly stones, and hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house." (I Kings 5:17) It seems that these stones refer to the lesser lights in the spreading of the gospel kingdom: the called out who were given to bear the candle of grace. They were used by the Carpenter in this foundation with himself as the chief cornerstone.

"Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation." (Isaiah 28:16) This stone was tried in all temptations as we are; he suffered agonies in the flesh, yet overcame. He was made precious through his shed blood to those that the Father had given him, and was sure, because, "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." (2 Timothy 2:19)

Yes, these stones and timbers fitted for the building of God, are hewn in such fashion by the Carpenter 'till they are always known by the Father. They will fit only in the place they are meant for, and would be amiss in any other building. The building is upon a Rock both sure and steadfast, with its various stones and timbers; with its foundation of great stones, costly stones, and hewed stones, and "Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. (see Ephes. 2:2-21)

So the lowly Carpenter of Bethlehem built a house; a house so peculiar it could not be seen by the carnal eye; so huge it houses a host which no man can number. A house inhabited by a peculiar people, a chosen people unto the Lord. "So the carpenter encourgeth the goldsmith, and he that smootheth with the hammer him that smote the anvil, saying, It is ready for the soldering: and he (the carpenter) fastened it with nails that it should not be moved." (Isaiah 41:7)

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Lillie, La.

THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD

By Elder David Bartley

CHAPTER NINE

CHRIST THE PROPHET-PRIEST-KING

"CROWNED with glory and honor," the ascended Christ-man is seated at the right hand of the blessed God and Father, and unites in himself the glorious three-one office of our Prophet and Priest and King. All the divinely sacred authority, obligations and holy qualifications to perfectly perform and fulfill all the divine work of this triple office, God the Father vested in his well beloved Son, "Whom he hath appointed heir of all things." And as the anointed and crowned Son of man and Son of God, Christ "was faithful to him that ap-

pointed him" over his own house. "Christ glorified not himself to be made an High Priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my son, today have I begotten thee." (Heb. 5:5)

And as we have before seen, God also raised up the meek and lowly man Christ to be the Prophet unto his Father's house, as he did Moses; and he bestowed upon his Son all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, that as the wise Prophet of his people he should "open their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures," and make them wise unto salvation, and that they should know to choose the good and refuse the evil. "And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears, but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdles of his reins." (Isa. 11:2-5)

God further says of his Son, as the elect Head of his people: "Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgement to the Gentiles. He shall not cry nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgement unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he hath set judgement in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law." (Isa. 42:1-4) Thus it is revealed and seen how wondrously qualified is our Prophet to gloriously execute his office, and to perfectly fulfill all his ministry and work. In all this prophetic work of revelation there is a holy positiveness and absolute certainty, as expressed in the frequent word "shall." For it is the omnipotent God who declares that all this his enthroned Son shall bring to pass. Of the ministry of our reigning Prophet upon his mediatorial throne of grace it is also written: "And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. . . Therefore thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale. But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel. They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine." (Isa. 29:18-24) "The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped: then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert." (Isa. 35:5, 6)

These glorious prophesies present our eternal High Priest in both his prophetic and kingly power and work, and as having sanctified his people by his blood, reconciled them unto God by his death, and is now saving them by his life. For, let us not forget, he is our High Priest unto God forever after the power of an endless life. So it is by the authority or power of his risen and righteous life eternal that he thus reigns in the successful fulfillment of all this divinely blessed work of righteousness, in the full and free salvation of all the people whose sins he died for, and for whom he ever liveth at the right hand of God to make intercession. How supporting and comforting to us, whose arm is too short and weak to save us, are these divine prophesies, which were verified by the "wills" and "shalls" of the God

and Father of our only Saviour, who speaks and it is done; commands, and it stands fast. These positive declarations concerning the saving power and work of the one Mediator between God and men are supported by his eternal power and Godhead, and can no more fail of fulfillment unto his glory than the immutable Jehovah can change.

The glorified Son of man is the highly exalted and coronated King eternal and immortal upon his Father's holy throne of universal dominion, and his kingly power gives absolute support and success to him as both the Prophet and the High Priest of all his Father's house, so that there is the infinite fullness and perfection of Wisdom and Holiness and Power in him; wisdom to enlighten and give understanding to the blind and ignorant, holiness to purify and sanctify the sinful and vile, and power to save the lost unto the uttermost, so that they shall be "The holy people." It was unto this heavenly ministry that God crowned JESUS with glory.

Of his kingly power much is written, but only a few statements can be given here. The Most High says, "I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." (Ps. 2:6) "Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness." (Ps. 60:1-3) "Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgement. And a man shall be a hiding place from the wind, and a cover from the tempest: as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim; and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly." (Isa. 33:1-4)

Our holy God says all this shall be. To our precious Christ he has given this power and success, and he fulfills all the good will of God. "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is the BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." (Zech. 6:12-13) The counsel of peace shall be between the King and the Priest, and also between the Priest and the people, for he is the Prince of peace, and his peace he gives unto them. "God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ," said Peter to the Jews. "Both Lord and Christ," means the same as both King and Priest, or Anointed. The Lord said, "I have exalted one chosen out of the people. I have found David my servant: with my holy oil have I anointed him; and with whom my hand shall be established; mine arm also shall strengthen him." (Ps. 89) "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." (Heb. 1:8) The crowned Son's name is, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." (Rev. 19:16)

"ALL HAIL the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all."

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." (Acts 5:31) "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him which is the head of all principality and power." (Col. 2:9, 10) "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which are, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned." (Rev. 11:17) "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." (1 Cor. 15:-25, 26) His feet refer to the inferior members of his body, which is the

church; that is, to the bodies of his saints, by which they are now kept in contact with the earth and the present earthly life and nature. But the King of saints must reign till he hath given them the victory over death, and then he will present the sanctified church to himself, a glorious bride, blameless and holy.

"Wonderful," and glorious beyond our highest thought, is the highly exalted Prince and Saviour, Son of the Father Almighty, who thus unites in his Divine Person the prophetic and priestly and kingly office-work, as the one all sufficient Mediator and Redeemer of all his everlasting brotherhood in the new covenant of life and peace. For we have now seen how God himself speaks to and of his Son Jesus in his holy oracles, and with what infinite fullness of wisdom and holiness and power he hath invested and clothed him as his Anointed, "the man Christ Jesus;" who "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." O! it was for his people, who are the children of men, that Jesus, the Word that was made flesh, thus bowed the heavens and came down to us in our low estate of helpless misery and ruin.

We have seen, too, that this loving and faithful Brother of ours in the flesh met all our enemies and the power of darkness, our sins, the curse of the law, death and the devil, fought our battle, accomplished our warfare, redeemed us from all our sins and iniquities, despoiled death of its sting, and the boasting grave of its victory, then ascended up to his Father in triumph and glory. God is well pleased for the righteousness' sake of his Son, who magnified the law and made it honorable; and now he hath given him a name which is above every name, and seated him at his own right hand upon the throne of omnipotent power. Thus did Christ love his dear people unto the end of his obedient sufferings in the flesh, and gave himself for them, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savor. In that he gave himself for us, he has bought us, takes us to himself, and gives us himself; therefore he is ours, with all his infinite fullness of righteousness and salvation and life, and God accepts his people as complete in his Son and loves them even as he loves him. (John 17:23) But O, how amazing that Christ gave himself for us! He thus stood in our places and for us, took all our sins and miseries upon himself, suffered the full penalty of the holy law for us, as our sacrifice unto death, that we should be his and stand in his place, as spotless, holy and blessed as himself! "O wondrous love!" "Such an High Priest became us." No other offering and sacrifice unto God could have been well pleasing as a sweet savor or holy incense. How divinely true was the word of the apostle Peter: "The God of our fathers hath glorified his Son Jesus."

Come, all ye whose hope he is, and let us in faith view him in his divine glory, the High Priest for ever, the holy Prophet, and the King eternal; and all this for us, that we through him might have access unto God, come to his throne of grace, obtain mercy, and be accepted with him. Let us ever cherish in our hearts with profound gratitude and joy that this wondrous King of glory, clothed with omnipotence, having all power in heaven and earth, whom all the angels of God worship, is none the less the meek and lowly ministering Man, the sympathizing Brother, who wept with the sisters over the death of their brother, the pitying Master, who stooped and washed the feet of his poor disciples, the tender son, who provided a home for his heart-broken mother, when dying on the cruel cross; and who was thus always sacrificing himself, but ever having compassion upon those whom he came to seek and save. In all his infinite love and compassionate sympathy, ministrations of mercy and consolation to the poor and needy, the blessed Christ is the same Divine Friend, who never loses sight of one whom he gave himself for, nor forgets for a moment the least of his brethren. They are his Father's gift to him; yea, his Father's be-

loved children, and his own brethren. He was once on the earth with them in the flesh, and is yet, as then, touched with the feeling of their infirmities; and he always hears their cries, succors them in temptation, in that he was tempted for them, and ever sees them, though they see him not. O, weak and tried friend of Jesus! remember that he is at the right hand of God, who is rich in mercy, that he is there as your accepted High Priest, and as your Advocate he makes intercession upon the throne for you — yea, for every poor sinner who pleads his gracious name. And through him your prayers and cries for mercy find acceptance with God, who forgives your sins, softly wipes away your tears of sorrow with the hand of his mercy, gives you an answer of peace, and blesses you for the name's sake of his holy and beloved Son, who loved you, died for you, and loves you still.

"This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O daughters of Jerusalem."

"Since Christ and we are one,
Why should we doubt or fear?
If he in heaven hath fixed his throne,
He'll fix his members there."

(Chapter ten next month)

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506 N. 7th Street,
Hiawatha, Kan.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed you will find check for two years renewal to the Signs, for I do not want to do without it. It is so comforting to a poor begger like me. I feel sometimes that I would like to write to some of them and tell them how much I enjoyed their writings.

May the good Lord bless you in your work. I am not close to a church of my faith, so do not get to go often. I can't get any comfort from the preaching in my home town, — they are all doing so much for the Lord; helping him do the work he had declared that he finished.

Pray for me when at the throne of grace.

Unworthily,
Mrs. Lillie Fridell

(Why not write some of the brethren when you feel to; they would be glad to hear from you. — J. D. W.)

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 4, Box 408D,
Bessemer, Ala.

Dear Brethren:

We desire to renew our subscription again — it is precious to us. We are blessed to attend meeting almost every Sunday, and can't know how precious it must be to those who live so far away from any church, or from anyone who understands as they do. Yet we feel sure that they at times feel the blessed assurance that they will hear every sermon, and receive every crumb, however He may send it; because He is not slack concerning his promises, and none will ever be too far away; nor will the ones near the churches receive more than their share. What a sweet consolation!

This past Sunday we, a goodly number, were blessed to meet in a fifth Sunday meeting at Sardis, and felt so favored to have Elders R. L. Biggs, Willie Norris, and Clydus Moon to preach; also Elder Brock on Saturday. At the conclusion, we remarked to the sister beside us, how we wished we could keep that; but regardless of how many there are, and how uplifting it is, we cannot bottle up the sweetness and save it — no, it would become stale. God has it ALL so wonderfully fixed.

Brother Norris spoke so beautifully from the third chapter of Ecclesiasties: "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven", etc.; and of how this impressed him in his earlier experiences. This also was true with us; if we can feel that the Lord showed us some part first, this was true with us, and has remained just as precious until now. As he did to others,

it seemed he spoke to our poor soul, and caused us to feel to hope in His mercy. The light becomes so dim at times, and we feel to be a deceiver among his precious children; but sometimes we feel we are brought just so low, to be given to see deeper beauties; and are raised and given to rejoice with more strength. We rejoice, and yet we fear and tremble to say "We".

Elder Biggs spoke in his discourse of our Elder Brother; and it struck me with such beauty and force, because we feel so unworthy, and the least if one at all, here in our home church and association. And, O, to think or speak of our dear Lord and Saviour and our Elder, melts this heart, and makes us to feel surely one such as we know ourselves to be, is deceived in hoping. Yet, dear brethren, there is a time and a place so precious and so sacred to us, we are not completely destroyed — cast down, yes so much of our time. But when blessed with a glimpse back when that sweetness was so new and fresh with us, we feel to know that this arm of flesh and these feeble knees had nothing to remove our feet out of the miry clay, when it seemed the end of the way had come. And in searching for some scripture that fitted a case such as ours, it all seemed to condemn us more, and to show how deep down we were. Our dear companion united the month before, and how we longed to go that day, but we couldn't move a muscle. (Oh, may I say as I feel: is wasn't the time or place) I had always contended this to my young friends who thought I should join with them; but this day I felt more my doom than that. The few times I was lifted up this month of searching, begging, and hoping for some little sign that I, even I, might be led into the watery grave, I was given to sing, "Children of the heavenly King". How precious it was, and is to me! But the next hour I would be down again. On Friday night before the fourth Sunday, I was lying across my bed reading. I opened the Bible, as often I do, and began reading where it fell open, which was the Book of Colossians. It is all so beautiful, but when I came to the 21st verse, "And you who were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblamable and unreprovable in his sight." O, how my heart was made to rejoice. It seemed that these words stood out, and were just for me. I could not stop there; as I read the 11th verse in the second chapter, "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross," then, then I did feel to say, "My God and my Saviour".

Such joy can't be defined; but if it is of Him, then there is no need of definition to those who have tasted of that joy — that new song we are given to sing, even praise unto our God. It seemed I couldn't doubt any more; but, Ah, I did before Sunday came, which was the 24th day of December. My every prayer and breath it seemed was to be able to be baptized with my dear one; yet I knew unless it was the time and place, I could not.

I am being too lengthy, but I must tell this: I dreamed Saturday night that we were in a large crowd gathered for a baptizing — it seemed at Shiloh, in Georgia, and a song was asked for in announcing the doors of the church open; a stout lady, who seemed to be my cousin, asked for one. And I looked and turned to mother, and said, "O, I wish they would sing 'Children of the heavenly king', for I don't know the one called for."

My parents had come from Georgia

to spend the week-end with us, and I told mother of my dream the next morning. We gathered at the water — the clouds had been dense, but opened up and the sun was on the water as we stood there; I had taken a dress, after much fear and wondering if I should; yet feeling to know that it would not hinder nor help the time, place or purpose of God. Just as I had dreamed, my dear mother-in-law asked that we sing a song, and it was one we don't use. . . I wished aloud, as I had dreamed, that they would sing mine; which they did. But, alas, how we are tossed about: Brother Griffin asked them to sing the first three verses; and as they sang, realizing with each line it was soon to be at the end, I stood as dead on my feet, thinking that this is because I've been so bold to ask for the song, and to bring my dress; and feeling so deeply condemned — sinking away, it seemed, then, I can only say, at that moment I heard "music", and I was carried (O, I can but believe that, because I could not move), and found myself in front of that precious band of heavenly children trying to say something, and could utter only a word or two — But the joy when they made motion to receive and baptize me too!

I want to clarify the "music" I heard (and I truly heard no words), it was my dear mother's voice leading them to sing on through the last verse. Instead of ending as Bro. Griffin had stated, she began that last one. As you know, in Gobel's Hymn book the last verse is at the top of the following page; and I presume I was always so full when I sang with the book propped in the kitchen window, or wherever I had it that month, that I did not look above and see that verse. In reading it later that day, how precious the words were to me; and they are yet.

We felt then that joy, peace, and happiness would ever be with us; but we learned so soon that it is, "Mixtures of joy and sorrow we daily pass through: Sometimes I'm in the valley, and sinking down with woe; sometimes I am exalted, on eagle's wings I fly: I rise above my troubles, and hope to reach the sky". When we get so low at times, we are sometimes given to go back there as we were raised from that grave of death, and feel that serene peace that seemed to engulf us. What more can a poor sinner ask for, knowing we deserve nothing!

We feel that we pray (if and when we pray) to be kept at the feet of our dear brethren and sisters: to look over them for good, and not for evil, ever esteeming them better than ourselves. We're not our own keepers, but bought with a price, if we're His. O, dear Lord, keep us in the way.

We realize that this is rushed and scattered, but if we make copy, we won't send it. If you feel it blends with the paths you have been led, or if you feel it does with any little one, for that reason only we have felt to write it, realizing how the precious experiences of others have encouraged us, and made us to feel that someone else knows just how we feel; but if it doesn't blend, you know where it belongs, along with any other thing that isn't the truth.

May He bless you all in your efforts to continue the dear Signs. Remember a little one, if one.

Ruth Redman

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224 S. Sixth Street
Union City, Tenn.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

My subscription is over-due, and I don't want to miss one single number, so I am enclosing my check for an extension of two years.

I enjoy the paper more than anything except the Bible. I am enjoying "The Priesthood of The Son of God", by Elder David Bartley, which is being printed in installments; and I enjoy all the writings. The Editorials are always so good, and, as I see it, full of truth. And "The Voices of the Past", are so wonderful.

When a person does not get to hear

the truth preached very often, as has been my case, always having to depend upon someone, then the Signs means so very much to them.

May you always be enabled to print the truth as the Old School Baptists see it.

Mrs. J. H. Jonakin

3347 Tutwiler,
Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

You will find enclosed a check for two years' renewal to the Signs. . . . It is so good to have it come to us each month, filled with letters and editorials from different parts of the world; and all telling the same experiences along the way, being tried and coming forth as gold. When the Lord begins a good work in the hearts of men he is able to perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. He ever watches over them and works all things for their good. We cannot at all times feel so sure about it, but we quickly find out there's nothing we can do to help, by seeing our every effort fall to the ground. Often we become so cold and indifferent, and find the sweet promises which meant so much to us are lost sight of, and questions arise as to whether we are deceived in it all or not.

But thanks to our blessed Redeemer, who is our salvation, the way, the truth and the life, he, in his own time and way, sends the Comforter to take the things of His and show them unto us; and brings to our remembrance all the ways the Lord has brought us. It is then that we feel that all is well with our souls, as we find hope revived, and joy fills our hearts. It is then sweet to clasp the hand of our brethren and call them brothers and sisters; and to remember that God's grace is sufficient for us. It is good to feel to be at the feet of our brethren and behold their love, kindness, humbleness, meekness and fear; and to listen while they tell of God's love and power to save. With man it is impossible, but with God all things are possible. Our experience teaches us this.

We each have in nature different dispositions: some are humble, meek and gentle; others seem independent, acting as though the world was at their command; while others seem intelligent, quiet, and sure of themselves to do what is right. But we have seen in all these the effect of God's power, which arrests them and causes them to fear God, who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell; and they begin to inquire of the way, seeking and begging to be given the things they see others have in Christ the Lord. We have some around us who often express these things to us, and are so afraid they will never have them. Our hearts are full of sympathy and love for them, but until the Lord's time comes to deliver them from their fears, we cannot comfort them. Though we may quote many scriptures to them, we know how impossible it is for them to understand.

But how precious it is when we find ourselves filled with the presence of Jesus, who is whispering peace, love and joy to our souls. "Tis heaven below our Redeemer to know." One feels at this time that his troubles are over, but, alas, he has to learn many, many things. He feels it will be so easy to walk soberly and righteously in this world, but learning obedience by the things he suffers, is not easy. Christ said that it was needful that he go away, for if he went not away the Comforter would not come, but that he would send the Comforter, and that he would take of the things of mine and show them unto us; and we soon find how greatly we need the Comforter, and also find that he is faithful who promised. We are tried very sorely, and often feel forsaken, but after we have suffered long enough, he sends the Comforter; and how precious the things of Jesus are! We then see him the one altogether lovely, who has given us riches untold.

Then, with the song, we desire, "Oh, that more his salvation might see." For

one to believe, is the work of God; and God cannot be hindered, for his word is quick and powerful. When he speaks, it is done. Something takes place in the heart which turns us about; and before we are aware of what is taking place, we begin to see sin exceedingly sinful. We try to flee from it, and promise to be a better person, only to find we get worse; and always breaking the promises, we are truly condemned in our own eyes. We try all we know how, and fall far short, and are worse than before; and feel that we must die and be lost without mercy. Along about this time, the thought struck me like a thunderbolt, Why surely I can't be saved; for God is just, and he could not remain just and save me. This seemed to send me in a whirl of dispair for a little while; and certainly caused me to know that mercy, and mercy alone, was the cause of salvation. I still suffered on until the appointed time; when I found, to my surprise, the storm had passed, and I was in a heavenly state of mind. My sins had fled from before me, and the smiles of Jesus were upon me, saying "Peace, be still," And I beheld his glory, and saw him the way, the truth and the life.

Now these are precious things to me, and I hope I am not doing wrong by claiming a sweet hope in the finished work of Christ. For if this is not the way he teaches his children and brings them in, it is all I have; and I would not exchange it for ten thousand worlds like this. "In this world ye shall have tribulation, but in me peace." We have many sorrows, troubles and trials, but as Brother Joe McKinzie, of Canada, said, "What difference does it make, if we have the gift of eternal life."

Pray for me and mine when you can pray, that we be kept by God's grace ready to be revealed in the last time. My husband is not well at this time, and we do pray to be reconciled to God's will, knowing that He works all things together for good to those that love him.

Yours in hope,
Mrs. Luther Campbell

Danville, Virginia
Route #5, Box #77

Dear Editors;

The following is a letter we received from Elder B. O. Thompson's wife and we feel that there is much comfort for the children of God contained therein. If you have space and feel that it is worthy of publishing, we have her permission to have it published.

Mrs. Cindy Parsons

Copper Hill, Virginia

Dear Wilford and Cindy:

We arrived home about 5 o'clock Sunday. We were an hour and fifty-five minutes making the trip. There was a lot of traffic on the main highways. One can't make quite as much time under such conditions.

We wish to say again, we enjoyed our visit very much. It was so good to visit in your home again, also to meet the brethren and sisters at the church. We spoke on our way home of how we were so thankful that we had the opportunity to hear Elders Dodd and Payne. They are precious Elders.

Again we enjoyed the delicious food you served, and appreciate so much you having taken us to see Brother Oakes. As a matter of fact, we enjoyed everything you did to make us happy. The Lord is so good to us; giving us a home among the children of God is such a blessing, also enabling us to visit and mingle with them from time to time, and from place to place, and find that sweet fellowship in evidence everywhere we go. It is too much for me. I am so undeserving, and take so much for granted, therefore I can say with the Apostle Paul, "By the grace of God, I am what I am." All the morning I have been thinking of His goodness and mercy toward the children who are given to trust in his name; which brings the writing in Psalms 21:7, "For the king trusteth in the Lord and through the

mercy of the most High he shall not be moved."

Also Psalms 23:6, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." To my mind these are most precious thoughts. The 23rd Psalm is so precious when we are given grace to hope we know something of the Psalmist's feelings when he wrote it. This morning I love it. So much of my time I am in gross darkness and find myself groaning within, and it is then I think of Job 23:3, "Oh that I knew where I might find him: that I might come even to his seat." We must wait upon Him for our every blessing. Again Job 23:13, "But he is in one mind, and who can turn Him? and what his soul desireth even that he doeth."

If I am not deceived he visited me with His spirit when I was in my twelfth year, from that time on I have been emptied from vessel to vessel. The precious, the very precious, thought is, I hope He has given me to know something of His goodness and mercy.

Enough of me; I hope I haven't worried you. Hope you are all well and receiving a crumb when He sees fit to give. It must be when He sees fit to give.

The scriptures you asked Odell about will be found in Isaiah 11-9 and 65:25, if he remembers correctly what you asked for. He asks to be remembered.

We are looking forward to seeing you Saturday. Remember us to your mother and aunt.

May the Lord bless us all together.

Yours in hope,
Gaye

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Pa. June 3rd. and 4th. 1959, to all the Associations and Churches with which we correspond, sends love and fellowship.

Dear Brethren:

Although we have been saddened by the recent death of Elder Harold M. Bennett, we would bow in humble submission to the will of God, who does all things well; and in so comforting us, we are made thankful for his tender mercy shown us in again permitting us to gather in this Association.

The ministering brethren have spoken with love of their experience of grace, and giving all honor and praise to God's holy name.

The spirit of the Lord has been in our midst, for he so blessed the words of the brethren that they gently dropped as the rain, and distilled as the dew, and, indeed, gave us a refreshing season.

We have enjoyed receiving your correspondence and messengers, and desire such may continue, and pray the visiting brethren may be spared to come our way again.

Our next session will convene, the Lord willing, with the time and place to be announced in the Signs of the Times, when we hope to meet many of your messengers again.

Until then, dear brethren, may the Lord bless you. May His love be shed abroad in your hearts.

Elder William D. Griffin, Moderator
Deacon Casper G. Fetter, Clerk
Sister Letha A. Blackwell, Ass't. Clerk

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association in session with the Southampton Church, Southampton, Pa., Wednesday and Thursday, June 3 and 4, 1959, to the churches composing the same, and to the sister churches and associations with whom we correspond, sendeth Christian greetings:

"Walk about Zion, . . ." (Psalms 48:12)

Dearly beloved Brethren:

According to the custom set by our forefathers, you have the right to expect something in the way of a Circular

Letter. This custom was not set by learned men after the days of the Apostles, but it was something originated by them as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Writing letters to the churches was brought about by the inspiration of God. Writing material was something that was important to Paul. He enjoyed the personal contact with his brethren, but, as with ministers and brethren and churches, it was not always feasible to visit one another; therefore he delighted in his written messages to the churches and brethren. The importance of writing communications is seen in his charge to Timothy: He needed his cloak and his books, but most important were the parchments which were used to write his letters on.

We are told to do good, and to communicate, forget not. (Heb. 13:16) In this day of the dear brethren being so widely scattered, our letters and written messages to one another mean a lot. It is a great favor from the Lord to be concerned about the welfare of each other. Our journey here in this weary world is one that is beset with many difficulties. We are often cast down and almost ready to give up. The Psalmist tells us to walk about Zion. To enjoy the walk about the Zion of the Lord, one must have had to walk among the ruins of fallen Babylon. That fabulous city was once our pride and joy, but that day in our life when we had to walk amidst the ruins and desolation of that once beautiful city will not be forgotten.

When the voice of our Beloved called us out of the ruins and confusion of that city Babylon, and told us not to be partaker of her evil deeds, it was with joy that we followed to Zion, the city of our God; the city that is beautiful for situation; the city that is the joy of the whole earth. We trust that from that time until now our delight has been to walk about Zion; to be going around her, viewing the many glorious scenes, beholding her ordinances, sharing in the fellowship of her inhabitants, and paying homage and adoration to her King.

We hope we have noted her towers: that in each tower there is a watchman, and that his cry is, "All is well"; and to have the joy of marking her strong bulwarks, and considering her lovely palaces; and to have been brought from being an outcast, to being in fellowship with the saints therein, and to join in with their song: Salvation is of the Lord.

Brethren, let us walk often around this lovely city, the church of the living God.

Elder W. D. Griffin, Moderator
Casper G. Fetter, Clerk
Letha A. Blackwell, Asst. Clerk
Written by Elder W. D. Griffin

LETTER OF A CANADIAN SISTER

Ridgetown, Ontario
December 19, 1956

Dear Elder Ruston,

This is for Sister Ruston too. At last, I've begun the letter long-promised both you and myself. Many times I have written you in my thoughts, when I had my hands full of other tasks. Now, I may not recall many things I planned to write. However, I hope I may write something to His praise and for your pleasure.

As the year draws to a close, it seems a good time to look back over our path in life, not only for the past year, but for the past generally, and to look to the future with that sweet thought, "He knoweth the way that I take," etc.

After the point had been brought up during our conversation, when you so kindly visited us in the Summer, I thought much for some time of the way I had been led from my childhood, for I recall, that at about fifteen years of age, I was DEEPLY concerned regarding my soul's welfare, etc. It is true there were times, in my youth, that I wished to be UNSHACKLED and be able to have party dresses and do things that others my own age seemed to enjoy and talk about, but when, at about twenty-two

years (just previous to my baptism) those words of the hymn commencing: —

"When all thy mercies, O my God!
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view,
I'm lost in wonder, love and praise."

were indelibly imprinted upon my heart, my soul did seem to RISE above these earthly, fleeting pleasures, and I could look back and see that the Lord, I believe, had hedged me about, and the view (as from a great height) did fill me with wonder, love and praise. I cannot honestly say, now, that I gave up anything of value when I became a church member. It seemed such a great dignity and honour to be counted worthy to have a name with those who love Him, and to suffer sometimes of embarrassment and natural longing for companionship of young people. I believe I learned to say, "I thirst, but not as once I did, the vain delights of earth to share." It has been such a warmth and comfort to have the loving fellowship of you and the brethren that is often FELT more than expressed, that I am not now sorry that I was not allowed to have my fill of worldly pleasure, and then, in my later years, desire the church fellowship I have known since 1929, and my love of it, even before. Of course, I am aware that when one is in business contact with the public, one is socially avoided if one does not dance, play cards and enter into such pastimes as society enjoys, but that is small suffering if the dear Lord enlightens our darkness, and shows us "what MANNER of love the Father hath bestowed upon us."

In the immediate past year we have been greatly blessed in many ways. One time in the Fall I was deeply concerned about a matter, and fear begin to grip me. It is remarkable how we remember the PLACE (our Bethels) where we feel the Lord spoke or otherwise undertook for us, isn't it? I well remember that I was at the front of my class-room, before school time, when I felt afraid, and it was, as it were, One lifted up my head, and when the words of the Psalm, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee," dropped into my heart, I was no more afraid.

When Katherine Gillies spoke to the church with the others, I felt my heart especially knit to her, yet I knew her only to speak to before. A responsive feeling leaped within me when, following the relation of her experience, she said, "what more could I ask?" That's it! What more could any of us ask, if the Lord has graciously blessed us with a reason to hope in His Love and Mercy? At once I began to hope for the time when I could write to Katherine about a precious experience I had had not long before. So surprising and precious it was that had I never had any token from the dear Lord before or since, I feel I could say like Katherine, "How could I ask for more?"

As it is getting late I must write quickly and briefly but I want to tell you what I wrote to her.

One morning early in early Fall, I got up fairly refreshed and stood looking quietly through an alcove window at the trees and clear blue sky beyond. Suddenly it seemed one of those rare moments I'm sure both of you have known sometimes, when the soul seems caught up with a feeling of praise to precious Jesus. That morning I just seemed to breathe the words from my heart, "Dear Lord." Suddenly, like a Lover's response, the words rejoiced my heart, "Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee." When I quickly came to myself I could but think, "This to me, dear Lord!" for I knew that I was black! I believe He looked upon me, seeing only His spotless righteousness and love, or else the precious words and lovely experience were not for me at all, but I cling to it as priceless!

Is it any wonder that it is a joyous privilege to go to meeting where one has been so abundantly blessed of the Lord, and who speaks about dear Jesus with such evident love and praise as you are blessed to do? My prayer is that you

may be blessed and strengthened to feed the church as a dear under-shepherd, as we feel you are, until it is time for you to go to your long home. That is a nice line, isn't it, "He giveth His beloved sleep?"

I don't believe I feel any harshness toward any brethren who do not find comfort in some beliefs that I do, and you do, such as the precious thought that the Man, Lord Jesus, is in Heaven with His Father, with the sacred marks of His dying upon His person. I am, or was, AMAZED, that anyone could overlook some Scriptures that indicate the facts, such as, "I have engraven thee upon the palms of my hands." If brethren express a LOVE and reverence for dear Lord Jesus and for each other, I love them, I hope, with an indescribable love that variations in opinions cannot change.

I should like to write much more, but must close now. My prayer is that you both may be ever blessed and kept.

Lovingly,
Edna McColl Carey

Spencer Road,
Ivyland, Pa.

Signs of the Times,

Dear Editors:

I find it is time to renew our subscription to our Signs of the Times, which we have taken for so many years. My husband passed on in September, 1959, and he enjoyed reading our family paper. Maybe I should not speak of it in these terms, but it does really seem like a part of our family. I am enclosing a check, so please renew for one year.

It means so much to me to read the Editorials, and the good spiritual letters of those who express their experiences so beautifully. I enjoy reading them, but am not gifted to write as they do; and I regret that I am not.

With my kind wishes to the Editors and all of those who help to make the Signs of the Times so valuable to us.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Joseph A. Rook

PIGG RIVER DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

The PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION is appointed to meet with River View Church, Bassett, Virginia, beginning Friday before the 1st Sunday in August, and continuing through Sunday (July 31, August 1 and 2).

Our correspondents and all interested brethren are invited to meet with us.

John D. Wood, Clerk

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

THREE DAYS MEETING

Bethel Church of Riffe, Washington, holds her annual three days meeting, the 3rd Sunday in August, beginning on Friday before at 10:30 A. M. The meetings are held in the church house.

We will welcome any of our brothers and sisters of the same faith. For further information write the Clerk.

Elder Atteberry, Pastor
Vernie Schoonover, Clerk
Maston, Wash.

MAINE ASSOCIATION

The MAINE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION will convene, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, September 4, 5, and 6, 1959.

An invitation is extended to those of our faith and order, and interested friends. For overnight accommodations please contact Deacon Arthur Merigold, King Mills, Whitefield, Maine; Brother Charles Reynolds, 106 High Holborn Street, Gardiner, Maine; or Mrs. Sanford Bartlett, Damariscotta Mills, Maine.

Mrs. Sanford S. Bartlett, Clerk

THE LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The Lexington-Roxbury Association is appointed to be held with the Olive and Hurley Church, of Shokan, N. Y., but holding it at

Halcottville, Delaware County, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, September 23 and 24, 1959. Those coming Tuesday take Route 28 to Fleischmans, then take Halcott Center Road out of Fleischmans at Esso Gas Station, four miles to The Maples (Mr. and Mrs. James Peet).

Those coming on Wednesday will go directly to the Halcottville Meeting House; and those expecting to stay one night or more, please send card to Mr. and Mrs. James Peet, Halcott Center, N. Y.

Elder A. J. Slauson, Pastor
Neva Brooks, Church Clerk

ORIGINAL FLINT RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1959 session of the ORIGINAL FLINT RIVER ASSOCIATION is appointed to be held with Kelly's Creek Church, Friday, Saturday and fourth Sunday in September. The church is about four miles from Ardmore, Tenn., and five miles from Taft, Tenn., on Highway 110, and is known at the Old Baptist Church in the community, Lincoln County, Tenn.

For further information write the clerk:

Reaner Reese,
Rt. 2,
Toney, Alabama

THREE DAYS MEETING

The Lord willing, a three days meeting will be held August 7, 8, and 9th. The meeting place is 5265 Ardelle Avenue, Stockton, Calif. We invite all lovers of the truth.

Wm. Echols, Clerk
Chowchilla, Calif.

THREE DAYS MEETING

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Seclusa Church would be pleased for you to print this announcement in the Signs: We have agreed to hold our three day meeting, the Lord willing, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in August, and continuing through Sunday. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

The meeting will be held at my place, 12812 South Williams, Compton, California.

L. W. Langwell

CONTRIBUTORS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(From July 1, 1958, to June 1, 1959)

Mrs. Fannie D. Wiles, Va., $2.00; Joseph A. Johnson, Tenn., $1.00; Mrs. Fred Little, Fla., $2.00; J. B. Barron, N. C., $1.00; E. B. Ault, Tex., $5.00; Mary Ryker, Calif., $5.00; Mr. Joe Daniel, N. C., $1.00; Mr. I. G. Allen, N. C., $2.00; Mrs. I. S. Bond, Va., $5.15; Mrs. Ernest W. Gibson, Ga., $2.00; H. F. Triplett, W. Va., $5.00; Mildred Finnegan, Md., $3.00; Mrs. E. A. Bagwell, Ala., $2.00; W. R. Wallis, Miss., $7.00; Elder O. J. Croker, Ga., $1.00; Mrs. Jessie H. Daniel, Tex., $2.00; Mr. Guy Sisk, Tex., $2.00; James L. Howell, Ala., $5.00; Mrs. C. M. McPherson, Can., $10.00; W. M. Rushing, Ala., $1.00; Katherine Gillies, Can., $2.00; Becky McLaughlin, Can., $1.00; James Carter, N. C., $7.00; Mrs. G. W. Mathews, Tex., Mrs. A. V. Pearce, Va., $5.00; Lee Hardy, Calif., $2.00; Mrs. Carl Twilley, Md., $2.00; Elmer F. Hastings, Md., $8.00; Mrs. Ollie Bullock, N. C., $1.00;

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Danville, Virginia August, 1959

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Do you know of someone who would like to read the Signs? He or she would appreciate it as a gift from you.

EDITORIAL

THE TEMPLE OF GOD
(1 Cor. 3:16, 17; 6:19, 20; 2 Cor. 6:16)

The children of God are the temple of God. This is proven by Paul in a number of cases. As I come before the dear brethren once again, it is with much casting about in my mind. I think that I would write and preach so as to heal instead of rending, but if I could do that, I would please men, but, according to the record, I would not please Him that I trust has called me.

I feel it my duty, as well as I feel it to be a joy, to comply with the requests that I write on a given portion of Scripture, but so often when I am requested to write my views, it is with misgiving that I do so. If I have any talent, it is a gift of God. I did not reecive it of men, neither was I taught it by men, and, further still, if it is for the perfecting of the saints; if it is the work of the ministry; if it is for the edification of the body of Christ, I did not get it by my aptitude for spiritual learning, nor by a well thought out course of study (See Eph. 4:12; Gal. 1:12). If I have been thus favored, whatever gift I have is for the church. If I am ever blessed, I want to, as did Ruth, to bring my gleanings home to the church. I beg the people of God to be patient with me, and when I err to come talk it over with me.

To those that have requested me to write, I will comply as I have time and a mind. I can not create a seed for the earth, nor can I create light upon a subject, nor exercise a mind to write.

I will not write upon this subject with the expectation of removing the difficulties that any scripture will present to our mind as viewed in nature. I hope to tread humbly and softly before you all, for I realize my proneness to speak and write in nature unless I am given an unction from above.

People are men and women. Men and women are sinners. Jesus Christ came to save his people, his sinning people. The Church is composed of men and women. They are sinners in Adam; they are saints in Christ. If the gospel is to be addressed to the unregenerate, it will take all of the scripture. This we readily know is not the case, for the unregenerate characters *are not* the temple of the Holy Ghost; therefore, I will, if blessed of God, confine my remarks on this passage as belonging exclusively to the children of God.

The children of God are men and women. I do not want to try to interpret the text so as to leave the children of God out of it. I want them to have a part in the text, for sometimes I have a hope that I am a child of God, and I want a part in the text. I always, when in the spirit, want to enjoy the preaching; enjoy the text; enjoy the eating of His broken body and drinking His shed blood.

In 1 Cor. 3:15, the brethren are given

to know that when their works are burned, that they suffer loss. Yet, he that suffers the loss shall be saved, yet so as by fire. These brethren are men and women, sinners of Adam's race, objects of saving grace. Unless they are spirits, they have a body. This body is a part of the sinner. It is a vital part of him; it is an important part of him. To these brethren he here tells them that they are the temple of God. The same ones whose works are tried by fire are the same ones that are the temple of God.

It is a man that is the object of the new birth. Unbelievers may cavil; gainsayers may find fault and criticize and ridicule, but when they get through I am still standing on the words, and contending for the doctrine that is involved in these words: Except a *man* be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God (John 3:3). Follow each one of the scripture characters from this birth until inspiration leaves them out of the record, and they begin their testimony as men, and they end it as men; in Adam sinners, in Christ saints.

In 1 Cor. 3:16, there is not any reference made to the body. The writer states to these brethren that they are the temple of God; that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. As he launches out a little further and deeper in chapter six, we see the working of his mind as it concerns us. He is talking about the body of the children of God. They have a body, and that body is an object of redemption (See Rom. 8:23; 1 Thes. 5:-23). After presenting a great truth in verse 18, it seems that he becomes aware of the solemnity and importance of his statement; that perhaps they have not given it any thought; that they were not aware of their body being the temple of the Holy Ghost. Here, as in so many instances, the inspired writer looks ahead and anticipates the doubt, the opposition, the misunderstanding, and he hastens to answer the matter, even before it has became a personal matter with us.

What? The question is not asked in the script, but the inspired mind leaps ahead and sees it coming. Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 1st. Our body is the temple of the Holy Ghost. 2nd. You have the Holy Ghost in you by the work of God. 3rd. As the result of this work, you are not your own. If I separate the body from this, I have the Holy Ghost in a spirit. This I cannot do, for the subjects of this wonderful declaration are the children of God, the people of God, men and women, sinners in Adam, saints in Christ. In the first place, they are the temple of God; in the second place their body is the temple of the Holy Ghost. If the first statement (1 Cor. 3:16, 17) means the man is the temple of God, the insertion of word "body" in the second statement (1 Cor. 6:18, 20) cannot make it mean more or less than that, for, if so, we have the child of God as a temple of God, and then we have his body as another temple, and that gives us one temple too many.

The one who is not his own, has a body. He also has a spirit. This man, this complex being, is more than one. We have him as being two in our text. This spirit is the quickened spirit but not quickening Spirit. This indwelling of the Holy Ghost has quickened the spirit in the man. By the quickening of his spirit, he then testifies that Jesus is come in the flesh (1 John 4:1, 3). This is not a testimony of the Holy Ghost that Jesus has come in the flesh, but the Holy Ghost is dwelling there, as the quickening power (See Psa. 71:20; 80:18). The One that owns this man, this child of God, does so as a Sovereign. It is alone by His divine power that the Holy Ghost dwells here; it is alone by the reign of his grace that we have this gift in earthern vessels. Since this is all true the children of God do not belong to themselves. They were bought with a price. The buying came first; the indwelling of the Holy Ghost came second.

This buying of the children for a price is a subject fraught with difficulties when examined in the light of our kin-

dling (Isa. 50:11), but is filled with sweetness when the time of trusting in the Lord comes (Isa. 50:10). The giver of eternal life was a poor Man. No poverty struck man or woman has ever been as poor as He was. Yet, He had one thing. That was everything needed to buy His brethren. The one thing, the only thing, that He had was His life, but that was enough, when laid down in humble submission to His Father's will, to redeem every chosen vessel of mercy. To give out of abundance is not remarkable. That kind of giving will not call for much praise from beneficiaries, but when the Man, Christ Jesus, our Lord gave all He possessed to ransom us, then we became solely the Lord's.

Surely He has the right to command these redeemed people; surely He has the right to demand obedience and exact it from us; surely He has the right to be jealous about the purchased possession, and to consume by the brightness of His coming all of our works, yet his zeal to preserve us while consuming the works.

He gave all He had for us, and He will have us to glorify him in our body. He learned obedience by the things He suffered, and we are predestinated to be conformed to His image. This predestination will be culminated in the resurrection; this conformation will be finished when every chosen vessel of mercy is safe in heaven. The lovely doctrine of predestination will not be found faulty as we are being conformed and transformed into the lovely forms of heavenly creatures. As He commands us to be glorifying God in our body and in our spirit, we do not know how to do so. Oh, Lord, how can a vile wretch like I am glorify thee while here below? And how does it appear to you dear reader? O how cast down we become as we view over the past events. Sin has done its work; ruin is everywhere; misery and decay are rampant on every hand. But it seems that I hear something else as I write. "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee (Isa. 60:1)".

Yes, now the glorifying sets in. What a long night it has been. How despondent the children of God were as they toiled through the long watches (Lam. 2:19; Heb. 2:1). The evidence was so little as we watched. Our spirits became weary and despondent, but the command has gone out. The witness must appear; the evidence must be given. It has been well said that God would not leave himself without a witness (Isa. 43:10; Ezek. 6:8; Acts 1:8). In courts of men, the witness must produce the evidence. But in the court of heaven, the witness is first given that which they must testify to. The Spirit of God beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God (Rom. 1:16). The moment that the witness of the Spirit is made known to our spirit, it is at that precise moment, no sooner, no later, no failure, no intervening time between, that we begin to glorify God in our body and in our spirit.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

PERVERSIONS OF SCRIPTURE

AMONG the devices of the adversary for trying the saints in the house of their pilgrimage is the wresting of the words of inspiration, by which they are frequently made to seem to forbid their hope in the sure word of God. Even in his first assault upon our parents in the garden the serpent quoted the words which God had spoken, but reasoned against their truth. So it has ever been his common mode of assailing the faith of the children of God, first by quoting some word of Scripture, and then by misapplication distorting it to the distress of the dear child whom he is tempting. One advantage in this device consists in making the reference as nearly correct in the letter as possible, while denying the truth and power of the divine word. But if the letter of the word should be too plain to admit of perver-

sion, it is easy to slightly change the language so as to reverse the meaning of the text, and bewilder the trusting ones whom he has already led to doubt their hope in Christ. On many such portions of Scripture we have been requested by different ones to write; and as time and space would fail to consider at length all the texts submitted, we will brifely refer to a few of them. It is impossible to mention separately every passage perverted; but attention to two particulars will expose the fallacy of most of these efforts to change the truth of God into a lie. First, it is well to examine the text, and see if it reads as suggested in the temptation; for the omission or insertion of a very little word will often give an entirely different meaning to a whole passage. If it is found to be a literally correct quotation, then examine the connection, and see whether the application of the words by the tempter is that which was made by the Holy Ghost in moving them to be written. A few examples of such perversions which are commonly used by opposers of the truth may be profitably cited.

To sinners who have not known the fear of the Lord the exhortation is applied, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." This is presented in evidence that it rests with them to accept or refuse imaginary offers of salvation, that by serving the Lord they may secure eternal life, or by serving sin they may incur the curse of death. Nothing like this language is found in the Bible, except in the last address of Joshua to the tribes of Israel, and there the choice is offered them only between idols. The Lord, who brought them up out of Egypt, was not in the choice which Joshua proposed to them. "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." — Joshua xxiv. 15. The context clearly proves that there is here no foundation for the doctrine of the salvation of sinners depending upon their own choice, for none but the Israelites were addressed by Joshua; and when they declared that they would serve the Lord, Joshua told them that they could not serve him, but that they were witnesses against themselves in their profession of willingness to obey him.

Much use is made of the text, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." — Isa. xlv. 22. This is sometimes mixed with the command of our Lord, Matthew xi. 28, and made to read "Come" instead of "Look." But the command is construed as an entreaty, expressing the will of God as desiring to save everybody if they would but comply with his wish by "Looking" or "Coming." The plain reading of the command assures the salvation of all to whom it is addressed; but this fact is not seen by those who would distort it to sustain the theory that salvation depends upon the will of the sinner. The fulfillment of this command is repeatedly recorded in the Scriptures. "The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of the heathen. He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God." — Psalm xcviii. 2, 3. "The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." — Isaiah lii. 10. The command to the laboring and heavy laden never fails to be effectual in bringing them to their Redeemer, as he says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." — John vi. 37. This was positively foretold by the prophet, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem." — Isa.

xxvii. 13. These perishing ones who "SHALL COME" are the very same who are designated by our Lord as laboring and heavy laden. All such are drawn by the Father, and given to the Redeemer, who is the everlasting covenant; and every one of them shall certainly be gathered together by the Spirit, and kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. This command of our Lord therefore cannot imply that he wills the salvation of any whose names are not eternally written in the heaven of the electing love of God as members of the body of Christ, in whom they were chosen before the foundation of the world.

"Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?" This is frequently addressed to sinners, as a last appeal from God to them in his great anxiety to save them from death. No such words are spoken by the Lord to the ungodly world; and one amply sufficient reason for this is that every sinner is already dead in trespasses and sins. — See Eph. ii. 1-3. So the Lord says, "The Son of man is come to save that which *was lost,*" not to prevent their being lost. He certainly accomplished the work for which he came, and saved all for whom he gave himself a ransom. The text from which these words are taken reads, "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" — Ezekiel xxxiii. 11. The preceding verse expressly designates the house of Israel as the people to whom this message is sent. In that covenant under which that nation was the peculiar people whom God had chosen, temporal blessings were promised them in obedience, and temporal calamities in disobedience. No intimation of eternal life was given to the obedient, nor was there any penalty beyond this world attached to disobedience. The natural Israelites who received that covenant were already dead in the sin of Adam, and that law could not give life. "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." But, "If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." — Gal. ii. 21; iii. 21. While the law of Moses demands perfect and perpetual obedience as the price of justification, and denounces temporal death as the penalty of its violation, yet the justice of its demands furnishes no power to render obedience; hence, "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." This fact does not affect the justice of the legal requirement, neither does it relieve the sinner from his obligation to obey. The voice of justice perpetually consigns the sinner to death; and the law is an everlasting admonition to obedience on that ground. Such was the condition of national Israel when the inspired prophet spoke to them in the words above quoted. The solemn form of assertion used is called an oath in Hebrews vi. 17, being an appeal to his own life in confirmation of the word of the Lord God. This is not only true in the sense that nothing can be added to the infinite pleasure of the eternal God, but it is also true in the administration of his holy law, that there is no vindictive pleasure in the death of the transgressor, who is the wicked in the judgment of that law, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Hence, this admonition speaks exclusively to them that are under the law. The impossibility of the wicked turning from his evil way is declared Jeremiah xiii. 23, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." The salvation of Israel is declared Ezekiel xxxvi. 21-38. By reading this word of the Lord it will be seen how God will secure the fulfillment of the injunction under consideration, for in the passage last cited it is the Lord who does all the work, and saves them from all their uncleannesses. This text is then in perfect accord with all the inspired record, and shows that the only hope of salvation for sinners is in the sovereign grace

of God, and not in the perverse will of man.

In their efforts to prove that God is not able to execute his will in gathering his chosen people, will-worshipers often refer to the words of our Lord, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" — Matthew xxiii. 37. This is supposed to express the disappointment of Jesus in failing to overcome the opposition of carnal Jews so that they might have been included in his salvation. It is not clear what comfort could be drawn from this sentiment if it could be proved true, since there could be no certainty of the accomplishment of any promise of God if his power is not infinite. But by reference to the record it will be seen that nothing of the purpose of God was defeated by the stubborn opposition of that nation. The children whom the Lord would gather were all assembled by the power of God, and taken out of that house of the legal covenant, which belonged to the natural children of Jacob, whom the Lord here calls Jerusalem. This left their house desolate, without a living inhabitant.

The illustration used is very significant. It is not to make them her chickens that a hen gathers her brood under her wings. They were hers when scattered, and for that reason they hear her call and are gathered under her wings. If she should warm and feed a young hawk, she could never change its nature, and it would certainly be a bird of carnage when fully developed. Nor could any amount of education change its appetite so that it would desire the food of the chickens. As the call of the hen is heeded only by her own brood, so the voice of Jesus is heard and obeyed only by those who are vitally related to him. As the Shepherd, he says to the Jews, "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." — John x. 26, 27. They do not become his by following him; but they follow him because they are his, and hear and know his voice. That murderous Jerusalem addressed in the text neither heard nor knew the voice of Jesus. He said to that people, "Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word." "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." — John viii. 43; v. 40. That dreadful "will not" is characteristic of all who are not made alive by the Spirit of God; while all who are led by that Spirit are born of God and have eternal life, which is manifested in their soul thirsting for the living God. All such will come to Jesus. The house which was left desolate to Jerusalem refers not merely to the city literally, but to all that dispensation of legal ordinances under which from the time of Moses even the saints had found shelter. All this house was now desolate as having been fulfilled and taken out of the way, so that the living children of Jerusalem could no more dwell there. Those offerings which the law had formerly required were now become abomination and sin. He that offered an oblation was as if he had offered swine's blood, and he that burned incense as if he blessed an idol. The perpetuation of those observances demanded by the law was a denial that Jesus Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes. Hence, the very ordinances divinely authorized under the former dispensation were no longer acceptable to God even when observed by the Jews, much less could they be approved when voluntarily observed by Gentiles, of whom it had never been required to keep that law or bring those offerings. Although steeped in pollution and rebellion against God, that typical nation of Israel was preserved until the great Redeemer came and magnified the law in its perfect fulfillment. Then that former heaven and earth passed away, and the new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness were brought in. No longer did the true chil-

dren of God look through the shadows of the legal ceremonies to the coming Messiah; now the types are all withdrawn, and the perfect day arises in the resurrection of Jesus, and in his exaltation with the right hand of God upon the throne of his eternal glory. As all power is given unto him in heaven and on earth, he is fully able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him. This includes all that the Father giveth him, and no more. Then it cannot be that the Lord was defeated in his will to save any, by the obduracy of their hard hearts.

When he lamented the ruin of Jerusalem as stated in the text, there was no disappointment in his sorrow. There was indeed incomprehensible pity and compassion in his heart, but not a murmur of opposition to the will of God. He had not failed to save any one of all for whose redemption he came into the world. While Jerusalem was left to destruction when the last one of the elect vessels of mercy had been taken out from that devoted house, yet none of the chosen people of God could be involved in that desolation. As Lot and his family must be taken out of Sodom before the vengeance of eternal fire could fall upon that doomed city, so the last subject of divine love must be saved from that legal abode before it could be removed for the manifestation of that everlasting house where all the redeemed are forever justified in the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. Desolation such as had never been and should never be again was visited upon Jerusalem in her overthrow; for now in her destruction she is the type of antichrist. No longer are her ceremonial institutions typical of the church, the body of Christ. Her sacred courts are become the cage of unclean birds and the den of dragons. Her sad case may well be lamented, for all the righteous blood ever shed upon the earth is come upon her, and her generation must forever bear the awful load of all that guilt. How wonderful is that grace of God which has gathered the elect children of Jerusalem under the protection of eternal love and power. While pouring out upon the enemies of his truth the dreadful wrath of strict justice, the vessels of mercy dwell securely in the secret place of the Most High, and no plague comes nigh that dwelling.

A very much abused quotation is the phrase, "Work out your own salvation." This expression is found only in Philippians ii. 12. Any honest reader must see that the sentence is plainly addressed to saints already noted for obedience. To such the whole epistle is addressed, and this particular verse is confined to them as beloved of the apostle. It is willful perversion to apply this direction to any others. Paul says, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Their former obedience is the very ground on which this exhortation is founded, in consideration of which Paul appeals to them to work out their own salvation; and in further confirmation of the admonition he in the next verse assigns the reason for the direction given: "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Since both the will and the deed are wrought in them by God, it is evident that this text affords no support to the theory of the freedom of the will of the sinner in salvation.

It should also be remembered in this connection that the carnal mind is enmity against God, and cannot be subject to his law. The natural man has no mind but the carnal mind which is born of the flesh. Therefore it necessarily follows that there must be another mind given to him before he can love God and desire to be free from sin; for enmity cannot desire the holiness it hates. So John says, "Love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love." The only will in any sinner which can desire conformity to the image of Christ is that which is wrought in him by the Spirit of

God. Hence, whoever has this desire must be led by that Spirit and born of God. This is the character specified Revelation xxii. 17, who is authorized to take of the water of life freely. This description will apply to none but those who are made willing in the day of the power of the Redeemer. Not only is it impossible for any sinner to attain everlasting life by his own efforts; even the will to desire that life is infinitely beyond his possible grasp. It is certain therefore that every one who hungers and thirsts after righteousness is already blessed in Jesus as the perfect righteousness of all who love him. There is no other fountain of the water of life but that which is treasured in Jesus, in whom it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell. All who have received his Spirit are led to will or desire the water of life, and it is of God given to all such to take of the water of life freely. Indeed, there is no price to be rendered and no condition to be fulfilled in taking this water. The abundant grace of God in Christ Jesus has given this fountain to the poor and needy, and it is ever opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. It is not by merit or righteousness of their own that they are entitled to the benefit of this fountain. It is the birthright of every spiritual Israelite, and in its cleansing water they are made holy with the perfect righteousness of God. Taking freely of this fountain experimentally in trusting implicitly in the word of the Lord, and drawing comfort and strength from the truth and power of the God of salvation.

In this brief review we have only referred to a few of the more common perversions of Scripture by which the saints are frequently assailed. It would be impossible to follow all the tangled devices of the adversary; but they will all be exposed in the light of inspired truth when applied by the blessed Comforter in the experience of every saint.

(Editorial by Elder Wm. Beebe, Sept. 15, 1885.)

ORDINATION OF DEACONS

Minutes of ordination of deacons at Shiloh Church (North Carolina) the first Sunday in May, 1959.

At the request of the church, a presbytery assembled for the ordination of two deacons, namely, C. T. Hall, Jr., and C. B. Davis. The Presbytery was composed of Elders D. V Spangler and Leonard Brammer, Deacons J. J. Whitley, C. R. Massey, Gold Minter, C. T. Hall, Sr., and O. Y. Clayton.

Deacons C. T. Hall, Sr., was selected as spokesman for the church. Elder D. V. Spangler was chosen Moderator, and O. Y. Clayton chosen as Clerk.

Elder Brammer read the 3rd Chapter of 1 Timothy on the qualifications of a deacon; and proceeded with the ordination by the laying on of hands, and prayer by Elder Brammer. The charge to the candidates and church was by Elder Spangler. The deacons were then delivered back to the church.

The minutes were read and approved, and on motion the presbytery was dissolved.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
O. Y. Clayton, Clerk

OBITUARIES

BERTHA HOLLOWAY RICHARDSON

The earthly pilgrimage of our beloved sister began near Salisbury, Maryland, on September 7, 1882, and terminated in Newport News, Virginia, on October 30, 1958. She was the daughter of Goldsborough and Gattie Holloway of Salisbury, Md.

On October 3, 1910, she was united in marriage with Charles M. Richardson, and to that union were born two daughters, Mrs. Carolyn R. McMurran of Newport News, Va. and Mrs. Nancy R. Caldwell of San Simon, Arizona, both of whom, together with her husband, survive her. Sister Richardson's married life was one of exceptional happiness, each always considering the wishes of the other above their own.

As a very young woman, our sister was spiritually exercised, brought to know and love her dear Redeemer, given a hope of eternal life and a deep desire to be identified with His people here in the world. Accordingly, she confessed this hope and desire to the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church of Salisbury, Md., asking for a resting place with them. She was joyfully received and baptized by their pastor, Elder Silas H. Durand, on November 17, 1911. Although she, with her husband and children, moved to Newport News in 1918, she retained her membership in the Salisbury Church and

remained one of its most loyal, faithful and loved members. One of her children, writing to the Church after her departure, said "Her church was always one of her dearest associations and certainly the guiding force in her life".

Her funeral was conducted by her beloved pastor, Elder David D. Spangler, in the meeting house of the Church she loved; and her body was laid to rest in the family plot on Sunday, November 2, 1958.

We mourn her absence here, but know that for her it was better to depart and to be with Christ. May we and all who love His Blessed Name, be made to delight in His Holy Will.

Written at the request of her family, by one who loved her deeply for her own and Christ's sake,

Mildred V. Dykes

DEACON CLAUDE C. DODD

It has pleased the most high God of heaven and earth to call home from this world of sin, our beloved Brother and Deacon, Claude C. Dodd. He was born September 13, 1884, and died March 31, 1959, at the age of seventy-four.

Brother Dodd suffered the loss of his first wife, Suenette Bryant, but was blessed with five boys to this union. His subsequent marriage to Kate Evans resulted in the birth of fourteen children. He is survived by his wife, Sister Kate Dodd, twelve children, two sisters, three brothers, twenty-nine grandchildren, and eleven great grandchildren.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, who was assisted by Elder Raymond Payne.

Brother Dodd joined Mountain Springs Church, of the Staunton River Association, in November, 1911; and was ordained deacon in 1916. He moved his membership to Malmaison Church in 1921. He was a man of great humbleness and kindness, and bore the true marks of a deacon in wisdom and faithfulness: after serving as deacon for forty-three years, he often related that his sole dependence for qualification was upon the Lord. Brother Dodd has finished his course; he fought a good fight, and we believe there is a crown of righteousness laid up for him — his walk was proof of his love for Christ.

We of Malmaison Church extend our sympathy to all the family in the loss of so faithful a husband and father. May the Lord cause each of them to realize that it is a glorious thing to leave this world of suffering, to be carried home to God, where sweet peace reigns forever.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; and that a copy be placed on our church book; and that a copy be sent to the family.

Written at the request of the church, by one who loved him.

Burnell B. Williams

BETTIE MAY ANDREWS GROGAN

Zettie May Andrews Grogan, widow of the late Irvin J. Grogan, was born in Tennessee January 23, 1974; and departed this life April 15, 1959. She united with the New Providence Primitive Baptist Church the third Sunday in July, 1919, and was baptized along with her husband by Elder Hugh Oliver. She was the mother of thirteen children, twelve surviving, a number of grandchildren and great grandchildren, along with a host of friends. Sister Grogan will be greatly missed by her church people as her seat was always filled if not providential hindered.

Funeral services were held at the Max Churchill Funeral Home in Murray, Kentucky, by Elder J. H. Darnell and P. E. Poyner, and the body was laid to rest in Old Salem Cemetery to await the resurrection of all the saints of God.

Submitted by her Brothers and Sisters of Providence Church.

MEMORIAL

Whereas, it has pleased our God to take from our midst by death our dear and beloved brother, Elder Harold M. Bennett, since our last session of the Delaware River Association, we bow in humble submission to the will of our God.

Elder Bennett was pastor of the Hopewell Church, and also of the Kingwood Church, and served them well; preaching that which he was a firm believer in: that salvation was by grace and grace alone. We wish to express our deepest sympathy to his widow and family, if it be the will of our God, that they may be reconciled to their loss, and be made to feel that their loss is his eternal gain.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this letter be sent to his widow; and

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the Delaware River Association in session with the Southampton Church of Southampton, Pa., June 3rd and 4th, 1959.

Elder W. D. Griffin, Moderator
Deacon Casper G. Fetter, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 127 DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1959 NO. 9

GODLY CONVERSATIONS

807 Pope Street,
Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

My subscription renewal comes due in January, and I usually wait until after the second Sunday to send it in, for on that date Elder Biggs, of Nashville, has (what we hope is) a standing appointment here in Memphis. And this pleasant visit of several hours of conversation which is so sweet, and precious and edifying, along with two wonderful sermons, most always leaves me with a mind so full of praise and thankfulness to God for such blessings, that it makes writing easy.

I know one doesn't have to send a long letter with their remittance, but as I think back over the twelve issues filled with the doctrine of God our Saviour, and the experiences of the love, grace and mercy in the hearts of his children; and also the love and sacrifice and effort of those who labor in getting the material ready from the first of it, to the stamping names, and getting them mailed, I just have to write something in honor and praise to God for so graciously working in the hearts of his children to do these things for our comfort and edification.

But, having tried to give a reason for this attempt to write, I suddenly have a feeling of awe: How does one find words to describe the sitting together in heavenly places; or the sweetness of the peace and love of God toward each other, as a room full of brethren and sisters sit in conversation of those things that pertain to godliness? How could one condense in a few words two whole afternoons, and into the nights, of having our questions answered; and with kind consideration toward our lack of understanding of the scriptures; and the expounding of the truth as they were given to see it?

How can one write of the tenderness in trying to comfort us in all our fears (and somehow succeeding)? I feel rich and full. I have wealth untold; and how I wish I could pass it on to all who read this, it would take nothing from me, for I would still be full.

How can we understand words which mean so much — just think of the fullness of God; we can't begin to understand it. There is a verse of scripture which reads something like this, "Seek not your own but another's wealth." I don't know if I ever understand anything right, but my heart is so full this morning — and how great these riches are — I believe, if I could impart, share, or even give it to others, I would be willing to become poor that they might experience this wealth. I recall reading that Jesus became poor that his children might be made rich. He laid down his life for them; and one writer says, "As he laid his life down for us, we ought also to lay our life down for the brethren."

I believe I have had an exercised mind concerning the admonitions. A peculiar thing just occurred: I picked up a copy of the Signs to look for an address; it was the November issue of 1958. I turned the pages, and saw Elder Griffin's article on Admonitions. I knew that I read it when it first came, but it was as though I had never seen it before. I certainly enjoyed it, I hope, with the understanding in which it was written. I love the admonitions and exhortations, and I wish I could understand how these things are, but I have to believe that God's children do them. A verse reads,

"We have the mind of Christ." Another says, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who thought it not robbery to be equal with God and took upon himself the form of a servant; and being found in the fashion of a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death."

Here I think of Stephen; whose words, "Lay not this sin to their charge, . . . Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.", so closely resemble the words of Jesus when he said, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do."; and, "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit." Who would say that Stephen was trying to be like Jesus? I believe he was like him: having the mind of Christ, and filled with the spirit, love, and power of God, he said it out of the fulness that was in him. But it pleased God to put this treasure in earthen vessels — our earthen vessel, with its weakness and defiled with sin; and we say, "How can these things be?"

Something was said in our conversation about the walls and bulwarks — the place of refuge, being the wills, the shalls, and predestination, and purpose of God. How I do wish I could hold on to the things that were clearly brought out in this! Inside this place of refuge are all pleasant things — the sweets; and its the dwelling place of God's children. Its invisible to the natural eye, for they mingle and live among all people, but they are separated and protected by this wall, and their safety and destination is in the power of God.

We do hope that God's mercy has been with us, and will continue. David said, "His mercy endureth forever." We do believe we have felt his tender mercy in our life, and that it will endure forever. As we look back over our lives, and remember all the times we feel He was with us, then we can say, "Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

For the past few weeks I have felt to be searching; but as I look back now, I feel that my heart *has been* searched. It would take too many words to tell of this experience, but I have just thought of the 139th Psalm which Brother Biggs told me to read very carefully. I read it after I came back from taking him to the bus; and just now it seems to connect so much with everything I have been thinking, and trying to write about.

Who is sufficient for these things? They are too high and wonderful — we cannot attain unto them.

Mrs. Lucille Young

PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD

By Elder David Bartley

CHAPTER TEN

THE PEOPLE OF CHRIST'S PRIESTHOOD

"HE SHALL save his people from their sins." For this he was born of the virgin Mary and came into the world; for his people are born of woman and are in the world. Thus they are partakers of flesh and blood; for God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." To this one whole family in the embodiment of the first man God said, "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Man ate, and died. Death passed upon all in him. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. 5:12) All the family of man sinned in and by the one first man, who was the earthly head and natural life of all. This life of all the children of men Adam was, and they inherit and receive it from him. This is brought forth and developed in the natural birth of the flesh. From this sinful life is our corrupted fleshly nature, mind and soul, and our mortal body. "By man came death . . . In Adam all die." (1 Cor. 15:21, 22) The entire Adamic tree was corrupted in its root, and hence a fatal and withering blight rests upon it, even unto the righteous curse, as upon the

barren fig tree, and the sentence went forth to "Cut it down." Thus all the children and members of the first man Adam were righteously and hopelessly condemned in and with him, by the just sentence of the holy command of the beneficent Creator, to whom all men are righteously accountable forever. Our individual sins do but manifest this original guilt and condemnation unto death and separation from communion and favor with God.

All the foreknown, chosen and predestinated people of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose names were written in heaven and are in the book of life, were held in this righteous condemnation, alike with all the human race, whose life was in Adam. So the righteous obligations and claims of the condemning law stood in force against them all, notwithstanding their guilty inability to fulfill and satisfy it.

Now, therefore, how infinite the mercy to the lost children of men, that God's "holy child Jesus" was not a member or branch in the Adamic tree; for then all must have been condemned and lost forever. For "the man Christ Jesus," who is the one and only Mediator between God and men, is not a son of Adam, although he is the son of Eve, the seed of the woman that should bruise the serpent's head, and destroy the devil and his works. For, as we have before seen, God is the holy Father of our only Lord Jesus Christ, while the favored Jewish virgin, the daughter of David and Abraham and Eve, who is the mother of all living men, was his blessed mother. And this was the greatest and divinest honor that was ever bestowed upon Eve and her daughters; and thus also through Eve and Mary came this infinite mercy and grace upon Adam and his guilty sons. So Eve was a wonderful type of the church, the bride of the Son of God, that Christ loved, and gave himself for it. Adam loved Eve unto death, and died with her; but death was their sad separation forever. Not so, however, with the second man Adam; for after he had died for his sinning bride, whom he had bethroned unto himself forever in bonds of deathless love and saving mercy, he had power to arise from the dead and give her life for evermore, and to adorn her with the new wedding robe of purest linen, spotless and white, the righteousness of saints. And this because the Omnipotent One was his Father, and gave him the commandment to lay down his life, and to take it up again. Jesus therefore said, "I and my Father are one." One in Divine Essence and holiness and power. Yet it is just as true of him as a man, the child that was born unto us, that the Father's Son and his brethren are one. Of them he said in prayer for them to his holy Father, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." The gift was mutual, so that they were Christ's and he was theirs. The church as the bride, says, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." In his prayer for them, the holy Son further says, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." (John 17) This oneness asked for by our Intercessor is in life and holiness, and it secures their complete separation from all their sins, from weakness and suffering, mortality and death, and that they shall be with Christ where he is, and forever love and worship God in the beauties of holiness.

This indeed is the perfection and fullness of the glorious priesthood of God's holy Son Jesus. Of this he spoke when he said, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:38-40) This is overflowing with eternal truth and heavenly assurance, showing that the righteous and almighty Son shall successfully and entirely accom-

plish his holy Father's will, in the full salvation and eternal redemption of all the countless millions of his people, his Father's gift to him. This holy testimony of him who came down from heaven is so blessed, let us a little dwell on it, that through its comfort we may have hope. First, his exalted and holy origin, which is from God out of heaven; therefore clothed with the eternal excellence, dignity and power of God himself. Second, he came to do his righteous Father's will, not his own as a man. How this should instruct and correct us, and also reprove and humble us. For it is the most exalted man that ever dwelt upon earth, possessor of heaven and earth, who "thought it not robbery to be equal with God", that abnegates or renounces his personal will, and is wholly swallowed up in doing and suffering the will of the Father who sent him; for. as we have seen in these pages, that will appointed him to endure infinite suffering and sorrow of soul unto death, and the cruelest tortures at the hands of the most wicked men, as a harmless lamb in the midst of wolves; yet the loving and obedient Son faltered not, nor complained, but with meek submission said, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." This is the true spirit, and its divine lesson is, no man should presume to reply against God; nor dispute his sovereign right and holy will. Third, the Father had given him a countless people, whom no man could number, yet definitely known to the Father and Son; these were in the world, away from God and Christ, as lost sheep, and they must all die, having sinned; but Jesus came into the world to bring all this people to his holy Father, to serve him in holiness and righteousness before him for ever. Fourth, "the last day" is repeatedly named by our Divine Prophet when he shall raise up again his people. Fifth, he then identifies them personally, as every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him. Thus the Saviour himself very fully reveals the Father's will, and specifies the holy purpose and righteous work which he came down from heaven to do. It was to purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, to the everlasting praise and glory of the Father, in the glorious exaltation of Christ. In his intercession with the Father for them the holy Mediator says, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth. . . And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." (John 17)

They shall surely be sanctified unto the saving knowledge of the Father and Son through the truth. And the Son of God is himself the full revelation and embodiment of the Truth. He therefore said to the apostle Thomas, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6) To come unto the Father by the Son, then, is to be blessedly brought into the way, the truth, and the life; and this is nothing less than to be rescued from the broad way of destruction, from falsehood, though it be religious, and from the monster death. Now this holy Prophet, who reveals his Father's will, and does it, also says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me: and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:37) He thus makes it absolutely sure to all his people, the children that God gave him, that they shall come unto the Father, and be accepted with him, but not in their sins and unrighteousness; for he who is the way of holiness, and the truth that makes them free from sin, and the life that sanctifies and saves them, will himself bring them. His holy obligation to his Father behooved him to thus make them nigh unto God, and he does so by his sin-cleansing blood, and his saving life, which he gives them. God gave his Son this power, the power of an endless life of holiness.

The holy Son of God fulfills this work of sanctifying his Father's people through the truth unto holiness by the power and perfection of his eternal

priesthood, in union with his prophetic and kingly power, as we have beheld him. In thus giving life to the dead, sight and hearing and understanding to the blind and deaf and ignorant, and salvation from the dominion or reigning power of sin, that his people whom he thus sanctifies may come and offer unto God an offering in righteousness, the Holy Spirit of love and truth and peace is his minister, to quicken them from death in sin unto life in righteousness, and to comfort them. Therefore, said Jesus to one who trusted in the covenant of works, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." (John 3:5-7) For God is a Spirit, and his kingdom is spiritual; therefore his worship is spiritual, and neither fleshly nor legal, as the ruler of the Jews had thought. So, as the Prophet and Teacher come from God, Jesus cut him off from this fleshly dependence, which was the delusive error of the legal worship, as it is till this day. "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24) This unerring teaching of our Divine Prophet, who prevailed to open the sealed book and to reveal what was written therein, cuts off all legal and carnal or fleshly offerings and works of men from the true and acceptable worship of God, as unclean and unholy. So God had not respect to Cain and his offering as worship, because it was neither in spirit nor in truth, and was not in faith, which is a fruit of the Spirit and the gift of God. The only way to be made free from this legal dependence and carnal worship is by the circumcision of the Spirit in the heart, and this is nothing less than death to the covenant of works, and being raised up in newness of life, to serve God in newness of Spirit. It is to be born of the Spirit. "For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me." (Rom. 7:12) "For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God." (Gal. 2:19)

This is as true in every one who lives unto God as it was in Paul, and the power of this solemn truth is experienced in the heart. No one, therefore, lives unto God and worships him truly, until he first dies unto the law, and to legal trust and hope. For God will not accept any legal service. Paul very clearly states this fact when he says to his brethren in Christ: "For we are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." (Phil. 3:3) Of this true and spiritual work of circumcision in Christ, Paul says, "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses." (Col. 2:11-13) This holy operation of circumcision, or cutting off the sins of the flesh of the true Israel, was accomplished by the death of Christ unto sin in the flesh, as Paul here states, showing that Christ was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgressions of his people in their sinful flesh, as their passover who was sacrificed for them; that, having thus made reconciliation for their sins, God raised him from the dead for their justification unto righteousness, as shown in the ordinance of baptism, and therefore he quickens them together with Christ in his risen and righteous life; "that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." As thus judged in the flesh, every one so quickened by virtue of Christ's death unto sin, and resurrection unto life, is spiritually baptized with his baptism of

soul-sorrow and suffering for sin unto death. This is the true circumcision, made without hands, for it is by the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, and it brings all who are his down into his death unto sin in the flesh and under the law, as also unto it, then quickens us together with him, and raises us up together in the power and holiness of his endless life, to live with him in his Father's kingdom.

Now it is evident, from the divine testimonies given, that this saving and sanctifying work of righteousness in the people given to Christ, in bringing them from death unto life, and separating them from their sins and the law, is an experience in the heart and life of trouble, mourning and weeping, of supplication and crying unto God for mercy and pardon, and of sinking down into the anguish of fearful despair and the bitter sorrow of death. It is truly being brought into the fellowship of the Man of sorrows, our anointed High Priest, in the days of his flesh, that we may die indeed unto sin in the flesh, as did our suffering Christ, and that we might know the power of his resurrection by the Spirit of holiness, and be the sons of God in the life of his first-born Son from the dead. In no other way could our dying Redeemer enter into his glory, in his Father's kingdom of righteousness and life and peace. Therefore, in words of sympathetic reproof to his lamenting disciples, the newly risen Man of the cross said, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24:26) He was reconciled to his loving and holy Father's will, though that will was that he should be betrayed into the hands of sinners and tortured unto death; and he would likewise have his sorrowing disciples reconciled and comforted, knowing that his Father's will and way was best. So in no other way can we come into the life and holiness and glory of the risen Christ, only through his sufferings and death. We must follow him in his steps. Such is the meaning of circumcision. It is to die unto sin, that we may live unto righteousness. It is to become dead to the law of works by the body of Christ, who was smitten by the sword of the Law, and to have no confidence in the flesh, that we may rejoice in our Saviour alone, and worship God in the spirit.

The fleshly mind will murmur and fight against this way of salvation, as too self-sacrificing and hard, and will cleave to the old covenant of conditional service and reward, as better suited to the dignity of man and his idea of his free moral agency. Nevertheless, this way unto God by the circumcision of Christ, which is to be crucified through the weakness of the flesh, is the only way of separation from sin and confidence in the flesh, and of preparation and consecration unto the true worship of God. Paul had experienced the power of this only way of salvation and life when he said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal. 2:20) Thus was the devoted apostle of the gospel of Christ, through the sufferings of his crucified Lord, into the fellowship of which he was brought through the ministering Spirit, cut off from the law of works, in which he had trusted, and from the dominion of sin and death, "separated unto the gospel of God," "passed from death unto life," and now the glorified Christ lived in him, and the new life of the servant of God he lived by the faith of the Son of God. This is likewise true in all who have the faith of Jesus. Now, then, Paul says, "We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus." Having sowed in tears, and sorrowed with him unto death, our rejoicing is now in him, for he has raised us up into loving acceptance with God through the Spirit, and we worship him in spirit and in truth.

(Chapter Ten Concluded Next Month)

I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU COMFORTLESS, I WILL COME TO YOU. (JOHN 14:18)

The above words were spoken by Jesus just a little while before his crucifixion. All believers should consider these words with the same solemnity, and also the same joy as they would were He here now speaking to them in person.

In trying to explain a text of Scripture, it is very important that we consider who is speaking, and who is being spoken to. In the subject before us, we find Jesus is speaking, and He was speaking to His disciples, and He spake as never man had spoken before. He taught as one having authority, and not as the Scribes. "I will not leave you comfortless," said He. What a promise! In these words, we see that we have not a High Priest who cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities.

"I will not leave you comfortless!" The time was fast approaching when Jesus was to suffer death by the hands of cruel men. In the beginning of this fourteenth chapter of John, Jesus said to His disciples, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

"I go to prepare a place for you (the disciples)," said Jesus. But where was He going? First, He must go to the cross, suffer, bleed and die to make a complete atonement for the sins of His people.

Thomas was perplexed, and said: "Lord, we know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way?" A pertinent question. Jesus saith unto him, "I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me."

Now I want to give my personal views regarding the words, "house" and "mansions." "In my Father's house are many mansions," said Jesus. I do not think the words "house" and "mansions" are to be given literal interpretation. Should we do this, it would seem like putting a house within a house. I therefore think the word "house" means the Church, and the "mansions" means the members composing the Church. One of the New Testament writers puts it something like this: "Know ye not your bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost?"

"I will not leave you comfortless." Let us not pass over these words hurriedly, but consider them carefully. Let us remember that every promise Jesus made will be fulfilled in its entirety.

But someone may say, "Yes, the words of the text sound good, but they were spoken to His disciples, and what right have we today to claim any relationship with them?" I hope, and in fact I believe it has been revealed to me, that the words spoken by Jesus to His disciples while here upon earth apply with equal force and weight to His believing children who are living today. Is it not a fact that Jesus calls His ministers and all His believers just as He did while here upon earth? Of course He does. Therefore I repeat what I said in the beginning of this writing. We should consider the words of the text with the same solemnity and joy as we would were He here speaking to us in person.

The reader may want to know why I used the word "solemnity" in this writing, and then added the word "joy" in the same sentence. Well, it was a solemn time with the disciples when Jesus told them He was going to leave them. But the joy is found in the words, "I will come again and receive you unto Myself; that where I am there ye may be also."

When Jesus returned to heaven and His Father, He sent the Holy Ghost or Comforter, just as He said He would do. Our mind now turns to the book of Acts, Chapter Two. In opening to the book of Acts, the first verse of Chap-

ter One attracted my attention to the extent that I feel it will be profitable to the reader to quote it: "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began to do and teach." The thought arises, what did the writer mean by the words, "former treatise?" This writing sounds like the writing of Luke, the physician. So to find the correct answer to this question, it is necessary to refer to the book of Luke.

The "former treatise" mentioned in Acts 1:1 refer to the writings of Luke, the physician. The language used is very beautiful. I will quote the introductory part: "Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning (the beginning of the works of Christ) were eye witnesses, and ministers of the word; it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of these things wherein thou hast been instructed." It is evident from the foregoing words of Luke, that Theophilus was a man of good repute because Luke addressed him as "most excellent Theophilus."

We can readily see that Luke was anxious to verify the testimony of the other disciples concerning the mighty works of Jesus. Luke continues his writing by mentioning what took place with Zacharias, Elizabeth and the virgin Mary. Luke had perfect understanding in all these things, he tells Theophilus. That is to say, he had perfect knowledge concerning these things.

I will now turn back to the book of Acts. Before noticing the second chapter, I want to notice briefly a few verses in Chapter One. In Verse Two we find these words: "Until the day in which He was taken up, after that He through the Holy Ghost has given commandments unto the apostles whom He had chosen." So we see that the apostles were apostles because they were chosen to be such. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you," said Christ in another place.

After the resurrection of Christ from the dead, He remained on the earth forty days. Before His ascension, He commanded His disciples to tarry at Jerusalem till they received power from on high, which He said would be not many days hence. He would not leave them comfortless.

They did receive power from on high; for just ten days after Christ's ascension the Holy Ghost descended upon all who were assembled together at Jerusalem. This was the day of Pentecost.

As this chapter is well known to all Bible readers, I will be brief in commenting upon it. I want to say, however, that this event was another fulfillment of a promise made by Christ before His ascension to glory. I also want to mention that on this memorable day there were two classes of people present. One class rejoiced, and another class mocked. Why the difference? The answer to this question follows. One class was chosen in Christ from the foundation of the world, and the other class was not. The human mind asks why did God choose a part of the human race to salvation and leave out the rest? I will let the hymn writer answer that question. The answer follows:

" 'Twas even so, Father, we ever must sing
Because it seemed good in Thy sight."

After the Holy Spirit had come upon the disciples, enabling them to speak with cloven tongues, then the believers said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" At that instant, the Spirit came upon Peter, and he told them what they should do. "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." (Acts 2:37-38)

I want to notice the words, "and to all that are afar off, even as many as

the Lord our God shall call." I wonder if Peter was not referring to the Gentiles when he used the words, "and to all that are afar off," though he may not have known it at the time. What is generally spoken of as the middle wall or partition between the Jew and Gentile had not been broken down at the day of Pentecost, but was broken down at the time Peter was sent to preach and to baptize at the house of Cornelius. As this Scripture is well known to all Bible readers I will not quote any of it or make any comment upon it. Rather, I want to notice briefly the words, "And to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

We see in these words that God calls whom He will, and that call is always effective. I do not believe the Lord ever called a man to preach and left it to the discretion of the man whether he would do it or not. The case of Jonah is sufficient proof that when the Lord calls a man to preach, he will do it, though he may have to suffer almost death before doing it. The Lord calls and qualifies. No help by man is needed.

I want to dwell for a little while on the words "chosen" and "elect." The Lord calls whom He has chosen. Allow me to make a natural illustration. In our country we elect a president every four years. We most always have more than one candidate. They reason thus within themselves: Each one thinks he is fully qualified to fill this important position. But he must be elected or chosen. The people make the decision. So, in the religious world there are many who think they are fit subjects for heaven because of their good works. But I am afraid they have not been chosen or elected by those in authority — the three that bear record in heaven. I sometimes fear I am not one of the chosen. I have not gotten beyond hope. "But hope which is seen is not hope; for what a man seeeth, why doth he yet hope for? but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." So saith the apostle.

Now back to the text for the completion of this writing. When this Scripture came into my mind, there came also the name of a certain widow. I felt at the time that these words applied to her, and to all who had lost a companion. "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you." I, personally, can witness to the truth of these words. I know by experience what it means to part with a companion. But we must always remember that we are born to die. That is, the natural body must die.

I will now quote Revelation 14:13, and close. "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors and their works do follow them."

A. T. Benson
Delmar, Del.

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227 19th Street,
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Dear Elder Wood:

. . . For some time I have wanted to write you editors of the Signs and try in my weak way to express what I hope is my sincere appreciation of this Scriptural pamphlet. I have read the Signs since a child, and surely God in his infinite wisdom keeps, directs, guides, and blesses those who have edited and contributed to this paper down through the years.

In "Voices of the Past", how sweet to be made to realize that His called are still speaking the same Word, the doctrine as set forth by the holy Redeemer and the Apostles; and yet it never grows old. No! The half has never been told. One never tires of hearing the good news of the Blessed Jesus and what he has done, and is ever doing for his bride, the church of the Living God.

How timely, Brother Wood, was your article on the different opinions in regard to joining the church. This meant much to me, since we have a dear friend who is lingering near the fold. She talks to me in tears of her beautiful dreams,

her trials, worries, etc. She has a great desire to come to the church, and when passing streams of water, wishes to be baptized. When she comes to the church, she often leaves home with the full intention of coming home to the church, but this leaves her when the open door is published.

I believe I know how to sympathize, and also rejoice for her, since I seemed to travel very much the same road; but all I can tell her is that the Lord adds to the church daily such as shall be saved: He makes them a willing people in the day of his power. If it is His holy will that she unite with the militant church, she will surely come at God's appointed time; and nothing can prevent her doing so. Before I united with the church I would often hold to the seat to keep from going forward when they published an open door. The day I united with the church I never thought of doing so, but was looking out the window, when — words cannot express what I saw — everything was praising God, the trees, birds, — all nature; before I knew it I was before the church begging for admittance.

Bless the Lord, O my soul; all that is within me praise his holy name. What a wonderful belief! It is all of Him; it is the work of God that we believe. God gives repentance. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. Grace is the gift of God; and there is salvation in none other than the blessed Jesus Christ.

The least, if one at all,
(Mrs.) Nanna M. Carney

"Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Matthew 19:28)

Upon this text I desire to express some thoughts. A friend of mine who graduated from Johns Hopkins' University, Baltimore, Md., and afterwards studied in Germany, wrote me that in the original Greek there is a comma after the word "regeneration." Elder Chick wrote me the same. In our translation the comma is omitted; this makes a great difference in the meaning of the words. Be that as it may, I shall try to give my understanding of this text, as I believe and have believed for years the Holy Spirit meant it. I do not believe that regeneration is a work wrought by the Holy Spirit, while yet it is, as all the work of Jesus is, revealed by the Spirit. It was essentially the work of our dear Redeemer in the body of his flesh, and was, as is all his work, fully accomplished when he arose from the dead to newness of life. If there is a regeneration there must first have been a generation, and there could not have been a generation without a generator, one who generates or begets.

In many places it is written that God is our Father, and Jesus is said to be the only begotten of the Father; therefore if God is our Father and Begetter, it must have been in the begetting of Jesus. As we cannot separate the life of the child Jesus from the Father, neither can we separate ours from God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; for to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. I think, therefore, that the church was begotten or generated by God the Father in Jesus Christ as the covenant head of the church, according to the record that "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." 1 John V. 11. This was before the mountains were settled, when as yet he had not made the earth, or the hills, or the highest parts of the dust of the earth. Even then was Christ by him as one brought up with him. He says, "I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." God speaks here of things according to his word, "That which hath

been is now; and that which is to be hath already been." Eccl. 111. 15. He speaks of things that were not, as though they were. The Lord saw his substance when as yet it was unperfect, and in his book all his members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.

The Psalmist says, "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." At that time "the Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people." As the Lord shall count, we conclude that there must be a definite number, else he would take them all without counting; counting is to determine the number. These are the sons of men with whom were the delights of Jesus before he had made the highest parts of the earth. These were they who were begotten in Christ, and to whom God promised eternal life. These are distinct from the fleshly children of Abraham, being the children of promise. The eternal purpose of God, the promise of God and the giver of life, all depend upon this regeneration, for by the transgression of Adam sin separated them from God and consequently from life. "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." Isaiah LIX, 2.

They were now dead in sins, dead to God, not God dead to them; that could never be. As they were dead to God and dead to life, there must be a regeneration, or a re-begetting, else they must be forever separated from life and God. This was the gracious work of our dear Savior. This required that he should obey every jot and tittle of the law for the putting away of sin by the sacrifice of himself, the quickening of us together with him, and raising us up with him so fully and completely from under the power of death that it shall no more have dominion over us. Peter, filled with the blessedness of this glorious regeneration, said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." This is the true meaning of the words "regeneration," "Begotten again."

Peter's great rejoicing was that by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead we were regenerated, or begotten again. The mysterious and wonderful declaration of Jesus was, "I am the resurrection, and the life." Therefore Jesus said, "They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." This is life from the dead, begotten again, regenerated. When Jesus in the text, answering Peter, said, "Ye which have followed me," he did not mean that they had followed him in spirit, as they did (and we trust we have done) after his resurrection, for the reason that they had not followed him in spirit, and the scriptures do not so prove; but he does mean, as it seems to me, that they had literally in person followed him, and the question of Peter, as it seems to me, meant no more or less than this. But I freely admit and rejoice in it as a blessed hope, that since his resurrection Peter and all heaven-born souls have in spirit followed him. It should be remembered that only the twelve had followed him when he said this, "Ye which have followed me." His words therefore applied only to them, and it applied to them in the regeneration, putting the comma after this word regeneration as it is in the Greek. With most of our brethren this word is used synonymously with the words "born again;" others in the far south use it synonymously with the resurrection, but could it be possible that the Holy Spirit of God would use two words of different meaning, and entirely different, to set forth the same thing? To generate is to beget, to beget is to procreate; so

regeneration is to generate again, to beget again. This is, as I have shown, from the dead, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Surely the begetting is one thing, and being born again is another and an entirely different thing. There is more difference, if possible, between regeneration and the resurrection than there is between regeneration and being born again. In speaking of being born again, I do not mean when born in Christ from the dead, (Isaiah LXVI. 8,) but "born of the Spirit," as Jesus said to Nicodemus, "born again." It seems to me that if Jesus had meant that regeneration was the exercise of the Holy Spirit in the experience of the child of God only, and not the work of our blessed Lord while in the flesh, he would have said, Ye which have followed me, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel, in the regeneration. But on the contrary, he places this expression before his sitting on the throne of his glory, and before the disciples sitting on twelve thrones.

If my informants are right, and I believe they are, that there should be a comma after the word regeneration in the text, then regeneration is before, and not after Christ sits in the throne of his glory, and the apostles upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Indeed, if regeneration means what the dictionary says it does: to produce anew, to reproduce, to give new life, which agrees with Peter when he says, "Begotten again," then it is evident that it must have preceded the sitting of Jesus on his throne, or the disciples sitting on twelve thrones as judges, for the reason that Jesus reigned in righteousness, and the apostles as princes in judgment over those only who had been begotten again, or given new life. With prophetic vision, Isaiah beholding Jesus upon his throne, and the apostles ruling in judgment, said, "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." Isaiah XXXII. 1. Jesus did not reign in righteousness until he had brought life and immortality to light, until he had saved his people from their sins. This was foretold by Jeremiah XXIII. 6-8: "In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, The Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, the Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land." It does appear from the Scriptures that when the Lord had purged our sins he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, and to him the Father said, "Thy throne is forever and ever." As a Son he rules over his own house, "whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." Heb. III. 6.

His reign is over those begotten again, made alive from the dead, regenerated, made holy, righteous, without spot or blemish, to whom our dear Redeemer said, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." Sol. Song IV. 7. To accomplish all this for those who were under the law, under the curse, required no less work than the regeneration. In one more place only is the word regeneration used, Titus III. 5, there it is "the washing of regeneration." The purpose of washing is to get rid of that which defiles, to make clean the unclean, to make the thing that is washed white, holy and without defilement. Where do we find this regeneration? surely not separate from Christ. Our experience is the experience which we have of Christ, it is faith laying hold upon the perfect work of Christ making it ours, that work which washes away the guilt of sin and condemnation, and which presents us holy and without blame before God in love.

The work of the Holy Spirit is simply to teach and make known to the faith of the child of God that which the blessed Savior has done for him. There is no washing that can free the sinner from his sin and present him holy before God save that water and blood which flowed from the bleeding side of our dear Redeemer. This washing of regeneration is the application of the blood of Christ by faith, by which we are sprinkled from an evil conscience so effectually that the worshipers once purged should have no more conscience of sin, (Heb. X. 2) resting in the finished work of Jesus, who when he purged our sins sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, and we know that he shall reign until the last enemy is destroyed; and he reigns in righteousness, which guarantees to us our final victory. Then "he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father." 1 Cor. XV. 24.

While we live in the body of this flesh, our minds so carnal and our heart so sinful, we need the constant application of the water of regeneration, and this the Lord has promised: "It shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning." Isaiah IV. 3, 4. This is written of them who shall be called holy, who are written among the living in Jerusalem, whose filth is washed away by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning. Surely it is by the unsearchable judgments of God that sin is discovered, and by the spirit of burning destroyed.

"If we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Heb. X. 26, 27. I shall never forget while reason is on her throne, reading, not long after I was baptized, this Scripture: "Ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." 1 John III. 15. What did all my experience amount to? What did my baptism profit? What had I to rely upon? Nothing, no, nothing. I am banished from God, and plunged into eternal woe, the Bible is true and I am lost, forever lost. Brethren, if you have never been there I cannot tell you how I felt; if you have, then you know better than I can tell you. Here it is we learn to know how awful his judgments are, how fiery his indignation is, and that his Spirit against sin is the spirit of burning, and that he came not to send peace, but a sword. I said then, There is no hope, no hope for me. What would I not have given to know that I had never killed a man. Could I pray? No; and if I did, what good would it do? That would not blot out this damning sin. O the tumult of mind, the awful distress of heart, the bitter sorrow, the deep repentance, all this did not and could not give me one moment of peace, or take away the guilt of conscience, though baptized; I was yet under the law, and under its curse.

One day while lying meditating upon my lost and ruined condition, I do believe that God spoke peace to my soul in these never to be forgotten words, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." My conscience was from that moment washed from all guilt by faith in the blood of Christ, nor has that sin ever been a trouble to me since. We have an evidence, and faith is that evidence; the apostle says we have the witness in ourselves. This is the evidence of things not seen, it makes to be true to us that which is true of Christ. There would be none just, and hence no resurrection of the just, but for the fact that in the resurrection of Christ they were justified; neither would there be any washing of regeneration but for the fact that in Christ we were regenerated, and be-

gotten again unto a lively hope by his resurrection from the dead.

Dear Brethren, I submit this to your judgement.

Your brother in hope,
(Elder) E. V. White,
Leesburg, Virginia,
March, 1906.

(Re-published by request)

SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION will convene, the Lord willing, with the Snow Hill Church, at Snow Hill, Maryland, October 21 and 22, 1959.

All ministers, brethren and friends of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us.

Those arriving on Tuesday will please contact Deacon Harry Ward, Bay Street, (Telephone 201); or Deacon Handy B. Truitt, Whiton Road 354, (Telephone 1070) Snow Hill. Those arriving on Wednesday go directly to the church on Washington Street.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Pastor
Maude P. Truitt, Clerk

VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING

The 1959 session of the VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING is appointed to be held at Mt. Zion Church October 14, 15, and 16; services to begin at 10:30 Standard Time. The meeting house is located on U. S. Route 50, about three miles East of Aldie, Virginia. Those arriving on Tuesday will please get in touch with Deacon Walter Norman, Herndon, Virginia; or Elder Wood, Manassas, Virginia, and they will be taken care of.

A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends to meet with us.

Arthur L. Carter, Clerk,
Manassas, Va.

LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The Lexington-Roxbury Association is appointed to be held with the Olive and Hurley Church, of Shokan, N. Y., but holding it at Halcottville, Delaware County, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, September 23 and 24, 1959. Those coming Tuesday take Route 28 to Fleischmans, then take Halcott Center Road out of Fleischmans at Esso Gas Station, four miles to The Maples (Mr. and Mrs. James Peet).

Those coming on Wednesday will go directly to the Halcottville Meeting House; and those expecting to stay one night or more, please send card to Mr. and Mrs. James Peet, Halcott Center, N. Y.

Elder A. J. Slauson, Pastor,
Neva Brooks, Church Clerk

Danville, Virginia September, 1959

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EDITORIAL

"GALEED"

(Genesis 31:45-47.)

How wonderfully blessed the Lord's people are to have the Word of God to go to from time to time. In it there is a heap of witness to God's humble poor of the faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God. Jacob, before ever he was born, was a subject of God's eternal mercy. His mother was given a promise before Jacob and Esau were born, so Jacob, like all who are in the covenant of grace, was a child of promise.

The things that occurred, the scheming of Rebekah and the lying of Jacob to his blind father, which brought much trouble to all concerned, did not make the promise of God of none effect. No doubt Jacob blamed himself, as in sorrow he left the mother he loved so dearly, knowing that the deception in getting his father's blessing had cost him his home and the embraces of those he loved. Even here he was embraced by a faithful God, though he knew it not.

He wondered why, as most of us do, as he wandered into the darkness of night. He had had the blessing of his father Isaac, who prayed the blessing of Almighty God upon him, the blessing that God had given him and his father Abraham. How much Jacob knew and felt, we are not told, but as he went we believe that there was an unseen hand guiding him to the certain place where he took the stones of that place and put them for his pillow. He knew enough to know that the stones of that place were something on which to rest his head during the night.

Stones come from the rock and seem to represent the promises of God which are yea and amen to the glory of God the Father. When Eve had disobeyed God and they were plunged into sin and shame, God gave them a promise on which to rest their poor distressed heads, a promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. While Jacob rested his head on the pillow of stone, he dreamed of the ladder from earth to heaven. John 1:51. The Lord who stood above the ladder talked to him and gave him promises that covered his life-long journey, and when he awoke he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not."

Now we will leave the history of Jacob with the suggestion that the readers of this article read the account themselves in the Word of God in chapters 28, 29 and 30 of Genesis, and we will come to our subject. Laban, Jacob's uncle, had many things that can be told against him, but we cannot forget his welcome to the Servant of Abraham, Genesis 24:31. "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord, Wherefore standest thou without?" He was one of the family, it was to him that the father and mother directed Jacob, it was from there that Jacob was to prove the promises of God to be true. Much could be written about Laban and his unscrupulousness and his shameful treatment of Jacob his nephew. We should, of course, remember that these were primitive times, but we should like, as the subject of our text suggests, to gather together a heap of stones where Jacob's stone was placed, and there eat, as they did, upon the heap. Jacob seems a type of Jesus Christ who loved his bride before ever she knew him, Rachel is a type of the Church in the Gospel Dispensation. Leah is a type of National Israel under the law, a law that had no love in it. One can see a natural desire in Laban to palm off Leah on the unsuspecting Jacob. She was not beautiful like Rachel, she also had weak eyes. "Leah was tender-eyed, but Rachel was beautiful and well favoured." Genesis 29:17. Israel under the law, her eyes being weak, could not look into the legal ceremonies and see what those things daily testified. There was no love there, yet she belonged to Jacob, so with literal Israel, she belonged to our Lord, and while now she is put aside as unclean, yet there has never been found a bill of divorcement. Isaiah 50:1.

The Lord blessed Laban and prospered him because of Jacob, Genesis 30:27. yet Laban considered that all Jacob had belonged unto him. Laban's sons told him that Jacob had taken away all that was their father's; and of that which was our father's, hath he gotten all this glory. How true that was of Jesus, who, beginning at Moses and all the prophets, expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Luke 24:27. No wonder the Jews hated His disciples when they testified of Jesus, His sufferings and the glory that should follow. From the day that Jacob saw Rachel at the well and ROLLED AWAY THE STONE so that the flocks could drink, he loved her with a constant love, and was willing to stay and work for his uncle that he might obtain the object of his love. The fixing of a wage and the changing of it by the cupidity of Laban did not hinder God's promise which He had made to Jacob. Much could be said of Jacob's attitude to Leah, it is said that he hated her. One must see that in contrast with the intense love that he had to the object of his choice. Leah was given children

and no doubt she thought this would cause Jacob's love to embrace her fully, but this was not so. Rachel was barren, and this must have caused much distress and heart-searching. "And when the Lord saw that Leah was hated He opened her womb; but Rachel was barren." Genesis 29:31. When Leah brought forth her first child and called him Reuben, she said, "Surely the Lord hath looked upon my affliction; now therefore my husband will love me." Each child she bore to Jacob she expresses a longing for his love. We must leave the exercise that these two sisters had which can be read in Genesis 30, where in verse 22 we are told "God remembered Rachel, and GOD HEARKENED TO HER, and opened her womb." God took away her reproach and Joseph was born. Within fourteen years eleven sons and one daughter had been born to Jacob, and a desire came over him to return to his native land. To this Laban did not agree, Jacob was freed from the servitude he had endured for his wives, but Laban had had the best of the deal and had wonderfully prospered because of Jacob. He said to Laban, "It was little which thou hadst before I came, and it is now increased unto a multitude; and the Lord has blessed thee since my coming: and now when shall I provide for mine own house also?" Laban made new terms, thinking to get the advantage of Jacob, but the Lord over-ruled to the advantage of Jacob. The two daughters of Laban, who were witnesses of his covetousness, were thus already prepared to fall in with Jacob's plans, and the flocks of Laban being three days' journey from those of Jacob, and Laban having gone to the shearing of his flocks, Jacob fled with all that he possessed, but three days after, Laban, hearing of it, took his brethren with him and pursued after Jacob seven days' journey; and they overtook him in the mount Gilead. Before leaving, Rachel had stolen her father's idols, but Jacob knew it not, and when Laban accused him of stealing his idols, he said, "With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live." Surely Jacob must have been very humbled if he found later that his beloved Rachel was the thief. God again showed Himself as Jacob's preserver. Jacob feared Laban, but God told Laban, "Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad." Without doubt Jacob spake the truth of Laban when he said, "Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and rebuked thee yesternight."

The conscious evidence of the presence of God made a great change in Laban's approach, and strengthened Jacob as he heard Laban's confession, and he knew that God was overshadowing him. What mercies of God to such unworthy creatures! Surely Jacob saw what a wretch he had been, twice robbing his brother, and deceiving his blind father. He must have seen himself no better than Laban. True, he knew now that God was on his side by it, and he could also rebuke Laban, but he was humbled, not by Laban, but by God, to listen to Laban's suggestion, that they make a covenant that should be a witness between them, a covenant of peace. Jacob was in a mind now to go back to Bethel, and no doubt the Bethel "Pillar" was what he thought of, "The House of God, The Gate of Heaven," so he took a stone and set it up for a pillar. What else could he do, with his mind filled with such remembrances of a covenant-keeping God? and "Jacob said to his brethren, Gather stones; and they took stones and made an heap: and they did eat there upon the heap."

We, to-day, as brethren, have a heap, a "Galeed." If we would gather stones, let us first consider that the stones must be out of the field or place of God's revelation, stones on which no man has lifted a tool. Stones come from the Rock, and are not of man's making. In Genesis 28, Jacob had come to a place where darkness surrounded him and God became his light. He took of the

stones of that place, the promises of God, those things He has planned and purposed for strangers and outcasts of this world. Here Jacob, wretched man that he felt himself to be, rested his head, and through God's mercy and revelation, he saw the ladder (Jesus) and it became to him the House of God and the Gate of Heaven. We believe that Jacob could think of nothing else when he saw the man who could have ruined and destroyed him and all that he had, brought to the spot where he was willing to live at peace with him.

The Church of God is "Our Galeed," here. As in Noah's ark, clean and unclean, wild and tame, (Jew and Gentile) dwell in peace TOGETHER. Isaiah is speaking of this blessed day when he says "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall die down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them." Isaiah 11:6. Whatever they had by nature was overcome by grace and as little children they were willing to follow the Holy Child Jesus. Whatever was Laban's standing before God, we must leave, we do know that he called upon various gods.

He not only called upon the God of Abraham but the god of Nahor, the god of his fathers, yet under God's rebuke he could sit down with Jacob and eat bread. Jacob sware by the fear of Isaac (a loving regard to the Word of God) thus the stones that we would bring to this heap are God's avowed testimonies, not only of His love and mercy unto thousands of them that love Him and keep His commandments but to those who bow down to gods of their own making and choice, He will visit their iniquities upon them to the third and fourth generation of them that hate Him.

Since we, in this day, have the written word of both Old and New Testaments, it becomes those who fear God, with the fear of Isaac, to bring together the stones of His blessed Word, that is, the promises and helps. (Ebenezers) 1 Samuel 7:12. Yes, let us bring the twelve stones that the elders brought up out of Jordan (judgment) typical of the twelve Apostles who saw Jesus, the Ark of the Covenant, go down into the depths of death, and who testified that by one offering He had perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Let us also bring every stone that has ever witnessed among the saints since the world began, for as we have already said, "Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." Luke 24:27. Let us not neglect to bring in the doctrine and testimony of the Word, which either approves or condemns what we do, as well as what we believe, nor push aside the precepts and admonitions of the Gospel of God's Son, after brethren have faithfully brought together the things most surely believed among us. Let us not forget that while Leah, as we have already said, was a type of Israel under the law, yet her striving to beget children did not obtain the love which was already bestowed upon a bride of Jacob's own choice. To this heap belongs Paul's testimony, "Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God, calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." 1 Corinthians 12:3. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." 1 Corinthians 13:1.

Let us bring all there is, as brethren should, with Jacob's stone as the one IN THE MIDST, and let us eat together, and determine, by God's help, not to PASS OVER this heap for harm. Let us unite, with the fear of Isaac in our hearts, to offer unto God the sacrifice of thanksgiving and DECLARE HIS WORKS with rejoicing. Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race which is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the centre of the circle of so great a cloud of witnesses.

Let not one of us cross this heap to do hurt to another, for the Lord will judge such an one, whose spirit would, if possible, break a covenant, made, not by Jacob and Laban, but by our Eternal God, ordered in all things and sure.

G. R.

MY BEST DREAM AND THE BEST ROBE
(Isa. 61:10; Luke 15:22; Rom. 4:7)

Face to face in a precious dream,
Indeed so sweet to me,
Yea, in a vision of the night,
I did the Saviour see.

With a smile, He appeared to me,
In slumberings upon the bed,
And on me gently laid His hands,
Though not a word He said.

Then with the heavenly King I stood,
And mine eyes did behold
An emblem of His righteousness,
Which now He did unfold.

One end of a robe Immanuel held,
Whilst I held the other;
O how great to be thus found
With Christ, our Elder Brother!

Next He took the garment from me,
As about Him I hovered,
And the scene that shortly followed
Showed that my sins are covered.

With holy hands He dipped the vesture,
And around me it placed;
O happy thought that surely I
Was in His love embraced!

This was a token of being clothed
With the robe of righteousness,
And when it was so sweetly revealed,
I did a hope profess.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, N. C.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ETERNAL LIFE vs. TIME LIFE

Our Savior has said of that people whom he calls his sheep, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them ETERNAL LIFE; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." — John x. 27, 28. And again, the apostle says, "The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." — Romans vi. 23. When the word eternal is applied to God in the scriptures, we understand that it means something more than an extended existence from some given or implied date, onward interminably; for it also means without "beginning of days or end of life," and that which is like the Son of God, "from everlasting to everlasting." — Heb. vii. 3; Psalm xc. 1, 2. Webster defines the word **eternal** as meaning without beginning or end, but allows its application to whatever is of endless duration; but in a scriptural sense we understand it to be used only as applicable, in its full extent, to that which distinguishes eternal things from things of time, or things temporal from things eternal, as defined by divine inspiration, thus, "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." Evidently the things of time, as contrasted with eternal things, are called temporal; for they are finite, transitory and limited, both as to beginning and ending.

Now if, according to this definition of the word eternal, the first or earthy Adam and his posterity had possessed eternal life, how could death have passed on them? or with what propriety could it be said, "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is **eternal life?"** How could they be in need of that gift, if their Adamic life was eternal, in this sense of the word eternal?

We are slow to believe that any intelligent being will deny that the eternal life which Jesus says he gives to his sheep is a life of a higher order than that which was given to mankind in the earthy Adam. If that life which was given to Adam, and to all his posterity in him, had been incorruptible and eternal, it could not have become corrupt, for the very meaning of the word incorruptible is applicable only to that which cannot possibly become corrupted; but corruption and mortality are too clearly developed in all the human race to admit of any doubt. "Death has passed upon all men, for that all

have sinned." — Rom. v. 12.

That the life which was given to Adam, when "man became a living soul," was liable to corruption and death, is clearly implied in what was said to him by his Creator concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: "For in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." — Gen. ii. 17. If man had been incorruptible, he could not have corrupted himself by disobedience, and to the extent of involving all his then undeveloped posterity in corruption, depravity and death. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners." — Rom. v. 12, 19. And "Sin hath reigned unto death." "For the wages of sin is death." Now if man had been, as a natural man, incorruptible, he could not have corrupted himself and his posterity in the corruption of either sin or death. But seeing that Adam, as the earthy parent of all mankind, has by his disobedience involved all his posterity in corruption and death, consequently all who descend from him by ordinary generation are born of his corrupted and corruptible seed; and as all seed is restricted by a decree of God, to bring forth after its kind, so all who are born of the seed of the earthy Adam develop only his corrupted and depraved nature. Surely no nature can be born of the flesh of a higher order than the nature which Adam himself possessed; and all mankind are his children in the flesh, and possess and develop his earthy nature. And if any of his children could be born again of the flesh, or if they could be born a thousand times of the flesh, it would not change their nature. No birth, whether natural or spiritual, can produce or bring forth any other than the nature which has produced it.

The nature of Adam before he sinned was incorrupt, for God pronounced it "very good;" but even as it came from the creative hand of God, it was not **incorruptible**, for if it had been, it could never afterward become corrupt. Anything that is liable to corruption is corruptible, and such was the nature of the earthy Adam, as the natural head and progenitor of our race, in whom all mankind have their creation. It was not only corruptible, but corrupt, before any son or daughter was born to him, for he possessed no incorruptible seed by which to multiply and replenish the earth. All who are born unto him are born then of seed corrupted, and incapable of bringing forth other than a corrupted prodigy. And as the corruption of Adam's nature involved death, "so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Thus we are told in the word, that by one man's offense death reigned, and that "sin hath reigned unto death." — Romans v. 17, 21. In this same chapter we are told that Adam is the figure of him that was to come, and that, as in the figure, sin and death have come upon all men unto condemnation; so by the higher nature of the second Adam, who is the Lord from heaven, the Head and spiritual progenitor of a chosen generation, the free gift of life and immortality has come upon all who, by being born of God, are made partakers of the divine nature. "That as sin hath reigned unto death," by the earthly Adam, to all his seed, "even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord," unto that seed which shall serve him, and be accounted to the Lord for a generation. — Psa. xxii. 30.

Now as all who are born of the flesh are born of corruptible seed, and develop the fleshly nature of Adam, so all who are born of God are born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever; and the nature produced by the incorruptible seed differs as widely from our earthly nature as death and life, as sin and holiness, or as widely as the sources from whom they came, the one from Adam, and the other from Christ.

God in creation has given to all mankind mortal life in the earthly Adam, and he has given, by generation from himself, to all the children of the second

Adam, eternal life. Our life in the flesh, in its nature and kind, is temporal, natural, corruptible, mortal, and sadly depraved; and it was provided for and given to mankind in Adam by the creative power of God; while our spiritual life has its fountain and origin in the self-existent God. This life, we are told, 1 John i. 2, "was with the Father." It is and was hid with Christ in God. — Col. iii. 3. And was given us in Christ, according to the record of heaven. — 1 John v. 11, 12. This life is Christ, and proceeds from the eternal Father by generation and birth, thus securing vital relationship, as sons of God, and joint heirship with our Lord Jesus Christ. Had the gift of life been but an extension of our natural, Adamic life interminably, it would neither be eternal life in the proper sense of the word, nor would it develop any vital relationship to God. But it is a sonship in the Sonship of the Son of God, who is himself the eternal life of all his heirs. Well may we dwell with delight upon the words of the beloved John, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God." — 1 John iii. 1.

In speaking of the priesthood of Christ, it is said, "Who is made (a priest) not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life." — Hebrews vii. 16. And in the third verse of the same chapter we are told that this endless life is without beginning of days or end of life. And in speaking of the superlative glory of his regal supremacy, it was said to the Son, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever," &c. "And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thy hands: they shall perish, but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment: and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." — Heb. i. 8-12. David, in the spirit of prophecy, has said of him, "Thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head. He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days forever and ever. His glory is great in thy salvation: honor and majesty hast thou laid on him; for thou hast made him most blessed forever; thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance." — Psa. xxi. 3-6.

These scriptures, if we understand them, testify of Christ in his Mediatorial relation to the church, which is his body, and perfectly harmonize with 1 John i. 2, and v. 11-13. And this testimony is given that those unto whom it is addressed may know that they have **eternal** life, and that this eternal life is in the Son of God. This life of the body, the church, is the life which the Son asked for. It was with the Father, hidden in God, and was given to the church in Christ. For "the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Thus, as our natural or temporal life was given to us, and hidden for us in the earthly Adam, and developed by ordinary generation, so our spiritual, eternal life was given to us, and hidden for us with Christ in God, and is made manifest to us experimentally by extraordinary generation and the new birth. Our natural birth from Adam is of a corruptible seed, which is mortal; but our new birth is of incorruptible seed, which is both spiritual and immortal. In our Adamic life, our relation is to the earth, and of the earth, earthy; but in our life in Christ, our relation is established in his Sonship, and as sons of God in his Sonship, and heirs of God in the heirship of him, "Who being the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, is the appointed heir of all things." This heirship is established in the relationship of that eternal life which was with the Father, in which the Head and body are, and were, and forever shall abide in vital eternal union; one with Christ in this eternal vitality, even as he is one with the eternal Father in the Godhead.

As our natural birth of the flesh brings us forth, in our fleshly, earthly

nature, as the degenerate plants of a strange vine, only capable of producing grapes of gall, in clusters that are bitter, so our spiritual, eternal life in Christ is brought forth by being born of the Spirit, as plants which God's right hand has planted, that God may be glorified in us, as branches of the true and living Vine, of which the Father is himself the Husbandman, that our fruit may be unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. The apostle John, in the closing verses of his first epistle, reminds the **little children,** to whom he writes, of three things which he says we know. First, "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." Second, "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." Third, "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true; even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen."

How do we know that whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin? We know it because nothing that is corruptible can be born of incorruptible seed; and therefore, as the Holy Ghost has declared by the mouth and pen of the inspired apostle, we know that none of the corruptions of our flesh are born of God, for they are only evil continually. Our flesh, with all its elements, is depraved, and there is nothing good in it; but it is born of the flesh, and therefore it wars against the spirit which is born of God. "They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit do mind the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally (or fleshly) minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." This distinction is made between the two natures, impersonated as two men, yet both dwelling in every Christian; one is called the old man, the other is called the new man. The old man is born of the flesh, and is flesh, always in bitter opposition to all that is spiritual and good; the other, which is called the new man, is born of the Spirit, and is not a child of the flesh, for it is after God, created in righteousness and true holiness. One of these men is under the power of death, for death has passed on it because of sin; the other is life because of righteousness. One is corrupt, with all its deeds; the other cannot sin, because it is born of God, and the incorruptible seed of God remains in him, and therefore he cannot sin. Hence the Christian, who embodies both the old and the new man, is admonished to put off the old man, and to put on the new man; because "they that are in the flesh (or old man) cannot please God," and "to be carnally (fleshly) minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." "This I say, then, Walk after the spirit, (new man,) and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye (Christians, who possess both the old man and the new man) cannot do the things that ye would." — Gal. v. 16, 17. By this array of Bible testimony, corroborated by our daily experience, we know that whosoever and whatsoever is born of God sinneth not; and knowing this, we cannot believe that our flesh with its corruptions is born of God, or that any pure, spiritual or heavenly aspiration or element that we possess is born of the flesh.

And being in possession of this knowledge, we know that we are of God; his spirit witnessing with our spirit that we are born of God. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." — John xvii. 3. "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true." How else could we have this knowledge of the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent? For we must admit

the truth of Jesus Christ's testimony, that this knowledge is eternal life, according to John xvii. 3. We know it, then, because Christ has declared it; and as he has given us understanding, we know that we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. And as he is in the Father, and we are in him, therefore our life is hid with Christ in God. The church is in Christ, and Christ is in the Father, and he and the Father are one, (not two); for all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in and belongs to the Son. And the church is one with Christ, even as he is one with the Father. God is in Christ. — 2 Cor. v. 19. Christ is in the Father. — John xvii. 21-23. The Head of the church is Christ. — Eph. i. 22. And the Head of Christ is God. — 1 Cor. xi. 3.

This is the true God, and eternal life. This Jesus, who has come in the flesh, who is in and one with the Father, is the true God; all others are imaginary and false. "He that hath seen him, hath seen the Father; for he is in the Father, and the Father is in him." — John xiv. 9, 10. This is not only the true God, but he, being the true God, is eternal life. He is most truly the "blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality (or eternal life) dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen." — 1 Tim. vi. 15, 16.

As Christ only hath immortality, or eternal life, he is himself the life, the eternal life and immortality of his church, his body, and of all the members of that body. He only hath it. It was not found in Adam. No man hath or can see or approach unto it, for it is hid with Christ in God. And although he gives this eternal life unto as many as the Father has given him, it is only as he gives himself to them, for this life is in the Son; so that he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life, neither have they power, capacity or desire to approach unto it.

This, then, being the true God, in distinction from all other gods, God's little children are admonished to keep themselves from idols. To trust in or worship any other than the true God, who in all his eternal fullness dwells bodily in Christ, is idolatry. And to ascribe eternal life to any other than the true God, is idolatry. Or to ascribe the power to approach unto the true God and eternal life to any human power, is idolatry. Therefore, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, June 1, 1879.)

NEW VERNON MEETING

The yearly meeting of the NEW VERNON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH will be held the first Saturday in October — October 3rd. All members and friends are invited to attend.

Wm. D. Chapman

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The 1959 session of the Seven Mile Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Liberty Church on the third Sunday, Saturday, and Friday before in September (September 18, 19, and 20). The church is located about five miles west of Benson, N. C. Those coming from Durham and western sections will follow Highway 55 to Coats. At Coats, take Highway 27 and watch for an association pointer at cross roads; turn right and follow this hard surface road to the church. Those coming to Benson will take Highway 27 to association pointer at crossroads; turn left and follow hard surface road to the church. Those coming from the South will follow Highway 301 about two miles north of Dunn; turn left and follow this hard surface road to the church.

Brethren, sisters, and friends are invited to attend.

Lester E. Lee

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God in his infinite wisdom and everlasting love has seen fit to remove from our midst our dear sister, Snowie Holley Payne, on the morning of February 28, 1959; who was a devoted wife and mother in the home, and whose door was always open to the household of faith. Many times have we enjoyed the hospitality of Sister Snowie and Mr. Payne, who never tired in helping their church folks, neighbors and friends; and

WHEREAS, Sister Snowie joined Strawberry Church September 4, 1955, and was a faith-

ful member, always filling her seat unless providentially hindered. She was ever interested in the welfare of Zion everywhere, and her pastor. Her funeral services were held at Swicegood Funeral Chapel March 1st, by her pastor, Elder W. R. Dodd, and Elder Raymond Payne. No one had ever seen so large a funeral attendance; and the beautiful flowers showed the high esteem in which she was held. She is missed by all who knew her, as she had a smile and a personality that will never be forgotten. Those who knew her not, no words can paint; and those who knew her, know all words are faint. Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we extend our sympathy to the family, and brothers and sisters, and all who deeply feel her loss; especially the husband and children who so devotedly cared for mother during her long illness. May God, in his mercy, reconcile them to their loss, which is her eternal gain. And

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be placed on our church records, a copy sent to the family, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the Strawberry Church (Virginia) the first Saturday in April, 1959.

Elder W. R. Dodd, Moderator
Josephene Dodd, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God, in His infinite wisdom and according to His most righteous purpose, has called unto Himself our beloved Pastor, Elder Harold Bennett, to inherit the kingdom prepared for him from the foundation of the world.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to our Father's will, desiring to be reconciled to our loss which we feel is his eternal gain: and

RESOLVED, That we extend our deepest sympathy to Mrs. Bennett, and the other members of his family, and that she be given a copy of these resolutions, and that a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Elder Arthur R. Warren, Moderator
Cornelius S. Hoff, Clerk
The Old School Baptist Church,
Locktown, N. J.
July 4, 1959

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It has pleased the Lord to call from this walk of life our sister, Susie Hall. Sister Hall was born June 1, 1882, and died November 27, 1958, making her stay on earth approximately 76 years. She was born in Pearson County, North Carolina. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church in Durham, North Carolina, and moved her membership, by letter, to the Richmond Primitive Baptist Church, Richmond, Va. on December 23, 1923. She remained a member of the Richmond Church and was a faithful member, attending church meetings as long as her health would permit.

Sister Hall's husband preceded her in death by several years. She left the following children to mourn their loss: Mr. Edward Hall, of Richmond, Va.; Mrs. Mary Vakos, of Washington, D. C.; Mr. Lewis Hall of Sanderson, Va.; and several grandchildren. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Raymond Payne.

Sister Hall was laid to rest in Maury Cemetery, South Richmond, Va. to await the coming of her Lord.

BE IT RESOLVED: That we bow in humble submission to our Father's will, desiring to be reconciled to our loss which is her eternal gain. and

BE IT RESOLVED: That a copy of this be placed in the records of the Church; also that one be sent to the *Signs of the Tmies,* and one to the family.

Done, and signed by the order of the Church this fourth Sunday in June, 1959.

Committee
Nettie Farnsworth
N. L. Broomfield
J. L. Butcher

OBITUARIES

ELDER C. O. KERLEY

Elder C. O. Kerley was born August 22, 1882, and departed this life May 12, 1959, at his home near Simpson, Ill. after a very severe illness. He was hospitalized for ten days in the Western Baptist Hospital, and all that medical aid and tender and loving family and friends could do, was done for him; yet God called him home to forever dwell in peace and rest with the saints of God.

Elder Kerley was married to Vincie Shelton August 19, 1906, and to this union three sons and a daughter were born; one son died in infancy, and the two sons, Paul and Lyndolph, of Simpson, Ill., and the daughter, Mrs. Imogene Butler, of Paducah, Ky., together with the mother are left to mourn his passing; also the grandchildren and great grandchildren, and other relatives.

He joined the Rock Springs Primitive Baptist Church when a young man; and he assured us often how he was taught and led to see that salvation was by the grace of God, and not by the works of the creature. The church soon recognized what a wonderful gift he had to tell of the wonders of God's love, and he was ordained to the full work of the ministry; and was a minister in the Soldier Creek Association for fifty-two years, and pastor of Rock Springs Church and a church in Kentucky for more than twenty years.

Elder J. N. Darnell, of Cadiz, Ky., an elder of the Little River Association, was called to preach his funeral at Rock Springs Church May 14th. He used as his text, John 3:15. The house was crowded with listeners to truth, and to pay their last respects to their pastor, brother, neighbor and friend; and their respects to his wonderful family.

Elder Kerley will be missed by the Baptists and the Baptists' friends, his home church, and his home association. He ever felt the least of all other ministers whom he was privileged to hear, always declaring that if he could speak in his Master's name, as did these brethren, he would gladly do so when called upon. His gift to we who loved him, and called him Brother Kerley, was a very precious gift to us; and we hope we were thankful to our God for that gift. We understood his feeling that he was the least of all the saints, esteeming others better than himself.

He comforted others while here he stayed:
The family, loved ones, and the friends he made.
The family will miss him each way they turn:
And for his presence their hearts will yearn.
O, may the God of all true peace be theirs,
And strengthen them through all the coming years.

Written at request of the family by a sister, I hope,

Effie Bowden,
Benton, Ky.

EARLEY J. WILLIAMS

Funeral services were conducted at New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Malvern, Alabama, for Earley J. Williams on May 8, 1959; with interment in the adjoining cemetery.

He was a firm believer in salvation by grace; and his wife was a member of New Hope Church, and was baptized by the writer. He was a prominent business man of Graceville, Florida; and a native of Geneva County, Alabama.

He is survived by his wife; one daughter, Mrs. Charles Hicks, of Graceville, Fla.; a sister, Mrs. Belle Dykes; two brothers, J. H. of Jacksonville, and E. J. of Titusville, Fla.; and one granddaughter. He was seventy-one years of age.

J. J. Collins

MATTHEW JOHN CULPEPPER

He was born October 11, 1876, in Lavaca County, Texas; and passed away March 19, 1959, making his stay on earth more than eighty-two years. He was united in marriage December 15, 1908, to Miss Lela Hawk, and to this union nine children were born: Three preceded him to eternity: Norma Faye, age 6; Winston, age 32; and Francis, age 30. He is survived by his wife, Sister Lela Culpepper; three sons, Lee, Stockdale; Vernon, San Antonio; and Lloyd of Karnes City; three daughters, Mrs. Ermine Meek, Houston; Mrs. Nina Luker, Cuero; and Mrs. Joy Welch, of Pharr. Also by two brothers, Everett, of Beeville, and Jake, of Stockdale; one sister, Mrs. Maggie Grant, of San Antonio; and nineteen grandchildren, and ten great grandchildren.

Sister Lela, his wife, has been Clerk of Mt. Olive Church for many years, but Matthew did not join the church — he felt his unworthiness so greatly he did not offer, but his walk and talk was the fruit of a gracious work done by the Lord. His home was always a welcome place for Old Baptists, and meetings were held there many times. He told the writer that he tried to join the church twice, but was just unable to get up. I replied, that he would be received if he just raised his hand.

A number of years ago I was on my way to Mt. Olive Church (which is 250 miles from my home), and about half-way there I felt so down hearted, and cast down, feeling that I was too great a sinner to be trying to serve that church, that I ought to go back home, etc., that I stopped on the road and studied what to do; but I went on, and we had meeting, it seemed, as usual. After service, Matthew got in the car with me, and when we stopped at his mother-in-law's home for dinner, he put his arm around me and began to cry; and said, "I do not know why I keep going to these meetings. Last week, when I was plowing in the field, I remarked, 'Why did Eugene (that is, the unworthy writer) come to my home the month before and bring all those good people?'; and a voice spoke to me and said that Eugene did not do it, he was sent."

When Matthew said that, then I began to cry for joy; for it was the evidence I wanted that the Lord was in the matter, and that the Lord had sent a message of comfort to me through this precious brother.

"The Lord moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform."

His remains were laid to rest in the Stockdale Cemetery to await the resurrection morning. May the Lord comfort all that loved him, and enable them to be submissive to His will. Written at the request of the church.

Elder E. B. Ault,
Weslaco, Texas

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 127 DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1959 NO. 10

San Juan, Texas

Dear Brother Wood:

I have been thinking about my travels, and call, if indeed I was called. I was born July 24, 1871 in the State of Mississippi; father moving to Texas in 1880, when I was nine years old. At that time I had no thought of my future; but at the age of fourteen something came over me that I did not know how to cope with, and I got into deep meditation, and was in a terrible fix. I did not know why, but it seemed I was going to die and go to eternal doom; and all I could say was, "Lord have mercy." I was at the bottom of despair and desired relief some way; and was made to know that all could come from the Lord. About this time I saw the brightest light I ever saw in my life, and was made to love everybody and almost every thing; and the terrible dread was gone for awhile — until I was nearly 21 years old; and I did not forget that beautiful light.

In the meantime, I would go with mother to her meetings, she being a Primitive Baptist before my memory, and I saw those good people enjoying their meeting together; and how I longed to be one with them, but knew I was not fit: I was too unworthy and too sinful. I realized I was a sinner, but did not before I saw that light. It was impressed on me so much that I felt to offer; and if they turned me down, it would be just and right, but I was longing to be with them. When I offered, to my amazement, they received me, and I was baptized the next day by the pastor. It seemed that I left something in the water that I did not carry away, and that was a clear conscience. At the time I thought my troubles were over, but, lo and behold, something worse, if possible, came over me, and I got to where I could not sleep very much, and my appetite failed; and I was in a bad fix sure enough. By this time I had married, and my wife would ask me what was the trouble; and I would tell her that nothing was the matter. I suppose the church saw in me something I did not think anyone knew; and our old pastor would ask me if I did not feel that I wanted to talk. I replied that if I could tell it like you, I would not quit.

Dear ones, I felt that way at that time, for it seemed that I would die; and I suppose I did in a way. I guess Jonah died and was in the belly of hell, because he said, "I will pay that I have vowed; Salvation is of the Lord." I had walked eighteen miles to my meeting, and the dear old pastor was so good to me. I would stay with him; and one night I got out of bed and went down into his pasture, and fell on my knees and tried to pray, "If it be thy will, O Lord, show me." The next day was Sunday, and the pastor asked me to open the meeting. The first thing I knew I had given out a hymn, and I suppose I tried to offer prayer; and well do I remember my subject: It was the language of David, "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" I don't know how long I stood, but when I quit the people were shedding tears. I thought they were so sorry for me, and I thought I would never try again: when I get home, I will stay there.

But thirty days from that time I was eager to go again. They liberated me against my will; and about two years later I was ordained. Then my trials began; I would leave home to serve churches, having later four churches;

and I was very poor in this world's goods. My preaching began in 1900, and it has been a rough road to travel; and I am now nearly to the end of the road. But, dear children, I hope I can say with Paul, that I have fought a good fight; I believe I have contended for the faith.

This is only a brief account of my travels. My call, if I was called, was against my natural will; otherwise I know I could not have gone on. Brother Wood, do with this as it seems good to you.

Your unworthy brother,
J. B. Reid

THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD

(By Elder David Bartley)

Conclusion of

CHAPTER TEN

CHRIST THE PROPHET-PRIEST-KING

"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." (Rev. 14:12) This is the experience of "being born again," and these are the fruits of the birth of the Spirit, with its sorrowing in the flesh, and rejoicing in Christ. In this way, but in no other, can any man see and enter into the kingdom of God. Christ, who lives and reigns upon his Father's throne within the veil, entered into his kingdom through the door of death. So all who have the mind that was in him, and his reconciled spirit, will meekly take the cup of sorrow and suffering in the flesh, as he did, because it is the Father's will, that they may be partakers of his grace and glory. Therefore, "he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." (Rom. 2:29) Of this way of salvation unto life and holiness, Paul again says, "Not by the works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." (Tit. 3:5-7)

Now, as our apostle here states the fundamental principle and power of salvation and justification, denying that it is by our works as Christians, and affirming that it is according to the mercy of God and grace of Christ, and wrought in us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit; so he elsewhere abundantly establishes this doctrinal and experimental truth of salvation by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ — abundant, reigning and sovereign grace. For he says, "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 5:20, 21) And this being true of grace, he went on to exhort and encourage his brethren in Christ, saying, "yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace." (Rom. 6:14) Grace, then, shall have the dominion over her favored subjects, the people of the covenant of grace and of Christ's priesthood; for he hath redeemed them from the law and its curse, and washed them by his blood from their sins; so to them sin has lost its strength, and the law has no power to accuse or curse them. Such is the potency and success of reigning grace. Paul declares a most blessed and heavenly truth, to the praise of grace, when he says that it much more abounds where sin abounded; and so much more that, although the reign of sin was unto death, yet the reign of grace as a heavenly princess is so much mightier that she rescues her subjects from sin and

death, and then reigns in them and over them unto life eternal. But, most glorious of all, grace reigns through righteousness, because she reigns by the power of the King of saints, the righteous and ever-living High Priest of all the blessed people of God. This is the praise and glory of sanctifying and saving grace, and its excellency and sufficiency cannot be over-estimated; for since grace much more abounds than destructive sin, is mightier than the monster death, and so triumphantly reigns that her saved people love righteousness, and hate sin and iniquity, why should any one, who needs and desires salvation from sin and unto righteousness, seek any other way of salvation than by grace? It is a very low and mistaken estimate of the grace of our holy Redeemer, if any one supposes that there is any lack, deficiency or weakness in his reigning and saving grace. In the sore trials of Paul, who plead with his Lord to make his burden lighter, his sympathising High Priest gave him this sustaining assurance: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Thus fortified, Paul adds: "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." (2 Cor. 12:9) How sad the mistake, therefore, when any one will turn from grace to his own works and weakness.

"And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. 6:2) This is the necessary preparation and qualification for the holy worship of God in his sanctuary, and all who are thus consecrated are in his kingdom of grace. Christ is their High Priest unto God, and they are of his priestly brotherhood and house. God has accepted them in his beloved Son. To them Paul says, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his . . . For as many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God. . . Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." (Rom. 8) We have been born of our Father in heaven, who is a Spirit, and have been made partakers of his holiness in his holy Son, in whom we are thus in brotherhood. All who are thus made partakers of the divine nature, as redeemed, washed, sanctified, and justified, are of the spiritual and divine priesthood and kingdom of God's Holy Son. These are the true worshipers of the Father, who is holy, and whose service is holy. "This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." (Isa. 54) "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." (1 Cor. 1:-30, 31) Now, then, all this salvation and consecration unto the worship and service of the God of all grace is of him, through the one Mediator, and ministered by the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

To this family of our blessed God, and brotherhood of his holy Son Jesus, the apostle Peter writes and says, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." (1 Peter 2:9-11) This testimony of the inspired apostle shows that, although the people of God are chosen of him unto salvation, and made the royal or kingly priesthood of Christ, and as such they are an holy nation, yet they are for the present time in the flesh, or connected with it, in which there dwelleth no good thing, and that

it is not with the desire or will of their fleshly mind they worship and serve God, but they are to abstain from these, as things at war with their soul pantings after God and his holiness. This revelation of the truth also shows that this holy nation and peculiar people of the living God are strangers and pilgrims in this world, and that the sin-blighted earth and mortal flesh is not their inheritance and home, but they are here only for a time, which God hath put in his own power, as said his Son before he in person left the world to go unto the Father. Therefore, as their interceding High Priest unto God, Christ said to him, "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." (John 17:14-18) Here Christ evidently speaks of his people in their spiritual and holy relation to him, not only as his people in the new and better testament, as redeemed by his blood, but especially as born from above of his Father and God. It was as his brethren in the Spirit and as his disciples, therefore, that he sent them into the world, to be the witnesses of his resurrection from the dead, and servants and ministers in his new kingdom. He was then to enter into that within the veil, as the atoning High Priest of his people, and their Forerunner into the glory of his Father's house, but they were to remain in the sanctuary without as his consecrated and worshipping priestly house, until the time appointed of the Father. This was sublimely shadowed forth by the first priesthood, when their high priest passed beyond the sight of his brethren and stood in the presence of the Lord within the veil as their intercessor, while his sanctified people worshipped in the first sanctuary and court of Israel, as the whole congregation of the Lord. Our Lord therefore said, "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are." (John 17:11) All that our Advocate with the Father has asked him for shall surely be granted to him; for the holy Son said to his Father, "And I knew that thou hearest me always." "Neither pray I for these alone," (the apostles) "but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that we all may be one," etc. In the fulfillment of our Lord's prayer, Paul was moved to testify, saying, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." (Eph. 4:4-7) And the apostle Peter also, in harmony with the prayer of intercession, assured his brethren in Christ, who are born again, to the holy inheritance in heaven, that they "are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." (1 Peter 1:3-5)

We are thus divinely and blessedly assured that our Lord's holy intercession for all his purchased possession shall be fulfilled, just as he has asked his holy Father. God has promised to give his Son the heathen, or Gentiles, for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession; therefore the good Shepherd said, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this" (legal) "fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd." (John 10:16) His word is faithful, positive and sure, and he says it shall be thus, and he must bring them, because they were his sheep or people. Thus he is faithfully fulfilling his prophetic and priestly and kingly authority and work, by purifying unto himself his

peculiar people, and bringing them into his kingdom, and reigning over them in righteousness by his abounding and saving grace, to the praise and glory of God. "And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel, I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. . . Thus saith the Lord, in an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heart nor sun smite them; for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them. And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted. Behold, these shall come from far; and, lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim." (Isa. 49:6-12)

All this glorious power of the King of glory upon his mediatorial throne shows how truly Paul affirmed the superabounding of the grace that reigns through righteousness by our Lord Jesus Christ, and also manifests the perfection and absolute success of his everlasting priesthood. By the Spirit of revelation Isaiah wrote of him, saying, "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom." (Isa. 40:10, 11) O faithful and good Shepherd of his people! How safe are his helpless lambs! "Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: and they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." (Isa. 51:11) All this "shall" be, saith the Lord. To the people of his covenant mercies he says, "Fear not; for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him. . . I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Saviour. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God. . . I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King." (Isa. 43) Of this King in Zion it was written: "Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee forever. Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most Mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things." (Ps. 45:2-4)

"Rejoice, the Saviour reigns
Among the sons of men;
He breaks the pris'ners' chains,
And makes them free again;
Let hell oppose God's only Son,
In spite of foes his cause goes on

The cause of righteousness,
And truth and holy peace,
Design'd our world to bless,
Shall spread and never cease;
Gentile or Jew, their souls shall bow,
Allegiance due with rapture vow."

This is according to the new covenant, in which the Lord writes his laws in their hearts, and says he will be their God, and they shall be his people. When this is done by him, his laws are sacred and dear to them, and they love him and his laws. He also sheds his love abroad in

their hearts, by the Holy Spirit, which is given unto them. Not only do the saved in Christ love God; but they are taught of him to love one another. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." It is the first-fruit of the Spirit; "for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God", testifies the beloved John. Indeed, it is the love of Christ that constraineth his followers in their loyal service in his kingdom; for to them he is "the chiefest among ten thousand", and inexpressibly lovely and precious. Because he is their salvation, their life and their all in all, as has been in part shown in these pages. For this cause all his people offer themselves willingly when his gracious and loving power is manifested in them, by the enlightening and sanctifying ministration of the Spirit of truth and comfort and peace. And so there is a holy delight in his worship and service, for he is their adored High Priest and King. His own blessed testimony is, "Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." (John 6:45) For they have been taught of God, and he hath revealed his Son in them; therefore they know and love and serve him. In all this divine worship and service of love, through the sanctifying and beautifying and righteous reign of saving grace in their hearts, Christ is exalted and God is glorified, and the saints are united and edified together in faith and hope and love. And all this divine and spiritual service and worship of God in his kingdom of grace on earth, is by the perfection and power of our Lord's eternal priesthood. For all this life-giving power and saving virtue, thus manifested in his saints and in his body, the church, to the praise of the glory of God's grace, goes out of Christ to all his redeemed and quickened members, as truly as healing virtue went out of him to the suffering and dying woman who touched him, and was made perfectly well.

"Dear, dying Lamb! thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransom'd church of God
Be saved, to sin no more."

"For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgements, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God." (Ezek. 34:24-28) This is the glorious fulfillment of the Lord's new covenant of mercy with his people, under our Lord Jesus Christ and by his reigning grace; and all these riches of mercy he has vouchsafed to them, according to this sure covenant in the blood of Jesus. Here there is no possible failure to the heirs of promise, the priestly brotherhood of the holy and beloved Son of God. All this proclaims the infinite goodness, almighty power and inexpressible glory of the Holy One.

(Chapter eleven next month)

EXPERIENCE

Draper, N. C.

Brethern and Friends of
Like Precious Faith:

After thirty-five years of my life I was made to know that there was a living God.

On the 5th day of October, 1949, I was on my way to work, when I met an old friend, and we went for a drink. I wound up drunk, and didn't go near my work. Soon the day was past and gone, and I was taken home by a friend so drunk that I did not know where I

was, who I was, or what time it was. My wife said it was about four o'clock in the morning. Before day I was awake and as sober as anyone, and was made to realize that there was a living God; and was made to wonder about myself in time to come.

As time passed I was troubled about the things I had done in the past thirty-five years. One Sunday I went hunting to try to forget my worries; it was the fourth Sunday in October, 1949. When I came in sight of the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, I was made to know that there was an all wise and merciful God. I stood in shame and fear, and I hope as I stood in my shape and condition, that I was made to ask God to forgive my sins. It seemed that I would choke to death in wondering and thinking of the difference of who I was, and who I ought to be; and where I was, and where I ought to be. As I sat on a slab pile near the church, I feel that the Lord showed me myself; and I was made to call on him in my poor way, and asked him to go with me home; to enable me to reach home safe and sound as I was before I left for my day's hunt, and I would promise I was on my last mission. The day soon was past, and I was home.

I was asked if I would be ready to go again the next Sunday morning about 6 o'clock; and I replied, "No. I have been my last time on Sunday." And as I was questioned, one asked, "Aren't you going hunting on Sunday any more?" I said, "No." And he asked, "Have you quit drinking?" I replied, "Yes." "Are you going to preaching?" And I said, "I expect so." Then he said, "Let's go; he is as sorry as the rest of them." As the truck rolled off, I felt the most relief I had had all day; and I said, "Thank God, I am at home at last."

The week passed, and Sunday came. I lived in a country home and had no car or way to go except to walk; and I was made willing to walk the distance to church. Where ever it was, I was made willing to go. I started to leave my home, walking, when a truck turned into my driveway; and a brother of mine said, "I have come after you to go with me to church." I went with him to the Christian Church in Draper, N. C. When I left the church, I was in more trouble than ever before. As I would read my Testament, I would realize more and more just how helpless I was, and how lost and undone; how unworthy and small I was. Eighteen months passed, and I would wonder if I was going to the right church. One day I met a man on the street in Draper, and I said to him, "I would like to talk with you, if you have time." He said, "I haven't time." Then, I guess he saw my condition, he said, "What is it?" I started to tell him; and he said, "My friend, you need to change churches."

On Sunday morning I dressed to go to church — the Christian church where I had been going for the past year and a half; as I came out of my front door I saw the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church sitting on a knoll in my front yard just as plain as it could be — both the name and sight; and the front door was standing open, and everything lighted as plain as could be. I turned around and said to my wife, "I believe I will go to Dan River Church." As a car was waiting to take me to the same church I had been going to, I said to the driver, "I am going to Dan River." And, as he pulled out, I went back into the house, and my wife said, "You had better go on up there where you have been going, so you will have a ride there and back." And I replied, "It is only nine miles to Dan River Church, and I can walk every step of the way. I might not get there in time to hear the preaching, but I will get there in time to say, Thank God I am here."

I started walking along the highway, and the tears began to trickle down my face. A car came along and stopped; it was an old friend. He said, "Going my way?" and I said, "I don't know, but I am going across the river, if that is what you mean." He said that he was

looking for someone to go with him to get a drink, and I told him that he hadn't found him yet. About two miles farther he turned off in another direction; and I left him and started walking in the hot sun. The perspiration began to run down my face, and the tears were flooding my eyes, so that I could hardly see the highway. I walked some distance, and another car came along, a bootlegger going to Reidsville, and I told him I was going to Mayfield. He asked what I was going to Mayfield for, "Are you going to preaching?"; and I said, "Yes." And he said that if I were going to preaching that he would take me; so he drove me near Dan River Church. As I walked along, I saw the church, and the front doors were open; and I recalled that these were the doors I saw before I left home. I saw many friends going into the building, and I felt so ashamed I could hardly go in. As I walked into the churchyard, they saw me, and spoke, saying, "Hello; how are you?", and I could hardly speak from choking and shame. As I sat there I felt that I was not fit to be among the people. I could see, as I looked over the congregation, bright faces among the folks; and I felt so low and torn down, and unworthy; and with shame I sat there. Soon the preaching began, and I felt that I knew what the brightness of their faces meant.

As the time passed from one meeting to another, I would read my Bible, and ask the Lord to show me the way he would have me go; and guide me, and teach me right from wrong, and give me knowledge and understanding that I might do his will; and keep me forever in his care. Time passed; and one Sunday morning I felt that I had found a home, and was satisfied. I told my wife that I believed I would join the church that day; and she said, "Whatever you want to do."

I went to meeting that day to join, and I sat in the front so that I would be near when the door was opened for the reception of members. Elder D. V. Spangler preached the most wonderful sermon I ever heard, and I enjoyed it all. As the meeting came to a close, the doors were opened for the reception of members. I thought, "Go on, you said you were. Why don't you go?" I saw in a vision a hand stretched forth, and heard a voice within me say, "Go back, Sam, you haven't prayed." And I had to stand there and let the meeting close. When I returned home, my wife asked if I joined the church; and I answered her with eyes so full and throat choking, "No ma'am."

As the month went by, I was in more shame than ever; until one day while at my work with the Fieldcrest Mills, I felt that the Lord broke me down with troubles and trials, and laid my sins on me so heavily that I was brought down, and made to say, "I have never tried to pray, but if the Lord will hear a sinner's prayer, I will do the best I can." I tried to pray, but the only words I could say, were, "Lord have mercy on me, a sinner"; and as I stood by my work, I felt as if I were a new person — I felt that my prayer was heard, for my troubles were gone, and my burdens were light. I was made to praise God, and thank him for all that he had done for me. A new feeling was in my heart and I was satisfied.

On the 4th Sunday in August, 1951, I went to church with my brother, to Dan River, and sat on the back seat, and had no desire to unite. When Elder Spangler opened the services and started to preach, I felt something I had never felt before. When the preaching was over and the door of the church was opened, I was made to know it was the time, and I offered and was received by the body into their fellowship; and was baptized the following 4th Sunday in September, 1951, by Elder C. E. Turner, of Bassett, Va., and I thank God for it.

My heart's desire is to praise Him, and Him alone, for he is the only one. I hope my name was written in heaven, in the Lamb's Book of Life before the foundation of the world. Whatever my lot is, when the time comes for me to

go hence, I hope I will be blessed with the Spirit to say, "Come, welcome death"; and can say that my God is just in all his ways. I love you, brethren, please pray for me.

Sam Underwood

Rt. 1, Box 164C,
Acombo, Calif.

Dear Editors, and the
Household of Faith:

Sometimes I am made to wonder if I love my brethren as I should; if I esteem them more than self. We hear Him say, "Love one another." Our God is a God of love.

Sometimes ago I woke up three times one night, singing a verse of Amazing Grace:

"Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

These few words were going through my mind all the next day. To me, this is one of the sweetest hymns in the book. Isn't it wonderful that He can comfort his little ones at the mid-night hour; but if I am one, I feel to be the least. I have been cast down, and made to feel that I didn't have a friend. It was then He spoke words of comfort: "Be not afraid, it is I." and "Follow me." My prayer, when I can pray, is, Lord keep me humble, and at the feet of my brethren. The feeling so little, ignorant and unworthy of his goodness and mercy, to me, if not deceived, comes from the heart, and not the head. Our sweetest moments are when we are led to that fountain, and are fed; then we sing the sweet songs of Zion. God does not always give us what we want, but He does give us what we need.

Some of my sweetest memories are of things which occurred while asleep. A few nights ago I was traveling alone, and walked up to a big, lovely old mansion, and was admiring its beauty. It was of stone, and its design was perfect. It had no windows, but needed no sun, moon, or stars to light up its loveliness. It seemed that He just spoke, and there it was.

On another occasion I was troubled over the welfare of our little church; and I fell asleep. I was traveling alone in a strange land, when He asked me what I was seeking. I told him that I was looking for the old land-marks our fathers had set up, and the old path. And He said, "This is the way, walk therein." I woke rejoicing, feeling that I was in the path that leads to that Everlasting City, whose maker and builder is God. When He said, "Follow me," He walked before me until we came to a beautiful river, so clear and wide; and we couldn't go around it. Then He left me. I feel that it won't be long now until He will guide me across this river.

"A few more rolling suns at most
Will land us safe on heaven's coast;
Where we shall sing the song of grace,
And see our glorious hiding place."

Your little sister, if one at all,
Martha Frost Little

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN JESUS, JUSTICE AND A SINNER

Jesus: My court's erected in the sinner's heart.
Bring forth the prisoner: state his awful crimes;
Nor from the bar of conscience let him start.

Justice: Thy righteous will is done, just Judge,
See here the prisoner stands.

Jesus: What has the prisoner done?
The cause of his commitment state;
And let the law of God be honoured in his fate.

Justice: With outstretched arms he's broke the law of God,
Despised His mercy, set at nought His rod;
Conspired the death of Him who gave his life,
And conspired against Him an eternal Strife.
His hours, his weeks, his months, his years have been
Hours, weeks, months, and years of deep-stained sin.

His crimes are all against a gracious God,
Whose goodness he abused; nay, wantoned with his blood.

Jesus: If this be true, his guilt is very great.
But who can prove this is his real state?

Justice: His own confession is a witness sure.
He has confessed the whole; nay, more,
Himself declares his guilt for vengeance cries;
For vengeance from the Lord of earth and skies.
For 'tis against the Holy Three-one God
His crimes have been; and cry to heaven for blood.

Jesus: What sayest thou, sinner? Hast thou aught to plead
That sentence should not pass? Hold up thy head
And show thy brazen, thy rebellious face.

Sinner: Ah, me! I dare not! I'm too vile and base
To tread upon the earth; much less to lift
My eyes to heaven. I need no other shift
Than my own conscience. Lord, I must confess
I am no more than dust; and no whit less
Than my indictment styles me. O, if thou
Search too severe, with too severe a a brow,
What flesh can stand? I have transgressed thy laws;
My merits plead thy vengeance, not my cause.

Justice: Lord, shall I strike the blow
And sink his soul in endless grief and woe?

Jesus: Hold, Justice; stay!
Sinner speak on. What hast thou more to say?

Sinner: I'm vile and base, and by myself abhorred.
And though I am thy handiwork, thy creature, Lord,
My very limbs, and all my powers have been
Basely employed in adding sin to sin.
Though once, in Adam's head, I bore thy image fair;
That image lost, I Satan's image wear.
Justly accused of every baneful feature,
An awful vile, degenerated creature,
Here, humbly at thy bar —

Justice: The fault's the greater. Shall I strike the blow
And sink his soul in endless wrath and woe?

Jesus: Hold, Justice. Stay!
Hast thou nothing more to say?

Sinner: Nothing but mercy, mercy, Lord! My state
Is miserable, poor, and desperate.
I have no hope in self, no works to plead.
If mercy *cannot* save, Justice must strike me dead.
And I must freely own the sentence just,
For on law-ground I feel I must be curst.
From law, and self, and all things else, I flee
To Thy dear bosom, to be saved by Thee.

Justice: Cease thy vain hopes. My angry God has vowed
Abused mercy must have blood for blood.
Shall I yet strike the blow,
And sink his soul in endless wrath and woe?

Jesus: Stay, Justice; hold! My bowels yearn;
My fainting blood grows cold
To see the trembling wretch. Methinks I spy
My Father's image in the prisoner's eye.

Justice: I cannot hold, —

Jesus: Then turn thy thirsty blade
Into my side. There let the wound be made.
Cheer up poor soul! Thy life's redeemed with mine.
My soul shall smart; *My* heart shall bleed for thine.

Justice: It is enough. I'm fully satisfied.
God is well pleased; the law is magnified.
The sinner must be quit for whom the Saviour died.

Jesus: Sinner, thou standest complete in me:
I bore the whole of vengeance due to thee.
I make thy cause my own; on me rely,
And thou shalt reign with me in endless day.

Sinner: O, groundless deeps! O, love beyond degree!
The offended dies to set the offender free!
Jesus, thy love, thy blood, thy matchless grace
Has cheered my heart and brightened my face:
Inspire my soul to shout abroad thy fame,
And sweetly sing the honours of thy Name.

(From the Gospel Standard, October, 1861. Thought to have been written by Gadsby.)

I cannot find words to add to the truth of these words. I believe there is not another article that tells of more of the love of God to sinners, and their love to him; and their desire to praise and honor him. It is all of Him, and the work of man as nothing. We cannot see Him as he is while we live in the flesh, but we can, when the Light shines in our hearts, see that we are less than nothing, and vanity. While in this condition, we are in the condition to ascribe all praise and honour to Him; but in our weak, ignorant condition we cannot. Only as we are led by the Spirit do we praise Him as we desire; and could not praise at all except by the strength He gives us.

If we could make one step towards Him, or speak one word of praise of our own accord and strength, it would be just that much honor we would claim; robbing Him of the same. As long as we see our helpless condition, and are made to beg for the joys of His salvation, just that long do we desire to give Him all praise; let it be ever so feeble.

Hoping in His finished work,
Geo. W. Jackson
632 Connally Dr.
East Point, Ga.

Rt. 2,
Marion, Louisiana

Dear Brethren:

Enclosed you will find my renewal for two years. I surely have enjoyed reading the articles that are printed in the Signs. How good it is to read and meditate on the glorious doctrine set forth — it is a great comfort to me.

Surely the dear writers are enabled by the Holy Ghost thus to write; for I feel of a truth that no one can write or speak things that are comforting to God's humble poor unless their minds are taken from time and the perishable things of this world, and carried to things that pertain to God and godliness. How wonderful it is when we are given in our hearts to witness with that which is spoken through them, either by pen or mouth. The writer or speaker must be inspired to write or speak, and the reader or hearer must be given the understanding by the same power before it is food or drink to them.

May the Almighty God bless you to continue to publish this paper, and the writers to write, that the children of God may be comforted through this medium; and give Him all the praise, honor, and glory. Farewell in the Lord.

Your little brother in hope,
L. D. Smith

R. R. 1,
Port Burwell, Ontario, Canada

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am writing to notify you on my change of address — I do not want to miss any of the Signs, as I do not have the privilege of meeting with any who believe in the Old School Baptist doctrine as you do, and as I hope I do. It is the only preaching that I enjoy, but there is so much more that I would like to understand about the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But thanks be to God for the change I feel has taken place in my life: the things of this life seem so different to me than they once did; and the striving for material gain of the people around me, seems so foolish.

May God give you strength to continue in the work you are doing — it is

food indeed to the hungry. I am one who seems to be much alone, and depressed much of the time. The letters of those who write for the Signs always give me comfort, and I am made to rejoice when I am reading them. I need the prayers of all the brethern. Yours in love.

A sister, I hope,
Mrs. M. J. Cathen

Whitefield, Maine

Editors of the Signs,
Dear Brethren:

Enclosed is money-order for renewal to the Signs. We both enjoy its contents so much; you know we do not have preaching here in Maine very often.

I enjoy the experiences so much; many times through the experiences told, I have been drawn in love to the writers, for their experiences seem to be along the line I have traveled. So much of my time I seem so far from God — so void of understanding; so far from what I would like to feel. I have to wonder if I know anything of grace; have I had any experience at all, or am I a deceiver? I hope I am one of God's little ones, even the least of them.

When I read of others who have had the same experience, somehow it gives new hope. I know of myself I can do nothing: If saved, its all of the love and mercy of God. Saved by grace! That's my hope, which gets so small at times. A scripture in Malachi 3:16, 17, has so many times been a comfort to me when I am so dull and far away: "And a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." So many times as I lay awake at night, my thoughts are upon the Lord — certainly I do think upon his name, then can go no farther. "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." etc.

I am so glad that scripture was left upon record. I know all of God's promises are true, and will be fulfilled to those who are his. The only question is, am I included? The Old Baptists preach what we both believe, and are the only people with whom we feel at home. We have been blessed to go and visit other churches of our faith, and always find the same love and fellowship manifested — a love the world knows nothing of.

My husband joins me in love and fellowship. May God bless you to continue the Signs.

A sisted in hope,
Mrs. Arthur Merigold

DESIRES THAT BRETHREN WRITE THEIR EXPERIENCES

Lawrenceville, Ga.

Dear Brother Spangler:

I wish to renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times. I enjoy the paper very much, and think the editors are doing a good work.

It seems to me that we ought to have more contributors of articles from the subscribers themselves. Not every minister is gifted to write, but I feel that we have a number who could contribute if they would make the effort. This is the more necessary when we consider that with many the Signs is the only comfort afforded many of the aged, afflicted, and far removed from meeting places. The experiences are greatly appreciated, and if any feel a desire to contribute their experience, let them fulfill it by writing. Rhetoric and grammar, even spelling, is good when done correctly, but the spiritual content is the thing which feeds the children of the Kingdom. I am sure the editors will gladly edit and correct any errors, if requested to do so. So let's encourage the publication of the rich experiences of grace which we know of, especially where we find a desire by one to tell of the Lord's dealing with them.

I once listened to an old negro man tell of how he was convicted of his sins, and the terrible condition he was in; how his white mistress when bringing him water to the field nearby, found him weeping, burdened, and broken up; how she clapped her hands for joy that "de Lord done took hold of you". He told of his travels, and of his deliverance in such a way that, even though the old fellow did not know one letter from another, much less any scripture at that time, his testimony was living proof to me that, "Salvation is (indeed) of the Lord." He is gone now, but I have been told his departure was sweet and serene; and of this I have no doubt, for Jesus can make a dying bed soft as downy pillows are.

Are we not living epistles (to be) known and read of all men? Should we not be always ready to give a reason for the hope that is in us? I knew, not many years ago, a dear old sister who was converted at a tender age. She told me her experience, and this she never varied to her dying day. I have watched her on occasions, lifted, as it seemed, above this earth while sitting in her regular place in the church congregation, and preach along with the preacher under her breath, with moving lips as hard and earnestly at the minister. Such as these are not "off" by any means; if so, would that we had more "off" members in our midst today. Peter answered this when he declared, "These men are not drunk as ye suppose", on that Pentecostal day. I do not approve a farcial display of emotion, but the fire from heaven I cannot rebuke, or deny, or forbid.

Why does it appear (perhaps it is not true) that there are fewer deep, rich, and vivid experiences now than in the long past? I have observed that in congregations, and especially in the church body, where there has been, and is no **fire,** there is correspondingly little warmth.

My own personal experience, while by comparison to others, seems very unimpressive to me, yet to me is very real in that I was definitely let to fall upon the Rock Jesus, and confess, "Lord save, or I perish." I have no doubt that I have in this at least the finale of every believer's experience. My church home was shown to me among the Old Baptists, who only among "all the peoples of the earth" acknowledge that, "Ye are saved by grace, and that not of yourself, it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man (any who is blessed to receive the gift) should boast". But, Oh, how dry and cold and dead I do sometimes get! I know and understand the meaning of the poet who inquires:

> "Lord, if indeed I am thine,
> If thou art my sun and my song,
> Say, why do I languish and pine,
> And why are my winters so long."

Nevertheless, dear ones, happy recipients of God's grace and mercy through faith, as I come nearer at each setting of the sun to the "time of my departure", I feel that for me there is surely a place where there are no clouds, no winter, not one distressing circumstance or scene; or else my faith in God and his Christ is in vain. It was only after Abraham had **patiently endured** that he received the promise. Yet I know that weak are the efforts of our hearts, and cold our warmest thoughts, but when we are enabled by His grace to see God as he is, then only can we praise him as we ought.

Your unworthy brother in bonds of love, I hope,

J. B. Dunagan

ENJOYS READING THE SIGNS

Bellingham, Wash.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I have been reminding myself that my subscription is due next month, so I am sending it now.

I can't tell how much the Signs of the Times means to me; it is something I feel I cannot do without. I thought that Elder S. L. Moran's experience in the May issue was wonderful, and I had to read it over more

than once. He seemed to tell a lot of my experiences, for my life has been so sinful too. About all I can remember is the wrong I have done; but God has been so good and kind to me, and has answered many of my prayers — I cannot praise him enough. I am not deserving of his goodness and mercies to me, and I know that, "If not free by grace, then I am lost."

When I have read the Signs through, then I turn to my old copies of the Signs which I have had for many years, and the writings in them are just the same, — good and true as they are today. Christ said in John 15, ". . . for without me ye can do nothing." How true that is! O, how I need him to guide me in the pathway I should go, and to give me words of wisdom to write what I feel in my heart. We are powerless without him. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." (Romans 13:1) This is the God I trust in; and I know that he works all things for our good, and to his own glory.

Christ learned obedience by the things he suffered (Hebrews 5:8), as do all his children. I hope I am one of his, and I believe that this hope has been in me for many years. I believe it is the love of God, and nothing can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:39)

In bonds of love and hope.

A little sister,
Blanche Brown

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The 1959 session of the BLACK CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION will be held with the church at Mill Branch, Nash County, N. C., beginning Friday before the fourth Sunday in October and continuing through Sunday. The church is located between Highways 95 and 301, one half mile from C. R. Owens' Grocery on 95 and one and one half miles from Sharpsburg on 301.

We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of truth and especially to our ministering brethren.

W. E. Turner, Clerk

SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION will convene, the Lord willing, with the Snow Hill Church, at Snow Hill, Maryland, October 21 and 22, 1959.

All ministers, brethren and friends of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us.

Those arriving on Tuesday will please contact Deacon Harry Ward, Bay Street, (Telephone 201); or Deacon Handy B. Truitt, Whiton Road 354, (Telephone 1070) Snow Hill. Those arriving on Wednesday go directly to the church on Washington Street.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Pastor
Maude P. Truitt, Clerk

VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING

The 1959 session of the VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING is appointed to be held at Mt. Zion Church October 14, 15, and 16; services to begin at 10:30 Standard Time. The meeting house is located on U. S. Route 50, about three miles East of Aldie, Virginia. Those arriving on Tuesday will please get in touch with Deacon Walter Norman, Herndon, Virginia; or Elder Wood, Manassas, Virginia, and they will be taken care of.

A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends to meet with us.

Arthur L. Carter, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

CONECUH RIVER ASSOCIATION

Dear Editors:

Please announce that the CONECUH RIVER ASSOCIATION'S 123RD ANNUAL SESSION will be held at Pleasant Hill Church, about 4 miles Northeast of Troy, Alabama, on the 2nd Sunday, and Friday and Saturday before, in October, 1959.

Go out North Three Notch Street to the oil mill, turn North on Farm to Market Road, go about 2 miles. The church is about one-fourth mile of the road on the West, or left side.

Elder Warren King, Moderator
A. C. Carter, Clerk

NEW VERNON MEETING

The yearly meeting of the NEW VERNON OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH will be held the first Saturday in October-October 3rd. All members and friends are invited to attend.

Wm. D. Chapman

CONTRIBUTORS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

A. H. Summers, Ky., $2.00
C. M. Richardson, Va., $10.00
Joseph A. Johnson, Tenn., $4.00
Mrs. David Farnie, Va., $1.00
Mrs. Dosia Deal, No., $5.00
Elder C. N. Bunn, Va., $2.00

(Note: the amount of contribution of Mrs. G. W. Mathews, Tex., was $2.00; which was omitted in last report.)

THE ENDOWMENT FUND

Following is a report to those who so liberally contributed to our Endowment Fund:

When the request was made for contributions, it was stated that the funds would be used either for the purchase of a press, or to set up an Endowment Fund, and the income from the fund used to help defray our expenses. At a meeting of the Board of Trustees it was decided not to buy a press for the time being, so the money was invested as an Endowment; which investments are as follows, as of January 1, 1959:

The amount donated (after deducting $192.00 as the cost of stationery, mailing, return envelopes, etc.) was	$10,187.55
Invested in first Deed of Trust on Real Estate (6%)	4,786.68
25 shares American Telephone and Telegraph stock, (since split three shares for one)	3,558.54
Deposited in savings account Security Bank and Trust Company, Danville, Va.	1,842.33
	$10,187.55

WELSH TRACT CHURCH HISTORIES

THOSE WHO DESIRE COPIES OF THE WELSH TRACT CHURCH HISTORIES SHOULD ORDER THEM FROM THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES OFFICE AT ONCE. AT THE PRESENT TIME WE HAVE A NUMBER ON HAND, AND IT IS NOT LIKELY THAT ANOTHER EDITION WILL BE PUBLISHED. THE PRICE IS $1.00 PER COPY, POSTPAID.

Danville, Virginia **October, 1959**

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Route 5, Box 332F **Danville, Va.**

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

EDITORIAL

Our readers will note the suggestion of Brother Dunagan (page 228) that our elders and brethern write more for the Signs. With this we heartily concur. We welcome articles that are sound in doctrine on scriptural subjects, and the experiences of our brethren, for we desire as far as possible to publish current writings; but will occasionally republish interesting articles when requested to do so.

As mentioned by Brother Dunagan, the Signs of the Times is read by many of our aged and afflicted brethern and friends, some of whom are not able to attend their meetings. To them the experiences and writings of their brethren are as cool water to their thirsty

souls. We often hear from brethren who say that the writings in the Signs are all the preaching they have; and their letters have often encouraged us when we are about ready to give up due to the amount of time and labor necessary to keep the paper coming out on time.

It will make our work less if our writers will remember not to make their writing too lengthy; and when possible to have them typewritten, using double spacing. However, we do not want any to hesitate to send in hand-written letters, as we will, as we have opportunity, type them and prepare them for printing. Since our space is limited each month, medium length articles are more easily handled, and can usually be published without too much delay. The subject matter, consistent with the doctrine of God our Saviour, is of much more importance than literary style to most of us. We will make such corrections for you that we find necessary.

Notices of meetings and associations should be mailed to us about two months before the date they should be published — if they come in early, we will file them for the proper date. We always regret when we cannot publish notices at the time requested, but often we receive them too late. Any changes in the Church Notices (which are published in each January issue) should reach us early in November.

The continued desire of your editors is to publish that which is God honouring, declaring what He has done for his people. Anything other than this has no place in the Signs.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

A Sermon Preached at the Warwick Association by Eld. Thomas P. Dudley, June 6, 1879.

Text. — "By night, on my bed, I sought him whom my soul loveth. I sought him, but I found him not. I will rise now, and go about the city, in the streets, and in the broadways. I will seek him whom my soul loveth. I sought him, but I found him not. The watchmen that go about the city found me, to whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth? It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me." — Song of Solomon iii, 1-4.

The Song of Solomon is called the Song of Songs, and is generally regarded as a dialogue between Christ and his church, of which he is the Head, or Bridegroom, and she is his body, or bride. The strongest expressions are used by him to set forth his love and affection for her, and equally ardent are the words spoken in reply, to show her love for her Lord and Husband. "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness: as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine." Then follows the reply of her Beloved, "Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem. My dove, my undefiled, is but one; she is the only one of her mother; she is the choice one of her that bare her."

There are many organizations that claim to be the church of Christ, but unless they are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, they have no right to make the claim, nor can it be allowed. The church, which was set up at Jerusalem, is the only pattern, and unless conformed to this pattern, all pretended churches or religious organizations, whatever may be their pretensions, are spurious. The Lord does not say to them, "Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art

fair. O my dove, that art in the clefts of the Rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." What precious words! How cheering to the poor, disconsolate child of God, who would hide his face, and is bowed down under a sense of sin and unworthiness. Let me see thy countenance, however sad. Thy sorrow shall be turned into joy, and thy grief into songs of praise. Let me then hear thy voice and see thy countenance. When she hears his voice utter these gracious words, she breaks forth, "I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem; as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon." Black as she is, and as she feels herself to be, she possesses a comeliness given unto her by her beloved Lord and Husband, and in him she is comely; for he has become the God of her salvation.

Dear brethren, when you have been permitted to see him thus, has he not appeared to you as the chiefest among ten thousands, and the altogether lovely? And you have joined in songs of praise unto his holy name. Let the inhabitants of the Rock sing, and those only who inhabit this Rock can join in their song. Of all others it is said, "Their rock is not as our Rock." Our Rock is the God of salvation. Their rock fails them in the time of their need, and is unable to help them in the hour of their extremity. It cannot save them. Of our Rock it is said, "His work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment; a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he." He only can say, I will work, and who shall hinder? He says of his people, "They shall return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their head, and sighing and sorrow flee away." He speaks as the God of omnipotence, who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast.

He saves the poor, and the needy are delivered by him. When in the horrible pit, and deep sunk in the miry clay, where there is no standing, and there is none to help, and they find no way of escape, they cry unto him, and he hears them, and flies to their relief. Jonah cried unto him out of the belly of hell, and like him, all who have been thus delivered can and do say, "Salvation is of the Lord." All his children are made to learn that "None but Jesus, none but Jesus, can do helpless sinners good." They are made to cry unto him, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy upon me." He hears, and delivers them, and their soul is filled with joy, and they fondly hope their fears and sorrows are removed forever. But soon they are taught that a carnal mind, which is enmity against God, remains, and amazement and fear take possession of their heart. The bride, in the text, speaks their experience. "By night, on my bed." All is darkness around. The bed which seemed so pleasant, affords her no rest. Her Lord is gone, and she is left alone, and disconsolate. She seeks him, but finds him not. Sleep forsakes her, and she is in great trouble. Anxieties and fears prey upon her. What shall she do?

How often, dear brethren and sisters, have we, upon such a bed, sought him whom our soul loveth. We sought him, but, like the bride, we found him not, and our souls were in great trouble. We could not rest. Sleep fled from our eyes. At last, like the bride, we resolved to rise. We looked eagerly around, but no heavenly vision met our eyes. We listened intently, but his gracious voice saluted not our ears. We could wait no longer. Says the bride, and she speaks the language of every child of God, "I will rise now, and go about the city, in the streets, and in the broadways." Surely some one can tell me where my Beloved is gone. I will seek him whom my soul loveth. But alas! how grievous her disappointment. She seeks, but finds him not. Even in the by-lanes, as well as the broad ways; but she finds him not. How often have we, like the bride, made unavailing search. We hoped to

find him soon, but, like Job, were made to cry, "O that I knew where I might find him." Then the adversary assails us, and tauntingly asks, "Where is now thy God? He has forsaken, and cast you off forever." We listen to his base suggestions, and our cry of grief and lamentation is heard in the streets. The watchmen that go about the city find us, and demand the cause of our grief. Our reply is, "Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?" But they can give us no information — can afford no comfort.

No, dear brethren, you must look beyond and above the watchmen. Much as they may pity you, they know there is One only who can deliver you. You turn from them, and all seems darkness, and you are ready to despair; but relief is now near at hand. Said the bride, "It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth." O what joy! How his presence cheers, how his gracious words comfort the poor soul. Now you can say, "I have found him whom my soul loveth. My Beloved is mine, and I am his." You hold him in your embrace, and will not let him go until you bring him into your mother's house; into the church, into the Jerusalem which is above, which is the mother of every heaven-born soul.

Now your desire is to dwell forever in Mount Zion, and amongst the children of God. You wish to speak of his goodness to you in delivering you, and to declare unto them that fear God what he has done for your soul. You had been in great distress, but now you are filled with joy, and you greatly desire to speak the praises of your glorious Bridegroom. You have no desire to wander any longer in the streets, but to abide in the chamber of her that conceived you, to share your mutual joys. Now you wish to dwell forever amongst the sons and daughters of Zion. You look upon them as the blessed of the Lord, and as the excellent of the earth, and your language is, O that I could be like them; that I could talk as they do. But you hardly dare attempt to speak of what you hope the Lord has done for you. Could you but speak as the watchmen do; it seems to you they have no troubles. But in this you are mistaken; God's ministers have troubles, and they meet with great trials. They know all about your situation. Could my dear brother Beebe speak words of comfort and consolation to the afflicted and poor people of God, if he had no experimental knowledge of their trials, sorrows and afflictions? Could he feed the sheep of Christ, if he did not know the cause of their distress, and could he cheer the dear little lambs of the Redeemer's flock? O no, my dear brethren. He could not speak comfortably unto Jerusalem, unless he had been made to know her afflictions and tribulations, and to partake of them. "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Zion, who shall not hold their peace." They shall speak comfortably unto Jerusalem, and shall comfort the people of God. They shall feed the church of God; they shall set forth the name of him whose right arm is an arm of strength, and who is mighty to save. He it is who hears the needy when they cry. He came to seek and to save that which was lost. He hears the groaning of the prisoner, and loosens those who are appointed unto death. He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and will not despise their prayer. The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down.

I want the presence of my Lord continually, is the language of the bride. He alone can comfort me; he alone can cheer me in the hour of darkness and distress, and chase all my fears away. None but Jesus, none but Jesus can do helpless sinners good. It is not until he speaks that comfort is imparted. The watchmen find the poor, distressed soul, but they cannot afford the relief so anxiously desired. They can only point you unto Jesus, and your cry is still, O that I could find him; then would I come even unto his seat. I am overwhelmed with sorrow, O Lord; hear me, and shine in my poor heart. You may ask the watchmen, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth? but they have no power to help

you. You must go beyond them, must go a little beyond them. Our dear brethren in the ministry can only point you to the Lamb of God, as the only source of relief. Pass by them then, only but a little, and you have found him. O what joy! O what rapture! In the midst of my distress he found me. In the last distressing hour his arm brought deliverance. He cuts you off from all other hope, from all creature dependence, and his own arm shall bring you salvation.

Thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help, is the language of your blessed Lord. How your heart bounds within you as you hear his voice. There is none so lovely in your eyes as Jesus. He is unto you the chiefest among thousands, and the one altogether lovely to your soul. His voice is the voice of your Beloved. Behold he cometh, leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills. His voice reaches your enraptured ears; how sweet the sound.

How sweet the voice of Jesus sounds
To the believer's ear.

How sweet his accents! He speaks, and says, Rise up, my beloved, and come away. Come away from these low grounds of sorrow; no longer lie in despair. Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, from Amana, from Shenei, and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards. Now I have found him, I must bring him again to my mother's house. Now I can say, His mouth is most sweet; yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my Beloved, and this my Friend, O ye daughters of Jerusalem; I would not let him go until I brought him to my mother's house. He is King of kings and Lord of lords. She is the queen, standing at his right hand, in gold of Ophir. Now the language of the bride is, Rejoice with me, for I have found him whom my soul loveth. He has made known unto me the joys of his salvation; he led me in paths which I had not known. He has made darkness light, and crooked paths straight. Her heart aches with joy. Her desire now is to declare his name to the saints who are in the earth, and to the excellent in whom is all her delight. He will (says she) shew me the path of life, for in his presence is fullness of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Dear brethren and sisters, I have tried to tell you a little about the love of my dear Lord towards his children, his bride, and in doing so have told you some of my own experience; how the Lord found me in my great distress, how he led me, and brought me even to his banqueting house, where I told my brethren what the Lord had done for me. For indeed I was in great distress; my load of sin bowed me down. I fell down, and there was no one to help me; I felt myself justly condemned. But the Lord was merciful unto me, and delivered my poor soul. I was made to look to him, and to him alone, for salvation. I cried with my voice, and the Lord heard me, and came to my relief. He came, leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills. It is thus the Lord saves his people; not for their goodness or merit, but alone of his abundant mercy. He takes away their filthy dress, and clothes them with his own robes of righteousness.

"How much these glorious robes exceed
What earthly princes wear;
These ornaments how bright they shine,
How white their garments are."

He adorns his bride; she is clothed in fine linen, fine and white, even in garments of salvation. Paul did not desire his righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is of the faith of Jesus Christ; even the righteousness which is by faith. This the dear Lord will give you. God leads and guards his people; he will never leave you nor forsake you. He will hear the prayer of the destitute, and will not despise their prayer. When he putteth forth his own sheep he goes before them, and they shall go in and out, and shall find pasture. He feeds his flock; they shall never perish. His language is, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with

me where I am, that they may behold my glory." "He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." He will bring you off conquerors, and more than conquerors. O the contrast between this time state, and the immortality and eternal life we are seeking. One is earth, the other heaven. Here are trials and afflictions; there is life and fullness of joy. Here are sins and sorrows and temptations; there is eternal life, and crowns of righteousness, and joy which is unspeakable and full of glory.

Dear brethren, do not fear; he will clothe you with the robe of his righteousness. Yea, he has done it, even as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels, and he will clothe you with immortality; for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. "For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, being burdened." But when Jesus shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. That will do. Nothing else will satisfy that longing desire to be free from sin, free from corruption. But even this shall be given you. This mortal body is of the earth, and it is earthy; but it shall be changed into the likeness of his glorious body. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. You will leave earth and sin behind, and heaven will be your eternal home. As heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ, you will hear his blessed voice, saying, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest.

God bless you all, and keep you, for Jesus's sake. Amen.

MEMORIAL

WHEREAS, It has been the will of our Heavenly Father, in his divine wisdom to remove from our midst by death, our beloved brother and pastor, ELDER HAROLD M. BENNETT on May nineteenth, 1959, and

WHEREAS, This, the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, at Hopewell, New Jersey . . . even though we bow in humble submission to God's will . . . we are much saddened by the loss of our esteemed brother who served the church most faithfully since September fourth, 1954, until illness the past year prevented his coming. He always came among us preaching the gospel of peace to our comfort and edification, and to the praise and honor of our God. He was a kind and humble man, and his genteel manner endeared him to everyone. He manifested the Godly walk the church so much loves to see in a brother and pastor. He was firmly established in the truth of a God-given faith, and because of all these virtures and the sincerity of his belief, and his gift in proclaiming the truth of the word as it is in Jesus, be it,

RESOLVED, That as a tribute of our love and esteem to his memory, a copy be sent with our deepest sympathy to his dear companion and family, desiring God's blessing and needful grace to rest upon them; and that a copy be spread upon the Church records; and a copy sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

Written by order of the Church the first Sunday in June, 1959, by Sister Mary L. Hellings.

Elder Arthur R. Warren, Moderator
Letha A. Blackwell, Church Clerk

ORDINATION OF ELDER

301 Rives Road,
Martinsville, Va.

Dear Editors:

We wish to report in the columns of your paper an account of an Ordination Service that we attended last Saturday. After fasting and prayer (Acts 13:3), we joined with Elders J. E. Burgess, J. O. Conner, and R. A. May, of the Pigg River Association, and Elder J. C. Pashal of the Upper Country Line Association, at Gills Creek Church in Franklin Co., Va. We Elders were assembled at the request of the Church to look into the qualifications of Licentiate Rufas Brown, and to ordain if qualified to the office of Elder in the Church. Licentiate W. M. Willis and J. L. Carter of the Pigg River Association and E. B. Taylor

of the Smith River Association were present with us. Deacons present were P. L. Stone, J. L. Carter, Tom W. Turner, T. R. Plybon, Jim Perdue, Owen Tyree and A. L. Hudson of Pigg River; Flemmy Prilliman of the Smith River; T. R. Haney, A. J. Paschal, S. S. Gwynn and L. L. Paschal of the Upper Country Line.

Elder Burgess was chosen Moderator and the unworthy writer, Clerk. Elder Paschal questioned Deacon Hudson, spokesman for the Church, as to the character of the candidate, and the kind of doctrine that he had been preaching. His answers indicated that Brother Brown was held in high esteem by those who knew him and that he preached sound doctrine. Elder Paschal then led the questioning of Brother Brown concerning various points of doctrine and his call to the ministry. In answer to this Brother Brown arose to his feet and proclaimed the goodness and the mercy of God; how that God had visited him from time to time since he was a little boy sleeping in a trundle bed; how that fear was placed in his heart and adoration for his matchless name. Soon after he became a church member he saw in a vision, Heaven opened and a voice said, "I am God and not man. Go ye and preach the gospel. . ." With many words he convinced us that he was a chosen vessel of the most High God.

Amid many tears we proceeded to lay hands upon him while Elder Conner led in prayer. Elder May delivered the Charge and we turned him back into the hands of the Church an ordained Elder, with the recommendation that he be accepted and respected as such by all orderly Primitive Baptist that are in fellowship with us.

Minutes was read and approved, then the meeting was dismissed with song and prayer.

With best wishes to you and the Household of Faith, I am,

Your unworthy brother,
(Elder) P. E. Ingram

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It has pleased our heavenly Father to call from our midst two very precious and devoted members, to wit: Brother Lollie Thomas Pate (March 1, 1874-June 21, 1959, who is survived by 1 son, 2 daughters, 11 grandchildren, and 17 great grandchildren; and his wife, Ella Murphy Pate (March 5, 1875-May 7, 1959), who is survived by 5 sons, 8 grandchildren, and 9 great grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Brother and Sister Pate manifested in their walk and conversation the spiritual gifts of God's grace of faith, love, humility, honesty, liberality, and hope; and

WHEREAS, Bethel Primitive Baptist Church located near ElDorado, Union County, Arkansas, was graced with their membership and fellowship;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, though we be deeply grieved, that we bow in humble submission to God's will; that we thank Him for their lives and communion with us; and, that we extend our heart-felt sympathy to the bereaved families.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be filed with Bethel Church records; a copy be sent to SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication; a copy be sent to Brother L. T. Pate's children, and a copy be sent to Sister Ella Murphy Pate's children.

Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, Union County, Arkansas, ordered Elder E. J. Lambert, pastor, to compose this resolution. This ordered while the church was in her regular conference June 21st, 1959.

E. J. Lambert, Pastor

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church of Christ at Winnsboro, Texas, mourns the passing of one of its members — John Rudolph (Rudy) Claunch (July 1, 1881) of Como, Texas, on May 3, 1959; and —

WHEREAS, Brother Claunch was ordained to the officeship of Deacon in 1952; was blessed to be well established in his faith and convictions; was graced to be faithful in attendance and the performance of his duties both as member and deacon; therefore be it —

RESOLVED, that we bow to the sovereign and unquestionable will of God, and thank Him for blessing us with the life, walk, fellowship, and conversation of our highly esteemed brother and deacon while he was permitted to walk with us; that we extend our sympathy to his wife, Mrs. Etta Claunch, and to his six children, 17 grandchildren, and 8 great grandchildren. Be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be filed with our church records, a copy sent to SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication, and a copy be presented to Mrs. Etta Claunch, Como, Texas.

This written by order of the church in its regular conference in June, 1959. Read and adopted the 11th day of July, 1959.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Moderator
J. J. Mills, Church Clerk

OBITUARIES

LAURA HYMES MARTENEY

Laura Hymes Marteney was born April 20, 1875, and departed this life on April 4, 1959. Although she had been ill for several months, her death was sudden and unexpected.

Sister Marteney was a daughter of Gilbert S. and Susan M. (Fitzwater) Hymes, and was born near Meadowville, Barbour County, W. Va. She joined the Little Bethel Primitive Baptist Church at a called meeting, and was baptized the same day (October 8, 1916) by Elder Jonah S. Murphy. In this church she served her membership well by her faithful attendance, giving encouragement to others, and expressing her faith in words of kindness under conviction of an all wise and sovereign God.

She was united in marriage to Anthony L. Marteney July 19, 1917; who preceded her in death several years, having died in 1938. Since that time she made her home with her sister, Sallie Gainer, and her nephew, Gene J. Gainer. Other nieces and nephews surviving are, Mrs. Mary Baughman, Philippi, W. Va.; Mrs. Martha Corder and H. H. Gainer, Bridgeport, W. Va., and Mrs. Ruth Bryan, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. Also one stepson and five stepdaughters; and a number of step grandchildren and great grandchildren. She was tenderly cared for in the home by her sister and the children who were in reach.

A host of relatives and friends attended the funeral conducted by Elder Velden B. Linn; and she was laid to rest in the Little Bethel Cemetery, to await the awakening of her loving Master.

It is in humble submission to His holy will that we bow, though sadly missed by all, and especially by those few members who remain at the Little Bethel Church; but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Written at the request of the Little Bethel Church.

V. B. Linn

THOMAS WALTON (WALT) SKINNER

Thomas Walton Skinner was born July 1, 1894, near Gail, Borden County, Texas; and died May 4, 1959, at his home in Elgin, Oklahoma.

He was a lifelong friend of the writer, having known each other as children, as young men, and later as brethren in Christ. It was a pleasure to converse with him on the Scriptures. He and I, and his brother just younger than he, grew up together. Looking back over my past life, it seems I can see, and can surely say with David, "His mercy has followed me all the days of my life." God in his mercy, and by his power, brought these three boys to manhood for his purpose known only to him.

Walt did not unite with the church, having told the writer a number of times that he was not fit to belong to the church. He was a strong believer in salvation by grace; and affirmed that if a man be housed in heaven of immortal glory, it would be by the imputed righteousness of Christ Jesus; and that, according to the eternal purpose of God.

In 1915, he married Miss Sallye Sikes, who preceded him in death about twenty years. To this union one daughter was born — his only child. In the late forties he married Miss Evelyn Ezell, of Elgin, Oklahoma. He leaves to mourn their loss, his wife, of the home address; his daughter, and one grandson: Mrs. R. J. Redford and Bob, of Waurika, Oklahoma; his mother, Mrs. Hesta Skinner, wife of the late Elder L. E. Skinner, of Fletcher, Oklahoma; also one sister, Mrs. Lillian Weber, of Oregon; five brothers: F. E., of Fletcher; J. D., of Altus; A. J., of Ballinger, Texas; L. J., of New Mexico; and W. H., of Oregon.

The funeral was conducted at the Dalton Funeral Home, with Don Bergerson and the writer officiating; and he was laid to rest by the side of his first wife, to await the second coming of our Saviour.

"If a man die shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in flesh shall I see God." This was Walt's hope, and he confessed with the Apostle Paul that if it be so with him, it would not be by works of righteousness which he had done, but according to His abundant mercy.

May the God of all grace and the Father of mercy reconcile us to his will, and cause us to remember that we too must soon pass the way of all flesh.

Written by one who loved him as a friend and a brother; and sent to the *Signs* by request.

C. U. Landers

SISTER HIXIE OPHELIA VIRGINIA BRITTON WHITE

May God give us all the spirit of reconciliation, as Job expressed when he said, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed

be the name of the Lord," for God has removed from our midst our dearly beloved Sister Hixie White. She was born September 30, 1861, in Cooso County, Alabama, at Alexander City.

Aunty Hixie, as we all knew her, was married to Brother John V. White February 23, 1882, and came to Texas in the year 1900, and settled in East Texas, where her husband and five of their children preceded her in death. She joined Old Fish Pond Primitive Baptist Church in Alabama; and immediately after coming to Texas, she and her husband united with Hopewell Church, near Winnsboro, Texas. When Cana Church was organized they were charter members in the organization. She remained a faithful member until her death; which occurred at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Jennie Gilbreath, in the Cana community.

To know Aunt Hixie was to love her. She was sound in the doctrine, and strong in the faith; always rejoicing in the gospel truth. She expressed that her only hope was in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace through Christ Jesus. She attended her meetings until she was past 95 years of age. Her health then prevented her from attending, but her faith never weakened. By the grace of God she bore her afflictions patiently. It was the blessed privilege of the writer to visit her in her home, and hold services for her, which she enjoyed so much.

Aune Hixie's life spoke for itself, showing her love for God and her faith in Christ by her actions. Her home was a home for the Old School Baptists; and her patience and kindness as a friend, as a Christian, and as a mother will never be forgotten. Her noble life, which spanned more than 97 years, quietly ended on the morning of May 5, 1959, leaving to mourn her passing: four daughters, Mrs. Florence Harrison, Golden, Texas; Mrs. Allie Smith, Winnsboro, Texas; Mrs. Jennie Gilbreath, Quitman, Texas; and Mrs. Mary Morris, Quitman, Texas; together with 35 grandchildren, 54 great grandchildren, 14 great great grandchildren; and many other relatives and friends; among whom are all the Primitive Baptists who knew her.

Her funeral was conducted at Cana Meeting House by her pastor, Elder W. W. Taylor, and Elder E. J. Lambert; and her body was laid to rest in the Rock Hill Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers. Our trust and confidence is that her soul is at peace with God, while her body lies sleeping to await the resurrection morning, when she, together with all of God's children, will be gathered around God's throne to eternally enjoy heaven and all it means, while shouting everlasting praises to our God.

While we wait here below, our prayers go out for the bereaved family, praying with them for the spirit of reconciliation to say from the depths of the heart, "Thy will be done, O God. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Amen.

Her pastor,
W. W. Taylor

MARTHA ANN OCTAVIA (MORELAND) KIMBALL

Martha Ann Octavia (Moreland) Kimball was born March 6, 1876, at Sarepta, La.; and died April 20, 1959, at Dallas, Texas, at the age of 83 years. She was the wife of Nat S. Kimball, who passed away September 15, 1928. She was the last surviving member of the Hugh and Barbara Moreland family, which consisted of five sisters and four brothers. She leaves to mourn their loss a host of neices and nephews, including four generations. Not having children of her own, "Auntie" was a mother to all her nephews and neices, and was loved by all.

Sister Kimball united with Fort Worth Primitive Baptist Church June 30, 1956, and was baptized by the writer. Her presence and words of encouragement are missed by all who knew her, and especially by her brethren and sisters.

She was a close observer of the doctrine preached, and of order and practice; a strong believer in the predestination of all things, and that what God wrought in his children, was manifested by them outwardly. She believed that God's "heaven-born" children showed their faith by their works — showed whether we are "possessors", or "professors"; how we act and how we live, we are witnesses unto ourselves whether we love God, his truth, and his children; or we just "profess" to love Him.

She had a hope of a life beyond this life, and proved it by her walk, her talk and belief in a Sovereign, Eternal, Immutable God, who says, "I will" and "You shall"; and who promised eternal life in Christ before the world was. She believed it was one "eternal now" with Israel's God. He knows the thoughts, the downsittings and uprisings of his children, and supplies their every need; and also knows the thoughts and intents of the hearts of the hypocrit. She said, "That is Israel's God, and I hope I am included in that everlasting covenant that was not made to grow."

Indeed, we have lost a mother in Israel that the writer greatly misses, and especially each church meeting. May Israel's God, her God, comfort her relatives, and open their understanding to the truth of his Holy Scriptures.

Services were conducted by her pastor, the unworthy writer; and she was laid to rest by the side of her late husband in Shady Grove Cemetery, Irving, Texas, to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;

when, as it is written, "We shall see him and be like him", which was her hope.

Written and sent to the Signs of the Times by request.

C. U. Landers

MRS. R. D. HATCHETT

Mollie Georgia Gatlin was born to Mr. and Mrs. Robert L. Gatlin June 11, 1886, in Lincoln County, Tennessee. She departed this life June 15, 1959, at Earth, Texas; thus making her 73 years and 4 days old. She spent her childhood days at Athens, Alabama, where she later married R. D. Hatchett on December 10, 1905. To this union three childern were born. The family moved to Oklahoma in 1921, and then to Earth, Texas, in 1937; where they since resided.

Sister Hatchett had been failing in health for three or four years. Her beloved husband had continuously prayed for strength to take care of her as long as she lived; and we believe our God heard and granted his request.

Survivors include her husband, R. D. Hatchett; two daughters: Mrs. A. J. Dutton and Mrs. R. K. Finnell, of Muleshoe, Texas; one son: W. R. Hatchett, of South San Francisco, Calif.; four grandchildren; two sisters: Mrs. J. A. Graves, Huntsville, Alabama, and Mrs. Gus Cross, Ardmore, Alabama; and a host of other relatives.

She was laid to rest in the Earth Cemetery, to await the call of our Heavenly Master in the morning of the resurrection. Funeral services were conducted by Elder L. M. Hammitt, together with the writer. Written by request.

(Elder) C. M. Haygood

ELDER J. G. L. HASH

On May 15, 1959, it pleased the God of Heaven to call Elder J. G. L. Hash, 77, from his labors. Elder Hash was the son of the late James H. and Sallie F. Thompson Hash. The seventh child in a family of nine children of which three survive. Mrs. S. B. Dehart of Phila., Pa., R. L. of Lookout, West Va. and John S. Hash of Spotsylvania, Va. He is also survived by his devoted wife, Nannie F. Snead Hash, Ferrum, Va. Seven children, Ora H. Thomas, R. F. D., Stuart, Va., Gustava H. Sutphin, Hyattsville, Md., John H. Hash, New City, N. Y., Noel D. Hash, Radford, Va. Virginia F. Hash, Ruth H. Jones and Amos I. Hash, of Ferrum, Va.

Elder Hash was reared and lived practically all his life at the place of his birth in Franklin Co., Va. He never was priviledged to attend school very much. However he was educated by the one who makes sinners wise unto salvation. Being deprived of attending school did not hinder him from being a scholar of today's world nor did it stop our God from shedding his love abroad in this man's heart. At an early age it pleased the Lord to turn his thoughts from the things that torment us and to cause him to cry for mercy and divine guidance. (I sincerely believe this prayer was heard and answered.) When only 7 or 8 yrs. old the Lord appeared to him; and time and again in his early teens. He was also burdened with visions of the ministry while but a youth.

In September 1899, he was received into the fellowship of the church at Long Branch upon confession of faith and the reason of his hope. He was soon chosen clerk, which office he held for more than 55 years with some help. In May, 1910, he was granted liberty by Long Branch Church to exercise his gift in public; and in June 1911, he was licensed. In November 1917, he was duly ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry.

Throughout these many years he was kept humble and obedient, declaring there was none other name under heaven save Jesus whereby we must be saved. Certainly he was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ nor of those who professed a hope in the lowly Lamb of God. To be with these people, to tell them of and hear them tell of what great things the Lord had done for them, was his heart's desire and prayer. He verily believed and practiced what he believed. He was a faithful and much loved servant of the most high God. For a living he was a rural letter carrier until injured and retired. He was a Notary for near 50 yrs. He was a servant not only to the churches he served but to his entire neighborhood. He was serving as pastor of Mayo, Charity and Long Branch Primitive Baptist Churches at the time of his death. He lived to see his desires fulfilled in many respects. To remain active, to grow stronger in the faith and to never shun to declare the whole council of God, then last if it be the will of God to fall asleep in Jesus to await His (Christ's) second coming. Precious one we miss thee, but God has loved and called; and you have obeyed. May we bow in humble submission to thy will, Oh Lord. Keep us also ever looking to thee the author and finisher of the Christian's faith.

Written by request of Long Branch Church at our conference meeting in July, 1959.

Your little brother in an humble hope,

Amos I. Hash

(Note: To the above we add that Elder Hash served as Clerk of the Smith River Association from 1931 until his death — Ed.)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 127 DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1959 NO. 11

THE DEACONS, THEIR QUALIFICATIONS, AND DUTIES

The Holy Scriptures are our sufficient, certain, and infallible rule of faith and obedience, as our confession of faith states; also the Old Testament in Hebrew and the New Testament in Greek were immediately inspired by God, and by His singular care and providence kept pure; therefore the church is to finally appeal unto them in all controversies of religion.

Now, may the Scriptures be our authority and guide to show us what a deacon is, what his qualifications are, what his duties are, and how he comes into his office. It may be necessary to appeal to the original Greek New Testament at times for true and clear answers.

First, what does the title deacon mean? The word in the original Greek New Testament means: A waiter, a helper, minister's servant, or assistant, an errand runner, a table waiter. That shows conclusively that a church deacon is a helper to his pastor, who is the church's minister.

The Apostles, who were the ministers of the early church, informed the church it was not reason for them (the Apostles) to leave the word of God to serve tables (Acts 6:2) and instructed the church to bring men of certain qualifications unto them whom they (the Apostles) might appoint over the business of serving tables. (Acts 6:3) "But", says the Apostles, "we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." (Acts 6:4) The above definition along with both the text and context of the sixth chapter of Acts, leaves us no doubt about the term deacon meaning minister's helper.

Second, what are the deacons' qualifications? "Wherefore brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." (Acts 6:3) Here are four qualifications clearly set forth. First: the deacon must be among the group that chooses him. That makes him a deacon of his home church only and has nothing to do with the office in another church. Second: he must be of honest report. If a man's honesty is questionable he is not suitable for the office of deacon, because he is to have charge of the church's money and should make proper distributions of it. If he is dishonest he would be tempted to miss-use the church's money. Third: he must be full of the Holy Ghost, so as to be zealous about his duties and to have proper love and compassion for the poor of the flock. Without a great measure of the Holy Spirit, a deacon could not be kind, patient, and gentle to the poor; neither could he have proper love for the labours of the office. Fourth: he must have equally as much wisdom as he does the Holy Ghost ("Full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom"). Without God given wisdom, the deacons would not know what to do about the poor, the needs of the pastors, the upkeep of the building, etc. The deacons must be men of wisdom, for they have great responsibilities in the church and have to make important decisions.

There are four qualifications required of a deacon as to his personal character. (1 Tim. 3:8) "Likewise must the deacons be grave not double tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience." First: the deacon must be grave, a Greek word

meaning honorable. The deacons must be honorable in their speech, not double tongued. Their speech must be straight, clear, true, and sound, honestly reporting to the church and the pastors the things which the office requires of them. A deacon must be grave (or honorable) so the flock will respect him and his judgement. If he is not grave his speech will not be effective and he cannot get proper results from his reports and opinions. Second: A deacon must not be given to much wine. The scripture allows the use of wines in moderation, but not to excess. If a deacon uses wine to excess he will bring great reproach upon the cause and grief to the flock; such a thing should not be allowed. Third, a deacon must not be greedy of filthy lucre. This simply means he must not be covetous of money. If a man is appointed to the office of a deacon who covets money, he will not devote proper time to the duties of his office, neither will he be liberal himself. The deacons should be conscientiously liberal, giving cheerfully so as to lead and admonish others in cheerfully supporting their church and the poor thereof. Fourth: he must hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. He must be sound in his belief, not wavering and unstable; he must be very conscientious in his belief of the gospel, the faith once delivered unto the saints. If his belief of the gospel is not pure from the heart he is not suitable for a deacon. The great mystery of the faith in Paul's day was the doctrine of the trinity. A deacon must hold that mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

Paul was very plain about these qualifications, stating clearly in 1 Timothy 3:10, "Let these also first be proven; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless." The church is the judge as to whether a man is a qualified deacon or not, and should be very careful in declaring a man a deacon, and not be presumptuous in the matter; because they can hurt both the church and the member they have ordained.

Next, the deacon's wife must be considered. She too must be grave not slanderous, sober, and faithful in all things. These qualifications must be observed in the deacon's wife, for she is to be a help-meet to him in his office and could not do so if she is slanderous, unsober, and unfaithful.

The last of the deacon's qualifications is his family status. "Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well." (1 Tim. 3:12) The deacon is allowed one wife only. In the days of Paul's writing, it was legal, in that country for a man to have more than one wife; but the church of God under the teachings of Jesus Christ prohibited multiple marriage. However it took some time to get it completely eradicated, for some men had more than one wife before they became believers. They were allowed to keep them; but no officer of the church could be allowed who had more than one wife. To have so allowed, it would have been a stumbling block to young believers who followed after them. Second: The deacon must be the head of his own household, having his children under subjection with gravity.

Thirdly. What are the duties of the deacons? A deacon is his pastor's helper and should assist him, not in administering the word of God, nor the ordinances of the church; but he is to serve the tables.

At one time the tables were served by the ministers; but the work grew to be too much for the ministers to take care of both the ecclesiastical and the secular affairs of the church; therefore the deacons were appointed over the business of serving tables. (Act 6:-1-4)

Now, what are the tables? There are four tables to be served, or they may be grouped into two. First: the Lord's table must be served. When Christ ate the last passover and instituted the Lord's supper, he sent his disciples ahead of

him to prepare for the occasion. (Matthew 26:18) Christ admonished the church to continue to observe the Lord's supper until he comes again. It is the deacon's duty to prepare for the occasion by preparing the bread, the wine, the table, and any other furnishings need for the occasion, so the pastors can devote their time to prayer and the ministry of the word of God. (Acts 6:4)

Second: there is the table more directly and immediately called the church's table including the pastor's needs, the poor of the flock, the upkeep of the building, and the grounds. First in serving this table the deacon must acquaint himself with the pastor's needs and report to the church. It is not necessary for the pastor to be given a salary; but his needs should be supplied; for Christ ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. (1 Cor. 9:10-14) The deacons should report such needs to the church, and admonish every one to contribute as he purposes in his own heart, according as the Lord has prospered him. (1 Cor. 16:2, 2 Cor. 9:7) In turn the church should put their contributions into the deacons' hands and the deacons should give to the pastor. This saves the pastor from embarrassment and enables him to concentrate more fully upon the word of God. Second: the poor are to be cared for. The deacons should acquaint themselves with the needs of the poor of the flock and report it to the church. The church should be interested in the poor of their number, and be ready to give comfort, encouragement, and relief. In the Apostles day the churches made collections for such purposes. (1 Cor. 16:1-4) It is the duty of every local church to do the same today. It is the duty of the deacons to handle the collections and give to every one according to his needs. In the same manner the deacons should look after the building and the grounds, along with any other secular matter the church may have.

By fulfilling the above duties the deacons will be of great help to their respective pastors. The deacons are their pastors' helpers and should at all times be ready to help them, conversing with them often and to the best of their knowledge, reporting to the pastors the condition of the church, so the pastors can properly look after their churches; but in no case does the deacons have rule, or control over the flock, or the pastors. They are helpers. The pastor's office is administrative and he must administer the ordinances of the church and the word of God; give reproof, rebuke, and exhortation. (2 Tim. 4: 1, 2) The deacons office is secular. It is too much for the ministers to serve both offices. That is why the helpers, the deacons, are needed and are appointed over the business of serving tables.

May I right here admonish all who read this, to abide carefully by the scriptures when declaring a man a deacon and never let it be said: "Brother Henry Black has some of the qualifications and I believe he will develop the others, or I believe he will make a good deacon." My friends, that will not do. Let every man abide in his own calling, whether it be deacon, pastor, evangelist, or member.

A good deacon deserves the prayers and esteem of his brethren because of the office God has graced him to fill.

When a church needs a deacon they should look out among themselves a man whom God has qualified, bring him to the ministers for ordination; and above all, first let it be proven that he has the qualifications. Then let him use the office of deacon, being found blameless. (1 Timothy 3:10) "For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." (1 Timothy 3:13)

Now, may the love of God the Father, the communion of the Holy Spirit, and the grace of Christ be with us all, now henceforth and forever: Amen.

Your servant in the gospel,
(Elder) W. W. Taylor.

230 Marilee Row,
Grants Pass, Oregon
September 11, 1959

Dear Brother Wood:

I have just received my September issue of the wonderful Signs — I am always so glad to get it. Looking at the date, I see it is time to send in my renewal, for I do not want to miss a single copy.

The good Lord has been so good to me all the days of my life, and I want to praise his holy name all of my remaining days; which may not be too many, as today is our 52nd wedding anniversary, but it doesn't seem that long. We have reared four girls and one boy, and they are all happily married and doing very well. We lost one girl in 1935, our youngest; she had an heart attack and was gone in a minute, leaving two little boys — one two years old and one ten months old. Then her husband was killed in a car wreck in 1941. So we reared the younger boy, and his father reared the older one. They are both now fine young men with college educations. The one wife and I reared is a fine Bible student, and believes as the Primitive Baptists do; for which I am very thankful. He went to meeting with me one Sunday and heard one of our preachers, and he said to me that it was the first preacher that he had heard who preached what the Bible teaches.

I sold my ranch the 7th of last July, and sold the cattle on the 9th; and on the 12th I was taken sick, and am still not well enough to go to church, if there was one here to go to. There are only four members here, with myself, that I know of, and over two hundred miles to the nearest church, and one in Portland.

I get very homesick for the dear old ranch which I owned for fifty-one years; and I get very lonesome and homesick for the churches in New Mexico and Texas, where I could go to meetings every Sunday.

The very least, if one at all.
C. H. Greathouse

THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD

By Elder David Bartley

CHAPTER ELEVEN

KINGS AND PRIESTS UNTO GOD THE FATHER

"BLESSED be the Lord God of Israel: for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up on horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began, that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us: to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; the oath which he sware to our father Abraham, that he would grant to us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." (Luke 1:68-75)

These wonderful and gracious words of the priest and prophet of the Most High, Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, when the child was eight days old, who should go before the face of the Lord Jesus, blessedly reveal and show the whole work of redemption through the anointed Messiah unto eternal glory, according to the holy covenant and oath of God. As this prophesy was just before the advent of the Son of God in Bethlehem, so it was given as a divine message from God, proclaiming that the fullness of the time was come when he would send forth his only begotten Son in the flesh and under the law, to fulfill all this glorious salvation; "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: in whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him." (Eph. 3:10-12)

And so the Lord suddenly came to his temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, to fulfill it, and to mediate

between his Father and his covenant-people. We have followed him on in his heavenly footsteps and holy ministry, from his lowly birth to his glorious coronation upon the throne of glory, the Head of the church and the King of Zion. We have beheld something of his triumphant success and glorious power as the Prince and Saviour, and how his arm of omnipotent power has ruled for him, to the overthrow of the enemies of righteousness, and in bringing his redeemed to Zion, the kingdom of his Father, under the victorious and righteous reign of his grace that bringeth salvation.

Having followed the meek and lowly Captain of salvation, the Commander and Leader of the "little flock", "through great tribulation", until we have sat down with him in his kingdom of grace, and found rest unto our souls, we now "serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life." And we rejoice that our glorified Brother upon his Father's throne of absolute dominion, having all power in heaven and earth, is our High Priest forever after the power of an endless life, and that his faithful word to us is, "Because I live, ye shall live also." Therefore, to him and us God has promised in his covenant, saying, "His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven." (Psalms 89:29) Accordingly, our God has brought us into the sacred bonds of this covenant of life and peace in his reigning Son, and "we are saved by hope". "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began," said Paul to Titus. "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (Rom. 8:24-25)

The saints are now in this waiting state, hoping for that which they see not; "For we walk by faith, not by sight." Their High Priest, whom God hath consecrated for evermore, has personally passed beyond the veil of mortal flesh, to suffer and die no more, where he ever liveth in the very presence and glory of God; but we are still clothed with mortality, as our risen and ascended Brother and High Priest unto God once was, and we, according to his promise, by faith look and wait for his return, that we may behold his glory, which God hath given unto him, and be with him where he is. "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. . . For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." (1 Cor. 8:9-12) This waiting and longing and hoping for the full revelation and blessing of God, while we worship him and magnify his reverend and holy name in this earthly tabernacle, was solemnly represented in type by the worshipping and praying congregation of the Lord in the sanctuary without, while the officiating high priest for them stood before the Lord within the veil. The inspiring music of the golden bells upon the border of his sacred robe assured them that God accepted and heard him on their behalf, and that he should surely return again and bless them in the name of the Lord their God. "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise we shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee, the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them." (Numbers 6:22-27)

This was a very great blessing, with which God blessed the children of Israel, because they were his chosen and redeemed people; yet all this was only an earnest of better blessings to come. Of these let us now read: "The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors, unto the

utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren." (Genesis 49:26) This overflowing blessing the Father put upon the head of his Son Jesus. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved." (Eph. 1:3-6)

This is the fullness of the blessing, the everlasting blessing in the Beloved, the Apostle and High Priest of all the chosen and predestinated sons and daughters of the everlasting Father, and it is unto all the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus. In the consummation of this perpetual blessing, they shall all be holy and without blame before the Father in love, and shall be taken home to himself, unto which holy and blissful estate he has predestinated or fororddained them, "to the praise of the glory of his grace." And so, according to this appointment and blessing of God, their righteous Advocate with the Father asked, saying, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." (John 17:24) So the apostle Peter likewise spoke of this infinite and accomplished blessing of the God of the everlasting covenant, saying, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Peter 1:3-5)

In the last time, therefore, all the heirs of this inheritance in heaven, who are thus kept by the power of God unto it, shall be brought into its full possession, and into the glorious revelation of the finished salvation and the fadeless inheritance of eternal life and holiness, and the perfection of beauty and love. And so John also speaks of this perfected salvation in all the predestinated children of God, the complete brotherhood of Christ, saying, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (1 John 3:2) So long as we sojourn in this militant state, as strangers and pilgrims in our earthly house or mortal body, we cannot thus see our glorified and crowned High Priest and King, the first-born Brother from the dead among the many brethren, because our finite powers are too weak to bear the full revelation of the King in his beauty now. To the three apostles on the holy mount, and again to John on Patmos, was given a brief glimpse of the beloved Son of God as he is, but it was too great a weight of glory for them in the flesh, and they fell to the ground. And also to Paul, to whom was given an abundant revelation of heavenly things, when caught up into the third heaven or paradise of God, he heard unspeakable words. The martyred Stephen, too, was highly favored with his Lord's sufficient grace and the light of his face, to sustain him under his cruel torture as they gnashed on him with their teeth; and "he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." (Acts 7:55-56) These are divinely blessed assurances and earnests of the heavenly glory that awaits the redeemed of the Lord, after

they have received the adoption, unto which God predestinated them before the world was. Therefore, Paul was inspired to comfort the suffering brethren in Christ with these words: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." (Romans 8:28-34)

It has been proved that all for whom Christ intercedes shall be with him in his glory. And Paul shows above that all the predestinated people of God shall be justified and glorified, and thus shall they be conformed to the image of his Son in his divine nature and life and holiness. Yea, with God this is as though they were glorified, and so Paul speaks of it in the perfect tense, as that which is done. He divinely assures his brethren that, as God had not withheld his Son from his people, but delivered him up unto death for us all, he would with him also freely give us all things. And that, having given his Son power over all flesh, and all power in heaven and earth, so that the Roman governor, who delivered him up to be crucified, could have no power against him, except it were given him from above, as the lamb-like Jesus told him; therefore Paul knew that all things work together for good to them that love God; because all things are under his omnipotent control, and subject to his power. This is the divine protection and safety of all for whom Christ makes intercession, and whom God justifieth. Jesus assures us that heaven and earth shall pass away, but his words shall not till all be fulfilled. Paul was therefore bold to say that no peril, trial or foe, as tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, or sword, shall separate us from the love of Christ, and he says, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:35-39)

O, how unspeakably blessed and confirming this is! To be conquerors over all these combined dangers and opposing powers would be very wonderful and seem impossible, but O! "In all these things we are MORE than conquerors." This is an infinite good, surpassing our utmost thought. We shall not only conquer all these things, but the least and feeblest child in the kingdom shall triumphantly rise up from the conflict into heights of infinite strength and glory and blessing, forever free from all weakness, shame, pain and death. All this, O living, glorious words, "THROUGH HIM THAT LOVED US!" That loved us, and gave himself for us! This love is mightier than all opposing powers and foes, and they were and are as nothing, when arrayed against the people whom the Lord loved with infinite, perfect, everlasting love. He who so loved them, through whom we are more than conquerors, and "who also maketh intercession for us," said to his loving and Almighty Father, "And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I IN THEM."

All this is infinitely lovely, blessed and heavenly, and our language can

never utter its wondrous fullness of divine goodness and beauty and power thus bestowed upon the chosen people of our Lord's priesthood and kingdom. For they are all equally embraced in the fullness and perfection of the immutable love of God for his holy and blessed Son, and both this love and the living and loving Son abideth in them; and so their life is hid with Christ in God, and the eternal God is their refuge. Jesus, therefore, comforted his disciples with the assurance that, "the Father himself loveth you;" and he also promised them that, during the time of his personal absence from them in the body of flesh, he would send the Comforter to abide with them and in them, the Spirit of truth, who should bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever he had said unto them, and show them things to come. "He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you", said the loving Saviour. It was because of this indwelling and ministration of the Spirit that Paul testified, saying, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." (1 Cor. 12:13) Paul says of Christ, "For through him we both" (Jews and Gentiles) "have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore we are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an inhabitation of God through the Spirit." (Eph. 2:18-22) This is the fulfillment of a prophecy of old, saying, "Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with my by sacrifice." (Psalms 50:5) "The sacrifice of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." (Psalms 51:17)

It has been abundantly shown that the Lord will build up Zion, his kingdom, and gather his people together in his spiritual house, that they should offer praise unto him. So there arises in their hearts the desire of David, when he said, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple. For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me: he shall set me up upon a rock. And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord. Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice: have mercy upon me, and answer me. When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek." (Psalms 27:4-8) This is the way and work of the Lord, and this its blessed effect; and this is the heartfelt experience, desire and prayer of all who are taught of God.

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob: and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowhares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Isa. 2:2-4) All this reign of righteousness and peace is under the dispensation of the covenant of life and peace, the Mediatorial reign of the Prince and Saviour; and it is positively declared by the Lord that thus it shall be in his kingdom. Let us

observe, that the mountain of the Lord's house is exalted above the hills, and established or firmly fixed in the top of the mountains; that is, it is not earthly or worldly, but far above or superior to the hills of worldly wisdom, and the mountains of legal worship, as the law on Sinai. For the temple or house of the Lord is heavenly and spiritual, and it is firmly established upon the eternal mountain of his holiness; and all who are raised up through the divine power of the Holy Spirit to worship in his temple are holy; for they are in the life and righteousness of Christ, and are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion", is the word of God. His holy Son said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." (John 12:32) "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:44) It is thus that the Lord builds his church upon the immutable Rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Zerubbabel, who rebuilt the temple of the Lord, was a type of Christ, God's Anointed, and it is written: "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you." "This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain; and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, Crying, Grace, grace unto it." (Zech. 4)

This brings us to the completion of the Lord's house, the time of the end, "the last day", so frequently spoken of by the Son of man, when he shall be revealed in his Father's glory, and "bring all the saints with him." For, as the High Priest of the kingdom of priests did not abide long in the tabernacle of his flesh, so neither will his brethren, who must come after him in his steps, and pass through the veil of the flesh, then arise and ascend with him in the power of his resurrection from the dead. This will be the perfection of his priesthood in them. Then shall they be a kingdom of priests, an holy nation, the heavenly family, to joyfully worship their God and Father in the divine beauty of perfect holiness in his holy heaven, and make his praise glorious for ever and ever. His washed and sanctified and justified people now taste that the Lord is gracious, "To whom coming, as unto a Living Stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 2:3-5) This is not only their acceptable and delightful service now, as grace is given them according to the measure of the gift of Christ, while they shall remain in this mortal house of their tabernacle, but it shall be more fully and gloriously their sweet and eternal employ when that which is in part is done away, and that which is perfect is come. And just as truly as the God of salvation has begun the good work in them by his Spirit of life and grace in his Son, he will also perform it until the day of the revelation of Jesus Christ, when he shall come to be glorified in all his saints, and the sons of God shall be manifested in the resurrection unto life and holiness, bearing the divinely lovely image of the glorified Son of God, their High Priest and Brother, First-born from the dead. For, speaking of the purpose and power of Christ's atoning death and risen life, Paul said, "And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." (2 Cor. 5:15) This word, "henceforth", goes on, and on, and still on, so long as they shall live the new life in Jesus, who is the resurrection, and the life; and all this endless life they shall live to him who died for all his people and brethren, and rose again. They cannot live to themselves in the flesh, but must

find their life, and their bread of life and water of salvation, in Christ, who is their life; for in the flesh there is naught but thorns and thistles, sin and death.

"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come. By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise unto God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." (Heb. 13:12-16) We seek a continuing city, an abiding home, "an house not made with hinds, eternal in the heavens." This is "to come". In part we still bear the image of the earthy man; for we have not yet been glorified, neither have we yet been conformed to the image of God's Son, unto which he predestinated us that we should be; nor have we received the adoption, for which we wait, to-wit, the redemption of our body. But God's holy decree of predestination shall not fail, for his "wills" and "shalls" relating to his foreknown, chosen and predestinated people cannot fail, because his omnipotence will accomplish all the word that hath gone forth out of his mouth. It is true of us, as Paul says, "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit." (2 Cor. 5:4-5) The earnest is the faithful and strengthening assurance that God will bestow the full inheritance of life and immortality, unto which he hath wrought his people in Christ through the Spirit. Paul therefore says again, "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." (Eph. 1:11-14)

It has been abundantly shown from the holy scriptures that the Lord's redeemed people are the purchased possession, and that they now wait for their full deliverance from the bondage of corruption and mortality, into the glorious inheritance in light and immortality, when mortality in them shall be swallowed up of life. When speaking of the bodies of his brethren, Paul says, "Now the body is . . . for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power. Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? . . . What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." (1 Cor. 6:13-20) Paul therefore says again, "Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." (1 Thes. 5:22-24) That is, the God of peace, who calls his people with an holy calling, will sanctify them wholly, and preserve their whole spirit and soul and body blameless unto the coming of Christ. The meaning is, the redeemed of the Lord cannot be condemned or perish, because God has justified them from all things, and keeps them by his own power unto salvation and eternal life in Christ. His holy decree of election is that they should be holy and blameless before him in love. This, therefore, they shall be; for they are "The holy

people", "an holy nation", "an holy priesthood", washed and made spotless and without blemish in the blood of the Lamb of God, and they are the righteousness of God.

We have seen that, when our atoning High Priest expired on the cross, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection. And the inspired writer has instructed us that, when this was accomplished, the way into the holy heaven was opened, and the gateway of death was made the highway unto God and glory. For when the strong veil was torn away, then the way was made manifest out of the holy place or first tabernacle into the Holy of holies. This separating veil represented the veil of our mortal flesh, which must be rent and removed by the strong hand of death, before we can enter into the unseen heaven, "Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." (Heb. 6:20)

Then rending rocks, the rent veil, the opened graves, and the rising bodies of the sleeping dead, all are so many infallible proofs that the crucified Son of man made an end of sin, destroyed the power of darkness, and is death's conqueror. At the grave of Lazarus he said, "I am the Resurrection, and the Life." And thus did the conquering Man of the cross abolish death, and bring life and immortality to light. This is the holy light of heaven. All upon whom it shines are children of the Light, and shall not abide in darkness, but shall shine in the kingdom of their Father, and be forever joyful in the transporting Light of Life. Even now their most sacred employ is, "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." (Col. 1:-12-14)

In the dear Son of God we ourselves have redemption, so completely so that our sins are all forgiven, and shall never rise up to condemn us. Sin brought death, and shuts us up in its prison-house, the silent tomb. But our precious Christ was sacrificed for our sins, then taken down from the altar and laid in the boasting grave, which was both sealed and guarded. O how rich the mercy and compassionate the love of our dear Redeemer, that he was laid in the tomb for us! For here he conquered in the final conflict, and his victory was for us, and we shall be joint-heirs with him in the power of his resurrection. Hear the joyful news: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept!"

"Eternal life, at his request,
To every saint is given;
Safety below, and after death,
The plentitude of heaven."

"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." (Psalms 126) "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:3) "And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1:10-11) He will surely come, therefore, at the appointed time of the Father, and receive his people unto himself in his Father's kingdom of glory. "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (Hebrews 9:28) There is, therefore, the appointed second coming of Christ, as there was the first advent, when he came in the flesh as the sin-bearer of his people, and put away their sins,

when he through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot unto God. And by the one offering of himself having perfected forever them that are sanctified, that God hath set apart for himself, and for whom the Son asks the righteous Father that they may be with him where he is, and behold his glory, which the Father gave him; therefore, before he went away in person to be with the Father, he left the above promise with them, that he would come again, and receive his dear people unto himself; that where he is, there they may be also. The night before the precious Christ was put to death in the flesh, he said to his Father, "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee." The two angels in white testified to the wondering disciples, that the Lord Jesus, the resurrected Man of the cross, was taken up from them into heaven, and that he should so come again in like manner as they had seen him go into heaven. Now all this divine testimony gives us the fullest assurance that our glorified Redeemer will come down from heaven the second time, not to bear our sins again in his sacred body on the cross, but having washed us from our sins in his own blood, he shall appear the second time without sin unto the full salvation of his people. That is, when he shall appear the second time unto them that look for him, all his saved people shall then be without sin, for he shall have saved them from their sins, as testified the angel before the birth of Jesus. As yet sinful in his mortal body of dying flesh, Paul exclaimed, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.'' For Jesus should deliver him from death. He therefore testified again, saying, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 15:51-57) This full victory thus given us shall be over both death and the grave, founded upon perfect justification from the law and freedom from sin; and God will crown us with this glorious victory through the righteous priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who took away all our sins, and shall therefore make us free from corruption and mortality, and raise us up to the glorified state of immortality and eternal life, "an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ," his holy and obedient Son.

Now, therefore, all this acceptable spiritual sacrifice, with every qualification and consecration thereunto, as God's spiritual house and priestly family, is entirely through the Lord Jesus, our Brother, our Redeemer, our Resurrection, our Life, our Advocate, and our perfected and glorified High Priest, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself spotless and holy unto God for us. So, then, we have nothing that is holy, spiritual, acceptable and well-pleasing unto God, only that which God hath given unto us in his righteous Son. He is our wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption, God having made him all this unto us; and it is of God, and according to his choice and predestination, that we are in Christ Jesus. As it is only because we are in him, and God hath made him all this unto us, that we live to God, love him and serve him, and worship him in spirit and truth. Even the power of faith, by which we believe, is the power of God in the resurrection of Christ, as Paul testifies, saying, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye

may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places," etc. (Eph. 1:18-20) And so the faith by which we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ is the inwrought power of his resurrection from the dead, the power by which he now liveth unto God, and also liveth in us. Paul could therefore say, that he was both crucified with Christ, and quickened with him from the death unto sin, and that Christ lived in him, and the life he now lived in the flesh he lived by the faith of the Son of God. He affirms the same truth thus: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." (Eph. 2:4-7) All this glorious salvation is through Christ and with him; yea, he is salvation itself, salvation from sin and death, the last enemy. And all this rich mercy and great love of God to his people is for the glorious purpose, that in the coming ages, ages upon ages, he might manifest the exceeding riches of his grace in his loving kindness toward his people through their Anointed Saviour, as the name Christ Jesus means.

Now Paul, having thus shown the inseparable relation of faith to the resurrection-power of Christ and his life, then speaks of this faith in the risen Christ as the assurance and earnest of our resurrection in the life and holiness of Christ, saying, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch-angel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thes. 4:14-18) These are truly words of divine comfort, supported by the infallible word of the Lord that cannot be broken, and made sure to us by the victory of our faith in Jesus, that he died and rose again, which we verily believe, because God has given us this power to believe on Christ. Our faith is the gift of God, and a fruit of the Spirit; therefore it is the witness of the Spirit in our hearts that we are born of God, and are in Christ Jesus his Son. The inspired word of the Lord Jesus is, that he himself shall descend from heaven, and then shall the dead in Christ rise first, and the living saints be changed in a moment, and all, thus redeemed, shall be caught up together to meet the Lord, who has thus come the second time without sin upon them unto their glorious salvation and full redemption, to receive them to himself, to ever be with him and behold his glory. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (Col. 3:4) There is divine positiveness and absolute certainty in all these truths, for they are the word of the Lord, and shall be fulfilled at the time appointed, just as he hath spoken, because his omnipotent power will perform all his promises to his people. This is the perfection of the priesthood of the holy Son of God for his people and in them.

"To all eternity our Priest
And King shall be adored;
Sinners from Satan's power released
Shall ever praise the Lord."

(Chapter twelve next month)

CIRCULAR LETTER
(1912)

(Prepared by Elder J. M. Fenton)

Circular Letter from the Delaware River Association to the churches composing the same.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

The subject under consideration will be Associations. The first appearance of such a body we find recorded in Hassell's Church History, mentioning the Philadelphia Association in 1707. The Kehukee Association was formed in 1765, with seven churches, and is still in existance. On page 662, Hassell's History, is recorded as follows: "Before these churches were organized into an associate body they held yearly meetings, wherein matters of consequence were discussed and determined." In their articles of faith the Kehukee Association says: "We believe that every church is independent in matters of discipline, and that associations, councils and conferences of several ministers or churches are not to impose on churches the keeping, holding or maintaining any principle or practice contrary to the churches judgement." "Much discussion arose as to the power of associations over churches, which resulted in an understanding to leave the churches their entire independence, and permitting the association (which is but a collection of churches) to act as an advisory council only." — Hassell's History, page 702.

Continuing, it further says: "Should the churches ever allow the associations, or any body of men formed by their combination to dictate to them against their consent, it has ever been held that their liberties in such case will have passed away, and they become no longer churches of Christ, but tools of tyrants." "A church of Christ has ever been considered, by genuine Baptists, the highest ecclesiastical power on earth." — Hassell's History, page 702. Thus is seen clearly set forth by the Lord's servants in their day where the association as a body composed of several churches of the same faith and order were to occupy. We do not understand that the associations acting as an advisory council implied that their advice was to church or churches, but only to embrace associational relationship. Associations receive church letters and observe the writing of circular letters and corresponding letters; should it be expedient for the association to withdraw correspondence from any church or association, it does not imply that there is any barrier for the servants of God to labor among the Lord's people from whom the association has withdrawn correspondence. There is no headship to the church but Christ; he is "the head over all things to the church, which is his body." (Eph. 1:22, 23) We "grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." (Eph. 4:15) "Christ is the head of the church: and he is savior of the body." (Eph. 5:23) "And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell." (Col. 1:17-19) "And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power." (Col. 2:10)

It would seem that the apostle, by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, was instructing the church in all ages by the above Scripture, that we fall not away to seek instruction or guidance from any power, principality, assembly, council or body as over the church of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This would not imply that any church would seek independence from other churches, for the love of God would constrain them to seek the love and fellowship of sister churches, and their advice and counsel if necessary. The assembling of yourselves together for the worship of God is by command of the apostle, and we desire to see the same observed. The assembly of the saints we believe has ever been observed since the Savior set up his kingdom in the earth, and all

that was necessary in the observance of that worship was given by our Lord and Savior and by his apostles in the New Testament. Therefore we regard the associations as a creation of the churches, and subject to the churches, and not the churches subject to the association.

S. H. Durand, Moderator
William Hobensack, Clerk

(By request we re-publish the above Circular Letter of the Delaware River Association of 1912. We feel that the Letter expresses what all orderly brethren believe and maintain, and what we have expressed many times both in speaking and writing. There is, however, one statement in the Letter which we feel was not fully expressed so as to leave their eventual meaning clearly stated. This is in regard to an association finding it expedient to withdraw correspondence from a church or association, not implying that there is a barrier for the servants of God to labor among the Lord's people from whom the association has withdrawn correspondence.

If it is meant that the servants of God should labor to have removed the cause for withdrawing fellowship, and consequently correspondence, we give our heartiest endorsement.

If it is meant that some breach of doctrine or order serious enough to withdraw correspondence, and yet the servants of God are to act among them as if nothing had disturbed the peace of the brethren, we cannot grasp the implication.

We believe that the first of what we have supposed above, was the intention of the brethren in the Letter; and we feel that their subsequent manner of dealing with actual cases qualified their statement.

We feel to make this comment lest we be thought to have overlooked a vital point of order. — J. D. W.)

Danville, Virginia November, 1959

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

EDITORIAL

"Sir, we would see Jesus."
(John 12:21)

At any time it is a miracle and a wonder that a man or woman wants to see Jesus. The miracle is not lessened, even if it is a Herod that has nothing in view but His crucifixion. The hiding of the things of God from the wise and prudent, has not removed the fact that Nebuchadnezzar recognized the Son of God; that the devil knew Him for who He was; that the Herod knew that here in this Man was one who would dethrone him. This recognition is condemnatory instead of evidence of acceptance in Him. Job long ago was in agreement that God gave and that He removed; the Saviour was pleased and gave thanks that His Father hid and revealed; we today, if blessed in the Truth, know that

God is Sovereign, whether it is manifest in speaking peace to us, or in keeping hid these things from those that know not God.

There has not been a day when Jesus was not precious to believers. It matters not the length of time between the creation of the world and His coming; it matters not how long the world was without the ceremonial law; it makes no difference how long the law was austere in its ruling, Jesus was ever the life and light of the people of God. In types and shadows and figures, we see Him appearing to His bewildered little ones with bread and water, shelter and protection, shade and shadow, and He fed them and watched out for them and shielded them as much before being known in the flesh as He did while known in it. Job recognized Him as being his living Head; Abraham saw His day and was glad; the Hebrew children had Him **to hinder not the fire in burning the bonds from them** and then had Him **to protect them from the fire.**

Today, our dear Redeemer, means as much to a poor sinner as in the days of long ago. I think that I see evidence that not so many find Him precious in this day, but even in that I may be mistaken. I am a poor judge of the other fellow's feelings. I readily agree that it seems a sad day for the church, and that the love of many is waxing cold, and that the Lord's people are bent on biting and devouring one another, but when I turn on them, I am astonished and ashamed that the searchlight of Truth keeps turning on me. Foolish man that I am, sometimes I get to thinking that I have been told to examine my brethren as to whether they are in the faith, and the light will not stay on them; it just keeps turning on me. And what does it reveal? It shows my faults, my defects, my shortcomings; it shows my need of Jesus, and it brings me to say, "Thou art the man." (2 Sam. 12:7) Finding myself out of the way so much of the time, even so much, that I am fearful to make a claim as to being a follower of Jesus, I am not able to condemn the other fellow, because I have made a profession and have not lived up to it; I have said that I loved the Lord, and have not proved it; I have expressed delight in the law of Christ, and talked right much of His commandments as being joyous, and I have not lived by them; I have made a promise to forsake all others, and I have courted the fickle world.

It does seem that few are interested anymore, but maybe they are, and maybe they are diamonds in the rough, still to be polished by the fire of the Spirit as made manifest in persecution. However it is, the churches are having right much ingathering in congregations. Perhaps the harvest is getting ripe; perhaps He is becoming more precious to the Lord's people. But to those that He has become precious to, I am sure that He is as precious to them as He was to the three thousand on the day of Pentecost; as to the many that often believed in the early church; as to the churches of a hundred years ago when they had a hundred members and now less than a dozen. In searching out the history of the churches of yesteryear, I find that in those days, many were lingering on the outside; t o d a y , the same conditions prevails.

This may be because that the Lord has been gracious to many and they have found other interests, but this is not borne out by the Bible. God does not surrender nor abdicate in favor of some creature. If we have within our grasp the power to overthrow the work of Jesus in our lives, wouldn't we have the power to dethrone God? If not, why? If the work of the Comforter is weak, in that He keeps **at** the children of God instead of **keeping them,** isn't it likely that the redemptive work of Jesus is as weakly as the keeping work of the Spirit? If not, why? If the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, begins a work, a good work, in the children of God, will He perform it to the day of Jesus Christ? If He does, then the work of Jesus in redeeming, and the work of God in electing, will be as good as the

work of keeping.

Every text in the Bible breathes Jesus. Every life that has graced the kingdom of heaven is a spirit filled and spirit kept life. Every man or woman that has been born again, is as desirous to see Jesus as were the Greeks that came up to the feast to worship. This is not a one sided desire. In the religious world there has always been two thoughts about Jesus. One was that He was an inferior product of the workings of Mary and God; the other that He was God manifest in the flesh. In the church of Jesus Christ there has been two thoughts that have raised their heads from time to time. They have been here in America; they are seen as far back as we have any authentic history of the church; they were expected and answered in the days of the apostles. So many people are trying to ride to glory on the coattails of Jesus. One person desires him so that they may trade their works to Him for His blessings; another class of nominal followers desire him that they may pursue living in ungodliness, thinking that being in grace gives an immunity from sin.

Jesus is precious to the believer. He desires to see Him, to hear Him, to believe Him, to see Him, to obey Him.

My God, the spring of all my joys,
The life of my delights;
The glory of my brightest days,
And comfort of my nights;

In darkest shades if thou appear,
My dawning is begun;
Thou art my soul's bright morning star,
And thou my rising sun.

The opening heav'ns around me shine,
With beams of sacred bliss,
While Jesus shows his heart is mine,
And whispers I am his.

And this showing of Himself at the lattice, this whispering the sweet words of saving grace, is enough. "I will arise and go to my Father" becomes the watchword of poverty stricken sinners; "have you seen Him whom my soul loves" becomes the plaintive cry of poor burdened mourners. Seeing Jesus as running a trading post, is not worthy for Christians to mention; beholding Him as saying unto us, "That seeing you are now an object of my love, it is now permissable to continue in sin" is as much the language of Job's fellows as the other.

Devils may be satisfied to dwell in swine; gainsayers may love the flesh satisfying doctrine of being able to accept or reject; nominal believers may imbibe the atrocious doctrine that God is as well pleased with sin as righteousness, disobedience as obedience; the little children of God may get the mistaken idea that the religion of Jesus Christ is "so much work, so much pay"; being, poor and needy, we may, and doubtless we do, endeavor to swap our goodness to Jesus for His blessings, but, when the chains and fetters are all broken, and the tombs, which signify a place among the dead, are all removed, and the nakedness is covered with the robe of Jesus' weaving, there will be, there must be, a crying out (not to be tormented before the time comes, but) for the blessing before the angel left, the tarrying of the Saviour, the begging of God to send out thy light and thy truth (Gen. 32:26; John 4:40; Ps. 43:3).

"We would see Jesus," and we would sit at His feet; we will trust in the Lord, even though that trust looks like, to Ashdod and the Bildad, destruction; we will, when seeing Jesus, see a morning clear of all clouds, clear shining after rain, having no desire to offer our filthy works to God as a means of salvation, nor have a desire to walk in sin because of the fixedness of salvation. Seeing Jesus, we will be as ready to go forward in our duty as was He to go on to Jerusalem, even though it means death to us, as it did to Him; we will be as ready to meet and endure the bonds and afflictions that await us, as was Paul when he went to Jerusalem; we will count it a joy and blessing to pass under the rod, knowing that, as He learned obedience by the things He suffered, so will we likewise learn.

We would see that dear Man as wounded for our sins, and we would see Him as bearing in His dear body

the stripes by which we are healed. All other names have failed us; all other things that we have seen are passing away, but this One comes a little closer day by day; His presence disperses our gloom, his touch cures our sinsick soul, his look of tender compassion causes us to weep bitterly at our denial, our sin, our lack; his beckoning hand, the head lifted towards heaven, his eye fixed upon that city that is built four-square, carries with it such weight and such power, that our business lies ahead and forward and upward, and the one obsession of our soul is to see Jesus without any veil, without any tabernacle of clay between.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

The Corresponding Meeting of the Old School Baptists, held with the Church at Bethlehem, Prince William County, Virginia, August 12 and 14, 1858, to the Churches, Associations and other Meetings Corresponding with us, desire grace, mercy and peace.

Beloved Brethren: — We would in return for your epistles of love, write to you also concerning the **common salvation.** The particular point on which we would now address you, is the exhortation found in Heb. 12th, 28, "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." In ver. 26 it is said, "Whose voice then shook the earth, but now he hath promised, saying yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." The expression, **Whose voice then shook the earth,** refers to the giving of the law from Sinai, of which was spoken ver. 18-21. The promise, **yet once more, I shake not the earth only but also heaven,** is taken from Haggai 2d., 6. It was spoken by the Prophet in connection with the promise that **the desire of all nations,** the Messiah, should come to that second temple which the Jews were then building, as is seen by the context.

Hence it is manifest, that this **once more shaking not only the earth, but also heaven,** refers to the shaking the Jews out from their good land, and also the removing or rolling up the legal dispensation by the coming of the Messiah. Hence in ver. 27 we are told, "And this word yet once more signifieth the removing of those things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." The Sinai covenant was the heaven, which overshadowed and bedewed national Israel with those temporal blessings by which they were preserved as a distinct nation until Shiloh came. They were made, not created, but made of that which already existed, as the shadow is made by the pre-existing substance. When the purpose for which they were made was accomplished, they were removed. Those things which cannot be shaken are what relate directly to Christ, his body, and his salvation. They **cannot be shaken;** first, because the covenant in which Christ was set up and the whole salvation of his body secured was from everlasting, and not like things made in time and for a time purpose. Secondly, the declaration of these things was by the absolute promise of God who cannot lie. Hence, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after the promise made to Abraham could not disannul the promise. If the giving of the law could not make the promise of none effect, the removal of the legal dispensation could not shake it.

Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, &c. This is the gospel kingdom, the kingdom of heaven; it is established by a covenant ordered in all things and sure; a covenant established upon better promises than was the Sinai covenant, therefore it cannot be moved.

A kingdom signifies the dominion of a king, as well as the territories over which he reigns. As to its territories, it embraces **the dominion and the great-**

ness of the kingdom under the whole heavens. Dan. 7th, 27. Its dominion is not an earthly reign; it is a heavenly kingdom and therefore a spiritual dominion. It is exercised all by and through Christ the Head and Husband of his church.

The heirs of this kingdom, by nature as the children of Adam, are born in bondage under the law and are under its curse as transgressors. But the Captain of their salvation, has by his death obtained for them a complete redemption, has taken the curse out of the way, and with it removed all evil as flowing from it. And the law itself is made to them a blessing in that by it, is the knowledge of sin, and by its application to them, their hearts are prepared to receive with joy the glad tidings of salvation.

Satan is said to be the prince of this world, and is an enemy; but he is conquered and his enmity made sub-servient to the people and church of Christ. As the shepherd makes use of dogs to collect the scattered sheep to keep them from wandering, to fold them, so the Lord makes Satan's malice work for good. If Satan assaults with his temptations, if his minions watch for the haltings of the children of God, to reproach them or try to entrap them, or if his ministers annoy them with their false systems of religion, these all tend to drive the sheep of Christ back to their pastures and their folds; they make the preached gospel, the society of the brethren, the blood of Christ, the throne of grace, and the mercy and grace of God to appear more precious to them. The world is an enemy; but it is also overcome and made to work for the good of Zion and her children. Its snares, its afflictions, vexations and cares, as well as its flatteries, have a similar effect upon the subjects of grace, as had the oppressions of Pharoah upon Israel in Egypt. This made them willing to leave Egypt and go forth at God's bidding. So the people of God are made willing by various trials here, to leave the world and go to be with Christ.

The flesh with its deformity is an enemy. But as the curse upon the ground is a blessing to man in his present state, his eating his bread in the sweat of his face makes his bread sweet and his sleep refreshing. So when we have been laboring and groaning under the burden of our corruptions, how sweet and refreshing it is to be enabled by faith to feed upon the **shew bread** of the gospel, the flesh and blood of Christ, and to rest upon his atonement. Israel loathed the manna in the wilderness; (Num. 21st, 5) they did not labor to produce it. So probably we should esteem the preached gospel insipid, if we were not from time to time, made to feel the grievous burden of our corruptions. In like manner, "All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." (1 Cor. 3d, 21-23) "And all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." "We receiving a kingdom &c." How do we receive it? Said our Lord to his disciples, "Fear not little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." We receive it then as a free gift from our heavenly Father. We do not receive it, as we do natural things so as to have the possession of it, made manifest to our natural senses.

We have noticed that the kingdom is spiritual. Hence it is only by that faith which is the fruit of the spirit that we receive it. And it is only when faith is in exercise that we can realize the possession of it, and feel that **we are made kings and priests unto our God.** Hence says John, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." (John 5th, 4) **Let us have grace.** What is grace? It signifies the bestowing of favor freely; it is therefore opposed to works by which favor is earned. When spoken of in reference to God and his people, it relates to the everlasting love of God to them in Christ Jesus, which led him to provide salvation, and everything pertaining to it with eternal glory for them of his own good pleasure. It is frequently used to denote particular

gifts, strength, consolation, light, &c., bestowed of God upon his people individually, in fitting them for particular stations, in guiding, upholding, comforting, and strengthening them, &c.

When spoken of as relating to us, it must mean the same principle of free favor, or of action as flowing from love, in distinction from acting or doing for reward. It is action produced by the love of God shed abroad in our hearts. The expression, **Let us have grace,** does not imply that we can of our own selves be influenced in our actions by love to God, for "We love him because he first loved us;" and it is only as he influences us by his love that we act from grace. Neither does it imply that we can command by prayer or otherwise the grace of God to be communicated to us at our pleasure. But if we are the subjects of God's grace, we have the principle of grace or love in our hearts, while we have the principle of works in our old man. Hence the importance of the exhortation **Let us have grace,** that is, let us be actuated by the principle of grace; let us act from love and not from the idea of reward. In other words, let us **walk after the spirit, and not after the flesh.**

"Whereby we may serve God acceptably." In vain would we expect to be accepted of God, if influenced in our religious service by an expectation of being rewarded for it. That service can alone be acceptable to God which proceeds from love to him; and which instead of being as something meriting reward is offered only in reliance on Christ's blood for its acceptance. **We having received a kingdom which cannot be moved,** every ground is cut off for offering that selfish service which looks for reward, or for supposing that God needs any of our poor services to enable him to extend or establish his kingdom, when it is already given and fixed immovable. **With reverence and godly fear.** A proper reverence for God; for his greatness, his majesty and holiness, will lead us to desire to do those things which he has commanded in his word, and which he has made manifest to us as our duty and privilege to do, and will prevent us from offering to him any service, or performing any thing in his name, which he has not required us to do.

Godly fear will lead us in approaching God with any of our services to be jealous of ourselves, to feel our vileness in his sight, to mourn over the imperfection and polutions of all we do, and to ask acceptance for them alone through the blood and righteousness of Christ. If at any time we receive evidence of acceptance in our services, it will lead us to esteem it rich grace and to praise God for it. We will also notice the following verse in its connection with the above. "For our God is a consuming fire." It has been supposed that this refers to God out of Christ. But however it may be with others, we worship not a God out of Christ. "He that is our God, is the God of salvation" (Psal. 13, 20) and therefore God in Christ. The **fire that devoureth before him** (Psal. 50, 3) but it consumed all the sacrifices offered on the altar of Israel, even consumed not only the sacrifices of Elijah, but the **wood, the stones and the dust, and licked up the water.** How then can any of our **will-worship,** any of our services not appointed of God, or not offered in Christ's name, or accepted through him, escape being burned up? Nothing that is not of God and therefore nothing that is not of faith can stand the test of his **fire. Let us,** then brethren, **have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.**

The letters from the churches and from the associations, speak more encouragingly than they have been won't to in years past, not that they speak of greater increase to their numbers, but they manifest a greater and more unshaken confidence in the Great Head of the church, in his power, wisdom, and faithfulness to sustain his churches and cause, and to control all the rage and arts of the enemies of truth, so as to make their devices all work for the good of his cause and people. We would feel

grateful for the epistles of love received, and for the appointment of messengers, to visit us by the associations in correspondence with us. Though we much regret that so few of them attended our meeting. Those who did visit us, cheered our hearts by their preaching and kindly interviews with us. Our meeting was harmonious, the preaching was clear and faithful.

Our next meeting is appointed to be held with Mount Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, to commence on the Thursday before the 3d Lord's day in August, 1859. We entreat the associations and meetings in fellowship with us, to continue their expressions of love to us, by sending us their ministers and messengers, and we desire that the brethren appointed may be directed by the good providence of our God to meet with us.

S. Trott, Moderator
R. C. Leachman, Clerk

(Copied from the Signs of the Times of August 15, 1858.)

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The Staunton River Union Meeting is appointed to be held with Union Church tre first Sunday and Saturday before in November, 1959. The church is located on Highway 605, West of Gretna, Virginia. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

H. M. Mattox

IF GOD SHOULD ANSWER PRAYER

If God should answer my prayer,
And hear my feeble plea,
These are the things I would do —
The soul I'd like to be:

I would smile instead of frown,
And laugh when my heart breaks.
I would praise when praise is due,
And ne'er a friend forsake.

I'd see light when dark prevails;
The sun on a dark morn;
The rainbow in the storm sky;
The rose and not the thorn.

I would forgive frowns and smirks;
Speak soft at a proud word;
Show mercy to cruel ones,
Who would my spirit gird.

I'd see the inward beauty,
Though outwards hurt the eye
Of human, object or place
I chanced while passing by.

I'd ne'er envy prosp'rous friends
But show humility,
And count blessings one by one
That God has given me.

I'd fix hope on spirituals
And not on earthly gain,
And have a thankful heart, for
God sovereignly reigns.

I'd speak kind words to the lame;
Help the blind in light walk;
Lend my ears to a deafness,
And help the dumb to talk.

I'd give food where hunger lurks,
And warmth where cold doeth dwell;
Hope when hope has taken flight,
And calm a stormy swell.

I'd cleanse the soiled, right the wrong,
And heal the sick of mind;
Lift a burden from some soul,
And help him peace to find.

I would still the mournful sounds;
Bring laughter, joy and glee.
No sorrow, pain or sadness:
No cause for advers'ty.

I'd love my neighbors, friend or foe,
And do a kindly deed
To help them in their despair,
Or comfort them in need.

But of all things I would be,
I fondly think of none
That could exceed my desire
To be God's little one.

For in myself I know that,
Like all the lowly worms,
From dust I came to this world:
To dust I shall return.

Mrs. Willie M. Ratliff,
Norfolk, Va.

OBITUARIES

DEACON WILLARD HORACE CONNER

Since my father's obituary was not prepared when he passed away about two years ago, I feel that I would like to write it.

Willard H. Conner was born July 25, 1898, to Joseph F. and Sarah C. Conner, of Pilot, Virginia; and died February 25, 1957. He is survived by his widow, Maude M. Conner, to

whom he was united in marriage in 1920; three children: Banks H., Roanoke, Va.; Mrs. Alfred L. Ratliff, Norfolk, Va.; and Mrs. S. W. Yates, Check, Va. Also by seven grandchildren, six sisters and three brothers.

My father united with the Head of the River Church, along with my mother, and they were baptized by Elder S. L. Moran. He was ordained a deacon and served faithfully until his death. He was a strong believer in a sovereign doctrine, and therfore loved the Primitive Baptists dearly; and was fed by their able ministers many times. He was not a man of many words, and told me often that he could not express his feelings as he desired, but the sweet expressions and tears of joy often showed his love of the truth.

I still remember the loving and beautiful tributes of Elders S. L. Moran, B. O. Thompson and J. P. Helms when they preached his funeral; and all the lovely flowers, and the kind friends and neighbors. Although we miss him more than words can express, we beileve he is at rest with the God he loved so much; and it is our prayer that though we be wretched and undone sinners, we may someday dwell with Christ at home. Written by his daughter,

Willie Mae Ratliff

MRS. MABEL O. BOONE

Mrs. Mabel O. Boone died at her home in Simms, Texas, November 16, 1958. She was born November 7, 1881, in Alabama, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Johnson, and later moved with her parents to Texas.

In 1897 she was united in marriage to Jack Floyd, and to this union three children were born — one girl and two boys. Jack passed away October 2, 1948. In 1950 she married Mr. R. L. Boone.

Sister Boone was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church at Prospect; and she was laid to rest in the church cemetery called Old Union, to await the resurrection of the dead when the Lord comes again.

Written by her sister,
Mrs. Jesse H. Daniel

MYRTLE CUMMINS DUNCAN

Myrtle Cummins Duncan, the daughter of J. W. and Amelia Cummins, was born May 19, 1895, in Elgin, Oregon; and departed this life December 5, 1958.

She leaves to mourn her departure, her husband, Wilford Duncan,and one son, Wilford R. and wife and four grandchildren. Also the following brothers and sisters: Dee, of Roseburg, Oregon, and Orville, of Pendleton, Oregon; Elva Spikes, Audra Williams and Thelma Sherwood, of Elgin, Oregon; Lela Lockheart, Oxford, Nova Scotia; Katherine Dickenson, Medford, Oregon. Two brothers preceded her in death: Brother Luther Cummins and Guy Cummins.

Having known this dear one for over fifty-two years, I feel that I should call her Sister, though her name is not on any church book; yet I feel confident it is written in the most sacred book, which is the Lamb's Book of Life. Her life was the life of a subject of grace; and she defended the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. She had a clear understanding of the Predestination of all things, and defended the Articles of Faith of the church where she attended all her life. We know that one is taught such a belief only by the power of Almighty God, and that He always leaves a finished work. So we would say to the bereaved ones, not to mourn her death as one who had no hope. We know that God knows best, and he has just called home another one of his jewels. May we be reconciled to His will in all things, and wait patiently for that appointed time when the dead in Christ shall arise; when all his chosen shall say, "Oh, death where is thy sting; Oh, grave where is thy victory."

Written by one who feels his inability; and if I write or speak comforting words, it is all by the power of a just and holy God.

Ernest J. Attebery
Hermiston, Oregon

BERTHA ALICE (CHAMBLISS) SNIDER

Sister Snider was born at Bentonville, Arkansas, August 1, 1884, and died at Okemah, Oklahoma, June 27, 1959; at the age of seventy-four years. She leaves to mourn their loss four daughters: Mrs. Bernice Perry, Odessa, Texas; Mrs. Thelma Gratton, Monahans, Texas; Mrs. Bonnie Mae Wilson, Medford, Oregon; and Mrs. Lorene Collins, Okemah, Oklahoma; one son: Joe Snider, Oklahoma City, Okla.; nine grandchildren and six great grandchildren; a host of friends and her brothers and sisters of the church. She was the widow of the late Elder W. P. Snider, who passed away in May, 1942; they were united in marriage November 15, 1903.

They united with the Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church, near St. Louis, Oklahoma, on Saturday before the 4th Sunday in August, 1904, and were baptized by the late Elder G. M. Snider. Her husband was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry on August 21, 1909. After Pleasant Hope Church, at Dustin, Okla., was organized, Brother and Sister Snider moved their membership there, as their home was at Dustin; and both died members of that church.

We feel that a mother in Israel has been tak-

en from our midst to something better than the tongue of man can describe: eternal life with Him, which the Father promised before the world was. She now awaits His second coming, to come into that "Perfection" which all of His children shall come into at his appointed time.

She was kind and considerate, and spoke in a way easy to be understood; and was an example in the home, in the church, and unto the world. She was a strong believer in Salvation by Grace,and in the eternal decrees and purposes of God — "All things working together for good for them that love God." Her presence, council and encouragement will be missed by the unworthy writer. May the God of all grace, and the Father of mercy, comfort her family and her brethren and sisters; and reconcile each of us to His will.

Written at the request of her children, by her pastor.

(Elder) C. U. Landers

ALTA SMALLRIDGE JOHNSON

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call another of his children home. Sister Alta Johnson was born in Putnam County, West Virginia, August 16, 1901; and departed this life April 4, 1959, making her stay on earth more than fifty-seven years. She was united in marriage to H. C. Johnson August 26, 1922; and to this union were born two sons: Lee Villard, of Huntington, W. Va., and William Willington, of Hurricane, W. Va.; and one daughter, Ina Elsie Thornton, of Milton, W. Va.; all of whom survive. She is survived also by one sister, Catha Bird; one half-sister, Lena Wood; one half-brother, Lonnie Smallridge, all of Hurricane; and seven grandchildren.

Sister Johnson united with the Harmony Primitive Baptist Church July 30, 1950, remaining a true and faithful member until she passed away. She had been in poor health for several years and suffered much, but bore her afflictions with patience, willing to submit to the will of God, whom she served. She attended her church meetings many times when she seemed to be in so much pain she could hardly sit up. It was a joy to her to entertain her brethren and sisters in her home.

Her funeral was conducted at the Mt. Moriah Baptist Church by Elders J. P. Helms, George L. Weaver, and her beloved pastor, Elder J. R. Lane. Her body was laid to rest in the Church cemetery to await the resurrection morning. We miss her very much, but feel that our loss is her eternal gain. Oh, may we be made submissive to the will of our Heavenly Father, who doeth all things well.

Written at the request of the church by her daughter-in-law and niece,

Lilly Johnson and Mildred Stanley

MRS. ELLA E. NELSON

The following information for the obituary of Sister Nelson was written to Sister Jesse H. Daniel by her son, Garrett H. Nelson:

"It is of you who are members of my mother's church who were of great consolation to me at my mother's funeral. She loved nothing more here on earth than her church and the members of that church. You people made her last years happy indeed.

In answer to your letter I give you the following information: Mrs. Ella E. Nelson was born September 30, 1874, in the State of Georgia. She moved to Texas with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Whitaker, when she was twelve years of age. They moved directly from Georgia to Hughes Springs. She was married to Henry D. Nelson on the 16th day of May, 1893. Following their marriage they lived at Hughes Springs until December 1918, at which time they moved to Linden in order that he might assume the duties of County Judge of Cass County on January 1, 1919. Henry D. Nelson died February 6, 1952. To the marriage of these parties there was born five children as follows: (1) Gladys, a daughter, who died at the age of eight; (2) Garrett Hobert, a son, who now resides at Lubbock, Texas; (3) Hubert Henry, a son, who died in infancy; (4) Lorene, a daughter, now the wife of J. A. Holder of 4114 Ascot Lane, Houston, Texas; (5) Henry Thomas, a son, who was killed in an automobile wreck in 1938 and left surviving him a widow and an infant daughter. The daughter is now Mrs. Lorene Stewart, 8601 Winkler Drive, Meadowbrook Apartment No. 4, Houston, Texas.

Her death occurred on the 30th day of May, 1959, at her home in Linden, Texas. She was buried in the family lot in Hughes Springs cemetery at which place her deceased husband and three deceased children are buried.

Yours very truly,
G. H. Nelson"

TONEY OWEN MINTER

It has pleased the Lord to call from our midst Deacon Toney Owen Minter. Brother Minter was born May 23, 1895, and departed this life March 30, 1959. He was the son of Deacon William Silas Minter and Maranda Coleman Minter. Brother Minter is survived by his wife, Sister Ruth Jennings Minter of the home in Salem, Virginia; one son, Walter Madison Minter, of Virginia Polytechnic Institue, Blacksburg, Virginia; two brothers, Ave-

rett Minter and Leonard Minter; and one sister, Mrs. Jettie Barbour.

Brother Minter was a member of Bellview Church in Roanoke County. Shortly after he united with this church, they saw in him the gift of a Deacon. This office he filled faithful and well until his death. He was very firm in the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone. He loved the truth and loved the church. We bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father who works all things after the counsel of His own will.

We feel that Bellview Church together with the many friends and brethren and sisters of that community will miss the gift that we feel that the Lord bestowed upon him, but we feel our loss will be Brother Minter's eternal gain. Our hearts are filled with sadness as we look at his vacant seat that he so faithfully filled. May it be the Lord's will to reconcile his wife and son, together with us, and may he give us grace to keep us in the way that he would have us to go until that great day shall come, and then raise us and fashion us like his own glorious body where we shall praise him worlds without end.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication; and a copy be spread on the church book; and a copy sent to the family and one sent to the **Old Faith Contender** for publication.

Done by order of Bellview Church while in conference June 21, 1959.

Written by his bereaved pastor,
Elder Leonard J. Brammer

OCIE LEE SCOGGINS

"Sunset and evening star, and one clear call for me."

In the early morning hours of December 19, 1958, while the stars were yet in the sky, O. L. (Ocie) Scoggins heard "the one clear call" and quietly "put out to sea." So quietly did he go that his companion lying by his side heard not the least moan. It was his wish to go that way. The entire community was shocked when the word went out that Mr. Ocie had passed away in his sleep.

Ocie Lee Scoggins was born May 15, 1890, in the Rock Hill community (Texas), the son of Willie and Fanny Corley Scoggins. He was 68 years, 7 months and 4 days of age. He, with his parents, moved to the Pleasant Grove community where he lived until manhood.

He was married to Minnie Turner June 20, 1909; to this union 5 children were born, one son dying in infancy. He with his family moved to the Cana community (Texas) in 1915, where he was living at the time of his death. He was a farmer by trade, working hard to provide for his family, taking pride in his work, and doing his work in a neat, orderly way — not only in his fields but around the house. I have heard the remark "Mr. Ocie could keep house as good as any woman." He was a member of the Cana School Board for a number of years and worked diligently for the upbuilding of the school and community.

Mr. Ocie never united with any church but was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace; and his talk and many good deeds were proof of his convictions. He was a regular attendant at Hopewell and Cana churches. It was with his untiring help that the little church at Cana was repaired making it possible to have meeting there. Just recently he made arrangements to have preaching in a dear old sister's home, making it possible for her to hear the preaching she was longing to hear, since she had not been able to attend meetings for sometime. He and his good wife were never too busy to visit the sick and afflicted, especially the aged. The writer was a recipient of their many visits, and kind words spoken in trials we have passed through.

He will be greatly missed not only by his family but by the little church at Cana, where he always went early to make the building ready for services.

Having left the evidence of a hope in the glorious resurrection, we can say to the bereaved, Take comfort; and can say:

"Jesus, while our hearts are bleeding
O'er the spoils that death has won,
We would at this solemn meeting,
Calmly say, 'Thy will be done.'

By thy hands the boon was given,
Thou hast taken but thine own;
Lord of earth and God of heaven,
Evermore 'thy will be done.'"

He leaves to mourn his passing his widow and two sons: Valton and W. B. Scoggins, of Dallas, Texas; two daughters: Mrs. Frankie Taylor, Dallas, and Mrs. Beryl Freeman, Kilgore, Texas; three brothers: Elbert and Odis, Quitman, Texas, and Adrian, of Denison, Texas; two sisters: Mrs. Myrtle Pittman, Quitman, Texas, and Mrs. Missy Kramp, of California; also eight grandchildren and four great grandchildren, and a host of other relatives and friends.

He was laid to rest at Hopewell Church amid a large concourse of sorrowing relatives and friends; the beautiful mound of flowers speaking the high esteem in which he was held. Elder W. W. Taylor, of Dallas, spoke beautiful words of comfort to the bereaved.

His friend,
Mrs. Nevie Thompson

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 127 DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1959 NO. 12

R. F. D. 2,
Burlington, N. C.

Signs of the Times:

I would like for this to be published in the Signs of the Times. I visited in the home our dear Sister Walker shortly after our association, and she told me that as she lay on her bed, she was thinking about our association and all the brethren, and desiring to be with them, these words came to her forcibly and she had her daughter to write them for her.

She is afflicted and in bed most of the time. She is a lovely sister, and would be glad to see any of her brethren. Hope some of them will have a mind to visit her. She lives in Greensboro, near Guilford Dairy on Howard Street.

(Elder) J. Harvey Smith

BENEDICTION

We are gathered around the stand,
Soon to take the parting hand;
'Twas so sweet to mingle here,
And the parting brings a tear.

We may meet on earth no more,
But hope to meet on Canaan's shore.
Some of us will pass away,
As have those we miss today.

Soon the earth will melt like snow,
And the sun will cease to glow:
Moon and stars go out of sight,
For we will not need their light.

Lord prepare us for that day
When all things shall pass away.
May we all then be found
Safely on God's holy ground.

Now the parting time has come:
Gently Shepherd lead us home
To that bright celestial shore,
Where we'll meet to part no more.

Mrs. Evelyn Walker
Greensboro, N. C.

New Church, Va.

Elder and Sister Spangler,
Dear Ones:

Have been thinking of you dear people so much, so thought I would write a few lines. You have been on our minds and in our hearts more than you know. Do hope that you and dear Sister Mildred are both feeling better by now.

We were up to Welsh Tract Sunday, and heard Elder Griffin there, and at London Tract in the afternoon. I never heard him speak sweeter than he did in the afternoon. It was wonderful — the truth in its fullness and beauty, if I know the truth.

I find myself so much of the time, asking myself, Why? Why have I been so greatly blessed to have the joy of being among the dearest people on earth to me? There could not be anyone who deserves it less. Oh how unworthy I feel: it almost makes me tremble. Sometimes I look at the brethren and sisters, and see in them so much more than I can in myself, that I fear to call them brother or sister. My greatest desire is to walk before my brethren (if I am one of them) in a manner that will be becoming as a sister in the church; that I may never do or say anything that might reflect on the church. Even so, I more greatly desire to walk before my God, who has so richly blessed me with his great love, to have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and to have an ear to hear his precious truth; and to know that he is the great Deliverer.

But for the merciful grace of God, who knows all things, I would still be struggling along, trying to do all I could of my own works to inherit eternal salvation. For, as you know, I traveled in this way for a long time, close to thirty

years. I thought at that time I was doing great things for the Lord; but, Oh, I was so blind. I didn't know then that there was nothing I could do, but that Jesus had done it all for his people. He paid all the debt of his people with his spilled blood on Calvary, once and for all: a precious Redeemer, so good, so kind, so mighty and merciful, — a loving Saviour. There doesn't seem to be enough words to express all that's in my heart tonight, as I write of the wonderful love of so great and powerful a God that I hope I love. He has been so good to me and mine.

There is one thing for sure, my hope (even though it sometimes gets small) rests in this same God that I have been talking about in my feeble way. The Word of God is such a precious thing that I fear to try to speak of His great name; but, (I believe this with all my heart) if I am not embraced in His love, and if He has not provided for me in His eternal kingdom, (a kingdom not made by earthly hands) then I am lost forever. Because: There is nothing in my hand to bring; simply to the cross I cling; naked to the fountain fly: save me Saviour, or I die.

I had intended to write only a few lines, and here I have lost tract of time. I seemed to have a mind to write of these things that are precious to me. May it be of the Lord. We will be glad to see you again. Good night, and best regards.

Evelyn Davis

R. F. D. 4,
Fayetteville, Tenn.

Dear Editors:

It has been a long time since I tried to write a few lines, though many times I have desired to write, yet feeling so unworthy, I put it off, saying, Some other time. I remember that not long after I was given a home with these people whom I believe are the true people of God, I attempted to answer a letter I had received from a dear Elder in California, I felt that he had forgotten more about these precious truths than I ever knew, and I said, "Lord what can I write that will be of any comfort to him." It seemed I heard a voice say to comfort others with the same comfort wherewith you yourself have been comforted. Then I thought of the words, "Without me ye can do nothing." and, "I can do all things through him that strengtheneth me."

We have just had another session of the Flint River Association. The three days were wonderful: surely it pleased the giver of all good to make his face to shine upon his servants who came many miles to be with us, for they so wonderfully preached Christ crucified, the way, the truth, and the life. I will not take the space to name each one, but perhaps someone else will write and give more information concerning the meeting. I wasn't really able to go each day, yet I begged the Lord for strength, and on Sunday I hardly felt my aches and pains which linger in my body each day; and it seemed that each word spoken was to the glory of God, and to the comfort of his people, causing tears of joy to flow down the cheeks of many.

Sometimes I can say that I know my Redeemer lives; but it does not last. Then I am in the dark and feel that he would not notice a poor, undeserving wretch like me. It will be thirty-eight years this December since I was led into the water and buried beneath the flowing waves. I was so happy, and I then felt my troubles were over, but soon found out differently. I think that is why His little children love to sing, "Mixtures of Joys and Sorrows." If we never had a cloudy day, we would not enjoy the sunshine so much. So when the Sun of Righteousness appears we have nothing to fear, for we feel that underneath are the everlasting arms.

All the years I have spent in suffering caused by ill health, and the loss of my dear ones, I still say, His loving kindness, O how great. I have been blessed beyond my expectation many times, and

feel that it was all by the hand of the true and living God, who knows our every need, and said that he would not leave nor forsake us. His promises stand sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. I hope I have a little place with them.

To all that attended our association, both elders and other dear ones, we were glad to see you, and would ask to be remembered in your prayers. May God bless the editors in their work that is food and comfort to all who have the pleasure of reading the Signs. My eyes are so weak sometimes that often it is days before I can get all of my paper read, but it affords me much joy when I read. A poor sinner saved by God's free grace, if at all.

(Miss) Willie Sisco

THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD

(By Elder David Bartley)

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE GLORIFIED SAINTS

THE LORD will be glorified in all his saints, and he is the glory of all his saints. God will fulfill to his Son the prayer that they may be with him where he is, and behold his glory that the Father gave him. This shall be fulfilled in heaven, when his saints shall appear with him in glory. Before the death, burial, and resurrection of the holy Redeemer, John said of him, "For the Son of Man is not yet glorified." When his hour was come, he earnestly prayed to his Father, saying, "Glorify thy Son." So it behooved him to suffer and die, that he might enter into his glory. This was unto the end that his people, thus redeemed and saved from sin and death, might be glorified in him. Therefore, as it was with their Forerunner into glory, so also is it with them; and they must first be raised from the dead before they shall be glorified. They must follow their Master, who is the way, and be made like him. "Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead. . . It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him," wrote Paul to Timothy. The suffering and dying with Christ, then, are absolutely necessary to our living and reigning with him. Of this Paul says, "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. . . Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." (Romans 6) Just so shall it be with all who are planted together with him in the likeness of his death, which was unto sin in the body of his flesh; for they shall be raised up out of death in their bodies in the likeness of his resurrection, which was in his buried body, "of the seed of David;" and death shall have no more dominion over them, but they shall live unto God. "Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being children of the resurrection." (Luke 20) This is word of Christ himself, and thus it shall be, as he taught. To be the perfected children of God, then, we must be the children and subjects of the resurrection from the dead. It was by the resurrection from the dead that the Son of David was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness," said Paul. To John on Patmos the Son of God in his glory said, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." (Rev. 1:18) He has the power, therefore, to raise the dead; and he says of every one that the Father gave him, and that believeth on him, "and I will raise him up at the last day." For it was not possible that he should be holden of death, said Peter; so neither is it possible for one of his brethern to be holden of it. If it

were possible, then his priesthood would not be perfect, but would fall, and all would be lost, for death and the grave would have the victory.

But the word and power of the Lord says, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." (Hos. 13:14) "The Ancient of days came, and judgement was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed a kingdom." (Dan. 7:22) "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power." (Psalms 145:10, 11)

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. . . Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." (Romans 8:18-21) When the Lord by his inspired servants said, "shall be," it must be. We have seen that the sons of God shall be manifested in the resurrection from the dead. We shall then bear the image of the heavenly Man, the Son of God, and be like him. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." Yet he is a man in the flesh, and is now unwillingly subject to vanity, but in hope of deliverance from the bondage of corruption, this body of death, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. This shall be blessedly realized when, "Death is swallowed up in victory," and "mortality is swallowed up of life;" and then the kingdom and dominion "shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom."

The saints are now in the kingdom of grace, and in a militant state, in which they are called to "endure a great fight of afflictions," and to "sow in tears." Therefore, while in the mortal body, they are not at home, being absent from their ascended and glorified Lord and High Priest, whose coming again according to his promise, they now await. Nor shall their waiting and watching for his coming disappoint them. "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." (Heb 10:35-37) "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Peter 3:13) "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Phil. 3:20, 21) Our confidence is in him who is thus able. We confidently look for him to come again, and when he comes, he shall perfect us in his own image. O glorious change in us! How unutterable the beauty, glory and rapture, when our now vile body shall be fashioned in the likeness of his own spiritual, immortal and glorious body! Then, transporting assurance, the bodies of the countless millions of the redeemed saints shall all be thus glorious! O that will be holy, lovely, blissful HEAVEN! O we shall all then behold with transports of love and joy our First-born Brother from the dead, our everliving and adored High Priest, who perfected us through his infinite sufferings in our flesh, and has thus made us an holy priesthood unto his and our Father and God! Our loving and altogether lovely Redeemer, when he shall present his sanctified bride to himself a glorious church, holy and without blemish, and shall present all his innumerable company of glorified brethren to his Father, saying, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me," will then be blessedly satisfied, and God will be well pleas-

ed for the righteousness' sake of his glorious Son. And this will be the fullness of the all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ with which the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ blessed his saints according to his choice of them before the world was. His election and predestination thus gloriously consummated in them, they, though once so sinful and sorrowful on earth, shall be holy and without blame before him in love. "Then shall the King say unto them on the right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

"And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he said unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God." (Rev. 19:-5-9)

"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." (1 Pet. 4:12, 13) "Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasures of his goodness, and the work of faith with power: that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thes. 1)

"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou are worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou was slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." (Rev. 5:9-12)

"Come, thou long expected Jesus!
Born to set thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us,
Let us find our rest in thee:
Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the saints thou art;
Dear Desire of every nation, —
Joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver;
Born a child, and yet a King;
Born to reign in us forever,
Now thy gracious kingdom bring:
By thine own eternal Spirit,
Rule in our hearts alone;
By thine all sufficient merit,
Raise us to thy glorious throne."

Hymn 324, Beebe's Col.

"Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." (Heb. 6:17-20) The hope of all the saints is anchored in Christ, the Rock that was

smitten for us; and he who is our hope, the hope of eternal life, is now in the presence of God for us. All whose forerunner unto the Father our highly exalted Prophet and Priest and king is shall as surely follow him through the veil of flesh, and be with him in the eternal glory of the Father, as that the Lord hath said of him, "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

This, O people of the living God, is the perfect work of the meek and lowly King of saints, who reigns in righteousness, and whose arm of power rules for him; and by him grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life over all the children that God gave him, perfecting holiness in them. The enraptured John said, "And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer." (Rev. 6:2) Through this crowned Son of the Highest, that loved us, we are more than conquerors in all the conflicts which lie between the cross of suffering unto death and the crown of life that fadeth not away. Again, when the time of the end was shown to John, he says, "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns: and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called the Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." (Rev. 19:11-14) This shows the victorious and glorious reign of the crowned King in Zion; and that all his redeemed and conquered subjects shall be purified and made white, and blessedly follow him as soldiers of the Cross, the glorious heavenly army, so great that no man can number the ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands. "And they sang the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgements are made manifest." (Rev. 15:-3, 4)

Now, all this forbids the thought that this glorified Son of man, the crowned King of heaven and omnipotent Conqueror, either tries or strives to save and reign over his called and chosen people, or to make his foes his footstool; for the Most High proclaimed of him ages ago, that, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged." Even in his humiliation in the flesh, the irresistable power of the then uncrowned King was triumphantly manifested in all his word and work; for all to whom he spoke were subdued into submission, whether winds and plagues, madness and death, men or devils. At his voice or touch, the most lothsome and fatal contagion and disease vanished, and all sins were forgiven; yea, ghastly death fled at his approach and command, and legions of devils must go at his word. And shall it now be thought that, crowned upon the throne of universal dominion as he is, he has not sufficient power and grace to successfully and lovingly reign in his militant kingdom of grace, and in the hearts of his quickened and called people? This would be a reflection and reproach upon him, and an impeachment of both his wisdom and power. From his resurrection in triumph over his last enemy, and coronation upon the throne of God on high, the word of his Almighty Father to him is being unfailingly verified, saying, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."

We do well to remember, and let it humble and hush us, that the little line of finite or human judgement is infinitely too short to measure and judge the purpose and counsel, way and work of the Lord on high, whose arm rules for him. For his eternal purpose and

the counsel of his will cannot possibly be turned aside, frustrated or fail in anything or the smallest measure; for there is no disappointment with the unchangeable Lord God omnipotent. Moses was inspired to declare that the Lord rideth upon the heavens in the help of his people, and in his excellency on the sky. In this humble tribute of praise to the Anointed of God, the Man whom he made strong for himself, the clear and strong divine testimonies presented have shown us the glorious perfection and sufficiency of his mediatorial work and reign, as the absolutely successful Prophet and Priest and King, ordained of God before the world was, sent forth in the fullness of the time to do his righteous Father's perfect will, and invested with the fullness of the Godhead, though a sinless and perfect man in the flesh. Therefore, all that God appointed and sent his Son to do, with all things he has declared and written concerning the sinful and lost people of his new and everlasting covenant, shall absolutely be accomplished in them, because the omnipotent word of the Lord hath spoken it. With him there is not the shadow of a turn or change; neither is it possible for a fortuitous or uncertain event to arise in all the Lord's unlimited dominion to disturb his counsel and purpose, or surprise and disappoint him.

In these pages, devoted to the Priesthood of the Christ of God, it is important to say, the present life and state is fully shown in the Scriptures to be divinely appointed and designed as a preparatory place, and that the God and Saviour of his people, who knew all their sins and weakness, backslidings and failures, has an infinitely wise and merciful purpose towards them in it all, to successfully teach and convert and save them in these very things as needful truths and lessons of wisdom, which they could learn in no other way. Therefore to his dear people the Lord says, "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver: I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." (Isa. 48:10) This is the way, then, that he is forming his people and preparing them for himself, that they should show forth his praise. Not perfectly now in the flesh, certainly, for none perfectly glorify him now; but when he has refined them through the fires and floods, and shall bring them forth as the pure gold, then shall they show forth his praise and his power to save, and shall be to the Lord an holy priesthood, and perfectly glorify him in their body and spirit. His people and children need not flatter themselves, therefore, that they can raise themselves up out of the furnace of affliction by any power or goodness that they possess, do and try as best they may; for the Lord has chosen his people and refines them in this hot furnace. So the man that lives so much to his satisfaction that he escapes the afflictions in the trying furnace does not prove that the Lord has chosen him at all. Such an one was the self-boasting worshipper who went up in the temple to pray; but the lowly man who asked for mercy was certainly in the furnace.

The Lord again says, "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my supplicants, even the daughter of my dispersed shall bring mine offering. . . I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. . . Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord hath taken away thy judgements, he hath cast out thine enemy; the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more. In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not; and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy over thee with singing." (Zep. 3) This is like the word of Christ, saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed

are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." (Matt. 5:3-6) The Lord also says, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not ? . . But he chasteneth us for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Heb. 12:5-11) It is in this way that the Lord prepares and leads his priestly people to approach unto his presence and worship him. And so in all the way that he dealeth with them, as well in his providence as in his grace, he is sifting them as wheat, and purifying them as silver and gold in the furnace, that they should show forth his praise. Of the coming and work of Christ Jesus the Saviour it is written: "But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." (Mal. 3:2, 3)

The Lord is now upon his mediatorial throne, the Prince and Saviour, and he is thus successfully performing his work of purifying the sons of Levi, the priestly family, in his own sure and good way; but not the way they would choose, for it is as silver and gold in the heated furnace, that melts the hard metals and consumes the baser part, the alloy and dross, the legal trust and fleshly confidence; that they may bring to the Lord the acceptable sacrifice of a broken and contrite spirit, an humble trust and hope in Jesus the only Saviour of sinners. And as thus sifted and humbled, they come unto God by faith in his dear and holy Son, and plead his sacrifice and only righteousness, and God pardons and accepts and blesses them in his righteous Son, who is their salvation and holiness and life.

This is the good work of righteousness that our Saviour has begun in his people, and he will righteously and graciously perform it unto the perfect day; and in such a holy way and so glorifying to God that they shall be saved from themselves and their own way, so that they shall know and confess, with Jonah, "Salvation is of the Lord," and shall offer the true prayer that Jesus taught: "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen." To thus save us from all that we need to be delivered from is not a light or easy work, for it is so difficult, owing to the innate and deep seated maladies of corrupted and self-reliant man, that none but our all-sufficient High Priest, who has all power in heaven and all power on earth, can save us from our sins and from ourselves, and prepare us and enable us to offer unto God an offering in righteousness, and worship him in spirit and in truth and in the beauty of holiness. Jesus only can save; and thus he is saving and will save his people from their sins. Not the least of our sins, that he shall save us from, is self-righteousness, self-sufficiency, self-dependence, and self-trust. A no less physician than Jesus, who had all wisdom, all grace and all power, so that he could save the raving Gadarene from himself, could have cured Peter of his strong and ruling passion of self-dependence, and it almost took his life away to save him; yet the gentle and lamb-like Jesus applied the bitter remedy, by letting Satan catch him in his snare, to shake him up and sift him, and Petter was effectually saved and taught to have no confidence in the flesh. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that came unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." And thus he interceded for his

apostle Peter, before he let Satan have him, that his faith should not fail. Christ our High Priest, as the Son over his own house and brethren, is faithful to God who glorified him to be made an High Priest after the power of an endless life. The power and virtue of Christ's life and holiness will, therefore, take away from his sinful people all their sinful maladies of every sort, and they shall be purified unto salvation and made acceptable unto God. This work of saving his people from their sins is being performed in them, and the Lord who begun it in them will complete it.

It should not be thought, therefore, that because the Lord's quickened people so often come short in outward or manifest gospel obedience, he is frustrated, hindered, or in the least disappointed; for he sees and knows it all, and will as surely accomplish his wise design to the glory of God and the effectual salvation of all his straying sheep and backsliding children, as in the awful fall of Peter, the prodigal son, or the great trial of Job. Let us not think for a moment that the Saviour of sinners is either wishing or trying to accomplish something for his people, or with and by them, but meets with sad failures and disappointments; for the adorable and perfect Saviour, whose arm rules for him, is not trying any experiments with his people, as many doctors do with their worst patients, to see whether this or that will succeed and cure the patient. The world of religion, indeed, savors very strongly of this mere experimenting; and many sincere and zealous souls show that they believe that the glorious King of Zion is likewise experimenting and trying to accomplish much more that he succeeds in having done, and so there is failure with him as there is with man.

That we may have a far more exalted view than this of the reigning Son of God and his power to save, let us hear faithful Paul, who says, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." (Rom. 5:8-11) This gives us the absolute assurance of full and blessed salvation from sin and death for all whom God loved and for whom Christ died. The apostle then goes on to say, "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." (Verse 17) Not only saved from wrath through Christ, and blessedly reconciled to God, but shall reign in eternal life as kings and priests through Christ and by him. This is divinely blessed to sinners and glorious to Christ. Now, let us notice also in what way Christ thus effectually saves us; that is, by the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness. Then, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us." Paul then says, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." (Verse 19) Not by the obedience of many may they be made righteous; for the word declares of all the sons of Adam that there is not one righteous. "Shall many be made righteous." This is as positive and sure as that the Son of God as a man was righteously obedient. His infinite merit in his holy obedience shall absolutely make all his people and brethren the very righteousness of God in Christ. There is no power in the universe that can possibly hinder or prevent this perfect holiness of the countless many to whom God imputes the righteousness of Christ. The Immortal Son of man sits a King upon his holy throne; yea, King of kings, and in power and glory reigns as the Prince and Saviour.

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the

Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him that appointed him."

(Concluded next month)

"And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third part be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God." (Zech. 13:8, 9)

I heard a young preacher use this text as a foundation for his sermon, and I could see that, if he was a God-called servant, he has a lot of fire to pass through, if he is to be used for the comfort of the saints, and God's glory. He said that in the division of 1832, one side went so far from the truth in absolute predestination that they went into Fatalism, and fell into the ditch on one side; and the other side went so far into Armenianism they fell into the ditch on the other side, — that these are the two parts that shall be cut off and die: that they were children of God, and that this was not eternal death, but death to joys of fellowship with the church and the saints; they were disobedient ones. Then he had a lot to say about the third part, but did not explain where they were to be found.

I have read a lot, and heard many of God's people talk of this division, but I have never heard of but two sides in this split: one side being those who stood firm on the principles on which the church was constituted. They did not go aside — did not depart from the old principles, but contended for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and the order handed down through the ages by the apostles. The other side departed from the faith and order, and completely lost their identity as the church, and has never regained it.

These being only two parts, where are we to find the third part? Let's trace back and see if we can find it. It seems plain to me that the two parts that are cut off, are not included in the covenant of grace; for they shall be cut off and die. They are not brought through the fire — which is positive proof. The third part, those brought through the fire, are tried and refined, and made pure, the dross being consumed; and they are able to say, "The Lord is my God." The other parts could not say this.

Mr. Smart, a Strict Baptist preacher in England, preached from this text in 1868, and said: "The profane world, and the professing world, so living and so dying, will find what an awful thing it is to die in their sins, and to be cast into the lake of fire where their worm dieth not, and the fire (the wrath of God due to sins) shall never be quenched; but the third part, His sons and daughters, loved and chosen from all eternity in Christ, separated for His own use and purpose, these He has promised, and evidences more or less to their souls, that they will be brought through the fire."

This profane world is those wicked ones who make no profession of religion, and the professing world are those who are religious in their own strength, with no thought of God's work in the heart, nor giving him any praise.

Mr. Smart also said, "For the most part, God's people in this world are poor people. What does worldly prosperity do? A man's riches are the very backbone of pride. Perhaps nothing makes a man proud and self-conceited sooner than wealth; and this brings more dross, and calls for more furnace. It is our work to collect this pride and rubbish; and God by his wisdom, for our sin and folly, sees fit to put us into another furnace."

I have seen this pride growing for several years — the more wealth, the more pride, and departure from the old paths. Many years ago our people were generally poor, and plain, more friendly

and spiritual. Love was more in evidence; and not having much of the world's goods to occupy their minds, they talked more about the Lord and his goodness to unworthy sinners.

Now a few words about God's sovereignty. There are people who declare they believe in salvation by grace, but if brought to the test, they do not know what salvation nor grace means. So it is with many who declare they believe in God's sovereignty: they deny God's purpose for the things he has made. What kind of a God is one who made the world and all in it, but has no purpose in and for them? He made all things, even the wicked for the day of evil, and pronounced all things good, — good for the purpose for which they were made. What purpose did he have for the wicked: for the serpent in the garden of Eden? It is needful that offences must come, but woe to that man by whom they come. He said the wicked are His rod to chastise his people.

Many people cannot see the difference in Absolute Predestination and Fatalism. They are in no way related; there is as much difference between them as there is between predestination and armenianism. Predestination and sovereignty are the same, as I see it, and influences all our life. If he was not a God of purpose, and all his works are for our good, how could we trust him? There is much said about time salvation; and it has been said that God's people everywhere are turning from the old "can't help it doctrine", and turning to the doctrine that **we can do** through the Spirit: If we obey God and work out our own salvation, we get the blessing stored in Christ for us; but if we disobey, we fail to get them — we are paid for our obedience. It seems from the way some people talk, they can do anything through the Spirit **anytime they choose**: If true, THEY HAVE TO CALL upon the Spirit.

There is no chance in the matter. Our "time salvation" is in His hands; and the "conditions" by which we get the blessings are in His hands, and He, and He alone, works those conditions so that we receive the blessings intended for us. Not one is wasted, and not one is additionally supplied for the "over-obedient" ones. He has not left anything for us to do in our own strength; he has not said it is up to us to work out our own salvation. If left to us, what kind of salvation would we work out? Why, just like Adam and Cain! When left to our own strength, we begin to wander away, not knowing where we are going; and get farther away until the Good Shepherd of our souls comes and brings us back in the way.

Dear ones, I know by experience that it is not in me to walk in obedience, only as led by Him who rules all things according to his pleasure. Man's work is no good to the hungry soul. Our hope is in his sovereign power and rule; and it is the only doctrine that comforts His little people, and gives Him all the praise and glory.

George W. Jackson,
East Point, Georgia

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Lexington-Roxbury Association now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, held at the meeting house at Holcottsville, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, September 23 and 24, 1959, sends love, fellowship and greetings to the several churches and associations with which we correspond:

In reading in the volume of the book, we find these words, "In this was manifested the love of God toward us." (1 John 4:9) As we dwell upon the words, "Manifested love of God towards us," the thought is in the word "Manifested." Let us dwell there for a time, as the word "Manifested" abides with us; as it is made known, perceived, revealed.

The Word says, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not;" "Here-

by perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments." "And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." Then we say again, "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him."

Is it manifested? Surely, for the Word continues to say: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propituation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." Is it manifested?

Let us continue. "No man hath seen God at any time; if we love one another, God dwelleth in us; and love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him and he is in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify, that the Father hath sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." "We love him because he first loved us." Is is manifested? This is no new thing to you, beloved!

The Word says, "This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth."

In John's Gospel, the word says, "I am the way, the truth and the life." Jesus says, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known the Father also." Is it manifested?

Surely it is; and you, dearly beloved brethren, know these things. Now Jesus further says, "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you." "If you ask anything" (and I repeat here again) "If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it." "If ye love me keep my commandments; and I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever."

Brethren, is it manifested? Truly such love the Father has overwhelms us — such is the manifested love of God toward us. Now it continues to say, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."

Now one of the twelve apostles, Judas, is speaking (not Iscariot), and saith unto Jesus, "Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him; and we will come to him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings. And the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me. These things have I spoken unto you, being present with you; but the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Behold what manner of love God has manifested towards us!

God has manifested life in the creature. In the gospel of Mark 4:22, it says, "There is nothing hid that shall not be manifested." He manifests forth his glory, and that in the Son, in that, "He was manifested to take away our sins." (1 John 3:5)

Now Jesus was manifested when he said, "I am the bread of life"; when he said, "I am the light of the world"; "I am the door"; "I am the good shepherd"; and when he said, "I am the resurrection and the life." What love then is so great, brethren? Is it manifested to you; to us?

Now James says, "Do not err, my beloved brethren: every good gift and ev-

ery perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures. Wherefore, my beloved brethern, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath."

Brethren, we close with some words of Peter: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promises." "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night." "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God." "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your steadfastness. But grow in grace, and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen."

(Written by Deacon E. K. Adsit)

REMEMBERS OUR VISIT

2713 White Oak Drive,
Houston 7, Texas

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

It has been in my mind to write you ever since you were in our midst in February, but directly you were gone, even though I did try, our heart overflowed with such fullness that our effort of expression seemed so inadequate. Then, as days passed, the trials and cares of this life, the doubtings and misgivings of our poor heart, while not blotting out the savor of your gracious visit with us, did weigh us down 'till we have deferred until this present time to communicate our thoughts and love to you in some measure.

We are humbly persuaded that the gracious and alwise, ever to be adored Lord God of Israel, who has led his people all the days of their lives, did direct, uphold and bring you His anointed servants to us at this certain time — his appointed time — filled with the very meat he himself alone provided and laid up in store to be dispensed to each and every little child of grace when he sees their needs. When we poor mortals are given to behold in the minutest measure His wonderous power and perfection made manifest in those things that concern depraved, poluted, sinful man, we can but be astonished, and stand in awe before such a longsuffering and beneficient Holy Redeemer; and are brought to say with Paul, "We are bound to thank God always for you."

The God of all grace who never forgets to be gracious, has promised (and cannot lie) to be with us always even to the end of the world. Yet how prone we are to forget; how dim our hope becomes; how darkened our hearts in unbelief like sheep gone astray, 'till He comes in his own time and manner, to raise us up and strengthen those he loves. And when the Holy Messenger comes in these times of love, though we stagger as drunken men and the needy and lame are ready to be turned out of the way, we are renewed as the eagle, and are carried on wings of love to lofty heights of praise and adoration to his Holy Name.

As said above, the savor of your visit, embellished with the goodness and severity of the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, still lingers in our hearts. I think there is not a time when the little body of members of Shepherd Fold meet but some gracious word you spoke while here, is remembered and spoken of, either to instruct, reprove, or to comfort and stir up our pure minds to remember His word, and try to thank him who doeth all things well.

May God bless you both, and keep you as watchmen upon the walls of Zion, to edify, reprove, admonish and instruct; and give you grace to strengthen the weak, comfort the poor, and defend

His cause, who is the foundation and the author and finisher of our faith, is my desire to pray. When at the throne of grace, remember this chief of sinners in hope of mercy.

Mrs. Buena V. Wright

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325 West Missouri St.
El Paso, Texas

Dear Brother Spangler:

I realize I have long neglected writing to many of those whom I esteem so highly in fellowship and love of and for the things pertaining to our Heavenly Father's house. We still enjoy reading after those we believe to be fellow travelers, whether they ever again read any of my puny efforts at expressing my feelings.

There are many I am sure who occasionally think of us in a kindly and perhaps a sympathetic way, and wonder as to our physical welfare as well as of our spiritual state. It is mostly for this reason I now take time to write a short letter. On June 1st of this year my wife was operated on for cancer of the breast. It was necessary for the doctors to remove the entire left breast. She has made a remarkable recovery and the doctors assure us that we have nothing to worry about so far as recurrence of the cancer is concerned. She has been dismissed already, but, of course, she will have to be checked on once a year for five or six years yet. It was only last year that I had a cancer removed from my mouth. I have been back for observation and check-ups several times and so far the doctors have detected no evidence of return of the malignancy.

In it all GOD has been most merciful and kind to us. Our blessings far outnumber our trials. Please pass this information on through the Signs of The Times.

Unworthily yours,
Hubert T. Faulk

R.F.D. 3,
Minco, Oklahoma

Dear Brethren:

I hope I am a brother through the grace and mercy of God, if not then I have no hope at all. My inquiry concerning my subscribing to the Signs of the Times brought me great joy. And the writings of Elder David Bartley brought me great joy; as did all the rest too. I never heard the Priesthood of the Son of God preached or explained so divinely. It was just what I was hungering for. I believe my inquiry was timed by our merciful God that I might have that explained.

Enclosed is $5.00 for two year subscription to the Signs.

In bonds of hope,
G. B. Loyd

CORRECTION

In the November Issue it was stated that the STAUNTON RIVER UNION meeting would be held with Union Church, on Highway 605, West of Gretna, Virginia, the first Sunday in November. The time of this meeting is the fifth Sunday in November instead of the first Sunday. We regret the error.

We would remind the brethren that they should send in their notices at least five or six weeks before publication date, in order that we may have opportunity to proof-read all copy before printing. — J. D. W.

CONTRIBUTORS TO
THE INDIGENT FUND
(To October 1st)

Bobby Snider, Va.	$5.00
Jim Carter, N. C.	5.00
Mrs. Isaac L. Kip, N. J.	1.00
Harry T. Vories, Cal.	5.00
M. T. Smith, N. C.	3.00
Eliza Turner, Va.	1.00

In addition to the above, we have received the sum of $1,000.00 which was bequeathed to the *Signs of the Times* by Mrs. Ellen Beebe, of New York.

Danville, Virginia December, 1959

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

CLOSE OF ANOTHER VOLUME

As we come to the close of another volume (No. 127) of the Signs of the Times, we have been reflecting upon the grace of God that has sustained its publication these many years.

Brought forth of necessity, in the wisdom and purpose of God, the Signs of the Times made its first appearance November 28, 1832. This was just two months after the meeting held at Black Rock Church in Maryland, known as the Baptist Convention, which produced the Black Rock Address. The first issue of the Signs of the Times gave an account of this meeting, and published the Address. This served to show that the brethren of the Old School were fully aware of the innovations which had come among the Baptists, and that the time was come when they could no longer be identified with those who held such innovations.

As to the name Old School, a footnote to the Address states as follows: "In reference to the epithet 'Old School', which we have used as a discriminating term, we beg leave to say that we were led to adopt it from its having been applied to us by others; and that in our use of it, we have reference to the school of Christ, in distinction from all other schools which have sprung up since the apostles' days."

The first paragraph of the Address reads as follows: "It constitutes a new era in the history of the Baptists, when those who would follow the Lord fully, and who therefore manifest a solicitude to be, in all things pertaining to religion, conformed to the Pattern showed in the Mount, are, by Baptists, charged with antinomianism, inertness, stupidity, etc., for refusing to go beyond the word of God. But such is the case with us."

Included in the second paragraph is the following: "For it is a well known fact that it was in ages past a uniform and distinguishing trait in the character of the Baptists, that they required a Thus saith the Lord, that is: direct authority from the word of God for the order and practices, as well as the doctrine, they receive in religion."

Those who are familiar with the Address (and all Baptist ought to be) will know the several vital points which separated one from the other in the division; and will know that the Signs of the Times had the support and recommendation of the brethren of the Black Rock meeting. The Proposals published in the first issue of the Signs (and re-published many times since), gave a summary of the doctrine believed by the Baptists who had not been carried away with new things; and which the Baptists of the Old School, and the Signs of the Times, would maintain.

Thus was the name of Old School Baptists applied to those who stood firm upon Bible doctrine; and thus the Signs

of the Times had its beginning. The doctrinal sentiments of the Signs of the Times is identical with the Old School Baptist doctrine; and the Old School Baptist doctrine is Bible doctrine. Some have departed from this Bible doctrine over the years, and have advocated things entirely foreign to the declarations of the Old School. Some, finding the bed too short to stretch upon, and the covering narrower than they could wrap themselves in: attempted a reforming to suit their own particular sentiments. This, of course, was away from the Old School. It behooves each one, therefore, to examine himself whether he is in the faith.

These are some of our thoughts as the 127th volume comes to a close. And we would have all to know that the present editors, and all connected with the publication of the Signs, stand firmly on the original principle on which the paper was founded; and endeavor to publish that which is God honouring, contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, knowing that these things are comforting and edifying to the redeemed family of God.

We humbly acknowldge our entire dependence upon our God; and pray, according to his will, that we may be sustained in the work, and that the Signs may continue in the hands of those who shall follow, in the same blessed truth.

The brethren in all parts of the country have supported the Signs by their subscriptions and contributions; and their continued support is necessary. New subscribers are necessary to fill the ranks of those who have finished their course in this world; and we appreciate the fact that many of our brethren in the ministry make mention of the Signs to their congregations, and often send in new subscriptions and renewals. These things, together with the writings of the brethren, help to make our labors easier; and we desire the brethren and friends to continue their support.

We trust we each have the same spirit that caused Samuel to set up a stone, calling it Ebenezer; and saying, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Philippians 2:12-13

Paul, a prisoner in Rome, is writing to his beloved brethren at Philippi, who had sent Epaphroditus with such help and comfort that they knew their beloved Paul needed in his afflictions. Such kind thoughtfulness by his brethren caused his cup to overflow, which made him to say, "But I have all and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God."

For Epaphroditus the journey had been long and hazardous; Paul tells us that he had been sick nigh unto death, but he says, "God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow." The letter is addressed to the saints which are at Philippi with the bishops (or elders) and deacons, to men and women who had been taught and baptized by the Holy Spirit into one body and had been all made to drink into one spirit, and who had openly testified of the Spirit's work done in them by freely submitting to the ordinance of believer's baptism. Being buried in a watery grave and being raised from that burial, they had begun a new life of fellowship one with another and with their Lord Jesus Christ their Redeemer.

They could set to their seal that God is true, that His Word, confirmed in them by the Holy Ghost, was the Word of life. Paul had, while with them, (perhaps ten years before,) witnessed how

they fashioned not their conversation according to the former lusts in which by nature, as individuals, they had lived in disobedience, but now as a body fitly framed together, they had obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto them.

We say as individuals they were by nature children of wrath and had lived in disobedience, led captive by the Devil at his will. Paul had witnessed these things for himself, had been blessed with a vision of a man of Macedonia saying unto him, "Come over into Macedonia and help us," and there Lydia and her household believed and were baptized and there he cast out the unclean spirit from the damsel and there also the jailor and those that were his, were converted and were baptized.

No wonder that Paul loved them dearly, and could say, "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all, making request with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Thus he had first hand knowledge of their obedience while he was with them, and now no doubt the visit of Epaphroditus was also to inform Paul of their condition as a church and of the existing problems that the church had to face.

Now to come to our subject which begins with the word "Wherefore," i.e. on which account, from the preceding testimony of what Christ had done, Philippians 2:5-8, not on account of your constant obedience, for that would be looking the wrong way, but on account of what he had said in the previous verses of this Glorious Person Jesus, at whose name every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that He is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

In the preceding Scripture, nothing is said about the devil's terrible effort to destroy Him, or of the apostate Jews whose wicked hands crucified Him, but what Paul would set before them and us, is His willingly submitting to a life of reproach and an ignominious death, even the death of the cross. How well those words we often sing fit Him,

"Led as a lamb to meet the sword,
He bowed beneath the stroke.
Not one revengeful angry word
The dear Redeemer spoke.

O may His meekness be my guide,
The pattern I pursue;
How can I bear revenge or pride,
With Jesus in my view?"

He would have them whom he called "my beloved," (knowing that they had put off the old man with his deeds) to put on the new man, and be like-minded with Him whom God had highly exalted and given Him a name which is above every name; that they, with this mind in them, the mind of Christ, would willingly present their bodies a living sacrifice, which would be a painful sacrifice to the flesh, yet it became them on account of what their Lord had done for them.

In reading the Epistles we find few churches that stood as high in obedience to the Word as this church did. The Galatians were turned away from the truth they had received, by Judaizing preachers. Paul told them "a little leaven leaventh the whole lump," and he said, "I stand in doubt of you." The Corinthians also were reproved sharply by Paul in I Corinthians, chapter 5 and 6 for their disobedience in not holding forth the Word of life in their walk and conversation. Practical godliness finds much consolation in what Christ did and said, and gets comfort and satisfaction in the love that abounds among the brethren through the fellowship of the Spirit, which is love shed abroad in the hearts of believers by the Holy Spirit which is given unto them. It is this divine love that enables brethren that comprise the church of God, to put on "bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing one another and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel

against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. Colossians 3:12-13.

This salvation then that is under consideration is the salvation of the church at Philippi, a church that was alive and walking in the doctrine and order it had received. Such a church, following the instruction of their beloved Paul, doing all things without murmurings and disputings, were blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom they shone as lights in the world.

Paul said, "Work out your own salvation." No man or body of men could do it for them, nor could they do that in their own strength, any more than Paul could remove his thorn in the flesh. There was only one way this work could successfully be done, it must have fear and trembling accompany it from start to finish, and not just one member to possess these two requisites, but the church as a body, and until that is so, the church should wait, wait on the Lord.

What fearfulness and trembling, with prayer, fasting and supplication there is in a church who has walked in obedience to the Word of life, and now finds itself up against problems that CONCERN THEM. How good it is that God's people have the testimony of God's Word today. Isaiah 30:20-21 says, "And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers: and thine ears shall hear a Word behind thee, saying, this is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand and when ye turn to the left." This fear in our text is not a slavish fear, but it is a loving regard to what God has spoken, it accompanies faith. "Faith without works is dead." James 2:26, yet faith is not moved BY FEAR but it moves WITH FEAR. Paul tells us "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved WITH fear." Brethren who watched over each other for each other's welfare, like the Philippians, were faithfully warned to "beware of dogs, beware of EVIL WORKERS, beware of the concision," who would entangle them again with the yoke of bondage. Such admonition would make them desire to be prayerful and watchful, and whatever came up they would meet it with fear and trembling, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. O, "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Remembering our first love, what a delightful place was God's house, the place where His honor dwelleth. We lived for our meetings and it was our highest joy when our brethren came to our home and we were favoured with heavenly things as the subject of our conversation, "On the wings of His love, we were carried above all sin and temptation and pain." Like the wild beasts that the Lord brought into the Ark, we were a living testimony to what our Lord had done. "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them." It was wonderful to be seen that those creatures, who by nature would destroy each other, could come under such a spell and dwell together. It is just as wonderful today. The word Gospel in Old English was God's spell, yet when the wild beasts turned their backs on the battered Ark, their own nature became uppermost again. This should be something for all of us to remember, while here in this world. This orderly church had more than a spell, they had love, the love of God, shed abroad in their hearts, they had drunk into one Spirit, been baptized by one Spirit into one body. If Christ dwells in us, the body is dead because of sin. After our first love we were shown that we still had a body of death, which we carried about with us and which hindered and damped our joy, and we learned what Paul said, "That in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing."

Fear of oneself, with a consciousness of past follies, will make a person ap-

proach a problem with meekness, "considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." We have to face things as they are, and whatever cross lies at our door, it cometh from the Lord. We wonder why things are as they are many times, but we believe there is a needs be, the error of brethren at Corinth and Galatia brought forth epistles that are the Word of God to us, Jesus said "It must needs be that offences come, but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!"

Consider the strange way that Paul was moved to go to Philippi, and the things that took place there, show us how true it is that "His purpose will ripen fast, unfolding every hour." Paul and Silas did not need that certain damsel, who was possessed with a demon, advertising that they were servants of the most high God, and so he commanded the unclean spirit to come out of her. This enraged the men who owned her and used her for gain, who went and accused Paul and Silas before the magistrates, who rent off their clothes and commanded to beat them. If they had told them that they were Romans they would not have touched them, but that was not God's will, for there were prisoners and a jailer in God's purpose, so Paul and Silas had to go to jail and have their feet made fast in the stocks. Everything seemed against them but God was for them, "And at midnight (the darkest part of the night) Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them, and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed." The jailer would have killed himself, "but Paul cried out with a loud voice, saying, do thyself no harm: for we are all here." He knew if the prisoners escaped, his own life was forfeited, and he probably felt that a public death awaited him for sleeping at his post. The earthquake was sent, not so much to liberate the captives, as to liberate the jailer from his former life. God had a purpose of mercy in it all, how mysterious are His judgments and His ways past finding out. The jailer, having as much to praise God for as Paul and Silas had, and as we all have, could, in gratitude to God, wash the stripes of His servants. Paul and Silas would feel it was worth all their stripes and suffering as they saw it was God who was working in them, both to will and to do of His good pleasure. We have spoken of the wild beasts turning their backs on the battered Ark. Not a few have through the flesh turned their backs on Christ and His Word. There were those of the Corinthian church who would be rulers rather than be ruled by His Word. Paul says in I Corinthians 4:7-8, "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive, now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it? Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you."

We go back to Psalm 2. and there we may think that those kings and rulers were of the world! but would the Spirit tell the wicked that know Him not to "Kiss the Son?" Let us read that portion. "Be wise NOW therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord WITH FEAR and rejoice WITH TREMBLING. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

We know the Lord is able to abase the proud and it is a mercy to be brought low.

> "He that is down need fear no fall,
> He that is low no pride;
> He that is humble ever shall
> Have God to be his guide."

God worketh in all who are brought low, and when the eye of faith seeth Him we can say truly "I abhor myself in dust and ashes." Such a view of God by faith gives us also a sight of ourselves, so that we loathe ourselves, without this

self-loathing we cannot be His disciples. Such humbling experiences make us kiss the Son and we find the words of forgiveness are the kisses of His mouth. If a brother be overtaken in a fault, there is a way for those who are spiritual to first lay his case before the Lord, and by fasting and confession of our own short-comings open a spiritual approach for him to confess his sins before his God. Love will not let such an one go, any more than a person will let his hand be taken off without much effort to save it. There is a wilful sin, Hebrews 10:25, winked at by some, and not considered as serious as it really is by others, forsaking the assembling of ourselves together. A dear brother got cold and indifferent to the cause of truth and stayed home. The brethren missed him, they were very concerned about him, for they loved him, they prayed for him, more, they went out of their way to visit him, often going after meeting and telling him who was there and that brethern had missed him. God also took a hand. One day, in his business, he spoke unkindly to a person under him, when a large piece of masonry fell off a tall building and dropped beside him. He thought, "why didn't God cut me down as a cumberer of the ground? Their concern and God's mercy were all of one lump, and he was back in his place with fear and trembling that was also theirs.

This world is very alluring, have we not feared it will swallow us up like it did Korah, Dathan and Abiram? Numbers 16:1-34. The Word is sufficient for the man of God that he be throughly furnished unto every good work. Let us not love in word only but in deed and in truth. Can we stoop down sufficiently to wash another's feet? Our Lord washed ours if we came rightly into His house. "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than His Lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." Many things are done unwittingly, affairs that are the church's business should be left to that church to work out. Where there is trouble in a natural family it is very wrong for any member of that family to peddle their trouble abroad, how much more it becomes an offense to spread church troubles from place to place. A church that obeys the Word of truth will not do that, and it will reprove its members that are found doing so. The Word of truth is very emphatic. "Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people." Leviticus 19:16. "Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth." Proverbs 26:20.

What excellent admonitions there are in the Scriptures for the man of God, to encourage God's humble poor, as a body, to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of His good pleasure.

G. R.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

REMARKS ON MATT. XVIII 10

"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

Although we have on a former occasion expressed such views as we had on this text, yet at the request of brother Elias Newkirk, we will offer a few remarks further on the subject.

An ambitious spirit, unbecoming the followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God, had been detected in the disciples, in agitating the question of their comparative greatness, and as they could not settle the matter to their mutual satisfaction, they appealed to our Lord for a decision; whereupon Jesus

called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, "Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." In this connection our Lord gave them such instructions and rules for their social government as should always be applicable to his church and people throughout all time. We shall not attempt in this article to comment on all the rules of order enjoined upon the members of the church of Christ in this chapter, but dwell particularly on what we understand to be embraced in the text proposed for consideration. In doing which we will call attention to the solemn admonition given to all the disciples, to **take heed** that they despise not one of these little ones. The command to take heed implies that through inattention, thoughtlessness, or without direct design, the error against which they are warned may be committed even by Christians. Care, and close and constant attention, is required, that the little ones be not overlooked, or their place and importance in the house or kingdom of God be not underrated. Aspirants for distinguishing positions will be apt to bring themselves into notice; but those who are more diffident and childlike may, unless great heed be taken, be overlooked, neglected or forgotten, or they may come to be regarded as of less importance in the church of God.

Two causes may tend to this result. First, the humble and childlike humility of the little ones make them unassuming and retiring; for they feel themselves to be less than the least of all the saints, and willing to be servants or door-keepers, and to let others whom they esteem better than themselves occupy more conspicuous or exalted places, and, secondly, the fleshly pride and vanity which is too frequently betrayed, unless closely watched and promptly checked, will predominate, as in the example presented in the first verse of this chapter, and in its ascendency tempt us either to think more highly of ourselves than we ought, or be attracted by the splendid appearance of some others, so that the humble, quiet, childlike little ones fail to be appreciated. Where the little ones are wantonly thrust aside, and that which is lame is turned out of the way, by the arrogance or wantoness of any one, God will avenge the oppressed; but wo to him by whom the offence cometh.

But while Christians are here in the flesh, the utmost vigilence is required to watch over our prejudices and partialities, lest, even undesignedly, we despise one of these little ones. It is not enough that we may say we have not wounded the feelings, disturbed the peace, or disregarded the expressed wishes of such. It may well be presumed that many a wound has been keenly felt in the heart of an humble child of God which has festered, unseen by any eye but that which watches over these little ones, causing grief untold, and perhaps unutterable, leading the wounded child to reason thus: O that I were worthy of the esteem of those whom I so dearly love, but while they show strong appreciation of the society, the gifts, or the conversation of others who are so far my superiors, they treat me, as I deserve, as though they have little or no confidence in me. We are commanded to be kindly affectioned one towards another, and to be especially careful in regard to those who are weak and tender; what care should we take lest we despise one of these little ones.

But, Who are these little ones? All who enter into the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. This truth is not only declared by our Lord in the third verse of this chapter, but it is fully implied in his declaration to Nicodemus. (John iii. 3, 5.) "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." All who are born again, of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, become "new born babes." — 1 Peter i. 23, and ii. 2., and in that birth not only

are they manifested as children, but as very little children. Whatever may be their age in the flesh, or whatever may be their capacity, strength, physical or mental, if they are born again, that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and among the fruits of that spirit will be found childlike humility; like little children, very small, they are dependent, reliant, and desire the sincere milk of the word that they may grow **thereby.** No other growth is compatible with their heavenly birth.

All who enter the kingdom of our God must enter as little children, and the more they learn, experience or know of God and of spiritual things, the smaller they will feel themselves to be, and the smaller they are in their own esteem, the higher they will stand in the estimation of their brethren. When Christians become vain in their imaginations, heady and high-minded, God will provide a way to humble them. They become sensitive, and if their importance is not acknowledged, they are mortified and offended. A gospel course, in such cases, will be very apt to offend them. But wo unto him who shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Jesus. "It were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

As a consideration calculated to impress the solemn admonition more deeply on the minds of the disciples, Jesus added the following emphatic declaration: "For I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." The words **their angels** are the same in signification as **their spirits.** For spirits, when spoken of in distinction from the bodies, are called angels, as in the case of Peter when he had been delivered from prison, he came to the house of Mary, and knocked for admittance. When the damsel affirmed that Peter was at the gate, they thinking it impossible that he could be there in his body, concluded that it was his angel, or spirit, or ghost. In the same manner the word was used by the Saddusees in denying the resurrection of the dead, &c.

God's presence is heaven to all who are born of him, and although our bodies are dead because of sin, the spirit within us, which is born of the Spirit of God, is life, because of righteousness, and although flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, yet we worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. "In heaven," in the spiritual presence of God, the spirit, or angel, of the child of God is in communion with God, in his presence, enjoying his presence, and behold his face, for he reveals himself unto them as he does not to the world. No man hath seen the Father at any time, but the Father reveals his face to the faith of his elect, and every one that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father also; but not with their mortal eyes or natural perceptions. Only to their faith, spirit or angels, is he revealed. Always when in heaven, or in a heavenly frame, they behold his face, and derive all their consolation from his presence, in which they have fullness of joy, and at his right hand they have pleasure forevermore.

Seeing then that these little ones which believe in Jesus are in spirit held in communion with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, how presumptuously wicked for us to despise or offend them. God will avenge them, as his own elect who cry unto him day and night, and they shall certainly triumph over all their enemies.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, February 1, 1868.)

OBITUARIES

MISS IDA MARIE HICKMAN

Miss Marie Hickman answered the call of her Heavenly Father and departed this life on September 26, 1959, in Buckeystown, Maryland, where she made her home with friends.

She was the daughter of the late Thomas and Ida Hickman; and is survived by two

nephews: Thomas and William Hickman. She never united with the church but was a firm believer in the faith and doctrine of the Old School Baptists; and was faithful in her attendance when her health permitted.

The beautiful floral emblems and those assembled to pay their last tribute, showed their love and devotion toward a very dear and loving person.

Funeral services were conducted September 29, 1959, by Elder John D. Wood from the Hylton Funeral Home, in Barnesville, Maryland; and she was laid to rest in Bealesville Cemetery.

"Death is no more a frightful foe;
Since I with Christ shall reign,
With joy I leave this world of woe:
For me to die is gain.

To darkness, doubts, and fears adieu,
Adieu, thou world so vain!
Then shall I know no more of you:
For me to die is gain.

Fain would my raptured soul depart,
No longer here remain,
But dwell, dear Jesus, where thou art:
For me to die is gain."

Written by a friend,
Janet Hawling

T. O. CARTER

Brother Thomas O. Carter was born October 28, 1873, and died December 8, 1958. He was married to Lucy Trent on December 26, 1906.

He spent a long, useful life near Reidsville, North Carolina. He was a farmer, and was a man with a friendly disposition and had good neighbors and friends, as was shown in his last years of feebleness, and in his funeral service and the floral offerings.

He died at the home of his and Lucy's good friends and was well taken care of in his last days. They left a good home on the farm with everything plentiful and pleasant for them both, but after his wife's death (in 1958), he remarked that he did not want to live there anymore. He leaves one sister, one brother and a number of nieces and nephews.

He joined Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church on August 26, 1956, and was baptized on October 28, 1956 by Elder John W. Gilliam, the pastor being out of the State at that time. No one doubted his firm belief in Salvation by Grace.

Brother Carter's funeral was conducted by Elders Spangler and Gilliam at Wilkerson's Funeral Home, and burial was at Trent's Cemetery near by Reidsville. The Reidsville Church feels that the lives of Brother and Sister Carter stand as a memorial to them.

Read and approved by the Reidsvile Church Sept. 12, 1959.

Written by,
Mrs. Kate Mitchell, Church Clerk

ROBERTA PAGE OAKLEY

Sister Oakley was born July 13, 1900, departed this life June 21, 1959, making her stay on earth 58 years, 11 months and eight days. She was married to Claude S. Oakley on January 1, 1919, and leaves to mourn her death her husband; one son, James Oakley of Sutherlin, Virginia; three daughters, Mrs. Earl Heath, Hampton, Virginia; Mrs. Floyd Burton, Burlington, N. C.; and Mrs. Melvin Page of Route #2, Elon College, N. C.; one brother, Roy Page, Route #2, Burlington, N. C.; one sister, Mrs. Ira Stanfield, Route #3, Burlington, N. C.; two half-brothers, A. A. and H. C. Page, Route #2, Burlington, N. C.; ten grandchildren and a host of other relatives and many friends.

Sister Oakley united with the church at Bush Arbor on the second Saturday in May, 1949 and was baptized the following Sunday, and lived a most useful and faithful member, always attending her church meeting as long as she was able.

Sister Oakley was sick for several months, suffering much pain in her body. She often said that her sufferings were not to be compared to that of her Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, for poor lost sinners as she had felt to be. She was made reconciled to God's will to be done, stating that she didn't dread death, but was ready to depart to be with her Lord.

Her funeral was conducted by Elders Harvey Smith, Earnest Oakley, and W. C. King. Her body was laid to rest at Bush Arbor Cemetery, awaiting the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who shall call the sleeping dead to arise from the silent tomb to be made like unto His glorious body, where sickness, suffering, death, and separation will be no more.

FIRST, BE IT RESOLVED, That the church at Bush Arbor bow in humble submission to the will of God who does all things right and makes no mistakes, and that our deepest sympathy be extended to Brother Oakley, her faithful and loving husband, and to each of the children who so loyally and lovingly administered to her every need. May they find the grace of God sufficient for them in the days to come, ever looking to God for comfort and strength.

SECOND, That a copy of this resolution be sent to the bereaved family; a copy to be spread upon our church records; and a copy be sent the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of Bush Arbor Church at her regular conference meeting October 10, 1959.

W. C. King, Moderator
J. D. Simmons, Clerk

ELDER CHARLEY HOSTON EVANS

Elder Charley Hoston Evans was born May 29, 1892, in Elloitt County, Kentucky; the son of the late Elijah Evans and Easter Maggard Evans. He departed this life September 4, 1959, at the age of sixty-seven years. He was a retired employee of North American Refractories Company, of Hayward, Ky.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Jennie Conn Evans, Olive Hill, Ky.; four sons: Sterl, Ironton, Ohio; Alan, Niles, Ohio; Nigel, Dayton, Ohio; and Charles, Jr., Olive Hill. And by three daughters: Mrs. Ester Hall, and Mrs. Sherman Clark, Olive Hill, Ky.; and Mrs. Murl Shumake, Manisfield, Ohio; four brothers: Van, Grayson, Ky.; Bill, Cincinnatti, Ohio; Everett, Ashland, Ky.; and Code Evans, Portsmouth, Ohio; and one sister: Mrs. Ola Parsons, Chillicothi, Ohio. Also by fifteen grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

He united with the Rock Spring Church of Primitive Baptists about forty years ago. I do not have the date of his ordination to the ministry. He was an able gift in preaching, and loved by all who knew him. His request was that I and Elder H. J. Bird, of Charleston, W. Va., preach his funeral. He will be missed by the Baptists and his many friends.

We pray that the Lord will bless his bereaved wife and children.

(Elder) H. L. Rogers

MEMORIAL

WHEREAS, Since we last met in an associated capacity it has been the will and purpose of our heavenly Father, in his infinite wisdom, to remove from this low ground of sorrow our beloved brother and faithful and able minister of the Word, Elder Harold M. Bennett, of the Salisbury Association; and

WHEREAS, Elder Bennett often visited with us here in our Associations and churches, and came declaring the unsearchable riches of Christ, feeding the flock, both sheep and lambs, with the pure word of God, as manna from above, edifying and strengthening us in our most holy faith, and teaching us sound doctrine as believed by the elect; and

WHEREAS, We of the Lexington-Roxbury Association, deeply conscious of our loss and that of the other churches and associations where his gift was richly evidenced by his walk and conversation, bow in humble submission to the omnipotent will of God, thanking him for the gift of Elder Bennett's ministry, and the welfare of Zion. We felt his comforting words as an expression of his having had some knowledge of the sufferings of Christ; and also felt he contended for the faith once delivered to the saints as a faithful minister of the Word. Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we send this tribute in memory of him whom we have loved and cherished, to his bereaved wife, Mrs. Virginia Bennett; and that this Memorial be printed in our minutes; and that a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the Lexington-Roxbury Association September 23, 24, 1959.

Elder A. J. Slauson, Moderator
Edward K. Adsit, Assn. Clerk

BETTIE LEWIS MOORE

The subject of this notice was born in Pitt County, North Carolina, November 12th, 1864, and died on the 9th day of March 1959. Sister Moore was married three times. Her first and second husbands were both named Lewis, but the writer does not know the first names of either. But to one of these unions was born four sons, Walter, Oswell, Herbert, and Hugh Lewis, and one daughter, Mrs. Thad Everette of Fountain, N. C.

According to the date of Sister Moore's birth, and the date of her death, as shown above, she was passed 94 years of age. Sister Moore united with Tyson's Primitive Baptist Church the third Sunday in April of 1932, and was baptized by Elder Joshua Ross, who was Pastor of Tyson's Church at that time. Sister Moore lived a faithful member and attended services when she was able. Sister Moore was in declining health for several years. Before her passing, she lived with her children most of the time. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace and grace alone. The writer and his companion, together with others, visited her in her last illness, tried to sing and pray with her for her comfort and consolation.

RESOLVED, First, that we the members of Tyson's Church bow in humble submission to the will of God our heavenly Father, who doeth all things well, and is too good to be unkind. Second, that a copy of this notice be recorded on Tyson's Church record. Third, that a copy be sent to the family.

This was done by the order of the church in conference, the third Saturday in September, 1959.

W. B. Barnes, Moderator
J. B. Tyson, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 128 DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1960 NO. 1

2713 White Oak Drive
Houston, Texas

". . . so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field."

The thirteenth annual meeting of the four churches composing the Pleasant Valley Association is now past, and I am persuaded were made to sit together in heavenly places. I thought it might make your hearts to rejoice with us to hear in part of the joy and rejoicing manifested at the meeting. God has not forgotten to be gracious to Zion; nor has he left himself without a witness, even in these days of falling away, and the love of many is waxed cold because of the iniquity that abounds. It seemed that all at the association were of one mind, and were all in a measure lifted above the petty trifles of this life, and the indwelling sin subdued and brought under, while the teachings of the Holy Spirit held sway over the lusts of the flesh.

There were five from our little church here in Houston who made the trip. Arriving at Elder Haygood's home at Ballinger, Texas, we met a dear brother from Earth, Texas, and were soon joined by Elder and Sister W. W. Taylor and Brother and Sister Harris, from Dallas; and a little later Elder and Sister Ault and Sister Culpepper arrived. After a bountiful repast, we all proceeded to the church near Lawn, Texas, where we met Elder T. A. Wall, from Atlanta, Texas; Elder Winfry, from Liberal, Kansas; Elder Shipman, from Cisco, Texas, and his son Elder Gerald Shipman, from San Antonio, Texas; and Elder Ballard, from New Braunsville, Texas; and many other brothers and sisters, whom it was a joy to meet in His precious name. Elders Winfrey and Taylor occupied the stand after a number of hymns were sung. They were both blessed to speak the form of sound words wherein Christ is all in all. After the service we dispersed to the several hospitable homes, where we were welcomed graciously and made to feel at home.

We came together on Friday morning, and after singing songs of praise, and prayer by Elder Winfry, the Introductory Sermon was preached by Elder Taylor. He was blessed to set forth in order those things which are surely believed among us, and our souls did feast upon strong meat from the Master's table.

During the three days of the meeting the brethren preached in their turn, and we were made to rejoice, and our hearts did burn within us as the gracious words of the Holy Spirit were wrapped around our hearts as a mantle of love without seam, or beginning or end.

After the services on Saturday a few of the brethern visited in the home of Sister Lawless, who is the only living charter member of that church. She is very feeble and unable to meet with the assembly. Here again we were made to behold the faithfulness of a covenant keeping God: "And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you." (Isa. 46:4). Her face beamed with love and she requested singing, and then preaching. The ministers spoke words of comfort to every soul, I am persuaded, and all to the lifting of Jesus on high, who is our hope of glory.

Elder Haygood spoke last on Sunday, and was lifted in spirit as he bade the saints of God to look beyond this low

ground of sin and sorrow, to the beauties, the rest, and the peace to be entered into when Christ shall come again the second time without sin unto salvation, to take his own unto himself, where they shall ever be with the Lord.

This is only a little remembrance of the precious things we feel were showered upon this poor and afflicted people, whom I am persuaded do hunger and thirst after His righteousnes, though made to know that in themselves they are unworthy of the least of his mercies. We feel of a truth it was good to be there.

Buena V. Wright

(Note: the above is a synopsis of the account written by Sister Wright—Ed.)

Box 304,
Emory, Texas

Signs of the Times,
Dear Brethren:

I see that the gentle reminder asked, "Is it time to renew your subscription?" With me, it is. So herewith my subscription and a donation to the Needy Fund.

I would like to read or hear a sermon sometime on Job's question: "Who has knowledge? Who has understanding?" There have been so many ideas advanced through the years, religiously and politically, that one would be confused as to what life really holds, or what is God's will, if he did not have an anchor.

In hope,
Guy Sisk

THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD

By Elder David Bartley

CONCLUSION

THE SACRIFICES OF THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

THE PRIESTHOOD under the law offered unto God sacrifices of blood and the bodies of slain beasts, which represented the awful fact that they were yet in their sins, and under the wrath of the broken law of the holy Lawgiver. Hence, they were ever trying to make atonement or satisfaction for their sins, and so obtain the favor and blessing of their Sovereign. This is true yet in all forms of legal service in the formal worship of God. But we have seen that such sacrifices could never take away sins, neither was there anything meritorious in them, nor satisfying to the demands of the holy law. But the fact that those legal worshipers trusted in those carnal offerings in sacrifice for their sins, and expected thus to obtain acceptance with God, was both dishonoring and displeasing to him, and he had no delight in them. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of the goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hands to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations: incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and the sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with: it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting." (Isa. 1:11-13) "O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise. For thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering." (Psalms 51:15, 16)

The psalmist David was thus taught of God to look away from anything he could do to atone for his sins; and so he ceased from all his own offerings and works, and said, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit." So he trusted in God, and offered the sacrifice of praise for his mercies, saying, "I will freely sacrifice unto thee: I will praise thy name, O Lord, for it is good." (Psalms 54:6) "But I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble. Unto thee, O my Strength, will I sing: for God is my defence, and the God of my mercy." (Psalms 59:16, 17) "It is a good thing to give thanks unto

the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High: to shew forth thy loving kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night. . . For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work; I will triumph in the works of thy hands. O Lord, how great are thy works!" (Psalms 92:1-5) Thus did David offer the spiritual sacrifice of praise unto God, who had become his salvation, and gave him glory for the greatness of his power and mercy.

How different is this from all worldly religion, and fleshly sacrifice and service, which is ever proclaiming the importance of its works and sacrifices for the Lord. The best people naturally cannot understand that our glorified High Priest unto God has made an end of sin, redeemed from all iniquity, and brought in an everlasting righteousness, and that all the true worshippers of God the Father are complete and accepted in his Son, for whose sake only their sins are put away forever and they are blessed. This perfection and fullness of grace and salvation in Christ Jesus is received by faith only; "not of works"; but the natural tendency of all who lean to their own understanding and worldly wisdom is to rely upon themselves and their religious sacrifices. For they cannot divest themselves of the natural belief that they must bring a price in their hands for their present sins, and make such offering unto God as he will accept, and so reward them with his favor and blessings. This they expect in consideration of their services to him. Indeed, they cannot understand how God will bless them in any other way than this, as a recompence for their sacrifices in his service. While this is a natural principle in all men, it is both legal and selfish; for it seeks and expects a reward, as one who serves another, for which he is entitled to pay. This principle belongs to nature and law, but not to Divine mercy and grace. Therefore, it does not please and honor the God of our Salvation, nor praise his grace; but it does please and honor him who thus brings his offerings of service, and it praises his own works.

In the Lord's new covenant with his people, he says, "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin." (Heb. 10:17, 18) This is true of every spiritual worshipper of God, and of all the people with whom the Lord makes his everlasting covenant; therefore their sacrifices are not offerings for their sins, nor in order to obtain the heavenly blessings. Nay; for so far from this principle and motive obtaining in the kingdom of the saints, all their sins of all their lives have been blotted out in the blood of the Lamb of God, and the Lord is merciful to their unrighteousness. So every reward and blessing they receive flows to them from the riches of his mercy.

Paul calls every new covenant blessing the reward of grace; but of all who expect their works to save them and obtain the blessing he says, "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." (Romans 4:4-8) Thus it is seen that no sin is imputed to the Lord's believing people, whose faith embraces Christ as their righteousness and salvation, in whom their God and Father hath blessed them with the divine and heavenly fullness of his beloved Son, "whom he hath appointed heir of all things," even all spiritual blessings. So they have ceased from their own works for any reward or blessing, knowing that they cannot receive more than Christ's fullness of grace and salvation and blessing, all of which is "grace for grace."

In this humble work of faith and labor of love, as a tribute to the praise

of our Lord's perfect Priesthood, it has been shown that there are only two principles and ways by which the children of men expect to come unto God acceptably, obtain his divine approval and blessing, and secure their own salvation. One way is to appear before God in their own obedience and works of righteousness, and thus enter into his worship and live in his favor. The Pharisee that went up to the temple of God to worship, very truly represents all who thus approach unto God. The other way of approach unto him in worship is, as expressed and sung by Toplady:

> "Nothing in my hand I bring!
> Simply to Thy cross I cling."

This way is to come unto God in the obedience and righteousness of the crucified Christ, whose dying words on the cross were, "It is finished." The publican, who likewise went up to the temple to pray, and contritely said, "God be merciful to me, a sinner," truly represents all who seek acceptance with God in the name and righteousness of his obedient Son, and ask forgiveness and every blessing of God for Christ's sake.

The people who are thus saved and blessed in the Lord Jesus, in whom they are complete, are ordained of God to offer up to him spiritual and acceptable sacrifices, not in time only, but more gloriously in holy eternity. In this conclusion, therefore, it is appropriate to briefly sum up the sacrifices unto God the Father of "The redeemed of the Lord."

In the solemn words of adoration: "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever," our Lord himself has taught us the true sacrificial worship of all the saints. This ascribes all salvation and blessing, power and glory to God alone, and to him all praise is due. These are the joyful sacrifices of his saints. They praise God, from whom all blessings flow. They give him honor and glory for all his majestic greatness, holiness and goodness. There is no place in their hearts for any other sentiment than the sacrifice of thanksgiving and praise to his reverend and holy name. They freely and with rapturous melody offer the grateful devotion of their loving and loyal hearts to their God and King, for all his glorious power and grace in their salvation from their numerous sins and foes, and for his surpassing love bestowed upon them in making them his children, and the inheritors of his holiness and blessedness. They can do no more. Less they would not render unto their blessed God and loving Father, who has so wondrously manifested to them his glory. They adoringly realize that they are infinitely indebted to the God of salvation for all his divine mercies and blessings, and that the free streams of his unmerited love and goodness are ever flowing to them from their compassionate Sovereign and Saviour; so that they are under ever-increasing and unceasing obligations of adoring love, and the holy sacrifice of grateful praise to their Lord, whose glory is above the heavens. The language of their hearts is: "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord."

"He is thy praise, and he is thy God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things, which thine eyes have seen." "I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving." "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee." "Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power. Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness."

That God should be praised and glorified forever in all his saints, is the holy design and end unto which he ordained them, and new-created them in the life and likeness of his beloved and holy Son. Thus he formed them for himself, his holy workmanship, redeemed from the earth, born from heaven; a royal priesthood and holy nation, that they should glorify him in the highest, and

be holy and happy forever in his perfect love. For it is fully shown in the revealed will of God that his excellent purpose and the crowning glory of all his wonderful works, as consummated in the eternal redemption of all his people, is, that their supreme bliss shall be in his everlasting praise and glory. Therefore to Zion the Lord says, "Thou shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God." "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." "So have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel, . . . saith the Lord; that they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory." "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: that we should be to the praise of his glory." Paul then testifies that we are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise in our hearts, "which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." Thus it is seen that the praise of God's glory in all the redeemed in Christ is the crowning purpose of the Holy One in all his works of creation and redemption, which are the unfolding of his eternal power and Godhead. And so the Father Almighty shall be glorified forever in all his saints through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Come, and let us by faith view the innumerable multitude of the people of the saints of the Most High, as they stand in his presence in white robes of salvation and righteousness, the general assembly and church of the First-born, arrayed in holiness and divine beauty as the sons of God, the royal and holy priesthood, offering up to him their blessed sacrifice of praise, all uniting in heavenly harmony and saying, "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty; . . . because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned." This view will inspire our spirit with praise to God and the Lamb for his everlasting love, the riches of his mercy and the power of his grace, in thus bringing home unto life and glory and bliss his dispersed people from all the earth, the redeemed in Christ, the children of the Most High, the heirs of the immortal kingdom of the saints in holy heaven. O how this transporting vision of the holy priesthood in heaven inspires the heart to love and praise God in the highest and give him glory! so that we would freely unite with the psalmist in saying, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake." O how wonderfully the Lord has glorified himself in the full salvation of all his redeemed and glorified saints!

"And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." This woman is the church, the queen of heaven, adorned with the celestial radiance of life and light from her Divine Lord, with all the shadows and darkness of the moon or law of death put under her feet, and her days of mourning ended in songs of salvation, joy and gladness.

> "O blest the men, blest their employ,
> Whom Thy indulgent favor raise
> To dwell in those abodes of joy,
> And sing Thy never-ceasing praise!"

"So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him. . . The King's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needle work." This is said of the righteousness of saints, the holy garments of salvation, compared to fine linen, clean and white,

with which all this holy people and heavenly family of priests shall be enrobed and made glorious.

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful."

"After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne . . . and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen."

"O that with yonder sacred throng
We at his feel may fall;
We'll join the everlasting song,
And crown him LORD of all!"

(This concludes the **Priesthood of the Son of God**, by Elder Bartley; and we hope it has been interesting and profitable to our brethren. — Ed.)

Bassett, Virginia

Dear Elder Wood:

Enclosed you will find a writing headed, **The Obligations of Church Members,** found in the papers of the late Deacon G. E. Blankenship, which was given to his daughter, Sister Rlee Houchins; and, having her consent, I would like for you to publish it in the Signs of the Times, that more of the brethren might have opportunity to read it. To me it sets forth the true obligations of the members to their church, everywhere and at all times. . . To me this is taking heed unto one's self and the doctrine, and also the order of the Lord's house.

Yours in hope,
(Elder) C. E. Turner

THE OBLIGATIONS OF CHURCH MEMBERS

The privilege of membership in the church of Christ is a great one indeed. The church furnishes a safeguard against the temptations of the world when its privileges and obligations are understood. Having the association of the people of God and hearing the gospel preached, is a great comfort. That this privilege may be continued and enjoyed, certain obligations are assumed by those who become members of the church.

ATTENDANCE. The church could be of no benefit to the members, nor to the world, if the members did not meet together; hence arises the obligation of attendance at the regular meetings of the church. Paul gives a rule which should be observed by all the members of the church, "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some it." (Hebrews 10:25) Neglect of this duty is discouraging to the church and to the pastor. We should consider that this is a service we owe; and when we are "making" excuses for staying away, we should consider whether it is valid, and to remember that the Lord knows the very thoughts and intents of the heart — would He have approved it? The searching test, Would the Lord excuse me? ought to be ever before us.

We may be tempted to stay away because of what someone has done, or not done. But are we justified in treating the services of God with contempt

because of what someone in the world does? We are not serving men, but God; and what we do should be done as unto Him, and not as unto men. It is a matter of great importance that churches are justified in requiring their members to attend the meetings; or that they have justifiable grounds for staying away. If the members have the right feeling about it, they will be willing to let the church pass on their reasons for missing the meetings.

THOUGHTFUL OF EACH OTHER. It is the duty of members to be thoughtful of each other. We should think more of the members of the church than we do of the people of the world; and we should show it by our actions. If one of the members is sick, other members should at once show their love and kindness by doing whatsoever may be needful to be done for the comfort of the sick. Jesus showed a sympathetic nature, and helped and comforted the sick. They were glad to see his face, and hear his voice. His followers should walk in his steps. Let the sick see your face and hear your voice, and feel the willingness of your hands to help them.

RESPECT FOR THE PASTOR. The church members should show proper respect to the pastor of the church. While he is not to be considered infalliable, yet if the Holy Ghost has made him "overseer" of the church, and the church has recognized that appointment by a "call" to the pastorate, his counsel should be sought and his instructions followed, unless positively contrary to the teachings of the word of God; and in such case the matter should be discussed with him seriously. It is contrary to the word of God to treat the pastor lightly, and to pass his advice and instructions by with contempt. No doubt in many cases neither the pastor nor the church has given the office the consideration they ought. The pastor should receive enough financial assistance that he may devote the necessary time to his pastorial work.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS. Every member of the church should realize that there is expense connected with the keeping up of a church and its services, and be honorable with the other members in bearing such burdens. It is not any more honorable in a member to let others pay in the church what he himself should justly pay, than in a business way to fail to pay his just debts! None can bear more than he is able, and we should not expect all to bear an equal amount, but we should not expect others who are in no better circumstances than ourselves, to bear more than we do. We should make it our business to know that we are bearing our share: it does not show a becoming interest in the church to be indifferent in this matter. The following questions should be asked by each member, and he should not be satisfied until he is informed on each of them:

1. How much should this church expend for incidental expenses, and toward helping the pastor?

2. Is the church meeting its obligations?

3. Am I bearing as much of this according to my circumstances as other members are according to their circumstances?

Not to desire to share equally with other church members according to our ability, is to shrink the responsibility which we solemnly assumed when we asked the church to let us become members. If we are not willing to bear the obligations of membership, we should hesitate to take the privileges and comforts of membership. It is so easy and pleasant when the members consult one another, and all are willing to do what is right. We have no heavy salaries to meet, and we should meet our expenses cheerfully. A church home is what the members make it. If they are selfish, contrary, covetous, and peevish, and do not bridle their tongue, it will become unpleasant and a burden instead of a joy. If they are loving, kind, and forbearing, like the Master, it will be a pleasant place, a glad retreat from the world, where the pure, sweet song of peace and love is sung, and the pres-

ence of God is enjoyed.

CARE FOR THE POOR. The members of the church should be careful to look after the poor. Though it is especially the duties of the deacons to relieve immediate needs of the poor, it is the duty of every member of the church to be thoughtful in this direction, and to keep the deacons supplied with funds when there is need; and then give personal attention to the poor who may feel to be neglected. The Master was himself very tender toward the poor, and we cannot feel that he would at all approve our course if we neglect them.

TO BE LOVING AND KIND. The members of the church should be very loving and kind toward each other. They are brethren, and they should treat each other as members of one family. This will require that they be forbearing, for there is none perfect. Should we require perfection in others, it would be more than we could give in return, and it would be very unkind of us. We should be forgiving, for we shall need to ask others to be forbearing and forgiving towards us. Jesus taught his disciples to pray to be forgiven even as they forgave others.

SHOULD BEAR PERSONAL WRONG. We should make a distinct difference between bad treatment of ourselves by members, and conduct which shows disrespect for the church, and is hurtful to its interests. We can afford to carry a great deal ourselves, but we must not sit by and see others tear down the home which has been established for all the children. The Saviour bore personal abuse silently, but when he went into the Temple and saw it being profaned, he drove out those who showed no respect for his Father's house. If we reverse this, and give a great deal of concern to what others may do to us, but show little interest as to what the church must suffer, we shall not be following the Master.

THE CHILDREN. The members of the church should encourage those who have a hope in Christ, to come to the church, if they receive the preaching of the cross gladly. Especially should this interest be shown toward their own children, the Lord having laid it upon his people to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. They should use every endeavor to keep their children from hurtful associations with such things as will prejudice them against the truth, and the true church. While they cannot regenerate their children, nor be the means of it, yet they should seek to do their whole duty by their children as regards the teaching of the word of God; and especially so when there is evidence that they have been enlightened by the Holy Spirit.

(The above was copied from papers found after the death of Deacon G. E. Blankenship, of Pine Forest Church, near Copper Hill, Virginia. "Strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." (Hebrews 5:14 — J. D. W.)

NORFOLK CHURCH DESIRES ASSISTANCE

2 November 1959

Dear Elder Spangler,

The deterioration of the walls of our church has forced us to endeavor to try to build a new building. Since we will not be able to rebuild on the same lot, it has become necessary to locate and buy a suitable lot to build upon. The lot has been located and a retainer fee paid.

Since a number of our members are elderly and they have very little if any income, it is necessary for us to ask for help. It is therefore, requested that you appeal to our people through your paper, and we pray it will please Almighty God not only to furnish the will but the do necessary for us to accomplish this task.

All contributions may be sent to Sister Orie Elliott, 858 West 38th Street, Norfolk, Virginia.

Your kind cooperation in this matter will be greatly appreciated by all.

The Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church
Ruby E. Coward, Church Clerk

CONTRIBUTORS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To November 1, 1959)

W. M. Rushing, Ala.	$1.00
W. R. Wallis, Miss.	2.00
Mrs. A. T. Couch, Ala.	5.00
Verda Machesney, Kansas	5.00
Elmer Hastings, Md.	8.00
Mrs. C. C. Tomlinson, Del.	2.00

Danville, Virginia January, 1960

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ANOTHER NEW YEAR

At the beginning of another year and another volume of the Signs of the Times, we send greetings to our brethren and friends everywhere. We cannot wish for them greater things than the continuation of the Lord's blessings, which, coupled with the realization that they are unmerited, give rise to praise and adoration of His great and holy name.

What the coming year holds for us no mortal knows: "My times are in thy hand", David owned. And Solomon wrote, "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven;" and that God "hath made everything beautiful in his time". These things we fully believe; and are made glad.

Sensible of past mercies, and mindful of His promises, we approach the morrows with joyful anticipation. We, "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus".

That which we cannot know of our earthly course is tempered with, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world"; and, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also".

May we each be given grace to "pass the time of our sojourneying here in fear"; and to remember that it is by the grace of God that we are what we are.

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" (Isaiah 53:1)

To get a lot of head shaking, it is only necessary to make a report about Jesus. The mentioning of Jesus, or of his cause, or of our own walk and talk in and about Zion, will bring about the same reaction now that the crucifixion of the Saviour brought among the mob that did the work. The treatment that the Saviour got while here in the world, is the treatment that his followers will get while here in the world. There may not be a discernable difference between those that follow the circumcism of the flesh and those that follow that which is in the heart, but, mark my words well, it is nevertheless there. If it is not there, if there is not a marked, bitter, and vitriolic reaction to those that are demanding a strict 'thus saith the Lord' as the true criterion of their action and judgment, it will be much better to take an inventory of our position.

He was not of the world. And, in a precious sense of the word, none of his followers are of the world. Yet, there is a special sense in which those that endeavor to maintain true doctrine, true order, true practice, will ever come under the venomous attacks of those that are not satisfied to dwell in the house of the Lord, to have and use the furnishings of that house as it was bequeathed to them by their Lord and Master. It is a strange quirk of the most

recent departure, that the adherents of that departure are the most bitter and vituperative of all the enemies of the truth. This quirk of nature is increased and caused to abound by calling attention to it. It is the quirk of nature that is of the world and abounds among worldlings; it is the quirk of nature that crucified the Lord of glory; it is the quirk of nature that will, if not restrained, crucify those that hew the closest to the line.

We will see this disregard for the word of a brother even by his closest associates. From one standpont, it does look like that more oxen are determined to gore to death other oxen in the Old School Baptist Church than any other organization on earth. The pitiful part of it is, that a great many claim that it is a mark of the true church for such a practice to go on; that if one can be gored to death it proves conclusively that they should be gored to death, and the last, and the most cruel and inhuman and ridiculous and ungodly argument of all, is that if you do not think it is all right for oxen to gore each other to death, that you are a weak predestinarian. May God deliver the true oxen from such puny arguments, and above everything else, may we be delivered from having to listen at such rotten stuff palmed off on us as the doctrine of God our Saviour.

"Who hath believed our report." Gossip will be given a better hearing than the brother's own words. If a brother gives his own opinion and interpretation of a situation, or of a text, or of an event, who will believe his report? Some will, but many will twist what he says, take his words out of their setting, put words in his mouth he had no intention of saying, and then will receive, and gloat over, the words of the busybodies, letter scavengers, gossipmongers, and hate peddlers.

Now this situation is tied in with the latter part of the text. It is a situation that is prevalent in the world, in the church; it is to be found in just one place. That place is where the arm of the Lord has *not* been revealed. Contentiousness is not a sign that the arm of the Lord has been revealed to the contentious; striving about words to no profit is not a sign that the arm of the Lord has been revealed to the lover of strife; the unjust and malicious and destructive criticism of a brother's action, or his writing, or his preaching, does not show a revelation of the arm of the Lord to those who would thus use a brother.

A report of Jesus will be joyfully received by those that the arm of the Lord has been revealed to and in. The first prerequisite for believing the report of the true servant of God, is to have seen the hand that wrote our condemnation and sentence of death. God, by the mouth of the prophet, said, "And I looked, and there was none to help — therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me." The look of God has got to be seen and felt by each poor sinner. Not only is he made to realize that he cannot save himself, but he is blessed to see the arm of the Lord that brings salvation. The sower may go forth and sow much gospel seed; the poor servants of the Lord may spend and be spent in preaching the gospel of peace, but this report about the salvation that is in Jesus, this peace that was obtained for us by the shedding of his blood will not, nor can be, received and believed until the arm of the Lord has first been revealed.

This revelation of the arm of the Lord is a spiritual work, as it is a spiritual work for us to put our hands in the hole in his side. The most speculative and imaginative among us could not say that we now put our natural hand into his side, and yet those that forbid us to spiritualize the Scriptures can not deny that believers are thus now blessed to *feel* the hands and feet and side of Jesus. How pleasant it is to notice the credulity on the faces of our listeners. Doubtless many dear servants of God have noted for years the mark of indif-

ference and unbelief that was shown for years in the face of listeners, only to have that look changed. The restlessness was into restfulness, the listlessness into a leaning forward to grasp every word said. The report about the saving grace of God and the efficacy in the shed blood of Jesus had not been believed, and then it was received as good news from a far country. Why all this? The arm of the Lord had been revealed.

The absence of believing a report does not exonerate one from blame. The report has gone out to all the ends of the earth. There are no languages that this report has not been spoken in. (Ps. 19:3, 4). The barren condition today of many Old School Baptist Churches is not a sign of the members and believers being vindicated in their lack of interest. Rather it is an indication of their condemnation. But a few believe our report; but few attend our services from Main to West Texas. That much of the country I can speak for with first hand knowldege, gained by being in attendance. The person that blames the Lord, or the Lord's purposes, or the Lord's ministers, or that attempts to lay the blame on extenuating circumstances is not possessed with that religion which works by love and in which the requirements are done by faith.

It used to be that he that was of God heard the ministers of God. Has that rule been changed? When? By whom? By what authority? On one occasion the people would see Jesus (John 12: 21); on many pleasant scenes we look back when the church was in a lovely session and the report about Jesus was being well received. As far as I remember, the servant of Abraham did not broadcast the desire for a bride for Isaac; as far as I remember, he did not visit around over that country inviting all of the young maidens to go and be the wife of Isaac; as far as I remember, that servant was sworn to go *only* to one place, to one family, for this bride. Would any of my readers be so simple as to think that any other maiden *could* have savingly heard what the servant said to Rebeccah? Would any one reason that the servant of the Lord would have had a hearing of his report about Isaac's riches from any other maiden?

The gospel was heard by three thousand on the day of Pentecost. The arm of the Lord had been revealed unto each of them. The ones that belonged to the Lord in Corinth heard Paul; the ones in Antioch that were ordained to eternal life believed. He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. The arm of the Lord had been revealed to these people, and, as a result, they believed the report about Jesus. Everywhere that the gospel has been preached, he to whom the arm of the Lord had been revealed, b e l i e v e d the report. Again, let me say that this is the way it used to be. Those, and only those, that had been visited by the revelation of Jesus Christ, have, in the past, believed the report of the prophets. This report has ever been the same. It has been Jesus all the way; it is still Jesus and Him crucified. Where it has been Jesus preached, the report has been believed and has ever been a herald of good tidings to the poor and needy. The rich do not need, have no promise of it, would not want it if it was proffered them. The poor have the gospel preached unto them, and they receive it and believe.

To those, and only to them, that this report comes to, and is believed, and to whom the arm of the Lord is revealed, is there a behaviour in keeping with the followers of the Lamb. There is a lot of lip service going the rounds; there are a lot of people that have nothing to do but act as scavengers. They have not received the report; they have not had the arm of the Lord revealed to them. I know that these are still in the land. They were recognized by our Lord as encamping around the afflicted people of God. The ancient followers of the Lord had them to contend with, for their lo here and lo there was to be heard on every side. Today, the church

of the First Born has them still, and the command from Him is still the same, Believe them not. The sound of their trumpet can be heard on every street corner; it is a familiar cry on the air; it is on all sheets purported to be heralds of the gospel; it wedges and edges itself behind the sacred desks of true churches, but the sound of it, wherever heard, is an uncertain sound, and is not to be believed. This uncertain sound is always accompanied by actions that belie the thing revealed. Invariably, these actions show that the belief has been gained by the teachings of men, and not by a revelation of the Lord's arm.

As far as the hearing and believing of the reports of the servants of God it will show us for what we are. We do not practice the religion of Jesus Christ in order to be followers of Jesus Christ. Our attending to, our following after, our complying with, our doing or practice, does show what we are. We will treat those of our brethren who preach the gospel, in the manner that the principle in us desires. If love is in action, it will give a brother a fair hearing; if it is not, what he says, the way he says it, who he says it to, will not have any weight. Instead of believing the report of our brethren, we will *make* reports about them. This will show so clearly among those purported to be the children of God.

To the unregenerated, the dead and alienated sinner, there will likewise be unbelief. This is expected. They have not professed an interest in the love of God; they have not shown that they had had the arm of God revealed to them. This shows to us that our nature is not acquainted with the things of God before regeneration; it will be found in the actions of men everywhere that have not been wrought upon by the same power that raised Jesus from the dead.

This unbelief in unborn-again-men brings home so forcibly that the arm of the Lord has not been revealed to them. This unbelief in born-again-men shows that the nature of men has not been born again. However, it also shows something else when it is the rule of action in them. They are, by their words, born again, but by their action, still in their sins. Thus, all unbelievers are in the same condition. The arm of the Lord has not been revealed to one; it is hid from the other. Both are helpless.

To those that have had the arm revealed to them, and that arm *upholding* them, they will believe the report of the brethren as to things among the subjects of the kingdom, and they will believe the report about the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ. It will be pleasant to hear from and about the brethren; it will be pleasant to hear about the saving grace of God which is *now* made manifest by the appearing of Jesus Christ.

The lack of belief in the brethren will be condemnatory of them. God can not be held in blame for this lack. Where the arm of the Lord has been revealed, there will not be any desire to blame Him. The seemingly lack of belief among those of the world can not be construed that God has forsaken His church, or that the church is to die, but the belief of the report shows His sovereign grace and power and purpose in giving them to believe. The lack of them having belief shows just as conclusively His sovereignty in withholding.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS LIKE THE GREAT MOUNTAINS

"Thy righteousness is like the great mountains." — Psalm 36:6.

My text is a very important and a very solemn one; it contains truths exceedingly precious to those who have an interest in the great God our Savior. When the psalmist compares the righteousness of God to the great mountains, these mountains are used in Scripture

figuratively to express eminence, strength, stability, and firmness. Babylon, which was raised to such a high pitch of grandeur and power, is called a great mountain; and frequently the heads of nations, who are by the providence of God raised so much higher than others, are compared to mountains. But that which I believe to be meant by the psalmist in my text, is the strength, stability, firmness, &c., of the righteousness of God. In Psalm cxxv. it is said, "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abideth forever;" and, "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth and forever." Yet the Lord says that these mountains, notwithstanding their firmness and stability, shall be removed; but though this shall be so, "though the mountains depart and the hills be removed," yet "my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." Hence the psalmist here compares the righteousness of God to the great mountains, to show the firmness, stability and immutability of it. The righteousness of God respects the perfect holiness, purity and justice of his nature; but there are several acts of righteousness which flow from that perfection of the divine nature, which are called the righteousness of God, because those righteous acts manifest the righteous nature of God. And I believe the psalmist more respects those righteous acts than that perfection of the divine nature, although that is principally mentioned; because all his righteous acts flow from his perfect holiness, purity and truth. To make this as plain as I can, I will endeavor to show what other Scriptures say of his righteousness; for though I often take my texts from the Old Testament, I get my discourses principally from the New Testament, because that is as a key to unlock the treasures contained in the Old Testament.

The apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Romans, ascribes righteousness to the sovereign acts of almighty God, which are his own perfect right, as Creator and Lord over all his creatures; they being all his work, must all be subjects to his dominion, for him to do what seemeth good in his sight with them. The apostle treats of this in Romans ix., where he shows that though the greater part of the Jews rejected Christ and his gospel, yet there was a remnant among them, according to the election of grace, who were children of the living God by eternal predestination; and in consequence of that eternal determination of Jehovah they were redeemed from under the law by the blood of Christ, that they might receive the adoption of sons, and they were favored by God with the spirit of adoption, to witness to them that they were interested in such a great, perfect and almighty Savior.

Although the Jews were privileged with the oracles, the prophets, and the service of God, and though of them "Christ came who is over all, God blessed forever," yet the apostle knew that this objection would be raised. How is it that this so highly favored people should now be despisers and rejecters of the gospel, and Messiah the subject of the gospel? Well, says he, "They are not all Israel that are of Isarel, neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children." I mean that the children of the flesh, the lineal descendants of Abraham, "these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." For this is the word of promise: "At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son. And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Now mind: "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with

God?" Why, Paul, there are thousands of preachers, and tens of thousands of professors, now-a-days, who would tell thee that there is unrighteousness with God. If God, foreseeing neither their good nor bad works, as the cause of love to the one or hatred of the other, it is tyranny, partiality, injustice, not giving all a chance. All this has been said, and it is in print. But Paul asks, "Is there unrighteousness with God?" Hear his answer: "God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." The inference he draws from the whole is, "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Here the apostle is ascribing righteousness to the Most High, who is the Creator of heaven and earth, and therefore has dominion over all the works of his hands, and a right to do with them what seems good to himself. God has left these truths upon record in his word, in order that they might be made known; and those preachers who profess to believe them, and do not preach them, for fear of their doing harm, are guilty of almost as great a sin as it is possible for them to commit; for it is setting up their wisdom, holiness and goodness above those glorious attributes of the eternal Jehovah, as if the omniscient God could not foresee the consequences of publishing and making known these solemn truths. But if the truths I have mentioned be the word of God, then how awful that the God of heaven should publish a truth that his poor, blind creatures, who in their own eyes are so wise, so holy, and have such regard for the honor of God, that they should think it right to smuggle it up and not preach it. Surely this is an awful sin, and shows their ignorance of it, their disbelief of it, or their dislike of it, as it prevents them having a large congregation to get them a good living; for such is the awful pride of man that he cannot submit to be at the disposal of the almighty God.

But whether they will have this truth or not, it stands fast as the mountains, and to this day the Lord has some of his own sent servants who publish it; and facts also loudly proclaim it, for how many of the great and learned and wise of this world are left in nature's blindness, darkness and death; while God will take some of the scum of mankind, some of the vilest sinners, and at once put a stop to their evil course, the blessed Spirit working in them, until he brings them humble penitents to the feet of Jesus, true believers in his name, unfeigned lovers of God, heartily devoted to his cause, and glorifying his blessed name by thanking him with all their powers of heart and soul for the grace with which he has been pleased to favor them.

The Most High God has a supreme right to do with his creatures as seemeth good to himself, however unseemly it may, through the ignorance and pride of fallen man, seem in his sight. It was the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of wisdom, who directed the apostle to leave the solemn truth on record; for he did not write it as a fallible man, who might be mistaken, but as an amanuensis of the Holy Spirit, as a pen in the Spirit's hand. Of the Corinthians Paul says, "Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart." This, blessed be God, some of us are witnesses of to this day, for at times we sit and hear the preacher just like a person who has a pen in his hand, but without ink: he writes, but it leaves no impression; but when the blessed Spirit is pleased to take the pen in his hand, and accompany the preaching of his truth with his blessed teaching, it leaves such an impression upon the heart that with the mouth we make confession unto salvation. Every scholar in the school of Christ is an epistle of Christ, known and read of all men; but, then, all men here must be rightly understood, or facts would contradict Scripture, and

Scripture cannot contradict facts. They are known and read of all those who are capable of reading, all who have been taught to read by the blessed Spirit. You must not think I mean to read letters. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them." He that is spiritual judgeth all things." If you put these passages together, and do not limit all to those taught by the Holy Spirit to read, you will cause the two passages to clash. The carnal man knows not the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them; therefore the spiritual man cannot be judged by him. Words cannot be plainer. Hence the poison of the serpent has been employed, with all the sophistry possible, to soften the truth, and make it palatable to the natural mind; but all this will not do. God will not have a proud, empty creature to regulate his truth. I say the words are direct, that as those two "children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."

If election were of works, it would make it uncertain, our enemies themselves being judges, for by their scheme it is uncertain who will believe or who will not; and even after some did believe, they may not hold out to the end, for they may make shipwreck of their faith at the last. Therefore it must be uncertain, to God as well as man, for even God could not know a thing certainly, unless that thing certainly takes place; but to ascribe want of knowledge to the infinitely wise Jehovah, is dreadful blasphemy. The words are plain, that as it is from first to last the work of God to fulfill the eternal counsel of his will, this makes his choice as stable as the great mountains. If the accomplishment of his everlasting appointment of his people to salvation depends upon Jehovah himself, he being almighty, it is impossible it can fail. If God from eternity determined, in the fullness of time, to send his Son to die for his people, to bear the punishment of their sins, to redeem them from under the law, from death, and from the wrath to come, and the Son perfectly accomplished this his Father's will, this makes their salvation sure and certain.

In addition to this, that his people might be brought to the knowledge and experience of these covenant blessings, God's providence, and God's Spirit and grace, go hand in hand in causing them to hear and know the joyful sound, to know it by his operation, to have faith wrought in their hearts to receive it, to love it, and to embrace it in their affection; for he circumcises the heart to love him, with the circumcision not made with hands. "He is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter." "In whom (Christ) ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands." If God thus breaks up the fallow ground of the heart, circumcises the heart to love him, gives the Spirit as a Comforter to abide with him forever, to incline and enable him to worship God, who is a Spirit, in spirit and in truth, to love God, to trust in him, to pray to and praise God, to be dependent upon God for everything, both in providence and in grace, and to abide in him, to preserve him in all opposition from the powers of the world, the flesh and the devil, until the whole work is completed, the body raised, and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ, and soul and body are presented blameless before the Lord, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, this causes that glorious act of divine sovereignty, which Jehovah has a right to put forth, to be like the great mountains, which cannot be moved. That sweet passage of Scripture of which we have heard, (for sweet it is to the children of God,) however grating it be to the children of the flesh, yet did men feel it and enjoy it, they could not spit out their venom against such blessed truth, but

they would be singing the high praises of God, crying with humility of soul, "O Lord, why me, why me? Whyever has thy love reached such a vile rebel as I? Only because for so it seemed good in thy sight." The Savior expresses the same acts of divine sovereignty, not in a murmuring, but grateful way. "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes;" and this "because it seemed good in thy sight." O how blessed are those souls who are thus favored with this revelation! They have cause to bless God for humbling their hearts, not only to submit to, but to delight in this glorious truth, for they find all their salvation depends upon it.

The ever-blessed Spirit, being perfect in knowledge, foresaw all the objections that would be raised by proud mortals against the truth; therefore he inspired the blessed apostle to show that God's love was not fixed upon us on account of our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began, and also that his purpose according to election might stand, that all those might be saved whom he chose to salvation.

It is true, works are spoken of. Isaiah the prophet speaks of them; he says, "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us, for thou also hast wrought all our works in us." But these are works of God's grace; not the cause of his choice, but the effects of it. These works are wrought in his people that his purpose might stand, that all those whom he hath appointed to salvation might be saved. This is all of grace; for all the good wrought in us and done by us, it is the blessed Spirit and the grace of God that is the cause of all, and these works are the effects of his grace. This being the case, it makes it an undoubted right of Jehovah to do what he may please with his creatures. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." And that "he showeth mercy to whom he will show mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." This is what God reveals that is to be believed, for what comes from God must be truth. Of all the truths in the word of God, none can be more comforting or soul-establishing than this to a poor, humble sinner, who is enabled by God to venture his all upon the mercy of God through Christ. Jehovah himself says, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure;" and, "God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." What a sweet, condescending description is this of those interested in his counsel! They are poor, sensibly wretched sinners, in danger of God's wrath. God's voice comes to them, "Flee from the wrath to come!" But ah, Lord, whither shall we flee? Flee to the Savior of sinners, who bore your sins in his own body on the tree, he who has procured pardon and peace for the ungodly, for those who are without strength, for those who are enemies to God, and rebel against the Majesty of heaven. Hearing of this sovereign grace, for sovereign it is, for God was by no means bound to send his Son to die for such wretches; but these poor sinners, hearing of this sovereign grace, they are enabled by the blessed Spirit to betake themselves to this Rock for shelter. These are the heirs of promise, which they became by an eternal act of predestinating grace. God has promised to teach these heirs of promise, to clothe them, to feed them, to chastise them, to put their feet in the way of peace, to preserve them in it, and finally to bring them to the inheritance prepared for them of old. "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

In consequence of God's everlasting decree, they become heirs of promise;

but until it pleases God to regenerate us, we are totally ignorant of this, unconcerned about it, callous in heart and thoughtless about it. But when it pleases God to give us light in our understanding, when he quickens and puts life into our souls, and causes us to hear, and to know the joyful sound of a free, full, perfect and everlasting salvation, to every sinner who is enabled to come to God by Jesus Christ, the blessed Spirit causes the soul to flee to that almighty refuge. When it pleases the good Lord to break the hard heart, to humble the proud spirit, to quicken the dead soul, to give sight to the blind eyes, to enlighten those who sit in darkness, to show them their danger, and the awful storm that hangs over their head, the blessed Spirit enables them to flee to the hope set before them, even Christ and him crucified, for he is the hope of Israel.

This is, I think, a real Scriptural account of the righteousness of God, in his dealings with his rebellious creatures; for in disposing of their eternal state the apostle asks, "Is there unrighteousness with God?" Some would reply, "If you say that God foresaw that Jacob would be good, and Esau bad, therefore he loved the one and hated the other, there could be no unrighteousness with him; but if you say, without consideration of this goodness or vileness, God manifested a right to do as the potter, of one piece of clay to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor, there is unrighteousness with him; it is partiality, injustice". And shall a poor worm of the earth have this right, and a proud, rebellious wretch dare to deny the Lord over all the right he has over his lumps of clay? For we are nothing else, formed by the Creator out of the dust of the ground. "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God?" Yes, say thousands, there evidently is. God ought to deal with men as they are. If they do good, let them be rewarded, and punished if they do evil. But here is the grand point. Who makes the good good? I have labored to control my thoughts, to get rid of evil thoughts, and have my mind set upon good ones; for unless God stays my mind, I cannot continue to fix my thoughts for ten minutes together. Particularly at night, I have tried to keep my mind upon spiritual things, but in spite of all my endeavors it has wandered to vain thoughts; I could not keep it stayed upon good things. I may be weaker and viler than others; but when I go to the Scriptures I find I am like Paul, not sufficient to think a good thought. "When I would do good, evil is present with me. The good that I would, I do not; but the evil that I hate, that do I." That God has a right to dispose of his creatures as seemeth good in his sight, the word of God is plain, and what he does must be righteous. Well, then, blessed are those who are enabled to take the consolation of this glorious truth; for to those whom he hath appointed to salvation, and whom he brings into the way of salvation, that he might manifest to them that he has not appointed them to wrath, what can be more comforting, more supporting, or more soul-establishing, than that the purpose of God is stable, fixed and immutable, like the great mountains? I believe I never had a more humble spirit, never more abhorred myself, never more dearly loved my God, my thanks to him never were warmer, or my soul more comforted, than under this consideration, that the good Lord had revealed his purpose concerning me in this passage, "I will not turn away from thee to do thee good."

At times, notwithstanding all my cries, tears, and diligence in his ways, he has kept me at a distance from him. At other times, when I have expected some rod for my wandering from him, to my surprise he has spoken pardon and peace to my soul, and caused me to weep with tears of joy and gratitude that, in spite of all my rebellion against him, and my hard thoughts of him on the one hand, and on the other my cries and tears, the good Lord has gone on doing me good, and he will not turn

away from it. This is a sovereign act of God, entirely of his own good pleasure; hence he says, "Not for your sakes do I this, be it known unto you, but for my own name's sake." It is for my own sake that I save you, that I may to eternity manifest all my glorious perfections in your everlasting salvation. This is such a stable revelation of God's righteousness, that it is for the strong consolation of every soul who has been enabled to flee with wings of God's gift to the refuge set before them. Thy righteousness is like the great mountains, fixed firm and stable, and, says God, I will not remove it, and man cannot.

God bless what has been spoken, for Jesus' sake.

(The above appeared in the Signs in 1882, with the following notation: "The foregoing notes on a sermon preached by the late Mr. Samuel Turner, Sept. 1, 1850, at Sunderland, England, we copy from the Gospel Standard for February, 1882."

We thought it worthy of re-publication — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. DELIA BATES BURNS

Mrs. Delia Bates Burns died July 4, 1958, at McGuffy Nursing Home, the Lord having called her from this world. She is survived by the following children: Mrs. E. N. Head, Mrs. F. N. Sanders, Mrs. Eugene Holmes, Mrs. J. D. Howard, and F. E. Dunnavent; also by one sister, Mrs. Henry Nichols.

She was the widow of the late Elder Lytle Burns, of Florence, Alabama. Sister Burns' maiden name was Delia Bates; she married Mr. Dunnavent in early life, and reared her family. After the death of Mr. Dunnavent she married Elder Burns, to whom she was a great comfort, taking care of him in his last days. Sister Burns was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for over 50 years, and was well established in the doctrine of God our Saviour.

The writer had been in the home of Elder and Sister Burns many times, and it was wonderful to listen to her tell her experience. We feel that God in his mercy has taken her away from her suffering.

The writer, with Elder J. N. Darnell, conducted the funeral at the funeral home in Athens, Alabama; and she was laid to rest in the Old Antioch Church cemetery, of which she became a member many years ago.

May the Lord bless all that mourn.

Elder R. L. Biggs

MRS. GRACIE DYER WILSON

It is with a sad heart as I write of the passing of a dear and near friend, Mrs. Gracie Dyer Wilson.

She was born January 4, 1891, died October 8, 1959; at the age of 68. She was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia and lived there her entire life.

She was married to James Anderson Wilson on November 24, 1909. They were parents of eight children, one died in infancy, seven survive, four boys and three girls, whose names are as follows: James E. Wilson, Arlington; Noel E. Wilson, Ringgold; Perry W. Wilson, Hampton, Herman A. Wilson, Danville; Mrs. E. G. Critz, Martinsville; Mrs. James E. Moss, Danville; Mrs. James Brumfield, Danville; and one sister, Mrs. Eula Brown of Danville, the last surviving member of the family.

Mrs. Wilson was a lovable person, so nice, kind, and of sweet disposition, always ready to help any one she could. She had lots of friends, and the children were so devoted to her, did everything they could for her and her sister. They were really a devoted family. She will certainly be missed by many. I believe she was ready and willing to go, as she didn't want to be a sufferer or a burden to any one.

She was of the Primitive Baptist faith, and attended our church regularly. She never united with any church, but was strong in the faith; and said if she passed during the operation it would be all right, as she would not go before her time, and believed God had a purpose in all things.

Her funeral was conducted from Townes Funeral Home, with burial in Highland Burial Park, beneath a beautiful mass of flowers, which proved she had many friends.

Written by one who loved her and her family, and had known her since she was a very small child. Her mother was a true Christian woman.

Mrs. W. L. Ferguson

DAVID BLANCHARD THOMAS

David Blanchard Thomas was born near Ringgold, La., February 1, 1904, and died November 2, 1959. He is survived by his wife; one son, John David Thomas; two daughters: Mrs. Juanita Thomas Barron, San Antonio, Texas, and Dorothy Marie Thomas, Ringgold. Also by his aged and afflicted mother, Mrs. Nancy Thomas, of Shreveport, La.; three brothers: Edward A. Thomas and Walter Thomas, Shreveport, and Clinton Thomas, Stillwell, Okla.; and two sisters: Mrs. John Davis and Miss Edna Thomas, Shreveport.

Brother Thomas joined the New Hope Primitive Baptist Church on August 4, 1951, and was a very lovely brother and highly esteemed among our people. His devotion was such that

he attended Primitive Baptist meetings far and near, thus denoting that "Where the treasure is, there will be the heart also". He was blessed of the Lord, and was well read and established in the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone; and not in the works of the creature. He was liberal with his means towards the cause, and took a deep interest in things pertaining to the welfare of Zion. He will be missed by all, but we are admonished to weep not as those who have no hope. We feel that he is asleep in Jesus, and will sweetly rest until He comes again without sin unto salvation. The Lord's people are those who are blessed to see the Lord and feel themselves sinners, and are made to believe and trust in him as the way, the truth, and the life. Brother Thomas gave much evidence of his hope in the Lord.

The unworthy writer, Elder W. A. Speer, and Elder J. L. Smith took part in the funeral, and the burial was in Pleasant Grove Cemetery. A large concourse of friends and relatives, together with the extensive flowers, gave evidence of the high regard in which he was held.

May the Lord bless and comfort his dear loved ones that they may know that he is better off than those who yet live. "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." (Rev. 14:13)

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

MRS. CHARLOTTE HOOD CARTER

On September 3, 1958, it pleased the God of heaven to call from this earth Sister Charlotte (Lottie) Carter, at the age of 79 years. Her husband, W. P. Carter, passed away several years ago. She was the daughter of Elder and Mrs. C. M. Hood.

She is survived by the following children: Mrs. J. Hugh Knox, Mrs. Robert Linn, Mrs. R. Thurman Hayes, Charles William Carter, Brakton B. Carter, all of Nashville, Tenn.; and Paul Harville Carter, Huntsville, Ala., and William P. Carter, Jr., Boulder, Colorado; and two sisters: Miss Stella Hood, Nashville, and Mrs. Hubert Worrell, Goodlettsville, Tenn. Also thirteen grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

Sister Carter joined the Primitive Baptist Church while quite young, and remained faithful in all her ways, and to the writer, who was her pastor for twenty-five years. She was of much comfort, and always enjoyed her meetings, with a word of encouragement to her church. She was a firm believer in the sovereignty of God, and that salvation was by grace. Their home for many years was a home for Old Baptists, and she never tired of trying to make them feel welcome and comfortable.

The church has lost a wonderful member; one who was a mother in Israel. We feel that our loss is her gain. She talked much of that time when Jesus would come and gather his redeemed to live eternally with him.

The writer conducted her funeral, and tried to speak words of comfort to the family and the church members. She was laid to rest under a mound of flowers to await the coming of her Lord.

Elder R. L. Biggs

MRS. ETHEL CLOWER MORAN

Mrs. Ethel Clower Moran was born February 20, 1888; and died August 14, 1959. She was united in marriage to Elder S. L. Moran on October 10, 1906.

Surviving are her husband; one step-daughter, Mrs. V. T. Sowers; one sister, Mrs. Jasper Eanes; all of R. F. D., Check, Virginia; one brother, Archie Clower, Pilot, Virginia; and four step-grandchildren, and fourteen great grandchildren.

She united with the Primitive Baptist Church in January, 1911; and was indeed a mother in Israel. She was kind, generous, and very spiritual minded; and it was a great pleasure, and comforting, to hear her speak of the wonderful works of God. The Lord dealt bountifully with her, and the writer was comforted many times in hearing her speak of the dealings of the Lord with her. She bore her husband's burdens in the ministry to a very great degree. I would like to speak of it in this way: many were the times when she could have said, "The burden of the word of the Lord was upon me." And she was delivered of same when her dear husband was blessed to speak of the unsearchable riches of Christ to her comfort.

She was an affectionate wife, and so very willing to assist her husband in any way she could to fill his appointments at the various places in his field in the ministry. The memory of these precious characteristics will be a consolation to those of us who miss her so much; and especially the family.

We can pay no higher tribute than this, she lived true and faithful to her church, family, and friends; and also earnestly contended for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." To express herself, she could witness with the Apostle Paul when he said, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

She was laid to rest in the church yard

at Salem Church (Floyd County, Virginia) where she had her membership, in the presence of a large congregation of relatives and friends, to await His second coming. Submitted by one who loved her so very much, and I hope for Jesus sake.

Gaye Thompson

ELDER HAROLD M. BENNETT

Elder Harold M. Bennett departed this earthly life after several months of illness, in the afternoon of May 19, 1959, in the Peninsula General Hospital, Salisbury, Maryland.

He was born October 15, 1896, near Mardela Springs, Maryland, the son of John P. and Maude Z. Bennett. He was married June 27, 1917, to Virginia Elsie Bailey, who, with one daughter, Mrs. Iris B. Stant, two granddaughters, Sylvia and Claudia, and one brother, Carl P. Bennett, survive him. A kind and loving husband, father and grandfather, he will always live in our memory.

He was baptized in July 28, 1921 by the late Elder C. W. Vaughn into the fellowship of the Rewastico Old School Baptist Church near Mardela Springs, Maryland. He served as clerk for a time, then as deacon.

The Indiantown and Forest Grove churches asked for his ordination November 2, 1941, to serve them. He was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry January 8, 1942. After the death of Elder H. C. Ker, he was called to serve the Little Creek, Broad Creek and Rewastico churches; then after the death of Elder C. W. Vaughn, he was called to serve Hopewell and Kingwood churches in New Jersey and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

His services were not confined to the pulpit, but as well in the homes of his brethren and of those who loved the truth. He not only preached the word but lived it in his life, walk and conversation. He preached Christ, crucified and risen, in demonstration of the Spirit and with power from on high as the way, the truth, and the life. He did not wish to appear before men and be popular, but he rejoiced to meet with the people of God with fear and trembling, feeling to be the least of all saints, if one at all.

Funeral services were held in the meeting house in Delmar, Delaware, May 23, 1959. Ministers officiating were Elders J. D. Wood, W. D. Griffin, and Arthur Warren, appropriate remarks being made by each of them. Interment was in Mardela Cemetery. May the Lord grant us complete reconciliation; "not my will, but thine, be done."

Written by his daughter,
Mrs. Iris B. Stant

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It has pleased our Heavenly Father, in his wisdom and holiness, to remove from this life our dear brother, Elder L. D. Rose, February 26, 1959, bringing sorrow to our hearts. Elder Rose served as co-pastor of Saints Rest Church, Dallas, Texas, from about August 1947, until January 1, 1951. He came to the meetings when possible, and remained strong in the doctrine. He enjoyed good health through the eighty years of his life, other than the last ten days. And

WHEREAS, We believe that our loss is his gain, and that he has been removed from this life to realms of glory; from a world of trouble to a land of delight. We sorrow not as thought we have no hope, but because we shall see his face no more, believing that what the Lord does is best. Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, By Saints Rest Church, that we bow in submission to His will, believing that when Christ shall appear, all those who are asleep in Christ shall be gathered up by His righteousness. And

BE IT RESOLVED, That we extend sympathy to his friends in that they have lost an affectionate friend. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Also

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication; and a copy written in our church records.

Written by order of Saints Rest Church, Dallas, Texas, while in conference February 28, 1959.

Elder W. W. Taylor, Moderator
D. G. Connell, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It has pleased our heavenly Father, in his wisdom and holiness, to remove from this life our dear sister, E. C. Thornhill, bringing sorrow to our hearts. And

WHEREAS, We believe that our loss is her gain, and that she has been removed from a bed of afflictions to realms of glory, and from a world of trouble to a land of delight. We sorrow not as though we had no hope, but because we shall see her face no more, believing that what the Lord does is best. Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, By Saints Rest Church, Dallas, Texas, that we bow in submission to His will, believing that when Christ shall appear, all who are asleep in Christ shall be gathered up by his righteousness. And

BE IT RESOLVED, That we extend sympathy to her family and friends, in that they have lost an affectionate mother and friend.

The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Also

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the sorrowing family; a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication; and a copy written in our church records.

Written by order of Saints Rest Church, Dallas, Texas, while in conference February 28, 1959.

Elder W. W. Taylor, Moderator
D. G. Connell, Clerk

MEMORIAL

WHEREAS, Since the last meeting of this Association, it has pleased God to take from our midst our beloved brother and Elder, Harold M. Bennett — on May 19, 1959; and we bow in humble submission to the will of our God.

Elder Bennett served several churches in this association faithfully, always declaring the truth which is in Christ Jesus. He was dearly loved by the members of his churches, and the many friends who knew him; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we of this association extend our deepest sympathy to his widow and family; and a copy of this Memorial be sent to them. Also

RESOLVED, That this Memorial be printed in our minutes, and a copy be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Written by order of the Salisbury Association while in session with the Snow Hill Church, October 21 and 22, 1959.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Maude T. Laws, Clerk
William S. Adkins, Ass't. Clerk
Handy B. Truitt, 2nd Ass't. Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, Since we last met, the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association has lost seven members; to wit:

Elder Harold M. Bennett, of the Rewastico Church; Deacon Calvin Holloway, and Sisters May Morris, Lena Plummer, Ella Virginia Williams, and Bertha Richardson, of the Salisbury Church; and Sister Maggie Lank, of Forest Grove Church; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to our gracious heavenly Father's will, desiring to be reconciled to the loss of very precious members in our midst; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Salisbury Association extend its sympathy to the bereaved families; and may the grace of God enable them to look to Jesus for comfort in their hour of need; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we send a copy of these resolutions to the **Signs of the Times** for publication; and a copy be made for our minutes.

Done by order of the Association now in session with the Snow Hill Church, October 22, 1959.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Maude T. Laws, Clerk
William Adkins, Ass't. Clerk
Handy B. Truitt, 2nd Ass't. Clerk

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M.

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M.

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 11 A. M.

WRIGHTS' CREEK CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 11:00 A. M.

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., six miles SE. of Sulligent, Alabama.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each Saturday before the fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Alabama.

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles SW. of Fayette, Alabama.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

ELAM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located two miles North of Goshen, Alabama, meets each third Sunday at 11 o'clock.

J. P. MORGAN, Pastor
A. C. CARTER, Clerk
3383 Montezuma Rd.,
Montgomery 6, Ala.

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before.

E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Pratt City, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. Meeting place at Alder Street at top of hill, first car going into Pratt City from Birmingham.

H. C. MOON, Pastor

LIBERTY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., eight miles South of Gordo, Alabama.

O. G. GARVER, Pastor

MT. CARMEL CHURCH, Coffee Springs, Alabama, meets each first Sunday 11 A. M.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

W. A. SPEER, Pastor

REHOBETH OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located five miles North of El Dorado, Arkansas and half-mile West of Highway No. 7, meets second Sunday in each month and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

R. W. RHODES, Pastor
W. A. SPEER, Clerk

WHITE WATER OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located about one mile Northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

W. A. SPEER, Pastor

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Stockton, California, meets second Sundays, 10:30 A. M., at 5620 E. Marsh Street. All lovers of the truth invited.

T. R. JEFFERSON, Pastor
WM. ECHOLS, Clerk
Chowchilla, Cal.

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Compton, California, meets each fourth Sunday at the home of L. W. Langwell, 12812 S. Williams Street.

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in the United States), meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is located one mile south of Newark, Delaware, just off of Highway 896.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK CHURCH, Miami, Florida, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before, SW. 29th Avenue and 6th Street. We extend an invitation to any interested to visit us.

Mrs. J. M. Futch,
7005 SW. 21st Street,
Miami, Florida

NEW HARMONY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Hiram, Ga., meets every 1st Sunday at 11 o'clock.

O. J. CROKER, Pastor
J. F. JORDAN, Clerk

ELAM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located at Forest Park, Clayton County, Georgia, meets every 3rd Sunday at 11 o'clock.

O. J. CROKER, Pastor
MALISSIE STEWART, Clerk

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located at 5th and East Park Street, Weiser, Idaho, meets each 4th Sunday at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Address any communications to Deacon A. L. Turnidge, Weiser, Idaho.

ERNEST J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
FLOSSIE ATTEBERY, Clerk

PLEASANT VALLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas. For information please write Mrs. Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C, Kingman, Kansas.

THE LOST CREEK CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, meets first Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Kentucky, ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton, on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

H. L. ROGERS, Pastor

NEW HOPE CHURCH (better known as Lick Creek) meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Kentucky.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE ZION CHURCH OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS, Mayfield, Kentucky, meets first Sunday each month at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M., on South 7th Street.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Baltimore, Maryland, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Street, near Calvert.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on

Falls Road about twenty miles north of Balti-
JOHN D. WOOD, Pastormore.

LITTLE FLOCK PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Cass County, Missouri, meets on second Sundays in the Memorial Building, Pleasant Hill, Missouri. We invite brethren of our faith and order to visit us.

L. L. SCHENCK, Pastor
MRS. J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk
Pleasant Hill, Mo.

OLIVE AND HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Shokan, N. Y., meets each 2nd Sunday at 1:30 P. M.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
MRS. NEVA BROOKS, Clerk

The **WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,** Warwick, Orange County, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are at 10:30 A. M. DST.

The **MIDDLETOWN AND WALLKILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,** Middletown, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday from April to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. Meetings are at 2 P. M. DST.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, New York City, meets every first and third Sundays at McBurney Branch Y. W. C. A. 215 W. 23rd Street, corner of 7th Ave. (Elevator to 2nd floor.) 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M. All visitors are welcome.

THE WILSON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Wilson, N. C., meets each second Sunday at 3 P. M., and Saturday evening before at 7:30 P. M. The location is on the corner of Green and Jackson Streets.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor
MRS. BETTIE RICHARDSON, Clerk

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
C. E. TURNER, Co-pastor

BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin, Oregon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes.

ERNEST ATTEBERY, Pastor

ROCK SPRINGS OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, meets each first Sunday at 10:30. The meeting house is located on highway 222, about one-quarter mile of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets each 5th Sunday from May through September, with two days meeting the 1st Sunday in May; and meets at Needmore, Pa., on 5th Sundays from October through April, with two days meeting the 2nd Sunday in October.

JOHN W. WOOD, Pastor
ORIEN MELLOTT, Clerk
McConnellsburg, Pa.

THE PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Memphis, Tennessee, meet in the Primitive Baptist Church, corner of Getwell and Fizer Streets, on second Sunday in each month at 11 A. M. and Saturday evening before; also on fourth Sundays at 11 A. M.

H. G. BROWN, Pastor
791 Watson Street
L. C. CAMPBELL, Clerk
3347 Tutwiller Street

The **WALNUT FORK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH,** near Cottage Grove, Tennessee, meets on the second Sunday of each month.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor
R. L. VEAZEY, SR., Clerk

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, Houston, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before 10:30 A. M. Church is located on Little York Highway, four miles north of Houston, and one mile east of Highway 76.

W. W. FLEET, Pastor
IRENE WISENBAKER, Clerk

MT. ZION CHURCH, Weslaco, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.; and each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday before at 2:00 P. M., at their new location: seven miles West of Weslaco, on highway 83.

E. B. AULT, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk

SARDIS CHURCH, Amarillo, Texas, meets first Sundays at 10:30, in the home of E. J. Parsons, 1711 Lincoln Street.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, has moved their meeting place to 3629 8th Avenue. They meet each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Take College Ave. bus to Butler and Ryon; go one block West, then half block North to church. C. U. LANDERS, Pastor

THE ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST CHURCH, Lawn, Texas, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
MRS. NOLA STEWART, Clerk

AN ARM OF PILGRIM REST CHURCH, meets each second Sunday and Saturday night before at Earth, Texas.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
A. A. CHAMBERS, Clerk

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30, at the home of M. J. Culpepper. Lovers of the truth invited. E. B. AULT, Pastor

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THE OLD SALEM CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS, four miles South of Teague, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before. MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

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SAINTS REST OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday evening before at seven-thirty, at 4614 Sylvester Street.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
D. G. CONNELL, Clerk

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday afternoon at 2:30. W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor

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The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located on Route 28, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia. Arthur L. Carter, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. each second month (February, April, etc.), and is near Lucketts, about eight miles north of Leesburg, Virginia.

L. D. Duke, Clerk
Charlestown, W. Va.

BROAD RUN CHURCH, Poolesville, Maryland, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. each second month (January, March, etc.)

MT. ZION CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, Virginia, on Route 50, between Washington and Winchester, Virginia. Mrs. David Iarnie, Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are always glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Deacon G. C. Spindle, Lincoln 3-3782.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2:30, Fairmont Park, 2023 Tidewater Drive.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Richmond, Virginia, meets each fourth Sunday in their new meeting house about ten miles South of Richmond, just off highway 360 South. R. S. PAYNE, Pastor

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DAN RIVER CHURCH, between Danville, Va. and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville, Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday night before, on Bradley Road.

W. R. DODD, Pastor

LITTLE ZION PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Chehalis, Washington, meets in the home of Sister Effie Parke, 1360 First Street, the first Sunday of each month at 11 A. M. HOWARD EASON, Pastor

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BETHEL OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, of Riffe, Washington, meets each 3rd Sunday at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 7 P. M. For information write the Clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. VERNIE SCHOONOVER, Clerk
Box 612, Morton, Wash.

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, Naches, Washington, meets at 10:30 A. M. each second Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. DASIE BAKER, Clerk
Rt. 1, Naches, Wash.

HARMONY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, about four miles East of Huntington, W. Va., near Route 60 at Russell Creek, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

J. R. LANE, Moderator
MILDRED STANLEY, Clerk
Rt. 2, Huntington, W. Va.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 128 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1960 NO. 2

EXAMINING HIMSELF

Arkansas City, Ark.

Dear Household of Faith:

The November number had a wonderful article by Elder W. W. Taylor on "The Deacons, Their Qualifications, and Duties". Also from time to time we see and read articles on duties and qualifications of the elders, but no one seems to write on the duties and qualifications of the lay members of our visible church. So your humble servant thought it a good idea to jot down some things pertaining to his duties; and, thinking the Scriptures the best guide, began with 1st and 2nd Corinthians and read through all of Paul's admonitions to the churches, listing each admonition under "Do" and "Don't".

When I finished, I thought I had better make an examination of myself first, before sending to the Signs; and when I did I found I made 100% on all the Don'ts, and could not qualify on a single Do.

Now we do believe that every one of the children of God must be elected, called and qualified according to the foreordination and purpose of God, to be an heir and joint-heir with Christ; yea, must be born again, must be regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and have the breath of life breathed into his nostrils to become a living soul. And this applies to everyone of the household of faith, whether they be Elder, Deacon or Lay member; none can act of themselves, for the great God of love and mercy acts and moves according to his will, and not according to any act of the creature man.

We also believe that everyone that is called is also qualified to perform the exact duties, whether it be Elder, Deacon, or Lay member; and that nothing is without the Father's knowledge, and that every message so prepared never returns without fulfilling every purpose of said message, for the same God who prepares his shepherd's message also prepares the hearers or flock; and no food from God the Father returns void.

I note that my subscription has about expired, and I do not want to miss a single copy, for I find so many wonderful gifts from God's little flock that fill my heart with love and fellowship, making me to want to fall humbly before each one and wash my brethren's feet. I am getting old and do not get to go very often to our services, which I miss very much and very sadly. So keep on writing dear ones, telling of your travels and trials, for they comfort and cheer this old unworthy veteran. "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2:8, 9)

"So by experience I do know
There's nothing good that I can do:
I cannot satisfy the law,
Nor hope no comfort from it draw.

My nature is so prone to sin,
Which makes my duty unclean,
That when I count up all the cost,
If not free grace then I am lost."

Farewell, brethren, for awhile. May the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all.

Your very unworthy one,
Ben Parrish

EXPERIENCE

Scotch Road,
Titusville, N. J.

Dear Editors in the Household of Faith:

My first experience at an early age was a realization, or a conviction of my own sinfulness and weakness, and personal need of the Saviour for strength and support. While my experiences have been many and varied, often beautiful things of nature among trees and flowers and birds, I was always brought back to the realization of a constant need of divine help for strength and guidance.

As the years have passed by I often marvel how the beautiful experiences stay so vividly clear in my mind, when lots of other instances in my life have long been forgotten.

Then, there was the time of feeling as a lost one standing without the church, yet desiring the love and fellowship of those in the faith. But then I would find myself so unworthy, I could do nothing but turn away, and hope and pray for the hand of deliverance to come and place my feet firmly where they could not go alone.

The time came in the summer of 1937. I was visited by an angel. I believe in all ages of the world God and His angels gave many important messages to mankind by way of visions and experiences. Often when the thoughts of the day are hushed in quiet slumber, we are visited by guardian angels or angel spirits, who often direct us in the way we should go, to soothe and comfort us, and to ward off the ills which might otherwise befall us. Oh, what a comfort it is in this dreary world to be loved and cared for by the all powerful, all wise and loving Spirit of God.

For six continuous nights I was visited by an angel, who came and stood by my bedside, like a beautiful mother looking down upon her sleeping child. On the seventh night the angel came again with an armful of lovely, pure white lilies, and gave them to me saying: "I bring you a treasured gift of acceptance in Christ. It shall ever live as pure and beautiful as the lilies." The next day was Saturday meeting, and I went along with my mother. I was filled with joy from my treasured gift, and was given strength to ask for a home in the church. My pathway has led through many beautiful experiences since then. To be sure I have had my anxious moments. I have had doubts and fears, but then I have been given sweet meditations on my experiences. The seven visits of an angel have been sweet.

To me seven is the number of spiritual perfection, for on the Sabbath day God rested from all the labour of creation. On the seventh day Jesus rested in the tomb, that His soul might rest in hope. The Sabbath signified bodily rest to the Israelites of Old Testament times, but to the Church it symbolizes spiritual rest, rest from the labors under the law, by which man cannot attain unto righteousness. Jesus performed all the work of the law for believers, therefore this gospel day is to them their Sabbath of spiritual rest. Paul said, "We which believe do enter into rest," and again, "There is a rest that remaineth to the people of God." So the presence of the angel with the treasured gift and lilies on the seventh visit does denote an acceptance in Christ, for the lily is a type of a believer, as we read in the Scripture. "Consider the lilies of the field how they grow; they toil not, they spin not; yet I say unto thee that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

I see so much beauty in these words. The lilies toil not, nor spin, that is labour under the law they could not keep, and which only condemned them, nor try to attain salvation by their own works. Consider how they grow — by the power of the sun, so the spiritual lily, the child of God, grows by the power of the Sun of Righteousness, and all the gifts of grace are from Jesus. The rain and dew are necessary for the lily's life and growth, so the rain of God's doctrine and the dew of God's Holy Spirit are needful for the spiritual lily. The liles of the field must grow from the earth, and so God's children have the treasure of truth and life in earthen vessels. The

winter season, or dark days are necessary for the life and beauty of the lilies, and so trials and darkness are necessary to God's lilies that bloom in the Garden of Grace. The armful of white lilies were perfectly blended together without spot or blemish, so all the perfections of Christ Jesus are blended together in His people, the great family of redeemed believers, of whom I hope to be one. The treasured gift seemed to me a token from God of my finding gracious favor in His sight. I felt to be blessed of the Lord, for I was given strength to confess my Lord before the church. "Whosoever shall confess before men, him will I confess before my Father which is in Heaven."

God bless you with peace, with hope, and with every spiritual joy.

Mary L. Hellings

EXPERIENCE

5 Gregory St.,
Brampton, Ont., Canada

Dear Elder and Mrs. Ruston:

The dear ones of the church are in my thoughts so much of the time, and I think of different ones I would like to write to. You asked me to try and write my experience and I wondered if I could include the dear ones in this letter.

We realize we can do nothing of ourselves but as Paul said in Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." May the Lord direct my thoughts. I know if it is of the flesh it profiteth nothing. Many times I have felt the presence of His Holy Spirit and felt so uplifted and felt that peace which passeth all understanding. I felt there was so much I could tell but it wasn't the time. And now, dear ones, I feel such a leanness of soul. Is it because of the life I lead away from the ones I know believe as we do? But I am not alone — every day I feel His presence, and whom can we want beside!

At times I have felt I should write to the editors of the **Signs** and some of the writers, as their articles and letters have meant so very much to me. But I have felt my helplessness to express myself.

"Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth." Oh that the young will be enabled to take Him in their bosom. There is no other one to guide us and to look to as we journey here. What a comfort your preaching has been to many, and the experiences related of your youth. What sweet memories we have of the dear saints who are gone. God has been good to give us such a wonderful heritage and revealed what we believe to be the truth and what is taught in the Bible. He gives us the hearing ear. It seems so wonderful that we are led all the way by Him. If I had my say in the matter I shudder to think what a life it would have been.

My mind goes back to when I was about 11 years old, and I was at a meeting where Elder Vail preached and he was talking of us being like worms of the dust. I remember very little about the sermon except I felt what a terrible thing; and wept. I didn't want the folks to know why, and I spoke of my grandma who just died, but felt there was more to it. I never forgot the feeling of helplessness and only told one person. Then years later I remember Brother Maddock told my mother about it, and said "These things could be revealed to a child." By this time I loved the preaching very much. I remember too at the age of 12 reading some of the experiences in the "Signs" and I wouldn't want anyone to see me read them. I do feel almost ashamed to think I went on loving the Old Baptists for years, getting so much encouragement from you, as well as others, but could not stay in and ask a name with the church. I did feel unworthy but was told most members feel that way; and then I felt I might do something and be a reproach to the church and my walk might not be as it should.

One time when two ministers from

the States were in Dunwich I thought all their preaching was for me and then you followed with so much encouragement. I felt to rejoice and wanted to stay in. But felt "Who am I to think that was for me?" Dear Mrs. Ferguson noticed me in tears, and she said, "Won't you stay in?" Many times I felt like a disobedient child.

After a June meeting in 1954 Sister Beckie drove us to a dear friend's home and we had a lovely visit. After arriving home and in bed, the thought came to me, "I loved every one in that room and the love for each seemed the same" — I felt it was **love in Christ** and the words came "My cup runneth over — surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." Oh the happiness I felt for awhile!

Then Christmas came and I felt I didn't want to celebrate as the world does; I felt a heaviness of heart. Then I received letters telling me of the experience before and of baptism of a dear sister. It seemed a joy to me and these letters seemed the best gifts I could have. I just felt I could forsake all and follow Him. I told my dear husband of my desire to join the church, and though he was a member of another church, he said, "Well that's what you should do then." Oh the joy I felt, and pictured him at my baptism.

But the following March my companion left home one morning never to return. When I received word on the 'phone I will always remember and wonder if it was a prayer unuttered and unexpressed. I didn't want to be rebellious. And Elder Ruston, your letter came and meant so much to me. You said that we were in your prayers and you prayed I wouldn't be rebellious . . . "rebellion hardeneth the heart." I felt the prayer was answered. "Thy will be done." In the days following I was very busy. The psalms seemed like prayers at bed time. One morning the words "Why art thou cast down" seemed to be before me. And I found them in verses 5, 6 and 11 of 42nd psalm — they seemed a comfort for days — "Yet the Lord will command his loving kindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life . . . hope thou in God for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God."

At May meeting when we went to go home a dear sister said to me "And neither of us stayed in." We both felt sad but I didn't know her longing to go at the time. I felt then, "There's a time to favor Zion."

In July Katherine and I had letters from dear Beckie telling us dear Flo was to be baptized, and would we come. When I knew of others joining the church I felt it was impossible for me to do such a thing — people would think I was joining as others were and because I was so sad; and so many things seemed to be telling me, "No." We went to church at Lobo and five joined that Sunday. Elder Ruston you spoke on baptism and it was beautiful to me — the words you used "Perfect love casteth out fear" were so sweet — I thought when I went it would be with fear and trembling but stayed in that day rejoicing and feel it was all in the Lord's time. Dear Sister Gilbert and I wished to be baptized in September and hoped our families would be there.

The same month we had a lovely meeting and preaching at Muskoka, it was so good to be with the friends and hear them talk of Jesus and his love. I was feeling very empty. Then the words came "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me." Hearing these words preached about, and your editorial have been most precious to me.

In September we were baptized — was pleased to have Elder Spangler and his wife at the baptism. The very heavens seemed to rejoice when we came ashore. I felt so happy and a great burden gone. My loneliness was great leaving friends. Psalm 94 was a comfort — verse 14 — "For the Lord will not cast off his peo-

ple, neither will he forsake his inheritance."

The words used by you in a sermon have always been very precious to me. "In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths."

Dear folks I have nothing to boast of in myself. I feel there was given to me a thorn in the flesh lest I should be exalted above measure. Read 2nd Corinthians Chap. 12, verses 7-10. "But he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord." "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh."

It is written "He can do all things for He careth for us."

I feel this is too lengthy. My love to all the household of faith.

Your little sister in a precious hope,
Verna Carscadden

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Sister Minerva Dunlap)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association meeting at Whitefield September 4, 5, 6, 1959, to the churches of like faith with which we correspond: Greetings in the Lord.

In Isaiah 55:8, 9, we read. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Altho God made man in his image (Gen. 1:26), he did not give to his creation his own mental and physical capabilities. Nearly everyone will agree that there are certain concepts which the human mind cannot fathom, among others being infinity in space, eternity in time, life and gravity. But accepting the fact that he cannot explain many mysteries that confront him, man has evolved standards of right and wrong and events happening contrary to these standards are deemed unjust or unfair. Likewise reported events that seem illogical or inexplicable to the natural mind are adjudged unreasonable or untrue.

According to these standards of man many events recorded in the Bible could be accounted untrue, unreasonable or unjust. The creation of man from the dust of the earth are recounted in Genesis is one of these. Such a creation cannot be comprehended by the natural mind and might therefore be labelled impossible. Some so-called churches reject this account of creation as a legend originating with primitive people and handed down through generations without foundation in fact. To their way of thinking, an educated mind cannot possibly harbor a belief in anything so intently unreasonable. They argue that science has proved that man evolved through the lower animals from the single cell and this is the logical explanation of creation. Because this theory gives no chance for a soul to be injected into the human animal, they reason that man has no more soul than the cell he came from and therefore no eternal life. But in 1 Cor. 3:18, 19, 20, we read: "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God; for it is written: He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." And again, "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain."

The theory of election is another Bible precept that is contrary to man's ideas of justice. That a man who is wise and cannot err should have created some men for blessings and eternal life and others for destruction and eternal torment, appears impossible to the natural mind. But in Rom. 9:20-23, we read: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might

make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?"

The natural mind would argue that an all powerful God who knew the end from the beginning would not create anything that he must later endure with much long suffering, when he could as easily make all things pleasing to himself. One who has had no revelation of the power of God and of the limitations of the mind of man, could not reason otherwise. But an experience of grace teaches that the wisdom of man is foolishness to God; then how can man judge God's acts?

The idea of predestination is unreasonable to the natural mind. Man's pride makes him desirous of planning and consummating his destiny. Not to have free will would be unfair. But the experienced soul knows that man's goings are of the Lord; Prov. 20:24, "How can a man then understand his own way?"

Revelation brings the change. As the hymn reads: "I loved to see and know my path, but now, lead thou me on."

The advent of evil into the world is another event unacceptable to the natural mind. That a God of goodness and love, being all powerful, should allow evil to enter the world, with all the accompanying misery and sin, seems unreasonable. Yet one who has been shown the nothingness of man's wisdom and the vastness of the distance between God's thoughts and man's thoughts, can accept this truth. Are not the heavens far above the earth? Why, then should we think that we can comprehend the ways of God. "He hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." (Prov. 16:4)

Unfair, to the mind of man, is Jacob's blessing of Ephraim in place of Manassah, the older son of Joseph. Yet Jacob and Joseph were loved of God.

Unfair, also, seems the blessing of Isaac on his son Jacob when the blessing should have been Esau's and was obtained by Jacob through deception.

It seems unreasonable also that a sinful woman, Rahab, should have been allowed to befriend the spies of a God-fearing man such as Joseph. Yet Rahab received a blessing.

No human reasoning can explain how men could be thrown into a fiery furnace and survice, or into a den of lions and live. Yet one who has experienced the power of God knows that he commands fire and water, life and death, and nothing is impossible to him.

Many who reject such records of the Bible as unreasonable, claim that only a narrow minded person could believe such things, that modern churches have become less rigid in their creeds and are accepting only the reasonable parts of the Bible. Some deny the virgin birth as being opposed to facts of medical science and they ask: Where did Jesus get the power to perform the miracles imputed to him? Not having experienced the miracle of the blind being made to see, the deaf to hear and the lame to walk, they can only count such things as unreasonable. When the miracle of revelation comes to man, he knows that the wisdom of God is too infinite for human understanding, that his judgments are unsearchable and his ways past finding out. He forgets, then, his own standards of right and wrong and cries out: "O, Lord, how great are thy works and thy thoughts are very deep." (Psalms 40:5) Too deep for human probing; too high for man's measuring. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord."

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, September 4, 5, 6, 1959, sends greetings to the Associations and meeting with which we correspond:

Dear Brethren:

Through the mercy of our God we have been blessed to meet again. Your

correspondence and messengers have been gladly received. Elder Griffin and Warren preached the gospel as they were directed of the Spirit.

Sometimes we are so happy it seems our spirits soar to heights unknown, and there is a song in our hearts we cannot sing. When the words of our Saviour come to us, it seems our cup of joy runneth over. The disciples said, "Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?"

It is written in first Timothy 3:16, "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." We cannot fathom the depths of this mystery. The powerful operation of God's Spirit quickening the heart towards God, is compared to the blowing of the wind: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is everyone that is born of the Spirit." (John 3:8)

If we are children of grace, we see our faults and try to do better, but often find ourselves doing worse; and we feel lost and helpless. We who have passed through this experience know no deeper anguish, but when the Lord appears unto us with healing in his wings, and the still small voice whispers unto us, saying, "Lo I am with thee always", our burden is taken away and we are filled with wonderful peace. The scripture reads, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." (Matthew 5:4)

The Lord willing, our next association will be held at Whitefield, Maine, in September, 1960; the time to be announced in the Signs of the Times.

Elder Arthur Warren, Moderator
Mrs. Sanford Bartlett, Clerk

THE LORD TEACHES HIS CHILDREN

Williamston, N. C.
July 9, 1864

Dear Brother Temple:

I have thought that an account of the Christian experience and ministry of old brother James Hinton, an aged colored preacher of our faith and order yet living in this neighborhood, would not be uninteresting nor unprofitable to the readers of The Primitive Baptist. His truthfulness and sincerity are attested by the uprightness of his character, and by the excellence of his teachings. "By their fruits ye shall know them." (Matt. 7:20) With his thoughts, his conversation is continually directed towards heaven, where all his treasures lie.

Brother James does not know a "letter in the book": he has evidently derived his information from a divine source. I give it in very nearly his own simple and expressive language:

I am 83 years old. I was born and raised in Bertie County, N. C. My first master was old man Billie Hinton. I have had five or six owners during my life. They have been kind to me. I have been married twice, having twelve children by my first wife, and two by my last and present wife. Most of them died in infancy. My son, Bosen, became a Baptist and a preacher, though unlearned, like myself. But with his master and others of my children, he moved many years ago to Mississippi. I do not know the number of my grandchildren nor great-grandchildren.

I was twelve years old when first struck under conviction; up to that time I had been required to do scarcely any work — my old master wanted me to grow and get strong, and be of some account.

One day I challenged several of my playmates to box with me, declaring I could outfist them all put together. We had been thus roughly engaged for some moments, when I heard a voice, loud enough I thought to be heard four miles,

calling out most distinctly, "James". I look all around and up, but saw nobody. My arms and wrists at once grew weak; and, at a second similar call, powerless; so I backed away in silence, and sat upon the ground. I wondered that the boys didn't hear the call, but they did not for they kept thumping me for some time, crying out that they had whipped me; but I did not care for it. After they had left me, something seemed to fall from the heavens and drop into my bosom. Ere long it spoke, and said, "Christ is the way for saving sinners." I trembled like a leaf and wept like a child. From that day forward it kept talking to me — gospel, scripture, justice and righteousness, continually pointing out the way for me to go. I never was more puzzled, and could form no idea what it was.

I tried my best to run away from it by moving from place to place, but all in vain — the talking went everywhere I did. It kept up with and annoyed me so that I thought it must be my tongue somehow was speaking; so I pulled it out and tried to hold it and stop it, but quickly it darted back, and the talking went on worse than ever. Well, I thought, what is it? What can it be? I was fond of frolics: the voice told me to stop going. I resolved not to obey it, and continued to go, but at last I was so much troubled that I promised that I would not dance, but would sit civil, and not be chargeable. I did it; but while walking along one day the voice reminded me of my promise, and added, "James, I say unto you, if you will go into such places when not compelled, I threaten you with dreadful wrath!"

I shook with terror — I wept as though my heart would break. I never went to any more frolics after that. I kept wondering what could be the matter with me. One time it spoke to me and said "Come out from among them; be ye unspotted from the world, and I will receive you, saith the Lord." Then I knew, and not 'till then, that it was the Lord who had been dealing with me. "Come you, by prayer, to me," he said. I told him I did not know how to pray. "Cry out to me," He replied, "through faith for God to have mercy on you a poor sinner, and I will have mercy."

I tried to pray this prayer a long time, and thought I had been heard by the great Master; but one night I went off to pray in great distress. My tears struck the ground before my knees did. I prayed with a new and true fervency of the Spirit; and the Lord said to me, "James, this is the first prayer of yours I have heard."

My deliverance occurred in May, about corn weeding time. I had been abroad over the swamp, and came home at early sunset. I went to bed and slept until two or three hours of day, then woke up and found myself straight and flat on my back as though I was dead and laid-out — a position I never lay in to my knowledge. I was as wide awake as I am now. I felt a weight press down on the middle of my breast; and I could not imagine what it was. I looked and saw, hanging from three cords, a great body of darkness about two and a half feet from my breast. I could not tell what it was. A strange thing in my bosom then moved, and spoke, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." I knew what was the matter then. This cry was repeated. I thought I would get up and move away from the terrible object, but found myself unable to stir; and looking up, saw myself right in the middle of the jaws of hell. Oh, what a great ocean!

I gave up utterly, and confessed: "Lord, this is my sins; would you be merciful, would you be so good, would you be so kind as to pardon and forgive me? O Lord! I am not able to stand them, they are greater than I can bear." At once a straight line of light came as swiftly as a shot and cut down the great body of darkness, and slipped it by me. Then there broke a light in and about me, as old Brother Paul says, above the brightness of the sun. If brought into this world, it would make noonday look like darkness. I thought it was day, but found it was not. I felt as light as any

down in your "head-pillar."

My old master was a mild, free and open-hearted man. He had hundreds of servants, whom he clothed and fed well. He used to sell a thousand barrels of corn a year, and send off hundreds of fattening hogs to Richmond, Petersburg, Suffolk, Smithfield, and Edenton. He would put them under my charge and allow me to bring home the bags of money received in payment. One Spring, when I was hauling rails, he thought I was staying too long in the woods, so he took to watching me. He did not tell me of it though until I asked for an order to relate to the church what I had faith to believe the Lord had done for my soul. "Jim," he said, "do you believe He has done anything for your soul?" "Yes sir," I said. "And I believe it too," he answered, "for I have been watching you for years, and often see you in the woods, after you had loaded your car, kneel down and pray for yourself and for me; but I would not interrupt you."

He told me to take the rest of the day to talk with him, and that I might go to meeting whenever I pleased, for the time was not his but mine; but I only stayed awhile with him, and then slipped off to my work — it was such a good day for work.

The Lord promised me that when I went to give an account of my exercises to the church, He would be with me, and bless the day. It, indeed, proved to be a lovely day, and the Lord seemed to manifest his special presence. As I was telling of His dealings with my poor soul, I could see the gentlemen and ladies trembling, and wiping their eyes. The old Elder declared it was useless to examine the candidate any further; "For," said her, "we cannot go anywhere he cannot go with us." Many said they had not seen such a candidate in thirty years; and after I was through talking, they told me to talk on, for it was greater than the preaching they had heard. One great gentlemen was struck then and there under conviction. At the beginning of the service he sat away up high in one corner of the meeting-house, but before I finished speaking, he was standing by my side, half bent, and trembling. He did not rest until he experienced conversion, and was baptized a year later. He used to hail me, and talk with me everytime we met; and we loved each other.

On the day of my baptism, before I reached the water, the devil tried to persuade me that if I were baptized, I would be drowned; but I did not believe him, And, as always, he turned out to be a liar. Six years after I joined the church the Lord told me he was going to make me a minister of his Gospel; and that, too, before the year was out, no matter how much I might run and hide from it. But I thought surely not yet; and went one Sunday to Billy Thompson's quarter where two colored brethren were expected to preach that day. When I arrived they urged me to go forward and speak to the people, saying that I was better taught of the Spirit than they. I wanted to run away, but saw no chance. I felt that I had nothing to say, and trembled like a leaf; but when I arose this hymn came to me at once, and I gave it out:

> "That awful day will surely come;
> The appointed hour makes haste
> When I must stand before the Judge
> And pass the solemn test." etc.

I tried to pray; and when I had finished that duty, I was as much at a loss what to say as ever. But this text was given me, as well as every word I spoke from it: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in unto him, and sup with him and he with me." (Rev. 3:20) The strength and warmth of feelings came over me, and I could not help from weeping while I spoke the Saviour's sweet, kind call and welcome to the poor, lost sinners unto him. The people said that they had never heard better preaching than on that day. They called me "preacher" after that. Another text given me once was, "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and

his ears are open to their cry." (Psalms 34:15) Another was, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it that it bring forth more fruit." (John 15:-1, 2)

By invitation, I would often preach, especially on funeral occasions, in porches of gentlemen's houses, to congregations of two or three hundred persons. After service the gentlemen would crowd around me, and push a book before my face, and ask me if I could not read. I assured them that I did not know a letter; and could not tell one if they were going to hang me unless I did. "How can you preach, then? We would rather hear you preach than anyone else." I told them the Lord was my teacher. Other books can be burned up, but mine is fixed with the seven seals of the Lord. Oh, if any person wants high learning, let him get the grammar of Christ!

I must not forget to tell you that He once said to me, "Always be dutiful to your earthly master, and tell him the truth, and you can ever meet him gladly. And so, by always living in prayer and faith to me, you will at last invite, instead of dreading, death; and face it boldly." This command was put over me, and I thought that I could not do enough for Him after that.

In the Lord's direction to me in pursuing his ministry, He has said, "James, you know my terrors, and shall persuade men to strive for beauty that will never die, for crowns of righteousness that shall never perish. You shall warn sinners to repent; you shall preach my gospel by the tree of life." I once prayed to the Lord to take away this talking and deal with me as other of his people; and for awhile He left me in silence, and did not visit me at all. But, as I was going across an old field one day, I heard a singing low down at a distance, which gradually ascended the heavens, and followed and overtook me, and struck down on my face. "Ah, James", said my inward mentor, "you disbelieved in the way in which I was bringing you, but I shall not deal with you otherwise. Talk with your brethren, and you will find that they and you witness the same truths; have all drunk of the same spring, and have been born of the same God. I shall talk with you thus, as man to man; you shall feel, hear, and see with your inward ears and eyes, and you shall believe. These are the great witnesses that shall stand death and face judgment. You shall pray and thank me every Christmas day and New Year's day that your life has been preserved. You shall glorify me. I will be with you, and support and supply you with gospel and scriptures. You shall drink of me and never run dry. I will keep you here a long time, working for me. You need not think that pain or chill will carry you off. You shall know when I call you. I will send six angels when you expire, who shall convey you home to heaven, and then one of your attendant spirits shall exclaim, 'Fly wide open, ye pearly gates of the New Jerusalem, and let the righteous nation in.' A crown of glory shall be put on your head, and you shall take your seat at my right hand, and your end shall be peace."

One day, while I was in the field, it seemed that He slipped around in front of me, and treated me with a drink far sweeter than all the sugar and coffee in the world; that, if the taste had remained, I should have never wanted water.

During the night of the shelling (6th of July, 1863), I sat in my door facing the river, assured by the Lord that I should not be harmed; and I was not, though I could see the shells bursting through my walling, and firing a neighbor's dwelling house. The Yankees asked me if I did not want to go with them and have my freedom. I told them I did not want to go from my old home, where I know my people, off with them where I knew nobody; and, besides, that I was already free — that I had a freedom that no man could take from me, even

the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. They said that they wished they had that freedom, (I thought to myself, you won't get it by throwing bombshells), and they left me alone.

Oh, this something within me often sings its own praise, prays its own prayers, and preaches its own sermons. As I am working with my hoe in my little field, it often holds a meeting like an association! And as it talks to me of the greatness and goodness of God, I have to stop working and sit down; and my eyes become leaky as a spring, and my tears drop like the rain. I never stop thinking of Him; I can never thank him enough for his blessings. I have tried hard many a year to get a better love for Him, but I find I can only feel the same old love still. Sometimes I rise and sit up in my bed at night, rapturously listening to the marvelous, glorious language of my God. Oh, the teachings of this heavenly voice will never leave me! No thunder or bombshell can drown it. The world and the devil cannot stop it. Old Jim is going to die there! For almost 50 years he has been a mouth for God, laboring for Him, and laying off his parables. Poor old fellow, he is "most gone", but not afraid to die; for his life is hid with Christ in God, safe from all harm. (Col. 3:3) There's my dependence. I'm not living here for a peck of meal or pound of meat, that I may have something to eat hereafter, that I may not perish there. I long to die the death of the righteous, and have my last end like His. (Num. 23:10) The Lord sustains me with his comforting word, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

Our last work is not done after God speaks peace to our souls. It is rather begun than ended. We must follow all the directions of the Spirit, try to serve the true and living God aright, to get all our help from Him — for without Him we can do nothing — endeavor to die in the triumphs of faith. Ours is a whispering God. He speaks so softly that even if another head be touching yours, it cannot hear Him. While he is speaking the tears run down your cheeks.

The Spirit is made overseer of the body, to mortify its lusts. We shall carry the warfare with us until death. When we offend, the good Lord whips us well for it, but will never take his loving kindness from us. (Psalms 89:-30-34) We are careful to avoid that place in the future.

"When grace is given to the soul", He said to me, "it keeps pushing away sin, and distilling in the soul until it drives out every unclean thing, and in death washes it as pure as gold, and fit for the kingdom of heaven."

I could not tell the end of his instruction in a thousand years. We shall all meet at the great Day. All the judges in the world shall be there, and be silent and tremble, while the great Judge only will speak. There will be no rocks or mountains to hide the wicked from his vengeance. They will all be turned into Hell; while the righteous shall be welcomed to life eternal.

Sometimes I doubt, but deliverance comes and stamps the foundation sure. I feel that I know that God who thunders when he pleases, and calms the rolling seas; who directs the whirlwind and rides upon the storm. I have thought I loved my wife and children better than anything else in the world, but now I know that I love my God, his ways, and his people, better than these; and best of all.

Thus, dear Brother Temple, I have given you an account of some of the exercises of this truly wonderful man of God. His brethren know that his is the "path of the just, which is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

REMARKS

I was baptized by my father at Williamston, N. C., in Roanoke River, January 11, 1864, and in the same year

wrote the above narrative. The testimony of the old brother was a blessing to me then, and is a blessing to me now. I cannot read it without tears. May the Lord bless it to thousands of the present readers.

The shelling of Williamston by the Federal gunboats on the river, July 6, 1863, was an account of a few Confederate soldiers passing through, who, however, did not shoot at the Federals. The bombardment continued part of the afternoon and all night. Nearly every resident, except a few Old Baptists, left the town. Two houses were burned by the shells, but no person hurt. When the Marines marched up Main Street next morning they saw my father sitting on his front porch, and asked him what he had been doing all night. He replied, "I have been praying for you."

If all men had this spirit, there would be no more wars.

Silvester Hassell

(The above was re-published in the Gospel Messenger of August, 1917, and is re-published in the Signs by request. We found it very interesting, and feel that our readers will also — J. D. W.)

Keeling, Virginia

Dear Brother Spangler:

I have thought a long time of writing you, and now is an opportune time. I am enclosing a renewal subscription for the Signs.

. . . Referring to the salutation, if I may. I feel that this is not to be taken lightly. Having known you so long, and having heard you preach and talk so many times, I have since childhood felt you to be like a kinsman; and have had great respect for you as a friend, and more, as a preacher of the truth. Now that we are both members of the militant church called Primitive Baptist, we have the great privilege of calling members Brother or Sister. In doing so, I feel that often we do not think deeply about it.

If we are Brothers in the church of the living God, then we are sons of the same God, who is our Father, and the Father of all that call on his Holy Name. This indeed puts us in the same family: the family of God; chosen by him, for him, and through him from the foundation of the world. Then we are the sons of God; brothers in the Church of God, and very near kinsmen indeed. I so often fear that I am not in this number, but feel that it is a wonderful blessing to be able to mix and mingle with a people so dear, who, I am sure, are the called of the Mighty God: Not that I feel that all of God's elect are in the militant church, as we know it, but what a feeling of joy, peace, and contentment we have at times, enjoying this fellowship that is present no other place when the great Prince of Peace is there.

. . . I feel ever in need of the prayers of the saints; remember me.

A brother, is my hope,
Julian Williams

2418 Massachuetts Ave., N. W.
Roanoke, Virginia

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am sending you my sister's experience (Mrs. Snowie Holley Payne), and if you have space, I would appreciate it if it could be published. . . The family found this after she has passed on; and she had addressed it to the Signs of the Times.

I look forward to getting my paper each month, and sometimes I can't lay it down until I have read it through. It is wonderful when we can read and understand, but sometimes it is like a sealed book.

Your unworthy sister in hope,
Mrs. Henry J. Powell

EXPERIENCE

Dear Editors of the Signs,

If my experience is worthy of the space in the Signs, I will appreciate if it be published.

The Lord has done so much for me I don't know how and where to start. I do know He brought me out of the horrible state of mind I was in and put a new song in my mouth, even praise to His name.

I was hesitant in asking a home with Strawberry Primitive Baptist Church, as my hope and experience was so small. I thought I would be rejected. Then again it brightens up like a fire that has almost gone out. I don't think anyone ever got any lower and cast down than I was. I thought I was losing my mind. I even took the gun and tried to end my life, I thought to do this would end it all and I would be through with troubles, trials, and tribulations. But the one that has power over me had power over the gun and it was not intended that way. My life was spared for some reason and I was made to fall upon my knees and was shown how little and how unworthy I was. I prayed the prayer everyone prays, "Lord, have mercy on me, a poor sinner." How long I was in this condition, I don't know. I arose in a different world, singing praises to my God. Everything was different. I loved everybody and felt I didn't have an enemy in the world.

An Association was held at Strawberry Primitive Baptist Church in July 1955. At the closing on Sunday, it seemed a string was tied around me pulling me but I couldn't go. I went on desiring a home with these dear people, and I knew I would never be satisfied until I talked to the church, all the time feeling too unworthy to be among them.

I had a dream my mother and I started on a long journey. We had to cross a large river, and I was wondering how we would cross. It seemed as if we walked upon the water and didn't get wet. But after we crossed the river, we had a steep hill to climb. It was much harder than crossing the river. The brush was thick and thorny. About day break we reached the top, and behold there was a great sight. As far as I could see was white as snow. But in the meantime I had become separated from my mother. A book-keeper was sitting there asking each one his name as they walked pass. I was looking around and over the crowd to find my mother when she came up from behind me and I heard her say, "Jennie White Holley." I am not uneasy about her name not being there, but is my name written there?

The small hope I have keeps me going on to fight the battle of trouble and sorrow that confronts each and everyone as they travel through this changeable world hoping for the better world to come.

I used to stay awake and worry about where my soul would go if I should die. I wanted to do something about it but found I could do nothing but pray and ask God for mercy. I didn't want anyone to know my condition but my burden was so heavy I couldn't conceal it. And I want to give God all the honor and glory for delivering me out of the awful condition I was in. He did something for me no one else could do. I can't praise Him enough!

The first Sunday in September, 1955, a baptizing had been planned. It was cloudy and had been raining the night before. I didn't know whether it would be called off or not. I took my time Sunday morning in hopes I would be too late and wouldn't have to talk to the church. But as my dear husband, who has been so considerate of me, and I approached the river, I heard them singing. I slipped up behind them hoping I wouldn't be seen. I took one look at the beautiful water which sounded like music flowing over the pebbles and I couldn't leave without asking a home with these dear people. I told a sister in front of me to tell Elder Dodd I wanted to talk to the church. He met me and led me down to the water. I was received and baptized.

I have been sick a lot in my life but we are not promised a bed of roses and His will shall be done. I only pray He will make me submissive to his will and may He give me faith to endure to the end. And when He calls his children

home, I hope to be in the number. I want to live and die with the people who mean so much to me.

Yours in Love and Humble Hope,
Mrs. Snowie Holley Payne

Box 11,
Seneca, Oregon

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is my check for two years renewal to the Signs. I have been out on a traveling crew all Summer and haven't gotten my mail very regularly. I had my magazines held at the post office, and just came back for my Winter work. I haven't had time to read them as yet, but did notice that I was behind in my subscription.

I am one of the flock who is "on the outside, looking in" at the feed troughs, where the Lord's sheep are fed. Sometimes I am where it is possible for me to sneak in and partake of a few morsels, but not often. I try going to other churches, but they have nothing to offer that I can digest.

I especially enjoy reading the "Voices of the Past", for I have heard mother speak of almost all of those old "Masters", and feel that I have known them personally. It is very pleasant for me to read their writings, and to know that they have thought those thoughts, and spoke those words so many years ago, when conditions were so much different than they are now. It is all the more proof, if any were needed, that the Lord is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

I have had many experiences along these lines, and could tell of many things that have been so forceful that there is no doubt in my mind that God is all-powerful; that he has planned our paths from the beginning; and that he is still in command; and that we "are not running the show; we just work here."

The Scriptures say that there is a time to be born, and there is a time to die; and that we know not the day nor the hour for these things to come. It is very disgusting (I believe that is the word I will use) for me to hear preachers say that our destinies are in our own hands, and that we must accept certain things, or we are doomed to certain destinies. I believe that if there is a time to be born, and a time to die, then the method and conditions are also made up, and we are at the time and place that were arranged for us to be at those times. Else, how could anyone provide for certain things to happen at certain times, and leave out the method of that happening? I do not believe that God is so short-sighted that he has planned part, and left out some parts; or left them to the care of mortal man to finish.

Even with the things of men, such as building a house: if the house it to be built as planned, then all parts must be planned. . . . Are not God's ways more sure than any of these things of men? . . . As I believe, I know that if this is the day and the hour, then my work here will be finished as He planned it: I will be cared for as He intends that I shall be, until that day and hour.

. . . Do with this as you see fit: if there is a message that someone would enjoy reading, you have my permission to publish this. If it does not conform with the doctrine, or you do not believe it sincere, cast it aside. From one who lives in the knowledge that whatever God has in store for him, he will receive: at the time and place He has so planned; and who hopes to be reconciled to it, whatever it may be.

Charles W. Bond

R.F.D. 2,
Winfield, Ala.

Dear Editors:

I have wanted to write something that I feel to be the dealings of the Lord with me the past few months, but feeling my unworthiness, have hesitated

to do so. I am such a weak worm of the dust I have never been able to talk to the church concerning the matter.

I feel that I have deceived the church, and feel that I must make the attempt now, hoping you can look over my many mistakes. I feel so sinful and undone so much of the time, and wonder if I am included with the chosen ones that Christ died for. I look back through the years and weep over my failures throughout life; and how God has blessed me from time to time, and has kept me from falling away. O that I could praise his holy name forever!

I know that if I am a child of God, it is through the shed blood of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This is the way all of the chosen ones are saved; and they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. I cannot write more, but enclosed you will find a little contribution to use as you see fit.

In a blessed hope,
Mrs. A. T. Couch

(The above briefly expresses the inmost feelings of the children of God. Do we not have fellowship with those who feel this way? — J. D. W.)

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session at the Mt. Zion Meeting House, Loudon County, Virginia, October 14, 15, and 16, 1959, sends greetings to the churches and associations with whom we correspond:

Dear Brethren:

Another year has rolled around since we last met; at which time I was appointed to write this Circular Letter. I ask your indulgence as I make the attempt, knowing full well that comfort cometh from the Lord.

I wish to quote from the second chapter of the Acts, verse two, "And there came a sound from heaven." This scripture has been on my mind for some time. It was heard by the church on the day of Pentecost, and was an act of Almighty God to show his power over all things when the church was first established at Jerusalem over nineteen hundred years ago. It was given as a pattern, and if we cannot find the marks in the church today, we have departed from the faith. Notice that it was an exact time, and that God called his people together from every nation under heaven, and spoke to them. And today, if the Lord has not called us together, there is no meeting; and if the sound from heaven does not come there is no comfort. It is evident from Matthew 18:20, that, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them." Not where two or three congregate, will he come, but he gathers them together — He is the cause of them being together. When God brings his people together, there comes a sound from heaven, and his ministers "speak of the wonderful works of God." (Acts 2:11)

On this Pentecostal day the miraculous power of God and his wonderful works were revealed from heaven — his Holy Spirit takes the things of Jesus and shows them to us; and it is then that we work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, as God works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Phil. 2:13) We hear a voice like thunder proclaiming, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

It is a pleasure to read about the visible church our Lord organized on that Pentecostal day. Joel, the prophet, spoke of it that day; and the Apostle Peter roes to defend it: that the Lord himself had called the meeting together in one place at the appointed time, and of one accord. He spoke of the Holy Ghost which had shed forth this which they now saw and heard. They heard the wonderful works of God; how that Jesus was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and was taken and by wicked hands crucified and slain (verse 25), whom God raised up, and loosed the pains thereof;

that our flesh should rest in hope of the glorious resurrection of all God's chosen people; for the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 6:23)

The chapter ends with, "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." The Lord added to the church at that time, and he adds to the church today. The same grace and faith that saved all his church, was through the the love of the eternal God before the world was made. They were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, being predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will (Ephesians 1:4, 5)

We do rejoice when we meet together and hear the sound come down from heaven; and we rejoice when our brethren come among us from the several states, proclaiming the love of God to them; and esteeming themselves unworthy of the rich blessings that God has given them. You are welcome among us. We are glad to greet our ministering brethren; may they be enabled to feed the sheep of the Lord. We are at peace among ourselves as far as we know.

Elder George L. Weaver

ATTENDS THE MEETINGS, ANYWAY

Spokane, Wash.

Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed you will find money-order for a year's subscription for my mother and one for myself. I have not been a subscriber to the Signs before, but I have read them several times in the past.

I believe the way the old "Hardshell" Baptist do; at least I hope I do. I hope that I have been given a hope and faith in God, by His grace. . . . I was at church in Rife for one day of a three day meeting in 1954, when Elder Lambert was there; and how I did enjoy it.

I have been to quite a few meetings, and sometimes God would open my ears to hear, and cause my heart to understand; and at other times I was made to feel as though I had no business being among the church people; and actually I do not feel to be fit any of the time, but I find myself going, anyway.

An unworthy child, if one at all,
Mrs. N. L. Martin

(The feelings and expressions of the Lord's people are the same wherever they live: it cannot be otherwise, for they are all taught in the same school. — J. D. W.)

PLEASE NOTE

We would like to publish as many of the associational and special meeting notices as we can in the July issue. The brethren will please send them in as early as possible.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To December 1, 1959)

Guy Sisk, Tex.	$ 2.00
Beckie McLachlin, Canada	1.00
S. L. Midgett, N. Y.	4.00
Mr. and Mrs. M. C. Johnson, Md.	5.00
G. S. Varnes, Mich.	10.00
Mrs. Blanche Gillum, Tenn.	1.00
Mrs. Ruby Parsons, Md.	3.00
John W. Grafton, Md.	25.00

OUR APPRECIATION

We appreciate the many cards and letters received from brethren and friends during the holiday season; and since we will not be able to acknowledge each one individually, Sister Wood and I take this opportunity to express our thanks to each one who so kindly remembered us. We highly value their love and fellowship.

May the New Year bring renewed evidence of the goodness and mercy of the Lord to all the household of faith.

John D. Wood

Danville, Virginia February, 1960

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

EDITORIAL

Often we are brought to realize our weakness and inability to do the things we would do. We have found that this is good for us, though very unpleasant at the time. It was our intention to write something as an editorial, but it seemed that the more we tried, the farther we were from writing anything that we felt would be the least bit interesting to the brethren. So, as the dead-line came, we found that all we could do was to make this explanation.

The following Circular Letter by Elder Griffin was ordered by the Salisbury Association, to be sent to the Signs for publication, and we insert it here to serve a dual purpose — an Editorial, and Circular Letter.

J. D. W.

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION 1959

(Written by Elder W. D. Griffin)

"Divers weights, and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the Lord." (Proverbs 20:10)

Generally speaking, when a person has a lot of ways to offer you, it will be best to carefully consider all of them. Especially is this true in regard to curing the ills of the Old School Baptist. The one who will take any number of things, counting one as good as another, is not sure of what is wrong, nor is he sure of what it will take to cure.

If nothing is wrong, one with a cure will not be worth anything. A lot of time, if we will carefully consider the apparent ills, we will find that the things which are thought to be wrong are only the crosses of the true spirit of religion and the false premises of the religion that is of law and carnal judgment. A false diagnosis can aggravate a true ailment more than lack of examination and diagnosis, for a false diagnosis is sure to be followed by wrong remedies.

Sure fire cures for every apparent mistake the church has made are offered by every would be physician. The weights and measures being offered today as correctional to our many ills, and apparent ills, are just about as numerous as the physicians. These weights and measures are just as abominable to the Lord as are the ailments. To bring about by transgression and disobedience a wrong, and then transgress and disobey again, in order to cure it, is to, to say the least of it, applying bandages and poultices and remedies of no lasting

value.

That weight and that measure, however plausible it may be to human reasoning, is an abomination to the Lord. A diagnosis launched and made by carnal reasoning, is, in the first place, not authorized by divine authority, neither is an analysis authorized by those who have divers weights and measures to offer. Their judgment of anything being wrong is more apt to be based on human reasoning than on the "thus saith the Lord" to be found in Holy Writ; and even should they stumble upon the true condition, their prescriptions are always based on the theories learned at the feet of the Gamaliels.

The sporters of weights and measures were wrong in their diagnosis of Job's problems; they were no less wrong in the cause of the blind boy's condition; they have ever been wrong in finding out the troubles of Zion. Not only have they been wrong in what the trouble was, or what brought about the trouble, but they have been equally wrong in what it would take to remove the trouble. In building a healthy nation, as in building a tower to reach heaven, they have been confused. Often the nation, whose God is the Lord, is moving right along towards perfection, being perfected by He who is perfect, when, to the dealer in weights and measures, she is lacking in many things.

Every man and woman has already been weighed that is a true follower of the Lord, and all others will be sometime and somewhere. God's dear children, who have seen the hand writing, have also heard the solemn declaration, "Thou art weighed and found wanting." No longer do they then carry around weights and measures, for He who is their true weight, has brought them to see the abomination that is found in the doctrine that is so well pleasing to men. These are they who are preaching that glorious doctrine of Jesus Christ and Him crucified. This doctrine is an abomination to men, therefore they have a bag full of weights and measures to augment the work of Christ, and to serve as an auxiliary in the work of sin cleansing, which the blood of Christ is supposed to do alone. The express command of the Lord to Israel was that they should not have a bag of divers weights and measures. (Deut. 25:13, 14)

The dear children of God feel a desire to present Christ at all times. Although the church at Corinth had many ills, yet, the apostle is determined to know nothing among them save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. This is the just weight with which the Lord is well pleased. The weights many and measures many, as the lords many and gods many, just will not suffice to correct and instruct and console the city of God. As the church is one, as the Bride of Christ is one, just so does she have One Husband. He is her sufficiency at all times and on all occasions and under all circumstances.

The church receives from Him all her fullness. It is not gathered by her from different sources and supply houses, nor does the Lord have agents running around to peddlers of various wares to get some of the goods that they all have. None have this weight to peddle and trade and traffic among the saints, let alone among the ungodly and unbelieving world, but the saints are all weighed by Him and found wanting, and then supplied by Himself and with Himself.

All of the burdensome weights are to be laid aside, and the burden of the Lord is to be carried. It is light, and the further it is carried, the easier it is to carry. As the carrier of this burden and the wearer of this yoke gets nearer home, how his and her eyes light up at the mention of Jesus, and how eagerly does one look through the lattice for a glimpse of Jesus, and how the steps get a little quicker to respond to the sound of singing in that home of the soul.

That which is well pleasing to men is an abomination to God. He who has a bag full of weights and measures (tricks): he who is too quick to judge about our ills, and much more ignorant than quick about the cure for them,

they all are under the condemnation of He who is the just weight in Israel. This weight will give a sack full and the money (works) with which we would have paid, in the top of it, and this measure is justice administered in such a way that it fell on our Surety, and mercy is poured on purpose into our cup to overflowing. This is the sure mercies of God, and it is measured to us as the need arises, not too much, not too little, not a little from that soul factory and a little from that peddler of foul remedies, which are remedies of death, but a perfect weight and a perfect measure.

When brethren meet as becometh saints, they meet to give to each other the blessings that have been given them. He who is our just weight and full measure commanded the disciples, saying, "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom; for with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." The One measure causes you not to owe anything save to love one another; it makes you that ye are not unfruitful and barren in the works of the Lord; it will lead you in a path that is measured and straightened by the power that is in the blood; it will cause you to measure and count off all things that you might win the One measure, which is Christ the Lord; it will make you lay by (measure) as you are measured to, so as to be able to measure out warmth and food to him that is cold and hungry; it will make you to measure the things of this world as not worthy of comparison to the things that are to come; it will make you to measure and count it all joy when men persecute you and put you to death.

Dear Lord, keep us from the dealers in divers weights and measures, and measure to us, heavenly Father, chastenings and purgings that we may be assured of thy love, and freed from our sinfulness; and measure to us grace that we may grow as lively stones in thy kingdom. Amen.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

QUERIES AND REPLY

Elder G. Beebe: — Suppose a member of the Missionary Baptist church, of undoubted piety, and sincere in his attachment to your church, were to apply for admission, would you receive him, without re-baptizing him? What should an individual do who can have no fellowship with the various (so called) benevolent enterprises of the day, and who still believes that the Old School Baptists have gone into error in reference to predestination, &c., and that they so hold and teach these doctrines as to produce bad practical results, supposing him to believe that salvation is wholly of God, and that good works do not procure salvation, but ought to be constantly required of church members as a test of Christian character, and an evidence, and the chief evidence, of being under grace? These questions are propounded in all honesty and sincerity, and with the purest motives, if a constant and intense desire to see the Baptist church what it has been, constitutes such motives; and I hope you will find it convenient and agreeable to answer them in your next issue of the Signs of the Times, and in so doing you will gratify one who has been for some time burdened with a sense of the terrible corruptions existing in the Christian world.

J. I. POWER

Tyro, Jan. 21, 1856

REPLY

If by the Missionary Baptist church our querist means those who are engaged in the modern missionary schemes of the present day, we do not recognize them as the church of Christ, and consequently we cannot hold their administrations valid. Should a member therefore of that class of professed Baptists, apply for membership or communion with the church of Christ, we should suppose he ought to be baptized according to the order of the gospel, though he may have been immersed by the modern Missionists. And on the supposition that the applicant is a person of undoubted piety, we have no doubt it would be his wish to be baptized in an

orderly manner, by a regular minister of Christ, duly authorized to administer that ordinance, and sustained in so administering it, by the fellowship of the church of God. If, however, a person who has been regularly baptized before the division took place between the church, and those Missionists who went out from us, because they were not of us, has been led off into the modern schemes of the day, and having discovered his error, and returned with his confession to the church, he would not, in our judgment, require to be again baptized. A person who has been once regularly baptized in the fellowship of the church of Christ, by a minister of the church duly recognized at the time by the church, under no circumstances requires re-baptism.

A person who can have no fellowship for the various so-called benevolent enterprises of the present day, and who still believes that the Old Baptists have gone into error in reference to predestination, &c. We think such an one should remain where he is, until he can find a church sufficiently pure for him to unite with without defiling his garments. There is a wide difference between going up to the house of the Lord, and being so holy that the house of the Lord must come up to us. We know of but one way of holding the doctrine of predestination, and that is as it is taught in the Bible, and by the Spirit of truth. Any person, however pious he may be, who believes that an unwavering belief in the Bible doctrine of eternal predestination, is productive of bad practical results, cannot make a sound member of the church, and he ought not to subscribe to what he does not believe. And furthermore, we give it as our honest opinion, that any person professing to believe in predestination, who does not find all the tendencies of that doctrine to be such as humbles him in the dust before the thrice holy God, and to inspire within him a profound reverence, and desire to be fully conformed to the will of Jehovah, lacks the evidence that he is born of God, and therefore should refrain from making any profession of religion until by a new and heavenly birth he is qualified to "see the kingdom of God."

There is a palpable contradiction involved in the idea that any person who denies the doctrine of predestination, can at the same time believe that salvation is wholly of the Lord. The practical result of God's predestination is conformity to the image of the Redeemer. "For whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." Thus the Bible holds the doctrine; to hold it any other way is virtually to reject it. God himself saves sinners, only as he has predestinated them to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, and has made them acceptable in the Beloved. And as salvation certainly follows predestination, and results from it, so good works as certainly follow salvation and result from it. For it is God that worketh in you, (his children) both to will and to do according to his good pleasure.

We do not doubt the sincerity of the desire of our correspondent, to see the Baptist church what it has been. When he shall see her from the eminence on which John stood, she will appear to him a holy city, coming down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride for her husband. The perfection of beauty, for she is all glorious within, and her garments are of wrought gold. She is fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. It is very true the poor, vile bodies of God's dear children, are black as the tents of Kedar, but that which is born of God is as fair as the curtains of Solomon. But in looking after the church of God, we are to know no man after the flesh. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. The kingdom is spiritual, and those who inherit it are spiritual; these vile bodies will not participate in the inheritance until they shall have been sown in weakness and raised

in power, sown corruptible, but raised in incorruption; sown a natural body, but raised a spiritual body. "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

That only is the church of Christ which is what she has been, for the church is the kingdom which the God of heaven has set up, and which shall never be removed. "God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God will help her, and that right early. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear, for our God is a consuming fire." May it be our happy lot, through grace abounding to the chief of sinners, to enter in through her gates, and have a right to the tree of life.

"There would I find my settled rest,
While others go and come,
No more a stranger nor a guest,
But like a child at home."

One word in conclusion, to our correspondent. Would you behold the beauty of the Lord, his love, his dove, his undefiled, never look down in searching for his loveliness. She is "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great king." God is known in her palaces for a refuge." For behold the mountain of the house of the Lord is established on the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills. She is the fairest among women, clothed with the garments of salvation, and covered with the robe of righteousness. Look up for her, she is clothed with the sun, and the moon is under her feet, and on her head is a crown of twelve stars. If you have too large a stock of perfection to allow you to be identified with her, wait until every rag of it is stripped off, and then you will be glad when they shall say to you, Come let us go up to the house of the Lord.

We know but little about the Christian world, only that our Lord has said, "In the world ye shall have tribulations." And that the world by wisdom knew not God. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." — 1 John ii. 15, 16. And again, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." — 1 John iv. 4-6. The spirit of error which is in the world, has invented many counterfeits of Christianity, but in reality the terms Christian and world are of opposite signification. To be a Christian is to be called out of the world, and that we may be known as Christians, we must renounce the world, for we cannot possess the love of the Father, and also the love of the world. It is true, there are terrible corruptions in the world, and especially in that portion of it which make pretensions to Christianity, and there are terrible corruptions even in the depraved worldly nature of the children of God, which every Christian feels and laments; but the church is nevertheless the body, and members of Christ, quickened with his Spirit, and made perfect in his righteousness.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, Feb. 1, 1856.)

OBITUARIES

ELDER T. A. WALL

Elder T. A. Wall was born in Alabama August 14, 1886, and died October 17, 1959, near Atlanta, Texas. His dear wife, Sister Tina Wall, preceded him about three years. He is survived by three daughters: Mrs. A. T. Bradshaw, Bivens, Texas; Mrs. J. V. Hutchins, Mesquite, Texas; and Mrs. D. F. Rhoades, Dallas, Texas; three sons: J. W. Wall, Magnolia,

Arkansas, D. F. Wall, California, and Elder Lloyd Wall, Bivens, Texas. Also by one sister, Mrs. Evie George, Lindon, Texas; twenty grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Elder Wall united with Pleasant Hope Church May 11, 1918, and was highly esteemed among his brethren. He was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry August 12, 1922, and was wonderfully blessed in this capacity for more than 37 years. He was very humble, manifesting that fervent love that is so becoming among the Lord's people. He was wonderfully blessed to preach the comforting doctrine of God's sovereign grace, and the abundant mercy of God through Jesus Christ, to all of His elect people, chosen in Christ before the world began.

Though not a strong man physically, he was blessed of the Lord to serve four churches, and was a faithful pastor. He will be greatly missed by our people, yet I feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

The funeral services were held at Pleasant Hope Primitive Baptist Church, near Atlanta, Texas, by the writer, Elder Speer, Elder Lambert, Elder Fleet, and Elder Turner. There was a large congregation and many beautiful flowers, showing that he was held in high esteem by his brethren and friends. May God in his love and mercy be with those who mourn the passing of our brother, and may we be given to look to and trust in the blessed Lord, who wonderfully blessed him to sweetly contend for the precious faith once delivered to the saints.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

DEACON GEORGE BARNETT

Deacon George Barnett, seventy-nine years of age, and a retired farmer, died at his home at Lacie, Kentucky, October 23, 1959, after an illness of several months.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Mabel Barnett; one daughter, Mrs. Leah May Rankley; one granddaughter, Miss Mary Leah Rankley, of Lacie, Ky.; two sisters: Mrs. Birdie Chilton, New Castle, Ky., and Mrs. Ethel Owen, Carrollton, Ky.; and two nephews.

Brother Barnett was baptized into the fellowship of Cane Run Old School Baptist Church when a young man, and proved faithful as a member; and proved his worth to the church as a deacon who was always ready to help, and to look after the needs of the poor. Their home was a most pleasant, Christian-like home; and the writer was entertained there many times. Brother Barnett, with his brothers John and Frank, and two sisters, were members of Cane Run Church: both of the brothers have died, and now George, and the remaining brethren will miss them. After I had served them as pastor and many of the older ones had died, our Clerk had a fire that burned his dwelling and general store, and all of the records of the church were destroyed. A meeting was held at the suggestion of Deacon Barnett at which the deacons of Sulphur Fork Church met with our deacons and clerk to formulate a new book. I was pastor of both churches, and we used the By-laws of the Sulphur Fork Church in starting the new church-book of the Cane Run Church, of Turner's Station, Kentucky.

During the next ten years after several of the older members of Cane Run Church had died, by unanimous agreement the Cane Run Church and the Sulphur Fork Church were amalgamated, the Sulphur Fork Church having a substantial house in Campbellsburg, Ky.

Brother Barnett was buried in the Port Royal Cemetery, with McCarty Funeral Home in charge. May the great God comfort all the bereaved ones, and reconcile all of us to his will.

(Elder) George L. Weaver

HENRY LEE VAWTER

I note with much sorrow the passing of one of my dearest friends, Brother Henry Lee Vawter, and quote the following from the **Shelbyville News:** "Former Magistrate and Outstanding Farmer and Resident of Shelby County Dies in His 84 Year."

Brother Vawter was born May 17, 1875, and died October 19, 1959. He was united in marriage to Nancy Bell Herndon on July 23, 1900; and to this union were born five children, two of whom passed away many years ago. He is survived by his wife and long companion; three daughters: Mrs. Lorine Catlett and son, living on a farm near the home, Mrs. Francis Pollard, Shelbyville, and Miss Ruth Vawter, of the home.

Our brother received a hope when a young man, and united with the Old School Baptist Church, called Little Flock, in Anderson County, Kentucky, and was baptized by Elder J. G. Sawin the fourth Saturday in December, 1894. He remained a member of this church all his life. He would tell of visits with his church of ministers such as Elders Chick, J. G. Eubanks, S. H. Durand, P. G. Lester, John and Peter Sawin, and J. F. Johnson, whose son Dudley Johnson was ordained in the Little Flock Church; as was also Elder Bond, who afterwards moved to Oregon.

Brother Vawter was a reader and supporter of the **Signs of the Times** all his life. After the first World War, my first visit to Shelbyville was in his home, and we had meeting there. For about forty years we were very close in the order and doctine of the Old School Baptists. Well done thou faithful one;

enter into thy rest! His body was taken to the Shannon Funeral Home where services were held by a resident minister.

Written by request, by one who loved him and his family.

(Elder) George L. Weaver

LENA M. PLUMMER

Miss Lena M. Plummer, daughter of Hudson D. and Marinda S. Plummer, was born November 17, 1875, on a farm near Concord, Sussex Co., Delaware.

She moved with her parents to Laurel, Delaware, in 1898, and lived there until she entered the John B. Parsons Home for the aged in Salisbury, Maryland, in January 1951. She was baptized in Chipmonds Pond, Sussex County, Delaware on November 21, 1922, by Elder A. B. Frances, pastor of the Broad Creek, Old School Baptist Church; and she was a faithful member.

After coming to Salisbury to live, she could not attend the church of her membership, she asked for a letter and was gladly received into the fellowship of the Salisbury Church October 19, 1952.

She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and was happy when in company with those of her faith, looking forward to meeting time. She was never absent until she was physically unable to attend, and then she would always remember her dear pastor.

Sister Lena, was a very quiet person, agreeable with all, and she had many friends. She bore her affliction patiently, was in bed but two days. She passed away quietly like she lived, December 20, 1958. We miss her, but we do not wish her back; we believe our loss is her eternal gain.

Funeral services was held December 23, 1958 in the John B. Parsons Home, with Elder W. D. Griffin of Baltimore officiating. Burial was in the Odd Fellows Cemetery, Laurel, Delaware.

She was the last of her immediate family. Only nieces and nephews survive. Her father and mother were members of Broad Creek Church many years, and her father was a Deacon.

Written by one who loved her,
Bertie Dryden

MRS. JOHN EDGAR GLASS NEWMAN

Mrs. John Edgar Glass Newman, of Pelham, North Carolina, was born June 4, 1888, in Rockingham County, N. C. Before marriage she was Beulah W. Glass, daughter of J. A. and Ida Carter Glass.

On November 4, 1908, she was united in marriage to John Edgar Newman. She is survived by her husband and the following children: John W., Pelham, N. C.; Gaither L., Myrtle Beach, S. C.; George E., Ridgeway, Va.; Mrs. Evelyn Watkins, Eugallie, Fla.; Mrs. Susie White, Ruffin, N. C.; and Mrs. Blooma G. Pryor, Pelham, N. C.

She and her husband manifested much interest in the church for many years, and were loyal friends in every way. On the 2nd Sunday in August, 1958, after hearing a sermon from the text: "Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left," Sister Newman presented herself before the church for membership, stating that she had heard that voice. Her husband also came and both were gladly received into the fellowship of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, and were baptized the 4th Sunday in August.

In all the years of our ministry we have never known two who seemed to receive more from their church fellowship than Brother and Sister Newman. They went to meetings far and near, enjoying their new home in the church and the fellowship of their brethren. How thankful the writer is that God brought them into his house, to enjoy the blessings that attend those who follow Him.

In her passing, the church at Dan River has lost a faithful and loving member, her family a devoted wife and mother, and her community a loyal and esteemed citizen. We would bow in humble submission to His holy will, believing she has fallen asleep in the triumph of a living faith, from which none ever wake to weep.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder W. C. King and the writer in Dan River meeting house, amidst a large concourse of loved ones, after which her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery, to await the coming of the Lord.

D. V. Spangler

MEMORIAL

WHEREAS, It has pleased our Heavenly Father in His divine wisdom to remove from us by death our beloved brother and Pastor, Elder Harold M. Bennett, May 19, 1959 and

WHEREAS, This the Rewastico Old School Baptist Church, (his home church) at Mardela Springs, Maryland. Even though we bow in humble submission to a just God, knowing He makes no mistakes, our hearts are saddened much, by the loss of our highly esteemed brother. He served the churches of his pastorate with faithful and humble love and care that we cannot forget.

He came preaching the gospel of peace and

love, and salvation by grace and was firmly established in the belief of the predestination of all things, giving all honor and glory to the God he loved and served, manifesting that love and servitude in his daily walk in life, which endeared him not only to the brethren, but to everyone.

Because of this love and esteem which we had for our brother and Pastor, be it,

RESOLVED, That as a tribute to his memory, a copy be sent, with our deepest sympathy to his dear companion and family, asking God's blessing and needful grace abide with them and that a copy be spread upon the church record, and a copy be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Written by order of the church the second Sunday in November, 1959.

Elder Arthur R. Warren, Moderator
Minnie E. Gambrill, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It has pleased Almighty God, in his infinite wisdom, to remove from our midst, our dearly beloved and highly esteemed brother, Elder H. M. Bennett, one who was devoted to the cause of truth, a humble follower of the blessed Redeemer, one who did not shun to declare the truth as it is in Christ Christ Jesus our Lord, declaring the unsearchable riches of Christ to the comfort and edification of those begging for a crumb of mercy, one whose only hope of heaven and immortal glory was in the shed blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the holy and divine will of our heavenly Father. We mourn not as those without hope, realizing our loss is his eternal gain. May it be the Lord's will to give us grace sufficient to be as true and faithful to the profession we have made as Elder Bennett was, he always desiring to be at the feet of the brethren, to always be kind to one and all, and never to do or say anything to hurt or harm one of the Lord's little ones. And be it further

RESOLVED, That we extend our deepest sympathy to Mrs. Bennett and her family, and we pray that the dear Lord will sustain and comfort them in their bereavement when all human comforts fail. May they be given strength to look unto Him from whence cometh all their help, waiting with patience to meet their loved one in that world beyond this vale of tears. Also be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be sent to the bereaved family, a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times**, and a copy be placed in the minutes of the yearly meeting at the New Vernon Church in New York, October 3, 1959.

This Resolution of Respect was ordered written at that meeting and approved later at a meeting of the Ebenezer Church in New York City October 18, 1959.

Sister Elsie Loeffel, Writer
Elder A. J. Slauson, Moderator
Deacon Edward Adsit, Clerk

J. C. FLORENCE

James Cunningham Florence, son of Mary Jane Russell and William Thaddeus Florence, was born at Odessa Dale, Georgia December 28. 1884, and died at his home there on September 18, 1959. He was buried beside his wife in Decatur, Georgia September 20, 1959.

He was married to Miss Willie May Jackson of Decatur, Georgia. Later they moved to Decatur where Mr. Florence was in business for twenty-five years. Shortly after the death of his wife, he moved back to his old home to be with his sister.

He is survived by one sister, Miss Lena Florence of Odessa Dale, and a niece, Mrs. J. P. Thrash of Mountville.

WALTER E. MELTON

Walter E. Melton, 79, of Dunbar, West Virginia, died September 2, 1959, at his home after an extended illess. We was the son of the late Silas and Fannie Melton, of Poca, W. Va.; and the grandson of the late Elder William A. Melton, who for 30 years was pastor of Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, Mt. Tyler Road, Charleston, W. Va.

Though Walter never united with the militant church, he was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation alone by the grace of God; the total depravity of man; and a God who rules and controls to the minutest detail the whole of his creation. He was faithful in attending the meetings when his health permitted.

He is survived by his wife, Lucy; three sons, Lawrence, Morgantown, W. Va., Stanley and Delbert. Dunbar, W. Va.; one daughter, Mrs. Cleo Morris, Dunbar; four brothers: O. B. Melton, St. Albans, W. Va., Howard, Milwaukee, Wis., Woodson and Rome, of Poca, W. Va. Also by seven grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

His funeral was conducted September 4th at the Keller Funeral Home, in Dunbar, by Elder J. C. Hammond; and interment was in the Melton Cemetery on the farm where he was reared. Written by his cousin, who loved him for Christ's sake.

Nanna Melton Carney

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 128 DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1960 NO. 3

When Jesus tells me he is mine,
And whispers I am his,
My head shall on his breast recline,
And drink in draughts of bliss.

O that he would his grace reveal,
And make my heart his home;
Upon my forehead set his seal
And never let me roam.

I long to know he died for me,
And long to shout his praise;
I long his blessed face to see
And trace his wondrous ways.

Experience of his love I want:
Experience of his grace;
For more experience, Lord, I pant,
To cheer me in the race.

But O, my heart so backward is
To run the prize to win;
And what to me is worse than this,
I cannot cease from sin.

'Tis this that damps my soul's pursuit,
And makes me often sigh;
Still Jesus is the Friend to suit
Just such a wretch as I.

O, when will his love reveal,
And show his blessed face?
When shall I make a heavenly meal
On Jesus' love and grace?

O, bless his name! 'Tis sweet to me —
I wish I knew him more;
For in his light I'm taught to see
What grace he has in store.

There's naught but grace can save a wretch
Deserving Hell like me;
My soul is now upon the stretch,
And longs to be set free.

(A. H. — Gospel Standard, 1868.
Re-published by request.)

2713 White Oak Drive
Houston 7, Texas

Dear Editors:

Another two years has rolled by with such speed that it seems almost unnoticeable, bringing forth the time for another renewal for the Signs of the Times; and I hope it is my desire to thank God for you brethren who are called, and established in the precious doctrine of Christ our Saviour; and who contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. It seems now, upon retrospection and introspection, this precious truth is sadly fallen in the street. But, God be praised, He hath laid help upon one that is mighty; and when we are given the lively operations of the blessed Holy Spirit in our poor souls, we can say with utmost confidence and sweet assurance, that the Lord is our defense, and the Holy One of Israel is our King. Then, though the storms of life and the evils of this wicked world, surge around us as boisterous waves of the tempestuous sea, our hope anchored within the veil, guides, leads and draws us that the dangers, the hurts, the trials that befall us, can come so far, and no farther.

As we behold the terrible things that are coming upon the earth to try the inhabitants thereof, our poor hearts fail with fear and trembling. There we see no hope, no help; and when we turn our eyes within, all is vain. Then, to be drawn to look up, by the eye of faith, to Him that hath said, "I have overcome the world."; "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."; "I will be with thee all the way, even unto the end of the world." ; "And even to your old age I am he; and even to your hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry and will deliver you." When these precious promises are applied to our poor souls by the living Spirit, it is as balm in Gilead to the tempest tossed soul: then we can say with the psalmist, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? why art thou dis-

quieted within me? hope thou in God."

May God bless each of you to stand firm, and cast the true bread upon the waters, and waver not in the face of the enemy, who would, if he could, destroy God's people, and even God himself — but the precious Christ Jesus hath gotten the victory by his own right arm. And though his people will be persecuted, harassed, and tried in this world, as we have his word for it, praise his holy name, he has also said, "I have overcome the world."

Yours in hope of mercy through grace,

Mrs. Buena V. Wright

CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH

"A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon." (S of S 4:15)

Months ago while reading Solomon's Song, I was so very much impressed when I came to this portion of it. I have thought about it from time to time, and have been impelled, or so it seemed, to write about the beauty I saw in it.

Naturally speaking, we would understand the phrase if it were to read, "A garden of fountains"; but this says, "A fountain of gardens". I believe the fountain represents Jesus Christ; the gardens, His people. Christ is the well also from which flows the life-giving drink from the streams from Lebanon (Heaven). If we are his true followers and have truly been blessed to drink from this Fountain, and our robes have been washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb, then we wear them as a chosen people whose fruits bear the marks of faith, hope, charity, goodness, mercy, kindness, grace, wisdom, meekness, strength, fear, righteousness, humbleness, truth, crosses, and all things necessary to keep us, and cause us to be thirsty for, and long for, a refreshing drink from this life-giving stream which flows from this sacred well of Lebanon.

Truth: to release us from these old shackles, and enlighten our poor depraved minds to see Christ as the One who died on the cross of Calvary, thereby setting us free, and making us whole (well) in the Beloved.

Humbleness: to cause us to act the Christian's part where our brother is concerned, forgetting self and all sinful flesh, and sit at the feet of the saints.

Righteousness: which is bestowed by the Saviour; and, if worn as a garment, it will be on the inside. We are told in the Scriptures that there is none righteous except it be imputed through Christ. Job said, "I put on righteousness (Christ), and it clothed me." Do we not long to be clothed with His righteousness?

Fear: is necessary. We find in Proverbs, "Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." We, in nature, do not like fear, for it is a dreadful feeling to be afraid. However, He has promised mercy to them that fear Him. In Proverbs is a command to, "Fear the Lord; depart from evil." "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God", says the writer to the Hebrews. However, I believe we are made to rejoice in this fear, since it is a reverential fear and not slavish. "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings." (Mal. 4:2) — and we glory in that healing; it is as a sweet balm that calms our fearful hearts. Fear and faith and obedience work together.

Strength: is essential to one's well being, but while in the state before spiritual birth one has no strength; and Paul calls it an ungodly state. In Revelation 12:10, it is written that salvation and strength go hand in hand, and also the power of our God and the power of his Christ. Often we feel so sick and undernourished, but when food is given from above we can go leaping as an hart; and the blessed word that flows into our hungry souls, is as milk and honey, reviving us to a lively hope, and to a point of vital strength. Then

the desert doesn't seem dry, the valleys low, nor the mountains high.

Meekness: is an excellent virtue. In Christ's day it was a term applied to the humble and godly, those living quietly; and by sharing their humility, Jesus magnified them to his glory. In Numbers 12:3, we read that Moses was meek above all men which were upon the face of the earth; yet he was the law-giver, a man chosen of God, strong and gifted. Simeon and Anna were meek and lowly. I pray for meekness to be mixed with my daily living and thinking.

Wisdom: I pray for, sufficient to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord working the will and the do of his good pleasure; and to look to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, the all-wise God who supplies our needs in times of peace. Give us not foolish, worldly wisdom, or wisdom of vanity, but that which is applied to our hearts; that pure wisdom from above which knows God.

Grace: is so sweetly and charmingly expressed by Montgomery and Needham, that it seems to wrap up my feelings well:

"Grace like a fountain ever flows,
Fresh succors to renew;
The Lord my wants and weakness knows,
My sins and sorrows too.

He sees me often overcome,
And pities my distress;
And bids afflictions drive me home,
To anchor on His grace.

Weak as I am, yet through Thy grace
I all things can perform;
And, smiling, triumph in Thy name
Amid the raging storm.

'Tis He directs my doubtful ways,
When dangers line the road:
Here I my Ebenezer raise,
And trust the gracious God."

Kindness: it seems such an easy virtue; but are we really ever kind to those who are unkind to us? Do we put ourselves out to be kind to others? Kindness to give a cup of cold water in His name is far removed from our sinful nature unless God motivates the act. We are bid to turn not strangers away lest we fail angels unawares. This causes me to take inventory of myself: Oh, how I do feel the need of help in every small instance. I would that I had the kindness of Ruth. How shall I attain to anything? God is kind and he shows these things to poor sinners and faithful servants, I believe. May He keep our hearts so that we may dwell in the fountain of brotherly love and kindness towards one another.

Mercy: Lord we crave; without it we surely faint. Thy mercy we beg, Lord, all the day long. For mercy we begged when first we felt to be the chiefest of sinners. "He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy." He hears our cries, and we are glad that his mercy is from everlasting to everlasting. (Psalms 103: 17) We pray that his mercy shall follow us all the days of our lives, and that we shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Goodness: and mercy go hand in hand. The goodness of our Lord and Master is great, and the earth is full of it, says the Psalmist. Man's goodness is as filthy rags, and if in the everyday life of God's dear people who dwell in the gardens here, any good is found in them, it is imputed through Christ, who is perfect. There is no goodness in the flesh, but if goodness is manifest, it is as a light that becomes light because of having found something to cast its beams upon.

"*Charity:* suffereth long and is kind." (1 Cor. 13:14) "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins." (I Peter 4:8) it does not say *a* multitude, but *the* multitude. Does that mean all? I realize that I understand so very little, and perhaps not anything worthwhile, and certainly not, unless taught from above. The word Charity, and its meaning, has always bothered me. Does it mean the same as *love*, that little word that we feel we've understood all down through the years? I love to think of it as sharing with the poor. I have not forgotten something that happened when I was a small child:

A family moved into our neighborhood, and one of the children was in my class at school. Our good teacher realized that they were in need, and asked that we contribute something to their welfare. The child was my age, I suppose — my size anyway, and I took a beautiful jacket I was fond of, and gave it to her. I can't even now describe the sense of love, compassion and unselfishness that I enjoyed. It was such a small gift; and so long ago (over fifty years). I not only remember, but sometimes the same kindly, heart felt feeling surges through my poor being; and it was as though it happened yesterday. Charity? Sharing!

Hope: "Hope that is seen is not hope." One of our dear servants expressed it: "We can't live without hope, yet we don't expect to see it until we have entered within the veil; because when we see that which we hope for, it is no longer hope." God's children are given reasons to believe that they have a sweet hope in Jesus. And, how refreshing to be able to give a reason, from time to time, that such manifestations go on within our hearts. The poor sinner knows what it is to have, "hope deferred: it maketh the heart sick." (Prov. 13:12) Again and again we are made to feel that we are without hope and God in this troubled world; but "Blessed are they whose hope the Lord is." (Jer. 17:7)

Faith: is the gift of God. "That which is not of faith is sin." God's people are justified by it; purified by it, and sanctified by it. There are those who died in the faith; and we live, we hope, by faith. So very much is said about faith in the Bible. It is a pure mystery to the unbeliever; and is something as vital to the believer as the heartbeat. If one does not have it, he is as dead as one who never breathed. If he has it the size of a mustard seed, he can remove mountains. The chosen of God wait, through the Spirit of Jesus Christ, for the hope of righteousness by faith. Faith produces peace, joy and hope. "The just shall live by faith," etc. (Hebrews 10:38)

Fruits: Paul says, "The fruit of the spirit is meeknes, love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, longsuffering and temperance." "Let us praise the Lord continually; may the fruit of our lips give thanks to his blessed name." The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness and truth. We are commanded to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness; but rather to reprove them. A good tree beareth good fruit; and by their fruits ye shall know them. Do we bear good fruit? How we dread the bitter fruit! It is not good to our taste, but we have to suffer the bitter in order to appreciate the sweet.

I fear that my walk and talk is often far from good fruit, but if Christ be in the matter, all will be fruitful. God grant that we walk in this garden which has been nourished by the well of living waters of the Fountain, and streams from Lebanon.

Prayerfully,
Mary W. Sowers
607 Maple Ave.
Reidsville, N. C.

R. F. D. 6, Box 303
Jasper, Alabama

Dear Editors:

I want you to know that I am still receiving the Signs; and that words cannot express the comfort I get in reading it. I do hope that I appreciate it. I have thought that I would write you a little message to tell you how much comfort I find in its pages, but I am no writer. I hope, however, that I have been taught the truth as it is in Christ the Saviour. If I could write my thoughts as others do, it would be a comfort to me; and I would tell them how much joy I get in reading their letters.

I am not able to make trips as I did when my companion was living and able to go (Elder J. W. Free). Those who

can go seldom visit me, and I cannot talk with my own family in church matters, as I am the only one that belongs to the original Primitive Baptists. I have been among them 48 years, and truly love them. I don't see how they can love me half as much as I love them; for they are dear to me.

I desire the prayers of God's dear children, if they can get low enough to think of a poor, undone creature as I am. I hope they can find a place for me to stay among them the rest of my days. I may never meet all of you editors, but I have met Elder Griffin and Elder Lambert, and they have been wonderful to me.

A sister saved by grace if at all,
Mrs. J. W. Free

EXPERIENCE

R. F. D. 2,
Ruffin, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

I have wanted to write you for a long time, but nothing was given me. I wish so much that I could paint the picture as lovely as I receive it from time to time, when you preach Jesus. You preach the Saviour's love and mercies so beautifully, and make it so plain and wonderful to a hungry soul such as I have been for so long. There aren't words for me to tell you how wonderful it is to me.

I hope I am thankful for all I have been blest to hear and understand. Isn't it wonderful what God can do? Isn't it wonderful to be brought down so low as to feel our unworthiness and helplessness in the sight of God; then to be raised up and turned around by the mighty hand of God. He can make one a stranger with no where to go — no where to turn, and then put him in green pastures to feast and feed on God's wonderful word; and enable him to hear, and to understand just how powerful his word is; and how great his love is to poor sinners.

He died on the cross that we might have this blessed hope. There was nothing I could do — nothing I did: it was the gift he willed to give me. "Nothing in my hand I bring; simply to thy cross I cling." I have tasted the bitter; but then if I had never had the bitter, how could I ever have known the sweetness I now taste! I wanted to be taken out of it all — not by my hand but by God's hand; but it wasn't His will for it to be that way. I wondered why at the time — there was nothing in this life to live for; but it was God's way of showing me his loving kindness and tender mercies. God makes no mistakes, but I am full of them — not willingly, but because I can't help it.

Earthly things fade away when Jesus is revealed: I can witness to it for it has happened to me. . . At a birthday dinner in 1957, those whom I usually asked to give thanks declined; and an unseen visitor appeared and I felt his hand upon me, and my whole being was filled with words to give thanks. I had always felt ashamed to give thanks in their presence, for I felt they would think me forward, and I didn't want that; but this time I felt the hand of God leading me, and I wasn't ashamed. My loving husband said, "O Lord, I am not worthy of all this." I felt that heaven came down in my home and filled my soul with such love and forgiveness I had not experienced before.

. . . I felt that I was on a cloud, praising the Lord; and I was given to write my loved ones, and friends, asking their forgiveness if I had ever hurt them. I guess some thought I was crazy, but it made no difference with me, I was led by the power of my Saviour to make peace, if I could . . . I had a burning desire to live closer to Jesus, and to ask for his will to be done in my life; and to make me willing regardless of the price or suffering I would have to bear. No matter what trials I might have, they could never be as the Lord had suffered for me on the cross.

Then I was down again in the valley:

I wasn't happy in my church life (previous affilliation — Ed.), and I went more and more to Dan River Church, and at times I was fed, and at times I couldn't hear. I planned again to go to my church and found I was a complete stranger there, and could hardly stay until the service was over; then I had no desire to go any more.

The 4th Sunday in August my husband experienced the loving care of Jesus and that he was one of His little ones: I was floating on a cloud again, for I knew that God alone was the doer of it. I had never tried to persuade Jim in any way. On the 4th Sunday in September at 7:30 AM our tobacco barn, which was full of tobacco, was burned. I walked the floor and tried to thank God for having Jim in the hollow of his hand, for I felt that his grace would be sufficient for us; and it was — Jim came into the house singing "Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound." Oh, how my heart rejoiced! We got ready and went to Dan River meeting, and were enabled to forget about the barn.

. . . The 1st Sunday in October I experienced great peace, with not a worry or care. Tongue cannot tell of such peace. Then after that I felt to be a complete stranger, and fear gripped my poor soul. On the 2nd Sunday in October I went with Jim to Reidsville meeting. I sat in the back of the house, where I thought no one would see me, for I thought that God had left me a total stranger in this life. Jim's sister, Nannie, came in and sat by me. My heart was made glad, for she didn't seem to be a stranger. But I was in a terrible condition, and begged for mercy and relief from the condition that was weighting me down. It would have been a great relief if I could have died.

At this time I was led to write you, Brother Spangler; which no one knew of except God and Jim. I went to the Reidsville meeting, and you preached on, "What think ye of Christ?" That was the sweetest music I ever heard, and you answered the letter, which I had written, so completely that I was satisfied that God worked through you to answer it. It was so mysterious and wonderful that it could not be taken from me. Man couldn't give that — it had to be from on high. How my poor, hungry soul was fed that day. After I went to bed, I read my Bible and feasted on all you said, and tried to thank God in my weak way.

I wasn't able to go to Dan River for the singing, but I felt that I had to; yet before I got there I wished I had not come. Then, when Louise asked for a home, I was struck completely helpless; my feet seemed glued to the floor, and I couldn't even shake hands with the ones I loved. When my mother passed on, she laid the burden on me to look after Louise, and I did the best I could. That was lifted when she asked a home with you saints: I knew she was in God's hands.

. . . The 4th Saturday in May I was so afraid it made me sick, and I couldn't overcome the fear; so I told Jim and Louise to go on to Dan River preaching, that my body was so tired and given out. I wanted to fix my clothes so that I could be baptized with Louise, but I couldn't that night; so I asked God to let me sleep that night and to feel well enough to go to the meeting on Sunday, and, if it were his will, I would ask for a home with you dear people. I arose at 5 o'clock on Sunday morning and felt good, and was getting ready to go. I laid my clothes on the bed to take with me, but I just couldn't take them. I felt that I never would be shown to go before the church; and I never dreamed that I would be led that day. But when the song, "I'm not a s h a m e d to own my Lord", was sung, I had to go, for I wasn't ashamed to own him as my God. I felt that the appointed time had come for me to ask for a home, though I felt so little. The sermon was food to my soul — Fellowship. The three days of our association were just wonderful. I found part of what I had been searching for for over 20 years, the bonds of love and fellowship. I felt that another link had been added to my chain. It was

sweet to me, that 2nd Sunday in October, 1959: I felt the links drawn closer together by the hand of the dear Saviour, who does all things for our good, and at the appointed time.

I wish so much, Brother Spangler, that I could tell you how my poor soul has been fed and made glad by the doctrine you preach. It is the way I believe. God's love and tender mercies have showered down on a poor sinner, and I have experienced these things. If I have been given a spiritual ear to hear and to understand, then I do have a hope to trust in. I know I must have gloomy days, and doubts and fears in the flesh I now live in, but I feel assured that the blessed hope I have, came from the gracious hand of the mighty God, though I know I don't deserve any of it; but I hope I have a thankful heart. Paul said that he could do all things through Christ that strengthened him. I do believe that, don't you? For I live and breathe by the mighty hand of God, or else I wouldn't be here. . .

May His grace and mighty power keep you, and bless you and yours all the days of your life. In bonds of love and fellowship,

A sister, I hope,
Nannie Carter

(The above is a synopsis of Sister Carter's letter. — Ed.)

Route 3, Box 115
Bassett, Virginia

Dear Brother Wood,

Enclosed you will find the experiences of Brother Charley Parcell, which some have requested that he have published in the "Signs of the Times".

He has asked that I mail it in to you. You may publish this when it is convenient to do so.

I would like to add that I had the privilege of baptizing this brother.

Thanking you very kindly,

Yours in hope,
Elder C. E. Turner

"I CLAIM NO HONOR"

Rocky Mount, Va.

Dear Brother Wood,

I have been requested to write an article in your paper as I have never had an opportunity to publicly praise God for the many blessings that I have received at the hand of God.

I am a man that has been highly favored of God and highly honored of men. This has all been unmerited on my part, for it is God that has given me strength and courage to perform my duties in such a way as to be commendable to my nation. So it is to Him all honor, praise, and adoration belongs.

I was reared in a Primitive Baptist family and in my boyhood and young manhood days their preaching was dry and uninteresting to me. When I went to Sunday School, I felt that I was learning a great deal about the way of life and salvation. I had a Bible teacher that I had a great deal of love and respect for. He was a very wise and prudent man. The things that he put the most emphasis on were that the days of the miracles had past and God no longer appeared to men in dreams and visions, that Christ had died for the whole human race and every man could accept and be loved or reject and be lost. I accepted this doctrine because it seemed reasonable to me.

In 1917, I was called into military service and was assigned to a company of men of whom the large majority were men of high moral character. This made army life more pleasant than in many companies. In 1918, I went overseas with the 317th Reg., 80th division. Soon after arriving in France, I was assigned to liaison duty and orderly service. My duties were to stay at company headquarters while the company was on drill. I had a great deal of time to myself with very little work to do. I read my Bible a great deal. Everything I read seemed to condemn me and I became much disturbed over my sinful condition.

On the third day of October, 1918, our regiment was ordered to the front. I was very busy for several hours getting ready for our move. After my duties were finished I came back to headquarters, which was a German dugout. I was told to lie down and relax for we had a hard march in front of us. I wanted to be alone, so I went into a room to myself and lay down on a German cot. It was the darkest place I have ever seen, and it seemed to me that I could feel the darkness around me. I began to think of what a deplorable condition I was in. There I was far from home and my loved ones, facing death. unfit to live and unprepared to die. I thought my chances to survive were so slim. The enemy cannons were rumbling like distant thunder. I felt that I should make peace with my God but it was now too late. I was condemned to eternal doom and justly so, nobody's fault but my own. I felt that God was so high and so holy that I was entirely beneath his notice, but still my cry was Lord be merciful to me, a sinner. I fell asleep or went into a trance and I had a wonderful dream. The whistle blew and I grabbed my rifle and fell in line. It seemed that I was in a new world, that great burden was removed from my breast. I was in a complete state of happiness. All that I could remember of my dream except this was telling my comrades goodbye.

As we marched on, the sound of the enemy cannons became plainer. In a few hours we came within range of them. Those guns had a range of about fifteen miles. As our platoon was marching beside a high building, a large shell fell very near to us. Dirt, rocks and shrapnel poured against the wall near us and literally covered a number of us up. Every man crawled out and marched on very calmly as though nothing had happened. I had seen all of this in my dream the night before. As we marched on, many things happened that reminded me of my dream. About sunrise we came in plain view of the enemy. They were hidden in a piece of woods about a mile away. They opened machine gun fire on us. Our Captain was shot down in a matter of seconds after the firing started.

When our Captain was shot down, my platoon commander, being the next in rank, automatically took command of our company; and I automatically became company runner.

We were directly in front of what we called a machine gun nest, about ten or twelve machine guns in a small area, each gun firing six hundred or seven hundred shots per minute. Our commander gave the order "Down," and we all fell to the ground. Every few seconds some man would be hit, most of them rendered unconscious. Some would curse and some would call on the name of the Lord.

A small still voice assured me that all was well with me. The Captain lay with his face on the ground, and commanded his corporals to advance their men, one man at a time. The sound of the battle was so dense that he could not be heard but a short distance. It was a pitiful sight to see, those men lying there in a storm of bullets.

I sprang up and ran along the battle front and relayed the command through the company. When I began to move and the rest of the men lying still, it seemed that all of the guns were directed at me. The bullets were singing over my head and in front of me and behind me and knocking dirt around my feet. I succeeded in getting the company to moving forward. Three Governments decorated me for this act.

For this I claim no honor, for it was God that gave me strength and courage to perform my duties, and the arm of God that shielded me from those bullets. Nothing short of the power of God could have done that.

We maneuvered slowly and tediously all day in the direction of the enemy. Late in the afternoon, we came in about fifty yards of the woods where the enemy were hidden. The Captain called me to his side and asked me to give him an estimate of how many men he had

in his command. I told him I could not make an accurate estimate but our loss had been heavy. He said his orders were to take those woods. I told him that I didn't think we were strong enough to do it, so he sent a message to Battalion Headquarters to know what to do. The answer came back, withdraw your troops at once.

It was my responsibility to get this order through the entire company. Everybody was lying flat on the ground. When I started running the firing became very intense. As I went along the battle front, I passed a number of wounded men who would look at me with tears running down their cheeks begging me to help them; please give me a drink of water; please drag me in a shell hole. I had to hurry on to get the order to the men that could come out. After I delivered my message, I attempted to drag a man with a broken leg into a shell hole. I was so weak I could not move him, so I called a man to help me. About the time we two picked him up, he was riddled with bullets and fell across the wounded man. I dived for a shell hole and lay there until the guns were directed in another direction.

I then jumped from one shell hole to another until I got out of sight of the machine guns. I thought I would be alright then. About that time a sniper got range on me, I dived into a place where some man had dug out for protection. The bullets came gliding along on the ground knocking dirt in on me. There I was tempted of the Devil. I was tempted to rise up and let those bullets put me out of my misery, as I was hungry, thirsty, and dispondent about the way we had to leave our comrades at the mercy of the enemy, and had to fall short of our objective.

The thought then came to me, Oh how untrue it would be to my God and to my country, to commit such a rash act! So I lay there until the firing was directed in another direction. I then moved forward a short distance and was wounded in the face by shrapnel. I was then carried to the hospital and was there when the war ended.

I was then assigned to a Casual Company and sent back to the States. When I went through the mustering office, they sent me back to the hospital for further treatment.

While I was there the great evangelist, Billy Sunday, was holding a revival in Richmond. I wanted to hear some preaching. So I got a pass and went over there. There was a great throng of people gathered there hours before preaching time. When he began to preach, he set forth the Armenian Doctrine stronger than I had ever heard it before. He preached the creature far more powerful than the creator. Everybody seemed to be rejoicing at his preaching except me. Why was I so different? When I was sent home the Billy Sunday clubs were organized all over the country.

One afternoon I visited a lady friend and she suggested that we go to the Billy Sunday meeting, and of course we went. We took a back seat hoping to not be noticed. The leader of the tribe came to me and asked me to come and go with them. I told him I could not believe such a doctrine.

When I came back to Chestnut Church and heard those old Elders set forth the power of God and sovereignty of God, I was built up and made to rejoice in it. Before I would hardly get off the church ground my mind would be back on the things of the world. When I read the parable of the sower and the seed, I saw that I was described as the stony ground. I was much disturbed about that. My prayer to God was to be able to retain these great truths in my memory.

I was reluctant to ever tell my experience to anyone as I thought it would sound like a fairy tale. One Sunday at Chestnut Church, Elder Randolph Perdue came to me and asked me how long had I had a hope. This was such a surprise to me that I could hardly speak, but I began trying to relate something of my experiences to him. I could hardly

express myself.

He began telling my feelings better than I could tell them myself. He told me that I need not look for better evidence to come on and join the Church, that I would be better satisfied and get more out of life.

When I offered myself to the Church, they seemed to receive me gladly of which I am surely grateful. The fellowship of the Church is very dear to me.

Yours in hope,
Charley M. Parcell

THE HEAVEN SENT BREAKFAST

Mr. H. L. Hastings, of Boston, says in his "Ebenezers," that on the afternoon of Christmas Day, 1866, he went into an humble chapel on Lowell Street and found a physician delivering a brief address in reference to the gracious providences of God, and his guiding hand as seen in the affairs of life. He spoke in substance as follows:

"Once in my visits about the city, I stepped into a store and commenced to talk upon the truths of revelation; and the conversation presently turned upon the faithfulness of God in providing for his people. And the merchant said, 'In the city of Portland there resided some years ago a rope maker named H—. He was regarded as being in prosperous circumstances, and doing a comfortable business. In the year 1812, the 'embargo' which was laid upon exports ruined his business: he could not sell his ropes, and finally fell into straitened circumstances.

'He had a wife, a frail and feeble woman, who had been afflicted with pulmonary disease for 25 years; and he also had several children. One cold, snowy, winter's night their last morsel of food was consumed; he had no means to obtain more, and the children went supperless to bed. The man was not a Christian, and was in great distress. The woman was a child of God and knew there was a hiding place for tossed and troubled souls before the throne of grace. The husband retired to rest with the children, and the feeble wife remained to pray, and plead the promises of God who feeds the hungry from his bounteous hand.

'The night wore away while she continued in earnest supplication; and about two o'clock something seemed to bid her to go to the door; and she opened it. The snow was drifting and the storm howling without, but in the entry there stood a large basket. Unable to lift it, she dragged it within the door as best she could; and uncovering it, beheld bread, beef, potatoes, butter, ham, and a variety of other articles of food — an abundant supply for the pressing and present wants.

'For all these things she thanked and praised God; and having done so, proceeded to prepare a breakfast for the family: boiling some potatoes, cooking meat, and placing them with the butter and bread, upon the table.

'When all was done, she called her husband and bade him come and see the breakfast the Lord had provided for them. But he, ignorant of God's wondrous workings, supposed that hunger and trouble had made her insane, and begged her to be quiet; and said he certainly would get some food in the morning. But she insisted that he should come and see the food the Lord had provided for them. At length the odor of the cooking breakfast reached his nostrils, and he came out, and saw with grateful wonder the food which the Lord had given to feed his suffering family. The children were awakened, and the heaven sent breakfast was eaten with keen appetites, and reverent and thankful hearts. But the source of the supply, or the hand by which God had sent it, was yet a mystery. Nothing about the basket gave indication of the place from whence it came; and they could only give thanks to the giver or every good and perfect gift for such timely aid.

'Sometime afterward, someone was looking at the bottom of the basket and discovered on it the trace of two initials, nearly obliterated. At once the man recognized them as the initials of the grocer

who lived at the next corner, and concluded the basket came from him. The grocer was a believer in the final salvation of all men, and was not regarded as especially devout; but it seemed evident that the Lord had used him to convey food to this suffering family.

'The rope-maker's wife lost no time, but speedily called on the wife of the grocer, saying, 'I have come to tell you how the Lord heard my prayers.' 'Stop', said the grocer's wife, 'hear my story first. That cold, stormy night, when I lay in the bed with my infant only a few weeks old on my arm, and the winds howling around, someone came and took hold of me, and said, Mr. H—'s folks are starving, and you have bread enough; send them some bread. My husband said that it was false, that Mr. H— is better off than we are. He does not need bread. Soon the hand was laid on me again, and the message was repeated. I again urged my husband to go, but he refused.

'This was done the third time; and I entreated my husband to go, but he had no faith in it. I said unto him, You take care of the child, I am going to carry Mr. H—'s folks some bread. I cannot stay. God will take everything we have if we do not do it.

'Seeing that I was determined to go, he offered to go for me; and took the basket. I told him to put in bread, potatoes and butter, etc., and he went out in the storm, wading through the deep drifts of snow; and left the basket in your entry.

'The rope-maker's wife then told her story about the sore distress, the weary night watch, the agonizing prayer, and the timely answer, which brought comfort to both soul and body in that wild and stormy night.' "

"And", said the merchant who told the story, "I was one of the children who ate that breakfast which the Lord thus provided." "And", said the physician, "that merchant is Mr. H—, of this city."

This was the physician's story as nearly as we can repeat it; and we have placed it among these records of prevailing prayer in hope that from it some of God's poor children may derive comfort in the midst of trial and distress, and be enabled to plant their Ebenezers, or memorials of divine faithfulness, thick amid the shadowy pathways of this weary world, until they shall reach the land where, "They shall hunger no more, for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and lead them unto living fountains of waters."

Still God humbles his people, and suffers them to hunger, and feeds them in unknown ways, that he may make them know that, "man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord, doth man live." (Deut. 8:3) Happy are they who apply these lessons of His providence, and learn more and more perfectly to trust His faithful word.

Sylvaster Hassell

(Copied from Gospel Messenger of December, 1905)

Dear Brother Wood:

There is nothing I enjoy more than reading such as the above. I cannot tell how I feel when I read or hear of God's goodness in caring for his needy ones. It is far better to be so poor as to trust Him for our living, than to trust in uncertain riches. What are the riches and honor of the world worth to the little ones who hunger for his righteousness? The love, fellowship, and presence of Jesus with bread and water, is far more joyous than all the world without him. If others enjoy such as this as I do, it is worth reprinting.

I would like to get Mr. Hasting's "Tales of Trust", or other writings, if available.

Yours in hope,
George W. Jackson,
East Point, Ga.

4511 Prescott
Portland 18, Oregon

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am almost late with my renewal, but have been so busy getting settled;

and time does seem to fly as we grow older. Sometimes I feel reconciled and peaceful that the years left, if years it should be, are not as long as the years we've lived that are past; and again, I long to stay on, and immediately wonder why I do. So it is a constant desire or prayer that the dear Lord reconcile me to all his dispensations; and again I can't ask for so much. So it's a warfare all the time.

We are nicely situated here, not far from our children, in a nice neighborhood, and our street is well lighted. The traffic is heavy but we are getting used to it. This is a beautiful city — called the garden of roses; and I think it is. Just now the holly trees are full of their red berries, and are beautiful to see. So much pride is taken in the landscaping of homes. Grass is like velvet, and is green all winter. It gets down to 32, but in the daytime is 45, 48 and 50; and in February will be in the 60's. It is much more pleasant than the Missouri winters.

. . . I am so sorry to be so far away from my home church, but they are so good to write to me; as is Sister Hardy, in Winnsboro, Texas. My home church is Big Walnut Church, Topeka, Kansas; and Elder L. L. Schenck is our pastor.

Enclosed is $5.00 for which please renew my subscription; and thank you.

Saved by grace, if saved at all,
Mrs. J. W. Taylor

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

EDITORIAL

THE LOST SHEEP

Sometime ago I received a request from a dear brother to write an article on the subject of the Lost Sheep.

In presenting to our readers such thoughts as we have on the subject, it is with fear and trembling; there is a difference of opinion among brethren on the subject, and we hope a mantle of charity will be cast over the article; and if there are those who view the matter differently, we would be glad to have them write on the subject. As long as one manifests a brotherly spirit in his writings, we are glad to publish his articles; provided they conform to the principles of salvation by grace.

We find the subject of sheep through-

out the Bible. The wealth of a person was often determined by the number of sheep owned. The animal was useful for food, and used under the law as a sacrifice — as a type of Jesus Christ.

Often in the presentation of them in the Scriptures they seem to represent the church of God as a whole. The line is often drawn between sheep and goats, as representing the elect and the non-elect; or the saved and the eternally lost. The parables of the Kingdom of Heaven seem to present two classes of people. The difference between the virgins was that five were wise, and five were foolish: five took oil in their vessels with their lamps; and five took no oil with with them. Five went in with the Bridegroom to the marriage, and the door was shut; and five returned after going to buy oil, and found the door shut. Under the legal or law dispensation, the Hebrew nation was often a type of the church which would be set up under the gospel dispensation; and often referred to as the House of Israel. But all are not Israel that are of Israel, but in Isaac (Jesus) the seed is called; which is the church of Jesus Christ. Though the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant is saved. This remnant, in our humble judgement, represents the lost sheep of the House of Israel.

Under the sacrificial law the priest and High priest made offerings for the people daily and yearly, with a promise of better things to come, as a lamb was bound to the altar, and his life taken by the priest. As this lamb was kept continually before the house of Israel as a promise of the coming of the Lamb of God who should take away the sins of the world, no doubt there were among the worshippers Israelites who saw no more than a literal offering; and others who saw Him who was brought as a Lamb to the slaughter for our sins. Faith in the offerer was that which distinguished between the true Israelite, and they who were after the flesh.

Many saw these daily offerings, and longed for a better sacrifice. Many longed for a better righteousness than could be obtained by daily offerings; and only where there was a God given faith could one see the day of Jesus, and rejoice. Abraham saw his day, and by faith could say to Isaac, as they journeyed to the mount where God had commanded him to make an offering of his son, "God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering."

As the coming of the Lord Jesus drew nigh, the Jewish priesthood had sunk to such a low level that the torn and the lame were o f t e n substituted for the Lamb w i t h o u t blemish: the people brought that which was torn and presented it to the priest for an offering; and this was referred to in the book of Malachi as robbing God. Tradition had taken the place of the commandments of God, and Israel had sunk to a low state. And yet, with this dark picture before us, we are reminded that there remained some who thought upon His name; and a book of remembrance was written for them. These are referred to in the 24th chapter of Ezekiel:

"As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there they shall lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock, and will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong (persons who need no repentance); I will f e e d them with judgement."

When Jesus sent out the twelve apostles, he commanded them to go not into the way of the Gentiles, nor into any city of the Samaritans: "But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go preach, saying the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, clean the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give."

One of our departed ministers was asked many years ago to whom he would preach the gospel, if God called him. His reply was, "If I preach the gospel, it will be to the **lost sheep of the house of Israel.**

When a woman of Canaan cried to Jesus to have mercy on her, her daughter being grievously vexed with a devil, he answered her not a word; and his disciples besought him to send her away, but he answered and said, "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Then she worshipped him, saying, "Lord help me." But he answered and said, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs." And she said, "Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the master's table." Then Jesus answered and said unto her, "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt." And her daughter was made whole from that hour.

In Luke 15:4 we find a parable presented to the Pharisees after the publicans and sinners had drawn near to him. The Publicans and the sinners seem to portray the lost sheep, as we find the poor publican in the temple feeling too cast down to lift his eyes to heaven, but crying to God to be merciful to him a sinner; but we find the Pharisee thanking God that he was better than other men — resting his case on his fasting and giving. The line is drawn between the poor lost sheep, as represented by the publican, and the self-righteous Pharisee: one begs for mercy, with no righteousness of his own to plead; the other manifests that in his own heart he is a just person who needs no repentance. This was a good time for Jesus to draw the line: one class draws nigh to hear him — the publicans and sinners; the others, Pharisees, murmering because the Saviour eats with sinners and publicans. Here he searched their hearts; and closed their mouths.

"What man of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine (notice where he leaves the ninety and nine) in the wilderness, and goeth after that which is lost, until he finds it. And when he had found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he called together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."

There are those who do not hear Jesus' word; and they do not hear his word because they are not his sheep. He says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. He calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth **His own sheep,** he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice."

There were other sheep which Jesus owned, that did not belong to the Jewish fold, or the lost sheep of the house of Israel. This refers to the believers, or sheep, among the Gentiles, that he must also bring; and there would be one fold and one shepherd.

There are none of God's people who need no repentance; or whole who need no physician. He did not come to call the righteous to repentance, but sinners. All are sinners, but only to those who have received the commandment, sin has revived, and they have died to hope of salvation by the works of the law; and know the exceeding sinfulness of sin.

Dear reader, have you felt to be the lost sheep? Have you found yourself in the wilderness, with no place to go? Have you been brought to the end of

the law, and He took you on his shoulder and brought you to the fold? Could you believe that the Lord's people are those who are just persons who need no repentance? or are they the Pharisees whom Jesus was setting forth in the parable, who murmered because he ate with sinners? Are the ninety and nine, regardless of their profession of religion, the ninety and nine left in the wilderness. Has the dear Saviour found you as one alone, and delivered you from self-righteousness? If so, then you can sing with Newton:

"I once was lost, but now am found."

In my understanding, we find the lost sheep that Jesus takes on his shoulder and brings home, a picture of the church; and the ninety and nine a picture of the self-righteous who have never felt the need of repentance. One claims to have no right to the blessings of God, as poor lost and ruined sinners; and acknowledging that the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the master's table, and knowing that all they are, and all that they have, is because of the goodness and mercy of a gracious God. The other despises all others, needs no repentance, is clean in his own eyes, and trust in himself.

As the line of distinction was drawn then, so shall it be until the Lord comes for his own. Times change, conditions vary, but human nature changes not.

Each may feel that he is a lost sheep. There are not two classes of God's people: they are all one in Christ Jesus. They are all by nature a disobedient people; all go astray, and need Him who must find us, deliver us, and bring us to the fold.

Humbly submitted,
D. V. S.

THE WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY

(John 8:3-11)

We have been asked concerning the above incident, if anyone knows what it was that Jesus wrote on the ground. The inquirer states that she had heard it quoted that Jesus wrote with His finger in the sand. This incident is recorded only by John the apostle, who is represented as the one of the four beasts who was like a flying eagle. Revelation 4:8. It is thought that John, being much younger than the other disciples, lived long enough to see men arise who denied the divinity of our Lord, thus John began his testimony of Jesus with "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men: — And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." The occurrence of which we wish to write took place the day after the last day, that great day of the feast of tabernacles, where He had cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this He spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)" John 7 shows that when Jesus came into the temple, "the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" Some believed, others said He had a devil, and the Pharisees and Chief Priests sent officers to take Him, some would have taken Him but no man laid hands on Him. When asked why they had not brought Him "The officers answered, Never man spake like this man."

In the end of that day every man went unto his own house. Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives, what a blessed yet sorrowful place was this, was it not here that His forefather "David went up by the ascent of Mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his

head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up?" David fled before Absalom and his once close friend Ahithophel. Jesus went up from the temple, which was His house, but those who professed to be friends of God and children of Abraham had made it a den of thieves. One only has to read 2 Samuel 15:25-26 to see that David had a hope in God even at that dark hour. Whenever we may be in sorrow and distress, where there is hope, there will be a place of prayer. The Mount of Olives was a place of prayer, every man went to his own house, but Jesus, whose house was the temple, went to Mount Olivet that night.

"Early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came unto Him; and He sat and taught them. And the scribes and Pharisees, (they whose plans had been thwarted the day before) brought unto Him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, they say unto Him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting Him, that they might have to accuse Him."

How wonderfully David testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ when in Psalm 38:12-14 he says, "They also that seek after my life lay snares for me: and they that seek my hurt speak mischievous things and imagine deceits all the day long. I as a deaf man heard not; and I was as a dumb man that openeth not His mouth. Thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs." What cunning craftiness our Lord had to meet with from them. If He had said that she ought not to be stoned, then they would say that He opposed the Law that God had given by Moses, the God whom He had told them had sent Him into the world to do His will. Had He have said she should be stoned, then they could accuse Him to the Romans as a self-appointed judge. How often men think they are doing God's will when they are not. If they had done as Moses said, they would have also brought the person that was caught with her in the act of adultery. This very man might have been a Roman, and they knew better than to be caught in such a trap themselves, for the Romans were their rulers at that time.

We are asked, if Jesus wrote on the ground, or, as some say, on the sand? I believe it is established that Jesus sat in the temple teaching when they brought the adulterous woman to Him. It was in the outer court which was paved with stones but was called the ground, as we read in 2 Chronicles 7:3. "And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the Lord upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the GROUND upon the pavement, and worshipped and praised the Lord."

These rulers of the people called Him Master with as little sincerity as Judas did when he said "Hail, Master," and kissed Him. Elder Joshua S. Corder said, "The Holy Ghost wouldn't allow Judas to address Jesus as his Lord."

When they asked Him what He had to say about the adulterous woman, He as one who was deaf, stooped down and with His finger wrote on the ground, as though He heard them not. The question has been asked, what did He write? We would not speculate on this, but we shall, we hope, answer the question. He was the WORD of God. David, in Psalm 119:89 says "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." Jesus Christ is the faithful witness. Revelation 1:5. He never spoke or wrote a vain word. The substance of the whole of God's word is found in the Law and the Gospel. The first writing of God was upon two tables of stone. The first writing then in that temple was a testimony against those who were accusers. The Law was written that the offence might abound, that all flesh might be brought

substance of that first writing. "The un-
in guilty before God. This then was the
godly are like the chaff which the wind
driveth away. Therefore the ungodly
shall not stand in the judgment." Psalm
I:4-5. "But who may abide the day of
His coming? and who shall stand when
He appeareth." Malachi 3:2.

This first writing condemned every one of them, it brought conviction which stopped their mouths, and Jesus said unto them, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again He stooped down, and wrote on the ground." This second writing was not for them that went out while He was writing it, but notice, "They went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst."

Now what was the second writing? We believe it belonged to the second covenant, written, it is true, while the first covenant was doing its work. Prophets told of this second writing. Isaiah said, "He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of His ears." Jeremiah said that God, in the new covenant, would write His law in their hearts. "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Jeremiah 31:34. We believe that woman stood in the midst and felt her pollution by the same light that enlightened the others, yet such was His presence to her, that He, who enlightened her as to her condition, also gave her understanding to know that He was her Lord. When He said to her, "Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, LORD." She did not say Master, no, she called Him Lord. We believe that like the dying thief, she was given inward sight and saw Him Lord of all.

God, in restoring Israel, would sprinkle clean water on them and they would be clean from all their filthiness. This sprinkling is when a word or words are spoken; it is described as washing of water by the word. Jesus said, "Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you."

Turning to Ezekiel 36:25-27, the Lord says "I will sprinkle clean water upon you. — A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and ye shall keep my judgments and do them."

"Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." Let us remember that He is King of kings and Lord of lords, and when He shows mercy and says, "Go, and sin no more," He will keep the feet of His saints.

There is something that must follow this second writing of which I speak, when the Lord is pacified to His sinful people. Turning back to Ezekiel 36: 31 it is written, "Then shall ye remember your OWN evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall LOTHE YOURSELVES in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations." It is the remembrance of such dealings of the Lord with us that humbles us in our walk and conversation, and it is then that we are given to "serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling."

Brethren who are given to accusing their brethren are far from being in this humble mind, and it would be more becoming of them to lay their mouths in the dust. To the accusers in our text Jesus said, "He that is without sin among you let him first cast a stone." In the Gospel Church it is written, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ

that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who maketh intercession for us," and that very chapter ends up with this assurance, that nothing "shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Of course to be an accuser is an offence against the Church of God. The right way is set before us in Matthew 18:15-17, but seems to be seldom considered as worthwhile by most who are not humbled. One of the first accusers we find in the word of God was Ham, who, when his father Noah was drunken in his tent, walked in and saw his father's nakedness and told his two brothers without. Shem, from whom the Lord Jesus was descended, and Japheth took a garment and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness. No wonder, when their father, in his humiliation, saw what those two had done, could say in all sincerity, "Blessed be the Lord God of Shem, — God shall enlarge Japheth, and He shall dwell in the tents of Shem." Here in the Covenant blessing of the Gospel we find Jew and Gentile in fellowship, who should ever be found ready to walk backward with the garment that could not be torn, even God's testimony of His everlasting love on their shoulders to cover the nakedness of their brethren wherever they may be found in the tent, or Church of God, for in this fellowship, as Peter says, "charity shall cover the multitude of sins." If one must accuse another in the church, after that person has been laboured with as directed in Matthew, if he will not hear the church, it is better to leave him to himself, and not carry it from Dan to Beer-sheba. That would be, and is, whoever may be found doing it, a despising of God's blessed word and a giving great occasion for the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme.

Our Lord was without sin and He alone has a right to cast the first stone, as He did to David when Nathan said, "Thou art the man." It will be asked what these stones stand for? They represent the Word of God, which came at first from the Rock, and are not man-made. The stones of the law were those that ministered death, and under that law the offenders, when found guilty, met their death by men throwing stones at them, and they were thrown to kill. The witness that accused, cast the first stone. Jesus, in our subject, settled the case of a poor sinner by bringing all that were there into such condemnation that not one could throw a stone, but they went out beginning at the eldest to the youngest. Under the gospel, stone-throwing is very offensive against the order of God's house.

The writer, in looking back over the forty-four years of his ministry since he was set aside by the Church as an elder, has seen quite a lot of stone-throwing. He went first to the Catskills where there were lovely brethren at variance, yet worshipping the same God and loving the name of Jesus. At Shokan the two sides worshipped in the same meeting-house on different days, used the same Bibles and hymn-books, yes, and preached the same truth, yet their leaders, who were not all elders, had no use one for the other. Quite a few stones were thrown, but they seemed not to hit those at whom they were cast, but rather grieved those poor distressed sheep who in their sorrow knew not what it was all about. One side invited the writer several times to visit them, which he did, and his preaching was well-received, and he was invited to come again the next year to their association. In the meantime he became pastor of the churches of the other side. Of course, stones were occasionally thrown at him, and it was, for some time, hard not to throw back, and hard to find those who had once brothered him turning their backs upon him. IN GOD'S TIME, He turned the HEART of the fathers to the children, and the

HEART of the children to their fathers, and all became peace, to the great joy of all God-fearing people. The stone-throwing ceased and brethren were glad to greet one another with a holy kiss. In Canada it was the same thing, brethren, as in the Catskills, used that stone very often: "They went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." Now, if brethren will read what John said, I John 2:18-26, they will find that he was not speaking of brethren who loved the truth, nor does that Scripture apply at all to those who believe in the Deity of Christ Jesus our Lord. It was written against those who denied the Son and so had not the Father. The proof of this is that those dear lovely brethren, both in Canada and New York State, came together as one. How did they do it? By walking together, desiring to grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby they were sealed unto the day of redemption, by putting away from them "all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, — with all malice." By being "kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Ephesians 4:30-32. Just as children of one family fall out, yet knowing that they have been taught to love one another, and desiring to please their parents, bury the hatchet, knowing that it is not life, but death, to live in such confusion.

G. R.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

MARK 16:17, 18

The Scripture to which brother Hall refers, reads as follows: "And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

"And these signs shall follow them that believe." "Behold I and the children whom the Lord hath given me, are for signs and for wonders in Israel, from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth in Mount Zion." Also, "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." That the last quotation from Isaiah pointed directly to the reign of Christ and the rule of his inspired apostles during the gospel dispensation, will not, I presume, be questioned by any real believer of gospel truth, as recorded in the New Testament. The real followers of our Lord Jesus Christ have been to the carnal world of mankind signs (**semeion,** mark, signal) and wonders (**mopheth,** miracle), not only in the early state of the organized gospel church, but remain so today; for they are the only characters who set forth God's justice, as well as mercy, and testify faithfully to fallen man's true condition; therefore are signs. Also, every one who is so unspeakably blessed as to be born again, is a miracle of God's abounding grace; but none have been inspired to do and record what the apostles did; for the declaration was, "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples." The word bind, in this connection, is of awful import, and is recorded only in one other place in the Old Testament from the same word, which is **tsarar,** to straiten, compress; therefore there is no appeal from the straitened and compressed testimony of the inspired apostles concerning the doctrine of God our Savior.

Said the Son of God, "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." There is no authority to sustain any one in attempting to show that any miracles have been performed by the church upon the physical body of mortals since the apostles passed away; and our God gave them that power, as the **absolute** signs or tokens of their special position as judges on

the "twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel;" and in the sense that God's servants cannot now heal the sick, cure the lame, nor raise the dead, night has certainly come. Said the apostle Paul, "God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will." It should be carefully noticed that all those signs, wonders, miracles and gifts are according to God's will.

"In my name shall they cast out devils." "And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. * * * Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names (personal election in the strictest sense) are written in heaven." See also the following: Acts v. 16; viii. 7; xvi. 18; and xix. 12. These quotations and references positively show what power Israel's God gave to those ancient disciples and apostles, thereby positively attesting the call of God as bestowed upon them, and the gifts, as no others have had.

But, brother Hall, in a gospel sense, faithful, discriminating and God-honoring preaching still has a "casting out" power; and Jude exhorts that we "should earnestly contend (not simply talking in a pleasing, flowery manner, but contend earnestly) for the faith which was once delivered to the saints;" and the reason given is, "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness (**aselgeia,** signifying excess, licentiousness — what a fearful meaning), and denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ."

About fifty years ago, when the separation was taking place in the Baptist denomination in the state of Maine, a true, tried and faithful minister was preaching from the words, "Evil communications corrupt good manners," and a large assembly was present; and up got one man, and out he went, in somewhat of a hurry. Then the faithful servant of God said, "I am satisfied this is the gospel, for one unclean spirit has gone out, both soul and body." Therefore it is evident that gospel preaching, without any mixture of legality, draws the line of demarcation, and soon, if any are not at home in the church, will be heard the following: "He is too severe, too doctrinal, not enough charity," &c., &c. It is not possible for any more severe language to be used concerning hypocrites than the dear Savior and his apostles used; and if the truth is too severe, such are not at home. David said, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." This declaration of the psalmist is restricted to "all ye that fear God;" and Paul says, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

In the deep and glorious sense of the gospel, the most ignorant and illiterate person, when brought by abounding and reigning grace to openly triumph in the salvation of our God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, speaks with a **new tongue,** and sings a new song; not the old one remodeled; yet the same fleshly member is used; and how often in the happy moments of the first deliverance the person sees the glorious way of life and salvation so clearly that such thinks, Now I can certainly make my friends understand this great matter; but he soon learns that natural persons cannot understand this new tongue, or pure language God has given him; and the promise was, "For then will I turn to the people a pure language (in this place the word is **saphab,** lip, and is recorded seven times only in the Old Testament from that word, with precisely the same meaning in each case), that they may call upon the name of the

Lord, to serve him with one consent."

A remark upon the last word in this quotation, and this clause of the text will be dwelt upon no more. Consent is a remarkable word as used here, for it is from **shekem,** one shoulder, and it is only recorded in one other place from the same word; and, meaning shoulder, shows that there is no dividing the pure lip in praising God in the great matter of salvation. My brother, it has been shown from Scripture testimony that our God enabled the apostles to speak with tongues as none have since; but every dear child of God speaks with a new tongue in our day, when he gives God all the glory in the salvation of ruined sinners; and there is no Ashdod language in it, but the pure language.

"They shall take up serpents." That they could take up literal serpents and receive no harm, is clearly set forth; for when the viper came out of the heat and fastened on Paul's hand, "he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm." And the minds of the barbarians were suddenly changed, for they had just "said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live. * * * But after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god."

God's dear children in this day, through reigning grace, are enabled to shake off vipers yet; for often when the viper fastens on them, in the person of some bitter opponent of God's truth, and they can say as did Michael, the Arch-angel, "when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee," it shakes the viper off into the very fire out of which he came, and the child of God receives no harm. And the ingredients which keep the fire in which the vipers live, burning, are revenge, malice, hatred, wrath, strife, sedition, &c. And when all are burning, the fire is very hot indeed; for wicked men were called vipers by our dear Redeemer; and while here on earth, how often in their malice did they fully intend to harm or destroy him; but the truth uttered by our Immanuel always shook them off, and into their own fire; therefore it is evident that vipers are shaken off, and God's children remain unharmed.

"And if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not harm them." The power of the Savior did neutralize any and every poison that they might drink; and so to-day, when some of God's children drink some of the old traditions, he keeps them from being hurt thereby, though for a time they may be sick; but all shall rebound to his declarative glory and their good. Many deadly things are prepared in this day, and many of God's dear children are placed in positions where deadly things are dealt out literally; and in some cases the vessels are so beautiful in which such "wild gourds" are presented, that if not a full potation is taken by a child of God, he is very apt to taste; but to the man of God anciently exclaimed they who were eating, "O thou man of God, there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof. But he said, Then bring meal. And he cast it into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was no harm in the pot." The meal neutralized or took away the death out of the pot; so grace can take away or subdue the power of the wild gourds, gathered in fancy wide domain, that a servant of God may attempt to feed the children of God with. And adored be our heavenly Lover, when any of the dear lambs of the flock have taken a drink from that pot, when ornamented with wild gourds, grace will prevent any fatal results. This clause might be dwelt upon at length, and not exhaust the subject; but enough has been said as a key to unlock with, as we have merely entered the vestibule.

"They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." "And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women, insomuch

that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits; and they were healed every one. Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and were filled with indignation, and laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison." We should notice carefully that the apostles were the persons empowered to heal the sick. Carefully peruse the rest of the chapter from which the quotation is made, to see what wonders God wrought through the apostles.

Upon another occasion the apostle Peter was enabled to perform a surprising miracle on the "man lame from his mother's womb;" for the man, "seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked an alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee. In the name (reader, notice carefully the wording) of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength." Did Peter claim any power of his own, as a man, to perform the miracle? No; but said he, "Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?" Then follows the awfully sublime description of "the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob," &c. And in the sixteenth verse he says, "And his name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all."

Many quotations might be made, showing the power given the apostles; but one more must suffice, and then with some general remarks the reply be closed. James says, "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the Elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith (not merely a formula of words) shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." That there was power given the apostles to heal, has been proven from the Scriptures, if words have any meaning. And there is a kind of sickness, at times, in churches in this day, painful at times to behold; but when God's time comes for healing such diseases, it surely will be done.

In closing this reply, it seems very important to state that the inspired apostles never boasted of what they, as men, had done, but gave all the power and glory to God, which excluded all boasting; and it must be evident to every real and humble follower of Christ, and every true believer of the record made in the Scriptures, that since the apostles passed away miracles ceased; but alas! there are some so under the hallucination of the carnal mind as to be advocating faith cures to-day; but the condition that such ones are in themselves only shows the sad frame of the mind controlling them. This subject might be extended to a great length, but I forbear writing any more; and if published in the Signs, brother Hall can read and compare the same with the Scriptures, as well as others who take the time to read the communication, and reject all that is not according to the law and to the testimony.

(The above is the answer to a request of Brother Enoch Hall, of Illinois; and was written by Elder William J. Purington, of Hopewell, N. J., May 3, 1886.)

OBITUARIES

DEACON WILLIE O. ALTIZER

It is with much sorrow that I attempt to write these lines in memory of this esteemed brother.

Brother Altizer was born, lived and died at

his home near Riner, in Montgomery county, Virginia. He was a member and deacon at Valley View Church for many years, and was highly esteemed by the church and all that knew him. He was active in business and public affairs, and his deportment was of the highest quality, his disposition being of a quiet, reserved and unassuming nature.

Born of a hardy stock of ancestors who were known for industry and frugality, which qualities were his inheritance, he was a farmer by vocation which he pursued with diligence, and prospered, having accumulated a great abundance but was humble and mindful of the poor.

Brother Altizer departed this life at the age of 82 years, leaving his wife and three sisters to mourn his loss. He did not marry in early life but in later years married Miss Nova Harman who was a devoted helpmate and a great solace to him.

His sisters are Mrs. Lucy Lawrence and Mrs. Mirtha Gordon, of Riner Va., and Mrs. Zoll Grim, of Christiansburg, Va.

Brother Altizer will be greatly missed by the church, his loved ones and many friends. He sleepeth now that blessed sleep.

Written by his yoke fellow in the church,
W. M. Graham

MRS. CASSIE ELIZABETH HILL

Sister Cassie Elizabeth Hill, of ElDorado, Ark., passed away November 26, 1959. She was eighty-two years old and had been in a pitiful state of health for several years.

She is survived by her husband; one son Fletcher M., ElDorado, Ark.; one daughter, Mrs. Roy Stone, ElDorado; two sisters, Mrs. John Burton and Mrs. A. O. McLeod; and by seven grandchildren and six great grandchildren, and a number of nieces and nephews.

Sister Hill manifested much love and interest in the doctrine and fellowship of the Primitive Baptists, and united with the church at Rehoboth years ago, and always attended her meetings when possible; and after she was no longer able to attend she would make mention of the meetings when the writer visited her, which was as long as she lived.

May the Lord bless and comfort all who mourn her passing. Let us not weep as those who have no hope, but let us look forward to the great day when the Lord will come to gather all his children to himself.

The writer and Elder W. A. Speer conducted the funeral at Rehoboth Church in the presence of a large congregation of relatives and friends.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

CHRISTENA McLAREN

Our dear aunt, Christena McLaren, was born September 29th, 1872, and departed this life September 15th, 1959. She was the daughter of the late John McLaren and the former Elizabeth Campbell of Covenanted Baptist belief, and lived in Kent County, Ontario, all her life. She is survived by several nieces and a number of grand-nieces and grand-nephews.

She was a faithful attendant of Duart Covenanted Baptist Church, not a member, but very staunch in her belief and was greatly beloved and highly respected by all who knew her. Friends of the family church were always welcome in her parents' home, also in the home of her sister, Sister Effie Carey, where she lived for many years. For the past three years, she and I lived together. Elder George Ruston, being her pastor for the past thirty years, knew her very well, and at times she repeated to him, "Not a single shaft can hit, till the God of love sees fit."

Funeral services were held at the Walker Funeral Home, Rodney, conducted by Elder George Ruston, who spoke very comfortingly from Psalm 36:7. Interment was in Ford Cemetery, with five grand-nephews and a neighbor acting as pall-bearers.

Written by her niece,
Marie Driver

As her pastor, I would like to add that it was twenty-eight years ago, when she was very ill in the hospital, expecting to have a serious operation, that she first said to me, "Elder Ruston, not a single shaft can hit, till the God of love sees fit." This God-given and God-honouring confidence remained with her, and her end was peace.

G. R.

MRS. VIRGIE T. VARNELL

Mrs. Virgie T. Flowers Varnell, widow of the late Elder C. D. Varnell, was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Flowers, born January 18, 1882, in Henerson County, Texas. She died November 2, 1959, at Hobbs, New Mexico.

She was united in marriage to C. D. Varnell in 1902, in Van Zant County, Texas. They moved to Taylor County, Texas, in 1915, where she resided until about three years ago when she went to Hobbs, New Mexico, to make her home with a daughter. To this union were born eleven children; of which eight are living.

Sister Varnell united with the Old School Baptist Church in 1929. Her beloved husband, Elder C. D. Varnell and three children preceded her in death. Survivors are: 3 sons, J. R., Plainview, Texas; Estelle, Rogers, N. Mexico; C. D. Jr., New York; five daughters: Mrs. Roy Cogsdill, Hobbs, N. Mexico; Mrs. M. N. Rowe, Abilene, Texas; Mrs. Preston Rushing and Mrs. H. C. Hailey, Ft. Worth, Texas; Mrs. Dewey Denton, Maybrook, Texas.

Also 27 grandchildren, 9 great grandchildren, and a host of other relatives and friends.

Funeral service was conducted by the writer. She was laid to rest in the Potosi Cemetery, to await the coming of her dear Saviour.

Written by request,
Elder C. M. Haygood

MRS. MARGARET JACKSON WOOD

Mrs. Margaret Jackson Wood was born at Marmet, W. Va., August 18, 1876, and died December 1, 1959, at the age of 83 years. She was a daughter of Thomas Edward and Susan Mahon Jackson; and was united in marriage to the late Daniel C. Wood on August 18, 1897. They lived at Hinton, W. Va. until moving to Roanoke, Virginia, in 1912.

She was the mother of nine children, one son, Wesley, dying in infancy, and two sons, Carl and Jesse, preceded her in death by two and three years. Surviving are the following: John D. Wood, Manassas, Va.; Paul A. Wood, Roanoke, Va.; Mrs. Otto Davis, Berkley, Calif.; Mrs. J. V. Webb and Mrs. Leslie F. Foltz, Waynesboro, Va.; and Miss Doris E. Wood, Washington, D. C. Surviving also are eleven grandchildren and twelve great grandchildren; one sister, Mrs. Mary Wilson, Charleston, W. Va., and one half-sister, Mrs. Thelma Ramsey, Charleston, W. Va.; and several nieces and nephews.

Soon after moving to Roanoke she was experimentally brought into the knowledge of the truth, and made to love that which she had not loved before, and united with the Primitive Baptist Church there. Her husband, who had long been a believer, soon followed her, and they were baptized at the same time. Their home was typical of most Old School Baptist homes: they loved to entertain the brethren and friends, which they did as long as they were able. For some years she lived with a daughter in Waynesboro, (Mrs. Webb) and in a nursing home nearby.

A private service was held at Waynesboro, after which the remains were taken to Roanoke, where graveside services were conducted by Elders C. E. Turner and J. P. Helms; and she was laid to rest by her husband in Evergreen Cemetery.

Mother had been getting weaker in body and mind for some months, so that her death was not unexpected. She finished her days on earth, and we find that we weep not as those who have no hope. Her hope was founded in grace, and we believe it will be with her as the apostle wrote:

"Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (Hebrews 9:28)

J. D. W.

MATTHEW WILLIAM PICKERAL

Matthew William Pickeral was born August 19, 1877, and departed this life November 28, 1959; making his stay on earth more than eighty-two years. He was the son of the late George and Jane Brumfield Pickeral, and lived in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, all his life. In December, 1909, he was united in marriage to Leanna Dalton, who died in February, 1956. To this union were born eight children, who survive: Early, of Gretna, Va.; Lawrence, Hurt, Va.; Paul, Greensboro, N. C.; Otis, Altavista, Va.; Mrs. Naomie Phelps, Newark, N. J.; Mrs. Tommie Tinnin, Greensboro, N. C.; Mrs. Louis Gullitti, and Mrs. Paul Henderson, Altavista, Va. Also surviving are: fifteen grandchildren, and one great grandchild; one brother, Lee Pickeral, Hurt, Va.; and one sister, Mrs. Jane Ramsey, Alton, Va.

Brother Pickeral united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, September 5, 1908, and was ordained deacon July 22, 1922. He was a very lovely brother, and was highly esteemed among the Primitive Baptists. He was devoted to the church and attended meetings far and near as long as he was able. He was well read, and was established in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace; and gave much evidence of his hope in the Lord.

His funeral was conducted at Weatherford Church by Elders J. W. Gilliam and H. W. Wray, in the presence of a large congregation of friends and relatives. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the second coming of his Lord and Saviour.

Lelia Dalton

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, We the members of Valley View Baptist Church, Montgomery County, Virginia, mourn the passing of our beloved brother and deacon, Willie O. Altizer, be it

RESOLVED, that we bow humbly to the will of Him that doeth all things according to his will, knowing that we have lost a faithful and highly esteemed brother; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Signs of the Times and the Old Faith Contender for publication.

Written by
W. M. Graham

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 128 DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1960 NO. 4

Rt. 3
Arab, Alabama

Dear Editors:

Enclosed you will find $5.00 to cover our subscription for 1959 and 1960.

. . . I am also enclosing an article written by my dear companion several year ago. If you find it sound and care to publish it, you have our permission.

A very unworthy little sister,
Fannie R. Hyatt

"I am the vine, ye are the branches; He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." (John 15:5)

What a blessed comparison is this? When men compare one object with another, or one thing with another, there is apt to be an uneven comparison. But when God makes a comparison, both sides are equal; for he is alwise, and none can instruct him. In the 15th chapter of St. John, Jesus himself is speaking.

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." (Hebrews 1:1)

"I am the vine, ye are the branches." Consider for a moment what relationship the branch has to the vine: The branch is dependent upon the vine for its life, for the substance that gives life to the branch must come through the vine before the branch can put forth and bud. The branch depends entirely upon the vine for every bit of substance it receives; and the branch bears fruit only because it abides in the vine; it bears fruit only through the substance of the vine.

God's children bear the same relationship to him, and bring forth fruit; for he says, "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit."

Can a branch sever itself from the vine, and say to the vine, "I will bear no fruit this season?" Anyone knows that that is impossible! Can a branch say to the vine, "I will bring forth fruit?" Or can it, in any sense, do anything independent of the vine? I say no! Neither can a child of God bear any fruit of himself, except as he receives the substance, or life-blood, from the vine.

In this area there are no Old Predestinarian Primitive Baptists, but many who are called Primitive Baptists take much of their time telling the good things a child of God can do after regeneration — after he is born again. They say he can of himself be obedient and receive blessings from God; or of his own will be disobedient and receive chastisements. I maintain that we can be obedient only through abiding in the Son, as the branch abides in the vine; and that every whit of man's obedience must come from that substance that comes only through the vine. In 1st Peter 1:2, we read, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." If we have any obedience in us, it must come through the sanctification of the Spirit.

I hear it said, "I can go to church and receive a blessing; or I can stay at home and be condemned." But I main-

tain that if one goes to church, it is through the grace and mercy of God that he is given a mind to go — God has given him that mind, and made it so strong that he could not stay away. Remember, that the branch bears fruit through the substance received from the vine. The last part of the verse says, "for without me ye can do nothing."

Keep this in mind for awhile: "Without me ye can do nothing." All the children of promise, all down through the ages, and today, without Christ they could do nothing. Are there any exceptions? Christ did not mention any. The word Nothing means just that, and no more.

We come to the key to the whole thing, and I quote Elder E. J. Lambert's text which he once used in the Signs: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

If there is any obedience in us — if the branch bears fruit, it is through the substance of the vine. If the branch is cut loose from the vine, it immediately withers and dies.

"For without me ye can do nothing."

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

David Hyatt,
Rt. 3,
Arab, Alabama

REMINISCING

535 Jefferson Street
Greensboro, North Carolina
March 12, 1959

Dear Brother Spangler:

Since I have been deprived of the privilege of attending church meetings for some time, I have an insatiable desire to write and let you know how very much I have missed the meetings. But first, I would like to say that I deem it the highest privilege that a poor sinner could be blessed to enjoy in this life, and that is that he be enabled to attend his church meetings, mingle with the dear saints of God, and sing songs of praise in unison to our dear Savior. That has been my life down through the years. It is no wonder then that I cannot find words that would adequately express how I have missed this blessed privilege.

I have had some sweet meditations of late that I would like to mention. One night recently while everyone was asleep, I was meditating on some glorious sermons that I have been privileged to hear from time to time down through the years. My reflections on the many, many, comforting sermons I have heard you preach have revived my famished soul, and I was enabled to take new courage. Of all the sermons that I have heard you preach through the years, I especially would like to mention two that I rejoiced in. I well remember the first time I heard you preach was at an association in Reidsville in 1924. This was on a Saturday night that I went with my dear mother, whose dear spirit I feel with all my heart, is now resting in the great Paradise of God. And in this connection, I would like to say that our dear mother and father carried us children far and near to Old School Baptist meetings from our childhood till we were grown. I feel to be thankful for this.

Now, back to that sermon. Although it was some thirty-five years ago since I heard you that first time, I shall never forget your text. It was, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. For the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the Law of sin and Death." (Romans 8:1-2)

Ah! how gloriously and comfortingly you spoke, and how my young heart feasted on that blessed manna from on High! For a time, I felt free of that condemnation, and somehow I felt that blessed freedom from the law of sin and death that Paul spoke of. Since that time I have wondered if, in my youth, I was too presumptuous in trying to lay

claim to those blessed promises of which you so beautifully spoke.

I was then given to feel that there are no age barriers with our blessed Lord, neither to the dispensers of His glorious gospel, nor to its recipients. Blessed thought!

Another of your sermons that stands out with me, is the one that you preached at our church in Reidsville, when you visited our church about the middle nineteen-thirties. It was so precious to me that I feel that it too, will remain with me as long as I remain in this world. Your text that day was from the 17th Chapter of I Kings — and was about Elijah requesting water, and a cake from the poor widow. This poor widow said to Elijah, "As the Lord liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel and a little oil in a cruse," etc., but she did as Elijah bade her and she and Elijah and "Her House" did eat. You so beautifully pictured how the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail. My poor soul was again made to rejoice in the assurance that, just as the poor widow's meal and oil never entirely was exhausted, so it is with our dear Lord's inexhaustible supply of Grace. He supplies it to His dear people from time to time — and it is never too late nor too little!

I am slow of speech, being unable to express myself concerning the things that will endure when all things earthly have passed away, but just felt to tell you these things; they have been so sweet to me. I was so glad to have you and dear Sister Spangler visit us, and I hope you will come back when you are again in Greensboro.

I am looking forward to the time when I can be privileged to assemble with you dear people again, and I hope that you good folks will feel to pray for me. I feel to need the prayers of God's dear children. May God continue to keep His constant watchcare over us all.

In hope of life beyond this world,
Mamie P. Aldridge

AM I A CHILD OF GOD?

First allow me to introduce myself by telling you a little about my life. I am third from the youngest of ten children. I was born in the flesh May 25, 1915, on a farm in Crenshaw County, Alabama. My father is William Sion Mitchell and my mother was Velma Welch Mitchell. She departed this life October 27, 1954. When I was two I burned both my feet and had to learn to walk the second time. Let me say here, I walked in fire naturally and I feel for sure I walked in fire spiritually. I was about ten years old when I had a dream I have never forgotten. After my mother died I dreamed the same thing about her. I dreamed I was dead naturally but I knew everything. I could see the flowers and the people but I could not move. In my dream about my mother I knew she was dead but something kept telling me she was alive. This might not have any meaning to you, but to me it means there is life beyond the grave. My mother lives and I have a hope. I finished my high school education at Luverne High. My parents were getting old and I had to get a job to help with the family budget. In the year 1943, I met and married my husband, Charles Oliver Dixon.

The question I have used as a title comes to my mind often, but no answer. I do know one thing, and that is I am one of the greatest of sinners. This has been revealed to me by a power so great that it ingulfed my very being. I thought for sure I was doomed for hell. On Sunday night, June 29, 1951, I had an experience which I shall never forget. I went to bed about nine o'clock. When I had been in bed about thirty minutes, something came over me in a flash. It was a mighty power that I could not escape. I knew for sure that the devil had me. I thought my time had come to die and I would go to a place of torment for eternity. I was awakened to see myself as I really was. I thought I was a good person, at least I tried to be, but I measured my goodness by the

ways of the world. I found that would never do. I wept bitter tears. I got out of bed and it seemed as a white light covered me. It only stayed for a second, but it frightened me so I called my husband and told him I was dying. I was crying and shaking so I could hardly control myself. I was begging God for mercy. Oh, what a terrible shock it is to suddenly realize you are the worst kind of a sinner. I found myself as I imagine Paul must have felt when the Lord made him fall on his way to Damascus. I tried to think that it was all an imagination but it was like a mighty rushing wind and I do not think I ever had a brain storm that great. The doctor came about twelve o'clock and put me to asleep. The next morning I was not much better. There was not any place on my body that did not hurt. I was most miserable. The doctor started me on a series of examinations which took about three weeks. When all the doctors had finished, they had found nothing organically wrong. They said that I was suffering from a nervous breakdown. It was a breakdown, for God unrobed me of all my self-righteousness and my false pride melted like ice on a hot day. I was really sick then, but I realized my only help was coming from God. At the time, I had a job as a bookkeeper in a department store which I had had for ten years. I had to quit my job. Most of the time I cried and could not sleep day or night. It seemed that all the world had changed but it was not the world at all, it was me. My sins poured on me as hot water. How I did want to run and hide but I knew that the Lord could find me any place I might go. I tried to pray and all I could say was, "Lord, have mercy on me." I knew if the Lord did not help me I was lost without hope. By April, 1952, my husband was at a loss to know what to do. He and my doctor, with my consent, decided to take me to the Oschner Clinic in New Orleans for another series of examinations. When the doctors had finished, they told me the same thing the other doctors had told me. I had been sick about a year and burned one of my legs. Part of the time I had to stay in bed. One day while I was in bed, I thought about reading the Bible, so I got it and started reading. I had read it many times, but not like this. I could not put it down. I just wanted to read on and on. I read all the New Testament and part of the Old. Since then I have read and reread. It is always so very new. God's word can only be interpreted when it is revealed by the Holy Spirit. I seemed to hear a small voice saying to me, "Be still and know that I am God."

When all this happened to me I was a member of the Missionary Baptist Church, so I started taking an active part in all the church work. Dear friends, let me tell you right here, you cannot work your way to heaven; and being good won't get you there either. You are saved by the grace of God. I tried hard to be a good member. But the more I did the smaller I felt. I taught Sunday School, was secretary of the W.M.U., and Community Mission chairman of my circle. When I was teaching, I had a class of five and six year old children. Every Sunday I would go in the room and close the door, and it seemed to me that the Lord was looking at me through all those little eyes. I would try to read a Bible story to them and I would choke on the words. I soon found I could not teach those children anything. I was in need of a teacher myself. When I would go in the worship service I felt like I was in a desert place or a city of the dead. The preacher's sermons were as dry as sand. He read most of what he had to say. I worked real hard at the Community Mission work, it was the only thing I really had my heart in. I carried food and clothing to the poor, visited the sick, helped with the Christmas trees at the Veteran's Hospital, and many other things. We had to report everything we did to the W.M.U. of the church but one day this scripture came to me. "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost:

and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one." (I John 5:7, 8) I knew then the church did not need a record of what I did. I remembered Jesus said on one occasion, "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: but when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." I think when a child of God does a good deed he isn't looking for a reward or for glory. It is the love of God he has in his heart that makes him want to do it. I just had to give up all the church work I was doing, for the burden was more than I could carry. The last time I made a quarterly report and started to sign my name, I started shaking and crying for no known reason. I knew then I was signing the wrong thing.

My mother was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church and I could get more consolation out of talking to her than I could anyone, but the Lord took her to be with Him. I was then in the darkest kind of wilderness. I tried time and again to beg the Lord to help me. I was ready to stop. Nothing had any meaning. I wasn't bitter; I was just lost. The second Sunday in August, 1955, I was drawn to Sweetwater Church like it might have been a powerful magnet. Elder E. D. Gafford was and still is the pastor of that church. I asked the church to give me a home. I don't know why they did but they took me in. I don't remember what I told the church that day, but I do know a burden was lifted off me for a while. Then much to my sorrow I had to be carried to the hospital the next week. The doctors could not find anything wrong. I knew I was going to die then, and I did die to this world and its vanity. I stayed in the hospital a week. After that I had to go live with my sister, Lois, for three months. I wasn't able to take care of my home. Often I would be trembling and crying, and my sister would ask me to tell her what was wrong. I would say, "I am afraid." One day I heard Elder Gafford use as a text Proverbs 14, Verses 26-27: "In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge." "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death." When I came out of the church I felt much better and have been made to meditate on that scripture many times since. My sister, Bessie Lou, joined the church at Rutledge in September after I joined in August and she and I were baptized at the same time. Elder Gafford asked me where I wanted to be baptized and I told him it did not make any difference as long as it was in a stream. He asked me why a stream. He said God made all the water. I could not tell him then, only Jesus was baptized in a stream and I wanted to follow Jesus. Since then I told Elder Gafford that the running water seemed to have life in it and the pond or pool was dead. I had already been in a dead pool and tried to believe and live a dead or dried-up doctrine. Ever since I came out of the water I have felt a wonderful joy and hope. Not that I think going down in the water had anything to do with the sweet peace that filled my soul, but God saw fit to give me relief. I still get down in a low pit sometimes but Jesus has mercy on me and lifts me out again. I can't go to church enough. My heart yearns for spiritual food. I know God gives to His children such as they need. I realize now I am a stranger in this world. I will wait the Lord's time to take me home. He said in His word, "I will not leave you comfortless" and I know He won't. I will go along with Paul when he said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

I am writing this, I hope, with a humble heart. I hope it pleases God to pardon all errors. When you feel the spirit of prayer and are at the throne of Grace, if not asking too much, please

think of me.

Yours in bonds of God's precious love,
Eleanor M. Dixon
Montgomery, Ala.

HIS NAME IS JEHOVAH

9301 Notre Dame
Chatsworth, Calif.

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am enclosing $5.00 for renewal of my subscription.

I enjoyed the last issue very much: the editorials are good. I enjoyed Elder George Ruston's writing from Phil. 2:12-13. There is one thing sure, God is the judge of the whole earth, and the universe. So we know he will do right, and his will is being made manifest as time unfolds before us. Not one thing will go uncontrolled beyond his power and wisdom. His purposes for the earth, and for man upon it, are being fulfilled in every place. He is not a man that he gets, or becomes confused in anything that he has made. He is a God of order and peace among his visible and invisible creation.

But man in the flesh or nature is constantly being confused and disappointed; and great problems arise among men of the earth. But this is not so with the eternal God. He is a God of purpose; and that is why he told Moses to tell the children of Israel what his name is — so that they could distinguish him from all other things called gods. He told Moses to tell them his name is Jehovah. (see, Exodus 6:3; Psalms 83:18; Isaiah 12:2; and Isaiah 26:4.) These all show that he was not as the gods of the nations, but in him was all power, and his determination was to carry out every purpose which his name signified.

There are many lords and gods in all the earth, but there is only one almighty God, or Jehovah. We can see by the written word which he has given us, that through the ages his will in his purposes has been carried out; and it ever will be carried out to his name's glory. He said that for his name's sake he did this or that. His word is truth, and has been proved in all ages: he is a true God and will not fail in any of his promises.

I did not intend to write a letter, but, speaking of our Creator and his righteousness, causes one to feast in the spirit of truth; and it is hard to stop.

Sincerely in hope,
Bessie Martin

EXPERIENCE

As you have again requested that I send you a copy of my experience, I will try, the Lord being my guide, my strength, my all in every thing; though I feel fearful of the attempt.

I will not say that I have no experience, for I know there is a Power reigning over us day and night, and that this power lifted me out of pits of darkness when I had given up to die; and I knew that Hell must be my doom:

I went to a secluded spot near the house. It began raining, some of it falling on me, but my tears were pouring too, and I didn't notice the rain. All of my sins came up before me — even the thoughts that I had not been good to my little brothers when we were young. I wanted no one to find me, but to let me stay there and die. Velma, my youngest daughter, missed me, and found me in so much trouble. When she failed to get me to the house, she asked Daddy to go and see if he could get me to come in: she wondered what had hurt Mama so. Roy came, and sat down by me. I begged him to go, and "Don't worry, let me stay here and die; I am too mean to live with you and the children." He said, "No, you are not mean." But he did not convince me.

I don't recall all of the Scriptures he quoted to me, but one passage was, "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." He said, "Come on with me; it is raining." I went, reluctantly; and lay across my bed for awhile. He went back to his reading; (I learned later

that he did not read any more).

Later in the afternoon, a neighbor sent for me to come and see her sick baby. I got up, and, knowing that I could not see very well, looked in the mirror: my eyes and face were swollen. I went on; and I noticed that they looked at me in wonder, but I did not worry over what they might think. This was not mentioned until Saturday afternoon after Roy (my husband) and I had united with the church at Elam that day — Saturday before the second Sunday in July, 1927. I said, "Cora, I know you are ashamed of me." She said, in tears, "I'm sure not; I only wish I were like you." I said, "I've turned to tears, it seems, but that is alright: Each sin demands a tear." She said, "We felt it was that when you were up home to see the baby."

The next day we were baptized; and two others joined at the water, Mrs. W. A. Carter and Mrs. E. A. Jackson, and were baptized. When I came out of the water, old Brother Davison said, "You have left something here that will never give you any more trouble." I have thought many times of his remark; and found it true. Trials and troubles continue to come, but something holds us up, and we are not weighted down as one without hope.

At the age of nine years, I won a prize in school. It was a book entitled, "The Peep of Day," for infant minds. I read its pages many times and would try to comply with its teachings, and try to pray at night, as I read of others doing. I compared the quotations with those in the Bible; and there was not an error in it. I still have the book: it hasn't a torn leaf in more than fifty years; and all of my children read it as they grew up.

As time passed on, though, I knew that I was meaner than ever, and was sure I would never join the church: I was not fit to live with such good people, though I loved them. I tried to hide my tears when I enjoyed their association so much. I shall never forget one second Saturday in 1920. Roy said for me to go to church, but that he must work. I went; and the talk that Elder B. J. Wilson made at the close of the service, impressed me so that when I got home I said to my husband, "From now on, if not hindered, I am going to the meetings through respect to the old white-haired members, if nothing more. At times he went with me; and the Lord blessed me to go every time, except three or four when I was hindered by sickness, in the thirty-one years.

We traveled along in this way until June, 1927. My brother, E. A. Jackson, joined; and the following day Brother W. A. Carter and Jesse Beard joined at the water; and all were baptized. During the next month I suffered agony that no one can express except those who have gone through the same dark hours. Elder H. M. Curry once said that this is called **darkness,** but instead it is light. I believe now that he was right.

Space forbids that I tell all that I went through, but I knew that unless there was a change, I must offer for membership at the next meeting. I felt that I could not wait that long; yet when I would think of asking for a called meeting, the thought would come: Who am I to be so important? That afternoon I visited a neighbor in hope that that would help me. They were Baptists and talked the whole afternoon about the good meeting. I was choking, and wished I could find some excuse to get away. I cannot express all I went through until the next meeting day. I would get up during the night, when all were asleep, and read the Bible in an effort to find something of comfort to me. Several passages, "Blessed are they that wait on the Lord." "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." "Neither height, nor depth, nor principalities, nor powers, . . . can separate us from the love of God." All these and many more, meant a lot to me.

"Should earth against my soul engage
And fiery darts be hurled,
Then I can smile at Satan's rage
And face a frowning world."

On the first Sunday in July we attended the annual meeting at New Providence, where, it seemed, all of the preaching and singing was pointing at me, and all eyes were upon me. How I did wish I could hide, and let the tears roll. The next week I wrote a letter to Elder Wilson, and told him of some of the things that were killing me, and asked him to come prepared to baptize me, if the church at Elam would condescend to receive me into the church. I wish I knew now what I wrote in that letter. I kept it a few days, then asked my husband to read it, feeling that I would not send it if he thought it best not too. He read it and pondered over it for some time; then he said, "I want you to know that I do not doubt the sincerity of it, not one iota, but I want to go to, and do not see how I can go now." I told him that he was much more worthy than I, and that I hoped the Lord would show him the way. I had felt that he would unite with the church, for I knew he was not satisfied.

The next Saturday, when opportunity was given, I went up. I had but little to say; and Elder Wilson remarked, "I received a letter from this child on last Thursday, and I carried it over and read it to Sister Stinson, who has known her all of her life; and she said that it ought to be published." Oh, how unworthy I felt of the things they said. I was trying to pray that my husband would come. He did, and many tears were shed by those present. I recall that he said, "If I could only have crumbs from the Master's table, that would be more than I am worthy of." (Mat. 15:27) When we got home, he lay down and wept; and I wept with him.

I felt like saying with the last chapter and verse of Psalms, "Let everything that hath breath sing His praise forever."

I do not know whether this is an experience of grace, but I would not exchange the evidence I feel has been given me of an all wise God, for all of this world. I know this writing is long, and probably nothing in it for others; but I must say that the Lord has been good to me. Even when trouble comes our way, something gives us strength to know that "It is right." The Lord has blessed us with five as good children as ever graced the earth. Again I want to say, "Thank the Lord from whom all blessings flow."

I have touched only a few points along the way. Surely the half has not been told of the many wonderful things the Lord does for his people. I pray that I am one of them.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. J. L. Folmar
Route 2, Box 237,
Goshen, Ala.

Rt. 3, Box 19,
Millport, Alabama

Dear Editors:

I am sending $5.00 to renew my subscription — I kept thinking that I would write something to send with it, but it seems that I am not given anything that would be of any comfort to our people.

However, I can say with you in your New Year's Address, that we cannot wish anything greater than the continuation of the Lord's blessings; and among those blessings is the privilege of reading the columns of the Signs of the Times. May you be blessed to the fullest in carrying it on; and may we be blessed to praise and adore His great and holy name.

I feel that, with me, these blessings are so unmerited; but without them, what would become of one so low as I?

Humbly,
Mrs. R. A. Mathis

Moore's Bridge, Ala.

Dear Editors:

I see that it is time to renew my subscription.

I hope that God, in his infinite wisdom, will enable you to publish the truth as long as time shall be. I know many who aren't able to attend meetings, who

enjoy reading the truths you print in the Signs.

Enclosed is $5.00 to renew subscription for two years, and $1.00 for the Indigent Fund.

In bonds of love,
Mrs. Tom V. Strickland

INTERESTING CORRESPONDENCE OF ELDER SLAUSON AND ELDER RUSTON

46 Cedar Street
Kingston, New York

Very dear Elder and Sister Ruston:
Precious Brethren in the Lord:

To think that you, with all the correspondence that you have to do, could have us in mind enough to write us the way that you do. How very thankful we should be to God for such brethren, for your letters are always such a comfort to us. Lizzie said, when I read your letter to her, that years ago when you were telling that you were going to leave and go to Canada, that she would have to weep with flowing tears, for you people meant so much to her. She did so much enjoy going around among the brethren, but, poor soul, I doubt very much if she will be able ever to go to meeting again. We want to feel that we have some assurance that the God of Heaven, through His blessed Son and the teaching of the Holy Spirit, has delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us into the glorious kingdom of the Son of God, but if we did not have some doubts and fears and fear and trembling, how could we be at the feet of our brethren to comfort them? The Apostle Paul comforts us when he is made to cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Peter comforts us when he tells us that he was made to cry, "Lord, save or I perish." It was the grace of God that taught them their need of Christ, so it is the weak that cry for strength, the hungry that cry for food and the thirsty that cry for the water of the fountain of life, which our blessed Lord gives freely, and the more we drink from that fountain the less we care for the things of this vain world that perish with the using.

You said some brethren say there is not much said about Heaven in the Bible. Does not the Word of God tell us that His people's vile bodies shall be changed and fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, and that they shall see Him as He is and be like Him and be satisfied? There are many other things told us about it, but what more do we need than to be told that we shall be like Christ and be with Him with no more pain, no more sorrow, no more tears, no more sin, no more sickness and no more death, but be holy as He is holy, so it appears to us that there is an abundance said about Heaven. What more could a poor sinner expect or ask for or need to be told about Heaven, than to see and be like the Eternal Son of the Eternal true and living God? Sometimes I have had a feeling this winter, when at meeting, that the world was put under my feet, that I saw the glorious things of the Gospel of the Son of God so beautiful, that I could, I thought, feel something of what is meant by Heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Lizzie wants me to tell you that words cannot express what you two have meant to her, she is yet from time to time calling on her God, whom she confessed before men many years ago, to undertake for her. I believe her body is a temple of the Holy Ghost.

I can fellowship you when you tell about being very low, but there have been, thanks to the blessed Lord, a few times this winter that I did feel, while I was speaking, that I saw things of the work of Christ so beautiful, as if I was almost out of this world. One time when I was at Duanesburg, (I fear and tremble to tell it, as Jesus said, "Tell no man.") it came over me on my way to the meeting, and it lasted through the meeting, I could not tell this precious truth with enough power or strong enough. I did feel that my cup or my

whole being was running over, it was unspeakable and full of glory to God. I just did feel that I was going to have a great rejoicing time, talking and thinking about the precious Gospel of Jesus and His love and goodness and mercy to poor sinners, but alas, after, I think, several hours, it was gone and I was down again. I have had a few other times, but I do not know as I ever had an feeling equal to that time, and I was as humble as a little child at the feet of his loving father, so it is a little here and a little there. If it is the Holy Spirit, we can lie down in green pastures and feast upon His love, for in His kingdom and in His Gospel is plenty of rich, nourishing food in His blessed promises of His finished work for poor helpless sinners, whom Christ has made alive from the dead by the power and mercy of the Holy Ghost taking up His abode in their hearts, killing them to sin and the love of it, being made new creatures in Christ Jesus by the saving grace of a God of rich mercy, who kills and makes alive, who wounds and heals, makes the deaf to hear, the blind to see and the lame to walk as they never could before, for now it is a Godly walk in the straight and narrow way, **JESUS, THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE.** The ear that once was deaf to the preaching of the Gospel now can hear it and rejoice in it. It is as green pastures to his poor hungry soul, for it is living food, for it has life in it. Jesus said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life," for the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation **TO EVERY ONE THAT BELIEVETH.**

When a poor blind sinner is made to see, having the eye of faith, he does not walk by the natural eye in God's kingdom, as the Apostle Paul says, not by sight but by faith, which again is the gift of God. One can then see his many, many sins and how poor he is, and how very, very much he needs God's mercy on every hand; can see how wonderful that Christ has become an offering for sin, and without Him we can do nothing, and if we are saved, Christ has paid the debt, and we see Him as the One we need at all times.

Will close with much love from us all and sweet fellowship in the Lord.

Brother Amasa Slauson

Dutton, Ontario

Dear Brother and Sister Slauson:

Your letter was very welcome and greatly enjoyed by both of us, as we have you often in our minds. Your labours have been much on my mind for years, as I know most of the ground you have to cover and I believe the Lord has sustained you in the task laid out for you. When I have prayed for myself and for you, the words have been given me, "Ye shall reap if ye faint not," yet I myself have often been ready to faint, and He has spoken to me as unto a son and said, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: — If ye **ENDURE** chastening God dealeth with you as with sons." I think it is David who said, "I was brought low and He helped me." God's dealings with His own are so well expressed in the Psalms. In Psalm 77 Asaph says "I cried unto God with my voice, even unto God with my voice: and He gave ear unto me. In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: **MY SORE RAN IN THE NIGHT,** and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted." This seems to me, that the dear man could not be comforted by any man, only the Lord could satisfy him, and as he went over past mercies and saw so much in himself that merited reproof, he says, "I remembered God and was troubled, I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Selah." It did not end there, read the whole Psalm and see how his mind is led to speak of the greatness of Him who is the God of his salvation. No wonder that Asaph was one of the sweet singers of Israel. The trials that he came through fitted him for that blessed company told of in Revelation 7:13-17, who had come through great tribulation. "Our sorrows

in the scale He weighs and measures out our pains," and now and then He comes so close to us with His embrace of love that we for a while are able to say "He hath done all things well."

I hope you are given often to watch the hand of the Lord. Elder McConnell used to say to me, "Brother George, watch the hand of the Lord." Read Jabez's prayer, I Chronicles 4:9-10. He prayed that God's hand might be with him, to sustain him under every load, for it is God and He only that can make the burden light. Yes, as we get older, we see "The one thing needful, dearest Lord, is to be one with thee." To have that clearly established to our inward sight that He has by His blessed Spirit translated us from darkness to light.

I have, in the last three weeks, driven hundreds of miles visiting brethren and friends in sickness, and I have had many thoughts and felt how poor a creature is who has not had a ray of light from our glorious Sun of Righteousness. We could possess the whole world and yet sink into hell without our blessed Jesus — how thankful we ought to be for His love and mercy. Thus we see how miserable is the state of one in this world without a hope in Christ. Yes, and how miserable our state would be if we had much of the religion of today without a knowledge of Jesus Christ **WHOM TO KNOW IS LIFE ETERNAL.**

I am glad that you could tell of such a glorious season while trying to extol the God of Heaven and to tell the beauties that shine in our glorious Lord and Saviour, such seasons are long to be remembered. Such sights are accompanied with a sense of our littleness. I often think of the prophet Isaiah when he saw the Lord high and lifted up and His train filled the temple. "Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: **FOR MINE EYES HAVE SEEN THE KING** the Lord of hosts." (Isaiah 6:5) At our best we are men of unclean lips; what are we at our worst?

I do not think that I can do one good thing of myself. I read recently of a very worthy man who said that if the Lord helped and sustained him all the way to heaven but the last step, if the Lord left him to himself there, with only one step to take. he would fall into hell. Self-confidence should have no place at all in those who serve the King of kings and Lord of lords. Our confidence should be in God who made Heaven and earth. Paul had confidence, that He who had begun a good work in him would perform it unto the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. May He give us all such a confidence and may we abide in Him. Much love to you all. Your letter did us good.

In sweet fellowship.

Your brother through grace,
George Ruston

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46 Cedar Street
Kingston, New York

Very dear Brother and Sister Ruston:
Beloved in the Lord:

Your very kind and loving letter received today, and so many very good and comforting things that you did set forth to our poor hungry and thirsty souls, that we can fully fellowship you in every word, which is all a help to strengthen us and to build us up and establish us in that most holy faith once **DELIVERED** unto the saints. Oh, dear ones, I love the words, "once delivered," how true that this faith is delivered, which is the gift of God, and is delivered to a certain people, as Jude says, "To them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ and called." It is not delivered to all people, but to a certain people, and none will have it unless it is delivered unto them, and when it is once delivered unto them it is theirs to keep, and no thieves can break through and steal it. The Apostle Paul kept it until the door of death. There is no price that will or can buy it for us, no price can buy it from us, and there is no need of railroad

train, aeroplane or help of puny man in any way to deliver it. It matters not where the poor sinner may be, at home or abroad, on the land, on the sea, in the whale's belly, at the furnace door, or in the furnace, in the lion's cage, alone in the wilderness, or a suffering Job, or a thief on the cross, our God can and does deliver this faith to poor hell-deserving sinners. He delivers it to them when they never knew there was such a thing as God-given faith. It is delivered to them free of cost, no postage, no freight charges, no express charges, no, a hundred times, no. Dear ones, gold and silver are dung and dross compared with it, and of no more value than the dead leaves fallen from the tree. All the gold and silver under heaven could never have made the lame man to go leaping and praising God, but the God-given faith delivered unto Peter and John could. Yes, faith delivered was the reason this miracle could be performed. How wonderful that God has **DELIVERED** this faith unto us when we were by nature the children of wrath even as others; and those who have this faith delivered unto them surely have something earnestly to contend for.

In this dark and cloudy day when it looks as though darkness has covered the earth, and gross darkness the people, thanks be to God there are a few, as we see it, who believe in God as God, and man is as nothing in himself before this great God. Nations are as the drop of a bucket before Him. How true are the words of our Lord, "I kill and I make alive, I wound and I heal." Jesus said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." If we love Him, it is because He has first given us of His love. If we are in His kingdom it is because He has given us a place there, and has delivered us from the power of darkness, and if we have a home in Heaven with Him it will be because He has given that to us also. Oh, could I praise Him more and serve Him better!

Dear ones, I wept like a child when I read your good letter. Lizzie is no better. Love from us all.

Brother Amasa Slauson

Rt. 2,
Toney, Alabama

Signs of the Times:

You will find enclosed subscription for the Signs for 1960; and just a few words concerning our many blessings as a church, and an association. Our sister, Willie Sisco, made the report so plainly about the 1959 session of our association, the 145th annual session of the Flint River.

We had plenty of preaching brethren to supply bread and fish for the three days; and we rejoice that we are blessed to have our two elders, who have recently been ordained. We love these two ministers: they are filled with good tidings to feed the sheep, and we are made to lie down in green pastures. Elders W. D. Griffin and R. L. Biggs have lately visited us, and we enjoyed their preaching very much. A church that has loving members — a home for God's humble poor, is a welcome place for visiting ministers.

May He give us his grace that we may love one another; and that we may find rest to our weary souls. Written in love to the household of faith.

Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Reese

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Sister Minerva Dunlap)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association meeting at Whitefield September 4, 5, 6, 1959, to the churches of like faith with which we correspond: Greetings in the Lord.

In Isaiah 55:8, 9, we read, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Altho God made man in his image (Gen. 1:26), he did not give to his cre-

ation his own mental and physical capabilities. Nearly everyone will agree that there are certain concepts which the human mind cannot fathom, among others being infinity in space, eternity in time, life and gravity. But accepting the fact that he cannot explain many mysteries that confront him, man has evolved standards of right and wrong and events happening contrary to these standards are deemed unjust or unfair. Likewise reported events that seem illogical or inexplicable to the natural mind are adjudged unreasonable or untrue.

According to these standards of man many events recorded in the Bible could be accounted untrue, unreasonable or unjust. The creation of man from the dust of the earth as recounted in Genesis is one of these. Such a creation cannot be comprehended by the natural mind and might therefore be labelled impossible. Some so-called churches reject this account of creation as a legend originating with primitive people and handed down through generations without foundation in fact. To their way of thinking, an educated mind cannot possibly harbor a belief in anything so potently unreasonable. They argue that science has proved that man evolved through the lower animals from the single cell and this is the logical explanation of creation. Because this theory gives no chance for a soul to be injected into the human animal, they reason that man has no more soul than the cell he came from and therefore no eternal life. But in I Cor. 3:18, 19, 20, we read: "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God; for it is written: He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." And again, "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain."

The theory of election is another Bible precept that is contrary to man's ideas of justice. That a God who is wise and cannot err should have created some men for blessings and eternal life and others for destruction and eternal torment, appears impossible to the natural mind. But in Rom. 9:20-23, we read: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?"

The natural mind would argue that an all powerful God who knew the end from the beginning would not create anything that he must later endure with much long suffering, when he could as easily make all things pleasing to himself. One who has had no revelation of the power of God and of the limitations of the mind of man, could not reason otherwise. But an experience of grace teaches that the wisdom of man is foolishness to God; then how can man judge of God's acts?

The idea of predestination is unreasonable to the natural mind. Man's pride makes him desirous of planning and consummating his destiny. Not to have free will would be unfair. But the experienced soul knows that man's goings are of the Lord; Prov. 20:24, "How can a man then understand his own way?"

Revelation brings the change. As the hymn reads: "I loved to see and know my path, but now, lead thou me on."

The advent of evil into the world is another event unacceptable to the natural mind. That a God of goodness and love, being all powerful, should allow evil to enter the world, with all the accompanying misery and sin, seems unreasonable. Yet one who has been shown the nothingness of man's wisdom and the vastness of the distance between

God's thoughts and man's thoughts, can accept this truth. Are not the heavens far above the earth? Why, then should we think that we can comprehend the ways of God. "He hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." (Prov. 16:4)

Unfair, to the mind of man, is Jacob's blessing of Ephraim in place of Manassah, the older son of Joseph. Yet Jacob and Joseph were loved of God.

Unfair, also, seems the blessing of Isaac on his son Jacob when the blessing should have been Esau's and was obtained by Jacob through deception.

It seems unreasonable also that a sinful woman, Rahab, should have been allowed to befriend the spies of a God-fearing man such as Joshua. Yet Rahab received a blessing.

No human reasoning can explain how men could be thrown into a fiery furnace and survive, or into a den of lions and live. Yet one who has experienced the power of God knows that he commands fire and water, life and death, and nothing is impossible to him.

Many who reject such records of the Bible as unreasonable, claim that only a narrow minded person could believe such things, that modern churches have become less rigid in their creeds and are accepting only the reasonable parts of the Bible. Some deny the virgin birth as being opposed to facts of medical science and they ask: Where did Jesus get the power to perform the miracles imputed to him? Not having experienced the miracle of the blind being made to see, the deaf to hear and the lame to walk, they can only count such things as unreasonable. When the miracle of revelation comes to man, he knows that the wisdom of God is too infinite for human understanding, that his judgments are unsearchable and his ways past finding out. He forgets, then, his own standards of right and wrong and cries out: "O, Lord, how great are thy works and thy thoughts are very deep." (Psalms 40:5) Too deep for human probing; too high for man's measuring. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord."

(Many will recall reading the above in the February issue. It is published again for two reasons: there were some omissions and errors in the first; and because the more we have read it, the more we have appreciated the depth of thought in portraying the impossibility of the unquickened man understanding the Lord's thoughts and ways, and the reasons he objects to Bible doctrine.

Those who are taught of the Lord turn not to carnal reasoning for proof of the truth of spiritual things, for theirs is a kingdom separate and apart from the kingdom of this world. They alone are partakers of the New Covenant which God makes with his people, and, as such, have an understanding far beyond the wisdom of this world. The laws of God are written in their hearts and put in their minds, and they know perfectly well that man by searching has never found out God; neither can any teach his brother or neighbor to know Him.

Those who have been called out of darkness into His marvelous light, being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, are not concerned with the unbelief and ridicule of men. They have a marvelous wisdom the world knows nothing about.

As Sister Dunlap wrote, "When the miracle of revelation comes to man, he knows that the wisdom of God is too infinite for human understanding, that his judgments are unsearchable and his ways past finding out." — J. D. W.)

Ringgold, Virginia

Dear Editors and Household of Faith:

I have felt impressed to write you for sometime, off and on. I now will try, if God will direct my mind and pen for awhile. I feel so helpless and dependent on my God. The day Ryland come to the church I was so surprised and shock-

ed. I afterwards felt so ashamed of myself, for I felt I created a scene. I just could not control myself, and was so embarrassed I could hardly face people.

Ryland being a retarded child, I feared some could not understand him, and could not fellowship him, thinking he didn't know what he was doing. I, too, could not at that time feel sure he was a fit subject, and did not want him to bring any trouble in the dear church.

Had he been a normal child, I would have been overjoyed, but just couldn't be sure at that time. But now I feel sure, and satisfied he has been born of the Spirit, — more and more convinced as time goes on. I knew that he had enjoyed the preaching for several years, and think some others had seen it in him too. I hope I feel thankful to God for having inscribed his name in the Lamb's book of life from the beginning.

I know that God can save all classes of people — deaf, dumb, blind and afflicted; and that He does, for nothing is impossible with him. Ryland has been a faithful child to me, always willing to help, and is good help in the house. God has given him to me for a purpose. I am made to feel thankful that he is not as badly afflicted as some. And I feel so thankful that many sisters and brothers are so kind and understanding to him. He enjoys the meetings at Dan River Church: the members are a lovely band, they manifest so much love. I read the Bible to him, and can tell that he enjoys sacred things; they are first with him. He loves the good sacred hymns above all.

I hope I am thankful to God for the good brothers and sisters having put up with me all these years — about 50. Lately, I lie in bed at night, feeling I have to sing praises to His holy name before I can go to sleep. I hope He will enable me to hold out faithful to the end.

The good meetings mean more to me than anything on earth, when we are able to forget all earthly troubles and cares, and bask in His divine love. I believe all things will come to pass just as God planned from the beginning. He declared the end from the beginning, saying my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. W. L. Ferguson

Rt. 1, Box 140
Monmouth, Oregon

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing $5.00 for renewal of my subscription to the Signs of the Times. I enjoy the paper very much and want to have it continue to come to me.

I don't belong to the Old Baptists, but I truly believe they are the true church: just wish I lived where I could hear them preach, but as I don't, will continue to read the paper as long as I can. I desire to be remembered in your prayers.

Mrs. B. D. Mitchell

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(through February 1, 1960)

Mrs. H. W. Taylor, N. C.	$2.00
Eliza Turner, Va.	1.00
Mrs. Harold Daniels, Sr., N. C.	2.00
Mrs. Ellis Hodgins, Canada	4.00

MINUTES OF THE ORIGINAL FLINT RIVER ASSOCIATION WANTED

Dear Editors:

Would you please appeal to the readers of the Signs of the Times to help us find the following copies of the Original Flint River Association Minutes: 1905; 1906; 1909; 1910; 1911 to 1916; 1920 to 1925; 1930 to 1937; and 1940.

We would certainly appreciate receiving these numbers, addressed to the Clerk, Mrs. Reaner Reese, Rt. 2, Toney, Alabama.

Mrs. Reaner Reese

Danville, Virginia April, 1960

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

PLEASE NOTE

As noted in the February issue, we desire to publish as many associational and special meeting notices in the July issue as we can. The brethren will please send them in as early as possible.

EDITORIAL

SINGING

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom: teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." (Col. 3:16)

A few years ago I was in a group of believers who were engaged in informal service where all were talking of the marvelous mercies of God. Many expressions of joy and gratitude had been made by many in this congregation. This was about two hours before the next scheduled church service was to begin. While this conversation was in progress a brother passed some books among the group with the suggestion that we sing a certain hymn. Everyone's voice was mellowed by the Spirit of God, it seemed, even at the beginning of the singing. I had so much enjoyed the conversation upon God's goodness to His children that I thought the height of enjoyment had already been reached. I was wrong. As we sang Heaven seemed to come closer and closer. I had never heard such harmony. I had never experienced such sublime and peaceful sensations. Tears of joy were flowing from my eyes to such extent that I had to remove my glasses and dry them. When I looked around I saw that everyone was weeping. Just in front of me were two young ladies who were yet in their 'teens. Their faces were glowing and radiant. Tears were dripping from their cheeks. They were sisters in the flesh who appeared to be identical. They appeared as angels to me. These sisters asked for a home in the church at the next scheduled service of that meeting.

The above related experience has been re-lived by me many times since then, and has been a great inspiration to me. I have been blessed to rejoice many times while engaged in singing. I feel it to be a sublime and sacred ordinance of divine worship.

Singing has been a glorious portion of revealed religion in all ages and periods of time. It was engaged in by God's people before the giving of the law of Moses. When God delivered His people from Pharoah the children of Israel sang a song. This song is recorded in the 15th chapter of Exodus. The song of Moses, as recorded in the 32nd chapter of Deuteronomy, was sung in all the

congregations of Israel. David and all Israel sang when the Ark was being brought to Jerusalem. (1 Chron. 13:8) The Song of Hannah is recorded in the 2nd chapter of 1st Samuel. In the 2nd chapter of the Gospel according to Saint Luke it is recorded that a multitude of the heavenly host appeared with the angel that was conversing with the shepherds relative to the birth of Christ, and said in unison, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward man." Singing is particularly enjoined under the gospel dispensation as we shall see when we examine Colossians 3:16 and Ephesians 5:19. John heard the singing of some songs by the heavenly hosts in the wonderful revelations as recorded in the last book of the New Testament. We find that Jesus and his disciples sang an hymn after partaking of the bread and cup. (Matthew 26:30) One hundred and fifty psalms have their rightful place in the Bible. Many of the books of the Bible are written in rhythm.

For the past week I have examined with renewed interest the words of the songs and Psalms recorded in the Bible. Sublime truths are so richly stated in these rhythmic expressions. Truths so musically expressed, spiced by the grace of God in your heart, cannot be harsh upon anyone. They are spoken softly, tenderly, and affectionately. Paul said, "I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." (1 Cor. 14:15) I do not like to attempt to sing a song or hymn until I have meditated over the expressions to such extent that I understand what the writer meant to convey, and can feelingly take his expressions as my own with all sincerity and reverence. I like to understand and feel what I am singing. When voices are tuned by the gift of God's Spirit and mellowed by the grace of God in their hearts, and blessed to sing in unison of God's wondrous mercy and love, there can be no harsh notes. Oliver Wendell Holmes said, "Fluent harmonies may be spoiled by the intrusion of one harsh note." Natural carnal harmonies may be spoiled so that music critics may condemn, but the grace of God can so soften the raspy voice of a man so that the singing is as an heavenly chorus.

Space nor time does not permit us to examine all of the songs recorded in the Bible, but, as God graces, we will examine a few sublime portions of these songs. The 15th chapter of Exodus begins like this, "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath He thrown in the sea." The first words of this song ring out the praises of God's power in deliverance from the enemy and His power manifested in the destruction of the enemy. These words bespeak His almighty power in delivering His children from the clutches of the enemy and magnify His name even in their destruction. God's people are blessed to praise God not only for deliverance but also for destruction. This is the God of Israel. This is our God. There is a question asked in the eleventh verse of this song: "Who is like thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like thee?" We find some wonderful expressions in answer to this question in the same verse: "Glorious in holiness, fearful in praise, **DOING WONDERS.**" Have you not experienced the same wonderful God. You do not want to take credit for anything pertaining to your salvation, or the devastation of the many attacks of your enemy. You want to give praise where praise is due. You desire to praise God for it all. We read in the same song: "The Lord shall reign forever and ever." (Exodus 15:18) He is before all things. He created all things. He works all things after the counsel of His own will." He doeth according to His will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth." God has always reigned — He is reigning now, and we are assured, that He will forever reign. No creature can take Him from off His throne. No devil can frustrate His counsel. No be-

ing can ever prevent Him from doing His will. He does wonders!

We find these words in the 13th verse of the same song: "Thou in thy mercy hast led forth thy people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy mountain." The words of this song declare that a certain people has been redeemed. It declares that this people is led forth by His mercy. It acclaims that they are guided according to His strength. It affirms that He will guide them unto His holy mountain. There is no opportunity for the enemy to ever frustrate this divine guidance and cause one of the least of His little ones to stray to such extent that he will not reach that holy mountain. What a wonderful promise is this! We are made to realize that we do not merit God's leading us forth. It certainly was an unmerited favor bestowed upon us that caused His leading. If justice had been measured out to us, hell with all its fury would have been our just doom. Surely, then, it was a merciful act of God that He chose to lead us forth from this unholy way. It certainly was not our own choosing. We craved the praise of man. We coveted something of our own doing to lead us forth. We found by sad experience that we could not deliver ourselves. When we had exhausted every means of escape, we appealed unto God. We cried to Him. He heard our cry. He delivered us from so great condemnation in such a merciful way that we can never forget His goodness toward us. What mercy He had upon us! What guidance does He exert? He guides us from the paths of folly unto the paths of righteousness. He causes us not to trust in ourselves but to trust in Him. He makes us to see the vanity of our own ways and causes us to seek guidance from Him. The holy mountain is the place to which we shall go. He does not leave us by chance along the way. He forever guides us!

The song of Moses, as recorded in the 32nd chapter of Deuteronomy, has many glorious expressions of truth. The expressions, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herbs, and as the showers upon the grass." (Deut. 32:2), are very important to me. This manifests that the doctrine of God comes as the rain. The rain comes from above. It does not ask who needs it. It comes upon whosoever it will. If we should see the earth elevate itself in order to take advantage of the rain, then we would cater to the idea that man should avail himself to that opportunity. Never-the-less, not seeing these things, we feel that His doctrine shall drop as the rain. The earth does not elevate itself in order to determine upon what part of the earth the rain shall come. The rain comes upon whomsoever the Lord wills for it to come. This rain has an everlasting effect upon whomsoever it comes. The song further says, "My speech shall distil as the dew." Have you ever heard the dew fall? Have you ever witnessed the distilling process? You do not know from whence it comes. You do not know whither it goeth. So is everyone that is born of the spirit of God.

Another wonderful expression of this song of Moses is found in the eleventh verse of this song: "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange gods with him." Has your nest ever been stirred up? I am persuaded to believe that you have been convinced that carnal easiness has proven to be a refuge that is not sufficient. You crave the sufficiency that is only found in the goodness of Christ. Have you ever fallen into the abyss of your merited condemnation to really feel that Hell was your just doom? Have you ever felt your nest stirred up to such an extent that you knew that if justice was measured out to you that heaven could not be yours to enjoy? You were not satisfied with yourself nor with the condition in which you were in. This led you to cry to God for His mercy

and the manifestation of His love. You have known the goodness of God to rely upon His promises. You know that He bears you upon His wing of Love. You do not deserve it, yet you experience the "fluttering of His love over you." You are astonished at his goodness, and amazed at His grace. He feeds you with the sensations of His love. He lifts you up when you are in the valleys of doubts and fears. He confirms His love for you. He picks you up from the valley of doubts and fears and makes you to know that His banner over you is **LOVE.** Even though you are dropped into the valley of despondency, He bears you up again to the mountain tops of His wondrous love. There is no strange God with you for you have been made to know that the God of Israel is your strength and deliverer.

In the Song of Hannah there are many expressions of God's power. The most sublime of these expressions are found in 1st Samuel 2:6-8: "The Lord killeth and maketh alive: He bringeth down to the grave and bringeth up." The children of God not only praise Him for bringing up out of the grave but also they praise Him for bringing down to the grave. They are made to know that His killing is just as precious as His making alive. They are given to praise Him for His destruction of their own ways. Were it not for this destruction they would have been traveling their own pernicious ways. Now they see that their own ways lead to destruction. The ways of God only lead to life. This same song says again, "The Lord **MAKETH POOR,** and **MAKETH RICH:**" The Lord is to be praised as much for making poor as He is for making rich. Those who are poor in spirit are in a blessed condition. Jesus said in His sermon on the mountain, "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of God." The praise is due to God for making us poor as much as for making us rich. It requires our realization of our poverty to make us to appreciate our richness. Then, we should praise God for making us poor as much as we praise Him for making us rich. We could not appreciate this richness had we not experienced this poverty.

It says again in this song: "To set them among princes, and to **MAKE** them inherit the throne of Glory." What a wonderful inheritance! The Grace, Mercy, and Love of God elevates the objects of His Love to such an high position!

We want to meditate upon the songs of the heavenly host in the conclusion of this article. "They sang a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kinds and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." (Rev. 5:9-10) "And they sang as it were a new song . . . and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth." (Rev. 14:3) The songs of Zion can no man learn of himself. It must be revealed to him. How good it is when we are given to sing with the spirit and the understanding. The songs of Zion are learned by revelation. When they are revealed unto us we can sing with the spirit and with the understanding also.

May God give us to sing the songs of Zion in all sincerity, reverence, joy, and gratitude; praising Him aright for His goodness to the children of men. May we be given to sing with the spirit and with the understanding also, that our songs may render praise unto His glorious name. May we be given to meditate upon the psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs so that we may be blessed to teach and admonish one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, **SINGING** with grace in our hearts to the Lord.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

WHAT IS PRAYER?

In the preceding number of the Signs, Sister Gentry asked for our opinion and for the views of others, on the subject of prayer. The subject of prayer has occasioned us much reflection at times, for the last forty-five years, and yet we have been so dull a scholar in the school of Christ, if indeed we are a pupil of his school, that after almost half a century's tuition on the subject, we have now to confess the humiliating truth, that we often ask and receive not, because we ask amiss; and to this day we know not how to pray as we ought. In the year 1811, when but young in our profession, we resolved to be much engaged in prayer, and, as we had read somewhere that,

"Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees,"

we were fully resolved to make him tremble continually. We supposed then that prayer consisted in periodical forms, in which we were required to humble ourselves before God, and ask of him whatever we were in need of. To our inexperienced mind there was much virtue in prayer, that is, in the form and language of prayer, and it was our impression that the poet was right when he said,

"Restraining prayer we cease to fight;
Prayer makes the Christian's armor bright,"

And we verily thought, by our constant praying, we should avoid temptation, and live above doubts and fears. We should keep the old tempter so terrified with our devotions, that he would not dare assail us with any wicked suggestions. But we soon learned that our prayers were not the right kind to keep Satan at bay, for it was not long before it really appeared to us that we were much more annoyed with his company when performing our solemn devotions, than at any other time. Often, when the hour of prayer, which we had set, came, we were either inflated with pride that we were so devout, or crushed down with such a sense of our sinfulness that it seemed wicked and presumptuous to call upon the name of the Lord. Sometimes, when about to rush into the presence of the Lord like the unthinking horse into battle, we found our thoughts, like the fool's eyes, were wandering to the ends of the earth, and we have been unable sometimes to utter one word of supplication. Self-abased before the Lord, we have risen up from our knees, and left the place, concluding that we could not pray, and perhaps in reality praying, or breathing forth the heart-felt and heaven-inspired desire of our inmost soul, that God would manifest himself as our God and portion, and give us grace whereby we might serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

These earnest desires breathed forth to God, we hardly dared to call them prayer, for we had imbibed the idea that prayer must have more formality about it, that we must go into some closet, or secret place, literally, and fall on our knees, or prostrate our body before the Lord, and then and there utter our prayers in an appropriate utterance of words. Often like Sister Gentry, we have been in great heaviness, because we could not pray, or rather because we were unable to satisfy ourself that we had prayed. But we are now led to believe that the most fervent prayers we have ever offered to God, were indited by groanings which we could not utter. There have been times when it has really seemed to us that the Spirit truly helped our infirmities, and made intercession for us in that day, and we were made some sensible of our entire dependence on God, than we could have been if we had believed that we had ability to pray when and as we pleased.

Volumes might be written in reply to the inquiry of our sister, "What is prayer?" without exhausting the subject. But in this short article, we can only touch briefly upon the subject. Secret prayer, or that prayer of the saint which

is poured forth as a communion between God and the individual worshiper, we believe is often made when we may be in the open field, on the public highway, or when lying upon our bed, but it is always when none but God, who seeth in secret, knows the emotions of the suppliant's heart. And this is what we understand to be entering into our closet and shutting the door; here it becomes a matter between the God of heaven and that saint on whom God has graciously poured the spirit of prayer and of supplication.

Social prayer is that in which a number of Christians are led by the same spirit to call upon the name of the Lord, and in which one is mouth for them all; such praying must necessarily be audibly uttered, so that all who are present may understandingly unite in the prayer. This public or social devotion is as important in its place as the secret aspirations of the praying saint in the closet. But all vain show and ostentatious parade should be avoided. We are to remember that God is in heaven, and we are on his footstool, and it is becoming that our words should be few, for his people are not heard for their much speaking, nor for their loud speaking, nor for the sanctimonious tone in which the words of prayer are uttered. In the public assemblies of the saints, we do not find that every praying soul has been distinguished with the gift to be mouth for the church, but all the saints are blessed with the gift of prayer, whereby they may unite in the petitions offered, so far as they are indited by the Spirit of God.

In regard to the answers of prayer, we are not to expect that there is either power, merit or efficacy in our prayers, in themselves considered, to entitle us to the things which we pray for. God, who has all things needful for us, either for time or eternity, in store, gives the spirit of prayer to his children, and that spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God; it knoweth what is the will of God, and it indites within us the desire for what God designs to bestow in answer to prayer. So, instead of our bringing the Lord under obligation to bestow blessings on us for our prayers, here is an additional dependence on God, not only for the things that we need, but also for the spirit to ask him for them. And when we speak of our children and neighbors being quickened and born of God, in answer to our prayers, we mean to be understood that God has not only made bare his holy arm, and revealed his salvation in the conversion of sinners, and in reviving his church, but that he has made his children desire, and by the spirit of supplication, has led them to pray for the accomplishment of all these things. There are many things connected with this subject, on which, at this time, we cannot dwell. Among others, faith is indispensable. Not a faith of human origin, that we can create or exercise, but the faith which is the fruit of the Spirit and the gift of God; that faith of which Christ is the author and the finisher, and which is called the faith of Jesus Christ, by which we live spiritually, and that faith which is of the operation of God. He that cometh unto God must believe that he is. How can we devoutly pray to a God, the existence of whom we doubt or disbelieve? And if we believe there is a God, how can we ask of him for blessings, unless we have faith to assure us that God has them in store for us, and that he will freely bestow them upon us through Jesus Christ our Lord? Without faith it is impossible to please God. Faith lays hold on his promises, and gives us confidence that they shall all be fulfilled. Faith looks to Jesus as the only medium through whom we may approach the Father; for he says, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." He is also the only medium through which spiritual blessings are sent down from heaven upon the saints. God has blessed his children with all spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world; so we have no reason to expect any spiritual blessing out of Christ, or

in any other way than according as he hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world.

I PETER 3:21

"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

Baptism, according to this text, has a figurative import, and as a figure of our salvation, Peter classifies it with the figure of the temporal salvation of Noah and his family in the ark; the former figure is like the latter figure. Hence we understand that both figures refer to and set forth a spiritual reality in reference to the manner of the everlasting salvation of the church of God. The Spirit of Christ was in Noah as in other patriarchs and prophets of the Lord. And Noah, as a patriarch, a preacher of righteousness, the representative of a family and progeny to be saved from the deluge, and as a builder of the ark which was to contain all that God has ordained to that temporal salvation, was an eminent type of Christ. Christ is the builder of the spiritual ark, the church, which contains all that God has from the beginning chosen to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. He is also their spiritual progenitor, and they are accounted to him for a generation. And with him, in the church, they shall outride all the storms and floods, which shall sweep away the ungodly, and rest forever on the mount of God. Salvation by grace was clearly set forth in the figure of Noah's deliverance. And as also is the ordinance of Christian baptism an expressive figure of the same salvation of the people of God. It is not, like the Jewish purifications, designed for the putting away the filth of the flesh, but it is the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Christian baptism, as instituted by our Lord, and practiced by the primitive saints, sets forth a death, burial and resurrection, and is applicable to, first, the death, burial and resurrection of Christ; second, to the experience of saints, who are slain by the law, and raised up from condemnation and wrath by the application of the blood and righteousness of the now risen and glorified Redeemer; and third, it sets forth the dissolution, burial and ultimate resurrection of the bodies of all the saints of God.

1. The death, burial and resurrection of Christ is called a baptism. "I have," said he, "a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" The sons of Zebudee were to be baptized also with that baptism wherewith Christ was to be baptized. Paul says the saints addressed in his epistle to the Romans, were also buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so they should walk in newness of life. Hence it is our understanding that the whole church of God was represented in Christ, as to her spiritual identity, when he died on the cross, slumbered in the tomb, and when he arose from the dead, and ascended up on high. When he died for all, then were all dead, and they were quickened together with him, raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. In this baptism we are truly saved. "The law has dominion over a man as long as he liveth." Romans viii. 1. Christ as the embodiment of the church, takes our law place, and that lawfully, not making void the law, but establishing it; for in him the law finds the church, and makes its stern demand. He asks for no abatement of the demand, but promptly meets and completely cancels it. The sword awakes against the fellow of the Lord of Hosts. Deep waters come into his soul, and all the billows pass over him. Immersed in death, the law can ask no more; the dreadful debt is paid. The yawning grave receives the

slaughtered body, and closes its doors upon him, recognizing in his person all for whom he died. This is baptism, but it is not all. His flesh must see no corruption. The pains of death cannot hold him long. As in baptism the body is immersed but also raised up to make the figure complete, so Christ must arise from the dead, and bring immortality into light in his resurrection. Under the law he dies, but quickened by the Spirit he rises, and brings up from the dead all his sheaves with him. As except a corn of wheat falleth into the earth and dieth, it abideth alone. and the germ of its production remaineth undeveloped, but if it die it will bring forth much fruit, simply by developing that which was in it, so in the death and resurrection of Christ, his people are buried with him by baptism into death, wherein the extreme penalty of the law being executed, the law can henceforth have no more dominion over them. Now, quickened by the Spirit, they arise, not to a legal bondage state again, but they arise to walk in newness of life, and are married to, and become one with him who is raised from the dead, and are no more under the law, but under grace. "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law, by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." — Romans viii. 4.

2. Christian baptism sets forth the experience of the saints. When the commandment comes, sin revives, and they die. They are slain, and all their legal hopes are cast off, and they are buried from their former element, and raised up from the horrible pit, and out of the miry clay, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Dead to, and buried from, the rudiments of the law, and the beggarly elements of the world, they are crucified to the world, and the world is crucified to them; they are raised up to participate in all the privileges of the church of God.

3. The ultimate resurrection of our bodies from their graves, and ascension to glory, is also embraced in the figurative import of gospel baptism. One of the strong arguments of Paul, in proving the final resurrection of the bodies of the saints, is presented in these words: "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?" — 1 Cor. xv. 29. Baptism was evidently designed to signify a resurrection, and would be divested of its doctrinal import if there is to be no final resurrection of the bodies of the saints from the dead.

(Editorials by Elder Gilbert Beebe, April 1, 1856.)

OBITUARIES

E. CALVIN HOLLOWAY

The members of the churches of the Salisbury Association were shocked at the sudden passing of Deacon Calvin Holloway on January 10, 1959. We feel the loss keenly, but also feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

Brother Holloway was born in Snow Hill, Maryland, March 11, 1911, the son of E. Calvin and Mary E. Holloway. He was united in marriage to Pauline Ruark on April 10, 1934; and to this union were born two sons and two daughters. Surviving are his wife, Sister Pauline Holloway; two daughters, Nancy and June, at home; two sons, Ronnie, of Salisbury, and Paul, United States Marines; two grandchildren; his mother; and three sisters and one brother. His father was an active member of Salisbury Church for several years.

Brother Calvin was baptized August 28, 1958, by Elder D. V. Spangler, and was chosen deacon the fifth Saturday in November, 1958, in Salisbury Church. He performed his duties as a deacon faithfully until his death. Not only his home church but all the churches of the Salisbury Association miss him keenly. We are made in our frailty to question why one so young had to be taken from us, but it is all in His will, and He is too wise to err. May we be led to say, Thy will be done.

Funeral services were held at Salisbury Church, conducted by Elders W. D. Griffin and Arthur R. Warren; and interment was in Wicomico Memorial Park. The concourse of friends who were present, and the many florial tributes, testified of the esteem in which he was held.

We pray that the Lord will comfort the bereaved family and all the brethren and friends who deeply miss him.

Submitted by one who loved him,
William S. Adkins

ELDER L. P. HARRISS

Elder Lewis Potter Harriss was born in Perry County, Illinois, February 5, 1880; and passed away May 15, 1959, after a long illness. He was the son of John P. and Emily Harriss.

He was first married to Bell Scronce, and to that union seven children were born — two died when quite young. His wife died in April, 1943. In 1954 he married Mrs. Nellie Odum. He is survived by the wife, two daughters and three sons: Mrs. Irene Winklehake, St. Louis, Mo.; Mrs. Lottie Bertance, Herrin, Ill.; Provart Harriss, Calif.; Theodore Harriss and Frank Harriss, Duquoin, Ill.; and by two sisters: Mrs. Lula H. Foster, Peoria, Ill. and Mrs. Maude H. Webb, Duquoin, Ill.; three brothers: Carrol Tolbert Harriss, Galesburg, Ill.; James Cornelius Harriss, Chicago; and Charles M. Harriss, Duquoin, Ill.; and by several grandchildren.

He professed a hope in Christ and joined Nine Mile Church the third Sunday in July, 1908; was licensed to preach in 1910; and was ordained to the full function of the gospel ministry in May, 1913. He preached in several different states, and had made his forty-second annual trip in May, 1958, to Oklahoma. He was never able to attend meetings or preach again. He had heart condition and complications. He was pastor of four churches in southern Illinois for many years; and was moderator of Bethel Association since 1932, with the exception of two years.

His younger days were spent on the farm and coal mines. Later he mastered the profession of law; and was elected to the office of Judge of City Courts of his home town, which he held for thirty years. He was also Judge of one of the courts in Chicago for ten years. He would dismiss court on week-ends to go home to serve his churches — a distance of about three hundred miles. He loved his churches and was willing to toil and labor for them. He was sound in doctrine, and was loved by the lovers of the truth for the stand he took in proclaiming the fundamental truths and doctrine of the crucified Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and for the great cause of His church.

Never at any time did he deviate from preaching salvation by grace, and grace alone; humbling himself to his Master's gift, feeling his weakness but proclaiming a sovereign God — giving God all the honor, glory and praise. He had many heart aches, trials and persecutions, but his trust, faith and hope were in God. He looked for a city which has foundation, whose maker and builder is God.

A large concourse of loved ones, friends and business associates attended his funeral to pay tribute. His body was laid to rest beside his first wife, mother of his children, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, in Nine Mile Church Cemetery, to await the second coming of the Lord; when he will be raised in glory, and be fashioned in the likeness of the blessed Saviour, be satisfied, and ever be with the Lord.

A bereaved brother,
C. M. Harriss

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God, in his infinite wisdom and according to his most righteous purpose, has called unto himself our beloved sister, Kitty Green, on the morning of December 6, 1959. Sister Green was born June 2, 1872, making her stay on earth nearly 87 years. She united with the Little Flock Church, at Altus, Oklahoma, by letter in 1923. She was preceded in death by her husband, the late Elder W. N. Green. Therefore be it

RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to our Father's will; and be it

RESOLVED, That we extend our sympathy to the family and all who deeply feel her loss; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of these regulations be placed on our church records; one be sent to the family; and one be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Elder W. W. Taylor, Moderator
Nina Stallings, Church Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It has been the will and purpose of our Heavenly Father to call from the shores of time our beloved sister, Virginia Ware Walker — "Miss Gennie" as most of her friends called her — on February 12, 1959, at the age of more than seventy-seven years. Her funeral services were conducted from the church by her pastor, Elder Harvey Smith, and Elder John Gilliam and Mr. Milton Warf; and burial was in the church cemetery — Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist.

She is survived by five daughters and three sons. She was a faithful member of Pleasant Grove Church. "None knew her but to love her; none spoke of her but to praise."

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of the above be placed in our church records, and a copy be sent to the family.

Written by request of the church by Mrs. Jimmie Hodges.

Elder Harvey Smith, Moderator
R. F. Walker, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 128 DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1960 NO. 5

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

594 Caley Drive,
London, Ontario, Canada

Dear Lollie:

Some time ago we were speaking about prayer. After that my mind seemed to be upon the matter, and so during my reading I jotted down the different places it is mentioned; so would mention them here for your consideration. Hope my mind was led to do so, and then, and only then, will it be profitable for anyone's consideration.

In Acts, Chapter 10, it speaks of Cornelius as a devout man, and one who feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always. In Paul's 1st Epistle to the Thessalonians, in the 5th chapter, it says, "Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." As you were mentioning about "pray without ceasing", it caused me to think upon the matter. It seems to me that Paul was speaking to the church, and as such he admonishes the church to pray without ceasing. Can't quite see how this is for an individual; and yet it could be in the sense that, that individual should do so always as the Spirit gives him utterance.

In the 1st chapter of Romans, Paul again says about the church at Rome, "For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers." Doesn't without ceasing, in this sense, mean that always in his prayers he prays for that church.

In hymn 367 (Lester-Durand) it says:

"When thou dost give a heart to pray,
Thou wilt incline thine ear;
From me turn not thy face away,
But my petition hear."

When He gives the spirit of prayer, then only can we really pray. Then when he gives the answer to prayer, and a thankful heart, we are made to rejoice and sing hymns and psalms to His praise. Isn't it then we have a sweet fortaste of heaven?

What a sweet prayer: "Lord keep me." How unpleasant to lisp the words, and to feel it is not a true prayer, but seeming hypocrisy; or so I have found it. Then again trials come, and you come to the place that you can say, "Lord keep me and mine."

In the 17th chapter of John Jesus says, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Again he says, "I pray for them. I pray not for the world but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine, and all mine are thine, and I am glorified in them; and again I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from evil."

In the 6th chapter of Matthew, where Jesus and his disciples were in the mountain, He taught them the prayer commonly known as "the Lord's prayer". It seems to me it would better be called the Disciple's prayer. The prayer in the 17th chapter of John would probably be better named the "Lord's prayer". The Lord's prayer, so called by men, is very high ground, and though I repeated it with the children many times, it came that I felt no longer able to say it; and only a few times since have I felt to lisp the first line when about my work.

In the 6th chapter there seems to be much instruction for prayer; such as: "But when thou prayest enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father which seeth in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." Sometimes I feel it is so easy to slip, and seemingly fast as the hypocrites do, with a sad countenance; but, as He says, they have their reward.

In the 19th verse He says, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. In the 33rd verse it says, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

It seems in the last year I have wondered what these treasures were that could be laid up in heaven. In a measure at least, I trust, I have been shown. Wouldn't some of them be the answer to prayers for which there will not be a full reward here in time; or at lease a full fulfillment: such as, the prayers for the souls of those about us; prayers for the welfare of Zion, etc. Would appreciate your thoughts on the matter some time.

In 1st Corinthians where Paul is speaking to the church at Corinth: "If I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth but my understanding is unfruitful. What is it them? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also. I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." Abraham prayed unto God and Abimelech's life was spared, according to the promise that God had made to Abimelech in a dream.

In the 24th chapter of Genesis, Abraham made his servant promise that he would go into Abraham's country to seek a wife for his son Isaac. The servant did so, and prayed to the God of his master Abraham that the girl who came to the well and would offer water to his camels, as well as himself, should be the one for Isaac. It must have been a God given prayer, for He works at both ends, and the words that Rebekah answered were those that the servant had prayed for. He later bowed down and worshiped the Lord, and blessed the Lord God of his master Abraham.

Surely we need to be taught how to pray, and unless we are given the mind to pray for things according to His will, the answer will not be to our peace of mind, and to His glory.

In the general epistle of James, in chapter 4, he says, "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." Again he says, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." "Humble yourselves in the sight of God, and he shall lift you up." Many times, when I have desired things to come as I wished, the words would come to me, "Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God and he will exalt you in due time."

"Prayer is the saint's sincere desire,
Unuttered or expressed;
The motion of a hidden fire,
That trembles in his breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear;
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near."

In Hebrews, chapter 4, and in the 58th Paraphrase, it says, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain grace and mercy to help in the time of need." and, "For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Mark that! Surely it should be our desire to have that same mind that was found in Him, be found also in us.

In Romans Paul says that the spirit helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for

us with groanings which cannot be uttered; and that He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Again, in Hebrews it speaks of his Priesthood, which is unchangeable, and He is able to save to the uttermost, as he ever liveth to make intercession for his people. I think it is Huntington who in so many cases quotes Ecclesiastes. "In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him." Isn't this so? It seems to me that the first part of the verse has a natural as well as a spiritual meaning. It seems that after being happy and content in Him, feasting on spiritual things, then you can expect nothing after Him. That is, nothing but his thoughts and ways can offer that peace and contentment which only He can give. Perhaps that is why His people desire after and seek him, and desire to be like him. David says in the 17th Psalm, "I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness."

Shouldn't it be the desire of every God called minister to extol Him? Shouldn't it be the desire of everyone of his people to extol him? — the One who has done great things for them. Isn't this the song that the redeemed will sing? Isn't this truly the new song that will be in their mouths? — honor, praise, and glory to Him for ever and ever. Aren't these the sweet foretastes of the better land? — when we are given thankful hearts for natural things, and how much more spiritual things. I hope in Him for life in this world, and how much more a hope in Him for life everlasting. Isn't it pleasant and satisfying!

In St. Luke, 18th chapter, it speaks of the poor publican who stood afar off, and would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven but smote upon his breast, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." It says that this man went down to his house justified. It seems that in my own life I have been made to look down naturally or literally in order to look up. Again it says in another place to this effect: Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted in me. Hope thou in God, and you shall have cause to praise him.

Before Jesus was crucified, he went, as he was wont, to the Mount of Olives; and he took with him Peter, James and John. He prayed that if it were possible that the cup might pass from him — nevertheless not his will but his Father's will be done. It speaks of him as being in agony, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. When he found the disciples sleeping, he admonished them to watch and pray lest they enter into temptation; for the spirit truly is willing but the flesh is weak. Again, on the cross, Jesus in agony was made to say, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"; just as it is found in the 22nd Psalm.

On the cross, when Jesus died for sin, one malefactor died **in** sin, and the other died **to** sin. What a sweet prayer was that of the thief: "Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Again, how sweet was the answer: "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." Where the word of a king is there is power — all was well in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

"The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day,
And may I there, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away."

Lollie, I have had much pleasure writing this letter. More, much more could be said, but suffice it to say it is something like John when he was speaking about the things that Jesus did: there were also many other things that Jesus did, the which if they should be written everyone, he supposed that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.

I trust you will find some pleasure in meditation on the things enclosed, and if you do, give all praise to Him, where the praise is due. If anything is written

amiss, attribute that to me, and be so kind as to bring it to my attention.

Pray for me and mine when at the throne of grace.

Yours sincerely,
Alex McColl

(Copied from a letter he wrote me. — Lollie Campbell.)

THEY ENJOY THE SIGNS

209 W. Pine Street,
Palestine, Texas
February 16, 1960

Dear Editors:

We wish to express our appreciation of the February Signs. To us both it was one of the best issues we have ever read. The first article, "Examining Himself", was well written, and to the point. I too, listed the "Do" and "Don'ts" in Paul's admonitions to the churches. How prone we are to overlook these things. When we examine ourselves, we find that we fall short in them all, and realize that, of ourselves, we can do nothing — all our righteousness is as filthy rags. But if, and when, we are given the grace of God, it is a sweet pleasure to humble ourselves at the feet of our brethren, and to wait upon them in every way we can: to visit them, administer unto them in time of need and sorrow, and speak peace unto them.

If indeed we have been born of God (as we sometimes hope we have been), we are drawn to all of His elect children by the sweet cords of His love, and are made to love one another and to try to show our faith and hope by our Charity, which, to me, is **love in action** — the evidence that we have Faith and Hope in our blessed Lord and Master. If we do not manifest charity for the shortcomings of our brethren, and show our love for them by our actions, we are nothing. "Faith, hope and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Our Saviour said, "A new Commandment I give unto you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friend."

We were indeed happy to read so many sweet experiences of grace in this issue. I always glance through the Signs and look for "An Experience of Grace", and read it first of all. Somehow there is a sweet chord of love that draws me near to the writer, because of what I hope the Lord has done for me, and the experiences through which I have passed. I hope that more of God's dear children will be blessed to write to the Signs, and tell what Christ our Lord has done for them.

Brother Wood, we were so glad that you re-published the article written by Elder Silvester Hassell. It brought tears to our eyes to read what God did, and how he directed and led the colored minister, James Hilton, throughout his life. It proves that God is no respector of persons, and that he has a people in every nation, tongue and people, and that God doesn't need the help of man-made ministers to carry His message to the heathen here or in foreign lands. As I read it, I was reminded of some of the things I have heard my parents relate about the experiences of the old colored minister, Henry, of Illinois, whom they had heard preach when they were young. I think that is the same preacher which Elder Durand mentioned in his writings. As we read these things, we are made to exclaim, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God of Hosts."

Brother Wood, my heart went out to you when you said you couldn't write an editorial. How many times I have felt a desire to write something for the readers of the Signs, but I could not express my thoughts as I wanted to, and gave up the effort. We too, felt the Circular Letter, which you published, served a dual purpose; and it was good. However we enjoy your editorials, but know that you can't write them except God directs your thoughts.

A recent letter from our grandson, Victor Dale Fugate who is stationed with the Navy in Maryland, stated that

he hoped to visit the church which you serve at Butler, Maryland, soon. He is an Old School Baptist, and being in the service, has attended several churches of that name in different parts of the U. S. and has been greatly disappointed in most of them. He takes the Signs, and is looking forward to meeting you as soon as he can.

Enclosed you will find check for $5.00 for which please renew Elder Fugate's subscription for two years. I haven't been able to attend church regularly this Winter, and I enjoy the Signs more then than when I can go to meetings each Sunday. It does us good to get real hungry: we can digest our food, both natural and spiritual, better.

May the Lord bless the editors of the dear old Signs, that they may be enabled to keep the old paper in circulation, that God's humble poor may be blessed to feed upon the hidden manna which comes down from above, is the prayer of

Your "little Sister from Texas",
Velma J. Fugate

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209 W. Pine Street,
Palestine, Texas
March 17, 1960

Elder John D. Wood,

Dear Brother in Christ:

You will find enclosed an obituary of our grandson, Victor Dale Fugate, whom I referred to in my last letter to you; also his last letter to us, and a poem which he composed. Although these were not written for publication, I have his father's permission to send them to the Signs, which he loved. We would like the Primitive Baptists to know how much he loved his church and the cause of Christ, even if he couldn't attend often.

He enlisted in the U. S. Navy soon after he finished high school, and by hard study and faithful service, he advanced in rank to Chief Aviation Electronics Technician. Being stationed on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, and part of the time in foreign waters, he did not get to come back to his old home very often. When he and his family came, they couldn't stay long, as Texas is so far from either coast. In the Summer of 1953, he and his family were here. He arrived too late to attend services at Cool Springs Church, where his father and grandfather belong. He told his grandfather that week that he loved the Primitive Baptists very much, and believed the doctrine which they preached, and that he would like to join the church if they would have him; and wondered if it would be alright to offer at Mt. Olive Church, which convened that week-end. Elder Fugate told him it would, and that he could get a letter and place it in Cool Springs later. He united with the Mt. Olive Church, near Brownsboro, Texas, and was baptized by the pastor, Elder W. T. Fugate, and was granted a letter of dismissal during their three-days meeting September 11, 12, and 13, 1953. The next time he was home he was received into the fellowship of Cool Springs Church, near Canton, Texas.

He was loved by all the brethren and sisters. His tear-stained countenance showed his deep emotions within, as he listened to a good sermon. He will long be remembered by those who knew him.

May God comfort those who mourn for him, and cause them to say, "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord." May God be merciful to all who lost their loved ones in that terrible crash, is the prayer of

Your "little sister from Texas",
Velma J. Fugate

VICTOR DALE FUGATE TO HIS GRANDPARENTS

Sunday, January 3, 1960

Dearest "Papa" and "Mom":

My thoughts are with you today, and

with our little church at Cool Springs, if I have any right to refer to it as "my" church. I have finished reading the January Signs, and the article "The Obligations of Church Members", submitted by Elder Turner. It served to make me more keenly aware that I have not been fulfilling my obligations to the church. . . . I've had grand and noble thoughts concerning all those listed obligations, but I've never done anything about them. I say I love the church and its teachings, and the dear old brethren and sisters who cling to it. But, do I really? It is a question that both startled and frightened me. Could I be one of those who give "lip-service" only? I know that the only thing I can believe is what is preached in the Old School Baptist Church (if I believe at all); that's why I asked to become a member of the church. I wouldn't, couldn't be anything else. And now, after all this time, I begin to know what a member should be. May God give me wisdom and strength to carry through with what He has shown me to be right. You will, I hope, hear from me again very soon; at which time I expect to begin the discharge of at least one of my obligations.

We had a very pleasant Christmas and New Year's holiday. We stayed at home the whole time. As I wrote Dad, we would have liked very much to come home, but we had to choose between that and seeing that the children had a few things for Christmas. But we do plan a trip home right after school is out, probably around the 5th of July. If the Lord is willing, we will see you then.

I went to a Primitive Baptist Church in . . . . . ., which was the only one listed in the phone directory. I was sorely disappointed. If I understand anything about the truth, they are not blessed to have the Word with them. In fact there was no preaching at all. The pastor read a couple of chapters from Romans; he paused after each line for a little "explanation", then re-read the sentence, and proceeded to the next, etc. . . . There was the benediction; and I went out quickly. I knew I didn't belong there.

. . . But in this issue of the Signs, I read a statement by Elder Wood that meetings were held at a church at Butler, Maryland. I intend to go if I can. They meet on the 1st Sundays. It will be so good to hear what I believe to be the truth preached. I've read many articles by Elder Wood, and believe him to be highly enlightened.

I am glad you enjoyed the poem, and hope you didn't interpret it as "man-praise", but as it was intended. "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things."

Will close now; God bless you in all of your endeavors. Remember us in your prayers. Write when you can, and have a mind to do so. All our love,

Your grandson,
Victor and family

(See obituary this issue)

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388 McPhail St.,
Lebanon, Mo.

Dear Household of Faith:

It is again time to send in my renewal to the Signs for another year, but I am at a loss to write anything that would be of comfort to the children of God. I can still realize that I am a sinful man, and I know we are told that in this world we shall have tribulations.

The ministers of Satan come telling the child of God today that he or she must do something to bring about the forgiveness of sins. But what is it the **dead sinner** can do? We must be as little children or we cannot see the kingdom. If there had been a way for man to save himself, Christ would not have come to save man from sin. He did not ask man to let him save him, but it was of his own love and tender mercy.

I beg to be remembered in your prayers.

A sinner saved by grace,
W. W. Kenaly

St. Charles, Ky.

Dear Elder Wood:

It is time to renew my subscription again, so am enclosing it.

I love the dear old paper, for I am sure it stands for the truth; and if you have the truth, you have Christ: he said, "I am the . . . truth." There are many things preached in this world, but there is only one truth. To rightly divide the word of truth, is a great gift to a poor sinner.

The wonderful Book asks, "What think ye of Christ. . ? This is a direct question, and of deep interest to storm tossed pilgrims who wander on in the valley, hoping to get a little refreshing of the water the poor woman got at the well. If I could feel as sure that I am worthy to be in the minds of you dear people as I am that the doctrine set forth in the **Signs of the Times,** is the doctrine of the Bible, I would have no fear. I find no spiritual comfort outside the fellowship of this peculiar people. The God they worship is the God I love to talk about, and meditate upon. "If God be for us, who can be against us."

We cannot wish for a greater blessing for you dear editors than a continuation of the Lord's blessings. These are some of my thoughts this morning. Enclosed you will find check for the paper two years and one dollar for the shut-ins.

Mona McGregor

THOUGHTS ON DEATH OF THE SAINTS

If it is the Lord's will, I want to offer some thoughts on the death of God's saints, thoughts which were so comforting to me I was almost overcome while walking the street; but I cannot tell it unless I have help from a higher power. It is surprising that so many people are so wise in this day of falling away, heaping to themselves teachers having itching ears. They are discovering new doctrines that were never thought of when nearly all of God's people were one in spirit, and love and fellowship abounded.

Some of the younger generation who believe (?) in God's sovereign rule over all things, when brought to the test, completely deny it. Let me ask some questions: Does God have complete rule over sin? Did he have a purpose for sin in the world? Does he have a purpose for Satan?

He made all things, even the wicked for the day of evil. (Prov. 16:4) He pronounced all his work good — for the purpose for which they were made. It is said by some that He had nothing to do with Satan being in the Garden of Eden; and that he has nothing to do with death — that the wages of sin is death, and when sin is finished then comes death; that death, sin and its effects are all in Satan's power.

Dear little humble child do you believe a preacher with such thoughts can comfort one who is hounded on every side by Satan's fiery darts?: Satan rules sin, and when the little child has finished sin, then death. God said to the waves of the sea, Thus far shalt thou come, and here shalt thy proud waves be stayed. (Job 38:11) — including the waves of sin. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." (Psalms 116:15)

Where is the child of God who does not know some of Satan's rage? Satan was whipped when Christ spilled his blood, and arose from the dead: he knows he has no power only as allowed of God in tempting the saints, and he is always alert, watching as a cat watches his prey, and he never lets an opportunity slip to tempt, harrass, and torment God's people. He would torment them 'till the last breath leaves them, if he could, seeing that they will soon be beyond his reach. If it were left to him, when would one ever cease to sin? when would he let one die? for he is done with them after death — he would follow them into heaven if he could.

"I am he that liveth, and was dead;

and behold, I am alive for evermore." (Rev. 1:18) "And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness; yea, the Lord our God shall cut them off." (Psalms 94:23) There is a time to be born and a time to die. Our lives were in God's mind and purpose before the world was created, when the Father, Son and Holy Ghost planned our redemption. He had a wise purpose for creating us in Adam and creating us in Christ in eternity; and when He has finished that purpose, He, not Satan, nor finished sin, will take us home to be be forever in his presence, to praise and adore him, and crown him Lord of all.

Would there be anything more horrible than to be left at the mercy of Satan in death? If we had to die this way, our beds would not be "as soft as downy pillows are", nor could we rejoice in the love and presence of the Saviour. We would be so harrassed that there would be no comfort. Why does God allow Satan to trouble his people in their last sickness? Is it to draw them closer to him, to see more of the weakness and sins of the flesh, and to see more of God's power in overcoming Satan? The more we see our condition, and our need of Him, the more we are able to praise Him; and the friends and attendants, seeing God's power and mercies in death, are often comforted.

I hope the readers can see what I am trying to tell, and can see more and deeper comforts than I am able to tell. There is no fear in death when God is with us — it is only passing through the door from sin and sorrow into a life of happiness and praise. I hope this will be my joy.

George W. Jackson,
632 Connally Drive,
East Point, Ga.

Ruffin, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

Ever since my baptism I have wanted to write you of the wonderful day, May 24, 1959, when I was accepted into the church. I could not say much that day, so have wanted to write something of my experience.

Just about every fourth Sunday my mother and father went to Macedonia church; and they always took us children with them. When I was married I did not have a way to go to church; and I think it was in 1933, a revival was being held in an old school house where I had once attended school. I went several times because I could walk there, and because I felt that I ought to go to preaching. After I had gone several times, they kept asking me if I did not want to be saved; and I went up. After I got home I realized that I did not know why I did it; and the more I thought about it, the more I felt that I wasn't fit to be baptized. I could not sleep at night for thinking about it; and a few nights before I was supposed to be baptized, I was lying on my bed trying to pray, and got up and got down on my knees to ask God to show me in some way if I was fit to be baptized. I then went to bed in peace.

I had a dream that the wind was blowing so hard that the trees across the road were lying flat on the ground, but the house wasn't moving. When I awoke, I was afraid, for it was so real; and I got up and went to the window to see if the trees were lying flat. I went back to bed wondering about the dream. During the same night I had another dream; I dreamed that my husband, mother, my two little boys and myself were sitting in the house, and heard a great noise. We all went out on the porch; and we could hear it going all around the world. It started in the West, and when it got back to where it started, it burst, and streams of blood came flowing from the sky. Then I saw Jesus come floating down in a white robe and a golden crown. He came to where we were, and I wasn't afraid, and he talked with me, and told me that everyone would be judged according to his deeds.

. . . I had other dreams, and among them I dreamed that I was baptized.

I was baptized by those folks, but I never got to attend their church. Later Sister Somers moved next to me, and I attended Dan River Church with her when I could. About 14 years ago I went with her to Dan River, and when we entered the door they were singing, "How tedious and tasteless the hours." It was the first time I had heard it, and I thought it the prettiest I had ever heard. I felt that day that I wanted a home with you, but was afraid I would not be accepted because I had joined another church. About a year ago I again had a great desire to join, but couldn't seem to. I went to the hospital in April; and before I went I told my oldest daughter how I felt, and that if anything happened to me, I wanted my funeral to be preached at Dan River, and that I wanted you to preach it. She asked that, if I felt that way, why I didn't join Dan River Church; and I told her that I didn't know.

After I returned home from the hospital, and became able, I went to church again, and I felt that I just had to ask for a home. . . I had dreamed of going to Dan River to be baptized before I was baptized. When I was baptized I never felt so happy in my life, and it seemed that the sun never shined so brightly. I feel that at times my cup runneth over. I love all the brothers and sisters, and the church, and feel that I need their prayers. Please overlook my mistakes: I hope I am not deceiving God's little flock.

An unworthy sister in hope,
Mrs. Willie Tate

Stockdale, Texas

Dear Editors and Readers of the Signs:

I am sending an account of the ordination of Brother Gerald Shipman, which we would like to see published in the Signs. He is a young brother whom we esteem very highly for Christ's sake and what the Lord has done for him. We have high hopes that this same dear Lord will use him and his beloved companion many years for the comfort and edification of his poor and afflicted people as they journey on through this low ground of sin and sorrow.

We feel that we have been greatly blessed as a church, few and unworthy though we be. We also have Elder H. L. Ballard, who was ordained just a few years ago, who serves the church as pastor, with Elder Shipman as co-pastor.

Elder E. B. Ault requested the church to accept his resignation as pastor of Mt. Olive Church the third Sunday in January, 1960. His request was reluctantly granted. He had served us faithfully, lovingly and patiently for over twenty years, full time except the last few years when Elder Ballard has been co-pastor with him. He also served as co-pastor with Elder J. B. Bowden for several years. He has traveled many thousands of miles coming here, as it is 250 miles each way from his home. We feel lost without him as our pastor, but hope he will be enabled to visit us often.

Our meetings are still on the 3rd Sundays in each month, with services Saturday night before; and also on 2nd Sunday afternoons. We are glad to have any visitors who may read this, to come to our meetings, or visit or write us any time. The meeting house is on Highway 87, West end of Stockdale. I live next door to it. Elder Ballard's address is 230 Ridgewood Ave., New Braunfels, Texas; and Elder G. D. Shipman's is 221 Drury Lane, San Antonio, Texas.

May grace, mercy and peace rest and abide with all the household of faith.

Mrs. M. J. (Lela) Culpepper

Winfield, Alabama

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a check for the **Signs of the Times** another year, and a little donation to use as you see fit.

If I am not deceived, it is my greatest desire to help keep the **Signs** going out to all that would enjoy reading it. I

know how much I enjoy it: I get much comfort and joy in reading the many good experiences. It seems that all of God's little children are traveling the same road. I may not be one of them, but I wouldn't give up what I believe to be a hope of salvation by grace for anything in this time world. It is so wonderful how God lifts his trembling children up, and places their feet upon the Rock. How we do rejoice! Praise his holy name forever!

But sometimes I get so low in the valley of despondency that I wonder if I do truly know the Lord; and I try in my feeble way to pray for his guidance, that he will direct my steps in the right way, and keep me humble and always at the feet of the brethren. I know that there is where I should be, if I am one of the chosen ones. I feel so unworthy and imperfect to call upon the Lord, but I know there is no one else to call upon. I think I have been made to know that there is nothing good that I can do — it all has to come for our God.

A little sister in hope,
Mrs. A. T. Couch

WHAT WOULD I DO?
WHERE COULD I GO?

311 Acme Street,
Reidsville, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am reminded that it is time to renew our subscription to our paper. It is a very sacred privilege to have the Signs come to our home, and I hope I shall always love what it stands for — the doctrine, experiences, and messages of comfort it contains for one so poor and cast down as I so often am. So many times I've been made to think: what would I do should all this be taken away from me? Where could I go should the Old Baptists turn away from me? With this comes the thought that I am not worthy of the notice of one of you; not worthy to be numbered with you. If I have any worthiness, it is of Christ the Saviour of sinners.

This past year has been one of many changes with us. With these changes came trials and troubles; and I have had to go down on my face, in my feelings, over the error of my ways more than once. I have felt ashamed to face those who have been so good to me. Yet in all my trials God has been good to me; and I would, if I could, praise his holy name for the measure of grace I've been made to feel at times. These treasures help me to press onward and upward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ our Lord.

Some seem to believe that things have gotten out of hand: that God is not controlling all things in these days. Nevertheless this does not change one of His purposes, nor will he ever be dethroned of his sovereignty — his counsel stands, and he does all his pleasure. He rules in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and he super-rules. How much clearer can we desire this truth than is recorded in the written word of God, and implanted in us? I hope I shall ever be found with a sincere desire to declare Him the Most High God, who has all power and does not consult puny man, or need the help of weak worms of the dust, such as I. I hope He will guide my footsteps, causing me to walk in the way of truth; and lead me beside the still waters, that I may feel He is my Shepherd, my Lord, and my God.

This morning, as I looked out over the town, I was made to view the beauty of the snow, and to think of the wonders of God. How quietly the snow fell; how white and clean it looked as it covered the earth with a beautiful blanket! What power God makes known to his creatures in sending the snow, the rain, or the storms with great winds! In all this there is a purpose, as much so as in the withholding of these things in a time of drouth, when the earth looks parched. He holds the issues of life and death in his hands; his ways are past finding out — yet he is so merciful, and

hears the cries of his begging little ones. He delivers them from the jaws of the lion, closing its mouth that it can do no harm; He is with us in the fiery furnace; he has said he would never leave nor forsake us. What a wonderful thing this is! how much we have to thank Him for! Yet at times I am so forgetful of all these great mercies he bestows on me, and have to be reminded that He is God, and there is none like him; He loves us when we deserve nothing, not even the fellowship of our brethren. . . I fear at times that I weary you all asking for your prayers, but I am such a sinner that I need your prayers. I so often feel that I am not worthy to call upon the name of the Lord, or beg his mercy be applied to me continually; though I continue to hope he will not cast me away forever, or let me fall to rise no more. May all who love his appearing ever look to him, the author and finisher of the faith of God's elect; their hope and their salvation.

May God bless you to preach the gospel, as you and His true servants do today, for many more years to come. There is only one Gospel — the Gospel. We see the statement, the gospel according to John, or Luke, or Mark, or Matthew — many wrote concerning the gospel — yet it remains the gospel, meaning one Gospel. These things are precious when we are given a mind to study in search of the truth. Then our hope is most dear to us, and we are made to believe that He cares for us; and that in the face of all opposition, He will see us safely over the river to a peaceful home where all tears are wiped away; where there is no sorrow or sighing because of sin that was in our flesh while we sojourned in this earthly tabernacle. We long for, and would, if we could, forever rid ourselves of that which hinders our joy and peace; and beg grace sufficient be applied to our case.

Our prayers are for the welfare of Zion, and to be kept at your feet always; for there I would do the least harm. I hope I am

A little sister,
Mrs. Fred Cobb

1050 Richmond Street,
London, Ontario, Canada

Dear Elder Spangler:

It is time for me to renew my subscription to the Signs: it is always filled with good news from a far country. For sometime I have been travelling in a barren land where I could not behold my Saviour's face; but the last week he has filled my heart with peace and gladness. When He shuts, no one can open; and when he opens, no one can shut. It is all of him. The 71st Psalm has been made sweet to me: like the travail of my soul in this weary land. May the dear Lord always keep me in his love and in my right mind. I know He will if I am one of his little children. How often do we cry unto our God!

I am enclosing parts of a letter I received last Summer, written by one who is hungering and thirsting after righteousness. His meditations are on Prayer, and I trust it is suitable material for the Signs of the Times; if not cast it aside.

May the Lord bless and keep his little children in the right way; and to His name be all glory now and forever.

Humbly yours,
Lollie Campbell

(See Page 97)

"NOT TO . . . BUT BECAUSE OF . . ."

Princeton, W. Va.

Dear Brethren in Hope:

I thought I would write some of my meditations for the relief of my mind.

I believe the children of God are brought into virtue (2 Peter 1:5) by the adding of the Holy Spirit, and persevere after they are quickened into divine life by Christ, of whom all fullness dwells, through that covenant ordered in all things and sure, before the world began; giving all glory to Him who is made unto us wisdom, righteousness,

sanctification and redemption, not claiming any honor to or from themselves but feeling they are ten thousand talents in debt, and not a farthing to pay. Our own righteousness is as filthy rags, and except our righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees and hypocrites we shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Some will say to me, Do you believe in good works? I believe the same power that works the will also works the do; and that all by love, not to gain a blessing, but because of a blessing; for faith without words is dead.

Some say, Do you believe in obedience? Yes, I believe in obedience, but I believe that obedience is all through the obedience of the Store-house of grace, and is the virtue of the Holy Spirit. I believe the Grace of God not only tells the people of God, but teaches them that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly and righteously in this world: — not to gain something, but because of something.

If we see our brother have need, and shut our bowels of compassion against him, how dwelleth the love of God in us? You see, anything that isn't done through love, is not charity; and anything that is given grudgingly, is not of love; and God loveth a cheerful giver. Even in discipline in the church, if all isn't done through love, it surely isn't right.

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." (2 Cor. 4:7) It is of that hidden treasure; and I believe that God can speak to us, and show us things when our natural faculties are not in operation, or when we are asleep.

My health and nerves are not good; and I hope the Lord will give you a prayer for me, that I may run with more patience the race that is set before me, which, without a change, I don't think will be long. I hope He will go with me through the valley. If any have a mind, write me.

Your sister, I hope, in tribulation and suffering,

Mrs. W. G. Pritchett,
Box 286,
Princeton, W. Va.

Rt. 1, Box 127
Ione, Calif.
March 7, 1960

Dear Elder Spangler:

I am a little late; but last month was a sick time for me again. I felt a little fear I would have a sick time, as all of last year, but through God-given strength I am so far recovering much better than last year. Our flesh is weak, and will murmur some.

"Since He endured so much in suffering for us, shall we murmur when called upon to suffer a little for Him?", is a thought from an elder in England. Also, as the poet expressed: "Hope on! though all seems lost, and storms beat high, have faith! be still and know that God is nigh." It seems all I can say is "Oh, Lord, thy will be done, not mine." I am heart-sick, with tear dimmed eyes. Our dear pastor isn't able to fill his appointments. May the dear Lord in his love and divine mercy, hold him up and give him strength to endure; and heal him, if it is his will — if not, may He help us to be reconciled. How I do miss not having a meeting to go to! I love my church in spirit and in truth; and we love our dear pastor in the Lord. The Lord is love, our pillar, and Rock of our salvation: the pearl of great price.

I feel so unworthy of His love, yet I hope I am sealed in that holy Spirit of promise. Oh, the preciousness of Christ! His purity, his spotlessness I cannot attain unto it. Some believe in doing good works in order to receive a blessing. To me, for one to be in that state, I feel they don't know the grace of God. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works lest any

man should boast." (Eph. 2:8, 9)

I hope that I have felt the grace of God: I know that there is something that is near and sweet, and deep within my heart, if not deceived. I've tried going through a day doing good, but hardly got started, when I found myself away off. There's none perfect, no not one.

I hope your health is much better. At this time last year I never expected to be here now: many times each breath seemed to be the last, but I am still here for some purpose known only to God: he has it all solved. I have my Baptist papers, other good articles and booklets, my note book and my Bible, and many good letters, which never grow old.

May God in his mercy be with you all.

Saved by grace if at all,
Mrs. Mabel Lindsey

SONGS OF ZION

As songs have a very good part in any worship in our churches, I feel impressed to write something about them.

Of late I've noticed that a lot of Old Baptists are singing a lot of Armenian songs — songs which are not suited to our doctrine. This has caused me much concern. I have noticed that the next generation copies the one that has gone on; so I feel that if we want to leave them the doctrine we love and teach, we should also leave them the songs we love. This, along with the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace, is a priceless heritage to leave them.

I think I will just here take one of our songs apart, and show the difference from others in the armenian churches. Take the song, "Amazing Grace", for instance: It takes the sinner from nature to grace; then from grace to glory. Then take one of their songs, "There's a New Name Written Down in Glory". Here someone has made a song suited to the way he believes. But we know that there are no new names written down in glory. Instead all the names have been written there since before the world began. I feel that if we hear a sermon on the Election of Grace, we should then use a song on the same theme.

Are we going to leave our children Old Baptist sermons — and Armenian songs? Won't this be a paradox? I don't want to seem old fashioned, but these things are sacred to me. I well remember where I learned to sing, "My Long Sought Home", and "Oh, When Shall I See Jesus", and many others as a child; and all through the years they have remained within my heart. I find myself singing them as I go about my daily duties, and they make me long for that far-away home. The things children learn in childhood are seldom forgotten.

I am not afraid that the Old Baptists as a church will die out, as it is built on the solid Rock of Ages; and I fully believe that when the Lord comes again, there will be some here preaching the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace. I do not feel that our songs will die out, but a good many of them are shoved to the background, and these others are taking their place. I ask, Is this right? Will it not soon be where Old Baptist songs will be rare? If we consider these new songs, they are in accord with what they believe: salvation by the sinner's choice and desire — with His feeble help.

I remember once as a child I attended a large campmeeting with some neighbor children, and heard a song that caused me to think that Christ would suffer some humiliation on the day of judgment. I believe the title was, "Will Christ be Crowded Out?" I asked my father about that song, and he put me straight on the different songs. Some may think we will sing these old songs to death, but to those of this sentiment let me ask, "Can the doctrine of grace be preached to death?" In other words, can the truth be told so long and so often it will lose its value? I say, No. Truth is like a diamond: the more you polish it, the brighter it will shine; so

it is with truth.

From reading the first chapter of Revelation, we fully believe that in Heaven the elect will still be singing Salvation by Grace; for it says, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us in his own blood." Doesn't that prove we are in harmony with what we preach?

Now, instead of discarding these precious songs we love, let us teach them to our children — peradventure they will do the same, so they will never die. These things are sacred to us because we're the heirs of that Heavenly Kingdom. We find a sermon in each of the old songs: I would say that they are the songs of Zion which should be preserved from generation to generation.

Written in love for Zion,
Myrtle Cross
1203½ Mariposa
Glendale 5, Calif.

DELAWARE ASSOCIATION

The Delaware Association is appointed to meet with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, near the Maryland-Pennsylvania State Line, on Route 222, on Saturday and Sunday, July 2 and 3, 1960, the Lord willing.

Our correspondents and friends are invited to meet with us.

Charles B. Osborne, Church Clerk

DELAWARE RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Delaware River Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Hopewell, N. J. on Wednesday and Thursday, June 8 and 9, 1960, beginning at 10:30 A. M. on Wednesday.

Our correspondents and those in fellowship with us are invited to meet with us.

Casper G. Fetter, Clerk
Lctha A. Blackwell, Asst. Clerk,
Lafayette Street, Rosa Acres,
Hopewell, N. J.

THREE DAYS MEETING

Little Flock Primitive Baptist Church of Bakersfield, California, will hold a three days meeting beginning the 29th of April, at 2930 Alpine Street, Odd Fellows Hall, East Bakersfield. Phones EXport 9-0429 or EXport 9-4000.

Eld. T. R. Jefferson, Pastor
Bertha S. Wright, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The Staunton River Union Meeting is appointed to be held with Cane Creek Church the 5th Sunday in May, 1960, and Saturday before (May 28 and 29).

The church is located on Highway 726 near Ringgold, Virginia. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Fannie D. Wiles, Church Clerk

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Harmony Primitive Baptist Church will be held, God willing, all day Saturday and Sunday, May 28 and 29, 1960. Services to begin Saturday at 10:30 A. M. and Sunday at 10:00 A. M.

The church house is located one mile East of Huntington city limits, on Cedarcrest Drive, about one quarter mile off U. S. Route 60, at Eastern Heights Shopping Center. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

Elder J. R. Lane, Moderator,
110 Harrison Court,
Huntington, W. Va.
Mrs. Mildred Stanley, Clerk,
1046 Cedarcrest Drive,
Huntington 5, W. Va.

UPPER COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The Upper Country Line Union Meeting is appointed to be held with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church the fifth Sunday in May, 1960. Services will be held Saturday night at 7:30, and Sunday beginning at 10:00 A. M.

The meeting house is located on Highway 700, between Draper, N. C. and Danville, Va., 15 miles West of Danville.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

Mrs. P. I. Froude, Mich.	$ 2.00
Harry T. Vories, Calif.	5.00
Mrs. D. M. Radford, Va.	1.00
Bessie G. Clark, Md.	3.00
Mrs. L. B. Haneline, Ky.	1.00
Mrs. Tom Strickland, Ala.	1.00
Mrs. Catharine MacKenzie, Canada	5.00
Mrs. M. L. Lucas, Ala.	10.00
Mrs. Ethel Werner, N. J.	2.00
Mrs. C. E. Lawrence, Mass.	1.00
Mr. and Mrs. Walter Black, Neb.	1.00
Mrs. David S. Blackwell, Ind.	2.00
Mrs. P. O. Clowdus, Ala.	4.00

CORRECTION

On page 52 of the March, 1960 issue, the name should be Mary W. Somers instead of Mary W. Sowers. We regret that we mistook the M for a W in the signature. Please write the correction in your copy — J. D. W.

Danville, Virginia May, 1960

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YOU CAN HELP US

When a subscriber does not renew his subscription before, or a short time after, it is due, we are at a loss to know whether to continue to send the paper. We do not want anyone to miss any of the issues when they desire to have them, but the cost of printing, etc. is such that we must hold the number printed to within the limits of our active list, with but few extras. Our brethren and friends can help by:

1. Checking their expiration date, and renewing promptly; or notifying us they will renew later.
2. If the paper is no longer desired, by notifying us, and if in arrears, to send the amount due.
3. If the person receiving the paper dies, and the family does not desire to continue to receive the paper, by notifying us to discontinue the paper at the expiration date.

Our brethren and friends can also help by securing new subscribers, and by their donations to the Endowment Fund and the Indigent Fund. Also by sending experiences and articles suitable for publication.

We will appreciate the efforts of the brethren and friends in these matters — Editors.

EDITORIAL

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." (Heb. 2:14, 18.)

The reason assigned for taking part of the flesh and blood of his brethren was that he might destroy the devil and deliver them. The God of Israel is the God of purpose, despite all the talk belittling the purposes of our God. He did not take the part of angels, but he did take upon himself the seed of Abraham. Taking the part of angels would not save sinners; his being acquainted with angels would not make him acquainted with the griefs and sorrows of his people. This taking part of the seed of Abraham is a direct fulfillment of the promise of God to his people at the Mount. That promise embraced the sending of Jesus into the world, and that he would come in their nature, be one of them, be like them, and yet not sin in the nature which he took upon himself. This Prophet was to be raised up among them and they were to hear him (Deut. 18:15, 18).

It is well to notice who it was that took part of the same flesh and blood of the children. We must not lose sight of Him taking part of the same. These children were given him in covenant be-

fore the coming of time or creation. How else could he carry out his part in the destruction of the devil and the deliverance of the children, save in taking part of the same flesh and blood of them. There could never be any union between them, had he taken the nature of angels, and we would be mystified about whether he came from God, whether he was God, did we not have him taking this part. We have here the sacred and precious doctrine of the preexistence of him as our Head. Here is the Husband of his bride coming to save her. In the fullness of time God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. (Gal. 4:4, 5) Here is that unity of the Godhead, God sending him forth, he taking part of the flesh and blood of his people.

What a pleasing theme it is to meditate upon, that Jesus came to destroy the devil and to deliver his brethren. It would have been lovely, after what they had endured, to have escaped Pharoah and he stopped at the bounding sea, but how much more lovely that they had the satisfaction of seeing all of his mighty host drowned. It would be lovely, seeing how he has tormented us and hounded us and kept us in bondage, to be delivered from Satan, but what rejoicing there is with poor sinners who are delivered, and who see the destruction of him that caused all of our troubles. Yet, let us not think altogether about our deliverance and his destruction. Let us lay our hands in the nail prints and in his riven side. Better still, come poor sinner and let us look at the cost to him in suffering, his taking upon himself flesh and blood. In the first place, we will consider his being made of a woman. He fell heir to all the things that the woman, through transgression, had brought upon her race. Ah, the love of our Redeemer for his bride. What a price that love caused him to pay for the deliverance of that bride. Job described the life of a man born of a woman as being of a few days and full of trouble (Job 14:1); and certainly this is the lot of all men, including our Saviour. Moreover, he came under the law, being made there by divine appointment and agreement.

These which Jesus came to deliver were in bondage. Not any use for men to talk about having a part in salvation. The only ones that will ever be housed in glory are those that Jesus came to deliver, and they were all in bondage, and had been all of their lives. They were in bondage when he came to deliver. Stop and consider the redeeming love of God in this glorious work. He came to deliver the lawful captives, who were, and had been, in bondage. That is why he came under the law. His people were held under it, and he was made under it with them. Nothing was ever said about them being unlawfully held in bondage. No reflection was ever cast on the law being hard or unjust. As we, the children, were lawfully held in bondage, there must be, if the deliverance stands the test, a lawful Deliverer. This lawful Deliverer we have in Jesus who was made under the law for the expressed purpose of redeeming his people from under the law. If justice is thwarted in this law being broken, then the deliverance would have been a travesty, and the charges against us would still be in force. His having been made under the law in the interest and in the behalf of his people, it made him responsible for her sins. That law demanded death, and he died, thus the redemption and deliverance were both lawful.

His purpose in taking upon himself flesh and blood was to die. Not to die without purpose; not to die haphazardly, no, no, none of that. The deliverance was to come through death, and it was to be Jesus in a flesh and blood body that died. Through death he was to destroy him that had the power of death, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Sinner dost thou see the glorious account here given of the coming of the blessed Lamb of God into the world? And dost thou see how that thou wast made to glory in him who released

thee from this bondage? Dost thou wonder how it came about that thou didst become in bondage? Wonder no longer, dear child of God, for it was through the seduction of this devil that caused thee to fall in the beginning. In this sense is it said that he had power of death. He, through thy weakness, carried you to ruin and bondage. Through thy transgression thou didst become a lawful captive of his, and when the life that is in Jesus was made manifest in thee thou didst become in bondage and fear, and from then forward had no liberty. But at the proper time He came to thee; and delivered you when it did look like to you that none was to be had. This death came when sin entered into the world; it brought death to all, for that all did sin.

His coming down and meeting death is fraught with many lovely things. As Samson went down to get his wife, so did Jesus visit the earth to get his bride; and in the way of accomplishing that, death awaited him. Samson's having the lion arise to dispute with him about his travelling that road, is figurative of death disputing with the Saviour. Had it not been that the Spirit of the Lord wrought mightily in him, the result would have been disastrous to Samson. His going over territory that belonged to the lion caused the fury in him to attack; just so, the devil, having power over death, and having all the chosen race as lawful captives, arose in rage against Jesus as he came to release them from death and bondage. Had it not been for the working mightily of strengthening angels, and the glorious power of God wrought in raising him from the dead, he would have lost this battle with death, and all the lawful captives would still be under the sentence of death.

As Samson rent the lion in this battle, it is worthy of notice that he did not have any weapon in his hand. He met the lion with the natural weapons only, and so did Jesus meet death in our nature. Again, let us notice that the Spirit of God wrought mightily that Samson might win, and that it was through His working hitherto (John 5:17) that the Saviour wrought deliverance from the death and bondage that held us.

Death was the appointed end to his bride. It stood in the way, and it had to be met before Samson could get to his bride, and Christ had to meet it in order to abolish death, — which death was over all, for all had sinned. Even meeting death was agreeable to each of them. Each went on their way, Jesus from the triumph over it to his exaltation; Samson on to his bride. As Samson came back, after working out the details of getting his bride, he was turned aside to where he had wrought with death. It is said in Jewish history that about twelve months elapsed from the time of his going down to his coming back. This was time enough for the flesh of the lion to be gone with the bone structure left intact. History tells us that it was the custom for wild bees to build comb and place honey in bony carcases like unto this. However, in this instance, it was not custom that caused this anymore than it was custom that caused the fish to be near by and to swallow Jonah, or the hornet to drive the Hivite, Canaanite and Hittite out from before the children of God (Exo. 23:28; Deut. 7:-20). It was the Lord that sent these bees to this spot, to give, First. Samson a strengthening food as he came on the long journey. Second. To show us the power of God and the wisdom of God in giving Jesus the sweetness that came after his death. As Samson came away eating from the scenes of death, so Jesus came from the tomb enjoying the sweetness to be had as he met once again his brethren, having, by his death, forever set them free from any more molestation from the evil one. As Samson gave his parents to eat of the honey and comb, which was the sweetness that came from the battle, and as they did not know from whence it came, just so does Jesus give us to eat of the good things that his death brought us, we knowing nothing about how divine love conquered the enemy that stood over us.

It behooved him to be made like unto his brethren. This word **behoove** means "to be binding on"; as also in Luke 24:46; in this being bound to this end, He owed it to his word or agreement to his Father, and this agreement to his father carrying obligations; he likewise owed it to his brethren to be made like unto them. To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. (John 18:37) Here, again, is that Prophet that the Lord would raise up; and here he corroborates the testimony of God in promising that Prophet, and his actual existence in the world. His being born to that end is conclusive proof of the predestination of God in procuring the salvation of his people. Too, it shows how that all of the resources of heaven, all the riches of God's providence and grace, were pledged to insure this deliverance of those in bondage and the destruction of him that had the power of death.

And now, dear children of God, draw near with a full assurance of faith and let us sum up this glorious work of Jesus. Let us look at the ultimate object of this being made flesh and blood like unto his brethren. It was not to acquire the riches of this world; it was not to add an enhancement to the glory of God; it was not to experiment with creatures to see what they would or could do. It was for this alone that he took part of the same, to wit, That he through death might destroy him that had power of death, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. This is the work of Jesus Christ our Saviour. He is now being made manifest as having abolished death (2 Tim. 1:10), as having accomplished what he came to do in the body prepared him. He has come in a body of flesh, and he has conquered him that first conquered us. He has done for us, while in a body like unto ours, what we did not do in our Father Adam; and, by reason of the fall, can not now do. In his body, he has conquered and won a glorious victory over death, and over him that had power of death. He has come in a body of flesh and blood and has by his own death, conquered death itself. Will wonders never cease, will the double for all Jerusalem's sins ever cease to be made manifest unto us?

It was his faithfulness that caused him to take on himself flesh and blood, and to act as our representative in faithfulness while in this body, thus becoming unto us a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God. But wait a moment, tried saint. That is not all. He also has made reconciliation for the sins of the people. He has come as the Mediator between God and man. He humbleth himself that he might behold the things that are in heaven and in earth. (Psa. 113:6) Thus he passed by the nature of angels, and took upon himself the seed of Abraham, becoming the servant of his people, humbling himself unto death, even the death of the cross, that he through death might deliver them from death and from bondage.

He did all this for us, having suffered while being tempted, that he might succor us that are tempted. He tasted death, but he conquered him that had power of death, and thus became our great High Priest, having endured and stood through all of the raging of the devil, whose work, with himself, he came to destroy; that he might deliver his brethren, and present the whole church to himself not having spot or wrinkle or anything like it, — keeping it, succoring it, being touched with the feeling of every infirmity, sin excepted.

Seeing that we have such a high priest, let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. May the dear Lord give us of his fullness that, as he arose from the death grave, and entered into the joys of being received up into glory, we may also be raised to newness of life, to eat the honey and the comb, to feel the surety

and safety that comes to us from his having met and conquered death.

Written at the request of Brother Harry Ward of Snow Hill, Maryland, church.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

REV. 22:17

"And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come." What Spirit? Whose bride saith Come, and to whom do they say Come? These questions are involved in the correct elucidation of the text. The Spirit of the gospel, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. The Spirit which is life and immortality. The Spirit which moved on the face of the great deep when all was without form and void. The Spirit that breathed upon the slain, in Ezekiel's vision, and quickened the dry bones. God, by his Holy Spirit, in the holy calling of all the heirs of salvation, says "Come." Does not invite them to come, but says, Come, with the same power and effect as when God said, "Let there be light." He speaks the word and it stands fast: he commands and it is done. An invitation leaves the person or people invited to accept or decline, as they may choose; but in the calling of God by the Spirit, he saith not unto the seed of Israel, Seek ye my face, in vain:

> "He speaks, and that almighty voice,
> Fulfills his great decrees."

The dead shall hear his voice, and they that hear shall live. At his voice the South gives up, the North resigns; from the rising of the sun to the extreme West, all who are called by his name, come with singing to Zion, and with everlasting joy upon their head. And the bride says Come; and as the bride is the Lamb's wife, and she is one with him, "They twain shall be one;" she has the Spirit of Christ. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." But, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Therefore, to what the Spirit of Christ says, the bride, the church of God, responds; therefore the Spirit says, come, and the Spirit in the bride says come. And this is said to every one that is called by Christ's name, as we have seen. Come where? To the River of Life, to the Holy City, New Jerusalem, to the Tree of Life, to the Fountains of living waters. Not to the mountain that might be touched, but to the heavenly Jerusalem described in this and the preceding chapter; to the spirits of just men made perfect; to the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel; to Jesus, the Mediator, to God, the Judge of all.

This calling of the Spirit and bride is not to the law, to Moses, to human aid — not to some wooden-bench, said to be anxious — not to a system of works; for they were all there before they were called experimentally by the quickening operation of the Holy Spirit. But, come from death to life; from darkness to light; from bondage to liberty; from sin to holiness; from Moses to Christ. **And let him that heareth say, Come.** For they that hear shall live; they live by the spirit of life and immortality which distinguishes the Spirit and the bride. All who hear are brought manifestly into the unity of the faith, and God teaches them a pure language, and in perfect harmony with the language of the Spirit and the bride — he that heareth will reiterate the language of the Spirit. And let him that is athirst come. The river of life flows from the throne of God and the Lamb to supply the thirsty in the New Jerusalem, with its streams which make glad the city of God.

The dead do not thirst; none but the living can desire or appreciate the living waters of the New Jerusalem, to the fountains of which the Lamb that is in

the midst of the throne shall lead his flock, and beside the which he maketh them to lie down in green pastures. And as all who have an ear to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches, are welcome to hear, are of those who are addressed, so the gospel, with all its promises, provisions and privileges, is addressed to those who have a desire for them; for none desire or thirst for them until quickened and made alive by the life giving Spirit of our God. To hunger and thirst after righteousness is a blessed state for a poor sinner to be in. Poor as they may feel, they are called to Come to the waters and buy wine and milk, without money and without price. **And whoever will, let him take the water of life freely.** As none but the living can thirst; so neither can any in an unquickened state have a **will** a desire for the salvation which is of God. We have seen in our investigation of the first text, that God only can work in us to will and to do, or to make us a willing people, in the day of the Redeemer's power; therefore **whoever will,** is a subject of quickening power and saving grace, and let him take the water of life.

How, conditionally? O, no; there are no conditions resting on the creature. If he has a hearing ear, God has furnished it. If he is thirsty, God has made him so. No man has power to make himself thirsty, and especially no dead man has that power, as all unquickened sinners are like the carnal Jews, without a will to drink of the waters which flow from Christ the Rock of our salvation, it is sufficiently discriminating to say, and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life **freely.** It flows freely, and it is without money and without price, and therefore the poor, the helpless, the wretched, and those who have nothing to purchase it with, are welcome to take it freely; and they must have it freely, unconditionally, and without fee or reward, or not at all.

"For I testify unto every one that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book." This is a fearful testimony which Jesus has sent his angel to testify in the churches. Should we add a single condition, to be performed by the creature to entitle him to the water of life, we add to what is written; and whatever we may teach or practice, without a clear, "Thus saith the Lord," is an adding to the words of the prophecy of this book; and all who do it shall receive at God's hand the plagues which are written. Of the nature of these plagues we cannot speak particularly in this already extended article. But it is spoken to those in the churches who should be rebuked and chastised when they presumptuously add to what God has said, or teach for doctrine the commandments of men.

"And if a man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy. God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life, and out of the Holy City, and from the things which are written in this book. The **Book of Life** in this case, as we understand, means the record of the living in Jerusalem, not the record of eternity, in which all the members of Christ are written, and from which they can never be blotted out; but the living in Jerusalem, or those in fellowship, and who have the privilege of his house. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. None even of the children of God are entitled to the fellowship of the church of God, and the privileges of his house, who walk not in obedience to the authority of Christ, as laid down in the New Testament. If they walk not according to this rule, they become the subjects of discipline; and if they persist in their unruly course they are cut off from fellowship, and their part is taken out of the church, and as long as they continue thus they are to the church of God as heathen men and publicans. They being out of the bounds of the church find for their companions,

dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers, and whatsoever loveth and maketh a lie. This is not what is called falling from grace; for if they are subjects of the grace of God, they shall be brought back with weeping; but they fall from works, for want of grace to preserve them in the order and fellowship of the church of God.

Many who have had a name to live, and who have been recognized as orderly members of the church, by disorder have forfeited their **part** in having a name to live, and as being entitled to the privileges of the church in her gospel order. Therefore take heed, and let him that standeth beware lest he fall — not from grace, but from his steadfastness in the truth.

Henry County, Va., March 25, 1859

Brother Beebe — I am a stranger to you in the flesh, but hope that I am not a stranger in spirit. Will you please give your views on Ecc. xii. 5? "Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail; because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets."

Mary A. Jones

Reply to Sister Mary A. Jones — We have understood the wise man to be describing in a highly figurative way the infirmities and declining mental and physical powers and faculties incidental to old age, as explanatory of the evil days in which human life is bereft of its principal natural enjoyments. Having set forth in the preceding verses, by very striking similitudes, the shades and obscurity of the mind to earthly pleasures, the dimmed light of the eye, decayed teeth or grinders, ceasing to perform their wonted functions, the common avenues of earthly enjoyment closed, wearisome nights, and early rising with the voice of the bird. This is very common with the aged, and the enjoyment of music is low. **Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high.** Easily alarmed at every thing presented to the mind which they cannot comprehend; **and fears be in the way.** In the imbecility of second childhood, how easily alarmed at that which would have occasioned no uneasiness to them in their more youthful days. **And the almond tree shall flourish.** The almond tree is the earliest tree to blossom, and when in full bloom is like the peach tree, very white. The almond tree is in full blossom, and perfectly white, before any of its leaves appear, thus giving it a more snowy whiteness of appearance.

How strikingly this similitude describes the hoary head of the aged. "The Hebrew name of the almond, **shakad,** comes from a verb signifying to make haste, to be in a hurry, to awake early. To the forwardness of the almond tree there seems to be a reference in Jer. i. 11, 12. The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Jeremiah, what seest thou? And I said, I see a rod of an almond tree. Then the Lord said unto me, Thou hast well seen; for I will hasten my word to perform it." (Enc. of R. K.) **And the grass-hopper shall be a burden.** The smallest objects will be magnified to enormous size, and in the natural impatience of old age shall feel depressed and sadly burdened by very small objects. **And desire faileth.** As we draw near the margin of the grave, with whitened locks, dimmed eyes, decayed teeth, enfeebled limbs, exhausted energies, and tottering frame, the yielding mind at length relinquishes its desire for terrestrial things, having no more capacity to enjoy them, now only waits and longs for a change that shall launch them into a new and more vigorous mode of existence. **Because man goeth to his long home.** Or because he is mortal and destined to leave his short, transitory abode, which has passed swifter than the weaver's shuttle, and he goes to his final and everlasting destiny. **And the**

mourners go about the streets. Earthly ties the most dear and cherished are dissolved, the loved one has passed away, and those who survive are reminded that they are rapidly following in their course, by seeing the mourners continually going about the streets.

(Editorials by Elder Gilbert Beebe, June 15, 1859.)

ORDINATION OF AN ELDER

Pursuant to the call from Mt. Olive Church, Stockdale, Texas, for a presbytery to examine Brother Gerald D. Shipman for the office of an ordained minister, and ordain him if found qualified:

The church met, and after singing and prayer by Elder H. L. Ballard, Brother Gerald Shipman preached; followed by his father, Elder J. W. Shipman. After which the church went into regular order of conference. Under new business, called for the ordination of Brother Shipman to take place at once. Sister Lela Culpepper was chosen as spokesman for the church.

The Presbytery was organized with Elder J. W. Shipman as Moderator; and Elder E. B. Ault, Clerk. Elder H. L. Ballard and Deacon C. L. Chambers were others in the Presbytery. Sister Culpepper then presented Bro. Gerald Shipman to the Presbytery. The prayer was by Elder J. W. Shipman, with laying on of hands by the Presbytery; and the charge was delivered by Elder E. B. Ault.

Elder Gerald Shipman was then delivered back to the church as an ordained minister, and is recommended to all of our churches we are in fellowship with. The presbytery was then discharged.

Done the third Sunday in August, 1959.

Elder J. W. Shipman, Mod.
Elder E. B. Ault, Clerk

OBITUARIES

ALICE ASHWORTH DAVIDSON

Sister Alice Ashworth Davidson died November 10, 1959, at the age of 76; the widow of Winburn H. Davidson, of Sandy Level, Virginia, who died in June, 1941. She is survived by five sons: Tony, of Philadelphia; Beverley, Gretna, Va.; Clifford, Front Royal, Va.; Giles, St. Albans, W. Va.; and Herndon, Sandy Level, Va. Four daughters: Mrs. L. H. Roane, Winston-Salem, N. C.; Mrs. W. S. Johnson, Martinsville, Va.; Mrs. C. W. Linthicum, Philadelphia; and Mrs. E. S. Fogle, Martinsburg, W. Va., with whom she spent the last two months of her life: her youngest daughter and husband, Dr. Fogle, and two sons, so tenderly cared for her in every way humanly possible for her comfort. She also leaves three brothers: Posy Ashworth, Danville, Va.; Leonard, Covington, Va.; and John, Troutville, Virginia; and two sisters: Mrs. R. L. McCrichard and Mrs. S. T. Gilbert, of Sandy Level, Va.

After her husband's death, the youngest son, Herndon, and his wife, Sister Beulah, made it possible for her to maintain her home by living near her on the farm, and being so kind to her in every way. Sister Davidson was received into the fellowship of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church by letter June 11, 1944, where she filled her seat whenever possible. She was a lovely sister, a good neighbor, and loved by all, especially by the household of faith. We believe she is asleep in Jesus, and will sweetly rest until He comes again without sin unto salvation. We feel she was blessed to see the Lord in her last moments, she said, "I am so happy." May the Lord bless and comfort her loved ones, and reconcile us all to say, "Thy will be done."

Funeral services were held at Springfield Church, conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench; and burial was in the family cemetery, where she was laid beside her husband.

Written by Sister Annie Tosh

RESOLVED, That a copy be put on our church records; a copy be sent to the papers for publication; and a copy be sent to the family.

Done by order of Springfield Church in conference.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
R. C. Dalton, Clerk

VICTOR DALE FUGATE

Chief Aviation Electronics Technician Victor Dale Fugate was born in Canton, Texas, July 7, 1927. He was a member of the picked crew of the U. S. Navy plane which collided with the Brazilian airliner over Rio de Janerio, Brazil, on February 25, 1960. He passed away enroute to the hospital after he was removed from the tail of the plane, at the age of 32 years, 7 months, and 18 days.

He was a veteran navy man and had served his country on the waters and in the air, at home and abroad, on the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, and in many foreign waters. He was held in high esteem by his officers and crew members, and by all who knew him. The chief of the Navy Squadron personally accompanied his body to Canton, Texas, and watched over it

until it was buried.

Memorial services were held at the Brazilian Naval Ministry, Rio de Janerio, Brazil, on February 29th, and also at Washington, D. C., on March 1st, for all who were killed in the crash. Later the bodies were sent to their respective places of burial.

Brother Victor Dale was a member of Cool Springs Primitive Baptist Church, near Canton, Texas. Funeral services were held on March 8th at the First Baptist Church in Canton, with Elder P. E. Weisinger, officiating. Elder Weisinger spoke comforting words to the bereaved, and the large congregation of friends who filled the church. Interment was in White Rose Cemetery, in Wills Point, Texas.

Survivors include his wife, Edythe McCarty Fugate; one son, Thomas Calvin Fugate; two daughters, Ginger and Vickie Fugate, of Lexington Park, Maryland; his father, Calvin W. Fugate, of Canton, Texas; his mother, Mrs. Ruth Mason, San Leandro, Calif.; three brothers, James D., of Hayward, Calif., Ronald and Paul, of Canton; one sister, Mrs. Patsy Brasiel, Oklahoma City, Okla.; his grandfather, Elder W. T. Fugate, Palestine, Texas; and a number of close relatives, and a host of friends. Written by one who loved him dearly,

Velma J. Fugate

"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." (Romans 10:15)

One man; who stands uprightly,
Who towers in a throng:
Whose record stands out brightly;
Who was destined to belong.

He's run the carnal gamut
With its weakness and sin:
He's fought the noble battle
That is foolishness to men.

He denounces pomp and glory
That men take to be their own;
He knows their eyes are blinded
To that ever-living Stone.

He speaks against self-righteousness,
The foolishness of pride;
He teaches real humility
Where the seeds of love abide.

He asks for very little,
And he gladly gives his all:
His life is working, waiting
For the day when God will call.

He's husband, father, loved one,
A loyal friend, and true;
He's pastor, elder, brother,
To a band that numbers few.

His heart is pure and humble;
His faith and hope are strong;
His message is God-given,
Unless my thoughts be wrong.

He's lived a life worth living
With the blessings God did send:
The gift of grace upholding,
He'll endure unto the end.

One man — a lighted candle
One man — for all to see;
One man — a living pattern:
One man, I'd like to be.

Victor Dale Fugate

(Composed in honor of the 80th birthday of his grandfather, Elder W. T. Fugate, October 11, 1959.)

ULYSSES S. LOYD

Brother Ulysses S. Loyd was born April 24, 1886, in Alton, Kansas; and died December 24, 1959, in Morland, Kansas, at the age of 73 years and nine months. He moved to Missouri with his family in 1887, where they lived for five years. In 1892, the family moved to Leland, Kansas, where he remained until he finished his common school education. On April 17h, 1907, he was united in marriage to Nellie Clark. To this union were born five sons, three of whom died in infancy. One son, Dale, lives in Wichita, Kansas; his other son, Ralph, lives in Ottawa, Kansas.

Lyss, as he was affectionately called, taught in Graham County schools from 1902 until 1947, when he retired from the teaching profession. During this period of his life he attended school at Fort Hays, Kansas, State Teachers College and at Emporia State Teachers College. He was County Superintendent of Public Instruction for four years, from 1915 to 1919.

He was preceded in death by his father and mother, three infant sons, five brothers, and one sister.

He is survived by his widow, Nellie, of the home; his two sons and their wives; six grandchildren; two brothers: Perry, of Salina, Kansas, and George, of Morland, Kansas; and a host of other relatives and friends.

Brother Loyd was received into the Pleasant Valley Church of Kingman, Kansas, by relation on Saturday before the fifth Sunday in August, 1937. He was ordained to the office of Deacon, July 7, 1957. The presbytery consisted of Elder C. M. Haygood of Ballinger, Texas, Elder W. A. Winfrey of Liberal, Kansas, Deacons H. F. Cate, Wichita, Kansas, and Holden Hatchett, Mangum, Okla. In this office he attended the Church faithfully and humbly, always considerate of his brethren and any visitors of the

Church which he loved; this love showing by his faithful attendance and his attentiveness to the truth wherever talked of preached.

His absence will be greatly felt by all who knew him, but our loss is his gain, and we know that the great Creator and righteous Dispenser of all things will truly watch over the remains of his sleeping dust until the dawn of the resurrection morning, when He comes to raise, own, and crown his heirs into that upper and better kingdom above, where everlasting praise shall be alone due the worthy name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We feel that this dear brother will be counted among that blood washed throng of the general assembly and Church of the First Born.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer, and he hopes the few feeble words spoken were of some comfort to the loved ones left behind. If so, they were spoken by and of the Holy Spirit.

We feel that our beloved Deacon and brother was indeed a child of promise, and by his fruits was recognized as one of whom the scripture spoke as an elect, a redeemed sinner, an exhalted spirit, and one who had passed from death unto life because he loved the brethren.

Brother Loyd was sick only three hours before his spirit returned to the Maker who gave it. He attended the last meeting in Kingman November 1, 1959.

Funeral services were held at his home town in the Methodist church of Morland, Kansas. This building was the only place large enough for a man so well respected and loved, as the crowd attending his final rites clearly showed. He was laid to rest in a cemetery some ten miles from his home.

Written by
Elder W. A. Winfrey

SISTER LUDIE VEAZEY

Sister Ludie Veazey, wife of Brother R. L. Veazey, was born January 1, 1872, and died October 2, 1959.

She professed a hope in Christ in 1914, and this hope of the Love, Mercy, and Grace given her in the forgiving of her sins, remained with her until the Lord saw fit, in his alwise providence, to call her from this world of afflictions and take her to himself. She called me to her bedside and said, "Pappy (that is what she called me for years), I don't want you to grieve after me, for I am willing and ready to go; and it won't be long before He will call you, and we will be together, free from all our afflictions and sufferings in this life.

She was a true and loving companion for 71 years. She has left me here to walk and wander from place to place alone; yet I will not say alone, for I feel that the Lord is with me, to guide me and uphold me the rest of my days here on this earth; and I pray that he will keep me by his love, mercy and grace, and prepare me, and give me as sweet a farewell to this life, and that glorious hope of entering into His presence, as he did my dear and precious companion.

I am now in my 94th year, and my days on earth are nearing an end, and I hope and pray that when the end comes, I can fold my hands on my breast and say, "Come welcome death." I want to join with my dear companion in praising the Lord for what he has done for us.

I will close, as I don't want to take up too much space in the paper, by asking the dear brethren and sisters to remember me in their prayers — a poor, old, unworthy brother saved by grace, if saved; not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by the grace of God which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world was framed.

Her funeral was preached by her beloved pastor, Elder R. L. Biggs, of Nashville, Tenn. the 1st Sunday in October, 1959, at Walnut Fork Church, assisted by Elders J. N. Darnall and Paul Poyner, at her request; after which she was laid to rest in the Walker Cemetery, to await the coming of Jesus, when her precious body will be raised and fashioned like unto her precious Saviour, a spiritual body, and will dwell with and praise Him forever. Written by her husband,

R. L. Veazey, Sr.

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God in his infinite wisdom and power has seen fit to call from our midst our beloved sister, Amanda Pickeral, who was the daughter of Oliver C. and Lucy Richman Cassada. Her husband, Charles Lewis Pickeral, died in 1937. She was born in 1869, and died October 24, 1959, making her stay on earth 90 years. Surviving are four sons, four daughters, twenty - four grandchildren, thirty - five great grandchildren, and ten great, great grandchildren; also one sister and one brother.

She united with the Springfield Primitive Baptist Church December 29, 1923. Funeral services were conducted at the Gretna, Virginia, Christian church, and burial was in the Gretna Burial Park. Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be put on our church records; a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication; and a copy be sent to the family.

Done by order of the church in conference.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
R. C. Dalton, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 128 DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1960 NO. 6

PLEASE CHECK YOUR
EXPIRATION DATE
IF IT IS 6/60 IT
EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

PREDESTINATION

La Mesa, New Mexico
Dec. 18, 1931

Dear Brethren Editors: — A dear brother in California asked me to write an article on the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things and send it to the Signs. In writing on this most sublime subject I feel I am too unlearned to attempt to write upon this, the most wonderful point of the doctrine of the Bible, and besides the weakness and inability of my mind, it seems that the dear brethren for the last several years have ably written on this point of doctrine, and at this time I do not think it could be more forcibly defined than has been done, but I will try in my weak way to contribute a few words for the consideration of the editors and the many readers.

First, I will say I know nothing about any predestination which is not **absolute.** I have heard by the hearing of the ear that there is more than one kind of predestination: one is conditional, one is limited to that of man, one is limited to all good things; that is, all good things are and were predestinated, and of course that leaves me to wonder what rules the evil things, and what are the evil things. My mind has for the last twenty-five years been led to speak of the great and wonderful mercy, love and providence of God to his little ones here in time, and the final perseverance of his little ones to glory by his unchangeable and divine grace, and how that God did by his everlasting love, according to his immutable purpose, redeem us by the appearing of the great God in the form of man, the man Christ Jesus, who was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, and condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Rom. viii. 4) The law was just, holy and good, but the flesh was weak, frail and depraved. He sent his Son into the world to save his people from their sins, and, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, it by wicked hands crucified and slew him. By what? By wicked hands, not by good hands, but by wicked hands, and that according to his determinate counsel. You good fellows, who were afraid to pick up sticks on the Sabbath day, you who would condemn the righteous for plucking the ears of corn on the Sabbath day, yea, you did it, and how? Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, God's eternal purpose must be fulfilled, and they did it in condemning the Just, and it was for benefit, and was one of the "all things" that work together for good to them who are the called according to his purpose. It must needs be some one whom he foreknew, some great multidude embraced in his foreknowledge and counsel prior to the execution, hence the apostle said, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he (his Son) might be the firstborn among many brethren." — Rom. viii. 29. The image of the Son of God, which these brethren must be conformed to.

Jesus was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, was that the image under

consideration? I think not, but the divine image he assumed in his mighty resurrection, that is the blessed image every one embraced in the counsel of God shall awake with, and they are the ones who shall appear with that image spotless, and here is where the poor little trembling child's hope is concerned; this is the predestinated image to which the called according to his purpose attain. They are the ones of whom it is said, "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Paul said again, Called with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace. He adopted us into the perfect image of his Son, which adoption is that one taken from the Adam family and adopted into another family. The adopted heir is by the law of adoption a legal heir with the family, and has a perfect right to the promise, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." He has predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, and the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace, in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh ALL things after the counsel of his will; that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. (Eph. i. 5, 6; ii. 12)

The above has been my meat and drink for more than thirty years, and in all that time I have never had time to look for a limited God, never had time to try and see just what a carnal mind could find in the form of a conditional predestination, but all I have in my weak mind ever found was that which pertained to the perfection of God, and in all my poor attempts to speak in his name I have never found anything satisfactory to me but the unlimited sovereignty of God. While I have traveled along the King's highway (I Sam. vi. 12) I have feared to turn to the right or to the left, and have been satisfied with the thought that God in his infinite wisdom and purpose would be glorified in all his attributes. Often when I hear brethren or friends arguing on predestination, and seem to want to arrange it to suit the carnal mind, or the general idea of the world, it makes me think that surely they have not been taught of God the truth of his perfect sovereignty, for they seem to want to cull out some of the most sublime things on record, such as the selling of Joseph by his brethren to the Ishmaelites, the raising up of Pharoah, David's sin in numbering Israel, David having Uriah slain in battle in order to get his wife, Samson killing the thirty Philistines, Gideon in the slaughter of the Midianites, the woman killing the man Sisera with a nail and hammer, Peter's denial of his Lord, when he cursed and swore he did not know the man, the adultery of Lot with his two daughters, the nations which were destroyed by David's army and the most cruel and heinous crime that we have any account of in history, the slaying of the Just, the man Christ Jesus, a man in whom no guile was found in his mouth. Thousands of things have come to pass which we look at as black sin, which God in his purpose and counsel determined to be done, and all work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. What right have we to set bounds for the Almighty, seeing he is Ruler, and works all things after the counsel of his will? It is sufficient for me, and I feel for all the true Israel of God, to stand still and know that he is God, and that he will do as it is his infinite mind and purpose to do. He in his mercy hath given us a gracious hope in the final resurrection at the last day that we shall awake with his likeness, and then be satisfied. Oh what a glorious

thought! that when the last trumpet shall sound the dead in Christ shall arise in that glorious image of him, and shall see him as he is, and be like him. (I John ii. 2) We shall bear his image, for we were chosen to that end. For, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." — Eph. i. 4, 5.

Not according to that which we have or can do, not for any foreseen good in us, but according to his own free will and purpose. I cannot for the life of me see why any sensible, unbiased person can have the audacity to stand up in the face of the undeniable record and advocate anything contrary to the doctrine of predestination of all things, for in the quotations above is pictured our eternal and everlasting salvation prefixed on the certainty of God's design, freely and unchangeably. The certainty of his decree is fixed to the everlasting salvation of his elect who were predestinated to be conformed to the image of Jesus, in which all the imps of hell can never destroy one little one, for they were secured by the promise of God in the beginning, or ever the earth was, because they were chosen in him (Jesus) before the foundation of the world. Dear brethren, this is our hope, this is our refuge, and a present help in time of trouble, for our daily experience is that we can only look to him who is the author of our faith. Yea, when we read of the beauty of him, and the love he manifested for us on the cross, who has said to us, Be of good courage, for I have overcome the world, then when we reflect back to our days of sin we can but wonder how such an one could be so gloriously housed in that paradise, there to forever bear the perfect image of Jesus. If left to ourselves and to the goodness of our hands and to the righteousness of our own we would of all men be most miserable, for Paul said, If in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable. In our experience we have learned that in us (that is, in our flesh) there dwelleth no good thing, for that which we can produce in life is of short duration and perishable, as the fig-leaf apron Adam made in the Garden. The doctrine of a certainty is prefixed by every attribute of God. When we preach the gospel of God we fail to declare unto you all the counsel of God if we try to cull out some of the things we in our carnal minds think to be evil, and which seem evil to us, for it is taught that God works **all things** after the counsel of his will. The apostles never did such things, but fearlessly stood firmly upon the decrees of God, and on down the line to the present men have been called to defend the doctrine of the sovereignty of God. I can well remember back fifty years and listening to the old servants of God declaring the predestination of God over all worlds, creatures and things, such men as old Elders W. A. Bowden, J. M. Perkins, R. H. Boaz, and a host of others, who in their last days were put to the test on the doctrine against the introduction of a softening down of the decrees, and how they did preach the certainty of God in the salvation of poor needy creatures, and that by the love, mercy, and according to his everlasting choice in Jesus Christ before the world was, and that the poor little ones would persevere triumphantly to glory, through grace, unto a perfect image of him who died that we might live, for as he was delivered for our offenses, just that surely was he raised again for our justification. Therefore, brethren, our justification, our sanctification, our calling and our final resurrection from the dead will be accomplished in fullness by the same power that raised our Lord Jesus Christ. Then might we exclaim as did the apostle, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all

things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen." — Rom. xi. 33, 36.

I will leave these scattered thoughts to the better judgment of the editors. I have only hinted at the subject, for the end cannot be reached in this short life on earth.

Pray for me, a poor sinner.

J. B. Bowden

(Republished by request of Sister Boyd, of Texas.)

REDEMPTION

Redemption is the work of the Spirit. The only one who has a right to redeem, is the rightful owner. It has God for the author, his Son for the sacrifice, and God's eternal power for its executor. The doctrine is fully shown by the Old and New Testament scriptures; and is given to the heirs of God for their comfort and hope while they travel through the valley of the shadow of death. (Psalm 23:4)

"He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverent is his name." (Psalm 111:9) The prophets looked ahead for the Redeemer who would surely come: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir to all things, by whom also he made the worlds." (Hebrews 1:1, 2)

When we were children, we were in bondage under the elements of the world: "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal. 4:4, 5) "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abaa, Father." (Gal. 4:6)

The Bible does not teach the redemption of all the human family, as some teach; nor does the experience of those who have been born again. The redemption of all the ones who were chosen in Christ, is finished; and there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin — the law has been fulfilled, every jot and tittle. As the prophets looked ahead to the coming of the Redeemer, now those with the spirit of adoption look back and see it done; and thank God through Jesus Christ their Lord for having obtained it for them. No offerings under the law were able to take away sin, they only brought sin to remembrance, but Jesus by his one offering hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. (Hebrews 10:14)

It is a pleasure to look back over our experience to the hour we first believed — after we had sunk to the lowest Hell, and had quit our struggle, and said, O, God, be merciful to me a sinner. Then it was that His arms were under me, and He brought me up out of the horrible pit and the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and has established my goings, and has put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God. "Many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." (Psalms 40:1-3)

Redemption is a personal matter with each individual concerned — it is between him and his God. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you." (1 Peter 1:18-19) And the last three verses tell who and what they are: they were born of corruptible seed, but were born again of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. "But the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." (1 Peter 1:25)

Redemption! what a glorious thought: Christ in us the hope of glory. Not by works, not by silver or gold, but by the shed blood of the glorious Redeemer.

"For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." (Rev. 5:9)

"As for me and my house we will serve the Lord." May the Lord keep us humble, and at His feet forever. Love to the brethren everywhere. Pray for me, and forgive my errors.

Your humble servant,
George L. Weaver

Lincolnton, Ga.

Signs of the Times:

Enclosed is renewal; use the balance for some who are not able to pay.

I always enjoy the good themes in the Signs. I wish I had the time, or would take the time, to shake the cares of this world off, and, with the help of the Spirit, I could write you a letter of appreciation for the good work you are doing in getting out a good periodical. It is just about all the preaching I get here.

May the good Lord continue to bless you all, that you may continue in the paths of righteousness as it is in Christ Jesus.

Gordon H. McGee

Simms, Texas

Dear Editors:

I have felt for some time to write again but afraid it would be an imposition, but will make the attempt, the Lord being my helper. It is written, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," and I believe it to be true. It is also true that none can stay His hand, nor say, What doeth thou. Our God is a God of mercy, truth and love; he is so grand and glorious.

If we are not led by the heavenly Master we go astray. This verse of the 119 Psalm is so beautiful, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." I hope I am thankful for the dear ministers of God who are enabled to set forth those things prepared of our Master for his little ones. How sacred these things are to this weak worm of the dust. Our God is a God of love, and we are taught that all things should be done in love, kindness, calmness and humbleness; and my experience is if they are not done in this manner, it is wrong. We should not render evil for evil, for kindness oftimes heaps coals of fire on individuals, and things are so much better all around. The members of the church which the dear Lord set up here on earth, should be very careful towards one another in all things, and, as much as in them lies, not to offend one of the little ones.

Our little church is so precious to me, and is the highest court of all; and our God is King of all Kings. It is wonderful to go to our little churches and be fed so bountifully; and I am always glad to see the faces of the brethren, and to shake their hands.

. . . I pray the Lord will lead us all in the paths of righteousness, and keep us at his feet; may he bless one and all, is my prayer.

A sister in hope of glory,
Mary Johnson

FOR A SPECIAL PEOPLE

All scriptures are written to the man of God, and are a gift from God to his chosen, or elect, and redeemed people whom he gave to his Son; and his Son shed his blood for their sins.

His blood was shed for a special people: for a people his Father gave him before the world was. There are lots of these people, a number which no man can number; and these are the people that will see heaven. Christ has the key to death: he has the keys to open and no man can shut, or shut and no man can open.

What God does is done forever: Christ has shed his blood for their sins, and not one will be lost, nor one

added. No stake can be moved, nor cord broken. The children which Christ redeemed will sing praise to God and Christ forever.

I was born May 5, 1879, and am 80 years old, and still work seven days a week.

Dr. F. P. Welch
Rt. 1, Box 123
Stanton, Texas

Coleman, Texas

Editors of the Signs of the Times,
and my Dear Brethren:

As it is time for me to renew my subscription to the Signs, I just wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed the reprint of Elder James Hinton's experience in the February issue, "The Lord Teaches His People".

The Holy Scriptures tell us: "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith." I wish every one who wears the name "Old Baptist" would be given to examine himself; and if, after reading the old colored brother's experience, and being given to examine himself, he doesn't see himself one of the least, or the least, I wonder if he has an experience of grace.

God doesn't change. He can't change, because he has forever been infinite, and has forever possessed every attribute of Divine Perfection. Let us remember, "He is not mocked." He is even a "discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart of man."

Holy men of old wrote as they were guided by the Holy Spirit; and being endowed with wisom from above, the prophets preached and spoke of the coming of Christ. It seems to me, according to the Scriptures, that before the flood, before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorra, and before the coming of Christ, that the "sons of God", or "children of Israel", had integrated with other nations, and to worshipping their idols. The old prophets who were taught of God, who were given wisdom to prophesy of Christ's coming, were too "old fashioned" for them. They wanted prophets to speak "smooth things" to them. To my mind "smooth things" are as husk to one with an experience as this old colored brother. It humbles anyone, and he will not try to "lord it over God's heritage". Faith, hope, and charity are manifested by one having such experience, and thus by "works" shows that he does have a hope, or shows that he has been "born again".

If everyone among Primitive Baptists had a deep abiding experience as this old brother, we would see the fruits of what Jeremiah prayed for, "Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old." (Lam. 5:21) When the Lord turns his people unto Him then there will be a "revival", and not until then. Each one has to be "shown again" that "the lame walk, the blind see, the deaf hear, and the poor have the gospel preached unto them." Each and every heaven born child comes to "the acknowledging of the truth, which is after godliness according to the faith of God's elect."

After our Saviour finished the work the Father gave him to do, (and he said himself, "It is finished"), he laid in the grave three days, and came forth from the tomb. He had promised to send the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, or Holy Ghost. He said the "Comforter will guide you in all truth." and will, "take the things of mine and show them unto you." Do we take this lightly and just use it and quote it to fight armenians, or do we feel this deep down in our souls? And if we do feel and realize this "teaching", what kind of a fellow do we find ourselves? Are we as King Saul, a head taller than our brethren? Do we seek to please men, or God? "If we seek to please men then we are not the servants of God." "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates." (2 Cor. 13:5)

I believe the Comforter, or Holy Spirit, causes every heaven born child

to see his weakness — how vile he is, and that he is a sinner in the sight of God. For that reason he desires to be a better person than he sees himself to be. He has a thorn in the flesh to buffet him lest he become exalted that he should say that he knows that he is a child of God; instead of saying he has a hope that he is a child. He desires to know whether he has been "pricked in the heart", or pricked in the head. But we read that the Saviour told the Apostle Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." (2 Cor. 12:9) Then Christ's strength is made perfect in the weakness of his people. Thus it seems that we can understand what the apostle meant when he said, ". . . to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." (Romans 7:18) Has any brother, or anyone on earth, reached a point of perfection that he can do more than Christ, or better than he, when our Saviour said, "Of myself I can do nothing." We know some do claim they can do things; even "do" and receive a blessing, but Christ said that the Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

As Christ has ascended to the Father, he begets whom he will. Do we act and live like one "begotten of an incorruptible seed"? Remember He said, "I will not give my glory to another."; and that means to me, not to anyone any part of his glory: His saints will be glorified with him. "Whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." And that hope is an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and reaches to within the vail whither the forerunner has entered, and is now sitting at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for us according to the will of God. I most certainly believe the only begotten Son of God, Christ Jesus our Saviour, came to earth and did the will of the Father, and now the risen Christ, the man Christ Jesus, is at the right hand of the Father making intercession for us.

Hearing some of the brethren tell their experience, and reading this old colored brother's experience, what heaven born child can refrain from saying, "I know my Redeemer liveth." Brethren I believe this is the work of an All-wise, All-powerful, Sovereign, Eternal God of love, according as he has chosen us in Christ Jesus before the world was; and that through the Holy Spirit he teaches his people. May He have mercy on us, and lead us in peace, righteousness, and truth, that we may ever give Him all praise, honor, and glory. An unworthy servant of his servants in hope of life eternal, if anything at all.

C. U. Landers

El Paso, Texas

Editors,
Signs of the Times,
Danville, Va.

Brethren:

Being time to renew my wife's subscription to Signs of the Times I will take advantage of this opportunity to write a little concerning a project that I believe should appeal to all Primitive Baptists. For quite a long time, Elder E. B. Ault, of Weslaco, Texas, deep in the Rio Grande Valley, has dreamed of some day having a home for elderly, and especially physically unwell Primitive Baptists, where they might spend the evening of life in the most comfort and with the best health possible. He does not propose to limit the advantages of the home to Primitive Baptists of his persuasion or affiliation but extend a welcome to all who are of that faith and persuasion. Elder Ault is willing to make a sacrifice of his earthly possessions in the support and promotion of such home. Of course, accommodations in the home would not be free to those who might enjoy it and be able to pay at least a part of their keep. To put this over will take time and money but more money than time. I personally feel

that it is not a matter to be considered by individual Primitive Baptists but by the several churches which could contribute as churches. I know that there are not many wealthy Primitive Baptists but almost each and every Primitive Baptist in the nation could contribute something to a purse to be raised by the churches of which such persons are members. I would be most gratified and pleased if any and all who read this would write to Elder E. B. Ault, Route 2, Box 23, Weslaco, Texas, and ask for such information as they wish, in addition to telling him what they think of the idea. Many of our ministers, including Elder E. J. Lambert of Winnsboro, Texas, and Elder Wood of the Signs of the Times Staff, are to some extent acquainted with this project. They may be contacted for their views on the matter.

May the God of mercy, love and justice, keep and guide you brethren of the Times Staff in your endeavors.

Hubert T. Faulk
325 West Missouri St.
El Paso, Texas

NOT TO SEND PEACE, BUT A SWORD

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I come not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household." (Matthew 10:34-36)

I am made to wonder if all the dear servants of the blessed Lord have suffered this experience. The religious professors of the world seem to believe that Christ came to earth to try to make peace with the whole human family; and try to persuade them all to believe in him, to repent and believe, and accept his proposition, and all go to heaven — it is now up to them to keep their part of the contract. They seem to believe, or think, that Christ came to earth and redeemed the whole human family from the fall which Adam our federal head plunged us into; that Christ restored all back on the same footing as Adam was before he transgressed God's law which was given him in the garden of Eden. They say that Adam could have kept that law and not have fallen into condemnation; and that now since they have been redeemed from the condemnation which Adam brought on them, it is now up to them to keep the law: which they can and must keep, and God will save all that will do so; that all has been done for them that can or will be done, and now it is up to them to save themselves from everlasting condemnation or death in hell.

But such a theory is all of the carnal mind of men, it is just opposite to the things of the spirit — to the things our blessed Lord has said in our text. He is saying that he sent a sword to separate his elect from the reprobate; and to set them at variance one against the other. In the 6th chapter of 2nd Corinthians we read, "Be ye not unequally yoke together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

So when the good Lord calls his elect out from among the world, it sets the world at variance against them; and in many cases his own family is set against him, and become his worst foes. This is what hurts him: when they turn

against him for the truth's sake, which he is bound to contend for. It adds so much to his suffering; yet they do it ignorantly, not knowing just what they are doing. We often ask the Lord, as Stephen did when he was stoned to death by the enemies of the truth: "Lay it not to their charge for they know not what they do."

Christ our blessed Lord spoke a parable, saying, "But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed: for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." Then he says, "A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: and he sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. So that the servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord said to his servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper. "And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

So we see that a man cannot and must not hold anything between the service and worship of his blessed Lord. This does not mean to hate them in a natural or material sense, so as not to love them and provide for them in a material way, but natural love can go no farther than nature. The Lord did not have this under consideration, but with the spiritual mind to hate everything that is evil even in your father, mother, children, brothers, sisters, and wife, and the evil that is in your own life, and love nothing but your heavenly Father; who is to be loved with all the soul, all the heart, all the mind and all the strength, so leaving no love for anything else.

James says, "Ye adulters and adultresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God." Matthew says that no man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. When God through Christ takes up his abode in his elect, in their souls or hearts, Satan is cast out, for God's Spirit and Satan cannot dwell in the same individual at the same time. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" It is also said that if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his. The Lord's servants who have the Spirit of Christ dwelling within them, are clothed with the sword of truth. A sword is a weapon to fight with, which our Lord sends to defend his truth; and when this is done, it sets the ungodly at variance against them, and in many cases, their own families; which hurts worse than all the rest. If they only knew how much the dear old servants of the Lord had to do or suffer, they no doubt would treat them with kindness, sympathy and respect. They usually regret after the old soldier has passed on, and give him honor; but they get no honor while they live and are fighting the battle. How true it is, as Jesus said, that a prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house.

It seems that the more we are given

to understand the greatness, wisdom, power, goodness, and mercy of our God, the more we suffer because of the imperfections, the sins, and the wretchedness of our human nature; as Solomon says, "For in wisdom is much grief, and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow." So, as we live and learn, the more and more we are afflicted with grief and sorrow; but all is set in God's purpose and decrees, and is all working to the good of them that love God. When the ungodly world persecuted and killed the prophets and apostles, and crucified our blessed Lord, no doubt they thought they were doing God's service. It seems that it has pleased the Lord to seal the carnal minds of men in darkness to all spiritual truth, and set them at variance against all who are given to see and understand the truth. Our Lord said, "These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues; yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me." (John 16:1-3) He also said, "All things are delivered unto me of the Father; and no man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." (Matthew 11:27)

So no man can by searching, praying, or by any so called good deeds, find out or know God. He must be revealed through and by the Holy Spirit of God through Jesus Christ our blessed Lord. So, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (I Peter 1:3-5) It is a blessed thought to the children of God that they are only waiting now through faith for the time when their blessed Lord will deliver them to the Father, with all their troubles, trials, afflictions, temptations, sorrows, and all sin left behind; where they shall praise Him in a world of bliss for ever and ever. Jacob will be lame no more, Paul will not be bothered with the thorn in the flesh, Job will not be afflicted with sore boils, the blind shall not be blind, nor the deaf deaf, but all will be perfect just like our blessed Lord's body, neither male nor female, but all one in Christ.

H. L. Rogers
Denton, Ky.

"O FOR A CLOSER WALK WITH GOD"

Reidsville, N. C.

I have had some very serious thoughts as I have meditated on the meeting we attended last fourth Sunday. This song has been with me all week:

> "O for a closer walk with God,
> A calm and heavenly frame,
> A light to shine upon the road
> That leads me to the Lamb."

How I long for divine guidance in all things, God surely knows; and if ever I have been given to walk with Him in the way of saving grace, I'm just as sure that he will be with me all my journey through this vain world, as I am that Jesus died for the sins of his elect people; rose for their justification, and is now seated at the right hand of God making intercession for the saints of God according to his holy will and purpose.

It concerns me greatly at times whether or not I have this grace to claim as mine; and I get so low I have to hope I have a hope in His name. In my doubts and fears, I long for more evidence that He is my Lord and my God. So many things I do and say amiss, and I fear that they are evidences that I am not one of his little ones. I surely feel that if I am not one of his that Christ

shed his blood for, there is nothing whatsoever I could do to make me one; then, on the other hand, if He died for me, if I am in that number, then there is nothing that could be done to remove that; and I shall never return from following after you, for even death shall never separate the entire household of God's choice. We may precede one another in the falling asleep in Jesus, but only to be raised in His likeness when the final consumation of all things natural comes: then we shall be together forever with our Lord and our God.

Today I feel he is my Lord and my God, and I feel a oneness with you that love him because he first loved us. I am made to believe that there is absolutely nothing that could take the place of this thing that is to me most precious: no earthly toy, or anything less that the whole counsel of God that is taught and believed among the children of God. Why do they believe it? they are taught in the school of grace; they are taught what the doctrine really means to us. They love to hear it expounded pointedly and plainly. They are taught to believe in the predestination of all things, and to love it.

Jesus said, "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me." Again, he said, "I came not to do mine own will but the will of him that sent me." He came from heaven to seek and to save that which was lost. Doctrine! what a blessed thing to behold! have we seen it with an eye of faith?

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Once this scripture came to me, and I was given to feast upon it, though I am sure I did not understand it in its fullness; but a glimpse was such a rich token to me that I rejoiced that one so weak and poor as I feel to be so much of my time, could be given such thoughts of beauty. "Apples of gold in pictures of silver." Gold, the more it is refined the brighter it shines. Could the process it goes through in being refined be compared with our travel from nature to grace? the chips being cut away making one fit his place in the building.

When a word is fitly spoken, one is moved by the Holy Spirit to speak in this "unknown tongue." Then, when we walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh it is acceptable: the day of God's power is upon us, and we do honor him. "This people have I formed for myself, and they shall shew forth my praise."

"The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
O come and tear it from its throne,
I'll worship only thee.

So shall my walk be close with God,
Calm and serene my frame;
So purer light shall mark the road
That leads me to the Lamb."

Keep me, Lord; help me walk close to thee. There's where I know my sweetest joy — close to thee. There I receive food for strength to carry my cross — close to thee. There my tears are wiped away; there I taste of that love — when I am drawn close to thee. These things I am concerned about: He hears our cry in an accepted time.

Though our road be ever so rough, we just wouldn't exchange with the world. He showed me that clear stream as it flowed so gently: so beautifully it was pictured there. Out of it grew this tree that filled all space; and as I crossed it on those stones — just a step apart they were — the water crystal clear as it bubbled around the stones. Then I was under the tree: and I looked up and could not see the height. I looked out and the branches filled space. There I was satisfied to be. It seems as fresh in my mind today as it did two years ago.

"O for a closer walk with God."

Mrs. Fred Cobb
311 Acme Street,
Reidsville, N. C.

Rt. 2
Monticello, Ga.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I wish to renew my subscription since it is almost out.

I enjoy the Signs so much: it is such a sweet privilege to receive the Signs when I am all cast down, as I often find myself. Some of the experiences I read in the Signs are along the same road I have traveled.

I am in my 78th year, and have been almost down with arthritis, and can hardly walk or write, and my eyes are failing too. I have had a home with the Old Baptists 61 years, and, if I know my poor heart, I love them beyond words; and as long as I am permitted to live here, I want nothing more than just a little place at their feet.

May God give you strength to continue in the good work you are doing; and may the children of God be comforted through this medium.

Please remember me when at the throne of grace.

A sister in hope,
Ollie Callaway

WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST MEETING

The Lord willing, there will be an all day meeting at the WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST MEETINGHOUSE, at Warwick, N. Y., on Saturday, June 11, 1960. The brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

(Elder) A. J. Slauson

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EDITORIAL

THE PARABLE OF JOTHAM

(Judges 9:7-15)

We have been asked to write upon the above subject by a dear brother who is one of our associate editors, and feeling our leanness, we would have much preferred that he had undertaken the task himself, but esteeming him highly in love for the truth's sake, we will give what we have.

After the great victory that God had given to Israel by the hand of Gideon and his three hundred men, as recorded in Judges 7, we find that "The men of Israel said unto Gideon, rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also; for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian. And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: THE LORD SHALL RULE OVER YOU." Judges 8:22-23.

Gideon said this while he was fully

conscious of the great victory which the Lord had wrought for them against the Midianites. For forty years there was peace in Israel, yet they forgot the hand that had delivered them. Gideon also seems to have helped to lead them astray by his folly. Judges 8:24-27. He had many wives and three score and ten sons of his own body begotten. His concubine who was in Shechem, also bare him a son, whose name was Abimelech. Of all the other sons, there is no record of their names, except the youngest, whose name was Jotham.

Abimelech, being the child of a bondwoman, would still be a bondman and would have no inheritance with the seventy sons of Gideon. He went to the house of his mother's father, for they were of his bone and his flesh, inciting them to support him in his desire to be their king, and "Their hearts were inclined to follow him. for they said, he is our brother." They gave him three score and ten pieces of silver out of the house of their god Baal-berith, wherewith he hired vain and light persons, who followed him and aided him in slaying Gideon's sons. Jotham, the youngest son, whose name means "Perfection of the Lord," was by the mercy of God spared. Surely he could have said as David did in Psalm 124:2-3. "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up quick." How he escaped their treachery we are not told, but we feel that there was something in him that was in his father Gideon, when he told the Angel "Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the LEAST in my father's house." Judges 6:15. Jotham went and stood in the top of Mount Gerizim. This was the mount that Moses commanded the half of Israel to stand on to pronounce the blessing, and the other half stood on Mount Ebal to pronounce the curse. Joshua 8:33. Jotham stood alone, as our Lord did, who also spake in parables. Matthew 13:34. He began: — "The trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them; and they said unto the olive tree, Reign thou over us. But the olive tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honour God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?" The olive tree produced the oil used in the worship of God and also later used in anointing kings. It is a type of the Holy Spirit being poured upon Jesus without measure and upon those who are His in all ages. It was seen in Abel and many others even down to Gideon, who all preferred subjection to God and His word than any promotion from their fellowmen. The church of old was compared to an olive tree, its roots began in the eternal purpose of God which He purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began. From the body or trunk of this tree were the two cherubims made that covered the mercy seat, and the doors for the entering into the oracle were made of the olive tree, also the posts of the doors were made of the same. I Kings 6:23-33. The two anointed ones were the two olive branches that supplied the oil to the lamps. These, we believe, represent the Law and the Prophets, personified by Moses and Elijah, who testified of Jesus, His sufferings and the glory that should follow. Zechariah 4:11-14.

Paul, in Romans II, shows that some branches were broken off that the Gentiles, as wild olive branches, should be grafted in. Our Lord often went to the Mount of Olives to pray while in the flesh, and we are assured that where two or three meet in His name there He is in the midst. What a sacred place! Here also was the olive press, here they all must come, humbled and often crushed down, to give utterance to spiritual things.

"Gethsemane, the olive press! (and why so called let Christians guess) Fit name, fit place where vengeance strove and griped and grappled hard with love."

None of those who understand what we are writing about would leave this fatness, that honours God and man, to

be promoted to an earthly throne. Our Lord gave the answer for them all when He was led by the Spirit to be tempted of the devil into a high mountain and was shown all the kingdoms of the earth and the glory of them: — Jesus said, "Get thee behind me, Satan, for IT IS WRITTEN, Thou shalt worship the Lord Thy God and HIM ONLY shalt thou serve."

"And the trees said to the fig tree, Come thou and reign over us." The fig tree seems to set forth the Church in its public profession, when in its order and walk it stands with its branches spreading, with first its fruit showing and the leaves of profession, even under trials, fresh and green. Even in seasons of adversity, we find, when the fig tree did not blossom and no fruit was in the vine and the labour of the olive failed, yet, because of past mercies, they could rejoice in the Lord and joy in the God of their salvation. Under the law, when the commandment was applied by the Holy Ghost, men gave utterances that were very sweet to the souls of those who were of like precious faith. Hezekiah was under the SENTENCE OF DEATH that he would never see the Lord in the land of the living, but an application of a cluster of those sweet figs gave him the assurance he would go into the house of his God. The barren fig tree, we feel, sets forth the temple worship or profession of the Scribes and Pharisees who taught for commandments the traditions of men. True, even there, there were some who were taught of the Lord. Jesus told Nathaniel, "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee." Those under conviction who see the badness in themselves, that is, in their flesh, like Job or Hezekiah, loathe themselves and are cases needing the great physician. They look for more than profession, and have no desire to be advanced to earthly thrones. The precious promises, the sweet fruit of the fig tree, may meet their eyes but will not meet their case until the true Prophet Jesus applies it to the sore spot.

We find the fig tree associated with the vine, especially during the gospel dispensation. "In that day, saith the Lord of Hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree." Zechariah 3:10. "But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree: and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. For all people will walk in the name of his god and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever." Micah 4:4-5.

"The fig tree said unto them, should I forsake my sweetness and my good tree, to go and be promoted over the trees?"

"Then said the trees to the vine, Come thou and reign over us. and the vine said unto them, should I leave my wine which cheereth God and man and go to be promoted over the trees." Jesus said "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman," also "I am the vine, ye are the branches; He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."

His people, national Israel, was His vine. Asaph says "Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it. Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land." Psalm 80:8-9. Isaiah 5 tells of His vineyard in a very fruitful hill, and His care over it. Matthew 21:33-41 tells of God's dealings with His vineyard and of His judgment upon those wicked husbandmen who took His son and slew Him, and "They say unto Him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men and will let out His vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render Him the fruits in their seasons." In verse 43 it says, "Therefore say I unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." This nation would be a holy nation. "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, AN HOLY NATION, a peculiar people;

that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light." I Peter 2:9. None of these who are reconciled to God through the blood of the everlasting covenant would desire any promotion here, they are "content and pleased to live unknown till Christ their Lord appear."

"Then said all the trees unto the bramble, Come thou and reign over us, and the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow: and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon." There are a few mentioned in Holy Writ who had names given unto them that did not fit at all, such as Absalom, which means "father of peace" or "the peace of the father," yet see what trouble he brought to his father, Abimelech means "father of the king" or "my father the king," a name, no doubt, given to him by his mother, a bondwoman. They were deceivers, as were their names. All men by nature are bondchildren whose unregenerated hearts, in their lust for power, would, like Cain, even slay their brother.

This parable, which is our subject, was not spoken to the world, but to Israel from the mount of blessing and therefore profitable to us that we should try the spirits whether they be of God or not. That is whether their spirit be of the devil or of God. Jesus said to those of His day, "Ye are of your father the devil and the works of your father ye will do." Everything begets its kind, love begets love, hatred begets hatred. Those who are out to destroy usually meet with destruction themselves. The wicked scheme of Abimelech found its equal in those who were bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, and it is remarkable that silver should be mentioned in the story, for silver was the price of the soul. It was silver sockets that linked the boards of the tabernacle, but behold, this silver came out of the house of Baal-berith, that is, "idol or god of the covenant," so we see there is a covenanting together of evil men to do evil deeds. Men go to their own company just as Peter and John did. Acts 4:23.

What shelter could there be in this bramble Abimelech? Even in the covenant he would make with them to be their king we see jealously toward the cedars of Lebanon. What could come of such a union but destroying one another? The prophet Micah, in chapter 7, shows the dark day in which he lived. As he bemoans the low condition of Zion he says, "Woe is me! for I am as when they have gathered the summer fruits, as the grapegleanings of the vintage: there is no cluster to eat: my soul desired the first ripe fruit. The good man is perished out of the earth: and there is none upright among men: they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net. That they may do evil with both hands earnestly. — The best of them is as a brier: the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge."

Joshua warned Israel that if they should cleave unto the remnant of those nations, even those that remained among them, they would be traps unto them and scourges in their sides and thorns in their eyes. These enemies were left there by God to prove them. Jude tells us that "there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation." He exhorts them, that is, those who are preserved in Christ Jesus, that they contend (not with them) but earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward." Cain believed in God, but, like the natural man, would worship Him according to his own will, he had not a "thus saith the Lord" for what he did. Balaam, willing to please a king, rose up in the morning to do evil, yet how mysteriously God put the right words in his mouth (but not in his heart.) Read Numbers 23 and 24. "How shall I

curse whom God hath not cursed? — From the top of the rocks I see Him, and from the hills I behold Him: lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations." This man Balaam could not but bless Israel time after time. His prophecies were most beautiful and full of truth, yet he would, if he could, have cursed them for gain, but God had blest and how could man curse them? He showed his true character by causing the Israelites to commit trespass against the Lord in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague in the congregation of the Lord. Numbers 31:16. This strange man died sword in hand fighting against the Lord's people. Numbers 31:8.

Briers and thorns thrive close to the earth and spread rapidly in their pernicious ways, seldom rising above the earth unless to the hurt of the trees planted in the same soil. Paul says in Hebrews 6:8. "But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned." In the parable, this was the end. When Abimelech had reigned three years, God sent an evil spirit between him and the men of Shechem and they dealt treacherously with Abimelech. The acts of this man who made himself king, and the way in which he fought against his own flesh and blood with fire and sword, and in the end to die, slain by a millstone dropped on his head by a woman, can be read in the chapter from whence this parable is taken. Surely "The way of transgressors is hard."

How did Jotham escape? He fled from them to a place called Beer. In Numbers 21:16-18, we read that when Israel was passing the border of Moab, "they went to Beer: that is the well whereof the Lord spake unto Moses, Gather the people digged it, by the direction of the Then Israel sang this song, Spring up, O well: sing ye unto it: The princes digged the well, the nobles of the people diggde it, by the direction of the lawgiver, with their staves." This well seems to have been given freely, not through their chiding and murmuring with Moses and Aaron, as when he struck the rock. These princes and nobles, servants of God in ages past up to the present, used their staves or staffs, which represent the promises of God on which they leaned and with which they walked.

How good it is to think that Jotham, like Samuel, could stand and declare the blessing and the curse in the place which God our Lawgiver had chosen and then have a cover from every foe in the same place, and drink from the same spring by which saints, in all ages, have been refreshed and preserved.

"O Christ! He is the fountain, the deep sweet well of love:
The streams on earth I've tasted, more deep I'll drink above:
There to an ocean fullness His mercy doth expand,
And glory, glory dwelleth in Emmanuel's land."

G. R.

TIME AND CHANCE

"I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all." (Eccl. 9:;;)

A request has come to us for our views on the latter part of the verse, which reads, "But time and chance happeneth to them all."

No doubt the reader is confused about the word chance; or has his own opinion, and wants the opinon of others. I believe we find the word chance used about four times in the scriptures. The question in the mind of many is how anything can happen by chance, and yet be predestinated. Can the two be reconciled?

There are many things that happen to men, that come by chance: They have

not planned the matter, and, as far as they are concerned, it was by chance to them. But, with God nothing happens by chance. For instance, we find in Luke 10:31, "And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him he passed by on the other side." We find this account in reference to the man journeying from Jerusalem to Jerico, who fell among thieves. The priest in his journey had not planned to come upon a man wounded and half-dead. Whatever directed him on his journey, it was not to find a poor man in such a state; and his passing him, as far as he was concerned, was by chance, since he had no knowledge that the poor man would be there. In the purpose of God it was not so, for as God has thought so shall things come to pass; as He has purposed so shall it stand. He has declared the end for the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, etc. He is of one mind.

"Time and chance happeneth to them all." The writer described many of the things that come to us here in time, as things that happen to all mankind. Time brings with it many things we have no plans for: our journeys often embrace many things we did not know would overtake us. Sometimes we plan a journey, and the time for leaving and arriving is both set by us, but something we did not take into consideration changes the picture. As far as we were concerned, it happened by chance, but in the purpose of God it was all appointed.

The Saviour taught the disciples that in their going out, they would meet with much persecution; but also reminded them that the sparrow would not fall without Him; and that even the hairs of their heads were numbered. No doubt they met with many trials which caused them to realize that they could not keep themselves; and received much comfort from the promise of Him whom the winds and sea OBEY.

In the journey of Paul from Jerusalem to Rome, God had told him he would just as surely bear witness of Him at Rome, as he had testified of Him at Jerusalem. To the eyes of men many of the things that happened happened by chance; but not so with God. It would appear to the carnal minds of men that the journey to Rome was governed by circumstances — and truly it was, but God Almighty controlled the circumstances. Since Paul had appealed to Caesar, he was carried a prisoner by ship to Rome. It was not by chance that the journey included a shipwreck. They, traveling without knowledge as to where they were, were thrown upon a certain island, where the natives tenderly cared for Paul after he had been bitten by a snake and was not hurt. Probably if the question has been asked as to whether all these things were embraced in the purpose of God, many would have answered that one circumstance led to another. Not so with Paul, for God stood by him, and assured him that every person on board would be saved; and none of these things could come by chance, as God purposed that Paul should go to Rome; and His word does not return unto him void. To them it was chance that brought these things, as these things were not in their plans when they started to Rome.

When the ark of the covenant was in the camp of the Phillistines, and had proven a curse to them, they decided to return it to the Lord's camp. They agreed to place the ark upon a new cart drawn by two milch kine; and if the milch kine took a straight course to the camp of Israel, it was to be a token to them that the judgments of God had been visited upon them because of the presence of the ark; but if they followed not a straight course, it was evident that the things that had befalled them, were by chance. "And see, if it goeth up by way of his own coast to Bethshemesh, then he hath done us this great evil: but if not, then we shall know that it is not of his hand that smote us; it was a chance that happened to us." (1st Samuel 6:9)

The milch kine took the straight

course, and went along, lowing as they went. Their calves had been shut up, and it was contrary to all human reasoning that they would take such a course, and leave their calves behind, except the Lord had been directing them.

In 2nd Samuel 1:6, we find the word chance used again. When the young man reported to David that he saw Saul lean upon his spear when the battle went against him, he said, "As I happened by chance upon Mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned upon his spear; and, lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him." The indication is that the young man had not planned to pass Mount Gilboa, but by chance he went without any knowledge of what he would find, and with no special purpose in the journey.

In conclusion, dear readers, let us leave with you the thought that many things come to us here by chance, as we made no plans in regard to them, and had no purpose in the matter; but truly they did not come by chance with God, and not with us as far as He is concerned. The doctrine of God's decrees is not in conflict with these things. Many years ago the writer tried to believe differently on these things, and God brought him so low that he was convinced that all out times are in His hands. Once, while in the State of New York, I tried to speak of these things, and it was my first visit among them; when I concluded, a man arose in the rear, and said, "Sovereign ruler of the skies, ever gracious, ever wise, all my times are in thy hand; all events at thy command." He is now departed to be with Him, but the memory of that dear brother will remain with me while I sojourn here. It is a part of the TIE THAT BINDS.

D. V. S.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Butler, Md.
Sept. 25, 1879

Elder Beebe and son: — By request of the church, I send for publication in the Signs of the Times a letter written to her by her pastor, Elder F. A. Chick, during his late visit to Maine.

Yours in love and fellowship,
T. H. Scott

Kingwood, N. J.
Aug. 17, 1879

To the church at Black Rock. Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ be unto you now and always.

Dear Brethren: As I am away from you for so long a time, I wish to let you know that I have you all in my mind, and that your welfare is dear to me, and so I will write you a letter, to be read at your church meeting, or, if not then, on Sunday morning. I feel a great anxiety for you all to be prosperous in a Bible sense, that you all may be established in the doctrine of God our Savior, and that, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so ye should walk in him. Both of these things are essential to true prosperity, both as a body of believers and also for our personal enjoyment of communion with God and with one another. I wish to write to you, dear brethren, and exhort you to hold fast both right doctrine and right practice. We have had some sweet and refreshing seasons together of late. God has added to our number of such as shall be saved, and we have rejoiced over these, willing captives of Jesus, the trophies of divine grace. It is nearly eleven years since God cast my lot among you as your pastor. There have been many changes since then among you. Almost a new congregation has

taken the place of the one I looked upon then. Most of those who were members then have either passed away to their reward, or else their heads are whitening for the grave. Soon they will leave us for their abode on high. Two-thirds of the present members of the church have been added since I came among you. For these I feel especial desires, that as the old fathers and mothers pass away, they may be found walking faithfully in their steps, believing the same things and minding the same things. I wish the church at Black Rock to be built upon the right foundation, as well as to increase in numbers. I pray that we may all hold fast the doctrine which we have learned of God, and which we believe. As your loving pastor and brother, (and as long as I may be with you) I wish to faithfully preach to you salvation by grace, and all the branches of truth growing up out of it and connected with it, and to faithfully warn and reprove and rebuke when it may be necessary.

It seems to me needful, dear brethren, at this time, that we should be especially careful to set the landmarks right, since the aged counsellors and fathers are passing away, and we who are younger must soon take their places. And what I say in exhortation in this letter, I mean especially for us who are younger. First, let us cling faithfully to the doctrine of God's word. This church at Black Rock has always recognized these cardinal principles of truth, God's absolute sovereignty, his predestination of all things; his unconditional election or choice of his people to salvation; his special redemption of his chosen people through the atonement finished on Calvary; his effectual calling of his people, whom he had chosen, by the efficacious work of his spirit in their hearts; and his preservation of his called people through grace to glory. They have also believed that the salvation of God is all of grace, and that no work or condition of our performance secures it to us; and that this salvation felt in the soul will also produce obedience and good works. Now, dear brethren, let us be careful to see that we hold fast these truths. There has not been one who has come to us during the past eleven years, in whose experience of grace was not wrapped up the substance of all these truths. Was not God a sovereign in convicting you of sin? Did he not work like a sovereign in delivering you into hope and light? No power but his could avail. Predestination and election also appeared in your experience. God had chosen and predestinated you to salvation, or you had never chosen him. This you left. He atoned for you. You could not atone for yourself. He effectually called you. You had no power to withstand his word. Thus all these truths appear shining forth clear as noonday in your experience. They are dear to you. In your experience also was wrapped up the true view of baptism. A death and burial, and a resurrection. Experimentally you had become dead to sin. Experimentally you had become alive to righteousness. A death and resurrection was symbolized in your baptism.

There is need, brethren, that we should watch in these things, and hold fast the form of sound words which we have learned in this experimental way. For many scoff at and deride these truths in this day. We should all the more plainly and clearly sound them forth. Many of Israel often get ensnared and taken, and it should be our object to so unfurl the banner of truth and love as that they may see it plainly, and if they recognize there what God has taught them in their heart, be gathered to it, with the rest of the people of God.

As your pastor, let me ask of you, What was it that drew you to the people at Black Rock? Chief among all that drew you there was the fact that these truths were held up to your view there. Then let us continue to hold them plainly forth, that others may see, and, if God will, rejoice in the same things.

Now growing up out of our church relationship and fellowship there are

a thousand things which might well claim our attention. Suffer me, dear brethren, out of the love I bear you, to mention a few. I am affectionately desirous for you, that you should be found practicing as well as believing the truth. By faith in the truth our own hearts are assured and comforted; but it is only by the fruit we bear that we can prove that we are married to Christ — that we can be justified in the sight of our fellowmen. To love one another is the second great commandment. John said, "My little children, love one another." He spoke this for you and me NOW. There is always need for this exhortation. By nature we love our own selves. We look on our own things. We strive for our own profit and advantage. But the effect of grace in the heart is to make us love others as ourselves. It was said in the early church, "Behold how these love one another." Dear brethren, let us strive to have it said of the church at Black Rock, Behold how they love each other. And let us not love in word and tongue only, but in deed and in truth. Love should be the great governing principle in all our daily intercourse and dealings one with another. It may seem easy now, in the warmth of our early experience, to love our brethren; but we shall have temptations to grow cold toward each other. Our flesh must be guarded against all the time, for the flesh is selfish. We are prone to seek our own interest and our own profit, and not the things that make for peace, the things whereby one may edify another. Let us love one another. We are all poor and needy, halting and stumbling. All of us are imperfect and liable to err. It is love only that can hide a multitude of faults. Have our brethren sinned against us? May we remember it is against God they have sinned, and we can safely be quiet. And as we from time to time bow before our God, and make humble confession of our own faults, and ask for forgiveness, let us remember our erring brother and pray for him also that God would forgive him and restore his wanderings. None of us can pray for our brother in our hearts and hate him. If we pray for him we must love him. But our proud hearts rise up and say, "Oh, he has injured me so deeply that I can no longer have confidence in him as a child of God." Let us, dear brethren, look into our own hearts. What do we see there? Are not anger and enmity and illwill toward the wrong doer just as evil in us as his wrong act is in him? What did Jesus do in such a case? What does he tell you to do when injured? Have you followed his example? Have you obeyed his word? Can you then cast a stone? Has your brother sinned more against you than David did against Uriah? Was not he a child of God, even though he sinned so grievously? Oh, do not say at such times, I entreat you, "I have lost confidence in this or that brother or sister." Remember God's children may stumble and fall deep in the ditch. Now is the time to test your love. If you love and do good only to them that love and do good to you, what thank have ye? Do not even publicans and sinners the same? But this is Christ-like, to love your enemies, to bless them that curse you, and to pray for those that despitefully use you and evil entreat you. Brethren, let us pray that God would increase our love, our patience, and make us have fervent charity to each other. If God pities us in our wanderings, ought we not to pity with a deep and tender anxiety our Father's children when they go astray?

To think of these things will make us gentle and considerate and kind one to another, and this is what we are told to be, even to the unthankful and the evil. This is the only way to dwell in peace and to have a growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And here I feel to mention with gratitude to God, and with love to you all, how forbearing and full of consideration you have been toward me ever since I have been with you. No one knows better how many short-comings you have put up with and overlooked in me, than myself. No pastor

ever had a more loving and kind-hearted people than you have proved yourselves to me. I think I do appreciate your love and long-forbearance, and feel that I have made a poor return. But yet I can say conscientiously, that I have desired to serve you to the extent of my ability, and God has blessed me in so doing a hundred fold.

I want to also exhort you to stand shoulder to shoulder in bearing every burden that comes upon you. Is there any trial and sorrow, do not any of you leave your brethren to endure it alone. By your love and sympathy help them to bear it. All burdens are lighter if we know that we have the sympathy of our brethren. Whatever burden comes upon you all, let all feel called upon to help bear it. Divided among you all, it becomes light to each, while if the few of you are left to bear it, they will be oppressed by it. If we love God, his cause and his truth, if we love our brethren, we shall be anxious to relieve them of some of the burden, to do all we can ourselves. I speak this to you, my dear young brethren and sisters, as something for you to remember as long as God shall keep you with his people upon earth, and also because your own spiritual comfort and profit is involved in it. We cannot leave all the burdens to our brethren, and expect a growth in grace and joy in our own souls. Then stand side by side and help each other always to the extent of the ability that God has given you. If you have but little strength, yet use that little, and your one talent shall produce another, as God hath promised.

"Be ready always to give a reason of the hope that is in you, to every one that asketh you, with meekness and fear." There are many and various temptations that will assail us all our life long against the truth. But we are commanded to stand fast, having our loins girt about with truth. We are not to yield the truth of God. We have experienced its power, and we **know** therefore that salvation is **all** of grace. Then let us always be ready to testify to this truth which we have seen and felt in our own hearts.

Now, brethren, I wish to say a few words to you all. First to the aged. You have temptations and trials which we that are younger can know but little about. You may feel to say, "Why do I remain on the earth? I am but a barren and useless tree. I am only a burden, and no benefit to any one." But, dear aged fathers and mothers, let it console you to remember that God will call you home when you have done glorifying him on the earth. He will not let you remain one moment longer than he has work for you to do, or trouble to suffer for his own glory. He seems to call you out of active life, that in the calm of old age you may contemplate his goodness and calmly wait for his coming. Dear aged ones, I have had many happy hours with you during the past eleven years, and you have given me many a good word of encouragement and advice, for which I feel grateful. I came among you young in years and small in wisdom, and you have had great patience with me, and have borne with my faults. I have been among you in weakness, and fear, and much trembling, and you have stayed up my hands. May God bless you all, and give you a bright pathway to your eternal home. For those of you, dear brethren, who are younger, I have an affectionate solicitude. You have temptations of a worldly sort. The cares and business and pleasures of this life will often allure. But I beseech you by all the mercy and goodness that God has shown you, that you seek FIRST the kingdom of God and his righteousness at all times. May heavenly things be your chief thought and desire. I look back over the past eleven years since I have been your pastor, and they have been years of great blessing. God has remembered us in mercy many times. How often have the windows of heaven been opened, and blessings poured out upon us. God has not forgotten us for a single moment. O may we not forget him. Let us not only believe on Christ as our Savior,

but in meekness and love and humility and patience follow his example. Charity suffers long and is kind. O may we all have this fervent charity, the dearest gift of God in Christ to us. Soon to the youngest of us the warfare will be over. One after another we shall soon cross the narrow stream that divides that longed for heavenly land from ours. Then may it be ours to look back and say, "I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord shall give me at that day."

Dear brethren, I have written this out of the fullness of my heart for you all. It will assure you that I have not forgotten you, though for a season absent. I finish this letter at North Berwick, Maine, August 22nd. I am well, and have found my family well. With love to all, I remain your brother and pastor,

F. A. CHICK

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It has pleased our Heavenly Father, in His Wisdom and Holiness, on January 31, 1960, to remove from this life our dear Sister Pat Harris, bringing sorrow to our hearts.

Sister Pat Harris served our church as trustee, and was always ready to do what ever she could to help our pastor, Elder W. W. Taylor, in his care of the flock. And

WHEREAS, We believe that our loss is her gain, and that she has been removed from this life to Realms of Glory, and from a world of trouble to a land of delight. We sorrow not as though we have no Hope, but because we shall see her face no more. Never the less, we believe what the Lord does is best. Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, By Saints Rest Church, that we bow in submission to His will, believing that when Christ shall appear, all those who are asleep in Christ shall be gathered up by Him in righteousness. And

BE IT RESOLVED, That we extend sympathy to her husband, Mr. Earl Harris, and friends, in that he has lost an affectionate wife, and we have lost a true friend. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away: Blessed be the name of the Lord. Also

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be sent to Mr. Earl Harris, a copy sent to the **"Signs of the Times"**, for publication, and a copy written in our church records.

Written by the order of Saints Rest Church, while in conference February 6, 1960.

Elder W. W. Taylor, Moderator
D. D. Connell, Clerk

OBITUARIES

MRS. JENNIE (CORBIN) PYLES

Mrs. Jennie Corbin Pyles, aged 75, died March 19, 1960, at the Baptist Hospital, Campbellsburg, Kentucky.

She is survived by her husband, Brother S. F. Pyles, Sr.; two daughters, Mrs. Edward Vaughn, Louisville, and Mrs. Billy Forquer, New Castle, Ky.; two sons, S. F. Pyles, Jr., Louisville, and C. Y. Pyles, Campbellsburg, Kentucky; also by ten grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Funeral services were held at the residence on March 21st, by a local minister; and burial was in the Campbellsburg Cemetery.

Mrs. Pyles was an attender of the Old School Baptist Church all her life with her husband, Brother C. F. Pyles, and during my pastorate of over thirty years. She was a firm believer in the doctrine and order of the church, and their home was a Baptist home — many times I have been entertained there. She had been in poor health for some years, but death came suddenly, and her passing was a shock to all of us. We feel to say as one of old, Well done thou faithful one, enter into the joy of the Lord.

May the Lord reconcile us to our loss, for it is her eternal gain. May He bless Brother Pyles and his family. Written by request.

Elder George L. Weaver

IN MEMORY OF OUR PASTOR
ELDER R. B. DENSON

Almighty God decreed that our beloved pastor, Elder R. B. Denson, would be born into this time world 26 June, 1897. He would walk the path of life ordained for him and at the time appointed, which was 31 December 1959, his Lord and Saviour would say to him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise. We feel for a surety Elder Denson was one of God's humble poor with a contrite spirit given unto him by his God. For such the Lord promised never to leave or forsake. He was a living example of the surety of God's promises. God performed the will and

the do necessary for him to be a faithful, kind and loving pastor for 20½ years. We feel God fulfilled through him again and again the scripture: "Take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak but the Holy Ghost"; for our beloved pastor was blessed to preach Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Elder Denson's life exemplified that he was taught of God, for his delight was to be among his brethren and sisters not only in the many churches he served and visited but also in his home. His door was always open and a hearty welcome extended to all that came to visit him. Oh how lonely we are made to feel at times. But we trust his God (and we hope ours) will reconcile all who mourn, making them to know that he works his will in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay his hand.

May it be the will of God to lead, guide and direct his dear companion, children and grandchildren and shower his blessings upon them that the loss they feel may not be so great.

BE IT RESOLVED, That distribution be as follows: One copy be sent to the family, one sent to Signs of the Times, one sent to Zion's Landmark, one sent to Old Faith Contender, one entered on the Church book. Done by order of conference held in the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church 19 March, 1960.

Written by one who loved him for the truth's sake, Ruby E. Coward.

Elder I. S. Conner, Moderator
Ruby E. Coward, Clerk

SISTER ASENETH HARRINGTON

Aseneth Harrington, formerly of Halcottville, Delaware County, New York, died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Harry Hubbell, at Kelly Corners, New York, January 5, 1960, after an illness of three years (two years of this time being helpless in bed), making her stay on earth over 92 years.

Sister Harrington was born at Vega, New York, July 20, 1867. She was the daughter of Brother Ira and Mary Kelly Slauson. On January 30, 1890, she was united in marriage at Vega, New York, to Walter Harrington, also of Vega, where they operated a dairy farm until 1922 when they sold and moved to the Village of Halcottville, New York. Here Mr. Harrington worked at his trade as a mason which he learned from his father when a young man. Mr. Harrington died October 11, 1955, at the age of 88.

Sister Harrington united with the First Roxbury Church May 22, 1927. She was baptized by Elder George Ruston, Pastor, September 4, 1927. She leaves to mourn her loss two daughters, Mrs. Harry Hubbell of Kelly Corners, New York, and Mrs. Effie Mead, a widow, of West Conesville, New York, and several nephews and cousins. Sister Harrington was tenderly cared for by her daughter, Mrs. Harry Hubbell, in her home during all of her long illness, assisted at times by her Sister, Effie, who had much sadness in her home losing her husband during that time. Mrs. Harry Hubbell's husband is a grandson of the late Elder J. D. Hubbell and resides in the house where he lived, better known as the Hubbell Brothers place of business.

Sister Harrington and her husband, Walter, was a very devoted couple. Fulfilling the law of God as the word says "no more twain but one flesh" and they were just that. Sister Harrington was a loving mother, a loving and devoted wife, and one who lived her religion. She was loved by all who knew her. The brethren were at all times more than welcome in her home. You did not need to have an invitation to be a welcome guest.

Jesus said, "By their fruits ye shall know them", also, "A tree is known by its fruits". So, as we see it, she bore much fruit of the Spirit, which is borne only by those in whom the Spirit dwells: much love for the cause of Christ and the brethren, and God given faith, and a zeal for the truth as it is in Jesus. Seldom did we call at her home but that she would want prayer. Surely, she has left a wonderful example for us who are awaiting our call. Though her husband was not a member, he was always with her at her meetings and made Baptists just as welcome in their home as she did.

The community has lost a loyal neighbor and the Church a noble sister, by the Grace of God. We feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Services were conducted by the writer from the First Roxbury Church at Vega, New York. Burial in cemetery near the meeting house.

Elder Amasa J. Slauson

BROTHER Z. R. LANGDON

In memory of a precious and beloved brother and deacon of Black River Primitive Baptist Church, Z. R. Langdon, whom the Lord, who knows best, called from our midst, August 3, 1959, and is now resting, we feel, in paradise.

Brother Langdon was born in Johnston County, N. C., February 4, 1889, making his life here, seventy years and six months. He was a farmer and a retired mail carrier, and no doubt, knew by experience the many hardships required to make a success in this life. He was a devoted husband and a loving fa-

ther, rearing a family, one son and two daughters, who are highly esteemed by many friends and people who have become acquainted with them.

Brother Langdon united with the Primitive Baptist Church the second week end in December, 1948, and was baptized on that Sunday. He was faithful in every duty that befell him. He was ordained a Deacon in April, 1951, and spent much of his time and labor for the tender care, upkeep and welfare of the church, to make it pleasant for the brethren and friends to meet together.

Brother Langdon was admired and loved by all who knew him, both with whom he transacted business and his social friends, he was always ready to give a helping hand to those in need.

We miss so much the sweet fellowship of one we loved, yet our precious hope is, that in the morning of the resurrection, when Jesus shall come to gather his precious jewels, that we shall meet him in glory, for the Apostle Paul said in Romans 8:18, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us". Brother Langdon's absence is not only felt in his home and in the church, but among his many friends.

We extend our deepest sympathy and love to his dear companion and children, who we realize have suffered the greater loss, though may we all remember that our loss is his eternal gain. May we all bow in humble submission to God's will, who doeth all things well.

We send a copy of this writing to his family, one to each, **The Old Faith Contender,** and **Signs of the Times,** and record one on our church records.

Written by request of Black River Church in conference Saturday before the fourth Sunday in November, 1959.

Elder C. D. Turner, Sister Nettie Turlington, Sister Margaret Lassiter, Committee.

Sister Nettie Turlington, Clerk
Elder C. D. Turner, Moderator

(In memory of Brother Langdon)

A SEED OF THE MASTER'S SOWING

Our house is, Oh, so empty, the air is damp and cold; the webs that hung from the ceiling, are, as our thoughts, covered with mold.

The brother we loved and trusted, our main and able stay, has been called to a higher purpose, where moth nor rust can decay.

He left our house a sparkle! Aglow with fruits of love! With nails and paint, the sweat of his brow, the grace in his heart to unglove.

The matchless love of a child of God whose delight is to walk where the Saviour has trod!

Our grief is not of his labors to maintain our meeting place, but handclasps warm, his songbook charm, and the smile upon his face.

We feel he's done his duty, fulfilled his mission with care; the loved ones left have filled his seat with teary eyes and prayer.

Proclaiming love is in his Birth, Redeeming Love in Death; surrendering our love, not mine but thine, for so our Master sayeth!

Very good and good! 'Tis all of Him for which we do and say. We travel on, waiting our call, the end of a Perfect Day!

A sister, I hope,
Margaret Baggett Lassiter

SISTER BIRDIE (BARNETT) CHILTON

Again it is my sad duty to chronicle the death of an old and highly respected citizen, and member of the Old School Baptist Church, Sister Birdie (Barnett) Chilton, of Turner's Station, Ky. Our sister was baptized early in life into the fellowship of Can Run Church, by Elder Sawin; and remained an humble and worthy member all her life. The last two years of her life were spent in a rest home in New Castle, Ky. She reached the ripe age of 82.

Left to mourn her passing are two sons, Lyndon and Lloyd, of Turner's Station; one sister, Mrs. W. H. Owen, Carrollton, Ky.; five grandchildren and seven great grandchildren. Her passing followed closely her brother, Deacon George Barnett, of the same church, whose obituary appeared in the February issue of the *Signs of the Times.* Her husband, Leslie Chilton, died several years ago.

When I think of the many years as her pastor, and the times I was entertained in her home, and the many dear brothers and sisters that have passed on since I was chosen their pastor forty years ago, tears flow; and I feel to say with Job, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away." It can be said of her that she kept the faith, and is entered into rest, and is now asleep in Jesus, and someday will hear the voice, Come enter into the joy of the Lord.

She was laid to rest by the side of her husband in the Turner Cemetery. May the Lord reconcile all of us to his will, for he is the only one who can reconcile. Written by request of the family.

Elder George L. Weaver

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 128 DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1960 NO. 7

CHECK YOUR
EXPIRATION DATE
IF IT IS 7/60
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE POWER OF GOD

"And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." (Luke 10:18)

These were the words of Jesus as he was speaking to the seventy disciples he had sent out to preach that the kingdom of heaven was come nigh unto them. This was after they had returned and said, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name."

We cannot understand the Scriptures aright unless the Spirit guides us, for these things are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes. If we are given to read aright, then we are also given to understand. For years I could not understand this verse of scripture; and I know I cannot explain just what I see now.

I believe that Jesus was telling them how Satan and his kingdom fell: by the power of God; that as the lightning is under the control of God and goes to its appointed place, just as he has appointed for his people to go, and they go at that appointed time. So Jesus caused Satan to fall. I do not believe that Satan was ever in the eternal heaven where God is. The heaven he fell from was the church here in time, and at the end he will be cast out, as is recorded in Rev. 12:9. God is a god of love and with loving kindness he draws his people, but to sin he is a consuming fire.

The power that caused Satan to fall, is the same power that spoke this world into existance in the beginning. He did not have to labor as we would to build anything; He just spoke it into existance by the word of his power; and this same power created every thing in the creation of the earth. Then he made man of the dust of the earth.

This same power caused Abraham to have faith in God; and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now this righteousness is, I believe, the same thing as the Lord Jesus Christ formed in us the hope of glory; for faith is the gift of God and so is the Lord. God gives them to his people; and he gives them all things that they need, for he said he would supply all their needs.

This same power caused Noah to prepare the Ark for the saving of the eight souls, as well as the beasts and the fowls, and all creeping things. This same power caused all of them to come into the ark of their own accord — Noah did not have to drive them in. God does that for his people to this day: he brings in his own; and the preacher cannot do it. God brought them into the ark and shut the door, and they could not get out. And today, if we are in that number, we are shut in, for God has brought us into his kingdom. I feel that the ark that Noah prepared in some wonderful way points to Jesus in the gospel day — the eight souls were saved from the flood, and the drawing of the beasts, fowls and creeping things, points to sinners being drawn by the Holy Spirit in the gospel day. They are drawn by the same power, and made willing to come to the church and tell what great things the Lord has done for them. Jesus said that all the Father has given him should come unto him, and they should in no wise be cast out; and he also said that none could come unto him except the

Father which sent him draw them. They are all brought by the same power that also causes Satan to fall.

This same power is shown again in the experience of the three Hebrew children when they were cast into the fiery furnace: they were kept by the power of God. The furnace was heated seven times hotter than was want to be; and I feel that this was to show the wonderful saving power of God, for it was so hot that it destroyed the ones that cast them in, but did not harm the three Hebrews. The king was astonished when he saw four men walking in the midst of the fire and had no hurt, saying that the form of the fourth is like unto the Son of God: Jesus had come down to deliver his children, and to show his wonderful power, and there was no smell of fire on their garments.

In our experiences we have sore trials and are tried in the furnace of affliction, but it is for our good: if we did not have trials and afflictions and troubles here, then we would not know by experience how good the Lord is. But when he comes and delivers us from our trials and temptations, then we rest in that peace the world knows nothing about.

This same power closed the mouth of the lions when Daniel was cast into their den. Here is shown the power of God and the weakness of man: there was nothing that Daniel could do to help himself there. The lions would have killed him at once had it not been for the protecting power of the all powerful God. We don't know what the Lord will do for us in the way of preserving our lives here in the world, but we can truthfully say that he is able to keep us, and will do whatsoever is his will.

This same power made the sun, moon and stars, and placed them in their place, and does all things according to his will; yet some will preach and believe that He cannot save unless the sinner wants him to. When it comes time for God to manifest his saving power, he does not save against the man's will, but he makes the man willing — they are willing in the day of his power, for he works both the will and the do of his good pleasure.

This same power was shown when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, showing that He is the resurrection and the life. And this same power will change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body in the glorious resurrection; and then we shall ever be with Him in that world that has no end, where we shall praise him for ever and ever.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,
Charles R. Ball
Henry, Virginia

Charleston, Mississippi

Editor
Signs of the Times
Danville, Virginia

Dear Sir:

Enclosed is check for $10.00 for renewal of my subscription to the Signs of the Times for two years. It is my belief that I subscribed for two years and that the time has expired (March 1960). If so I apologize for being late.

You may discontinue the subscription of Elder W. V. McDonald of Rt. 4, Coffeeville. Our beloved pastor passed away last October while preaching at one of his regular appointments, or immediately after closing the service. He sat down and asked for a glass of water. Members of the congregation, realizing something was wrong took him to a home and then to the hospital, where he lived only about 2 hours. He was 72 years old and had been serving the churches in this part of Mississippi for nearly 50 years, as well as travelling in other states.

The remainder of the check, after paying for my two years' subscription you may apply to the sending of the church paper to those who can not afford to pay.

Thank you for sending the paper on to me, although I was delinquent, and

may the Lord continue to bless you to send out the good news to those in a far country.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Lillie N. Henry

P. S.: My great grandfather, Col. Shadrach Barns, subscribed for the Signs of the Times until his death (He requested the following be inscribed on his headstone: "A Primitive Baptist for 50 years" — (he is buried near Oakland, Miss.). My grandmother — his daughter-in-law, continued to subscribe after his death — She was Mrs. S. N. E. Barns; and at her death my mother, Mrs. L. E. Neely, and now myself. I can see no difference in the basic truths that are still being published in the "Signs", as it was called in our home.

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE LICKING ASSOCIATION OF KENTUCKY — 1910

(Written by Elder C. W. Bond)

To the churches composing the Licking Association of Particular Baptists, greeting in the Lord.

Dear Brethren: — We again as an association have the privilege of addressing to you our annual letter. Like the apostles of old, after consideration of what message we had best send you, we would not add to your burdens, but would remind you of the liberties the Lord has called you unto.

The liberties of the gospel are the most sacred of all liberties known to man, and free him from every kind of bondage, and bring him to acknowledge allegiance only to God as the Father, and Christ as Master and Elder Brother. Every one is equal before God, all called, chosen and accepted in the same way, and having such gifts as the Father has bestowed upon each respectively, some evangelists, some teachers, some pastors, and others with no special gifts except faith, hope and charity, and the works wrought in them by the exercise of these gifts.

There is no room for boasting under the gospel dispensation, for we have nothing of worth which we did not receive, and if one has been given more than another the possession of the greater gift makes that one the more a servant of the others, for the gifts are for this purpose, that the one possessing the greater gifts may minister unto those who are needy, and thus strengthen them and edify the body of Christ, which includes every one of his chosen ones. In an individual sense, we thus stand independent of each other, and bow to none except God, who is the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. To him let us at all times be in humble submission, trusting his divine wisdom and power in the directing of all things for our good and his name's honor and glory. In a related capacity as members of the body of Christ there is a unity and a oneness of feeling, and a love produced by the greater love of God toward us and operating in us, so that those possessing such gifts desire to be together and to commune with one another upon heavenly things. This love for the brethren is so prominent that it is one of the best evidences of the new life in us, for by this we know that we have passed from death unto life. Upon this sacred relation the churches are founded, and by the strength of it they are maintained in peace and unity. The different churches or organizations thus formed are independent of each other, and the highest tribunals on earth for the government of all matters relating to the lives of its members. When actuated by the right spirit it can make no mistake, and its decisions are final, having the Scriptures as its lawbook, and the mind of Christ as its wisdom.

The same spirit and desire for the society of those of like precious faith has in a wider sense caused a number of churches to form an association, the purpose of which is somewhat similar to those of the church organizations, viz., to meet for the worship of God, and to consider such matters as are for the good of all, having things done accord-

ing to the scriptural order and directed by divine wisdom. For a long time it has been the custom to further extend this organization, by a sort of correspondence between different associations, by means of letters and visiting brethren and ministers. Dear brethren, we would remind you that all this extended organization further than the individual church organization, is good and for the strengthening of the body of the brotherhood so long as the scriptural order is strictly followed, but it is the cause of disturbance to the whole body when something unscriptural enters into the councils.

We desire to admonish the brethren of our churches, and those of our correspondence, to always be on your guard against unscriptural proceedings in church methods and associational meetings, doing all things with an eye single to the glory of God, and striving to preserve "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Try all the spirits, whether they make for peace or stir up strife, remembering that Satan often appears as an angel of light, and that the spirit of Satan may sometimes operate even in the elect persons and those high in our councils, as when Peter was rebuked for considering the things pertaining to man rather than those of God. The spirit of Satan thus moving Peter was rebuked by the word of the Master, which is the only effective weapon to apply to such a subtle and powerful enemy.

We would remind you also to mark the talebearer, or the visitor or messenger who brings into your midst anything other than gospel truth or words of edification. Your churches are established and strengthened by the power of the gospel, but weakened and destroyed by worldly-wise and meddlesome counselors. Turn a deaf ear to all such, and tell them you are hungering and thirsting for the bread and waters of life, and your little ones are crying for the sincere milk of the word. Let each church be judge of its servants in the ministry, without any suspicion or criticism from other churches, for they are accountable to their own consciences and God alone. They are to be their own judges as to what is for their edification, and it is a breach of fellowship to attempt to dictate to or act as lords over God's heritage. Let no brother ever so forget himself as to in this way offend any of the little ones whom our God has called unto the liberties and peace of the gospel. Your liberties are sacred liberties, and are measured according to the measure of the Spirit of God in you, all of which is a gift and an assurance of your acceptance with God and your heirship to eternal life. Maintain these with the spirit of watchfulness, which is commanded by the Scriptures, and the prayer for wisdom to direct your walks in acceptable ways.

May the blessings of the all-wise God attend you always as churches and individuals, that you may be brought through all tribulations and troubles more than conquerors through him who loves us and gave himself for us.

P. W. Sawin, Moderator
J. T. McCoun, Clerk
T. J. Ratliff, Ass't Clerk

(When we read this in their minutes of 1910, and finding it expressive of our own thoughts, we desired to publish it. — J. D.W.)

1320 Aspen Street,
Danville, Virginia

Dear Brother Spangler:

I enjoy the Signs of the Times very much, for it sets forth my travels, and expresses what I believe better than I can. I have loved the Primitive Baptists all my life: they were the first people I ever heard preach. When I was a little girl I loved to be with them and hear them talk. When I was very young I felt to be the greatest sinner on earth, and had a great desire to pray. Some way my burden left me, though I was

grieved that I couldn't live as I wished. It has been a mixture of joy and sorrow, yet the Lord has been wonderful to me.

When the Lord is pleased to shower his blessings on us, it is a foretaste of heaven; and we are enabled to forget our many trials and afflictions for awhile. Our little hope is the greatest thing on earth; yet I am fearful lots of times. "The Lord safely leads my soul along; his loving kindness, O how strong!"

A sister, I hope,
Mary J. Patterson

6915 Laredo Street,
Houston 20, Texas

Dear Editors and Readers of the Signs:

It is time to send my renewal to the Signs, so I am enclosing it.

The dear paper is a welcome visitor in our home, and is a stay between our meeting days. The letters from the dear brethren and sisters, together with the sermons from God's chosen ministers, are food to the soul. We are given comfort and assurance from them, if given a spiritual mind and understanding.

Our mind is a blank most of the time, but, if not deceived, we have been made to feel the goodness of our Lord in our varied travels and trials in this low ground of sorrow. When in the valley of woe and despair we are led to call on Him, who is our ever present help, and he never forsakes his people. But am I one of his, is the great question which he alone can answer.

May God in his great mercy help you to continue to publish the Signs for the comfort of his saints. From one saved by the grace of an omipotent God through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, with no merit or effort of our own.

Mrs. Irene Wisenbaker

Spokane 52, Wash.
7814 N. Gale,

Signs of the Times,
Dear Brethren:

I enclose money order for my renewal to the Signs.

I hope this finds all strong in the faith once delivered to the saints, not having any confidence in the flesh; for, if I read my Bible right, in the flesh dwells no good thing. We have been richly blessed in the last year and a half by having meetings every 5th Sunday of the month in our home here in Spokane. So far it has been a season of peace and rejoicing.

Elder Attebery from Oregon has served as our pastor, and Elder Davis of Riffe, and Elder Hall, have come several times and spoken comforting words to us. It seems so strange to me, as I think of the past.. I haven't been too well, having had heart surgery six years ago, and it bothers me to travel too much, yet God, in his infinite mercy, and goodness beyond comprehension, has seen fit to bring the church to my door. No wonder I feel like casting myself on my face before Him when I think of these things.

I know He has others here of far more value than I, but just the same I have been allowed to meet with them in praise of His mercy, to worship him in spirit and in truth, I hope. And I hope that as we gather together, we can be humble, and cast off our shoes, as Moses at the burning bush; and "Be still and know that I am God." Here is joy unspeakable, and here our Saviour reigns. May God bless and keep you.

One of the least,
Mary L. Eckard

Perrin, Texas

Dear Editors and Readers
of the Signs of the Times:

I enclose my renewal to the Signs, and regret that I am a little late.

There are many things on my mind in regard to God and godliness, since

I have been reading in the book of Isaiah, where he speaks of the many wonderful things that should take place when Christ was come, and the glory of the good things that should follow him.

We believe we saw some of these things at the association the first Sunday in September. There were lots of Old Baptists, and some as able preaching as I have heard. It seemed that the brethren felt the admonition of poor old Peter, "See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." This new birth is the cause of all the true worship there is; and we all hope that we have been, "Begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

. . . I had a birthday the 13th of June (1959), and was 90 years old. The good people of Perrin brought dinner and gave me a pleasant time, for which I felt very thankful to the great God of the whole earth, and to the people for their friendship and their love for me as a neighbor. I realize I will not be here long to read the good Signs of the Times.

Your brother, I hope,
C. Y. Osteen

1160 Halifax Road,
Danville, Virginia

Dear Brother Spangler:

It is getting near the time for me to renew my subscription for the Signs of the Times. My mind is still upon the true doctrine you proclaimed from the 2nd chapter of Acts at dear old Malmasion. The message delivered by you from the text was buried deep within me, as I have experienced so many of the things you recalled to my memory. You mentioned Brother Charlie Evans who was the pastor of Malmasion at the time I was given a home with the people I had loved from childhood.

This home was given me in August, 1916, which is 44 years ago this coming August. O what a trying time I spent from the year 1914 to 1916! I went through so many trials and temptations, which, I do believe, worked for my good; but I did not know it at the time. When the dear Saviour brought me to his banqueting house with the banner of his love, it was different from what I had hoped for: my desire was that if the Lord ever did have mercy on my poor soul, to call me out of darkness into his marvelous light, it would happen to me at Mountain Springs Church, located near Spring Garden, Virginia, where I lived.

My Daddy named the little village, Spring Garden; where he reared all his eleven children. Mountain Spring was named by my brother, J. W. Bryant, on Route 29, near Chatham, Virginia; which now is called Banister Springs. Elder Octavus Boaze was the pastor then of Mountain Springs Church. I dreamed of him baptizing me before I ever saw him or heard of him. I was baptized the 4th Sunday in August by Elder Charlie Evans in my Daddy's pond on the meeting day for Elder Boaze to preach at Mountain Springs. When I came out of the water the lovely band of people were taking my hand in fellowship: they all looked just alike and so beautiful I found myself kissing them. I shall never forget Brother Ben Evans on that day. That day I was given rest for my laboring soul.

After I was given a home with the dear people at Malmasion the first Saturday in August, I began to doubt that I was a fit subject for baptism. I begged the Lord for more evidence. In a dream I went into the pond (I have mentioned my Daddy being deceased) and I saw him in the air in white apparel, and a white dove on his shoulder: he was over

the pond looking down upon me. Brother Spangler, I never ask for more evidence after that.

While under conviction all my family talked among themselves that I was going to die, as they thought I had T. B. and I had lost considerable weight. In the meantime I began reading the Bible by beginning with Genesis; and when I got to Revelation, the Devil told me over and over that if I read the last chapter of Revelation, I was going to die. I believed him until the loving Saviour took him far away from me for a season. I would like to tell you all the connections to this but will not take up your valuable time. . . .

We were glad to have you with us at Malmasion. I recall so many of your sermons when you were pastor there. Enclosed you will find $5.00 for 2 years renewal to the Signs of the Times.

I hope I am looking by faith for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. May God's richest blessings be upon you, and keep you in the way. Remember me to your loving wife, and in your prayers, I humbly ask.

Nettie A. Evans

ELDER RUSTON TO ELDER SPANGLER

Dutton, Ontario, Canada.

My Dear Brother Spangler:

As I read your excellent article in the March Signs I felt I wanted to tell you that I enjoyed it very much. Its clarity and simplicity appealed to me, and I feel that it will be read with pleasure and profit by quite a few of God's dear children.

While, as you say, there have been different views expressed, I feel that in my own case the various views have caused me to think and to read the word of God. I remember one of our good ministers used to sing, "There were ninety and nine that safely lay in the shelter of the fold." The song was very appealing; but when one began to read, they did not lie in the shelter of the fold: They were left in the wilderness; which seemed to bring the expresion to mind: "But with many of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness."

When the Good Shepherd brought the lost sheep back, it was not to the ninety and nine, but he called together his friends. I liked that very much: he is the great Shiloh. Jacob said in Genesis 49:10, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Jesus in John 15:15, said to those he had called out, "Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth, but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."

The whole piece, and especially your address to the reader, was very sweet to me. I could say, yes, "Jesus sought me when a stranger wandering from the fold of God." Those self-righteous Pharisees could never sing from the heart: "I once was lost, but now am found." No; they could and did cry, "Crucify him, crucify him."

I hope this finds you and yours well; we are having our winter this last week or so. It seems to be one continual snow storm, not so deep but drifting badly. . . .

Much love to you and yours,
Your brother,
George Ruston

Pocomoke, Md.

Dear Brethren:

As I seem to have something on my mind, if the Lord is pleased to direct my pen, I will try to write my thoughts.

"The Lord is my shpeherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside

the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." (Psalm 23)

This is a wonderful portion of scripture, and I love to read and re-read it. The last part of the 5th verse: "thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.", is full of meaning to me. The word oil is used in a number of different ways.It seems to me that here it is the oil of salvation. Then for a cup to run over, it must be full — more than plenty to fill it; and if our heads are anointed with oil, we have plenty. In 1st Kings 17:10 to 16, we find the woman had only a handfull of meal, and a little oil in a cruse: and this was a plenty; for, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail; and she and her house did eat many days." So I am persuaded to believe that if we have a little oil, we have plenty.

The question arises, Where do we get the oil? The five foolish virgins took no oil with them; while the five wise had oil in their vessels with their lamps. And though the five foolish went to buy, and tried to borrow, when they returned the bridegroom had come, and the door was shut. If they had been of those chosen before the foundation of the world, they would have been blessed with the oil — He would have known them.

This proves to me that the oil cannot be borrowed, bought, nor made by men. It is by the grace of God alone. If one had this oil, no matter how little it may seem, it will be a plenty, and he will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

An unworthy brother in hope,
Frank A. Holland

Stuart, Oklahoma
Rt. 1, Box 5

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am enclosing payment for my subscription to bring it up to date and for two years to come. You cannot know just how much the dear paper means to me: we get to go to Dustin two times a year to a three day meeting in May and also in October. Dustin is forty miles from Stuart. I think we have a lovely band of Old Baptists, and there is so much love manifested among them: we are made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord.

One copy of the Signs is worth the price of the paper — it means so very much to me. If I could write like so many do, I would not mind trying to write. So many of their sweet letters tell my feelings better than I can. I was reared by Primitive Baptists; my mother was Mrs. E. F. Little, who passed away in 1939, at the age of 95 years. My maiden name was Minnie Little.

My husband and I both attend the two meetings at Dustin, and we look forward to them. The Old Baptists are dear to me, but I am not worthy to be with them. When I read the "Heaven Sent Breakfast" in the March issue, I was reminded of a cold, winter evening when I was impressed to take some quilts to a family about a mile from our home. It was continually on my mind, and though the walking was slippery, I made it. The woman was sick, and I knew she did not have sufficient covers to keep warm. She and her little girl were both sick with the flu, and she asked me to put a quilt on each bed, and I did so.

I feel that it was the Lord's doing, that He put it in my heart to do so; and I was happy. I want to give him all the praise, for it was through him, and nothing to my praise. What we have is of the dear Lord, and we feel to divide with others less fortunate than ourselves. The Lord impresses us what

to do, and when we do them we are happy. I believe in an all powerful God, who has all power both in heaven and in earth, and there is none that can stay his hand.

I know I come short of doing the things I feel I ought to do, but may the dear Lord enable me to do his will. "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God; not of works lest any man should boast." Yes, I believe in salvation by grace, but I wonder so much of the time if I am one of God's little ones. Is there anyone like me? It seems that my life has been full of mistakes and short comings. Remember me in your prayers.

Unworthily,
Mrs. J. T. Black

EXCERPTS FROM A SERMON

(Excerpts from a sermon preached by Elder W. C. King at Bush Arbor Church, N. C., on December 13, 1959.)

Recorded in the gospel according to St. Luke, 1st chapter, 37th verse, are these words: "For with God nothing shall be impossible."

We find in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. There was no man to help or to hinder: there was no man upon the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And God said, "Let there be light, and there was light." God divided the light from the darkness, and called the light day, and the darkness he called night. The things that would be impossible with man are possible with God.

The Lord said unto Abram, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred [illegible] from thy father's house, unto a la[illegible] that I will show thee." God told him that he would make of him a great nation, and that his seed should be as the sand of the sea. Abram was one hundred years old and his wife, Sarah, was ninety years old, when the Lord appeared unto him saying, "Sarah thy wife shall have a son." Sarah laughed, realizing she was old and stricken in age. But, according to God's promise, Isaac was born. The things that are impossible with men are possible with God.

If I could, I would like this morning to point out to you some of the things that seem impossible with men but are possible with God: Knowing that he has all power in heaven and in earth, does all things after the counsel of his own will, having seen the end from the beginning.

Men by wisdom cannot understand how that Daniel could be cast into a den of lions and not be destroyed. Yet God had sent his angels and shut the lions' mouths that no harm should be done to Daniel; He having all power even over the beasts of the forest, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea. He could cause the raven to feed Elijah — to find him in his desolation and sadness, and feed him meat and bread twice a day. We know by nature the raven would prefer to feed upon his body, but God commanded the raven to feed Elijah. How impossible these things seem to man. God makes a way where there is no way.

When the Hebrew children refused to worship the false gods, King Nebuchadnezzar ordered that the furnace be heated one seven times more than it was wanted to be heated. He commanded the most mighty men of his army to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. The king arose early, and in haste said to his counsellors, "Did we not cast in thee? Lo, I see four men walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt. The form of the fourth is like unto the Son of God." We cannot understand with the carnal mind how these things can be: without even the smell of smoke upon their garments. No condition or circumstance is such that our God doesn't have complete power to save from every destruction. Many of the trials and experiences of God's little ones here in this world seem a miracle, yet in God's holy providence all provisions are made for their security and

protection.

The angel from heaven appeared unto Zacharias when he was in the temple of the Lord about the duties and customs of the priest's office. When Zacharias saw the angel fear fell upon him, but the angel said unto him, "Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John . . . For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall neither drink wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. . . And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just: to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." How impossible this must have seemed to Zacharias, knowing that his wife Elisabeth was old, and barren. He asked the angel, "Whereby shall I know this?" The angel answering said, "I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings. And, behold, thou shall be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed." When Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered, she brought forth a son. When the cousins and neighbors heard how the Lord had showed great mercy upon her, they began to talk about a name for the child. Some, of course, wanted to name him after his father, but his mother said, "Not so; but he shall be called John." They reasoned that none of their kindred was called by that name; and they made signs to his father how he would have him called, and he asked for a writing table, and he wrote, "His name is John." Immediately his mouth was opened, and his tongue loosed, and he spake and praised God.

Do you not sometimes challenge God, dear believer, by asking him to give you some greater evidence of his love and mercy to you, that you might have a greater assurance of his promises?

Sometimes in our meditations and prayers we ask God to grant us certain things. I remember so well in my early experience, when I asked God just to spare my life until a certain time, and if he would do that, I would be submissive to what I felt to be my duty. But I found that I was not able to keep my promise even to God when he had spared my life to see the time requested. My heart was as cold as ice. I was made to weep and cry unto him for mercy, learning that I was not my own keeper: That without Him I could do nothing.

God sent an angel unto a city of Galilee to a virgin espoused to a man named Joseph. This virgin was Mary. The angel said, "Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him she was troubled and the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus . . . He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." "Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." "For with God nothing shall be impossible."

"Then Joseph her husband being a just man and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privately. But while he thought on these things, behold the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream saying, "Joseph thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost and she shall bring forth a son and they shall call his name, Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." "Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him and took unto him, his

wife. Knowing her not until she had brought forth her firstborn son and he called his name Jesus." How impossible this seems to men; how preposterous for human reasoning to believe that a virgin should conceive of the Holy Ghost and bring forth a son; even Mary pondered these things in her own heart. "For with God nothing shall be impossible."

Joseph and Mary went up from Galilee to Bethlehem to be taxed. While they were there the days were accomplished that she should be delivered, and she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

The angels of God made the announcement of the birth of the blessed Saviour of sinners, to those humble shepherds who were abiding in the field keeping watch over their flock by night; saying, "Fear not for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour, which is Christ Jesus the Lord." I feel this morning that when the Gospel is preached it is good tidings of great joy, coming from a far country; so far that mortal arms can't reach it, yet so near that it can be felt in every heart that God has touched by the finger of his love.

There was no room in the city of Philippi, although God showed Paul by vision to, "Come over to Macedonia to help us." As great as this Roman city might have been there was no place for the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. We find Paul on the Sabbath going out of the city by the river bank, a place where prayer was want to be made. The Lord opened the heart of Lydia, not only did she hear but she attended to the things she heard, and was baptized; and said to Paul, "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord come into my house and abide there." I want to say to you beloved that there is a love; a power that binds the hearts of believers together that the world by wisdom can never know. They are hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. Just as these shepherds were made willing to leave their flocks and every possession; they had to go to where their Saviour was. No man will desire to go where their Lord and Master is until they have had his love in their hearts. These wise men had the Star of Bethlehem to guide them. I believe that star is still shining. Every poor sin benighted soul has their eyes set on that star and the Lord Jesus Christ to lead and guide them to that City of habitation.

We don't know how many days it took them to travel the distance they covered. I don't know how many valleys they had to cross and how many mountains they had to climb. I don't think they turned either to the right or left. They had their eyes set on the Star of Bethlehem. It is Jesus Christ your Lord and Master that you have your eyes focused on. Every poor helpless sinner has learned there is no where else to go. You can witness with Paul when he said it was better for him to depart. I am so glad he told us why it was better, — to be with my Lord Jesus Christ.

So these wise men were so divinely sent; nothing could prevent them from reaching where this child Jesus lay. They found him in a manger wrapped in swaddling clothes. They presented to him these treasures, gold, myrrh and frankincense. Herod had told them, "When you have found him come and tell me that I might go and worship him." Herod no doubt thought that he would dethrone him as King. Oh, how wonderful and past finding out is the great work of our God. He had the wise men to go back another way. You or I can never go over this road but once. How much you would like to have some of your experiences of God's precious presence with you over again! The things that are impossible with men are possible with God. It was never the desire of Jesus to be honored and praised by men for what he did. When men

sought to praise him and to make him King, we find him absenting himself from the crowd, going to the mountains in prayer. The poor, needy souls he never turned away empty. The poor leper that came to him (who knew he was doomed to be cast into isolation, and there to spend his last and expiring days, had faith to believe that Jesus could heal him. We hear him saying to Jesus, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Jesus had the power to cleanse the leprous. This morning do you not believe that he still has the same power to cleanse you from all sin; that your soul can be set free, that the dungeon cell can be opened, and the shackles fall from you? The Lord Jesus Christ only can set you free. That which the Lord had cleansed is cleansed forever. The Lord's people are drawn to him by the cords of his love. We love him because he first loved us. We are drawn from the world and its pleasures into his blessed love and fellowship. There may be times when Satan will prey upon you so heavily that you will be made to feel that after all you are mistaken in the whole matter.

John was in prison but made to cry unto God, "Is this the way or shall I look for another?" God has always come to his people; not just when they want him too, but at his appointed time. These disciples of John were told to go and show John again these things ye do hear and see. The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up and the poor have the Gospel preached to them. Oh, how much we need to be reassured that this is the way that leads to the City of habitation! Sometimes in my traveling over strange roads I have a road map. I have it all marked out, the road I want to go. But there are times when I have traveled long distances without seeing a road sign. I become uneasy about the way; then all of a sudden I see a sign pointing the way I wanted to go, how good I feel. Is it true, dear trembling souls, that you too desire some renewed evidence as you travel this lonely road? Is this the way or shall I look for another? No wonder the poet could say, "I am a stranger here below and what I am tis hard to know, I am so vile so proned to sin, I often fear that I am not born again." Has this been your experience as you travel in this low ground of trouble and cares, doubts and fears? Then God opens little oasis in the desert that you may rest and find water to quench your thirst. They are handfuls of purpose.

Herod entered his decree that all the male children two years and under should be destroyed. By this decree Herod was sure that the Christ Child would be destroyed. How impossible that decree was, just as God had warned the wise men that they shouldn't return back to Herod, but go back another way. The Lord appeared to Joseph and told him to take the child and its mother and flee into Egypt. The Scripture tells us that they departed in the night. Oh, how much of our traveling seems so dark as in the night! The Lord appeared again to Joseph when Herod was dead saying, "Arise take the young child and his mother and go into the land of Israel." The unseen power of the everlasting God was controlling every move to take care of this blessed child.

Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem at the Feast of the Passover every year, and they carried this child Jesus with them, who was twelve years old at that time. When they had fulfilled the days and started on their journey back, Jesus tarried in Jerusalem. After a day's travel they sought him among some kinsfolk and acquaintances, but they found him not. So they went back to Jerusalem seeking him some three days. Later they found him in the temple sitting in the midst of Doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. When they saw him they were amazed. His mother said unto him, "Why hast thou dealt with us? Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, "How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

How strong and amazing it must have been to see this lad of a boy, the son of a poor carpenter there in the Temple among the most learned and intelligent people of the land asking and answering questions. Yes, he must be about his Father's business. God's business is a business so important that he can call men from the various occupations of life and cause them to leave all and follow him.

The Scriptures have but little to say about Jesus from about the age of twelve until about thirty. "He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them, and Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." John says, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." We know the half will never be told. No power that could be formed could take his life until the appointed time of the Father. Every demand of the law must be fulfilled. The church of the living God must be cleansed from all sin by the one offering of our Heavenly Father, his only son Jesus Christ.

How impossible it seemed to his own disciples when he began to tell them that he must go away, must leave them that the Holy Comforter may come. When he had eaten the last supper with them, he tells them that I am now betrayed and shall be crucified and put to death, and I shall rise again on the third day.

I want to say to you that every single soul that has ever come into this blessed fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ is brought there by His own glorious power and love. It is an impossibility that men in nature, or natural minds, can know this glorious truth as it is in Christ our Lord. No greater miracle can be performed than to see a poor sinful lost man or woman that seemingly have had no love for heaven or immortal glory, be touched by the finger of God's love and turned about by his Holy Spirit, made to come down in sackcloth and in ashes to beg God for mercy on their poor, sinful souls. What is more impossible than that to human reasoning? Confessing that by the grace of God I am what I am, having no confidence in the flesh. No man can resist successfully this blessed power. It subdues and brings you under subjection and makes you willing in the day of his power; ascribing all power to his Holy name. You and I can't understand the great mystery of godliness unless they are revealed to us.

How impossible it must have been for those who would comfort Mary and Martha, to believe that Jesus could raise Lazarus from the grave after he had been dead four days. Mary and Martha didn't believe that he would be raised until the resurrection of the last day. Jesus said unto them, "I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth on me though he were dead, yet shall he live." Jesus asked, "Where have ye laid him? They said, come and see." Jesus had only to say, "Lazarus come forth," and he that was dead came forth.

Oh! what grief and sorrow it brings to us when our love ones are taken from us. It is impossible for us to call them back. Their spirits return to God, while their bodies rest in the grave to return to dust from whence they come, awaiting our blessed Saviour to come again and call them to come forth. I can't tell you my beloved this morning how these things shall be, but I can assure you they will come at his command, without blemish, spot, or wrinkle or any such thing, to be made like unto his own glorious body.

His promise to his dear ones cannot fail. I believe with all my soul that he will come again. He told his disciples before he was crucified: "I go to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am you may be there also."

If I never address you any more on this side of eternity, I want to tell you that Jesus reigns. This child Jesus

which was born in Judea in the City of Bethlehem is still alive. He is seated at the right hand of God making intercession for his saints upon the earth, and that he will at his own time call the jewels of his mercy unto himself. There will not be one of the objects of his mercy that shall not hear his blessed voice to arise and come forth to be like unto his own glorious body.

As we approach this Christmas season we would if we could share our natural resources with those less fortunate, but we know there is a limit. We know we can do but so much, yet I can point you to one whose eternal power and love is without limitation or bounds. He is able to reach the most remote parts of the earth and give a gift that far surpasses all the gifts that man can give. So I say to you this morning that the greatest gift that you have ever received or that you will receive as these days come, is the gift of his Holy Spirit in your heart as your Saviour; who is the anchor to your soul both sure and steadfast. Anchored to that within the veil that shall never be severed. This gift will never be obsolete or out of date. I am persuaded that as the years go by and we grow older, these precious promises become brighter. We know our shoulders become stooped, our heads silver for the tomb, the time for our departure is near. His promise becomes more precious, that he will not leave nor forsake us but will be with us always even to the end.

I want to assure you that all things are possible with God. Not one single blessing that God sees you stand in need of will be withheld from you; though He has left you here in a land of trials and afflictions, the eternal God is at the helm. He will do all his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and his church shall be brought out from the world by his mighty hand and at last be presented to the Father a glorious Church perfect as himself.

How impossible it would seem to us that the sleeping dead in yonder tombs, that have been there, some of them more than one hundred and fifty years. We know that there is no form of human body left. They have gone back to the dust from whence they came. It is impossible for us to tell you how this shall be. I can tell you that with God nothing is impossible. I have every reason to believe that the same God that created the heaven and the earth is able to cause these dead bodies to arise and come forth.

John saw the Holy City new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and shall be their God. God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."

What a glorious hope we have. What a blessed promise that some day we are going to move into this new house made not by hands, from this old house of clay. One day we are going to leave the cares and burdens of this sinful world to go home to God to appear in his likeness, to see him as he is, to be like him; where we can ascribe all honor and praise to his Holy Name forever. Momentarily here in this life we feel that our souls are lifted to the mountain top, soon to find we are again in the valley of despair. We are told that in this glory land there will be no shedding of tears. No sorrow can come, no death to separate us from love ones. What a glorious Saviour we have. One who has power to call us from the ways of this world, into the blessed fellowship of our God and with his saints upon the earth kept by the power of God ready to be revealed at the last day.

In conclusion let me say, May God bless you, keep and guide you in wisdom's ways, and at last deliver you securely and safely into the fold of God, where sickness, sorrow, and death and

separation shall be no more.

"For with God nothing shall be impossible."

DESIRED AND SHOWN A TOKEN FOR GOOD

(Psalm 86:17)

Quite often in this realm of sin,
Doubts and fears arise;
That is when true believers all
The presence of Jesus prize.

However bright their experience be,
Their comforts will decline
By God's own act to draw them nigh,
Or by chastisement condign.

I will relate an experience had
When I in gloom was found:
I trust it was of the Lord, for
My comforts did abound.

I sat down in my home one night
With my hymn book in hand,
Wondering if my sins were pardoned —
Oh! where did I stand?

I desired if my sins were forgiven,
That I might open at a song
Relating to the forgiveness of sin:
And this answer came along:

"Blessed with the pardon of her sin,
My soul beneath thy shade would lie,
And sing the love that took me in,
While others sank in sin to die."

Faith laid hold of these words, for
I retired in solid peace;
And I hope this was a foretaste of
The joys that never cease.

C. W. Vass
307 New York Ave.
Elizabeth City, N. C.

ANNUAL MEETING

The **Bethel Primitive Baptist Church** of Riffe, Washington, holds her Annual Meeting on the third Sunday (and Friday and Saturday before) in August.

Visitors are welcome to meet with us.

Elder Ernest Attebery, Pastor
Mrs. Vernie Schoonover, Church Clerk

ANNUAL MEETING AT SLATE HILL CHURCH

The annual meeting of the **Brookfield Old School Baptist Church** at Slate Hill, New York, will be held the 1st Saturday in August — August 6, 1960.

Members and friends are cordially invited to attend the meeting at this historic meeting house.

E. K. Adsit, Acting Clerk,
Shokan, N. Y.

UNION MEETING

A union meeting of the Predestinarian Primitive Baptist churches in California will be held, the Lord willing, with the Little Flock Church, of Bakersfield, on October 28, 29 and 30, at the Oddfellows Hall, 2930 Alpine St., Bakersfield, Calif. Phone EXport 9-0429 or EXport 9-4000.

Elder T. R. Jefferson, Pastor
Bertha S. Wright, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To May 1, 1960)

S. F. Pyles, Ky.	$2.00
Mrs. G. L. Reaves, Fla.	7.00
Mrs. Mary J. Murphy, Ark.	1.00
Mrs. J. B. Simmons, Tex.	6.00
Elder W. D. Griffin, Md.	5.00
Mrs. Ethel Werner, N. J.	7.00

(Note correction from May issue)

NOTICE OF ASSOCIATIONS

THE MAINE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, on September 2, 3, and 4, 1960.

An invitation is extended to those of our faith and order, and interested friends.

Mrs. Sanford Bartlett, Clerk

THE DELAWARE ASSOCIATION

The Delaware Association is appointed to meet with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, on July 2 and 3, 1960. The meeting house is located on Route 222, near the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line.

An invitation is extended to those of our faith and order and all interested friends.

Charles B. Osborne, Clerk

SMITHS RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Smiths River Association is appointed to convene with the Knob Church, Franklin Couny, Virginia, on Friday, Saturday and 1st Sunday in September, 1960, the Lord willing. Knob Church is located about three miles from Henry, Virginia.

Amos I. Hash

THE UPPER COUNTRY LINE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Lick Fork, Saturday, Sunday and Monday, July 16, 17, and 18, 1960.

Lick Fork Church is located two miles South of Ruffin, N.C., just off U. S. Highway 29. From the North go to Ruffin, N. C., (15 miles from Danville) towards Reidsville, N. C., and inquire. From the South follow Route 29 from Reidsville to Ruffin, N. C., and inquire.

Our correspondents, brethren and friends are invited.

(Elder) J. W. Gilliam, Clerk

PIGG RIVER DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

The Pigg River District Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with Chestnut Church, Franklin County, Virginia, to begin on Friday before the 1st Sunday in August and continue through Sunday. Chestnut Church may be reached from the North by going three miles South of Rocky Mount, Virginia, on Route 220, to Castle's old store; turn left on hard road four miles just beyond Sontag School; then turn right one-half mile on hard surfaced road to the meeting house. Those coming from the South on Route 220 will turn right at the same place.

Our correspondents and all interested brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

John D. Wood, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with Springfield Church, Gretna, Virginia, beginning Friday July 8th and continuing through Sunday. The meeting-house is located on U. S. 29 in Gretna, Virginia.

Correspondents, brethren and interested friends are invited to meet with us.

R. C. Dalton, Church Clerk

Danville, Virginia **July, 1960**

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 5, Box 332F **Danville, Va.**

EDITORIAL

"And if it seems evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods." (Joshua 24:15, 16)

I have a request from an elder in North Carolina, to write on this subject; and as I have had some pleasant meditations concerning this scripture, I will endeavor to present such thoughts as may be given, leaving the disposal of the matter with the Lord.

It is interesting to note, in the Lord's word, the expressions of the various writers as the time of their departure from this world approached. We have recorded the last words of David, the departing message of Moses, Joseph, and many others. As the time approach-

ed with them, no doubt the tie that had bound them one unto another was felt more strongly.

This would especially be true of a minister and his flock; or a leader, as Moses or Joshua, of the people of Israel. I heard my father say a short time before he died that he had only two reasons which cause him to desire to remain here: one was his family, and the other was his brethren. I know of no tie like the tie that binds the shepherd and his flock.

Among the last words of David we hear him saying, "The spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Irsael spake by me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain. Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he maketh it not to grow."

David here looks forward to the coming of Jesus, and the bringing in of the everlasting covenant of grace: as the rising of the sun in the morning, even as a morning without clouds. His beloved people see him today in his perfect righteousness, and the redemption of his people as the Sun of Righteousness, rising with healing in his wings. And as they behold him in his beauty, their faith lays hold of him as their salvation, and it is a morning without clouds with them.

Moses who typified the law dispensation, in his departing words to the Children of Israel, could behold them resting under the shadow of God's wing, and say, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy before thee, and shall say, Destroy them." "Happy art thou, O Israel, who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places." Moses, though not permitted to enter the promised land, was favored to see Israel supported by the everlasting arm of God, and resting in Him as a place of refuge.

Now to the subject. Joshua was a type of Jesus; he was the leader appointed to lead the Israelites across Jordan into the promised land. After crossing Jordan and entering into the land that God had promised them, the people witnessed many miracles that God wrought among them: The walls of Jericho fell down before them without a battle; and their many deliverances from their enemies, was a constant reminder that the race was not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. Lands for which they did not labor, and vinyards they did not plant were given them; and though chastened by the Lord, they were given tokens of His everlasting love.

Joshua, in his departing words, is putting the people to the test. In doing so, he reminds them of the goodness of God towards them in overcoming their enemies: fighting their battles, and giving them lands for which they did not labor; and mentioned many other mercies of their God towards them. There has never been anything that so stirs the hearts of God's people, to cause them to desire to serve him in meekness and fear, as a reminder to them of how gracious and merciful God has been to them — poor, vile, hell deserving sinners.

Dear reader, has it not been so with you? No exhortation, no admonition, no rebuke, no encouragement to the Lord's people can be effectual unless coupled with a reminder of God's mercies to them. All true and genuine obedience must flow from the love of God and the knowledge of his great mercies. As one looks back over the uneven journey of life, and here and there remembers all the way the Lord has brought him, how

it fills him with a sense of unworthiness in himself; and with a desire to acknowledge his mercies by serving him in sincerity and truth. Holding forth a blessing as a reward for serving him, will never take the place of the reminder of his great grace and mercy.

Joshua did not offer the people a choice of serving the Lord or the Devil, as many preach today. The testing of them was in their attitude toward God in their services: If it seems evil to serve God, if it is not something delightful to you to acknowledge his great mercies in your service, then your service is not true service wrought by His love. This obedience must be as the Psalmist speaks, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."

If it seemed evil to them to serve the Lord, then the choice with them was among the false gods. If we do not serve the true and living God, then one choice among false gods is as good as another. This was not a suggestion to the people to serve false gods, but a reminder to them of the way the Lord had brought them, and the searching of their hearts as to the motive which prompted them in their obedience unto the Lord. This was the dividing line then, and is the dividing line today between those who serve with a hope of reward (which is the doctrine of works), and those whose serving Him is produced by their great love for Him. D. V. S.

"THE LORD KNOWETH THEM THAT ARE HIS"

We are happy to note that there is an increasing awareness among our people that there are things being advocated under the name of Primitive or Old School Baptists which do not accord with the doctrine held by brethren generations ago. We read some of it ourself; and our correspondents often mention it.

One sister wrote that she and others get so confused in hearing, from various sources, and under the name of Primitive Baptists, doctrines and interpretations which are not all like they were when she united with the church. She mentioned also that many were not preaching the doctrine which was preached by Elders Beebe and Gold, and others.

Another sister wrote that her church had been taken over by those holding progressive views; and that their doctrines and practices were entirely different from that held by former brethren. She found it impossible to stay with them.

In our reply to one of the sisters, we wrote:

"We remember well our many visits with the brethren and friends in your part of the country; and the joy we had in meeting together, and hearing the gospel preached. . . But there have been many changes in the past few years — sometimes in doctrine, sometimes in order, until those who are given grace to be aware of the changes, are made sick at heart.

"It is no wonder you feel confused, with some contending for one thing, and some for another; with quite a difference on the one hand in the doctrine which was held by those you knew when you first came into the church. But you are blessed to discern that there is a difference; which some apparently are not.

"We cannot help but wonder why things are as they are: Why brethren are led away from the old paths which they and their fathers once rejoiced in, and take up with things they once could have nothing to do with.

"There have always been, perhaps, some who were not discerners of doctrine and order, yet who were good brethren in many ways. It is evident that some are led deeper into the mysteries of godliness than others, and who are bulwarks against deviation from that which distinguishes their brethren from all others. Just why any should follow the leadership of men to the disruption of fellowship, is a thing we wonder at.

"I am glad that you mentioned the

doctrine contended for by Elders Beebe, Gold, etc. I have tried to point out many times that the doctrine of Elder Beebe and the other brethren, on which the Signs of the Times was founded, and which was plainly stated in the separation of the Old School from the New School, is Bible doctrine, and is the doctrine of Primitive or Old School Baptists, being held by them from the beginning.

"This Bible doctrine declares the sovereignty of God over all things, and that it is by grace alone that his people are what they are; that there are no conditions at all for sinners of themselves to meet in order to be saved; nor are their blessings obtained by their good works. I liked so much your expression, 'I believe the grace of God not only tells the people of God, but teaches them that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly and righteously in this world — not to gain something, but because of something.'

"We are admonished to hold fast the form of sound words, which is not always done by many having the name of Baptist. Some would have all who hold the name to come together, but this could not be done; for there are those brethren with whom the doctrine and order are rightly held to mean more than anything else, being essential to the peaceful walking together in the unity of the Spirit. . ."

We quote the above because it expresses what we would say concerning these things to the brethren in general; and because we would point out to them that departure from the doctrine as taught by the Lord and his Apostles, is a serious matter; and that knowing there is the difference, it rightly brings the question as to whether we have really been taught of the Lord. When it is declared that there should rise up among you men having itching ears, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, the little, fearful child of God is continually examining himself whether he be in the faith — he is careful to ask for grace and wisdom not to be led astray, or to lead others astray from the old path.

Are there those who are at ease in Zion? Are there those who want smooth things? Are there those who are not experimentally acquainted with the doctrine, and to whom order means almost nothing?

There is no doubt that these things exist. But, on the other hand, there are those who bear the burden of these things, and who are continually confessing that we are sinners; and whose prayers are continually before the throne for the welfare of Zion, and for grace to know and stand in the old way so as not to be carried about by every wind of doctrine.

It seems to be a dark hour for those of us who are so vitally concerned. But there have been many such dark hours before, and it has always been proved that the grace of God is sufficient for all the needs of his people. The Lord is not standing by helpless, waiting for men or devils to change their ways, and to let his people alone. Neither is He ignorant of what is going on in the church and in the world. In his own time and way he will make bare his mighty arm, and the voices that cry against the things which disturb his people, will be vindicated in seeing that the Lord still has a remnant reserved to maintain the truth as long as the world stands.

It is worse than folly to believe that the Lord has turned over the keeping of his people to the people themselves while in their time state. This would be contrary to the proclamation of the gospel; contrary to the covenant ordered in all things and sure; contrary to their experience; contrary to their felt sense of dependence upon the Lord; and contrary to the Lord's declaration that upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

What we write here we hope will be read by brethren and friends, and by some who, perhaps unwittingly, care more for the name Primitive Baptist

than for the doctrine of Primitive Baptists; and maybe by some who have said that in twenty years one will not be able to recognize the "Old Baptists" due to the changes taking place among them. But whoever may read it, we trust the Lord may be pleased to give the spirit of discernment, and the spirit of understanding, that, regardless of who "concerning the truth have erred, and overthrown the faith of some; nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." (2 Timothy 2:18, 19) J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Elder John McConnell)

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Middletown and Wallkill Church, at Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1910, to the several churches composing this association, sends Christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED: — It is the custom of most associations to adopt and print with their Minutes a letter addressed to the churches composing the association. The letter also circulates among the associations and churches in their correspondence, and is presumed to express mutual fellowship in the matter under consideration. It is becoming in such a letter to use words easy to be understood and to avoid foolish and unlearned questions, for if any man consent to other than wholesome words, "the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings." The word of Jesus is that "it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh," and he commands his disciples, saying, Take heed that no man deceive you; take ye heed, watch and pray; and what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch. This he taught them as being a living way of acceptance with God, and when they were endued with that Spirit "they went forth and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following." It was the gospel, the power of God unto salvation to every one that believed on Jesus through their word. In eating their bread with carefulness, pondering their path, considering their way, examining themselves and proving what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God, they obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto them, and became servants of righteousness. The words of our Lord Jesus Christ are Spirit, and are life, and "not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth." To know how frail we are is the teaching of the Lord; such "understanding is a wellspring of life unto him that hath it."

Such knowledge will make a man shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom; the wisdom that is from above, which "is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." The fruit of such righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace. These good works God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Such a workman will not make a man an offender for a word, but will follow after charity; he will prove his own work, prove he is spiritual, by considering and taking heed unto himself, and thus save himself and them that hear him. This a living way of holding fast the profession of our faith; this approves us unto God, for without faith it is impossible to please him. That one is taking heed unto himself, and unto the doctrine of godliness, who passes the time of his sojourning here in fear. The fear and obedience of Noah was ef-

fectual "to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith," and to-day the faithful in Christ Jesus do save some, and condemn others, for they are saviors prophesied of who "shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the Lord's." In that day shall they "discern between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not." No service is spiritual that is not vital, and it cannot be vital without the exercise of a vital principle. All spiritual life is hid in Christ, and by faith we live the confession that Christ is come in the flesh, and it is his Spirit that quickens us in newness of life to worship God acceptably. When the heart is fixed on God there is panting after him, a following after righteousness, and "when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life," it transforms us into hunger and thirst, and the more a sense of vileness oppresses us the more vehement desire for the beauty of holiness is wrought in us. It is according to this spirit that Jesus Christ is declared to be the Son of God with power, and no man can say he is the Lord but by that Spirit. This is calling upon the name of the Lord. In this spirit we worship God acceptably, and by this Spirit is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts.

The commandments and doctrines of men teach that the approval of God may be attained unto by works which we can do, notably, studying the Scriptures. Surely this is a vain imagination. The Scriptures contain an account of the revelation of God's will to man in different ages of the world, and of the operations of his power relative to the salvation of his people; they contain an account of the Spirit by which the writters were inspired, *but they do not contain that Spirit itself*. They record the promise of eternal life, *but that life is not in the Scriptures, but in the Son of God.* Jesus said to the Pharisees, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." They contain an account of the law of God, *but Scripture is not that law.* "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." They contain an account of the gospel of Christ, *but they are not the gospel itself.* They contain a true account of the word in all ages, according as it was delivered at sundry times and in divers manners, *but the Scriptures are not that word.* When the word of God came to any of the prophets, it was not the Bible that came to them, but the word of God which is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. *This cannot be said of the Scriptures.* The word of God is incorruptible, and liveth and abideth forever; the Bible is not so, and if the latter were put out of existence forever, the word of God would still be the same quickening Spirit.

According to the Scriptures, the word of God always dwelt in a man of God as a quickening spirit, by which he was moved to utter or write such things as it pleased God to reveal. What was thus uttered or written might be perverted, destroyed, and the man put to death, but the quickening Spirit, the word which liveth and abideth forever, could never be altered or destroyed. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable to the man of God alone, who has the word of God living and abiding in him, by which he is made perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. Surely there is a distinction between the word of God and the Scriptures, and notwithstanding the latter relates the travel of the man of God, *it must be admitted that the Spirit which inspired the writing is greater than the writings, and is therefore the only living and true guide into all truth.* The Scriptures testify of Jesus, but all

he said and did are not written. God never was dependent upon letters to reveal his will, or teach his people to know him. Certain it is, that the Scriptures are misunderstood, perverted and forced out of their true sense whenever the comments and precepts of man prevail. It is the Spirit that quickens our understanding, "casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringeth into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

Notwithstanding the confidence of the apostles that God would perform the good work begun in his brethren, until the day of Jesus Christ, they continued faithfully to exhort them to diligence in taking heed unto themselves, for, said Paul, "Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Peter did likewise, assuring them that "many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you."

These things they preached by commandment of the Lord. They were not ignorant that the evil which befell many of our fathers in the wilderness "happened unto them for ensamples: and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." And "the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils:" and, "He limiteth a certain day, saying in David, * * * To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." He that hath an ear to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches, is poor and trembleth at his word, but such are the blessed characters who have the gospel preached unto them. "Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works." Let us take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of us an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called "to-day," lest any be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

John McConnell, Clerk.
H. C. Ker, Moderator.

(Note: the italics are ours — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

DEACON WILLIAM D. CHAPMAN

Deacon William D. Chapman, of Bloomingburg, N. Y., departed this life December 26, 1959, after several months of illness. He was the son of Charles and Elizabeth Chapman, and was born May 12, 1874. He leaves to mourn his departure a cousin of New Burg, N. Y., and a host of Old School Baptist brethren and friends, since he was loved and highly esteemed by all.

Brother Chapman united with the Middletown Old School Baptist Church, of Middletown, N. Y., June 25, 1944, and was baptized July 23, 1944 by the late Elder R. Lester Dodson, the pastor at that time. Brother Chapman proved to be a faithful brother, and was much devoted to his church and ever ready and willing to do all that he could for her welfare, and the cause of Christ. He was always ready to give a helping hand to his sister churches wherever he was needed. Some years after the passing of Elder Dodson his pastor, the writer was called as pastor of the Middletown Church, and the brethren saw the gift of deacon in Brother Chapman; and, though he did not feel worthy for such, he was set apart by the church on April 26, 1953, to the office of deacon. He proved very faithful to the office as long as he was able.

His passing leaves a vacancy that none but God can fill. We can but say that the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken; blessed be the name of the Lord.

Funeral service was held from his home at Bloomingburg, N. Y., conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder W. D. Griffin. Burial was in the New Burg Cemetery, New Burg, N. Y.

Elder A. J. Slauson

MEMORIAL TO BROTHER JOE H. DANIEL

WHEREAS, It has pleased our Heavenly Father in his divine wisdom to remove from us, by death, our beloved Brother, Joe H. Daniel, April 17, 1960.

WHEREAS, This the J. H. Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church at Stem, N. C., even though we bow in humble submission to a just God, knowing He makes no mistakes and doeth all things well, our hearts are saddened much

by the loss of our brother.

He was born on July 13, 1897, and had lived in this community for 52 years. On January 26, 1918 he was married to my mother, Senie L. Thomasson, she is the daughter of Brother P. L. Thomasson and Sister Minnie Suitt Thomasson, who were founders and charter members of our church. Brother Daniel brought to this sight of our meeting house, the first load of lumber and helped with the construction of the church. In June of 1938 he came before the Church seeking a home and professing a hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, sinners being saved by the Grace of God. He was received and baptized in July, 1938, by Elder D. V. Spangler. He was active up until the last day of his life, and was always ready to help care for his church and grounds around it; and the brothers and sisters and elders were welcome in his home.

We feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

He is survived by his wife Senie; one son, Julian, of Stem, N. C.; two daughters: Mrs. W. B. Hardy, Stem, N. C., Route 1, and Mrs. Robert H. Crissman, Route 8, Jonesboro Heights, Sanford, N. C.; and four brothers, five sisters, and four grandchildren.

His funeral was conducted April 19, 1960, at the meeting house by Elder J. Harvey Smith, his pastor, assisted by Elder D. V. Spangler and Elder W. C. King, and interment was in Elmwood Cemetery at Oxford, N. C. The friends that came, and the many floral offerings were a silent token of the respect and love of those who knew him.

As a tribute to his memory, therefore be it:

RESOLVED, first, That we in patient recognition bow to this dispensation of God's providence, knowing that all His purposes are right.

RESOLVED, second, That we cherish his memory and strive to emulate the virtues which through abounding grace, adorned his life.

RESOLVED, third, That a copy of this memorial be inscribed on our church record, a copy given to the bereaved family and a copy sent to **Signs of the Times** for publication.

These resolutions, adopted by the J. H. Gooch Memorial Church conference, assembled this, the 7th day of May, 1960.

Written by one who loved him, his son,

Julian M. Daniel, Ass't Clerk

GEORGE T. JONES

George T. Jones, son of the late William W. and Ann Brittingham Jones, was born near Pittsville, Maryland, March 17, 1879, and passed away March 1, 1960. He leaves to mourn his passing, his wife, Mrs. Estella F. Jones, Delmar, Delaware; one daughter, Mrs. Myra Parks of Fishersville, Virginia; and three grandchildren. Also two brothers, Elijah H. Jones of Philadelphia, Pa., and Wilmer L. Jones of Montchanin, Delaware.

He was married December 23, 1903 to Estella F. German of Delmar, by the late Elder A. B. Francis at the Francis home in Delmar. In early life he joined the Line Methodist Church, but soon after became dissatisfied with the doctrine they advocated and withdrew from them. Afterward, he attended the meetings of the O. S. Baptists as long as he was able, but never asked for membership with them, feeling his unworthiness. as many have. He greatly enjoyed hearing the late Elder A. B. Francis preach.

He came to Delmar in September, 1903, and lived here ever since. In 1911 he started in newspaper work, and was former editor and owner of the Bi-State Weekly newspaper of Delmar, retiring in 1948.

I have never known anyone more devoted to his family than George T. Jones. Often when I would go into his room to see him, he would ask if I knew when Myra (his daughter) was coming. She could not come very often, as she lived quite a distance from Delmar. She is also an instructor of Nurse's Aides, which keeps her time pretty well occupied.

The writer was unable to be present at the funeral, but requested that Hymn 535 in the D & L hymnal be read: "It is Not Death to Die." Also, Hymn 90 in the same hymnal was read, this being a favorite of the deceased: "There is a Fountain Filled with Blood."

The funeral was conducted by Elder C. E. Benson, pastor of the Church at Wilmington, Delaware, who read the 121st Psalm. Text, First Corinthians, 15:17: "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins."

Much more could be written about the deceased, but time and space forbid. Will just say, another one has finished his course, passed away, and we will know him no more as we knew him here. "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality: (I Corinthians, 15:53.) "We sorrow not even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." (I Thessalonians, 4:14.) Written by

A. T. Benson

SISTER HELEN (COOPER) ZEH

Sister Helen (Cooper) Zeh departed this life February 29, 1960, at the Ann Lee Home, Colonie, N. Y. She was born May 28, 1856, at Middletown, N. Y., which made her stay on earth 103 years, nine months and one day. She was the daughter of Martin and Harriet (Towsend) Cooper; and her husband was David Zeh, who died many years ago.

Surviving are a niece, Mrs. Leonard Alverson, Voorheesville, N. Y., and a nephew, Gordon Smith, Middletown, N. Y. Two of her sisters, Mrs. Orville Wood and Mrs. J. K. Smith, preceded her in death, they being members of the Old School Baptist Church. For many years Sister Zeh resided with her niece and husband, Mr. and Mrs. Hiram Rust, in Middletown, N. Y.; but for the last few years, before entering the Ann Lee Home, she resided with her niece and husband, Mr. and Mrs. Lonard Alverson, who gave her as kind, loving care as human hands could give until the niece's strength was exhausted.

Sister Zeh united with the Middleburg Old School Bapist Church, Middleburg, N. Y., July 22, 1876, and was baptized August 27, 1876, by Elder Whitcomb. This made her a member of this church more than 83 years; and we can say that she was a faithful and devoted member, a most loyal and loving sister those many years, bearing the fruits of the Spirit and having a zeal according to knowledge. Salvation by grace and grace alone was her only trust and comfort. We are told that to know Jesus is eternal life. God surely gave Sister Zeh a long and useful life: she was active and able to go about until the last few years. He gave her to be a faithful witness of his precious gospel truth, so we feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was held at the Palmer and Shaylor Funeral Home, Middletown, N. Y., by the writer who was her pastor; and interment was in the Middletown Cemetery.

Elder A. J. Slauson

MRS. DOYLE TURNER

In memory of Mrs. Doyle Turner, of Marion, Louisiana, who was a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Pardue. She was united in marriage to Mr. Doyle Turner, and to this union three sons were born.

Sister Turner was accidentally burned very seriously, and remained bedfast with severe suffering for nearly three months. The writer visited her several times and she desired prayer to the Lord on her behalf. She manifested a deep loving trust in the Lord, who has all power both in heaven and in earth, and does his will and purpose in all things. On March 9, 1960, she was taken by death, and thus released from her sufferings to await that glorious resurrection when all the heirs of glory shall be made like his glorious body, and abide in his gracious presence forever.

She is survived by her husband, Doyle Turner, and three sons: Donald, Terry, and Doyle, Jr., all of Marion, La.; her parents, Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Pardue; one brother, Mr. Dan Pardue, of Marion; two sisters, Mrs. R. B. Hollis, Farmerville, La., and Mrs. Rudolph Koot, Jr., New York City.

The funeral was conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder David Turner, Elder J. L. Smith, and Brother Duff Smith, at Liberty Baptist Church. The presence of the large congregation and the many floral offerings indicated the high esteem and respect in which she was held.

May the Lord bless her mourning husband, her children, parents and brothers and sisters, and enable them to look to and trust in the Lord, who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. With much sympathy, I remain your brother in hope,

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

MRS. M. F. SMITH

The subject of this sketch is Sister Linnie, or M. F. Smith, who was born in Union County, Arkansas, June 7, 1878, where she grew up and became the wife of Brother Marion F. Smith. She died April 5, 1960.

She joined the Primitive Baptist Church in September, 1904, and she and her husband were very highly esteemed for these many years. She had her membership with several different Primitive Baptist churches since they moved and lived in several communities. She manifested a great experimental interest in the truth, and was loved and esteemed by her brethren and friends. Her home was a home for her brethren, and she is long to be remembered by them. She was greatly afflicted for the last 6 or 7 years of her life, suffering with arthritis; and became totally blind and completely helpless. The writer has heard her pray that she might be taken out of her great suffering.

Sister Smith and her husband were the parents of ten children, nine of whom survive, together with her aged and very afflicted husband, who suffers with a broken hip and other afflictions. Surviving are W. C., W. J., of West Monroe, La., and John E. and L. D. Smith, of Marion, La., Mrs. Nora Phillips and Mrs. Christine Cartlidge; also by 24 grandchildren and 26 great grandchildren; two brothers, Jeffie Phillips and Louise Phillips; three sisters: Mrs. Annie Cates, Mrs. Julia Garrett and Mrs. Lula Lawrence.

Funeral services were held at Liberty Hill Church, in the presence of a large congregation, by the writer, and Elders David Turner, W. A. Speer and J. L. Smith; and she was laid to rest in the Raylor Cemetery.

May the Lord bless her afflicted husband and the entire family; she is better off and beyond suffering any more. Your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 128 DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1960 NO. 8

CHECK YOUR
EXPIRATION DATE
IF IT IS 8/60
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CHRIST EXALTED

Jehovah in counsel resolv'd to fulfil,
The scheme from eternity laid in his will;
A scheme too profound for a seraph to pry,
And all for the lifting of Jesus on high.

'Twas not from the creature salvation took place,
The whole was of God, to the praise of his grace;
And all to his glory shall tend by and by,
T' accomplish the lifting of Jesus on high.

His wisdom brought forth the adorable plan,
Grace, mercy, and peace, and good-will towards man;
The great Three-in-one did the same ratify,
And all for the lifting of Jesus on high.

Here all the perfections of Deity shine,
Love, wisdom, and power, and goodness divine;
His justice and grace receiv'd honor thereby;
And all for the lifting of Jesus on high.

When first the great project to angels was known,
They hail'd Him in songs as the Lamb on his throne;
The concave of heaven resounds with their cry,
God, Man, Mediator, they lift Him on high.

Creation proclaims the great work of thy hand,
All beings and things in the order they stand; —
Productions of chance we are led to deny,
'Twas made for the lifting of Jesus on high.

All things for his sake did Jehovah prepare,
For of Him, and to Him, and thro Him, they are;
All systems and worlds that revolve in the sky,
Were made for the lifting of Jesus on high.

Set up as the Head of his mystical frame,
He honor'd the records of heav'n with his name;
And nothing was wanting, which God could supply,
To aid the uplifting of Jesus on high.

When man was created, what wisdom we see,
The whole he possess'd was the image of Thee;
But, oh! in his fall, we are led to espy,
'Twas all for the lifting of Jesus on high.

The law that was given on Sinai of old,
Was still the great mercy and love to unfold,
Which did in the womb of eternity lie,
And all for the lifting of Jesus on high.

In fulness of time, he came under the law,
It's jots and its tittles, he answer'd we know;
And stretching his arms, did on Calvary die,
T' accomplish his lifting to glory on high.

He slept in the tomb, till the morning arose,
That signed his release, and confounded his foes;
Then, bursting its bars, He ascended the sky,
To reign in his glory, eternal, on high.

(No. 233 Beebe's Collection)

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Sister Mary L. Hellings)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church at Hopewel, New Jersey on June 8th and 9th, 1960, to the churches composing the same, and to the Associations and Churches with which we correspond, sends greetings in the Lord.

Dear Brethren:

We feel to be the least of the flock, and in no way gifted to write a circular letter that could edify the brethren, or confirm them in the holy faith with such words of spiritual truth that would express enduring doctrine. Particularly, at this time when we find ourselves in

a valley which is overshadowed by a passing cloud. The shadow of the cloud has not only spread over our way, but also over sister churches, not because of any perversion of the faith we believe, but because of human frailties. So we feel our great dependence upon an all wise and compassionate Saviour to give us greater understanding of the word as it is in Jesus, and grace to present a few thoughts of worth from the twenty-fifth chapter of Isaiah. "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined."

The words of the prophet Isaiah have fresh meaning for the children of God in the church today. The verse quoted embraces chosen words that follow expressions of praise from a people unto God for the great things done for them, with added assurance that, in THIS mountain, a certain mountain, the Lord of hosts SHALL make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees well refined. There is no uncertainty in these well chosen words, "the Lord of hosts SHALL make unto all people a feast", expressing positive power and foreordained purposes of our Lord Jesus Christ, who came to save all the children of God from ages past, through all time to come, even the present church dispensation embraced in this mountain, this certain mountain that symbolizes the Church of God. We have often heard brethren speak of Mount Zion as the perfection of beauty out of which God hath shined, and also the Church of the living God as a mountain of His holiness.

For the children of God that embrace the church, have the imputed righteousness of Christ, and are a peculiar people of a holy nation, being both Jew and Gentile believers. They are a certain people of God's electing love, blessed with divine favor, and prevailing grace. And in this mountain SHALL the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, which to our understanding embraces the believeing Gentile as well as the believing Jew; that is, all believers having been chosen in Christ, are justified by His shed blood upon the cross, and now stand in Christ before the Father as ALL people of a holy nation feasting of fat things, feasting of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow which we partake in spiritual nourishment when Jesus is revealed by the Holy Ghost; and we are raised unto a comfortable hope to feed upon the precious promises of the word as it is written for our learning. As we grow in knowledge, we know there is a life giving substance of God's great love whereby he has loved us from the aeon of eternity. Then, our many experiences are the fruits upon which we feast, giving us a feeling of renewed spirit from day to day. We feast upon His redeeming love, His divine favors, and many blessings. We feast upon the wines on the lees, the gospel wine that is ever refreshing and uplifting to the children of God who thirst after righteousness. Spiritual wines on the lees is inexhaustible. It is the soul cheering life of this gospel dispensation. It gives the children of God an ever renewing spark of hope and increase in faith, for this wine that is well refined is filled with virtue and strentgh to bear the believer up, and in the end to be conformed to the image of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

May the Church feast in the fellowship of the saints upon these precious things declared by the Lord of hosts. Amen.

Elder Arthur R. Warren, Moderator
Sister Letha A. Blackwell, Clerk

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512 Caine Street,
Fayette, Alabama

Dear Brother Spangler:

This dark, rainy day I am here all alone, but trust there is a power watching over me unseen by human eye. I have been shut in with a cold for some

time. I live alone, but my oldest son lives just across the street from me, and my daughter lives on Temple Street close by; and they are very thoughtful of me.

It will be seven years since the Lord took my husband out of this troublesome world. I know my time is short here, but I have a sweet hope the dear Lord gave me sixty-nine years ago this past year; which is the anchor of my soul. I am eighty-four, but very active for my age and the sickness I've gone through. The Lord has wonderfully blessed me; and I have evidence that each of my three children have a hope of better things when the Lord calls them from earth.

I still receive the Signs, and I can't begin to tell you and Sister Spangler the comfort it is to me in my lonely hours. I would be so glad for you to visit us again; do hope you can while I am here. The Lord only knows what the future holds for us, but dear brother and sister, if we are His, we are as ready to go as we will ever be. When He saves his children, it doesn't have to be done over again.

May God's richest blessings be with you. A little lonely sister, if one at all.

Mrs. George W. Poe

Whitefield, Maine

Dear Editors,
Brothers Spangler and Wood:

The enclosed Postal Order is for two years renewal. The Signs of the Times means a lot to us both; it is such good reading, and preaching too. We both receive courage along the way of this life from its pages. Many times experiences of dear ones tell the same travels I have had; and some of our experiences would be hard to understand, and cannot be except by those who have been led along the same way.

I shall relate one experience a few years back which was a wonderful comfort to me, and took all my fears away. It could only be from the Lord Jesus — I hope my Lord. My husband was very sick, carrying high fever; and I was very worried about his condition as I watched over him in the mid-hours of the night, giving medicines every hour as the doctor had prescribed. But each time would find his fever going higher, his pulse slower and weaker, and his respiration faster. No need to say that I was frightened, sad, and worried.

As I lay in the bed beside him after giving medicine, I dropped off in sleep, being very tired; when of a sudden I awoke with a vision (I know of no other way to describe it). My husband in full form, dressed as he would have been had he been up and around, stood with his hand on the foot-board of the bed: just as natural as if he had really been there. In fright, I was about to say, "Arthur, what are you doing up?" when the vision went from my sight, and I realized my husband was lying by my side still burning with fever.

This no sooner passed, when all my fear was taken away, and I was in a peaceful state of mind. I knew God had showed me that my companion would be spared to me. (This I had tried to seek God for all through his sickness, when it seemed I could not pray.) Now I knew God did hear my prayers. Praise his Holy Name! Would that I could thank him for his goodness to me!

When morning came my companion was better; his fever had dropped to near normal, and his heart action so much stronger: A great change had taken place, and he continued to gain, and in a few days was around again.

It was a wonderful experience to me: To be relieved in every way in a moment's time, so to speak. I have always looked upon that time as God showing me there was great fear where no fear was. I write this for your consideration and judgment.

I know God's blessings to us are above numbering. Still so much of my time I am low down, and I have to question, Do I know anything of the love of God?

In the last issue of the Signs (June) was a sweet experience written by Sister Fred Cobb, in which she related, "I have to hope I have a hope." This is my feeling. "Am I his or am I not?" I enjoyed Sister Cobb's experience so much. I think my husband and I met her at Sister Murdock's home where we were entertained in Durham, N. C., several years ago.

Hope this finds you both, and your families well. May God bless you in your work.

A sister in hope of eternal life,
Mrs. Arthur Merigold

SALVATION IS OF THE LORD

Dearly Beloved Saints of God:

"Salvation is of the Lord." This blessed truth is of great comfort to the children of God; it is just one of the precious promises left on record for the consolation of those who have been shown that "there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, for they are led in paths that they have not known, given eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand the things that are hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. What a merciful God we worship when led into that blessed state; one who loved us so dearly that He gave His only begotten Son that we might have eternal life. Stop and think seriously of this; how many would give their only son to save lost and ruined sinners? "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." Such love can not be comprehended by the natural man; it is only by the eye of faith that we are given a glimpse and a foretaste of the great love wherewith he loved us, causing us not to be ashamed to own our Lord, nor to defend his cause, because his love has been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.

"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Sometimes we would sink to where we would have to look up to see the bottom of the pit, were it not for the promise in the above words. If we know anything at all, we do know that we love the truth, and those of like precious faith. We have been told to fear not, for we have been redeemed with the precious blood of a loving Saviour, a dear dying Lamb who cried, "It is finished." He finished the work that his Father gave him to do. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and he that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." These shalls and wills of Jehovah are the very foundation on which our hope is built; praise the Lord for giving us a foretaste of the joys that await us beyond this world of trials and tribulations. They shall come to Him and He will not cast them out; no man is able to pluck them out of the Father's hand; His everlasting arms are underneath at all times; He has promised that the rivers shall not overflow thee, the fire shall not burn thee, nor the flame kindle upon thee. Why? Because He "is the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour"; the great, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

The work that He finished was what He came to do, to seek and save that which was lost; therefore we are made to acknowledge "Salvation is of the Lord"; to stand still and know that He is God; to wait on the Lord; to "pray without ceasing," knowing that the potter has power over the clay to make one vessel to honor and another unto dishonor. We are, oh, so helpless; just like the clay in the hands of the potter. "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His wonderful works to the children of men." How can we ever praise Him enough for His tender care and love, compassion and mercy? We

can not, for we can not even think a good thought; when we would do good, evil is present with us. "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits?" Let us praise Him for His loving kindness and His tender mercy; for revealing the truth to us, not because of any merits in us, but because it seemed good in His sight. It is all of the Lord.

He is our only hope of heaven and immortal glory. We love Him, because He first loved us; not that we have done anything to merit His love, for He loved us with an everlasting love; we were chosen in Christ before the world began. Man is so utterly helpless, that he has not done anything, but "the Lord knoweth them that are his." What man may say or do can not change the eternal plan of salvation, which is alone by the grace of God. What a blessing to have this truth revealed to us, which does not make for a boastful manner, but rather in meekness and humility is it received. How thankful we should be that we have been given something that the world knows not. This world holds no charm for me, but there is a yearning and longing for more and more of the riches of His everlasting grace. "Thy mercy my God, is the theme of my song; the boast of my heart and the joy of my tongue." The Lord has been so good to me, so much more than any poor mortal could expect.

He has promised never to leave or forsake His own. In the darkest hour He is near; when all human comforts fail, He will bring the blind by a way that they know not. Was the path you have traveled one of your own choosing? No, it was not, but thanks be unto God for leading in paths that you have not known; for making darkness as light before you, and for declaring the end from the beginning, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." "I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Saviour." God sent his Son into the world that we might live through Him; He came to give, not offer, eternal life to every heaven born child of God. We have seen and do know by faith that the Father sent His Son to be the Saviour of the world of His people, and that for every one whom He shed His precious blood He will make perfect in love.

"The Lord is my light and my salvation"; I will not fear what man can do unto me. The Lord has all power in heaven and earth; He is my Rock and my Deliverer; He has delivered me in times past; He has been a present help in time of trouble, and by faith I know He will not leave me at last to sink in trouble. He is my God, my strength, my help in time of trouble, my shield, my fortress, my trust, my all in all. Teach me thy way, O Lord; make me to walk in thy paths, dear Lord; give me patience, understanding, a reconciled mind, and a submissive will to acknowledge with all sincerity that "all things work together for good to them that love God," and help me to say, "Not my will but thine, O Lord, be done," knowing that what the God of all grace does is best, and that it is all for good. "Be merciful unto me, O God," and help me to look unto thee at all times for help.

"I will look unto the hills from whence cometh my help; my help cometh from the Lord." Where else can we look? We have no where else to go but unto God who performeth all things for us. "Truly my soul waiteth upon God; from Him cometh my salvation." He only is my Rock and my salvation; all my help must come from Him; He is everywhere, He knows our thoughts, what we have need of before we even ask or think; He is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, the great I am. Whither shall I flee from His presence? Praise His great and adorable name that He is everywhere, none can stay His hand or say unto Him, "What doest thou?" He is alwise, and all powerful. Dear Lord, give us strength and courage to give all praise, honor, and

glory to thy great and adorable name.

A sinner saved by grace, I hope,
Elsie Loeffel,
1158 Falls Terrace,
Union, New Jersey.

CORRESPONDING LETTER

(Written by Sister Letha Blackwell)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association in session with the Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J., June 8 and 9, 1960, to all the Associations with which we correspond, send love and fellowship.

Dear Brethren:

It has been such a pleasure to have you all with us. To me there is no prettier sight than seeing our precious brethren assembling to worship, with the beautiful expressions on their faces and the gladness of meeting one another.

We feel to thank our Heavenly Father for the privilege He has given us to have you with us and to hear the beautiful messages our ministering brethren have been blessed to deliver to us; and hope it will be our Father's will that we may all meet again.

Until we meet again, may the Lord bless you and keep you.

Elder Arthur Warren, Moderator
Letha Blackwell, Clerk

Box 693,
Quitman, Texas

Dear Elder Wood:

I am herewith enclosing Resolutions of Respect for our beloved brother and deacon of Cana Church, Cecil Hamrick. In the death of Brother Hamrick our church has suffered a great loss, nevertheless we desire to be submissive to God's holy and divine will.

We often think of you and Sister Wood when you were here at our little church, and long so much to have you come and be with us again. I cherish the memory of our 5th Sunday three day meeting that you were permitted to attend. Our church is still under the care of Elder W. W. Taylor, whom we esteem very highly. Our aged Elder and pastor, S. C. Davenport, is still with us, although not able to attend services. He is very feeble, and says he is just tired of this old sinful world. Our church has lost two members since you were here.

I am sure you remember Brother Hamrick; he meant so much to our church. But his labors are over and the Lord called him home. Cana Church requests that the Resolutions be printed in the Signs of the Times. May God bless you all in your labors, and keep you by his sustaining grace.

An unworthy sister,
Buena White

(How well we remember the ones mentioned by Sister White, and many others in the vicinity of Cana Church! We had the pleasure of visiting in the home of Brother and Sister Hamrick, and it was with much regret that we learned of his passing. We have pleasant memories also of our visit with Elder and Sister Davenport. — J. D. W.)

1420 North Avenue 51,
Los Angeles 42, Calif.

Editors of the Signs of the Times,

Dear Brethren:

My subscription expires in June, and I enclose Money Order to extend it for two years.

If I am not deceived in myself, I believe with all my heart and understanding the doctrine of faith and repentence as set forth in the Signs of the Times. I rejoice in the fellowship of a people that believe in a God that has all power in heaven and in earth, who rules and none can hinder; yet he is a merciful God in that he gave his only begotten Son to suffer and die the ignomenious death on the cross of Calvary, shedding his blood for the remission of the sins

of all the chosen of the human race.

"Jesus, thou art the sinner's friend,
As such I look to thee:
Now in the bowels of thy love,
O Lord, remember me.

Howe'er forsaken or distressed,
Howe'er oppressed I be,
Howe'er afflicted here on earth,
Do thou remember me.

And when I close my eyes in death,
And creature helps all flee,
Then, O my dear Redeemer God,
I pray remember me."

Leara M. Willis

"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." (Ephesians 6:4)

Brother H. H. Bentley, Atlanta, Ga., asks that we give "a little talk" upon Sunday Schools, and Old Baptist parents allowing their children to attend the same. We are willing to give such as we have upon the subject, which no doubt is one of importance, and one which has perhaps been neglected. It is good for us all to be reminded often of our obligations to God in all things. Our children are the gift of God to us, and we should endeavor to do all in our power for their welfare. We should instil, if possible, every honest and upright principle in them, beginning in their infancy; we should teach them to honor father and mother, to respect old age, to be kind and gentle toward each other; we should take them to meetings with us, teach them to respect the day of rest, Sunday, (so called) because the law of our country demands it, teach them as far as we can of God and his almighty power. As far as we are able, we should educate our children and give them a profession or trade, that they may be independent, prepared to take care of themselves when it becomes necessary. All this is the duty of the Old Baptist parent to the child, but this is not the duty of the Sunday School teacher concerning our children. A believer should never feel that he can trust an unbeliever to instruct his child in the Sunday School.

The original design of the Sunday School was to teach poor children, whose parents were not able to send them to regular schools, to read and write. After a short time the Bible was read to the children, and little by little the original design of Sunday Schools disappeared until not a shadow of it remains. Today, children are taught a lie in Sunday Schools: they are taught that God wants to save them if they will only let him; if they will be good God will love and bless them here and take them to heaven when they die. Does not this teaching fill the mind of the child with the idea or belief that God is subject to him in the salvation of his soul? What could be a greater falsehood?

No harm can be done by us in reading the Bible to our children, and in talking to them of God and his power to save, but to send or allow them to attend Sunday School is inconsistent. Why should we be willing for our children to go where we ourselves would not go? It is sometimes said, The Lord is able to keep our children and to bring them out even should they unite with other denominations. None of us doubt the power of God, but this should not make us indifferent concerning the welfare of our children; the Lord is just as able to take our children from the gambling den or the saloon as he is to separate them from the Sunday School, but we do not want them to frequent such places. The idea to let them go and if the Lord wants to manifest them as his he will do so, if not all our carefulness amounts to nothing, is more fatalism than predestination. Sunday Schools, where a lie is taught, and where God is dishonored, and where his people are ridiculed, is no place for our children, hence let us keep them away from such places; if we cannot teach them the truth let us see to it that they are not taught false doctrine. The children of the Israelites were not permitted to mingle with the nations round about or to

worship their idols; why should the children of spiritual Israel be allowed to do so?

The text at the head of this writing is the stronghold of those who believe in Sunday Schools, but it has no bearing whatever upon that subject; the apostle is admonishing children to obey their "parents in the Lord;" he tells them it is right to do so. These parents in the Lord are fathers and mothers in Israel, hence it is right for the children to obey and honor them; it is the commandment of God that they may live (spiritually) long upon the earth; if they disobey and dishonor them they die to their confidence and fellowship.

How well we all remember when we were little children in the church, and how at that time we honored and obeyed those older in grace and experience, how we recognized their superior judgment in all things pertaining to the Christian life and order of the house of God. The fathers are not to provoke the children to wrath, this is not the way to bring up children either in our homes or in the church. All are children when they unite with the church, though they may be well stricken with years, and all need to be kindly and affectionately dealt with by the fathers and mothers in the Lord; those who were once children are now qualified, through the training of others, to bring up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; it is in this way that the order of the house is maintained. Solomon said, "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Surely this cannot refer to natural children, for many of them do depart from the moral training of good and faithful parents. Solomon and Paul are in perfect accord upon this subject; it is the child in the church to which Solomon refers. If he is brought up in the way he should go, he will not depart from it; to be instructed in doctrine and in the order of the house is "the way." When he becomes a man, instead of departing he is qualified to instruct others who are y o u n g in experience, hence those who were babes become fathers and mothers in Israel.

Let us "be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners," but let us beware of antichrist in all its forms. We know well that it is not in the power of natural men to teach spiritual things, if so, some of us would have known them much sooner than we did. The Scriptures belong to the man of God, that he may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. In the New Testament we find no example or authority for Sunday Schools, therefore whatever be unwarranted by the word of God we may be sure is false, being only the notion of men.

May the Lord deliver us and our children from the snares of the devil.

(Editorial of the late Elder H. C. Ker, May 15, 1906 — re-published by request.)

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407 34th Street,
Charleston 2, W. Va.

Dear Brethren Editors of the
Signs of the Times:

I am making remittance herewith for two years renewal to the Signs; and also for a year's renewal of Elder Smith, as shown.

May God continue his blessings and prosper your way in the labor of love in your endeavor to edit and publish a sound doctrinal paper in this dark day. I enjoyed the reprint from Elder David Bartley's pen, "The Priesthood of the Son of God." My father had a copy of this book when I was a child, and he loved the doctrinal contents so dearly.

Do you know where I could purchase a copy of this book? If you know of one available, please let me know, giving price, etc.

Yours in hope in Christ,
H. J. Bird

(Anyone having a copy of this book for sale, please answer the above. We regret the delay in publishing this request — Ed.)

Box 304,
Emory, Texas

Dear Brethren:

Many of our religious contemporaries are a little critical of our Primitive people for the lack of works, evangelism, etc. But it seems to me, through experience and observation, that John Milton's words on "His Blindness", (1655), about expresses our sentiments on this subject.

"When I consider how my light is spent,
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He returning chide,
'Doth God exact day-labor, light denied?'
I fondly ask, But patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gift; who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
Is kingly: thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who can only stand and wait."

Guy Sisk

Rt. 1,
North East, Maryland

Dear Elder Wood:

I trust you arrived home safely, and that you are feeling better.

I have been thinking of the state of mind you spoke of being in, and I believe the Lord was preparing you to follow the other brethren who preached at the association (Delaware). We were built up in the most holy faith, and our hope renewed in Christ, as we listened to the preaching. I do not know that I should say "we", for I feel to be the very least.

I heard a minister say not long ago that he did not know if he would be saved, but that he did know that God had a people who would be. Doesn't this feeling keep us begging for mercy instead of justice — praying for a closer walk with God, and that we may have sweet fellowship one for the other. As you wrote in the Signs, our most precious possession is a hope in Christ. It is something the world cannot give, neither can any man take it from us. Nothing present or to come shall be able to separate us from the love of God which we have in Christ. It is a garden enclosed, a fountain sealed.

As you have often said, we are awaiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body; and we are kept by the power of God ready to be revealed in that day.

Now back to the sermons: they preached Jesus, and what great things he has done for his people; and the way was opened up to you by the same power to preach Jesus the way, the truth, and the life; and that there isn't any other way. No doubt you and others have often been cast down for various reasons, but the Lord takes care of these things also. . .

All of us enjoyed having you and Sister Wood and Brother Dade with us during the association. Hope you can come again soon and can stay longer so that we may visit around. Love to Sister Wood.

Yours in hope of rest beyond the grave,
Sister Farmer (Mrs. D. P. Farmer)

1216 S. Brighton Ave.,
Dallas, Texas

Dear Elder Wood:

Enclosed is a writing of Elder S. R. Boykin which I have greatly enjoyed, and feel that others will also. I have permission for it to be published in the Signs, so am sending it to you, hoping it will find space in the paper at an early date.

The date on my July Signs tells me that it is time to renew my subscription, so I am enclosing my check for the amount of $10.00; half for my own renewal, and half for the renewal of Sister Rhoades, as shown.

The Signs is a great pleasure and

comfort to me, and I do not want to miss a single issue.

I am still searching for old writings, books, periodicals, minutes, etc., and I would like very much to procure the following copies of the Signs: (see Request on page 178).

May God bless you and the entire staff to carry on with the paper; and may He also bless all the dear readers to continue to support the paper, and to enjoy it to the good of their souls. And may God bless all the little churches everywhere with the sweet reign of peace, brotherly love, and the blessed communion of the Holy Spirit now and forever.

With brotherly love and dear esteem, I remain,

Your unworthy yokefellow,
(Elder) W. W. Taylor

(Elder Boykin's writing will appear in the September issue.)

REQUEST

Elder W. W. Taylor desires the following copies of the Signs to complete his files for the years indicated: July 15th and Sept. 1, 1900; January 1, 1904; May 15th, July 1st and Sept. 1, 1905; and Sept. 1, 1909. He would be glad to hear from anyone willing to let him have them. His address is:

Elder W. W. Taylor,
1216 S. Brighton Ave.,
Dallas 8, Texas

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

E. J. Akers, Va.	$ 5.00
Clara Quesenberry, Va.	1.00
Mrs. Robert Wagner, Pa.	2.00
R. D. McGough, Ala.	5.00
J. R. Davie, Tenn.	2.00
Miss Reidy Pickral, Va.	5.00
Eld. C. N. Bunn, Va.	5.00
Mr. Henry Earnheart, Tenn.	3.00
Lillie N. Henry, Miss.	5.00
Ebenezer Church, N. Y.	100.00
A Friend, N. Y.	7.00

THE SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The **Smith River Association** is appointed to convene with Knob Church, Franklin County, Virginia, near Henry, Friday before the first Sunday in September, and continue through Sunday. (September 2, 3 and 4, 1960)

Those traveling Route 40 should turn East on road No. 605; next turn right on 798, and follow same to church. Those traveling Highway 220 should take road number 605 through Henry to 798.

Our brethern and friends are invited to meet with us.

B. O. Thompson

PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The **Pleasant Valley Association** will be held the 4th Sunday in August, and Friday and Saturday before, at Stockdale, Texas. We would be glad to have anyone who loves the truth as it is in Christ Jesus to visit us; and to meet with us any time they can.

Lela Culpepper

MEETING TIME CHANGED

The **Mt. Olive Predestinarian Baptist Church,** of Stockdale, Texas, has changed her meeting time from the 3rd Sundays to the 2nd Sundays and Saturday night before.

Lela Culpepper

NOTICE OF THE LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The **Lexington-Roxbury Association** is appointed to be held with the First and Second Roxbury Churches, of Roxbury, Delaware County, N. Y., at Halcottville, Delaware County, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, September 14 and 15, 1960.

Those coming on Tuesday take Route 28 to Fleischmans, then take Halcott Center Road out of Fleischmans at Esso Gas Station four miles to the Maples (Mr. and Mrs. James Peet). Those coming on Wednesday go directly to the Meeting House at Halcottville. Those expecting to stay one night or more will please send a card to Mr. and Mrs. James Peet, Halcott Center, N. Y.

An invitation is extended to our ministering brethren and friends to meet with us.

Amasa J. Slauson

Prudence Hinkley and
Virtue Ballard, Church Clerks

BLACK CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION FOR 1960

The eighty-fourth session of the **Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association** will, the Lord willing, be held with Sandy Grove Church, Nash County, N. C., beginning on Friday before the fourth Sunday in October and continuing through Sunday.

The church is located on Highway 95, between Zebulon and Stanhope; more properly between Highways 231 and 581.

Our Correspondents, brethren and all lovers of the truth are invited.

W. E. Turner, Clerk

PIGG RIVER DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

The **Pigg River District Association** is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with Chestnut Church, Franklin County, Virginia, to begin on Friday before the 1st Sunday in August and continue through Sunday. Chestnut Church may be reached from the North by going three miles South of Rocky Mount, Virginia, on Route 220, to Castel's old store; turn left on hard road four miles just beyond Sontag School; then turn right one-half mile on hard surfaced road to the meeting house. Those coming from the South on Route 220 will turn right at the same place.

Our correspondents and all interested brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

John D. Wood, Clerk

UNION MEETING

A union meeting of the Predestinarian Primitive Baptist churches in California will be held, the Lord willing, with the Little Flock Church, of Bakersfield, on October 28, 29 and 30, at the Oddfellows Hall, 2930 Alpine St., Bakersfield, Calif. Phone EXport 9-0429 or EXport 9-4000.

Elder T. R. Jefferson, Pastor
Bertha S. Wright, Clerk

ANNUAL MEETING AT SLATE HILL CHURCH

The annual meeting of the **Brookfield Old School Baptist Church** at Slate Hill, New York, will be held the 1st Saturday in August — August 6, 1960.

Members and friends are cordially invited to attend the meeting at this historic meeting house.

E. K. Adsit, Acting Clerk,
Shokan, N. Y.

Danville, Virginia **August, 1960**

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 5, Box 332F **Danville, Va.**

HAVE YOU SENT IN A NEW SUBSCRIPTION LATELY?

A REQUEST ADDRESSED TO THE BRETHREN AND FRIENDS

During the Summer months articles and letters for publication usually drop off considerably, so that at times we are pressed for suitable copy for publication. We feel sure that there are many of the brethren and friends who have articles they have written, (we know some of them), but hesitate to send them for publication; and we know there are many who "have been thinking about writing". Why not share your thoughts and experiences with others?

The Signs of the Times is for those who believe the principles of doctrine upon which it was founded, and who are glad that these principles are main-

tained. It is published for the Lord's people, and is for their edification and comfort in the things of the gospel. They love to hear the preaching of the gospel; and they love to read articles in which these gospel principles are set forth. Further, they love to read the individual experiences of their brethren, in which they set forth the reason of their hope when they give account of the way they have been led from nature to grace.

The Signs is a medium through which the brethren hear from each other; and though they may live in distant states, through their writings in the Signs many fast friends have been made, and often correspondence is begun after reading interesting things from the pens of brethren and sisters.

In order to keep the Signs interesting and profitable to the brethren, we invite and urge those who feel to do so, to write as they are impressed, and send to us. When we find it necessary we will edit and prepare for publication. This issue contains twenty pages; we expect to have the full twenty-four next issue.

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

DOES IT MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE WHAT CHURCH WE BELONG TO?

If it does not, then by all means it does not make any difference what we do, think, or say. If it does not make any difference, it is strange that the Lord would command his people to come out of Babylon. If it does not, the Lord should not have been so hard on the Pharisees and Sadducees, for they were getting along as well as those that the Lord had called to follow Him.

Salvation is of the Lord. It is all to the praise of his grace. It was the Lord that separated Paul from his mother's womb; it was no less the Lord that called him from out of the ranks of the law-worshippers and into the fellowship of the people of God. Had the Lord not done this, I would be ready to answer my question in the negative. Since the Lord called him **out from** one and **into** another, I suppose that as long as I follow New Testament teaching, that I will answer my question in the affirmative.

The difference in the church we belong to, is the difference between right and wrong. The Head and Founder of the church did not palm off on us two or three, or two or three hundred, churches. As far as I remember, there is not a plurality of churches by different names or doctrines mentioned in the Bible, except that one of them is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth (I Tim. 3:15); one of them is the, Mystery, Babylon the great, the Mother of harlots and abominations of the earth (Revelation 17:4). The church that Jesus founded is one; the other is many. The doctrine of the one is one only; the doctrines of the other are many by name but one in essence. The doctrine of the Old School Baptist church is one with the doctrine of Jesus Christ. I am not satisfied with my walk and talk, but I am satisfied that the Old Baptist people are that Church. I know that there is room for improvement; I regret the divisions; I would like to see a better day, but that day, if it ever comes, will come in the Old Baptist church. We have departed in some ways, but we have not ceased to be churches. We may be, and in many cases, we are, churches in error, but, nevertheless, churches.

If it did not make any difference, I would never desire to correct anything. It would be useless and vanity to labor for peace. In fact, if the spirit of indifference is right, those that act indifferent are to be commended as highly as those that are at the post and on the firing line. As far as I am able to

see, no Bible writer ever gave the least encouragement to indifference.

If I did not believe that the Old School Baptist people were the church that Jesus founded, I would leave them. It made a vast difference thirty-three years ago as to what church I went to. I had sought something to ease the ache in my heart a long time. It made a difference to me as to what I became a member of, and I feel today that the same rest is in the church now. It makes a difference to me now. The Old Baptist church may be old-timey and out-dated and old-fashioned to some, but it is still the most precious people in all the world. I know the most of them among my folks, and they are not the bunch of crooks that you hear them being. They are like God's people have ever been, all being poor and needy, and all being guided by the flesh when at home in the body, but just as ready to acknowledge their sin as any of the apostles, when led by the Spirit of God. I know nearly all of our ministers. To be sure, we have had some to deny the faith; to be sure, we have had some that did not walk worthy, but if we quit because of this, we are poorer soldiers than I thought. These brethren are doing the best they can to contend for sound doctrine and a godly walk. I loved these soldiers when I came to the church, and my yoke fellows are still precious men of God. It make a difference to me as to whether I associate with them or the ministers of other orders.

This church, the Old School Baptist, is suited to the needs of the little children of God. It has rest in abundance in it, if it is rest that one is looking for; it has plenty of the Lord's humble ones in it, if you are looking for humility; it has sound ministers, that are giving their life for the cause, if you are looking for that kind. I do not doubt at all, that if you are looking for faults in the Old Baptist church, that you will find plenty of them, and especially is that true in my corner of the fence, but I had rather be in the Old Baptist church, and feel our faults, and have a desire to beg God for correcting grace, than to be among the churches that do not have any faults and not in need of grace.

The Old Baptist church is not a protestant body. She never was in that body which came away from the body of Catholics, and protesting against their mother's inconsistencies. She had been separated from that august body from the days of her founding. While the fires of rebellion and protestantism were burning in Rome, the church was looking after her own affairs. She lamented her leanness and barrenness, I am sure, in those days, as in the apostolic days, and as in the present day, but she was not protesting to any earthly power or king or people, nor did she cross in compromise to the old lady of harlots and tell her that it did not make any difference what a man believed and what he belonged to as long as he was sincere, and that she wanted to join up with the old lady.

This lovely body of people that I am writing about, is not a denomination. Let us, dear brethren, be careful in giving an answer to the question, to wit, What denomination do you belong to? We are not a denominator, we are not a denomination. A denomination is worth something, it is not worthless, it is not meritless. The smallest fraction, even into one sep-tillion, if it had one for a numerator, it would amount to something. This the Old Baptist church can not claim. Regardless of how great the numerator, the denominator will be greater, as to the final result. Denominations make Christ a poor secondary in the affairs that govern their body. Such a system will not even work in the field of mathematics, and it will not work in the kingdom of heaven, which, manifestly and organically and doctrinally, is the Old School Baptist Church. Christ is all to us, and, as His bride, we are all to Him, but when it comes to the work of redemption, He did all the work. He is the whole Sav-

iour, and we can be a denomination as easy as Israel could have roasted half a lamb when commanded to roast it whole.

I have heard the expression, "I am a believer in some of the things that Primitive Baptists hold to." And as often as I have heard it, I have heard the thought attacked by many of our people that will turn from that ridiculous statement and then say that "it does not make any difference what church you belong to." The most of the time, when such things are said, it is to salve the feelings of some kindred in the flesh. Several years ago a daughter of a very dear and precious couple who were among our most staunch members wanted to leave us. She knew not to make the attempt while the mother lived, but after her death she went to the father, who was so meek and precious and dear to all, but who could never say no to the daughter, told her to go on with her family to the other church, that "it did not make any difference what church one belonged to." So many, by far too many, of our people have that idea.

If we are not the church somebody else is the church; if we are the church, then we are the only church. Regardless of name, age, rank, wealth, none, absolutely none, can be called the church, except the one that Jesus set up. We are told to prove all things and hold fast to that which is good (I Thes. 5:21), and, to me, there is ample proof that the Old School Baptist is that good way and good home that belongs to the Lord's people here, and I hope for grace that I might obey Paul's injunction, Hold fast to that which is good. While holding fast to that which is good, I also beg the Lord for grace that I might know and see the difference; desire that which is different to all others; and last but not least, turn loose (not hold to, not compromise) every false church, principle, doctrine, and man that raises its ungodliness in my pathway.

God has a people in every nation and kindred and tongue; he has people in every kind of religious society in the world; but that He has that church which Jesus set up, and which Luke gives us a history of its establishment and which Paul and Peter and James and John and Jude shows in action, out there in the world, I emphatically deny. The church is still the church. It has not been absorbed by the many institutions in the world. It has not ceased to function, its functioning now being in a bunch of orders that do not believe one, much less all, of the fundamental doctrines of the church.

Now a word to this church, the Old School Baptist church. You that have divided, and yet study division, you are as indifferent as the world. For me to say that I love the Old Baptist church, for me to say it makes all the difference in the world which religious body I belong to, and then be so indifferent that I divide the one body that has been made different, is, to me, begging the question, as well as dodging the issue. Under divine blessing, we are different (not in our facial features, not in our ambling down the street, but), having been called out of darkness into light, out of bondage into liberty, out of falsehood into truth, out of confusion into order. Under the guise of firmness and soundness (which, however, have been stubbornness and contentiousness and *sound*) we have forfeited all right to having the difference made between us and those that *do not* differ from one another. Thanks be unto God, the forfeiture has not been enforced on us. The longsuffering of God has long blessed us, even though our indifference toward the one body, the one church, the one assembly of believers, has been different to that which you would expect from those that are different, and who say that it makes a difference what one belongs to.

O, the sadness! O, the sadness! Under the smiles of heaven, we do not love the church well enough to be different; or loving her enough to be different,

we have become so indifferent that we are dividing her asunder, and saying, in doing it, that it does not make any difference whether we are different or not. Some day, and mark my word well, it will not be long, we shall soon learn under the chastenings of the Lord, learning obedience by the things we suffer, that the body of Christ, known organically as the Old School Baptist church, is to be different from all; that she shall not be reckoned among the nations, but that she is reckoned by us as that body whose faith is spoken of everywhere. When the day of persecution comes, and it is at hand, even at the door, then those that are different, but, through the weakness of the flesh, have become indifferent, will then be found wending their way towards a better day, towards each other, towards love and fellowship, towards a people that is different from all others, and willing to be different for Christ's sake.

Yes, dear children of God, it makes a difference whether we belong to the church of Jesus Christ or to some idle professor; it makes a wide difference whether we are following truth or falsehood; it is of primary importance that we have been made to differ, and that we are willing to be different for Christ's sake; it makes all the difference in the world as to whether we are right or wrong, for Joshua and his house will follow the Lord; the others can follow anything else, all of their gods being false.

Does it make a difference to you? If so, who hath made thee to differ?

This is by request of a sister in Alabama who asked that her name not be mentioned.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Raleigh, N. C.

Beloved in Christ Jesus our Lord:

You are all pursuing that path that leads to eternal glory. It is a path which none know but the ransomed of the Lord, and they only walk therein by faith, and not by sight. That faith which worketh by love, and which is of the operation of God, clings to, rests upon and walks in the new and living way which Jesus has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. The Obedience and atoning blood of the Lamb is the glorious highway through this wilderness to the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. "I," saith Jesus, "am the way."

As I contemplate the life of the righteous, and muse upon their blissful and eternal inheritance of glory with Christ, the Head of the church, I find longings flowing forth from my soul, and I join with one of old, saying, "Remember me, O Lord, with the favors that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation; that I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance." I gladly admit that our God grants me seasons when I can sing with gladness of heart for Jacob. "For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he." But, oh, at other times I am so beset with enemies, so tossed with internal conflicts, and my sins as a very plague seem to isolate me from the commonwealth of Israel. I am as one thrust forth from thy tents, O happy Israel! The fretting leprosy of mine iniquities causes me to wander as an outcast from the holy people. Ah! well I know my uncleanness unfits me to associate with the clean. I feel my presence would defile the tents of the beloved nation. Therefore when any of the family of God would draw nigh to recognize and to embrace me as a brother, I inwardly cry out as if to forbid their drawing nigh. I am unclean; I am not fit to be taken into fellowship and companion-

ship with the ransomed of the Lord. And when, notwithstanding my inward protestations, tokens of fellowship have been bestowed upon me by God's dear children, this so humbles me, I feel so contemptibly mean, so vile, so unworthy of their esteem, that I have gone before now in secret to sigh and to weep. I need thy precious blood, O Lamb of God, to cleanse my guilt away. "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." The blood of thine atonement apply to my distressed soul. Oh give me the evidences that thou didst die for me, and then I shall be clean in thy sight. "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." This shall raise me up from the dust to rejoice in thy salvation.

"He sent his word and healed them." This is what I need; not the bare theory of the doctrine, with its proof texts set in array in my natural understanding, but the glorious truth sent by the Lord's gracious power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. When the Lord sends the word it prospers in the thing whereunto he sends it. This I know, for then his speech distils as the dew upon my soul, and I am refreshed. His doctrine sent to my heart calms all the tumults that my sins and the devil create, and I have peace through the blood of Emmanuel's cross. Sometimes I am as one famishing, and I pine away for want of the fruits of the field. My soul craveth Jehovah's sweet mercy, I yearn again to taste his pardoning love, but the Bible cannot afford it, the letter of the Scriptures cannot bestow it. I have no power to suck honey out of them. Those who can go to the Scripture and always get what they need, and can close the book well satisfied with what they have got, are altogether different from poor, sinful, helpless me. I can no more help myself to food out of the Holy Scriptures than a very babe could feed itself at a well laden table spread with all manner of sweet tasting and nourishing food. I well know that the concentration of the natural intellect upon the Scriptures cannot gather food therefrom. Mere natural study yields no sustenance to the quickened soul.

By our natural powers we may acquire a natural knowledge that the Bible teaches the doctrine of predestination, election, salvation by grace, etc., and by the application of the natural mind to these subjects in the perusal of the Bible a person may be well versed, as the saying is, and be able to prove his points, to preach the doctrine in the letter. He may be quite competent to debate with the opponents of the doctrine, and secretly, if not openly, pride himself in this line. But what of it all? It may all be, and the man's soul be utterly destitute of the grace of God that bringeth salvation. I have been harrassed with thoughts that I was just such an one, that all I know is the result of natural study of the Scriptures, and fears have invaded my heart that after all I know nothing of the anointing of the Holy Spirit. I have been brought low, and with great searchings of heart I have fallen at the feet of the Lord so troubled, so weakened, so dismayed at the thought that the secret of the Lord was not with me.

Perhaps someone who is fully six feet tall according to his own measurement, may hold one like me in very contempt, and think one like me by this time should be a man, and no more a child. Well, perhaps there are times when I am a man, strong indeed in Christ Jesus. I grow up by faith, by the abundant ministrations of the Spirit of Truth into Jesus Christ in all things. I am strong then in our Redeemer, and the arms of my hands are made strong indeed in Christ by the mighty God of Jacob. Then I can vanquish the foe, and tread down my enemies as the mire in the streets, but my triumphing, and all the exploits are altogether by faith, which is the fruit of the Spirit, in the love, and mercy, and faithfulness of God, in the blood and righteousness of Jesus. These are rare times, when I can in truth experimentally triumph and glory in Christ Jesus. But, I am as a sickly

babe sometimes, so weak, defenseless, I feel, as it were, to be dying for the need of some one to care for me, feed me and cloth me, and that one, that only One that can do these things unto me is the glorious everlasting God. "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." Sickly and faint and ready to die in the filth of my own heart, the Lord in his tender pity has placed me in the arms of Zion, she has borne me upon her sides and carried me in her bosom. I have been dandled upon her knees, and she has drawn out the breasts of her consolations to me, there I have suckled, and have been satisfied with the abundance of her glory.

They have breasts in some places that they call "conditional time salvation," but from the description that some of them give of them I am fully satisfied they are not the breasts of the free woman, but the breasts of Hagar the bond woman. However the children of the bond woman may thrive upon Hagar's breasts, Isaac will do well by being suckled at the breasts of the everlasting covenant of grace, even the sure mercies of David. Those who want to suck at the breasts of "conditional happiness," of conditional time salvation, can do so, and they are welcome to all the happiness that they derive therefrom. There is a vast amount of fleshly religious happiness in the world that is of no kin to the joy of the Lord. People may perform their supposed duties, and render their supposed obedience unto God, and compass themselves about with their sparks, and walk in the light of their fire, and in the sparks that they have kindled, but I had rather walk in the dark with God than walk in their light. (Isaiah 50:10, 11)

I am pained to think that such teachings are being taught among our people, teachings wherein the precepts of the law of liberty are mingled and confounded with the precepts of the covenant that gendereth to bondage. The obedience of faith, and commandments of Christ's gospel, are handled in such a way that the joyous, captivating sound of them cannot be heard as they come forth from the lips of conditionalists. Their sweetness, freshness and beauty are departed, and grace, the grace of God, cannot be discerned, in the obedience required, and the gracious and almighty operations of the Holy Ghost exercising the hearts of the elect to the obedience of faith are altogether in the background, in the doctrines that are being promulgated in this distasteful phraseology, conditional time salvation.

True gospel obedience flows from the constraining love of Christ. Apart from the love of God in the soul there is no obedience in the gospel. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." The Lord delights in that which his Spirit inspires. In order to the true worship of God we need the ministrations of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, to revive our faith, and hope, and love, praises and supplications, then obedience to the Lord will be the fruit. "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart." (Psalms 119:32) To this day I have to say to Jehovah's sovereign grace I owe above what the fiends have in hell. I desire from my very soul to walk holily, just and unblameably before the Lord and his people, but I have not attained unto this. I see very plainly that vanity is stamped upon all that I engage in, the vileness of my flesh is so manifest to me, it intrudes itself, mixes itself with and defiles all that I put my hands unto. That others may not be so beset with sinfulness so polluted I allow, for I see it is only by a miracle of grace that I can be saved, and grace is the only fountain that yields supplies to one like me. I can with all my heart join with Hart, who sings:

"Jesus gives us pure affections,
  Wills to do what he requires,
Makes us follow his directions,
  And what he requires, inspires.

All our prayers, and all our praises,
  Rightly offered in his name,

He that dictates them is Jesus,
He that answers is the same."

"Love is the fulfilling of the law." Thus that dear child of God, that invalid, that deaf and dumb paralytic, when by the sweet communion of the Holy Ghost is instructed and comforted, and filled with love to the Redeemer, is as much obedient unto Christ as any of the ransomed family. That strength and grace by which the believer walks in the commandments of the Lord our Redeemer, is not an ability that we have inherent in us as subjects of the new birth, which it is in our power according to our will to put into exercise; and thus, apart from walk obediently, it is the obedience of faith, and this comprehends that God's grace is made to abound unto us, and this is our sufficiency. (2 Cor. 9:8) I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Thus the apostle, knowing that believers have no stored up, inherent ability, in themselves, to do the will of their God, says, "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen." (Heb. 13:20, 21)

Though I am, I hope, a subject of Jehovah's grace, and born of the Spirit, and if so even such an one, yet with me there are many times when I have no strength, I am as it were dead, I have not the power to put forth a sigh, or groan; to cry, to pray to God seems impossible. I am so hardened, so frozen up, so stiffened and numbed by the decietfulness of my sins, and an evil heart of unbelief, that I find it beyond my power to think a thought. Ah, I know by humbling experiences that apart from the unremitting ministry of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, I have no might to worship God. Those who can always sigh over their sins, and pray unto the Lord for his pardoning love, those who can praise God any hour of the day they appoint to do so, are not like me. But I have proved that our God is very pitiful, and his longsuffering with such a miserable, unprofitable worm as I am is a wonder of wonders.

"He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength." He visits my soul in his love, he chastens me with his rod, he shows me when I am smarting under his reproofs, that mine iniquities have exceeded all his chastenings. (Job 26:9) He maketh my heart soft, he gives under his discipline a humble and contrite heart, he smiles with pardoning grace upon me, he speaks kind promises to my soul, he gives me glimpses of the riches of his grace, displayed in the works and merits of Jesus our covenant Head. Oh, then I sigh, then I weep, then I pray, then I praise, then I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

"I can do nothing without thee,
My strength is wholly thine;
Withered and barren should I be
If severed from the vine."

I find, dear children of God, that I have to be learning over and over again that "Christ is all, and in all." (Col. 33:11) Oh, that name Jesus, Savior, is so sweet! In him are such transcendent excellencies, and so suitable to a needy sinner like me that at every view that is given me by the Spirit of truth I fall deeper and deeper in love with our altogether lovely Savior. And when his love is shed abroad in my heart I find myself saying within me, He loveth me still, he loveth even me, and what proof of his love I see in his fulfilling all the gracious relations that he sustains unto his people, as the loving Kinsman, our Brother, our tender, faithful Husband, our Almighty Friend and Redeemer. When the Holy Spirit, who takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto the elect, shows them unto me, how can I help loving him and praising and adoring the King in his beauty? Ah, then it is that I would not

in word only, but in deed and in truth love him who hath loved me with an everlasting love.

"Love moved him to die, on this I rely;
My Savior hath loved me, I cannot tell why;
But this I can tell, he loved me so well,
As to lay down his life, to redeem me from hell."

Frederick W. Keene.

(The above originally appeared in the May, 1936, Signs. — Ed.)

OBITUARIES

SUSIE REBECCA (THOMAS) MELLOTT

Susie Rebecca (Thomas) Mellott, of Route 1, McConnellsburg, Pennsylvania, was born June 22, 1888, in Loudoun County, near Leesburg, Virginia; the daughter of William P. and Sally M. (Riticor) Thomas. She died suddenly of a stroke on April 21, 1960.

On October 28, 1924, she was united in marriage to Orien Mellott, of Fulton County, Pennsylvania; where they made their home. To this union one daughter was born. Surviving are: her husband, Brother Orien Mellott; the daughter, Mrs. Howard J. Fix; two grandsons; two sisters: Mrs. Mabel Farnie, Leesburg, Va.; and and Mrs. Margaret Ellington, Waynesboro, Va.; and three brothers: Henry P. Thomas, Alexandria, Va.; Charles H. Thomas, Leesburg, Va.; and Clarence Thomas, Charlottesville, Va.

Sister Mellott united with the Sideling Hill Old School Baptist Church in Fulton County, Pennsylvania, on March 29, 1936; and was baptized by the late Elder H. H. Lefferts. Their home was a stopping place for the brethren and friends, whom they delighted to entertain. Sister Mellott will be greatly missed in the neighborhood, and especially by the members and friends of the church.

Funeral service was held at Sideling Hill Church on April 24th, conducted by the pastor, Elder Wood, and interment was in the adjoining cemetery. The large congregation and the numerous flowers gave testimony of the esteem in which she was held. May the Lord give reconciling grace to those who mourn her passing, that they may sing with the poet:

"Death is no more a frightful foe;
Since I with Christ shall reign,
With joy I leave this world of wo:
For me to die is gain."

John D. Wood

DEACON MOSCOW RENARD NORMAN

In the early hours of March 14, 1960, the good Lord saw fit to call our loved one, M. R. Norman, to his eternal home at the age of 86 years and 6 months.

Funeral services were conducted by his beloved pastors, Elder E. D. Gafford and Elder Sam Dean at the Fort Deposit Methodist Church, Fort Deposit, Alabama, March 15, 1960, at 2:30 P. M. Interment in the Fort Deposit Cemetery.

He was born September 15, 1873, in Butler County, Alabama. When a young man he was married to Miss Ella Pollard and to this union no children were born. After her death, he was married to Miss Theodosia Smith.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. M. R. Norman, and four children, Mrs. W. Z. Middleton, Greenville, Alabama; Joseph R. Norman, Greenville, Alabama; John W. Norman, Grosse Pointe, Michigan; Mrs. Tom Lowery, Pensacola, Florida.

He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Oak Bowery Church in Butler County, Alabama, in 1901, in the Ebenezer Association. For several years he served as church clerk, and also as clerk of the association. At the time of his death he had served for fifty or more years as a deacon of his church.

His life was the life of a subject of grace and he always defended the doctrine of salvation by grace. He had a clear understanding of the predestination of all things and defended the Articles of Faith. He was loving, kind, and considerate, and was an example in the home, in the church and unto the world. His presence, council, and encouragement will be missed by all. May the God of all grace and the Father of Mercy, comfort all of us and reconcile each of us to His will.

His Wife and Children

ELDER S. L. MORAN

God, in his infinite wisdom, love and mercy, has seen fit to remove from our midst our beloved brother and Elder, Samuel Lee Moran, of Check, Virginia. He was born February 22, 1877, and died February 28, 1960.

He was united in marriage to Miss Lillie Poage February 27, 1898; and to this union one daughter was born, Mrs. Grace Sowers, of Check, Virginia. He is survived by his devoted daughter, three grandsons, one granddaughter, fourteen great grandchildren, one sister, and several nieces and nephews. His wife died October 8, 1904; and he was married the second time to Miss Ethel Clower, on October 10, 1906.

He united with the Primitive Baptist Church in November, 1910. He and Sister Ethel were baptized at the same time in January, 1911, by Elder H. V. Cole; and he began speaking

in public January 21, 1912. He was licensed in May, 1914; and was ordained in April, 1916. He was, indeed, a faithful servant and a good pastor; and will be greatly missed not only by the churches he served as pastor, but at the variuos places where he visited.

We are resting in the thought that he realized in death what the composer of one of his favorite hymns was blessed to record:

"Death is no more a frightful foe,
Since I with Christ shall reign;
With joy I leave this world of woe:
For me to die is gain." etc.

Elder Moran highly appreciated everything the churches and friends did for him; and many times the writer heard him say, "The brethren and friends are so thoughful of me." In the course of his ministry he served as pastor, Pine Forest, Mountain View, Laurel Creek, Salem, and County Line churches. He served also as moderator of the Smith River Association since 1932. He was blessed with a wonderful gift; and his willingness to sacrifice himself for this churches won for himself much love and respect.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders J. P. Helms and B. O. Thompson at Salem Church, where he had his membership. He was laid to rest in the church yard, there to await that great day when he shall be called to meet the Lord and ever be with Him.

May his loved ones and friends find comfort in the things that he loved and cherished: Salvation by grace, and the sovereignty and immutability of an all wise and gracious God. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." (Psalms 116:15)

Written by request of his daughter.

Gaye Thompson

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It has pleased Almighty God in his infinite wisdom to remove from our midst our beloved Brother and Deacon, Brother Cecil Hamrick, an humble follower of the Lord, and one whose only hope of Heaven and immortal glory was in the shed blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the holy and divine will of our Heavenly Father — we mourn not as those without hope, realizing our loss is his eternal gain.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we extend our deepest sympathy to Sister Hamrick and family. May they be given strength to look unto Him who doeth all things well. Be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* and a copy be placed on our church record book.

Buena White, Church Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, The Delaware River Association, being in session the 8th and 9th of June, 1960, desires to extend our deep sympathy to the bereaved family of our dear departed brother, Elder R. B. Denson. We also desire to express our deep felt loss of this dear brother who was so dear to his many brethern far and near. He visited the Delaware River Association many times and we dearly loved him and will greatly miss him in our midst. May we be made reconciled to the will of God. May God bless and be graciously near to all that so dearly loved him.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to his widow, and That a copy be sent to the the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the Delaware River Association in session with the Hopewell Church at Hopewell, N. J., June 8 and 9, 1960. Written by Deacon Casper Fetter.

Elder Arthur Warren, Moderator
Letha Blackwell, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It was pleasing to our gracious Father to remove from our midst by death on February 28, 1960, our highly esteemed and greatly beloved brother and faithful laborer in the vineyard, Elder Samuel Lee Moran; and

WHEREAS, His gracious kindly manner, and his earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, has endeared him to us in such a way that we will greatly miss him in our homes, in our churches, and in our Association, where he had served as moderator since 1932; and since we shall no longer have the benefit of his presence amongst us, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, at Salem Church, bow in humble submission to our Father's will, and offer thanks to Him for such a gift unto his church; and further

BE IT RESOLVED, That we express our deepest sympathy to his daughter, Sister Sowers, and all of the family; and that this resolution be spread on our minutes; a copy be sent to Sister Sowers; one to the *Signs of the Times* and one to the *Old Faith Contender* for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference, June 11, 1960.

Elder B. O. Thompson, Moderator
G. E. Connor, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 128 DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1960 NO. 9

PLEASE CHECK YOUR
EXPIRATION DATE
IF IT IS 9/60 IT
EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

EXPERIENCE

I would like to write a few words of what I hope was the Lord's dealings with me. To begin I will say that I don't think I have any ability to do any dealing with the Lord. If I have ever been brought or taught of the Lord, it is by his dealings with this creature, and not something I have done.

In the latter part of 1950, the Missionary Baptists were holding a meeting close to my home, and one day a strong desire came over me to go. I went that night; and when the invitation was given I went up and offered myself to the church and was accepted, though I was never united or baptized into this church. I saw it wasn't the place for me.

When I returned home that night and went to bed, a fear came over me that no human can imagine, unless he has been in that condition. I could see myself doomed for an eternal hell, without hope in this world or the world to come. I slept hardly any that night, nor lots of nights after that — it seemed that I could see death and hell before my very eyes. How long this terrible state lasted I cannot remember, but I went for days in what seemed to be eternal woe. I would think, O how I wish I could exchange places with some dumb animal that didn't have a soul to be cast into outer darkness. Oh, what agony, what pain bottles up inside one in this condition! I would go down in the woods and fall on my knees seeking to find the Lord; but it seemed it was only eternal damnation for me. During all this time I had never heard or read of anyone going through such experiences, and I thought I had committed the unpardonable sin.

Several weeks later, I went to my aunt's, Mrs. H. M. Rhodes, and they had some copies of the Signs of the Times. I began to read in these papers, (the first time I had seen any of them), and read some experiences which were soothing to my soul, because I found someone who had feelings like me, and trials which so heavily beset them. During this period I had two or three times when I felt my burden was completely lifted; and I could say at those times that I knew my Redeemer liveth. But these times wouldn't stay with me, no matter how hard I strived to retain them. Oh that I could feel what I hope was the Lord's presence and praise him, as I was enabled to do in those moments of bliss!

It seems that I am the greatest stranger I have ever met in this world — I cannot understand myself. I ask, if I am a child of God, why am I so void of spiritual feelings? If not deceived, I long for the desire to pray; I long for the desire to study God's word, and it not seem a sealed book. During some periods of time it seemed I could read the Bible with an understanding mind, but now it is a sealed book. I wonder, if I have ever been taught of the Lord, why does it remain so with me. If I know my heart, I desire to love the Lord, but I don't have something that I can turn on and off that

will generate this love, like many people this day say you can.

If the Lord doesn't draw and lead, and direct my steps I know I shall be gone world without end. He said that without me you can do nothing; and unless He picks me up and carries me on his heavenly wings, I shall surely go down in utter woe. I am not a member of the church but hope that some day the Lord will lead me home. I feel to be most unprofitable and unworthy, and long for more evidence.

I would like to hear from some of you, if these things be such with you. Please forgive any mistakes I have made; and I beg of you to pray for this sinner when at the throne of grace.

Your brother, I hope,
Loy P. Rodgers,
McCaskill, Arkansas

EXPERIENCE

Dear Editors and
Household of Faith:

As it is nearing time for me to renew my subscription to the dear old Signs, I somehow have a mind to send a copy of a piece I wrote in 1923. I hope the Lord will lead and guide me. I enjoy reading the Signs, and hope I can as long as I live; and I hope you editors and writers will be blessed of the Lord to continue to write in the future as you have in the past. Many of you can express my feelings better than I can. Thank the Lord for you.

My parents were Primitive Baptists, lived good Christian lives and set a good example for their children. I couldn't realize how good they were until I was nearly grown. I was full of life and wanted to enjoy the pleasures of the world, especially music and dancing. I was near sixteen years of age when I felt to be a sinner, and couldn't enjoy dancing any more. I became so worried that I couldn't seem to enjoy anything very much. I quit dancing, and thought I would live a better life. Life was very little pleasure; and I couldn't sleep good at night. I wanted to pray, and couldn't. I would cry and beg God to have mercy on a poor sinner like me. I wondered if anyone had ever felt as I did: I was so miserable. I would read the Bible, but couldn't understand it; and it seemed I could get no relief. I would search the *Landmarks* for the experiences, to see if I could find anybody that ever felt like I did.

I stayed in this condition for several months. One day in August some of the preachers from the association preached at Malmaison, and several of my family and I went. It seemed that I had never had any understanding of the preaching of the gospel until that day; and it seemed all of it was to me, I enjoyed it so much. I wanted to thank God. They sang, "Amazing Grace how sweet the sound," when they closed, and it seemed that my burden was lifted. I was so happy and felt so different to what I had ever felt before, I could hardly keep from shouting, but tried to control myself the best I could. It looked to me like everybody was happy and praising God, and I shed many tears of joy. I hope God showed me the church that day.

I tried to hide my feelings and didn't want anyone to know how I felt. I wanted to follow God's children, and hear them sing and preach all my life. I didn't take this for any change at the time; still I felt different and didn't have any desire to do the things I once had enjoyed. I would read the Bible every day, and kept on trying to pray. I desired so much to live right and serve God, but I felt so sinful, and would ask God if it was his will to give me brighter evidence.

When I went to church, sometimes the preacher would tell my feelings better than I could. After I left I would think that I would not go back next meeting day, but when the time would come I would have a desire to go again. I felt

so unworthy and sinful to be with the dear children of God, and I didn't want to deceive them. I had such great love for them that I wanted their fellowship; and I hope God gave me that love. Sometimes I felt that he did, and sometimes I was in doubts and fears, and felt that I was mistaken. Again I could rejoice and claim Jesus as my Saviour. I would go to hear every denomination to see if I could get any better satisfied. I was trying to pray all the time that God would lead me to the right church, though I didn't seem to have much desire to join any; and I went in this condition for over two years.

One day these words came to me, and stayed on my mind for some time: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.", etc. I did not know this was in the Bible, but found it and read it. Then I had impressions to join the church and be baptized, but felt unworthy. I knew I couldn't be of any help to the church, and I didn't want to deceive the dear saints of God. My father and mother were members of Old Mt. Ararat. The fourth Sunday in November, 1910, I went to church as usual; and after good preaching by Elder T. N. Walton, my impressions were so strong to offer to the church that I can never tell anyone how I felt. I hope it was God's power: and it seemed the time had come for me to offer. I couldn't keep from crying, and I thought I would go outside and maybe it would wear off. But it seemed I couldn't go out; and I stood trembling and crying, and went up and told a part of what I have written, and was received. It was a heavenly place to me.

When I was baptized I felt so calm, and the water looked so pretty. It seemed all my troubles were gone, and I had such a happy season for several days, and I was singing and rejoicing. I can never forget the happy time, and can feast on it at times now. The church has been a sweet home for me for nearly fifty years. I hope I have never done or said anything to hurt the church; yet I don't know sometimes how they have put up with me all these years. I can't live as I desire and wish to; and I say so many things I would like to leave off. I trust in the God who has all power, and does whatever is right. I sometimes feel as Job did: Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. I have been slain many times, and feel so cast down at times that it seems all hope is gone. Again I am happy, and thankful for the many, many blessings God has given me. If God has given me a hope in his dear Son, that is the greatest possession I will ever have here. I can't find words to express His wonderful love. I love to hear Jesus preached, and my poor heart rejoices when I do.

After I married I moved my membership to Malmaison Church, where I hope I have felt God's presence many times, and we have sat together in heavenly places. I hope I love God's children everywhere. If I am a child of God, I feel to be the least. My desire is to live an humble Christian life.

If you think this is worthy of a place in your dear paper, please correct mistakes. If I know anything about the love of God, it is so wonderful, and I can't find words to express it as I would love to. I desire your prayers. In sweet fellowship,

Your sister I hope,
Eva L. Hall,
(Mrs. John A. Hall)
1145 Franklin Tpke.
Danville, Virginia

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN ELDER GOLD AND DR. HOOPER

(NOTE: The following interesting correspondence is re-published by request. It is not likely that many of our readers have read it, so we hope they will find it interesting and instructive. The correspondence took place in 1870, and was published in the Landmark. Due to its length, it will be continued in several issues — Ed.)

"There have been many requests for

me to republish the correspondence between Dr. Hooper, of the Missionary Baptist faith, and myself, which occurred in 1870. This was the year I left that denomination. I was requested then by our people to give my reasons for this course, but my reply was that I did not feel like making any statements about it — until Dr. Hooper addressed me the following letter, whereupon I felt that my reasons for leaving one denomination and going to another ought to be good, and that I should be willing to give them

"Dr. Hooper has long since departed this life. He was a man of very fine ability and excellent reputation.

P. D. G."

(From The Biblical Recorder)

TO ELDER P. D. GOLD

Dear Brother Gold: — Your defection from us and going over to the party of those styling themselves "the Old Side, or Primitive" Baptists, has, as you may well suppose, excited the surprise and displeasure of your former brethren; and, as it is an implied censure of them and their cause, and even a public declaration that they were so much in the wrong that you could not, with good conscience, remain among them, it seems to justify them in asking your reason for taking this step. No one questions your right to follow your best judgment and the dictates of your conscience in changing your church relations. But as you must be aware that all such changes wound the feelings of many, imply something very wrong in the party abandoned, and serve to increase the lamentable divisions of the church which bring so much discredit, I had almost said disgrace, on the sacred cause of our common Master, we are entitled to believe that some serious apparent objection at least lies against the churches distinguished by the name "Missionary Baptists", an appellation unfortunately rendered necessary by the withdrawal of our former brethren from us and which attaches to them the opposite, and we should think the unwelcome appellation of "Anti-missionaries." I believe we, "the missionaries", wish to do right, and if by mistake or infirmity we go astray, the well-ment, tender and candid rebuke of a brother will be meekly and thankfully received.

Our preaching, so far as I know is such as would be sanctioned by Andrew Fuller, whose works have been a standard authority for Baptists both in England and this country, ever since they appeared. They recognize and set forth prominently God's electing love, effectual calling and preservation of His saints unto final salvation — the sinner's guilt and helplessness and his entire dependence upon God "both to will and to do of His good pleasure." But they hold and prove it by scriptural example, that all this is perfectly consistent with the most urgent appeals to sinners to repent, believe, and obey at the peril of their souls, and these are the appointed means of arrousing them to flee from the wrath to come. On those who profess to be Christians they inculcate the duty of showing their faith by their works, of being abundant in good works, of devoting health, strength, zeal, property, to the cause of Christ. They teach that the love begotten in the soul by redeeming love ought and will impel to a life of active usefulness and to zealous exertions to extend the knowledge of that love to the ends of the earth. Every true church must therefore be a missionary church, and the very doctrines which we preach and practice resulting therefrom are what set in motion the Christian world towards the end of the last century, and gave the Baptists the honor of being pioneers in the great work of evangelizing the world, a work which has since been going on with accelerated speed, owned and blessed by God by the conversion of multitudes of poor heathens, who were once just such monsters of violence and pollution as Paul describes the Romans and Corinthians to have been, but have now like

them, "been washed and sanctified and justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of God." If any of our number do not preach and love this doctrine, it is not because they belong to a society which does not inculcate it, but in opposition to all the efforts and teachings of our pulpits, and books and periodical press.

When will the people, with whom you have chosen to affiliate yourself, produce any like fruits? Has not their opposition to us produced a reaction in the contrary direction, and made them adverse to all progress in knowledge? Do they not repudiate all helps to the interpretation of the Scriptures, and take for granted that the meaning adopted by every preacher that can read the English Bible is the teaching of the Holy Spirit? And does not every one that listens to their preaching hear the wildest and most groundless fancies of the human brain delivered from the pulpit as the truth of God, and the food appointed by Christ for the nurture of his sheep? Can it delight you to see the mass of the people delivered over to the tuition and custody of such shepherds? Forgive me, if I have, in any particualr, spoken too harshly.

We regret to lose such a man as you, and to have you attach to a body who make it a part of the regular ministrations of the pulpit to decry us as enemies of the truth, and recreants to the good old Baptist doctrine. — In one sense we may conceive hope from the proselytism of intelligent men. They will serve as a leaven which will gradually leaven the whole lump, and the whole body will gradually drop their errors and again amalgamate with us. We do not deny that there are among the "anti-missionaries" many truly pious people and that many of their people, and that many of their preachers, hold and preach true, saving doctrine; but we claim that the very same wholesome and saving truth is heard from our pulpits, while we charge upon these, our separating brethren, the error of departing from the Scriptural precept and example by preaching the doctrines of predestination and election in such an unguarded manner and disproportionate quantity as to lead to the practical effects of fatalism; the sinner being lulled in contented slumber until his time shall come, and the convert discouraged, after his conversion, from actively exerting himself in doing good, on the plea that he is thereby trying to work out a righteousness of his own. Thus all active exertion is branded with the reproach of helping God to achieve his purposes by our puny hands. Yet God does not scorn our fellowship in his work.

Are we not called "workers together with him?" The truth is, God carries on all his operations for the setting up of his kingdom on earth through the agency of human hearts and hands. He who uses the winds to waft Paul to Macedonia and Troas, uses Titus and Timothy's hands and feet to visit and serve the churches which he nursed. He who wants his imprisoned ministers to have comforts in their bonds, makes use of Epaphroditus to carry those comforts from Phillippi and Thessalonica, at the hazard of his life. This consistency of human effort with divine preordination is so obvious, that we wonder how our brethren styling themselves "Old School" can fail to see it and act upon it as we do. But maybe our opponents will say: We don't object to your working, but you don't work in the right way. — Very well. Now my dear brother, come forward and tell us how we ought to work, "show us a more excellent way," and we will all heartily thank you, if you can suggest some better way of working; for we are always trying to find out the best way.

If I have in any respect misrepresented the doctrine or the practical results of the preaching of your new associates I shall be very glad to be corrected, and will take back most willingly any wrong statement of which you may convince me, if your intercourse

with this class of Christians be sufficient to authorize your denial of this commonly received opinion of their instructions and their church proceedings. I make no other apology for being the one who takes the liberty of asking for this explanation from you, except my age as seeming to warrant me in watching with a kind of fatherly interest over the lives and labors of our rising ministry.

Wm. Hooper

TO DR. HOOPER

My Dear Sir: — A communication addressed to me appears in the *Biblical Recorder* of April 27, 1870, calling on me for a statement of the reasons for my leaving the Missionary Baptist denomination and uniting with the Old School Baptists. It was not my intention to offer any defense of my conduct, as it is unpleasant to be thrust before the world either in abusing those one has left, or in defending his new associates, as if he felt himself to be their champion. — But since yourself and many others of your denomination are held in much esteem, and your request is accompanied with a promise of a candid consideration of my reasons, it is not easy to decline giving some of them. I write not to needlessly offend any one, neither arrogating my superiority nor charging any person with insincerity.

I can bear my former brethren testimony to their zeal and earnestness in propagating what seems to them to be truth, and would not, if not so directly called upon, any further wound their feelings by any public expression of my own views which are so opposite. It shall be my endeavor to give what seems to me to be Bible teaching, brought to my view in experience, and let all who are disposed to consider my views try them by the word of God; for they are worthless if not sustained thereby. According to Bible authority, spiritual truth can be discerned and received in the love of it only by those that are spiritual, so that he who relies on that standard never satisfies those opposing.

I was, perhaps, as much opposed to "this sect everywhere spoken against" as any one of you number, and verily thought such a course was doing God service. I embraced the Andrew Fuller system, and was under teachers of theology — was sincere in thinking salvation was offered and only offered to all men — that it depended on the creature's own will whether he accepted it or not — that Sunday School teaching was a wonderful help in the Lord's work — that missionary boards were a happy organization for spreading the gospel — that theological teaching was a wise provision for training a man to preach — that money would hasten the conversion of the world, if we only had it; glorying in this age of wisdom in devising and developing many fruitful measures for accelerating the progress of truth, and regarding the man blind and bigoted who would not come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

During this period of several years, some of my actions were bad enough to stagger me. Trouble like dark billows would at times roll over me, succeeded by short relief. My zeal, however, continued unabated; but the tasks began to increase.

Suddenly corruptions arose everywhere within me with a fierceness uncontrollable, and sin raged like a devouring fire. The law confronted me with a killing sentence, and death, I thought, was on me. Hell was the only place that could fitly receive me, and was so just in God in sending me there, that my soul must approve the righteous sentence. While sinking down Jesus was manifested in the heavens in a glorious appearance, and these words sounded out, "If God gave you Christ, how shall He not with him also freely give you all things." Since then Christ is my only hope, and all human righteousness appears as filthy rags from

which I wish to be delivered. A painful sense of sin forbids confidence in the flesh, and I am entirely dependent for faith on its author and finisher.

Upon this new and I hope heavenly teaching, which was about five years ago, followed fresh troubles, but of a different sort. A general dissatisfaction with the principles and practices of the denomination I had until then gloried in, began to arise.

(Continued next month)

EXPERIENCE

Early this year while riding in my car and meditating on the scriptures, I was caused to think on the Lord Jesus when he was here in the world and the love that He had for His people, even to love them so much that He gave His life for them. During this meditation a voice seemed to speak in me saying, "Love one another, even as Christ did love the Church for which He died. Even so you should lay your lives down for the brethren."

Here I was caused for a time to feel a deeper love for the Children of God than I had ever felt before, and this love continues with me even till now.

At the Union Meeting in March I saw some members from the Upper Country Line Association. I asked them if they knew how Elder King and Elder Spangler were. They said that Elder King was doing right well, but that Elder Spangler was not well, for he had suffered another attack. When I heard of his condition, a feeling came over me that I had never experienced before in my life. A feeling that brought me so low that I felt the pure love of God in my heart and soul. If I have ever known what the love of God is it was at this time. flowing from my heart out to the people of God everywhere. There was a power about this love that seemed to reach out and embrace the whole flock of God. This was so precious and sweet to me, and the sweetness of His grace that I enjoyed continued with me for some time.

That evening as I was on my way home alone, that power (the power of God) pressed me down so low that I was made to pray for His Elect, wherever they were. In this prayer, there was only one brother that I was made to mention by name and that was Elder Spangler. Why, I do not know, but the thing that I do know is that I was made to pour out my pure heart and soul to the mighty God of Heaven for Him and all the Saints of God that He had called from Nature's darkness to the light of His Glory. In this prayer I was caused to pray for each one of His ministers that He has called by His grace to stand on the watch-walls of Zion to cry aloud and spare not the whole counsel of God, that He make them to stand before His Church as brave as a lion and as harmless as a dove, seeking not to please man, but to be brave enough to preach the unadulterated Gospel of the Son of God to its fullest extent.

I do not know the words that went out of my mouth in this prayer other than those above; and also that if there was any one that was trying to preach that He (God) had not called that he would bless His Church by giving them (the Church) wisdom in the true sound of the Gospel so that they may be able to judge between the true and the false doctrine, and that the church may cause each one that does not bring the true Gospel of Christ Jesus the Lord, to be set down, lest they divide the flock.

Here I begged God that His love and mercy might be made manifest in each one's heart in a way that would cause them to keep themselves unspotted from the world; and to lead them by the Holy Spirit.

After this there came a desire in my heart to visit the Dan River Church in the Upper Country Line Association. I thought that I would go and be with them on the fourth Sunday in June. However, I felt unworthy to be with so great a people. As time passed I fully

thought I would go, and I obtained leave from the church I serve at this time, so that I could go, but at the same time I had a feeling to come over me that I would not go.

About two weeks before this meeting my sister was taken desperately ill and continued to get worse from day to day, to a point that I could not leave and go that far from home. She passed away on Monday after the fourth Sunday in June, 1959.

At this time I felt so low in my feelings I did not know what I should do, for I knew I was not fit to live nor fit to die. Oh how I would pray and beg my God for mercy, and if it could be His will to deliver me from such a low place, and I was made to say with the Psalmist, "O Lord, restore unto me again the joy of thy salvation."

During this condition I was made to think back on my prayer to God that His Church might cause each one that is not called by the Grace of God to preach, and that brings to them false doctrines, to be set down. This made me beg my God for mercy and in some way to show me if I were really called by His grace to preach. Oh how I would beg the good Lord to give me more evidence that I was a yokefellow in the ministry with such servants of God as Elder W. E. Turner, Elder A. P. Newbourn, Elder King, Elder Spangler, Elder Helms, Elder Ayres, and all others that were called by the grace of God to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ Jesus and His kingdom.

At the Pigg River on Saturday I heard Elder Spangler preach the most wonderful discourse to me that I ever heard from the lips of any man. Oh how the tears of joy trickled down my cheeks. I also saw tears in the eyes of many others during this preaching. Oh how my heart and soul did feast on the bread of Heaven at this time. I feel to know that when one is blessed to feast on the Word of God as I did, and I am sure that others did, during this preaching that they are eating of the bread of Heaven which Jesus Christ spoke of when He said, "I am the Living Bread that came down from Heaven wherein if a man eats thereof he shall never die.", and also He said, "The Bread of God is He that come down from Heaven and giveth life to the World." (The Word of God)

After this I was made to wonder if I had ever been blessed to feed any of the Saints of God, even just one. Oh how I longed for and begged my God to give me again a little more evidence that would cause me to know that I was one among the servants of God which He had called into the ministry of Christ Jesus. This was then, and is now, all of my desire. Oh but how can I know. It is all Hope, which is enough if it is God given Hope. It is an anchor to the soul both sure and stedfast. After a few days I was caught away in a dream or a vision one night, and in this I was made to see myself just as you would look at another person ten or fifteen feet away from you. There I saw myself as if I could not walk very well without help. There was Elder Spangler on my left with his right hand under my left elbow and some other minister on my right with his left hand under my right elbow, just as they were helping me to go.

The minister on my right I did not know at this time. However, I was made to know that each minister that is blessed to preach the Gospel is a help through the Gospel to each minister that hears him, as well as all the people of God are when they are blessed to eat of that Heavenly food to the comfort of their soul. The minister whom I did not know in this vision was taller than I and was on my right side. This troubled me, for I was made to know that it was a minister of the Gospel of Christ Jesus called by the grace of God.

This would appear to me from day to day as the time passed, so I would wonder just what it meant. I would pray to God for enlightenment on these

things but none would come, so my prayer to God for mercy was with me day and night that He might give me evidence in some way that would comfort and assure me that I was one that was really in the number that had been called by His grace to the ministry of Christ Jesus the Lord, to feed his little ones. (the Flock of God)

At the Smith River Association on Sunday, I heard Elder Spangler preach again. This lifted me up for a day or two and comforted me so that my heart did rejoice in the love of God, for he was blessed each time to preach the blessed truth of Jesus and His Kingdom, as I believed them, better than I. During the next day or two, I felt that I had eaten of the Bread of Heaven to the fill of my soul, but soon I was back in a low place again.

A few days after this, I was caught away in another dream or vision, which, I do not know, but I do feel that whether asleep or awake, it was of the Lord. In this dream, I again saw myself and Elder Spangler walking, and between us was one like I had never seen before. It was in the form of a woman's body and was several times the size of a natural body. She wore upon her head a crown of pure gold, which was shaped differently from any crown that I had ever seen before. It was round and extended above her head to a point with a large star on top, which was filled with small stars or diamonds that shone and glittered as we went. It fitted her head perfectly. The garment she wore was of one piece, having no seam or waist band, and being straight from top to bottom, was free of wrinkles. This garment was also filled with stars or diamonds, without number, that glittered as we went. I say we, for Elder Spangler was on her left and her left hand held him firmly, and I was on her right, and her right hand held me firmly. Elder Spangler and I were dressed in the same clothing that we wore in my first vision when he and the other minister were helping me to go. I have already said that I did not know who the third minister was in my first vision and I will try to tell how I was made to know who he was.

At the Kehukee Association I heard Elder Taylor preach a wonderful discourse. I wish I could tell just how much I received from it. It was food to my heart and soul, for in it I could see Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and Life being declared to the fullest extent. To me it was the whole counsel of God.

After this, my mind would go back to that day, and the lifting up that was mine to enjoy. Some how there was something about the way that Elder Taylor appeared to me while preaching that day that did not leave me.

On the fourth Sunday in October at our association while Elder Taylor was preaching so wonderfully, and to my comfort, I would look at him and wonder just what it was about his looks that I did not understand. As he continued his discourse, and nearing the end of it, he in some way lifted his left hand slightly, and I, looking at him as he held his left hand in that position for just a few seconds, was made to know that the other minister that I saw with me in my dream was Elder Taylor, for I could feel the same touch of his hand as I did in the dream, and he was dressed in the same clothing as he was in the dream.

I so much desired to tell Elder Taylor of this experience then that I was even burdened by that desire in my heart. All I could tell him then was that I may write him and tell him of an experience that I had witnesed some time before.

This vision or dream caused the greatest calm to come over me that I have ever known. Also it seemed to increase my faith in the Son of God and to renew my hope in the Lord Jesus Christ to a point that I felt surely I was one that had been called by the Almighty God to preach the Gospel of his dear Son along with the other ministers of God that I had seen in the two dreams

and others that had been called by His grace.

I was made to know that the woman that I saw was the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ and the large star on top of the crown she wore was Jesus himself. The stars that were in the crown and in the garment that she wore were the Saints of God that have passed on from this unfriendly world, and their spirits that have entered into the Paradise of God there to await the coming of Christ on the resurrection morning to gather all of the saints of God and to take them to the Father in Glory. These stars were without number.

Elder Spangler and I were with this body, he on one side and I the other, and we were held so firmly by her that there was no way that we could be parted from her. I was made to know that each of the elect family of God that remains alive in this world is so firmly connected to them that have gone on before that they too are given a desire even as Paul was when he said, "I have a desire to depart this life and be with the Lord which is far better." So when we do depart this life here in this world we too will take our place in the Paradise of God together with them that have gone before to await in a state of perfection until Christ comes again to take us home to eternal Glory, and at His appearing, these our bodies will be raised from the graves in the same state of perfection that His (Jesus) body was when he was raised from the tomb on the third morning after He was crucified and placed in the grave. Then the spirit of each one of His Saints will enter into their bodies and we will meet him in the air to ever more be around the Great White Throne of God to sing praises to God the Father, God the Son, and ever blessed Holy Spirit in that world which will never end. Amen.

(This experience was witnessed by the writer during the months from first of February to the first of November, 1959.)

S. R. Boykin
1702 Tryon Road
New Bern, N. C.

"HOW MARVELOUS THAT I DARE TO HOPE!"

1360 1st Street,
Chehalis, Washington

Editors of the Signs,

Dear Brothers in Christ:

. . . I believe I subscribed for the Signs in 1932, and I saved every copy of it. It was a welcome visitor in my home, and I found much comfort in its articles; or most of them: I am limited in understanding, and sometimes I failed to see all that was contained. I have begun to give my papers and books, "My Treasures", to younger people who I know will enjoy them.

I have been bed-fast exactly half the time for the past two years, and can only get from room to room now by the aid of crutches. I do not expect to ever be able to walk alone again. But let me hasten to add that the blessed Comforter is ever near, and sees all my faltering steps: He knows and cares, and I cannot complain. "In everything give thanks," is not easy to do; but through Christ I can do all things, for he strengthens me.

The end of my time on earth is not far away, and for this I daily give thanks. For I feel to know that there are better things ahead for those who love the Lord, and surely, if I know anything, it is that I love the One who gave his life that I might live in eternity with Him — that I might live in the mansions He prepares for those who love him; that I might feel He has ever interceeded for me, there where he sits at His and my Father's right hand. How marvelous that I dare to hope! Yet He caused me to hope, caused me to pray, and caused me to love; and I can never thank him enough for all the wonders that have fallen to my lot. "Praise Him, Oh my soul. Praise Him

for ever."

This may be published, if you wish, that others may hear from me, as I cannot write as many letters as I once did. May He bless you in his service.

Yours in hope of God's mercy,
Mrs. Effie Parke

A WONDERFUL MEETING

The fifty-fourth annual session of the Upper Country Line Association convened with the church at Lick Fork, Rockingham County, North Carolina, the third week-end in July, 1960, including the Third Sunday, Saturday before and Monday following.

Nine associations were represented, including the Kehukee, the oldest Primitive Baptist Association in the United States. The Country Line and the Kehukee have had a continuous correspondence for over one hundred and fifty years. There were about thirty visiting ministers, from six states, who spoke during the meetings. Included were: Elder A. B. Ayers, Kehukee Association; Elders E. D. Gafford and Sam Dean, from the Ebenezer Association of Alabama; Elder E. J. Lambert, of the Sulphur Fork Association of Texas; Elder R. W. Rhodes, of the South Quachita Association of Louisiana.

Elders W. E. Turner, S. R. Boykin, W. B. Barnes, and L. H. Stephenson of the Black Creek Association in North Carolina; Elders A. P. Newborn and C. N. Bunn of the Contentnea of North Carolina; and Elder Lester Lee of the Seven Mile Association of North Carolina.

Elders W. R. Dodd, and R. S. Payne of the Staunton River Association; Elders J. P. Helms, Posey Plybon, E. C. Jones, Lenord Brammer, J. R. Hollandsworth, C. E. Turner, O. K. Tench, P. E. Ingram, Rufus Brown, and Otey Conner of the Pigg River Association of Virginia; Elders B. O. Thompson, and F. L. Clark of the Smith River Association; Elder J. R. Lane of Harmony Church of West Virginia; and Elder George Weaver of the Virginia corresponding meeting.

The home ministers of the Upper Country Line present included Elders W. C. King, J. W. Gilliam, Jesse Paschal, Harvey Smith, Ernest Oakley, Haywood Wray, and D. V. Spangler; also licentiate Kenneth Key. There may have been others that I do not recall at present — we appreciated having each one.

I think there was the largest congregation seen in fifteen years at an association; estimated at five thousand. The preaching was in complete harmony with the principles of salvation by grace: ascribing all honor and glory to Him, in whose name we believe we were met. There was preaching from the stand morning, afternoon, and night.

Surely there was the manifestation of the fulfillment of the Psalm: "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." No discord was heard throughout the meeting, but there were many tears of joy, manifesting that the Lord was in the place. Surely these meetings are of much benefit to the dear people of God — when they are blessed to meet to worship in an associational capacity, with nothing in view but to worship God, and have spiritual communication with each other. That is the true purpose of these meetings: it is not to control or dictate to the churches, or to legislate for the churches, but to worship God and mingle with the little ones.

D. V. Spangler

HER ADDRESS IS CHANGED

Chico, Calif.

Elder D. V. Spangler,
Danville, Va.

Dear Brother Spangler:

This is to ask a favor of you. I have been moved to this new address because of my helpless condition. My new address is, Marion S. Brooks, R. F. D. 1, Box 763A, Chico, California. Will you please give the new address in the dear

old Signs so that the brothers and sisters of the Old Baptist churches who have written me, may know what has become of me?

Many long years have I enjoyed the Signs of the Times without price, and I love all the writers. Their good letters are the only preaching I ever get. Only three times in my life have I heard them preach, and I am almost eighty-five years of age. I realize that I am a sinner, and if Christ didn't die for me there is no hope. My sins sometimes rise up before me like the blackest clouds; and I feel that I never did a good thing in my long life. I have tried, only to realize that I am a hypocrite. I am very helpless; surely it won't be much longer before I cross the bar.

If you will publish this, I will appreciate it, that the brethren may have my new address. May God's blessings be yours. With love and fellowship for all the household of faith.

Marion S. Brooks
R. F. D. 1, Box 763A
Chico, Calif.

"A MAN SHALL BE A HIDING PLACE"

"And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." (Isaiah 32:2)

Prophecy, as we understand it, is the foretelling of events to come. In the foregoing scriptural quotation the Prophet has spoken of a "man" who is a refuge under certain prevailing circumstances. The person or people under consideration are those who find themselves in need of a refuge from conditions over which they have no control.

The man referred to by the Prophet is, as we understand, Jesus, for what he is in the quotation could not be fulfilled by any other than He. For He is the Eternal Son of God; the Creator, the Redeemer, the final Preservator; and resurrection of the dead.

The depraved nature of natural fallen man cannot know or foresee his needs. Neither is he capable of reviving himself to the higher order, or spiritual life as it is in Jesus. Nor can he provide for himself a refuge from the menacing and deadly effect of sin and death.

The Prophet has spoken of elemental power and influences which man has always yielded to. Even though the ingenuity of men has devised many inventions, yet God "hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." (Acts 17:26)

In our text Jesus has made reference to the uncontrollable power of the elements by man. This has reference to the uncontrollable power of sin in the mortal nature of man. It is a debt that must be settled not by the resolution of fallen man in a self-righteous change — "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23) The law cannot be a refuge, "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. 3:20) Since God is holy the debt of sin must be settled by the holiness of God in His own Son. It is true the unregenerate find rest and comfort in their deeds of self works until the Holy work of Jesus plants the incorruptible seed of holiness in the heart which reveals the depraved and lost condition. Then there is an awakening to the lost condition and the deadness of self-righteous works. David's horrible pit is then an experience. (Ps. 40:12) Pharisaical preaching loses its charm, for natural strength is dead. David in the horrible pit and Peter in the sea are sinking. They could not revive by the strength of nature. The same works that had before lifted them up were now taking them down. The bottomless pit of sin and the roaring waves of destruction can never be conquered by self works. The natural trend of fallen nature is to sin and disobedience to the law of God. This is a known truth to every child of God by sad experiences. "For the carnal

mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." (Rom. 8:7) When the holy spirit is born in the soul and the old man nature is fully revealed in its ghastly form there is often a longing to hide from self. Sin and its evil effect is a strong, chilly wind to the Lord's humble poor. Jesus is their covert.

The Prophet speaks for himself in deep, humiliating words of sorrow: "Then said I, woe is me; for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." (Isaiah 6:5)

My dear poor in spirit, when you pause in deep meditation, loathe and deplore your state, whisper deeply within the heart: "Lord if my brethren knew me as I am, they'd have no more fellowship for me," you may take courage in a most precious hope, for your eyes have been opened to see the King (Jesus). The Prophet did not find these defects of depraved nature until his spiritual eyes had been opened to see the King. This is when we feel to need the covert (Jesus) from the tempest of the powers of sin, its destruction and destitution.

It is not infrequently when the Lord's humble poor recline at night with a desire to pray, before they are aware they have left off praying and the mind wandering on some earthly object. How barren it makes one feel; how dry. It takes the "Rivers of waters" (Spirit of Christ) to revive the dry places, to water the barren soul poverty.

How often do we hear many of our aged brethren complain of their desolate condition, that their seasons of hearing and rejoicing seem to grow further apart as though a famine had begun. (Amos 8:11) The more the revelation of Jesus the greater the destitution. He must increase, but I must decrease. (John 3:30)

It is the gospel that gives a sure hiding place and a refuge. It creates a need and fills that need, creates hunger and feeds the hungry.

It is the gospel that gives the knowledge of light and darkness. "I form the light and create darkness: I make peace and create evil. I the Lord do all these things." (Isaiah 45:7)

Formation and creation are here accredited both to the holy and divine work of God. The light of the gospel in all its virtue and power is formed by revelation in the heart of the redeemed. This formation creates a knowledge of the darkness and horror of sin in its deadly nature. The revealed peace of God in the soul is as a rest in the shadow of a great rock (Jesus) when the knowledge of evil is created within by Him who is our peace. (Eph. 2:14) Light and peace would have no meaning except from their opposite effect. How beautifully the scripture sets forth the complete destruction, eternally of darkness and evil by the atoning blood of Jesus for His redeemed. He is our hiding place, covert, as a river of water in a dry place and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

Submitted in love and for truth's sake.

(Elder) W. E. Turner
403 Monticello Drive
Wilson, N. C.

BY HIS MERCY

Oh! the love that cannot die
Does not weaken as time flies,
But is ever as a guide —
That is by His mercy.

By the streams and hills and dales
Where our Shepherd has tilled well;
And that love is not for sale
He tells them with his mercy.

These sheep that are wandering home:
Sometimes far away from home;
Sure He knows which are his own;
That is by His mercy.

Oh! I know that I have strayed
In my stumbling, wandering way —
Knowing now it was His will —
All is by His mercy.

Hoping as I go along

In my heart to hear His song,
And sing His praises all day long
Telling of His mercy.

Sweet it is that song of grace,
When He shows His smiling face;
Thus the spirit takes its place,
We are blessed with mercy.

There's the mercy-seat I see
Where it was prepared for me,
And by thy ordained decree
I have found thy mercy.

Thy will be done with me today:
Keep me in this willing way
That I might have a heart to pray,
Asking for thy mercy.

There upon the mercy-seat
My soul heard music that was sweet:
It was thy word, and truth was preached;
I knew it by thy mercy.

My lot was cast there at your feet:
In tears you shared this love with me.
With handshakes warm and smiles so sweet,
May I live with you in His mercy.

(Mrs. Rachel Wray, wife of Elder Haywood Wray, of Mt. Pleasant Church, N. C.)

REMEMBER ME

Remember me, O Lord, when clouds surround
The place of thine abode, and all is drear;
When passions wild spread devastation round,
And the overburdened conscience droops with fear.
E'en then, unholy and defiled with sin,
Unloving and unlovely though I be,
With slipping feet without, and guilt within,
Forsake me not. O Lord, remember me!

Remember me, O Lord, when in the world
Amidst thy enemies my pathway lies;
When oaths and blasphemies around are hurled,
Help me towards thy throne to lift mine eyes.
Then do thou keep the portals on my lip,
Lest I, in trying to defend, dishonor thee —
Lest my unguarded tongue some word let slip!

Remember me, O Lord, when in the church,
Among thy saints, as one of them I move;
Give me with diligence my hope to search,
Lest I a blot be in their feasts of love.
Keep me from judging harshly in the thing
That working in myself I often see;
Help me each knotty circumstance to bring
Before thy throne. O Lord, remember me.

Remember me, O Lord, when worldlings smile,
When less of earthly sorrows press me down;
Let not their guilded baits beguile,
But rather let me see the sinner's frown.
When my unstable mind would look around,
And pause, and parley with the enemy,
Then let thy word in solemn accents sound
Within my inmost soul. Remember me.

Remember me, O Lord, when life and joy
From thy dear presence swells within my breast,
When thy sweet praise my willing thoughts employ,
When on my branch the heavenly dewdrops rest;
O then, lest Satan snatch that gift away,
A gift so highly prized, a gift so free,
Help me in spirit fervently to pray:
"Guard thine own work." O Lord remember me.

Remember me, O Lord, through all the way
Thy wisdom had designed that I must tread.
And when my weary, sinful frame I lay,
While earth recedes, upon my dying bed,
When death's chill arms around this form is cast,
Still help me to prefer this only plea:
"Thou refuge of my soul, from first to last,
Jesus, my only hope, remember me!"

B. M. — Gospel Standard, Jan. 12, 1860
(Re-published by request)

NEW VERNON MEETING

The yearly meeting of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church will be held the 1st Saturday in October — October 1st. All members and friends are invited to attend.

(Elder) A. J. Slauson

NOTICE OF THE LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The **Lexington-Roxbury Association** is appointed to be held with the First and Second Roxbury Churches, of Roxbury, Delaware County, N. Y., at Halcottville, Delaware County, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, September 14 and 15, 1960.

Those coming on Tuesday take Route 28 to Fleischmans, then take Halcott Center Road out of Fleischmans at Esso Gas Station four miles to the Maples (Mr. and Mrs. James Peet). Those coming on Wednesday go directly to the Meeting House at Halcottville. Those expecting to stay one night or more will please send a card to Mr. and Mrs. James Peet, Halcott Center, N. Y.

An invitation is extended to our ministering brethren and friends to meet with us.

Amasa J. Slauson
Prudence Hinkley and
Virtue Ballard, Church Clerks

Danville, Virginia September, 1960

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HAVE YOU SENT IN A NEW SUBSCRIPTION LATELY?

EDITORIAL

BLIND BARTIMAEUS
(Mark 10:46-52)

"And they came to Jericho: and as He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging."

The subject of this article was blind and poor, so that he was, through extreme poverty, forced to beg from day to day. In this sad condition he sat, longing and hoping for someone to relieve him in his misery. Little did he know or think that he was an object of God's Eternal love and mercy, that prophets had long told of One who should come to open the eyes of the blind, that Jesus would come and save them. "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing." Isaiah 35:5-6. Although he was blind and poor, yet he could hear and hearing is a wonderful thing, but there is a more wonderful blessing in a knowing and discerning a certain sound; as one of old said "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound;" and again, Paul said "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"

This man had been moved with expectation many times as the crowd passed by, but this time was an acceptable time, it was "the time of love." Ezekiel 16:8. How many times he had heard of Jesus we are not told, but this man had a desire. "Those feeble desires, those wishes so weak, 'tis Jesus inspires and bids you still seek."

"And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me." What a sweet and suitable prayer for such as he, who had sat by the wayside of life in this world, blind to any hope of peace with God or felicity in a world to come. He must have felt as some do now, that he was a beggar poor at mercy's door and that none could help him but Jesus of Nazareth. "And many charged him that he should hold his peace." How few there are who understand the case of such an one. Many charged him and no doubt unbelief had done its worst to keep him silent, but his sorry plight and the presence of Him who lightens those who

sit in darkness and in the shadow of death caused this poor man to give a deaf ear to the many, and spurred him on to cry "the more a great deal, Thou son of David, have mercy on me." How good that his cry was to Jesus only, for "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Such a cry in such a condition caused Jesus to stand still. "And JESUS STOOD STILL, and commanded him to be called." What amazing grace, that the King of kings and Lord of lords would design to notice a poor poverty-stricken creature and give commandment concerning such. It seems here that the work of the ministry finds its appointed place. "And they call the blind man, (how?) saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise, He calleth thee." Their soul-cheering testimony is Be of good comfort, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." We are sure if Jesus is present and He has sent a man, that man will ever carry a message of comfort to God's humble poor. Even if his testimony carries with it a word of reproof or rebuke the receiver will find it to his comfort and instruction.

We would here state that we do not think that this beggar could rise in his own strength, rather we believe that the Spirit of God, who had brought him to feel his need, gave him faith at the word or command of Jesus, for "where the word of a King is, there is power." Enabling grace lifted him to his feet, unfit as he felt to be. "And he, casting away his garment, rose and came to Jesus." He, no doubt, had often pulled that covering around him to make himself presentable to his fellow men. Faith in Jesus enables one to cast away his garment of self-righteousness to the moles and to the bats, and he arose (just as he was) and came to Jesus. "And Jesus answered and said unto him." Jesus ALWAYS answered the cry of faith. It was faith that, in another place, enabled the woman to press through the crowd, saying, "If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole." Her touch, without faith, (which is God's gift) would have been just as unfruitful as that of the many others that the disciples said touched him. Jesus did not say, thy touch hath saved thee, but "Thy faith hath made thee whole." Faith enables a poor beggar to ask and receive. "What WILT thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto Him, Lord." faith enables one to know and call Him Lord. "Lord, that I might receive my sight."

Jesus Christ our Lord came into the world to give His life a ransom for many, this was the declared will of our Eternal God by the mouth of His prophets since the world began. This world was under a curse and so was Jericho, from which Rahab the harlot and all that she had, were saved by sovereign grace, when Jericho was overthrown. It is interesting to read what Joshua said at the time of the destruction of Jericho. "And Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before the Lord, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho. He shall lay the foundation thereof in his first-born and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it." Joshua 6:26. This prophecy was fulfilled when one of the most wicked kings, Ahab, reigned in Israel. Hiel built Jericho, "he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his first-born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the Lord, which He spake by Joshua the son of Nun." Thus Jericho, which represents man's works, whether best or worst, is under the curse. David declared that "Every man at his best state is altogether vanity, surely every man walketh in a vain shew."

It was here that Jesus came to live a life of perfect obedience to God's holy law and to die for the sins of those whom the Father had given Him, the

ones who are called MY PEOPLE in Isaiah 40. For them He died and rose from the dead for their justification. For them He wrought out a perfect obedience, and by His blood forever washed away the stain of sin from them. To them the servant of God is sent to declare that they have received of the Lord's hand double for all their sins. As Toplady sings, "My Saviour's obedience and blood hide ALL MY TRANSGRESSIONS from view." It is thus the work of the Holy Ghost, the third person in the Trinity, who is also the Spirit of the Son as well as of the Father, who is, in this Gospel day, performing the work of grace in the hearts and lives of those who are His, taking of the things of Jesus and showing them unto us. What a transformation the work of God's Spirit makes upon an individual. He becomes a stranger here, heaven is his home, he is "content and pleased to live unknown till Christ His Lord appear." Jesus said to the blind man, "Go thy way." What way was that, the way he had travelled among those in Jericho? Yes, but while in the world ye are not of the world. Jesus said "Go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole," saved thee from this Jericho, this world, and your affections are on a world to come. "And immediately (from the moment Jesus spoke) he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way." It was his sight, it is true, but how different were his vision and prospects to what the natural man with natural sight has. He followed Jesus in the way, Jesus, our shepherd, husband, friend, our prophet, priest and king. O, to be a follower of Him in the way. To love one another with a pure heart fervently is one of the clear evidences of following Him, of being one of His disciples. The eyes that He opens can look two ways, they look at Jesus as the altogether lovely, and at the saints and excellent in the earth as those who are to be admired and loved for Christ's sake, they also look within and see so much there that they mourn over and loathe, that it makes them shun the paths of those who seem fully satisfied with the Jericho which man has built under the curse. To quote David whose eyes had been opened "The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes. For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful. The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: he hath left off to be wise, and to do good. He deviseth mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself in a way that is not good; he abhorreth not evil." Psalm 36:1-4.

Our beloved Shepherd goes before His flock and leadeth them, His Father gave Him "for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people." Isaiah 55:4. Jesus said, "A stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." John 10:5. Bartimaeus went his way as commanded by our Lord, but he also followed Jesus in the way. Being buried in a liquid grave was Jesus' way, a confessing Him before men, and a humble desire to walk in His commandment, walking in love.

We read of one, who, leaving the city of Jerusalem, went down to Jericho and fell among thieves. The priest and the Levite went by on the other side that was not Christ's way, but one who was called a Samaritan and journeyed THAT WAY came and bound up his wounds. How lovely! He bound up his wounds, He brought him to the inn, which is a type of the Church of God, which surely is a resting-place for poor wounded souls. He laid Himself out for the well-being of those who are in distress. Of course the parable was given for one who would justify himself. Our Lord, when He concluded that parable, said to that man, "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among thieves? and he said, he that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise." Luke 10:36-37.

Doing the word was one of those

things that those who followed Jesus in the way are commanded to do. Many may hear the word, as we can see in the parable of the Sower, Matthew 13, but Jesus commands a blessing on doing the word. This is not an easy task, for he says, "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair." Isaiah 50:6. When He was reviled, He reviled not again. Our Lord has given a perfect set of rules that the man of God might be fully furnished unto every good work. How then can such as we follow Him in the way when we are so prone to err? Surely even that puzzling question finds the answer in our Shepherd's words. David says, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake." Psalm 23:2-3. He must do this Himself, and those who follow Him in the way, learn to wait upon the Lord for enabling grace. He who has given us faith to look to Christ, will also freely give us all needed aid to walk in THE WAY.

G. R.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA
(Acts 5:1-11)

G. BEEBE'S SONS —
DEAR BRETHREN:

Last night I received a request by letter to say something through the Signs upon the subject embraced in the Scripture named above. My correspondent gave no name, but the postmark was Nolensville, Tenn., if I am not mistaken. I would have preferred writing directly to my unknown correspondent had the name been given; as it is I will try to suggest a few thoughts for the Signs upon this most important theme. It is important and full of solemnity to us, because that in it we see displayed a disposition that is abhorrent to God, and the judgment of God against those who do such things.

The wonderful scenes of the day of Pentecost were just past, and the first gospel church had just been organized. The hearts of the thousands of believers were filled with zeal and love to the cause of God and to each other. They felt themselves to be brethren indeed, and the tie that bound them together was felt to be higher and holier and nearer and dearer than any earthly relationship. It was also a time when the malice and enmity of the ungodly world about them raged very fiercely. This also served to weld their hearts more closely to each other, even as iron is softened and welded in the fire of the furnace and by blows of the hammer. As has been the case in all ages since, so was it the case then, that many poor were among them; and such was the love and brotherly feeling among them that each one who could was anxious to minister to those who had not, and each one felt that what he had was the Lord's and was as much for the use of his brethern as for his own.

There was no command that any one should sell what he had and bring the proceeds into a common fund; neither afterward do the apostles enjoin any such thing. In fact, all that they say in their various epistles to the churches with regard to the duty of giving implies that each brother or sister was to retain his own portion of his Lord's goods and use it individually for the glory of God and the good of others. But here they were filled with perfect love, and love made them feel that they were all but children in a common family. The possessions of this world looked small. The world itself was soon to fade away. Persecution was all about them. No man said that what he had was his own, and they had all things common; and no one lacked, because those who had possessions sold them and

brought the price and laid it down at the apostles' feet, and distribution was made to every man as he had need.

Now I wish to make a suggestion or two right here. The spirit in the disciples that led to this is a right spirit. It is the spirit of him who kept back nothing from his needy people, not even himself. The same spirit should actuate us in all our lives. It is Christ-like to be asking not what has our brother done, or what is he going to do, but, What can I do for the relief of my needy brother, for whom Christ died? It is Christ-like to say not, "How little must I do?" but, "How much can I do?" This is love; love such as brought Jesus down to die for us; love that can never do too much to honor God and comfort in any way his people. The same love now will lead each believer to count what he has as not his own if another is needy. A mother, out of love, counts nothing too costly for the child she bore. So was it at this Penticostal season, and for a time afterward, among the followers of Jesus.

A second suggestion is this, that they brought what they had and laid it down at the apostles' feet, that they might do with it as they would. The apostles were men inspired of God, and what they did was from heaven. Their decisions were the decisions of God. Today they sit on thrones judging all the Israel of God in all things. We are today bound by their judgment. Our time, our property, our every qualification, are of right subject to their control by the commandment of God. We also ought to always bring everything that is ours and subject it to the will of the apostles, as expressed in their various letters to the churches. It is as true today as then, that all things should be regarded as common, and that all should be held by us to do with it as the word of inspired apostles dictates. We are not commanded to have a common treasury or a community of goods, as do the Shakers, or followers of Ann Hutchison, or as is the dream of Socialists today; but we are commanded to hold what we have as the Lord's, and to do with it as his word requires.

It was a delightful time in the church when love filled all hearts, and union and sympathy were felt. But there is no Eden without its serpent; there is no lovely church without its blemish; there is no exaltation without its thorn in the flesh to humble us. So right here, in this garden of the Lord, so richly watered by the rivers of grace, where the fruits of the Spirit were growing so abundantly, we are told of one spot of darkness and deceit and sin against God. By it we may learn that we need not expect to find a perfect church on earth. No matter how orderly, how loving, how zealous a church may be, we need not to be surprised if we find members who bring sorrow to our hearts by some evil way which they are following.

Here we have the account of a man and wife, members of the church, and apparently as earnest and full of zeal as any others, who yet were not one in spirit with the rest. They wished, no doubt, to be thought as earnest, as loving and as zealous as any of the rest. They wished to purchase popularity, and at as cheap a rate as possible. They also sold their possessions; and then, instead of bringing all, they kept back part of the price secretly, and sought to deceive the apostles and the brethren by making as though they had brought all. They lied to God!

This suggests one or two reflections. First, Peter charges upon Ananias not a wrong done to his brethren, but a sin against God. "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?" In this is seen a great principle of truth, which ought to control our judgment in all cases where wrong is done. It is not against man, but against God, that any of us sin. So David, after he had so grieveously wronged Uriah and Bathsheba, and was aroused by the words of Nathan to see the enormity

of his crime, said, "I have sinned;" and in his confession to God in the fifty-first psalm he said, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned." The view of his sin against God swallowed up all thought of personal wrong done to his devoted captain and his wife; and in the subject under consideration Peter was not moved by the thought of not having all this money to handle, nor by the thought that some poor ones might suffer any lack in consequence of this, but solely by the consideration that Ananias had lied to the Holy Ghost. How differently we should act if when we are wronged we always remembered that the injury to us is nothing, but the sin against God is everything. So Stephen made no complaint about any personal injury, but simply thought of the sin of those who stoned him, and at the last prayed that this sin might not be laid to their charge. Does any one feel or speak or act wrong toward us, then let us also remember that they sin against God, and we shall find no room for anything but pity and a prayer for their forgiveness. If we have injured our brother in thought or word or deed, let us remember that to wrong our brother is but a small thing compared to the thought that we have sinned against God, which the blood of Christ alone could atone for!

The second reflection is this, that the sin was not in failing to give all into the common fund, but in the attempt to deceive involved in the matter. While the earnest love of those early Christians was prompting them to such a display of unselfish generosity as would excite the wonder of all who did not feel the same heavenly love, yet there was no command to do this. No man sinned who kept what he had in his own hand, meaning to use it himself as he might think wisest and best; but this man and woman desired a reputation for a love which they did not feel, and so endeavored to deceive their brethren. They wished credit for giving all when they gave but a part. Covetousness is abhorrent to God, but hypocrisy is still more abhorrent.

The judgment of God was not long delayed. Both this man and his wife fell down dead. The penalty was severe, but the sin was a fearful one. Lying to the Holy Ghost! The penalty was also needful as a solemn warning to the church of God in every age. It is a lesson that we need as well as they. The effect then was that great fear fell upon the church, and upon all who heard these things. No doubt the same evil leaven might have spread further, since carnal nature is alike in every one; but wherever this story should be told it would be seen that God requires truth and honesty among his people above all things else. We must not profess more love than we feel. It is bad to love but little, but it is worse when, loving little, we desire a name for loving much.

It seems to me that one of the most solemn questions for each of us to ask is this, Are we professing more than we feel? What we feel is measured by what we do. Are we claiming that we are holding all that we have at the bidding of God whom we profess to serve, when we never think of asking, much less doing, the will of God in using what he has given us? Is our profession of love to God and his cause and his people hollow and vain, or is it real, vital and earnest? It is better to say frankly, "I do not hold all I have at the bidding of the Lord; I love my own pleasure and profit better than his will," than to act in this way while professing the opposite.

Today, as then, there are many calls for help in a financial way in the church. The poor must be cared for, houses of worship built and maintained, the pastor, who does as he is bidden of God, devoting himself to the interests of the church, must be supported, and other calls there are for needed aid. Are any of us saying, "I am doing all I can," when we know that we are not? Are any of us refusing to lay our all at the feet of our Lord, while at the same

time desiring that it should be thought that we are yielding all to him? If so, are we not bodering on this sin of Ananias and Sapphira? If we do not love the cause sufficiently to sacrifice something for it, let us frankly say so at once. Let us say, "I will give nothing for its support," and not, "I can give nothing." Let us at least be frank and honest.

This, it seems to me, is the one great lesson taught by this judgment of God upon this man and this woman. It rebukes the spirit in man which desires to appear what he knows he is not. Elsewhere in the New Testament is the duty to give enjoined upon all, each one as the Lord has prospered him; but this is not the special lesson taught here, and therefore I will not enter into this theme. If any having this world's goods are withholding them, to God must they answer. If any do not love the cause they feel it a hardship to help in any way; and if they do help, it will be because they desire to be thought well of, and not for the glory of God. We can only judge the outward act, but God judges the heart. These two people were stricken dead literally for their deceit. Many die in an experimental and spiritual sense because of this same sin. I trust that nothing may be found contrary to truth in what I have here written.

I remain your brother in Christ,

F. A. Chick

(The above was written by Elder Chick in 1889, and appeared in the Signs of November 27, 1889.)

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, NORFOLK, VIRGINIA

The Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church, Norfolk, Virginia, is endeavoring to build a new meeting house, and need help from the brethren and friends in their undertaking. The present meeting house was condemned some years ago. They have purchased a lot, and as soon as they finish paying for it, they plan to undertake constructing a new building.

Their membership is not large, and the church is located a long way from other churches. It has not been the policy of the Signs of the Times to solicit help at large for the various undertakings, but knowing the circumstances well, we believe our people will be glad to help them in their undertaking.

Donations may be sent to:

Mrs. Ruby Coward, Clerk
1017 Park Avenue
South Norfolk 6, Virginia

Or they may be sent directly to the Signs of the Times, Route 5, Danville, Virginia. Any receipts we receive will be forwarded to the church, and acknowledgement made through the Signs.

D. V. Spangler

MAINE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The **Maine Old School Baptist Association** will convene, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, on September 2, 3, and 4, 1960.

An invitation is extended to those of our faith and order, and interested friends.

Mrs. Sanford Bartlett, Clerk

BLACK CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION FOR 1960

The eighty-fourth session of the **Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association** will, the Lord willing, be held with Sandy Grove Church, Nash County, N. C., beginning on Friday before the fourth Sunday in October and continuing through Sunday.

The church is located on highway 95, between Zebulon and Stanhope, more properly between highways, 231 and 581. Our correspondents, brethren and all lovers of truth are invited.

W. E. Turner, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To July 1, 1960)

Katharine Gillis, Canada	$3.00
Eliza Turner, Va.	2.00
Myrtle Cross, Calif.	2.00
Harry T. Vories, Calif.	3.00
Joseph A. Johnson, Tenn.	2.00
Pattie Krewatch, Md.	2.00
Mrs. D. H. Baker, Wash.	1.00
Mrs. G. W. Mathews, Texas	1.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER MERTIE BAILEY

Sister Mertie Bailey, of Schoharie, N. Y., died March 31, 1960, at the Saddemire Rest Home at Middleburg, N. Y., at the age of 83 years. She was the daughter of Martin D. and Emily Ryder Bailey.

Surviving are one brother, Jerome R. Bailey, Oneonta, N. Y.; one sister, Laura Dittmar, Schoharie, N. Y.; three great nieces and one great nephew.

Sister Bailey was baptized the 3rd Sunday in September, 1912, by Elder Fenton. She was a loving sister and was dearly loved by her brethren and friends. She always filled her place in the meetings when she could get there, and loved to hear the gospel's joyful sound, as Christ had become the end of the law for righteousness to her; and to hear Jesus preached in demonstration of the Spirit and power of God, was food to her poor, hungry soul. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life to the saved sinner — saved by grace alone; so we feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

The funeral was held from the Palmer and Shaler Funeral Parlor, Middleburg, N. Y., conducted by the writer, her pastor.

Amasa J. Slauson

SISTER EMILY GREEN

Sister Emily Green departed this life April 18, 1960, at the age of 84 years, passing away very suddenly at the Benedictine Hospital, Kingston, N. Y. She lived almost her entire life at Shokan, N. Y. Her husband, Charlie Green and one son, Marvin, preceded her in death by a few years, being a great care for several years before their passing. Sister Green, though not strong, cared for them most of the time in their own home uncomplainingly, saying that the Lord had given her strength to endure the trial, and to give them care.

Sister Green was baptized December 17, 1916, by Elder George Ruston into the fellowship of Olive and Hurley Church, Shokan, N. Y., who was the pastor at that time. She leaves to mourn her passing, one niece, a few cousins, and her brethren.

Her funeral was held from the Baptist house for worship at Shokan, N. Y., and burial was in Tongore Cemetery beside her husband. Services were conducted by the writer.

Amasa J. Slauson

SARAH OLIVIA ADAMS PETERS

Sarah Olivia Adams Peters, widow of the late G. W. Peters, who preceded her to the grave in 1934, passed away May 6, 1960, at the age of 82 years. She was the daughter of the late Elder and Mrs. J. M. Adams, longtime residents of Monroe, Georgia. Elder Adams was a Minister of the Primitive Baptist Church and attended many of the Associations throughout the South and up into the Eastern States. He was a brother of the late wife of Elder H. H. Lefferts of Leesburg, Virginia. Elder Adams died in 1931.

Large attended funeral services occurred Sunday, May 8, 1960, at her Church, Harris Spring, Newton County, Georgia. She united with this Church in 1902, and moved her membership back there after the church at Monroe, Georgia, was disbanded in 1949. Officiating Ministers were Elder H. O. Nash, Elder T. L. Huff, Elder T. Floyd Adams and a nephew, the Rev. James A. Lester. Interment occurred at the Malcom-Green Cemetery. Pallbearers were Deacons of the Churches in the Yellow River Primitive Baptist Association: T. R. Breedlove, B. A. Malcom, E. T. Wade, Thomas Watson, A. P. Cross, C. R. Margan, R. A. Braswell, Tom Brooks, Roland Arnold, J. H. Paige, J. C. Doster, O. H. Brooks, and W F. Swafford.

She was a devoted mother and enjoyed the highest respect and sincere affection of countless numbers in all walks of life, and was marked as a Christian woman of the highest principles of character.

She was united in marriage early in life to G. Will Peters, a widower with three little children. Out of this union were born two boys and two girls who survive. After the deaths of her husband, stepson and his wife, she took their four children into her home. She was indeed a mother to all of these children, saying she wanted all of the three groups treated as though they were her own children. Surviving are W. Edward Peters, John S. Peters, James L. Peters, Garland Peters, G. B. Peters, Mrs. R. C. Foster, Mrs. W. B. Hearn, Mrs. John A. Lowell, Mrs. Carolyn Alston and Miss Kathryn Yvonne Peters.

Mrs. Peters suffered a stroke in May, 1959, and was confined to her home and hospital for the last year of her life, being in the hospital almost two months at the end. All that loving hands and medical science could do was done. She bore her afflictions without complaining and as the end neared she looked forward with sweet anticipation to the day when she could be relieved of all the suffering here on earth and enter into that eternal rest, there

to await the final resurrection.

May we that are left behind ever be mindful of the wonderful examples and life she lived here on earth and carry on and on in the way she would have us do.

T. R. Breedlove, Clerk
Harris Spring Church

LUCY APPLE DIXON

Sister Lucy Apple Dixon was born in Caswell County, N. C., October 9, 1882, and departed this life on March 25, 1960, making her stay on earth 77 years. Sister Dixon was married to Mr. A. C. Dixon on November 3, 1904, and she leaves to mourn her departure her husband, four daughters, three sons, eleven grandchildren, and a large number of other near relatives and many friends.

Sister Dixon had been a most faithful and loyal member of Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church for more than 40 years. The last four years of her life she had spent much time in hospitals suffering from a weak heart. It was always an inspiration for the writer (her pastor) to visit her. Sister Dixon was a great believer in prayer and spent many hours reading and studying the Scriptures. Seldom did I see her without her asking me what I used as a text on Sunday before my visit.

Sister Dixon will be greatly missed by her family, her church, and the community in which she lived. She had lived in Greensboro for some 55 years.

We feel that our loss is her gain, that her spirit has returned to God who gave it and her body has returned to the dust from whence it came, to await the glorious resurrection of the body when it shall be changed and made like unto His own body, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, to be gathered home to be with her Lord forever, where sickness, sorrow, and death shall never come.

We couldn't wish her back in this world of sin and sorrow. May God's richest blessings rest and abide with all who mourn.

Written by request of the family for publication in **Signs of the Times,** which she loved and read for so long. By her pastor,

W. C. King

BERNARD WATKINS

Bernard Watkins, long-time resident of Eastland County, Texas, where he was a farmer, passed away at 2:45 a. m. Saturday, June 4, 1960, at a hospital in Austin, Texas, after an illness of two months.

He was born September 30, 1882, at Newton, Newton County, Mississippi. He was 77 years, 8 months and 4 days of age at his death. He was married to Aletha Evaline McGee, January 22, 1905, at Hickory, Newton County, Mississippi. She preceded him in death on June 8, 1953.

To this union were born four children: M. L. Watkins, El Paso, Texas; Mrs. Woody B. Hall, Fort Worth, Texas; Mrs. T. J. Fowler, Dallas, Texas, and Mrs A. G. Foyt, Austin, Texas; also, seven grandchildren. All are surviving and were present at the funeral except two of the grandchildren. He is also survived by one sister, Mrs. F. I. Kroenke, of Baton Rouge, La., also several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held at the Higginbotham Funeral Chapel in Rising Star on Monday, June 6, 1960, with Elder C. U. Landers of the Primitive Baptist Church of Coleman, Texas, officiating, assisted by Brother Harry Hames of the East Side Baptist Church in Comanche, Texas. Burial was in the Rising Star Cemetery by the side of his wife.

Mr. Watkins united with the Primitive Baptist Church September 19, 1908, and was baptized by Elder J. C. Kilgore. He has been a member of that faith since. Pallbearers were: Arthur White, Ray Agnew, Curt Smith, Clifford Watkins, Jerry Winfrey, and Fred Roberds.

By his son,
M. L. Watkins

SISTER HELEN (COOPER) ZEH

Sister Helen (Cooper) Zeh departed this life February 29, 1960, at the Ann Lee Home, Colonie, N. Y. She was born May 28, 1856, at Middleburg, N. Y., which made her stay on earth 103 years, nine months and one day. She was the daughter of Martin and Harriet (Towsend) Cooper; and her husband was David Zeh, who died many years ago.

Surviving are a niece, Mrs. Leonard Alverson, Voorheesville, N. Y., and a nephew, Gordon Smith, Middleburg, N. Y. Two of her sisters, Mrs. Orville Wood and Mrs. J. K. Smith, preceded her in death, they being members of the Old School Baptist Church. For many years Sister Zeh resided with her niece and husband, Mr. and Mrs. Hiram Rust, in Middleburg, N. Y.; but for the last few years, before entering the Ann Lee Home, she resided with her niece and husband, Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Alverson, who gave her as kind, lov-

ing care as human hands could give until the niece's strength was exhausted.

Sister Zeh united with the Middleburg Old School Baptist Church, Middleburg, N. Y., July 22, 1876, and was baptized August 27, 1876, by Elder Whitcomb. This made her a member of this church more than 83 years; and we can say that she was a faithful and devoted member, a most loyal and loving sister those many years, bearing the fruits of the Spirit and having a zeal according to knowledge. Salvation by grace and grace alone was her only trust and comfort. We are told that to know Jesus is eternal life. God surely gave Sister Zeh a long and useful life: she was active and able to go about until the last few years. He gave her to be a faithful witness of his precious gospel truth, so we feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was held at the Palmer and Shaylor Funeral Home, Middleburg, N. Y., by the writer who was her pastor; and interment was in the Middleburg Cemetery.

Elder A. J. Slauson

(In order to correct the name of the town from Middletown to Middleburg, as previously published, we republish the above. — Ed.)

MATTIE EVANS PARCELL

It has pleased God to remove from our midst by death Sister Mattie Evans Parcell. She was the daughter of the late Elder and Mrs. C. T. Evans, and was born May 20, 1886. She died April 7, 1940. She was united in marriage to W. A. Parcell in January, 1905, who passed away many years ago. She is survived by five daughters, two sons, seven grandchildren, and one great grandchild; also by three sisters and two brothers.

She united with Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church in August, 1914, and was a faithful member, attending church as long as she was able. In her late illness she expressed her faith and trust in God, and her love for her church and its members. Her funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench.

May the Lord bless her family, and give them the understanding that He doeth all things well.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be put on our church book; a copy be sent to the family; and a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of the church at our June meeting.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Kate Dodd, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

We, the members of Hickory Grove Primitive Baptist Church, desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father in calling our beloved sister, Stell Smith Lee, on April 26, 1960, at the age of 76. She was married to Brother J. Lib Lee, October 1, 1902; and to this union six children were born, of whom four survive, together with her beloved husband: Stephen W. Lee and Eugene Lee, of Benson, N. C.; Mrs. Floyd Barefoot, Newton Grove, N. C., and Mrs. W. H. Alford, Richmond, Va. Also surviving are thirteen grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Sister Smith united with the Hickory Grove Primitive Baptist Church the second Saturday in June, 1911, and was faithful to her church. Many things can be said of the beautiful life she lived. She will be missed in her home and in her church.

Funeral services were conducted at the old home place, where her son Stephen now lives, on April 28th by her pastor, Elder Lester W. Lee, assisted by Mr. W. D. Godwin and Mr. J. L. Powers, and Mr. Niles Compton. Burial was in the family cemetery near the home.

We desire to extend to the bereaved family our deepest love and sympathy, hoping that God will comfort and sustain them in their distress.

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family, and a copy to the **Signs of the Times** for publication, and a copy recorded in our church book.

Elder Lester E. Lee, Moderator
Brother L. J. Kinsey, Clerk

Committee:
Eldridge McLamb
Luttie McLamb
Vara Johnson
Hettie Smith

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 128 DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1960 NO. 10

SAVIOUR, HOW MANY TIMES?

How many times I've tried to be
A helper precious Lord to thee,
By telling folks what they must do
To earn a heav'nly home with you.

How many times I've turned around
And traveled the wrong direction,
Feeling the works of flesh alone
Were needed for my protection.

How many times I've thought of you
In that city beyond the blue,
And wondered if a mansion fair
Has been prepared for me up there.

How many times I've ventured to
Look up into the lonely blue,
Hoping beyond the open space
To find thy precious hiding place.

How many times I've felt in need
Of bridles for my evil tongue;
Going over its broad pathway
And from the days when it was young.

How many times I've longed for bread
From where thy hungry sheep are fed;
And to be invited to dine:
If but the little crumbs are mine.

How many times when troubles rise
I fail to see the deep blue skies,
Forgetting God is on his throne
I would carry my load alone.

How many times I have listened,
Hoping to hear thy gracious voice,
If only in a soft whisper
To make my poor heart to rejoice.

How many times each passing year
I find I'm in a state of fear;
Over the field of life I race
Fearing I'll never see thy place.

How many times in hours of doubt
I've wondered what things are about,
While trav'ling o'er a desert field,
Searching for thy protecting shield.

How many times my evil mind
Is filled with thoughts which are unkind;
I try and try to chase away,
But they never, never obey.

How many times I have rambled
In sin upon this wond'rous globe,
Hoping to touch the precious hem
Of thine own pure and sacred robe;

Hoping to feel that the virtue,
Which all alone can purify
And redeem this worthless sinner,
Is mine when I am called to die.

(The above came to us some months ago without giving the writer's name. — We would like to have it — Ed.)

"SIGNS FILLED WITH GOOD THINGS"

Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Editors, and All Lovers of the Truth in Christ Jesus:

It is my desire to pen some of the things I have felt and rejoiced in along life's way. Yet it is with fear and trembling that I make the attempt, for our God is not mocked, and he knows our every thought. We believe it is he that works in us the will and the do of his good pleasure; and this morning, I feel it is good and right to put forth every effort to write when so many sweet and rich experiences seem to be stirring my mind.

I have never been more comforted than I was in reading the articles by Elder Bartley on "The Priesthood of the Son of God." It seems I had been asking in my mind many questions as to the Whys of our belief, hope, and faith in these things that are not seen. These questions did not appear to be idle thoughts of unbelief, but seemed to be inquiring into the truth. Surely there was a cause; and how it did seem that all the answers were set down in this writing, and how my heart did rejoice

and feel to find rest for my soul. I felt so thankful that this writing was republished; and I think it should be from time to time. What great work was accomplished in the Priesthood of God's dear Son; in whom and by whom we live, move and have our being. Praise His holy name!

He taught his children while here with them in the flesh, showing many miracles and wonders, leading on up to the time of the hour for which he came; and telling them he could pray to his Father and He would send a host of angels to fight for him — but then, How could the Scriptures be fulfilled? He proved over and over that he could not be taken until that hour; and at one time when He said, "I am he," his would be captors had to run backwards. All the powers were hindered and overthrown that sought to destroy him as an infant, and through his journey here; but, Oh the scene at the cross and crucifixion!

When He had uttered his last words (after he had prayed to the Father to keep them — "I have given them thy word, and they have received it"), the sun refused to shine, the earth quaked, and graves gave up their dead under the power of God who had spoken. Even unbelievers said that he must have been the Son of God: how dreadful a feeling that must have been. And the veil of the temple was rent from top to bottom: The end of the old covenant, and the gospel day at hand. Oh, the riches of this new covenant! How precious are the gifts of God to men through Jesus our Lord, as we see that in him all fulness dwells!

The way often gets rough, and darkness adds to its gloom: all the light we have is to see ourselves all unclean and undone. We have lost sight of our leader, and we are afraid to just wait for his return. We feel and think so many things which frighten us, and Satan is at our side offering to help by suggesting it would not be so with us, if we were what we professed to be. At such times we are afraid to meet our brethren for fear they will find us out. No one knows the agony of such trials but those who have had them; and when we find a brother or sister in this condition, how our hearts become burdened for them. For we know that until the Lord is pleased to lift the clouds which cause such distress, they will suffer. But then how we do rejoice with them when we see their faces all aglow as they tell us again how good the Lord is to them; and how they feel to know that all things work together for good to those who love him. There are so many glorious things spoken or written of the wonderful evidence of God's power in proving that He is God; and that he speaks and it is done.

One of old was to fight a battle, and was fearful as to the Lord being with him to save Israel. "And Gideon said unto God, If thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said, Behold, I will put a fleece of wool on the floor; and if the dew be on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said." And it was so, to the extent that he wringed a bowl of water out of the wool. Then Gideon begged God not to be angry, but to reverse the thing the next night; and it was so. Then Gideon arose early and all the people with him, but the Lord divided his company twice, saying he had too many: and only let him take three hundred, lest they feel they had done it themselves. God knows our thoughts and fears, and in Judges 7:10, God said, "But if thou fear to go down, go thou with Purah thy servant down to the host: and thou shalt hear what they say; and afterwards shall thine hands be strengthened to go down to the host." How marvelous!

In 1st Kings we read, "Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men." It seems that the people were hanging between two opinions, for Eli-

jah asked them, "How long halt ye between two opinions?" They were to try their gods first; and after they fixed everything, they called upon Baal from morning till noon, but he did not answer by fire. But Elijah being given to prove his God, fixed the altar and the bullock, etc. and poured four barrels of water, three times, over the sacrifice and the wood, etc., until the water filled the trenches around the altar. Then Elijah said, "Lord God of Abarham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word." Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench, proving who was God.

Our God is a God of purpose. Many things confuse us and almost overthrow us, but just for a season, to teach us how frail and helpless we are of ourselves. Be the trial ever so great and hard to bear, what can we do about it of ourselves? We can't even stand still unless the Lord enables us to do so. But when we have suffered a while, we realize that we shall be utterly destroyed unless He comes to where we are, and pours in the oil and the wine. Oh how well I know this, if not deceived! How quickly and completely the wound is healed when Jesus says its enough, and draws us unto a sacred nearness to Him!

Dear ones who are suffering these trials, and are burdened so heavily with your state of mind, the storm will end; and like Jacob of old, you will say, "The Lord was in the place, and I knew it not." Jesus prayed to the Father before he went away, that he would keep you from the evil of this world; and He does that, for He watches over you and sees that you are not utterly destroyed, but that all is for the trying of your faith, and in the end you will say with Jonah, "Salvation is of the Lord," and crown him Lord of all.

I feel that I have learned (if indeed I am a child) the meaning and the comfort of the written word, that the sure mercies of David never failed. If I am one, I was a child when I first felt my sins forgiven; and there was a time of rejoicing with me for awhile. But to describe my weakness: I was no more than a leaf on the ocean driven to and fro; and no more able to stand than the leaf to be still. I viewed the way before me as a long journey, and I wondered what would become of me when all those around me were gone, feeling they were my support; and according to nature I would see them all go; and I have. But, in the meantime, I hope I've learned in great suffering wherein my strength lies; and now I can't find words to praise my God for his loving kindness toward me. So many times I have felt that surely I was deceived, and had deceived the ones I loved so dearly; and that God was also displeased with me, to the extent that he had withdrawn his blessings from me, but for his own name's sake He would raise me up again the last day. He alone knows the shame and sorrow of my heart at that time: I felt it so much I seemed to bow under the load as one of the worst undone creatures, I thought, that could be. But I will say that, to my surprise, relief sprang into my heart like an arrow from heaven, and I then was the happiest and most relieved person, I thought, upon earth; and praise flowed to my God and friend, who had pardoned all my folly and filled my heart and soul with his love; which also flowed out to my kindred in the Lord, whom I feared and cared not to see, but now I wanted to see them and hear them tell of the wonderful works of God, for I felt that I could understand again.

Now I must close, for it is already lengthy. The Signs with all the good letters and editorials are so rich, and such a blessing to the household of faith in their world of troublesome times; for it seems to me it has been filled with

good things. Elder Griffin's editorial, "Does it make any difference what church we belong to?"; Sister Elsie Loeffel's, "Salvation is of the Lord"; the "Voices of the Past", and many others are wonderful and edifying.

In sweet fellowship,

Mrs. Luther Campbell,
3347 Tutwiler,
Memphis 12, Tenn.

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN ELDER GOLD AND DR. HOOPER

(Continued)

Salvation must be either by works or of grace, and not by blending them; but your people, it seemed, were trying to blend the two systems. That it is by grace, both the Bible and my own experience taught. "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast." "If it is of grace, it is no more of works." etc. It was presented to me in some such manner as this, that in the new covenant of grace Jesus, the second Adam, stood for his seed, as the first Adam stood in nature for his, and that they must all be in him, and that Jesus made all that were in him righteous in his obedience, as Adam made all that were in him unrighteous in his disobedience; and though the law is given that the offence might abound, this affects not the covenant, for where sin abounded, grace did much more abound — and that the names of his children were all written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world — that they were the Father's, who gave them to Jesus, and made him who knew no sin to be sin for them, and that he in holy obedience fulfilled the law for them, and gave his life in all prevailing righteousness for their ransom. It was necessary for Christ to die, as he was surety for a people actually under sentence of death. When he, the Shepherd, is taken to pay their debt, God turns his hand on the little ones to shelter them and they escape. Jesus is crucified and the church receives forgiveness and the blotting out of sin; Jesus rises from the dead and the church is justified: "He was delivered for our offences, raised again for our justification." To make manifest unto them this salvation, Jesus is exalted a prince and Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins unto Israel. God carries out his own counsel according to the purpose of "foreordination:" "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son; moreover whom he did predestinate them he also called, and whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified."

Will any but these be saved, and will not all of these be saved? was a leading question in my mind. Will any sheep for whom Christ laid down his life be lost; will the lawful captive be delivered? Shall Jesus see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied? Shall God, who commends His love to us while we were yet sinners, by giving his Son for us, in whom we are reconciled through His death, fail to draw any to Christ, since none would come without the drawing of Him whose love is everlasting? Is what Jesus said true? "Glorify thy Son that thy Son may also glorify thee, as thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." I am free to say that all the blessings which man enjoys come to him through Christ; but here the question is, as to his chosen people to whom he gives eternal life. The Saviour prays that He may be glorified in their salvation, but if one were lost how would the completeness of his atonement be glorified in that? Will all that the Father gave to Christ come to Him? "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." Will any others? — "No man can come to me except the Father which sent me draw him." "But ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep." — Human nature, which cannot help to bring the sinner to Christ,

cannot prevent it in the day when "shall come" makes him willing.

Such questions were sweetly answered in Christian assurances, powerfully enforced — that God, who sees the end from the beginning, and whose faithfulness will not fail, will not suffer any sheep to be lost, any wheat to be left in the chaff, nor any child to be forgotten: "Here am I and the children which God hath given me." It also convinced me that no goats would appear in heaven with the sheep; no chaff with the wheat, no bastards with the children.

Mankind are ready to question God's right to discriminate among a mass where all are equally guilty. They say is he not unjust in choosing some of Adam's broken creation to eternal life, and leaving the rest where a holy law assigns them? Accordingly most denominations attempt to apologize for it, by accounting for it, either on the ground of forseen or afterseen good works, thus giving the creature an important part to perform, and ground for boasting. But God has not chosen them for, or according to, their works of righteousness, but according to his mercy: "He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." He is not the author of sin, nor does he tempt any man to sin, nor can he be tempted to sin. He made man upright, but Adam, the vessel was marred and fell by his disobedience procured by an enemy; and hath not God power over this same broken lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor, when justice said all should be made to dishonor? None but God could have such power to save. He fits the vessels of mercy to glory aforehand, and on these he will have mercy; he bears long with the vessels of wrath, fitted, suited only to destruction, and the very blessings he sends they pervert to their own hardening, and judgments harden them. He makes their condition no worse. What keeps them from coming to Christ? They love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. It is not predestination that keeps men from Christ, but it brings them to him. Men manifest their love of sin by choosing it invariably and constantly when they are left to follow their own wills. Man can no more plead his inability to come to Christ, than he can plead his love of sin as the reason for not coming, since it is his love of sin, and not election, that keeps him away, and by so much as he is unable to come, by so much does his sin appear. What electing love decrees is, to give some eternal life, and make them willing to be saved in Jesus. The saint feels that so dead in sin was he that if the Lord had waited for him to begin this work, he had been left as Sodom, and if his salvation had depended on his performance of the less than least possible condition, he would be forever lost, or if daily grace should be withheld on account of daily unworthiness, his hope would perish. The wonder with him is, why God should have ever chosen him, and not why he should have been left out. He never can see any good thing in himself as a reason why he should be saved. That sweet mystery is wrapped up in the folds of grace, and the righteousness of such a choice is unfolded alone in the blood of Jesus. The apostle's reason suits me: "that we should be to the praise of the glory of his grace."

I have at some length expressed my views as to the nature, extent, and power of the atonement, knowing that your denomination seem to regard it as universal, and hold to a very general, uncertain, and indefinite application of it, reconcileable with man's natural power of accepting or rejecting it, according to the motives that may be brought to bear on that natural power and will.

But the redeemed are by nature children of wrath even as others, being by nature dead in trespasses and in sins. Now an important question, as it seemed to me, was, by what power can these dead sinners be quickened, and made sensible of their lost condition, and who

shall reveal the arm of the Lord unto them? If they are dead in sins they cannot bring themselves to life, and it is equally certain they cannot be brought into life by man. The Scriptures say it must be of God. They must not only be born of water, which perhaps alludes to the washing of regeneration, that is effected by the shedding of the blood of Jesus; that is they must not only be redeemed, but they must be born of the Spirit, or born of God — that one cannot see the kingdom of God until he has a spiritual birth. What power produces this spiritual birth? "The Spirit quickeneth whom he will;" "the Spirit giveth life." Then the Holy Ghost is the only, and always effectual agent in the heavenly birth. The everblessed Trinity are equally engaged in salvation: God the Father gives the people to Jesus, and lays their sins on him, and no less a personage than God the Son can make the atonement, and he is put to death in the flesh to make an end of sin. It requires God the Holy Spirit to quicken the dead sinners and reveal Christ unto them. "No man can say that Jesus Christ is Lord but by the Holy Ghost."

What shows the sinner that he is lost? not human teaching, for that but sets him to building up himself by setting him to work in the fleshly nature. What makes the sinner sensible of his poverty, but the Holy Spirit quickening him to see the spiritual holy nature and the demands of the law of God, and then this same spirit takes the things of Jesus and shows them to the sinner, and seals him an heir of salvation.

A question that was long in my mind was this: What is the design of preaching? and to whom does the gospel come in demonstration of the Spirit and of power? "How can they hear without a preacher?" "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." It was through preaching that the knowledge of the Lord was communicated, as the Lord gave to every man. The apostles are commanded to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, and he that believed, etc. is saved. Let it be observed, that faith was indispensable, and so also repentance, and that faith is no less than the gift of God. Faith is just as much of grace as any part of salvation. "It is of faith that it might be by grace," etc. Faith is a fruit of the Spirit. "We through the spirit wait for the hope of righteousness which is by faith." Faith sees God's way of saving sinners and rests the soul in an imputed righteousness. Faith cometh by hearing, but how would it come to a human heart, if it were the work of a creature? How does hearing come? "By the word of God." The birth of the incorruptible seed by the word of God develops hearing. The soul then can hear, and to such faith comes. How can they hear without a preacher? The apostles, and others called of God, were sent forth, and they preach — not a round of human works, but Christ, which is the gospel of God's wisdom and power unto salvation. Some believed with the heart unto righteousness. Who did believe? "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." God ordained them to salvation from the beginning, and ordained the means for it. "God hath, from the beginning, chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth." By faith the knowledge of salvation is received. Nothing but faith can apprehend that eternal spiritual righteousness that justifies a sinner, and God gives the faith.

The apostles are ministers by whom the saved believed, even as the Lord gave to every man. Then the true preacher has his gift. How can they preach except they be sent? The Lord of the harvest sends these laborers into the harvest, and they reap wheat. It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. Then we are told that they cannot preach unless they be sent, and one cannot believe unless it be given him from above. Then where is the proof that one ever believed unless it was of the Lord, or that one ever preached the

gospel unless it were of the Lord? The Holy Ghost endows men to preach, and every gift is to profit. Even the apostles were to tarry at Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high before they went to preaching. Who sent Paul to preach to the heathen! — "And the Holy Ghost said, separate me Paul and Barnabas, for the work whereunto I have called them." — Paul was directed by the Spirit where to go, because the Lord had people at such places, and he was restrained from going certain places.

Preaching, then, seems to be the appointed means — not of making sheep, but of feeding them after gathering them into the fold, and for this high purpose certain ones are called and endowed by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit that guides them and is their mouth and wisdom, seals the heirs of salvation, and who is sufficient for these things, if his sufficiency be not of God! Who makes him an able minister of the New Testament! The treasure is in earthen vessels, but the excellency of the power is of God. No wonder the frail earthen vessel trembles when burdened with such a treasure. But the feet of such are beautiful as they publish peace to poor famishing souls. The blessing is to the hungry; the poor have the gospel preached to them. The wisdom and power of God in a finished salvation is proclaimed, and while the words are powerful and searching, and expose the hidden darkness of the heart, bringing every secret thing to light, as a wonderful interpreter, telling the poor soul all he ever did, faith sweetly unfolds the glory of Christ and His righteousness to every one that believeth, and then how sweet the message to Zion's convert, "thy God reigneth."

The gospel is a savor of life unto life in them that are saved; but how different to them that perish. These will boast of free agency and despise the gospel. The carnal mind is enmity against God, and cannot be subject to his law. Now if you can tell me what can give such boasting scoffers a new heart, that could desire Christ, unless you tell me that God does it, perhaps you can declare a new thing under the sun. One thing seems clear to me, that the human will never wants Christ, and never comes to him.

(Continued next month)

THE 126TH PSALM

It looks at this present moment like this subject is going to be the most important of any subject I have ever written upon. Because in this subject we see the completion of the work of Christ. This Psalm is short, therefore I will comment on each verse, as I hope to be given wisdom to do.

Verse 1: "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream." Israel was often in captivity, and suffered in many ways. Pharaoh caused Israel much suffering, but the Lord heard their cry, He sent Moses to deliver them; and they were delivered. No failure in this work.

In this first verse of Psalm 126, we find the Lord has again turned the captivity of Zion. The meaning of Zion is, a fortress. And Zion, or this fortress, is situated on the southwest hill of Jerusalem, the older and higher part of the city, often called the City of David. We learned this by referring to the Funk and Wagnalls Concordance. But when we mention Zion, we also mean the Church. And when we mention the Church, we mean people. The Scriptures are written for people, and not for things inanimate. So when the Lord turned again the captivity of the people, they were like those that dream. That is to say, "Is it really true? Are we really delivered? Or, are we just dreaming?" The change was so wonderful they could hardly believe it.

How beautifully this illustrates the experience of a sinner saved by grace. A moment ago the sinner was under condemnation, no hope and ready to die and be lost. But in an instant his or her burden is gone, and for awhile they are like one that is dreaming, be-

cause the change came so sudden they hardly knew what had taken place; but like the "Wayworn Traveler," they did know deliverance had come.

Now Verse 2: "Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: Then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them." There is something in this verse wonderful to think about, and here is the wonder. Even the heathen recognized the fact that the Lord had done great things for His people.

Now Verse 3: "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." Of course they were glad. And so is every sinner glad when Christ is revealed in them the hope of glory.

Verse 4: "Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the South." The word "South" I understand to be a symbol of warmth. Let these streams of love so warm our hearts that we can feel our brother's sigh and with him bear a part.

Verse 5: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." What a contrast! At this present time many of the Lord's people, and perhaps all of them are sowing in tears. There are many reasons for this. Suffering and death is still upon the human race, but these are to be removed, we read in Revelation. Just how soon, we don't know. But when the time does come, no more sorrow or crying, for the former things will have passed away; and the things which are taking place now, will then be the former things.

Now Verse 6: This verse is the most interesting of any which precedes it: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing His sheaves with Him." These words are so wonderful, and there is so much embraced in them. I hardly know where to begin commenting on them. I think all will agree that the word "He" in this verse refers to Christ. At, and during His first appearance, He went forth and wept. In this truth we see that we have not an High Priest who cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities. Jesus according to the flesh was a Jew. This being so, we can readily understand why He wept over Jerusalem. He knew that Jerusalem would later on be destroyed and the temple also, and great suffering would come upon the inhabitants thereof. But the most impressive place of His weeping, was at the grave of Lazarus. In John 11-35, we find these two words: "Jesus wept." The shortest verse in the Bible. Before this, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. So we have not an High Priest who cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities.

Now we come to the bearing of precious seed. And how precious are those seed! They almost cause praise to sit silent on our tongue. I invite the attention of the reader to that wonderful Sermon on the Mount. Here we find the loving Saviour sowing His precious seed. When you read these wonderful words, may the Holy Spirit enable you to understand the true meaning of these gracious words: "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." No doubt about this. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." . . . and so on and on.

So at the first advent of Christ, He sowed good seed and where the fallow ground had been broken up, the seed took root, and produced some thirty, some sixty, and some a hundred fold.

Now we come to the great contrast. At the first advent of Christ, He wept. He wept in the garden of Gethsemane, saying to the woman, the Church:

"I am thy redeemer, for thee I must die.
The cup is most bitter, but cannot pass by.
Thy sins like a mountain are laid upon me,
And all this deep anguish I suffer for thee."

So Christ died for the sins of His people, and was buried. But the grave could not hold Him. "He arose! Hallelujah, Christ arose."

Now the great contrast. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing His sheaves with

Him." Again, praise sits silent on my tongue. I must pause for a little while and just meditate. Christ appears as the fairest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely. Even though I must now look through a glass darkly, yet in a small measure I see the great day of the resurrection.

Let no man deny the resurrection of the dead. Paul says, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." How true! But this life is not the only life for us; but eternal life awaits us. I know how the natural man reasons. He comes at us like this: How can anyone who has been drowned or buried at sea, or anyone who has been cremated, be resurrected? Know ye not that nothing is impossible with God? Have you forgot that the great creator made a world out of nothing? With all these truths ever before us, how can anyone deny the resurrection of the dead? In the twentieth chapter of Revelation, we read: "The sea gave up the dead which were in it."

So Christ arose from the dead and is coming again with rejoicing bringing His sheaves with Him. What a beautiful type are these sheaves of His people! A sheaf of wheat consists of many bodies, and are joined together by a cord. So in like manner, the people of Christ are joined together by the cord of His everlasting love. Notice the word "doubtless" in this sixth verse. The word is a positive one, meaning it will surely come to pass without a doubt. Then notice how He comes. He comes again with rejoicing and not with weeping as He did the first time.

Now a word about these sheaves. These sheaves are put together in shocks scattered about in different places over the field. I wonder if the reader doesn't know what I am going to write before I write it. But I am going to compare these shocks to the different places of worship scattered about over the whole earth. The whole earth is nothing more than just a field for the Lord to see. And in Revelation 5:9 we read that Christ has redeemed a people out of every kindred tongue and nation. This takes in the whole earth.

I wish I knew how to extol or preach Christ as I would like to, but words fail me. But Christ stands as a mediator between the sinner and a holy God. He is the intercessor. Someone has written:

"Sing how He interceeds above
For those whose sins He bore,
Sing on your heavenly way,
Ye ransomed sinners, sing!
Sing on rejoicing every day
In Christ, the exalted King."

Another has written:

"He's the Lily of the Valley,
The bright and morning star."

I reckon it will not be amiss to acquaint the reader with the fact that the Lily of the Valley is a medicinal plant. Here is what the medical profession has to say about this plant. In doses it strengthens the heart. In larger doses, it quiets it. It quickly relieves shortness of breath in heart affection and is of value in dropsy. It also has been used as a substitute for digitalis when the latter drug has been used for a long time in heart disease. It is also of value in other diseases. This information from the Library of Health.

Now I turn to Hosea 14:5-6, "I will be as the dew unto Israel: He shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots in Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon." Here we have Christ presented in type.

Now to Songs of Solomon, Chapter 2: "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys. As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters." Here we have a beautiful picture of two lovers. In the two first verses of this chapter, we find the husband (Christ) speaking, and in the third verse, we find the bride beginning to speak: "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons."

No better illustration could be made

than the two just mentioned. Imagine the difference between a beautiful and sweet-smelling lily, and that of a thorn. Imagine also the difference between an apple tree in full bloom from all the other trees surrounding it. The apple tree bears fruit, which forms a part of the food we eat, while the other trees of the woods bear no fruit, but just leaves.

Now I come to the concluding part of this writing. Having read what I have written up to now, I notice I didn't complete the symbol presented in the natural Lily of of the Valley plant. The virtue of this plant is in the stem and roots. And as the medicinal quality in this plant has power to strengthen and quiet the heart, so Christ, the antitype, has power to quiet and strengthen the heart when filled with trouble and sorrow, and He does it. And while we remain here in the earth, He will come to us in our troubles, leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills, (severe or minor troubles) until He comes again with rejoicing bringing His sheaves with Him.

A. T. Benson
Delmar, Del.

Rt. 1, Box 340,
Simms, Texas

Dear Editors:

I am sending $5.00 for two years renewal, and one dollar for the Indigent Fund. We have been getting the Signs since 1956. My husband and I united with the Primitive Baptists in October, 1956. We had an association at Prospect at the time, and we were blessed to have Brother and Sister Griffin, and Brother Owens and wife, all from Alabama at the time, and Brother and Sister McDuff in our home one night.

If I know myself, I believe this doctrine, and I get so much comfort in being with the brethren. On the 20th of September, 1957, the Lord saw fit to call my husband, J. H. Daniel, to his eternal home, at the age of 65. He enjoyed this doctrine so much. We like the old-fashioned ways, if it can be called old-fashioned: It seems so new to me, and I am thankful to be with such wonderful people, though I feel so unworthy.

We are blessed to have such wonderful ministers, and I enjoy reading the dear one's experiences. I hope the Lord will bless you editors to carry on. Does it make any difference what church we belong to? Yes, it does with me — a big difference. I don't believe I could tolerate any other doctrine. I enjoyed reading this editorial; it is so true, it is such a blessing to have peace. Where there is peace there is love.

When you have a mind to come this way, we will be glad to have you.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. J. H. Daniel

REMEMBERS
ELDER GILBERT BEEBE

Marks, Miss.

Editors of the Signs:

I am enclosing Money Order for renewal of my subscription to the Signs. This publication has been in my family since I can first remember — and I am past 90 years of age.

As a small boy I used to see Elder Gilbert Beebe; and knew well Elder Wm. L. Beebe, when he visited the homes of my parents and relatives. Elder Spangler favored me with a short call some years ago.

Very truly yours,
W. R. Wallis

---

828 Belmont Ave.,
Wilson, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

I see it is time for me to renew the good paper, and I do mean its good reading to me. I look forward to having it each month — we are wonderfully blessed to have such God fearing brethren to carry on in love for one

another.

I have never found anything unsound in the Signs of the Times in all my years of reading it; and I only hope that I will never be without it as long as I live in this world. When we see and read where others feel and see as we do in Christ, its comforting to poor worms of the dust.

My wife and I both hope and pray Almighty God will give you health and strength to carry on for years to come: that you may be able to feed the flock of God's little ones. I hope, if it be the will of the good Lord, that I can hear you preach again as I have in the past; though I know you and I both are growing old. Should I live to see August 22nd, I will be seventy-five years old. I have been with you good people since 1904, and I only hope I may be with you as long as life lasts.

Enclosed is a check for seven dollars for two years renewal; I wish you to use the balance as you see fit.

A brother in Christ, I hope,
J. B. Barron

Copper Valley, Virginia

Dear Elder Wood:

I have been thinking of you and the Pigg River Association, as I did not get to attend. Hope you had a good meeting and that the preaching brethren were blessed to preach.

I wanted to write a few lines to let you know how well I enjoy reading the dear old Signs of the Times. If I know my heart, I love the truth it sets forth. I am still a poor one saved by the grace of God, if I am saved at all. I hope I am trusting in the God who has all power both in heaven and earth, and none can stay his hand. He gives us all the good air we breathe, the good water we drink, and all the good food we eat.

But Brother Wood I can't walk like I would like to, and I can't talk like I would like to, and I feel so much of my time cast down, but I hope not destroyed. God has been so good to me all the days of my life, bless his holy name. I will soon be seventy-one years old, and I know I haven't many more days here on earth.

We want to thank you dear editors for sending the Signs of the Times. If not asking too much of you, remember me in your prayers.

Your unworthy brother,
J. E. Cox

SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

The Salisbury Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the church at Salisbury, Maryland, October 19 and 20, 1960.

All ministers, brethren and friends of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us.

William Adkins, Asst. Clerk

THE VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING

The **Virginia Corresponding Meeting** is appointed to be held at the Mt. Zion Meeting House, on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, October 12, 13 and 14, 1960. Mt. Zion Meeting House is located on U. S. Route 50, about 3 miles East of Aldie, Virginia.

A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends to meet with us.

A. L. Carter, Clerk,
Manassas, Va.

GOSPEL COMMENTS

Elder R. W. Rhodes now has a re-printing of his **Gospel Comments,** which will be mailed postpaid for $1.60. Please address all orders to:

Elder R. W. Rhodes
Rt. 3, Box 15
Lillie, La.

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(To August 1, 1960)

Miss Eliztbeth Walker, Canada	$5.00
Mrs. David Farnie, Va.	1.00
J. B. Barron, N. C.	2.00
Dr. and Mrs. M. O. Slaughter, Texas	5.00
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EDITORIAL

VARIOUS PRACTICES AMONG OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCHES AND ASSOCIATIONS.

FEET-WASHING

For some time I have been impressed to write about the various practices I have observed during my forty years membership; and trace out some of the history of those practices. About twenty states of the Union have been covered in my travels among the churches, and also part of the Dominion of Canada. Different practices have been found: such as, literal feet-washing, observing the Lord's Supper, collections for the church expenses and help for the ministry, manner of conducting association business, church conferences, posture of ministers while praying, together with other things. If the Lord will direct, I hope to give our people more information as to these practices; not with the purpose of converting others to any certain practice or custom, but that our people might have a better understanding of these things.

According to Hassell's History, Feet-Washing can be traced back to the 17th Centry. We quote the following from page 527 of this History:

"A very few churches observed the washing of feet; but this was placed among the things indifferent, and was never made a bar to fellowship."

In the United States the practice of washing feet has never been observed in the Northern states, and a number of their members never heard of it. In the Middle Atlantic states some churches have observed the practice, and others have not, even in the same association. No bar of fellowship has ever been raised, to our knowledge, in these states, and the brethren have lived together in perfect peace and fellowship. Even in some of the churches part of the membership have observed it, and others have not; but these things have never marred their peace and fellowship. In the South and West the practice seems to be universal, and all the churches and members observe Feet-Washing.

The ministers of the North have visited in the South, and the Southern ministers have visited among the Northern churches for over one hundred and fifty years in perfect peace and harmony; with never the question of fellowship being raised among them over Feet-Washing. Good brethern have differed about these things through the years, yet these differences have not affected fellowship. According to history Feet-Washing was observed in olden times in homes, or at a set time during the week.

Kehukee Association, in North Carolina, is the oldest Primitive Baptist Association in the United States. It was formed in 1765. Elders S. H. and C. B. Hassell, of this association, compiled what is known as Hassell's History; which includes the history of the Kehukee Association and the history of the Church of God throughout the ages; and is recognized as the most complete

history of the Primitive Baptists ever written.

We desire to quote here Elder Sylvester Hassell's observations regarding literal Feet-Washing. In our opinion, we have had no other minister better qualified to treat upon the different practices of Primitive Baptists. We quote from page 845 of this History:

"As to Feet-Washing: This appears to be an open question among Baptists, some approving and others disapproving the literal observance as a church ordinance or rite, and all getting along harmoniously together.

"We find nothing in the Acts of the Apostles or among the churches in ancient times, but of late it has assumed importance, and has been more or less observed in the bounds of the Kehukee Association for the last hundred years.

"Some of the Kehukee churches have never observed it at all; others have occasionally observed it upon motion of some one in conference, and attended to it during some week day at the meeting-house, or at some private house at night, and this at long intervals. Others observe it annually, and connect it with communion or the Lord's Supper; while others repeat it quarterly, and in every instance connect it with communion, which almost invariably occurs on Sunday, after the preaching services are ended.

"This irregularity, we must confess, shows more difference among orthodox Baptists than all other practices or observances adhered to by them put together. Some are ready to conclude on the account of this diversity that they are not one people; that they are divided and cannot walk together. But this is a wrong conclusion; they are one people still, and do not allow the observance or non-observance of this rite to affect their fellowship with each other. The churches composing the Kehukee Association will perhaps represent, on this subject, all the churches of the United States, some engaging in the practice of feet-washing more or less, and others not at all. We conclude, therefore, if the discordant views on this subject have not broken fellowship among the dear people of God for the last hundred years, that they never will; and that the faithful in Christ Jesus will continue to press onward, hand in hand together, 'toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus' through the remaining portion of the Christian dispensation. It would be deplorable and contrary to ancient usage among Baptists if any one or more should at any time hereafter, on either side of the question, set up a bar of communion between themselves and those who differ with them on this subject. Such a dogmatical or dictatorial spirit should not be encouraged or even tolerated in the household of faith. It would be selfish and out of place.

"The argument in favor of the observance of feet-washing, either regularly or irregularly in church meeting, is about as follows, viz.: In the 13th chapter of John it is recorded that the Saviour, in rising from supper, took a towel and girded himself, poured water into a basin, washed the feet of his disciples and wiped them with the towel, and then said to them, 'Ye call me Master; and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.'

"Here is a command, it is urged, binding on the disciples and all who should believe in the Lord Jesus Christ till the end of time. That it should be literally observed, too, as it was literally instituted. That its literal import cannot be dispensed with or construed away as being only figurative. And some on this side of the question also urge that, as the washing immediately followed the Supper, so it should now be attended

to immediately after communion, either quarterly or annually. While some recognize it as a duty only, others hold it as an ordinance inseparably connected with the Supper, and that it should be held just as sacred.

"Those on the other side of the question hold that the washing of the disciples feet by the Saviour was intended to be restricted to them, or at the fartherest to the Jewish Christians in the East. They hold that it was a custom of long standing among the Jews to wash their own feet, or have someone else do it for them when weary and resting in the day time, or before retiring at night. They either went barefooted or wore sandals in traveling, as a general thing, so that their feet were soiled and required washing. These argue that something beyond the literal was intended, because the Saviour said to Peter on the occasion, 'What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.' They also instance the entire absence of anything of the kind in the Acts of the Apostles; and say that the allusion to it in 1st Timothy 5:10, clearly shows that the washing was of a domestic nature, and not in a church capacity: 'If she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have followed every good work.' These, it is urged, are private and household duties and virtues, and do not refer to the ordinances of public proceedings in the Church of Christ. They regard the act of washing the disciples' feet as entirely figurative of that love, humility, burden-bearing and stooping to the necessities of each other, which should characterize the chosen people of God throughout the world, until time should be no more.

"A great deal more has been said on both sides of this question than is here noticed, but what it here reported, it is thought will suffice.

"The (senior) author of this work has always, since his connection with the Baptists, supposed this to be an open question among them, and has had the like feeling of regard and fellowship for those who did and for those who did not literally observe the practice of feet-washing. He has a number of times, since his church membership, (a period of more than fifty years), united with the brethren in feet-washing, and has had some pleasant seasons on these occasions. He never made a move in that direction himself for a public feet-washing, but always sanctioned it when made by others, feeling all the time willing to wash a brother's feet, either in the meeting house or a private house by night, where the brethren occupied one room and the sisters another. He has engaged in it with members of his own church and others, when occasionally they have agreed to enter into it; and he has united in the literal observance with some who adhere to the custom annually.

"The discussion on the subject of feet-washing on both sides has been characterized by a true Christian spirit, worthy of great commendation; and has had the appearance of washing each other's feet all the time, while the question was mooted in the Baptist periodicals. Such will likely be the condition of things even to the end.

"It would be a sad day for the church, were the observance or non-observance of this rite ever be set up as a bar of fellowship. So far from this to the present time, it has been customary with the churches in the Kehukee Association to excuse any or all who did not feel disposed to unite with them on such occasions."

The above has been copied from Hassell's Church History, and shows that for about two hundred years the ministers and brethren from North, East, South, and West, have worshipped and preached together, some observing feet-washing literally, and others not observing it. During this time there has been no question of fellowship raised by either side over it. The Kehukee Association is the oldest Primitive Bap-

tist Association in the United States, and Hassell's History is recognized as the best authority on Primitive Baptist practices. We humbly hope that in this late day no association raises a bar of fellowship over it, but continue to live in peace and fellowship as our forefathers did. But should they do so, it should not be tolerated by brethren everywhere.

In this article we have not tried to argue either side of the matter, but to show the attitude of our brethren in the past two hundred years.

D. V. S.

BEGINNING WHERE THE LORD BEGINS HIS WORK

We often find it good to be exercised to "remember the former things of old," and the pathway we have come, which is sometimes done in reading the experiences of others, where we find many things similar to our own. To remember the "hole of the pit from whence we are digged," and to "look unto the rock whence we are hewn," is to bear evidence of the Lord's mercies toward us.

Many things were brought to our memory not long since while typing the copy of the Correspondence between Elder Gold and Dr. Hooper, preparing it for the printer; (and which we are now re-publishing in the Signs).

Remembering many things of my boyhood when the brethren would be gathered in my father's home, I recalled that they spoke so often of the things they had experienced, giving them as reasons of their hope. Their chief topic was: The way the Lord had led them into the knowledge of the truth.

When I first began to notice the topic of their conversations, they spoke of strange things: strange for I could not understand a personal revelation, or a personal dealing of the Lord with individuals, since I had had no such experience. After a period of time, however, and many encounters with the failure of my law-righteousness, and the early prospects of condemnation in Hell, I was given a glorious sense of relief, and a deliverance of the burden, and felt assured that I had an intimate, personal evidence that Jesus was my Saviour. After this, it may well be believed, the conversations of the brethren had an attraction and charm I had not known before; for I felt that I knew something of the things they spoke of.

In his correspondence with Dr. Hooper, Elder Gold gives his reasons for leaving those with whom he was formerly affiliated and uniting with the Old School Baptists. In reading this correspondence, it is very noticeable that Elder Gold began at the beginning; that is, he began giving his reasons for leaving them at the very place the Lord began with him.

Isn't this the place we all have to begin in giving the reasons why we believe as we do? and why we can't believe anything else?

Elder Gold had been very active before in a religion of a sort, but he knew nothing of condemnation and conviction of sin; and, of course, knew nothing of a deliverance. He had no evidence of a hope of eternal life. He cites many things of which he thought extremely well as being evidences of Christianity; and, in his words, "... and verily thought such a course was doing God's service."

But how different when the Spirit began his work! "Suddenly corruptions arose everywhere within me," Elder Gold wrote, "with a fierceness uncontrollable, and sin raged like a devouring fire. The law confronted me with a killing sentence, and death, I thought, was upon me. Hell was the only place that could fitly receive me, and it was so just in God sending me there, that my soul must approve the righteous sentence. While sinking down, Jesus was manifested in the heavens in a glorious appearance, and these words sounded out, 'If God gives you Christ, how shall he not also freely give you all things.' Since

then Christ is my only hope, and all human righteousness appears as filthy rags from which I wish to be delivered. A painful sense of sin forbids confidence in the flesh, and I am entirely dependent for faith on its author and finisher."

How true it is that, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son." (1 John 5:10) It is a great blessing to be able to testify of the witness within; and it is because of this witness that the Lord's people firmly hold to the teachings of the Scriptures, for both are of the same Spirit. They reject all doctrines of a human source, even if they have to become an offense to former friends.

Those who experience such things are those who were chosen in Christ before the world began; and the order of God's dealing with them is, that they are kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. (see Galatians 3:23) And though they were chosen in Christ, they are "children of wrath, even as others," in their natural standing. But, because they are chosen sons, "God sends forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying Abba, Father."

God has his own way of bringing each of his out of the darkness of nature into the marvelous light of the Son of God. He leads the blind by a way they know not, and the captives out of their dungeons. When the "fulness of time" comes He brings each one forth in a wonderful way: They are born again — born of God, and for the first time they see the kingdom of God, no matter what they held before. These are the dead who are quickened; and for this reason: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." (Ephesians 2:4-7)

These now know that the kingdom of God comes not by observation, but that by the powerful work of the Spirit the kingdom of God is in them. (Luke 17:21) These are the things which remove all traces of self-righteousness, and fastens the hope of redemption alone in the finished work of Jesus. They now talk of things they know, but didn't know before; and each can say, The Lord has done great things for me, whereof I am glad. This is a powerful work — powerful enough to accomplish all that God sends it to do.

These things seem so strange and contrary to reason to those who have not been brought this way, yet it is true that this is the only way that the redeemed of the Lord are ever brought into the knowledge of the truth. This is the way that the redeemed are "sealed with the holy spirit of promise", and receive the "earnest of their inheritance", and receive their "hope of eternal life." It is quite easy to know whether a person has been brought this way: If they can "frame to pronounce" (Judges 12:6) the truth aright. We know of many who feel that they are "converted", but the test is in the substance of their conversation, and their further fruits of the Spirit.

How is it with you, dear reader? This is an important question with each of us. You may rest assured that you are His if you have been taught of him; and, if taught of him, you have no confidence in the flesh, nor its ability to please God. You know that, if you are saved, it is by grace alone; you know that you have had deep exercises in your soul which have entirely altered your former course in life; you know that you love the things of God, and you love godliness. But do you cry, "My leanness, my leanness," and that you cannot do the things you would; nor re-

frain from doing the things you would not? If so, be encouraged, for this is but part of the "strange course that a Christian must take". It is a sure evidence that you have a great treasure in your earthen vessel. For though a great work has been wrought in you, your vile body has not been changed as to its nature; and you will find a warfare in which the flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh as long as you are in this body. Do you not delight in the law of God after the inward man? yet often have to cry with the apostle, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 7:24, 25)

In a wonderful sense our life here on earth is but a preparation for that which is to come. We have to be born into the world in order to have our being and identity; and we have to be born again of the Spirit in order to have our identity as children of God; and there are other "have to be" things which are ours in the way we are led. For instance: We receive in this life the "spirit of adoption", not the adoption; the hope of eternal life, and not the actual eternal life; the holy spirit of promise, not the actual possession. The poet has written:

"'Tis a heaven below my Redeemer to know"

And indeed it is. But unless we have these exercises, and these evidences of grace while we are in this low ground, we have no assurance that heaven shall be ours. But if we have these, no matter how rough the way may seem, nor how many doubts and fears may assail us from time to time, we are assured that we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. We are given sufficient grace for our every need, and knowing that we have not yet attained unto the things which all our exercises assure us, we forget those things which are behind and reach forth unto those things which are before us, pressing, with the Apostle, toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

All these things point to our coming into the fulness and possession of all things which are ours as the redeemed children of God, and as heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.

Well may we therefore lift up our heads with joy, and praise and adore our God for his goodness and mercy towards us, knowing, as we do, that He is faithful and will perform all things He has promised. It is a great pleasure to walk with those whose "conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Philippians 3:20, 21)

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ROMANS IX 6-8

"They are not all Israel which are of Israel; neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children; but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."

The paramount importance of the doctrine of vital relationship to God in Christ Jesus, and joint heirship with him, as indispensable to salvation, may well be inferred from the indefatigable labor of the apostle in all his epistles, especially those addressed to the churches of Galatia and Rome, in elucidating the doctrine of the new birth, as stated by our Lord to Nicodemus, John iii. 3-7. As that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and as only that

which is born of the Spirit is spirit, we need not marvel that it is so positively declared, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The first Adam, as the seminal head or progenitor of all his posterity, was of the earth, earthy; and in his first estate, before he transgressed, he was not spiritual, but natural. — 1 Cor. xv. 46, 47. Consequently he was, even in his best estate, elementally qualified only for an earthly paradise; for as the things of the Spirit of God can only be spiritually discerned, he could not, without being born of the Spirit, see the kingdom of God, or know the things of the Spirit. No amount of reformation, or of mental or physical improvement, education or moral discipline, can supersede the imperative necessity of a spiritual birth to enable any man to see the kingdom of God, or to develop a spiritual, vital relationship with God. Flesh is not the production of spirit, or of spiritual relationship to God; nor can fleshly or earthly seed produce spiritual or heavenly life, or qualify man for the enjoyment of that which is spiritual.

In all the various branches of antichrist the radical error is cherished and pertinaciously contended for, that natural man possess moral ability to acquire by their persistent efforts, not only a discernment of, but also a participation in the kingdom of God; and that the influence of religious training in Sabbath Schools, Bible classes, protracted meetings, anxious benches, and missionary appliances, can effect or produce all that is essential to make children or adults savingly acquainted with the things of the Spirit of God, and prepare them for heaven and heavenly things. This fatal error is as prevalent today among all the Arminian tribes of the earth as it was in former times with the carnal Jews, who thought their fleshly descent from Abraham secured to them eternal life.

The Gentile churches, beset as they were in the days of Paul by Judaizing teachers, required the labors of the inspired apostles to teach them the way of the Lord more perfectly. In the eighth chapter of John the carnal Jews claimed to be Abraham's seed; this claim Jesus admitted, so far as related to their fleshly relation. He said to them, "I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. * * If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." These truly were the lineal descendants of Abraham according to the flesh, but they were not of the faith of Abraham. Religiously, they were of their father the devil. That is, the spirit of falsehood and murder was the spirit of Satan, not of Abraham. In writing to the Galatians, Paul says, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Here the apostle evidently alludes to the promise which God made to Abraham: Now to Abraham and to his seed were the promises made; he saith not unto seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. This covenant was made with Abraham, and confirmed of God in Christ as his seed, four hundred and thirty years before the law was given from Sinai to Israel; and being so confirmed, it could not be disannulled by the Sinai covenant. "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could sware by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, Surely, blessing, I will bless thee, and multiplying, I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise." — Heb. vi. 13-15. Observe: this promise, solemnly confirmed by the oath of God, was not only made to Abraham, as a man, but to him as a patriarchal type of Christ, as his seed. "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise'' (who being Christ's, are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise) "the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it" (in Christ) "by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we" (who being Christ's and Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise) "might have

a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." — Heb. vi. 17, 18.

Now to return to our text — "They are not all Israel which are of Israel." "Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved." — Rom. ix. 27. "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work." — Rom. xi. 5, 6. It cannot then be partly of grace and partly of works; if it be of one, it cannot be of the other. Of which then is it? Well, this same apostle tells us, "For by grace are ye saved, through faith: and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." — Eph. ii. 8-10. As the number of God's children among the thousands of the carnal Israelites were as a very small remnant compared to the sands of the sea, so is the election of grace at this day compared with the popular multitudes who profess christianity.

"Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children." On this part of our text we have already dwelt. Although they were recognized under the old covenant, in the worldly sanctuary, and in the carnal ordinances, John the Baptist, in the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, drew the line of discrimination, and declared that the axe was laid unto the root of the trees to cut those fruitless trees off from Abraham as their father, as their root, and refused them the ordinance of baptism on the ground of that relation. Only they who brought forth fruit meet for repentance were accepted, and all others of them were rejected as a generation of vipers.

"But, In Isaac shall thy seed be called." That is, the seed of Abraham should be called in Isaac. Now, "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye hear the law?" If not, listen: "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons; the one by a bond maid, the other by a free woman. But he who was born of the bond woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." "Which things," says the apostle, "are an allegory; for these are the two covenants. The one from Mount Sinai, in Arabia, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar," or Hagar, and represents Jerusalem, which then was, in bondage with her children, the carnal Jews, who under the Sinai covenant were in bondage. But the other son, who was born unto Abraham by Sarah the free woman, represents the covenant of promise, which was made with Abraham and his seed, and confirmed of God in Christ as the seed of Abraham, four hundred and thirty years before the Sinai covenant was given. Now, as in the allegory, Hagar represents the legal covenant, so her son represents the children of the flesh. And as Hagar was herself a bond maid, she could no more entail freedom to her children, than the law of a carnal commandment could give spiritual life to those who were under it. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse. And if a law had been given that could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law; but instead of this, it is positively declared that by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified in the sight of God. Therefore the children of the flesh, with all their law-righteousness and legal works, although they, like Ishmael, may for a time dwell in Abraham's house, and be nurtured on the lap of Sarah, cannot be heirs with Isaac, in whom the promised seed is called, because he is a child of the flesh, gendered in bondage, and born a slave, and being a child

of the flesh, is not a child of God. He was born after the flesh, and not by the promise which God had made to Abraham, that Sarah should have a son. Neither did God recognize the result of the **means** system devised by Sarah, as the fulfillment of his promise. As a child of the flesh of Abraham, he was an illegitimate, and could not be heir with Isaac, who was the child of promise, the son of the free woman, and the free born son of the Jerusalem which is above, which is the mother of the legitimate heirs of the promise which is confirmed of God in Christ. As Ishmael represents, in this divinely inspired allegory, all the children of the flesh, Isaac represents all the children of God; therefore the apostle says to the saints, as children of the heavenly Jerusalem, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scriptures? Cast out the bond woman and her son; for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. So then we, brethren, are not children of the bond woman, but of the free."

There is then a seed that gendereth to bondage, which seed when gendered, generated and born, is born after and of the flesh; and because it is born after the flesh, and is flesh, in it we cannot please God, because the children of the flesh are not the children of God. "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye (the children of promise) are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead." It is not in our carnal nature, which is born of corruptible, fleshly seed, that the vital relationship of the saints to God consists. For that which is gendered by and born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is produced by any kind of seed, must develop the nature of the seed of which it is produced. Spiritual seed cannot produce other than spiritual development. Flesh cannot produce spirit, nor can spirit produce flesh. But if the Spirit of God dwells in us, then our vital relation to God, as the children of promise, is not in the flesh, which is the production of a different seed. The incorruptible seed cannot produce corruption, nor anything that is corruptible. Therefore, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." Why? "For his (God's) seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." — 1 John iii. 9. But still sin dwells in the flesh of those who are born of God. This is indisputable, if Paul was born of God; for he says that when he does that which he would not, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." — Rom. vii. 25. Being born of the Spirit, he had the mind of Christ, with which he served the law of God; and also having a carnal, depraved nature, which was born of the flesh, of corruptible seed, with it he himself served the law of sin. This incessant conflict between the flesh, born of corruptible seed, and the spirit, born of the Spirit, of incorruptible seed, made him feel like a wretched man, greatly desiring to be delivered from the body of this death. Still having the Spirit and mind of Christ, his faith rested with assurance upon the hope of eternal life which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began, and that victory which God shall give through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In speaking of this promise to Abraham, confirmed of God in Christ, on which the heirship of the spiritual inheritance is secured, the apostle is very explicit. "He saith not, And unto seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Yet in speaking of the heirs of this same promise, he embraces all who are children of the Jerusalem which is above, as being, as Isaac was, children of promise. Evidently regarding them all as they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and as being included in and

one with him, even as he is one with the Father. He the Head, and they the body, and all of them required to make up the fullness of him that filleth all in all. — Eph. i. 23. As in Isaac all the seed of Abraham, in the type, was counted, although more numerous than the stars in the firmament, and like the sands of the sea innumerable, still they were all embodied in one man; so the innumerable host of God's children are embodied in Christ, and their development in the fullness of the dispensations of times is not adding to Christ, but multiplying, as God said to Abraham, "Multiplying, I will multiply thee." Christ asks for no more glory than he had with the Father before the world began. When it was promised, "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation," (Psa. xxii. 30,) he was himself regarded as the seminal Head of that seed, although they were a people that should be born. And as the germ that is to produce a harvest is in the seed, so the eternal life of all the chosen generation of Jesus Christ was secured to them in him from everlasting. None of his seed can be born, as his seed, of any other parentage than himself. None can be recognized as his, except his Spirit dwells in them; and his Spirit only dwells in those who are quickened and born of him.

Jesus, in speaking of his death and resurrection, said to Andrew and Philip, "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily, verily I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." This is a beautifully illustrative figure; for as the germ that is to produce the fruit is in the corn of wheat, so the eternal life of all his people was given them in the Son of God. — 1 John v. 11, 12. And therefore, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." — Luke xxiv. 46, 47.

Now in fulfilling the promise to Abraham, which was confirmed of God in Christ, it was necessary that he, as the embodiment of the seed to whom the promise was made, should take on him the seed of Abraham, and be made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death. That is, that in our flesh he should die and expiate our sins, that in his life and immortality, which he brought to light in his resurrection, we might be justified, and presented holy and without blame before him in love. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." — Heb. ii. 14-17. He took our flesh, that he might die for us; and we are made partakers of his righteousness, that we may live and reign with him. In no other way could we be made the righteousness of God, and without the righteousness of God we could not be saved. In our flesh he bore our sins, died our death, and met and canceled all the requisitions of the holy law, that we being thus buried with him by baptism into his death, should also be quickened together with him, and raised up together, that we might sit together with him in the heavenly places in him. We being thus in him slain by, and dead to the law, by the body of Christ, should be married to him that is risen from the dead, and from under the law, and walk in newness of life, and bring forth fruit unto God. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin." That is,

having been put to death in the person of Christ, we are redeemed from the penalty and dominion of that law; and being by the Son made free, are free indeed. "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." — Rom. vi. 6-12.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, May 1, 1877.)

MEMORIAL TO
SISTER ELIZABETH MURDOCK

On May 25, 1960, the God of all grace called unto himself our dear sister in the Lord, Elizabeth O. May Murdock. Funeral rites were conducted in Durham, North Carolina, on May 27, 1960, by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler and her body was interred in Maplewood Cemetery.

She was born and reared in Orange County, now Durham County, the daughter of William May and Mildred Latta May, and was educated in private schools in Durham. Surviving are her husband, Mr. Albert Allen Murdock; her son, Mr. W. H. Murdock, Solicitor of the Tenth Solicitorial District; her daughter, Elizabeth May Murdock who attended her devotedly; five grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Sister Murdock joined the Durham Primitive Baptist Church by experience on February 18, 1923, and the Lord favored her to live a long and exemplary life among her brethren. She was a woman of noble character, unassuming and gracious in her manner, and adorned with a lovely spirit of humility. Her life among us was a testimony that her citizenship was in heaven. She loved the assembly of the saints and was faithful in the duties and responsibilities of church membership. We feel that the memory of her precious faith in God must be a consolation to her bereaved family.

The members of the Durham Primitive Baptist Church are grieved by the loss of this lovely sister, but we receive consolation in the belief that her spirit has been set free from the chains of death and has entered the portals of glory.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." (Rev. 14:13)

Written by request,
Catherine M. Copley

OBITUARIES

FRANK M. STEGALL

Frank M. Stegall was born September 17, 1906, son of the late Elder J. F. Stegall. Brother Stegall departed this life May 6, 1959, making his stay here 52 years, 7 months and 18 days. In 1946 he married Lena Smith who survives. He is also survived by a daughter, Peggy Lou Stegall by a previous marriage; his mother, Mrs. J. F. Stegall; and a sister, Mrs. Doris S. Richardson.

Brother Stegall united with the church at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on the fourth Sunday in July 1957, at the water and was baptized the same day. As he had been burdened to go home to his friends he had brought clothes to be baptized if the Church received him. Truly our God moves in a mysterious way to bring the subjects of his marvelous grace to the militant church.

Funeral services were conducted at the home of his mother by Elder D. V. Spangler, who spoke so comfortingly from Romans 8:38-39, after which he was laid to rest in the family burial plot at the home, to await the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ on the morning of the resurrection.

The Lord blessed our brother to enjoy the fellowship of his brethren less than two years, yet our loss is his eternal gain. The writer feels a greater loss, as he and I went together to meetings so often. Brother Stegall was given a precious experience of the goodness of God during World War Two while in the service of our country. This was to him a turning in his life as it is with all the dear people of God. From that day hence his heart and mind was on Christ and what He had done for poor sinners such as he felt to be. However many years went by before he was burdened so heavily that he could not refrain from going to the Church for a home with those of like precious faith.

May God reconcile us to the loss of our brother and bless all that mourn.

Harold D. Weatherford

(We regret the delay in publishing the above — Ed.)

HENRY LEE PETERS

At the request of Camp Branch Church I will try to write a few lines in memory of our dear Brother Peters, whom God in his providence has removed from us.

Brother Henry Lee Peters was born in Franklin County, Virginia, on June 1, 1885, and departed this life January 17, 1960, at the age of nearly 75 years. He was united in marriage to Betty Mae Ramsey on April 2, 1916; and to this union were born five children — three sons and two daughters. All of the children and his wife survive.

Brother Peters united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Camp Branch on Saturday, July 25, 1959, and was baptized July 26th, along with his wife. They were baptized by Elder Rufus Brown. Brother Peters had been in bad health for a number of years, but was faithful in attending church until his death.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this letter be entered on our church book, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* and the *Old Faith Contender* for publication.

Written by request of Camp Branch Church July 2, 1960, by an unworthy believer in Christ.

Mrs. Nancy Haynes, Clerk of Church

MEMORIAL OF SISTER KATE WILSON

Sister Kate Wilson departed this life May 3, 1959, at the age of 82. Sister Wilson had been a widow for several years.

She was married to John Wesley Wilson in the year 1895, to this union there were no children.

She leaves as survivors one sister, Sister Mary Sharp who has now passed her 90th birthday and 2 nephews.

Aunt Kate as the writer knew her at the time of her death united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Dan River in 1903, at the age of 26 years and remained with this church for 56 years. She served the church as clerk for 35 years.

She lived a devoted member to her church, believing in the strength and wisdom of her Saviour, Jesus Christ the Lord, and having no confidence in the flesh. Her sufferings the last few months of her life were very severe yet she was uncomplaining to the end. Her funeral was conducted by Elder David V. Spangler and Elder John W. Gilliam.

We feel our loss is Sister Wilson's eternal gain and it is better for her to depart and be with the Lord than to remain in the world of sickness, pain and death.

Resolved that a copy of this memorial be made a part of our church records, a copy be sent to her sister and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times.*

Coley Strader

(We regret the delay in publishing the above — Ed.)

MAGGIE FLORENCE LANK

As it pleased our God to take from our midst on September 17, 1959, our dear and beloved sister, Maggie Florence Lank, we bow in humble submission to the will of our God, believing that He giveth and he taketh away at his own appointed time.

Sister Lank was born June 3, 1880, the daughter of the late John Martin and Laura White Hancock. She was united in marriage to Clarence Lank (who departed this life in 1950), and to this union was born one daughter, who died in 1925. She is survived by one grandson, two great grandchildren, two nieces and one nephew.

Sister Lank had attended Old School Baptist meetings for many years, and was given a desire for a home in the church. She went before the Salisbury Church, and was baptized by Elder David V. Spangler August 31, 1958. She had expressed a desire for her membership to be with the Forest Grove Church and was given a letter to that church, where she remained a faithful member until her death. She enjoyed attending the meetings as long as her health permitted.

Funeral services were held at the Holloway Funeral Home on September 20, 1959, by her pastor, Elder Warren, and interment was in the Walston Switch Cemetery. May the God of all grace reconcile those left to mourn the loss of this dear sister and friend.

Arthur R. Warren

SISTER R. LILLIAN B. HODGE

God has seen fit to remove from our midst our much beloved sister, Lillian Blalock Hodge, on September 5, 1959. She was born in Person County, N. C., March 4, 1878, the daughter of Franklin Pierce and Mary Oakley Blalock. She was married at the age of 25 to William C. Hodge, from Orange County, N. C.; who died in 1954.

She leaves one daughter, Mrs. Alma Lynch, Elon College, N. C.; two sons, Wilbur, of Burlington, N. C., and Lester, of Mebane, N. C. — one son Clyde, deceased. Also surviving are one sister, Mrs. John Oakley, Prospect Hill, N. C.; 13 grandchildren, and 22 great grandchildren.

She united with Prospect Hill Primitive Baptist Church Saturday before the 3rd Sun-

day in May, 1901, and was baptized by Elder L. H. Hardy. Her greatest desire was to be faithful to her church, and to visit the sick and afflicted. There was always a sweet smile on her face — one which this writer will never forget; and she was so comforting to talk with.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we at Prospect Hill Church express our deepest sympathy to the family and all who mourn her passing; and that this resolution be spread on our minutes, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Elder W. C. King, Moderator
Hallie O. Griswold, Clerk

MRS. LIZZIE KILGORE FOSTER

Mrs. Lizzie Kilgore Foster was born in Alabama February 20, 1875, to John Calvin Kilgore and Hettie Henry Kilgore. She died June 6, 1960. They moved to Texas in the 1890's, living in Comanche, and later Brown Counties. She was united in marriage to James Isaac Foster in 1908, who died in 1945. One daughter and four sons were born to this union, one son dying in infancy.

Surviving are Claude H., Atlanta, Ga.; Margie Rixford, Comanche; Calvin E., Big Spring; and Travis E., Fort Worth. Also surviving are five grandchildren: Frances, Vincent and Judy Foster, Fort Worth; and Francine and Norman Foster, Atlanta, Ga. She is survived also by one foster-son, Medford Conger, Vanderbilt, Texas; and two brothers, Ed. P. Kilgore, Brownwood, Texas, and W. H. Kilgore, Mission, Texas.

The family moved to Rising Star, Texas, in 1926. Sister Foster was baptized at the age of 15, by her father, the later Elder J. C. Kilgore. For a number of years she was Clerk of Macedonia Church, Rising Star, Texas, and died a member of that church. We miss this mother in Israel, who, we believe "earnestly contended for the faith", though always showing charity towards those who disagreed with her.

Mr. Harry Hamet, a life long friend of the family, and Missionary Baptist minister, and the writer conducted the services; and she was laid to rest beside her husband in Blake Cemetery, near Rising Star, to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Sent to the *Signs of the Times* by the request of her children.

C. U. Landers

SUSIE PILGREEN HENDERSON

Sister Henderson was the wife of Mr. Albert Henderson, who preceded her in death six weeks, having died suddenly. She was born near Linville, La., February 10, 1880, and died in the Bernice Clinic July 26, 1960, making her age more than 80 years. She had been in critical health for several years, and the loss of her husband seemed to serve to further her declining state of health.

Sister Henderson was the daughter of a very precious Deacon, Dick Pilgreen and Sister Pilgreen, whose membership was with Union Primitive Baptist Church; and Sister Henderson also united with this same church, but later, after losing her first husband, Mr. Rufus Goodson, she married Mr. Henderson, and moved close to our home church, New Hope, and united by letter.

She was a very lovely sister, manifesting the wonderful love of God in her great love of the Lord's people; and in the doctrine of the sovereign grace of God, and His salvation by grace through the precious blood and righteousness of Christ Jesus. She and her husband were very faithful in attending the church meetings as long as her health would permit. She was patient in her sufferings and afflictions, and through the faith and love of God was enabled to endure what she suffered. We feel that she is now better off, and is free from suffering. Solomon said, Better is the day of one's death than the day of birth. So let us not weep as those who have no hope.

She is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Aden Mitcham; five grandchildren, and eight great grandchildren; two sisters, Mrs. Mary Tucker, Farmerville, La.; and Mrs. Annie Love, Linville, La. Also by one step-son, Jacob Henderson, Pine Bluff, Ark.; six step-daughters, Mrs. A. B. Murry, Lillie, La.; Mrs. H. L. Darden, El Dorado, Ark.; Mrs. Robert McDonald, Fort Worth, Texas; Mrs. T. B. Smith, Lillie, La.; Mrs. J. D. Williams, Junction City, Ark.; and Mrs. W. H. Woodall, Los Angeles, Calif. Also surviving are twenty-five step-grandchildren, and a host of step-great grandchildren.

Sister Henderson's funeral was held at Liberty Church, near Linville, La. The writer and Elder J. L. Smith conducted the services in the presence of a large congregation. The many flowers denoted the deep devotion of her family and many neighbors and friends, and the brethern among the Old Baptists who knew and loved her.

May the Lord bless and comfort all that mourn until the Lord comes again without sin unto salvation, when in the glorious resurrection the children of God will be carried home to heaven, there to praise the Lord forever in that bright and Eternal City.

Your servant and brother in the Lord, I hope,

R. W. Rhodes

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 128 DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1960 NO. 11

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/60 IT EXPIRES
THIS MONTH

THE LILY

Oh the Lily, the beautful lily,
In its season it will ever abide;
Yet could no more itself be a lily
Than the sharpest briar that grew by its side.

The cold North wind in all of its fury
Had blown it about and caused it to fall:
It was broken, withered, bent and twisted:
It seemed that it had no life left at all.

Though broken and bent by the sleet and snow,
And the winter season so cold and long,
When the sun and warmth shines upon it then,
It seemed not likely to survive at all.

So long it has been so dead and lifeless
And a great many things seemed to enthral,
Yet when the winter season is over,
It is proved they were never dead at all.

So dependent upon the Creator
For all the warmth, the sun and the rain,
When as the Spring time comes in its beauty,
We will see the lily come forth again.

The lily can only be a lily
In all of its majesty and so fine,
Because God alone planted the lily,
And all of the briars after their kind.

And all of its beauty will ever remain
Though no merits of its own can be found,
For when God clothed the lily in beauty
He gave its wraps for beauty all around.

So typical it is of God's people
Who travel in darkness — oft not a ray
Of light to shine on them in their pathway,
But the briars always seem to grow each day.

But a Sur'ty I saw for his people
Though no righteousness of their own is found:
When God clothes in his robe of righteousness
All his people are secured all around.

(Written out of an experience of bleak winter in my soul)

Cora Powell,
Salisbury, Md.

"A SUFFICIENT MEASURE
OF JOY, PEACE, AND REST."

476 Williams Street
Cumberland, Maryland

Esteemed Elder and Sister Wood:

I trust that this finds you and all your family in good health; I feel assured that God abundantly supplies you with spiritual bread sufficient for all your needs. As for myself, I feel to say with the poet:

"When trouble like a gloomy cloud,
Has gathered thick and thundered loud,
He near my soul has always stood,
His loving kindess, O how good."

If not deceived, I have known what it is to feel spiritual joy, peace, and rest above earthly cares; and rest in the cleft of that great Rock, until given strength to travel on; and to know what the poet meant when he wrote:

"Children of the heavenly King,
As you journey, sweetly sing;
Sing your Saviour's worthy praise,
Glorious in his works and ways.

"Fear not, brethren, joyful stand
On the borders of your land;
Christ, your Father's elder son,
Bids you undismayed go on."

He hath redeemed them, and given them a lively hope, and an eternal inheritance to life everlasting, and a sufficient measure of joy, peace, and rest while they journey through this wilderness of sin and sorrow; and for these blessings no mortal man can ever glorify sufficiently the great Redeemer's name.

The followers of wickedness never know or experience these wonders, because their eyes are blinded and puffed out with self-righteousness; and they rush to climb up some other way. They can't stand the truth! To them they are only "hard sayings" — the broad road suits them better. Consequently they never see the brilliance of that great light, or know the quenchings of thirst that the Lord's children feel when enabled to drink from the endless stream; or the joy of basking in the fullness of God's great love which surpasses all worldly knowledge.

My mind seems to dwell on the contrast between the two roads, as described in the Scriptures: the one all children of the heavenly King must travel, so narrow and strait, that leads to life eternal; and the broad, glittering road that leads to destruction, and of the many who follow its false alluring trail.

Oh, how different are the travels of the ones who are kept by the power of God, whose eyes have been opened to see clearly the yawning pit from which, by the grace of God, they have been lifted. He alone is able to guide their faltering feet along that narrow way. How joyfully they embark on that journey! and for a reason:

"On the wings of his love,
They are carried above
All sin and temptation and pain;
And they cannot believe
That they ever shall grieve:
That they ever shall suffer again."

But, alas! All too soon they find their feet are sore and weary from the thorns and briers that spring up along the way; and that without the guiding light (the presence of God) they cannot find their way through the wilderness. In their joyful haste, they had forgotten that their dross must all be consumed:

"That the soul who would to Jesus press
Must mark this firm and sure:
That tribulations more or less,
They must and shall endure."

As it was with the Apostle Paul, lest they become self-conceited and puffed up, they are given this thorn in the flesh, which causes them to look for help from the Rock which supplies their spiritual strength; and to cry Abba, Father, save or we perish with hunger and thirst. It is then they feel again His soul cheering presence; and find

"He gently leads us on;
Protects from fatal harm,
And when we faint and cannot walk,
He bears us in his arms."

Gently He leads them beside the still waters. How refreshed they feel after drinking from that endless stream! and so strong are their steps when fed with that heavenly Manna.

"His presence cheers our souls,
And smooths the rugged way;
He often makes the crooked strait,
And turns their night to day."

We are taught that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, and that henceforth we should not serve sin; for we are not under the law, but under grace. As many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God. And we are taught that all things work together for good to them that love Him, and who are the called according to His purpose.

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." (Romans 8:18) Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ — a peace the travelers in darkness never know or understand, it is foolishness to them. For unless taught by the Lord of all spiritual knowledge, it is impossible for any natural man to understand why the Remnant travel such a narrow path; and in spite of it all, find delightful joy, peace, and rest. Even the learned and mighty are confounded by this trait in those who follow the strait and narrow path. Yes,

"We travel through a barren land,
With dangers thick on every hand;
But Jesus guides us through the vale,
The Christian's hope can never fail."

Yes, dear children of the heavenly

King, you are kept by the power of God, and have the precious assurance that the most ferocious darts of Satan can never retard or sever that gift of eternal life, or separate you from that great love bestowed by your Redeemer God.

"Faith! 'tis a precious grace,
Where'er it is bestowed;
It boasts of a celestial birth,
And is the gift of God."

We have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Our God will not suffer his children to be tempted about that which they are able, but will with the temptation also make a way for their escape, that we may be able to bear it. So, we pray for grace sufficient. Jeremiah says that God will turn their mourning to joy that they may rejoice from their sorrows. "So there remaineth a rest to the children of God." "And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness." "And the redeemed shall walk there."

Therefore we should do nothing through strife, or vain-glory. If we glory, let it be in praise to our great Redeemer; and in lowliness of mind let us esteem other brethren better than ourselves; and for all these blessings, bow our knees and give thanks, and all praise and glory to our God: the Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; who is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. So:

"If I must sing, I'll sing of grace,
Which raised me from the fall,
And brought me to a hiding place:
Jesus, my Lord, my all."

A fellow traveler in hope,
Hester B. Thompson

3338 McAfee Road,
Decatur, Ga.

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is $5.00 for which please renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times for two years.

My grandparents loved this paper and the doctrine it advocates; my parents subscribed to it all their lives, and it has been in my family ever since I married — more than fifty years ago. I hope I love this doctrine, and my dear children love it, and are members.

The Signs is like a member of our family. May God bless the editors to keep it true to the doctrine of our Lord and Saviour.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. N. C. Alston

ENJOYS MEETING WITH THE BRETHREN

Dear Kindred in Christ Jesus:

I hope that I am thankful to feel that God has visited me again, and given me the mind and desire to write of the goodness and mercy, and His great love for us; wherein He has brought us in ways that we had not known. What great love He has for his chosen people, in that he sent his only begotten Son to earth to die on the cross, that we should be redeemed by his shed blood; and be given a precious hope of eternal life. When it pleases him to reveal it to us at his appointed time, we are of all people most blest.

I feel too unworthy of the blessings and rejoicing that I have received of late. I had the pleasure of attending the Pigg River Association on Saturday and Sunday, August 6 and 7th; and on Monday night after I slept very little, as I was meditating and rejoicing in the goodness, and mercy, and love of our wonderful Lord and Saviour, which he bestows on his believing people. I feel to be one of the least of His little ones. My membership is with the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church — a people whom I love and esteem very highly.

I have been in this part of the country since June, and have been blessed to attend meetings around here most every weekend, and have enjoyed them very much; as I have also the associations that I have attended. I was blessed

to hear the sweet gospel of our Lord and Saviour as it was ably proclaimed from the pulpit by our gifted ministers. How sweet and comforting to our hearts: it is as rain falling from heaven, refreshing our souls and causing us to rejoice in Him. It renews our spirit, and makes us to know that God has all power both in heaven and in earth. We rejoice in the sweet fellowship of our dearly beloved brethren, our kindred in Christ; and we can see the love of God shining in their faces as they sing the beautiful songs of Zion.

We have our sorrows, trials and troubles in this life, but at times we are lifted above them and made to feel that God is with us, enabling us to bear our burdens and comforting our hearts, and we are made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. How marvelous is His grace, and his ways past finding out! We are cast down, but not destroyed.

When it pleased the Lord to cause me to look within, (18 years ago), and see what a vile and sinful creature I was, lost and undone, and without hope here in this world or for eternity: a sinner under condemnation, I was made to cry unto our God for help and mercy; for I knew that I was lost, and that all of my dependence was in Him. I was made to know that there was nothing I could do to obtain salvation, but was enabled to call upon Him, and I feel that he heard my prayers, and at the appointed time revealed to me that it was only through his Son that I should be saved: He makes us a willing people in the day of his power. As was decreed before the foundation of the world, He sent his only begotten Son to earth to die on the cross for the redemption of his people. We are saved by grace through faith, and not of works lest any man should boast. I was made to feel that he lifted my feet out of the miry clay, and put my feet upon a solid foundation; and put a new song in my mouth, even praises unto Him, and gave me a precious hope of heaven — not for any good deeds that I had ever done to obtain it; and we are enabled to know that all power, honor, and glory belongs to Him.

Our hope gets dim sometimes, and we almost despair that we ever had one; and at other times, it shines in our hearts as a beacon light, renewing our spirit, and is refreshing to our soul. Then we can say with the poet, "How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed." Salvation is of the Lord. We are not taught by man, neither can we receive it of man: It is a gift of God unto his elect. He says, "I will be your God and ye shall be my people." It is by grace that we are saved.

May we be counted one among that number when Christ shall come to claim his own. The following came to me along with the writing:

By faith we live from day to day,
And we are made to watch and pray,
Looking to Jesus for His love,
Which comes to us from heav'n above.

He is our Prophet, Priest and King;
To His praises we are made to sing:
He died for us; He lives again
To bless us in his heav'nly reign.

Then after our troubles and strife
Have come to an end with this life,
May we all be among the blest
And enter our heavenly rest.

A sister in a precious hope,
Mrs. Thelma Reece Wilson

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN ELDER GOLD AND DR. HOOPER

(Continued)

But how can one preach except he be sent? Some of your people say that boards send them, and that they cannot go without money secured after your way of obtaining it, which was enough of itself to cause my soul to distrust boards. Does not the Lord of the harvest send forth his laborers? He sent the apostles, who went into all the world and preached the gospel to every creature. Who prepares them to preach? God teaches all his preachers,

as well as all his people, and the teaching and interpretations are the same. They are all thrown under one schoolmaster, the law; a flesh-killing teacher he is, too; and there they are hedged in, until Christ is revealed, and then they are no longer under tutors, but Jesus teaches them.

But, say you, cannot the schools aid in training and fitting one to preach? — cannot colleges, which men have originated and built up, aid the Holy Spirit in preparing men to preach? Paul says he was not taught the gospel by man, nor did he receive it of man, but by revelation; nor did he confer with flesh and blood; but straightway after baptism preached Christ that he is the Lord. How any man who knows anything of the divine fitness necessary to prepare one to preach the gospel, and the utter insufficiency of human schools to aid at all, can yet, in the face of Paul's plain declarations that he was not taught by man, but by revelation, insist that he went into Arabia to a school for that purpose, was such a stumbling block to me that I could have no fellowship with those that avowed it. But one says, were not the disciples with Jesus four years before they began to preach? Yes, and if they are not with him all their lives, what is their preaching worth? Are the schools in the place of Jesus, or is he to be found by going to them? and is that the way to get with Christ?

But, say you, were there not schools of the prophets? Well, it seems to me that the prophets can give as sensible an account of their call as any one can give for them. Do any of them ever tell us that they were called out of any school, or ever were called to go to any such place? They spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. But who were the sons of the prophets? I suppose their children. They tell us of false prophets fed at Jezebel's table, and these perhaps were taught by man or some lying spirit.

But, you say, will not human learning aid man in preaching the gospel — will it not give him words and power over men's minds, and enable them to present the gospel in a more attractive form! I am free to admit the value of human learning in man's earthly affairs, and heartily commend its acquisition in that sense. But what does inspiration say about spiritual things, and how they are spoken? "Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual." Not many wise men are called, but God calls the ignorant and foolish to confound the wise. Witness Peter and John. While Peter was an unlearned man, he preached the gospel to men, speaking about sixteen different tongues, and each one in his own tongue heard the wonderful works of God. You say those days had miracles. But can man, of himself, any more preach the gospel now than he could then? A man that has never been taught that he is a poor, blind, helpless sinner, knows nothing about it.

When man thinks by human learning he can find out God or serve him, he is puffed up. When the Lord calls a learned man (though he does not call many), than man glories in becoming a fool that he may win Christ. Let every man abide in his calling. If the ignorant man is called, let him know that out of the mouths of babes God's praise is perfected; if one is called being learned, let him know that the foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of men, but let him use his knowledge as occasion serves. The faithful study of the scriptures, in humble dependence on the anointing which is from above, thoroughly furnishes the man of God unto every good work.

But do we not need men of human learning to preach to intelligent Christians? Human learning makes no part of the new man, and the saint who has human learning is just as weak and dependent on God for his crumb as any other, and all are fed with the same kind of food. But say you, after one is certainly called to preach, can not the

schools polish him and gave him more influence over men, and enable him to better command their respect, by keeping pace with human learning? Tell me, from scripture, where one ever tried it, or where it was ever authorized. How much can frail man add to God's gift? How much pride do you think is necessary to influence man to presume on such a task? Do not the Scriptures pointedly forbid the employment of worldly weapons in building up Christ's kingdom, and are not all appeals to the base passions of human nature contrary to heavenly teaching? Is the minister of Christ to suit his message to proud man's tastes? "We speak wisdom to them that are perfect, but not the wisdom of this world." If a natural man cannot discern the things of the Spirit because they are foolish unto him, does it follow that a spiritual one will be edified by worldly wisdom, the very food that most delights man's pride?

It seems to me that the Scriptures make some allusions to such schools, though in the way of alarm: "But the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but will after their own lusts heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears." Much as the Bible is talked of, its doctrine is not endured, but the progressive age calls for theological schools that shall enlighten men to preach doctrines suitable to men's lusts. Men who have devoted so much time and labor in the preparation for the ministry, are worthy of positions of influence and profit. The teachers come from these schools, dosed with a sort of preparation from dead men's brains that will make them sick enough, if God should ever teach them where their dependence lies. How do these schools heap up teachers? They furnish opportunities for obtaining an education, open the way to positions of honor and reward, so that there is but little trouble attending the road; and if money enough could be comanded, it would be difficult to tell how many would be heaped up; but they shall have itching ears and shall turn away their ears from the truth, and be turned unto fables. The doctrines and fables of men are accepted. Andrew Fuller becomes a wonderful standard. Not content to walk in the way of revelation, and live in dependence on God for their message, their success and their bread, they must follow the cunningly-devised fables of men. The fables are powerless unless cunningly devised, the wolf of course coming in the sheepskin, the messengers of Satan transformed into angels of light. Does not Mr. Fuller teach salvation by grace? So do all other denominations in their way, no doubt all thinking they are right. But how are they detected? If they are not of the truth, they will cross the right way somewhere. Andrew Fuller takes repentance and faith out of the covenant of grace, and puts them under the law, in the sense that he makes them men's duty, and not gifts of grace. If salvation comes on account of men's performance of his duty, it is of works in some sense. He brings in the modern missionary enterprise, a system somewhat like the Popish measures for propagating their creed, but unknown to the Bible and to Baptists, and is a disturber of gospel peace and order among the churches. By reading his works one can see from his own statements that his views were strange, and new to Baptists, and it may be inferred from the opposition to him. Those who condemned his plans, and desired to follow the apostle's ways, abiding in their doctrine, as Baptists had done up to that time, were such as you now call anti-missionary Baptists; while those that followed Mr. Fuller are the modern missionary Baptists, claiming him as their standard, though it is doubtful if his followers have not departed farther from the truth than he did, as he refused flattering titles which they accepted for modesty's sake without much urging, and do not preach salvation as nearly by grace as he did, so they are waxing worse and worse. The system of doctrines which he brought in required and contained in its fruitful womb all the offspring of

modern missionism. Since the whole world is now to be evangelized under his theory, many teachers are needed, and since man has so much to do, and can do it so well, he must prepare these teachers, and so theological schools are brought forth. Inasmuch as money is so good just here in equipping them and upholding the enterprise, a wise system of begging to obtain it is devised, in the name of religion. As the world is to be converted to our measures, and our religion, where can we so well begin as with the youth, while their minds are tender and their conversion easier, and Sunday Schools rise up, as a wonderful means for this work — the nursery and right arm of the church. Human knowledge becomes the handmaid of religion, and how sweetly they walk together. Some man must hold the hand of the missionary, while he goes down into wells, and he must see how his bread comes before he goes, and the churches combine in forming such tremendous agencies of power as your conventions, while all glory in the fruits of your wise system. That your denomination generally endorse your system is manifest, and what little I write may only have the effect of influencing them to fall down before their idols, and shout in louder strains, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!"

In your system, salvation is somewhat dependent on what man does of himself; it is not a gift, unless he does something to obtain it, and he may forfeit it by his misdoing. Much power is claimed by your boards, even that of sending out, directing and sustaining your missionaries, and controlling their work; much power is claimed by your teachers, too, in converting men, reminding one of the characteristics of the man of sin, who exalts himself above all that is called God, sitting in the temple of God, and showing that he is God. In popedom the power of pardoning sin (God's prerogative), is boldly assumed as the mystery of iniquity. In Protestant denominations this power is covertly claimed in sprinkling children — a practice condemned by your people — yet it seems to me you are allied to the man of sin in various ways. You hold your traditions of men; you put yourself in the place of the Holy Spirit, when you teach and better prepare men to preach, directing them where and how to go; when you teach your missionaries to place their dependence for support on yourselves, it looks like taking it away from its proper place; and what less when you teach that if money enough be contributed, you can evangelize the world? For your frequent use of the "anxious seat" no apology is made that does not suppose some power in the preacher, time, place or occasion to aid in conversion. Your preaching, too, savors of the idea that it is the means of procuring the new birth.

If you say these are important means, and we judge them to be righteous because of their good fruits, I should take issue with you generally. Why did not the apostles, who are the twelve judges in the church proclaiming the law that is final, authorize them? See what fearful penalties they foretell for those who either add to or take from the law that governs in Zion. Are not their terrible cautions against the love of money and making a gain of godliness enough to cause one to beware of covetousness? See, too, how pride is condemned, pride of intellect, whose great boast and most effective weapon is human learning that puffeth up.

God's ministers are sent to preach the gospel, and woe is to them if they go not, money having nothing to do with their going. The preacher, like Paul the true missionary, labors night and day, working with his own hands for the support of himself and those with him, coveting no man's money or apparel, rather than being burdensome to the churches; for Paul tells the preachers of the Ephesian Church he had set them such an example for that intent. The true preacher being delivered from the snare of covetousness seeks first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, resting the matter of his support with

Him who feeds the sparrows and clothes the lillies, feeling that he, as well as any other man, should labor with his own hands for his bread, if Providence orders is so; while true churches are likewise delivered from the snares of covetousness, and need not be begged for a gift, but of a ready mind minister of their temporal things to those that minister to them in spiritual things. The preacher is content to let the matter of giving rest in the free, cheerful contributions of the Christians, and feed the flock of God which he has purchased with his own blood, taking the oversight thereof, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; while the churches as freely give, not only to him, but to any in need, and know the blessings of a cheerful giver.

But now attend one of your meetings, such as an association or convention. What a gathering place for agents, appointed to raise money, artful men trying to make such good impressions that one will be glad to give them, and what consummate skill do they use in begging for each other; telling the pastors the more the people give the agents the more will they give to them. The arrangements of the meeting are wisely adapted to raise money, the speeches ring with it, the pet measures are discussed when the largest crowds assemble, and such appeals as that the heathen are perishing because the people will not give them money enough to send the gospel to them, are urgently made. When fever heat is attained, and the coveted moment for casting in the money-drag comes, such excitement prevails that an observer might well conclude that money is indeed an object with them. Those who refuse to give them are of a bad spirit, those who have nothing to give feel that they are held at a low valuation, while those who give much are heralded abroad as worthy; for the standard of piety consists in part in this sort of charity, falsely so called.

You speak of the fruits of your system. I have often heard of the speed you are making; your seers have often promised us the golden harvest of the universal reign of religion and peace, if the money could but be raised. Well, you have raised enormous sums of money, you have compassed land and sea, the kings of the earth have given you access to their countries, and you have said the fields are ripe. For about a hundred years you have experimented. Now, ignorant people who cannot see afar off, must look around their own homes, and in their own country, to see the fruits of your system. What then are some of the fruits at the fountain in our own midst? In the name of religion your Northern brethren, leaders in the missionay movement, have waged a runinous war on us all, our once good government is gone, our once happy people downtrodden, vice prevails, and the very fountains of government seem to be poisoned. I know no such fruits as those among the people I am with.

You think we are opposed to the preaching of the gospel, because we earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, withdraw from those who cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine of Christ, and sharply rebuke these errors. But we rejoice in the preaching of the gospel in all lands. We think that preaching the gospel is the appointed means, not of making God's children, but of calling them out of the world, and feeding them, and that the government of this family rests upon the shoulder of the wonderful Counselor, of the increase of whose kingdom there shall be no end — that he holds the preachers or angels in his right hand and walks among the candlesticks, and that he as much directs and protects his people as he ever did, chastening them for their wanderings, and bringing them back. It is as much their duty to obey their King on the holy hill of Zion, and keep themselves from idols, as it ever was. The Lord gives his people a new heart, and works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure, making them willing in the day of his power, and hence

they are careful to maintain good works. They are dead to the love of sin, they see nothing pleasing in the world, and the world sees nothing pleasing in them; each being dead to the other. The urgent appeals of Scripture are addressed to the Lord's people, to save themselves from the untoward generation, and every evil way, while the threatenings on the ungodly are prophetic of their final doom. It is of the utmost importance to every one, to examining himself and see whether he has a hope of a well grounded nature, to watch, and fight the good fight of faith.

We think the gospel is preached to every creature, but do not understand that the world is ever to be converted, that wonders after the beast.

You stated that we are workers together with God. Do you mean that there is an equality of partnership? No more than is between the ploughman and the plough. The Lord, it seems, calls, sends forth, goes with, and works in, his people by his Spirit, and directs them where to go, and when, as he did of old, and no man, nor set of men, can take his place, nor take the work of preparing, directing, and upholding his laborers out of his hand, or put it in their own.

You lament my association with a people who do not rely on human helps in interpreting the Bible. Well, if one has the anointing that teacheth him all things, why should he rely on man? If he can go to the clear fountain, why drink in the muddy branch? You are mortified to see the people delivered over to the custody of men who attempt to preach without reading any but the English Bible. If they are called they can preach, whether they can read the English or Hebrew Bible, and if they cannot read either. Without God sends one, can he preach? Is not the gift which the Spirit bestows the indispensable qualification for preaching, and if one has that can he not preach? As far as I am able to judge, if at all, the Old School Baptist preachers study the Bible more, and understand the gospel better, than any other class of preachers.

You ask me to come forward and show you a more excellent way, if yours is not right, for you must labor in some way. I have no way of my own to show you. Paul says charity is the more excellent way — the love of God in Jesus, who is the way, the life, and the truth. If one come, bringing not this gospel, neither receive him into your house nor bid him God-speed. Let each one walk worthy of the high vocation wherewith he is called, in all meekness and long-suffering, forgiveness and brotherly love. As for labor, there is plenty of that in the good old way, but it is neither easy nor fashionable. One should always abound in the work of the Lord, seeing his labor is not in vain, and he can have as much hard service with an old enemy — the flesh — which is never ashamed of worrying him, but which he is daily to deny, as any poor saint can desire. There are always hungry sheep to be fed, but the Lord saves us from the impossible task of teaching one another to know the Lord in the new covenant: "For they shall not teach every man his neighbor, saying, know the Lord, for all shall know me, from the least unto the greatest." One can find the heathen here all around him; but what good will preaching to dead men do, unless the Lord goes with him? But does the Lord go with him unless he sends him, and he goes in his name? and how can he go in the Lord's name, and in the name of some other? The Lord alone leads Jacob, and no strange god is found with him.

The Lord has long ago redeemed his sheep, paid the price down, not a corruptible one either, such as silver and gold, but his precious blood, and he will not leave a hoof behind. He just as much brings the last stone as the first in this building, and not by human might, but by his Spirit, nor will he be debtor to man. No hurried zeal of Jehu hastens him — no wanderings of Jonah hinder him. He who is God, seeing the end from the beginning, will do all his pleasure,

casting down every high thing that exalts itself, and raising the beggar from the dunghill to the throne; his righteousness will be brought to the noonday light in taking vengeance on man's inventions, and his grace be glorious in saving those that wait on him, such as hope in his mercy, and call on his name. Oh, who will not fear before God, for marvelous are his works, and just and true are his ways who is king of saints!

I have, in this way, been trying to answer your inquiry, by giving you the impressions that were made on my mind, endeavoring to condense the account as much as possible, to express my views. A few years ago these views took such possession of my mind that I could not preach any other doctrine. But many of the people I was with objected, some saying there was a disproportionate quantity of election; others said let us have more works; and if this is true, God is unjust; while others said it was a dangerous doctrine and I had better go to the Hard Shells. There was confusion; like the number of the **Recorder** in which your inquiry appears, wherein one lauds Andrew Fuller as the standard, while another charges him with defection from the truth. Your Northern Baptists were your enemies, and you opposed to them in the sense that there was poor fellowship. There was, it seemed to me, striving for honor among you; there was an improper resort to the world for its good will, and many other evils I felt to be inconsistent with Christ's church. I could not endorse your pet measures, and your denomination did not love the doctrine that was dear to me. Honesty required me to leave. I would not advise any man to leave you who believes you are right.

While you had disorder, it seemed to me that the Lord's church was one, abiding steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and walking blameless in the ordinances of the Lord's house, not resorting to the artifices of men, the fascinations of wealth, the power of learning, nor any device to swell their numbers, but dwelling to themselves, separate from the nations, were content to heartily receive in their fellowship all poor sinners whom the Lord sent them. The Old School Baptist seemed to be that people, and I love them, but did not like to make a change, nor did I feel worthy to go to them. There were many people among you I loved as Christians, and I hated to wound the feelings of any one by leaving them; but the Bible said pointedly to me, come out of Babylon. "Be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean, and I will receive you." Whom should I obey, God or man? No one knows the grief I felt for years. I thought of going to an unknown country and there offering myself to them, to avoid the thing of which you are complaining. But at length an open door is given me, and I am made willing in the face of all reproach to go where I have found gospel peace, rest, and fellowship worth more than all the world. Whenever any of your people become dissatisfied with the burdens and confusion of your denomination, and wish to unite with a people that love the doctrine of grace in love and deed, feeling that nothing else can save them, and spurning everything else as wicked, desiring baptism at the hands of those who have kept the ordinances as the apostles delivered them, let them come out and take Christ's yoke and they will find rest to their souls.

It is not my desire to needlessly offend any, and if this should be of any true service, I am willing to suffer the reproach that will follow upon its publication.

Respectfully yours to serve,
P. D. Gold

(Continued next month)

SHALL WE KNOW EACH OTHER?

There has been much speculation on the subject of knowing each other in heaven; and various opinions have been expressed. When I was young I heard

a lady ask a brother if he believed we would know each other there. When he said he did not, she asked how then could it be heaven. He said, "If when you get there, you should find some of your dear ones not there, would that be heaven?"

I do not remember having thought much about this before, but just then I seemed to see that where Jesus is, is heaven. We realize this in our experience, for when we feel His presence we get a little foretaste of heavenly joy; and these little seasons are so sweet: so different from anything we have ever felt of worldly joys, that they seem to make us desire to be drawn closer.

All earthly joys vanish, they are as nothing; and we forget our dearest ones in the flesh. Hidden things belong to God, and revealed things to us; so it is time and word wasted to be contentious as to whether we will know there as we know here. When we leave this life, we leave all things pertaining to this life and world. Family relations belong to this life — to the flesh, and have no place in heaven. Just because we love them in this world as much as it is possible to love, even to making an idol of one in the flesh, it all passes from our lives when we leave this flesh.

We will know as we are known. How is this? We know God in the Spirit, and we know his people the same way. We know no one as father, mother, brother or sister, in the flesh, in the church: we know as God's children, as brethren.

We have seasons of trials, and sorrows — many times, it seems, more than we can bear — and it seems that Jesus is clean gone forever. What more torment can we feel than this? But let Him come to us and lift us up! What better heaven could we want in this world? He is everything to us. When we have him, we have all we could ever want; except the ability to praise him as we desire. And this we can never do in this world: as long as we live in this veil through which we see darkly.

This is just a suggestion; may someone write much better upon the subject.

Geo. W. Jackson
632 Connally Dr.
East Point, Ga.

ABRAHAM'S SEED

God promised Abraham that his seed would become as the stars of the heavens and as the sands of the sea. But how shall this innumerable host spring from one man? It is done by the mighty works of God in his mighty way of doing things.

The seed which Abraham sowed was that which was brought forth in his children. He had many children, but there was only one good seed among all the seed of Abraham's children; and that seed was the only seed that had any righteousness, so that the promised seed was called Isaac. The promise comes down to Isaac, and God gave him the same promise that he gave Abraham; and so to Jacob. So Abraham's posterity became larger and larger as time went on. As I understand the Bible on these things all his posterity were the children of Abraham, both the good and the bad, and they grew into many nations, for number as the stars or the sand of the sea. So we see that God carried out his promise in the working of his mighty power, for he works and none can hinder; he hinders and none can work.

Now we will look at Jacob and Esau, Isaac's seed. God said that he loved Jacob and hated Esau. Why did God hate Esau? He was the seed of Abraham as well as was Jacob. Neither of these two had done good or evil for they had not yet been born. Why did God hate one and love the other? It was because he chose one of them according to his purpose, and that his purpose according to election might stand. In the 9th chapter of Romans we find also, "Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called."

So there is a great difference in the children. And the question is answered, to my mind, in the following verse, "That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." And it is written that all Israel shall be saved. I believe that all Israel spoken of here are those children of promise who were chosen in Christ before the world began, and they are the ones that Christ died for, and arose for their justification.

Written by a poor sinner who desires your prayers.

W. C. Smith,
Marion, La.

"YOUR LIFE IS HID WITH CHRIST IN GOD"

Dearly beloved brethren in the Lord:

"Your life is hid with Christ in God." What a safe abiding and hiding place, to be with Christ, your elder Brother, thus to be heirs of God and joint heirs with your Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; your life is hid from all the snares and pitfalls of this world; hid from the evils and temptations of Satan, who is chained by the almighty power of God, until he can go so far and no farther, just as it was with Job. He could not take his life; it was hid with Christ in God. What a blessing to be with Christ; there is a sweetness in this relationship which can not be put in words, but those who have been with Him and learned of Him know what it is to have a hiding place where none but the redeemed of the Lord can go.

"Hid with Christ in God." My dear ones, just stop and think of the wonderful hiding place, "in God." What more could you desire, where else could you go; "If God be for us who can be against us?" You are now hid with Christ in God, and after death it is still with Him in paradise. Many promises are left on record for the comfort and consolation of those that are "hid with Christ in God." All that were given to Him by the Father are made willing to come seeking a hiding place and a refuge, and "all that come unto Him, he will in no wise cast out," but will be an ever present help in time of trouble, for in Him we live and move and have our being.

We are told that "great is the mystery of Godliness"; it is a mystery that your life is hid with Christ in God, nevertheless it is true, and may the dear Lord reveal this truth to us all with all of its beauty and comfort. When the cares of this world seem to be more than you can endure, Jesus Christ is our hiding place, a covert from the tempest, a resting place for the weary and heavy laden who have come seeking a place of rest, which was prepared for those that come by commandment to, "Seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you"; and he that comes knocking or seeking, shall not be turned away. The Lord knoweth the way that I take;

"The steps that I tread and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will."

Known unto God are all his works; and "we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." What is ordained of God shall come to pass at his own appointed time. All the chosen, the elect of God, were "created in Christ Jesus"; they are "hid with Christ in God"; and none is able to pluck them out of the Father's hand, for they are kept by the power of an alwise God.

What is it to be "with Christ in God?" It can not be told in words, but it is felt in the heart when the old stony heart has been taken away and they have been given a heart of flesh; it is then they are made willing to walk in his statutes and keep his commandments. "They shall be my people and I will be their God," and it is by the Spirit of God dwelling in their hearts that they are made willing in the day of his power, willing to be submissive and reconciled,

ready to declare that, "I know that my Redeemer liveth"; and that, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him": trust him to give me the blessed assurance that my life is "hid with Christ in God."

Oh that words could express the sweetness, the maganimity, the solemn and sacred love of the truth hidden in those words! Such a safety of peace and rest can not be understood by the carnal mind, but when the dear Redeemer opens our heart of understanding we can bask in his never dying love, and know of a surety that we have a hiding place from all the cares of this world; a haven of rest that is everlasting, and will not perish with the using.

We are thankful that these things have been hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes, because it seemed good in the sight of God, who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast, saying, "I will do all my pleasure." He does according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, "What doest thou?" Could those who are "hid with Christ" deny the power of the great "I am?" Never, if they are kept by the grace of God, but if left to their own carnal nature, their faith becomes smaller than a grain of mustard seed, then they are made to cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" "Remember me, O Lord, once again with the joy that was in my bosom when first I tasted the goodness and mercy of God. Restore unto me, O Lord, if it be thy will, the sweetness of thy first love, make me to know that my 'life is hid with Christ in thee', knowing of a truth that if it is, no harm can befall, regardless of what man may say or do".

Could one who has ever tasted the goodness and mercy of God, become so destitute of spiritual knowledge until reading is just a repetition of words, with no understanding? Could such a life be "hid with Christ in God", when

"If I pray or hear or read,
Sin is mixed with all I do,
You that love the Lord indeed
Tell me is it thus with you?"

How does one know they really love the Lord indeed? "We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren". Do we love them in deed and in truth? So much of this sounds like a doubting Thomas, that I must beg, Dear Lord help thou my unbelief, and make me to say, as Thomas did, "My Lord and my God". He did not need to put his hand in the pierced side or touch the nail prints in the hands of the dear Redeemer.

O for a stronger faith
To look within the vail;
To credit what my Saviour saith,
Whose words can never fail.

Yet, by faith, I know that all the elect, the redeemed of God, were chosen in Christ before the world began; this blessed truth I know, and it is of great comfort to know it. If I were as sure of my own salvation as I am of the truth of salvation by grace, I would not be such a doubting one. But

'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his or am I not?

Is my life hid with Christ in God? If it is, all praise, honor, and glory belongs to God. Of one thing we may be sure, if the dear Lord has ever begun a good work in the heart of a poor sinner, he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, for, "your life is hid with Christ in God"; and your affections will be on things above, not on things of the earth, for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Your heavenly Father knoweth what you have need of before you even ask or think. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness", and whatsoever you have need of shall be given unto you.

Consider the lilies, the dear Lord hath clothed them in all their beauty. The hairs of your head are numbered; not a sparrow can fall without the Lord. Are you not of more value than many sparrows? Oh, ye of little faith, give heed unto the watchcare of your dear Redeemer who is your beloved sovereign

Protector, "unseen, yet forever at hand". He has promised to be with thee through the fire and through the waters; the rivers shall not overflow thee, for "I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine". "I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour". "Fear not, for I am with thee".

These are precious words of comfort and edification to those that are "hid with Christ in God". Can you not see the sweetness of being with the One you love because he first loved you and gave his life that you might have eternal life? Dear Lord, give a hearing ear, eyes to see, and a heart to understand the beauty of being one with Christ, for only those can know the divine fellowship and love of such a relationship, if it be thy will to reveal it to them by the Holy Spirit of thy quickening love.

Written by one who hopes her "life is hid with Christ in God."

Elsie Loeffel
1158 Falls Terrace
Union, N. J.

FAMILIAR WITH SIGNS SINCE A CHILD

Abilene, Texas
August 17, 1960

Elder John D. Wood,
c/o Signs of the Times, Inc.

Dear Brother Wood:

It must be that I failed to get my remittance in, on time and thus I failed to receive the August issue, will you kindly mail same, and oblige. I have been familiar with the Signs ever since a child, and all the days of my life I have looked upon it as being next to the Bible. May it be God's will to ever keep it that way, and may it be here at the end of time. When we read a daily paper we know that we are going to read some News, Sports, Society, Comics, and what have you. But when I pick up a religious paper I don't want to read about anything but the Theme of Salvation and the Travel of God's Chosen ones. Some writers cannot write unless they write on some hobby or pet subject, they have to choose just anything but the Theme of Salvation. I know that the Old Baptist are getting fewer in number each day, but I don't believe ever before in their history was there a greater desire for the Sincere Milk, than there is today, and I have been amongst them all the days of my life.

As a whole I have enjoyed the Signs very much of late, and particular the Voices of the Past and Elder Ruston's articles; it seems as though he gets better all the time. I have read after him for many years and I never read an article or letter of his that I didn't like, they are always solid and to the point. I have also enjoyed all the reprints, and I am going to make a request later on.

The reprint of the Circular Letter, written by Sister Minerva Dunlap, page 84, April issue, was very timely. I have read many a Circular Letter and I had already thought before I came to your foot-note that it was as good or better than any I ever read.

The reprint on Predestination, by Elder J. B. Bowden, deceased, in the June issue, was very, very good; I believe as good as I ever heard on the subject. I had known this brother in person and had heard him preach, and of course I read after him for years and years.

Now then back in April and May issues, of the year 1940, Brother Leo V. Bagley of Macon, Georgia, had an article written which I would like to see in reprint very much. Before my two major heart attacks, I was preparing an article on this passage of Scripture. But while I was bed-ridden I reviewed the Signs and came across this article, which far exceeds anything I could say or write. The main reason I was going to write on it was because I had heard the word-

ing abused all the days of my life, and never did hear an Old Baptist talk on same. You hear it quoted and see it on the hi-ways and by-ways everywhere." "The wages of sin is death." To be effectual for them they leave off this all important little three letter word, "FOR"; for they knoweth not why it is there. As a rule they just leave the balance of the text off, for they come to another little three letter word, "BUT" that they cannot digest or handle. It is impossible for them to see that it is a complete reversal of what has been said. All of which if they knew in part they would know that death comes before life.

May you and your entire staff stand firm and bring us the Signs as it is for many years to come. May all Covenant Blessings be to each of you.

Humbly submitted,
Charles B. Berry

"BETTER A CRUMB FROM THE MASTER'S TABLE . . ."

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

I have just come from Brother and Sister Merigold's, where I spent most of the day. As I felt when I arrived in Jefferson Thursday night, how good God is to me to permit me to go to the meetings I love, and to mingle with the children of His kingdom. How good of Him to send you safely so far, to minister to his little ones whose hearts were longing to hear exactly what you told them: that no one can hear the gospel until his ears are opened by the power of God; that no one can see the Holy City, the power of salvation, the glory of God, unless his eyes are opened by God Almighty; and that this hearing and sight can be given without the aid of schools, ministers, or Bible. The physically blind and deaf might know every precept of His word, and, as you said, a stone could be turned into a witness of His power, if He so chose.

I believe this, for I have felt the power of God, and I know it is beyond the comprehension of man's mind. What do the riches and honors of this world amount to when compared to the God-given ability to understand and enjoy the proclaiming of the gospel? Better a crumb from the Master's table than a feast at the banquets of the world! And it is rated as foolishness with the world.

I have often thought, what a power it must take to turn a man from the persuits of the natural mind, to the ministry among a despised and insignificant people. But this ministry is the greatest office one can hold in this earth; and is an office, I believe, that cannot be refused: The same power that bestows the office, constrains the subject to accept, and also gives the power to perform. Why should I be chosen as one of those who enjoy hearing this gospel? and why should I be received in love and fellowship? I am not fit to sit among you, or to write or speak His name; and how can he grant me such comfort and rejoicing as I experienced during the preaching of these past three days, and during the mingling together of the brethren. Thank you from my heart for those glorious truths you told us; which we knew, which we wanted to hear again, and which God gave you the strength and ability to tell.

With love and sweet fellowship from your sister, I hope, though as unworthy as one could be.

Minerva F. Dunlap

(The meeting referred to by Sister Dunlap was the Maine Association, held at Whitefield, Maine. These brethren are few in number now, but they are greatly blessed to keep up their meetings when they can, and their association each year. Elder Arthur Warren, of Berlin, Maryland, is their pastor.

It is good to behold their love and fellowship, and their God-given faith; and to know that when men and women are taught of the Lord, they love the

theme of salvation by grace, and rejoice when they are blessed to sit under the sound of the Gospel, when their pure minds are stirred up in remembrance of the Lord's promises to them; and their own inmost feelings and experiences give assurance and comfort that the things spoken are true: And, best of all, assured that they have a part in the glorious things of the gospel of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." (Psalms 89:15) — J. D. W.)

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EDITORIAL

"Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether." (S. S. 2:17)

"Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense." (S. S. 4:6)

If your heart is anxious and your soul is cast down within you, come hither and let us take a stroll in the garden of the Lord. In all the descriptions of the Church, and all her longings after Christ, and all his love making to her, there is not a place in it all that equals the soul searching journeys in the garden.

Regardless of how much slang and criticism is tossed at God's dear people, they are a praying Church. The prayer of Solomon, as well as the prayers of the ancient saints, graces the pages of the Old Testament, but how resplendent in beauty the petitions of God's peo-

ple become after Pentecost. God's grace poured into the hearts and minds and souls of his people does not make them fat and haughty and indolent. Prayer is never made to God unless accompanied by a confession of our faults. Those without sin will never be found at a throne of grace, although they make, as did the Pharisee, a right good informing talk to God. The Bible does not teach it to me; it is not in my experience, that grace makes God's people sin, that it puts them in a position to merit rebuke, that they soon forget the old paths, the old landmarks, the old true and tried way. (Isa. 35:8).

How precious are the words *love* and *grace*. One will never have love bestowed upon him, without grace also. The love flows out from the Godhead, being founded in the eternal purpose of God; grace is given only to those thus loved of God. This grace is not given purposelessly, nor is it given needlessly, nor is it given as an experiment. It is given to console the recipient; to cause them to walk in right paths while in this vale dwelling. When it is given to one there is an immediate difference in the way they walk and talk. This difference is noted by two peoples; to one, it makes them delightful people to associate with, each enjoying the way that the other has been led; to the other, they appear strange, melancholy, inconsistent. Grace makes the children of God feel that they are strange; it produces in them such a frame of mind that they are made to realize how diverse they are to their fellow man; it will even make them realize that they are not a fit companion to one that has not been thus dealt with. This grace will make us strange, and make us do strange things, and make our ways strange. It does not make one boastful; it does not make one think himself sufficient; it does not make one able to go alone, but rather it does everything differently. One of the greatest feats of grace is in making a recipient see how dependent he is.

"Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether." Behold the Church of God, dear reader: behold the little ones as they come alone or in an assembly to pray; behold the Bride, as she is led to view life without her Husband. The breaking of day is as sure as all creation; the likelihood of shadows ceasing is as remote as God ceasing to be. These are things that have never failed, and they will never fail while time continues (Gen. 8:22). How faith launches out, as she contemplates his timely care and vigilance. Her prayer is not a temporal passing need, soon to be overcome by her adroitness, but it is a need that she visualizes as being as lasting as her stay on the dismal shores of time. She is brought to pray, "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." (Psa. 35:3).

This need of the lasting turning of Jesus is found in the experience of every law-burdened sinner. The writing of the law in the heart (Pro. 3:3;2 Cor. 3:3) foreshadows better things to come. The law is not, as is often quoted, a schoolmaster *to bring us to Christ*, but it is our schoolmaster to Christ. The light of the moon is one, the light of the sun is another, yet, all of the light of the moon comes from the sun. The shadows of the moon, how weird, how eerie, how grotesque, how wearisome, how exhausted they cause us to become, and yet they point. *They point!* Mark that thought down, dear reader. They point in only one direction; they point to only One Saviour! The putting into the mind and the writing in the heart of the law is followed by teaching. This is a school that has not ever graduated a student; this teaching continues while mortal life exists. This teaching produces prayer, for only in this teaching is need caused to spring up.

Lord, leave us not where all these shadows are; leave us not in the lower story of thy ark alone with the fleeting dim shadows; leave us not in our weakness to travel in the mountains of deep ravines. Ah, dear reader, did you hear

this bride as she prayed? Has the Spirit made supplications for you in like manner with groanings that can not be uttered? (Rom. 8:26) Talk to me about that any of my salvation is in my own hands. Away with such childish talk. (I Cor. 13:11) I am not able to scale one mountain alone, and neither is the bride of Christ. How we need Him the long night of the law's domain. Be our Saviour, O Lord, until the day breaks; until the day of the Lord shall burst in upon our soul in all its regal splendor; be thou unto us a young roe or hart upon the mountains. How many of the mountains? My God, my God, what questions blind unbelief will ask. Who said anything about a limitation on the number of mountains that she needed him? Who has said anything about having *some* ability to scale *some* of the mountains alone? The concubines talk this way, but the dove, the love of the Lord needs saving all the way; she needs him that is young with an earliness of the morning to be her Saviour on all the mountains. (2 Sam. 23:4; Hos. 6:3; Heb. 11:38)

What a delightful posture when this Church is before the throne of grace. Let us sing

"Lord, how delightful 'tis to see
A whole assembly worship thee
At once they sing, at once they pray,
They hear of heaven, and learn the way."

And this being at this throne is because of the lack in them. No prayer has ever left the hearts and lips of God's people bound for glory, save it has been wrought in the heart by the operation of the Spirit. This operation will never be performed with a lot of debris left from the operation of Satan in the way; it will never be performed by co-operation of the flesh; it will never be dependent on the co-ordination of human faculties. This bride, this Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, is commanded to come boldly to the throne of grace. This is God's throne of grace raised and exalted for those that need mercy, for those that need help. All, all, that are comamnded are those that need mercy and that need help. Whoever heard of deserved mercy? Well, now, methinks that I hear right much about it, but I am free to admit that it is not the spirit of supplications which is bestowed on the house of David, upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem. (Zech. 12:10) Whoever heard of the able in body seeking a doctor? Who can find one account of a character that came to Christ who was not in dire need? Since the first apearing of Jesus he has been precious to her, she has felt the need more and more of his presence. Feeling her need of mercy, feeling her need of help, where do you suppose she has been frequenting? The same place that you, dear reader, have often been gathered, to wit, a throne of grace.

"Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense." Ah, yes, linger long here in this holy place. It is indeed a holy place when a Christian is praying. What a precious sound to the ears of the Redeemer as his bride pours forth her soul in supplication to him for mercy and for help. Then how exquisitely sweet it is when the answer of prayer comes. What a holy place it is when Jesus speaks to the poor needy sinner; how delightful to the ear when heaven answers earth! He now takes up her supplication and he answers it in as broad terms as she has asked. She had seen and felt the end of all her strength and righteousness; she had implored him to be her help in all the mountains, for all time to come. Here is being unfolded the prayer answering of God. (Mat. 7:7, 11; 21:22; John 14:13, 14: I John 5:14, 15) Here is being made manifest the declaration of God towards his people, to wit, "They shall call and I will answer." (Job 14:15; Psa. 91:15)

I will be your Youth of the morning, the bright and morning Star, until the day breaks, I will be your Answer until the shadows all flee away. But tarry a

little longer, little one. The best wine is yet to come. I will be your Answer when all the law night is over and gone and the dawning of the gospel Day breaks in all its sweetness on a shore that has been besieged by law forces. I will be the onslaught of all those weird and grotesque shadows, all those doctors and lawyers that have set up all the law night harassing the poor, seeking to get all they have, and to apply remedies that never could cure a sin-sick soul. I will be the Answer when all the shadows flee from my approaching Light. Ah, yes, my soul, it is Jesus that speaks. He is resting in his love, he is joying over his bride. (Zeph. 3:17)

His satisfaction in the travail of his soul (Isa 53:11), will carry him to the mountain. Please pause, dear reader, and refresh the soul upon your petition that we were reviewing a little gone. Do you remember that you prayed to him to be your Saviour on all mountains? Now, as he answers, he assures you that he will be that to you. To the mountain, to the mountain, is his watchword and assurance to you. He remembers, and he can never forget, the mountain of Jehovah-jireh, where the wine was mingled with myrrh for Abraham as he offered (in type) Isaac. How bitter it was, and yet what sweetness as he viewed the resurrection of him from the dead. That "the Lord will provide" has been the satisfaction of He who is the first born among many brethren, and of all the children of God. This "Moriah" will be the dwelling place and the meeting place of the Saviour and his bride, and all of her inquiries and supplications will be answered by an allusion to the mountain. What soul searchings she will have as he takes her to that mountain of myrrh, for how copious did that myrrh flow when the body of the tree was cut, and the riven side of the Lord caused the sweet dripping myrrh to perfume the whole church.

This Saviour will look back to the mountain, Jehovah-jireh, and he will look forward to the hill of frankincense. This frankincense, like myrrh, also flowed by incisions being made in the tree. How fitting, O poor soul, that Jesus is looking to the hill where frankincense flowed. Frankincense is used, primarily, to fumigate and to perfume. All of the cleansing for poor sinners come from the hill of frankincense, where arose the perfume that gives such a sweet smelling fragrance to the lily of the Valley. As Aaron put incense upon the fire of the altar, making an atonement for Israel, even so did Christ, as the Offerer and the Offering, come upon the altar of God's consuming wrath, endure the fiery vengeance of a sin hating God, and then in a cloud rise into the heavens, there to always answer prayer by saying, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense, for I drink the bitter mixed drink of wine and myrrh for you, thus giving you the pure myrrh for your drink, and the frankincense from the hill of Calvary for the washing and fumigation, for the perfuming and odorizing of the Church of God.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE CHILDREN'S FOOTPRINTS

Dear Brother Beebe: — I recently received a letter from an esteemed brother, in which occurs the following language: "Dear brother, my sheet is now full, and I have said nothing worth your trouble to read; and if you think that you discover any of the footprints of a child of God in all I have said, when you write again (which I desire you soon) tell me where they are, for I am still a great mystery to myself." I have felt like offering some thoughts upon these footprints, which are seen along the way over which the believer travels in his earthly pilgrimage.

It is impossible for him to see these "marks by the wayside," only as the light of God shines in his heart and

upon the way, for there are times when he is led into the dense forest, through the dreary wilderness, and the thick gloom of distress and darkness, where the howling of beasts is heard as "night sets in upon him," and he feels himself entirely forsaken and lost. Yet whether in the wilderness, in the valley, or upon the mountain, as the light of God falls here and there upon him and over the way, he sees the footprints of those who have passed on before him, who have crossed the river telling the triumphs of their King, and are resting forever in the presence of their God.

He finds the "Slough of Despond," and "Doubting Castle" with its "Giant Despair," then comes the "Delectable Mountains," and in the dim distance he occasionally sees the pearly gates of the New Jerusalem, while the voice of eternal victory as the echo of a distant melody falls upon his ears. The traveler may come into a dark place, where for the time he feels entirely alone in his experience; none have ever been there before him, his is a "peculiar case," some "strange thing has happened unto him," "I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life to take it away." But after a while, in the dim shadows of returning light, he beholds, it may be, a solitary track, and what joy and gladness springs up in his heart, as in the light of returning day he sees everywhere around him the footprints of fellow-pilgrims who have gone on before him.

When in thick darkness, a lonely wanderer in "a solitary way," how refreshing, encouraging and with what comfort and joy does he receive a promise sent from God. It comes as a footprint in the sands, a ray of bright light in the darkness of midnight, a cup of cold water from the clear, crystal river, to cheer the weary, thirsty soul.

But I had some thoughts of presenting from the written word the experience of holy men of God who have passed on before us, to present their experience as footprints in the pilgrim's way, that we through a corresponding experience may have comfort and hope. The word contains the measuring rod of a gospel experience, and that experience which does not correspond with the word is evidently false, and worse than none. A great number of the religionists of the day will tell you in substance: "I found that God had done part of the work, and I had to do the rest, so from our united efforts I was able to get out of the pit." We look into the word and find that "Salvation is by grace." "He brought me up also out of a horrible pit." We lay this rule down on the aforementioned experience, and it proves that the experience will not do at all, there is too much of it; and when we come to test it in the crucible, the word of God, we find that it is not composed of the proper material. — See Rom. xi. 6. These people talk about going as far as we do, and "a little further, too." The Mohammedan comes as near the truth as that. Says he, "There is but one God." This much will do; but then he goes further, and says, "Mohammed is his apostle." The modern Pharisee will talk about salvation by grace, and then talk of "salvation by works, too." He will tell us of the "sovereignty of God," and then talks of the "free agency of man." Is not this a "linsey-woolsey" doctrine? The religious theory of these people is something like the heathen god, Dagon, with a head like a man, and a tail like a fish.

But I may be digressing. I spoke of the experience of brethren in other days as "footprints" in the way. We hear them complain of feeling destitute, and poor in spiritual things, and tell of their trials and darkness, with now and then seasons of comfort, which come as refreshing showers from heaven, and as the dew "that descended upon the mountains of Zion." How truly and clearly does this present to us the experience of the believer today. His beloved is like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains. For a moment it appears to view, and is again lost sight of in the surrounding forest. Yet the faint view, the momentary sight which the believer has of that lovely form, is sufficient and

more than compensates him for the earnest seeking, the anxious watching, the toils and trials of the way. Everywhere in the word of our God is found the experience of his people. Patriarchs, prophets and apostles have spoken upon this subject with an unerring testimony. Let us consider some of these marks of eternal life, and diligently inquire whether or not there is any correspondence thereto in our own experience.

"But I am poor and needy." — Psa. lxx. 5. "O that it were with me as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness." — Job xxix. 2, 3. "I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath. He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light." — Lam. iii. 1, 2. "From the uttermost parts of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous. But I said, My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me! the treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously." — Isa. xxiv. 16. "For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" — Rom. vii. 18, 19, 24. "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go, and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." — Ruth i. 16. "Behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." — Judges vi. 15. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." — 1 John iii. 14. "All these things are against me." — Gen. xlii. 36. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." — James i. 12. "Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" — Psa. lxxvii. 9. "O Lord, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear? even cry unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save?" — Hab. i. 2. "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." — Psalm xlii. 1. "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God." — Psalm lxxxiv. 2. "Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." — Psalm xlii. 11.

I have quoted from the word an experience of poverty of mind, of great darkness and trial, and a calm, abiding hope in God for deliverance, with a heart united to his people in the strongest of ties. Let me pause and ask the reader here, Have you ever felt any of these things? Do these strong declarations from persons of undoubtful experience find an echo in your own? Have you felt with the psalmist that you were "poor and needy," to cry with Isaiah, "My leanness, my leanness," and to feel with Gideon that you were the least in your "Father's house?" Have you ever felt to cry out with Jeremiah, "I am the man that hath seen affliction;" and with the psalmist, "Hath God forgotten to be gracious?" to realize with Paul a perfect knowledge that in your flesh "dwells no good thing," and how to perform that which is good you "find not;" on the contrary, the good that you would you "do not," but the evil which you "would not," that you do? Has that bitter, agonizing cry of Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" ever been felt in your experience? Yet in the midst of all this, while sensibly realizing your unworthiness of their fellowship and esteem, can you lift your hands toward the people of God, and in your heart imploringly cry with Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee?"

I am confident that there is not a

child of God under the broad canopy of heaven whose heart has been opened to receive and understand his truth, but who has felt the power of these strong, expressive declarations. I have quoted but a few of the many in the word of God. I might continue to quote until the columns of the Signs were entirely filled, and still there would be many more. In all of this experience we read our own.

But the quotations that I have made present seasons of severe trial and great darkness; as before stated we find this experience interspersed with moments of comfort and great joy. We might quote from the word declaratious of this nature strong and expressive, and as applicable to Christian experience as those already made. We might speak of the psalmist, who filled with exceeding joy could call upon his soul to "bless the Lord," and all that is within him to "bless his holy name;" of Paul, who, "caught up to the third heaven," "heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter;" of Jacob, who, wrapt in holy vision, beheld the ladder upon which the angels of God were ascending and descending, and who was made to exclaim, "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." We might speak of the spouse in the "Song of Solomon," who sat down under the shadow of her beloved with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to her taste, who was brought to the royal banqueting-house of her God, and "his banner over me was love;" we might speak of that people to whom Peter writes, "who rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory;" and again come to the psalmist, and hear him exclaim with rapturous joy, "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness."

We might continue to quote, and yet there would be more. In our travel we experience the joys as well as the sorrows. There are moments of exceeding joy which stand out as bright spots in the dark past, oases upon a dreary desert, seasons of refreshing from the presence of our God. The things of which I write are footprints along the way over which we travel onward and upward to a higher and nobler life. They follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. They may become faint when the way is dark and dreary, but the Lord renews their strength, and they press on with unabated zeal.

"Through flames and floods, if Jesus lead,
I'll follow where he goes."

"Though the outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." We trace them on as strangers and fellow-pilgrims, hated by the world, "everywhere spoken against," persecuted unto prison and unto death. But the walls of salvation are around them, the banner of love over them, and the everlasting arms underneath. Time, the great book upon whose pages are written the irrevocable decrees of the unchangeable God, unfolds his purposes before us, each in its appointed time.

"Each opening leaf, and every stroke,
Fulfills some deep design."

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." The sands of time are swiftly passing away, and though thousands of years may be to come, yet but a few more days, months or years at most remain for us. The bounds of our habitation are appointed that we cannot pass. Every trial is measured by the rod of his love, and all of our times are in his hands. We can securely rest in this truth. The prospect of final deliverance from this "bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God," animates us with heavenly joy, "while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen." Then may the Lord, if it be his will, guide us through all our changes, and at last receive us into endless rest, in the glory of that city to which the footprints of the pilgrims are leading. In the unclouded realms of perpetual glory, where

"The saints of all ages in harmony meet,
Their Savior and brethren transported to greet;
While the anthems of rapture unceasingly roll,
And the smile of the Lord is the feast of the soul."

Yours in gospel fellowship,
Wm. M. Smoot
Occoquan, Va.

(The above is re-printed from the April 1, 1877, Signs.)

OBITUARIES

JOAB W. TOWLER

Joab W. Towler, of near Chatham, Virginia, died at his home on December 31, 1959, at the age of eighty-seven. He was the son of Joseph T. and Mary C. Towler. He spent his entire life as a farmer, the work that he loved, until his retirement in 1951.

Brother Towler was a faithful and loyal member of Gallilee Primitive Baptist Church, and served as Clerk for many years until his death. He was feeble and weak for over a year, but was able to be up and dress himself, as he had hoped he would be; and the Lord was good to him and granted him his wish. He suffered from a weak heart and hardening of the arteries.

Her funeral was held at the Hollywood Baptist Church, and burial was in the church cemetery by his wife.

Written by his daughter,
Mrs. Lorene T. Reynolds

TO CORRECT AN ERROR, please note that the date of Sister Mattie Parcell's death (whose obituary was published in the September issue) should have read April 7, 1960, instead of April 7, 1940.

ELDER CLARENCE EMMITT TURNER

Elder Clarence Emmitt Turner was born Feb. 1, 1889, in Cook County, Texas, and departed this world July 3, 1960, in Wichita Falls, Texas, at the age of 71 years.

Brother Turner was ordained to the ministry May 13, 1939, at Little Flock Church of Altus, Okla., where he pastored with the late Elder W. N. Green for many years. The Presbytery consisted of Elders W. N. Green, Altus, Okla., and J. C. Sikes, Sulphur Bluff, Texas; and Deacons J. L. Word, S. H. Houk, and J. A. Dunson, who recognized the treasure stored in this man and released him that he might be heard where ever he was called.

Elder Turner was pastor of the Sardis Baptist Church in Amarillo, Texas, where he was blessed with a very great gift, and fed the little ones faithfully and in truth. He never tired of talking of the grace and power of God, and preached with a heart-felt demonstration of the divine Power. All his hope was in a crucified Savior, and he shunned and despised any other doctrine.

The writer was never privileged to hear this great calling in this man, but what little contact I had with him, a love sprang up as to his fulfillment of his duties and his love for the saints.

The writer was privileged to preside at his funeral, and with God's guidance was led to the 12th chapter, 1st verse of Corinthians, and hopes some comfort was given to the ones left behind. We never give praise to any man, but to the spiritual gifts which God hath bestowed in the hearts. This Elder was profoundly gifted and very learned in the holy testimonies, so we praise God that He saw fit to take this vessel of clay and impart such knowledge; that he might guide, direct, and instruct; and reveal some of the deep mysteries of the holy testimonies unto the saints; these mysteries being unfolded by the revelation of the Holy Spirit; which knowledge is hidden from the world.

Elder Turner is survived by his wife, Mrs. Mary Elsie Turner, Amarillo, Texas; daughters Miss Joyce Turner, Amarillo, Texas; Mrs. C. J. Fitz, Clovis, N. M., and Mrs. J. W. Crawford, Amarillo, Texas; a son, Norval Turner, Amarillo, Texas; brothers George Turner and Arthur Turner, Branch, Arkansas; sister Mrs. Bonnie Braswell, Denison, Texas; and five grandchildren.

His sleeping remains were laid to rest in Memorial Park Cemetery in Amarillo, Texas, where he waits for the dawn of the resurrection morn when he will be raised, owned, and received into that upper and better kingdom where everlasting praise shall be alone due to the worthy name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

W. A. Winfrey

CORNELIA WILLIAMS TURNER

Sister Turner was born June 12, 1861; fulfilling her allotted purpose in time, being relieved of this joyful election March 19, 1960, to rest in waiting, fully adorned in the wedding garment, a gift of the expected Bridegroom. Her days here were numbered 98 years, 9 months, and 7 days. She was the widow of the late Elder William Green Turner. To this union nine children were born: the late Walter G. Turner, Roscoe Turner, Laura Barbour, Elder W. Elmon Turner, the late Elder Luther

W. Turner, Sister Nettie Turlington, the late Claudie Stewart, Elder C. Dewey Turner, and the late Jarvis E. Turner.

Our dearly beloved sister was given a mind to unite with Black River Primitive Baptist Church July 16, 1932, by baptism.

In precious memory of our mother, whom the dear Lord has seen fit to remove from our midst on March 19, 1960, and is now resting from all her labors and toil of this present world. Her works do follow her, because her works were most surely the works of God, the Heavenly Father, through the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. She was steadfast in her belief that it is the work of God that one is brought to believe on Him. Mother was faithful to every duty here on earth, esteeming others better than self; always ready and willing when health would permit, to deny self that she might comfort those who were sick or in need. She was ever thoughtful of her children, and her deep and abiding love reached those afar off, as well as those near her, even to her passing, to know about their welfare, hoping and praying that everything was well with them.

She was surely a faithful and beloved member and sister in Christ of Black River Primitive Baptist Church, of the Seven Mile Association. A precious branch of the vine has been cut loose from these earthly ties, and transplanted into that holy Kingdom of God, where all trials, afflictions, sorrows and heartaches are no more: in the morning of the resurrection to come forth in the likeness of our Saviour, and be forever satisfied in the fullness of His love.

We acknowledge with kind appreciation the many tokens of friends in our bereavement. Her absence is greatly felt with us, and not only with the children, but the vacant seat she has left in the church is not easily forgotten; but is yet a precious memory to those who knew and loved her. May we all bow in submission to the will of the Heavenly Father, who doeth all things well, and according to the counsel of His will.

One member of the family of Cornelia Williams Turner is speaking in a small way for all.

Elder C. Dewey Turner
her son and pastor of Black River Church

BROTHER GEORGE DAVIS

George L. Davis was born March 10, 1873, and departed this life July 4, 1960. He was married to Laura Freeman on August 18, 1897, at the home of her father, Ira Freeman. He, together with his wife, united with the White Oak Springs Primitive Baptist Church in the year 1916. They were baptized by Elder C. A. Davis. They moved their membership to Suggs Creek Primitive Baptist Church in February, 1939, where he remained a faithful member until his Heavenly Father called him from this time world.

Brother Davis delighted in having his brethren and sisters visit him in his home and talking of the goodness and mercies of our Lord. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone. He trusted in none other. Many times I have visited in his home and heard him express how unworthy and sinful he felt to be and how good the Lord had been to him.

He leaves his wife and a large family, together with a host of friends, to mourn his passing. We feel that our loss is his eternal gain. He will not only be missed in the home but will be greatly missed by the church, which he was so faithful to attend.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder Z. L. Rhue, Elder D. R. Pyrtle, and Elder D. A. O'Bryant at Suggs Creek Church, and burial was at White Oak Springs Cemetery.

May our Heavenly Father bless us to bow in humble submission to His righteous will.

RESOLVED, That a copy be kept on our records, one sent to the family, and one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the Church while in conference August 13, 1960.

Elder Z. L. Rhue, Moderator
Bertha R. Stuart, Church Clerk

ANNIE L. RAYMOND

Sister Annie L. Raymond, of Richmond, Maine, died of angina pectoris February 15, 1960. She was born in Boudoinham, Maine, July 24, 1887, the daughter of Eldridge and Sister Ella Buker Raymond.

Sister Annie was received into the fellowship of the Boudoinham Old School Baptist Church and baptized by Elder Dodson September 12, 1926. She remained a loyal and loving member to the end.

Sister Annie and her mother were for years hospitable entertainers of visitors at our associations, sparing no time or effort to make the brethren and friends welcome at their home in Boudoinham.

Funeral services were held in Richmond, Maine, February 18th, and the committal service at the grave was conducted by our pastor, Elder Arthur Warren, on April 23rd, when brethren and friends met at the cemetery.

M. F. Dunlap, Clerk
O. S. B. Church of Bowdoinham

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 128 DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1960 NO. 12

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12/60
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, meeting at Whitefield, Maine, September 2, 3, 4, 1960, sends greetings to the Churches and Associations with whom we correspond:

As we gather to spend these three days in the worship, we hope, of our Lord and Master, we feel to say with David of old, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." (Psalms 122:1) We realize that without a preparation of the heart and a working of the Holy Ghost in the soul of David, he would not have felt joy in going into the house of the Lord, neither would he have recognized the house. The love of God placed in his heart, not by works lest he should boast, but because it was the pleasure of the Father to make known unto him the riches of His Kingdom, constrained him to enter the house of God. We hope and trust that our hearts have been prepared by the same spirit and that we are drawn by the same power that drew David thousands of years ago to seek his brethren and to sit under the ministry of God's chosen ones as they proclaimed the riches of His kingdom.

We understand that the house of God does not signify a grand cathedral or a spired structure, where men are wont to assemble, but rather, that place, however humble, where the Spirit of the Lord has appeared to a poor soul and thus made the place sacred. One may be in the most misrable and dreary of lands, in a desert with no hope of reaching an oasis, weary and hungry and hopeless, when the vision comes to make the heart rejoice: Like Jacob, on his way from Beersheba to Haran, in a land where he found only stones to place under his head at night, dreaming of a ladder from earth to Heaven with angels ascending and descending, the Lord standing above and blessing him, awaking and realizing that the place was holy and calling it the house of God (Genesis 28:10-17), we, in our deepest despair, may be visited by angels and shown that God's love and mercy are with us and so feel that we are in His house. We can worship alone or with our brethren, but either way our words of worship at the altar cannot be expressed more beautifully than in the language of David — "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together; whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord." (Psalms 122:2, 3, 4) "Let my cry come near before thee, O Lord — give me understanding according to thy word. — My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes. My tongue shall speak of thy word; for all thy commandments are righteousness. Let thine hand help me; for I have chosen thy precepts. I have longed for thy salvation, O Lord; and thy law is my delight. Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and let thy judgments help me. I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments." (Psalms 119:169-176) "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be

satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple." (Psalms 65:4) We are glad when in our hearts we feel a desire to honor and praise His holy name and we hope we are led by the spirit to His courts. "As the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?" (Psalms 42:1, 2)

We are glad, also, to be able once more to hear the gospel preached by the ministers whom God has called, as we believe, to be the stewards of his mysteries, who come, as written of in Corinthians, giving no offence, approving themselves in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings: By pureness, by knowledge, by long suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned. By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left. (2 Corinthians 6:3-7) Having been tried and prepared in all these ways, they are able to instruct, to cheer, to comfort and to edify the sheep of their flocks who are experiencing those same distresses, stripes, imprisonments, tumults, labours, watchings and fastings. We are glad, as we enter the house of God, to know that He has raised up "able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (2 Corinthians 3:6), and to know that, like Philip in Samaria, they preach Christ. With Isaiah we can say of them: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth." (Isaiah 52:7)

In these turbulent times, with rumors of wars and threats of destruction so rampant, how comforting it is, and how glad we are, in this house of God, to hear these ministers affirm once more in no uncertain terms, that God reigns.

Minerva F. Dunlap

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, September 2, 3, 4, 1960, sends greetings to the churches and associations with which we correspond;

Dear Brethren: We are thankful to our Heavenly Father that he has made it possible for us to meet again in an association. Your correspondence is gladly received.

Elder Wood and Elder Warren preached wonderful sermons, giving all praise, honor and glory to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, whom we feel was in our midst. Jesus told Peter three times to feed his lambs and his sheep. We do not understand he meant natural food, but to feed God's children with spiritual food; as we were fed in this association.

When He is absent from us we are filled with doubts and fears, and, like John when he was imprisoned, have to be told again of all the things Jesus has done. But when He is present with us, we are filled with joy unspeakable, and feel as David in the twenty-third Psalm, "The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want."

Our association is small, but we hope we are part of that remnant which the Lord shall gather from all parts of the earth. (See Isaiah 11:11, 12.) Our strength is not of ourselves but of God, who doeth all things well according to his will, for our good and his glory. The Bible declares our Lord to be the supreme ruler of all the universe: If we fly to the uttermost parts of the world He is there; or if we make our bed in hell He is there. Hath He not power, righteousness and wisdom to do what seems good in his sight? "Let him that lacketh wisdom ask of God."

May the Lord forgive all that is amiss in the household of God, from the least

to the greatest. May He give us faith to lift up our eyes unto hills from whence cometh our help. All our help cometh from the Lord who made heaven and earth, and who shall preserve our going out and our coming in, as in ages past; and from this time forth, and even forevermore. ". . . let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

The Lord willing, the next meeting of the Maine Association will be held at Whitefield September 1, 2, 3, 1961.

Mrs. Sanford Bartlett, Clerk

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN DR. HOOPER AND ELDER GOLD

(Continued)

TO DR. HOOPER

"Our preaching, so far as I know, is such as would be sanctioned by Andrew Fuller, whose works have been a standard authority for Baptists, both in England and in this country, ever since they appeared."

"We go by Bible precept. We work by Bible example."

My Dear Sir: — The above quotations you will recognize as your own. In the first letter you addressed to me, that Andrew Fuller was your standard authority, in preaching, you plainly stated. Now, you seem very fond of asserting the superior learning of your denomination. I freely own that your scholarship is far above mine. I honor you as a fine scholar, and should regret it indeed if no one knew any more than I do. Inasmuch as you surpass me so far in human learning, you can appreciate my reference to Webster for determining the meaning of standard authority. He says authority means, "that which is claimed to justify measures, opinions," etc. The word standard, he says, means, "having a fixed or permanent value." Then you have Andrew Fuller as your fixed permanent power, to justify and direct you in your opinions and practices. He justifies you in your measures, and you state what is true, when you affirm, that you are his followers. You are distinguished as missionary Baptists, and the first missionary society among Baptists seems to have been formed by him and others on the 2nd of October, 1792. (See Fuller's Works, Vol. I, page 62). My difficulty lies in reconciling the first quotation with the one made in your last series of articles to me, in which you say: "We go by Bible precept. We work by Bible example." Why in your reply, did you desert your standard authority, and attempt to shelter yourself under the Bible, which from first to last I claim as my only authority? But another great wonder appears. You attempt to drag all your doctrines along with you under cover of the Bible. Did you know that the word doctrines does not appear in the Bible, except as held by men or devils? and I don't suppose it will own your doctrines, so let them remain with your standard authority.

You would foist Sunday schools on the Bible. They are your nursery, from which you transplant what you call christians, into the church at proper age, and when there are good seasons. You intend through the Sunday school to instill into the minds of these children your notions of benevolence, so that the next generation will more liberally support your measures. Now, does the Bible tell us what thing in nature is the nursery of the church? A nursery room in a house is designed for children which are as much members of the family as the parents. So in orchards, the young trees in the nursery are as much fruit trees in their nature, as those already bearing fruit. Now, you call Sunday schools the nursery of the church. Your denomination is exalting them into exceeding importance. Why have not the apostles told us something of them? But you hint that they are in the Bible, because Timothy is indebted

to his mother for his godly character. I suppose Timothy is indebted to God for his godly character. You say his godly character came from the care and education of his mother and grandmother, and that the Scriptures teach this. Now, I cannot find where this is taught. It is said that Timothy's mother was a Jewess, and that the same faith he had, dwelt in his grandmother and in his mother, before it did in him; but that they made him a christian, is what I do not think is taught. Because it is the duty of parents to train up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, you say Sunday schools are taught in Scripture. Parents should set good examples before their children, and urge upon them the study of the Bible, where the truth is found, and this should not be neglected. Parents should urge upon their children a becoming regard for the Lord's day; but that one person can grant another faith, or a godly character, is what I can not admit.

My objection to Sunday schools is, in part, because you claim too much for them. You acknowledge they are a modern institution, not a hundred years old, yet you attempt to sanction them by the Bible. You give them an intimate connection with, and make them an important part of the church, when they are not so much as mentioned in the Bible. I believe God's revelation is complete, and in the Bible all is found that is needful for the church. But your inference is, that this age of human learning and progress develops necessary additions to the church, of which revelation is silent. It seems to me that they are dangerous, partly because much of the matter taught in them is fabulous, and because children are deceived into the notion they are christians when they are not, and because you claim for this modern idol so much power and value. The true church has no nursery from which she transplants, no teachers but such as the Holy Ghost prepares for their work, and the Bible thoroughly furnishes these unto all good works.

Your reply, on the question of begging for money, amounts to no more than an apology for it. You say some abuse it, and thence infer that it is right. If you had admitted that all abuse it, and then renounce it, we would be nearer together. If any measure is right in itself, no one should object to it, because some one, Judas-like, betrays or perverts it. My objection is, for the thing itself; for I can not see from Scripture, your right to the high value you place on money in the conversion of souls. When some, or many, of your number of acknowledged authority, teach that it is not known how many souls one ten cents or one dollar will be the means of converting, some people feel like coming not into your secret, nor being joined to your assemblies. When you teach that the heathen are perishing, because we do not send the gospel to them, and that we will send it if you will but give us the money, you put forth that which contradicts the teaching, that it is the Lord of the harvest, and not man, that sends laborers into his vineyard, and God and not money that saves souls. I do not think all the money in the world can save a soul, nor if there were not a cent of money in the world, that the number of the redeemed would be a single soul diminished. If money will convert the heathen in the sense you believe, I think your people very culpable; for you hardly average twenty-five cents a head in your contributions for this purpose, and that after much begging, when you ought to give all you have, if it be true that money will save their souls, for a soul is worth more than all the world. If you do not believe it will convert them, why submit to this priest-craft and dishonor the name of our Lord, who redeemed his church, not with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb slain from before the foundation of the world?

Let us see how you justify giving to convert the heathen, by the precepts

and examples of the Bible. You say, "if the apostle Paul enjoined on the churches to give," etc., "that is sufficient warrant for us to follow his example," and so say I. You go on, "and if we can induce the covetous world to appropriate some of its wealth," the inference is, to promote the glory of God, in giving money to convert heathens, it is right, etc.

Now, how near does this statement correspond with Paul's case. It is stated in Acts, 9th chapter, beginning at the 27th verse, that there should be a great dearth throughout all the world. Then the disciples determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea. See also Romans, 15th chapter and 26th verse, "For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem." For the method of raising this contribution, see I Cor. xvi: 1. For the motives to this giving, see II Cor. viii: 18, following verses. Here we see that the churches were sending up contributions for the relief of the poor saints in a famine. From this case you argue, that money should be procured by your missionary boards, first organized in 1792, for converting the heathen, and you are to go to the covetous world to secure it. How much is this like Bible precept and example? As much as sending money to suffering saints, which is a commendable act, is like sending money to convert heathens; as much as the free offerings of Christians, which are acceptable to God, are like spoiling the Egyptians or covetous world.

Why did you not give your Bible precepts and Bible example for raising money to convert souls? It seems to me that you pervert the plain commands to give money, not for the purpose of converting souls, but to feed and clothe the bodies of Christian laborers and sufferers, into pretexts for raising it, to support men in attempting to do that which man is unable to perform. The addresses in the epistles are made not to unbelievers, but to Christians, and this should not be overlooked. As to giving and receiving the Scriptures teach that he that ministers in spiritual things should be ministered to in temporal things, by those that are taught in the word, for "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." I Cor. 9:14. Paul received gifts from churches and commended their liberality. How one can have the love of God in him and refuse his property to a brother in need, was a matter of question with John: "But whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" I John 2:17.

The Lord writes his law of love on his people's minds and hearts, and hence they find the blessing of the cheerful giver in obeying this law. God's people are made honest, and they are not willing that true preachers should be faithful in feeding them, and ministering to them in spiritual things, without ever giving such laborers any of their temporal things. They need not, therefore, be begged to make these gifts. True preachers are equally delivered from covetousness, and preach of a ready mind, never demanding salaries, nor wishing to be burdensome. How much, what I have stated, is like the Bible, judge for yourself. How much it is unlike the practice of your denomination, you can also judge. I think it well becomes Christians to observe this, as well as all other commands of our Lord. But my difficulty is, in seeing any scriptural warrant for your high modern pretensions in regard to the power of money.

One would suppose from reading your article on the fruits of Mr. Fuller's Mission system, that India, China, etc., are blossoming as the garden of the Lord. So, perhaps, you would represent these United States as blooming for the millennium. This is about as conclusive as saying, that because unfeigned faith first dwelt in Timothy's grandmother, and then in his mother, that therefore Timothy is indebted to his mother for

religion, and hence Sunday schools can be justified by the Scriptures. Or that because it is the duty of parents to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, therefore modern Sunday schools, not a hundred years old, teaching fables and doctrines of men, are found in the Bible. You are replying to me though, because, as you say, my arguments are inconclusive.

You complain much of the bitterness of my article. My convictions were stated in as mild a manner as I well could express them. If my charges are true (and you have not denied many of them), you had better try to correct the evils pointed out, rather than blame me for doing what you asked me to do. I had not intended to write anything about this matter, but you called on me in such a manner, that I did not feel that I could well decline doing so. I have a high regard for many of your brethren, and, besides, it is not pleasant to me to offend any one, nor do I like to incur the odium that results from publishing what is so unpopular, yet under such circumstances shall I withhold what seems to me to be truth to please men?

As to your allusions to our ignorance and fewness of numbers, judging from your manner of writing about it, perhaps no one glories more than you do, that we are few in number and ignorant in worldly wisdom. The Lord's people were more numerous at one time than the prophet Elijah thought, when the Lord told him he had a reserve of seven thousand, all the knees of which had not bowed to Baal. I Kings xix. The Scriptures tell us, "straight is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Matt. 7:14. It is not so bad to be ignorant, either, when Jesus says, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Matt. 11:25. And again, "For you see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen; yea and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are. That no flesh shall glory in his presence." I Cor. 1:26-29.

Instead of glorying in my ignorance, or feeling that I am better than others, I am a corrupt miserable sinner, and can not hope for salvation except by grace. Far be it from me to say, that I am better than others. I am free to say that the pride and vanity, and other corruptions, of poor human nature, afflict me to my grief and shame.

You consider me extremely imprudent, when I state that it seems to me you are allied to Babylon in some respects. You know I suppose that Babylon is from babel, which means confusion. I do not know a denomination that exhibits a greater confusion of tongues than the Missionary Baptists. Your articles to me are good proofs of it. Here you ascribe salvation to grace, there you say Timothy's godly character is from his mother. At one time you say all Christian dispositions are implanted by God, then again, the human will comes to Christ. So much is this the character of your reply that I felt like trying to show how unlike the Scriptures your views are, although of course, you appeal to them for confirmation of your positions. The two texts at the head of this article, which you enunciate as true of you, I shall utterly fail to reconcile. You remind me of one who, being chastised for his wrong doing, complains sorely of the severity of the castigation, yet clings to his old ways.

You suppose a case, which you say, it would gratify you if I would give my opinion on. It is that of a poor young man, who says he has an unmistakable impression that he ought to preach to the heathen. How shall he go?

Suppose one should say he has such impressions, and prepare himself for it, according to your method, and after receiving the benediction of his teachers, some difficulty should be interposed, and he should quietly settle down in this country. What would you say? Does the Lord call one to go to the heathen, and then blockade his way so that he can have no access to them, or does he suffer such obstacles to check his way? I should conclude the Lord had not called him.

Therefore, some other proof, that he is called to go to the heathen than his mere assertion that he is, might be more convincing.

The God whom I wish to worship is of one mind, and when he bids Jonah go to heathen Ninevah, the way seems to be open for him to go there, and shut up and quite stormy if he attempts to go any other way. It is more difficult, it seems, to get Jonah willing to go to Ninevah, than it is to get him a conveyance.

Now, suppose this young man comes to the church, as you say. Let us look into the Scriptures, which thoroughly furnish the man of God unto all good works. This you cannot object to, according to one of your texts: "We go by Bible precept. We work by Bible example." The young man must go, but according to your supposition, he will be speechless when he gets there, for he knows not their language. We believe those whom the Lord calls to preach he makes apt to teach. Paul exhorts those having the gift of tongues, not to speak in an unknown tongue, which is profitless. Those that are to preach for you are put in your hand to prepare them more fully for their work. Did you show me from Scripture where the Lord authorizes any school of man to fit men to preach? Our God knows the end from the beginning, has foreseen all exigencies, has provided all that is useful for the church in all her necessities, and revealed it in Scripture, and forbids her resorting to anything except what he has shown in the mount, yet he has given us no account of any school of man to better prepare one to preach the gospel to any one.

Your schools, after all, do not teach these foreign tongues, and one leaving them with diplomas in his pocket knows no more of the Chinese language than I do. The Lord calls a man of human learning to preach when it pleases him, but that man never glories in human learning. You, for instance, state, "that human learning enabled Paul to handle the deep and high arguments of the Scriptures with a power and skill beyond that of the unlettered fishermen." Here you expressly state that human learning gives light on revelation, or better enables Paul to handle the deep things of Scripture, than Peter and the other disciples could. Well, what does Peter say about the deep mysteries Paul has written? "Even as our beloved brother Paul, also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you." II Peter 3:15-16. Here Peter tells us that Paul wrote, not according to the wisdom acquired in the schools, but according to the wisdom given him from above. Let us hear Paul on this question, "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." I Cor. 2nd chapter, 4th verse; read the whole chapter. Let us hear James, who tells us where to go for wisdom, if we have it not: "If any of you lack wisdom let him ask God that giveth to all (men) liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given to him." James 1:15. But is he not to study? Yes, study the Scriptures, and receive knowledge, that is worth anything, from whatever quarter it comes. But does the Lord send any man to preach who is not of a sound mind and apt to teach? Do you suppose he sends a man to preach, who does not know the difference between an oyster-grabber and an austere man? When he sends one, I think he does not call riotous living by the name of righteous living.

(To be continued)

THE THREE CALLINGS OF GOD

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son; moreover, whom he did predestinate them he also called, and whom he called them he also justified; and whom he justified them he also glorified." (Romans 8:29, 30)

We see that with God these things are already done; but they must come to pass in us by the effectual working of His Spirit. Every chosen vessel will be called in this sense that has not yet been called. I believe that all who were predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, will be called in time — called out from under the law of sin and death, and made alive in Christ Jesus.

I believe that it takes a special calling for one to be added to the militant church. "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (Acts 2:46, 47) I think that the writer had under consideration such as should be saved to the church. The Lord has not purposed that all his people should unite with the church. It takes a special calling, and a special qualification through much tribulation and many trials and fears. They feel their unworthiness and unfitness; and yet a growing in grace and love — a love that is strong enough to overcome everything that stands in the way. I think that the ministry ought to speak words of encouragement, but let everyone be fully persuaded in his or her own mind. The way to have a sound church is for the Lord to add to it, and not the man.

It also takes a special calling for one to preach the gospel. One should never be licensed to exercise away from his home church until he first preaches to the comfort of God's humble poor at his home church; then the brethren and sisters of other churches will want his home church to license him so he can visit them and preach to their people. It is very hurtful when Old Baptists fail to wait on the Lord, and begin to try to build for themselves. The Lord said that he would build his church upon this rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Paul said, "By the grace of God I am what I am." He was speaking of being an apostle, but I believe that Paul would have agreed that everything that he was: that is, speaking of being Christ-like, was by the grace of God; and that nothing could be added to it, nor any thing taken away from it. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God before ordained that we should walk in them."

Humbly submitted,

(Elder) James R. Hollandsworth,
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EXPERIENCE

34 Jordan Road,
Colonia, N. J.

Dear Editors, and
Household of Faith:

I hope you editors and writers will be blessed of the Lord to continue to write in the future as you have in the past. Many of you can express my feelings better than I can; thank the Lord for you.

My parents were Lutheran, and I was raised to believe in their teaching when a small child in Sunday School and at home. In my early twenties I became dissatisfied, and I did not know why I felt that way. When I was married, we visited my husband's parents in Virginia; they were Primitive Baptists, and are now resting in the paradise of God. We attended a meeting while there in the year of 1922; and I was drawn to the Old School Baptist doctrine, and

have received much comfort. We moved to another town, but I had no desire to go to the Lutheran church again.

About 1940 my husband searched for an Old School Baptist Church, and found one in Hopewell, N. J.; and we attended meetings there for years, and loved the Primitive Baptist people dearly. Several years back, in a dream I walked through a crowded, noisy street, and came to a large door; I opened it and went through, and discovered that I was wearing a black gown; and a Bible was open in my hand, which I tried to read but did not understand.

It seems to me that the black gown meant that I was dead in sin. When I looked up, I saw the most beautiful place, and heard singing; and a short distance from where I was standing there was a little child, but she disappeared. In this, I think I was shown that I had to become as a small child.

We went on enjoying the pleasures of this sinful world; but in the beginning of 1958, I saw myself a vile, unworthy sinner. I lost my desire for the things of this world, and stopped going to the places of pleasure. In the latter part of 1958, I met a dear sister in Christ, and she asked me if I would like to go to the meeting in New York with her. I attended these meetings regularly, and must say that I enjoyed them more than I can tell; and being with the dear children of God is more than I deserve. At these meetings I tried to hide my feelings, for I did not want anyone to know how I felt. My burden grew so heavy, I could not keep back the tears which rolled down my cheeks like showers of rain. Sometimes, when I have been made to suffer, these words came to me: Christ suffered as no man has ever suffered.

The Lord afterwards visited my burdened soul and gave me sweet relief; and there were times when I was so disturbed and depressed. I would that I could be as patient as David: "I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry."

I went on in this condition for months: kept humbled, and in the blessed state of seeking, searching, praying and crying after Him and his righteousness; He who has all power in heaven and in earth. We can do nothing without him. On the third Sunday in November, 1959, Elder Slauson used a text in Ephesians — 2:11-22. I cannot recall all he said, but at these words, "By grace are ye saved through faith," etc., I became alert and lifted up. I wondered to myself, What is happening to me? It seemed that I could see; and I had not before. And my ears were unstopped. When the preaching came to a close, and we stood singing, there was a terrible burning within me; and I heard a small voice say, "Ye must be born again." I then knew the Lord was dealing with me; and I was crying, and I did not realize I was walking up front toward Brother Slauson, and was asking for a home. I could not tell the church what was in my heart, yet I was accepted by the Lord's people with love and understanding. When I arrived home I was impressed to write Brother Slauson my experience.

I was baptized the first Sunday in December, 1959. When I came out of the watery grave I felt so calm; I feel I left something there. I do desire to live soberly and righteously, and to praise God, who has delivered me from such a deep sea of darkness. If I am a child of God, I feel to be the least; and am made to prize highly the love and fellowship of God's humble poor.

Mrs. Letcher Smith

1702 Tryon Road,
New Bern, North Carolina

Dear Elder Spangler,

I have heard you ask the brethren to write to the Signs for publication. I am very poor at writing, but I will do the best that I can to tell of an experience that I was blessed with on Monday night of this week. I do not know if I was awake or asleep, but the following was revealed to me as I sat in my home.

On the night of August 22, 1960, at approximately 7:30 P. M., I was sitting in the living room of my home alone. My wife and her sister were in the kitchen. It was raining, and it was thundering and lightning. I looked out the door, and, as I did so, there came a flash of lightning that remained and caused everything to be visible for five or ten seconds. At the same moment the whole heaven was bright and I could see the clouds in the heavens; and the thought flashed through my mind that this is the way it will be when Jesus comes again.

The thought came to my heart: What if He should come at this moment, how would it be with my soul? At the same moment I was made to know that if He should come now, it would be well with my soul! There in a moment I could see Him as He will come, and I was with Him in the flash of lightning.

Dear ones, this is so precious to me that I am unable to put it into words that express just how I felt. The wisdom of man and all the learning of man will never be able to put words together to make one know the glory that was mine to feast upon for a while after this.

To me at that moment, as the flashes of lightning came out of heaven and shone to all parts under heaven, was just as Jesus said in Matthew 24:27: "As the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of man be."

I could see Jesus in the clouds of heaven just as He will come in the last day, and there was a lifted up feeling in my heart, just as if I were being caught up with Him. Oh, for just a second or two I felt it was so; and Oh, how I wanted it to be so when it was all past and gone.

For in this I knew if it were so now, that all trials, afflictions, heartaches, pains, and all weeping would be gone forever. There would be no more tears to wipe from my eyes, and I knew that I would have had a clear title to heaven, and this title would have been endorsed by the Almighty God and with the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

After this happened, I arose and tried to read a copy of the Gospel Standard, but I could not, so I had to lay it down and walk the floor for a while. Then I sat down and wrote what I had been blessed to experience. At this time, I was rejoicing so much that I could not read nor do anything else except praise my God for all of this.

I can not say whether I was awake or asleep when all this happened, but there is one thing I do know, and that is in those few moments the Lord of heaven revealed to me the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ at the last day. I believe that the feeling that I had in this experience of being lifted up, was of the same power that will raise His people from the dead when He does come again.

(Elder) S. R. Boykin

Gordo, Alabama

Dear Editors:

The following are a few thoughts on natural life, eternal life, and the adoption.

God, in His creation of man in this lower, natural world, made him in two respects like the Father and Son. They made man (1) "In His image." (2) "In His likeness." In His image, Adam was made with his bride in him as bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. All for whom Christ died are called His bride, as their spiritual eternal life was in him from all eternity, being "chosen in him before the foundation of the world." As God is the Spiritual Father of all the elect so is Adam the father of all the human family; for who can say, "I'm not of Adam."

In His "Likeness", God gave man dominion "Over all the earth," (Gen. 1-26) which we see in man's making use of the powers, and forces of nature and the resources and elements of this world, which God created for him. Some wise men have said that the image of God in man was defaced in his fall, but

such is not the case; for the fall of man was a death in sin and to all righteousness, having only a carnal mind which "Is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be"; which places him in a position in which he can devote his entire strength and ability to the work assigned him of God in taking dominion of all earthly things. Thus establishing man's "likeness" in earthly powers to God's all powerful dominion over all things.

In this earthly wisdom and knowledge "The children of this world are in their generation (adamic) wiser than the children of Light." The children of God know by faith that all these earthly things have an end and shall be destroyed. They realize they have no continuing city here, but "Look for a city, which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God."

This difference in the carnal worldly man and that of the one called out from this way of life is of course the New Birth: A birth in which the Holy Ghost or Spirit takes its abode in the person. "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God." (I Cor. 6-19) Such persons are not carnal but spiritual. "But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you, now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."

This Spirit of Christ in His People is none else than Eternal life itself. "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." Christ also says "they shall not die" but "live forever." (John 16:47-50) This language sounds strange to the natural ear since we know our natural mortal bodies must die as we understand death, but in God's wisdom and knowledge these bodies sleep in the tomb, awaiting the awakening at the resurrection. He speaks of his people sleeping in him.

These mortal bodies cannot inherit eternal life, their father being Adam, and their inheritance being all that fell to Adam; of which we are all too aware. God is their Creator, not their Father as the world would have us believe. Adoption is the only way by which this mortal, corrupt body can be changed and fashioned like unto the glorified body of Christ, who is the forerunner of this great throng of the redeemed. "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you;" and, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."

While in this life the presence of the Spirit of Christ within us is the Spirit of adoption to our natural mortal bodies that it too might live in hope of Eternal life which God promised before the world was.

W. L. Crowley

NOT ASHAMED OF THE OLD BAPTISTS

R. F. D. 2,
Winfield, Alabama

Dear Editors:

As I am sending a little contribution to the Indigent Fund, I will send also an account of three dreams which were of great comfort to me. I think they were in the same year; and I still love to meditate on them.

In the first one there was a square plot of ground marked off for me to keep check on — I was to go from corner to corner, back and forth, and watch it all the time. I didn't know why I was to do this. Around this square muddy water started bubbling up, and the ground kept getting softer until it all dissolved; and I started sinking down, and down: there was no solid ground to stand on. I was all under except my head; and looking to the North-east, I saw a spark of light. In this I believe that God showed me I was walking on dangerous ground, and I was made to stop and think. At that time I scarcely ever went to church, as we didn't have

much of a way to go, and the children were small; and I neglected to go.

In the next, I thought I went to a Primitive Baptist meeting; and after the song service was over, the pastor still hadn't come, and they decided that I do the preaching. I knew that I just could not do it; and Oh, how miserable I was. While in prayer, the pastor came in, and how relieved I was! The pastor was Elder Moore, whom I loved to hear preach; and from then on for a long time, I felt I had heard a good Old Baptist sermon, and I had a strong desire to go to preaching. Oh, how I did rejoice for some time!

In the next, the children were playing down by the highway, and I went down that way to tell them to come up to the house; and they came on to where I was. When I turned around to go to the house, (then facing the South), I saw a bank of muddy water rolling over as high as I could see, and as far East and as far West as I could see; and I knew there was no escape for us, and we would be swept away. We stopped and stood there, knowing we were gone. But, when it passed over, we were still standing there just as dry as we were. On the other side of this bank was a new world, most beautiful, and as bright as crystal. I cannot describe the beauty of it. All this was during the time I didn't get to go to church.

Oh, if I could write what I feel sometimes, and rejoice in, but I am so ignorant and unworthy — maybe not worth the space and your time. If it were not for the Old Baptist Doctrine, the Bible and the Signs of the Times, I don't know what I would do. Reading the Signs helps me understand the Bible more.

I want everyone to know that I am an absolute predestinarian Old Baptist, and I am not ashamed of them, they are most lovely. It isn't the outward appearance that counts, it is the Holy Spirit that you can see shining in their faces that counts.

May God in his grace and mercy enable you to keep the good Signs sound, and to continue to contend for what we believe to be the truth.

A sister in Christ, I hope,
Mrs. A. T. Couch

THE WOMAN AND THE ALABASTER BOX OF OINTMENT
(Matt. 26:7)

Many bewildering and hard to understand comparisons are recorded in Holy Writ, which, if seen through the eye of revelation, would present a beautiful view of Jesus and the church in redemption.

The narrative which we have under consideration is a figure of the church being brought out from under the law of condemnation, coming to Jesus as her refuge under grace. "Wherefore, the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." (Gal. 3:24) Not that the creature was in himself fulfilling the law to the satisfaction of the wrath of God the Father, but by and through the law was the discovery of sin and death. For through Christ was the revelation of death by sin. The law is not in the will power of the creature to accept or refuse its demands; for when seen through the eye of revelation the sinner is already condemned to death and everlasting punishment.

The woman who came to Jesus presents a very convincing and beautiful type of the church under repentance. She was walking by faith, not by sight. (2 Cor. 5:7) It is true she saw the humanity of Jesus, but since the humanity of Jesus was like in appearance to natural man, this woman who typifies the church saw in Jesus by faith the immortality of God shining forth. Let us consider what she saw in contrast to what those saw who condemned her. She, by faith, saw in the mortality of Jesus, death. By sight, some had indignation against the woman for what to them was waste, but to her it was life everlasting. Indignation against her was

also against Jesus.

Let us here consider the substance from which alabaster is made. It is translucent; that is, not dark, not clear enough to identify the inner contents. It is a clear representation of a sinner's experience. They truly hope they are born again of the incorruptible seed of Jesus, but they cannot see the substance sufficiently to say it is the redeeming spirit, so then we are, as St. Paul said, "saved by hope." That is we are saved from despair. (Romans 8:24)

St. Mark, 14:3, says the woman broke the box and poured the very precious ointment of spikenard on Jesus' head. This box of very precious ointment is symbolic of a repenting sinner's heart. She broke the box (heart) and poured out the very precious ointment (repentance) upon Jesus. Breaking the box is very significant, for it seems no provision had been made to dispense the contents of the box. Nature makes no provision for pouring out repentance, for it is at ease, needing no such troublesome thing as a broken heart and repentance. "I was at ease, but He hath broken me asunder." (Job 16:12)

When the repentance appears, the body of flesh has come to an end. So, when Jesus took the sins of his people upon himself, He came to the end. When the woman performed the act of anointing Jesus' body to the burying, she saw by faith the body must die and be buried. She saw in the death of Jesus that her body must also die to sin; therefore, with a broken heart (alabaster box) she pours out her complaint (repentance) upon Jesus.

The death of Jesus brought the old covenant to an end; so the woman (church) is brought to a beginning, the dawn of the Gospel day. The natural Jesus went down as a sunset. In his resurrection he arose as the Son of Righteousness and spread the light of the Gospel day in the hearts of his children.

The woman represents the end of the old law covenant — judicial or law dispensation. The alabaster box is broken up, its very precious contents are poured out upon Jesus — she looks upon Him as her King. (Hos. 1:2) The broken alabaster box is also a type of the body when its sinful state is revealed — there is no more confidence in the flesh.

Since the contents of the alabaster box seem to represent repentance, and without repentance no man shall see God, is not this what Jesus had reference to when He said, "Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of her. (St. Mark 14:9)

John came preaching the doctrine of baptism of repentance (Mark 1:4), he being the forerunner of Jesus, the last of the law prophets. Is not the forerunner of a sinner's conviction repentance, a broken heart, a contrite spirit? The heart must be broken before sorrow and repentance flow out. Then a memorial unto her (church) anointing Jesus unto His burying? For when sin is finished it brings forth death. (James 1:15) When sin was laid upon the holiness of the nature of Jesus, it brought forth death to his body. So, when the spirit of the righteousness of Christ takes up its abode in a sinner's heart the body dies. "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness." (Romans 8:10)

We also note the time and place where this anointing took place. It was just before the betrayal of Jesus by Judas. Jesus was in the house of Simon the leper. Simon was either afflicted with leprosy or had been. Leprosy has been in many instances biblically compared to sin. Jesus was in the house of Simon the leper, even as every cleansed vessel of the mercy of God goes by the name sinner.

There is a sign that follows the believer in Christ. That sign is a broken heart and repentance. "And there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas." When Jonah preached to the Ninevites the effect was repentance. "God by sorrow worketh

repentance." (2 Cor. 7:10) It was so with the woman and the alabaster box of very precious ointment. The box had to be broken before the contents could be poured out. So the heart has to be broken before repentance appears.

(Elder) W. E. Turner

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Dear Brethren:

I suppose you know something about Mr. J. C. Philpot, who was one of the best English preachers. He and Mr. Tiptaft seceeded from the established church, enduring much persecution, and joined the strict Baptists. Many years ago two volumes of their lives and works were published and thousands were sold; now, after about ten years delay on account of finances, the third volume is ready for sale, and Mr. Paul requested me to advertise it in our papers, if you have no objection.

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Yours in hope,
Geo. W. Jackson

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COMPLETION OF
ANOTHER VOLUME

With this number we complete another volume of the Signs — the 128th; and we approach the end of another year of time, and of earthly things.

It is not likely that any of us conscientiously appreciate the half of the many blessings we have each received, nor fully aware that they have come to us as gracious gifts of the God of heaven and earth. But sometimes we experience with David in the 63rd Psalm:

"Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips, when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice."

All who are instrumental in publishing the paper appreciate the comments

of the brethren and friends, and are glad that they are comforted and edified; and would remind them that they, as enabled by the Spirit, are the ones who keep the paper coming to them each month, by their subscriptions, writings, etc.

Our great desire is to keep the paper sound in doctrine; to comfort the Lord's people; and to praise and exalt the name of our God for his goodness and mercy.

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

"THE HOUSE OF JUDAH AND THE HOUSE OF JACOB."

We have a request that we write on the difference between the House of Judah and the House of Jacob. Such a task is beyond our ability, unless the Lord direct us by His Blessed Spirit.

There were twelve tribes in the House of Jacob as it entered into possession of the land which the Lord their God gave them. Judah, one of those tribes, was, in after years, to become the most important of them all. To Judah God gave the portion of land upon which Mount Moriah stood, where God sent Abraham to offer his son Isaac, a place sacred to the whole House of Jacob. Judah, the fourth son of Jacob, in his lifetime secured a place of respect among his brethren. We find him speaking for his brethren when Jacob would not consent to their taking Benjamin back with them to Egypt. He also offered to become surety for the lad, when Joseph's steward stopped them to search their sacks, and found Joseph's divining cup in the lad's sack, it was Judah that was the one who pled with Joseph so touchingly, that Joseph could no longer refrain, but made himself known unto his brethren. His moving address can be read in Genesis 44:18-34. Though Reuben was Jacob's first-born, Jacob said he was unstable as water, and should not excel, and so we find Jacob sending "Judah before him unto Joseph to direct his face unto Goshen."

We would here quote from Jacob's blessing of Judah in Genesis 49:9-12. "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies: THY FATHER'S CHILDREN SHALL BOW DOWN BEFORE THEE. Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, THOU ART GONE UP: he stooped down, he crouched as a lion, and as an old lion: who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come: and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." It is said that on the standard of the Tribe of Judah was a lion's whelp with the words, "Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered." Caleb was of the tribe of Judah and he was one of the two spies that gave a good report and encouraged the brethren to invade the land. Because of his faithfulness Joshua gave him Hebron, the city where David was anointed king by his brethren. Judah and Benjamin were the two tribes that stood together when David was first made king, and from then we find the influence of Judah growing exceedingly. David, their king, was blest to become king of all the House of Jacob, and Judah became a spot to which the whole House of Israel looked for protection from their enemies and for the worship of the God of their fathers.

When Israel agitated for a king that they might be like other nations, God gave them Saul, who was of the tribe of Benjamin. Hosea the prophet says of him, "I give you a king in mine anger and took him away in my wrath." At the height of Saul's power, Samuel the prophet told Saul to smite Amalek and utterly destroy all that they had. Saul did not obey the voice of the Lord and it is of note for us to consider what Samuel told Saul, "And Samuel said, when thou wast little in thine own sight, was not thou made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king over Israel? — Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord? — Behold, to obey is better

than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams: — And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death." God then sends Samuel to Bethlehem in Judah to anoint David the son of Jesse, king. When Saul's life came to an end the men of Judah went to David at Hebron and there they anointed David king over the House of Judah, and we are told "there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: but David waxed stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker."

At the cruel death of Ishbosheth, Saul's son, all the tribes of Israel came to David unto Hebron and made him king of the whole of the twelve tribes. Thus as Jacob said in his blessing, "Thy father's children shall bow down before thee," so it came to pass. During the reign of David and Solomon the Lord brought much glory to the House of Judah, but after Solomon's reign the ten tribes split away, and to stop them going up to Jerusalem to worship, Jeroboam made two calves of gold and placed one in Bethel and the other in Dan, and said, "Behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." Later, the worship of Baal was brought in by Ahab when he married Jezebel the daughter of the king of Zidon. "Yet the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by His messengers, rising up betimes, and sending: because He had compassion on the people, and on His dwelling place." After the dispersion of the ten tribes, the kingdom of Judah continued for nearly one hundred and fifty years, then they were carried into Babylon, and we find them called Jews in the time of Daniel. In his life of captivity we see that he would open his window toward Jerusalem when he prayed. How good, that in their darkest days, there were those who grieved for the afflictions of Joseph. It is not known by whom the 137th Psalm was written, in it how sorrowfully the captives bewailed the desolation of Zion and desired never to forget Jerusalem. During this distressing judgment that God brought upon them, He most graciously sent prophets telling of a better day. "Zion heard and was glad: and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of Thy judgments, O Lord." Psalm 97:8. At the fullness of time God sent His Son, who was the Lion of the tribe of Judah, "the root and the offspring of David and the bright and morning star." Revelation 22:16. The sceptre was not to depart from Judah until Shiloh came, and the New Testament says, "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem, saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the East, and are come to worship Him." Matthew 2:1-2.

Isaiah had long before said, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder." Here, in the purpose of God, is the person who puts a glory upon the House of Judah. A child born of a Jewish virgin, a Son given from Heaven, God's Eternal Son. This and many other facts make the House of Judah to stand out gloriously above all the other tribes of the House of Jacob. To Zion and Jerusalem the whole of the House of Jacob came, and the sons of Levi were priests, but a greater than Aaron, who should be a Priest for ever was this child born in Bethlehem, for He came to sit upon the throne as King and Priest. "Even He shall build the temple of the Lord: and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne: and He shall be a Priest upon His throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." Every one of the seed of Jacob who are in the promise given unto their father Abraham shall come and bow down to Him as their brother, yet also as their glorious King. He then is the One that distinguishes the House of Judah by His choosing Zion as His dwelling place, His kingdom shall have no end. Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar that God would set up this kingdom and it should never be destroyed, and it should

not be left to other people, that is, to change or interfere with it. He is the King that shall reign in righteousness. HE WAS BORN A KING. God had said in Psalm 2:6. "Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion." We are also told in Psalm 122, "For there are set THRONES OF JUDGMENT, the thrones of the House of David." The Apostles were told, "Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." The Apostles today are judges in the Church of God, the ground and pillar of the truth. The House of Jacob and the Jews were cast off. Jesus said, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." He had come to fulfill what was spoken of by the prophet, "Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass." Matthew 21:5. Jacob, in his blessing says "Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine." Genesis 49:11.

Jesus heard the multitude of the common people cry "Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest." But the chief priests and scribes were sore displeased and said unto Him, "Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea: have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?" Read Matthew 21. In Matthew 23 Jesus utters the Woe that He is about to send upon them, not only for their rejection of Him, but for their persecuting and slaying of the prophets and the wise men that He had sent unto them. They were soon to crucify their King, and the words of Hosea 9:17 were to be literally fulfilled. "My God shall cast them away, because they did not hearken unto Him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations." But is their case hopeless? No, Jesus, when He said, "Your house is left unto you desolate," also said, "For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Hosea clearly shows the condition of national Israel even now. "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their King, and shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days." Hosea 3:4-5.

They have been wanderers into every part of this world. If there had never been a missionary sent by man they would have been, and still are, the ones who have carried with them, the words of their prophets, and though they have not known it, the testimony of Jesus. Isaiah 50 reads, "Thus saith the Lord, Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away? or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have you sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away." We believe there will be a remnant of the Jews saved, but it will be with them as it has been with the Gentiles, for Jesus said to Nicodemus, who came to Jesus by night, "Ye must be born again."

Paul tells us that "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew which is one inwardly: and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter: whose praise is not of men, but of God." Romans 2:28-29.

In this article we have spent much time on the House of Judah while under the old dispensation, now, as we close, we would give a glance, as it were, of the true Kingdom, where Jesus reigns in righteousness, and the Apostles rule in judgment. The true Mount Zion is that which has been built by the Eternal God, with King Jesus, who ever lives as our High Priest to make intercession for every one of the House of Jacob,

when they come to worship God. The ways they come vary very much, but they all come by the teaching and instruction of the Holy Ghost. They need not that any man teach them, for the anointing they receive of Him abideth, and it teacheth them all things. These, from wherever they come, are of the House of Jacob, the New Man, who, Paul tells us, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. These are led to Zion with everlasting joy upon their heads, and as they journey from the various parts of His Kingdom they find Jesus "an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest: as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." All that are saved or will be saved are of the Household of our Heavenly Jacob. Adam, the first man, was under the curse. Jesus, the second Adam, the supplanter, has, through His perfect obedience, received from the Father, the blessing (which is life for evermore) and righteousness from the God of His salvation, a righteousness that exalts this nation, for this is the generation of them that seek Him, that seek Thy face, O Jacob.

Thus our Lord in the flesh is the true Jacob, the supplanter, who has taken away the curse, and through His obedient life and vicarious death "was declared to be the SON OF GOD with power, according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead." Romans 1:4.

As the Son of God He now sits upon the throne as King and Priest and has a Kingdom that shall never end. This Kingdom was taken from the Jews and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

G. R.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Hendley, Neb., June 12, 1898

Elder F. A. Chick — Dear Friend: — Will you please to give, through the Signs of the Times, your views upon the spiritual meaning of the words found in Genesis xix. 26, and oblige?

A Friend

REPLY

The words to which our friend calls attention are as follows: "But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt." Before beginning our remarks upon this sentence, we will call attention to the fact that the blessed Redeemer is recorded in the seventeenth chapter of Luke, as referring to this narrative, and as enforcing his warnings to his disciples then, by the reference to it. In what we shall have to say concerning the text, we desire to also call attention to the use of it made by the Savior. We need not narrate the whole story recorded in this nineteenth chapter of Genesis, as it is familiar to all Bible readers, and as any one can turn to the narrative and read for themselves. The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were devoted to destruction, for their great wickedness. Lot and his family dwelt in Sodom. Out of his divine compassion for them God had commanded Lot to depart from the devoted city, that he should not partake of her plagues, and her destruction. The righteous soul of Lot had been vexed at the wickedness of the city, as we are told elsewhere. Abraham, when told of the impending destruction of the city, had interceded for them before the Lord, and had received the promise that if ten righteous men could be found therein, the city should be spared. But when the angels of God had come to the city and tried it, there were not found even ten righteous men. The condition of the city with regard to its wickedness is plainly discovered by what they tried to do to the two angels. Even the sons-in-law of Lot were involved in the general iniquity which abounded; and even Lot was of such a worldly mind that he and his wife and daughters lingered, loath to leave such a pleasant home in the plain. But the Lord had such com-

passion upon them, that the angels laid hold upon their hands, and drew them out in haste. How sad it is that not only the world loves wickedness, but that the people of God themselves, so much love the ease and pleasures of the world, that they are slow to leave the evil land, and would still linger there, and though vexed with the evil conduct of the wicked, yet would continue to live in intimate association with them, were it not that the Lord has more compassion upon them, than they have upon themselves, and lays hold upon them and draws them out.

Every believer has to confess with shame, his love of pleasure, and folly, and ease, and that nothing but sovereign grace has constrained him to go out from these things. Even though he can but vex his soul at all the wickedness of the world, yet he lingers near, finding that all the desires of the flesh, and of the mind, go after that which delights the wicked. Therefore he takes great shame to himself, and only praises grace which has saved him. Even when his face is Zionward, and he steadfastly is minded to go forward, with sorrow and shame he finds a deceitful heart inclined to all the evil when he would leave behind. If he does not look back indeed, he finds a law in his members which constantly would induce him to look back. And so he cries out against himself, "I cannot do the good that I would." He feels that his best obedience is marred by the evil heart within him, which makes his service but partial, and nothing to be boasted of. While this is true of all the people of God, as they all will confess to their shame, and while each one feels to praise unfailing love and care, that they are still pressing on to the better land, and are still going out from the cities of the plain, to the mountains of God, yet it is sorrowfully true of some, that they are found, like Lot's wife, looking back.

First, we are told in the narrative that they lingered, even though that night they had had proof of how great the wickedness of the city was. That night Lot had interceded in vain for the safety of the guests whom the Lord had sent him. He had full proof that he had nothing in common with those among whom he dwelt. Yet his foolish heart was so enamored of the place, that he lingered. But let us not be found judging Lot, lest we judge also our own selves. We know that this world is not our home, that as believers we have nothing in common with it. It does not believe what we do; it does not love what we do; we have visitors which it does not, and for which it does not care, and it despises the heavenly guests, which have come to abide with us. O what a wretched heart that will still linger amid such scenes. How little, after all, we are weaned from the world. How much we love it still. But by all this, how is the compassion and mercy of God toward us magnified. Surely there is nothing in us that can merit esteem, or give the Creator delight. Yet he loves us; he loves us without any reason that exists within ourselves. He loves us freely, and because he will. There is, there can be, no other reason. His is the only free love in the universe. How great was the mercy that could pardon the lingering of Lot, and lay hold upon the hands of him, and his, and draw them out, and hasten their going.

Second, we are told in the narrative that Lot still so much loved the cities of the plain that he could not bear to think of going to the mountains, to which he had been bidden to flee. We recall that when the land was before Abraham and Lot, to choose between them, there was so much of a worldly spirit in Lot, and so little of that which possessed Abraham, that he chose the plain where there appeared to be a prospect of an easy life, rather than submit the choice to God, and that Abraham took that country which Lot had rejected. And now, in the time of the destruction of the city, we find his heart lingering around these same pleasures. So he asked of the angels of God that they would not send him out to the

mountains, lest he should meet some evil and die. There was a little city called Zoar, near by, and he asked that instead of departing to the mountain, he might turn aside there and abide. His heart was much in the world of wickedness yet. He could not give up all, and dwell in the mountains which God had chosen for him. How slow we are to learn that God's way is best. How much, even the best of those who love and serve God, live in the world. We excuse many things upon the ground that "it is such a little one." We know and say that this world with all its glory, honor, fame, position and wealth, is doomed to destruction. At the best it can abide but for a little time. Still more, we confess that its cares, and pleasures, and ambitions, keep us from the enjoyment of the best, the everlasting things. Yet we are so wedded to it, that when we are bidden to flee to the mountains, where we shall be carried above the plain of this world, and which is our proper abode, we still cling to the world. We do not obey the injunction of the apostle in full measure when he says, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." On the contrary, we do set our affection on things below, and grovel in the earth. O how great the mercy of God, that we are not left to perish in Sodom, but are hastened out.

Nothing describes the experience of us all, and the confession which we must make, better than the testimony of one who when asked, What part he had done in his salvation? said, "The Lord determined to save me, and I did all I could against it." There is not a foot of the road which has not witnessed a warfare. The flesh striving against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. How many little cities of the plain we dwell in. How many worldly things claim our affection, and our attention. How loath we are to leave the world. We do not mean how loath we are to die, as we must when the end of life's journey is reached, but how loath we are to be separated from the world in our love, and in our life, day by day. How often the deceitful heart says, "Is it not a little one?" And yet Lot disobeyed God in this thing. The little city was of the plain, as much as was Sodom. Ah, wretched, vile, deceitful heart, that can still cling to what belongs to the world. In this city of the world, Lot found a snare, and through drunkenness was led into grievous sin with his daughters. And Moab and Ammon, deadly foes of Israel in all their history afterwards, were the fruits of this sin. Are not these things written for our learning, upon whom the ends of the world have come? O, that we might be shown the right way, and earnestly abide and walk in it.

In the third place, we are called to contemplate a still more open violation of the word of the Lord. They have been forbidden to look behind them. Permission had been granted to the weakness of Lot to turn aside into the little city, but no permission had been granted to look behind. If still there is a lingering in the world for a little, there is not to be a looking back. To look back would show that the heart was not in the matter of escape from the sin of the world, with its destruction. Lingering and turning aside into the little city, is from the weakness of the flesh, which the Lord pities, as a father pities his children, because he knows our frame, and remembers that we are dust; but to look back, while the angels of God are hastening us away, is the result of willful perverseness. There is, according to the testimony of the apostle, such a thing as sinning willfully, after we know the truth, and this is an altogether different thing from being overtaken in a fault. For this willful sinning there remains no more sacrifice, but on the contrary, "A certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." When Lot's wife looked back, it seems to us that her sin came under this head. There was no sacrifice for it. The chastisement must be inflicted, both to vin-

dicate the commandments of God, and as a warning to his people during all ages. So the Lord himself said to his disciples, "Remember Lot's wife." We believe that Lot's wife must represent one who truly belongs to the family of God, and it seems to us to be an undoubted truth that some of the Lord's own people do look back to the world of sin and folly from which they had escaped, and are engulfed in it, and become so much like the world, that the eye of man cannot tell the difference between them. But how glorious the consideration that, "The foundation of God stands sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." The Lord knows, if we do not.

Lot's wife, looking back, was turned into a pillar of salt. In other words, she became like the world around her. In all the plain of Sodom, there rained down fire and brimstone, and the plain was incrusted with elements, which would not suffer any green thing to grow, and where nothing could live, of bird, or beast, or fish. Salt is the sure destruction of all where it falls. We use it to preserve meat, and other things, but we must remember that it does so through the destruction of all life, which would feed upon that which we wish to preserve. It preserves one thing by destroying other things. It is therefore primarily the agent of death and destruction. The region of the Dead Sea is today desolate, by reason of the exceeding saltness of the sea, and of salt mingled in the land around. There is a solemn meaning then in the turning of Lot's wife into a pillar of salt. It signified that she had become filled with the elements of the world around her. She had so lived after the flesh that she had died. While she was so much of the world, no spiritual emotion or exercise could live in her. In the Bible sense of the word she was dead. She was identified with the world around her. She stood as a monument of the evil of looking back to the world, and living after the flesh. In all ages of the history of the church, some who have once loved God, and his cause, have become enamored of the world so much that they have lost all spiritual interests in the things of the kingdom of God. They have wandered off so far as to never attend the ministry of the word, or upon the services of the sanctuary. They have lived in the company of carnal men, and have enjoyed the pleasures of the world, and have loved pleasure more than God. Some are in our mind as we write, of whom we believe this to be true. They are pillars, but not pillars of the truth. They are monuments, but not monuments of grace, so far as their daily life is concerned. When they shall be awakened to the knowledge of their sins, and their backslidings shall be healed, as they shall be some day, they will mourn, and will feel that none are such monuments of grace as are they.

We may all, if the words of the Master are true, and of this we must not doubt, become pillars of salt. We may become monuments of God's anger against sin. We may sow to the world and reap corruption. We may so look back to the world that we shall become as the world, and none can see aught that differs from the world. The light within has not died, but it has become concealed. It has been put under a bushel. How terrible are the effects of sin. How much must Abraham have felt to praise that God who had given him such faith that he had not chosen the country of the plain. How great must have been his estimation of that grace which had kept him from looking back, when he was bidden to go out from his own country, and from his own kin, to a land which he did not know of then, but which should afterwards be shown him.

While Lot must have afterwards bemoaned his unbelief and half-heartedness, in the obedience which he had rendered to God. On the other hand, Abraham could not praise himself for his obedience, but must ever praise that grace which had wrought in him to the end that he might believe and render the obedience of faith. Sin has its wages,

but obedience has no wages of eternal life, for this is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. If any of those who love and serve God, are now dwelling in the heavenly land that was promised to them through Jesus Christ, and dwelling there in peace, they cannot say it is because of their obedience. They must and do praise the sovereign grace of God, in it. This we know by experience. We have never felt that we could attribute any spiritual blessing which we had received to any merit of ours; but we have ever felt when darkness and sorrow have been ours, we have deserved it all. We have had the wages of sin, but we have never found any wages of righteousness. Here all, all, is of grace. If we have in anything obeyed, while others have not, this we know is not to our credit, but to the praise of grace. From us then must all boasting be excluded. The peace and the obedience which leads to peace are alike to the praise of the glory of his grace. We repeat the words of the Savior, "Remember Lot's wife." We trust that in the hearts of many of our readers, he has spoken these words, and if not the very words themselves, yet the substance and meaning of them. It is noteworthy that when the Savior used these words, he was speaking also of destruction which should come upon the people, as it had come upon Sodom. The hearts of men are not changed with the advancing centuries. Men are no better now than when Sodom was consumed. It is still true that the hearts of disciples are deceitful, and cling to the world, and so the blessed Master implies, when he bids the disciples learn from Lot's wife. For ourselves, and our readers, we could desire nothing better than that the lessons of this narrative might abide with us. O, that our separation from the world might be more complete. O, that the disposition of heart which would lead us to look back, might be so bound, and kept in subjection, that we might be daily, monuments of the grace which teaches us that denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present evil world.

When we began this article, we expected to write but briefly upon this matter, but the subject has enlarged, and we have written as it has been opened to us. We shall be compelled to leave some other things, of which we expected to write at this time, until a later date. The subject has been to us a very solemn one. We trust that it may not be wholly without profit to others.

(Editorial by Elder F. A. Chick, August 1, 1898.)

OBITUARIES

ELDER HIRAM LEWIS ROGERS

Hiram Lewis Rogers, son of the late George Washington and Elizabeth Ratcliff Rogers, was born December 21, 1883, at Jeriel, Kentucky; he departed this life June 20, 1960, at Ashland, Kentucky, at the age of over seventy-six. In 1904 he was united in marriage with Martha Mullins, and to this union were born six daughters and seven sons.

In 1909 Brother Rogers became a member of Lost Creek Old School or Primitive Baptist Church; and 1953 was ordained to the ministry. He served as pastor of the Lost Creek Church until his death. He was a merchant, and a retired farmer by trade.

Surviving are his wife, Martha Mullins Rogers; six daughters: Mrs. Chester Black, Lexington, Ky.; Mrs. Clifford Bellow, Springfield, Ohio; Miss Madgel Rogers, at home; Mrs. Frank Watson and Mrs. Tony Waugh, Denton, Ky.; and Mrs. Bruce Cooksey, Hitchens, Ky.; five sons: Grover, Homer and Clifton, of Denton, Ky.; Harmie, Hitchens, Ky.; Hubert, Grayson, Ky. Also by two brothers: C. E. Rogers, Logan, W. Va., and Thomas, Pedro, Ohio; and four sisters: Mrs. Hulda Mullins, Ashland, Ky.; Mrs. Mary Jones, Argillite, Ky.; Mrs. Mattie Holbrook, Logan, Ohio; and Mrs. Ethel Young, Hillards, Ohio; 25 grandchildren and 16 great grandchildren.

(Elder) J. S. Hunnicutt

MISS LULA PATTERSON

Miss Lula Patterson, the daughter of Deacon W. A. Patterson and Sister Nannie Kennedy Patterson, was born July 7, 1882, near Farmerville, La., and died in the same vicinity October 6, 1960.

Miss Lula, as she was known far and near, was a very unusual and useful individual. Early in life she became a very efficient and much appreciated school teacher, and taught in several communities of Union Parish. She was highly esteemed as a teacher, a neighbor and friend. She became much interested in the doctrine of God our Saviour, and attended Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church regularly, and manifested much interest in the preaching. Later, after she became afflicted, she wrote the writer a letter in which she related an experience which took place with her as a small child, which was very impressive to read. After teaching school for 45 years and had been retired a few years, she became much afflicted and a bed patient for over a year, and passed away at the old Patterson home where she was reared.

The writer and many other ministers visited her in her affliction, and she often desired prayer, preaching and scriptural reading, and manifested a sweet hope of a glorious salvation. She expressed a desire for church membership but because of her felt sense of unworthiness, she stayed out. We feel confident that she was born of God and sleeps until the Lord comes to call her and all his people home to be with him forever, where there is peace, love, joy and everlasting rest.

She is survived by one brother, H. A. Patterson; three sisters, Mrs. Mollie Taylor, Mrs. N. G. Breazeal, and Mrs. B. E. McDougal, all of near Farmerville, La. Surviving also are many nieces, nephews and other relatives.

The writer and Elder J. L. Smith conducted her funeral at Liberty Hill Church in the presence of a large and devoted congregation. May the Lord bless and comfort the relatives and friends with the realization that she is at peace, and will in the glorious resurrection be brought forth in the image of the Lord to praise him forever. Yours in sweet hope of everlasting salvation.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

JOHN ANDERSON CAMPBELL

John Anderson Campbell was born January 21, 1869, and died May 2, 1960, at the home of his son Paul, in Hartselle, Alabama. His age was more than ninety-one years. In 1904 he was united in marriage to Miss Francis Johnson, who survives. To this union seven children were born, three passing away in infancy; surviving are: Floyd, Huntsville, Ala.; Paul, Hartselle, Ala.; Jesse, Hartselle, Ala.; and Edward Athens, Ala. Surviving also are 19 grandchildren, 16 great grandchildren, and a host of friends.

He was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church sixty-six years, and served as Church Clerk several years. He was a kind and affectionate husband, a loving father, and a good neighbor. He would have nothing as a means of salvation but Christ and him crucified. He attended church as long as his health would permit, being in ill health for about four years.

We shall miss his wise counsel, and encouraging words, but we desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our God. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and that God foreknew all things. We hope the Lord of mercy will comfort those that mourn and lead them out of the darkness of their suffering.

Funeral services were held at Kelly's Creek Church in the Flint River Association, May 4, 1960, by his pastor, Elder R. O. Simmons, and by Elder R. L. Biggs. Written by his sister-in-law,

Mrs. L. R. McNeill

WILLARD TAYLOR SETLIFF

On May 21, 1960, God in His infinite wisdom saw fit to take from us, by death, our beloved Brother Willard Taylor Setliff. He was born in Rockingham County, N. C. March 2, 1885, where he lived his entire life; and was united in marriage in December, 1905, to Carrie Belle Pryor, who preceded him in death. To this union four children were born, all of whom survive. Two sons Gordon and Elmer; two daughters, Mrs. Lillian Davis, with whom he was living at the time of his death, and Mrs. Pauline Austin, all of Route 2, Ruffin, N. C.

Brother Setliff united with us at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, and during his membership proved to be a very faithful member. Although his health was bad during his later years, he attended service as often as his health would permit. We always knew Brother Setliff to be a faithful and devoted companion and father, a good neighbor and faithful member to our church.

Funeral services were conducted at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church May 23, 1960, by his Pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler; and his body was laid to rest by the side of his wife in the church cemetery, there to await the second coming of our Lord and Savior. We miss him very much but feel our loss is his gain. Therefore, we bow in humble submission to God's will, knowing that He doeth all things well; and that precious in the sight of God is the death of His saints; and that His mercy endureth forever.

Written by order of the Church while in conference on the 4th Saturday in July, 1960, with the request that a copy be sent to the family, a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and a copy be recorded

in our church record.

Lucy Davis

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT
IN MEMORY OF
WILLIAM SIM GORDON

We the members of New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Patmos, Arkansas, desire to bow in humble submission to the Will of our Heavenly Father in calling our beloved Brother and Deacon of this Church from the walks of this life on June 4, 1960, at the age of 82 years and nearly eleven months.

Brother Gordon, was born in Columbia County, Arkansas, on June 9, 1877, and moved to Hempstead County, Arkansas, near Patmos, Arkansas, at an early age, where he was married to Martha Elizabeth Johnson, who survives him. In addition to Sister Gordon, he is also survived by five children, Captain Madison Gordon, Port Hueneme, Calif.; Lester L. Gordon, Nacogdoches, Texas; Mrs. Edna Simpson, North Little Rock, Arkansas; Mrs. Nora Davis, Little Rock, Arkansas; and Alvin Gordon, Hope, Arkansas, and three grandchildren.

Brother Gordon joined New Hope Primitive Baptist Church in October, 1902, and remained a faithful member until his death. He was elected Clerk of the Church in October, 1908, and served as Clerk continuously until 1958, when because of failing health of himself and Sister Gordon they went to live with their son, Lester L. Gordon of Nacogdoches, Texas. He was ordained to the office of Deacon in December, 1945, and served the Church as such until his death. He was a noble and lovely brother, faithful in his attendance and rejoiced to hear the Gospel prached. He was loved by the members of the Church, and highly esteemed and respected by all his neighbors. The great throng of brethren, sisters, neighbors and friends in attendance at his funeral service was evidence of the high esteem they all held for him. He was a kind and loving husband and father to his beloved wife and children. He loved them and they loved him. He will be greatly missed by his family, the brethren and sisters and all that knew him, but we are comforted with the feeling that their loss is his eternal gain.

His funeral service was conducted at New Hope Church in the presence of a large attendance of brethren, sisters, neighbors and friends, by his Pastor, Elder W. A. Speer, Sunday, June 5, 1960, and his body laid to rest in New Hope Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection of the body, when it shall be changed and made like unto His own body, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to be gathered home in glory to be with the Lord forever.

May the Lord bless, comfort and give a sweet Spirit of reconciliation to all that mourn his passing.

Resolved, That this Resolution be recorded on our Church Record, a copy sent to the family, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the Church in Conference on September 4, 1960.

Elder W. A. Speer, Moderator
Lillian Sutton, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

By request of Danville Primitive Baptist Church and others I write as follows:

WHEREAS, It has pleased Almighty God in his infinite wisdom to remove Sister Sallie Butcher by death from her husband, children, church and friends July 22, 1960. She married Charles Edward Butcher, August 19, 1906, and they were blessed to live together 53 years, 11 months and 11 days. Six children were born to this union: Mrs. Mae B. Hudson and Mrs. Ruby Adkins, Danville, Va.; Mrs. Mamie Wallace, Dry Fork, Va.; and Charles Pritchet Butcher, Richmond, Va. The two oldest children died in infancy.

Sister Butcher united with Danville Primitive Baptist Church November 30, 1904, and was baptized December 25, 1904. The writer has had the pleasure of serving Sister Butcher as pastor for twenty years. When not providentialy hindered she was always present at the Saturday night and Sunday services each month. She believed the doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God; and always met you with a smile. She will be greatly missed in her home and in her church. It was a pleasure to meet with Brother and Sister Butcher in their home, whose door was always open to the household of faith and other friends; which were many.

The funeral services were conducted at Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Home by Elders W. R. Dodd, Raymond S. Payne, D. V. Spangler and J. W. Golliam, amidst a large concourse of friends and relatives.

THEREFORE, Be it resolved that we at Danville Church bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Father for such a gift as was Sister Butcher. That we extend our deepest sympathy to the family and also to the members of Danville Church. May the Lord bless her family and cause them to know that he doeth all things well.

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family, a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication and a copy recorded in our church book.

Elder W. R. Dodd, Moderator
Russell T. Holley, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129 DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1961 NO. 1

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR SUBSCRIPTION DATE
IS 1/61
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

HE IS A FATHER INDEED

Though I see not a step before me,
God knoweth the way that I take;
And He will both guide and direct me,
And never will leave nor forsake.

He'll lead me all through the dark valley,
No evil shall make me to fear;
His rod and his staff, they shall comfort,
Through all my pilgrimage here.

He'll make me to walk in green pastures,
While the world with evil is rife;
Yea, surely his goodness and mercy,
Have followed me all of my life.

He knows all my cares and my conflicts,
My burdens He'll help me to bear;
He'll smooth the rough places before me,
And all of my sorrows will share.

Though foes may unite to o'erwhelm me,
With Jesus I'll ne'er be afraid;
He'll lead me beside the still waters,
And make me to rest in the shade.

And while the fierce tempests about me,
May rage and unceasingly roar,
And waves of affliction o'erwhelm me,
He'll bring my barque safely to shore.

And even before I may ask Him,
He knows all my wants and my need;
And He who has promised is faithful —
Oh He is a Father, indeed.

In mercy and love He will chasten,
He does it, my soul to refine;
Through sore persecution and trials,
That I in His likeness may shine.

And though He may slay me, I'll trust Him,
Still trust Him for all that's to come;
He'll lead me and guide me and keep me,
He never will leave me alone.

With a heart of thanksgiving I'll praise Him,
For blessings He daily bestows;
My cross I will bear, my burdens He'll share,
And I'll walk in the path that He chose.

Della Davis,
1168 High Ave.,
Topeka, Kansas

Rt. 1,
Ruffin, N. C.

To the Household of Faith;
Dearly Beloved:

I wish I could put on paper some of the things that have come to me this morning. Except I be guided by the spirit of him who said, "Be still and know that I am God", I am a failure. How prone I am to be forgetful of him who has saved us, and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works but according to the good pleasure of his will. I have to be brought down to be enabled to look unto the hills from whence cometh my help.

How dear to me is a little season when I am brought to think about the greatness and goodness of God; and to view some of his work, (His is a perfect work, out of the sight of man), and to feel he has granted me grace sufficient to wait upon him — which is a priceless treasure. When earthly trials and cares seem to have us all but defeated, feeling alone and far away from Him, we are made to cry, "Have mercy, O Lord, have mercy; I am such a sinner."; and we feel Him say, "Be still and know that I am God."

"On him almighty vengeance fell,
That must have sunk a world to hell;
He bore it for his chosen race,
And thus became their hiding place."

How wonderful to feel his promises applied to our case; to feel that all things work together for good to those

who love the Lord, to the called according to his purpose. I love to think that he is a God of purpose: How Ruth gleaned from the fields the handfulls of purpose which were left for her. Could another have gathered this food left that she should glean in the field of her kinsman? No! no! And aren't you glad it is that way? It brings joy to be made to feel that what He has in store for us, we shall receive — anything less or more would not be a perfect work; and, as I have said, "His work is perfect."

How we dread the cold, bleak seasons when we feel winter in our souls; and we can't read with understanding, and can't meditate. Should we try it only scatters away. It makes me feel so full of hypocrisy. I wonder if any of you have to get along as I do: longing for more evidence that I am one of the called, and longing to feel close to my Lord. Yet when dawn appears, we behold the rising of the sun in its beauty.

His ways are higher than our ways, as much so as the heavens are above the earth. May he keep us all in his loving care, and enable us to face whatever changes may occur in our home land; and may he be with all his servants, upholding them and causing them and all who love the truth, not to veer to the right nor to the left, but to hold fast that which is sound doctrine; and to ever declare him only as the true and living God. May he cause us to walk softly before him, and to desire to walk worthy of the vocation wherein we are called. "As many as are led by the Spirit, these are the sons of God." May we be made to feel it is good to be at the feet of our brethren, and to have no confidence in our flesh, or boasting in self, but have a fervent desire to praise God. He has done so much for sinners such as I.

Your little sister,
Mrs. Fred Cobb

CORRESPONDING CIRCULAR LETTER

The Lexington-Roxbury Association now in session with the First and Second Roxbury Churches, at Halcottsville, Delaware County, New York, Wednesday and Thursday, September 14 and 15, 1960, extend our love and fellowship in the Lord, to our sister churches of like precious faith, in the Lord.

As has been our custom, and is yet, we address our sister churches, at these meetings with a message called a Corresponding Circular Letter, and, when approved by the Association, is printed in the minutes of said meeting, hence going to different parts of our land, enabling other brethren to know a little of our feelings about the goodness and mercy of the blessed Lord to us until the present time.

We, in this part of the land, though small in number, are yet, we trust, walking by the eye of faith; and we feel to thank the blessed Lord, that the hope, we trust, we reecived many years ago, is yet the same, which we trust has been as an anchor to our soul both sure and steadfast. We of the churches of this Association, and other churches with whom we correspond, fellowship and live, had this hope given to us, (Yes, we will say given to us, for it cannot be bought, nor sold) and it has been as an anchor which has held us steadfast until now from being carried away in any manner.

We have been made able not to tolerate to any degree the free will or works of puny man. We do not understand that religion or salvation for the poor saved sinner has changed in the least since the dear Apostle Paul's day when he had to say, and did say, "By the grace of God, I am what I am". Also, speaking or writing to the Ephesian Brethren, the same concerning their salvation, "For by grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast". (Acts 8:35)

It is recorded that Philip preached Jesus unto the eunuch. Dear friends and kindred in Christ, what a wonderful

doctrine to the believer: Such comfort, such food, such rest, that they can rest from their own works as God did from His; Such rich promises in this gospel for the poor, needy, hungry and thirsty souls who feel at times unfit to raise their eyes toward Heaven. But the above words by the Apostle Paul concerning salvation, by the grace of God, and the gift of God, in this gospel tells us that the believer, by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath been made free from the law of sin and death. So when Jesus is preached it is the demonstration of the spirit and the power of God to the believer. Jesus being the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believe.

Oft times, when this gospel is preached, it is the means to those feeling stripped, wounded and half dead, that oil of grace and comfort is poured in their wounds, and their wounds are bound up with the kind words of the gospel of the blessed Son of God. He says, "I wound and I heal, though half dead", sure then there is some life yet. There is hope as long as there is some life. Jesus said, "My words they are spirit and they are life". So when Jesus is preached oft times the one half dead is restored to new life or more life. David said, "He restoreth my soul." Then one has been given new courage and more vigor. That spark of faith which was so small has been fanned to a flame. Though stripped, now has once more been clothed with the garments of salvation, faith, hope and charity. The love of God is now a burning zeal in this one's heart and bosom. This one has had a feast of fat things from the store house of our blessed Lord. He now can press on and on, and upward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We believe that when Philip preached Jesus unto the eunuch, the demonstration of the spirit and the power of God was there. Philip was a man of God, as we understand it, and it was in God's plan and purpose for Philip to take this message or gospel of the Son of God to this poor inquiring eunuch. We do not understand that Philip had any part in forming or fashioning him into a child of the living God. But that he was one of God's little ones that was in need of attention, and, Philip being a man of God, the Angel directed him to that place. So when Jesus was preached unto him there was a love and an anxious desire to follow the one he had heard preached. "See here is water what doth hinder me to be baptized," said the eunuch. Sounds as though he feared there might be something that could hinder him. But, dear ones, there was nothing to hinder him at that very time from following the one he had heard preached. It was of great interest to him; the same as it is to every believer.

Can we not understand a little how this poor eunuch felt? Did we not at one time wonder what did hinder us from being baptized? But all are made willing in the day of His power. So we feel that this eunuch's eyes had been opened at the preaching of Jesus. He could see Jesus, the way, the truth and the life, and his deaf ears were unstopped that he could hear the joyful sound of the gospel. He could see that being baptized as Jesus was, by immersion, was the right way. So in answer to the eunuch's question about being baptized, Philip said, "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest"; and he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God." This answer was satisfactory to Philip, and Philip baptized him, not by sprinkling a little water on his head, but the word of God tells us that they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch and he baptized him. As we understand it, he being dead to all works, except the workmanship of Christ, was a fit subject to be buried from his former life, to rise again to walk in newness of life in Christ; and as other believers, he could go on his way rejoicing.

To come back to the words, "And he preached unto him Jesus". To the heaven born soul, when Jesus is preached it

sets forth the greatest of all things to him. It sets forth one that can be a father to the fatherless and a husband to the widow. One that came into this sinful world to seek and to save them that were lost. So if we have ever known anything about being lost to all salvation amidst this sinful world, the flesh and the devil, then sometimes it gives us comfort that Jesus came to save such ones; for it is the living who see their lost condition. The dead in sin know not that they are lost, know not that they are in need of God's saving grace. But the lost sinner, it being made known to him by the Holy Spirit, "that the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests," as Jesus said, "but he hath no where to lay his head"; and he cannot enjoy or go along with the world. But at last when Jesus becomes their surety and their all, like the eunuch, when Jesus is preached unto them, they find though they are of themselves clothed with filthy rags, there is one now who has put on them the best robe, or the grace of God.

This gospel sets forth that every thing has been done for the poor lost sinner, for a complete salvation, regardless of kindred, tongue, place or condition. Though this eunuch was black, this blessed gospel of the Son of God could reach him and comfort him. Are not all black with sin as we stand in Adam? But there is set forth in this gospel a complete cure for this terrible condition of death. This poor creature was dead in sin because of our father Adam, we being his children and the fruit of his loins. But what a marvelous work has this mighty God set forth, that Jesus, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, a quickening spirit, should come and give life to the dead in sin. And after being quickened and made alive from the dead, they have the promise of God, which cannot fail, that such ones will be for ever cared for, and have this love of God shed abroad in their hearts that all things will work together for their good.

This God could control the lion and lock his jaws in the cage in Daniel's day, so there could be no harm done to this man of God. So, much to our comfort, we know that He can control the one, Satan, who like a roaring lion is going up and down through the earth seeking whom he may devour. But our God has said, "thus far shalt thou go and no farther, and there shalt thy proud waves be stayed." In this dark and cloudy day when it appears as though darkness has covered the earth and gross darkness the people, thanks be to God there is yet a few whom we humbly trust have been delivered from the power of this darkness and translated into the glorious kingdom of the Son of God. To such ones the time of coming together, such as these two days of gospel preaching or the preaching of Jesus, the same as Philip preached to the eunuch, is looked forward to as a feast of some crumbs that fall from the Master's table. Our Lord is tongue and utterance to His servants that come laden with the precious gospel from different parts of our land. We feel we need our pure mind stirred up in way of remembrance, that we may remember all the way the blessed Lord has brought us these years, and be in remembrance of His power and promises to continue with the poor and needy in all the future, even in the furnace. If the most severe trials should be their lot, nothing can hinder Jesus from being there, if it is His will. Our God has said, "The flame shall not kindle upon thee." The deep sea or the whale's belly was not beyond the reach of this God.

Dear beloved in the Lord, — this blessed Son of God, a word from Him can calm the sea, and He can say, "To the north give up, and to the south keep not back, bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth, even every one that is called by my name." This Jesus could change the doubting Thomas very quickly that he could own Him as his God. Quickly and plainly was Thomas made to see that

there was nothing for him to do, as he had thought there was something that he must do before he could believe. But when Jesus made himself known to him, and called Thomas by name, there were no works for him to do but to own Him as his God. How true, his sheep hear his voice and they follow him, and own him as their God. We humbly desire to say, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ", which according to His abundant mercy, has begotten us unto a lively hope, (or a living hope,) to an inheritance incorrutible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, we trust, reserved in heaven, where if we are his, we shall see Jesus as He is, and be like Him and be satisfied.

"Now may the God of all grace who hath called us unto his eternal glory, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you."

"To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever." AMEN.

Amasa J. Slauson, Moderator
Edward K. Adsit, Clerk
Woodrow Bellinger, Ass't. Clerk

CIRCULAR LETTER

To the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Salisbury Church:

Dear Brethren: It is a great blessing that we are brought together in associations when we are prompted by the love of God and the desire to see our brethren. Ministers are favored to meet and to hear each other in these meetings, who otherwise would be deprived of these blessings. In preaching and hearing the gospel in these meetings, the pure heart is often stirred up; and love flows from heart to heart.

There are those who would raise their voices against associations, and charge them with being dictatorial bodies, detrimental to the welfare of God's people. We do not so view them, but by experience have found them to be a medium of correspondence among brethren. These meetings should be what the name implies — association.

> "Not to control the church of God,
> Nor rule, or bind her sons;
> But to associate below
> With Zion's little ones."

Associations among Old School Baptists date back almost to the establishing of the first churches in America. These bodies were not established to rule over the churches. Most of them have articles of faith declaring that every church is independent in matters of discipline; and that no body, or bodies of men have authority to infringe on their sovereignty. The principles should be strictly adhered to, and no organization allowed to impose on a church in such matters.

No association should overly burden themselves with much business. Yet whatever business is required should be attended to faithfully, as we are commanded not to be slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. The business of an association consists of hearing from the churches and correspondents. Most trouble among brethren arises in the churches, not in associations: whenever these things arise they should be settled where they start — in the churches.

A church can be as orthodox in doctrine and order out of an association, as in one. It is the right of church bodies to decide for themselves. We know of churches that we consider as sound in the faith as any church, which do not belong to any association.

Wherever we find meekness, gentleness, longsuffering, patience, temperance, and brotherly love abounding, together with steadfastness in the faith, we will find a wonderful manifestation of God's love abounding; and whether in associations or churches, we will find peace among brethren. We are commanded to mark them that cause division among us, and when we find one sowing the seeds of discord among brethren, whether it be in attacking associations among us, or any other principle contrary to the things we have

mentioned, we may know that that person is puffed up in the flesh.

May the God of all grace bless us to walk humbly before our God, and his people; to hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; to be kind one to another; and, favored with the spirit of gentleness, forgiving one another; and, confessing our faults one to another, loving one another with that great love wherewith God has loved us. And to also, "Be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

I have been attending associations for over forty years, and have found the most of them lovely meetings indeed; and my prayer is that God will continue to bless in the future as he has in the past.

"O may we ever walk in him,
And nothing know beside;
Nothing desire, or ought esteem
But Jesus crucified."

(Written by Elder D. V. Spangler, and ordered by the Association to be sent to the Signs for publication.)

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN DR. HOOPER AND ELDER GOLD

(Continued)

It seems to me, that when you are discussing a question as important as that of a call and qualifications for preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ, that when you can do no better than to get on such a high strain of ridicule, as you did, it betrays your want of anything better. Men are apt to exhibit their best wares on public days. For you to so treat the great Bible teaching, that preaching is a gift of the Holy Spirit, as to hint that if one has that gift and is not perfected in the schools of human learning, he would make the ridiculous mistakes you are stating, only shows your high estimate of human learning, in fitting one to preach, and also what you suppose preaching would be without the learning of the theological schools.

I might as well here remark, that since you complain that I have willfully made a false statement as to the kind of young men you sent to your theological schools — that is, that if one should rely on your statement — he would conclude that you take young men that do not profess to have grace, and after giving them a certain amount of biblical training, you send them out to preach: If you will examine my article you will see, that after some general discussion of that question, I make this statement: "But you say after one is certainly called to preach, can not the schools polish him," etc. I know not how to make a fairer statement than that one. If I were disposed to state matters falsely, there is so much that to me is objectionable in your teaching, that there is no necessity for it.

But, as to the young man who is impressed to go to the heathen. He is poor, and the question of money comes up. Let us consult the standard authority, the Bible. Surely, it tells us of boards and combinations of men, for raising money to send such preachers to convert the heathen. Surely, you will find plain their instructions to the churches for making regular contributions to send such preachers to the heathen. Surely, as they can not preach except they be sent, you will find in the Bible, precept and example, that justify boards of men in preparing, sending, directing and controlling the movements of these missionaries. But, lo! not a word of such things is found there. One turns to you and asks where this system of converting heathens came from? You tell him that your standard authority, Andrew Fuller, originated it about one hundred years ago, and, "it is admitted that his writings and his actions gave the first impulse to the grand modern movement for the conversion of the world: that by those movements the wilderness and the solitary place have been made to blossom as the rose," etc. The enquirer says, Jesus we know, and Paul we know, but who is Andrew Ful-

ler? You reply, O "he is our standard authority, in preach, both in this country and England, and has been ever since his works appeared."

By the way, in your last articles, why did you not refer more to your standard authority, Mr. Fuller? Weak as you acknowledge my article to be, if it had the effect in any sense of turning you to the Bible, please read this one carefully, and perhaps you will begin to think that your departure from the Bible to follow Andrew Fuller, in his cunningly devised fables, has brought such sad and lamentable divisions into the Baptist ranks, that it would be much better to go back to the old landmarks, and abide steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and ways, where you would be sure of finding peace and fellowship with the whole household of faith.

How, then, shall the young man go to the heathen, if he is not sent? I say he must be sent, but who sends him? Jesus says, "All power is given unto me in heaven and earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28:18-20. If Jesus has all power, in heaven and earth, no man, nor combination of men, has any power to send men to preach to any one. He never says to any one, he can send somebody else. He commands the person to go himself. When he impresses one, or sends him, he will go with him unto the end of the way. Do you not suppose he will provide some way for him? "And he said unto them, when I sent you without purse or scrip and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, nothing." Luke 22:35. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. 6:33. But, you say these were days of miracles, and such days have passed, which amounts to about this: these are Bible cases, and therefore they are out of fashion now. Is not the Lord the same Lord now, that he was then? Do not the same miracles, that gave divine proof to the Scriptures then, still support and sanction the Scriptures to us as the same word of God, just as true and mighty now as then? But why do we not have miracles now, as there were then? Because those miracles speak until there is a new dispensation. Just as a foundation once being laid for a house, remains while there is a house on it. So the Scriptures are introduced and founded on miracles, and but one foundation is needed. Every new dispensation must rest on a foundation sufficient to uphold its claims. The miracles that attest the Scriptures to be of God, and the twelve apostles to be sent in the name of Christ, are as sufficient proof today of the divine authority of the Scriptures and the divine commission of the apostles, as they were on the day of their performance. A new dispensation would have to be sustained by miracles. But when the dispensation is once established on miracles properly authenticated, no more miracles are demanded to support it. The gift of tongues was a sign in the days of the apostles, but this was a sign to the unclean or unbelievers, and to speak in a known tongue was better than to speak in an unknown one. In the gospel now, every subject of the kingdom of Christ has had the miracle of grace performed on him, of having his feet taken out of the mire and clay, and put upon a rock, and a new tongue given him with which he makes his confession unto salvation. He also can handle serpents and not be hurt, in the sense that, "the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall lay his hand on the cockatrice's den." Isaiah 11:8.

Because I insist that the Bible is of as full and binding force now as it ever was, is therefore no reason why you should require a performance of miracles by him who comes in the name of Christ. What did the apostles enjoin on

those they taught? Was it to work miracles? No. It was to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Jude, 3rd verse, "Behold, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto and exhort you, that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. See II Tim. 3:14-17; also I Tim. 4:16. "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine, continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." What shall be done with those that come contrary to the doctrine of Christ? See Rom. 4:16-17. "Now I beseech you brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them." Again, see II John 10-11 verses. "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." Then when one comes to us the question is not, can he work a miracle, but it is this: Does he bring the true doctrine, the doctrine of Christ? If he does not, we are not so much as to receive him into our house, much less bid him God speed, by sending him to another's house. For thereby we would become partakers of his evil deeds.

Then it would be necessary to inquire of your young man if he brings the true doctrine, the gospel of Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation.

I should rejoice to see the gospel preached to the heathen in all lands; but my trouble is, that the men you send there do not preach it. Preaching the gospel is such a dispensation that one man cannot commit it to another, nor restrain him from preaching. Woe is me if I preach not the gospel, is its impelling power.

Do you bring that doctrine? Let us consider the company you keep and judge from that. You lay down a broad challenge to any Old Baptist, to find one single sentence in any of the publications of any of the four orthodox denominations of the world, which denominations are, Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Missionary Baptists, as you say. That is, you affirm, that they are all sound and true, holding the gospel, and you endorse all that they publish, and defy any one to show that any one of them has put forth one sentence that teaches salvation by works. You agree to shut your mouth if it can be shown that any one of them has ever done this. You thus link yourself with them, and are to be regarded as endorsing them. Let us take up the Methodists. In their creed, which ought to teach what they believe, and I suppose does, one can find the teaching that a Christian, one truly born of God, can fall from grace and be forever lost. If that be true, his salvation depends on his works of some sort, and they ought to be good. He must, according to that teaching, keep himself from falling by good works, and if he can fall away and be lost by bad works, that is if the Christian is left in that sense to go to heaven or hell by his own works, I think you stand fairly convicted. Now, suppose your young man comes to us endorsing this doctrine, can we receive him into our house as one bringing the doctrine of Christ? I say not. Well, your Presbyterian brethren hold to the practice of infant sprinkling for baptism, and further hold, that it is the door by which children are introduced into the covenant of grace. This seems like works puts them in the way of being saved, and much as I respect all these people as people, I can not see how they are teaching all things commanded. Do you endorse their sprinkling for baptism? You say that it is not essential to salvation. We say it is essential in order to abide steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. Take the Episcopalians, who teach that when a child is sprinkled it is born again, or regenerated, and made an heir of Christ's kingdom by that act, and you have a denomination, you call orthodox, that hold and practice that when a

priest sprinkles a child, he thereby procures it the new birth. Is this not performing works to be saved? It is clear that one cannot be saved without regeneration, and this act of the priest procures it, so they say. I can not call the act of sprinkling a baptism at all. But they hold that spurious thing, sprinkling, for baptism, and claim that it can do so much more than scriptural baptism can, that it seems dangerous and shocking enough to me. If your young man comes endorsing this doctrine, or those that do endorse it, "neither receive him into your house nor bid him God speed."

As to your own denomination, it presents a creed which seems to put things together, which are separated. You say, "you hold a doctrine of election not inconsistent with man's free agency;" that is grace that is dependent on works — man is dead in sins, yet can hear the gospel — his carnal mind is enmity to God, and can not be subject to his law, and yet that same mind or will comes to Christ.

You object to my statement, that man's will (the carnal mind) never comes to Christ or wants him by saying that then no man ever comes to Christ "willing." Do you suppose it is the same will which comes to Christ that he speaks of, "And ye will not come to me that ye might have life." John 5:50. By your reasoning, it is the same will that comes to him, that will not come — no change in the man — no new birth. When it is said, "As many as received Christ, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:12-13. If any suppose that the will of man comes unchanged to Christ, I could not receive him. Paul tells us in Rom. 9:16, "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." Does the sinner then come to Christ "unwilling?" "Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again." John 3:7. God gives his people a new will, that desires to come to Christ — that hungers for him and thirsts for him. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Psalms 110:3. David knew a corrupt will, and depraved affection did not, could not, desire Christ. Therefore he says, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Psalms 51:10. Do you say there is no change in the soul of man, when he comes to Christ? The natural man is nothing but a sinner, while "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." I John 3:17. The spirit of a Christian is willing, but the flesh is weak. In me, that is my flesh, dwelleth no good thing, while there is in the Christian a mind to serve God, or with the mind he serves the law of God. See Rom. 7:15-25. The Christian, then, has a mind to serve God, but it does not come from the flesh, for that serves the law of sin, but it comes from God. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. 2:13. They are renewed in the spirit of their mind.

You state that man is dead in sins. — Well if he is dead why are some quickened and not others? You say God saves some of sovereign electing love, and strives by law and gospel to save others; but not overcoming their opposition, leaves them to perish, &c. What is it that saves some and does not save others, if all are equally dead? Would not the power that quickens one sinner and raises him, quicken another? Do you mean that the same power of law and gospel, that strives with some and fails to overcome them, is the same power that saves others? Do you indeed believe the Lord strives to quicken a man and fails? If you strive to do a thing, it is good proof that you wish to do it, and would if you could. Is man stronger than the Lord, and does he defeat the Lord? The Scriptures teach, "that the Son quickeneth whom he will." John 5:21.

The Father gives them to Jesus, and it is not his will that one of them should perish. It is the spirit that quickeneth, and not law nor gospel. I do not think the law is ever spiritually applied, in its killing power, except to God's elect; nor the fullness of the gospel ever revealed except to those slain by this powerful application of the law. Who begins salvation the spirit or the sinner? Do you say the Lord does? Then if the Lord begins it, will he not continue it, unto completion? "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Phil. 1:6. In whom does he begin and perform this work? God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." II Thes. 2:13. Again, "According to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." II Tim. 1:9. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Eph. 1:4.

Then God chose every one of his people in Christ before the foundation of the world. "But of Him, (God) are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." I Cor. 1:30. Upon what foreseen good work can one be chosen? Oh, but you say, you believe this doctrine of election, as much as I do, and your people rejoice in it as much as I do. Well, I earnestly sought such people, while I was with you, and heartily wish I could have found them. Here and there I found some, but they were greatly in the minority. Those that I found complained bitterly of the general preaching of your denomination, as being rotten and void of comfort to them. How can the doctrine of election be precious to you, from two reasons: One is you think we preach it in "unguarded quantities." If it is so good how can you have too much of it, and if it be so good how can it be dangerous? Secondly, you say you believe in election as much as we do, yet you impose certain conditions and restrictions on it, which if true, would clog and quite annul it. Hence instead of preaching election, you wish for something else to be preached, and if something else be preached, it is in contradiction to election. The gospel is, yea, yea, and not yea and nay. We do not know that the apostles preached but one gospel, and if you come preaching any other doctrine, or if your young man should come preaching any doctrine, but the doctrine of Christ, we should not receive him.

It is about as hard to reconcile grace and works, predestination and free agency to each other, as it is to reconcile your two texts.

You say that the great difference between us is, that you hold to the use of human means and instrumentalities in carrying into effect God's purposes, while we do not. Then in a few sentences you state the strange position, that God implants in man's heart all the impressions that lead to these human efforts. That is like your creed that holds an election consistent with man's free agency. Now for me to reconcile these conflicting statements, and your standard authority with the Bible, is a task too hard, nor do I believe that you will ever do it. Your human efforts of course are something not of the Bible, but of man, and for you to attempt to shelter them and yourself under cover of the Bible, which does not teach them, is indeed the practice of many. There is no practice so preposterous, that is done in the name of religion, but men claim authority from the word of God for it. That would give it currency. But it seems to me that the Bible plainly teaches all that it requires of man, and in laying down expressly his duty, it positively forbids his doing anything of a different nature, or after a different pattern. Can man originate any scheme of his own, employing human means for executing it, and then claim that God has implanted the impressions leading to it, in his mind? Is it not true

that when the Lord implants any impression on a man's mind, and causes him to carry it out, the conduct resulting from it will be in accord and harmony with God's revealed will in the Bible? Paul says, "If any preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." Gal. 1:9. When Christians are exhorted to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, it is "because God works in them both to will and to do of his own good pleasure." Here, then, God works in his people, both to will and to do, and not of their wills nor according to their minds, but of his own good pleasure. I agree with you, that herein a great difference does lie between us. It seems to me, nothing can be true obedience, unless it be from the Holy Spirit, who brings the things of Christ to the saint, revealing Christ to him, enabling him to pray, to repent, working faith in his heart, giving him the adoption of sonship, sealing him as an heir of salvation, opening the Scriptures to him, refreshing him with his visitations, entertaining him with the sweet mysteries of grace, strengthening his feeble spirit, and giving him liberty in the Lord. Any religion that is not of the Holy Spirit is a form of godliness at best, but a denying of the power thereof. Unless one abide in Christ he brings forth no fruit that remains. If we abide in him, the beloved eats his own pleasant fruits in his own garden. If your young man come bringing not this doctrine, how shall we receive him? The Lord's name is called on by all his people. I agree with you, that by anticipation or election, the Lord calls a people that are yet in their sins, for I do not think he calls any other sort. In the proper time he sends the gospel to them. This gospel is foolishness to the Greeks and a stumbling block to the Jews; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the wisdom of God and the power of God. The word comes to them (by preaching) in demonstration of the Spirit and of power in the Holy Ghost and much assurance.

Christ has all power and sends his preachers. The Holy Ghost goes with them, and applies the word and waters it and seals the heir of salvation. The word is mixed with faith in them that hear, and with the heart they believe unto righteousness. When the apostles went forth preaching to the Gentiles, "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Acts 13:48. Haters of election would have it, as many as believed were ordained to eternal life because they believed, or because it was foreseen that they would believe. Not so, it seems to me. The Lord had set them apart to salvation before the foundation of the world, and now sent his angels, the preachers, to gather them into the gospel net. So to the end of time, he sends his preachers to gather his people into the fold. By nature they are dead in sins. The Spirit quickens them. Then they are ready to perish, and the great gospel trumpet is blown, and they that are ready to perish shall come.

Your impression, I believe, is that the word, or letter of the gospel, conveys the Holy Spirit, while I think the Spirit carries the word. The word is called the sword of the Spirit. Now does man wield his sword or does the sword wield the man? You say man controls his sword. Then does not the Holy Spirit control the sword which is the word of God? "And the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God." Eph. 6:17. The Spirit knows the mind of God and applies the word rightly. That Spirit is in the Lord's people, and abides with them forever and guides them into all truth. Now do you not think that his company and guidance will effectually direct all the Lord's preachers when he sends them to the heathen?

P. D. Gold

(Concluded next month)

A LIGHT TO GUIDE

1320 Aspin Street,
Danville, Va.

Dear Brother Spangler:

It is life to believe our doctrine; life is the cause of believing. It is most glorious to me, but I get so low spirited and feel afraid I have deceived these good people: this is awful to think about. It makes us know that if we had hope in this life only, we would be of all men most miserable. But, in spite of our hard trials and afflictions, we have a hope eternal, of which Christ is the head. His Spirit stands between us and the world. I do believe the Lord our Saviour works his sovereign will, and makes himself known to whomsoever He will; and goes before them, and teaches them.

Once, when my children were babies, my husband's health went bad, and I wanted to go to work. I dreamed of seeing a candle burning in the mill in the part I was experienced in; so I felt at ease to make an effort, and I worked a long time. Then they built a new mill, and I was experienced in that; afterwards I wanted to change, but I couldn't help but meditate on my seeing the candle burning where I was. My work ran short and we had to divide time, so I asked my foreman if I could try the new job, and if I didn't have success, would he take me back; and he said he would. The words were spoken in my breast, and said that the light you saw was in you to guide you whereever you go.

Our Saviour is alive for evermore. I don't feel worthy of the clouds of witnesses with which he deals with us. Once I went to an association, couldn't go much, but went in the evening; and I remember one sermon. I didn't get the brother's name, but he preached to me. He told us these trials were appointed to us; but my flesh tries to think there is no need for them. We just don't know, for we are poor, weak creatures, dependent on an alwise God. We can't even trust Him! but we beg for grace to trust the Lord in an acceptable way.

Sister Butcher's passing took my strength as much as anything ever did. I believe we really loved each other with a sweet fellowship. We were of one mind, and if we ever differed it didn't seem to bother. She was loved by so many.

I hadn't been well, and I did not think I would be able to go to the association at Gretna, but did go each day. I thought it was a wonderful meeting. We do appreciate our people visiting our meetings. We appreciated Brother Rhodes' interest; and I feel its wonderful to be moved to go a distance, especially such a long distance, to be at these meetings. They are wonderful. I feel that the Lord has wonderfully blessed us with peaceful meetings; and if I know my heart, I feel thankful.

A sister, I hope.
Mary J. Patterson

PASTOR VERY FEEBLE

1168 High Avenue,
Topeka, Kansas

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing three dollars for my subscription to *The Signs of the Times,* and would add a word of gratitude and thanksgiving for the dear paper which comes laden with messages of comfort and encouragement from the dear saints of the Household of Christ scattered abroad. The Editorials are truly a feast to the soul. We here, of the last church of the once Kansas Association, seldom are privileged to meet in church capacity any more, because of the inability of our Pastor, who is also my dear Uncle, Elder L. L. Schenck, to meet with us, as he has been unable to do for over a year. He is very feeble and frail and will have reached the age of ninety-one on the 21st of November. He served us faithfully for many years.

We are blessed to have Elder Winfery, of Liberal, Kansas, visit us occasionally

who is a very able speaker and much loved among all lovers of the truth.

I am enclosing some thoughts that brought comfort, strength and encouragement in a time of deep distress and trouble when the way before me seemed dark and almost unsurmountable.

In bonds of fellowshipand hope,

One of the least if one at all.
Della Davis

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

(Exodus 37:1)

There are three arks spoken of in the Scriptures, all have a meaning to the Lord's people when they are revealed by His Spirit. "For the Spirit searcheth all things, Yea, the deep things of God." (1) The ark that Noah built, wherein eight Souls were saved from the waters. (2) The Ark of bulrushes where the infant Moses was preserved, and (3) God commanded this same Moses to build the ark of the covenant. It is this ark about which I wish to speak.

First: Let us notice, that it must be just so long, and so wide, and so high; was to be made of shittem wood, except the cover, which was just the size of the chest, and was of pure gold. Four rings were to be cast in the sides of the ark for the staves of shittim wood by which the ark was to be carried. On the lid of pure gold they were to be two cherubims of beaten work. Moses was commanded to send for Bazaleel, for the Lord had said, "I have made him cunning in this work." All the wood was to be overlaid with gold. The ark was made for the purpose of containing the testimony of God. Now all this work was carried out to the letter according to the pattern shown to Moses on the mountain.

I see in this a wonderful picture representing the church collectively (and what applies to the church as a whole is of interest to all those who are members of the mystical body of our Lord). It was by the decree of God in every particular, and for each individual whose sins are covered, and whose hearts contain the law of God. This ark was to the eye a golden box: the cover of pure gold was to represent the love of God; and the cherubims of beaten work represents the suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ in his humanity for the sins of his people. "There I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat." To this day it is just as plain to those whose sins were covered, as it was in the wilderness over six thousand years ago.

The ark had to be carried about, for it had not the ability of its own to go any place, but was carried. Today the true servant of God must be carried about by the Spirit. The staves will never be removed until we are carried in the Holy of Holies, as was the ark in the temple at Jerusalem in its final resting place. As the ark of Noah had only one light from above, so today the only comfort is at the mercy seat where God communes with us when we are carried by the spirit in communion with God.

There was no object held more sacred by the Jews than the ark of God. Before it the Jordan was divided, and the walls of Jericho fell down flat. It was carried about from place to place. It was taken by the Philistines, but it proved not the same to them; in every house into which it was carried it produced death instead of life. The word of God has no place among them, and they had something on their hands and did not know how to get rid of it. They finally resorted to divination to test whether it was really of God. They took two cows that had never born yoke, with calves by their sides, which they shut up, and they hitched the cows to a new cart, and placed the ark upon it, just to see what the cows would do. According to nature they would not have done anything, but, contrary to nature, they started across the field to the land of Israel. Even though the oxen shook the cart, none could steady it; and they took it safely to where it belonged.

I think now of the many oxen in treading out the corn, leaving their

calves or families at home, lowing along the way, sometimes shaking the ark, often not realizing that they were being carried without scrip; and many times without purse, they went in obedience to the word of the Lord. "Thou shalt go to all that I send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak." Some of the Elders know what I am talking about; and all true believers will know what a glorious type the Lord hath shown us.

In the ark of God we look up and see the pure gold as a covering (gold to be pure must pass through the fire). Above it is the beaten work of one piece, as the one was that was despised and rejected among men, hated by the world, and crucified. Think of the agony He went through in the Garden. "O my Father! if it be possible let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not my will but thine be done."

Soon we that are of the dust of the earth; we poor mortals that have been covered with the righteousness of Jesus; we that have been born of the Spirit, heirs of God, sons of God, members of the body of Christ, we, like the ark, will be carried to the silent city of the dead, as the ark was carried in the Temple at Jerusalem, and the staves will be removed, and we will soon be forgotten by the world. No doubt there will be rejoicing, as precious are the dead that die in the Lord. The world will rejoice in their passing, as they did when they crucified our Lord. Like the ark of the testament there was rejoicing among the Philistines when they saw the word of God leave their camp. When the word of God gets in among the work-system of today it upsets their whole system. They have forgotten grace; and any one can come to Him whether they know him or not. No doubt they would gamble today to get rid of it, as it is unto them foolishness, and a stumbling block. But how the Lord's people do rejoice, when He causes them to sit down together, and they hear the story that never grows old; the story of our dear Saviour who was crucified, who laid down his life for them, and who leads all the heirs of God into the banqueting house under the banner of love.

Now as the ark was carried about from place to place, like the Son of man, "Having no place to lay his head," was crucified and laid in the tomb: so the ark was carried in the Holy of Holies in the temple, and from there it has disappeared. History accounts of it was lost, or burned, but it is evident to me that God took care of it, as he did Elijah, Enoch, Moses, and Jesus. Now we turn to Revelations 11:19, "And the temple of God was opened in Heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament." This shows to the children of God that the type given in the wilderness was safe; and we rest assured, that all it represented here in earth is safe in the hands of God. May the Lord be praised.

Elder George L. Weaver
2802 Marium Terrace
Huntington 5, W. Va.

DURAND AND LESTER
HYMN AND TUNE BOOKS

There is another limited edition of these Hymn and Tune books available. See page 274 of the December issue for price and address.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND
(To November 1, 1960)

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Raymond Clayton, Ky.	5.00
Wallace Clayton, Ky.	1.00
H. R. Toney, Tenn.	5.00
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Elmer Hastings, Md.	8.00

Danville, Virginia January, 1961

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EDITORIAL

ANOTHER NEW YEAR BEGINS

Under our heading, "Voices of the Past", we are re-publishing a portion of Elder Gilbert Beebe's editorial, "Reflections on Entering the New Year", which was published in the January 1, 1856 issue of the Signs. We do this because of the wonderful thoughts which are presented; and feel that our brethren will find them reflective of their own.

To all those who rejoice in the finished work of Jesus, and love the doctrine of God our Saviour, and who have no confidence in the works of the flesh as a means of salvation, we send Christian greetings at the beginning of the New Year, and of the 129th volume of the Signs of the Times.

We endeavor to publish only those things which are in accord with scriptural teaching, and confirmed in the individual quickening unto the knowledge of the truth of the Lord's people. We know that they are not interested in the various "winds of doctrine", or vain philosophies; and for this reason we do not attempt to pattern after the wisdom of men. We trust that we are not corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. (2 Cor. 11:3)

From our readings, and from various conversations, however, we know that many do not know this simplicity, and are turned to that which seems plausable to them. It is not difficult to understand that the doctrine of God our Saviour is one thing, and that the doctrines of men are another; for when men attempt to conform the truth of Jesus to their way of thinking, they invariably try to explain away the truth, and give it a meaning conformable to the acceptable opinions of their own.

As an instance of this, we quote some of what we recently read in Ruter's History; in which is given the articles of faith, which, he said, were generally held by Christians:

"The general resurrection of the whole human race, and the distribution of eternal rewards and punishments, according to the respective deserts of each individual, constituted another most important article of belief; 1 Cor. 15:22; Matt. 25:31; since upon this point rests the whole moral obligation of the Christian system."

To the enlightened believer in Jesus as the Saviour of those the Father gave him, there is much in the above that is contrary to the gospel; and, of course, contrary to the teaching of Jesus and his apostles. To such a believer these sentiments would not seem so out of place, had it been an account of some

"system" other than Christian. But, in the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ, (which is left on record as being the doctrine of God our Saviour), it is impossible to reconcile such as being anywhere near the doctrine of the Bible.

The only truth we find in the above, is the resurrection of the whole human race. This is taught in the Bible. But the distribution of eternal rewards and punishments according to the respective deserts of each individual, is positively not taught there. Neither is the moral obligation of Christians based upon a system of rewards and punishments.

If salvation depended upon the works of the creature rather than upon the redemptive work of Jesus, then there might be a distribution of rewards. But no man who has been born again believes any such thing, for he does not find it in his enlightened reading and understanding of the Scriptures, nor in his faith of which Jesus is the author and finisher. The whole tenor of the GOSPEL shows that salvation is by grace, and not by works.

If upon the prospects of reward rests the whole moral obligation of men, then Christ is entirely unnecessary. But the truth is that Christ came to do for his people that which **his people could not do for themselves,** yet which was **absolutely necessary** to be done in order to salvation. Therefore these have no works for which to receive rewards, Christ having performed it all. God gave his Son to redeem his people from their sins: it is the Son's imputed righteousness which brings his people justified before Him. There is positively no basis for the doctrine of the reward of eternal life for the works of any creature under the gospel "system".

As to punishment, were it not for the redemption of the Lord's people by the Son of God, both the Lord's people and all others would receive the just sentence of death without hope of eternal life. How true it is that ALL deserve this! But God himself provided for the salvation of his own beloved through his Son. Where, then, is the reward that men claim? The doctrine that heaven is for those who deserve it through their works, is not Bible doctrine.

The moral obligation of men is not incited by God's promise of eternal rewards and punishments. The fact is that all were condemned in the fall, and none have redemptive power necessary to reconcile themselves with God. As creatures of God, men owe Him obedience; and acknowledgement that he is their maker. God's laws to men had the purpose of showing the guilt and corruption of men. No man was ever able to keep them, or even a part of them. Men failed in them all! Upon what, then, do they base their claim of reward?

Christians do not need a promise of reward in order to keep up moral obligations. They have a greater incentive than this. How surely is it in the hearts of those who have been brought out of darkness into the marvelous light, to praise and adore him. They have no expectation of being rewarded for such, but are already blessed to love and adore Him because of what he is to them. Their works are the result of the Spirit of Him who dwells in them, as fruits of the Spirit; and certainly not works of the creature with the hope of reward.

We know that most of the so-called Christian world believes in the system of rewards and punishments. So do all other religions. But it is difficult to understand how that men read the Bible, yet cannot determine that salvation is by Jesus Christ, and not by works of men. It would be unbelievable to say that intelligent men are able to read other papers or documents without understanding what is conveyed in the phrases and sentences; yet it is so evident that these same men read the Bible, and make a study of it, without comprehending its meaning. Could it be that Peter was speaking of such when he said concerning the epistles of his beloved brother Paul: "As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard

to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also other scriptures, unto their own destruction." Is it not a fact that the truth is so far above the comprehension of the carnal mind, that men read into the Scriptures what they want there, and dismiss the truth with a, "It just can't mean that"?

We do not mean to be understood that we believe that men should be able to understand the mystery of godliness, and believe spiritual things themselves. We know there must first be a being born again, a quickening, a work of God, before men can see the kingdom of God; or believe that which pertains to this kingdom. But our concern is, How can men profess to be believers in and followers of Jesus, and profess to hold the Bible sacred, and yet deny much of what is taught by them?

Men prefer what seems right to them. Those taught of the Lord will have nothing other than what he has taught them. We may be sure that God is not a compromising God. He is not mocked. Everything contrary to the declarations of God will fail.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

REFLECTIONS ON ENTERING THE NEW YEAR

The Lord God of Israel changes not, therefore we are not consumed. The bounds of our habitations and number of our days are immutably fixed in his irrevocable decrees. The measure of our happiness in this world and in the world which is to come, depends on his gracious purpose, and infinitely wise administration. His providence governs the revolving seasons of our years, causing the earth to unbosom to us that succor which our earthly nature requires for sustenance and for comfort, in such measure and manner as seems good in his sight; while from the ample fullness which there is in Christ Jesus our Lord, he, by his Spirit, constantly administers to the spiritual necessities of all those who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

It is also consoling to know that the afflictions, trials and conflicts of his children, while in the house of their pilgrimage, do not rise up out of the earth, nor come upon them by chance. An even balance is poised in his hand, and the weight, measure and duration of all the sufferings of his children is proportioned with the most exact and infallible certainty to that amount of grace which he bestows on them, whereby they are not only sustained in their deepest afflictions and trials, but made to realize the greatest profit and benefit from them all. From all their conflicts with the world, the flesh, and the devil, they shall emerge in triumph as more than conquerors through him that loved them and gave himself for them. "These light afflictions," says an inspired apostle, "which are but for a moment, do work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not on the things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." The trials, afflictions, losses and bereavements that we encounter in these vile bodies, are seen, they are visible to the natural sensibilities of the flesh, and therefore our carnal nature writhes under them; and while we look at them, like Peter when he looked on the heaving billows of the sea, we begin to sink; but when our faith looks up to Jesus, and we see his hand outstretched for our deliverance, we glory in that tribulation which afforded opportunity for the cheering revelation.

The raging billows on which we are tossed are seen, but faith that looks to Christ is the evidence of things that are not seen. This is the blessed privilege of all the sons of God, to look on things which are not temporal, but

eternal. Our fleshly powers, including all the powers, mental and physical, which are born of the flesh, and all that we can have without a new birth, are totally blind to all the things of the Spirit of God, and only able to look on things which are temporal; but that life which is born of God, can discern the things of the Spirit of God. How essential it is then to our happiness that we heed the admonition of the apostle, to crucify the old man with his affections and lusts, and that we sow to the Spirit, that of the Spirit we may reap life everlasting.

Our prospect for the future is involved in the things which are not seen. Our God leads his people in paths that they have not known. To him, with the most unwavering confidence, do we desire to unreservedly commit all that we have, and all that we are, and if it be not his good pleasure to make our periodical a medium of comfort, edification and profit to his dear children, we have no desire that its publication should be continued. But from the assurances received from many thousands of our brethren and sisters, and from every perceptible indication of his will, we feel encouraged to move forward in the work.

As to our designs, we intend, as the Lord shall give us ability, to labor for the edification of the saints, the dissemination of the truth as it is in Jesus, and in opposition to heresy, will-worship, superstition, bigotry and idolatry. Nothing affords us more real pleasure than to be employed in waiting upon the bride, the Lamb's wife, with the consciousness that in so doing, we have the authority and approval of him who walks amidst the golden candlesticks, and holds the stars in his right hand. We will spare no labor or reasonable expense to make the forthcoming volume more useful, interesting and edifying, than any of the former volumes. In attempting to carry out this design, we shall rely much on the aid of our brethren and sisters who contribute to our columns. Much will depend on the character, spirit and temper manifested in their communications, as well as the tone and character of the editorial articles. All subjects vitally connected with the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom may be discussed freely, so long as such discussions can be conducted in a spirit of love and brotherly kindness, and all personal thrusts, gibes or insinuations, which are calculated, in our judgment, to irritate, are avoided. It is not our intention to suffer the paper to be the medium of crimination or recrimination among the brethren, nor a repository in which to record or publish all personal grievances. We shall aim at a higher mark. As we hold no secret or private sentiments in regard to the gospel of the grace of God, we shall candidly, fairly and unreservedly give an expression of our own views on any passage of Scripture, or point of doctrine, and on all subjects relating to the ordinances and order of the house of God, whenever called on to do so, to the very best of our ability. But in doing so we wish to have it distinctly understood that we give only the views of the humble editor of this paper. None are bound to endorse our views any farther than they can see them clearly sustained by the Scriptures of truth. Any of our brethren are at liberty to animadvert upon or controvert any sentiment that we may advance, provided they do so in a kind and brotherly manner.

We are fully satisfied, from many years' experience, it is not discussion or controversy that wounds or disturbs the minds of our readers, but the harsh, unkind and unbrotherly manner in which such controversies have sometimes been conducted. Brethren cannot be too careful to avoid such expressions as are calculated to irritate the feelings of each other, by impugning each other's motives, or insinuating that they are unsound in the faith, while they may honestly differ in their understanding of the import of some Scripture, or the propriety of some particular expressions. The wise man has told us

that "A soft answer turneth away wrath." How important then that Christians should act on that principle while following after the things that make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another.

The world is at this time in a state of general agitation; wars and rumors of wars are current all over the world, to an extent hardly ever before known; and discords are prevalent in our own country, threatening to prostrate our civil, social and political institutions, and to produce anarchy and distress, where freedom has unfurled her joyful banner. It is natural that some difference of opinion should exist among our best and wisest brethren, in regard to those things which agitate the world, and jeopardize our dearest earthly rights. Great care is necessary that we do not wound each other by any rash or premature action or expression in regard to the general tumult. As citizens we have to do with the institutions of our country, and as Christians we may be interested in the final issue. But let us not forget that we are citizens of a kingdom that is not of this world, a kingdom that shall stand forever, and whatever privations, tribulations or distress may await us upon these mortal shores, we shall outride the storm at last, and that it will not be long before we shall be called to lay aside our armor, and the weapons of our warfare, and pass into that state where the wicked shall cease from troubling, and the weary shall be at rest.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, January 1, 1856.)

OBITUARIES

HUGH CARPENTER

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst by death our beloved brother Hugh Carpenter. He was born August 16, 1874, in Wayne County, West Virginia, moving with his family to Putnam County, near Hurricane, at the age of three, where he lived the remainder of his days. He had been in poor health for several years, and his eyesight nearly gone for two or three years, but he bore his affliction with patience. On July 21, 1960, he fell and broke his hip, then took pneumonia, and passed away August 3, 1960; making his stay on earth nearly 86 years.

About the year 1895 he was united in marriage to Miss Laura Bird, who died in 1931. He is survived by an adopted son, Hartley Carpenter, at home; and a brother Asa Carpenter, of Hurricane, W. Va.; and a host of other relatives and friends. He was a true and faithful member of Harmony Primitive Baptist Church, Huntington, W. Va., since October, 1954. He loved to attend the meetings but was hindered much because of his health. He loved to read the *Signs of the Times* until his eyesight failed.

His life was a life of a subject of grace, always defending the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God; believing in the depravity of man, and that God rules all things according to his own will.

We feel our loss is his eternal gain, that his spirit has returned to God who gave it, and his body returned to dust from whence it came, there to await the resurrection. Funeral services were conducted at the Harmony Primitive Baptist Church by his beloved pastor, Elder J. R. Lane; and his body was laid to rest in the Carpenter Cemetery near his home.

Mildred Stanley

ROSA PRICE BROWN

Sister Brown was born August 25, 1874, departed this life June 17, 1960. She was the daughter of Sydner M. and Venita Stone Price. She united with Springfield Primitive Baptist Church by letter August 8, 1954.

Sister Brown was faithful to fill her seat at her meetings as long as her health permitted. She leaves two daughters, Mrs. O. W. Tucker and Mrs. Courtney Franklin, of Lynchburg, Va.; eleven grandchildren and twenty-one great-grandchildren; and two sisters, Mrs. Mike Moorman and Mrs. Jake Gibson. It can be said of her that she kept the faith, and is entered into the peaceful rest of her Lord, and is now asleep in Jesus, and will hear the voice, "Come enter into the Joy of the Lord." May the Lord reconcile her family and church to say thy will be done. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and Elder W. R. Dodd. She was laid to rest in Fort Hill Memorial Park, Lynchburg, Va., beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

RESOLVED: That a copy be put on our church records, one sent to the family and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication. Done by order of Springfield Church in conference.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
R. C. Dalton, Clerk

MITCHEL E. FOSHEE

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our beloved brother, Mitchel E. Foshee, who was born October 12, 1879, at Merryville, La., and passed away May 30, 1960, in Newton County, Texas. His stay on earth was 80 years, 7 months, and 18 days.

Brother Mitch, as he was called, joined New Hope Primitive Baptist Church of the Old School Baptist faith and order, and was baptized June 25, 1955. He leaves three sons to mourn his death: Clarence, Ramsey A., and Willie J. Foshee, all of Newton, Texas; and one daughter, Mrs. Eva A. Honey, Dayton, Texas. Also 17 grandchildren, and a host of other relatives and friends.

His funeral was preached by his pastor, Elder L. L. Dobbs, and his remains were laid to rest in Union (Phelps) Cemetery, Newton County, Texas, to await the glorious call, "Child come home."

We say to the bereaved, grieve not as for one who had no hope: Our loss is his eternal gain. Written by request of New Hope Church. Merryville, La.

Elder L. L. Dobbs, Moderator
J. Paul McMillian, Clerk

ANNIE WARD LOFTIS

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die . . ."

It has been the will of our heavenly Father to call from among us at Pleasant Grove our beloved sister, Annie E. Loftis, who was 80 years old at her passing. We believe her purpose on earth was fulfilled, and it was the appointed time that she leave us. We shall miss her, but we desire to be submissive to the will of God in all things. He never makes a mistake.

Sister Loftis was born in 1880, and spent most of her life in the Pleasant Grove Community, Caswell County, N. C. She was married to Mr. Charlie H. Loftis when 18 years of age. He preceded her in death 14 years. To this union were born five children, all left to mourn her passing: Mrs. Julius Smith, Reidsville; Lawrence, McLeansville, N. C.; Mrs. Jay T. Boswell; Hildrey, Reidsville; and Andrew, Reidsville; also surviving are 29 grandchildren and 40 great grandchildren. One of her granddaughters, Mrs. Lelia Walker Crumpton, was reared in her home, and loved her as one of her children.

Sister Loftis had been a member at Pleasant Grove since 1936. She fell asleep in Jesus June 3, 1960, to await the final consummation of all things, when Jesus shall own all the redeemed family of God, and present them without spot, blemish, or any such thing: His righteousness being imputed to them.

Her funeral was held at the meeting house by her pastor, Elder J. Harvey Smith, and Mr. G. R. Thomas. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

We extend our sympathy to all the family, and desire a copy of this be given them, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* to be published in our paper. Written at the request of Pleasant Grove Church while in conference at the June, 1960, meeting.

Mrs. Fred Cobb

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

David L. Paschal was born in 1872, and passed away July 18, 1960. He was a native farmer of the New Hope Community. He united with the church in 1915, and was ordained a deacon a few years later.

INASMUCH, as it has pleased God in his divine providence to remove from our midst our beloved brother, Deacon David L. Paschal,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we beg grace to be reconciled to His holy will. Brother Paschal was a faithful and devoted Brother Deacon as long as his health permitted. He loved the church, and filled his seat as a faithful member. In his last years he was confined at home. He was an example of Christian humility. Be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of these resolutions be spread on the church record; a copy sent to his bereaved family; and a copy be published in the *Signs of the Times*.

Done by order of Pleasant Grove Church, Caswell County, N. C., while in her regular conference September 18, 1960.

Sister Robert Walker
Elder J. Harvey Smith
Robert F. Walker, Clerk

MEMORIAL

WHEREAS, Since we last met together, we have lost one member, Brother Elisha Truitt, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we humbly and graciously submit to the providence of our God in calling our dear brother from this world of strife and trouble to a far better land. Also

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Salisbury Association, express our sympathy to all those

that mourn, and that we pray our heavenly Father that He will give us all grace to trust him in this hour of bereavement, knowing that His ways are all for the best. And

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be furnished the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and one copy given the family.

Done by order of the Association, now in session with the Salisbury Church, October 20, 1960.

Elder David V. Spangler, Moderator,
Brother William S. Adkins, Clerk,
Brother Handy B. Truitt, Asst. Clerk

MEMORIAL

WHEREAS, Since our last session, it has pleased our heavenly Father to call our precious brother, Elder R. B. Denson, from his labors, we bow in submission to the God of all grace.

Elder Denson often visited us and was kind in rendering assistance to our elders and churches in supplying on special occasions.

He was ever kind and was easily entreated, which always shows the indwelling of the love of God in our heart. Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That this body extend to the widow and children our heartfelt sympathy and understanding in their loss, knowing that he has gone ahead to a better home. And

BE IT RESOLVED, That this be printed in the minutes, a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and a copy sent to the family.

Written by order of the association and appoved while in session with the Salisbury Church, October 20, 1960.

Elder David V. Spangler, Moderator,
Brother William S. Adkins, Clerk,
Brother Handy B. Truitt, Asst. Clerk

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M.

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M.

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 11 A. M.

WRIGHTS' CREEK CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 11:00 A. M.

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., six miles SE. of Sulligent, Alabama.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each Saturday before the fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Alabama.

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles SW. of Fayette, Alabama.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

ELAM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located two miles North of Goshen, Alabama, meets each third Sunday at 11 o'clock.

J. P. MORGAN, Pastor
A. C. CARTER, Clerk
3383 Montezuma Rd.,
Montgomery 6, Ala.

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before.

E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Pratt City, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. Meeting place at Alder Street at top of hill, first car going into Pratt City from Birmingham.

H. C. MOON, Pastor

LIBERTY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., eight miles South of Gordo, Alabama.

O. G. GARVER, Pastor

MT. CARMEL CHURCH, Coffee Springs, Alabama, meets each first Sunday 11 A. M.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

W. A. SPEER, Pastor

REHOBETH OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located five miles North of El Dorado, Arkansas and half-mile West of Highway No. 7, meets second Sunday in

each month and Saturday before at 11 A. M.
R. W. RHODES, Pastor
W. A. SPEER, Clerk

WHITE WATER OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located about one mile Northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.
W. A. SPEER, Pastor

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Stockton, California, meets second Sundays, 10:30 A. M., at 5620 E. Marsh Street. All lovers of the truth invited.
T. R. JEFFERSON, Pastor
WM. ECHOLS, Clerk
Chowchilla, Cal.

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Compton, California, meets each fourth Sunday at the home of L. W. Langwell, 12812 S. Williams Street.

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in the United States), meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is located one mile south of Newark, Delaware, just off of Highway 896.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK CHURCH, Miami, Florida, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before, SW. 29th Avenue and 6th Street. We extend an invitation to any interested to visit us.
MRS. J. M. FUTCH,
7005 SW. 21st Street,
Miami, Florida

NEW HARMONY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Hiram, Ga., meets every 1st Sunday at 11 o'clock.
O. J. CROKER, Pastor
J. F. JORDAN, Clerk

ELAM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located at Forest Park, Clayton County, Georgia, meets every 3rd Sunday at 11 o'clock.
O. J. CROKER, Pastor
MALISSIE STEWART, Clerk

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located at 5th and East Park Street, Weiser, Idaho, meets each 4th Sunday at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Address any communications to Deacon A. L. Turnidge, Weiser, Idaho.
ERNEST J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
FLOSSIE ATTEBERY, Clerk

PLEASANT VALLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas. For information please write Mrs. Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C, Kingman, Kansas.

THE LOST CREEK CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, meets first Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Kentucky, ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton, on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.
H. L. ROGERS, Pastor

NEW HOPE CHURCH (better known as Lick Creek) meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Kentucky.
R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE ZION CHURCH OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS, Mayfield, Kentucky, meets first Sunday each month at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M., on South 7th Street.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Baltimore, Maryland, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Street, near Calvert.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on Falls Road about twenty miles north of Baltimore.
JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Cass County, Missouri, meets on second Sundays in the Memorial Building, Pleasant Hill, Missouri. We invite brethren of our faith and order to visit us.
L. L. SCHENCK, Pastor
MRS. J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk
Pleasant Hill, Mo.

HOPEWELL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Hopewell, N. J., meets each first Sunday at 10:30, and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.
ARTHUR R. WARREN, Pastor
LETHA A. BLACKWELL, Clerk

OLIVE AND HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Shokan, N. Y., meets each 2nd Sunday at 1:30 P. M.
A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
MRS. NEVA BROOKS, Clerk

The **WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,** Warwick, Orange County, New

York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are at 10:30 A. M. DST.

The **MIDDLETOWN AND WALLKILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,** Middletown, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday from April to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. Meetings are at 2 P. M. DST.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, New York City, meets every first and third Sundays at McBurney Branch Y. W. C. A. 215 W. 23rd Street, corner of 7th Ave. (Elevator to 2nd floor.) 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M. All visitors are welcome.

THE WILSON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Wilson, N. C., meets each second Sunday at 3 P. M., and Saturday evening before at 7:30 P. M. The location is on the corner of Green and Jackson Streets.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor
MRS. BETTIE RICHARDSON, Clerk

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
C. E. TURNER, Co-pastor

BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin, Oregon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes.

ERNEST ATTEBERY, Pastor

ROCK SPRINGS OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, meets each first Sunday at 10:30. The meeting house is located on highway 222, about one-quarter mile of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets each 5th Sunday from May through September, with two days meeting the 1st Sunday in May; and meets at Needmore, Pa., on 5th Sundays from October through April, with two days meeting the 2nd Sunday in October.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
ORIEN MELLOTT, Clerk
McConnellsburg, Pa.

THE PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Memphis, Tennessee, meet in the Primitive Baptist Church, corner of Getwell and Fizer Streets, on second Sunday in each month at 11 A. M. and Saturday evening before; also on fourth Sundays at 11 A. M.

H. G. BROWN, Pastor
791 Watson Street
L. C. CAMPBELL, Clerk
3347 Tutwiller Street

BORDEAUX PREDESTINARIAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Nashville, Tenn., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. The church is located on the old Hydes Ferry Road in Bordeaux, in Nashville. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

The **WALNUT FORK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH,** near Cottage Grove, Tennessee, meets on the second Sunday of each month.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor
R. L. VEAZEY, SR., Clerk

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, Houston, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before 10:30 A. M. Church is located on Little York Highway, four miles north of Houston, and one mile east of Highway 76.

W. W. FLEET, Pastor
IRENE WISENBAKER, Clerk

MT. ZION CHURCH, Weslaco, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.; and each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday before at 2:00 P. M., at their new location: seven miles West of Weslaco, on highway 83.

E. B. AULT, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk

SARDIS CHURCH, Amarillo, Texas, meets first Sundays at 10:30, in the home of E. J. Parsons, 1711 Lincoln Street.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, has moved their meeting place to 3629 8th Avenue. They meet each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Take College Ave. bus to Butler and Ryon; go one block West, then half block North to church.

C. U. LANDERS, Pastor

THE ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST CHURCH, Lawn, Texas, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
MRS. NOLA STEWART, Clerk

AN ARM OF PILGRIM REST CHURCH, meets each second Sunday and Saturday night before at Earth, Texas.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
A. A. CHAMBERS, Clerk

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30, and Saturday night before, at the home of M. J. Culpepper. Lovers of the truth invited.

LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk

THE OLD SALEM CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS, four miles South of Teague, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

SAINTS REST OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday evening before at seven-thirty, at 4614 Sylvester Street.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
D. G. CONNELL, Clerk

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday afternoon at 2:30.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located on Route 28, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia.

ARTHUR L. CARTER, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. each second month (February, April, etc.), and is near Lucketts, about eight miles north of Leesburg, Virginia.

and

BROAD RUN CHURCH, Poolesville, Maryland, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. each second month (January, March, etc.)

L. D. DUKE, Clerk
Charlestown, W. Va.

MT. ZION CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, Virginia, on Route 50, between Washington and Winchester, Virginia.

MRS. DAVID FARNIE, Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are always glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Deacon G. C. Spindle, Lincoln 3-3782.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2:30, Fairmont Park, 2023 Tidewater Drive.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Richmond, Virginia, meets each fourth Sunday in their new meeting house about ten miles South of Richmond, just off highway 360 South.

R. S. PAYNE, Pastor

DAN RIVER CHURCH, between Danville, Va. and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville, Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday night before, on Bradley Road.

W. R. DODD, Pastor

LITTLE ZION PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Chehalis, Washington, meets in the home of Sister Effie Parke, 1360 First Street, the first Sunday of each month at 11 A. M.

HOWARD EASON, Pastor

BETHEL OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, of Riffe, Washington, meets each 3rd Sunday at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 7 P. M. For information write the Clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. VERNIE SCHOONOVER, Clerk
Box 612, Morton, Wash.

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, Naches, Washington, meets at 10:30 A. M. each second Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. DASIE BAKER, Clerk
Rt. 1, Naches, Wash.

HARMONY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, about four miles East of Huntington, W. Va., near Route 60 at Russell Creek, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

J. R. LANE, Moderator
MILDRED STANLEY, Clerk
Rt. 2, Huntington, W. Va.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1961 NO. 2

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/61
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

TRUSTING

Dear Lord, my life is not my own —
I dare not plan my way,
For toil and duty claim my time,
And hold me fast each day.

I'm weary, weak, — so dumb and blind
So oft I stray afar;
I find myself completely lost;
And wonder where you are.

Help me to lift mine eyes aloft,
And let my burdens fall;
Yes, give me grace and faith to trust
To thee, each day, my all.

I know not what lies on ahead,
And the past I can't erase;
The present time is all I have:
Help me its problems face.

My lone desire while in this world
Is to do my Father's will,
But should I stumble on the way,
O Lord, be with me still.

Just take my hand, O precious friend,
And may I hear Thee say:
"Be still, my child, be not afraid,
I'll lead thee all the way."

Mrs. Flora Booher
Rt. 1, Shirleysburg, Pa.
(Member Trough Creek Church — Ed.)

THAT WHICH THE LORD HATH PURPOSED SHALL COME TO PASS

Dear Brother Gold and Lester:

From some cause my mind has been much exercised for several days upon the purposes of God. I do not know why I should be so constantly meditating upon this, to me, wonderful, deep and sublime subject; yet it is so. A kind of irresistable impression seems to impel me to write, notwithstanding my great weakness. I am fully aware of the fact that I am not able of myself to grapple with so deep and sublime a subject. Therefore, it is with much fear and trembling that I approach it. I think it is with a heartfelt desire that the Lord may direct my mind that I may write so as to glorify His name, and thereby edify His saints, believing that when God is honored through our Lord Jesus Christ, the saints rejoice and are edified.

It was the purpose of God to speak the earth into existence. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." (Gen. 1:1) This proves a purpose to create. In fulfillment of his purpose He made the firmament that his handiwork might be shown. For, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork." That the dry land might appear, it is written, "And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so." (Gen. 1:9) "And God called the land earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he the seas: and God saw that it was good." (10th verse) Thus his purpose was carried out. Take into consideration the fowls, the beasts, the fishes, the herbs, etc.; then come to man. In his creation we see the plural used, "And God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth; over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." (26th verse) "So God created man in his own image; in the

image of God created he them." (27th verse) In their creation the male and the female.

It is said that while they were in this state they were immortal. But God did not say so, and I shall not. It is also said that he was made able to stand, but liable to fall. But God did not say so, so I shall not, for I don't know. That he did transgress and fall is certain. If he had never transgressed and fell, I own that I cannot trace the purpose of God in the perfect work of salvation. For if the man had not falled, I cannot see for the life of me why God should, from before the world have given any of the fallen race grace in Christ. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Tim. 1:9) This is an affirmation of the apostle, as the preceding verse shows. This grace which was given in Christ Jesus before the world began consequently was before the creation of man. If this was according to God's own purpose before the world began, it seems to me there must of necessity have been a purpose in the fall or transgression of the man, without which he never could have been the recipient of this grace; for none but fallen, depraved sinners stand in need of saving grace. I do not think that it is blasphemy to assert that God purposed grace in Christ Jesus before the world began, that he also purposed that the sinner should stand in need of it.

I am not able to see how the Lord could declare the end from the beginning, and not see and know every event from the beginning. And He by the prophet declares, or commands thus: "Remember the former things of old; for I am God and there is none else, I am God and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isa. 46:9, 10) I am not able to see how He could declare things that are not yet done unless he purposed or predestinated that they should be done. To say that he permitted things to take place that he did not purpose, seems to me to contradict itself, and makes the creator no higher than the creature. Man purposes and plans, but his purposes fail — his plans are frustrated. Not so with God: He purposes, and it comes to pass.

But, to my mind, all things were purposed by the eternal I Am; and his purpose is as sure to be accomplished as it is sure that his throne stands. I cannot see for the life of me, how his honor can be maintained if we teach a probability of the failure of the reign of his grace. Never, to my mind, has one single sinner been quickened to life only by the Spirit of God; and this, it seems to me, is because of the reign of grace; and this grace was given in Christ before the world began. Consequently was bound, in the very nature of things, to have been before there was a man made; and this must of necessity prove that God purposed to save man, and that man would need a Saviour because of his death in sin.

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen." (Romans 11:33-36)

Now, if in the wisdom of God, all things are for him, it does seem that it is reasonable to conclude that all, and every event that taketh place in the heights above, or the depths beneath, or in the lengths, or breadths, either in earth or hell, are under his control; and that he purposed and foresaw them, and overrules them to his own glory; or else events are not things. Then, taking this view of the wisdom, power, mercy,

and love of God, I feel safe in believing and teaching that the God of salvation is a complete Sovereign; and therefore I live in hope of his mercy, and through the efficacy of the blood and righteousness of His adorable Son, I shall yet praise him who is my wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. (see 1 Cor. 1:30) Then, God forbid that we should glory save in the Lord.

Dear brethren, I have put these thoughts together under the most trying circumstances, with much fear and trembling, knowing that I am imperfect, ignorant and shortsighted; often wondering can it be that such a creature as I am can be a child of God, — saved by grace. I have written my own imperfect views, without consulting any man for his views; and I alone am responsible for what is here presented. I desire, if it is published, that none will take offense because of it. I hope I have had the honor of God in view, and trust that I have the mind of Christ. My race is nearly run, and I shall soon go hence, and shall soon know the reality of these things. I am looking forward to the time of my departure. When I go I expect and believe that I shall meet a satisfied Saviour. My hope is to see the King in his beauty, and the whole of the purchases of Christ's blood, which will be a train that shall fill the temple — not one left out for whom he atoned. If I am thus blessed, it will be because of His eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ before the world began. Then I shall be as the glorified saints; and methinks that all the hosts of heaven will be shouting, "Crown him Lord of all." Then I shall be completely happy as I stand with the sanctified family of God.

To his name be all the praise now and in a world which shall never end.

(Elder) John C. Hall,
Gogginsville, Va.

(We re-publish the above at the request of Brother T. R. Plybon, of Bassett, Va. It originally appeared in Zion's Landmark in 1901. Elder Hall was an able minister, of whom we have often heard those who knew him speak. He died in 1901 — J. D. W.)

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN DR. HOOPER AND ELDER GOLD

(Continued)

TO DR. HOOPER

One that comes under the teaching of the Holy Spirit comes in the name of the Lord, because the Lord sends him, and when he comes thus, not sent by any man, and preaches the doctrine of Christ, you may give him as much money as you please, and I suppose it will not be applied amiss, but will be given as unto the Lord if you give it in love. I believe it right and proper and a duty to help such forward on their journey, if we have the means. Paul was a case of this sort. He was a poor man and had such an unmistakable impression that it was his duty to go to the heathen. Some of the churches gave him contributions of money for his necessities, and he commends them for it. At other times, his enemies unwittingly paid his expenses while he was carried a prisoner before gentiles and kings. Though Paul was whipt and imprisoned and stoned for dead, yet he finished his course, and preached to every heathen it was intended he should preach to before his death. When one comes sent of the Lord, we know it by his preaching the doctrine of Christ, and coming in the way the Lord has revealed, not sent by man but sent of the Lord, not directed to his field of labors by a board of men, not depending on them for a support. There is no man appointed to raise his salary, who himself receives a large salary for begging for the missionary. No, the power of God goes with his people. The mind of the Lord is with them, and the Lord makes a way for him, and when his way is so blocked up that he cannot go, he might as well conclude the Lord has not sent him and go home.

You are ready to object, that we have no plan of sending the gospel to the heathen, and I am ready to answer, no.

The word was first spoken by angels and prophets sent by the Lord, then by the Lord himself, and afterwards by those that heard him, and even now it can be preached in truth only by those the Lord sends, and then the power of Israel's God opens a way. You reply, that I desire to follow the Bible too closely for precept and example, while my objection to you is, that you are too far from it.

But you say, the world ridicules us for the rejection of all human means in preaching the gospel, and that the old Baptists are a standing proof of what man says of us, that we have no good works, and are a dead mass of the fossil remains of Pharaoh's lean kine, never doing any good ourselves, nor admitting that anything anybody else does is any good. Other denominations, in comparing themselves with old Baptists are favorable to themselves and claim themselves to be good and the old Baptists bad, yet if you will question them closely as to what is so bad about these people, you will find that it consists in this, that they condemn the ways and teachings of the denominations of men, that are contrary to the Bible. You will not find the old Baptists to be such monsters of vice as one might suppose. I believe that a true Christian has good works that no one else has. Faith without works is dead being alone. A faith that is saving must be a great worker. It must clothe my own naked soul by putting on Christ, it must feed me with the bread of life, it must work by love, and purify my heart, and overcome the world. The great work of faith is, not to give your neighbor bread, but to feed your own perishing soul, by putting on an imputed righteousness. She rejoices, not in the approbation of men, but in the finished work of Jesus. She seeks, not to follow the world, but takes up the cross, denies self and ungodliness, and suffers persecution from the world for doing this, but she performs works that none but the ransomed of the Lord ever perform. In the great day that will try men's works, I believe no works, no building, will stand, except that which faith builds on Christ. Instead, then, of saying that faith hath no works, I believe it will then appear that none but the true Christian has performed works acceptable to God. I can not see wherein a genuine old Baptist is such an evil doer. He is created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that he should walk in them. His conduct is conformed to the scriptural rule. He is a sober man, not loving this world, is an honest man, paying his debts, not hiding himself behind any provision the law of the land makes, which would involve his violation of his word, which is yea, yea, or nay, nay. He is disposed to labor, working with his own hands, rather than be burdensome to others, and gives of what he has to him that is truly in need. He submits to the lawful authority of the land, but feels that if he is a subject of Christ's kingdom that is enough for him, therefore he cannot unite with any society of men. I think, too, that he prefers to leave his family in the hand of his heavenly Father when he dies, rather than to make provision for them by means of life insurance companies. He wishes to provide things honest in the sight of men, and after faithfully laboring for them, he feels it better to commit them to God after his death rather than to societies of men. He is sensible of his condition as a helpless sinner, and hence is meek and humble, and has the spirit of forgiveness for others. He rejoices in the truth, and gladly receives any that give a reason with meekness and fear of the hope that is in them. He rejoices in the preaching of the gospel, he believes it is to be preached to every creature all over the world, and would gladly see you, and all denominations, preaching the truth as it is in Jesus. I am giving you my own views, not knowing how far others endorse them. If I write falsehood may the Lord have mercy on me, and you need not impute it to the Old School Baptists.

These old Baptists love each other.

But what is their bond of union? They are of one mind and spirit. "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." Fellowship in the truth is of heavenly origin, and can be enjoyed only by those that abide in the apostles' doctrine. It implies union. How can you call me dear brother when you make such charges against me, of bearing false witness, of wilful misrepresentation, of bigotry, pride, etc. If you think I am guilty of such things, what fellowship can you have for me? When there is such difference between us on doctrine, what fellowship can there be? If there be no true fellowship, why call me by such an endearing name. Not that I object to being called brother, by the humblest man on earth, if he sees in me any image of Jesus that is dear to him. It gives me a sweet feeling of meekness and joy to receive the fellowship of my dear brethren. But if we are not of one mind and heart, why should we call each other by terms that suppose we are? I could wish that we were together. I feel that the doctrine of the Bible will stand when all man's inventions shall have been swept away as so much rubbish. Grace is the dearest theme known to me, and Jesus is a glorious and all-sufficient Saviour. He is head over all things to the church, and he rules in Zion. No man can stay the ark nor guide its way. Happy is that people who are clothed in the righteousness of Christ and sit at Jesus' feet to learn of him, who see so much beauty in Zion's perfect law that they desire no other, and who live in gospel obedience. Their fellowship is not of this world, their life is hid with Christ in God, and when Christ, who is their life, shall appear, then shall they also appear in glory with him. I do not read that any arminian note will be sung in heaven. There they ascribe salvation unto Him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb, who loved them and gave himself for them.

They begin this song on earth, when at the Red Sea they find the outstretched arm of the Lord. Would that we all were abiding in peace under Israel's tents, none molesting us.

To any missionary Baptists that are troubled with the evils of your denomination, I wish to make a quotation, from a book that will be acknowledged as standard authority when this world is known no more. It is found in Revelation xviii: 14: "Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." The mother of harlots has long been making the nations drunk with the wine of her fornication. You are identified with a people that have adopted some of her measures. She is the inventor of boards for sending out missionaries. The Catholics were using them long before Andrew Fuller introduced them into the Baptist church. They pet the Sunday schools even more than your denomination. Money is a grand lever with them, too, in raising the materials upon their building. They have their religious schools of learning, and were the founders of them for engrafting their views on peoples' minds, and for better fitting their preachers to publish their tenets. They gain much admiration from men because they are fine scholars. You are identified with them thus. I verily believe those of your denomination, who so strenuously defend your human measures, would unite even with the Catholics rather than the old Baptists.

Now, you are not idle spectators of this discussion. While I do not blame Dr. Hooper, for I once thought as he now does, yet it vastly concerns you to be in the right. What matters it if the world scoffs. How little can human learning aid you. How little does Dr. Hooper's learning aid in bringing to light the hidden things of the Bible. "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." May the Lord make this discussion a blessing to some of his people.

Respectfully yours to serve,
P. D. Gold

(This concludes the answer to Dr. Hooper by Elder Gold. — Ed.)

CAUSE AND EFFECT

"Father save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour." (John 12:27); and, "Now thanks be unto God, which always causes us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the Saviour of his knowledge by us in every place." (2 Cor. 12, 14). As we atempt to speak of the cause of all causes; as he causeth His face to shine upon us; as we look at the first cause of all things in the world and the heavens above; as we speak of the great cause that produces all effects, since there cannot be an effect without a cause, let us look to God for guidance.

Life precedes action both natural and spiritual, and every thing has its opposite. We had nothing to do with coming into this world, and surely will have nothing to do with going out. "And we know that all things work together for good, to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose." (Rom. 8:28) "That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the West, that there is none besides me; I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil, I the Lord do all these things." (Isaiah 45-6-7) Here the redeemed of the Lord begin to see the cause that produces the effect. Our love for Him, is the effect of His love for us, and He loved us before the world began with an everlasting love, and with loving kindness draws us.

No one can receive this saying but those who are born of God. Now let us turn back the pages of time to the beginning. Before there was a here or there or any place or anywhere, God was around, below, and above; unlimited in power and love was the glorious trinity, the Father Son and Holy Ghost (the great causes of all causes) and these three are one. It is recorded that in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth (Gen. 1-1) This one statement is worth more to me than all the writings of uninspired men that ever lived. GOD has spoken! from nothing all that was not now was, "Darkness was on the face of the deep, and God said let there be light; and there was light." (Gen. 1:3) — God: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son, in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins; "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature; For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, principalities or powers: all things were created by Him, for Him; and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." (Col. 1:13)

Now as I sit and ponder over what I have written, I tremble. I feel my own sinfulness, and I know I cannot write, or pray or think of the great power, and the cause that I feel has been laid upon me (the less than the least of all saints) to defend the great cause, and preach Christ crucified even though it be to the Jews a stumbling block, and the Greeks foolishness. This doctrine is not mine: I did not believe it myself at one time, but when it pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, straightway, like Paul, I conferred not with flesh and blood. After graduating from the Jonah college in the belly of hell, I learned that salvation was of the Lord, and for over sixty years I have, with the ability that God has given me, preached Christ and him crucified. I have learned obedience by the things that I have suffered. I feel the great cause of all causes is God almighty, and his son Jesus Christ is my Redeemer, and his Holy Spirit is my comforter. May his name be praised.

I cannot but think about the first visible church which was established on that Pentecostal day, God had called the people out of every nation under heaven for that meeting, and they sat humbly until the day was fully come.

Then there came a sound from heaven, and filled the house wherein they were sitting, and they began to speak as the Spirit gave them utterance. The Lord called that meeting together on that day, and He calls them now. When the Lord sets us down, and we hear the sound from heaven, and he feeds the sheep with the feed that he gives, there is comfort. God's love in us is the CAUSE, of our love to Him the EFFECT. May his name be praised. Yours for the truth's sake.

Elder George L. Weaver
2802 Marcum Terrace
Huntington 5, W. Va.

1718 Champasnolle Road,
ElDorado, Ark.

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood:

If the Lord is pleased to guide me, I will endeavor to write a few words of praise and adoration unto His holy name. I realize He gives us our being, and all that we have or do in spiritual desire. He is our upholder and disposer, and our thoughts are known to him. David says, "He knows our thoughts from afar off"; and that he knows our downsittings and uprisings.

At times when I can't sleep, it seems that sweet meditations of his love and wonderful blessings to usward are mine to enjoy for a short time. When we are so low, he often gives us sweet thoughts of his wonderful power, which shines in our hearts and minds through our black curtain of sin; through this awful cloud of sin which we carry about with us as we travel the rugged pathway of life. He, and he alone, gives us the spiritual strength whereby we walk and talk, and are mindful that the things we once loved we now hate, and the things we once hated we now love. These things are imprinted indelibly, and no one is able to remove them.

God's will and good pleasure towards his people is fulfilled in them every moment of their lives here in time. He says, "I am the Lord and I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Whatsoever he doeth he doeth forever.

Men in their natural state have little knowledge or appreciation for their natural blessings, but enjoy the sinfulness in which he was born. But when one is truly furnished with the Spirit of Almighty God, it is then that he sees his unfit and unworthy condition. May Almighty God give us strength, and lead us by his Spirit; give us faith, and be with us through all ages. May he bless us to realize that we are helpless creatures, and that we are in his hands as the clay in the potter's hands. May our declining days be filled with contemplation of heavenly things, and we be drawn away from perishing things. May we, with David, say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, let all within me bless his holy name." . . .

May that love which passes all understanding be with us.

Yours in hope,
J. J. Davis

Rt. 2,
Toney, Alabama

Dear Elder Spangler:

Your article on Feet Washing was of much interest to me. I feel as you do, the brethren have walked in fellowship and there is no need to put up bars. We as members of the church of Christ should endeavor to be submissive as is required of a church member; to walk with the church — not the church with the member.

. . . I would like some information on the following: "Was the invisible church deceived, or just the visible church, when our mother Eve was deceived?" This is an important question to me. I love the deep mysteries of the doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and I feel we have been blessed in the past to find comfort in the writings in the *Signs of the Times*. Sister

Luther Campbell's article was so comforting, and all the other writings in the October issue were good.

I have an exercised mind to write at times, but, with pen in hand, all fades away. So all my feeble efforts are in vain, but I hope I trust a God and Saviour who is our all. He is the life, the truth, and the way; and no man can come unto him except the Father which sent Him draw him.

We have just concluded the 146th annual session of the original Flint River Association. All was in peace and one accord; and one trembling child came to the church on Sunday, which was a great joy to us. God is so good and merciful to his children.

Dear writers of the *Signs*, your writings mean so much to the shut-ins and those who love the truth; so continue to write, and bring that joy that abounds in our hearts on reading your good articles. May God bless you Editors and Associate Editors, and all the household of faith.

Your little brother and sister, we hope,

J. J. and Reaner Reece

(See editorial reply)

MY EXPERIENCE OF GRACE

I joined the Missionary Baptist Church when I was about fifteen years of age. I thought it was the right church, and went on feeling all right for about two years. I attended the church most every meeting day; but one day, while the preacher was preaching (I do not remember the scripture he was using), I felt the first condemnation I had ever experienced. From then on I felt to be the vilest sinner that ever lived. I would look at others, and wish I could be like them. I would try to pray, but could not.

Others seemed to be enjoying themselves, and I just couldn't enjoy anything anymore. I felt that I was forever lost, but would still go to church some, seeking comfort; and would read the Bible hoping to get some relief. I went on this way for three or four years, when one night I saw the devil and his imps walking around in chains in the bottomless pit; and I felt that all I lacked being there was the breath leaving me. Oh, the misery I went through! But it seemed that God always gave me courage to try to press a little further.

There was a protracted meeting going on close by us, so I decided I would go one night and see if I could get any relief. I thought, when they called for sinners to come up for prayer, I would go up, for I could not get in any worse shape than I was. While in prayer, I heard a voice speak to me, saying, "What are you doing here, when you are already saved?" My burden left me that instant, and I raised up and looked around. Oh, what a relief! I rejoiced, and felt that I never would have another burden again. I went back to church next day to see how I felt; and the preacher, after preaching, came back to where I was, and asked if I had received a blessing during meeting, and I answered that I did. I rejoiced, and felt satisfied for a while, but I would soon be in the valley of darkness again, and would wonder: If I were saved, why would I feel my sins all over again; and feel so cast down again?

But now I can see, I believe, that it is all in God's purpose, and for our good (if I can claim that precious gift); and I want to praise his holy name more and more each day.

As time went on, I thought I could see the Sovereignty of God more and more. One day I was reading the Bible where Adam and Eve partook of the forbidden fruit, and I asked my father if God knew that Adam and Eve would eat of the forbidden fruit; and he said, "I think so." It seemed, as I would read, that the Primitive Baptist doctrine kept unfolding; and I would have sweet seasons of rejoicing; and also seasons of sorrow.

How I wish I could write the things I hope I can feel in my soul sometimes, but I am so ignorant to put it in words. I am the least of God's little children, if it be that I am one of them. I have many doubts and fears, and feel so worthless; but He says, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." Who can stay His hand?

O Lord, help me to follow thee, and to praise thee more and more. Guide my steps and keep me in the right way, for, Lord, thou art all powerful, and we are such weak worms of the dust, and can do nothing of ourselves.

When I started this, I did not intend to mail it; I just wanted to write it and leave it here, but after some days decided to send it for your disposal. After I married, we moved to Oklahoma, and I united with the conditionalists: I did not understand at that time predestination of all things, as I hope I do now.

May God bless you editors to carry on this good work.

A sister, I hope,
Mrs. A. T. Couch,
Winfield, Alabama

"HOW GOOD A MERCIFUL GOD HAS BEEN . . ."

According to promise, I will try to record some of the mercies I have received from the Lord, — not for vain show, but that it might be known, after I have passed from the earthly sphere, how good a merciful God has been to a poor, undeserving sinner as I feel myself to be.

The first great blessing was when He made me to see myself a sinner in the sight of a just and holy God. How great was the burden until He revealed himself to me by giving me a great desire to follow him: a blessed hope of eternal life. Not long after I became a member of the church, my mother and I attended an association at Goldsberry. Brother Sutton, long since gone to his reward, was preaching, taking for a text, "Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 3:18) I felt just like I wanted to do that, but, alas, I fear I have fallen far short of my desire.

At another association several years later which mother and I were attending at old Chariton Church, as we were retiring for the night, a great fear came over me, and something seemed to say, "There is something wrong at home." I was terribly worried for sometime. Then I heard a voice say, "All is well." A quietness and peace came over me, and I enjoyed the meeting. On coming home, I watched the family, especially the two that were involved in my fear, but nothing seemed to be wrong.

Time moved on until another great trial came in my life. My heart was so bitter against it, and I was made to ask, "Would I feel so strongly against it if it were God's will for it to be so?" I'm no better, nor half so good, as others who go through as great, or greater than this." Yet I prayed almost day and night for God to remove this trial; and I went in much anguish. One evening I seemed to be more troubled than usual, and the words, "Doubting Thomas", came to me with such force that I got my Bible and began reading where it opened. It was the 11th chapter of Hebrews, where faith is the theme of the whole chapter. Oh the comfort and assurance I received! I felt I never would doubt again but have perfect confidence that nothing would happen to me, only for my good and God's glory. Not so long after that the trial was removed; praise His great name.

In gratitude to him for his great blessings I wanted, in my weak way, to devote my life to his service. I have gone to the dear old church, walking two miles through mud, and wondering why I was going. We had no pastor at the time. I was not going for show, for there would be no one there to see me. Oh no, not for show, but for that great love he had bestowed upon me, and his tender mercies. After trying in my weak

way to hold a little service, singing some hymns, reading a chapter or two, then pouring out my heart in prayer to Him in behalf of our little church; and begging Him to ever keep his eyes turned toward us; then singing another hymn in dismission. Often I was made to say, "Lord it is good to be here." (Matt. 17:4) Such perfect peace, such blessed assurance of his presence.

We had no pastor, and I would get so hungry to hear a good sermon. Sometimes I would go to the Methodist Church, a half mile from our home, and would come home more hungry than before. All I heard there was all works, no grace. One Sunday evening my husband and I were sitting on our front porch, and I said to him, "I'm so hungry to hear a good sermon. The Bible speaks of a famine of hearing the word of the Lord in the land; I think I must be going through that famine." As I arose to follow my husband into the room, I was filled with spiritual food, and felt I had heard a wonderful sermon; and felt like shouting praises to my God, who had so wonderfully filled my hungry soul with heavenly manna. Words are too weak to express the sweetness of it.

Not so long after this the Lord sent us a good pastor, praise his holy name. Yet, after all his benefits to me, there are times when I am so rebellious. Then at other times I am made to feel a sweet submission to His will; and I can say, "Thy will be done." Proverbs 16:9, says, "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directs his steps", and I am glad, for if left to myself, I know I would wander in forbidden paths so deep I could never get out. Oh, what a wonderful God is ours!

Clella McAfee
Anabel, Mo.

(The writer of the above, Sister McAfee, died July 31, 1960)

Rt. 1, Box 226
Winona, Miss.

Dear Brother Spangler:

Brother M. M. Richardson gave me a subscription to the *Signs of the Times*, and I want to tell you how much I appreciate it. I find it to be sound; and both the editors and contributors set forth the sovereignty of God as it should be — not mixed with the works of man. How few there are today even among professed Primitive Baptists that really believe sound scriptural teachings.

I have been identified, or a manifest member, of the Old Baptists since 1932, and have been trying to preach for them since 1935; and Paul sets forth a fundamental truth when he says, "By the grace of God I am what I am." It was not only as an apostle of the Lord, but also as an elect vessel of mercy. Whatever the apostle set forth as a teacher and preacher, he ascribed to the grace of God. Is this not the true experience of every one of the people of God today? Separate him from the grace of God (if such a thing were possible), and he would not have anything left. As Joseph stored up grain in the storehouses of Egypt, even so, according to His purpose and grace, all spiritual blessings for his people were stored up in Christ before the world began.

Brother Spangler, I wish you or any other brother would write through the *Signs* on Revelation 13:3. Has this prophecy been fulfilled, or is it yet to be fulfilled?

A servant for Christ's sake,
Elder Louis Stewart

Dear Editors, and all good writers:

Our time is about up, and I do so want the dear paper to keep coming as long as I live on earth; so am enclosing $5.00 for renewal. They have been in my family since the 1880's, and I don't know how much longer.

If I mistake not, I love the articles

and the editorials which are published, and hope the God of all power and wisdom will enable the editors to keep the paper as firm in doctrine as they have been since Elder Gilbert Beebe founded it in 1832.

I like to read after the old writers, for when I read after them, it causes me to feel we are following after the Old School Baptists, which I hope I love very much. I don't know if I am one of them or not, but I have a little hope.

Elder Dodson was so good to send my dear mother some of the old *Signs* to read in her last days. She passed away in 1954. I hope to read them as long as I am here, which may not be long.

A friend, I hope, to the cause,
Lutie Womack

"LET BROTHERLY LOVE CONTINUE"

The Epistle of Paul the apostle to the Hebrews 13:1: "Let brotherly love continue." We know that it first must be, before it can continue. Brother means son of the same parents. The elect family are begotten of God unto the church which is the Lamb's bride. Brotherly means loving and attached. We think of the sheep, the burden, the storms, the chosen. They come together. Paul also exhorteth to unity. Ephesians 4-1, "I therefore the prisoner of the Lord beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love."

I John 4:7, "Beloved let us love one another, for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love." Romans 12:10, "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honor preferring one another."

I see my brethren many times and prefer to be like them. I feel the Lord has shown them what is good. "And what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy and to walk with thy God." Isaiah 40:1, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem and cry unto her, that her welfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Romans 6:1, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that Grace may abound. God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein, know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

I Thessalonians 4:9, "But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you, for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." I feel, if not deceived, the time came in my life when I could not trust in man, nor make flesh my arm; and I hope by the grace of God I was made to choose to suffer the afflictions of God's children rather than enjoy sin for a season. I hope I was taught something about the meaning of brotherly love and to feel the need thereof.

Proverbs 10:12, "Hatred stirreth up strifes but love covereth all sins." Isn't it wonderful to see the little lambs of God come telling of the mercies of God that has been bestowed upon them. We can see His light reflecting in their face, and we feel that their sins have been forgiven, for love has covered them all. St. John 15:12, "This is my commandment that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you."

St. Luke 17:3, "Take heed to yourselves: if thy brother trespass against thee rebuke him; and if he repent forgive him, and if he trespass against

thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him." I like to think of the wills and shalls of God, for there is a surety in these words. He has said ye must repent and thou shalt forgive. I feel that repentance and forgiveness are the foundation of brotherly love.

St. Matthew 6:14, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses neither will your Heavenly Father forgive your trespasses."

I know there has been many errors made among our people, but I hope and pray if I could, that by the Grace of God through repentance and forgiveness that brotherly love may continue. II Peter 1:5, "Giving all diligence add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to Godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you and abound, thy make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

St. Matthew 26:52, "Put up again thy sword into his place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." "Let brotherly love continue."

Clifton Robertson
Reidsville, N. C.

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5 Gregory Street,
Brampton, Ontario, Canada

Dear Elder Spangler:

Am enclosing remittance for subscription for two years. Like many others, I do not like to miss a single copy. So many dear brethren and sisters seem to tell my experience better than I can express myself; and I have a love for them through the medium of the *Signs*.

"The Priesthood of the Son of God", by Elder Bartley, was well worth republishing. After enjoying reading it in the *Signs*, I found a copy of it among my dear mother's books. The articles under "Voices of the Past", are also good; and we have enjoyed the editorials, and feel to thank the dear Lord that you elders have been given the gift to preach and write the truth as it is taught in the Bible.

How often the song

> "O for a closer walk with God,
> A calm and heavenly frame,
> A light to shine upon the road
> That leads me to the Lamb."

is in my mind. In the June *Signs* Mrs. F. Cobb mentioned the hymn; her letter was very sweet. Am sure many would enjoy Sister Elsie Loeffel's letter, "Hid in Christ"; it was sweet. Many others I could mention that have been a comfort and a joy to read.

Our Pastor, Elder Ruston, comes to Toronto every fifth Sunday to preach. I live near Toronto, and it is a large city, and we do wonder if there are more of our faith living near here. It is lonely to feel that in the town where I live, I am the only one that I know of our faith; a town of over sixteen thousand.

We often think of you, your wife and family. When we hear of a death or sickness among the Old Baptists, whom we love for the truth's sake, we feel very sorrowful. It seems as if we are related. We do hope that we have that relation, that our dear Redeemer died to save us, and have the love of God and our Saviour Jesus, in our hearts.

May God bless the editors and writers of the *Signs*, and may he see fit to its continuance to uphold the truth. In love and fellowship,

A little sister in the church,
Verna Carscadden

HEAVENLY PLACES

Not long ago I attended a fifth Sunday meeting at one of our churches here in California. It was near a big boule-

vard; and I couldn't help but think of the scripture that says, ". . . and hath raised us up together, and made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ."

There we were, listening to the good news of salvation, and singing the songs of Zion in a world that knows not God. No matter what the world may boast of, it has nothing like this. The world only has today — it has no tomorrow, for the fashion of this world passeth away. The church has had these heavenly places since time began. David said, "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand." At another time he said, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."

Outside it's not only like a howling wilderness, it's filled with all sorts of sin and vice. Certain men have crept in unawares, who's condemnation of old is foretold. They would deceive the very elect, if possible. Notice, it says "If possible". I think the walls of salvation will keep every child of God safe from these deceivers. It would have been better for them not to have know anything about salvation, than after they have known it, to turn away. I feel that this means to the letter, not the quickening Spirit. Educated men know something about the Bible, but not to any saving value.

These heavenly places are like springs in the desert. The hot, burning sand presents to us the mirage; that is, the world would try to comfort one with what it has, but, like the mirage, its only counterfieit. Nothing can take the place of water to the thirsty soul. At these heavenly places we can drink long; but then we thirst again. But at these springs there is more water.

All this reminds us of the woman at the well, where our Lord was sitting weary from his journey. He told her of this heavenly water: and, in telling her of it, he created in her a desire for it. She knew nothing of the living water until then — I don't think she ever gave it a thought, for, until then, she was satisfied with herself. After one has seen himself as he really is, he will never again be satisfied with himself: He wants that living water. It takes the Holy Spirit to show one that they are in need of the living water.

I don't know if others have felt as I have, but after attending such places, I've found myself more and more discontented with life here. I often think, If these places are so harmonious, so serene, and suited to the hungry soul, what must it be to be over there where congregations never break up, and sabbaths never end?

There is so much food in these heavenly places. I noticed this in this last meeting I attended. One spoke of the sovereignty of God; another on the love of Christ for his own; another on, ". . . for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."; and the last one that day spoke on the resurrection. I thought about it afterwards: they began with God, and ended with the resurrection, taking up the various links that lead to Him.

How far have some of us come? It is true we are nearer our heavenly home today than ever before. The nearest thing to that abode, is a heavenly place in Christ. How good of God to set up these places in the desert here! There we are refreshed as we travel on to that City, and we are strengthened, and there is rest also. Jacob dreamed about it, the Apostle Paul visited it, and John saw it; and it was like a huge diamond, sparkling and bright. Another thing that helps us along our journey, is that the redeemed have their names written there.

"I do not look for worldly fame,
Or a fortune large and fair:
One thing I would love to know —
Is my name written there?"

Submitted by,
Myrtle Cross,
1203½ S. Mariposa,
Glendale 5, Calif.

ElDorado, Ark.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I enclose $5.00 to renew my subscription to the Signs.

I hope the Lord will bless me to read it the rest of my days here in this unfriendly world. I feel downcast so much of my time, and find myself trying to fix things that were fixed before the foundation of the world. I believe that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord; and I hope I love him. I feel that his mercies have followed me all the days of my life. How I want to be at my brothers' and sisters' feet — but what I would do that I do not. Dark and thorny is the way. Pray for me.

Unworthy of anything,
Mrs. E. M. Cameron

Blackburn, Mo.

Dear Editors:

You will find enclosed $5.00 for the renewal of my subscription.

We are living, as they say, in a changing world. I pray, and have faith, that the *Signs of the Times* will never change. May you be enabled and sustained to continue, and the others who follow, in publishing the truth we so much believe and trust.

May we all be kept in the faith, and to do and act as we should.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Dosia Deal

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EDITORIAL

REPLY TO QUERY OF BROTHER REESE

In replying to the question asked by Brother and Sister Reese, "Was the invisible church deceived, or just the visible church, when our mother Eve was deceived?", we will give our understanding of the subject.

The deception of Eve resulted in the whole human family falling into sin, and consequently affected the elect vessels of mercy along with all others of the human race. This made manifest the need of redemption of the Lord's people.

The CHURCH consists of ALL who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began; and is the same ALL who were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ. There is, consequently, but one church, whether it is called "invisible", or "visible".

We often hear these expressions used, and have sometimes used them ourself;

and, while they are not Biblical terms, they are good, if it is clear what we mean. Our use of "invisible church" is confined to express the *entire number* of the redeemed of the Lord, without regard to whether some of them have been manifested as children of God to the church as organized in this world.

And our use of "visible church" expresses all those who have been led of the Spirit to be separated from the world into the fellowship of each other as the organized *church in the world.*

We say again that there is but one church, whether visible or invisible. It is composed ONLY of REDEEMED SINNERS; there being no others who could possibly make up the church. We feel, therefore, that as Eve is considered to represent the "bride of the Lamb", or the church, the church was deceived in the sense that each member became sinners in the transgression. We have it from the Apostles Paul to Timothy, "For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." (1 Tim. 2:13, 14)

We do not understand, therefore, that there are two kinds who compose the church, those who were deceived, and those who were not, but that all who shall inherit the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world, were in the deception, becoming thereby sinners. They are all alike REDEEMED SINNERS.

There are two other expressions often used in connection with the church: "the church triumphant", and "the church militant". The triumphant church would be the glorified church after all her members are conformed to the image of Christ, and have inherited the kingdom prepared for them. The militant church would be the church while yet in the world, with her warfare, etc., before receiving her inheritance.

These are our thoughts on the subject, and are submitted for the consideration of Brother and Sister Reese and others.

J. D. W.

THE PAST

If I believed in salvation by works, I do not think that any timely creature would be as miserable as I would be. However, since I do not believe that salvation has been by works, I am taking heart with some degree of hope to write some of my reflections on my past, as well as on that of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. I hope to be a partaker of the divine nature, and if so, I have a right to talk of my past as to my becoming a professed follower of the Lamb, as to my reasons for being associated with those denominated Old School Baptists. This past is mine, if so be that I am his, and it includes what God has done before the world was, what he has done for me, and if I have done anything for him, I expect to also enumerate my deeds, and to tell in minute detail the manner in which I have been a contributing factor in getting myself this far, and the part that I have had in bringing the church to its present status.

Undoubtedly, the design to save was of God, and is as old as He. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." (Eph. 1:3, 4); "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us

in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Tim. 1:9); "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was made manifest in these last times for you." (I Peter 1:18, 20); "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Rev. 13:8; 17:8); and many other passages could be noted that pertain to the design as being before the foundation of the world.

The choice and election of God are synonyms. The two words are both expressing an act of God to his creatures — an act that was performed before time began, an act that was not predicated upon the foreseen merit of the creature, nor in pay for something that he had done or could do. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and a sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." (I Pet. 1:2); "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." (Romans 9:11); "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Romans 8:29, 30). These are things that God does, not man. The works of God were known from the beginning of the world (Acts 15:18), thus his electing love, his purpose to save, his predestination of them unto the adoption of children, and to the image of Jesus, his choice of them, his every determination, and his every move toward the execution of the same, was according to his eternal design before the world began.

It is not wholesome doctrine to set forth the thought of eternal children. Yet, it is not wholesome to set forth God having a design to save something that was not. We must not look for them as being to us before the world began, for we, nor none of the family of God, had a being, as humans, as men and women, as born-again creatures to need the blessings and promises of God. We did not have an actual existence as people, neither were we non-existent to God. He, being eternal, has before him all things as they are to be by development.

One of the greatest disputes among theologians has been how that we got into Christ; how that we became related to him as his brethern; in short, how we were born again. All of the disputants have been engaged in this controversy, all of them being aligned on one side or the other. The most of these learned men have thought that the unborn could, by action on their part, independent of God, be born into the family of God; other men, just as learned in the wisdom of this world, have taught that the Holy Spirit acted upon the creature independently of both it and all other creatures, to bring about the new birth. What each group has taught is of small moment to the one who is sitting at the feet of Jesus. The question with that student is, *What has God said?*

1. Let us notice the remarkable experience of the apostle Paul. It is indeed a wonderful display of the power of God in bringing him before kings and courts to hear his testimony. Each time that he told it he ascribed his being stopped to God and His Christ. Many times, in writing and in preaching, have I gone over this account of his dealing with Paul. For fear I have missed something, bear with me as I

travel with Saul as he journeyed to Damascus. It is well that we go back and look into the purpose of the trip. It is not a man whose heart has been made tender by the Spirit of the Lord, that seeks the help of the authorities in his efforts to presecute the Lord's believing children; it is not a heart that the dying cries of Stephen had made any influence on. If there is among my readers one man that can show any change in Saul up until the voice and light from heaven stopped him, let them speak up. My stay on this terrestrial globe is far too short for me to be playing with falsity; and, too, the matter is too serious for any to *let* me play with it, without giving me due concern and warning. If there is any scriptural evidence that *anything* had wrought in Saul a change of heart, or if there is any scriptural evidence that he, by the volition of his will, had brought about a difference in his concern or desire towards the church, that evidence will be carefully weighed and considered in a future article. If it is not presented, the evidence is, that nothing like that is taught in the Scriptures.

The apostle tells us in his letter to the Ephesian church that they had been quickened by God the Father. If language means anything, they were not alive until quickened; if good sense is *good sense*, they were not a contributing factor in being quickened; but if good sense is not good sense, and they were a contributing factor, it follows that they were not quickened, never having been dead. Now to use his logic, nay, to use his divine and inspired testimony as it is related to his own quickening, we find that there had not been any change in the manner of his walking and talking prior to the sudden appearing of the light and sounding of the voice. He was "yet" doing what he had been doing all of the time. He had not expressed any desire toward Christ; he had not lessened his drive to exterminate the saints, but rather had intensified it; he had not brought pressure on heaven by prayer that Jesus come to his rescue. In no sense of the word had he changed from a persecutor of saints to a comforter of them; in no sense of the word had he changed from an independent Saul to a dependent Paul. His being converted, his being born again, his being called to preach, all, all, were the sovereign work of God.

2. Zacharias and Elisabeth were well stricken in years. What would you expect of them? Would you expect them to raise a family? If so, how? Only by the special blessing of God could this woman conceive. Here is the first step in the matter. Only God can, whether it is in the preaching of the gospel or in the begetting of children, give the increase. This is the Bible record, and here I take my position, yet aware of what men will say. In the country round about Herod's kingdom another woman had become with child. How did she become that way? If the scoffers can find a Bible statement of the man that contributed to her condition, I will quit the Old Order of Baptists at once. The Holy Ghost overshadowed her and she became with child. She did not have anything to do with becoming that way; none of those that inhabited that land had a part in it. However, if I have failed to find the book that tells us about the help that she had, then I will, if blessed of God, treat on that, giving particular glory to those that have helped in the matter.

These two women, each of them with child in a manner that the earth could not contribute to, came together as a result of the visit of Mary to see her cousin, Elisabeth. Suppose some one tells me and you that things were in Mary's hand. Let them say on, but, remember that it was the work of God that revealed to Mary the condition of Elisabeth. It was God's work that caused her to seek the company of Elisabeth. She did go, and she did find Elisabeth at home. She did address her, and the news imparted caused the unborn child (John) to leap for joy in his mother's womb. Did the imparting or receiving of the news cause the child to leap for

joy or was the news that caused it? The religion of men is based upon the intellect of men. God can work himself into a lather and unless the intellect of men receives his work, it will prove a failure. What *intellect* leaped for joy? What optinal decision did the unborn child make that caused the leap for joy?

When Jesus came into the world he was rejected by his people as a whole. "He came to his own, and his own received him not, but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:11, 13) Of the Jews and Gentiles that received him, they all were given power to become the sons of God. We Old Order Baptists must not be found fighting against God in order to fight against false doctrine. That is false within itself, and that fight will be lost. *Each of them were given power to become the sons of God.* If we are unable to find an answer or key to this Scripture, we are going to have a self evident contradiction in this noted passage. It will not do us any good to close our eyes; it will not extricate us from our dilemma by ignoring its existence. Whatever the text means, it means what it says. *He gave them power to become the sons of God.* It would not have been a gift of power unless it enabled them to accomplish, to do the object for which it was given. And the thing to be by this given power is not the same thing under consideration as the birth which was not by their will. The thing that they were to become, to wit, sons, would find them willing to become that, for his people are willing in the day of his power. (Psalms 110:3) This gift of power was a right or privilege (See the Geneva Translation of the Bible; Young's Analytical Concordance), but not the power which made them sons, for, let us read, "Which were born." Let us stop there, for the gainsayer must be stopped, and hemmed, and circumvented at every turn. The giving of power to become the sons of God was after they had been born. The verb phrase carries us back to a period before the giving of this power. They were already born at that time, that is, they were, unless the meaning of words has under gone a change since they were uttered.

How were these that received him and were given power to become the sons of God, born? If this birth is conditional, the first one is also. If the first is not, then this one is not. If there ever has been a man or a woman that selected their parents, this will be a good time to upset the country rustic's position. Many people would do it *afterwards*, if they could, but that any man or woman *would* before birth, is a matter that, 1st. the Bible forbids us to believe. 2nd. Medical science also forbids such a thought. No man or woman could be the father and mother of a child save he that fathered the child and she that bore it. Even though men and women advocate that a *thing which is not* can have a voice in *what it is* and *when it is*, it is still as far from the truth as the poles are apart. This birth is a singular one; the earth did not have anything to do with it. *Not the least thing did the earth have to do with it.* All of the blood before them, as well as their own blood, did not have any birth essence in it. The blood of Abraham and David and all the ancient saints of God did not play any part in this birth.

The Jews tried to get baptized because of their blood stream. and it would seem today that some people are traveling heavenward because of their blood, but being born again is not of blood in any sense. This birth did not come about by the will of flesh. If the fleshly standing of any man had been conducive to being born again, then, by all means, Paul could have told a story to Agrippa and Festus and Felix that would have saved him stoning and lashing. Instead he condemned the

thought that he or any man had, by his earthly standing, any priority in the kingdom of heaven. The Saviour declares, "Thou hast given him power over *all flesh*, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." (John 17:2) Again he says, "Flesh and blood *hath not* revealed it unto thee." (Matthew 16:17) The will of the flesh, which certainly (seeing that Jesus has power over it all) means all flesh, whether Pope John, his cardinals, his priests, Protestantism with all of their archbishops and prelates, or any other *ism* or *ist* that existed then and now or future will ever have anything to do in the birth of these that received Christ, or those that have since then, or those that are yet to be born. These were all born by the will of God.

As I look back at the history of the people of God, I am made to inquire as to the past salvation of individuals and the church collectively. It is a daily cry of mine, Who has required this of you? Am I contending for the truth? Or am I misleading people? I hope and think that I am conscious of my small offerings to God's people by way of the pulpit and the printed page. Yet, I know that the position I am occupying brings me before many people. Am I contending for the truth? When I tell the Lord's people that he hath saved them, am I telling the whole truth? When I say that I am what I am by the grace of God, am I talking of something that the Bible proves?

This is my initial offering for this year. To examine the position of the church, it is needful to deal in dry technicalities at times, but I hope that you will be patient with me and that you will remember me to the King that my writing and my preaching be seasoned with the grace of God.

God willing, in my next, I will deal with *what* has brought us from the infant church to now; with *what* has saved you and I thus far.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association met with the Church at Black Rock, May 19th, 20th and 21st, 1858, to the Churches connected therewith.

Beloved Brethren: — Permit us to address you on this occasion on the Present State of the Church of Christ. That the Church is at this time surrounded with darkness in a peculiar manner, is generally admitted; it is like the plague of darkness of Egypt, a darkness that may be felt; it is a wintry state of the Church. The sun occasionally shines, but its shining has not that warming, enlivening and cheering influence upon the plants as at other times it has had — and it is soon obscured by cold bleak clouds.

There are clouds rising from the mists of this world, from the various agitations in the world at this time, politically and otherwise, which much darken the hemisphere of the Church and saints, and produce a corresponding chilliness. There is not that liveliness in our love to the brethren, nor to the truth and ordinances of the Gospel, nor that engagedness in religious exercises, and in religious conversation, and meditations, as have at other times been felt.

As in night and wintry seasons beasts of prey crowd round the settlements of men, to raven; so it is with the Church at this time. There are those around the saints and among them, that would persuade or scare the sheep from their fenced folds to ramble with them in the wild ranges of human wisdom, and to repose with them in their dens that they may prey upon them, and no doubt they have bewitched some of the sheep. There are others again who would persuade the children of God that they ought not to follow or receive the light

which God has given for their continual guide, the Scriptures and blessed teachings of the Spirit, but to be guided in their belief and practice by the mixture of light and shade which is found in the writings of eminent men of past ages; and as these are various, so as they are followed they produce differences of views and dissensions among the saints. Again, Satan takes the advantage of this darkness, to assault the saints with temptations. It is an old complaint with the children of God that,

"Temptations every where annoy,
And sins and snares my peace destroy."

How it may be with the brethren generally at this time we know not, but some are peculiarly tried with temptations. Satan so stirs up their passions, appetites, &c., that they think it is altogether themselves. And indeed it is their own vile nature that thus shows itself; and what is a worse annoyance to them, the old man when left to act itself loves as much as ever it did, the indulgence of itself in its corruptions, and hence under this wildness and darkness, or, in other words, not having the spiritual man in lively exercise, we are led on under the influence of our corruptions, till we are on the very brink of acting them out; and were it not for the faithfulness of God who has promised that with the temptations he will make a way for our escape, we should plunge into actual sin. Though the escape is brought about, we know that it is not of ourselves, but that the sin is ours, though we were not left to carry it out; then arises the trying doubts, whether, if we loved God and his cause and believed the declarations of his word, &c., we could be led on thus contrary to his word and to the exposing of his cause to reproach. We are sometimes thus tossed upon the billows of temptations, until like Jonah, we become exceedingly displeased, and angry, and pray the Lord to **take away our life,** thinking it **better for us to die than to live,** yea, with Job, **our souls,** those souls which others tell us are made heavenly in regeneration, **choose strangling and death rather than life.** Again, as in wintry seasons, clouds have heretofore at times gathered over the Church, but at this time they appear to be gathering thicker than ever, as though preparing to burst in a storm upon us.

But, brethren, it is with the Church now as it was with Israel during the plague of darkness in Egypt. **All the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.** So we think the churches of the saints have at this time as clear light in the great truths of the Gospel as in any former period; and it is more distinguishable from every false system then formerly as it makes manifest the darkness without, by being so contrasted with it. The ministers of Christ, although frequently on account of the wintry darkness when going to their appointments, feel more as though they were going on some worldly concern than to deliver a message of grace, yet are enabled generally to preach the gospel with much clearness, to feel, while preaching, the vast weight of their subject, the precious fullness and freeness of the gospel of salvation, and the importance of contending earnestly for the faith, and of preaching Christ as the only way of salvation. Private members are as well established in the truth, and have as clear a discerning spirit to distinguish between truth and error when preached, as at any former period; and whilst complaining of many doubts, fears and temptations, are as well established in the truth that their whole salvation is in Christ Jesus as in any former period, and manifest as much anxiety to know the Scriptures, and to be in all things conformed to them.

The inquiry is frequently made, What can be the reason of the Church's being in this dark wintry state, and whether it is not owing to the unfaithfulness of the Church that this has come upon her? The inquiry is also made whether the Church cannot adopt some course, whether some measures cannot be taken to bring the Church back to more sunny seasons, and whether individuals by

proper efforts, by prayer, &c., cannot deliver themselves from their coldness? Some few have urged the making certain exertions to relieve the Church and saints from this unpleasant situation. Brethren, does not the same God reign in the heavenly kingdom as in the earthly? Does he not reign as supremely in the one as in the other? Does not the declaration of the Lord, "I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create evil; I the Lord do all these things" apply as fully to the spiritual world and its government as to the natural? Try your powers, brethren, in mid-winter to clear away the storm clouds, to avert the long, dark cold nights and to bring the sun back to his summer solstice, and if ye can do this, then may ye hope by your efforts to hasten on again the period when in reference to the Church ye may sing, "For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land," and not till then.

We know, brethren, that all this coldness and darkness and the corruptions, that cause us to doubt and fret, and are the materials for Satan's temptations to act upon, are in us. We cannot say with our Lord "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me." No, the evil is all in us, and when we rightly feel, we take all the shame and blame to ourselves. But can we shake off or overcome these evils of ourselves? No, the more we feel the evil of these corruptions and coldness, we feel the more our entire impotency to relieve ourselves from them, we cry for God to interpose his grace or we must fall under them. It is true, that amid the severest colds and storms of winter, if God in his providence provide us with shelter, with fuel and clothing we may keep from perishing, so under all these dark and wintery seasons spiritually, God's grace will be sufficient for his people to secure that **their faith fail not.** He will **keep them by his power through faith unto salvation,** though he may leave them, for more humbling of themselves, and for the trying their faith, to fall into the mire.

The people of God, are likened to sheep. Sheep are feeble, defenseless creatures of themselves, very simple in providing for their defense against their enemies, or in providing for, and protecting themselves and their young from perishing in the wintery storms. They need the constant care of a shepherd to provide food and shelter for them, and to protect them by keeping them embosomed, or by watching over them, or they will wander off, get scattered and devoured. The people of God are equally as dependent upon the care of their Shepherd. But David personating Christ in his body, the Church, says, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul, &c." So that even the souls of the children, get off at times from the simplicity of gospel truth and order and need to be restored by the great Shepherd. This does not look like the souls of saints have been changed into heavenly souls.

As to the reason why the church is in this dark and wintery state; we would say, it is not that the Shepherd is unfaithful to his charge; not because he has not power to preserve his sheep in perfect peace, and to keep them in the constant enjoyment of light; nor because they are left to their own care; but because he has seen it best for the church to be in this state. In a word, because it is so written, and the Scriptures must be fulfilled. The present dark and cold state of the church, will no doubt be more for the glory of God, more for a manifestation of the power and exceeding riches of his grace; more fully display to the admiration of saints and angels, the divine efficacy of the blood of Jesus to cleanse from all sin, and that perfect fullness there is in him to present the vilest sinner without spot or blemish before the throne of God, than would the church's being kept

in the constant exercise of that faith and love and zeal such as characterized the lives of Peter, John and Paul. Because now it appears so manifest that it is all of grace that they are saved and kept, all of Christ in which they will appear with acceptance before God, and shine in glory.

Let us then, Brethren, amidst all the darkness around, rejoice in the power and faithful care of our Shepherd and may we be found walking as children of Light.

S. Trott, Moderator
Jas. Blizzard, Clerk

(The above Circular Letter of the Baltimore Association appeared in the Signs of July 1, 1858.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. SARAH GILLEY HOLLAND

Mrs. Sarah Gilley Holland, daughter of the late Dowell Gilley and Zinnie Hopkins Gilley, was born in Patrick County, Virginia, September 22, 1873; and departed this life January 12, 1960, making her stay with us over eighty-six years. In 1905 she was married to William B. Holland, who passed on several years ago. To this union ten children were born, four of which preceded her in death. Surviving are: three daughters, Mrs. James Pearman, Martinsville, Va.; Mrs. Tom Griffin, and Mrs. Holman Vernon, Reidsville, N. C.; three sons, Robert W., and T. S. of Reidsville, N. C., and George, of Madison, N. C.; also by forty-one grandchildren, forty-six great grandchildren, and two great great grandchildren.

Sister Holland joined Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church, near Madison, N. C., over thirty-five years ago. Though she suffered the loss of one leg years ago, she was faithful to continue her meetings, and was an example of faith, love and courage. She bore her cross with meekness, and often said that she felt it a little thing to suffer, compared with what the dear Lord had suffered, and compared with what he had prepared above. She was steadfast unto the end in this faith, losing her other leg in the last days of her life.

Before her last illness, she told me a dream, in which she saw Jesus coming in the air and a cloud with him. As it came closer, she saw that the cloud was composed of angels making a train into heaven. She looked, and saw the earth full of people running to and fro. She asked, "What are you running for, (in joy she asked this) that's Jesus coming." So it is our belief that she is at rest with Jesus; and we witness that, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

She was laid to rest in the church cemetery after the services in the church, which was filled with loved ones and friends. Elder Roy Smith assisted me in the service. Written at the request of Pleasantville Church while in conference.

(Elder) H. W. Wray

ELDER L. T. TUCKER

In memory of a dear friend and an able minister of the gospel that our Heavenly Father has called from the battle-field of duty, Elder L. T. Tucker. He was born June 21, 1876, and died June 23, 1960, making his stay on earth eighty-four years and two days.

Elder Tucker was first married to Lillie Shelton, and to this union were born four children: one daughter, Mrs. Mable Diggs; three sons, H. S., P. A., and W. C. Tucker. After being separated by death, he later married Ella Corns, who also preceded him to the grave. To this union there were also four children: two daughters, Loris and Ruth, and two sons, Isaac and Raymond.

Elder Tucker joined old Stewart's Creek Church, in Surry County, N. C., in 1905. About a year later the church felt a gift in him, and liberated him speak. His gift developed greatly, and in September, 1910, the church at Pilot Mountain required his service, and called for his ordination. He was ordained September 24, 1910. The Presbytery consisted of the following elders: A. M. Denny, Gabriel Denny, G. O. Key, and H. D. Mikey, with deacons S. A. Taylor and William Simmons.

He was ably gifted, deep in doctrine and well informed in the Scriptures, and was uncompromising in his convictions. He suffered many disappointments in his service to his brethren in his long life with them, as well as had many, many pleasant meetings with them. His life was dedicated to the service of his brethren. He is missed much by them, especially by the writer. Many times have I felt my life enriched in his deep and well explained understanding of the inspired word of God. Peace be to his dust, and let us hope the good Lord will give us more such gifts as his. Written by one who loved him.

D. A. O'Bryant

NATHANIEL D. FOSTER

Nathaniel D. Foster, age 47, passed away in June, 1960, in a Greenville hospital, Greenville, Alabama, after a brief illness. He was a native of Greenville.

Survivors include his wife, Mrs. Roberta Ellen Foster; three daughters: Helen, Annette

and Nancy; one son, Robert; four sisters: Mrs. Sam Dean, Mrs. Mack Dunn, Mrs. Noel Cook, all of Greenville, and Mrs. Maxie Kent, Pensacola, Florida; three brothers: J. C. Foster and Felix Foster Jr., both of Greenville, and Ralph Foster, of Baltimore, Maryland.

Funeral services were conducted at Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, June 22nd, with Elder E. D. Gafford, and Mr. Lewis Watkins and Mr. John Vickers officiating.

Brother Foster was experienced in the Textile Field, and was owner and operator of the Foster Manufacturing Company, of Greenville, Alabama, having recently built a new plant in Greenville. He was well known throughout the area.

It was my privilege to know and love him for a number of years. His great delight was to attend the services of the churches of the Old School or Primitive Baptists. He was well established in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and manifested his love for the brethren by attending the meetings, and helping in every way possible in supporting the church. He left evidence that he died in the triumph of that living faith.

He was blessed with a lovely family, and it was my privilege to visit in their home a short time before he was called away.

When the Lord shall come for his people, we believe he will be among that innumerable host that no man can number, who shall awake with the likeness of the Lord Jesus, to join the blood-bought throng in praising Him who is Lord of Lords and King of Kings forever.

D. V. Spangler

Madera, Calif.
October 28, 1960

Dear Editor:

Please publish my husband's obituary; he had many friends among the Old Baptists, and we have been among you kind people at meetings many times.

May God richly bless you good people in your good work. One in hope of eternal life through God's goodness and mercy.

Mrs. Craig Cunningham

CRAIG CUNNINGHAM

From information furnished, we have prepared the following:

Mr. Cunningham, aged 79, was a native of Madera, California, was one of the few remaining Maderans who knew California's real pioneers, being born into an early-day family. His father sluiced for gold in the mountain areas in the 1880's; and his uncle, Capt. R. P. Mace, was owner of the early-day Yosemite Hotel.

Mr. Cunningham, who had been retired for about ten years, had a long career in education and business. He was Superintendent of County Schools from 1911 to 1923, beginning his career in education as a school teacher at Grub Gulch. After this he was in the furniture business, and was active in the Business Men's Association; and was Secretary - Manager of the County Chamber of Commerce for eleven years.

He is survived by his wife, Marie; two daughters, Mrs. Meredith Daulton, of Madera, and Mrs. Paul Ellis, Fresno, Calif.; one stepdaughter, Dorothy Scott, Hanford, Calif.; two sisters, Mrs. Alice Pitman and Miss Margaret Cunningham, Madera; two brothers, Henry, of Madera, and Dr. Edgar Cunningham, of Richmond; and by five grandchildren, and two great grandchildren.

MRS. MATTIE SIMMONS JOHNSTON

Death came into the life of our beloved Sister Mattie Johnston on Sunday morning, October 23, 1960, and removed her spirit to be with God.

Sister Johnston was living in Reidsville, North Carolina, at the time of her departure, but had spent most of her life in Caswell County, North Carolina. She united with the church at Bush Arbor in July, 1939, and had lived a faithful life to her church, often attending when her body was so filled with pain that she could hardly endure it, but would say that she couldn't be satisfied not to come.

Sister Johnston leaves to mourn her departure her husband, Mr. Ben M. Johnston; two sisters, Mrs. Edward Terrell and Mrs. Roy Somers both of Route 2, Elon College, North Carolina; four brothers, John, Berry, and Roach Simmons of Route 2, Elon College, North Carolina, and Philip Simmons of Camp Butner Hospital.

Her funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Church by her pastor, Elder W. C. King, Elder J. W. Gilliam, and Elder J. Harvey Smith. Her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the coming of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to call her from the sleeping tomb.

We do not mourn as those who have no hope. We believe that our loss is her gain. May God's blessings be upon all who feel this loss of loving ties that have bound them together in this world for 76 years. May those who mourn be given a heart to bow humbly to God's will.

RESOLVED, that a copy of this memorial be sent to the family, a copy to be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication, and a copy placed on our record book of Bush Arbor Church.

Done by order of Bush Arbor Church in

conference December 10, 1960.

W. C. King, Moderator
J. D. Simmons, Church Clerk

MRS. MOLLIE McKINNEY OAKLEY

On August 24, 1960, God saw fit to remove from us the spirit of Sister Oakley. She was born and reared in Caswell County, North Carolina, and had spent her entire life of 74 years in the same community. While she had lived a long and useful life, death came as a shock, having died suddenly from a heart condition.

Sister Oakley leaves to mourn her departure two sons: Dewey C. Oakley, Route 3, Burlington, N. C., and Freddie W. Oakley, Route 1, Yanceyville, N. C.; twelve grandchildren, eight great grandchildren, and a host of other relatives and friends.

Sister Oakley united with the Church at Bush Arbor at her June meeting, 1932, and was a most faithful member, always attending her meetings if possible. We shall miss her, but feeling that she is now resting from all pain, sorrow, and trials of this world, may we all be given to say not our will but God's be done.

Sister Oakley's funeral was largely attended. Her body was laid to rest at Bush Arbor Church Cemetery to await the coming of our Blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, to call her from the dead to arise and come forth to meet Him who saved her and gave her every needed blessing. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder W. C. King, and Elder J. Harvey Smith. May God give to her dear loved ones a heart of submission to his Holy Will, who makes no mistakes.

RESOLVED, that a copy of this memorial be sent to the family, a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication and a copy be spread upon the record book of the Church.

Done by order of Bush Arbor Church in her regular conference December 10, 1960.

W. C. King, Moderator
J. D. Simmons, Church Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Insomuch as it was the will of our gracious and kind heavenly father to remove from our midst our dear sister, Sister Ella Lee Bonds, we, the church at Skewarky, Williamston, North Carolina, desire to write a few lines in her memory. She was born in the Darden's community of Jamesville Township on October 5, 1889, and died in Martin General Hospital, Williamston, on November 1, 1960, making her stay here 71 years and 27 days.

It was our privilege to have known this dear sister the most of our lives; therefore we have seen the footsteps she took in her everyday life. We are grateful to say our departed sister was a faithful mother in a natural sense to her children, a most faithful grandmother to her grandchildren, and a kind and tender friend to all who knew her. And what is most comforting to us, the church at Skewarky, is that she was faithful to her God, her brethren and sisters, and her church insofar as we could be blessed to see and understand from the fruits she bore.

The church at Skewarky grieves over their loss, but we hope and feel that our loss is our dear sister's eternal gain. We rejoice in this because she professed a hope in an all wise, all powerful, and merciful God. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and was resting in the hope of being taken on the wings of God's love to that celestial city eternal in the heavens whose builder and maker is God. She had a desire to give God all the honor and praise for a finished and complete salvation made by the spilling of the blood of his glorious, ever-to-be adored son, Jesus Christ, on the cross; a salvation complete in the mind and purpose of God before the foundation of the world.

Sister Bonds was received in fellowship with the church at Skewarky in February, 1935, by letter from Morattock Primitive Baptist Church, Washington County, making her stay with us around 25 years and eight months. She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Faith for approximately 50 years. She served the church at Skewarky as housekeeper 25 years and as treasurer and trustee 10 years. She was faithful to the end, bearing much suffering and pain over the years with patience, resigning herself with God's blessings to his will.

She was the wife of the late John Dennis Bonds. To them were born 13 children, 7 boys and six girls. She is survived by 4 sons, 3 daughters, 28 grandchildren, and 11 great grandchildren, to whom we extend our heartfelt sympathy in their distressing hours. May you be comforted by God's love is our prayer for Christ's sake.

Her funeral was conducted in the Skewarky Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder E. C. Stevenson, assisted by Elders A. B. Ayers and E. O. Harrison. Interment was in the Skewarky Church Cemetery under a mound of beautiful flowers which she loved so much.

RESOLVED, that a copy of this be placed on the church record; a copy for publication; and a copy be sent to the family.

Done by order of conference second Saturday in November, 1960.

Elder E. C. Stevenson, Moderator
Committee
Deacon Johnny Ray Gardner
Sister Nancy Daniels

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129 DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1961 NO. 3

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3/61
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE TOUCH OF HIS HAND

When once I was lonely and weary
Trouble encircled me like an iron band,
I remember the kind, loving Saviour,
And sought the "Touch of his Hand".

So unworthy and quietly I asked Him
To help me these trials to stand,
When, softly out of the shadows,
I felt the "Touch of his Hand".

Then quietly but firmly He led me
O'er the rocks and treacherous land,
To a place forever I'm grateful
For the precious "Touch of his Hand".

No more shall the fear of the darkness,
Nor the sting of sharp cutting sand,
Bring me pain, or cause me to falter,
For now he has hold of my hand.

Mrs. Flora Booher,
Rt. 1, Shirleysburg, Pa.
(Member Trough Creek Church — Ed.)

GOD'S FOUNDATION

Other foundation can no man lay:
It was laid long, long ago.
Jesus said, "On this rock I will build";
'Twas by revelation we know.

Other foundations, flimsy and weak,
Are built only on the sand:
They cannot withstand the wind and storm,
For they're foundations of man.

But this one was founded by Jesus,
And can withstand all the gales;
It is the house He built on the rock —
On the rock that never fails.

Their God remembers their sins no more,
Whose hopes upon Him are staid:
They are safe in the cleft of the Rock,
With their sins on Jesus laid.

Willing to suffer in the garden;
Willing all their sins to bear;
Willing to pay that others might live;
Willing, He bore their sins there.

Willing to suffer all the shame
That his people should be free,
He was forever the spotless Lamb,
When He died on Calvary.

He was made sin who knew no sin —
But, Oh, at what a great cost —
That the price of redemption be paid,
He bore their sins on the cross.

Cora Powell,
Salisbury, Md.

HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS OF LEADING CREEK AND VALLEY CHURCHES OF WEST VIRGINIA

"Much of the romance and history of pioneer days is written around and interwoven with the activities of the early churches. One of the first denominations to find a footing West of the Alleghenies was the Primitive or Predestinarian Baptists, commonly known as 'Old School Baptists', and sometimes referred to as 'Hardshells'."

Thus reads the introduction to an account of the Valley Church and the Leading Creek Church of central West Virginia. This history was furnished us by Sister Hester B. Thompson, of Cumberland, Maryland, who is a member of Leading Creek, and a great granddaughter of the first pastor of that church, Elder David P. Murphy.

In the early days of our country the members of the churches often lived many miles from their meeting-houses, and since traveling was over rough roads and trails on horseback or afoot, the brethren often organized other churches and built new houses more

conveniently located. For this reason Leading Creek Church was organized by fourteen members who obtained letters from the Valley Church, in Tygert's Valley, near Elkins, West Virginia; and built their meeting-house at Montrose, West Virginia.

The account given us is a newspaper article written in 1941, and, due to its length, we will have to greatly condense it. The Valley Church was established in 1806, about the time the Indians were making their last raids in that part of the country. It consisted of ten members with ten more added the same month, and included the following family names: Kittle, Canfield, Hixon, Chenoweth, Holder, Moore, Schoonover, Hart, Caplin, Kelly, Skidmore, and Weese. The following Elders served Valley Church as pastors: Thomas Collett, Phinneas Wells, Nathan Everett, Joseph Poe, Ezra P. Hart, S. D. Lewis, John N. Bartlett, and Jonah S. Murphy. About fifteen years ago Valley Church members united with Leading Creek Church, and Valley Church ceased a separate organization.

The newspaper account further states concerning Leading Creek Church, "This offshoot of the original church boasts a record that is unique and perhaps unparalled in the religious history of the United States. On April 24, 1854, less than a month after the letters of release were issued, Leading Creek Church was constituted — and during the intervening 87 years the church has had but three pastors — a father, a son, and a grandson: Elder David P. Murphy, his son Elder James Murphy, and his grandson Elder Jonah S. Murphy." This was written in 1941, and we must now add that after the death of Elder Jonah Murphy, his grandson, Elder Veldon B. Linn, became pastor, and remains at the present time.

Thus Leading Creek Church is unique as to the continuation of all her four pastors of one family. And she has been blessed of the Lord to have remained firm in the doctrine upon which she was founded. They, together with Valley Church, refused to be drawn into the errors which appeared in the doctrine of many who retained the name of Baptist. So, while many former sister churches were departed from the faith so long held by gospel churches, the Leading Creek and Valley brethren were monuments of God's mercies, and continued to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

The newspaper account gives some of the history of the division among the Baptists, quoting from Hassell's History and from Black Rock Address, which we shall not give here, since all Old School Baptists are acquainted with it. But we do quote as follows: "This action (by the Kehukee Association and the brethern at Black Rock — Ed.) in 1827 and 1832, marked the final parting of the ways for the followers of the Old School and the New School of the Baptist denomination. The Old School, or Hardshell Baptists, as they were dubbed at that time, have, through all the intervening years, stood steadfast in their interpretation of the tenets which they claim were handed down continuously from the days of the Apostles."

Our writer also says, "Followers of a faith, who have stood steadfast as a stone wall against the march of modern methods in matters religious, merit the respect of Christian people, even of different beliefs. Such has been the record of the Murphy family for almost a century, (now more than a century. — Ed.) Elder Jonah Murphy, like his honored grandfather, has never received a salary for his services. He permits no musical instruments to be used in his church. He believes in baptism by immersion, but not in a man-built baptistry. When accessions to the church are made, the congregation gathers on the banks of nearby Leading Creek, regardless of the season of the year, where the rites are administered in the running waters of the stream."

The original fourteen members of

Leading Creek Church who were released to "constitute a church of the same faith and order at Montrose, called Leading Creek Church," were as follows: Daniel Schoonover, Archibald Ferguson, Edith Ferguson, Santha Wilmoth, William Workman, Lucinda Workman, Edmund Wilmoth, July Ann Chenoweth, Polly Wilmoth, Debora Ferguson, Hickman Chenoweth, Mary Wilmoth, Isaac Canfield, and Elizabeth Ferguson.

Though this account is quite brief we believe the generations to follow will find it quite interesting.

J. D. W.

Rt. 1, Box 29
Branch, Arkansas

Dear Editors:

The good Lord willing, I would like some information, as it is not clear to me just what happens to the natural man through regeneration; or what I believe is called the new birth, or spiritual birth.

I understand that man was created equal at the beginning. In other words, he was created upright until the transgression of God's law while in the garden of Eden. The Bible teaches that the natural man is not subject to the laws of God because they are foolish to him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned.

So, what I would like to know: Is there anything changed about the natural man in this operation, only he is made subject to God's will; not willingly but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. (Romans 8:20) The Bible teaches that at corporal death the body goes back to dust, and the spirit goes back to God who gave it.

If anyone feels led by the Holy Spirit to give further information on the above subject, I would appreciate a reply through the *Signs of the Times*.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
J. A. Turner

(See editorial reply)

DESIRES ELDER RUSTON'S VIEWS

1160 Halifax Road
Danville, Virginia.

My dear Brother Ruston:

How unworthy I do feel to call you my brother. However, I have a desire to write you again this morning to tell you how much joy I received after reading your editorial in the December, 1960, issue of the *Signs of the Times*, meditating upon the truths you set forth pertaining to the House of Judah and the House of Jacob. I believe you brought forth the fruits of the two Houses, with the truth that cannot be disputed. While I was reading I was rejoicing to know I had seen you and had visited in your home, also had heard you preach. I could visualize I was seeing you as I once had.

The dear gracious Lord has given us some good writers and lovely witnesses to His precious Word in these dark days we are travelling in.

How glorious it is to know that we have this freedom, that God's Word can go across the miles to comfort the little thirsty flock who seeks for a drink from the fountain that never runs dry. So many times I have had tears streaming down reading the Word. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." If I do know my poor heart, I do thirst after righteousness, I get so hungry at times to hear the gospel word proclaimed. I am deprived very much in convenience of going to meeting. I try to comfort myself down the pathway by reading the Bible, seeking peace to my weary soul and mind. I am comforted with this hymn some of the time.

"Do not I love Thee, O my Lord?
Behold my heart and see," etc.

Now I want to make an apology for not answering the comforting letter you wrote me. I am sorry I did not let you know how very much I did appreciate it, and how very much I enjoyed the editorial you wrote in answer to my re-

quest on the woman taken in adultery.

Now, Brother Ruston, if not asking too much of you, will you please, when your time permits, write on the subject in Genesis 28:21-22. I would like to know your views on the subject of Jacob saying, "So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God; and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."

Would this tenth be material things? It seems I can't understand it to be the tenth of one's income, as in this day we hear some preachers, not of our faith, preaching that we should give a tenth of our income to the church. They also use the text, Leviticus 27:30, saying the tithe is the Lord's. In my early life I never heard anything preached about the tenth or the tithe from any source. "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it, etc." (Psalm 127:1) O, how sinful me does beg to be led in the paths of righteousness. I do know that Jesus told Thomas, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

Now I will close with my love to your lovable companion. I am trusting you may be blessed to write many, many more editorials, as I do always look forward to reading them. I thank the Lord for the good editors of the *Signs*. If you can only remember me in your prayers, please do so.

In hope of entering the Father's House with many mansions. (John 14)

Mrs. Nettie A. Evans

(See Elder Ruston's Editorial)

6510 N. Calispel,
Spokane 53, Washington

Signs of the Times:

Please renew my subscription to the *Signs* for one year; and also renew my mother's for one year, for which I enclose a check.

I've been a subscriber to the *Signs* for only the past year, but, my, how I have enjoyed getting them. I enjoy the articles of experience and the editorials; and I have especially enjoyed Elder Gold's correspondence with Dr. Hooper. I love a good argument in defense of the "Hardshell" Baptist belief.

I wouldn't trade my hope and belief for anything in this world. I only hope and pray it's God-given, and not of myself. I believe in predestination to the fullest. I rejoice in defending God's word as I see and believe it, when He sees fit to aid my defense. But, then, there are so many times when "of myself I can do nothing"; and how helpless I am!

When the dear Lord opens my ears and heart to understand, how glad I am; and when I try to understand of myself, I understand nothing. I have a sister who told me not to lean upon my own understanding, but to go to someone who has studied and read the Bible for years, and who has more reason to know what the real interpretation is. I wrote her that I didn't lean on my understanding, but on the understanding God gives me, if He does; and if He is the "author and finisher of my faith", He also gives me my hope and belief that the understanding I have is the true one. I told her, "Yes, don't lean on your own understanding — lean on some other mortal man's, who probably has been blind and in the ditch a lot longer than you have."

Oh, I get wrought up just thinking about how they believe. They claim they love and teach the truth, and yet it is all of man, not of God. Yet I realize they believe the way they do because God intended that they would; they claim that without God they can do nothing, yet when they talk its the Witnesses who get all the credit.

May God guide and direct you always to print the truth, is my prayer.

Unworthily,
Caroline Martin

PROSPERITY AND ADVERSITY

967 Maxey,
Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I wish to renew my subscription to the *Signs*, so am enclosing check for two years.

I wish to say that we enjoyed your being with us here in Memphis this Fall; and this goes for all the elders and brethren who visit us. It is good when the Lord sees fit to gather his little children together, and make them sit together in Christ. There is their Heavenly Place here in the earth: When they meet and sing hymns of praise, and try to pray and to talk in His name; because there is none other name given among men whereby we must be saved. So we are made to say with the Apostle in the 5th chapter of Romans, "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ." This clearly explains that man is not justified by works, in order to have peace with God. God gives us peace through his only begotten Son, whom he sent into this world to save sinners. He did not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. The well man needs not a physician, but he that is sick. When, in time past, we were made to hate the things we once loved, and love the things we once hated; and our feet were placed upon the Rock, and our goings established, and a new song placed in our mouth singing praise to His name, how wonderful and how sweet was the season. To all that call upon His name, these seasons are joyful.

In Ecclesiastes 7:13, 14, we find, "Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked? In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him."

Now when we are given faith to look unto Jesus and realize in every sense of the word that he is the author and finisher of our faith, in which there is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, we are joyful in that day and confess that we have no confidence in the flesh. I believe this is part of the prosperity under consideration in the above scriptures; and that it is just as necessary to be in the day of adversity, when we seemingly are left to ourselves. It is then that we are made to consider, wondering if He is gone from us. Don't we then pray for Him to be merciful unto us, as the Publican did?

This is a subject that is given for His children to study and meditate upon: How God has so wonderfully set the one over against the other — prosperity and adversity, for the welfare of his little children, and that man should find nothing after him. Great is the mystery of God's handiwork: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." (Psalm 19:1-3) Their voice is heard whereunto he sends it: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." We see him with the eye of faith, and hear his voice in the day of prosperity, and are joyful. Not only do we hear but we are led by Him. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, are sons of God."

In the day of adversity we are led into adversity. We would never have any dark moments in this life if it were left to us, but when we do, we are made to consider the handiwork of God in all things. So we must believe that all things work together for good to them that love Him, to them who are the called according to his purpose. And all that we can think about in the making of all things working together for good to them that love Him, is because He is before all things in the minds of his children. You know that in Isaiah 9:6, we are told the following: "For unto

us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

I want to say here that when the new birth comes into our life, then is when I understand is prosperity; then is when we celebrate Christ's birthday — the day of prosperity. The Prophet Isaiah said, "For unto us . . ." This word "us" includes the whole house of Israel — spiritual Israel; and here is a precious gift his children receive: the Son is given to them. No man could do anything in order for Christ to come to him; if he could, it would not be a gift, but would be a reward, wouldn't it?

So, our most precious gift is the hope the Lord has freely given us which we enjoy here in the world; and which reaches beyond this life. If in this life only we had hope in Christ, we would be of all men most miserable. We are saved by hope. Hope that is seen, is not hope; but if we hope for that we see not, then do we wait for it with patience: and it is good to wait upon the Lord. A walking by faith, being led of the Spirit, denotes the day of prosperity, when we praise Him in all things. Do we not believe that the government (church) rests on his shoulder? Where the word of a king is there is power. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men." (John 1:1-4)

Him being the Prince of Peace, brings joy to the troubled soul — not to the one who has no troubles and trials in this world, but to the ones included in the "us": "Unto us a child is born, a Son is given." This being true, those that are given him, He keeps, and will raise them up again at the last day. There is no danger that one who is given him will ever be lost, for Chirst says, "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Here is power! Just think of what Paul said, "Neither death, nor life, nor any other creature is able to separate us from the love of God."

God is love; and if you have ever loved Him, it is because He first loved you: even when you and I were dead in trespasses and sins, and walked according to the course of this world, according to the Prince of the power of the air: the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Isn't it wonderful to think that God loved sinners even when they didn't know him. Here is our Keeper; "He brings us to his banqueting house and his banner over us is love," said Solomon. And David said, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters." I see no difference in the meaning of the words "bring" and "leadeth", as used by Solomon and David: The Spirit calls, brings, sends, and makes His children willing in the day of his power. When His voice is heard speaking unto you, you obey it. We are made to suffer for his name's sake, and in this way we learn obedience; we learn that we need help, and that our help must come from him, for it is in God that we live, move, and have our being. And we are made to realize that without him we can do nothing.

I am glad that God has a people today who preach and believe in Him, not just about him. Of course we desire to be closer and closer unto him in all things. His people are not ashamed of owning and confessing the one in whom is all their trust. We read in 2 Timothy 1:8, 9, "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

My dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, do not the above scriptures give us the account of how and why He means so much to all of us — of our being led by the Spirit which teaches us all things. Read I John 2:27: "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." All of God's people are taught of him, and great is their peace. These are the elect of God, who are justified by faith. We read in James 2:5, "Harken my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?"

Now the will in which your, and I hope my name is included, whatever that estate is, His heirs will, and do receive eternal life, and this life is in the Son of God. We read that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life; and we read that God's work is from everlasting to everlasting; and that He declared the end from the beginning. So it is declared of Him in whom we trust, that he controls all things, and upholds all things by the word of his power. There is no power but of him: the powers that be are ordained of Him.

Then why shouldn't He be called the King of Kings, the Lord over all things? Has he not made all things for himself? Surely you and I look unto him who calls, and performs his work in earth and in heaven. Who are the people who truly believe that his will is done in earth and in heaven? They are the ones unto whom He was born, who believe in him, and who talk of his wonderful love that is shed abroad in their hearts.

I had no thought of writing as I have when I began, but things kept coming into my mind, and it seemed that I couldn't quit. There is so much to thank our God for, and I realize that I know not how. But may He bless his children wherever they are, and keep them in the way, walking by faith. We know that the way of man is not in himself. Man cannot direct his steps. I have experienced this, if not deceived.

May God bless you and all who call upon his name. Elder Spangler, we want you to come back to see us, and for Elder Wood, Elder Griffin, Elder Lambert and Elder Ruston to come when given a mind to do so. Written in love, I trust.

Your brother in hope,
Elder H. R. Prince

LETTER TO ELDER RUSTON

Saragossa, Alabama

Dear Brother Ruston:

When I read your article in the December *Signs*, somehow I felt that I must write to you. I enjoyed reading the things you said regarding the House of Jacob (or Israel) and the House of Judah.

Sometimes in meditation my mind runs in channels that are a comfort to me. So much can be said of the House of Judah, to me a Royal Kingdom appears, over which Jesus reigns supremely. We find this kingdom referred to as a poor and afflicted people and He in the midst of them.

In Jeremiah 23:5-6 read, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a Righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

This kingdom consists of poor afflicted ones, crippled, not able to do things,

but are completely dependent on their King for the sure mercies of David. Here is a little group that are trusting in the finished work of their King. Did He not say on the cross, as He hung between heaven and earth, that, "It is finished." There are some who believe this to be true. The reason that they believe it to be true is because they have been made acquainted with their afflictions. The poor fellow at the pool of Bethesda had to wait for Him. Jesus was in the midst of Israel then, and Israel is God's people. They will be saved and inherit immortal glory. It has not pleased God to make all Israel to see. He has not worked upon them to pay tithes, which, in this day, must be honour and praise, but there are the subjects of the Kingdom, who will be praising Him. It may not be done in a formal way in a church building, it may even be a poor, ragged black-face in the slums of Africa, but wherever it is, it will be pleasing to God.

This Kingdom is GIVEN one, not just something put up to be received or rejected. It is an inheritance, some feel unworthy, in fact, all do, but it is theirs just the same, and it is not given grudgingly, for the Saviour said, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

Write on, Brother Ruston, your pieces are good food, we all love to dwell upon the Hope of better things beyond this life, but we know so little of what awaits us after death. Little is told us in the Bible, which makes me think that it is impossible for us in our state here to understand the wonder of Eternity. It is sufficient for us that He has prepared a life for us free from sin, diseases and troubles. When we try to fathom that great mystery, we get lost, but there are so many beautiful Scriptures pointing to His kingdom here, pertaining to the travel of the people of God, and this is food for our souls.

May the Lord keep you and all the writers of the Signs.

A poor sister,
Ercella Hand

"THERE IS JOY IN OUR HOPE"

We hear people say they know they are saved; they talk of their good works, and are on the straight road to heaven. I have wondered, even wished I knew just how they feel; then I remembered that to know how they feel, I would be as blind as they are, without any knowledge of the work of grace in my heart, and without God and hope. The thought was so horrible, I was frightened: suppose God had never noticed me, and I was still in nature's darkness. I felt, no, I do not want to know their feelings. With all the trials, doubts and fears I have been brought through, I had rather have my (seemingly) little hope than all their assurance of heaven, founded on a sandy foundation.

Perhaps you will ask, "Didn't you know how you felt before you saw your lost condition?" No, I never knew, for if this work has been begun in me, it was when I was a child. I could not see and feel like other children. I heard arminainism all around, people were so happy that they had found Jesus, and were happy all the time following Him. It was a mystery to me; I could not understand it. The preacher would call all, large or small, especially children, to come up and kneel around him and let him pray for them; then ask if they felt that He had blessed them, and they would say, "Yes." I could not understand it, and wondered.

When I was a child, a neighbor girl, younger than I, said, "George, I had rather die and go to heaven, than to live." I could not believe it, for I thought she was talking at random, because I feared death. She is now an old woman, and I have never seen any evidence that she felt what she said. This began to impress me, and became such

a burden I cried. I did not know what the trouble was, but could not keep from crying. Wish I could remember it as it was, but the best I can tell, it seemed I felt a guilty conscience, not for any special reason; and I felt a desire to go to heaven. I could not enjoy the foolishness and worldly fun like other children, without a guilty conscience. I was still a sinner and was as mean as other children when my conscience did not trouble me, sometimes so much so that I would cry.

I began to read Christian experiences in my twelfth year. They fascinated me. I did not know why, for I do not remember feeling any spiritual emotions while reading, but I could not understand doctrinal material, for I could not get any light, and I did not read them. But as time passed, the light was given me to understand a little at a time, until I feel the doctrine of God's complete sovereign rule over all things, is now the sweetest food and drink for hungering souls. Seeing how God brought His people through the fire under a burden of sin, fear, and terror of eternal torment, I knew if I was to be saved I, too, must be brought the same way; and, O, how I dreaded it. The thought of feeling to be lost without the least particle of hope was horrible. Yet I felt to take comfort that when I was brought to this trial, having read so much about it, I would know what it was, and it would not be so hard with me. I did not know that God had different ways of bringing His people into the knowledge of the truth. As time passed, brethren began to talk to me of joining the church. I was shocked. I could never do this in my condition, for I had not been changed, and I could never until this came about; which was many years, and I joined in my 31st year.

The main object in writing this is the joy we get from our hope. The joy of worldly religion is shallow, and soon vanishes. With all their boast of knowing they are safe, they say they can fall away and be lost. Where is comfort for the little, fearful child in this kind of faith? No matter how low we are brought under a burden of doubts, sin, and sorrow, there is a joy in our hope; let it be ever so little and weak, it is all we have to cling to, though we are disposed to throw it away, it is now at its best strength, and is dearer to us than all the world. It is anchored in a sure place: in Jesus, and is as everlasting as He is, and will never fail. All other joys vanish and are nothing compared to the joy of this hope. I would not give the joy of this hope, be it ever so little and weak, for all the joys, riches, and honor of the world; nor exchange the trials I have endured, for these things. These things grow sweeter as I grow older. I am trusting, I hope, in this little hope.

Geo. W. Jackson
1884 Connally Dr.
East Point, Ga.

3338 McAfee Road
Decatur, Georgia

Dear Brother Spangler:

Christmas day's-end, 1960, and as the happy "tumult and the shouting dies", my thoughts turn to quieter things — the things which happen only in the heart and spirit. From a heart made tender, I hope, by His manifold blessings, I give thanks unto God, the Giver. For His care and keeping in this and all my years, for my many natural blessings, for my family and O let me remember always to give thanks for my frail hope of His mercy, His grace unto salvation.

I deeply and daily feel the need of His keeping for:

I see the right and I admire it too,
Condemn the wrong and yet the wrong pursue.
— Ovid

Or as expressed by St. Paul in Romans 7:18-19, "For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good

I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do."

When we are given to know the weakness of man, we are also blessed to know the strength of God. There is no religion but that which comes directly from God and is distilled in a man's heart. All the form and ceremony which men take up of themselves and call worship, is folly. The only prayers ever offered have come down from Him into a human heart, to ascend again unto Him as incense unto His glory. The only hearers of those called to feed His sheep are those whose hearts have been anointed with the oil of gladness which His hand alone bestoweth.

All is of Him, from Him, and unto Him. The strength of His arm and His everlasting mercy begin, work out, and finish all salvation. Where, in His all-encompassing purpose, is anything left for the puny strength of man: man who is unable of himself even to desire the love and mercy of God.

Often it seems the vessels of His mercy walk in darkness, through the valleys, crying for light, for assurance. They feel lost, their heads are bowed and they know not how to tread life's pathways as others seem able to do. By the will and purpose of God, they are led this way; and, walking in darkness, they are able to see the far, high light of His power and mercy. And given His grace they stumble toward this light all their days on earth. "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light?" (Isaiah 50:10.) If a man does not walk in darkness he has kindled a light of some kind, a light of his own works to walk by, and he is like those spoken of in the next verse of Isaiah: "Behold all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow."

Surely if a man be given to know that his own light means only blindness, he must trudge onward in darkness toward the only real light, though his eyes discern it but dimly, and it seems distant indeed. O may He keep us in the way, lead us through the darkness toward His marvellous, ever-shining Light!

Dear Elder Spangler, we think of you and feed upon the memory of your short visits with us. Please convey our greeting to dear Sister Spangler and Mildred for us and tell Mildred Mother and I love her for her thought of us at Christmas and wish for her in return blessings in the New Year and always. We look forward to seeing you all again. Please send the *Signs* to my son, Capt. Norman D. Gibson, for one year. His address is: 190 McLeroy Drive, Athens, Georgia.

In love and hope,
Florence A. Gibson

SPECIAL ADDRESS
TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

The response we are receiving to our appeal for our subscribers to help increase our subscription list, had, indeed, been heart-warming. Some have sent in three new subscriptions, and many two, or one.

We do not want our readers to have the impression that the paper faces a financial crisis of any kind; for we do not. We are not asking for donations, but, of course, appreciate these. Some have sent in small donations which we felt they were not able to send, and these have been returned.

We expect to continue to send the paper to any unable to pay, and do not want them to feel they are a burden in any way; for the brethren and friends continue to help do this. Our main object in asking our subscribers to

help obtain new subscriptions, is to maintain and increase the number so we can publish the paper at a reasonable price, and continue our free list.

We believe that many are acquainted with those who would enjoy reading the paper, and would subscribe if it is mentioned to them.

Many thanks for the response you are giving to our request.

Editors

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CANE CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and is located nine miles Southwest of Martin, Tennessee. All lovers of the truth are invited.

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EDITORIAL

"So that I come again to my father's house in peace: then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee." (Genesis 28:21-22)

Jacob, fleeing from his brother Esau, was no doubt humbled and perplexed by the remembrance of the part he had taken in deceiving his blind father Isaac. Rebekah had been given the assurance by God before the children were born, that the elder should serve the younger, but she was fearful that Isaac, in his old age, would give the birthright to Esau. How ashamed Jacob must have felt as he journeyed into the wilderness, how filled with hopes and fears. Perhaps he had been told by Rebekah what had taken place before their birth. We see Jacob asking Esau to sell him the birthright, "And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die, and what profit shall

this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day: and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob." (Genesis 25:32-33) Rebekah's fear for the son she loved, led her to school her son Jacob so perfectly that Isaac was deceived, but from that day Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, "The days of mourning for my father are at hand, then will I slay my brother Jacob."

Thus it was at his mother's solicitude for his safety that Jacob was sent away. On his leaving home, Isaac blessed him again, mentioning the blessing which God gave to his father Abraham, "And God Almighty bless thee and make thee fruitful and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people: and give the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee, that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham." (Genesis 28:3-4)

Jacob was sent away with not even a servant, he must travel this path alone, a solitary path, friendless, with many solitary miles before him or ever he comes to where he will be able to find rest under an hospitable roof. How small and insignificant he must have felt himself to be. How well that Scriptures fitted him which was spoken to his offspring by Isaiah a thousand years after, "Fear not, thou worm Jacob," for they, as Jacob, ever shall have God to be their guide.

"And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep." In his dream he saw a way from earth to heaven, it was not a Babel building, no, nor a church building with "its towers that brave the skies." It was a ladder, and the Lord stood above it, which even to us poor mortals seems to show God Almighty's loving care reaching down from high heaven to the desolate regions where His poor afflicted ones seem to be driven through necessity, and there they are made to REST IN HIS LOVE. God's promises down through the ages, found in a CERTAIN PLACE, are the stones that come from the Rock, and are put where they are, so that His humble poor may have something upon which to rest their heads during the night of time. The first promise was spoken in Genesis 3 after sin had overcome our first parents. God said to Satan that the Woman's SEED would bruise Satan's head. Thus was given, even to them, something they could rest upon.

How precious that spot was MADE to Jacob, because the Lord was there. It is always the House of God where the Lord appears, where he shows to poor sinners, Jesus, the ladder from earth to heaven, and God above, in covenant love, directing every event and sending comfort and reproof and receiving the desires and supplications of His dear children. It is written later on by Moses, the first historian of any value, "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land and in a waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." (Deuteronomy 32:-9-10) From Jacob's experience we are led to believe that all such must wander in the wilderness of this world and find it a solitary way. They will not always feel it, but the Angel of the Lord is always encamping round about them that fear Him, also God's angels that excel in strength are there to do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word. How true the word was in Jacob's case, "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." Coming to that certain place, he had gone as far as he could be guided by natural light, and was now in darkness alone, yet God, Jacob's God and the God of his fathers, was very close and He was there to talk to him as a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. The vision of angels, angels that do always watch the

face of our Heavenly Father and do His bidding, coming and going by the ladder, the only WAY, Jesus, the only name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved, is indeed precious to us, yes, and what a precious spot that CERTAIN PLACE was to Jacob from that very night. He had there received from the very mouth of God the same blessing that his father had given him as he left his home. How satisfying and settling this was to Jacob's troubled soul, causing his heart to well up with gratitude and thanksgiving and praise which befit such a place and make it the House of God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

Now let us come to our text, yet we would make mention of Jacob's vow. Without doubt he performed his vow when he was brought back in peace with his brother Esau, with gratitude to see that his father was spared to join him in worshipping the God of their lives. How easy it was for him to return the tenth to his God, fulfilling beforehand the command of Moses to his offspring in a later day. Like Jonah he could pay that he had vowed, "Salvation is of the Lord."

It is the first mention of the word in the Scriptures, yet we think that God's word to Abraham is a positive vow when He said, "By Myself have I sworn — that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed." (Genesis 22:16-18) Now we do not believe that there is any IF about what God in covenant love has vowed that He will do, but Jacob said, "If God will be with me and will keep me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God." We cannot think that Jacob had any mistrust or the least desire to suggest a conditional vow, but rather feel that the whole revelation was so wonderful and God's promise to him so stupendously great and he so very small and insignificant, that he could not seek great things for himself, yet it was great beyond his comprehension, so there was an IF. If God be with me, who am but a worm, fleeing from my brother, who would, if he could, slay me, surely here we see a fellowship with the sufferings of Christ, who said, "I am a worm and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people." (Psalm 22:6) Jacob called that place Bethel, the House of God, the Gate of Heaven. The Lord was in that place, and he knew it not and he was afraid. Why should not those who have experienced their Bethels be willing to forsake all aspirations to greatness and be "content and pleased to live unknown till Christ their Lord appear?" "Having food and raiment let us be therewith content." Yes, Jacob had an IF, if God be with me? Paul also had one, "If God be for us who can be against us?" God's children can sing today,

> "IF on my face for thy dear name,
> Shame and reproaches be,
> All hail reproach and welcome shame!
> IF Thou remember me."

What can they render unto the Lord for all His benefits unto them? They would ever be in God's House, praising Him, and willing to take the cup of salvation and call upon His name. "And of all that thou shalt give me," that is, the benefits that accrue to God's dear saints, which make their cheerful feet in swift obedience move, "I will SURELY give the TENTH unto Thee."

Here we have the second reference in the Scriptures to tithing, the first was when Abram paid tithes to Melchizedek. (Genesis 14:20) Under the law, tithing was enjoined upon the Israelites by Moses, their lawgiver, in Leveticus 27:20. In Deuteronomy 14:28, we find that it was at the end of every three years that they were to bring forth all the tithes of their increase the same year. The only references to tithes that we have from our Lord was to utter woe upon the Pharisees, whom He called hypocrites, who paid tithes of mint, and anise, and cummin and omitted the weightier matters of the law. The Pharisee told in his prayer, "I fast

twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess."

We believe that tithing was under the law, and Jesus, who came under the law, brought the full tithes of that land into the Gospel Storehouse, the third dispensation, to sustain every one of His servants. He used His apostles as His servants to gather the fruits of His labours, that is, the things concerning Himself, so that there is a sufficiency in the New Testament, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. When we bring the tithes into the storehouse, our testimony and experience, to be acceptable unto God, should accord with those of His People who, like Jacob, have come through great tribulation. "And all the tithes of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's, it is holy unto the Lord." (Leveticus 27:30) That land was typical of a spiritual land flowing with milk and honey. Nowhere in the gospels is literal tithing commanded, for we owe Him our all, "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price." He owns us, and as His own, it becomes us, as obedient children, to seek the good of His cause.

Paul, in his ministry, seems to have been given the one talent of the unjust steward Judas, who carried the bag and was a thief, for Paul carried what brethren gave for needy brethren, (1 Corinthians 16:1-3) but he never suggested that they should give a tenth of their income. Why limit it to a tenth? many give their lives! "We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." (1 John 3-16) It is well for us to take the Word of God for our guide. "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth, that thine alms may be in secret and thy Father, which seeth in secret, Himself shall reward thee openly." Paul told them to give as God had prospered them. That, we hope, is the practice amongst those who love the truth today. Jacob did many things of which we have no doubt he was ashamed, but he, like us, must learn. We see Jacob, when faced with trouble and perplexity, calling upon the God of his life. "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant." There is much that we must pass over which can be read of Jacob's and Laban's doings, but the Lord so blessed Jacob that in the end Laban and his sons turned against him. God then told him to return to the land of his fathers, and Jacob left unawares to Laban, who pursued him with evil intent, but God was watching over Jacob, and He told Laban in a dream, "Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad."

After Laban had departed from him, we find him being visited by angels, God's host. It does seem that the dear man needed pick-me-ups often, and our God can do just that, Esau had an old grudge, which during the intervening years, had not grown less, and before they met, Jacob, alone, wrestled with the angel, and was pronounced to be an overcomer, even though after that encounter he could never walk as he once did.

Esau was seen with four hundred men, but when they met, instead of fighting, he fell upon Jacob's neck and kissed him and they wept together and later parted from one another in peace. Yet his path was not to be easy, for at Shalem, a city of Shechem, Dinah, his daughter, went out to see the daughters of the land, and was defiled. Her brothers were so enraged that they slew Hamor and Shechem and all the males with the edge of the sword and took Dinah out of Shechem's house. Jacob was greatly distressed and feared that the people would gather together against him and destroy him and his house. God appeared again to him in his trouble and said, "Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there; and make there an altar unto God." As they journeyed, the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob. How can we reach such a wonderful testimony of God's faithfulness to a

worm of the earth without desiring Jacob's God to be our God to guide us, yea, even unto death?

"O God of Bethel! by whose hand thy people still are fed;
Who through this weary pilgrimage hast all our father led;
Our vows, our pray'rs, we now present before Thy throne of grace:
God of our fathers! be the God of their succeeding race."

May He give true brethren a mind to walk in love, and those who are blessed with evidences of His mercy, a heart to take them to the church of God, where He has recorded His name, that there might today be food in His House, and in so doing they may find themselves supping with Him and He with them.

A closing thought: — The one, out of the ten lepers cleansed, who turned back to glorify God, was a Samaritan, a stranger, Jesus called him. The tenth, a tithe of the Gentiles, came to Jesus' feet, falling down on his face, thanking Him and glorifying God. (Luke 17:11-19) G. R.

REPLY TO BROTHER TURNER'S INQUIRY

The question broached by Brother Turner is a very important one, for, without the new birth, (being born of the Spirit), no man can see the kingdom of God. Those who are not brought to this birth will ever remain ignorant of the gospel; and will never know anything of the joys of the redeemed.

The word **birth,** or being born, expresses the idea of being made manifest, and refers only to that which has already had an inception. This is as true with the spiritual as it is with the natural birth; as we shall see.

The necessity of birth in nature is apparent before there can be a partaking of the things of nature; and the same holds true of the things of the Spirit: There must be a birth of the Spirit before there can be a partaking of the things of the Spirit. The Apostle had this in mind when he wrote, "For what things knoweth a man, save the spirit of man that is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." (1 Cor. 2:11)

We are not likely to find professing Christians denying the necessity of being born again; but there is much difference among them as to, (1) The source of the New Birth, (2) The extent of the New Birth in the Adam family, and (3) The effect it has upon the one born again. These we shall consider in their order.

1. The source of the new birth implies the question of whether it is of God or of man. That is, whether it is initiated and finished alone of God, or whether it is elective and under the control of the man. We think that the fact that the natural child is entirely passive in its inception, needs no argumentive support; and we must insist that the same is entirely true of the spiritual. Yet we know that this will need proof, due to the contrary views of some professors. But we think this would not be difficult, if all could understand that in their natures **all men are dead in trespasses and sins**; and, in this condition, all have the spirit of man only in them, which is the source of their knowledge of the things of man. There is no record that any man in this condition knows anything of the gospel, or the spiritual kingdom; for, as Brother Turner mentioned in part, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14)

John records that when Christ came into the world, he came unto his own, and they received him not. These were his own according to nationality, the Jews, (who represent all who are born after the flesh). But there were **some among these same people** who gladly received Christ as the Son of God; and of **every one of these** it is recorded: "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:12, 13). Which proved that their being born of

the seed or blood of Abraham, had nothing to do with their receiving Christ; nor did the will of their own flesh have anything to do with it; nor, indeed, did the will of any other man have anything to do with their receiving Him. But, because they were **born of God,** they believed and received Him. No other construction can be put upon this language.

Jesus gave the necessity of being born again, (which is not a re-birth, as we expect to show), when he said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This is a necessary thing! No professors are inclined to deny it, yet the method and the effect of being born again, is as impossible and strange to most professors today as it was to Nicodemus. There is a mysterious power and effect about it, which was stated by the Lord himself: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

Now, it surely seems that if the source of being born again were in the hands of men, and under their control, they would know all about it: Indeed, they would have to know all about it in order to bring it about. But actually, the fact that the wind (Spirit) blows where it pleases (for this is the meaning), and only the sound (or effect) is heard by the subject, (who doesn't know whence it comes or where it is going), precludes forever the volition of men in the new birth. So much for the source of the new birth.

2. We now consider the extent of the new birth among the Adam family. From what we have substantuated above, we see that it does not apply to the whole human family; for some did not receive Christ, not being born of God.

Who then, are they who are born again? All the family of God, of course! No others have any necessity of being born again. When Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out," and, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day," he was speaking of **all that were chosen in himself** before the world began: He was speaking of all of whom the Apostle wrote to Timothy, "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

There was not an individual or church spoken of in the New Testament, or written unto by the Apostles, being believers and followers of Jesus, but to whom the things in the above Scriptures directly applied. On the other hand, there was a multitude who did not believe in Jesus, and did not know him; and these Jesus addressed when he said, "But ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." And then added, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

The disciples, including Peter, in answering Jesus, who asked whom men said that He was, said, "Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some Elias; and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets." But, when Jesus asked them, "But whom say ye that I am?" the answer was, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Then Jesus sets the keynote of gospel revelation: "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

Thus we can understand that God has his own way of doing everything; and know that at least some of his ways and purposes are revealed in the Scriptures. It would seem that all professors would believe him; but they do not. However, their unbelief does not alter the accomplishment by the unchangeable God of all of his will, to his own perfection. We may therefore plainly

see that the extent of the new birth and the extent of the election of grace, is exactly the same among the family of Adam; which includes **all** that were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. They are an innumerable host, but who they are is determined by God's choice.

3. We now come to consider the effect of the new birth upon the man. In God's time, in the life of each of his chosen, He begins a work which leads to the full coming forth in the new birth. We insist that it is God who begins the work, the subject being unable of himself, because he is dead, entirely dead to these things, and does not know his real condition.

It must be remembered that this man is already in possession of the spirit of man, which he obtained in his coming into the natural kingdom; but that he **must be born again,** else he cannot see the kingdom of God. In his nature he cannot see or understand further than the natal spirit has endowed him: He has no perception at all of things spiritual.

We have previously mentioned that birth makes manifest that which has already had its inception; so it is evident that there can be no new birth without the same. Unless God has previously chosen or elected him who is to be born again, and in the wonderful sense **foreknown** him, there will be no birth of the Spirit.

We come now to the time for the beginning of the manifestation in birth; and we give some hints as to the manner in which this is usually accomplished; which varies in indivdiual cases: It is usual that the person is pretty well satisfied with his condition, being full of works which he feels are good, and have a great deal of influence with God. He feels that he has a choice of doing and living, working and being blessed for it. Or, as it is in many cases, he is just not concerned about it.

But, behold, something gets wrong! He does not quite understand it, but he undertakes to right the matter by carefulness in all he does. This does not satisfy, however, and his condition gets worse; and continues for varying periods of time in individual cases, until he verily believes he is the worst sinner that ever lived, and that his case is hopeless: He is a lost sinner, and his prayers unto God are not heard.

The Apostle describes it thus: "I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." (Romans 7:9)

So each is brought to realize his lost and ruined condition; and it is not until this takes place to its fullest, that Jesus is revealed as his Saviour. Then the sinner is brought out of the "horrible pit, and miry clay". The burden and condemnation is gone, and joy is unbounded. For the first time it is realized that grace has reached out, and accomplished what all the works of the creature has utterly failed to do.

The Apostle describes this condition also: "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Cor. 5:17, 18)

Thus is one brought out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light, and he beholds the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ. There has been a quickening. It is from death unto life; and the kingdom of God is now seen. There is an entering into the joys of salvation; and Jesus is become the glorious Mediator of the New Covenant which God has made. Grace has provided the forgiveness of sins; the justice of God is satisfied. Faith and hope is a very pleasant and satisfying balm. The laws of God are written in the heart, and praise to God is uppermost.

But we find it impossible to put together words to describe the man who has thus been dealt with. If there ever was a complexity, here it is: We have a man who is of the earth earthy, and

subject to death, and is condemned in his flesh by reason of sin; and who has tried every human means, and utterly failed to satisfy the justice of God. But this same man has received a wonderful manifestation of the love and mercy of God, and is made "meet to be partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light", and is "delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of His dear Son." And it is purely by the grace of God that he is now what he is.

But let us consider his complexity further: Solomon wrote, "Return, return, O Shulamite: return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies." (S. of S. 6:13)

Here we have the loved one of Solomon, (the name Shulamite is the feminine of Solomon), whom he desires to look upon. And as he does so, he sees in her the company of two armies: There is but one Shulamite, but she is described as **the company of two armies:** One company, but consisting of two armies. To us, this speaks clearly of the state of individuals who have been born again, and are manifestly the redeemed of the Lord, but who are yet in this world. These are they who make up the church. Taken individuality, it is but one man, but he is composed of his identity in Adam, which is described as the **old man,** and also of that which is born of the Spirit, which is described as the **new, or inner man.** This person is both of these, and manifests both natures in the same man, though at different times: Sometimes we find him manifesting that he is after the flesh; then again manifesting the fruit of the Spirit. We cannot but feel that the flesh has "its day" when the Spirit is not pleased to subdue it, for there is no question but that the power of the Spirit subdues the flesh at will.

Thus the same man manifests both the fruit of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit: both apparently eminating from the same person, though at different times. Just why this is God's way seems to be plainly answered by the Apostle: "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." and, "That our faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." And also, because we have not yet attained unto the resurrection of the dead, and "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

We have somewhat answered the question of Brother Turner, who asked if there was anything changed about the natural man in this operation; and we further reply: There is no change in the inherent disposition of the man. He is not **re-born** in his nature; but rather, is born again of the Spirit into the knowledge and possession of the spiritual kingdom, and is now a discerner of spiritual things. His fleshly nature is not made holy in any sense, so as to be able to live without sin; or to do, in his flesh, that which is pleasing in the sight of God. So, we cannot agree with some, that, after the new birth a man is able to live godly of himself, or able to do those things for which, some say, they are blessed. It must be said therefore that the man is yet a sinner, still having his sinful nature; for that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit; and he is both.

But this man is made to hate sin and his natural propensities, and cannot live in them with any degree of pleasure. His nature is not changed, but he hates the things of his flesh, and longs to be without them. His nature is not changed, but it is subjected in hope: He is not yet thoroughly furnished for heaven, but has the hope and assurance of it. It must be remembered that it is the sinner who is redeemed: it is the sinner who is saved. His being born of the Spirit is the beginning of the assurance of the completion of his redemption at the coming of Jesus without sin unto salvation; for he is, "Waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our (his) body."

Thus the new birth, makes no basic change in the nature or flesh of men; but it does give evidence and foretaste of the things that God has prepared for them that love him. It is because the new birth is not the actual change from natural to spiritual, of the one who shall later be conformed to the image of Christ in the resurrection, that there is between the time of the new birth and the resurrection, a terrific warfare going on between the flesh and the spirit: "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." (Gal. 5:17) The battle ground is the poor one who hates sin, and loves godliness; but can't get rid of the one, or fully attain the other. If we read the 7th chapter of Romans, we will find that the Apostle was fully acquainted with this condition, for he writes in part: "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not . . . I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."

He who has been blessed with the spiritual birth, knows that this is a deep and sublime subject; and the fact that he is "led about in ways he has not known", and has seen things he had not seen before, causes him to stand in awe that he himself has experienced these things. What a sacred experience it is to be "sealed with the holy spirit of promise", and "receive the earnest of our inheritance"; to be given faith which is the substance of things hoped for, and hope, which is the anchor of the soul?

We dare say that there is no person who has experienced these joyous things, but who also knows the weakness of his flesh, and knows that he stands always in need of the grace and mercy of the Lord, and the leading of the Spirit to enable him to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he is called; and to walk in a godly manner all his days. But how well he knows that these things are the fruits of the Spirit, and not the fruits of the flesh.

We know that there are many ways in which the Lord brings his people into the knowledge of the truth, some suddenly, some over a period of time and through deep waters of tribulation. We believe what we have outlined is in keeping with Christian experience, but that the subject will not be fully covered until all are safely in their inheritance. Whatever the experience, if it is of the Lord, they learn the same thing; for they are they "which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

They are, "Delivered from the law, that, being dead wherein they were held, they should serve in newness of spirit; and not in the oldness of the letter."

We conclude by saying that the Scriptures prove, as do our experiences, that the flesh is not changed in its proneness to sin; and that the sinner will ever remain a sinner through his natural life. Yet, with all this, he has bright evidences of Christ formed in him the hope of glory; and that, with the poet, sometimes, "Heaven comes down his soul to greet." It would seem that the best evidence that one is born of the Spirit, is that he bears the fruit of the Spirit. He who walks humbly and fearfully, whose conversation is godly, and whose conviction is contrary to the religion of the natural man; and whose conscience is tender when his carnality displays itself, surely is bearing these fruits.

To have "seen" the kingdom of God

through being born again, means one has been chosen in Christ, and is redeemed by him; and that, "He that hath begun a good work in him will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ROMANS IX. 22

"What if God, willing to show his wrath?"

It is not strange that men should contemplate the mercy and grace of God with satisfaction, while they dread his awful wrath, for we have all sinned against him, and should he display on us his wrath, as we have displayed our rebellion against him, no flesh could endure the weight of vengeance under which we should be crushed. The greatest Arminians we have met with, seem perfectly willing that God should show his mercy, his long-suffering and kindness to the children of men, while they deny his right, in justice, to show his wrath, but how few consider that eternal justice calls for wrath, and when justice calls for wrath, that justice would be violated, outraged and trampled upon, if mercy should take the place of wrath. Depraved men, in their unregenerated state, find it hard to conceive how the holy God can pour his wrath on them without violation of his justice, especially if he has made any discrimination, and saved some from wrath, and consigned others who are only of equal guilt, to wrath. But quickened sinners, when under his mighty hand, convinced of their own lost and helpless condition, wonder with much greater admiration, how God can be just, and yet the justifier of any of the guilty sons of men.

Whatever, however, may be the views or speculations of men upon this subject, God has on various occasions shown his wrath in his providential government of the world. In bringing the flood upon the ungodly in the days of Noah, and sweeping the guilty race from his footstool; in the case of Pharoah, Amalek, Moab, and upon the heathen nations of the earth, and that he has done it demonstrates that he did it willingly, or willed to do it, for he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. For his pleasure, we are told, the earth and heavens are and were created, and that he doeth his pleasure in the army of heaven and among men, and none can turn him. Had God been unwilling to show his wrath, who could force him to do it against his will? And had he not been willing to show his wrath; when the Son of God hung writhing on the cross, by what door could grace and salvation have entered for any of the guilty sons of men? But, was God willing to show his wrath, and to pour his vengeance upon the suffering, bleeding Lamb who died on Calvary? "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief." — Isaiah liii. 10. He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. For this very purpose came he into the world. "Then, said I, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." — Psalm xl. 7, 8; Hebrews x. 7, 10. And when the dreadful hour had arrived for which he came, he was seen crushed with agony in the garden, sweating, as it were, great drops of blood, and praying, "O, my God, if it be possible, let this cup pass."

But no other way was possible. "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." — Isaiah liii. 6. And where iniquity was found, the bolts of justice must fall. The doleful prayer wrung from the agonizing heart of the suffering Savior, fully establishes the doctrine for which we contend. "If it be possible, let this cup pass; nevertheless, not my will, but thy will be done." Could wicked Romans or spiteful Jews; could earth or hell inflict on him one pang beyond what was the will of God? Never, we confidently affirm, from the creation of the world to the great burning day, has wickedness of men or devils been so fearfully developed, never has hell

belched forth so much spite at any time, as when the immaculate Lamb of God, loaded with the iniquity of all his people, stood the victim. Truly against thy holy child, Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." — Acts iv. 27, 28. **What if God willing?** Does that make him the author of sin? or does it afford to man a just cause to blaspheme his holy name? God forbid. Because God has power and wisdom to control, restrain, permit, overrule, and even to make use of the wicked acts of men and devils, just as he pleases, does that imply that he is himself a sinner, or that sin flows from, or is compatible with his nature? Absurd and preposterous. Nay, wicked and blasphemous as such conclusions are, the charges are often belched forth from infiidel lips, and alas! must we add, that some of God's dear children have thoughtlessly, or carelessly endorsed the horrid blasphemy, by arguing that if he absolutely governs and controls all beings, all worlds, and all events, then he is, or must be the author of sin? But, be entreated, dear child of God, to pause and consider this matter a moment.

Must God lay aside his crown, must he yield some part of his governing power, in order to escape your charge? But you say you admit that he has all power, and that he controls all events and all worlds. But, forget not that he is the infinite God; of one mind, and none can turn him; what he wills to allow today, was his will yesterday, and from everlasting. You cannot believe that he has found out anything new, that he did not have in his mind and will before he made this world. One of two things you must admit, either that Jehovah knew precisely what kind of a world he was about to make, and that he made it just as he intended to, or else that he has been disappointed in his purpose. You dare not deny that this world with all its vast machinery, is precisely as the omniscient eye of God saw it, before the days of creation: peopled with all its infinite variety of men, and beasts, of birds, of fishes, of serpents and of worms, from the grosser objects down to the myriads of animalcule which people a single drop of water. What part of the history of the world have we a right to believe God did not know from everlasting, and what may we presume he knew, and yet had not in his inscrutable wisdom determined? Is there a sparrow or a worm, by him created, for which he has no use? True, we may not know or comprehend the use of many of his creatures, but we are finite, and have only that measure of intelligence which he has appointed and provided for us, and beyond that measure who can go?

But, once more. What if God be willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known? The apostle anticipates the ranking venom of the depraved hearts of men, and says, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault; for who hath resisted his will?" In one general sense, every carnal man has and does resist the will of God, they are not reconciled to it; they hate it, and employ all their depraved powers in opposing it, as Stephen charged the persecuting Jews, "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did, so do ye." But how vain is their resistance. All the powers of earth and hell combined cannot prevent the execution of his purpose so as to cause a sparrow to fall, or bring even a single hair of our heads prematurely to the ground. But in the sense evidently intended, the apostle does not say that any have or can successfully resist the will of God. Woe to the world, if they could. What then would it avail us to know that it is our Father's good will or pleasure to give us the kingdom, if he were unable to execute his will? But must it be inferred that if God is so infinitely wise and omnipotent, that he executeth his pleasure in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of

the earth, that he has therefore no right to punish men for their wickedness which he overrules for his own glory? This is strange logic for infidels, but stranger still for Christians. "Nay, but O, man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed, say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known?" Has he not an undoubted right to do so? Are any of his creatures able to give a reason why his will shall not be the supreme rule of his government? If any of us feel that it would be unsafe for us, why do we mock him by praying, "Thy will be done," and then object to his universal control and government of all beings, and of all events, according to his own sovereign will?

But, instead of the frightful images painted in the vain imagination of men, as to the consequences of his wearing the crown, bearing the sceptre, and occupying the eternal throne, let us consider how he shows his wrath, and how he makes his power known on the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.

If it were his sovereign pleasure to show his wrath and to make his power known upon the vessels of his wrath, by crushing them to atoms, or by such signal displays of his power and wrath as when he destroyed Sodom, or when he deluged the world in the days of Noah, his right to do so could not be contested. But it is his will to show his wrath and display his power in a very different form. By **enduring with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction.** By allowing them to pursue their own course, act out the enmity of their own wicked nature, walk in the light of their own eyes, and to fancy themselves the masters of their own destiny. Long has he suffered them to dispute his reigning power, and to call his sovereign government unjust. With much long-suffering has he spared their lives, afforded them health and strength to fill up their cup of iniquity, by stoning his prophets, killing his messengers, under the old dispensation, and with what endurance and long-suffering has he allowed them to drench the earth with the blood of his saints, and even to stain their guilty hands with the blood of his dear Son. With what forbearance did he wink at the idolatry of the Gentile world before the advent of the Redeemer, and how has he, for purposes of righteous wrath, allowed the anti-Christian powers of iniquity to make drunk the nations of the earth with the wine of Babel's intoxicating cup. Even now, what more awfully retributive judgment of God can we contemplate, than to be suffered to reject and defy his government, and to pursue our own course, the course of this world, under the power of darkness, in the pride and vanity of our own hearts treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath? Why has he suffered the wicked to prosper, or seem to prosper, in their abominable wickedness? Had he no power to restrain them? He had, for he has all power. But it is because in his inscrutable wisdom he saw fit thus to show his wrath, and to make his power known on them.

How, or why is it that unto his chosen, redeemed, regenerated children, it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, and from all others this knowledge is withheld? Because, in this very way it is his sovereign will to show his wrath and make his power known. Nor is this a matter for his saints to regret or deplore. Having the mind and spirit of Christ, we will rather with him rejoice and thank God that he has hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes, because so it seemed good in his sight. If our Lord Jesus Christ rejoiced in spirit at the accomplishment of the sovereign will of his Father, can we possess his Spirit, and yet desire that it should be otherwise? If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

We do not say that God could not display his mercy without also making a display of his wrath, for we dare not limit his powers and wisdom, but the Scriptures teach us that it is in wrath, that he remembers mercy. (Hebrews iii. 2; Isaiah lxi. 2; lxiii. 1, 6.) The very first intimation of mercy made to fallen man fully expressed this doctrine. The seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent. God's people were preserved by the destruction of their enemies. Egypt must suffer the wrath of God, that the Hebrews might be mercifully released from bondage. The same miraculous display of power which wrought the salvation of Israel at the Red Sea, overwhelmed in wrath, and utterly destroyed their pursuing enemies. The everlasting salvation of the church of God, from sin, death and hell, was made manifest by the wrath which her sin-bearing Savior endured, when he carried her sorrows and bore her griefs, when the chastisement of her peace was laid on him, by whose stripes she is healed. And the final triumph which awaits the saints at the resurrection, their bodies will be raised simultaneously with the destruction of the last enemy which is death. What then, we once more inquire, "If God, willing to show his wrath and make his powers known,"

"Shall man reply against his God,
And call his Maker's ways unjust?"
"Shall mortal man presume to be
More holy, just or good, than he?"

Does it not rather become us to be still and know that he is God?

The will of God being the only recognized standard of holiness in heaven, whatever that will dictates, whether of wrath or grace, is right, and just, and harmonious with all the eternal perfections of Jehovah. If then it be his will to launch the fiery bolts of vengeance down upon the ungodly, or even to bruise his only beloved Son, when the guilt of his people was laid on him, or if he choose to redeem from sin, and death, and hell, millions of the chief of sinners, and ultimately to raise them up to crowns and seats at his right hand, all, all we need to know is, that it is the will of God, and then we know it is all right, for that will is the true standard of righteousness. High as the heavens rise above the earth, are God's ways and thoughts transcending our ways and our thoughts. Therefore, with the apostles, we beseech the saints to be reconciled to God. Our brightest, our only hopes of heaven, rest on the complete and perfect execution of the will of God in all things. If in a single thing it could possibly fail, that failure would shake the very foundation of our hope. It is because he is God, because as God he changeth not, the sons of Jacob are not consumed. O, may we then in sincerity and truth pray, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is done in heaven."

(Editorial of Elder Gilbert Beebe, August 1, 1860.)

OBITUARIES

NANCY JANE SMITH

Sister Nancy Jane Smith departed this life October 12, 1960, at her residence near Monroe, Georgia, where she had resided continuously most of her life. She was the daughter of William and Frances Moore, of Walton County, Georgia, born December 14, 1873. Death came to her in her 87th year.

She was married to John David Smith December 1, 1892. To this union was born five daughters and four sons as follows: Nora, Clara, Ruth, Francis, and Claudine and Grady, Oscar, Otis and Perce, all of whom reached adulthood and have taken their place as well respected and loved citizens of the community. All her children survive her except Mrs. Claudine Hardin, and Mrs. Frances Justice, both of whom were taken from us within recent years. The unmarried daughters Clara and Nora remain at the homeplace; Grady, Oscar, and Otis nearby; and Perce and Mrs. Ruth McCarty in Atlanta.

Sister Smith professed a sweet hope in Christ before the Church at Sorrells Springs near her home August 20, 1898, and was baptized soon thereafter by Elder John Chandler at Tanner's bridge, in the Apalache River. She remained a steadfast and loving member of her church until her death, serving her God, her family, and neighbors with constant faith and heartfelt fidelity. She was truly a mother in Israel, surpassed in virtues by none. Her home was always a welcome place for the brethren and sisters and friends.

Sister Smith was practically an invalid the last nine years of her life but bore every pain

and discomfort with patience and fortitude becoming to her explicit faith in the goodness and righteousness of her Lord. The faithfulness of her children to care for her in her affliction also must have surely added a great comfort to her. O'ershadowed by heavenly love and surrounded by sorrowing hearts, she passed gently over the stream of Death in the morning hours of October 12, 1960, and was returned October 14th to the Sorrells Springs Primitive Baptist Church home in death, to the same place where she had sixty-two years before professed a hope of eternal life, her pastor Elder W. F. Beauford, assisted by Minister Chas. Handley of the Methodist Church, Campton, preached to a good congregation of sorrowing friends and loved ones, to their comfort and hope, assuring them by the Gospel that this sister while dead to this world is alive for evermore in the eternal Kingdom of our God. After which she was tenderly laid to rest in the church cemetery, to await the morning of the Resurrection.

May the Lord continue his richest blessings upon the bereaved sons and daughters, and her 15 grandchildren, and 22 great grandchildren, and her beloved Sister Nora Roberts, the last living one of the Moore Family, a dear sister in the church with us at Sorrells Springs, Walton County, Georgia.

This obituary was prepared by the undersigned deacon of the church, and, being approved while in church conference December 18, 1960, was ordered spread on the church book, and sent to the church papers for publication.

Submitted in Christian love,
J. B. Dunagan

SANK HOPSON CARR

Sank Hopson Carr was born June 7, 1910, and departed this life December 2, 1960. He was united in marriage to Miss Marie Sumner April 11, 1936; and to this union were born four children: Dwight and Johnnie Carr, and Mrs. Marvin Underwood, and Mrs. Earl Calhoun, all of Trigg County, Kentucky. Brother Carr united with Drycreek Primitive Baptist Church the second Sunday in September, 1945, and was soon ordained a deacon; and was a deacon indeed. He love his church, and loved the doctrine of a sovereign God. He was a kind and affectionate husband, a loving father, and a good neighbor. He would have nothing but Christ and him crucified for salvation.

The unworthy writer tried to speak to the comfort of the bereaved family and friends at the funeral home in Cadiz; after which his body was laid to rest in the family cemetery to await the call, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

May God bless all that mourn, is our prayer.

(Elder) J. N. Darnall

ELDER E. B. SANDERS

Elder E. B. Sanders was born February 14, 1874, and died November 9, 1960. He married Miss Missouri L. Pate November 15, 1895; and to this union three children were born, two of which preceded him in death: Mrs. Ethel Harding and Hill Sanders.

He and Sister Sanders joined Salem Primitive Baptist Church, Pickens County, Alabama, the first Sunday in August, 1925, and lived faithful members all their days. He was ordained to the ministry July 4, 1943, by Elders O. G. Carver, W. D. Griffin, and H. M. Brock. He esteemed his brethren his superiors, and wanted a back seat, and to be always at their feet; which signifies to me he was one in the higher court. How wonderful indeed to be given this station in life, for we read in James, "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted." Again, Luke says, "He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree." It is a great blessing to know that God trims down the camel to fit the eye of the needle.

Brother Sanders contended for the great doctrine of God our Saviour which teaches all His children the way, truth, and life — Jesus the only way man must be saved. Not only did Brother Sanders live it, but departed this life with the same faith God gave him years ago. His body grew weak, and remembrance of earthly things short, but faith grew stronger, and he longed to meet his blessed Saviour. I esteemed him as a father in Israel, as a lamp in my pathway, for many are the times our scriptural conversation was as manna from on high.

His body was laid to rest in the home cemetery, Salem, by the side of his wife who preceded him several years. Ministers who spoke words of comfort were Elders W. L. Norris, J. M. Freeman, and H. M. Brock. Left to mourn his departing are, Mr. and Mrs. Victor Sanders, Mrs. Hill Sanders, four grandchildren, and many other relatives; and his brethren in the Church.

"It is not death to close
The eye long dimmed by tears,
And wake in glorious repose
To spend eternal years.

Clasped in his Saviour's arms
He would forget his breath,
And lose his life amid the charm
Of so divine a death.

He would not life in heaven give
For all the earthly charms.
It is divine this life to live,
And rest in Jesus' arms."

Written by request of the family.

Mrs. Maggie Lee Hayes,
Vernon, Alabama

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129 DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1961 NO. 4

"WHAT I DO THOU KNOWEST NOT NOW;
BUT THOU SHALT KNOW HEREAFTER."

My heart was sad, for sorrow deep had pierced its inmost core;
Repining then, I turned from all that I had loved before;
Thus murmurings dark against Him rose, who is too wise to err,
As though my puny reason could be His interpreter.

And why, I thought, do fairest flowers soonest fade away?
And human objects best beloved first fall to death a pray?
While many an aching heart, whose hopes all lie beyond the tomb,
Is kept awhile to onward toil amid earth's dreary gloom?

Why doth the heart in silence brood o'er sufferings undressed?
And why are they who strive to rise most fearfully oppressed?
How is it that some have pleasure strewn along the path of life,
While others' feet, with briers torn, are bleeding in the strife?

Then through my mind came a sound, soft, chiding, still and low:
"Frail worm, whate'er thou knowest not now thou shalt hereafter know."
"Ah, pardon me, great God," I cried, "I fall before thy throne;
My follies, sins, waywardness, all to thee are known.

"Nor let me ever more rebel against thy sovereign will;
What e'er thou doest must be right, if good, or seeming ill;
And for the future let me trust in thee, who knowest best;
Give me submission to thy will, I'll leave with thee the rest."

This heart of mine sore chastening needs, or else I should not care
To seek a bright inheritance that lasting is, and fair.
God doth not willing afflict: He loves his own too well;
But this proud heart of mine would rise against Him and rebel.

I'll wait a little longer here, till Christ shall call me home,
And I shall hear his welcome voice: "Come, weary pilgrim, come."
Then in His light, and not my own, these mysteries I shall see,
And say, "He hath done all things well, who lived and died for me."

E. Henser, in Gospel Standard, 1878
(Submitted by Bro. George W. Jackson)

Coeur d'alene, Idaho
P. O. Box 532

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I find that my renewal date has slipped by so I must get this check to you immediately. I do not want to miss one copy. Please renew me for two years more.

I have about finished re-reading the past four year's numbers, or since they started coming to me. I find that I have gleaned a lot more from them than upon first readings and the same applies to re-reading the Scriptures. If not mistaken, this comes thru an enlightened understanding. In St. Luke 24:45 we find — "Then opened He their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures". The many wonderful sermons and inspired writings in the Signs, including letters telling experiences and trials of the Lord's people, are something I find most precious. They fill in what is lacking — there being no one to my knowledge in this large area of Idaho's Panhandle Section, believing as I do, to whom I can talk. The nearest ones are over the line in Spokane, Washington, some 40 miles west.

Now in my retiring years, having lots of time to read and meditate on things natural and spiritual, and of the past and future, my mind goes back so much to the past. Although brought up by Old

Baptist parents who counseled against tying up with worldly Churches, and also having heard Baptist preaching while growing up, my footsteps led me astray, so it seems, against my better judgement, due mostly I suppose, to there being no Old Baptist people or Churches were I lived several years. I took up with and was active in two or three Churches but not as a member. About thirty-five years ago, while fairly active in local Churches, something came over me, causing some concern over my lack of understanding of things spiritual, and a strong feeling was present that in due time I would have to be prepared spiritually before the end of my time on earth. I thought on it and decided that in due time, when not so busy, I would take enough time to figure it all out and read the Bible, attend Church more, and fit myself perfectly for the end, long before it should come. In this state of mind, I drifted on about ten years, seemingly blind to the teachings of my parents and had forgotten all the Baptist preachings.

About twenty years ago, as planned, I took up more intently with a local Methodist Church. After a time, feeling all was well and I was making progress, one night in what seemed not to be a dream, I suddenly found myself in a room where an unseen person was sentencing me to death, saying clearly, "You are going to die". I gave mental assent, then was pricked into action when I thought of my actual state — not yet fully prepared — and I firmly stated — "No, I'm not prepared — I'm not ready to die yet". What seemed to be another voice, spoke up, "The price is paid". I thought on this and was rather puzzled.

Not long afterward, partially at the suggestion of my dear wife, a Methodist member, and my desire to fully prepare myself, I joined that Church. I can well recall the so-called Baptism (sprinkling) and that as far as I could tell, there was no particular change in my feeling. It was just a ceremony there in the front of the Church. I continued actively, ushering in the Church and helping on programs of various sorts, and felt at ease and believing all was well, and that I was now a full-fledged Christian. I hadn't read my Bible very much as it wasn't understood and didn't seemed to be interesting, but this didn't bother me since I was in the Church and all was right.

About that time, as near as I can place the event, while sitting in our auto one day, a most peculiar feeling came over me, and, all of a sudden, I seemed to have finished up evaluating myself and thought of my good works and good intentions as being sufficient proof of my excellent departure from sin, etc. Then a sudden reversal struck me — it was clearly made known to me in no uncertain terms that I was a vile person and there was not one whit of good in me and I was nothing — even less than nothing — just a sinner of the worst kind. The words flashed in my mind and I do not recall if spoken aloud — "Lord be merciful to me a sinner". I marveled at this after it happened, but didn't fully realize its import, although from then on I found myself repeating those words often.

In 1953, after moving to North Idaho, letters of Church membership were sent here and I continued on actively with them. As time passed, there seemed to be a "falling away" of interest on my part. I sensed that something was lacking. I was not satisfied as before. I noticed that the services were, most of the time, void of actual praising of the Lord for his saving grace and goodness toward man; but rather their attention was given to worldly things. Most of Church time was taken up with ceremony, pomp, formality, musical numbers, etc. Sermons were of few minutes length and mostly in praising man's wisdom, his accomplishments and what good he does for mankind. Finally our minister, a learned man with many years in the pulpit, in his sermon, kept elevating man "up into the skies" so-to-speak, and finally got him above God, by saying "WITHOUT MAN GOD IS HELPLESS". This was too much, it

hurt me, and after closing, I bounced him, telling him he was preaching it backwards. He got my point, but passed it off with some remark about God having to use man to help him. After that I lost interest and become very critical of the Church but attended fairly regularly. As stated in my letter in November, 1957, Signs, my brother, Elder John Hall, Boise, Idaho, started sending me the *Signs*, and I found in them the preaching I liked. Then one night, an unusual dream occurred which I shall never forget. In view of Joseph's statement to Pharaoh's officers, as shown in Genesis 40:8, I am rather reluctant to try and interpret my dreams, for when asked to interpret their dreams, Joseph said unto them — "Do not interpretations belong to the Lord?". However, I will briefly relate this one.

My wife and I were out walking. Very soon, she did not want to go on in the direction I was taking and we decided she would walk as she liked and I headed on alone. Very soon I walked from a timbered area into a clearing, and was stopped by some unseen warning, telling me I was in the area of a deadly enemy. Looking about, I could see part of the house of the enemy just over the brow of a sloping hill, and I sensed I was seen, or my presence known to him. I stood helpless, seemingly unable to move; and then some unseen power took hold of me and laid me gently down, face upward, and the ground came up over me, excepting a small breathing space. I was aware of the enemy coming and standing almost over me, looking and wondering where I had gone; then leaving. I was soon up and running hard to get away, only to realize the enemy was after me. After quite a run, I approached what appeared to be a fair-sized building set hard against a hill, which I entered. I found no one therein to help and no apparent place to hide or to escape, other than some forty feet up where the roof came against the hill was a hole thru which I could escape, but there was no way to reach it. Standing again helpless and wondering which way to turn, I saw the wall next to the hill, turn into a solid rock, then there plainly appeared handholds several inches high also of rock, and notches were also in the rock for feet. I made haste in climbing up and thru the hole in the roof and escaped the enemy for the time being.

I soon was aware of walking on, apparently to finish up my journey; and again I was aware of the unseen enemy being in pursuit. I had never seen him and had no knowledge that he entered the building in his pursuit. Trying again to get away, I started running hard and after quite a distance, I sensed he was close enough to jump and tackle me, when I was given power to rise several feet above the ground and glide quite a distance, gaining a lot thereby. This occured two or three times before I seemed safe, having eluded him, when I walked into an open space slowly, sensing that this was the end of my travel. No one was in sight, but the voice of an older brother who deceased a year later, began telling about our father's funeral, and the lovely casket in which he was buried. I was not present at his funeral. As my brother was speaking, the casket appeared some feet above the ground in what seemed to be close proximity to a building, and under a roof that extended out several feet. I desired to examine the casket, to feel inside it the beautiful and luxurious lining, and as I reached up to so examine it, I was stopped by the apperance of my father in a fairly visible form, by the casket. He started moving away toward a walled-in area adjoining the building where an entrance appeared. I was drawn toward him; and seeing him entering into that other place, I made for it too; and just as I got to the opening and got a quick glimpse of the beautiful grounds, the door closed, and a voice said, "Not yet for awhile." Turning to leave, a voice again said, "What you have seen was almost a revelation — yes it was a revelation."

I awoke and thought on it for a time, but never figured out what it meant. It still is clear in my memory. If not mistaken, it was to show me that I was to travel a different road to church than my wife, but before I got into the church, I was to be shown the power of the Lord who came and hid me from the enemy on whose grounds I had entered. When I entered there and found myself helpless, and received his divine help, I was given power to get away, to run, and that it was directly to that building, the Baptist Church, in which I found the Rock of salvation. Then after I had been therein, I was possessed with greater power to travel on, even able to almost fly. The finale was the warning that my brother was the next to go; and the appearance of my father at the place where his casket was seen, and leaving there to enter this other area walled off and separated from us, to be entered after death, and not by me or anyone while in this earthly life, was to show that there's life beyond the grave. Other things that have happened during the daytime are hard, indeed, to explain but have their meaning; and I do know that I now find that things that once brought pleasure, now are distasteful. Where I once found it to my liking to go for worship, now I can see they are sadly lacking in the true spirit of praising and glorifying the Father who sent his Son here on earth to die for us that the Father chose before the world was.

In the past three years I have been blessed to attend services in Spokane, where a small group gathers frequently to hear Elder E. J. Attebery, when he comes up from Hermiston, Oregon to preach to us. He has been joined at times by Elder D. C. Davis, Riffe, Washington, and by my brother, Elder John Hall, Boise, Idaho. I was further blessed and privileged to attend the three day meeting of the Old Baptists at Riffe, Washington, where these same three Elders poured forth sermons most spiritual and revealing.

In pulling away from the Methodists, I am somewhat like Elder Gold, whose letters to Dr. Hooper are re-published in the *Signs*. He was inspired to relate the reasons, and to explain them so much better than this poor writer. He took the man-made doctrine, man-made preachers, man-made methods of trying to bring sinful human beings from darkness to light, bring each out into the open and exposing them piece by piece. His words as to the fallacy of the Churches trying to Christianize the world, were timely and true. How very right he was is proven by what we now see ninety years later, after all the frenzied effort and expenditure of many, many millions of dollars by the many worldly Churches, here and abroad, in doing what they call "God's work" saving the sinners and making people good. In my mind, it is a fulfilling of the scriptures and particularly the words of our Christ, who said, "If the blind lead the blind, they both shall surely fall in the ditch." If the worldly people — those unregenerated millions upon millions of humans over the entire world, are not in the ditch at this time, I'm badly mistaken.

I may have written far too much. If so, cut it down as you see fit. Or if you find it of no value, the waste-paper basket will be the proper place for it. In my experiences, I seem to be like one writer in the *Signs* recently, who wrote, "Then, our many experiences are the fruits upon which we feast, giving us a feeling of renewed spirit from day to day." It is something upon which we build our hope. Another aged writer wrote, "I have a sweet hope . . . which is the anchor of my soul." They state my feelings, surely. It is my hope that later on the Old Baptists will afford me a home so I may be numbered with them; and thereby experience the real baptism. I could go on and on telling what I get from the Bible and the *Signs*, and my beliefs on many points of scriptures, but the more able writers seem to fill the *Signs* with better material.

Concluding, I will say that my hope is that the *Signs* will never cease being published. May the good Lord continue his richest blessings on you Editors.

Yours in the Faith, I hope,
Wm. O. Hall

R.F.D. 4,
Bassett, Virginia

Dear Brother Spangler:

Recently someone requested the writing of experiences, and I will now try to write something of what I hope to be the dealings of the Lord with me.

In 1939, I received the news that my twin sister had joined the church at Republican. I thought I should be glad; but I just couldn't be. If she had died a corporeal death, seemingly I couldn't have been hurt any worse. It just seemed that she had left me for good; and there I was, without God and without hope. My cry was day and night, "God be merciful to me a sinner." If ever I felt the need of Jesus, it was then.

I dreaded for the time to come for her baptism; for I felt my weakness so much I knew without God's mercy, I couldn't stand. As the time grew near, these words were given me, "I'll strenthen thee, and help thee, and cause thee to stand." Amazing Grace was given me to sing with such joy as I had never felt before.

When the time came for her baptism, instead of fainting, I felt to join in with the singing; and felt these people were my people. After the baptism, I thought my troubles were all over now; but soon I was in trouble again. I had such a desire to be baptized, but felt I didn't have enough evidence. . . . I asked the Lord to give me more evidence, and if I had a duty to perform, to show me, and prepare the way.

I dreamed of being at my grandfather's home-place; and I was standing in the yard and my brother was on the house top; and as I looked up, I saw the word *Jerusalem* in large letters. Again once when I was at my mother's home-place, in a dream, I saw white cords hanging down, and the word *Come* was under the cords; and I heard these words in a still small voice, "Christ came to save and redeem his people." Later I heard the same voice say, "I bequeath my garment."

Before I united with the church, I dreamed my Uncle Goode (Elder J. G. L. Hash) baptized me; . . . and I had a stronger desire to be baptized. Just before the time for the meeting I saw my home church in a dream: I was sitting on a bench in the pulpit, and Uncle Goode and my mother, and others were sitting by me. I saw this come true at the next meeting, when I was received into the church.

I was happy for a while and the burden was gone; but soon doubts and fears arose. In a dream again I saw myself dressed in white as a bride adorned for her husband; and in another one, Uncle Goode and I were standing beside a stream of water; and as he opened a book I saw the diagram of my person drawn in ink on the right page, and at the right of my head were two words, "Bride Christ."

. . . I have had many other comforting evidences in dreams: A few years before Uncle Goode passed away, I heard a voice within me, saying, "Yet this body lives." Remember us in prayer.

Yours in hope,
Hattie Radford

Snyder, Texas

Dear Editors:

It has come time to renew my subscription to the *Signs*, so am enclosing a check for two years.

The editorials and letters from God's little ones are food and drink to my soul, and help to lift my drooping head from time to time. I trust the dear Lord will continue to bless his little ones to write words of comfort to those who are

seeking and longing to hear the word of truth as it is in our blessed Lord.

The dear Lord has richly blessed the writer, and I long to be able to thank him for each blessing, but it seems that sin is present with me so much of the time that I seldom have a heart to pray. I know our Lord is everywhere at all times, yet most of the time I am seeking to find him and feel his blessed presence. What joy and happiness it brings to my poor soul when I can feel his presence for a brief moment. A long life of worldly pleasure can't begin to compare with one brief moment with our blessed Master. It is a mystery why the Lord so richly blesses me in daily living, but the hope he has given me of life with him in eternal glory, is a much greater one. Surely it is one I wouldn't exchange for all the wealth and pleasures on the earth.

My name and address have changed since my last renewal, from Minnie Lee Williams, Snyder, Texas, to Mrs. J. P. Madding, Rt. 2, Snyder, Texas.

May the God of love comfort the editors and readers of the *Signs*; and may He enable us to love one another, and to pray for each other. A little sister I hope by the grace of God, in whom we live, move, and have our being.

Mrs. J. P. Madding

"BUT IN WORKS THEY DENY HIM"

"Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth. Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." (Titus 1:14-16)

These words of Paul to Titus are as much the word of God in its setting as John 3:16, or the 1st chapter of Ephesians. I cannot believe that one passage of Scripture contradicts another; whether we understand them or not.

Jesus said, "He that denieth me, him will I deny before my Father which is in heaven; and he that confesseth me, him will I confess before my father." These people that Paul was writing to Titus about, were denying the Saviour; and that because their mind and conscience was defiled. They professed that they knew God, but in works they denied him. I believe that God's people are in good works, because they are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, for God hath before ordained that they should walk in them. Do we believe that His sheep hear his voice and follow him? I am persuaded that they do. When they follow him they walk with him; and they have been baptized with him: "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." (Romans 6:4-5)

But those who profess to know God, yet in works deny him, are the ones who preach, teach, profess, and worship the small gods of this world: "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thes. 2:9-12) Those who believe in the frail, weak, and without-foreknowledge god, are the ones who deny the all wise, all powerful, and invisible God of heaven, earth, and all deep places. "I will not give my glory to another." "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." These are the same

ones under consideration: in works they deny Me. Whenever anyone tells me that he can fall from grace, right then I know he has never been in grace.

God did not choose his church up to just a few steps of him, and then turn them loose to make the last step or so of themselves. "He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Who was it that began a good work in you? it was God himself. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Now God's church is his own choice: certainly they were chosen in his Son before the world began; and surely they were treasured up in the One that finished the work, and went back to sit on the right hand of the Father, to make intercession for the saints. Was this according to man's will? no, but according to the unchangeable will of God: The God who was able and powerful enough to declare the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that were not yet done, saying my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure.

If I understand this matter at all, this takes care of all time and timely things; and, if he declared the end from the beginning, I am persuaded he surely knew all things that would come between the end and the beginning. "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it that men should fear before him. That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past." (Eccl. 3:14-15)

It seems to me that just a few profound statements of this kind should tell all the world, that God spoke and it was done, commanded and it stood fast; and that man and his natural wisdom cannot help or hinder God's eternal mind and purpose in saving his church, which is his choice. Those who deny him in works, are the ones that shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings; and they that are with him are called, chosen and faithful. ". . . and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is." (Rev. 17:8)

Dear reader, if you don't understand these things, don't feel alone, for they are deep, deep matters; but don't go to some man made institution, thinking you will learn it there. They shall all worship the beast, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. "If any man have an ear, let him hear what the Spirit sayeth unto the churches." Yes, dear reader, they are denying him ever, and at all times, by accepting the one of their choice. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people "whom he would choose if he could". Their God is trying every way, and at all points of the compass, to convert the entire fallen race of Adam; and, I have to say, that in my short stay in this sinful world, it is getting worse as the days come and go.

Now back to the passage: "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." (Psalms 33:12) "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Surely these are the disciples of Christ: the Bible speaks only of two kinds of disciples: the disciples of Christ, and the disciples of Satan. Which reminds us that there are only two kinds of doctrine: true, and false. God's choice, which is his elect — his church, shall travel the strait and narrow way which is to heaven. The broad and crooked way is the road to Hell. God's choice is traveling today; and have been, and shall be with him along the strait and narrow way. Those who are with him, are called, and chosen, and faithful. Others claim they make their own choice. The false prophets and the beasts would deceive the very elect, if it were possible.

These elect were told at one time: "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people." (Deuteronomy 7:6, 7) We can see that God Almighty had a chosen people among the Jews, and he has chosen people among the Gentiles. "For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision in that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." (Romans 2:28, 29) These make up the church of Christ; the called out. They are God's people by the new birth, and are the ones that are born of the incorruptible seed. "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

Consider the word "blood" here for a moment or so: "Where there is no shedding of blood, there is no remission." No remission of what? No remission of sins! "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." (Acts 20:28) Sometimes it seems plain to me that the ones who purchase themselves by doing good works in order to give their small god a chance to save them, are the same ones mentioned in Titus 1:14-16 (which please read). In works they deny the Lord.

The ones who are in Christ Jesus (the Christ Jesus I am speaking of), are the ones of whom he said. "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:-25-30)

It is to be understood that the people unto whom he spoke the above, hear his voice, and follow him. For they are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, that God hath before ordained that they should walk in them. Walk in what? good works that God had set apart for them to walk in. If they don't do it, tell me why they will not! Again, "My sheep hear my voice and they follow me." Tell me how it is that "my sheep hear my voice, and follow me", if they don't walk in the good works that God hath before ordained that they should walk in. If it is not so, then you have God's people walking along with Satan and the satanic forces of this world.

The same people who hear his voice and follow him, are the same ones who were pricked in their hearts on the day of Pentecost; and asked the question, "What shall we do?" and Peter said unto them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." (Acts 2:37-39)

Now, little flock, I think it would be proper to consider the thing that pricked their hearts; It was the same thing that opened their ears to hear, that

made them ask the question, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." (Acts 2:33) Do you not believe that the ones who were pricked in their hearts, are the ones who saw and heard this? See and hear what? the promise of the Holy Ghost! Surely they did see and hear, for it was the very thing that pricked their hearts; or would some go so far as to say that the people pricked their own hearts! Did they ask the question before they were pricked in their hearts? No! the pricking of their hearts motivated the asking of the question.

We may ask ourselves also, Was this the same thing that shined around and about Paul, brighter than the noon day sun? Should one deny the pricking of the hearts, or the light that felled the apostle, I believe he is manifesting that he is of the class Paul wrote to Titus about: "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." (Titus 2:-16) It is to be remembered that these denied him by their works. Plainly, whenever the creature proclaims his work in order that God can then do the thing he has been waiting to do for so long, but couldn't do it until the creature made up his mind, I am persuaded this is what Paul meant when he said, "In works they deny him." You may recall in John 6:28-29, "Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered, and said unto them, this is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."

Now let us look at Ephesians 1:18-19, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye might know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of the inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead." etc. If these passages do not mean what they say, tell me what they do mean! I say without fear of contradiction, It just means that it is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. In Acts 13:48, we read, "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Were there more who could have believed?

Finally, dear ones, as many as were ordained to eternal life have believed, are believing, and will believe; not any over the number, not any under the number. In Ecclesiastes 3:14, we read, "I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it; and God doeth it that men should fear before him."

Let us notice Acts 2:39, again: "For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." You notice the passage says, "Even as many as the Lord our God shall call". I know those who are on the other side say that God calls, and some won't answer. If such were true, I would have to go along with the free moral agent; for if they are right in their will-worship, God's choice is null and void. But let us look into this so called free-agency situation, for this seems to be the great gulf that is fixed so that the sheep and goats don't mix in spiritual knowledge. On the one hand we have those who "choose God"; and on the other, those whom God chose in his darling Son before the world began. Jeremiah 10:23, says, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

God's little children feast upon the doctrine of God's choice, and they thrive upon it; but the world and man made doctrine is foolishness unto them. Where do the free-agents come from? can they stand in Jeremiah 30:23? In Acts 13:41,

we learn, "Behold ye despisers, and wonder and perish, for I work a work in your days, a work in which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." Now would one tell me that these people are going to believe. Free-agents, so called, say, It is left up to you: You can believe if you will just come to church and sunday-school, etc. This is far from the truth. The passage says, "Ye shall in no wise believe." The free-agent preaches that the gates of hell are prevailing against the heaven born child. The Bible says it is not so. They preach that a man can accept or reject Him: They can accept or reject the **one they worship,** for they do all this themselves.

"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Now don't tell me that the Lord built the city, and is trying to get all the fallen race of Adam into it! "To sit on my right hand, or on my left hand, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared." "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom for you from the foundation of the world.

Dear readers, I realize the surface has scarcely been scratched. May God's richest blessings be yours, world without end, is my prayer. A sinner saved by grace of an all wise, all powerful, invisible, eternal and self-sustaining God, I hope.

David E. Turner
410 W. Madison
Bastrop, La.

(We regret the delay in publishing the above. It was partly prepared, and laid aside for the time, then overlooked. — J. D. W.)

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931 Modoc Ave.,
Norfolk 3, Va.

Signs of the Times:

Enclosed find check for two years' subscription to the *Signs of the Times.*

I wish to thank you for the book, "Showers of Rain", by Flossie Faulkner, which I received a few days ago. It is impossible to tell you how much I enjoyed it. I've read it over and over again; and I plan to let my friends read it. Each month, when I get the *Signs,* I usually lay aside whatever I am doing, and sit down and read from cover to cover; and often read it the second time. Then I pass it on to my friends so they, too, can enjoy the good writings published.

May God bless you to continue its publication.

Mrs. J. Van Der Hooning

AN INQUIRY

P. O. Box 532,
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

Dear Editors:

Will you please, at your convenience, explain what is meant in I Corinthians 7:14?: "For the unbelieving husband is lieving wife is sanctified by the hussanctified by the wife, and the unbeband; else were your children unclean; but now they are holy."

Most of the Scriptures that I have come upon, having apparent contradiction to the accepted "being born again by the Holy Ghost", and "By grace are ye saved", etc., have in time, and through writings in the *Signs,* been cleared up. But this one seems impossible for me to understand. I just can't figure it out how a total unbeliever, be he husband, or be she a wife, can be brought into the grace of God by and through their spouse, who is a child of God by His choice, and through His saving grace.

Thanks for your attention. Yours in hope of eternal life through God's saving grace.

Wm. O. Hall

(See editorial reply)

EMPTY VESSELS ARE OFTEN FILLED

Rt. 3,
Benton, Ky.

Elder D. V. Spangler:

I am enclosing check for my own subscription, and for my niece's . . .

We have just traveled a few days in to the New Year; the first Sunday we were kept away from services at Mayfield, Kentucky, where Elder O. W. Perkins is the Moderator. Snow covered the ground and roads were almost impassable. The second Sunday the services were at Soldier Creek Church, where Elder Paul Poyner is our Moderator. Surely the Lord was there. Elder Poyner talked from I Corinthians 1:4-10. About the time we think we are fairly acquainted with a scripture, someone comes along and reads it as though we had never seen a Bible. "That in everything ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: So that ye come behind in no gift, . . ."

As far as I was concerned, I was an empty vessel; but these words, when read, grew so large, so full and complete, I don't see how that little page held them: Enriched by him in all utterance, and everything you think, (and can't utter except with a groan,) he has *confirmed* it in you, and we are not behind in any gift. And that ninth verse: *How God calls his children unto the fellowship of His Son!*

I'll never say again that I read the Bible — these are not the words to use, but when it starts unfolding to you its beauty: every word a new word, taking on a new meaning, then, maybe, I can say surely these words were wielded by the Spirit of God home to me — even to me. We know that at times when we enter a church-building, we are not hungry; just satisfied in an unconcerned state of being. Sunday I must have been just contented to go where we were supposed to meet to worship; I felt concerned as to whether Elder Poyner could get there, and whether some were coming from Ilinois. So when that was settled, all was well; and I was happy as far as all arrangements were made. I had gone about as far as I could, for we can't stir up the pure mind, if we have it. But how often we have to be told again and again that it is not of us to open up our understanding; it is not of us to be able to worship.

Has the grace of God been given us by Christ Jesus? Do we have all things, so that we come behind in no gift; is utterance ours, knowledge ours; is the witness within given us, because He loved us when we were dead in sins? We are often so dead after we have a hope in Him; after we have eaten his flesh and drank his blood, as we hope, that we still cannot go nor come. Right now I am glad that it is so: For if power were mine, all scriptures would look as beautiful as the ones Elder Poyner talked about yesterday.

A beautiful text came to me last week. Maybe I did not get it fully, but I feasted on it for a few days: Isaiah 12:3 — "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." My mind ran to the words of Jesus, when he said, ". . . but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (John 4:14) To me, when we draw from one another, their minds, their thoughts on scriptures, it is because we find joy drawing from the well of water within them. "Wells of salvation" — Ye shall draw! No use saying you wont, for, *ye shall.* What wondrous love is this, Oh my soul. Much fellowship to the household of faith. I will be glad to help in obtaining new subscribers; this one is new and I am giving it to my niece.

Effie Bowden

"THEY MOVE WILLINGLY AND LOVINGLY"

R.F.D. 2,

Ringgold, Virginia

Dear Editors and Household of Faith:

Am sending my renewal to the *Signs*. I find its contents very precious, heavenly food — next to the Bible. The experiences are wonderful, and the editorials are enlightening. It stands for the things I believe, have experienced, and have tasted.

I feel we are living in perilous times, but believe that God is still ruling; and will until the end of time. Lots of things are hurtful to us, but I try not to worry over things I have no control. The Bible foretells all these things coming to pass before the end of time. He has declared the end from the beginning, saying his counsel should stand, and that he would do all his pleasure.

Some say and think that if we fulfill the commandments, we will be saved; but God writes these things in our hearts, and puts them in our minds. His is an irresistable power. He speaks to sinners, and they move willingly and lovingly; and have a great desire to do things God puts in their hearts to do. Only God has power to do this. We are dependent on Him for everything.

I was glad to see Elder Spangler's piece in the last issue of the *Signs* in regard to the wonderful association. Nothing on earth can compare with these good meetings. We have not been well, and have missed many meetings we wanted to attend. Our minds were there with you dear people. We are growing older and more feeble, and our vision is very poor, so we know we cannot attend the meetings regularly; but shouldn't complain, for we have been wonderfully blessed. far more than we deserve. Love to the household of faith.

Sister W. L. Ferguson

"LIKE A VISITOR ENTERING THE HOME"

Rt. 3, Box 261,
Jasper, Texas

Dear Editors and Writers:

Enclosed you will find money-order to extend my subscription another two years.

I have been reading this good paper for some time now, and would not like to miss a single issue, for it is like a visitor entering the home each time it arrives; and it always brings good news of glad tidings, which is food to the hungry soul. . . . It sets forth a soveriegn God, and salvation by grace through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners. It does my heart good to read of others, who, as I, have only a hope; and are laden with many doubts and fears much of the time; and so dependent at all times.

Thanks to each and every one who writes such good articles; and special thanks to the Editors and Associates for their time and efforts in bringing us such good reading. May the God of all power continue to bless you with wisdom and understanding, and health and ability in getting this paper to us. May it ever be kept sound, and continue to come our way, is my prayer. With Christian love and fellowship.

A brother I humbly hope,
Frank Martindale

REQUESTS FOR VIEWS ON SCRIPTURES

(Quite often we receive requests for views on portions of the Scriptures. Were we able we would like to comply with all of them, but this being impossible we will pass them on to our brethren under this heading. As we have space, we will publish such replies as we deem of general interest to our readers. Replies should not be too lengthy, and typed if possible.)

"I would like for someone to write on the 20th chapter of Revelation, if they have a mind to do so."

Mrs. Agnes Jones,
1550 Portland,
Abilene, Texas

"I should like very much to have some

comment on the following passages of Scripture: Matthew 23rd Chapter; Mark 14:51; and 2 Peter 1:9, 10. There are so many things I don't know. I live in a town of forty-three thousand, yet I have no one to talk to; that is, no one who believes like I do."

Percy A. Loyd,
Box 204,
Salma, Kansas

"I read so much about predestination it would please me very much if you could give me some information on it. What I would like to know is, did God predestinate some things and leave others to accidentals, whether it be good or evil, large or small. I will appreciate some information on this."

J. T. Cobb,
Rt. 2, Box 177,
Greensboro, N. C.

UPPER COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The Upper Country Line Union Meeting is appointed to be held with Prospect Hill Church the fifth Sunday in April, which is April 30th.

The brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Hallie O. Griswald, Church Clerk

SPECIAL MEETING AT NORFOLK

Elder D. V. Spangler is expected to preach at the **Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church,** Norfolk, Virginia, the first Sunday in April at 11 o'clock, and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30 P. M., by special appointment.

DELAWARE ASSOCIATION

The Delaware Association will be held with the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, on the 2nd Sunday in May, and Saturday before, the Lord willing.

Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Rees S. Jarmon, Clerk

CHANGE IN TIME AND PLACE OF LOUISIANA DISTRICT MEETING

Dear Editors:

Please publish this notice of the change of time and place of the Louisiana District Meeting of the South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association. It is to be held with Union Church, Marion, La., beginning on Friday before the third (3rd) Sunday in July, instead with Concord Church, Bastrop, La., on Friday before the second (2nd) Sunday in July.

L. D. Smith, Clerk Union Church

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Harmony Primitive Baptist Church will be held, God willing, all day Saturday and Sunday, April 29 and 30, 1961. Services to begin Saturday at 10:30 A. M., and Sunday at 10:00 A. M.

The meeting house is located one mile East of Huntington, W. Va., city limits, on Cedarcrest Drive, and about one-quarter mile off U. S. Route 60, at Eastern Heights Shopping Center. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

Elder J. R. Lane, Moderator
Mrs. Mildred Stanley, Clerk,
1046 Cedarcrest Drive,
Huntington, W. Va.

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the **Staunton River Primitive Baptist Union,** which did not convene in January due to the snowy weather, will meet, the Lord willing, with Canaan Church April 29 and 30, 1961.

Our correspondents and interested friends are invited to meet with us.

W. R. Dodd, Moderator
W. J. Oakes, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To February 1st, 1961)

Florance A. Gibson, Ga.	$ 2.00
Aubrey Cristopher, Texas	1.00
W. Tom Smith, Texas	1.00
Mrs. Maynard Finch, N. Y.	2.00
Mrs. Ellis Hodgins, Canada	5.00
H. L. Knight, N. C.	10.00
Miss Mary A. Johnson, Texas	5.00
Ben F. Preston, Oregon	5.00
Mrs. Ora Cochran, Calif.	5.00
Katie Ragan, Tenn.	2.00
Mrs. C. W. Adams, Va.	1.00
O. D. Bell, Va.	10.00
T. A. Pullig, La.	2.50
Annie L. Cornelius, Texas	1.00
Homer Bailey, Del.	1.00

Danville, Virginia **April, 1961**

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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EDITORIAL

REPLY TO INQUIRY

"For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean; but now they are holy." (I Corinthians 7:14)

No doubt many have been concerned over the meaning of this passage of Scripture, since, as our correspondent points out, there is an apparent contradiction as to the source of "sanctification", to that taught throughout the Bible. So a careful reading of this is necessary in order to understand the Apostle's expressions as given in the translation.

First we will want to remember that it is an established principle that there can be no knowledge of the truth without personal revelation: no "seeing" of the kingdom of God without being born of the Spirit; and that these things are entirely outside of the sphere of a mortal's accomplishment.

Again, it is to be remembered that none will ever know the truth, and be embraced in its membership, except those who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; but that all of these will be embraced, because the choosing, the redeeming, and the calling, are all in the hands of the triune God, and he has willed that his people shall be saved.

So we must notice carefully what the Apostle is presenting. He writes: "If any *brother* hath a wife that believeth not"; or, if, "the woman (wife) hath an husband that believeth not". He is speaking of a brother or sister, who believes, but whose spouse does not believe. Believes what? Believes the doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: Believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that he saved his people from their sins by his death upon the cross; that he arose from the dead, and was received into heaven. One spouse believed this, having been brought into the love and fellowship of these things; while the other did not know anything about it at all. Isn't this often found among the Lord's people?

But the Apostle is saying that this of itself is no reason they should separate: "And if she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away"; or, "If he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him." Which means: If they find nothing repulsive in the other because of his faith, or lack of faith, there is nothing, in the Apostle's opinion, in their living together as husband and wife that would be contrary to church discipline or order; and so they would not be censured for it.

"For," the Apostle continues, "the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieveing wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now they are holy."

We then want to know the meaning of the word "sanctified" as it is used here. We know that it is sometimes used to show the difference between the manifest works of the flesh, and the works of the Spirit in a person. But it also has the meaning of (in its present tense), "To be set apart for a specific use or purpose." We think it has the latter meaning here. For, after consulting the usage of the word as quoted by several writers, it seems that the Jews often used the word in the sense of "being espoused", or "married to"; which carries out the idea of "being set apart for each other." This is quite different from a personal inference of freedom from sin; or that the marriage relationship imparts the grace of God to bring the unbeliever into the kingdom, as some have thought.

In this light the difficulty is removed as to the apparent contradiction of the whole tenor of the Scriptures as to the source of the faith of all the children of God; which, of course, the Apostle never contradicts; but rather confirms. For, if the believing wife is espoused, or married, to an unbelieving husband; or, if the believing husband is espoused to an unbelieving wife, the Apostle finds nothing contradictory to the order of the church, for each member stands in a *personal* relationship in the church.

Nor is there anything contrary to the recognized law of the land in their marriage. So neither the church nor the government would have any charge against them; and thus it is perfectly right for the Apostle to say that, because of this, "your children are holy"; that is, without ought against them through their parents.

The Apostle further states that if the unbelieving depart, because of the difference, from the brother or sister (husband or wife), let him depart. A brother or sister is not under bondage (censure) of the church in such cases.

There are many of the Lord's people who are married to those who just cannot understand why or how the other can believe as they do; or understand why their faith means so much to them; or why to be with those who believe as they do, is their chief joy. What a blessing it is for husband and wife to see eye to eye in these things! or what a blessing it is, if one's spouse does not believe, but yet has great respect for the other's belief, and put no hindrance in the way for the exercise of the other's worship!

But what a pity it is when we see believers so harrassed by their mates in things religious, that their life is made miserable by personal demands or hinderances, so that meeting with their brethren, which means so much to them, has much of the joy and freedom suppressed by memory of their mate's opposition, or the prospect of a quarrel upon arriving home.

Certainly the believer knows the source of his faith, and should remember this in dealing with an unbelieving spouse in things called religion; and the unbeliever will, if he is not too self-centered and intolerant, have the courtesy to allow the conscientious exercise of the other's faith.

Who knows, (and we know of some cases of it,) but that the Lord may bless the other spouse with the same faith at some time in life; or that the example of the one, of patience and humility, may afterwards be spoken of by the other as used by the Lord as the beginning of the work of grace in his heart. This is what we believe the Apostle had in mind when he wrote: "For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? Or, how knowest thou O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?"

This is our understanding of the scripture inquired of by our correspondent, and we submit it for his consid-

eration; as well as to others who may be interested.

J. D. W.

THE PRESERVATION OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

If Christ is our Saviour, then I have the scriptural right to title this article in this way; if he is not, then the title is misleading. To talk of its preservation is to suppose that some power other than its own is doing the work; otherwise, we would tell how that she preserves herself.

In our last we were engaged in finding the nucleus of this glorious church, this organized Bride of Christ, this home of the Lord's dear children in this lifetime. Without going over that ground again suffice it is to say that Christ founded this church; that he called to him such as he would have follow him. It is likewise safe to notice that it had not been done until he came and did it; therefore, the design to build, and the building of the same, was entirely the work of God as manifest in the flesh.

One time I picked up a book in the churchhouse at one of my appointments, and was looking through it. A visitor had written this notation, to wit, "I would not mind coming here to church if they did not talk about grace all the time." How truly that is the feeling of those not acquainted with grace; it grows boresome, it has become obsolete, it has outgrown its usefulness, it is a stale subject. To the poor and helpless, it is as sweet and precious today as it was the first time it was heard. I will, if blessed of God, dwell right much on the grace of God as I write. However, I pray, if I pray, that I be blessed to investigate this matter from a scriptural standpoint; if I pray, I will have the answer of prayer, and each time that I find works being the cause of faith I will come right out and boldly say so; each time that I find grace as a virtue of the creature instead of a gift from the Creator, I will give credit as it is due to that system of doctrines.

On the day of Pentecost the church was already in existence. The Lamb declared, "I will build my church." All of the sophistry of the scoffers, all of the reasoning of the intellect, will never eliminate the three thousand being added to something. These all (both those who were already in the church, as well as the added ones) continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine, and are recognized from here on as the church. But how did this come about? Is this Peter's design? Is this a product of the minds of the apostles? Is this a great Christian movement to bring the kingdom to greater influence? If it was, then Old Baptists had as well go home; they never had anything to begin with; they were through before they started. But (and I am not ashamed to challenge that authority that would lay any other foundation for Pentecost and what followed), if it were not a well thought out plan of the apostles, then everybody, **really, everybody,** has as well take down their sign, to wit, "We are taking the world for Christ" for they did not contribute one iota to the founding of the kingdom, and they have not contributed any more to its preservation.

It will take but little of your time to read the book of Joel. Begin at the beginning and read down to the 28th verse of the second chapter. Now let us read together: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and

in the remnant whom the Lord shall call" (Joel 2:28, 32). Did the One who promised this great blessing falter before that day and need help? If he did, where did he shout it out in his written word, "O creation, your Creator is slipping, my footsteps are faltering, my arm is too short to do all that I have promised, your support is needed at Pentecost"? We know that no such cry has gone forth from his mouth. This pouring out of the spirit of the Lord is not a work of co-ordination nor of co-operation with and from any man. To pour, signifies from a container, and the container is God; only Jesus could take hold of Godliness and pour it out upon his people. In the promise, there was no mention made of a helper in the work; in the fulfillment of that promise there is no helper present.

Who would, as we look and listen at Pentecost, say that this coming together is the work of any man? What a scene is unfolded to our astonished gaze! How men are brought to a complete standstill as the sound from heaven of a mighty rushing wind fills the house! What glory is unfolded as it appeared to them as cloven tongues like as fire, settling upon each of them. Which one of them did this power consult before settling upon him? Not one, and thus the doctrine of God's saving grace is made clear in the carrying on of the church which his Son founded. This being filled with the Holy Ghost caused them to speak in other tongues, as they were given utterance by the Spirit. In this particular place let us notice that Jews were living here, devout men, from every nation under heaven. With God no accidents ever happen; no event is unlooked for; none of his creatures decide on the place that they live. God has made them all that dwell on the face of the earth; he hath (not wanting to, not going to, but) already appointed the times; and he hath set the bounds of their habitation (Acts 17:26). If the Lord had determined to pour his Spirit out upon a man here, and that man was in Europe, his knowledge and determination would be as weak as the people that think they have the weight of ordering and determining the government of God on their shoulder. They were all there. It is certainly to the point to know the extent of this outpouring. It was not in vain, for the work, as prophesied by Joel, was effectual. Each and every recipient of this outpouring was pricked in his heart, and they all cried out. They had something to say; a work had been done which had not been done. Never before had these bewildered saints had this miracle to happen to them; never before had light and power come in such volume. These people did not say, Men and brethren, what must we do in order to be saved? No sir, these were devout men (Gr., men who were receiving and talking well), and they were in need of instruction. Their query is that which identifies the church of the living God. "What shall we do?"

The outpouring of the Spirit worked on them all. It brought the anxious query, but it also brought the quieting answer.

This Pentecost day is as much in effect now as it was then. It is the day of the gospel; it is the day of the reign of Christ as manifest in the outpouring of his Spirit. The power that was in that mighty blowing wind is still sweeping all before it. It has not blown itself out; it does not need a rekindling of the fire, nor a windmill to put vigor into a declining breeze. This outpouring of God's Spirit sent them all out from there. It sent them out believing in the power that had been wrought in them. It did not come in weak, and is to go out strong; it did not come in strong and to go out weak. It was not to go out before the end of the day; the fire would not flicker, the wind of the Spirit would not abate. The outpouring of this Spirit is the cause of the promulgation of the gospel; it is the cause of those to whom it is sent answering and complying with it. Occasionally I hear a dear brother say, O, I do not believe in encouragement; I do not believe in calling on people to repent; I do not believe in saying

anything to those on the outside about being baptized. How sad, for they are saying that the things caused by the Spirit at Pentecost and left on record for us to follow are worthless. If we have any right to any of Peter's preaching, we are bound to it all.

Paul wrote much on election. Every brand of Old School Baptist is ready to defend that doctrine. They all say in unison, "That God has chosen his people in Christ before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4). Why is it that they will not all defend the doctrine that "we have been blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ?" They come according to the choice; we were blessed with them at the time of the choice. These blessings accompany those elected to the end that they all get home to glory. All blessings are in Christ; and he beginning the good work in us, will bless us with those all things pertaining to life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3) to finish that which he had started. If this is not true, the Old School Baptists not need do talk about God keeping his church any longer; they do not need (and it was useless and vain for Christ to say it to Peter) God to restrain hell to keep its gates from prevailing against the church; they do not need the Holy Spirit now. If it is true, then all the blood that precious saints have shed; all the sneers and jeers that have been hurled against that sect everywhere spoken against; all the stakes driven and all the fagots lighted have not been done in vain, for Truth is still alive and as long as He lives, even though the body perishes, we shall yet live with him in eternal glory. Not only did Paul write much on election, but his yoke-fellow in tribulation, the apostle Peter, also wrote much on it, and as much and as strong as was his defense of it, it was equally as strong that all things necessary to our overcoming was given in Christ and made manifest in our present lives as a church. As quoted above, all the things that pertain to life and godliness were given us in Christ. Let us read together, "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus Christ our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue" (2 Pet. 1:2, 3). Let us analyze: Where is grace and peace to come from? From the creature? What knowledge has he or she got? They do not know their own mind, much less the mind of Almighty God. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20). If language means anything; if the inspiration of God as left on the Bible pages for the Christian's perusal is of primary importance to us, then grace and peace both come from God through His knowledge and the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the only source of grace, the only source of peace. These things being multiplied unto the church in days past has been in just one way; from just one source. It has been, it all has been, according as his divine power has given us all things pertaining to life and godliness, and it has been through the same knowledge, from the same Almighty Being, that gave us grace and peace.

Let us read, "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ." What a wonderful statement! What power in the Spirit that gave this man, who did not know what to pray for as he ought (Rom. 8:26), to always thank God for the only thing that saves. This grace enriches. It is the only enrichening thing spoken about in the Bible. A man can not be enriched by filthy rags (works), but he is made poorer by their accumulation. Regardless of how rich we are in our works (rags); regardless of how much honor and fame and money has been bestowed upon us, it is worthless in the kingdom of heaven. It will not buy the Holy Ghost; it will not buy the love of God; it will not buy sweet fellowship; it will not buy a single blessing. Now look at what grace does.

1. It is as extensive as God, the great Giver; it enriches in everything (I am not writing about wickedness; the fall brought more of that than the child of God desires). There isn't a gift that the church has been blessed with in the past that grace did not give. 2. Especially do I want to note that grace enriches in all utterance. Ah, yes, how it makes what is said lovely, but what is better it makes how it is said lovely, and best of all, it makes the speaker lovely. What a boon to poor sinners, that He has created the fruit of their lips (Isa. 57:19) to where they talk of his wondrous works and his glory and his power (Psa. 119:27; 145: 11). 3. This grace enriched the early church in all knowledge. This was done even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in them. How many was thus enriched? If it began and stopped, when was it stopped? This epistle was (and is) written to all of those at Corinth, as well as all that were sanctified in Christ, all that were called saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ. If we call upon Him now, we have what the church has ever had, to wit, the enrichening grace of God. 4. This grace was so enrichening that they did not come behind in any gift. Ah, how far behind we feel in our works. They have never enabled us to plead for God's blessing upon them. 5. This being blessed to not come behind lasts from the first confirmation all during the waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. It will not give out. 6. It is the gift which gives us confirmation to the end. It is such a rich gift that it lasts to the end. "This God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death". 7. It is so rich that it will bring us before God blameless in the day of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Dear brethren, is this your experience? Come tell us how you do. As for as I feel about the matter, it is the Lord by his enrichening grace that has brought my wandering footsteps to Mount Zion; it was there that he confirmed me in the shed blood of the Lamb; it is in and through his grace that I have come thus far. This is all of my hope. That which has preserved the church, has, as I humbly hope, preserved me. That which took care of the little church in its infantile state (it hasn't got out of that yet), has been my stay and my guide, for I, too, have not gotten out of my little state.

In my next, God willing, I will deal with the present.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Fairfax C. H., Virginia
June 16, 1858

Dear Brother Beebe: — I see in the Signs for June 1, among other requests on me, one from Sister Bagg, for my views on a part of Phillippians iii. 10, "And the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death," &c. In coming to this subject, I will go back a little to notice the drift of the Apostle's argument. He, in verse third, shows that those who are of the true spiritual circumcision, "Worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." He then proceeds to show, from his own case, how entirely vain are the attempts of men to base the hopes of their salvation or acceptance with God, in whole, or in part, on any thing fleshly, whether birth, religious rites, education or their own attainments. He says, verse four, "If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more." He then goes on, in verses five and six, to state the superior claim he had to fleshly attainments, and, indeed, to what many would consider, religious attainments. In verse seven, he gives the conclusion he had been brought to that, "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ." He, in verse eight, further says, "Yea, doubtless I count all things but loss for the

excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord," &c. I will here remark that **gain** and **loss** as used in verse seven, are opposites. Those fleshly attainments Paul once accounted as **gain** or advantageous in reference to acceptance with God, he now found to be a **loss**, a hindrance, a real obstacle to his receiving and resting on Christ as the way of salvation. He further adds, "For whom I have suffered the loss of all things and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him," &c., verses seven and eight. That **I may win Christ,** that is, that Christ may be my **gain,** or the one object of my trust and delight.

In verse ten, Paul continues the enumeration of what he desires in Christ, and hopes to find in him, "That I may know him and power the of his resurrection." That he might know more and more of him, of his infinite excellency and fulness, enjoy more intimate communion with him. **And the power of his resurrection.** That is, **know the power,** &c. The power of Christ's resurrection is manifested in several points.

1. In his resurrection he was **declared to be the Son of God with power.** Rom. i. 4. Hence his resurrection was a complete triumph over the demands of the law upon his people and him in his oneness with them — and, therefore, over that bondage which the law held over them and him, subjecting him to endure its penalty in their stead.

2. The power of his resurrection is seen in his being raised for the justification of his people. Hence to know the power of his resurrection, is to know the clearance of all them that believe, from all demands of the law — and, therefore, from all possibility of again being brought into a state of condemnation.

3. The power of his resurrection is manifested in that he **raised up together with himself all for whom** he died and **made them sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.** Thus to know by faith, the power of Christ's resurrection, tends to make us feel and enjoy our liberty and privileges as children of God, and not servants. "And the fellowship of his sufferings." Fellowship signifies community or mutual participation. Peter tells us that Christ **hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust.** Peter's declaration here must imply that as Christ was just in himself, he must have had such a fellowship with his people in their sins, that is, that he was so one with them, that he could justly be made to suffer for their sins. Hence, though just, he righteously suffered for the sins of the unjust. Hence his question, "Ought not Christ to suffer these things?" If there was this fellowship of Christ with his people in their sins, so that he could be made to bear them and call them his sins, as in Psalm lxix. 5, then his people must have had an equal fellowship in his sufferings, that is, in that the satisfaction thereby made to the law, was as if it had been received at their hands. Then **he was raised for their justification.** And hence to **know our fellowship in his sufferings** is to know that we have in Christ rendered to the law all that satisfaction which justice required of us for our sins, and all that obedience which it could demand, so that **Christ is the end of the law for righteousness** to us, (Rom. x. 4) and so that the law can ask no more of us.

But this fellowship and knowledge of it is experimental. When the commandment comes, when God speaks the law to us and shows us its spirituality, we feel the weight of sin laying upon us, and the sentence of death as justly standing against us, and we feel a submission to it, though we are led, we know not how, to cry for mercy. It is true we have at this time no idea of fellowship with Christ nor with any other in our condemnation. It is that we feel our own sins, and for ourselves we feel the sentence of death just, whoever else may be saved. We think our case peculiar in guilt. Beyond this we cannot know only by faith our fellowship in the sufferings of Christ. We were bound and laid upon the altar as Isaac was, and the sword of justice was drawn ready to

inflict the fatal blow; but God had himself provided the Lamb for sacrifice which we knew not of. Thence the hand is stayed, and faith given us to behold Christ as the Lamb of God substituted in the sinner's stead. Christ could not have **the cup pass from him,** could have no substitute, he must pay the penalty; he was the Shepherd, the Husband, the Head, the Life, to whom the law of right looked for satisfaction. When enabled to believe, we see that Christ is the way of acceptance with God, and not our obedience to the law, that Christ has borne the penalty of the law, and that the law is satisfied, and that God is just in pardoning and justifying sinners through Christ. We know that we are sinners, and that Christ died for sinners, and therefore hope for being saved through him. We then knew not for ourselves our oneness with Christ as Husband, Head, &c., and therefore knew not our **fellowship with his sufferings,** and may not to this day, and therefore, like Paul, desire to know this fellowship. Yet we feel sensibly the effects of this fellowship. The demands and curses of the law are as completely hushed toward us as though we had borne the penalty ourselves; we cannot bring ourselves to feel that they are standing against us; and we **are thus justified by faith** in that we feel a reliance on Christ's righteousness as sufficient ground for our justification before God, and with confidence plead it, for our acceptance at the throne of grace.

"Being made conformable unto his death." Paul speaks of this as a consideration in his **knowing the fellowship of Christ's sufferings.** We read in Rom. vi. 10, "For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." In verse 11, Paul thus exhorts the saints, "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." There is brought to view a conformity unto Christ's death. **This being made conformable unto his death, is an important consideration in our knowing our fellowship in his sufferings; for without this, if we had the assurance that we are pardoned and justified through Christ, Satan and our natural propensities might lead to indulge our corruptions more than we do.** The believer is dead to sin so far as relates to its dominion — that is destroyed — but its indwelling continues, the old man is corrupt in his deeds. We almost constantly feel the workings of these corruptions, excepting when under the immediate influence of faith and the love of God. We not only feel the workings of these corruptions within, but also often feel a strong inclination to yield to them, and do too much indulge in them. Yet there is in the believer a principle of holiness, of love to God, which leads him to loathe and abhor all these workings of corruption within him. Thence he, like Paul, desires to be made conformable unto Christ's death. "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." That is, as I understand it, that he might attain to that perfect incorruptibility or freedom from depravity and its workings, in which the bodies of the saints will be raised. See verse 11 compared with verses 12, 13 and 14, as justifying these views.

Sister Bagg also asks whether **the fellowship,** or Christian fellowship, as spoken of anciently, was limited to contributions, &c. I think not, as spoken of in the Scriptures. I know of but one instance wherein the word occurs in the Scriptures, in which it is applied to the ministering to the wants of the poor saints, viz.: 2 Cor. iii. 4. This contributing to the necessities of the poor saints at Jerusalem was an expression of fellowship, it was an act of participating with them in temporal things. The disciples being together and having all things common, Acts ii. 44 and 45, comes up to the full import of the word **fellowship** as referring to temporal affairs. But I do not find it used in that case. "Fellowship in the gospel," as found Phil. i. 5, refers evidently to the Phillippian brethren being equally partakers with others of the gospel and its

privileges, graces, &c. The apostles at Jerusalem giving to Barnabas and Paul the right hand that they should go to the heathen, was an impression by which they recognized them, though they were preaching to the heathen, as fellow-laborers in the gospel of Christ; it was called by Paul **the right hand of fellowship,** Gal. ii. 9. The term fellowship as found in Acts ii. 42, does not, I think, refer directly to contributing or mutually sharing in temporal things, for that is expressly mentioned in verses 44 and 45, as a distinct circumstance. This fellowship as well as the doctrine, is called the Apostles'. The text reads thus:

"And they continued steadfast in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread," &c. The Apostles stood in the first gospel church and fully represented it in its visible form. Thence verse 41: "And the same day there were added with them about three thousand souls," is the same as though it was said, **"They were added to the church,"** &c. And as they were added as members in particular of the one body, the church, they were received as fellows, or mutual participants in the privileges, duties and persecutions, &c., with the Apostles; that is, with the church as the church, not in the peculiar gifts and station of the Apostles as such. Thus in continuing steadfast in the fellowship, they continued according to their stations or places, in the church, to be mutual participants with the Apostles or church in the labors, toils, self-denials and afflictions incident to being disciples of Christ, as well as the privileges, ordinances, and consolations belonging to it. This is what I understand to be implied by the term church fellowship, as used by O. S. Baptists to this day. And we recognize a fellowship with churches and their members, as being churches of the same faith and order, &c., with us. We may and sometimes do, express fellowship for persons, as believing them to be mutual partakers with us of regeneration, and of the doctrine and hopes of the gospel, whilst we have not church fellowship with them, because they have not been added to the church to walk in its ordinances and orders. And the terms brother and brethren as used in the New Testament, and correctly by O. S. Baptists, is expressive of fellowship, as we thereby recognize them as children of the same heavenly family.

I have thus given Sister Bagg the above as being my views on the subjects she proposed. She will, of course, test them by the Scriptures before she receives them as her views.

Yours in love,
S. Trott

(From the Signs of the Times of July 1, 1858.)

OBITUARIES

SISTER MOLLIE McCLANAHAN

God in his infinite wisdom has taken from us our dearly beloved and faithful sister, Mollie McClanahan, aged 89, of Lanaham, W. Va. She died after an extended illness at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Bertha Thomas, on October 10, 1960.

She united with Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, of Kanawha County, W. Va., on October 2, 1949, and was baptized by Elder Harvey Bird. She was blessed with many deep and beautiful experiences in her travels, both before and after uniting with the church. She was faithful in attendance of her home church and those of neighboring communities; and was most happy when visiting those of like faith, where her conversation was ever of the blessed Lord and his Bride, and what He has, and is, doing for his chosen ones; who are saved by his grace alone. That she was a blessed Mother in Israel is our sincere conviction and hope.

She is survived by four daughters and four sons: Mrs. Bertha Thomas, of Lanaham; Mrs. Della Robinson, Mrs. Dorothy McClanahan, and Mrs. Maysel Vance, of Charleston, W. Va.; Brady, Anthony, and James, of Lanaham, and Roy, of Diamond, W. Va. Also by one sister, Mrs. Fanny Turley, Nitro, W. Va.; eighteen grandchildren and twenty-one great grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted at Hopewell Church by Elders J. C. Hammond and Harvey Bird; and interment was in McClanahan Cemetery by the side of her husband, the late Sam

McClanahan. The many floral offerings were a tribute to the memory of her gracious presence among us. She will be greatly missed by her family and friends, and we of the church. May we be given strength to say, "Thy will be done."

Nanna M. Carney, Clerk Hopewell Church

GERTRUDE WALTON KER

Inasmuch as it pleased our God to take from our midst our dear and beloved sister, Gertrude Walton Ker, on December 19, 1960, at the age of seventy-six, we bow in humble submission to his will.

Sister Ker was born September 27, 1884, the daughter of the late Thomas B. and Harriett Hall Walton, of Pocomoke City, Maryland; and was the widow of the late Elder H. Claude Ker, who died in 1946. After the death of Elder Ker, she, being in bad health, lived with her two sisters, Miss Bertha and Miss Wilhelma A. Walton, and also one brother, B. Fuller Walton, of Pocomoke City; who survive.

She was baptised in the fellowship of the Little Creek Church, of the Salisbury Association, on July 15, 1934, by her late husband; and she remained a faithful member of that church until death. She always accompanied Elder Ker to the meetings; and the writer can see now her pleasant smile when greeting the brethren and her many friends. We feel that she had spent her allotted time here, and believe that our loss is her eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer, assisted by Mr. Perry Ellis, Pastor of the New School Batpist Church of Pocomoke City. Interment was made in the Old School Baptist Cemetery at Snow Hill, Maryland.

Arthur R. Warren

ANNIE SMACK

At it pleased our Heavenly Father to take from our midst by death our dear beloved sister, Annie Smack, on January 5, 1961, we bow in humble submission to his holy will.

Sister Smack was born January 17, 1862, the daughter of the late Bassett and Julia A. Payne. She was united in marriage to the late Isaac Smack; and to this union were born two sons: Calvin Smack, Berlin, Md., and James Smack, Houston, Delaware; who survive her. She had made her home with James for many years.

Early in life she was given a hope in Christ, and asked for a home in the Indiantown Church, of the Salisbury Association, and was baptized by the late Elder T. M. Poulson, and remained a faithful member until death; but was unable to attend the meetings for many years because of ill health. The writer was privileged to visit her many times in the past few years, and always found her anxious to hear someone speak of the grace and mercies of her eternal God.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Burbage Funeral Home, Berlin, Maryland; and she was laid to rest in the River Side Cemetery, near Berlin.

Arthur R. Warren

JOHN H. MILES

It is with a sad heart that I write a few words in memory of my dear father, John H. Miles, who died suddenly at his home in Lakeland, Florida, November 3, 1960. He was born in Fayette County, Alabama, December 17, 1877, making his age 83 years. He was the son of Robert and Monica Miles; and was married in 1909 to Miss Anna Lee Pass, who died in February, 1924. Six children were born to this union, five of whom survive: Mrs. Ben Cothern, Lakeland; Mrs. Virginia Moseley, Jacksonville; Mrs. John P. Craig, Tampa; J. Holland Miles, Lakeland; and Robert L. Miles, Shreveport, La. One son, William, died in 1925 at the age of seven years. He is survived also by 14 grandchildren and two great grandchildren; and by six sisters.

Papa moved from Alabama to Florida in 1896, with his parents; where he made his home the remainder of his life. He was baptized by the late Elder M. L. Gilbert into the Old Baptist Church in 1902. He lived a faithful life to his convictions of the Old Baptist doctrine of predestination, election and salvation alone by the grace of God. He was ready at all times to give a reason of the hope he had in Christ Jesus as his Saviour; and though he would only say that he had a hope, to those who knew him, there is no doubt he is at rest with his Saviour. He was a loving husband, father and brother, and always ready to help and advise those he loved.

It was sad to have to give him up, and there is an aching void, but we believe God who does all things well, and works all things after the counsel of his own will, fulfilled his purpose with our loved one. He was a firm believer in the resurrection of the body, and I know that in that day when the Lord shall descend in all his glory, that his body will be raised from the tomb, formed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Son of God; to ever be with his dear Saviour and the saints of God in that beautiful city prepared from the foundation of the world for the heirs of promise.

Papa was laid to rest in Mt. Tabor cemetery, near Lakeland, by the side of his dear com-

panion. Funeral service was conducted by Elder I. C. Davis, of Plant City, before a large gathering of relatives and friends. The large array of beautiful flowers was an expression of the high esteem in which he was held. He often expressed the desire that he would leave this world suddenly, and his prayer was granted. Though it leaves us with a broken and sad heart, we desire grace to be reconciled, and to say, "Thy will, Oh, God, be done, and not ours."

May the peace and love of God, which alone can come from Jesus, be with his children and loved ones, as they journey through this life, is my prayer for Christ's sake. Amen. Written by his son.

Robert L. Miles

MRS. EUNICE McNEILL

God in his infinite wisdom, love and mercy has seen fit to remove from our midst our beloved wife, Eunice McNeill, of Water Valley, Kentucky. She was born March 28, 1896, and died February 24, 1960, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Morris, of Pilot Oak, Graves County, Kentucky. She was united in marriage to Bernie McNeill April 23, 1922, who, with two daughters, survive: Mrs. La Dean Pryor, Mayfield, Ky., and Mrs. Armacilla McMichael, Arlington, Virginia; and by one granddaughter, three sisters and three brothers.

She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at South Mt. Zion, Graves County, Ky., where she lived a faithful member. She was baptized by Elder O. W. Perkins, of Mayfield, Ky.

By her husband

Sister McNeill was a firm Old Baptist, and enjoyed the fellowship of her brethren and sisters. Brother and Sister McNeill's home was a very pleasant home to visit; they did everything possible to make the Baptists welcome. She will be greatly missed among the Old Baptists by those who knew her; for to know her was to love her.

Sister McNeill died in the Mayfield Hospital, and her funeral was conducted by the writer at Byrns Funeral Home, in Mayfield, in the presence of a large congregation of sorrowing brethren and friends; and she was laid to rest in a new cemetery, Southwest of Mayfield on number 45 highway, there to await the call of her Master to awake from the dead in the image of her Saviour, and see him as he is.

I feel she was a consecrated and faithful soldier of the cross; she fought a good fight, kept the faith, and received her discharge; and fell asleep in Jesus, where whatever the length may be, it will only be a night of sweet and undisturbed rest. And the same one that gave her hope, will come to call her from the grave, never more to die.

May God in his love and mercy reconcile her husband and two daughters, that their loss is her eternal gain.

O. W. Perkins

MAY MORRIS

On December 22, 1958, after a lengthy illness, our beloved sister, May Morris, was called from her earthly house to her eternal home.

Sister May, daughter of Robert F. and Rosa L. Morris, was born March 5, 1882, in Wicomico County, Maryland, where she lived her entire life. She was never married, and is survived by a brother, John L., and a sister, Ida Morris, both of Salisbury, Maryland; and by a number of nephews and nieces.

Nearly forty years ago, Sister May was blest with a strong conviction that salvation is of the Lord, and a precious faith and hope that the Lord Jesus Christ was delivered for her offences, raised again for her justification, and exalted to the right hand of the Father, there to appear in the presence of God for her. By reason of this, she was made to desire a resting place among the Lord's people here in this world. She made known this desire to the Nassaongo Old School Baptist Church, and was received and baptized on September 30, 1923, by the late Elder J. C. Mellott. Later she moved her membership to the Salisbury Church, where she remained one of its most faithful and devoted members; never missing her meetings unless providentially hindered. She delighted in doing things for the Church, often unknown to anyone. Truly she followed her Saviour's instruction: "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." She once told the writer that her greatest pleasure was in serving her Church.

A final service was held at the Hill and Johnson Funeral Home on December 24, 1958, by Elder W. D. Griffin; who spoke with power, humility, and sweetness of the Saviour she loved and worshiped. Her mortal body was laid away to await the coming again of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, when he shall appear a second time without sin unto salvation to raise the dead in Christ. May we who miss her presence so keenly, be enabled to "comfort one another with these words."

Written at the request of her relatives and pastor, by one who loved her for own and Christ's sake.

Mildred Dykes

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129 DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1961 NO. 5

"CHOOSING RATHER"
(Hebrews 11:25, 27)

Choosing rather afflictions with the suffering saints of old,
Than a life of ease and splendor, wealth, and luxury untold;
Than the glittering court of Egypt, all her good and pleasant things;
Than a name renown and honored in the palace of her kings.

Choosing rather as a wanderer in the desert lands of earth,
To forego all promised greatness in the country of his birth:
Looking for a better country, an unfading heavenly crown,
Courted no mortal's favor, feared no earthly monarch's frown.

Choosing rather, in His wisdom, Israel's God his guide to be,
He endured as in His presence whom no mortal eye can see;
Greater wealth by far esteeming the reproach of Christ below,
Than the vast imperial treasurers Pharoah's lordly court could show.

Choosing rather tribulations: Jesus, may such choice be mine,
Knowing 'tis the only pathway which doth heavenward incline.
As a pilgrim and a stranger may I sojourn here below,
Craving earnestly thy favour, seeking thy deep love to know.

Help me by thy gracious Spirit still the narrow way to choose;
Give me strength in all temptations sin's sweet morsals to refuse;
Make me able at thy bidding to endure reproach and shame,
Willing to relinquish all things for the love of thy dear Name.

Choosing rather all thou willest than my own rebellious way;
Knowing that my heart too often in forbidden paths would stray;
Trusting that the highest wisdom doth my portion here assign,
And will all life's bitter waters sweeten still with love divine.

Choosing rather thou should'st lead me than to walk in sin and pride;
Knowing thou abidest faithful to thine own, whate'er betide;
Knowing thou wilt never leave them: thy strong arm will hold them fast
Till thou bring them to thy presence — all their toil and suffering past.

Vera

(Selected from Gospel Standard, 1878)

THREE THOUSAND MILES FROM NEAREST OLD SCHOOL MEETING

Box 53
Okanagan Centre
British Columbia
Canada

Dear Elder Wood:

Ever since I met you and Sister Wood at the June Meeting in Canada in 1956, and heard you preach the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ our Lord, I have wanted to write to you and tell you how really blessed of God I felt myself to be, that I was enabled to be there and listen to the wonderous word of God expounded in truth and sincerity by yourself, and Brother Warren (now Elder Warren), as well as by our own beloved pastor, Elder Ruston.

I wrote you a letter but did not feel worthy to send it, but I want you to know now that I did enjoy your preaching: the first and only time I've heard you. I made special note of your texts: . . . I was fed and comforted by your sermons, and also stirred up. How good a stirring-up is at times! makes one cast glances inward; and, in my case, shows only the blackness of sin and deceit, and causes a, "Certain fearful looking for of judgment." (Hebrews 10:27)

How far down in doubt and despair

we can get at times; and how much comfort comes to our hearts with the slightest renewal of hope!

It is now more than forty-five years since Elder Durand baptized me in Winnipeg on one of his visits out West; and, contrary to my expectations, I am no better now than at that time. But the little hope I have had, and the love of God's people I have felt for over sixty years, is more precious to me than all the riches of the world. "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee."

How I wish I could remember your sermons, and all the good preaching I have heard in years past; but they are all like good meals: We are refreshed at the time, but soon forget them, and grow hungry again for more good food. Fresh mercies, and comfort, and help, are needed daily: the manna will not keep over.

In 1915 a small church was formed in Winnipeg, and we had meetings for some time, but of the twelve members of that church, three now survive: my wife and I away out here at the West coast, and her brother, Gilbert McColl, still in Winnipeg. There are no meetings near us, and as the Ontario churches are three thousand miles from here, we do not get there very often; though we were able to be at one of their meetings in 1958, when Elder Denson was expected, but through illness, was not able to continue his journey there. So the only preaching we get between these rare occasions, is what we receive regularly each month when the **Signs** comes to us with good editorials and comforting letters from dear ones who love the truth; and in their writings tell of my own experience and feelings better than I can tell them myself. Often my heart goes out to them in love, and I deeply regret my inability to write these dear ones, to tell them how much good they have done me.

"Voices of the Past", is good reading, and I hope you will be able to continue these good pieces. Elder Gilbert Beebe and Elder W. L. Beebe were both before my time; but I heard Elder McConnell more than once. Elder Ker and Elder Chick were frequent visitors to our home in my younger days. The editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, and your own preceding it, were both especially good and timely in these troublesome times the world is passing through. . . . We are admonished to remember that, "All power is of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers." (Romans 13) "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." (Exodus 14:13)

It is my prayer that God may bless you, and all the editors of the **Signs**, and sustain you by his grace, so that our paper may continue to come to us regularly with the sweet messages of truth and love, as in the past. I am enclosing five dollars to renew my subscription, and two dollars to help the Indigent Fund.

I had almost forgotten to tell you that a letter addressed to you from Mr. Gosden, Sussex, England, enquiring of any Old School Baptists in Vancouver, was sent to us by Sister Ruston in 1958. I forwarded the letter to my brother in Vancouver, and he visited with Mr. and Mrs. Gosden on a couple of occasions at the home of their daughter there. They did not visit us here or any one else in Canada that we know of.

A brother in hope,
James W. Black

ETERNAL SOVEREIGNTY
BY
ELDER R. W. RHODES

R. F. D. 3, Box 15
Lillie, La.

Dear and Precious Brethren:

I have a mind to write some on the very solemn, deep and mysterious subject of the Eternal Sovereignty of God in all things, which have been, which are, and which shall be. This is a most glorious subject: It is too high, I cannot

attain unto it. (Psalms 139:6)

To begin, I desire to quote Isaiah 14:24: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed so shall it stand." Seemingly most present day religious professors do not have any use for this great passage, nor for the great subject it so wonderfully treats upon; but I desire, if I know my heart, not only to give the full meaning of this great passage upon this subject, but I desire to see, feel and understand, and speak and teach the full meaning of all scripture. 2 Timothy 3:16, says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." Read also the last verse of the chapter.

We see from the last reference, that all Scriptures are equally important to the man of God. Oh dear brethren, how I do hope I am a man of God in the sense of this passage; and that I may be blessed of the Lord to profitably use and understand the sacred things contained in the Scriptures. The Lord said in Matthew 11:25, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Thus showing plainly that it is necessary that these things be revealed unto the Lord's little ones, even though they are written in the Bible.

Now referring to Isaiah 14:24: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn." What was it that the Lord of hosts swore to? "As I have thought so shall it come to pass." Do you think, dear reader, that God thought of all things? If not, then he was ignorant of everything that he did not think of. Could God be all wise, and at the same time be ignorant of anything? He thought, and swore that all things would come to pass just as he thought they would; and that is the way, and the only way, they do come to pass. He could not be all wise if anything came to pass differently to what he thought it would. The way He thought it would come to pass, is the way that God purposed that it should stand.

Remember, precious brethren, that God thought and purposed everything just as it comes to pass; and just as it stands, He swore to it with an unchangeable oath. It is said that all things are possible with God, and that there is nothing impossible with him, except to lie: If everything does not come to pass as he thought, and as he purposed, then his oath is no good; and he could be tried for perjury, as men are tried. But not so with the holy God of Heaven, who declared the end from the beginning. (Isaiah 46:10; also read Isaiah 48: 3, 5, 7, 16) From all this, does it seem possible that anything ever has, or ever will, come to pass, except that which God thought, or that he had purposed to take place? His holy and all wise oath stands; and so does his eternal and holy purpose stand, just as he hath sworn.

No doubt there are those who would say that all things were not embraced in his oath. But this would imply that He was not all wise in his thought and purpose; then to the extent that he never thought of a thing which does come to pass, his oath is invalid, and his purpose also.

Now the Lord has sworn that as things come to pass, is the way he thought they would; and the way things stand, is the way he purposed them to stand. If his oath is good, that is the way they do come to pass. If they come to pass differently from the way he thought and purposed them to be, there is no dependence in any of his purposes, promises, or thoughts; and his sworn oath is increditable, and there is nothing to any of his teachings in the Bible.

Dear brethren and friends, I desire to show by the Bible that his precious oath has never failed, and that his thoughts are shown innumerably perfect, if we believe the Bible. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and he said, "Let there be light, and there was light." You know,

God thought there would be light, or he could not have said it. It came to pass just as he thought and purposed that it would. "For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." (Psalms 33:9) So then, according to this, just as he spake, commanded, and thought, so it stands. And that was what his holy and unfailing oath was: that as he thought, so should it come to pass; and as he purposed so should it stand.

We find that the Apostle Paul said in Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Paul spoke by inspiration of God, and we have no doubt of its truth; then God must have thought and purposed all things as they have been, are, and shall be. According to the way he thought, and as he purposed them to be, that is the way all things stand: Through the mercy and grace of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, to all his people. Inspiration in this and many other places in the Bible, includes **all things.** So there is absolutely nothing that was not covered by his oath; and there is nothing embraced in God's thought which he swore to, but comes to pass. What wonderful hope and consolation there is in his thought, oath, and purpose, to his people!

We find in Hebrews 6:13: "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee." So we see that God in his holy thoughts, unchangeable purpose, and oath, revealed to Abraham long before it was fulfilled, that he was to have a son. God swore to this long in advance; and it was fulfilled to a jot and tittle. Even though Abraham and Sarah tried to use Haggar, the bond woman, to fulfill this promise, yet the Lord fulfilled it through the conception and birth of Isaac; which shows that it is impossible for humans to help fulfill God's sovereign promises.

We find also that God's oath is also mentioned in Hebrews 6:17, 18, to the precious assurance of the salvation of all his people. Here he is stated to be immutable, or unchangeable in his purpose and counsel, and confirmed it by an oath, (and it is stated that it is impossible for God to lie) that his people might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them. And they are given to flee from the vain confiidence they have by nature in the works of the creature. So, we see that the salvation of all of God's people is also embraced in the immutable oath of God; and that they will be saved, and housed in heaven and immortal glory.

Not only this, but when Jesus was on earth, he thought and spoke many precious and assuring things concerning those he came to save. He said, "Fear not little flock for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Then it was not dependent on what they did, or might do of their own volition. It is God the Father's good pleasure to **give them the kingdom;** it is the gift of God as he purposed it from the foundation of the world. In Matthew 25:34, Jesus says, "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." So it is in accord with his purpose and oath.

We find in Genesis 22:16-18, that the Lord swore to Abraham that his seed should be innumerable. So, as I see it, his seed included every individual who will inherit the kingdom of heaven. God's oath was that they should be innumerable; and, from the Bible, Jesus being a descendant of Abraham, all who are his are included in the wonderful and extensive promise and oath of God Almighty.

We also find that they were not only included in God's oath, and in his purpose, but we find in Matthew 25:34, that the kingdom of heaven was prepared for them from the foundation of the world; that the kingdom was for them who should inherit it, and was not

for any who should not inherit it. God's oath included all his people whom he thought, and promised that he would set them on his right hand; and call them to inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. They, the sheep, are the only ones who will inherit it: they on his left hand, whom he calls goats, he commands them to depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. (Matthew 25:41) So, here are two places prepared for somebody from the foundation of the world: All that the kingdom of heaven was prepared for will enter in and inherit it; and all who are called goats receive the very place prepared for them; as is completely stated in this reference. Then surely, surely, the Lord of hosts thought it would be that way; and surely his immutable oath is thoroughly fulfilled as he thought, and swore.

We find in Deuteronomy 7:8, that the Lord complied with his oath in the deliverance of the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt. Here he says, "But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharoah, king of Egypt." So the Lord's thought, and his purpose, which he swore hundreds of years before, was completely fulfilled.

The Lord's thought, purpose, and oath designated long years before the children of Israel became bond servants in Egypt, just how long they would dwell in that bondage. It was 430 years. And the Lord sent Moses and powerfully delivered them out of bondage, and his mercy and grace towards them was gloriously manifested in their deliverance through the Red Sea, Israel walking through dry shod; while the Egyptians with their mighty chariots of war, attempting to follow them, were destroyed in the wrath and righteous judgment of God. As the Lord had thought and purposed, and prophesied long before, so he fulfilled. (Read also Deuteronomy 13:17; 19:8; and 31:7)

We read in Psalms 89:3, "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant." So it is seen that God is on oath in regard to all things. And unless we charge God with ignorance, and with violation of his solemn oath, everything that has, or will, come to pass, was just as he thought and purposed, and swore; and so shall it stand. It is stated also that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, (Ephesians 1:11); so we find that not only did God think, purpose and swear, but in some deep, mysterious way, God works **all things** after the counsel of his will.

In Isaiah 45:23, it is written, "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." So it is shown that God's oath and thoughts embrace every individual who has ever lived upon this earth, or ever shall live upon it; and God has said that every one of them shall bow before him. He doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, "What doest thou?" (Daniel 4:35)

In Amos 8:7, we read: "The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works." So it is sure that He will not forget.

In Acts 2:30, on this subject, we find, "Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne." This shows the certainty of God in all of his thoughts, his purposes, and his oath, in reference to all things.

In Acts 7:17, it says, "But when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt." We can see from this that God's oath had not only embraced the circumstances, but his oath had also set the time for the

deliverance of Israel out of Egypt. It says also in Eccl. 3:1, "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal." etc., to the 9th verse. So it is seen that there is a set time of the Lord, and none can change the time God sets.

Now no doubt some will think: "How is it that God sets the time to kill?" Yet it is exactly what this above scripture says. God set the time for the crucifixion of his own dear Son; and the mighty ruler, Pilate, was not able to change the time set in God's holy purpose. Judas secured the 30 pieces of silver for the betrayal of the blessed Saviour at exactly the time that God had set; yet it was wickedness on the part of Judas, and of the rulers of the temple, and of Herod, and the Gentiles. Acts 4:27, 28, shows this subject in detail: "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and counsel determined before hand to be done." We see from this that the wicked crucifixion of Christ was also among the all things which were thought and purposed, and sworn to by the God of heaven — and the money Judas got was to buy the potters field. (Matthew 27:7)

Now God delivered up his Son to be crucified by wicked hands in the lawroom and stead of his people; yet the wicked hands had desired in their hearts to kill him from his birth: Herod wanted to kill him, and sent forth and slew all the male children from two years and under, trying to make sure that he got Jesus, the son of Mary. But God knew the wicked heart of King Herod hundreds of years before, so by one of his prophets he told of it, saying, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son." And he stated also that he should be called a Nazarene: and Joseph was afraid of the son of the dead king, and turned aside into the city, thus fulfilling the prophesy. (Matthew 2:28)

We notice a very remarkable point about the price Judas received for his betrayal of Jesus. Matthew 27:9, shows that the Lord knew, and had a purpose in the price of the betrayal; saying, "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the Prophet, saying, And they took the 30 pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me." Now, dear reader, think of this: How marvelous it is; the price was thirty pieces of silver, since God thought and purposed it should be; and he also thought and purposed, and swore just what would be done with the thirty pieces: that it would buy the potter's field to bury strangers in. And the Prophet let us know who it was that appointed his prophesy concerning the price and disposal of the money Judas received.

I desire to quote from another prohet of the Lord on this subject, Zachariah 11:12, 13: "And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prised at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them unto the potter in the house of the Lord." Now this was all very definite and specific, the prophet not only knew what the price was, but also what was to be done with it: To buy the potter's field. What for? to bury strangers in. And he also knew just where Judas would cast the pieces of silver — in the temple at Jerusalem. "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Dear reader, have you considered all these things? What a wonderful and glorious display of the Lord's wisdom, power and unchangeable purpose! What can we say? but to acknowledge his glorious and wonderous works in this perfect display of his counsel in all

things; because that is what his oath, thoughts, and purposes included.

Now in Matthew 26:34, Jesus told Peter, after Peter had said, "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended", "Verily I say unto thee, that this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice." We believe that Peter was in good faith, and had no intention of denying the Lord; neither did any of the disciples believe they would forsake him. But Peter did deny him the exact number of times that Christ said. Jesus also knew the rooster would crow when he did; and I say that there was not power enough anywhere to intervene to prevent Peter from denying him; neither were there hawks enough to have kept the cock from crowing at the very time, just as Jesus said.

Nevertheless it was wrong and wicked in Peter to deny the Lord, but the Lord did not keep Peter from doing this great sin; however, he did give him a repentant spirit. And Peter went out, when the Lord turned and looked on him at the crowing of the cock, and wept bitterly. Why did Peter do it? Because Peter was not able to keep himself. The Lord saw fit to leave him to temptation, just as he did Job of old. It was for Peter's own good, and for the good and comfort of all the Lord's people; for he was an example to them when they are left to themselves. Jesus said in John 15:5, "For without me ye can do nothing." So the denial by Peter was the way the Lord thought, spoke, and purposed; and the cock fulfilled his part for the same reason.

(Concluded next month)

"EVERY GODLY DUTY: EVERY OBEDIENCE IS BY THE GRACE OF GOD"

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28)

"For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him." (Col. 1:16)

"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things; and for thy pleasure they are and were created." (Rev. 4:11)

There is no limit to the things that work for good to them who love God, and who are the called according to his purpose. Forasmuch as he created them for himself, he also created them for the whole family of God.

Sin is not a thing in the sense of creation: sin is the act of the creature in the transgression of the law. "Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 5:20, 21)

So we see that God had a purpose for sin entering into the world: That he might get unto himself glory and praise in saving his people from their sins. God is not the cause of sin, but he is permissive and over-ruling; and I believe that he over-rules all the sin that he does not see cause to take place. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." (Psalms 76:10)

"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." (James 1:13, 14)

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." (I Peter 1:7)

When I was younger, I never thought

that trials would ever be of any comfort to me: I only thought that the times of rejoicing would be worth looking back to for comfort. But the most bitter trial I have ever had proved to be just as precious to me as any part of my experience.

Yes, I rejoice today, knowing that I mourned in my youth; and I believe this mourning was with godly sorrow: And I still mourn much of my time, because I know I am vile; yet I am thankful for the knowledge of being acquainted with my depravity. I do not believe that any man, woman, or child, could possibly know that they are vile unless the light of the glory of God has shined in their hearts, showing them their condition. **They are made to know that everything they are, or ever will be in being Christ-like; and every godly duty; and every obedience, is by the grace of God;** and that it is God that works in us both to will and to do according to his good pleasure.

"He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

Humbly submitted by
(Elder) James R. Hollandsworth
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Note to the Editors:

With the permission of the author, we present for publication in the Signs, the following explanation of the text, as quoted below.

Signed,
A Subscriber

"He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findest life, righteousness, and honour." (Proverbs 21:21)

The above quotation shows us the end results of him who follows after righteousness and mercy. Yes, there is a promise from God unto him who loves righteousness and mercy. Surely, no one will follow after righteousness and mercy that has no love for it. Then one may say well, He who follows after righteousness already has life. Yes, that is true. Dead people neither move nor think. A person who has no natural life does not have any natural thoughts nor perform any natural deeds. Likewise, a person who is dead, spiritually, does not do any spiritual deeds, nor think any spiritual thoughts.

Then, what did Solomon mean by this proverb? Before answering this question, let us consider what righteousness is, and what life is: Righteousness is that which is right; and life is that which animates, has feeling, and endurance.

When a poor sinner is made sensible of his sins and made to realize his ruined condition, he feels the sting of death in his soul; but really he is being made alive. He is awakened to feeling, animation, and understanding; but his soul has not yet experienced the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus Christ. (Experience is proven knowledge.) He has life but not the knowledge of the soul-cleansing blood of Christ.

Now, let us notice that Solomon said, "He who follows after righteousness and mercy." When a poor sinner is made to know something of how sinful he really is, he is also made to know of his helplessness. Therefore, he cries for mercy. Yes, "follows after mercy," feeling the sting of death in his soul; which causes him to beg God to have mercy upon him and allow him to live.

"Show pity Lord, O Lord forgive,
And let a repenting sinner live."

Yes, he who follows after righteousness and mercy findeth life. In the mercy of God, life is found by the sinner. He cannot find spiritual life in himself. Neither can he find life in the deeds of the law; but in God's mercy he finds life in Jesus Christ.

The realization of sin and a taste of mercy in Jesus Christ causes the poor sinner to follow further and further after mercy and righteousness. Paul tells us that Christ is made unto us righteousness. Therefore, the poor sinner is following after Jesus Christ when

he is following after righteousness. No one has ever followed after Christ that did not find him.

"No sinner has ever been empty sent back,
Who comes seeking mercy, for Jesus' sake."

Christ tells us that He is the life. Yes, he who finds Christ finds life, righteousness, and honour.

Through the mercy of God, life is found every day in Christ. We all sin, due to the weakness of our flesh; but the abundant mercy of God gives us renewed experience of the atoning blood of Christ, showing us that Christ is our Saviour and makes us whiter than snow in the sight of God.

Oh, how sweet is the experience of life in Jesus Christ to the poor sinner who follows after Jesus Christ! He is the light, the life, righteousness, sanctification, redemption, and our all and in all.

Yes, the day will come yonder, after a while, when the follower after righteousness and mercy will find the sweet experience of eternal life, honor, and glory, on the golden shore of heaven.

Now, may we all, who have been given a sweet hope in Jesus, follow on in faith, looking unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith; praising God as we go: Amen.

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Dear Editors of the Signs:

I find it is time to renew my subscription to the Signs, so am enclosing money for 2 years renewal. I hope the Lord will bless me to read it the rest of my days, for I enjoy it so much. I feel that it is a blessing to the Lord's people to have the opportunity of reading such sound writing from the little ones. I hope I am one of them; although I feel so unworthy of their love and fellowship. But I believe that the Lord gives his people times of rejoicing in his love: then, O how sweet it is to our souls.

Dear Brother Wood, I remember so well your and Sister Wood's visit with us and the church at Houston. Everyone enjoyed it so much; and the sweet messages that you and Brother Taylor brought. It just seemed that the house was filled with the Lord's presence; and everyone was rejoicing in this little church.

Oh, for a closer walk with God;
A calm and heavenly frame;
A light to shine upon the road,
That leads me to the Lamb.

May God bless and keep you, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

A little sister in hope,
Rhoda Kelley

THINGS BELIEVED AND THINGS NOT BELIEVED

Box 216
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Dear Elder Wood:

For many years I have wanted to meet you, as I have read your writings in the Signs of the Times and I hope I have enjoyed them very much. I was in Virginia a few years ago, and thought that you would be at that association; but you were not, and I did not get to see you. I have met brethren Griffin, Lambert and Spangler, and heard them preach. I don't have time to go to meeting very often, as we live several hundred miles from any Old Baptist Church. We attended a meeting in central Texas about a year ago.

I received the Signs this morning. It is about the only preaching that I have the pleasure of having. I am very grateful for the work you brethren are doing with the Signs. It is a sound paper, and I have just finished reading it, and enjoyed the articles very much, and I always look forward to its coming.

There are many views taught by the so called Old Baptists; and even among the Predestinarian Primitive Baptists there is quite a difference on several points of doctrine. When I run into this

it causes me to wonder and doubt as to whether I know anything about any of the teachings of the Scriptures or not. I have been with the Old Baptists about 40 years, and have traveled from one end of the country to the other to hear and witness what the Old Baptist believe. Some believe in eternal children; some believe in the two seed doctrine; some don't believe in the resurrection; some believe that man has something about him that is spiritual that is born again; some believe that it is the whole man that is born again; and there are many views on predestination. As to salvation by grace, we teach and believe this; and most of the Baptists are agreed. I find many times when you hear someone preach and quote scripture, that unless you talk with them directly, we may think we see the scriptures alike.

I will mention some of the things I believe; and some that I don't believe: I believe in the predestination of all things, not just some of them; and I don't believe that this causes God to be the author of sin. I don't believe there is any power except it comes from God. I believe that God created all things for himself and by himself; I believe that Satan is one of those things, and performs according to the purpose of God. I don't believe that Adam and Eve were created sinners, but were weak and subject to all the things they did: they were not condemned until they violated the law of God. I don't believe that they were created with anything about them that was spiritual or eternal: they were natural, and the life they possessed was given them and it was not everlasting but timely.

I don't believe that the Scriptures teach that there are rules laid down in the Scriptures whereby man could or can comply with, and relieve himself of condemnation. I believe that the Old Scriptures teach the coming of Christ, and only the elect were able to see them as such. I don't believe that man eternally existed — only in the mind and purpose of God. I believe all Scriptures were written by men of old as they were led by the Spirit of God, and they are for our learning, and theirs. I don't believe that Christ eternally existed — only as God: He was with God and was God. I believe that he was verily God and verily man; as God he always existed. Christ was the first born among many brethren, he was as we are, sin excepted. God and man coming together brought about a cross, which we also bear if so be that we have been born from above. I believe he came and was both God and man, and that he lived, died, and arose that he might make perfect the chosen of God.

I believe that salvation is by the grace of God, and is not merited by man, but is a free gift — even as all the things we give our children are without price. I believe all of Adam's race who were ordained to eternal life are quickened into spiritual life and born into the heavenly family. Birth is a deliverance, not a production. The natural child inherits all the things that he is from his parents, and he bears the likeness of both parents, which also is a cross being both parents in one child. God being a spirit quickens whom he will. Quickening, I believe, means the same as conception; in both cases life begins for the thing quickened or conceived. As we convey our life to our children in conception, so do we receive spiritual life when we are quickened or made alive spiritually; and as we have borne the image of the natural man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly. In the new birth we become two men, the natural and the spiritual, even as He was both natural and spiritual. The heavenly family is all of one, and in the resurrection shall be one, as Christ and his Father are one.

In the new birth we become heirs and joint heirs with Christ; he is our elder Brother. All who were before time ordained to eternal life compose the bride the Lamb's wife, or the church of God: Christ being the Bridegroom. In olden times the husband did not choose his bride, but she was chosen

by the father. "Thine they were, and gavest them me." The bride that was given the Son was natural, and became unclean in all her parts; but this Groom, who loved them, gave himself for their cleansing, making them white as snow. This cleansing was everlasting, and no blemishes shall ever appear against them; for his family is as perfect as He is perfect.

Now we have taken on a new man, which is Christ, while still possessing the old, which is nothing and less than nothing, and altogether vanity; although we have a perfect being and offering standing between us and God. This brings about a strange condition. "Whoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin because he is born of God." I will say here that there is no difference in the natural man; but there is a quickening power and birth from above: the one is natural and timely, the other having eternal life. Christ is our perfection, life, hope, resurrection, faith, brotherly love, and all there is to the family of God. Of ourselves we can do nothing. Being two is the cause of our trouble here in this life: On the one hand, we are even as He is; on the other, we are nothing and less than nothing.

The family of God bears his image, also the image of the natural. The image of the heavenly is what we love, and it is this image we have fellowship for. It is the Christ side of us that causes us to pray, and causes us to see ourselves as we are, and to trust in Him for all the blessings that come our way. The Son did not boast of himself, much more do we see our brethren giving God all the honor and glory. Boasting is excluded: even in nature we cannot boast as to what we are, for we know we are what we inherited from our natural parents. We were not consulted in the matter at all.

For a long time I have desired that someone would write on the New Birth, and if you have a mind to write on the subject, I would appreciate it.

The lack of faith, and my unbelief, bother me more than anything else: When things become dark for me, I find myself wanting to feel after Him, but He is not there. But, when least expected, it seems I am filled with that light and truth that men cannot know of themselves. Brother Wood, if I am not deceived, I have had the pleasure of sitting and being filled to overflowing of the good things that were given the preaching brethren to convey to His children. How wonderful this is! I believe at these times His children are nearest to that which we hope for, than any other time in this life. I hope this has been my experience; then again I have doubts and fears that almost overcome me. If it were not that we are kept by the power of God ready to be revealed in the last time, we would sell our birth-right for a mess of pottage. Am I wrong? Don't we often have to say with the apostles, "To whom shall we go?"

I love sinners who confess they are sinners saved by the grace of God. No one knows the darkness, and how vile he is, until the brightness of the Son of God has shined into his very being: This light will show him up. I am a stranger and pilgrim, looking forward to that city whose maker and builder is God.

May the God of all hope bless the Editors of the **Signs** with love and wisdom to continue to declare the whole counsel of God, to the edifying and strengthening of His children. I remain yours

Whose hope is in Christ the Lord,
James A. Bell

THOUGHTS ON DEATH

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." (Revelation 14:13)

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." (Psalms 116:15)

"He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." (Job 5:19)

"The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: Thou wilt make his bed in all his sickness." (Psalms 41:13)

When I was a child I dreaded death, and wanted to live as long as possible, so as to put off that horrible time. In my childish way I tried to pray for a long life. I did not know there were many precious promises of God to those who were precious in his sight; that He had promised to be with them to the end; and that He had gone through the door of death and the grave, and removed the sting and terror. He went before us in all the trials we are to travel through; and is still with us, but we cannot realize it all the time. But when He comes in the person of the Comforter, we can see and feel his presence and love; and can rejoice that "it is good to be afflicted," for without it, we could not rejoice in his presence, and his support in trials. "As our days so shall our strength be," for our strength is in him, and not in ourselves.

Having never passed through death, I do not know what it will be; and what terrors I may feel if Satan is allowed to tempt and harrass me, and I not have the presence of Jesus. I am giving my views according to the teaching of the Scriptures, what I have read of Christian experience, and what I have experienced in afflictions and tribulations: As the saint gets nearer to death, Jesus is dearer to him; and the desire grows to leave this world, to live with Him. When I was suffering, I felt weaned from the world: Felt that I was being drawn from nature, I hoped, towards God and heavenly things. I rejoiced I was not the rich man I had planned to be, but a beggar all my life; learning time and again that I am not my own keeper; and that if God had not kept me, I long ago would have been doomed to everlasting torment.

These seasons of drawing, and joy in him, were so sweet — above all earthly joys — I wanted to be drawn closer. Worldly things vanished, and I forgot death and its terrors. I look at death as just a door through which we pass from the darkness, sinfulness, cold, trials, etc., of this world, into the light of heaven, and joys of the Lord. I do not mean that we walk through this door. We are carried through. If we walked through, we might have something of which to boast. But Jesus does all the work; and all praise belongs to him. He said, "I in you, you in me, and I in the Father." So he is with us as we pass from this life, and there is nothing to fear. He is the "Way, the Truth, and the Life," then can we not safely say, He is the door? Satan may follow to the door, but no further.

Here is what Mr. Philpot said in 1858: "And more wondrous still, "death", the last enemy, the king of terrors, who makes the strongest tremble and the stoutest heart quake; that too is yours, if you be Christ's. Death is not your enemy, if you are Christ's, but your friend. He may, indeed, in the dim and distant prospect seem to come in the guise of an enemy; you may dread the thought of his approach, and may even sink down with fear how it may be with you in that solemn hour. But, if you are Christ's, death is yours as well as life; for He has abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light. Death, then, cannot harm you, because Christ died for you. Death will merely cause your poor body to drop into the ground, whilst, it will open to your soul the everlasting door through which the King of Glory, the Lord mighty in battle, entered as your forerunner when He went to prepare a place for you."

Mr. Philpot did not here mention the resurrection of the body, but he was a strong believer in this important sub-

ject. If the body is not raised, and the sinner is not conformed to the image of Jesus in the resurrection, where would there be any joy in heaven over the salvation of sinners? The body is buried; the spirit is carried to be with Jesus. This spirit is the Holy Ghost dwelling in us to lead us in the way, the truth, and the life. Jesus said, "I am the way", etc.; then it is he that dwells in us to lead us out of the world, to love and worship him. This spirit that dwells in us is pure, has never sinned, and needs no redemption. It is that which has sinned, and dies, that will be resurrected; and will bear the image of the heavenly. The mortal must put on immortality; being sown in corruption, it will be raised in incorruption. It is sown a natural body; it will be raised a spiritual body. It is the hope and assurance of *the sinner* that he will be conformed to the image of Jesus in the resurrection.

It is needless to try to describe eternity: not one saint, while in the flesh, can do so. Paul could not tell what he saw and felt in the third heaven. But we know by the little glimpses that have been given us to help us over the sorrowful way, that it is far more than we will see in this world; for we cannot see God and live. Dear trembling child, you will not fear death, for Jesus has been there, and will be with you. I felt impressed to write this on hearing a devoted, severely afflicted sister, say she feared death. Grace be multiplied to all Israel.

Hoping in this resurrection,
Geo. W. Jackson
1884 Connally Drive,
East Point, Ga.

1700 Morey Avenue
Hamilton, Ohio

My Dear Brother Spangler:

Enclosed is the obituary of my sister, Mrs. Mellie Z. Wilt, and it is hoped you will print it in the *Signs of the Times*. I am fully aware it is a bit lengthy, and much of the content is of local interest and intended for the hearer at the time of Mellie's funeral. It will be appreciated if you can use it as enclosed.

Knowing that all this is an additional cost to the printing of the *Signs*, I am enclosing a check for five dollars to be used as you desire in the name of Mrs. Mellie Z. Wilt.

On my way to my sister's funeral, seventy miles from here, I drove through a graveyard of Old School Baptist Churches. Nine or more just along the route we traveled. Then, back in my home county, Fayette, there were five Old School Baptist Churches in the days of my youth. Indeed, I have preached in each of them. Why was the candlestick removed? Ichabod!

It wasn't their doctrine that destroyed them. The most of them had preachers of more than average ability. I believe I can put my finger on the cause — it was the desire for self aggrandizement and self appointed leadership. What a mess we preachers have made of our stewardship.

My health is not good. I am under the constant care of both my doctor of internal medicine and my surgeon in urology. As I have so often said, "I don't know what the future holds, but I do know *who* holds the future."

In Christian bonds,
Eldon A. Huchison

SENDS THE SIGNS TO THE ELDER

Minco, Oklahoma
R. F. D. 3,

Dear Brethren and Editors:

I am attempting something I have wanted to do for a long time, but have waited, hoping I would be given to know how. In this inability I hope I have been given to feel my unworthiness.

. . . The greatest comfort I have had, was in listening to Elder O. V. Ray, of Homnie, Oklahoma, while he was

preaching the tender mercies of our God. Truly he has been raised up that those who have been taught of the Spirit should be drawn to him. Listening to him in the latter part of his sermons, is like having a letter read from heaven. He is aged, and worn of the trials of this life; and his dear companion is aged too, and has an heart condition.

I want to send the Signs of the Times to them, as I believe it would be a comfort and a joy to them, since they are confined more at home than they have been. We hope the Lord will bless them, and speed her recovery, that they may resume their regular meetings. I am enclosing $3.00, for which please send the Signs to them.

George B. Loyd

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To March 1, 1961)

Joe Hamrick, Texas	$ 1.00
Grace Hohan, Conn	3.00
Mrs. M. L. Lucas, Ala	10.00
Miss Ada Brock, Texas	5.00
Mrs. J. J. Minyard, Miss	2.00
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DELAWARE ASSOCIATION

The **DELAWARE ASSOCIATION** will be held with the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, on the 2nd Sunday in May, and Saturday before, the Lord willing.

Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Rees S. Jarmon, Clerk

THE DELAWARE RIVER ASSOCIATION

The **DELAWARE RIVER ASSOCIATION** is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Hopewell, N. J., on June 7 and 8, 1961.

An invitation is extended to those of our fatih and order, who are in order at home, to meet with us. All friends will be welcomed.

Letha A. Blackwell, Clerk,
Lafayette Street, Rosa Acres,
Hopewell, N. J.

UPPER COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The **UPPER COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING** is appointed to be held with the church at Prospect Hill the fifth Sunday in May. Those coming from Danville will take Route 86 South to Prospect Hill School, and turn left at the school; from Durham take Route 86 at Hillsboro North to Prospect Hill School, and turn right; from Burlington take Route 49 to Route 86 to the school, and turn right; and from Roxoboro take Route 49 to Prospect Hill, and Route 86 right to the school, and turn right.

Brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

H. F. Blalock,
Prospect Hill, N. C.

OUR APPRECIATION

We appreciate the continued response we are receiving to our request for new subscribers, and hope the brethren and friends will continue their efforts. We receive new subscriptions each day. The supply of books we were sending to those securing new subscribers are exhausted, but we are keeping a file, and will send them later. Have you mentioned the *Signs* to a friend?

Danville, Virginia May, 1961

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5/61
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE SIGNS ARE NOT ALL EVIL

It is with much pleasure that we are receiving many articles, experiences, etc. for publication. It does us good to see evidences of increasing interest in the things for which the *Signs of the Times* has long stood; and when brethren write of their good meetings, our joy is increased. Surely the signs of the times are not all evil for the children in these days, but that God's mercies and longsufferings are yet in evidence. God did not leave himself without a witness in olden days; nor will he in these days. We believe that the spirit of prayer and supplication continues to be with us, and that God is "not far from every one of us."

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

ONE MEDIATOR

"But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." (Hebrews 8:6)

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." (I Timothy 2:5)

The subject of the mediatorship of Jesus is deep and sublime. It involves the grace and mercy of God towards those who have sinned against him, who, consequently, deserve only the judgment and wrath of God. The coming of Jesus into the world was plainly an act of mercy on the part of the Father. For Jesus becoming the Saviour and Redeemer of God's people, and the mediator between Him and these people, was certainly initiated by the Father. The condition of men was such that they could not in any way begin negotiations with God; so, if God had not been pleased to take note of them in mercy, they should have always remained in their state of condemnation and death.

In this writing we are to consider the fact that Jesus is the Mediator — the **one Mediator** between God and man; and that he is the **mediator of a better covenant.**

The meaning of the word "mediator" is: One who is a go-between; one who acts with the purpose of bringing agreement between persons at odds; etc. This has its usefulness in many walks of life, such as, between employers and employees; or between friends who have had a misunderstanding. But the most wonderful and far reaching sense of mediatorship is Christ Jesus between God and God's sinning people.

It is easy to understand that a suc-

cessful mediator must necessarily be qualified to meet both sides on equality with them; and he must be thoroughly acquainted with the situation on both sides. How eminently qualified was Jesus! He was **one with the Father**; and, being incarnate, he was **one with the people.** "I and my Father are one." (John 10:30) ". . . in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." (Hebrews 2:17)

It is evident, since Jesus said that he came to do the will of him that sent him, that everything Jesus came to do — and which he did — was the thought of his Father. In this there was, of course, perfect oneness of purpose and accomplishment, for Jesus and his Father were one. "I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." (John 17:4)

To mediate between God and God's people necessitated the achievement of everything which was in the purpose of his coming into the world. Sending his Son into the world indicated not only God's willingness to be a party in the matter, but also his determination that it should be done.

There was a great gulf between God and his people. They had broken God's law, and were under its penalty. This meant that they were alienated from God, shut up in their prison; and, as far as they themselves were concerned, must remain there. For of themselves they had nothing to bargain with, nothing with which to claim leniency — they were miserable guilty, and their condition was helpless and hopeless. God's judgments are inflexible, demanding complete satisfaction; and there was not one among all their number who could make satisfaction, for all were under the same condemnation.

Was there no one to pity? Was there no one who cared?

Yes, there was One who had pity; and cared! Behold, at his time, God caused it to be proclaimed: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."

But there was much involved in his saving his people from their sins: He must take upon himself the likeness of sinful flesh, (without sin, of course) that he should be capable of obeying the offended law. He must of himself have something to offer, for without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sins. So he must suffer, he must die, in order to make satisfaction in the nature of his people who had sinned.

The manifestation of God's love towards his people, in that he willed that they should be redeemed, and in that he himself provided the only one who could satisfy the rigid demands of the law, even his own Son, is a most sublime subject for the contemplation and comfort of His people. That Jesus came into the world is not just merely a matter of dogmatic opinion: It is an historical fact. It is not a cunningly devised fable: the disciples were eyewitnesses of his majesty; and each subsequent disciple has the things of Jesus confirmed in his heart. How surely it is established in Christian experience that there is no other way of redemption and salvation.

We are told that Christ is the mediator of a **better covenant** — a new testament, which has positive declarations of mercy and grace towards those with whom it is made. This differs greatly from the former covenant. The former bestowed blessings upon the performances of men. But the record is that men failed in all of their obligations. The better covenant brought to full view the grace which had its moments of view in Biblical history; but it was not until "in these last days" that God was pleased to speak to us by his Son, rather than as he had formerly by the prophets.

The first, (or old) covenant served its purpose of bringing all the works of men into their proper light, and showed the utter inability of men to comply with its requirements. This brought the full force of judgment upon all. (Yet

we must be reminded that this judgment of condemnation is not applied to any in this life except those with whom the **better covenant** is made. Then it is with each as it was with the Apostle, "When the commandment came, sin revived and I died." But none shall escape this condemnation, though with many it will be in that day when there will be a separating of those whom the "sheep" and the "goats" typify.)

This experiencing of "the commandment coming, and sin reviving", is in preparation for the manifesting and applying of the new and better covenant, when Jesus, as the mediator of that covenant, speaks, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

It is apparent that this new covenant is the gracious work of God to those with whom it is made; and that it entirely supersedes the old. Not that the old is merely discarded in favor of the new, but that the new is given because the eternal will of the Father was that the sins of **his people** should be atoned for by his own Son. Only Jesus, as the one efficacious sacrifice, could satisfy the demands of the law. Thus He, first of all, fulfilled the law perfectly, not just merely destroyed it, by meeting the requirements of perfect obedience to it for each whom the Father gave him; and whom he fully represented. Justice demanded this obedience, and could not be satisfied otherwise.

Jesus accomplished in his coming into the world all that was necessary to completely redeem all of God's elect from all their sins. He was everything for them. He overcame death by his resurrection, and is declared to be the Son of God with power. He glorified the Father on earth in his perfect accomplishment of his mission to earth, and is received back at the right hand of the Father in heaven, to appear in the presence of God for us. He is glorified with the same glory he had before his advent into the world, and in this perfection he makes intercession for us. This means that when one is brought under conviction through the operation of the Spirit of God, and justice demands condemnation and death, the blessed Saviour intercedes for him. He makes the sinner's cause, his cause. He presents the righteousness and atonement which he wrought for each of his brethren, as having made satisfaction for each. In this way He makes application of that which he wrought for them by his death, since it is a portion of his work as a priest after the order of Melchisedec to make intercession for them.

When a transgressor is brought before the courts of our land, he is represented by counsel; who may present evidence in favor of his client, plead for mercy, or take other actions. But he himself cannot satisfy the law on behalf of his client; and he is powerless to prevent the execution of the judgment of the court. But the condemned sinner has One who is far superior to this counsel; one who pleads no extenuating circumstances for his client, nor asks for mercy. Rather, he interposes: "I represented this man when I was made sin, and when I died the just for the unjust I suffered his penalty. I made complete satisfaction for all charges against him. And having done this, I conquered death by arising from it, showing that the man is completely justified." What a counselor! What a mediator!

He speaks directly with his Father, who is the offended one. He knows the infirmities and needs of his brethren; and having already made complete satisfaction for all demands against them; and as the Mediator of the new covenant which the Father has made, and which was secured by His conforming to all necessary demands to secure the new covenant provisions, Jesus presents all these things in behalf of the elect children; and their sins are remembered against them no more. The Father is satisfied, and the sinner is fully justified before him.

Now we are to consider Jesus as the **One Mediator** between God and man. This precludes any other, either between

God and us, or between our Mediator and us, because Jesus himself alone is between God and man. Who could be a better Mediator than he who has met all demands and completely satisfied the offended Father?

We think that it is the eternal truth that Jesus, as our Saviour, had one great and important work to do. He was to present all the elect "holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight." (Collosians 1:22) To this end he lived, and died, and arose from the dead. We are on safe ground when we state that Jesus never lost interest in his assignment, nor in any way lapsed in its performance. We conclude, therefore, that he needs not any to remind him, or any to undertake to influence him, be they mother, priest, saints living or dead, ministers, or any one else. How well the redeemed know that even their worship must be in Spirit and in truth, and that they are dependent upon the grace and mercy of God for all things; and that God works in them both to will and to do of his pleasure. They know that even freedom in prayer is not at their own command. So, what influence could those who need grace have upon the giver of all grace?

How wonderful it is to have one in heaven to represent us as our Intercessor, as our Mediator, as our Advocate with the Father! And especially since we know that we need him at all times. "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." (Hebrews 4:14) There is a coming boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. It is unto **the throne of grace!** We cannot go directly unto God of ourselves: It is through Jesus — for his name's sake, for we have nothing of our own to plead. How important, therefore, to every member of the elect family, that they have Him who was once on earth, but now exalted, the man Christ Jesus, as their Mediator, their one and only Mediator, between them and their God.

We have no desire to be critical of anyone's faith, or system of religion. What we do desire, however, is that we **may through grace contend** earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; and to present, as we are enabled, to all interested parties, this faith honestly and plainly, that the name of our God might be praised, and His little ones comforted and built up in the most holy faith. We dare not to enlarge beyond revelation; that would be foolhardy. And we dare not refrain from speaking what we hope we have been taught, for that would be contrary to our calling, if we have one. We dare not go beyond our firm convictions in these matters, to follow others. We hope it is with us, as with the Apostle Paul, "For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed." (Romans 15:18)

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus."

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"DEARLY BELOVED, AVENGE NOT YOURSELVES"

Romans xii. 19

Who that read the solemn admonitions with which the New Testament abounds, do not feel deeply humbled under a sense of their shortcomings, and propensity to err? Were we not in the flesh, and exposed to temptations, we should not require to be thus frequently admonished; but such is our present exposure to the alluring vanities of the world, the corruptions of our own carnal nature and the temptations of Satan, that we need every admonition that is given us in the Scriptures, and we also need abundance of grace to incline and enable us to heed them. Among other trials which are common to the saints of God, their exposure to

unjust injuries in their persons, their reputation, their property, or what is by far more trying to them, in that which brings down on them the unprovoked censure, suspicion and disfellowship of those whom they esteem as the excellent of the earth, among whom is all their delight. This, although more cruel than the grave, is sometimes the lot of the dear children of God, and while called to pass through these bitter waters of Meribah, while chafed and fretted in their feelings, how very apt is their carnal nature to suggest to them the idea of retaliation. Our carnal minds will urge that it is just and right that we should resent the injury done us, and smite those who have wantonly smitten us, and deal to them a just retribution for their wicked assault upon us. Self preservation is said to be among the fixed laws of our nature, and it is sometimes mistaken by even the children of God for a law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. But we, alas, have found it to be a law of our members, warring against the law of our mind. Under no circumstances are the disciples of Christ to administer retribution to those from whom they have received injuries. "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves." Your cause is before the Lord, and perfectly under his control. He will judge his people, and avenge his own elect who cry unto him night and day. There are several good reasons why the saints should not attempt to avenge themselves, of which we will call the attention of our readers to a few; and

1. Because we are forbidden to do so, not only in our text, but also in many other portions of the word. This, in the absence of all other considerations, is a sufficient reason. We cannot avenge ourselves, nor attempt to do so, without involving ourselves in an act of disobedience to our Lord and Master. He has, both by precept and example, pointed out to us the better way. By precept he has commanded us to love our enemies, bless them that curse us, and do good to them who despitefully use and persecute us, and if they smite us on one cheek, turn to them the other also; if they violently take away our coat, give them our cloak also. As we reverence him, let us regard his authority. In his example he was meek and lowly; he gave his back to them who scourged him, and his cheek to them who plucked off the hair. When he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he was reproached, insulted, slandered, rudely led away to be crucified, as a lamb is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep is dumb before his shearers, so he opened not his mouth. And when writhing in agony and blood upon the cross of Calvary, condemned as a criminal to die a painful and ignominious death, though he could command the hosts of heaven, and had power to summon all the legions of mighty angels, he called not for vengeance, but he cried, "Father, forgive!" Righteous precept; blessed example. Dearly beloved, let us obey the command, and follow the example of our blessed Savior.

2. Another reason why we should not avenge ourselves, is our incompetency to accurately estimate the amount of injury received, the criminality of the motive of the offender, and the amount of retribution due to the transgressor. Both from the world and from brethren, we are liable to receive injuries. From the world we have no right to expect anything less, and from brethren whom we hold near and dear, we shall sometimes encounter such treatment as is calculated to wound the spirit by which we are sealed, and provoke the corrupt passions of our yet unsubdued and sinful natures. When in conflict with the world, let us remember that our God has said, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," and leave the matter with him who knows how to deliver the tempted, and to reserve the ungodly to be punished. He will preserve his people from the wicked who are his hand and his sword; or, as the poet has said,

> "When men of spite against me join,
> They are the sword, the hand is thine."

And when from brethren we are made

to feel the force of the words of the psalmist, "It was not an enemy that reproached me; then could I have borne it; neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him; but it was thou, a man, mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company," &c. — Psalms lv. 12-14. While in this world of conflicts, sorrows and afflictions, it is impossible but that offenses will come among the disciples. See Luke xvii. 1. But when offended by a brother or sister, instead of laboring for redress, or for the punishment of the offender, the divine rule is clearly given us, and we are commanded by our Lord Jesus to labor according to the rule to reclaim the offending brother. If he hear thee, well, thou hast gained thy brother; but if unsuccessful in laboring to reclaim him, conclude not that his is an hopeless case, for the failure may be in part, or wholly attributable to thyself; take the second step; take with thee two or three faithful brethren, who are prepared to give wholesome advice, and to judge impartially between you; and let it still be the grand object to gain the erring brother, and if this second step should fail to reclaim him, still presume not to decide the case yourself. You can neither search the heart nor try the reins of the delinquent brother. Do as your Lord directs you, tell it to the church. The Lord is there. God is in his holy temple, and he will judge his people. Let all the saints look to him for counsel, and ask of him, and he will give you that wisdom which comes down from heaven, which is pure, peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, without partiality or hypocrisy; such wisdom he will give to his saints, and not upbraid them, and such wisdom we greatly need to direct us in the adjustment of all the difficulties which occur among the saints.

3. We should not avenge ourselves, because to do so would be a usurpation of a prerogative which belongs only to the Lord. It is treason when the subjects of any government usurp the prerogatives of the king or sovereign to whom their obedience is due. None who possess the Spirit of Christ would willingly and understandingly grasp his sceptre, or attempt to seize his crown. But they all, while here in the flesh, possess a fleshly nature, which is full of opposition to that which is good, and it is from that polluted fountain that all our corruptions flow. From whence come wars and fightings? Come they not of your own lusts? The saints have never been afflicted with any conflicts among themselves, which were not attributable to their own fleshly lusts; for that which is born of God cannot commit sin; and if we, as Christians, possessed nothing about us that is not born of God, we should neither be disturbed with sins, trials nor conflicts one with another. Under all these considerations it is exceedingly improper that dearly beloved brethren should avenge themselves.

4. Were we allowed to so avenge ourselves, such are our liabilities to err, we might severely injure those for whom Christ has died, without securing to ourselves anything more than the gratification of a vindictive and revengeful feeling of the flesh, which should rather be denied and crucified. It is greatly to be feared that Christians sometimes mistake their carnal passions which are aroused to resentment of real or supposed injuries, for a justifiable grief of spirit, and their attempts to avenge themselves, for an obedience to the divine rule which requires us to labor to reclaim such as have departed from the order of the house of God. Liable, therefore, as we are to err, it becomes us the more earnestly to take heed to the admonition, "Avenge not yourselves."

5. The relationship in which we stand to each other, as dearly beloved brethren, presents another good reason why we should not avenge ourselves. When Moses saw two of the Hebrews striving together, he reproved them, saying, "Sirs, ye are brethren, why do ye wrong one to another?" As a fraternity bound

by the most sacred considerations, to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace, we should rather give place to wrath, than attempt to avenge ourselves. The saints of God are not only brethren, but they are dearly beloved. Dearly beloved of God, for, "God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ," &c. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God. Such was his love that he spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. And our Redeemer has also said, when lifting his eyes to heaven and addressing his Father, "That thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me; and, O righteous Father, thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." As God has so loved them before the world began, and given such incontestable evidences of his love towards them, is it meet that we should attempt to retaliate on them, when we feel confident that they have injured us? As we love the Lord supremely, will we not rather for his sake suffer the wrong for a season, until he is pleased to reclaim the wayward? But the saints are not only dearly beloved of God, but they are dearly beloved one of another, and as we love him who begat them, we also love them that are begotten of him, and his solemn charge and new commandment to them was that they should love one another. How can we obey this new and blessed commandment, if we seek to avenge ourselves?

6. Aside from the wickedness of disobeying this command, if there were no law against it, should the saints attempt the administration of retributive justice, they would make wretched work, cause trouble for the saints, and make a thorny pillow to recline their own heads upon. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" But what can be more unchristian, or more unpleasant, than for brethren to indulge in hard feelings, and hard sayings, and unkind actions one towards another?

To the foregoing we might add many other reasons why the saints should not avenge themselves. The whole spirit and letter of the gospel forbids it; the law of Christ written in our hearts forbids it. Then from all these considerations, dearly beloved brethren, let brotherly love continue; let love be without dissimulation, and love one another with a pure heart fervently. Avenge not yourselves. Grieve not the holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice, and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. And while in love we admonish one another, and with much long-suffering reprove those who err, let us at the same time remember how much our brethren have to bear from us, and how much our God has forgiven us. We are not to be remiss in faithfully laboring to reclaim the erring, but let it be in meekness, considering that we also are subject to many temptations.

(Editorial of Elder Gilbert Beebe, May 1, 1856.)

NOTICE

The booklets given with new subscriptions will be discontinued on June 1. Send your subscription in now.

OBITUARIES

CHARLES LAWRENCE SAUNDERS

This dear brother, better known as Brother Charlie Saunders, of Lick Fork Church, was born October 10, 1887, and closed his eyes in death November 30, 1960. He was married on December 15, 1917, to Miss Mary Frances Durham, of Rockingham County, N. C.; and to this union were born three children. The first child, Mary Velma, died in infancy. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Charlie Saunders, Reidsville, N. C.; two sons: Dr. Charles L. Saunders, Burlington, N. C., and Professor Frank Wendell Saunders, Hartsville, S. C.; six granchildren; two sisters: Mrs. J. L. Butler, Reidsville, N. C., and Mrs. W. L. Buck, Norfolk, Va.; and several neices and nephews.

He joined the Lick Fork Primitive Baptist

Church in August, 1920, and was ordained Deacon of the church at the December meeting, 1920; and was chosen Church Clerk, in June, 1922, and served faithfully until death. Brother Charlie Saunders was one of the most lovely Primitive Baptists I have known: He was a most humble, kind, and devoted member. His love for the cause of his Master kept his heart warm to all the household of faith. Too much could not be said concerning his loyalty to the Old Baptists, his interest in his Church, and his faithfulness in serving his brethren. His home was a real Old Baptist home, and the welcome and kindness extended to all was a beautiful tribute to him, to his wife and children; and a visit with them could not soon be forgotten.

Brother Saunders was very anxious for the 1960 session of the Upper Country Line Association to be held with Lick Fork Church, where he had been a member for more than forty years. It was in many respects a wonderful association, and our dear Brother Saunders was so thankful and appreciative that the Lord let him live to enjoy one more association at Lick Fork. Brother Charlie seemed to know that his time here was very short; and seemed to be just waiting to hear the call from heaven. And he seemed to be drawn closer and closer to his family and to his loved ones, as the day drew near; trying so hard to leave everything for their comfort and joy. His mind, heart, and soul were cleaving unto the Lord with such tenderness and love, as perhaps he had never realized before. He and I checked and rechecked almost every milestone in our pilgrimage here below. He was a precious brother to me: we had a deep and abiding fellowship for each other; and our families have a sweet and abiding love for each other.

We bow in holy reverence and love to Almighty God, who does all things right, and works all things together for good to them who love the Lord, who are the called according to his purpose. The funeral services were held with Reidsville Primitive Batpist Church, and were conducted by his pastor, Elder Harvey Smith and myself; and his body was laid to rest in Reidlawn Cemetery, Reidsville, N. C.

Our love and sympathy to his Church, his family, and to all who mourn their loss. He is not dead, but sleepeth.

Elder J. W. Gilliam, Former Pastor

W. G. LEWALLEN

This is the obituary of Brother W. G. Lewallen, who died February 6, 1961. This dear brother lived about 7 miles East of ElDorado, Arkansas; and was a chicken and egg, and milk producing farmer. His health had not been good for a long time.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Mae Lewallen; one daughter, Miss Patsy Lewallen; and one son, Ralph Lewallen, St. Louis, Mo. And also by one brother, Ed Lewallen, Shamrock, Texas; and two granddaughters. Brother Lewallen and wife and Sister Patsy joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Rehobbath, near Norphlet, Arkansas, several years ago; and they attended meetings regularly as long as his health was good.

It was my privilege and pleasure to baptize him, and he manifested a great interest in the doctrine. He and Sister Lewallen and Sister Patsy were very kind and generous, freely administering to the needs of the ministry, for which it is my wish to express my thanks; and also to say that they were very much devoted to the doctrine of God our Saviour, his love, mercy and grace.

It is sad to give up loved ones, but it is sweet and comforting to be given to believe and trust in Him who has promised that he would eternally save all his people from their sins; and will house them in heaven and immortal glory when he comes again without sin unto salvation, where they will be with their precious Saviour, be like him, and be satisfied forever.

The writer and a Baptist minister by the name of Travis were in the funeral arrangements which were held at ElDorado, Arkansas. May the Lord bless and comfort the dear bereaved family and friends who were close and greatly devoted to Brother Lewallen and family. May we trust in the Lord, and be given to look forward to his second coming, when all his children shall be delivered from death and the grave, and shall enter heaven and immortal glory to praise and adore Him in that bright City where all is love.

Best wishes to all the family; and in behalf of his dear afflicted wife and daughter, may the Lord bless and comfort you all. Your unworthy brother in hope through the grace and mercy of God.

R. W. Rhodes

MRS. ALPHA BIRD RHODES

The obituary of our dear and precious mother, Mrs. Alpha Bird Rhodes, widow of J. H. Rhodes. Our dear mother was born December 18, 1866, in Union Parish, La., and was the daughter of N. B. Bird, Sr., and Jane Glasco Bird, both of whom have been long deceased.

She was united in marriage to Joseph Hugh Rhodes; and to this union seventeen children were born. Of this number twelve survive: W. B. Rhodes, Junction City, Ark.; myself, R. W. Rhodes, Spearsville, La.; A. B. Rhodes,

Lillie, La.; George W. Rhodes, Monroe, La.; Minor M. Rhodes, Lillie, La.; Mrs. Maude Spooner and Mrs. Mamie Upshaw, Junction City, Ark.; Mrs. W. L. Swilley, ElDorado, Ark.; Mrs. Gertrude Patterson and Mrs. B. E. Teagle, Ruston, La.; Mrs. H. A. Patterson, Farmerville, La.; and Mrs. Jim Roberson, Sulphur, La. There are also about 65 grandchildren, 87 great grandchildren, and 14 great great grandchildren; and many other relatives.

Mother was born and reared, and lived most of her life in this vicinity. She was so blessed of the Lord with health and strength and patience that she did as much hard work as anyone I have ever known. We were farmers, reared away back in the country, with no way to live but by hard work. We had to produce nearly everything we used by our own hard work, not having any of the modern improvements, which shows the hardships in rearing, clothing and providing for a large family as we were.

Mother joined New Hope Primitive Baptist Church in 1893, which is in this community, where she was blessed to hold her membership until her death. She manifested a great love, deep devotion, and firm belief and trust in the Lord for all our much needed blessings both for time and eternity. She loved the doctrine of God's sovereign and saving grace, which He so freely bestows upon his people, who in nature deserve nothing but wrath and righteous indignation. She was blessed to look to and trust in the precious and glorious Redeemer, who shed his precious and cleansing blood for his people; and who solemnly and sweetly promised to go to prepare a place for his people, and to come again and receive them unto himself: where there will be peace, joy and everlasting rest for all who are brought to believe and trust in Him who finished the work of redemption.

Elder J. L. Smith and Elder W. A. Speer conducted the funeral at the old church, in the presence of a very large and devoted crowd of children, grandchildren, great grand children, great great grandchildren, and many neighbors, brethren, and friends, which showed the respect and esteem in which she was held, as did the abundance of flowers.

Thanks to the dear preaching brethren for their comforting and scriptural encouragement to those who have a sweet hope in the Lord. Written by her son; may the Lord look in mercy on us all. Yours in a precious and glorious hope in the Lord.

R. W. Rhodes

MRS. BERTIE E. PARSONS

Mrs. Bertie E. Parsons, daughter of Dewitt Jehue Pryor and Josephene Staton Pryor, was born July 8, 1875; and was married to George H. Parsons December 24, 1902. She is survived by the following children: Walter M. Parsons, Milton Jehue Parsons, Agnes P. Leach, Myrtle P. Chatham, Cora P. Dennis, all of Salisbury, Maryland; and by four grandchildren, and one sister, Agnes Malone.

She passed away January 24, 1960, at the home of her son, Milton J. Parsons, Salisbury, Maryland, where she had been tenderly cared for for two years. She had been an invalid for eleven years. All who knew her will attest that she never complained of her afflictions, which were her lot. The smile that wreathed her face when anyone spoke to her, was an inspiration; and caused one to wonder if he could be so reconciled and humble under the same burdens.

She was not a member of the visible church, but we all feel assured by the evidences shown by her loving, kind, and forgiving disposition, that surely her name is written in the Lamb's book of life. She believed strongly in salvation by grace, and loved the truth that Old Baptists preach and teach. The *Signs of the Times* were one great source of pleasure to her, especially after she became afflicted. She loved visitors, and did so very much appreciate the many visits of the late Elder H. M. Bennett and his wife; and by Elder Arthur Warren and his wife. It was so kind of them to visit her. She felt every kindness, no matter how small, "a crumb from the Master's table".

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Arthur Warren at the Holloway Funeral Home, Salisbury, Maryland; and her body was laid to rest in the Wicomico Memorial Park beside her late husband.

Written by a friend

MRS. BERTHA M. EUNIS

Mrs. Bertha M. Eunis, 75, widow of McCoy Eunis, of Pittsville, Maryland, died Sunday, October 30, 1960, at the home of her son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Robert McCurdy, of Baltimore, Maryland. She was the daughter of the late Joseph and Nancy Ellen Hastings, of Parsonsburg, Maryland.

She is survived by two daughters: Mrs. Robert McCurdy, Baltimore; and Mrs. Denver Rayne, Williards, Maryland; one son: Preston W. Eunis, Delmar, Delaware. Also by five grandchildren, and a sister, Mrs. Virgil Wilkins, Parsonsburg, Maryland.

Funeral service was conducted by Elder Arthur Warren, of the Primitive Baptist Church, at the Holloway Funeral Home, Salisbury; and interment was in the Wicomico Memorial Park, Salisbury, Maryland.

MEMORIAL TO SISTER ALMA HALL BROOKS

Sister Alma Hall Brooks, the oldest daughter of Joseph H. and Minnie Jones Hall, was born January 2, 1876, and passed from this life on April 10, 1960, at the age of 84 years. She was a granddaughter of the late Elder A. N. Hall. In August, 1895, she married Ruben Phillip Brooks. Eight children were born to them. One son, Joseph, died while very young. The surviving children are: Robert P., Mrs. Inez Savery, Clarisse Brooks, Glynn H., Mrs. Alfred West, Dorothy Brooks, and Mrs. Ben Reade. Also surviving are three brothers: W. H. Hall, Claude T. Hall, and R. L. Hall; one sister, Mrs. B. E. Mitchell; three grandchildren nd two great grandchildren.

Having received a precious hope in the Lord, Sister Brooks united with the Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church in July, 1917. She lived the quiet and peaceable life of a true believer among her brethren and in her community. The devotion and respect of her children toward her is a testimony of their love and appreciation for her faithfulness as a mother. Constant in her love and faithful in her responsibilities, she leaves them the shining example of a noble character. Steadfast in the doctrine of salvation by grace, she leaves the members of the Church at Shiloh the inspiration of a consecrated and fruitful life.

Elder W. C. King conducted her funeral at Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church and her body was interred in the church cemetery.

May God grant her family and friends reconciliation to His will, bind up their wounded hearts, and give them strength for days to come.

"We speak of the realms of the blest
That country so bright and so fair,
And oft are its glories confessed,
But what must it be to be there?

Dear Lord, amid sorrows and woe
My spirit for heaven prepare,
That shortly I also may know
And feel what it is to be there."

Having seen the evidences of the wondrous work of the grace in the life of Sister Brooks, we feel that her spirit now knows and feels what it is to be There.

By request,
Catherine M. Copley

MELLIE Z. WILT

Mellie Z. Wilt, oldest child of James Matthew and Frances Yeoman Huchison was born in the log cabin home of her parents, on the Huchison-Yeoman Road, near Chaffin's School House, 20 September, 1882.

When she was about ten years of age her parents moved to Madison Mills, and six years later to Oak Grove, a few miles east of Washington C. H. Her school days were spent in the district schools of the communities mentioned, all being in Fayette County, Ohio.

During her twentieth year, while recovering from a critical illness of typhoid fever, she received a hope in Jesus Christ as her Saviour. Several years later, in September, 1909, she confessed that hope, and united with the ancestral church of her parents, viz., the Harmony Old School Baptist Church, near Washington C. H., Ohio being baptized by her great-uncle, the late Elder Walter Yeoman.

On October 19th, 1924, she was united in marriage to Mr. Roy B. Wilt, with whom she found more than eleven happy years, until his death June 20th, 1936.

Following the death of her husband, Mellie lived with her mother at Bloomingburg, Ohio. lovingly devoted to her mother's every wish and desire. After the death of her mother, she made her home with her sister Mrs. Etna R. Coil, Jeffersonville, Ohio.

Mellie's hobby was her flowers and posey garden. Her chief interests in life were her church and the immediate family circle to whom she was devoted. Those who remain of that family circle recall, with tenderness, how through more than three-score years her love was so freely given to others — and so modestly received and deeply appreciated in return.

She loved music, and the good old hymns extolling God's sovereign grace. And, now, that she has been released from the burdens of the flesh, she has found the answer to a hymn sung by those she loved so long ago, when, in an old fashioned parlor a closely knit family gathered around the organ and sang, "What Must It be to be There."

Mellie went home to be with the Lord on the evening of January 10, 1961, aged 78 years. In that moment of transition faith changed to sight, hope to full fruition, prayer to praise, and with those she "loved long since and lost awhile", she knows the eternal joy of what it means to be there.

She leaves to mourn her demise, one sister Mrs. Etna R. Coil, a brother Elder Eldon A. Huchison, and three nephews Gilbert Coil, Darrell Coil and James P. Huchison, together with a large circle of other relatives and friends.

Her funeral service was conducted at Washington C. H., Ohio, January 13th by Elder Edgar Aleshire, Springfield, Ohio, and Elder W. G. Bell, Dry Ridge, Kentucky. That which was mortal was laid to rest beneath a mound of floral tributes in the Bloomingburg Cemetery to await the certainty of a glorious resurrection morning.

Eldon A. Huchison

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129 DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1961 NO. 6

DAVID'S 27TH PSALM

When I'm down in the valley
And my soul is far from calm,
I seek refuge in the Bible —
From David's 27th Psalm.

"The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear?"

I often look toward the mountains,
At the very highest peak,
I watch the sun shining brightly
On the mighty and the meek.

"When Thou saidst, seek ye my face, my heart said unto Thee,
Thy face Lord will I seek!"

This world has many attractions
Satan beckons "Come on in."
How easy it is to go astray,
Down the highway of sin!

"Hide not thy face from me, neither forsake me,
Oh! God of my salvation!"

Many times storm clouds gather
And the stars I cannot see,
How I long for the sunlight —
To brighten the path for me!

"Wait on the Lord and He shall strengthen thine heart,
Wait I say on the Lord!"

Vercie Holly Bolejack
1019 Owen Road
Martinsville, Virginia
November 22, 1960

REJOICE, THE LORD IS KING

There are times when some special passage of Scripture comes to our minds, and stays with us until we feel we must say something about it. It may be as we go about our work, or lying in bed at night: It can come to us anywhere at anytime.

The other day I was listening to some talk about the possibility of another war, and what the Russians might do; and I thought of something Elder Spangler once said during a sermon at Welsh Tract: He said that he was not concerned too much about what they would do, because, if it were the Lord's will, the force of an atomic bomb sent our way, could be turned about and fall upon the Russians, as easily as on us. If it is the Lord's will, harm cannot come to us just because an enemy tries to do us harm.

The world claims to be seeking peace, but there can be no peace outside the Prince of Peace. Only when we have this peace, which comes through and by Jesus Christ, can we relax and know it is an everlasting peace. . . Real peace lies in the knowledge of the love of God in the hearts of men. The people of the world claim to have a knowledge of Him, yet worship other gods: their pleasures and good things are here on earth; and they feel that when their time here on earth is up, they will be taken home, and have a place on high: as long as they haven't stolen anything, or murdered any one. But the Lord is King, and as such he rules over all things; there is no half-way service to him. It is all wills and shalls: no ifs, ands, or buts, and no maybes. It is a comfort to me to know that he is an all powerful being, whom none can question.

So many are ashamed to speak the name of Jesus above a whisper, and do not want to admit they have a future to think seriously about. That isn't my thought, nor do I believe it is the thought or feeling of anyone who is a child of God. Haven't you often heard a sermon that gave you such sweet feelings, that you longed to tell the speaker how much you enjoyed it. I have, many times. It seemed every word had been spoken for your comfort and enjoyment; yet you found it hard to find words to

describe your feelings. Often our hearts are full to overflowing with enjoyment at being blessed to be there with the brethren to worship God.

All through the Psalms we find that joy is essential to real worship: quiet, inward joy of the soul. In the 104th Psalm we read, "I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being." And the other Psalms speak mostly of "making a joyful noise unto the Lord"; "rejoicing in the glories of salvation"; "serve the Lord with gladness"; etc. The Lord's people feel free to offer their joy and gladness in worship. I am not ashamed to own my Lord, nor to declare openly what he has done for me: how he has led me and kept me with mercy and loving kindness.

True worship is far more than "duty" so many make it to be: It is, for me, a time of gladness when we can come together and express our love to God for his mercy and goodness towards us. . . . Yet there are times when He is far from our minds, and we think of the good things that come our way; and we are apt to say it was good luck, or take credit ourselves. And this may go on for a time, until the good Lord puts a stop to our self-inflation; when we are taken away from self, and are made to look up and away toward the high hills, lovely mountains, and beautiful valleys, which are all creations of God, and majestic in their stately beauty. When we are thus made to take our eyes from self, and look to Him, we see how very small we are; when we look with open eyes and clear vision at something far greater than ourselves, we give thanks to the Lord that, in creating such great and glorious beauty, he gave a thought to create such a small worm of dust as we feel to be most of the time. Take a little time, and look toward the Lord, who is infinitely greater than we are, and ask why we dare to complain at our lot. He is so precious that my heart sings with joy when I remember that He has given me even a tiny hope of eternal life with him.

When the Lord turns one about, and sets his feet upon the right path, that one feels the desire to tell others what the Lord has done for him; but he cannot put his feelings into words. And unless one has felt the same joy of salvation, he will never understand what is meant: It would be Greek to them. As the Lord's chosen ones go about their daily life, there is a difference in their walk and talk, and a radiation of God's love shining from within, which draws others to them. The Lord has children everywhere, and one day they will all be drawn together in one fold, beneath his sheltering wing, to sing his praise; and nothing else will matter. Isn't that a wonderful thought?

When one finds their joy is in Christ and spiritual things, they feel they would rejoice evermore. The early Christians suffered much, leaving families and friends behind; often put into prison, but their faith in God kept them. That same faith has been through the years. Paul and Silas sang hymns in prison at Phillipi; and Paul wrote from his prison in Rome, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." . . . It is the tendency of the world today to complain, instead of rejoicing and giving thanks. We have so many reasons to be thankful, and to rejoice, because He is king and none can overthrow him. The giver of every good and perfect gift has bestowed upon us unspeakable gifts and great blessings. We should thank Him for all things, good, true and beautiful; the light and the air; for eyes that see the unseen; and ears that hear the heavenly harmony.

We should also thank Him for the trials and tribulations that have come our way; for, if we had not had troubles to try our faith and patience, these might never have been strengthened, and made more sure and steadfast. A good father chastens his children, so, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

Above all, we give thanks for his

surpreme love manifested in human flesh in the person of Christ Jesus. We praise thee, O Lord, for thy loving kindness and tender mercies which we receive daily. Great is thy faithfulness: Teach us to see thy hand in all our lives, and fill our hearts with trust and song. May we be like the little boy who said grace before each meal. Regardless of the weather, his mother noticed that he always said, "We thank you God, for this beautiful day, and for our food." One especially bad day, she asked him why he thanked God for the beautiful day, when it was so bad. (She thought it was because he had been saying it from habit.) And she was surprised when he answered, "Mother, never judge a day by the weather."

Much like Joseph of old; He spoke in later years of how his brothers had sold him into slavery in Egypt; and told them, "Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it for good." Paul learned to be content in prison. He exhorted us to give thanks in (not for) everything. Therefore, rejoice this, and every day. Sometimes our day seems to be darker than at other times: We stumble through the darkness of fears, anxieties, and obstacles of all kinds; and sometimes fall. But when Jesus shines the floodlight of his presence around us, our way is made safe again, and the darkness is gone. We walk again with renewed hope and assurance that all is well. The illuminating power of Christ is God's gift to his children. There is no darkness too deep for his light to penetrate; and no matter how low we are, how deep the miry clay of the world we have sunk, His arm is never too short to reach down, raise us up, and put our feet upon the solid rock, with a song of praise upon our lips: A song of rejoicing that **the Lord is King,** and will always be, world without end.

When the gospel of Jesus Christ is preached, it isn't history; for history is dead, but Christ is alive. Not history just to be recorded; but alive to be shouted from the house tops far and wide. Some have not yet heard, but in God's own time, it will be revealed to all his people — line upon line, and precept upon precept.

The waters of life are in tumult all about us; the storms of life are heavy and destructive, but we know that He has it in his power to raise his hand and speak, "Peace be still."; and the water is quiet. As we are enabled to look to him we are safe; but when we look down we become fearful, and feel we are drowning in the world of sin. Then we are made to cry, "Lord save me." "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Blessed Saviour, pilot me over these tempestuous seas, and bring my battered ship safely into harbor. Make me to sing, The Lord is King! blessed be his holy name.

Your little sister in hope,
Ruth Lucht
Rt. 3
Chestertown, Md.

"WITHOUT MONEY — WITHOUT PRICE"

113 Park Hurst St.
Bastrop, La.

Dear Readers of the Signs:

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." (Isaiah 55:1)

If the Lord sees fit to enable us, may we be given to meditate and feast upon the beautiful and sweet promises of this Wonderful God. "A word spoken in due season, how good is it." (Proverbs 15:-23) When the words of the text are spoken unto our hearts at an acceptable time (a time when we are low in spirits, cast down, etc.), then we rejoice in the goodness of our God to poor sinners as we feel to be.

Isn't heart felt religion wonderful? Furthermore, if we cannot feel anything pertaining to Spiritual things, then something is wrong. If our religion is an outward form of worship, then we

have no true religion. But, if our religion is in the heart, then we have felt and experienced the things that the prophets of old experienced, and we rejoice in reading our feelings and experiences in the Bible.

Now, let us consider the text. Notice that the words of this text are directed to a special class of people. These are the ones who thirst after righteousness, and can see that they are poor sinners. These are the ones whom the Lord has called out of the darkness into His marvelous light. If the Lord will guide us, let us consider the work of God in the hearts of sinners.

In due time, the Lord deals with you, and causes you to hunger and thirst after righteousness. Not when you get ready, but when he gets ready. There is no rushing the Lord. "The Lord was ready to save me: —" (Isaiah 38:20)

When the Lord gets ready, and in due time, he will make himself known to all of his elect. "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32) So the Lord makes the truth known to all his people, and he is not forgetful (as man is) and not one will be left out. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. —" (2 Tim. 2:19)

Isn't it true that you have not always felt and seen the things that you now see and cherish so much? "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved). (Ephesians 2:1-5)

He loved you even when you were dead in your sins! He loved you before you knew him. What wonderous love is this! Before the Lord dealt with you, then you did not know him. Your mind was upon the things of this world. You may have had an outward form of worship. That being true, we may say that you worshiped the works of your own hands. Also, you were well and healthy, and did not feel the need of a Physician.

You may have fared so well with your own self, that you thought you were in good shape. (Spiritually) In connection with this, let us consider another qualification of this text. "And he that hath no money." This reminds us of the flesh, such as carnal wisdom, carnal works, pride, a haughty spirit, etc. The old Pharisee was in good shape, and he worshiped the works of his own hands; and he was not poor in spirit. "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess." (Luke 18:-11-12) Notice that he was well and did not need a physician; that he had plenty of good (carnal) works, and he had pride, self justification, etc. — and in this sense, we may say that he had money (spiritually speaking). This is the prayer (or form) of the ones who are dead in their sins.

A corpse cannot see, feel, taste, hear, etc. So, a carnal minded person cannot see the things of God. Before the Lord quickened you, then you were dead in your sins. (Notice the scripture we quoted in Eph. 2:1-5.)

"See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand." (Deut. 32:39) So, the process of conversion is the work of God. A change happened to you, but no man had anything to do with it. The Lord strips you of your self-righteousness, and makes you poor, and causes you to hunger and thirst after his righteousness, and

causes you to depend upon him for mercy, comfort, guidance, etc.

When the Lord shined his light and blew his spirit upon you, what did you first feel? You experienced soul afflictions. "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; **I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.**" (Isaiah 48:10) This refining process is hurtful to the flesh. First, you were made to realize your sinful condition, and to see and feel the need of a Saviour. You could not see this beforehand; but when the glory of the Lord appeared unto your soul, you saw your sins before you, as the prophet Isaiah cried out: "Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." (Isaiah 6:5) Notice especially the last expression: "for mine eyes have seen the King," Isaiah's sins were open before him when the Lord appeared unto him. In other words, you are given to see the Lord when he makes himself known unto you. The Lord draws you by the cords of his love, and calls you out of the darkness unto his marvelous light, and quickens your soul. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:44) This is proof enough to show that one dead in his sins cannot see nor seek the Lord.

Oh, what a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of a living God! Doesn't it make you fear and tremble? A natural flower looks beautiful when it is fresh, but it soon fades away. Before, your own works looked so beautiful, but when the Lord shined his light into your soul, then the works of your flesh appeared to you as filthy rags. "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: **because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it:** surely the people is grass. (Isaiah 40:7) This scripture covers a lot, but let us only consider the flower in connection with our thoughts. Your flower, self righteousness, good works of the flesh, etc., stays fresh **until** the Lord blows his spirit unto your soul, and then it fades away. When this happens, you are given to look at your self, and see your sins before you and cry out as the prophet did: "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." (Isaiah 64:6) Justice faced you, and you reached the end of your strength, and saw that you were condemned to destruction.

You saw the darkness in your soul, but did not know that the Lord was dealing with you. This is some sweet evidence that the Lord is shining his light upon you, because you could not see this darkness in your soul beforehand, and in times past you could not see your inability, sins, etc. One must be in the light in order for him to see the darkness in his soul. Yet, we cannot always feel the presence of the Lord, but he never forsakes his little children. "If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." (Psalm 139:8)

In this condition you mourn over your sins, and can see the "mess" your own house is in, and you are given to esteem others better than yourself. You have no pleasure in the things of this world, and you are given to set your affections upon things above and to be made to thirst after righteousness. You are sick and poor, because you have been stripped of all your self-righteousness. In this sense, you have no money, and you thirst, and you can see that the text is speaking to your poor, hungry, thirsty soul. As the poet says, "Nothing in my hand I bring." You can see that there is nothing you can do for your condition. You are helpless as a babe and have been made to cry out as the poor publican: "God be merciful to me a sinner." (Luke 18:13)

If you have experienced these things, and know what soul afflictions are, then this is some evidence that you are one of the Lord's chosen people. When you have been made to see your condition, then you have been taught something that the world cannot know nor under-

stand — As Paul said, "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Don't you believe that this is a pattern for all the children of God? Meaning, that the truth, gospel, etc. must be taught to you by God, or revealed to you by the operation of the Holy Ghost. Now, God uses different means or ways in this. You may be alone or at different places of this world, or you may be at meetings, and God sees fit to reveal this to you through his servants. In short, God works in a mysterious way. See Acts 9:1-19, for the account of the conversion of Saul.

When the words of this text: "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye buy and eat; yea, come buy wine, and milk without money and without price," are spoken unto your soul in your helpless condition, then it comes in due session to you, and you are made to rejoice in the mercy of the Lord. And this is the time of Love. (see Ezekiel 16:8) It is not only an acceptable time, but it is a wonderful time; how glorious it is to feel the love and the presence of this Wonderful God!

You had experienced a famine for so long, and you wondered if the Lord had forsaken you, but now the Lord has seen fit to lift you up, and to show these things again to you. You can now see that the Lord is your strength and shield, and the author of your salvation. You can see that the Lord does keep his promises. Notice the sweet words of this scripture that has applied to you: "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." (Isaiah 41:17, 18)

How wonderful it is to feel these things, and to see and know that salvation is free, and that the blessings of the Lord are free. And, you are given to see that salvation is by the grace of God.

When you experience the joy of deliverance, and the joy of the love of God made manifested into your poor, hungry, thirsty souls, then you feel like praising the Lord for his wonderful love and mercy. "From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the Lord's name is to be praised." (Psalm 113:3)

Dear friends, isn't our God a Wonderful God?

Yours in Christian love,

(Elder) Woodrow W. Hudson, Jr.

ETERNAL SOVEREIGNTY
BY
ELDER R. W. RHODES

(Concluded)

We also find (in line with this great subject), in Matthew where his wicked crucifiers and persecutors fulfilled the Scripture which said, "They gave him vinegar mingled with gall, and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink." Now, whether we like it or not, this was just as much in the arrangements of the eternal purpose of God, as anything is. It was prophesied of long before; and the ones who did it did not know they were fulfilling prophecy. But just as the Lord thought, purposed, and swore, just so it was. And in Matthew 27:35, we find these wicked ones dividing the Lord's garments among themselves; and casting lots for his vesture (robe), that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of by the prophet. Remember, dear reader, that all this was purposed, thought, and sworn to by the God of Heaven; because it came to pass that way, and it stands that it was done that way. Prophecy embraced every detail of Christ in his death, his suffering, and his resurrection.

Another definite item is recorded in

Acts 13:29: "And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre." So we readily see that they did not leave anything undone that had been written in the prophecy concerning it. So God must have thought, purposed, and swore to it, because that is the way it stands, and the way it all came to pass. Many more instances of scriptural predictions, and their respective fulfillment could be mentioned along this line, but it seems that these ought to be sufficient on the subject at present.

Dear brethren, I am sure that you know there isn't any real difference in the meaning of purpose and predestination: The fact that God swore by his holy oath that as he thought, spoke, and purposed, so it comes to pass; and so it stands. So I am inclined to believe that purpose and predestination mean the same thing as to the final destiny of all things. Let us quote Romans 8:29, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren." Do you believe that God's predestination could be imperfect? Don't you believe that the meaning, finally and ultimately, of predestinate and purpose of the Almighty and unchangeable God will result alike. We find one definition of predestinate given as purpose. Now you and I may purpose many things we cannot do, and are frail enough that we may change from our original purpose; but not so with the perfect and eternal God. He says in Macachi 3:6, "I am God and I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." So I think that God's predestination is just as extensive as his purpose. We notice also from the 8th chapter of Romans, that God's foreknowledge is co-extensive with his predestination. And then we find in Acts 13:48, that, "When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of God: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Here we have the word ordain, seemingly equal in meaning to purpose and predestinate; to almost conform to the meaning of several similar terms. At least as many, and no more, who were ordained to eternal life, believed. So, all these terms to me mean the same, as was so stated in the original text. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed so shall it stand." To me, the things God thought and purposed, predestinated, or ordained, are just as firmly fixed in the mind and purpose of God, as his throne is fixed and established.

Now, dear ones, I know that many contend that this would make God the author of sin; but let us reason on one of the plainest incidents that I know of in the Bible: The crucifixion and shameful death of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is certainly scripturally already proved that God thought, purposed, ordained, or predestinated that he should die such a death as he did; and that, at the hands of wicked men. Prophecy hundreds of years before Jesus Christ was born into this world, treated so definitely on every phase of the subject; and told of the cruel and wicked punishment he should suffer; the wounds in his hands and side; and described him as a fountain opened for the sins of his people. If God had purpose in this cruel crucifixion and death of our precious Lord, and I say he did, and this did not make him the author of sin, then there is no danger of anything else ever doing it. We know that Jesus was sinless, except for the sins of his people which were laid upon him. Dear ones, how I do hope that yours and mine were laid upon him; as he is the way, the truth, and the life; and the only name given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved. (Acts 4:12)

Now I want to present Psalms 33:11, 12: "The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations." I feel that all the thoughts of the Lord, were what He

swore to in our original text: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed so shall it stand." The 12th verse of 33rd Psalms, says, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." The Lord's people are wonderfully, and mercifully, and graciously blessed of the Lord; and this is the way their inheritance comes: It is the free gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now dear reader, please stop and consider the statement of David, when he said, "The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of the Lord to all generations." We can see from this that his oath in the text (Isaiah 14:24) concerned the thoughts of his heart that he solemnly swore to. His oath, thoughts, purposes, predestination, ordination, and his counsel, all stand forever, even unto all generations; even to the end of the world; and also through eternity.

No wonder David speaks of the wonderfulness of the Almighty God in his thoughts and works to his people: "Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would desire and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered." Truly did David express in this solemn declaration, the greatness of the mighty works and thoughts of God. No wonder he said in another place, "It is too high, I cannot attain unto it."

David also said in Psalms 92:5, O Lord, how great are thy works; and thy thoughts are very deep." They embrace all things, past, present and future; as he hath sworn, and as he purposed, so shall it come to pass, and so shall it stand. If this is not what the Bible consistently teaches, then I have misunderstood the plain wording of the simple language of the Bible altogether.

Isaiah the Prophet plainly assents to this truth when he says, "For my thoughts (speaking of the Lord) are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." And the next two verses: "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth, it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it." (Isaiah 55:8-11)

Isaiah says in 66:18, "For I know their works and their thoughts: it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and see my glory." Here he shows that God knows their works and thoughts, even of all nations and tongues. How wonderful and extensive are God's works, thoughts, purposes, counsels, and his perfection in his attributes. He knows the thoughts, words and doings of all nations, tongues, and people, as well as where and when he shall cause them to see his glory.

Jeremiah says on this great subject, "The anger of the Lord shall not return, until he have executed, and till he have performed the thoughts of his heart: in the latter days ye shall consider it perfectly." (Jeremiah 23:20) We see from this that His thoughts were not just to the early and middle times, but they go out and perfectly include and embrace all things; even the latter days they would be plain, and considered perfectly.

Jeremiah also says, "For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord; thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end." (29:11) This shows that the Lord knows his thoughts of mercy, grace, love, and final glorious deliverance towards his people: They will be delivered, for He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. (Romans 9:18) So we see that the

Lord's mercy and grace are administered to his people according to his oath, purpose, and counsel, which he has purposed in himself.

In Hebrews 6:17, Paul says, "Wherein God willing more abundantly to show the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath." This is enough to justify us believing that all the counsel and thoughts of God were included in his unfailing oath.

Now I feel that I must come to a halt in this article, although there is no limit to the scriptural evidence of the truth of this great subject. Yet I desire to mention the case of Jonah, whom God called to preach to Ninevah. Jonah felt his unworthiness and unprofitableness, just as all of God's truly called ministers do, and he decided to pay his own way and go to Tarshish. But God had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah; so, on schedule time, the men in the ship cast lots to see who was causing the great storm; and the lot fell on Jonah, and they cast him overboard. And this great fish that God had prepared swallowed Jonah. (read the first chapter of Jonah) We see that God in his holy, wise and eternal purpose, knew Jonah's rebellious attitude; and he knew also that Jonah would be on his way to Tarshish, and who the lot would fall on, so he prepared the great fish to bring him to shore; and Jonah went and preached to that wicked city; and the inhabitants repented. Thus gloriously proving God's purpose in the whole thing: Jonah's rebellion, the great storm, the lot casting, the great fish, his preaching to the wicked city, and the repentence He gave them at the preaching of Jonah.

We now turn to Revelation 10:6 and 7, "And sware by him that liveth forever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things that therein are, that there should be time no longer But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." This shows in detail that God's thoughts, his purpose, his counsel, his word and oath, did embrace all things for all time, including the very end; just as he also spoke in the beginning, and it was done.

So, my dearly beloved brethren and friends, I hope you can read this rather lengthy article with the light of the Holy Spirit of God, and if it is the truth, that you may be comforted by its contents. If it is otherwise, I hope you may be given to pray for me, a very unworthy and unprofitable servant, if indeed a servant of God at all. I know this is a very deep and mysterious subject; and so are all the inspired teachings of God's Holy Bible. But, however deep and mysterious it is, it is written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. (Romans 15:4) Yet we are strictly dependent on the light of his Holy Spirit to reveal these precious things to us. Jesus said in Matthew 11:25, 26, in prayer to his Father, "I thank thee O Father Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes. Even so, Father: for it seemed good in thy sight." So revelation is necessary to the Lord's people; and it is hid from the wise and prudent of this world.

May the Lord in his mercy and grace richly and abundantly bless, keep, preserve, and lead his people through this dark and desert land of great troubles, trials and afflictions, destructions and perplexities, that we are surely witnessing this day and time; which seemingly are growing worse and worse every day. And is scriptural witness of the nearness of the final and glorious second coming of Christ, to gather all his humble, trembling little children home to himself, to heaven above: Where there will be no more trouble, sin, sickness, pain, nor death, but where there will be peace, love, and joy forevermore, with the King of Kings and Lord of Lords; together with all his holy angels, and

all the Lord's children, who are to be like Him, and see him as he is.

Pray for me that I may be given of the Lord to see, feel, and rejoice in the precious, and holy, and comforting Gospel.

Your brother in hope,
(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

Perrin, Texas

Dear Elders and Readers
of the Signs of the Times:

I have read the good old paper for a long time, and I am sure there have not been very many things I could not endorse. Elder Gilbert Beebe was able in all his writings. I sit alone here as far as my belief is concerned, and I don't get to go very much among our people; and I am the only one in our town that believes in the old time doctrine which sets up Christ as a full and complete Saviour.

My age is keeping me down. I am 91 years old, and I forget things; I had not noticed that my subscription is several days past due, please forgive me. I am sending $3.00 to re-new another year. I surely do enjoy the Signs — it puts new life in me when I read them. Elder Wood your piece was fine. You started with what the Lord began with you. The Apostle Paul did the same, and he preached in demonstration of the Spirit and of power that the brethren's faith should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. The faith that God gives his children is the faith that made lame men leap and praise God, not for what Peter and John had done, but for what God had done. The faith that raised him up is the foundation of the hope of every little child of God; and without faith it is impossible to please God. It is the blood of the everlasting covenant that makes us perfect in every good work, working in us is that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Jesus Christ our Lord.

Please excuse me for I ought not to try to write. I am too old to try to write or to preach any more, but I love the Old Baptists. I have been a member since 1892, and when I go to meetings the brethren act like they are glad to see me, and I am proud of this.

Your brother, I hope,
C. Y. Osteen

ALL-DAY MEETING AT
WARWICK CHURCH

There will be an all-day meeting at **Warwick Old School Baptist Church,** Warwick, N. Y., on Saturday, June 10, 1961. Brethren and friends are cordially invited to attend.

(Elder) A. J. Slauson

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Banister Spring Church Friday, Saturday and 2nd Sunday in July, (July 7, 8 and 9, 1961). Banister Spring Church is located about 15 miles North of Danville, Virginia, on Highway 29.

All brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

W. J. Oaks, Clerk

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INDIGENT FUND

(To April 1, 1961)

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H. M. Anthony, Texas	1.00
Wm. Graham, Va.	2.00
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Danville, Virginia June, 1961

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THE DELAWARE RIVER ASSOCIATION

The **Delaware River Association** is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Hopewell, N. J., on June 7 and 8, 1961.

An invitation is extended to those of our faith and order, who are in order at home, to meet with us. All friends will be welcomed.

Letha A. Blackwell, Clerk
Lafayette Street, Rosa Acres
Hopewell, N. J.

EDITORIAL

HEZEKIAH'S SICKNESS AND RECOVERY

"In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death: And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live." (Isaiah 38:1)

For some months we have been mindful of a request from a sister to write upon this subject. In October 1940, we touched upon this subject when we wrote upon the words, "O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me." Isaiah 38.14. This time we would consider this gracious man and his troubles; he was the son of a very wicked man, Ahaz, who had closed the doors of the temple and forbidden the people to offer sacrifices to the God of Israel; and who, following the practice of the kings of Israel, had made molten images to Baalim. When the wrath of God was clearly seen to be against him, he was more and more determined to pursue his wicked ways. It was in such a time that Hezekiah came to the throne, and from the first month of the first year he set his face to seek and please the Lord. From what we read of him and his times, we conclude that it was God's work, a sudden illumination from above, and he faithfully continued to restore and establish the worship of God. It is recorded that "He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, ACCORDING TO ALL that David his father had done." 2 Chronicles 29:2.

He had a number of instances when it was proven to be the work of the Lord; one of them is seen in Isaiah 36th and 37th chapters, which show the determination of the king of Assyria to conquer the kingdom and overthrow that which Hezekiah had so faithfully established. Surely he was opposed by a strong, crafty foe, yes, on every hand, just as we are today in this world of unbelief. Hezekiah seemed to have trouble on trouble. How dark and distressing it appeared before God showed His mighty power in destroying in one night the host of the Assyrians, and causing their wicked king to return to die a violent death in the house of his god.

Hezekiah's greatest distress was at

the sight of the cities of Judah in the hands of his foe; and a fear, still greater, that Jerusalem would also be taken and the worship of God overthrown. It was enough to make the good man sick. Another thing must have distressed him, he was childless, and to him, as to Abram, it was a constant desire that he have a son. In this distressing condition the prophet Isaiah was sent to him with, "Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order." He who had been so faithful in setting the house of Judah in order and had just seen God's power so clearly manifested in overthrowing his foes, now had the sentence of death come to him. Just when life looked much easier for him, death stared him in the face. Man would say, "Why is this?" How true are the poet's words:

"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain,
God is His own interpreter
And He will make it plain."

Hezekiah was no self-righteous man any more than Job or David was, and as we look over the way he had come, as a subject of God's love and mercy, he could say, "Remember NOW, O Lord I beseech Thee, how I have walked before Thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in Thy sight." This was not a self-righteous brag, but the effect of a God-given faith that gave evidence that he had worked out what God had worked in him of His good pleasure. The fact that God had overthrown the host of Assyria without the aid of man's sword, and in so doing, had heard the cry of the destitute, was enough to show that this man was not in a boasting frame of mind. Was he not David's son? As God's anointed he had done "that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father had done." In his life, coming as he did near the time when Judah must be carried into captivity because of their wickedness, he stands out as a type of Jesus the son of David. Like Job, this man feared God and eschewed evil, and he had an integrity, that neither friend or foe could take from him. Paul also had the same, he could say, "I have fought a good fight — I have kept the faith." Hezekiah's prayer shows him to have a correct knowledge of himself, for he was divinely taught, and therefore he could come as low as Paul, who called himself the chief of sinners. One only has to read awhile in the Psalms to see the same truth proclaimed. David, though a sinner, could say, "Let integrity and uprightness preserve me." We therefore conclude that Hezekiah's words are not to be considered for a moment as an expression of a self-righteous person. We know if he had been such an one, God would not have immediately answered his cry. His prayer did not go out of feigned lips. A God-given faith is proven when we see our God listen to the cry of those who are His.

A self-righteous person is so sure he is right, and thinks that those who are bowed towards the earth, and weep and mourn sore like doves, have some prevailing sin that they ought to give up and then they would be happy all the day long. "There are no bands in their death, but their strength is firm." But let us look at what we would call the personal side of his religion and prayer. By nature the Lord's people, left to themselves, are proud and need trials, and God will try them as gold is tried. 2 Corinthians 12:7. Is there not a self-loathing? His prayer was like a chattering noise, and his eyes failed with looking upward and he cried, "O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me: O Lord, by these things MEN LIVE, and in all these things is the life of my spirit; so wilt Thou recover me and make me to live." Our Lord says in Luke 18:7-8, where He taught that men ought always to pray and not to faint, "And shall not

God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them SPEEDILY."

We are told, "And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the Word of the Lord came to him, saying, Turn again, and tell Hezekiah THE CAPTAIN OF MY PEOPLE, Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold; I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the House of the Lord." 2 Kings 20:4-5. The Lord also said, "I will add unto thy days fifteen years." Job said, "He is in one mind, and who can turn Him? and what His soul desideth, even that He doeth." Job 23:13. God, being of one mind, knew when Hezekiah's life would terminate, even when He said, "Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live." He knew what the effect of the word would be on Hezekiah. It was to bring him to His footstool to express in his prayer such testimony that will be a comfort to the household of faith in all generations. By it, he was brought into the sufferings of Christ, who came into the world to die. Humiliated before a threatening foe, grieved under the seeming nearness of his own death, despondent, as he thought of the land that he loved, being so helpless before such an enveloping calamity, he searched himself and considered the path he had taken from the first month of his reign, and he had the testimony of a good conscience. Like Paul, he had not been disobedient to the heavenly vision. Now, with so many things left undone that ought to have been done, helpless and discouraged, thoughts of sudden destruction or pining sickness would cross his mind. How fearful he was, "I reckoned till morning, that, as a lion, so will He break all my bones, from day even to night. Thou wilt make an end of me." Yet this dear man, bowed down with foes without and fears within, still had a covenant God to go to. In Isaiah 54:8, the Lord says, "In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment." Yet one has only to read the prayer of Hezekiah to see how many thoughts and fears can, in that short time, pass through an oppressed sinner's mind. He had hoped for peace, instead there was great bitterness, "But Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back." Isaiah 38:17. He could, in the end of this bitter experience, see that the Lord had a purpose in it all, that the Lord was ready to save him, not as man would say, that God had one plan, but changed His mind when He saw that Hezekiah repented. Our God doeth all things well, and He has a purpose in all things whatsoever comes to pass. Today what darkness covers the earth in what men call the Christian world. The Lord's people, who profess to have been illuminated from above, seem to be few and far between, and one wonders if there is not a lesson to be drawn today from the above account of Hezekiah. Babylon seems to have spread her errors over the whole earth. There seem to be a few here and there whom God has separated, for He will not leave Himself without witness. How few there are He knoweth right well. Perhaps we have not seen the worst of it yet. In not a few places where the Standard of Truth was maintained, the doors are closed, and the ways of Zion do mourn.

"To Thee, Almighty God, to Thee,
My Rock and Refuge would I flee;
Now tides of sorrow rolling high,
Appear to mingle earth and sky.
To see Thy saints in mourning clad,
And foes by their distress made glad,
O'erwhelms my soul with poignant grief,
Lord send Thy servants sweet relief."

In Isaiah 37:1-3, Hezekiah sent a message to Isaiah that is suited to this day more than many may think! "This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy; for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength

to bring forth." To be sure, there came a reply from the prophet, a "Thus saith the Lord, be not afraid," yet with all the promised help that it brought, chapter 38 was needed with another "Thus saith the Lord: Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live."

Today we believe that in the Church and fellowship we have known and loved these many years, there is a good conscience toward God. In its public expressions the truth, which was so boldly declared in days past, is preserved, but it will be well if we, as Hezekiah, bring the battle to the gate of our own consciences. It is a dark day, but, as we have seen, God "can clear the darkest skies and give us day for night." The preaching generally seems to have the same ring, but it is not easy for man to practice what he preaches. In that day a man could rend his garments and put sackcloth upon his head. One prophet cried, "Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth Him of the evil. Who knoweth if He will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind Him?" Joel 2:13-19.

Hezekiah manifested more than an outward show of repentance, the word of the prophet was regarded, and it caused self-examination, a confession of error and general mourning. The writer of this article has the sentence of death in himself, and ere long will have ceased the struggles of this life. He knows that the truth has been and is preached amongst us, and it is high time that, as one body, we have a feeling anxiety for every member, not forgetting that in the true body of Christ, if one suffer, they all suffer. Let us look closely to the fellowship of those with Hezekiah in his distress, there was not one of them but could rejoice with those that did rejoice. It was the Lord's doing. "And Hezekiah rejoiced and all the people, that God had prepared the people: for the thing was done suddenly." 2 Chronicles 29:36.

G. R.

"So the father knew that it was the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house." (John 4:53)

Some time ago we had a request for views on the last clause of the above: "And himself believed, and his whole house." "His whole house" believing is the chief point of inquiry. At the time we had nothing which seemed satisfactory in way of reply, so have delayed until now. The same inquiry would probably include this scripture: "And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway." (Acts 16:33)

In considering this, or any other portion of Scripture, we must remember that the Scriptures are one whole and complete pronouncement of those things God is pleased to reveal of himself; and of his unchangeable will towards men. And, we would hasten to say, of his special dealing with those of the election of grace. All is built upon one sure, and certain, and continuous foundation. *Whatever the statement or event may be, it stems from, and is a part of the whole.* It matters not, therefore, which portion, or what statement, or event, *it is sure to be in full conformity with itself as a whole.*

We see great beauty in the way and manner in which God has manifested himself in the Scriptures. From the beginning, to the coming of the Saviour, there is a portrayal of the ever mounting necessity of grace, or none would be saved. And, along with the necessity, there is the unfolding of the promises, as well as examples, of this grace.

The Old Testament is often thought to show the way in which God gave opportunity for men to be saved; that is, through laws and precepts. But nothing could be further from the truth. Such consideration disregards entirely the stated fact that, "The law entered that the offence might abound." It ut-

terly disregards also the ceremonial portions which foreshadowed the one great sacrifice necessary for salvation. How vividly the saying of Jesus flashes the truth: "Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; *and they are they that testify of me.*"

The fact that the Old Testament promised the coming of the Messiah, and that He made his appearance at the beginning of the New, and was the very embodiment of the New, certainly emphatically shows grace and mercy of God to be that which the Old Testament was unfolding.

These facts of the Old Testament are developed in such a wonderful way that all persons are shown to come under the full judgment of God's laws; and all are declared dead in trespasses and sins, since they are all condemned. This, together with the choice of God of one nation among all the others as the object of his love and merciful dealings, (which prefigures his love and choice of his church;) and the promise of the coming of the Messiah, we feel, is a summary of what is contained in the Old Testament.

The New Testament is developed in all of its parts, upon the very things which were promised in the Old: The Messiah who was promised to come, came; and in the way and manner as foretold. All that he did, in obedience, in life, and in death, was fully known and recorded; and is found perfectly in accord with all prophecy.

Therefore, it must be remembered, the New Testament is not just a modification of the Old; not just a kind of after-thought to make up the deficiencies of men; not just another opportunity offered. For, do not the promises of God run like a golden thread throughout the Old Testament? Are they not perfectly brought to fruition in the New?

If there is one thing more than another which should be kept in mind in our consideration of these things, it is, that Jesus did for those who are spiritual Israel, the spiritual seed of Abraham, what they could not do for themselves. And that Jesus fully satisfied the judgment against them, so that all are freed from the law of sin and death. The Apostle said, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Romans 8:2-4)

The above is what the New Testament declares has been accomplished for all for whom Jesus died, and arose again. The prisoners have been set free. They never again can be accused by the law of sin and death. All these old things are passed away, and the provisions of the New Covenant have full dominion. The redeemed can no longer be terrified by bondage and chains. They are set free from these things. And we do well to distinctly and loudly proclaim this truth, and never attempt to apply to the New, things which belong strictly to the Old. Of a truth, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death. One is as distinct from the other as day is from night.

Much false teaching is derived from the lack of knowledge of these things. Many proclaim the New Testament, but insist that much of the Old is still applicable. Many take the things which apply strictly to God's dealings with Israel under the law, and handle them as if they were still applicable to the church under the proclamation of the gospel. Could we imagine for a moment that there are any who know the New Covenant in its application to themselves, who are yet in bondage under the old? If such could be the case, then the grace and mercy of God is a failure!

What beauties we see when we are blessed to trace out the evidences of

God's mercies, as they were couched in their types and shadows many years before their actual fulfilment. The Old Testament is full of these things. How good it is to hear the servants of God when they are led to delve into these ancient things, and show their perfect fulfilment in the person of our Saviour; and especially when we have already felt them fulfilled in us!

What a great difference there is when the laws of God are written in the hearts and minds of God's people, rather than on tables of stone! What a difference grace makes! "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men (all classes or conditions of men: Aged men, young men, aged women, young women, and servants, as shown by the context,) teaching us that, denying ungodlines and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

If anyone has not learned this he is not qualified for church membership. If anyone has not learned this, and is as much at home with ungodliness as with Godliness, he has no place in the church. If we do not see the fruits of the Spirit manifested in the professed followers of Jesus, it is safe to assume that the grace of God has not appeared to them. Not that we may expect these fruits to be always in manifestation, while men are yet in ther earthly existence. It will be remembered that the question was asked, and then answered: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" This expresses the deep emotions of those delivered from the bondage of sin. They are no longer *dead in sins,* but *dead to sin.* When one is overcome of the lusts of the flesh, the evidence of grace and godliness appears as there is remorse and godly sorrow manifested. This is of great value to the brethren, in that it tempers their "sitting in judgment", and causes them to know their weaknesses, and their continual need of the grace of God.

We must now come to directly consider our subject. What we have been saying is ground-work for it.

Why did men believe that Jesus was the Christ? The answer is, They had evidence of it. John said, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." (1 John 5:1) When John the Baptist saw the heavens open and the Spirit descending like a dove upon Jesus, and heard the voice saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased", he had no doubt as to whom Jesus was. Saul, under the power of the light from heaven, heard the voice saying unto him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?", he said, "Who art thou, Lord?" The reply was, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Then Saul trembled and was astonished — he had no doubt as to whom Jesus was.

When Peter confessed, with his brethren, "Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God", he was told that he was blessed, for flesh and blood had not revealed it unto him, but the Father in heaven. The evidence was such in the heart of the Eunuch that he proclaimed to Phillip, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

On the day of Pentecost, while Peter was preaching, the evidence and power was such that many were pricked in their hearts, and we are told that they that gladly received his word were baptized. Peter had told them that, ". . . the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call." This we take to be a statement of truth and fact as to whom believers on Jesus should be: "Even as many as the Lord our God shall call." There is nothing here to indicate anything other than that the promise was unto both Jews and Gentiles, whom the Lord should call. Certainly there is no indication that Peter meant that the promise was unto

each natural child of those who were pricked in their hearts; as if this were a matter of heredity. Much false doctrine has sprung from wrong premises derived from this and similar scriptures. So we do well to enquire what is the mind of the Spirit in these matters. We know that a "natural religion" can be taught, and handed down from generation to generation; and we know that children can be brought up in certain doctrines or tenets which are held by their parents, and that it was true among the Israelites of old; but we also know that before any of them could know the truth as it was in Christ Jesus, there was an extraneous work beyond the power of hereditary teaching which was necessary in each one of them. And we may be sure that the same is necessary today.

All evidence is that belief on the part of those mentioned in the Scriptures, was because of some word or work which took place in their hearts from an outside source; that is, not of human effort or will. And that it was a work which was *always effective*, for it was not carnal, "but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds." And, "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." (2 Corinthians 10:4-5) Is it not with us as it was with the Apostle? We are, "confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Philippians 1:6)

The fame of Jesus had gone out to many parts of the country, and many followed him out of idle curiosity to see what he would say or do. Our text has to do with a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. Jesus had returned again to Galilee shortly after he had spoken to the Samaritan woman, and "told her all things that ever she did," and she had said, "Is not this the Christ?" The nobleman came to Jesus and besought him to come to Capernaum and heal his son who was at the point of death. But Jesus said, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." The people had heard of, and probably some had seen, his first miracle of turning the water to wine, for it was done in that same town of Galilee; and they had seen the things which he did at Jerusalem at the feast. It is probably that what Jesus said was meant for all of them, though it was addressed to the nobleman.

We are impressed with the lack of hesitation on the part of the nobleman, though accused of desiring to see signs and wonders: "Sir, come down ere my child die." Jesus immediately said to him, "Go thy way; thy son liveth." How quickly he believed Jesus, and went his way towards home. "The man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way."

As he was journeying, he was met by his servants, who had departed from home to bear him the news, "Thy son liveth." And he inquired of the hour when he began to mend; and it was the same hour in which Jesus had told him, "Thy son liveth." "And himself believed, and his whole house." That is, himself and members of his household believed.

From the evidence we have gathered in the former part of this writing, as to all scriptures and doctrine being in full conformity with itself, we are safe in saying that this man, and all his house, believed because of the working of the mighty power of God in them; as it was evidenced to them that Jesus had done what no mortal man could do of himself. "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God," some had said before; and these needed no further evidence. How certain it is that this man and all his house, were included in the number: "even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Their evidence and conviction was as strong to them as Paul's was to him; or Peter's to him; or as John the Baptist's was to him.

And they all believed.

We can see nothing in these things other than the unfolding of the way the Lord brings his people individually to the knowledge of the truth; because Jesus said that no man could come unto him except the Father draws him, and that it was the work of God that they believe on him.

When rightly understood, there is nothing in the Bible which upholds the theory of man's free will; nor of mere invitations to believe. The Bible just doesn't teach such doctrine.

What we have written, we hope will at least stir up the pure minds of our brethren.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

CAVE ADULLAM

Elder G. Beebe's Sons — Dear Brethren in Christ: — A man who is now past his three score years, in his youthful days used to hear and sometimes read the remarkable story of one David, who "escaped to the cave Adullam, and when his brethren and all his father's house heard it, they went down thither to him, and every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him, and he became a captain over them, and there were with him about four hundred men." This same old man learned in early life from some source that Adullam meant "their witness" or testimony, but what meaning there could be in such a statement he could not imagine, for such a class as were described as gathered themselves to David, seemed to him to be a class of persons wholly unprepared to testify to anything but their own wretchedness, although he had read in a book, called the New Testament, the following description of certain characters: "Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place, and labor with our own hands; being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer for it; being defamed, we entreat; we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day. I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you." What possible connection there could be in these declarations, and the characters described as being in the cave Adullam, could not be seen so as to be understood.

When this now old man was about eighteen years of age, a strange something took hold of him, and he became convinced that everything between him and his Creator, God, was wrong on his part, and then it required no elaborate argument to convince him that he was a sinner, justly condemned by the righteous law of God, and it needed no learned disquisition to convince him that there was a state of existence beyond this world, where all the race of mortal men would still have a being in either weal or woe. After seeing such to be the case, he immediately went to work to change his condition, not knowing that the fountain within was totally depraved, and that nothing but corruption could issue from such a source; though there were times that there seemed to be some relief, but soon the matter seemed worse than ever, and some two years or more passed, and he found himself to be "in distress, in debt, and discontented," and in some unaccountable way to him, he found himself in the cave Adullam, mingling with persons having exactly the same kind of trouble, and after being in the "cave" some time their captain, David, made him a personal visit, and that lovely, sweet and charming countenance can never be forgotten while reason remains upon the throne, for he truly appeared "the chiefest among ten thousand," and the one altogether lovely, and when those heart-cheering words were uttered, "Because I live, ye shall live also," the distress, poverty and discontent seemed gone;

soon followed the words from that precious Captain, "If you love me, keep my commandments." Then the man remembered that it was written, "For it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings," and so sweetly and powerfully were those declarations applied to him that he clearly saw why David was the captain over them in the cave Adullam.

He read in the New Testament the following: "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway **out** of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." So powerfully were the circumstances connected with the baptism of the Captain of our salvation, by his servant John, applied unto that man at times, that a glory indescribably great appeared to surround and envelop that awfully sublime scene, and three important things were clearly seen as connected with that baptism of Jesus, viz: A proper mode; a prepared administrator of the ordinance; and the true character, for in that ordinance was set forth by that man Christ Jesus not only the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, but every member of his body.

But the man who saw such glory and majesty in the ordinance of baptism had at times an anxious desire to obey his glorious Captain by following him into the "watery grave" as soon as he felt "good enough", but after waiting a long time and finding no improvement whatever in the principles dwelling in his flesh, and that he had not got far removed from the cave Adullam, the words of the apostle Peter, which declare that baptism is "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God," had such an effect on him that he was constrained, out of love, he hopes, to obey his Lord, by being baptized by a servant of the church, "in the name of Jesus Christ," which act he has never regretted, but has been made sad and gloomy very, very many times, on account of his shortcomings and his wanderings in forbidden paths, and although he has had a hope in the mercy of God toward him through Jesus Christ about forty years, and has been a member of the visible church over thirty-six years, he finds that he has not improved his fleshly passions and lusts any during that long period of time, and he still finds himself in distress and discontented, at times, fearing that he must be mistaken in the great matter of salvation, and he is often made to say, "Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar."

During the forty years he has had a hope that Jesus died for him, one great, important and fearful lesson has been taught him, and that is, **not to trifle** with what the inspired apostles have written, nor to seek to evade any of their positive declarations, for he has found measurably, at least, what a short-sighted, ignorant, erring mortal he is, and the awfully momentous truth recorded by Paul when he said, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not," he finds true. How trifling those words of the apostle appeared to the man when he was a wild, giddy and foolish boy, but since he was brought "down into the cave Adullam" he has found that the apostle penned the truth, for forty years has not removed out of his flesh, covetousness, wrath, malice, revenge, jealousy and evil surmisings. Those "vile

serpents" are all alive, but sometimes more quiet than at other times, but not any of them are dead, and at times, when disturbed, their "hissing" is frightful, but reigning and abounding grace can and does chain them down. The closest and most profound examination shows to this man the certain truth of what the apostle recorded concerning his flesh; and if they were quiet there would not be such a strife, but they are active; hence the same apostle says, "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man, but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."

Upon another occasion the same apostle said, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." These principles are not only in the flesh, but are active ones, and since this man has seen himself in such distress, involved in such a debt, and so discontented, and found himself with such a class in the cave Adullam, he has had no desire to shun the company of Paul, by improving what he said concerning the warfare. During the time this man has had a hope, he has heard thousands of sermons, and sometimes he felt elated, and at other times depressed, cast down and gloomy, feeling that he lived undesired, and should die unlamented. It has seemed generally to be more interesting preaching to him when the trials, sorrows and afflictions of God's dear children have been dwelt upon, and the full, complete and finished salvation, in Christ Jesus, for just such poor, helpless, wandering creatures, has been clearly set forth, than simply to be dwelling on the duties of obedience and "right living" of God's children while here in the flesh, especially when it has been urged that their blessings depend upon those deeds, as such, for that position is antiscriptural because it puts effect for cause. The church, in all her members, is **already** blessed, according to the following divine declarations: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will."

These declarations positively show that the members of the body of Christ are already blessed; therefore instead of creature obedience being the means of obtaining the blessings, the blessings bestowed by the Father of mercies and God of all grace and consolation, cause the true obedience. How often has this man listened to preaching, and his mind has been like the "fool's eyes," rambling far and wide; yet he was present, filling his place among the members of the church, but had a "lean time;" therefore he has learned the just meaning of the following declarations: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure," and this man is so childish as to receive these important declarations just exactly as the apostle has penned them, and the reason his beloved brethren had always obeyed was because God gave them the will and the power. Then was their obeying the cause of the will and the power, or was it the evidence and result! The thought has often been given this old man, concerning the spiritual blessings, about as follows: "If great and precious blessings were given a child of God in Jesus Christ before time began, and those blessings were to be given or bestowed according to the obedience of that child, while here in the flesh, and such child should be so disobedient as not to merit one of the blessings, what confusion there must arise in the divine arrangement, for

there are surplus blessings given in Christ, according to the carnal theory, you do and then you will be blessed. But how any one who has been in the cave Adullam, and had a view of the great, the wise, the glorious, the infinite and righteous Captain of our salvation, can advance the carnal view that our blessings depend on personal obedience, when the record made by inspired penmen teaches exactly the reverse; but our God, in his infinite love, boundless mercy and endless compassion, has seen fit to give "credit," as it were, to his dear children, in some places recorded in the Bible, for that which they are absolutely debtors; but this "ignorant" man so understands the matter, and, according to what the apostle James has written, everything for the good of God's people comes from him, for he says, "Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning;" therefore all the children of men ever have done, are now doing, or will ever do, has not even caused the shadow of turning with Jehovah, if the testimony of the apostle James is to be received and believed; but if it is to be "improved and changed," woe be unto them of his children who countenance such a thing.

In the New Testament it reads, "We are fools for Christ's sake;" and this man, who has been in the cave Adullam, as he hopes, is so foolish in the eyes of the "wise and learned" of the present day, that he is willing to take the New Testament just as it reads concerning the choosing of the members of Christ's body in him before the foundation of the world, the vital unity between Christ and his people, the efficacy of the atonement for the sheep, the spiritual birth, the ordinance of baptism, the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, the office work of the ministry, the deep mystery of the resurrection of the bodies of the saints, the description given of the invisible God, the final glorification of all the elect in the world of immortal glory, and the everlasting punishment of all the non-elect; all of which matters are as fixed and sure as the eternal throne of God, and can no more be changed than God can cease to exist. He closes these remarks, wishing Zion well, and that our God, if it be his will, will keep his dear people from carnal theorizing and vain speculations, and cause all to be childlike and simple, being willing to take forms of expression that inspired apostles have left on record, and not attempt to suit them to "the favor of the learned world of mankind," by modernizing them, thereby attempting to accommodate matters with worldly religionists. May God apply the following declarations with sweetness and power: "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

SIMPLICITY

(The above originally appeared in the Signs November 15, 1884, and was written by Elder Wm. J. Purington; of whom Elder Chick wrote, "Than whom there has not been an abler gifted minister of the gospel since the days of the apostles."

We believe and advocate today the same principles which were maintained by Elder Purington. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

HENRY THOMAS EARNHEART

On April 22, 1960, God in his infinite wisdom saw fit to take from us by death, our beloved brother, Henry Thomas Earnheart. He was born July 3, 1885, making his age almost seventy-five years. He was the son of the late Lee and Sallie Earnheart, of Maury City, Tennessee; and was married to Miss Fannie Ellen DeShazo, of Friendship, Tennessee, on December 23, 1917. Surviving are his wife and six daughters and three sons: Mrs. Evelyn Moore, Fort Worth, Texas; Mrs. Shirley Batte, Memphis Tenn.; Mrs. Julia Browder, Memphis; Mrs. Martha Walker, Memphis; Mrs. Altha Dell Cunningham, San Angelo, Texas; Mrs. Emily Ellen Green, Fayetteville, Tenn.; Max Earnheart, Friendship, Tenn.; Lee Roy Earnheart, Jackson, Tenn.; and Calvin Earn-

heart, Pineville, Louisiana; and by several grandchildren.

Brother Earnheart has been coming to the Memphis church for many years, driving about ninety miles each way; and did not miss many meetings. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Memphis, November 14, 1954, and was baptized the fourth Sunday in November. Although he was well up in years, he was not afraid of the cold water, but rather rejoiced to the fullest extent, believing and loving God with all his heart. He loved his church; and in his last years it was a great pleasure to him for his wife to read and reread each copy of the *Signs of the Times* as they came.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders H. R. Prince and H. G. Brown, assisted by a Methodist and a Baptist minister. His body was laid to rest in the Belvernon Cemetery, at Friendship, Tenn. We bow in humble submission to God's will, knowing that He is too wise to make a mistake — He doeth all things well. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." "His mercy endureth forever." May we all meet beyond the grave to forever praise Him who loved us. Yours in sweet hope of everlasting salvation.

(Elder) H. G. Brown

DAVID FRANK PAGE

In memory of a beloved brother in Christ, David Frank Page, whose time ceased on January 29, 1961, after more than 72 years. (The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh; blessed be the name of the Lord.)

Brother Page was a retired farmer who had lived a clean and respectable life, and provided for his household well, in the community of Pagetown, near the church at Bush Arbor, where he united on Saturday before the 2nd Sunday in August, 1959. He was a loyal and faithful member, manifesting the spirit of Christ, which we shall miss.

We feel, with a sad heart, that our loss is his gain, but we would not ask the bereaved family, who stood so closely by him with willing hearts but helpless hands, not to mourn the loss of one so near and dear. Those left to mourn include his dear companion of more than 49 years, Mrs. Lula Robertson Page; two children, who so tirelessly served him during his illness, Alton J. Page, and Mrs. Oscar Brintle, Elon College, N. C.; two grandsons; one brother, Zackery Page, Reidsville, N. C., and one sister, Mrs. Tommy Page, Elon College.

The funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder W. C. King, assisted by Elder Harvey Smith and Elder Earnest Oakley, and burial was in the church cemetery at Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church, where his body now rests in the silence of the tomb for that glorious resurrection, when hope shall be reality, and these little ones shall come forth fashioned like the glorious body of our Lord, and be satisfied forever.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; and a copy be spread upon the Record Book of the Church.

Done by order of the church at Bush Arbor at her regular conference February 11, 1961.

Elder W. C. King, Moderator
Earl Rudd, Clerk
Written by Clifton Robertson

DEACON DAN CAMPBELL

Donald A. Campbell was born September 12th, 1860, and departed this life on February 23rd, 1961. He was a native of Lobo Township, where he farmed until twenty years ago. He was predeceased by his wife Christina (McDougall) Campbell in 1941, and by a son Archie in 1944. He is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Stanley (Flora) Robson and three grandchildren, all of Lobo Township, Ontario.

Brother Dan, as he was called by the brethren who loved him so dearly, was a gentleman of excellent character and behavior, which made him greatly esteemed by those among whom he lived. He united with the Covenanted Baptist Church at Lobo October 6th, 1917, and was baptized by the late Elder J. B. Slauson, and became a very valued member of the church. He served the church well as a deacon for about thirty-five years, and was blessed with a gift to comfort and encourage those who showed themselves interested in the things of God. He had a very clear active mind on the Scriptures to the end of his days; and while unable to get to meeting for some years, during which, part of the time, he was confined to his bed, blind and quite deaf, he was able with joy in his heart to speak of things of God, to the comfort of those who heard him. The writer found much pleasure in visiting him.

Last September 12th was his one hundredth birthday and many called to see him on that day. His last sixteen years were spent at his daughter's home, where he was lovingly cared for by that dear family until he breathed his last. The writer spoke at his funeral, where a large gathering of relatives and friends came to show their loving sympathy and respect. Interment was in Ivan Cemetery, Lobo Township, Ontario.

George Ruston

EDITH DURAND McCALL

The following is from a Winnipeg, Mani-

toba, newspaper:

"On April 4, 1961, at the Misericordia Hospital. Edith McCall, aged 77 years, beloved wife of Gilbert McCall, 167 Lanark Crescent. Born in Herrick, Pennsylvania, she came to Winnipeg when she was married in 1912. She was the daughter of Elder Silas H. Durand, for many years pastor of the Old School Baptist Church at Southampton, Pennsylvania. She was a graduate of Bryn Mawr College. Mrs. McCall was an active member of the University Women's Club and the Canadian Club. She is survived by her husband Gilbert; three daughters, Mrs. Ellen Clark of Storrs, Connecticut, Mrs. Margaret Glabais of Red Deer, Alberta, Frances of Winnipeg; one sister, Mrs. Charles B. Gordy of Ann Arbor, Michigan; and six grandchildren. Funeral service 2:30 p. m. Thursday, Canon J. N. Doidge officiating. Interment in Brookside Cemetery."

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Dear Brother George,

Edith passed away at the hospital last night. Ellen, Margaret and Frances are here, and have been attending her day and night. She has been in a half-conscious state for several days past and did not appear to be suffering pain. I am thankful that her illness did not result in a prolonged period of hopeless suffering, but my loss is none the less. Please send a notice for the "Signs," if you can find the time, so that her many friends may know.

Affectionately your brother,
Gilbert

Our beloved friend was blessed with a lively, affectionate disposition which endeared her to all who knew her. She visited in our home several times and enjoyed attending our meetings whenever she came East. In our intercourse with her, both in conversation and correspondence, she evinced a knowledge and love of the truth as it is in Jesus, and we believe that she is for ever with the Lord.

We extend our loving sympathy to our dear Brother Gilbert, his daughters, grandchildren and our dear Sister Mildred Durand Gordy.

George Ruston

CHARLES HENRY JARMON

In memory of our dear brother and deacon, Charles Henry Jarmon, who was born February 6, 1870, near Berlin, Maryland, and died on August 10, 1960 at his home in Newark, Delaware.

He was the son of George Werner Jarmon and Sarah Ann (Brittingham) Jarmon, who were devoted members of the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church near Powelville, Maryland. He was married to Miss Bessie Staton in March, 1894. She was the daughter of Elder Joseph Staton. Sister Jarmon died several years ago.

Our dear brother was a remarkable man. Many years ago, when a young man, he lost a leg. His acceptance of this has been outstanding in all the years. He did not give up the struggle of life, but as soon as returning strength would permit, he plunged with fervor into the making of a living and in caring for his household. He has told me that he heard the doctors talking about his approaching death, but that it did not alarm him. For more than sixty years he continued to take his place among men and to live a rugged, hard working life. In all the terrible pain and suffering he realized that it was not worthy to be compared to that which Jesus suffered for him. It was my privilege to know our brother the last five years, and but few people that have come under my observation, suffered more intense pain than did he, and yet he was as free of murmur as any sufferer I have known. Even though the Lord blessed him to a ripe old age, He blessed him with a keen intellect within days of his death.

He was appointed to the office of deacon at the Welsh Tract Church on March 14, 1931, which place he filled with praise to his Maker. He was a faithful member of this church for sixty-six years.

Our brother is survived by three daughters and two sons, to wit, Mrs. Elizabeth Holloway of Snow Hill, Md.; Mrs. Annabelle Shakespeare, Mrs. Helen Hawthorne, Rees Staton, of Newark, Delaware; Louis Tilham, of Graham, N. C. He also left one brother, William, of Wilmington, Delaware; two sisters, Mrs. Ida Holloway, and Mrs. Katherine Laws, both of near Berlin, Maryland, together with six grandchildren.

Our brother was laid to rest in the church cemetery at Welsh Tract, after services conducted by the writer.

We, the family, the church, and the town, feel that we have lost a precious follower of the Lord, but we realize that the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh, and blessed be His holy name: for what is our loss is his eternal gain.

(Elder) W. D. Griffin

ALLIE BELLE GOSSIEN FITZGIBBON

It is with much sadness I attempt to write of the passing of our dear and precious sister in Christ, Allie Belle Gossien Fitzgibbon, who passed away in the Warren, Ark. Hospital after a lengthy illness. Sister Allie, as she was known by all who loved her, was born at Kingsland, Ark., December 2, 1889, and passed away February 7, 1961, at the age of 71 years and 2 months. She was married to James Fitzgibbon on December 20, 1908. She is survived

by three children, Mrs. C. M. Wilson, James N. and J. R. Fitzgibbon; also two sisters, Mrs. Will Gambill and Mrs. Louie Calvert, both of Warren, Ark.; two brothers, Walter Gossien of Warren, Ark., and Oscar Gossien, of Little Rock, Ark. At the time of her death, she resided with her sister, Mrs. Will Gambill.

Sister Allie united with the Antioch Primitive Baptist Church, near Warren, Ark., and was baptized by the late Elder H. H. Phillips, who was pastor of the church at that time, on third Sunday in October, 1942. It was a sweet and precious privilege to know Sister Allie, as she was a faithful member of the church, always ready to care for the church and those she loved. She was a faithful believer in salvation alone through the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, and we are confident was in possession of that sweet hope that Jesus bore her sins upon the cross. She depended not upon the works of the flesh for salvation, but confessed that her hope rested alone in the blood of Jesus. While those who knew her doubted not concerning her belief, yet she freely stated that all she had was a sweet hope of eternal life beyond this vale of tears and sorrow. She was afflicted with cancer the past few months of her life, yet she bore her pains and afflictions in much patience, and was a faithful attender of the meetings until the last month of her illness, when she was confined to the hospital. Though the bereaved ones will miss her, and there will be a vacant chair in the home, as well as the church, we feel of a surety that she is at rest with her dear Saviour and has ceased from her toils and sorrows of this life, and will no more have to bear the afflictions and trials that are promised to those that shall live Godly. The blessed spirit of Christ that dwelled within her bosom has returned to God who gave it and the body returned to the earth from which it came, there to await the resurrection morning when the Lord shall descend with a shout to call his loved ones to himself, to that place called heaven, the place of heavenly rest for all the saints of God, to reign with the Lord forever in a world that shall have no end.

Funeral services were conducted by the unworthy writer before a large gathering of friends and relatives, and a large array of floral offerings, and her body was laid to rest in the family cemetery near Warren. May God who is rich in mercy and love, grant unto those left to grieve, grace sufficient to say thy will oh, God be done and not ours. May He ever be their guide and strength in all things, to the praise, honor and glory of His great and matchless name.

Written by her unworthy pastor at the request of the family, and one who loved her dearly.

Robert L. Miles

KATHERINE VICTORIA CAMPBELL

Katherine Victoria Campbell, daughter of Sister Etta Campbell and the late Mr. S. D. Campbell, was born May 24th, 1904, in West Lorne, Ontario, from which place she removed with her parents to Dutton and later to London, where she resided until her death, August 16th, 1960.

Besides her dear mother, she leaves to mourn her loss, a brother, Dr. Mac Campbell, of Detroit, and one sister, Jean, who lives with Sister Campbell. Katherine, along with her dear mother, joined the Covenanted Baptist Church by relation of experience and baptism at Lobo, Ontario, in September, 1944, being baptized by their pastor, Elder George Ruston.

Our dearly-beloved departed sister was for many years a great sufferer, but was always patient in tribulation. After one of our meetings in July, 1944, she wrote to me that for some time she had had a desire to ask a name with the church; then she added, "On Saturday morning I awoke from a dream, in which I saw the church in communion. I desired to partake, but the thought came, you can't, you are not a member, you haven't been baptized, go and be baptized, confessing your sins." She asked her dear mother if those words were in the Bible, she replied "Yes, in Matthew 3:6." "And were baptized of him (John) in Jordan, confessing their sins." She and her mother came before the church, and she, being so crippled, was carried by a deacon and myself down into the water on a chair, and was so baptized. For quite a while afterwards she was much improved in health and it rejoiced her brethren to see her so happy and at home in their fellowship. This could not last for long and she was taken to hospital for an operation, yet she was not left without comfort. The words "Let not your heart be troubled — In my Father's house are many mansions," were given to her; and we wondered if the Lord intended to take her to her heavenly home. That was not to be at that time. She returned home and lived on, a great sufferer, yet patient, with a mind to cheer others and a loving thoughtfulness for those around her. She was lovingly and unceasingly cared for by her family, who did everything to make her as comfortable as possible. She lingered on in patient suffering until the Lord took her to Himself, which is far better. A few days before she died, when she was being pressed to eat but had no desire to do so, she said, "Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live." Deuteronomy 8:3. The writer spoke from those words at her funeral, where the twenty-third Psalm and "Abide With Me" were sung. Interment was in Dutton Cemetery.

George Ruston

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129 DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1961 NO. 7

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/1
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

MY WEB OF LIFE

"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." (Romans 8:28)

No chance has brought this ill to me;
'Tis God's sweet will, so let it be;
He seeth what I cannot see.

There is a needs-be for each pain,
And He will make it one day plain,
That earthly loss is heavenly gain.

Like as a piece of tapestry,
Viewed from the back appears to be
Nought but threads tangled hopelessly.

But in the front a picture fair
Rewards the worker for his care,
Proving his skill and patience rare.

Thou art the workman, I the frame,
Lord, for the glory of Thy name,
Perfect Thine image on the same.

"When He hath tried me I shall come forth as gold." (Job 23:10)

Jessie Gillis
Canada

R.F.D. 1,
Check, Virginia

Dear Editors:

With a sad heart I am sending, at his request, the last writings of my dear father, Elder S. L. Moran, to be published in the *Signs of the Times*. He is sadly missed by his daughter.

Grace Sowers

THE LAST WRITING OF
ELDER S. L. MORAN

I want to relate some of the things I have seen in mercy; and this is one of them.

I was living at the place where I first bought land, and there were no Baptists living near me, except two sisters. My wife's father lived close by, but he had no use for the doctrine the Old Baptists contended for; so I was there between two walls, and felt that someone would buy the farm which was on the other side of me.

I was attending Pine Forest Church, and on coming home one Sunday evening, as I turned in at my gate, my father-in-law came into my mind with great force, along with the desire that he could believe just what I did; and with this feeling there came forcibly the words, "He will believe". These words sank within me. I went into the house and asked my wife, "What would you think if your father believed like we do?" She said, "If there is anything impossible, that is." And I replied, "There isn't anything impossible with God; and if he doesn't believe, I have no hope."

Time went on, but it wasn't long until he went to Laurel Creek Church. His habit was to sit near the door, and if anything was said that he didn't like, he would go outside. This time he came halfway down the aisle. I was on the stand, and, of course, he came into my mind. When preaching began, I could tell he was hearing, for tears were flowing freely. Words cannot tell my feelings at the time. He went home with his cousin, and told her that he had been going to meeting all his life, and

was 60 years old, and had just heard his first sermon.

There had been a stand built where Mountain View Church now stands, where they met for worship. When the invitation was given, he came and asked for a home with the people whose doctrine he had thought wouldn't stand the test. He was received into the fellowship of the church; and I haven't seen anyone more established in the faith. He would relate things that were wonderful, which gives me great assurance that what I had seen was not my imagination.

I would like to mention also W. E. Eanes buying the farm adjoining me. I was sorry when he came; and I told my wife that I wished that some Old Baptist had bought it. Once, as I was passing his house, he stopped me, and said, "Why don't you come to see me?" I told him that it wasn't any farther over the hill to my house, for him to come see me; and he said he would soon.

In a few days, as I went out to work, a scripture came into my mind with force: "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand, for thou knowest whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they shall be alike good." This was continually with me during the morning. At 12 o'clock I said to my wife that I thought I would go over to Mr. Lawrence's, as he wasn't expected to live. I started to go, and as I had to pass near Will Eanes' home, I thought as he had asked me to visit him, I would go by. Then the thought came, "You will have an argument if you do." And I turned to go away. Then another thought, "I can keep quiet about religion." So I went to the house.

He said that he was glad I had come; and all the time that scripture was on my mind, and I could not think of anything else to talk about. So I said to him, "Will, we work together. I know we don't believe alike, and I don't want an argument. I will make you a proposition: I am going to tell you a few things that I have been made to believe, and when I am through, you can talk all you want to, and I will not disturb you."

I began talking; and as soon as I began, I felt the power of the Gospel, if I know anything about it. I saw that he was receiving every word I said; and when I was through, he came to me in tears, and said that people might think this foolish, but I know it is the truth. I then said to him, "Now tell me what you want to."

He said, "A wonderful change has taken place in my heart. When I asked you to visit me, it was not just asking, I felt if you would come, you could take a burden off of me; and you have come, and have done just that. You don't know how glad I am, and pleased, that we can believe alike, for I thought there was no one like me." I told him that I could baptize him on what he had told me. He said, "You know how my people believe: they have no use for Old Baptists. I have to look to them to do my work, and I don't guess I can ever join the church." And I replied, "I will not persuade you to join the Baptist Church."

I went back home, and told my wife that I had a good meeting, and we had one of God's humble poor to live by, for he gave me a good reason of a hope. I want to say that I have been taught something in these things that no man can teach. I can say in truth, as the prophet, "Oh Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Not long after this I was taken ill, and he came to see me; and when I had to go to the hospital, he came to the car and said that he hoped I would come back. And I said that if the Lord had any more use for me, I would be back; and if not, I am as ready as I will ever be.

The Lord willing, I will try to give a few more hints of some things I feel He has shown me: In a vision or dream I

had in the year 1908, as near as I can remember, I went to bed feeling as well as usual, and that night I saw two women standing over me; and they were dressed in white, with white caps on their heads. I had never seen anyone dressed like that, since I had never been to a hospital at that time. They laid a cloth over my mouth, and it seemed to take my breath, for I felt it going out; and I heard a noise, saying, "All right." And I awoke; and behold, it was a dream. I told my companion I had seen something that I guessed meant my death. I was shown it meant something to me.

I went on thinking about it for sometime, and then it left my mind. But one morning as I went out to work, a deathly pain struck me in my stomach, and the dream come back forcibly to my mind. We went to the house and told my wife I was sick, and that the dream I had had eight years ago is going to take place. The end of this was that I was taken to the hospital, and the next morning to the operating room; and there were the two nurses I had seen eight years ago. They placed a cloth over my face, as I had had in my dream. I knew it was the same, for it had the same effect on me; and when they thought they had me asleep, the doctor said, "All right". It was the same voice I had heard in my dream.

. . . What I saw in this was the merciful hand of God on a poor old sinner. When I got home, this neighbor came, and said, "I want to go to your next meeting, and if you will have me, to join your church. It makes no difference what my people say or think." He came, and was received; and later ordained a deacon of Mountain View Church. If I am a judge of a deacon, he was a God-called servant; and served until his death, which was about twenty-five years. His memory lingers with me in love.

These things may not be worth anything to those who read this, but it has been strength to me: to behold the merciful hand of God in his love and kindness to an undeserving sinner. I feel that He has been so merciful to my unworthiness, and has not remembered my sins against me. If he had, I would have long since fallen by the wayside. I have had a desire to write this for publication when I am gone.

S. L. Moran
Check, Virginia
(January 19, 1959)

REPORT OF GOOD MEETING

301 Rives Road
Martinsville, Va.

Dear Brother Wood:

I wish to report on the signs of the times as manifested in Martinsville Primitive Baptist Church this Easter Sunday evening, April 2, 1961. Elder A. B. Ayers, Moderator of Kehukee Association, filled an appointment with us, and was blest to preach most eloquently the whole council of God to an overflowing audience. He began by reading his text which is recorded in Acts 20:28, "Take heed therefore to yourselves, and to the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." He manifested zeal and enthusiasm as he handled this most interesting and timely subject to our people who had gathered from our sister churches in Pigg River, Smith River, Staunton River and Upper Country Line Associations.

I say that the subject was timely, as the Apostle was addressing a group of ministers from Ephesus when he set forth the above mentioned text. Ministers present, other than myself, were Elder Cecil Turner, our pastor, Elders O. K. Tench, Jim Hollandsworth, Leonard Brammer, David Spangler, Rufus Brown and W. R. Wray. Elder Wray introduced the service in his humble manner, using hymn number nine in Lester & Durand hymnal.

"Ye humble souls approach your God

With songs of sacred praise,
For he is good, immensely good,
And kind are all his ways."

Elder Ayers reminded us ministers of the sacredness of our calling, and our duties as faithful servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. We feel that is good to have our pure minds stirred up from time to time, and this Elder Ayers did in a most effective, fatherly manner. His discourse was followed by Elder O. K. Tench, who spoke briefly but feelingly of the goodness and mercy of God in saving his people with an eternal salvation. Tears flowed down his face as he spoke in his usual manner when blest to preach the glorious gospel of Christ.

Elder Wood, I write these signs of our times that our dear brethren, in far away places, may rejoice with us, and know of the love, peace and fellowship that we enjoy when assembled together in God's peaceful presence. We have not departed from the primitive precepts and examples as some dissemblers would have you believe, but use the Holy Bible for our guide.

Sometimes there are several ministers present at our meetings but seldom do more than two or three speak, and the others judge and rejoice. (1 Cor. 14:29) Our regular services usually last about 1½ hours including the song service. When we have special all-day meetings we usually have from two to four discourses before intermission and a similar number afterward, depending on the number of ministers present and the amount of time consumed by each minister, whose time is not designated. We are aware that Paul preached all night on one occasion in his day, but someone fell asleep. We do not want to keep our audience together longer than they can remain comfortable. May we hear from peaceful Primitive Baptists everywhere. What are the signs of your times?

Yours in sweet fellowship,
(Elder) P. E. Ingram

HE FOUND IT UNTRUE

Bates, Oregon

Signs of the Times:

Enclosed find my subscription for two years. I would hate to miss any of the copies of the old paper: It has been in my parents' home ever since I can remember, and I understand that it was in the home of my grandparents ever since it was printed on a sheet, and had to be cut apart. I remember the pinkish color of the old covers, and the inscription on the covers, long before I was able to read (which has been quite a while).

I sometimes find things which I do not understand, but they may be "just deeper than I have been instructed to understand." I really do not find any fault with these artitcles; and most of the others are so plainly written that I get the message, and usually agree fully with them.

Since my last communication, I have joined a "Bible Baptist" church. I knew that I would find many things that I did not agree with, or to my liking. I had a long talk with the minister, a very able young man, and told him of my beliefs and experiences. He assured me that my beliefs did not conflict in any major part with what they practiced, and that both were complimentary to each other, rather than in conflict. *How untrue I found this to be!*

I knew I would not be able to digest many things that were served as spiritual food, but thought I would be nourished by the things I could digest. Now I find so much that is served, is so highly seasoned with the works of man, (and so little to God's credit,) that I loose my appetite long before the first course is over.

I have enjoyed reading the correspondence between Elder Gold and Dr. Hooper. . . . After my experience in this "Bible" church, I see what they were both talking about. Elder Gold seems to know "whereof he speaks", and I fully

agree with everything he says.

Many may wonder how "a dyed-in-the-wool Hardshell" could join with a sect, as I have. I was lonely, and thought that any church home was better than none at all; and I had many friends in this community, and was not near enough to be with "the ones I should be with". Excuses are not reasons, I know, but I was taken in, just as my father was years ago, and Elder Gold about the same time. I don't recall how long either stayed before they pulled away, but I see that I must leave soonor or later, (probably sooner).

The missionary part of the church, I knew I could never swallow; and I was in doubt about "saving souls". I find our minister knows all the latest "begging methods". If the "cash value" was taken out of his sermons, I am afraid we would have to sing a lot to fill in the time during the meetings. I must be a "goat": I know I am not a "sheep", as I cannot follow a shepherd who can read so many different things out of verses while I am listening.

I received many responses to my last letter, (February, 1960). Apparently there are many who believe as I do. If we all are wanderers, there will be quite a bunch of "strays" at the "last round-up". If things depend as much on man's "free agency", as I have been told to believe, and God has no control over things as they happen, then the world is doomed and entirely lost; (which I do not believe to be the case). I believe that God is all powerful; that He rules the world, and everything that is in it, (including the Bible Baptist Church). What his purposes are, and how they all fit in with the final plans, I do not know. I believe that those who are saved were so ordained and created from the beginning; and that in the time and place as it was so ordained, they will be called, and will answer the Master's voice. I know that I could not stand still when I was called, even when I knew I did not believe as others did. . . . I am still probing my way, praying that God will guide me in the way he knows best. What my path will be, or where He will lead me, only He knows. But I am positive that He can, and will, take me where I am supposed to be; and I only ask that I may be reconciled with whatever it may be. A stray, who tried to slip in and eat with the wrong group.

Sincerely,
Charles W. Bond

PRECIOUS EVIDENCE OF GRACE

Mount Hermon Road
Salisbury, Maryland

Elder and Sister Ruston,
Precious ones in our Lord Jesus Christ:

I feel poorly qualified this Sunday morning to answer your lovely letter which I so joyfully received and deeply appreciate. Especially do I feel unqualified to write to ones so able in the things of the Spirit. However, I realize that I have that which I have received, and I have no right or desire to apologize for what the Lord is pleased to grant me, be it little or much. Whatever He grants IS much! I long to be grateful for that which He has given and does so graciously give me, and to learn "In whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." I do have moments such as this, but they do not last long. I am not given much to doubts, as many of my dear brethren seem to be, but oh! the long periods of drought that I have — weeks and sometimes months when I'm swallowed up in things of earth, and the "JOY of my salvation" becomes only a memory. It is in just such a state that I'm now living through. There just seems to be nothing for me at these times and my heart cries out for His dear presence and tender words of love to comfort my sore heart. Last month Elder Griffin visited me and last week he was in this community for more than a week and I was with him several times, hoping and longing for a change in my cold

state, but each time I was with him, he seemed to be just as lifeless as I was — which shows clearly that it is no more in the power of the preacher to feed than it is in ourselves to reach and grasp it — but in and through Him only! I've had many such dreary times and mostly they have come to an end suddenly, usually when I was alone, then would follow indescribably sweet communion. I'm reminded of the verse:

"When darkness seems to veil His face,
I rest on His unchanging grace.
From every high and stormy gale,
My anchor holds within the veil."

"On Christ the solid Rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand."

These grand old hymns have come from the depths of someone's experience — deep trials and glorious deliverances! Why it is the lot of some to soar so high and fall so low, I cannot explain, but I'm certain each of us is led in the pathway which He, in His great love and wisdom, knows is best, and my great desire is to be conformed to Him!

It is true that our Association next October seems a long way ahead, but it will be here before we realize it, and I do hope you may be shown a clear way to come. So many of our good old ministers who are not afraid to declare the whole truth of God, yet declare it in love, are slipping away, and it nearly breaks my heart as I realize they are not being replaced. I often wonder and am greatly troubled as to what the future of our people holds, should the Lord's coming be in the distant future, yet He has promised that He will not leave us comfortless, and regardless how dark the future may look, one glorious thought remains: He lives! Yes, He was dead and is alive for evermore!

"He lives, my dear Redeemer lives,
What comfort this sweet sentence gives;
He lives, He lives, who once was dead,
He lives, my great Eternal Head."

You spoke of missing Elders Bellows and Lefferts. I miss them too. Both of them meant so much to me in the days after I was given a knowledge of the truth. I'll never forget what dear Elder Lefferts said to me awhile before my coming into the visible church. I had talked with him two or three times in the preceding year, and one Sunday at Welsh Tract he said to me in that very forth-right way of his, "Well, Mildred, I keep looking for you to come to the church, but the years are passing and you don't come. I certainly hope you won't wait until you are too old to be any good to the church." Right here, I want to say that I've never felt to be any good to the Church — I've been on the receiving end! Anyway, I told Elder Lefferts that some of the old members told me to stay out as long as I could, and when I could stay away no longer, to come, to which Elder Lefferts replied, "I don't agree with that theory for one moment — I say, come as soon as you can." Some weeks later Elder Spangler, while visiting in my little home, spoke to me along the same line. I told him what Elder Lefferts had said, and he replied very firmly, "I agree with Brother Lefferts."

I believe the Lord directed those conversations and I began to be stirred up concerning membership — then one Saturday night at Snow Hill, I was given, through Elder Spangler's sermon, that which I hope was unmistakable evidence. I didn't sleep that night, and towards morning I was made to feel that I must go, and determined I would. Then I fell into a peaceful sleep. That morning I did go and was received. Two weeks later dear Elder Spangler, in obedience to the command, led me into the stream and baptized me — so beautifully symbolic of death and arising to "newness of life." That was nearly twelve years ago, and I've been in deep water much of the time since then, but through it all, my dear Redeemer has stood by, sustained and comforted me, so that I was not overwhelmed. What an adorable Saviour we have! How utterly He saves and keeps! How glorious are even His chastisements, because they are dealt by the Hand of love —

not to punish me, but that our sufficiency might be in Him! How beautiful He is when we are enabled to behold Him in all His loveliness!

Going back to Elder Lefferts, I can never forget the last time I saw him, and his sermon that morning at Welsh Tract — just two weeks before his departure. His text was "I know, oh Lord, that Thy judgments are right and that in faithfulness Thou hast afflicted me." He said many things that morning, especially of the faithfulness of the Lord in afflicting His people, that have comforted me and helped to bear me up in my eye and facial affliction which is a constant "thorn in the flesh." Many of our people think the afflictions spoken of in the Bible are spiritual afflictions only; maybe they are, I don't know, but I do believe the promises of God hold true in the natural realm of His elect as well as the spiritual. What I'm trying to say is that He who provides for our spiritual well-being is no less able or willing to supply our natural needs. "Your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." When Paul said, "My God shall supply all your need, etc.", I believe he meant ALL our need. When Peter said, "Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you," I do believe he meant ALL our care. Besides, we are so wonderfully and fearfully made that who can say where the natural leaves off and the spiritual begins? Certainly we are just as dependent upon Him for natural life and subsistence as for spiritual; and I believe He DOES supply all our need. What manner of love He has bestowed upon us and how forbearing He is with us, knowing our frame and remembering that we are dust; yet clothing us with His righteousness and already having delivered us from the penalty of sin and the dominion of sin, He will one day deliver us from the presence of sin. Oh glorious day! Yes, the dear saints who have been called, are now forever with Him beholding His glory, while we are yet "looking for that blessed hope and His glorious appearing," and then we, too, shall ever be with the Lord. May we "comfort one another with these words." What else in this world matters? I did so enjoy being at your meeting and in your sweet home. I hope I may go again, but can see no way in the near future. My vacation this year will be spent mostly in preparing for, entertaining and attending our own Association at Salisbury where my membership is. Again, I hope you can come and spend at least a little time in my little home. We do feel so thankful for our dear pastors, Elders Spangler and Griffin. We feel highly blessed in having them. Both are wonderful and mean untold blessings to me.

I am so sorry, dear Sister Esther, about your eyes. I'm wondering if you experience any pain, or is it just lack of sight, and do the doctors give you hope of improvement? I surely do sympathize with anyone who has eye trouble. The doctors tell me mine will never be any better, and it hurts every moment of my conscious hours, but my affliction could be much worse. It could be both eyes, or I could be crippled, a helpless invalid and a burden on someone else. So far, the Lord has spared me that and I do hope I'm deeply grateful. Also I'm thankful that I've been given grace to accept my affliction as coming from the Lord and not to question His goodness in sending it. This is a very, very great blessing and while so blest "prisons would palaces prove."

I must bring this letter to a close. I had not the faintest idea of writing so much when I started, but it came faster than I could write. As I have writen the tears have fallen fast; and behold, the darkness has been dispelled, and the Voice has spoken to me, "Rise up and come away, the winter is past, the voice of the turtle is heard in the land." How very beautiful! The Church arrayed in the meekness and humility of Christ, is like the dove, gentle and harmless. Oh, I could write on and on,

of so great a Saviour. When I started this letter the sky was cloudy and gray, but now, as I look through the window, the sun has broken through and is dazzling as it shines upon the new-fallen snow. How true in the spiritual realm when the Sun of Righteousness arises with healing in His wings. Truly, "He restoreth my soul!"

My love to you both in "That blessed Hope."

Mildred Dykes

THE LOVE BESTOWED UPON US

1158 Falls Terrace
Union, N. J.

Dearly Beloved Brethren in the Lord:

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." (I John 4:1)

Behold, look, see, take notice of the manner of love; a love that will not let us go; a love that is everlasting; a love that binds with a tie that can not be broken; a love that can not be fathomed by the natural mind; a love that can not be comprehended by any except those who have been given a heart of flesh, a heart made tender and understanding by that love. This manner of love can not be explained with mere words, but it can be seen and felt in the facial expressions and in the handshake when the saints of God meet each other as they assemble themselves together according to the commandment of the God of love. "God is love," and we love him because he first loved us, not because of any merits of our own; it is all of grace, the free unmerited favor of an allwise God, who has said, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." We are told to "love the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength," and this love first bestowed upon us and shed abroad in our hearts, causes us to love not the things of this world. We are given the assurance that nothing is able to separate us from the love of God.

This love has been bestowed upon us, not according to our works, but according to his loving kindness and tender mercies; and, it not being by works, far removes any boasting from us. What do we have to boast of? What do we have that we have not received? It is all according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God that it was bestowed upon us. This was by reason of the gift of the Father. (Eph. I:3, 4) It being bestowed upon us by him, the giver of every good and perfect gift, it can not be merited, it can not be won. It is freely and lovingly bestowed upon every heaven born child of God. What could be freer than a gift, the price of which has been paid by the shed blood of Christ? We are told to come and buy wine and milk without money and without price (Isaiah 55:1), and the manifest difference between those loved with this everlasting love and drawn by its tender cords, is that made by him that has, as we humbly hope, made us to differ from other men. "Who maketh thee to differ?" (I Cor. 4:7) We do not have anything whereof to glory, save in the precious blood of Christ, which is all a gift of God.

He has bestowed this great love upon us for a purpose; which is, "That we should be called the sons of God"; if sons of God, then children of God and heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. (Rom. 8:17) What does it mean to be a child of God and a joint heir with Christ? Ponder the question in your mind; it is so full of food, so full of meat for thought, too much for my finite mind to comprehend, but I do like to meditate upon such sacred words of comfort, hoping that they have been left on record for my consolation. If an heir with Christ, we shall share with him the inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for

you who have been kept by the power of God. We have been made partakers of this inheritance by having been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of his dear Son. Oh, to be a joint heir with Christ, to share with him the joys of heaven and immortal glory, to be at home with the Father, who has given this inheritance to every saint of God! "Ye are all one in Christ Jesus, and if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise." (Gal. 3:28, 29) What God has promised shall not be denied, for none can stay his hand or say unto him, "What doest thou?" "Let God be true, but every man a liar."

This inheritance that awaits in that world beyond, is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but it is solely by the tender mercy of our covenant keeping Lord that we are saved. Being justified by his grace, we have been made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is life eternal, to know the Father and the Son; to know the Father who gave his Son, his only Son, to ransom rebel worms; to know the Son, who is now making intercession for us, that we might enjoy, in the ages to come, the inheritance prepared for us from before the foundation of the world. My knowledge and understanding is too limited to tell what it means to be a joint heir with Christ, but my heart tells me that it is a blessing and joy awaiting that can not be put into words. If the Holy Ghost has spoken to you in revelation of this blessed truth, you know of what I am writing.

My understanding is too blind to undertake to tell its beauty. While the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, they being spiritually discerned, yet the hidden wisdom of God is no longer a mystery when revealed unto us by his Spirit. What is wisdom and where shall understanding be found? "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom." We would not fear him unless we have some knowledge of his sovereign power and will; we fear him because we realize he is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. No flesh shall glory in his presence, for of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. (I Cor. 1:29, 30) He is our wisdom, and it is bestowed upon us as the love of God, only through the workings of His Holy Spirit.

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God that giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." (James 1:5) This asking is in faith, we knowing that every good and perfect gift is from above, and from the Father who has bestowed the gift of love upon us. Ask of him, saying, "Father, not my will, but thine be done," and he will give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your understanding will be enlightened, and a study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, will surely follow, for the Lord gives understanding in all things. "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding." Why do we set our affections on things above? because we have been given wisdom and understanding; why do we love to meet with those of like precious faith? because the given understanding has made us want to depart from evil and to be kept away from those things of this world which have lost their charm. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge and understanding are hid in Christ and shall be revealed unto us as it seemeth best to the Father. May it be his will to shine in our hearts, thereby bringing us into these treasures of love and wisdom and understanding, filling us with the knowledge of his will, and giving grace to perform it, having all the fulness of Christ made manifest in us to that most glorious end. We would pray, "Lord increase our knowledge and help us to walk worthy of thee, and make us meet to be partakers of the

inheritance of the saints."

If we have been made a joint heir with Christ, we shall be glorified together with him; we shall reign with him forever and ever to sing praises unto his name; to give honor and glory to the Father, who hath bestowed this great love upon us that we should be called the sons of God. Oh, that I, a poor sinner, could be a little door keeper in the house of the Lord.

To the world, we are "a peculiar people," for we are strangers in a foreign land. If we are embraced in this love; if we were given to Christ; if we have been made heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, we will not expect the world to know us and understand us, because it knew him not, neither understood his ways. If all this has been bestowed upon us, then we will not teach every man his brother and neighbor, saying, know ye the Lord, for he that taught us in this irresistible bestowal of love and grace, will teach them all the same, even from the least to the greatest of them. Following this teaching, there comes from him that great peace and satisfaction that passeth all understanding. This bestowal of love on a sinner removes him from the world as a rule of action, or as a home, or his final rest; they are not any longer of the world (although, to their sorrow, still in the world), even as Christ was not of the world. The world knows not the things of the Spirit, which things are foolishness unto all, except they be revealed by the Holy Ghost. We are made to say of those who know us not and would persecute us as did they the dear Saviour, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Our hope is that his omnipotent power will keep them from prevailing against us and his church, knowing that we, too, would be where they are had it not been for this bestowal of love upon us. We do know that at one time our affections and desires were on the world, and that they would still be there if grace had not made the difference.

May the dear Lord give us grace to set our affections on the things above, not on the things of the earth; to enable us to seek the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, knowing that all other things will be added unto us. Oh, for strength and courage to have the Lord Jesus Christ and his righteousness first in every though and word and deed. We are so frail, so helpless, without him we can not do anything, but we can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us. We would not know him as a loving Saviour, had it not been the Father's will to bestow his great love upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; to give us to Christ that through his redemption we be made joint heirs with him. What a blessing, what a precious gift. Praise his great and adorable name for the unmerited favors of One who has promised never to leave or forsake his own.

Written by one who hopes that this love has been bestowed upon her, thus being made a joint heir with the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Your little sister,
Mrs. Elsie Loeffel

R. F. D. 3,
Minco, Oklahoma

Dear Editors of the Signs:

If not mistaken I am thankful for your efforts to enlarge the subscription list, and comfort more Old Baptist believers. Surely all Old Baptists will treasure the *Signs of the Times* once they have read it. It surely has kept true to the faith once delivered to the saints, and I hope that I love it for the truth's sake. I also hope that I appreciate the efforts of you editors and brethren.

Above all, I hope I am given to love the great, allwise, and merciful God that the Old Baptists worship in spirit and in truth. They claim nothing of themselves, and live in hope of his mercy, which their Lord and Saviour made plentiful to them in giving himself,

that they through him should have everlasting life. I often wonder if I really love him. If so, why am I thus?

There are no Old Baptist members in my community. There is only one who believes, so I am sending his name for a subscription.

Thanks for allowing me to add my mite of help to the *Signs*. May God bless and sustain you and your work.

Your unworthy brother, I hope,
G. B. Loyd

JONAH'S QUALIFICATIONS

R. F. D. 2,
Elon College, N. C.

My Dear and Precious Ones in Christ Jesus:

Before Jonah was prepared to preach salvation is of the Lord, and that deliverance can come from none other, Jonah had first to learn this for himself; he must have it first-handed. It seems there must be something to be delivered from, or there will be no need of deliverance. We must first be made partakers of the sufferings of Christ before we can hope to be made to enter into the comfort, joy, and sweet assurance of deliverance, and to know whom we have believed, and be made willing to pay that which we have vowed, that, Salvation is of the Lord.

The true servant of God can't preach with power and conviction of soul, something he has not first been made partaker of. When he knows of Jonah's hell, and what it is to be carried down to the bottom of the mountains where the floods compassed him about, and the billows and waves passed over him; and, like David, brought to his wits end, then, and not before, can he pay his vow unto the Lord, and before His people, that Salvation is of the Lord.

"Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah, the son of Amitti, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me." Instead of acquiescing and obeying the word of the Lord, Jonah, like the Lord, must learn obedience by the things he suffered. (Hebrews 5:8) Jonah couldn't preach deliverance from hell and destruction to the Ninevites without first knowing something of the power of God, and that nothing was to baffle the will of God; and that he holds the winds in the hollow of his fist, and that his sovereign power extends to the winds, the billows of the seas, the great fish, and that all things else are at his command, and He does his will in heaven above, and the earth below, and in all deep places.

When Jonah said, "I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed, Salvation is of the Lord," the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land. Jonah was now prepared to preach that salvation (deliverance) is of the Lord. He was now qualified in the school of God's grace to preach the kind of preaching God prepared Jonah to preach to the Ninevites. And, under the power of Jonah's preaching, the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth (mourning) from the greatest of them to the least of them. Even the king laid aside his robe and sat in ashes (mourning). This old king seemed to manifest a trustful fear before God, for he said, "Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?"

Nineveh was a great city; God knew how large the city was, and how many persons therein (six score thousand), that could not discern between their right hand and their left hand. The king and the people were brought down in mourning. Jonah's preaching, under the convicting power of God's Spirit, had caused this people to turn from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that he said that he would do to them, and did it not.

God's people have been declared to

be the salt of the earth by their God. The apostle tells us that God is not slack concerning his promises, as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. His second coming is no less sure today than then; and God's good will and purpose to wait to gather in his last precious jewel, is no less certain and sure.

From reading of how Jonah was displeased, and seemed disappointed that God had spared Nineveh, he seemed to overlook that everything is in the hand of God; and that God is God at all times and in all places; and that in providence we may not understand his doings. But that His will is done, and must be done, we have no question. He raised up the gourd for a shadow over Jonah's head, to shield him in time of grief; and God said to Jonah, "Dost thou well to be angry for the gourd?" Jonah had pity on the gourd, but was displeased that God should spare Nineveh.

This matter was in my heart this morning, and I lay in my bed and wept at the merciful providence of our Eternal King, and at the tender, and loving, and compassionate hand of our precious Redeemer and Friend forever.

With love to all the household of faith.

In sweet hope,
(Elder) J. W. Gilliam

THE MOTE VS THE BEAM

"And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye. (Luke 6:41-42)

The above has been on my mind of late, and, if the Lord will direct my train of thought, and guide my hand, I hope to write some of my views on the subject.

First, I call attention to the five senses of the human body: The seeing; the hearing; the taste; the smelling; and the touch or feeling. Without life in the human body, none of these senses function. If we have been born again, that is, born of the Spirit, we possess the spritual senses. Without these we cannot see the kingdom of God.

In my endeavor to present my thoughts, it is not my intention to reflect on any person. First, The question is asked, "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye?" There has to be a mote in, I will say, my eye in order for my brother to behold it. The mote in my eye represents my faults, my sins, my imperfections. But why should my brother see the mote that is in my eye. If he had an eye single to the glory of God, would he be looking for, or trying to find fault in his brother? Or would he not be looking over his brother for good, and not for evil?

We will note that the brother who wants to pull the mote out of his brother's eye, has a beam in his own which prevents him from seeing clearly how to pull the mote out of his brother's eye. The brother with the beam has a much worse problem than the brother with the mote. To illustrate: I remember when I was but a small child, my mother used to card cotton for the spinning wheel, and for quilting. And, as she would place the cotton on the cards, she would find motes in the cotton; and she would have to remove them in order for the card to work properly, and for the cotton to turn out a perfect roll or bat, whichever was desired. Now the mote is very small, but has a bad effect. A beam is a much larger object, and can do a lot more damage than the mote. However small the mote it has its effect, and represents sin. And when

one of the Lord's people is brought to a knowledge of the truth as it is in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the mote (sin) in the flesh causes anguish of soul, and great fear. Deep sorrow overwhelms the heart and soul. This is the way the Lord brings his little ones to repentence. With this knowledge, the child of God feels his or her condemnation is just, but it makes them cry out to God for mercy.

Now the brother who has a beam in his eye which obstructs his vision, is disqualified to pull the mote out of his brother's eye, for he cannot see clearly. In other words, he is at least partly blind; and if the blind lead the blind, shall they not both fall into the ditch? Then there is another thought that comes into my mind concerning the beam. Those who are experienced in carpentry know something about the beam (a strong piece of wood or iron) set into a wall of a building over a large door or opening. It has to meet certain specifications in size and length, to have the proper strength to support that part of the wall that it is to rest thereon.

Now I know this is only a natural illustration, but have we not sometimes seen some come into the church, or fold of God, who, when they have been in the church only a little while, begin to try to dictate to the church, or set out to run the business of the church; when it seems he needs to do some house cleaning at home. Oh, my brethren, if it is pleasing in the sight of God, may he bless us to love and pray for each other, forgiving one another's sins and short comings. If we love one another, even as Christ our blessed Saviour has loved us, we will not be found trying to pull the mote out of our brother's eye, but will be concerned about our own greater sins and faults.

Oh, Lord our God, our heavenly Father, make us to see and to know ourselves; make us to love each other, and to watch over each other in love.

Love covers a multitude of sins. Brethren, we may say we love the brethren; and, if we do love them, may we show our love and our faith by our works: works produced by faith; the faith of the Son of God which maketh not ashamed.

Yours in hope,
(Elder) W. B. Barnes
R. F. D. 1,
Stantonsburg, N. C.

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505 Houston Street,
Levelland, Texas

The Signs of the Times:

As it is time once again for me to renew my subscription, I would like to speak a few words of appreciation and encouragement to its editors and writers. My husband was a subscriber to the Signs when he and I were married in 1897, and it has been coming to our house ever since.

I will say here that I still have several volumes of the paper which I would be glad to send to anyone who likes to read them. I will pay all postage. My reason for wanting to do this, is my failing health and eyesight, which necessitates my moving to my daughter's to live. I had rather send them to someone who loves to read them, than to know they will be destroyed.

I believe as of now, as well in more than a century past, it advocates the same sound doctrine it did in the begining of its publication; and the reprints and Voices of the Past, I think, will bear me out in this. It is comforting, as well as encouraging, to one who is traveling near the end of life's highway, to find in those articles written so long ago telling of things they experienced along the way, that bear witness to the Spirit within.

Oh, I would want to thank God for this and all his wonderful mercies to one of the least of the flock, if indeed I am one. May our dear Lord spare each of you, and enable you to continue to contend for the truth as it is in Christ our Lord for many years to come, if

it can be his holy will, is the earnest desire, and I hope heart felt prayer, of a little sister,

Ida Bowers

Ingals, Arkansas

Dear Editors of the Signs:

It is time to send my renewal to the *Signs*, so I am enclosing it. The paper is a welcome visitor in our home, and is a stay between our meeting days. The letters from the brethren and sisters, together with the sermons from God's chosen ministers, are food to the soul. We are given comfort and assurance from them, if given a spiritual mind of understanding.

Our mind is a blank most of the time, but, if not deceived, we have been made to feel the goodness of our Lord in our varied travels and trials in this low ground of sorrow. When in the valley of woe and despair, we are led to call on Him, who is our ever present help. He never forsakes his people. But am I one of his, is the great question; which He alone can answer.

May God in his great mercy help you to continue to publish the *Signs* for the comfort of His saints. From one saved by the grace of an omnipotent God, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, with no merit or credit of our own.

Charlie Harrod

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204 N. Clayton Street,
Wilmington 5, Delaware

Elder J. D. Wood,
Manassas, Va.

Dear Sir and Friend:

Just a line or so to say that I am as well as I usually am; not as well as I have felt, but, no doubt, far better than I deserve. I certainly hope you both are fine, and will have a happy holiday season.

I do wish I could be as thankful as I should or ought to be, knowing that I am an undeserving sinner, and that through his precious goodness He has kept such an unworthy wretch as I feel to be. I am sure that I have felt that Jesus was my very personal saviour — not so often, but so sweet.

I shall not write a long, worrisome letter, but just to ask your prayers for a poor, unworthy creature as I am.

As ever a friend I am sure of that; not worthy to be called a brother.

C. A. Bass

REQUESTS FOR VIEWS ON SCRIPTURES

"I wish someone would write through the *Signs* on Revelation 13:3. Has this prophecy been fulfilled; or is it yet to be fulfilled?"

Elder Louis Stewart,
Rt. 1, Box 226,
Winona, Miss.

"Would like your views on Hebrews 13:13. 'Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach'."

Mrs. J. J. Reece,
Toney, Alabama

UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

The **UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION** is appointed to meet, the Lord willing, with the church at Pleasantville, Rockingham County, N. C., beginning on Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in July, 1961, and continuing three days.

Following are directions to Pleasantville Meeting House: From Reidsville take 87 West to Corum Store, then take 704 via Wentworth to Pleasantville Church, on the right. If coming from the North over 220: after crossing Dan River Bridge, take first left hand road, No. 704, 5 miles to Pleasantville Church, on the left. If from the South over 220: just before the bridge over Dan River, take 704 to right, 5 miles.

Our correspondents and visitors are cordially invited to meet with us.

(Elder) J. W. Gilliam, Assn. Clerk

PIGG RIVER DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

The **Pigg River Association** is appointed to be held with Chapel Church, Franklin County, Virginia, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, August 4, 5 and 6, 1961. Chapel is just off of Route 890. Those coming by Gretna will follow Route 40 to Penhook, and take Route 890 there; and those coming by Rocky Mount will come on Route 40 to Penhook. There will be signs along the way.

Our correspondents and other brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Mary Brown, Church Clerk
John D. Wood, Ass'n Clerk

MAINE ASSOCIATION

The **MAINE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION** will convene, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, September 1, 2, and 3, 1961.

An invitation is extended to those of our faith and order, and interested friends.

Mrs. Sanford S. Bartlett, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The **Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association** will be held with Banister Spring Church, Friday, Saturday and 2nd Sunday in July, (July 7, 8, 9, 1961). Banister Spring Church is located about 15 miles North of Danville, Virginia, on Highway 29.

All brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

W. J. Oakes, Clerk

ANNUAL MEETING AT
SLATE HILL CHURCH

The annual meeting of the **Brookfield Old School Baptist Church** at Slate Hill, New York, will be held, if the Lord so wills it, the 1st Saturday in August — August 5, 1961.

All brethren and friends are invited to attend this meeting.

(Elder) A. J. Slauson

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND
(To May 1, 1961)

Verna C. Allison, Fla.	$5.00
Mrs. J. C. Holly, Va.	1.00
Mildred D. Gordy, Mich.	2.00
Mrs. J. B. Simmons, Tex.	3.00
John Franklin Lax, Ill.	5.00

Danville, Virginia **July, 1961**

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CIRCULAR LETTER

The Delaware Association of Old School Baptists, in session with Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, May 13 and 14, 1961, sends Christian greetings to those brethren whose chief concern is to remain in gospel faith and order, and those with whom we correspond, and with whom we unite in prayer for grace to be kept faithful in things pertaining to God and godliness.

Dear Brethren: We address you in our Circular Letter with the desire that we may be mutually drawn together in thanksgiving and praise to the great and only God for his abundant grace and mercy in preserving us in the truth of the gospel, so that we do not seek confederacy with those of dissimilar doctrines and practices.

We are aware that we are few in number, and that the number of voices to preach the unsearchable riches of God's grace, are few in these parts, yet we are no less desirous of maintaining what our brethren have maintained in

the churches of this association for many score years; for we are convinced that what they maintained is the doctrine of God our Saviour, the faith once delivered to the saints; and we earnestly pray that, if God wills it so, we may be preserved in our course in these matters; and that we might continue to be mindful not only of the doctrine, but the order as well. We know that this is necessary for the preservation of the distinctive and true doctrine of God's revealed word; and we would be admonished that the full sense of Apostolic teaching was to preserve the bonds of fellowship among brethren, by endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. This we would strive to do; and this is what is done when disorder is not condoned.

It is no secret that there have been many departures because of one thing or another, since our brethren stood together at Black Rock, and other places, during the early years of the nineteenth century. Our position is that those things believed and maintained by the brethren then, are the same that should be maintained by us today, in order that our distinctive doctrine and order be not different from our staunch brethren of years ago; in order that we continue steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer; and in order that our distinction of Baptists of the Old School be not lost in the maze of conflicting doctrines and practices. Upon these primitive things we are standing today, and would not be removed from them.

It has been with much concern that we have read and heard of disorders and departures before our day, and have sometimes observed them for ourselves. We are pained that these things should be, but we know that in human experience passions are often unbridled even by those in the church; and that often brethren follow men who, for the moment, are unrestrained in their quest for notoriety and leadership. And we know also that sometimes there has been an easing of membership requirements, so that men untaught of grace have had influence in churches, and finding the tenants of the Old School not to their liking, have undertaken to reform, much as prior to 1832, which has resulted in retaining the name, but un-tempering the doctrine and order, to make a show of love for men not authorized by distinguishing grace.

To these probably many other things could be added, but these suffice to show that there has not always been a "taking heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine"; not always an examining of ourselves whether we be in the faith; and not always seeking the mind of the Spirit in the affairs of the church.

These things are recognized and acknowledged, but we are convinced that the truth is still in our midst, and is not departed from the earth; that the Lord is yet calling his people out of darkness into light; that there are many, many places where the Lord is worshiped in spirit and in truth; and that there are many of his called servants who are blessed to preach with power and demonstration of the Spirit, making no compromise for personal advantage.

We are therefore glad to say that all is not gloomy; that all of our joys of faith are not at an end, for our God yet reigns over all of his work. False brethren, false doctrine, much disorder, or many divisions, have not changed the course of God's purposes concerning his church. Have we not seen revivals where it seemed all was dead? Is there not a closer knitting together of brethren when the causers of trouble are departed? Have not the Lord's servants been drawn closer together when persecutions and divisions have caused them to stand up as one man in defense of the truth?

As we are reminded of these things, and as some of us are assembled here in this meeting, is there not a solemnity; is there not a felt sense of the Lord's presence; is there not a rever-

ence when we come together where prayer is wont to be made? And is there not a feeling of awe when we remember how greatly we are blessed with the love of God's truth, and with the love and fellowship of His people; and with the desire to stand firmly in the only God honoring and God given faith that has ever been in the world?

Our address to you is a reminder of our ancient heritage of God's mercies. As we remain steadfastly in the faith once delivered to us, so do we uphold the honor and glory of our God in the midst of much error and ungodliness; and so do we testify against doctrines contrary to the teaching of the Spirit. Outside of these things, the church would have no distinguishing marks, and nothing to indicate that she is a kingdom not of this world.

As we see departures from the faith, and idolatry rampant throughout the world, may we have the spirit of prayer indited in our hearts, to pray for Zion as Habbakkuk did for Israel in his day, "O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy."

Elder John D. Wood
Elder Arthur R. Warren, Moderator
Reese S. Jarmon, Clerk

EDITORIAL

THE PRESENT SALVATION OF THE CHURCH

The Lord's people are commanded to pray for daily bread. The type in wilderness holds us to the fact that what we had yesterday will never do for today. To use the type in our preaching means that everything happening to them on that wilderness journey is, in some wonderful way, applicable to us today. Who gave them the manna? If we know who gave them the manna, then, if the type is applicable to us today, we know who gives us our food, spiritually speaking. If they devised, or helped after another devised, then we have a pattern for the church today. If the Lord blessed them, independent of them all, then he likewise blesses us today. The pattern holds good whichever way it was.

It doesn't matter what men say about it, whether those men are in or out of the Old School Baptist church. All of the assertions of men will never produce one scintilla of evidence in the highest court of time, to wit, the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, that our present salvation is one way or the other. It takes Bible evidence to prove things before this court. Everyone taught of God must have a "thus saith the Lord" for their evidence. What men think will not do. The irrational raging of men against the truth will never satisfy a soul that is exercised in the things of God.

That pattern is given for all time. The things written aforetime were written for our learning. Whose learning? Those that we could reach? No, my God, not that flimsy doctrine. Those that we could proselyte? No, no, none of the proselyting doctrine which would make us two-fold the inhabitants of hell. But the things written aforetime were written for our present day learning. This learning belongs to the children of God, and, primarily, it belongs to the Old Baptist people. If we have not learned, both from the written word, and from experience, that the Bread which feeds our hungry souls comes from above, we have not been taught very far by the Lord.

God gives the spirit of prayer, but that is not all that he gives. We likewise have the answer given to our prayer. I do not mean that all our petitions are answered, because they are not all prayers from the Lord. The daily begging for bread is daily answered with Bread. The answers may not seem in mercy sent, but somewhere they will be made clear. If our present salvation was in our hands, and God answered our prayers accordingly, many of us that write and read these lines would not be here to do so. It is certainly a great blessing that God answers the prayers that his

Spirit enables us to pray, but it is a great blessing that he does not answer the ones that come from carnal longing.

As I sit here in ponderation on the present status of my own fragile barque and the condition of my dear people, the Old School Baptist, I am made to look in astonishment at the saving grace and marvelous power that has subdued my carnal nature and brought me, as I humbly hope, in meek submission to his prevailing will. In the first place, I would never have been (if I am) an Old Baptist. I did not know **how** to be one; not knowing what they believed, nor why they believed it; not knowing how to act like one, nor why they acted as they do, if I had or tried to be, I would still be stumbling around trying to mimic the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. But that helplessness is not confined to the beginning of my experience. The warfare has been a daily conflict since its inception; I have had to endure its raging charges from day to day, and from moment to moment, knowing that the next would end in my utter abandonment to the wiles of Satan. Being reduced to desperation and destitution I could never have stemmed the tide, had not the sovereign and eternal Spirit of Almighty God been enlisted on my side, leading, directing, encouraging. That was true yesterday; it is no less true today. With John Newton, it is my soul's delight to sing

"Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come:
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far
And grace will lead me home."

And John Newton had the same grace in mind all the way through the hymn. It was sovereign grace that brought him from the drunkard's tavern to the house of the Lord, and it was the same grace that kept him there.

It was the sovereign work of the Lord Jesus Christ that gave Peter in his day, together with the elect family of his time and times to come, a lively hope. This living hope was given them by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. If we have this hope today, it is given us by the same power. We believe today, if we believe, in the same way, and from the same source, that the brethren at Ephesus did (Eph. 1:19, 20), and there isn't a man or woman living, or that has lived, or will yet live, that had the first septillioneth part in their believing. It came about by the same power to these at Ephesus, and to all the elect in Peter's day, as well as in our day. It doesn't differ about the time element; the two thousand years since Christ arose from the dead has not diminished from the power of that resurrection. Christ is as much alive **now** as he was when he said, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forever more, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death." (Rev. 1:18)

To them literally and spiritually, and to us spiritually, there has never been an equal to the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is an experience that Paul and Peter kept referring to. What sweetness and joy and keen anticipation there is in the soul cheering doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. As I write again and again of the dismal scene; as I preach again and again of the trying time through which these dear saints passed; as I blend it all again and again in my picture drawing of the tryst of the soul in its bitter anguish of an absent Lord, I do hope that the trembling jailors and weeping Marys among my many readers may be given to pause in the mad rush of the age in which we are living and to come hither and look into the present beauties of Beulah land.

All the tongues and pens of dull mortality are not sufficient to describe the anguish of the two as they walked toward Emmaus, or of Mary as she viewed the empty, gaping tomb, thinking that His precious body had been removed by the gardener; or, for that matter, Peter and all those that had travelled with him as He went ministering, giving them to believe that, through His coming into the world, Israel would be restored, or, for that matter (and most importantly) we poor ruined sinners

today, as we feel the bitter anguish of our soul after having known and felt the dear Saviour, and then to feel His absence. What a ruined, destitute assembly that turned towards home after his burial. Ah, dear reader, young and old, rich and poor, high and low, how awful, how dreadful it was when Jesus was first absent from your soul. Did it not have the same effect on you, as it did on the two that walked toward Emmaus, as it did on Mary when He revealed himself to her, as it did on Peter when he sent forth that living epistle?

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy (John 10:10) hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." That hope was in lively exercise at that time. We, the strangers scattered wherever they may be found, have now at this present moment this hope. We have it one day the same as another, all coming about through the power of Christ's resurrection.

Well may the Church sing in triumphant praise:

"Who can faint while such a river
Ever flows their thirst t' assauge;
Grace which, like the Lord, the giver,
Never fails from age to age."

And this has been the keynote of the songs and supplication of the dear saints of God down the steeps of time, and it will be our present salvation along this whole journey through, for we shall continue to sing with John Newton,

"The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures."

And, furthermore, if our salvation is of the Lord, as John heard the heavenly hosts singing that it was, and as our daily experience has shown us, we will soon cross the dark river of death, but in that bright and celestial city of God, we will not change songs when we arrive there. We may have learned it, as did Jeremiah, by fire being shut up in our bones; as did Jonah, in the belly of hell with seaweeds around our neck; as did the whole household of faith, with Pharoah behind, the sea in front, and the mountain walls on each side; as did Peter, after finding that his thought of being able to save, not only himself, but Christ; as did Paul, when he counted, one by one, all his vast stores of earthly riches off as dung that he might be found in Christ, but whatever the crucial through which we are brought, our testimony and our song will be,

"It is finished, O what pleasure
Do these charming words afford;
Heavenly blessings without measure,
Flow to us from Christ the Lord;
It is finished, it is finished,
Saints the dying words record."

And the hand of Christ, the footsteps of the flock, the loving letters of Paul and Peter and John and James and Jude will be in our hand and mind, joy shall be on our countenance, our tear dimmed eyes will be lifted heavenward, and our footsteps will be wending our way toward Him in whose strength and salvation we now are travelling.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

REPENTANCE

Many, La., July 19, 1874

Elder Beebe: You will confer a special favor on poor me, by explaining how it is that men in a state of nature, or rather in our fallen state, are required and commanded to repent, and still they cannot do so unless enabled by divine power. Please grant my request through the "Signs," and you will oblige one who feels that his lot is cast in an isolated place.

E. Duggan

REPLY

Much confusion, we apprehend, results from confounding the various kinds of repentance of which the scriptures speak, without discriminating between legal and gospel, natural and spir-

itual, or that which is required of all men everywhere, (see Acts xviii. 30) and that which is the gift of God, and inseparably connected with the forgiveness of sins. The scriptural meaning of the word repent, or repentance, is to turn away from some principle, practice or thing, and embrace, pursue or practice something opposite, or in another direction. As for example, "It repented the Lord that he had made man upon the earth," which is explained in the same connection to mean, that God had determined to destroy man whom he had created from the face of the earth. — Gen. vi. 7, 8. Also Jonah iii. 10, "And God saw their works, (the men of Nineveh) that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that he had said he would do unto them, and did it not." And yet in the sense in which the word is applied to man, we are assured that "God is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent." — Num. xxlll. 19. In all his attributes, God is immutable, and with him there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. In the dispensations of his providential government, he forms the light and creates darkness; he makes peace and creates evil. He sends blessings and judgments, as seemeth him good.

Legal repentance, if we may be allowed thus to discriminate, is the turning away from any transgression of the law, and doing that which is lawful and right. As in the ceremonial law, Israel was commanded to "Cease to do evil, and learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, and plead for the widow." — Isa. i. 16, 17. "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord God. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord; wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye." — Ezek. xviii. 30-32. There was a legal repentance required of the Israelites who had transgressed the law that they were under, and sin offerings prescribed in their law by which a ceremonial atonement was made, and the delinquent Israelite was restored to the temporal blessings of peace, prosperity and security. This was commanded. But when the law in its spiritual application is applied, then sin revives and the sinner dies.

No legal repentance, no bleeding victims, no rivers of oil, nor cattle of a thousand hills, can remove from us the guilt of our transgressions, or make for us a new heart, or give us a new spirit. But the demands of the law are inexorable, and heaven and earth shall pass away, but no jot or tittle of the law shall pass away till all is fulfilled. Thus by the law is the knowledge of sin, and when convinced of sin by the law, we are made to know that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified in the sight of God. We cannot put away our sins from us; we cannot make us a new heart or a new spirit; therefore without something more than what the law can do for us, we must be held under its wrath and curse forever more. But what the law could not do for us, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. — Rom. viii. 3, 4. Compare the demands of the law as stated, Ezek. xviii. 30-32, with what God himself has promised to do for his people, Ezek. xxxvi. 25-27. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you

to walk in my statutes; and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people; and I will be your God."

That repentance which is unto life, and needeth not to be repented of, as will be seen by the above written scripture, is the gift of God, wrought in the hearts of God's people by God himself, and is always inseparably connected with eternal salvation. The testimony of the Son of God himself on this subject is conclusive. "Then opened he their (the apostles) understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." — Luke xxiv. 45-47. "Then Peter and the other apostles said, We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses of these things; and so also is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him." — Acts v. 29-32. This evangelical, or gospel repentance, is a change from death to life, from sin to holiness, from condemnation to justification, from a legal to a gospel state. It is no where in the scriptures demanded of any man; but it is a free, gracious and saving gift, bestowed upon all the heirs of God.

The repentance preached by John the Baptist was addressed exclusively to a people prepared of God for that change which should bring them out from Judaism, to believe on him who was to come after John. If John had commanded all the Jews to repent, he would not have demanded of the Pharisees and Sadducees, who had warned them to flee from the wrath which was to come upon the Jews. It was not enough that they had Abraham to their father; for all whom John recognized as the subjects of the baptism of repentance, were such, and only such, as brought forth fruits meet for repentance.

Repentance also is a word used to signify the reclamation of any of the children of God who have erred either in faith or practice. "If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him." — Luke xvii. 3. Repentance here as in other cases means a change, recantation, a turning away from that wherein he has erred.

Thus, to the angels of the churches in any error it is said, "Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly," &c. — Rev. ii. 5 & 16. When Paul stood on Mars' Hill, and preached to the Athenians against their abominable idolatry, he told them that although God had in former ages of the ignorance of the Gentile world, winked at their idolatry, he now commands all men everywhere to repent; that is to desist from worshiping idols — or from ascribing to the works of their own lands such honors as belong only to the true and living God. Because he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. — Acts xvii. 30, 31. That appointed judgment day was ushered in at the resurrection and exaltation of Christ, and his inauguration into his Mediatorial glory, as the Judge of the quick and the dead. He is now seated in the throne of his glory, and before him all the nations, Jews and Gentiles, are gathered, and he is now separating them, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats, and setting his sheep on his right hand, and the goats on his left, and saying to those on his right hand, Come, ye blessed, and to those on his left, Depart, ye cursed. — Matt. xxv. 31-46.

Our inquiring friend, E. Duggan, will perceive that we have not, in the foregoing remarks, attempted to reply to his inquiry in the order in which he

stated it, as we have been led rather to treat on the subject as the word is variously applied in the scriptures. It is not true that God has commanded all mankind to exercise or possess that repentance which is unto eternal life; for as we have proved, that saving repentance is the gift of God, the work of the Spirit, and the evidence of eternal life already in possession.

In regard to God's commanding what men have no power of themselves to perform, we hold that it is his sovereign right to do so. When Christ commanded the lame man to take up his bed and walk, and the man with a withered arm to stretch it forth, they had no power to do so, only as he gave them the power. When he commanded Lazarus to come forth from his grave, what power had Lazarus to leave his tomb except the power conveyed with the word? When God commanded Israel to advance, they had no power of themselves to divide the Red Sea, or to cause Jordan to roll back his waves. Indeed if we speak of the commands of God in his law to Israel, he commanded them to do what they had no power of themselves to perform. So when our exalted Prince and Savior calls sinners to repentance, his quickening power attends his word, and he speaks the word and it stands fast, he commands and it is done. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." The dead have no power to quicken and raise themselves, but at his command they shall come forth; for the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.

Many have seemed to regard the word repentance as only meaning sorrow or regret for something done, but Esau was sorry, and deeply regretted that he had sold his birthright, but could not recede from the contract; he could find no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears. He could be sorry, but he could not repent. Those who were pricked in their hearts on the day of pentecost were greatly alarmed, and cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" But they had not repented, or withdrawn from their connection with Judaism, by baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus; therefore they were commanded to repent. The terrors of death and hell may fill the natural mind of men with remorse and sorrow for their sins, but only the love of God can lead to evangelical repentance. The sorrow of the world worketh death; but godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of. — 2 Cor. vii. 10.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, September 15, 1874.)

OBITUARIES

SILAS C. BIRD

Our dear brother in Christ was born September 11, 1884, and departed this life September 25, 1959. He was a son of Joseph H. and Elizabeth (Wiley) Bird; and was united in marriage to Geneva Frances Plumley on October 24, 1906. To this union ten children were born: Orvie, Evi, and Ernest, of Hurricane, W. Va., Alvin, Charleston, W. Va., and Bernie, South Charleston, W. Va.; Mrs. Mack Searls, Mrs. Raymond Edwards, and Mrs. Sylvia Thornton, Hurricane, W. Va., Mrs. Elba Harris, St. Albans, W. Va., and Mrs. Roy Edwards, Culloden, W. Va. These survive, together with four brothers: Walter L., J. Addison, and John, of Hurricane; and Andy J. of Milton, W. Va.; and two sisters, Mrs. Stella Johnson of Hurricane, and Mrs. Vergie Pennington, Huntington, W. Va.; and there are 41 grandchildren and 22 great grandchildren.

Brother Bird was reared, and spent most of his life, in Putnam County, W. Va. as an industrious farmer. In early manhood he was brought under conviction for sin. So deep was his conviction and travail, and so mercifully was hope given him when peace was spoken, that he thought he was alone in the world, and that no one else believed as he did; as I have often heard him say. At a meeting of the Pocatalico Association in September, 1910, in a discourse by the late Elder J. H. Terry, he heard his convictions and belief preached out. His parents were Primitive Baptists, yet he did not know that Primitive Baptists believed the very doctrine of his experience. His rejoicing was great in first hearing the gospel, as the Spirit gave utterance to this father in Israel, and gave reception in the heart of

Brother Bird.

From this time Brother Bird desired a home in the church, but, feeling unworthy, he carried this desire for many years; until at length the Lord brought him home. I well remember when he came before the church at Providence, and was received and baptized by the unworthy writer, at our July meeting, 1942. Many things could be said respecting his sterling qualities, but it suffices to say that he was honest and upright, humble and unassuming, deeply indoctrinated, and gifted in expressing his convictions. His trust and hope was grounded in the blood and imputed righteousness of Christ, and that salvation was by grace alone. He was a kind husband and a tender father, rearing his children morally by precept and example. He was a very pillar in the church, and his joy in receiving the preached word, was strengthening to my feeble ministerial efforts. We were first cousins, but the love we had is sublimely greater than natural love.

He was in failing health for a number of years, and was nearly helpless for a long time, but quietly and peacefully fell asleep in Jesus, in hope of the resurrection of the dead. He left his widow, Sister Geneva, to mourn and struggle on for a short time, until she too passed on.

Funeral services were conducted at Mt. Morriah (Missionary) Baptist Church by the writer, assisted by Elder J. R. Lane; and he was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the Master's call.

also

GENEVA FRANCES (PLUMLEY) BIRD

Our dear sister, and widow of Brother Silas C. Bird, was born May 24, 1886, and fell asleep in Jesus in Thomas Memorial Hospital, South Charleston, W. Va., January 1, 1961. She was a daughter of Evi Plumley and Martha (Smith) Plumley. She was a little more than 74 years of age.

Her decline had been gradual since the passing of Brother Bird. During his long illness she constantly ministered to his needs, desiring to be spared and be given strength to care for him. This was sweetly granted unto her. Shortly after Brother Bird united with the church, Sister Bird came before the church, giving the reason of her hope in Christ, and was received with open arms. And it was my privilege to bury her in the grave of baptism. She was an humble, faithful member, until afflictions and infirmities interfered with her attending her meetings. She was a gracious wife and mother; yes, a mother in the neighborhood.

In addition to the children and grandchildren mentioned above, she leaves to mourn, four brothers: George Plumley, Hamlin, W. Va., Ambrose, of Milton, W. Va., Sherman, Columbus, Ohio, and Walter, of Griffithville, W. Va.; three sisters: Mrs. Ross Tabor, Hager, W. Va., Mrs. Bessie Stowers, Hager, W. Va., and Mrs. Neva Honaker, Midkiff, W. Va.

As I pen these lines, sacred memories flood my soul of the place they filled in the church, and of the days past and gone. And there is an aching void in my heart respecting the vacant seat in the church, and in the home, which can never be filled. To the bereaved children I would say that for father and mother to die, for them was gain. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; they cease from their labor, and their works do follow them." These works, the fruits of the Spirit, adorned their walk and conversation. May God's grace be your strength and stay.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder J. R. Lane, by request, at Mt. Morriah Church, after which she was laid to rest beside her husband, in hope of that blessed immortality. May God comfort the mourning ones. Submitted in love.

H. J. Bird

CHARLES WILLIAM THOMAS

Charles William Thomas, 80, died suddenly from a heart seizure on April 5, 1961, in the home of his cousin, Mrs. B. B. Hutchison, of Arcola, Virginia. He was the son of William Phineas and Sally Riticor Thomas; and was born and lived his entire life in Loudoun County, Virginia. He had been a farmer until a few years ago, when, after the death of his wife Mabel Furr Thomas, he retired and lived in and near Leesburg.

Mr. Thomas is survived by three children by a former marriage: Mrs. Stuart Barrett, Alexandria, Va.; J. Rector Thomas, Arlington, Va.; and Mrs. Julia Sowers, Aldie, Va. And by two sisters: Mrs. Margaret Ellington, Waynesboro, Va., and Mrs. Mabel Farnie, Leesburg, Va.; two brothers: Clarence R. Thomas, Charlottesville, Va., and Henry P. Thomas, Alexandria, Va.

Mr. Thomas was a regular attendant of Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, where funeral services were conducted by the writer on Saturday, April 8th; with burial in the church cemetery.

John D. Wood

MRS. HASSIE SORROW

Sister Hassie Sorrow passed away February 6, 1960, at the age of seventy-one. She was a member of Black Creek Church in the Oconee Association, in Walton County, Georgia, for a number of years; and joined New Harmony Church, Paulding County, Georgia, on confession of faith, November 2, 1958. She was

a true believer in the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists, and was a faithful member and regular attendant of her church meetings.

She leaves seven children to mourn her passing: four daughters: Mrs. Grace Tony, Mrs. Monteen Hardeman, Mrs. Jonny Sprag, and Mrs. Lois Smallwood; three sons: Claude, Noble and Charles Sorrow.

Funeral services were held at Black Creek Church by Elder O. J. Croker. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

Her husband, John Sorrow, was a member of Black Creek Church for a number of years. He died June 10, 1945, at the age of sixty-six years.

J. F. Jordan,
Clerk, New Harmony Church

FELIX G. DUFF

Springfield, Tenn.

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing the obituary of my father, Felix G. Duff, at his request, who read the *Signs of the Times* religiously each day. His eyesight was so poor he could hardly read the Bible. He certainly enjoyed his *Signs*. He was a member of the primitive Baptist Church, and served as Clerk of Fykes Grove Baptist Church for several years. My mother passed away January 9, 1958, and we miss them both very much.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Ernest Wilkerson

The following information is from an Adams, Tennessee, newspaper:

Funeral services were held for Felix G. Duff, 83, at Meggs Funeral Home, by Elders Joe Darnell, Carl Smith, and R. L. Biggs. Burial was in the Adams Cemetery. He was a retired farmer, and a native of Robertson County, the son of William R. and Mary Ann Stroud Duff.

Surviving are three sons: Ernest W. Duff, Pensacola, Fla.; Felix Grady Duff, Nashville; Edwin A. Duff, Russellville, Ky.; three daughters: Mrs. Clayton Rust and Mrs. W. B. McKinney, Adams; and Mrs. Ernest Wilkerson, Springfield; two brothers: J. W. and Earl B. Duff, Nashville; two sisters: Mrs. Edna Tolleson, Adams, and Mrs. George Whitehead, Los Angeles; and six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

OBITUARY AND RESOLUTIONS

INASMUCH, As it has been the will of our heavenly Father to remove from us our dearly beloved sister, Ella Williams Richardson, we bow in humble submission to His will.

Sister Richardson was born March 24, 1889, and died January 11, 1961, after suffering a stroke on Saturday before the 5th Sunday in May, 1960. She was united in marriage to George T. Richardson in August, 1911, who died many years ago. She united with Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church in August, 1968, and attended her meetings as long as she was able, and the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone, was her meat and her drink.

She leaves to mourn their loss, three sons, two daughters, one brother and one sister.

Her funeral was held in Malmaison Church, conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Elder J. W. Gilliam.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be placed on our church records, a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication, and a copy be sent to the family. May the family be reconciled to God's will.

Done by order of Malmaison Church.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Kate Dodd, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

We deeply mourn the death of our dear sister, Lela Stewart Barefoot, who passed away January 20, 1961, at the age of fifty-eight. She was married to Brother John Henry Barefoot, who survives; as do five step-children, one sister and two brothers.

Sister Lela was a devoted and faithful wife, a devoted step-mother, and a good neighbor. She united with Liberty Church on Saturday before the 1st Sunday in June, 1956, and was baptized the Sunday following with her husband, who united at the water, by Elder Lester E. Lee. She was a faithful member to her church, and often attended other meetings. She and her husband had been faithful to attend many years before uniting with the church.

The family and church have sustained a great loss, but we feel it is her gain. May God, who doeth all things well, give each one grace sufficient to say, "Thy will be done."

Funeral services were conducted at Liberty Church on January 22nd by Elders Lester E. Lee, W. D. Godwin, and Dewey Turner.

RESOLVED, That we extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family. May God bless and comfort them. And that a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family, a copy be recorded on our church record, and a copy be sent to the **Signs of the Times** and **Old Faith Contender** for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference February 4, 1961.

Committee: Sisters Eva Tadlock, Liddie Tart, Dolly Stewart, and Hattie Denning

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129 DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1961 NO. 8

GENTLE HANDS

There was once a great physician
By the shores of Galilee,
And his hands were swift in mercy
To set the sufferer free.

Oh, they came to Him great numbers:
The great and the small were there.
Yet his hands were raised to bless them,
And to lift from them each care.

The blind man approached him stumbling,
And upon his knees did go:
"My Master, only speak the words,
And my sight again will glow."

Then the Master spat on the ground;
And then with his hands so strong,
He mixed a clay to salve his eyes:
For he had been blind so long.

Then his eyes were opened at last,
And he rejoiced all his days;
For the Master's hand had healed him
And set his feet within the way.

The lepers cleansed, the lame did walk;
And the woman in the throng
Of passersby did touch his robe,
And thought she had done no wrong.

But virtue had gone out of him,
And he was so quick to know,
For no one can come unto him
Except blessed by him below.

So, raising his hands, he blessed her,
And her faith was brave and strong;
For she felt these hands would help her —
These hands that had done no wrong.

His hands so gentle with the aged:
With the young so soft and kind.
Swiftly he reached them to Peter
When great doubts had filled his mind.

"O ye of little faith," he cried,
And raised him out of the wave.
He reached his hands out to Lazarus
When he brought him from the grave.

O, could we all but remember
His feet have walked on our sod;
And his hands swiftly healed the sick;
And he leads us back to God.

Then we ought with our brethren go,
And journey that second mile;
Our coat and cloak we'd hand to him,
And do it all with a smile.

Our God has blessed man with two hands,
And so earns his daily bread;
But man lives not by bread alone,
As our good Master has said.

So we should gladly give a hand
To a brother when he falls:
We do not know what we may need
Extended us when he calls.

We too would sink beneath the waves
If not held up by his hand:
The rushing waters pull us down;
And they make us understand.

Since man lives not by bread alone,
Christ's virtue has been given:
It is his hand that lifts us up,
And leads us on to heaven.

Mary L. Eckhard,
7811 N. Yale,
Spokane 52, Wash.

BROUGHT TO LOVE THE TRUTH

Dear Editors and Readers,

It is Easter Sunday, and I don't remember when the Lord has blessed us with a more beautiful day. But perhaps this day would be beautiful to me even if instead of the golden sunshine there were rain, or instead of the trees being decked out in spring green they were barren of leaves, for this morning I was received into full fellowship with the sisters and brethren here at Saint's Rest Church in Dallas — and the joy in my heart is deep and real. Elder W. W. Taylor told me sometime ago that perhaps I would like to write to the SIGNS sometime and tell you of my experience. However at the time he told me, I felt I wouldn't be able to. But today my heart is so full that I want to speak

to someone, so I shall let it overflow, as it were, in this letter, and ask you to do with it as you see fit.

All day the melodies of two hymns have been sounding in my heart, but of those two hymns only these words, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound," and "Cast down, but not destroyed." Together with this should yet go the words, "God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform" — and there I have in three sentences the reasons, if I am not deceived, which in a circuitous and to me yet almost unbelievable path, which brought me to Saint's Rest Church, and into fellowship with the dear souls there. Isn't it strange that at the time of certain events in our lives we rarely see or feel the guiding of God's hand, and yet when by His grace we have arrived at a certain destination which He had long ago purposed, we are enabled to look back, and step by step see how He has brought us there. This must be so that we can say, "Yours is the glory dear Lord, all Yours."

The joy in my heart today, yes and the days and weeks past since I first heard Elder Taylor speak of God's electing grace, in October of last year, has been so great that it has inspired me with awe that one so utterly unworthy as I should be allowed to experience it. For the first thirty-two years of my life I knew nothing of God in that I cared to know nothing about Him. Of all the friends and acquaintances I had, I believe there was only one who truly with heart and soul loved her Lord, and that was the first person I came to know when as a ten-year old child I came with my parents and sisters to America. She was a Kindergarten teacher, and the only teacher in the school to which I was sent, who spoke German. So it was that I was put in Kindergarten. She taught me not only my first English words, but told me also about God's love, but I was not interested. Yet I know that she never ceased praying for me, and when 22 years later, through a strange chain of circumstances I was confirmed in the Lutheran Church, no-one, I believe, was happier than she. Not because I had become a Lutheran, but because she thought I had also become a child of God. I remember that she wrote me, "there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth." But I didn't know then what repentance was, and there was no joy in heaven the day I was confirmed. Yet perhaps at that time God did kindle the first spark of spiritual life in my soul, for I was different in that I **tried to be** different, yet try as I would, I never really was.

Allow me to go back a minute to say how I came to belong to the Lutheran Church — something I had neither planned nor purposed. My first son was about to be born and I thought (unbelievable as it sounds now) that he would **have** to be baptized. I knew that I had been, my sisters, and my parents before us, yet none of us believed in God. So I reasoned to myself that baptism was necessary. I never stopped to think that I had been born in a country where church and state were combined, and baptism, yes and confirmation too, was almost a matter of course, not necessarily of belief. And so to have my child baptized I began attending the instruction classes at the Lutheran Church which culminated in my being confirmed on Pentecost, 1951. I will always look on my "first" baptism, even though it was not valid before God as such, as a signpost in my life which served to bring me not only to a knowledge of God, but to a deep longing to know Him better — a longing which was never satisfied even though for ten years I was a most faithful member of the Lutheran Church. I studied doctrine, I studied dogmatics, I took instruction courses, made mission calls, taught Sunday School, was active in every way and manner that I could be. I truly **desired** to do the Lord's work, for the emphasis was always being put on that "we" are the Lord's hands and feet, and He needs "us" to do His work for Him. And oh, how I wanted to do that work; how hard I tried to help "convert" sinners to faith

in Him, never knowing that indeed He needs no help, and that the greatest need was my own. I **did** know I had a need, for my prayer for ten years was, "Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief" . . . "increase my faith" . . . yet despite that prayer, I wasn't letting Him do it, but was trying my utmost to do it myself, for I know that hidden in the deep recesses of my heart I felt He would somehow "reward" me with a faith which I knew to be real. But all my "willing" and all my "running" was of no avail, until I learned that it is "of God who showeth mercy."

In what a strange manner the Lord led me to come to an experimental knowledge of these words. If my baptism was a sign-post which first brought me to know **of** God — a Bible, one particular Bible, which I acquired in a strange way too lengthy to mention, was another "sign-post" which in an equally strange way led me to the "Bible Hospital" where Elder Taylor was working. Through this association I visited Saint's Rest Church one Wednesday, but not because I was **looking** for anything. Yet here, through his preaching I felt the first stirrings deep in my soul, awakening me to the fact, not that **I** knew God, but that **He** knew me — not as righteous, but as self-righteous, as a sinner through and through. And there came a day, rather a night, in January, which I hope I may never forget. It was as though my inmost being was stirred up, and the words came over and over, "confess your faults," "there is something you have to confess," "My **knowing** your sins is not enough" . . . and one after the other, not only the sins I had committed against other people, but all of the "works" I had done the past ten years were literally wrung from deep inside me (being born again is a painful process) — and with each one it was as though the question came, "Did you do that for **Me?** And each time I had to confess, "No, Lord, not for Thee," "No, not for Thee," until I thought I could bear it no longer and I cried bitterly. I knew I was justly condemmed, but that was not why I cried, but because I knew that it wasn't Jesus I had been serving, but myself, and it was bitter in my mouth. But all at once like spring rain there came the words, "If you confess your faults, He is faithfur and just to forgive your faults." And, what to me was a miracle, occured: I **felt** forgiven, I felt washed, and clean — even as the rain washes the dirt and dust and grime from whatever it touches. It was as though Jesus had said, "your sins and iniquities will I remember no more" and I could feel to say, "Let us drawn near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience." That same day it was as if a voice said to me, "Now you are just **beginning** to know Me" — and I thought, oh Lord, after **ten** years, and the words came to me "what are ten years? With Me it is but the flickering of an eye" — and I felt at peace.

Two weeks ago I was baptized and it was as though "I had been washed with pure water." And today the sisters and brethren gave me their hand in full church fellowship. I feel altogether undeserving, and humble, but oh, so full of joy. I have heard it said, "God's children live in a mountain country" and already in these past weeks I have experienced what it is to go down into the valleys, but I trust that our Lord who said, "cast down, but not destroyed" will give me the strength to cling to His guiding hand, wherever He may lead, over rough or smooth paths, and will, I hope, at the end of the road bring me safely Home.

There is so much more I would like to say but this letter is already much, much too long. Yet I still want to add how much I have been enjoying the SIGNS the short time that I have been getting them, for in every article I read over and over again not only my own experience, but the wonderful truths which have become my dearest possession. May our Lord continue to bless this publication to the joy and uplifting of His children to whom it brings preci-

ous food.

A "very new and little" Sister,
Renate Trawnik
1114 Tarpley Ave.
Dallas 11, Texas

THE CHURCH

The church, as I see it, has been called a number of different names, such as Israel, Zion, Speckled Bird, The Lord's Habitation, The Lord's Chosen, Elect, The Kingdom of God, The Generation of Jesus Christ, The Sheep Fold, The Bride, The Church of God, The Church of Christ.

I have recently had continued thoughts about trying to write to the paper. As I undertake to do so it is with fear that it will not meet the approval of the editor or the readers. But most of all, I fear it will not be spiritually directed. I believe that it is a duty of some to write, but I don't know if I should be one among them or not, realizing my inability due to various reasons. If I should write anything unsound, I trust someone will feel it their duty to offer me some correction; and may it be just as true when the seriousness of any church matter becomes great enough to make it necessary for those responsible, to take proper steps to make the needed adjustments to the best interest of the church as a whole.

Well, I must get on with what I intended to write about, the church. I would like to begin with Galatians 3:16: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." God made this promise to Abraham. He and Sarah, his wife, both laughed at this as he was a hundred years old and she ninety. We find in Hebrews 10:23, "He is faithful that promised." The promise, in particular, that I would like to call your attention to, is in regard to the Church. In doing so, I would like to notice what is said about the seed in Genesis 17:19, "And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son *indeed;* and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him." A son indeed was promised and his name was Isaac. This promise being made to such an aged man, along with other unusual characteristics, makes it very clearly seen that Isaac was a type of Christ. I can see some symbol of Christ in Isaac as Abraham was making his way to offer Isaac on the altar on the mountain, where he was about to be slain. Genesis 22:10, "Abraham stretched forth his hand and took the knife to slay his son." From there, Isaac, to me, represents the church in God sparing him; as he went free, unharmed from the altar by reason of God providing a ram to take his place. Inasmuch as the ram was offered in the place of Isaac, I believe that Christ bore the weight of the sin of the church while in the garden, and the suffering and shame on the cross, for an offering to God without spot, that the church would be free from the guilt of sin and the penalty of it in eternity. I believe that God looks at the church, through the sacrifice of his Son, as being without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. I can't help from believing that rather than being eternally condemned, the church has been made every whit whole by the offering of Jesus Christ.

Getting back to the promise of Abraham and his seed, I think of this as a two fold promise. Isaac was a fullfillment of the first part, and what God would do concerning his seed as the second part. We may consider that those going to bring Rebecca for a wife for Isaac were made to know that she was the one, as she quoted words of the meditation of the servant as a sign desired by the servant, which was unknown by Rebecca. When she was leaving her household to become the wife of Isaac, it was said by some of her kinsmen, according to Genesis 24:60,

"Be thou the mother of thousands of millions." Now it surely must have been the spirit of prophecy directing the one that gave the parting words to Rebecca, as she was leaving home to become the wife of Isaac. I believe that God made the choice for Rebecca, who was a virgin to be the wife of Isaac. God must have had a purpose in the parting words. It seems as if this had some connection with Solomon's Song 6:9, "My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her." I believe that this one Dove here is the Lord's people; which takes my mind back to the one seed which I mentioned in the beginning. The mother spoken of here, I believe, has reference to Rebecca, the wife of Isaac, the mother of thousands of milions. I know not how many, but I would say all that's within the chosen realm.

Let us now notice a very interesting bit of prophecy concerning the fountain for the cleansing of the church. Zechariah 13:1, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleaness." Surely this fountain was opened at Golgotha for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, which were the Lord's chosen people, for sin and uncleaness. This fountain was the only sufficient cleansing that has ever been offered for sin and uncleanliness. This prophecy was penned long before the fountain was opened, even back in the days when many sacrifices were offered which could not take away sin, and when the Lord's people were often times referred to as Zion.

Let us notice Isaiah 4:4, "When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning." Notice the words, "when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion". This I take, means a positive event for a future day. Some more of Isaiah's prophecy which is very closely connected with the verse above concerning Zion and the foundation of the church, is Isaiah 28:16, "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation." I would say that this prophecy is pointing directly to Jesus Christ in the New Testament age concerning the foundation of the church: I Corinthians 3:11, "For other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Christ also said, "Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends." Yes, Jesus was obedient unto death. His suffering was great enough, his blood was precious enough and powerful enough; and God loved his people good enough, to give Him as a complete offering for the sins of the people that make up the church.

May I go back just once again to the old scripture, as I love to think about the prophecy of the old and it being confirmed in the new. Psalms 127:1, "Except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it." For vain is the help of man. I trust you will notice that I have intended in this letter to write in regard to the spiritual house rather than the meeting house we use to worship in. We have to be made fully conscious of the fact that the Lord, only, builds the house, and there is nothing a man can do about it. I hear quite a bit said about duty, and I highly agree as far as it is in harmony with the Scritpures. For an example, notice Hebrews 11:7, "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house." and Genesis 6:22, "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he."

So the real truth of the matter is that Noah was warned of God through faith and fear, and, if I may make it precisely, I would say there is power

in the command; and I believe wherever grace has shined into the hearts of God's chosen people as the light of men, it will have an effect. But any act on the part of a man for the peace and comfort of God's people is worthless. I often think of the scripture which says that some have a zeal of God but not according to knowledge. Men often get an idea that it is their duty to do a certain thing and are not divinely guided. I am afraid it may be the case in writing this letter. A man may sometimes think he is to some degree lifted up, and it will be only misleading thoughts from his fleshly mind.

I think of Peter when he wanted to build three tabernacles, and it was not the leading of the Spirit. But, may I leave the improper statement of Peter, and take note of a positive and correct one as he answered Christ in Matthew 16:16-18, "Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church." The scripture speaks of a spiritual rock which was Christ. In I Corinthians 12:3, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." It appears that the readiness of Peter to give a correct and positive answer without any hestiation, "Thou art the Christ," surely was by a divine revealed knowledge of the Holy Ghost from the Father, — revealed in Peter, not because of who he was, but rather for what he was. It was the work of God in Peter that Christ was speaking of when he said, "Upon this rock I build my church." Ephesians 2:20-22, "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

Here, when Paul was writing to the Ephesian brethren, he didn't limit this matter just to Peter when he referred to the church being built on the apostles and prophets. I think Paul was meaning the same thing that Christ did when talking to Peter about building his church. This, to me, means the very principle of Christ that was in these men. The same thing that caused them to be apostles and prophets was also that which Peter was blessed with when he and John found the lame man at the gate, and Peter said, "In the name of Jesus rise up and walk." He was healed and leaped for joy.

So, it's the work of God through his Son Jesus Christ that Christ is referring to when speaking of building his Church. The scriptures tell us that Christ is the foundation of the church, the head of the church, the chief corner stone, and door. So, He is the author and finisher of the Christian's faith. I Peter 2:5, "Ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house." I believe a lively hope is a lively stone in a spiritual house, and in some wonderful way they are builded together for a habitation for the Lord through the Spirit and are one as a body in Christ. Many are one body in Christ and every one members one of another. I Corinthians 12:18, "God set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased him." This was when God chose a bride for his Son before the days of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Christ said before Abraham was I am.

Inasmuch as God was well pleased in his Son, I believe he is also pleased with the bride he chose for his Son when he placed the members in the body as it pleased him. "It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell." These members are those that God chose and predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son. They also are bought with a price. Jesus purchased them with his own blood. They are the church, and shine forth as ac-

ceptable in the beloved, through the perfection of the offering of himself to God without spot. Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of the water of the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. This, of course, is when he comes for his Bride. I believe Jesus set in order his church in its militant state when he went upon a mountain and called unto him whom he would and ordained twelve and sent them out to preach. If I am correct this was Mount Hatan in Palestine; and he often went to the mountains. I have felt to go to the mountains many times myself in the past 24 years, where I feel I have received a source of comfort at least some of the time.

I have tried to convey some of my thoughts of the Old Scriptures as well as the New, hoping I haven't been too lengthy. I have written only a brief portion of what I had in view. If I have written any thing that seems to not be in harmony with the faith that was once delivered to the saints please tell me first. If I have written any thing that is worth the time and space in the paper, give all the praise and honor to the Almighty Sovereign God of all Grace and his dear Son the Saviour of sinners. I trust he has appeared to me in a spirit of just condemnation, and also in a spirit of merciful justification through the sacrifice of Himself for such an undeserving one as I.

Thomas T. Brammer
Box 303
Collinsville, Va.

WHAT GREAT THINGS WE LEARN THROUGH TRIALS

Box 3,
Denison, Washington

Dear Editors and Readers:

It has been brought to my mind to write, and if I am given strength, and God so directs, I will try; without Him I can do nothing.

I have been blessed to enjoy the wonderful writings in the *Signs,* for they are the things I believe. God's people are made a willing people, and the things they experience today, are the same as those experienced by those long gone before. God is still the same eternal, steadfast, unchangeable, all powerful God.

I will try and tell of one of my experiences. My oldest daughter was missing all of one cold day and night. Her Dad and I started our search for her, but it was many hours of searching in vain. I was made to realize the helplessness and weakness of the flesh; but I was determined I would find her on my own, after having tried to pray, and knew that my efforts there, too, were all in vain. Oh, the bitterness and rebellion that befell me! It seemed to me He had turned his back and closed the door, saying, "I know you not."

Oh, the torture I suffered in that state! I tried to pray, and couldn't. I tried to beg for mercy, and couldn't do that either. After what seemed an eternity, I was made to ask, "Almighty God, if you will, give me strength. Stand by me, and comfort me in my hour of need." I was made more calm now, praying for strength He alone could give; and was made to know that God is all power, and that of myself I had nothing — not even the power to pray. I believe all things come from God; and I mean all things.

It was near noon the following day when I was told to call a certain phone number; which I did. I placed the receiver to my ear, and heard my daughter's voice. "Oh, God!" I cried. I felt ashamed for the way I had acted; and my thoughts and heart uttered groans I could not utter. I feel sure that you, dear ones, who have had any of these experiences, know how I felt. I did then beg for His mercy; and to forgive this wicked, helpless mass of utter confu-

sion, called man; this lump of clay; this lump of nothingness.

Yes, I believe we are made a willing people. He opens and none can shut; He shuts and no man can open. He gives, and He takes away. And I am made happy, and glad, for if He is with us, who then can be against us? He makes the lion to lie down with the lamb. He calms the storm. He, and He alone, comforts my heart and heals my sufferings; He humbles my heart and soul, and leads me in the way of his will. He makes me to know that he is GOD; and to know him is to fear him. And I am made willing for his will to be done. He is the potter, and I the clay to be moulded to his will and purpose.

My prayer is that I might be made humble, and to wait upon him. One of the very least, if one at all.

Hasseltine Allen

Ocean City, Maryland

Dear Editors:

I am sending you, with his permission, a letter I received from Elder A. J. Slauson. It came on a day when I was very low in a dry place, and for awhile after reading it, I felt lifted up, and was made to think of our wonderful, all powerful Saviour. After the sweet meditations it brought, I felt I would like to share it with others, if you have room in the *Signs of the Times* to use it.

May God in his great mercy give us grace to sometimes look away from this perishing and sin filled world, and unto Him, the Lord of all.

A sister in hope,
Ethel Holloway

"HE IS THE WAY"

46 Cedar Street,
Kingston, N. Y.

Very Dear Sister Holloway:

I am ashamed for the long delay in answering your very kind and most appreciated letters; and before I say anything more, I want to thank you for the two nice pictures of two of your meeting-houses in Maryland. I was so glad to be with you dear people again last Fall at your association; to see and greet so many of the kindred in Christ. I always have enjoyed coming among you dear people, though some we used to see have been called home, having lived their allotted time in the wilderness world; which is mingled with joys and sorrows, from which to depart and be with Christ is far better. The Apostle said, For him to live was Christ, but to die was gain.

Dear one, if we can feel in some measure that we have a little foretaste of that heavenly manna which comes down from the God of all love and mercy, to feed our hungry souls from time to time, through the teaching and work of the Holy Ghost; who teaches as no man can teach: convicting of sin, and causing the poor sinner to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to cry unto God for mercy, grace, and strength; and as a little child unable to walk alone, then when Jesus is in some wonderful way made to know us, saying, "I am the way," then our utmost desire is for him to be The Way for us. No other way will suffice, for the poor, helpless sinner, for all other ground is sinking ground.

Jesus said, "I am the way." And he is the way that every child of grace wants. He is the way from death to life; the way from condemnation to salvation; the way from under the law to grace; the way from un-godliness to righteousness; the way from earth to heaven; the way from darkness to light; the way from sinner to saint; the way from hatred to love; the way from being blind to seeing; the way from being deaf to having a hearing ear; the way from weakness to strength; the way from the wilderness to the City of Zion; the way from the lack of understanding to knowing God; the way from having no God to having God; the way to know how to thank God for his many

blessings; the way to look unto God for all our needs; the way to know how to serve God with fear and trembling; the way that enables one to trust in God; the way that enables one to love God; the way that enables one to love the brethren; the way from selfishness to charity; the way that the foolish man learns wisdom; the way that the poor sinner knows that without Christ he can do nothing; the way the poor sinner is made to hate his own life; the way that enables a poor sinner to pray to God.

And He is the way that intercession is made to God the Father for poor sinners; the way that the sinner is freed from bondage of sin and iniquity; the way that the law has no more dominion over the saved sinner; the way that the Bride (the church) shall be fully cared for in all that she is in need of in this world, or the world to come; the way that when He shall appear, his children will appear with him in glory and see him as he is; the way that their vile bodies shall be fashioned like unto His glorious body.

. . . Sister Slauson remains so weak she can scarcely do any work. Hope you and your dear husband are enjoying the great blessing of good health. I often think that we all have to drink our cup: if it be pleasure, joy, or afflictions; or pain and much suffering; or it be vinegar mingled with gall. But the poet says: "The bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower." Dear sister, if it can be our lot, a few moments in heaven will make amends for all. Best regards and wishes to your dear husband and much love in the Lord to you, from both of us.

A. J. and Elizabeth Slauson

REBUKES AND ADMONITIONS HAVE THEIR PLACE

R. F. D. 1,
Ruffin, N. C.

Dear Brethren:

I am reminded that our subscription is due; and I hope as long as I shall live, I shall have the privilege of receiving the paper. I have read much good from its pages: at times I have felt rebuked and admonished in reading some of the articles. When that certain something within me arrests my attention to the fact that I am "out of the way", and to seek the old paths wherein is found righteousness, it causes a striving to take place within me to turn my face towards Zion's hill, where I know my greatest joys. When I am head-strong, self centered, and unmindful of the things wherein, as I hope, I have been taught, oftimes then when I have read, or heard a good sermon, I feel the rebuke, or admonition applies to me; and for days have pondered over it, that surely that was written or spoken to me.

Oh, I am such a wayward child. So often do I go astray, doing or saying things so unbecoming to one who professes a hope in Jesus' name. Then do I wonder if I did not run before I was sent; or, perhaps I only caught the shadow and not the substance. It seems I am so full of wrong doing, which, when I am reminded of it, fills me with grief, and with hatred of the things I do that are so sinful. Then I long for the sweet peace in being drawn close to the things which are most dear to me; and I long to feel that I am a link in the chain of love: heaven born love. I love the soft breezes that warm our soul; I love the time of the singing of the birds, for these are like the joyful sound of the gospel. The melody is in harmony, the warm breezes engulfs made known to us, saying, "I am the ward and upward towards the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus our Lord.

If we are his children, I believe He will lead us safely all the way through our journey here. We cannot expect the world to love us, for they did not love our Lord, nor his teaching. Should the time come that some of us shall have to give up this earthly life because they

refuse to bow to the beast or his image, it is indeed a comforting thought to feel that not one sparrow can fall to the ground without Him. When the Spirit is present with us, it teaches us to love our enemies, and pray for those who would despitefully use us. Then, lead us, Lord, as children of light, giving us a heart of thanksgiving in all that is done for us.

We feel thankful for our paper, and its editors who labor to give us so many things that be of God and true holiness, which we glean from time to time from its pages; and feel that even a rebuke given for our good, is given in the bonds of Christian love. What a blessing that I am not cast away.

Mrs. Fred Cobb

THE WAY OF A MAN WITH A MAID

In the Proverbs of Solomon we find that in all his wisdom, he said, "There be three things which are too wonderful for me, yea, four which I know not." The fourth thing being, "the way of a man with a maid." I would not tell you that I understand this, for no words can describe the beauty therein; but I do feel that the man and the maid are figures of Christ and the church.

I would like to start with Adam being a figure of Christ; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. (Christ said, "No man can come unto me except the father which sent me draw him.") Adam said that this is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh." I feel that there is nothing on earth as precious to a man's heart as his bride. There is also nothing on earth as precious to Christ as the church. A man's bride is to forsake all others, just as the church is to forsake the world for her husband (Christ).

We find that the angel appeared unto Joseph in a dream, saying, "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." I hope I believe in predestination; for I believe that in the foreordination of God, Mary was the wife of Joseph. And I believe that the church was predestinated to be called, justified, and glorified; and I believe that Christ feared not to come into the world and cleanse her for himself; for the Spirit of Christ that is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

We find in Genesis 3:16, "Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." Ephesians 5:22: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

We find in I Corinthians 14:33, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." This I have experienced; for when our deacons were laboring so hard for peace, and to hold the church together, the women started making motions, and seconding them, and caused division. I see the regret of this shameful act.

I know that I am poor and ignorant,

but some things come to my mind; and I am made to wonder. With all due respect to ministers, I wonder if this scripture could apply to them. For the bride has many members in one body, and all members have not the same offices; so we being many are one in Christ. I realize that the minister has to present himself a living sacrifice, not knowing if he will be blessed by the Husband with the gospel; and, if not, and he preaches in the flesh, he will preach the things of the flesh; and fleshly things are shameful things.

We find in Acts 20:28, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." To me, an overseer is an adviser; not a ruler. He has rules with which to advise, just as the minister has the Holy Writ with which to advise. I feel our deacons are to watch over the table, which is the pulpit, and to see that the food is fit for the flock. The deacons are to take care of the church of God.

Those that are married know the ties of natural love; and those that are married to Christ know the ties of spiritual love. I like to think back over my experience, if indeed I have one, when I felt my burdens to be more than I could bear. I had been out in the darkness of the night crying and begging God for mercy, the forgiveness of my sins. I couldn't live; and I couldn't die. When I came in, my wife met me, and said, "You can tell me your troubles, for I have known this for a long time." I believe that only the children of God know the works of God; and I felt very small to think that I had tried to hide these things from one so precious to my heart. "Houses and riches are the inheritance of fathers: and a prudent wife is from the Lord." (Proverbs 19:14)

I realize that it is impossible to tell all the glorious things about this Husband and wife, so I would like to close with the beautiful sight the angel showed John in Revelation 21:9-11: "And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." This is the bride that He cleansed to present to himself a glorious church, not having spot, wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

If I am not deceived, he shewed me this church in a dream. They were all clothed in solid white, no male or female; and the beauty thereof I cannot describe. I hope I love this church with such a love that, as Paul said, if eating meat offends her, I will eat no more meat. I know the Bible says that it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! It is better to have a millstone tied around my neck, and be cast into the sea, than to offend one of these little ones. And I hope that God will bless me and enable me, should at anytime my presence cause confusion and unrest among the people I hope I love, to step aside, that the sea might be calm, and the ship cease to rock.

I realize that the belly of hell is an awful place; but it is not a new place for this poor sinner. I believe with all my heart that the only road to heaven is through hell. My prayer is to be kept humble at my brethren's feet; for he that exalts himself shall be abased. I don't mean to be offensive to anyone, but the word of God is offensive to un-

believers. "The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going", for the truth causes us to judge ourselves, and not others.

The bride shall not be judged, for He has cleansed her with his blood; and she shall be acceptable to her husband on that day for which all other days were made.

Clifton Robertson,
Reidsville, N. C.

EXPERIENCE

I would like to write something of my experience of the new birth, and things that happened to me while I was in nature's darkness. I was brought up under the teaching of Campbellism, but my parents died in 1908 while I was in my early teens; and I then made my home with Mr. and Mrs. Estes and family, who were Missionary Baptists. In 1910 we moved to Ellis County, close to a little place called Mountain Peak. There were two churches there — a Methodist and a Missionary Baptist. The Baptists called themselves the "old line party Baptists"; and I joined their Sunday School because I had gotten disgusted with the teaching of water-salvation, which the Campbellites firmly believe in. In 1911 these Baptists were holding a revival meeting, and when they called for mourners to be prayed for, I went up to the mourner's bench. I wanted the Sunday School and revival meeting religion for I really had always believed in it ever since I had been a Sunday School pupil, but I didn't feel any change until the next day, when I had a very clean feeling come within my breast; and in a few moments I felt another movement within me. Then I said within myself, "Now I've got it." (Yes, I had a change alright — instead of having one evil spirit, I had eight evil spirits.)

So I got the Sunday School and revival meeting religion. Christ said that, "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places seeking rest and findeth none; then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come he findeth it empty and swept and garnished. Then he goeth and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be with this wicked generation." So I got a good dose of the Pharisee's religion.

In 1913 we moved to Johnson County, and the Methodist church was the only church close, so I joined their Sunday School. I had the reputation of always knowing the lessons, for I took their Sunday School book and memorized the lessons. I didn't read the Bible very much in those days. It always condemned me. After Mr. Estes died, we moved to Fort Worth, where I joined the Klan; and was swelled up with pride. I concluded I ought to join a church there, so I joined Frank Norris' church; and I thought I was doing a glorious thing, and was really filled with vanity. But after I joined the New School Baptists, I became very much disturbed about the new birth; so I picked out texts in the Bible and prayed that Frank would preach on it, and maybe it would give me some knowledge of the new birth. This happened three times, and Frank used the texts, but it did me no good. I then prayed that the Lord would send an angel from heaven to tell me the truth, for the truth was not in man. One evening the next week I walked over to the Samson Ranch, expecting to meet an angel who would tell me the truth. But when I came close to the ranch, I became fearful, because I found myself in the presence of a great God; a holy, righteous, reverend God, who knew every evil thought and every evil intention that I ever had. I was made to know that He was everywhere present and no place absent, and that I could not hide from him, which I had thought of doing when I first felt his presence. Then I saw myself one of the world's greatest sinners; and I heard a still voice saying, "Many are called but few are chosen." These words locked my mouth like a

vise, and made me realize that I was trying to take of the Lord's table without having a wedding garment, because I had not been born again.

A terrible, dreadful feeling came over me, it seemed to me that the end of the world had come. When this feeling wore off, the Spirit of the Lord hardened my heart, and it felt like a heavy flint rock, and had a sharp pain in it; then I prayed that I might be relieved, and He gave me relief. I was plenty excited; and when I got home, I told the Estes family what had happened to me. Mrs. Estes said, "Will, that was the Lord talking to you." And I felt that I knew it was.

I worked for the County, and we were getting gravel out of a pit beside a little wooded creek; and between trucks we would have a little time. And I would go down to the creek and try to pray; and every word that fell from my lips, it seemed I could hear hitting the ground. Once at dinner time as I laid down trying to sleep the conviction off, the other workers though they would have some fun out of me. They took a trace-chain and wrapped it around my legs; then made a loud noise by shouting and slapping their legs, and woke me up. The first thing that entered my mind was that the Lord had come, and they were running from him. I got up to run and hide, but the chain had me fastened, and I fell over and screamed, for I was thoroughly frightened. They looked amazed, and said that they were only having a little fun. I didn't tell them at the time that I was under conviction, but later when they found out, they said they would not have done it if they had known.

After ten days, the heavy burden fell from my breast, and I received a hope that caused a rejoicing. But it didn't last long, for the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan was given me. I prayed three times for it to be removed; and I did without food for six days. Then I thought it was not pleasing to the Lord for me to do without food, so I ate a meal; then picked up the Bible. Before I had been afraid to read the Bible, being fearful that that which was in me would cause me to blaspheme the great God, if I even touched the Bible.

I opened the Bible at 2 Corinthians 12th chapter, and the first place I looked was the 7th verse, and I read the 7, 8 and 9th verses. And after reading them, I realized that that which was in me would not destroy me, but was put there to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. I seemed that if his grace was sufficient for the Apostle, it is enough for such a one as I. And I felt it was put in me as a token of salvation, and I desired to find a home. A voice said to go to the Primitive Baptists. But I thought they were too common, and I could not go to them. In my ignorance I disobeyed the heavenly voice, and I joined a Sunday School church. I stayed with them three months, serving their idols through the lusts of my flesh. The night I was to be baptized, the preacher took for a text, "The living Word of God." He preached that the Bible was the living word; but my thought was that he did not know what he was preaching, for the Bible is only the printed word, and Christ is the living Word. But I let him baptize me; yet realizing as I came out of the water that I would have to go to the Primitive Baptists.

There was a sister living close to Mrs. Estes, so I walked over to see her. I was hoping she would agree with me; so when I got into the house, I began to give my views on spiritual things. She let me talk about thirty minutes, then she said, "Bill Williams, you are a Hardshell Baptist. That's their doctrine you are talking." She told me they had services the first and third Sundays, and why not come and hear the Primitive Baptists preach. I replied that I would go the first Sunday, if it was the Lord's will. I got there a little late; and when I stepped into the church house and looked at those Baptists, a feeling came over me that these people are my brethren. I sat down on the very back seat. When the preaching was over, I thought,

"These don't skim over the surface like others do, and tell you nothing. They go down under the letter and bring out the meaning of the letter."

The next meeting day, after hearing Elder Moreland and Elder Smith preach, I thought, this is the church of the living God. I offered for membership; and Elder Moreland said, "Tell us Brother Williams what great things the Lord has done for you." I didn't have one word to say; but they received me into the church. Before, I had merely told them that I wanted to be baptized, when I had joined churches; and that was all there was to it, because others are so eager for members they don't bother about asking questions. At that time I did not know anything about the customs and practices of the Old School Baptists.

I resigned from the Klan, because the words pressed heavily on my mind, "Come out, and touch not the unclean thing." I rejoiced to get out of the thing I gloried to get in. I was to be baptized on the first Sunday in December. That week all the little creeks froze over hard, and it seemed they would have to break the ice to baptize me. In my mind I prayed that the Lord would send enough warm days to melt the ice. By Sunday the ice was all gone. Before Elder Moreland put me under the water, the very cold feeling left me, and when I came out of the water as if it were a day in June.

I felt that I had been baptized, but had not the three times before. When I got home, I received a cold reception from Mrs. Estes and one of the daughters, almost as cold as the weather. This was in the year 1924.

Living in hope of eternal life,
W. K. Williams
3125 Hiawatha
Fort Worth 14, Texas

"THERE IS AN UNKNOWN TONGUE"

643 Mt. Vernon Avenue,
Portsmouth, Va.

Dear Elder Spangler:

Enclosed is a check for my renewal of the dear old *Signs of the Times;* which I eagerly look forward to each month. It is food to those who "hunger and thirst after righteousness", for if it doesn't contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, I know not anything at all about it.

When I was very young, I recall an elder that when he prayed, he would say, "Lord teach us to know God, whom to know is life eternal." They shall all be taught of God from the least to the greatest; for the dear Lord does teach and reveal to all his people the things of the Spirit that he would have them to know. We do not learn these things from men. When we sit under the sound of the voice of God's under-shepherds, we are made to rejoice, and are made, by the workings of his "will and to do" in us, to know that they are preaching Christ and him crucified.

There is an *unknown tongue* that only those who are taught of the Lord understand; and blessed are those who can hear the exceedingly joyful sound, for it is truth. Let him that hath an ear to hear, hear these mighty, wonderful things of the Spirit; and blessed are they. They have a peace that passeth all understanding here below. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

The Spirit brings to naught the things that are, and makes manifest the things that are not. Paul was bent on binding the saints and taking them to prison; but then when a great light shown round about him, it brought to naught, as it were, the things that were; and brought to light spiritual things into his mind and heart — things which were not (in evidence) to Paul. Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of heaven, (or heavenly things).

"And you hath he qickened, who were

dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." (Ephesians 2:1, 2) So was the Apostle walking in ignorance to the Spirit of Life, until he was called with an holy calling, and told what he was by nature, and what he was by grace.

May the dear Lord bless you all to continue in his loving kindness until the end, and then receive you unto himself. Pray for me, one of the very least, if one at all.

In hope of mercy beyond the grave, where can be said, "O death where is thy sting; and grave the victory?" And where we shall know as we are known, according to his rich mercy and loving kindness.

A sister,
Mrs. C. W. Adams

"THE CRUMBS HAVE TO FALL"

Princeton, W. Va.

Dear Brother Spangler:

Am sending some money to pay for the *Signs of the Times*, the dear old paper which has been so much comfort to this poor and afflicted one. For many years I have enjoyed your writings, and Brother Wood's, so much. I am shut in most of the time from afflictions.

I remember hearing your dear old father preach many years ago; and I also stayed two or three nights in your parents' home; and remember something your mother said to me about your being called to preach, hoping you would not be, as you were weakly. But I believe the Lord illuminates his preachers through afflictions.

I get so low in my feelings; and often try to walk by sight, but am made to beg the Lord to hold me up, for I seem to sink where there is no standing. Now and then I feel to get a crumb, or a glimpse of something beyond here. I think of the woman who said, "Yea, the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the master's table." Now the crumbs have to fall. I try to reach out and get a crumb, but I find that my arm is too short. So it has to be revealed that it is not as it pleases me, but at the Lord's time; for so much of the time I ask amiss.

I feel to be such a poor and needy person, as having nothing, as dying daily; but if we have that treasure in our earthen vessel, behold we live: And the more we die, the more we live; for we walk by faith and not by sight. I wonder about those of whom the Apostle John wrote, who said that they were rich and increased with goods, and had need of nothing. Oh that the Lord would give us more of that hidden Wisdom, for Wisdom is the master builder of his house. May the Lord keep the city that the candlestick be not removed.

Yesterday was our meeting time at Glenwood Park, and it seemed we were blessed to eat of the hidden manna; but, you know, we have to have new supplies everytime we are fed. Please overlook my imperfections.

Your sister in hope,
Mrs. W. G. Pritchett

NOTICE OF THREE DAYS MEETING

The **Bethel Primitive Baptist Church**, of Riffe, Washington, will hold their three days meeting, the Lord willing, on Friday, Saturday, and 3rd Sunday in August. A welcome is extended to all who can come and be with us.

Vernie Schoonover, Clerk

THE LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The **Lexington-Roxbury Association** is appointed to be held with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Holcottville, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, September 13 and 14, 1961.

Brethren and friends are invited to meet with us. Those coming Tuesday will take Route 28 to Fleishmans, then take Halcott Center Road 4 miles to The Maples, the home of James Peet. Those coming Wednesday will go directly to the Meeting House at Halcottville.

(Elder) A. J. Slauson

CORRECTION

In the July issue, at the end of the Circular Letter of the Delaware Association, page 161, we stated that Elder Warren was the Moderator of the association. This was in error. The ending should have read: Written by Elder Wood, with Elder W. D. Griffin, Moderator, and Reese S. Jarmon, Clerk. — J. D. W.

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** will be held, the Lord willing, with Lower Town Creek Church, the 5th Sunday in July, 1961, and Saturday before. The church is located near Pinetops, N. C.

All lovers of the truth are invited to attend.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Union Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To June 1, 1961)

Emma Brake, N. C.	$2.00
John W. Attaway, Texas	5.00
J. Y. Vanhook, N. Y.	2.00
Mrs. Letcher Smith, N. J.	5.00
Mrs. J. B. Hill, N. J.	2.00

E. M. Smith, Clerk

THE CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Contentnea Association is appointed to convene with the church at Autry's Creek, Edgcombe County, N. C., to begin on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1961. The meeting house is located between Crisp and Fountain, N. C.

Danville, Virginia **August, 1961**

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EDITORIAL

THE FUTURE

At this time I want to notice the following Scripture: "But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us (2 Cor. 1:9, 10)." This is a history of the apostle's salvation. Is it the history of yours?

Let us notice John 6:37. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. We have in this passage three of the fundamental points of doc-

trine. Election, effectual calling, and the preservation of the saints, is clearly and emphatically taught here. To deny one of these points is to deny the whole. If one is left out of God's choice; if one thus chosen is not brought; if one thus brought is not kept, then the doctrine is worthless. This is the history of the salvation of the people of God. Is it the history of your salvation?

What did this declaration of truth do for you? Not the first thing. The choice of God did not bring you to Him; the declaration of His effectual work in bringing men and women to him, and in keeping them from every enemy that would arise did not do a thing for you. God's truth must be made to live in us; there must be a manifestation in our lives of the doctrine. This manifestation was made to one, a pattern left on the sacred pages of the New Testament, to wit, the apostle Paul. This work is shown in types and shadows, in figures and allegories all through the Bible, but brought to its full prominence in the history of Paul's life, and in a marked degree in every child of God.

As we look in on the Apostle in his second letter to these Corinthians, it is with delight that we read of his knowledge of the travel of a child of God. He had learned contentment in whatever state that he was in (Phil. 4:11), and his afflictions and his comfort were all tied in with the past and the present and the future. This sentence of death was not something acquired or apprehended or intercepted, but it was placed in him by the Spirit's mighty power. I have the Scriptures on my side about the past, both as to my experience and Paul's; likewise it is on our side about the present. If his testimony by inspiration, and mine (I hope) by revelation, does not convince, then it is not because of the weakness of what he and I have been delivered from, but because that the sentence of death is lacking in unbelievers. His trust for deliverance was justified just before his death, was made manifest in complete triumph. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Were the disciples ever commanded to have faith in themselves? Did the New Testament writers give us one example whereby we were to have faith in ourselves or in one another?

Trees always come before fruit. It is the tree that makes the fruit. The fruit does not bear the tree, but rather the tree bears the fruit. Any source of fruit receives credit for the fruit. Have we got a tree, either in reality or in a symbol, that is set in the nature of men, which will enable us to have faith in it for the future? Which of nature's gifts will we have faith in? It can not be the sword, for if we use that, we shall perish by it (Matt. 26:52); it can not be the natural mind for certainly our hope for the future must be in something more than foolishness (1 Cor. 2:14; it can not be in the carnal mind for it is not, and can not be, subject to the law of God and is death (Rom. 8:6, 7); it can not be money for it had to perish with the user long ago (Acts 8:20); it can not be by the mighty and wise and noble, for but few of that kind are called and in that call they become the least; then in what shall we believe in for the future? Where is our faith coming from? It is all coming to us as a fruit of the Spirit. Faith is the gift of God, the product of the mighty working power of the in-wrought energy of God's Spirit (Eph. 1:19, 20; 2:8; Gal. 5:22). This faith is in God.

We sing:

"'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far
And grace will lead me home."

And we haven't had a hymnologist or chorister that would dare make two kinds of grace out of the experience of John Newton or Paul, but we sometimes, in this enlightened day, find folks preaching two kinds of grace. One kind saves, the other would, if you would.

My future, as well as the future of the church of Jesus Christ is dependent on saving grace.

There are two kinds of looking to the future. One is begging God to lead us and show us the way; the other is a dead traditional belief in the past, resting (not in his love (Zeph. 3:17), but) in laurels of long ago, pointing with pride to this man or that man or the other. What are we looking to for deliverance? Is our hope in God that raises the dead? Or is it in the name of yesterday's leaders? I would feel indeed sorry for the man that is not worried about present conditions among the Old School Baptists, but as bad as his condition would be, it is not as bad as it would be if I got to the place that I believed that about face was all that was needed to remedy the situation. How full of unbelief I am when I say one that has wandered away is able to find the way back. If the future of the church has depended on that in the past we are singing the wrong song, and we are preaching the wrong doctrine, and it would be becoming in us to change accordingly. If I did not know the way any better than to deviate from it, and my works were not the kind that keeps me, I feel mighty poorly about me getting to a former position. Lack of wisdom will not improve one's perception of the right way as we travel along further away; then I do not see how to get back. Lack of power to stay in the right way will not improve as I remain without it; then I do not see how that I can return, seeing that I am weak in both wisdom and power.

But, dear brethren, there is something much better than all of this, for, if you have been on a prodigal road, you learned that all this is a mess of husks. This kind of doctrine (if you will, God will) was placed on our brethren many times in the past. It is a galling doctrine and the church has not come to where it is by trusting in it. Grace and the in-wrought righteousness of Jesus Christ is a balm for the poor and needy. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for their's is the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5:3). It was given to the poor, and the poor we always have them with us (Matt. 26:11), thus as long as we have them with us they will have the kingdom of heaven. It used to be the pleasure of our heavenly Father to give the kingdom to the little flock, which is as poor as it is little. If he gave this kingdom to the poor, since when has it become their's by their wisdom, ability, riches of the flesh?

The poor own this kingdom. It is a rich kingdom, and they are joint heirs with the King of it. The subjects of this kingdom are brought into its pleasant borders by the quickening power of God's Spirit. Being begotten again to an inheritance that is beyond this life, they are not left to shift for themselves, but are kept ready for that which is to come. Let me state here that if I am not deceived, my being kept ready is just as sure as the inheritance is safe in its laid up place (Psa. 31:19; Col. 1:5; 2 Tim. 4:8). I do not see any way for enemies, inwardly or outwardly, to get into that sacred abode and destroy that inheritance. He who called me, as I humbly hope, out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God, has promised to never cast out, never leave, not to leave comfortless.

In the days of Gideon a small remnant was saved. This salvation was of the Lord. In the days of Daniel a small remnant was saved. This salvation was of the Lord. In the days of Elijah a remnant according to election was saved. This salvation was of the Lord. In the apostle's day there was, at the precise time of which he spoke, a remnant **according to the election of grace** and they were saved by grace. If we are preaching what Paul preached, we, as boldly as he ever said it, are preaching salvation by grace for the fiery trials ahead, and, since I believe that when the Lord comes the second time without sin unto salvation that he will find faith in the earth, I feel just as sure as God is on his throne that those faith-

ful people will be saying then, That there is a remnant today **according to the election of grace.**

This church was alright when I came to it. I am not condoning the evil among us; I will rebuke and reprove, exhort and admonish as long as I find it in my people. I will thank God for this church as long as breath is in this body, just like Paul did the Corinthians, even though I find in the body things that ought not to be there just like he did there. That little church is still alive down in Alabama that gave me my first taste of heaven below in a church capacity. As I have said, she was alright then, and as I have many times since then sat in her midst, sharing her joys and sorrows, I feel today that she is still faithfully keeping house for the Lord. Her membership has rose and fell over the years, but I am sure that when it was the least in numbers that God was taking care of her then; that every blessing belonged to those members as much as when the membership was larger. Now that I am a member in Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore, I feel that I can thank God for her, as I can thank him for past blessings down in Alabama. The two churches will survive as long as it is the will of our Father. They will be in a sad way when Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or some weakling like the writer, has to back track and get them on the right road. But how happy and contented is that church, at home, abroad, on the land, on the sea, in times of sorrow, in times of weal or woe, in times of thanksgiving, in times of brotherly love and affections is blessed to sing

"The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures."

for ere long we shall sing the song of triumph in yonder's world and shall render all praise and honor and glory to the Captain of our salvation, past, present and for all time to come.

W. D. G.

158 East 17th Street,
Hialeah, Fla.

Dear Editors:

My subscription expires in February, so am enclosing renewal for another year. It is the only paper I have found which truly adheres to that doctrine once delivered to the saints, which I find so precious to my soul. I have enjoyed many hours reading and re-reading my copies over the past year, and have shared them with other believers of like faith.

My health hasn't been too good the past year, but the Lord sustains me and keeps me by his power. How comforting it is to know that, "All things work together for good to them that love the Lord; to them who are called according to his purpose."

I hope this New Year will be a good one in both spiritual and natural blessings for all you brethren of the *Signs of the Times.*

A sister in hope,
Mrs. Chas. M. Hartman

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

MATTHEW XIII. 33; LUKE XIII. 21

Brother Beebe: — Please give your views on the parable of the leaven hid in three measures of meal. What are the three measures? Why not four, or six?

Yours in hope of eternal life,
W. A. Watson
Van Buren, Ohio
March 23, 1879

REPLY

Our views on the same parable have also been solicited by an inquirer after truth at New Lexington, Ohio.

When the disciples asked Jesus concerning the parables in which he so frequently spake to the people, "he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to others in parables; that seeing, they might not see, and hearing, they might not understand." — Luke viii. 10. From this ex-

planation we learn not only the sovereignity of God, in hiding the mysteries of the kingdom of God from the wise and prudent of this world, but also that a knowledge of them is a special gift of God. No man by the exercise of his mental powers or deep researches can possibly attain a knowledge of spiritual things. No man can see the kingdom of God except he be born again; it is just as impossible as for a man to see the things of this world without first being born of the flesh. After our natural birth of the flesh, we required the gift of light and instruction to develop the mental powers with which we were endued by the Creator, to enable us to understand the mysteries of the natural world. So also, those who are born again, of incorruptible seed, are dependent on the teaching of the Holy Spirit to reveal to their faith the deep mysteries which God has hidden from all who are not born of the Spirit. Hence we are expressly told in the Scriptures, that even "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." — 1 Cor. i. 18, 19, 26-31.

The total ignorance of the mysteries of the kingdom of God, which holds in chains of darkness all who are not born and taught of God, however far they may have advanced in what the world regards as the science of theology, is not a condition which God had not power to avert if it had been his sovereign pleasure, for he hath hidden these things from them because so it seemed good in his sight; and our adorable Redeemer rejoiced in spirit, and thanked the Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because it was even so. — Luke x. 21.

Among the many parables, which for this cause were spoken by our Lord, we have the one now proposed for our consideration, in which the kingdom of God is likened unto leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

The kingdom of God, here compared to leaven, we think is the kingdom as chosen of God in Christ as her spiritual Head, and as sanctified by God the Father, before the foundation of the world, preserved in Christ Jesus, and ultimately called with a holy calling according to God's own purpose and grace, which was given to the chosen subjects of it in Christ Jesus before the world began. Three elements, or constituent parts, are necessary to constitute a kingdom: a king, subjects, and laws. All these are found in Christ. He is expressly called God's King, whom he has set upon his holy hill of Zion. — Psalm ii. 6. All the spiritual subjects of this kingdom were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, (Eph. i. 4,) and the law of God was in his heart. — Psalm xl. 8. All the component elements of the kingdom of God were in Christ, as the Mediatorial Head of his body, the church, from everlasting; hence, Christ could say, "My kingdom is not of this world." It was prepared for the saints from the foundation of the world. — Matt. xxv. 34. It was appointed unto Christ by the Father, and unto the members of Christ by the Son. — Luke xxii. 29.

This kingdom of God, as a purely spiritual kingdom, was so embodied in Christ, that when he came in the flesh it was said to the Jews, "The kingdom

of God is come unto you." — Matt. xii. 28.

Without adducing further testimony to sustain our position, that the kingdom of God, as a spiritual kingdom, existed in Christ, as the Mediatorial Head of the church, from everlasting, in vital union with him as their head and life before any of the subjects of it had a fleshly existence in the earthly Adam, and before either Christ the Head or any of his spiritual members were made flesh, or had become partakers of flesh and blood, yea, before Adam's dust was fashioned into man, we will pass on to consider the strikingly appropriate similitude of the parable.

This spiritual kingdom was with Christ from the ancients of eternity, and was like leaven, designed of God to be put into three measures of meal, until all the meal should be leavened, or be by its assimilating power perfectly conformed to the nature and likeness of the original leaven. The apostle says of those who are the called according to the purpose of God, that "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren." — Rom. viii. 29.

As leaven has the power to diffuse itself into all the meal in which it is hidden, and by fermentation impart its nature to the meal, until the meal in which it is hidden itself becomes of the nature of leaven, so the life and immortality of the church of God, which was given her in Christ Jesus, as the seminal head and spiritual progenitor of all her members, with all spiritual blessings ever to be developed in the kingdom of God in time or in eternity, were treasured up and embodied in him before they were manifested in any of the fallen sons of men. In him all this fullness dwelt, and of his fullness all the vessels of his mercy are the happy recipients; and as the meal receives the leaven, and is subjected to its transforming power, so they receive Christ Jesus as their resurrection and their spiritual, immortal and eternal life. As the power to leaven the meal is all contained in the original leaven, so all the power, to quicken and transform the redeemed people of God was and is embodied in our Lord Jesus Christ.

The three measures of meal, in the parable, we believe represent the chosen people of God, which are redeemed from all the kindreds of mankind by the blood of Christ. The definite measurement is according to the election of grace, and the three measures signify to us the definite and exact quantity redeemed of those who were of the three dispensations, which make up the fullness of the times, in the which all shall be called by grace, quickened by the Spirit, born of the incorruptible seed, and leavened and conformed to the likeness of him by whose power and grace they are made meet to participate in the inheritance of the saints in light.

The chosen and redeemed people of God, embracing all whom God has ordained to eternal life, are figuratively called the seed of Abraham; and if we are Christ's, then are we Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise. This seed of Abraham Christ took on him when he was made flesh and dwelt among them; and as their spiritual life, he was hidden in them from the days of Abel, and he bear them, and carried them all the days of old. So, as the leaven in the parable was hidden in the meal, even so this mystery hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints, to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you the hope of glory. — Col. i. 26, 27. As the power of the leaven is sure to conform all the meal in which it is hidden, so the spirit of life in Christ Jesus our Lord is beyond the possibility of failure sure to permeate all the chosen people of our God, and conform them to the likeness of the Son of God. If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that

raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, September 15, 1879.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. MINNIE M. THOMAS

Mrs. Minnie M. Thomas died in Arlington, Virginia, March 31, 1961, at the age of ninety years and four months. She was born November 14, 1870, the daughter of the late Edwin and Jane Davis, of Loundon County, Virginia; and the widow of the late Milton E. Thomas. She is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Mary Alta Dewey, and Mrs. Ruth Harrington, of Arlington, Virginia; and one son, Robert W. Thomas, Grants Pass, Oregon; also by three grandchildren and three great grandchildren, and one sister, Mrs. Bessie Turner, Frederick, Maryland.

Sister Thomas united with the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, on Sunday, August 14, 1949, and was the last person baptized by Elder H. H. Lefferts. Sister Thomas had attended the meetings for many years before uniting with the church; and even at her advanced age, she loved to mingle with the brethren. Her daughters, Mrs. Dewey and Mrs. Harrington, were faithful in seeing that she got to her meetings, and to visiting in the homes of those whom she loved, and who loved her. They always saw that she lacked for nothing, and did everything possible for her comfort and pleasure.

Funeral services were conducted at the Ives Funeral Home, Arlington, Virginia, on April 3, 1961, by the writer, and interment was in the Arnon Cemetery, Fairfax County, Virginia. Sister Thomas was sound in the faith, trusting in nothing but the grace and mercy ofher God, both in life and in death. She now awaits the glorious resurrection at the coming of her Saviour.

John D. Wood

BROTHER ALEX POLLARD

After a short illness, our dear brother passed away at the Western Hospital, Toronto, Ontario, December 22, 1960, in his 78th year. He was born in Dunwich Township, Elgin County, Ontario, the son of Levi Pollard and Margaret Campbell, and grandson of the late Elder William Pollard, who served the church in Canada for many years.

His wife, the former Katherine May McAlpine, predeceased him January 9, 1949. Two sons, Clifford and Duncan, four grandchildren, two brothers and five sisters survive to mourn their loss. His body was laid to rest in the Prospect Cemetery, Toronto.

Brother Alex united with the church at the Lobo Quarterly Meeting, September, 1957 and was baptized at that time by the writer. For years he had shown great interest in our meetings, especially in Toronto. It was not long before the church saw the gift of deacon in him, and set him aside to that office, which he faithfully filled to the comfort and satisfaction of the church.

For years before he came to the church, we had much sweet spiritual intercourse with him. On one occasion, while his wife was very ill, he had to leave for his work before the nurse had arrived, and he was very anxious about her, but while journeying to his work, the words were given to him, "He shall give His angels charge over thee," and his fears were allayed. That evening the writer was holding meeting in Toronto, and to our brother's surprise, the text was, "He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." This was very confirming to both him and his pastor.

We sorrow because we shall see his face no more among us, but we believe he is forever with the Lord.

May our God reconcile us all to His holy and sovereign will in all things.

George Ruston

IN MEMORY OF SISTER NOLA DEAL

Sister Nola Deal departed this life March 17, 1961. Date of birth was November 1, 1870, making her stay with us 90 years, 4 months, 17 days.

In her young days she taught in our public schools. She united with Nazareth Church on Saturday before the second Sunday in December, 1906; was baptized by the late Elder S. J. Norris, and lived a faithful and devoted member the balance of her stay with us. Her nearest relatives were 5 nephews: P. C. Howell, D. D. Howell, Ben Harris and C. A. Harris of Tuscaloosa County, Judge Bruce Harris, of Pickens County; one niece, Mrs. Sidney Norris, of Northport, Alabama.

Although she had no family of her own, yet she had tender loving hands to care for her in her last days. No time or effort or money was spared in supplying the comforts of Aunt Tomy.

"By their fruits ye shall know them." It has been the privilege of the writer to know and live near Sister Deal during our entire life, and during this time we have never known or heard of her by word of deed saying or doing anything that would discredit or hurt

the feelings of anyone. She always had a kind and soft answer for all, and was very considerate of all, regardless of station in life. On one occasion there had been a misunderstanding in the neighborhood and the writer said to her: "You have never said anything either way that anyone can bring a charge against you." Her reply was, "No, but I have had many thoughts;" thus she acknowledged the weakness of the flesh. "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die, but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (Romans 8:13) Again in Second Timothy 2:25, "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging the truth." It seemed to the writer that she always had an abundance of grace, which kept her always at the feet of the brethren, and she spent this long life in labor and love, and that she could truly say with Paul, "I have labored more abundantly than you all, nevertheless not I but the grace of God that was with me," then it was by the grace of God that Paul labored; and so God in his infinite wisdom gives each one grace that He sees he stands in need of that enables him to fulfill the office it was foreordained that he should, to the praise and glory of His name.

We would say to the loved ones that we feel your loss is her eternal gain, and that when she wakes in His likeness she shall be satisfied. So let us sing,

"I would not live always — no, welcome the tomb;
Since Jesus hath lain there, I dread not its gloom.
There sweet be my rest till he bid me arise,
To hail Him in triumph descending the skies.

Who, who would live always, away from his God,
Away from yon heaven, that blissful abode,
Where the rivers of pleasure flow o'er bright plains
And the moontide of glory eternally reigns."

The funeral services were conducted by the writer.

(Elder) W. L. Norris

LEAH CATHERINE LAWS

Leah Catherine Laws was born October 2, 1864, and died February 11, 1961, aged 96 years and 4 months. She was the daughter of George W. and Sarah Ann Jarmon of Berlin, Md., one of nine children.

She was married January 2, 1884, to James H. Laws in the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church at Powellville, Md. Two years later she and her husband were baptized by Elder T. M. Poulson, and became members of the Indiantown Church, which they attended regularly for 63 years, until his death in 1947.

Three of their children died in infancy and eight survive: Mrs. Irene Toadvine, Mrs. Augusta Powell, Mrs. Jacob M. Adkins, Mrs. Margaret L. Walker and Ruth Laws, also Homer, Ralph and Calvin. She also left eight grandchildren and ten great grandchildren. While she was a devoted mother, her greatest pleasure was her church. She never missed an opportunity to attend services. She especially enjoyed entertaining Old School Baptist people and loved the yearly meetings.

During the last few years of her life, her eyesight failed completely, but her hearing remained perfect and she was able to enjoy conversation with her pastor and her friends. Her funeral was preached by Elder Arthur Warren, her pastor, and she was laid to rest beside her husband in the Laws' family burying ground.

"There is a land of pure delight
Where saints immortal reign.
Eternal day excludes the night
And pleasures banish pain.

There everlasting spring abides
And never-withering flowers;
Death like a narrow sea divides
That heavenly land from ours."

Written by her daughter,
Margaret Laws Walker

ROBERT L. DALTON

Robert L. Dalton was born May 1, 1881, and departed this life November 29, 1960; making his stay here 79 years, 7 months, and 28 days. He united in marriage to Madie G. Holley in 1909, who preceded him in death on June 17, 1957. To this union six children were born, all of whom survive: Harry L., Wade M., Marvin, Dempsey, Mrs. Beulah Washburn, Spray, N. C.; and Mrs. Dorothy Davidson, Raleigh, N. C.

Brother Dalton united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Dan River April 24, 1937, and was a faithful and lovely brother there until death.

Funeral services were conducted at Dan River Church by his pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, and Mr. R. F. Hardy, of Stokesland; after which he was laid to rest in the church cemetery, to await the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and the morning of the resurrection.

It can truly be said of Brother Datlon that he lived his more than seventy-nine years to the fullest; and, with Father Abraham, he believed God and it was accounted unto him for righteousness; for he claimed no righteousness of his own. His last days were spent in the home of his son Harry, of Stokesville, Virginia.

Dear bereaved ones, I think he is much better off than we who are still subject to disease, pain, and death. He is beyond all suffering and trouble, because the evidence shows that he believed in the Lord and had confidence in his mercy. May God bless you to believe in that God he honored and praised while he lived. Yours in hope and through grace.

Coley S. Stroder

MRS. MATILDA SHREVE ALLEN

Mrs. Matilda Shreve Allen, born January 1872, died March 1961. She was the youngest child of Elder Robert Shreve's fourth wife, Sallie Cox. Grandfather's four wives begat him twenty-three children.

Aunt Till, as she was known, married Thomas Allen when she was around forty years old. She had no children of her own, but some faithful stepchildren of Uncle Tom's first wife. She, like Uncle Billie her half brother, never joined the Militant Church, but were true believers in Salvation by the Grace of God. Their general life of deportment was in keeping with the faith of God's elect, because, they proved their faith by their works.

Her body was laid to rest at Wolf Island Churchyard, where she attended during her whole life. Services were conducted by Elder Hayward Wray, her nephew, and Elder Roy Smith.

This testimony furnished by request.

John R. Smith, Nephew

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It has been the will of our heavenly Father to remove from this earth our beloved brother, J. M. Alderman, who died at Woodard, Oklahoma, December 4, 1960; and whose funeral service was held in Tims Chapel of Memories, Altus, Oklahoma, conducted by Elder G. H. Crain.

Brother Alderman was born in Mississippi, August 23, 1879, and moved to Jackson County in 1920. He united with the Little Flock Church, Altus, Oklahoma, by experience and baptism April 7, 1923, and was baptized by Elder W. M. Green. He was a faithful member and was always in his place at church as long as he was able to come.

He is survived by two daughters: Mrs. Arthur Clark, and Mrs. Delbert Neel, of Altus; and two sons: Leonard, of Altus, and J. F., of Phoenix, Arizona; and by eleven grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That we deeply sympathize with the family; and that a copy of this resolution be made a part of our church records, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church.

Elder C. M. Haygood, Pastor
Mrs. Nina H. Stallings, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It pleased our Heavenly Father by His divine wisdom to remove from us by death, our beloved sister, Lula A. Foster, March 28, 1961.

WHEREAS, Bush Arbor Church bows in humble submission to a just and wise God, knowing He is righteous in all of His ways; our hearts are saddened by our loss.

She was born in Caswell County, N. C., May 6, 1870, and died March 28, 1961. She was the oldest member at Bush Arbor Church and would have been ninety-one (91) years old on May 6, had she lived.

She was married January 10, 1892, to John L. Foster. To this union were born six children, one deceased, leaving two girls, three boys, twenty-two grandchildren, thirty-two great grandchildren, two great great grandchildren, several nieces and nephews to mourn her loss. Her husband died when their children were small and she was a widow for fifty-seven years; however, by the Grace of God she was blessed to rear her children. The Lord blessed her to unite with the church at the age of thirty-three, and He also led her in a wonderful long life, being faithful and loyal to her church as long as she was able to fill her seat.

She frequently expressed her love for the church and how good the Lord had been to her. To know her was to love her. May God in His love and mercy reconcile her dear children and all that mourn her loss. I feel that our loss is her gain. We sorrow not even as others, who have no hope, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

Her funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Meeting House, March 30, 1961, by her beloved pastor Elder W. C. King, assisted by Elder W. J. Berry. Her body was laid to rest in the Church Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be placed on the church record, a copy given to the bereaved family, and a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication. Written by one who loved her, Alice R. Smith, her niece. Done by order of the Church in May Conference 1961.

(Elder) W. C. King, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129 DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1961 NO. 9

EXPERIENCE

Mesilla Park, New Mexico

Dear Elder Wood:

With much fear and weakness I attempt to write you again, knowing by experience that in me, that is in my flesh, dwells no good thing; and if one of His humble poor, the least of all. But what a great blessing to be given a small hope that we might be counted one of the redeemed: Redeemed by the death, burial, and resurrection of the Son of God; and given eternal life wrought alone by him when there was none to help.

I have not heard from you since I wrote you, but I feel like the article that was in the **Signs of the Times** for October, was for me as well as the rest of the family of God. I know that you do not have the time to write personally to every one to whom you would like. I take pleasure in thanking all of the Editors of the **Signs** for their untiring efforts in preparing the **Signs,** which means so much to the household of God. Many of the articles I read and re-read many times, and am so thankful for its coming to me, since it is almost all the contact I have with the brethren. I seldom attend church more than once a year, (sometimes two), as I live eight hundred miles from my home church. In all of New Mexico there isn't an Old Baptist Church — we have some who claim the name, but do not adhere to the doctrine we believe.

I will attempt to relate to you of my life's history and background, including some of my experiences: which I don't remember ever doing before. I was born in the Indian Territory, (which is now Oklahoma), of very poor parents, and grew up on a farm. I had three sisters, two older than myself. In a few months I will be sixty-two years old. My father was a Primitive Baptist preacher as far back as I can remember; and my mother was a Missionary Baptist. I grew up the only son working in the fields with the rest of the family. My father was a very clean, honest man, studying the Scriptures the most of his spare time.

My parents took me to church regularly as they went, but I had no interest in the meetings or what they had to say. However, at an early age, (around ten or twelve), my life and future began to bother me. I had such a feeling of condemnation; and no hope if I should die. I had a feeling of unworthiness to such an extent that I would consider my sisters, and wish that I was, even in a small way, as good as I saw them. I remained in this condition through my teen age; and for eight or ten years when I would lie down at night, and many times during the day, I would pray in my way; (and it is no different at this time many years later), however without avail or relief, though my pillow would be wet with tears. I received no relief from wandering in that desolate wilderness, not knowing what awaited me. When I look back on those years without any hope, how wonderful it would have been for me if I could have had just one glimpse of that New Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all; but all was darkness and gloom at that time.

During those years, my parents moved to Texas, then back to Oklahoma; my father still finding time to preach, but I could not hear him. When I was eighteen or nineteen, I would steal away upstairs where my father kept his **Signs of the Times,** and I would read them;

and tears would flow from my eyes, because it seemed to me that those writers were talking to me, and telling me my own story. Even then I was without hope, and kept my thoughts to myself, not wanting anyone to know that I was reading the **Signs.** When my father would have visiting brethren, and they would sit up at night and talk on the Scriptures, I would sit quite away from them, listening, but would conduct myself in a way that they would not know I was interested.

In my nineteenth year I married, and worked a part of my father's farm. I was having my same troubles seemingly without end. During this period there were revivals in the community, and my wife and I attended the Missionary Baptists one night; and when they called for mourners, I went up and knelt down at the bench to have them pray for me. During all the past years I was not able to find any relief; and I had heard some say that this was the way they got saved, so I thought I would try it. An old lady, whom I had known for a long time, came by to talk to me. The things she was telling me to do, I had done many times without avail; and her words were mockery in my ears. From that time on I knew that what she had said to me was no good, and I had no desire to return. Yet I was not improved, and felt that my condemnation was just, and believed that destruction awaited me.

In the Fall of 1920, I was picking cotton one afternoon, and was studying and pondering all of these things in my mind. I had heard my father speak of a very able Old Baptist preacher, and had made the statement that he was one of the ablest ministers among the Old Baptists; and, without knowing I was doing it, I was asking in my weak way that I might have an opportunity to hear him talk along the lines I had heard other Old Baptists speak. From where I was working I had to pass my father's home; and when I did, I saw a car and knew that he had company. So I stopped; and found that Elder W. P. Snider was going to spend the night with him. After my wife and I had eaten our dinner, we walked down to his home; and I listened to both of them talk. Later he moved on a part of my father's farm, and farmed it. About this time, I went to hear my father preach one Sunday, (as I had all my life), but I had never heard him preach before that day. He used the Scripture where Christ came to the Gadarene, and how the Gadarene had been bound with new fetters, and that he dwelt among the tombs, or the dead; and no man was able to tame him. But when Christ spoke to him, he was clothed and in his right mind; and sat at the Master's feet. That was the first time I ever heard, if I am not deceived. Even after that I did not want any one to know that I was interested in that beautiful way. Following that Sunday, I went regularly to hear my Father and Brother Snider preach; and what wonderful news from a far country!

During those days everything spoke forth His handiwork; and how glorious it was to be fed from above on those glorious truths. What wonderful hours I then enjoyed! yet I found an aching void the world could never fill. As I remember what wonderful love and fellowship prevailed with our little church, (however at this time I had not offered to the church), many doubts and fears began to step in my way, such as these: Do I love the brethren? Do I believe because my father is an Old Baptist? Is it truly the church, or am I deceived?

About this time I had begun to read day and night, or all the spare time I had; and as I would read the tears would run down my face, as I was led, as I hope, into the truths as we believe them. Prior to this time, without knowing it, I believed what the world believes; as does every heaven-born child of God before he is given a spiritual understanding. During these days I would ponder all these things in my mind, knowing that, if I was not deceived, I loved those brethren more than life itself. But, feeling as I did, I could not ask a home among them: I knew I

was nothing, and less than nothing, and altogether vanity. How could I ask for a home! I would ponder these things in my heart while in the fields plowing; and would have chapters and verses of Scriptures come to me, and when I would return home, I would turn to the Bible and read those passages, which were in accordance to what was bothering me. All the time I felt I was going to have to offer to the church, knowing that they would not receive one as I knew myself to be. Yet when the time came, I could no more resist than anything; so I went before the church and told them some of my travels, feeling in my heart they would reject me. Yet I had to do it anyway; and knew that if they did turn me away, it was just and right; but I would still love them. But, to my surprise, they accepted me.

The next thing was to be baptized, which I had a desire to fulfill. One thing I will always remember: As I walked from the water, the pastor (Father) said to me, (as they all called me), Brother Jim, I think I know how you feel. Fulfilling this obligation gave me a feeling of love and contentment that no words of mine have ever been able to convey to anyone. From then on for a few years, things went along with love and fellowship prevailing towards each other. What peaceful hours I then enjoyed! until one day I was made to believe that it was my lot that I would have to stand before my brethren and declare the wonderful works of God. Things went along as usual, only my brethren would speak to me in regard to doing my duty. I believe, if I am not deceived, I know in a measure what was meant when the Apostle Paul was told how great things he would suffer for His name's sake. Also, that it was a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living God.

In 1937, I sold all I had, and moved to this state, New Mexico; and for fifteen years I did not hear a sermon preached, or read the **Signs.** But for some reason not known to me, I had a great desire to hear preaching; and I enquired and found that they were having a May meeting at Altus, Oklahoma. My wife and I drove the 500 miles; and when we got there and went in and sat down, a brother, Oren Parsons, whom I had never met, shook my hand and said, "I know you. I read an article you wrote in the **Signs.**" This was without me telling who I was. Then in a few minutes another man came along and sat down by me, but we did not speak. In a short time, Brother W. W. Taylor, who was in the stand, said, "Come on up, Brother Griffin." This was Brother Griffin who lived at that time in Alabama.

Have you ever been fed when you were real hungry? If you have, you can understand in a measure just how beautiful that season was to me. It seemed there was a halo surrounding Brother Griffin while he spoke. Before or since I have never heard such wonderful words fall from anyone's lips.

When the meeting was over, on our return I was still being fed, and was lifted up above this world. That has been twelve or thirteen years ago, and since that time I have traveled from New Mexico to North Carolina, to Louisiana, California, Washington, Arkansas, and Oklahoma. Yet at this time I do not feel worthy to speak His name, and do not know what awaits me. During all the fifteen years I spoke of not hearing preaching, I did not cease to believe what I do now, and my mind had the same travel in being led into the mysteries of God, if not deceived. My prayer is continually that I might be given wisdom to understand the truth taught in the Scriptures: I am made to say with the Apostle, "Lord help my unbelief."

I would like to say to you: What a blessing to be led into the mysteries of our God. If I am one at all, I am the least among you. My fellowship is for sinners saved by the grace of God. I have no fellowship for those who can direct their own footsteps, and live perfectly in the natural man. At this time I still do not know what my calling is, if any at all.

Brother Wood, when I began I had no idea I would tell you all the things I have. I still have a small hope, and am looking for that City whose maker and builder is God. I feel so lame and not able to stand alone.

Yours in hope,
James A. Bell

BRIEF HISTORY OF ROCK SPRINGS OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH OF CHRIST

LANCASTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

(Originally known as the branch of London Tract Church at Little Britain.)

Prepared by Charles B. Osborne, Church Clerk

RECORDED EVENTS from 1766 to 1806 leading to the establishing of the branch of the church at Little Britain:

In the year 1766, June 12th, David Jenkins purchased and removed to a Tract of Land convenient to a place by the name of the Rock Springs, in Little Britain Township, Lancaster County, and himself with Martha his wife, being members of the Church at Vincent, were visited, first, by the Rev. Thomas Davis, who preached, forenoon and afternoon, to a large audience, in the wood, where about 30 rod from the dwelling house stood three trees in a triangular form; i. e., one Spanish oak in the back of two white oaks in front, in which Mr. Jenkins built a complete pulpit, nature seeming to have formed them for that purpose.

From that time, till the commencement of the American Revolution, they were visited, occasionally, by the following ministering brethren: The Rev. Missieurs Thomas Davis, John Davis, Benjamin Miller, Isaac Still, Richard Majors, John Sutton, Joseph Powel, and James Sutton.

In the year 1771, Mrs. Sarah Mathers, a member of the Church at Great Valley, removed from thenc e to Little Britain — the war put an end to any more visits of that nature; and before the conclusion thereof was no occasion for any, on their account, for the Lord removed them from that place to a world unknown.

But their families, since that time, have been visited occasionally, first by the Rev. Able Griffith, after that by the Rev. Joshua Vaughn. In November, 1803, by request of Mr. Thomas Davis, Deacon of the Church of Brandywine, and Rachel his wife, daughter of said David Jenkins, the Rev. Jethro Johnson visited the remainder of the families at Little Britain, and preached at the house of his son, Mr. Nathaniel Jenkins, and at Mr. Low's, whose wife Martha is a daughter of said David Jenkins.

From a number of requests made by the people of that place to said Johnson, he answered one made by Mr. John Hannah in March, 1806, when he spent the chief part of a week in that place, preaching from house to house, at which time several persons appeared to be seriously impressed and made application for baptism, by a letter from Mr. Nathaniel Jenkins, addressed to the Rev. Jethro Johnson, Pastor of the Church at London Tract; wherein he requested him to come over to Little Britain and baptized several persons in that neighborhood, and constituted them into a Branch of the London Tract Church: which being laid before said Church at their preparatory meeting, the following Brethren were appointed a Committee to visit them upon the occasion: Rev. Jethro Johnson, John Kugler, Deacon, Dr. David Eaton, Richard Kennedy, James Gerry, and Reuben Johnson, which they did, together with a number more of the members of said Church; and accompanied by the Rev. Gideon Ferrell, Pastor of the Church at Welsh Tract, and two of his members, met at the house of said Nathaniel Jenkins, on Saturday, the 19th of April, 1806, when Rev. Mr. Ferrell preached from Acts 26th and 31st, after which the Rev. Jethro Johnson proceeded to examine the following candidates: Na-

thaniel Jenkins, Rebecca Jenkins, Sarah Jenkins, Robert Hannum, Martha Low, Martha Hannah, and Hannah Jenkins, who giving a satisfactory account of the dealings of God with their souls were approved of by the brethren, and on the day following, Mr. Ferrell preached from Psalms 4th and 3rd first clause; after which they repaired to Octorara and Mr. Johnson baptized the above candidates; then returning to the house after Mr. Ferrell gave the charge, Mr. Johnson laid on hands with prayer, gave the right hand of fellowship, set them apart as a Branch of the Church, and administered the Lord's Supper to them.

DOCTRINES

The Doctrines we hold are these that follow:

We hold the Important Doctrines of three Persons, equal in the Godhead — Eternal and Personal Election according to the foreknowledge of God, and particular Redemption by the Blood of Christ — Effectual Calling by Grace, to a life of Holiness — Justification through the Imputed Righteousness of Christ — Perseverance of the Saints, in Grace, to the End, and Resurrection of the Dead, the Judgment to come, etc. — In a word, we hold to the Baptist Confession of Faith, put forth in London, and adopted by the Baptist Association met at Philadelphia, Sept. 25th, A. D., 1742. — We hold Believer's Baptism by Immersion only, and the laying on of Hands on those Baptized — And we believe it to be the Duty of persons regularly Baptized to become members of a Gospel Church, and be partakers of the Lord's Supper according to the Command of our Lord.

COVENANT

And we do, In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, voluntarily and freely give ourselves up to the Lord, and to one another, according to His Word, to be one Body under one Head, jointly to exist and act by the Bonds and Rules of the Gospel, etc., etc.

CHURCH ARTICLES

Articles:

1st. We do promise, by the Lord's assistance, to keep our places in His House, and not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, Hebr. 10th-25th, but shall attend at public Service, and all other meetings that this Branch of the Church may appoint, etc.

2nd. That we pay strict attention to the discipline and good order of the Church, and take the Scripture of God for our directions, etc.

3rd. That we will not divulge any of the secrets of the Church to the world, etc., for we have a Command, from the Lord, not to give that which is holy unto Dogs, neither cast ye your Pearls before Swine, etc., because there are Some Things transacted in the Church that the revealing of them to the World would be of no utility.

4th. That we will contribute to the necessities of the Church according to our abilities. The demands for contributions in the Church might be rendered threefold: — 1st. — For the Table of the Lord; 2nd. — For the Ministers of the Word; 3rd. — For the poor of the Flock, etc.

5th. We resolve that a Church Book shall be kept and that a Clerk, chosen from among the Brethren, be appointed to take care of the same, and to act as a Recorder, at such times as it may be most convenient for him to record the same. And business shall be carried on every Seventh day before the Communion. If the Church give a Dismission for any Member, let it be recorded in the Book, with the name of the Person, and date of the month and year. And if the Church receive any Member, from another Church, let his name and letter be recorded in the Book that it may be referred to in future if called for, etc.

6th. And we further resolve that these Articles shall be read in the Church at least four times in the year. And the Members that shall be received, from time to time, shall enter under the same Articles, and let them be read on their admission to the Church.

And thus we ratify our Church Covenant with one another, praying that the Great Shepherd of His Sheep through the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant may bless us with all Spiritual Blessings in heavenly places and cause us to grow in Grace and in the Knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

(Note by the Church Clerk. The capitalization and punctuation of the foregoing Early History, Doctrines, Covenant and Church Articles follow closely the original record.)

LATER HISTORICAL NOTES

The meeting, in the month of April, 1956, at Rock Springs, marked the one hundred-fiftieth year of the founding of the church. Rock Springs was organized as a branch of the Church at Little Britain, on April 19th and 20th, 1806, the mother church being the London Tract Church, near Stricklersville, Chester County.

This branch of the Church was sep-

arated and set apart from the mother church on August 30, 1812.

The ministers who have served the Rock Springs Church down through the years are as follows: Jethro Johnson, who served during the period that the local church was a branch of the church at London Tract, slightly over six years; Charles Moor, about three years; Thomas Poteet, a little less than five years; Thomas Barton, over forty-four years; William Grafton, thirty-nine years; John G. Eubanks, slightly less than sixteen years; Douglas L. Topping, over nineteen years; and John D. Wood, present pastor, over twelve years.

Some of these same ministers, and other ministers, being licentiates or ordained Elders, have filled the pulpit as supply during the total of about eleven years the church did not have a regular pastor.

The Rock Springs Meetinghouse is located in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, directly on Highway Route 222, and near the Maryland-Pennsylvania state line — the historical Mason and Dixon Line.

Nearby is a geological freak known as the Rock of Seven Springs, or Rock Springs, the waters of which are said to flow from seven different openings in a single rock. Legend has it that the Indians believed the water from each of the rock's seven crevices cured a different ailment. A village, a school, a hotel, and the church derived their names from these rock springs.

The Church was constituted with seven original members. Incidentally, one hundred and fifty years later the membership of ten was composed of seven different surnames.

The time of monthly meetings is on first Sundays, at 10:30 o'clock.

Charles B. Osborne, Clerk
John D. Wood, Pastor

QUOTATION FROM COUNTY HISTORY

"Baptist Church — Next comes the Baptist Church (Old School) called "Rock Springs," just above the Maryland line. It was organized in 1808, (the year was 1806 — Clerk) and has pursued the even tenor of its way since that time. The congregation is comparatively small, but earnest and devoted. In adherence to the principals they profess they exhibit as much firmness as those of the larger denominations, perhaps more.

— John C. Lewis, Esq.

In **History of Lancaster County**, Pa., 1883"

(NOTE: The use of the appellation "Reverend" had become quite common even among Baptists during the period of the above early history leading to the organization of Rock Springs Church. This was due to the new schemes which were promoted among them. The term was never used by the Old School after the division in 1832. Benedict, the Missionary Baptist Historian, said that the term "Elder", as a proper distinction for Baptist ministers, from time immemorial was the usual title for them. — J. D. W.)

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121 N. Hutchins St., Apt. B
Lodi, California

Dear Editors:

No doubt you received my change of address to late in December, as I did not receive the January Signs; but I have received the February issue at the new address.

Since moving, I have been going to one of the nearer churches with members of the church; and I feel grateful to the dear Lord for the sweet benefits to me. My home church is still miles from me, as the arm of the church was disbanded near here on account of illness and injuries our pastor suffered. I missed the meetings so much. Now, since moving, I am nearer this place of meeting, and hope to go more and more. I also long to go to my church meetings: my health is not good, and I am nearing seventy-one years. I love to go to church and sit under the shadow of His wing,

and forget about self; and feast on the gospel preached in its fullness.

I have been a member of the church nearly forty-nine years, and my love for it has never changed, though I have been situated so far away I couldn't get to meetings; sometimes a few years would go by before I would be blessed to go and meet the dear members. I read a lot of good articles in my papers, and I read the Bible, but to meet with the church is sweet.

May the Lord's blessings be with all. From one hoping and trusting in the Lord.

Mrs. Mabel Lindsey

EXPERIENCE

Box 45,
Dry Fork, Virginia

Dear Brethren in Christ:

For a long time I have had a mind to write some of what I hope to be the dealings of the Lord with me. Whether the mind to write is of the flesh or of the Spirit, I know not.

When quite young I had many thoughts of death and eternity; and I thought that when I got older, I would join some church and live a Christian, thinking that was all I would have to do. I didn't feel to be a bad sinner, but that I was as good as many, and better than some. When about twenty years old, a great fear came over me, and darkness seemed to cover everything. I thought the world was coming to an end, and I was lost. The devil seemed to be near me, ready to snatch me to everlasting torment; and I justly deserved it.

I saw then what a vile sinner I was, and began to beg for the Lord to have mercy on my soul, or I would perish; for I was sinking down in an horrible pit. I would read the Bible, but that would condemn me; and I could find no comfort. I would go to different meetings, and sometimes when they would ask if any one wanted to be prayed for, to raise their hand. I felt that if anyone needed prayer it was surely me; and I did raise my hand. But still there was no comfort for me. Night and day my prayer was for the Lord to have mercy on my poor soul; though my words seemed to fall to the ground not heard, for I was too vile a sinner to call on a just and righteous God, though that was all I could do. Many a night I would cry until my pillow was so wet I would turn it over. Sometimes I would go to the old smoke-house, where there was a place dug in the ground which we had used to keep things cool in the summer, and there I would drop in as low as I could get, begging for mercy. I did not want anyone to know what a sinner I was.

My husband was a believer in the Primitive Baptists, and was a subscriber to the *Spiritual Law Counsel.* I would read it, and liked to read the experiences, but the other writings were sealed to me. I would try to ask the Lord to show me the right church, thinking maybe I would join some church, and that this great trouble would leave me. One Sunday evening, while all were gone and I was alone, and in so much trouble, I knelt by a chair and asked the Lord to have mercy on my soul, and lift me out of this horrible pit. I raised up, and took this Primitive Baptist paper from the shelf, and opened it; and there was the church in Spirit in the writing. At once my burden was gone, and I was singing:

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."

I had heard that song many times, though I never thought what it meant. Now I had experienced it. I walked out into the yard, and everything seemed to be in praise to the Lord; and the great darkness was gone, and the sun was shining so brightly I could not praise

Him enough. For this was the Saviour that had lifted me from the awful pit. Then I greatly desired to hear the Primitive Baptists preach; and did go soon afterwards to Mt. Springs to a baptizing and to the meeting. I took a seat near the back, hoping no one would notice me. Elder N. T. Oaks, the Pastor, arose and began to speak; his text being, Jeremiah 20:9. It seemed as if he knew my feelings, and could tell them to me. This struck me so that I tried to shake it off, and tried to get my mind on something else. Nevertheless, the words were as fire shut up in my bones. After that I desired the more to go and hear the wonderful gospel, the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes.

I desired no one to know I was interested, but could not hide the tears. Oh, if I could just hear, and they not see me! I was not fit to be with such good people, though I continued to go whenever and wherever I could hear them. It was all my joy. Twice I dreamed of being baptized, and was so happy, I would awake praising God. At last I could not stay away any longer, and asked for a home with them; and was received the third Sunday in September, 1919, and was baptized the next month.

Then I thought my troubles were all over, I was so happy; and for a long time I would go singing and praising His great and holy name. But I have been brought many times since into the valley, and almost ready to give up, saying maybe I am deceived, and am deceiving others. I have been made to beg for the return of the joys of salvation; and have felt a few times that my prayers were answered, and joy filled my soul to overflowing.

"My God, the Spring of all my joys,
The life of my delights,
The glory of my brightest days,
And comforts of my nights."

"Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

If I could be just half as good as my brothers and sisters of this precious faith are, maybe I would not have so many doubts and fears. I feel I could write on and on, for the half could never be told. I have no kindred in the flesh to talk my feelings to, for none of them believes as I do.

I would not exchange my hope for all the world, if I could; although sometimes it seems almost gone. Dear kindred in Spirit, is this so with you?

I hope I am your sister in Christ,
Elizabeth Holley

3606 36th Street,
Nitro, W. Va.

Dear Brethren:

Enclosed find $3.00 for the dear old *Signs* for another year. I enjoy reading the letters, which give me so much comfort when I feel so low. I love to read the experiences of grace from the children of God. They make me feel that they have traveled the road I traveled for six years; then, at last, He spoke peace to me, when I had so much doubt.

I still have many doubts, but I believe His guiding hand leads and directs our steps; and I have a blessed hope in Christ Jesus that sustains me when I feel so low. I am a member of Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church.

Yours in hope,
Anna L. Fowler

ADMONITION

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." (1 Timothy 4:6)

This is an exhortation written to Timothy, the preacher, by Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ. Timothy was an ordained preacher, chosen and set apart by God, to comfort and feed his little ones, while they sojourn in this world of sorrow. Since preachers this day and

time have the same calling, to comfort and feed the sheep, the exhortation to Timothy is also applicable to them.

We are blessed in this section of the country, with a marvelous portion of the Lord's servants. There are many oases where his children may rest and be comforted. Any Sunday, churches are in driving distance, where those who are thirsty or hungry may be fed by the overseers, who were made such by the Holy Ghost. The doctrine is proclaimed in all its wonders as dictated by the Spirit. The writer, at times, if not deceived, has been made to rejoice under the dew drippings of the sanctuary.

To be taken out of one's self and lifted up to behold with the speaker, power, justice, glory, mercy, grace, hope, love and all other attributes of the Saviour and King, are ours to enjoy and feast upon as the Spirit directs the preacher and hearer. For these reasons, it is the first phase of Paul's exhortation to Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself," of which I wish to write.

When a comforter is lead to comfort one of God's little ones, both parties are acted upon by the Holy Spirit, neither having merited the favor. At other times this same comforter and comforted one may be left to themselves, in the flesh, without inspiration, and try as they will they cannot attain the blessing, as before. I believe they both have to be inspired or receive a revelation before they can speak or hear the mysteries of godliness. The little child, who has been fed through the preacher, is puzzled, when that same preacher tells him that only the prophets, apostles and disciples of the Bible days, were given such inspiration. That he is only a vessel of mercy, subject to mistakes, like other children, with only a hope. I believe that when Christ wants a child soothed and comforted, made richer in the knowledge of Grace, He prepares the particular preacher who is to comfort him. I also believe, that the words meant for that child, whether by mouth or pen, will be spoken by the Spirit "through" the preacher and he could not make a mistake, if he tried. In taking heed unto himself that minister should ask, "Am I feeding that little one, saving it from doubt and worry?"

The preacher has a very special calling. "Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:60) With the word of a king there is power. He was not only told to go and preach but also what to preach, the kingdom of God. Furthermore he receives his sheep food by revelation, as it is meted out to him, not his own preparation before the services: "For I neither receive it by man, neither was I taught it, by revelation of Jesus Christ." (Galations 1:12)

A few months back I was wallowing in the slough of despair. It seemed the wings of His love were closed from under me and I was falling to destruction. My prayer for deliverance was answered through a discourse, by one of his enlightened ministers, and the way was light again. His love and mercy had only been hidden from me for a season, for my own good, He explained to me through the lips of this elder. I feasted on it there at the church and at home that night my bed was easy and restful for the first time in months. From my window his handiwork shone forth from heaven in all its glory and I delighted in the works of the Lord. "Neither pray I for them alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." (John 17:20) It seemed my happiness knew no bounds, through this preached word.

But sometime later, while talking to another elder, I asked him what he thought of the sermon that had meant so much to me. His answer was, "I didn't get much out of it. It sounded like a good deal of speculation to me." I have heard very comforting sermons from this minister too, and could only question in my mind, "How can these things be?" Could Paul's exhortation

mean that such careless remarks are not calculated to save the child from pain and anguish, when he said, "Take heed unto thyself, etc."?

While enjoying the doctrinal sermons and feeding on the food sent through these ordained elders, in a relaxed, confidential frame of mind, are his children asleep in Zion? Is the watchman asleep on the wall? Such questions can be raised in a little child's mind, when it hears one elder criticize the other ministers, all who are supposed to be overseers charged by the Holy Ghost. Paul, to those who should hereafter believe on him to everlasting life, said, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." (Cor. 12:3)

When a poor, groveling worm of the dust, who is nothing and less than nothing, with the weight of his sins pushing him into a smoldering pit and the flames of destruction are closing in forever, feels all of a sudden a calm; a sabbath from all his writhings and is freed, he longs to hear more of the one who eased his pains. He hungers and thirsts for the soothing assigned to the preachers of the Gospel.

Many are called, but few are chosen. The chosen are the guards who are placed around the walls of the city to cry to the inhabitants that the wall is secure. That the enemy will never molest them again because of the strength of the wall. These chosen guards around the city have the proper authority and know what to cry to comfort the hearers.

The natural man, no matter how great he is in oratory, cannot expound the riches of the saving grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in fullness and truth, unless he is given light of thought and liberty of speech or pen, by inspiration. "But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." (Job 32:8) This inspiration works on the speaker and hearer alike, giving them tongues to speak and ears to hear, so that the comforter and comforted are one in Christ.

On another occasion, the writer heard a minister take a text and preach a long, comforting discourse. As we often say, the text took him, and he was made to show me green pastures and still waters of rest and peace. Before me spread a beautiful picture of the things bought for me, unworthy though I be, by the blood of the crucified one. The river of the water of life seemed to flow from the throne of God, through the soothing voice of the speaker into my very heart and swell it most to bursting with happiness.

The very next day, an elder of my acquaintance said the text of the night before had been misapplied, that the scripture had another meaning and could not mean what the preacher had interpreted it to mean. My heart sank and a lump came into my throat.

The question comes to mind, if we are his workmanship, made able to speak and hear these wonderful promises, by the Spirit working in us through inspiration and revelation, how can these things be? The joy and gladness in my poor soul, when permitted to feast at the table of God's love, or to be given just a crumb, when I am so hungry, is almost unspeakable. There are no words to express a broken heart, a despairing soul, made glad through the ministrations and comfort, channeled through the vessels, chosen by God to feed his sheep.

Several months ago I had an illness that was accompanied by severe pain and emotional depression. It seemed, when I was almost at the breaking point, our dear pastor happened in. Did I say "happened"? To me it seemed Providential. He talked of neighbors and friends, of brethren and sisters, of the sick he had visited, of correspondence with other ministers and brethren, all this interspersed now and then on the scriptures and the greatest of all Physicians. It was hard to be depressed or think or feel pain, and when he was gone my mind and heart kept feasting

on the "medicine" he had left me. He has always filled such a need, since we united with the church. "As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things."

Because we love them, we hope, for the Truth's sake, as brethren, and because we lean on them as staffs of comfort, when activated by the Spirit, we admonish with Paul, "Take heed unto thyself."

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Lillie, La.

REPLY FOR BROTHER LOYD

Editors of the Signs:

I would like to reply to the request of Brother P. A. Loyd, Box 204, Salma, Kan. who wants someone to comment on three different Scriptures, beginning with Matthew 23rd chapter. He doesn't ask for anything specific in this chapter and as volumes could be written using any one of the 39 verses for a text, I will comment in generalties of the chapter as a whole, and hope that some one's mind will be sufficiently stirred up to cause them to study the entire chapter, which are the words of Jesus with the exception of the first verse. He was addressing the multitude and his disciples, telling them about the Scribes and Pharisees. He denounces their hypocrisy and refers to them as hypocrites, blind guides, serpents and a generation of vipers; and asks the question, "How can ye escape the damnation of Hell?" He next laments over the desolate state of Jerusalem who was then in a state of bewilderment. Their house is left unto them desolate, he comments. Desolate indeed is the house of anyone of God's people until it pleases God to reveal himself to them as the chief of ten thousand and altogether lovely. There is hope though for Jerusalem (church) for he says in the closing verse, "Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." This last remark gives us courage to press on, for as Balaam prophesied, saying, "I shall see him but not now, I shall behold him but not nigh. . ." This is Israel's hope that some day they shall see him face to face, but now only as thru a glass darkly.

Brother Loyd wants to know more about an incident mentioned in Mark 14:51, 52. He states that there is so much that he doesn't know. That incourages me to call him Brother for I am sure that we have been taught in the School of Grace of our nothingness, and made to feel that we know nothing as we ought except guided by that unerring Spirit that spoke the world into existence. The Scripture that he mentions is an interesting one and one that has impressed me as having deep significance, but I never have heard it expounded from the pulpit or otherwise. The Scripture states that after all had forsaken Jesus that there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him: and he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked. If my impression is correct this certain young man represents the Levitical Priesthood that was coming to an end. In the morning of time the priests were commanded to wear linen clothes, but now the one had come who was to be a High Priest forever, and it was fitting that the significant covering be transferred to Jesus. Nothing is left to cover the Levite (work system) but nakedness and shame. In speaking of this changeover the Apostle says in Hebrews 7:18, 19 "For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope; by the which we draw nigh unto God."

Now our Brother is concerned about Christian behavior, for he enquires about the meaning of II Peter 1:9-10. In order to arrive at a proper perspective we should read the verses leading up to, and the ones following. We should always consider who is speaking, the one

addressed and then consider the import of the message. Here in the first verse the servant of God speaks to them that have obtained like precious faith. In other words he is addressing believers in Christ Jesus; they are not dead sinners but regenerated, born again believers having received, ". . . like precious faith." "Grace be multiplied unto you . . ." he says, and tells you how this is done; thru the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

In verse nine, the Apostle says, "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and has forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. What would bring about this blindness, nearsightedness and forgetfulness? Lack of these things. These things refer to what has been mentioned in the preceding verses; and we will take them up in their respective order.

Simon Peter has already referred to our faith, but says "Add to it virtue." The faith was given whereby you are able to receive instructions from a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. This servant is telling a live believer, who is capable, to do something; add virtue. What's virtue? Broadly speaking, it is abstaining from evil; righteous living. To virtue add knowledge. Knowledge is said to be an accumulation of facts. Get the facts pertaining to any subject and you have knowledge. Paul, no doubt had this in mind when he was instructing Timothy. He said, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." Notice that he used the word workman. Do Primitive Baptist believe in works? Yes. In good works; that which God hath before ordained that we should walk in. Paul declared that he would show his faith that way and there is no other way known to the writer to let your light (Christ) shine except in good works, which is righteous living.

Knowledge is not enough, we must add to our knowledge, temperance. This has to do with an orderly walk. We must use care in our eating and drinking habits. We are told to prove all things and to hold fast to that which is good. It is not enough to hold fast to the good but we must let go of that which worketh evil. He who eats too much has yielded to the sin of gluttony and must suffer the consequence here in this life. To the drunkard it is said, no drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God. What must we do next? Add patience. Patience is that characteristic of Christian behavior that manifests calmness, composure, and longsuffering in our dealings with our fellowman. When we are tempted to be rash, David would admonish, "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage and he shall strengthen thine heart: Wait, I say, on the Lord. Wait patiently for him."

Next in order is godliness. To walk godly we must endeavor to walk in the precepts and examples of Jesus Christ. Paul would tell us to come out of the world and be a separate people. We should follow Christ in baptism. We should eat his flesh, drink his blood and wash the feet of our brethren. To godliness we are to add brotherly kindness. Brotherly kindness may be manifest by as simple a thing as a smile or a friendly handshake. If you love your brother these acts of kindness will not be burdensome, but come naturally. Last and greatest to be added is Charity, the bond of perfection. To describe this most fully I will refer you to the inspired writer, The Apostle Paul; in the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians. Any explanation short of that would be inadequate. Summarizing, Peter concludes that, "If ye do these things ye shall never fail:" Never fall from your steadfastness. Verse eleven tells you why.

We have been requested to make our replies brief. I am afraid that I have not adhered to the rule but if any part or the whole is deemed worthy of space and some hungry soul gets a crumb of comfort, may they render praise to HIM unto whom all praise is due.

Yours in fellowship,
(Elder) P. E. Ingram
Martinsville, Va.

STRONGLY ADVOCATES THE DOCTRINE

416 Nelson Drive
Jacksonville, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler:

Per your request for renewals and subscriptions to the **"Signs of the Times"**, I am enclosing with this correspondence my renewal, plus an apology for being so late; and one new subscription.

I have read a lot of periodicals, but none advocate the doctrine of Salvation by Grace any stronger, and that is more orthodox, than the **Signs.** According to my feelings and experience, I have to go along with that which advocates a doctrine of a Supreme God, who not only saw, but declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done saying, "My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." Also, a God who has called his people with a Holy Calling, not according to our work, but according to the grace that was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Oh, what a glorious God; oh, what wonderous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss to suffer for Hell deserving worms of the dust. He raised his people out of the dust; He raised his people out upon a sure foundation; and that is Christ the Lord, who gave his life for those that were chosen before the world began. He came to this low ground of sorrow, to suffer, to bleed, and to groan upon the Cross of Calvary to make the election sure.

He gave his life, not to satisfy man; but to satisfy the Law; not to offer salvation to man, but to offer a pure offering upon the altar to God for those that the Father had given to him; that they may have life and have it more abundantly. All that the Father gave him shall come unto him, and he will in no wise cast them out. As the apostle Paul has said, "He is able to save them to the uttermost." Even as he yielded up the Spirit, He cried to his Father, and sometimes I hope to my Father, that it is finished. Surely when God's people are made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, they are made to know that this is a finished doctrine. There is no more sacrifice to be made.

In bonds of the gospel, I hope
D. B. Stokes, Jr.

UNFINISHED LETTERS

Check, Virginia
January 19, 1959

Dear Brother Spangler

I have been thinking about you for sometime, and feel that I want you to know that I appreciate your sending me the *Signs of the Times.* I feel that its pages contend for the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

I think so much of your father: how earnestly he contended for the same faith. He was at the church at Laurel Creek when I joined the 4th Sunday in November, 1910. I have gone through many hardships since that time. That was the place where it was made known to me where the true church was, and I have not doubted it until this day. If I were as sure that I am one of those who compose the true church, I would have no doubt. I only have a hope that I am one of that number; and sometimes it is sufficient, and is an anchor to my soul, sure and steadfast; and enters into that within the veil, where our forerunner has entered. When I can feel this for myself, I am satisfied.

April 12, 1959

Dear Brother Spangler:

I want to acknowledge the gift, for I felt it was in love and kind regards for me. I feel undeserving for anything, but I want you to know the gladness of my heart when I saw what you brethren had given me, and it humbled

me. If left to my carnal flesh, I would be exalted, but I have been dealt with in such a way that these things bring me to examine myself; and when I do, I find that in me (my flesh) dwells no good thing. The brethren and friends have been good to me.

I have been reading the *Signs* for over forty years, and it is the soundest Baptist paper I know of. I feel that the Lord has chosen men to stand firm for the truth, and I truly hope you and Elder Wood and corresponding . . .

S. L. Moran

(Note: The above letters written by Elder Moran were unfinished, and were sent to us by his daughter, Sister Grace Sowers, who found them after her father's death. Elder Moran is greatly missed by the brethren among whom he labored for many years. — Editors)

1258 Filbert Ave.,
Chico, Calif.

Dear Editors:

This is to say that I am no longer able to read the dear *Signs of the Times* which you have been sending me for many years — the only church services in my long life. My eyes have failed so that I can read only a few words, and I have no one to read to me. I live alone, and am in my eighty-sixth year; so surely can't be here much longer.

You never can know how I do thank you for the *Signs*; I miss being able to read them more than words can tell. I thank all concerned, and wish God's great blessings on all. I have many that I have saved. They are the worse for long wear and many readings, but would give some of them to poor folks like me, if I could.

I close with wishes for love and blessings to you and yours, and all of God's children.

Marion S. Brooks

HASSELL'S HISTORY

Hassell's Church History is available to our readers for $4.85 per copy. If you are interested in the history of the Primitive Baptists, its doctrine and order, we would advise you to obtain a copy.

This history includes the history of the Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Association in America), and traces the history of the true church in doctrine and order from creation. It has over 900 pages.

ASSOCIATIONAL MEETINGS

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **BLACK CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION** will, the Lord willing, be held with Scott's Church, Wilson County, the 4th Sunday, and Friday and Saturday before, in October, 1961. The church is located about seven miles Southwest of Wilson, N. C. Those coming from the North follow Highway 301 South of Wilson, about three miles; cross Contentnea Creek bridge below dam, turn right and follow to church. Those coming from the South on 301 Highway, turn left at Lucama, go about a mile to intersection, turn left for about 300 yards, turn back right, and follow to church.

Brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

W. E. Turner, Clerk

SMITH'S RIVER ASSOCIATION

The **SMITH'S RIVER ASSOCIATION** is appointed to be held at Charity Church the 1st Sunday in September, and Friday and Saturday before. Charity is on Route 40 between Ferrum and Woolwine, Virginia.

Those of our faith and order are invited to meet with us.

Amos Hash, Clerk

VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING

The **VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING** is appointed to be held at the Mt. Zion Meeting House, on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, October 11, 12, and 13, 1961. Mt. Zion is located on U. S. Route 50, about 3 miles East of Aldie, Virginia.

A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends to meet with us.

A. L. Carter, Clerk
Manassas, Virginia

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION** will be held with Corinth Church, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in September and continuing through Sunday (September 15, 16, 17, 1961). Corinth Church is located about 12 miles Southeast of Smithfield, two miles East of Highway 701.

Those coming from the West, take Highway 70 out of Raleigh, N. C., to Smithfield. At Smithfield, take Highway 301 South for about five miles before turning off on Highway 701. Follow #701 for about seven miles to a crossroads. Turn left. At this crossroads, there will be a store on the left side of the highway and an association pointer. Follow this hard-surface road about two miles to the church which is on the left side of the road.

Those coming from the North, come to Smithfield and take Highway 301 South about five miles. Turn left on Highway 701. Go about seven miles and look for a pointer at a hard-surfaced crossroads. Turn left, and follow this road to church house.

Those coming from either the South or East, come to Newton-Grove and take Highway 701 North. Go about seven miles and look for a pointer at a hard-surfaced crossroads. Turn right and go about two miles to church house on the left side of the road.

We extend an invitation to our correspondents, visitors, and friends to meet with us.

Lester E. Lee

UNION MEETING

LITTLE FLOCK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Bakersfield, California, will hold a three-day meeting beginning September 29th. For information call Export 9-0469.

Bertha S. Wright, Clerk
108 Circle Drive
Bakersfield, Calif.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND

(To July 1, 1961)

Pattie Arrington, N. C.	$ 1.00
Joseph A. Johnson, Tenn.	2.00
J. R. Davie, Ky.	3.00
Mrs. Mary McIntyre, Can.	5.00
Mrs. Fannie Wiles, Va.	3.00
Gift, Calif.	10.00

Danville, Virginia September, 1961

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EDITORIAL

AARON'S ROD THAT BUDDED

(Numbers 17:8. Hebrews 9:4)

It has been requested by an Elder that we write upon the above subject, which we shall do, the Lord enabling us.

Aaron was the elder brother of Moses and is first mentioned in Exodus 4:14 as "Aaron the Levite, thy brother," God Himself saying. "I know that he can speak well." A God that works at both ends is here seen, giving Aaron a mind to set out from Egypt to go and meet his brother Moses, whom God had commanded to go down into Egypt. God said to Moses, "Behold, he cometh forth

to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart."

In Exodus 4 we see that God had instructed Moses, first his rod turning into a serpent, then at God's command he took it by the tail and it became a rod again. God then commanded Moses to put his hand into his bosom, and when he took it out, his hand was as leprous as snow. Again God commanded him to put his hand into his bosom and when he took it out, it was turned again as his other flesh.

When Aaron met Moses it was at Horeb, in the Mount of God, where Moses had seen the Angel of the Lord in a flame of fire out of the midst of the bush. Exodus 3. In this lovely, but awe-inspiring place, the favoured brothers met, here they greeted one another with a holy kiss, here they were united in a common cause, to walk in God's command even though it meant to face a frowning world. They went from the Mount of God to visit the people and elders of Israel, where Aaron spake all the words which the Lord had spoken to Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people. "And the people believed: and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that He had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped." Exodus 4:31.

In Exodus 7, the Lord said to Moses, "See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh, and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet." In the same chapter, verse 10, we find Aaron casting down his rod before Pharaoh and before his servants and it became a serpent. Pharaoh then called on his wise men and the sorcerers: "Now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments and their rods became serpents."

We do not believe that they could by their magic produce the same effect, but we do believe that our God caused the same result in their effort, so as to harden Pharaoh and his people against letting God's people go. The wonder to us is that Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods, it brings to mind that "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty: and base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things that are not, to bring to nough things that are." It shows that before God's authority every false way was to disappear. We see in this instance in the purpose of God, that the magicians could do as Moses and Aaron did in the first three miracles, but in the plague of lice, they could not bring forth lice by their enchantments and they admitted their failure and said, "This is the finger of God."

Aaron, the spokesman and prophet, seems to be set before us as standing between God and His people, chosen of God. "No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." Aaron, the Levite, who had dwelt in Egypt, and witnessed the distress and enslavement of his own people, and was acquainted with their grief and sorrow, was a suitable companion for Moses, his brother, even though we see in him weakness, a man subject to temptation. In the office of High Priest which he was later on to fill, his brother would be a strength to him, for had he not heard God's word and seen the burning bush and the Angel of the Lord in the midst of the flame? After events prove that Aaron, left to himself, could turn to the ways of men to worship gods of their own making.

When Israel had encamped before Mount Sinai and Moses went up the mountain to receive the Law from God, in his absence the people murmured and said to Aaron, "Up, make us gods which shall go before us, for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what has become of him." Exodus 32:1. Aaron said, Break off the golden earrings of your wives and sons and daughters and bring them to me, and

of them he made a molten calf, and they said, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." Aaron, the good talker, the one whose rod had swallowed up the rods of the magicians of Egypt! O Aaron! How couldest thou fall so low? No doubt this was God's way (as in Peter's terrible denial of his Lord) to banish self-confidence and to cause a self-loathing. What a failure he must have felt himself to be, how ashamed he must have felt that he, who had seen the power of God to sustain them before Pharaoh and his wise men, should so forget the power of Israel's God, as to foolishly make a molten calf and listen to their rebellion, becoming a leader of them in their false worship.

Aaron, chosen of God, in his confession to Moses (on his return) exposes his own weakness when left to himself, and his putting the blame on the people, saying that they wanted it so, did not fail to heap upon himself self-condemnation that would affect his walk all the days of his life. How shocked Moses was in Deuteronomy 9:16-20. "And I looked, and behold, ye had sinned against the Lord your God, and had made you a molten calf: ye had turned aside quickly out of the way which the Lord had commanded you. And I took the two tables, and cast them out of my two hands and brake them before your eyes. And I fell down before the Lord, as at the first, forty days and forty nights: I did neither eat bread, nor drink water, because of all your sins which ye sinned, in doing wickedly in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger. For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure, wherewith the Lord was wroth against you to destroy you. But the Lord hearkened unto me at that time also. And the Lord was very angry with Aaron to have destroyed him; and I prayed for Aaron also the same time."

The intercession of Moses which was effectual, and the humbling consciousness of his errors, made Aaron, under God's abounding grace, a fit man to stand before Israel as their High Priest.

Israel did not travel for long after that distressing experience before they began to murmur and find fault with Moses and Aaron, saying, "Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them, wherefore lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?" Read Numbers 16 to see what awful rebellion showed itself, and there we see that the earth opened and swallowed Korah, Dathan and Abiram and all that appertained unto them. Aaron stood between the dead and the living and made an atonement for the people and the plague was stayed. Then a long-suffering God commanded them to take each one a rod for the house of his fathers, and Aaron's rod was to be the rod for the house of Levi. Thus twelve rods were brought to the Tabernacle with the name of each man upon his rod, and Aaron's rod was amongst them.

These rods Moses laid up before the Lord in the Tabernacle of Witness. "And it came to pass that on the morrow Moses went into the Tabernacle of Witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms and yielded almonds. . . . And the Lord said unto Moses, bring Aaron's rod again before the testimony to be kept as a token against the rebels and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from me that they die not."

Aaron's rod that budded and blossomed and bare fruit was therefore kept in the Ark of the Covenant, it was there as an everlasting testimony against rebels who would ever dare to do contrary to God's ordered way, a proof in all ages that God, the God of Israel, had established His worship, chosen Aaron as His High Priest and the house of Jacob as His chosen people.

What were these rods but dead sticks that man had cut down, sticks with

no life in themselves? Nothing that Aaron had done by nature made him to differ from the other eleven. The office of Priesthood was bestowed on him by his God, and the life manifested in that rod while in the Tabernacle of Witness that night (the night being a type of the night of the legal dispensation during which time the Aaronic priesthood flourished) was from an entirely different root than the natural root of the tree from which the rod was taken. This of course, was in God's purpose. Our Lord, coming from the tribe of Judah, could not be a priest under the law, the rod of Judah remained a dead stick when Aaron's rod lived, yet we are told in Matthew 2:2 that the wise men said, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the East and are come to worship Him." He must live and die, becoming a dead stick, cut off from the land of the living for the sins of His People. God was His Father, though He was also the seed of the woman, yet there was no sin found in Him, only by imputation. "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth." This was in obedience to the law to produce a righteousness that would fit us, and to cleanse us from all sin by His precious blood.

In Aaron there was a God-revealed, living testimony, he, in his person, had to be a man without blemish. Before the Lord he must carry the twelve tribes nearest to his heart, as the breastplate had twelve stones enclosed within it, also the Urim and Thummim, shedding light and beauty over them all. He must sprinkle the whole tabernacle with blood, he must make the various sacrifices. We see him performing his many duties faithfully, surely there were evidences of life in his authority. In all he did, even to his going once a year into the Holy of Holies, we see, as in the rod that budded and blossomed, promises of better days to come. When he returned and Israel rejoiced in sins forgiven, we see the fruit of his intercession, forgiveness was felt by the whole of Israel at the High Priest's return. It was felt by some when they laid their hand on the victim's head, (the lamb about to be offered) when blessed by faith to see Jesus, the innocent dying for the guilty.

Not only Aaron, the High Priest, but the prophets all spake of Jesus, His sufferings and the glory that should follow. Like the bud and the blossom they carried promises of fruit to come. The joy to which they gave vent when feeling the favour of God showed that many were given to taste of the fruit of God's love and mercy. Under those types and shadows they were encouraged to speak of a day to come when One would come as King and Priest, who would give even the stones of their temple a glory beyond the glory of Aaron and those who followed him in the same office. Thus the testimony of Aaron, his offerings and all that he did, testified of Jesus. If Jesus had not come, the budding and blossoming would have been of no value. The fruit being seen showed the certainty of His coming. No wonder Moses prayed "And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it." Psalm 90:17.

To accomplish this that had been a mystery hidden from those of old but revealed in the Gospel, "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

"Almighty God sigh'd human breath!
The Lord of Life experienced death!
How it was done we can't discuss,
But this we know 'twas done for us."

Our Lord must die, as the Lamb of God, to bring forth much fruit. He must come alive again to be a High Priest for ever, He, who was not of the tribe of Levi, but of Judah, whose rod remained dead, arose from the dead and was declared to be a Priest for ever

after the power of an endless life. He has gone, as our High Priest, by His own blood, into the Holy of Holies, which is Heaven itself, and has poured out His blessed Spirit upon us, enabling us to walk in love and do those things that are well-pleasing in His sight. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is spoken of as the firstfruits, and Christ Jesus' body is the firstfruits, for He only hath immortality, but when He appears the second time, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. Through the Spirit's work we cry Abba Father, His Spirit bearing witness with our spirits that we are the children of God.

"To all eternity our King
And Priest shall be adored;
Sinners from Satan's power released
Shall ever praise the Lord."

G. R.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. Howbeit, Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel."

At the Delaware River Association last May, we used the above Scripture as a text, and although we felt some leading forth of the Spirit in our efforts to speak, we did not feel that the subject had been exhausted when we had finished. As it still lingers in our mind, we will undertake to present some of our thoughts upon it for the consideration of the readers of the **Signs of the Times,** in the hope of both interesting them and finding relief of mind for ourself.

In order to more fully appreciate the picture here presented it is necessary to recall some of the background, and thereby get a more complete description of the main character involved. We wish to call attention to the fact that Jesus had left the other side of the sea and had come over into this Gadarene's country. This is worthy of note for the reason that many present the idea that the sinner must first seek Jesus. In crossing the sea a "great storm" had been encountered and those who were aboard the ship had feared the loss of their lives, but when they awoke Jesus, who was asleep and apparently unaware of their predicament, he arose and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, "Peace, be still, and there was a great calm." Those who witnessed this display of his mighty power exclaimed one to another, "What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" And "when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not-with chains: because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces. Neither could any man tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones." Herein is set forth the pitiful condition which this poor man was in, and it is sad, indeed. It takes our mind back to a scene which we witnessed in southern Virginia many years ago. We were too small to be at work in the field, and were playing around the house. Our house was on the main road, but about one-half mile distant there lived a man with his family who one day became violently insane. Early in the morning of the day in question he began calling to my father at the top of his voice, "Ah, friend Dodson; Ah, friend Dodson," which he kept repeating, and finally, later in the day, he brought his small

daughter over and threw her into the gutter of the road directly in front of our house, and for several hours he shouted and raved, breaking down mullen stalks, which he pretended to use as guns, shooting at the passersby on the road. My father was not at home and I was sent to the field to call the workers to the house. Others stopped, until finally quite a crowd had gathered. Eventually, it was planned that one of the strongest men in the group should slip up behind him and pin his arms to his sides, when others would rush up and assist until he was overpowered and bound with a rope, placed in a wagon and taken to Danville. Frequently, a man appears to possess supernatural strength under such conditions. We will never forget that scene as long as we live, and the sadness of it almost brings tears to our eyes as we pen these lines. A serious mental affliction is undoubtedly one of the most pitiful things that can possibly befall a human being. It is very baffling to medical science. Jesus sought out such a case to show how sad our state by nature is and to manifest his power to heal the most difficult of all diseases. This poor man saw Jesus afar off, and ran to worship him, crying with a loud voice, "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not," for Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of him. Jesus had here performed a great miracle and it was seen that the devils which dwelt in the man, for their names were legion, were subject unto him. They in turn recognized his power over them and asked leave of him to permit them to enter a herd of swine, which he granted, and the record is that the herd ran violently down a steep place unto the sea and were choked in the sea. Those who had fed the swine, seeing their herds destroyed, fled to the city and they that dwelt in the city came out to see what was done. And when they had come to Jesus and saw him that was possessed of the devil, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind, they were afraid, and well might they have been, for their doom was sealed. When those who had witnessed what took place related it to them they prayed him, Jesus, to depart out of their coasts. The feeders of those who will eat anything today will have none of the real Jesus, but those who rejoice in his love and power want to be with him all the time. This poor Gadarene wanted to accompany Jesus in the ship and pass over the sea to the other side and be with him, and he prayed him to that end, but our text says he suffered him not, but commanded him to, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath compassion on thee." Until recently we had thought of this Scripture as applying only to those outside of the pales of the visible church. We have heard it quoted by others and have also quoted it many times ourself by way of trying to encourage those to whom the arm of the Lord has been revealed, to take up their cross, go home to their friends, be baptized, and become full-fledged members of the militant church. We do not want to detract from this point of view in the least, but rather would we emphasize it and urge those who have been with and learned of Jesus to do their duty in this respect. At the same time we would like to stress another point, one which we have heretofore overlooked, and that is that, "He departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him." In view of this our text takes on a broader meaning. It shows that Jesus had not only done great things for this man in relieving him of his distress and giving him a sound mind, but that he had called him to go forth and declare his wonderful works among the children of men. There are doubtless many of God's humble servants today who would prefer to cross over the river and for ever be with Jesus, but he still has work for them to do here in this sin-cursed world, and that work is to go among their friends,

declaring his power to save unto the uttermost, and his ability to cure the hardest of cases, for nothing is impossible with him. He is able to deliver them from the legion of devils, who tempt and harrass them the most of their days while here in this time state. He is the Great Physician who can heal all of the diseases of their sin-sick souls, and he will have compassion upon them. What wonderful things, indeed, we have to tell our friends, those who are acquainted with our travel, our doubts and fears, our sorrows and our joys, our downsittings and our uprisings, who share all things in common with us. Truly, they are our friends and they understand our language, which is not strange to them. They know of his sufferings for his people, of his compassion, or sympathy for those who have been called by his grace. Decapolis, we understand, signified a group of villages, towns or cities, or the community in which this Gadarene was to publish these glad tidings, and we are told that "all men did marvel."

We also read in this chapter that Jarius, whose daughter lay at the point of death, was encouraged to pray that he might heal her and that she might live. There is also the record of a certain woman who had had an issue of blood for twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all she had, and was nothing better, but rather grew worse, when she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment, for she said, "If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole." What wonderful faith was her's, and it was fully rewarded, for it is declared that "straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague."

In our natural state we are as mad men. We will fight and oppose this way with all of our might and main, and if left to ourselves would never seek Jesus, but instead would drive him out of our coast, or lives, and refuse to have him reign over us, but, oh, what untold and everlasting gratitude springs up in our poor hearts when we discover that he has come our way, that he has sought us out, and that he commands the unclean spirits to come out of us and depart, for a season at least. Then it is we find ourselves in our **right minds,** and we not only can think rightly of him, but we are imbued with the desire to go home to our friends and tell them what great things he has done for us. The trouble with us is that we cannot begin to tell these things to our friends as we would like. We find that words cannot express what we feel, but sooner or later we realize that a hint to the wise is sufficient, and that our friends who have likewise had these things wrought in them are witnesses to the same power that has been working in us, and then, oh what a relationship there is between us. We can then sing, Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love, and declare that the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above. What a mercy it is that those of like precious faith can rejoice together in telling and hearing of him who has loved us with an everlasting love and, therefore, with loving-kindness draws and constrains us to forsake the ways of sin and to seek him, whom to know is life eternal. God is still calling his people with an effectual calling, and when he commands them to go home to their friends and tell what great things he has done for them they have nothing good to say for themselves, but it is all of his grace. And when he calls and qualifies and sends forth his servants to preach the everlasting gospel of his blessed Son, they go preaching in demonstration of the Spirit and with power sent down from above, and those who hear marvel at these wonderful things.

(Editorial by Elder Dodson, September, 1941.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. NANCY THOMAS

Sister Thomas lived with her children in

Shreveport, Louisiana. She was born in Scott County, Mississippi, and moved to Louisiana, where she reared her family. She died April 2, 1961. Her husband David A. Thomas died about 12 years ago. She is survived by three sons: E. A. and W. L. Thomas, of Shreveport, and W. G. Thomas, of Stillwell, Oklahoma; two daughters: Miss Edna Thomas, Shreveport, and Mrs. John F. Davis, Ringgold, Louisiana. Also surviving are 18 grandchildren, and 14 great grandchildren.

Sister Thomas was a devout attendant of Primitive Baptist meetings as long as her health permitted her to go; and she manifested that great love of the humble children of God. She loved the preaching of the everlasting gospel of God our Saviour, and the great love of God was visible in her pleasant countenance when she was at the meetings. Her membership was with one of the churches near Jamestown, or Castor, Louisiana, and she was a regular attendant at Mt. Olive Church after I started going to that church.

May the Lord be with, and comfort her beloved children and their families, and give them precious memories of her love and devotion to the glorious gospel truth. She is gone in spirit to God, and her body lies in the grave until our Lord comes again without sin unto salvation, when in the resurrection His people shall be conformed to His image and be housed in their home in heaven, where all shall be peace, love, and joy.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer at the Rockett Funeral Chapel, and graveside services at Oak Grove Cemetery. There was much evidence of respect, devotion, and friendship manifested by the congregation, and there were many flowers showing their love.

An unworthy servant, if one at all
(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

LOIS ARGENBRIGHT HELMS

Lois Argenbright Helms was born February 27, 1914, and died March 22, 1961. She was united in marriage March 18, 1932, to James Rodney Helms; and to this union two sons were born: James R., Jr., and John W. Helms, who, with their father, survive. Surviving also are, her father and mother, W. F. Argenbright and Blanche S. Argenbright, and seven sisters: Winnie, Iris and Joan Argenbright, Mrs. Tressie A. LaPrad, Mrs. Estell A. Wimmer, Mrs. June A. Palmer, and Mrs. Rose Mary Maxey.

Sister Helms united with Basham Church, Bedford County, Virginia, the second Sunday in December, 1946, and was baptized by her father-in-law and pastor, Elder J. P. Helms, and was a faithful member. Her sudden passing was a severe shock to the family, the church, and her many friends, but those who know what it is to have a hope of eternal life, rejoice along with their sorrow, for they know that the Lord has but taken his own; and that

"Death is no more a frightful foe,
Since I with Christ shall reign:
With joy I leave this world of woe,
For me to die is gain."

Funeral services were conducted at Basham Church by Elders John D. Wood and Julius Bocock, where an overflowing congregation of friends were gathered in respect and sympathy; and where the many flowers gave silent and beautiful tribute of those who loved her. Interment was in the Church Cemetery.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to those who mourn, and cause them to realize that He does all things well.

John D. Wood

LUNDY COLEMAN DOSS

It has pleased God to remove from our midst by death Brother Lundy Doss. He was the son of W. L. Doss and Virginia Brumfield Doss, and was born July 11, 1896, and died January 15, 1961. He was united in marriage to Mary Hardy November 6, 1916. He is survived by his wife, five sons and five daughters: Ruben Loray, Frank, and William, of Gretna, Virginia, and Raymond, of Danville, Va., Mrs. Roy Dalton, Mrs. Allie Collins, Mrs. Morris Mills, of Gretna, and Mrs. Sam Owen and Mrs. George Mayhew, of Danville. Also surviving are eighteen grandchildren and one great grandchild; two brothers and one sister: R. L. Doss and Mrs. Albert Dooling, of Gretna, and Goldie Doss, of Alexandria, Virginia.

Brother Doss united with Springfield Church on November 8, 1924, and was a faithful member. His companion has lost a good husband and the children a good father. We feel that our loss is his gain: that his spirit has returned to God who gave it, and his body to dust from whence it came, to await the glorious resurrection, when it shall be changed and made like unto our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The funeral service was conducted by his pastor Elder O. K. Tench, and he was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park. May the Lord bless his family, and give them understanding that He doeth all things well.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be put on our church records; a copy sent to the family, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of Springfield Church in conference.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
R. C. Dalton, Clerk

STEPHEN GROVER AKERS

This in memory of Stephen Grover Akers, who was born near Calaway, in Franklin County, Virginia, on August 15, 1884. The call came for him August 15, 1960 on his 76th birthday. He was united in marriage to Mary Etta Bryant, December 25, 1907. To this union was born ten children, five boys and five girls; one daughter died in infancy. His wife and helpmate and nine children, nineteen grandchildren, and four great grandchildren, are left to mourn their loss. But, they rest in this assurance, that their loss is his gain.

Brother Akers united with Pigg River Church in November, 1921. He was appointed as Assistant Clerk in May, 1930; ordained as Deacon in October, 1930, then chosen Clerk in May, 1957.

Brother Grover filled the offices of Deacon and Clerk with meekness and modesty, as well as any that I ever knew. All of his brethren loved and respected him, and the Lord gave the Church a faithful Deacon and his helpmeet, in him and Sister Etta. His funeral was preached at his home church by Elder William Holland, Elder Odell Thompson, and his pastor, Elder J. P. Helms, on August 17, 1960; and interment was in the Church cemetery.

Many of his brethren and friends from all walks and religious sects were present to manifest their sympathy to the family. All we can say or do, has been done — Rest in peace: you will see Him as He is.

J. P. Helms

AGNES B. GOODRICH

Our dear beloved sister in Christ, Agnes B. Goodrich, departed this life March 11, 1961, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Lillian Becker, Vernon, New York. Funeral services were held March 14th, from the Clark Funeral Home, Central Bridge, Schoharie County, New York. Interment to be made later in Pine Grove Cemetery, Livingstonville, New York.

Sister Goodrich was the daughter of the late William H. and Alzina (Cole) Brayman. She was born March 25, 1869, in the town of Broome. Her husband was the late William Goodrich, who died January 15, 1950, in Rome, New York. They were married March 10, 1891, and lived in Hauverville until 1914.

Sister Goodrich had been a faithful member of the Middleburg Old School Baptist Church since 1902. Surviving besides the daughter mentioned are two other daughters, Mrs. Lula C. Sands, of Central Bridge, and Mrs. Naomi Bennett, of Olean; a son, Fred R. Goodrich of Rome, New York; a sister, Mrs. Charlotte Moister, of Scotia; a brother, Fred Brayman of Central Bridge; and 14 grandchildren and 38 great grandchildren. Of the 38 great grandchildren 22 are grandchildren of Sister Goodrich's son, the late G. Dewey Goodrich, of Elmira and Mrs. Nettie A. Goodrich of Binghampton, New York. Five of the 14 surviving grandchildren are children of Mrs. Lula Sands and are well known locally, Miss Laura C. Enders, Albany, New York; David Enders, David Enders, Central Bridge; Mrs. Nellie Enders, Albany, New York; David Enders, Central Bridge; Mrs. Nellie Enders Carver, North Haven, Conn.; Mrs. Mary Ellen Sands Vanerongen, Essex Junction, Vt. and Mrs. Lois Sands, Uhl, Albany, New York. Her children were very kind and devoted to her and always attended to furnishing her all of her needs in her old age, and tenderly cared for her to the end.

Sister Goodrich was much devoted to her church, though for recent years her impaired hearing was so bad she could not hear the preaching. But that did not take away her deep interest in the meetings, for it was her joy to meet with the brethren, to see their faces and enjoy the sweet fellowship and the warm hand shake of those of like precious faith in the Eternal God and His Son, Jesus Christ, whom she loved and trusted in. When in her presence, though she could not hear, it was a pleasure to listen to her testimony of a reason for her hope and her love for Christ and His truth and of her great desire to do His will and to hear her quote Scripture and recite hymns.

Funeral was conducted by the writer,

Amasa J. Slauson

MRS. FANNIE JOHNSON BLACKMON

After a lengthy illness, God in his infinite love and mercy has seen fit to call from our midst, our beloved sister, Mrs. Fannie J. Blackmon. She died at the age of 76 years and 9 months. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joshua Johnson, of Johnson County, North Carolina. She leaves to mourn her loss one son, Johnny Barefoot, of Raleigh, North Carolina; one daughter, Mrs. Loomus W. Johnson, of near Benson, North Carolina; four grandchildren and one great grandchild. Sister Fannie was a kind, loving and affectionate wife and mother, a good neighbor, doing all she could for others although she had been

in very poor health for several years.

She loved her church and filled her seat when able to go. She joined the church at Hickory Grove, Saturday before the second Sunday in July, 1946. She was baptized by the present pastor Elder Lester E. Lee.

BE IT RESOLVED, In the passing of Sister Fannie Blackmon, Hickory Grove has lost from her membership a very faithful and highly esteemed sister. That we mourn not for her as those who have no hope. May we be enabled to bow in humble submission to God's holy and gracious will.

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be recorded on our church records; a copy be sent to the family; and a copy to *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference on Saturday before the third Sunday in May, 1961.

Committee:
Sister Georgia Hill
L. J. Kininsey and wife

SAM McGREGOR

It pleased our Heavenly Father to call our dearly beloved and esteemed Brother, Sam McGregor, from his walk in life to his home above. He passed away quietly in Hopkins County Hospital, at Madisonville, Kentucky, on March 9, 1961. He seemed to realize he was going for he took my hand and said, "I don't have much to place my hope on, but I wouldn't take all this world for what I have." His funeral was preached by Elder J. N. Darnell and our pastor, Elder Ramon L. Biggs, in the Beshears Funeral Home, Dawson Springs, Kentucky. The funeral was attended by many friends and relatives, and so many beautiful flowers were sent.

Brother Sam was born July 29, 1881. He was the son of Elder Sam McGregor. About 1905 he married Mirtie Roberts. To this union were born twin sons, Justine and Jewel McGregor, and a daughter, Kathleen McGregor Hunter. On January 9, 1923, he married Maude Tapp. There were no children born to this union. In September 1952, he married Willie Irene Kurly who was a companion for him in his last days. Brother Sam had a great love for music. He won many prizes at old fiddlers' contests. He worked on and also made many violins. It was so sweet to hear him play the old time tunes we love and sing in church.

Brother Sam joined the church when he was about nineteen years old. He was made Clerk and Deacon of the church and has been a regular father in Israel ever since. He loved the song, "If God is Mine". We do so miss him, no other can take his place and it will be sacred only for him. Brother Sam was a retired city mail carrier.

Written by order of New Hope Church in conference Saturday, May 20, 1961.

RESOLVED, That a copy be placed on our church records, and a copy be sent to his widow, Willie McGregor, in Martin, Tennessee. Also a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Mona McGregor

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Sister Mahala M. Houk, wife of the late Deacon Samuel H. Houk, was born September 20, 1864, and passed away November 16, 1960, in General Hospital, Hobart, Oklahoma, at the age of 95 years, 1 month, and 27 days. She was married to S. H. Houk July 23, 1882, at Greenville, Texas; moving to Oklahoma in 1905, and resided at Snyder, Oklahoma, most of the time since 1916.

She joined the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church on Saturday before the 4th Sunday in June, 1887, at Mt. Zion Church, Hunt County, Texas, now Cash, Texas. After coming to Oklahoma, she moved her membership to Dawson Valley Church, later Little Flock Church, Altus, Oklahoma, where she remained a faithful member until her death. To this union nine children were born: her husband and six children preceded her in death. Survivors are one son, W. L. Houk, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; two daughters, Mrs. M. L. Hammond, Ringling, Oklahoma, and Sister Robby Boyd, of Snyder, Oklahoma; also 12 grandchildren, 21 great grandchildren, and 6 great great grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder W. W. Taylor at Snyder, and she was laid to rest beside her husband in the Fairlawn Cemetery, Snyder, Oklahoma. Granny Houk, as she was known by her many brethren and friends, was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church 73 years, and was always at meetings when she was able. Several years ago she fell and broke her hip, and was not able to walk afterwards. She was happy when any of the church members visited her. She was strong in the faith; and was blessed with a clear mind to the last, but her eyes were dim and her hearing impaired the last two years. God in his infinite wisdom called our sister to her eternal home: she was ready to go, and longed to meet her blessed Saviour. Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we deeply sympathize with the bereaved family; and

RESOLVED, That a copy of this writing be made a part of our church record; a copy sent to the family; and a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of the church.

Elder C. M. Haygood, Pastor
Mrs. Nina M. Stallings, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129 DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1961 NO. 10

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10/1
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

HOMESICK

Lord, 'till my time on earth is o'er,
Although thy child I may not be,
Let me, as Ruth, dwell with thy fold
While here in time my lot doth be.

With thy dear children let me live:
I'd rather a doorkeeper be
Than dwell within the tents of sin,
Since there no more is aught for me.

I love thy courts, I love thy house:
To dwell in them, dear Lord, I plea.
Fain would I shun the tents of sin,
But bonds and fetters hinder me.

Could I fly as a weary dove —
Had I her wings to pilot me —
I'd rise and soar where angels sing,
And all thy glories would I see.

There with my God forever blest,
Where doubts and fears molest no more;
There would I bathe in seas of rest
Forever on that happy shore.

Then let me here in patience rest;
Though I be chasened, sick and sore,
My God ordains that which is best —
He of the sheepfold is the door.

Then come what may of grief or pain,
Or fiery darts from Satan's store,
Through Christ I will the vict'ry gain
And dwell with Him when life is o'er.

Lord haste the time, O haste the day
When I my armor shall lay down;
When thou well done to me shall say:
Put on an everlasting crown.

I composed the above on the night of November 2nd, and wondered if I was strong enough for the 6th and 7th stanzas as my own; and was not left long to find out. I went to bed in what I thought was perfect health, and had a stroke in my left side before daylight which has rendered me unable to do gainful work anymore. I've had many sore conflicts with Satan since, but can still hope, and say with the apostle, "Cast down but not destroyed". The above can be sung to any long meter tune; I suggest the tune Ester. Dedicated to all who are having great conflicts with Satan.

C. B. Britt
Rt. 6, Box 282
ElDorado, Ark.

WITHIN THE VEIL

"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even, Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." (Hebrews 6:19 and 20)

To all who love His appearing, Beloved Brethren: A number of times in the past two or three years, the expression "Within the Veil" has gripped me and I have had some very delightful meditations on the subject and on the verses quoted above. For some time, I have felt an urge to try to express a little of the beauty which I hope I have been blest to see. So, if it please the Lord to direct me, I shall attempt it, humbly trusting that whatever I may say will be the truth as it is in Christ Jesus and the written word of God.

The text takes us back to the tabernacle in the wilderness and the many beautiful types portrayed there. Moses, who was in so many respects, a type of our Lord Jesus Christ, together with Aaron, the high priest, was chosen to lead God's people Israel, out of Egyptian bondage where they had been exiled for

four hundred and thirty years, through the wilderness, to Canaan, the promised land of rest, freedom and plenty. The journey through this great wilderness covered a period of forty years, although the distance was not great, but God had many lessons to teach them, many trials and deliverances for them during those many years. It was on this journey that God called Moses to go up to Him in the mount, and there, on tables of stone, God gave Moses the law and commandments for the people. There, God bade Moses to have them make Him a sanctuary, that He might dwell among them and showed him the pattern of the tabernacle they were to build, with explicit instructions as to measurements, furnishings, worship. The first thing to be built was the ark, a type of our Lord Jesus in judgment. Just as all redemption, all salvation, all worship, must center in and emanate from the Lord Jesus Christ, so the tabernacle must be built around and out from the ark.

The reading indicates that the tabernacle was an oblong, wooden structure, covered with the skins of animals. The structure was in two parts — the outer part to be called the Holy and the inner part, called the Most Holy or Holy of Holies. Between these two parts hung the veil, a curtain made of fine twined linen, in blue, purple and scarlet. This veil, a type of Christ's human body, separated the two parts and barred the way to the Most Holy place. When, on the cross, Jesus gave up the ghost and died, we are told the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, thus making possible access to the Most Holy Place, the throne of God. The Most Holy Place represented heaven, the throne of God and His glory. It was in the Most Holy Place that the ark was to be placed. Let us examine the ark for a moment. It was to be made of wood, accacia wood, a desert growth, typical of our Lord Jesus, and overlaid with gold. The wood typified His humanity, the gold His divinity, His divinity overshadowing His humanity. In the ark was to be placed the testimony or commandments, setting forth the truth that in Him are all the law and commandments kept. Above the ark was the mercy seat with the cherubims at either end, facing each other and looking toward the mercy seat, typifying mercy overshadowing judgment. As I am blest to see, in my mind's eye, this sacred scene, my heart wells up in gratitude and praise to our God that there IS a mercy seat.

Into the Most Holy Place, the High Priest entered once a year, on the day of atonement, with the blood of an innocent victim, a lamb without blemish, for a sin offering for himself and the people, a type of the Lamb of God who took away the sin of the world. This was typical of a MAN entering heaven, into the presence of God. In fulfillment of this beautiful type, our Blessed Lord, after His resurrection, entered into the presence of God. We read in Hebrews 9:24 "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."

Referring back to the text, we find that Jesus has entered into heaven as our forerunner. As the word signifies, a forerunner is one who goes on before and is a pledge, a surety that others are to follow, and that when they come, they will be like the forerunner. Since Christ's resurrection and ascension, believers who leave their earthly abode, depart in spirit to be with Christ and their bodies sleep in the grave. Their manifestation and glory will take place at the second coming of Christ when their bodies will be raised and fashioned like unto His own glorious body. Until then, Christ Jesus is in heaven, on His Father's throne, WITHIN THE VEIL, the first fruits of the great harvest which is to come, and as He is, we too, shall be when He descends from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God to

receive us unto Himself. As we are blest to behold Him now, a glorified man in the divine presence, we can glimpse our own glorious future, for when He appears, we shall be like Him. All earthly prospects lose their significance as we get a foresight of that future.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is now WITHIN THE VEIL to present us to the Father, faultless, blameless, and forever free from condemnation. He is there to intercede for us — not for the world, but for the household of faith, the blood-bought throng, the divine family. He is there to intercede for us, not as rebellious sinners, but as poor, needy little children who often err through the weakness of the flesh. So, God looks upon us through Christ's intercession, not in judgment, but in tender mercy.

Christ is now WITHIN THE VEIL as our advocate. Our prayers and our worship must ascend to the Father through Him for He says "No man cometh to the Father but by me." He knows and advocates our needs to the Father before we ask or even feel our need. In the case of Peter, Jesus told him he must be sifted as wheat, but that He had prayed for him that his faith fail not. Poor Peter didn't even know his faith was weak. In my own experience, I have been prepared for trials and temptations sometimes before they came. On one occasion, when I was to go through a bitter experience, I had been given, for some time before, such sweet communion, such positive assurance that He would go with me through deep water, that when the trial came, I had been strengthened to the extent that I never felt to question God's goodness in sending it. I had been fortified before the attack! Sometimes some unsought blessing comes to us and we are amazed. We should not be. Up there, WITHIN THE VEIL, stands the MAN who walked the shores of Galilee, who "had not where to lay His head" — that dear head which was crowned with thorns FOR ME, who trod our path before us, who was tempted in all things as we, and who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross for us. Amazing grace!

We understand that when the High Priest entered within the veil, the people represented waited outside for his return and when he had laid both hands upon the head of the live goat and confessed their iniquities upon his head, the animal was sent away by the hand of a FIT MAN, into a land not inhabited, to die in the wilderness. The people waited until the FIT MAN should come back WITHOUT THE SIN OFFERING. Again in fulfillment of the type, Jesus, our sin bearer, was led away by Christ, the FIT MAN, to Golgotha, a place called the place of a skull, to be crucified. But He arose, and went into heaven and He is now WITHIN THE VEIL and we await His coming the second time, not as our sin bearer, but as our heavenly bridegroom — our resurrection and our life. Paul tells us in Hebrews 9:28 "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him, shall He appear a second time without sin unto salvation." Therefore, our spiritual abode, our place of worship, our great hiding place, is WITHIN THE VEIL, while our walk is yet "without the camp, bearing His reproach."

So, dear ones, let us boldly approach the throne of grace. Boldly? Not boldly in the sense that we, of ourselves, are entitled to that grand privilege — but with confidence! Confident of what? Confident that He is faithful who promised — confident that, having died for us, He ever liveth to make intercession for us.

I have barely touched upon just a few of the glorious types set forth in the setting up and worship of the tabernacle and there may be errors in my interpretations, as my knowledge and understanding is so vastly short of what I wish it were, but I am not afraid to defend the glorious truth that THE MAN CHRIST JESUS is now WITHIN THE VEIL until His enemies be made His footstool. And as the day of our

adoption draws near, and it seems it must be very near, may we ever cling closer and closer to our dear Redeemer and to His people, while we "look for that blessed hope and His glorious appearing."

Yours, with love and hope in "The Tie That Binds."

Mildred Dykes
1114 Mt. Hermon Road
Salisbury, Maryland

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Elder Arthur R. Warren)

The Deleware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J., June 7 and 8, 1961, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and churches with which we correspond, sends greetings in the Lord.

Dear Brethren:

As the time has come once more to address this association with what is called a Circular Letter, we attempt it with much fear and trembling, yet hoping that it may please our God to guide our minds that what is written may be of comfort to those of our faith assembled here.

We believe in a sovereign God who rules in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say unto him what doeth thou. We believe that many times our interpretations of the Scriptures may not be the same, but do believe that all of God's chosen people, wherever and whoever they are, are taught of the Lord that their salvation is by grace and not by the works of man; and that they are led out of the darkness in which they were born into the marvelous light of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; of which we hope to write.

We believe, by the way it has pleased our God to lead us, that God before the beginning of time knew all things that would ever take place, and had a purpose in all things for the good of his chosen people and to his own honor and glory. The Apostle Paul said in Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." It is our firm belief that God loved his people with an everlasting love before the beginning of time, "Therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee," said Jeremiah in the 31st chapter and the third verse. Having chosen his people in Christ before the world was and in his own appointed time teaches them the depravity of spirit, by the light of the Lord, which is nothing other but the Lord revealing himself in the hearts of his people, causing them to look inwardly and see themselves poor vile sinners; and then and then only do they cry out for mercy.

We do not believe the natural mind has ever or will ever seek the things of God, for the things of God are contrary to the ways of man; neither do we believe that it is by the enticing words of man's wisdom that men are drawn to God. We believe that man is born in this world blind to the way of salvation; and he travels in his own strength until such time as it pleases God to bring him out of the darkness in which he was born into the marvelous light of our Lord.

He comes forth like a flower by the wayside with all its natural beauty, but when the heat of the noon-day sun shines upon it, it withers and fades away; likewise man is born in this world with all the natural pride and beauty of life, but we believe that when the Son of Righteousness shines in the heart of his chosen people they are cut down and they see themselves as they never saw before; and can say with the Apostle Paul in Romans 7:19-20, "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me."

We feel to say further that this pilgrimage is a strange one to our natural minds, for the Apostle Paul said, 1 Corinthians 2:14, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." But when it pleases God to give us a spiritual mind we have a season of rejoicing, not in our strength but in our God who has blessed us to see our weakness, and to look to him who is the Rock of our salvation.

We do feel to say further that it is indeed a blessing when we are made to see our sinful nature, not that we rejoice in our evil thoughts, the things we speak with our unruly tongues, but we rejoice because we have felt the condemnation of sin, for the Apostle Paul again spoke to the comfort of the Lord's people when he said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." (1 Timothy 1:15)

Thus as we journey here we are comforted from time to time by the Scriptures which confirm us in the things we have been taught; and are given a hope, by such, that we are a part of that building not made by hands, but by the grace and mercy of an all-wise God. Amen.

Elder Arthur R. Warren, Moderator
Sister Letha A. Blackwell, Clerk

CORRESPONDING LETTER

(Written by Sister Mary L. Hellings)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association in session with the Hopewell Church, Hopewell, New Jersey, June seventh and eighth, 1961; to all the associations and churches with which we correspond; sendeth greetings in the Lord.

Dear Brethren:

Once more we feel blessed to be permitted to meet with your messengers and receive greetings and correspondence, which we gratefully appreciate, and, Lord willing, hope for its continuance.

Though we are but few in number we desire to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

Of a truth we feel there is no strange doctrine among us. We welcome the visiting brethren who have come in love of the doctrine of salvation by grace; and in their preached word, gave all the praise and honor to Christ Jesus, the only Saviour for sinners. We have been truly edified, spiritually comforted, and blessed beyond measure.

Our next session will convene, the Lord willing, with the time and place to be announced in the **Signs of the Times,** when we hope to meet as many messengers as can come in love and fellowship. Until then, may God bless all of you most abundantly; may He lovingly watch over you and guide you, and cause you to delight in walking together about Zion, the church of the living God.

Elder Arthur R. Warren, Moderator
Sister Letha A. Blackwell, Clerk

OUT OF THE DEPTHS

"Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, Oh Lord." (Psalms 130:1)

For the last few years we have lived in a house at the top of a hill, with the pasture and barn at the foot.

Late in the afternoon while doing the chores at the barn, it would be so dark and gloomy it seemed to be night. But as I walked up the hill to the house it would get lighter and as it was usually about sunset, nature would be showing forth the handiwork of God in the colors she portrays at that time of day. Time after time as I would reach the top, the thought would run through my mind, "Out of the depths."

Most of the time I am at the foot of the hill, deep in despair because of the

darkness in my soul. My sinful, carnal nature leads me on and on into the depths of sin.

Sometimes I almost forget there is light at the top of the hill and yet I am always aware of a "still small voice" that checks my love and revelings in these vile wishes of my being. This remorse and regret that gnaws at my heart in a world where many go headlong into the depths of sin without a twinge of conscience, is the ray of hope that makes me know there is light at the top of the hill. "For the love of Christ constraineth us."

In my girlhood days I thought I was good. I believed lecturers and other flatterers when they said a girl who followed the moral code of life was good and had a heart as pure as gold. I am still thankful for the parental love and restraint that led me thus; but when I look into my heart and see the evil and vain longings there, I wonder how I ever thought it pure. I am ashamed and try to banish these evil thoughts, but it seems the harder I try the more they come.

Once before for a long, long time I was in the wilderness, and now in my despair I try to look back and get solace and comfort from the happiness I felt when I thought the Lord had "found me and brought me out." For months and months I have longed for that freedom again. God grant that it may be done unto me as to the Israelite of old, "He rebuked the Red Sea also, and it was dried up: so he led them thru the wilderness."

It seems that some of the poor in the Lord are exercised most of the time by the dealings of the Lord. Anytime you approach them they have a wonderful account of the things done unto them, and their eyes glow with the inner light, continuously. But I, (if I am one of His) am in the darkness most of the time. A few times I have felt so happy I wanted to go home to my Saviour. I wanted to tell the world about the great light in my soul, to stand at the top of the hill in the light of God's beautiful sunset. Oh God, lift me up, for out of my troubles I beseech thee to let me live in the everlasting light of thy love, if it be thy will. "They mount up to heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble."

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Lillie, Louisiana
1935

Woodward, Iowa

Dear Elder Spangler:

As my time is up I am sending my renewal. I have been taking the Signs for many years, and I don't want to miss a copy of it. It is all the preaching I hear, except when I am given the privilege of going to Kentucky, where I heard you preach last October at the association. I never enjoyed a meeting more.

I would love to explain many things, but am afraid to make the attempt, for fear I would not be understood. But I do love the doctrine of Salvation by Grace, for it is all that can reach a wretch like me.

Wishing you much success and a prosperous future, I am, I hope, a sinner saved by grace. In bonds of love to you and all God's children.

W. J. Kimbro

EXPERIENCE

I was born May 12, 1884, in Randolph County, North Carolina. My father and mother were members of the Primitive Baptist Church. At a very early age, (close to five years), I became concerned about my eternal destiny; (this could be traditional from training in the home, but as to that I cannot say.) My childish desire at that time was that, above any and all things I might attain

in life, I might be a servant of the Lord; and be blessed with the experience of grace my parents had, and those ministers and brethren who visited our home; and who seemed to have only one mind in their conversation, which was invariably things pertaining to God and the church. I can remember sitting on the floor at their feet, listening to all they said, and wishing that I could be like them, and have the manifestation of love, hope, and faith they had. Through their talk I was made to see that I had to be born again before it was possible to become a servant of the Lord; and that no one but God was able to perform that miracle.

I began trying to pray that my sins might be forgiven, and I too could feel as blessed as they seemed to be. This condition went on for several years without any manifestation of an answer to my petitions; and then I began to be burdened with a sense of guilt and sin, and that surely there was no hope for me. As the years went by I received no hope or comfort, but the burden seemed to get heavier all the time.

At the age of about 15, I had a dream which gave me some slight hope that God had not left me entirely alone. I dreamed I was in a tree by a roadway, and a woman came along and told me to come down, and go with her; and without asking why, I got down and went with her. The road was smooth and easy to travel on, with nothing to hinder our progress. We traveled some distance without speaking a word, and came within sight of a great forest of trees of great height and stature; and the whole forest was a solid flame of fire reaching above the top of the trees. Then I spoke to the woman for the first time — I told her that was Hell, and I didn't want to go there. Still she did not speak; and I began to look for some way to escape, but could find no other road; the one we were on led directly into that place. I searched the sides of the road, hoping to find a way of escape; and while looking, I saw a narrow pathway leading to the right of this road open up through the growth on the roadside, so it was possible to travel on it.

I immediately got into this pathway and began to move away from that awful place, but I found this pathway impossible to stay in, as I would be in the path and out. After going some distance, I came to a great gulf — so deep I could see no bottom to it; and there the path ended. There was no way to get around or across this gulf, except on a very small pole reaching across to the other side. I knew I could not walk across it, even if it would bear my weight; which seemed unlikely. The only way I could get across, was to get astride the pole, and move a few inches at a time. By so doing I got about half way across, then felt myself falling to utter destruction. I then cried to the Lord to save me; and it seemed as though I was lifted up and carried the remainder of the way safely to the other side of the gulf; which proved to be a soldier's encampment. And then I awoke.

This dream comforted me to some extent, but not enough to remove the weight of my sins and transgressions; and I had to continue to walk carrying this burden, which seemed to be a load I had upon my back, and at times it seemed more than I was able to do. I tried going up at one of the armenian churches to be prayed for, to no avail.

At the time I was working on a farm with a Methodist family, about 24 miles from home, and there I met the girl who was the daughter of the family. During the time I was there, we were together each Sunday at Sunday school and church. One Sunday she asked me if I were a Christian; and I told her, No. She said I ought to be, as that was the most important thing in life; and I agreed that it was. In a joking way, I told her I would have to come to their protracted meeting, and try to become a Christian the next year, since the meeting was over for that year. I had no idea of trying to comply, for I

thought I would be no where near that neighborhood then.

But circumstances proved I was wrong. My older brother hired me to cultivate a crop for him in that neighborhood, and stay with his family while he was away working; so I was close to where I was the year before, and I was with this girl every Sunday during the year. As the time for the Methodist yearly meeting came closer, I began to think of the assertion I had made the Summer before; and this added to my afflictions. I realized I had lied to her, and also in the presence of God as well; for by then, after trying to pray and do all I could with human ability to obtain mercy, I realized there was no hope for me in anything I could do in my natural strength. I tried to make an excuse whereby I could be elsewhere at the time of their meeting, but failed completely, since I was tied there. So the only thing I could honestly do, was to face the situation, and take whatever happened. I was there the Sunday their meeting began, and when they opened the way and invited all who wanted to be saved, to come up and be prayed for, I made no hesitation, but got up immediately and went up. The preacher had me to sit down on the front seat, and bow over in an attitude of prayer; and when I did so my burden grew so heavy it seemed it would crush me through the floor, and then I broke down crying, as I never had before to my knowledge. After the prayer was over, which prayer I don't think I heard one word of, the preacher came to talk to me, and asked me if I didn't think the Lord had a work for me to do; and I told him, Yes, I did, and intended to do it. The burden I had been carrying all the past years rolled, as it seemed, off my back, and was gone. The work I saw in my mind that God had for me to do, was to contend for the faith and doctrine of the old Primitive Baptists; which I believe I have for the last fifty years, and hope I will be enabled to still contend for it until I am called away from this world.

After the above meeting was over, I went back to my brother's home, and the next day being Monday, I had work to do, and did not go back to the services any more, except at night; and had no interest in what they said or did, since I didn't feel I had anything in common with them. I went to plowing on Monday, and became worried as to what had happened; and wondered if it was a figment of my imagination, for I feared I was deceived, and had allowed all these people to be deceived. Surely I did not desire to deceive any one. I became so worried, I decided to go to the woods nearby, and would stay there beseeching the Lord to show me as to His purpose concerning me — a poor miserable wretch who had been carrying this burden these years, and that burden was rolled away, and yet me to be so afflicted the next day.

I threw down the lines, and started to walk away; and it seemed that I was stopped by some power before I had made three steps, and the words came to me as if someone had spoken them aloud, saying, "Rejoice greatly in the hope of eternal glory." And, if not greatly deceived, I was filled with a glory I had never known before or since: The elements seemed to be praising God, the birds sang as never before, and it seemed all the trees in the woods were clapping hands; a dove was singing nearby, and seemed to sing differently, and a sweeter song than I had ever heard one sing before. That to me was the happiest and most glorious day I have ever known. I cannot find words to describe the glory of that day; and I felt I would never again be afflicted with my sinful condition. But, how soon I was to see I was still carnal, sold under sin, and my only hope was to trust the Lord, who, I hope, gave me this revelation that I might hope in his sure mercies.

There is only one thing I know: The burden I had to carry all those years was gone; and I could not call it back in any of my natural afflictions or transgressions. So I have gone on all these

years, being comforted in this hope that it was the work of the Lord; and being comforted in hearing the gospel preached by those whom the Lord has called to, "Comfort ye my people, saith your God." How they can comfort when they are blessed by the Spirit, is more than wonderful!

It seems I can find no place to stop, as this seems to be a subject with no end to it. There are no words I can use to describe this God whom I hope I love with a love that is from everlasting to everlasting, without beginning of days or ending of time; for I believe this God saw all these things from eternity, and before any of his creation in this world; that we, as a part of his creation, were saved in the eternal purpose of God from everlasting.

Many years have gone by since that time, with many afflictions and much hard work, but I can say of a truth that I have been blessed to be satisfied to trust the Lord to enable me to bear all my natural burdens; and that I have moved according to his purpose in this life, and have been directed according to his eternal will and purpose, and have never been afflicted above that I was enabled to bear.

I will try to describe a vision I had while undergoing treatment for a heart attack. I dreamed I was carried away out of worldly things, and was caught up by an invisible power over the blackest space I have ever seen or known. I was carried to see the place where this darkness ended; and there was a place the brightest I have ever seen. It seemed the place was a dividing line, and the darkness could go no further. And I saw a beautiful stream of water, the clearest I have ever seen, and on each side of this stream was a beautiful tree. And I seemed to be told that this was the river of the water of life, proceeding from the throne of God. I saw on the East side of this stream, a woman kneeling as in prayer, looking toward the East; and by her side it appeared there were three men standing. They were there to judge as to whether I was worthy to be her companion.

I came back to this natural world without ever being carried out of this darkness. I verily believe that if I had passed on into that bright kingdom I saw, I would not be telling this vision now. But it was not to be at that time, and I hope that when my time comes, the same presence will carry me again out of this wilderness into that bright world I saw, to be with this woman, which means to me, The Bride the Lamb's Wife. This is my hope; and sometimes I am made to feel it will even be so, which is a great comfort when I am enabled to believe so.

. . . Here I will add some thought for the consideration of he who reads. I believe God knew his purpose in all his creation before anything was formed or created; and that the Holy Bible is God's word written for and given to his people. I believe the Scriptures have a natural interpretation, and also a spiritual, and that it is impossible for a human mind to understand them, but it has to be revealed by the Holy Ghost. I believe the sun, moon, and stars have a direct application to the church, or the children of God, as well as a light for day and night in the natural kingdom. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, and the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep; . . . And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." I believe the children of God are in a state of darkness until the blessed Lord says, Let there be light. They can see the glory of God; and rejoice in it. Then the sun shines, being the glory of God in their souls, and they have been awakened to eternal life through the mediation of Jesus Christ our Lord. The sun shines on the children of God only by day, and then the moon shines by night, being the lesser light, proving to me that the child of God is never left alone, but is kept by the power of God, and is ready through this same power to be revealed

in the last day.

Bunyan Linville Snyder,
Martinsville, Va.

"WAIT O MY SOUL THY MAKER'S WILL."

I know of no better subject at this present time to write upon, than the hymn mentioned above. The fact is, this hymn came to my mind for the last two mornings — October 21 and 22, 1960. Therefore I hope it is according to the will of Him in whom I live, move and have my being, to write an article on this wonderful hymn.

"Wait O my soul thy Maker's will,
Tumultuous passions, all be still."

The first thought in reference to this hymn, is, why did Beddome write it? If we read this hymn carefully, I believe we will see that he was in distress of mind, the nature of which we do not know. At this time in his experience, the spirit of wisdom came upon him, showing him that, "All things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are the called according to His purpose," and so he began to write this hymn.

"Wait O my soul thy Maker's will,
Tumultuous passions, all be still.
Nor let a murmuring thought arise,
His ways are just, His counsels, wise."

So Beddome was made to be still and to know that his Maker's will was being done in him.

In Verse 2, he wrote as follows:

"He in the thickest darkness dwells,
Performs His work, the cause conceals.
But though His methods are unknown,
Judgment and truth support His throne."

And now just a word about the "cause conceals." This does not mean that the cause will not be revealed in the future, for it will be. Christ said on on occasion, "What I do, thou knoweth not now, but thou shalt know, hereafter."

Verse Three:

"In heaven, in earth, in air and seas,
He executes His firm decrees.
And by His saints it stands confest
That what He does is ever best."

So the Lord has decreed something, and that something will come to pass at the time appointed. And one of the things He has decreed is the salvation of His people in Christ. "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He (Christ) might be the first-born among many brethren." Romans 8:29.

It is also written of Christ, that He was to be made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. This is also a decree.

Now Verse 4, the last verse in this hymn. This verse is a summation to what Beddome has written in the three preceding verses.

"Wait then, my soul, submissive wait,
Prostrate before His awful seat;
And midst the terror of His rod,
Trust in a wise and gracious God."

Having been shown that the Lord is righteous in all He does, and that He worketh all things after the counsel of His own will, and what He does is ever best, Beddome calls upon his soul to be in submission, because eventually all will work out for good.

And now a deep thought arises. What is a soul? It is written that when the Lord created Adam, He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and Adam became a living soul. So if we stop here, we will have to conclude that the whole man is a soul. But there must be something about the Adamic man besides the soul; for Beddome said, "Wait O my soul thy Maker's will."

The psalmist said, "Why art thou cast down, oh my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for thou shalt yet praise Him," etc. He also said, "Wonderfully and mysteriously am I made, and that my soul knoweth right well."

So the soul must be the seat of knowledge. But there seems to be something about the man above the soul. What is it?

The answer, as I see it, is the spir-

it. So man is a triune being, composed of body, soul and spirit, and this makes man the image of God. "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them." Genesis 1:27.

So here we have a true account of the origin of man. He didn't evolve from a monkey. Man is still a man, a horse is still a horse and a monkey is still a monkey, and so on down the line.

Now let us consider the structure of this created man. First, he is made to stand upright, showing that he is superior to the beasts of the field. "And the Lord God said, it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an helpmeet for him." Genesis 2:18.

If I am not mistaken, I see Christ presented here in type. Paul tells us that the first man is of the earth earthy, and the second man is the Lord from heaven. And this second man is the Lord Jesus Christ. And as it was not good for Adam to be alone, so the Lord made or chose a woman for His son. This woman is represented in the Scripture as the bride of Christ, or His Church. "And there appared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." Revelation 12:1. This bride of Christ is all who were chosen in Him from the foundation of the world.

In conclusion, I will just say to any and all, if something is disturbing you and all seems dark and hard to understand, wait thy Maker's will, and in due time all will be made clear some day. Someone has written the following words:

"Some day, what now seems a mystery,
Will be made clear.
The threatening clouds which now we see,
Will disappear."

A. T. Benson
Wilmington, Del.

Room 1428
127 North Dearborn Street
Chicago 2, Illinois

Dear Brother Spangler:

I can recall when many humorous experiences of Old Baptist were told from the pulpit. Sometimes a humorous incident, when told, bears more subtle meaning than at first appears on the surface. Sometimes they strike me as humorous, when others pass them by.

When you visited Mayfield, Kentucky, in Graves County last year, you attended Soldiers Creek Association. Had you traveled East into the next county to Soldiers Creek Church, you would have been in Marshall County. The incident I am about to relate concerned Senator Humphreys Marshall, from whom this county was possibly named.

In 1795, before the break in the Baptist denomination, those who joined their churches, did so, not as a soul saving act, nor on the plea of their ministers, but to become a part of the spiritual family, asking to be received by them into the fold; and then taking their place in the church life with a degree of responsibility, just as a person should in their natural family. Before being received, it was customary for them to give their Experience of Grace as being the evidence necessary to establish them as fit subjects for membership.

In 1956, the President (then Senator John F. Kennedy) wrote a book entitled "Profiles in Courage", which is now on the book shelves in paper-back edition. On page 196 he relates a story of Senator Humphrey Marshall of Kentucky.

He chose to end his career in the Senate by standing with President Washington in approving the immensely unpopular Jay Treaty with Great Britain, and this in opposition to most of his political colleagues and the constituents of his state. He returned to his home and toured his state, explaining his position. Late one night a mob dragged him from his home with the avowed intention of ducking him in a nearby river. At the water's edge Senator Marshall, with great calm and humor, told the raging mob,

"My friends, all this is irregular. In

the ordinance of immersion as practiced in the good Old Baptist church, it is the rule to require the candidate to relate his experience before his baptism is performed. Now, in accordance with established rules and precedents, I desire to give my experience before you proceed to my immersion."

He was then placed on a stump, and in the same humorous vein warmed to his work; and concluded his speech by caustically blistering all of his enemies, some whom he later described as: "poor ignorant beings who were collected on the bank of the river for the very honorable purpose of ducking me for giving an independent opinion."

I have no doubt that the President, in the preparation of this book, enjoyed the humor of the story. I do doubt, however that he, and the many that read his book today, realize that he was relating a Primitive Baptist story, and that the manner of telling it was in their tradition also.

I also wonder what other religious sect today, would have a candidate for membership asking to be heard in relating his experience.

May you, as Editor of the Signs, find continuous joy, and added fellowship, with all your brethren, is my sincere wishes,

John Franklin Lax

ELDER RHODES TO SISTER FERGUSON

Lillie, La.

Mrs. W. L. Ferguson,
Ringgold, Virginia

Dear Sister Ferguson:

I have just received, and do appreciate, your good and comforting letter, together with your liberal contribution on the publication of the little book, **Gospel Comments** for which I desire to thank you. May the Lord bless you, together with his humble little children, to be comforted in His precious truth, as I hope the Lord enabled me to set forth in this little book.

I feel greatly encouraged and lifted up in that so many of the Lord's little ones have written me letters expressing their feeling of gratitude for the little book and its contents. I was so seized in my mind to write on this great and wonderful subject, until I undertook it, and continued to type day and night for two days and nights without getting sleepy enough to quit, until I had finished the 157 page book. Then I began to realize it was too lengthy to be published in the Signs of the Times, or other paper, so I began to be concerned about getting it published. I had 500 copies printed, and they were gone in three months. Then I published about the same number again, and they lasted about a year. I continued to get inquiries for them, so I had a thousand copies printed about a year ago; and they are going pretty good, but printing them cost more the last time than before, so I thank you so much for your kindness and contribution. May the Lord bless, lead, comfort and uphold you, and all his humble children, by the light and teaching of his blessed Holy Spirit.

This is a very troubled age of this old world; . . . and I feel that his precious and glorious coming is near at hand, even at the door; when all his precious little children will be called by Him from the graves, and from this world: When He shall say, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." What a wonderful and glorious day that will be to the Lord's dear children: To be with him in heaven; to see him as he is, and be like him; and there to praise him in that eternal kingdom, where there can be no more pain, sickness, sorrows, nor troubles any more; but there will be joy, love, and peace forever.

Dear Sister, how I long for that heavenly rest, if I am not woefully deceived. That is what I long for, and hope for, through the cleansing blood and righteousness of the blessed Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious and Almighty Redeemed and Saviour. There all the re-

deemed children will be gathered to praise Him forevermore.

Dear Sister, I thank you very much; and I wish I could be with you the dear children of God in your meetings, and in your homes while I am in this world. But, if I can't do that, then I long for the time when I may be gathered with them in that bright and glorious home above. Your unworthy brother in hope through Christ Jesus our Lord.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

Gordo, Alabama

Editor of the *Signs:*

Enclosed is my renewal for the *Signs.* It is refreshing and edifying to read a periodical which relies wholly on the Lord's keeping, instead of the many which claim that the welfare of the church depends on obedience by us in spiritual matters.

Yours in hope,
W. L. Crowley

BELIEVES GOD FIXED ALL THINGS

Crossett, Arkansas

Dear Editors of the *Signs:*

I see that it is time to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times,* so am sending check for $5.00 for two more years. I have been reading the *Signs* for over sixty years, and don't see how I could get along without them, since I do not have opportunity to go to church very often. The good articles in the *Signs,* and my Bible are my greatest source of comfort. The *Signs* still contends for for the same doctrine it did when I first began reading them — Salvation by grace; and that is food for the hungry soul.

There is no other way given whereby we are saved: It is through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He is the Way; He is our life; and He is our all in all. We are exhorted to be ready to give a reason of our hope in Christ; and I believe that everyone to whom the Lord has spoken peace to his soul, has been made alive to spiritual things, and has a reason for his hope. I thought that Elder Gold, in his correspondence with Dr. Hooper, gave more of the best reasons than any piece I ever read.

I know that these wonderful truths are foolishness to the wise and prudent of the world, for they are dead to spiritual things, and cannot know them.

I hope that the dear editors will be blessed of the Lord to continue on in the old paths, and publish such things as are food and drink to the hungry. I wish that I were able to write as others, but I have never been gifted in writing. But I do love to read the sweet experiences, and the wonderful travels and thoughts that some are able to write. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people sayeth your God. Speak ye comfortably unto Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." (Isaiah 40:1, 2)

Aren't we proud of this double portion? Without it, we wouldn't have any hope beyond the garden, would we? I am glad that I believe in God that fixed all things, to work out for the good of his people, and for His glory. Blessed by his Holy Name.

"I love the sons of grace,
The heirs of bliss divine;
Who walk in paths of righteousness,
And flee from ev'ry sin.

Because they will my faults reprove
When suddenly I err;
How I do prize their faithfulness!
Their love and tender care."

Yours in hope of a better life beyond,
F. N. Morgan

---

230 Marilee Row,
Grants Pass, Oregon

Dear Elders and Readers:

I am enclosing my check for $10.00

to pay my renewal, and also for a subscription for my sister . . . If not asking too much, I wish you would mail her the June issue, as there are some very wonderful writings in there that I am sure she will enjoy. She, my brother, and I, joined the church at the same time, the fifth Sunday in February, 1948, at Muleshoe, Texas; and were baptized by Elder J. B. Hardy, a most wonderful preacher.

I take several other Baptist papers, but I think the **Signs** is the best of all. I certainly do enjoy every article in them; and the **Voices of the Past** are so wonderful.

All the preaching I get now is through the Baptist papers I take. We do not have a church here, and not enough members here to support one, as there are only five members here that I know of, and the nearest church is at Portland.

May the good Lord bless you to keep the **Signs of the Times** as pure and clean as it has been in the past, and coming for many more years.

Your brother in Christ, I hope,
C. H. Greathouse

1550 Portland
Abilene, Texas

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing money to pay for another year's subscription for the dear old Signs of the Times. Though I am late in renewing, I haven't missed any of the issues.

I have been a member of the Pilgrim Rest Church, at Lawn, Texas, since July, 1952, as unworthy as I am. I have often wondered why they received me, but I am glad to have a home with them. I also go to Little Flock Church, in Altus, Oklahoma, with Brother and Sister Haygood on the fourth Saturday and Sundays. Elder Haygood is pastor at Pilgrim Rest and Little Flock churches.

Thanks again for sending the Signs on to me.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. Agnes Jones

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the **STAUNTON RIVER UNION** will be held, the Lord willing, with Strawberry Church, the fifth Sunday in October, and Saturday before. The church is located on Highway 750, one mile from Wood's store on Highway 41, twelve miles North of Danville, Va.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Mrs. W. R. Dodd, Church Clerk

SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

The **SALISBURY ASSOCIATION** is appointed to be held with the Forest Grove Church, one mile South of Parsonsburg, Maryland, October 18 and 19, 1961. Brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

Those coming Tuesday go to the home of Louis Holloway, about six miles from Salisbury on Maryland Route 350; or if by bus, call Salisbury PI 2-1013, and you will be met. Those coming Wednesday, take Route 50 from Salisbury to Parsonsburg, turn right, and the meeting house is about one mile.

Ethel Holloway, Church Clerk

ORDINATION OF
ELDER JOE L. HAMRICK

Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, Weslaco, Texas, having called for a Presbytery to inquire into the qualifications of Brother Joe L. Hamrick for the gospel ministry, the following ministers and deacon were asked to compose the presbytery: Elders W. W. Taylor, E. B. Ault, W. W. Fleet, H. L. Ballard, W. M. Burkhalter, and J. B. Reid; and Deacon C. L. Chambers.

The Presbytery was organized by choosing Elder W. W. Taylor as Moderator, and Elder E. B. Ault as Clerk; with Elder Taylor to offer prayer, and Elder Reid to give the charge. Elder Burkhalter, as spokesman for the church, presented Brother Hamrick to the Presbytery; and the Moderator, Elder Taylor, asked Elder Burkhalter a number of questions regarding Brother Hamrick's qualifications for the ministry. All questions were answered satisfactorily; and the ordination proceeded with prayer by Elder Taylor and laying on of hands by the Presbytery. Elder Reid then gave the charge.

Elder Hamrick was then presented to the church as an ordained minister.

Elder E. B. Ault, Clerk

Danville, Virginia **October, 1961**

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EDITORIAL

MATTHEW 23

In writing, as in all acceptable service to the Lord and to his people, there must be an unction from above. This unction gives knowledge where bestowed (I John 2:20), and it seems that if I have a gift of the things of God it is so small that I fear that this unction has not been applied to me. However, if I have a little and my brother is in need of a little, I am as unfaithful in this small matter as one who is in possession of greater gifts would be in withholding from the brother.

This chapter is abounding in food for thought. Meditation upon the mighty works of God is precious to those who are exercised thereby. There is much good instruction laid down for the followers of the Lord, and there are many rigid rebukes for the unbelieving scribes and Pharisees. The instruction is as good today as when uttered; the rebukes of the unbelievers are as much in force now as when spoken. The things that Jesus spoke to both were things that would endure; time and usage and distance would never detract the force away from that which was said.

Sometimes a zeal will arise in the Old Baptist church to avoid being like **anybody** and this zeal will often take us into things that are as abominable as what we would **try** to avoid. The Saviour enjoined upon believers that they do all that the scribes and Pharisees commanded. There is nothing wrong in doing right, if it is done for righteousness sake. Just because that the self righteous Jews talked a lot about their righteous acts does not mean that believers are not to do righteous acts. You must not say that you do these good works and then act like the unbeliever, do them not. The motive that is enjoined on God's children is a heavy burden, whereas the faithful service of his people is done in love. The difference in a burdensome service and one which is a labor of love is the difference between law and grace. One is prompted by hope of reward or escape of suffering; the other is prompted by the love of God being shed abroad in their hearts, and the only thing that is set before them is the banner of his love. They would, through the power in the blood, be good soldiers, following him wherever his command directed, and they would not count it a sorrow but a joy and a rich gift to be counted worthy in Christ to be his follower. Another difference between the serving under the banner of love and that of law, is shown in the mutual feeling of the servants. They, of the scribes and Pharisees, will add to the burdens of God's children without a helping hand, without a kind word of encouragement, without any condolences or sharing in their feeling of despair; the admonitions to walk in the more excellent things by the children of God are accompanied by the companionship of the one giving them; there is a giving of a helping hand, a reaching to one another of that which each has been given.

These scribes and Pharisees have a system that will keep them in the foreground. Their name is ever before men for they design it that way; they must be seen of men or they soon perish and die; they must pray on street corners **so that many will see their piety**; they must have the high seats at the social feasts as well as in the church services; they will call attention to themselves by hailing one another in public markets and referring to one another as Rabbi, which today we hear Reverend So-and So.

These scribes and Pharisees have not been confined to the Jewish race, as we have them in all kinds of orders and it is greatly to be feared that their number and kind has infiltrated the followers of the Lamb. He or she that is born of God loves God and godliness. It is not a Sunday love and forgotten on Monday; it is not a display in the crowded hall to be laid aside when alone. These desire to be known as walking in his footsteps, and their way is by showing how many of the airs and mannerisms of a supposed follower of Christ they can put on. The ancient kind of scribe and Pharisee enlarged their phylacteries for carrying portions of the law, and the modern brand have many improved ways for displaying their knowledge and ability in regard to the law. We see so much on the streets and public conveyances, advertising by spectacular garments their adherence to the things of their religion.

The religion that has got to be advertised by raised voices, different types of clothing, special addressing of one another, and all other things that will call for notice is not a religion of the Lord Jesus Christ. His religion, when bestowed upon a sinner, causes that man or woman to take the low seat (See Luke 14:8, 11). They do not feel capable of teaching, therefore they do not relish being called Rabbi nor Master nor Father, but realize that they need to sit at the feet of Jesus and learn of him. This abasing of one's self is not an act that is put on in order to be exalted, but it is the nature of he or she that is a new creature in Christ.

I am not sent, if I am sent of God, to preach damnation, therefore, the many woes and denunciations of these serpents, generations of vipers is not mine to hurl at folks. They are not part of the gospel of peace, but belongs to those that know not the Lord. I suggest that you read these denunciations as they were hurled upon these scribes and Pharisees. Read carefully the searching question, to wit, How can ye escape the damnation of hell? The question has in it all of the fury of God against those that know not the saving grace and imputed righteousness of his Son, Jesus Christ the Lord. Suffice it is to say that this is a terrible (and yet how truthful) description of those that believe a lie.

A profession is worthless unless it is accompanied by action in keeping with it. Unless what I say is well fortified by a 'thus saith the Lord' and accompanied by a walk that is parallel with the profession, it may cloud the issue under consideration, but it will never edify. The charges and denunciations hurled at these would-be-teachers and leaders are enough to condemn before the tribunal of justice; coming from the lips of the Saviour they will satisfy the people of God. Everything must be tested that none will have the right to hurl anything at Christ. This test is not for the purpose of God learning something, but it is to confirm the elect in the precious truth that **by their fruits ye shall know them,** and to take away all words of the gainsaying generation of vipers.

God's ways are higher than ours, and we will see his hand of providence and grace all the way. Hear this people boast; listen at them as they mock poor Isaac at the breast of that aged woman; hear them tell about piping in the streets, about paying tithes, about fasting, about all kind of benevolences. Are they like this? Is their profession from the heart or the lip? Does their holiness and piety before the Lord stem from a

heart made pure by blood or is it the outward walk of one whose aim is policy? Let us see; let us have the whole truth revealed by the work of the Lord. Behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them ye shall scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city. What has become of their goodness and piety and holiness? What has happened to cast a shadow upon their profession? They have said, but done different; they paid tithes of small matters, but have neglected the weightier; they have had the outside of the cup and the platter clean, while we now see how vile and filthy it is on the inside; they have been bearing themselves as dead to sin, this being shown by whited sepulchres, when inwardly they were filled with dead things.

Watch these vipers as they hound the servants of the Lord; watch them as they slay the Lord of glory. The blood of saints and martyrs have run as rivers, as this professing bunch of religious fanatics have acted out what is in the heart. Every religious order under the sun has punned at the others that they were guilty of this, when they themselves are black as night with this guilt hung upon them. As a people the Old School Baptists have not persecuted others, but at the blood we have shed in persecuting one another, in backbiting and devouring one another. In what name has it been in? What has been our excuse for doing it? Oh, how sad to relate that it has been as lame as the general argument of the unbelieving Jew in crucifying the Lord of glory. How truly the words, For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel (Rom. 9:6).

Now we come to one of the Scriptures that has mystified the followers of the Lord. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." Is the language addressed to the same person as in Isaiah 40:1? Is this Jerusalem, with her blood shed, rioting, clamoring, the same Jerusalem that shall be seen as a quiet city (Isaiah 33:20) Are these inhabitants of Jerusalem the same ones upon whom the Lord is going to pour the Spirit of grace (Zech. 12:10)? No, indeed not. These are vipers, hypocrites, serpents; these are they that can not escape the damnation of hell; these are they that killest the prophets and stonest them that were sent unto them; these are they that put the Lamb of God to death. These are the ones that are being addressed. But the question keeps coming up, Why does He address them in this way? We all admit that no man nor set of men nor hell with all of its fury has ever kept the almighty Spirit of God from gathering his chosen people together. All Egypt stood in array against the God of Israel, but He brought every Israelite out on dry ground. All the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar was engaged to bring men to worship the golden image, but Israel's God preserved the helpless Hebrew children. Saul and all the Jewish courts were engaged in putting to death God's humble poor, but one ray of light and one sentence from above ended all that. We are fully persuaded that God manifest in the flesh did not make a stirring plea to Jerusalem to let him gather together the children of Jerusalem. Let us note some things that was not said, to wit: He did not say, How often I would have gathered Jerusalem, and she would not; He did not say, How often I would have gathered thy children, and they would not; He did not say, How often I would have gthered you, and you would not, but what he did say was, How often would I have gathered thy children, **and ye would not.** How clearly and implicitly the Saviour is leaving these in the middle of their perverseness. These are the same ones that heard him on another occasion, to wit, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father you will do" — and on this occasion

they would have stoned him (John 8:44, 59).

That Christ manifested his human relationship can not be disputed. He was a Jew and he loved them as a nation; he was in the flesh with a human nature. God the Father and Creator never manifested any relationship with his chosen people. Not so with Christ, for not only did he love after the flesh, but he was sorrowful unto death. He was grieved by the neglect and indifference of those that followed him. On one occasion a young man came to him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? The Saviour reminded him of the law. His reply was that he had kept all that. Christ loved him, but if the love was anything more than one national for another, it is not shown, for the young man did not show any knowledge of sonship, and his going away grieved, brought Christ to say, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven. He could not have loved him as a child of God, seeing that he was not in the kingdom. At another time he wept over the city of Jerusalem, not because it was filled with his brethren in the Lord but filled with his people after the flesh (Luke 19:41). How that he could be touched with the feeling of our infirmities and not experience our infirmities has not been explained, so I will, as blessed of the Lord, continue to say that he was tempted as we, but that in the nature which we fell under the temptation, that he stood, thus being able to succor us at all times.

How often we look at his record, and as often amazed that he sorrowed as man sorrows; how often we find him burdened under the many vicissitudes of his checkered life, and how glad we are of One that understands of our frailties. The divine will of God does not come and go as the ebb and flow of a stream, but is constant from all eternity; the will of Jesus toward Jerusalem was one of oftimes. **He often** would have gathered them, and **as often** they would not. How forcibly this shows the human will of our Saviour, which will was subject to the divine will. We must note whom he would have gathered, and who would not. We also must remember that he did gather them, but it was not those that **would not**, but it was that Jerusalem which is free, is from above, and is the mother of all the children of God. How marked is the distinction between this city which is stubborn and murderers and stoners of the messengers of God, and that blessed number of the children within the city that our Lord defends and gathers together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings. As the day of extinction for this city gathers in the impending doom, how he did warn, as a hen warns her little ones; how he did communicate to them the dangers of remaining in the city marked for destruction; how far reaching his repeated warnings to flee the city that has always been noted for its viperous nature. It is in perfect complacency that I rest: 1st. That the children were all removed before that city fell. 2nd. That the legalists fell with the city, still determined that he would not gather the children. 3rd. That the city was left desolate to those that would not, but that the children were all brought out to a new and living way; to a city of habitation, wherein dwelleth righteousness; to a city where the brethren are all ways and always welcome, being given bread instead of stones, things pertaining unto life instead of being dealt death; to a city that is quiet and in which no gallant ship ever passes nor rowing is ever known, but, to the contrary every vessel is less than all the others, and all of them have their being in Christ, live and move in his sovereign and efficacious will, which will is that none of them be left there anymore (Ezek. 39:-28). 4th. The city is still desolate to the viper minded, and will continue to be so until the day comes in which they shall say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE CHURCH OF GOD, WHAT IS IT?

How indefinite and vague is the popular idea of the church of the Living God; and how various are the applications of the word **church** in the parlance of the learned and unlearned theologians of the present times. A building erected for the convenience and accommodation of religious convocations, by almost universal consent, is called a **church**; and by that name, with great ceremony, is frequently consecrated, and with much parade given to the Lord! A church made of wood, or of bricks and morter, so consecrated is by many regarded as a most holy place. Others with scarcely less absurdity apply the term to all religious organizations; as the Catholic church, the Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, or Mormon church: and these with very many other religious bodies are very generally regarded as churches of God, but of different denominations, alike intitled to be known as churches of God, and all in their different ways, real worshipers of God, and alike acceptable to him. But the Scriptures of truth can only recognize the church of God, as one body, having but one head, built upon one rock, by but one builder. The inspired apostle Paul says. "There is one body, and one spirit; even as ye are called in one hope of your calling: one Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Will this apostolic description of the church of God apply to all the discordant and conflicting organizations which claim the name, but deny all the essential characteristics which divine inspiration has shown to be indispensible to the church of God? Do all these towering piles of brick, or lumber which men call churches, stand vitally united to Christ as their head? Have all the various denominations alluded to above, kept the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace? Have they all but one Lord, one faith, and one baptism? Are they all one body, having but one spirit; and do they all even profess to be called in one hope of their calling? They certainly do not.

If then these great popular denominations, when weighed in the balance, are found wanting, and when tried by the Scriptures are rejected; does it not become us, who profess to be Old School, or Primitive Baptists, most carefully to examine, in the light of divine revelation whether we possess the marks by which the holy Scriptures identify the church of God?

When the rising Savior brought the immortality of his church to light; when he had vanquished death and finished transgression, made an end of sin, having obtained eternal redemption for all his members; he ascended up on high; went to his Father and our Father, to receive the kingdom which the Father had appointed him, and his coronation as King of Righteousness and Priest to the Most High God; he was raised up far above all principalities and powers; and all thrones and dominions were made subject to him; and he was given to be Head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. In evidence of all this He sent the Spirit down, as he had told his disciples he would, which came like a rushing mighty wind, immersing all who, obedient to his command, were in the house, and recognizing them as the only body vitalized by his Spirit and Baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. On this occasion the church appeared in the first disclosure of her gospel organization; and was expressly recognized as the church, unto which God continued to add such as should be saved. The constituents of the church of Christ are, first, Our Lord Jesus Christ himself, as the Head, the King and only and blessed Potentate, the Prophet and Priest, the Way the Truth and the Life. In whom is vested

exclusively all legislative power. Second, the Apostles of the Lamb, seated, by the special command of Christ, on twelve thrones of judgment, not of legislation, immediately inspired by the Holy Ghost to rule in Judgment, as infallible expounders of the laws, ordinances, doctrine and order of their Sovereign. Next to the apostles, are Evangelists, and pastors and teachers. These are solemnly required to recognize, and be governed by the laws of Christ the King, as laid down and expounded by the enthroned apostles; with express instructions to be governed by the laws and institutions of Christ, without presuming under any circumstance to alter, revise, add to or diminish from the decisions made and recorded by the apostles. Deacons, exhorters, helps and every gift as found in the apostolic rules, are to be recognized precisely as it has pleased God to distribute them among the members of Christ's body for the profit and benefit of all the church.

All the members which the church has power to recognize, must come in by the door; all who would climb up some other way, are thieves and robbers, who come in only to steal, to kill and to destroy.

As all the laws of the church of Christ are immutable and irrevokable, the same rule which was observed at the day of Pentecost for admitting to fellowship are in force throughout all ages in Christ's church; and any community claiming to be his church that does not recognize them is an harlot and not the church of God. This declaration may seem uncharitable; but let those who fear God beware how they controvert it.

We hold, first, that Christ has no church in earth or heaven over which he does not positively preside.

Second, There is no church existing over which Christ presides except where his apostles rule in judgment. For he himself has said, "When the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory; (his Mediatorial throne is the throne of his glory) then shall ye also set upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." We know that the apostles are not here now in the flesh, nor is the Savior now here in the flesh; for henceforth know we them no more in the flesh. But all their doctrine order and decisions are here in every church or branch of the church where Christ presides as the King; for Christ has farther said that whosoever rejects his apostles rejects him also. They cannot be separated in the organization of his kingdom or church.

Now then, Let the laws of Christ, embracing all the doctrine which he established, as settled forever by the decisions of the holy apostles, as left on record in the New Testament, be regarded as the infallible standard or test by which the church of Christ is identified, and, it must follow that all who are deficient in these essential and indispensable points are weighed in the balance and found wanting. This cannot be the case with the church of Christ; for she is the Ground and Pillar of the Truth. She is the perfection of beauty. She is the workmanship of God, and All his work is perfect. It therefore follows inevitably that all who profess to be the church of Christ, and reject him, his apostles, his doctrine, his ordinances, or his government, are base imposters.

In view of these well defined principles, let us look well to the order established by the apostles, for the reception of members to church fellowship and membership. Of those who were received on and about the day of Pentecost it is written, that the Spirit was poured out in a most astonishing manner, in fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, by virtue of which many heard the preaching of the apostles, so that they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Thus quickened by the Spirit and made to feel and know their lost and helpless condition, their minds were directed to the apostles for instruction,

and when the way of life and salvation was opened to their understanding, and the word applied to them by the Holy Ghost, they gladly received the word. A wonderful change was wrought in them; insomuch that the word which had no attraction, and of the spirit and power of which they had always been so profoundly ignorant before, now seemed to them as apples of gold, in pictures of silver: as words of life, peace and comfort to their hearts. The apostles' doctrine, which so recently they could ridicule and reject with scorn, was more to be desired than all the glories of the world. Without reluctance now, they gladly received the word. It was perfectly adapted to their renewed state; for now being born again of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, they desired the sincere milk of the word, that they might grow thereby. Hitherto they had despised and hated the apostles and their doctrine; but now by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit which God had poured upon them, they not only received, but **gladly** received the word, and according to the word as preached to them by the apostles they were baptized, and added to the church. That is, they were brought manifestly into the fellowship of the apostles, and the apostolic church. And they continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine; having gladly received it, they continued to be perfectly satisfied with it. The record given that they continued **steadfast** in the apostles doctrine, implies that they encountered opposition; which they certainly did, for it was a time of severe persecution. But so deeply were they rooted and grounded in the truth, that neither the bitterness of cruel persecution, nor the specious allurements of new doctrines zealously promulgated by Judaizing, or other teachers, could shake their confidence in the apostles' doctrine. The apostles' doctrine, and the apostles' fellowship are so joined together that they cannot be separated. If steadfast in the one we are equally so in both. But if we depart from the one, we cease to enjoy the other. In departing from the apostles' doctrine, we may secure the fellowship of the world, or of anti-Christ; but we cannot depart from their instruction, and still retain their fellowship.

Thus, quickened by the Holy Ghost, recipients of the doctrine of the apostles, baptized on profession of faith in obedience to the command of Christ, fully recognizing Christ as the Head over all things to his church, and the apostles as divinely authorized and qualified exponents of all the laws, order, ordinances and doctrine of his kingdom, we have described the Old School, or Primitive Baptist Church, built upon the foundation of the apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief corner Stone. And being thus steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, they will be steadfast also in prayers, and in breaking of bread; and they may confidently expect the Lord will add to them such as shall be saved. How very different in all respects is the church of the First Born, from those humanly constructed religious organizations which have become so numerous and diversified in these times. However much they may differ from each other in some characteristic peculiarities, they are all alike in adopting the spirit of the proposition of the "Seven women, who shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." Isa. iv. 1. They dislike to be called anti-Christian, or false churches, as that would be too humiliating: but to live on every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, by no means suits their taste. They have no relish for the apostles' doctrine, nor do they desire their fellowship; they desire rather to make a figure in the world, and be at liberty to believe whatever doctrine they please; conform to such rites and ceremonies as they please; get religion when they please, of whatever

kind or quality they please; keep it as long as they please, and lay it aside or exchange it when they please. Such **churches** as they presumptuously call themselves churches, are fond of receiving such members as will find themselves, having self-righteousness enough to live upon and only desiring to have a name to live while they are dead. For them the apostles' doctrine is quite too stale; it is behind the age of progression in which we live; it is to slow, it waits for God to add to his church such as shall be saved; while their plan is to add themselves such as shall not be saved; or such as give no evidence that they shall be saved.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, March 15, 1866.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. H. W. LAWLESS

Sister H. W. (Annie) Lawless was born Margaret Annie Griffin, June 9, 1877, in Tuscaloosa, Alabama; and departed this life April 28, 1961. She was united in marriage to H. W. Lawless in 1899; and to this union were born five children, who survive: one daughter, Mrs. A. B. McMillian, Lawn, Texas; four sons, Clyde, of Lawn; Clinton, Floyd, and Flinton, of Abilene, Texas. Surviving also are 9 grandchildren. Her husband died April 28, 1958.

They came to Taylor County, Texas in 1902; and she was a charter member of Pilgrim Rest Church, Lawn, Texas, and remained a faithful member for fifty years, lacking a few days. Surely a mother in Israel has passed from this old world of sin and sorrow to be at rest, and asleep in Jesus until his second coming to gather his people home.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, C. M. Haygood, and Elder Hanley.

(Elder) C. M. Haygood

MAHALA M. HAUK

Sister Mahala M. Hauk was born September 20, 1865, near Greenville, Texas, the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Simmons. She was married July 23, 1882, to Samuel H. Hauk, and to this union nine children were born. Her husband and six children preceded her in death. She passed away November 16, 1960, at the age of more than ninety-five years.

Sister Hauk is survived by one son, N. L. Hauk, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; two daughters: Mrs. M. L. Hammons, Ringling, Oklahoma; and Mrs. Robby Boyd, Snyder, Oklahoma; and by 12 grandchildren, 21 great grandchildren, and 6 great great grandchildren; and many other relatives and friends — as shown by the large number who were present at her funreal, and by the great number of flowers.

She moved to Oklahoma in 1905, residing at Snyder most of the time. She united with the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church at Mt. Zion, near Cash, Texas, and was baptized in June, 1887. After coming to Oklahoma, she moved her membership to Dawson Valley Church, near Vernon, Texas; and later to Little Flock Church, Altus, Oklahoma, where she remained a faithful and highly esteemed member. She was a semi-invalid for many years, and in March, 1954, she fell and broke her hip, and was not afterwards able to walk. But as long as her eyesight permitted, she spent much of her time reading her Bible, *The Signs of the Times*, and her hymn book, her mind staying clear to the end.

Funeral services were held in Snyder, Oklahoma, November 18, 1960, by her pastor, Elder W. W. Taylor, assisted by a minister whose name I do not have. She was laid to rest in Fairlawn Cemetery, Snyder, Oklahoma, beside her husband.

Sister Hauk was always glad to see her friends and talk with them concerning the Bible; and she would often say, "The Lord has been so good to me all the days of my life." She was saddened by the death of her precious son, Brother Henry Hauk, who died two years before she did. May the Lord bless the loved ones and comfort them, is my prayer and desire for Jesus' sake.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

LILLIE LAW CARTER

It has pleased the Lord to remove from our midst and from this time world, our dearly beloved sister, Lillie Law Carter. Sister Carter was born July 17, 1887, in Franklin County, Virginia, daughter of the late William Lee Law and Lodeskie Spencer, of Patrick County. She passed away Sunday night, April 30, 1961, in Martinsville General Hospital, making her stay here 73 years. Besides her husband, Brother Thomas Green Carter, she is survived by one son, William Thomas Carter, of Bassett, Route 1; one daughter, Mrs. Jessie Mason of Portsmouth, Virginia; two brothers, Mr. H.

A. Law of Bassett; Mr. Posie Law of Beckley, West Virginia; two sisters, Mrs. Lee Mullins, of Bassett; Mrs. Goldie Adams, of Collinsville, Virginia. Also, one daughter preceded her in death on June 23, 1923, Erma Maude Carter. She leaves eight lovely grandchildren.

Sister Carter united with Republican Primitive Baptist Church on May 9, 1911, of which she was a loyal member, filling her seat whenever she could. We feel that her walk and her talk, and her way and manner of life, made manifest what she was kept by grace. We think of her now as we bow our heads in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father; we think of her faith and the patient love and devotion to her husband, to her children and grandchildren, and her church.

We would see her come to the church when we felt that she was not physically able to come. We think also of her labors of love in the Lord, and how that we feel that she was interested in the welfare of others more than herself, even to the end. Our sympathy and our prayers go out to the family and we Primitive Baptists in this part of the country will miss Sister Carter very much, but we feel that our loss is her gain.

Funeral services were conducted for Sister Carter in Riverview Church by Elder C. E. Turner and the unworthy writer, in the midst of a large congregation who mourned with the Carter family. She was laid to rest in Roselawn Cemetery in Martinsville, Virginia, to await the second coming of the Lord, when we hope that we can join with Sister Carter and praise the Lord of Lords and King of Kings forever.

Leonard J. Brammer

AUGUSTUS HOWELL O'NEAL

Augustus Howell O'Neal departed this life September 15, 1960, at the age of seventy-two. He was born in Talbot County, Georgia, but lived most of his life in Columbus, Georgia. He was retired by the City of Columbus, Georgia, after twenty-two years of service. In the Spring of 1958 he moved to Atlanta, Georgia.

He was married to Zula Thetford October 12, 1914, and to this union were born three sons: A. Howell, Jr., of Louisville, Kentucky; Charles W., Jonesboro, Georgia; and Marion C., of Memphis, Tennessee. Two grandsons and two granddaughters also survive him. We miss him so much.

He was not a member of New Harmony Church, near Atlanta, but he seldom missed being seated in his pew when the services convened. He loved the Pastor, Elder O. J. Croker, and the brethren and sisters. Although he was in a very poor state of health, he loved to go to Church and hear the sweet sound of the gospel, hoping he would someday be given a new body. His present body was crippled up from rheumatoid arthritis, and he also had a cancer on the larnyx. He suffered much pain, but he did it in patience.

Elder O. J. Croker preached the graveside service and was assisted by Mr. Mack Anthony, of Columbus, Georgia. Interment was at Parkhill Cemetery, Columbus, Goergia, amongst the presence of many relatives and friends.

"O Death, where is thy sting?
O Grave, where is thy victory?"

Written by his wife,
Zula Thetford O'Neal

THOMAS CURRY ALLRED

God called the spirit of Brother Allred from this world to be with Him in Glory May 31, 1961. He was born and raised in the community of Bush Arbor Church. The Lord blessed him to live a long and useful life, 81 years. He leaves to mourn his departure one son, A. Lewis Allred, of High Point, N. C., where he had made his home since the death of his last wife; one sister, Mrs. Mamie Garrison, Route 2, Elon College, N. C.; one brother, Mr. Ezra Allred of Burlington, N. C.; and four grandchildren.

Brother Allred was twice married. His first wife, Sealey Ann Smith, lived only a few years. He later married Ada Smith who died January 9, 1951.

At our April, 1951, meeting he united with the church at Bush Arbor and lived a faithful member until his death. We shall continue to miss him, yet we can't but feel our loss is his gain. He so often prayed that God would take him from his suffering, yet he was one of the humblest men I ever saw, so thankful for everything that was done for him. Surely he could say with Paul, "I am in a strait betwixt two having a desire to depart and be with Christ which is far better." May God's blessing be upon each member of his family. Especially, would we like to mention how tenderly and lovingly his every need was taken care of by his son and family.

Brother Allred's funeral was largely attended at Bush Arbor Church and conducted by his pastor, Elder W. C. King, and Elder J. Harvey Smith. His body was laid to rest in the silent tomb to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who shall call his sleeping dust to arise and come forth made like His own glorious body, where sickness, sorrow and death shall never come.

This memorial was approved by Bush Arbor Church in her regular conference at her

July, 1961, meeting; and ordered a copy be put on our church record book, a copy sent to his son and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

W. C. King, Moderator
Earl Rudd, Church Clerk

EVADNA LANDERS DUDNEY

Sister Evadna, affectionately known by many as "Vad", Landers Dudney, died Wednesday, March 1, 1961. She was born near Emmet, Nevada County, Arkansas, November 16, 1878, and was the youngest of 15 children of Elder and Permelia Matthews Landers. She was blessed to live a beautiful life, died in a good old age, full of years and gathered to her people, being 82 years, 3 months and 13 days old at the time of her death. She was married to Ira B. Dudney December 8, 1897, who preceded her in death on March 1, 1947.

Survivors are her four daughters, Ivad Dudney, Mrs. Trula Lloyd, Mrs. Marie Browning and Mrs. Esther Tillman, all of Texarkana, Texas; a son, Bennett Landers Dudney of Kansas City., Mo.; a brother, Joe E. Landers of Texarkana; six grandchildren, two great grandchildren and a number of nieces and nephews.

Sister Dudney was a faithful member of New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, near Hope, Arkansas. The date she joined is not known, but at an early age when her father served as pastor in the late 1800's going to his appointments horseback. She loved her church and continued her attendance as long as she lived. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her and especially by the brethren and sisters of New Hope Church.

Her funeral service was conducted Friday, March 3, 1961, by her former pastor, Elder E. J. Lambert, at New Hope Church. Her present pastor, the writer, was ill and unable to be present. The beautiful floral offerings and large congregation of brethren and sisters, relatives and friends was evidence of the love and respect of all that knew her. Her body was laid to rest in New Hope Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection when the bodies of all the Saints shall be changed and raised by the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, and fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself.

May God bless and comfort her loved ones and all that mourn her passing.

Elder W. A. Speer

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, The Lord has seen fit, in his wise providence, to remove from us by death, our dear brother Elder G. E. Frazier, on May 30, 1961. For several years Elder Frazier was in bad health, and while he was not pastor of New Hope Church, he would often open the services and preach when he was able. He was always present when health permitted and had a way to travel. We loved him, and feel that our loss is his gain; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; for he never makes a mistake; and

RESOLVED, That we, the church at New Hope, have lost a faithful brother and elder; his wife a good husband; his children a kind father; and his neighbors a good neighbor; and that we therefore send a copy of these resolutions to his wife; and a copy spread on our minutes; and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church, with Brother Taylor acting as moderator.

Sister Minnie Loftis, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God in his infinite wisdom and everlasting love, has seen fit to remove from our midst our dear brother, Junius Howard Gay; who was born December 11, 1889, in Franklin County, N. C., and died February 10, 1961; making his stay on earth more than seventy-one years. He was married to Elonie Murray, and to this union eight children were born, four boys and four girls, who survive, except one son preceded him in death. There are twenty-seven grandchildren.

He joined the Sandy Grove Primitive Baptist Church, Nash County, N. C., May 23, 1923, and was baptized by Elder George Boswell. He was a faithful member, always filling his seat unless providentially hindered. He was ordained a deacon May 23, 1954. He will be greatly missed by his wife, Sister Gay, and the family, and by many friends, and by all the churches he visited.

His funeral was preached by Elders J. B. Murry and D. B. Stowes; and he was laid to rest to await the coming of our Lord.
Murry and D. B. Stokes; and he was laid to

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent the *Old Faith Contender* and to the *Signs of the Times*; and a copy spread on our church books.

Done while in conference.

L. H. Stephenson, Moderator
W. T. Brantley, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129 DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1961 NO. 11

WILL CHRIST ACCEPT ME?

"Much is being said among the orders of today
Over the radio, the press, and every way,
About accepting Christ if you will; —
Has no place in my humble heart to fill.

I just wonder if they look
Inside of God's precious Book;
And when hungry sinners feel His power
They accept Him at that same hour.

For salvation comes by saving grace,
And with the sinner finds its place;
In the depths of the penitent heart
Where the Spirit performs His part.

Not by works that man can do
But by grace through and through;
So why, will mortal man attempt to change
And preach a doctrine that is strange.

It must be they do not know
About the things they try to show;
Put stumbling blocks in the way of men
And pull them down to deeper sin.

For they have no food for the hungry soul,
And all is husk, upon the whole;
But the "Elect Lady" they can't deceive,
Because the little flock won't believe.

For they have something from above
In bonds of mercy, peace, and love;
So let us look to God with praise
For all His plans and righteous ways."

Selected by a reader.

"THE ROCK THAT IS HIGHER THAN I"

(Job 33:15, 16: Psalm 61:2)

One night, in deep slumberings,
I had an impressive dream;
In this dream it seems I crossed
The dry bed of a stream.

Now, when I had safely crossed
The bridge across the sand,
A dear late Elder met me,
And took me by the hand.

It appears that then he led me
Up on a great high rock,
And that there he talked with me
Of joining the "little flock."

A church meeting was being held
Upon this rock nearby,
Which is a pertinent figure of
"The Rock that is higher than I."

I hope this dream was indicative of
A good work in me begun,
And in the resurrection to meet
The Just and Holy One.

Oh! to be raised in His likeness,
And be for ever blest,
To spend with the saints in glory
An "eternal Sabbath of rest."

How sweet it is to contemplate
The consummate bliss above!
Nothing there doth mar this joy,
Where all is perfect love.

C. W. Vass

ELECT

There was a man, a very pious man. He was zealous of good works and told God about them in prayer. In his own mind, he kept the law tithing and fasting. But in the same church a fellow man of his, humble and afraid, would not lift his eyes toward heaven, but prayed only, "God be merciful to me a sinner". Jesus said of him, "I tell you this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other". (Luke 18:-10-14)

Did you ever ask yourself why? What did he do to obtain justification? The answer is, nothing. Christ who fulfilled the law and satisfied justice, by taking the sins of his people on himself and dying in their law room instead, knew the Publican as an elect. However, the Pharisee, who tried to fulfill the law with his own good works, was unjustified, not having Christ to take his place.

We often are made to wonder why Christ would leave the throne of glory,

take on flesh with its accompanying trials and tribulations, die on the cross of Calvary for sin cursed man, and ascend again to heaven to continue making intercessions with the Father for them. The great love and mercy He has for the elect, his chosen people, from the foundation of the world, was God's purpose in the earthly ministry of his Son. He came to save such poor, wretched sinners as the Publican mentioned above, through grace and mercy, just because He willed it so.

Naturally speaking, the deserving one of these two would have been the Pharisee, who not only did good works but left off doing bad ones (in his own imagination). However, for some reason known only to himself, God saw fit to choose the poor and humble at heart, as vessels of mercy. He chose the publicans of this world who bring no offerings, rather than the Pharisees who boast of their tithes, fasting and offerings. These vessels of mercy, the elect, are his, not because of their good works, but because they were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began; and only because He willed it so. "For He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I **will** have mercy, and I **will** have compassion on whom I **will** have compassion. So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God who showeth mercy." (Romans 9:15-16) It seems the Pharisee and Publican were seeking the same thing, but only the Publican found it. Why? Because the Pharisee "sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law." (Romans 9:33)

There was a son, an obedient son. He fulfilled the request of an aging father and **worked** to receive his blessing. However, through deceit, his younger brother stepped in and received the blessing before the work was finished, yet, who can question the will of an all wise God who said concerning the younger brother, the deceitful one, "Jacob have I loved", and of the working one, "Esau have I hated"? For making this choice between the two can we ask, "Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid." (Romans 9:14) "I have loved you, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother, saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob. And I hated Esau and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of of the wilderness." (Malachi 1:2-3) Here the Lord himself speaks of a choice, an elect, and though they were brothers, even twins, with like backgrounds and heritage, He loved one and hated the other. "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the **purpose** of God according to **election** might stand, not of works but of him that calleth. (Romans 9:11) We still question why, oh why, and the answer comes from inspiration, "even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." (Luke 10:21)

Jacob, who represents the elect, was poor, underserving and unworthy of the blessing which, under the law, was justly Esau's. However, God saw fit through his love to exalt Jacob and turn Esau out into the desert. In his decree He willed that the seed of Jacob should be as the dust of the earth, and "in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Genesis 28:14)

There was a persecutor, a man who sought to bind and slay the disciples of the Lord. He guarded the garments of those who slew Stephen, and consented to his death. He also made havoc of the church and imprisoned the members. While this persecutor was on the way to Damascus, with letters of authority to bind any disciple of the Lord he might find there, he was surrounded by a light from heaven and fell to the earth. After the Lord made himself known to this man, who was a religious **worker** under the law, with much zeal, and yet a persecutor of God's elect, he asked, "Lord what will thou have me to do?" and the Lord answered, "It shall be told thee what thou **must** do." (Acts 9:6) From that day forward Paul preached and wrote to the children of God, comforting and suffering with them in love. His ministry to and for

the elect is recorded in his many epistles in the Bible. His epistles, or letters or communications were meant for instruction and comfort to the addressed, or elect, and not the whole world. For instance he addressed his brethren at Ephesus: "Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, **to the saints** which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ." (Ephesians 1:1)

Because it was his holy will, God elected and set apart Paul, a former persecutor of Christians, to minister unto a people he elected and set apart as his own. Paul had done no good works to merit his salvation, being in the business of persecuting Christians under the guise of religion. His only claim to heaven and life eternal is through the death of Jesus Christ, who fulfilled the law in his stead. He was thus chosen because of the will of God and love and mercy of his Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Lillie, La.

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER P. D. GOLD

(Editor's Note: Many of our readers enjoyed the re-publication of Elder Gold's Correspondence with Dr. Hooper, and we are requested to re-publish his experience. We are glad to comply with this request, for we believe many will also enjoy it.)

"But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which art written in the law and the prophets. And have hope toward God, which they themselves allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." (Acts 24:16-16)

Many have requested me to write my experience and manner of life, but it has seemed to me that my life is so poor and sinful that it is unbecoming in me to make much personal reference. However, it is a fact that what each and every one writes reflects his own character and inner life. If a politician writes in bitter flings at the opposite party, it is because his heart is full of that strife. Should one's writing or talk be of lewdness, it is because his soul is full of that filth, and if you could mirror his heart you would see the imagery of this bestiality ruling in him. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

The prophets and apostles spoke and wrote as they were moved, of the things of Christ Jesus. They spake and wrote not by the will of man, but that which they had seen and heard and their hands had handled of the word of life, they have declared unto us. Notice how constantly Paul refers to his own experience in his writings. Indeed what could we know of redemption were there no living epistles written by the Holy Ghost in our hearts, and known and read of all men. In that sense the apostles were themselves a savor of life unto life in them who are saved; that is, those who are saved could and did behold in the apostles so sweet smelling a savor of Jesus that was delightful to them, and they glorified God for such gifts. So every servant of God should so act and conduct himself in both word and deed that all that love the Lord Jesus will be charmed with his good conduct. No one should ever be ordained to preach that has a bad name among them without; that is, that acts so badly that outsiders have a right to speak evil of him for his dishonest conduct. It is not persecution for one to be talked about because of his defaulting conduct. The enemies could find no fault of Daniel except concerning his religion. He could say, like Paul, we have defrauded no men, therefore receive us.

It is the inner and real life of a Christian that you desire to know. Hence the writers so often tell of their own joys and sorrows. The Bible is made up in great part of the recital of the troubles and deliverance of God's people. It is only in this way, or by the fruits they bear, that one can see the handwriting of Deity in the life of another. Nor is there any other way for you to have

hope that you are saved, only as the Lord works in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and your working out and making manifest that salvation to others as well as to your own comfort. So that we are to be ready always to give to every man that asks us a reason of the hope that is in us with meekness and fear. For one that loves the truth desires to hear you tell what great things that the Lord has done for you, and had mercy on you. Hence Jesus said to the one out of whom he had cast so many devils, go home to thy friends and tell them, not what you have done, but what the Lord has done for you; and that is all that we hear of his doing afterward.

Notwithstanding my embarrassment to refer to myself so much, when an aged and much beloved Sister Percy Ham recently said to me she desired to read my experience before she died, and earnestly requested me to write it out and publish it, there was a willingness of heart to do so. The text of Scripture at the head of this article occurred to me this morning as embodying the substance of what it is my mind to write.

I was born in what is called Cleveland County, N. C. (then it was Rutherford County) on the waters of Sandy Run Creek, almost on a line and equi-distant between King's Mountain and Gilbert-town, places made famous by important scenes and events of the Revolutionary war. When a youth one of these old soldiers lived near; and this old man is about the only Revolutionary soldier within my memory. The date of my birth is March 25, 1833, so that the great progress made in modern arts and sciences, such as application of steam to machinery, has been done chiefly within my memory. Such a thing as telegraphy was not known then, which has so revolutionized business. There was not a railroad in operation in all this country at that time.

The name of my father was Milton Gold. My mother's maiden name was Martha Fortune. My father was a farmer and a poor man that never owned a servant, though it was common in the South for men to own slaves. He and my mother with their children did the farm and house work. It was not common for him to hire work done. From early morn to dewy eve it was labor, labor. Seldom did we have a Saturday afternoon even for rest or sport.

It seemed hard to me not to be allowed to roam and play or frolic. For they did not allow their children to go to dances or parties. It was only a short while after crops were laid by that we went to school a few weeks. Our winters were spent chiefly in clearing up large new grounds for cultivation. That boys and girls of this day may know how my time was spent in youth, this part is written.

Now the memory of my parents is dear to me for giving me this severe discipline.

What were my habits of life? While my morals were fairly good, yet my nature was abominably corrupt. It is not my way of thinking to gloss over crime, nor blacken that which is good. While men in writing memoirs of life or obituaries of those gone, hide the faults and magnify the virtues of their subjects, this is not according to the pattern shown in the mount. The Bible tells of our first father's sin, and of our first mother's nakedness. It does not keep back the drunkenness of Noah nor the adultery of David, nor the backsliding of his son, Solomon, nor the faults of God's people. When the Bible records the ugly traits of one it does not select an obscure person, but the king on his throne, as well as the humble and obscure, is selected. God causes the writers of his book to tell the truth. He is a God without partiality.

While I was never drunk with intoxicating liquor until I was grown, yet since then it has been shown to me that my thoughts were vile and every abomination dwelt in me. It was about the time of my birth that the division among Baptists began on the mission

question, which Andrew Fuller and his aids devised in the preceding century; but the progress of Fuller's methods did not spread so rapidly in that country. For in my youthful days there was not a salaried preacher, nor a Sunday School, nor any of the modern machinery of the Missionary Baptists in all that country.

My father and mother were members of Sandy Run Church in my youthful days. Elder Drury Dobbins, "Uncle Drury" as many called him, was the pastor of that church. Not within my memory, or observation either, has ever a preacher been beloved, or more deservedly so. His grave is dear to me now. Last Summer it seemed to me his dust was precious to me, as a friend and myself visited it. Elder Dobbins was a predestinarian Baptist, and preached the whole truth ably. He was wonderfully gifted, and his conduct was exceptionally good. His manners were charming, his wit without slur, his wisdom above guile, his eloquence burning, his speech sublime, his expositions of Scripture were indited by the Holy Ghost. In the memory of the old people he yet lives in that country.

It was as a youth my days were passed under that wonderful preaching. Who can tell the power of a godly preacher on a country?

Elder Dobbins opposed the new measures of Missions in full as long as he lived. He was not in favor of protracted meetings, and stood as a wall against Mission schools to teach people to preach, money beggers, and all that hive of modern schemes to control the world, so endorsed and practiced by modern missions. He kept those things out of the churches he served, and out of the Broad River Association as long as he lived. These things are remembered by me. Besides they are admitted in a history of the Broad River Association recently written by one of its leading missionaries, J. R. Logan, Esq., a man that was personally known to me very well, and an honorable man. Drury Scruggs preached the funeral of Elder Dobbins about the year 1845. This man lauded Elder Dobbins with all the force of his speech (the writer was present). On the next day he went down to Sandy Run where Elder Dobbins had been pastor perhaps forty years, and had preached election of grace so long, and this man Scruggs said at a protracted meeting they had commenced, "As for the doctrine of election and predestination, I stamp my foot upon it"; accompanying the remark with that action of his foot on the pulpit floor.

Then Missionism began to sprout up and spread all over that country, and soon it had overrun the entire country, and has deluged it ever since.

In my day, after these things, protracted meetings were common. After crops were cultivated in the leisure weeks of August and September, the preachers would hold their protracted meetings, and frighten people with graveyard tales and old wives' fables, and get them to the mourner's bench to get religion, as they called it.

Such scenes as these have often frightened me, and to escape the awful doom they pictured, the young people generally, and myself among them, would kneel for prayer. Many made a profession of religion at such meetings; and many that professed, afterwards made it manifest that they knew nothing of the truth. What is the good of so reproaching the blessed worship of God by these desecrations? By the lawful and true preaching of the gospel all that are ordained to eternal life will believe. Much scandal is brought on that blessed name of Jesus by such unhallowed measures. It is good to have gospel preaching, and God will not leave himself without a witness. This gospel of the kingdom has already been preached to the end of the world, and the Jewish world has come to an end.

When attending these meetings many would be seized with paroxysms of such excitement that they would become quite excited and then sink into a semi-

conscious state for awhile. After the excitement would pass off, the reaction would bring a calm, which the preachers would tell them was religion. But to me there were no such feelings. Often my desire was to feel my sins as others seemed to feel theirs, but my heart was as unfeeling as a stone. Satan or my evil nature would suggest to me to commit some sinful deed in order to bring on conviction, but still hardness of heart was my lot. What a gloomy state this has since appeared to me. There was no true fear of God, no life toward him, no knowledge of sins, or the dreadful estate of a lost sinner. It was a state of delusion and deceitfulness when no truth was preached. If ever the doctrine of truth was once preached in all that dreary time, it is unknown to me. It was held out by all the preachers that it is all left with the sinner to determine about his salvation. The Lord has done all that he can do to save sinners, only he is standing waiting and waiting, but he has no power over the sinner unless the sinner will allow him to come in and save him. Such a thing as Jesus standing at the door of the disobedient Christian and knocking to come in and feast or sup with that Christian, was not hinted. All exhortations were to the ungodly, or chiefly so; and the dead sinner was represented as having the power of himself to accept; and if sinners did not accept, these preachers would be swift and willing witnesses against them in the judgment.

(Continued next month)

IMMORTALITY

"Who (God) only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honour and power everlasting." (1 Timothy 6:16)

This agrees perfectly with God's decree in the beginning with our foreparents and their succeeding generations: "And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life (Christ) and eat, and live forever; therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden. . . So he drove out the man; and He placed at the East of the garden of Eden, Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

Therefore, for anyone to possess immortality, it must come without merit of the creature, he being dead to the things of God; and is wholly by the sovereign will of God, for "He quickeneth whom he will".

"Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." This will of God embodied the fall of man through the deception of the serpent, Satan; God giving to Satan the power of death (in sin) over our foreparents. This power of death Satan holds over all Adam's posterity until the Holy Spirit quickens into eternal or immortal life his own children. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also took part of the same, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

The unjust pass their days here in this state of death — a state in which there is no life of Christ. "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." In the resurrection: "They that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." It is called the second death. This is not a resurrection to life, but to death, therefore could not be called immortality though they continue to exist forever. The word immortality means more than continuing to exist. It is the very nature of God himself, and only as his people are "partakers of the divine nature", are they immortal too. First in this life by being quickened in the new birth, it being a spiritual

birth; later, in the resurrection, the mortal body shall be quickened by His Spirit that dwelleth in you. For in this life, "If the Spirit of Christ dwell in you the body is dead because of sin." "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

W. L. Crowley

DESIRES TO LIVE UP TO THE NAME

To the household of faith, and to all that have tasted that the Lord is gracious; and the power and sweetness of the world to come:

Dear Brethren and Sisters in the Lord: (If you will allow one who feels so little and unworthy to address you thus.) I have felt from time to time for forty-five years that I wanted to tell you in part what I hope has been the dealings of the Lord with me. But being so unlearned, and not knowing whether the feelings and impressions I had were of the Lord, or just imagination of the flesh, I have hesitated. But the feeling lingers with me, and, if the dear Lord is pleased to direct my heart and hand, I will try with his help to do the best I can.

When I was a small child I had serious thoughts about where I would spend eternity, and sometimes wished I had never been born into this world; then I would not have a soul to be saved or lost. When I was twelve years old, my precious mother died, and one day when I was doing the dishes, I was feeling very sad and condemned. I felt I was a sinner; and as I dried the knives, forks, and spoons, and put each one in its place, I promised the Lord I would quit my sinful habits and ways, and be a better girl. But how little did I know then that I would not keep those promises! They were soon forgotten, or grown dim, and I was worse than before.

There was an association at Pee Dee Church where my father was a member, and we went, but I went through the meeting with no interest, until they began to sing the parting hymn: Number 618 in Lloyd's Hymn Book. The singing arrested my attention, and I thought it was the saddest and sweetest music I had ever heard. We had in our neighborhood the Old School or Primitive Baptists, and the New School Baptists, and somehow I felt there was a great difference in them. So much so I thought the Old School had a Bible to suit their religion, and the New School had a different kind to suit theirs.

We went up in the country to an association, and Elder Isaac Jones was there. His preaching was sweet music to my soul. I must have had a quickening of the flesh, for I felt good after hearing him preach, and I wanted to be good and not do anything wrong: I would not sing any worldly songs, for I thought it was wrong. I always had a tender spot in my heart for him, and loved the name Isaac Jones. The serious feelings lasted about a month, and left me. I felt there had to be a change in the person. I had read the experiences in the Landmark, and heard the preachers tell theirs from the stand; and I felt there had to be a great turning about, and deep suffering for sin. And I thought if that ever happened to me I would know I was under conviction, and when delivered, I would see a bright light, and know I was a Christian. But how little I knew! I finally came to the conclusion that the Lord had finished his work with his people on earth, and when the Old School Baptists died out there would be no more of his people here; for I felt they were his people.

Once a year I would go to hear the New School Baptists at their big meetings. One night, after I returned home, I felt somewhat disturbed in mind. I went out in the silent night and tried to ask the Lord to show me the right way. And when I became so distressed over my sinful condition I tried to beg him to forgive me for being so weak.

There had been an association at Pee Dee, and I did not go, my children being small I stayed at home. I cried when I would see others going. Then it was time, in course, for another association at Pee Dee Church, and I went each day. I got along fine; did not get much interested until Saturday afternoon when Elder Samuel McMillian went forward to the stand. I don't know what his text was, but he preached predestination and election. He said in his preaching, the election was over and the polls closed. Oh, it was wonderful to me! Such preaching I had never heard before, and with so much power. I felt so sure that what he had preached would stand all through time and throughout the ages of an unending eternity, that I said to a woman who was criticizing the Hardshells, as she called them, that if that doctrine went down, I felt willing to go with it.

As I started home, a woman called to me, and asked, "Are you a Hardshell?" I said, "Yes." Then I said, "No, I'm not, but I wished I were." She replied, "Yes, and you will be one of the first to go to Hades." (only she said it in a harsh manner — the word is too big for me.) After believing what I had heard that afternoon, I still had no spiritual hope, but felt so sure it was the truth and would stand forever, I loved it.

Sunday morning Elder L. H. Hardy went to the book-board first. He preached about the opening of the seven seals in Chapter 5 of Revelation. Then Elder McMillian followed, saying he was suffering with a bilious headache. I think he forgot the headache. He read a good portion of the 10th Chapter of St. John; but the 16th verse struck me hard: "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." But his main text was the 26th to the 29th verses, "But ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." It was all so sweet and touching, it was sweet music to my soul.

I felt very different by Monday morning: I felt to be a condemned sinner over what I had heard the two previous days. I believed it to be the truth, and would stand forever; but me — what would become of me after death. I greatly feared I had no part in it, and I knew there was nothing I could do to bring myself in favor with the Lord: My sins were too great for that, and I was afraid I would be found in sin in thought or deed. I felt my sins were so great they could sink a world like this. I fell a begger at his feet. I was weeping and mourning. I felt lost and undone, for I knew that without His mercy I was forever lost.

I was begging and pleading all my wakeful hours, hoping the dear Lord would be merciful to me a vile sinner, the One I had sinned so bitterly against and trampled his mercies under my sinful feet. I was begging and pleading with him not to send me down to everlasting woe, which I felt I justly deserved. I tried to beg him to let me be a servant or a door-keeper in heaven, that I might escape the burning flames, and not cast away from his holy presence.

I fled to the New Testament to try to find comfort there; and when I would see anyone coming, I would hide it, for I did not want anyone to know I was in trouble. I remained in this state of mind for about six weeks. One night I had retired, and a vision appeared beside my bed as a small tree; and on the limbs were small objects hanging from top to bottom. In the vision I knew the objects were the Lord's people, and I saw myself as one amongst the very lowest, almost ready to drop. And in the vision, I spoke and said, "Lord, is it that I am still hanging on?" And the vision was gone. I have never thought I was asleep. I rejoiced a little, but not like I thought people did when they met with a change. But my burden was gone, and I felt free and calm within.

In a night or so I dreamed I was in a small boat that people steer with oars, and Christ was in one end as a little babe dressed in pure white, and I was in the other end. I awoke rejoicing, but still did not feel as happy as some I had read about, but my troubles were gone. I thought to keep this all to myself and never tell anyone that I ever thought on the name of the Lord. My little hope, if I should call it a hope, was not bright enough to tell. I did not suffer over sin as I thought I should, and my deliverance was not bright enough. I did not see the bright light; and I will say here that I have often thought if it had left me there and not have followed me on, I don't think anyone would ever have known that I had thought on the name of the Lord, for I felt that I could live just as good out of the church as I could in it. And, too, I was not fit nor impressed with joining the church; and, too, I thought the Primitive Baptists were a people that could not bear the thought of sin, and therefore were the people against all the world that would believe my story. I had no impressions to go to the church.

This was in December after the association in November, 1915. How little I knew of the wills and shalls of our great Jehovah God: How they carry you where you would not have gone. I went to church in January following; and on Sunday Elder Bell, the pastor, preached on Isaac and Rebekah. Somehow his preaching was sweeter than it ever had been to me. Sometimes I would dream of fixing to offer, but never did offer in my dreams.

In April was meeting time again at Pee Dee, the 3rd Sunday and Saturday before. There was a man there who was speaking in public, who took up most of the time each day. I got along fine, and did not feel disturbed in my feelings in the least, until our dear old Elder Bell got up late on Sunday, and in just a few words preached a very wonderful and sweet sermon. He read for a text in the 11th Chapter of Matthew, 28th to 30th verses; and as he read, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Then the hymn, "Alas and did my Saviour bleed." It seemed as he read he was speaking to me, and his words took hold on my heart, and I felt like he thought there was someone there that ought to join the church; but not me. I did not give myself a thought. It had been four months since the burden of sin left me, and I had gotten along so good, never intending to let anyone know I had ever thought on the name of the Lord. But as the hours went by, I began to feel more and more disturbed in my feelings; and the feelings grew deeper and deeper with the hours, and in just a few hours I did not have to ask who was in trouble. If I had stayed at home and not gone to church, perhaps I would not have gotten in this fix. Yet there was a sweetness as well as a sadness in it; and I began to feel that the one thing I thought I never could or would do, I now felt I must do. My feelings grew deeper and deeper as the hours went by. On Thursday morning the same week I was sitting all alone in a little log cabin where I lived, and I was over shadowed by some great power; and it was shown me so plainly that it was my duty to follow the Lord and Saviour in baptism. I did not hear anything nor see anything with the natural eye, but I felt something. It was the sweetest and saddest thing I ever felt, and unto this day it is the sweetest and most outstanding part of my experience. It was so severe it took my natural appetite. I prepared a dress that day to be baptized in, and put it away. I was impressed to tell my sister, who was not a member of the church, some of my feelings, and I did not want to tell her. When I saw her, I loved her with the sweetest love, and as we walked along, we were talking about our aunt, and I said, "It is strange that she never united with the church." And she said, "How about you?" She

caught me off guard, and I said, "I feel sometimes like I will have to." She threw her arms around me and burst into tears. I was sorry I told her, and begged her not to tell anyone; but she made sure she did.

Elder George Gore and Elder Brown sent an appointment to Pee Dee for the 4th Sunday and Saturday before in June, and the Baptists came to let me know. I was so afraid they would say something to me about my feelings that I would not stop ironing. I knew they had heard about me. My uncle who was a member, told me about the appointment, and I was getting ready for the meeting. The day came, and I was there. When they began to sing, the tears began to roll down my face, and I had no control over them — and I wanted so much to keep my feelings hid.

When Elder Gore began to preach, it was just heaven to me, or as near heaven as I ever will be in this world. It was the same way on Sunday. Elder Gore and Elder Brown had promised to come back in August. I wanted to be baptized the worst of anything I had ever thought about; and Jesus was the sweetest name in all the world to me. When I would pass the waters, they looked so beautiful to me. I wanted Elder Gore to baptize me: I had dreamed that he did, and that was my desire. But how could I ever go before so great a people and ask for a home, as unworthy and unfit as I felt to be; and how could I live and not be baptized, was a question and a cross to me.

The third Sunday was meeting time again for the pastor, but there was a storm and he could not come. I felt the Lord sent the storm to keep me from offering to the church because I was not fit. But he did come in August; and I got along alright Saturday and did not feel to offer. Sunday, when he announced a open door, I stood with a fan in my hand, and there was a storm raging in my breast. It seemed as if my heart would come out, and I trembled like a leaf and could not hide my feelings. After the meeting closed, I went out the side door, but felt I must speak to the preacher. I went back in the house and shook hands with him. He said, "You couldn't come." I said, "I am not fit to come." And he said, "Those are the kind."

I felt somewhat relieved after speaking with him. We were to have meeting the next week-end; and I felt I would have another opportunity, and tried to beg the Lord, if it were his will for me to go to the church, to strengthen me and go with me. And different Scriptures would come in my mind, such as, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you." and, "Today if ye hear his voice harden not your heart."

Elder Gore and Elder Brown came as promised; and when Elder Gore finished preaching Saturday, he walked down to the floor from the stand, and they began to sing, "Amazing grace", and there was nothing in my way then, not even myself, and I went forward, and was received and baptized that afternoon, August 26, 1916, by Elder George Gore. I left a burden there that has never returned. But I did not feel clear, and would sigh and groan until I fell asleep. When I awoke next morning all was peace and quiet within. It was a beautiful day: all sighs and groans had fled away. "Not a wave of trouble rolled across my peaceful breast." My heart was full of love and praise to Christ my King, and I was happy as could be.

After returning home from another heavenly meeting, I walked the yard in the afternoon in praise to our heavenly King, and wondered how I could ever doubt these things anymore. But the tempter soon was to visit me to frighten my soul away. I have had many ups and downs since then; had many dark seasons, and some bright ones. I have felt lonely and almost forsaken; have found my feet walking in forbidden paths, for which I have had to bear the rod. **Oh, how glad I would be if I could live up to what I feel the name Old School**

or Primitive Baptist stands for. But I have miserably failed.

I have left much untold that has been both sweet and sad. I loved the church when I went to them when I had no where else to go; and almost 45 years later I still love them. Whether it is the right kind of love, I do not know; only hope so. Of late years I have been in a dark and thorny desert where there was no spiritual food or drink — so low in my feelings I could not say Brother or Sister to the dearest people on earth. I felt too far beneath them; and I dared not to call them Mr. and Mrs. But the dear Lord has brought me through it all, and let me taste and feel once again the power and sweetness of His love, if not deceived. Praise His great name! I can never thank and praise him enough for the way I feel now. I have been to many an association, but none ever meant to me what the one did in 1915.

I hope His rich and reigning grace will rest and abide with all the chosen saints of God. May the glorious light of his love light your pathway through the pearly gates in heaven, where all but love is done away, is my sincere desire. I hope to be remembered in your prayers.

If this should come before the Editor, do with it as you feel best, and I will abide by your decision. A very little Sister in hope.

Humbly submitted,
Frances Moore
1204 Morning Glory Avenue
Durham, N. C.

HIS HOPE IS PRECIOUS TO HIM

Box 160
Woodward, Iowa

Dear Elder Spangler:

Why I am doing this I don't know, but the desire is, I hope, for some comfort to myself and to others. I heard you preach at Mayfield, Ky., last Fall at the association, which is the last sermon I have heard. I enjoy so much hearing those Old Baptists proclaim the richness of God's glory.

I don't know just where to begin, or what to say, but I do hope the Lord of mercy will guide my mind and heart to say nothing to offend anyone. I claim to believe the doctrine the Old Baptists contend for. As for an experience of grace, I don't know that I have one: I can only say what I believe, and what I have been taught by one not seen by natural eye. When I am with them I feel I am treading upon sacred ground: there is a solemn peace which comes over me I cannot describe; and the good old songs of Zion calm a fear I cannot tell about, for there are no words to describe the feeling of contentment and peace that calms the fear that engulfs me most of the time.

If anyone lives as far away as I do from the people who are so dear to their heart, they may understand in part my lonely condition. I am the only one that I know of who believes as I do, living in this part of the world. There are people here who claim to be Old Baptists, but I can't go along with them. Their preaching just don't ring true to my way of thinking. Salvation by grace is my only way of believing; and the doctrine of salvation by grace is all that will ever reach this old sinner, for I can do nothing to merit the mercy I so much desire. But I don't know whether it will reach down this low to redeem such a worm as I feel to be.

There is so much to say, I could write volumes; and yet say nothing of value to anyone, as my understanding is so limited. I one time had good eyesight, but now my sight is very poor, and in reading what little I can in the Bible there is much I don't understand; but when it is explained, I hope I can understand the meaning then.

I hope, the Lord willing, to go back to the association this Fall and hear Elder Darnell preach once more. I won't even attempt to tell of the beauty and glory of the sermon he preached on Saturday morning concerning the king-

dom not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. It has been on my mind ever since I heard him.

I don't belong to any church now; the one I joined here in Iowa has gone down and does not exist anymore. So I am one alone in a desert land, where there is no food and no water to drink. What a desolate place to be! Six-hundred miles to the nearest place to eat and drink at the fountain of truth and righteousness! I would love to have a home with these dear people, but I am getting old and would be of no value to them — only a stumbling block. I received my Signs this morning, and have read it as far as the Editorial page, and have enjoyed it to my comfort.

I will try to write something of my travels through this time world. I was born and raised by Old Primitive Baptist parents in Southern Illinois; where, in my youth, they had to go to church about twenty miles mule-back. I can remember very well some of the happenings of my early life. As a little child I remember sitting on the ground by my mother, and listening to the preacher; and when he would stop, I would wish for him to keep on. Even at that tender age there seemed to be a feeling come over me which I can't yet describe. But, if I know my heart, I have always had some kind of a feeling that there was a higher power that leads in a way we don't know. They never did try to instruct me in the way they believed, and yet they would attend the Missionary Baptist Church sometimes about a mile from where we lived, and would let me attend their Sunday Schools; but I never could quite understand their teachings.

I can't help but believe that God in his wisdom knew before he ever made the world, what would happen all down through the ages to come. He spoke the world into existance out of nothing, creating all things that exist, visible and invisible, for his own glory. He never left anything to man, for man never existed until all things were created. What, therefore, has man to glory in, except in the shed blood of Christ? I don't believe that all the prayers of all the saints will ever change the mind of God, or cause him to change his mind, or save one sinner that He did not give his Son to die for on the cross of Calvary. His mind was fixed in his purposes before the foundation of the world. He chose his subjects as it pleased himself, and gave them to his Son to die for. His will is done in heaven and on the earth, for there is none to advise such a wonderful Saviour.

If man could only see and realize how small and insignificant and weak he is, there would not be so much confusion in the world. I have enjoyed the Signs for many years, and hope to continue enjoying it for the rest of my life. I have not learned to love its contents through the teaching of men, although they have been instrumental in explaining the things that have been so comforting to my lonely existance.

I realize that I have not written as I would like to write; my understanding is so limited, and I am so ignorant of things pertaining to things not of this world, which makes me fear that I don't know anything at all. But my hope is that at the last day this old body will be raised in the likeness of Him who said, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I feel that I have labored, but to no avail: it has all been of a higher power. But that hope that seems so small at times, is so precious to me that I would not exchange it for ten thousand worlds and all their riches. That is all I have left in this world to look forward to.

In closing, I wish you and all the editors and writers of the dear paper, all the richest blessings of Him who never slumbers nor sleeps; whose watch-care is ever over his dear people. I hope to meet you all in that world that God prepared for his people before the foundation of the world. If you see anything that is offensive, or not to the betterment of the cause, throw this away, and I will thank you for doing so. May

God in his mercy uphold and guide you and all who believe in Salvation by Grace, and grace alone. Written in love for all God's little ones, whose trust is in the Lord.

W. J. Kimbro

Rt. 3, Box 123
Stanton, Texas

Dear Editors:

Just a few lines. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin; and as Christ shed his blood to fulfill the promise of a Saviour, the blood was shed to redeem the chosen ones in Christ. We have no need for more offering for sin. Christ saves every soul that will ever see God and heaven. At the end of time Christ will come and call all he shed his blood for. He will call all the redeemed from the four winds of the earth; He will say to the North give up, and the South hold not back. He will bring his sons and daughters from afar, and they will be caught up with Christ in the clouds, and the wicked will be judged according to their works. "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. 20:15)

"God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." (Acts 17:24-26)

He made all things for a purpose. He has all power in heaven and on earth, and we have nothing to say concerning our salvation, for our lives are in the hands of our maker. The Apostle says to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. God works in purpose and righteousness, and we should rejoice and love him, and thank him for the gift that worketh in us a work pleasing to our Maker.

He calls and redeems his elect, and when their days are fulfilled here, there will be no more sins to be forgiven, as the blood of Christ hath cleansed them from all sins, and they shall live with Christ forever.

My letter is getting too long to ask for space in our good paper. I love the **Signs of the Times**, and the good editors keep it clean: Thank God for that. I have written what I have, and hope God has directed my thoughts and hand. There is only one true and lawful Bride. Her eyes are as fair as a dove; and her children are their Father's pride.

The Lord adopted mercies plan;
He made the world, also the man.
This is the way the thing was done,
Without a ray of light or sun.

Away out there alone, above,
Without a thing to make it of:
The world was made without a flaw,
Without a hammer or a saw;

Without a bit of wood or stone;
Without a bit of flesh or bone,
Or anything to nail it to.
F. P. Welch, age eighty-two.

Dr. F. P. Welch

A TIME TO BE BORN, AND A TIME TO DIE

Perrin, Texas

Dear Editors and Readers of
The Good Old Signs:

I see my time is about out, and I don't want to miss a single one. It is almost all the preaching I hear lately that amounts to anythings to me. I was 92 my last birthday, and I can't go much. But I feel that the good Lord has been with me in all my ups and downs, and had kept me as the apple of his eye; and has kept all the strange gods from me, for I am not sufficient of myself to do anything of myself. But with Jesus, with his almighty arms upholding me, I can do all things by him that strengtheneth me.

I find every day I live that I am fully dependent upon Almighty God for the true blessings that come my way. I have felt many times I have comforted God's little ones, in trying to preach Jesus and him crucified for our offences, and raised again for our justification. We are not uneasy about God's little ones, for what God did was done forever — nothing shall be taken from it, and nothing shall be added to it. The Old Baptists have a wonderful God.

With this good hope, we are looking for Him to come without sin unto salvation, which all God's people will be fully satisfied with. It won't be long I know, that I will have to go and learn all it means; but **it is just as natural to die as it is to be born,** for there is a time to be born and a time to die. Our God set a time to every purpose under the sun.

Your brother, I hope,
C. Y. Osteen

7811 North Yale,
Spokane 52, Washington.

Dear Brethren:

I am enclosing $3.00 money-order to renew my subscription, and also a poem I wrote sometime ago, if you care to publish it.

. . . I had a dream or vision which I would like to tell you about: I dreamed all the world was a vast race track, and everyone was either racing, or watching people race in small cars. It was evening and almost dark, and there were clouds in the sky as if a storm was brewing. As I looked, I saw my sister in one of the race cars, and they were traveling at an immense rate of speed.

And a man by my side, with whom I was talking, wanted me to look off in the distance where the cars were coming from; and I looked, but I seemed to be drawn to look into the sky, and saw a dark cloud. A light began to show in it, and it opened up; and, Oh, such a beautiful sight was there! It was the glory of God, and I was so enraptured. As I looked, I saw a fish net hanging in this cloud in this glorious light — it was so beautiful, all a golden light. The end reached in to heaven; and I cried out, "Oh, my God, the net is empty, isn't it?" And a wind began to move in the cloud, which was the Spirit of God, and the net began to stir, and I could see that it was empty.

As I awoke, these scriptures were in my mind: "Arise, Peter, kill and eat." "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." What does it mean? I hadn't had the Bible, or God, or the church, or anything like that in my mind for several days, before the dream. But it surely had a great effect on me; and, as surely as God is my witness, I did see it. But what it means, I know not. Please bear with me; and remember I know I am the vilest of all sinners.

But I hope I have a love for my fellow-travelers, and the blessed truth, and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and I know that if I do, it is because it has all been given me — freely, and unmerited, for sure. I feel, too, that if I am not kept by the power of God unto salvation, then I am none of his, and am lost and undone.

I am often made to feel that, though I make my bed in Hell, still He is there. And, as I tell so many, if I cannot live my natural life without Him, how could I expect to live a spiritual life without Him?

May God bless and keep you, and guide your feet in the paths of truth for His glory, and for his little ones who read the dear old *Signs*.

Mrs. Mary L. Echard

Winfield, Alabama

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I promised myself the last time I wrote to the **Signs** that I wouldn't write anymore. I am so weak and unworthy I can't write like I would like to. I am here alone as far as earthly creatures are concerned, but I am not all alone, for

I feel the presence of Almighty God with me. Oh, how I do hope I am thankful to our Lord and Saviour for all the blessings he has bestowed upon me, and for lifting me out of the pit of darkness. Oh, my soul, I can't praise him enough. How could I keep from praising him, when he is all in all to me.

Nothing else matters when I can feel the Holy Spirit with me, leading and guiding me. I know I can't mean anything to the church, but they do mean so much to me. What a wonderful Saviour we have.

To me the **Signs** was extra good this month (August). I just couldn't lay it down until I read it through. It explained my experience better than I ever could begin to. I couldn't read for my eyes filling with tears, and had to stop and dry the tears to see how to read. The whole book seemed so filled with the goodness of the Lord. I rejoiced all through it.

Sometimes I long to go on and be with the Lord. I used to think I was having such a hard life, but now I can look back and rejoice and be glad, for I know I was being wrought upon by Almighty God. How sweet it is to feel the presence of the Lord!

How precious are the dear Primitive Baptist people. I pray God's blessings on every one of them. And I pray the Lord will bless each of you editors in the precious work you are doing, and to keep you in health, if it be his holy will, for Christ's sake, Amen.

Mrs. A. T. Couch

Rt. 1, Box 34-A
Sims, Texas

Dear Editors and Readers:

I am a member of the Prospect Church at Old Union, but feel to be so worthless. I was baptized this past July a year ago, along with Sister Pearl Barnes and Brother George Daniels. I fought it a long time, for I felt to be such a great sinner and so worthless; but I love the Old Baptist people very much. I am like I heard Elder Spears say in a sermon awhile back: "I don't seem to have an experience like so many others have; and sometimes I wonder if I have any at all. I just have that very little hope."

My husband attends church with me regularly, and I hope he will be given a mind to come in with us sometime. The first night after I was baptized, just after I had laid down, a big bright eye appeared to me, and I was shown that it was the Lord's eye, that he was looking on; and that night I dreamed that I was tossed in a very swift river and I couldn't swim, and I felt that I was lost. But somehow I came out of the water so easily; and as I started to look for a cousin who was standing beside me when I was tossed into the water, I wandered around and saw a big white house. In the house I saw a woman dressed in white; and as I walked on towards the house, I came to a pretty all-metal gate, which I thought would be locked and that I couldn't get in. But I seemed to push a button, and the gate opened easily; and as I walked down the narrow lane leading to the house, I saw my cousin and my husband, whom I was looking for. I do not know just what the dream meant, but I have a little hope.

I was baptized by Elder Lloyd Wall, and he and his wife have visited us a few times, and we enjoy their company very much. My father, William Joe Johnson passed away in April. We miss him very much at church and at home. He attended the meetings regularly and was one of their deacons. My mother is greatly broken up, but the Lord saw fit to take him. I do believe our days are numbered, and that we are saved by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves.

I remember you visiting our church several years ago, Brother Spangler, and preaching one night; and I enjoyed your sermon very much. Hope you will have a mind to visit with us again.

A sister with a little hope,
Adiline Burkhalter

Danville, Virginia **November, 1961**

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EDITORIAL

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be destroyed, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?" (2 Peter 3:11, 12)

For some years we have had a few passing thoughts on the above, but since trying to speak of some of the things written in the first part of this chapter, we have had further meditations on the latter part.

It is evident that Peter was not urging upon the brethren that doctrine which is so prevalent: That the manner of persons we are by human efforts will determine our state of being when, "all these things shall be dissolved".

Peter had no such thought in mind. If there ever was one who believed and preached to the contrary, it was Peter; and his brethren were solidly with him. After all his self-confidence and self-works were wonderfully and effectually removed from him, as is recorded, and he was "converted", (see Luke 22:32), Peter was prepared to strengthen his brethren; which he did in a remarkable way, as, for instance, on the day of Pentecost. Peter was thus qualified with the other apostles to bind the false, and loose the true doctrine of God our Saviour unto his brethren.

As we read Peter's two epistles to the "strangers scattered", who had obtained like precious faith with him, we notice that, at the very beginning, he lays the foundation for all things which he wrote; and he wrote consistently with the foundation he laid. He told these brethren that they were, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification (their being set apart or called out) of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus." And he continued by saying that, according to the abundant mercy of God, they were begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; and that their hope was to an inheritance which was incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who were kept by the power

of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Now we take it that the things that Peter wrote is the doctrine of God our Saviour; and that everything taught by the apostles is in complete harmony with it. Is there any varience between this of Peter, and that of Paul in the eighth of Romans? "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to the purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to this image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

It is good to read the commendation of Peter concerning the things which Paul had written unto the brethren: "And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." (2 Peter 3:15, 16)

These are the things we believe and preach; and, finding no inconsistancies in any of the scriptures, and nothing contrary to the things we believe we have been taught of God's mercies to poor sinners, we hold no reservations in declaring these very things, when we are blessed with understanding and liberty. We have rejoiced in them ever since being brought to the end of our supposed righteousness as an aid to salvation. These are the things that Jesus taught; they are what the Old Testament portrays and forshadows to the enlightened heart; they are what the New Testament writers preached and wrote.

And these are the very things that the Lord's people believe when they have received the earnest of their inheritance, being sealed with the holy Spirit of promise. They rejoice in them, and love to meditate upon the goodness and mercy of God; and, though they have to stand relatively alone in their faith, they will not try to push these things into the background as of minor importance, and give way to the sophisticated ideas of moral reformers, who talk much of "practical godliness," and leave off the weightier matters, such as the source of all fruits of the Spirit.

In this third chapter of his second Epistle, Peter said that in both of his epistles to them, he was stirring up their pure minds by way of remembrance, that they may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of the apostles of the Lord and Saviour. Thus he was not adding anything new to their doctrine and faith, but was abiding in that which was of the holy prophets, and confirmed in themselves in their commission to preach the gospel of the Son of God.

But, in doing this, Peter, and the other writers, and the Lord himself, makes mention of those who oppose these things. Peter called the scoffers, walking after their own lusts. He showed that they cared not for the promises of God, and were willingly ignorant of the fact that the "world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished;" and that "the heavens and earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto the fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."

But Peter confirms his beloved brethren that all time is in the hands of their God, and that, "He is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any (of his own) should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

In these things Peter was but stating

the true state of affairs among men. There are but two classes: Believers and Unbelievers. There are those who are begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; and there are those who are false prophets, scoffers, those who bring in damnable heresies, etc.

Now more directly to our text. Those to whom Peter was writing were begotten again unto a lively hope — a lively hope of their inheritance. This is the same as was mentioned by Paul in his letter to Titus: "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." These had been born again — born of the Spirit, and were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise. They were pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. Heaven was begun below, and their thoughts were heavenward. They desired the fullness of what they had previewed and foretasted. This world was no longer their home; and the same grace that gave them their hope, caused them to look for their new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, according to the promise of God.

Each one of these has a work wrought in his heart which teaches him, "That denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, he should live soberly and righteously in this present evil world." This is the fruit of the grace that brings salvation to all of God's men; and is effective in all of them. They are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time; and their desire of holy conversation and godliness is not for gain, but because they have the principle of the life of godliness in them; which is Christ in them the hope of Glory.

We feel that every godly exhortation is of the same source as godly preaching, and it has its effect as applied by the Spirit. In it is a reminder of what they are saved from, as they run the race set before them, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of their faith.

The New Testament declares what the children of God are through the imputed righteousness of Jesus; but at the same time does not hide what they are in the body of this death. How seriously Paul exclaims, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." (Romans 7:24, 25) This flesh, with its native weakness, is the cause of the children bemoaning themselves, because they cannot do the things they would.

If ever there is one who does not thus sigh and groan, it is doubtless because he has not seen and felt the beauties of holiness; and such will not be concerned as to the manner of person he ought to be in his daily walk and conversation. Nor will he be more concerned should he be admonished.

On the other hand those who are quickened together with Christ, and are raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, as Paul shows in the second chapter of Ephesians, know that they are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that they should walk in them. This is the very element into which they are brought, and would remain as they abide their time, and reach forth unto those things which are before them.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." (Romans 6:6)

The apostle has here declared a strange thing; he says of himself and

his brethren, that their old man is crucified with Christ, for the purpose and to the intent that the body of sin might be destroyed; that from that time on they should not serve sin. The question is, How is this true, and in what way is it accomplished? Paul was a living man, and so were the brethren to whom he wrote; they still had natural life, and were servants of the Most High God, yet their old man was crucified. How was this, and by what process? Some would seem to wish to convey the idea that our mortal bodies are the old man, and that to put off the old man would be to discard our mortal frames, but such could not have been Paul's meaning. They were crucified, he says, and yet they retained their mortal powers and frames.

Paul, in the preceding chapter, had said that through one man's disobedience many were made sinners, and so also by the obedience of one many were made righteous. He means that the sin of Adam was entailed on all his posterity, and also that Christ's righteousness was entailed on all his posterity, which shows how the people of God, though vile in themselves, can be considered righteous before a just and holy God; it is by imputation. Our God in his all-wise and eternal purpose laid the sins of his people upon Christ, and his righteousness upon his people. Thus the Redeemer and his people were passive in the matter. Jesus declared repeatedly that he came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him, and once he prayed, "Not my will, but thine be done." Thus Jesus was not a free agent, in the sense that men attempt to claim free agency for themselves.

In the connection Paul also said, "Moreover the law entered, that the offense might abound," and also that by the law is the knowledge of sin. Hence the law was given solely for the purpose of bringing in man guilty, in order that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God. He who seeks to use the law for any other purpose perverts Scripture. Paul also said in this same connection, Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. To some it seems passing strange that our God should give a law to make man guilty before him of sin, and then cause grace to much more abound where sin abounds. Thus we can understand a little of Paul's meaning when he said, "For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law," meaning, as it seems to me, that where there is no commandment men are not condemned. Paul seems to mean that during the twenty-five hundred years from Adam to Moses, who gave the law, sin was in the world, but that in the absence of law sin was not imputed, and that wherever there is no law, there is no transgression. When the law did come it made sin to be a transgression, that all the world might become guilty before God, because all the world was sinning, as Paul has so forcibly declared in the third chapter of the Romans. Hence we must conclude that the purpose of the law entering as it did, was that offenses might abound. This paved the way and opened the channel for grace much more to abound. Thus the remedy is made known as much greater than the disease. This truth is again shown by the declaration of Paul, that as sin had reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life. This would seem to mean that as the law is the strength of sin, so that without the law sin is dead, therefore in the absence of the law sin could not reign unto death, and while sin remained in the world for the first twenty-five hundred years, until the law came, yet man was not considered a transgressor until the law was given.

To come directly to the text now, I will say that man has been a sinner against a just and holy God all his life, but until God writes his law in man's heart, he will not know that he is such a great sinner, so Paul said, I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. The sin which was in his heart, and

under which he lived, when the commandment came, produced death. Before the commandment came he was alive, afterwards he was dead. National Israel was without the law of Moses four hundred and thirty years. They then had the promise and circumcision. After the law was given it thundered judgments upon them, and death reigned, and distress was felt everywhere. The same is true in an experimental spiritual sense. Paul said as quoted before, "I was alive without the law once." Paul did not mean the law of Moses, for he had never been without that, and it was not that law which killed him. He was speaking of the law of God written in his heart which had caused sin to revive, the law being the strength of sin. Sin is a sweet morsel under the tongue until the law is given. Paul asks the question, "Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid." He means, Was that good law written in my heart made death unto me? No, no. "But that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good." He means, The good law written in his heart was that which gave strength to sin to work death in him. He also said that the commandment which he had thought to be unto life, he found to be unto death. Sin took occasion by the commandment writen in his heart, and deceived him, and by the commandment slew him, and it also wrought in him all manner of concupiscence.

See what sin does for those in whom God has written his law; it kills them. So sin reigns unto death, and because of this sin and death grace and mercy are the only hope of the Christian, and here is his crucifixion of which Paul speaks; this is the way by which we are crucified with Christ. It was sin that put Paul to death, and it was sin that put Christ to death. Christ was made sin for his people by coming under the law, the life of his people was in him, and as the law demanded the life of his people, so he must lay down that life. We were all guilty, and as he was our life, the law must take him to reach our life; he is the head, and they the body; the life is not in any member of the body, but in the head; a member may be taken away and we still live, but if the head be taken we die.

Paul asks the question in the beginning of the chapter, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" This was in reply to the assertion that if it be true that where sin abounds grace much more abounds, then let us continue in sin that grace may abound, but Paul says, "God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" If sin has reigned unto death, and if sin has killed us, how shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? How are we dead? The answer is plain. Sin which had caused us no trouble until the Lord wrote his law in our heart, has strength from the law, and has revived and deceived us, and has slain us, and has wrought in us all manner of concupiscence. "Sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful." This is just the condition every child of God finds himself in when the law of God is written in his mind and heart. Then, and then only, does the sinner think of grace and mercy as what he needs. The self-confident old man is slain, all our first religion is shown to be false, and all our former notions about God, false. We never knew anything about the power of sin until the law came and gave it strength, and we were slain by it. What was slain? Our old man, our first trust and hope; self was laid aside, in the sense that our first strength was gone, and with it all confidence that we could do aught to save ourselves, or that we could do anything good.

Thus Paul says, "Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed." That is, that self and all the pride, haughtiness, confidence and trust in our own strength, which once we thought to be so great, might be completely crucified as Christ was. And as Christ was freed from sin

when he had been crucified, so those whose sin has been slain by the law, are forever freed from sin, and they are no more under the law, for they have been as completely crucified under the law as was the Savior. The Redeemer was literally crucified upon the cross, while we are crucified in our affections and desires. The one was a setting forth, as in a type, of the other. Paul says again, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" He, as it seems to me, means that by baptism we set forth that we have been completely crucified to the world, and the flesh, and all things that are of the world, as much so as was the blessed Lord literally, when he was crucified upon the tree of the cross.

Take the case of a poor sinner who has the work of the new law written in his heart, while his conscience bears witness and his thoughts meanwhile either excuse or accuse him, and he feels to be in the grasp of a mighty monster, viz: death, and when one has thus been crucified, he has no further use for the doctrine of free agency; he is dead, and his life is hid with Christ, and he is ready to be buried with Christ in baptism, by baptism into death, and as Christ went into the tomb, and burst the bars of death, even so have we viewed many poor sinners going down into the liquid grave, a scene as solemn as death, and when they have been buried by baptism into death with Christ, and have been raised up again, we have seen a smile of victory over death plainly visible on their countenances. They have been buried with Christ, and raised up to walk with him in newness of life; the bars of death have been broken, and the captive set free, and there is a song of praise in their mouth. It is true when one is born of the Spirit there is joy in the Lord, even as was the case when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, but when Christ was raised from the tomb, a victory over death was secured and proclaimed. In baptism, with its burial and resurrection from the watery grave, there is a setting forth of their faith and hope in the burial and resurrection of Christ, and it also sets forth our own death, burial, and the resurrection of this mortal body. Each step in the ordinance sets forth a step in the chain of events that transpire to all the people of God in their experience in this life. As Christ was dead and buried under the law, so they are crucified and raised up to walk in newness of life. No one is a proper subject for baptism, but he whose self, or old man, has been completely crucified. These have no more use for the company of those who think that salvation is by works, or that it is conditional on the part of the creature. "When we were without strength, in due time, Christ died for the ungodly." He did not die for the righteous, but for the ungodly. "If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life." It is by grace, and grace alone, through the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, that we are saved, not of works; O no! lest any man should boast. We are simply his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has ordained that we should walk in them. Chosen ages past, before the world began, that we should be holy and without blame in love before him. O, what matchless provision has been made for us in Christ; created in him, and chosen in him, and holy in him, and without blame before him in love, and all this purposed to be done for his people, away back yonder before time began. What more can be done? All that we can do is to say, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.

Dear Brother Beebe, as some of the dear brethren have asked to hear from me through the Signs, I submit the above for their perusal. I have been confined at home for the past five months with my sick father, and have therefore not met with many of the brethren, and now my mind reverts back to them whom I have neglected for so long. I gave my father almost all my mind, but

he is now gone from us.

(The above appeared in the Signs of May 15, 1901, and was written by Elder Newton Peters, of Portland, Indiana. We found it very interesting, and feel it will be to the brethren. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

JAMES M. CARMACK

James M. Carmack was born June 10, 1898, at ElPaso, Arkansas. He was united in marriage to Miss Reiter Hudson, and they lived in the vicinity of Farmerville, Louisiana, for a long time. He died March 20, 1961. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Reiter Carmack, and two daughters: Mrs. Jack Jaggers, Jonesboro, La., and Mrs. E. J. Albritton, Farmerville, La.; and by his mother, Mrs. L. C. Carmack, and three brothers and two sisters: J. S. Carmack, C. S. Carmack, J. E. Carmack, Mrs. Herbert Kiehl, and Mrs. Hugh Spinks, all of North Little Rock, Arkansas. Five grandchildren also survive.

Mr. Carmack had a lengthy illness, and underwent two or three operations. He did not hold membership with the Primitive Baptists, but was a good friend to them, and he and Sister Carmack attended the meetings as regularly as their restaurant business would permit. He was good to me personally, his wife's pastor, and in many ways manifested an interest in the church. We believe he is resting in the grave from the great turmoil of this world, and that in that sweet and glorious day when the Lord comes again, to call his people home to heaven and immortal glory, that he will be among that number to whom the Lord will say, "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

His funeral was conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder Woodrow Hudson, Jr., at Liberty Hill Church, and his body was laid to rest in the Taylor Cemetery. May the Lord richly bless and comfort all the dear family, together with the friends and neighbors, in their great loss.

Your unworthy servant,
(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

MRS. L. M. BAKER

In memory of our dear mother, Mrs. L. M. Baker, who passed away April 25, 1961, at the age of seventy-six. She was born December 2, 1884. On December 7, 1906, she was married to Eddie Jaggers; and to this union a son was born. Mr. Jaggers passed away January 21, 1908, leaving her a widow for four years. Then she married Dad, Lem M. Baker, on February 29, 1912, who died June 12, 1955. To this union two boys were born, who died in their young days, and four girls who survive: Mrs. Fred Flemister, Crossett, Arkansas, Mrs. Cecil Goyne, Little Rock, Arkansas, Mrs. Auther Lloyd, Jr., Little Rock, and Mrs. John W. Daniels, Albuquerque, N. Mexico. There are also nine grandchildren surviving.

She went through trials and tribulations, as she was very unhappy as a member of the Missionary Baptists. On September 16, 1917, she was made to sing "Oh how happy are they who their Saviour obey." And on September 23rd, she asked for a home with the Primitive Baptists, and was baptized that evening. She always said, "That was the happiest day of my life. It was a day that excells all earthly joys. It was the day my burden was lifted from this poor soul of mine, and I was given a sweet hope that Christ had pardoned my sins, and caused me to sing glory to His name — a sinner saved by grace, if at all." (These are quotations from a piece she wrote to the Signs of the Times in the June issue, 1941.)

She was church Clerk for thirty years. She and Dad were both members, and cared for the church of Ephesus, of the New Hope Association, in their home for forty-three years. She went about her work humming one of the dear old hymns; and even when she was so near death that her mind was drifting, she would lie in bed and hum the sweetest tunes. "I'm passing on, the table is set; it's so beautiful", were her words.

I feel that as He promised to go and prepare a place, and will come again to receive his unto himself, she is now waiting, and will be with Him for ever where all will be peace and love, and will enjoy those things she viewed the last hours of her life.

Funeral services were conducted on the 26th by Elder David Turner, Bastrop, Louisiana. He preached a wonderful sermon on predestination of all things; and if saved, it is by grace and not of self, but a gift of God; lest any man should boast. Her body was laid to rest by Dad in the Lone Sassafras Cemetery near home, Ladelle, Arkansas, to await the coming of her Lord of hope.

A daughter,
Mrs. Cecil Goyne

FREDERICK E. MERRILL

Frederick E. Merrill was born November 14, 1883, and died October 29, 1960. He was the son of Charles E. and Lavinia B. Merrill. On November 16, 1904, he was united in mar-

riage to Sadie E. Thorn; and to this union one daughter was born, Lillian, who is married to Elijah L. Allen. There are two grandchildren surviving also.

Brother Merrill united with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church July 14, 1945, and was baptized the following day by Elder C. W. Vaughn. Brother Merrill was a good husband and father; a good citizen, and a good brother in the church. He was chosen deacon on February 28, 1959, and he faithfully filled the charge as long as he was with us. He was a quiet, meek, and humble brother, truly believing that salvation is by grace, and grace alone — not by any work which man can do. He was the last male member of our church. All we can say is, "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Arthur R. Warren, pastor of Hopewell Church, at the Cromwell Funeral Home, assisted by Mr. John H. Ginter, of the Presbyterian Church, Hopewell, N. J. Brother Merrill was laid to rest in the Highland Cemetery, at Hopewell.

We miss our dear brother very much, but realize he spent his appointed time here; and feel to say, "Thy will be done, Oh God."

Letha A. Blackwell, Church Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

In loving memory of our highly esteemed brother, Charles L. Saunders. It would be impossible to write how we felt about this dear brother. His loving kindness and Christian walk will never be forgotten. It is sad to know that he is gone never to return; but feel he is now where there is no more sorrow or pain, but happiness forever.

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of God." (Psalm 1:1, 2)

I feel that I can say he was a man of love and understanding in the blessed word of God. Words cannot express what he meant to Lickfork Church, and to all that loved him so much. We feel that in his death we have sustained a great loss — a vacant seat which can never be filled. We miss his kind and humble smile as we gather on our meeting days. He was not well, but never let anyone know his feelings. May God in his infinite wisdom make us understand his will must be done, not ours. He seemed always to be reconciled to his lot, looking to God for mercy and guidance. We feel he was bountifully supplied.

Knowing this dear brother, and the life he lived, I feel that he was none other than one of God's little ones. He was blessed to be on the earth seventy-three years; and he united with Lickfork Church in 1920, and served as deacon from the same year, and as Clerk since 1922. He served both offices faithfully until death.

BE IT RESOLVED, First, that we bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Father's will. Second, That we extend to the family our heartfelt sympathy. And Third, That a copy of these resolutions be sent for publication in the **Old Faith Contender**, and to the **Signs of the Times** for publication; a copy be mailed to the family; and that it be recorded in our Church Minutes.

By order of the church.

Willie W. Lee, Clerk

JOSEPH W. BECKETT

Joseph W. Beckett was born January 17, 1880, and died January 18, 1961. Brother Joe united with Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church in November, 1912. He was a dear humble soul, always quiet and pleasant to every one. He was faithful in attendance, and his sweet countenance expressed his interest and enjoyment when sound doctrine was preached.

He is survived by his wife, Ardenia; one son, Clifton, of South Charleston; one daughter, Mrs. Tida Bird, St. Albans; three brothers: John, St. Albans; Charley, Ormond, Florida; and Oliver, Hot Springs, Arkansas; and several grandchildren.

His funeral was conducted by Elders H. J. Bird and J. C. Hammond, at Snodgrass Funeral Home, South Charleston, W. Va., where Brother Joe had lived many years.

May God, who doeth all things well, strengthen and comfort the bereaved ones.

Nanna M. Carney, Church Clerk

LAURA V. MELTON

Laura V. Melton, of Dunbar, W. Va., departed this life March 28, 1961, at the age of 87, after an illness of ten years.

Sister Laura was a member of Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, Kanawha County, W. Va. She was a devoted member and seldom missed a meeting, until her illness prevented. She was so patient during this long illness, never complaining, and seemed to be resigned to the will of her blessed Saviour. Laura and Albert (her husband), as they were known by friends, lived on a farm on Poca River until she became ill, then they moved into Dunbar. Their home was a gathering place for those of the faithful in Christ. Many ministers and brethren and sisters, who have visited our meetings will have pleasant memories of their

visits in this precious sister's home.

We have long missed her dear presence in our church, and now she will be greatly missed by her husband and children, and especially by her husband who is 90 years old, and still attends meetings regularly.

Surviving are, her husband, Albert; one son, Arnie, of Dunbar; one daughter, Mrs. Vada Ray, Cross Lanes, W. Va.; and six grandchildren, ten great grandchildren, and one great great grandchild.

Services were conducted March 30, 1961, at Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, by Elders J. C. Hammond and H. J. Bird. Interment was in the family cemetery near their old home on Poca River.

Nanna M. Carney, Church Clerk

MARY L. CARTER

It has pleased our heavenly Father in His divine will to remove from us by death our beloved sister, Mary Lou Carter, known by many of her friends as Molly Carter. We bow in humble submission to the will of our God knowing that he is just in all his ways. Sister Carter was born October 13, 1880, daughter of W. Lee Law and Lodesky Spencer Law. She was married to John A. Carter November 12, 1896.

She leaves to mourn her loss her husband, John A. Carter, Ferrum, Virginia; four daughters: Mrs. Rosa Meadors, Mrs. G. M. Ingram, both of Ferrum, Mrs. Alton Prillaman, Mrs. Leonard Hurd, both of Bassett; a son, Ralph Jesse Carter, Ferrum; three sisters, Mrs. Naomi Mullins, Mrs. T. G. Carter, both of Bassett, Mrs. Goldie Adams, Collinsville; two brothers, P. D. Law, Beckley, W. Va., H. A. Law, Bassett; 36 grandchildren and 37 great grandchildren. Two sons preceded her in death, Archie C. in September, 1947; and William A. on November 22, 1960.

Sister Carter united with the church at Union in Patrick County, Virginia, August 21, 1909, of which she was a faithful member as long as she was able to attend. In her later days, she was not able to go but she enjoyed her brethren and sisters visiting in her home. Sister Carter loved her church, and her home was a welcome place for the people of God, her neighbors and her friends.

She bore her affliction we trust in faith believing that some day she would lay them by. I visited Sister Carter in her affliction and someone asked that we have prayer. I selected the hymn, "Come thy fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace," and she sang with us without a book very clearly; and I don't think there was a dry eye in the house. Sister Carter was a devoted wife and mother and grandmother. We know that she is missed very much by all that knew her. Our deepest sympathy goes out to the family, and especially for her husband whom we love very much. We feel that time and space would not permit if we should write of her history, but we believe that her life and her conduct will suffice. She was often heard singing, "We will all shout together on that morning." She looked forward for that morning, and may the Lord bless us to look for that morning of the Resurrection when we shall be raised with her.

Funeral services was conducted for her March 25, at 2 P. M. at Republican Church by Elder J. R. Hollandsworth and her Pastor, Elder Leonard J. Brammer, in the midst of a host of friends that mourned with the family. Then she was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the coming of her Lord.

Written by her unworthy pastor,
Leonard J. Brammer

ALICE SHEPHERD

Our sister, Alice Page Apple Shepherd, was called from among us May 21, 1961, at the age of 67 years. She was married to Joe Apple in February, 1919; and to this union three sons were born. The following two survive: Lowell N. Apple, McCleansville, N. C., and Ralph F. Apple, Gibsonville, N. C. Surviving also are three step-daughters: Sister Mary Fitch, Reidsville; Julia Jackson, Raleigh; and Myrtle Bebbles, Greensboro; and five step-sons: Brother Joseph Apple, Elon College; Joseph Elisha Apple, Greensboro; Morris A. Apple, Mebane; Arnold B. Apple, Pinevill, La., and Clyde Apple, Portsmouth, Va.; and one grandchild.

Joe Apple died in 1923, and she later married Jake Shepherd, who died in 1954. She had been a member of Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church, Caswell County, N. C., over forty years.

Her funeral was held at her church by her pastor, Elder J. Harvey Smith, and Elder W. Curry King; and her body was laid to rest in the Apple Cemetery, there to await the second coming of our Lord, when all the redeemed family of God shall be raised and fashioned like their Saviour, and be forever with their God.

To all the family left to mourn her passing, the church wishes to extend their sympathy. We also desire a copy of this be given to them; a copy to be spread on our church records; and a copy be sent the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Written at the request of Pleasant Grove Church in conference at their June meeting, by a little sister, in hope

Mrs. Fred Cobb

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129 DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1961 NO. 12

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12/1
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE TIME — 1961

The clouds of our times darken:
Satan seems rampant in the land;
Leaders to peace pleas will not harken;
Innocent blood stains African sand.

But our Redeemer liveth:
Over all nations holds command.
While Soviets their jealous wrath spitteth,
God's precepts immovably stand.

Though Rome in high seat sitteth
Hoping their power to expand,
Yet the Father in all things worketh,
And disposal is in the Lord's hand.

A sister,
Riffe, Wash.

BY GRACE YE ARE SAVED

"For ye are saved by grace, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Ephesians, 2nd chapter)

Dear people, who are deeply and seriously concerned in the truth or what is truth as touching the doctrine of the salvation of sinners: Among the professors of the primitive faith there are various ideas and theories to be found, and some of it has to do with the doctrine of the salvation of the elect of God.

I do believe that those bearing the title of Primitive Baptist of all factions, profess the doctrine of eternal and unconditional election. But in the ranks of our Baptist brethren, there is a difference in the interpretation of the doctrine of God, as it respects the salvation of God's people in their life. Now touching the doctrine of regeneration, I believe it is unanimously agreed that it also is unconditional. But from the time of regeneration, is where the difference begins; for according to their theory, the saving grace of God terminates with regeneration, for regeneration is unconditionally by the determined providence of God. Therefore, it can not fail because it is the work of God that they be born again. But these Baptist contend that there is another salvation pertaining to this life, which is known as a "Common or Time Salvation", consisting of every benefit, and every heavenly blessing in this life, in which any child of God may fail because of disobedience. Now if anyone may fail, as I understand, it would do no violence to reason to say that the entire church of God could all fail together. But the above text seems not to intimate such a theory of doctrine; it says that "ye are saved by grace through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works", which must mean that this efficacy did not proceed from the people. One can not boast against another then, for works play no part in this salvation. But what part does grace play in this salvation? Here we must consent that grace plays every part, or else it plays no part at all, for the salvation of God is not by a combination of grace and works; it is either of grace, or of works.

When Paul's ministry abounded more

than his companions, he credited nothing to himself, but all to the grace of God. Then we see that the grace of God has something to do with what is called a common or time salvation, and if it has anything to do in it, it has all to do, for the church of this age is under grace. Every righteous devotion of the saints of God is said to be the fruits of the Spirit. Now if bodily exercise in assembling ourselves together and humbling our bodies and ordering our conversation in scriptural fields, induces the presence of the Holy Spirit to bring showers of heavenly blessings, and whereas we have power to forbear this devotion, and fail of this blessing, then this would be the only conclusion: That the presence of the Holy Ghost was induced by obedience. In other words, the presence of the Spirit is the fruit of our labour.

But the above text affirms the saints are the workmanship of God created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Then, shall we conclude from these words that the disobedience of the saints may make void the purpose of God to which they were created in Christ; and shall the ordination of the great Creator be disannuled by the disobedience of his creation? No, my brethren let us not deceive ourselves. God is not a man as we are that he should be disappointed and his word fall unfulfilled, for it is written that, "As I have thought so shall it be, and as I have purposed so shall it stand." It is also written that his word accomplishes his pleasure, and prospers where he sends it.

But upon what does this prosperity depend? Is it predicated on the volunteered obedience of poor sinners, or does it not rather lie in the effectual work of the Holy Spirit? The promise of God by the prophet was that, "I will make a covenant of everlasting peace with them." Is such peace to be the reward of their righteousness, or does it rest in the mercy and grace of God? Again it is written that, "Thy children shall be all taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." Can it be in keeping with the word of truth to assume that this consoling peace comes only in obedience as a condition to be met by his people? But how would such a conclusion agree with such experience as is accounted in Romans 7th chapter? "To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not." "I know," said he, "that in my flesh dwelleth no good thing." "O wretched man," said he, "who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Can we assume that this man of God felt that he had attained to so great a peace as God had promised, by his pious and righteous conduct before God? No, but he testified that "by the grace of God I am what I am." Here is how that great peace comes, and not by our works. This peace came by Jesus Christ, "My peace, said he, I give unto you, my peace I leave with you, and my peace no man taketh from you." This is the covenant of peace spoken of by the prophet. It is also written that thou wilt ordain peace for us, for thou hast also wrought all our works in us. Wherein we see that the works of the saints are the fruits of the Spirit, and this gracious fruit is thereby wrought of God, and in such works they are ordained of God to walk.

Though the outward man perish, the inward man is renewed day by day. What part then does mortal man play in the spiritual realm of the kingdom of heaven, since his very nature is at war against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh? This cross has never been removed. There is no harmony between them. Then pray tell me how the prophet's words, "that great shall be their peace," apply to him? I think of Simon Peter when he told his Lord saying: "Though all men forsake thee yet will I not, I will go with thee both to prison and unto death." The Lord said, "Wilt thou not forsake me? I tell thee, Peter, before the cock crows this night thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me." Poor miserable man, his words

there were not prompted by the Spirit but through confidence in his helpless ambition of mortal man. If the determination of Peter had stood, he would have whereof to boast; but alas, it did not, but fulfilled every word of Jesus, and Peter was only left to weep in bitter remorse seeing his mortal power crumble and fall. How true the words of Paul; "that which I would that do I not, but that which I would not that do I." There is no doubt in my mind that some who profess the primitive faith would oppose the apostle Paul, and wish to withdraw from him on a charge of heresy, if he were in their church. But the holy prophets would go with him because they testify of a sovereign God who rules in heaven and earth; in whose hands alone is the hearts of all men, who removes the hard and stony heart, and gives them hearts of flesh, and puts his laws in their heart, and causes them to keep his commandments and do them; he orders their going and directs their steps. And this confidence persuaded Paul that God would perform the work which he himself had begun in them, until the day of Jesus Christ. (Philip. 1-6).

These precious people God keeps, and will keep them unto salvation. But what salvation is meant? Can it be that eternal and unconditional salvation acknowledged by all factions bearing the name Primitive Baptist, or where does this salvation extend? As I understand, as the result of his choice of them and his eternal love for them, his mercy to save them extends itself to the realms of time to deliver them from the tribulations and temptations which befalls every child of the kingdom, "I find another law in my members warning against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin." (8th chapter of Romans). Man surely can not meet the so called "conditions" of a holy law, for he is carnal sold under sin. He is a captive, and we know that a captive is not free. And while we sojourn in this state of mortality, we hear in this body the sentence of death. But while in this state of mortal life, we see by the light of that holy law, which according to his (God's) promise, is now written in the heart, the vanity and sin and uncleanness of nature. And where as we have this promise of a house which is eternal, free from all labour and sorrow, and where no sin can enter, we groan within ourselves desiring to be clothed with our house from heaven. There are no conditions here to be met by the people of God, and if there were, they would fail just as did the fathers under Sinai's law. And again if they were able and did keep it independent of constraint of the Holy Spirit, they would have no need of a constant watchcare of a Shepherd to keep them.

"To him that worketh is the reward, not reckoned of grace, but debt. But to him that worketh not but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." (Romans 4-4). If I understand the language of this text, the first part of it has to do with those who are strangers to the grace of God. Having never been quickened from dead works, and thinks to be justified by the works of the law, he does not know the poverty of his own soul; and in this ignorance he feels that when he has observed the letter of the law that he will be justified before God; that the justice and righteousness of God indebts him to bestow to him the promise of life eternal, and all blessings of this life for service rendered.

"But to him that worketh not but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly" — this is not to be applied to those whose faith without works is dead, mentioned by James, but this is the poor sinner who is stripped of all self-righteousness, and his confidence in any godly virtue in himself is taken away, but his faith is stayed upon Jesus Christ and his hope is in the mercy and grace of God. Yet there is a fruit to be seen in him that bears evidence of his acceptance with God; a virtue which is not seen or even known by the one possessed of it, but which shines as a light

to those of like faith.

"He flies from works to Jesus blood; yet proves by works he is born of God."

We conclude then, that a man is justified by faith, and not by the works of the law.

Unworthily in hope of mercy,
R. P. Hendrix
Frisco City, Alabama

CIRCULAR LETTER

With belief in that which is to be, the Pigg River District Association (Virginia), in session with Chapel Church, August 4, 5, and 6, 1961, sends greetings, and desires to cordially, sincerely and very cheerfully bid all those with whom we correspond, God-speed.

Dear Brethren:

If this letter has any value at all, it lies in the conclusion that all praise and power belongs to Jesus Christ the Lord. The church by Jesus Christ is home to the chosen of God. No weapon that is formed against them shall prosper. Everyone of them has received at the Lord's hand strength to continue, a hope that saves, and peace that cannot fail. They do indeed rest in the shadow of a great Rock in a weary land.

We calculate to a certainty that those who have passed from death unto life love the brethren, but have no authority over their brethren. Those who would substitute authority for love, are, therefore, false brethren. Ungodly men with long faces, and long rules, who claim to be helpful, or needed in the cause of Almighty God, have been the church's manifest enemies since Jesus promised deceivers shall come among you.

It is so, is it not, that Almighty God is His church's builder and keeper, and she has been from the foundation of the world holy and without blame; and she needs none of man's works or inventions to help it, or to boss it, or to steady it on the way, or to purify it either from without or from within? We own no auxiliary. It will not do to have the language of dependence on our lips, while our hearts are leaning on creature helps. We conclude, therefore, that all except the church is in the world, and is therefore just a part of it.

In view of these many things, we desire your prayers to God to make and keep us thankful for the blessed comforting hope that we are not seated in the world, but with the Church at Chapel; not in the position of workers, but in the happy and elevated position of worshippers; not in the place of judgment, but in the place of testimony.

The church is quickened out of the grave of Christ; it is part of His flesh and part of His bones. He is the Head, she is the body, making one man, as we read in the fourth of Ephesians. Now the glorious thought in this: ALL who are thus seated with the church will no doubt occupy their unique place through sanctification of the Spirit, until they fill their place in His coming glory.

In view of this, we are, we hope, thankful, devoutly thankful, for the blessed fact that we are seated with the Chapel Church. Our only business is to praise God. We would not change it if we could, and could not if we would. The Master has the mastery.

Our blessings and our trials were willed to us as individuals; and all of our past and all of our future and all that shall befall us, was determined by one God who appointed the bounds of our habitation, the ancient people, the things that are coming, and shall come. His eternal counsel and His finished work constitute the imperishable basis upon which rests the glory of God; and all our salvation both for time and for eternity.

Grace be with you all.

Written by request, and submitted in love by a sinner named

Julius Bocock

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER P. D. GOLD

(Continued)

When about twenty-one years of age at one of these meetings, some excitement seemed to get hold of me, and my hope was that it was conviction for sin. A few tears were shed, and on my way home one night a kind of relief came, which appeared to me then as religion. The next day they received me and baptized me soon. But there was no change in my faith or doctrine. The same notions that were held by me in all my youthful days, that salvation is attainable as the result of creature effort, were still held by me, though my mother had often repeated the words in my hearing, "Salvation is of the Lord." Nor was there any change in my morals or affections. It may have been that more care was taken that my conduct should give no offense to others, for pride would prompt a young man of my views and aspirations to maintain a decent regard for good behavior. The question has often been agitated in my mind whether such a system of religion, wherein preachers and their theories, and not the love and fear of God, controls the minds of the membership of such churches, is any profit to mankind or not. That the converts of this system deny the power of God, yet maintaining a show and form of religion, is apparent. For if you will talk with one on the subject of religion of his idea of faith you will find is just that of all natural men, and the limit and test of self-denial is to pay the preacher and give a few dimes to save the heathen, and maintain a decent behaviour, claiming at the same time that money can send the gospel anywhere. He will tell you that unless the money is sent the heathen are lost, but that if it is sent, they will be saved; while he may himself be worth his thousands, yet not give ten dollars a year for that purpose. He will not tell you anything of personal experience, knows nothing of being a lost sinner, has never felt the power of Jesus in his soul, nor the comforts and guidance of the Holly Spirit. He thinks the doctrine held by the Old Baptists the most dangerous and horrible of any ever held. He cannot endure election and a life of faith. He thinks there is no kind of drunkedness but that of liquor. Education is indispensable to qualify one to preach the gospel he holds.

Such were my views before and after the time here spoken of. My glorying was in the Missionary Baptist denomination; not once did ever the question arise in my mind, Can they be wrong? or myself either. Occasionally in an encounter with a Primitive Baptist during the war, as we would argue on subjects, and differ, it occurred to me what a dangerous doctrine they do preach and hold, what ignorant, selfish and conceited people they must be.

It was my intention when a young man, to be a lawyer. When between twenty and twenty-one years of age, and just before joining the Missionary Baptists, my academic course at school began. As soon as they received me as a member, it was remarked that there will be a preacher. This was very distasteful to me. For amid all my imaginings in my youthful days as to my occupation in after life, it never occurred to me at all that I would be a preacher. There was nothing in it of any charm for me. My ambition was to be a lawyer. A few years found me with my legal diploma and damaged morals — damaged not because of the legal profession, but because it was in me before, and began to rage. It is not good to charge one's bad conduct to his associates or occupation. The source of the trouble is in the man. If he were right, he would choose good associates and pursue a righteous course in life. Man is weak, however, having but little margin or reserve force against temptation, and should not presume that he could weather the storm. Let him choose the safest craft he may, and steer in the calmest waters, and even then he will make shipwreck.

Soon my soul was plunged into much

trouble in consequence of reckless living. Then it occurred to me that the best way to do was to preach. This was decided upon as the antidote for my troubled conscience. But to be a great preacher was the next step. The war in a few years came on before my course was complete, and I left school. There was a new trouble confronting me. Debts to the amount of about $3,000.00 were on my hands, and nothing with which to pay. For the first time this mountain of trouble stood towering and threatening me. Such had been my thirst for education that this difficulty had not much embarrassed me until now. For one may be so absorbed in the pursuit of a cherished object that he will quite forget, or scarcely notice, great dangers, even imminent. After leaving school this debt matter greatly oppressed my feelings. My father had always advised me not to make debts; yet my lot so far had been to be in debt from the time of my majority.

During the war my marriage occurred in the town of Goldsboro. The woman given me of the Lord possessed no worldly goods. In this respect we were equals. In purity of character she was, and is yet, far my superior. For the Lord has blessed me among other things, with a good wife. During the war, and after my marriage, a friend gave me $5,000.-00. The Confederate money was used as far as my creditors would receive it in payment of my debts contracted for my education and otherwise; and it liquidated nearly all of those debts, which was a great relief to me.

After the war was over, for about five years we lived in Halifax County, N. C. During the war my troubles began in another and severer form than ever. While attending my usual course of service as a preacher, and glorying in that denomination, in a manner wholly beyond my conception or control, it appeared to me that my heart was full of sin, rendering me totally unfit to preach to anyone. The people were kind to me, the congregations large, and prospects flattering outwardly, but there was no pleasure for me. It increased until it seemed that to be allowed to crawl under the house and not be seen, but merely suffered to hear someone preach, would far better befit my desperate case. The thoughts of my heart were foolishness. Sin was a burden to me. My heart trouble and anguish of soul weighted me down.

For months this darkened state of feeling oppressed me. The justice of God appeared so clearly in my condemnation that the word, amen to my condemnation seemed fittest. God appeared so holy, and my nature so vile, that it looked to me that no place but Hell could be suitable for such a sinner. Sin seemed as a tempest raging in me, and it looked to me that if a great stone were dropped in the atmosphere as it could have no power to resist its own fall, but its own weight would hurl it down, so my own sins were driving me justly to destruction; nor did it even enter my thoughts that this was conviction of sin that would end in salvation for me; for there was no hope for me. In the midst of these awful moments, while riding on horseback, suddenly Jesus was revealed to me in a glorious appearance in the heavens; and these words were sounded out as plainly as if spoken to me, "If God gives you Christ, how shall he not with him also freely give you all things." This occurred on the 15th of February, 1865.

It did not then occur to me that this is salvation. My mind seemed to be wholly absorbed in the contemplation of the glorious character of Jesus. The load of guilt and sin was gone, and self was lost sight of for a time. The glorious character and kingdom of Jesus appeared to me as it had never before. It seemed to me as a new world; but with my preaching it was different. At once Christ appeared to me as the only way of truth. This in letter or words for years had been held by me, but now in a new spiritual and glorious form it appeared and possessed my spirit; and thus the character of my preaching was changed. For from that time it was that

Jesus is the Christ.

New views of the church and way of salvation opened up to me, so that questions arose concerning Christ and his kingdom in a manner so distinct and unmistakable that they were answered in my conscience only by preaching Christ as my righteousness and the righteousness of saints. Jesus appeared to me from that time in power and glory, as the head of the church, having all power both in heaven and earth. There was, then, nothing else for me to preach but Jesus. All else was excluded from my heart and conscience. Money, Sunday Schools, Boards of men, Theological Schools, Human learning, the force and strength of combinations of men all disappeared; nor was it in my heart to preach them anymore. Jesus appeared to me as the righteousness of saints, and ever since that time, more than twenty-five years ago, it has seemed to me there is nothing else for me to speak of or attempt to preach. We preach Jesus crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to Greeks foolishness, but to them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

The matter of preaching has been a grave and serious question to me for many years. It was the most offensive thing to my feelings, and never, if this nature of mine had been suffered to dictate my course of life, would this have been my lot. How it came to pass that I was made willing, was most soul-humbling. It was a crucifying of my nature, and caused an immolation of my most cherished objects of earth. But to be willing to swallow down all that I had endorsed and espoused, to renounce that which had been so dear, namely the institutions and doctrines of modern missionism, and discard all my former associates, and to worship after the way they call heresy, was a sore trial; so much so that nothing but divine power could lead me to do this.

They began at once to reprove me for that sort of preaching, and to tell me it was not profitable, and would scatter the congregation of people, and wither the church; that while it would do to talk predestination around the chimney-corner to old women, or to serve old established Christians, it was not palatable to be general and mixed congregation composed in considerable part of unbelievers; and that the experience of their people was that in order to hold the congregations and win converts, the preaching must be adapted to the tastes of the hearers. It may as well be remarked here that the more of such arguments as this were advanced, the weaker their cause appeared to me. It was said that my facial appearance and construction of my brain made me a predestinarian, and that my views would land me in the lap of Hardshellism.

Others said it is the disposition of some men to take this view of questions, and see only the Lord's work in operation. But not until recently had it so appeared to me. A great and radical change had passed over me. Once I had believed as they did, and encountered lovers of predestination with the same arguments they now assailed me, and that which once appeared to me as glorious had been stripped of its beauty. Now the Lord appeared to me as the great operator of all the powers and forces of the universe, and men are but as dust and ashes in his hand.

(To be continued)

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609 7th Avenue, F. F. Hglds.
Fairfield, Alabama

Dear Brother Wood:

On my last issue of the Signs I noticed it's time to renew my subscription for another year. I feel we are wonderfully blessed of God that we are still able in these dark days to have the truth published; and to know there are those who yet believe in a God who rules in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and who is not in need of man's works to effect the salvation of his people, as so many think.

It seems there is so much trouble in every place: nation against nation, and all seem to be working frantically to bring about peace, and yet things just keep getting worse. But God knows; and I feel sure when it's all over, it will work out for His glory, and his people's good. The rulers of today have their bounds set just as Pharoah of old.

We have just held the 94th session of the Five Mile Creek Association, and had a wonderful meeting. I thought the ministers were wonderfully blessed to tell of the wonders of God's grace.

Yours in Christian love,
Claude C. Hand

R. F. D. 3, Box 123
Stanton, Texas

Dear Saints:

If it can please the Lord, I would like to pen my heart's desire; for I want my faith known to the saints. The people that God chose in Christ, our King, Priest, and Redeemer, the elect and not one more nor one less, will ever see heaven. The old prophet wrote long years ago what God the Father said, "The house of Jacob shall not grow nor dwell among the dead." These, the redeemed, were chosen in Christ before man was made a living soul. "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. 2:15)

God determined before time to have a people to sing his love and praises: They are a chosen people; chosen in his Son, and redeemed by his Son to serve and love God.

The Lord can teach me in my dreams,
And my instructions seal;
His cleansing blood in flowing streams,
My sinful nature heals.

The Father gave me to the Son
Before the world began;
And Jesus Christ will not lose one
Included in his plan.

Their names were written in my book
When there were none of them;
My holy Son their nature took,
And put away their sins.

His life was given for his sheep,
And they shall hear His voice;
For he is under oath to keep
The objects of his choice.

Dr. F. P. Welch

Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed is a letter I received from Sister Jones over a year ago. It has come to my notice several times, and I can't seem to put it away. So I am sending it to you for your approval, as to whether it will be good reading for the Signs.

I would like to say to you, Elders Spangler, Wood, Griffin and Lambert, that we did appreciate and enjoy your visit among us, and hope the Lord will give Elder Ruston a mind and open up the way for him to visit us sometime. Your sermons were enjoyed, and we felt so comforted and lifted up. This poor one wanted to write and tell you so; but, Oh, my leanness, my leanness! There are so many thoughts which follow an impulse to write; and, as I look into them, I am not sure from whom they come. So thus it passes, leaving me with a sad feeling, afraid I would be wearisome to my brethren.

I feel that I learned long ago that I had no ability of my own, and, if God's name was praised and honored in my feeble attempts, it was of him that my heart and pen was set in action. I was willing to appear a fool for Christ's sake, but it seems I can't be sure; nevertheless I do know He is able to hide, or reveal, as it pleases Him. No wonder he said, "Without me, ye can do nothing." But we know that with or in him we can do all things. How our hearts are refreshed and we rejoice, when He opens our understanding of the Scriptures, and we have rich meditations of the works of God our Saviour;

and we feel strength enter into us, and we find ourselves standing, though trembling, in the hope of so great a salvation, which has been graciously given to the heirs of the promise; and which is made known to them in due time, according as He had thought, and according to His word that was spoken; and thus He fulfills his word.

In Jesus all fullness dwells; and when we are given eyes to see, and hearts to understand, we see him all things pertaining to life and godliness; and in his wise designs are our down-sittings and uprisings; our joys and our sorrows; our distresses and our comforts; our fears and our faith; our weakness and our strength, for it is in Him that we live, move and have our being.

Yours in a sweet hope,
Mrs. Luther Campbell

THE LETTER FROM SISTER JONES

R. F. D. 1
Martin, Tenn.

Dear Brother and Sister Campbell:

Dear precious friends, your letter at hand today, which I have re-read, and, if not deceived, it is meat and drink to a weary traveler. So much of the time I am weighted down with trials, sadness, and disappointments, that it's only a moment of time that I have a peaceful mind. But, Oh, to be given the thought that God is God, and beside him there is no Saviour: How unsearchable are the riches of his grace, and his ways past finding out. He leads you through the night, not letting you know he is guiding your wayward feet 'till the dawn; and his appearing and living presence is so sweet that you feel within your soul the whispers of his love, saying, "It is I, be not afraid." It is then you have again thrust your hand in His side, and see the nail prints in his hands, and you are no more doubting, but rejoicing, and cry, "My Lord and my God!"

The darling Son had to go to the garden of Gethsemane, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood. The disciples went with him also; but see how helpless we are: they couldn't even watch one hour. Neither could they pray. The Son prayed to the Father three times, and was able in the Spirit to say, "Not my will but thine be done."

When you are carried to the deep, and made to cry by reason of your afflictions, you will pay that you have vowed: Salvation is of the Lord. Oh, dear sister, when you are made to feel these things in your heart, aren't you so glad its own record, and you find these precious things you have felt in the Scripture; which are the testimonies of Jesus. There are times you read with eyes given to see, and a heart to understand, are you not then bearing the body of Jesus in your dying body? I believe you are; and that is what His children see in their brethren that melts this old man to tears; and then gladly call each other brother and sister.

I believe that love is so great to the extent you do know for a small moment that you have passed from death unto life. These things are what make you look for a city who's maker and builder in God; and to look beyond this veil of tears, to a place of rest wherein dwells righteousness. I hope I know something about the downsittings and uprisings of a poor and afflicted people (as you said), who are traveling in this wilderness, sighing with groanings which cannot be put into words. I wonder if this is praying without ceasing, while being carried through the wilderness, being instructed, and kept as the apple of his eye; so when we are given a heart of understanding, then none of the Saviour's sayings seem to be hard sayings; for then you see all things working together for good to those who love the Lord. The great I Am is before all things, and by him all things consist; he is the same yesterday, today and forever. His power is just as great when you are not a believer, as after you are made to believe. He has all power in

heaven and in earth; and if he sends your soul to eternal woe, just and righteous is he. But when the love of Christ surrounds and fills our hearts to overflowing, then we can sing, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear; it soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds, and drives away his fear."

Dear Sister, I travel on not knowing the way which the Lord has purposed. It is with much fear, though the Lord knows all things: There is nothing hid from him, and he is never disappointed or alarmed as we, when things take place with us; for he said in his wisdom, power and mercy, "As I have thought so shall it be; as I have purposed so shall it stand." It would take many words to pen all that is seen in this at times. Now, I feel this is too wonderful for me.

I often feel fearful that I have never been brought to the knowledge of the truth; but when (if I be one), I am blessed to consider with understanding, I feel to say with one of old, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief." For, indeed, to believe is the work of God, and brings peace, comfort, and satisfaction; which is worth more to a poor sinner than ten thousand worlds like this.

I must tell you today, your letter is much comfort to me; it seems you think my thoughts, but you are blessed to so beautifully express them. I feel you have learned long ago that I am weak and unlearned, and slow of speech. But peace, sweet peace, when the broken family of God are permitted to meet here in one accord in love and unity; and He gives them a glimpse of heaven of rest, and that, one day, the family will all be gathered home, to appear in his likeness and be satisfied. But not so while we remain here, for in this world we shall have tribulation, and the world will hate you; but Jesus said, "Be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world." It is also said that whom He loveth, he chasteneth, and that chastisement at present is grievous, but afterwards worketh the peaceful fruits of righteousness. Known unto God are all his work from the foundation of the world; and Paul says, "Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

. . . I love to hear Jesus preached, for he is the way, the truth, and the life; He is the resurrection. I believe there is a people who are preserved in Christ, who can't be carried about with every wind of doctrine: Their sufferings are great in becoming believers.

Farewell in the Lord. Give our love to all the dear ones of the church. A little sister, I hope, by the blood of Jesus.

Mrs. Aseneth Jones

EXPERIENCE

R. F. D. 2
Elon College, N. C.

Dear Brother and Sister King:

If it is the Lord's will, I would like to write you about some of the things I have experienced (if not deceived), since I couldn't tell them when I joined Bush Arbor Church at the association. I know that God has all power, and without him I can do nothing. It has been my desire ever since I've wanted to join the church, to tell God's little children what great things He has done for me when I joined, but I was shut up, and couldn't tell them.

One night last January, I dreamed I saw a little midget about the size of a three year old child. He had on a suit made of one piece; I didn't notice anything else about him. It seemed that I laid down on a cot, and saw two little hands on the edge of the cot, and I took hold of them, and pulled the little midget from under the cot; and struggled with him until I had his hands crossed.

Then I asked him what he was doing under my bed. He replied, "You don't tell enough about how good the Lord has been to you." Then I awoke.

After that I had a desire to tell my experience, but it seemed that I couldn't; until it got to be such a burden that I told a few whom I feel are God's little ones. Then I felt relieved for awhile. "The Lord shuts and none can open, and he opens and none can shut." I feel I know this; and unless He blesses me to write or speak of him, it is a hopeless case.

When I was in my teens, one night we had a bad storm; and the wind blew so hard I was so afraid. I begged the Lord to save us and not let the wind blow our house over. It was the first time I realized He was the only one who could, since I had always felt safe with my mother and father. After the storm was over, and we were spared, I begged Him to save me when I died; and to let me know that he would in a dream. I dreamed I saw myself so corrupt that worms were coming out of me. When I awoke, I felt awful, and decided to be a better girl, and He would save me. I tried every way I could, but have been getting worse ever since.

One Sunday after that, while I was reading the comics, I felt so condemned that I promised the Lord, if he would spare me, I wouldn't do that again — but I did. I made so many promises to him — and broke them all. I would slip and read the Bible, but couldn't get anything out of it. I would sometimes think that God's people whom I read about, could do better than they did; and that I wouldn't do such things, but do just the things that seemed good to Him. And all the time I couldn't do anything but worse and worse. I have learned that, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

I believed that the Old Baptists were God's people, and would go to hear them preach, but couldn't get anything out of it. One night in September, 1955, I dreamed of being in a stand with you and some other preachers, Brother King, and something had taken place with me. When I awoke, I felt my hard and stony heart had been melted; and the song, "Come thou fount of every blessing," was on my mind. We went to Williamsburg that day, and when they sang that song, I felt it was for me, and I shed tears of joy.

One night later, I think I was awake and trying to pray, I saw a light coming down from heaven toward me through the top of the house, as if the house was not there. I was so afraid that I cried, "Lord have mercy." The next thing I knew I was up in the clouds looking down, and saw the prettiest green fields I've ever seen, all joined together. I didn't feel the light when it reached me. After this I was so happy, but something would say in my heart that I must be baptized; and I would say, "Lord, I can't. I'm not fit." That was one thing I didn't want to do.

I got to feeling pretty good after that, and I thought I had hope and faith. Then something took place with my natural body that I desired to know about more than anything. After I asked the Lord to show me what I wanted to know, and felt that He did in a dream, I found that I was wrong about the whole thing; and, because I told my dream, I felt I had sinned against heaven and earth, and there went all my faith and hope. Because it didn't come true, I felt all my dreams and visions were imaginary. This was in May, 1957, and from then until the following November I was the most miserable person in the world. I felt to be so wicked I thought the ground might open up and swallow me, like it did in Bible days. By Fall I was in so much trouble, when I went to bed I would beg the Lord to let me die so I could get some rest in my grave before I went to Hell, where I felt I was surely going. Then one night in November I dreamed I saw this same light I had seen before, coming straight from heaven toward me, and I cried, "Lord have mercy." It came toward me, and struck my body three times with

the heaviest weight I have ever felt. And I saw streams of water in this light, and after it struck me, I saw my arms and legs wither away, and what was left of me was no larger than a baby. I awoke rejoicing, with all my burden gone. I was the happiest person alive; and sang praises to my God. The earth looked so pretty; it seemed the grass and everything was praising my God.

Then I wanted to be baptized, and tell God's people what great things He had done for me, and asked him to make me go at his appointed time, and to put the words in my mouth that would be to his praise, honor and glory; and that if I were not his, to keep me from joining the church. Oh, how I've longed and prayed to be baptized. But there is a time and a season for everything; and I kept hoping He would give me more evidence. I had dreams of joining since then, but I never did have as much evidence as I wanted.

When I went, I wanted to go so badly; then before I got home, I felt I had made a mistake, and that evening and the next morning I was so miserable, because I felt I joined the church and wasn't fit. I cried and begged the Lord to have mercy on me. Tuesday morning I decided I would tell the church I had deceived them, and they need not put my name on the book; but just let Elder King baptize me. I still wanted to be baptized so badly. About noon the song, "Come thou fount of every blessing," came to me, and the storm that was raging inside me, was made to cease. Once again I felt that peace that passes all understanding, and I was made to rejoice. When I was baptized I left such a burden in the water, and I was the happiest I've ever been in my life. I believe I'll have many troubles and trials in this life, but if I am His, He will say, "Peace, be still", when the storms are raging within me, and He will bless me to feel that sweet peace.

Brother King, I am very grateful to you for baptizing such a wretch as I am; you don't know what it has meant to me; and for singing that song, "Come thou fount of every blessing," that night.

If you have a mind, will you pass this on to Brother Spangler to publish in the **Signs of the Times,** if you think is suitable. I don't want anything that I write published if it is not right. May God bless both of you, and keep us all.

An unworthy sister, in hope,
Gladys Page

Huntington, W. Va.

Mrs. Mary E. Claggett
Bethesda, Md.

Dear Sister Claggett:

Your letter, coming from an old soldier of the cross, who is a shut-in, to such an unworthy sinner as I feel myself to be, made me rejoice as I read it. O sister, how can I answer — what can I say for myself! I of myself can do nothing, but through Him can do all things. All I know has been given me by Him, and if I am enabled through Him to speak comforting words to those of like precious faith, give all the glory to God.

This is a comfort to me, and I know it is a comfort to you: "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread." (Psalm 37:25) We both have toiled in the vineyard of the Lord all day, and will receive our penny, the same as those who toiled but a few hours; for we know that all the chosen people of God are saved by the grace of God, and our toiling in the vineyard did not make us sons, but because we are sons; and because He leads his people, and draws them by the heart strings, and brings them into the banqueting house under the banner of love. Unto us the heavens show the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork.

But with me, dear sister, so much of

my life has been dark and dreary. When I turn my eyes within, all is dark, and vain, and wild, filled with unbelief and sin — can I deem myself a child? But what can we expect, as Satan tempts and tries to make us put it all aside and worship him; and promises riches and enjoyment in sin; and I know I have my fill of it, and I am weak. Then it comes to me the suffering that Jesus went through. He said to Satan, "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him alone shalt thou serve." It was not for himself, for he was without sin; but it was for you and me, and all poor sinners in whose hearts God dwells; "Christ in us the hope of glory."

When we, his servants, have served our time here beneath the circle of the sun, He will crown us with a crown of glory; then we will be satisfied. In this world we shall have tribulation, but in Him peace. As we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we will fear no evil, "For thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." We dwell in the midst of a perverse generation, with nothing but confusion all around us. In a world of people that know not God, we are as shining lights, known of God and redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.

Sister Claggett, the sun is getting low in the West, and will soon be setting in our pilgrimage, and we will be numbered with the has-beens. But we are comforted in the fact that, "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and no power on earth, nor life nor death, can separate us from the love of God. His love will never end, and he will carry out his great eternal will. May we humbly pray that his will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

Sister Weaver is enclosing a few lines. I have been real well, and I am thankful — of course, old and gray headed, but still able to preach Christ and him crucified. May the Lord be with you, dear sister, that you may have some good thoughts and pleasant times in Him. Pray for this old sinner.

A sinner saved by grace, I hope,
(Elder) George L. Weaver

SOLDIERS

I long, dear Lord, to thee confess,
To tell the blessed story,
Of Jesus' blood and righteousness,
And then go home to glory.

I long the world to overcome,
Although my hair is hoary;
To fight until the battle's won,
And then go home to glory.

I would, dear Lord, a soldier be —
I would not be a tory;
I would the field of battle see,
And then go home to glory.

I long to leave this vale of tears:
The battle field is gory;
To quit this land of doubts and fears,
And then go home to glory.

'Midst storms and persecutions great
I'd launch my barque or dory,
And gladly leave this world of hate,
And sail for home in glory.

And after I have told to all
The sweet and lovely story,
O, may I in the battle fall,
And then go home to glory.

The above can be sung to the tune "New Harmony." I composed it about 1938, and sent it to the late Elder J. C. Sikes, of Gainesville, Texas, who liked it very much, and gave it the title, "Soldier".

If published, I would like to dedicate it first to the glory of God, and next to the memory of Elder Sikes, a very able minister and writer.

C. B. Britt,
Rt. 6, Box 282,
ElDorado, Arkansas

OLD TIME DOCTRINE PREACHED

Dozier, Alabama

Dear Editors:

Enclosed you will find check to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times;* also two dollars for the Indigent Fund.

Most all of our associations in this part of Alabama are now over, and I

believe they were all blessed with the ablest preachers, who stood firm on the old time "Hardshell' doctrine as God enabled them to deliver it to us poor sinners.

I wish I knew how to express my feelings as some others can, but I am what I am, and can't seem to be any other way. I really enjoy the *Signs of the Times* each month, and hope and pray that I may continue to do so for many more months to come.

May God bless and keep you all, is my prayer,

Sincerely,
J. Fred Clark

UPPER COUNTRY LINE
UNION MEETING

The Upper Country Line Union Meeting is appointed to be held with the church at Bush Arbor the fifth Sunday in December, 1961: on Sunday only.

Bush Arbor Church is located on Highway 62, nine miles South of Yanceyville, N. C., and about eighteen miles North of Burlington, N. C.

Brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

Earl S. Rudd,
1005 N. Mebane Street,
Burlington, N. C.

BOOK BINDING

Elder W. W. Taylor is manager of THE BIBLE HOSPITAL, Dallas, Texas, which does all kinds of book binding. They have had more than 25 years experience, and would appreciate serving those who have need of their craftsmanship. The address is:

Bible Hospital,
3124 W. Davis Street,
Dallas 11, Texas

DESIRES THE WRITING OF
ELDER H. M. CURRY

The great nephew of the late Elder H. M. Curry, Charles W. Floyd, of 1848 W. Wier Avenue, Phoenix 41, Arizona, desires to obtain as much of the writings of his great uncle as he can; and desires to correspond with anyone who may have some of them. Please write him at the above address — Ed.

Danville, Virginia **December, 1961**

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(To Norfolk Church) 2.00

EDITORIAL

"AND THE IRON DID SWIM"

2 Kings 6:1-7

We have been requested to write upon the above Scripture, and in doing so, it will be of interest to notice that during the lives of the prophets Elijah and Elisha there were men gathered to-

gether in increasing numbers, who studied the Scripture, and who also desired the company of those men of God.

They are called Sons of the prophets and are also spoken of as the School of the prophets. We do not for a moment think that they followed the prophets thinking that the prophets could teach them to prophesy. No doubt the remarkable gift that was seen in Elijah drew them towards him. He appeared suddenly (in the reign of Ahab, one of the most wicked kings), prophesying that there would be neither dew nor rain for three years. During that time the Lord fed and sustained him by ravens, and later by the Widow of Zarephath, whose son he raised from the dead. We wonder if it were these sons of the prophets whom Obadiah took, a hundred of them, and led them by fifty in a cave and fed them bread and water. I Kings 18:3-4.

We see that there were groups of them at Bethel and also at Jericho, and we have no doubt that they were often favoured by the prophet being present with them.

From the Word of truth it can be seen that these men's interest was in what the prophets did and said. Both those at Bethel and at Jericho had a positive impression that the Lord would take Elijah from them that day. In both places they communicated their impressions to Elisha, who was then the servant of Elijah. To each group Elisha's answer was, "I KNOW IT," and he told them to hold their peace.

So impressed were they that fifty men of them stood afar off and watched the prophet and his servant Elisha, they saw them come to Jordan and they saw them cross it dry shod. We are not told that they saw what appeared to Elisha, "A chariot of fire and horses of fire," but they might have seen the effect of the whirlwind which carried Elijah into heaven.

Elisha, left alone, took hold of his clothes and rent them in two pieces. He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him and went back and stood by the bank of Jordan. He took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters and said "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" and when he had smitten the waters they parted hither and thither, and Elisha went over. Here we would like to say that the mantle of itself had no power or charm. The double portion of the Spirit of Elijah bestowed upon Elisha was that which caused faith to be mixed with the words spoken. It was the like precious faith of which Jesus spoke to His unbelieving disciples, a grain of which could remove a mountain. Matthew 17:-20. No doubt those men who were put to watch saw Elisha come across Jordan and knew from what they saw that the spirit of Elijah rested upon Elisha, "And they came to meet him and bowed themselves to the ground before him."

Though they had seen wonderful things, yet without the Spirit, they showed the lack of faith, for faith is a fruit of the Spirit. Thus we see them begging the prophet to send men to look for Elijah, fearing that the Spirit of the Lord had taken him up and cast him upon some mountains or into some valley. Elisha said, "Ye shall not send," but they urged him till he was ashamed, and at last he said, "Send." While he tarried at Jericho, the fifty men went and sought three days but found him not. Although we see unbelief in these men, as in Christ's disciples, yet the prophet dwelt among them and there he performed a miracle, he healed the waters with a new cruse in which he put salt, and he declared that the land there should be no more barren.

At Bethel the little children (echoing no doubt the unbelief of their parents, who probably had expressed freely before their children that the testimony of the man of God was just a myth) mocked Elisha, saying, "Go up, thou bald head, go up, thou bald head." What a solemn and awful judgment upon those who despised God's servants and made light of their testimony to have their children torn by two she bears out of the wood.

"His wrath let us fear to provoke
To dwell in His favour unite.
His service is freedom, His yoke
Is easy, His burden is light."

Each chapter in Elisha's life shows how true it was that he received a double portion of the spirit of Elijah. In the chapter from which our text is taken we find the sons of the prophets telling Elisha that the place where he dwelt with them was too small. They suggested Jordan as the place where they should build, he told them to go and do so. "One said, Be content and go with thy servants, and he answered, I will go. So he went with them, and when they came to Jordan they cut down wood. But as one was felling a beam the ax head fell into the water: and he cried and said, Alas, Master! for it was borrowed. And the man of God said, where fell it? and he showed him the place. And he cut down a stick, and cast it in thither; AND THE IRON DID SWIM. Therefore, said he, Take it up to thee. And he put out his hand and took it."

The Word of God cuts close and is sharper than any two-edged sword. Hebrews 4:12. The Word of God in the mouth of His prophets was a word of judgment. "Therefore I have hewed them by the prophets, I have slain them by the words of the mouth." Hosea 6:5.

It was a borrowed ax! Twice in Deuteronomy Moses tells Israel that she could lend to other nations but she should not borrow from them, but in the family of Israel, "If a man borrow ought of his neighbor, and it be hurt or die, the owner thereof being not with it, he shall surely make it good." Exodus 22:-14. Perhaps this was what made the man feel it so keenly when the ax sank in the water. To get to our subject. Were not all the utterances of the prophets borrowed? They spoke the words, but it was the WORD OF GOD, They uttered promises and words of judgment, and the prophets, to the last one, testified of Jesus, of His sufferings and the glory that should follow. The prophet Malachi was the last prophet of the Old Testament, and we find utterances of a judgment to come and of a messenger who would prepare the way before Him, and the Lord would suddenly come to His temple.

For four hundred years this testimony, as the testimony of all the prophets, was sunk in the judgments that came upon Israel. (Jordan means judgment). Elisha was with them when the ax sank. Elijah never died. As Moses personified the law, so Elijah stands for the prophets. Their testimony was a living testimony, yet they, as Jews, testified not for themselves but for those who should BE heirs of salvation. Elisha, coming after Elijah, is a type of Jesus Christ. If Elisha had not been there, the ax would never have come to the surface again. If Jesus had not come, and He came for judgment into this world, the testimony of the prophets, as of the law, would never have been heard of again.

It would interest the reader to read the life of Elisha and to compare his miracles with those of our Lord. We find Elisha healing the Gentile leper, Naaman, and feeding the multitude with twenty barley loaves and full ears of corn in the husk thereof. He had a "THUS SAITH THE LORD, they shall eat and leave thereof." He it was who often passed by the Shunammite, who is spoken of as a great woman. She had kind thoughts of him, seeing him pass her way, so they built a little chamber and prepared it for the prophet, on the wall. They placed in it a bed, a table, a stool and a candlestick, for, said she, when he cometh to us, he shall turn in thither. Are there still a few little chambers with their bed, table, stool and candlestick amongst us today, are they on the wall and does the PROPHET turn in thither? She, though of herself could not believe such a thing, was promised an increase! "Thou shalt embrace a son." "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." She could say this, as a type of the Gospel Church.

What a wonderful type we see in the prophet as he goes into the room where the mother had laid her dead son, and he shut the door on them twain. He put his hands upon the boy's hands, his eyes upon the boy's eyes, his mouth on the boy's mouth, and his body upon the boy's body, and the boy's body became warm. Our Lord, Prophet of prophets, had to come where we lay dead, had to come in the likeness of sinful flesh and suffer for us that we might live unto God.

After the silence of four hundred years, John the Baptist came, whom the angel had said would come in the spirit and power of Elijah, and many of the children of Israel should he turn to the Lord their God. Six months after his mother Elisabeth had conceived, the angel Gabriel was sent of God into a city of Galilee named Nazareth to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. Prophecy comes alive again. The angels named these two boys and told why they had come into the world. Jesus, the Son of God and the son of man became a little child, yet was worshipped as the Son of God by the wise men. When of age, He must needs be buried by baptism in Jordan, and John, who had already testified of Him, declares that he knew Him not, but he said, "He that sent me to baptize by water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God."

The apostle John tells us "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

It can be said that our Lord came at the darkest part of the night of Judaism. The Law and the Prophets were the two witnesses that prophesied in sackcloth. The last chapter of 2 Chronicles tells us "The Lord God of their fathers sent to them by His messengers, rising up betimes, and sending, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place. But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised His words and misused His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people till there was no remedy."

"But who shall abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth?" Malachi 3:2. John received the ax from our Lord through His blessed Spirit, and so John could with the boldness of Elijah, when he appeared before wicked Ahab, say, when he saw the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism in Jordan: "O, generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also THE AX is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire." Matthew 3:7-10. Our Lord is the true Israelite who lendeth but does not borrow. It was His own word that He declared to Satan when He said, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." All those prophets spake of Him, His sufferings and the glory that should follow. At the salutation of Elisabeth to Mary, John leaped with joy in his mother's womb: and as we have already mentioned, he was assured by God's Holy Spirit that Jesus was the Son of God; but when the ax fell in judgment, and he was left to himself, sunk in distress and gloom, he sent his disciples to Jesus, saying, "Art Thou He that should come, or look we for another?" Jesus said, "Go and tell John again." Yes, we must be told again and again, that the impossible is true. Thomas was told by his brethren that Jesus had risen from the dead, but only our PROPHET could make him believe that. The words from

His mouth caused him to cry "My Lord and my God." HIS WORD was the ax that did swim. Elisha cut down a stick, also when Israel murmured because the waters of Marah were bitter, Moses cried unto the Lord and the Lord showed him a tree which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet. Just as Elisha cut down that stick, so Jesus, the stick or rod out of the stem of Jesus; must be cut off out of the land of the living. The law condemned Him in our stead, for as by man came death, by man must come the resurrection of the dead. The Son of God willingly gave His body, which, during His life upon earth, rendered a perfect obedience unto God's law, then sinking down under God's righteous frown, suffering the hell due unto us.

He sank just in the place and condition that the law and the prophets had testified. Thus the testimony of Moses and all the prophets, like an iron ax, fell into Jordan (meaning judgment) and was brought up from the depths by our Lord when He arose from the dead. After His resurrection the cutting things that He had spoken against that generation came to pass. The Priest and the Levite were cut off and died. One of the prophets had declared, "And it shall come to pass that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on My name, and I will hear them: I will say, it is My people: and they shall say, the Lord is my God." Zechariah 13:8-9.

G. R.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Leesburg, Va., March 21, 1911

THOUGHTS ON MERCY

(Aroused by reading Exodus XXV. 17-22)

Transgression is the occasion of mercy, for without the former the grace of the latter cannot prevail, and while man is not justified in doing evil that good may come, God is perfectly honorable in all he does, even in creating the wicked for the day of evil, and in predetermining the death of his Son at the hands of wicked men. Without sin there can be no manifestation of grace; without transgression, no revelation of mercy. Is it not true then that the Almighty's plan of creation as it was conceived in the divine mind in eternity embraced in its purpose the entrance of sin into the world, and death by sin? Evidently so, for He chose his Son and anointed him High Priest and Savior before ever the earth was, and elected unto the salvation and glory the church in him. Why all this exhibition of divine wisdom in securing the welfare of the church against all odds if he did not foreknow the threatening of that welfare by the entrance of sin into the world? And if the foreknowledge of God to this extent is granted, then it must follow that the jeopardizing of the welfare of man by the entrance of sin was beforehand certain, since an uncertainty cannot be absolutely foreknown, and that the foreknowledge of God is absolute we know, because he declared the end from the beginning and from of old things that are not yet done. This certainty of things foreknown carries unavoidably with it the foreordaining of all foreknown things, and since there is only one God, supremely sovereign over all worlds, he it is who ordained as well as foreknew the entrance of sin into the world, and all its consequences. This does not at all make God the author of sin, for sin is the transgression of law, and God, being under no law, cannot therefore disobey it. Whatever God does is right because he does it; he can do no wrong, let him do what he will. His very superlative nature, sovereignty and supremacy make it impos-

sible for him to be the author of wrong. For a human being to take human life is criminal, because he outrages the laws of God and man in doing so, but for God to send a shaft of lightning across a man's path and strike him with death is all right, because in doing so he outrages no law to which he can be held accountable.

The plan of redemption is gloriously wonderful, reaching as it does from eternity, before time, down through all the ages of time and throughout eternity beyond. In this plan are many items hard to be understood in themselves, but when faith views them all as one comprehensive and extensive whole, it becomes a plain path, with no crooks in it. Sin, with all its horrors, is embraced in this wonderful plan to make way for grace and mercy, and the revelation of the fullness of the Son of God. Without a sinner there can be no Savior; without Adam, no Jesus, since without the total depravity of the one there is no occasion for the perfect righteousness of the other. God is equal and coextensive in all his attributes; he is as just as he is merciful, and as merciful as just. Neither will he exert any one of his attributes at the expense or sacrifice of any or all attributes.

Mercy is seen in the election of the church in Christ before the foundation of the world and in the divine anointing of him as the High Priest, Redeemer, Surety and Head of the church. Justice is displayed in the banishment of the man and woman from Eden after the transgression, in the cursing of the ground for their sakes, and in passing the sentence of death upon Adam and all his posterity as the consequence of his transgression. God will not alter the thing that has gone forth out of his mouth; it is never revoked, and no commandment of his is ever annulled. Hence when God placed Adam under law to him, and Adam disobeyed, justice demanded his death, since death was the penalty named in the law for disobedience, and the changing of the penalty to any lighter punishment would not have been just, and would have ill consisted with the nature of the Godhead. In this disobedience are included both elect and non-elect, and since the sentence of death is irrevocable, has justice outwitted mercy? Has the adherence of God to his justice prevented his achieving the covenant of mercy? Perish the thought. But God will not be merciful at the expense of his justice. Rather his mercy will be exhibited so as to magnify and carry out the ends of justice. How? The church being included in disobedience through Adam's transgression was dead in trespasses and sins, and so utterly without ability to make good her breaches of the law and thus bring herself into favor with God. Neither can God extend mercy to her in such a state so long as the breaches of the law are not repaired, without dishonoring himself. Therefore the necessity for Christ to suffer, he being the Surety and Head of the church, and as such responsible for all the obligations of his body, the church, so he takes upon himself the likeness of sinful flesh, and all the sins of the church are imputed unto him. He fulfills the law in every iota and every fine point, so that the law is not revoked to make way for mercy, but is satisfied, exalted and honored, and passes not away only as it is fulfilled, repaired in all its breaches.

So great is God in justice that, his people being unable to satisfy it themselves, he condescends to clothe himself in flesh and manhood to carry out every purpose of justice in order to open the way for the coming of mercy to those too destitute to achieve anything for themselves. Herein is mercy seated, and here is the mercy-seat. The Lord Jesus Christ is the seat of God's mercy, its base and resting-place. He is the ark or container of the covenant of grace; in him is the fullness of the Godhead bodily. The ark of the covenant as prescribed by the Lord to Moses in Exodus, twenty-fifth chapter, held the stones of the law, the pot of manna and Aaron's budded rod, thus signifying that in

Jesus Christ, the spiritual ark of the new and better covenant, is kept the law of God, and only in and by him is it kept. In him also is kept the spiritual manna of the church, grace sufficient for every need, for the nourishing of every part of the body. In him, too, are the life and safety of the church, for he is the spiritual Aaron or High Priest, who alone can prevail with God to remit the sins of the church. Upon this ark of the covenant is founded the mercy-seat of God. Mercy flows to the sinner through the mediatorial work of the Redeemer, never through any merit or effort of the creature.

Upon each of the two ends of the mercy-seat was a cherub, or angel. The faces of the cherubs looked inward toward the mercy-seat, hence they saw eye to eye, and with their wings they overshadowed the mercy-seat. Now angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister unto them who shall be heirs of redemption. So these cherubs each represent ministry; on the one end, that of the old or legal dispensation, and on the other, that of the new or gospel dispensation. All holy men of old spake as moved by the Holy Ghost, and to testify beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and the ensuing glory. The work of the Holy Ghost in this gospel age is just as much the testimony of Jesus, of his pain and of his glory. Thus these cherubs looked toward the mercy-seat; the law and the gospel both look to Jesus and testify of him. They also see eye to eye, because Moses and the prophets looked to the gospel age, while the apostles and the ministry of today round out prophecy, interpreting it and the law so that there is accord between both dispensations, and the messages or wings of both overshadow the seat of mercy. Here is where God meets and communes with his people — from above and from between the cherubim. Between the two dispensations is Christ and his work of propitiation. It is in this man Jesus, his life, death and resurrection, God and his people meet, are reconciled and commune sweetly together.

Throughout the experience of the child of God every new sense of the preciousness of Jesus is a renewal of communion with God. The cherubs and the mercy-seat were all of pure gold; so through the fiery furnace of severe trials, persecutions and afflictions was purification wrought, and the seat of mercy reared, and the testimony of the cherubs rises out of the depths of woe, whither were led to descend the saints of God, that they should sound forth the testimony of Jesus, looking toward the mercy-seat. This was all of beaten gold, gold that had been scourged. So we see the mercy-seat is not reared save through sore agony on the part of Him who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace being upon him, with his stripes we are healed. So was the faith of Moses, of the prophets and of the apostles sorely tried; hence even the cherubs were of beaten gold. Now the cherubs were not made of separate pieces of gold and then attached to the mercy-seat, but the seat and the cherubs were all of one piece, beaten out together. The same faith that was in Moses was in the prophets, was in Jesus, was in the apostles and is in the church today, and the same Spirit runs through and animates the whole, so they are all one piece of gold; perfect unity throughout, and vital, too. Again, not only is the work of Jesus the seat of God's mercy to his poor, lost sheep, but the ministry of the law, the spirit of prophecy and the ministry of the gospel are all of mercy. Throughout the darkness of the ministry of condemnation which the church justly deserved, God in his mercy placed the moon (law) and the stars (prophets) in the firmament of the legal heavens to shadow forth the coming of a better day, so the church was not without a glimmering of hope even then. So, too, it is by the mercy of God the church in this age is given the gospel ministry and the comfort ensuing from the liberty of the

gospel. The seat and the cherubims are all of mercy, all one piece. It is all of mercy from first to last. Amen.

H. H. Lefferts

OBITUARIES

MINNIE DeBRULER BROWNING

Oh, may we be reconciled to the will of God and say, O Lord, thy will be done. I feel Minnie (as she was affectionately called) would have wanted it that way when she suddenly and cheerfully headed home May 6, 1961. Tired, I'm sure, but happy in the consciousness of her work here was finished and was well done. Her last moments, I feel, were her sweetest moments because she was blessed to feel the touch of the Master's hand.

Her many kindnesses to her beloved church, her family, neighbors, and even little children whom she loved very dearly will be cherished and linger long in the hearts of her many friends.

She was such a faithful companion to her ailing sister whom she had lived with since her husband passed away in 1940, and, without complaining, she so willingly and tenderly cared for her even in her last moments of life.

She was 70 years old and united with McCray Primitive Baptist Church June, 1950. The church she had always loved and attended from childhood and was baptized by the pastor, Elder W. Curry King. It was one of her great pleasures to fill her regular pew in her church, also to visit with other churches of like faith. Always showing interest in the care and upkeep of the church and its financial problems, she desired in her will that McCray Church be given five hundred dollars from her estate.

Her funeral was held at McCray Church and conducted by her pastor, Elder W. Curry King and Elder Ernest Oakley, with burial in church cemetery.

Sister Browning was survived by an only sister, Miss Maggie DeBruler, and three brothers — Andrew, Lester and Edward DeBruler, all of near Burlington, N. C. She was the wife of the late Lewis Browning, and the daughter of the late Chestina Oakley DeBruler and Joseph DeBruler.

It has been a joyous privilege to have known the deceased. A privilege I shall always prize and appreciate because my life has been made richer from the sunshine she scattered with deeds of kindness and inspiration. He alone can make us understand.

Written by a friend who loved her,
Ruth Jeffreys

THOMAS RANSOM PLYBON

We deeply mourn the death of our dear brother, Thomas Ransom Plybon, who gently fell asleep in Jesus May 29, 1961, at the home of his daughter Nancy Haynes, Rocky Mount, Virginia. He was born November 21, 1875, the son of the late Elder and Sister S. O. Plybon and was twice married; first to Cora E. Altice on August 9, 1900, who bore him fourteen children, of whom the following survive: Antholine Howell, Fred T. Plybon, S. Hatcher Plybon, Julia Cannaday, Janie Giles, Raymond D. Plybon, Nancy Haynes, May Campbell, Edward R. Plybon, and Dossie Martin. Also surviving are three brothers: J. S., C. N. and P. L. Plybon; three sisters: Julian McGuire, Emma English and Leslie Bailey; thirty-five grandchildren and twenty-eight great grandchildren. Sister Cora Plybon passed away January 22, 1955, and Brother Plybon later married Rosa P. Philpot Williams, daughter of the late Elder A. B. Philpot, who survives to mourn the loss of her husband.

Brother Plybon at an early age was arrested by a super-natural power, and was exceedingly distressed on account of the depravity of his heart. He tried to hide his troubles from the world, but the words of divine truth proved as barbed arrows, and convinced him of the utter insufficiency of his own righteousness, and his awful condition in the sight of a holy God. He fled to the law for refuge and safety, and resolved many times to live a more moral life, but found all his fine resolutions and deeds were as filthy rags. It was while thus disparing of salvation by the deeds of the law, and finding no way of escape and deliverance, and while bowed in secret at the throne of grace, Christ Jesus was presented to his understanding as being the end of the law for righteousness to the believer; so that the believer is freely justified from all things — from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses; and that the perfect obedience of Christ is imputed without money or price to every poor convicted soul. Then and there he felt the burden of sin removed, and he felt a joy unspeakable and full of glory. At this time, being a hired boy, he was asked if he wanted to go to the home of Sister Susan Basham, near Stewartsville, Virginia, where Elder T. M. Walton was to preach. At the close of the meeting Brother Plybon was received for baptism, and was baptized November 10, 1897, by Elder Walton, having his membership at Lynville Church. The doctrine of Election, Total Depravity, Particular Redemption, Effectual Calling, and preservation of the saints to Glory, was at this early period firmly settled in his mind. He was ordained deacon of Lynville Church May 17, 1906.

Brother Plybon was a farmer and sawmill

operator, and was also in the mercantile business many years. He suffered heavy losses from his debtors not fulfilling their promises, yet he preferred to suffer loss rather than grind the faces of the poor.

On the first Sunday in March, 1961, he selected the closing hymn: "Thou dear Redeemer, dying Lamb, we love to hear of thee." That evening he suffered an heart attack from which he did not recover, and was in a hospital until his passing.

His funeral was held at Lynch's Funeral Home, Rocky Mount, Virginia, May 31, 1961, conducted by Elders J. P. Helms, J. E. Burgess and Rufus Brown. Many friends and brethren were gathered around the body of our father, brother, husband, friend, and he was gently lowered into its receptacle and covered with earth, at Old Center Church. On the morning of the last day, the body thus sown in weakness will be raised in power and glory, to join its companion spirit; and the devoted servant of Christ will be welcomed to a blissful and everlasting association with his God. May divine grace prepare us to follow him to that sinless and tearless state.

Done by order of the Church at Camp Branch in conference July 1, 1961.

(Elder) Rufus Brown, Moderator
Nancy Haynes, Clerk

MRS. MARY ELLEN DILLON

Our mother, Mrs. Mary Ellen Dillon, departed this life February 21, 1961, the day after her 87th birthday. She was born near Gladehill, Virginia, the daughter of Andrew Hopkins Hunt and Wilmoth Perdue Hunt, February 20, 1874.

At the age of twenty, in 1894, she joined Old Bethel Church, and was baptized by Elder A. B. Philpot. On February 4, 1909, she married Jesse Lee Dillon in Roanoke, Virginia. After their marriage they moved to Missoula, Montana, where their three children were born; all of whom survive. During their eighteen years in Montana she was away from her church, but was ever faithful to it and her belief. After returning to Virginia in 1927, and after the death of her husband, she settled in Roanoke, and had her membership moved to the Roanoke Church.

Her surviving children all live in Roanoke: Jesse Andrew Dillon, Mrs. Oscar Heyman, and Woodrow Hopkins Dillon. She is survived also by eleven grandchildren and three great grandchildren; three sisters: Mrs. Zetta Ashworth and Mrs. Isa Byrd, both of West Virginia, and Mrs. Clara Harrison, of Gladehill; and three brothers, Isaac Hunt, of Redwood, Buchanan Hunt, of Roanoke, and Ben Hunt, of Ennis, Montana.

Our mother answered the summons that sound for all people, for we are but sojourners upon this earth, and our times are in His hands. In this she believed, and at the coming of this hour she was ready and unafraid. She had written instructions for her funeral, even the songs she wished sung; and had chosen Elder Tench for the service. Thanks to him for his appropriate and lovely words.

Mother was a devoted member of her church, and looked forward to meeting days. During her last weeks, when she was kept in with a broken hip, she was blessed with visits of some of her church members, which meant so much to her. Thanks to them! She loved people and they loved her, as was shown by the large crowd at the funeral service, and by the many beautiful flowers. Many had sent her birthday cards and remembrances, which she loved. We couldn't write everyone, and we want all to know that you made her last day with us a happy one. The money she received in her cards, with some added by friends rather than flowers, was used to purchase a pew in the new church in Roanoke, in her memory.

We miss her greatly, but know she has but passed through the gateway of the grave into the peace of life that endureth always. May the beauty of her life abide among us as a loving benediction.

Her body was laid to rest in Cedar Lawn Cemetery in Roanoke County, Virginia.

Her daughter,
Ethel Dillon Heyman

SISTER LAURA JONES

Sister Laura Jones passed away July 9, 1961, at the home of her daughter, Miss Mary Jones, in Dunn, N. C., after a long illness, at the age of eighty-seven.

She was born in Johnson County, N. C., October 16, 1874, the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Alex Hodges. She united with the Primitive Baptists several years ago, and on the first Sunday in October, 1956, she was received into Liberty Church by letter. Due to her condition she was not able to attend church many times during the last few years, but when she did, she came rejoicing.

Her funeral was conducted at Grove Presbyterian Church, (with that of her grandson, who passed away the same day she did) by her pastor Elder Lester Lee, assisted by the following ministers: Mr. C. W. Kirby, Mr. Leslie Tucker, Mr. Rufus Cromartie, and Mr. Creech. Both were buried in a family plot near the church.

WHEREAS, We bow in humble submission to God who doeth all things well, and desire that God may comfort and bless the bereaved; be it

RESOLVED, That we send a copy of this

memorial to the family; a copy be recorded on our church records, and a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference the 1st Saturday in August, 1961.

Committee, Brother James G. Young
Sister Liddie Tart
Sister Hattie Denning

W. B. RHODES

W. B. Rhodes was born in July, 1887, and died April 18, 1961; making his age more than seventy-three years. For many years he lived in Junction City, Arkansas. He was the husband, first of Miss Nora Johnson Rhodes, who preceded him in death about twenty years, and to which union the following children were born: Mike, of Farmerville, La.; Milam, of ElDorado, Ark.; Mrs. Inez Woolley, near Shreveport, La.; Mrs. Immojene Johnson, Ruston, La.; and Mrs. Eleese Gainor, ElDorado, Arkansas. After the death of his first wife, he married a cousin of hers, Miss Owney Johnson, who became a very devoted stepmother to the children. He is survived also by ten grandchildren, and the following brothers and sisters: A. B. Rhodes and R. W. Rhodes, of Spearsville, La.; G. W. Rhodes and Minor M. Rhodes, of near Spearsville; Mrs. Maude Spooner and Mrs. Manie Upshaw, Junction City, Arkansas; Mrs. Carle Swilley, ElDorado; Mrs. Ruth Teagle and Mrs. C. N. Patterson, Ruston, La.; Mrs. H. A. Patterson, Farmerville; and Mrs. Lillie Bell Robertson, Sulphur, La.

He became a serious cripple early in life, but was very active in teaching school, farming, Notary Public and Constable for several years. He was a devoted member of our home Primitive Baptist Church, and was most beloved as one of the humble children of God, and though handicapped, he was at one of the churches nearly every Sunday. He had a deep experience and good hope in the blessed Lord and Saviour, and was warmly devoted to the brethren and sisters.

Elder E. J. Lambert was called to conduct the funeral, and both Elder W. A. Speer and Elder J. L. Smith were there also. The large crowd of people and the many beautiful flowers gave evidence of the high esteem in which he was held by those far and near. The funeral was held at Old Scotland Presbyterian Church, where his first wife was buried, as were many of her relatives. May the Lord bless and comfort the greatly bereaved children and his very dear wife, and his brothers and sisters and other relatives and friends.

Written by his brother in close bonds spiritually as well as naturally.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

C. W. UPSHAW

Brother C. W. Upshaw was born April 2, 1887, and passed away July 18, 1961, making his stay on earth more than seventy-four years. He died suddenly, and we believe that according to God's will, he was to go at that time.

He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Manie Rhodes Upshaw, and eight children: Hardy, Farmerville, La.; David, Silbee, Texas; Harold, Los Angeles; Sikes, Los Angeles; Mrs. Grace Gardner, Crossett, Ark.; Mrs. Mildred Hall, Junction City, Ark.; Mrs. Vera Hopper, ElDorado, Ark.; and Mrs. Fannie Mae Hall, ElDorado. Also surviving are twelve grandchildren and three great grandchildren; and the following brothers and sisters: Loney and Claude, Spearsville, La.; George, Crossett, Ark.; Grady, Pine Bluff; Mrs. Ollie Knight, Spearsville, La.; Mrs. Annie Culp, Bastrop, La.; Mrs. Unis Wesson, Wilma, Ark.; and Mrs. Ople Noble, Hamburg, Ark.

Brother Upshaw was a member of our home church, New Hope, not far from Spearsville, Louisiana, and was a believer in the precious doctrine of salvation by the grace and merit of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, and not by the works of the creature.

Elder W. A. Speer conducted the funeral at Caanan Church, where a large congregation was present; and the many flowers gave evidence of the esteem in which he was held. His body was laid to rest in the Cannan Cemetery, until Jesus our Lord comes again without sin unto salvation, to gather his people unto himself in heaven.

May God bless the widow, my dear sister, and all the children and grandchildren, and comfort them by his holy and blessed Spirit, is my humble prayer.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

OTTO LEATHERWOOD

Otto Leatherwood was born January 14, 1894, in Hunt County, Texas, and passed away April 20, 1961, at his home near Rising Star, Texas. In 1902 his parents moved to Brown County, Texas. He was united in marriage to Miss Hattie Lee Chambers November 8, 1914. To this union one child was born. He is survived by his wife and daughter, Mrs. Wayne Garms, Brownwood, Texas; two sisters, Mrs. Virgie Hodnett, Rising Star, Texas, and Mrs. J. C. Jones, Littlefield, Texas.

Though he joined the Missionary Baptists years ago, he was an **Old Baptist in belief.** The writer visited him in his home and conversed with him many times, and he always affirmed that salvation was by grace, a gift

of God and not by anything that man can do. It was Otto's hope that he was numbered among those chosen in Christ before the world began. He is missed in his community as a friend and neighbor.

Services were conducted at Higgenbotham Funeral Chapel by Harry Hames, Missionary Baptist minister, and the writer before a large crowd of relatives and friends among many beautiful flowers. To those who are left we would repeat the words of our Lord, "Let not your hearts be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me."

Written by request.

C. U. Landers

STELLA (HINES) DODSON

Stella (Hines) Dodson was born near Ardmore, Oklahoma, March 15, 1893; and passed away April 3, 1961. She was united in marriage to Vernon A. Dodson August 28, 1910. One of their sons is deceased, and four children survive: P. A. Dodson, Rosenberg, Texas; Eugene Dodson, Dustin, Oklahoma; Mrs. Christine Yeats, Holdenville, Oklahoma; and Mrs. Jo Ann Gray, Ada, Oklahoma. Surviving also are 16 grandchildren, 7 great grandchildren, one brother and two sisters.

Sister Dodson united with the Shilo Predestinarian Baptist Church in 1919, and was baptized by the late Elder W. P. Snider, of Okemah, Oklahoma. Surely she could repeat the 23rd Psalm with David; and it was good to converse with her. It seemed her mind was carried to the heights of heavenly things, and she manifested that, "The Lord is my shepherd." Believing in salvation by grace, and having a hope that she was one of those chosen in, and promised eternal life in, Christ Jesus our Saviour before the world began, she looked unto Him, and could say by faith, "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

Another mother in Israel has passed on, which the little church at Dustin certainly misses. One by one we pass on. There is a time to be born and a time to die; and it is written, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." We have a taste here in this life, and will receive the fulness at His second coming.

Services were conducted at the First Baptist Church, Dustin, Oklahoma, before a large gathering of relatives, friends and brethren. Interment was in Dustin Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord, who shall change these vile bodies and fashion them like unto His glorious body, so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Written by request of her husband and children by her unworthy pastor, who is made sad by her empty chair. May the grace of God be with all His saints.

C. U. Landers

MEMORIAL

WHEREAS, in the providence of our gracious Heavenly Father, our dear sister, Dora Vannoy was called to her eternal home December 26, 1960, and

WHEREAS, Our sister, although a member of the Welsh Tract Church for a very short time, manifested her walk and her talk that she had been with us in spirit for many years, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we acknowledge the Lord's will as best for us and pray that His will be ours, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we exted our sympathy to our dear departed sister's family, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this memorial be made a part of the minutes of this Association, a copy sent to *The Signs of the Times*, a copy to *The Old Faith Contender* and a copy to our sister's family.

Done by order of the Delaware Association in session with the Church at Welsh Tract, May 13 and 14, 1961.

MEMORIAL

WHEREAS, On August 10, 1960, it pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from his earthly abode, that old soldier of the cross, our beloved brother, Charles H. Jarmon, and

WHEREAS, Our dear departed brother so graciously manifested a faith unshaken by trials and afflictions and ran with unfaltering patience the race that was set before him, and

WHEREAS, This Association, as well as the church of his membership, feels to have suffered a great loss and deep sorrow at his departure, but

WHEREAS, We rejoice in the midst of our sorrow, in that our dear brother has been delivered from the afflictions of this life and is forever with the Savior whom he loved, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we render praise to our God for our dear departed brother's life and for his death, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we extend our love and sympathy to our brother's family and mingle our tears with their, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this memorial be made a part of the minutes of this Association, a copy sent to the family, a copy to *The Signs of the Times* and a copy to *The Old Faith Contender*.

Done by order of the Delaware Association in session with the Church at Welsh Tract, May 13 and 14, 1961.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 130 DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1962 NO. 1

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1/62
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

PRAYER FOR ZION

Lead us Lord in that lighted way,
Gently through the unerring day,
'Till all life's efforts are complete,
And we are found at Jesus' feet.

Grant us, O Lord, that we may live
Our precious brethren to forgive;
Grant us thy grace that cannot fail
Through His name to Hosanna hail.

May all thy saints find rest in thee,
And sing of Him who made them free
Through Jesus' blood and grace divine:
Made then heirs, their count'nance will shine.

Remember Lord how frail we are.
Ceaseless love! though we're scattered far
We trust thee — Spare not the rod
That we may know our only God.

When our toils and cares are at end
And on thee all our hope depend,
Be thou our shield and hiding place,
Where we can sing Amazing Grace.

Bless thy servants one and all —
Through powerful grace prevent their fall,
And land them safe on yonder shore,
Where they will praise Thee, and adore.

(Elder) L. D. Rose
Athens, Texas

MARY, MOTHER OF JESUS

When I heard on the radio about the presumptuous decree of the Pope, proclaiming Mary queen of heaven and of earth, I remembered a conversation I had with a cousin, who is a Catholic.

I asked her why they worship Mary and call her holy, praying to her instead of her blessed Son. She told me that Mary was chosen to be the mediator between flesh and spirit, the only tie between earth and heaven, God and man.

What blasphemy! In the first letter of Paul to Timothy 2:5, he says, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." Even now, he sits at the right hand of God making intercession for those that are his. (Romans 8:34)

The angel Gabriel appeared unto Mary and called her highly favored of the Lord and blessed among women. What a blessing indeed, to be overshadowed by the Holy Ghost, and bear in her natural virgin body, till her full time of delivery, her Lord and Master, the blessed Saviour, Jesus Christ.

All these things were strange to her, and her knowledge of them came just as they come to any other poor mortal in this world, through revelation by the Spirit.

She wondered at the news the angel brought her and questioned him, knowing that such things could not come to pass, according to nature. In her mind of flesh, the tidings the angel spoke concerning her and her cousin Elizabeth, were impossible, as she pondered them. Then the angel spoke, "For with God nothing shall be impossible." I believe that then, and only then, was she made able to understand, through revelation, what Gabriel meant when he greeted her with the salutation, "Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee." (Luke 1:28) So that she answered, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." (Luke 1:38)

When I think of Mary, I think of a lowly, kindly, gentle woman of her day,

but nonetheless, a daughter of Adam, subject to sin, just as I. However, she was blessed above all women, being the mother of her Lord. Her right to heaven and immortal glory were obtained, not by bearing the blessed Lord and Saviour in her body, but by his death, in payment for her sins, on the cruel cross of calvary. Her salvation was procured in the same way of all his elect.

The righteousness of Mary came by the same path as that of any child of God. "And blessed is she that believed." (Luke 1:45) We find in Genesis 15:16, "And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness."

Following the birth of Christ, Mary continued her role of wife and mother in the accepted manner of her day and time, without the halo we so often see portrayed on her, in modern make believe pictures. When Christ taught with his wisdom and miracles in his own country, where his family was known, people asked, "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren James, and Joses, and Simon and Judas? And his sisters are they not with us?" (Matthew 13:55-56)

According to Matthew, even though Christ was about his Father's business, with his miraculous works, etc., people doubted him because they knew his family, including Mary, who was a natural mother, no different to others as to her flesh.

All through his sojourn in this wicked world, men used his lowly birth in (to them) a natural manner, as a basis of doubt that he was the Son of God. This birth gave them the excuse they used to crucify Him. When he said he was King of the Jews, he was reviled and persecuted because (for lack of revelation to his accusers) he was only the son of Joseph, the carpenter, and his wife, Mary.

Would not Mary, in her maternal love, as well as spiritual, have protected him, had it been in her power? How then, could lowly Mary be the only link between heaven and earth, flesh and spirit? No, such things could not be. Although he had love and compassion for his natural mother, Christ, in the flesh, directed all his prayers, supplications and intercessions to the one who could grant them, his Father, God of heaven and of earth. Not to some Adamic creature, appointed to the power of queen of the universe, by some presumptuous man of this world.

When Simeon blessed God through the Holy Ghost for Christ and his miraculous works, while the Saviour was still a child, Joseph and Mary marveled. (Luke 2:33) The definition of marvel, according to Webster is: to be struck with surprise or astonishment. Can you imagine a queen of heaven and of earth, who was also the mother of Christ, being surprised and astonished at any disclosure concerning this Son who was both of heaven and earth?

They, Joseph and Mary, were also amazed at his wisdom and understanding, when they found him at the age of twelve years, conversing with doctors and learned men in the temple. They understood him not when he told them he must be about his Father's business. How could Mary have been so ignorant concerning his heavenly calling, with the power man thinks she has?

The last concern Jesus portrayed for earthly creatures before his death was for his mother. He gave her into the keeping of the disciple he loved, who from that time on kept her in his home. (John 19:26-27)

Lack of belief, faith, spiritual power and love were Mary's lot, along with all Adam's race, except when given her by the Father, through her Son. She was God's creation and fulfilled his purpose as do all other creatures, even though she was blessed among women in bearing the Saviour.

Her role in the annals of time was to be the vessel through which the Fountain of Life flowed into the world. Through her pain and suffering the blessed Lamb of God was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten

of the Father), full of Grace and truth." (John 1:14)

The mediator between God and man is from everlasting to everlasting, without beginning or ending of days, a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. This mediator spoke to the Father on completion of his duty in this world, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." (John 17:4)

The work that he had finished was the greatest act of love the world has ever known. He lay down his life through pain, suffering, ridicule, abuse and vile persecution for the sins of his bride. He was a man of sorrow with the load of all his people on his shoulders. Greater love than this hath no man that he lay down his life for a friend. Paul told of it in his letter to the Galatians, "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

Thus Mary, the lowly virgin, blessed among women, served the purpose of her God.

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Lillie, Louisiana

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER P. D. GOLD

(Continued)

My search for the true church began, or to find people that held and loved what had been revealed to me, and to find a people congenial to me, for what would the true church be to one that loved it not, nor had any of its truth hid in its inward parts. But if God is in one then that spirit of truth will lead that soul to cry out for the true and living God, and to seek rest in his habitation, and as soon as that place of rest or the church of Jesus Christ is revealed, there will he see rest and there abide.

To suppose that such as God teaches will not love his people and doctrine is an absurdity. No sound of ax or iron tool is needed or heard to change a vessel of mercy brought into this temple, to cause it to fit in the building.

Many and painful were my perplexities, and long and bitter were the trials that for about five years beset me in this search. I became thoroughly convinced that the people of my early choice and myself could not agree. They could not see things as they appeared to me, nor could I be in fellowship with them. My soul thirsted for a people of simple manners, that loved electing grace, that rejoiced in the power of Jesus, that walked by faith, and contended earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; a people that worship God as the fathers did, relying alone on the word and power of God, and that believe that all things that God hath spoken by the Psalms, the law and the prophets or in the Scriptures, shall assuredly come to pass, and teaching none other things than the law and the prophets did say should come to pass, that Christ should suffer and should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people (Jews) and to the Gentiles, having hope toward God that there shall be a resurrection both of the just and unjust, which they themselves also allow. For there are some things which all denominations allow to be right.

But the great question is what think ye of Christ? Of old they rejected him in toto, but in modern days they preach a Christ, but not Christ the Lord. They preach a Christ that has no power until the sinner helps him, or becomes willing for Him to save him. They preach a Christ that died for everybody and rose again for their justification, and still many will not be saved for whom he died.

It appeared to me that Jesus is King in the holy hill of Zion, and that he has all power both in heaven and in earth, power over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as God has given him, and all the people of God are taught of God, and therefore great shall be their peace.

When my affection was turning to the strangest people on earth that I had so

opposed, I had an interview with Elder John Stamper, and in the conversation I said in substance that it appeared to me that the child of God is not under law but under grace, that if one is under the law of Moses as a rule of life he must be under its penalty also, for a law without a penalty has no force, and if no one is under its penalty, which is death for any transgression, then there is neither rest nor salvation for a believer in Jesus; but He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, and a believer is under law to Christ who is our law-giver, our judge and our King, who will save us; for he hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. The old brother replied, "That is our doctrine, that is what we believe." How good it seemed to me to find a people that believed as I did, and my soul loved him.

But, the idea of going to that people! My pride rebelled. But the more my researches were pursued the more the Primitive Baptists appeared to me as worshipping as the fathers did, or as God's people had always worshipped and served him.

Entangled in the wilderness, what hard fare I had — no peace, no rest. The question between peace of conscience and self-interest, the fear of God or the snare of man, whether to forsake all for and follow Jesus, or remain with those I was with and enjoy prosperity and wealth of those people; whether to unite, if they would have me, with a poor people, few in number and despised, hated and evil spoken of by all nations, and be ostracized by my former friends for renouncing all I had ever confessed, and contending for the doctrine that never will be popular with the world, or remain as I had been, was a most distressing question. For it is no easy matter for one to change his church relations. One that has never traveled in this way can never know the sorrow and distress it will cause.

It was said, "If you go to the Hard-shells they will ram you down in a corner and not help you any, and you will starve for bread." It did look that way. This Scripture was much on my mind:

"And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life." Which has proved true in my case, and the God who begins to delight is able to finish the matter.

Another Scripture was on my mind for months whenever I would attempt to fill an appointment, yet I dared not use it as a text, for its meaning was too plain to me:

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

There was no agreement or fellowship between myself and those I was with. Many of them were dear to me and we were good friends, but on doctrine we would not see together. Was it right to them or me for me to stay with them? We could not walk together because we were not agreed; but how hard to leave them and give this offense. When I left them they would have no more dealings with me, for they called it heresy. It often seems to me now that it would be a great pleasure to me to visit their congregations and preach to them, (if enabled), Jesus and the resurrection.

Then the question would arise, How do you know that you are right? The answer to this would rise up in my deliverance. How did you receive Christ? By works of the law, or the hearing of faith, or was Jesus revealed to you according to, or for your works?

Then the question would arise, How will you live if you go? And the words in that Scripture, "I will be to you a Father, etc." would ring and sound as if he commanded the universe, and therefore would supply all my need.

The question would arise, What about Sunday Schools? Are they not doing great good? Look at the numbers that advocate them, and how they get people into their organizations that way when they are young, and thus they mould and shape their lives as they please, and bring them up as they wish. Are they not thus doing a great work? "Without Sunday Schools how can we get along, they would say. They are the greater institutions in the world." Well it appeared to me if they were really so important as all this, would there not be some words in their favor in the Bible, For that is the book to decide all such questions, and the Bible thoroughly furnishes the man of God unto all good works. But on looking into and searching that book it is seen that Sunday Schools are not once named in that standard authority — not even once named. So it was with other pet measures of this denomination. None of them are once named.

I asked Elder C. B. Hassell about feet-washing, for it was on my mind that it is right to wash feet. He said that Primitive Baptists washed feet — that some washed all together after the Lord's supper, and others did not wash at that time, but would at sometime whenever it was on the mind of any member to wash, and he would ask others to join in with him, and thus they would engage both in the spirit and in the literal act of feet-washing. I well remember the first opportunity offered for this after being received by the Primitive Baptists. It was at a brother's house. He brought his basin and water, and girted himself with a napkin at night in his own house, and washed my feet and I washed his feet. Since then I have several times washed feet with the church after the Lord's supper, and to me there is no difference in the answer of peace in each and every case. Nor is there ever a sweeter feeling of peace after the duty I perform than this.

The question of reforms has been much on my mind. What is true zeal? Jehu boasted of his zeal for the Lord, and asked one to come with him and look at his zeal. He was raised up to kill a wicked king and others, but, ah, himself was wicked also in some things.

To not condemn another in that which you allow in yourself, is moderation. To require in another more that you render yourself in anything while you offend at all, is making yourself a judge of evil thoughts.

Whenever a brother pushes his zeal so far as to destroy churches for a point of order, beware of him. There are many things crooked that we cannot make straight. **The great place to commence a reformation is in one's own self.** Some would be great reformers, but, alas, **they do all their work on others, and see no faults in themselves.** If you are with a people you cannot fellowship, withdraw from them and let them alone. If you say, I cannot leave them, there is no other place for me to go, but to stay. Then try to correct evils mercifully, not by tearing up churches, or wringing the nose to force blood. Take care if you use violence and smite and tear up churches, that you yourself are not smitten in turn.

(To be continued)

"A WORD IN DUE SEASON"

Simms, Texas

Dear Ones:

If the Lord sees fit to enable us, may we be given to meditate and feast upon the beautiful and sweet promises of this wonderful God.

"A word spoken in due season, how good it is?", when we are low in spirits and cast down: then we rejoice in the goodness of our God towards poor sinners as we feel to be. The Lord makes the truth known to his people, and he is not forgetful — not one will be left out. "The Lord knoweth them that are his." Isn't it true that we have not always seen and felt the things we now see and cherish so much? "But God,

who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved). (Ephesians 2:1-5) What wonderous love is this!

We want to hold to that faith which was once delivered to the saints. What is this faith, hope, and charity? "Though I speak with the tongue of men and angels and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up." Read 1 Corinthians 13:12-13, "But the greatest of these is charity."

I feel to be the least, if one at all.

An unworthy sister,
Mrs. Jesse Daniel

Bassett, Virginia
Route 3, Box 115

Dear Brother and Sister Wood,

Enclosed you will find a letter written to the late Elder Landon A. Harris by Sister Elizabeth Tuck, in 1949, relating some of her experiences of the goodness and mercy of the Lord unto her. I consider this to be a very good letter and would like to have you publish it in the **Signs of the Times** at your convenience.

I would like to express again that we enjoyed our trip and visit with you at the Virginia Correspondence Meeting very much. No earthly price can be put on such blessings and enjoyment.

May the Lord bless you and Sister Wood to carry on in this most sacred way.

Yours in fellowship,
(Elder) C. E. Turner

LETTER TO THE LATE ELDER L. A. HARRIS

Dear Brother Harris,

I've had it on my mind for so long to write to you that I don't suppose my mind will be eased any until I do. If it could be the Lord's will to direct me, I would write a few words of his dealings with me.

I suppose it has been eight or ten years, or maybe not that long, since I have been so dissatisfied. As he told Nicodemus, "that being born again is like the wind that bloweth where it listeth and thou heareth the sound thereof but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goes," so it was with me. Even when I was a child I felt that the name Jesus was going to mean something wonderful to me some day. When I would hear the older ones speak his name, the way it made my heart leap for joy is far more wonderful than I could imagine then.

I remember once I was seeking this. There was a preacher holding a revival in an Auditorium. I wanted my mother to go to preaching with me, and she did. Of course, she went knowing me and why I was seeking, saying nothing, but later, Brother Harris, I was so miserable and ashamed that I had taken her there; and I even remarked so when I got out of there. So it went on for a space of time and I would go to my mother's house and we would talk on the Bible.

One day she asked if I would like to go with her to hear the Primitive Baptist preach. So I agreed to go and hear them, but Brother Harris, my ears were dull of hearing the gospel preached. As God had his appointed time, so mine was not then; but somehow my heart was directed back to the Primitive Baptist Church time and again, until in the year 1946 I became so burdened that I thought I was going to die, and that I was doomed and that surely a sinner as I that had sinned away the day of grace, couldn't get the forgiveness that I want-

ed. Oh! so desperately my heart was made to cry out for mercy. I had been trying to read the Bible but it seemed that my heart was so far from it and so cold, but this time I got the Bible and casually opened it and this is the Scripture that was before my eyes, one I'll always cherish as I felt that it was meant for me. It reads, "Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire where there is no standing; I am come into deep waters where the floods overflow me. I am weary of my crying; my throat is dried; mine eyes fail me while I wait for my God." (Psalms 69:1, 2, 3) It seemed that between every line that I read I could see the words, I forgive you, I forgive you, over and over; and the sweetest feeling I have ever felt, before or since, came over me, and it seemed that I could just feel his presence fill the whole room. I even felt I could touch Him, I got up from my bed thanking God and praising His holy name; and for the rest of the week I felt so joyful, and, oh, so thankful that God would bestow His goodness and mercy on me the vilest of sinners. When I entered church the following Sunday, it seemed such love filled my heart that I thought it was the most wonderful place I had ever been in. It didn't seem like that before at the previous meetings I had attended there.

Brother Cecil Turner was there, if I am worthy to call him brother, for I heard him that day, and, Brother Harris, though I've grown cold at times, I feel that spark is still there. I felt that Brother Turner preached only to me there that day, and, Oh, the joy that I felt. It didn't seem that anyone was in the church that morning but me.

I attended church regularly after that. It seemed that I couldn't stay away, and I wanted to go forth many times when I didn't, but there was a time God had appointed for that too. Each time I felt to go my unworthy feelings kept me away, till once at a Communion Meeting a sister remarked that if I waited to ever feel worthy enough to go I would never go. So this day when I was there, Brother Gray was there and I found myself on the stand asking for a home with the people that I loved who could receive me the least of all of them, unworthy to be called by their name. They received me much to my joy. Brother Harris, I wanted Brother Turner to baptize me at that time but God works in mysterious ways his wonders to perform. The day you put me in the watery grave, and I came up out of the water and those wonderful people there rejoicing over the unworthy one that I felt to be, seemed more that I could bear. The love I felt for you then showed me that my love for one of you dear people was just as strong as it was for another. I have spent many happy hours with these dear people and feel that the gospel I hear preached when God gives me a hearing ear is the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Brother Harris, this letter is too lengthy and for fear of worrying you I will close.

An unworthy sister if one at all,
Mrs. Elizabeth Tuck
1301 Dale Ave., S. E.
Roanoke 13, Virginia

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, September 1, 2, and 3, 1961, sends greetings to the associations and churches with which we correspond:

Dear Brethren: Another year has passed, and we have been blessed to meet again in an association. Your correspondents and ministering brethren have come to us laden with the fruit of the Spirit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

"Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound." I hope I am not deceived in thinking that I know the joyful sound, and that I drank from the fountain that

never runs dry. We came together for the worship of God, trusting that the sheep of his pasture might be fed with knowledge and understanding from the lips of his humble servants, Elder Ayers and Elder Warren. Their sermons gave us comfort from God's rich promises, and made us realize again that if left to ourselves we would despair. It is only when we feel God's presence within that we, like the Apostle Paul, can glory in tribulation.

The Lord deals out for his elect what seems good in his sight each day — each hour their needs are supplied. If we are his children, I believe we shall be fed, that seed time and harvest will continue to come, for we have the promise of the Lord: "He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness." (Psalms 107:9)

The Lord says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and with loving kindness have I drawn thee." When we are tossed about by the trials of this world, and are assailed by doubts and fears as to whether we are one of His, may we be given the assurance that he who plants his footsteps in the sea and rides upon the storm, will be an ever present help in time of need.

The Lord willing, our next association will be held at Whitefield, Maine, the 1st Sunday in September, and Friday and Saturday before, (August 31, September 1 and 2, 1962).

Elder Arthur Warren, Moderator
Mrs. Sanford Bartlett, Clerk

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Sister Minerva Dunlap)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church Sept. 1, 2, 3, 1961, sends greetings to sister churches and associations with which we correspond.

Dearly Beloved: In prophecy, Isaiah speaks of Jesus in these words: "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not." (Isaiah 53:3) And John, in Corinthians, quotes Jesus as saying: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." (2 Cor. 2:4)

We believe that God has a people on this earth whom he has chosen for his portion, a people for whom he gave his son as a redeemer and as a shepherd for a flock that knows his voice and follows. If we believe that we are of that flock and are following in the footsteps of Christ, then we realize that we must share his sorrows, afflictions, poverty and oppressions. If we are his people we cannot think of the world as our home, we can expect to be forsaken and rejected and saddened as was that rich young man to whom Jesus said: "Sell all that thou hast." (Luke 18:22)

A child of God is separated from natural men because of his belief that works do not lead to salvation, that fame and fortune are vanity, that true worship of God can only proceed from a broken and contrite spirit, that grace is a gift and a humble heart a heritage from God. The child of God would not naturally choose the road he must travel. There is always the struggle between the old man of the flesh and the new man of the spirit. The flesh loves worldly possessions, the esteem of man, honors and glory, and is filled with self righteousness. Naturally, the flesh loves the company of its kind. But to follow Christ is to give up these worldly pleasures. "In the world ye shall have tribulation", (John 16:33), and so the child of God is led through the fire that purges the dross, through the wilderness of loneliness deserted by friends, through humiliation that levels self esteem, and through rejection by mankind. These were the portion of the Savior and these are the portion of his followers, who cannot expect to enjoy the pleasures of his kingdom without sharing also his pain and enduring the chastisements.

The Child of God must pass through

the wilderness as did Elijah and Moses when they were led for forty days and forty nights. But God provides sustenance and makes known to his people his power and glory in ways and times of his own choosing. He leads and instructs them in the desert lands and in the waste howling wilderness, shows them that tribulations are blessed to their good and instructs them to "suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock." (Deut. 32:13)

Not many of God's people, perhaps, have suffered so severely from tribulations as did Job. Although he was acclaimed a perfect and upright man, yet he was brought to such depths of misery that he bemoaned to his friends that God had stripped him of his glory and taken the crown from his head, destroyed him on every side until he was gone, (Job 19:9, 10) and he cried out: "Let the day perish wherein I was born." (Job 3:3) But when God spoke to him he said: "Behold, I am vile, I will lay mine hand upon my mouth." (Job 40:4) Whatever the affliction, when God speaks to one of his own, what else can be said: "Behold, I am vile." For the presence of God's spirit in the soul of man makes him know that he is nothing and less than nothing and can do no good. But however great the trials, there is still a remembrance of past blessings and the hope that the light of his countenance may shine again. Then can he say: "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand." (Psalms 84:10) And in passing through the wilderness the child of God can recall the sweet promises: "Thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams." (Isaiah 33:20, 21)

Moreover, the chosen of the Lord are a holy people as stated in Deuteronomy 14:2, "For thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth." And in 1st Peter 2:9: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." And so, the child of God being greatly blessed, should not only suffer patiently for sins committed by himself but should also bear patiently and without rancor accusations and recriminations made against him falsely. For Christ suffered in silence when unjustly accused.

As Peter writes: "For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently. But if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps. Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." (Peter 2:19, 23)

Christ was put to death in the flesh. The child of God must suffer that same death or he is no follower of his Savior. But as Peter says: "If ye suffer for righteousness' sake happy are ye." (1 Peter 3:14)

Jesus promises: "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. (John 17:14) "But be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

SISTER POE TO ELDERS BROCK AND GRIFFIN

Fayette, Alabama
May 29, 1956

Dear Brother Brock and Brother Griffin:

It is one o'clock and I can't sleep for thinking maybe I have deceived the church in your care, so I want to give a short sketch of my life.

I was born and reared in Tuscaloosa County. My parents were George Washington Hocutt. My mother was Martha Ann Evans. They joined the Primitive Baptist Church before they were married. Father passed away when I was only 8 years old, leaving mother and 6 children. I was next to the oldest. At an early age, I would think of death as a very serious thing, and, as I grew older, I became very much disturbed about my condition and would often try to pray to the dear Lord to have mercy on my poor soul. I well remember spending the night at my grandmother's. I was in a room alone and was in so much trouble, and was crying but didn't realize anyone knew it. She came into my bed room and asked me what I was crying about. I told her that I didn't know. I knew I was in awful trouble. I was in that condition until my 15th year, often begging the dear Lord to remove that awful burden. I thought I would be willing to leave this world of trouble anytime if He would remove the burden of sin that was so awful.

One day, all alone in a room of our old home near Liberty Hill Church, that "still small voice" almost as plain as a natural voice said, "Where are your sins?" To my great relief they were gone. I felt so free from sin I didn't think I would ever have any more trouble, but I soon found out that I was mistaken, and would ask the Lord if I was deceived to make it known to me. I hoped as I grew older that I would have more evidence but I wouldn't sell what I have, for its an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast. I wanted to go to Harmony Saturday so bad. If I had known you were coming through here that evening, I would have asked Newton to take me to your house early that morning. I had been so troubled about offering myself, and now I am afraid I shouldn't have. Would love to see you and talk to you. Hearing you dear ones talk is my meat and drink, spiritually speaking.

Hope to see you both soon. Will you all remember me when at the Throne of Grace.

A lonely sister, if one at all,
Mrs. George W. Poe

The following was written by my husband many years before his death:

Corona, Alabama
January 3, 1925

To my dearly beloved Companion and Children,

While I have been indoors most two weeks, I have been made to think and study a lot after reading a part of God's word. I have been thinking and examining myself to see if I come up to the measurement required of a man that prayed to know God in a free pardon of his sins. Well, I sometimes fear I have fallen short and will be found wanting when weighed in the balance. If not deceived, I am one of that number the Father gave the Son even before the world was formed or the dust of the highest hills was laid. I know that if I am not one of that number there is nothing I can do to be saved. I hope that I am not deceived, although if I am, my bed will be with the wicked and those who know not God. I know this of a certainty. Well children, I guess you would like to know when I received my hope, if I have one.

Praise God, if I am not deceived, I don't think there is anything in my way if I were called to die tonight. This feeling does not last long, then I get back in doubts and fears. I may be spared for several years, but it won't be very long at best. So when I am gone, don't weep for me. Only think your loss is my eternal gain. It was on Wednesday night before the fourth Sunday in August, 1885, when I hope the Lord forgave me of my sins and took my feet out of the miry clay, placed them on a firm foundation and put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God.

While I know I haven't lived as I should, I feel tonight that God has forgiven me for all my short comings.

Your mother and I were married on September 25, 1890, by Elder W. R. Brown, and on Saturday before the first Sunday in November, 1890, we both offered ourselves to the church at Old Salem for membership and was received and were baptized Sunday by Elder A. J. Gibson, but oft times I fear I deceived those good people.

One that loves you all,
Daddy (George W. Poe)

Rt. 2, Box 237
Goshen, Alabama

Dear Brother Spangler:

If you feel that the enclosed letter is worthy of space, I would be glad to see it published in the Signs of the Times.

How strengthening and uplifting for one so young in age, and in the ministry, to be blessed of the Lord to write such. Each discourse while in our association last week, was loved and admired by many.

When I wrote Elder Hudson, I referred to our association being in the near future, and that I was fearful of being exalted; hence this wonderful interpretation of the scripture.

May we feel thankful for such gifts, is our prayer.

In bonds of love,
Mrs. J. L. Folmar

THE LETTER TO SISTER FOLMAR

113 Park Hurst St.
Bastrop, La.
September 12, 1961

Dear Sister Folmar:

Thank you very much for your letter of Aug. 17; and I really appreciate your comments concerning my recent article in the Signs. I really do appreciate the encouragement, especially since there are so many discouragements to undertake. But it all works for our good, (that is, if I am included in that sweet number).

Thank you for quoting the Scripture: "Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord." (Obadiah 1:4) The third verse speaks about the pride of the heart. "The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee —"

Doesn't this above Scripture connect with Jeremiah 17:9. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" So, it is just natural for our heart to be proud. Consider Isaiah 3:16, 17, "Moreover the Lord saith, because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go and making a tinkling with feet: Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will discover their secret parts."

"Pride comes before a fall." We cannot humble ourselves, and esteem others better than ourselves, because it is against our nature to do so. Therefore, it takes a Higher Power to enable us to do so. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Also, the Scriptures teach that the steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord.

How does the Lord humble his people? By afflicting them. Paul was given the thorn in the flesh, and I believe that all the Children of God have been given this thorn (the messenger of Satan). Why is it given? So that we will not be exalted above measure. I often think of this thorn as doubts and fears. Have you ever gotten to the point that you wondered if your hope was gone. Have you ever felt to be deceived in the whole matter? I feel sure that you have. Doesn't this humble you? As you meet the brethren, you are given to esteem them better than yourself, and you feel

to be the least.

We have to be humbled in order to pray, as we cannot pray when we are upon the "mountain tops". But, we pray a true prayer when we are down in the valley. If things go well, and we are at ease, then we cannot pray. But when doubts and fears and sorrows compass us about, and, worst of all, when darkness overshadow us — (see Job 36:32) and we cannot feel the presence of the Lord, and get to wondering if the Lord has forsaken us, then we are truly in great distress.

David said, "Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth." (Psalms 104:20) In a Spiritual sense, we may term this darkness as night to us. Aren't these nights wearisome, and don't they seem to be so long? Notice what Job says: "So am I made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me. When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise, and the night be gone? and I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day." (Job 7:3-4)

In this condition, we pray unto Almighty God and beg for mercy. We have to be shown these things over and over again. There is nothing that we can do, as we feel to be so helpless, and to be sinking in sorrows. We cry out, "Save Lord, or I perish." When Peter realized that he could not walk on the water, and found that he was sinkng, then he cried unto the Christ.

There is no source upon this world that can do us any good. No one here can help us. How wonderful it is to know that our God never forsakes the cries of his people, and that he is with us always even unto the end of the world. True, we cannot feel His presence so many times, but this Wonderful God is watching over us. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." (Isaiah 43:2) In 139th Psalm, David said, "If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there." There is no escaping the presence of the Lord.

As we spoke of the wearisome nights and how long they are, then you are very anxious for the morning to come. Or, we long and wait for the Lord to show His smiling face upon us, and to visit us with his love and mercy. This is morning to us, and Oh, how beautiful is this morning! This morning is a set time. "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come." (Psalms 102:13) We cannot hasten the coming of the morning, and we are given reassurance that the Lord remembers us and that our God is a merciful God. He is our refuge, our strength, our shield — in fact, God is our all in all. You know the Lord has done, and shown, these wonderful things to you, and that no one had any part in it; so you render all praise to the Lord. There is no equal with God, because He is the high and lofty one that rules. He is the sole Creator of all things, and God sought **no** counsel with man when He created this world. "Where the word of the King is, there is **power**." Just think, God spoke this world into existance. The Universe, beasts, birds, etc. were all created before God made man.

Well, I must stop. I really did enjoy reading your letter, and re-reading your experience in the April, 1960 issue of the Signs. If the Lord is willing, I do hope to come to the Conecuh River Association in October. I hope to see you then.

May the Lord bless and keep you is my prayer.

Yours in Christian love,
(Elder) W. W. Hudson, Jr.

"AM I HIS, OR AM I NOT"

309 Hagerman Street,
Houston 11, Texas

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood:

Please let me thank you for sending me the dear old *Signs of the Times.* My periodicals are of great comfort to me, and are about all the preaching I get. However, the Lord has been most gracious to me, for He has blessed me to be able to go to church three times this year, 1961. Praise his name, He has blessed me in so many ways all my life.

Though I was blessed to go only on Sunday, the second Sunday in August, I feasted on that precious name. His precious promises are soul satisfying. I was filled to the full, and my cup ran over. The blessings I received that one day were sufficient, for I was lifted to the top of Mount Pisgah, and I seemed to view the land of Canaan, with all its fruit and oil; where the spices send off their sweet and pleasant odors. "Sometimes on eagle's wings I fly, rising above Mt. Pisgah, I almost reach the sky."

But I realize I can't remain in this elevated condition for long. I have experienced it before, and I know that dark clouds will appear . . . However dark and gloomy the outlook may be, we at times are enabled to raise our eyes to a faithful and loving God, with whom all things (not just a few) are possible. He is our refuge and strength: a very present help in trouble. He brings us into a dry, desert land where we are made to feel alone — almost forsaken, if not quite: poor, needy, and thirsty, we seek water and find none. Then Christ our dear Lord and Redeemer springs up as a rock out of dry ground, and speaks words of comfort to his little ones. Then they feast upon this precious food; and drink and are satisfied.

In Isaiah we read, "When the poor and needy seek water and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them; I the Lord of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in the high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys. I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." This precious fountain is the water of life, Jesus; if any drink thereof he shall never die. But, dear brethren this is my greatest worry: Have I ever drunk of this precious life-saving water?

I often ask, "Am I his, or am I not?" How often this poor one cries to God to be merciful to me, a sinner. Much of the time these few words are about all I can say. Last night, while reading in the Psalms, I read, "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I. For thou hast been a shelter to me, and a strong tower from the enemy." When my sins overtake me; and burdened with the knowledge of them rising like great mountains before me, and I feel darkness all around, I am made to cry out to Him for mercy.

It is the omnipotent God, that gives peace of mind and body. Many years ago, if not deceived, He gave me a little hope, which is all the hope I have. It is the anchor to my soul.

...God's servants were given strength to stand firm on the walls of Zion, and cry aloud and spare not — not refusing to declare the whole counsel of God, defending his own declaration, "I am God and there is none else. I am the first and the last, and besides me there is no God." By his grace I know his servants will be enabled to cry aloud the unsearchable riches of God as long as he wills. He will not be left without a witness. Those old servants were not slack in expounding the Word, the gospel of Jesus Christ and him crucified: the absolute sovereignty of an all wise God, and of his great and wonderful works — his mercy, grace, and loving-kindness for his people.

Brethren, since it has been so long since I wrote you, I felt I should write and let you know I am yet, by the grace of God, left in this low ground of sin, sorrow and woe; and that I never miss an issue of our dear old paper. And I thank you again. May you and the other editors be blessed with good health, and be given grace that you may abound in your labor of love. May he bless you and

all the household of faith with his tender love and care, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

I am only an old worm of the dust in hope of eternal life.

Harriett Little Gray

ENJOYS THE PAPER

2761 Cochese Cove
Memphis, Tennessee

Dear Brother Spangler:

I received a card stating that my copies of the *Signs* were being returned because of incorrect address. Evidently, I did not notify you of our change of address. It is as shown above.

I enjoy reading my copies of the *Signs* very much because I believe that they set forth the doctrine of God our Savior more than anything that I have read except the Bible. I especially enjoy the experiences of others that seem to indicate that they have been brought by a way that they knew not and claiming no credit for themselves, because, if I have had any experience at all, that is the way that it has been with me.

I also like the "Voices of the Past" very much as it is comforting to know that the things that we hope to believe today are the same that were being set forth and believed by those that have gone on before. The world and worldly doctrines have changed so much, and since God saw all things from the beginning of time, it does not seem that his doctrine would change from generation to generation to keep up with the so called progress of civilization, and I do not believe that it does.

I hope that God will continue to bless the editors and writers of the *Signs*, as He has in the past, and that it will always stand on the sure foundation, and proclaim the unsearchable riches of God's Grace and Mercy. These are the things that are comforting to one who feels so undone, so insecure, and so dependant on some source of power, other than their own, for salvation.

We surely did enjoy your visit to Memphis and Soldier Creek Association last Fall and hope that you will be sent our way again. May God's Grace, Love, and Mercy be with you and yours, is my prayer.

In bonds of love,
Richard Campbell

Rt. 1, Box 211
Olla, La.

Dear Editors:

I have stopped tonight to write a few words that I have wanted to for some time.

I have belonged to the Missionary Baptist Church for about 30 years. I guess I am blind to all spiritual things, but if I do understand anything, it has to be by the grace of God, it is because of nothing I have done. I have some good friends in that church, but they preach that all is left up to man; and I can't see it.

I have been reading the *Signs of the Times* for some time, and if I could know that I was one of them, I could say that His grace is sufficient for me.

I hope the grace of God will enable the good paper to continue. I am enclosing my renewal for one year. I believe I do love those who tell the gospel truth. I close with love, and looking forward to receiving the *Signs*.

Houston Jones

Rt. 2
Ruston, La.

Editors of the Signs:

Am enclosing check for my renewal of the Signs of the Times.

There are no Primitive Baptists where I live, and the nearest church is forty miles away. I have good neighbors, but they don't like the kind of preaching I do. They believe a person can be saved

if he will just go to church and accept Jesus.

I would like to write some for the good paper, but I can't write much. I am past 80 years old, and, not getting to go to church often, I love to have the Signs to read. I find so many traveling the same road I am traveling.

May the good Lord bless all of you, is my prayer.

In hope of the world to come,
C. B. Stokes

CONTENTNEA UNION

THE CONTENTNEA UNION will convene, the Lord willing, with Upper Town Creek Church, Wilson County, N. C., December 30th and 31st, 1961. The church is located three miles East of Elm City, N. C.

An invitation is extended to those of our faith and order, and interested friends.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

UPPER COUNTRY LINE UNION

The **UPPER COUNTRY LINE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST UNION MEETING** will be held the fifth Sunday in December 1961 at Bush Arbor Church.

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The **STAUNTON RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST UNION MEETING** will be held December the 30th and 31st with Banister Springs Church. This church is located on U. S. 29, between Danville, Va. and Chatham, Va. about ten miles north of Danville. Ministers and brethren and friends are invited.

W. J. Oakes, Clerk

CROSS ROAD UNION

The **CROSS ROAD UNION** will convene with the Rock Hill Church, Asheboro, N. C. on Saturday before the fifth Sunday in December 1961, at 2:30 P. M. and Sunday morning at 11 A. M. The church is located about two miles from Asheboro on Farmer Road.

All lovers of the truth are invited to attend.

J. D. Newnam, Union Clerk

Danville, Virginia **January, 1962**

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TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 5, Box 332F **Danville, Va.**

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To Nov. 1, 1961)

Sara Slack, Del.	$5.00
Mrs. Ruby Parsons, Md.	2.50
Mrs. D. M. Radford, Va.	4.00
Charles S. Reynolds, Me.	5.00
Elmer F. Hastings, Md.	8.00
Mrs. C. C. Tomlinson, Md.	2.00

EDITORIAL

BEGINNING ANOTHER VOLUME

"Wherefore lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees: and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed." (Hebrews 12:12, 13)

It has been customary for one of the editors to greet our readers in the be-

ginning of a New Year, with a brief review of the past year, some description of our present status, and our hopes for the future, in relation to the publication of the *Signs of the Times.*

As we enter the New Year, we hope we are mindful of God's mercies, and to some degree thankful for the many blessings bestowed. When left to self, we are often glad, but not thankful; but when we see the gracious hand that has led us, and are enabled to look up, then we see him who is the source of all thankfulness.

Though I have not written much for publication, it has been a pleasure to receive a number of good articles for publication, which have been much enjoyed by our readers, as we have heard by word of mouth and pen. To those who have contributed, and those who feel inclined to write, we would encourage you to do so. I feel the writings of others have been far better than I could have contributed.

The writings of our Associate Editors have been a source of strength to the paper, and we hope all will be blessed to fill the allotted space to them during the coming year.

Though we have lost some subscribers, mostly by death, during the past year, the subscription list is the largest it has been in ten years, by several hundred. To all who have helped in the circulation of the paper, we are indebted; and we hope you will feel to continue your efforts in behalf of the paper, by writing for publication, by sending in notices of meetings, securing new subscribers, and contributing to the Indigent Fund.

Knowing our many failings, we appreciate the constructive criticisms of brethren, and hope they will be perfectly frank and brotherly with us in all things pertaining to the circulation of the paper.

Many of our people already know — and all should know, that the *Signs of the Times* is owned and operated by the Old School Baptists, as a non-profit paper. The later owner, Elder R. Lester Dodson, incorporated the paper and gave it to the Old School Baptists before his death; and it is operated by a Board of Directors.

None of us know what the year will bring to us. Dark and lowering clouds hover over the earth, yet we are persuaded that the events that are unfolding before us, are but the fulfilling of prophecy. Though men believe they hold the destiny of nations in their own wisdom and power, yet God is over all, and not a dart of Satan can hit, except what the God of heaven sees fit. All things are working together for good to them that love Him. The coming of the Lord draweth nigh, and I say unto you who love his great name, "Lift up your heads for your redemption draweth nigh."

The visit of the head of the Church of England to the Pope of Rome; the circulation of a revised edition of the Bible, that denies many of the miracles of the Scriptures, and shows an effort of wicked men to change the Scriptures so that they will conform to the reasoning of the carnal mind; and the efforts to organize the various churches into a world organization, bodes no good for the Old School Baptists, and any others who hold definite convictions about God. It may be that the things that are being manifest among false teachers, are a prelude to our own people who hold the same doctrine, being drawn closer together.

If the Lord wills, we hope to continue to publish and send forth to you a paper which will continue to be a medium of comfort to the household of faith, a strentghening of Zion in contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and a medium of communication in publishing obituaries, notices of meetings, etc.

We desire your prayers, that in sending forth your paper to you, we may be given to make straight paths for our feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way. But rather let it be

healed.

D. V. S.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

The wise and foolish virgins all slumbered and slept while the bridegroom lingered. (Matt. xxv) During all that time no difference could be seen between them. No mark appeared by which it could be told who were wise and who were foolish. No one could tell whose vessels had oil in them and whose had not. So it was with the nation of Israel during the legal dispensation. The Lord's people could not be distinguished from the others; the legal works could be done as well by one who had no grace in his heart as by one who had; all appeared alike, as do those who sleep. This was the sleeping time, the night dispensation, and no fault is found with them for sleeping. But when, at the end of that legal day, at midnight, the announcement was made, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh," then the difference between the wise and the foolish was made to appear. Those who had oil in their vessels were ready to go in with the bridegroom; those who were without oil could not go in. The difference between the two characters, those who had grace in the heart and those who had not, was as great before the bridegroom came as after, but that difference could not be manifest until he came. The wise were not made wise because they took oil, but they took oil because they were wise.

So also with the foolish; they were not foolish because they took no oil, but they took no oil because they were foolish. The wisdom of the wise was, and always is, a gift to them from the Lord, and so is the oil, or grace, by which they have the light of life, which shineth in the darkness of our nature, but is not perceived by the darkness. The wise went in with the Bridegroom and the door was shut. That door between the legal and the gospel dispensation was never opened but once, and then Jesus entered into his gospel kingdom with all his redeemed. "By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." When the legal character, represented by the foolish virgins, comes, he must necessarily come knocking, for the door was shut as soon as Jesus entered in. One who knocks implies that there is some good reason why the door at which he knocks should be opened to him. Those to whom Jesus says, "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you," are gospel characters who desire gospel blessings, and they knock in the name of Jesus. But these are asking in their own names, because of good things they have done. The oil they have has been purchased by them, for which they have paid in their own good works, and it will not be received; it does not make gospel light. The true oil, the Spirit and grace of God, cannot be bought. So the Bridegroom says to them who come with that oil which they have bought, I know you not.

All of the Lord's people, from the beginning to the end of time, went in through that gospel door with Jesus, and none who ever have entered there experimentally, or ever shall, will ever make mention of any other name but Jesus as the way by which he entered in, and because of this there will be on the part of living souls, but no others, a strong and deep exercise of soul from time to time, by the power of this sweet command of Jesus: "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." Every experience of the coming and power of Jesus, and every temptation to doubt and question concerning our knowledge of him, will lead us more carefully to consider how all of our experience of an entrance into divine favor, from the very first, has been an entrance with Jesus, and in his blessed name, and will lead us to watch that we do not ask for or seek for any entrance into his favor because of any fancied

merit of our own. How careful and watchful we are, and need to be, lest the light that is in us be darkness, lest the oil we have has been purchased with our own fancied goodness. "For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart."

Silas H. Durand

(The above was written by Elder Silas H. Durand, and appeared in the October 1, 1911 issue of the Signs.)

ORDINATION OF AN ELDER

The Salem Primitive Baptist Church, Floyd County, Virginia, met Saturday September 9, 1961, with the following Elders present: Leonard Brammer, B. O. Thompson, William Holland, Sam Terry, F. L. Clark, J. T. Turner, J. L. Bocock, Rufus Brown, and Otie Conner, together with deacons from several churches. The meeting was for the purpose of a presbytery to inquire into the qualifications of Brother James Leroy Agee, and ordain him a minister, if found qualified.

Prayer was by Elder Leonard Brammer, and then Brother Agee was requested to speak to the people. He spoke from 1st Corinthians 2:1, 2, and was blessed to speak in demonstration of the Spirit and power.

The above named elders and the deacons were organized into a presbytery by choosing Elder B. O. Thompson, Moderator, and Elder Julius Bocock, Clerk. Deacon G. E. Conner was spokesman for the church, and expressed that the church was satisfied with Brother Agee's gift and qualifications. Elder Sam Terry led in questioning Brother Agee, and all being satisfied, the presbytery proceeded by the laying on of hands, with prayer by Elder J. O. Conner. Then Elder William Holland delivered the charge, which was very impressive. Brother Agee was then delivered to the church a duly ordained minister of the gospel of Christ.

We heartily recommend Elder Agee to the brethren wherever our God shall cast his lot.

Elder B. O. Thompson, Moderator
Elder J. L. Bocock, Clerk

ORDINATION OF DEACON

On October 21, 1961, the church at Pigg River, Franklin County, Virginia, placed in the hands of a presbytery Brother Gary Akers, to be examined for the office of deacon.

The Presbytery was organized by choosing Elder J. P. Helms, as Moderator; W. W. Abshire, Clerk; with Elder C. E. Turner to lead in the examination, Elder William Holland to offer prayer, and Elder Amos Hash to deliver the charge.

The following deacons were asked to sit in the presbytery in an advisory capacity: L. A. Perdue, L. T. Nichols, Roy Gearhart, P. D. Akers, Brammer Nichols and Sylvanias Carter.

The examination began by questioning Deacon W. R. Bernard, the spokesman for the church, as to Brother Akers' qualifications. All questions were answered satisfactorily. The Presbytery then questioned Brother Akers as to the duties of a deacon, also his belief in doctrine and order. The Presbytery being satisfied, moved to proceed with the ordination by the laying on of hands, and prayer to Almighty God by Elder Holland. Elder Amos Hash delivered the charge. Then Brother Akers was returned to the church an ordained Deacon.

Elder J. P. Helms, Moderator
W. W. Abshire, Clerk

OBITUARIES

ELDER LEVI LOVEJOY SCHENCK

Elder Levi Lovejoy Schenck (pronounced Shank) departed this vale of tears at the age of nearly 92 years, his home being at Williamstown, Kansas. He was born November 21, 1869, the son of John and Mary Schenck. Five brothers and five sisters preceded him in death, one being a twin brother dying in infancy. The family came to Kansas by covered wagon, and settled near Springdale.

Elder Schenck joined the Primitive Baptist Church on the 3rd Sunday in May, 1892, and was baptized by the late Elder A. D. Jones. He entered the full work of the ministry in February, 1914; the Presbytery consisted of Elders J. H. Hammons and W. A. Ferguson, with Deacons W. C. Jenkins and Wm. Osborn. This great man of God followed in the footsteps of his father, who was also a Primitive Baptist minister. He had the care of four churches, one of which was at Kingman, Kansas, where the writer is now pastor, having been co-pastor with this gifted elder for a few years.

June 29, 1892, Elder Schenck was united in marriage to Amy Arminta Zinn. This union was blessed with a family of three children: Mrs. Viola Allen, Kansas City, Mo.; Mrs. Lottie Stallard, Perry, Kansas; and Garrett Ryker Schenck, who died in infancy. He re-married nine years after the death of his first wife, to Mrs. Lenora Wood Gray, who died July 10, 1949. He is also survived by a step-daughter, Mrs. Rennie Cowan, San Bernadino, California; nine grandchildren; nephews and nieces and a host of friends.

The writer conducted his funeral the second

Sunday in June, using a text from 1st Chronicles, 3rd chapter, and hopes that some measure of comfort was given by the Spirit to the bereaved.

Elder Schenck wrote many beautiful articles for the *Signs of the Times*, and I have seen comments in following issues as to the soundness and the great comfort gained. I know that long obituaries are frowned upon by the editors, but I feel to set forth some points I think were of great value to this man, and to Primitive Baptist ministers:

In all the years of his youth and until his death, he never swore an oath; he never took a drink of alcoholic beverage, except in communion service; and never knowlingly cheated a man. This was written in his autobiography, and verified by his family. Yet how sinful and unworthy he felt at all times. He wrote, and has related to me, that he never delivered a discourse with which he was satisfied. His humbleness was beyond comparison, yet I have heard him preach the unsearchable mysteries as well as any man I ever heard.

I, as an ordained minister, wonder how the great Jehovah could ever give a second look to one such as I. How is it with you, you God-called ministers? Do you sometimes think you are pretty good at delivering a message? Can you boast of such a gift of cleanliness of soul and spirit? Can you look at yourselves and see such as Elder Schenck, and hear how unworthy he felt, and how he felt that the brethren couldn't possibly want to hear him; feeling that God had passed him by, and that the church had him preach, instead of his having been called of God. Yet he would pray in such a manner as would not leave a dry eye in the congregation — leaning on His rod and staff, praying sincerely for guidance and help; praying for strength which he felt other ministers had, and that he lacked.

Do you have this utter dependance upon God, or do you lead the flock with a firm, boastful hand? Do you criticize pastors with lesser gifts than you believe you have? Do you exalt your own learning above one of God's taught ones? I confess, brethren, that I have. But if it be God's holy and divine will, I would endeavor in my weak condition, to commit all that I have and am, into his hands for safe-keeping and guidance in the same path that Elder Schenck was led in.

Please read this in the spirit in which it is written. I thank God that he chose me to be present with this man of God for a little season. I would that I could have shared him with everyone of you who enjoy God preached in power, wisdom, glory, and thanksgiving. I was taught as I stood before those listening at his funeral: Be humble, be sincere, and be grateful to God for just anything He so desires to give me; and for just anything of comfort to say to the dear saints from His bountiful storehouse: Not to feel great, but grateful.

(Elder) W. A. Winfrey,
606 S. Kansas,
Liberal, Kansas

WILLIAM F. OAKLEY

He was born August 15, 1879, died August 18, 1961, age 82. May we, that are grieved and mourn, be blessed to humbly submit to the will of our heavenly Father, as it is in Christ our Lord, his darling son; and be comforted in the evidence of the blessed hope which our kinsman, neighbor, friend, and brother in Christ had. He rejoiced in the ever abiding faith which he lived; and passed on from this world of sorrow, sin, and death to that which our Lord has prepared for those whom he loves; where the light shall never grow dim, and sorrow, sin, and death can never invade. We shall be like him and be satisfied in that world that hath no end.

Submitted by,
Ernest F. Oakley
(Elder) W. C. King, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

AGNES LAWS HASTINGS

As it pleased our God to take our beloved friend, Agnes Laws Hastings, from our midst on September 14, 1961, we bow in humble submission to the will of our God.

Mrs. Hastings was born September 29, 1885, and was the daughter of the late William R. and Mary Edna Laws. She was married to Elmer F. Hastings on June 18, 1913, and to this union one daughter was born: Mrs. Mary Bell Holland of Ocean City, Md. She is survived by her husband, her daughter, and three granddaughters: Mrs. Janet Ann Kelley, Mrs. Sandra Lee Anderson and Miss Marline Holland.

Mrs. Hastings lived at Parsonsburg, Maryland but stayed at her winter home in St. Petersburg, Florida during the winter months. She attended the Old School Baptist meetings when possible, and will be greatly missed by her many friends. By some of her writings found after her death, the writer feels to believe, though she was not a member of the visible church, she had been given a hope in Christ.

Funeral services were held at the Hill and Johnson Funeral Home in Salisbury, Maryland by the writer, and she was laid to rest in the Parsons Cemetery, Salisbury, Maryland. May the Lord bless the loved ones and comfort them, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

GEORGE W. RUDD

On July 24, 1961, God called the spirit of our beloved brother, George Washington Rudd, to return to Him who gave it, at the age of 81 years.

Brother Rudd united with the church at Bush Arbor on the 2nd Saturday in August, 1958, and was baptized the following Sunday together with his wife. He attended his meetings as long as his health would permit, but continued to ask about the meetings and often expressed his desire to go in his last days.

Brother Rudd is survived by his wife, Sister Golie Chandler Rudd (a daughter of the late Elder and Mrs. Y. I. Chandler), eight daughters, one son, thirty grandchildren, twenty-two great grandchildren, two brothers, and a host of other relatives and friends to mourn his departure. The church has lost a faithful member, his wife and children a lovely husband and father who provided well for his household.

Brother Rudd's funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Church by Elder W. C. King, Elder Harvey Smith, and Mr. John Webb. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who shall call the sleeping dead to arise and come forth made like unto His own glorious body to be presented to His Father in heaven where sickness, sorrow, and death will never come. May God's blessing be upon all who mourn his passing.

Read and approved by Bush Arbor Church at her October meeting, with a request that a copy be presented to the family, a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication, and a copy be spread upon our church record book.

(Elder) W. C. King, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

ELDER E. C. JONES

Everett Calvin Jones was born in Wake County, N. C., July 9, 1886, and died November 26, 1960, at his home in Varina, N. C.

He was married December 27, 1909, to Chloe Penny and to this union twelve children were born. One gave his life in defense of his country, and his wife and the following eleven survive: Clifford B., Durham, N. C.; Mrs. J. W. Peoples, Winston-Salem, N. C.; Mallie B. Jones, So. Boston, Va.; Thenton Jones Scotland Neck, N. C.; Tommy Jones, Fuqua Springs, N. C.; Mrs. Milton Haggard, Norfolk, Va.; Mrs. R. C. Blanchard, Fayetteville, N. C.; Mrs. J. C. Rhodes, Varina, N. C.; Charles H. Jones, Raleigh, N. C.; Mrs. R. B. Martin, Varina, N. C.; and Miss Joyce Ann Jones, Silver Springs, Md.

Brother Jones was given a good hope in Christ in the Spring of 1914, and was received into the fellowship of Middle Creek Church May 14, 1914, and was baptized by the late Elder Jimmie Jones. He was soon called to the ministry, and ordained soon after he began to exercise. He was blessed to preach God's grace to the comfort of his brethren, and was unashamed, and fearlessly stood for what he felt the Lord had taught him. He was soon called to the pastoral care of churches, and served several for years, including his home church. He also served as Clerk of the Little River Association for some years.

I was his pastor in his last days, and loved him and esteemed him as a servant of God. His body failed, and then the call came; and a faithful servant was called to await the summons from the tomb.

May God take care of his family and give them all needed grace, together with all who knew him and loved him.

J. P. Helms

A MEMORIAL FOR ELDER H. O. NASH

Elder Henry O. Nash was born August 21, 1882, in Gwinnett County, Georgia. His parents, William Riley and Marinda Jane Nash, were longtime members of Nancy's Creek Primitive Baptist Church, where both are buried. He joined the East Atlanta Primitive Baptist Church April 1908, and was baptized by the late Elder Jimmy Jordan on May 10, 1908. He was ordained into the ministry in April 1925, his Ordination being called for by the Nancy's Creek Church. Elder Nash died May 25, 1961, at Georgia Baptist Hospital. He had been in and out of the hospital since February this year, being there the fourth time when the end came. All that loving hands of the family and friends could do was done for his comfort.

He was elected Moderator of the Yellow River Primitive Baptist Association on September 26, 1941, at Sweetwater Church (succeeding Elder J. M. Livsey, deceased) and served in a most acceptable manner until his death.

On this occasion as we pause in his memory to make known to his loved ones that we grieve with them at his passing because we, too, loved him, let us linger for a little while, taking new hope, inspiration, courage, and determination to carry on, to perform to the best of our ability the various tasks that lie ahead. May such gains as these replace, in a measure, the loss sustained by the family and the church.

The Lord blessed Elder Nash with a wonderful gift to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, which was of great comfort and edification, not only to the churches which he served, but

to other churches that he visited of the same faith and order, whose members believe that Salvation is of the Lord. In addition to his pastoral cares and as moderator of the Association, he was a gifted writer on the Scriptures, and served as an associate editor on the Signs of the Times, Inc., from 1950 until January 1957, and Zion's Landmark from April 1958 until his passing.

He is survived by his wife, the former Elizabeth Mae Brown, one daughter, Betty Jane Nash, one son, H. O. Nash, Jr., and two grandchildren. Horace Ward Funeral Home was in charge of the body. Funeral services were conducted by Elder Floyd Adams, Willow Springs, North Carolina, and Elder T. L. Huff, Lawrenceville, Georgia. Deacons of the Yellow River Primitive Baptist Association served as pallbearers and honorary escort. The funeral was attended by a throng of people, interment in Westview Cemetery, beneath a mass of flowers.

"He that believeth in Me, though He were dead, yet shall He live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." — John 11:25-26.

Prepared and submitted at the request of the Yellow River Primitive Baptist Association while in session September 22, 23, 24, 1961.

Elder T. L. Huff, Moderator
T. R. Breedlove, Clerk

Correction: In the November issue, in the obituary of Sister Alice Page Apple Shepherd, the name of one of the step-daughters is Myrtle Peebles, Greensboro, instead of Myrtle Beebles; and the name of one of the step-sons is Brother Robert W. Apple, Elon College, instead of Brother Joseph Apple. We are glad to make this correction. — Ed.

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M.

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M.

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 11 A. M.

WRIGHTS' CREEK CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 11:00 A. M.

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., six miles SE. of Sulligent, Alabama.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

MACEDONIA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located one and one-half miles Southwest of Sulligent, Alabama, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT R. PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
HURTON PITTS, Clerk
Sulligent, Ala.

OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each Saturday before the fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Alabama.

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles SW. of Fayette, Alabama.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

ELAM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located two miles North of Goshen, Alabama, meets each third Sunday at 11 o'clock.

J. P. MORGAN, Pastor
A. C. CARTER, Clerk
3383 Montezuma Rd.,
Montgomery 6, Ala.

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before.

E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Pratt City, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. Meeting place at Alder Street at top of hill, first car going into Pratt City from Birmingham.

H. C. MOON, Pastor

LIBERTY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., eight miles South of Gordo, Alabama.

O. G. GARVER, Pastor

MT. CARMEL CHURCH, Coffee Springs, Alabama, meets each first Sunday 11 A. M.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

W. A. SPEER, Pastor

REHOBETH OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located five miles North of El Dorado, Arkansas and half-mile West of Highway No. 7, meets second Sunday in each month and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

R. W. RHODES, Pastor
W. A. SPEER, Clerk

WHITE WATER OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located about one mile Northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

W. A. SPEER, Pastor

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Stockton, California, meets second Sundays, 10:30 A. M., at 5620 E. Marsh Street. All lovers of the truth invited.

T. R. JEFFERSON, Pastor
WM. ECHOLS, Clerk
Chowchilla, Cal.

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Compton, California, meets each fourth Sunday at the home of L. W. Langwell, 12812 S. Williams Street.

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in the United States), meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is located one mile south of Newark, Delaware, just off of Highway 896.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK CHURCH, Miami, Florida, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before, SW. 29th Avenue and 6th Street. We extend an invitation to any interested to visit us.

MRS. J. M. FUTCH,
7005 SW. 21st Street,
Miami, Florida

NEW HARMONY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Hiram, Ga., meets every 1st Sunday at 11 o'clock.

O. J. CROKER, Pastor
J. F. JORDAN, Clerk

ELAM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located at Forest Park, Clayton County, Georgia, meets every 3rd Sunday at 11 o'clock.

O. J. CROKER, Pastor
MALISSIE STEWART, Clerk

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located at 5th and East Park Street, Weiser, Idaho, meets each 4th Sunday at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Address any communications to Deacon A. L. Turnidge, Weiser, Idaho.

ERNEST J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
FLOSSIE ATTEBERY, Clerk

PLEASANT VALLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas. For information please write Mrs. Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C, Kingman, Kansas.

THE LOST CREEK CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, meets first Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Kentucky, ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton, on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

NEW HOPE CHURCH (better known as Lick Creek) meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Kentucky.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE ZION CHURCH OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS, Mayfield, Kentucky, meets first Sunday each month at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M., on South 7th Street.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Baltimore, Maryland, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Street, near Calvert.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on Falls Road about twenty miles north of Baltimore.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Cass County, Missouri, meets on second Sundays in the Memorial Building, Pleasant Hill, Missouri. We invite brethren of our faith and order to visit us.

L. L. SCHENCK, Pastor
MRS. J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk
Pleasant Hill, Mo.

HOPEWELL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Hopewell, N. J., meets each first Sunday at 10:30, and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

ARTHUR R. WARREN, Pastor
LETHA A. BLACKWELL, Clerk

OLIVE AND HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Shokan, N. Y., meets each 2nd Sunday at 1:30 P. M.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
MRS. NEVA BROOKS, Clerk

The **WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,** Warwick, Orange County, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth

Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are at 10:30 A. M. DST.

The **MIDDLETOWN AND WALLKILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,** Middletown, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday from April to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. Meetings are at 2 P. M. DST.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, New York City, meets every first and third Sundays at McBurney Branch Y. W. C. A. 215 W. 23rd Street, corner of 7th Ave. (Elevator to 2nd floor.) 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M. All visitors are welcome.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

THE WILSON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Wilson, N. C., meets each second Sunday at 3 P. M., and Saturday evening before at 7:30 P. M. The location is on the corner of Green and Jackson Streets.

MRS. BETTIE RICHARDSON, Clerk

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30. W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor

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BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin, Oregon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes.

ERNEST ATTEBERY, Pastor

ROCK SPRINGS OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, meets each first Sunday at 10:30. The meeting house is located on highway 222, about one-quarter mile of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line.

JOHN D. WOOD. Pastor
CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets each 5th Sunday from May through September, with two days meeting the 1st Sunday in May; and meets at Needmore, Pa., on 5th Sundays from October through April, with two days meeting the 2nd Sunday in October.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
ORIEN MELLOTT, Clerk
McConnellsburg, Pa.

THE PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Memphis, Tennessee, meet in the Primitive Baptist Church, corner of Getwell and Fizer Streets, on second Sunday in each month at 11 A. M. and Saturday evening before; also on fourth Sundays at 11 A. M.

H. G. BROWN, Pastor
791 Watson Street
L. C. CAMPBELL, Clerk
3347 Tutwiller Street

CANE CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and is located nine miles Southwest of Martin, Tennessee. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT T. PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
J. B. JONES, Clerk
Rt. 1, Martin, Tenn.

BORDEAUX PREDESTINARIAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Nashville, Tenn., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. The church is located on the old Hydes Ferry Road in Bordeaux, in Nashville. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

The **WALNUT FORK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH,** near Cottage Grove, Tennessee, meets on the second Sunday of each month.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor
R. L. VEAZEY, SR., Clerk

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, Houston, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before 10:30 A. M. Church is located on Little York Highway, four miles north of Houston, and one mile east of Highway 76.

W. W. FLEET, Pastor
IRENE WISENBAKER, Clerk

MT. ZION CHURCH, Weslaco, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.; and each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday before at 2:00 P. M., at their new location: seven miles West of Weslaco, on highway 83.

E. B. AULT, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk

SARDIS CHURCH, Amarillo, Texas, meets first Sundays at 10:30, in the home of E. J. Parsons, 1711 Lincoln Street.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, has moved their meeting place to 3629 8th Avenue. They meet each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Take College Ave. bus to Butler and Ryon; go one block West, then half block North to church. C. U. LANDERS, Pastor

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THE ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST CHURCH, Lawn, Texas, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
MRS. NOLA STEWART, Clerk

AN ARM OF PILGRIM REST CHURCH, meets each second Sunday and Saturday night before at Earth, Texas.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
A. A. CHAMBERS, Clerk

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30, and Saturday night before, at the home of M. J. Culpepper. Lovers of the truth invited.

LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk

THE OLD SALEM CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS, four miles South of Teague, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

SAINTS REST OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday evening before at seven-thirty, at 4614 Sylvester Street.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
D. G. CONNELL, Clerk

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday afternoon at 2:30.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located on Route 28, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia.

ARTHUR L. CARTER, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. each second month (February, April, etc.), and is near Lucketts, about eight miles north of Leesburg, Virginia.

and

BROAD RUN CHURCH, Poolesville, Maryland, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. each second month (January, March, etc.)

L. D. DUKE, Clerk
Charlestown, W. Va.

MT. ZION CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, Virginia, on Route 50, between Washington and Winchester, Virginia.

MRS. DAVID FARNIE, Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are always glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Deacon G. C. Spindle, Lincoln 3-3782.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 8:00 P. M., Fairmont Park, 2023 Tidewater Drive.

C. N. BUNN, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Richmond, Virginia, meets each fourth Sunday in their new meeting house about ten miles South of Richmond, just off highway 360 South.

R. S. PAYNE, Pastor

DAN RIVER CHURCH, between Danville, Va. and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville, Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday night before, on Bradley Road.

W. R. DODD, Pastor

LITTLE ZION PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Chehalis, Washington, meets in the home of Sister Effie Parke, 1360 First Street the first Sunday of each month at 11 A. M.

HOWARD EASON, Pastor

BETHEL OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, of Riffe, Washington, meets each 3rd Sunday at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 7 P. M. For information write the Clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. VERNIE SCHOONOVER, Clerk
Box 612, Morton, Wash.

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, Naches, Washington, meets at 10:30 A. M. each second Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. DASIE BAKER, Clerk
Rt. 1, Naches, Wash.

HARMONY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, about four miles East of Huntington, W. Va., near Route 60 at Russell Creek, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

J. R. LANE, Moderator
MILDRED STANLEY, Clerk
Rt. 2, Huntington, W. Va.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 130 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1962 NO. 2

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/62
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

WAITING AND PRAISING

Dear Lord I await the portion
Of thy rich grace thou hast for me:
My arm is too short to reach it,
Unless you extend it to me.

How sweet the taste of the morsels
You have given along the way.
For these my heart is so thankful —
I know you deserve all the praise.

True without grace I am nothing:
My works are all tarnished you see.
There's no way to obtain mercy
Except you extend it to me.

Oh, great is thy power and fullness,
And thy mercies so full and free:
No mortal mind can comprehend
Half the praise we owe to thee.

Thy might and power is eternal —
Mortal praise can't extol enough.
Great God, the friend of us sinners,
All creatures can't praise thee enough.

Hester B. Thompson,
Cumberland, Md.
July, 1961

"POWERS THAT BE ARE ORDAINED"

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God." (Romans 13:1)

Dear Household of Faith — Through the Signs of the Times:

For some time now the Scripture quoted has been on my mind to the point where it seemed to overshadow other forceful Scriptures. It has given, or caused me to meditate upon it for many hours. For a time it seemed to me that of all the attributes of God, his power excells all the others. However, I don't believe it can be said that his wisdom or his love or any of the other attributes can be separated or taken singly, and one held to be greater than the others. The Scriptures seem very clear in showing that in all things, God is perfect and lacks or needs nothing. He is all-wise, all-powerful, all-sufficient, all-enduring, all-righteous, omnipotent and omnipresent, and his ways past finding out. His love is past the comprehension of man. After these several centuries, man still has found out but little about God and that has come to them by God's own power of revelation as he sees fit to reveal himself.

Altho spoken or written thousands of years apart, we notice that the words of Job, 12:10, are almost identical, for he said "In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind". Since it is a gospel truth, proven in the several other Scriptural statements of prophets of old and writers in the New Testament, God being the one and only power to begin with, and "The Powers That Be" being ordained of him (thus subservient and directly controlled by him), man is completely ruled out in having anything to do with what has come to pass in the past or what is to take place in the future. This would apply to all things of a Scriptural nature, as well as all things earthly or natural. The reference, "The Powers That Be", means, I believe, all the multitude or types or

kinds of power that has existed in the past or that exist today and that will exist or come in the future. If this Scripture, when taken in its complete meaning, does not spell out and prove PREDESTINATION, then my reasoning is off.

For some time after I began to earnestly search the Scriptures, I could not accept various portions as being the gospel truth. I could not believe that the power of the Devil came from or had its source in God. It just had to be a fact that it came from another source. Predestination, as believed and taught by the Old Baptists, just couldn't be possible. Then as time passed, and God, in his own good time and way, gave me the power to see and understand a little more here and a little more there, the picture changed and all that is written in the entire Holy Bible, to me is a gospel truth. I accept it all, without equivocation. I am reconciled to God's power as being the one and only power, and by it only are we living and breathing. His Spirit (or presence) is everywhere in the heavens and the earth. As Job stated in 37:5, "God thundereth marvellously with his voice; great things doeth he, WHICH WE CANNOT COMPREHEND".

It may seem to some, as it does to me when meditating upon this Scripture, rather perplexing that God ordained the "Powers That Be" and set them apart for his purpose. That would, I believe, include the present nuclear 50 megaton bomb recently exploded in Russia. The force (power) of fifty million tons of T.N.T. is past the comprehension of most men. I fully believe that God has destined or purposed such as this, and other great and powerful man-made things such as outer-space contrivances. It is to confuse mankind and draw away their attention from the good and power of God. Wherever man now dwells on this Universe, the Divine and Holy Power of God is spoken of, or written about, but little, if any, excepting by the scattered remnant of his chosen ones; while the so-called powers and scientifiic developments of man are publicized and voiced so loudly.

My mind turns to past records of God's power as opposed to man's. To mention one or two, it is found in St. John 10:18 that Jesus told those about him that no man had the power to take his life. He said "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself". Again later when Jesus stood before Pilate (St. John 19:11) and heard Pilate speak of his power to crucify or release him, Jesus replied: "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above". I believe this ties directly in with the Apostle Paul's words that the "powers that be are ordained of God". It was God that gave Pilate the power even to live, or to release or crucify his Son. It was the fulfillment of His Divine purpose and plan.

In Acts 5:38, we find that the Apostle Peter and others were before the Council because of their teachings and works. The learned man Gamaliel, a member of the Council, must have been possessed with an understanding of God's power, for he stood up and said, "for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught;" and (verse 39) "But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God".

Much is written in books, periodicals, newspapers, and much being said in TV and Radio programs about the power of man's contrivances as now in the hands of man, particularly the great enemy powers. Great movements are already set up or being set up to combat them before they destroy our Government and possibly the entire human race. While it is too terrible to think upon, yet I am constrained to accept the Scripture just quoted. If it is the work of man, it will come to naught in the end, but if it is in God's predestinated plans and purpose, we cannot hinder it one iota, regardless of what we are urged to do. I believe the preponderance of references in the Scripture treating on the last days of this earthly era,

point out that God has thusly predestinated that it should come to pass, and that the time this world is to remain, is short.

One can but briefly touch upon the power of God, as told of in the Scriptures, when writing. Books have been written, and lesser writings, thruout the years of the Creation of the heavens and the earth and the creating of man, and God's power to "breathe the breath of life into him and make him a living soul"; and of the many other great miracles of God's power when applied to the accomplishing of his will and pleasure. Without his Holy and Divine Power to sustain his chosen ones while they dwell here on this troubled earth, we would be of all people most miserable.

In including myself in this chosen group, I feel that I can be mistaken, and I can only go on living in hope, desiring and longing for further proof that I am included therein. My hope is aided and abetted so much by reading what the several members of the Household of Faith write of their own experiences. The **Signs of the Times** could come each week and I would still be anxiously waiting for each number.

Yours in the Faith, I hope,
Wm. O. Hall
P. O. Box 532
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

Rt. 1, Box 1AA,
Mena, Arkansas

Dear Editors and Readers:

I see our time is out, and we don't want to miss a single copy of the dear old paper. We love it for the truth's sake, and think its the best religious paper ever published. We have read it for many years. According to nature we will soon pass to the Great Beyond.

To our friends who have written us through the paper, we have changed our address from Black Springs, Ark., to Rt. 1, Box 1AA, Mena, Arkansas.

Love to the Editors and readers of the *Signs of the Times* from both of us.

Mrs. J. H. Head

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER P. D. GOLD

(Concluded)

I am satisfied to have forbearance and the spirit of feet-washing. If Jesus or any of his disciples had ever said that a church should wash feet whenever they commune, or if there is a single example where the church in the days of the apostles observed feet-washing in connection with the Lord's supper after the resurrection of Jesus, then we should require it thus done now; but as this does not appear in the Scriptures, it is not wise to enforce this to the destruction of churches. The reason I engage in feet-washing at the Lord's supper, or at other times, is because it is plainly taught that we should wash one another's feet, and the time or place is not so important as the act done in the right spirit.

Washing feet is taught in such a way as to show and make manifest the very spirit of feet-washing or humility, and so it was impressed on me in those days of affliction and famine wherein the things I am recording were taught me by the hand of God in the furnace of affliction, and my views were cast and moulded in the molten sea of trouble, and searching inquiry, when deep called unto deep at the noise of his waterspouts. Do not tear up churches because they do not wash feet literally, but wait and show the spirit of forbearance and brotherly kindness and longsuffering towards your brethren, remembering God's long suffering to you.

On the question of baptism some trouble arose, but I feel that if the Primitive Baptists were the church of Jesus they were contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, and therefore they kept the ordinances and possessed the true baptism. For Christ is not divided. It is not than one denomination has one part of the ordin-

ances of Christ, and another denomination has another part, or one denomination is the head, and another the hands, and another the feet of the same body, and you have to get all those together to make one body. But the body of Christ is one and fitly framed together. All the members hold one and the same thing, for there is one Lord, one faith and one baptism, even as ye are called in the hope of your calling.

Finally, all objections to the Primitive Baptists were removed. Myself was in the way — my unfitness; but still I loved them so that it was my desire almost every moment to be with them.

It was Saturday before the 2nd Sunday in March, 1870, at Old Kehukee Church, and at the old Meeting House, and I went and told them but little, for I have never been able to express my travail in full. They received me into that church, and on the next day Elder C. B. Hassell, a most precious brother to me, baptized me. It was in the same stream of water and the same place that I had baptized many when a Missionary Baptist, and many of them were present to behold this stoop. The time had been when this would have been an intolerable disgrace. But that day it appeared to me that I was a dead man, so quiet and peaceful and so restful. Glory was everywhere, and peace and love. It was on that day that the words that had been burdening my mind so long, "Wherefore come out from among them," etc., were used by me as a text. It did not seem to me as preaching, but the sweetest ease and relief as the long pent up matter was emptied, and I felt so refreshed. That text has never since burdened my mind.

After being received into the fellowship of the church I visited my father's section, and there was a little church of the Primitive Baptist faith in the neighborhood in which Elder Drury Robbins had lived and died. A seed had been sown there and a remnant was preserved. My mother heard me speak, though she and my father had both gone off with the New School or Missionary Baptists. When she heard me, she said, "Son, you preach as they did when I was baptized, and I desire to live with you." She was received there on confession of faith and her former baptism. Some time after this she and my father were in Wilson, and when he heard the preaching and saw the order of worship of the Primitive people here, he said it carried him back to the days when he was baptized, for it was like that, and he desired fellowship with us, and was also received on confession of faith. My grandfathers and grandmothers on each side of the family were also Primitive Baptists, and thus my father's God is, I hope, my God. "My father's God, and I will exalt him." (Exodus 15:2) Who is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the Lord of our fathers? It is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, and the God of all comfort. Him I desire to worship and serve. What a blessed mystery to be a son of God, born of God and identified with and related to the whole house of Israel.

There was then another matter that was unfolded in my experience. It is the case of what is called the prodigal son. It was that prodigal that had come home — been brought home, and the fatted calf was slain, the ring of love was on my hand, the garment of praise had covered me; then was feasting, music and dancing in my soul. This lasted months. Why cannot one remain in the blessed estate of love, feasting and obedience for life? What a sweet life it looks like it would be! But, alas, we leave our first love, and coldness, doubts, barrenness and trouble sets in.

One very prominent question that much exercised my mind for years, was the nature and extent of the atonement made by Jesus Christ. The Armenians claim an unlimited, general atonement, and say they preach free grace and free salvation. The Primitive Baptists do truly believe and preach an unlimited atonement, and the Armenians can scarcely be said to preach any atonement at all. For Primitive Baptists

preach that no power on earth or in hell can prevent the salvation of the sheep for whom Christ laid down his precious life. For all power both in heaven and on earth is in his hands, and he has power over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. But those who preach that many for whom Christ died, are eternally lost, do certainly limit his atonement. While those who preach that Christ hath forever perfected them that are sanctified, by the one offering of himself once, do preach an unlimited atonement. That is, we hold that so effectual and perfect is the atonement of Jesus, the price that he paid down for redemption of sinners, that nothing shall ever prevent the coming to him of any or all those for whom Jesus died.

The Armenians preach what they call an universal atonement, but it is really no atonement at all. It is dependent on conditions to be performed by man that so fetter and clog their so-called atonement of Jesus, that many things controlled by man may defeat it, or render it ineffectual. It is left with the creature altogether whether he will repent or not. If he does not, although Christ did as much for him as he did for any other that is actually saved, he will never be saved. They hold that Christ died as much for all that are finally lost as he did for any that are saved. Whether the heathen are saved depends on many contingencies, such as whether covetous man will give money to send the gospel there, and then whether any go to preach to them, and then whether the heathen will repent and believe; and further, whether they will live a godly life: None of these things are at all made certain by the death and resurrection of Jesus, but all are dependent on the creature. Now according to this, where is any guarantee or certainty in the atonement of Christ, or the salvation of any one? Is this not a most limited and uncertain atonement? Indeed, is it any atonement at all?

The Primitive Baptists preach the power of God quickens the dead, and that Jesus having all power, quickens whom he will, and makes sinners willing in the day of his power, and that he saves and calls them with an holy calling, and not according to their works; and that all that call on the name of the Lord shall be saved, and that everyone that thirsts shall be filled, and whosoever will come to Jesus shall be saved; and that all that are weary and heavy laden are among the redeemed; that salvation is free and without money or price or previous goodness of the creature, nor is it based on his good works foreseen, but causes the sinner to perform good works and lead a godly life.

Salvation is a gift in every and all senses of the word gift. Preaching, too, is a gift, and those that the Lord calls to preach, receive their qualifications and preparations of him.

It is through much tribulation that we enter the Kingdom of Heaven. My trouble is not with the people my lot is cast among, nor with the doctrine they hold. As Ruth said, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to forsake from following thee." The feeling of my choice and heart is that thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.

The Primitive Baptists have faults, and know they are sinners. Nor do we occupy the land or live as we should. The strength is decayed, and the burden-bearers are weak. The strength and force of discipline is much wasted, and we have departed from the living God in many things. Still they come nearer to the ancient landmarks than any people within my knowledge. They know the truth, and rest in Jesus for salvation.

My trouble is concerning myself. My unbelief, and disobedient conduct, give me more trouble than anything; and yet it seems to me that it does not grieve me deeply enough, or I would repent and reform more. Daily nothing but grace can reach my case. As I look back and can see my life, how abased I should feel. Persecuting the church, reckless in manners, if called to preach it is in such a way as to humble me for life, having

been brought from the land of Moab; if a Christian at all, having a fleshly experience and was taught the depths of Satan by going through its cheats and practicing in its pretensions. If there is one that can truly say that by the grace of God I am what I am, it is myself. Still, after so much that should humble me, I am yet a sinner, no better, but rather worse.

If others have whereof to glory in works, I have the Lord Jesus to glory in, who had mercy on me and saved me. I can never ascertain for a certainty that I am a child of God. We are saved by hope, and walk by faith. We are to give diligence to make our calling and election sure. This is a life time matter, nor is the task finished while we are in this mortal state.

As to the matter of preaching, it has never been clear to my mind that I am called of God to preach, as we know things naturally. It appears to me if I could know that he has called me to serve thus in the gospel of his Son, that it would, next to my own personal salvation, be the greatest thing to know; and if I could know my services thus rendered are of the Lord and to the profit of his people, then it would be the sweetest and best of all labor.

When I was received among the Primitive Baptists I laid my services at their feet, and said on the day that I was received that if my service was not of the Lord, my desire was to cease; and that if I could quit, I would like to do so. But with me it is not a matter of choice, nor am I able to keep my mouth shut or hold my peace, yet I am not able to decide fully without any fear that I am a gospel preacher; and still I am afraid to try to stop, nor dare I do so.

This is a soul humbling life, a life of trials and straits. The question is never with me, What money shall I receive, but it is, What have I to give? It is more blessed to give than to receive. Have I anything of the Lord to give? Has he given me a message for the people? I am poor in this world's goods, and expect to be as long as I live; yet the Lord supplies my need. He has cast my lot as an editor, and by my own labor I earn my bread for myself and those that are with me, and this is in harmony with my views of labor and duty. For a preacher or an editor is no better to labor than others, and labor is ennobling; and if by word or pen or writing I am able to serve the Lord, that is enough for me. It does appear to me that money and the love of it is degrading, and that the best employment of man is to seek nobler things than worldly gain. While some suppose that gain is godliness, it does not occur to me that a soul is ever redeemed with money, or any such corruptible thing as silver and gold, and therefore that money, or the giving of money, can ever atone for sin, nor save a soul, either in this land or any other country.

The maintaining of these principles or those that the Primitive Baptists hold, renders one necessarily unpopular with the world. If ye were of the world, it would love its own. We must be crucified to the world, hated of men for the sake of Jesus, and our names cast out as evil.

It was in 1871, contrary to any and all expectations or thought, I was requested to move to Wilson, where my room has been ever since. A contract had been made for me to live elsewhere and teach school. This contract was cancelled by mutual consent. Soon after moving to Wilson, Elder Bodenheimer, who was then Editor of this paper (Zion's Landmark), requested me to become Associate Editor; and pretty soon it came into my hand. All of this was unforseen by me, unthought of and unsought, but as the way was opened, I found myself willing, if enabled of the Lord, to serve in this way. Though feeling incompent, yet it seems impressed on me thus to serve, and if it is profitable to the household of faith, that is reward enough for me. This too seems to be the way Providence has prepared and opened for me to support my family and self with food and raiment, to-

gether with the little help otherwise received. But it is mainly, indeed nearly all, obtained in this way.

It has been the disposition of my mind, or according to my feelings, to serve churches. But seldom do I take any trip otherwise than as a pastor visiting the same churches I've been endeavoring to serve for years, though it would be a pleasure to me to often visit other churches.

The brethren have borne surprisingly with me and my infirmities, while they are accused as sinners and selfish. I know there is one sinner among them, and that one is myself. They are a kind and loving people, and have shown me much kindness.

For about twelve years my health was very poor, and it was much of an effort to keep going; but within the last year or two it is better. It was the Lord that healed me, for in him we live and move and have our being. Having obtained mercy of the Lord I continue unto this present time, testifying repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

My hope is toward God, if not a deceived soul. Many are my heart sinkings and heart searchings at times. Heavy burdens of a sense of vileness and friendlessness pass over me, yet the Lord delivers, and I trust and hope he will yet deliver. There is hope that when our brief stay on earth has passed, then we shall be partakers of the glorious fruits of the resurrection.

To this end I labor sincerely, desiring to be found in Christ. To have a conscience void of offense toward God and man is the best of all living. There is no such living amid all the wealth and honors of earth. To be so exercised in the truth that one may be able to keep his body under and live to the Lord in peace and in good will toward men, is the best of all living.

If God be for us, who can be against us? If by the faith of Jesus I am enabled to live in truth, dwelling with Israel in peace, and having good will toward men, this is a good exercise.

May peace be upon Israel, and the blessing of the Lord rest on and direct my labor, and may it be to the Lord.

Brethren, pray for me that my faith fail not. To be dead to the world and all worldly institutions, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord, and to live the life I now live in the flesh by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me, and be found unto praise and honor and glory at his appearing, is my desire.

P. D. Gold

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you so. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:2, 3)

The above scripture has been interpreted differently by different persons. Some say that Christ went to heaven to prepare a place there for his people. My father repeatedly said to me that He went to prepare a place here for them; and others say that He went to the cross to prepare a place above for them.

Now the Saviour was speaking of his Father's house, to begin with, and I am inclined to believe that He went there, by way of the cross of course, to prepare a place there for His chosen people: "the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." (Romans 9:23) His vicarious and sacrificial death, his reconciling and meritorious blood-shedding on the tree of the cross, was an atonable and redemptive preparation of the election of grace unto glory.

So it is clear that he went to the cross to prepare his elect for heaven, and not to prepare heaven for them. Some contend that heaven could not be meant for the reason that it was prepared from the foundation of the world. To this argument I would reply that

the Saviour's going to the cross did not prepare a place in heaven for his bride, for the kingdom was prepared for her from the foundation of the world. So no point is gained here without wresting the Scriptures of truth, or straining the language thereof; and I don't think there is any intention of doing that.

As to a state or condition of perfect bliss, or transcendent felicity, or supreme happiness, the presence of Jesus in his glorified body is essential. In a sense this is heaven. It takes his presence by his Spirit to constitute heaven below, which is an earnest or pledge of the celestial joys of the saints within the veil, "whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." (Hebrews 6:20) I quote the words from a familiar song as appropriate here: "'Twas a heaven below, the Redeemer to know." and "'Twill be a heaven above, the Redeemer to love." So He, by his glorious presence, might be considered as the extra preparation of the heavenly mansions, they being thus made ready for occupancy by the saints of all na[illegible] these mansions are not the s[illegible]ts themselves, as some have strangely preached. The Redeemer is the preparation of the predestinated jewels of mercy for the bright abode of God. There the children of the Heavenly King will reign with him for ever, where there will be no sorrowing nor sighing, no dismay nor doubting, no sin nor suffering; but instead, eternal life and everlasting love, consummate bliss, and unending blessedness, "full prosperity" and perfect peace.

The King in his beauty is the crowning adornment of the heaven of heavens. "How beautiful heaven must be!", as the song goes. Christ is the light of the heavenly city, and the life of the blest inhabitants of that city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. (Heb. 11:10) He is the chief corner stone laid in Sion (the gospel church), elect and precious, as recorded; and we delight to extol his virtues, to think of his excellencies, and to dwell on his perfections. He is the "topmost stone" laid in heaven, where he will be the ineffable joy and triumphant song of the saints to all eternity.

Heaven is sometimes used for God (Luke 15:18), and Christ is God. Without Him there would be no heaven, no happy place for any of us; no rest that remaineth to the people of God. (Hebrews 4:9) He is our hope and our peace, and the propituation of our sins. (I John 4:10) In a word, He is all in all to his loved ones, to those given to him before time, to be redeemed by him in time; who, considered in themselves, are the unworthy recipients of his manifold blessings in providence and grace. "For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens (firmament, skies). (Hebrews 7:26) How affecting is the account of Isaiah's vision of the Lord's glory: "I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple." (Isaiah 6:1) O the simplicity of the language! "high and lifted up" — how sweet and melting!

I quote here the answer by the later Elder Sylvester Hassell, of blessed memory, to a question propounded to him as to the meaning of the text. "That in the heaven of immortal glory, where Jesus visibly dwells and reigns, there are many abiding homes for his people; and that, after his death and resurrection and ascension, He would personally and bodily go to that Holy City, that blessed, heavenly country, and prepare these homes for their everlasting abode, and at last take all his people there to live forever with him. He could have made the heavens and the earth and all things therein instantly, but he chose to take six days in which to make them. While he prepares heaven for his people, he prepares them for heaven; and he sovereignly chooses to take time for both of these works of his."

I like the tenor of Elder Hassell's writings, and concur with him in his doctrinal views. He was conservative in setting forth his tenets. His History of the Church is a valuable work, and it should be in the home of every Old School or Primitive Baptist. It is enlightening and instructive; and the readers are amply rewarded for the perusal of its pages. As I remember, about the time I united with the church, more than thirty years ago, I had access to this book, and I read it with avidity. One particular thing I read therein fitted in with my experience so well that I sprang to my feet rejoicing. This was concerning the robe of righteousness, which I felt was symbolized by the robe placed around me by the Saviour "in a dream, in a vision of the night."

For the time, all doubts were removed, and I declared that I had no fear of death whatever. But I have had many doubts and fears since that memorable day, being ready to despair at times. I have gone down into the depths more than once, and have been raised up again to rejoice in hope. So, in conclusion, may I say with the psalmist: "Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou has wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!"

C. W. Vass,
307 New York Avenue,
Elizabeth City, N. C.

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Woodrow W. Bellinger)

The Lexington-Roxbury Association in session with the Olive and Hurley Church, held at the meeting house at Holcottsville, New York, Wednesday and Thursday, September 13 and 14, 1961, sends love, fellowship and greetings to the several churches and associations with which we correspond.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

It is with much joy and, we hope, spiritual affection that we greet you with this Circular Letter, for it is good for the Brethren to meet together in the worship of God. Jesus said, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them", (Matthew 18:20). It is also said, "Forsake not the assembling together." The brethren came from the North, East, South, and West, all proclaiming the same doctrine, "salvation by grace which is the gift of God". He is [illegible] first and the last, the Alpha and Or[illegible]. What a joy it is to hear that lo[illegible]s been provided through Jesus [illegible]our Lord. In St. John 14:6, Jesus [illegible]ito him, "I am the way, the [illegible]nd the life: no man cometh unto [illegible]ather but by me."

All through the Scriptures we find this expounded. It has been said in Galatians 4th Chapter, 24th Verse: "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified". The old is revealed in the new. When Jesus' disciples were walking on their way to a village called Emm[illegible], as [illegible]corded in the 24th Chapter of St. I[illegible] verses 13, 15, 16, "Jesus hi[illegible]ar, and went with them but their eye[illegible] were holden that they should not know him." In the 27th verse, Jesus, "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." In Isaiah 11:1 it says, "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots." In the book of Acts, Chapter 8, we read of the angel of the Lord sending Philip to the eunuch who was reading Esaias the prophet. Philip opened his mouth and began at the same Scripture and preached unto him Jesus.

We shall all be (if we are of that number) one in Christ Jesus from the least to the greatest, rich or poor. The last shall receive as much as the first. Jesus says, "In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you." (St. John 14:2) How much

this is like the natural family. When the first child is born all the love is bestowed on this one child, but when other children arrive a place is there for them also with all the love and loving care as though a place had been prepared. The last is loved just as much as the first. How much more so with our Heavenly Father when Jesus says, "I go to prepare a place for you." There shall be joy and peace beyond human understanding when the saints are joined with Jesus, in eternal praise of God.

That we may have that hope, which is as an anchor of the soul sure and steadfast, which enters into that within the veil to hold us and keep us in that straight and narrow way: "Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it," (Matthew 7:14) "for wide is the gate and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction and many there be which go in thereat," (St. Matthew 7:13), to keep us on that firm foundation, the rock of salvation by grace, which is the gift of God. That we may hear words of spiritual food to feed the hungry soul on Christ. For "a word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver", (Proverbs 25:11) and that we may be given a hearing ear for the Gospel of truth and may we be found ready and waiting as the five wise virgins with the oil of salvation in our lamps. And may we be found faithful as required of stewards when our Lord shall come with healing in his wings and take us to our eternal rest with Jesus, is our prayer. Amen.

Amasa J. Slauson, Moderator
Woodrow W. Bellinger, Clerk
Elnora Sickler, Ass't Clerk

APPRECIATES THE SIGNS

St. Charles, Ky.

Dear Elder Wood:

How we older people do appreciate the dear old **Signs of the Times.** The cold Winter months are here and we cannot meet together as we would like, but there is a mutual love and fellowship for His people, let them be far or near. How we do love to meet and sing the songs of saving grace! Scattered far or near, they have heard that still small voice.

"Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God."

We have just received such a dear letter that I would like to share with others, if it will be alright.

Mona McGregor

THE LETTER

DuQuoin, Ill.
Nov. 20, 1961 — 3:45 A. M.

Dear Brother and Sister McGregor:

Your good letter came a few days ago, and I was glad to hear from you once more. I guess you will wonder why I am writing at this time of the night.

Well, I went to bed at the usual time last night with you dear people on my mind, and thinking about your good meeting which I hope you had yesterday. So I just laid there with all the good Old Baptist's picture on my poor mind, and I haven't been to sleep yet; so here I am.

I would loved to have been with you all yesterday, and heard you sing the good old songs, and also to have heard Elder Biggs preach. We have not had preaching in our association now for about four years; so we are starving to hear the good news again.

So in meditation often I'm cast
And find my thoughts back in the past;
Mid scenes of long ago I dwell
And memories fond my bosom swell,
As pleasures that were mine to share
When I was but a lad back there,

Come fresh to fill my heart with joy;
And once again I live the boy
Who did not know his joy would cease,
And cares would come to mar his peace;
But thought of age as far away —
(Although he knew it would come some day,
But could not fully realize
The sorrows, heart-aches and the sighs
The years would bring as time crept on;
When childish pleasures would be gone
And heavy burdens in their place
Would stoop his form, and line his face
With seams where bitter tears would run
Because of snares he could not shun,
And heart-wounds he could not prevent) —
And lived so happy and content.

How quickly the years have come and gone
Since time for me began to dawn!
I hardly can believe it true
That soon my journey will be through,
And that my work is almost done
In this time world beneath the sun.
And shortly I must quit this strand
When death has seized me with its hand,
And all my mortal powers shall fail,
And I will pass beyond the veil
Where nought but deathly silence reigns;
And I will know no grief or pain
But sleep 'til God shall bid me rise,
And on his glory open my eyes,
To be with Christ my Heavenly King;
And join with all his saints to sing
The fulsome praise to Him that's due
For what his power alone could do,
In conquering death's cold grip for me,
And from its hand to set me free,
That I may live with Him for aye
In that eternal, deathless day.

I thank you for your invitation to your home and to your church. I surely would have enjoyed being with you, but could not see the way clear at that time.

I hope this finds you well, and that you will write again. I surely love to read the good letters I sometimes get from good Old Baptists, but I am a poor hand to write. I thought the last **Signs of the Times** was about the best one I ever read.

Goodbye for now.

Charles M. Harriss

1884 Connally Drive
East Point, Ga.

Dear Brother Wood:

Mr. Paul in England has published the fourth volume of further history of the Gospel Standard Churches, titled, **Some Northern Churches.** I have read some of these books, and they contain a lot of information and interesting reading of old churches, and some of the distinguished ministers and members. At his request I am sending copy of advertisement.

In hope,
George W. Jackson

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EDITORIAL

PSALMS 72:16

"There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall florish like grass of the earth."

This text is suitable for meditation if we are of the city. It is not meant for any other, and lest others would come and gather on the tops of the mountains, thus depriving the inhabitants of the city, it has been hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. In the first place, the city is hid, and the corn that they eat has not been palatable to the carnal appetites of men. Hid away in the text is a number of delightful themes. As blessed of God, let us analyze the text under four heads.

1. The source and location of the corn.
2. The results or fruit of eating the corn.
3. The city, and what it is.
4. The purpose in it all.

1. It has pleased the Lord to teach, as well as to feed, in the top of the mountain. It was his custom to leave the multitude and go up into the mountain and teach his disciples. Peter and James and John were taught a valuable lesson on the mount of transfiguration. It was on the mountain that Abraham and Issac had the doctrine of God our Saviour taught them. It was in the mountains that Solomon built the temple.

As high as the heavens are above the earth, so are the Lord's ways above our ways. If man had been designing this place for the corn he would have placed it on a level place, and would never be content to have it given to this one city. It has pleased our God to establish the place of feeding away from those that would follow for the sake of gain. As long as men can have an easy religion, they will have it in a way that will get the praise of men. Pure and undefiled religion is not gained by the works of the creature. The first work of God in teaching his people their dependence on grace, is to afflict them. This affliction comes through the arrows of the law. It is God that wounds, and it is God that heals. My prayer to God would be that he enable us to remember how wounded we were when we left the mount that burned with fire, where blackness and darkness and a raging tempest had us in its grip; where Moses cried, "I exceedingly fear and quake." (Hebrews 12:18, 21) What a death blow it was to us when we heard that voice of words, when we found out that we could not endure in this mountain.

God's people are come to the mountain of the Lord. To those that have had one visit to the first mountain, the most enjoyable part of their life is spent up in the mountains. "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together." What a precious place to go, but how utterly unable we are to get there in our own strength. We would never have seen the city, nor known the sweetness of companionship and fellow-

ship of its inhabitants had not the Prophet come our way. What wretched and hungry creatures we were as we scatter from the mountain of fire and darkness and blackness and tempest. Instead of coming to God our desire was to get further away from his dwelling place in the law mountain. O the intensity of hunger as we try to feed on the husks of the law! But hark! What is that new voice that is heard in the distance? Ah, methinks it is the Voice of our Beloved, and it does seem that it has come to us at the most needed moment. It is not the voice of one in distress, but it is the voice of One that cares for the distressed. It is not the voice of one that wants somebody to do something for him, but it is the Voice of One that commands us to come to Him, and that he will do something for us. The source of this handful of corn is in the true and living God. If the law never passes away until all be fulfilled, how long would it be until it was fulfilled by us? If any read this little message that think they can do so let them ponder well. **We could not endure this voice of words.** We could not hear the words of that law spoken into our souls, and live. A handful of corn is to be in the top of the mountain. It behooves us to find its source. We could not endure on Mount Sinai. We could not hear God and live. We could not go up there again, much less could we take supplies upon that mountain for even our own needs, much less the needs of a city.

How glad I am that the Lord has spared me to one more time write the glad tidings of the gospel to you, and you. How glad I am that help was laid on One that is mighty to save, and that "when the fullness of time was come, that God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." This is love beyond the love of men. Some would even dare to die for a good man, but here is One that agreed in eternity to die for sinners. To pass by the nature of angels; to pass by the noble of earth, and to take on flesh in which he could suffer; to have all the afflictions of fallen man meet in his body; to humbly and willingly appear on the sin smitten earth and that alongside his fallen bride as she weltered in agony under the law as she labored to keep it and could not endure, as she listened in soul distress at the Voice of words which carried death to her.

Come tell me. Who moved to provide corn in the top of the mountain? Did God's people? No, for they moved away, and they could not endure, and they could not hear and live. Did God tell Moses that "unless they make a new start and come back to me, I will send death upon them?" No, no, let the world preach that; let Babylon have her fill of that spurious doctrine. Listen, dear child of God, the Old School Baptist are preaching a doctrine that provides a handful of corn for those on the mountain, for those gathered in the city. Without God raising his children a Prophet, and giving them hearing ears to hear him, there would not be any children, there would not be a mountain of the Lord, there would not be a handful of corn, there would not be a city to flourish.

The source of this corn is in God. Everything flows to us from him. We have never had anything to offer him except that which we first received. Not the first thing has ever gone up of its own efforts. We have never prayed, save when we were blessed with the gift and spirit of prayer; we have never heard, save when we have been blessed with a hearing ear; we have never seen, save when we have been given seeing eyes; we have never understood, save when our heart was opened to the things of the Spirit; we have never had an appetite for a handful of corn, save when we were blessed with a hungering after righteousness; and last, but by no means least, we would never have had any corn, save Jesus, the corn that sustains life, had been given us.

The location of this corn is in heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord. This

is the mountainous country where this corn is found. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. God is known in her palaces for a refuge." Have you ever joyed in Mount Zion? If so, you have revelled in the beauty of her situation, and you have often feasted at her banqueting table wherein was spread the bread corn which it pleased God to bruise for you. "It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow into it." If there is one reader that can flow up stream against the current, then, but not until then, will I yield that getting into these mountains is the result of men's efforts. The timber used in the building of Solomon's temple was cut (without consultation), put into floats or rafts (without help from the timber), and carried by sea to the place of building. "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go **up** to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths, for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Ah, what a glorious journey it is to go up to Mount Zion, to the city of our God, and to leave behind the things that are to perish with the using. "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnites: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem, a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a **place** of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby." This location of a handful of corn is not found in a city that is seen by observation. It is not listed among mountains and cities of the earth. It is seen and lived in, and corn is found and enjoyed alone by faith.

2. The results or fruit of eating this corn. In the gospels, as well as Paul's letters, there is much precious thought expressed about the multiplicity of the word, of grace, of peace. As the adding commanded by Peter (2 Peter 1) can not be done save by having the different sums, just so, no more, nor, please God, no less, can the fruit of the handful of corn be increased by any save he who is the originator of the handful. The fruit of the handful of corn shall shake like Lebanon. This language is highly figurative and, even though many think that spiritualizing is not permissible, it must be made to conform to the spiritual comfort of God's hungry children. Truly, Lebanon has not been shaking by the winds of storms, but we notice that the fruit shall shake like Lebanon. The fruit of these mountains shall shake like the fruit on Lebanon. This mountain was the most noted mountain for the variety of its fruits. The work of Christ, the handful of corn, produces fruitful trees, and, living on Christ, the fruit is copiously brought forth. These fruits come from healthy trees. When trees are planted in good soil, have plenty of light and moisture, are well fertilized, they bear much fruit. How delightful it is to see the sheep fed on the living Bread, which bread came down from heaven to the mountain of the Lord's house, and what a glorious beauty there is in these trees of righteousness as they bear fruit unto the Husbandman's honor and glory. God has left a mark on his sheep. This mark is not seen by those having it. (Matthew 25:37) He has named his people, but the name is placed in a manner that they feel far from bearing his name. (Rev. 22:4) Nevertheless, his work in bringing them to the feeding place in the mountains will produce an outward walk that is in conformity to the righteousness that is by faith instead of that which is by law. One taste of this handful of corn is enough to cause the recipient to desire to follow in his commandments. Eating from this handful makes

for well fed and well behaved children of God.

3. The city, and what it is. Much has been covered under the first heading as to what the city means. If men founded and built the city, then the city is of men. The cities that men build (religiously) are today smoking with fire; darkness and blackness and tempests roll around them, as it came from Mount Sinai. They are preaching around their cities the same thing that God thundered to ancient Israel. The child of God caught in the meshes of their cunning weave is terror stricken by what they preach. It is not any small wonder that the dear Old School Baptists can not get a **grain of corn** from such mountains. As far as manifestation is concerned; as far as organization is concerned, **as far as truth is concerned,** the Old School Baptist church is that city. In the world that we live in there is not a body of religionists but who ascribe unto themselves a part in storing the corn, in having an appetite for it, in producing the good works after eating of it, in building and watching the city, save the Old Baptist people. Why is it that men deny this? Why is it that men say, The church is not the Old School Baptist?

This city is a little city. In this it must be compared to other cities, to other women, to others that call themselves churches. I am not sent to minimize the aggregate of God's children. The wisdom of men could not number them. They could not, as a whole, be said to be a little city. Nor could they be said to be a little flock. But it is **the little city,** and it is **the little flock** that is today maintaining that the solid and comforting and edifying themes found in the text are entirely of the Lord. (Eccl. 9:14; Luke 12:32)

The city of the church was, and is presently, being built by the Lord. The Lord came to earth and he had not a follower save those that had been born anew, that had come at his call. The city is today the same city that it used to be; it is born anew; it is called by grace. The names of those that contributed blood to build it, the help that was given on Calvary, those that have had one end of the government on their shoulder, are missing from the roll call of those that were a contributing factor in the erection of this city. In this city they are all poor in themselves, but they are rich in their Head, in he who is unto them a handful of corn. This city is far different than any other, be their name what it may be. They are satisfied with a handful of corn. "For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread." A contented city, a satisfied city. A city whose watchmen have never had but one message to report as they watched. That message has not been changed, and, unless the corn gives out, it will never be changed. That watch word is a simple message. If it was the truth then, and we have any right to being the house of the Lord, (If we have not that right, why? If we do not have it, who does, and why?) it is the truth now. If it isn't the truth now, why? Has the power diminished? has the grace given out? has wisdom flunked her lesson? has the throne of God crumbled? has God changed? is the city (church) now being kept by men? That message is still the same, to wit, All is well, and the Lord omnipotent reigneth, and all things work together for good, to all them that are called to the city.

I want to hasten to say that all that are of this city do not have their name on the church book, but they are of the city. All they of the city have the handful of corn to eat. They all flourish like the grass of the earth. They do not flourish as grass, for then they would be soon faded away. They flourish **like** grass, luxuriant, healthful, green plantings of the Lord, abounding in his finished work.

4. The purpose in it all. It is according to the purpose of God to provide these mountains for his hungry sheep,

for the children of God. God did not make the earth and what is in it without purpose. Furthermore, nothing has ever thwarted that purpose. If the devil, and all that he has dominion over, has ever thwarted the purpose of God, then the handful of corn would have stayed in the grave, and Peter and all the other apostles would be still fishing. It was the purpose of God that his house be established in the top of the mountains. It was the purpose of God that Jesus come into the world, suffer and bleed and die, to endure the thundering voice of God in his law proclamation. He endured where I could not; he heard the Lawgiver and lived, where I could not. If God's purpose is older than the natural creation, then his purpose embraced the fall. It was his purpose to bruise him; it was his purpose to put him to death. The purpose of God was, and still is, to save sinners. Let me say again and again that nothing has thwarted that purpose. He is today, as much as he did yesterday, and in the same way and degree that he will tomorrow, saving his children. He carried them in his bosom and brought them safely to the mountain, and he became to them the handful of corn. He was ever that corn, but they had not needed him. If I am not mistaken, he has purposed to bring them to a state of hunger, and to give them himself as their staff and bread of life. This mountainous country will never be removed by any power of the earth. The powers of men may incarcerate those of the city, but there in that prison will rise the glorious mountains of the Lord, and a hand filled with bread of heaven will be reached to them, and it will come from Boaz, and it will be corn that is parched. (Ruth 2:14) Ah, my brethren, how glad I am that Jesus endured the wrath of God as it was poured out in fury on him. My soul is inflamed in love to God, and I hope in grateful acknowledgment, that his purpose embraced corn for the poor and needy and hungry beggars and vagabonds in the earth, and that after they had fainted by reason of wanderings, that he led them forth by the right way to a city of habitation, a quiet place, where babes are silently and contentedly eating corn that came through the fire for them.

This writing has been done at the request of Sister D. S. Reid, of North Carolina. I used this as a text at the Upper Country Line Association, and she wanted me to write on it. I realize that it is not as I spoke on that occasion.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee." (Mark 5:19)

I like this text for several reasons; I like it because it is so simple and easily understood. Listen: "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee." Seventeen little words, all of one syllable, and so plain that any little schoolboy could tell the meaning of each one; in fact I am surprised at the simplicity of the language used by the Savior in his teaching. There are so many little words that I can but wonder that men of common sense should deem it absolutely necessary to have a classical education in some worldly institution in order to preach the gospel. I like this text because of its address, being particular; it is not addressed to the preacher. There are texts in the Bible that apply to him, but this one does not. I like it because it is not addressed to the church members. Brethren and sisters, there is an abundance of Scripture for you, telling you how you should live and walk, to which we would all do well to give more earnest heed, but the immediate application of this one is not to you. I like it because it is not addressed to the dead sinner. While men cavil, and are undecided as to what part of the Scripture is to you, I feel sure that I

would be taking the precious pearls of the kingdom and casting them before swine were I to apply this Scripture to you.

Now some one is saying, Who does it apply to? He says it is not to the preacher, nor church member, nor the dead sinner; who in the world does it mean? I will tell you: it is addressed to a very peculiar class of individuals, and as they read this they say in their hearts, That means me, that means me. Those whom God has called by his grace, and taught their sinfulness, and put into their hearts to take up their cross and follow him in the ordinance of baptism, and who are pondering these things in their hearts, I want you to feel that you are the subjects of my address, and while I am writing to you, if the Spirit gives me liberty, I am sure the old brethren and sisters will be interested and fed also.

The first word in the text is a little word composed of only two letters: "Go," but O how powerful it becomes to the child of grace when spoken by the Spirit of God. The way of the Spirit in the heart of a sinner is different from the way of anything else in the world. There are perhaps none who know better the force of the word, when spoken by that still small voice, in tones louder than thunder, when the Spirit said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel," than preachers, yet you, brethren and sisters, are not strangers to its persuasive eloquence, and you yet remember the time when it was the last thing you heard at night and the first thing in the morning: "Go," and you never found rest until you obeyed. The word is both persuasive and imperative. Persuasive as characteristic of the meek and lowly Jesus, and it has in it the tone of assurance and encouragement, as from a father to a child. Imperative as one who has the right to command you to whom you belong, and who, being all-wise, will not direct his children to go wrong. Therefore he says, "Take my yoke upon you." He not only tells you to "Go," but tells you to go to the best place in the world: "home," the sweetest word in all the English language — home. Around it there clusters more joy and pleasure than any other place; indeed, there is no place like home, there is no place that has such a wonderful influence. At home you know you can take off your hat and coat and rest; rest is sweeter there. Then you can do things there and say things that you would not do out in the world; your best friends are there, they will bear with your failings and hide your imperfections more than all else in the world; they are our loved ones, there father dwells, one of our best friends, the one who protects us, who provides for our living, and who has toiled the best part of his life that we might have bread. When we are young we are prone to mistake the kindness of our parents. I remember when I was a boy my father always taught us to do right, but he was strict, and when I would disobey he would chastise me severely, and as I was not the best boy in the world, and he had good sense enough to know it, I was well acquainted with the "rod." I would complain, and think father was too hard on me, but I have lived to thank him for every stroke he gave me. Young man, listen, has God spared your father to you? If so, let me tell you to be kind to him. He may be old, feeble and childish, and deaf and blind, and you think him an old fogey, and that he needs much waiting on, but with it all remember he is your father. He will not be with you always; the time will come when he will not be in the room when you come down to breakfast in the morning, for death will come and he will be gone from the fireside, gone from the farm, gone from the neighborhood, and cry as loud as you may he will not hear you. I will never forget my feelings the day my father was buried. When we returned to the house I thought, This is the first time in all my life that I ever entered father's house when he was not there to provide for me, and although it has been seven years, yet today my poor heart almost

bursts when I realize he is gone never more to return. It seems to me if I could have him back I would treat him better than I did. So, my young friends, do not be cross to your father; make his last days pleasant, and see how kind you can be to him.

Home is where mother dwells, the one who cared for us and watched over us in our helplessness, the dearest, sweetest friend in the world. There is no love like a mother's love. Young lady, listen to me a moment. If God has spared your mother to you, thank him for it and love her, too. She may be old, and perhaps childish, but she is your mother and all the one you will ever have in this world. You can never do too much for her. You can hardly know what she has suffered for you, and when you go out from your home on pleasure bent tell her where you are going, she has the right to know; tell her when you will return, and keep your promise faithfully, for it is her heart that will be uneasy and her eyes that will refuse to close, and her ears that will hear the hours tolled off one by one all through the dreary night until she hears you come, hears your step upon the stair and hears you enter your room; only then will she fall asleep to get the much needed rest to prepare her tired body for the duties of the coming day. In the southern part of this State lives my mother; she is old, wrinkled and grey. I can remember when she was young, but I cannot remember when she was not good to me. She is always glad to see me come home, and when I am there she delights to wait on me and make me comfortable, just as she did years ago when I was a boy. That is one place where I am always sure of a royal welcome when I go. So, girls, be kind to mother while she is with you, for the time may come when those dear lips will quiver for the last time and you will hear that voice no more, and in after years as you stand with nothing but the picture of the dear face upon the wall and gaze upon it with eyes by tears made dim, every unpleasant word, every unkind look and every neglect you gave her will come crowding upon your memory, and you would give the world to have the opportunity to do better.

But I must pass on. When I get to writing about such things I never know when to stop. The church is a home; I found it so. You brethren and sisters found it one, and you, poor, trembling child of grace, will find it not only a home, but your home; yes, "my home;" there your best friends, your kindred dwell. When on my way to your home in company with you we perhaps will pass several fine looking houses, and I will think, Now surely the next one is the place, it is such a fine looking place; but no, you drive right on by, and directly you leave the main road, turn toward the creek, over the rough stones, through a gate or two and stop at a very plain, ordinary looking house, and you say, "This is the place." I say, "Why do you stop here?" You say, "This is my home." I say, "We passed several nicer houses than this." "Yes," you say, "but they were not my home; they may be just as much home to the people who live in them, but they are not my home." A few years ago I, in company with Elder Lines, visited a sister who had just been baptized the meeting before. Her husband was in an ill humor about it, and did not try to conceal his feelings. I remember he said, "If she wanted to join a church so badly there is one just across the road, without her walking three miles in the hot sun to go to that Old Baptist Church." We can understand why she did it; that was her home, the other was not. When I went home I went to the Old Baptist Church; my going there did not make it my home; I went there because it was my home. It has been a home to me ever since, a good home, and I do not want to exchange it for another. My prayer is that I may dwell there all the days of my life. It may not show up well along with other homes, from a worldly view, but it is the dearest spot on earth to me. "Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home."

But I must hasten to the next words: "and tell." How plain this is! He not only tells you where to go, and what you will find, but also what to do when you get there: "tell." Ah, yes, I hear you say, that is the trouble. I believe the Old Baptist Church is the church, and they require when one comes home that they tell something, and I believe that is right, too, but I have nothing to tell. This troubled me for a long time, and the members here have not forgotten the trouble it gave them because they had nothing to tell. Let me tell you it does not take much talk of the right kind to gain a membership in an Old Baptist Church. When I talked to the church I could not tell what I wanted to in the way I wanted to, and I never have been satisfied about it. It seemed I began in the middle and talked both ways, but they were satisfied. One old brother whom I had been afraid of, because I thought he knew so much, said he could have voted for me if I had not said a word, and I know some today I would be willing, and these brethren would be willing to receive into their membership if they could not say a word. I remember a few years ago, at an Old Baptist church meeting in Ireland, when the privileges of the church were extended a little girl eleven years old came forward and told her hope. She talked all right and acted well, but her age! The idea of a girl only eleven years old a member of an Old Baptist Church. It was unusual, so the old deacon felt it his duty to ask her some questions. He asked, "Were you a sinner before this change came that you speak of?" "Yes, sir," she replied. "Well, are you a sinner yet?" "Yes, sir, I feel that I am a greater sinner than ever," she replied. "Well," said he, "how do you account for this change then?" She looked up in her childish innocence and said, "I do not know, sir, if I can quite explain it, or not, but I used to be a sinner running after sin, and now I am a sinner running away from sin," and they received her, and would not you, brethren and sisters, hold up both hands, if it were necessary, to receive into your fellowship one who gave such evidence of grace? The oldest of us can tell no more; the youngest can tell as much. I thought when I heard it that it was a whole sermon, the biggest I had ever heard.

"Tell them." Who? the world? No. Strangers? No. The ungodly? No; tell your friends; they will understand you, the world will not. You may be a stranger to them, but they are not strangers to what you tell. You cannot tell it to the world. I remember hearing an able minister tell his experience in this line. He was deeply convicted, had been in deep trouble for some time, and when God revealed his face to him the change was so great and everything seemed so plain he wanted to tell it, and was sure he could make any one see it. He had about a dozen men employed in an adjoining room, and he rushed into their presence, shouting and telling them what he had just passed through, and they laughed at him. Instantly came reaction, and he thought, Is this a delusion? am I a fool? am I crazy? and he returned to the office cast down in gloom and despair, and remained so for some time, until one day he was passing a place where some horses were hitched, and becoming curious to know what was going on, went in, and found it was an Old Baptist meeting. After preaching, an invitation was given, and before he knew it he had taken a front seat. The preacher asked him to tell his hope. He told some of the same things he told that day in the shop. He had not talked long when he heard sobs in the room, and looking around saw they were all weeping. The thought came to him, They are ashamed of you. But it was not that, he had found his friends and was telling them; they understood him well, and knew all about it. Those tears were tears of joy, and their eloquence has not ceased to ring in his heart. Tell them; they love and long to hear it. Tell them what? How good you are? No. What you have done for the Lord? No. What you are doing for him? No.

Well, what? Why, just what they delight to hear: what great things the Lord hath done for you. Notice the word "great." The Lord is great, and great are all his works. I hear you talk about a little hope; do not do it, the apostle called it a good hope. Also notice the word "things," in the plural, more than one. Time would fail me to tell of all the things the Lord has done for us, and every one of them great, so great that all the world combined could not do the least one. Listen to a few, and then I will close. He redeemed my soul, set my feet upon a rock, put a new song in my mouth, told me I was a sinner. It is a great thing to know you are a sinner. He died for me. But it is more particularly with reference to his dealings with you in experience that the text applies. But give your friends the evidence that you are born again, and they are assured of all the sure mercies of David to you, for the God they worship is the Sovereign who works all things after the counsel of his own will, and he will save his people with an everlasting salvation, world without end.

Frank McGlade

(The above was written by Elder Frank McGlade, of Hebron, Ohio. It was found among his papers after his death, and was published in the Signs of May 15, 1911. — Ed.)

OBITUARIES

ARRIE B. JESTICE

Arrie B. Jestice was born May 19, 1880 near Whitesville, Delaware, died August 16, 1961, near Laurel, Delaware, making her stay on earth 81 years, two months and 28 days. She was the daughter of the late George W. and Nancy J. Scott.

She was married September 26, 1900 to Isaac H. Jestice, near Laurel, Delaware. To this union four children were born, three of whom survive and live in or near Laurel. They are: Raymond F. Jestice, Mrs. Mattie J. Crouch and Paul H. Jestice. There are ten grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

She leaves to mourn her departure her husband, the children and three sisters: Mrs. Estella F. Jones and Clarissa E. Brinson both of Delmar, Delaware, and Mrs. Ida Black of Baltimore, Maryland, with other relatives and many friends.

The deceased attended Broad Creek Church for many years, and she and her husband were a great help in the maintenance of that church. On May 17, 1953 she was baptized into the fellowship of this church by the late Elder H. M. Bennett. She was then 73 years old.

Arrie was a wonderful person; quiet and unassuming. So noble was she, that her children can now rise up and justly call her blessed.

I cannot close this writing without a few words of commendation for her daughter-in-law, Olive. On October 29, 1938, Olive Whaley married Paul Jestice, son of the deceased, and came at once to live in the home of her father and mother-in-law. I doubt if there was ever any ill-feeling existing between them. I have visited in this home occasionally, and felt like saying, here is the true meaning of the word "home".

The funeral for the deceased was held in the Windsor Funeral Home, Laurel, Delaware, on Saturday, August 19, 1961, conducted by Elder Arthur Warren, Pastor of Broad Creek Church. Burial was in Laurel Hill Cemetery.

Written by request,
A. T. Benson

MARY ELIZABETH WHITE CLAGGETT

Mary Elizabeth White Claggett was born September 4, 1870; and died November 4, 1961, making her stay on earth 91 years, 2 months. She was the daughter of Benjamin White and Sarah Elizabeth Jones White, and was united in marriage to Honore Martin Claggett on September 4, 1889, who preceded her in death.

She is survived by two children: Richard Martin Claggett, and Mary Martin Cuttle; and by 5 grandchildren and 17 great grandchildren; also by one brother, Benjamin White, of Poolesville, Maryland. She was the mother of four other sons, who preceded her in death: Dr. Thomas John Claggett, Commander Benjamin White Claggett, Laurence Gray Claggett, and Honore Martin Claggett, Jr.

She was baptized in the faith of the Primitive Baptist Church at New Valley, near Leesburg, Virginia, at an early age, and remained a steadfast member all her life. She never missed an opportunity to attend the meetings and services whenever possible, and derived much pleasure and comfort from them. In fact, we believe that it was her faith in God and her church that gave her the courage and strength to overcome her personal tragedies in the loss of so many of her loved ones; and her own ill health and infirmities in her later years. She maintained her cheerfulness and gentle goodness to the end.

Services were conducted by her pastor, Elder John D. Wood, in the chapel of the Pumphrey Funeral Home, Bethesda, Maryland; and she was laid to rest beside her husband in St.

Mark's Church Cemetery, near Petersville, Frederick County, Maryland.

We will never forget her love and devotion, and deeply mourn her loss, but take comfort in the knowledge that she will have eternal rest and peace with our Heavenly Father.

Her devoted son and daughter,
Mary M. Cuttle
Richard M. Claggett

(To the above we feel to add that what Sister Claggett said of her sister, Louise White Ball, when she wrote her obituary published in the October, 1956, issue of the Signs, may well be said of Sister Claggett also:

"She was a faithful member of her church, which she attended as long as she was able. Her humble spirit showed throughout her life; and her greatest delight was to hear the Gospel of Jesus preached, and to listen to those of like faith conversing of the things of God. We believe our sister is at rest with the Saviour she loved; and in whose trust she lived. We deeply mourn her loss, but feel that we may reverently say, "Thy will be done."

For several years Sister Claggett was Matron of the Primitive Baptist Home when it was maintained at Salisbury, Maryland. She resigned to accompany other Gold Star Mothers to Europe.

She will be greatly missed by all who knew her. May reconciling grace be blessed to those who mourn. — J. D. W.)

BESSIE BEULAH ASHBY

Bessie Beulah Ashby, a native of Texas, was born December 5, 1888, and passed away July 5, 1961. Services were held at the Grensted Chapel, Grover City, California, July 8, 1961. Elder T. R. Collier, of Portland, Oregon, officiated. Interment was at Arroyo Grande Cemetery.

Sister Ashby was a member of Little Zion Old School Baptist Church, having come to us by experience and baptism on the 4th Sunday in July, 1952; and was baptized by Elder I. F. Coleman. She was a faithful member, and though severely afflicted, she traveled many miles to be present where the few of us were gathered in our Lord's name. She was indeed a faithful wife, mother, and church member. She was useful indeed to the church, as she was a good reader, and could lead almost any hymn that was asked for.

She left to mourn her passing, besides the dear little church, her husband, at the home in Oceana, California; three sons: Clyde Ashby, Las Vegas, Nevada; W. T. Ashby, Jr., Oceana, California; and Jane Ashby, Eureka, California; one daughter, Mrs. Pearl White, Renton, Washington. Also by one sister, Mrs. Lena Jones, Winnsboro, Texas; and two brothers: W. P. Scarbrough, Fresno, California, and J. S. Scarbrough, Albuquerque, New Mexico; besides nieces, nephews, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Of all God's saints I've been blessed to meet, not one was more humble, nor more conscious of sins and shortcomings than she. She often said that she could not remember when she did not believe in the power and goodness of God. To the dear families and husband left behind to suffer their loss, I would say, It is her gain; her time of love; her eternity of rest, and joy and peace. Let us thank God she has it, and will never part from it.

Written by agreement and request of the church.

Effie Parke, Clerk
Elder Howard Eason, Pastor

MRS. MOLLIE OGDEN

Sister Mollie Ogden was born near ElDorado, Arkansas, April 18, 1880. Her maiden name was Mollie Williams; and she was married to J. R. Ogden. She is survived by her husband, J. R. Ogden, Lillie, Louisiana; two sons: William Ogden, Lillie, Louisiana, and Monroe Ogden, Ruston, Louisiana; five daughters: Mrs. George Upshaw, Crossett, Arkansas; Mrs. G. T. Bryan, Lillie, Louisiana; Miss Olivia Ogden, Lillie, Louisiana; Mrs. L. A. Ensenat, Houston, Texas; and Mrs. T. J. Madden, Bossier City, Louisiana. Also surviving are three sisters, Mrs. Neoma Horris and Mrs. Nena Chandler, ElDorado, Arkansas, and Mrs. Julia Wood, Heflin, Louisiana; and by 16 grandchildren, and 11 great grandchildren.

Sister Ogden was a very calm and serene person, though she had many trials and hardships. She maintained her calmness even after she greatly failed in health, and was sick a lot of the time, finally becoming an invalid and continued in this pitiful condition until the end came on May 23, 1961.

She was given a sweet and lasting experience of the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, early in life, and was so drawn by God's love and mercy that she was led to join New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, and remained a faithful member to the end. She was much devoted to the doctrine, and good old-time singing. Though not able to go to church for a long time, the brethren met with her several times and had preaching for her, and she greatly rejoiced. She loved spiritual conversations very much.

Weep not, dear ones, as those who have no hope. We should rejoice that her great sufferings are all over with, and she is at rest where no trouble can come. Soon the Lord shall come and call all his people from the sleeping dust,

and take them home to himself. What a wonderful and glorious day this will be!

Her funeral was conducted by the writer and Elder J. L. Smith, and Mr. J. C. Adams and Mr. Polk. May God bless the family and friends, and may grace and mercy be with all those who mourn her passing.

An unworthy servant,
(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

MILLIE DAVIS BARNES

It is with a sad heart that I make this attempt to write something concerning the passing of my beloved companion. Millie Davis Barnes, wife of Elder William B. Barnes, was born June 1, 1890, and passed away September 8, 1961. She was the daughter of Stephen D. Davis and Loujennie B. Davis. We were married August 10, 1913, and to this union nine children were born — one daughter and four sons preceded her to the grave in infancy. Two sons and two daughters survive, besides her bereaved husband.

None one knew her virtues better than I, for I lived with her forty-eight years. Never at any time did I have reason to doubt her honesty and faithfulness as a true and faithful companion in every way. She was a loving mother to our children, watching over them while they slept; and when they were sick would doctor and nurse them back to health again. She watched over her husband in sickness and in health. We lived in poverty, raised our children in poverty, but above all things, we loved each other, and any little differences were soon settled. We held nothing in secret from one another, and we shared our joys and sorrows together, as they should be.

My wife united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Elm City, N. C., the 2nd Sunday in August, 1929, and was baptized by the late Elder T. H. Pridgen. She lived a devoted member until death. The brethren and sisters who have known us, know how faithful she was in helping me, and going with me to my appointments. Oh, how I miss her everywhere I go. Everywhere I turn there is a vacancy; and above all, her voice is stilled in death, to be heard no more. Her body is now resting in the narrow confines of the tomb, where I shall shortly join her. There I hope to rest from all my labor and be at peace with my God and Redeemer.

But this is not where hope ends. No brethren. my hope reaches beyond the grave — my hope is anchored within the vail, whither our Elder Brother is gone, and is now seated on the right hand of the Majesty on high, interceeding for those he died to redeem. And he has promised to come again, and to receive them unto himself, and to present them before his Father in love, without spot or blemish. Here rests my hope.

Written by her bereaved husband,
Elder W. B. Barnes

LUCY T. (REED) GRAVES

Lucy T. (Reed) Graves was born April 22, 1869, in California, and passed away November 21, 1960, at the age of more than 91 years. She came to Texas with her parents, one brother and one sister, in 1875. They settled near Goldthwaite, Texas. On November 22, 1882, she was married to G. W. Graves, who passed away several years ago. To this union eleven children were born, of whom six survive: Joe Graves, Los Angeles, California; J. E. Graves, Fulton, California; Mrs. Elizabeth Nunnelly, Stockton, California; Mrs. Ethel Bowman, Rising Star, Texas; Mrs. Annie Thompson, San Diego, California; and Mrs. Essie Earhart, Lumas, California. Also surviving are 14 grandchildren, 16 great grandchildren, and 12 great great grandchildren, and nephews and nieces. She leaves also to mourn their loss, her brethren and sisters of Macedonia Church, of Rising Star, Texas.

Sister Graves joined the Predestinarian Baptists in 1902, and was baptized the 2nd Sunday in June, 1902, by the late Elder W. S. Harriss, of Mullin, Texas. Surely another mother in Israel has passed on to her reward. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and that God controlled All Things, had a purpose in All Things; and He, having all power, was able to, and will bring to pass that which He promised His children in Christ before the world was, even eternal life with Him. This was her hope, and she spoke it with words easy to be understood. We miss her very much.

Services were conducted by the writer at Higginbotham Funeral Chapel, Rising Star, Texas, and the body was laid to rest in the Rising Star Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord.

C. U. Landers

DANIEL LEE HAMLETT

The Lord has seen fit, in his wise providence, to remove from us by death, our dear Brother, Daniel Lee Hamlett.

Brother Hamlett was born May 13, 1866, in Charlotte County, Virginia, and passed away July 25, 1961, making his stay on earth 95 years, 2 months and 13 days. He was united in marriage to Mary E. Mann on March 18, 1891. To this union were born 14 children, two dying in infancy, two sons died after they were married and had families. He leaves to

mourn seven sons and three daughters; four sisters and three brothers; 68 grandchildren, and a number of great grandchildren. The sons and daughters: Daniel Lee, Jr.; Walter, Frank; Courtney; Deward; Lucy B.; Harry; Sallie M. Parson; Mary E. Parson; and Rozette St. John. Three brothers, W. T. Hamlett, J. W. Hamlett, and A. M. Hamlett. Four sisters, Mrs. D. M. Lore, Mrs. Henry Hamlett, Mrs. Eddie Hamlett and Mrs. R. F. Morton. He and his wife joined Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church in the early twenties, and was baptized by Elder P. G. Lester. Brother Hamlett was received in Springfield Primitive Baptist Church by letter July 11, 1925. He was faithful to attend his meetings as long as his health permitted. His funeral was held in Oak View Presbyterian Church by his pastor Elder O. K. Tench. He was laid to rest in the family cemetery to await the glorious resurrection, when the bodies of all the Saints shall be changed and raised by the Lord Jesus Christ, and fashioned like unto his glorious body. We feel our loss is his eternal gain. May God bless and comfort his loved ones and all that mourn his passing.

RESOLVED, That a copy be spread on our church records; a copy sent to the family; and a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
R. C. Dalton, Clerk

EMMA C. KENNEDY

Sister Emma Kennedy was born Emma Carine Thompson, December 17, 1872, in Early County, Georgia, and was married to Jesse K. Kennedy September 4, 1889, in Nocona, Texas. To this union was born 8 children; Thomas William, Mattie Winfred, James Walter, Lula Grace, Leonora Guy, Stella Marie, John Henry and Homer Clark. She died at Hope, Arkansas, April 19, 1957, at the age of 85 years, 4 months and 2 days. Her husband preceded her in death several years ago.

Survivors are three sons and one daughter, Thomas A. Kennedy of Nashville, Arkansas; Mrs. Clayton McDaniels of Minden, Louisiana; John H. Kennedy, Hope, Arkansas; Homer C. Kennedy, Hope Arkansas; two brothers, Idus P. Thompson, Comanche, Oklahoma; John W. Thompson, Lawton, Oklahoma; two sisters, Mrs. Frank Brow, McAlester, Oklahoma; Mrs. Walter McMasters, Duncan, Oklahoma; fourteen grandchildren and twenty-four great grandchildren.

Sister Kennedy had been a member of the Primitive Church for many years. The best information the children have she first joined old Bethesda Primitive Baptist Church near Camden, Arkansas, in 1890, then about 1900 she and her late husband, Brother J. K. Kennedy, whom she always affectionately called "Jesse" moved their membership to a Primitive Baptist Church near St. Joe, Texas, to where they were then living, then about 1903 they placed their membership with Damascus Church near Buckner, Arkansas, and from there to New Hope Primitive Church, near Hope, Arkansas, where her membership remained until her death. Sister Kennedy was a loyal and faithful member. She loved New Hope Church and was loved and highly esteemed by all the brethren and sisters there. She visited among our people extensively and was loved by all that had the blessed privilege to know her.

Funeral service was conducted at New Hope Church by Elder E. J. Lambert. Her body was laid to rest in New Hope Cemetery by the side of her beloved "Jesse" there to await the glorious resurrection when the bodies of all the Saints shall be changed and raised by the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, and fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.

May the God of All Grace comfort her loved ones and all that mourn her passing.

Elder W. A. Speer

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, Since we last met the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association has lost six members, to wit, Sisters Gertrude Ker and Rosie Stevens, of the Little Creek Church; Sister Arrie Justis, of the Broad Creek Church; Sisters Kate Laws and Annie Smack, of the Indiantown Church; and Sister Alice Mellott, of the Massawango Church, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we humbly and graciously submit to the providence of our God in calling our dear members from this world, knowing that His ways are all for the best, and that our loss is their eternal gain; also

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Salisbury Association, express our sympathy to all those that mourn, and that we pray that the grace of God will enable them to look to Jesus for comfort in their hour of bereavement; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we send a copy of these resolutions to the **Signs of the Times** for publication; and a copy made for our minutes.

Done by order of the Association in session with the Forest Grove Church October 19, 1961.

Elder Arthur Warren, Moderator
Maude T. Laws, Honorary Clerk
William S. Adkins, Clerk
Hady B. Truitt, Ass't. Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It has pleased the God of all grace, since our last session, to remove by death from our midst, our beloved Elder E. C. Jones, we bow in humble submission to the will of our heavenly Father.

Our brother visited among our churches and associations, supplying for pastors, lending a helping hand when he could do so. He enjoyed being with his brethren and their love and fellowship.

BE IT RESOLVED, That this body express their sorrow to the family at the passing of our brother, and that we send a copy of this resolution to the family, place the same in our minutes, and send a copy to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

This written by order of the association and approved by the same while in session with the Forest Grove Church on October 18 and 19, 1961.

Elder Arthur Warren, Moderator
William Adkins, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It pleased God to take from our midst by death, our dear brother L. G. Chamblee, we bow in humble submission to His will.

He was born April 19, 1878, and married Ethel O'neal, who was also a member of our church. To this union were born six boys and three girls. His wife and eldest son preceded him in death. Brother Chamblee died December 16, 1960, making his stay on earth more than 82 years. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Sandy Grove, Nash County, N. C., September 6, 1924, and was baptized by the late Elder George Boswell.

We, the church, and his family shall miss him. He was faithful to the church as long as he was able. His funeral was preached by Elder J. B. Murray, and he was laid to rest in our church cemetery to await the coming of the Lord.

Done by order of conference.

Elder L. H. Stevenson, Moderator
W. T. Brantley, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

In the divine providence of the Almighty God, Daniel W. Tate departed this low ground of sorrow by death January 28, 1960. He was born March 15, 1872, making his age nearly 88 years. He was united in marriage to Lula Crowder, who passed away in 1958. To this union eight children were born, of whom five survive.

He joined the Primitive Baptist Church at New Hope, in North Carolina, in 1917, and was baptized by the pastor, Elder T. M. Trent. He was a faithful member, always at his church meetings unless hindered by sickness. Many were the times he walked eight miles to New Hope, and many miles to other churches of his faith and order. We do not recall him not attending his association unless hindered, and then he seemed to be satisfied, taking it as his lot. In his experience, he learned to love the hymn, "Now in thy praise eternal King." He was shown he was cast down, but not destroyed, and had a bright hope. The Lord caused him to stand still and see His salvation.

We desire to be submissive to the Lord's will, who doeth all things well; and we extend our sympathy to the family, and desire that a copy of this be sent to the family, and a copy be spread on our church book, and a copy be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of the church.

Elder J. C. Paschal, Moderator
Sister Minnie P. Lofis, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

INASMUCH, As it has been the will of our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst by death, our dearly beloved brother, Elder Silas L. Melton,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the will of Almighty God.

Brother Silas was born March 21, 1873, and departed this life September 4, 1961, at the age of 88 years, and more than five months. He was sound in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone; and had been a faithful believer from his youth, ever following after, and with, those of like faith. He united with Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church by experience and baptism, on September 30, 1945; and was ordained to the ministry February 1, 1953.

He is survived by four daughters: Mrs. Leslie Goff, Mrs. Olive McClannahan, Mrs. Genevieve Repass, all of Charleston, W. Va.; Mrs. Thelma Camper, Washington, D. C.; one son, Ernest Melton, Huntington, W. Va.; and by seven grandchildren, and five great grandchildren.

His funeral was conducted in Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, Charleston, W. Va., by Elders H. J. Bird and J. C. Hammond.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be placed in our church records; a copy sent to the family; and one sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of the church.

Elder J. C. Hammond, Moderator
Nanna Carney, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 130 DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1962 NO. 3

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3/62
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"COMFORTING ONE ANOTHER"

Lillie, Louisiana
18 Oct. 1955

Dear Sister Rowell,

My heart has been heavy this week, for I feel that I failed to make plain to you my feelings concerning the experiences of God's people as they sojourn in this world. His poeple are exhorted by Peter to, "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear".

Dear Sister, I hope I write with meekness and fear of the grace and mercy of God to usward, as we comfort each other with words of His blessings to us in this time world.

I pray He guides my pen to write words of comfort to you and that we be permitted to sup together, in the sweet fellowship of mystery Brother Lambert was so wonderfully blessed to tell us about Sunday.

You told me you were afraid you were wrong in coming among us, because you had not been blessed with dreams, visions, wonderful experiences, etc. like the brethren related at your house during the association, and that you feared you offered yourself just to be with Brother Rowell. You remarked that I was raised among these people and knew their ways, whereas, their customs are strange to you; that you are tormented by fears you have had no Christian experience. Let's study together Christian experience, God permitting.

All of us are born into this world in iniquity, sin and carnality. Even though we have good moral parents and environment, we still are tools of Satan, being deceitful and following the lusts of the flesh, totally unaware of the Spirit of life, and any spiritual righteousness. We are very satisfied with ourselves and seek not the things of the spirit for they are foolishness unto us.

Then, oh then, something happens. If we be one of those He redeemed through his shed blood on Calvary, then he stops us from this headlong flight of folly. He arrests us and makes us prisoners of love forever. No more are we unaware of Him. No more are we allowed to revel in sin without pangs of spiritual remorse. No more are we satisfied with Arminianism where we worship our own works and call it God's. We are taught, within ourselves, to hate our sinful flesh.

Can you not remember when you were satisfied and happy "working for the Lord", as you called it, before He arrested you and told you to "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord."? No more work, no more strife, no more seeking, but rest from your labors, peace for your troubled soul are the fruits freely given, without merit, by the mercy and grace of our God.

Now let's think of "how" we are arrested from sin, "how" we are brought into the sanctuary. We know that our salvation was obtained by Jesus Christ

in his death on the cross, if we are what we hope to be. But it is made evident to us in this world in many ways.

If you listen to the brethren and sisters tell their experiences, no two of them are alike. Can anyone of them tell of standing on Smyrna's doorstep, looking into the face of their companion and seeing the "most beautiful sight in the world," when he was crying. To the world, tears mean sadness and sorrow, but to you they were beautiful in the eyes of one you love. Can you account for this except that it is a "mystery in fellowship", that it was God directing your steps and making known unto you as well as Brother Rowell of his mighty works and of his love and mercy to man?

Do you believe he sent dreams and visions to the woman of Canaan? Let's read about her together in Matthew 15:22-28. He seemed to rebuff her by saying to feed her, would be like taking the food from children, and feeding it to dogs. However, she said, "yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." That is when she felt "less than the least of all saints", that Paul experienced. Now, don't you see there was an ordinary woman without a great experience of visions and dreams as Paul had, but just the same, her life held the same happy promises as Paul's for Jesus said unto her, "Oh woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thy wilt."

I sat by you in church on Sunday morning as we listened to the Spirit through Brother Lambert. I saw your head move in negative and affirmative approval as his statements touched your heart. I heard your breathless word "wonderful" as he closed. Don't you believe the same witness testified in your heart that prompted the utterances of his tongue?

Do you not realize that you and your dear husband are almost strangers in the flesh to most of us, but oh dear Sister, if we were required to make a list of those we love, your names would be among the highest. Why? How can these things be? I believe, when permitted to believe through blessings I have never merited, that it is because we are one in Christ, that He, "hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus".

Do you think it an incident of chance that Sister Blalock took your picture on the doorstep at Rehobeth? I think it an act of Providence. You told me if you were not allowed to stay among us, just to let you stay on the doorstep so you could hear. Dear one, if you could only see yourself as others among us see you. Your home and heart are thrown open to His little ones in this world.

These things, in my humble opinion, are the marks of a Christian, and you grow in grace as you give of yourself to a point of sacrifice. In a recent meeting, I saw a sister holding a front seat for her husband against all visitors, and you raised your exhausted and ill body and gave your seat away. These praises, if I know my heart, are not meant for you in the flesh, but are for your good and comfort and his glory who shines through you.

I feel so unworthy and weak, myself, it seems presumptuous on my part to try to comfort you, but the trials and afflictions of this world seems lighter if we can bear them together, in Christ.

One last reference of encouragement to you, and then I will have to be about my household duties which I laid aside to commune with you.

In the Introduction by Elder Wood, in Brother Lambert's book, down at the bottom of page eleven, you will find these words, "at the same time, it is well to remember that, though some may seem to have brighter, or more conclusive evidences than others, each one who is taught of the Lord learns the same things; and that his own hope is as his own anchor to his soul, both sure and steadfast."

John said, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Not because we can relate a brighter experience or tell of dreams and visions. Jesus told the disciples before his ascent into heaven that He would send a comforter. That comforter is the Holy Ghost, who dwells as a witness, (evidence) in your heart, that you love the brethren, that your faith is placed on higher and better things and that your hope, both sure and steadfast, is for a home beyond this vale of sorrows, where time and timely things will be no more.

Remember me in your petitions and think not that I count myself (as of myself) able to comfort or reassure you. But I felt an urge to relieve my mind of the weight of these thoughts concerning the question you asked me at Sister Pate's.

Give our love to Brother Rowell. We hope you and he are blessed in health to be able to go with Brother Speer to the ordination. Our thoughts will go with you, even though at the time, it seems we can't be there in person.

Your sister in hope,
Ruby (Mrs. Cisco Barron)

Dear Elder Spangler:

Enclosed is an article, written a few days ago, when I suddenly felt moved to write it, even though the subject matter had been in my thoughts quite awhile. I showed it to Elder W. W. Taylor, who said it was doctrinally sound and suggested that I might like to send it to the **Signs** for possible publication.

If you find that it is worthwhile to publish, I should, I believe, be glad, because my reason for having wanted to write it in the first place is to give an expression of thanks for the faith I have received — I might call it my doxology to God. But the second reason, if I can even enumerate it as reason 1 and reason 2, is because I am hoping that someone else, who believes as I once believed, may chance to read it and "have his nest stirred up," or at least stop to question the truth of the matter. Whether or not this article will ever be instrumental in that direction, rests solely with God, who, I hope, caused me to write it in the first place.

Your Sister in the faith,
Renate Trawnik

GRACE — UNIVERSAL OR PARTICULAR?

For quite some time there has been a desire in my heart to say something about Universal Grace, and here and there a thought has come to me, but they were only fleeting thoughts and I filed them away, as it were, to be taken out at a later time, if it should please God. And so they have lain dormant for months.

Today I did not have "Universal Grace" on my mind, but was meditating instead on "Infant Baptism", wondering where it had its beginning, and why, and I felt a weight on my heart when I thought of so many God-fearing parents who in good faith bring their children to be baptized, believing that thereby they become children of God, and rest in that security — a false security — which so often brings with it, as the child grows older, either a sense of complacency about God's truths, or results in a cold orthodoxy in doctrinal matters. And yet on the other hand it fosters an array of good works, ostensibly for the reason of being grateful to God for having become a member in His kingdom. But so often this "being a member of God's kingdom" is only a profession and not a possession, and these good works which are meant to be an offering of thanks become a savor unto death, and yet the poor "professing" Christian does not know it, because instead of God's truth he has been taught man's truth, which is not truth. Jesus said, "But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matthew 15:9.

The doctrine of "Infant Baptism" is,

I believe, one of these "commandments of men" which perhaps was born out of the fiction of the doctrine of "Universal Grace". Yet there was a time when I believed these very doctrines. Sometimes, in my innermost heart, I had doubts as to the efficacy of Infant Baptism, but fought valiantly against these doubts because I thought they were inspired by my reason. Above all things I wanted my reason to be subject to God, and so whenever this, to me, "ugly doubt" raised its head, I fought it with all my might, yet never found real peace within me in this matter. Now I know that what was disturbing me was not my "human reason", but God stirring me up to come to the knowledge of the truth — for now there **is** peace in my heart in the matter of Baptism — and "human reason" **never** gives peace — only God. But of this subject I should like to write more fully another time. I mentioned it here because it was baptism which led me to meditate on the subject I want to write about — the doctrine of Universal Grace.

As I thought of my struggles with my reason, I remembered that Jesus said, "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes." And the thought came to me that a certain parallel is to be found in these "wise and prudent'' to those who espouse the doctrine of Universal Grace, and in these "babes" to those who believe in Particular Grace. For those who believe in Universal Grace, reason thus with themselves: "How can God be a 'loving' God if He discriminates against **anyone?** This would make God **unfair!** Since we know God is **not** unfair, the only alternative is to believe that He offers an equal opportunity of salvation to all." — The "babes" on the other hand have, I believe, been made willing to say "not **my** will, Lord, but **Thine** be done", and to praise and glorify His name even if it should please Him to save but one, and that one another than themselves.

Now to prove their reasoning, the exponents of the doctrine of Universal Grace use some of the following texts, for the reasons briefly mentioned:

John 3:16 — "For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." This text is used because it points out that God, having loved the whole **world,** gave His only-begotten Son. The "world" signifying all people who live, have lived, or will live.

Titus 2:11 — "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." "All men" are referred to here, which is the obvious reason for the usage of this text.

John 6:37 — "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." Here Jesus promises that He will not cast out **anyone** who "comes" to Him.

Romans 10:12 — "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him." In this verse Paul seems undeniably to state that God is rich, or merciful, unto all or any that call upon Him, for Jew and Greek, or Jew and Gentile, is the same as saying anyone in the whole world.

I Timothy 2:4 — "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." And this verse, of course, stresses that it is God's **will** to save all men, or as it is interpreted, the whole human race.

I am sure there are other texts besides, but suffice it to use these. Taking these texts, then, one at a time, I should very briefly like to show that they speak for Particular Grace rather than for Universal Grace, either by themselves, or with supporting texts. In John 3:16, the words "that **whosoever** believeth", point out that only **some** in this world will believe on the only-begotten Son. God loved the world for their sakes. But these, who will believe on the Son, are those whom the Father Himself draws,

for Jesus said, "No man **can** come unto Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him." John 6:44. And to be more specific still, these words, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" were spoken by Jesus to Nicodemus after he told him that a man must be born again, for if he is not, he cannot see the kingdom of God. And He told him how this spiritual birth comes about, in these words, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is everyone that is born of the Spirit." John 3:8. As the wind blows where it pleases, so God bestows His Spirit where, and on whomsoever it pleaseth Him." Thus the text, John 3:16, speaks for Particular, and not for Universal Grace.

Upon examination of the second text given, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men", it can be clearly seen, that it tells us that while "the grace of God (Jesus Christ, our Savior) bringeth salvation", it does **not** say that He brings salvation to ALL men, but that He has **appeared** to "all" men. And in a historical sense this is certainly true; but as far as salvation is concerned it was **not** for all. In John 1, verses 11-13, we read: "He came unto His own (or we might say, appeared to His creation), and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name; **which were born,** not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but **of God."** Again these texts speak for Particular and not for Universal Grace.

Also the text, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out," John 6:37, is used to support the doctrine of Universal Grace; but this is only part of a sentence. The first part of the same verse says, "All that the Father **giveth** Me shall come to Me." So Jesus clearly teaches that it is not "he who comes" who will not be cast out, but **those** shall not be cast out "whom the Father giveth to Him." Could we say this speaks for Universal Grace? (Although none **will** come, except those whom the Father giveth.)

In Romans 11:12, Paul does indeed say "for there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him," but he precedes it by saying, "Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed." Thus only those who **believe** can call upon the Lord. Not the other way around, that those who call upon Him will believe. Again, this speaks for Particular, and not for Universal Grace.

Finally, the last text I have chosen, namely, "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth", I Timothy 2:4, **does** on the surface seem to speak for Universal Grace, since it speaks of "all" men. I pray that I am not presumptious when I say that I believe this word "all" to be synonymous with "many" as it is used by Paul in the 5th chapter of Romans where he says in verses 18 and 19, "Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon **all** men unto justification of life; For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall **many** be made righteous." Also Isaiah says in the 53rd chapter, in verses 11 and 12 respectively, "by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify **many;"** and "He bare the sin of **many,** and made intercession for the transgressors." I believe that "all" and "many" as used in the verse quoted from the book of Romans are interchangeable, and that the same sense applies to the word "all" as used in I Timothy 2:4, so that we can, in all faith, take it to mean that God will have **all the many,** whom He chose, and for whom Jesus gave His life a ransom, to be saved and to come to the knowledge

of the truth. And we may be all the more confident to take this meaning since Isaiah used **only** the word "many" in referring to those whose sins our Lord bore. Also I believe this sense is still further borne out in verse 6 of I Timothy, chapter 2, where Paul writes, "Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." **All** those, for whom Christ gave Himself a ransom, will be testified in due time, or in other words, **will** receive the testimony of the truth, or come unto the knowledge of the truth. For when our God says that He **will** do a thing, then we know it will be done indeed. He does not purpose more nor less than He **wills** to accomplish, and accomplishes. If He purposed to save **all** men then **all** would be saved.

From all the foregoing evidence presented, I am persuaded to believe that the doctrine of "Universal Grace" is not of God, but is a man-made doctrine, or, I would like to use the words "man-made system". Whenever man works out a "system" of anything, be it a system to "win at roulette" (forgive the camparison), or a system "whereby all men can be saved", man is being wise in his own conceits. "Universal Grace" is the product of such wisdom, or more to the point, it is a product of FEAR and IMPATIENCE. It is defined, I think, in words something to this effect: "that grace, whereby a sinner may apprehend the forgiveness secured for him by Christ Jesus." It is a way of "helping God along" to make sure that He will not overlook anyone, as if He were not sufficient of Himself to find His own. And it is a doctrine, if I may venture to say so, born out of a guilt-complex — a dual system of receiving forgiveness for sin; while at the same time, through the means of works, appeasing one's own poor, doubting heart, and from the secret recesses of one's inner being, hoping that God may accept such works as an offering. Moreover on the surface of it, it seems to be justifiable on the grounds that these works are not for self, but for the benefit of others — a way of helping extend God's grace. It is a system whereby man makes grace available to all — and forgets that this is God's prerogative alone. Or, I might say, he does not **know,** for Jesus says, "Thou hast **hid** these things from the wise and prudent."

It sounds like a very charitable doctrine; in fact, it sounds like the kind of doctrine a loving God would offer — for a "loving" God would not reject **anyone** who in true contrition calls upon Him. NOR DOES HE. But not at man's bidding, and not according to man's "system". He bestows His grace — His undeserved and totally unmerited love — on His children when He is ready to bestow it and not when THEY are ready, willing, or desirous of apprehending it.

And oh, the deep joy and surety of such a faith! No longer any relying on self — no longer the fear that perhaps one has **not** apprehended the grace that is said to be there within reach. No longer the prayer, "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief", but the prayer, "Oh my gracious merciful God, I thank Thee for the faith that Thou hast given. Now, Oh Lord, do Thou keep me steadfast in that faith. Amen."

Yet before God in His mercy bestows the gift of faith, I am persuaded to believe every child of God can witness with me that first there are many heartaches to be suffered, there is a mountain of pride and self-love to be faced up to — for we must be able to recognize that evil in us which needs to be confessed. Oh, there is a long, hard fall which comes before God lovingly raises us up. It is a hard and hurtful, a spirit-wounding and ego-killing task to face up to the hidden commands inherent in God's law; to confess that by pride and self-love we have put ourselves in the place of God, that we have been worshiping self, and not God; that we have made a show of serving others for His cause; that we have made a show of serving only Him, all the while we were serving for the sake of the applause of others — and received that

applause from those who thought our service was true. For who can search the heart but God only?

And God does search the hearts of His children. It is His goodness that leads us to repentance. Yet, Oh, **how long** we often have to wait until God grants us a repentant heart. How easy it is to see that those who are truly desirous of being God's children, who crave to feel the witness of the Spirit within, but yet do not feel it, become afraid, impatient, despairing of ever receiving it, and devise ways of their own. Out of such fear and impatience and despair Universal Grace must first have been born. For who is not afraid of being condemned to an eternal Hell, however justly? And while this doctrine is said to extol God's love, in truth it only reveals man's inward cursing, as it is written in Psalms 62:4: "They only consult to cast Him down from His excellency; they delight in lies; they bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly."

But, Oh, those who conceived this doctrine, overlooked the Lord's words in Psalms 46:10: **"Be still,** and know that I am God;" and David's admonition in Psalms 27:14, **"Wait** on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart; **wait,** I say, on the Lord."

We have to wait. We can't **take** grace and **give** Him our sins. He **takes** our sins, and **gives** us His grace. He reveals "unto babes" His efficacious, "Particular Grace" in His own good time and according to the counsel of His own will. Whereas "Universal Grace", on the other hand, being devised by man, is "that grace" which cannot accomplish what it claims to be possible. The word "grace" is altogether wrong terminology. If, instead it were "Universal **Proclamation",** it would, I believe be a scriptural teaching altogether fitting in with God's purposes, and rebounding to His glory, for He said it would accomplish that which He pleases and would prosper in the thing whereto He sent it.

Renate Trawnik
1114 Tarpley Ave.
Dallas, Texas

Mineola, Texas

Dear Brother Britt:

Just a few lines, as my time is most all taken with my husband. He has been critically ill again, but is improved somewhat. The doctor says the cause is still there, a stone lodged in the gall bladder, and he is too weak to undergo an operation. We have to wait, and pray that God's will be done.

You may send the poetry you composed and dedicated to him, for publication, if you wish. He enjoyed it so much.

When you have a mind to go to our God in prayer, remember us. A sister, I hope, in our blessed Master.

Mrs. S. C. Davenport

HONORING ELDER DAVENPORT

In honor of Elder S. C. Davenport, Mineola, Texas, who is now confined to his bed, and is ninety-two years old. Elder Davenport has been a minister for many years — over sixty, I believe, and a faithful soldier in the army of our Lord:

(L. M. Tune)

Ninety-two years of life well spent
Within a world of discontent;
Ninety-two years away from home,
While in this house of sin I groan.

Ninety-two years of life below,
Where naught but disappointments grow;
Ninety-two years of toil and pain:
But hope eternal rest to gain.

Ninety-two years in foreign lands,
But hope a heavenly building stands,
Where, when I've spent a few more years,
My God will wipe away all tears.

Ninety-two years a captive here
Where taskmasters have proved severe,
From whom no comfort I could draw:
They always said: more brick, less straw.

Ninety-two years of hate and scorn;
Sometimes the rose — more oft' the thorn.
But God ordained both for my good:
The thorn pricks kept me in the road.

Ninety-two years! but God was good,
And by my side has always stood.
Yea, often in the darkest night
He has appeared — then all was light.

Ninety-two years! but soon I'll go
Where endless joys and comforts flow;
Where Jesus sits upon his throne,
And I will know as I am known.

There years, by millions, I shall spend
Praising my Saviour, Husband, Friend:
No trace of sorrow there shall gleam —
Ninety-two years will moments seem.

I feel the above is very inadequate to express our gratitude to Elder Davenport, but it is the best I can do. There is no doubt in my mind that when this great soldier shall lay his armor down, he will hear the welcome, "Well done thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."

Humbly submitted by one who loves him, and, I hope, all the household of faith.

In hope of God's free mercy,
C. B. Britt

(The above by Brother Britt brings back memories of our visit with Elder and Sister Davenport in 1959. Sister Wood and I spent a night with them, and much of the conversation while with them, we shall not soon forget. One remark in particular by Brother Davenport comes to mind: While quoting a passage of Scripture, he stopped and with much earnestness said, "This is the language of my Saviour; I don't want anybody else's language."

He was then nearly 90 years old, but his mind was greatly exercised in the doctrine of his Lord which he had preached many years. We counted it a great blessing to visit with them. May they continue to find how true it is that the Lord's grace is sufficient for them. — J. D. W.)

GREETINGS FROM ELDER BARNES

Stantonsburg, N. C.
December, 1961

Dear Brethren, Sisters and Friends in the Lord:

I wish to send you my best regards, my love and fellowship. As the closing of another year is fast approaching, so is the end of my life near at hand; I am made to wonder if I will live to see the end of the incoming year.

My blessings have been innumerable — God has been so good to me. He has blessed me with reasonably good health all my days, and has given me a home with this so great a people: the people I love most dearly. They have borne with me in my afflictions and short comings; and I know I am not worthy of their kindness. But I thank the Lord for my brethren and sisters in the Lord: I do not feel that I am of any profit to them, but they mean so much to me; and I have no where else to go. I do not fit into the worldly amusements — they have no charms for me; once I admired their pleasures too, but grace has, I hope, set me free and caused me to desire the strait and narrow way that leads to life everlasting.

My precious brethren, I will endeavor to write what I hope is a prayer in my heart on your behalf; and I trust I may be included: O Lord, our most gracious, merciful heavenly Father; the Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob, it is through thy loving kindness and tender mercies that we poor sinners are yet spared on this side of a never ending eternity, to meet together from time to time at the various places, to endeavor to humbly worship at thy feet. Grant us, Lord, hearts of understanding that we may be enabled to understand thy word; and that we may receive comfort when we are blessed to meet and to hear thy humble servants preach thine everlasting gospel. Oh Father, we realize our weak and depraved condition. Oh Father, undertake for us, and give each of us wisdom from on high, that we may know how to go in and out before thy people. May thy servants be blessed to preach thine everlasting gospel.

We humbly pray that thou will abide with each of thy children while they sojourn in this world of sin and sorrow; and pray that thou keep us from the evil of this world, and from the snares of Satan. Shield and protect us, Lord, from the wiles of the wicked. Grant, O Lord to make us humble and truthful, and honest in all things in our dealings with our fellow-citizens and brethren everywhere. Grant that we may pray for our enemies and those who would despitefully use us. Bless all for whom it is our duty to pray: for the widows and the orphans, the poor and the afflicted, the distressed in body or mind; the aged and infirm, and those who are desiring thy love to know, and are hungering and thirsting after righteousness; for thou has said in thy Word that they shall be filled.

Grant thy presence with us while we remain in this world; and when death shall come to claim these our bodies, grant, O Father, that we may fall asleep in the triumph of the faith of the Son of God. Then hand these our bodies to the dust from whence they came, in peace with thee and all just men; there to await the second coming of our Lord. Then the dear saints of God hope to hear the voice of the Son of God, when he says to the North to give, and to the South keep not back; and he will his sons from afar, and his daughters from the ends of the earth.

O Lord, have mercy upon Zion, and, if it is thy will, unite thy people in the bond of love and fellowship, that they may live in peace one with another. We humbly pray these blessings in the name of our Redeemer, and for his sake. Amen.

Brother Spangler, if you think this is worthy of space in the *Signs*, please publish it, as it is intended as an annual season's greetings to God's humble poor everywhere.

(Elder) W. B. Barnes

ON GOING TO LAW

I believe that in the New Testament the word "perfect" is used in four senses. In Matthew 5:48, we read, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Here we see from the context that the word perfect refers to the principle of our walk. "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

Hence, to be perfect in the sense of Matthew 5:48, is to act on a principle of grace toward all, even toward those who are injurious and hostile. A Christian going to law is not "perfect as his Father", for his Father is dealing in grace, whereas he is dealing in law.

This article is against going to law. First Corinthians, sixth chapter, is conclusive as to brethren; and as to going to law with worldlings, what I would here point out is, that a person so doing is acting in a character the direct opposite of the Father. For He is not seated on a judgement seat, is not going to law with the world; and if his blessings were not on them they all would be in Hell. He is evidently seated on a Throne of Grace. Wherefore, all who would bring another before a judgement seat, is not "perfect as his Father which is in heaven."

At the close of Matthew 18, we have a parable which shows all who have a teachable spirit, that a man who asserts his rights is ignorant of the grace of God. The servant was not **unrighteous** in demanding what was due him; but he was **ungracious.** He was unlike his master — such work is iniquity. He had been forgiven ten thousand talents, yet he could seize his fellow servant by the throat for a paltry hundred pence. What was the consequence? He was delivered to the tormentors. He lost the happy sense of grace he **seemed** to have, and

was left to reap the bitter fruits of having asserted his rights. Observe, reader, that he was called "a wicked servant".

My master has a solemn voice for all going to law: "So shall my Father do to you, if you from your heart forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."

Another sense of the word "perfect" is in the ninth of Hebrews. Here perfect pertains to the conscience. The worshiper under the law could not have a perfect conscience for the simplest reason possible, because he never had a perfect sacrifice: The blood of bulls and goats did well enough for a time, but they could not do forever; and therefore could not give a perfect conscience.

Since Christ's sacrifice is perfect forever, the believer's conscience is perfect forever. For the believer not to have a perfect conscience is a dishonor to the perfect sacrifice. The babe in Christ has a perfect conscience; whereas none has perfect flesh. The flesh is not presented in the Scriptures as a perfect thing, but a thing which has been crucified. The Christian has sin in him, but not on him. Christ had sin (our sin) on him, but he had no sin in him when he was nailed to the cross.

Finally, in Philippians, 3rd chapter, we have the two other senses of the word "perfect". Paul says, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect." Yet a little further we read, "Let as many as be perfect be thus minded." The first refers to his full and everlasting conformity to Christ in glory. The last refers to our having Christ as the only object of our heart's affections.

In bonds,
Julius Bocock
717 Palmyra Drive, N. W.
Roanoke, Virginia

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Elder Arthur Warren)

Dear Brethren in Christ:

As we attempt to write what is called the Circular Letter of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, we are in much fear; yet hoping it may please our God to direct our mind to write to the comfort of His chosen people. We believe that all comfort is from above, and comes from the allwise God, "Who has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." (Isaiah 46:10)

We believe, by the way in which our minds have been led, that this divine power spoke all things into existance, and spoke by the inspired prophet, saying, "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." (Isaiah 14:24)

Thus, we believe that God knew all things that would ever take place, and knew his chosen people and loved them with an everlasting love. We also believe that God, in his own appointed time, draws his people to him, as the poet has said:

"Jesus draws his chosen race
By his sweet, resistless grace;
Causing them to hear his call,
And before his power to fall."

We believe the doctrine of Salvation by Grace, and grace alone, and not by the works of man; for the natural man in his natural mind would go the way of Lot when he looked toward the well-watered plains of Jordan, and went toward Sodom and Gomorrah, the wicked cities; which were later destroyed. We feel to see here the mighty hand of God in the matter, teaching Lot, as He does even at the present time, by leaving his people in the flesh many times, and then bringing them back in the Spirit to view by faith the marvelous works of our eternal God. "For while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the

things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2 Cor. 4:18)

Therefore we believe that our eternal God is pleased from time to time to so lead his people, as he did Lot, to teach them that it is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps; and, as the apostle mentioned, the viewing of things which are not seen. We feel to say, by experience, that it is most comforting in our pilgrimage here on these mortal shores, when we are blessed to look, by faith, away from the many toils and cares of this life, and are persuaded to believe that the toils and cares of this world are needful for us. We are told by the Apostle Paul, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28)

We now think of the words of the poet, who wrote:

"I love to steal awhile away
From every cumbering care,
And spend the hours of setting day
In humble, grateful prayer."

We believe there are times when it pleases God to lift our minds out of this body of clay, and then, and then only, can we meditate upon the goodness and mercies of our eternal God. We believe that such meditation is food for the hungry soul to those who have been shown the need of the grace and mercies of an allwise God. As Israel was fed by the manna, each one received just the proper amount, for we are told, "They that gathered little had no lack, and they that gathered much had none over."

So, dear brethren, even though we many times feel to need more of both natural and spiritual things, we are persuaded to believe that God of all grace and mercy is supplying our every need. We would say dear brethren of this association, and to all of our faith and order everywhere, that we believe in a sovereign God who leads his people in many mysterious ways (some of which have been mentioned in this letter), because of the love He had for them before the beginning of time; and did know that Adam would fall, and all his people with him, and, therefore, fixed the way to redeem his people by sending his only begotten Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, yet without sin, to redeem them from the curse of the law.

We cannot fathom this great love, but believe it is all because of his love, and not by the works of man; not only by the way we have been led, but the Apostle Paul said, "There is none righteous, no not one." (Romans 3:10)

Therefore seeing our frailty, do we not rejoice from time to time in that we have been made to see our weakness? Paul said, "When I am weak, then am I strong." (2 Cor. 12:10) Again he said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." (1 Timothy 1:15)

We feel to say further that, though we are made to mourn for our sins, we feel to praise God from whom all blessings flow, that it has pleased him to give us to see ourselves as we are by nature, and thus hope in his mercies that we are numbered with those for whom Christ died on the cross, and finished the work the Father sent him to do.

It is our humble prayer that we may be blessed to sit together in sweet fellowship one for another in the Lord. Amen.

SELDOM HEARS PREACHING

Rt. 4,
Mt. Airy, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler:

Enclosed you will find $3.00 for renewal of my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. My subscription is due, and I don't want to miss a single copy of it for I enjoy reading it so much. It is a good, sound paper, and I look forward to its coming. I seldom get the

opportunity to go to hear the Old Baptists preach — the only ones that preach Salvation by Grace; and I love that doctrine.

I wish I could hear you preach again. I heard you preach in Greensboro when you first commenced preaching; and I enjoyed it then so much, and I hope I still love the doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God, and Predestination. I believe that the good Lord knew all of his chosen people before the world was, and I hope I am one of his little ones. May the good Lord bless you in your work of the ministry of the gospel. Remember me and mine in prayer.

Mrs. R. L. Fowler

A SWEET HOME

P. O. Box 395,
Draper, N. C.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I see that it is time to renew my subscription, so am sending $5.00 for two more years. I do love to read the good sermons of our able ministers, and the sweet experiences of some of the dear brothers and sisters. It makes me rejoice and think back on my own experiences of what the Lord has done for me. He made a way for me to have the sweetest home on earth with his saints. I know for there are no other people that love one another as we do. It is so sweet to meet; and sad to part. I often wish we could just stay, and not part. We have a wonderful pastor who preaches so good to us. It seems that anyone could understand it; and I feel I could listen all day and never get tired.

. . . We had a wonderful meeting the 4th Sunday in September — an all-day meeting, and two were baptized. There were five preachers, and all preached wonderful sermons; and then we had the Lord's Supper, which is always so impressive to me. I can just see Jesus taking the Supper with his disciples. It makes me wonder if I am worthy of such a sacred blessing. I know I love them so much, and I hope I can live the rest of my life with them, and die with them. Dan River is the sweetest home I know; it is my joy, my life, and my love. I pray the good Lord will enable me to continue to go and be with them. And I pray that Elder Spangler will be blessed with health to continue to serve us.

(I wrote part of my experience in the July, 1958, issue of the *Signs*, and I hope some day to be able to write some more, though I am a poor writer. But sometimes my heart gets so full I have to try. I wish more of the dear members would write their experiences.)

Your little sister in hope,
Mrs. R. B. Goulden

ANNUAL MEETING

The **ANNUAL MEETING** of the **HARMONY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH** will be held, God willing, all day Saturday and Sunday, April 28 and 29, 1962. Services to begin Saturday at 10:30 A. M. and Sunday at 10:00 A. M.

The meeting house is located one mile East of Huntington, W. Va., city limits on Cedarcrest Drive; and about one-quarter mile off U. S. Route 60, at Eastern Heights Shopping Center.

All lovers of the truth are welcome.

Elder J. R. Lane, Moderator

Mrs. Mildred Stanley, Clerk
1046 Cedarcrest Drive
Huntington 5, W. Va.

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EDITORIAL

PROVERBS 16:7

"When a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him."

We have been requested to give our views upon the above word of truth, and our desire is that the Lord may enable us to do so. Solomon, the son of David, was given heavenly wisdom, and in Ecclesiastes he is called the Preacher, and we are told in chapter 12:9-10, "Because the preacher was wise, he taught the people knowledge: yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs. The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth."

God grant unto us wisdom for such a task. Turning to God's Word as our guide, we find that there are two men that we would mention: the first will be Adam, the natural father of all mankind, who, in his primeval state, when God breathed into him the breath of life, was well-pleasing to God. It is written in Genesis 1:27, "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created he him: male and female created He them, and said unto them, be fruitful and multiply." Later, we are told, "God saw everything He had made, and behold it was very good."

Turning again to the word of truth, we find that our first parents disobeyed, which certainly was not pleasing to God, which the judgment that came upon them fully proves. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin: and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: — for as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Romans 5. The first man Adam, through disobedience, displeased his maker, and we therefore, by the word of the wise, conclude that by nature no man has ever been able to please the Lord in any of his ways.

We would therefore turn to the word of God, and if we are given wisdom from above, we shall see another man, of whom Solomon was but a shadow, THE PREACHER OF PREACHERS AND KING OF PEACE, that was yet to come. Jesus, the second Adam, the Blessed Man, "that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; His leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." As Abraham — so David, rejoiced to see his day, he saw it and was glad. How sweet it is, that the Psalms, which are songs of praise, should begin telling of the Blessed Man; giving such a true likeness of him before ever he appeared in human flesh: that all true Israelites might confess in praise that from him is their fruit found. Hosea 14:8. Is He not the tree of life planted by the rivers of water?

And how wonderful it is that we are told that the leaves of that tree are for the healing of the nations. Revelation 22:2.

In the fulness of time this man came unto His own but they knew Him not. The world then, as the world now, had no room for Him. Though born a king, He was laid with the beasts of the stall. Even the wise men, who were given wisdom from above, failed of themselves to follow perfectly the star which they saw in the East, for they went in their own wisdom to Herod's palace, saying, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the East, and are come to worship Him." God had given them faith, "Without faith it is impossible TO PLEASE HIM: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." Hebrews 11:6. At the age of twelve, Jesus showed what His heart's desire was, for He said to Joseph and Mary, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Luke 2:49. In the same place it says, "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man."

This blessed man, whose ways PLEASED THE LORD, came to the age of thirty years, which was the age when the priests went into public office. At that time there were men who mused in their hearts of John the Baptist, whether he were the Christ or not. John answered, saying unto them all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and will gather the wheat into His garner; but the chaff He will burn with fire Unquenchable." Luke 3:16-17.

This blessed man came to John to be baptized. But John forbad Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?" And Jesus answering saith unto him, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." Then he suffered Him. And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him: and lo a voice from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I AM WELL PLEASED." After this heavenly testimony, Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, and fasting forty days and forty nights He was afterward an hungred, and when the tempter came to him, He said, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." But He answered and said, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Matthew 4:3-4. Satan, by temptation, overcame the first Adam, the second Adam came to restore THAT which He took not away. Psalms 69:4. The same breath by which God made the heavenly host, Psalms 33:6, was breathed into the first Adam, and Psalms 8 declares him to have been made a little lower than the angels: "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas." Yes, and the first man walked with his God in the garden, where he could eat of any of its trees, except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which was in the midst of the garden.

Made in the image of God, and possessing the lordship over God's creation, this first man, through disobedience, lost it all. The lowly Jesus, who was to be called, "The repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in." Isaiah 58:12. Though a man of sorrow, yet He is Lord of all, having power over all flesh, yet submitting to John's baptism, at which John witnessed the approval of God directly from heaven, yet He

must be tempted to prove that Satan could find nothing in Him, for He was the Word, and could say, "IT IS WRITTEN."

Our Lord not only had the approval of Heaven at His baptism, but also in the Mount of Transfiguration. The same words were heard by those with Him, with the added words, "Hear ye Him." He pleased the Lord in all His ways, fulfilling every word that the prophets had fore-told of Him. Isaiah, who was greatly blest to testify of Him, said, "Behold my servant whom I have chosen: my beloved, IN WHOM MY SOUL IS WELL-PLEASED: I will put my Spirit upon Him, and He shall show judgment to the Gentiles. A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench, till He send forth judgment unto victory. And in His name shall the Gentiles trust." Matthew 12:18-26.

The many ways He must go were ways of suffering; and there it pleased the Lord to bruise Him. Isaiah 53 is a profound declaration of this man's ways, and in all of them He pleased the Lord. Yes, we were all enemies to God by wicked works, and the Lord laid upon Him the iniquity of us all. He is our Mediator in whom God is well-pleased, our Advocate with the Father, He covenanted to redeem all that the Father loved in Him. Not only did He make peace through the blood of the everlasting covenant, so that we, enemies to God, might be at peace with Him, but such was His wisdom that before Him even Satan had to hold his peace. We are told that devils believe and tremble, but the love of God was not in them. The legion of devils must come out of the man who dwelt among the tombs, when Jesus appeared as his friend, yes, they knew Him, who pleased the Lord, and He gave them leave to enter into the swine. We have learned to feel, whatever man may say to the contrary, that there is enough devil in God's humble poor, by nature, to sink two thousand of those who are not His, into the sea of perdition.

There is, of course, an application of our text to every one who has passed from death unto life. We could use space here by turning to the Old Testament worthies who possessed God's gift of faith, but we suggest that our readers take time to read, in connection with this part of our subject, Hebrews, chapter 2. It will there be seen that those who diligently sought God by faith, were blessed in their deeds. Their works proved that they had a living faith.

When Jacob left his father's house, he ran away from Esau, who would have slain him; in a dream God revealed Himself, as Jacob saw the ladder set upon the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven. God gave him wonderful promises as He had given Abraham many years before. God also said, "Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." Genesis 28:15. Such assurance of God's care was seen in the years that he spent with Laban, as He often over-ruled Laban's crafty schemes to work for Jacob's good. When God commanded Jacob to return to the land of his fathers, Laban would have planned his hurt, but "God came to Laban, the Syrian, in a dream by night, and said unto him, Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad." Genesis 31:24. When Esau got word of Jacob's intention to return, the messengers Jacob had sent, returned to Jacob saying, "We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him." Genesis 32:6. We find Jacob in such trouble, willing to appease Esau with the substance he had accumulated while with Laban, but when alone in the dark of the night he wrestled with a man until the break of day. There he obtained a blessing, with a new name and a touch that affected his walk ever afterwards.

How wonderfully true is our text in what took place between Jacob and Esau. God made him to be at peace with Jacob, and Esau's four hundred

men neither aided nor hindered God in His work. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, and the ministration of the Gospel is in the hands of the Holy Ghost; who in times past moved men to write of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. Now, the same Holy Ghost enables men to declare that Jesus hath saved us and called up with an holy calling, and that, because of Christ's perfect obedience in all His ways, all things (whether bad or good) work together for good to them that love God, to the called according to His purpose. In each subject of grace, the leading of the Spirit is an evidence that they are children of God. It will be seen, by such an one, that in the flesh we cannot please God, but ye are not in the flesh, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. Our Lord Jesus, the PERFECT MAN, has said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." They that are after the Spirit, do mind the things of the Spirit, and they will see and know that as we are led of the Spirit we learn that tribulations worketh patience: and patience, experience: and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. Peter could write to God's scattered people, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." I Peter 1-22.

There is a fellowship of the cross, and there can be no blessing without a cross. Jacob crossed his hands to bless the two sons of Joseph, and said that the elder should serve the younger. Walking in subjection to the will of God in all things, will mean crucifixion of the flesh. To do the teaching of our Lord as commandments that must be obeyed, is only possible in one who has a faith that worketh by love. In our right mind we learn and are assured that those things, whatsoever they are, that seem to be against us, through Christ are for us, and whatsoever foe we might have, can do no harm, when they force us to watch and pray. Peter tells us, "For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully, For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, THIS IS ACCEPTABLE WITH God." Death is spoken of as the last enemy that shall be destroyed, and while we all, sooner or later, must die, there are times when the Lord makes that enemy to be at peace with us. When we have witnessed those we have loved for Christ's sake, sweetly falling asleep in Jesus, we have remembered with comfort the words of the Psalmist, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints," and we have hoped that we could welcome death as a friend. Much trouble of the past has come from men living after the flesh and being puffed up with a carnal mind. It was so with the Corinthians, of whom Paul could write, "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given unto you by Christ Jesus; that in everything ye are enriched by Him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: so that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." I Corinthians 1:4-8.

Yet in the third chapter he declares, "I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? for while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believe, even as the Lord gave to every man?" He concludes, "Therefore let no man glory in men, for all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death,

or things present, or things to come; all are yours: And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."

G. R.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE POWER OF AN ENDLESS LIFE

The life which we derive from the earthly Adam, which animates our fleshly nature, began when man became a living soul, an animated being; but the sentence of death was passed upon it in the day that man became a transgressor of the law of God. By an irrevocable decree from the immutable God the stern sentence of the law was pronounced upon Adam, and as all his undeveloped posterity were in him when he sinned, by his offence they were all made sinners, and all were embraced in the sentence of death which was passed. The holy apostle says, "Wherefore, as by the offence of one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." — Romans v. 12.

The life therefore which animates the sons of Adam, as his fleshly posterity, is not an endless life, and cannot exert the power of an endless life. It has no power to resist death, or to attain unto immortality. "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." And lest the man should put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever, therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life. — Genesis iii. 22-24.

The power of our mortal life is very limited. Death reigns over it, and death is passed upon it. Man in all his boasted ability cannot put forth his hand and take the fruit of the tree of endless life, for the flaming sword meets and repels him at every approach. This mortal life has not the power to shield the man from the infirmities, the pains, the groans and mortal strife attendant on our fallen and guilty state, much less to resist the reigning power of death and the grave. In contrasting the priesthood of Aaron with that of our Lord Jesus Christ, the former is said to be after the law of a carnal (fleshly) commandment, and the priests of that order could not continue long in the priesthood by reason of death. Men of infirmities were eligible to that office; but they had no power to give to those of their priesthood a life which they did not themselves possess. Ceremonially they offered gifts and sacrifices according to the law of a carnal (fleshly) commandment. But the law made nothing perfect; it was only typical of the bringing in of a better hope, by which we draw nigh unto God. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." — Romans viii. 2-4.

"For (says Paul in the same connection) the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." This law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus is the same power of an endless life spoken of in Hebrews vii. 16, compared with which all earthly power fades into vanity and nothingness. The law of a carnal commandment could make nothing perfect: by its deeds no flesh could be justified in the sight of God. For if a law had been given that could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. There would have been no necessity for the bringing in of a better hope. "For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof." The powers of our natural life can only extend to natural things, to till the

ground out of which man was taken, and that only to a very limited extent. Although, before sin entered, man was crowned with glory and honor, and held dominion over the whole animal creation, yet now we see not all things put under, or in subjection to him. "Man being in honor abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish." — Psalms xlix. 12.

Man by reason of mortality has no more power to perpetuate his existence than have the beasts that perish. "Is there not an appointed time to man upon the earth? Are not his days also like the days of an hireling?" — Job vii. 1. "Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, (with, or in the hands of God) thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass." "If a man die, shall he live? All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come." — Job xiv. 5 & 14. In view of the impotence of mortal life, may we not with the Psalmist pray, "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how frail I am. Behold thou hast made my days as a handbreadth, and my age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best estate is altogether vanity." — xxxix. 4, 5.

If then all that is born of the flesh is flesh, and all flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field, which withereth and fadeth, how great must be his infatuation to believe that he can control his eternal destiny, when he has no power at all to perpetuate his mortal existence! Yet, men will feel insulted and offended if we tell them that only the Spirit of God can quicken them and make them spiritually alive. They will generally admit that diseases and death are beyond their control, but they still imagine themselves able to quicken themselves into spiritual life, and secure for themselves crowns of immortal glory.

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the sufferings of death." We see him as "God manifest in the flesh," partaking of the same flesh and blood of which his people are partakers, in a body of flesh, under the law, bearing the sins of his people in his own body, and suffering for them; while he held his unchangeable priesthood by the power of an endless life; yet the body he offered up was subject to death, a mortal offering, yet an immortal Priest. His priesthood is not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchisedec, without beginning of days or end of life, abiding forever in his priesthood. But the offering which our immortal Priest laid upon the altar, and offered without spot unto God, was the body of his flesh, in which body of flesh all the seed of Abraham were embodied; so that in dying he died their death, expiating all their guilt, and bearing their sins in his own body on the tree. "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows;" "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." — Isaiah liii. 4, 5.

If he had not taken our flesh, and the transgressions of his people, death could have had no power on him; but he took on him the seed of Abraham, and the iniquities of all his people were laid on him, and under the law which his members had transgressed he was put to death in the flesh; but his immortality did not, could not die, or it would not be immortal. The offering was prepared for the suffering of death; but the Priest, by the power of an endless life, had power to lay down his life, and power to take it up again. The power of death could seize the offering, when laid upon the altar by the immortal Priest; but death could do no more; the Priest possessing the power of an endless life was able to destroy and utterly abolish death, and bring immortality to light through the gospel. An endless life is an immortal life; a life over which death has no dominion; and this life is found alone in our Lord Jesus Christ. "He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it

him, even length of days forever and ever." — Psalms xxi. 4.

"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever; the sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom: thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest; and they shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." — Hebrews i. 9-12. These are some of the peculiar glories of the Son of God. "Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality dwelling in the light, which no man can approach unto: whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen." — 1 Timothy vi. 15, 16. "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen." 1 Timothy i. 17.

This life which is ascribed to Christ our blessed and only Potentate, we conceive to be the life and immortality of God himself. This life, the apostle John testifies, was with the Father, and was manifested." 1 John i. 2. It is hid with Christ in God. Colossians iii. 3. And this life as exemplified in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and is called the glory of God. — Romans vi. 4, and in Ephesians i. 19-23, it is called the "Exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Such is the power of an endless life, as demonstrated in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord Jesus Christ, not only in his triumph over sin, death and the grave, but in his exaltation to the right hand of the Majesty on high. The power of his resurrection is the power of his endless life. In the "exceeding greatness of his mighty power," "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet." — Psalms xlvi. 5.

He has destroyed death, and him that had the power of death, and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. By the power of an endless life he has unbarred the doors of death, and spoiled principalities and powers, he has led captivity captive, and by this power he has opened the portals of eternal glory to all his members. The power of his endless life extends over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him: it embraces all power in heaven and earth, and puts all things under his feet. It puts in his hands the keys of hell and death. It sets him upon his holy hill of Zion, seats him upon his Mediatorial throne, and crowns him with all the glory of the Father, and commands all the angels of God to worship him.

This power of an endless life through him is given to his body and all his members, of whom he says, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish;" and because he lives they shall live also. "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." The same power of an endless life which quickened and raised from the dead the crucified Jesus, is that by which all the redeemed believe in God, as we have shown. Paul testifies that the exceeding greatness of God's power to usward who believe, is according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought

in Christ when he raised him from the dead. It takes the same power to quicken us who were dead in sins, that was employed in the resurrection of Christ. "God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord." It is the power of Christ's resurrection and endless life that quickens and raises up all the members of his spiritual body; hence the assurance of their ultimate resurrection. "For if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." — Romans viii. 11.

Christ alone hath this immortality to which no man can approach, and it is only by vital identity with him that the church which is his body is quickened by it. The life of the head and that of the body of Christ must be the same life; therefore Christ is the life of all his body and members. Paul says, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:" And John says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him." And again, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth; for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." — Colossians iii. 1-4.

It is no wonder that they who are only quickened by sparks of their own kindling, should be profoundly ignorant of the power of an endless life, or that being ignorant of God's righteousness, they should go about to establish their own righteousness; but to his members it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for his sake; that they may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and be conformed to his death.

In conclusion, the deep and vital interest which the saints have in the Immortality of the Priesthood of Christ is beyond all comparison. Not by the law of a carnal, or fleshly commandment, but by the power of an endless life, the great High Priest of one profession who has passed into the heavens, and sitteth at the right hand of God, hath an everlasting priesthood, and by the power of his endless life, "He is able to save them unto the uttermost who come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." — Hebrews vii. 25. By the power of his endless life, he ever liveth, and therefore is able to save them unto the uttermost who come to God by him. And all that the Father giveth him shall come to him, and him that cometh he will in no wise cast out. None can come to God in any other way; for he is the way, and the truth, and the life; and he says, "No man cometh to the Father but by me." But however extreme may be the condition of those who come to God by him, he is fully equal to the work, and by the power of an endless life is able, and will save them to the uttermost. A dying thief, a persecuting Saul, or a blood-stained Manassah, he is able to make them whiter than snow, and to present them without spot or blemish before the throne, and he will surely raise them all up at the last day.

How blessed is the prospect which our subject opens to the tried, tempest tossed saints, now in the body of this death, yet possessing this life, constantly vibrating between life in Christ and death in our members. These vacilating conflicts shall cease: death shall be swallowed up of life. This mortal shall put on immortality. The power of the endless life shall triumph over all our infirmities. Our relations to earth shall be dissolved, and our relation to our living and immortal Head shall be fully realized, and we shall be perfectly conformed

to the image of our risen, exalted and glorified Redeemer.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, March 1, 1873.)

OBITUARIES

WILLIAM ARTHUR EDWARDS

William Arthur Edwards was born March 4, 1883, near Haile, La., and died at Merion, La., July 13, 1961, at the age of 78. He was married to Miss Nettie Robertson, of Haile, La., who survives. To this union were born one son and two daughters, who survive: W. A. Edwards, Jr.; Mrs. A. R. Patterson, Lake Providence, La., and Mrs. M. R. Arrant, Merion, La. Surviving also are two brothers: John Edwards, Bastrop, La., and Joe Edwards, Haile, La.; one sister, Mrs. Velma Platt, Merion, La.; six grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

He was a very kind, calm, and big-hearted person, and was highly regarded by all his acquaintances. I knew him for close to 50 years, and never heard anything detrimental spoken of him. He was a long time attendant of the Primitive Baptist Church at Union, near Linville, La., and was blessed to show quite an interest in the doctrine of God our Saviour — the doctrine of salvation by grace through our Lord Jesus Christ; and the sovereignty and unchangeableness of God. Brother Edwards and his dear wife have manifested a solemn interest in the doctrine of the election of grace of those chosen heirs of salvation from the foundation of the world. This manifested interest is evidence that the pure and holy love of God was shed abroad in their hearts, and is unfailing evidence that our dear departed brother is much better off, having departed this life of much suffering, tribulation and darkness, which is so abundant here in the world.

Dear Sister Edwards and family, may the Lord bless, lead, and keep you, and enable to look to Him who is able to comfort, and does comfort, his people in their trials, afflictions, and sorrows, until He comes again to gather his little ones to himself; where they shall be with and praise him forever in immortal glory.

His funeral services were conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder W. A. Speer, at Liberty Baptist Church in the presence of a very large and respectful audience, including a goodly number of Primitive Baptists, who were blessed to sing sacred songs. The beautiful flowers gave token of the widely shared respect and affection for Brother Edwards and family. The body was laid to rest in the Liberty Baptist Church Cemetery, between Haile and Linville, La.

R. W. Rhodes

CHARLES BURTON GORDY

Charles Burton Gordy, beloved husband of Sister Mildred Gordy, died October 2nd, 1961. He was born December 12th, 1893, near Salisbury, Maryland; the son of Charles F. and Rosina West Gordy.

He was married in 1918 to Mildred Durand, daughter of the late Elder Silas H. Durand, who was for many years pastor of the Old School Baptist Church at Southampton, Pennsylvania. They lived at Southampton until 1923, when they moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Professor Gordy was the first person to hold a professorship of industrial engineering at the University of Michigan, and during his thirty-seven years as a member of the University of Michigan faculty he taught continuously without Sabbatical leave, sick leave, or any other absence during his regular college year.

He is survived by his wife, Mildred, one daughter, Mrs. Mary G. Dodson, of Ann Arbor; two sons, Dr. Philip Durand Gordy of Wilmington, Delaware, and James F. Gordy of Washington, D. C.; twelve grandchildren and one great grandchild; also by a sister, Mrs. Laura Adkins of Salisbury, Maryland, and a brother, Herman, of Florida.

Professor Gordy often came over to our services in Canada, which he seemed to enjoy. We can truly say, from the conversations we had with him, that he had a sincere desire for the truth as it is in Jesus. He was a man of integrity, and, by his gracious manner, endeared himself to all who knew him. Sometimes, after a service, he would speak of the prayer, at other times of the preaching, which showed his interest, and makes us hope that it is well with him. He is greatly missed by his dear family, his associates and by all who knew and loved him.

The writer officiated at his funeral, speaking, by request from, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." (Psalm 23:5) Interment was in the Washtenau Memorial Park, Ann Arbor. May God reconcile us, in all things, to His Holy Will.

George Ruston

SISTER ROSA STEVENS

Our dear and beloved Sister, Rosa Stevens, departed this life on July 16, 1961, at the age of ninety-two, and we feel to say with Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Sister Rosa was born April 14, 1869, and her parents were the late Wm. Lenard, and Margaret Ann Hastings. She was married twice, her first marriage was to Frank Bennet, and they had only lived together seven

years when he passed away; she remained his widow five years, then was married to the late Franklin Stevens, who departed this life in the year of 1933. To this last union were born two sons who survive: Chaplan Stevens, of Weatherford, Texas, and Ohle Stevens, of Queenstown, Md. She is also survived by two brothers Arthur R. Hastings, of Emmaus, Pa., and J. W. Hastings, of Cambridge, Md. Also she is survived by two grandchildren, a number of great grandchildren, three nieces and two nephews.

Early in life Sister Rosa was given a desire for a home in the Church, and was baptized by the late Elder A. B. Francis. She was first a member of the Wolford Church, in Dorchester County near Cambridge, Md. which has now become extinct; but in later years moved her membership to the Little Creek Church at Smith Mills, near Delmar, Delaware, where she remained a faithful member until her death.

Funeral services were held at the Marvel Funeral Home, at Delmar, Delaware, by the writer, and she was laid to rest in the Little Creek Cemetery at Smith Mills. We miss our dear sister, but she had spent her appointed time here; and, if it be the will of our God, may all those who knew and loved her, be reconciled to her passing, we humbly pray for Christ's sake.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

NORMAN ALVA PACE, JR.

Norman Alva Pace, Jr., was born near Haile, La., November 18, 1921. He was the son of Norman Alva Pace, Sr., and Fannie Robertson Pace. He was apparently a strong, healthy young man, but he suffered with heart trouble, and died very suddenly and unexpectedly. He leaves to mourn their loss, his mother and father; his widow, Mrs. Margaret Pace, Haile, La.; two sons, Norman A., 3rd, and Randolph B. Pace; one brother, Ed Pace, and one sister, Mrs. Billie Williamson, of Haile, La.; and also his grandmother, Mrs. Orphy Roberson, of Haile, and other relatives.

It was sad to see this young man go like this, but if we consider these things in the light of God's holy word, though it may seem strange to us, we will remember that in Ecclesiastes 3:2, it says that there is a time to be born, and a time to die; and that to everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven. So I am sure it was God's time for him to pass away, and we cannot question what God in his holy and righteous and sovereign purpose does.

May the Lord bless the dear family to look to and trust in Him who holds the keys of death and hell, who shuts and none can open, who opens and none can shut. Dear ones, let us hope and trust in the Lord who saves his people from their sins. His people are all sinners, and Christ died for them. None of us deserve his salvation: it is through his grace, mercy and lovingkindness. So let us hope in Him and his salvation for your loved one. He seemed to show quite an interest in the meetings at Union.

Elder David Turner and I conducted his funeral on October 20, 1961, in the presence of a large congregation, at Liberty Baptist Church; with burial in the Liberty Cemetery. The nice floral offerings showed the esteem and sympathy of the many friends.

May the Lord bless and comfort the widow and children, together with his parents, grandmother, and brother and sister. In hope of God's mercy.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

MARY SOMERS POTEAT

It has been the will of our Father to call from among us our sister, Mary Somers Poteat, aged 96 years. She was born February 6, 1865, in Caswell County, N. C., near Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church. She grew up, married, and raised a family of six children in this same community. Her husband's name was William (Bill) Poteat, who died more than 30 years ago.

After the death of her husband, she resided with a daughter, Lula Straughn, until the daughter became disabled to care for her; then she moved to Greensboro, N. C., and resided there until she fell asleep in Jesus, the Lilly of the Valley, the Bright and Morning Star. Time is over for her, no more pain or sorrow shall she feel. Her body shall go back to the dust to await the resurrection, when all the redeemed family of God shall be brought forth out of the grave, at the return of our Lord to gather the elect together. They shall all hear the welcome voice, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Our tongues are too poor and too puny to publish what our Lord has done for us all, who love him because he first loved us.

She had been a member of Pleasant Grove Church for over 60 years. To know Cousin Mary, was to love her, for she was a lovely person and was interesting to talk with. She loved the Old Baptists and the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God. I visited her in Greensboro most every year, and she would ask about her church and its pastor. She was blessed with a keen, clear mind until the last year I visited her.

Three of her children preceded her in death: Lula Straughn, Mattie Butler, and Will Poteat.

Three sons are left to mourn: Joseph, Allen and Lee, of Greensboro; also a number of grandchildren, great grandchildren, and great, great grandchildren.

She was called from among us September 11, 1961, and her funeral was held at her church by her pastor, Elder J. Harvey Smith, and, Mr. (no name was given — Ed.) She was laid to rest in the church cemetery. At her grave a few of us sang, "We shall sleep but not forever," etc. This song is precious to our hearts, and to all the blessed of our Father.

We desire a copy of this be given to the family; a copy spread on our Church Book, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Written at the request of Pleasant Grove Church while in conference at the October, 1961, meeting, by a cousin who loved her, and

Your little sister in hope,
Mrs. Jennie Somers Cobb

SUSIE A. STONE

Susie A. Stone, daughter of the late Joseph D. and Catherine L. Stone, was born August 7, 1879, in Trenton, N. J., and departed this life January 23, 1961, after a long illness.

She went to work as private secretary for C. V. Hill and Company about 45 years ago, and was retired after 35 years. One day she was looking for an important paper in Mr. Hill's desk drawer, and saw a **Signs of the Times** in the drawer. She took it out and started to read it, and knew she wanted to know more about what she read, so she came to Hopewell to our meetings. She later united and was baptized by the late Elder C. W. Vaughn on October 3, 1920. On April 25, 1936, she was chosen a member of the Board of Trustees, and became Secretary and Treasurer of the Board the same day. She served so faithfully until her health failed, and she resigned July 2, 1955.

Her health gradually failing, she went to a nursing home for about three years, since she had no family left to be with her. When we would go to see her, she would be so glad to see us; but the last year she did not know us. But when our pastor, Elder Arthur Warren, would go to see her and would quote from the Bible while talking with her, her face would light up, and she would look so happy. On one visit with her, when he had tried to talk with her, she took his hand, and said, "I don't know who you are, but I would like to know you better." This showed that even if she had lost everything else, she still knew the "joyful sound". She was a wonderful sister. All we can say is, "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Funeral services for Sister Stone were conducted by Elder Warren from the Blackwell Memorial Home, in Pennington, N. J., and she was laid to rest in the Greenwood Cemetery, Trenton, N. J.

Letha A. Blackwell, Church Clerk

LONA JOHNSON FARRELL

God in his infinite wisdom, love, and mercy has seen fit to remove from our midst our beloved sister, Lona Johnson Farrell. We bow in humble submission to the will of our God, knowing he is just in all his ways. Sister Farrell was born on December 13, 1888, and died October 9, 1961. She was the daughter of the late Henry Johnson and Jane Andrew Johnson. She was married to Herbert C. Farrell June 18, 1918. She leaves to mourn, her husband, Herbert C. Farrell; two brothers, Clayton and Walter Johnson; a number of nieces and nephews, and a host of other relatives and friends.

Sister Farrell was united with the Big Meadows Primitive Baptist Church, in Chatham County, N. C., in July of 1941. She was a faithful member of this church as long as she was able to attend. She expressed a great love for her church and its people. She bore her affliction and suffering with the same courage and faith that she lived and believed every day. Her favorite Bible verse was: "The Lord rules in Heaven and earth." Her favorite song was: "When I Can Read My Title Clear." We feel that she bore her suffering with the same belief that "The Lord Rules in Heaven and Earth" and that now that her suffering is over and her eyes are closed in the eternal sleep that one day the song, "When I Can Read My Title Clear" will have its true meaning for her. Where there will be no more sorrow, only joys.

Funeral services were conducted for her at Hanks Chapel Church, Pittsboro, N. C., by Mr. Bob Haultman, Elder J. W. Gilliam, and her pastor, Elder Harvey Smith. She was laid to rest under a blanket of beautiful flowers in the church cemetery to await the coming of her Lord.

Written by request by:
Mrs. Jessie Ruth Seagrove

MEMORIAL

WHEREAS, Our Heavenly Father, in His infinite wisdom and mercy, has removed from our midst and from this mortal existence, our beloved brother, Deacon Milton Maddock, of Strathroy, Ontario, we, The Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, assembled in conference at the Duart Meetinghouse, October 15,

1961, feel very keenly the loss of this esteemed brother.

Brother Maddock was born July 8, 1886, and died July 12, 1961. He was the son of Brother John William Maddock and Sister Mary Abigail Weed Maddock. His wife, Sister Mary Maddock, died March 18, 1957. He leaves to mourn, one son, Calvin Maddock; three daughters, Mrs. Monna Armstrong, Mrs. Bernice Campbell and Mrs. Laura Hume; also two brothers, Brother Ernest Maddock and Russell Maddock; and two sisters, Sister Minnie Cathers and Mrs. Marybelle Putnam.

Brother Maddock united with the church June 26, 1915, at Ekfrid, and was baptized by the late Elder John Slauson; and was appointed deacon in 1952. His funeral service was held at the Strathroy Funeral Home, with burial in Alvinston Cemetery.

Brother and Sister Maddock were a very hospitable couple and always, as we remember them, took home as many as they could at the quarterly meetings. We used to like to hear Brother Maddock ask a blessing at mealtime. Both he and his companion knew the truth and would talk of good things when two or three were together, or if there were many. We have things come to us that they said while in their company, and they are a comfort to us.

LET IT BE RESOLVED, That with hearts bowed in humble submission to God's holy will, we do express our belief that our loss is his eternal gain; and give voice to our gratitude for the rich blessing his presence was in our midst, and

BE IT RESOLVED, That this tribute to his memory be written in the church book, a copy be sent to *The Signs of the Times* and one to his family.

Eldon Gilbert
Church Clerk

OBITUARY AND RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our beloved sister, Minta Oakes Hundley, September 3, 1961, making her stay on earth over ninety years. She was born in Pittsylvania County, near Whitmell, Va., November 28, 1870, a daughter of the late William Henson Oakes and Mahala Oakes. She was the last member of her generation of the family.

She was married to James Henry Hundley in 1895, and since that time has been a resident of the Swansonville community. Her husband died January 30, 1953. She leaves to mourn her departure two sons and four daughters: James C. and Guy H. Hundley, Dry Fork, Va.; Mrs. George L. Dovel, Bridgewater, Va.; Mrs. John W. Stratton, Ridgeway, Va.; Miss Lillye Hundley, Dry Fork, Va.; and Mrs. Ernest Blair, Danville, Va., R. F. D. 2. She also leaves seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Sister Hundley was a devoted wife, mother and a good neighbor. She never spent her time in idleness. Though the last years of her life were spent in a rolling chair she was engaged in some form of handwork as long as health permitted.

Sister Hundley united with Strawberry Church August 14, 1921, and was a faithful member, always attending church services unless providentially hindered. She and Mr. Hundley and family also visited neighboring churches of this association and those of our corresponding associations during their lifetime. She was a true believer in Salvation by Grace and in the complete work of Christ, and that the church was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. She enjoyed preaching and singing at her home whenever she could not attend church services regular. We miss her and no longer can we look forward to seeing her at home or being rolled to her place at church as we have the last nine years since she fell and broke her hip. As soon as Brother Guy drove in the church yard the brethren and friends went out and helped him lift her into the door.

Her funeral was conducted at Swicegood Funeral Chapel by Elders W. R. Dodd and R. S. Payne amidst a host of friends and neighbors and beautiful flowers, showing the esteem in which she was held.

We, the Church at Strawberry, greatly feel our loss which is her eternal gain. We extend our sympathy to the family who so devotedly cared for their mother in her declining years, especially Brother Guy and Miss Lillye who were at home with their mother. They did everything for her comfort and pleasure that human hands could do. Even though they miss her presence more than anyone else, we feel they should have no regrets for they did their part faithfully day and night; and may God reconcile them to his will.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to His will. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh, blessed be His name.

FURTHERMORE BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be recorded on our church record, a copy sent to the family, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference September 30, 1961.

Elder W. R. Dodd, Moderator
Josephine Dodd, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 130 DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1962 NO. 4

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4/62
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

DESIRE FOR A NEW HEART

O heart so hard it cannot melt,
That cannot mourn for sorrows felt,
That cannot feel, that cannot grieve;
That hears the truth but can't believe.

O heart so wretched and undone,
That does not, cannot evil shun,
That cannot keep the narrow way,
And cannot God's commands obey.

O heart so vile, so full of sin:
O wretched state that I am in!
Within my heart no goodness dwells —
It every righteous thought repels.

O heart so deceitful, sinful, base,
That cannot evil thoughts erase;
But evil deeds desires to do.
O, when wil't thou my hope renew.

My sorrows tongue nor pen can tell,
Nor can I inward tumults quell:
A contrite tear I cannot shed,
I seem plucked up, yea, seem twice dead.

Lord give me strength for daily needs,
Through Him who for me intercedes:
I'll trust in thee, though thou me slay,
To lead and keep me in the way.

A new heart, Lord, in me create,
And turn to joy my mournful state;
In Jesus' blood O wash thou me,
And white as driven snow I'll be.

Thy loving presence Lord restore,
Let me again thy grace adore;
Then in thy law I'll take delight
And meditate both day and night.

Though foes by thousands me assail,
And all my earthly friends me fail,
And some prove false I love most dear;
Yet in thy strength I'll persevere.

Lord thou art all in all to me:
If thou remove, no joy I see.
To me thou art the sea of love:
When shall I view thy courts above?

How long, dear Lord, must I here stay
In prisons strong, bound up in clay;
In dungeons dark, in sorrows great,
Tormented by the sins I hate?

Yet thee I'll trust, though thou me slay,
To be my portion night and day;
And in a few short years at most
I hope to join the blood washed host.

C. B. Britt,
Rt. 6, Box 282,
ElDorado, Arkansas

A FEW MORE TRIALS HERE BELOW

A few more rolling suns at most
On this cold, rocky shore;
Then I shall join the saints most blest
On Heaven's blissful shore.

A few more pains and heartaches here
In this most barren land;
Then I shall join the hosts above
In Canaan's happy land.

A few more raging storms below
In this my prison land;
Then freed from sin, my soul shall fly
To Heaven's happy land.

A few more battle scars to bear,
And groanings over sin;
Then the glad tidings I shall hear
"CHRIST BORE THE REBEL'S SIN."

H. J. Bird
December 15, 1961

"GOD HATH DECLARED FROM THE BEGINNING . . ."

Sharps Chapel, Tenn.

Dear Brethren:

It is with misgivings that I attempt to write a few words for our family paper. I do this at the earnest request

of our aged brother Reagan. I am not a writer, but it has been hard to say no to our brother, therefore, I send you this with the hope that it will do some poor child of God some good.

I am trying to serve three churches, and have for some time. I have not experienced the conditions with which we are surrounded today, in regard to both doctrine and practice. The churches are gradually going down; some are following worldly things, and some are dying. We can not say how long that this will go on. For myself, I find that I am weak and impotent in the matter.

Some are saying that it is our old way of worship; some think that it is our old songs that we sing; and some think that it is the old doctrine that we advocate. They say that this doctrine is a hard one, who can hear it? This calls my attention to a scripture that is very common among the Primitive Baptists: Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? (Isa. 53:1) I think that it is important to know that we only have two reports; one is false, one is true. If you think that I am making a false report, then disregard this letter and say that the fault is in me. My contention is that there were many in that day that did not believe the report when the prophet made it. When he asked the second question, "To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?", evidently he had in mind the true believer, for when the arm of the Lord is revealed that individual will believe, for he will have the evidence of a true and living God. This report to us is a very comforting gospel, and what a blessing it is to be blessed to understand that our God rules all things in heaven and in earth. It is written, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork."

It is my understanding that God has declared from the beginning all things that would come to pass. May I refer you to a scripture that is sound and that can not be cast aside? "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." (Isa. 14:24) It is true that the Lord's hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back. According to the scriptures, the Lord peopled the earth with its numerous inhabitants, and gave to each its specified being, provided all the means for their preservation and continuance and departure in their different generations from beginning to end. He sees under the whole heaven, and directs all his works; his eyes are on the man which he made; He sees and directs all his going. The eyes of all wait for Him; He giveth them their meat in due season; He opens his hand and satisfieth the desire of everything; He closes his hand and they are in trouble.

The only thing that I know to do is to stand still and know that He is God. Some tell me that this standing still and this doctrine will destroy the church. My contention is that the truth will not destroy anything. May I close by saying, "That these are parts of his ways, but how little is heard of Him, but the thunder of his power, who can understand?" Read Job 26th chapter.

In fellowship and love,
(Elder) John Wilder,
Sharps Chapel, Tenn.

R. F. D. 2
Farmerville, La.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I sincerely hope I am not too late with my renewal to miss a number of the **Signs,** since I look forward each month to its coming. I do enjoy reading it so very much, and don't quit until I've read it through.

I had the pleasure of visiting in Brother Wood's home in September, and did enjoy it so much.

May God bless you all to be able to continue this wonderful work in this

dark and trying hour; but we know that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are the called according to his purpose. We know His will shall be done, and that is what keeps us going.

An unworthy sister, if one at all,
Mrs. Herbert Miller

"THE LORD WATERS THE GARDEN OF GRACE"

Princeton, W. Va.

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

This cold and stormy day finds me still in this suffering tabernacle of clay, feeling to be on the highway, and begging to be fed of the crumbs that fall; for I know my arm is too short to reach out and get a crumb. Therefore I have to go hoping along, feeling so poor and needy: carnal security or vain glory does not hold me up. I have to cry, Lord be merciful to me, for I have the sentence of death in me that I cannot trust in myself, or anything of this world. I hope I am one of those that the Father gave the Son before they had their existence in the earthly Adam. I feel that if in this world only I had hope, I would be most miserable. I hope I am one of the circumcision who worships God in Spirit and have no confidence in the flesh. O that we may rest in the Lord and the power of His might, putting on the whole armor of God.

"Oh land of rest for thee I sigh;
When the moment come
When I shall lay my armor by,
And dwell with Christ at home."

I don't have to go to the mountains to feel a wilderness, for I am shut up in this wilderness of clay, where all natural streams are dried up, and I cannot get a crumb from the Master's table; yet hoping that grace, mercy, and peace may be multiplied unto all that were given in Christ before the world began.

We know that except our righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, we shall in no wise enter into the kingdom. But Wisdom has built her house, and Christ is the chief corner stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. We are quickened together with Christ, and he is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. The whole church was baptized into His death, and raised again by his life, and quickened together with him; and we are made to sit together in heavenly places in him. He is the only storehouse, for grace was given in him; and he stood a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. He has predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, who was made sin for us, and who fulfilled the law and brought everlasting life. Our sins were imputed to him, and his life given to us. But still there is an inward conflict: the spirit and the flesh warring against one another, so that when we would do good evil is present. But the inward man brings into subjection the outer man, and it is all of grace and not of works, and therefore boasting is excluded. If we do anything just for duty's sake, desiring a blessing, it is not of love; and though we give our body to be burned and have not charity, it profits us nothing.

There is a great difference in the works of the flesh and of the Spirit. The Lord is the only one that can water the garden of grace and make the sweet spices flow out with joy.

. . . But sometimes we feel to be in such a barren state that we cannot go any farther unless given help from the sanctuary of love. I desire to be content with my lot, but cannot unless the Lord of all grace enables me, for I of myself can do nothing. Sometimes I desire to leave this tabernacel of sin, but this old body dreads it, and I still have a rebellious heart. We go through this

desert land hoping that grace, mercy, and peace may be multiplied unto us, but the children of old received these blessings only as added and supplied by Him from whom all blessings flow.

Your sister in tribulation,
Mrs. W. G. Pritchett,
Box 287,
Princeton, W. Va.

SIGNS A BUNDLE OF GOOD LETTERS

3347 Tutwiler,
Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Editors:

It is now time to send payment for the **Signs**, so we enclose a check.

I always desire to say a few words in honor and praise to God for the many gifts of his love; and one is, in keeping the **Signs** such a lovely and welcome paper these hundred and twenty-nine years. My heart is made glad when I see it in our mail, knowing it is a bundle of good letters, together with the good editorials, and the writings of those gone on before. Nevertheless we are dependent upon the goodness and will of our God to give us a mind to understand and receive them. Sad indeed is the time when we have to lay it down un-read; and while we wait for the mind to read, we wonder about many things; for we have already learned that of ourselves we can do nothing. But we have also experienced many times, we hope, the sweet words of our Lord saying to our souls, "Be still;" and the sweetness of peace which seems to fill our whole being, and opens our understanding of the Scriptures and the writings of our loved ones from far and near. Sometimes love is so abundantly flowing we feel it reaching many, many miles to embrace ones we have met in person, or by pen; and even those we know not.

And sometimes we are so lifted up above the cares of this life, and view the handiwork of our God in its beauty, power, and never failing love, we dread for the time to come again when we are left to ourselves. For when we are left to ourselves again, we lose sight of the beauty; and when He withdraws from us, our hearts are grieved, and we exhaust all our strength trying to hold on. But, alas, we again find ourselves groaning, and asking many questions; but God is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. We are told in time of adversity to consider, and in time of prosperity to rejoice; and we hope to be enabled to do that.

We are looking forward to having Elder R. L. Biggs with us the 2nd Sunday in this month (January). He has been coming for several years, and we feel that God has richly blessed him to that end, and us as well. It seems he is filled with the love of God, and has a tongue of utterance and a mouth of wisdom, to speak comfortingly to the Lord's people. Oh, the riches of God's grace to his people; it can never be told!

Pray for us when at the throne of grace.

Mrs. Luther Campbell

R. F. D. 1, Box 850
Alvin, Texas

Dear Editors:

Am enclosing check for renewal of the Signs of the Times. I enjoy reading my copies of the Signs very much, because I believe they set forth the doctrine of God our Saviour better than anything I have read, except the Bible.

I especially enjoy the experiences of others, which indicate that they have been brought by a way they knew not, and claim no credit to themselves; because, if I have any experience at all, that is the way it has been with me.

I have been reading the Signs for two years, and I think it is wonderful. I joined the Primitive Baptist Church July 11, 1958, at Fellowship Church, near Gilmer, Texas; and then transferred my membership to Shepherd Fold Church, at Houston, Texas. My work is such that

I have a hard time getting to go to meetings.

I hope that God will continue to bless the editors and writers of the Signs as he has in the past; and that it will always stand on the sure foundation, and proclaim the unsearchable riches of God's grace and mercy. When at the throne of grace, pray for this old sinner. May the Lord bless and keep you editors, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

A lonely brother,
Arthur B. Jones

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE FAITHFULNESS OF ISRAEL'S GOD

2713 White Oak Drive
Houston, Texas.

Dear Editors of *the Signs,* and those blessed to contribute to the spiritual contents of its pages; and all the household of faith:

It is my desire to send greetings in love and sweet fellowship in the name of our precious Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Inasmuch as the wheels of time have speedily spun another two years into oblivion, thereby bringing forth the appointed time to send in my renewal fee, we would, if enabled, declare His faithfulness to a poor sinner such as we are; also confessing our faults, our shortcomings, our backslidings, and our waywardness; and would humbly testfy with one of old, that it is of His mercies we are not consumed.

How the child of God is at times pressed down! His own sins rise up as mountains before him, and the sins and evil of the whole world vex his righteous soul. How he becomes entangled in the cares of this life, and overcharged with its surfeitings, and unbelief and hardness of heart separate him from the sweet communion and a felt sacred nearness to his Beloved! And then some great trial befalls him, for every child of God must and will have trials, some more, some less; perhaps diverse in nature, but all fixed in God's purpose and decree ere the world was.

In the intensity of the fiery trial, how prone we are to rely upon our own strength, only to find that we are lacking in wisdom and knowledge as to what to do, as well as devoid of strength to do it. Then, (my experience) we turn and squirm in the heat of the furnace, and our mind turns to mankind; to some one or other, perhaps to one of our ministers. And if we are allowed to go so far as to trust in him for the matter at hand, we find we have trusted in the staff of a broken reed, whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand and pierce it. And this aggravates our already miserable case an hundredfold; but at the same time, it has brought us to know of a certainty there is no earthly help for us, and that it must come from above.

But where, how, and by what means, can a soul in such darkness find this precious One? We read our Bible — it is a sealed book as far as our case is concerned. We may see the perfections of Him therein, and read of his mercy to lost sinners, but in our soul we cannot find the living witness testifying of our part in the matter. Then, Oh then, how dark is the darkness! And we cry aloud, "The darkness hath covered our head." And when we lie down at night breathing our groanings that He would appear again for us in our behalf, only to awaken in the morning with the bitter realization He is still absent from our soul. No wonder Job cried out, "Behold, I go forward, but He is not there; and I go backward, but I cannot perceive him."

But constrained in our helplessness of any other source of deliverance, we cease not trying to pray, for we know that He only hath the words of eternal life. But the eye of the weary soul has become dim, and all hope seems to be gone, and the darkness seems complete. Our physical bodies now feel weakened

and ill from the onslaught of the strife within, and we sink, as it were, in despair; and we say, Now our sins have found us out; we have been deceived in our wicked heart, and have deceived others. Our sweet assurances we had thought to feel in the past now rise up to mock us. Yet in the depth of this soul searching misery, we confess that if we have been cast away forever, it is just and right; but it lessens not the agony of the soul, but rather seems to add to it, in that we know we have sinned against the Holy God.

Who can know the desolation and despair of such darkness except those who have been in this place? Words cannot express it — it must be felt. The pit would close over us but for the faithfulness of Israel's God. All praise and thanksgiving to that compassionate and longsuffering God whose work is perfect: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, the one only true and living God! He, in his sovereign love, has elected a remnant of Adam's fallen race, chosen in His beloved Son, who, in due time, was sent into this world, being born of the Virgin Mary, begotten by the overshadowing of God the Holy Ghost; born under the law, that he might suffer the curse of the law for those his Father had given him, and putting away their sins by his agonizing suffering and shedding of his precious blood upon the cruel and shameful cross. Though there was no sin in his holy flesh, he suffered the sting of death for his people, for all their sins were imputed to him; and all His righteousness is imputed to those He died for. We can only stand in awe and wonder, and exclaim, "Who is sufficient for these things?"

Now having loved his own which were in the world, He loves them to the end. And to the afflicted one being tried in the throes of darkness and has sunk in self-despair, a still small voice with living power drops these words into the soul, "He that walketh in darkness and hath no light, let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." But so hardened in unbelief is our heart, we say O Lord, we cannot trust in thee except thou give us faith. And then the sweet promise is given anew, "My grace is sufficient for thee." And we are given to see by the light of the blessed Holy Spirit, the compassion and long suffering of the Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief, and our hard heart melts as we behold Him as a Father that pitieth his children; (Psalms 103:13) and we as one whom his mother comforteth, (Isaiah 66:13), as He gently chides us with the words, "O ye of little faith, hast thou forgotten my former kindnesses, the many sealings of the Holy Spirit with sweet and gracious assurances of my dying love?" And thus He brings to remembrance the sweet testimonies of his love, his suffering for our sins, his death and resurrection for our justification — these things having been testified of in our soul by the living Spirit in the power of God.

Now we must confess in shame and sorrow of heart, our unstableness and our unfaithfulness to Him; and He chides again, "These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself, but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes." (Psalms 50:21) Then we can say with David, "Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness; let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oil." (Psalms 141:5)

And still, in his gentleness and condescension to the poor soul, He continues to speak as a loving parent to the wayward child: Didst thou not know I am in the midst of thine every trial; that I have suffered thine every pain; that I am ever aware of thy whole case, and know it is too much for thee? Hast thou forgotten my word, "He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper." (Psalms 121) And we are

made to confess again our forgetfulness of him and his word. Again he says, "My arm is not shortened that it cannot save." And we are given living faith to believe; and we cry out, "My Lord and my God."

He remembers that we are of the dust, and says that the victory in the fiery trial cannot be gotten by our frail efforts; trust not in the arm of the flesh, for I am your strength in weakness, and the victory is gotten by my own right arm. "I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy." And we know that he is God, and these are his perfect works, and that he has done this that our faith be tried. We read in Peter's first epistle, ". . . though now for a season if need be ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations, so that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

We read in Zech. 13:9: "I will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: They shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say it is my people, and they shall say the Lord is my God." When this is experienced by the Spirit's inshining, then our mourning is turned into joy, and we are made to rejoice from our sorrow. It is written, "He hath appointed unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified."

So, in his pity, and longsuffering, He brings the lowly sinner to these precious promises of God, confirming them by the Holy Spirit that they are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus, whose word is forever settled in heaven.

Here we would note a special scripture that so sweetly dropped into our soul in a recent trial, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, sayeth the Lord."

Now, if the misery and woe of an afflicted soul in darkness is such it cannot be expressed, how much more cannot the joy and rejoicing of the soul be expressed when it is liberated from its bondage, and we are lifted out of the pit of miry clay and our feet set upon a rock.

He has not promised us that there will be no more trials; He has not said that he would take the present trial from us, nor has he said that he would take us out of the trial, but He has assured us again that He is our strength and has gotten the victory over all our oppressors within and without.

So may each and everyone be made to remember that our weeping may endure for the night, but joy cometh in the morning when the Son of Righteousness arises with healing in his wings; and then with David we can say, "I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving."

"I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him." (Ecclesiastes 3:14)

Unworthily yours in hope,
Mrs. Buena V. Wright

LAW AND GOSPEL

(Part of a letter by J. C. Philpott, 1861.)

My dear Sir — In one of your letters you express the wish that I should give my views upon this point — Why, in my judgment, the law is not a believer's rule of life . . . In doing so I shall take occasion to offer my thoughts on these

three distinct points —

1. Why the law is not the believer's rule of life.
2. What is his rule?
3. Disprove the objection cast upon us that our views lead to doctrinal or practical antinomianism.

By a believer, I understand one who by faith in Christ is delivered from the curse and bondage of the law, and who knows something experimentally of the life, light, liberty, and love of the glorious gospel of the grace of God. By the law I understand chiefly, though not exclusively, the law of Moses. And by the rule of life I understand an outward or inward guide, by following which a believer directs his walk and conversation before God, the Church, and the world.

It is very necessary to bear strictly in mind that we are speaking here wholly and solely of **a believer.** What has the law to do with a believer in Christ Jesus? Is he required by the revealed will of God to take the law as the guiding rule of his life? I answer, No; and for several reasons.

1. God does not leave us at liberty to take at will one part of the law and to leave the other. It must be taken as a whole, or left as a whole, for God has so revealed it. I cannot find in any part of God's Word any mitigation of its terms, or any halving of it, so that, according to the views of many divines who have written on the subject, we may be dead to it as a covenant, and yet alive to it as a rule. The essential and distinguishing characteristic of the law is that it is a **covenant of works,** requiring full and perfect obedience, and attaching a tremendous curse to the least infringement of its commands. If then I, as a believer, take the law as my rule of life, I take it with its curse; I put myself under its yoke, for in receiving it as my guide, (and if I do not this, it is not my rule), I take it with all its conditions and become subject to all its penalties . . . The indispensable connection between a covenant and its rules is clearly shown in Gal. v. 1-6, where the apostle testifies to "every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law". It is idle to talk of taking the law for a rule of life, and not for a covenant; for the two things are essentially inseparable; and as he who keeps the whole law and yet offends in one point, is guilty of all (James ii. 10), so he who takes but one precept of the law for his rule, (as the Galatians took that of circumcision), by taking that one, virtually adopts the whole, and by adopting the whole puts himself under the curse which attaches to their infringement.

People speak very fluently about the law being a rule of life who little think of the resulting consequences; for amongst them is this, that its written precepts and not its mere spirit, must be the rule. Now, these precepts belong to it only as a covenant for they were never disjoined by the Authority that gave them, and what God hath joined together no man can put asunder. To show this connection between the precepts and the covenant is the chief drift of the Epistle to the Galatians, who were looking to the law and not the gospel, and having begun in the Spirit were attempting to be made perfect by the flesh. Read with enlightened eyes, this blessed Epistle would at once decide in favour of the gospel as our guiding rule of Christian conduct as distinct from the law which was never given to believers in Christ as the rule of their daily conduct and conversation. Observe how Paul chides those who would so act; he calls them "foolish Galatians", and asks who hath bewitched them that they should not obey the truth (that is, the gospel), "before whose eyes Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth, crucified among them". He appeals to their own experience and asks them: "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?" He draws a line of distinction here between those works which are done in obedience to the law as a guiding rule, and that power of God felt in the heart which attends a preached gospel when heard in faith, and asks them under which of

the two they had received the teaching and testimony of the blessed Spirit. But observe, further, now he bids them "walk in the Spirit" (Gal. v. 16). Now, to "walk" is to live and act, and the rule which he here gives for this living and acting is not the law but the Spirit, and he tells them the blessedness of this divine leading and guiding: "If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law"; that is, neither as a covenant or as a rule — that they were free from its curse as a condemning covenant, and from its commands as a galling yoke, which neither they nor their fathers could bear (Acts xv. 10). But **to show them that this deliverance from the law did not set them free from a higher and more perfect rule of obedience, he bids them "fulfill the law of Christ",** which is love, a fruit of the Spirit and not produced by the law which worketh wrath and gendereth to bondage (Rom. iv. 15; Gal. iv. 24).

If we are willing to abide by the inspired Word of Truth, we need go no further than this very Epistle to decide the whole question, for in it we have laid down the rule according to which believers should walk, which is "a new creature" (or a new creation): "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and on the Israel of God" (Gal. vi. 15-16). Is the law or the Spirit's work on the heart held out here as the rule of a believer's walk? The law is strictly a covenant of works; it knows nothing of mercy, reveals nothing of grace, and does not communicate the blessed Spirit. Why, then, if I am a believer in Christ and have received His grace and truth into my heart, am I to adopt for the rule of life that which does not testify of Jesus either in the Word or in my conscience? If I am to walk as a believer, it must be by a life of faith in the Son of God (Gal. ii. 20). Is the law my rule here? If it be, where are those rules to be found? "The law is not of faith." How, then, can it lay down rules for the life of faith? If I wish to walk as becometh a believer with the Church, what help will the law give me there? To walk as such must be by the law of love as revealed in Christ and made known in my heart by the power of God. If I am to walk in the ordinances of God's house, are these to be found revealed in the law?

We give the law its due honour. It had a glory, as the Apostle argues (II Cor. iii.) as the ministration of death and condemnation, but this glory is done away, and why are we to look to it now as our guiding rule? The ministration of the Spirit, of life, and of righteousness "doth much more exceed in glory", and why are we to be condemned if we prefer the Spirit to the letter, life to death, and righteousness to condemnation? A rule must influence as well as guide, or else it is a dead rule. If you choose to be ruled by the killing letter which can only minister condemnation and death, and we choose for our rule that which ministers the Spirit, righteousness, and life, which has the better rule? It is much to be feared that those who thus walk and talk have still the veil over their heart, and know nothing of what the Apostle means when he says: "Now the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. But we all with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (II Cor. iii. 17-18).

But not only have we these deductions to influence the mind in rejecting the law as a rule for a believer's walk, but we have the express testimony of God as a warrant for so doing. We read, for instance, that "I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God" (Gal. ii. 19); that "I am become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that I should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that I should bring forth fruit unto God" (Rom. vii. 4). As a believer in Christ, the law is dead to me, and I am dead to it. The Apostle has clearly

and beautifully opened up this subject. He assumes that a believer in Christ is like a woman who is re-married after the death of her first husband; and he declares that "she is bound by the law to her husband as long as he liveth, but if the husband be dead she is loosed from the law of her husband" (v. 2). Of course the first husband is the law, and the second husband is Christ. Now, adopting this figure of Paul's, may we not justly ask: Which is to be the rule of the wife's conduct when re-married, the regulations of the first or of the second husband?

2. What, then, is the believer's rule of life? Is he without rule? a lawless wretch who because he abandons the law of Moses for his rule has no guide to direct his steps? God forbid! for I subscribe heart and soul to the words of the Apostle: "Being not without law to God, but under law to Christ" (I Cor. ix. 21). The believer then has a guiding rule which we may briefly call **the gospel.** This rule we may divide into two branches. The gospel as written by the divine finger upon the heart, and the gospel as written by the blessed Spirit in the Word of truth. These do not form two distinct rules, but the one is the counterpart of the other; and they are mutually helpful to and corroborative of each other. One of the four promises of the new covenant (Jer. xxxi. 31-34; Heb. viii. 8-12 compared), was: "I will put My law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts." This writing of the law of God in the heart, I need not tell you, is that which distinguishes it from the law of Moses which was written on tables of stone; and becomes an internal rule whereas the law of Moses was but an external rule. This internal rule seems to be pointed out in Romans viii. 2 where we find these words: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." By "the law of the Spirit of life", I understand that guiding rule (for a **rule** in Scripture is frequently called a **law;** the word law in Hebrew signifying literally "instruction") which the Spirit of God, as communicating life, is in a believer's heart. It is, therefore, the liberating, sanctifying, guiding influence of the Spirit of God in his soul which, as a law or rule, delivers him from "the law of sin and death"; by which I understand not so much the law of Moses, as the power and prevalency of his corrupt nature.

If this then be a correct exposition of the text, we have a guiding internal rule distinct from the law of Moses, and a living rule in the heart, which that never was nor could be; for it did not communicate the Spirit (Gal. iii. 2-5). But this internal rule, as being "the law of the Spirit of life", has power to lead all the children of God; for in the same chapter (v. 14) the Apostle declares that "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God". This leading which is peculiar to the children of God and is an evidence of their sonship, delivers them from the law; for "If we be led of the Spirit we are not under the law" (Gal. v. 18) either as a covenant or as a rule, for we have a better covenant and a better rule (Heb. viii. 6). What is the main use of a rule but to lead? But who can lead like a living Guide? How can a dead law lead a living soul? The very proof that we are the children of God is that we are led by the Spirit; and this inward leading becomes our guiding rule. And is it not a disparaging of the guidance of the blessed Spirit to set up in opposition to His guiding rule a dead law and to call those Antinomians who prefer a living Guide to a dead letter? This living Guide is that holy and blessed Spirit who "guides into all truth" (Jn. xvi. 13). Here is the main blessedness of the work and grace upon the heart, that the leading and guiding of the blessed Spirit form a living rule every step of the way; for He not only quickens the soul into spiritual life, but maintains the life which He gave, and performs (or finishes, **margin)** it until the day of Jesus Christ (Phil. i. 6). This life is eternal, as the blessed Lord at the well of Samaria declared, that the water which He should

give the believer should be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life (Jn. iv. 14). It is then this springing well in a believer's soul which is the guiding rule, for, as producing and maintaining the fear of God, it is "a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death" (Proverbs xiv. 27).

But lest this guiding **internal** rule be abused, which it might be by enthusiasm, and that they might not be left to substitute delusive fancies for the teaching of the Holy Spirit, the God of all grace has given to His people an **external** rule in the precepts of the gospel as declared by the mouth of the Lord and His apostles, but more particularly as gathered up in the epistles as a standing code of instruction for the living family of God. Nor do these at all clash with the rule of which I have just spoken, but on the contrary harmonize entirely and thoroughly with it; for, in fact, it is one and the same rule; the only difference between them being that the blessed Spirit had revealed the one in the written Word, and by the application of that Word to the soul makes the other to be a living rule in the heart.

Now there is not a single part or particle of our walk and conduct before God or man which is not revealed and inculcated in the precepts of the gospel; for, though we have not minute directions, we have what far excels all such unnecessary minutiae — most blessed principles enforced by every gracious and holy motive, and forming, when rightly seen and believed, a most perfect code of inward and outward conformity to the revealed will of God, and of all holy walk and conduct in our families, in the Church, and in the world.

I would say then that a believer has a rule to walk by which is sufficient to guide him in every step of the way; for if he has the internal quickenings, teachings, and leadings of the Spirit to make his conscience tender in the fear of God, and has the law of love written upon his heart by the finger of God; and if besides this he has the precepts of the gospel as a full and complete code of Christian obedience, what more can he want to make him perfect in every good word and work (Heb. xiii. 21)? Can the law do any of these things for him? Can it give him life, in the first instance, when it is a killing letter? Can it maintain life, if it be not in its power to bestow it?

But it may be asked: Do you then set aside the two great commandments of the law: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," etc., and "thy neighbour as thyself"? No, On the contrary, the gospel as an external and internal rule fulfills them both, for "love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. xiii. 10). So that this blessed rule of the gospel **not only does not set aside the law as regards its fulfillment, but so to speak, absorbs into itself and glorifies and harmonizes its two great commandments, by yielding to them in obedience of heart, which the law could not give; for the believer serves in newness of Spirit, not in the oldness of the letter** (Rom. vii. 6), **as Christ's freeman** (Jn. viii. 32), **and not as Moses's bondslave.** This is a willing obedience and not a legal task. This will explain the meaning of the Apostle: "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man"; for the new man of grace, under the powerful influence of the Holy Spirit, delights in the law of God, not only for its holiness, but as inculcating that to do which fills the renewed heart with inward delight — love to God and His people . . .

(We found the above to express our views on the subject and felt to pass it on to the brethren. We copy it from the December, 1961 issue of the Gospel Standard of England. — J. D. W.)

1884 Connally Dr.,
East Point, Ga.

Dear Brother Wood:

As you know, I have done a lot of writing, and many times I felt the leading of the spirit, (I hope) and many

sweet thoughts came to mind that filled me so much that my eyes were filled with tears. As I grow older, these sweet thoughts grow sweeter and dearer, and it seems that I see so much more light and glory than in younger days. They are so wonderful they seem to be more than I can comprehend. I try to write; can't find words to tell what I want to, become confused and have to quit. They are too high, I cannot attain unto them. It seems I know less as I grow older.

I read in the paper a few days ago, a man trying to tell how large the universe is, but I think he failed; I do not believe any one can tell it. I will give my idea, and if you see differently, let me know your opinion. God is from everlasting to everlasting, without beginning or end. He fills immensity; is everywhere at the same time. We look at the sky and see millions of stars. It is said the most distant planet that can be seen, is millions of miles away. Is that the end of space? No. If we could fly to the most distant planet, do you suppose space would be just as far away beyond as that which we can see? God being without beginning and ending, is everywhere, then space must be as large as He is. So is there any end to space? If not and there are stars and planets everywhere space extends, just think of the billions, trillions as space reaches on and on.

Now let us come closer home. "Lord, what is man that thou takest knowledge of him or the son of man that thou makest account of him?" (Psalms 144:3) All nations are accounted to Him as nothing and less than nothing and vanity. A very small per cent of people ever think of this; and many give it a passing thought. Is there a contrast ever heard of, as great as this? God fills space that we cannot begin to comprehend. Man is less than nothing; where is the space he fills? HOW can anything be less than nothing? Is this one of God's miraculous secrets? Man is less than the point of a fine needle compared to God. Then why did He ever notice such sinful, rebellious, ungrateful beings? The worst of His creation. All living beings are obeying the laws of nature, except man. He is violating the laws of nature, and God's laws. The best answer we can give is, "Even so Father for so it seemeth good in thy sight."

He made all things for His praise and glory. If man should obey all laws and commands, would He praise God? If he did not need any help from above he perhaps would completely forget God, but the all-wise, all-powerful God has arranged all things so that all praise **shall** belong to Him; and when we can by the leading of the Spirit realize these things we can thank and praise Him for **all** His works, so much as He enables to do. We cannot praise him without the Spirit. Then just think what an awful thing for man to declare that God cannot do as He pleases with anything and all things that He has made. For a man to say, "God cannot do thus and so without my permission," is the limit of blasphemy. Some of the Lord's people are so weak in the knowledge of the work of the Spirit, they think they have to let God do. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." (Isaiah 14:24) He does not have to speak, His thoughts are so strong as His words. The Bible is full of His sovereign works, power, wisdom, shalls and wills. What would be our condition if we did not believe these things? Oh, what a shock the blind are to experience when they face this Sovereign God at the judgement bar. How little and unworthy we feel because He has passed by so many seemingly good people in nature, and reached down to even notice us. The half will never be told in this life.

The doctrine of absolute predestination has been hated almost from the beginning of time; has been abused, slandered and persecuted, but it is founded on a solid Rock, Jesus, and is as safe, and will endure as long as He lives. It is the sweetest, most God honoring, soul comforting and man debasing doctrine; and it is sweeter to me as

time passes. It is impossible to explain my thoughts and feelings, and joy. Some people try to make a distinction between predestination and decree, foreordain and others; but predestinate, predetermine, foreordain, decree, purpose, etc. seem to mean the same as to God's sovereignty over all things.

I have heard preachers (I wonder if they are God called) who cannot say much without bringing in time salvation, conditioned on our ability to work it out. It is left with us to obey and receive blessings or disobey and lose them. Such blindness, that cannot see that such a God is so weak that He cannot do His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. There are but two spirits or powers in the earth, God and Satan. We are under the power and leading of one or the other all the time, there is no middle ground. They say we are left to obey. Christ said, "Without me ye can do nothing," then when He leaves us to ourselves how are we to do anything in a spiritual way? Satan is tugging at us all the time except when he is driven away by the Lord, and the second the Lord withdraws His leading, Satan takes charge. Then how are we going to work out our salvation while in his power? I have read thousands of Christian experiences, and I have never read nor heard of a child of God who has lifted himself out of his burden of sin, darkness and despair. But I have read of God lifting them up, and, Oh, how the sorrowing one rejoiced and shouted His praise. If one could lift himself up above his trials, he would never praise God for it; would even forget God and become over righteous. What greater miracle of mercy has God done when He brought us from nature's darkness and gave us this knowledge and love, and enabled us to want to praise Him and live separate from the world? We are monuments of His love and mercies. I did not expect to write this; I started to write on a much different subject. May God bless you and enable you to pray for needy sinners.

Hoping for eternal rest,
George W. Jackson

Spokane, Washington

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing $6.00 for renewal of my subscription and that of my mother's. I want to tell you once again how much this dear magazine means to me — how I would hate to be without it, but words can't express my love, I hope, for the word of God I believe it holds.

We have meetings here in Spokane, held at the home of my aunt, Mrs. Mary Eckard, whenever Elder and Sister Atteberry are able to make it up from Hermiston, Oregon. My, how Brother Atteberry is blessed to preach! I nearly always enjoy his sermons, but only occasionally does God lead me spiritually into food and water; but when he does, what joy this poor mortal is made to feel. I hope I am a child of God, but I don't see how I can be; yet God has given me, I believe and hope, a faith and hope in him in spite of my evil and sinful nature. And, although it seems small when compared to the experience of others, it has been sufficient unto this day for me; and how glad I am I possess it!

I suppose I am like most carnal humans, I want the good things in life. Not riches, but enough of the natural desires: health for my family and myself, security, and all natural desires; and since my marriage nearly four years ago, I have been blessed with these. But I also desire a nearness to God, which I can't have of myself. I feel that it is true, as my Aunt Mary said, God may grant me my natural desires, but give me leanness of soul. I believe this is the way it is for me, yet I also believe that He is looking out for me just the same. I know that but for His grace I would fall so far so fast I could never climb back; nor even want to.

These people who preach what man

can do, I wonder sometimes if they have ever been truly tempted by that old Devil — who can really tempt, if God lets him do it. Then I wonder just how straight they could walk and how good they could be. I have been tempted, and I know that it was by God's grace alone that I was kept from falling; and not of myself. So I know to whom all praise is due; and I hope I am able to give all glory to God, and God alone. I feel that I glory in God as God, in the great I AM, and am glad he is God; and that He rules all things, and has all power; and that this is as it should be, even if I never enter into it.

I enjoy all the articles in the **Signs.** How I have enjoyed Elder Gold's experience this far! He was surely gifted of God to write the way a predestinarian believes. He really tears the sand right out from under all these "free-willers".

May God be with all his dear people everywhere, and watch over and keep them: He will; He says He will. Grace be with you.

Unworthily,
Mrs. Norman L. (Caroline) Martin

27124 Perkins Road,
Maderia, California

Dear Editors:

I see it is time to pay for my paper again. It means so much to me that I don't want to miss a copy. It is almost all the preaching I get. And through it I keep up with a lot of the Old Baptists, whom I love very dearly.

I was blessed to go to four lovely meetings last Fall while visiting relatives in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas. I enjoyed all of them, and trust I got a few crumbs, at least, from the Lord's table.

I am enclosing subscription also for my dear mother again. She is old and failing, and is partly a shut-in. She loves the paper, and feels lost without it.

Ola Marie Cunningham

THE SPIRIT'S WORK IS ALWAYS EFFECTIVE

Gordo, Alabama

"And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they will not depart from me." (Jeremiah 32:40)

Here are two remarkable promises. First, That God will not turn away from them to do them good; which Paul confirms: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28) Second, That His people (spiritual Israel) will not depart from him, for the reason that He will put his fear in their hearts, binding them to him, so that they will not depart. The work of the Spirit in God's people is always effective.

How different was the covenant of works under which natural Israel labored until the coming of Christ! The substance of it was expressed by Isaiah: "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured by the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." The Lord told Moses why they could not obey: "Yet the Lord hath not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear unto this day." (Deut. 29:4)

The elect, or spiritual, among them were but a very small remnant; even as it has been among all nations. The elect remnant among natural Israel, God kept as the "apple of his eye", forgiving their sins; as evidenced by David's sins of adultery and murder, which sins were put away. But to keep him from further sins, he was given an afflicted mind, in which remorse for the sins were ever present with him. Later he said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word." (Psalms 110:67)

All the woes pronounced against the Israelites by God's sent prophets, were against the carnal ones. But we now hear and read these same Scriptures of woe transferred to God's people among the Gentiles, as if they were carnal and under the law; yet "The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in them (not by them) who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." Since Christ has taken upon himself the woes due his people for their sins, there remains nothing against them.

John was given to see and prophesy of things that should come hereafter, and a great portion of his prophesy concerns the woes and plagues which should be sent upon the earth, and it was always upon those who had the mark of the beast, or who served him; never upon God's elect. To save his people from the wrath poured upon this Babylon, a voice from heaven is sent to his people among them, "Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." This God does experimentally by giving them the Spirit of Truth, opening their minds to his ways, so that they cannot continue any longer in Babylon. Many of the experiences published in the *Signs* tell how they have been led out, and brought to Zion.

The covenant under which His people now live, is one of Father, sons and daughters. Our natural father and children relationship is but a faint representation, compared with the love and care which God bears to his own. Those who have had some revelation of the glory and intenseness of this love, can realize that He will not withhold anything for their good, and the eternal glory of His presence in the world to come.

There have always been those that depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. They can be identified by their doctrine. If they substitute personal ability (even after regeneration) to return, or to keep themselves in the favor of God by their works, it is a seducing spirit. This keeping is alone of God by His Spirit working in his people that which is well pleasing in His sight.

All the admonitions and reproofs by Christ and his Apostles, are alone to the elect, and, like all other Scriptures, have to be applied or administered by the Holy Spirit to be effective.

W. L. Crowley

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Union Meeting will be held with Malmaison Church, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in April. It is located on Route 726, about 8 miles North of Danville, Virginia.

Our ministers, brethren and sisters, and friends are invited to meet with us.

Mrs. Kate Dodd, Clerk

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** will convene with Otter Creek Church the fifth Saturday and Sunday, the 28th and 29th of April. The church is located just off of Highway 258, about 14 miles south of Tarboro, N. C.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
R.F.D. 3,
Tarboro, N. C.

The **Skewasky Union** is to be held at Kehukee Primitive Baptist Church, Halifax County, N. C., 5th Sunday in April, 1962, Friday and Saturday before. Elder A. B. Ayers was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon and Elder W. E. Grimes, Alternate. The church is 1 mile south of Scotland Neck, N. C. on Highway 125. We extend a cordial invitation to Ministers, Brethren and friends.

E. C. Harrison
Union Clerk

UPPER COUNTRY LINE UNION

The **Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Union** is appointed to be held with the church at Reidsville, N. C., the 5th Sunday in April, 1962. Services to begin at 10:30 A. M.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Pastor
M. T. Smith, Act. Church Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To February 1, 1962)

Mrs. Drusiler Gillispie, Md.	$1.00
Eliza Turner, Va.	2.00
J. B. Alumbaugh, Mo.	5.00
Elder W. D. Griffin, Del.	2.00
Bertha Hanly, Md.	2.00
Mary E. Hendrick, Okla.	1.00

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EDITORIAL

REPENTANCE

2 Cor. 7:10 — For godly sorrow worketh REPENTANCE to salvation not to be REPENTED of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

It has been almost two years since I have written anything for publication. In answer to the many inquiries relative to the reason for my silence; I must be frank with you, I must confess that I cannot find one good reason even though my carnal mind suggests many frivolous excuses. I have experienced much sorrow because of this neglect but I greatly fear that it is the sorrow of the world which results in death instead of godly sorrow that worketh repentance to salvation. I can, at this moment, sympathize with Job who said: **"I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."** I would but cannot write, So help me, Lord, I pray: Deliver me from this plight. Bless my hands this day. May I be blessed to pen, Words that Thou wilt give — To sink into hearts of men, That they repent and live.

The first question we shall attempt to answer is: What is godly repentance? The term repentance suggests a true mourning for sin and a fervent desire to be delivered from it. True repentance is always the result and experience of those who have been convinced that they are sinners. Am I convinced that I have transgressed God's holy law? Do I possess sorrow in my heart because of my many wrong-doings? Is this sorrow great enough that I will confess to my God, my brethren, and my friends that I have sinned? Do I hate my sins to the extent of renouncing them? If I can from the heart answer these questions in the affirmative I do have some evidence of true repentance. I am convinced that true repentance is the daily exercise of a true Christian. David asks in Psalms 19:12: **"Who can understand his errors?"** Then he prays, **"Cleanse thou me from secret faults."** Enough of my faults have been revealed to me to make me shudder, but I realize that I have many that I am not aware of. I am guilty of disobeying God's revealed commandments in the Scriptures. I am guilty of being polluted in my own carnality. I am fully aware of the fact that I am so awfully polluted and so terribly depraved that I am helpless in attempting to deliver myself. If saving repentance does not include the mercy of God given to us in Christ Jesus, I have no hope. Repentance is a change of mind or purpose. There is a repentance that need to be repented of. This repentance is worked by the sorrow of the world. Worldly repentance includes change of mind or purpose, but would only be a change from one error to another error. Worldly repentance is the result of a sense of danger and fear of wrath brought about by the workings of a natural conscience. However, godly repentance is the result of a true mourning for sin and an earnest desire to be delivered from it which is brought about by the workings of the Spirit of God in changing the natural conscience to a spiritual conscience. The conscience that

has been spiritualized by the mighty working of the Spirit will do to follow. There are different kinds of repentance. There is the natural, legal, internal, external, and hypocritical repentance, as well as the true spiritual godly repentance.

The next question we shall consider is: Who is the author of true repentance? We find through sad experience that the carnal mind is not subject to the law of God. There must be something done for us, and in us, from without before we can repent or have a change of mind or purpose against self toward God. Repentance is not within the grasp, or reach, of the natural mind. The natural mind does not have the ability to change itself. True godly repentance must be the work of God. God promised it through prophecy by the hand of Zechariah. We read in Zech. 12:10 — **"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his own son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his own son."** Repentance is a grace or gift of God as is clearly affirmed in Acts 5:31 — **"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and Saviour, FOR TO GIVE REPENTANCE TO ISRAEL, and forgiveness of sin."** Read the second chapter of Acts and you will note the effect of this God-given repentance. Those who were "pricked in their heart" gave evidence of a change of mind and purpose. God had turned their hearts with this godly sorrow to make them fit subjects for external repentance. They brought forth fruit meet for repentance which caused them to be proper subjects of address to heed the command of Peter, "Repent . . ." Outward repentance would be nothing less than hypocritical if the heart and mind has not been changed. Inner repentance worked by God, is certain to cause outward repentance. Jeremiah quotes Ephraim as recorded in Jeremiah 31:18-19 — **"Turn thou me and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord, my God. Surely after that I was turned, I REPENTED . . ."** The Lord performs a perfect work that will result in the desired effects. Turning and repenting are synonymous terms. I do not feel it would do any violence to the meaning of Ephraim's cry to paraphrase it, using these words, "Give me repentance of heart and mind, Lord, and I shall have repentance. Surely after my heart and mind was given repentance, I outwardly and manifestly repented." We will further prove that repentance is the gift of God by quoting Acts 11:18 — **"When they heard these things they held their peace and glorified God, saying, 'Then hath God also to the Gentiles GRANTED REPENTANCE unto life'."** Paul verified this in his instructions to Timothy relative to his duties as a minister as recorded in 2 Timothy 2:25 — **"In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves: if God peradventure WILL GIVE THEM REPENTANCE to the acknowledging of the truth."**

The text implies that there is a repentance worked by a worldly sorrow. Your temperament, education, and the customs within your environment may cause you to experience a sense of guilt coupled with a feeling of helplessness which would result in an apprehension of danger. This painful feeling would not necessarily mean that your repentance was brought about by the Holy Spirit. I once knew a man who committed an ungodly act. Two years later it became publicly known that he was guilty. Then, he went to one whom this act had offended and said, "I am very sorry. Can't you forgive me?" The offended one responded, "Are you sorry that you committed the act? Could this sorrow be only because you were caught up with?" The only sure test that repentance is worked by a godly sorrow is hatred for the sin and not for the consequences of it. Evidence of true repentance is your fervent desire to be delivered from the sins themselves —

not just delivered from the result of them. It is further proof that you sincerely seek this deliverance when you put forth every endeavor possible to refrain from committing these sins.

If our own internal experiences harmonize with the teaching of the Holy Scriptures relative to repentance, we have evidence of genuine repentance. Paul experienced sin being mixed with all he did. He realized the presence of evil in the midst of his desire to do good. He declared himself to be a wretched man and wondered who would deliver him. His conclusion of this state of being was that with his mind he served the law of God, but with the flesh, the law of sin. He must look to the mercy of God through the merits of Jesus Christ for deliverance from this wretchedness. When we can see our experience in the experience of God's children as recorded in the Bible, we have evidence of genuine repentance. If examination of ourselves prove that we hate our secret sins as much as we hate those outwardly performed, we have another evidence that we are in possession of genuine repentance. The hatred and forsaking of both secret and open sins prove a genuine repentance. Another evidence is that you desire sincerely to do the will of God; to walk and to talk becoming to saints of God. These things must be in us and abound.

Let us look to the verse following our text to note the specific things wrought by this godly sorrow that worketh repentance — **". . . What CAREFULNESS it wrought in you, yea, what CLEARING OF YOURSELVES, yea what INDIGNATION, yea what FEAR, yea what ZEAL, yea, what REVENGE . . ."** (2 Cor. 7:11) One wrought upon with godly sorrow cares so much for the doctrine that gives, or proclaims, God to be the author of all things pertaining to godliness that he will not condone any other doctrine. His care is so great relative to discipline that he will do his best to walk circumspectly so as to not bring reproach upon the church. His care is great enough to inspire him to seek the fellowship of those of like precious faith. The world would want to clear themselves of guilt by denying that they are guilty. It is not so with those who undergo this godly sorrow. We confess our guilt, acknowledge our error, pray for forgiveness, and do our very best to rid ourselves from this error. The indignation manifested by those who have genuinely repented is a righteous anger against base things. We hate the things that are unjust and vile with a godly hatred. How careful are the Lord's people not to give approval to anything as righteous that would be in any way polluted with man's self-righteousness. The fear worked is the reverential fear of God. This is a contrast to slavish fear, or fear of men and devils. We eagerly and passionately desire to be rid of these hateful characteristics to such extent as to promote the greatest endeavor to reform ourselves, looking to the power of God for this strength. We are persistently pressing on, being graced with a godly zeal to attempt to rise again after each fall. The kind of revenge worked in us is not the revenge against persons, because this kind of vengeance is rightly exercised only by God; so, this revenge is against sin and not the sinner.

Awakening to the mercy of God in Christ Jesus is essential to genuine repentance. The immortalizing of the conscience by the Spirit of God gives knowledge of the laws of God and causes those who come under its stimulation to demand the same perfection that Divine Justice would demand. This is the reason that awakened sinners are never satisfied with their actions, thoughts, or words. We are made to constantly pray for mercy and strength. Our souls surely would be tormented to remorse and desperation, were it not for the knowledge of Christ and the belief in Him worked in us. Our God is a consuming fire that can destroy the adversary, is our only hope of ever being completely rid of sin and all of its consequences. This hope is based upon the truth that Divine Justice is satisfied

only by the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ. Grace cannot be so amazing as it is to those who have been wrought upon in such a manner as to convince them and convict them of their sins. What a wonderful revelation to poor hell-deserving sinners to taste of God's mercy, and to behold the richness of His grace; to believe in Jesus Christ who both lived for us and died for us.

We read in the Holy Scriptures of **"Repentance to the acknowledging of the truth"; "Repentance unto salvation"**; and, **"Repentance unto life"**. What a perfect and complete work this repentance begets. There may be many who turn from one error to another error. There may be some who will turn to damnation as a result of the working of a worldly sorrow. Many, no doubt, will experience a repentance unto desperation and death. How sweet and how glorious it is to experience the repentance that is given us by God, which results in our embrace of the truth and our love for it! How sweet that life is that never ceases, to which we are turned when we lose confiidence and a taste for worldly and carnal life! When our earthly life loses its beauty, our life which is from Heaven becomes our joy and glory. Our minds are turned from the overwhelming desire to lay up treasures on earth to seeking those treasures which are from above. We are turned in our purpose in this life from the desire to please man to the desire to please God. We are turned from seeking the praise of man to seek the good will of our Heavenly Father. We are made to realize that it is God who holds the keys to Heaven, to death, and to hell. We seek for those to be our companions who are graced to walk in the paths of righteousness. This godly sorrow causes us to realize that we have no continuing city here but we seek one that is to come whose builder is God. We turn from the "untoward generation" to a company of believers who have a goal set before them. We turn from the modernists in search for the "old paths" that lead to life eternal. We strive to walk in "the footsteps of the flock".

How thankful ought we to be for this godly sorrow that has weaned us from the things of this world in order that we be fit subjects to have our feet set upon a rock and to have our steps ordered and our goings established. This repentance needeth not to be repented of. We have no desire to love sin and self again. We have no wish for the allurements of this world to be renewed. We run with patience the race that is set before us. We do not put our hand to the plow and look back. We look to Jesus who is the author and finisher of so great FAITH. We have no desire to stay here longer than it pleases God. Sometimes, we yearn for our departure from this rugged and unpleasant life. Sometimes, we look upon death as not the end but the real beginning. We look upon it as the entrance into Heaven instead of the end of our journey. We think of it as the time we shall be clothed upon instead of being unclothed. We think of it as being the beginning of that ETERNAL DAY instead of being the night. How merciful God is to sinners to work in them such change of heart, mind, and life. May God give you the knowledge of this change being wrought in you, as you meditate upon these words. May your faith be strengthened and your hope greatly renewed as you call to remembrance the drastic changes that has been wrought in you during your sojourn here. May you be given to praise God for the wonderful leadings of His Holy Spirit is my sincere prayer as I close these remarks.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

WHERE IS THE TRUE CHURCH?

In the confusion of tongues prevailing among professed Christians in the present day, while so many contending parties each claim to be the church of Jesus Christ, the bewildered inquirer after

truth must feel with serious earnestness to desire a reliable answer to this important question. Its solution has been vainly sought by resorting to the wisdom of this world; and equally futile have been the efforts of kings to settle the point by their power, and decrees enforced by the carnal weapons at their command. Persecution has drenched the earth with blood, and untold sums of gold have been lavishly expended in the work of sustaining their favorite sects and creeds; still the God of heaven has mocked their vain attempts to wrest from his omnipotence the guardian care and protection of his church, as his power has also restrained the wrath of man which would injure them whom he has blessed. For their protection God has hidden his church, not in shades of darkness, but in the blazing glory of his own immortal light; so that as the great Captain of their salvation was in the world, which was made by him, yet the world knew him not, so the world cannot see or know the church, the people whom he has "called out" from the world to be followers of him.

This wonderful hiding place, unto which the wisdom of man cannot approach, is the secret place of the Most High, the shadow of the Almighty. As it was only by the revelation given of God that the Lord himself was known as the Christ, the Son of the living God, so that revelation alone can give the knowledge of his chosen followers, the true church. Therefore it is not at all strange that the historians who have attempted to trace the record of the church have failed to follow that history further than the apostolic age; immediately thereafter turning to the records of antichrist, and only referring to the church of Christ in such terms of reproach as characterize all that the devotees of error delight in using to express their hatred of the truth. While in the providential government of God the wrath of man has been so controlled as thus to bear testimony to the fact that in all ages there has been a despised and persecuted people who were not numbered among the nations of popular worldly religionists, they have only left in the bloody records of their sufferings under persecution the evidence of their continued existence, not as embodied in the monstrous ecclesiastical societies fostered by earthly governments, whether denominated Pagan, Catholic or Protestant, but alike separate from and persecuted by each of these enemies, whenever the possession of secular power enabled them to engage in the bloody work. And as nearly all ecclesiastical history within the last eighteen centuries has been written by men who knew not the true church, they naturally have made only incidental allusions to the real saints while tracing the progress of the various orders of antichrist, as we may see in the present time the same order of writers only allude to those who hold the truth in terms of reproach and vituperation.

Is the church, then, dependent upon the testimony of such witnesses as these uninspired, and in most cases inimical, historians, to attest the truth of her claim to be the true church of Jesus Christ? As well might Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the persecuting Jews, be appealed to as witnesses of the genuineness of the apostolic church. Even conceding to the historian the design to be honest, without inspiration how should he know that the sect which was "everywhere spoken against" was the true church?

How, then, is the true church to be known? To the natural mind there is no mark by which she can be recognized. The very features which to the spiritual mind identify her with unmistakable distinctness as the only people whose God is the Lord, to the natural man present no evidence at all of that identity. As the Lord, who is revealed to the faith of saints as the chief among ten thousand and altogether lovely, is seen by the natural mind only as the despised and rejected Nazarene, so the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all, is seen by the natural mind as destitute of all the

heavenly beauty which she has received as being covered with the stainless robe of his perfect righteousness, in which the scrutiny of divine justice beholds no defect, having already recorded the verdict of the unerring judgment of God, saying, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." This beauty of the holiness of the Lord, which is peculiar to his church, can be seen only by those who are born of the Spirit, and who consequently have that faith by which they are enabled to look on things unseen by reason or the natural mind. Such as can see Zion as the perfection of beauty, have the evidence in that very fact that they are native children of that Jerusalem which is above, and is the mother of all the free-born heirs of God and joint heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ. None can see the spiritual beauty of the church, which produces heavenly love for her courts and her institutions, except such as have been born of God. These alone find their own mind recorded in the language of the inspired psalmist, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." With them it is no idle question, "Where is the true church?" The Lord himself has given the infallible marks which characterize his own chosen people; and all these peculiar characteristic marks are embraced in the first fruit of the Spirit, Love, that heavenly principle which abides in every one who is born of God. And as this fruit of the Spirit abides in each of them, qualifying them for membership in his church, so this is an infallible mark of the general assembly and church of the First-born, who bear this definite and distinct seal of their divine origin. Whatever may be their history, or however they may be approved by human judgment, no society can rightfully claim to be the true church of our Lord Jesus unless that indelible mark of his Spirit seals them as subjects of divine grace. Even though they should trace their history back to the church at Jerusalem, without this indispensable mark they are no more the true church than were those carnal Israelites who withstood our Lord the true spiritual seed of Abraham.

Since, in the inspired record, the man of God is perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, it is an unavoidable consequence that in the sight of the Lord no works are counted good but such as are authorized and enjoined in that divine rule. Therefore the true church must now be found, as in the apostolic age, continuing "steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Wherever this peculiarity is found, there is the true church; and where any other principle is held as superceding apostolic authority, just to the extent of the departure from that rule, is the evidence deficient to prove that people to be the true church of Jesus Christ. So the inspired benediction is expressly limited, "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." — Galatians vi. 16.

From the facts cited, it is evident that the true church is not dependent for her identification upon the uncertain testimony of human records, however authentic and well attested such records may be, and we would not depreciate such history so far as it may be authentic and reliable; but the true church is identified now, as she has ever been, by the fact that "God is in the midst of her," and the name of the city is "The Lord is there!"

(Editorial by Elder William L. Beebe, January 1, 1882.)

OBITUARIES

SALLIE BENSON HOWARD

I will try and write something in memory of Sister Sallie Benson Howard. She was born February 8, 1885, near New Holland, N. C., and departed this life September 4, 1961, in Beauford County Hospital. She was married to Thomas Howard January 28, 1913; and to this union were born five children, two having died in infancy. Surviving to mourn are her

husband, and three children: Mrs. Charles Benson, Pantego, N. C.; Curtis Howard, Swanquarter, N. C.; and Charles Howard, Norfolk, Va.

She united with the church at South Mattmuskeet September 1, 1922, and moved her membership to Beulah Church March, 1950. She was a great sufferer for many years, but was a faithful member and always at her meetings when her health permitted. She believed in salvation by grace and grace alone.

We loved her very much, but believe God loved her best and has called her away, where there will be no pain, sickness, sorrow nor death. Although we miss her so much at Beaulah Church, we desire to say, Not our will but God's will be done. She was very meek and humble, and loved her church very much. She was a loving wife and a good mother.

Written by one who loved her.

Lenora Alligood

MRS. MARY ELIZABETH DIXON

Mrs. Dixon was reared in the vicinity of Liberty Hill Church, and lived near this church for a long time. She was born August 31, 1884, and died in Monroe, La., where she had lived for some time. She was 77 years old, and died September 25, 1961.

She is survived by one son, John Robert Hudson, of Calif.; one step-son, Monnie Dixon, Pine Bluff, Ark.; one daughter, Mrs. Thelma Austin, Monroe, La.; one step-daughter, Mrs. Fannie Wells, W. Monroe, La.; one brother, Emmett McGough, Farmerville, La.; and three sisters: Mrs. Ellen Jane Ward, Rockey Branch, La., Mrs. Docie Brantley and Mrs. Della Ramsey, Farmerville, La. Surviving also are 9 grandchildren and 28 great grandchildren.

I can faintly remember when she was priviledged to be at Liberty Hill Church years ago, and she showed an interest in that belief and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and his salvation. So there was a lively evidence of a sweet hope in Christ, and we feel that she is much better off to be away from this world of sin, trouble and affliction. May the Lord sweetly console the loved ones in their minds and feelings concerning her, for her sufferings are over. The time will soon come when the Lord will come again, and his people shall come forth in His glorified image, to be with Him and be like Him, and dwell with Him forever. So, dear ones, weep not as those who have no hope. In Revelation we read: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

The funeral services were held at Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church in the presence of a large congregation, by the writer, and the body was laid to rest in the Taylor Cemetery, near the church.

R. W. Rhodes

VANCE POTLOW

New Hope Church (North Carolina) regrets the passing of our beloved brother, Vance Potlow. He was a lovely and faithful member, humble and kind to everyone. Although he was sick and afflicted, he attended the meetings regularly. We believe New Hope Church was a sweet home for him, but the dear Lord has called him to a better home than was afforded him on this earth. We believe Brother Vance is with his Saviour.

We at New Hope Church join in sympathy to his family and friends, and request that a copy of this be sent to his wife, a copy spread on our church book, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church.

Robert F. Haney, Asst. Clerk

SARAH DeHART PRUITT

With a heavy heart I am making this attempt to write a brief sketch of my loving companion, Sarah DeHart Pruitt. She was born March 29, 1878, and passed from this life of joy, sorrow and disappointment February 23, 1961, at her home near Meadows of Dan, Virginia, after a long illness. All was done that loving hands could do. She died at a ripe old age of 82 years, 10 months and a few days. She was the oldest daughter of the late William Preston and Lucinda Ellen DeHart of Floyd County, Virginia.

She professes a sweet hope in Christ in the year of 1905, at the age of 27 years and joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Conner's Grove, in Floyd County, Virginia, in the month of October of the same year. She was baptized in November by Elder Jasper Moran. She lived a faithful member until death, looking forward at all times for the meeting time at her home church. It was her great pleasure to fill her seat, and to visit other churches of like precious faith.

She was married to William LeRoy Pruitt on October 17, 1921, at Stuart, Virginia, by Elder L. I. Gilbert. To this union no children were born. It was indeed a great pleasure for her and the writer, both were members of the same faith, to travel miles far and near to mix and mingle with people of like faith. But after a few short years our health began to fail and we had to discontinue long trips, and meeting times at our home church at times. The last few years of her life her pleasure was spent in her home when people would visit her. She was a good singer, and when members of her church would come to visit her, it was her chief desire to sing and

pray and to hear preaching. Many times she would try to help sing. She enjoyed talking about her loving Saviour and how he had appeared to her in many ways. She told of how he appeared to her in a dream and told her he was coming for her. She never seemed to dread or fear death.

Her father and mother and one brother preceded her by death several years ago. She left to mourn their loss her loving companion, four brothers and one sister: D. C. DeHart of Meadows of Dan, Virginia; J. C. DeHart of Davy, West Virginia; S. G. DeHart, Willis, Virginia; W. G. DeHart of Davy, West Virginia; and Mrs. Coy L. West of Detroit, Michigan; also several nieces and nephews.

A short funeral service, as she requested, was conducted at her home church on February 26, 1961, by her loving pastor Elder J. M. Vipperman and others of her choice. Elder Allen Ester, Elder Ray Rotenizer, Elder M. O. Stevens, Elder S. E. Terry, Elder V. E. Ogle, and Elder M. H. Vaden.

Her body was laid to rest in the family cemetery at her request, to await the glorious resurrection when our blessed Lord shall come in the clouds of his glory with ten thousand of his Holy Angels to call all the redeemed ones, and fashion them like to his glorious body, to sing his praise forever and ever in heaven where all is love. So sleep on dear one we all loved you but God loved you best.

By her heartbroken husband,
W. L. Pruitt
Meadows of Dan, Virginia

(The above letter was read to the church at Conner's Grove at our April meeting and was approved by them. The church will greatly miss Sister Pruitt's presence at our meetings as she was always faithful to attend when able. Her home was always open to visiting members of the church, which will be missed by her many friends in the Primitive Baptist Church. The church wishes to express their sympathy to Brother Pruitt and the family. We feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Elder J. M. Vipperman, Pastor
R. O. Slusher, Clerk)

WALLACE H. HOLLOWAY

Wallace H. Holloway was born October 20, 1893, and passed away at his home near Parsonsburg, Maryland, July 25, 1961, after a brief illness. He was the oldest son of Handy B. and Ina Perdue Holloway, and after the death of his parents he took the responsibility of keeping a home for his younger brothers and sisters. September 12, 1928, he married Katie Warren, and this union was blessed with one son, Billy. In addition to his wife and son he is survived by one grandson, three brothers and three sisters.

On July 18, 1937, he was appointed Trustee of Forest Grove Old School Baptist Church, which office he faithfully filled until his death. He was not a member of the visible church, but his walk manifested an interest in and love for the doctrine we hope we believe.

Elder David Spangler conducted his funeral and interment was in the Forest Grove Cemetery.

Written by a sister-in-law,
Ethel Holloway

LAURA FREEMAN DAVIS

Laura Freeman was married to George L. Davis, August 18, 1897, at the home of her father, Ira Freeman. She, together with her husband, united with White Oak Springs Primitive Baptist Church in the year 1916, later moving their membership to Suggs Creek Primitive Baptist Church, where she remained a faithful member until her death October 29, 1961. She lived to the ripe age of 83 years.

Sister Davis was an ardent lover of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. She always looked forward to her meetings and really did enjoy the preaching. We feel that she is not dead, but just sleeping. She was a very affectionate person, always meeting her friends with a smile, and was loved by all who knew her.

She leaves six sons, Fred, Roy, Shuford, Romie, Emmitt, and Earl Davis; five daughters, Mrs. Gurney Auman, Mrs. J. B. Cooper, Mrs. Howard Miller, Mrs. Theodore Cornelison, and Mrs. Aaron Smith; forty-four grandchildren, eighty-six great grandchildren, eight great great grandchildren, together with a host of friends to mourn her passing. She will be greatly missed not only by her family but also by the church.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Z. L. Rhue, and Elder D. R. Pyrtle at Suggs Creek Church, and burial was in the White Oak Springs Church cemetery.

May the Lord of all grace enable us to humbly bow to His most righteous will.

RESOLVED, That a copy be kept on our church record, one sent to the family, and one to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference December 9, 1961.

Elder Z. L. Rhue, Moderator
Bertha R. Stuart, Church Clerk

MARGARET LUCAS KING

Sister Margaret Lucas King united with the Suggs Creek Primitive Baptist Church on April 13, 1929, where she remained a very faithful member until she was called from this time world October 16, 1961, in the Troy Me-

morial Hospital. Her husband preceded her in death seven years ago. She made her home with her daughter, Mrs. Elma Reynolds.

Sister King was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone. She attended her meetings as long as her health would permit. She manifested a great love for her brothers and sisters in the church. The church surely will miss her.

She leaves three sons, Dewey, Elroy, and Willard King; two daughters, Mrs. Elma Reynolds and Mrs. Lola Saunders; twenty grandchildren, one great grandchild, and many friends, to mourn her passing. We feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Z. L. Rhue, and Elder D. R. Pyrtle at Suggs Creek Church, and burial was in the church cemetery.

May our Heavenly Father bless us to bow in submission to His most holy will.

RESOLVED, That a copy be kept on our records, one sent to the family, and one to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference December 9, 1961.

Elder Z. L. Rhue, Moderator
Bertha R. Stuart, Church Clerk

JAMES G. MATTHEWS

Brother Matthews was affectionately known by many as Jim Matthews, and was born March 6, 1881, and passed away September 24, 1961. He was the son of Levi and Elvira Idol Matthews. He was a faithful and beloved member of Bunker Hill Primitive Baptist Church. The church was organized in 1907, and he was the first member baptized into the fellowship of the church after the organization. He remained faithful until his death, and was a firm believer in salvation by grace and grace alone.

Bunker Hill Church bows in humble submission to the just and holy God, remembering that He doeth all things well; yet our hearts are saddened and we shall miss him.

He was first married to Bertha Huff December 14, 1903; and survivors of this union are four sons and one daughter: Odell, of Winston-Salem; Guy, Coy and George, of Kernersville, N. C.; and Mrs. Maxine Hicks, Winston-Salem. He was married the second time to Miss Bertha Landreth November 18, 1929, who passed away June 25, 1961. To this union seven children were born: Gurney, Eddie and Terry, of Kernersville; Mrs. Betty Saunders, and Mrs. Edna Berrier, High Point, N. C.; Mrs. Annie Lee Wall, Kernersville; and Mrs. Edith Rice, Colfax, N. C. Also surviving are two sisters: Mrs. R. E. Vance, Kernersville, and Sister J. M. Crews, Salisbury, N. C., widow of the late Elder J. M. Crews.

His funeral was conducted by our pastor Elder Z. L. Rhue, at Bunker Hill Church, and it was largely attended. His body was laid to rest in the Saint's Delight Cemetery, to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who shall bid his sleeping dust to arise and come forth like unto His own glorious body. The enormous florial tribute could only show the love and high esteem in which he was held by his friends.

This Memorial was approved by Bunker Hill Primitive Baptist Church in her regular conference December, 1961, and a copy was ordered to be put in our record book, and one given to his son Odell Matthews, and one sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Written by the Clerk by order of the church.

Elder Z. L. Rhue, Moderator
G. B. Hawks, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Our Heavenly Father has seen fit to call from our midst our much beloved Sister in Christ, Mrs. Melia Johnson Wood, widow of Ferney Wood. She was born in Johnston County, North Carolina, July 18, 1882, and died October 21, 1961. Making her stay on earth 79 years, 3 months, and 3 days.

She was the daughter of Aulcy and Betsey Johnson, of Johnston County, North Carolina.

She leaves to mourn her loss, two sons, and four daughters, 16 grandchildren and 17 great grandchildren; two brothers, J. Mancy and Jasper Johnson, of Benson, Route 2, North Carolina; and two sisters, Mrs. Ockie Parker, of Dunn, North Carolina, and Mrs. Fannie Tart, of Princeton, North Carolina.

She united with Hickory Grove Primitive Baptist Church in July, 1924, and was baptized by her pastor (now deceased) Elder L. A. Johnson.

Her funeral was preached by her pastors Elder Lester E. Lee and W. D. Godwin, at Hickory Grove Church. Burial followed in the Johnson family cemetery beneath a mound of many beautiful flowers.

The church has lost a very dear and faithful sister. She was devoted to her church to the end. We loved her and miss her, but God loved her best. We mourn not as those who have no hope. The church extends their heart-felt sympathy to the family.

BE IT RESOLVED, First, that we bow in humble submission to Him who doeth all things after the council if his own will. Second, that a copy be sent to the family, a copy put in our church book, and a copy be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Committee: L. J. Kinsey, Vara Johnson, Georgia Hill

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 130 DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1962 NO. 5

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5/62
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CLOSE TO THEE

Close to thee, O matchless Saviour;
Close to thee, thou Sovereign God,
Father, Son, and blessed Spirit,
Draw this cold and feeble clod.

When the storms of life are sailing,
And dark billows o'er me roll;
O, for mighty grace prevailing —
Grace to comfort my poor soul.

Close to thee in mid-night's hour,
And at noon-day time as well;
Keep me by thy mighty power,
Save me from the gates of Hell.

Close to thee, O Lord, Emmanuel;
Draw me nearer, Prince of Life,
God of Abraham and David,
Leave me never in the strife.

O, for grace to love and trust thee,
And to worship at thy feet;
Is there cause (O, sure there must be;)
For this fellowship so sweet?

Sure there is a Cause and Reason:
Christ the only answer is;
Cause us, in and out of season,
To proclaim the glory His.

May we know no name, or care to,
Save the Holy Lamb of God;
Grant that we may never dare to
Question when He sends His rod.

Both His rod and staff are needful —
His dear people to refine,
And to make them duly heedful —
All the glory, Lord, be Thine.

Now, I'm near my journey's ending,
And my stay here can't be long;
Be thy grace my path attending,
Make it in my heart a song.

May I sing the song of angels,
And of Moses and the Lamb;
Join with saints of all the ages,
To adore the Great I Am.

(Elder) John Lee Smith
P. O. Box 631
Spearsville, La.

BURDENS OF GOD CALLED MINISTERS

(By the late Elder L. L. Schenck)

"So I spoke unto the people in the morning and at even my wife died, and I did in the morning as I was commanded." (Ezekiel 24:18)

Many and varied are the experiences of the called servants of the most high God. All are made to pass under the rod. The priest and the prophet, the apostles and every true servant of God, all and each must come in for their share of afflictions and trials as they go forth in the sacred service of their exalted Master. We read of the experiences of those sages of old, and it lends us strength to know that, although their way was hedged about, beset on every hand with trials and afflictions, often cast down but never destroyed, always fearing yet ever going forward boldly in the work whereunto they were called, for God was with them, having given his promise: "I will be with thee to deliver thee." I say the humble servant of today will be able to glean a little strength from the recorded experiences knowing that God is still able to deliver, and his promise holds good unto this day.

My desire is to call attention to the experience of one of the old prophets and see how well it may fit into the lives of the more modern ministry. For

while their gifts may be vividly divergent, they are all of the same spirit. Unto the one it was commanded "Prophesy" and unto another it was commanded "Preach the word." In neither case were excuses acceptable and yet in either case no doubt the same feeling of weakness and inability and unworthiness is felt — expressed by the prophets and no less felt by the humble servant of today. "Lord I am not eloquent neither before nor since thou has spoken unto thy servant, for I am a man slow of speech and of a slow tongue." This was the excuse of Moses whom God had called and ordained to bear his message unto Pharoah, but the Lord said unto him, "Who hath made man's mouth or who maketh the dumb or the deaf, or the seeing or the blind, have not I the Lord?"

The word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah the prophet saying, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee and before thou cameth forth out of the womb I sanctified thee and ordained thee a prophet of the nations." Then said I, ah Lord God, behold I cannot speak for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, "Say not I am a child for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee that though shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces for I am with thee to deliver thee." Speaking from a natural impulse it would seem that the excuses of those two old servants of God would be good and valid excuses, but there was one very important truth which they were yet to learn and which we must not overlook, to-wit, their sufficiency was not of themselves but of him who called them to the work. God not only calls his servants but he qualifies them also; and not only so, but he chooses their field of labor and sets the race before them, fixes all their environments and adjusts every circumstance that enters into their career, so that the matter is briefly comprehended in this: "Whether we live, we live unto the Lord and whether we die we die unto the Lord, and whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's." The prophets and apostles were all fitted for their respective fields of labor, and likewise every true servant of God must labor in the field appointed unto him. And without exception it must be "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," and as they go they must preach, saying, "The Kingdom of heaven is at hand." And oftentimes they will experience the truth of the Master's words: "Behold I send you forth as sheep among wolves."

Thus it fell to the lot of Moses to go to the wicked King Pharoah and demand of him in the name of the Lord that he let the people (Israel) go. Being informed beforehand however, that God would harden Pharoah's heart that he would not let the people go, but the command was to "Go", and go again, no matter if your labors may seem to be unfruitful to you. No matter if you receive the jeers of this haughty king, and are made the subject of general ridicule, remember you are now laboring for, and by the instruction of God Almighty, whose ways are not our ways nor his thoughts our thoughts.

It is even so with the poor servants of today. They may review their labors and behold the utter unfruitfulness of their efforts, enough to discourage the strongest heart; and much more one who feels his weakness and inability to speak, as every true servant must feel. But God is not slack concerning his promise. If he has promised, "I will be with thy mouth and I will teach thee what thou shalt say," there should be no fear that the right thing will not be said. He promised Abraham that he would bring this people out of bondage and thus he sanctified and ordained this very Moses to go forth as his mouth piece in this stupendous task; and thus, while Moses was laboring in this capacity under hardships and discouragements, God himself was at work fixing everything against that great day of deliverance which he knew would come. When his afflicted and poor people should receive this blessed instruction from him, "Stand still and see the sal-

vation of the Lord," and God Almighty himself shall have realized his eternal purpose to get him glory upon Pharoah. Thus when the whole drama was complete, and Moses is favored to see the complete exodus of the whole house of Israel, and Pharoah and his host drowned in the Red Sea, the scene is climaxed with this remarkable expression: "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up that I might shew my power in thee and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." Although his way was attended with difficulties, hardships and discouragements, yet in the end he saw the purpose of God fulfilled, and the whole transaction crowned with ultimate glory.

Well might we admonish one another to do as we are commanded and leave the result with the Lord. How often may the poor servants of God go forward in the face of difficulties and adversity. How often our poor efforts may appear to us to be a complete failure, void of everything that is good. We can only do as we are commanded and God will take care of the rest. It was a very remarkable circumstance which led up to the expression of the prophet at the head of this article. "Son of man behold I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: Yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep neither shalt thy tears run down. Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind the tire of thine head upon thee and put on thy shoes upon thy feet and cover not thy lips and eat not the bread of men. So I spake unto the people in the morning and at even my wife died, and I did in the morning as I was commanded." Who but a truly called servant of God could go forward in the face of such a gloomy prospect. Forewarned of God that he would remove from him the desire of his eyes, the very idol of his heart, his wife, yet his vigilance and faithfulness must not relax. Even in the death of his wife, his bosom companion, he is not excused from duty. "Prophesy." "In the day of prosperity rejoice and in the day of adversity consider for the Lord hath set the one over against the other that man should find nothing after him." One of the disciples said unto Jesus, "Lord suffer me first to go and bury my father." But Jesus said unto him, "Follow me and let the dead bury their dead."

I find it convenient to speak of these things by way of admonition to our brethren, which admonition I also take unto myself. And while we cannot construe these divine words to mean that God's people are forbidden to in any wise give vent to their grief or sorrow or leave their dead unburied, I do think that, instead of separating us from the service of our Master it should bind us the closer to him. I feel that the commandments of God should surmount every obstacle. Thus, "I will take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke, yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shalt thy tears run down." Surely not to the point of rebellion against God; not to the point or to the extent that we desert or neglect his cause. God's commandments are not toys to be played with and then cast aside; and I feel sure his little ones cannot spurn or disobey his commandments with impunity. Thus when we are stricken with grief, what shall we do? Bind the tire (the attire) of thine head upon thee and put on thy shoes upon thy feet and cover not thy lips and eat not the bread of men. What is the attire of thine head but the crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give at that day to all them that love his appearing; and the helmet of salvation? What is "thy shoes" but the preparation of the gospel with which God's people are shod? And why should we cover our lips since God has put a new song in our mouth, even praise unto our God; and the commandment is to sing. "Sing unto him a new song: play skillfully with a loud noise for the word of the Lord is right and all his works are done in truth."

Therefore when we are bowed down with grief and sorrow, instead of sur-

rendering our sacred privilege, and instead of neglecting our solemn duty, let us remember that our blessed Master himself was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and although it pleased the Lord to bruise him and put him to grief, he failed in nothing that God was pleased to lay upon him. One poet has most beautifully expressed our case for us, "From all their afflictions God's glory shall spring, and the deeper their sorrow the louder they'll sing."

When we are engaged in the service of our Master, should it be done with a view of being recompensed in some literal manner, or should it be through love and fear of him who gave us our command. What think you of these hired singers, or hired mourners, or hired preachers? It is all blasphemy against God, for God has promised no servant of his a recompense of filthy lucre. To the contrary, when he gave unto his disciples their instructions prior to sending them out, he also gave them a brief category of their labors, thus: "As ye go preach saying the Kingdom of heaven is at hand, heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give; provide neither gold nor silver nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes nor yet staves, for the workman is worthy of his meat." How many theological colleges would survive today should they be compelled to depend for their support upon those who are the truly called servants of God? And how many young men with a preaching ambition would really receive a "call to preach" if they really knew what the recompense of a true minister is. It is sadly only too obvious that many have launched upon the occupation of so called preaching with nothing more than a lure for gold, an inclination to make an easy living, and a burning ambition for popularity; and while these may insist upon their call to preach, yet they will not preach unless they are paid in money or its equivalent. The blessed gospel of the Son of God cannot be purchased with money. Its value cannot be reckoned in dollars and cents. How many of these ambitious young men would be willing, like the Apostle of the Lamb, "To go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflications abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto me, so that I might finish my course with joy and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the Grace of God."

I desire now to appeal to every dear child of grace, whether you be called to preach or prophesy, or whether your gift consist of singing; whether it is in counsel or conversation, or whether it be merely filling your seat in the house of God: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God. and if any man minister let him do it as of the ability that God giveth," and we need not expect a worldly recompense.

For when we have done all, we are to say we are unprofiitable servants, and have only done that which was my duty to do. I wish we might be enabled to assimilate the thought so deeply expressed by this old prophet when he said, "I will take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke. So I spake unto the people in the morning and at even my wife died and I did in the morning as I was commanded."

We will conclude with this expression, "Fear God and keep his commandments for this is the whole duty of man."

(Submitted for publication by Elder W. W. Hudson.)

PREACHERS OFTEN DISCOURAGED

Preachers often become discouraged because they cannot see the fruit of their labours as they would like. One who has baptized more in a short time than others baptized in several years, is discouraged because there has not

been an addition for a short period of time.

Let us consider a natural family. A father with a small family, becomes discouraged because there are not more additions to his family. Suppose he should leave them. His duty is to those already in the family; they need a father's love and care.

What is the motive for serving churches? Is it for worldly honour or for a big name, or for loaves and fishes? Christ said, "Feed my lambs and sheep," and Paul said, "Woe is me if I preach the gospel." He was so filled with love to the Saviour and the church that he could not rest, nor forget the desire to feed and comfort the little saints, and labour for the honour and praise of God.

The preacher's duty is to preach wherever the spirit leads and opens the way for him. Think of a preacher labouring for many years without any additions to the church. If any one had cause to be discouraged, he would. Think of one who served a church a full year and received one peck of peas for all his labour. How many would do this? As many as were led by the spirit to love the church and feel a desire to feed and comfort them. Yet it seems that there was not much hungering and need of food in a church so cold as to neglect a pastor to this extent.

Suppose there was not an addition to the church in five, ten or twenty years. There are a few old faithful members who need feeding as long as they are alive and needing heavenly food. They love their pastor and he loves them, and they are comforted under his preaching. He can see it in their faces, expression and their tears are sure evidence that his work is not in vain. If he should leave, who would comfort them? Could he leave them without a shepherd, not knowing if they could find another to fill his place? You say you love them but feel you are no good. Can't you see evidence of their love? Do they welcome you with a smile and warm handshake? Do they ever mention the joy they receive and feel under your preaching? Do they administer to your needs, according to their ability?

The Lord has not promised his ministers a smooth road strewn with roses without thorns. Where there are many roses, remember there are many more thorns. A preacher's faith must be tried as well as the members. He must be brought through the fire once in awhile to burn the dross, to remind him he is always dependent on the Lord for all things; that we do not have anything that was not given to us. If he did not have any trials, he would be puffed up above measure. If he did not have trials, he could not comfort others. The greater his trial the better he is able to comfort others.

When there is coldness in the church; there seems to be very little or no life, the members are careless, show no evidence of spiritual life, etc. it seems evident the Lord has removed the candlestick, and when this is the case the pastor cannot continue his work for nothing.

Perhaps you feel your service is no good, yet you love the church and it would grieve you to leave, then consider well before taking the step. As long as you love them surely the Lord would not let you waste your love on those who do not love you. If God gives you love for them, He also gives them love for you.

I hoped to write something worth reading, but have only hinted at this deep and wonderful matter. May God bless all His ministers everywhere, and the same to the churches.

George W. Jackson
1884 Connally Drive
East Point, Ga.

THE LATE ELDER HASH
TO SISTER TURNER

Ferrum, Va.
Dec. 23, 1958

Mrs. Eliza Turner,
Floyd, Va.

Dear Sister Turner:

Please accept my heartfelt thanks to you and your loved ones for the Seasons Greetings, with the present. I do not feel worthy of such love and sacrifice from one I esteem so highly. Hope you, with all your loved ones, are in good health this cold weather. We had 6 inches of snow on the 14th, with 4 above zero one day. How are Jimmy and your daughter and family getting along?

I have been blessed so wonderfully all this year, with such good meetings in love, peace, and sweet fellowship. I was 77 December the 6th, and was blessed to preach Jesus and his love to sinners saved by grace, twice that day; also the next day here at Long Branch, I was blessed again to feed the flock of God with the doctrine of salvation by grace. O dear sister, if I could I would praise the Lord at all times for his mercies to this sinner, saved by grace and grace alone.

I have not been well since then, and have been to the doctor; he thinks he can help me. I desire to be submissive to the dear Lord, and ever say, "Thy will be done." My wife keeps up fairly well, though not able to be about as she used to be. Our daughter, Virginia, is here with us, or we could not keep house. I have done no work, even in the garden, for several years; but after the wood is prepared, I help get it to the house.

With every good wish for you and all your loved ones, with a happy season throughout the year. Pray for us, and our people everywhere. Your little brother I hope in the Lord.

With love,
J. G. L. Hash

(Publication requested by Sister Turner. — Ed.)

Alpine, Texas

Signs of the Times:
Dear Friend:

Find enclosed a check for $3.00, for which please send me the *Signs of the Times* for one year.

My father took this paper when I was a child more than sixty years ago. A friend gave me a copy to read; and I enjoyed it so much. I see no change in it.

Mrs. I. M. Miller

ELDER WARREN TO ELDER SLAUSON

Dear Brother Slauson:

As I have thought of you many times recently, I will attempt to write a little in my feeble way. We are coming to the close of another year, and as my mind is prompted to look back over the year, someway I feel to see that the Lord has blessed us greatly, having given us strength to keep going, and, most of all, friends of like faith to whom we can speak with a mutual understanding. We may be far apart in body but close in spirit, I often think of the Psalmist when he said, "Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." I do not feel, as I once felt, that it means the assembling together of the saints in body only, but it means in mind and spirit; and it make no difference where they are, they are all taught by the same spirit and are one in Christ Jesus.

It is good to behold, as it pleases our God to give us minds to do so, the goodness and mercies of an all wise and eternal God, who has blessed us from time to time, to think upon him and his tender mercies toward a people undeserving of the least of his mercies. I am glad, and I believe you are dear brother, that we can see the frailty of our being, for it is by seeing our weakness in the flesh that we are made to look to the Lord, who is our refuge and strength and a present help in

trouble. This work of grace, to my mind and I believe to yours, is not something the natural mind of man would desire, for the Apostle Paul said that the natural mind of man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God for they are foolishness to him neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

This work of grace, in the hearts of His chosen people, is an individual work and cannot be passed from one to another, but when we are made to see eye to eye, by the one and only God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, we have the same mind in the matter and sweet fellowship for those of like faith.

Sometimes I am made to muse on the years that are gone, and can say with one of old "Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life", but I rejoice that I have been made to see it; not that I am glad for the evil thoughts and things I say with my unruly tongue, but I am glad the Lord has been pleased to show me just how little I am, for I believe that is the way the good Lord leads his people, and causes them to seek his mercies.

The Apostle Paul said, "It is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptations that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief." If the Apostle felt that way, are we any better than he? I do not feel we are, but what a blessed thought to feel that there is a Divine Power who loved his people, from before the beginning of time, and fixed a way to redeem them, not because of any thing they have done to merit esteem, but by his grace and mercy he was pleased to send his only begotten Son, who took upon him the iniquities of his chosen people, of which we hope to be, by reason of the way in which it has pleased the Lord to lead us in this life. I know of no sweeter thought that has ever entered the mind of man, as he travels thru the toils and cares of this world, than that blessed hope of a better place beyond the toils and cares of this life; and yet I am persuaded to believe that all the toils and cares of this life are needful for us that we may look by faith to a better land.

My wife joins me in hoping that you and Sister Slauson are doing very well and will be able to enjoy the holiday season, and when at the throne of grace, dear Brother, remember me in your prayers. Much love to both of you from both of us.

Yours in precious hope,
Arthur R. Warren

"AT HOME IN THE BODY"

1718 Campognolle Rd.
ElDorado, Ark.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I want to attempt to write a few lines, the Lord willing, though I am aware that I am not a writer. My meditations for some time have been on Paul's writings in 2 Corinthians 5:6, "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Iord."

I feel to be an occupant of this house so much of the time. A home is where we have comfort, a place of rest, a relaxed mind. And we are satisfied in this home until the Lord sees fit in his infinite wisdom to bring us into his presence, and we find that we are helpless and dependent creatures; and that it is only by and through the grace of God that we are what we are in our hope of his mercy.

We hear so much over the air and on street corners day by day, that we are going to have to get right with God. The ones who make these statements do not understand what they are, or where they are going; yet they undertake to tell us what we must do. By observing them closely it is readily seen that they are comfortably at home in the body and absent from the Lord. Many of them

are deeply in love with the things of this world, and seek personal gain from fellow men. And they are not found in just one faith and order, but in all.

When we are at home in the body, we have no regard for the following: "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." (Hebrews 1:25) The example is very cloudy that is set before ones who are not identified with any faith and order, and we are made to wonder at their profession. Possession is much more important than profession.

May the outstretched hand of God and his tender mercies deliver us from being home in the body, and give us a closer walk with him. May it be his will to give us spiritual strength that we may realize our dependence upon him; and that we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.

When we are at home in the body, we have no knowledge of His presence, and indulge in many things the world has to offer; but when the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts then we shun the evil worldly ways and desire to be with our brethren, and desire above everything else to live a clean, sober life in this world. We then make every effort to be with our brethren, not away from them. We believe the Lord will guide, and direct, and bless his children according to his good will and pleasure.

You will find enclosed $3.00 for another year's subscription to the **Signs**, the paper I have been made to love for the past quarter of a century. If not deceived, I love the doctrine, etc. it was established upon. May his directing Spirit be and remain with us.

J. J. Davis

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." (Rev. 3:20)

My mind seems to be led to the word "if," in the above scripture. It looks and sounds very insignificant, but it is the condition around which the whole text is laid. With the word of a king there is power, and the statement, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock," leading up to the if, is all powerful.

The Lord told the "any man" on the other side of the door, to behold. The word behold means to watch or see. The door being closed, cut off the view from the natural eye, so the only possible way for any man beyond the door to behold the Lord, is through faith, or spiritually. Thus if he obeys the command to behold the Lord knocking at the door, he already has a spiritual sight instead of the natural eye.

He is thus equipped with spiritual discernment, before the conditions of hearing the voice and opening the door are set forth.

The I, who stands at the door, is the great I Am, the beginning and end, Alpha and Omega, the one who has all power in heaven and earth. This most powerful being is the I who stands at the door and knocks. Do you believe he knocks in vain? Do you believe he sets up these conditions for his loved ones and leaves them to the chance system, to be fulfilled by weak, puny, sinful "any man"?

Jesus said, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find lodging." (John 10:9) I believe that all on the other side of the door in our text, who open the door to Jesus, are the ones who entered in by him, in the first place, and have already found the lodging of which he spoke.

The scriptures say the steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord. When any man hears the voice of the Son of God and walks to the door to let him in, these steps are ordered of the Lord.

He is a good man, only, because of the goodness of Christ who died for him. He is enabled to fill this condition of opening the door because he beheld his Saviour through an eye of faith.

There is a people who, "seeing, see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand". "But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear." That is the only reason any man sees or beholds, through the door, and the only reason any man hears through the door; he is blessed to do so.

So many times God's humble poor in this world, are led off by worldliness, and indifference, like the Laodiceans, and the door that only He can open and shut, closes before them. However, God who remembered them through his Son, knocks at the door. Their coldness disappears and they are made to beg for crumbs from the Master's table. This begging, through faith, is the steps ordered of the Lord, and it leads those who hear his voice to the door. "And the sheep shall follow him: for they know his voice, and a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him for they know not the voice of strangers."

I believe the any man beyond the door on which Christ knocks is his sheep. The spirit in a child of God, is the porter who opens the door. So when the knock comes, the porter is always ready. "To him the porter openeth and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." Any man, through his own carnal works, is a stranger and knows not this porter who openeth the door to the one who knocks. But, any man who hears the voice of his shepherd, already has the porter to open the door. He hears his own name called, and is led out.

Dear child of God, how wonderful is the blessing enjoyed by "any man" who is made able to "hear my voice", and "open the door". The promise is if he hears the voice and opens the door, "I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Lillie, Louisiana

---

843 Glendale Ave.,
So. Charleston, W. Va.

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing $3.00 for another year's subscription to the dear old *Signs*.

I get so much comfort out of it, I don't want to miss a single copy. I have some copies printed in 1918 which belonged to my grandmother; and the articles written today are just as sound as they were then.

May the good Lord continue to bless you in your work.

Mrs. Lester Haning

Hialeah, Fla.

Dear Editors:

In checking, I find my subscription to the *Signs of the Times* expires with the February issue, and, not wishing to miss any copies, I am enclosing three dollars for another year's subscription.

The paper is a great comfort to me, since it reflects my belief and deep conviction as to the meaning of the Scriptures. "The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." The literal word condemns me, for it shows me to be the helpless sinner that I find myself to be. Without Him we can do nothing, for it is in Him that we live and move, and have our being. I find that I can't even direct my thoughts, not to mention my walk. He is my atonement, and my all; and without Him I am destitute.

May His blessings continue on you, the editors of this paper, and on His children wherever they may be.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. Chas. M. Hartman

Hermiston, Oregon

Dear Beloved in Our Lord:

I am sending a letter I received from an Old Baptist in Canada. I was so impressed with his letter, and their (he and his wife's) experience and belief, and their personal appearance at our meeting, that I would like to see his letter come before all who read the *Signs*.

Their talk and walk was truly an evidence of the inward work of God's grace. We hope they will be spared to be with us at our August three day meeting this year. I have his permission to send his letter for publication.

May it please God to continue to lead, guide, guard, and protect you all to continue to publish the *Signs*, is my heart's desire.

With love to all,
(Elder) Ernest J. Attebery

THE LETTER

3767 Benheim Street
Vancouver 8, B. C.
Canada

Dear Elder Attebery,

I have wanted to write you for some time but it just seems presumptious of me to do so. But I must tell you how much I enjoyed my visit to the Riffe meeting last summer, and what pleasure and goodness I got from your preaching and the association with all the other dear people assembled at that dear old 50 or 60 year old church, with just a few gathered together in His name.

My 600 mile trip was bountifully repaid, and I am hoping I may be able to go again.

At age 77 years one does not plan very much ahead. But the Lord has given me such a wonderful life and such good health that it seems reasonable to hope that I may be able to see you all again. It seems I was given the hearing ear and the understanding heart those two days; something I have prayed for so often.

I must say that I enjoyed your preaching more at that time than any time I can remember. Your talk to us on Sunday on predestination (the back bone of our religion) was beautiful. You said you did not know what you were going to talk about, but something Elder Davis said turned your mind to that subject. You were given strength and ability to preach the clearest and soundest sermon I have ever heard. It was to me a heart rending treat. So wonderful I could have listened for an hour more.

Elder, I hope you never feel that you may offend anyone, or feel the need to apologize for using the world absolute. Without absolute predestination there is no predestination. If one thing is left to chance then my religion is blasted apart completely. Not a sparrow falls but He knows. If I cannot believe that, then I am lost entirely.

Absolute is a word I have been familiar with all my adult life in my work as a dispensing pharmacist. Some chemicals are 75% pure, some are 80%, etc. But some are absolute (100% pure). If there is a religion that is less than 100% pure it is not for me.

In this sermon that I mentioned, you started your talk hesitantly, as many Elders do, but you were given liberty to preach a marvelous sermon to me, who has experienced many marvels, even miracles in my unworthy life, marvels that were not at all my just dues, but were allowed me by a merciful God.

I thought how different we were from the world, gathered under those majestic pines, just a handful of humble souls in fellowship together giving God all the praise.

Christ said feed my sheep. He did not say go and try to create new sheep as modern churches do. That was all done before the world began, by an all powerful God, according to His will. Whether I am one of those sheep, is the question.

I was feeling very low and barren

when I saw that notice in *The Signs of the Times* of that meeting in Riffe, and prayed that I might be able to go. And even a hand shake from those dear people there gave me a lift. The basis of my hope it seems is that I love God's humble few known as Old Baptists.

I have been led in a way I knew not, I can now see that His hand was in everything that has ever transpired in my life. Many things that I wanted to do, I was not allowed to do and other things that I did not want to do, I was made to do. And it has all turned out so good.

And now in my older years here I am living in beautiful British Columbia with its grand scenery and wonderful climate, in a comfortable house with automatic heat, hot water and modern conveniences, while the Son of God had no where to lay his head.

Predestination? Yes, it can't be otherwise as it was none of my doing and none of my plans.

If my name is written in the Book of Life it has been there always, and nothing can remove it. If it is not there, nothing I can do can put it there. This is my belief and has been for over 50 years. And I have a small hope that it is there through the Grace and Mercy of God. But I am so low at times I am almost afraid, but not entirely. God's will shall prevail and whatever it is it is just. Nothing that humans or the devil do can change it.

He has been so good to me in times past I cannot believe He will forsake me now.

I have already written too much. Forgive if I have said anything amiss. Remember me to the dear folks at Riffe and with Christian love to you and Mrs. Attebery, I am in weakness.

D. R. Black

FINDS BRETHREN IN FAR WEST

4511 N. E. Prescott,
Portland 18, Oregon

Signs of the Times,
Dear Brethren:

Again my subscription for the dear *Signs* is near due, and I am enclosing check for two years. I do not want to be without it.

I would like to tell you that we have been so blest as to find lovely Baptists of my faith and order in this far West. There is a church at Riffe, Washington; one at Naches, Washington; one at Elgin, Oregon; and one at Weiser, Idaho. Elder Ernest Attebery is pastor of these churches, and we have been to each, except Elgin. They are lovely bands, not large, but such unity and love.

Brother Attebery and wife have taken us where we've been; also Mr. Ben Preston has taken us twice to Naches and once to Riffe. He is a lover of the truth but not a member. When we returned, I awakened the following morning with the words that Abraham's servant said when Abarham sent him to seek a bride for Isaac, "And I, being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren.", vividly in my mind. I reviewed in my mind all the way we had been led since being here, and I wonder if that text could be for me. I felt so humble, and tears filled my eyes: wholly unworthy, yet so grateful. It stayed with me for several days, and I could rest and rejoice in His mercy which endures forever. I had felt so alone, the churches here in Portland were all so kind to us, but I'd come home each time feeling so alone, and yet a sweet peace seemed to fill me that I was where I am. Then Brother Attebery and wife came to see us, and what a sweet visit we had. They later came and took us to their home and to three of his churches. So how wonderful it all is.

We do hope you are well and will be enabled to publish the *Signs,* and keep it as it is for years to come; and I believe He will. In an humble hope.

Mrs. J. W. Taylor

Stockdale, Texas

Editors and Readers of the *Signs*,
Dearly Beloved in a Precious Hope:

As I am sending in my renewal, I wish to say a few words to all who love the truth as it is so ably published in our dear old paper. It is a regular visitor that builds our hope up each month, and gives us encouragement to press on; also gives instruction in many things. Yes, it is wonderful to see how the Lord upholds it, raising up able ministers and other writers to keep its columns filled with the very things his scattered children need.

We are so prone to think we are forgotten or forsaken, and like the prophet of old, who said, "And I am left alone to tell thee." Don't you think he felt a little puffed up to think he was the only one? O yes, there were others, 7,000 of them, but he had to be told that. How many times we have to be told, or shown! "Tell John *again* the things ye do see and hear," etc. Not some new thing, but are sent back to our past experiences, and remember how He has helped us and shown us so many times, in so many ways, — in our waking hours, as well as on our beds in dreams of the night. Yes, I can rejoice that I hope in a God who can reach us awake or asleep, on land or at sea — can care for us, and does care for us, when near or far away.

When our sons were in the war in the Pacific, I prayed they would not find a watery grave out there. It seemed it was my constant cry. Well, they were returned to me safely, not a scratch on any of the three. Then in a few short years, two of them were killed in car wrecks. Their graves are on a hillside in sight of my home, but there is not much comfort in looking over there; they are gone just the same. I am thankful for the short time they were with us, if I know my heart.

So we see, "We know not what to pray for as we ought." When I am enabled to try to pray on this wise: "Dear Lord, help me to be thankful to thee for the many blessings bestowed upon this poor sinner. Help thou me to walk among thy children so as not to hurt any, and to not bring reproach to thy dear name. Help me to stay in that strait and narrow way, and give me strength and grace so that I may press on to the end of my journey in peace and love. Increase my understanding, if it please thee, dear Lord; and grant me charity for those things I can't understand.

I want to say to all who might come our way, that we of Mt. Olive Church, in Stockdale, Texas, are always glad to have any of like precious faith to visit us, or be with us in our meetings. The second Sunday in each month and Saturday night before, are our regular meeting times. Now we are holding services on fourth Sunday mornings also. Elder H. L. Ballard and Elder G. D. Shipman are our co-pastors. We also have Elder W. W. Fleet, who has recently located near by, and can be with us. We feel we are greatly blest to have these dear brethren. It grieves me to think of so many friends and loved ones who, I feel, would enjoy this heavenly manna that is showered upon us by these humble servants, but do not come to meetings to hear it.

Love to all of you, and may God bless all.

Mrs. Lela Culpepper

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343 E. Pine Street
Lodi, California

Dear Elder Spangler:

It is nearing time to renew my subscription and I am enclosing the amount. I do enjoy the Signs of the Times and other papers. I read the Signs in my teen age, and I will be seventy-two in April. As I grow older, it seems I want to read more and more in the Bible, and all good Old Baptist letters and articles I get from dear ones.

I have read your greetings to the

readers of the Signs, and it is a heart felt article, if I know anything about the grace of God. O, praise His saving grace, his preserving grace, his justifying grace, his reconciling grace! To feel his reconciliation is sweet. He gave it all to his chosen ones: he did not offer it. I do hope I am sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.

My heart is full of praise to the dear Lord for all his blessings to me in many wonderful meetings during 1961: all truly manifesting the fruits of the Spirit, and preaching the gospel in its fullness. It is a haven of rest to sit under the shadow of His wing in the precious meetings; and with sweet meditations and pleasant memories of the sweet benefits to me. I feel so undeserving of them all, yet they are cherished deep in my heart, hoping that I am called by his grace. What a sweet relief to feel his calling in my heart.

"Oh! what a wonderful Saviour
To feed poor mortals like me:
His grace is ever sustaining,
To lead me through toils and cares."

May His richest blessing abide with all the editors and the household of faith all through this New Year. A little one plodding along in this low ground of sin and sorrow, looking to the dear Lord for endurance.

Christian love to all,
Mrs. Mabel Lindsey

GOD'S TAPESTRY

Already in eternity
God designed a wondrous tapestry
Which, though woven by you and me,
Will be according to His decree.

Whate'er life brings of tragedy,
Happiness, pride, or humility,
Is part of that great tapestry
Laid out by Him for you and me.

Yet the purpose we may not see
Until, one day, miraculously
What once seemed only chance to be
Becomes realer than reality.

Then in all joy and misery
We see God guiding our destiny
'Til through Jesus' setting us free,
We become part of that tapestry.
Yet not until eternity
Will we be privileged to see
The beauty of that tapestry
Which God designed for you and me.

Mrs. R. Trawnik
Dallas, Texas

"HELP LORD"
(LM)

Shrewd Satan, with a thousand snares,
Once more has caught me unawares:
Now I, a wretched captive, cry
"Lord Jesus, save me or I die."

O why should I so foolish be
To let Satan get hold on me!
But flattered, I like mother Eve,
His bait did bite — and now I grieve.

He says my God has me forgot,
That woe eternal is my lot:
That with him I shall always dwell,
With demons in the lowest Hell.

He told me — now I know he lied —
The Spirit's sword to lay aside:
Instead of faith, to walk by sight;
To him, with carnal weapons fight.

And I, poor, silly, foolish I,
My hope and shield of faith laid by;
And now I mourn as lonesome dove,
And think I hate the God I love.

Since I was prudent not, nor wise,
Satan did thus me hypnotize.
And now I pray, and weep and pine,
But can't my former weapons find.

My harp now on the willow hangs:
I can't coax music from its strings;
While Satan taunts in language strong,
For me to sing him Zion's song.

But God, my God, still ruleth well
On land and sea, in heav'n and hell.
And when I truly am refined,
My former weapons I will find.

Then with the Spirit's sword I'll slay
My carnal foes, and chase away
Vile Satan with his cunning snares;
And pray: No more I'm unawares.

C. B. Britt
ElDorado, Ark.

REQUESTS FOR WRITINGS ON SEVERAL SUBJECTS

We have received requests for someone to write on the following subjects:

1. The last four verses of the 4th Chapter of Zechariah.
2. John 14:1, 2, and 3.
3. 2 Peter 1:1-8.
4. Psalm 50:2.

BOOK BINDING

Elder W. W. Taylor is manager of THE BIBLE HOSPITAL, Dallas, Texas, which does all kinds of book binding. They have had more than 25 years experience, and would appreciate serving those who have need of their craftsmanship. The address is:

Bible Hospital
3124 W. Davis Street
Dallas 11, Texas

NO SESSION OF THE DELAWARE RIVER ASSOCIATION

Sister Blackwell, Clerk of the **Delaware River Association,** informs us that they will not hold a session this year. — Ed.

CHANGE IN MEETING PLACE

The Predestinarian Baptists, of Memphis, Tenn., meet each Sunday at 10:30 A. M., on Andrews Road, in Ellendale; about a block from Highway 70.

H. G. Brown, Pastor
H. R. Prince, Asst. Pastor
Harold Toney, Clerk

CHURCH NOTICE

Shepherd Fold Predestinarian Old School Baptist Church, Houston, Texas, meets each first Sunday, and Saturday before, at 10:30 A. M. The church is located at 815 Little York Road, between Highway 75 and East Tex Freeway 59.

C. M. Haygood, Pastor
Irene Wisenbaker, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(TO MARCH 1, 1962)

Mrs. Chas. B. Gordy, Mich.	$ 3.00
Mrs. M. L. Lucas	10.00
Bertie F. Brown, N. C.	2.00
E. W. Rhodes, Ark.	2.00
Raymond Collins, Ala.	2.50
Mrs. A. T. Couch, Ala.	5.00
H. J. Bird, W. Va.	1.00

Danville, Virginia **May, 1962**

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EDITORIAL

ROMANS 6:6; GALATIONS 5:24

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."

If I had the pen of a ready writer, had all the time that is needed, had more than tinkling cymbals and sounding brass, I could scarcely more than touch the astonishing and amazing truths that are so sublimely laid down here for the meditation and consideration and to daily experience by the children of God. In dealing with this, as in dealing with all of the scriptures, if setting forth Christ and him crucified is not the central theme of it all, we may rest assured that we have missed it all. To remove him from *any* of our travel and experience is like launching

out in calm waters without a sail, or into rough waters without an anchor.

May it please our heavenly Father to give me an unction from above so that I might be enabled of his Spirit to bring out the things that have been, and still are, being said to the churches. I fully realize that no two men have ever been able to see the scriptures in the same way, and thus I would beg that a mantle of charity be thrown over me, as Shem and Japeth covered their father's shortcoming. The scriptures will not warrant us in saying that God teaches two ways. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." At the same time there is a measure of grace and faith given to each one. If this measure was exactly the same we would all be hearers or preachers or something else, and there would not be any harmony and unity in the body. (Rom. 12:3; I Cor. 12:11; Eph. 4:7)

It is a sad day for the church when she sets up the experiences of her inhabitants in the place of Christ. A church membership that has not experienced deep sorrows, great joys, unspeakable deliverances, a blessed hope, is a church without Bible evidences of acceptance in Christ. However, if these experiences are not seen and felt through the blessedness of His Spirit, it is a Christless church. It must always be remembered that the flesh profiteth nothing, even though it is able to present as valid experiences as those who have the spirit and the life (John 6:63). There is no work that a child of God can do in the sight of men which the unbeliever or hypocrite can not do as well. The difference between that which is by faith, and which is by the flesh, is to be found in the motive.

In our examination of these things, we need to have ever before us that the flesh does not have anything good in it; that it does not, and can not, please God, therefore profiteth nothing; that we, as our dear Redeemer before us, can not do anything, save as the Spirit worketh hitherto. If we are blessed with the Remembrancer, we will not be charging one another with advocating any doctrine other than that which is glorifying to the name of our Saviour.

God's children are subjected to a mighty warfare. This warfare, in one respect, is between two parties, using their own breast as the scene of the conflict. Both of these parties dwell in the child of God. This brings about the conflict, and it is a conflict that is never over as long as there is life in the fleshly body. While this conflict is between the flesh and the Spirit, and, while it is carried on in our own breast, it often seems as though we, the child of God, becomes one of the combatants. It will be noted in the epistles that the things that are freely given us by Christ are often the things that we are to labor for. For instance, we know that peace is a gift of God, being a fruit of the Spirit, along with all other acceptable fruit, brought to us by the blood of Jesus Christ (Col. 1:20), and yet we are commanded to follow after the things which make for peace (Rom. 14:19; 2 Tim. 2:22; 1 Pet. 3:11; Heb. 12:14).

The kingdom is not left to men, whether in the establishment of it, or in them coming into it, and yet the Saviour commanded his people to strive to enter in at the strait gate (Matt. 7:13; Luke 13:24); to strive together in prayer (Rom. 15:30); that they strive together for the faith of the gospel (Phil. 1:27), and as man we well know that our rest, both for time and eternity, is found in Jesus Christ, yet we are commanded to labor that we might enter into that rest (Heb. 4:11). In this experience, it must be remembered that the believer in Jesus Christ shall do the same works that Jesus does, not similar works, but the same works. There is not any difference in God closing the mouths of lions and us closing them by faith (Heb. 11:33), but for fear that some one might think that this faith can be exercised by the Lord's people, let it be remembered that only Elijah and Enoch were translated by faith. All

of the many favors and gifts bestowed on his followers were the works of Jesus, but they were also their works by faith. Truly it can be said, "Thy faith hath saved thee," and as truly it can be said that He gave that faith.

There is an old man, but he is not shown to us as being old until a new man is on the scene. We do not know anything of the old man's work until we know something of the new man's work. Before being born of God, there is not any hatred of sin for sin's sake. I do not mean by this that none of the world does not love clean living morally speaking. This would be contrary to what I have found among them. But to hate our ways before being born of God is not done. The trouble that Paul had with "I" did not trouble him before grace was made manifest to him. He only had one mind, and it is easy to find a way to follow it, seeing that there is no opposition to it, seeing that there is not any check on us in doing so.

This old man is like his father in every particular. Ever since the fall, he has been following after the things that belong to death, even being dead, and not knowing it (Eccl. 9:5), and those things which he follows after as being unto life, he will, if ever moved aside and made to give ground by the appearance of the new man, be a witness to, but not a partaker of, those things as being unto death. Satan witnessed to the Son of God, but he did not ever become a willing servant to Him. This old man had possession of the dwelling first. He had had his way and dominion for a long time, long enough to fight most ferociously any that would later appear, counting them as an intruder upon his premises, and a challenger in his own domain.

It was by one man's disobedience that many were made sinners. It is likewise by one man's obedience that many shall be made righteous. Had God not given a law there would not have been any sin (Rom. 4:15), therefore the law entered that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 5:19, 21). From here Paul begins to reason with the Romans, with the beloved of God, with those called saints (1:7). These Roman brethren had been born of the Spirit; they were now a dual character, possessing both an old man and a new man, and an outer man and an inner man. Both of these men are now living in one house; both of these natures that are so contrary to each other belong to one, the child of God.

In being born the second time, there is a new nature given the man. It is a nature that will bring the old man or nature under subjection. This is an evil tree and it can not bear good fruit, but in the new birth another tree is shown, another principle comes into the man. At once hatred is manifested between the two natures. The old nature loves the things of the first birth, the earth and the fullness thereof; the new man of nature loves the things from above. The works of the flesh or old man or old nature are enumerated in Gal. 5:19, 21. This old man is as proud of his works, glories in them, loves them as does the new man. The new man or nature or tree produces fruit by the operation of the Spirit and those fruits are enumerated in Gal. 5:22, 23.

What shall the Romans say now? What shall the beloved of the Lord say now? What shall the saints say now? *What shall we say?* Shall we say, Let us continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. That is the way the old man would talk. Ungodly men and women, being a one principled character, will all say that. The new man, the new nature, says, God forbid. Here is evidence now that the elder shall serve the younger; here are new born children of God that such an argument is repulsive to them. I want to call special attention right here that the new man is not an ignorant something placed in the child of God. This man, these men and women are born again; they

are born of the Spirit, and the Spirit is a deep searcher of things. They are not the same at all; it is not a renovation of the old; it is not the old made new. They are new creatures in Christ. They are now men and women with two natures. Both natures belong to them. Being born of God, they take on the characteristics of God. Adam's children take after him in their birth, God's children take after Him in the second birth. God hates every evil way, and his children are like him, they also do. God's children at Ephesus hated the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, as He their Father also did. God teaches His children. If this is doubted look how wise they are. They say to one and all, Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this (knowing what?), that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. I am well aware that many lovely and precious brethren think that this baptism is water baptism, but it has not appeared so to me. If it is, then none of these things in Romans apply to anybody save those that have been baptized in water, and the dear children of God on the outside must not be joyous about the great things in this book.

They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. They have done it. This is a work of faith. Christ is the giver of faith, but the faith belongs to the one to whom it is given, and through this faith they crucify the old man with his deeds. I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me (Gal. 2:20). In this Paul talks as he does in Romans 7. *I* am crucified with Christ; nevertheless *I* live. It is Paul in both cases, and in each case he is telling the experience of himself. He has, as he said in Romans 6:6, together with all they who are thus exercised, crucified the old man with his deeds that the body of sin might be destroyed.

This is presently taking place with all they who belong to Christ. As to the time of it taking place, it seems that it begins at the time of the two men or natures coming into contact with each other. The warfare starts instantly, and it is the children of God that are commanded to crucify the old man. As the warfare goes on for the life (natural) of the child, so does the crucifixion go on as long as life lasts. The daily subduing, the daily mortifying, the daily crucifixion of the old man goes right on and on. A total extinction of sin is not understood, for the Bible experience does not hold that good, but it is a disposing of its reign daily, yet as death follows, although slowly, crucifixion, so likewise doth sin live in a believer of a dying life, and dies a lingering, but nevertheless, a certain death.

These are a peculiar people which belong to Christ. They are united to him, and he to them, in the strongest bonds, even the indissoluble bonds of a betrothal that will not be broken for other lovers (Hos. 2). This union and communion with Him is such that it is much more than their outward profession. It was sealed between Him and them on Calvary, and manifest between them and Him in the new birth, being sealed to them by the operation of faith in their hearts. These know (See Rom. 6: and the beginning of verses 3, 6 and 9) that Christ has come and stood in their room and stead, and this interest and union causes them to be daily crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts. There is a similarity between the

crucifixion of Christ and this of the old man or body of sin. The death of Christ was a long death of agony, dying slowly under the excruciating torments of the soldiers, so it is with this body of sin, this rugged old man that has been the sole occupant of the building so long. By a daily crucifixion he loses his grip upon our lives. It is not that he is growing weaker, and we are growing abler; but it is that he is crucified daily, and the new man is renewed daily.

It is a great mystery how the child of God is two, and how that he is made to love one of himself and hate the other, and to hate the one that has lived with him the longest, instead of the newcomer, is still a greater mystery. How great a work has been done for him and in him that he arms himself with the same mind that Christ had when he, as a sheep to the slaughter, submitted unto death, even the crucifixion of the cross to satisfy the law; and as Christ counted it a joy to redeem his people by crucifixion, so, also, we do count it a joy, through his joy, through the same mind that he had, to crucify our own vile nature, our own vile affections and lusts that we no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God (I Pet. 4:1, 2).

The children of God are debtors. To whom? the flesh, to live after it? God forbid. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. God will not give his glory to another nor his praise to graven images (Isa. 42:8). The child of God is not able to play both ends against the middle; he can not serve Satan one day and God the next; he can not run to riotous living one day in soothing the old man, and then turn and pacify the hidden man of the heart, by putting on a pious face and long cloak; he can not be a Sunday Christian and a Wednesday worldling. A living after the flesh, a giving over to the affections and lusts of the old man is death, for, to be carnally minded is death (Rom. 8:6). To be anything other than carnally minded, to live any other way than after the flesh or old man, must come from Christ, and made manifest through faith. The putting to death of the old man; the crucifixion of the body of sin; the mortifying of the deeds of the body, all, all, pertain to the same work in the lives of God's humble poor. In each case there is a death, and as sure as death comes to one, there is life to the other. One is daily dying, the other is daily living; to one it is an agonizing way to die (having to yield and submit to an intruder), to the other it is a troubled life to live in the midst of a continued disputant of every step of the way.

"How strange is the course that a Christian must steer;
How perplexed is the path he must tread
The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
And his life he receives from the dead.

His fairest pretensions must wholly be waived,
And his best resolutions be crossed;
Nor can he expect to be perfectly saved,
Till he finds himself utterly lost.

When all this is done, and his heart is assured
Of the total remission of sins,
When his pardon is signed and his peace is procured,
From that moment his conflict begins."

I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me (Gal. 2:20). Here are both men in the same house talking. Here are two "I" men; one is crucified, the other is living. One is mortifying or crucifying or putting to death the other, in order that he might live, and yet, it is not he that is doing it at all, but it is Christ that is living in him. Now look one step further with me, and you will see why that the preaching that sets forth Jesus as the way, the truth, and the life is so precious to me. Paul continues, "and the life which I *now* live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Any other motive

of life, presently and now and today, other than that which is motivated by this faith, is a spurious life, is a faithless life, is a life still in the affections and lusts of the flesh. This life which is lived by the indwelling of Christ, by and through the gift of faith, will daily be found crucifying the flesh and the lusts of it. As Christ died to remove sin and the penalty of sin, we, also, through faith will be found putting to death every daily rising of the body of sin that we might walk in newness of life.

I have tried to comply with the request of my yokefellow in the ministry, Elder H. M. Brock, of Fayette, Alabama. May the Lord teach us and enable us to prove all things, and to hold fast to that which is good.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Corresponding Association of Old School Baptists in session with the church at Mount Zion, Loudoun County, Virginia, August 18, 19 and 20, 1859, to the Churches, Associations, and other Meetings, with whom we are in correspondence:

Dear brethren — In accordance with our custom, we would again address you a Circular Letter upon some subject relating to our most holy faith, and have selected as a subject one suggestive of the most important considerations, The Grave of Christ. Although no marble slab marks the spot, and no national tribute has hallowed the place, yet Christians have, in all their generations, regarded the fact that there was such a grave with a sort of mournful pleasure — mournful, because it was the sacred deposit of the innocent Lamb of God, put to death for the sins of the guilty — pleasurable, because connected with it are all their hopes of heaven and eternal happiness.

It has ever been the custom in all civilized countries to bury the dead, whether they were friends or foes; but it was not necessary for ordinary reasons that the body of Jesus should be buried: because the prophets had predicted, and he himself had repeatedly declared, that in three days he should rise again; and the question whether these predictions have been fulfilled is one of most absorbing interest to the child of God; for, if they have not, our faith and hopes are all in vain. If they have not been fulfilled, who can conduct us to the place, and point out to us the mortal remains of him who suffered upon the cross? Why is it that the disciples, on looking in very early in the morning of the third day, could see nothing but the linen napkin that was about his head? and should be told by a heavenly messenger, "He is not here; he is risen." But as it is not our purpose to enter into a discussion of the question whether he be risen or not; but, regarding that question as settled in the faith of all Christians, we will proceed to examine some of the reasons why he was buried at all, and why that tomb is now empty.

We take the position that both his dying and his being buried were voluntary acts of his own, in executing the will of the Father that sent him, independently of the wrath or good will of men. In proof of the first, we refer you to John x. 17, 18, "Therefore, doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me; but I lay it down of myself." And of the second to Isaiah liii. 9, "And he made his grave with the wicked," &c. It will be remembered that death is the wages of sin. If, therefore, Jesus died, it must have been because of sin, not his own **personally**, and yet his own considered in his relation to his people whom he represented. As the Husband of a wife, the Head of a body, and the Shepherd of his sheep, he stood legally bound to render to Divine Justice that satisfaction in his own body which **their** sins had made him amenable to. And, standing in such relation to them, we maintain that Justice could not have

been satisfied in their death. In dying, therefore, he did not suffer in the eyes of law as an innocent person in the stead of the guilty, for "he bare our sins in his own body on the tree." Now, if he, in bearing our sins, paid that penalty which they had incurred to law and justice, **Justice** has no longer any demand upon them; but the grave has, for it is written, "dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." This sentence Jesus has also met by entering Joseph's new tomb, wherein never man laid; and, although he has not, by so doing, exempted his people from also returning to their mother dust, yet he has, by rising again, robbed death of its sting and despoiled the grave of its victory. The sentence, "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return," could not embrace him personally, as it did the first Adam, who was of the earth earthy, (he being the Lord from heaven;) but it did embrace him as the law representative of his people; and inasmuch as he did not destroy their Adamic natures, nor leave them in the grave, but arose with the same body in which he was crucified, with no marks of corruption upon it, we must return to dust the same as though Jesus had not died and been buried. But what of that? When our anxious thoughts cluster around that holy shrine that once encased the corporeal substance of our Lord Jesus, and find him no longer there, we yet find it not wholly empty. Then we see the linen clothes and the napkin that was about his head, reminding us that those sins which he bore upon the cross, and which consigned him to the grave, are thrown off and left behind. That as he laid aside the grave clothes in which he was interred, and with which he was bound, so he has successfully combatted with the powers of darkness, thrown off the bands of sin with which he was fettered, torn away the bars of death, and risen with the keys of hell and of death in his hand. The lion-hearted guard that was set to watch the tomb, stand aghast or shrink back appalled, and the minions of darkness flee in wild dismay at seeing the mighty Conqueror rise. That great stone that was rolled upon the door of the sepulchre as the prestige of Herodian power, is rolled away, and an angel of God sitting quietly upon it, and a song of triumph begun which will never end, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

As the death and burial of Jesus released his people from all the dreadful consequences of sin, so his resurrection and return to that glory he had with the Father before the world was, has opened to them the gates of heaven, and given them a sure pledge that where he is they shall be also. The grave can no more retain them than it could him. Being gorged with the satisfaction that Jesus rendered when he died, when the trumpet shall sound, it shall give up its dead. "If we believe, therefore, that Jesus died and rose again from the dead, even them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." How consoling the reflection, that, though carrying about with us continually bodies of sin and death, in which we groan, being burdened, that all those sins with which we are constantly annoyed were buried with Jesus in his grave, and that he rose without them. How transporting the thought that, though we are doomed to dust, heaven is opened to us by the triumphant resurrection of our Lord and his glorious ascension on high, and that we have in reserve with him an inheritance that is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

There were those who garnished the sepulchres of the righteous; and men often pay tributes of respect to departed worth, by marking in tasteful style and with enduring monuments the place where the remains of those they loved in life repose; but it is wholly unimportant that we should know the spot where Jesus was buried, or what has become of the tomb in which he lay for three days and nights, since he is no longer there. Our faith looks beyond the cross, and beyond the grave, and beholds him seated upon a throne great and high, and

his train filling the heavens. It sees him whose grave was once the rallying point of anxious disciples, and who had there entered into combat with the king of terrors, now crowned with glory and honor, and having all power in heaven and in earth, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him. It looks through the vista of time, of death, and of the grave, and comprehends the idea that as certainly as the needle points to the pole, so certainly are we tending to him, and soon will be with him.

We have an earthly pilgrimage to endure, in which we are subject to many annoying and distressing scenes; but he who leads us on has not left us wholly exposed to these, but has strewn our pathway with some choice comforts and blessings, not the least of which is the privilege of meeting occasionally with those we love, of uniting in the worship of our common Lord, and of hearing from him out of his word; and when we would, as we sometimes do, attempt to seek the living among the dead, we are made to hear a voice as if sounding from the tomb, "He is not here; he is risen." We sometimes find him as did Job, in the whirlwind; and sometimes see him riding upon the storm, and when we thus see him, we know that

> Whirlwind and thunder, fire and hail,
> Shall never against our souls prevail.

The clouds that look the most threatening and alarming are made to distil the richest blessings, while the way that looks to our carnal senses the most inviting, and into which we are often lured, contains the bitter water of Miribah. We look forward to the grave as our most dreaded foe. Its gloomy cavern often fills our minds with fearful forebodings; but when we remember that it is on the road to heaven, and that our Jesus has been there before us, we would gladly take the step that lands us there, but to sojourn for a season, and then to follow him to immortal joys.

Our present interview has been marked by the attendance of a goodly number of ministering brethren, who have preached unto us the unsearchable riches of Christ with their accustomed ability and discrimination, by expressions of love and fellowship among the brethren and by general good order and decorum on the part of the immense multitude in attendance. There have been together brethren from all the churches in our vicinity, and others at a distance, who seemed to feed and lie down upon the green pastures of gospel grace. Many who seem to follow and cry after us as Ruth cried after Naomi, and a numerous multitude, who, as in the days of Christ, seem to follow us only for the loaves and fishes, with which they have been abundantly supplied, and after partaking copiously, will perhaps go away and curse us.

Our next meeting is appointed to be held with our sister church at Upper Broad Run, commencing on Thursday before the third Lord's day in August, 1860, when and where we hope again to meet you.

R. C. Leachman, Moderator
P. A. L. Smith, Clerk

(Re-published by request.)

ORDINATION OF DEACONS

The Salem Primitive Baptist Church, Floyd County, Virginia, met Saturday, September 9, 1961, with the following named Elders present: Leonard Brammer, B. O. Thompson, William Holland, Sam Terry, F. L. Clark, J. T. Turner, J. L. Bocock, Rufus Brown, and Otie Conner; together with the deacons from the several churches. The meeting was for the purpose of ordaining Brethren Roy Gearheart and Brammer Nichols to the office of deacon.

The above named Elders and deacons were organized into a presbytery by electing Elder B. O. Thompson, Moderator, and Julius Bocock, Clerk. Deacon G. E. Conner was chosen church spokesman; who expressed that the church was satisfied with Brethren Gearheart's and Nichol's qualifications.

Elder Brammer led in questioning; and the Presbytery being satisfied, proceeded to lay hands upon them with prayer by Elder Rufus Brown. Elder Bocock delivered the charge; and they were delivered to the church duly ordained deacons.

Elder B. O. Thompson, Moderator
Elder J. L. Bocock, Clerk

ORDINATION OF ELDERS

Forsyth County, North Carolina
December 24, 1961

The Primitive Baptist Church at Bunker Hill, Forsyth County, North Carolina, met in regular conference on November 25, 1961, and requested that a presbytery be called together at Bunker Hill Church on December 24, 1961, to examine Brethren J. T. Prescott and John R. Gatewood as to their qualifications for the full work of the ministry. Brother W. C. Parrish was duly elected as spokesman for the church.

The presbytery assembled on the appointed date and was made up of the elders and deacons of sister churches as follows: Elders Z. L. Rhue, D. A. O'Bryant, and Zeb Rhoades; and Deacons R. L. Doss (clerk), J. D. Cagle, B. B. Hogan, W. C. Parrish, Ernest Jones, G. B. Hawks, J. M. Denny, C. L. Overby, S. G. Snider, and S. P. Knight. After song and prayer by Elder O'Bryant the presbytery was organized as follows: Brother W. C. Parrish moved that Elder Z. L. Rhue serve as Moderator and that Brother R. L. Doss serve as Clerk. Elder O'Bryant seconded the motion, and the vote was taken by Elder Rhoades, and unanimously carried. Brother Parrish, having been previously appointed as spokesman, moved that Brother J. M. Denny be appoointed to question the brethren as to their qualifications, Elder Rhoades to pray the ordination prayer, and Elder O'Bryant to deliver the charge, which was unanimously adopted.

The evidence was deemed sufficient that the candidates be ordained. Elder Rhoades was wonderfully blessed in the ordination prayer, and with the laying on of hands, the two aforenamed brethren were ordained elders of the Old School Predestinarian Primitive Baptist faith. Elder O'Bryant delivered the charge, reading from I Timothy 3:1-8 and II Timothy 4:1-5. Dwelling upon these scriptures, he very clearly set forth the teaching therein, describing the walk of an elder in the ministry. Brother Parrish then, before delivering the brethren back into the hands of the church, was wonderfully blessed of the Lord to instruct and point out to them the ordeals and trials that were before them, that the church had their welfare at heart, and that they should always seek the counsel of the church in every trial, for after all it is the church that has the final say over us all.

It was moved, seconded, and adopted that Brother R. L. Doss write the credentials. The minutes were read and approved and the conference dismissed with song and prayer. Done by order of the presbytery.

Elder Z. L. Rhue, Moderator
R. L. Doss, Clerk

OBITUARIES

LOLLIE M. CAMPBELL

Sister Lollie M. Campbell, daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm Campbell, was born in Curadoc Township in 1882, and died March 1, 1962.

She is survived by two sisters, Mrs. Willie (Mary) Graham, of Wallacetown, Ontario, and Mrs. Gerald (Margaret) Lavitz, of Poplar Hill, Ontario; and also by a number of nephews and nieces.

Sister Lollie united with the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada at Lobo on October 5, 1902, and was baptized the next day by the late Elder W. I. Carnell, who was then the pastor of the church. She remained a member of the church over 59 years.

Sister Lollie decided in youth to take up nursing for a profession, and graduated from the London Victoria Hospital School of Nursing in 1910; and successfully followed that profession until she retired in 1955.

She was a very faithful member of the church, and whenever possible she took her place with her dear brethren wherever they were assembled. After the September meeting last year in Lobo, she entered the hospital for surgery. We know from conversations with her, that she would have gladly fled away to be forever with the Lord, but that was not to be. She endured suffering patiently, but, as was feared, she gradually declined. Her faith was in God, and she could say, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in him." Those who have known and loved her for Christ's sake, sorrow because they shall see her face no more here, but our loss is her eternal gain.

The writer, who had been her pastor for over 31 years, spoke at her funeral service, after reading Psalm 34, and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, from the last verse: "Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

May God reconcile us all to his sovereign will, and enable us, also, to endure to the end.

George Ruston

ARTHUR FINNIX DABBS

Inasmuch as it has pleased Almighty God to remove by death our highly esteemed and beloved deacon, Arthur Pinnix Dabbs, we wish to humbly bow in submission to the will of the God he loved and served in much fear and trembling.

Brother Dabbs was born in Caswell County, North Carolina, on September 21, 1891, the son of the late Rufus and Sally Arnold Dabbs, and departed this life December 23, 1961 at the age of 70 years. He was married on December 24, 1916, to Miss Fannie Simmons, who survives to mourn her loss. Their home was always open for their many friends and to the household of faith.

Brother Dabbs united with the church at Bush Arbor on second Sunday in October, 1926, and was ordained deacon on the second Sunday in May, 1937. This office he filled well. 1 Timothy 3:13, "For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." His entire life was spent in the public, operating a store, was county commissioner for Caswell County 14 years, notary for 20 years, served as trustee for Bush Arbor Church for 24 years, and many other positions of trust, all of which he filled honorably and trust worthy.

Brother Dabbs' funeral was conducted by Elders Harvey Smith, Ernest Oakley, and Brother Wallace Smith on December 25, 1961 (Christmas Day) at 2:30 P. M. with a large attendance which showed the respect and esteem of his many friends.

We pray that God will grant to his dear wife who so lovingly and faithfully walked with him for 45 years, sharing their joys and sorrows together, and his only surviving brother, O. M. Dabbs, every blessing God sees they stand in need of to strengthen them in their great loss.

W. C. King

JOSEPH C. MILLER

Joseph C. Miller was born May 26, 1887, the son of William H. and Sarah Elizabeth (Butler) Miller. He died September 29, 1961. He was married to Nancy Jane Smith September 25, 1907, in Roswell, New Mexico. Four children were born to this union: One daughter, Mrs. Gertie Slusher, Newcastle, Oklahoma; three sons, Arra, of Phoenix, Arizona; Aaron, of San Antonio, Texas; and Wilton Miller, of Newcastle, Oklahoma. He also leaves eight grandchildren; one brother, W. R. Miller, of Quitman, Texas (two brothers deceased); four sisters: Mrs. Cinda Fisher, Konawa, Oklahoma; Mrs. Mary Ryker, Springfield, Oregon; Mrs. Laura Richards, Maysville, Oklahoma; and Mrs. Eula Lock, Sulphur, Oklahoma (one sister deceased).

Brother Miller joined the Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church May 24, 1924, and was ordained deacon about two years later. His brethren feel that he served well in that capacity. He was a strong believer in salvation by grace — a gift of God. He affirmed that Israel's God thought of, saw, and purposed all things even before time that would take place in time; even as it is written: "As I have thought so shall it come to pass; as I have purposed so shall it stand." His patience, wise counsel, and firmness is missed, but we feel we can say that he kept the faith, and there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness, as there is for everyone who doth love the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Services were conducted in the Baptist Church at Newcastle, and he was laid to rest in the Tuttle Cemetery. Written by one who loved him as a brother, and sent in by request of his wife and children.

C. U. Landers

FLOYD EUGENE DODSON

Floyd Eugene Dodson, the son of V. A. and Stella (Hines) Dodson, was born May 12, 1915, near Asher, Oklahoma, and passed away November 15, 1961, at Wetumka, Oklahoma. He was married to Miss Mary Ella Poe November 15, 1941. He leaves to mourn their loss, besides his wife, three daughters, and one son: Mrs. Jo Ann Gray, Ada, Oklahoma; Sharon, Sue, and Mike of the home. Also one granddaughter, Christi Ann Gray, Ada, Oklahoma; his father and step-mother, Mr. and Mrs. V. A. Dodson, Dustin, Oklahoma; one sister, Mrs. Christine Yates, Dustin; one brother, P. A. Dodson, Alexander, Louisiana; and nephews and nieces.

Gene, as all knew him, was a man we liked to meet. It was a pleasure to talk with him. Though he never united with the church, he was a strong believer in salvation by grace, a gift of God. And he proved it by his attendance, and assisting in any way he could during the meetings. We believe he did "see" the kingdom of God. Christ said, "Except ye be born again, ye cannot see the kingdom of God."

So we would say to his family, as it is written, "Sorrow not as those who have no hope." We believe he was given this hope, this evidence, and testimony to leave with you for your comfort, and for our comfort.

Services were conducted in the Baptist Church at Dustin, and he was laid to rest in the Dustin Cemetery. Written and sent in by request.

C. U. Landers

MRS. C. Y. OSTEEN

Mrs. C. Y. Osteen was born December 24, 1870, and died February 22, 1962, making her stay on earth more than 91 years. She had been in a wheelchair for 17 years and suffered much. But it was hard to give her up. Everyone who knew her loved her; and she loved the Old Baptists and treated them with the best of care. She loved to read the Bible, and seemed to get more from it each day.

She was a loving wife and a good mother. She had lots of friends, and they came from far and near to pay their last tribute of re-

spect for her. I dreamed once that I baptized her, but never did. I believe she was one of God's little ones, and if she was one of His, she has a home in heaven, and will be satisfied when she awakes in His likeness. Written by her husband,

C. Y. Osteen

ETTA DARINA CHEATWOOD

Sister Cheatwood was born in Alabama January 6, 1888, but lived near Ruston, La. for a long time. She died January 1, 1962, after a long illness. She was a member of one of the old Primitive Baptist Churches of the old Louisiana Association, near Winfield, La., which was disbanded years ago. She was a very lovely and devoted sister, and manifested great love for the doctrine, and the dear brethren and sisters. She attended services for a long time at Liberty Hill and at other churches, and loved to be gathered with the church people.

She is survived by her husband, H. A. Cheatwood; one daughter, Mrs. Toney Henderson, of Monroe, La.; one brother, L. M. Gentry, Winfield, La.; and one niece and two nephews, and many other relatives. May the dear Lord bless, lead, comfort and console her dear husband and family.

Here funeral was conducted by the writer in the presence of a large congregation and many flowers, at Kilpatric Funeral Chapel, Ruston, La. Her body was taken to the old Corinth Cemetery below Winfield, La., where several close relatives and loved ones are buried.

Dear ones, let us not weep as those who have no hope, but may we look to the Lord who has taken her to himself. Soon he will gather all his little children from the grave and they will be made like him, and shall be with him forever.

R. W. Rhodes

MRS. NANNIE AMELIA AUSTIN

Mrs. Nannie Amelia Austin was born January 1, 1883, and died of a heart attack on her birthdate January 1, 1962, at the age of 79. She was convalescing from three previous attacks at the home of her eldest daughter in Washington, D. C., when she passed away.

She was the daughter of Dennis and Linnie Collins, of Baywood, Grayson County, Virginia; and was united in marriage to Cleat Enoch Austin on January 15, 1902, who was also of Baywood; and who died in 1940. To this union five children were born: a baby girl and Bletcher died in infancy, and one daughter, Mrs. Eva Palmer, passed away November 11, 1961. Surviving are two daughters: Mrs. Edna Kauffman, Washington, D. C., and Mrs. Lathena Dell Andrews, Colorada Springs, Colorado. Surviving also are four grandchildren, and three great grandchildren; one brother, E. T. Collins, and one sister, Mrs. Litha Flanagan, both of Meadow Grove, Nebraska.

At an early age both she and her husband united with the Primitive Baptist Church, and were baptized by the late Elder Smith Webb. When she came to Washintgon, D. C. to make her home, she brought her letter to Mt. Zion Church in the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, where Elder John D. Wood is pastor.

She had been in failing health since the death of her younger sister, Mrs. Bettie Hawkins, of Fort Worth, Texas, on August 31, 1961; and when she received word of the fatal heart attack of her daughter, Mrs. Eva Palmer, of Colorado Springs, on November 11, 1961, the shock proved too much and she suffered three heart attacks in one week. She was visiting at the home of her brother in Nebraska at the time, and after spending a week in a hospital, her eldest daughter brought her back to her home in Washington on December 2nd. Then on December 15th she received word of the death of her oldest sister, Mrs. Pollie Austin, in Nebraska, who had been in failing health for some time.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Leslie Henry, of Pocatello, Idaho, assisted by Mr. Herbert Gilbert, at Battle Creek Methodist Church, Battle Creek, Nebraska, where 21 years ago Elder Henry assisted in conducting the services of her husband. The church is just across the street from the Austin home where they lived for many years. She was laid to rest January 5, 1962, beside her husband in the family plot in Union Cemetery at Battle Creek; where on November 16, 1961, her daughter Eva was buried.

The floral offerings and kindnesses of the community displayed the esteem and sweet fellowship she enjoyed while on earth.

Written by her daughter

Mrs. Edna Kauffman

(Sister Austin was a highly esteemed member of Mt. Zion Church, and her passing leaves another vacancy in our membership. Those who knew her best loved her most, and will greatly miss her. Due to the great distance to Battle Creek, Nebraska, it was deemed best not to delay the trip, and to hold the services there.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to all who mourn her passing.

John D. Wood)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 130 DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1962 NO. 6

"SOMETHING TAKES HOLD OF US"

Dear Editors of the Signs:

It is past time for sending remittance for another year's enjoyment in reading, and I wish to write a few words of my experiences, hoping they won't sound strange to the household of faith; for numerous and mysterious are the experiences of God's children, who walk by faith in this time world.

None actually know why or what we are here for. We live, move, and have our being; we earn our living by the sweat of our face, laboring for meat and bread that perishes. Then something takes hold of us, takes up abode within us, and spoils our peace and our goods in this world; but we are given something far better: A knowledge of God and his love for us, and filling our hearts with love for him. Now we learn that it is in him that we live, move, and have our being here in this world. All our thoughts are turned toward him; he puts a new song in our mouth, and we speak words that we never before knew the meaning of. Praise unto Him! Behold all things become new. He acquaints us with himself by quickening us by his Spirit, and teaches us a new and living way by writing his law in our hearts and putting it in our minds, causing us to meditate upon them day and night. And we are given a desire to walk in and keep his statutes. We soon learn that our strength to do this is in Him. So far as our own strength is concerned, we are as helpless as we were before he quickened us.

We found ourselves singing:

"Amazing grace how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me."

and

"Oh thou in whose presence my soul takes delight,
On whom in affliction I call;
My comfort by day and my song in the night,
My hope, my salvation, my all."

We were so happy, so perfectly blessed in being given this assurance of his love, for we had worried much about ourself before it came, fearing we might be one who would never receive it. You see, we have always believed it would have to come from Him: this faith, this hope; and we felt it would have to come in power, great power, to make a sinner such as we are, confess before men the love of God shed abroad in our heart.

We didn't know much about this new way we were to travel; we haven't learned yet, but as we went along we found pleasant gardens, green pastures, still waters, pleasant fruits, and lovely flowers. We soon learned that the fairest flower was also the Guide and Keeper of the Gate; that gracious one who first gave unto us, the Lily of the Valley, the Rose of Sharon, the Bright and Morning Star, the fairest of ten thousand to our soul. Our heart melts in humble gratitude for his loving kindness towards us. How we love this place! For it is here our kindred dwell, our loved ones; and all is so peaceful. We wish we could stay here for the duration of our life on earth, but we are sinful; it seems there are things to be learned, suffering to be done, and we have to be taught to endure hardness as a good soldier. There are battles to be fought, and there is a great warfare: wars and rumors of wars, famine, pestilences and earthquakes to shake this earth (earthy creature) to its foundation. We must be purged, and tried and refined as gold and silver, tried in the furnace and brought through the fire, all to this end:

That His children be conformed to the image of his Son.

We think about these things most of our time. We read much, but do not always understand what we read. "Man's goings are of the Lord, and how can he understand his ways." We read that God hath set prosperity and adversity, one over against the other that man should find out nothing after him.

So our journey continues. We find ourself in a desolate place; the way gets rough, the clouds appear, our eyes behold vanity and evil doings, and we are afraid. How completely the scene has changed to empty wasteland. Troubles, doubts, and fears, like a gloomy cloud, are all around us. "We turn our eyes within, all is dark and vain and wild. Filled with unbelief and sin, can we deem ourself a child?"

"Our friends", they too have changed. Their words are tinkling cymbals and sounding brass. Where is the fine wrought gold we saw? the jewels and precious stones that made them so lovely to behold? We search for charity and faith that once dwelt among us, and they seem to be gone. We are so cold within and without; we are afflicted, and we mourn. Our complain is bitter; our soul cries out with the feelings of the poet, who must have been in this place:

"When sorrows encompass me 'round
And many distresses I see;
Astonished I cry, can a mortal be found
Surrounded with troubles like me?

Few seasons of peace I enjoy,
And they are succeeded by pain;
If e'er a few moments of praise I employ
I have hours and days to complain."

Then when our mind is turned to Job, and to the Psalms of David, and as we read, we realize that our blessed hope is not gone — that precious anchor of the soul. How true it is that it is "both sure and steadfast", for in the dark hours of night, as we think on these things, there comes a whisper into our heart: "Fear not, for I am with thee; Oh, be not dismayed, for I am thy God and will still give thee aid." And many other things, as, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." "Be not afraid, it is I." How greatly we are blessed as we feel faith and charity stirring in our bosom; and hope saying the Winter will melt away into Spring, and the voice of the dove will again be heard. Mercy has taken us gently by the hand, and how sweet it is.

"Without thy sweet mercy I could not live here,
Sin soon would reduce me to utter despair,
But through thy free goodness, my spirits revive,
And He that first made me, still keeps me alive."

I know this is getting lengthy. It is a description of parts of the way I have been brought along. "I am a stranger here below, and what I am 'tis hard to know." There are so many places to tell about: deserts, places of desolation, rough and crooked places; but not all are such: there are "places of drawing water", wells and springs that so refresh the spirit, and lift the soul to joyful heights. One such place was when we lived where we heard no preaching for months and months; and no one believed as I did, so there was no one to talk with. I believe the Lord took my mind and so imprinted the seven verses of the song, "How firm a foundation" in it, to the extent it was as though I had listened to the greatest sermon I ever heard. My spirit soared in joyous thanksgiving to God, for I knew for sure at the time that He sent it. I was working near fifteen or twenty people, and I looked around, my heart bursting to tell of this joy, but I feared they would not know or understand.

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, or nakedness?" Jesus said, "I have overcome the world, be of good cheer." We do not know what is in the way ahead that we must pass through; and, as the poet said:

"My God, I would not long to see
My fate with curious eyes;
What gloomy lines are writ for me,
Or what bright scenes may arise."

But I love to think of that sure foundation that has this seal: "The Lord knoweth them that are his." And Job said: "He knoweth the way that I take — when he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold." And, "He performeth the thing that is appointed for me." We know that He knows what is best for us, and we count it a great blessing to be thus dealt with.

I have quoted from many songs, but they are rich experiences in poetry. I have recently read the book of Job, and the Psalms, and it seems that all the songs are taken from these two books. I trust that I have written nothing amiss, it is the truth as I have lived it, and very real indeed with me. Sometimes doubts and fears would destroy me, if it were possible. One thing is sure, if Jesus is the author and finisher of my faith, then all the united powers of Hell cannot destroy it.

I would pray humbly at this time that He would give us grace and strength to lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and cause us to run with patience the race that is set before us.

"Teach us to pray and praise and hear,
And understand thy word;
To feel thy blissful presence near,
And trust our living God."

Humbly submitted in love,
Mrs. Lucille Young
807 Pope Street
Memphis 12, Tenn.

LETTER TO SISTER DYKES

307 New York Avenue
Elizabeth City, N. C.

Miss Mildred Dykes
Salisbury, Md.

Dear Sister Dykes:

I have read your very interesting, experimental letter in the Signs of the Times for July, and I have a mind to write to you, although I may not so write as to interest one so well qualified to write along spiritual lines as you clearly are. My companion and I remember so well the outstanding letter you read at the Salisbury Association a few years ago. It was indeed an extraordinary letter, showing a good understanding of spiritual things. Elder Ruston is truly an able writer as well as minister of the Gospel of Christ, and so are the Editors and other Associate Editors of the Signs. I trust that I have been blessed to hear each of them preach the unsearchable riches of Christ with much liberty and power from on high. I am glad that you are blessed to sit under the ministry of such gifted men as Elders Spangler and Griffin. Their preaching has touched me deeply, and I wish that I could hear them frequently.

I note that you are not given to doubts, as many of the dear brethren seem to be. Whatever I am, I am much given to doubts and fears. It seems that I have always been unduly fearful, and I am made to wonder whether I have any faith at all. The Lord only knows, as He knows all things, and "He hath done all things well." How sweet these words were to me when taken for a text by the late Elder Fly on one occasion! As the poet wrote:

"In heaven and earth and air and seas
He executes His firm decrees,
And by His saints it stands confessed
That what He does is ever best."

As you stated, so many of our good old ministers are slipping away, and are not being replaced. This is so true, and it is a matter of grave concern to those who love the doctrines of grace so ably set forth by them. And while the denominations of the world are flourishing, gaining in numbers, the ranks of Old School Baptists are thinning, especially in some sections, but I firmly believe that some of them will be here when Christ shall descend from His blissful abode within the veil to gather His loved ones home. In this connection, I quote a verse of a song that appeals to me:

"I know He'll come to raise the dead,
When all His saints shall see
The glory of their living head —
O will He come for me?"

How indescribably wonderful it will

be to see the King in His beauty, to behold Him in all His glory! With joy, I have many times thought of Him as being beautiful. Isaiah's vision of the Lord's glory has been touchingly sweet to me more than once: ". . . I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple" (Isa. 6:10). Referring to the Saviour in a dream one night, I affectionately exclaimed, "HE'S THE ONE!" My father, to whom I was speaking, instantly replied: "The chiefest among ten thousand," to which I added: "millions, billions!" He's the lovely One. ". . . yea, he is altogether lovely" (S of S 5:16). He's the pre-eminent One, "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy" (Isa. 57:-15). He's the One that is fairer than the children of men. "Fairer is He than all the fair who fill the heavenly train," as the song goes. He's the one and only Saviour and Redeemer — the one mediator between God and men. Others have arisen claiming to be the Messiah, but He's the One — the anointed One — while the others were mere pretenders and impostors. He's the Holy One of Israel whose vicarious death secured the pardon of the election of grace. He's the One that appeared in human form with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the midst of the burning fiery furnace. The king said, "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God" (Dan. 3:25). How awesome it is to reflect on this miraculous event, to contemplate the appearance of the Son of God in this scene! He's the Just One who will judge the world in righteousness. He's the One in whom all fullness dwells. In a word, He's the One who is all, and in all to His people, who are the unworthy recipients of His manifold blessings. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name" (Phil. 2:9), this exaltation taking place following His state of humiliation here below, as appears from the preceding verses. While Elder Dodd was preaching so affectingly at the Smith River Association in 1957, I thought of the Lord of glory in His state of exaltation and of my abasement, of His loftiness and my low estate, and the tears flowed all the more freely.

With reference to afflictions, I agree with you in your views pertaining thereto: I believe that bodily as well as spiritual afflictions are spoken of in the Bible, and that God's people are exercised thereby, that they are sanctified to their good. Job's case, for example, is a clear case of bodily afflictions, from which he was delivered, and he was doubly blessed in his latter days. How sweet are these words which he once uttered: "I know that my Redeemer liveth . . ." "What comfort this sweet sentence gives." In Psalms 14:19, we read: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." The following verse expresses the attitude of exercised saints toward God in their afflictions:

"Though with afflictions sore
He may them exercise;
Yet still His hand they shall adore,
And still His love shall prize."

I will conclude, hoping to be with you all at your next Association, and that we may be blessed to hear the glad tidings proclaimed by the ministering brethren from various parts of the country.

Yours in the Beloved,
C. W. Vass

R. F. D. 2, Box 147
Hurricane, W. Va.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

It is time to renew my subscription to the Signs so I am enclosing $5.00 for two years renewal. I hope the Lord will bless me to read it the remainder of my days, for I enjoy it so much.

It is a blessing to the Lord's people to have the opportunity of reading such sound writing from the little ones. I hope I am one of them, although I feel so unworthy of their love and fellow-

ship; but I believe that the Lord gives his people times of rejoicing in his love.

May God bless and keep you, is my prayer.

A brother in hope,
Lewis M. Johnson

BROUGHT THROUGH MANY TRIBULATIONS

R. F. D. 1, Box 114
Atlantic, Texas

Dear Beloved in Christ:

I have wanted for some time to write some of my thoughts and experiences, and it is with much fear that I attempt to do so, for the thought of deceiving God's precious elect, fills me with terror.

I believe that God has all power both in heaven and in earth, and that He predestinated and foreordained all things before the foundation of the world; and that, if I am one of the elect, I was in the mind and purpose of God before the world was, and that he loved me as one given to the Son; and that none who were predestinated to eternal life will be lost. "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

I do not believe that of myself I believed in God, but being born of the Spirit, I believed, and was enabled to discern the things which are spiritual. We are taught of God, for he said that he would "put his laws into their hearts and write them in their minds; and that he would be unto them a God and they should be unto him a people." I am not a volunteer in the militant kingdom: Jesus said in the parable of the great supper, "Go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in." His people have been a proud and stiff-necked people. I believe my own experience will prove that, "None can stay his hand, nor say what doeth thou." "Surely, as I have though so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed so shall it stand.

Eight years ago, being in great spiritual trouble, and fearing that hell surely yawned at my feet, I entered into the conditional Primitive Baptist church, feeling it to be the right thing to do. I enjoyed a warm fellowship while with them, and they have a very special place in my heart. I knew their doctrine to be different from the old doctrine I had known in my childhood and youth, but I soon came to understand it, and fancied that I believed it in its entirety. For two years I was pretty well satisfied, but the remaining four years I spent with them I became more and more discontented; and the more unhappy I became, the more hypocritical I became, for I did not want them to know I was deceiving them concerning my belief.

Finally, in December, 1959, I went to talk with Elder Loyd Wall; and when he told me some of his experiences, I was most unhappy, for I felt I had made a mistake and that I was not one of them. That night when I got home, I began to meditate on what Brother Wall had told me concerning that he dreamed of each candidate before baptizing them. Then I did a strange thing, for I began to cry and to long for that dream and that baptism; yet feeling sure that it could never be.

The next year was the strangest time of my life. I became a stranger to myself, and felt to be completely lost and alone. For a number of years I had been unable to cry much, but now most every night my pillow was drowned with my tears. I had thought I had known what fear was, and had even tasted rebellion in the years before entering the other church. I had thought myself to be a great sinner, but had never tasted the sort of hell I found myself suddenly thrust into. I believe there was a great difference in seeing myself as a great sinner, and having my sins brought up before me in such a way that I felt too wicked to live, and surely afraid to die in such a condition. Dear ones, I was made to cry out to God to remove my sins from before my face, because they

were so vile I could not bear to see them. I had tried many times before to pray, but now I was compelled to bow my knees to Almighty God, and with many tears beg for mercy for this poor worm of the dust. This was contrary to this proud and rebellious heart, but when I was brought to the end of my own strength I had to beg for mercy, for I could not live in the condemnation of my vile, black heart; and I needed the saving, cleansing blood of the precious Lamb of God, slain on Calvary's cross for all his people who were before ordained to eternal life.

My thoughts were so vile and so rebellious against God and against his church and people. I rebelled against all predestination, saying, How could it be fair to elect some to eternal life, and not all. I wanted no part of the old church, and thought to stay away and go back to the other one. But I always wound up at one of Elder Wall's churches. I was seldom comforted by the services, though I felt I heard the truth as I believed it; but more often than not, I was condemned, and I felt lost. When I did feel love for this church and its people, I wept bitter tears because I knew I was not fit to ask for a place with them. But, Oh, at those times how I wanted that baptism, and how my heart would break because I knew it could never be. I felt that surely one who had a hope could not think such vile thoughts, and that I surely must be one of the damned.

Once, when my fear for this church and its people was so great, a voice seemed to say to me, "Read the Bible." With a heart as heavy as lead, I picked up the Bible and opened it to the 31st chapter of Deuteronomy, and the 8th verse leaped out at me: "For the Lord he it is that doeth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed." As I started to cry, the 6th verse stood out, (the only two I saw on the page), "Be strong and of good courage, fear not nor be afraid of them: for the Lord thy God he it is that doth go before thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." Oh, how precious these words were to me, for they took away the stony heart and gave me a heart of flesh, and I rejoiced for many days, feeling that indeed the Lord was with me.

Many were the times when it seemed I had reached the end of my strength; many were the times when I wished God would take me out of it all; and even went so far as to wish I could take myself out of it all. Many were the times when my heart was crushed and broken. On the 26th of December, 1960, I had been especially rebellious, but after reading in Job, I had finally decided I could be as faithful as Job, and say, "Though he slay me yet will I trust in him." During the afternoon I picked up the Bible expecting to be comforted; but, Oh, how I felt on that day. The Bible opened at a Scripture I never remembered seeing before, and it cut my heart to ribbons: "There is no healing of thy bruise; thy wound is grievous: all that hear the bruit of thee shall clap their hands over thee: for upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?" (Nahum 3:19)

I was completely stunned for a moment, for it condemned me, and left me without hope in the world. I just felt great anger toward God, as rebellion became uppermost in my mind. Soon I began to feel so condemned I could hardly bear it. Then a messenger of Satan came to me, saying, "Since you are lost anyway, why not just get the gun and end it all." The turmoil in my mind lasted fifteen or twenty minutes; then the thought came over and over in my mind that I ought to try to pray. My heart was like lead. I finally went into another room, and knelt by the bed. I stayed on my knees for a minute or two wondering why I was there, and thinking that I would get up for I had nothing to say. Then the dam broke. I will never know what I tried to pray; the only thing I was conscious of at the time, was the fact that I said over and over, "Oh, God my heart is broken! Oh, God

my heart is broken!" My tears covered the foot of the bed, and even dampened the floor; for my husband coming in about an half-hour later, asked why water was at the foot of the bed; but I could not tell him.

For two days I avoided the Bible, but finally I found the Scripture, and saw that it was written to the City of Ninevah. I thought then that that Scripture had brought about the same kind of repentance that Jonah's preaching had for Ninevah many years before this particular Scripture was written. How great are the depths of the mysteries of God, and how able he is to bring down one who becomes exalted!

There came a time the last of January, 1961, when I really reached the bottom of the pit. Snow and ice was on the ground and I could not get out to talk with anyone, and I was afraid to stay alone. It was the most terrible time of my life, and I was brought to the place where I had to say, "Thy will be done." I promised God that, if he gave me strength for it, I would go unto the church.

The 4th Saturday in February I went to church in much conflict and much fear that I would have to go before the church, but did not do so. The next day I was free of conflict and felt very happy, but sure that I would not go before the church. That happened to be the day, and hour, and minute that God predestinated that I should ask for a home in the Pleasant Hope Church. They received me, although I was unable to say anything; but how the tears did flow then and up until the time I went into the water. The baptism I had wanted so badly was before me, but I felt so unworthy of it that it seemed I could not bear to be baptized; and I felt it was all a mistake.

It was a sunny day, cold with a chilly wind blowing; but that seemed to be the least of my worries. When I went into the water I never felt so calm in my life; and when I came out of the water I did not feel the coldness. I did not feel the peace then that some have experienced, but it came gradually as time passed. A miracle did seem to unfold, for, with the conflict gone, how sweet was the singing and the preaching; and I no longer felt ashamed to shed tears in front of the beloved brethren. How I rejoiced to know that Brother Wall had dreamed of baptizing me thirteen months before it came to pass.

My troubles and conflicts were not over, for I soon was again in darkness, but that too passed, and I rejoiced in the blessed sunshine of God's everlasting love. There are still seasons of light and darkness, rejoicing and despair, but I feel it will be this way as long as I live in this old world of trials and tribulations. Through it all shines my little hope of that eternal home for the saints, where there will be no more sorrow nor tears, but all will be peace and joy, and time will be no more. How precious to me is my little hope: its worth more than all the gold in the world.

Do with this as you think best, if there is any truth in it, it will be to the glory of God; and, if I am a deceiver and all is false, it still will be to his glory, and according to his purpose. Dear ones, when at the throne of grace, remember a poor sinner like me.

If a sister in hope, the very least of all.

Bernice Cox

(Submitted by Elder Loyd Wall, Bivens, Texas, for publication. — Ed.)

GOD OF ALL POWER

967 Maxey Street
Memphis, Tenn.

"These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son may also glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." (John 17:1, 2)

We understand that there is no power but of God, and the powers that be are

ordained of God; and that everything is subject to the power of God, from the first to the last of all things. I do believe that God is able, and does control everything that he made, and that without him there was nothing made. So, from the very smallest insect to the largest animal, including man, everything is under His control: even man's goings are of the Lord, and his steps are directed according to God's will.

All flesh is in His hand; and how wonderful to know that He prayed for those the Father gave him out of the world. These are the ones that are given eternal life. He is the way, the truth, and the life; and there is none other name given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved. He is our resurrection also, for Jesus told Martha that he was the resurrection and the life, and he that believed on him, though he were dead, yet should he live. (John 11:25) So we know by the eye of faith of God's power in all things.

O, I think of the prophets and the fathers of old, how they were comforted of the Spirit by the same God we hope to worship today; how they were moved by the Spirit to go places, and to do as they were told to do. We think of the Prophet Elijah, the Tishbite, whom God talked with, and caused him to go according to His power. We find in the 17th chapter of 1st Kings, some things that God commanded Elijah to do: "The word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Get thee hence, and turn eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith . . . and it shall be that thou shalt drink of the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there." The ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening, and he drank of the brook. Here God's power is demonstrated in man and in the fowls of the air.

To my mind we here have the law demonstrated. We see that the brook dried up, and that Elijah could no longer drink of it. The ravens fed him no more; and Elijah had to go at God's command to the widow woman for sustenance. This means to me the Grace Covenant at the end of the Law Covenant; and God's mighty power is shown, which is the same power that causes the lame to walk, the blind to see, the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak. As we go a little further in the life of Elijah, we find that he proved that the true God was Israel's God, when he said, "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word." (1 Kings 18:21)

The people did not believe in Elijah's God until God answered with fire from heaven. Then they said, "The Lord, he is God." It takes the power of God to cause men to see and believe in him, in every sense of the word; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believe in God: no more, no less.

. . . Has God ever changed? No! He is the same today as he ever was. The Prophet Malachi says, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Christ told his disciples, "Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." That which God has done is done forever, and nothing can be added or taken away from his work, for his work is a perfect work in all things both visible and invisible.

The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. His people are kept as the apple of his eye, and none of them will ever be destroyed. The Apostle Paul says that life nor death, things present or things to come, shall not separate us from the love of God. If we love Him, it is because he first loved us; and he called us out of nature's darkness into his marvelous light, not because of our works, but because of his purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

The power of God sends his servants to preach the Gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew and also to the

Greek. The preaching of the cross of Christ is to them that perish foolishness, but unto those who are saved, the power of God. The children of God are justified by faith, and have peace with God through their Saviour Jesus Christ. God works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure; and it is his good pleasure to give them the kingdom. This is a precious gift; it is a perfect gift, because it comes down from above, from the Father of Lights in whom there is no variableness, neither a shadow of turning.

These things are not learned in the schools of men, or come from them. God teaches his children, and they learn obedience; "they rejoice in hope of the glory of God, and not only so, but they glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience hope: and hope maketh not ashamed: because the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given them." God has power over all flesh to do as he pleases with his own. I believe that every living thing praises God in the purpose he had in it. The reason we can't see into all mysteries, is because His ways are higher than our ways as the heavens are above the earth; and they are past finding out by men.

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind but now I see."

How amazing this grace is! Even when we were dead in trespasses and sin God loved his own. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:8-10) The workmanship of God shows the power of God in making one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor; and none can call him in question, because he has power over all flesh.

When his children are gathered together in his name, we often think how powerful He is. He brings them from the ends of the earth, and makes them sit in heavenly places in him and worship their King of Kings: to whom all honor is due. He causes his servants to preach the Word, reproving, rebuking with all long suffering and doctrine; and gives food which gives them strength for each day of their lives.

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Romans 8:29, 30) Aren't you glad to know that God's foreknowledge and predestination will never become obsolete in the hearts of those whom He justifies and glorifies. I love the predestinated purposes of God: whatever they are, He brings them to pass according to his will. May we not preach anything else other than the absolute truth as it is in Christ Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith. And faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

May the grace of our Lord be with each of his children.

Elder H. R. Prince

Danville, Virginia

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed is a letter from my beloved pastor of Union Church, which I cherish very much. Would like it published in the Signs at your convenience.

An unworthy sister,
Kizzie H. Bowen

R. F. D. 3
Martinsville, Virginia

Dear Sister Bowen:

I heard you had been sick since we saw you last, but hope you are better by now. We had hoped to come see you at Christmas time, but did not get to it. I think of you very often.

I wish that I could see you and hear you talk, for I think of your faith and patience and faithfulness in the Lord. I feel so unworthy to be called your pastor, because I feel so far from the things that I feel a child of God should have. All that I have, Sister Bowen, is a hope, but that is worth more than all this world can afford.

I have been thinking the last few days about the white stone that is spoken on in the book of Revelation. "I will give him a white stone, and in that stone a new name." I am so glad that the stone was white, and that the name was inside. I feel that we have received at the Lord's hand the fruits of this stone, and in some way we feel that we have been given a new name that no one knows but they that have received it. Don't you know, I believe that the Lord can speak to his children and they will hear, though they may be in the midst of thousands of people; yet they hear as the Lord speaks to them in a still small voice. I feel that you know this better than I. May the Lord be with you and bless you.

With love and best wishes,
Leonard J. Brammer and family

HIS POWER IS NOT LIMITED

623 Summit Street, Apt. 1
Petersburg, Va.

Dear Editors:

I would like some information from you, if possible. I am in the army stationed at Ft. Lee, and have tried to locate the meeting house near Richmond; however, I have run into a blind. . . . I know that there are several Primitive Baptist churches located in this area, and that the one listed in your publication is listed to be in the faith and order to which you subscribe. I am not a member of the church: however, I feel that the Old School Baptists preach what I hope to believe; and feel, that through personal experience with the people of the Harmony Church at Huntington, W. Va., and of reading several issues of the "Times", that those of your faith and order preach the true gospel according to the Scriptures.

For it comes to my mind that nothing comes to pass unless it was foreknown and predestinated by the, and through the will of the Master, our Lord God of heaven. Now we know that God is not the author of sin, but I feel that the Devil could not possibly perform any act that would just happen, or by chance. I feel that our God is all wise; and if this be the case, then the foreknowledge of every act that comes to pass is bound to be had by the God who created us. I know that it is good to be mindful of the Spirit, and that carnality is not with God; and, if I believed that man is a free-agent to go and come from carnal to spirit as he desires, then I would not believe in the true and living God, whose power is not limited.

I cannot believe that I could worship a God that had tied hands, and had to wait for an insignificant creature as myself to help him, or give him a chance to save me, or open my heart to him; because then it would be of my own sinful self, and would not be good.

Forgive me if I offend in my writing, and please correct me if I write something that would tend to glorify man in anything: All glory belongs to God.

I had not intended to write of my feelings or belief, only to request information as to the location of the meeting-house near Richmond. I would like to visit with them and enjoy the preaching. As I said before, I am not a member of the church, but I do enjoy hearing the preaching of those who preach the power and glory of God, without trying to be co-workers, or detract power from God by glorifying man. I cannot

see that it is in man to be able to put limitations on the power of God. Thank you kindly.

With respect,
B. K. Smith

1042 Cedar Crest Drive
Huntington 5, W. Va.

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

Enclosed you will find check for the renewal of our **Signs of the Times.** We certainly enjoy it very much.

Hope you and Sister Wood are enjoying the best of health; we are about as usual.

We have meant to write you ever since your association to tell you how much we all enjoyed it. This was our sixth association with you at the Virginia Corresponding Meeting. Although we missed in 1960, we were blessed to attend five consecutive associations, and then again in 1961. Our party all remarked on the way home that we enjoyed the last one best of all, all the way through. Elder Griffin put it pretty nicely: "I came before it started, and stayed until it was over; so it goes without saying that I must have enjoyed being here." Our party shared his feeling. Although we have to drive 430 miles to be with you folks, we wouldn't have missed a minute of it; and we hope we are thankful to our Lord for giving us a safe trip.

Love to you both,
Lee and Lilly Johnson and boys

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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EDITORIAL

Hebrews 13:13

"Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach."

In looking back over the 1961 Signs, we find a request for someone to give their views upon the above Scripture, which, the Lord enabling us, we would desire to do. None but the Lord could have chosen a man so suitable as Paul to write this epistle to the Hebrews. Paul very aptly gives us his record in Philippians 3. "Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church;

touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." After his illumination he counted his attainments as dung. Such a man, who had been a leader among the Hebrews, was turned from hating Jesus to preaching him, with an inspired and true conception of the work of Moses' hands in giving the law and all that pertained to it. This epistle to the Hebrews stands out as a complete compendium of God's purpose in giving the law, with its types and shadows which were good, showing by clear contrast the BETTER and enduring things of Christ.

A careful reading of that which is written in the book of Acts of the early Jewish Christians, will suffice to show how easy it was, when left to themselves and the snares of the evil one, to try to blend Judaism with Christianity. In Paul's epistle to the Galatians we see how judaising preachers had gotten among them, and how entangled the Galatians were with Jewish customs and laws. He tells them, "I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law, Christ has become of no effect unto you." Thus, in his ministry, he would not have them follow the teaching and traditions of the fathers, but rather as they had received Christ Jesus the Lord, to so walk in him. In every other epistle that he wrote, he began with his own name PAUL, but in this epistle to the Hebrews he begins with GOD. The same God, who spake to the fathers, "hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." He proves also that Jesus was David's son, yet David's Lord, of whom David was inspired to write in Psalm 110. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." He warns his brethren to take heed to the things that they had heard, lest at any time they should let them slip, that Jesus had been crowned with glory and honour and that all things had been subjected to him, exhorting them to consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was in all his house. "For this MAN was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house: And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, AS A SERVANT, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after. But Christ as a Son over his own house; whose house are are, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." This Epistle is wonderfully complete, telling of the Lamb of God's providing. Genesis 22:8, and of him who sits upon his throne as KING and PRIEST. Zechariah 6:13.

After he had by one offering perfected for ever them that are sanctified, he ascended on high, and when the day of Pentecost was fully come, He sent forth his Holy Spirit, who takes of the things of Jesus and reveals them unto us. Paul brings the inspired word of Jeremiah as a witness of God's Spirit, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin." It was the Holy Spirit's work that made these Hebrew brethren of Paul, believers, as it must be his work alone to make believers today, which Paul shows in Hebrews 8:10-13, and from the very things that Paul writes to them, we can see that they had earth and hell to face, they were among a people who had crucified their Lord and who would be glad to see the last of them. They needed encouragement and they were reminded of that wonderful cloud of witnesses who DECLARE PLAINLY in their tes-

timony and walk, that they sought a better country, that is, a heavenly. "And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned." How true that is today, there is so much to allure back to the world, the world has never been a friend to grace; but then they had shown their colours, they had espoused the cause of Christ, and had submitted to the ordered way of believers' baptism, showing that they were dead to the law by the body of Christ, and had a desire to walk in newness of life. Although Paul himself could be taken as a good example, just as those worthies he had mentioned in Hebrews II, yet he, being led by the Spirit, would make no mistake, for as a servant, he directed them to the Captain of their salvation, who had said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Paul began chapter 12 "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." O, how much instruction and comfort we find in this chapter.

In a previous chapter, Hebrews 10, he witnesses of their devotion in former days, and asks them to remember how after their illumination, they endured a great fight of afflictions; "Partly, while ye were made a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, while ye became companions of them that were so used. For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward." How encouraging he was, and they needed it just as we do in this day. To draw back is to draw back to perdition, and no doubt, then, as now, there were those who did draw back. Paul concludes that chapter, coupling himself with them who were still beloved in Christ Jesus, he says, "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition: but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."

In the last chapter of this epistle, where our text appears, Paul admonishes them to love one another and to have a fellow feeling for those in bonds and to them who suffer adversity as being themselves in the body, telling them to be content with such things as they had, for Jesus hath said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." Verse 10 says, "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle." Those who served in the tabernacle, as we have already seen, were serving under the law and there was provision made for them there, as shown in our Lord's parable of the rich man and Lazarus, by "a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day." Luke 16:19. They had no right to eat of our altar, Paul declares! What is our altar? The brazen altar upon which the lamb was offered was made of two materials, shittim or acacia wood, which was considered almost indestructible, and this was covered with brass, which was of great strength and could endure the fire. Jesus Christ, being both God and man, only could endure the wrath of God for those that were

his. Our Lord, being a perfect man, had infinite strength to endure. Thus the human nature, as the Son of man, was offered upon his divine nature, as the Son of God. Here then is our altar! As the son of God he was from eternity, he could walk in the furnace with the three Hebrews, and by his presence enable them to endure as seeing him who is invisible. With such a way of approach unto God, his children, who are chosen in the furnace of affliction, can endure great tribulation. Under the law, the lamb, upon whose head the man laid his hand and confessed his sins, though innocent, was slain and consumed upon the brazen altar by fire to ashes. Jesus, from the manger to the cross, lived a perfect and holy life, meeting the requirements of God's holy law, and producing a righteousness that presents his bride perfect before God. When he was taken and with wicked hands crucified, he, as he hung there, nailed hands and feet to that accursed cross, endured the fire of an offended God for us while he lived, not after he died. His was better blood than that which Abel offered, and while he poured out his blood, he saw of the travail of his soul and was satisfied, by his knowledge shall God's righteous servant justify many, for he bore their iniquities. "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." As a man, he endured divine wrath, as God, he could forgive the awful sins of the dying thief, to whom he said, "Today thou shalt be with me in Paradise." When he had endured the hell we deserved, he, as a victor, cried with a loud voice, "It is finished." and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. Then was the veil of the temple rent in twain from the top to the bottom, the mystery of Judaism was ended, and their house was left to them desolate. Luke 13:33. Left of their God, those wicked leaders of Judaism were spared for awhile, so that Paul's Hebrew brethren might come safely out of that camp. Here we would also mention Peter, who wrote of the threatened judgments that hung over that nation; he said to his brethren that God is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish. The dead carcase of Judaism was soon to be attacked by the Romans, who, in God's time, would come as swift eagles to tear up that nation. Jesus had told his disciples "For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together." Matthew 24:28. How completely deluded they were, so proud that they could not dig into God's word, and to beg they were ashamed, Luke 16:3. Yet they boasted that Abraham was their father. Jesus told them, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it and was glad." Such was their hatred of him that they would rather, than Jesus, have the murderer Barabbas released to them, and to Pilate they cried, "Crucify him." Pilate even said, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it. Then answered all the people and said, His blood be on us and on our children." The Roman soldiers took Jesus without the gate, to a place on the North side of Jerusalem called Calvary and crucified him there, fulfilling to the last degree what was to be. "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach."

"If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified." I Peter 4:14. To confess Christ for these early Christians meant persecution of a most cruel kind. We see the hatred of the Jews to Paul, spoken of in various places in the book of Acts, in chapters 22 and 23, where he told the Jews how he persecuted those who believed in Jesus, while he was in their camp; one sees there what reproach and shame were heaped upon him. On one occasion they lifted up their voices and said, "Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live." There are quite a few camps today, in which much that has not a "Thus saith the Lord"

to sustain it, is practiced; where the work of the creature is put forward instead of the work of God. Should the Lord take such an one in hand, convincing him of sin, of righteousness and judgment, making such an one to know his end and the measure of his days, that he may know how frail he is; he, like the leper of old, would be forced to leave the camp, crying, unclean, unclean. Should the good Samaritan journey that way and bind up his wounds and give him but a taste of amazing grace, his one longing desire would be to follow the lamb whithersoever he goeth. Then he will feel what we sometimes sing, "If on my face for thy dear name shame and reproaches be, all hail reproach and welcome shame, if thou'lt remember me."

Paul in 2 Timothy 3:1-4, describes exactly the perilous days in which we are living, and in verse 5 he concludes his arraignment with these words, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away." That is, come out from that camp. In this dark and cloudy day our Lord is still on the throne: His word to Zion is "Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the East, and gather thee from the West. I will say to the North, give up; and to the South, keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth:" Isaiah 43:5-6. Wherever there are those for whom Christ died, God's honour is engaged to instruct, teach and guide them. There are many of God's children in these camps today, just as Daniel and the three Hebrews and others were left in Babylon of old. In Revelation these camps are spoken of as BABYLON THE GREAT. It is where men are trying to build a way to heaven, and God has greatly confused their tongues, which will be seen when tested by a "Thus saith the Lord." When the time shall arrive for the overthrow of this great Babylon, then a voice will be heard from heaven, saying, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Surely we believe that as Moses led all of the despised Hebrews out of Egypt, so that not a hoof was left behind: so there will not one perish for whom a greater than Moses came to be their Leader and Captain. "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you."

G. R.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

PRAYER

Few subjects, perhaps, have occasioned greater concern in the minds of the children of God than that of prayer; and it is indeed, when rightly understood, a comforting thought, that the living children of God are more seriously tried upon this subject than any other people. Indeed, we do not know that any other people have any trouble at all in regard to prayer. The Pharisee who stood and prayed with himself, and paraded before the Lord what he evidently regarded as his own good works and self-esteem, had not a single petition to ask of God, and being full of self-righteousness, betrayed no doubt or fear that his prayer was meritorious in the sight of God. The parable of the Pharisee and publican was spoken by our Lord unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others, (Luke xviii. 9-14), and it is applicable to all self-righteous Pharisees, whether of ancient or modern times. The ease and fluency in which all self-righteous persons can read or recite what they call their prayers, is very observable. They profess to regard it as a duty to do a certain amount of praying; and when they have read or repeated their task, they can say, with

the strange woman described in Proverbs vii. 14, "I have peace offerings with me; this day have I paid my vows." Of this class of will-worshipers, not a few are like their ancient brethren, fond of being heard in their devotions: they choose the corners of streets, or market places, or places where they may be heard of men, that all may see how devout and righteous they are. They think, as we are told, that they shall be heard for their much speaking, and therefore make long prayers, and use vain repetitions. But our Lord has said of them, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." — Matt. xv. 8, 9.

It is not then the fluency of speech, the eloquence of language, nor readiness to engage in public or in private prayer, that God will accept as worship. Nor is it a periodical appropriation of times in which to go through the form of prayer, for the spirit of grace and supplication are not at our command. In his sermon on the mount, our Savior forbid his disciples praying as the hypocrites do, or using vain repetitions, as the heathen do. Be not ye therefore like them; for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him. Even the repetition of the form of prayer which Jesus taught his disciples, (Matt. vi. 9-13), becomes with us vain and forbidden repetition when we are not led by the Spirit to pray with the spirit and with the understanding. How many of us have been taught from our infancy to commit to memory what is called the Lord's prayer, and to repeat it, as though by so doing we could secure the mercy and protection of the Lord. It is used as a kind of charm, to keep evil from us when we lie down to sleep, and we have felt as though we have secured the favor of the Lord; when not a word has been felt in or uttered from our heart. Even the saints of God, including the apostles of the Lamb, have asked in prayer of God and received not, because they have asked amiss. We may rest assured that we have asked amiss, if God withholds from us that which we ask for; and this is a great mercy to us, that he does withhold those things which his Spirit has not made intercession for. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. And he that searches the heart knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." — Rom. viii. 26, 27. Our Savior said to the woman of Samaria, "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship in spirit and in truth." — John iv. 24.

The experience of the saints is in harmony with the last two references, especially when they feel their heart drawn out in prayer to God. When they remember that God is a Spirit, infinite and eternal, the inquiry from their heart arises, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God?" — Micah vi. 6. They know they cannot approach him with a price in their hand, or with any offerings they can bring. How often in their heart the unuttered desire is hidden, O that I knew where I might find him! They may bend their knees to the ground, but their lips are sealed; they perhaps cannot utter a word, a syllable, and they sometimes even fear that they have offended God by their very attempt to pray. How sensibly do they now feel their weakness, and in deep humility they groan in spirit, in inexpressible breathings of desire. This is prayer, and this prayer enters the ears of the God of Sabaoth. And this prayer God has promised to hear, for he has said, "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them: I the God of Israel will not forsake them." — Isa. xli. 17. This is truly helping their infirmity. Their tongue has failed; it can utter no sound, it cannot

express the deeply hidden groaning for the water of life which is felt within. No created ear can hear the silent emotions that rend their broken hearts; the deep contrition that overwhelms them in unspeakable anguish can be heard only by their gracious prayer hearing God. "I the Lord will hear them." What heavenly consolation is found in these gracious words. The heavens had seemed to them like brass, and the earth as dust, and their prayers had seemed utterly unavailing, and shut out from the ear of sovereign mercy. A consciousness not only of infirmity, but also a sense of guilt and unworthiness, had paralyzed their tongue; but their inability to articulate with their tongue cannot prevent him, who searches the hearts and trieth the reins of the children of men, from hearing the prayer which his own Spirit has indited in the heart, and no other prayer than that which his Spirit indites will be accepted, though uttered in thunder tones. "For we know not how to pray as we ought," nor can we learn from all the prayer-books ever published, or by any lessons taught by good or bad men. It is only the Spirit that can search or know what is the mind of God, or make intercession for the saints according to the will of God. The spirit of our flesh would ask that God would yield to our carnal desires; but the Spirit of God teaches us to say, Not our will, but thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven, and to ask for grace to reconcile us in all things to God. The Spirit of our God will never lead us to pray for or desire that God should grant us anything more or less than what he has in store for us; and when we pray for the gratification of our carnal desires, we surely pray amiss, and it will neither be for our good or his glory, and therefore he graciously denies our requests. The saints are instructed to pray without ceasing, and in all things to give thanks. We do not understand this injunction to mean that all our time is to be devoted exclusively to a form of prayer, for vain repetitions in prayer are forbidden; but at all times in our heart to breathe forth our desire to God to preserve us from evil, and lead us by his counsel and wisdom in all things. There is no place or period of our pilgrimage when we can say our prayers are ended, or that we can cease to call upon the name of the Lord. And in all things, whether agreeable or painful to us, we are to give thanks to God.

"Our days of praise shall ne'er be past,
While life or breath or being last,
Or immortality endures."

The peculiar trials which are experienced by God's praying children, when their prayers seem to be unheard, and they feel as though they were sinking in deep waters of sore affliction, should not lead them to conclude that God's ear has become heavy that he cannot or will not hear them; for he often withholds the answer to our prayers for the trial of our faith and patience, and that we may the better understand and more fully appreciate the blessings when received. Our blessed Lord spake a parable of the unjust judge and importuning widow, (Luke xviii. 1-5), "to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint." A sense of our abject poverty and utter unworthiness should not cause us to faint, or despair of the mercy of the Lord, for it is the poor, humble, contrite, laboring, heavy laden child that God has made welcome to come boldly to his throne of grace in their Redeemer's name; and the promise is that they shall obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need; but the rich, self-righteous, he sends empty away. The poor publican, bowed down under a sense of unworthiness to even raise his eyes to heaven, in deep contrition smites upon his breast, and the hidden anguish of his heart in trembling accents cries, "God, be merciful to me;" and to this last petition he signs his name and character, "A Sinner." He does not claim to be a saint, nor indulge a thought that his sad prayer is meritorious. If God shuts out his prayer, and spurns him from his presence, he feels in his heart that God is just. But with fear and trembling he feels that

this is his last, his only hope; for if God withholds from him his mercy, he sinks in hopeless despair. But O, what wondrous grace! his prayer is heard, and he is justified rather than the boasting Pharisee.

There are times with some who have hoped in the Lord, when they have had so deep a sense of the infinite majesty and holiness of God, and so deep a sense of their own pollution, as, like the publican, to stand afar off, and because they dared not to lift up their eyes to heaven, or take the sacred name of God upon their lips, have concluded that they have not — cannot pray; when perhaps in no part of their experience have they in reality and truth prayed more, or with greater acceptance. Their prayers have not been formed into words, nor articulated with their voice, but from the deepest recesses of their aching heart the pent up ejaculation has in unutterable groanings, in heaving sighs and flowing tears, expressed the desire and confession, "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

The subject of prayer opens before us a boundless theme for serious reflection. The God to whom prayer is to be made is the "high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, and his name is Holy." He is "of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity." Yet in the amazing riches of his grace he has provided a way of access through Jesus Christ, the one and only Mediator between God and men, whereby his children may approach him, and come even unto his seat, and not be consumed. Most truly, Jesus Christ is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life, and no man can come unto the Father but by him. — John xiv. 6. Our prayers to be acceptable to God must be presented in his name, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must or can be saved; and he has instructed us to address all our prayers to the Father, in the name of Jesus Christ the Son, and as indited by the Holy Spirit. This rule should be strictly observed when we approach the throne of grace. It is true that these three are One, but officially to be regarded in our prayers, as Jesus has commanded us. By the Spirit we address the eternal God, as "Our Father which is in heaven," whose name is hallowed; and we find access to him through his Son, in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, whom the Father has given to be the Head over all to the church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all; and in whose sacred Sonship is treasured the sonship, heirship, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, with every other spiritual blessing of all his members, and their eternal, vital union is securely treasured up in him. Therefore when we pray we should ask our petitions of the Father in his name, as taught by his Holy Spirit. Thus the "Three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost," are recognized in our spiritual devotion. While we call upon God, as our Father, this relationship is in and through Jesus Christ his Son, who by the gift of the Father is our Head, and officially our Mediator, in whom alone we stand accepted. The Holy Spirit which is given us, while one with the Father and the Son, is officially our Comforter, our Teacher, and the gracious, infallible Prompter of our prayers. Every prayer, therefore, to be acceptable to God, must be addressed to the Father, in the name of Jesus Christ our Mediator; for in no other name or way can we have access unto God. The new and living way unto the Father, which is consecrated for us, is through the vail; that is to say, through the flesh of him who was made flesh and dwelt among us: whose glory we beheld, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. How frequently Jesus informed his disciples that after his resurrection, and ascension to his Mediatorial throne, they should address all their prayers to the Father in his name. "And in that day **ye shall ask of me nothing.** Verily, verily I say unto you, Whatsoever **ye shall ask of the Father in my name,** he

will give you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing **in my name**; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." — John xvi. 23, 24. "And whatsoever ye shall **ask in my name,** that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything **in my name,** I will do it." — John xiv. 12-14.

The privilege of asking in his name belongs exclusively to those who are embraced in his name; as all the members of a man's body are included in his name, and as a wife is in the name of her husband, and as children are legally included in the name of their paternal parent, so the church of God, as the Lamb's wife, and all her members, are members of his body, and covered by his name; and as his seed, or children, his name is their inheritance, and their approach unto God in his name implies a vital relationship to him; and his name is to them a strong tower, and perfect indemnity for all they need for time or for eternity. And the Holy Comforter shall lead them into all truth; for he shall take of the things of Jesus and show them unto them. This Spirit shall make intercession **for** them and **in** them, according to the will of God. Hence the gracious assurance is given, that whatsoever they are moved by the Holy Spirit to ask in the name of Christ shall be given them; for the Spirit will not lead them to ask for anything contrary to the mind and will of God. And as none can call Jesus Lord but by the Holy Ghost, so none can pray in his name but by the same Spirit. An inspired apostle has assured us that all our necessities are known and amply provided for by our heavenly Father. "But my God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." — Phil. iv. 19. But as we have not wisdom to discriminate between our need and what our carnal mind may crave, the blessed Spirit maketh intercession for us, withholding only what would be hurtful to us, and incompatible with the righteous will of God; for he will withhold no good thing from them who walk uprightly.

The subject of prayer opens before us so wide a field for meditation, that we cannot — we know not where to stop when dwelling on the subject. Our principal object in this article is to relieve, so far as we may be enabled, some trembling ones who, from a sense of unworthiness, and of inability to order their speech aright before the Lord, have been sorely tempted to doubt their right to pray, and fear that it is sinful for them to attempt it; we have labored to show that such are the very ones that are the most welcome to approach the awful majesty of God in prayer and supplication. They come not in their own name, but in the all-prevailing name of him who forever liveth to make intercession for them and in them.

Prayer, as a mere duty, is a very dull and unavailing employment, yet it is a duty devolving on all who feel their need of divine favor, because Christ has enjoined it upon them; but when led by the Spirit to the throne of grace, it is a most delightful privilege. Poor, weak and worthless as we are in and of ourselves, yet,

> "Sprinkled with reconciling blood,
> They may approach the throne of God,"

and not be consumed; because the name of Jesus Christ, their Advocate with the Father, is upon them, and he has sealed them with the Holy Spirit of promise. — Eph. i. 13. In prayer we are permitted to hold communion with God, through our High Priest, from over the mercy-seat. The apostle speaks (Eph. vi. 18) of "praying always with all prayer and supplication **in the Spirit," &c; from** which we infer that the apostolic practice of social as well as private prayer is to be perpetuated in the church of God until time shall be no more.

In social prayer, one is mouth for all who are present and qualified by the Spirit to unite in the devotion. If the saints who meet for prayer are, like the primitive saints, all of one heart and one mind, and all are led by the one spirit, there will be no discord nor con-

fusion, and the prayer expressed in words by him who is mouth for all will be equally the prayer of all. In social prayer we use the plural form of the personal pronouns, **our, us,** &c., as taught Matt. vi. 9-13. This is proper, because it is the prayer of all who in their hearts can say, Amen.

We have many instances recorded of the saints meeting for prayer, and the practice should be continued in the church of God. When Herod the king had killed James with a sword, and had imprisoned Peter also, intending also to deliver him unto death, many were gathered together praying: and their prayers were graciously heard and answered. — Acts xii. 1-19. We have many other accounts of the meeting of the primitive saints at places where prayer was wont to be made; and should not the saints of the present age walk in the footsteps of the early Christians.

But in social or public prayers, we should carefully avoid all ostentatious display, or effort to elicit the admiration and praise of men. Be not like those who pray to be heard and admired by men; nor should we use vain repetitions, for that is forbidden. Our words should be few; for God is high in the heavens, and we are on the earth. It is not becoming in ministers, while assaying to lead in public or social prayer, to presume to explain or expound anything to the Lord: he needs no logic or explanation from us, and our prayers are to comprise supplication, intercession, and thanksgiving, under a full conviction that the Lord knoweth all about us, that he searches the hearts and tries the reins of all, and with a solemn consciousness that all things are naked and open to his all-seeing eyes. In our public or social prayers, our wandering thoughts are prone to seek the applause of those who are present, and almost forget that we are professedly addressing the God whose dwelling is in the heavens, and from whose sight the inmost secrets of our heart cannot be concealed. The cruel tempter is ever ready to divert our mind from the awful solemnity of holding communion with the eternal God. How cold and dull and formal are our prayers when thus yielding to the carnal impulse of our fleshly nature and the temptation of the adversary; our pride and vain ambition are either inflated or mortified, as we have succeeded or failed to make a display. One would hardly believe Christians could be troubled in this way; but they are the only class that are really **troubled** on this account. Carnal professors and self-righteous Pharisees feel perfectly satisfied with their prayers if they can secure the applause of men; but those who are taught of God feel and lament the imperfection of their most solemn devotions, for they feel deeply their short-comings; and were it not for the blessed assurance that the Spirit helpeth their infirmities, supplying the ability which they lack, and making intercession for them according to the will of God, they would not dare to take the sacred name of God upon their lips in prayer or praise.

The humblest and most simple expression of desire that comes welling up from a broken and contrite heart, is far better than the most eloquent flow of words that charm the carnal ears of men; for the sacrifice of a broken and contrite spirit God will not despise.

In our secret prayers, when alone in our closet, that is, when the world is shut out from our mind, and there is none but God can hear, and we feel that our devotion is a personal matter between the trembling suppliant and his God, we use the personal pronouns in their singlar form; as, **My** God, why hast thou forsaken **me?** God, be merciful to **me;** hear **me;** deliver **me,** &c. Whether upon our knees, prostrate on the ground, or upon our beds, or even when our hands are engaged in labor, by night or day, when our heart is drawn out to God in the secret aspirations of the heart, we pray with the spirit and with the understanding, even when our lips are sealed in silence. We cannot suppress the secret desire inwrought by the Spirit, and involuntarily arising from the depth of our heart to God as the giver

of every good and perfect gift; and from a deep sense of our own vileness, every ejaculation is presented in the name of Jesus, with a full conviction that we can approach God in no other name.

The apostle Peter reminds us that the end of all things is at hand, and admonishes us therefore to "be sober, and watch unto prayer." — 1 Peter iv. 7. What Jesus our Lord has said unto one, he also says unto all his dear saints, "Watch." "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."

In a careful, vigilant watching, we cannot fail to find abundant incentives to prayer; and if our watching does not have the effect to incline us to pray, it must be that we are in the sad condition of those saints of whom Peter speaks, 1 Peter i. 9, who, having neglected the admonition given in that chapter, are blind, cannot see afar off, and have forgotten that they have been purged from their old sins.

In conclusion of this already lengthy article, we wish to say to those who have been exercised upon the subject of prayer, and who have requested us to write upon this important subject, You cannot be too poor, too needy, or too unworthy to call upon the name of the Lord. It is especially for those of just your description of character that God has provided the new and living way, which he has consecrated for all who, being humbled under his mighty hand, do feel their need of his mercy and grace. It is the poor that he filleth with good things, while the rich he sends empty away.

"Blest are the humble souls that see
Their emptiness and poverty;
Treasures of grace to them are given,
And crowns of joy laid up in heaven."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, January 1, 1879.)

OBITUARIES

MARY COLLISON CHISWELL

Mary Collison Chiswell was born February 17, 1886, and died September 12, 1961, from injuries sustained in a fall. She was a daughter of John A. and Susan Gott Chiswell, and was born in Montgomery County, Maryland. She is survived by one sister, Mrs. Eleanore Bourke, of Frederick, Maryland.

Sister Chiswell united with the New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, in July, 1902, and was baptized by Elder E. V. White. She remained a faithful member for about sixty years. She was quiet and unassuming, yet firm in her convictions concerning the doctrine of grace, which endeared her to all the brethren.

Funeral services were held at Barnesville, Maryland, by the writer, and her body was laid to rest in the Monocacy Cemetery, Beallsville, Maryland, to await the resurrection, when she and all the redeemed will be raised in the likeness of the Saviour.

John D. Wood

DEACON F. B. COLLIER

J. B. (Bud) Collier died December 30, 1961, at his home in New Home Community following a lengthy illness. He was born March 30, 1872, in Weekly County, Tennessee, where he lived his entire life. He served as magistrate of the County for 24 years; and was Deacon and Clerk of Cane Creek Church for many years, being a member for 51 years.

He leaves to mourn his departure, his wife, Sister Pearl Collier; two sons, Hassell and Woodrow Collier, of New Home Community; one daughter, Mrs. Floice Chappell, of Mt. Pelia; one brother, Ruffie Collier, Martin, Tenn.; and five grandchildren, and twelve great grandchildren.

Services were held on January 1, at Doug Murphy Chapel by Elder Herbert Prince, assisted by Elders Grady Brown and O. W. Perkins, in the presence of a large crowd of sorrowing brethren and friends. He was laid away to sleep in the Collier's Cemetery until Jesus comes to gather his loved ones home, to be like him and see him as he is, and sing his praise forever.

I knew Uncle Bud Collier for about forty-three years, and found him to be sound in doctrine, faith and practice, believing in the doctrine of predestination, and salvation by grace through faith unto life everlasting. He was an able defender of the doctrine of God our Saviour, and a meek and lovable man. He filled the office of deacon well, and had no compromise with unsound doctrine. Cane Creek Church has laid away an old and faithful soldier. Brother Collier fought a good fight and kept the faith, and his Captain gave him an honorable discharge.

He will be missed by his brethren and friends, and most of all by dear Sister Collier

and his children. He reared a noble family who are devoted to each other. May God be with Cane Creek Church in abundant mercy, and enable you to fight a good fight of faith, ever looking to Jesus the author and finisher of your faith. And may He reconcile Sister Collier and the children: Brother Collier's passing is your loss but is his eternal gain. I know that when I come back to Cane Creek I will miss him, for I loved him greatly. May we all be given reconciling grace. Written at the request of Sister Collier.

O. W. Perkins

CORNELIUS S. HOFF

Brother Hoff was born November 9, 1877, and departed this life on June 14, 1961, making his stay here in this life eighty-three years and a few months.

He was the son of the late Cornelius and Sarah Jane Seals Hoff. He was married to Bessie L. Taylor on September 26, 1906, who departed this life in 1938. He is survived by one nephew and three nieces.

Brother Hoff was a very highly esteemed citizen of Frenchtown, N. J., where he spent all his life, having conducted a shoe store there for many years. He was Postmaster of Frenchtown from 1930 to 1950, was at one time mayor, and also trustee of the Frenchtown Cemetery Association.

Brother Hoff, who was the last surviving member of the Kingwood Church at Locktown, N. J., was baptized by the late Elder Harold M. Bennett in the year of 1952. He was also a deacon of the Kingwood Church, and though very feeble in his latter days, attended the meetings almost to the time of his death.

Funeral services were held at the Johnson Funeral Home in Frenchtown, N. J., on June 19, 1961, at 2 P. M. by the writer, and he was laid to rest in the Frenchtown Cemetery at Frenchtown, N. J.

May it please the Lord to reconcile all who knew and loved our departed brother is the prayer of the writer.

Elder Arthur R. Warren

ARDELIA BIRD BOOTH

Sister Ardelia Bird Booth was born February 7, 1895, in Putnam County, West Virginia. She was the youngest daughter of the late deacon, Creed M. and Sarah A. Bird. She departed this life January 8, 1960, after a short illness.

Sister Booth was born and reared on a farm and lived in the same vicinity all of her life. In her childhood she was subjected to asthma, and billious attacks, and was ill much of her time, yet as a child she bore her afflictions in a humble spirit of resignation, and without murmuring. She enjoyed attending Church meetings at various places among the Old School Baptist people. At one time during the latter part of her life she confided in the writer that the preaching meant so much more to her than at any other time before in her life. I feel sure that she realized that her time was short here on earth, and yet I am confident her last days were her happiest days, when she rejoiced in the Saviour's love. Her last illness was short, but her suffering was severe. Her death resulted from a heart condition.

She was united in marriage February 4, 1922, to Thomas H. Booth. To this union were born two daughters and one son. The son, Creed, preceded her in death. Left to mourn their loss is her devoted husband, Hurricane, W. Virginia; two daughters, Mrs. Nina Easter, St. Albans, W. Virginia; Mrs. Maxine Salter, Alexandria, La.; three grandchildren; two sisters, Mrs. Harriet Thornton and Mrs. Lelia Edwards; two brothers, Benjamin B. Bird and H. J. Bird; and many nephews and nieces.

Sister Ardelia labored under conviction of sin, many years ago, she was given a sweet hope in the saving blood and righteousness of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as her only Saviour. When the ordinance of baptism had been administered to others, she came at the water's edge, gave a reason of her hope, and humbly asked a home with the Providence Primitive Baptist Church, July 26, 1942, and was baptized the same day into the full fellowship of the church by the unworthy writer. She lived a faithful member until she was called home. Often she and her husband would walk the distance of several miles from their home to the church, winter or summer, foul or fair weather, so great was their love and esteem for the church. She never tired of hearing the gospel of Christ. She was well established in the doctrine, and loved to converse on the things of Jesus. She was my Sister in the flesh and no words can express my joy in the sweet privilege of burying her in baptism. She was of great strength and comfort to me in my feeble ministerial efforts in serving the church as Pastor.

She was a good wife, a kind mother, a good neighbor, a staunch friend. She spent a useful, industrious life, and was respected and loved by all who knew her. She loved to entertain her kindred in Christ in the home, often having preaching service in the home in the evenings

by the brethren.

Our loss in the church, in the home, and in the community we keenly feel, but we grieve not as those who have no hope. We feel that for her to die was gain. In her last hours, she spoke to members of her family at her bedside and assured them that everything was alright, manifestly the sweet resignation to the will of God. She fell asleep in Jesus in the full triumph of a living faith.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Veldon Linn, who was blessed to set forth the doctrine she believed. Her body was laid to rest beneath a mound of flowers in the family cemetery on the old home place.

I have felt my limitations and weakness in this attempt. Many things I would love to say relative to her charity and graces, but for the sake of brevity, I must omit. May God visit us with reconciling grace.

Written by one who loved her as a sister in the flesh and as a sister in Christ.

Elder H. J. Bird

MRS. W. T. CLAYTON

Mrs. W. T. Clayton, widow of Elder W. T. Clayton, was born in Webster County, Kentucky, September 26, 1879. Her maiden name was Genoah Townsend, and was married to Elder Clayton November 22, 1893; and they lived together for over sixty years. Dad was a gifted minister of the Primitive Baptists. He preceded Mother in death five years. Mother gently fell asleep in Jesus May 20, 1960, at her home in Providence, Kentucky. While she was not a member of the church, she gave evidence of her love to the Master. She was in bed a year, and was always patient and kind: she put her trust in God. She was a true and faithful companion to Dad while he lived. She proved that she loved the cause Dad so faithfully served, and entertained many of the Baptists and friends. Everyone who knew her loved her. They were precious, loving parents to their children. Memory brings back scenes of Home Sweet Home of days gone by. We praise and thank the dear Lord for their life.

She is survived by five sons and four daughters: Mrs. D. L. Ball and Mrs. Finis Hinkle, Providence, Ky.; Mrs. S. G. Harralson, Nebo, Ky.; and Mrs. John Fike, Allen Park, Michigan; Wallace, John and R. G. of Providence; Raymond, Dixon, Ky.; and Otis, of Oak Park, Illinois. Also surviving are 20 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren; and a brother, T. M. Townsend, Providence, Ky.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder R. L. Biggs, of Nashville, Tenn., at the Tirza Primitive Baptist Church in the presence of the family and a large crowd of relatives and friends. The many florial tributes testified of the esteem in which she was held. Interment was in the church cemetery by the side of Dad, both to await the call of their Master in the resurrection.

May the dear Lord in whom they trusted, give us comfort.

A daughter,
Mrs. Finis Hinkle

CAPTAIN LEE HANKS OSBORNE

Captain Lee Hanks Osborne, aged 44, U. S. Army, retired, was killed in an automobile accident near Columbus, Ohio, on the night of March 9, 1962.

Captain Osborne had a long and distinguished record in the Armed Forces of our country. During World War II he served as aviation instructor, test pilot and bomber pilot with the Eighth Air Force Unit in the European Theatre of the war. His military record shows that he flew 32 bombing missions over Germany. On one occasion, he brought his plane in, with his pilot dead by his side, and two engines of his plane on fire. His awards and decorations consisted of Air Medal with three oak leaf clusters, the Purple Heart (for wounds received in action), two Bronze Stars, the Distinguished Flying Cross, and several citations for gallantry in action.

Following World War II, he served with the Central Intelligence Agency and Criminal Investigation Division. His assignments included Atomic Energy Project, Albuquerque, New Mexico, agent in charge of C. I. D. field office, Kobe, Japan, and Chief Criminal Investigator New York Port of Embarkation, Brooklyn, New York. He also served as Criminal Investigator for the U. S. Army, Heidelberg, Germany.

After his retirement to civilian life, he was Supervisor, Training Institute of Central Ohio, which position he held at the time of his death.

Early in life, Lee received a hope in his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and united with the St. Louisville Primitive Baptist Church, near Newark, Ohio, being baptized by his father, Elder T. W. Osborne.

Amid the dangers and carnage of war, he was sustained by an unfaltering trust in an allwise and omnipotent God, and could say with David, "Though war should arise against me, even then will I be confident. For in the day of trouble he will keep me secretly in his pavilion: In the covert of his tabernacle will he hide me." (Psalm 27:3, 5)

The deceased is survived by his wife, Mrs. Lois Imogene Osborne, one daughter, Kathy, his father and mother Elder T. W. and Rosa Osborne, three brothers, William, of California, Elder Claude Osborne, of Huntington, West Virginia, and Samuel, U. S. Navy. Two sisters, Mrs. Ella Applegarth and Mrs. Nora Newkirk

of California.

His funeral services were held at the Norris Funeral Home, Grove City, Ohio, Monday, March 12, 1962, where he was buried with full military honors. Elder Eldon A. Huchison (Colonel, U. S. Army, retired), conducting the funeral service. That which was mortal was laid to rest beneath a mound of flowers to await the reveille of the resurrection, when the trumpet shall sound and those who sleep in Jesus shall come forth from the grave, changed and made like unto the glorious body of our risen Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; according to the mighty working of His power whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself.

Eldon A. Huchison

JESSE CLAY THORNTON

Jesse Clay Thornton was born January 12, 1911, in Putnam County, W. Va., the son of T. J. and Rosa (Oxley) Thornton; and departed this life July 12, 1961, at the age of 50 years and 6 months, the victim of a car collision. He was united in marriage March 4, 1934, to Rosetta Edwards; and to this union five daughters and two sons were born. One son and one daughter died in infancy. Surviving are his widow; four daughters: Mrs. Janet Chapman, Mrs. Irene Goff, Mrs. Betty Lipscomb, and Miss Brenda Thornton; one son, Gregory Thornton. Surviving also are three brothers, Fleet, Elwood, and Everett Thornton; three half-brothers, Leonard, Buford, and Howard Thornton; two sisters, Mrs. Elva Sloan, and Mrs. Leva Byrnside; two half-sisters, Mrs. Edith Johnson, and Mrs. Catherine Coyner; and his stepmother, Mrs. Harriet Thornton.

Jesse was indeed a friend to the Primitive Baptist cause. He never united with the church because of his felt sense of unworthiness. He was deeply convicted of sin, and was given a good hope through grace in the cleansing blood and imputed righteousness of Jesus. Many times through the years he visited me in my home to talk of the redeeming pity and power of Jesus to save the chief of sinners. Several times he confessed to me his desire for a home in the church, but was never given strength and courage to come, though he was faithful in his attendance of the church meetings. He was an honest, upright, and conscientious man in all his dealings with his fellow man; a man of humble, unassuming manner, and a gracious husband and father, and a true neighbor. He will be greatly missed by all, in the vicinity and in the church, for truly in spirit and feeling he was one with us.

Elder Veldon Linn was called to conduct the funeral, and was blessed to speak to the consolation of the bereaved family and friends. He was laid to rest in hope of that blessed immortality. Our confidence is that he fell asleep in Jesus, therefore our grief is softened. May God visit reconciling grace.

Submitted by one who loved him,
H. J. Bird

DEACON WALTER L. BIRD

Our dear brother in Christ was born January 8, 1874, and departed this life November 8, 1961. He was the oldest son of the late Joseph H. and Elizabeth (Wiley) Bird; and was united in marriage November 11, 1897, to Cordelia Bell Plumbley. To this union two sons and two daughters were born, who survive: Roy Bird and Ezra Bird, Hurricane, W. Va.; Mrs. Verland Smith, Canada, Ky., and Mrs. Bernard Oxley, Hurricane, W. Va. Surviving also are several grandchildren and great grandchildren, and three brothers: J. Addison Bird and John Bird, Hurricane, W. Va., and Andy J. Bird, Culloden, W. Va.; two sisters: Mrs. Stella Johnson, Hurricane, W. Va., and Mrs. Virgie Pennington, Huntington, W. Va.

Brother Bird united with Providence Primitive Baptist Church November 26, 1920, and was baptized by the late Elder W. I. Wade, and was soon ordained a deacon. He served in a spirit of meekness and humility until age and infirmity hindered him from attending the meetings. He also served for a number of years as church trustee. His convictions were deep, and his faithfulness marked: he loved the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God, and had no confidence in the arm of the flesh. He delighted in entertaining the kindred in Christ in his home. His health had been failing for several years, and his final illness was complicated by pneumonia, and the end came quietly and peacefully.

Brother Bird was quiet in disposition, not given to foolish conversation. He was honest and upright, a good provider, a kind husband and father. His was an industrious life, a farmer, a carpenter, and for some years held a position with the United Gas Fuel Company. We shall miss Brother Bird in the church and community for a long time to come, but we feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted in the Providence Church house before a large concourse of brethren, relatives, and friends, by the unworthy writer. I used for a text a portion of the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians, speaking upon the blessed doctrine and hope of the resurrection of the dead. His mortal remains were laid beside his wife in the family cemetery, to await the final resurrection.

May God bless with the healing balm of his presence. Written by request.

H. J. Bird

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 130 DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1962 NO. 7

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/62
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

MY EXPERIENCE

The following was composed about 35 years ago, many years before I united with the church, when all I could hear from most people was, "You must accept it." — meaning the gospel. And since that was all they preached, and sinners accepting it is what saved them; and, as whatever you trust for your salvation is your God, it seemed that "Accept It", was the proper name for the God of these people. And, since he is unable to save by himself, I thought it proper to add "poor and little", thus making his name "Poor Little God Accept It".

"Poor Little God Accept It",
How frail and faint you are;
You cannot save from Satan
Nor hear us from afar;
For, with both men and money
To aid you in the task,
You're far too weak and puny
To grant what we would ask.

O, once in bitter anguish
I to that God did cry:
"I am a wretched sinner,
Pray save me or I die."
Thus answered God Accept It,
"I've done all I can do,
But Sunday Schools and preachers
Can do a lot for you."

I went to those professors:
Related my sad case;
Told them I was a sinner,
The worst of all the race.
They said, "You must accept it,
And us much money pay."
This is, they did assure me,
The strait and narrow way.

I answered thus his servants,
"You do not understand:
I am a ruined sinner —
The vilest in the land.
I am of sinful nature,
Good deeds I cannot do.
In works I'm short of stature,
So aid I seek from you."

"Then how can I accept it
When I am vile within?
Can light be loved by darkness,
Or righteousness by sin?
Though shaped in this condition,
Of late I found it out;
And if you cannot help me,
I'm lost beyond a doubt."

"Too long you have rejected,"
Their God did answer me,
"The overtures of mercy,
So vengeance you must see;
Too long you have resisted:
The spirit's taken flight;
And you who have desisted
Must dwell in endless night."

"Before your heart was hardened,
While in your tender years,
You could have then 'accepted'
And now been free from fears.
I only save such sinners
As those who give me aid;
And, if you cannot accept it,
You're lost, I am afraid."

I turned from "God Accept It" —
How bitter was my soul!
I cried, "No God can save me,
No God can make me whole."
'Twas then a voice answered,
"'Tis I, be not afraid;
Since false Christs failed to save thee
I now will give thee aid."

"I am the same Lord Jesus
That saved the rebel Paul,
Who, like thee, was a sinner
The chief among them all.
And I have all the power
In heaven, earth and hell:
'Twas given me to save thee —
I nothing have to sell."

"A heart of flesh I'll give you:
Your stony heart take away,
You'll then delight to serve me:
Delight to sing and pray.
I loved thee e'er the mountains
And valleys took their form.
Grace then was stored within me,
To save thee from all harm."

"And now I give thee knowledge
That thou wast saved from sin,
When on the cross I suffered
Death at the hands of men."
'Twas then my burden left me,
My joy no tongue can tell:
I shouted loud his praises:
He saved my soul from Hell.

And now I tell to others
Who are oppressed by sin:
The Lord of hosts will save thee,
Come now and enter in.
O, how it sorely grieves me
To see the nations trust
In "Little God Accept It" —
A God of greed and lust.

To free from "God Accept It"
I dedicate my days,
Deluded souls that serve him
And trust his works and ways.
He layeth heavy burdens
On shoulders drooping low,
And exacts much money
From them who to him go.

But blessed, blessed Jesus,
My Saviour, Husband, Friend,
'Twas thou alone who saved me:
I'll trust thee to the end.
And then through endless ages
With praise I will thee crown:
When "Little God Accept It"
Forever is cast down.

C. B. Britt
R. F. D., Box 282
ElDorado, Ark.

"THUS FAR MY GOD HAS LED ME ON"

Delmar, Delaware

Dear Cousin and Sister in Christ:

Early one morning this week, your name came into my mind, with the same feeling I had when the name of Virgie Bennett came to my mind. I felt then I must write a letter especially for her. This I did, and the letter was published in the *Signs,* as you no doubt remember.

As a basis for what I may write, I will direct your mind to Hymn 574 in the Durand and Lester hymnal. I am inclined to the belief that this hymn has a special application to you, and part of the hymn I feel applies to myself also. Let us notice the first verse:

"Thus far my God has led me on,
Thus far his power prolongs my days.
And every evening shall make known
Some fresh memorial of His grace."

Do you not feel your days have been prolonged or extended? You have outlived all of your immediate family. You have passed the seventy to ninety years. Does this not prove your days have been prolonged?

I have lived longer than any of my immediate family. I have passed the seventy years by seventeen. If I remain until the 25th of this month, I will be 87. We will remain on the earth until the appointed time comes for the curtain to be turned aside, then we will not have to look through a glass darkly, but face to face.

In Revelation it is written, "Every eye shall see Him, and they that pierced Him shall wail because of Him." They that pierced Him refers to Roman soldiers, but our sins were the cause of his being pierced, which is almost saying we did it.

The first line in Verse 2 seems to apply especially to me. "Much of my time has run to waste." This is the way I feel. I have wasted my life. But if such men as Isaac Watts felt their lives were wasted, I cannot expect to be above them, but much lower than them. But I had rather feel this way than to feel like some I know of, who believe there is a great reward awaiting them for the number of souls they believe they have saved. So I hear them sing sometimes, "We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves." If they would use "He" instead of "we," it would sound better. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bring-

ing *his* sheaves with him."

I must digress from the main subject for a little while and present a few thoughts on this sixth verse of the 126th Psalm. "He that goeth and weepeth." Let us notice these words carefully. These words apply to Christ. At his first advent, he went forth weeping. He wept over Jerusalem, knowing that the city would soon be destroyed, and that not one stone in the temple would remain in place. They would all be thrown down. He wept at the grave of Lazarus. "Jesus wept." Shortest verse in the Bible. "He went forth weeping." How wonderfully these words apply to a sinner saved by grace.

There is a difference, however, the difference being Jesus did not weep for His sin, because He was sinless. But He wept for our sins, if so be we are embraced in the everlasting covenant of redemption. He wept in silence many times because of our sins. We went forth weeping. But one day, suddenly, our burden was gone, and instantly we began to rejoice. The birds never sang so beautifully before; the sun never shone so beautifully, all nature was praising the great Creator. We then could join Wesley and sing:

"'Twas a heaven below
The redeemer to know,
And the angels could do nothing more
Than to fall at his feet
And the story repeat,
And the lover of sinners adore."

"And the wind bloweth where it listeth; and thou heareth the sound thereof. But can'st not tell from whence it cometh, or whither it goeth. So is everyone that is born of the spirit." This is the new birth. This is when we receive a hope. But this happy frame of mind doesn't last long with us; we are soon in doubt again. The conflict with the flesh and Satan just begins.

Now a thought about the sowing of precious seed. Jesus began to sow precious seed in His Sermon on the Mount. He fed them (the disciples) with the finest of the wheat. "He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat." (Psalm 147:14) The word "finest" we understand to mean the most perfect. There are no half grains or stunted in development, but whole perfect grains.

As I am sure you are familiar with this Sermon on the Mount, I will only notice one verse, in Chapter 7, Verse 12: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets."

Yes, this was the rule or doctrine promulgated by Moses and all the prophets. Solomon prayed for wisdom that he might know how to rule over the people of Israel well, and in righteousness. So we in this day should have the same desire as did Solomon. We cannot, we must not, be partial in our judgment. If we feel to judge another in any matter, let us be sure there is no mote in our own eyes, large enough to blind us so that we might make a mistake in judging another. We must always remember that "with what judgment we judge, we shall be judged." Therefore when we think about bringing a charge against another, let us first turn to the Bible to see if the Bible will sustain us in this charge. This is important.

We have been considering the sowing of the precious seed, now let us notice the crop produced by the sowing of these seed. In nature, these seed must be covered up with soil. The sun and rain on this soil cause the seed to germinate, and a body is started from the seeds, and forces its way through the soil, and this body becomes visible. It can be seen. But the fallow ground must be plowed or broken up before the seed can be sown. In like manner the heart of men and women must be first broken up, and prepared by the Holy Spirit, before the good seed sown can take root . . .

Now back to the hymn. I will quote Verse 4:

"In vain the sons of earth or hell
Tell me a thousand things.
My God in safety makes me dwell
Beneath the shadow of his wings."

These words bring to mind a hymn written by the late James B. Durand:

"O God of love, how infinite and holy,
How great in wisdom and in power thou art!
And yet doth make thy dwelling with the lowly
And him who is of meek and contrite heart.

"Under the shadow of Thy wing reposing,
I feel that all is best which come to me;
I see Thy circling arms my way enclosing,
And feel that even my life is hid with Thee."

Read both of his hymns on Page 251. Notice in Verse one of Hymn 618, he says the Lord knoweth the number of his heart throbs. This dear one was writing these two hymns, but did not know he was writing to some who would be alive in the year of 1961. But the Lord knew it, and saw to it that the hymns would be kept until this time, for the comfort of all for whom they were intended.

This dear brother was received into the everlasting Kingdom of Christ as he told those around him just a little while before he passed away. And now he is resting from all his suffering and labor, and his works do follow him. These two hymns are inspiring.

There is another hymn which often comes to mind. It is Hymn 323 in the D and L hymnal. I will quote two verses:

"Stand up my soul, shake off thy fears
And gird the gospel armor on.
March to the gates of endless joy
Where thy great captain Saviour's gone.

"Hell and thy sins resist thy course,
But hell and sin are vanquished foes;
Thy Jesus nailed them to the cross,
And sung the triumph when he rose."

The most impressive words in this hymn are, "Hell and thy sins resist thy course." Yes, I certainly have something in common with these words. Not one time, but many times I have been in the lowest hell where David was on one occasion, and no doubt on many occasions. When we are in the lowest hell, we cannot get any lower. But the Lord brought David up out of that horrible pit, and in another place he says, "By thee have I run through a troop, and by my God have I leaped over a wall."

And again he writes: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures," etc. Notice the Lord does all this. I feel I know a little at least about deliverances. But as to being cast into the lowest hell because of sin, I can fully join in with him. Yes, hell and my sins have resisted my course, but the power of hell and my sins have been put to rout, and I keep on writing, and talk a little sometimes.

If we would know why we have to be cast down and severely tempted at times, the answer will be found in 2nd Corinthians 12:7. The answer: "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure."

We today want this thorn in the flesh and the messenger of Satan to depart from us. If this was done, what do you think the result would be? I think we would become puffed up, and might descend as low as did the Pharisees mentioned in Isaiah 6:55, "Which say, stand by thyself, come not near me; for I am holier than thou. These are a smoke in my nose, and a fire that burneth all the day."

I well remember a few years ago, when I felt I was sinking down never to rise again, an inward voice, or I should say a still small voice, said, "Read Isaiah 66:2." At that time I thought there were only 65 chapters in Isaiah. So. I thought, this is Satan. He knows there are only 65 chapters, and when I look for Chapter 66 and don't find it, he will laugh at me.

But I could not erase these thoughts from my mind, so I finally opened the Bible and to my great surprise there were 66 chapters. Then I read verse 2,

and it follows: "For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." I was strengthened.

"When I was sinking down,
Christ laid aside his crown
For my soul."

Read Hymn 604 in the D & L Hymnal. I close repeating the words in the last line of verse 2, Hymn 574: "He gives me strength for days to come."

In hope,
A. T. Benson

To: Sister Tomlinson
Salisbury, Md.

San Juan, Texas
June 2, 1959

I now live in San Juan, Texas, just a few miles from Old Mexico. I will attempt to pen a few lines about my travels and call to the ministry, if indeed I have been called. I was born in the state of Mississippi July 24, 1871. Father moved to Texas in 1880, when I was nine years of age. Little did I think of my future welfare at this time. But when I was 14 years of age I began to study more about my future. We went to these modern meetings, but I saw nothing in them. It was at this time that something happened to me, I was in a terrible fix. I tried in my weak way to ask the good Lord to be merciful to an unworthy wretch like me.

On July 18, 1885, I saw the brightest light I ever saw in my life. It was no common light for it shined so brightly; and at this time I loved everybody; in fact, I loved everything. I thought I would go and tell my dear mother, but before I could get to her, something said, "Hold on, now, you might be mistaken." So I did not tell mother, but I think she saw a change in me. I learned to play the violin and at times while I was playing, this same scene would come back upon me. I could not get rid of it. I continued off and on in this position and at the same time attending church and Sunday School even though I did not enjoy what I heard. It all seemed so foolish to me. I had heard Old Baptists preach, but it was not until I reached the point where something had to be done, that I heard old Elder Hosier preach. This time it struck a responsive cord with me. I believed it was the truth. I started going to the Primitive Baptist Church regularly with mother, and they seemed so good I wanted to be like them. But I thought I never could be as good as I saw them, but if I could only be just a little one. The impression was so great that finally I offered myself, and on what little I told them they took me in and the dear old pastor baptized me the next day, being Sunday.

I was married shortly afterwards at the age of 22. During these times I felt to be the happiest person living and I thought all my troubles over but instead they were just beginning. I could not sleep, my appetite failed and I thought surely I was going to die; and I guess I did. My wife would ask me what was wrong with me, and I would tell nothing — tell her a falsehood; and dear children, I have told more lies about this preaching than all other things put together. I continued on in this condition until around 1900. My dear old pastor would ask me if I felt like I wanted to talk some. I told him if I could tell it like he did, I wouldn't mind. It was in this same year that I made my first attempt and, dear children, my first text, if indeed I had one, was the language of David: "What have I now done, is there not a cause?" The house was full and when I quit, the people were shedding tears, they felt so sorry for me. I said I would never do that again but in thirty days from that time I was back in the stand again. They soon liberated me against my will. I walked 18 miles to meetings and my feet would be blistered. They ordained me against my will. I have gone through heat, cold, rain, and shine to get to my appointment, leaving my wife and chil-

dren at home to carry on with making the crop. There were many times when I didn't see how I could go but my wife would sell some chickens to pay my way. I decided to quit and moved to the plains of north Texas to get away from it all, but we found the same God there. This left me completely broke, nothing but wife and children. I asked, "How long, Lord, just how long?"

My dear brethren and friends, we have had many ups and downs but so far the Lord has made a way for my escape. If indeed we were called to preach the goodness and mercy of a gracious God, we have said in our thoughts, we will never preach; no, the Lord can kill but He can not make us preach. We read in the Good Book that the dumb beast spoke with man's voice. Well, if God can make a beast speak, He can make a poor mortal man speak. Jonah decided he would not preach, but my children, the man was made willing. There is nothing like the joy and the comfort when the light shines within and gives us poor mortals a small bit of His love.

I attended a large association in Alabama many years ago. They put me up first on Sunday. I told them I would give a large Texas pony for someone to take my place; but they told me after a while that I said I wouldn't take 40 ponies for my place. It seems at times I am given to meditate on the far beyond where our dear Savior has gone to prepare a place for His dear children. He redeemed them from under the curse of the law; yes, He paid all that was against His bride. Yes, His dear Father gave her to Him before the foundation of the world. She is His by choice and He purchased her with that precious blood. Oh, but if this poor worm can be one of that number when Jesus comes to claim His own and take them home to glory.

I still try to preach, and I have tried to quit but there is no discharge in this war. Dear ones, I have never been satisfied with my preaching. It seemed if I could preach some like my dear brethren, I would be more satisfied. No, dear ones, I do not want their gift. I have had as many as four churches to serve, but I feel that I have only hinted at it. I still try to preach sometimes having to sit down while preaching. I lost my dear companion a year ago and it is so lonely by myself, yet it won't be long till we will quit the walks of life. The dear Lord has been wonderful to poor unworthy me, and I'm still here for some purpose unknown to me but well known to the Giver of all good gifts.

"Sometimes I go to meeting and wished I'd stayed at home;
And then I'd find a blessing and then I'm glad I come.
Sometimes I read my Bible and it is a sealed book;
And sometimes I find a blessing wherever I do look."

Dear ones, if I could think to think before I did think, I would be better in one way. When I want to be a better man then evil is continually before me. "Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!" Dear children, it doesn't seem to me that it will be long now until the angel will declare time is no more. I am not a prophet nor the son of a prophet, but it does seem that the end is drawing to a close. We know God declared the end from the beginning. It is all finished. Jesus said so when He was hanging on the cross. Yes He has saved all His people and the Holy Spirit makes it known. Yes, Jesus paid it all. You and I could not pay one farthing, our best deeds can not get us anywhere. This is just a little portion of my travels. I'm so weak and poor but I hope I love the brethren.

Elder J. B. Reid

(See obituary this issue — Ed.)

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2 PETER 1:1-8

Spearsville, La.
P. O. Box 625

Dear Brethren:

In response to the request in the May

issue of the Signs, I am undertaking to comply with the request that someone write on 2 Peter 1:1-8. Though I feel unworthy and unprofitable, for some reason I am impressed, the Lord willing, to write on this sacred and very comforting portion of Scripture; and I hope that I may be blessed of the Lord to comfort His people, and all to the praise and glory of His precious name.

Now the first verse: "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Now I feel that this verse is a complete introduction as to whom the Apostle Peter was, and that his entire position, calling and all, is of the Lord Jesus Christ. This introduction gives no indication that Peter had become an Apostle by and through his own wisdom, learning, or effort, nor by the teaching of any man or institution, but by and of Jesus Christ himself.

This verse also very clearly indicates to whom Peter is writing: It is not to the world, or all of Adam's race, but only to them who have obtained like precious faith with us — speaking of the Apostles and himself. So the complete apostolic teachings and writings are just to those who have obtained this like precious faith, and they are brought into this faith, wisdom, and righteousness, by and through Jesus Christ himself; who is the way, the truth, and the life: the Redeemer and Saviour.

To me it is very plainly taught as to whom the inspired writings are written. This same apostle in his introduction of his first epistle says, "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia." And then in the next verse he makes it plain who these scattered strangers are: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."

So, dear reader, regardless of the teachings of worldly wisdom that asserts itself contrary to Bible teaching, there can be no interpretation other than what the Apostles, the Prophets, and Jesus Christ himself have taught: That the inspired teachings of the Bible are to the Elect People of God; and that they are strangers to the world, and are scattered among all nations.

These things are not broadcast to everybody, as most people teach and advocate, but they are only to those who are designated as strangers scattered abroad; and these are the ones to whom Peter is writing, they having obtained like precious faith with the Apostles and disciples. And it is very clearly set forth from what source these have obtained this precious faith: Through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Not from any other source than through the revelation of Jesus Christ; As in the case of Paul, to whom this knowledge was revealed by the light from Heaven, and Christ spoke to him. This is how Paul obtained like precious faith. (Acts 9th chapter)

Now the second verse: "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord." I feel that the grace and peace of Almighty God, which Peter speaks of here, is extensively and gloriously multiplied unto each and every one who have obtained like precious faith with us. And the next verse shows clearly how and from what source this gracious multiplication of grace and peace comes to the Lord's people: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." So then, all things which pertain to life and godliness are gifts of God through Christ Jesus our Lord.

One might be ready to ask what these things are which pertain to life and godliness. I feel that there isn't sufficient time or opportunity for any poor mortal to answer, except to point out that the text says, **All things that pertain to life and godliness.** Dear humble children of God, God, Christ, and the Holy Ghost are the givers of all such

things which pertain to life and godliness. None of it comes from any other source: it is a gracious, merciful and abundant gift. You do nothing of yourself to obtain it: It is clearly stated that it is a Gift; and it is said to be not of works lest any man should boast. So it being alone the gift of God, no man has any right to boast of any of it.

It is stated also in this verse that all this comes through the knowledge of him (Christ) that hath called us to glory and virtue. So the gift, calling, and multiplication of grace and peace, all things which pertain unto life and godliness, are by the divine power of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. O dear reader, do you not hope that you are included with those who have obtained like precious faith with the apostles and children of God, who receive all things that pertain to life and godliness? What else do God's children need besides these wonderful gifts and calling of God our Saviour? I say they need nothing else. The Lord says he will supply all our need; and Paul was told, "My grace is sufficient for thee . . ."

4th verse: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." So, through the gifts and calling, salvation, and merciful provisions, God's humble little ones have escaped all these things, and are free from just condemnation; which all of us are justly due, except through the provisions of the divine power of God in all his gracious gifts to his people. Among these gifts we find: "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

5th verse: "And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge." Now this admonition and acknowledgement of adding to faith virtue, and all these things, it is done through the same divine power of Christ, and all pertains to life and godliness. The 3rd verse has acknowledged and announced the gracious source of all these things as being a gift of Christ by his divine power. No wonder he announced, grace and peace be multiplied! Paul in Romans 8:28, records the very precious and comforting language: "And we know that all things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." With all things working together for good of God's people, what can be against them? "If God be for us, who can be against us?" With the gift by his divine power of all things which pertain to life and godliness, what else is needed?

Regarding the admonition the apostle Peter sets forth of adding virtue to faith; and to virtue knowledge; to knowledge temperance; to temperance patience; to patience godliness; to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. Some might be ready to ask, how can God's humble children do all these things? Well, I think the teaching of the Bible is so complete that there can be no doubt; for Jesus said, "For without me ye can do nothing." (John 15:5) Then Jesus is with them, and is leading and keeping them, and upholding them, and working in them both the will and the do of his good pleasure. (Phil. 2:13) Paul has said, "I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me." Now Paul could not do the things he would, and said the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." (Gal. 5:17)

In Ephesians 2:10, Paul says, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Now all the good works which God ordained for his people to walk in, they will and do walk therein by the light and leadership of the Spirit; and all these good works which God has ordained them to walk in, pertain to life and godliness; and by the divine power of Christ they are led, and given

to walk in them.

Now dear reader, belief, faith, repentance, and obedience are all pertaining to life and godliness, and they are all gifts of God; and a godly walk and conversation in God's children pertains to life and godliness, and are given by the divine power of God through Christ Jesus our Lord, and they are given and led to walk in them, because they are ordained to walk in these good works. David said, "The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord, and he upholdeth him with his hand." It is also written that God worketh all things after the counsel of his will.

I feel I should bring this to a close, lest I make it too lengthy. Let us praise and glorify the blessed God and Saviour, who is, and was, and shall be the Almighty Sovereign; who upholds all worlds by his power, and does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say what doeth thou.

May the Lord bless each and every one who are brought down from high exaltation of worldly wisdom, and made to fall at the rich throne of grace and beg as the poor publican, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." May the Lord keep us in the way, even the strait and narrow way, which leadeth to life everlasting.

Soon the blessed Lord is to come the second time without sin unto salvation, and carry his little ones home to himself, where there will be no more sin, sickness, trouble, pain, nor death, but where there will be peace, love, joy, and everlasting praise, honour, and glory to His Holy Name forevermore. The heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, shall worship and praise him forever.

Your very unworthy brother in hope of deliverance and salvation through Jesus Christ.

Elder R. W. Rhodes

LOVE

Much has been written about love, for there are many different kinds of love. There is love for one's country; the love between a husband and wife; the love of a mother for her child, and etc. All these could be viewed in their own light. Each one could be shown to have intrinsic values, and time would not be wasted writing about them, but to write about the love that moved God to elect a number that we cannot number, is the greatest love. I have heard it said, if a man living from the beginning of time and writing upon this subject, he could have only told a very little of it. Even if he had written continually, who would have lived long enough to read all of it? But from the beginning of time there has been a manifestation of it to the children of men. In the Old Testament we find, there was such a sweet manifestation of family love, that people now-a-days have almost no trace of. They don't find the pleasure of each other's company they used to. Yes, there are a few fleeting moments displayed of it, but where is that family love that used to be in years gone by? What has taken it's place, but the cold entertainments of this frivilous world? How soon forgotten are these light pleasures!

Of old the Lord loved Israel, although they were few in number. It would have seemed to us that he would have chosen a large number to have given so great a love to. We find that this love was an everlasting love. That it had no beginning and no ending. Israel, being a type of the church, shows that the church was formed in the mind of God before the world was. We find Christ willing to purchase it with his precious blood, and the Holy Spirit willing to indwell every believer. A love like that truly passes understanding; and yet at times it glows so bright in the heart of a child of God, they could wish to be away. I will say there is a longing in every believer's heart at times to see the One who loves them so much to give his life for them.

Everlasting love is also a timeless

love. How we would like to explain this love so we and others could fully understand it. This alone would banish a lot of fears which fill the finite mind. It's a sort of balm that heals all wounds. In sorrow we search for this balm; but lost in grief, we feel like Hagar of old out in the desert, — there's no water in sight. The sun bears down, and the body craves for water; and the desire is so consuming that nothing else seems important. Now notice though, that the spring, or well was close by, but Hagar didn't know it. In her misery and grief she began to talk to God. All this reminds us to go to him with every problem, however small it may be. Water is more satisfying than food; for water is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. Sometime, though, in blind confusion, we seek other means to comfort us. Afterwards, we're willing to acknowledge our folly. Sit down and ponder all the refreshing springs along the desert road. The blessed church holds wells of cooling refreshing water; the Scriptures are filled with golden promises for the redeemed along the way. In one place it says, "Lay hold on eternal life." That is, seek those things above where Christ is, and not things of the earth. Time itself is sweeping us on fast to our eternal home.

I'm inclined to think we look more to this side than to the other. It is well to state here and now, we are only overnight visitors in a far country. Lots of people would like to think otherwise; but try as they will, they can't twist the scriptures to suit themselves. I think many times of the Jews who wanted an earthly kingdom instead of a heavenly one. When they found that Christ came to establish a kingdom not of this world, they soon lost interest in it. We, of the church, see that it was mere folly to do so, but many in our day are doing the same thing. They would, if they could, patch up this old decaying world, and stay on a while longer; but the very though of it is inconsistent with Scripture. We build our hopes on things eternal, and not on time which soon will pass away. Our being embraced in the covenant of grace secures everything needed. All things needed to make the journey satisfactory is included. I like to think that it is so. I know there are lots of people today worrying about these needed things. Also, they are worried about the blessed covenant of grace being incomplete without their help in the matter. All these apprehensions only confuse the mind.

Again, could you imagine a world without love? It would be horrible to conceive. It would be worse than any of the worst prisons we could think of. It would be the survival of the fittest; and the others would be at the hopeless mercy of those human devils. We've heard of some of the awful things that happened in war-time that are almost beyond the imagination.

I heard of a man dying of an incurable disease in a foreign prison. What an awful outlook for this man! dying there with not the slightest expression of love. He could only look to the end of his life here with a degree of satisfaction; but one day a guard showed a little compassion for him. What a change it made in this man's life! It caused his mind to dwell on the love of Christ for the elect; that was as far as this man had somewhere, sometime heard of it. It brought a bright glow to his heart, and he cried out to God for help in his awful condition. For sometime he seemed to be left in despair; but not for too long. It came to him that somewhere love is expressed in its fullest, and in his troubled mind he tried to figure where. It could not be here, for only a little light shines here and there. It surely must be in another world. As he thought of a world where there was no hate, no malice of any kind, then it must be Heaven where Christ is. A feeling of happiness seemed to overflow his very being; and he knew it was a working of grace. What a great thing for one who had nothing

but a cold bare prison floor to sleep on.

All this reminds us of the Apostle Paul, who's prison terms must have been in a place something like this man's. No wonder he could say, "I have a desire to depart, to be with Christ which is far better." Imagine leaving a dark dungeon cell for the courts of Glory!

Love was displayed in its reality most at the cross. Even amidst such hatred and malice, it glowed like a beacon light. This was the hour to display a love so great that it cannot be told: a love that transcends time, and finds its fullest expression in the ages to come.

Not one of the elect shall ever wander beyond the boundries of this love. I feel as the Lord hung on the cross, all the elect came before him, even as a mother knows and loves all her children. Now let us try, in our weak way, to picture that love. I say, weak, for we can only in a small way, get some glimpse of it. It was not a new love; it was not what some would call an old love patched up. Of course it was old, being from everlasting to everlasting. We could say it was love in all its brightness, and it is ever the same, yesterday, today, and forever. We could also call it an enclosed love, a hidden love. I feel that this needs to be explained, for some might not understand it. This love is bound up in the hearts of the elect, and not for the world. We find our Lord saying in the 17th chapter of John, "I pray for them and not for the world.".

Have you ever sometimes in the darkness of the night, felt a sort of loneliness, and began to seek to find an answer to it? For a moment you become a little bit bewildered; then a portion of Scripture will come to you with such an assurance of the love of Christ, that it seems to overflow your soul, and you know all is well. Its like a child reaching out for mother in the darkness: as long as mother is there no harm will come. I love to think of the Scripture where it says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness I have drawn thee." This world with all its splendor, all its vain riches, will some day die without that love. It will never have the treasure of a memory of it. The elect who are in possession of it now, will enjoy it forever with the Lord.

In hope of a better world,

Myrtle Cross
429 E. Chevy Chase Drive
Glendale 5, Calif.

LETTER TO SISTER DeHART

R. F. D. 1
Titusville, N. J.

Dear Sister DeHart:

. . . We missed you last Sunday, but we had a good meeting. Elder Warren preached so grandly and comfortingly from Isaiah 40:1, 2: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortingly unto Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

This text was particularly precious to me because other able ministers have stood there before, and used the same text, when the meetings were well attended with many dear ones I see no more. But He who made our meetings at Hopewell Church so good and pleasant then, has not wholly deserted us, but His gracious Spirit is still in our midst as He was Sunday.

May your health and strength continue to improve, and your sweet self ever be precious in the eyes of your dear Redeemer; and may He spare you many years to come, that you may proclaim His glorious truth to the comfort of your children. And may the best and choicest of heaven's unnumbered blessings attend you today and always, is my prayer. Kindest remembrance to your family.

In sisterly love,
Mary Hellings

THE TRAIN THAT FILLED THE TEMPLE

"In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up and his train filled the temple." (Isaiah 6:1)

Many years ago I dreamed of seeing the train that filled the temple. My dream seemed too fantastic to tell, for I had not read the above Scriptures. A few years later I heard Elder W. C. King use it for his text, and it was very comforting to know that it had been recorded back in the days of Isaiah.

As I grow older, my dreams seem to grow more precious. Yet, I am so unworthy of the beautiful things I hope my Lord has shown me in dreams and visions that sometimes I am fearful that I may use imagination for revelation.

It was the thought left by a dear uncle of mine that refreshed my mind of this dream. His name was not recorded on the books that are kept by men, but I have a blessed hope that it is recorded on the Lamb's Book of Life; and I believe he was baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire that cleanses the Heart.

Elisha Apple was at death's door, and his room was filled with loved ones. It was a cold, dreary day, and no one was outside when he looked through the window and said, "They are all going home, and I am going next." I believe he too saw the train that was filling the temple.

We find in Joel 2:28 — "Your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions." I believe this young man is the spiritual man that sees the train which fills the temple . . . We learn obedience by the things we suffer; therefore, the Lord's children are taught in a special school that the world knows nothing about. David said, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." We all fear the rod, for no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous. Nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby, so we hope to be a part of the train by the grace of God.

It is not in my power to take natural things and show you spiritual things, but I think of a train as an object whose tracks have been laid; and it follows the course that is laid out before it just as we as human beings also do. This train is a certain number of units fastened together and moved by a great power, so are the elect family a certain number of units fastened together by a God given faith that is the substance of our hope and moved by the great power of our heavenly Father. (Corinthians 4:13) "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak."

I dreamed of seeing this train not as a natural train but as something that I cannot find words to explain. It crossed a wide and swift flowing river of clear water, which calls my attention to the river that John saw. (Revelations 22:1) "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." I believe the clear water I saw was the spiritual water of life that is so swiftly passing onward, for man that is born of woman is but a few days and full of trouble.

The train I saw crossed over on no visible support. This to me is hope, the support of our faith, which is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. We know that no man can cross this river of life over into heaven and immortal glory except through faith supported by the pillar of hope; for faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. Through faith we understand that the worlds were formed by the word of God so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. Without hope, there is no support of our faith.

I saw this train flowing into a great temple with a beautiful golden door.

Everyone in the temple was clothed in pure white, and I could tell no male or female. (Revelations 11:19) "And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament." (Isaiah 1:18) "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." (Revelations 3:5) "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment."

I believe this beautiful golden door is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for he is as pure as gold. The fairest of ten thousand, and altogether lovely, the only doorway to heaven. (St. John 10:7) "Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep."

Brethren, sometimes I wonder why such a wonderful paper as the Signs of the Times is willing to publish writings of such a one as I. I do not wish to be boresome to my brethren, but I wish I could explain the relief I have found many times in writing the thoughts I hope the Lord has given me. For many years I have done this, and many articles will never be published. I find they mean more to me when writing them than when I read them later. I wish I could express myself like some of my brethren who write to this wonderful paper.

Clifton Robertson
Reidsville, N. C.

Rt. 3
Benton, Ky.

Dear Brother Spangler:

Am enclosing an experience Sister Ella Darnell wrote me sometime in January. I had written them that my home and contents burned January 3rd, and that in its burning, all my books, Bibles, concordances, especially my Young's Analytical Concordance, and my History of Welsh Tract Church, all went. I had our own Association book, and the church books of Soldier Creek Church, and I would have rather lost all my own belongings than to have lost these old records: They were very dear to us.

Brother Paul Poyner asked me to mail you some of our minutes, which I will do . . .

Hope all is well with you.

A Sister I hope,
Effie Bouden

EXPERIENCE OF SISTER ELLA DARNELL

Dear Sister Effie:

I just want to write a few lines to you, as I have been shut in, as you know, for a long time; and I have been thinking: "Am I saved, or am I not?"

I go back over my experience to the year 1921. I was in deep trouble. One day, while cooking dinner, I heard a voice saying, "Where are your sins?" The voice was so plain that I went to the door to see if there was anyone there. The sun seemed to be shining so bright — ten times brighter than usual; birds were singing sweeter, and my troubles were all gone.

I thought, I'll tell "Nuck" when he comes in; but by the time he came something seemed to say, "Don't deceive anyone."

Then one night I had a dream: I dreamed that we, Nuck and I, had started to old Dry Creek, when we met a man on a little mule. He said to us, "You can't cross the creek." But we went on; and when we got to the creek the water was so muddy, and big waves were rolling high. We walked up to the bank, and the waters parted; and we walked across on the botton of the creek. The water and waves were higher than our heads; and when we were on the other side the water rolled on and on. We went on to the church, and it seemed that Elder D. R. Turner was to preach. When he arose, he was a big white sheep, with paws so white lying on the Bible. We were out in front; I looked, and Nuck was gone, but on one

side of the stand sat a big white sheep and a little lamb; and on the other side, two sheep looked so large.

I worried about this dream, but the day I joined the church my dream came true. Brother Turner preached that day; and Nuck and Brother Worth Futrell sat on one side, and Sister Mattie Thomas and our eldest son sat on the other side.

I can't say, Effie, if this means anything or not; but I get some sweet comfort from it when I begin to think about, "what does it all mean?" You know that I can't talk on the Scriptures, but I do love to listen to others when they talk on different texts.

I am feeling some better.

Ella Darnell

P. S. Nuck has brought the mail in, and your card telling us about the fire destroying the home and contents. Write us more fully about it. I can't put in words what I feel. Love from all of us.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To May 1, 1962)

Eliza Turner, Va.	$ 2.00
Eldon A. Huchison	1.00
Mrs. Pope Darrow, N. C.	2.00
Rena Moore, La.	1.00
Miss Reidy Pickral, Va.	12.00
Wm. O. Hall, Wash.	1.00

ANNUAL MEETING

The annual three days' meeting of the **Bethel Church of Primitive or Old School Baptists,** of Riffe, Washington, will be held, if the Lord so wills, the 3rd Sunday and Friday and Saturday before in August, 1962, at the old Meeting House at Riffe, Washington. This is about forty miles East of Chehalis, Washington.

Any information will be furnished by the Clerk.

Mrs. Vernie Schoonover, Clerk
Box 612
Morton, Washington

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The **Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association** will be held with Malmaison Church Friday, Saturday, and second Sunday in July (July 6. 7, and 8, 1962). This church is located on Rt. 726, off of Rt. 29 North of Danville, Virginia.

All lovers of the truth of our faith and order are invited to meet with us.

Mrs. Kate Dodd, Clerk

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The **Pigg River District Association** will be held, the Lord willing, with Leatherwood Church, Henry County, Virginia, Friday, Saturday, and 1st Sunday in August (August 3, 4, and 5).

Our correspondents and all interested brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

John D. Wood, Clerk

UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

The **Upper Country Line Association** is appointed to be held with the church at Pleasant Grove, Caswell County, N. C., and will convene on Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in July (July 14th), and continue through Monday the 16th.

Pleasant Grove Church is located about 12 miles Southeast of Reidsville, N. C., just South of U. S. 158. Those coming from the South follow U. S. 158 East from Reidsville, N. C. for about 10 miles, and inquire.

Those coming from the East follow 158 to about 10 miles of Reidsville, and inquire, and look for signs at crossroads. Those from the North go to Ruffin, N. C. on U. S. 29, turn South across the railroad, take next lefthand hardsurfaced road in Ruffin, follow 4 miles to Quick, a crossroad, turn right and go to U. S. 158, and follow same to church.

Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

D. V. Spangler, Asst. Clerk

APPOINTMENTS FOR ELDER E. J. LAMBERT

Following are appointments for Elder E. J. Lambert:

Friday night, June 29th — at Dan River Church.
Saturday night, June 30th — Malmaison Church.
1st Sunday in July — all day meeting at Shiloh Church, near Roxboro.
1st Sunday night, 7:30 — Durham, N. C.
Monday night, 7:30 — Martinsville, Va.
Tuesday night, 7:30 — Rocky Mount, Va.
Wednesday night, 7:30 — Roanoke, Va.
Thursday night, 7:30 — Gretna, Va.
Then to the Staunton River Association.

D. V. Spangler

Danville, Virginia July, 1962

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EDITORIAL

GOD HATH SHINED OUT OF ZION

"Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." (Psalms 50:2)

I shall attempt to comply to a request of a reader of the *Signs* by treating upon the above quoted scripture. It is hoped that we all will be edified, comforted, and encouraged as we meditate upon Zion, the perfection of beauty.

I like to think of the Psalms as The Christian's Poetical Manual of Experiences. David was blessed to write this beautiful expression. I think David experienced it. When we experience the same it becomes our expression. How much better it is to feel and truly say from the heart, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined"; than it is to preface the expression with, "David said." Can you say experimentally, "Out of Zion the perfection of beauty, God hath shined"??

There are several phases of the Chistian's experiences that must be realized before we can incorporate this beautiful and glorious expression as our own. It requires the brilliant rays of God, Who is light, to shine in our hearts in order to bring us through the different phases of a Christian's experience. God focuses the beams of this great light first upon our own selves. The all-searching rays show the magnitude of our imperfections and sins. This causes us to fear and tremble. The things within ourselves which we thought to be light is gross darkness. These rays reach into the dark corners and crevices of our souls and brings to light the hidden evils and miserable wretchedness of even our best righteousness and most noble ambitions. These heart-searching and all-revealing beams of light reveal our greatest truth to be gross error. That which we thought to be right appears wrong. That which we thought to be strength becomes weakness. All which we thought to be beautiful and desirable in ourselves becomes ugly and obnoxious. We become sick of self and desire to look somewhere else for beauty. Should God see fit to forever focus His light upon us we would be of all men most miserable. However, when we become so disgusted with ourselves, and have such great desire to look elsewhere for beauty and perfection, the beams are focused elsewhere.

Next, we are given to view the world with the spotlight of God focused upon it. Dear ones, have you not continually searched for beauty elsewhere? How long did you go there and elsewhere in search of the truth? You were so thoroughly disgusted with yourself and so confused with your mixed-up ideas that there was a space of time that was devoted zealously in search for something to satisfy you. This religion and that philosophy and other ideas were tried and found wanting. You find no comfort nor edification in any of it. You are thoroughly convinced there is no beauty, no perfection, no satisfaction, nor anything to be desired in the world. You can then incorporate into your own

experience this true fact, "I am a man of unclean lips dwelling in the midst of a people of unclean lips." If God should forever focus His light upon ourselves and upon the world we certainly would continue to be unhappy, miserable, and hopeless. God, who has shined into our hearts and caused us to see no beauty there in ourselves; God, who has next focused the spotlight upon the world, and we have found no beauty there: — is pleased to next focus the spotlight upon Zion, the perfection of beauty.

God causes the perfection of beauty to shine out of Zion. When the beams are centered upon Zion and we are called upon to "Look upon Zion the city of our solemnities", the scene is drastically changed. We desire to turn from looking upon ourselves, for we found no beauty there. We desired to cease looking upon the world for there was no beauty to behold. What about this new view? Now, we behold order, perfect arrangement, and glorious beauty. How we do yearn that our eyes be continually fixed upon it. This is the first view in the revelations that has brought us up out of chaos and confusion. We can now incorporate our text into our own experience. We gladly say from the depth of our heart, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." We see God, the source of light, shining out of Zion. Turn to the 33rd chapter of Isaiah and begin reading at the 20th verse, and meditate with us on some of the beauties and perfection of Zion.

First, we find it to be a city of solemnities. These become our solemnities when we are blessed to see them as God shines out of them. These sacred ceremonies are wonderful to behold. This city is composed of God's little ones. There are no towering selfish beasts there. The beasts have been killed. Beastly hearts have been take away and pure hearts implanted therein by the mighty work of God. The spirit of humility is manifested by its citizens. Each has been fitly placed to fill his place in the city. All pride and vanity has been pruned from them by the mighty work of God, and self trust has been taken from them. The praises you hear in song are directed to God. When the light shines and the inhabitants are blessed to sing with the spirit and the understanding also — what a melody! How sweet and exhilarating the music. Gladness fills the troubled heart, expressions of joy and peace can only be understood by those of like experience. Have you ever heard singing that so infiltrated your soul with joy that sorrow and sighing fled away? God was shining out of Zion.

Another beauty is the preaching in Zion. I shall never forget the beauty in the first sermon that I was blessed to hear. God shines thru gospel sermons out of Zion. I had never before heard the power of God preached. How different it was from the sermons that stressed the power of man. The mighty power of God to save His people from their sins through Christ Jesus was the sweetest preaching I had ever heard. Paul incorporated Isaiah's expression as his own when he said, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." (Romans 10:15) How it rejoices our heart to incorporate this expression as ours and see the beauty.

Prayer is another beauty beheld in Zion. Beautiful prayers are not the prayers of the Pharisees but the prayers of the little ones crying for mercy and grace, and confessing their own unworthiness. The prayer of thankfulness for what God has done for us is beautiful. A beautiful prayer is, "I thank Thee that THOU HAST." An ugly unjust prayer would be "I thank Thee that I HAVE." Many other solemnities that I shall briefly state are as follows: Visiting with one another, forsaking not the assembling of ourselves together, love manifested one to another, confessing faults, forgiving, the communion service, etc.

Another beauty of Zion is that Jeru-

salem is a quiet habitation. Bugles are not sounded when the Lord's people start out on a venture. The noise and confusion characteristic of worldly organizations are not to be found there. The church does not sound alarms in order to attract the attention of the masses of people. What a calmness! Citizens gracefully move about and orderly maneuver in such a manner that will least disturb or attract. People who do things to be seen of men sound an alarm so that men will see them. Not so with the inhabitants of Zion. When they do alms they let not their right hand know what the left hand doeth. (Note Elder Beebe's article in "Voices of the Past" in this issue.)

Another beauty of Zion is that "Not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed." Worldly organizations are subject to change with the changing of the times. Not so with Zion. Its builder and keeper is God. Articles of faith never have to be altered, deleted, or amended, because the "The Lord is our lawgiver". His laws never change because they originate in Eternity. You show me a people who is constantly changing their modes, regulations, and rules; and, I will show you a people who cannot claim to be the inhabitants of Zion. God's people tread in the foot steps of the flock. The old paths are good enough for them.

Another beauty is, "Neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken." The cords of God's love which unite each and every trophy of His rich and amazing grace to Him, shall never be severed. His people are secure in Him. Nothing can separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus their Lord. Nothing shall ever take from any one of them any blessing that God has in reserve for him.

Another beauty is that "There the Glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ships pass thereby". Nothing shall pollute that stream. It is clear as crystal proceeding from the Throne of God and of the Lamb. No person shall make gain from this river nor streams. The river shall make glad the city of our God. There are as many streams flowing from this river as there are children of God. This water shall quench the thirst of famishing ones. No man can drink of this water other than those who have been made to thirst for it.

Time will not permit writing more. May God bless this to your comfort.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

APOSTOLIC FOUNDATION ON WHICH THE SAINTS ARE TO BUILD

"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's works shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shalt be saved; yet so as by fire." — 1 Cor. iii. 10-15.

Officially Paul, as an apostle, by the will of God, duly inaugurated in power to sit on one of the twelve thrones of judgment, was a master builder, endued with power from on high, and by the grace of God supplied with wisdom to lay doctrinally the only foundation that can in a spiritual sense be laid. This foundation of the apostles and prophets, is the Lord Jesus Christ; for other foundation no man can lay.

Of the foundation of the eternal salvation of the church of God, the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building (the church) fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple, in the Lord, the Lord God has said, by the mouth and pen of Isaiah, xxviii. 16, "Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding places." Hence the apostles have only laid doctrinally that foundation which Paul declares is already laid. No other is needed, no other can be laid; and by the *line* and *plummet,* in the hand of the Lord God, all that are not built even to the line and true to the plummet, shall be swept away. Whether we apply this declaration to the persons who claim to be in and of the temple of God, or to doctrine, works, hopes or expectations, nothing of faith or of practice, ordinances or order that does not rest squarely, perpendicularly and exclusively on this foundation, as tested by line and plummet, shall be swept away and perish.

The materials of which the church of God is composed are lively stones, that is, quickened, vital, living subjects of the grace and salvation of God. These are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. — 1 Pet. ii. 5. This building is not made with hands, for its maker and builder is God, and it stands eternal in the heavens. — 2 Cor. v. 1. No stones but those which God has chosen, Christ has redeemed and the Holy Spirit has quickened, can bear the test of the line and plummet. As in the garden, Every plant that the heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up; so all who come into a Christian profession without God's grace and the quickening power of his Spirit, shall go out without his saving favor. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." — Psa. cxxvii. 1. And it is also written, "When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory." — Psa. cii. 16.

But in the text, at the head of this article, we understand the apostle to be treating, not on the building up of the house of God, for it is written, "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, his hands shall also finish it." And again, "Behold the man whose name is The Branch, and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; even he shall build the temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." — Zech. iv. 9, and vi. 12, 13. This work will not our spiritual Zerubbabel, whose name is The Branch, intrust to any other hands, nor divide his glory with any of the sons of men.

But we understand the apostles to apply the figure of building to the works and theories, faith and practice which the saints attempt to build or predicate on the doctrine of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, which works are to be tried so as by fire.

At the conclusion of Christ's sermon on the mount, we have the application of this figure of building, in perfect harmony with what we understand the apostle to mean. "Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it." — Matt. vii. 14-27.

According to the dispensation of the gospel committed to the apostles, they as wise master builders taught the saints of all subsequent ages, even down to the end of the world, "to observe all things whatsoever Christ had commanded them." No more, no less. And in obedience to their great commission, they presented Christ, as the King and only and blessed Potentate, to whom all their allegiance is due, as the foundation, not only of their eternal salvation, but as the only lawgiver, on whose laws, sayings and instructions all their works and doctrine were to rest. A strict adherence to all the sayings he has uttered, and all the laws, ordinances and teachings which he has given them, either immediately from his own lips, or through the apostles whom he set in judgment over them; should forever prove to them a sure and safe foundation, from which no rains, nor winds, nor fires, nor storms can ever drive them. It is enough if for all we say or do as disciples of Christ, we can find a "Thus saith the Lord," or in other words, if we have the express authority of Christ or his apostles, then we are safe, and may confidently rest assured that our labors are not in vain in the Lord.

"Then let the wildest storm arise,
Let tempests mingle earth and skies,
No fatal shipwreck need we fear,
But all our treasures with us bear."

We are told that in the days of Micah, "In those days when there was no king in Israel, every man did that which was right in his own eyes." — Judges xvii. 6. But now God has set his King upon the holy hill of Zion, and he has commanded all the angels to worship him. The saints are not at liberty to do more or less in his kingdom than what he has commanded them; and in the fiery ordeal which is to test the validity of every man's work, all that has been done in strict obedience to his commands will rest securely on the foundation which Paul, as a wise master builder, has laid. It will then be approved of God, and so will stand the fiery tests. Gold, silver and precious stones will suffer no loss, but retain their intrinsic value, though they be tried in the fire, while all that we may think or do, believe or practice, however right or good it may seem in our own eyes, shall prove as wood, hay and stubble, to be utterly consumed by that fire which is to try every man's work of what sort it is, whether good or bad. If any man's work abides, which he hath built upon the foundation which Paul has laid, he shall receive a reward; that is, he shall not suffer loss, in that he hath not labored in vain. It shall be said to him, Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord. But those who have labored, however sincerely or industriously, to do something for the Lord, without his express authority, though they may say, Lord, we have taught in thy streets, cast out devils in thy name, converted the heathen, or evangelized the world, we have replenished thy treasury, qualified and employed many to preach, some at home, and sent others abroad, how terrible will be the interrogatory, Who hath required all this at your hands? Shall they not suffer loss? Even if any of them should be, as we hope there are some even among the infatuated thousands who are thus engaged, who are of the redeemed of the Lord. They who are God's redeemed people, shall be saved; yet so as by fire. Their wood, hay and stubble will all be consumed, and they saved as brands which are plucked out of the devouring flames.

The authoritative sayings of our Lord to his disciples, the laws, institutions and ordinances which he has enjoined on all his disciples throughout all time, are presented by the apostle as the only safe and permanent foundation or authority for the faith and practices of the saints; and the solemn and impressive admonition which above all other considerations concerns us, to whom they are addressed, is, "Let every man

take heed how he buildeth thereupon." The carnal Israelites who professed to predicate their doctrines and works on the law, and claimed to be Moses' disciples, made void the law by their own tradition, and as heedless builders refused the very stone which God has made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling and rock of offense to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed. — 1 Pet. ii. 8. "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." — Heb. ii. 1. "Jesus saith to his disciples, And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: he is like a man which built a house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock; and when the floods arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it; for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built a house upon the earth, against which the stream did beat vehemently, immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great." — Luke vi. 46-49.

The solid rock on which alone we can with safety build, may be deep hidden from our sight by the earth of human tradition, popular usages, and vain speculations; but the wise builder will dig deep, until he finds the sayings of our Lord, and cast away the inventions and traditions of man; for however plausible and pleasing they may seem to our reasoning powers, they will not stand the trying day when every man's work shall be made manifest, and when the hail shall sweep away all that is not founded on and sustained by the laws and sayings of the King of saints, who said of the Jews, "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." — Matt. xv. 9, and Mark vii. 7. By the inspired scriptures, the man, (or men) of God are thoroughly furnished to all good works. — 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. To presume that the performance of any service, religiously, which Christ has not commanded, will be acceptable to God, is impious, and forbidden. It implies a denial of the wisdom and ability of Christ to give us a perfect law for a standard of our faith and rule of our practice. How presumptuous, then, for us, as professed disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ, to attempt to revise, amend or improve upon his perfect laws, either by adding to, or diminishing from what he has enjoined. Let those who would make void the law of Christ by their own traditions, read and consider the fearful import of the declarations with which the New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ is concluded. — Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

This moment while we write, a band of music is passing by with waving plumes in sight of where we sit, in marshal habiliments, employed by a religious sect to lead the children of a Sunday School to a picnic; and all in the name of piety. The advertisement reads, "GRAND CENTENNIAL PICNIC! The Sunday School and congregation of St. Paul's —— —— Church will make an excursion to Phillipsport, Wednesday, July 19, 1876. The Philadelphia centennial cars have been chartered on the occasion, and the Middletown Band invited to accompany the party. Ice cream, &c., can be procured on the grounds, &c. Proceeds (if any) will be applied towards the floating debt of the church," &c., &c.

Would not Saint Paul be somewhat surprised to be informed that he is the proprietor of a church in Middletown, and that his church in this place has a Sunday School and Congregation attached, and that his church is selling tickets to a religious frolic to obtain funds to pay off a floating debt? Would the old apostle regard this as building gold, silver and precious stone on the foundation which he, as a wise master builder had laid? Would he not rather denounce it all, as wood, hay, stubble,

to be utterly consumed when the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements melt with fervent heat, and the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up? — 2 Peter iii. 10.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, August 14, 1876.)

ORDINATION OF ELDER AMOS I. HASH

The Long Branch Primitive Baptist Church, Franklin County, Virginia, met Saturday, September 30, 1961, with the following Elders present: Cecil Turner, B. O. Thompson, S. E. Terry, Tom Turner, Roy Agee, W. M. Holland, J. L. Bocock, P. L. Plybon, and Rufus Brown, together with deacons from the various churches. The meeting was for the purpose of a Presbytery to inquire into the qualifications of Brother Amos I. Hash, and ordain him a minister, if found qualified.

Prayer was by Elder Tom Turner, and then Brother Hash was requested to speak to the people. He spoke from Psalm 27, and was blessed to speak in demonstration of the Spirit and power.

The above named Elders and the deacons were organized into a Presbytery by choosing Elder B. O. Thompson, Moderator, and Elder Julius Bocock, Clerk. Brother H. Bowling was chosen spokesman for the church, and he expressed that the church was satisfied with Brother Hash's gift and qualifications. Elder Sam Terry was chosen to lead in the questioning; whereupon, all being satisfied, the Presbytery proceeded by laying on of hands, with prayer by Elder Roy Agee. Then Elder Cecil Turner delivered the charge, which was very impressive. Brother Hash was then delivered to the church a duly ordained minister of the gospel of Christ.

We heartily recommend Elder Hash to the brethren wherever our God shall cast his lot.

Elder B. O. Thompson, Moderator
Elder J. L. Bocock, Clerk

OBITUARIES

MISS BLANCHE TURNER

Miss Mary Blanche Turner was born March 24, 1887, and passed away March 24, 1962, making her stay on earth 75 years. She leaves to mourn her passing, one brother Howard Turner, where she had lived for years; and one sister, Miss Docie Turner; and several other relatives, as well as many dear brethren and friends among the Primitive Baptists.

She was abnormal physically, as were several of her brothers and Sister Docia Turner, who is and has been a wheel chair patient all her life. Sister Blanche joined Union Primitive Baptist Church 20 or 25 years ago, and Sister Docia joined at the same time. They were gladly received, and were well loved and respected by the brethren far and near.

She was faithful in her weak ability to help serve her greatly afflicted family until she became unable to do so. She passed away at St. Francis Hospital, in Monroe, La., on her 75th birthday. The writer and Elders David E. Turner and J. L. Smith, attended the funeral services March 26, 1962. There was a large congregation and many nice flowers.

May the Lord richly bless Sister Docia and her brother, Mr. Howard Turner and wife. She is much better off than we are — her sufferings and afflictions are over, and we feel the assurance of that sweet hope through Christ Jesus our Lord, that she will be gathered home to heaven to dwell forevermore.

R. W. Rhodes

SISTER ULTRA TAYLOR

At the request of the church I will attempt to write a little memorial of our dear beloved sister and Mother in Israel. She is being missed so much. She was faithful in attending her meetings, never missing unless providentially hindered. She had a willing mind and was always ready to do more than her part of whatever was to be done.

It may be of interest to the church to know that Sister Taylor wrote the following record of herself in 1959. It is recorded just as she wrote it:

"A record of me that may come in handy someday. Ultra Greer Taylor was born April 16, 1892, the daughter of Thomas J. and Nancy Lou Tysinger Greer. Married to Henry M. Taylor, April 24, 1916. To this union was born two sons, Henry M., Jr. and Roger Greer Taylor, one daughter, Ella Lou Taylor Wann.

"I was received into the membership of the High Point Primitive Baptist Church in High Point, N. C., January 17, 1911. I was appointed and unanimously elected to serve as clerk of the church March, 1937. I served in this office until 1944 at which time my health had become so bad that I asked to be relieved of this responsibility. By 1951 my health was much improved and I was appointed assistant clerk. In 1952 I was again appointed and unanimously elected to the clerk's office. I am still serving as of this date, 1959, as clerk. I have also served on the board of trustees for many years."

Mrs. H. M. Taylor

Sister Taylor served as clerk right on until she was called home by her Heavenly Father,

leaving the church with a good record. Sister Taylor was called home October 13, 1961, making her stay here on earth 69 years, 5 months, and 29 days. We all mourn our loss, but could not ask her back. Our loss is her eternal gain.

Everyone of us has been greatly enriched by her life. May we never forget the humble spirit and the great boldness in which she stood for her convictions. No opposition ever shook her faith in her Precious Savior. She was always ready to defend the doctrine that was so sweet to her. She believed in the complete sovereignty of God. She believed that He decreed to create and to bring about or bring to pass all things that has been or will be, and to rule over it all sovereignly so that it will serve Him in the purpose for which He created it. It is, indeed, a great privilege to be given such a great belief, and such great faith to uphold it. May we all bow to the great will of God and pray for thankful hearts for such a life as Sister Taylor had. May he give us strength and courage to press on and upward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling as it is in Christ the Lord.

Yes, all of us will go right on missing Sister Taylor, but I am sure that no one, outside the family, will miss her more than I, her pastor. I always looked forward to seeing Sister Taylor come in and take the same seat each meeting day. She was of great strength to me. Her words were always encouraging, understanding, and sympathetic. When the chips were down, she knew exactly what to say and how to say it to give me the needed courage. Her unselfish support and encouragement have meant much to me in the 29 years I have served her church. I most surely do and will continue to miss her, but I do not grieve after her as I would one who had no hope.

We all hope someday to meet her on the banks of sweet deliverance, where there will be no separation, and join in a song of eternal praise to our Savior. So we will say, sleep on dear Mother and take your rest, for someday we hope to awake with you in heaven, with all the family, to praise our Lord and Master.

Children, children, we have a lot for which to look forward and a lot for which to thank God. May He ever keep us by His Grace.

At the request of the church, I have written this, for the church and for its disposal.

Elder D. A. O'Bryant

The above letter of Testimony and Memorial for Sister Ultra Taylor was read and approved by the church while in conference, Saturday, February 17, 1962.

Elder D. A. O'Bryant, Moderator
R. D. Newnam, Clerk

SALLIE SHELTON SNOW

Sister Sallie Shelton Snow, age 78, passed away in the home of her daughter, Mrs. Owen McGregor, December 6, 1961. She was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, in 1883, the daughter of James and Eliza Hines Shelton; and was united in marriage to the late John A. Snow. Nine children survive to mourn her passing: Mrs. Raymond Pickeral, Danville, Va.; John J. Snow, Plainsfield, N. J.; Mrs. Jesse Watlington, and Victor, both of Cleveland, Ohio; Mrs. Leroy Owen, Lynchburg, Va.; Landon, Gretna, Va.; Mrs. Owen McGregor, Willie and Clay, of Java, Va. Surviving also are two brothers, Tommy Shelton, Gretna; and Walter, of Java.

Funeral services were conducted from Riceville Baptist Church by Mr. B. R. Cook, Mr. W. G. Hall, and Elder O. K. Tench. Interment was in Highland Burial Park.

May we all bow in humble submission to God who doeth all things well, and desire that God may comfort and bless the bereaved ones.

Done by order of Springfield Church. Written by Annie Tosh.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
R. C. Dalton, Clerk

ELDER J. B. REID

It pleased God in His infinite mercy to call from our small number our dear brother and faithful friend, Elder J. B. Reid, from this earth of sin and corruption to a better place prepared by the Father for the members of the mystical body of Christ.

Elder Reid was born in the state of Mississippi July 24, 1871 and departed this life, December 27, 1961, making his stay on this earth 90 years, 5 months, and 3 days. He was the son of Thomas Thorton and Clementine (Cox) Reid. His mother was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church and his father was a firm believer in the doctrine of the same. His family moved to Texas in 1880.

The grace of Christ was communicated by the Holy Spirit to Elder Reid at an early age. He was only 14 years of age when that great and brightest of all lights shined upon him. He, like many of God's little ones, kicked against the pricks until the impression was so great that he offered himself for baptism, was received and baptized by Elder Hosier into the Primitive Baptist Church. He was asked, and preached his first sermon in 1900, was liberated a short time later, and was ordained to the full gospel ministry a few years later.

He was a faithful servant of God, serving as many as four churches at one time, and having to walk a distance of 18 miles in order to keep one of these appointments. He was married to Miss Ada Jane Milner in 1895,

and to this union was born 3 sons and 4 daughters. His wife was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church. She departed this life in 1918. He met and married Mrs. Johnnie M. Berry September 4, 1919. To this union was born one daughter. Mrs. Reid had 5 young children by a former marriage. This made a total of 8 children and 5 stepchildren whom he considered and loved as his own, 35 grandchildren and 49 great grandchildren.

Mrs. Reid preceded him in death, leaving this earth in June 1958. Elder Reid was carefully watched after by his daughter, Mrs. Kay Lay, and two stepdaughters, Mrs. Bobbie Dobbs and Mrs. Allen Cox all of San Juan, living in a little house they built for him and his wife next to Mrs. Dobbs.

For the past 5 years this unworthy writer has had the pleasure of spending many profitable hours in communion with him. The minute his brethren would walk into his home, he would start talking upon the Scriptures, which he was greatly blessed to do by the Holy Spirit, going down into the things crouched beneath — the things hidden from the wise and prudent but revealed to God's little ones. He was blessed to go into the stand and preach Christ and Him crucified until just a short time before his death, feeding the children of God with spiritual food for over 61 years.

His funeral was conducted by Elder E. B. Ault, assisted by Elder Wm. Burkhalter in the presence of friends and relatives. His body was laid to rest in the family burial ground near McAllen, Texas, to await the resurrection morn: at which time he will come forth in the likeness of the blessed Son of God. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

At the time of his passing the writer was in Dallas, Texas, attending the funeral of his father, N. Frank Hamrick.

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

MEMORIAL

Brother Thomas W. Saunders, the subject of this sketch, was born December 1, 1876, and departed this life on February 24, 1962, at the age of eighty-five years, three months and twenty-three days. Brother Saunders was a son of the late Brother Monroe and Emma Brincefield Saunders. He was twice married. His first was to Miss Maude Moore Webb, of Randolph County, in 1899; and to this union the following children survive: four sons — Lee Roy, C. Norman, J. Arnold, and Millard F., all of Reidsville, North Carolina; and five daughters — Miss Blanche, of the home in Reidsville, North Carolina, Mrs. J. A. Moore, of Greensboro, North Carolina, Mrs. Claude Webb, Mrs. Audrey Minor and Mrs. C. C. Robertson, all of Reidsville, North Carolina.

He was last married to Sister Minnie A. Apple in 1926, and to this union were born two children, and both survive. One son, T. W. Saunders, Jr., and one daughter, Mrs. Wesley King, of Ayden, North Carolina. Sister Saunders has been very unwell for the past two years, and too feeble to be out.

I feel that I should state here that all of Brother Saunders' children felt to be one family of brothers and sisters, and felt just the same to each other. Brother Saunders raised a lovely family of children and with all my acquaintance with Brother Tom and his family, having been in his home so many times, I never heard Brother Saunders raise his voice in speaking to any member of his family, nor in speaking to anyone else. I know this is most unusual and a praise worthy thing to say, but I am writing the very truth and I feel like those who knew him as a husband, and as a father, and as a businessman would say just what I have said. Brother Saunders leaves but one brother, Brother Lofton J. Saunders, of Gibsonville, North Carolina.

I know what I am about to say now has, perhaps, seldom taken place among our churches, and I feel deeply touched in my feelings, but my tears are tears of thankfulness to God that it became my sweet and sacred privilege as Pastor of Gilliams Church to baptize this dear Brother Thomas W. Saunders at our September meeting, 1923; and within one year before and one year after our church at Gilliams had received the father at 83, and both of his sons, the youngest, our dear Brother Lofton J., first, and Brother Thomas W., next, and the father, Brother Monroe, last, at age 83. The mother was a lovely person, and retained her membership with the Methodist Church. I had her funeral, and she lived to be 89 years old.

Brother Saunders was ordained Deacon on 4th Sunday in November 1926, and continued to serve with much honor as Deacon of Gilliams Church for many years until dismissed by letter. When Brother Saunders joined Gilliams, he was a citizen of Caswell County and remained so until about twenty years ago, when he moved to Reidsville, where his business was located. The Lord had given Brother Saunders a very fine mind as well as heart, and he was more than an ordinary person. He was a leader of the finest type, and was an asset to any community.

Brother Saunders was a man of excellent character and of the noblest convictions. His word was his bond. He personified many of the fine things Primitive Baptist stands for. He was a lovely Brother and has left a host of brethren who mourn their loss. He had great concern for the poor, and he was ever ready to lend them a helping hand. He was an humble and God-fearing man. His religion

was seen and felt in everything he did. Some way I can't question in my feelings that Brother Saunders was one of the Lord's Jewels, and I feel like the Lord has taken him home to heaven.

Brother Saunders spent the last few years living in Reidsville, where most of his children live, and where he had a good Old Baptist home, just a few blocks from the Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church; and he was received by the church there in 1955, in sweet and loving fellowship.

Brother Saunders provided well for his own household. He was most attentive to his family to see that they lacked for nothing needful. So long as he was able to go to his place of business he was there. Finally he became too feeble to work, and seemed reconciled to remain at home and await the Lord's time to call him. He was cared for most tenderly and lovingly by his family, and I feel that he came to the end just as he lived, in full triumph of faith.

His funeral services were conducted by his Pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler and myself, before a large group of sorrowing brethren and friends.

Written by request of Reidsville Church.

Sincerely yours,
Elder J. W. Gilliam

Approved by the Reidsville Church at the April meeting, 1962, a copy to be given to the bereaved family, and a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Pastor
M. T. Smith, Act. Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, Since it has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst by death on February 2, 1962, our dear sister Mae Hines Mitchell, we bow in humble submission to His will.

She was born in the Hinesville Community, near Whitmell, Va., January 12, 1885, a daughter of the late James Thomas Hines and Belle Towler Hines. She was united in marriage to the late John Albert Mitchell on January 9, 1906, by the late Elder G. W. Hundley. She was a good wife and mother. She leaves to mourn her departure four sons and four daughters: W. B. and Robert Mitchell, Danville, Va.; Surry Mitchell, Aberdeen, Md.; Elmer Mitchell, Dry Fork, Va.; Mrs. H. R. Beville, Reidsville, N. C.; Mrs. Benjamin Brown, Ruffin, N. C.; Mrs. Dewey Matherly, Danville, Va.; and Mrs. James Wilson, Axton, Va. She also leaves twelve grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Sister Mitchell united with Strawberry Church September 3, 1921. She had not attended her church meetings regular during her last years due to ill health.

Her funeral was conducted at Swicegood Funeral Chapel by Elders W. R. Dodd and R. S. Payne, and Mr. T. E. Leviner, amidst a huge congregation of friends and relatives and immense floral offerings, showing the esteem in which she was held. Interment was in Highland Burial Park, Danville, Va.

We, the church at Strawberry, greatly feel our loss, which is her eternal gain. We extend our sympathy to the family who devotedly cared for their mother during her illness. May God reconcile them to His will, and may they be given to trust the God their mother trusted and believed.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be recorded on our church record, a copy sent to the family, and a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference March 3, 1962.

Elder W. R. Dodd, Moderator
Josephine Dodd, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from time unto himself our beloved friend and fellow pilgrim, Jesse Clay Thornton, be it

RESOLVED, That we, the Primitive Baptist Church of Providence, desire to bow in humble submission to the sovereign will of our God, witnessing that what He does is ever right.

Jesse was indeed our staunch friend, and was faithful in his attendance of our church meetings. He was a firm believer in the cardinal points of doctrine espoused and believed by our people. He was given a good hope through grace in the blood and righteousness of Jesus. Yet, through a felt sense of his unworthiness, he never united with the church. He was born January 12, 1911, son of the late T. J. and Rosa (Oxley) Thornton; and departed this life July 12, 1961. He was united in marriage March 4, 1934, to Rosetta Edwards; and to this union seven children (two sons and five daughters) were born. One son and one daughter preceded him in death in their infancy, and the others are left to mourn their loss, together with his widow. The church in this place has lost a precious friend. Be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be spread on our church minutes; a copy be given the family; and a copy be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference.

H. J. Bird, Pastor
V. L. Byrnside, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 130 DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1962 NO. 8

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8/62
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

COULD I BUT KNOW

(L. M. Double)

Could I but know I loved the Lord;
Could I but know that Christ is mine;
Could I but know that I abhorred
All that is carnal, not divine,
Methinks with joy my path I'd tread:
My doubts and fears I would lay by;
I'd know the Spirit had me led
Unto the Rock higher than I.

I then shrewd Satan could resist;
With joy could say "Get thee behind".
Should he temptation still persist,
I would dismiss it from my mind.
On eagle's wings I then would soar
To heights more lofty and sublime;
And fleshly lusts that now me bore
Would then be banished for all time.

O, what a heav'nly, rapturous thought!
Could I but know instead of hope —
Assured with blood I had been bought —
I would no more in darkness grope.
And doubts and fears me now pursue,
And mighty battles in me rage.
I watch and pray, but cannot view
An exit from my prison cage.

But He who gave me this thorn
Lest I should too exalted be,
Ordained my steps e'er I was born:
Each trial and sorrow that I see.
And though by sight I fain would walk,
To walk by faith was His decree.
So of His mercies I will talk:
His grace sufficient is for me.

C. B. Britt,
El Dorado, Ark.

Rt. 1, Box 69
Silas, Alabama

Dear Editors of the *Signs:*

Since my subscription is about up, I am sending renewal.

I have been taking the *Signs* for a number of years, and I don't want to miss a copy of it. It is all the preaching I hear: It is over a hundred miles to a true Primitive Baptist Church from where I live. I love the doctrine of Salvation by Grace, for it only can reach the case of anyone.

Wishing you much success and a prosperous future, I am, I hope a sinner saved by grace. In bonds of love to you and all God's saints.

Sincerely,
D. L. Cunningham

1160 Halifax Road,
Danville, Va.

Dear Editors, and Associate Editors:

What wonderful God given servants you are to us who are seeking the truth of the one who is full of grace and truth. (John 1:14) "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32)

I believe the word of the Lord has had free course with you laboring for the cause to your readers of the *Signs.* I do get joy and comfort from it. It is reviving to me, especially when I am so low down in the dark valley. My days are filled with mixtures of joy and sorrow.

How great it is to know a Jesus who read the words: "The Spirit of the

Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." "And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." (Luke 4:18-21)

Enclosed you will find $5.00 for two years subscription for the *Signs* to continue on.

Mrs. Nettie R. A. Evans

COMFORT FOR THE BEREAVED

P. O. Box 625,
Spearsville, La.

Elder C. Y. Osteen,
Perrin, Texas.

Dear Brother:

I did so much enjoy my short visit with you. It was a long ways to travel, but I most assurredly did enjoy seeing you once more; and my deep sympathy goes out to you in your lonliness, and your great sadness and bereavement, in the loss of your dear wife. Yet we feel that Solomon was correct when he said that better is the day of one's death than the day of one's birth. Again it is written that, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." So our only hope is in the blessed Lord and his salvation, for ourselves and any of our loved ones; because Paul says, "And we know that all things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." So then, as Paul says in this same 8th chapter of Romans, "If God be for us, who can be against us."

So, my dear and aged brother, what is more to look to than the blessed and almighty God and Saviour? He so rules and controls all things that they work together for good to God's humble, trembling, and loving ones, who are brought to see and feel their very needy and dependent condition before Him, who declared the end from the beginning, and spoke from ancient times things not yet done, saying his counsel should stand and that he would do all his pleasure.

O, how wonderful to be blessed to look to, and to trust in Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will! and who has so sweetly promised all his to be with them alway, even to the end of the world; and that he would never leave nor forsake them. Peter wrote of God's people when he said, "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" What a sweet and comforting consolation it is to be given a sweet hope in Him and his atoning blood and righteousness; and to hope that we are sweetly embraced in his everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure!

Dear brother, what a lonesome, troublesome place this frowning world would be, were we not given this sweet hope in Him, his mercy and grace, and all his lovingkindness, which God has so bestowed upon his humble, trembling little children as they journey through this low ground of sin and sorrow. Yet we are made to feel so unworthy, sinful, cast down, and lonely so often; but realize that it is through much tribulation that we shall enter into the kingdom, as Jesus said while he was here on earth; and as his little ones find it to be with them as they journey through this wilderness.

May God be with you, comfort and keep you through all your trials, afflictions and sorrows, as you journey here in this greatly troubled world. What a glorious and grand day we are looking for, when the Lord Jesus comes again the second time without sin unto salvation unto all his children, who are looking for and hoping for that blessed day. The Lord himself shall come in the clouds, and gather all nations be-

fore him, and shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left; and then shall say to those on the right hand, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Then shall the sheep go into everlasting life, where there will be no more sin, sickness, sorrow, pain, nor death, but glorious and eternal love, peace, joy, and pleasure forevermore; there to see the Lord as He is, and be like him and be satisfied.

Dear brother, I arrived at Minneola, Texas, at 8:30 that night after leaving your place, and I stopped and visited with old Elder Davenport, who is very much afflicted, and a bed and wheel chair patient, but I feel that the abounding faith and patience of the Lord and his Spirit is very sweetly abiding with him and his dear aged wife. God bless you, is my prayer.

Your brother in hope,
R. W. Rhodes

HEAVENLY MANNA

2564 Hillger Ave.,
Detroit 14, Mich.

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a money order for renewal of my subscription . . . I certainly don't want to miss an issue of this greatly appreciated paper. May God's blessings abide each one that has a part in the experiences that go to make up this paper; and enable the Editors and Elders and others by His Spirit to continue to pen the great truths therein. When at a throne of grace, please remember a poor sinner and family in these days of great trials and tribulations.

The ones who write for this paper tell my experience far better than I ever could. If I am saved, I am saved by grace and not of works. I have nothing whereof to boast; works are excluded, and it is by grace through faith we are saved. My sins are many. When I would do good evil is present with me; and afflictions and bonds abide me. I cannot order my steps in straight paths, or avoid evil thoughts. Like Peter, I denied my Lord and Saviour; and when he bade me come to him on the water, I looked down instead of to Him. And I cried out, "Save or I perish."

. . . Like Thomas, I am a doubter; and unbelief covers all evil. Like Peter, I was grieved when the Lord and Master spoke to me, "Do you love these more than me?" I have been cumbered about with many things, like Martha; but Mary chose the good part: to sit at Jesus' feet; and this is my hope. Like the woman with the infirmity for so long, if I can but touch the hem of his garment, I shall be made whole.

I am enclosing money order for $5.00 for one year's renewal and $2.00 for the Indigent Fund.

May our Heavenly Father watch over us, and keep us in the narrow path that leads to heavenly mansions, where there's no war, nor trials or tribulations; but peace and love where He is the Light of that Bright City.

I am weak and very unworthy, and dark clouds hover over me so much I fear and tremble to even try to write. But I want you to know that this paper is heavenly manna to this poor sinner, because I don't get to go to church the way I desire. But I know that God knows best, and that what He wills shall be done. If I am not deceived, I love the Old Baptists, and have had a home with them more than 29 years, but do not deserve it.

Yours in hope beyond this life where no tears or sorrows come.

Minnie Seay

Swansboro, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

Our church has requested, together with other brethren, that I send the enclosed account and minutes of the

recent ordinations of Brother Jabez Rhue to the full work of the gospel ministry; and Brother Jesse R. Rhue to the office of Deacon of Hadnot Creek Primitive Baptist Church, for publication in the *Signs of the Times.*

We read the *Signs* regularly and enjoy the good articles and letters contained therein. Indeed, if we know anything about the truth, the *Signs* does contend for it. We hope and pray that the Good Lord will in mercy continue to bless you together with the other editors, and the many others whom the Lord has so blessed to contend for that faith that was once delivered to the saints. The doctrine of salvation by grace is the only doctrine that will stand when we are gone. I believe there will be someone enabled by the grace of God to preach and defend this truth as long as time lasts.

May He who is able keep us all and protect us through the further journey of this life; also present us to the Father in heaven. This is my hope.

Vilma Garner Rhue, Clerk

IT IS GOOD TO BE EXERCISED IN WEIGHTY MATTERS

Lord, lead us in the way of truth, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

Am I an Old Baptist? Oh, how I do wonder and hope. I believe we are approaching the day when our Lord shall come again — the second coming of our Lord. How comforting to feel our God is still ruling in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

This should be to all true believers in Jesus a time of serious thinking; a time for striving for peace. I spend sleepless nights over disturbances, and it causes me to long to hear the doctrine expounded as we have been brought to believe, and have been shown of the things of Jesus, as we humbly hope.

Do I believe God predestinated all things whatsoever shall come to pass? I am fully aware that many do not believe this, and I do not judge as to their being children of God, but it is good enough to live and feed on in this life, and is a source of comfort to poor dying sinners such as I.

I am made to believe that God controls all things; has all power in heaven and in earth; speaks and it is done; commands and it stands fast. I believe that He not only looked down through the ages seeing all things that shall take place, but he also purposed all things taking place as they do. It is as impossible for one thing to be out of focus as it is for man to go to Christ when he is dead in trespasses and sins.

I know I am unable to put the things on paper which I feel in my heart, without the help of my Lord; or even hint at them. Pray tell me what comfort could I feel in a doctrine that gives God only part power, and man part power? I am the one that is so weak. Such a doctrine declares God is able to save, and does save those chosen in Christ unto salvation eternally, then it is left to man to render obedience to God to merit spiritual blessings here in time; and that God only predestinates the good that shall come to pass. To say that God does not ordain, or predestinate, every step we take here in this world, means to me that he does not control all things: Which would mean some things he has left to poor, puny man to help him in salvation. Then when Christ said, "It is finished", he didn't mean what he said. But he **did finish** the work the Father gave him to do.

I hope I have been taught in the school of grace that my God needs not the likes of me to help him save one of his beloved children. This Christ has done. He secured the salvation of everyone who shall some day see him, be like him, and be satisfied, in a world which shall never end. No, he doesn't need my help; but I need him and his help continually. He has to give me strength, else I have none; he has to come to me, I cannot go to him. Then, if I in a state

of helplessness cannot go to him, how could I perform one acceptable act without him; how could I render obedience to God except the Holy Spirit moves me in an acceptable way. Christ, the head over the church which is his body, is our obedience. In him we live, move and have our being.

My deepest concern is, am I one of the elect family of God. If I am one of these blessed characters, no amount of opposition can take my inheritance from me; or, if I am not one whose name was written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world, then no amount of so called obedience of the creature, with all forms of outward profession, could put me, or any of the non-elect, in that number. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." This testimony, together with the words of our Lord planted in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, teach us truth. "It is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." — believe on Jesus whom God hath sent to save his people from their sins.

If Jesus has been revealed in us the way of salvation, then we have fellowship in the gospel. Paul said, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes.

Knowing the depravity of my nature, (and this I believe I do), how could one so weak, so full of mistakes as I surely am, feel comforted to have such a doctrine declared that my God does not control all things? He said he made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. How can this be explained? and, please, I desire that it be explained, for I want to be set right if I am mixed up in the matter.

The written testimony of John says that all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. Now I am concerned about these things, for I have had it put to me that God did not make the devil; that he was an angel, and fell, as Adam fell, in sin, and thus became a devil by choice through his fall. Also it is said that we become better in regeneration. The Scripture says that it is the Spirit that quickens, the flesh profits nothing. It is the inner man that does not commit sin, or the seed within which cannot sin; but we are still sinners by nature and practice. Not lovers of sin, mind you, for we have had our fill of that; and hate it, and long to be free of it. We are promised grace sufficient.

Back to the idea that God did not make or have anything to do with anything but good things: I believe I have read in the word of God that he formed the crooked serpent; and I have believed that the devil has always been a devil from the beginning: he was made for the purpose he serves, and was never an angel. Will you also set me right on this, if I am wrong, for I hope I desire to know what is truth and what is error. I may be unable to talk as some, but I hope I long after the things of God; long to know more of him and his truth. Today we see more isms and schisims that to hear some talk who claim to be Old School Baptists, is confusing. I am made to feel as the dear sister from Louisiana wrote recently, "How can these things be?"

If it is so, as I heard from a pulpit recently, that God does not ordain, or did not absolutely predestinate all things that shall come to pass, how can it be explained that God hardened the heart of Pharoah that he would not let the children of Israel go until the appointed hour. Then all things worked together for good, in so much that the bark of the dog was withheld in the appointed time of their departure. The Scripture says that for this purpose God raised up Pharoah, that he might show his power in him, and that His name might be declared throughout all the earth. "He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will her hardeneth. Mind you, it says that God hard-

eneth some that they could not believe, be converted, and be healed. Yet he cannot be charged as being the author of sin. I believe He taught me this by experience: if he withdraws his Spirit but for a moment I would go astray.

Now also, how can it be explained that Joseph's brethren were allowed to do all the evil things they did to him; and, mind you, Joseph told them that they meant it for evil, but God meant it for good: for their good, and His glory. Then did He not predestinate, predetermine, or anything else one might choose to call the fore-ordination and purpose of God in whatsoever comes to pass. This does not mean that it is perfectly all right to do evil, but let us draw a line and put down a stake here. If we are partakers of salvation by grace, we are sinners by nature and practice: our nature does not become better in regeneration; and when we go astray, (and I often do, to my sorrow), we are visited with the rod of correction. Without this chastisement there would be evidence we were bastards and not sons. Afterwards it yields the peaceful fruits of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby. "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." When we walk in an orderly way, it is that we are being led by the Spirit of God.

Then we feel to grasp a tiny ray of light on the teaching of the Apostle Paul when he said, "For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose." He foreknew all the beloved family of God, having predestinated every one of them to be conformed to the image of his Son. They shall all be called with an holy, effectual calling; and justified, and glorified. "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us who can be against us. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him us for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things."

Here is the beauty, dearly beloved of God: our Lord has redeemed his bride from the curse of the law, and we are no more under the law, but grace. Isn't this enough to make every one of his little ones beg to be kept in the way of truth, walking acceptably before Him, ever looking to our Lord, the author and finisher of the faith of God's elect. May we press onward and upward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I realize I have only hinted at the greatness I hope I see in this subject, and I hope you will place a mantle of charity over my imperfections. I would not misapply when I bring a few remarks on a subject under consideration. There is strength in these words, "I am God and there is none else; I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all of my pleasure." "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." "As I have thought so shall it come to pass; as I have purposed so shall it stand."

These things are dear to me. All error belongs to man, but my God is perfection: he works and none can hinder, hinders and none can work. "We love him because he first loved us."

A little sister, I hope,
Mrs. Fred Cobb,
R. F. D. 1,
Ruffin, N. C.

Ajlune, Washington

Dear Editors:

I have permission to send you the enclosed letter for publication, subject to your approval.

. . . With best wishes to all the editors and writers of our family paper.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. D. C. Davis

THE LETTER

Hermiston, Oregon,
July 9, 1958

Dear Brother and Sister Davis:

We received your good letter yesterday, so will try to answer it while it is on my mind.

We are both as well as usual, but rather lonesome on the first Sunday as it was the first time we had missed being at Elgin for one year. We were pleased to hear you had a mind to write to Brother and Sister Eckard. Their address is Spokane, Washington, 7814 N. Yale Street.

Now as for me to write on the Scripture you mentioned, I am somewhat hesitant, as I fear I might not rightly divide the word of truth. I do believe a bit different than some on this body of flesh, and I have been led to dwell on obedience of late; and have been made to see it somewhat different in regard to our bodies that I have condemned so much in the past.

So I must pray to Almighty God to lead me in truth and understanding. Now turn to 1st Corinthians 6:15 to 20th verses. It may be well for us to read the 5th chapter, then on to the 6th chapter — all of it.

We see that the preceding chapters are referring to their way of life, and the natural body. (1 Cor. 5:11) Now to the quotation you wrote about: "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." (1 Cor. 6:19, 20)

I believe this is the same body that was spoken of in Romans 8:20: "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." And the same body spoken of in the 23rd verse: "And not only they but ourselves also which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit: the redemption of our body." I have thought that there was a great difference or gulf between the body and the spirit; but I see it differently now. I see the body as a dwelling place for the Spirit; and so closely related that I have a great desire to keep it clean both naturally and spiritually, and may I add, morally. For I have a great desire to be enabled by the power of Almighty God to walk soberly and righteously in this present world. Therefore, if my body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, should I not try to keep it unspotted from the world (or uncleanness)? If we are what we profess to be, what manner of life should we live?

God, I am sure, has made me willing in mind and body to be submissive to His will. So I am taught obedience by the things I have suffered. When I realize how I rebelled so long, and was so disobedient, I am made to know how the power of God can make the lion eat straw like the ox: For it is the power of God working in you both to will and to do. So we are made willing and anxious to glorify God in our body, and in our spirit, which are God's.

Paul says, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4:13) In Acts 20:28 it is written, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood." Therefore I believe God will do just what he has promised. "And being made perfect he became the author of eternal salvation unto all that obey him." Then please read Jeremiah 7:3-28.

I may be accused of being one who believes in good works; and I hope I do. But not to obtain grace for my good works. I believe in efficacious grace: that there should be an outward show of the inward working of God's grace, which is free, and does not depend on the works of the creature.

I also believe that those whom He foreknew he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did pre-

destinate, them he also called; and whom he called them he also justified; and whom he justified them he also glorified. There must be a way for us to glorify God in our body and in our spirit or else he would not have inspired the writers of his Word to admonish and advise us to do those things. If God calls a man to preach the gospel, I believe God will enable him to preach. Without Him we can do nothing. I must come before you empty and stripped of all natural desires and strength, for I feel as clay in the potter's hands.

I know by experience that God has enabled my natural body to endure hardships, and that he has given me spiritual strength to comfort his chosen ones at times. So I must say again that I do feel in debt to him who is the giver of every good and perfect gift; and one of the many good gifts is that I have a desire to glorify God in my whole body and spirit, which are God's.

And we are admonished to purge ourselves from certain things, and flee youthful lusts; and follow righteousness, faith, charity and peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. I am a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and that God's grace is sufficient for us. To love God is to hate sin; so where sin did abound, grace did much more abound. Some may say to continue in sin so that grace might abound. God forbid! How can one that is dead to the love of sin, continue to have pleasure in sin?

It is the Spirit of God that has been placed in this body that enables us to walk by faith; to forgive the ones that are offensive to us. It isn't in us to do that until God places it there. So it is by the unlimited power of God that makes us willing to suffer for the ones we once hated. It is the Spirit of Christ that Paul spoke of in Romans 8:9: "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." The Spirit is placed there in that man by Almighty God, and no other power can put it there, or remove it.

So I am continually praying to God to enable me to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith I have been called. I well remember when I felt that I could resist or accept it anytime I desired. But that Spirit is not passive in our hands; it is of God just the same as our body is God's; and we can only glorify God as we are enabled by his will and power to worship, glorify, praise, and love Him, and his precious chosen ones.

May God have mercy on us all, and lead us in the way; for He is our life, our resurrection, and our only salvation in this world and that eternal home or rest and peace, where no more trials, sorrows, or heartaches will ever be known.

God bless you both to all your needs, and comfort and keep you, is the prayer of one who feels to be one of the least; and so weak at times. Please remember me when you have a mind to pray. Submitted in love, and I hope in sweet fellowship.

As ever,
Ernest J. Attebery

LONGING FOR HIS FELT PRESENCE

I want to love the Lord. I long to praise his name. My heart cries out from the night of my experience, to embrace and draw him near me. I seek him in the light and shadows of my thoughts. Heights and depths do not escape the seeking for him of my soul. Day and night I search and search.

I long for the touch of his hand, the smile of his countenance, the presence of his spirit. I beg for a small remembrance, a token of love for my famished soul. I reach for the substance on which my faith and hope are hinged.

My search is in vain. My soul grows weary with seeking. His love evades me and I fall, exhausted, into slumber.

Behold! there he is, in a dream. He was waiting on Calvary. His love shone down on me with the brightness of his countenance. He found me with his loving eyes as I slept, weary, tired, and

exhausted from my futile works. His mercy and grace endureth forever, O my soul.

Mrs. Cisco Barron,
Lillie, La.

IS GOD LIMITED?

R. F. D. 3, Box 123,
Axton, Virginia

To the Signs of the Times:

Is God a limited God, or is he just limited in the minds of men? I believe it was David who said that they limited the Holy One of Israel; and I believe David also said that He does his will in the sea and all deep places.

We find in the Old Scriptures that there isn't anything too hard for God; and in the New Testament that all things are possible with God. Yet some say He wants to save everyone, but some won't let him.

The Scriptures say that Abraham believed that whatever God promised, he was able to perform; and, since the Scriptures also say that God cannot lie, and the impossibility of it, it would seem that, if God has promised to save every man that ever lived, it would be impossible for anyone to be lost.

I hope I believe in the sovereignty of God, — yet I doubt that everyone who says so, does. I have heard some say that they believed it, and then say that it is impossible for God to save a man unless the man "hears" the Gospel. And then some say that God can't hate, even though the Bible says that he did. And some say that He can't be displeased, even though he was displeased with some of the things that David had done. I don't believe in a God that can't be displeased; but I hope I believe in one that can do, and does, as He pleases, and has a perfect right and the power to do so; one that is not limited in any direction by what I believe, or by what any other man or group of men might believe; though most men claim to have a lot of wisdom.

Paul said that our faith is not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Some say that God's people can't be disobedient, but, if that is the way it is, then I am not one; for it is how to perform that which is good I find not. No man, except Jesus, ever lived in perfect obedience, and pleased God at all times. This is the reason I would hate to think that anything was conditioned on man's obedience. I believe God predestinated all things, but I do not believe that limited him, or made a sinner out of a man; for I read where Paul said that by the disobedience of one man, many were made sinners; and that by the disobedience of one man sin entered the world. So disobedience is what made me a sinner, and I do not believe that anything can justify man in what he does or does not do, but God. Jesus is the only reason I have a hope; and I wouldn't trade my hope for what most people claim they know, even if I could.

I hear some say that it doesn't make any difference what we do, but I do not get the idea. I do not believe that salvation is by man, but rather that salvation is of the Lord. And I fail to see how Adam, or any man, could sin, if he had a right, or was free to partake of any and everything. I also feel that anything we can't freely partake of, is just as much sin now as ever.

These are just a few thoughts I would like to send along as I renew my subscription for the Signs. If there should be anything that is in error, I hope you could feel to forgive, as I am very limited in knowledge. I don't want to hurt anyone, unless with the truth.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Howard T. Edwards

1320 Aspen Street,
Danville, Va.

Dear Brother Spangler:

I have been reading some old Signs of the Times, and I feel that the Lord has showered a blessing down on me.

There is wonderful reading in the Signs: I believe the ones who write for it are moved with the Spirit from the Lord. It is not man's natural knowledge. Their writings and the Bible are right along together.

I feel sure and satisfied that we have the doctrine of our Lord and Saviour; but what troubles me is that I have never been able to say that I know I am one. I get weak and low spirited, which keeps me bowed down; but I believe the Lord has a purpose in it — to keep us humble.

I was overjoyed in reading Brother Gold's piece in the Signs. Such a calm, sweet spirit. We have some like that now: they will suffer rather than cause confusion. The Lord teaches his children; how wonderful!

We had a good meeting at Danville Church last night and this morning. Young Brother Smith was there and preached last night. We were happy to have him. Brother Dodd seems to be as well as usual. I feel the Lord has wonderfully blessed Danville Church. He has blessed us with good, sound preachers who are taught of him. As far as I know we are in peace. It is the dearest place on earth, to go to where there is peace; and hear good, sound preaching.

I wish you both God's richest blessings.

A sister in Christ, I hope,
Mary J. Patterson

ACCOUNT OF ANNUAL MEETING

1046 Cedarcrest Drive,
Huntington 5, W. Va.

Dear Brethren:

On Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, April 27, 28, and 29, 1962, the Harmony Primitive Baptist Church of Huntington, W. Va. was blessed to hold its Annual Meeting, according to appointment made the 5th Sunday in April, 1961.

We were privileged to have visiting with us our dearly beloved Elders J. P. Helms and William Holland, of the Pigg River Association, and George L. Weaver, of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting; along with several brethren, sisters and friends among our correspondents. Services were held Friday evening, all day Saturday, and in the forenoon on Sunday. All were well attended.

What wonderous love is this, when, as it were, heaven comes down our souls to greet, and glory crowns the mercy seat; and we can feel that love and sweet fellowship flowing from breast to breast, and see it in the faces of our brethren and sisters! We feel that it was through the mercy and loving kindness of God that we were privileged to have these precious elders, brethren and sisters with us. We hope we are thankful.

He has planted a love so great in the hearts of His people, they are made to leave their homes, and travel many miles over the mountains (His mountains) to be together, and enables them to dwell together in unity; all singing the same theme: Saved by the grace of God through faith (implanted by Him), and not by the works of man.

The preaching throughout was of one accord: proclaiming the power of God, the love he has for his people whom he chose before the foundation of the world; and sent his only begotted Son to redeem them with his own precious blood. What a comfort to know it has all been done, and nothing left to puny man.

Our next Annual Meeting will be held the 5th Saturday and Sunday in June, 1963, the Lord willing.

Elder J. R. Lane, Moderator
Mildred Stanley, Clerk

P. S. Dear Editors: I am sending this account of our meeting. If you deem it worthy of publication, we would be grateful.

Mildred Stanley

"HE HATH CEASED FROM HIS OWN WORKS"

"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." (Hebrews 4:9-10)

The children of God enter into that rest experimentaly when they have ceased from their own works. As long as one tries to establish his own righteousness by the deeds of the law, it is a certain sign that he is not in that rest.

Now, what causes you to cease from your own works? The flesh desires to be praised, or to receive credit for its deeds. It is natural for men to attempt to obtain eternal life by their own merits or deeds. It takes the power of Almighty God to turn you about. "— turn thou me, and I shall be turned: for thou art the Lord my God." (Jer. 31:18) It is God that gives you an eye of faith to view how filthy the works of the flesh are. "They are as filthy rags in the sight of God." (see Isaiah 64:6) "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." (Romans 3:20)

When you first saw and felt the burden of your lost and ruined condition, then you may have tried to work harder. But the harder you worked, the deeper you sank in your miseries and sorrows. "I sink in deep mire where there is no standing." (Psalm 69:2)

The burden of the law was too heavy for you. You found that you could not bear the yoke. You became weary and heavy laden, and was in such a helpless condition that you realized that there was nothing you could do to obtain this "Great Salvation". It is not by any works of righteousness which we have done. (see Titus 3:4-5) You could see death staring you in the face. Destruction lay before you. You looked away from self, and was made to cry unto the Lord for mercy. In due time, God visited you in his love. These words were spoken to you: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and by burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30) Notice that this text is directed to weary people who are looking for rest. Since you are in this class, then this scripture is a great consolation to you.

Chirst is revealed in you the hope of glory! Christ is your rest. This heavy burden left you. As the poet said, "Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to the cross I cling."

You have ceased from your own works and entered into that rest: not because you decided to, but because you were led to do so. "Draw me, we will run after thee." (Song of Solomon 1:4)

Yours in hope,
W. W. Hudson, Jr.
1508½ Country Club Road,
Bastrop, La.

DELAWARE ASSOCIATION

The brethren of Rock Springs Church, where the **Delaware Association** would be held, have found it best not to entertain the Association this year. Instead, they have appointed an all-day meeting, the Lord willing, on the 1st Sunday in September.

Our brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Charles B. Osborne, Clerk

MAIN OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The **Maine Old School Baptist Association** will convene, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, on August 31, September 1 and 2, 1962.

An invitation is extended to those of our faith and order, and interested friends.

Mrs. Sanford Bartlett, Clerk

CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **Contentnea Association** convenes with the church at North River, Carteret County, N. C., to begin Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1962, and continuing through Sunday.

Following are directions to the church: Follow highway number 70 through Morehead City, N. C. and Beauford, N. C. to Otway, N. C., and turn right; the church is about one-quarter mile.

E. M. Smith, Clerk

Bakersfield, Calif.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

You will find enclosed, $5.00 to renew my subscription for another two years. Will you please publish this announcement in the Signs:

The **Predestinarian Baptists** of Bakersfield, California, will hold their three-day Union Meeting September 28, 29, and 30, at the Odd Fellows Hall in East Bakersfield. All believers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Call Export 9-0429 or Empire 6-4317.

Elder T. R. Jefferson, Mod.
Mrs. Robert Wright, Clerk
108 Circle Dr.
Bakersfield, Calif.

PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **Pleasant Valley Association** convenes with Mount Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, beginning on Friday before the fourth Sunday in August, 1962, and continues through Sunday. The church is located about 6 miles West of Weslaco on Highway 63.

E. B. Ault, Clerk
Rt. 2, Box 23,
Weslaco, Texas

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To June 1, 1962)

Andy D. Hall, Ore.	$3.00
J. Taylor Boyd, Tex.	3.00

PLEASE NOTE

In the fourth verse and third line of Elder John Lee Smith's "Close To Thee" in the May, 1962 issue, the name David should be Daniel, as is obvious. Please mark the change in your copy — J. D. W.

Danville, Virginia **August, 1962**

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TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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THE SKEWARKY UNION

The **Skewarky Union** is appointed to be held at Hopland Church in Whitakers, N. C., on Highway 301, the 5th Sunday in July, 1962, and Friday and Saturday before.

Elder W. E. Grimes was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder Marvin Garner, alternate.

We extend a cordial invitation to ministers, brethren and friends.

E. C. Harrison, Union Clerk

THE CONTENTNEA UNION

The **Contentnea Union** will convene with Hancock's Church, near Wirtville, N. C., in Pitt County, on July 28th and 29th, 1962.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

EDITORIAL

JOHN 3:9; 5:18

"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

"We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not."

As I endeavor to write to you my prayer to God would be that He remember how frail that I am, and that He give my kindred in the Lord a patient spirit toward me, and a mantle of charity to throw around my narrow shoulders. Just because any two brethren differ does not give us the right to bear with wrong doing or wrong applications of the teachings of the Scriptures, nevertheless it is still true that no two men are agreed on the Bible. This calls for much soul searching and should be conducive to much patience and forbearance towards all saints. In almost all cases every question of importance among us has had much difference of opinion. On these questions I have known as lovely brethren on one side as the other. I would not draw a line between them as to their soundness, sincerity, and devotion to the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ.

To get before you the thoughts connected with the above texts, let me here insert another. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (John 1:8) Each of these passages mean what they say, although they are (in the letter) diametrically opposed to each other. As to what they say, I am sure that all believers will be agreed that it is the inspired writing of the apostle. When it comes to the application of what is said we often differ as to what or who is under consideration. Thus, our task is to apply both scriptures to the child of God; not to apply this one to a part of the child and the other to another part of the child. Working among "parts" is an exasperating business.

I only know one thing that is the subject of gospel address. That is the same thing that is the object of the New Birth, which is man. Any attempt to apply gospel teaching to a part of that man is as abortive as trying to apply the New Birth to a part of a man. I am not in the mind to do so, and would not be able if I did have the mind, to use better language than did the Master; his was the best, therefore, I accept without any reservation that the beneficiary of the New Birth is the man. Except for denunciations, God, nor his Son, nor his apostles, ever addressed the unregenerate or those that had not been born again. The Bible is silent in commanding anybody to be born again. But after the man is born again, then he becomes the subject of gospel address. Everything that is written belongs to him. All the commands, all the exhortations, all the admonitions, all the entreaties, all the promises, all the things left on record in the Bible, become his by reason of being born into the family of God.

Man is a triune being. As God is three-in-one, so, also is He one-in-three. As man is three-in-one, so, also is he one-in-three. As it was "us" that agreed to make man in His image (us); so, also, is that which was the object of His creation a character that was composed of three. This man is said to have three component identities, either of which is referred to as being the whole. This man is the object of salvation. As he came from the creative hand of God he was not spiritual. He had life, but it was natural life; that life was suited to his surroundings in his pristine morning of life. He did not, in his creation, receive any thing from the immortality of God; this creation was not the bringing of **something** from the bosom of God and putting it with **something** that God created, thus making the man an eternal outlet of **something** that He had had concealed in His Deity. The man, the whole man, was created and made out of the mass of God's natural creation. He had a soul; he had a spirit; he had a body. These three component parts made up the man; made him in his entirety.

We do not speak of three Gods. Bible evidence will not permit such disparage-

ment of the godhead. Human understanding and human grasp of things divine will never enable us to speak of Him as being a three-in-one God without running into difficulty, and without coming to a misunderstanding by our brethren. Nevertheless, He is spoken of as being God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, and yet we find Him as being One born and One given; still further, we find His office work as each of these three Beings overlapping to where we are not able to put our finger on Him in any realm and stay the work of Him as the Son or the Spirit.

This Supreme Being said, "Let us make man in our image." I have hoped and begged that the Lord would grant me light to expound what I see in this creature of His as being in His image. So far I have felt my inadequacy to get across the grandeur and beauty of what was, and is presently, being done for that creature. In the midst of this little epistle to the saints let me pause long enough just here to say that my deep and main concern is not in what is to be the disposition of the non-elect. That there is a non-elect, yes; that God's disposition of them will be final and just and eternal; that this disposition of them is not to be construed as being annihilation, but that their woe will be as lasting as the joy and felicity of the saints. Otherwise, I do not care to enter into lengthy discussions of their state. This man I desire to deal with as the object of salvation. Once again let me urge that the man was made; that God created the earth out of nothing (creation is the bringing into existence that which did not previously exist), and from the mass of creation He made the man. Again let me urge that God did not bring **something** from His eternal abode and infuse **it** into the man as a part of him so that it could be said that he was an eternal child, or that it could be said that he was a part created and part immortal or eternal as God was.

This man, which God made and placed under law to Him, violated that law and fell into condemnation, fell into death and the consequences of that death. He fell all the way, HE FELL INTO DEATH IN HIS ENTIRETY, SOUL, BODY AND SPIRIT. He did not have left a single faculty for the throwing off of that condemnation, for the quickening of himself back into the life he had before the violation (which, if he did have, would be an absurdity), for the re-establishing of that relation that he had with his Creator. It was no more and no less than this man that all the promises, all the types and shadows were given to, and tended towards.

It was this man that fell and became a sinner; it was this man, in his entirety, in his soul and body and spirit, in the aggregate, that lost all perception of godliness, all desire towards godliness, and all ability to do godliness. Bleak, yes; comfortless the thought, yes; without hope, yes, but in the work of Christ, in the finished making of that man in the image of God, which will be consummated in the resurrection of the dead, there is joy unspeakable and full of glory awaiting that man, for it was this man, the man which fell and became a sinner, that the angel had in mind when he declared that "she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins", and it was this man that Christ had in mind when he said, "I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance", and it was this man that Paul had in mind when he declared "that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners."

It was this kind of a man that came to Jesus at night. This man is the man that is coming to Him today; not any difference in the two, save about two thousand years in time. That man was told then, and this man is being told today, the same thing, to wit, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God." I have said earlier that the man is spoken of as the whole even

though it is the flesh or the spirit or the soul under consideration — in the same manner that God is spoken of as the whole, even though we are considering Him only in His creation or redemption or revelation.

Let us suppose, dear brethren, that John had in mind a part of the man; let us suppose that in one case He was talking about the spirit of man (that is, to the **part** that was the object of the New Birth), and that in the other case He was talking to the unborn **part** of a man. All these things were written to the **we** and the **us** and the **them** and **those.** If the apostle is talking **about** the body or **to** the body when he says, to wit, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us", then, when we say **that we do have sin,** we are not deceived any longer, and, reason how we may, we have the body in as good condition as the spirit — both alive in Jesus Christ, both with a living relationship to the precepts and commandments of the Lord, both with truth dwelling in them. On the other hand, if the apostle was talking **to** and **about** the quickened or born again spirit of the man, he was writing to **"that** which is born of God doth not commit sin," but I would kindly call to mind that it is **"whosoever** is born of God doth not commit sin."

"If we say that we have not sinned" His word is not in us. "If we say that we have no sin", the truth is not in us. Either in the past or at the present, the child of God can not say this. Both "His word" and the "truth" come from the same root word, and mean the same thing. It is the same "we" under consideration here as it is all through holy writ. It is "I" that sins; it is "I" that does not sin. Often my loved ones tell me that I speak strange things. Yes, for

"How strange is the course that a Christian must steer;
How perplexed is the path he must tread."

for,

"When his pardon is signed and his peace is procured,
From that moment his conflict begins."

This contradiction accompanies him his whole journey through, and yet it is all his journey. He feels the indwelling of sin; he feels to rejoice in Jesus Christ that he is presently delivered from the body of death. How surprising to find that sin still dwells in the man; how joyful to find that it does not reign any longer. It is the same man, the same child of God that has these exercises of mind. The battleground between the flesh and the spirit is the child of God, and it is between opposing forces, both of which are he or she. Paul and John wrote the same thing, only they used different language to convey it. One said, "Sin shall not have dominion over you", the other said, "Whosoever (definitely, not **what** and not **that)** is born of God doth not commit sin". How pleasant it is to observe the same spirit of reasoning in the two, for, if not the same thing is taught by both, we certainly have one of them saying that the other is not born of God, that he is a child of the devil; we have the other saying that the one is still under the dominion of sin. Let us remember that there is a vast difference between sin reigning in the believer and sin dwelling in him; let us remember that David reigned in the kingdom of Israel, but that the Philistine still dwelt in the land.

Before we were born sin reigned. Its realm was the man; its dominion reached into soul and body and spirit. We were subjects of sin and could not and would not quit it. If we will remember that it is a man all the way, much of our difficulty will disappear. The same man that was born the first time is born again. The language of the blessed Son of God will not allow of any other interpretation. This man (Nicodemus) had been born once, but, in order for him to enter the kingdom of God, he must be born again. It is not a renovation of the first; it is not a remodeling of an old building; it is a New Birth.

Now who will say that the first nature of that man is removed? Not I; and

neither will Paul and Peter and James and John and Jude. That body is still there, and it is still dead, and it is still living on fleshly or dead things. This it will continue to do while it is this side of the corporeal death of it. This is what we got in the first or fleshly birth, and this which we got in that birth will continue just that, no more, no less, the flesh, and nothing but the flesh, until it is dissolved in the death of the body. That which is born of the flesh is flesh. How can I interpret that? O Father give me grace just here. This fleshly birth came about by fleshly work. The work of nature in our parents brought this birth about, thus the Saviour used good language when he said, "That which is born of the flesh (the workings of flesh) is flesh." Fleshly work begets a work of flesh. Now, "That which is born of the spirit is spirit," and this is a spiritual work. The body or the nature is not born again, but the same man that was born of a fleshly birth or by fleshly work, is now born again by a New Birth or a spiritual work.

The man in his flesh (body) is not able to render any service unto God. He is the tree that cannot bear good fruit. In his New Birth the tree is made good, and as a good tree it can not bear evil fruit (Matt. 7:18); even so, we, the children of God, can not, and do not, bear sin as the crop of grace. While the old nature of the tree (man) is still present, the goodness of the Husbandman is such that the trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord (Isa. 61:3), bring forth after their kind. This weakness, or inability to render good, is found all through the Bible (Matt. 26:-41; Rom. 8:3), as well as being felt in the lives of God's children.

This man is composed of soul and body and spirit. In the New Birth he is given eternal life. Before this he was alive unto death and did not and could not refrain from sinning; after this, he is alive unto God, or unto holiness, and he can not continue in sin. God forbid that he do this, and it is true and certain this is forbid of God; not only in the written word, but if we continue in sin as our manner of living, it is dead certain and sure that we are of the devil and His Spirit has never made us spiritual, never regenerated us in our spirit; and the Church of the living God is commanded to leave out from communion any that still live in adultery, in wantonness, in drunkenness, in rebellion to God.

We can not continue in sin. If we have been born again, we have quit sinning, we can not go on in our old manner of living. How grievious to find that there is still sin in our members, but while in the midst of this realization that we are bearing about a body that is dead because of sin, we are also given the spirit (mark that word well) of adoption. And while this work is the work of the Holy Spirit, it is in our spirit. It is our spirit that has the "spirit of adoption"; it is "ye that have not received the spirit of bondage again", and it is "Ye that have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba Father." Now follow the apostle: The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God (Rom. 8:16). This is present salvation, yea this is that salvation which is of the Lord. It is time and timely. I do not know how that I would get along if it was not in time. I am beset by so many difficulties; I have such a heavy load carrying my former bed (my flesh, my place that I rested on while in nature's freedom, my dead body) that I wonder will I get to the place of laying it down. Not only is it in time, but it is timely, oh, so timely, even so much so that oftimes when I am without strength that Christ appears to me as being crucified for the ungodly. Having been delivered from sin as a habit of living, and yet finding it present everywhere I turn, I am made to cry out, "O Lord, my Abba, my Father"; and to have him, as I humbly hope, to bear my despairing spirit witness that I am now his child; that he blesses me with the Spirit of adoption, enabling me to rest assured that the dead body that I am

bearing about is my body, and that one glad tomorrow I shall be adopted in body into the glorious kingdom of heaven, and then shall the full fruition of being made in his likeness come about.

In conclusion, with the brother in England many years ago, "I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I want to be, I am not what I hope I shall be, but I thank God I am not what I once was." I once loved sin and I made it manifest by the life that I lived. The time came when I died to the love of sin. When that time came, I quit living in sin. I have not, to my sorrow and my shame, quit sinning, but I have, as I hope, quit it as a life. Not having quit it, and yet having to serve, as I sometimes hope, another, gives me courage to cry unto him, knowing that the work begun will be consummated in the leavening of the whole to the praise of his grace in the which I shall have gotten rid of the burden of carrying my dead body, in the which I shall be brought from a poor character in which sin still dwells (but does not reign), to where sin is not known nor felt, in the which I will not need the witnessing of the Spirit to my spirit; in the which I shall be all that I have hoped and desired and aspired to while struggling here below.

I have written this at the request of my yoke fellow in the ministry, Elder W. B. Barnes.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." II Samuel 23:5.

In the first verse of this chapter it is said that "these be the last words of David," who was also declared to be "the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel." The last words of a man are usually considered to be of great importance. When a man makes his last Will and Testament, for instance, he almost without exception prefaces it by declaring that all previous wills and testaments are revoked and made null and void. This is done in order to give emphasis to and make certain of the fact that regardless of what he may have done and said previously, it is to be disregarded entirely, and only his last disposition is to be of value and effect and regarded as final and binding. David said, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." The standard set up for those who ruled over Israel in the days of Moses was that they should be "able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness." Ex. 18:21. David had not measured up to these standards, for he had coveted Uriah's wife, and in order that he might have her he became a man of blood by sending Uriah to the front of the battle, that he might be killed. Later when David wanted to build an house for God, he was forbidden, and God said to him. "When thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom forever." This house, or temple, was reserved unto Solomon to build, and what a temple it was! The like of it was never before nor since known on earth, and when the Queen of Sheba beheld it she exclaimed, "The half was not told me." As wonderful as it was, however, it could not begin to compare with the wonder and grandeur of that spiritual workmanship of God, the true church, of which it was only a type, and which God created in Christ Jesus before the foundations of the earth were laid.

"The God of Israel" having said, "He

that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God," David had to confess that his house, or life, was not so with God. This strikes at the very heart of the matter for all of us, for we have all come short of the glory of God and like sheep have gone astray. But let us weigh carefully David's words and see if we cannot find some basis for hope. "Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure." How wonderful to contemplate that while he had no standing before God in his own right, by and through the mercy and grace of God in his Head, (Christ Jesus), an everlasting covenant had been made which embraced all things and was absolutely sure and certain of fulfillment in every detail. As a member of the mystical body of Christ, he stood safe and secure, and there was no possibility for him to utterly fall away. He whose wisdom comprehended the end from the beginning, provided for all things whatsoever cometh to pass and, therefore, there was nothing insecure or uncertain about his infinite plan.

With the help of God we shall endeavor to trace out for our readers something more of the mysteries of Him who doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or need ask, what or why doest thou? One of God's inspired prophets, centuries before the advent of Christ into the world in the flesh, was enabled to set forth his coming and to portray in type his sufferings and death, and the glory that would follow, in the following words: "Thus saith the Lord God; I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent: In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell." Ezek. 17:22-23.

As we understand it, the highest branch of the high cedar represents David as king of Israel, who sprang from the tribe of Judah, the most faithful of all the tribes of Israel, and, therefore, it was the high cedar. God said he would "set it," or fix and order it so nothing would interfere or cause it to go amiss. God also said he would crop from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and would "plant it upon an high mountain, and eminent." These young twigs evidently typified the house of David, and God's plan, in the fulness of time, was to crop a tender one, which signified Jesus, who was declared to be the offspring of David, according to the flesh. God was to deliver up his only begotten Son, Jesus, to be crucified in ignomy and shame for the sins of his people. In this everlasting covenant, entered into between God the Father and God the Son, in the counsels of eternity, all things were ordered and sure. Nothing was unaccounted for or left out. The Son of God was wise and had figured out all the cost before coming into the world, and God had determined before hand not to leave his soul in hell, or to suffer his Holy One to see corruption; therefore he could not be holden of death, but would arise in splendor and power and great glory, in justification of his people. Thus was he planted "upon an high mountain and eminent." He was indeed exalted "in the mountain of the height of Israel," and it was he who brought forth boughs and bore fruit. He was truly a goodly cedar and under his shadow dwells fowl of every wing, his people in every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue. What a safe place in which to dwell. The Psalmist also said, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

Let us trace still further God's mysterious purposes in his dealings with his servant David. If we will turn to the first chapter of Matthew and read "The book of the generation of Jesus

Christ," we will find that he came unto the world through the lineage of David and Solomon, whom David begat of her that had been the wife of Uriah. Surely, no one will contend that so great and important an event was left to mere chance, but rather that it was determined upon and that every link in the chain was forged and welded according to the predestinated purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, that no part of the whole could fail to fulfill its part, since no chain can be any stronger than its weakest link; therefore the wisdom and power of Almighty God was at stake and nothing could come short of fulfilling all that was embraced in his purpose. As the Sovereign Creator of heaven and earth, and all that in them is, had determined before hand that the ultimate end of all things should be for his own glory, and for the lifting of the name of Jesus on high, it illy becomes any of his creatures to call in question his wisdom, or to reflect in any way whatsoever upon what he has done. Our late brethren in England declared concerning God's decree that "God hath decreed in himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever come to pass; yet so as thereby is God neither the author or sin, nor hath fellowship with any therein; nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor yet is the liberty of contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established, in which appears His wisdom in disposing all things, and power and faithfulness in accomplishing His decree."

It would appear that David himself was in full accord with this for he made no attempt whatever to blame God for his sin, but confessed freely his own guilt, saying, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest." Psalm 51:4 He realized full well how vile he was, for he continued his wailing by saying, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

The experience of the Lord's people is also clearly set forth by David in the 139th Psalm, where he says, "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest altogether." With the burden of condemnation resting heavily upon him, he continues by saying, "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."

We believe this language expresses the innermost feelings of those whom God has led into a right understanding of his precious truth; therefore they cannot have fellowship with those who walk in darkness and take refuge in the doctrine of predestination as a cloak for their sins. God held Adam accountable for the violation of his law, and we may rest assured that God's people will have to give account unto him for the deeds done in the body. John says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Let us, therefore, come boldly to the throne of grace, acknowledging our guilt before God, and rejoice that mercy is meted out by and through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

In conclusion, we wish to emphasize the fact that in this "everlasting cove-

nant" all things were ordered, and sure, and nothing can take place contrary to the will of Him who declared, "Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." The faith of our fathers must needs have been tried, tested and proven, in order that it might come down to us as the unfeigned faith of God's elect, and the more it is tried in the furnace of affliction the more precious it will become to us. We see in the *all things* which were ordered, and sure, in this everlasting covenant, *predestination, election, resurrection, final preservation of the saints in glory,* and all that pertains to them. All that had anything to do with Israel's going down into Egypt, and remaining in servitude and bondage for four hundred years, was embraced in the mysterious purpose of God, but when they were brought up by an high and mighty hand and delivered at the Red Sea, God was glorified. While Joseph's brethren intended evil against him, God meant it for good and his overruling providence brought all things in subjection to him. Jesus said concerning himself, "The Son of man indeed goeth as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born." While the prophets of old foretold the sufferings and death of Jesus, they likewise spoke of his resurrection and the glory that should follow. If we will carefully examine the genealogy of our Lord, according to the flesh, as recorded by Matthew, we will discover that blood of every hue flowed through his veins, which enabled him to shed that blood, or lay down his life, for Jew and Gentile alike, representing sinners in every kindred, tribe and tongue. Not a single one of his was left out, but all were embraced in that everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure.

And we like to think that the God of our own little individual life has appointed all things therein, and that we shall in due time be brought forth more than conquerors, through him that loved us and gave himself for us. Therefore death nor any other creature or thing shall ever be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. David said, "for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." This is all embracing, with nothing to be added to it, and neither can anything be taken from it; it is so full and complete that there is not even anything more to be desired. It is good indeed when we can walk about Zion and see this perfection, beholding her towers and marking well her bulwarks. We can then look upon her solemnities and "thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ships pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us."

All we can do is to hint at the significance of our text, and we are glad it has been said that "a word to the wise is sufficient." God's children have been made to see and feel the great mystery of these precious things, which have been hid from the wise and prudent of this world and revealed unto babes. Moses called upon heaven and earth to witness to the matchless glory of God, and then said, "ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." Paul with all his command of various languages could not put it into words, for he said, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." May we be giv-

en to see and behold that in Him all fulness dwells!

(Editorial by Elder R. L. Dodson April, 1947.)

ORDINATION LETTER

Carteret County, N. C., March 18, 1962.

Hadnots Creek Primitive Baptist Church, while seated in Conference with the approval of brethren and sisters from our sister churches with whom we correspond, on February 17, 1962 requested that a presbytery be called to examine Brother Jabez Rhue and if found qualified, to ordain him to the full work of the ministry.

The Church also agreed while seated in conference on March 17, 1962, with many of our brethren from sister churches seated with us to call Brother Jesse R. Rhue to the office of deacon of this church if found qualified by a presbytery.

The following Elders and Deacons assembled at the above named Church on March 18, 1962: Elders Z. L. Rhue, D. R. Pyrtle, Zeb Rhodes, J. T. Prescott, Deacons J. D. Cagle, B. B. Hogan, and G. B. Hawks.

After introduction by song and prayer by Elder Rhodes the presbytery was organized as follows: Elected Elder Z. L. Rhue to serve as moderator and G. B. Hawks as Clerk, Elder D. R. Pyrtle to offer the ordination prayer, Elder J. T. Prescott to examine the brethren and Elder Z. L. Rhue to deliver the charge.

Deacon J. D. Cagle was chosen by the Church as spokesman and was called upon by the presbytery to deliver the brethren into the hands of the presbytery.

After being examined and found qualified Elder Pyrtle being blessed to pray wonderfully the ordination prayer, and in the laying on of hands Brother Jabez Rhue was entitled to all the ordinances of an ordained Elder of the old line predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church, and Brother Jesse R. Rhue was an ordained Deacon of the above named Church.

Elder Z. L. Rhue in delivering the charge to Brother Jabez Rhue read 2nd Timothy, 4th chapter, 1st through 5th verses, dwelling upon the scriptures very clearly set forth the teachings embraced in them pertaining to that of the walk of an Elder of the ministry.

Reading from 1st Timothy, 3rd chapter, verses 8th through 13th, dwelling upon this scripture very clearly set forth the duties and and walk of a Deacon of the Primitive Baptist Faith.

Deacon J. D. Cagle then delivered the brethren back into the hands of the Church, Brother Jabez Rhue an ordained Elder and Brother Jesse R. Rhue an ordained Deacon.

Moved and carried that Deacon B. B. Hogan write the credentials for Elder Jabez Rhue.

Conference dismissed with prayer by Elder Z. L. Rhue.

Done by order of the Presbytery.

Elder Z. L. Rhue, Moderator
Deacon G. B. Hawks, Clerk

OBITUARIES

JAMES W. TRUITT

James W. Truitt, of Snow Hill, Maryland, was born June 2, 1900, and died after a brief illness in Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, Maryland, April 15, 1962. He was the son of William K. and Gertrude W. Truitt.

He is survived by his widow, Agnes Lynch Truitt; a daughter, Mrs. Donald Yourison of Wilmington, Delaware; and four grandchildren. Also by a brother, Elijah P. Truitt, of Snow Hill, Md.; and a sister, Mrs. Edward Mariner, of Berlin, Md.

It was the writer's privilege to visit many times in the lovely home of our departed friend. His home was open at all times to the Old School Baptists, and he manifested in many ways his love for them, and his interest in the things of the Lord. On one occasion, after I had spoken in the Snow Hill meeting house on the subject, "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other", he wept and said, "That is what I have been wanting to hear a long time."

He was an excellent husband, father, neighbor, and citizen; and, above all, has left evidence that he feared God, and loved our blessed Saviour. Those who fall asleep in Jesus, have more to die for than to live for. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

Funeral services were conducted at the Snow Hill Old School Baptist meeting house by Elder W. D. Griffin, of Newark, Delaware. Interment was in the church cemetery.

Written by request,
D. V. Spangler

GROVER CLEVELAND ADKINS

Brother Grover Cleveland Adkins passed away October 30, 1960, making his stay on earth more than 75 years. He died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Edna Oakley.

He was married to Mary Lessie Draper February 2, 1910; she preceded him in death. To this union were born 6 children, 4 girls and 2 boys. The following survive: Mrs. Effie Coleman, Mrs. Viola Adams, Mrs. Mildred

Thompson, Mrs. Edna Oakley, Dover Adkins, and Wilden Henry Adkins, all of Martinsville, Va.

Brother Adkins asked for a home in Camp Branch Church the first Sunday in June 1960; and was baptized by Elder Rufus Brown. He served his church faithfully until his death.

His funeral was held at the McKee Funeral Home by Elder J. E. Burgess and Elder Cecil Turner; and his body was laid to rest in Roselawn Cemetery at Martinsville under a beautiful mound of flowers.

MRS. ANNIE P. LOVE

Mrs. Annie Pilgreen Love was born in Union Parish, Louisiana, September 24, 1877, and departed this life May 14, 1962. She leaves to mourn her passing, two sons: Firman Love, Ruston, La.; and George Love, Linville, La.; two daughters: Mrs. Lizzie Shelton, Hamburg, Ark.; and Mrs. Winnie Sones, West Monroe, La. Surviving also are 9 grandchildren and 20 great grandchildren.

Sister Love was a very devoted member of Union Primitive Baptist Church, near Linville, La. She was a widow who had adverse circumstances in caring for and schooling her children, but she attained this great task by the wonderful blessings of the Lord.

She joined the church between 50 and 60 years ago, and proved to be faithfully devoted to the church, the doctrine, and the dear brethren, as well as her friends and neighbors. She believed the one and only gospel of God our Saviour, which is the power of God unto salvation to his precious children, who are taught of the Lord to know and love this comforting doctrine.

So I would say to her dear loved ones, weep not as those who have no hope, because the precious fruits of love, mercy, grace, and the light and leadership of God's Holy Spirit was so manifest in her life, that it clearly manifested her as one of the Lord's humble little children. The Lord has received her spirit unto himself, and her body is asleep in the tomb awaiting the day of the Lord's second coming and his saints shall arise from the tomb, and the Lord shall say, "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Her funeral was conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder W. W. Hudson, Jr., at Liberty Baptist Church, near Linville, La., with a very large and attentive congregation and many flowers, which indicated the near ties she had with many of her brethren, relatives and friends.

May the Lord, in his abundant mercy, bless all those who mourn her passing. May you be comforted in the fact that she is forever delivered from the sufferings of this life. Your unworthy brother in hope through the saving grace and abundant mercy of our Lord.

R. W. Rhodes

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst by death our beloved sister, Mary Sharpe, on October 16, 1961.

She was born on April 10, 1869, making her stay on earth more than 92 years.

Sister Sharpe was truly a wonderful mother to her family, and sister in the church. She was a school teacher in her early life, and remained true to her profession as long as she lived. She was faithful to the needs of the household of faith and always had a kind word for everyone. Her honesty and neighborly traits were among her many virtues. Her hospitality was known by all who knew her. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor Elder D. V. Spangler at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church amidst a host of friends and neighbors, some of whom attended her classes when she was a school teacher, who showed their last tribute of respect.

We, the church at Dan River, greatly feel our loss which is Sister Sharpe's eternal gain. We extend our sympathy to her remaining relatives, and especially her son, Mr. Harold Turner, who is the only surviving child.

THEREFORE, Be it resolved that we bow in humble submission to Him who works all things after the council of His own will. "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be His name." Furthermore

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be recorded on our church record, a copy sent to the son, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church at her regular meeting on the fourth Sunday in March, 1962.

Unworthily her Brother in hope,
Coley S. Strader

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to call from time unto eternity, our beloved Sister Ardlie (Bird) Booth, who was born February 7, 1895, in Putnam County, West Virginia, and departed this life January 8, 1961. She was united in marriage February 4, 1922, to Thomas H. Booth; and united with Providence Primitive Baptist Church July 26, 1942. Funeral services were conducted by Elder Veldon Linn on January 11, 1961. Therefore be it

RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the will of our God, who doeth all things well. Our loss is great in the passing of our dear sister, but we feel assured that our loss is her eternal gain. And be it

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be spread upon our church records; a copy tendered to the bereaved family; and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference.

H. J. Bird, Pastor
V. L. Byrnside, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It has pleased God in his infinite wisdom and sovereign mercy, to call from time into His embrace, our beloved Brother, Deacon Walter L. Bird, on November 8, 1961. He united with Providence Primitive Baptist Church November 26, 1920, and was baptized by the late Elder W. I. Wade. He was ordained to the office of Deacon and appointed church trustee, which offices he filled in a spirit of meekness, serving faithfully. Funeral services were conducted in Providence Church House by the writer, after which he was laid to rest beside his wife to await the Master's call. Therefore be it

RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the will of God, who was pleased to call our brother from his suffering here below. We have sustained a great loss, but we feel that our loss is his great gain. And

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be spread on our church records; a copy be tendered the bereaved family; and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference.

H. J. Bird, Pastor
V. L. Byrnside, Clerk

DEACON G. C. WREN

Deacon G. C. Wren was born in Washington County, Texas, February 10, 1886; and passed away in San Jacinta Hospital, Baytown, Texas, January 29, 1962.

He leaves to mourn their loss, his wife, of the home address; 8 daughters: Mrs. Belle Sartor and Mrs. Weldon Sartor, Arlington, Texas; Mrs. Jack Comer, San Antonio, Texas; Mrs. Billie Sartor, Baytown, Texas; Mrs. Cecil Day, Mesquite, Texas; Mrs. W. T. Hardison, Baytown, Texas; Mrs. Burnell Jones, Fort Worth, Texas; and Mrs. Bertha Winkels, Anson, Texas. And one son, A. B. Miller of Baytown, Texas; two sisters: Mrs. Vada Beaver and Mrs. Lou Martin, Teague, Texas; four brothers: J. W. of Kilgore, Texas; G. W. of Teague, Texas; H. B. of Pasadena, Texas; and C. E. of Houston, Texas. Also twenty-four grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

Brother Wren farmed near Teague, Texas, most of his life. In 1957 he moved to Baytown on account of ill health. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church in Octber, 1923, and was ordained deacon in 1932. He and Sister Wren united with the Fort Worth Church in 1945, and he died a member of that church, and we believe in the faith which is of God. He was sound in doctrine and in discipline, and was kind; not out-spoken, but not afraid to speak at the proper time. We feel that he served his church well as a deacon for almost 30 years. He left a lovely family. You would not know who were step-brothers and sisters unless you were told. He was "Daddy" to all of them.

We would remind Sister Wren and the children of the words of the Apostle, "Sorrow not as for those who have no hope." Brother Wren died in hope of a life beyond the grave. We believe he is now waiting for the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus, when all the saints will be clothed with perfection; even see Him, be like Him, and be satisfied.

Funeral services were conducted at Ham Brothers Funeral Chapel, Teague, Texas, January 31st, by the writer, and Orval Barger, of the Missionary Baptists, and friend of the family. May the God of all grace comfort his family and his brethren and sisters. Sent in by request.

C. U. Landers

MRS. ZETHA ROWELL

Sister Rowell was a member of Rehobbath Primitive Baptist Church, where she and her husband, Brother Arthur L. Rowell, were loved and devoted members for about twenty years. They attended church services regularly far and near as long as their health would permit. Sister Rowell was partially paralyzed several years ago, and was a semi-invalid until the end came on December 9, 1961.

She is survived by her husband; one son, John Lee Rowell; two daughters, Mrs. C. C. Darden and Mrs. Glen Lewis; two brothers, Willie Primm and John Primm; three sisters, Mrs. Nannie Mitchell, Mrs. Hattie Smith, and Mrs. Cassie Thompson. And also by 5 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren.

She and Brother Rowell entertained many of the dear brethren and friends every opportunity they had, and were delighted to have them in their home. Dear ones, it is sad indeed to give her up, but we are comforted by the precious and gracious promises of God to his people. She is only gone to sleep in the tomb

until the Lord comes again, to call all his children home to heaven. Her spirit has already gone to God who gave it. So dear family and loved ones, weep not as those who have no hope; she is gone from the evil to come and is free from troubles and sorrows.

The funeral was conducted at Friendship Methodist Church near where they lived, and near where Sister Rowell was reared. The writer, together with Elder E. J. Lambert and Elder J. L. Smith were in the services, in the presence of a large and attentive congregation, with much manifestation of the high regard and respect she was held in.

May God bless and comfort Brother Rowell and family, and all who mourn her passing.

Your unworthy brother in hope,
R. W. Rhodes

JAMES D. BETHARDS

As it pleased God to take from our midst, our dear brother James D. Bethards on Dec. 21, 1961, at the age of seventy-nine, we bow in humble submission to the will of our God.

Brother Bethards was born May 10, 1882, and his parents were the late Littleton and Cornelia Dennis Bethards.

He is survived by his wife Mrs. Chloe Timmons Bethards; three sons, Raymond, James, and Cletus Bethards, of Berlin, Md.; three daughters, Mrs. Rada Jones of Powellsville, Md., Mrs. Thelma Littleton and Mrs. Belva Littleton, both of Berlin, Md.; seven grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Brother Bethards early in life asked for a home with the Indiantown Church, and was baptized by the late Elder T. M. Poulson on September 1, 1907. He was later appointed deacon, and served as long as his health would permit. He had not been well for many years, and in his last few years of his stay here was not able to attend the meetings very often.

Funeral services were held at the Burbage Funeral Home in Berlin by the writer, and he was laid to rest in the Riverside Cemetery.

We feel that our beloved brother had spent his appointed time here; and it is our humble prayer that it may please our God to reconcile those left to mourn the loss of this dear one, and to feel that their loss is his eternal gain.

Elder Arthur R. Warren

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 130 DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1962 NO. 9

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/62
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

1508½ Country Club Road
Bastrop, La.

"I will hear what the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace unto his people." (Psalm 85:8)

How wonderful and comforting it is when the Lord speaks peace unto our souls. It is most precious and sweet, especially when we have experienced a previous season of being troubled and overcome with much sorrow. The storm clouds have raged, and we cannot view the light of the sun. Oh! How miserable is this horrible state of darkness!

In due time the Lord commanded the storm to cease. ("He holds the wind in his fists. Proverbs 30:4) He commanded the light to shine in our souls. How sweet is this peaceful, calm state.

Yet, there are times when it seems that our friends have turned against us, and it grieves us, and causes us much sorrow. But, if we have peace with our souls, and feel the presence of this wonderful God, then it does not matter if the world and all our friends have turned against us.

Oh! may our prayer be as this: "O, Lord, I want not the smiles of men. I want not the applause of men. But I want thy smiles, I want thy presence, I want thy peace; because I feel to know that thy art my all in all. I feel to know that thou art a merciful God; and I beg thee, O Lord, to give me a few crumbs of this mercy which flows from thy mercy seat. Oh! Lord, I pray that thou will speak thy sweet peace unto my poor soul. Have mercy, O Lord. Amen.

I had much rather have peace with my soul, and have everyone turned against me — than to be troubled in my soul, and to feel that God had forsaken me, and then have the friendship and applause of men.

In other words, it is much more miserable to feel that God hath forsaken us, than to have our friends forsake us.

The applause of men cannot help a troubled soul who feels forsaken by God. Christ said, "My peace I leave with you." The peace of God in our souls is sufficient. It is enough.

Oh! May we not look to man for comfort, peace or guidance. May we look to the Lord, and look to Him alone. As David said, "I will lift up my eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help." (Psalm 121:1)

Yours in hope,
(Elder) W. W. Hudson, Jr.

"THE LORD'S PORTION IS HIS PEOPLE"

By the Late Elder L. L. Schenck

"The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in a waste howling wilderness; he led him about, and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of his eye. As the eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them, upon her wings: So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." (Deut. 32:9-13)

At the beginning of this 32nd chapter of Deuteronomy we notice that heaven and earth are called to record what is written here. Therefore it is of the utmost importance that we give heed to the doctrine herein set forth. It is a song which God commanded Moses to write for a memorial to the children of Israel, so I wish to dwell somewhat on that portion that I have recorded here from the 9th to the 13th verses, inclusive.

Taking each clause of this divine song in its order, it is interesting and comforting to know that the Lord has a portion and that portion is his people, and that there is no power that can ever dispossess him of that portion nor any part of it. Christ declared, "My sheep hear my voice. They know me and they follow me and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish neither shall any pluck them out of my hand for my Father which gave them me is greater than all, and none shall be able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." It is a matter of great consolation to these care worn pilgrims to know the Lord's portion. His people are secure. They are not only found of him, led about and instructed of him, but they are kept by his power: kept as the apple of his eye. Jacob is named "Israel." He found him in a waste howling wilderness and in a desert land. And there he finds all the Israel of God. They, as Jacob, are led about and instructed. "All thy people shall be taught of the Lord and great shall be the peace of thy children."

The fact that they are led, precludes the thought that they are directing their own steps. The way of man is not in himself. It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Much is written in the Scripture concerning the leading of His people. "He calleth his own sheep by name and **leadeth** them out." **"Lead** me to the rock that is higher than I." "He **leadeth** me beside the still waters." This is enough to confirm the fact that none can attain unto this exalted state except they be led, thus refuting the idea that one can become a child of God at one's own pleasure or, in other words, to assume it is a matter of our own volition whether we are a child of God or a child of the devil. No child can choose its own parent. Jesus did lead Jacob, although it is taught universally among the denominations of anti-Christ that the Lord must have help in the salvation of sinners. The Scriptures declare the Lord works **alone.** Christ came **alone** into this dreary world. He trod the wine press of the wrath of Almighty God **alone,** and of the people that were none to help. In the beginning God **alone** did create the heavens and the earth. This truth is most generally accepted, so Jesus has said, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me."

Jacob and Esau were twin brothers and were set as a symbol of the elect and the non-elect. The love and the hatred of God was fixed upon them before they were born. It cannot therefore be argued that their conduct can be given credit for the love of God toward Jacob, nor the hatred of God toward Esau, for the children, "Being not yet born neither having done any good or evil that the purpose of God according to election might stand." It might be said with propriety that the conduct of Esau was more commendable in the sight of men than that of Jacob, but God's purpose in all things must stand. His wills and shalls can never be revoked. Esau was sent by his father, Isaac to the field (which represents the world) to take him some venison and make him some savory meat such as he loved. Rebekah overhearing the words of Isaac, called her son Jacob and instructed him to go to the flock, which represents the church, the sheepfold of God, and take two good kids and she would make his father some savory meat such as he loved. Her instructions were carried out to the letter, and when he returned with the kids she dressed them and prepared the savory meat, and she took the skins of the kids and with them she covered the hands of Jacob and the smooth of his neck, and in this deceptive way she sent him to Isaac with the savory meat.

And in this deception he came to his blind father and declared, "I am thy very son Esau." It is quite contrary to human reasoning that the Lord would lead Jacob or any of his little ones in this deceptive way, but the purpose of God must be considered. It was the purpose of God that the one he loved and not the one he hated should receive the father's blessing. It was also the purpose of God that this loved savory meat should come from the flock and not from the world; for this savory meat taken from the flock must represent the flesh and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. That is the meat and the drink of God's people. Jesus said, "Except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood ye have no part in me."

Jacob drew near with the savory meat. Isaac heard his voice but he could not discern by sight for he was blind. Being skeptical he asked, "Art thou my son Esau and he said, "I am." Isaac commanded him to come near that he might feel of him, for Esau was a hairy man but Jacob was a smooth man. Isaac felt his hands and his neck which were covered with the skin of the kids and he said, "The voice is Jacob's voice but the hands are the hands of Esau." The voice of God's little ones is that which betrays them. Christ speaking to his bride says, "Let me hear thy voice, let me see thy countenance for sweet is thy voice and thy countenance is comely."

How many of the Lord's little ones today speak with the voice of Jacob but display the hands of Esau! They may talk of the goodness and mercy of God and the doctrine of God our Saviour, but cannot find time from their worldly labors to watch with him one hour. Truly the voice of Jacob but the hands of Esau. Jacob lied but he received the father's blessing. Not that his lie was commendable but that the purpose of God must stand. Be it remembered the Lord is leading Jacob and the purpose of God in directing his steps is far reaching indeed. Jacob was a chosen vessel unto him. Loved before he was born; foreknown and predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, called, justified, glorified. One who has been led to drink of the dregs of sin as Jacob was, can imagine the feeling of this one who came as a deceiver to his old father and obtained the blessings under false pretenses. He knew that he was guilty. And this feeling must have been augmented by the entrance of Esau just as he was leaving the presence of his father. Thus sin was made to appear exceedingly sinful to him.

It is thus with all of God's people who are led about and instructed of him, but it is good to know that where sin abounded grace did much more abound. Thus the purpose of God was that grace should triumph in the salvation of sinners. To follow the purpose of God further, the twelve tribes of Israel must issue from the loins of Jacob, and through this lineage Jesus Christ must be born. Hence Jacob was led to Padan Aram for there was the woman whom God purposed to become the wife of this man. God declared to Abraham, "Thy seed shall serve an evil nation four hundred years, and that nation whom thou serve will I judge," saith the Lord, "and after that I will bring them out." So all the way in which Jacob was led composed an unbroken chain of events which worked to the fulfilling of God's purpose.

"As the eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, and taketh them and beareth them upon her wings so the Lord alone did lead him." The nest was indeed stirred up. After he had received the blessing through guile, Esau hated him and purposed to kill him, thus his nest in which he was reared and wherein he had reposed became decidedly uncomfortable for him. He fled to the house of his mother's father. Night overtook him and he took a stone for a pillow and lay him down to sleep. He dreamed, and saw a ladder set up on the earth, and the angels of God ascending and descending on it, and the Lord stood above. He awoke and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not." The Lord was leading him but he

knew it not. He was watching over him with the vigilance of an eagle when she fluttereth over her young. "As the eagle stirreth up her nest" seems to illustrate the beginning of an experience of grace with every child of grace. The penitent sinner remembers when his nest was stirred up: his old bed of nature and sin in which he was conceived and reposed. It has become strongly uncomfortable to him. Instinct teaches the parent bird when it is time for the little ones to leave the nest. She destroys the nest then poses at a safe distance to watch over her young. They attempt to fly but their strength is not sufficient to bear them up. They go down to would be destruction, but the mother bird sitting yonder sees their plight and swiftly she comes with wings spread abroad. She comes underneath and taketh them and beareth them upon her wings to safety. So the Lord alone did lead Jacob. When the poor sinner is first awakened to his lost and ruined state, like the little nestling he tried to go alone but finds his strength is not sufficient to bear him over the great abyss that lies between him and his God. He finds himself going down to destruction unless God in his mercy intervenes. So God alone comes to his rescue and keeps him as the apple of his eye. Thus Christ comes to the rescue of his little ones when they cry in distress, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

"There is no other name under heaven given amongst men whereby we must be saved." The works of man even now can be given no more credit for salvation than Jacob, for all of God's people, like Jacob, were loved before they were born. "Jacob was the lot of his inheritance." That is to say God will lay claim to none other than his beloved Israel, that is his lot, and he has set his sacred seal upon them. "The Lord knoweth them that are his." And the Lord knoweth where they are whether they be at home or abroad, on the land or on the sea. He watches over them with the vigilance of the eagle watching over her young.

The apostle has given us the blessed assurance that God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loves us, even when we were dead in sin hath quickened us together with Christ. (By grace ye are saved). So Jacob or Israel has been borne, as it were, on eagle's wings from the womb. Through prosperity and adversity, God alone has led him all the way and he has blessed him with a never dying hope that when he shall have finished his course he shall enter unto the full fruition of the unfading glories of the paradise of God.

"Lord's portion is his people."

(Submitted for publication by Elder W. W. Hudson.)

"THE OIL AND THE MEAL WASTED NOT"

(By the late Elder L. L. Schenck)

"And the word of the Lord came unto him saying, Arise and get thee to Zarephath which lieth beyond Zidon and dwell there. Behold I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee." (I Kings 18:8-24)

These words were the words of the Lord spoken to Elijah the prophet of the Lord. Needless to say the prophet went. This was in the days of the great drought for the space of three years, when it was declared in advance there would be neither dew nor rain. The prophet arose and came to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city he saw the widow woman whom the Lord told him should sustain him. She was gathering sticks. The prophet called to her, saying, "Bring me water that I may drink"; and as she started to go for the water he called to her again, saying, "Bring me a little cake or a morsel of bread in thine hand." She answered, "As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake but a handful of meal in a barrel and a little oil in a cruse; and behold I am gathering two sticks that I may go in and dress it for me and my son that we may eat it and die." Thus is revealed the destitute condition of this poor widow, which is a fitting

type of every child of grace: destitute, starving, helpless, and ready to die. They are found gathering sticks — two sticks, striving not only to sustain their natural lives but also to insure an entrance into life eternal. Her own works were her dependence, and how soon those two sticks were consumed. She came to realize that death was staring her in the face; and so it was, had not the Lord been mindful of her. So it was no accident that the man of God came to her just at this time, and found her in just this condition. Now the prophet asked for a little water that he might drink, and a morsel of bread in her hand. She was quick to acknowledge her poverty. But she was richer than she knew. There was a handful of meal in a barrel and a little oil in a cruse — representing the grace of God in the vessels of mercy. Not unlike Saul of Tarsus, she was a chosen vessel unto the Lord, a subject of divine grace whom the Lord will not forget. To all such the Lord has sent the man of God even Christ to relieve their fears and comfort their hearts, and they all likewise were found gathering sticks, that is, depending on their own efforts for life and salvation. And they all like this poor woman came, or must come, to the place where they see their efforts are of no avail. But there is a little oil in a cruse, a little grace in the vessel. And although it may seem little indeed, it is sufficient. This little oil and this handful of meal wasted not. It did not diminish but she and her son and the prophet did eat many days. But I wonder how many of the subjects of God's grace remember our obligations to Him who is the giver of this grace. "Make me a little cake first." This command on the part of the prophet was not an act of impudence, as the world might construe. It was a divine command coming from the man of God, showing that our duties toward Him should not be secondary but **first.** A similar command came from the lips of our Lord and Master when he was on earth: "Seek ye **first** the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Not as though by our own works we can purchase to ourselves salvation, for those to whom the command was given had already found favor with God. But there are duties for all of God's people to perform. Not the least of which is, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is, but exhort one another and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." Indeed whatsoever your hands find to do, do with your might. Zion is in a sad state when her members neglect her solemn assemblies to run after the things of this world. How many will say they believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and then doubt his word that all these things shall be added unto you. "Make me a little cake first." It is commendable in all to labor to provide things honestly: things necessary for the sustenance of our natural lives; but God knoweth that we have need of all these things, and just how much we need. Hence we may gather sticks or do whatsoever we will, if God is not pleased to bless our labors our efforts can avail us nothing.

This woman was gathering "two sticks." Striving in her poverty to sustain not only her natural life but to purchase an entrance unto life eternal. Her sticks were soon consumed and were it not for the oil in the cruse and the meal in the barrel she must soon have perished. Had not the man of God blest the oil and the meal she could not have subsisted. In a word, she was thrown entirely upon the mercy of God. "Go to Zarephath and dwell there." This little community of Zarephath is enshrined in the hearts of God's humble poor. It is a sacred place, a hallowed spot in the memory of those to whom the Lord has given grace. It was here where we first saw ourselves destitute and helpless and just ready to give up. It was here where we first saw our blessed Lord when he came down to dwell there. God has declared, "I will dwell in them and I will walk in them and I will be their God and they shall be my people." This little

supply of grace in our vessel, although a little morsel, it is enough through God's blessing to sustain us many days.

When the man of God came to this poor widow, he did not consult her about his dwelling there, but she was no doubt glad to receive him into her house since he had shown his wonderful power to bless her little supply of oil and meal that it wasted not. Thus it is declared, "My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power." The prophet was sent of God to dwell at this place; and thus when he sends his Holy Spirit into the hearts of his people, he does not consult them whether or not they are willing to receive him. He makes them willing by reducing them to poverty and distraction, as in the case of this woman. She not only received him, she gave him an upper chamber; and it is so with every pardoned sinner: when our Lord came to dwell with us, we gave him an upper chamber. The highest place in our poor hearts was not enough. We exalted him, and in our estimation he was the fairest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely. We praised him, we worshipped him. Indeed we gave him an upper chamber. But it happened with this poor woman as with every child of grace. In our exultant joy we thought our troubles were over. But, alas, this woman's son fell sick. And his sickness was death. And the woman cried, "What have I to do with thee, Oh thou man of God, art thou come hither to call my sins to remembrance to slay my son." How common it is for the sins of God's people to be called to remembrance. The unclean spirit returns seven fold to dwell there. When it pleases God to lay his hand heavily upon us, it is enough to make us to remember him, and to continue to cry unto him, "O thou man of God what have I to do with thee."

But notice the pity and compassion of the man of God. "Give me the child." It is the exalted privilege of every child of grace to cast all his care upon him for he careth for him. "Give me the child." And he took the child from his mother's bosom, he carried him to an upper chamber and laid him upon his own bed. How unspeakably blessed! Laid in his own bed. When our blessed Lord was put to death in the flesh he slept three days in the grave, this was his bed. Thus in the type the child was laid in his own bed as every soul must be. But let us not overlook the power of the resurrection. The man of God stretched himself upon the child, not once, not twice, not four times, but three times, and life came into his body. He carried him down to his mother with these joyful tidings: "Behold thy child liveth." "Three times." An emblem of our blessed Lord when he lay three days in the grave, and thus sealed the redemption of every child of promise. He atoned for all their sins and guarantees the redemption of the purchased possession, even the resurrection of the dead. Jerusalem which is above and is free is the mother of us all. Thus when the bodies of the saints shall come forth from the grave I am persuaded that every disembodied spirit will receive its own body. When the man of God shall call them forth and present them to our mother with those same glad tidings, "Behold the child liveth," all by virtue of the fact that he stretched himself three times upon the child and life came into him. Thus one poet has so beautifully declared:

> "It is not death to die,
> To leave this mortal clod,
> And with the brotherhood on high,
> To be at home with God."

There is yet another feature presented in this Scripture that is worthy of our notice. This woman, who so beautifully typifies the church of God, was a widow. She had had a husband, but he is dead. She can no more rely upon him for support, nor for consolation. He is dead and buried. So the church of Christ once had a husband, the law. But he is dead now. She cannot further rely upon the law for justification; for the law is dead to her, and she is dead to the law

by the body of Christ. We have learned that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified in the sight of God. For if there had been a law given that could have given life, verily righteousness would have been by the law. But there was no such law given. The law could take one's life, but it was not the design of Him who gave the law that the law should give life or bestow righteousness. Concerning the heritage of God, "Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Concerning humanity there is none righteous, no not one. Else why should Christ have suffered for sin? When he came into the world he had no sin, and he came unto a people who had no righteousness. His righteousness was imputed to them and their sins were imputed to him. He took them, he bore them in his own body. He stood as the surety of his people. He suffered the penalty and paid the debt that was justly theirs. We had nothing with which to pay. Consider this poor poverty stricken widow and you have a picture of the bride of the Lamb's wife. But what a glorious transition is hers! We found her in her poverty, starving and ready to die; we now see her redeemed from that wretched state. John can best describe her now as a woman clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars upon her head. The sun, her clothing, is the righteousness of God; the moon, the law under her feet. In other words, she is raised above the law. No more under the law but under grace. Her crown of twelve stars is the testimony of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. The crown also represents the fact that she sits as a queen now. A glorious transition indeed! Raised from the dunghill, so to speak, to sit upon the right hand of the great King, a partner of his throne. This is the end of the Christian's hope.

"There shall we see him face to face
And tell the story saved by grace."

(Submitted for publication by Elder W. W. Hudson.)

Rt. 4,
Fayetteville, Tenn.

Dear Editors:

I received your card. I do receive the **Signs** each month, but cannot always read it. My health has been bad for a long time, and my eyes are very weak. But I do not want to complain, for I believe with my whole heart the God does all things well, and that we do not have more on us that we are made able to bear.

I love the blessed truth the **Signs** stands for, but I have to read a little at a time, which seems to do away with some of the sweetness it contains.

. . . I enjoyed the experience of Sister Ella Darnell. I love her, and hope the giver of all good will be pleased to restore her health. She has visited in the Flint River Association with her husband, who so faithfully preaches Christ the way, the truth, and the life of poor sinners. I feel so little and unworthy to claim even a little place among them. Yet my little hope is worth more that tongue can tell.

I haven't been able to go to meetings for sometime, but have sweet memories of when I was blessed to go to my home church, and meet with God's children, and sing sweet songs of Zion; and hear the pastor, one of God's humble ministers, preach salvation alone by the grace of God. This fills our hearts to overflowing.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ears."

Through God's mercy, I hope each one that helps in the publishing of the **Signs** will be given strength to continue the good work. It is good news from a far country.

I have had a home with these people for nearly forty-one years, and hope I have never done anything to hurt the church I love. Just a little place at their feet, makes me happy.

Many thanks to you, and may God continue his blessings to you. A poor sinner saved by grace, if at all.

Miss Willie Sisco

EXPERIENCE

R. F. D. 1,
Jack, Alabama

Dear Editors:

With fear and an trembling heart I undertake to write a few lines of my experience. I want to say to begin with that I believe in a just and righteous God, the maker, upholder, and disposer of all things; one who doesn't have to look to any little, feeble man for anything.

I have been reading the **Signs of the Times** for about three years, and do enjoy it; and have had a desire to write some for it. Sometime last year I did write, but did not send it.

On Sunday, November 25, 1956, Jesus came into my heart, and I pondered over it and was heavy laden. After all the family was asleep that night, I was awake and could not sleep. About eleven o'clock one of the biggest, brightest stars I ever saw shined down on me, and I saw an angel flying from the East and came to the star. And then the Union Springs Church in the Conecuh River Association came before me, (our home church). I had thought I loved that church, but not like I have since. All the people who usually go there were gathered there, and Brother Russell Gibson was in the stand. I want to say that he did preach to me that night — and me lying on my bed with my pillow wet with tears. When he came down from the pulpit and opened the doors of the church, I went to Brother Gibson and took him by the hand and around the neck, and told him I loved him. This was in a vision; and I thought I couldn't wait until the first Sunday in December. But my daughter and her husband came home from Germany, and I did not get to go to meeting.

I was so miserable, and I thought I would surely offer at the next meeting. But when I got there, it seemed that something said to me that I was not fit to even ask for a home with these people. I came back without asking for a home; but, Oh, how miserable I was. It was this way with me from November, 1956, until the first Sunday in September, 1957.

I believe that God directed my path, and the first Sunday in September, 1957, there was nothing in the way; although it seemed I was almost persuaded not to go. They had almost finished singing the song, and I went and asked for a home; and to my surprise they accepted me, and I was baptized that afternoon. It was a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

I believe I have experienced somewhat like Elder Spangler. He was at our association last Fall at Darion Church, and while in the stand he said that a week or two before he went to bed, and could not sleep; and he got up and went to his desk and wrote three or four pages. He said the next day he couldn't have thought of it. One night last week, I just couldn't sleep. My wife found that I was not asleep, and asked what the trouble was. I told her what Brother Spangler had said, and that I had been writing to the **Signs of the Times** in my mind, but that if I had it on paper I didn't believe the book would hold it.

In conclusion I would like to say that I have enjoyed reading Elder R. W. Rhodes' verses on 2 Peter 1:1-8, and I would like for some of the elders to comment on all the chapter; and also on Hebrews 10:26.

I feel to be a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all; and feel to be the least of all.

C. D. Mobley

General Delivery — V. A. Branch,
Los Angeles 25, Calif.

Dear Brother Spangler:

Here in Los Angeles this glorious morning, I don't need to read David's or Isaiah's message to see the beauties of nature, for it is all around in all its glory. It is not the least to be given natural faculties to see the sun, with

its Spring warmth, and flowers, and the green grass; to hear the birds singing — and the smog not too bad. It has not always been this way, for the past four to six months we have had much windy and chilly weather, with more rain than usual, and fog especially early in the morning, when I like to get outside and read the Bible and the Signs, or perhaps write. The Lord knows my needs, but from all reports this has been a long, bad Winter.

The Signs was very good. It does us good to read articles like Elder Beebe's, "Where is the True Church?" I hope I can see in it who is included in this church: They are a holy people, a special people, a peculiar people, and fewest of all the people of the nations of the land, as noted in Deut. 7:7, 8 and 1 Peter 2:9. While many of His people are in other churches, and some do not have their names on any church roll, yet He chose them, and died for them and will come for them. Jesus said in Matthew 16:18, "I will build my church . . ." None of these people had anything to do with the formation of His church. I guess his church came in its fulness on the day of Pentecost, as the Holy Ghost came in power as never before.

My main object in reading the Scriptures, is to obtain comfort from its pages. In St. John 5:39, we read, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they that testify of me." Paul, writing to Timothy, said, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the world of truth."

Adam and Eve tried to hide their sin by covering themselves with fig leaves, but the Lord showed them that their works were worthless, and he made coats of skins and dressed them; thereby teaching a valuable and beautiful lesson to the believer, not to trust in their righteousness, but trust the living God.

I have wondered quite a bit about St. John 21:25. I don't believe that anything that Jesus did was done in vain, or anything that he said was said in vain. It appears to me that the writers since that time, and the preachers since, and coming into this present time and to the end of time, will have fulfilled all of it. His ministers today are preaching the word as always. May the Signs and ministers always be a witness for Him. It has not always been so with all publications; and the Bible speaks something concerning it in the last days.

I wish I could write to all who contribute worthy messages. I can't praise Him enough for my blessings.

A brother, I trust, though a poor mortal,
Harry T. Vories

"GOD HATH SHINED"

Route 5, Box 245,
Reidsville, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler:

Enclosed is a letter I wrote you some months ago, as you can see by the date. I very often write to relieve my mind of something that lingers on; and I still have a mind to write you.

The first time I saw you was in a dream last November. Then at Dan River Church the 4th Sunday meeting in December. It was Christmas eve; and I had had a dread of the coming Christmas, for it was the first Christmas since God had taken my companion out of this world of woe we are traveling through.

It was the first time I had ever been to Dan River. I felt very low and heavy hearted. The singing had already begun when I got there. Surely, then I saw, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." So many times I want to thank God for such a gift as you, and to humbly ask Him to never leave this world without one to declare above and beyond any trial, affliction, and sorrow of this world, that God is still Lord of Lords; still the great Shepherd; still our Almighty, Merciful, ever loving Father, who has forseen all things, and will reign and rule his sovereign will from everlasting to everlasting: None can stay his hand.

I feel I have no right to take up your time.

In hope of God's mercy,
Fannie Sue Ware

THANKFUL THAT SHE IS A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH

1415 Chamberlayne Avenue,
Richmond, Virginia

Dear Elder and Mrs. Bunn:

May God, our Glorious Father, lead me in a few lines to you; and I pray you will accept my feeble attempt to write something of my desire to express my thanks to you and all the other brethren and sisters, for the sweet and kind love from heaven above, as it seemed to me; although I felt that this unworthy, sinful piece of clay that I am, was far too low to be accepted to be one of His flock. Nevertheless it was sweet to me then, as it still is. I have found comfort from it that I had wished for so long; yet my hope was very low at times. I would think to myself that it is a test of my faith in God Almighty. Thanks to God for this sweet morsel that has been provided for me.

When you told me that you would make provision for me to ask for a home with you and the other brethren in your church at Pleasant Hill, I felt glad and a warmness inside me, for I had yearned for such an opportunity for so long. Then I began to feel so low, wondering if I was deceiving myself and you the people I loved, even those I had never seen of the Primitive Baptist faith.

Then when I arrived at your home and the warm, sweet greetings extended to me by all those godly brethren and sisters, I felt glad; yet doubting myself. I almost felt I should go and hide, for I didn't want to deceive any of God's people. I felt that if I were not accepted I would get my just dues, but I thank my heavenly Father that I was accepted and that I could be baptized the next day. The feeling of lightness that came over me — it was as a great heaviness had rolled away.

How can one have such mixed feelings? I know God knows, and I pray I am one of his elect and he will take care of this my body and soul. If he does, and I believe he will, then my trials, tribulations, and sufferings, both mentally and physically, are not too much for me to bear: And I hope I can be thankful for them all the days of my life.

How God, or the good Old Primitive Baptists, can love such a worm as I feel to be, is beyond my comprehension, but I am thankful when I am made to feel I get a little taste of it.

This is getting lengthy, and I still haven't been able to say anything worthwhile; but, as I said, all of my efforts are so very feeble, and I feel so vile and unworthy, that I fear I make or take too many privileges.

To all the brethren and sisters, and to you two, may I say, God bless us all. My heart is full of love to you all, and to God our Father and Christ our Saviour.

Do hope to see the home church, Pleasant Hill, and the whole family of brethren and sisters; but if I never see them, it is still good to have a home there. Pray for me.

A little sister in hope,
Mollie Shackleford

Dunbar, W. Va.

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing $5.00 for two years renewal to the **Signs of the Times.** I do enjoy the articles in the Signs, and hope to be able to continue taking it.

The Editorials and **Voices of the Past** are especially appreciated, if I know my mind. They give God all honor, praise, power and glory, leaving the depraved, weak, puny, carnal man completely out of the picture; which is the doctrine I hope I have been made to believe, and the only doctrine I can feast upon.

In hope of eternal life,
Nanna M. Carney

1420 North Avenue,
Los Angeles 42, Calif.

Editors of the Signs of the Times:

I see from the date on my paper that my subscription is due, and you will find enclosed money order for another year.

May it please God to enable you to continue the good work of editing and sending the Signs to those that hunger and thirst after righteousness. The many good Editorials and letters are a comfort and blessing to all that love the blessed truth of a crucified Lord and Saviour.

We read in the Scriptures where Jesus said, "Many are called but few are chosen."

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

May God in mercy bless and keep you. From one of the least, if indeed one of God's little ones.

Leara M. Willis

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To July 1, 1962)

Mrs. Robert E. Richardson, Kan.	$ 5.00
J. B. Barron, N. C.	3.00
Katherine Gillies, Can.	5.00
Mrs. J. B. Hill, Sr., N. J.	2.00
Mrs. D. H. Baker, Wash.	1.00
Harry Vories, Calif.	20.00
Mrs. E. A. Bagwell, Ala.	2.00
Mrs. Lonie Ray, Tex.	1.00
Elizabeth Walker, Can.	4.00

LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The **Lexington-Roxbury Association** is to be held in the Holcottville Meeting House the 12th and 13th of September (Wednesday and Thursday), 1962. Meetings are on Daylight Saving Time.

All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us, especially ministers of our faith and order. Entertainment will be at the same place as last year, at the James Peet's, Holcott Center, N. Y. Turn at the Esso gas station in Fleischmanns, N. Y. for Holcott Center.

Prudence O. Hinkley, Church Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The **Smith River Association** is appointed to be held with Bell Spur Church on Friday, Saturday and first Sunday in September, 1962, the Lord willing.

Bell Spur Church is located at intersection of Route 615 and Route 645, between 58 and 52. Turn off Blue Ridge Parkway at Milepost 18A. Church is in view of Parkway.

Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Amos I. Hash, Clerk

THE VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING

The **Virginia Corresponding Meeting** will be held, the Lord willing, at the usual place at the Mt. Zion Meeting House, on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, October 17, 18, and 19, 1962. Mt. Zion is located on U. S. Route 50, about 3 miles East of Aldie, Virginia.

A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends to meet with us.

L. D. Duke, Clerk

HYMN AND TUNE BOOKS

We have placed an order for an edition of the **Durand and Lester Hymn and Tune Books,** in the shaped note. We are promised delivery in July or August.

The prices will be: $3.00 each, or $33.00 per dozen, delivered.

Send orders to:

F. D. Long,
Roxboro, N. C.
or
Masten H. Lester,
814 30th St. N. W.,
Roanoke, Va.
or
P. G. Lester, Jr.,
2246 Memorial Ave., S. W.,
Roanoke, Va.

Danville, Virginia September, 1962

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TO THE CLERKS OF CHURCHES AND ASSOCIATIONS

Quite often we receive notices of special meetings and associations, etc., too late to publish in the issue desired. In order to avoid this please send in your notices early, (about 6 weeks before publication date, at least), and please mail them directly to P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Virginia. The cooperation of the brethren will assist both them and us.

We would appreciate more of our elders and others writing for the Signs, that we may continue to have choice copy to present the brethren in our columns. The brethren and friends will enjoy reading such articles, etc., as we can publish in the Signs of the Times.

The interest of any of the brethren and friends on behalf of the paper is greatly appreciated.

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

ZECHARIAH 4:11-14

"The two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth."

The prophet Zechariah is usually called one of the minor prophets, as though his testimony is of less importance than some others, but that is not so. In this chapter we see a prince, Zerubbabel, a type of Jesus Christ who was also a Prince of the House of David, one who laid the foundation of the temple, and also brought forth "the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it." Zechariah 4:7. The prophet, when wakened out of his sleep, saw a candlestick all of gold and seven lamps thereon, and two olive trees by it, one upon the right side and the other on the left side. The angel that talked with the prophet asked him if he understood what these things were, and he answered, "No, my Lord." Verse eleven begins with the prophet asking, "What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof?" He also asked, "What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves?" Again the angel questions him, saying, "Knowest thou not what these be?" and he said, "No, my Lord."

Turning to the New Testament, we find in Mark 9, "After six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them. — And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus." How did these three disciples know Moses and Elias but by revelation? John the Baptist, the last of the prophets, said, "And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy

Ghost." John 1:33. We believe that by the same Holy Spirit those three Apostles saw Moses and Elias, THE TWO WITNESSES, standing by the Lord of the whole earth. Our view therefore is that the first is Moses, who personifies the Law, of whom Paul in Hebrews tells "was faithful in all his house as a servant for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after." Everything he did was according to the pattern that he saw in the mount. Moses died before Israel entered into the land of Canaan. The Lord buried him, but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day. When he died, his eyes were not dim, nor his natural force abated, which suggests to us that the Law, no matter how old it is, is still as strong as when it was fiirst given by the hand of Moses.

Elias is the Greek for Elijah, and we are told that Elijah did not die but was taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire. Elijah personifies the prophets, who all spake of Jesus, his sufferings and the glory that should follow, and who, like Daniel, were to stand in their lot to the end of their days. The golden candlestick was the light of the old dispensation, and standing on the right and on the left were the Law and the Prophets. They had their place in a worldly sanctuary, which was a shadow of a better and more enduring substance.

The olive tree was an evergreen tree to which the people of the Eastern lands looked for its fruit, which, when ripe, was used to produce the olive oil which was so needful for them in their every day life; and when the olive failed, it was a calamity, as suggested in Habakkuk 3:17. Gold, in the Old Testament, was used to set forth the Godhead. The ark, with its mercy-seat, the table of shewbread and the golden altar, were made of wood, a type of the manhood of Jesus, and were overlaid with gold, a type of the Godhead. The golden pipes therefore carry the thought that it was a God-ordained way that their testimony should come, the oil a type of the Holy Ghost, the pipes setting forth a perfect channel, that not a drop could be wasted, i.e. not a word of their testimony could fall to the ground. How wonderfully their testimony came to pass: Isaiah, speaking of the perfection of those golden pipes, said, "For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." These two witnesses, as ministering spirits, testified in types and shadows to the fathers. Some were given to feel and know the preciousness of that oil, for our Lord told the Jews, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." The Son of God and the Holy Ghost were the only two GOLDEN channels through which the oil of joy for mourning could then, as now, be known and felt in their souls.

These two witnesses stood by our Lord, who is the Lord of the whole earth, as we have said. We see this in the Mount of Transfiguration, where stood Moses and Elias as witnesses, yet the glory of Jesus our Lord eclipsed their glory, and the three disciples, when they came to themselves, saw none but Jesus. In the account given in Luke 9:28-36, we are told that Moses and Elias appeared in glory and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. Peter was for building three tabernacles, one for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elias, not knowing what he said. "While he thus spake, there came a cloud and overshadowed them and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him."

From his advent into the world to his death on Calvary's cross, those two witnesses stood by, proving that their testimony was true, through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, which was the golden

oil that proceeded from them and moved them to testify of Jesus, his sufferings and the glory that should follow. From the time that Israel became a nation, these two witnesses prophesied in sackcloth, and when Jesus came, they had foretold that a virgin should conceive and bear a Son, and that he would be a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of his people Israel.

During the three and a half years of his ministry, in which he showed by his wonderful miracles that he was the one of whom these two witnesses had testified, yet so debased were the Priests and the Levites, that they would have none of his counsel and despised his reproof. Moses and the prophets were read, sacrifices were made, but their worship was a dead formalism. They replaced Moses with the traditions of the elders. Jesus said unto them, "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." He then shows how fully the prophet Isaiah stood by him. "Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matthew 15:3-9.

It is the mind of the writer of this article that these two witnesses are those spoken of in Revelation 2. In the parable of the talents, Matthew 25:15, Judas was given the talent of carrying the bag, but he buried it in the earth, he was a thief. His talent was given to Paul, who faithfully carried what the brethren could give, up to the afflicted brethren in Jerusalem. 1 Corinthians 16:2-3. The Jewish nation buried their talent in the earth, they saw nothing more than a ritual that was pleasing to the eye. It can be said that their talent was given to John, who saw, when in the Spirit on the Lord's day, "seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man." Thus in what the Jews buried in the earth, John, in the Spirit, saw the perfect number of the churches which are the ground and pillar of the truth.

In Revelation 10:8-11, John received from the angel a little book. The angel told him, "Take it and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey." John must come into the fellowship of those two witnesses as they also came through great tribulation. Ezekiel was given a roll of a book to eat, and there was written therein lamentations and mourning and woe. "So I opened my mouth and he caused me to eat that roll. And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it: and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness." Ezekiel 3:2-3. The witnesses certainly prophesied in sackcloth amongst a wicked and rebellious Israel. John describes the witnesses and what they could do, and gives the same honour and placing as the angel did in the vision of Zechariah, which is the subject of this article, for we believe that they are the same two witnesses. Read of Moses in Numbers 16:28-35, and see what happened to Korah, Dathan and Abiram and their followers. Did not Moses in Egypt turn water into blood and smite the earth with plagues? Read of Elijah the Tishbite, who appeared before King Ahab, a wicked king, and said, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." 1 Kings 17:1. Did not Elijah, in 2 Kings 1:9-10, command fire to come down from heaven and consume those sent by the king to arrest him?

"These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will." Revelation 11:4-6. These two witnesses stood firm in their testimony, as Daniel did, who was told by the angel, "Go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." Daniel 12:13.

The wickedness of Israel increased, and when our Lord appeared, Satan had so blinded their minds that the wonderful testimony of both these witnesses was ignored. During the three and a half years of our Lord's public ministry, he, being the substance, the types and shadows ceased, and the two witnesses lay dead in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. Revelation 11:8. The people saw their bodies, which, to our mind, means that they, in their love of tradition, read their words but believed them not, as now the Bible is in every pulpit, but who believes what it says?

After three and a half years our Lord was crucified, and on the first day of the week he appeared to the two brethren on their Emmaus journey, chiding them for their unbelief, saying, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at MOSES and all the PROPHETS, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." Luke 24:25-27. Thus these two witnesses were caught up into the gospel heaven. Our Lord put life and meaning into their testimony so that from then on they were as lights from afar to the Church of the living God. When they ascended from under the Law to the Gospel Heaven they ascended in a cloud, a cloud of witnesses. Paul, in Hebrews 11, tells who were in that cloud, and in chapter 12 he begins, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us (the sin of unbelief) and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the same, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Our Lord, as our High Priest, is in the Holy place of Heaven itself, and the Gentiles are given the outer court. To the Jew, Moses and the Prophets are still prophesying in sackcloth. The outer court John was not to measure with his reed for it is given to the Gentiles for a set time. "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." Romans 11:25. To this day they read Moses and the prophets but see not that they testified of Jesus the Son of David. The judgments that Moses pronounced upon their disobedience have been meted out to the full, the mercies that are promised them in Ezekiel from chapter 37 are yet to come.

So completely to John the Apostle was the sight of Jerusalem above given, that in Revelation 12 he describes her as clothed with the sun, and the twelve apostles as stars in her crown and the moon (the Law) under her feet. She was ready to bring forth a man child (Jesus) who should rule the nations with a rod of iron. The dragon (Herod) stood ready to slay the man child as soon as it was born. Matthew 2:16. The child was caught up to God and to his throne. The Church, spoken of as the woman, fled into the wilderness, that is, among the Gentiles, "Where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days." Revelation 12:6. Our Lord's ministry was three and a

half years or forty-two months, a limited time, which is also set forth by the twelve hundred and forty days. How soon the church will cease among the Gentiles is in the hands of the Lord.

G. R.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." (Psalm CX. 3)

The Holy Ghost gave unto David glorious and comforting views of Christ. For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool."—Mark xii. 36. Our Savior in citing this portion of the holy Scriptures declared his own eternal Godhead, and that he, the Incarnate Word, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. Thus he silenced and confounded his adversaries who charged him with blasphemy in claiming to be the Son of God. From quotations made from this Psalm, in the New Testament Scriptures, it is very clearly seen that the language of this Psalm is speaking of Christ and his church. David by the Holy Ghost was enabled to "see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor." Christ is risen from the dead, and is become the first-fruits of them that slept. He ascended to heaven, and is set down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. There enthroned and crowned, reigns the Head of the church, the Incarnate Son of God.

"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Christ has a people. So it is written of old, "The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance," and when the Son of God was about to be made flesh and dwell among us, it was declared of him, "His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." Christ speaks of them saying, "Thou gavest them me," and they are described as "all which the Father hath given me."—John vi. 39. His people then are the elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, and given unto the Son of God in the covenant ordered in all things and sure, wherein Christ is the Head and Husband of his people. Our Prince and Savior having saved his people from their sins by the sacrifice of himself, is now seated upon his mediatorial throne to give unto Israel repentance and forgiveness of sins. From his glorious high throne he pours down upon the election of grace his Spirit and graces, and grants them times of refreshing from his presence, bringing to pass the fulfillment of the word, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." The people of God in their earthly estate are far from being the friends and willing ones of Christ. In their Adamic nature they are enmity against God, enemies in their minds by wicked works, and have no disposition of soul to bow beneath the sceptre of the Son of God. So darkened are their eyes with the depravity of their flesh that they see no beauty in the King that they should desire him. But the Lord hath published the decree, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Christ hath all power in heaven and earth. He made the worlds, the winds and the waves obey him, and in the everlasting covenant the Father hath given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him. (John xvii. 2).

How strong was he when as the Captain of our salvation he vanquished Satan, made an end of sin, and triumphed over the grave. He, death's conqueror, is risen from the dead, and dieth no more. The Son of God went up with a shout, robed in his sacred, incorruptible manhood. He is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him. The Lord's Christ is not the powerless myth that people talk about. The so-called Christ proclaimed

in the popular religion of the day is one whose success in saving people from their sins and bringing them to heaven depends upon the actions of frail, sinful creatures. Their doctrine is, He would save sinners if they would let him. What a worthless Christ would such a Christ be. But the Lord's Christ in the day of his power captivates his people; his love and mercy revealed in their hearts apprehends them, and holds them fast; they are called by grace, and respond to the omnipotence of his gracious work in their souls. Though in times past there was estrangement and non-intercourse, and like the Jews and Samaritans, there were no dealings with Christ. He was undesired, but in the time of love, (Ezek. xvi. 8), in the day of his power, he came to us, he dealt with us in such a way that we were won by his kindness, and we have been friends ever since. They that are with the Lamb are called and chosen and faithful. (Rev. xvii. 14.

To be among the called of God is to experience a gracious and invincible work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, and this divine work constitutes and presents us unto Christ a people made ready for him. It is not in the first Adam nature or life that the elect are the willing ones of Christ, but in the day of his power they are quickened with eternal life, they are born of the Spirit, they are made partakers of the Spirit of Christ, and thus joined unto him they are new creatures, a new creation. The natural creation is wondrous, and glorious, but it hath no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth, for the glory of the new creation surpasses in excellence the things that are seen. All God's works in nature are temporal, and shall be dissolved, but the new creation is destined to endure eternal ages. When all the work of the everlasting God shall be consummated in the regeneration of the church of Christ, of which the crowning act is the resurrection of the mortal bodies of the elect, at the last day, to immortality, incorruption and eternal glory, then shall the members of Christ's body be conformed to the image of God's dear Son, and then shall it be seen what a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory is the portion of the new creation. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away, behold all things are become new." It is then this living and transforming power of the Lord, constitutes the called of God a new creation, wherein they are made and become Christ's willing ones; and I am sure that when with the eyes of our understanding enlightened by the Spirit we contemplate the amiableness of God's workmanship in his new creation, that the glories thereof will be seen to far surpass the glories of the material universe.

"Thus saith the Lord, I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, for they shall return unto me with their whole heart." "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good: but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." I will and they shall, thus the eternal covenant stands. The fear of the Lord, which is a fountain of life, works marvelous things in the poor sinner. He is born again, he was dead in trespasses and sins, but is now alive, possessing life divine in his soul; now he sees things he never saw before, and feels manifold things to which before he was insensible. By the teaching of the Holy Spirit God's chosen discover what a dreadful condition they are in, that they are vile transgressors under the curse of God's righteous law. Their consciences become burdened with guilt, and darkness, and sorrow is their portion. The Lord graciously humbles them under the knowledge of their iniquities, and bows their hearts in godly sorrow at his feet, and there with a contrite heart they mourn over their sins. (Ezek. vii. 16). Blessed mourners! Under the Lord's gracious discipline the enmity of their heart is subdued, and they no longer despise Jesus Christ and his gos-

pel. Now, in their sore need as guilty, perishing sinners, Jesus is the one sought for, and as the Holy Spirit unfolds to them the way of mercy the gospel has sacred attractions unto which their yearning hearts flow forth. O the preciousness of the gospel! All its blessedness is for the poor and needy, the hungry and thirsty, the captives, the lowly, the contrite in heart.

Then again they are made his willing people, because the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them. He creates and maintains in their souls heavenly affections, and thus with loving-kindness they are drawn to Christ. (Jer. xxxi. 3). Who can resist the omnipotence of the love of Christ? It breaks every barrier down, conquers all opposition, and transforms a foe into an affectionate friend. Jesus said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said signifying what death he should die." In the day of his power we are drawn to the crucified One. We have eyes of faith and love given us to see him the conqueror of sin and death, how gloriously he wrought in behalf of poor sinners, traveling in the greatness of his strength, mighty to save, and when in our guilty and distressed souls hope is imparted by the Comforter that all was for our sakes, then our hearts are bowed to him. (2 Sam. xix. 14). A vision of Jesus in his acts of love, has a power divine within us, and the gracious work of the Spirit persuading us that he gave himself for us, then a transformation takes place within us, we are overcome in melting, wondering gratitude, as that sweet thought passes through our hearts: "He loved me, and gave himself for me." How affectionately we would hold fast this thought; yes, dear children of God, you know as more and more Christ Jesus is revealed to you, the more and more you are drawn to him. Being drawn we run after him, as the spouse says, "Draw me, we will run after thee." We are sick with sin, and are willing to be healed by the great Physician. (Exodus xv. 26). We are lost and perishing, and in the day of his power willing to be saved, willing to be clothed, willing to come unto him that we might have life, willing to slake our thirst at the river of the water of life, (Rev. xxii. 17), willing to take his yoke upon us, to serve him forever, willing that he should reign over us, willing to suffer for his sake, and sometimes so great and gracious is his power working in us that we are brought into sacred acquiescence to his good pleasure, and can say, even in sore tribulation, "Thy will be done." Christ is revealed by the Spirit unto us the Captain of our salvation, the King of glory, the Lord mighty in battle, and having eyes of faith and love given us to behold him, though poor and sinful, the ends of the earth, we see his ensign from afar and flock to his standard. For he will lead us on from victory to victory over the world, the flesh and the devil. We willingly follow him, having an eye to his atoning sacrifice for sin, his righteousness for our justification, and amidst our conflicts with sin and temptations we sometimes can sing the battle song of faith: "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

But our text invites us on to the contemplation of additional glories of the riches of God's grace, for it is published in the decree, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, **in the beauties of holiness.**" This is their appearance, thus the willing ones are apparelled. In their standing in relationship to the first Adam they cannot be viewed in such array. Ah no! In our earthly life all is sinful, the finest garments woven by the flesh are not fit to be worn in the presence of the King. "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." We have no holiness, no comeliness in our fleshly nature, and as we are led to know how depraved we are we see, and feel, too, with grief that we are a mass of wounds and bruises and putrefying sores, the whole head is sick and the whole heart faint. (Isaiah i. 5, 6). "Behold, I am vile," exclaimed one, (Job xl. 5), and

"O wretched man that I am!" cries out another. (Rom. vii. 24). The presentation of Christ's willing ones unto himself in the beauties of holiness is not that fancied holiness of the pharisee, who trusts in himself that he is righteous, and despises others. (Luke xviii. 9). What then are the beauties of holiness in which the willing ones are so lovely in the eyes of the Lord? It is that perfection of beauty which the Lord puts upon them, as it is written, "Thy renown went forth among the heathen, for thy beauty, for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God."—Ezek. xvi. 14. Christ is the Lord our Righteousness. (Jer. xxiii. 6). The doctrine of Christ's imputed righteousness (Rom. iv. 6), is full of blessedness to those who feel the nakedness and shame of their unrighteousness. Grace brings a poor sinner to submit himself unto the righteousness of God. Finding he has no righteousness of his own to put on, how willing he is to be dressed in the best robe, (Luke xv. 22), the wedding garment. (Matt. xxii. 11). Christ loved the church and gave himself a sacrifice for her, he hath espoused her to himself, (Hosea ii. 19), and grants unto her that she shall be arrayed in fine linen clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints. (Rev. xix. 8). O Zion, thou art a perfect beauty! Thine admiring Redeemer, ye willing ones, says, "Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah: comely as Jerusalem." Thy wrinkles and blemishes, blots and spots, are all removed. Our Savior hath cleansed them away in his sufferings and blood. He died to redeem thee from all iniquity. Thou art all fair, there is no spot in thee. There is no condemnation, O believer in Jesus; thy Savior's obedience and blood hide all thy transgressions from view.

There is also a marvelous work of beauty wrought in God's elect by the Holy Spirit, described in the Scriptures to be the sanctification of the Spirit. This internal beauty verifies that divine word, "The King's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold."—Psalm xlv. 13. All the lustre of material adorning fades and dies, it is soon tarnished, it is corruptible. But the beauties of holiness, without which no one shall see the Lord, are immortal. Believers, after the inward man, are as a glorious palace. Indeed, the King in his beauty dwells in them amidst the loveliness of those graces which the Holy Spirit has wrought in them and constantly brings forth in them. This internal loveliness of Christ's willing people is called "the hidden man of the heart, the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." (1 Peter iii. 4; Eph. iv. 24). The Lord's willing ones are beautified with bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, love, joy and peace, gentleness, goodness, and they are kindly affectioned to God and his truth and to one another. (Col. iii. 12; Gal. v. 22; Rom. xii. 10). O, dear children of God, thy Redeemer and King greatly desires thy beauty, he is thy Lord, and in all thy lovely graces worship thou him. (Psalm xlv. 11). O, my heart yearneth and crieth out, "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." Ah, while we are in this world the beauties of holiness put upon and wrought in the elect are often obscured from our view by the motions of our depraved nature, then in full view we behold with grief and shame our vilenesses, or we are so languid, feelingly so dead to divine things, it seems to us impossible that there can be anything of the beauties of holiness about us. O, the icyness of my heart with its languid, frozen prayers, its dull, formal praises. It is the revelation of Jesus anew to our souls that has gracious healing efficacy, bringing us forth again in the beauties of holiness. We put on afresh, in faith and love, our beautiful garments, (Isaiah lii. 1), and all the attributes of the new creation are called forth into fervent exercise, and as lovely, sweet-smelling flowers, our faith and love, peace and joy, and prayer and praise abound. O Jesus dear,

thy word is very true, "From me is thy fruit found."—Hosea xiv. 8.

Let us still go on to consider our text; it declares, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth."

Christ is the Morning; his going forth is prepared as the morning, (Hosea vi. 3), even a morning without clouds. (2 Sam. xxiii. 4). He is the light of life, the bright and morning star, the Day-spring from on high, who visits his people and scatters all the darkness of sin and death, and shines upon them in all the healing warmth of his love.

The Son of God came into the world to abolish death, and bring life and immortality to light unto his church. He gave himself a sacrifice for our sins, descending in suffering unto death, but when he arose from the tomb he unlocked the portals of death and came forth for our justification. Christ the Sun of Righteousness arose in triumphant radiance, bringing life and immortality to light. Christ is risen, the first-fruits of them that slept, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. When Jesus our King arose from the grave, all the clouds were gone, our sins and iniquities which were as a thick cloud were blotted out by his atoning sacrifice. No clouds of wrath, no frowns of displeasure, greeted our risen Redeemer, but the smiling, approving countenance of God the Father greeted the risen, Incarnate Word, and he was full of joy. "Thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance."—Acts ii. 28. Christ is our morning; from him streams forth that marvelous light of love and salvation, of justification and glory, in which believers live and rejoice. When he appears our dawning is begun, the darkness is past, and the true light shineth. When Jesus shines upon us there is no gloom, no night, no sin, no curse, no pain or sickness, these former things flee away at his presence. This willing people then are the fruit of the Morning. The morning brought them forth in the beauties of holiness; they are the children of light. Before Christ brought them forth how dark was their condition, they were captives in the kingdom of darkness. Satan, sin and death held them fast: "Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord."

"Thou hast the dew of thy youth." This is speaking of Christ. "My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand." Christ, and his church in him, hath immortal youth, they shall never grow old. In the beauties of holiness Christ and the church are one, and altogether lovely; they shall live for ever and ever. No sin, therefore no corruption, no decay, no wrinkles or blemishes or any such thing shall ever come upon Christ and his church.

"Thou hast the dew of thy youth." What sacred mysteries the gospel declares. Look at this, Christ and the church are one, (Eph. v. 31, 32), and his body, the church, being under the guilt, the stain, the curse of their iniquities, he came in the fullness of time to save his people from their sins. Thus when in his spotless manhood he took upon himself our transgressions, to make atonement for them, he descended with all our infirmities, all our sicknesses, all our sins upon him; he made himself of no reputation; he took all our shame. He stood before his bride, and for her sake he hid not himself from shame and spitting. He was her shield from all ignominy and everlasting reproach; it fell upon him. Our Head, our Lover, our Surety, humbled himself and became obedient even unto death; he was made a curse for us. Thus he descended with all our woes, all our wrinkles, blemishes and spots upon him, but he purged them away in the shedding of his precious blood. "He died unto sin once." This was enough for by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. And when he arose from the tomb how glorious and triumphant was he. He dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him. Never more shall Christ suffer for our sins; he came forth in immortal youth; his visage is no

longer marred, his form no more bowed down with anguish beneath the curse of our sins; the travail of his soul is over. How blessed! His eyes no longer flow with tears, his body is no more baptized with bloody sweat, all his sighs and groans are spent, for he poured out his soul unto death and redeemed his church from hell, and now by faith we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor. (Heb. ii. 9). Then, as he is, so are we, in this world accounted unto God. (1 John iv. 17). "Ye are complete in him." In union with Christ is all our beauty, and we shall reign in life by him. This is our destination for which we are apprehended of Christ Jesus. (Phil. iii. 12). "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." Like him? Yes, we shall bear the image of the heavenly, we shall be glorified together with him. Now, in our earthly estate our bodies are weak, they decay, thy are corruptible and die, but when the Lord shall descend with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, he will quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit that now dwelleth in us, and we shall be changed, and we shall be raised incorruptible, fashioned like unto the glorious body of our risen Savior.

(Elder Fredrick W. Keene in the Signs January 15, 1902.)

A LITTLE GIRL'S PRAYER

Dear Lord, I've had a busy day,
I hardly have much time to pray,
'Cause if a long prayer I recite,
I won't have time to say "Good Nite".
So, bless this world an' make me good,
And let me sleep the way I should.

For I am tired, and need some rest,
But you will always be my guest,
To share my dreams and thoughts with me,
And I'll always want to be with thee.

I'm glad to know of the deeds you've done,
Of the love you've given everyone,
For in heaven we are not alone,
In heaven we won't throw a stone,
'Cause you're the only Mighty Lord,
You're the One to be adored.

Satan lurks the "once good" earth,
And makes us sinners, straight from birth,
But, let me in, please give me the key,
That when I die, I shall be with thee.

Janet Osborne,
Cantonsville, Md.

OBITUARIES

ELDER ABNER B. AYERS

GONE HOME

It is with a saddened heart that I write this obituary of my dearly beloved father, Elder Abner B. Ayers, who parted this life on March 30, 1962. His untimely death makes us who knew him believe as Ecclesiastes 3:2 reads, that there is, "A time to be born and a time to die." We know not when or how. He had run his course and had his fill and was ready to meet his God, whom he had tried to serve these many years.

Elder Ayers was born on July 6, 1885, the son of John H. and Courtney Rogers Ayers. He spent all of his life in the Bear Grass Community and was held in high esteem by all who knew him. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Bear Grass on the third Saturday in September 1920 and was baptized with his wife, on the third Sunday by his pastor, Elder B. S. Cowan.

He was ordained in the ministry on the third Sunday in August 1934, and spent the rest of his life telling the people how good the Lord was to those that loved him. He was Pastor of Bear Grass, Briary Swamp, Flatty Creek, and Singleton Churches. He said so many times that he was thankful to God that those churches never replaced him.

On April 24, 1910, he was united in marriage to Lavinia Jones Harris. This union was separated on January 20, 1958, when a Mother in Israel departed this life and left him with an empty spot in his heart that no one could fill. He was a man who would share our burdens but would not let us share his.

The doctrine he preached was accepted up and down the Atlantic Seaboard and Canada. Everywhere he preached he was asked to come back, and felt that he was not doing his duty unless he went even though he was not physically able to go at times.

A dedicated man to his community, state, nation, and churches, he was faithful to visit the sick, and he preached over five hundred funerals. He came as nearly living what he preached as mortal man could, and the tribute paid him at his funeral was glorious to behold. His home was a haven for visiting ministers and brethren and hundreds of friends enjoyed many hours of sweet fellowship during their visits.

The funeral was conducted in the Church at Bear Grass on April 1, 1962, at 3:00 o'clock by Elders E. C. Harrison, P. E. Getsinger, I. S. Conner, A. P. Mewborn and W. E. Grimes. He was laid to rest in Woodlawn Cemetery beside his wife. He is survived by one son, A. B. Ayers, Jr. of the home; two daughters, Mrs. Selma Rawls of Williamston and Mrs. Mildred House of Robersonville; one step-daughter, Mrs. Elsie Bailey of Greenville; and one step-son, H. S. Harris of Plymouth; fourteen grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

Written by request of the church by his son, A. B., Jr. and wife, Theresa.

In the passing of this lovely servant of God, the Old School Baptist have lost a faithful servant of God. We shall miss him in the assembly of the saints. His sound doctrine, adorned by a godly walk, and conversation, will remain in the hearts of our people through the years to come.

I loved him very much.

D. V. Spangler

WYATT EMERSON PHELPS

Brother Emerson Phelps was born in Person County, N. C., August 10, 1906; and died at his home in Yanceyville, N. C., March 14, 1962. He was the son of Wyatt E. Phelps and Mollie Fitzgerald Phelps.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Ray Ivey Phelps, and one son, William Emerson (Billy) Phelps, of the United States Army.

Brother Phelps joined Prospect Hill Primitive Baptist Church on the 26th day of November, 1961, and was baptized by the pastor, Elder W. C. King, on the second Sunday in December, 1961, at Bush Arbor Church. He was a strong believer in the doctrine as set forth by the Primitive Baptists; he loved the truth, rejecting all uncertain sounds. He attended his church as long as he was able.

He was employed by the North Carolina State Highway Commission, and was an Engineer at the time of his death.

Funeral services were held at the First Baptist Church, Yanceyville, N. C., and interment was in the cemetery there. Elder J. M. Mewborn was in charge of the service, assisted by Mr. Paul Hardy.

Elder W. C. King, Moderator
Hallie O. Griswold, Clerk

MRS. JOSHUA S. ADKINS

Our dear and beloved sister in Christ was born December 26, 1880, and departed this life March 26, 1962. She was the daughter of the late John E. and Sallie E. Freeney.

She was married to Joshua S. Adkins January 10, 1900, who passed away on August 3, 1957, and to this union were born two sons and two daughters who survive: Mrs. Margie Holloway of near Parsonsburg, Md.; Mrs. Helen Tull of Salisbury, Md.; Kenneth Adkins of Ocean City, Md.; and Conrad Adkins of near Parsonsburg, Md. She also is survived by six grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

Sister Adkins expressed her desire on October 27, 1946, to unite with the Old School Baptist Church near Parsonsburg, Md., and was baptized the same day by the late Elder Harold M. Bennett.

The writer had the pleasure of visiting our dear sister many times during her illness of about two and one half years, and always found her to be reconciled to her affliction. Though we miss her very much, we feel she had spent her appointed time here, and believe she has gone to be at rest with her Lord.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Holloway Funeral Home in Salisbury, Md. on March 29, 1962 and she was laid to rest in the Forest Grove Cemetery near Parsonsburg, Md. May it please the Lord to reconcile those left to mourn the loss of this dear one, is the prayer of the writer.

Arthur R. Warren

MAGGIE DeBRULER

It has pleased our Almighty God to remove by death, our beloved sister, Maggie DeBruler. We wish to bow in humble submission to the will of the God she loved and served so faithfully.

Sister Maggie was born in Caswell County, North Carolina, on January 19, 1886 and departed this life November 22, 1962, at the age of 75 years and 10 months. She was the daughter of the late Joseph F. and Chestina Oakley DeBruler. Never being married, she made her home with them until their death.

She was a very devoted sister, a mother to her family, and was a gentle and humble woman. She seemed to love everyone, was ever sensitive to the good within the human soul, she was always one to uncover good where most persons discerned only evil. She seemed happiest when she could do something to help someone.

Following the death of her sister, Minnie D. Browning's husband, the two made their home together for the past twenty years in the McCray Community. They were very devoted sisters and after the sudden passing of her sister, Minnie, on May 6, 1961, she was deeply grieved and depressed so much of the time. Her health failed more rapidly. She suffered a

stroke and was critically ill for one week. The moment before she passed she opened her eyes wide, then closed them, there I believe she saw that home in heaven for all his dear ones. My prayer is that when my time comes that the Lord will show me that home that is built on high.

She joined the McCray Primitive Baptist Church August 15, 1954. She was a faithful member, many times attending church in much physical discomfort. Her home was always open to her many friends and to the household of faith.

Her funeral was conducted from the McCray Primitive Church by her pastor, Elder W. Curry King, assisted by Elder Ernest Oakley. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery, under a large blanket of beautiful flowers. She was one who loved flowers and always placed flowers on the graves of her loved ones each week while her health permitted.

She leaves to mourn her departure, three brothers, E. J. DeBruler, D. L. DeBruler of Burlington and A. T. DeBruler of Burlington, Route 3, several nieces and nephews and a host of friends who feel her loss very much.

The Lord has given and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.

Written by her brother,
Andrew T. DeBruler

SISTER KITTY HUDSON

It has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst our beloved Sister, Kitty Hudson, at the age of about 75 years. She leaves to mourn her departure two daughters: Gracie Rice, Emma Clide; and two sons: Noel Hudson and Blythe Hudson.

She became a member of Pilgrim's Rest Church of the South Arkansas Association when she was a young woman, and remained a faithful servant the remainder of her life. The membership of the church joins the family in their grief, but we feel to hope that our loss is her eternal gain.

May God in his kind and tender mercy reconcile us all to his most holy will, and give us faith to look to Him from whence cometh our strength, is the prayer of the humble writer.

Elder J. T. Everitt

SISTER JAKE PETERBAUGH

It has pleased our dear heavenly Father to take from our midst our dear Sister Jake Peterbaugh, at the age of seventy-four years. She died March 12, 1962.

She was received into Pilgrim's Rest Primitive Baptist Church of the South Arkansas Association, about ten years ago. The membership joins the family in their sorrow, but hope our loss is her eternal gain.

She leaves to mourn her passing two sons: Willie, of Kingsland, Ark.; Jewel, Kansas City, Kansas; two daughters: Birdie, Beardin, Ark.; and Ola May, Amorilla, Texas.

May the good Lord enable us to look to Him from whence cometh our strength, and reconcile us all to his holy will, is our prayer for Jesus sake.

This done by order of the church at Pilgrim's Rest, the 3rd Sunday in March, 1962.

J. T. Everitt, Moderator
Emma Broach, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT FOR BROTHER GASTON TART

Brother Tart was born February 5, 1883, and died March 10, 1962. He stayed on earth seventy-nine years, one month, and five days. He was a member of Bethsaida Primitive Baptist Church thirty-three years, and at Liberty Church seven years. He was a faithful and humble member, and attended church as long as his health permitted. We loved him, but God loved him best. Our loss is his eternal gain, we hope and believe. We miss him very much.

His funeral was preached at Liberty Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Lester E. Lee and Elder W. D. Godwin; and he was laid to rest in the Norris Cemetery.

He is survived by his wife, five children, and several grandchildren and great grandchildren.

It was agreed that a copy of this be sent to the family; a copy put on the church record; and a copy be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference Saturday before the 1st Sunday in April, 1962.

Committee: James G. Young
Liddie Tart
Melia Byrd

MEMORIAL

ELDER A. B. AYERS

It is with a deep sense of unworthiness, and in a most depressed and heart-broken frame, that I try to comply with the request of the Church at Flatty Creek, to write a memorial of our beloved and most God-fearing Pastor, Elder A. B. Ayers. We feel that a Prince of Israel has fallen and is now resting in the Paradise of God, waiting to receive his crown and the robe of righteousness, which was not wrought out by any act of man, but by Jesus, our righteous Judge.

Elder Ayers suffered a great deal in his call as a shepherd into the ministerial field, but in his suffering, he was made willing in the day of Jesus Christ to go forth in His name, never faltering to preach Jesus, the way, the truth, and the life — complete salvation of poor sinners, and sovereign grace to fallen man. He said many times that his greatest desire was to preach the whole counsel of God, rightly dividing the work of truth, and God blessed him to do so with a great demonstration of the Spirit. He was a man of an orderly walk and a godly conversation, a man of great intellect, bearing out the true marks of a child of God, and a great gift in the gospel field. He was very meek, humble, kind, and unselfish, always so loving toward his brethren and friends. In greeting him, one could always feel a warmth of God's love that went out from heart to heart, and in his special gift of prayer you could feel something very endearing because of the sincerity in which he petitioned his Father. He prayed so earnestly in behalf of the least unto the greatest, with a true heart fervently for the welfare of Zion, that it might please the Lord to bring them all together as a family of happy children speaking the same language as one in Christ Jesus. We do not have adequate words to express what we feel in our loss of our father in Israel, who was so dutiful and forbearing in the twenty-seven and a half years he served us. After his ordination, he preached his first sermon for us, and also his last one. In these many years, though seemingly few, he shared our joys and sorrows, looking over us at all times for our good as a good shepherd over his flock.

While we loved him God loved him, too, and He "moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform." David said, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way," so we feel he is now come into the reality of his hope, resting from his labours. While we grieve, we rejoice also, witnessing with David who also said, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." We quote:

"Lord we are pained but we resign
Our bodies to thy will;
'Tis grace, 'tis wisdom all divine
Appoints the pains we feel.

Dark are the ways of Providence;
While they who love thee groan,
Thy reasons lie concealed from sense,
Mysterious and unknown."

Beadie Meads, Church Clerk

IN MEMORY OF WOODROW AND LAWRENCE S. CROKER

In memory of my husband and son, Woodrow W. Croker, who died March 28, 1960, and Lawrence S. Croker, who died Feb. 22, 1958.

When my thoughts are beyond the sunset,
Through my window I can see,
Where my precious ones are sleeping,
Oh! they were so dear to me.

When my mind beholds their memories,
And my dreams of them are clear,
As we talk and laugh together,
Like we did when they were here.

Then I cannot keep the tears from flowing,
From this afflicted form of clay,
In hope of a glorious resurrection,
Where we will spend an endless day.

Where sorrow cannot touch us,
And no tears or trials there,
We will praise our blessed Saviour,
In that land so bright and fair.

In this world we will have tribulations,
For Jesus plainly tells us this,
Dear ones I know you are sweetly sleeping,
In a land of perfect bliss.

Sometimes the road gets mighty rough,
But I will try not to complain,
For I know it leads to a glorious rest,
Where happiness will forever reign.

I know, dear Lord, you are gracious,
When you take our loved ones from here,
Through the storms and tempest clouds of sorrow,
You've caused me to smile through a million tears.

You've taught me to cry to you, and humbly pray,
To keep me in your fear all the day through,
Sanctify to me all my trials and afflictions,
That I may not glory in anything but you.

For it was in the furnace of affliction,
That I learned my deepest lesson,
For you enabled me to stand the trial,
And I received my greatest blessing.

Now I know you have been with me,
If left to self I would surely fall,
Give me faith to press on forward,
Give me grace to meet each call.

And when I hear the death angel calling,
Dear Lord, please linger close to me,
Carry me in your arms to heaven,
Where I will spend eternity.

Then my eyes shall behold thy glory,
I'll sing sweet grace has brought me home,
There I will meet my precious husband,
There I will embrace my darling son.

Mrs. W. W. Croker,
Hiram, Ga.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 130 DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1962 NO. 10

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10/62
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

Whitefield, Maine

Dear Elders Wood and Spangler:

Enclosed is money order for two years renewal for the *Signs of the Times,* which is over due.

As I write, my mind is directed to the fact of how blessed we are that we both see eye to eye regarding the blessed truths recorded in the Book of Books, the Holy Bible; and set forth in the writings of the *Signs.* We do enjoy the articles on different passages of scripture, also the experiences of the brethren. Many tell of their travels of life along the pathway that corresponds to our own experiences — which we hope is by the Holy Spirit.

So many times I (the writer) am so far in the depths of despair, I have to question, "Am I His, or am I not?" Often so low that all I can think is to hope I have a hope. It seems the Bible is so often a sealed book to me; I so void of understanding. Then my mind is directed to some past experience that was so wonderful, it gave renewed hope, with peace and joy, that I could say that God in his mercy and love was truly with me, — all, unworthy as I am of the least of God's mercies. I hope that I am included in that number whose names are recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life, chosen before the foundation of the world. "Saved by grace!" What a firm foundation the children of God have? "Nevertheless the foundation of God stands sure, having thy seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his."

One experience that I was called to endure: A few years back I lay in a rest home over three months with one leg elevated 45 degrees because of a ruptured vein, which would not heal. The following scripture, as I was reading, stood out as just for me: "Fear thou not for I am with thee. Be not dismayed for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee, yea I will help thee; yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." (Isaiah 41:10)

A few days later my doctor told me an operation was the only way. He took me to the hospital and tied off the veins at thigh and knee. That same day I walked supported by my doctor and an attendant — the first steps for thirteen weeks.

The above named scripture gave me much comfort and peace of mind that there was no fear about the operation. I feel to know that God was with me, and strengthened me. Praise His holy name.

My husband joins me in love and fellowship to you both. May God continue to bless you in your publishing of the dear old paper, that I know so many enjoy.

Mrs. Arthur Merigold

A WORD FROM CANADA

R. R. 1,
Walkers, Ontario,
Canada

Dear Editors of the *Signs:*

Please renew my subscription for the *Signs of the Times* for two years, with

the remainder to be used in your work. Please forgive me for being overdue. I feel the need of much forgiveness from God's children, as I so often do and say unbecoming things for one who professes to be a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus. My hope is that my shortcomings may tend to keep me humble, lest I become exalted above measure.

We here in Canada do enjoy the love, fellowship, and labor of our pastor, Elder Ruston, and his dear companion. May God spare them to us for many years with health and strength equal to their burden, if it be His will.

. . . I enjoy the reading in the *Signs*. Some articles express my belief, and tell my experience better than I can myself. We need one another. May we ever pray for the peace and posperity of Zion.

"There my best friends, my kindred dwell;
There God my Saviour reigns."

May God's blessings rest upon all his people, for Jesus sake.

A sinner in hope of God's mercy,
Flossie Bishop

"ITS FREE"

Woodward, Iowa

Dear Elder Spangler:

As my time is upon its expiration, I am enclosing a money order for another year for the most wonderful publication in existence in these modern times. If after all is said and done, and all the confusion is past and gone, — I seem to think — if my name was not written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world, what have I to stand on, — I have no hope whatever. And if anyone can understand that there is anything he can do to help in any way to help themselves, it is more than I can see.

I can't understand any way but salvation by grace. My life span is nearly run, and I have not much more time to remain here in this time world, but I feel I am ready to go any time the Lord calls me. I may be mistaken, I don't seem to care about the going; only the change is my concern. I have nothing on earth but my children and God's children that I hate to leave. I do love them with a love that will not die; and when my time is up and I ever reach that golden shore of sweet deliverance, we can all sing together:

"Amazing grace how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me."

It is wonderful to have that hope of heaven and immortal glory. It doesn't cost money, either: Its free. I know I am a sinner, and I have never done one single thing to merit any of the many blessings that have been bestowed upon me.

Time is fleeting, and time will disappear. Then real life will begin for the people of God, when death is swallowed up in victory for the giver of every good and perfect gift.

. . . May God bless you and yours, and all who trust in God's grace for Heaven and Immortal glory.

Yours in hope,
W. J. Kimbro

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

Dear Brethren:

The church is the greatest brotherhood on earth, and is the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them. These good works are the fruit of the Spirit, and if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.

We receive the Spirit of Christ by being born of God; and the work of regeneration is the sovereign work of God. As children of God, we are the children of promise.

There is one thing that makes manifest the sons of God, and that is the love of God. Love unites the whole fam-

ily of God, and holds us together as one church, having one Lord, one faith, one baptism. Grace saves all of the elect family of God, and keeps them saved. Insofar as the faith and ordinances are concerned, the faith was once delivered to the saints, and the ordinances were given by Christ through the Apostles, and through this faith they have been kept through the ages. The Bible tells us that, "by their fruits ye shall know them."

The church has never lost its identity, and never will. The imprints of the love of God are stamped in His church, and will thus identify her from all other kingdoms and organizations under the sun.

Finally, brethren live in peace, and above all things put on charity, which is the bond of perfection.

Now unto Him who is able to keep you from falling, and who will preserve you unto that heavenly kingdom, be honor, and glory, and majesty forever.

Submitted in love,
Frank F. Eggleston

"THE PROMISE INCLUDED TRIBULATIONS"

Route 4,
Rocky Mount, Va.

Dear Brother Spangler:

Pardon me a stranger for presenting myself so boldly, since I don't think you know me anything like as well as I do you, and that only in a general way, having been one on the back bench during several of your preaching appointments.

To introduce myself is the purpose of this note for included herewith is a letter containing a few pages of my diary in recent months and years, and it appears proper that a touch of history concerning the author would be in season: partly for identification, and to search for marks of growth in grace, to see if it was a real leper, or a false alarm.

Today is exactly one year since the liquid grave consumed me, so it would appear good to look and see the way I have come; was that occasion a false pretense, or was relief found? The latter is my persuasion; however, the battle was not finished that day, as I had thought. The warfare goes on, and the battle rages worse now than then. Even so, I would not engage in continual complaining, for there has failed nothing at all of the things promised. The promise included tribulations, and I have had my assigned lot.

The way laid out was via the lily of the valley, so I have had my classes there, and learned that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like that lily. Part of the voyage, (which is still incomplete, since I am yet a scholar), went to the top of a mountain, and had to do with an occasion known as the Transfiguration; the substance of which I have never been able to reproduce. But I am continually made to go back to look to yonder hill from whence cometh my strength, for another of those crumbs cast upon the waters to return again after many days.

The consolation that was mine for a couple of hours while the instructions of this matter were being made known, I shall never forget; nor the beauty of the picture that was framed in my mind concerning the significance of that occasion: The cloud came up (faith), and the voice spoke (Spirit) and said, "This is my beloved son, hear ye him." The representative of Mount Sinai law, Moses, disappeared; and the favorite of the prophets, Elias, was gone.

The most striking part of the occasion was that Peter, poor fellow that he was, though he should build a tabernacle for each of the three. But the truth of the matter was that he was just like any other human would be, he was afraid, and wist not what to do. Oh, in my poor, lame, and helpless pilgrimage here, how oft has it been the case, "I wist not what to do." And fear overcoming to the measure permitted,

I would undertake what I have no business at all to do. But notice now what happened when the cloud came, that overshadowing, as it were, of faith, and out of the cloud, the voice. Was that voice terrible as the fast wind? Nay, but that still voice, the hearing of faith, that "slips" in, as one might say, by the back way, and stills that fear, seals instruction, and imparts joy and peace that the ordinary man in the street would be altogether stranger to.

Is this then the right way? and evidence of grace? Of this I would say, he did lead them forth by the right way; that he did cause them to walk in paths they had not trod before; that he did turn darkness into light before their eyes; that he did, in the essence of all this, form himself in them the hope, (which is the word I am coming to,) of glory, and then promised (and that promise can't fail,) that they should be saved by that same hope.

I bear witness that this is the way I have come; and that it is the way left on record as being "the way", with the exhortation, "walk ye in it." Not run in it, for in this case to walk is fast enough pace; and at times that is slowed to a "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord."

I realize now that I have overshot my mark, for I only aimed to make a little extension to the letter written some months back. I love to hear of the wonderful works of God, and trust, if I am not deceived, (as the enemy of all righteousness has so many times tried to persuade me), that He has called me to suffer in an assigned measure for his own name's sake. I do not claim to be the chiefest of sinners, as proclaimed by our Gentile Apostle, for I have never done many of the things that he had done outwardly; however, as concerning that inward sting and continual drag of sin, the natural depravity of fallen Adam, I know something of that, and that I am lost world without end, save for interest in, and application of the precious blood of a crucified and risen Saviour. There is nothing I have ever done in my 27 years, or left undone, that would gain me favor with God, seeing he receiveth not honor from men, neither giveth his own glory to another. If these things be true, and I am a child of Jehovah, it is simply because He loved me and gave himself for me, and that is my hope; and that the life I now live is by the faith of the Son of God.

I must leave off, for I had no intention of going so far; but even so, this life is so short that if I devoted all the rest of it to continual praise of the great God, (if I could do that), I should not more than say his name, in comparison to what could be said about him: unfathomable and unsearchable, and plainly manifest, yet unknown as he is.

Excuse my feeble way, encourage my theme, and may the God of all grace be tenderly manifest with you all. I am a stranger and a pilgrim enroute to that celestial city eternal in the heavens, so I hope.

James R. Holley

(We hope Brother Holley will write again. The length of the letter referred to, written to Elder Posey Plybon, Rocky Mount, Va., prohibits its publication, but we shall look for more. We regret the delay in publishing the above. — J. D. W.)

THE BEGINNINGS

(A sermon at the Pigg River Association of Virginia, 1962)

Somehow, brethren, I have full fellowship for the expressions of our brethren who have preceded me, as to their weakness, as to their inability to come before the Lord's people, because I think that the greatest trial I have is my feeling of inability, and that I am unlearned; and that it is a fearful thing to come before such a great people as the Lord's people: A people who have been taught the truth; a people who believe the truth; and a people who have been enabled through the grace of God

through the years, to contend earnestly for that truth; and who will not have anything else but that truth.

I am glad to have the wonderful privilege of being with you again. I have been coming to this association, of course, since I was just a boy, and have many fond and pleasant memories of our brethren, and of the love and fellowship that was manifested through these many years. Each year at the time for the meeting to come on, I have a longing to come to be with you again; but I honestly can say that, as I thought a moment ago, that if I were yet a member of the Pigg River Association, the brethren wouldn't call upon me, and I could sit and just listen; and that was my desire. Because, while I am sure that I am not ashamed of the gospel, believing it to be, as the apostle said, the power of God unto salvation, unto every one that believeth, etc. I am not ashamed of that, but I am ashamed so very often of the weak manner, the weak way in which I present this power of God unto the Lord's people. I feel, if I am not deceived, that I have been shown something of the wonderful power of God, believing that he has all power both in heaven and in earth, and that he works his will, and that there is nothing in heaven or in earth that can turn aside, or go contrary to that which our Father in his wisdom and determinate counsel decreed before the world began.

On yesterday my mind was greatly exercised, and I felt that when Elder King spoke, everything was taken from me, because he took my text; but he ran it, I am glad to say, in a way that I rejoiced in it. He said things that just suited me exactly, things I feel the text contains; therefore I was glad he was given that liberty.

My mind this morning has been to some extent upon *The Beginnings*.

I have often been amazed, often been concerned that there are many, many people who profess to believe the Scriptures, who say that the Bible is the word of God, yet on the other hand turn just around and deny much that is contained in the Scriptures. Now I believe, and am certain it is true, that the Scriptures as we have them are the word of God: That God enabled his servants, holy men of old, to write as He moved them; therefore the things that are written are the things that God would have us understand and know, and that He himself has so wonderfully wrought in all things, that these things are left for us. They were given by inspiration, and are profitable for doctrine, reproof, etc. I feel, as I stand before you, to say this: To me, if I should use the word blasphemy, it is not too strong a word to use when we hear men who profess to believe in the God of heaven — the almighty and all wise God of heaven — and then turn on the other hand and say that God wants to do things, and men won't let him. This is blasphemy to me; and I don't like it at all. I wonder how men, even in their carnality, could make such a profession, and feel that they are acquainted with the scriptures and what they teach, and then turn about and deny them almost entirely.

If I have a text at all, as a basis of what I might say, the Lord giving me light and liberty, as I have said, I have thought something concerning The Beginnings. And in 1st John, 4th chapter, there are two verses I want to read. The 10th verse says, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propituation for our sins." The other one is the 19th verse, "We love him, because he first loved us." To me, that is a beginning — we love him because he first loved us. You will remember that by inspiration Moses said, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." "In the beginning." We hear John in the first of his gospel, say, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was made flesh and dwelt among us," as you will recall. There is

another scripture that comes to mind, the language of the Apostle Paul, "Being confident of this very thing, that he who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

We have several beginnings in these scriptures, do we not? "We love him because he first loved us." "Being confident of this very thing, that he that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God." "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

I don't know whether you are quite aware of it, or not, but my attention has sometimes been called to it, that even in our schools, especially of higher learning, the colleges, they are actually, openly teaching and advocating things that are contrary to the things God has revealed in his word. They are not going behind a tree to advocate, but they are teaching it openly. They are denying many things that our God has revealed. Therefore I feel safe in saying that to profess to believe, and then deny some of the things God has revealed, is blasphemy.

I am somehow firmly fixed upon this truth, that God did in the beginning create the heaven and the earth, and the fulness thereof; that he is the maker and creator of all things. And the Apostle said in Hebrews, that by faith we understand these things were made, that God created these things. He is quoting, not verbatim, the things that Moses stated in the first chapter of Genesis. It is by faith that we understand these things; and without faith we cannot understand. Without faith we cannot please God. Without faith we cannot know anything about God. And this is a matter that is seldom understood, (and I should say, never understood), by those who have not been exercised, never been born of the Spirit. I was interested in our brother's text this morning: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world."

Now our God has loved us with an everlasting love; and we are blessed, as the apostle said, with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places according as he has chosen us in him before the world began. The same apostle also said, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

There were those who came into the hearing of Jesus when he first began his public ministry: some of them believed, but many more did not believe. There was a reason why some believed. We are told that they who believed Jesus were those who were born not of blood, nor the will of the flesh — not born of man — but born of God. These were the people who believed that Jesus was the Son of God. And we remember that when Jesus asked his disciples, "Whom do men say that I the son of man am?" They answered that some said that thou are Elias, or one of the prophets. I feel that the answer was, that men don't know who you are, they are just guessing at it. But when Jesus asked his disciples, "Whom do ye say that I am?" Peter answering for them all, said immediately, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

We ought to be, and are, very interested in the reply that Jesus made to them: "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

The thought, my brethren, which I want to emphasize is, (leaving as we shall now the truth that God is the creator of the heaven and the earth and

the fulness thereof, the upholder of all things, the disposer of all things, and works all things according the counsel of his will; and going back, if we can, in our mind's eye, in faith of which Jesus is both the author and finisher, back beyond the beginning of material things), that God loved his people. Not only did he love them, he chose them in his Son Jesus Christ before the world began. And I have rejoiced, my brethren, in the midst of many afflictions (or rather doubts I should say), and fears and tremblings, that I just believe and am convinced that the salvation, the redemption of the Lord's people, is the surest thing we can think about. Because God has the whole matter in his own hands — he hasn't done some of it, and then left it optional with men to do the other — not even to choose whether they will accept or whether they will reject. God doesn't work that way. God has declared the end from the beginning, and having done that, he must necessarily have declared all things between the beginning and the end, else it would be possible, (if we can think about it as something possible that way,) that something might come up that would prevent the end from being as it was decreed to be. But our God works all things after the counsel of his own will; and men or devils have never stayed his hand, and they never will. The Devil himself is a creature of God. He is not an independent being, though when I was a boy, I was taught that there were two great powers in the world. One was God; the other was the Devil. And the great question which should concern men, was who should have the most on his side in the end; because the greater number decided the victor. But you know, brethren, we read in the scriptures, "Now the serpent was more subtile than any beast of the field that the Lord God had created." Do you suppose that God did not know anything about that serpent? Did he somehow just slip in without the knowledge of God? Or was this, though it may be beyond our understanding, also according to the eternal will and purpose of God?

I want to say that I believe so without any doubt. Jesus was given to the church before the beginning, before the world began. God gave him, that he should come into the world at the proper time, to do a certain thing; and that was, to redeem his people from their sins. This was before the world began. Therefore, God, having determined to save his people, also determined that his people should stand in the need of being saved. It was for this reason that Jesus came into the world. Is it not true, as you have heard, that the remedy was prepared before the disease? Is it not true that Jesus was ever with the Father; that he was a lamb slain from the foundation of the world? Therefore, when Jesus came into the world, he came to do one certain, specific thing, including everything that he did — to this one end, to this one purpose; because he said, "I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me; and this is the Father's will that sent me, that of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day."

One of the brethren has quoted, "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Along with this, in the same chapter of John, it is said, "No man can come unto me except my Father which hath sent me draw him."

So we see, brethren, from these scriptures that the salvation of the Lord's people had its beginning not in time, not even after Adam and Eve had sinned and come short of the glory of God; but it had its beginning in the choice, or election of grace before the world began, when God knew and loved all his people. He chose them in his Son Jesus Christ before the world began; and it was the Father's will to redeem whom he loved; and whom he gave as the bride, the

Lamb's wife; and he sent his Son to redeem them. Therefore it is said that he came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him.

Now everything that Jesus did, (and I might also say here, that I believe that everything in the world, that has ever been or will ever be; in other words, the purpose that God had in creating the earth, the heaven and the fullness thereof, the world), was to this very end, that His people should be redeemed from their sins. Therefore, as you have probably thought, when the last one of these who were loved by the Father before the world began, has been brought to the knowledge of the truth, given a hope of eternal life, it just seems that then will be the time that the Father has no longer any use for this world, or for things of time; and then the end shall come.

It is a wonderful thing to believe and to know, and to be firmly settled upon the fact that the Father loved his people before the world began. This very truth, this very doctrine, is the very thing that separates, brings a division, and causes men not to be able to walk together; because not many believe that God actually chose his people before the world began; that he provided for these, and these alone, in the person of his Son, that they should be redeemed. The common doctrine is that Christ came into the world to offer salvation — a sufficiency of salvation — that, if men will choose, will to accept and believe, and conform themselves to certain requirements, then everything is going to be alright.

But here is the scripture that I read first in John, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propituation for our sins." I wonder if we could in any sense consider that the Apostle Paul, or Saul as he was before, was choosing to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. We read, and I think that everyone who is experienced in these things, knows something about the condition Saul was in, when he verily thought he was doing God's service; doing the very things he thought God required of him. He really believed that; and I am convinced that there are many who are earnest in what they believe, and in what they do: they feel they do the right thing. But we may be so very, very earnest in what we do, and, if we are wrong, we are just simply wrong. Two wrongs can never make a right. It positively is not true that God has in some way changed his manner of dealing with men, as I have heard nearly all my life, that he has now fixed it so that if men will do the very best they know how, then He will give them some grace, and everything will be alright.

As a matter of fact, brethren, if these who talk so much about the kingdom of heaven, the church of God, if they had ever been brought experimentally to see themselves as they really are in the sight of the eternal God; if they had ever been brought low; if they had ever been brought to see themselves in the pit, in the horrible pit that David wrote about; and had ever been brought out, and realized that it was God that brought them out, and put their feet upon a rock and established their goings, etc.; if such had ever been taught of the Lord, you wouldn't have all this Armenian doctrine that is rampant in the world. You would have the gospel of the Son of God being preached. But only those who know the joyful sound; only those who have been taught of the Lord; only those who have been born of the Spirit, know anything about, have ever seen, have ever rejoiced in, or ever will know anything about the kingdom of heaven. Because men, even those who were chosen in Christ before the world began, are simply so dead in trespasses and sins that they don't realize what they are of themselves — they have no knowledge of it. And they go along in this condition, even those chosen and loved of the Father, until in the wisdom of God the time comes, (because we know there is a time to every purpose under the sun), that God is pleased to send his Spirit into the hearts of his

chosen ones. None can ever know their need, until it is opened up to them — until these things are opened up to them, not by men, but by the Spirit of God.

But how wonderful it is that God has loved poor sinners — he doesn't love sin: he loves sinners; and he loved them with such a wonderful love — and who can understand that love? Yes, he loved us with such a wonderful love that he gave his only begotten Son. No wonder John said, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." Could you do that? Have you ever loved anyone with such a love that you could give your own flesh and blood, your own son, to die for the best friend you ever had? I say, No! You couldn't do it. Behold, then, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, who are the sinners that we are, and unworthy of His notice, that He should give His Son to die to redeem us.

So it is The Beginnings that we are interested in: the beginning of these things. "We love him because he first loved us." It was his first loving us that prompted all of his eternal will and purpose in the giving of his Son to come into the world to die to redeem us from **all** sins.

My brethren, this is a serious thing; and I hope that all our brethren are exercised to the extent to know that it is a serious matter. In the beginning of the chapter which our brother used as a text, in Titus, it says, "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine." "Contend earnestly," Jude says, "for the faith once delivered unto the saints." And should you ever, (and it is impossible not to hear, if you listen), hear men preaching what they call the gospel, and they in any way limit the purpose of God, and the power of God in the salvation of sinners; or if they preach anything, save, as the apostle said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation . . ." If they preach anything else than the power of God in its entirety, all the way through, the beginning, between, and the end, then they are not preaching the gospel.

It is a wonderful and glorious thing if we are given to trace out in our feelings experimentally, as well as in the scriptures, and to remember that Jesus was with his people here in the world manifestly for three and one-half years. But he had to go away when he had accomplished the will of the Father — when he had finished the work the Father gave him to do. And we want to emphasize the fact that Jesus did finish the work the Father gave him to do. He did not overlook a single thing: he did not forget anything. I have often been glad that it is said that certain things were done, that the scriptures might be fulfilled. So, brethren, all these things work together.

We remember that when Jesus was about to go away, having finished his work, he prayed unto the Father to glorify him with the same glory that he had with him before the world began; and the Father answered, "I have both glorified thee, and will glorify thee." He gave his divine approval that Jesus had finished the work he was sent to do. Therefore He was glorified in being received back into heaven. But he gave something else, brethren. The church is not alone in the world today. Your Lord and Master is ascended to the Father, where he is at his right hand interceeding for us. But you are not alone: God said to him, "Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." So the all-seeing eye and the everlasting purposes of our God are still ruling in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and in the church, just the same as God determined before the world began. He is still ruling; he is still reigning. Jesus said, "If I go away I will send the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, who shall take the things of mine and show them unto you."

Now that is the only way that I know of, that the scriptures teach that poor sinners, those who were chosen in the Son before the world began, are brought

into the knowledge of the truth — by the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, of the Trinity: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, these three are one. That, as the Father chose his people, and sent his Son to redeem them, he likewise sends his Spirit into their hearts to reveal to them that they were chosen and redeemed; that they are the children of God. This is the only way, and this is the first time, that they know anything about their election of grace. But so powerful is the work of the Spirit of God in the heart of dead sinners, that they are brought to a newness of life. They are brought! Jesus said, "The hour is coming and now is, in the which the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." It is absolutely a falsehood to say, or for any man to preach, or believe, or teach, that the Spirit of God is wooing and beseeching, and doing everything he can in order to get men to believe, but that some are just so stubborn they won't believe.

But these are not talking about Israel's God. They are not talking about the God who created the heaven and the earth. They are not talking about the God who speaks and it is done. No, they are talking about some foreign god, some little idol god; and all such gods must fall before the God with whom we have to do. How good it is to remember that it is said that every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that He is Lord of Lords and King of Kings.

So, brethren, the salvation of the Lord's people, as I said, is the surest thing that I know anything about. Why is it sure? Because God has done it all. And He has declared what he has done: He hasn't left it for us to guess about it. He sent his Son into the world, saying, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins." He shall do that! He shall save his people from their sins! Jesus sends the Spirit into your hearts; and when the Spirit speaks, it matters not how great a blasphemer a man may have been, how great an unbeliever, or full of self-righteousness, when this power of God, this Spirit of God, comes and speaks, it just melts everything that is carnal and human — it just melts right before it. Even that highminded Saul, under the power of the Spirit, fell down to the earth, and had to beg God to have mercy on him: "Who art thou Lord?" "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" He didn't know before: He thought he did, and verily though he was doing God's service.

The time is now, and will continue to come, (it will be in God's time), when you who do not believe the truth, but are of the chosen family of God, will be brought to see yourself as you are; and Jesus will be revealed to you as your Saviour: And that is the only way you will ever know it. In my case something took place which was so powerful that it turned me about; it took away everything that I ever trusted before; it made me come as a begger before the throne of God, asking him to have mercy upon a poor sinner. And I know, brethren, that yet, when I am brought to fear and tremble, and to sometimes wonder whether there is even a God in heaven or not; or to wonder whether I am of the Lord's chosen, or not, and go mourning and trying to pray; and sometimes can't pray, sometimes can't read or talk about the goodness and mercy of God, but every such time, when there is a renewing again, and a restoring again of the joys of my salvation, there is a leading right back to that time when this poor one was begging God to have mercy upon him. There is a going right back to that. And, my brethren, if I can't declare what I believe the Lord has done for me, you don't want to hear me, do you? You want to know whether I have been brought in the same way you have. You want to know whether it was just a notion I had that I would believe, or whether there was a power that overcame me; a power that made manifest to me that it wasn't because I loved God, but because God loved me, and he bowed the heavens and came down to a poor worm of the dust, and

manifested his graciousness, his mercy, his loving kindness.

And though we sometimes get exalted, God knows how to bring us down to where we must fall before him again, time after time; and to realize by the grace of God, that it is not in ourselves, neither is it in man that walketh to direct his steps. The Lord speaks when we are in great trouble: He brings us into a place of broad rivers, and wonderful glories of the Lord; and though our troubles may seem to be worse than anybody else's, we have not become any lower than the apostle when he said that, lest he should become exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given him a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him. I believe that it is God's way that we should be brought into doubts and fears, that we should learn with the apostle, that, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for **my strength** is made perfect in weakness." — your weakness. You don't know anything about the power of God when you feel strong. But it is when you are weak that you are strong: you are strong when you are weak and realize that you are kept by the power of God.

We ought, brethren, to really desire that God would bring us low. There is something in being poured from vessel to vessel — not poured out, not poured upon the ground, not cast away, but poured from vessel to vessel — from experience to experience; from the revelation of God in our hearts — from one revelation to another revelation; and being confirmed that all of our ways, and all of the Lord's dealings with us; and everything we are, and everything we have, is of the Lord. These are favorite expressions of mine. Do you realize that you don't have a thing in the world that the Lord hasn't given you? "What hast thou that thou hast not received?" "Who maketh ye to differ?" Have you worked harder than your neighbor, and have something that he does not? Some of us feel that way, don't we; but what have you that you have not received? Sometimes when I sit down to the table, I eat because I worked, and have the food I worked for; and at other times I am made to realize that it mattered not if I had worked and worked, it is God that gave the increase; it is God that gave the season; it is God that gave the food; and it is God that gave me the appetite to eat. Sometimes I am thankful, but often when I sit down, I forget where these things come from.

I hope you are not that way — yes I do hope you are that way, too! It is good for us. If it wasn't for the fact that we are often brought low, and if it wasn't for the fact that I am afraid of this place right here, I would become exalted, and so highminded that you couldn't have a bit of fellowship for me. When I stood back there yesterday and listened to the brethren as they talked about how fearful they were, I felt to take them into my arms, and say, "I know what you are talking about." This is the most fearful place I have ever stood in — and I have stood in lots of places and in lots of circumstances, but never in anything more fearful than this; because when we come here, it isn't to display natural wisdom, even if we had it, but it is in power and demonstration of the Spirit. If the Lord doesn't give us the spirit and the power, we just can't demonstrate it. You know that, brethren, don't you? You certainly do.

So, in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth; the Word was in the beginning; and we love God because he **first** loved us. And I am certain and sure that if it had not been for the grace of God that he manifested to us when we were dead in sin, and made us to know that even when we were dead, that Christ died for the ungodly, that today you and I would be going along with the world; we would be preaching self-righteousness; we would be going all over the world, maybe, using our influence as far as possible to try to save sinners. But, thanks be to our God, we are not trying to save sinners, we are

just trying to declare with such ability as we are given, that God **has** saved sinners: that He has done that. Not only has He saved sinners, but that he has ordained all things. "In whom we have obtained an inheritance, (isn't that wonderful?), being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." And when we realize how great strangers we are in this world, and that this world is not our home, we don't want to stay here long, do we?

You know, brethren, that except God has revealed something to you: that somehow heaven has come down — down where you are, you wouldn't have any hope of eternal life, would you? I say to you that, if heaven doesn't begin below; if there isn't an experience of the grace of God; if there isn't a sealing with the holy Spirit of promise; if you don't receive these things sometime while you live, you have no hope of eternal life. You are sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, and these things all work together. A man must be born again or he cannot see the kingdom of God. After believing, we are sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance. So, heaven begins below, and you have a little foretaste of it. The brother quoted yesterday, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered the heart of man the things God has prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed it to us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God."

So, brethren, my whole desire this morning is to preach to you and confirm you in your faith that God has done all things for you — things you could not possibly do for yourself. Even if it is contrary to the doctrine of men, God does not require you to do something before he will come to you, but it is when you are dead that he makes manifest that he loved you; and you love him because he first loved you.

If I have said anything that would tend to take any of the wisdom, power, or glory from our God, I retract it. I don't believe that I have. If I have given man any of the honor or any of the glory, I likewise retract it, for I know that our God has all power; and I know that we have nothing except what we have received at the hands of our God. My God be with you, and keep you. I hope, the Lord willing, to be blessed to be with you next year, but this is in His hands. In the meantime, his grace is sufficient for you.

(The above was by me at the **Pigg River** Association, 1962. It is published at the request of Sister D. S. Reid, and others, and is from a recording, and somewhat condensed for publication. — **J. D. W.**)

REJOICED TO MEET WITH THE BRETHREN

1168 High Avenue
Topeka, Kansas

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing $3.00 due on my subscription and I hope to not miss a single copy. I am sorry to have been so long delayed and humbly ask you to pardon the delay which has been due to an illness from which I have not yet fully recovered. I find much comfort reading from the pen of the dear Saints scattered abroad, and I hope to continue it as long as I live; and I am now in my 83rd year.

Since the long illness and death of our beloved Pastor, Elder L. L. Schenck, who was also my precious and aged uncle, the little church here has been unable to meet except the few times Elder Wm. Winfrey visited us. We are now so few in number, some aged and afflicted and unable to attend, it seems the little church cannot longer survive. It is the last church of the three which constituted the First Kansas Association, which existed many years.

It is not within our finite minds to understand why we are thus left in a declining state, but we desire to be submissive to the decrees of an all wise

Providence, "who doeth his will in the armies of Heaven and amongst the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay his Hand, or say, What doest thou"; and who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. And there is comfort and encouragement in the blessed assurance that, "All things work together for good to them who love the Lord."

The isolation from the dear saints of the Household of Zion has been grievious and hard to bear until recently. It was my blessed privilege to meet with the dear brethren at Kingman, Kansas, where Elder Wm. Winfrey is pastor; and visiting them at the time were Elder Wall and wife, and Brother McDuff and wife from Texas. My joyful heart knew no bounds to once more meet and greet them face to face and to humbly rejoice in the manifestation of the love and fellowship extended to me who am one of the least and most unworthy of any, if one at all. Both Elder Winfrey and Elder Wall are gifted speakers, and the blessed truths they were given to expound were indeed a feast of fat things to a hungry soul, and have afforded me many moments of sweet meditation after I returned home.

While in their midst, even in the joy of the moment, the isolation which had been my lot weighed heavily upon me, the loneliness that accompanied it overshadowed me and my desire and longing for a church home with this dear people so overwhelmed me, I was led, when the last song was sung at the closing, to ask for a home with them, with these words overflowing my heart, "Nothing in my hands I bring, Simply to the cross I cling," when the hand of fellowship was extended to me. Words cannot express the thanksgiving and gratitude which spring from the deepest recess of my heart to my Heavenly Master and these dear people who saw fit to bear with my many failings and shortcomings, to bestow on me the blessed privilege of a church home for my few remaining years.

"Give me, oh Lord a place,
Within thy blest abode,
Among the children of thy grace,
The servants of my God."

Unworthily,
Della Davis

1508½ Country Club Rd.
Bastrop, La.

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." (Psalm 46:1)

Notice that the text is speaking to those who feel the need of a refuge. In order to feel the need of a refuge, you must be brought down, and shown your helplessness and ruined condition, and to see that you have no strength of your own to save, or to help save, yourself out of this condition.

When you see that you are helpless and weak, and cannot help yourself, then you feel the need of strength; also you feel the need of a refuge. Your strength has failed you, but the strength of God lifts you up. Your refuge (works of the flesh, natural strength, pride, etc.) has been broken down by the shaking power of the Lord. The marvelous light of Almighty God has burned down your own refuge. You are made to feel the need of a refuge which shall stand for ever.

In due time, God speaks his peace to your poor soul, and gives you strong confidence in this sure foundation that cannot be shaken. Although you feel weak and have fainted along the way, God lifts you up by giving you strength. He gives you fresh courage to press forward. Does not the sweet communion of the Lord strengthen your soul?

The presence of the Lord is especially needed in our dark hours. Our enemies (both without and within) are too strong for us. Satan's temptations weary us. Our troubles weight us down. Oh, how we long for the sweet manifestations of the Spirit of God! We need reassurance. Again, God lifts you up by showing these things again to you, as John the Baptist had to be shown.

You are shown again that God is

your refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. (Please read the 107th Psalm for a sweet picture of your travels.)

Yours in hope,
W. W. Hudson, Jr.

VISION AND DREAM

304 Monteray,
Chowchilla, Calif.

Dear Elder Wood:

The following scripture has been on my mind for some time, and I would like to mention it to you: "And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions." (Joel 2:28)

I have been young, and now I will soon be eighty-five years old, and have been a subscriber to the *Signs* for 50 years.

When I was a young man, I saw a vision. I was so burdened with sin I was down in the bottomless pit of Hell. I had violated the laws of God and man. I was working with a team and wagon, and my day's work was done. Somehow I fell on my knees and tried to pray all alone. I didn't know how to pray, and don't know yet. But I asked the Lord to remove these mountains of sin over me — I owed the 10,000 talents, but God heard my little cry. I thank him for everything. Jesus said that no man could come to him except the Father which sent him draw him. (John 6:44) I believe I felt a drawing; and, bless the name of Jesus, I saw a spiritual plane about 5 or 6 feet long, covered with a white silky velvet, about 15 feet high, over me. I saw all of this about 4 seconds; then it went on its way. Then I turned around, and saw all of my sins swept away with one stroke. When God speaks, it is done, when he commands, it stands fast. Bless the name of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, all my sins were swept away from my youth up. Bless God for that day. I never try to boast of but one thing, and that is all that Jesus has done.

Now my dream after many years. I was on my bed, just thinking of heaven, wondering what it would look like. In my little weak way, I asked the Lord to show me a little inkling of heaven; and that night I dreamed of seeing a small portion of heaven. And here is what I saw. It was a beautiful sight: a small ever-green pasture. I was on one side, and on the other side I saw a beautiful bunch of God's little children: they were all alike, no big ones, no long tall ones, no crippled ones. They all looked alike and they were all dressed alike. And on the other side of a big highway, I saw an old abandoned shop about forty feet long; and along side of it was a great stack of dry bones.

I couldn't understand by dream, and I asked the Lord to please interpret this pile of bones. The next day I was alone, and something said to me, Turn on the T. V.; which I did. My wife and I seldom turn to 47, but that day I passed all other stations; and here is what I got: A so-called evangelist was holding a meeting — there must have been 10,000 people, and the preacher said that there was someone there chained, Yes, he has two chains on him. A small woman came down and said, "It must be my husband." The preacher went two or three isles, and came to a small man, saying, "It must be you. Come and go with me." When they got back to the pulpit, the preacher got him by the head, and said, "O.K., he is going to be a good daddy now." And he said, "Come out of him." And the poor fellow fell to the ground and laid there about four minutes, then moved one hand and then the other. The preacher and another man picked him up, and the so-called preacher said, "O.K. he is a good papa now."

I got so disgusted with such blasphemy that I turned the T. V. off. It was the worst blasphemy I ever heard; it was an abomination in the sight of

the Lord: man trying to imitate our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Jesus came to the man among the tombs; and he said only one word, "Go". The devils desired to go into the swine, and he said, "Go." And they went into the swine, and they ran down a steep place, and were choked in the sea. The man came clothed and in his right mind; and desired of the Master that he might go with him. But Jesus said, "Go home to your friends and tell them what the Lord has done for you."

The kind of preaching mentioned above, represents that big pile of dry bones I saw by the old barn, and is abomination in the sight of the Lord: the anti-Christ doctrine.

Wm. E. Echols

Anyone arriving at Salisbury, Maryland, for the Salisbury Association, on Tuesday before the Association, please phone Mrs. Ralph Morris, and accommodations for the night will be arranged.

D. V. Spangler
Pastor

CONTENTNEA UNION

The Contentnea Union Meeting will convene with Red Bank Church, Pitt County, N. C. on September 29 and 30, 1962.

W. S. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Tarboro, N. C.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

On account of poor health, Elder George L. Weaver has moved to 3514 Westbury Road, Shaker Heights 20, Ohio, and asks that the brethren and friends address him there until further notice.

PLEASE NOTE

Please make the following corrections in your September issue of the *Signs:* In the Editorial by Elder Ruston on page 206, 7th line from bottom of the first column, the reference should be to Revelation eleventh chapter instead of the second chapter. And on page 207, second column, sixteenth line, the word should be "shame" instead of "same".

— J. D. W.

MEETING AT NEW VERNON

The Lord willing there will be an all day meeting at New Vernon, New York, the 1st Saturday in October; which is October 6th. Lunch will be served as usual. Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Elder A. J. Slauson

KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

The Kehukee Association is appointed to be held with the Primitive Baptist Church at Old Sparta, Edgecomb County, N. C., the First Sunday in October, Saturday before and Monday following (October 6, 7, and 8, 1962).

The association will meet in South Edgecomb School, Pinetops, N. C. The school is about one mile South of Pinetops. Those coming by Greenville may turn left at first stop light. Elder W. E. Grimes was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, and Elder A. B. Ayers, alternate.

We extend a cordial invitation to ministers, brethren and friends.

E. C. Harrison, Ass'n. Clerk

THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

The Salisbury Association of Old School Baptists will be held with Nassango Church, on Snow Hill Road, Wednesday and Thursday, October 24 and 25, 1962. Those coming on Tuesday go to the home of Mrs. Ralph Morris, Lincoln Avenue, Salisbury, Maryland — phone PI 9-3693, and she will place you. Those coming on Wednesday go directly to the meeting house.

All of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Pastor
Sister Mollie Fooks, Church Clerk

THE SKEWARKY UNION

The Skewarky Union is appointed to be held at Smithwick Creek Church, Martin County, N. C., the 5th Sunday in September, 1962, Friday and Saturday before.

Elder P. E. Getsinger was appointed to preach the Introductory Sermon, and Elder Leon Harrison, alternate. The church is situated about 10 miles South of Williamston on black top road East of Highway 17.

We extend a cordial invitation to ministers, brethren and friends.

E. C. Harrison, Union Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To August 1, 1962)

Elder and Mrs. W. D. Griffin, Del.	$2.00
Loy P. Rogers, Ark.	2.00
Mrs. Dreusiler Gillispie, Md.	1.00
Charlie Stripling, Ala.	3.00
Mrs. Vera Bird, W. Va.	1.00
Mrs. W. R. Watson, Ark.	1.00
Mrs. J. B. Collier, Tenn.	2.00

Danville, Virginia **October, 1962**

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EDITORIAL

A TALK WITH DEATH

"O DEATH, WHERE IS THY STING? . . ." (1ST COR. 15:55)

The thoughts of death have terrified me with such horrors that I have had no desire to talk to it. It has heretofore appeared as a terrible monster most willing and anxious to devour me at the least provocation. I have seen it as an adder ready to pounce upon me and to insert the deadly poisonous venom in the sting of death. These horrifying experiences have caused me to cry aloud for mercy. I have viewed it as my greatest enemy. Of course, I have for many years tried to shun the thoughts of it and was far from wanting to talk to it. Lately, I have thought differently about it. I have been given a hope that some day I can gladly talk to it realizing that it is not as powerful as it has appeared. I have anticipated saying to it when my journey comes to an end here, "O DEATH, WHERE IS THY STING?"

I have stood by the bedside of loved ones and watched them slip from time into eternity. I have been amazed as the frown of death was changed into a smile of life. I have watched troubled expressions turn into a peaceful calm. I heard the dying groans of one person cease and the same voice utter the sweetest words that could be imagined as she drew in the last breath of natural life. I have of late wondered if they were having their last talk with death by asking it, "O DEATH, WHERE IS THY STING?"

I do not wish death to answer when I talk to it because I believe its power shall have been subdued and it cannot answer when I shall be privileged to talk to it. I do not expect the dead to answer because we read in Eccles. 9:5 that the dead know not anything. I want the answers to come from God through His saints. As I begin to meditate upon this subject that has so terrified me before, this question comes to mind: O DEATH HAVE NOT I TALKED TO YOU IN THE PAST?

The Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write, in 2nd Cor. 1:10 "Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust he will yet deliver us." Paul talked of a past deliverance from a GREAT DEATH. He must have been acquainted with it. He met it face to face when sin revived as a result of the law being indelibly written in his heart by the operation of the Holy Spirit. He confirms in Romans 7:9 that once he was alive without the law but when the comamndment came the result was the revival of sin which slew him. Using Paul's words to express it — he plainly affirmed, "I DIED." I feel that he suffered the sting of death to such an extent that he lost his life. His soul fainted in him. The pangs of death got hold of him and he experienced the great sting of it. I conclude that the infusion of the Spirit of Eternal Life brought death to him.

We read in Ezekiel 18:4, "**The soul that sinneth, IT SHALL DIE" Paul ex-

perienced the death of his sinful soul when his soul was eternalized by the infusion of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus. We note that, "Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; to DELIVER THEIR SOUL FROM DEATH, and to keep them ALIVE in famine." (Psalms 33:18-19) David said, "He restoreth my soul." Have not I talked to death when I found it to be powerless to destroy my soul even though my soul had been killed? I am persuaded that the death experienced in regeneration had the greatest sting of any experience that I shall ever again have with death. Have I not talked to it daily as I have been delivered from its clutches and sting by the grace of God? Paul said, "I die daily." (1st Cor. 15:31) I wonder if I have talked to it each time in my deliverance. The next question relative to death is, O DEATH, *WHAT* IS THY STING?

Let us listen to Paul as he testifies, "The STING of death is SIN" (1st Cor. 15:56) If sin be the sting of death I first tasted its sting when I was convinced that I was a sinner. When I was convinced I was chief of sinners I experienced its greatest sting. When I was brought into the captivity of sin and realized I was imprisoned in it I suffered its awful sting. Sin is that which kills, for the wages of sin is death. James affirms in his epistle, "**Sin, when it is finished bringeth forth death." (James 1:15) My next question that I shall seek for an answer is, O DEATH, WHAT IS THE STRENGTH OF THY STING?

Paul answers this question by saying, "The strength of sin is the law." (1st Cor. 15:56) Then, death cannot have dominion over any other ones than those who are under the law. Paul concludes in the next verse, "But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Death then can be swallowed up in victory. Read the Scriptures and you will find that death does not have dominion over those for whom Christ died. Death cannot conquer those for whom He accomplished the law. The victory of Christ over death is given to all those who were chosen in Him. Paul wrote to "The beloved of God, called to be saints" these comforting words in Romans 6:14, "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are NOT UNDER THE LAW, BUT UNDER GRACE." If we are not under the law then sin cannot reign over us. If sin cannot reign over us we have eternal life and can never die. If we have eternal life we have passed from death unto life and shall never perish in eternal death. In this sense we cannot sin because we are born of God and His seed remaineth in us. See 1 John 3:9. Sin does not reign in those who are born of God. The carnality or sin that dwells in us serves the law of sin which is that flesh of ours not yet experienced the quickening of the Holy Spirit. Our minds and hearts have experienced this quickening, but we are awaiting the quickening of our mortal bodies by this eternalizing Spirit. The next question in our talk with death is, O DEATH WHAT ART THOU?

We find that the first mention of death in the Bible was a fore-warning of consequence placed upon Adam and Eve for partaking of the tree of the knowledge of God and Evil. It was declared they should lose their freedom. Death was a penalty for the transgression of the law, and is the wages of sin, as has already been shown. Death is passed upon all men for all have sinned according to Romans 5:12. Death is the cessation of natural life. I feel that when Adam and Eve partook of the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil they became as God in the sense of knowing good and evil as the Scriptures bear us record. Read Genesis 3:22-24. Since that time the TREE OF LIFE has been so hedged in and even the TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL that man has been dependent upon God's grace to partake

of either.

Man ceased to have his freedom in the garden and the high privileges of all the things pertaining to God and godliness was taken from his reach. Death is a separation from something, or things, which the subject was before in possession of. The last phase of death is explained in Ecclesiastes 12:7:- "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." It is referred to in the Scriptures as, "Giving up the ghost" in Acts 5:10. In other places it is termed a sleep, a departure, a going the way of all the earth, a dissolving the earthly house of this tabernacle, and a being absent from the body and present with the Lord; as well as, sleeping in Jesus. The next question we shall pursue is, O DEATH, HOW DIDST THOU EFFECT ME WHEN I FIRST DIED?

Paul catalogued DEATH among the ALL THINGS that work together for good as noted in the 8th chapter of Romans from the 28th verse to the conclusion of the chapter. I maintain that the death experienced by Paul spoken of in the 7th chapter of Romans, 9th verse, was a blessing in disguise. Surely Paul was made somewhat better by having experienced it. If you compare Romans 7:9 with Romans 7:17 you will find a changed "I". After he had experienced this death and the resurrection from it he said, "It is no more I that do it but SIN THAT DWELLETH IN ME." There is a great deal of difference in sin dwelling in a person than SIN REIGNING. Paul did not serve sin any longer even tho it dwelleth in him. It was no longer the reigning influence of his life. The death that I died in my experience many years ago was the tool used in God's hands to cause me to hate sin and its consequences. Before experiencing this death and the entrance of the divine law, I rejoiced in things sinful, and was the servant of sin. Afterwards, the best of my own self righteousness is filthy and sinful to me. Death killed me to the love of self and confidence in the flesh.

My next question: O DEATH, HOW DOTH GOD CONSIDER THEE RELATIVE TO SAINTS? God answers through the Psalmist, "PRECIOUS in the sight of the Lord IS THE DEATH OF HIS SAINTS." (Psalms 116:15) Our Lord considers death of great value to those whom He hath set apart to lavish His mercy upon. It is used in the sanctifying process. The term, SAINTS, mean sanctified ones. They were set apart from all eternity by God. They were sanctified in Christ Jesus. They are sanctified by the blood of Christ, the Holy Spirit, and by all the graces contained in the new covenant. Even this first death experienced in regeneration is precious in His sight. It was awful for us to experience but I trust that I have been given to thank God for it many times. I feel that I now see how valuable it was in separating me from self confidence and yearning desire to please my carnal nature. The death I die each and every day of my life is being shown to me a thing ordained for my good instead of being against me. I can look back and see the value of the death experienced thus far; but, I cannot see the death I am experiencing today so precious. I may be given to see it tomorrow. Of course, the final phase of death will be precious. This final separation from all things natural, carnal, material, and timely will be of great benefit to the saints of God. Surely it will be precious to the Lord when all the saints whom He loves so dearly shall have been separated from time by death, and shall have been gathered together in Heaven with Him. The next question: OH DEATH, WHAT SHALL I CALL THEE WHEN I SHALL HAVE FINISHED MY COURSE?

Paul talked much of death in his epistles. He talked of the horrors of it and the need of sinners to be delivered from it. He talked about it as a judgment of God upon those who fol-

lowed after the flesh. He thanked God for having delivered him from it. He rendered praise unto Him for constant deliverances. He trusted Him for future deliverances. When he had finished his course and came face-to-face with the death of his natural body he had a different attitude toward this phase of it. Read II Timothy 4: 6-8 and you will find that he was ready for it. He did not term this phase as death but rather "MY DEPARTURE". When he had finished his course he was READY TO BE OFFERED. I do not believe he was ready before then even though he termed it as more to be desired than dwelling in his earthly house. I firmly believe Paul welcomed this departure. When we are so thoroughly convinced of the frailties of our earthly house and the imprisonment that it proves to be, I feel, we shall rather desire this departure from this earth into Heaven. When I come to the end of my course here I trust by the grace of God through the Merits of Jesus Christ to term death my departure. When I shall reach the end of the way of all men and my departure is at hand, I trust I shall talk to death victoriously. I shall talk to it of its benefits. I shall term it many things beautiful and precious.

I shall say, O DEATH, INSTED OF A STING THOU ART A RELIEF. No more physical pains to torment me. No more suffering of conscience shall make me so despondent. No more sins shall hamper or frustrate thoughts, acts, and words that my pure mind and heart would have me think, say, and do. There shall be no more separations from loved ones. There shall be no more weakness of body to become weaker and weaker as natural life wanes. My eyes shall no longer need glasses. My ears shall not become duller of hearing. My dwelling place shall no longer be in a body subject to death. I anticipate saying to it, O DEATH, INSTEAD OF DREADING YOU, I WELCOME YOU. YOU ARE MANY THINGS WONDERFUL TO ME.

Instead of the end, you are the beginning. You are the passageway from earth to Heaven. Instead of the wall, you are the doorway. You are the dressing room where mortality shall be clothed with immortality. You are the anesthetic God uses to condition one for the major operations necessary for all the saints of God to be properly adapted to live eternally in Heaven with the Lord and all of His angels.

I have enjoyed my talk with death but have not depended upon death to answer any of the questions. I fondly anticipate talking with it when my time here ceases. May God bless these thoughts to your comfort and edification.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Reisterstown, Md., Dec. 2, 1881.

Dear Brethren: — In the first exercises of a convicted sinner he flies to the law for the way of life, and to his own deeds for justification, and the earnest inquiry of his heart is, "What must I do to be saved?" Further on in this experience he ascertains that he can do nothing good, nothing by which he can be justified before God, and then it becomes to him the all-important question, "What has the Lord done for me?" "Did Christ die for me?" And still further on in this same experience it begins to be the absorbing question of his life, "What can I do to honor and glorify the name of him who has done so much for me?" The first question is answered by the word, "Nothing." The second question is answered by the word, "Everything." But the answer to the third question continues to perplex the mind as long as the believer lives on earth. The answer to it covers the whole life of the Christian. Every thought, look, act, word, and the conduct in every relation which

we occupy in life, are involved in the answer to this question. General principles of truth are laid down in the Bible, but it is often a perplexing question what is best and right to do in special cases.

This desire to do the will of God, and this constant anxiety to know his will, is one of the evidences that we are born of God. If there be no desire after obedience, there can be no divine life within us. Desire always precedes action, and so the desire to do God's will, to obey his commandments, always precedes obedience. God himself declares, "Whatsoever his soul desireth, that he doeth." The psalmist once said, "Lord, all my desire is before thee." God looks at the desire. The feet may often falter and stumble, but the inmost desire is upward still; and though we fall in slippery places, yet the heart urges us on, and by the power of grace divine we are still helped on our way.

This question, "What can I do to glorify God?" is then, in the first place, a proof that a man is saved. The natural man never has such desires or asks such a question. The carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not and cannot be subject to his law. The very beginning of such great desires in the heart proves the entrance of that word which giveth light. This humble child, though poor and a beggar, yet will be satisfied with nothing less than heavenly riches, and to be made just like Jesus. He is not now satisfied, he is so unlike his Master. And it is not enough to tell him that he shall be like the Lord bye and bye; he wants to be Christlike now; he wants a present experience of salvation. It is not enough to tell him that he shall go to heaven. He wants to be holy, he wants to be happy, it is true, but in his view holiness is happiness. As he feels unholy here, he is unhappy; and across the many hours of darkness which line his pathway there comes a gleam now and then, giving the assurance, "Then shall I be satisfied when I awake in his likeness."

"If I in thy likeness, O Lord, may awake,
And shine a pure image of thee,
Then I shall be satisfied when I can break
The fetters of flesh, and be free."

In the second place, the prevalence of such a desire in the heart proves that the salvation of which we speak, is a salvation from sin and the love of sin in this present life, as well as a salvation from hell and death beyond. It is to be feared that this is too much lost sight of sometimes. If we do not love holiness here, what evidence have we that we shall be holy and happy hereafter? If our feet run in the way of the evil here, and we love the taste of iniquity, of what avail is it to say, "I have a hope beyond?" If selfishness is seen to be the guiding motive of our life to-day, of what avail is it to claim the name of the unselfish One, who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many? If we devote every energy to the seeking of this world, what assurance have we that the things of the world to come shall be given us? The salvation of God is for this world as well as for the next; and he who is not saved here, need have no expectations of being saved in that world. Now this desire to glorify God is proof of being saved here, and contains the earnest of that joy that is eternal. There is a great change in the motives, desires, hopes, fears, loves and conversation of this man who is saved. There are thousands who make the hope of heaven and future blessedness a thing of the veriest merchandise. A little self-denial here, a few works performed, which in themselves are distasteful, and to be happy forever the reward. Such as these do not know the meaning of the word salvation — have no idea of salvation from sin. An earthly paradise and mortal honors are their aspiration and reward. But we rejoice to be saved to-day, saved from the love and dominion of sin.

We rejoice to know that Christ reigns in us now, and that in spite of

all our falterings he still reigns, having chained the strong man of sin in us. This is our happiness to-day; it shall be our eternal joy in the land of the blessed. In this salvation self-denial becomes a joy, a duty, a privilege. The natural man works for a reward. This renewed man finds his joy in the commandments, and his reward in keeping them.

But in the third place, this renewed heart is very jealous of the honor of God, and so is willing to bear all infirmities, if so be, that God may be glorified. Paul once said, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." To such a man the honor of the Master is the chief thing. He is willing to be nothing, that Jesus may be all in all; and he wants all other men and all other things to take the same lowly place, and conspire together to put the crown on Jesus' head. Such a man is hurt and grieved when he hears a frail creature like his fellow-man speak boastfully of the dignity of human nature, and of God's impotency to save, &c. He knows that whatever of dignity human nature may have been created with, is all lost now, so that it is but a mass of groveling desires, and passions base, and "mischievous as hell." He knows that God is holy and all-wise and omnipotent, and his whole being longs to rise up and condemn the foul slanders which are sought to be put upon his Savior. And because the Christian hears the name of God blasphemed, even among his professed friends, and sees so much scorn heaped upon the cause of his Master, he is led again to inquire, What can I do to refute these slanders, to prove the power of the grace of God, and to exalt the religion which I have professed?

In the fourth place, the believer is very jealous over himself, his heart, his thoughts, his words, his actions, over all his ways. He distrusts the motives of the best actions that he ever performed. If not strict in exacting a specified course of life from others, he is very stern in this demands upon himself. If he judges the faults of others leniently, he treats his own very severely. If he makes excuses for others, he makes none for himself. This jealousy over himself extends to all his relations in life. If in business, he is careful to be just before he is generous. He desires to provide things honest in the sight of all men. Religion makes men honest. It puts an honest principle into their hearts. The motive for greed of gain is taken away. It shows them how vain earthly riches are, and unfolds eternal riches to their view. They are taught by it, having food and raiment, therewith to be content; yet are bidden by the same principle not to be slothful in business. They are to have a good report of men in their business relations. As neighbors and friends, the Christian is taught as much as in him lies to live peaceably with all men. To do good unto all is the believer's chief business. As a parent or child, a master or servant, a husband or wife, a ruler or subject, the Christian feels a desire to act in these relations as to show that in all he does, he is influenced and controled by just and right principles, so that men shall be compelled to say, There must be something in this religion which is real and good.

In the fifth place, this humble inquirer looks to the revealed word for his rule in all things, and asks for the Holy Spirit to help him comprehend it. To him the Bible is a perfect rule of faith and practice. To it all things must be brought, and by its decision he must abide. Are we all sure that we are standing upon the principle that the Bible only is to be our judge? This is God's word revealed in human speech to men. Whatever our experience may be, it is valueless unless sustained by these Scriptures. Whatever may look right, it is not right unless the Bible commends it. We may be mistaken in our view of what God has said in his word, but yet to that word we must go at all

times. Jesus himself said, "If any man will do my will, he shall know the doctrine." That is, the humble, obedient child shall not be left in ignorance of what the will of the Lord is. To me this is a blessed assurance. I rejoice to believe that he will give light to them that walk in darkness, and yet seek him in their hearts.

Sometimes brethren complain to me that they are perplexed what to do. They say, "I want to rejoice evermore, to pray without ceasing, and in everything to give thanks. I want to glorify God in both my body and my spirit; but the cares of the world oppress me, and my mind is caught away in them, till perhaps a whole half day passes that I do not think of him at all, and I feel so little love. Yet I would not have it so." I would say to such a one, You need not be overmuch troubled. As long as a man has life enough to complain, he is not all dead; and besides, no one can think of two things at the same point of time. Simply thinking of God may not be acceptable to him; that depends upon how we think of him. Is the desire in your heart uppermost and controlling in all things to glorify him? Are you doing your daily tasks for the honor of his great name? You are obeying God and honoring him just as much by your sturdy, honest toil in your fields, or shops, or houses, as you would be in going to meeting, reading the Bible, or singing psalms. Christians in the New Testament are commanded to labor with their own hands, and when doing so we should remember that we are doing the will of God as much as when we silently meditate upon his word.

In conclusion, is the question, "What wilt thou have me to do?" in any heart, and are you perplexed what to do in any relation of life so that God may be glorified in it? Remember two things. First, this proves you a child of God; and second, the Bible will tell you how to behave in all places and times.

I remain, as every, your brother in hope.

(By Elder F. A. Chick in the *Signs* January 1, 1882.)

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

The Lord is my Shepherd:
He is all I want.
All other seem tasteless,
Displeasing, and taunt.

The Lord is my Shepherd:
He's all that I need.
His help is the only
True help indeed.

The Lord is my Shepherd:
He has calmed my fear,
And made me to know
His presence is near.

The Lord is my Shepherd:
My life and my all.
He made me know, only
On him I can call.

The Lord is my Shepherd:
He's made me to know
He is all that I need
With friend or with foe.

The Lord is my Shepherd:
He's all of my hope
In light of his nearness,
Or in darkness I grope.

The Lord is my Shepherd:
To want I shall not.
In life's greatest storms we're
Sure He hasn't forgot.

Fannie Sue Ware,
Reidsville, N. C.

REST, SWEET REST

Jesus, lover of my soul,
When life's tempests round me roll.
Precious Saviour, hold my hand,
And lead me to the Promised Land.

No aching hearts, no throbbing brow,
T'is just one long, eternal "Now"
Of rest and peace, of joy and love,
In that celestial world above.

There in that Land of pure delight,
Safe in those mansions gleaming white,
There will be no foe's alarms,
But rest, sweet rest in Jesus' arms.

Forever freed from doubts and fears,
There God shall wipe away our tears;
And lay our heads upon his breast,
And gently bid us sweetly rest.

That home of such celestial joys,
Is unsurpassed by earthly toys;
There reigns the Saviour on his throne —
He'll guide our weary footsteps home.

To join that happy, angel band,
To sing the praise of God the Lamb;
In heavenly strains our voices swell,
To Him who doeth all things well.

No parting hour will ever come,
When we have reached that heavenly Home;
And with the loved ones gone before,
In glory reign forevermore.

'Twill be a grand and glorious theme,
When we shall wake from sorrow's dream,
Where unceasing anthems roll
To Jesus, lover of my soul.

Della Davis
Topeka, Kansas

OBITUARIES

SISTER GRACIE EVANS

Once again the Lord has been pleased to remove one from our midst, Sister Gracie Evans.

Sister Evans joined Malmaison Church in August, 1912, and was a faithful member, attending the meetings as long as she was able; having attended less than a month before her death. She died unexpectedly April 23, 1962, at the home of her daughter, with whom she made her home. She was born May 19, 1888, in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Sam Hollie; and was united in marriage to Brother Ernest Evans in January, 1909. To this union five children were born, of which two daughters and one son survive. Surviving also are seven grandchildren and one great grandchild; and one brother and one sister. We believe our loss is her eternal gain. She loved her church and its members.

RESOLVED, That a copy be sent the Signs of the Times for publication, a copy sent to the family, and a copy be put on our church book.

Done by order of the church.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Kate Dodd, Clerk

MRS. CLAY PUTERBAUGH

Mrs. Clay Puterbaugh was born July 19, 1887, and died March 13, 1962. She leaves to mourn her passing, her husband, J. A. Puterbaugh, Kingsland, Arkansas; two sons, Willie, of Kingsland, and Jewel, of Kansas City; and two daughters, Birtie Wood, Bearden, Arkansas, and Ola Towery, Amorilla, Texas.

She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Pilgrims Rest, Fordyce, Arkansas, about ten years ago. We sympathize with her loved ones very much, but believe our loss is her eternal gain; and pray that the Lord will sweetly reconcile all her friends and loved ones, that they may say, "Thy will be done, and not ours."

Done by order of the church of Pilgrims Rest, while in conference the 3rd Saturday in April, 1962.

J. T. Everitt, Moderator
Sister Erma Broack, Clerk

MRS. KITTY CLIDE McCAN HUDSON

Mrs. Kitty Clide McCan Hudson was born October 19, 1885, and passed away January 28, 1962, at the age of 72 years. She was received into the Primitive Baptist Church in early life at Pilgrims Rest, at Fordyce, Arkansas.

Survivors include two sons: G. N. Hudson, ElDorado, Arkansas, and B. A. Hudson, Blytheville, Arkansas; two daughters, Mrs. Olin Traywick, Union City, Tenn., and Mrs. Grace Rice, Washington, D. C.; one brother, Ben McCan, Fordyce, Arkansas; and six sisters: Mrs. George Davis, Fordyce; Mrs. Jewel Hearusberger, Memphis; Mrs. C. F. Fowler, Little Rock; Mrs. W. T. Martin, Greneda, Miss.; Mrs. Bessie Morgan, Henderson, Texas; and Mrs. Ray Gray, Fordyce. Also ten grandchildren and fifteen great grandchildren.

Sister Hudson was faithful to attend her church services when at all possible. She will be sadly missed by the church and many friends and loved ones.

This done by order of the Church of Pilgrims Rest on Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in March, 1962.

Elder J. T. Everitt, Moderator
Sister Erma Broack, Clerk

JOB H. KERLEY

Deacon Job H. Kerley was born April 15, 1890, and departed this life May 17, 1962, making his stay on earth 72 years. He was the son of Elder J. W. Kerley. On the 11th day of November, 1945, he asked the Old Baptist church at Memphis, Tenn., for a home, and remained a faithful member as long as he lived. His father organized that church and was pastor of it as long as he lived, for over 40 years. Job Kerley was born near Ripley, Tenn., in Lauderdale County, and was laid to rest on the old J. W. Kerley home place near Flippin, Tenn.

He leaves his wife, Mrs. Bessie Lee White Kerley, and three boys: Conrad, William, and Alvin Kerley; also three girls: Mrs. Louise

Henson, Mrs. Ruth Stewart, and Mrs. Frances Muellar; and twelve grandchildren.

Services were conducted by Elder H. G. Brown, assisted by Elder H. R. Prince and Elder O. W. Perkins.

He was widely known, respected, and loved as a husband, father, friend and neighbor. It is sad and lonely here without him; but we would not bring him back, if we could. His suffering and sorrows are over, and God's purpose for him in the world is finished. Our earthly loss is his eternal gain.

A lonely wife, and children,

Mrs. Bessie L. Kerley,
Ripley, Tenn.

EDWARD LEE GILLUM

I will try to write something in memory of our beloved brother in Christ, Edward Lee Gillum. Brother Ed, as he was affectionately called, was born December 10, 1885, and passed away June 6, 1962. He was united in marriage to Blanche Morgan December 25, 1906, and to this union four children were born, two boys and two girls; one of the daughters died in early life.

Brther Ed's home was a welcome place for the wayfarer. In all his seventy-seven years he was an Old Baptist. He told me on the date he was baptized that he had wanted that ever since he could remember anything about the church. He never felt worthy of partaking of the ordinances of the church, but the 2nd Sunday in August, 1955, he came forward and asked for a home with those he loved, and who loved him, and was received, and was baptized by Elder J. N. Darnell. His home was a true Old Baptist home. There have been many church services held there. He was always ready to sacrifice for the church both before and after he beame a member. His last thoughts before he became delirious was of the welfare of the church.

He was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and had a sweet hope that Christ had redeemed him to himself. On my last visit with him before he got so low he said that he thought he knew what Paul meant when he said, "It is better for me to depart and be with Christ." And said that He will give me strength and will not desert me in this hour; for God is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind.

Brother Gillum leaves to mourn his passing, his dear companion of 56 years, Mrs. Blanche Morgan Gillum; two sons, W. M. and Radford Gillum, of Bumpass Mills, Tenn.; and one daughter, Mrs. Clayce (Opal) Wallace, Denver, Tenn. And by five grandchildren, and two great grandchildren, and many brethren. We shall miss him, but we feel to say, "Sleep on, dear brother, for your sufferings are over, and you are at peace in sweet paradise with Christ." The time will soon come when the gracious Lord will come again, and his people shall come forth in his glorified image, to be with him, be like him, and dwell with him forever.

His funeral was held at the Salene Creek Church, Bumpass Mills, Tenn., by Elder J. N. Darnell, assisted by the writer and Elder R. L. Biggs; and his body was laid to rest in the Morgan Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers. Written by request.

Elder W. Y. Chandler

RESOLUTIONS

LARRY RAYMOND JOHNSON

WHEREAS, God in his infinite wisdom has called from us by death, our beloved brother, Larry Raymond Johnson, who calmly fell asleep in Jesus in Betsey Johnson Memorial Hospital, Dunn, N. C., May 4, 1962; making his stay on earth 67 years, 10 months, and 25 days.

Brother Johnson joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Hickory Grove, along with his wife, the second Saturday in July, 1935, and lived a devoted member and able defender of the cause he so much loved.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder Lester E. Lee, assisted by Elder W. D. Godwin, at Hickory Grove Church, and burial was in the Johnson family cemetery at the old home place.

Brother Johnson was born and reared in Johnson County, near Benson, N. C., where he lived all his life. The church deeply feels its loss, but our loss is his eternal gain. We bow in humble submission to Him who doeth all things according to his will and pleasure. He leaves to mourn, his wife, Girtie E. Johnson; one daughter, Mrs. Richard Murphy, of New York; six grandchildren; one brother, H. W. Johnson, of Four Oaks; and three sisters, Mrs. W. J. Holliday, of Jamesville, N. C., Mrs. L. K. Parker, Wilmington, N. C., and Mrs. Addie J. Jackson, Tucson, Arizona; and other relatives. Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we look to Him for comfort in all our sorrows; and

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family; a copy be put on our church book; and a copy be sent the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in May, 1962.

Brother L. J. Kinsey and wife
Sister Bara Johnson
Sister Georgie E. Hill
Committee

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 130 DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1962 NO. 11

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/62
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"THE LONG-SUFFERING OF OUR LORD IS SALVATION"

"And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given him, hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." (2 Peter 3:15, 16)

I wish to write of those who are unlearned and unstable in the above scripture before considering the wisdom given unto Paul. My heart beheld a beautiful picture in meditating on the difference between the two classes; if I be permitted to tell you about it.

The world, led by these who are unlearned and unstable, is rushing headlong "unto their own destruction." They wrest or pervert the scriptures to teach their own good works as the way of salvation, instead of "the long-suffering of our Lord." True spiritual understanding cannot be reached by perverting the scriptures to suit the needs of those who would have salvation by any other than He who was sent.

They who preach according to the wisdom of this world, who are ignorant and unwise in "some things hard to be understood", lift these scriptures spoken of by Peter, and written by Paul and others, from their contexts. They fit them into blasphemous pictures of man's self-righteousness, and a make-believe saviour, who is unable to save his people without their help.

An example of this wicked perversion is the comforting scripture, (to one taught as Paul), most used by the worldly taught helper to prove man's part in this matter: John 3:16. How often as a child I heard this quoted apart from its true setting and meaning. I wondered how anyone could get around it, or deny it. It was a mystery of Babylon to my young, unlearned and unstable heart. But ah, sweet mystery of life came later and made me know the blessed Saviour died, not for the world they portray through perversion, but for those the Father gave him out of the world, "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish."

Our text teaches that those who thus shape the scriptures to suit their own tastes, do so unto their own destruction.

Another portion of scripture is used when the blind leads the blind, that is very comforting to the elect when brought forth in its entirety. They say, "Not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentence", and apply it to all of Adam's race. How wonderfully different it sounds to a helpless, lost sheep when taken as a whole: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9) He is not willing that any of the "usward" should perish, but that all of the "usward" should come to re-

pentance.

I beileve the "usward" spoken of here, will be the great multitude which no man could number, revealed to John. (Revelation 7:9 They are given wisdom like Paul's, to know that the long-suffering of the Lord is their salvation.

Election, or God's choice of his people, is a belief very dear to the hearts of the "uswards" in the world. They know in being born again, that they can do nothing in and of themselves to obtain salvation. However, the unlearned and unstable worldling offers you a choice by the twisting and omission of scriptures. Have you not heard the invitation far and near, "Choose you this day whom you will serve," leaving the choice up to the sinner? Read Joshua 24:15, and you will find that, instead of choosing between God and the Devil, as portrayed by the perverters, the choice is only between little gods: the ones their fathers worshiped before the flood, or the gods of the Amorites.

Have you ever thought that the difference between the teachings of the true church and the false, worldly doctrines of men, is the wresting or changing the scriptures by the unlearned and unstable? How I hope and beg for a merciful wisdom like that given unto Paul, that I may be taught through this wisdom to rightly divide the word of truth; that a warning, spiritual conscience will make me to know the right path each step of the way.

The reason some things are hard to be understood by those who are so wise and mighty in their own eyes, and yet are so unlearned and unstable in the way of salvation, is, that "He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, and be converted, and I should heal them." (John 12:40) These are hard sayings, and who can hear them? They are so hard to be understood that the unstable must twist them about, for them to make sense to carnal reasoning.

Satan has distractions, pitfalls, temptations, and all manner of evil contraptions to lure the little child of God away into the false teachings of these seducers. That they are kept through faith, spotless and unharmed from the doctrines of men, is no fault of these false prophets and interpreters. Ezekiel, speaking of the false prophets, said, "Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad," etc. (Ezekiel 13:21, 22) These are the wells without water, the foolish virgins without oil, the vessels of dishonor fitted to destruction. These are those on the broad way and in the wide gate, ravening wolves in sheep's clothing, seeking whom they may devour; these are the evil that understand not judgment. "But these . . . speak evil of the things they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption." (2 Peter 2:12)

These seducers not only change the meaning of Paul's writings, but the other scriptures as well. We can read, watch, and listen, to their discourses on every hand. What a horror to an humble child of God, when he sees all around him the stirring up of the unlearned and unstable, of the field wherein lies so small a thing as a percious jewel. But this treasure lies in a safe place, and no matter what happens to the chaff in the field around it, it remains the pure, precious pearl that He bought with His own life's blood. It is kept as the apple of His eye.

These unlearned, unstable wresters are never free from the watchful eye of the all powerful, sovereign God, who guards and keeps this treasure forever. The poor, weak children of God are just as safe as the Son himself, for they are joint heirs with him. This child of God is kept through the given faith, wisdom and understanding, from being defiled by these workers of iniquity. These unwise fulfill the purpose of God in their own place, as does the jewel in the field. God planted these and caused them to prosper, as told in Jeremiah 12. I be-

lieve they prosper only because God had a purpose for them, and their bounds are set. They go thus far, and no farther.

Peter was writing all this "to them that have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." He was writing to a people who had a special kind of wisdom and understanding: not the wisdom like Paul learned at the feet of Gamaliel; not the wisdom of the letter and the law. It was a heartfelt wisdom and understanding, given them, like Paul's, through faith. This wisdom came not through the teaching of men, but by God's putting it in their minds and writing it in their hearts. (Hebrews 8:10, 11)

These wise people to whom Peter was writing, understood the hard doctrine and hard sayings told by Paul, John, and other inspired writers, because their wisdom was from the same divine source as that given Paul. This wisdom was sent to the wilderness of Judea, the same as to the road to Damascus. It is the kind of wisdom bestowed upon the weak and foolish vessels of mercy, to confound the wise of this world. This God given wisdom prompted Paul to write the same thing that Peter was telling them, "that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation." This is hard to be understood by the unlearned. Paul wrote to the Ephesians, "Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known unto us the mystery of his will, etc." Thus the source of the wisdom that teaches that salvation is of the Lord, is God himself.

No matter how weak, or strong the creature of mercy, he is made to know this wonderful working of grace; and his wisdom abounds in it. We have Paul, David, Solomon, Job, and others on back to Moses, who were great and wise men of letters in their day, and were also given this special wisdom to know that salvation is of the Lord. However, there were also the lowly publican, the prodigal son, Peter, John, Jacob, and so many others who were fishermen, laborers, farmers, shepherds, poor and uneducated, who were made wise in this great mystery of godliness. This light of understanding shines as brightly through the one as the other.

There are among us educated and wise men of our day. It is a blessing indeed to have the leadership and counsel of these men of God: to hear them say that "the long-suffering of our God is salvation." But do you not know other wonderful lights in the firmament of grace with little book learning, who bring this wonderful news of glad tidings to men? Does the Spirit not comfort through these shepherds over their flocks the same as the others? The light sometimes seems brighter shining through the weaker vessel. Their wisdom abounds, and they are made to discern the pitfalls of the unlearned and the unstable wrester of scriptures.

The one who gives this wisdom also guards the narrow path and the strait gate. Is it not comforting to know He restrains the wicked, and holds the great storms of the earth in his hand, with the same power and knowledge he displays in a small sparrow's fall? The proud teachings of the worldlings, who would put to nought the long-suffering of Christ, are not food and drink to his humble poor. They are made wise through hungering and thirsting after his righteousness. They have been taught that their own righteousness is as filthy rags, and have been given this wisdom: That the long-suffering of our Lord is their only way of salvation.

Mrs. Cisco Barron,
Spearsville, La.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." (John 12:24)

From this statement of Christ, and

others, it appears that the Triune God abideth alone in eternity before time; but it was His will "to bring many sons to glory", and that these sons should come of an earthly race, and be in such a low estate that their case would be hopeless in respect to their own ability to recover themselves therefrom. This God did by making the creature subject to vanity; not willingly, that is, God did not work in them (Adam and Eve) the will to sin, that is, to disobey Him, for "God tempteth no man to sin." But the temptation came from the temptor, the Old Serpent, the Devil. In obeying the temptation of the serpent, Adam sinned and died that day as God had declared. Now the word "death" to the natural mind has only one meaning, the end of natural life; but in the Spirit it means to exist without eternal or immortal life. "He that hath Christ, hath life, He that hath not Christ hath not life." He is dead without this life. God's decree, from, "dust thou art to dust thou shalt return," embraces man's creation, natural life, and death.

Man in his disobedience became the lawful captive of Satan, and as such came under the power and dominion of the kingdom of darkness into which all of Adam's race are born naturally, being dead in sin and enemies to God by wicked works. Adam, as he came forth from his creation, had a body and soul, called a living soul, and was without a spirit either good or bad, but when he came under the dominion of the serpent this evil spirit became his guide and leader. It was a union of soul and spirit, a oneness of purpose and action. Paul expresses it this way, "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom we all had our conversation in times past, in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others."

It is this condition that all of God's children were in: without God and without hope in the world. But since God gave His Son a certain number of this human race: all whose names are written in Heaven, written in the Lamb's Book of Life, (and whose eternal life has always been in Christ as their natural life was in Adam, who was a figure of Him who was to come); and He came into this world as the Only Begotten Son of God. "That holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." He not only was the only begotten Son of God but He was the first begotten from the dead, the proof of the resurrection. All other persons were begotten of Adam or his descendants, and as such were not sons of God but His creatures, and their flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven, "neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."

This is where adoption comes in. If God were the father of our flesh, no adoption would be necessary, for a fatheir does not adopt his own son. Christ stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and He came in a body "thou hast prepared me" to put away sin by its sacrifice, that God could justly and gloriously receive His own in that upper kingdom.

To go back to where they were under the dominion and power of the prince of this world, Satan, their soul in union with the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience, there must be a change brought about by the Holy Spirit. It is called circumcision. Under the law, circumcision was outward in the flesh and performed by man in order for a man to receive all the privileges of an Israelite, for none were admitted into the temple worship without it. But the true circumcision is performed by the Word of God which is Spirit. It is performed in the heart. It is a dividing asunder of the soul of the creature from that evil spirit that had once been its leader and ruler. It is a putting off of the old man with

his deeds and the putting on of the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him, a new creation. "This word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to dividing asunder of soul and spirit" etc. This circumcision in Paul changed him in a moment of time from a persecutor to a servant of Christ.

But in this work of the Spirit, our flesh is not circumcised but continues in this life as a body of death from which Paul and all others of His children desire deliverance. Christ promised, "He that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto eternal life." The Spirit of God in His children is the Spirit of adoption, a promise that their mortal shall put on immortality. Thus they live in hope of adoption, to wit the redemption of their bodies, which shall take place at the resurrection of the just (the justified).

W. L. Crowley
Gordo, Ala.

OUR REDEEMER'S RETURN

Our risen Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ had met with the eleven disciples on a hill near Bethany. His earthly mission in the days of His incarnation had been completed. He was returning to His eternal home in glory, from whence He had come down to earth — where He had been born of a woman and made under the law for the suffering of death.

He had laid aside His robes of heavenly glory to tabernacle among men. His mission was to save His people from their sins. To do that, He must become their substitute and sin bearer. He became flesh and dwelt among us — had invaded death's realms — had met man's last enemy — and had conquered death, hell and the grave.

In simple language, He had defined His mission in these words: "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that hath sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which He hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." John 6:38-39.

His resurrection was a verification of His having accomplished every thing entailed in an everlasting covenant of grace, ordered in all things and sure.

On previous occasions He had told His disciples that it was needful that He go away. Now, that the time had come, He wished to leave them in such a way, that they would not think He had simply vanished (as He had sometimes done in His post resurrection appearances), and wait for another earthly appearance. It was the parting forever, so far as outward and visible communion on earth was concerned.

Step by step, He had instructed them and raised their conceptions of Him as to the unspeakable grandeur of His true nature and work. He is now leaving them as witnesses, to give testimony of the gospel of His grace.

The charge which He gave to them has been called "The Great Commission." It outlines and defines the responsibilities of the gospel ministry. Their task was not to make a flock, but to feed the flock of God of which the Holy Spirit had made them the overseer.

As we read that commission we observe that it bears two great seals — like that of the Great Seal of the United States, as an emblem of authority. The first is the seal of *omnipotence:* "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Matt. 28:18. Then follows the authorization: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Matt. 28:19. He then adds another seal — the seal of *omnipresence:* "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Vs. 20. Every God called minister of the gospel has known and felt the meaning of these two seals as he preached the sov-

ereignty of God in the salvation of sinners.

Little by little, for they were disciples of clay, sometimes slow of understanding, He had revealed Himself as the Son of God, veiled in the form of man. Since His crucifixion and resurrection, He had taught them to see in Him the Messiah, exalted to immortal and divine majesty, as the conqueror of death and the Lord of all.

"He was Lord in the manger,
Lord in the tomb,
Lord on the cross,
Our guilt to assume.
As Lord He arose,
Ascended above;
The Saviour of sinners,
Oh *beautiful* love."

The last earthly scene which closed His contact and communion with His chosen ones, is described, in simple language by Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles: "When He had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:9-10.

"A cloud received him out of their sight." In Holy Writ, the cloud is sometimes emblematical of God. It was a cloud that went before Israel in the exodus — a pillar of fire by night, and a shade and banner by day. It was a cloud that directed the movements of Israel in her wilderness wanderings. When the cloud stood still, Israel stood still — when the cloud moved, Israel went forward. It was a cloud, the shechinah of the Lord that hovered above the mercy seat of the tabernacle and temple. It was from a cloud a voice came saying, "This is my beloved Son: hear Him." Luke 9:35. And, so, on the day "in which He was taken up," it was God receiving His only begotten Son unto Himself in the courts of heaven; and, indeed, He was well pleased.

As we give way to our imagination, pondering that transcendent miracle of His ascension, we recall the words of Jesus in His great High Priestly prayer: "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." John 17:4-5. That prayer has been answered. He is seated today, at the right hand of the Majesty on high as our advocate and intercessor. He is pleading in glory — not as the Arminian hymn states, with sinners to accept Him and be saved — but pleading for us. When Satan would accuse a saint or God, Christ can point to His piereced hands and say, "Lay no charge against them! See these scars in my hands! I put their sins away by the sacrifice of myself on Calvary's cross." "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." Romans 8:33. *God won't — and the Devil can't.*

But, this same Jesus is coming again. *"This same Jesus"*, the angels said. The One whom they had known when "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us."

He went away unobserved by the world — rejected and despised by the world of unbelievers. Some day, He is coming again — "in the same way as ye have seen Him go."

The world will not be looking for Him when He comes again, but "unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Hebrews 9:28.

Just prior to His going away, His disciples "asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom of Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." Acts 1:6-7. Recently, we have seen the restoration of Israel as a sovereign state among

the nations of the earth. Some one has said, "the Jew is the time piece and calendar of God." Once Frederick the Great requested one of his chaplains to prove the existence of God, saying, "I want a brief answer — I haven't time for a long dissertation", and the chaplain answered in four words: "The Jew, your Majesty."

The religious leaders of the various Christian groups have had a great deal to say about the Second Coming of our Lord. Some have tried to fix dates, as though they had access to the calendar of God. I know they don't know, for Jesus said the time of His coming was not known even to the angels — that it was known only to God.

Others tell us He will establish a kingdom here on earth — but the kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom and is not of the earth, or earthly. Another view is that He will come again after a thousand years of peace and goodwill among the nations of the earth. But if mankind ever expects to find such conditions here on earth, then we will have to have a regenerated society — and the Bible contains no such promise as that.

The ideas of men concerning His coming again, can be grouped under one of three schools of thought. Some are pre-millenial, some post-millenial and others are a-millenial. The prefixes "Pre", "Post" and "A" designated their point of view. I shall not enlarge upon them here — nor, is that the purpose of this message.

The Word of God has a great deal to say concerning our Redeemer's return. As we have mentioned, no man knows the hour or the date of His coming again. So much that I have read is speculative — or the vain prattling of misguided teachers — nor, shall I attempt to reply to such.

But, I know He is coming. He told us to watch and wait. We ought to live each day, as though we were expecting our Redeemer to return to earth. What sweet Christian fellowship and spiritual warmth would be found in our churches, if the visible church were watching and waiting, and serving in humility while they wait. Here is food for a discourse on the second coming of Christ.

If we were really looking for Him — watching and waiting — would we want Him to find us engaged in many of the things we weave into our daily lives? Does your conversation indicate that you are seeking those things which are above? A good tree brings forth good fruit. Do our daily lives give outward evidence of an inward work of grace?

He is coming! The angels said He would come! Christ said He would come! The Holy Spirit through the inspired writings of God's Holy Word says He is coming! He didn't say *when* — but He did say, *"Watch!"*

Some day, when an evil world is least expecting it — when it is engrossed as always in the mundane things of this life, He will come again. He said: "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:3.

Yes, He will come again! In that great day — *the day of the Lord* — the earth and the sea shall give up their dead, and the mortal bodies of them that sleep in Him shall be changed and made like unto His own glorious body, according to the working of His mighty power, whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself.

When He comes again, we shall not all be sleeping in our graves, but we shall all be changed, "and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore, comfort one another with these words." I Thessalonians 4:17-18.

Elder Eldon A. Huchison

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909 Philip Powers Drive,
Laurel, Maryland

Dear Elders of the Beloved Church of God:

I submit the following in a question-

ing manner, and desire to be enlightened and admonished, as required.

The saying often arises that predestination is the backbone of the religion of the believers of truth. Now I take no offense, and mean not to admonish those who are steadfast in their belief, — for who am I that I should find fault, warn, or give advice? — that God is all-powerful, and that He has created all things, past, present, and future; for I profess to believe in predestination, if it is by God's grace that I believe anything.

However, by saying that we believe in predestination does not make our belief any more steadfast, or effective. I certainly think that if I believe that God is all powerful, all present, and all wise, then I *must* believe that nothing is excluded. Therefore I rather feel that God or Christ is the backbone of our religion, and that knowledge of predestination is one among many of the beautiful things that God has revealed through his Son to the elect. The fact is that man has many destinations, carnal as well as spiritual, in his life.

Oftimes we dwell so strongly on our conviction of predestination that we do not look to the Light, but are somewhat blinded. A mere belief in predestination is no more than a belief in, say, a road map. To believe in God is the positive point of our salvation, and this is not of ourselves.

Therein lies our hope, in that it is our devout hope that we believe in God. It goes without saying, that, if saved at all, we're saved by grace.

But my thoughts return to predestination. There are many who profess that the foreknowledge of God is indisputable; and also, they admit that to everything there is a season, or an appointed time. It seems there are some who confess this to be true, but become nearly violent at the use of the word predestination.

Do I believe in predestination? I say that I hope I do believe that our each and every destination has been predetermined; and this is evidently predestination, and not chance. Chance doctrine denies that God is God. If by grace we have knowledge, then we glorify Him according to his purpose; for the elect praise God in the acknowledgment of His power over all things. This truth is made known to all His people by His love and mercy, to sinners made to fall before him through grace.

It is my fervent desire to praise God always, but am not worthy of such a blessing. If any are unworthy, I am the most. But I thank God that He has revealed to me, if not mistaken, that He is most High and Mighty, and that I am most lowly of all. God's power is not to be denied.

Thank you for your forbearance thus far. Be merciful if I offend, for I mean no offense.

Yours in hope of a better life,
B. K. Smith

" 'MUTILATED' BIBLE

As a student of Biblical literature with a background of seven years' study in Greek and three years in Hebrew, I noted with interest the Associated Press story, "Revised Old Testament Will Have No 'Nonsense' " (*Star*, August 20).

Under the cover of "accuracy and readability" we are told that a panel of "Biblical scholars" is weeding out "nonsense" passages and such words as virgin and Jehovah from the Old Testament in a revolutionary English language translation. Indeed, this will be "revolutionary" because it won't be a translation. It will be a perversion of the Bible much like the Revised Standard Version and the New English Bible (New Testament). This is simply a further effort to make the Bible conform to liberal and modernistic theology with little or no concern for accuracy in "translation."

The panel would well use its time to stop the nonsense of trying to mutilate

the Scriptures instead of weeding out "nonsense" passages which do not exist.

The Rev. Ralph J. Schuler."

The above was copied from the *Evening Star,* Washington, D. C., and expresses our sentiments concerning the matter. While we know but little of the Greek and Hebrew languages, we do hope that we know something of, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

The language of the scriptures may be changed in new translations to suit the whims and fancies of liberalism, etc., and multitudes will follow with their approval, but it will be an impossible task for them to change what the Spirit saith to the Lord's people, or dull their hearing ear.

J. D. W.

3125 Hiawatha,
Fort Worth 14, Texas

To the Editors:

I am enclosing a money order for the renewal of my subscription.

Many things cross my mind but I cannot concentrate on any certain text, but will try to write about some things the Lord has done for a chief of sinners. When the Lord was pleased to add me to the church in 1924, by the grace that was given me, I labored with charity with widows and the fatherless more than some of the brethren, and my proselyte friends. Yet not I! but the grace of God that was with me.

To take credit to myself would be a great sin. All the power, and all the glory belongs to the infinite, triune God: His grace has brought me through hard things; things that were impossible for me to do. In the Spring of 1945, when it seemed to me that all things were gone from me, in the depth of my sorrow His grace caused me to bless his name with joy. He changed my feeling in a twinkling of an eye. Sometimes I feel like David: "Is his mercy clean gone forever?" But with Paul the Apostle, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to they that are called according to his purpose."

I wonder sometimes how my afflictions can work for good. At times I feel so cold and indifferent: It seems the Winter will last the whole year. When will Spring time come again? so that the showers of blessings will come to make our hearts rejoice, and to kindle our poor souls with love.

I can only affirm the writing of the Apostle to the Gentiles, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, all are things: to whom be glory forever. Amen."

Living in hope of eternal life,

W. K. Williams

"AND THOU SHALT REMEMBER"

"And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years into the wilderness, to humble thee and to prove thee . . . And He humbled thee and suffered thee to hunger and fed thee with manna which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know . . ." (Deuteronomy 8:2 and 3)

"For the Lord thy God hath blessed thee in all the works of thy hand: He knoweth thy walking through this great wilderness; these forty years the Lord thy God hath been with thee; THOU HAST LACKED NOTHING." (Deuteronomy 2:7)

To the Household of Faith,
Dearly Beloved:

Recently, as I have read the aforegoing verses, I have felt a compulsion

to write a little of the sweetness they have brought to me as I meditated upon them, and "The years that are past".

The book of Deuteronomy was written by Moses in the last years of his life, to the stiff-necked and gainsaying nation of Israel whom he had led forty years through the wilderness from Egyptian bondage even to the very border of the promised land. The book consists largely of parting counsels, exhortations, warnings and above all, reminders of the way the Lord had led them, of His great faithfulness while He had been with them those forty years in the great wilderness. He brings to mind their rebellion, their gross ingratitude for all the Lord's benefits to them; how they murmured against the Lord, saying He had brought them into the wilderness to die; how they had looked back with desire even to Egypt; how the Lord, in His wonderful faithfulness, had afflicted them, then healed them; had suffered them to hunger, then fed them with manna; had permitted them to wander, then restored them — that He might humble them and prove them and make them to know the source of their supply. He reminds them tenderly that the Lord their God had known their walking through the great wilderness; that He had been with them, and says, "THOU HAST LACKED NOTHING."

If we are of the Lord's redeemed ones, I believe when we read these wonderful and precious reminders, we are moved, in loving gratitude, to fit them to our own pilgrimage as we have walked through the great wilderness of this evil and perilous world; which inclines me to speak briefly of some of the way over which the Lord has led me these past FORTY YEARS. My experience has been so unlike most I have read in the *Signs* that I've been reluctant to write of it. Indeed, at times, I have wondered if I had ever had an experience — at other times I have known I did. In the beginning, I did not experience the terrible condemnation for sin which so many relate. This has come to me from time to time throughout the years as my experiences have taught me how frail and weak I am, and as I have been blest to see the loveliness, humility and holiness of my dear Redeemer; neither have I ever been given very much to doubts, as so many seem to be. But then, what parent finds it necessary to deal exactly alike with each of his children? The body of Christ is made up of individuals, with individual characteristics, individual desires, individual short-comings and individual needs, and I believe the Lord, in His great wisdom, love and mercy, deals with each of us as He alone knows best.

Forty years ago, in the fall of 1922, when just a young girl, I met and fell in love with a man — the best man, the most wonderful man who ever walked the shores of this world. One night that Fall, when I was going through a bitter experience, He spoke to me, told me to look unto Him; that He would give me peace and supply all my needs. This wonderful man had written, rather had dictated, a great book, filled from cover to cover with "the things concerning Himself" and the bride He would one day take to be with Him forevermore. He sent me this book and I have had it these forty years, and, with exception of the Man himself, it is my most precious possession. Truly, each time I read it with supplied understanding, I find a new loveliness in the Man that I had not seen before. It soon became apparent that this wonderful man had loved me before I loved Him — before I even met Him, even before I was born; in fact, that my loving Him was BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED ME; moreover, His love for me was so great that, however unfaithful I might ever be, He would never leave me nor forsake me; that nothing either in life or in death could ever separate me from his great love. Oh, my dear Brethren, this wonderful man was The Man Christ Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

As I meditate upon the verses quoted in the beginning and look back over my own forty years walking through this great wilderness, I see myself just as Israel was — stiff-necked, hard-headed, wanting my own way and failing to see the Lord's gracious hand as He led me on. So many have been the pitfalls in my pathway, and it seems to me I have walked headlong into every one of them; so many have been the snares of Satan and I've been the victim of them all; so many times I've looked with wistful gaze at the world and all its charms; so many times when the going was hard, I've wondered why and wished my lot were different. But in all my unfaithfulness, the Lord has been faithful, chastening me often and afflicting me, that He might humble me and prove Himself to me; and through it all, I can say with an overwhelming sense of gratitude, I HAVE LACKED NOTHING. His gracious and bountiful hand has supplied my material needs. It is true I don't have very much of this world's goods, but I have never had to go hungry or cold, and so far, I've never had to be a burden on or dependent upon anyone but the Lord. God forbid that I should ever, for one small moment, feel independent of Him!

He has also met my spiritual needs as He fed me with the gospel from the written and spoken word, has blest me with sweet fellowship and communion with Himself and His dear saints. Sometimes the waves of His great love have flooded my soul, bringing forth loving response from my heart. He has shown me so many times and in so many ways how much better are the things He has for me than anything this changing world could ever afford. Human beings change, even those we love the most, but He changes not! In the depths of distress and sorrow, He has spoken to me and comforted me. Not only that, He has given me a little foresight of that city to which I humbly hope I'm traveling, so that I do not dread, indeed sometimes I anticipate the prospect of leaving this old house for that eternal city where the glory of our dear Redeeer will be the light; where there will be no more temptation, no more sin, no more need for chastening; where darkness shall nevermore dim our view of His dear face. What a glorious day that will be!

Just a few words concerning chastening and afflictions which I've been taught these forty years in this great wilderness. Paul tells us "no chastening for the present seemeth joyous but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby". How very true! I have learned through the years that each chastening has brought me closer to Him who inflicted it, and made me to love Him more as I was blest to see the tender love in the chastening hand. Many years ago when I was teaching, I found it necessary, because of disobedience, to punish a little boy of whom I was very fond. After I had punished him, I took him in my arms, told him I loved him, that it grieved me to have to punish him and I hoped I would never have to do it again. Through his flowing tears, the little fellow looked up into my face and said , "Miss Dykes, I love you more than any teacher I ever saw". In the years that followed, I have sometimes been like the little boy, when in affliction my heart was melted and I was made to look into the face of my dear Redeemer and say, "Lord, I never loved you before as I love you now". You see, the Great Teacher had assured me of His love, even as He found it necessary to chasten me.

These experiences on the way are teaching me, little by little, that His way is best for me, and I am instructed: "In all things give thanks, for this is the will of God, in Christ, concerning you".

Dear Brethren, in closing, I wish I could say, as Paul did, "I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith", but I cannot say that. The faith has kept me and so I can say, as Paul did on another occasion, "The life I now live in the

flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me". By the faith of the Son of God! Let us watch closely for His footsteps as we journey through this great wilderness, until He comes again, whether the years be many or few.

Yours, in that inseparable tie,

Mildred V. Dykes
1114 Mt. Hermon Road
Salisbury, Maryland

A FEW OF MY THOUGHTS

I sometimes wonder how one poor mortal can be in so many different conditions. I often feel that I have been every way from the bottomless pit of Hell to the peaks of the highest mountains. Many times I feel so all alone, without a friend on earth, nor one in heaven: so low I have been on my knees to beg for mercy for what I thought was the last time. Yet I feel to witness with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." (Job 13:15)

I know I must bear my own burdens, even though I journey with a bowed head and a heavy heart. I have no where else to go, as when Simon Peter answered the Lord, "Lord to whom shall we go, thou hast the words of eternal life."

If not deceived, I have been lifted so high as to feel heaven in me, and I in heaven; and have felt the love that flows from heart to heart, and breast to breast, while seeing the manifestation of the Spirit of Christ reflected in the faces of my brethren; and realizing that I had no control over my thoughts and feelings. And sometimes I wonder how I can be so unconcerned: that often I am not concerned because I am unconcerned; notwithstanding all these things. I hope, if not deceived, I am trusting in a God of purpose, and that every condition we are brought in, is in accord with the will and purpose of an almighty, just, and righteous God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will, and together for good to them that are the called according to his purpose.

I have seen many things that I feared were intended for evil, which God, through his love, worked for the good and to the glory of his Church; which he predestinated, called, justified, and glorified through his only begotten Son, whom he made a little lower than the angels; for He came into this low-ground of sin and sorrow, and shed his precious blood on Calvary's Cross. We think of this as the cruelest thing that man ever did; but it was to be just as it was, for He stood a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. By this he bought and paid in full with his own blood, those that were chosen in him before the foundation of the world; and every object of his mercy will crown him King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, in heaven and immortal glory.

Sometimes my hope for these things grows very dim; and when things are not as I would have them, I go murmuring and complaining. Many times, when I have used all my tools and timber, if not deceived, He shows me that the building was fitly framed together: Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone.

I have tried to pray for evidence that he will supply me with the grace by which to die, but I feel that he has taught me that this is not needed until the time comes to die.

A few months ago I stood by the bedside of my father-in-law, Brother T. W. Saunders, and it was such sweet sorrow to see the manifestation of the God given grace by which to die. I felt that God had delivered him from the body of this death, and there would be no more pain, but a sweet sleep in Jesus, while waiting for his coming to take his jewels home.

I have stood many times by the graveside of my father, and I feel and hope, a brother in Christ, Arthur Robertson, and wondered why it could not have been me. His humble walk in this world manifested the guiding Spirit of the Saviour; and I so often feel that mine

is of the Devil. Yet I find myself anxiously hoping for that day, when I hope to see my Lord for myself, and be like him, and be satisfied — in that city not made with hands. I fear the sting of death as any mortal man; and I know it cannot be long, even if I live to be old. The past forty-four years have been but a few days and full of trouble.

Clifton Robertson,
Rt. 1,
Reidsville, N. C.

When thou, my righteous Judge, shall come
To take thy ransomed people home,
Shall I among them stand?
Shall such a worthless worm as I,
Who sometimes am afraid to die,
Be found at thy right hand?

I love to meet among them now,
Before thy gracious feet to bow,
Though vilest of them all:
But can I bear the piercing thought?
What if my name should be left out,
When thou for them shall call!

Prevent, prevent it by thy grace;
Be thou, dear Lord, my hiding-place,
In that most solemn day;
Thy pardoning voice, O let me hear,
And still my unbelieving fear;
Nor let me fall, I pray.

Let me among thy saints be found
Whene'er th' Archangel's trump shall sound,
To see thy smiling face:
Then loudest of the crowd I'll sing,
While heaven's resounding mansions ring
With shouts of sovereign grace.

Lady Huntington

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John D. Wood

EDITORIAL
PSALMS 23:4

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

Walking is spoken of more in connection with the experience of God's children than any other exercise. If the

Lord wills, let us walk with David as he contemplates the care of his Shepherd. As we walk, **let us walk,** and God forbid that we hold in ridicule or disdain those that run or sit or lie down, for, mark my words well, we, too, will come to all these experiences, that is, we will, if we are walking in the kingdom of heaven. There has been too much bodily exercise and too much printer's ink used in making it appear that **this** doctrine was blessed from heaven to the exclusion of that one, and that **this** exercise and experience was the only one that God's children had.

To the carnal professor, it would seem a dismal walk through the valley of the shadow of death. At times, as I look back, yea, as I look inwardly at present, I find that I am at cross purposes with God about this walk. I have criticized others because of their lack of understanding, but it is the writer that would, when left to walk alone, call in question the good that could come to me in walking in that valley of dark and gloomy shadows. This walk, like all the perilous journey of God's people, is an allotted walk. It is not, **To walk or not walk,** as seemeth good to the child. The child does not know the way, and, unless heaven directs, would end up in walking to (not in the valley of the shadow of death, but) death, eternal, everlasting, the second death.

This walk is inevitably fixed. It can not be avoided; if so, the bearing hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ would be left to the whim and the ability of a child of God; the characteristics and marks of God's children would be left to chance; there might be, and in all likelihood would be, some that would escape the chastening rod, and would be manifest as bastards and not sons. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." Isa. 43:2. This walk and passage through these trying times is one that comes to each child of God. If the walk through the valley of the shadow of death does not come to a professor, it is good evidence that he or she is not in possession of that good name, which is better than great riches.

This valley begins at birth, but it is not realized until we are born again. Thus our history of this walk is not interesting or of value until we are brought to feel that, were we dealt with according to our deserts, that we would walk **through** the valley and out **into** death, the second death, which is not the valley of its shadow, but death itself. O the love and mercy of God as we walk here. Deserving of (not only the valley of the shadow of death, but) death, and having brought it all by our transgression, yet, what love and mercy and tender compassion is given to us. We know that few and evil have been our days (Gen. 47:9; Job 14:1), and that this is our allotted way. This evil is to be considered in a two fold sense. Pestilence and disease and storms and disasters are considered evil in the Bible, and are a part of God's creation (Isa. 45:7); this evil is that which we receive from the Lord (Job 2:10). This phase of evil we will not fear, although, as with Job, we may be slain by it. Here mercy shows itself in its diviner form. We will not fear it because "our Shepherd is with us." Too, in this valley we are surrounded by the sins of an ungodly world. And this will not move us, because our Shepherd is with us. He governs these ungodly men, saying to them, Thus far shalt thou come and no further (Job 38:11).

"Thou art with me." Has anything ever been said that is worth as much to poor, helpless, ruined sinners as this Shepherd being with His sheep? Lift up your head you sighing sinners, for the great Shepherd is with you. Being great, we have the promise that he will never leave us. That is how far reaching his oversight of his flock goes. Shepherds may rise from out of a conditional hill, but they will not last and stay as long as this one will. He is as good as he is

great. His goodness was demonstrated in laying down his life for the sheep, and his greatness was shown in his rising for their justification. O what a rich boon is this good news. The good Shepherd has died for us, and the great Shepherd has conquered the grave for us, and he is now in attendance, watching over the household of faith. He is with the church now; he is with his little children now. The shepherd that has to wait for us to come to his conditional hill before he can save us, might become angry and leave us, but our Shepherd did not wait for us to become good; he did not wait for us to desire him; he did not wait for us to find him. He came to us; he came to us when we were wandering in the wilderness; he came to us when we were in the desert land; he went before us and laid up bread for us; he came down into the wilderness where we were bowed down under the load of our guilt, where we were lost and ruined forever, and he brought us out from the power of that dismal place; he changed our raiment, he gave us living water to drink, he taught us new things, he kept us. The power of bondage was gone, the sadness of being lost was turned to joy, the solitary place became a place where two is far better than one. He kept us in the same place we had been in, but he stayed there with us.

Dear readers, he is with his children now. If he has ever left one of them I do not find it in the Bible; if he is accustomed to leaving his bride for anything I have yet to be shown that. "All that the Father hath given me, shall come to me." How do they come? Is it a matter that he has left in their hands? If so, he is not a good shepherd, seeing that Jacob was lost in the wilderness. Moreover, Jacob is the lot of Christ's inheritance, and if that doctrine had one scintilla of truth in it, the shepherd would not have one sheep to herd. But their coming to him has not been left in their hands. They will all come. Every brother of Joseph came to him. Furthermore, they will all come confessing their sins. Repentance has been granted to Israel and forgiveness of sins is in the name of the grantor of repentance. Has the entry ticket from the kingdom of nature into the kingdom ever been delayed by secondary matters along the way? Has a doubt ever arisen in regard to the birthdate of the one being brought in? And has one ever come that the Shepherd was not expecting? And has more ever come than He could care for? This is just what I need; this is the Shepherd that I desire to guide and guard me while I live here in this world. I need, yea, the church of the living God, every heir of heaven, needs this One to bring us into the fold. But we need something more. We need Him to stay with us, to keep us while we remain in this unfriendly world and to finally carry us home to glory. "Thou art with me." Let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains (Isa. 42:11). Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel (Isa. 44:23). Ah, what a lovely text, "I will fear no evil, for thou art with me." They shall come to him, and he will in no wise cast them out. If he does not cast them out, he will stay with them. Now will someone rise up and name a reason that will cause them to be cast out? What will it be? It has got to be better than the Shepherd in power. He will not, he can not, cast one of them out. This is the Shepherd of His people now. This is the Shepherd that I need. Do you?

"Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Ah, what joy floods my soul as I contemplate the gospel of grace. It is said to be good news and such it is in every phase of it. What a gracious and mysterious working it is with a sinner that the rod brings comfort to him that it is applied to. This rod that belongs to the Shepherd; that is exclusively applied for the benefit of the sheep by the owner of both rod and sheep, I want to

notice from three standpoints. First. It is a rod of correction to the erring child. Right here is where a lot of wrangling has been carried on by lovely brethren over something that is in the hands of our Shepherd. The judgments of God are unsearchable, and his ways are past finding out. We have forgotten that all judgment is in the hands of Jesus (John 5:22); that he sits on his own seat of judgment; that we all must come to this seat and receive the things done in our body, whether it is good or bad. This is the administering of the rod to wayward children. All of God's children are wayward, and they all receive the chastening of the Lord. All of them are partakers of this administering of chastisement, for the Lord chastenth all that he loves. All afflictions are from the Lord, but all afflictions come not as a rod. The afflictions of the righteous are many (Psa. 34:19), but keep in mind that these afflictions are not the result of guilt. The rod of affliction is one thing; the afflictions of the righteous are another. One is administered for correction; the other is administered in mercy and for Jesus' sake and for humility. I will separate the chastening for correction from the suffering of God's people for righteousness sake. Chastening can not be applied to one not guilty of wrong doing; if so, it ceases to be chastening and becomes suffering for righteousness sake. There **are** many afflictions, both in body, and in spirit, that God's family are called on to endure. These come not by a rod of chastisement. These are not sufferings for disobedience, but they are sufferings and afflictions and persecutions for righteousness sake (Mat. 5:10; Rom. 8:17; Phil. 1:29; 2 Ti. 3:12). Joy and comfort are not synonyms. It is a joy to God's people when they are counted worthy in Jesus's name to suffer righteousness sake (1 Pet. 4:13), but the chastening by the rod is not received in that way. For the present chastening seems grievous. But the exercise under his chastening hand brings us to see that he was doing it for our good. It then **becomes** a joy (not in being a subject of chastisement for our wrongs, but) that we have a Shepherd that uses the rod to his name's declarative glory. Second. This rod that is in the hand of the Lord is the sceptre. Here we have the rod becoming the ruling staff in the hand of the Shepherd. The sceptre of the law ruled over Judah until Shiloh came, and then all rule and authority was vested in him. This sceptre became a rod of iron to all nations but it became a badge of goodness and mercy and loving kindness in the eyes of God's people (Rev. 12:5; 19:15; Gen. 49:10). At the first appearance of Jesus as our Ruler, we were not in accord with him (Gen. 37:8-11; Isa. 53:2; Luke 19:14), but as we were led forth from our own works and had him revealed unto us as the Saviour, then we were glad to follow him, and how anxiously we watch today for that hand that holds the rod of kingly authority. I will never forget an incident of some years ago. I was so tossed about in regard to moving here. I could not sleep, and my life was a nightmare. I could not stay and I could not go forward. Our senior editor was in touch with me and he said time and again, Wait until you see the Lord's hand. That time did come, as I humbly hope, and I shall never forget how comforting it was to see that hand stretched forth, beckoning me on. In this hand is the rod or sceptre that gives us joy and peace and comfort in (but not for) following him. Third. This rod is used as a measure. It has already measured all things that we will ever be called upon to endure. No man builds a house without first counting up the cost (Pro. 24:27; Luke 14: 28, 29), and God not only **knew** but he **measured** all of the depths of sorrow and affliction and distress that he would have to endure in order to redeem his people; he measured all of the cunning and cruelty, and untamed fury of Satan; he measured (as the Man) all of the Father's hatred of sin; he measured all the love of the Father for sinners; he measured and spanned the gulf that lay between his

people and heaven; he measured all the bitter desert travels, the exhausting travels through the wildernesses; he measured the deep waters wherein he sank; he measured the horrible pit of sin that we plunged him into. Ah, dear child of God, this rod has searched out the deep things of God. I see him measure, and I see him go down to that depth that it took to get under us; I see him measure, and the mountain is not to high to scale to teach an erring Peter; I see him measure, and the river of death is not too deep to defy to bring his darling bride home; I see him view and measure the yawning and narrow limitations of the grave and yet to go there to prepare us a place with many mansions here (John 14:2, 3), and to show us the way we must go, and that he went as full a measure into death as we will go, yet conquering it to the full measure.

What comforting words are these. This doctrine comforts my poor soul. This is what I need here; it will be what I need in death; it will be what I need in the resurrection morning. This is all I need now and ever. The rod in his hand. His rod, but my benefits. I am corrected by it when wrong; I am chastened by it when disobedient; I am delighted and made to joy when I am fully exercised (but not when I fully exercise) in this chastening. I am blessed to see his hand ruling the nations with a rod of iron and his dear children with a hand of mercy and grace; we are comforted as the sceptre over law and Satan and death glistens in the sunshine of God's love. Lastly, we are comforted when the measuring rod is shown us. We know that it has already measured out the sufferings to Jesus for us; that He descended into the depths for us and is now ascended on high and is now appearing for us before his Father's throne; that he has measured to us a sufficiency of grace for a thorn, for life, for death, for all things, and that it also measured to the full extent that Satan would go, assuring us that all things are working for our Good.

Lastly, a comforting staff to lean upon. The thigh may wither under the angel's touch; the step may falter and stumble; the eyesight may dim and fade away; the tabernacle of clay may be razed after slowly leaning and falling and perishing. All this is sure to come, but to all the sheep, they will lean on the everlasting arm of Jehovah-God, on this staff, even Jesus Christ the Lord. I think of a very aged sister who is badly afflicted with rheumatism. She almost has to crawl in at the door, but she always says, "I wanted to come one more time"; and I am reduced to nonenity in myself considered, and I am made to rejoice and to be comforted that the poor crippled children of God have a staff to lean upon, a sure staff, a tried staff, a staff that will never give nor break, having been tempered by the fiery fury of a sin avenging God, as Jesus hang dying. If the staff stood (let hell say different, let the raging of the world say different, let spys and scoffers and imposters in the church say different), and it did; if he stood what the sin of his people brought, and what Satan brought, and he stood it for you, then a question and I am through. Will that which is brought by our sins now, by this Satan now, will it be any stronger than what was brought against him on the cross? If not, then the staff will not break. Lean on it dear little one. Lean heavily on it.

"I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Amen.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Newark, Delaware
May, 1858

Dear Brother Beebe: — I cannot think that any established child of grace

can be carried away with the modern inventions, for their erronious nature is becoming more and more palpable in every new addition; yet in all ages of the church there have been some who were comparatively weak in the faith, and more liable to be tempted by appearances and certain associations than others. Indeed, we all have within us a natural propensity to idolatry. True, we may not feel any inclination to make images of gold, silver, wood or stone, but what were those images but the work of men's hands — mere human inventions? And what are all these modern religious institutions but the inventions of men? There is no God in them but the god of this world; there is no Christ in them but the Christ which bears the prefix **anti.** Yet they are doing wonders in the world; they can boast of their thousands and tens of thousands, and of taking the most desperate characters and christianizing them in a few minutes! And the leading spirits in these enchantments do not fail to make the most of these things to give plausibility to their cause, and by this means delude thousands into their meshes; and in some instances we have reason to think some who have the root of the matter in them may be embarrassed and perplexed by their art and ingenuity, as were the Galatians by the art and eloquence of the Judaizing teachers.

Moses admonishes Israel that deceivers might do wonders, and thus deceive the people. He says: "If there arise among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams; for the Lord your God proveth you to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear him and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him and cleave unto him." Deut. xiii. 1, 4. These wonder-workers were not confined to ancient Israel, for we read of them in the Revelations. "And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men," &c. Rev. xiii. 13. In the sight of men, that is, in the sight of unregenerated men. And by these wonders and false miracles, anti-Christ has deceived the credulous and deluded his millions; but the subjects of true faith have always been enabled to see the deception and escape the delusion.

Modern anti-Christ is now doing wonders, making fire come down from heaven in the sight of men. Men, unregenerated men, wonder at these things which are now going on. "How can we ascribe it to anything short of the power of God?" say they. Look at the wonderful effects of the present movement; its extent is almost boundless, it has reached Europe and America, and is sweeping all before it. Rich and poor, bond and free, are alike subjects of its influence. We must admit that these things are very imposing, and well calculated to deceive the simple. This is indeed like bringing fire from heaven in the sight of men, the eyes of whose understanding have not been enlightened by the spirit of truth. Indeed, there is nothing short of the sheet anchor that can prevent our frail bark from being shipwrecked and lost in this whirlpool of error and delusion which is now engulfing its millions. But deplorable as these things are in themselves, our God has them perfectly under his control, and he will cause good to result from them, and order out of confusion. These false dreamers and wonder-workers were to prove Israel, and Paul told the Corinthians that there must needs be heresies among them, that they who are approved might be made manifest among them, 1 Cor. xi. 19.

False doctrines and human inventions in matters of religion have been made manifest. It is with the visible church as it is with our atmosphere, it requires storms and tempests to purify it of nox-

ious vapors; and so with the visible church when enjoying a comparative calm, it becomes infested with noxious vapors, false professors, who have been brought in without having passed the fiery ordeal of regeneration, and these being unstable, yield to the storm of error and delusion. They are the stony ground hearers, who anon with joy receive the word, that is, they know nothing of the deep and pungent conviction through which true believers have passed; but with apparent joy received the word, and, for a time, seem to run well, even to outstrip the true convert; but it is because they have no weight to carry, never having known the plague of their own hearts; they have not been troubled as other men, neither are they plagued like others. Now these being light and airy, are ready subjects of the winds and storms of delusion. They fly before them as the chaff of the summer thrashing floor, and like the false spies they make a false report of the goodly land. While the chaff is thus yielding to the storm, lighter grains of wheat may be disturbed. This is a sieve to sift Israel, but although lighter grains may be carried to a certain distance with the chaff, they shall not perish with it. God has effectually provided against that. In fact, all the interests of flesh and blood favor the errors of the age, and when consulted, are sure to lead astray. There are various associations of a perplexing nature which have their effect in embarrassing the Christian. Husbands and wives, parents and children, worldly interests, worldly responsibilities, &c., all have their effect in tempting to error, and some are less able to resist these influences than others. Indeed, to be reproached as **hard shells, antinomians, contracted spirits,** and as the off-scourings of all things, is not at all pleasant to our proud nature, and whenever consulted we begin to sink. To say with Paul, "None of these things move me," requires the same amount of faith that he had.

True, all God's visible children have the same faith that Paul had, in quality, but all do not have it in the same degree; for we read of strong and of weak faith; and while the strong can bear the storms of error and persecution, the weak are often made to quake and tremble before them. These things show the propriety of the admonition of Moses, Deut. xiii. 4, "Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him and cleave unto him." When one of the disciples, on a certain occasion, said, "Are there few that will be saved?" Christ's answer, "What is that to thee; follow thou me." Whether there are many or few saved is with Christ; he will attend to that matter and see that all is right. As to the salvation of sinners, that is the work of Christ, he has never surrendered that prerogative to another, he has never authorized us to resort to means and ways to carry his purposes into execution, but we are to leave it wholly to him, and be content to follow his word, to take that as the man of our counsel, and as our guide while we sojourn in this wilderness. In all true science, certain first and fixed principles are recognized as indispensable to a correct understanding, and to these first and fixed principles reference is had to detect and expose false theories in the scientific pursuits of men. Such also is true in reference to all important matters of religion. That there are true and false religions, all are willing to admit; but how is the difference to be detected, is a question of vast importance, which deserves to be well pondered. Not by the **bulls** of Popes, the **decrees of councils,** or the **ipse dixit** of D. D.'s, nor yet by the decision of Synods, Conferences, Presbyteries or Associations; all such decisions are but the production of men, and often wicked and designing men who lie in wait to deceive the simple. Even good men whom we have esteemed as men of God, and as being substantially sound in the faith, whose writings we have perused with pelasure and profit, and whose memory we have cherished with esteem, and whose views we

respect; yet the best of men are but men at best, and are not to be regarded in the light of standards in this matter; but they are to be followed only as far as they follow Christ. And they who would claim the character of standards, and who require an unconditional surrender to their superior claims, are to be viewed as usurpers, and as such to be discarded.

The Bible is the only infallible standard of faith and practice, and they who speak or act in contravention of it, do so because there is no light in them. We are to try the spirits, but how can we try them without a certain standard? And if the Bible is not that standard, we have none on which to rely with certainty, and we should be like ships at sea, without compass or rudder, the sport of every adverse breeze. How often do we see this illustrated in those unstable men and women who have no fixed principles to govern them. Every new ism is swallowed with avidity, every new plan introduced is embraced with eagerness; they have no discrimination, all preaching is alike to them, except the plain, unvarnished truth, and they all unite to discard it; and why? Because it is a torment to those who dwell upon the earth.

But let us return to the Bible. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Here, then, we have all we need as a certain guide in matters of religion; unto which we would do well to give heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place. We are to bring everything we see or hear, of doctrine or order, to this standard, and receive or reject it according thereto. All that will bear this test is to be received, and all that comes short is to be rejected. No matter what may have been the standing of the promulgator in our minds, nor all who have once stood high in the church for soundness in the faith, and for their uprightness of deportment, if they have (at least to a certain degree) yielded to seductions of popularity or interest, they have become serious stumbling-blocks in the way of many honest-hearted Christians. But we should never let the servant get between us and the master. We should never let any man get so high in our confidence as to take for granted what he says, without reserving to ourselves the right to take heed what we hear, and of weighing it in the balance of the sanctuary. This is what all honest servants of God wish you to do; and whenever we find a man demanding implicit faith in his word, we have reason to suspect something is not right. Paul attributed nobleness to the Bereans, not because they received his word without examination, but because they searched the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so. And the men of Samaria said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of thy word, for we have heard him ourselves, and do know that this is the Christ," &c.

When John sent his disciples to know of Christ whether he was the Messiah, he did not say to them, Go and tell John that I am; but he said, Go and tell John what things ye see. And to the Jews he said, If ye believe not my words, believe for the works' sake for they do testify of me. Here, then, we find the Master who had a right to demand implicit confidence in his word, condescending to refer to tangible evidences. With these examples before us, how absurd and arrogant must he be who would dare to demand an unconditional endorsement of what he may advance. And on the other hand, it would be a mark of extreme weakness, if not of idolatry, on our part, to elevate any man so high as to consider him above the reach of scrutiny. We are to regard no man as being incapable of committing error. There are and always have been men who have justly stood high in the church, whose services have been highly esteemed for their work sake. But such men have always been humble and unpretending. One great object with

them has been to lead their brethren to the Bible. The fact that there always have been false teachers and false religion, and that men who have once stood high in the church have departed from the faith, and that no man, whatever may be his present standing, is to be taken as an infallible standard, are calculated to show the necessity of a perfect standard, and the imperative necessity of adhering closely to that standard; and thanks be to God for giving us a standard in his word.

Honest believers are sometimes perplexed by the differences among brethren on some points, or in reference to the proper application of some passages in the Bible, but although these differences may honestly exist, those things which essentially interest us are plain, they float upon the surface and are plain to the eye of faith. Who that has been the subject of the faith of God's elect, but has discovered that salvation is exclusively of grace, that it is not suspended on human volition, or any conditionality whatever, on the part of the subjects of its influence? "Not by works of righteousness that we have done, but of his own mercy hath God saved us. Being born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The sentiment here established is realized in the experience of all the subjects of regeneration; for they are all taught by the same spirit, and they are taught essentially the same lessons. And whenever we see a religious excitement progressing on any other principle, on that of human agency, human volition, or conditionality, we may take it for granted that it is not of God, but that it is to be rejected. The order of the gospel is plain and simple, and whenever anything is proposed as of religious use or authority that is not sustained by a "Thus saith the Lord," it should be at once rejected, no matter by whom presented. Any man who will dare to impose upon the church, as a duty, or as of spiritual benefit, that which is not according to what is written in the Scriptures, should be treated as a usurper, and he with his plans should be alike rejected, if he should persist in them. It is often asked, Do we not admit that there are real Christians connected with these things? But to this I would reply, that whatever may be our opinion in the case, it has nothing to do in influencing our course. We would here again refer to the reply of Christ to his disciple, "What is that to thee; follow thou me." We are to know no man as a gospel minister who does not preach and live the gospel. We can recognize none as citizens of Zion who do not obey the God and King of Zion, by taking his word as their only standard, and obey its precepts and walk according to its directions.

The present is no doubt a time of great darkness and delusion; truth has fallen in the streets; yea, truth faileth, and he that departeth from iniquity maketh himself a prey. But still the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, and his truth must and will triumph, and with Christ revealed in us, the hope of glory, and with the Bible in our hands and its precepts established in our minds, we have nothing to fear. Let our enemies increase in numbers, power and influence in and with the world, we need not dread them, while we are arrayed under the banner of the Cross of Christ. "These things say I unto you, that in me ye may have peace: in the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." So said Christ to his disciples, and this is enough for faith to cling to. This is firm footing, it is solid rock, and it will sustain us; all besides is sea. But I must stop, and leave the above to your disposal, and remain, as ever, Yours in the joys and afflictions of the gospel.

(From the Signs of July 15, 1858, and written by Elder Thomas Barton.)

OBITUARIES

SUE BET BRUMFIELD

It has pleased our heavenly Father to call from our midst our beloved sister, Sue Bet Brumfield, wife of the late Austin Brumfield; who preceded her in death July 15, 1952. She

was the daughter of Benjamin and Martha Mayhew, and was born October 16, 1879; and died June 19, 1962.

She leaves five children; two boys and three girls: Mrs. Thomas Worsham and Mrs. Charlie Tucker, of Altavista, Va.; Mrs. Brice Simpson, Danville, Va.; Jesse Brumfield, Chatham, Va.; and Oscar Brumfield, Gretna, Va.

She joined Springfield Primitive Church October 16, 1909, and was baptized by Elder Tom Oakes. Her health was very bad for several years before she passed away. We feel our loss is her eternal gain. "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be his Holy Name." May the God of all grace and the Father of mercy comfort her children, and reconcile us all to his Holy Will.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, who spoke very comfortingly. Her body was laid to rest in the family cemetery.

Done by order of Springfield Church; and written by Mrs. Annie Compton, Gretna, Va.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. R. Willis, Acting Clerk

CLARA E. HASTINGS

Clara E. Hastings departed this life on December 26, 1961, at the age of seventy-four. We feel that she had spent her appointed time here, and we would desire to say, with Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Sister Hastings was the daughter of the late Benjiman and Sarah Serman. She was married to the late William Henry Hastings; and to this union were born two children, Mrs. Calloway, deceased, and Floyd Hastings, of Delmar, Delaware who survives. There are also twelve grandchildren surviving.

Sister Hastings was for many years a strong believer in salvation by grace, having no confidence in the flesh; and in her latter years asked for a home in the church she loved. She was baptized on August 18, 1957, by the late Elder Harold M. Bennett.

Sister Hastings was a faithful member, and always attended her meetings when it was possible for her to be there; but was not too well during the last year of her stay here, having spent some time in the hospital, where she died. She suffered much pain during her last days here, but we feel that she was reconciled to her affliction, and hoped for a better place beyond the toils and cares of this world.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Marvel Funeral Home in Delmar, Delaware and she was laid to rest in the Delmar Cemetery.

Arthur R. Warren

JOHN W. DIX

Inasmuch as it has pleased Almighty God to remove from our midst by death, our dear Brother, John W. Dix, may it be His will to grant us reconciling grace, knowing whatsoever He doeth is right.

Brother Dix was born in Rockingham County, North Carolina, June 5, 1886, and died June 3, 1962; the years of his allotted life here being 76.

He is survived by his wife, Carrie Setliff Dix, and the following sons and daughters: William of Danville, Virginia; Dewey of Christiansburg, Virginia; Edward of Norfolk, Virginia; Mrs. Eleanor Josey of Danville, and Mrs. Pauline Josey of Norfolk, Virginia. He also leaves 17 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren.

Brother Dix was enabled to go home to his friends at Dan River Church the fourth Sunday in July, 1938, and was baptized the second Sunday in August of the same year.

He was strong in the faith and delighted in attending his meetings though often not physically able to do so. The last six years of his life was in much physical suffering, yet he was given grace to bear it without complaint, looking forward to that blissful land where sickness and suffering shall never come.

Funeral services were held at Dan River Church by his pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, who spoke so comfortingly from a portion of the 11th chapter of Hebrews to wit: "For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country"; after which his body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the glorious Resurrection.

May God bless those that mourn and comfort them as only He alone can do.

Humbly submitted,
Harold D. Weatherford

ADDIE COBB FRENCH

Sister Addie Cobb French was born September 17, 1894, in Rockingham County, N. C., and departed this life May 5, 1962; making her stay on earth 68 years. She was married to A. L. French, and to this union five children were born: Mebane and Catheryn, deceased; Elmer and Glenwood, of the home; and Mrs. Ruby Strader. Also surviving are her husband and ten grandchildren.

She united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in 1926, and was a faithful member. She was afflicted with much sickness, but bore her affliction with great faith, which the Lord gave. We shall continue to miss her presence with us. May God's blessings be with each member of her family through the further journey of this life.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, and Elders Hay-

wood Wray and J. W. Gilliam. There was a large congregation, who mourned their loss. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; then we can praise him forever and ever.

RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to her family, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication. Written by an unworthy sister,

Mildred Strader

HENRY C. HASTINGS

Brother Hastings was born on October 18, 1892, and departed this life on April 25, 1962. We desire to say of his passing, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

He was the son of the late James and Martha Hastings, and was married to Clara B. Truitt on February 12, 1912; who survives. There were born to this union two sons and four daughters, Henry W. and Benjiman C. Hastings, of Seaford, Delaware; Pauline Short, Doris E. Hill, and Helen Hearn of Seaford, Delaware; and Rachel Oliphant of Laurel, Delaware; who survive. There are also several grandchildren.

Brother Hastings asked for a home in the Little Creek Church and was baptized on January 20, 1952, by the late Elder Harold M. Bennett. He was a faithful member to his church, but was unable to attend the meetings for some time before his death, due to illness. He always enjoyed seeing someone come, and liked to talk of the grace and mercy of an all-wise and eternal God.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Watson Funeral Home in Seaford, Delaware and he was laid to rest in the Smith Mills Cemetery, near Delmar, Delaware.

Arthur R. Warren

MRS. LILLIE DEAN WILLIFORD

Sister Williford departed this life at Person Memorial Hospital in Roxboro, N. C. on March 13, 1962, at the age of 66 years.

She was the wife of the late Deacon Lester Williford. It had been the pleasure of this writer to have known this fine family for many years. It truly was a lovely family. She leaves to mourn her departure six daughters: Mrs. Wilson Clark, of the home; Mrs. Jones Day, of Durham, N. C.; Mrs. Macon Daniels, of Oxford, N. C.; Mrs. Charles Howard, of Burlington, N. C.; Mrs. John H. Cline, of Knoxville, Tenn.; Mrs. R. Delbert Kirkman of High Point, N. C.; also two sons: Victor L. Williford, of Route 3, Roxboro, N. C. and John Roy Williford, of the home. Also surviving are one sister, Mrs. D. T. Adcock, of Lillington, N. C.; three brothers, Aubrey Dean, of Angier, N. C.; Paul Dean, of Durham, N. C.; and Elmo Dean, of Varina, N. C.; and thirteen grandchildren.

Sister Williford united with the church at Bush Arbor on the second Saturday in November, 1953, together with her husband.

Sister Williford spent many months in hospitals with a heart condition. She loved her church and always looked forward to attending her meetings as long as her health would permit. We feel that she had fought a good fight, she had finished her course, and that her spirit is now with God. We believe that Sister Williford will come forth from the sleeping grave in the likeness of her Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, where sorrow, pain, sickness, or death shall never come.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder D. V. Spangler and the writer from her home and her body was buried at Surl Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery to await the coming of Christ the second time.

Submitted by W. C. King

MRS. LOLA SIMMONS SOMERS

On June 13, 1962, God saw fit to remove from this world of suffering and pain our beloved Sister Lola Somers at the age of 59 years. Sister Somers had been in failing health for 10 years. She bore her suffering patiently, remaining firm in the faith she professed, believing all things work for good to them that love God, who are the called according to the will of God.

Sister Somers united with the Church at Bush Arbor at the October, 1956, meeting, and lived a faithful member; always attending church when health would permit.

She was the daughter of the late G. W. and Emma Jane Barker Simmons. She leaves to mourn her departure two daughters, Mrs. Edith McPherson, of the home, and Mrs. Maggie Hogan, of Route 2, Mebane, N. C.; six grandchildren; one sister, Mrs. Edward Terrell, Route 2, Elon College, N. C.; and four brothers, John D., Berry W., and W. Roach Simmons, all of Route 2, Elon College, N. C., and Phillip Simmons of John Umstead Hospital, Butner, N. C.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer, assisted by Mr. Robert E. Ayers and Mr. Bill Traylor, at Bush Arbor Church. Her body was buried in the church cemetery.

May God bless and comfort all who mourn her departure.

W. C. King

LUCY M. CONNER

Sister Lucy M. Conner was born in Floyd County, Virginia, and was seventy-four years old at the time of her death July 26th. She was the daughter of William and Frances S. Stump; and was united in marriage to William D. Conner, and for many years their home was in the vicinity of Port Deposit, Maryland.

Besides her husband she is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Raymond Miller, Rising Sun, Md.; a son, Clifford G. Conner, Colora, Md.; three sisters, Mrs. Martha A. Collins, Mrs. Addie Bell, and Mrs. Louemma Bell, Roanoke, Virginia; and a brother, Leonard Stump, Roanoke, Va.

Sister Conner united with the Primitive Baptist Church more than forty years ago in Floyd County, Virginia, and was baptized by the late Elder S. L. Moran. She wrote Sister Farmer, of North East, Maryland, when she received a copy of Elder and Sister Moran's obituaries, "He baptized me when I was thirty years old, and that was the happiest day of my life; I felt so happy for weeks, but it just couldn't last. My mind goes back to that happy time; and if I could only feel like that when I die, I would welcome death, and could say, 'Farewell vain world, I am going home'." Sister Conner united with Rock Springs Church by letter after they moved to Maryland, and was a faithful member until her health failed and circumstances prevented her from attending her meetings.

Her funeral was conducted by Mr. Walter Burcham in Perryville, Md., and she was laid to rest in the West Nottingham Cemetery.

John D. Wood

OSCAR DALTON "BUD" BOSWELL

Brother Boswell was born on September 25, 1892, and departed this life on May 15, 1962, making his stay on earth 69 years, 7 months, and 20 days. He was the son of the late Marion and Betty Scott Boswell. Brother Boswell leaves to mourn his departure his wife, Mrs. Nannie Della Creed Boswell; two sons, Marshall Boswell, of Graham, N. C., and Dalton Boswell of Route 1, Efland, N. C.; three step-daughters and four step-sons; two sisters, Mrs. Weldon Campbell, Route 1, Yanceyville, N. C. and Mrs. Rosa Boswell, Burlington, N. C.; also seven grandchildren, twenty-four step-grandchildren, nine great step-grandchildren, and a host of other relatives and many friends.

Brother Boswell united with the church at Bush Arbor at the April, 1953 meeting and lived a faithful member, always attending his meetings as long as health would permit. His illness was for a long duration. He lost his speech entirely and had to communicate by writing. He bore his affliction with great patience.

His funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Church by the writer and Mr. C. J. Holt. His body was buried in the church cemetery to await the coming of our Lord the second time to call him together with all the Redeemed of the Lord to come forth.

May God richly bless his wife and family.

W. C. King

MRS. BERTHA ELIZABETH RUDD SIMMONS

On May 22, 1962 God saw fit to remove the spirit of Mrs. Bertha Simmons from this earthly tabernacle to be with Him in Glory, at the age of 70 years, 11 months, and 22 days. Mrs. Simmons was the daughter of the late George W. and Fannie Susan Rudd. On December 24, 1924, she was married to Deacon Roy T. Simmons. To this union was born one daughter, Mrs. G. W. Cox of Route 1, Gibsonville, N. C., and one son, Thomas Aaron Simmons, of Route 1, Yanceyville, N. C., who survive, along with one sister, Mrs. R. E. Miles, of Burlington, N. C.; one brother, Mr. G. D. Rudd, of Route 1, Yanceyville, N. C.; and five grandchildren.

May God richly bless her dear husband, children and grandchildren, together with all other members of this fine family, to say, "Not my will but thine be done."

Mrs. Simmons never united with the church but God gave her a good experience of grace. She had many visions or dreams of being baptized which she so beautifully related even on her death bed. Her illness was of long duration, but was borne patiently. Every care for her recovery was made possible by doctors and loving care by her family, but God only knows best. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." (Revelation 14:13)

Her funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church where she had attended all her life by Elders W. C. King, Harvey Smith, Ernest Oakley, and Wallace Smith. Her body was consigned to the tomb to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who shall call her sleeping dust to come forth to be made like unto His own glorious body.

May the blessings of our Heavenly Father be upon all who mourn.

Done by request of Bush Arbor Church.

W. C. King

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 130 DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1962 NO. 12

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12/62
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

Cumberland, Md.

Elder and Sister John D. Wood,
Precious Fellow Travelers in Hope:

Your good letter, which came sometime ago, was a great comfort to me, and also my sister, Martha. We have been thinking of you both. I hope I'm forgiven for this delay in answering, mostly due to my inability to write anything of spiritual interest to ones so gifted as you. I read in the Scriptures where Jesus said that out of the mouths of babes and sucklings he has perfected praise; and well do I know that unless guided by a higher power than mine, my faltering feet could never follow in the footsteps of the saints who have traveled the narrow road that leads to life eternal. At times I must hope against hope that I am one of that blessed number. If the Lord's children were able of themselves, they would never need to cry unto the Lord; nor would they ever be in distress. But they are taught by the Spirit through the things they experience, that salvation is of the Lord.

"Bound by his word, he will display
A strength proportioned to our day:
And when united trials meet,
Will show a path of safe retreat."

We know that here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come; and that there is a highway provided, and a way, it it shall be called the Way of Holiness: All the Redeemed shall walk there. The Spirit bears witness with our Spirit that we are the children of God; and that He is our God. He is our Rock and Fortress, and will be our guide; He will be with us in all our troubles, and not forsake us.

I thank God for all the brethren and ministers, the Church, beloved of the Lord, for God has from the beginning chosen them to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. We are taught to love one another, and to esteem our brethren better than ourselves; also to come out from among all the workers of iniquity; and to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good; and that if these things are hid, they are hid to them that travel the broad way that leads to destruction, who know not the truth.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: to Him alone we look for guidance and mercy. He who was verily foreordained before the foundation of the world, and manifested in these last times for us, will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance. His people, or church, are as the apple of his eye, and are kept by the power of God. They are a chosen and peculiar people: He has redeemed them with an everlasting salvation; and the gates, or powers, of Hell shall not prevail against them. They shall reign with Him who has called them with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purposes and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. It is written in Psalm 91:4, 11, "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler." "For he shall give

his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." And so,

"God is the refuge of his saints,
When storms of sharp distress invade;
Ere we can offer our complaint,
Behold him present with his aid."

This small remnant was his choice, and not many wise or noble are among them, but the lame, the poor, and the needy were his choice, which He made before the foundation of the world; and their names were written upon the palms of his hand and in the Book of Life. They were all baptized in Christ, and He was the sacrifice (the Lamb) prepared to redeem them: He was sent in God's own time, and completed their redemption to a jot and tittle. Thus paying the ten thousand talent debt they owed by the shedding of his blood on the cross; and not only that, but he hid their sins away in Christ, and God remembers them against them no more. O what a sacrifice! Then what manner of persons should we be?

No, a thousand times no, can we ever claim any of our works in His Salvation to us: He trod the wine-press alone. As for man, there was none to help. He alone paid the awful debt; and by his grace and mercy, he draws his children, causing them to love and fear him; and he clothes them in his own righteousness. So we see that

"Jesus paid it all,
All to him we owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow."

A broken spirit and contrite heart is not despised by our Lord: he seeketh such to worship him. For behold the eye of the Lord is upon them that hope in his mercy; and he knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and how to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished. He knows how to comfort his people, and will supply all their spiritual, as well as earthly needs. So, dear ones,

"How can we sink with such a prop
As our eternal God,
Who bears the earth's huge pillows up,
And spreads the heavens abroad."

Of late, I don't worry so much concerning the great falling away mentioned in the Scriptures, and spoken of so much in these days. Surely, as in the time of Moses, the mixed multitude went along, and in God's own time he made the separation. The bed of truth that the Old School Baptists rest upon, becomes too hard for them, and they fall out by the wayside, returning to their wallowing in the mire. Truly the leopard cannot change his spots. The food we eat does not suit them. We are told in Psalm 49, that "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give God a ransom for him."

The Lord's people are not of them who draw back unto perdition, or fall by the wayside, but are of them that believe to the saving of the soul. "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God." (Psalm 146:5) "He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord." (Psalm 112:7)

We know, according to the Scriptures, that except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh in vain. So let us be of good courage as we walk about Zion, considering her strong bulwarks: Even the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it (the church). So, my beloved ones, there is no power on this earth, or in Hell, that can ever separate one of his children (who compose his church) from him and immortal glory.

"Then let our souls in Zion dwell,
Nor fear the wrath of death or Hell;
His arms embrace this happy ground,
Like brazed bulwarks built around."

May his grace be sufficient for you and yours. As for me, at times I grope in much darkness, and feel to need your prayers. "Like Israel, Lord am I, my soul is at a stand: A sea before, an host behind, and rocks on every hand."

Truly I feel to be the very least, if one at all; yet at times I have this little hope, that I am a companion of all those who hope in His mercy.

From a sister, I hope,
Hester B. Thompson

EXPERIENCE AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY

Dear Brethren:

Feeling impressed to write some of my thoughts in childhood and youth upon the subject of death and religion, and at the request of many brethren to write my experience and call to the ministry, though feeling incompetent, I attempt it.

I was reared between two mountains of the Blue Ridge, where my opportunities were limited. I went to school but three months. No church was nearer than seven miles. My father and mother were Primitive Baptists. My mother's conversation on the subject of death brought solemn thoughts on my mind. On one occasion, when I was five years of age, she was taken sick very suddenly, and looked down at me at her feet, and said, "Matt, without a change I shall have to leave you, but I have a hope that I will be with my blessed Jesus in heaven. Be a good boy, and it may be He will bring you to me." I left the room but did not get out of her sight; and an awful gloom arrested my mind. I felt that I wanted to do as she told me, for I loved her. I could not sleep, — when I would retire, my mind was so concerned about dying and being put under the ground.

As I came to the age of eighteen, my mother was taken suddenly ill and in a few days passed away. She called the family to the bed, and bade them farewell. When she gave me her hand, she said to me, "I am going to heaven, be a good child. The Lord will bring you where I am." Then she sang, "Bright angels crowd around my bed, to carry me home when I am dead," and then passed away. But there was not enough power in her language to make me feel that I was a poor lost sinner.

Something very strange took place with me a few months later. On February 14, 1848, some of the larger children mortified my feelings, and the first thing on my mind was that I had no mother to comfort me. I went to her grave and got on my knees to beg the Lord to send her back to me. While there, I felt some voice say to me, "It is not my will that she should come to you, but I will bring you to her." I left the grave somewhat reconciled to my lot. I believed that there was a great God, and there must be a great change in me before I could meet Him in peace — and that it depended on the life I lived. Many times under the fear of impending danger, I would say, If the Lord would let me live, I would live a better life. But as soon as danger was past, I was the same in practicing the vanities of the sinful mind; but often troubled about death, until at about the age of twenty it was suggested to my mind not to concern myself about religion, that it was an unpopular thing, and the world would slight me: wait until you are married; then would be time enough. On the 18th of January, 1855, I was married, and I passed on in the delight of the world until June 16, 1855, when in my field about a mile from home, I felt I was going to die — and eternal judgment was now what I dreaded. I left my work and went to the woods to confess to the Lord what an awful sinner I was, and to beg him to let me live to get home. I returned to my work feeling a little relieved, but in a few minutes the same trouble fell on me again. I went home, wanting to see my wife before I died. When I reached home, she came to the door. Her appearances pierced me, for she knew I was a poor condemned sinner. I burst into tears, and went to search for some secret place to pray. I did not want anyone to knew I was in such deep distress: I felt I had committed the unpardonable sin, that the day of grace was past, and the door of mercy was forever closed against me. Sometimes my heart was so hard that I could not shed a tear, and yet I felt sensible that I was a dreadful sinner. In a moment I would be in tears; and my cry was, Oh Lord, have mercy on me a poor sinner. My words seemed to fall to the ground. I viewed myself to be so sinful that I became afraid to

lie down for fear the Lord would smite me with death. I felt that I had some fatal disease that would soon take me away. I thought everyone knew I was in this condition: I had not told anyone, but condemnation must be visible to all.

On September 16, 1856, I was impressed with the attempt that I had made to pray, and my words did not go above my head; and that Jesus was above all heavens — my words could not reach him. No comfort could I find; nothing but condemnation for me in the Bible. Oh, that it had been my lot to live when Jesus was in the world, when I could have fallen at his feet, and beg for mercy — there might have been some chance for me; but wicked men had crucified him. If I had been there I would have fought for him until I lost my life to rescue him. But in a moment I viewed him on the cross with his hands and feet expanded. I felt I could hear the hammer driving the nails in his hands and feet; and the words sounded in my poor soul, "Your sins helped nail him there."

My poor sinful body fell to the ground. I know not how long I lay there, but when strength returned, I went to the house. I wanted to see some of God's children. I loved them; and the great grief with me was that I had sinned against such a good and merciful God — and now to be cast off from him and his beloved children, was more that I could bear.

The next morning was Sunday, and mother Barnard was coming to visit our house. I wanted her to come, and I felt that I wanted to beg her to pray for me. But when she came in sight with her two little twin boys in her arms, my beloved and much esteemed brethren, E. M. and E. P. Barnard, I felt to be too great a sinner to be in her presence. I left and went into the woods, remaining there for some time. In the evening I concluded I would go with her, and help her carry her babies, and ask her to pray for her poor, wicked and sinful son. I went a short way, when I suddenly felt that I was not worthy to be where she was. I made a moan, and she turned and looked at me. I handed her the babies, and her look at me sounded in my soul: Farewell, poor condemned sinner.

I walked a short distance, and fell to the ground. I wanted to see some way to be saved, if it could be without God changing from his perfect holiness. I could not see how that could be. All that evening and when the sun set, I bade farwell to it in my feelings. I lay down that night, whether asleep or awake I know not, and viewed my life as a candle dazzling in the air. I felt I was dying, and called my wife; and told her that without a change I could not live; and not to sin against a good and merciful God, as I had done. I begged her to go after her father and mother to come and pray for me. She cried aloud and said that she could not leave me, but for me to go with her. I arranged to go, but was pierced with the feeling that I would commit a sin in disturbing those good people. I told her to lie down: I sat by the bed side; and walked the floor that night. When day broke I felt thankful that the Lord had let me live to see another day. I went to the woods to beg, — I remained until called for breakfast. I went to the table with my hat on to conceal my grief, and made an effort to eat, but felt that I was not worthy to partake of the smallest of God's blessings, and burst into tears, and left, going to the woods again. I fell on my face, and wanted to be more humble. Oh, that I had never been born, was my cry. I wanted to be anything of God's creatures, but that sinner. I remained there until about 9 o'clock in the morning, when I felt to go in the field in sight of my wife for her comfort. When I came in sight of her she was looking after me. In a moment I felt that I was sinking, and turned to tell her that I was gone: **But the burden was gone,** and I felt that I was changed soul and body. I cried, "As far as the East is from the West, so far hast thou separated me from my sins, O God." There were a few minutes that it seem-

ed everything was praising the Lord for his blessed salvation.

It was here, if the Lord has ever called me to the work of the ministry in these words, "Blow the trumpet in Zion, sound an alarm in my holy mountain." In a moment the depravity and helplessness of a sinner was presented to me. I cried, Lord, I cannot do them any good. In a moment, I sensibly felt and saw that all power is in Jesus, and that every sinner that ever would be saved must be by Him, and that none that mourned on account of sin would be turned empty away.

I stood amazed, and wondered what it all meant. I went back to the woods to try to pray again, and when I got on my knees as before, to my surprise, I asked the Lord to pardon my sins, if he had not pardoned them. I was amazed at my request; so I paused, and aimed to leave out the "if", but it was the same thing again. And the same love that I had in the beginning flowed over me again, and I found myself praying for a lady relative who came out of a Methodist family. In less than two years she professed a hope in Christ, and joined the church. I loved the brotherhood; and my soul was weighted with prayer and supplication for sinners, and to try to comfort the mourner.

Unfortunately at that time all the churches in this country were in confusion, which gave me a great deal of trouble. In consequence thereof, and owing to my impressions to preach, I remained out of the church until July 5th. My distress during that time, I cannot express. I concluded that if I would join the church, my mind would be relieved in regard to preaching. I joined at State Line, and was baptized the 2nd Sunday in September by Brother S. J. Lackey. When he raised me out of the water my soul leaped with joy. As I reached the bank, the text came again with great force, "Blow the trumpet in Zion, sound an alarm in my holy mountain." It was of such weight that I burst into tears, — I hope that I felt the unction of the Holy Ghost. We returned to the house, and at the close of the meeting, there were eleven persons came and asked Brother Lackey to pray for them. Among them was the companion of my youth who had been in trouble for a long time.

I returned home joyful in part; but, owing to my impressions, I was cast down when I would view the perfect holiness of God, and compare it with my sinfulness. Oh, how I would shrink; and one Scripture after another would come to my mind. "Let the dead bury the dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." Let me be where I might, it was so. I was almost continually begging the Lord to send some other, and release me. I was not eloquent, and had no learning. I roved in the mountain to try to ease my mind in regard to preaching, but could not. I think I have realized as loud preaching between my plow handles as I ever heard. I lived in rebellion against my impressions, to the sorrow of my soul. I could not help fearing that it was imaginary, or that Satan was endeavoring to entangle me. I tried to beg the Lord to give me some sign whether he had called me or not, and to take me out of the world rather than I should attempt to preach uncalled. Many times did I feel that death would be sweet to me.

When the war broke out, I felt that I would rather go to the war than to the pulpit, for I would be in obedience to the law of our country, but could not know that the Lord had called me to preach. I believe the war would test the matter: If I was wounded I might know the Lord had not called me. I served three years, and was not wounded, nor even had my clothes cut with a ball, but passed through many dangers. At Resaca, Ga., I well remember, in a charge on the enemy's front, my front man was shot dead, and a cousin on my right was wounded. The line charged into their works: they were firing on me from two ways while I was within a few feet of their breast-works. I believe that the Lord was with me — I feared no danger.

It was one of the brightest times of my life. It seemed to be said to me, "Fear not, no harm shall befall you, for you shall testify of me before many people."

I turned and looked each way; and I was alone. No man, except one, was on the whole line. I went back to the line carrying with me a wounded companion, feeling humble, and I trust, meek. I felt from that time on, if the Lord would let me live to get home, I would not rebel any longer. I reached home the first of April, 1865. Oh how thankful I trust I felt to meet with my family, and the dear children of God! Our meeting time came, the brethren, Arrington and Plasters, asked me to the stand, but the cross was too great: I wanted a greater sign to satisfy and confirm me in this great matter. On Sunday evening of our July meeting, when I left the congregation, in my feelings, I bid farewell to them. I reached my father-in-law's, feeling that the Lord was going to kill me for my disobedience. There was a short time I was unconscious, and the first I knew, old mother Barnard was consoling my wife in her humble manner, telling her there was no danger of my dying until I had filled my course in the ministry.

I reached home that night feeling feeble. I lay down on the bed, my companion standing by me, and I was begging the Lord to tell me what my duty was; and I would obey. Oh what vehemence, Oh what desire of soul and mind, I felt that I could not live. In a moment I viewed Jesus and the apostles in the kingdom of glory; in a moment I viewed their obedience to the fulfillment of the Father's will. I realized my disobedience so sensibly that I was not worthy, and the Scripture came again, "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, sound an alarm in my holy mountain." I cried aloud, and said, "Lord, let me live, and if thou wilt give me one word to say, let it be to the glory of thy name." The next meeting came, and I went to the stand with a heavy cross, begging the Lord to convince me by the feelings that followed my labor. After talking some minutes, I sat down, and I think I felt as pleasant as I did when I received my hope.

I want to relate two events I have passed in my ministry. Just before the second Sunday in November, 1865, I dreamed I was South of my house, standing on the bank of a beautiful stream of water. Some distance in front, I saw six beautiful men walking on the water leaning on staves in their hands, and drawing a net having seven wings. One staff there had no man by it: I was taken up and carried and my hands placed on it; and it seemed to carry me with ease for a short distance, when I became weighty. I let loose, and fell into great distress.

The next morning I left for State Line where I expected to meet with Elders Cassell and Lackey on a funeral occasion. I met brother Lackey and attempted to preach, and felt well a few minutes, and soon stopped; and an awful dread come on. I went with brother Lackey to the widow Hill's, the wife of Elder James Hill, to attend some funerals the next day. My distress that night, I cannot tell. My wife and three children I felt would perish, if I did not return and provide for them. Next morning I parted with brother Lackey in tears; he went one way, and I another.

I started to the hills of Dan River to stay until the meeting was over, and then to return to my poor wife and children, to try to care for them, and never to try to preach any more. I went to the river hill, and looked for the most comfortable place, as it was cool. I made an effort to go, and fell on my face, feeling that I should die. I begged the Lord to let me go home and care for my poor wife and children. While there, I viewed my wife and the three children between the heavens and earth with a wreath of light around them; and it was said to me in my soul, "Let the dead bury the dead. Go thou and preach the kingdom of God. I will sanctify your labor to their support." I arose reconciled, and went to the house and met brother Lackey. We burst into tears, and he said, "Brother Blanset, you can't

get out of the bounds of God's power; go on and preach." I willingly went, and felt in my labors that surely I was not in this sinful world.

Just one year after the church at Bell Spur liberated me to exercise a public gift, they licensed me to preach; and the second year, to a day, they ordained me. I felt they were too hasty, and that they were putting me under greater responsibilities than I was able to fulfill to the glory of God, and the good of the church. But the Lord, I hope, has been my only trust both in preaching and in administering the ordinances in the church. Yet, owing to the perverseness of my human nature, it all seems to have been imperfectly done; and were it not for the evidences received in my labors in preaching and baptizing, and for the dreams and visions of those whom I esteem as being children of God, I should have sunk in despondency long ago.

I have served five churches as pastor, and have baptized three hundred and forty-five persons; and most of them have expressed in their experiences, in some way or another, some relation to me or my labors. I now have the care, in the true sense, I hope, of four churches. I would never accept the care of a church until it had been made known to me that the church was a unit in the choice made.

What a joy and consolation we find when we meet all of the brethren and sisters in peace and fellowship, filling their seats and manifesting their love one to another. But how discouraging it is to find them in confusion and striving one against another.

I now relate one of the most consoling and blessed seasons of my ministerial life. My only son, who was afflicted with a serious lung trouble, and the Lord having blessed him with a good hope, sent for me on Saturday of our July meeting, to have preaching at his house that evening; and that he wanted to see all of the church. He had not been able to speak for sometime above a whisper. I made the appointment, and served in preaching. And when I closed, he said, "Pa, I want to talk to the church, if I can be heard." The church assembled about his bed, and in a few minutes he received strength to speak so that those in the yard could hear him. The brethren united in singing "Amazing Grace", and then my dear niece, whom we raised, Molly L. Hall, came forward and was received. It was a time of inexpressible joy for all present. Next Sunday was set for their baptism. When the time came, my son had not stood alone for about five weeks. Some brethren visited him in the morning, and felt he would not be able to go to the church. He said with power, "I want to go to meeting." He arose from his bed and walked alone to the door, and was put on a buggy with his father-in-law, Brother Simmons. He was very feeble, but was strong in faith.

After a joyful service, and after hearing the experience of Brother Ambros Jessup, I said to my son, "Do you want to be baptized?" He answered, "I do." He was lying on a spring couch, and was picked up and borne to the water; while the brethren and sisters sang. It seemed that their singing entered heaven, while the holy unction from the blessed Lord filled my soul. Brother E. P. Barnard helped me carry him, with several others, into the water, and I baptized them all; four of Brother Sanders Jessup's children and a daughter-in-law were of that number. That was one of the most heavenly days of my life.

I have now given some of the reasons why I hope the Lord has called me to the ministry, and some of the blessed seasons I have enjoyed, which have encouraged me to continue to labor for these forty-five years. I have merited none of the blessings of God, and can truly adopt the language of Jacob, "Few and evil have been the days of the years on my life." (Gen. 47:9) I live only by hope. For over fifty-six years election, predestination, sanctification, and holy calling, unmerited by the sinner, has been my meat and drink, believing it to be the doctrine of Christ and the Apostles.

Brother Branscome, . . . I have given some of my reasons for trying to preach, and would say to all who may profess a call to the ministry, that they should weigh their impressions by the Scriptures, and take the advice of Paul, who said, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

I feel unworthy to ask you to publish anything that I have written in your worthy and highly esteemed paper, the **Messenger of Truth,** which is so worthy of its title. Consider this, and if it goes to the waste basket, you will not hurt me; for I want your valuable paper maintained.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Elder James M. Blanset,
Mayberry, Va.

(The above is re-published at the request of Elder and Sister S. E. Terry of Meadows of Dan, Virginia, and is taken from the **Messenger of Truth** of May, 1910. The exercises of the Lord's servants in their calling, and in their ministry, are many and varied. It is good to live with them a little while as they give a brief account of their lives among the brethren. — J. D. W.)

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the 1st and 2nd Churches of Roxbury at Holcottsville, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, September 12 and 13, 1962: Greetings:

Beloved Brethren:

In accordance with a usual custom, and through the abounding goodness and mercy of Israel's God, we have been spared to meet once again. So, beloved brethren, in this our annual Circular Letter, we have no new doctrine to present, but would commend to you a portion of the testimony of God, our Saviour Christ Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, which is in that inexhaustable storehouse, as found in I Corinthians 2:9, 10, which reads, "But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard; neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." Why should we repeat these sacred assurances from the Scriptures? Is it because we have not known them? No, brethren, it is only to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance.

The Lord said, "I will put my laws in their inward parts and write them in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

In Isaiah 52, we read in part, "For that which had not been told them, shall they see, and that which they had not heard, shall they consider." In Isaiah 64, we read, "For since the beginning of the world men have not heard nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him." What God had in his mercy appointed for his people, were not only unknown, but inconceivable; for the Spirit, who alone fathoms the depths of divine counsels, only can teach. In I Corinthians 2:10, 11, the word says, "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." We have the Spirit from God, as measured to each of us, and by His teaching we both know and speak, as verse 13 reads, "which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but what the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual." "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard": seems like all this is God's hidden mystery; as written in Col. 1:26, "Even the mystery which has been hid for ages and for generations, but is now made manifest to his saints."

Let us consider some more, for it says in I Corinthians, 1st chapter, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness, but unto us, which are saved, it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." And Paul further tells us, "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified; unto the Jew a stumbling block, and unto the Greek foolishness. But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

Now, brethren, observe the privileges of those who enjoy the gospel revelations, those things which God hath prepared for them that love him. To them types are unveiled, mysteries made plain, prophecies interpreted, and secret counsels made known, as they search His holy word, and given by the Spirit to understand.

Now you can see, brethren, as Paul says, "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty." We know the reason, do we not brethren? — That no flesh should glory in his presence; and that, according as it is written, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

Think of it, brethren! Let us read this verse again, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard; neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." The counsels of God concerning your redemption are dated from eternity, and designed for the happiness and glory of the saints; displayed in time to make us glory both here and hereafter. Can we praise our Lord enough? No, never! For the Word says, "For ye are the temple of the living God." And, "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you the hope of glory." — the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

"Eye hath not seen." What a source of pleasure is the eye! Can you possibly think of nature without eyes; without eyes to see the flowers, how beautiful they are? The birds, like the little sparrows and the great eagle? Then there are the mountains, with their hues and colors, in Winter, in Spring, and in Autumn? The natural eye does not even see deity in Christ Jesus, for when Jesus came into the world, who was the Truth and the Life, in the body which God had prepared for him, he came not in the glory of form. He was a root out of dry ground; he had not form nor comeliness when they saw him; there was no beauty that they should desire him. The eye did not behold, even in Christ, the things which God had prepared. Pilot looked; but did he see? And what about Thomas, who said, "Unless I see . . ."?

Even the truths of the Holy Scriptures, brethren, the human mind cannot cross the threshold of that treasury of truth, for great minds do not see the glories that we see — even in the cross. There were two thieves on the cross — one was given a glimpse through spiritual eyes.

"Ear hath not heard." Now the apostles also speak of realities that are beyond the hearing of the natural ear. Here is a field of pleasure. We have heard a few recordings of great singers, have we not? and of great symphonies; but there is a heavenly chorus eternal that ears have not heard. Also, brethren, we have heard the gospel preached, but until it becomes "power unto salvation" by the Holy Spirit's anointing, did we really hear it? When it does, the doctrine is the sweetest music this side of heaven. The message then becomes divine love, and we know the meaning of, "Man shall not live by bread (natural) alone, but by my word (that spiritual bread)," and a feast of fat things. Also, brethren, we have heard from

childhood the hymns which tell about Christ, but they never thrilled or inspired us until the felt presence was applied to our hearts like a cleansing stream.

The brethren heard it on the road to Emmaus; and Mary Magdalene heard it at the tomb, whom she thought was the gardener, when He spoke her name, "Mary." And Paul speaks of many divine experiences which have never entered the natural unregenerate heart. So then we can say, "neither hath it entered into the heart of man," for it was exclusively for the child of God.

Today we look into the heavens with powerful telescopes, but we see only a fraction of the immensity of the universe. Even man has entered into so-called space a few hundred miles, and the world cries aloud, and we seem amazed: we glory in the man, and not in the God who gave it. "The heart is deceitful above all things."

Now, brethren, the secret — what is it? It is love. In John's gospel we read, "As the Father hath loved me so have I loved you." Beloved, continue in that love. The word also says, "If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

How wonderful have those words become! We can now say our hope is increased and our assurance strengthened, and take joy in tribulation; for, indeed, brethren, we can better understand the 23rd Psalm in that love prepared, which says, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want," and feel a manifest knowledge of it. "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures," the truths of his holy written word to feed you. "And he leadeth me beside the still waters." How sweet to the taste! as a sweet morsel under the tongue, or the giving of a cup of cold water. "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." So surely, then we can say that his goodness and mercy has followed me, and we now declare his blessed name in honour, praise, and glory.

"Ye that know the Lord, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him all ye the seed of Israel; for he hath not despised, nor abhorred the afflictions of the afflicted, neither hath he hid his face from him, but when he cried unto him, he heard."

O, blessed brethren, these are only some things which God hath prepared for them that love him. May we all be blest to continue in that love. Selah.

Edward K. Adsit

HYMN AND TUNE BOOKS

The Durand and Lester Hymn and Tune Book is now available in the shaped notes. Prices are $3.00 each, or $33.00 per dozen, delivered. Send orders to P. G. Lester, Jr., 2246 Memorial Ave., S.W. Roanoke, Va.

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Due to extension of rural route, our subscribers and correspondents will please notice that the new address of the *Signs of the Times, Inc.*, and of Elder Spangler, is R.F.D. 5, Box 539, Beechwood Lane, Danville, Virginia.

Please use the new address in all correspondence.

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The **Staunton River Primitive Baptist Union Meeting** is appointed to be held at Cane Creek Church the 5th Saturday and Sunday in December, (December 29 and 30, 1962).

Cane Creek Church is on Highway 726, near Ringgold, Virginia. All who love the truth are invited to meet with us.

Fannie D. Wiles, Clerk

Danville, Virginia **December, 1962**

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COMPLETION OF ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY YEARS OF PUBLICATION

We might well set a stone, and call it "Evenezer", as Samuel did when the Lord discomfited the Philistines; for, indeed, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

We think that none among those who rejoice in the doctrine of God our Saviour, would presume to feel otherwise than that the Lord has sustained the publication of the *Signs of the Times* during these many years. It is evident that He did this because He had a people, (and yet has a people,) whom He would nourish and sustain in this manner; and give them a means of communication with each other for their mutual comfort and edification. And also that His truth should be published abroad, and errors and false doctrines exposed. Would any dare say that it has not served its purpose!

For our part, we are glad we love the things the *Signs* boldly stands for; so it is a delight to send out such things to our brethren. We know that our publication has no appeal to those who have not been quickened and brought to the knowledge of the truth. But we know also that "The Lord knoweth them that are his", and that He alone does the quickening which brings them out of vain traditions into the knowledge and love of the truth. It is a glorious thing to have "the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, . . ."

Our love and joy in these things was expressed by the Apostle when speaking to Agrippa, "I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds."

May our brethren be given the spirit of prayer and thanksgiving for the mercy and longsuffering of our God, which he has ever had towards his people.

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL
HEBREWS 10:26-27

"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."

A dear brother has a request in the September **Signs** for someone to comment on the above Scripture. It is with

much fear and trembling that we make the attempt. Some would say that all sins are wilful. Sin is the transgression of the law, and there are many sins done by people who are not conscious of what they are doing. Paul, speaking of himself in his former days, said he was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: "But I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." I Timothy 1:13. In unbelief he had a will of his own, which was the will of the natural man, "but the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." I Corinthians 2:14.

The subjects unto whom Paul is addressing this epistle to the Hebrews were believers through the work of God's Spirit within them. Verses 32-34 should not be overlooked when approaching our subject. "But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance." To these lovely brethren, who had given such proof of divine love swaying their affections that they had walked in the fellowship of God's only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, was this solemn warning given in verses 26 and 27. May God the Holy Ghost give us eyes to see clearly what is implied therein. Jesus died for all that God gave him in a covenant ordered in all things and sure. There is therefore no more sacrifice for sin, "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Toplady's words are: — "Could my zeal no respite know, Could my tears for ever flow, All for sin could not atone; Thou must save, and thou alone." Yet God has so ordained that those who are his, wilful as they may be, shall learn obedience as they suffer, being conformed to the image of his Son, it is in this way, and this way alone, that they learn to put on the Lord Jesus Christ and to make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof. None but God's flock can say, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned EVERY ONE TO HIS OWN WAY: and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isaiah 53:6.

God's children are judged here, not hereafter. True, they will stand before that "great white throne," Revelation 20:11, but they will be on his right hand there. Matthew 25:31-40. From the moment that the Spirit of God begins a work in the heart of a poor sinner, judgment begins, yet some experience a deeper law work than others, as it is written, "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men's they follow after." I Timothy 5:24. From experience the writer of this article was shown the wickedness in which he had taken pleasure, and when reformation became his chief desire, he was shown, though he had been a moral man, he could not appear in such a righteousness before God, like one of old, who said, "If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean; yet shalt thou (God) plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me." Job 9:30-31. Thus it was with the writer until he came to the place where he felt he was lost, and, like the leper, his cry was, "Unclean, Unclean." The Lord took pity on him there and gave him the words, thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee. From that time, he could call God his Father. It seemed to him that he, a wretch undone, had received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby he could cry, "Abba Father." Many of our brethren have had a similar experience, while others that we have known, seem to be given to love the cause of truth, and know that they are sinners, but are not led so deeply into the knowledge of their own depravity. The same

love that led him to the Church of God brought them, and they were received as joyfully as he was, yet ere long they were led to see themselves, and taking such a low view of themselves, they almost felt that they had deceived their brethren. These are they whose sins follow after, and they are found writing bitter things against themselves. Such precious ones are seldom out of their place on meeting-day, no, they are not forsaking the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is. They can sing, "I love to meet among them now before thy gracious feet to bow, though vilest of them all." The flesh is not changed, for that which was born of the flesh is still flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. Our Lord said, "For judgment I am come into this world, that they that see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind." John 9:39. He who is the judge of all had come: "But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth?" Malachi 3:2. The time had come, as another writer, Peter, said to his scattered, believing brethren, "For THE TIME is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" I Peter 4:17.

There are many wilful sins, both of individuals and churches who do not abide by the Word of God. Our judge said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." John 15:5.

It was not an easy matter for those brethren to confess Christ, we see how Paul was hated when he was given the excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord, which enabled him to esteem the things that he had lost for Christ as dung. Our Lord was exceedingly gracious to him, he even gave him a sight of the Paradise of God, yet he, of himself, could not pull out a thorn in the flesh. In that experience he learned that when he was weak, then he was strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

The wilful sin referred to in our subject was the forsaking of the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some was and is. This was a wilful sin, one of the many which God's children commit when they are left to their fleshly minds. The flesh and its lusts are the adversaries. Brethren are sometimes blest to labour with one another, and, by example, others are blest with a mind to consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works. Exhortation is not confined to the pulpit, brethren in this day, as in Paul's day, need exhortation. To deny any of God's word is a wilful sin. Paul charges his son Timothy before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." Who can tell how or when our Lord, who is present even with the twos and threes who meet in his name, will bless the word spoken to the hearer, and if he does not, we can say that the skirt of the messenger is clean. Self-examination in the looking-glass of God's word is good for all of God's dear children. Paul told the Corinthians, who were very wilful, "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." I Corinthians 11:31-32. When the wilful sin is such that it would defile the whole body of the Church of God, Paul, even in such a case, does not say that such an one is an apostate, but admonishes the Corinthians "to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." I Corinthians 5:5.

In the subject that we are considering, Paul links himself with all the brethren, "For if WE sin wilfully," showing that he is speaking of breth-

ren, who, like himself, had died to Moses' law, which was a ministration of death. Those who believed in Jesus were delivered from the Law of Moses by the death of Christ, and Jesus Christ was born in their hearts the hope of glory, for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus had made them free from the law of sin and death. Romans 8:2. This law of the Lord is spoken of in Psalm 19:7. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." The law of Moses does not convert, but it does condemn, it is spoken of as weak through the flesh, therefore, God's own Son came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. The regenerated soul with a renewed spirit, which is the work of the Holy Ghost, Titus 3:5, which every one that is born of God possesses, finds to its sorrow that the flesh profiteth nothing, and possessing a higher and holier life from above, they, when left to sin wilfully, will have a more distressing sense of their wrongdoing than it is possible for a natural man to feel. Some might link this Scripture with what Peter has reference to in 2 Peter 2:13, characters who were apostates and hypocrites from the beginning of their profession, but there can be no final apostasy of those for whom Jesus died. God's children, being in a body of flesh and in a world of trouble, are often left to themselves, and wilfully do those things for which, when judged by God's Spirit within, they suffer much more acutely than ever the natural man can, because of them being in possession of spiritual life. Consider the terrible persecution, from both Jew and Gentile, that those early Christians had to endure. True, some loved not their lives unto the death, but others were afraid to associate with the saints as the persecution became more bitter, and they forsook the cause, and Paul, knowing the terror of the Lord, would persuade men.

After Peter's wilful sin of denying his Lord, he must have known and felt very keenly THIS CERTAIN fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, and did it not devour the adversaries, i.e. the fleshly pride of his nature? No more could he say "I am ready to go with thee both into prison and to death." Nor could he, after feeling the terror of the Lord, sing, as some do today, "Faith of our fathers', holy faith, we will be true to thee till death." No, that was burnt out of him, and our beloved Peter wrote later, "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be REVEALED in the last time."

There is much wilful sin amongst us today, so that shame and confusion of faces belong unto us. The primitive church was not alone, as though the word spoken by the apostles fitted only that day. James' testimony fits this day as does Paul's. "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with weekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." James 3:13-16. We live in a world that seems more tolerant than in the primitive days, a world in which there is much to captivate the natural mind and to please the senses, but this world is not a friend to grace. O, how many neglect the assembly of the saints of God. Company, a wet day, or perhaps they have their own special preachers and so they say, "It is only so and so, I don't think I will go today." Shame upon such wickedness. No! The King of kings and Lord of lords said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." To a child of God, who has felt the love of God in his heart and has tasted a sweet foretaste of a heaven to come, in the assembly of the saints, to stay away from that assembly for what God's blessed word shows to be insufficient reason, brings the offender

under reproof from the judge of all. There is no sacrifice that one can make for such a sin, and when true knowledge is brought to the guilty conscience, there is a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, but it will not consume what religion they had when they found their meat and their drink, the joy and rejoicing among the despised few, no, they will be thankful to God that the word of their king burns like a fire, "Whose fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem." Isaiah 31:9.

The flesh, with all its affections and lusts, as long as they are a plague and a cross to us, will keep us on our guard, praying always and desiring, by our walk and conversation, to be kept from being a reproach to the cause of truth. It is not a just reason to cease to be in our place because we may not be able to hear the preaching, our place is to be there with a desire that we might receive the "Well done" from our Lord. We can go back in our memory many, many years to those who, through deafness, heard not a word, yet found sweet comfort in sitting quietly with those they loved, and who could tell of times when, under the shadow of his presence, Jesus had whispered a word of his love in their souls.

We can thank God that there are still a faithful few, who, unless providentially hindered, are always in the assembly of the saints, to the comfort and encouragement of their brethren and their pastor.

G. R.

CIRCULAR LETTER

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, while in session at the Mt. Zion Meeting House October 17, 18, and 19, 1962, send greetings in the Lord to our correspondents and sister churches:

Dear Brethren:

It has long been the custom of the brethren of the various churches when they meet in an associated capacity, to send greetings to their brethren of other churches and associations, and give an account of their faith and order, that there might be a mutual thanksgiving for the evidences of God's mercy and long-suffering among them.

When we remember that we are as brands plucked from the burning, and that it is wholly of the mercy of God that we are not as those who are blown about with every wind of doctrine, but are firmly embedded in that which the Lord teaches, we walk softly as becometh those who receive so great a blessing. We cannot boast as if we have received a reward, but must humbly acknowledge our poverty and our unworthiness in receiving such great things, which are beyond the reach of mortal men themselves.

So our present theme will be centered around the questions of the Apostle to the Corinthians: "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou hast not received? Now if thou didst recieve it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"

The very foundation of God's dealings with us, is his grace and mercy, which are prompted by his great love for us; — and this is apparent throughout all his dealings with us, and our relations with him. In our penury we have received bountiful gifts. We were dead in sin, and unworthy of his notice, but he made known his great love towards us. We need not remind our brethren that our salvation and redemption comes this way. And it would seem that the weight and importance of it would keep us mindful of it, to the exclusion of any thought of pretense or boasting.

But we deal with realities, — we do become exalted, we do sometimes boast, as we and many of our brethren in the Scriptures prove. Even the apostle who wrote the above to the Corinthians, was given a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him, lest he become exalted above measure; that he might learn that only the grace of God was sufficient for him in all things; and that, though he was weak, God was strong.

Thus we find Peter strengthening his

brethren after he was made aware of his weakness; and we find Paul doing the same out of the depths of his experience. The true minister of the things of the Lord is taught in the school of grace, and learns his weakness by actual experience, and also his only source of strength, that he may strengthen his brethren; and on occasion reprove and rebuke with all longsuffering and doctrine. These things are food for the children of God, and they grow in the grace thus manifested.

Though these brethren composed the church at Corinth, being sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints; and had received the grace of God, for which the apostle expressed his thanks, saying, "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Christ Jesus", yet there were contentions among them, envy, strife, and divisions, which made manifest their carnality, and their walk as men. Paul and Apollos were only their ministers, even as the Lord gave to them. Some among them affected wisdom, but to such Paul said, "Let him become a fool, that he may be wise." And said also, ". . . let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come: all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."

Thus, required to be faithful as a steward, Paul brings them again to recall from whence they had received their call and sanctification; and to consider the truth which was in their hearts, as to the source of all their blessings. How startling is the truth of Peter's query when it is brought home: "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

"Who maketh thee to differ from another?", the apostles wrote. And he might have answered by asking, Who called you out of darkness into light? Who shined in your hearts? Who revealed to you that Jesus was the Christ? Who is it that shall confirm you to the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ? Who? Yes, who brought you into the knowledge of the glorious truth as it is in Jesus, and distinguished you as a light in darkness?

Then he asked, "What hast thou that thou hast not received?" And he would have answered by asking, Is there anything pertaining to Jesus, the church, your hope, your joy, that you did not receive solely by the grace of God? You know there is not! Then why do you glory as if it were your own doing? Why do you act one toward another as if these things were of yourselves, giving you advantage one above another?

These are things which sometimes bring us abruptly to see ourselves in a true light — when they are applied in our souls with power; and bring us to confess our faults and short-comings one to another, and to walk in true humbleness. When such is the case, we are glad to be blessed to be a little one among the brethren.

The apostle said of these Corinthians, "For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" The carnality that is in each of us, when it takes form as manifested among those brethren, is the cause of divisions and strife. Without it such would not be. The carnality in brethren cause them to follow men, and this same carnality causes men to want others to follow them. Without a following, no new thing would get far. So it behooves us, as we are given to be concerned in these matters, to prayerfully consider before we follow this or that; before we lend support to anything that would break the fellowship and peace of those we love.

The same Spirit that gave rise to the language of our text, also caused the following to be recorded a thousand years before: "These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked

imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren." A faithful steward will declare these things unto his brethren.

We value your love and fellowship, brethren, and are glad to have your correspondence; and are glad to have all of you who were able to visit us this year. May the God of all grace ever keep us mindful that it is by His grace that we are what we are; and keep us little in our own feelings, that we may behold the image of Christ in our brethren.

John D. Wood

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Little Red, Ark., July 31, 1884

W. J. Purington, Hopewell, N. J. — Dear Brother in the Lord: — It is contended by some in this country that when God first made man, he did not know that there would be certain men that now exist, nor that Satan would put such wickedness into man as he did, or has put into him; and that God did not know what would occur until the same took place. Now, brother Purington, if you can take the time, will you take up the subject of the foreknowledge of God, and discuss it according to the teachings of the Bible, and expose heresy, or the opposite of truth, and let the brethren and sisters read it in the **Signs of the Times?**

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

E. S. LEGGETT

REPLY

My Dear Brother: — In compliance with your request I feel to pen a brief reply to your desire; and, in my prefatory remarks, would state that persons making such statements concerning the eternal God either make willfully false statements, or else show an absolute blindness of the majesty, power and wisdom of Jehovah, and an unpardonable ignorance of the written Scriptures. But alas! we are living in an age of the world when plain, positive and cogent Bible truth is set aside, and what men call "science" is now taken, instead of the truth of God, given to his ancient servants, and recorded in both the Old and New Testaments. The God of heaven and earth says to and of such characters, "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself, but I will reprove thee," &c. When mortals, in the plenitude of their vain wisdom, undertake to advocate that blasphemous sentiment that God did not foreknow all events, it is the placing of the Infinite on an equal footing with the finite, and no sentiment can be more antiscriptural and God-dishonoring than that; and Israel's God said, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

"Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." If these declarations do not show foreknowledge and perfect knowledge, then terms have no meaning, and there is no possible way to represent realities. As the word "altogether" has been in two of the quotations, it may not be amiss to give its force and meaning. It is in these passages from **yachad,** together, and admits of no separation comparatively or in the aggregate, but binds all in one form, **echad,** one; and the noun "foreknowledge" is from the verb or active participle **progno,** to begin to know beforehand. So much for technical terms; and those perfections belong to no being in heaven or on the earth except the "I am that I am."

Now a quotation shall be brought forward to show the infinity of Jehovah, and that nothing ever has transpired nor ever can come to pass so as

to frustrate one iota of God's purpose. "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient (Hebrew **olam,** indefinite time, and also **quedem,** what is before, or **ad,** eternity, duration, continuity, each of which words shows God's eternal purpose) times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel (Hebrew **etsah,** advice, not the assembly to give it) shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east (doubtless Cyrus), the man that executeth my (not our) counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." These momentous declarations show perfect foreknowledge of every event, eternal purpose, absolute predestination and almighty power, and that everything is ordered by unerring wisdom, and that there is not "a sparrow nor a worm not found in his decrees;" and it requires a mind intoxicated with rationalism, and under the baneful influence of atheism, and led far astray by avowed infidelity, to set aside such God-honoring truth as the inspired prophet Isaiah penned.

Now Scripture testimony shall be given to show that our God raised up wicked men to carry out his purpose; but it has been said, "O you make out that wicked men and devils, then, are God's ministers." But, by the grace of God sustaining me, I do not intend that caviling men, who are not willing to take Scripture testimony in such momentous matters, shall put words into my mouth in order to make me say what I never did, nor distort what my pen has recorded, and attempt to pervert the same. The writer of this hopes that he is willing to take what inspired men have recorded, and cavilers may put what construction they please upon Scripture testimony. "For I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people; that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth. For now I will stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth.

And in very deed for this (cause) have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." "The Lord hath made all (things) for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things." "Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy." Yet of his dear servants, his children, he says, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Were not Joseph's brethren determined that his dreams should not be fulfilled? Certainly they were; but when they had exactly carried out the design of God, and their brother made himself known to them, his words were, "And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send (Hebrew **shalach,** to send, admits of no volition, but absolute sending) me before you to preserve life."

"And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant (Hebrew **chashab,** to think, devise, reckon, &c., or in simple plain English, purposed) it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." A vast amount more of Scripture testimony might be adduced from the Old Testament, were it necessary, to corroborate the great, the important truth that Jehovah raised up wicked men to fulfill his purpose, as well

as upright men to praise and adore him. In the case of Joseph's brethren, every act and thought were determined in Jehovah's counsel before he stretched "out the heavens like a curtain."

We will now turn to the New Testament Scriptures, and see if the same awfully momentous truths are not therein recorded. The record made by the inspired penmen, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, concerning the betrayal and crucifixion of the Son of God, ought to convince any one that our God raised up the very characters to do the dreadful work; but it was no less wickedness on their part. In prophecy, some seven hundred years before the mocking, spitting upon and smiting of the dear Redeemer took place, the declarations made were, "The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." Now the record made by Matthew is, "And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him." See also Mark xv. 1-39; Luke xxii. 63-71; John xix. 1-11. In the terrible agony of our Redeemer, one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down. — See Matthew xxvii. 47-49; John xix. 28-30. In the sixty-ninth Psalm, long before the advent of the Messiah, it is declared, "They gave me also gall for my meat: and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." And the pieces of silver were numbered in Zechariah xi. 12.

With what awe, wonder, delight and rapture the humble child of God at times contemplates the glorious truth that prophecy and fulfillment harmonize exactly. And now we will quote from an inspired apostle, who had given him the wisdom, after the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of Immanuel, to set forth in awful majesty the reason of such perfect agreement between prophecy and its fulfillment. "And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou (art) God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his (not their) Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herold, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined (Greek **proorizo,** to mark out beforehand) before to be done." Also, said the inspired judge, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man (not Deity) approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did (not simply the man, but God) by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom (the very man, 'approved of God') God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."

My dear brother, a sufficient number of quotations have been made to show the divine concatenation of the record made in the New and Old Testament Scriptures, and that there is no such thing as incongruity found in the record given by inspiration of God, and now

some remarks will be made on the subjects embraced in your questions. As stated in a reply to a dear brother not long since, it ought to cause no surprise when the non-professing world and carnal religionists are found caviling with the written Scriptures, showing that rationalism is all the religion they know anything about, which is leading directly to pantheism, and filling our land with openly avowed infidelity, deism and atheism; but when dear brethren and sisters begin to cavil with the letter of the word, it certainly must give them who have stood like "an iron pillar and brazen walls against the whole" of the modern metaphysical teachers of carnal creeds and dogmas, a gloomy feeling; and one of the sure indications is when any of our brethren are not willing to abide by what the prophets and apostles have recorded concerning the purpose of our God. Some of the sure indications of a departure from the record are when the following can be heard: "O, God certainly predestinated all good things, (they in the meantime judging what are good and what are bad); but as to wicked deeds, they come to pass by permission, or happen so; yet we believe that God foreknew all events," &c. Could anything be absolutely foreknown that was not eternally purposed? Leaving out that portion of the Bible denominated the Apocrypha, there are about eight hundred thousand words; and in that recorded number of words no mortal can lay his finger on the passage that says God's foreknowledge and predestination are ever separated, neither can the passage be found where Satan has ever deceived God or thwarted Jehovah's purpose, nor that any "wicked man" happened along by chance, and did not exactly fill up the "niche" in the building of God's purpose which he designed he should. But there are an abundance of "wise, learned, modern authors," who tell us "what might have been if so and so had been done;" but such utterances are vanity, and they who declare the same have one difficulty to surmount, and that is, they cannot find a "Thus saith the Lord." All such sophistry avails nothing; for the Lord said, "Who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together."

The writer of this reply, years ago, while attending an association, providentially tarried all night with a gentleman, and such he was in the strictest sense of the term; but early in the evening, in the presence of quite a number of brethren and sisters, he stated to me how much he thought of the Primitive Baptists, yet he had one objection against them, viz., they did not believe in a self-existent devil. As the remarks were directed to me, he was requested to produce the Scripture authority for a self-existent devil, and the answer was, "I can readily do that;" but he examined the Bible until nearly midnight, but could not find the passage, yet was sure it was "somewhere." He slept none that night, his nerves were so wrought up, because he could not find in the Scriptures what he wished. What a sad thing for a professed Bible reader and believer, to undertake to find what is not recorded therein. Christ said of his visible followers, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot (the son) of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve."

No other person could do what Judas was chosen to do; neither could any other man do the part Pilate was appointed for; nor could any one take the place of Herod; and so with every wicked man connected with the crucifixion of Christ. Every "step" taken, from the slaying of the young children by that hellish monster Herod, to the nailing of Christ to the cross, was according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; and so with every event to transpire in this world until the mystery of our God is accomplished and the last trumpet sounds. O God! if according to thy will, deliver the writer and the readers of this communication from caviling with thy written word, and clothe our minds with humility, reverential awe

and childlike simplicity.

(By Elder William J. Purington in the Signs of September 1, 1884.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. DELLA JOHNSON

As it has pleased our Heavenly Father to take from our midst our beloved sister, Della Johnson, we bow in humble submission to his gracious and holy will. She suffered much during her prolonged illness, but seemed to bear her afflictions with patience.

She was the daughter of Joshua T. and Annie Serman Powell. She leaves to mourn her passing her husband, M. Carl Johnson; three sons: Clifton, Hadden Field, N. J.; Rodney, Merchantsville, N. J.; and George, Cincinnati, Ohio; also four grandchildren and five great grandchildren; two sisters: Mrs. Ethel Covington and Mrs. Frances Richardson; and one brother, Herman Powell, of Salisbury, Maryland.

She was born October 15, 1884, and died April 15, 1962; and was united in marriage to M. Carl Johnson November 18, 1903, in Nassaongo Primitive Baptist Meeting House by Elder T. M. Poulston. She was baptized by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, and her membership was at Nassaongo Church. She was a loving wife and mother, and was much loved and highly esteemed by her church.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Arthur Warren at the Holloway Funeral Home.

"Why should we weep for those who sleep
On Jesus' loving breast;
Far from life's din,
Far from earth's sin,
In Paradise they rest.

There angels dwell and anthems swell:
There's joy that cannot cease.
They know no night,
God is their light,
No grief can mar their peace."

M. E. Fooks

SISTER BETSY DELIAH SIMMONS

Sister Betsy Deliah Simmons, aged seventy-eight, of Elora, Tennessee, passed away at her residence August 8, 1962.

She was united in holy matrimony to O. F. Simmons, and to this union were born seven children, five of which remain to mourn her departure: 2 sons, R. O. and S. O. Simmons, Elora, Tenn.; three daughters, Mrs. J. C. Shelton, Mrs. J. R. Perry, and Mrs. R. L. Jacks, all of Elora. Surviving also are twelve grandchildren, and eleven great grandchildren.

Sister Simmons united with the church of the Lord Jesus Christ known as Mt. Fork Primitive Baptist, the third Sunday in August, 1928; to which, by the grace of God, she remained faithful until the Lord saw fit to call her home. Mother was faithful to her children, and to her church; and loved the doctrine of salvation by grace. We will all miss her, but we believe that our loss is her eternal gain. We hope that we have been made to say with the servant Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Her funeral was conducted at her home church, Mt. Fork, by Elder R. H. Hale and Elder R. L. Biggs, in the presence of a large congregation of brethren, sisters and friends. Both elders were blessed to speak comforting words.

Written by her son at the request of Mt. Fork Church.

R. O. Simmons

MRS. ADA PYRTLE

Sister Pyrtle was born May 25, 1885, and died April 24, 1962; making her stay on earth almost 77 years. She was the daughter of James A .and Mary Moran Slawter, of Stokes County, N. C.; and was married to W. V. Pyrtle December 25, 1904. To this union ten children were born; one son, Carl, preceded her in death. Surviving, besides her husband, are W. V., Jr. and Joe, of Asheboro, N. C.; David, of Washington, D. C.; Mrs. Lelia Littleton, Cheverley, Maryland; Mrs. Grace Edman, Miami, Florida; Mrs. Gloria Staub, Winter Haven, Florida; Mrs. Irene Dickens, Asheboro, N. C.; Mrs. Roxie Hall, Baltimore; and Mrs. Mary Zimmerman, St. Petersburg, Florida; also eighteen grandchildren, and twelve great grandchildren.

Sister Pyrtle spent her entire life in Stokes County, N. C.; and united with Rock House Primitive Baptist Church in early life. She later moved her membership to Bunker Hill Church, where she was a faithful member until her death. She attended her church on Saturday and Sunday April 21st and 22nd, and was heard expressing her great love for her church and the people of God; and she passed away on April 24th. She will be missed by her church, and her many friends and neighbors; but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Z. L. Rhue, assisted by Elder D. R. Pyrtle, at Bunker Hill Church; and her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, to await the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall bid her sleeping dust to arise, and she will ever be with Him.

This memorial was approved by Bunker Hill Church while in conference in August, 1962; and a copy was ordered put on our Record Book; one given her husband; and one sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Written by the Clerk by order of the church.

Z. L. Rhue, Moderator
G. B. Hawks, Clerk

JUNIUS STILL LIVES IN SPIRIT

Junius Wesley Gilliam, the son of John W. and Mary Idol Gilliam, was born September 3, 1915, and died on August 3, 1962. At the urgent request of Gilliam's Church I agreed to write a few lines about Junius W. Gilliam to be read before the Church. It might seem more fitting for any one else rather than me, as his father, to write these lines, but I hope you can overlook that, and just remember that perhaps I knew Junius and his life about as well as any one. He has now passed from this time world and will know nothing more of the troubles and sorrows appointed unto men here below. Junius bore his afflictions without a complaint and his most frequent answer, when his friends would say, Junius, how are you, would be "all right". He was cheerful and seemed never discouraged. He didn't look for troubles, but if they came he met them cheerfully. He seemed ready at all times and would say when my time comes to go I'm ready. He lived beautifully, and he met death with the same sweet composure. He seemed unafraid. He believed in God and seemed to express in his feelings, Lord, thy will be done with me.

Junius Gilliam was honest, and he tried to be fair with his fellow man. He would not take the advantage of any one. He loved his family, his neighbors and friends. He was kind and charitable and had a lovely personality. Junius loved our church at Gilliam's, and Gilliam's Church never had, perhaps, a lovelier and sweeter friend than Junius. He served Gilliam's Church, as Church Treasurer, and until his death the Church never felt a financial worry. He said to me many times, we intend to see that Gilliam's Church doesn't lack for anything she needs. Junius proved his love for Gilliam's Church, and I believe every member of Gilliam's Church loved Junius. Junius was Chairman of Gilliam's Church Cemetery Committee, and his toil, labor and interest for our Church cemetery, where his body lies sleeping, I trust will not be forgotten by those of us who feel our great loss in his death and passing.

The passing of Junius has been almost more than I could bear. He was not only a lovely son and wonderful person, but he has been close to me in everyway. We counseled together, we walked together; our interest in the cause of Christ and his kingdom seemed to grow stronger and stronger. Junius was always anxious to know about our meetings, and if for any cause we had troubles, he was hurt, and when we had good meetings and seasons of joy his heart was lifted up and he was made glad. Junius enjoyed our different gifts, and he loved good preaching, and I believe he looked forward to our meetings with sweet hope of enjoying same. His memory will be sweet to me while I live, and it will be to every member of Gilliam's Church, and to his family and our family, and to all who have known him.

Now in conclusion, may I say, though our loss has been great, I believe that Junius in spirit is in heaven, and that he has gone home to that eternal city of God, and may we not weep as they that have no hope. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Submitted in love,
Elder J. W. Gilliam

LUCY NEAL CAMPBELL

Sister Lucy Neal Campbell was born in August, 1884, and departed this life June 2, 1962, making her stay on earth seventy-two years, ten months. She had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church of Christ for twenty-eight years, to which she remained faithful until death.

She was married to J. M. Campbell September 14, 1902, and to this union were born five children: Mrs. Laura Bell Maple, Miss Nannie Campbell, Jessie James Campbell (deceased), Mrs. Annie May Tant, and Clinton Campbell.

Sister Campbell's funeral was conducted at Mt. Fork Church, in Madison County, Alabama. Her membership was at Bethany Church in the Flint River Association. Elders R. O. Simmons and R. H. Hale preached the funeral in the presence of a large congregation of brethren, sisters, and friends.

Sister Campbell manifested time and time again, her humbleness, meekness, and love for her kindred in Christ, that she was fighting the good fight of faith. We believe she shall receive the crown of righteousness at that day, when the Lord returns again to raise the dead, and change these vile bodies that they may be fashioned like unto His. Often at the preaching of Christ and him crucified she would become so overjoyed that she would shout aloud.

May the God of love and consolation comfort all those that mourn her departure; and may He reconcile us to his will, that we may all feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Written at the request of the family.

Elder R. H. Hale

BROTHER MARION SMITH

Brother Marion Smith was born May 30, 1878, in Oakland, La., and died July 25, 1962, in Monroe, La. He was buried in Liberty Hill Cemetery.

He is survived by four sons: Woodie C. Smith, West Monroe, La.; John E. Smith, Marion, La.; Lovie D. Smith, Marion La.; Marion James Smith, West Monroe, La.; two daughters, Mrs. Nora Phillips, West Monroe, La., and Mrs. Christene Cartlidge, Rayville, La.; three sisters, Mrs. Etta Boehme, Fresno, Calif.; Mrs. Alice Phillips, Hutting, Arkansas; and Mrs. Ozella Alexander, Fresno, Calif. Also by twenty-one grandchildren, twenty-nine great grandchildren, and one great great grandchild.

It was not my privilege to know Brother Smith many years, but the Lord was pleased to call him out of nature's darkness, and deliver him into His glorious light, and added him to the militant kingdom. In a few years, the brethren having seen a gift in him, he was ordained a deacon. In all of his afflictions he never seemed to become weak in the faith. I would that we might remember Paul's words inspired by our God, "If in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable." Our hope reaches far beyond this natural life: it goes beyond death. When our time comes to leave the walks of life, may it be our Father's good pleasure to lay us down in this sweet hope; and raise us up in a glorious resurrection, to see God as he is, be like him, and be satisfied.

His funeral was conducted by the writer, Elder R. W. Rhodes, and Elder John Lee Smith.

Yours in hope,
David E. Turner

DEACON LUTHER CAMPBELL

Luther Campbell was born in Henry County, Tennessee, September 20, 1889, and died April 5, 1962. He was united in marriage to Carrie M. Anderson November 11, 1917, and to this union nine children were born, two dying in infancy. Surviving are, besides his companion, two sons: Richard and James C.; five daughters: Montey, Maggie Lee, Allie M., May Lucille, and Agnes; and twelve grandchildren.

Brother Campbell joined old Mud Creek Church in Fulton County, Kentucky, near Cayce, in 1922, and was baptized by Elder O. W. Perkins. In 1942 he moved to Memphis, Tenn., and soon placed his letter in the Memphis Church, a lovely band of Old Baptists. He was ordained a deacon in 1923, and we feel that he filled that office well. Soon after becoming a member at Memphis, he was elected Clerk of the church. The last four months of his life he was not able to attend his meetings. He loved his church and his brethren and sisters, and his home was a lovely place to visit. He and Sister Campbell always made the Old Baptists so welcome in their lovely home. To know Brother Campbell was to love him. He was sound in the doctrine of God our Saviour, and was a good counselor in doctrine and practice. I feel that a true soldier of the cross has fallen asleep in Jesus, to rest from his labours. He lived to see one of his sons ordained a deacon in his church, Richard H. Campbell, a young and gifted brother. Brother and Sister Campbell reared a lovely family of children, who seem to be greatly devoted to each other and their father and mother. Brother Campbell fought a good fight and kept the faith, and his Captain has given him an honourable discharge: He is sleeping in Jesus; and though he sleep a thousand years, it will be only one night of rest.

Elder Grady Brown preached his funeral in the presence of his brethren and sorrowing friends, who grieved at his going. May the God of all comfort and peace be with Sister Campbell and her lovely children, and bless them to be reconciled to his will. Written at the request of Sister Campbell.

Elder O. W. Perkins

ROBERT CAMPBELL

Robert Campbell was born in Dunwich Township, Ontario, on October 29th, 1883. He was the eldest son of the late Archie C. and Regina (Pollard) Campbell, and a grandson of the late Elder Pollard.

He was united in marriage on November 6th, 1912, to Jessie Gentleman, to which union were born two sons, William J., of Dunwich Township and David R., of London, Ontario; also one daughter, Mrs. Mary E. Anderson, of Shedden, Ontario. He is also survived by eight grandchildren and two brothers, Alexander and Humphrey, and two sisters, (Jennie) Mrs. Archie T. McCallum, and (Mary) Mrs. William A. McCallum, all of Dunwich Township. A brother, William, predeceased him in 1904.

Robert was a firm believer in the truth, and showed it for many years by his regular attendance at our gatherings. His low estimate of himself was such that he never was able to claim a place in the visible church, but he was ready at all times to render service to the Church of Christ. Such men are greatly missed when God takes them home, but to those who remain there is a sweet fragrance surrounding their memory. May God bless his dear ones and us to realize that

"It is not death to die,
To leave this weary road,
And 'midst the brotherhood on high,
To be at home with God."

May a gracious God reconcile his dear companion and family to His will and bless them to feel that their dear one is "Forever with the Lord."

G. R.

TRIBUTE OF RESPECT

Having lost by death one of our highly esteemed brethren, Brother B. J. Whitfield, we have been requested to write a tribute of respect to his memory.

Brother Whitfield was born March 23, 1880, and departed this life October 27, 1961. He was married in 1918 to Miss Tempie Gupton, who preceded him in death June 12, 1954.

Brother Whitfield joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Nashville, N. C., on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in July, 1935, and was baptized the following day by his pastor, Elder R. H. Boswell. He believed in and loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. He lived a faithful and consistent member and was one of the most humble men among us, often expressing his love and unworthiness by shedding tears and stating he was unworthy to be a member or brother. He was so dutiful to his church, always attended his services unless providentially hindered. We are to judge a tree by the fruit it bears.

After the death of his wife he lived alone until a short time prior to his death, when his brother, J. W. Whitfield and wife, took him into their home and cared for and administered to his every need in a most kindly manner.

Brother Whitfield is survived by the one brother, J. W. Whitfield; and one sister, Mrs. Bessie Denson; and several nieces and nephews.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder W. E. Turner and Elder L. H. Stephenson from the funeral home in Rocky Mount, N. C.; and his body was laid to rest in the family cemetery at Red Oak, N. C.

Having known brother Whitfield as we have and the life he lived, we do not feel to mourn his departure as one who had no hope, but rather feel thankful for having such a man among us, — for to know him, was to love him.

Written by D. W. Hales
Wilson, N. C.

MARY ELLIE BROWN
and
A. J. BROWN

Mother passed away December 28, 1956, and was seventy-nine years of age. Father lived until March 16, 1962, and was eighty-nine years old. They were married January 25, 1900, and are survived by three sons and three daughters; one son dying in infancy:

Mrs. Chas. Bailey, H. G. Brown, W. U. Brown, J. W. Brown, Mrs. H. H. Russell, and Miss Evelyn Brown. There are also several grandchlidren and great grandchildren.

We feel to thank the Lord for their lives. Mother was kind, and everyone loved her. She was a member of the Memphis Church; Father never united with the church, but was a strong believer in predestination and salvation by grace, and I am convinced he was a member of the invisible church. He was an able fire-side contender for the Old Baptist doctrine, and I miss asking him questions so much; but realize these things must be before we can meet our Maker face to face.

They were laid side by side. Both funerals were conducted by Elder H. R. Prince; with Brother Toney assisting in father's. A large congregation of relatives and friends were present, and there was a large display of flowers.

Written by his son,
H. G. Brown

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Again God, in his love and mercy, has seen fit to call from the church another of our most beloved brothers, L. J. Kinsey. He died in Johnson County Memorial Hospital, Smithfield, N. C., June 25, 1962. He leaves to mourn his passing, his devoted wife, eight children — five boys and three girls, one sister, and fourteen grandchildren.

Brother Kinsey was born September 9, 1892, and was received into the church by experience and baptism in August, 1953. He was appointed Clerk of Hickory Grove Church in August, 1957, and ordained a deacon in June, 1960. He served faithfully as long as his health permitted. He was a successful farmer, very highly respected, and a friend to all.

We, the Church, wish to express our heartfelt sympathy to the family. The Church feels a great loss in his passing, but God saw fit to call him. Our loss is his eternal gain.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder Lester E. Lee, assisted by Elder W. D. Godwin and Mr. Niles Compton at Hickory Grove Church; and burial followed in Banner Chapel Cemetery, near Benson.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to Him who doeth all things well; and that a copy of this writing be sent to the family, and a copy be put on our church records, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference on Saturday before the third Sunday in July, 1962.

Elder Lester E. Lee
Sister Georgia Hill
Sister Azelle Lee
Committee

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 131 DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1963 NO. 1

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1/63
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

TRAVELING A WINDING WAY
IN A DREAM
(Lamentations 3:29)

One night, I dreamed of going
Down through a mountain side;
I was traveling a winding way,
And the way was untried.

I was accompanied by two brothers,
Down this rugged way,
Thinking that ere long we should
Behold the light of day.

I told the brother ahead to see
How far we had to go;
Then I leaned forward to look,
And beheld a pool below.

With no hope of getting beyond
The water deep and clear,
And feeling too weak to return,
I had great cause to fear.

'Twas then I dreamed that I awoke,
And was lying on the ground;
It seems that I was weeping freely,
Whilst my face was down.

I thought my father was nigh me,
And to him I did say
That the Lord delivered me
In this (awakening) way.

He delivered me from going down,
When my strength was gone,
And I was weeping, mouth in the dust,
For His great mercy shown.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, N. C.

A MOTHER TO HER CHILDREN

Patrick Springs, Va.

My Dear Children:

I love you very much, and this is the sole reason I am writing you this.

I appreciate your interest in the welfare of your father's soul. It does my heart good to know your heart has been stirred, but, if I understand you right, I'm afraid you have the wrong idea. You left the impression in your letter, that if I would only tell your father he is a lost sinner without Christ, it would convert him to his lost condition. This only God can do. His words are powerful; ours are not.

Now let's consider the condition of people before Christ quickens them to know Him, which is the condition we are born in. Psalm 51:5, reads, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Psalm 39:5, reads, "Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreath, and my age is as nothing before thee. Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity." Psalm 37:23, reads, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." 1 Corinthians 2:14, reads, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

John 4:23, reads, "But the hour cometh and now is when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him." Then poor sinners cannot seek God to worship him, until they are quickened in Christ, and made spiritual. And God alone can give life.

Romans 8:7, 8, reads, "Because the

carnal mind is enmity against God, . . . So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." In Hebrews 11:6, we read, "But without faith it is impossible to please God." And Jude 3 says, ". . . faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Before we are born again we do not have faith: the natural man is interested only in worldly things, because he is worldly.

Now, my children, if your father has never been quickened and made alive in Christ, he cannot receive spiritual things: You might tell him there is a Christ who died for sinners, but it would not accomplish one single spiritual thought. In 2 Timothy 1:9, we read, "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

Colossians 2:13, reads, "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all your trespasses." Ephesians 2:1-5 says, "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world; . . . But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved)." Grace is a gift of God — something we are not acquainted with before we are quickened. It is not by a preacher we learn these things, as proved by Galatians 1:12, "For I neither received it of man neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." But we are called with an holy calling, and one who calls with an holy calling must be holy. Then it is not by the minister, for he is not holy. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes.

So it is all of God. We must be prepared to hear the gospel by the same power by which the gospel comes. "A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." (Ezekiel 36:26, 27)

David said in Psalm 40:2, "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, (Jesus), and established my goings." If we could bring out the beauty of this Scripture, we would be ashamed to think that God waits for man to make the first move. Verse 3, says, "And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." Verse 4, "Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust . . ." We see then if we trust in the Lord it is because we are blessed to do so — not, if we will trust him, we will be blessed. "Salvation is of the Lord," says Jonah.

Isaiah 55:11, says, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth. It shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish that which I please; and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I send it." The gospel is not preached in vain, and wasted, as some will have you believe.

You told me to tell your daddy that Christ died for him: **Only Christ himself can do that.** I could just as easily tell him he was going to heaven, for, all for whom Christ died will go to heaven. If Christ died for every soul, as the world will tell you, then everybody will be saved, if not, then some for whom Christ shed his blood will be found in hell. Away with such a heresy! "For thou will not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption." (Psalm 16:10) The eleventh verse is beautiful, read it.

Now read Matthew 1:21, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." Not that he shall give his people a chance to be saved: this is false doctrine. The world will teach you that when the Bible speaks of God's people, it means every individual. It is not so. The Bible speaks

of God's people: those who were chosen in Christ before the world began. All people are God's by creation, to do with as he pleases. If "his people" means everybody, then everybody will be saved. But read John 8:21-24, "Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins." etc. "For this is my blood of the new testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins." (Matthew 26:28)

This certainly makes it plain that his blood was not shed for everyone, but for many. Isaiah prophesied in 53:11, 12, "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

John 17, proves that Jesus saved everyone for whom he died. The world will tell you all you have to do is to make up your mind to accept Christ, and believe on him. Well, let's see how we believe, and accept him.

Isaiah says, "Who hath believed our report . . .?" "There is none that understandeth; there is none that seeketh after God." (Romans 3:11) Before we are quickened and made alive in Christ, we do not seek after God. In Acts 13:48, we read "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." No one can believe unless he has eternal life. We believe natural things because we are natural; but to believe spiritual things, we must be made spiritual.

"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer." (Phil. 1:29) "Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God that you believe on him whom he hath sent." (John 6:29) We believe on Jesus because God works the belief in us. Oh, how I love to render all praise unto Him, who deserves it!

In Acts 13:41, we read, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a day in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." It seems there are those who cannot believe, though a preacher makes it ever so plain. We get mighty anxious about the souls of men; but listen to what Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:37) Read to the 45th verse: "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."

Now, as far as accepting Christ, let's see what the Bible says: "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will; to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." (Ephesians 1:5-7) We, then, do not accept him of our own, but are made accepted in him: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." And, "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

My children, I too have long waited for a change in your father, and prayed much; but all the talk and everything in our power would only make him a whitewashed Christian. When the storms and trials of this life come upon him, the whitewash would be washed off. **I desire a born again Christian:** so we must wait upon the Lord: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles. They shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint." (Isaiah 40:31)

"It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." (Lamentations 3:26)

My dear children, while you are pray-

ing for your Dad, in the meantime, do not forget your Mother.

Your mother,
Minnie Foley

("The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord." (Proverbs 16:1) The evidence is that Sister Foley is taught of the Lord, and is blessed to be faithful in a sacred trust. Knowing, as she does, the source of all wisdom and knowledge in the Lord, she meets a situation squarely, and tells those near and dear unto her that there is but one way in which sinners are brought to the knowledge of the truth, and have evidence that Jesus is their Saviour. She cites not only her own convictions, but brings a mighty array of inspired witnesses to prove she is right.

The plainness and sincerity with which she writes, and no doubt with a prayerful heart, evidences faith which says, "Thou canst, if thou wilt: Thy will be done." "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." (Proverbs 16:33) — J. D. W.)

FROM ELDER AND SISTER DAVENPORT

809 Sycamore,
Mineola, Texas

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

My dear brother, I have just read the *Signs* for October, and can't explain how much I enjoyed it. In my mind I could see you in front of the congregation, and I felt to be there with them, drinking from that fountain above that never runs dry with God's children. What a message it is, and what joy, when it is direct from God. I felt your message at the association came from God. How rich it was to me! But I feel so unworthy of such blessings. When I look back over my life, it seems it has been filled with sin and wicked thoughts; but when I am led to contemplate the glorious covenant of grace, I can then say, "Bless the Lord, Oh, my soul, and all that is in me bless his holy name." The grace of God is so precious to me, for I can rejoice in hope of the glory of God, the only Saviour I know and believe in.

My husband is still very feeble, confined mostly to his room, but looked forward to the convening of our association (the Sulphur Fork). He was not able to attend, but was disappointed when he learned you were not there. . . . We don't want to complain, only hope to be given a spirit of submission to bear patiently all that the Lord sees fit to put on us.

We both can never forget the pleasure it was to have you visit in our humble home. A sister I hope, in bonds of love and fellowship.

Mrs. S. C. Davenport

REPLY

P. O. Box 186
Manassas, Virginia

Dear Elder and Sister Davenport:

We cannot tell you how much we appreciated your letter. We have often desired that we might visit you again; and it is often that we recall and mention the most pleasant visit we had in your home. It was good to be confirmed in our faith by an old and tried soldier of the cross. The feeling we had of love and fellowship for you, and the things you love to talk about, has not faded from then until now. If the Lord so wills it, we would like to come your way again and have another visit with you, but we do not know now, of course, when or whether it shall be a pleasure afforded us.

I am glad that you enjoyed the October *Signs*, and that the things spoken in the published sermon found a responsive chord in your feelings. It was published by request; and I am glad now, because many have expressed their enjoyment of it. I am hoping, from time to time, to publish sermons by other Elders from the tapes I have; for I feel that these will make good reading, and along with the publications under the "Voices of the Past", will confirm the fact that we are still contending for the doctrine that Old Baptists have always contended for; and that the *Signs*

of the Times is particular what they publish.

How good it is to know that the Lord never leaves nor forsakes his people, but that He gives them all needed grace for all their trials, afflictions, and joys; and sustains them in their hope of eternal life. You have both found it so during your lives, though at times, no doubt, your faith has been tried. But this has been good, when the joys of salvation have been restored, for it has kept you looking unto Him for all things.

Sister Wood joins me in love and very best wishes. Remember us to any who may inquire of us.

Yours in the very best of bonds,
John D. Wood

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Sister Minerva Dunlap)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, meeting at Whitefield, Maine, August 31, September 1 and 2, 1962, sends greetings to the churches and Associations with which we correspond:

Our mind has been led, we hope by the Holy Spirit, to think somewhat upon the 3rd and 4th verses of the 8th Psalm: "When I consider thy heavens the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained: what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" How inadequate are our minds to consider that infinite expanse of the heavens, the work of His fingers; to consider that our tiny earth is only a speck among the planets and visible stars that comprise only one of millions of galaxies, each so huge that light must travel thousands of years to span its limits, yet each star and each galaxy moving in its ordained path according to the Master's plan.

How incomprehensible to our minds also, is the formation of our earth which He has created, the various shapes of land and water, the millions of animals and plants, springing from tiny seeds that reproduce after their kind, as they were created to do by His fingers; the elements of the earth and sky, each one composed of countless invisible atoms and every atom in turn formed by smaller particles endowed with energy to react according to His plan, particles so infinitesimal that we cannot comprehend their structure or understand their functions. The works of His fingers are too high for the mind of man to reach, too deep to plumb; the universe remains a miracle, the atom a mystery.

But even more mysterious and more incomprehensible than His control over the galaxies of space and the reactions of atoms, are His dealings with those created in His image, of whom he is mindful, His elect. These, too, show forth the miracles of His power and follow the laws of His designs. And the subjects of His grace realize how wonderful is His plan of salvation, His work in the soul, the joy of revelation and the new birth, so contrary to the ways of man. Consider, for example, a man traveling from Jerusalem to Ethiopia nearly two thousand years ago, through a desert in Canaan; a man with a chariot and attendants, of great authority in his own land, keeper of the Queen's jewels and leader over many men. In the eternal council of God who planned all things from the beginning, the mind of this traveler so great according to the judgment of men, was turned from earthly thoughts to a study of the Scriptures, and to a searching for the things of the Spirit, seeking a way, as it were, in the desert. At the same time in distant Samaria, a servant of God and apostle of Christ was led by the Holy Spirit to make his way towards the man in the chariot. They met and conversed and the apostle explained to the eunuch the scripture he was pondering, and preached to him the truths of salvation.

God had prepared the heart of the high dignitary to receive the blessing and He had sent His servant to bring the answer to prayer. Here was the

miracle of the new birth and rejoicing filled the heart of the eunuch. The rejoicing was not over his high estate or because of his equipage but in great humility, because his Lord had been gracious to him, mindful of his needs and had revealed the glories of His Kingdom. And his first desire was to follow in the footsteps of his redeemer; and as the desert was passed and water appeared, he asked to be baptized. After the baptism, the eunuch would not wonder at Philip being caught away because he knew a greater mystery had just been wrought in his heart, in the answer to his searching for the truth.

Just as the stars and galaxies of the heavens obey his bidding, so Philip and the eunuch, drawn by the Holy Spirit, met to carry out His designs of salvation in the heart of a subject of grace. He has power over all his creations; They do as He disposes and are subject to His dispensations. His call is answered by those who are given the ear to hear, his knock at the door is not made in vain; the dweller recognizes the visitor and opens the door to receive the blessing. And so He performs His wonders not only in the heavens and in the bowels of the earth but also in the hearts of His people. The galaxies of space and the atoms of earth obey His laws and carry out His designs just as do men made in His image. What a blessing that He is mindful of His own!

"Eternal Power, whose high abode
Becomes the grandeur of a God;
Infinite lengths, beyond the bounds
Where stars revolve their little rounds.

God is in heaven, but man below;
Be short our tunes; our words be few;
A sacred reverence checks our songs,
And praise sits silent on our tongues."

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, August 31, September 1 and 2, 1962, sends greetings to the churches and associations with which we correspond:

Dear Brethren:

Again through the providence of our covenant keeping God, we have been able to meet in an association.

Your correspondence has been gladly received, testifying that there is no falling away from the truth, but instead, a meeting together in heavenly places. How wonderful it is that in all times God has provided his people a sanctuary where they can sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and be filled with the light of His presence.

Your ministering brethren, Elder Arthur Warren and Elder I. S. Conner, came to us laden with the fruits of the Spirit of him whom to know is eternal life. Those present could truly say with the psalmist, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

How often in our journey through life when the way becomes dark and hope seems almost gone, either by visible signs from without, or by the working of the Holy Spirit within, we receive the sign that the everlasting arms are underneath. We are carried above earthly trials with the assurance that, "Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come; nor height, nor depts, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." (Romans 5)

The Maine Association is one of the smaller and weaker associations, but we hope that we are part of that remnant which the Lord shall gather from all parts of the earth." (Isaiah 11:11, 12) It is comforting to note that it is through the small and weak things of

the world that God shows his power. So, our strength is not of ourselves, but of God who doeth all things well, according to his will, for our good and his glory. May we be given to lift up our eyes unto the hills from whence cometh our help.

The next meeting of the Maine Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, the first Sunday in September, and Friday and Saturday preceding, 1963. Notice will be published in the *Signs of the Times*.

Elder Arthur Warren, Moderator
Mrs. Sanford Bartlett, Clerk

WHO DOES WHAT?

Are we capable of going unto God at any time and at our own will, to be saved? Can we reject God's word? Is His power limited?

When an architect builds his own building, does he haphazardly get a bunch of men, buy a pile of lumber and some bricks, and then tell the men to build anything they desire? I don't think so. An architect has an *exact* blueprint of every permanent fixture down to a jot and tittle. Everything is organized. He gets the men *when* he wants them, and the parts of the building are added *when* their time comes. Think how wonderful it would be to see, in all its detail, the manifestation of a beautiful building, — especially if you designed it yourself. It is so with God.

Can anyone say that he can go to God and be added to his invisible church at any time? If you were an architect, what would you think if a brick came up to you, and said, "I have dusted the dirt off myself, and I am ready to be added to your building now." Why even think! it is entirely impossible for a brick to walk. What then can a man do, who is born as dead as the brick, about becoming part of the invisible church of God? He can do no more than the brick! When the disciples asked Jesus who could be saved, His reply was, "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible." (Matthew 19:26) In Acts 2:47, we find that, "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:44) Each child of grace has his own fixed time and place, in accordance with the unquestionable will of the Almighty Architect.

Most people believe that the word of God can be rejected: that when Paul was struck down by Light brighter than the noon day sun, he could have "accepted or rejected" God. He did not reject the light that blinded his eyes; nor can any person who is subjected to His will. These persons might say, "Well, I can show you in the Bible where God's word is rejected." And they can; in Jeremiah 8:9, for example. To me it means just this:

First of all, imagine God as a baseball pitcher; the baseballs as the word of God; and people as backstops: one is made of very hard wood (non-believers), the other is made of thick white cotton (believers). As baseballs are thrown at the backstops, they bounce off the hard wood, but are absorbed in sweet joy by the white cotton. It was God's complete knowledge and will that the wooden backstops would reject his word. Why not? He built them just that way. The power is not in the backstops to reject the word, but rather in their maker who constructed them that way. The word reaches hard backstops when it is preached to a congregation containing both believers and non-believers. And I do not think that He constructed these backstops with legs, so that they could walk up to the pitcher's mound and take the ball from him; neither have they legs to meet him half-way. The backstop may think he can, and he may think he is doing God a favor in exerting this effort. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the

end thereof are the ways of death." (Proverbs 16:25) Read also Matthew 15:8, 9; and 24:11 and 24.

What kind of a power is this that a backstop can take the ball from a pitcher? The shift of power would be completely out of reason. It's about as bad as saying that God is a big concession stand, where you can get some spiritual goodies, if you pay your tithes: and that there is nothing the concession stand can do but give them to you.

On Judgment Day the hard backstop might cry out in anger, "Why was I made this way in the first place?" An answer can be found in Romans 9:21, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" This would be comparable to a person who blames the sun when he gets sunburned.

. . . Our God is all powerful; but a God who is limited in any manner would not be all powerful, and is certainly not the one I hope to believe in.

Joe L. Hamrick, Jr.
Harlingen, Texas

(Submitted for publication by Elder Loyd Wall, Bivens, Texas.)

(We read the above with a great deal of pleasure, since we had been expecting something like it ever since we were favored to meet this young man while visiting at an association, and in the home of his father and mother, Elder and Mrs. Joe L. Hamrick, in Texas. His unusual interest in the Scriptures and experience was plainly evidenced, and we felt remarkably so, for one so young in years.

In his writing he gives the analogy between the things he knows in nature, and the things he has been taught of the Spirit, comparing one with the other; and gives conclusions which are most interesting. — J. D. W.)

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

(Written by Elder W. D. Griffin)

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." (Psalm 133:1). When the household of faith is grounded and settled and rooted in sound doctrine, it has a tendency to bring them to a single, steady aim; to lead them to the exalting of the Holy One; to unify them in walking together in the precepts and examples laid down in the Scriptures; to give them holy desires to have a "thus saith the Lord" for all they practice in occupying his kingdom. This being true, let us, by the grace of God, always be found searching for that doctrine.

"Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men." (Psalm 31:19). God is great in goodness, and He is good in greatness. These two characteristics of God are deeper and more precious to the children of men than we are able to mark out and comprehend. This "great goodness" is worthy to be compared with the "manner of love" that is bestowed on the children of God. (1 John 3:1). It is solely the work of God, and the goodness laid up and the love bestowed, are gifts from Him to poor sinners. This shows forth our God as He purposed and laid up this goodness, and it also shows forth his sovereign work in its bestowal upon us. In purpose we did not have anything to do with the laying up of his goodness. It was done for us according to the eternal purpose of God, and displayed to us in time by its bestowal on poor sinners. We do not have any more right to claim a part, or to be a contributing factor in the bestowal of this love, than we do in the laying up of this goodness.

God having loved His people with an everlasting love, it behooved Him to not withhold anything from them; therefore He laid up for them everything that would be needed in time. To preach otherwise is to impugn the veracity, the wisdom, the love, and the sovereign grace of God. In no way can it be said that we aided in the laying up of this goodness. If so, how? If so, by whom? Now let us notice carefully. God will not divide any of His honor or glory to fallen man. He did not ascribe any of

it to the unperfected members of the body of Christ (Psalm 139:16) in the laying up of this goodness, and neither will He divide any of it to us in the bestowal of it upon us.

This goodness was laid up for us in the purpose of God, and it is displayed among the God-fearing children of the covenant of grace. It is not laid up for them because He foresaw that they would fear, no, no, not that, but the bestowal of that goodness causes them to fear the Lord in reverence and godly fear.

Not only, dear brethren, did God lay this goodness up for us, but He also wrought out that goodness. The laying of it up is to be ascribed unto the Lord; the working out of this goodness is likewise, in the same manner, to the same degree, and in and for the same people, as being of the Lord. God overshadowed the virgin, caused her womb to be fruitful and to bring forth; He, by His Spirit, has quickened us into life, has wrought wonderfully and effectively that goodness in us, which causes us to sing:

"Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home,"

and we are assured that the laid up crown will be bestowed upon all that He has wrought the marvelous works of salvation in their hearts.

Seeing that such is all to the praise of His grace, what manner of people should we be? If such a glorious doctrine, laid up and wrought in us, is ours to enjoy, we should be patient with one another, punctual in church attendance, adhering closely to the simplicity of the gospel and the standard set by the apostles for the churches of Jesus Christ.

Pray for us in this association that we contend earnestly for this doctrine, and that we adorn it by a godly walk and conversation.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
William Adkins, Clerk

CONTENTNEA UNION MEETING

The Contentnea Union Meeting will convene with Shiloh Church at Goose Creek Island, in Pamlico County, N. C., on December 29th and 30th.

We extend an invitation to ministers, brethren, and friends.

W. W. Stalling, Jr., Clerk

THE SKEWARKEE UNION

The Skewarkee Union is to be held at Flatty Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Pasquitank County, N. C., the 5th Sunday in December, and Saturday before, the Lord willing. The Friday meeting is discontinued. Elder W. E. Grimes was chosen to preach the Introductory, and Elder I. S. Conner, his alternate.

The church is located about 10 miles Southeast of Weeksville. (Known as Kehukee Baptist) We extend a cordial welcome to those ministers and brethren who have a mind to meet with us.

E. C. Harrison

PLEASE NOTE

Due to lack of space we forgo an **Introduction To A New Volume** in this issue, but hope to include it in the next.

We are desirous of publishing notices of meetings, etc. in plenty of time for the brethren to learn of them, but we must have them at least six weeks before publication date. Please mail them directly to P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Virginia. — J. D. W.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
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Mrs. Pearl Lee, Tex.	$1.00
W. A. Womack, Ark.	4.00
Mary F. Davis, La.	2.00
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EDITORIAL

ISAIAH 11:6, 8

"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den."

As I view the gospel day, I have come to the conclusion that, based upon reports that are flooding the world, that it has not yet come. It would seem that the Gentile age does not have any of the beauties mentioned so often in the prophecies. For the most part, we are the neglected and forgotten dispensation. It seems that the Jews are to have much the best of covenant arrangements. They forfeited all right to the blessings of God (or did they?); the Gentiles were then brought in, but they are to lose all of their blessings for the same reason that the Jews lost theirs; and then the Jews are brought back and given another chance. How much better the Jews are faring, seeing that, under that system, the Gentiles will never get the second chance.

It seems that the peace which Jesus left with His people has been removed. Or has it been choked out by the wicked among us? If we have choked it out, we have more power today than Satan had while Jesus lived in the flesh. If it has been removed, God removed it, and if He moved it, He has changed. None of this appears to me to be comforting to God's people. It does not comfort me. If salvation is by works, it certainly would have simplified matters if the sacred writers had said so; if peace was given to God's people after the resurrection of Jesus, and has been removed by my works, then peace is a joint affair — Jesus brought it and set it up by the shedding of His blood, and I keep it going by my works. A conditional peace, call it what you will; clothe it in allegorical language as you will; dress it in the finest of Pharisaical finery, it will still be a conditional peace, and, to one that has been overcome by the Stronger, it will stink, as will all his spoiled goods. (Matthew 12:29; Luke 11:21)

The peace that interests this poor sinner is not given like the world gives it. And God, while here in the flesh, wrought out peace on the rugged cross, and gave it to us, and left it with us. The peace that I have, comes in the way that the brethren received it from Joseph. That peace did not, and it does not, come by the works of the brethren. If I have been called to preach peace, I am called to preach it by Jesus Christ (Acts 10:36; 1 Peter 1:25). It seems that if I have been called to preach, then my predecessor preached it as coming from God. In every letter to the ministers and churches, he begged for peace from God the Father, and from

the Lord Jesus Christ. As long as I have this grace and this peace, from such an inexhaustible source, it will not make too much difference who preaches peace from some other source.

My text has peace in it. It is the kind of peace that the opposites in the text will never bring. Until the animals mentioned in the text get to be peaceful towards each other without outside work, I will, as blessed of God, continue to preach peace by Jesus Christ. AND I WILL, GOD WILLING, PREACH IT AS BEING IN EXISTENCE NOW; THAT IT IS PRESENTLY FELT AND ENJOYED BY THE PEOPLE OF GOD. I will, as blessed of God, present such things as come into my mind. If Jesus Christ is, then there is peace now. If it is right to preach peace by Jesus Christ, it is right because peace comes by Jesus Christ. If there is an alternative, then the alternative is stronger, and thus more important, and I would beseech God's ministers to preach the alternative. If there is not an alternative, will it be alright for me to plod along and preach peace by Jesus Christ? And will it be alright if I preach it as being in effect now?

The nature of the wolf and the lamb are as different as the distance between the east and the west. The nature of either can not be transplanted into the other. They are not related in any sense. They do not have anything in common; there is not any middle ground that they can occupy, and thus live together in peace. The nature of the wolf is to destroy. It will kill for the sake of killing, for the joy that is to be had in killing. Do all you can, this animal will still have the same instinct. It is the same way with man made religion; train those with the nature of fallen men and as soon as they are loosed from policy, they will, as with the sow and the wolf, go back to the mire and the killing. In the time of Saul of Tarsus, I am sure that the church of Jesus Christ was not any formidable foe to the religion of the Jews. Yet the wolf in Saul caused him to destroy just for the sake of destruction. It could not contribute anything to his welfare; it satisfied the lust in him. Martin Luther and John Calvin came out of the Catholic church protesting, and continued, as did their mother (of harlots) before them, to persecute the true worshippers; men today, even in the Old School Baptist Church, are not any better. However, there is one thing sure and certain; the true worshippers have not persecuted; Ananias and his brethren did not persecute the wolf. It is the wolf that dwells with the lamb. The lamb did not change in order for the wolf to dwell compatibly with it; the lamb was fearful of the outcome until it was assured that the wolf nature had been quelled. The wolf did not desire to dwell with the lamb when it started to Damascus; the lamb did not desire the wolf to dwell with it when he started to Damascus. The lamb had been wolfish by nature and it knew what that nature would do. By experience it also knew what could be done to that wolf that it might be made a fit companion for dwelling in the sheepfold. I am sure that when Paul had put off the old man, and had put on the new, that it was as peaceful on the street called Straight as it was at any time down the ages, and throughout all apostolicity, and all time since then, and what is more, dear brethren, there is peace today. There is peace in the church now, for wolves are still being brought under subjection and are coming into the sheepfold and living in peace.

"The leopard shall lie down with the kid." What a contrast. One who has been all spotted by the ferocious living in lust and carnality is brought into step with the flock. Ah, what wanderings after prey while the lusts of the flesh are prevalent; contentment is not found anywhere; the docility and serenity of the kids, as they linger around the feeding place, could never satisfy this wild creature. He has many dark places on his life's record; he is known far and wide as one to be avoided; a report of his nearness throws consterna-

tion in the tents of Israel. He has been known to reform in order to carry out a still greater ravishing of his helpless victims. The time comes when the power of God is brought into the life of this spotted creature. His old nature is arrested and brought under the jurisdiction of a King whose word is life and spirit — a new life, which brings the old under its power, a new spirit, wherein the lambs and kids are loved, and the food that once was held in disdain is now palitable; the associates that were once shunned are now sought.

"The calf and the young lion and the fatling together." Here are all manner of men walking the highway of holiness. All of them brought one way, and into one fold, with One shepherd. The calf is awkward and apt to make mistakes, yet full of fresh youth that would say, Let us go up to the house of the Lord. The young lion cub is bold (Ezekiel 1:10), and does not yield to foes too easily. The fatling is well filled with the goodness of the Master's crib, and yet is a bit cautious about the goods of the Master. It is not any small wonder at the stableness of the threesome. They are together, and they have a wonderful Shepherd, a Child born to lead. He has built a city, and a road of holiness for the redeemed to walk in. He is the Door into heaven, and yet he went in at the door; He is the Way, and yet He has gone before us in the way.

This Child Shepherd is a great herdsman. His Father sent Him into the world to save the sheep that were given to Him. Power over all flesh was committed into this Shepherd's hand that He might give eternal life to them. Here is His work. It is the work of a master Herdsman. He goes after each object of love and brings them into the fold. It matters not that some are as wolves, some as leopards, some as ferocious young cubs. His effective leadership quells them all, subduing the old nature and giving them a new; his work in putting the yoke on them is so thorough that before He leaves them, they will be all together.

"The cow and the bear shall feed." The giver of milk, and the renderer of flesh feeding together? Does this take place now? Do you mean that the church of Jesus Christ has a phenomenon like that taking place in it now? Do you mean that in this war torn world there is such an ecstatical occurrence taking place? Do you mean to say that with all of the sorrow and division and trouble in the Old Baptist Church that this is happening now? Ah, dear reader, somebody has been peddling old wives' tales to you. It is true that sorrow is rampant in the land; it is true that lovely brethren have been and will yet be divided from one another; it is true that trouble is upon us. As true as this is, the little Child has not abdicated His seat of power; He has not capitulated to the devil. Not while this world stands will He cease leading and feeding all His children. The diet is the same, whether it is a meek cow or one who has borne the characteristics of the bear. They will eat the same fare, and be delighted with it.

"Their young ones shall lie down together." Are these to bring forth children? Will the one like unto a cow, have children, and the one like unto a bear, also? Forgive me, dear heart, I did not write the Bible. If I could pray just one prayer, I would ask God that He bless me to expound to the comfort and upbuilding of His children. I will not pass by the Scriptures of truth; I will not give a disdainful toss of my head and say, "O that does not mean this and that and so, and anybody that says it does is an Arminian." I would inquire for guidance; I would beg for the Compass that leads and guides and guards and directs into all truth. What does Paul say about his children? What does John say about his children? If the text has any meaning to us, it follows that Paul would be the wolf, the leopard, the bear, the lion; that John would be the lamb, the kid, the cow, the ox. Now let us hear what Paul says about his children. "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not

many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." (1 Cor. 14, 15). "I speak as unto my children." (2 Cor. 6:13). Even though it has got to the pass that it is unlawful for a minister to exhort and charge the children of God, yet the apostle says, "As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children." (1 Thes. 2:11). If this does not mean that Paul had children in the gospel, what does it mean? What words would the Holy Ghost have to use in order to show that Paul did have children in the gospel? And does it not seem rather irony that we must impugn the wisdom of the Holy Spirit in the wording or the manner of His inspiring men what to write? Now as already said, Since the characteristics of John would lead us to think of him as the opposite of Paul, what did he say about his children? "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth." (3 John 4). Here are two ministers who would, in their mannerisms in nature, be dominated the wolf and the lamb. Here we have each of them talking about their children, which undoubtedly means in the gospel. How lovely it is to see those that come up under different ministers lie down in the same green pastures, resting in the same precious promises of God.

"The lion shall eat straw like the ox." straw is not, as is often said, something of no benefit. It was that which strengthened the bricks; it was given as bed for the horses; it was spoken of as our hay. Hay for the cow and the ox is of the utmost importance in their feed. With good hay, there is not any danger in cattle starving. Although preaching hobbies is not good for the church of the living God, yet I do not subscribe to the theory that doctrine will starve a church to death. I fully agree that what men call doctrine will do just this, and I agree that we, as a people, have as many doctrines as the world does. But because we have copied after the world; because we do preach **something** and call it doctrine; because we do ride a hobby horse to death, none of this is proof that doctrine, that is, the doctrine of God's saving grace, will starve the church of God to death. Saul of Tarsus would never, while a disciple of Gamelial, have been satisfied with the doctrine that Ananias and his brethren enjoyed. But when the man was directed to Ananias, and to the church on Straight street, the same identical doctrine that he had done all he could to destroy, the same doctrine that had been a savor of life unto life to the whole church of God, now became his meat and drink. How beautiful, dear reader, the text becomes as we go about the city and tell (number) the towers and mark the bulwarks and consider the palaces thereof. Verily, verily, we see the bear and the ox eating straw (sound doctrine) together.

"And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp." The church of God will never enjoy these things until we find Christ doing them first. He must have the preeminence in all things. He is the example; He is the first fruit; He is the first born among many brethren. He it is that goes before us. It is not, You come and go with me, and we will clear the way for the family of God. It is not that way. Regardless of who has preached it; regardless of who preaches it now; regardless of who preaches it in the future, salvation is by the Lord Jesus Christ. God does not have to do like unto a man. Men look at things and see one thing today; they take another look tomorrow and they see something else. I think as I write, of many that at one time stood shoulder to shoulder with the soldiers of Jesus Christ, bearing hardness as good soldiers, being armed with the same mind and the same spiritual weapons that all the ancient worthies had. Where are they now? What is their vocation now? If we were to read what they wrote years ago and what they are now writing, we would think that we were reading from two men. Only one conclusion can be drawn from these matters. 1st. They have never experienced Christ having the preeminence in their lives,

or 2nd. They have forgotten it, having had a good turning over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh. They will never get out of his clutches until it is perfectly destroyed.

A sucking child is one that is dependent on its mother. Ah, my readers, what a sad day it is when we **think** that we are independent. How lamentably sad it is to see and hear those that once took sweet counsel together to now be preaching the independence of God's children; to be telling them that the key to their welfare is in their hands. Mark it well, dear brethren, there was not anything enticing to the son of the bond woman in the shriveled and wrinkled breast of the free woman. That is the reason that he mocked Isaac as he nursed his mother. And today, things have not changed. If your mother is from above; if wisdom furnishes her table today for her children; if your sole dependence comes from the Strength of Israel, both for the restoration of your soul, and the restoration of the church to her former glory, you can rest assured that Ishmael will be near by mocking.

Jesus, as the manifestation of God in the flesh, was the Son of God. All the support that was His, came from above; all the comfort that was His, was what he got from above; all the ability that He had to work, came from above. He was dependent on His Father for everything. As a son sucks at his mother's breast, so did Jesus draw all his spiritual comfort from the storehouse of His Father's love. It was as a man, even the Man, that He played on the hole of the asp. His delights were with the sons of men (Proverbs 8:31); He delighted to do His Father's will (Psalms 40:8; Hebrews 10:7); He delighted in playing on the hole of the asp, that his Bride might play in the streets of the city (Zech. 8:5). Ah, what great love is this, my soul; how costly, and how priceless, is thy raiment, poor sinner. What mother among my readers would leave her sucking child to play on the hole of the asp? Yet, behold the God of all grace and mercy that He consigned (predestinated, if you like) His Son to play there for us; to receive all of the bite of the asp, that we, poor undeserving c r e a t u r e s that we are, might receive the ointment of redeeming love. Yes, it was none the less than Jesus that first played on the hole of the asp, that received the full venom of the deadly poison, sin; and was able to overcome it, that we through His blood, which is our cleansing agent for all uncleanness, and through which we now face the asp and are able to drink his poison and no ill effects overtake us.

"The weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den." Walk quietly, dear child of God. We are standing on holy ground. May divine grace be ours as we tread in this sacred spot. How could this fit into the work of Christ? What part has this to play with a little child leading the wolf and the lamb, the bear and the cow? Was not Christ to come under the law? Did not God send forth His Son made of a woman? A stone untried, is a stone without worth. One who goes with us through the fire, must first be tried by fire. To wean a child is to take it from that which it had, is it not? We look yonder in Gethsemane and hear the prayer of Jesus as He prayed to the Father the last time in the flesh. We draw near Calvary, and we hear that Man of sorrows crying out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" God has forsaken his Son in that trying hour, that you, dear reader, may be owned in glory. That which had been His, for these thirty-three years, is now cut off. The weaning has come. The Son of Man is dying, weaned away from His Father's love. He is not playing on the hole of the asp now; He is putting His hand on the cockatrice's den. The cockatrice is something that does not exist. It is an imaginative animal, coming only in a deluded mind. Salvation by works has never really had any ground to stand on. It is the imagination of earthly minds, and this kind of mind is not able to comprehend the mind of God; it is not able to see that salvation is wholly by the grace

of God. Not being able to see the power and grace of God in salvation, the mind of imagination has connived, through Satan, to introduce into religion the monstrosity of false doctrine. This doctrine, like the horseleech's daughters, is not a part of the Christian travel; all three (the cockatrice, the horseleech, the works system of salvation) are products of deluded minds. Yes, imagination is the greatest thing in the life of a person that does not know God, whom to know is eternal life. To them, it is real, it is more than a match for their powers. The little child put His hand on the hole of this imaginary doctrine and broke its hold on the children of God. He met this monster (false doctrine) and put his hand on its hole, sealing in all of its followers, sealing out all the followers of the child.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

MATTHEW V. 16

Elder G. Beebe — Dear Brother in the Lord: — Please give your views on Matt. v. 16: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Who are they that are, by seeing the good works of the saints, to glorify the Father which is in heaven?

H. SMITH
Cerulean Springs, Ky.
July 3, 1878

REPLY

The words on which we are requested to write are among the instructions, admonitions and commands given to the disciples in what is commonly called Christ's sermon on the Mount. Having given, in the first twelve verses of this chapter, the peculiar traits of character by which his disciples shall be distinguished from all others of mankind, and the blessings of God with which, we are elsewhere told, they were blessed in Christ Jesus, according as they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, (Eph. i. 4,) he proceeds to teach them to appreciate the high and holy vocation of their heavenly calling, comparing them to the salt of the earth and the light of the world. As the salt, should it become defiled or mixed with filth, would thenceforth be unfit for seasoning our food, or preserving that to which it is applied, so the saints, if defiled with the flesh, or mingled with the abominations of the earth, would become unprofitable and useless for the edifying of the body, the church of God, and like salt that has lost its savor, would be cast out from fellowship, and trodden under foot of men. "Ye are the light of the world, a city that is set upon a hill, which cannot be hid."

The apostle Paul says to the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, which were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, that they were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; and exhorts them before to "walk as children of the light." — Eph. v. 8. The relationship of children implies parentage and birth; and as we were sometimes darkness, and now are, by a spiritual birth, born of and into the light and liberty of the sons of God, it truly becomes us to walk as the children of the light.

All the natural light of the world is embodied in and reflected upon the earth from the natural sun; and so also in the spiritual kingdom, God himself is our Sun and Shield, for it is written, "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of our God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High: God is in the midst of her." He is the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. He is light, and in him is no darkness at all. And as all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ, and he is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person, all the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines in his face, in all its refulgent radiance and eternal fullness. He is the Sun of Righteousness, having

healing in his resplendent wings; and in his incarnation it is testified of him that, "In him was light, and the light was the life of men;" and, "This is the true light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." This being **the true light,** all other lights, in a religious sense, are false and delusive; hence, if the light which is in any of us be darkness, how great is that darkness. Carnal religionists are charged with putting darkness for light, and light for darkness. — Isa. v. 20. And all who do evil hate the light, and avoid it, lest their works should be exposed; for whatsoever maketh manifest is light. And the light of that life which was with the Father, and was given to the saints in Christ, is the true light, which alone can manifest unto any of the sons of men the kingdom of God, or any of the things of the Spirit of God. As this light is the spiritual life and immortality which was in Christ in his revelation to us, we can only possess it by vital union with him; for he is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light, which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, or can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen. — 1 Timothy vi. 15.

This true light is not attainable by any power of man, for no man can approach unto it; it cannot be separated from Christ. Only by being born of this life, which reveals Christ in us the hope of glory, can any man have any true experimental knowledge of it. As Christ is the life, so he is the light of all who are born of God. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life; and this life is the true light: all else is utter darkness. This true light of life, of which the children of God are born when born of the Spirit, is not a new patch put on the old garment of our fleshly nature to improve it, but it is a new life, which we never had any knowledge or experience of until it was given to us. In the reception of it we received Christ, and not Adam revised and improved. A new heart was given to us, and a new spirit was put within us. The children of the light are born of the light, and walk in the light, and need not to be told that the Lord himself is their light and their strength, and he has become their salvation.

The church of God thus illuminated is as a city set upon a hill, which cannot be hid. That is, it cannot be hid from the children of the light. But, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" in its spirituality; for the natural man cannot discern the things of the Spirit of God. This mountain of the house of the Lord is established in the top of the mountain, and exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall say, "Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." — Isa. ii. 2, 3. The elevation, radiance and glory of this city is beautifully described to John by the angel in Rev. xxi: "Saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God," &c. "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light of it." Of this holy city and her light the prophets spake, saying, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." — Isa. lx. 1-3.

Before replying directly to the inquiry of brother Smith, we have thought it expedient to show what we

understand to be the light of the city of our God, and in what sense the disciples are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. It is not in themselves as earthen vessels, but like the pitchers which were carried by Gideon's men, when they surprised the camp of Midian, the lights were in the pitchers — as this treasure of spiritual light we have in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power thereof may be of God, and not of us; only so far as we have this light we are called to let it so shine before men, that others, seeing our good works, may glorify our Father which is in heaven.

The life, light and comfort which God has given to us, if we are called out of our former darkness into his marvelous light, should not be concealed; but those who are illuminated by it are to show forth the praise of him who has thus called us by his grace to a saving and experimental knowledge of him as God our Savior. Men do not light a candle and put it under a bushel, to circumscribe or conceal its radiance; but on a candlestick, that it may give light to all that are in the house. Even so the light of life which God has so graciously lit up in our hearts, whether it be in the gracious manifestation of his pardoning grace, or in the gifts bestowed on us for the edification of the church, should not be concealed. When God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shines in the heart of a poor sinner, and reveals the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of our blessed Redeemer, that enlightened one has a reliable evidence that he is a quickened subject of grace; and although the light of life which reveals Christ as his Savior also reveals to him his own vileness and utter unworthiness, still the subject of this saving grace cannot hide his experience under a bushel, without depriving those who are the household of God of what belongs to them.

How often the cruel tempter suggests to those who have been thus enlightened, that they had better just cover with a bushel, or conceal, what experience they have, at least until they feel more sure that they are worthy to speak of it to the church. To them such thoughts and temptations arise as these: It is only a mere candle, or taper; if it were a blazing comet, it might be of some use to the church; and they are tempted to conceal what light they have until their carnal reason can be satisfied with it. But the revelation of the remission of our sins is only made to our faith, and not to our carnal reason; this light which is life, shining in us, shines in the darkness of human reason, and the darkness comprehends it not. The faith of the Son of God, which we receive in the new birth, comprehends it, and it cannot be concealed from the household of faith without disobedience to our Lord, who teaches us that it should be uncovered, that it may give light to all that are in the house, which house is the church of the living God. Hence the command of your Lord and Savior is, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." The true light of spiritual life is to be seen of men by the good works which they are commanded to do. Our faith without works, is dead, being alone, that is, so far as giving light to all that are in the house of God; for if our light is concealed under a bushel, how shall others be profited by it? Show me your faith without works, says an apostle, and I will show you my faith by my works. As by the fruits borne the quality of the tree is known, so the fruits of the spirit in the saints, such as love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, and brotherly kindness, are to be manifested by the saints by their renouncing the hidden things of dishonesty and works of darkness, and by coming to the light, that their works may be made manifest that they are wrought in God. "For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure." Therefore the apostle exhorts us to "Do all things without murmurings and disputings,

that ye may be blameless and harmless the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life." — Phil. ii. 13-16. The good works of the saints, by which they hold forth the word of life, whereby they shine as lights, are works of obedience to the precepts of our Lord, and the man of God is in the inspired Scriptures thoroughly furnished unto all good works. — 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. No religious works, therefore, are or can be good, or can in any wise show forth the word of life, unless such works are enjoined and furnished in the inspired Scriptures. All the laws and commandments of Christ are in the Scriptures plainly written, and as his law is perfect, all or whatever he has not commanded his disciples to do, he has virtually forbidden. All the commandments and religious traditions of men make void the laws and government of Christ. The light of life in us can only so shine before men as to reflect the glory of our Father which is in heaven, when we take on us his yoke, and walk in cheerful obedience to all things whatsoever he hath commanded us. Jesus has said, If ye love me, keep my commandments; and then are we his disciples indeed if we obey him; but except we deny ourselves, and take our daily cross and follow him, we cannot be his disciples. We may be the children of God and heirs of glory, and live for a season in disobedience; but he will visit his disobedient children with his rod, and with many stripes. A disciple means more than a child, for it means an obedient child. And all of God's obedient children do let their light so shine before men, as to exhibit by their good works of obedience the light of life which God has given them. "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." — 1 John v. 2-4. Hence, although no works of the creature can possibly procure the light of life in us, yet when this life and light is given to and experienced in us, we can manifest or let it shine by our willing obedience and unreserved allegiance to our divine Lord.

Brother Smith desires us to say who are they who, in seeing our good works, are to glorify our Father which is in heaven? Well, our text simply calls them men, but they are the men before whom we are to let our light shine. Paul has said that the saints shine among a crooked and perverse nation; and it is said of some of the primitive saints that their enemies took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus, and beholding the man which was healed, they could say nothing against it. — Acts iv. 13, 14. And there are many other examples given in which ungodly men were silenced by witnessing the fidelity of the saints. We may therefore infer that at all times and on all occasions we should let our light shine out in our obedience to Christ our Lord.

But still it is not presumable that we can make either the dead or the blind see the shining of our light, or qualify them to glorify our Father which is in heaven. The figure used by our Lord in the preceding verse seems to us clearly to show that the men who are to glorify God at seeing our good works, are those who are in the house where the candle is put on the candlestick, that it may give light to all that are in the house, or all who are in the church of God.

We have witnessed many striking examples of this, when trembling children of God have come to the church to relate what God has done in their salvation; they have been enabled to tell of that light which God has lit up in their hearts, by which they have seen their lost and helpless condition, and finally how they have been made to hope and rejoice in the revelation of the precious Redeemer to them, and how in this light of life they have been made

to see, and desire to find a place in the kingdom of God, and in the fellowship of the saints. Their light has been so clear and bright as to be seen of all that were in the house, and a spirit of devout adoration has gone up from every heart to their Father in heaven, that he has thus called home his redeemed ones, delivering them from the power of darkness, and translating them into the light of his heavenly kingdom.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, August 1, 1878.)

OBITUARIES

CASPER G. FETTER

Our dear brother in Christ was born of earthly parents May 30, 1874, and departed this life January 25, 1962. He was the last male member of the Southampton Church and one of the few remaining in the Northeast churches. Our brother was firmly established in the soul cheering doctrine of God's saving grace, and yet how he longed for the church at Southampton to continue in the apostle's instructions by living peaceably with those that the church had travelled with for about two hundred years.

Brother Fetter was received into the fellowship of the brethren at Southampton on May 15, 1892, by the pastor at that time, Elder Silas H. Durand. This was the beginning of just short of seventy years of devoted and humble service to his brethren and to the One that bought him with the price of his blood.

He was chosen deacon on February 12, 1910, and he was a deacon in deed and in truth, ever contending for the glorious doctrine of God's sovereign work in the salvation of sinners, as well as a godly walk and conversation. The order and discipline of the Lord's house was precious to him.

He was appointed Church Clerk June 7, 1930, and his work in recording the deliberations of the body were nicely and orderly kept. His last entry in the church book was on October 8, 1961.

He was appointed Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the Southampton Church on September 10, 1941.

Our dear brother was a hard working man. He had filled the places of trust that he had been called to with a circumspectly walk before men and in honor to Him that had blessed him with a good hope through grace. In early life he was united in marriage to Miss Elizabeth Leedom and they were married in the Sexton's house at Southampton Church and lived there the greater part of their married life. This union left two children, to wit, Claude and Mary, who, with the mother, survive.

He left brothers and sisters, together with numerous other relatives, to mourn his passing. His funeral was largely attended at the funeral parlor in the town that he had known and lived in so long. The writer conducted the services using as a text Job 14:14, 15, after reading the hymn, "Abide With Me"; after which we deposited his body back to the earth to wait the summons of He that holds the issues of life and death in His hands, when the body that we left there shall come forth in honor and glory to the praise of His saving grace.

W. D. G.

CHARLES E. BERRY

Funeral services for Charles E. Berry of Abilene, Texas, were conducted by Elder C. V. Landers, and interment was in the Silver Valley Cemetery. He was born July 21, 1896, at Godley, Texas, and died June 3, 1962, after suffering for several years with heart trouble.

He is survived by one son, Will R., of Lubbock; four brothers: Calvin L., Houston; Lige S., Lubbock; Louis L. and Allen, Wichita Falls; and three sisters: Mrs. Ola Rucker, Coleman; Mrs. Ella Gaines, and Mrs. Delia Higgins, Abilene.

He was much interested in the church, and attended when his health permitted. He had visited in the home of Elder Landers a week before his death, and their conversation was of spiritual things. His hope was that he would be raised in the likeness of Christ. He was a subscriber to the **Signs of the Times** for some years.

(The above prepared from information furnished by his sister, Mrs. Delia Higgins. — Ed.)

EDMAN PRICE MARTIN

Edman Price Martin was born near Poca, W. Va., June 24, 1874, and departed this life September 5, 1962, at the age of more than eighty-eight years. He was a son of James Martin and Nancy (Harris) Martin; and was united in marriage January 13, 1897, to Ada C. Malton. To this union three sons and two daughters were born, who survive: Mrs. Verta Haning, South Charleston, W. Va.; Mrs. Nina Smith, Charleston, W. Va.; Cecil E. and James S., South Charleston; and Clemit E. Martin, Daytona Beach, Florida. Surviving also are eight grandchildren and sixteen great grandchildren. His first wife preceded him in death November 28, 1938; and on March 8, 1952, he was united in marriage to Mary Meadows, who survives.

I knew friend Martin from the days of my

youth, and know of his honesty, integrity, humility, and sincerity — a true, loyal neighbor and friend. He was a strong Primitive Baptist in conviction and belief. He did not unite with the church here in time, but he gave gracious evidence of a hope through grace in the blood and imputed righteousness of Christ. His high joy was to be privileged to attend the church meetings. Many times under the sound of gospel preaching, I have seen his face soften, and the tears flow, attesting to his high measure of rejoicing in the truth.

Though his last illness was severe and over a long period, he was made resigned and willing to go. He talked with members of his family in his last hours, and related the glory of being with Jesus, and of glimpsing into heaven. He desired to depart and be with Christ. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." We grieve not for friend Martin: we believe his spirit was wafed home to glory.

The funeral was conducted by Elder J. C. Hammond and the unworthy writer. His friends who loved him, sang some of the precious hymns he loved so well. His mortal remains were interred in the family burying ground to await the resurrection of the dead. Written at the request of his daughter, Sister Haning.

In hope of that blessed immortality,
H. J. Bird

MEMORIAL
ELDER A. B. AYERS

WHEREAS, It pleased our God to take from our midst by death, our beloved Elder A. B. Ayers, we bow in humble submission to the will of our God, believing that he had spent his appointed time here; and we desire to say with Job, "The Lord gave, and he hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

Our dear brother had visited among us many times, and was dearly loved by all who knew him.

BE IT RESOLVED, That this body express their sorrow to the family at the passing of our beloved brother, and that we sent a copy of this Resolution to the family, and place one in our Minutes, and that a copy be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Written by order of the Salisbury Association held with the Nassaongo Church October 24, 25, 1962.

Elder David V. Spangler, Moderator
William S. Adkins, Clerk

IN MEMORIAM
ELDER A. B. AYERS
A WIDELY LAMENTED SERVANT OF GOD

Elder A. B. Ayers, our dearly beloved Brother and highly esteemed Moderator, lately experienced the dissolution of the body, and we mourn his absence from the assembly of the saints in which he was desirous of being found. He departed this life on March 30, 1962, at the age of 76 years, and from his unfeigned faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ; his good hope through grace; his labor of love in the ministry; and his circumspect walk and heavenly conversation, we are not without hope that he has entered into an eternal Sabbath of rest from his labors here below, but believe that his spirit is now with the spirits of just men made perfect within the veil. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them" (Rev. 14:13). We believe that, with the Apostle Paul, for him to live was Christ, and to die was gain (Phil. 1:21). The cause of Christ was dear to his heart as demonstrated by the ardor with which he discharged his ministerial functions to the end, even in rapidly declining health. He preached Christ with much power and sweetness to the comfort and confirmation of many in different States of the Union and in Canada, where he was well received by God's humble people. And he longed for the restoration of peace in Zion, which is troubled by lamentable divisions.

Elder Ayers' dear companion, to whom he was married in the Lord, preceded him to the grave by four years, resulting in a loneliness which appeared to increase in the closing days of his pilgrimage here below. She accompanied him in filling his appointments as long as her health permitted her to do so, counseling and sustaining him in his high calling. His last sermon was preached with much liberty and power at Flatty Creek Church the last Sunday prior to his decease, and he enjoyed immensely a powerful sermon by a visiting minister, Elder W. D. Griffin, remarking that it was a feast to his soul. The immensity of the attendance at his funeral and the abundance of flowers sent, indicated a wide acquaintance and a high regard for this devout servant of the Most High God. In conclusion, I would say of him in verse:

He's gone from the shore of time,
Where he uttered many prayers,
And we are left to mourn the loss
Of our dear Brother Ayers.

Indeed, he is now greatly missed
By those who yet remain,
But we feel that our time loss
Is his eternal gain.

Written by one who esteemed him very highly in love for his work's sake.

C. W. Vass

By direction of the Kehukee Association.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to remove from these mortal shores by death, our beloved brethren, to-wit:

Deacon Handy B. Truitt, of the Snow Hill Church;

Deacon James D. Bethard, of the Indiantown Church;

Deacon Henry Hastings, of the Broad Creek Church;

Sister Clara Hastings, of the Little Creek Church;

Sister Della Johnson, of the Nassaongo Church; and

Sister Annie Adkins, of the Forest Grove Church,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, First, That we desire to leave upon our records some token of our love and esteem for them; Second, That we desire to bow in humble submission to him who doeth all things well, knowing that it is far better for them to depart and be with Christ; Third, That we thank God for the gift of these lovely brethren and sisters, whose memory we shall cherish in the years to come; and Fourth, That a copy of this resolution become a part of the Minutes of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association of 1962.

Done by order of the Association in session with the Nassaongo Church.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Maude T. Laws, Hon. Clerk
William Adkins, Clerk
W. A. Davis, Ass't. Clerk

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M.

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M.

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 11 A. M.

WRIGHTS' CREEK CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 11:00 A. M.

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., six miles SE. of Sulligent, Alabama.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

MACEDONIA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located one and one-half miles Southwest of Sulligent, Alabama, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT R. PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
HURTON PITTS, Clerk
Sulligent, Ala.

OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each Saturday before the fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Alabama.

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles SW. of Fayette, Alabama.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

ELAM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located two miles North of Goshen, Pike County, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 o'clock.

J. P. MORGAN, Pastor
A. C. CARTER, Clerk
1335 Avalon Lane,
Montgomery 6, Ala.

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before.

E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Pratt City, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. Meeting place at Alder Street at top of hill, first car going into Pratt City from Birmingham.

H. C. MOON, Pastor

LIBERTY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., eight miles South of Gordo, Alabama.

O. G. GARVER, Pastor

MT. CARMEL CHURCH, Coffee Springs, Alabama, meets each first Sunday 11 A. M.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

W. A. SPEER, Pastor

REHOBETH OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located five miles North of El Dorado, Arkansas and half-mile West of Highway No. 7, meets second Sunday in each month and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

R. W. RHODES, Pastor
W. A. SPEER, Clerk

WHITE WATER OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located about one mile Northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

W. A. SPEER, Pastor

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Stockton, California, meets second Sundays, 10:30 A. M., at 5620 E. Marsh Street. All lovers of the truth invited.

T. R. JEFFERSON, Pastor
WM. ECHOLS, Clerk
Chowchilla, Cal.

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Compton, California, meets each fourth Sunday at the home of L. W. Langwell, 12812 S. Williams Street.

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in the United States), meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is located one mile south of Newark, Delaware, just off of Highway 896.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK CHURCH, Miami, Florida, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before, SW. 29th Avenue and 6th Street. We extend an invitation to any interested to visit us.

MRS. J. M. FUTCH,
7005 SW. 21st Street,
Miami, Florida

NEW HARMONY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Hiram, Ga., meets every 1st Sunday at 11 o'clock.

O. J. CROKER, Pastor
J. F. JORDAN, Clerk

ELAM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located at Forest Park, Clayton County, Georgia, meets every 3rd Sunday at 11 o'clock.

O. J. CROKER, Pastor
MALISSIE STEWART, Clerk

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located at 5th and East Park Street, Weiser, Idaho, meets each 4th Sunday at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Address any communications to Deacon A. L. Turnidge, Weiser, Idaho.

ERNEST J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
FLOSSIE ATTEBERY, Clerk

PLEASANT VALLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas. For information please write Mrs. Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C, Kingman, Kansas.

THE LOST CREEK CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, meets first Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Kentucky, ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton, on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

NEW HOPE CHURCH (better known as Lick Creek) meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Kentucky.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE ZION CHURCH OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS, Mayfield, Kentucky, meets first Sunday each month at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M., on South 7th Street.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Baltimore, Maryland, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Street, near Calvert.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on Falls Road about twenty miles north of Baltimore.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Cass County, Missouri, meets on second Sundays in the Memorial Building, Pleasant Hill, Missouri. We invite brethren of our faith and order to visit us.

L. L. SCHENCK, Pastor
MRS. J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk
Pleasant Hill, Mo.

HOPEWELL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Hopewell, N. J., meets each first Sunday at 10:30, and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

ARTHUR R. WARREN, Pastor
LETHA A. BLACKWELL, Clerk

OLIVE AND HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Shokan, N. Y., meets each 2nd Sunday at 1:30 P. M.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
MRS. NEVA BROOKS, Clerk

The **WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,** Warwick, Orange County, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth

Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are at 10:30 A. M. DST.

The **MIDDLETOWN AND WALLKILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH**, Middletown, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday from April to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. Meetings are at 2 P. M. DST.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, New York City, meets every first and third Sundays at McBurney Branch Y. W. C. A. 215 W. 23rd Street, corner of 7th Ave. (Elevator to 2nd floor.) 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M. All visitors are welcome.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

THE WILSON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Wilson, N. C., meets each second Sunday at 3 P. M., and Saturday evening before at 7:30 P. M. The location is on the corner of Green and Jackson Streets.

MRS. BETTIE RICHARDSON, Clerk

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor

BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin, Oregon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes.

ERNEST ATTEBERY, Pastor

ROCK SPRINGS OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, meets each first Sunday at 10:30. The meeting house is located on highway 222, about one-quarter mile of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line.

JOHN D. WOOD. Pastor
CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets each 5th Sunday from May through September, with two days meeting the 1st Sunday in May; and meets at Needmore, Pa., on 5th Sundays from October through April, with two days meeting the 2nd Sunday in October.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
ORIEN MELLOTT, Clerk
McConnellsburg, Pa.

THE PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Memphis, Tennessee, meet in the Primitive Baptist Church, on Andrews Road in Ellendale, about a block from Highway 70, each Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

H. G. BROWN, Pastor
791 Watson Street
H. R. PRINCE, Ass't. Pastor
HAROLD TONEY, Clerk

CANE CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and is located nine miles Southwest of Martin, Tennessee. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
J. B. JONES, Clerk
Rt. 1, Martin, Tenn.

BORDEAUX PREDESTINARIAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Nashville, Tenn., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. The church is located on the old Hydes Ferry Road in Bordeaux, in Nashville. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

The **WALNUT FORK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH**, near Cottage Grove, Tennessee, meets on the second Sunday of each month.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor
R. L. VEAZEY, SR., Clerk

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, Houston, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before 10:30 A. M. Church is located at 815 Little York Road between Highway 75 and East Texas Freeway 59.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
IRENE WISENBAKER, Clerk

MT. ZION CHURCH, Weslaco, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.; and each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday before at 2:00 P. M., at their new location: seven miles West of Weslaco, on highway 83.

JOE L. HAMRICK, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk

SARDIS CHURCH, Amarillo, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 10:30, in the home of E. J. Parsons, 1711 Lincoln Street.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, has moved their meeting place to 3629 8th Avenue. They meet each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Take College Ave. bus to Butler and Ryon; go one block West, then half block North to church.

C. U. LANDERS, Pastor

THE ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST CHURCH, Lawn, Texas, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
MRS. NOLA STEWART, Clerk

AN ARM OF PILGRIM REST CHURCH, meets each second Sunday and Saturday night before at Earth, Texas.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
A. A. CHAMBERS, Clerk

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30, and Saturday night before, at the home of M. J. Culpepper. Lovers of the truth invited.

LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk

THE OLD SALEM CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS, four miles South of Teague, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

SAINTS REST OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday evening before at seven-thirty, at 4614 Sylvester Street.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
D. G. CONNELL, Clerk

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday afternoon at 2:30.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located on Route 28, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia.

ARTHUR L. CARTER, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. each second month (February, April, etc.), and is near Lucketts, about eight miles north of Leesburg, Virginia.

and

BROAD RUN CHURCH, Poolesville, Maryland, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. each second month (January, March, etc.)

L. D. DUKE, Clerk
Charlestown, W. Va.

MT. ZION CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, Virginia, on Route 50, between Washington and Winchester, Virginia.

MRS. DAVID FARNIE, Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are always glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Deacon G. C. Spindle, Lincoln 3-3782.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 8:00 P. M., Fairmont Park, 2023 Tidewater Drive.

C. N. BUNN, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Richmond, Virginia, meets each fourth Sunday in their new meeting house about ten miles South of Richmond, just off highway 360 South.

R. S. PAYNE, Pastor

DAN RIVER CHURCH, between Danville, Va. and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville, Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday night before, on Bradley Road.

W. R. DODD, Pastor

LITTLE ZION PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Chehalis, Washington, meets in the home of Sister Effie Parke, 1360 First Street the first Sunday of each month at 11 A. M.

HOWARD EASON, Pastor

BETHEL OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, of Riffe, Washington, meets each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before at 11 o'clock. For information write the Clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. VERNIE SCHOONOVER, Clerk
Box 612, Morton, Wash.

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, Naches, Washington, meets at 10:30 A. M. each second Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. DASIE BAKER, Clerk
Rt. 1, Naches, Wash.

HARMONY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, about four miles East of Huntington, W. Va., near Route 60 at Russell Creek, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

J. R. LANE, Moderator
MILDRED STANLEY, Clerk
Rt. 2, Huntington, W. Va.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 131 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1963 NO. 2

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/63
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

POOR IN SPIRIT

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven." (Matthew 5-3)

This characteristic, poor in spirit, of God's children sets them apart from the children of this world, who have never suffered the loss of their pride, love of the world, its pleasures and their own righteousness and ability to perform works that God would accept and reward them for it; hence they are the rich of whom Christ said, "It is easier for a camel to go thru the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven." This is the condition in which all mankind are in, under the dominion and bondage of "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, among whom we all had our conversation in times past — and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."

But when the set time comes for the Holy Spirit to translate one of God's children "From this kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son", there is first a circumcision, a casting out or separation of this spirit of satan from the soul or spirit of the person. This was openly manifested many times by Christ and His apostles. The devils or evil spirits which had held the persons in bondage were first cast out, leaving the persons in their right mind, or healing them.

In whom God begins this good work, He never leaves or forsakes them, but they become the temple of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ. Their soul or spirit now has the care and guidance of the Almighty, and it is by faith and hope that they walk and wait for the manifestation of God's power, mercy, love, and Christ's appearance at the last day. This manifestation in the believer's life of the Holy Spirit comes at God's appointed time, and the person in no way has the power to control, retain, or gain, this power of the Spirit by his will or power; for, "Our life (Christ) is hid with Christ in God."

There are times when this person feels to be without this presence of the Holy Spirit, and left entirely on his own. It is then he sees his own corruption, his helplessness and total inability to return, or to change his condition. Surely he is "poor in spirit". It is here that his hope sustains his spirit; that God is unchangeable, and that the work of Christ in forgiving his sins, will appear again to his relief and joy.

Some have departed from the truth at this point. It appears that they believe that after regeneration, the person has the power at his discretion to obey or disobey the commandments of God. If so he would be still the "rich in spirit"; but as shown above, the presence of the Holy Spirit in a person shows them their helplessness and poverty in things pertaining to God and righteousness. Such ones never see anything good they have done, for in fact sin is condemned in their bodies which are dead. ("If Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin.") This body was not circumcised in the circumcision

made without hands. Yet the death of Christ put away its sins, and herein lies the hope that it too shall in the resurrection put on life or immortality.

In the parable of Christ, (Matthew 25:34-46), the sheep on the right hand were not aware that they had done anything good in God's sight, and never boasted; the ones on the left never knew when they had not done good.

W. L. Crowley
Gordo, Ala.

LETTER TO THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

The Snow Hill Church, of the Old School Baptist faith, sendeth greetings to the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association when in session with the Nassaonga Church.

Dearly Beloved Brethren:

How blessed we are to have the privilege of meeting together once again in union and fellowship in knowing that He is our God. The merciful Saviour is so good to His little ones. If we but taste a crumb, we are made thankful, because if not for the grace of God we could not even see the little crumb, let alone taste it. Our God is a true and living God, whose promises have been kept. In Biblical days, when man went near unto God on Mount Sinai, as we are told in Exodus, chapters 19 and 20, they could not hear what He had to say and live. The law was a failure to them. God, being a merciful and loving God, promised them a Prophet; one that would do for them what they could not do for themselves. In the fulfillment of His promise, God sent forth His own Son, Jesus, born of a woman, made under the law to redeem sinners from that law which they could not keep. Only through this Jesus was the sinner to be saved. All this He did for us. Why? Because He promised it, this God of truth. The Redeemer was sent to save the children of God, and this He did, as evidenced by His nail-pierced hands and bleeding side. When He said, "It is finished," He meant that it was finished. No man will ever be able to lend Him a helping hand to bring one of His little ones into the fold. They are already there through the Great Shepherd. Praise, honor, and all glory be His, our precious and loving and merciful Saviour.

Our pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, is with us for our quarterly meetings. Our assistant pastor, Elder W. D. Griffin, is with us on first Sundays other than quarterly meetings. These two dear ones, who speak boldly concerning the faith of God's elect, are precious to our hearts. They are servants of God, whose love has been made manifest in them, and we trust has been revealed to us.

There are many dear friends who attend and love the church. Though they are not members of our visible church, we feel that they know the truth. Our hearts are always open to them, and hoping for them to be counted among the brethren. One of these dear friends, James Truitt, departed from us on April 15, 1962.

On October 21, 1962, our senior deacon, and beloved brother, Handy B. Truitt, passed from our midst. His absence will be greatly felt in Snow Hill Church, but the memory he left in the hearts of the brethren will be cherished forever. The most precious thought will be in remembering his bold, humble walk in the truth. There is a verse of Scripture that seems to describe him. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law, and they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." (Galatians 5:22, 24)

We send as messengers our pastor and assistant pastor, and all members able to attend. Our statistics are: members 18, died 1, baptized 3. We send $40.00 to help defray expenses.

Written by Sister Audrey Davis.

Pocomoke, Maryland

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

I tremble as I write this, wondering if it is of the Lord or of myself. Man is nothing but vanity, wanting worldly praise. I hope the Lord is with me.

"For if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversary." (Hebrews 10:26, 27)

These two verses have bothered me considerably, and when such is the case, I know I don't understand it. The writing to the Hebrews seems to be concerning the end of the old covenant, and the beginning of the new. The old covenant is the Mosaic law; and it is by the law that we are made to see our sins. After we are made conscious of our sins, and try to rectify them, we find ourselves continuing in sin, (wilful sins it seems). And we are tormented with a fiery indignation over our sins, which some call chastening: to me it is the baptism with the Holy Ghost and with fire, which is spoken of in Luke 3:16.

In Exodus 3:2, we find that the fire could be in the bush, and the bush not consumed. In Matthew 13:20, we are told that the tares and wheat should grow together, (that is, the sin and the spirit in our bodies), and the tares would be burned and the wheat gathered into the master's barn. This is the fiery indignation which shall devour the adversary, or enemy. Our enemy is our sin, and the fiery indignation will devour our sins.

The New Covenant is Jesus; he was, according to the Scriptures, sent into the world to save his people from their sins. His people are the ones whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life, chosen in him before the foundation of the world.

When Jesus hung on the cross, he said, "It is finished." (John 19:21) When he said that it was finished, I believe that every bit of his work was finished, and that every one of his little ones for whom his blood was shed, will be baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire: They will be gathered as the good wheat in the Master's barn, and will be presented without spot or blemish. Amen.

A little brother in hope,
Frank A. Holland

Perrin, Texas

Dear Editors and Readers:

I see my renewal is due; and it seems I can't get along without the *Signs*. What the writers in the *Signs* write, is just what I believe and enjoy.

Being here alone, it rejoices my poor heart to read after those dear brethren and sisters who speak of the goodness of God in their poor souls. I have been taking the *Signs* for a long time. I am now ninety-three years old, and can't be here much longer; but there is a time to be born and a time to die, and for every purpose under the sun.

While I was riding along by myself, there was a light that shined in me someway, that caused me to try to pray to the Almighty God for forgiveness of sins; and in 1892 I felt the good Lord forgave me my sins; and I at that time went to the church and tried to tell them what great things the Lord had done for me. When I think of the Old Baptists, I think of what a wonderful God they have.

I guess all the preaching I will be able to hear from now on, will be reading the *Signs of the Times*. The Bible says, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." (Isaiah 40:1, 2) This makes her safe in His almighty power, for she is kept by the power of God unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

May God's blessings be with you all, is my prayer.

Your brother, I hope,
C. Y. Osteen

THINKING OF THE DEAR CHILDREN OF GOD

Box 786,
Winfield, Ala.

Dear Editors:

I will try to pen a few of my thoughts, as I can't get any relief of mind. I awoke from slumber thinking of the dear children of God, including myself, if I am included with them. How wonderful when they are of one accord — how wonderful it is to think about; I wept for joy. I know I don't manifest my love for the church as I would love to; I have such a poor way of expressing myself, but it is about all I think about.

How we do feel to appreciate our dear pastor, Elder H. M. Brock, here at our little church. May the Lord bless and keep him as he goes in and out preaching for us so faithfully. May he be spared to us many more years. If not deceived, I love our little church here. We are small in number, but I believe we are all of one accord.

And I would not forget to mention the dear ones who furnish my way to church every meeting day, Sister and Mr. Lucas. They have been wonderful, and I hope I feel grateful to them for all they have done for me.

We had an addition to our membership recently, for which we hope to feel thankful to the all wise God. She made a wonderful profession. And I was made to remember about my coming to the church: I had thought it wouldn't be any trouble to talk to the church, but when the time came, I just couldn't say anything; but I knew in my heart that it was God's work. Sometimes I feel I have deceived the dear church; but I can't keep silent, but must praise his holy name. My heart goes out for all of God's little children. I believe we are all experiencing the same things as we travel in this life, to be understood at the last day, if we are His elect. We feel to know that except through the shed blood of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we could not rejoice when sitting under the sound of the ministering servants of the gospel.

I feel so grateful to you Editors for your faithfulness in striving to get the **Signs** out to so many people who enjoy reading it so much. It is the soundest paper I have ever read. May God bless you in your labors.

Yours in hope,
Mrs. A. T. Couch

"GIVEN STRENGTH FOR THE DAY"

Titusville, N. J.

Dear Elder Wood:

After reading your sermon at the Pigg River Association, printed in the October *Signs*, I have a desire to write you.

It was a glorious truth proclaimed; and but for this love and fellowship to sustain me, I would surely falter by the wayside. True, how many times does one go back to the "Beginning", — the beginning when one felt the manifestation of God's grace. It is everytime after one feels that surely there are none who suffer such trouble and burden as I; or go from experience to experience, when the little hope so long deferred, maketh the heart so sick, do we go back to the beginning. Yes, it is then one realizes that but by the grace of God, one could not continue to walk in faith; and, with the dawn of a new day, that little hope brightens up anew, and one is given strength for the day. It is all such a blessed miracle. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered the heart of man, the things God has prepared for them that love him."

And such truth as you made manifest in your text, was indeed food for the hungry soul, and comfort for the weary who long for rest from the conflicts of

this world.

May the God of all grace continue to bless you in your ministry. May He guide you and comfort you through all your down-sittings and up-risings, to His honor and glory.

Submitted in love,
Mary Hellings

REPORTS A GOOD MEETING

R. F. D. 2,
Luverne, Alabama

Dear Editors:

Enclosed you will find check to renew my subscription to the dear old *Signs of the Times*. Also money for two new subscriptions.

Most all of the associations in Alabama are now over. We were wonderfully blessed and glad to have with us Elders Griffin, Rhodes, and Wall. These able ministers stand firm on the old time doctrine, and we enjoyed them so much.

The Conecuh River Association was held at Enon Church, Dozier, Alabama, this year: we had a good meeting with old time preaching.

I feel I have been so wonderfully blessed of God to be able to go hear our able ministers preach the truth which was delivered to the saints; and to know there are many who yet believe in a God who rules in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand.

Being a widow, I live alone, and enjoy the *Signs* each month, and hope the Lord will bless me to be able to read it the remainder of my days. I do love the doctrine of salvation by grace; that is all that can reach a wretch like me.

May God guide and direct the Editors and all who contribute to the *Signs*, to publish the truth, is my prayer.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Audra Williamson

WORD FROM ELDER CHANDLER

Route 6, Box 408
Hopkinsville, Ky.

Dear Editors of the *Signs:*

It is time to renew my subscription, and I thought perhaps I might write a few lines; although I have been in the valley, mired in the clay. The Apostle Peter says these things are needful, (of if need be,) that the trial of your faith, being more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

The eighteenth day of November, 1914, (if I have an experience,) was the greatest day of my life: although I suffered in the proudness of the flesh for twenty-seven long years in the wilderness before I was made to acknowledge the truth that there is no other name given under heaven or among men, whereby we must be saved except Jesus. He paid it all; all to him I owe: He who verily was ordained before the foundation of the world, to redeem us with his precious blood. I hope I am included in the "Us", but if I am not, I believe he will give me a mind to know that he is just.

Hosea, second chapter, sixth verse, in speaking of His church, says, "Behold, I will hedge up thy ways with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths." I believe that this speaks for every individual child that is embraced in the covenant of grace; and they are the only ones who are discovered in their lewdness in the sight of their lovers; and are embraced in the love of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus the Lord. God declared by the pen of this prophet that "none shall deliver her out of mine hand."

So it is needful to be brought down in the valley; and there we can look to the hills from whence our help comes. And it is here that He allures us, and brings us into the wilderness, and speaks comfortably unto us; and it is there in the valley of Achor (sorrows, trials, and temptations), that we are

given the sweet hope of salvation. (Hosea 2:14, 15) It is there that the door of hope is opened to us; and what is that door except it be Jesus our Lord? "Verily, verily I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep." "I am the door, by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture." (John 10:6 and 9)

So it is needful for us to be in the valley at times; then, when the door is opened to us, we can sing in praise to His holy name, and bask in the beauty of Zion. Yes; for out of Zion the perfection of beauty, God has shined. If not deceived, I have seen that manifested a number of times in the past three months. Walk about Zion and behold her bulwarks, for out of Zion God hath shined: He could not shine where he was not; and he is shining through the perfection of his beauty.

"And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely. And I will betroth thee unto me *forever.*" Forever, isn't that long enough? But the sweetness follows: "Yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies." (Hosea 2:18, 19)

My dearly beloved, it is the righteousness of God, the knowledge (or judgment) of God, the lovingkindness of God, and it is all given of his mercies. Who, then, can deny that grace is freely given us: who are also betrothed to him in faithfulness. But we can only be faithful as we are led by the Spirit, and only when we are so led. Christ Jesus said, "If I go away I will send the Comforter, and he shall take of the things of mine and shew them unto you." Yes, through mercy and grace, we receive the revealed truth that, "By grace are ye saved."

I have not written as I intended, but I hope my pen was guided by and through love for the household of faith.

Yours unworthily,
W. Y. Chandler

EXPERIENCE

To Anyone Who May Read:

For sometime now I have had a mind to try to write some of my experience of the power of the Almighty, Omnipotent, un-impeachable, merciful God. Yet when I think of one as inconstant as I feel to be my very soul seems to die of fear for even thinking I know anythink of his grace, mercies and unchangeable sovereignty. I tried believing and saying that I knew very little of God, and that, too, brought shameful fear to my heart. So I hope — "By the grace of God I am what I am."

Many years ago, I believe I had a vision of a closed grave, with a cloud above toward the rising of the sun. God was in that cloud. Between the cloud and the grave was a fruit tree with no leaves on it; it was all fruit — and all different kinds of fruit. For a long time I did not know the meaning of this vision; yet it was so clearly in view in my mind through the years.

I awoke one morning of this year about four o'clock, and if not deceived, the meaning of the vision was revealed to me. But before I could tell anyone, it had all left me; except that the cloud was God and his power, the fruit tree was the Holy Spirit and the fruit of knowledge it bears, and the grave was Christ where our hope rests, his work finished, and the promise to raise us from the death our sins brought upon us.

Some years after this vision, I dreamed I was to be baptized. My aunt, May Allen, was leading me down to the pool. When we got there it was just a hole in the ground. She held my arm, and we began going down an old rotten wooden ladder, with rough, dark rock walls all around, into a deep, dark pit. So deep and so dark I could not see the bottom.

When we got to the bottom there was no water; and as I stood there in that waterless pit, I thought: There is no water to be baptized in. I looked up just above my head, and there were drops of water coming from that black rock wall; one drop at a time, just as clear as crystal.

I believe, if I have any knowledge of the power, grace, and mercy of God, it has been just one drop at a time: at the appointed time for the fulfillment of the will and purpose of the all wise God, who said, "My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." Even if it has been just one drop at the time, his grace is sufficient for us.

Some years later I felt I had a perfect right to hate someone who had done so wrongly towards me. Since I felt justified in hating this one, I hated with all my might; honestly believing I was right, and that it was no sin to hate anyone that had lived so sinful — only to be brought down to beg God for forgiveness, to feel to be the most sinful mortal on earth, and to love the one I thought I should hate.

I believe I knew then of a power and a love I had not known before. I knew that power was not of myself: I knew it was the mighty power of the merciful God. Only God can turn such hate to love. Had it been left to me, I would have been still living in hatred. For years after that experience, when the subject of the knowledge of God was spoken of, I would readily say, "I know very little of God." Then I would sometimes say, "I believe I know God's power."

A few years later, if not deceived, in a vision I saw myself going to New Hope Church. There was a guardian angel just above my head. Just before we got to the church doors, the angel ascended into heaven. The church doors were open, but I did not enter.

My Aunt Mary had been laid to rest for some time when I dreamed I visited her house of plenty. I believe it would be impossible to describe the abounding plenty of food stored in this house. I also dreamed I went to her flower garden. It was beautiful beyond words. The ground was completely hid by colorful blossoms; and a tree was covered from the roots to the top with a solid cover of beautiful blossoms. Even the fence around the garden was a solid mass of blossoms. I did not go into the flower garden: just gathered a few blossoms that had grown outside the fence and from the tree branches that hung out over the fence.

On July 23, 1960, the doctors told me my husband, James Franklin Ware, had lukemeia, and it was very doubtful he would live six months. Dr. Stallard had my sister bring me into his private office to tell me as gently as possible. It seemed this world was swiftly moved from under my feet. As we left his office, Sadie asked me where I wanted to go. There was no where for me to go — no place on earth to go; no one on earth for me to turn to; no earthly help, no earthly home. As we walked it seemed to me there was a hole before every step I made.

How could I face my dying companion without him knowing the horror I was trying to stand up under? How could I even stand up? What would I say to our only son stationed somewhere in Germany? We hadn't seen him for thirteen months; and just a few weeks before he had written he was counting the days until he could come home. Now he was to be flown home as fast as modern speed could bring him. How could I console him with nothing to say except there's no hope for his father's life.

My sister went to James' room, then came back for me, saying that James was calling for me. Who dried the tears in my eyes? Who gave me strength to stand up? and to walk into his room and speak calmly as usual; or to meet my son with a smile and calmly tell him his father must die? Only the mercy of our gracious and powerful Heavenly Father can give such strength.

James lived fourteen months, and I can never tell how it was . . . But in due time I was always made to "be still and

know that I am God." One day as he lay in the hospital, he told me he dreamed he was on a high mountain, and heard an awful roar; and he looked, and a great fire was burning everything on earth; nothing was being left but charred stumps. He thought he would surely be burned up; there was no way out. But when the flames passed over him, he didn't even feel the warmth from them; and he said, "There was one standing beside me." I told him, "James you need but one beside you."

Elder Jesse Paschal visited him while he was hospitalized the first time; and he mentioned, "I have already prayed for you." It seemed that when he said that, I knew God was with us, and it gave me great comfort and strength . . . I told someone two days before James died September 14, 1961, "Some day I'm going to cry as loud and as long as I want to." But when Dr. Payne told me that the dearest one on earth to me had expired, I could not shed a tear. Funeral services were conducted at New Hope Primitive Baptist Church September 16th by Elder J. Harvey Smith. It was a bright, sunny day, but it seemed as dark as night . . . I couldn't even cry . . . nor can I remember the words Elder Smith spoke, nor the singing, but all said he spoke beautifully, and the singing was the best they had ever heard.

Many times during his sickness, I tried to pray, but all I was able to say was, "Thy will be done, Oh Lord, not mine." . . . So much of my time I feel so blind, sinful, and lost, as I once wrote

The road seems long and lonely,
The desert so rough and wide,
The light so dim, I cannot see
The Saviour by my side.

About two months after James died I was so low in feeling it seemed I was completely unknown, and if I had ever known anything of the power and mercy of God, it was so little I had completely lost it, — the hope I thought I had was just a make-believe of my own, surely.

Time seemed as eternity
Hope seemed left way behind,
I was lost in a wilderness,
Stumbling helpless, and blind.

It seemed someone said to me, "To know His power, is to know it all." As I rejoiced fear overcame me, and doubt was bigger than ever. Did it mean that I did, or did not know anything of the power of God, I turned to my kitchen window, and a voice so small and soft said to me, "How can his power be called so little?" How weak and foolish I had been, was my first thought. For fifteen years I had been saying I knew God's power, and then sometimes with the next breath, I would say, "I know so little." For fifteen years I had been calling God's power, "so little". As I stood there it seemed a great cloud of power came all around me, with no end and no beginning.

Last night I dreamed I was standing under a huge oak tree. (My father, John P. Allen, spent his last weary, hot day on this earth, looking toward the sunset.) Someone had hung a tin pail of dirt to a branch of the tree with a piece of twine. The pail had rusted away, except a piece about the size of my hand, and a piece of dirt was still clinging to the piece of rust left on the pail. The twine was black and rotten. Beyond and across the way I could see a great mountain of earth, rock, green grass and trees. The grass was waving softly, and the trees moving calmly by a peaceful wind. There was not a house, or any man made thing on this mighty and beautiful God created scenery. And, as I stood there looking at the beauty and calmness, I was made to rejoice. Without moving my eyes I could see the ruins of this man made pail and piece of twine, that couldn't even hold the lowest thing God created. As I looked at it, I was again made to rejoice; and the same wind that was blowing the mighty forest on the great mountain, blew a part of my hair softly across my face, and a voice said, "Peace; it's all God's work. From the weakness of man to the mighty, mysterious power of God, it's all God's work."

We cannot see the reason; we cannot

understand, and we fall back to the cry, "Why?" Yet it is still all God's will and purpose. The same power that rolled the waters back on the sea of old, can calmly stroke your face softly with a strand of your own hair, as you stand motionless. He doesn't need the lift of your fingers.

. . . There is but one we know, and only one that knows us: We are among strangers, with the mighty power of God to rule and reign; to prove our weakness, guide our footsteps, lead us, put words in our mouth, and prepare us for something unknown to us; and to prove that he is power of all powers on earth and in heaven; and will be forever and ever.

There is much more I would like to tell. The half will never be told. Praises to the almighty, gracious, merciful, and ever-loving Heavenly Father. I am not a church member; I feel that I would be received with the dearest people on earth, for I have seen the doors of the church open. I know in no way I could deceive God for he knows me: I am afraid of bringing trouble into the church. I believe that God has purposed and foreseen everything, from the least to the greatest; and to me that takes in "all-things". Yet there is a fear in my heart, when I think of offering to the church — or begging for a home, would seem far better for me.

Be still and know that in the end
It's only on God you can depend.
All earthly things must decay:
I am the truth, the life and the way.

Be still and my salvation see:
Things not done will surely be.
From first to last 'twas my will:
In my loving care be still, be still.

Fannie Sue Allen Ware
Rt. 5, Box 245
Reidsville, N. C.

(The above was written in May, 1962. She was received into the fellowship of New Hope Church in August, 1962. — Ed.)

ENJOYED THE ASSOCIATIONS

1335 Avalon Lane,
Montgomery 6, Ala.

Dear Brother Spangler:

I enclose check to renew my subscription, and also my mother's, for another year.

. . . It has been my great pleasure to attend at least a part of six different Old Baptist Associations this year. I have been most gratified at the peace, fellowship and brotherly love that I saw demonstrated. In addition to the six associations visited, there were correspondents and visitors from many associations East of the Mississippi River, and some from West of it. It is heart-warming indeed when brethren from so far and wide can meet together for no other purpose than praising the great Jehovah God, and mixing and mingling with those of like precious faith.

I first attended your association, the Upper Country Line; since then I have attended the Five Mile Creek, Ebenezer, Conecuh River, Hopewell, and the Claybank.

I think our Conecuh River Association was one of the best we have had since I have been a member, or since I remember attending. Elder Lloyd Wall, from the Sulphur Fork Association, was with us. His great great grandfather, Elder Thomas Wall, was the Moderator of the first session of this association in 1828. Elder R. W. Rhodes, from Louisiana, was with us, together with the Elders of our neighboring associations, the Ebenezer, the Claybank, and the Western Primitive.

. . . Would be glad for you to come for any of our meetings, or at any time you can. Give our regards to Sister Spangler, the Minters, and many others.

A brother in faith, I hope,
A. C. Carter

ELDER TEW WRITES

Rt. 1, Box 268
Dothan, Alabama

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing $5.00 for renewal of my subscription to the *Signs*. I am somewhat late but I have sometimes felt that I wanted to write some of my thoughts concerning some of the things that are frequently discussed by us, who have a hope that we have a part in the first resurrection; and also by those who contend that even if one did have a part in it, he has to be on his guard or he will lose it.

. . . Concerning the disobedience of Adam in eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, I have heard the remark made: What a wonderful place this earth would have been to live in, if Adam had not disobeyed God in eating the fruit!

If language means anything, and the Scripture are true, (and we believe they are), Adam and Eve were ignorant, didn't even know that it was evil to disobey God: They didn't know they were naked until after they had eaten of it. God told Adam that in the day thou eatest thereof he should surely die. Adam couldn't know the meaning of the word "die", because he had never seen anyone die, or died himself.

This tree was in the midst of the garden; it was good for food, and pleasant to the eye, and a tree to be desired to make one wise. It was just as irresistable to Adam and Eve as a hot iron would be to a crawling baby, even though its mother told it not to touch it, that it would be burned if it did. The baby, having never been burned, would not know what the result would be.

The Eternal God had back in eternity given a certain portion of the race of Adam to his Son, their names having been written in the Book of Life; and just as certain as there were some who are vessels of mercy which were prepared unto glory, there were also some who are the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.

There had to be a fall before there could be a rising up; a dying before there could be a quickening, or making alive. So death passed upon all men, for all had sinned. But, as Paul says, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

I don't see anything in the Scriptures referred to, that suggests that we have to do something to earn eternal life, neither do I see where God pays us off with blessings if we will just be obedient. He freely gives us all things, and because of his great love wherewith he has loved us, even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ, and has kept us by his grace. He knows our needs better than we do, therefore he meets out to each one of us what is to our good, and to his eternal glory.

I have reached my three score and ten years, and I know, even though my health is pretty good at present, I can't hope to have very many more years here in this life. I would like to say with the Apostle Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day; and not for me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

Yours in hope of eternal life.

Elder J. A. Tew

NEWS FROM CANADA

5 Gregory Street,
Brampton, Ontario,
Canada.

Dear Editors:

Once again it is time to send my remittance. I want to thank the editors, associate editors, and writers of the *Signs* for their contributions of good reading. To me, the *Signs* is worth much more than the subscription price.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." (Matthew 5:6) Often after reading the *Signs*, I feel my cup runneth over, — how I'd like to see and write those dear people! Their experience sometimes is similar to mine, and yet each one is different, or it would not be our own.

My intention was to write earlier in the year: thought I could write more; but we can do nothing of ourselves. Paul to the Philippians said, "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me." Time permitting, I would like to re-read the 1962 *Signs*: they seem so very precious to me. These are the only ones I know of who believe in the sovereignty of God, without limiting it, or contradicting the fact. God knows where his people are, and there may be many in other churches who belong to His Church: "God knoweth them that are his."

We give all glory to God for the continuation of the *Signs* these many years; and may He see fit to continue its publication.

I had the blessed privilege of attending the May and June meetings here in Canada this year, and heard wonderful preaching. And friends wrote and said the same about the September and October meetings. Our pastor, Elder Ruston, preaches the 5th Sundays in Toronto, and we do look forward to his coming.

May God bless you all.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Mrs. Verna Carscadden

"THY ROD AND THY STAFF THEY COMFORT ME"

Route 4,
Rocky Mount, Virginia

Dear Brother Spangler:

I have thought for sometime that I would communicate with you, and it seems one thing, or something else, continually forbears; and after I blame everything else I can, I must confess that I am far from being a ready writer.

What I wanted to do, was to have you send me the *Signs of the Times* for two years, for which is enclosed a check for five dollars. Also, if you have a spare copy of October, 1962, issue available, I'd love to have one of them. I add a dollar to take care of that, and any that is left drop into the Indigent Fund for folks who like the paper but can't afford it.

I know a little about that sort of thing myself, only mine was a matter of being stranded beyond the normal circulation of the paper; and when I did get one to read, it was like a good drink of water in a hot desert. Of course, none of us think such a paper is liable to change anybody from nature to grace who is not thus appointed to be changed; neither is there always sure comfort in reading one. For I have read the Bible when it hurt much more than it helped; and at the same time that same Book bore record that the Lord of host is a puller-down as well as a builder-up, one that cuts as well as heals, — the one being just as important as the other.

If we had no such thing as chastisement, then we could not enjoy the peaceful fruits of righteousness afterwards. Of a certainty, if everyone else is like me, his behaviour is such as well deserves chastening, even the rod of affliction. Even so there is comfort in the words of David about this — he said, ". . . thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Which simply indicates, as David had to confess, that had not that rod been applied, he would have kept right on in his wild race. And the same writer

confesses elsewhere that many and varied are the vanities of youth. Another writer penned that it is good for one to bear the yoke in youth, which was hard for me to understand for some time. But a sober and stable mind, motivated by grace, will see that by bearing this yoke (the yoke of Christ), there are many slimepits, as it were, that wisdom guides us around. ". . . thy staff comforts me . . .", and gives me to walk in the strait and narrow way wherein is peace.

I feel, if not awfully deceived about the matter, that a few times in my life I have been made to lie down in green pastures, and made to travel by the still waters. These still waters are something seldom heard much about, or else I am not where they are talked about, but, to me, they represent something very reverent: a stopping of all going (vain running); a reconcillation to the sovereignty of God; a penitent tear (the water); and a hushed mouth (the silence), for we hear it said that he that controls his tongue the same is a perfect man. And we know that no man of himself can do such a noble thing as that. But there is a people in the earth whose favor it is to enjoy the salvation of Jehovah; and these do come to that Bethel spot, as appointed by heaven, to stand still — that same still as these still waters, and see (and feel) the salvation of the Lord.

This is called in another place, the preparing of God a table for his children to eat from (in a spiritual sense) in the presence of their enemies: That well of water (living water) that bubbles up from within (the kingdom is within you) to life eternal. In conjunction with this, I would ask what, just what, could we do, in any sense of what "do" means, without that inward unction that the world knows nothing about, — and subjects of grace couldn't hit a tap without. No wonder Peter refers to this matter as " precious faith", for so it is.

Must leave off now; look me over for good, please, and may the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob look over us all for Christ's sake.

James R. Holley

WHAT A GREAT DIFFERENCE IT MAKES

P. O. Box 595,
Mt. Vernon, Washington

Dear Elder Spangler:

I enclose my check for a two year renewal of the **Signs.**

My time of reading your good publication almost came to an end a few weeks ago, when, in connection with some temporary work I am engaged in which requires being out on a small lake in a small boat, in a moment of carelessness, I caused the boat to overturn, and I was thrown in the water while wearing full length rubber boots and heavy clothing; which made my predicament very serious, since swimming was out of the question, due thereto.

My first thought upon getting hold of the boat, was that I needed help, and there was none closer than a mile or so away; and my voice called out to the good Lord for help. There immediately came the feeling that He heard me, and was going to help. I proceeded calmly, and climbed upon the small boat with one foot on the motor, and in due time was able with the help of the wind and by paddling with my arms, to make it to the farther shore, and got out of the cold water. While moving across the water, I continued to call on the Lord for strength; and by clinging to the boat for my physical safety, seemed to be equal to clinging to the Cross for spiritual strength and safety. Before reaching shore I was humming or repeating the words:

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

This close brush with death, coming at a time since I was born again, as I hope, has brought forth such a different feeling and state of thankfulness than the few close calls in my earlier life,

when I thought I was a Christian and a God-fearing man. In meditating on the earlier incidents, I can see that I had no real appreciation or thankful heart and mind toward the Lord for his safe-keeping, and bounteous blessings. I can truthfully say that I **knew of God** in those days, but I did **not know him,** and it was not until he revealed himself to me in recent years, that I was given eyes to see, and ears to hear, and a heart of flesh.

Since I am nearing seventy years of age, I have but few years left, and I hope I will have the good **Signs of the Times** to read as long as I remain here on earth. I read each copy over and over many times.

Yours in the faith, I hope,
Wm. O. Hall

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To December 1962)

Elder W. Y. Chandler, Ky.	$ 2.00
James L. Howell, Ala.	15.00
Mrs. J. M. Davison, Ala.	2.00
Elmer Hastings, Md.	5.00
Mrs. S. L. Midgett, N. Y.	4.00
Mildred D. Gordy, Mich.	7.00
Laura B. Dittmar, N. Y.	1.00
Mrs. Lena M. Smith, N. C.	1.00
Eliza Turner, Va.	2.00
James R. Holly, Va.	1.00
J. F. Lax, Ill.	2.00
Mrs. Chas. B. Morris, Calif.	2.00

DISTRICT MEETING OF THE CONECUH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The **District Meeting** of the **Conecuh River Association** will be held at Pilgrim's Rest Church, in the Northwest corner of Covington County, Alabama, on the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in March, 1963. Follow U. S. 29 to Dozier, Alabama, turn Southeast on county road 77, cross Cnecuh River and go about two and one-half miles to the church. Preaching will start at 10 A. M.

A. C. Carter, Clerk

Danville, Virginia **February, 1963**

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TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

When one of our subscribers moves, and does not notify us, it costs us ten cents for the return of their paper to us. Second class mail is not forwarded.

Won't you please notify us in advance when you plan to move, and give us your new address. Thank you. — The editors

EDITORIAL

We promised something by way of an *Introduction to a New Volume* in a note in the January issue, and find many things coming to mind as we begin to write.

There is much subject matter in the revelation of God's dealings with his people, and in their exercises in being brought into the knowledge of these things, but if our brethren are as we find ourself, they are sealed so far as our being able to handle them at will,

either in meditation, preaching, or writing.

Before considering the prospects for the future, we may well review some things of the past, as they pertain to our brethren.

All Primitive or Old School Baptists are greatly interested in the reason why they are thus denominated, rather than just being called Baptists, which they really are. We find in the January 1, 1851, issue of the *Signs,* the following by Elder Gilbert Beebe:

"A retrospective view of all the way in which the Lord our God has brought the Old School Baptists for the last twenty years, may well lead them in astonishment to exclaim, "What hath God wrought?" When in the year 1832, the enemy came in upon our denomination like a flood, bringing in with them "damnable heresies and doctrines of devils", when, with their feigned words, they made merchandise of the simple, the Spirit of the Lord, as we trust, lifted up a standard for the saints to rally around; and from that day to the present, deliverance has been found in Mount Zion. After laboring to reclaim those who had departed from the faith and order of the gospel, until we despaired of ever being able to reclaim them from their errors, the Baptist church excluded from her fellowship the party which was then, and from that time have been known as "New School Baptists". At the time of the separation the party excluded branded those who remained on the old platform, as "Old School Baptists", because they said we were behind the spirit of the age.

"For the sake of discrimination the old party consented to be so called, having it distinctly understood that the term, school, in its application to us, referred to the school of Christ, and to no system of scholastic religion taught by men. It was in those days frequently predicted that we would soon become extinct; but having received favor of God, we continue to the present time."

Thus is the origin of our name "Old School"; to which has been added "Primitive", as a further distinction.

The Black Rock Address is well known and we feel it is only necessary to mention it here; and to remark that it was adopted at the Black Rock Meeting in 1832, to record the new things which had been advanced as tenets of Baptists, but not receivable by those who knew they were of late origin.

But because those Old School or Primitive Baptists who are doctrinal descendants of those first called Old School, still maintain their doctrine; and lest any should not understand what their doctrine was; and also that anyone may compare present things with those of the past, we give the following outline of the doctrine embraced in the commencement of the publication of the *Signs*: "Which was," as Elder Beebe wrote in 1853, "at that time fully recognized by all our Old School Baptists, North and South, East and West, as a fair statement of the cardinal doctrine of our order; and is still our platform."

"Maintaining inviolably the following Scriptural sentiments:

First, The existance, sovereignty, immutability, omnipresence, and eternal perfection of the Great Jehovah — the revelation which God has given of himself as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. "These three are one" (1st John 5:8)

Second, The absolute predestination of all things.

Third, Eternal and unconditional election.

Fourth, The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

Fifth, That the atonement and redemption by Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

Sixth, The sovereign, irresistable, and (in all cases) effectual work of the Holy Ghost in quickening, and regenerating the elect of God.

Seventh, The final preservation, and eternal happiness of all the sons of God.

Eighth, The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

Ninth, That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers; that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the Scriptures are the only rule of faith and practice to the saints of God.

The *Signs of the Times* will be decidely opposed to Bible, Tract, and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath School Unions, etc., etc., waging war with the mother Armenianism and her entire brood of institutions."

We now come to think about the outlook for the future. We are certain that the eternal will of our God has ever been fulfilled; and will continue to be. Were it not so, we would certainly have much to be fearful of. We are concerned, of course, about the state of affairs in the secular and the religious world. But, being assured that God is yet ruling in all things, we are given faith to wait for the fulfillment of his promises. This gives a certain degree of calmness as we live each present day, seeing sometimes the workings of the hand of the Lord. But, whether seeing or not, we are assured that He lives and reigns; so that all things are working together as his purposes are unfolded in the coming, and in the passing of time.

The purposes of God are to the praise of the glory of his grace, and to the bringing of his beloved people to the things He has prepared for them:

The events of time brought sin and condemnation into the world, and the law was given that this sin might be made manifest in the weakness of men, causing the offence to abound.

The Saviour was sent to fulfill the promises of God unto his elect family; and their redemption and justification was obtained and sealed by His fulfilling the broken law for them, by his being delivered for their offences, and being raised again for their justification. So that the purpose of Christ's coming into the world was that His elect should be fully prepared to stand in righteousness before God.

What Christ is to his people, and what he has done for them, is experimentally manifested or revealed to each of them; so that, "The Lord knoweth them that are his", and gave his Son for their redemption, and then sends the Spirit of truth, or Comforter, unto each one of them to bring the knowledge of their redemption through Christ. They are prepared by the new or spiritual birth, being born of God in a wonderful and glorious sense, to see the kingdom of God — of the water and the Spirit to enter into the kingdom, and are then sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest, or assurance, of their inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession. They have strong consolation, and are fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them. This hope is the anchor of their souls while they live: they are kept by the power of God through their given faith, ready to be revealed, as Peter said, in the last time.

These things are the heritage of the Lord's people. Many of them who were thus sealed, are now sleeping in Jesus; many of them now living have been sealed; many of them now living will yet be sealed while they live; and all, absolutely all, of them will be sealed with this holy Spirit of promise, even to the end of time. So the promise of Jesus will be fulfilled completely: "All that the Father hath given me shall come unto me."

The certainty of these things is because God has decreed it: He has taken care of the choosing, the redemption, and the calling. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 1:2)

Though they will yet be afflicted and poor during the year, the Lord's people shall still trust him. He will yet give them grace sufficient for their need;

and though many things may seem to be against them, nothing shall be able to separate them from the love of God. They shall look forward to those things which are before: They shall, "Press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

May we all be exercised in humility; realize our unworthiness to be so highly favored; be blessed to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called; examine ourselves whether we be in the faith; and contend only for that faith once delivered to the saints.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ROMANS VI. 23

"The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." — Rom. vi. 23.

To appreciate a gift, the needy condition of the recipient, as well as the intrinsic value of the gift, must be considered. The apostle has spoken, in this connection, of the wages of sin, which is death; and as he has testified that all have sinned, so he informs us that death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Death and life are clearly set before us. The one in Adam, the other in Christ. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." — 1 Cor. xv. 22. But our death is not spoken of as a gift; it is what we have earned, or merited; it is our just due, or what we deserve, at the hand of the righteous Judge.

Judgment has come upon all men to condemnation. And as all men were created in the earthly Adam, and were in him, undeveloped, when the transgression was committed, the death which was pronounced on him stamped mortality on all his posterity, although not one of them had then been born, and millions may not yet be born. In this death we find ourselves involved as we are brought into manifestation, being conceived in sin, and going astray from the womb, speaking lies, and so demonstrating the depravity of that nature which is Adam, or of the flesh. The natural life in which we are born of the flesh is not eternal, but mortal, and the possession of it cannot raise us any higher than the fountain or source from which it emanates. Being born of the flesh therefore can only develop us as children of Adam; it does not constitute us sons or children of God.

The relationship of a father and children is a relationship of life, and is predicated upon the pre-existence of the children in the father, or parent. It is true, our translators have, by supplying two words which are not in the inspired original copies of the Scriptures, rendered, in Luke iii. 38, "Adam which was **the son** of God;" but these words throughout the chapter are put in **italics**, to show that they were not in the original text, but were supplied by the translators. Adam was truly of God, as his Creator, but not as his father; for he was created of God, but not born of God. If Adam were a son of God, (we speak of him as a natural man, and head of his posterity) then all of his posterity would, as lineal descendants from him, stand in vital relationship to God, and would not need to be born again in order to inherit eternal life. The life of God is eternal, but the life of Adam is a created life, and subject to mortality and death. If the posterity of Adam were, through him, sons of God, they would be heirs of God; for, "If sons, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ."

But such is evidently not the case; for "The gift of God is **eternal** life through Jesus Christ our Lord," and not through the earthly Adam. The maternal parent of mankind was called **Woman,** because she was taken out of man; and after her distinct formation, as well as before she was taken from his side, she was bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh. God had called their

name Adam in the day when they were created. "And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living." And this was her name before any of her children were born. Their birth did not change the relationship. Eve was animated by the same vitality which God breathed into the nostrils of Adam, by which man became a living soul.

As Adam was and is the earthly father, so Eve was and is the earthly mother of all the human family. That life which they possessed in the beginning, was and is the life of all generations which they were and are the earthly parents of, throughout all succeeding ages down to the end of time. If this were not so, the transgression of one man could not have involved all mankind in condemnation. "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law." "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

It will be remembered that when sin entered, and passed on all men, not one of all the human race had been born; yet the guilt of sin and sting of death so effectually entered the fountain of human life that its poison extended to all generations of mankind down to the remotest period of time. To be developed in our individual manifestation as children of Adam, a natural birth is indispensable; but the birth is not the origin or cause of the life; but the life previously existing is the cause of the birth, and the birth in natural generation brings into manifestation that life and substance which before existed in the parent.

"Conceived in sin, O wretched state!
Before we drew our breath,
The first young pulse began to beat
Iniquity and death."

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh." "Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his image, and called his name Seth." And he also begat sons and daughters. All his children were like him in form and fashion, and like him also in nature, and the same judgments which passed on him to condemnation, passed on them in him before they were born.

It is sometimes said by those who never knew the deep depravity of their own nature, I am not responsible for the sin of Adam. But what saith the eternal Judge, by the mouth and pen of the inspired apostle? "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners," &c. One single transgression of the law of God was sufficient to consign all mankind to condemnation, wrath and utter perdition, so hopelessly and irretrievably that nothing short of the precious blood of Christ could possibly redeem, wash, cleanse and save any from the dreadful penalty. The terrific thunders of the violated law declare,

"Curs'd be the wretch, forever curs'd,
Who doth one single sin commit;
Death and damnation for the first,
Without relief and infinite."

But when the stern demands of God's holy law are heard by a quickened sinner, he is made to see and feel, and to confess with deep contrition and brokenness of heart that he is justly condemned, not for Adam's sin, but for his own sin in Adam's transgression, and for all his personal transgressions, which are more in number than the hairs of his head, and greater in magnitude than finite beings are able to estimate.

When arraigned before the awful bar of God, and all the fearful cloud of his guilt is presented to his astonished view, he will no longer doubt or dispute the justice of God in his condemnation; but as the holy law of God displays to him the infinite purity of God, and the justice and inflexibility of his law, the poor, distressed, guilt-stricken sinner is amazed that God has spared his life, and restrained his wrath so long. To his astonished mind it is a miracle of mercy that he is not in hell. There is no caviling now about Adam's sin, but he feels the load of guilt which he knows is all his own. He has now no longer a disposition

to challenge the justice of God, or claim the favor of God: sin has been the entire work of his life, and death his well earned wages.

He can no longer flatter himself that he can escape the righteous penalty of the law of God by any work or device of his own: he is driven out from every refuge, and sinking down in hopeless despair. Tell him now that he can make his peace with God, and by his groans and prayers and tears appease the wrath of God and satisfy the demands of law and justice, and avail himself of eternal life. Ah, these vain delusions which were once so grateful to his ears, have lost, forever lost their charms to him. Tell him now to give his heart to God, and this will secure to him salvation. He feels too sensibly the pollution of his heart to dare to offer it to God, who will accept of no impure or unclean offering. He says,

"In this polluted heart
An offering fit for thee?
Swarming, alas! in every part
What evils do I see."

He neither dares nor feels disposed to insult the majesty of God with an offering so vile and polluted. Neither can he rely upon his prayers or tears; these have no virtue or power to atone for sin, or wash away his guilt. He says,

"If tears of sorrow would suffice
To pay the debt I owe,
Tears should from both my streaming eyes
In ceaseless torrents flow.

But no such sacrifice I plead
To expiate my guilt;
No tears but those which Jesus shed,
No blood but he has spilt."

We cannot believe that any sinner was ever able to appreciate the gift of God which is eternal life, until made fully sensible of his utterly lost, helpless and justly condemned condition; until thoroughly convinced that there is no power in heaven or earth that can save him, short of the supreme power of God, and that must come as a free gift from God, and that not through a system of means or works, but through Jesus Christ our Lord. The gift of God: not an offer, made to depend on some condition to be performed by men. In the fifth chapter to the Romans, as in many other parts of the Scriptures, it is called, The gift of God, The free gift, and that unto justification of life, &c.

We have endeavored to show that our mortal life was given us in the earthly Adam, who is the figure of him that was to come; and that our personal development in that life was by being born of the flesh — that our mortal life existed anterior to our birth, or a birth could not have produced it — that our life is the cause of our birth; the birth has made us personally manifest as children of the earthly Adam. We had our life given us in him, which was not manifested in us personally until we were born of the flesh. So also we are informed that God has given us eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord. Our natural life was given us in and through the earthly Adam: but our eternal life is given us in, and we receive it through Jesus Christ our Lord.

"That which was from the beginning," &c., "the Word of life: (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.") — 1 John i. 1, 2. "And this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." — 1 John v. 11, 12. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." — John i. 1, 4. "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." — John xvii. 2, 3.

As that life which was given us in the earthly Adam was our life, and so absolutely ours as to involve us in the guilt of his transgression more than four thousand years before we were

born, so the life which was given us in Christ, and secured to us in him from everlasting, was, by the unspeakable gift of God, so truly ours before the world began as to make us the heirs of God in Christ, and in the fullness of God's appointed time the experimental recipients of that "eternal life which God that cannot lie promised before the world began." — Titus i. 2. Hence we are assured that all the children of God are "Sanctified (or set apart by the election of grace) by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and called," by him "Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." — Jude 1, and 2 Tim. i. 9.

These Scriptures prove beyond all successful contradiction, first, that God has given unto his people eternal life. Second, that this life which God has given is in his Son. Third, that it was given to them in Christ before the world began. Fourth, that it is preserved securely in him as their Mediatorial Head, and that they are ultimately brought into an experimental possession of this life by a spiritual birth; that is, by "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. For all flesh is as grass, (corruptible, and of corruptible seed,) and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth forever." By the power of an endless life.

Now as all flesh is as grass, and all that is born of the flesh is born of corruptible seed, no amount of reformation of the flesh can possibly supercede the necessity of being born again, of incorruptible seed, in order to see the kingdom of God, or to inherit eternal life, or to know the things of the Spirit, which can only be spiritually discerned. This eternal life which is given us in Christ, and by which we are quickened in the new birth, is light, and all who are born of it are children of the light and of the day. By its radiance they are delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into God's marvelous light. It makes manifest to them the darkness of their fleshly minds, shows them the corruption of their earthly nature, and the impossibility of seeing, entering or inheriting the kingdom of God, without being born of the Spirit. This eternal life, which is the gift of God, is not only in Christ, as our earthly life was in the earthly Adam, but is also **through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

The first Adam begat sons and daughters, and the sons of Adam also in succeeding generations begat sons and daughters; but not so in the spiritual life. Our Lord has no grandchildren; he is the **everlasting** Father, and all the heirs of immortal glory are begotten of him; and as their spiritual life is in him, he himself is formed in them, and dwells in them; he is the second Adam, the Lord from heaven. He gives eternal life unto as many as the Father has given him. He is the Quickening Spirit, and by him immediately, and without any intermediate means or agency, they are begotten and born, and are but one "chosen generation, royal priesthood, holy nation, and peculiar people." No man can come unto the Father but by him, for the gift of God is eternal life, through him, and through no other medium or mediator.

All who are born of this incorruptible seed are qualified to receive and enjoy an inheritance that is also incorruptible, and that fadeth not away; for that which is incorruptible is insusceptible of corruption. In that which is born of this incorruptible seed his seed remaineth, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. — 1 John iii. 9. But those who are born of God and of his incorruptible seed, were also born of the flesh, and of a corruptible seed; and as they are yet in the flesh, notwithstanding the indwelling of the incorruptible seed, they still have to say, "In me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing."

Although the immortal, incorruptible seed of eternal life is given to us, we have received it, and it dwells in us, yet our corruptible nature, which is born of corruptible seed, has not yet put off its corruption. This mortal has not yet put on immortality, nor has this corruption put on incorruption. Let not the children of God despair because they feel, and mourn, and groan, being burdened with a hard heart, a wandering mind, vain thoughts, carnal passions, and cruel doubts and fears. For we who have in this new birth received the first fruits of the Spirit, do groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

That Spirit of which we are born is the seed that dwelleth in us, and although the infirmities of the flesh are still so sensibly felt as to make us groan, yet the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, and maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered. But this conflict, now so turbulent and fierce, between the flesh that is born of the flesh, and the spirit that is born of the Spirit, will soon be over, and all that is corruptible, mortal and sinful will be put off, and we shall be raised up from the dead, in the perfect image and likeness of our risen, exalted and glorious Redeemer, to enjoy his presence without a vail between, and to be tempted and perplexed no more forever.

When our Savior was here in the flesh, he possessed two natures in his own person, the human and the divine. He was both God and man, and Mediator between God and man; and he claimed to be the Son of God, and the Son of man, at the same time. His redeemed people certainly are, in their earthly nature, children of men, and as such they are subject to all the infirmities of the flesh — to diseases and death; but they are also sons of God; for "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and in doth not yet appear what we shall be." Now we are in the flesh, and bear the image of the earthly Adam, in that fleshly nature which is born of the flesh. But as we have, and do still bear the image of the earthy, so we shall bear the image of the heavenly, when we awake with his likeness.

"Sin, our worst enemy before,
Shall vex our eyes and ears no more;
Our mortal foes shall all be slain,
Nor Satan break our peace again;
And every power find sweet employ
In that eternal world of joy."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, January 15, 1877.)

ORDINATION OF ELDERS

Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, of Tyler Mt. Road, Charleston, W. Va. while seated in conference with the approval of brethren and sisters from our sister churches with whom we correspond, on June 30, 1962, requested that a Presbytery be called for the purpose of the ordination of Brothers Randall Pennington and Robert Wilson to the full work of the ministry, if found qualified.

On August 4, 1962, the following Elders and Deacons assembled at the above named church: Elders J. S. Honeycutt, Johnny Smith, J. C. Hammond; Deacons Ben Bird and Hugh C. Johnson.

After introduction by song and prayer the Presbytery was organized as follows: elected Elder J. C. Hammond as Moderator, Nanna Carney as Clerk; Elder Honeycutt to offer the ordination prayer; Elder John Smith to examine the brethren and Elder Hammond to deliver the charge.

Deacons Ben Bird and Hugh Johnson presented the brethren to the Presbytery.

After the brethren were examined and found qualified, Elder Honeycutt was blessed with the delivery of an inspirational prayer; and in the laying on of hands Brother Robert Wilson and Randall Pennington were entitled to all the ordinances of ordained Elders of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church.

The brethren were then delivered back into the hands of the church by Elder J. C. Hammond, both Brothers Randall Pennington and Robert Wilson, as ordained Elders.

Conference dismissed by song and prayer. Done by order of the Presbytery.

Elder J. C. Hammond, Moderator
Nanna Carney, Clerk

ORDINATION OF DEACONS

According to the call of the Pleasant Ridge Church, a meeting was held on October 20,

1962, for the purpose of ordaining Brother Sammie J. Moore and Brother Bruce H. Sullivan to the office of deacon.

The following elders and deacons met and organized themselves into a Presbytery: Elders H. G. Brown, H. C. Moon, H. R. Prince, R. W. Rhodes, E. D. Gafford, Sam H. Dean, W. L. Norris, and W. W. Hudson, Jr.; Deacons R. A. Hocutt, C. M. Stripling, T. M. Parham, G. W. McDuff, J. W. Ray, E. T. Smith, U. R. Taylor, C. P. Hayes, Euel Evans, Greely Egger, J. W. Crawley and J. H. McGarity.

Elder W. W. Hudson, Jr., was selected as Clerk, and Elder H. M. Brock, as Moderator.

The two candidates were presented to the Presbytery by the spokesman for the church, Brother G. C. Lancaster. Elder E. D. Gafford was elected to question the candidates. He read the qualifications (1 Timothy, 3rd Chapter) of deacons. Brother Moore and Brother Sullivan stated that they were submissive to the action of the church in setting them apart for this work. After due examination concerning moral standards, doctrine of the trinity, predestination, and articles of faith of the Primitive Baptists, the Presbytery was satisfied as to their qualifications.

Elder R. W. Rhodes worded the prayer as the Presbytery laid on hands. Elder H. R. Prince delivered the charge, and gave sound exortation concerning duties of the office of a deacon. After the right hand of fellowship was given by the Presbytery, members of Pleasant Ridge Church, visiting brethren and sisters, Brother Moore and Brother Sullivan were presented back to the church as ordained deacons.

Minutes of the proceedings were read and approved; and the Presbytery was dissolved in order.

Elder H. M. Brock, Moderator
Elder W. W. Hudson, Jr., Clerk

OBITUARIES

DEACON HANDY B. TRUITT

Deacon Handy B. Truitt, of Snow Hill, Maryland, was born December 21, 1891, the son of John H. and Mary Truitt, of Snow Hill. He departed this life October 21, 1962.

He was first united in marriage to Ella Davis on December 31, 1914, who died in 1937. On February 26, 1938, he was united in marriage to Maude Perdue Laws, who survives. Surviving also are a step-son, Albert F. Laws, of Salisbury; a step-daughter, Mrs. Henry Guhleman, Jefferson City, Missouri; three sisters: Mrs. Bertha White, Exmore, Virginia; Miss Annie S. Truitt and Mrs. Beulah Littleton, of Salisbury, Maryland; and a brother, George Truitt, of Snow Hill.

On September 7, 1947, Brother Truitt and his wife were baptized into the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church of Snow Hill, by the pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler. The church recognized in him the qualifications of a deacon, and he was appointed to that office in December, 1947. He filled the various offices in the church well. He held a number of responsible positions in his county, including Judge of the Magistrate Court for two terms, and President of the Federal Land Bank Association of Salisbury, Maryland.

Brother Handy, as he was affectionately known, suffered much in the last fifteen years. The writer remembers the day he went before the church for membership. He was so weak that he could hardly walk, yet the dear Lord gave him strength to perform what He had laid upon him. In the church he was blessed to labor for the things that make for peace, and to adorn his profession with a godly walk and conversation. The spiritual welfare of his church and brethren ever appeared to come first with him.

His family, church, and community will miss him very much. May God bless his family, and all of us, to be reconciled to His holy will, and say, "Thy will be done."

Funeral services were held in the Snow Hill Meeting House by the writer, Elder W. D. Griffin, Elder Arthur Warren, and Elder John D. Wood, and his body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the second coming of the Lord.

Written by one who loved him very much.

D. V. Spangler

MRS. NANCY ADELINE SLAUGHTER

Sister Slaughter was the widow of Deacon Sam Slaughter. Her maiden name was Ballard, and she was reared in Union County, Arkansas; and lived in ElDorado for many years. She was a member of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, where her husband was a member and honored deacon for years. They were both very lovely and devoted members. He passed away ten or twelve years ago, and she passed away November 12, 1962, after a long illness.

She is survived by one son, Dewey L. Slaughter, ElDorado, and two daughters: Mrs. Velma Cartwright, Walpole, Mass., and Mrs. Dale Petty, Oklahoma City, Okla. Surviving also are eight grandchildre n and twenty-five great grandchildren.

Our dear sister suffered severely for several months, but with meekness and patience. The writer visited her often, and she nearly always called on me to pray for her to the dear Lord, whom she trusted in a loving and manifest sense as long as she lived. But the time for her to be delivered by death came, so, dear ones, let us not weep as those who have no hope. We feel, from every Scriptural stand-

point, that she is much better off. When the Lord comes again, she, together with all His people, will come forth in his image, to dwell with him forever.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer, together with Elders J. L. Smith and W. A. Speer, at Bethel Church. May the Lord bless and comfort her family and friends.

R. W. Rhodes

NETTIE FLENNIKEN RUCKER

Nettie Rucker was born May 4, 1871 at Kingston, Texas, where she was reared. Death came September 10, 1962.

Funeral services were held September 12, 1962 at Sorrels and Son's Chapel under the direction of Elder W. W. Taylor. Interment was in McWright Cemetery, North of Greenville, Texas.

Sister Rucker united with the Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church early in life and remained an orderly and faithful member until her death.

In 1890 she was married to C. M. Rucker, and to them three children were born: Mrs. Virginia E. Moore, of Brownwood, Texas; and Mrs. Lenice Corkett, of ElPaso, Texas, who survive. One son preceded her in death. Other survivors are two sisters: Mrs. Maggie Bull of Greenville, Texas; and Mrs. Leta Bowser, of Amarillo, Texas. Her husband, three brothers and four sisters also preceded her in death.

Action to prepare one copy of this obituary for the church books, one for the family and one to be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication, was taken while in conference September 22, 1962.

Elder W. W. Taylor, Moderator
Jean Williams, Clerk

DR. FRANCIS B. JORDAN

Dr. Francis B. Jordan was born December 30th, 1898, in Madison County, Iowa, and slept peacefully away on August 22, 1962, in Hollywood, California. Elder O. F. Dearing, pastor of the deceased, conducted the funeral services.

Dr. Jordan was the youngest child of the late Elder and Sister F. M. Jordan, of Winterset, Iowa, and was a member of Liberty Old School Baptist Church in Los Angeles, California. On January 11, 1928, Brother Jordan was married to Miss Dorothy Habenicht in Des Moines, Iowa. He leaves his widow, Sister Dorothy, Sister Mary L. Teaford and her husband, Marvin, and two grandsons, Michael and Mark. Also a sister, Grace E. Jones, a brother, G. I. Jordan, a niece, Helen Jones all of the Los Angeles area. Also, a sister, Velma French Fugate of Palestine, Texas and a brother, S. D. Jordan, of Grinnell, Iowa.

When a young man, "Doc" as his family and friends lovingly called him, was given a hope in Jesus. What a sweet hope it was to him! His life was a reflection of his God-given faith. Throughout his final illness, his patience and fortitude in his suffering endeared him further to his family and friends. He had been a reader of the **Signs of the Times** for forty years or more, and believed its sound doctrine with all his heart.

"Doc" was a practicing chiropractor for more than thirty-four years. He fostered his love of good music when he retired by teaching himself to play the electric organ. He also sang and composed music.

The enormous number of floral pieces and large crowd in attendance at his funeral were mute testimony of the love and respect in which he was held. We know he is far better off than we, but how we do miss him! It is indeed comforting to feel that he is with our Savior, away from the toils and cares of this troublesome world. Our hope is that through God's love and mercy we may be blessed to join him some sweet day.

Written by his loving niece,
Sister Helen Jane Jones

RAYMOND C. DALTON

In sadness I attempt to write in memory of our beloved Brother, Deacon and Clerk, Raymond C. Dalton, born October 10, 1894; and died September 22, 1962; age 67 years. Brother Dalton joined Springfield Church June 11, 1931; was appointed Clerk for the church March 10, 1945, and was ordained Deacon August 11, 1945. He was faithful to the church and performed his duties well. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace and grace alone. By his daily walk and Godly conversation we feel that he had treasures laid up in Heaven where moth nor rust doth not corrupt nor thieves break through and steal.

He leaves his wife, Sister Leona Dalton, and three daughters to mourn their loss: Mrs. Ralph Torrence and Mrs. Brooks Crews, of Danville, Va.; and Mrs. Morris Creasy, Gretna, Va.; and three brothers and three sisters. Our desire is that the Lord of all mercy will reconcile his family and the church to his holy and righteous Will.

His funeral was held at Springfield Church by his pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and his body laid away beneath a mound of flowers in Gretna Burial Park, to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour.

Done by order of Springfield Church; and written by L. R. Willis, Gretna, Va.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. R. Willis, Clerk

MRS. INKENOIS KERLEY

Inkenois Kerley, daughter of Schuyler and Edith Kerley, was born April 30, 1895, and departed this life November 31, 1962. On September 16, 1915, she was united in marriage to Miles Kerley, and to this union four children were born: Fred, of Golconda, Ill.; Lee, of Anna, Ill.; and W. M., of Cape Canaveral, Florida. One son, Ray, preceded her in death. Also surviving are, two half-sisters: Mrs. Wyona Glenn, Alton, Ill., and Mrs. Vernice Coppersmith, Metropolis, Ill.; four half-brothers: Klonda Kerley, Dixon, Ill.; Annawaw Kerley, Grantsburg, Ill.; Schuyler Kerley, Creston, Iowa; and Bryan Kerley, Vienna, Ill.; and three grandchildren.

Mrs. Kerley was a wonderful mother; and to her daughters-in-law and Johnny Ice, a nephew who made his home with her for many years, she was in every respect a mother, extending to them the same measure of love and devotion as to her very own . . .

. . . Sister Kerley was strong in the faith of God's elect, and had a wonderful experience. She would not compromise with unsound doctrine. Although she never united with the church, she remarked to me the last time she attended two months before her death, that she might ask me to baptize her, "If you will". I asked her then to let me call the church back to order, as we had dismissed, but she would not consent. When she was not able to attend the meetings, she always insisted that her devoted companion attend. In the five years I have had the care of Rock Springs Church she never failed to fill her seat unless providentially hindered.

She will be missed not only by her devoted family, but also by her kinsmen, friends, and by the church. She always had a smile and kind word for all. She believed that Jesus paid it all on the cross, saying, "It is finished." Her hope was in Him. She never boasted of her charity (as of giving), but she trusted that Christ was her charity.

Her funeral was held at the Rock Springs Church, conducted by the writer; and her remains were laid to rest in the Kerley Cemetery, to await the call of her Lord. May it please God to give the spirit of comfort to the bereaved companion, children, and friends. They have lost a lovely companion, mother and neighbor; and the church a staunch supporter. But our loss is her eternal gain. May the grace of God abide with all that mourn.

(The above is a composite of obituaries written by Elder W. Y. Chandler and her brother, Bryan Kerley. — Ed.)

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

J. MURPH RHOADES
WINNSBORO, TEXAS
(7-8-1883 to 10-26-1961)

WHEREAS, It pleased Almighty God to call from our midst our beloved friend and brother, J. M. Rhoades, of Winnsboro, Texas, on October 26, 1961, from among the natural living; and,

WHEREAS, Brother Rhoades graced our community as an outstanding citizen, and who graced our church as a loving, devoted, and faithful member; and,

WHEREAS, The richest of Divine Gifts, LOVE, was so manifest in his deeds and conversation; and, the richer gifts of FAITH and HOPE caused him to greatly inspire all with whom he came in contact;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That we formally express our thanks unto God for having blessed us with his life; and that we bow in humble submission to His Sovereign will to take him from us.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we express our deep sympathy to his widow, his children, his relatives, and, to his many close friends, for their loss of his continued words and deeds of love, counsel, and advice.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be given his widow, Mrs. Neaomia Rhoades; four sons, Earl and Arnold, of Winnsboro, Clyde, of Dallas, and Troy, of Athens; three daughters, Mrs. Ivey Elledge and Mrs. Ila Fay Black, of Mount Vernon, and Mrs. Carrie Lee Gilbert, of Denver, Colorado; that a copy be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication; and, a copy filed with Good Hope Church records.

The above resolution read and adopted while Good Hope Church, Franklin County, Texas was in regular conference on December 22, 1961.

E. J. Lambert, Moderator
Dessie Mae Lambert, Assistant Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

MRS. MINNIE LANGFORD EVERS
(2-15-1875 to 8-9-1962)

WHEREAS, God took from us on August 9, 1962, a very precious being, Sister Minnie Langford Evers, whose death we have reason to believe was precious in His sight. (Psalm 116:15); and,

WHEREAS, God blessed us with her life for eighty-seven years, having sanctified her to be a true minister's devoted wife, a loving mother for a large family, a faithful member of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, Union County, Arkansas for decades, and a gracious entertainer in her home where hundreds of Primitive Baptists and friends visited; and,

WHEREAS, The gifts of God's Spirit were made manifest in her fellowship with her family, brethren, and friends;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That we thank God for blessing us with her life, and that we bow in humble submission, and recon-

cilliation of His sovereign right to take her at his appointed time; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we express our high respect for her, to her children, other relatives, and many close friends, in this tribute to her memory; and further,

BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this tribute be given her children who survive, to wit: Barney and Aimer, of Norphlet; Claude of Camden; Ralph, of Calion; Harvey, and Emma Lou Barrett, of Tucson, Arizona; Mrs. Evelyn Copeland, of ElDorado; and Mrs. Lela Howey, of Gering, Nebraska; and that a copy be sent the **Signs of the Times**, Danville, Virginia, for publication; and that a copy be filed with the Bethel Primitive Church records.

Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, Union County, Arkansas, while in regular session August 18, 1962, ordered this written by Elder E. J. Lambert.

Elder E. J. Lambert

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT
ELDER W. R. DODD

WHEREAS, It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst by death our dear Brother and Pastor Elder W. R. Dodd, on August 26, 1962, we bow in humble submission to His will.

Brother Dodd served the Bradley Road Primitive Baptist Church as Pastor for more than twenty-two years, and was faithful to come as long as his health permitted. He was sound in doctrine. He believed in salvation by grace and grace alone. He believed in a God that does his will in heaven and on earth: who works and none can hinder; hinders and none can work.

Brother Dodd died in the Danville Memorial Hospital August 26, 1962, at the age of 85. His funeral was conducted at Swicegood Funeral Chapel by Elder Raymond Payne; and he was laid to rest in the family cemetery at Hinesville, beneath a mound of beautiful flowers. He leaves to mourn his departure his wife, Josephine Nuckals Dodd; two daughters: Mrs. Bertel Dodd Turner, and Mrs. Lois Dodd Thompson, of Hinesville; two sons: Benny Oswald Dodd, Raleigh, N. C., and Harry Curtis Dodd, Royal Oak, Michigan. Also, two sisters: Mrs. Lemma Dodd Hines, Danville, Va., and Mrs. Rovenna Dodd Blair, of Hinesville; and three brothers: James Church Dodd and Oscar C. Dodd, of Danville, and Herbert D. Dodd, of Hinesville.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to the family; a copy be put on our Church Book; and a copy be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done at the request of Danville Church.

R. T. Holley, Clerk

ELDER WILLIAM ROBERT DODD

'Twas the twenty-sixth day of August 1962,
Fifteen minutes after the hour of seven;
God called you from your loved ones,
To that peaceful home in heaven.

Eighty-five years, four months and five days,
Was the dear Saviour's allotted time,
For you to travel life's rugged highway,
And into our homes bring joy and sunshine.

All was done that mortal hands could do,
To comfort and ease your aching breast;
But God above was hovering near,
And called you to that home of rest.

For fifty years through heat and cold,
You journeyed far and near to heed,
Your Heavenly Father's gospel call,
For His dear little flock you did feed.

Fourteen years we traveled together,
Through God's haven here below,
That cheerful smile and warm handclasp,
Are precious memories to be cherished evermore.

Soldier of Christ, your earthly travel is over,
You fought the good fight and kept the faith;
And are peacefully awaiting that Righteous Crown,
Promised to such on the Resurrection morn.

Four long weeks will soon have passed,
Since last I bade you good-bye,
But I too, must await the call,
To that home beyond the sky.

As I sit alone in our room,
All around me seems forlorn;
For one I loved so dear,
Has forever from here gone.

Dear one, I dream of you often,
While my eyes are closed in sleep;
Your cheerful voice and gentle ways,
Are memories I'll always keep.

Though I long to hear your voice,
That forever on earth has been stilled;
Yet I hope to be submissive,
To the decree my God has willed.

Dear, you are gone but not forgotten,
Never will your memory fade.
Sweetest thoughts will always linger,
Around the grave where you were laid.

Your life's long warfare is over,
In this world of sin and woe;
And I hope to meet you again,
On a brighter, happier shore.

In heaven that peaceful, happy home,
O'er on the Golden Shore;

There I hope to meet you, dear one,
Where parting will be no more.

His devoted wife,
Josephine Dodd

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 131 DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1963 NO. 3

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3/63
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

WHO BELIEVED?

1158 Falls Terr.
Union, N. J.

Dear Kindred in Christ:

"As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." (Acts 13:48)

Who believed? Those that were ordained, set apart, separated, because of their efforts to obtain salvation? no, but because it seemed good in His sight. Those that were called and commanded to go home and tell what great things they had done for the Lord? no, not that; instead, go home to thy friends and tell them what great things the Lord had done for them: the, "elect, according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father." (I Peter 1:2). As Jeremiah was told, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee and ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." (Jeremiah 1:5) Those chosen in Chirst Jesus before the foundation of the world that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things according to the good pleasure of his will. Foreknown, predestinated, called, justified and glorified. "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31) "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit." (John 15:16)

It is all of him who hath ordained you unto eternal life; "and this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3) Do you know him? Have you walked and talked with him? Have you enjoyed sweet communion when none but God was near? Have you supped with him, gathering crumbs that fall from the Master's table, feasting on manna from heaven? Have you been drinking from the fountain that never runs dry? Jesus promised, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (John 4:14) Have you been given eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand the things revealed unto babes, but hidden from the wise and prudent? If so, it is because it seemed good in the sight of the Father. Have you been brought as a little child to sit at the feet of the brethren? Have you been made to say, "I know that whereas I was blind, now I see?" (John 9:25) Have you wrestled at night crying, "Oh that I knew where I might find him?" (Job 23:3) And then it was morning when he returned to your soul, and like Job, you could say with tears of rejoicing, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." (Job 19:25) Have your prayers been answered in time of trouble, giving you peace on the bed of affliction, with the sweet assurance that you are never alone? Have you been given a good hope of eternal life, "which God, that can not

lie, promised before the world began?" (Titus 1:2) His promises will never be broken, the shalls and wills of Jehovah are the very foundation of your hope; they are built on Jesus Christ the Rock, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. Dear child of God, if this is the road you are traveling, then you have been given a foretaste of eternal life, reserved in heaven for those "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before *ordained* that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10)

"As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." What did they believe? As the eunuch said, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? and Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." (Acts 8:36, 37) He was baptized and went on his way rejoicing in a once crucified, but now risen Saviour, a dear Redeemer born of the virgin, Mary, who came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. The whole need not a physician, but the sin sick souls need to have their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow." (Isaiah 1:18) They believe in a Saviour who suffered, bled, and died the ignominous death of the cross that they should never perish, but have eternal life. Their hope is built on a Saviour who came to do his Father's will, "to give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him." (John 17:2) "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." (Isaiah 14:24) What greater declaration should you search for? Whosoever believeth these things shall never die; and as Martha said, "Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ." (John 11:27) Unto you that believe all things are possible; He is most precious to your soul; he is "the only name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12) How blessed we are to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and believing we have life through his name, a treasure which can never be taken from you. How blessed we are to know whom we have believed, to have faith that Jesus Christ, the dear Redeemer, is able to keep that which has been committed to him. (2 Timothy 1:12).

May all who were ordained to eternal life be given strength to "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." (Hebrews 12:1) May those who believe as the eunuch did, "that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," be given strength to go home to their friends, following Jesus in the ordinance of baptism as the answer of a good conscience toward God. If it were only possible to tell you the joys of being in sweet fellowship with the saints of God, you would not hesitate another day to leave the things of this world and go home to those who would welcome you into the fold with open arms of love and fellowship. May it be the will of your precious Redeemer to give you a reconciled mind and a submissive will to say at all times,

"Father, whate'er of earthly bliss,
Thy sovereign will denies,
Accepted at thy throne of grace
Let this petition rise:

Give me a calm and thankful heart,
From every murmur free;
The blessings of thy grace impart,
And make me live in thee."

Written by one who hopes to have been included in those *ordained to eternal life,* one who believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, one whose only hope and trust for a home beyond this life, is built on the blood of Jesus Christ, a solid foundation.

Praise the Lord for giving poor sinners a hope that they love Him because he first loved them; and unto him be all praise, honor and glory for salvation by grace the free unmerited favor of an alwise God. Remember me in your

prayers when given access to the throne of grace.

In bonds of love,
Elsie M. Loeffel

SERMON BY THE LATE ELDER ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

(At the Salisbury Association, Maryland, 1956)

For a text, I feel impressed to read the 3rd, 4th, and 5th verses of the 44th Chapter of Isaiah.

"For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses. One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel."

This language applies to the church of the living God; which is a love gift from God unto his beloved Son the Christ. Let us consider for a moment the language, "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty." The wills and shalls of Jehovah abound in application in this wonderful text.

These promises of God are unconditional. We know that there are conditional promises in the Old Testament. One reading: "If thou wilt harken unto the Lord thy God, blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field; if thou wilt not harken unto the word of the Lord thy God, cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field." The Jew today is an example of this conditional covenant, for he could not keep the conditions any more than the Gentiles today can keep the conditions required for salvation; for they were all utterly under the law that condemns them. But now we see the precious promise, "I will pour water upon them that are thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground."

Water is a word that is significant in the Scriptures. Water is absolutely necessary for natural life. It comes in various forms: Sometimes as rain, for, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, and my speech shall distill as the dew." Sometimes water comes other than in the forms of dew and rain. It may come as a cloud; and isn't it true that often there are many things of the gospel that seem hidden from us, as it were by a cloud? Sometimes water is in the form of ice; and do not the children of God testify to the fact that sometimes they feel cold and icy, as it were, and mourn because of a cloud? Sometimes water comes as mighty waves that overwhelm; and so the floods of sorrow and contrition of heart sometimes seem to overwhelm the soul.

So we see the operation of the Spirit of God represented by water. Water often meaning the Word of God, as we remember in the Scriptures, "Husbands love your wives, as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the **washing of water** by the Word. Now we see here the expression, The washing of water by the Word. The Holy Spirit taking the Word of God, putting it into your heart, bringing godly sorrow and conviction of sin, and godly fear. How wonderful, then, is the action of water in connection with the Holy Spirit! And you will note here the Scripture, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring."

The relationship of water and of the Spirit is beautifully emblemized in the language I have read. You know that in Joel it is said, "Behold, the days come saith the Lord when I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions." It was quoted by Peter on the day of Pentecost — the outpouring of the holy Spirit of God. And water was connected with the sanctification of the priest. When Aaron

was sanctified, and the holy anointing oil was poured upon his head and ran down to the skirts of his garments. So we find water having many uses, and many beautiful meanings.

Without water there would be no life upon this earth. Without the Holy Spirit of God in its divine operation there would be no children born into the kingdom of heaven. How water fertilizes the soil! and how the graces of the Holy Spirit spring up when the water of the Word nourishes the soul, and supplies that thirst! "For as the hart panteth after the water brook, so panteth my soul for thee. My soul thirsteth for the living God." Now then Jesus said, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Thirsting then is an attribute of a living character. One does not thirst for the Word of God, nor for association with the saints, until he is first made alive: born again into the kingdom of heaven, and therefore desiring the things which are above: the things which nourish his soul. We remember that water was used when Jesus rose at the supper, laid aside his garments, and washed his disciple's feet; washing them in the water of the Word: cleansing, in type, their daily walk.

There was another use of water that often comes to my mind, found in Numbers, chapter 19, I believe; when one had touched the dead body of any man, he was unclean, and there had to be a red heifer killed and burned to ashes, and water mingled with the ashes and sprinkled the third day, and the seventh day, upon the one who had become ceremonially unclean. Then that one was restored to the privileges of Israel. And so water is significant in its many uses and applications.

Before God communicates grace unto a believer, that one has no knowledge savingly of Jesus Christ; that one has no godly fear in his heart; that one has no filial love for the Lord of light and glory. What produces this love? What causes this change? When the water of the Spirit is poured out to refresh the soul, and to cause the manifestation of life, then one believes. First, one may have a dismal apprehension of the life to come: he may have a fear, for the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. But the application of this water will cause the marvelous change that accompanies the new birth in Christ Jesus.

Now then, the water is poured upon the thirsty one, and floods upon the dry ground. We often feel to be dry ground, don't we? We feel so utterly lifeless; and therefore floods of water, as it were, the Holy Spirit, is poured out upon us. And it says so beautifully here, "I will pour out my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." Including there the whole church of the living God, the offspring of Christ Jesus. The water is poured copiously upon the seed. Now we remember that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female; but, if you are Christ's, ye are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise. And upon this seed — upon all believers, is poured out the living water of the Spirit. And it says here, "They shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses." It seemed beautiful to me as I read this verse, that something springs up as among the grass. We read in Peter that all flesh is as grass, and the glory of man as the flower of the grass, but the grass withereth, the flower thereof fadeth away, but the Word of the Lord endureth forever.

Now then, as this grass represents flesh, you'll see that something springs up as among the grass. Note the meaning of these little words: "They shall spring up **as among the grass.**" Then, among the fleshly people of the Lord, (for we are all in the flesh, and with the flesh we serve the law of sin, but with the mind the law of Christ), something springs up as the result of this outpouring of the water of the Word. What are the things that spring up? One of the very first things is conviction of sin. Before one feels the working of the Spirit in his heart, he has no

godly sorrow for sin: he may have a head-knowledge of God; he may look upon the starry heavens, and the majestic sun rising in all his glory, and think that there is a Creator back of creation, but with that knowledge only, there is no comprehension of God in any saving sense whatever.

Now, to have a knowledge of God savingly, there must be a condemnation in the flesh; and the pouring out of the Spirit of God produces this condemnation in the flesh: for in the condemnation of the flesh, there is the appearing of Jesus. Now one of the greatest, may I put it this way, thing that springs up at the pouring of water, is supplication. But there can be no supplication until first there is conviction; until one has seen himself as utterly ruined; until one has seen the very doors of Hell, as it were, opened to receive him, and can feel: I am worthy of Hell — not worthy of heaven. When one can feel that way, being made of a broken and contrite heart, and reckons bitter things against himself, and feels the flaming sword of justice cutting him down, then he has a conviction of sin. Feeling the conviction of sin, there is revealed to him another grace of the Spirit which springs up among the grass; and as the willows by the water courses. Having a knowledge of the conviction of sin; having a tortured soul and a burdened conscience, (all because of this water of the Spirit that is poured out), there is a cry that goes up to heaven, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Why did the publican put his hand over his heart when he stood and prayed? All because he realized that the heart of man is deceitful and desperately wicked — and who can know it. He stood, let us remember, in the temple. The Pharisee also stood in the temple. And isn't it true that in buildings dedicated to the worship of God, there are godly men who stand and pray, taught by the Spirit of God, and receiving the answer of prayer. Also there are those who have never tasted that the Lord is gracious — they stand and speak of their good works; but do not go down to their homes justified, as did this poor publican.

So, may we not be justified in concluding that there is not only the conviction of sin, but there comes a realization of the pardon of sin: There comes an experimental knowledge of a sweet deliverance. So, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and they shall spring up as among the grass." — the graces of the Holy Spirit, if you please. I love to think of that.

Faith is one of those graces. Without faith it is impossible to please God. Having faith, one has access to all things. Isn't that true? Another grace that is notable with faith, and in conjunction with it, is hope, the anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast. While going up in Maine one time, I saw a great ship out on the sea, and as the wind blew, that ship turned — but always toward the anchor. And so, when the storms of sorrow beat upon us, our hope is the anchor of the soul sure and steadfast; and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. I love to think of this hope as one of the three great graces: faith, hope, and love. Faith is the evidence of things not seen, the substance of things hoped for. Faith can but take us to heaven's door, but hope takes us inside; for hope is an anchor of the soul sure and steadfast, and reaches to that within the veil, whither the forerunner has entered, even Jesus.

Regarding the forerunner, do you not know that the high priest entered into the holy of holies: He went behind the veil of blue, and purple, and scarlet upon the Day of Atonement; and there he made atonement for himself and for the people. Elder Ruston beautifully touched upon that subject in his discourse this morning, so I need not mention it further than to say that, as the high priest entered within the veil, so our Jesus has entered within the veil of heaven, and is there the man Christ Jesus, for

we have on Mediator, the man Christ Jesus; the man whom the disciples saw ascending; the man whom they saw the doors of heaven open to receive; and two shining angels, saying, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven, this same Jesus which has been taken into heaven shall in like manner came again unto you." We have to have a mediator in heaven after the order of Melchizedek, after the power of an endless life. For Jesus, completing the type of the Aaronic priesthood, entered into heaven as our High Priest: not after one who could die, but after the power of an endless life, — being our Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God, without beginning of days, nor the end of years: our Intercessor touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

Again, we must have a Mediator in heaven who can represent both man and God. A prophet represents God to man; a priest represents man to God. Jesus presents us unto the Father holy and without blame in love; and he presents the Father to us, so that through the Spirit we are led to cry, "Abba, Father".

But I want to speak a little bit more about hope. How sweet it seems to me that this flood that is poured out upon the dry ground, embraces the promises of God unto the church of Jesus Christ. The promises include the application of his atoning blood; the promises include his manifestation to us as our Saviour and Redeemer. And more than that, it embraces the super-aboundings of grace over the aboundings of sin. All these precious promises, like the rungs in that ladder that Jacob saw from earth to heaven, with the angels ascending and descending upon it — being a type of that which Jesus said to Nathaniel: "Hereafter ye shall see greater things than these, ye shall see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." Was not heaven opened upon the day of Pentecost, when the church of God was manifestly set up? To my understanding it was.

Therefore the pouring out of this living water, giving life to the soul, has a meaning far deeper and sweeter than that we may at first think. But this hope, which I alluded to a moment ago, may be put this way: We must see Jesus in his suffering, we must each feel him in his agony as we experience the condemnation of sin, as the law stands against us in a pitiless way. We think of Jesus in the garden, sweating, as it were, great drops of blood; and saying, "Now is my soul sorrowful even unto death." And do you not remember that he was there with the eleven disciples, and that he withdrew from these disciples, took three and went a little distance; and from these three he went a stone's cast, and there knelt down and prayed? Why did he go a stone's cast? Because Jesus must fulfill the law. Heaven and earth should not pass away until all the law be fulfilled. And the Jewish law demanded death by stoning, not death by crucifixion; and therefore the nature of our very sins were the stones that were hurled at Jesus in that bloody sweat. Our sins were cast upon him when he said, "Now is my soul exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." . . .

But let us go a little further — until the next day, when he hung upon the cross. The Roman spear opened his side, and forthwith came blood and water; for three bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. Therefore we have in our text, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty."

And please note that in a dead body blood will not run, though water flows. But while Jesus hung there upon the cross with death upon his pallid brow, the blood flowed from his side, showing that he was the Son of God, that he was holy; and therefore his blood never lost its efficacy.

"Dear dying Lamb thy precious blood
Shall never loose its power,
'Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved to sin no more."

When Moses stood by the burning bush, which as it flamed was not consumed, the voice of Jehovah told Moses to go deliver Israel from Pharoah's dominion; and Moses desired a sign. The leprous hand was one sign; and there was also another sign when the rod was cast upon the ground, and became a serpent, then changed back to a rod again; and the leprous hand was healed. But then another sign was given, brethren, that when Moses should take water from the river Nile and pour it upon the ground, it should become blood. Search the Scriptures all you may, you will never find where that blood was ever changed to water again, showing that the blood of Jesus had eternal efficacy. So faith can shield itself in the suffering, open side of Jesus; yes, it can take anchor there in that salvation given unto his people, which is for time and eternity.

Now I will present but a few more thoughts, and close. "As willows by the water courses." I have noticed near my former home where willow sticks seven or eight feet high, were cut off and one end driven into the ground; and before the season was over there was life in the end of those sticks — those seemingly dead sticks. And so, those that are born dead in trespasses and sins, after the water of life is given them, like the willows by the water courses, they manifest life.

Now let us see the result of the outpouring of this water. And this seems like a climax to me. "One shall say I am the Lord's." I have often wished I could say this with all my heart, without doubt; but most of us have doubts and fears, don't we? Sometimes those doubts are removed, but often we go in darkness: a mourning people; but sometimes, Oh, sometimes, we say, that we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. I have come down here to Salisbury for twenty-five years, and have grown to love you; and have dared to embrace many of you, because I loved you; and do not apologize for the demonstration of a love which makes you seem unto me dearer than any person that was not a professor, or confessor. Yes indeed, many witness that love shed abroad in the heart: a fulfillment of a promise, — the result of the outpouring of the Spirit. Now, don't you see there are times when you can say, as one of old did sweetly say, "My beloved is mine, and I am his; he feeds among the lilies." Jesus said, "Consider the lilies, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin, yet I say unto thee that Solomon in all his glory, was not arrayed as one of these." Therefore, when the water of the word is life to your soul, there comes a sweet time; it may not be too often, but you can say, "I am the Lord's."

I want to hasten on. "Another shall call himself by the name of Jacob." Let us consider this particular character, Jacob. He had deceived his brother Esau, and fleeing from him. Fleeing, as he thought, for his very life. He crossed the river or brook, called Jabbok, which means "emptying". And that has a beautiful significance to me, because Jacob we find was emptied of all self-righteousness; of all creature efforts. He crossed the brook; and now notice, a man wrestled with him. This man was the **theophantic** Christ. Which means a manifestation in spirit form of Christ the eternal Son. The Spirit took the form of a man, and wrestled with Jacob; and Jacob with the angel — a minister from God. Angels are ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation.

Now we wrestle in our experience as the water is poured out upon us: we wrestle not against flesh and blood nor principalities and powers, but the power of sin. And now Jacob wrestled, and yet the angel for a time didn't overcome Jacob, nor Jacob the angel. There was a wrestling. When the Spirit of God works within you, as this water is poured out, there is a wrestling; there are doubts and fears: you wrestle with your doubts, and you wrestle with your fears. But finally you prevail after wrestling with

the angel. We find that the angel was overcome, and he blessed Jacob. What does that mean? That Jesus Christ was overcome when he came into the world to be our sin-bearer. He had to come into the world in the flesh, and in the flesh he must be condemned, and in the flesh must die. Therefore man, seemingly, overcame him. Isn't it true? Didn't Jesus say unto Pilate, "Thou could'st have no power against me except it were given thee from above; therefore he that delivereth me unto thee, hath the greatest sin." Pilate delivered Jesus to be crucified. It seemed as though man overcame Christ. And as the result of that crucifixion the blessings of salvation were poured out profusely upon all the family of believers.

Now then, as Jacob overcame the angel, in that type, he received the blessing. But before he received the blessing, Jacob's strength was all gone: all taken away. No longer could he wrestle; no longer could he struggle, but he clung to the angel, and said, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." And then Jacob received the blessing: but his name was changed to Israel, because he had found favor with God, and prevailed. And the morning dawned, the sun arose in all its splendor; and Jacob re-crossed the brook, no longer a wrestling Jacob, but a triumphant Israel.

Now you notice that the result of that struggle was that Jacob's name was changed to Israel. You have all had this experience, I believe. You have struggled; you have wrestled, but at last peace has been spoken to your soul, and you have received the blessing of salvation; for we read in Ephesians that, "God hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." You have received these spiritual blessings: you are no longer Jacob, in that sense, but are an Israelite — you have triumphed through Jesus.

Now note the beauty of this climax: "One shall say I am the Lord's; another shall call himself by the name of Jacob, (that's in your experience), and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord." What does that mean? I will tell you what I think it means: You hear preaching. It clears up your mind; it comforts your heart; you are edified; you are strengthened by it, and you say, "That's the truth: I am willing to die by that truth. I subscribe to all that is presented in the name of the Lord Jesus." So you can say, "One shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord."

Then again, "And surname himself by the name of Israel." So you have advanced then in your experience until you have become a prevailing Israelite: because the water of life has been poured out upon your thirsty soul.

(The above is from a recording — J. D. W.)

ENJOYED ANOTHER VISIT WITH THE BRETHREN

Whitefield, Maine

Dear Brother Wood:

As we three from Maine live over in sweet memory our wonderful visit among the brethren and friends in your part of the country, while attending the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, the Salisbury Association in Maryland, and the church in Baltimore, it is our desire to express our appreciation and thanks through the *Signs*, to each one who was instrumental in making our stay such a happy and pleasant season.

It was so wonderful to be blessed to meet and visit once again with those we had visited before; and also those we met for the first time: strangers in the flesh but not in the spirit. The same sweet manifestation of God's love was manifested to us: a welcome of love and fellowship the world knows nothing about.

For all these blessings, we each hope we are truly thankful to our God, who blessed us beyond measure that our trip was made possible: thankful to Him who rules over all things according to

his will. We enjoyed the whole time; it was a wonderful experience from start to finish.

The meetings at each church were beyond describing. Fourteen preachers were present at Corresponding Meeting (Mt. Zion Church) : Elders W. D. Griffin, B. O. Thompson, J. L. Smith, Roy Agee, J. P. Helms, George L. Weaver, Arthur Warren, C. E. Turner, O. J. Croker, J. R. Lane, S. R. Boykin, W. B. Barnes, G. G. Trevathan, and John D. Wood.

At the Salisbury Association eight preachers were present, Elders J. P. Helms, George L. Weaver, O. J. Croker, John D. Wood, W. D. Griffin, J. L. Smith, D. V. Spangler, and Arthur Warren. At the all-day meeting at the Baltimore Church, the pastor, Elder W. D. Griffin, and two visiting preachers were present, Elders Weaver and Croker.

We were blessed to hear each preacher, each declaring the same truth, preaching such as was given from on high — the true gospel as it is in Jesus, which is food to the hungry soul. We felt to see the hand of God directing and making it possible for us to visit those we love for the truth's sake.

I wish to relate two experiences that came to pass after we first thought of taking the long trip by bus, and ask, Brother Wood, do you agree that it was of the Lord. Before making a decision, we felt to consult our son, who is our only child, how he felt about us going so far. We expected to get a discouraging letter in reply, thinking he would feel it would be too much for us at our age and physical condition. But instead he wrote, "Go to your doctor and have a check up. If he finds you both O. K., then if you want to go, you should go." About a week later, the day hurricane Daisy was raging in New Hampshire and Maine, who should drive in but our son and wife, presenting us with the money for our trip. They had come a hundred and twenty miles in the storm, and had to return the same day, since he had to be at work the next morning. Our heartfelt thanks went out to them, but all praise to God who rules over, and brings to pass all things.

Another experience was, on going to the bus terminal for rates, etc., the agent on learning our destination was to Washington, but wished to start back from Salisbury, Maryland, was not sure we could purchase round-trip tickets. But upon inquiry, we were able to do so, which was quite a saving on expenses.

God works his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say, "What doest thou?" Though so unworthy of all his benefits, love and mercy shown us, we press on in hope that we are in that number whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. Praise His holy name!

A brother and sister, and a friend in bonds of love,

Arthur and Elta Merigold,
and Mrs. Helen Bailey

DIVERS WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

"Divers weights, and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the Lord." (Proverbs 20:10)

This Scripture has come to my mind so much lately that I feel constrained, as it were, to write something as to what it means as I am given to see it. I believe it was made of record for a definite purpose and had its meaning back in the days of old when King Solomon ruled, as well as all times that were to come, including the present. In a spiritual sense, it was, and is, a very potent Scriptural directive.

When we consider how clear the Scriptures are in showing the "oneness", or singleness in God's existance, his power, his purpose in creation of man, etc., and follow thru with Christ's teachings while on earth, then we can understand in part why the "Divers (many) weights and measures" are abominable (detest-

able) to the Lord. He has shown to us that there is ONE God, the source of all power; ONE Son, that was sent to dwell on earth for a brief time and to be sacrificed for the redemption of His children, who said, "I am the door of the sheep", and, "I am the light of the world". And further, he said to Peter, "Upon this Rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it". He did not say "churches" but "My Church", which means only ONE just as he said there was, but ONE door, ONE light, etc. Many other references could be mentioned, particularly those about the ONE true doctrine or gospel.

Going back to the Old Testament we find that Chapter 20 of Exodus shows that Moses was destined to set up ordinances and laws to govern the people of Israel (verse 20). In Deuteronomy we find such laws and ordinances recorded, and in 25:13 and 14, we find the reference to divers weights and measures. In 22:9, we find "Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds; lest the fruit of thy seed which thou has sown, and the fruit of the vineyard be defiled".

Vineyards were of great importance in the days of old and are mentioned many times both in the old and new testaments. Solomon was referred to as being "their vine" and in St. John 15:1 Christ said "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman". So we see why the admonition is given as to not sowing divers seeds in the vineyard. Thus it is seen that Christ, in a spiritual sense, is our vineyard if He is the true vine, and likewise He, is the head of the church or the rock upon which the church was built, to be tended by the Father. Therefore, the strong admonition against sowing divers seeds in the vineyards, which if done, would defile the fruits of the seed sown and of the vineyard too.

There is evidence in the Old Testament that the old Kings and Israel strayed from the right way and sought to use "divers weights and measures", as it were, and as it is recorded, "they did wrong in the sight of the Lord". The Apostle Paul ran into these same divers weights and measures in the form of false teachers and false doctrines, and repeatedly warned the church against them. In Hebrews 12:1, he said, "Let us lay aside **every weight,** and the sin which so easily besets us", which divides or separates the weights from the sins.

There are other references to "scant measures" also being abominable, as in Micah 6:10, and in St. John 3:34 we find — "God giveth not the Spirit by measure".

As I am led to see it, in these later times, there has been a great increase in the "divers weights and measures" in a spiritual sense. When we stop to enumerate the hundreds of different sects, creeds, churches and forms of worship thruout the world, they all offer something a little different from the others, and some vastly different; and how in recent years they have "modified" or re-written the Bible so that — in their words, "even a little child can read and understand it", it seems that more and more "weights and measures" will be brought into use by the worldly churches.

It has been my lot in the past to attend several services in Roman Catholic churches, particularly funeral services. To see the priest resorting to the numerous "weights and measures" was truly an awakening . . . Many millions are resorting to this type of worship and belief. Other millions follow the teachings of the Mormon Church, founded by a man who allegedly found certain tablets of stone in one of our Eastern states. Generally, they follow somewhat the lines of the Roman Catholics, with various weights and measures.

Coming to the Protestant worldly churches, we find many that boast of their worldly wealth in schools, colleges, hospitals and various institutions here and abroad, and their mode of "bringing

people to God and the saving of souls", as they term it, includes various "weights and measures". We find that the hundreds of lesser denominations also resort to all sorts of "weights and measures" to hold their place in the spiritual world. We have but to listen to their pleadings over the radio and television, and to see their workers going from door to door offering religious tracts and begging to come in to show you what they can do for people spiritually.

In following the local newspapers and other publications in late years, it is interesting to note the trend of thought among the high-up church leaders in this country and over the world. Most local papers carry "News Of The Churches" columns as covered by feature writers and reports of various large conferences. They now generally admit their failure to Christianize the world, and have come to the realization that they must bring into focus and realization, numerous additional "weights and measures" to offset their failures. They are admitting that their churches are not getting over to the people the spiritual messages, and not saving the souls they should, etc. Among the various "weights and measures" they propose, are the use of drama and theatrical effects along with their sermons; the elimination of sermons altogether in their worship; the forced teaching of religion part time in our public schools; and many other "gimmicks" too numerous to mention. This comes mostly after their putting out the so-called modified Bible and new versions in recent years, which would, in their words, "make the Bible so simple and easy to read and understand, even a little child could so do". In ending this subject, I can't refrain from referring to an article in a world wide publication in June, 1962, by a Rector of a very old and large famed church in New York City, titled "What Are Churches For?": and in commenting on what goes on in their (Protestant) churches today, which they are prone to congratulate themselves upon, he said, "If viewed as the sole ends for which our parish exist, is repugnant to Almighty God". Many timely statements were made in the article, which, when summed up, shows they themselves find their various "weights and measures" abominable to themselves. This same publication in its September, 1962 issue carries another similar article by a noted minister and writer, heading one of the largest Protestant churches in New York City, titled "Can Protestantism Be Saved?". It is another scathing indictment of their own and other similar churches for their failure to come forth with effective spiritual worship. He quoted one of their writers who said, "Protestantism today is losing ground, not so much in numbers as in spiritual effectiveness. It has lost faith to the point where the gasoline in the tank is half water and you can't run a car that way, and you can't run a church that way".

So, taking their own statements as criteria, they are falling apart, as it were, and their various or "divers weights and measures" must be very abominable to the Lord, since they are becoming abominable to themselves. Their various types of works have failed them. They have somewhat of a solution or cure, just more of their own works and the teachings of their man-trained ministers. Their resorting to merging several denominations into one is under way. The "weight" of several will do more than their separate "weights", they believe.

I am led to believe that all these things fulfill that Scripture as quoted — Deuteronomy 22:9, "Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds; lest the fruit of thy seed which thou has sown, and the fruit of the vineyard be defiled". The fruit means that which comes from or results from the crop grown, and surely the fruit or results of the worldly churches sowings are defiled. We can see that they are being "prevailed against" by some strong power. I ask, "Is it not by the gates of hell?" I know of no other power that could be doing

the prevailing.

Again in August of this year, I was blessed to sit in with the good people who gathered at Riffe, Washington, for the 1962 annual three-day meeting in the little church there. Brothers, sisters and friends came in from Vancouver, B. C., Canada, to the North; from North Idaho and various places in Oregon and Washington to be with the good people at Riffe, and to hear Elders D. C. Davis and Ernest Attebery preach the true Gospel as set forth in the Scriptures, feeding the little ones there assembled with the "Bread of Heaven". They did not come forth with "Divers Weights and Measures", but preached that there is but one true Gospel and but ONE way to worship our Lord, and that is by and thru the Holy Spirit that He alone must "put into our hearts and write in our minds"; and that all other forms of worship, without such, is but vain and of no effect. Elder Davis, tho nearing his ninetieth year of life and not in good health, was wonderfully blessed and strengthened to stand before us each of the three days and preach forcefully. There certainly was no evidence of this little church being prevailed against by the gates of hell. There was no evidence that "divers seeds had been sown in the vineyard" for the fruit was most perfect and far from being defiled. I hope to be enabled to attend many more of these annual three-day meetings there, and that it may be my lot to be there as one of the members.

I find that I have written far more than I intended. I do not want to take space in the **Signs** that can be used by others who are blessed with the ability and understanding so far superior to poor me, to offer their talent to the scattered flock who, in so many cases, have to rely on the publication for their main guidance and reading, due to being far removed from churches, and thru distance and infirmities.

These thoughts are submitted by one with but little understanding of the Scriptures, that is living in hope that he will be enlightened as time goes on, and come into more light and understanding that can be given only by the Lord our God. In hope of eternal life after this time world ends.

Wm. O. Hall
P. O. Box 595
Mount Vernon, Wash.

SIN CONDEMNED IN THE FLESH

Weatherford, Texas

To the Editors, and Avid Readers of the *Signs of the Times*:

I am enclosing $3.00 to pay for the *Signs*; and I may write a little, but if it is not worth any more than the writer, it should be donated to the wastebasket. This may be an experience of grace, or it may be another case of imagination — I have a lot of them.

A long while ago (43 years), I did not profess anything in a religious way; but went to hear any preacher that came into the community to preach. Not being a drunkard, not stealing, not being put in jail, not cursing hardly at all — maybe a little, and adding this all up together, I thought I was maybe better than the average. Anyway I thought I didn't need any advice or help in any way. I was just past twenty-one, so why couldn't I do as I pleased.

I found a new-made friend who wanted to trade for a horse — and I had a horse I thought needed trading off: a good horse, but balky. It wasn't long before he was willing to trade me a cow and calf, and the promise of $30.00. He asked if the horse would work; and I told him, "Yes". I told his brother-in-law it was a good work horse. "Will it pull?" "Yes, it will pull good." I knew how by leading it a few steps first, it would pull good, if it had a light load; but not a heavy load.

After a few days the brother-in-law came to me, asking if the horse wasn't balky. "No, I can show you he will pull." He said that they could not get

him to pull any way they worked it. Then I asked him to take my horse out and put his in, and we did; and I led him a few steps, and got into the buggy and went on towards home. Then he told me that "Uncle Jack Larremore" said that if Bill Purdy said the horse would pull, he would pull.

I was already condemned worse, and felt worse than I ever did in my life. And "Uncle Jack" saying that made me feel "awful". What could I do? I guess for the first time in my life I felt condemned. All my goodness was gone, and my burden so heavy that my prayer was that if the Lord would get me out of this, I would never, never do it again. But God would not hear my cries: I felt he did not value my promises, nor gave me any consolation, day or night.

After such an insight of the "exceeding sinfulness of sin", I became willing to do anything to get out of this. But I did not like the impression God gave me. It was "You shall go to those folks and tell them what a big liar you really are." "No, I can't." "Yes, you shall; you'll have to." Such were the feelings I had.

I told Lum Montgomery (the brother-in-law) that I had told a point-blank lie all the way through this; and he said that he believed it all the time. So I was not hiding anything. The devil could get me to lie, but could not save me from the great reproach that was upon me. I told Lum that I would go to Mrs. Stroops and beg her to forgive me: (She was the widowed mother of the boy I had worked out of his cow and calf) and that I would bring the cow and calf back and cancel the debt. Lum said that it was the Lord working in me, and what I had said was enough, and that they would bring the horse back and get the cow and calf; and that's all there would be to it, — that he was glad the Lord would not let me get by with such as that. He then told me some of his own experiences . . .

Soon after that I went to hear a preacher in the community, and felt so condemned. After preaching they said they would have a confession service; that if anyone felt to confess his faults and short-coming to the church, they could do it now. When they said that, I felt awful. A male member arose and told of his neglectful life, and asked that they pray for him, and forgive him; and two or three others did similarly. I felt worse than I had ever before. I knew I was not a member, and I thought it would be crazy for me to say anything, but I broke down and started crying very loudly. I thought I would get out in front and state that I had been sinful, and ask them to pray for me. But it did not work that way; when I got near the front, I could not hold my head up, and could not stand up, but fell over on the bench, making a loud noise. I was not hurt by the fall, but, Oh, from the exceeding sinfulness of sin I was suffering terribly.

My mother came to where I was, as I was turning over on the floor and crying for forgiveness. She said for me to get up and brush off my clothes. I noticed many in the house were crying. Then all my burden was gone. The preacher said, "Let's all pray; that's the way they were stricken down in olden times."

They offered to receive members, and I guess they thought I would join, but I had no desire for that. That night my mother was out to the barn where I was, and asked what was the matter with me that day. And I said, "I guess the Lord was whipping me." And she said, "You'll be my next hard-shell." She was a strong believer, and had one boy who was a member of the Primitive Baptists then.

Well, I must say that if salvation is by works, it was wicked works; for I was like Paul, doing wickedly when the Lord appeared to me. I contend that salvation is by grace; and that it is according as he hath chosen us in him before the world began. Without that choice, there is no salvation. When the choice was made, the Father, Son and

Holy Ghost were there, and no one else. After the elect were elected, the polls were closed, and none have been chosen since. If I had been there, and asked the Lord to put me in that everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure; and He had done as I asked him, I would boast of salvation by what I had done. I was not there, but my Representative was there, or I will never be saved.

Will someone poor and cast down write poor and unworthy me sometime? Yours in hope of a world where the thorn in the flesh will be no more.

Elder W. C. Purdy

1356 Evelyne Lane,
Akron 6, Ohio.

Dear Editors:

You will find enclosed $5.00 for which please renew my subscription to the *Signs* for two more years.

The *Signs* has been a great blessing and comfort to me for the past several years. It would be a great loss to not have it come to our home. We haven't failed to get a copy all these many years.

We have no Old School Baptists or church here, or near. Our membership is in West Virginia, where we meet once in awhile.

May you be blessed to continue on with the good old sound truth and doctrine as has been published these many years.

Yours in hope,
Gilbert Sears, Jr.

NOTE OF APPRECIATION

We are requested to express through the *Signs* the appreciation of Brother and Sister L. M. Johnson and family, of Hurricane, W. Va., for the many expressions of sympathy and contributions of furniture, clothing, etc., following the loss of their home and contents by fire, in which their twelve-year-old son was burned to death; and in which brother Johnson was burned about the face and head. Their neighbors, friends, and brethren rallied to their help, and their appreciation is beyond expression.

They are getting settled near their old home and their address will be the same. — J. D. W.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To January 1, 1963)

Joe A. McLamb, N. C.	$ 3.00
Durwood Bradley, Tex.	25.00
W. H. Dean, Ala.	1.00
Mrs. C. B. Lilly, W. Va.	5.00
Harry T. Vories, Calif.	20.00
Mrs. Ora Cochran, Calif.	10.00
Mrs. D. S. Reid, N. C.	2.00
Mrs. Robert Watt, Canada	5.00

CONTENTNEA UNION MEETING

The Contentnea Union Meeting is appointed to be held at the New Bay Church the 5th Saturday and Sunday in March. New Bay Church is just off Highway 17, about 3 miles South of Jacksonville, N. C.

All who love the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Tarboro, N. C.

WORD OF APPRECIATION

The Nassaongo Church of the Salisbury Association, in Maryland, wishes to express sincere and heartfelt thanks to all our sister churches, and our friends and relatives, who helped so generously with their hearts and hands in preparing for the association. It will always be outstanding in our memory.

The meeting was well attended, and much love and fellowship was made manifest in the preaching of the Word, and in assembling together. We believed the omnipotent power of the Most High made it all possible by his working mightly in the hearts of his people. He works and none can hinder.

We were glad to see so many visitors, and hope all were comfortably cared for: we feel we were wonderfully blessed with both spiritual and natural food. We are humbled in love and fellowship.

The Nassaongo Church,
Mollie E. Fooks

CHANGE OF ROUTE NUMBER

The Post Office Department has changed our Route Number, so please address the *Signs of the Times*, and Elder Spangler, as follows: Route 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane, Danville, Va. The use of the new address will speed our mail delivery.

Danville, Virginia **March, 1963**

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 **Beechwood Lane**
Danville, Va.

EDITORIAL

FELLOWSHIP

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." I John 1:3

God's dear children are not of this world, the world will love its own, but they are chosen of God, and for their fellowship to be true, they do not choose him, but it is his work alone by God's blessed Spirit. They were dead in trespasses and sins, and Paul says, "And you hath he quickened who were dead." God's Holy Spirit, the third person in the Trinity, convicts and reproves of sin, righteousness and judgment, and all who are born of the Holy Spirit are of one family. God is their Father, yet in this work the ones who are objects of God's mercy are brought into the light in many and various ways, for there are not two experiences alike; yet God's work is the work of one Spirit but there are diversities of operations. God calls and it is an effectual call. It affected Matthew the publican as effectually as it did Peter, James and John, they left their fishing and Matthew left his tax gathering; when Jesus said "Follow me," they rose up, left all, and followed him.

It seems that THE WORD IS MADE FLESH, for many who were good, as they thought, and who became religious to get better and better, are, under the Spirit's influence, made to feel that they are vile and full of sin. The expressions of the family of God, under God's teaching, become their own, whether it be Job's "Behold, I am vile," or Paul's "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." In fact, from the day that God reveals this truth to us, the flesh becomes an enemy that we shall carry about with us to our dying day; and we find it true, as one of the family said long ago, "WHO CAN BRING A CLEAN THING OUT OF AN UNCLEAN? NOT ONE." Job 14:4. God called Abram alone, and does he not call each of this family alone? and the testimony in the written Word and in Psalms and Hymns is often a blessing to us. (God blessed Abram, and he blesses all whom he calls.) How sweet the hymn seemed to the writer years ago when he first heard it sung,

> "I am a stranger here below,
> And what I am 'tis hard to know;
> I am so vile, so prone to sin,
> I fear that I'm not born again."

We have learned a valuable lesson when our Lord establishes the truth of God's Word within us that "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing," to the end that we should have no trust or confidence in the flesh.

In this article we speak of THE FAMILY OF GOD. There can be no unity of this family as far as they stand in the flesh, there is nothing of a satisfying unity, but DARKNESS, SIN, DEATH AND HELL. "But ye are not

in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." How cutting and testing such truth is to the soul to whom the flesh is a loathsome thing! Here we learn through the Spirit that God the Father hath ordained this to be so, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raiseth the dead. It is the indwelling of God the Holy Ghost that brings us into the fellowship of the Father and of his Son Jesus Christ. Paul speaks of this as the fellowship of the Spirit; and did not our Lord say while here in the flesh, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: — He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you." John 16:13-15. God has chosen all his children in the furnace of affliction, and the world, the flesh and the devil are proven to be no friend to grace; and God has ordained that his grace, when manifested to his little ones, shall be tried. God tried Abraham, the word as given in Genesis 22:1 is, "And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham."

We believe Abraham and all his promised seed, in the purpose of God, must be tried. Paul told the Corinthians, "There hath no temptation (trial) taken you, but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able: but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." Thus God's purposes are such that darkness, sin, Satan and death, while under his sovereign control, shall work together to bring us and keep us in this fellowship of God. No, there is no fellowship of light with darkness, nor sin with holiness, nor of Satan with God, for those of God's family have much grief because of sin, and knowing what the flesh is, they are glad that God has made a way to escape, which is PRAYER, that they may be able to bear it.

There is a fearfulness when the soul is in a healthy condition, yes, they are afraid of themselves, of the flesh, of the world and of the devil. The devil knows that he has the world, and he would love to be in control of those in the heavenly family: he knows his time is short and he will get them if he can, but God is faithful, who will not suffer his dear ones to be tempted above that they are able. Such foes, when let loose, would soon make an end of poor sinners, but God has said, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further," and by the Spirit they learn to glory in tribulations also, "knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; BECAUSE the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." It is in this way that God's dear humble ones are brought to their knees, and by prayer and supplication they make known their requests unto God. Christ is glorified by the Holy Spirit's work in the soul, that in humility suffers patiently for the truth's sake. Those in this family who suffer much, love much; and knowing something of themselves they are made to submit to one another in the fear of God.

Philippians 2 is so bearing upon what we would say that we feel we want to quote it. "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any FELLOWSHIP OF THE SPIRIT, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Though equal with God, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto

death, even the death of the cross. In John 13:14, He said to his own, "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet." To the writer, though he has never made light of those who choose to practice the literal washing of feet, there is much more in our Lord's example than that, for that could, if its spiritual significance be lost sight of, be walking in a vain show. Our Lord left us an example, that we should follow in his steps. "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that, we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."

In this family, when one member sins, he sins against Chirst, if a member be slighted, it is a slight against Christ. Individuals may err, as churches also may, and where they do, it is because they have followed after the flesh. Resting under the shadow of men brings results very different from what the bride enjoyed when she said, "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." What is his fruit? In this fruit of the Spirit we have LOVE one to another, seeing ourselves as most unworthy of this fellowship, for we cannot see Christ in ourselves as we do in others of the family who have fellowshiped us in our low estate. We rejoice with JOY unspeakable, which also brings to light a PEACE that passeth all understanding.

Wherever this fruit is manifest, the effect of divine love (charity) is also seen and felt. Charity suffereth long and is kind, this LONG-SUFFERING belongs alone to this family in the fellowship of the Spirit of God. There is a gentleness that was so fully seen in Jesus while here in the flesh. "A bruised reed shall he not break." Paul could beseech his brethren by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, whom Isaiah said would gently lead those that are with young. Gentleness therefore, as it is wrought in this family by the Holy Spirit, makes the children Christ-like. The poor unprofitable sinner who is writing this, was taught, as a child, to sing a hymn that has become very precious to him since the Lord undertook a work in him. The first verse is,

> "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
> Look upon a little child.
> Pity my simplicity,
> Suffer me to come to thee."

It has found its way into his prayers now he is old, but still needing that gentleness that comes only through God's Holy Spirit within. The first three of these nine fruits of the Spirit seem to set forth an establishment of an inward kind in the members of God's family, something that God, in his tenderness has made clear to them as theirs to enjoy in this wonderful fellowship; while the next three, LONGSUFFERING, GENTLENESS, and GOODNESS seem to be given them in their outward behaviour, especially to those of like precious faith, yes, and towards all men. This was seen in the early church, men perceived that unlearned and ignorant men had been with Jesus. What patience and gentleness we see in both Peter and Paul: Peter disowning any credit, power or holiness in the lame man walking. (Acts 3) Paul, the dear man, took an impossibly low place, saying that he was less than the least.

The last three are FAITH, MEEKNESS and TEMPERANCE. These wonderful fruits of the Spirit show in their attitude towards others in the family and before all men that these fruits are not gifts of which to boast, and when bestowed, will not cause the possessors to behave themselves unseemly, but rather their steadfastness will be to the glory of God and to the upbuilding of his cause. The faith of God which is the fruit of the Spirit, will be a faith that worketh by love. If it does not possess this mark it is as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. God's people, who

have made mistakes, and the Spirit of God has convinced them of these mistakes by the Word of God, which is the only rule of the household of faith, will be found today, praying to God, as Daniel of old, with his windows open towards Jerusalem, morning, noon and night, fearing neither friend nor foe. God enabled him to speak before the king, and God will enable his humble servants in this dark day to preach and live the truth, whether men will hear or forbear.

Meekness, as a fruit of the Spirit, cannot be put on like one's best clothes, God's family will easily detect that, but it is the result of much trial and temptation, of Satan's sifting, accompanied with many cries and tears. Their glorious leader, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." Hebrews 5:8. Our Lord, while in the flesh, often spent nights on the Mount of Olives. Joseph Hart sings,

"Gethsemane, the Olive press!
And why so called, let Christians guess;
Fit name! Fit place! where vengeance strove,
And griped and grappled hard with love."

In John 8, Jesus had spent a night there, and early in the morning he came into the temple, and those who hated him, thinking that they could trap him, brought unto him a woman taken in adultery, in the very act. The condition of this woman is that of God's whole family, brought by accusers to the spot where Jesus comes. It was here that Jesus stooped down, and acted as though he heard them not. When they continued asking him, he lifted up himself and said unto them, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." His word was heard, they were convicted and began to go out from the eldest to the youngest.

A guilty conscience had shut them out, when our Lord addressed himself to her. What a solemn, yet glorious, place! In Isaiah 60:13, our Lord himself had said, "I will make the place of my feet glorious."

Our glorious Lord, in this fellowship, said, "Hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." In this fellowship Paul says, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Every accuser is made ashamed of himself when God's word reaches the right spot.

May God bless and pity us today, enabling all of us who are of like precious faith, with his unblemished love, to embrace without question all who are of this blessed fellowship, that the last words of King David might be ours to see, "And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain." 2 Samuel 23:4.

G. R.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN.

Brother Beebe:—If not troubling you too much, please give your views on Matthew xii 32.

Yours in brotherly love,
JOHN K. JOHNSON.

Reply.—Such views as we have on the text proposed, we have given in former volumes of the "Signs of the Times;" and, we have no new light upon the subject. Still, as many of our present readers have not access to our former volumes, we will reassert what we have in substance written before. The thirty-first verse should be considered in connection with the thirty-second: they read thus:

"Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall

not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."

Recognizing the Son of man as one in the Godhead, according to 1 John v. 7. "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one." We know of but one sense in which a sin or blasphemy can be against the Son of man, and not be equally against the Father and the Holy Ghost; or how sins and blasphemy can be against the Holy Ghost, and not against the Father, and the Son, or Word. But while "these three are one, in the Eternal Godhead, it should be remembered that the Son, or Word, as the Son of man, sustains a relative and official position which is never in the Scriptures applied to the Father or the Holy Ghost. As the Son of man, Christ sustains a Mediatorial relation to, and identity with his people, in which, as their Head and Surety, all their sins, including all manner of sins, and all manner of blasphemy, committed by them is laid on him.

For the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of all his people, and he has borne them all in his own body on the tree; he has put them away by the sacrifice of himself; for he was delivered for their offences, and raised from the dead for their justification. He having suffered the just for the unjust, is now risen and exalted to be a Prince and Savior, to give repentance unto Israel, and forgivness of sins; as it is written. There shall come out of Zion a deliverer and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. Therefore, all Israel shall be saved in the Lord, with an everlasting salvation. Repentance and remission of sins are, in the gospel, preached in his name. As the Son of man was held to law and justice for all the sins of his people, he has borne the penalty in his own person, and having made full and perfect satisfaction to law and justice for all the sins of all his members, they shall never be remembered against them. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.—Rom. viii. 33, 34.

Some learned and popular commentators have attempted to classify the sins of men; and, to find some kind of sin more heinous than any other sins; and so bad that they can never be forgiven: and some have taxed their ingenuity to explain what the unpardonable sin is. It is said by some, It is a sin committed with light in the head, and malice in the heart, &c. And some of God's dear quickened children have been dreadfully alarmed from fear that they may have unconsciously committed that sin which can never be forgiven. But where is the child of God who has been brought to see and feel the exceeding sinfulness of his nature, who does not stand self-convicted of sinning with malice in his heart and light in his head? Was Saul of Tarsus free from malice in his heart when breathing slaughter to the saints? Or, were there other sinners of a still deeper dye?

But let us examine the words of our text. The sins which shall be forgiven unto men, and the sins which shall not be forgiven, are described by our Lord as being precisely the same. "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men." Are there any other manner or kind, than all manner? But the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, shall not be forgiven unto men. The speaking of a word against the Son of man, shall be forgiven; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, shall not be forgiven. The Son of man is not the surety of any but his own members — all the sins they have ever committed, were against him as their responsible surety; and the full expiation for them was exacted at his hand; and the sins of his people which he bore included all manner of sin and blasphemy, from speaking a word to the terrible sin of blasphemy.

But all the sins which men commit, for which Christ as Surety is not re-

sponsible, from the speaking of a single word against the Holy Ghost, to the sin of blasphemy, are absolutely unpardonable: not because the sins are varied in kind or enormity, but because there can be no remission of sins only through Christ. If our sins however small or great were not against Christ, and charged to or laid on him, then there is no hope for forgivness or salvation; for there is salvation in no other name. If our sins are not righteously charged to and canceled by Christ, then they are against the Holy Ghost, or against God, as a Spirit; for God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in truth. A spirit without a material or tangible body, is called a ghost, and when applied to God as a Spirit it is distinguished from all other manifestations of his eternal power and Godhead—he is contemplated only as a Holy, Eternal Spirit: everywhere present beholding all things, the evil and the good.

What we have written we give as our view of the subject; of course we hold none of our brethren responsible for our views. If we are wrong, we desire to be corrected; but we do not think our position will be controverted by our brethren that all who are in Christ, whose sins were laid on him, and who are redeemed by him, have or shall receive the forgivness of all their sins; and, "though they be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow: and though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." And that no sins, however great or small they may be, which were not laid on the Son of man, and expiated by him, shall ever be forgiven in this world or the world to come. Those whose sins are remitted, were by nature children of wrath even as others; and all feel and confess that they are the very chief of sinners: none of them claim that by nature or by practice they are in any wise better than those who perish—As the sins of Israel were laid on the scape goat and borne away to a land of forgetfulness, so they hope their sins were borne away forever by the Lamb that was slain, who has redeemed us with his blood, through whom we have redemption through his blood even the forgivness of sins, with whose stripes we are healed.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, June 15, 1874.)

ORDINATION OF DEACONS

The Harmony Church, Huntington, W. Va., met the 20th day of October, 1962. After singing a hymn, and prayer by Elder J. R. Lane, the church was called to order, and asked that the request of this church be complied with, by selecting a presbytery to examine Brother Lee Johnson and Brother Ben O. Campbell for deacons of Harmony Church.

The presbytery, with the following Elders present: J. R. Lane, Earnest Oakley, Wallace Smith, J. O. Conner, and Amos Hash; and deacons L. M. Johnson, Roy Simmons, and Henry Blalock, was organized by choosing Elder J. R. Lane, Moderator, and Elder Amos Hash, Clerk. Deacon L. M. Johnson, at the request of the church, was chosen as spokesman for the church. Elder Earnest Oakley led in the questioning, followed by Elder J. O. Conner.

It was moved and seconded that we lay hands on the above named brethren. Elder Wallace Smith offered the prayer, and Elder Amos Hash delivered the charge. After which these brethren were delivered back to the church duly ordained Deacons, whom we heartily recommend to those of our faith and order.

Elder J. R. Lane, Moderator
Elder Amos Hash, Clerk

OBITUARIES

EARNEST H. BROADWAY

Brother Broadway was born December 23, 1893; and passed away at Monroe, La., November 24, 1962. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Emogene Broadway, of Monroe, La., and by the following children: Mrs. Dudley Odom, Winnsboro, La.; Mrs. Earl Schultz, Monroe, La.; Mrs. Alvin Sidney King, West Monroe, La.; James L. Broadway, West Monroe, La.; Calvin Broadway, Owensboro, Ky. Surviving also are one sister, Mrs. Joe Williams, Farmerville, La.; thirteen grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Our precious brother was sorely afflicted for several years, and was very dependent upon others. He was a wheel chair patient for a long time, but was very patient and humble, and reconciled to his afflicted and feeble condition. He attended a meeting at Liberty Hill Church in his chair several years ago, and

when an opportunity for membership was given, he related very feelingly his experience, and was unanimously received; and the writer and a deacon baptized him in a chair.

His handicapped condition prevented him from attending his meetings much, but he always enjoyed the visits of his brethren and friends, and was very interesting in his conversation, and seemed not to tire when he had someone to talk with about the glorious doctrine of Salvation by grace and grace alone.

Weep not for him dear one, he is much better off. His sufferings and troubles are over with. His body was conveyed to the tomb, there to await our Lord's second coming: when all His people will be changed and made like Christ's glorious body, and taken home to Heaven, there to praise Him forever.

His funeral was conducted by the writer and Elder Woodrow Hudson at Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church in the presence of a large and attentive congregation. Then he was laid to rest in the Liberty Hill Cemetery.

May God be with, and richly bless his heart broken widow, the children, and others who mourn his passing.

R. W. Rhodes

MRS. MARILDA FINSTHWAIT PEARCE

Mrs. Marilda Finsthwait Pearce, 88, deceased Dec. 6, 1961 of 246 Florida Ave.

The widow of A. V. Pearce, she was the daughter of George Phillips Hitch and Mrs. Caroline Finsthwait Hitch. She was a native of Laurel, Del.

Sister Pearce lived in Portsmouth most of her life, and was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church in Norfolk. She was baptized by Elder Joshua Rowe.

Surviving are a son Allen V. Pearce of Portsmouth, a daughter Mrs. W. I. Cousins of Baltimore, a sister Miss Lorena J. Hitch of Portsmouth; three grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Elder C. N. Bunn, her pastor, conducted a very quiet grave-side funeral. He remembered on one occasion in her home she requested him to give her his views on Psalm 23, so he read same at her funeral, also Psalm 121 and John 14:1-3.

She was laid away in the arms of mother earth beneath lovely flowers. It was a very beautiful affectionate service.

The wise Master Builder Jesus Christ put His righteous robe of love on her. What love that reaches down to the grave and back to heaven and she is shining forth in all beauty, never to suffer again. She bore her suffering with noble and sublime patience. May it be our happy lot to meet her where God will light the city and all will be love and peace for ever and ever.

We can pay no higher tribute to her than this: That she lived true and faithful to her church, family and friends, also earnestly contended for the faith which was once delivered to the saints.

We extend to the bereaved family and her dear sister in the flesh, Lorena J. Hitch, with whom she lived, our heartfelt sympathy in the loss of one so dear to their hearts.

May the God of all grace and the Father of mercy comfort us all and reconcile each of us to His just and holy will and fill her absence with His presence.

The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

Submitted by one who loved her so very much and I hope for Jesus sake.

Pearl Fickett

MRS. RENA EDNA POTTER CARAWAN

Mrs. Rena Edna Potter Carawan, age 66, deceased July 17, 1r62. Wife of Thaxton B. Carawan, a native of Lowland, N. C. Joined the church 4th Sunday in May, 1919, and baptized by Elder E. E. Lundy, of Lowland, N. C. Brought her membership to Norfolk Church in 1938.

She was the daughter of James and Julia Whitford Potter, and sister of Marjorie Potter Kerman. Surviving are three daughters, namely, Doris C. Davis, Edna C. Hicks, and Catherine Carawan; also three sons: Jack D. Carawan, Reid H. Carawan, and James C. Carawan.

Her faithful pastor and fellow servant in the Lord, Elder C. N. Bunn, conducted a very quiet and affectionate Funeral Home service. He said some beautiful things to the family, and they were all so true of her. I believe Elder Bunn was made to feel these things by God's divine power. He has comforted the saint's hearts many times by his labors of love, and his hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. May the Lord bless him to carry on for a long, long time, and preach the gospel which feeds and comforts His people.

The blessed Lamb of God came for Sister Carawan and took her home to heaven. Jesus said, "As I live, you shall live also." God gave her something within her breast which was the most precious thing she could have possessed in this life; and she lived with it, died with it, and is now lying in the tomb with it; and on that great morning she will awake with it in His likeness, and be satisfied. She passed through some very fiery trials and sorrows during her life. Her road was too long and too hard to walk alone. God was with her, and spoke peace, and calmed her troubled breast; and gave her faith to press onward and upward to the high calling which is in Jesus. She suffered all the dear, good Lord gave her to endure: He enabled her to bear her cross and

losses. There was a need for these trials and fears, that she might prove her need for Him. He is still ruling and reigning on high, controlling the planets and holding them in their orbits; and completely takes care of his own.

Sister Carawan enjoyed meeting with the Lord's humble poor in sweet fellowship and love. She talked so beautifully to Sister Credle on the 70th Psalm. She would say, "Make haste to help me, Oh Lord: I am poor and needy. Thou art my help and my deliverer." We spent many pleasant hours together reading the Bible and talking on the great mysteries, goodness and mercies of an all powerful God. The tears of joy and rejoicing flowed from my eyes easily and freely. We were not ashamed to own our Lord; not ashamed to shake hand and call each other brethren; not ashamed to show His love, and say goodbye, because the everlasting love of God unites us in an unbreakable bond; and it comes through the suffering of God's blessed and only Son. How sweet the name of Jesus sounds! "Sweeter than honey and the honey-comb."

We extend to the bereaved family, and her dear sister in both church and flesh, Marjorie Potter Kerman, our heart-felt sympathy. We certainly do not grieve for her as we would for one who had no hope. She will be missed greatly by all the brethren that knew her, and by her family and neighbors; but most of all by her husband and daughter, Catherine, who has been afflicted for thirty years. No sacrifice was ever too great for her to make for her family. She tried so very hard to bring the children up in the way they should go: when they needed reproof, she employed it. Her prayers for them were that they take their places in the world, not with fame, glory and prestige, but with honor and humility.

The memory of her will ever be a "Bethel spot" in their lives. God is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, so we must say, "Rest on". Some sweet day we hope to meet her in glory-land and sing praise and redeeming love to our blessed Saviour. He alone is worthy.

Submitted by one who loved her so very much, and I hope for Jesus' sake.

Pearl Fickett

MRS. FANNIE DURHAM

It has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst our beloved sister, Fannie Durham. May we bow in humble submission to the will of God, for we believe that whatever He doeth is right.

Sister Durham was born in Pittsylvania County, Va., September 12, 1905, and departed this life August 24, 1962, making her stay on earth fifty-seven years. She was the former Fannie Durham. Most of her life was spent in Rockingham County, N. C. Sister Durham united with Dan River Primitive Church several years ago, and was baptized by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler. She was a faithful member and devoted wife and mother, she looked forward to the meetings at Dan River, and loved to hear the singing and preaching — a firm believer in salvation by grace. She was blessed with a kind and gentle way of expressing herself, and the writer was told that the last few words she spoke before departing this life, were kind and gentle words.

She is survived by her husband, Rufus Durham; three sons, Henry C. and Robert E., both of Reidsville, N. C. and David M. Durham of Greensboro, N. C.; one brother, Harry Durham of Reidsville; one half brother, J. R. Durham of Reidsville; one sister, Mrs. Mary Earles of Reidsville; one half sister, Mrs. Stella McGuire of Norfolk, Va.; and five grandchildren.

Her funeral services was conducted at Dan River Baptist Church, where she had attended for many years, by Elder D. V. Spangler. Her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who shall call her sleeping dust to come forth, and forever be with the Lord.

May we be submissive to the Lord's will who doeth all things well. We all miss her but feel that our loss is her eternal gain. May the Lord bless and comfort all who mourn. Done by request of Dan River Church.

Allen Carroll

WINFREE J. MURPHY

Mr. Murphy grew up in the vicinity of ElDorado, Arkansas. He was 54 years old, passing away in the hospital at ElDorado, November 17, 1962. He is survived by one son, Buford Raymond Murphy; three sisters: Mrs. Barry L. McMurrin, Mrs. Ira Honeycutt, ElDorado; and Mrs. Irene Murphy, Norphlet, Arkansas.

As far as I know, Mr. Murphy was not a member of any church, but went to Rehobbath Primitive Baptist Church occasionally, and I was told by one of his sisters that he was a believer in the doctrine of God our Saviour. He manifested an interest in the preaching at Rehobbath.

His funeral was conducted at the Pratt Funeral Home, in ElDorado, by the writer and Elder W. A. Speer, in the presence of a large and attentive congregation, which, with the nice floral offering, showed the great regard in which he was held by those who knew him.

We feel that through the grace and mercy of our God through Jesus Christ, he is better off, because Solomon says that better is the day of one's death than the day of one's birth. And we are told that precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. So if he was given to believe in the Gospel of God,

then there is every evidence that he is better off.

May the dear family be given to look to, and trust in the blessed Lord, who is the one and only glorious Saviour; and who said that he came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him; and this is the will of him that sent me, that of all the father hath given me, he should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day.

Burial was in the Rehobbath Cemetery. May God bless the family who mourn his death.

R. W. Rhodes

MEMORIAL TO
ELDER W. R. DODD

"I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but to all that love his appearing."

While these words were those of the Apostle Paul, they are applicable to the life of Elder W. R. Dodd, who, for over fifty years, proclaimed salvation by grace, and by grace alone. Wherever he went, he never faltered, but marched on, never losing faith in the One he loved so well.

Elder Dodd was born April 21, 1877, at Hinesville, Virginia; and departed this life August 26, 1962. His first wife, Florence Fleetwood Green Dodd, died July 14, 1947. To this union five children were born, three boys and two girls. He later married Miss Josephen Nuckols. He joined the church in 1911, and was baptized into the fellowship of the Strawberry Church; and was ordained in 1912.

He believed in salvation by grace, and had no confidence in the flesh; and was a strict believer in church order. He was the most patient and tender man I have ever known. He had been a peace-maker for more than fifty years, and always ready to help anyone in distress. It was never too hot or too cold, nor was he ever too tired to serve his churches. His wide knowledge of discipline caused his advice to be sought and given in churches and associations. He will be greatly missed.

He served Mt. Ararat Church for forty-seven years, and Strawberry Church for thirty-seven years; and was chosen Moderator of the Staunton River Association in 1937, and served until his death. In writing this, we remember the words of David concerning Abner, "A great man has fallen this day in Israel." To me, we have lost a great leader, and I have a sad and lonesome feeling as I write this Memorial. I had been going with him for several years, and when I find him not present, I have an empty feeling. It leaves us here, hoping that someday we will all be together again.

Written by a brother in hope,
S. A. Clark

SISTER AMY LEE RAY

"The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away"; in the exercising of that sovereign right to do what He wills with His own, our heavenly Father has seen fit to remove our lovely sister from the walks of men. She was born July 7, 1917, and died July 13, 1962, making her stay on earth six days over forty-five years. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. D. McNees.

On an early date in life she was united in marriage to our dear brother, De Witt Ray, who, with the following children survive her: Mrs. Shelby Jean Shaw of Steens, Miss.; Mrs. Glenda Joyce Hamilton, Mrs. Amy Doris Hepler, both of Riverside, Calif.; Mrs. Jimmie Nell Cook, David, De Witt, Jr., Ronnie, and Deborah, all at the home adress at Steens, Miss. One little girl passed away at about one year. Besides her parents she is also survived by one granddaughter, two brothers and two sisters.

Only those that have tread in a minister's path can know the anxiety, and yet the joy, as the children of God are brought into the fellowship of His sufferings. This sister grew up under the influence of the works of men in order to salvation. What a struggle it was as the Lord weaned her away from all that nature held by the ties of parental love, and a lovely family life. What a joy it was when she left all to follow the afflicted and poor people of God. Her virtues as a wife and mother and citizen were unexcelled, but it was in the church of the living God that the grace of God was made to show forth the matchless and boundless love of God. Everybody in and out of the church loved this noble sister in the Lord Jesus Christ; and it was in Him, and in Him alone, that she had any hope of a better world. She always wanted it remembered that she did not come into this knowledge by her will and effort, but that it was the Lord who removed from her every vestige of trust in man, and caused her to look unto the Rock for all her sustenance both natural and spiritual. She, with her husband, joined the Bethel Old School Baptist Church on November 16, 1952, and was baptized by the writer.

Our sister was sick a long time with that dreaded disease, cancer, but, while her sufferings were indescribable, her joy in the Lord for his mercy in life and guidance across death's dark stream, is unspeakable and full of unsullied glory to the praise of His saving grace. Elders H. M. Brock and Clydes Moon, with the writer, were called to the funeral, but, because of prior appointments, I could not attend. They spoke words of comfort to the bereaved, and talked of the glory of God which is to be fully made manifest in the resurrection of the dead. Her body was laid to rest

in the Bethel Cemetery, there to wait until the Lord has a desire towards the works of his hand (Job 14:15), when He shall call and the dead in Christ shall answer, and we that remain shall be changed and all meet the Lord in the air, there to ever be with Him.

W. D. G.

ELDER WILLIAM JASPER HARRISON

Elder William Jasper Harrison passed from this life Sunday night September 9, 1962. He was the son of the late John and Mary Harrison. He had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for many years.

He was near his sixty-seventh birthday when he was called home to be with the Lord. He was not sick when he went to be, but he suddenly passed away. He leaves his wife and six children, besides a host of friends and relatives, to mourn his passing. He had been married twice before his present wife. First, he married Ardella Tanton in August, 1920, and to them a baby girl was born; and Ardella passed away in May, 1921. Then he married Myrtle C. Williams in December, 1922; and to this union five children were born — two boys and three girls; and she passed away in August, 1948. On August 11, 1950, he married his present wife, Blanch Holiman, who administered to his every need, and assisted him in every way she could in his carrying on at home, and was always ready to go with him to the various churches where he was called to preach.

Elder Harrison was liberated August 11, 1957, and was ordained to the ministry March 8, 1958. He served two churches in his, the Western Primitive Association, and one in the Chipola Association; and they have a great loss in his departing this life. He served them well, and in all his churches there was peace. In his short ministry he baptized several. He believed in and preached a God of all power, who predestinated all events that come to pass, and who works his will in heaven and earth, and all deep places.

We feel that he fought a good fight; he kept the faith. We feel his spirit is with God that gave it, and his body is resting in hope, awaiting its change when the power that raised our dear Lord shall change his mortal body to immortal, in that great morning when all the redeemed of the Lord shall be called to their eternal home, ever to be with the Lord; where we will not have to part any more, but can praise His precious name in the eternal ages to come.

Written by H. T. Collins

SAMUEL P. KNIGHT

At the request of Sister Knight, I will give briefly a few lines in memory of a life long friend, and a dear brother in the church.

Brother S. P. Knight was born June 3, 1887, and departed this life May 28, 1962. Making his stay here on earth 74 years, 11 months and 27 days.

He was married to Maggie Lee Warren November 11, 1906. To this union were born six boys and two girls. One girl preceded him to the grave.

Brother Knight and I joined the church the same day and were baptized at the same time. We joined in June 1923, and were baptized in July. We were very much like twin brothers. We were very close to each other. It would be hard for me to tell how much I miss him. But I can not wish him back. While there is a vacancy that will never be filled, yet, while we realize that so keenly, we can only say peace be to his bones. The church saw a gift in him shortly after he joined them, and they set him apart as deacon, and he served in that office the rest of his life. Being qualified, he filled the office well, never flinching from his sacred obligation. Always humble, he always greeted his brethren and friends with a smile and a kind word. Sure all of this we miss, but we desire to be reconciled to the most holy will of our God; we know that He knows best.

Brother Knight had a deep conviction in the doctrine of the sovereignty of God. He believed that God was omnipotent and did rule in all things supreme, and did work his will in the army of Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and in so doing will bring many sons and daughters into glory.

The most praised part of his hope was in the resurrection from the grave. He firmly believed that Christ will come back here to claim the bodies of his children, and that he will raise them from the tomb and change them from mortal to immortal, from natural to spiritual; and that they in the change will be made like him. Oh, what a wonderful hope this is for poor sinners to have. We know that Brother Knight can not come back to us in the flesh but it will not be long before we can go to him in the spirit, to wait until the great day when all of the saints shall be gathered together to be carried home. There we will be able to sing perfectly a song of eternal praise to his holy name. So may we all be given strength and courage to press onward toward the mark of the prize of such a high calling, and look to Jesus who is our great Leader and King.

Sister Knight, I know that it is lonesome for you. You have the sympathy and I hope the prayers of all of your brethren. May God's richest blessings attend you to comfort you in your lonely hours.

Yours in love,
D. A. O'Bryant

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 131 DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1963 NO. 4

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4/63
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

FATHER KEEP ME

Keep me, Father, close beside thee,
  Though the storms of life betide me;
By thy Spirit safely guide me
  Through this vale of sin and gloom.

Though the cannon roar and rattle;
  Though be gone both field and cattle;
Thou art God of storm and battle;
  Thou can save from wrath and doom.

Let the rivers quit their courses,
  And the songs of birds lose their voices;
Let men hide in shame their faces:
  Thou art God, and Thou alone.

Keep me, Lord, (O blessed keeping!)
  When I'm shouting, when I'm weeping;
While awake, and while I'm sleeping,
  Keep me, Father, all thine own.

Thou, the one who gave me being:
  Thine, the holy eye, all seeing;
Keep me when thy foes are fleeing,
  In the conflict and the strife.

Blessed Spirit, keep me near thee;
  May I learn to love and fear thee;
Speak thy blessed words, — do hear me!
  They are Spirit, and they're life.

O, thou Holy One, most precious;
  Thou, all-wise and ever gracious,
By thy mighty rule, all-spacious,
  Still the tumult, end the strife.

Closer now: I feel death drawing;
  At my vitals it is gnawing;
Soon, O soon, I must be going —
  Will it be for weal or woe?

O my God, my blessed Saviour,
  Grant, please grant, dear Lord this favor:
Leave, O leave me never — never
  In life's conflict, to the foe.

Once again, dear God please keep me:
  I would one of thy dear sheep be;
Though, if needful, thou wilt whip me,
  It will all prove to my good.

Soon must end life's earthly story;
  But thy honor and thy glory,
This sweet theme, please keep before me:
  Help me live, Lord, as I should.

And in heaven, all supernal;
  Land of light, and love eternal,
Where no sin, or things infernal
  Can be found, or ever dwell.

Just to have my Saviour near me,
  And his loving voice to cheer me —
Master, speak! I'll gladly hear thee:
  "All is peace, and all is well."

Elder J. L. Smith,
P. O. Box 631,
Spearsville, La.

"HE WALKS UPON THE SEA"

When tempests rage and billows roll,
  And Satan's wiles beset my soul,
'Tis Jesus walks upon the sea,
  To calm the troubled waves for me.

When He commands them, "Peace, be still",
  The wind and waves obey his will.
To him for refuge will I flee:
  For me He walks upon the sea.

'Tis He who soothes the troubled heart,
  The while the burning tear drops start;
And He will undertake for me —
  Yes, Jesus walks upon the sea.

Della Davis
Topeka, Kansas

LETTER TO THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Church of Salisbury, Maryland, greets, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

the churches composing the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, meeting with the Nassaongo Church on Wednesday and Thursday, October 24 and 25, 1962:

Beloved Brethren:

By the keeping power and grace of our God, we have been spared to meet with you once more in an Association. It is good to meet with you at the Mercy Seat where God has promised "And there I will meet with thee and there will I commune with thee". God meets and communes with His human children in His divine Son who embodied His divinity in human flesh that He might give His life a ransom for His elect people.

While meditating upon what to say in this letter, the writer, having a blank mind, asked for divine guidance. Almost immediately the following scripture came with power: "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world". Dear Brethren, the solemn question is, have we as a church and as individuals, been blest to behold Him as the Lamb of God who took away OUR sin? Have we been blest to see in Him all our salvation both for time and eternity? May we behold Him in this meeting, the Lamb of God, born in a manger of a Jewish virgin, a root out of dry ground, having no beauty visible to the eyes of men that they should desire Him. Behold Him living His life among the poor and needy, trudging the rocky hills of Judea and the shores of Galilee, having not where to lay His dear head, but always "about His Father's business". Behold Him baptized of John the Baptist, a dove descending upon His head and a voice from heaven saying "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him". Behold Him led of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of Satan; hearken unto Him as He answers each temptation with a verse of Scripture. Behold Him on the Mount of Transfiguration, glorified, He alone remaining when all earthly figures faded away. Behold Him wearily ascending Calvary's hill, bearing His cross. Behold Him nailed to that cross, hanging there the incarnate Son of God between two thieves, a spectacle to be mocked and taunted.

But, blessed Lamb of God that He was, "He opened not His mouth," bearing without a murmur the dreadful anguish of being forsaken of His Father, His holy nature writhing under the awful blackness of the sin He bore. Behold Him, His humiliation complete, taking the cup, drinking its awful bitterness and crying "It is finished." Behold Him dying, the innocent for the guilty, buried in Joseph's new tomb. But ah! now the scene changes and on the third day, behold Him arisen from among the dead: ALIVE FOREVERMORE! Behold Him comforting His disciples with the promise that although He must leave them and go back to heaven, He would COME AGAIN. Behold Him caught up to heaven, back to the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. Behold Him now, a GLORIFIED MAN in the divine presence; and as we are blest to behold Him there, we may behold something of the glory awaiting us when, with bodies changed and fashioned like unto His own glorious body, we shall arise from the grave or be caught up to meet Him in the air at His second coming. This, my precious brethren, is the heritage of the Lord's people. This is THAT BLESSED HOPE!

Our meetings remain as heretofore and are generally well attended. Our membership is gradually declining, but the Lord knoweth them that are His and we must wait upon Him who will bring them in as it seems good in His sight; and may we always be mindful of the fact that divine approbation rests upon any church not in proportion to its numbers but in proportion to its spiritual depth and faithfulness.

We are most ably and faithfully served by our beloved pastors, Elders D. V. Spangler and W. D. Griffin, whose

theme as they come before us is Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.

Our yearly meeting this year was held on the fifth Sunday in April. We had with us our dear pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler and Brother Julian Daniels of Stem, North Carolina, and a goodly number of our brethren and friends from sister churches . . .

Submitted in love and fellowship,

Elder D. V. Spangler and
Elder W. D. Griffin, Pastors
Maude T. Laws, Clerk

Written by Sister Mildred Dykes

SERMON BY ELDER D. V. SPANGLER AT THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION 1960

"But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.

"Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament; which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Corinthians 3:7-18)

I know that if God blesses me to speak in connection with the subject I have read, I will only touch it: it is a wonderful subject whether I am blessed to expound it or not; for in the text, the Apostle Paul draws the line between the glory of the Old Covenant, or the law, and the glory of the work of the Spirit in the hearts of men. And Paul describes the ministration of condemnation as being a glory.

We would like, if the Lord wills, to show in what sense the ministration of condemnation of sinners has a glory. The Apostle goes on to show that the glory of the ministration of death engraven in stones, fades away into insignificance because of the excellency of the glory that follows. I think of the law that God gave to Moses on Mount Sinai, when He called him upon the Mount, as the law engraven in stone — the Ten Commandments. When God called Moses upon the Mount, the Israelites waited at the foot of the mountain; and it doesn't take anyone long to depart from the Lord, when the Lord leaves them to themselves. The nature of all of us is to go astray, and our feet are, "Prone to wander, Lord I feel it; prone to leave the God we love."

When Moses came down from the Mount with the Ten Commandments, his face shined because he had been in the presence of God; but when he saw what the Israelites had done, he threw down the tables of stone, and they were broken — showing that the first covenant, a covenant of works, has never brought salvation to a single sinner. The old covenant of works is all that Armenianism is preaching today: All over the land, it is works for grace. Every man that doesn't preach that all

the salvation there ever has been, or ever will be for a sinner, was treasured up in Christ Jesus — and that Christ obtained an eternal redemption for them, is preaching an Armenian doctrine.

Paul said, "I was alive once without the law." Had the law not been given? Certainly it had! I was alive once without it, though: I didn't know its demands; I didn't know where it came from; I didn't know that every soul that sins shall die; I didn't know that if we offend in one point, we are guilty of it all. I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came — when God laid it in my own soul — sin revived. He had the sin all the time: "Sin revived, and I died." How did he die? He died so much that the earth became his praying ground; he died so much that he asked the one who brought the light into his soul, "Who art thou, Lord."

The ministration of condemnation is glorious. Why? because mortal man has never found any fault with the Ten Comandments: Glorious because it came from a Holy God. But its demands have never been met by mortal man — if he could keep one law, he could keep them all. Suppose a man that was a murderer, was brought into the courtroom, and his indictment was without fault — there couldn't be a flaw found in his indictment of murder: (there are but few cases that go through the courts of the land but that a flaw can be found somewhere.) A man dodged the electric chair for twelve years . . . but the thought I want to keep in mind is that all the laws of the land are fallible; that the judges are fallible; that the juries are fallible; and the administration of it is fallible. But in the court of God, I want to say that when that man is overtaken — (and how is he overtaken? By the Holy Spirit: he may dodge the eyes of men but he can't dodge the eye of God) — and the indictment is brought by the ministration of condemnation, (as a line laid upon timber — not to straighten it but to show defects on it), that man will say, "I'm a guilty man."

The ministration is glorious as he's brought before the judge — the judge of the whole earth, who is holy and no man can deceive — when he is brought before him, the man stands trembling; and no one who has been brought before the bar of God with a convicted conscience, can stand up and say, "I'm not guilty."

The Pharisee will boast of his own works; he'll say, I'm better than the other man; he'll say, I fast twice a week, and that's all I need: I give part of all I have — and that's the rest of it. But when the convicting power of God reaches the heart of a sinner, he stands trembling before the bar of God. Have you been there, my friends? Have you stood before the judgment bar of God? and said, "If my soul be sent to Hell, his righteous law approves it well. I can't hope for mercy; I can't hope for grace: I see the terrors of His law."

Yet the man that stands there, is as Paul said, "We have the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raiseth the dead." That's why it's there; that's why He purposes it that way: the ministration of condemnation is glorious. The sinking beneath the righteous wrath of God is a glorious thing, isn't it? Why? because it speaks of Him who gave the law. If you find one numbered among the Old School Baptists who sins, and says, "God made me do it", you could have no fellowship for him; if you find one who hides behind this doctrine as a cloak for sin, you have no fellowship for him; but you can't draw the line, my friends, where the purpose of God ceases.

Elder Ayers told us this morning concerning the seed of the woman, that she should be saved in child bearing: Could one man die from Adam's day until Mary brought forth the body of the Lord Jesus Christ, to break the chain that would bring Him into the

world? If you are a child of God, you are a chosen vessel of mercy. Has there ever been a power that could take your life before God brought you into the world — or your father's life? Do we not preach a sovereign God? If he is not, who controls all these things? Is the Devil controlling us today? I find that the same power that binds him, loosens him for a purpose worthy of Himself.

The ministration of condemnation is glorious: for every man sinks beneath it. But only those upon whom the line has been laid by the Spirit, know the holiness of God.

But there is something that is more glorious: The ministration of condemnation is glorious, but it fades away in comparison with the glory of the work of the Spirit. You know, God made two lights to rule the world: the greater light, the sun; the lesser light, the moon. The moon to rule the night; and the moon is a type of the law. I am told, and I believe it with all my heart, that all the light the moon has ever had, was that the sun cast its reflection on it. And all the spiritual light that has ever been from Adam's day to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the life of Jesus Christ was there upon it — the Spirit of Christ was there. Even among the prophets, the Spirit of Christ enabled them to prophesy of Christ, Peter tells us. What did it do? It signified the suffering of Christ and the glory that should follow; and that's all. All preaching of the gospel today, is preaching the suffering of Christ, and the great glory that will follow for his people: The great glory that I hope sometime to share; the great glory, my brethren, that I hope sometime to see you in, — to meet you there. Whatever there is in heaven that God has for his people, will be enough. I'll tell you what will make it enough: it is to see Him who wore a crown of thorns; to see Him whose side was torn for me; to see Him who bowed his head for me; to see Him whose love was so great that I can't tell you of it, — That will make heaven. That's all the heaven we'll need: just to share in the glory.

If righteousness could come by the law to a single sinner, all the blood of Christ would have been in vain; you wouldn't have needed it. But it doesn't come that way. There is only one way that righteousness can come to a sinner: that's through the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ. How much more is the ministration of the Spirit? Why, we hear it talked all over the world that the Spirit is striving and striving, trying to get somebody to accept it. Is that the Holy Ghost? Is that the third person in the Trinity? Is that the one that is called HE in the Bible; and not IT. Is it? Do we believe that Jesus Christ went back to heaven and sent a Spirit into the world, and the Spirit has not the power to save a sinner? Does anybody believe that doctrine? that He can't overcome a sinner. God pity a man who believes that thing. We have no right to criticise them, because I would believe it too, except for the grace of God; and you would too.

Either Christ obtained the complete satisfactory redemption of his people from every sin of theirs, or nobody is yet saved; and if nobody is yet saved, His blood was shed in vain. To preach otherwise is a dishonor to the God of heaven. I don't know when I will be called to meet Him — sometime I will; I would rather have a good conscience; I would rather feel that I am not afraid to tell you what this doctrine is to me, than to have the applause of everyone of you. I said last night, that, if God blesses me to be in that great number, there will be one of the greatest sinners there that I know of. Sometime you brethren believe you will be there, don't you? How do you believe it? by the ministration of the Spirit, that's how you believe it. It is more glorious because it reaches beyond what the law can do.

How much more glorious is the ministration of the Spirit in the heart of a man or woman! I would like to make

it clear. The condemnation stands forever, but there is such a thing as the ministration of it: laying the line. How much more glorious is the ministration of the Spirit! What does the Spirit do? How is the ministration of the Spirit? How effective is that which we are talking about? It is so effective that when Jesus went back to heaven, he said I will not leave you comfortless, but I'll send the Holy Spirit, and he shall take the things of mine and show them unto you. Do we believe that He is still able to do that: to show the things of Christ to the sinner? Yes, we do; and He does it! He does it, first, as new life; and in the new life one is given faith; and in that faith they are dependent upon God for every particle of it they have. You can tell people to have faith: You can talk till your head falls off, and they can't have a particle of it, — of themselves they can't produce one iota of it. The Bible says faith is a gift of God; faith is the fruit of the Spirit; faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

I've seen times when my poor soul was sunk in sorrow; if I could have had an increase of faith, I would have given everything I possess for it; but I couldn't. I've seen loved ones suffering; and I've said, Oh, Lord, give me faith to pray; but I couldn't. I remember one night when I tried to pray; and the heavens were shut. The measure of faith comes as a gift of Christ, and God increases it in the heart of a sinner sovereignly at his will. What do they see by faith? They see the merits of Christ as a complete Saviour, for a complete sinner; they view all the merits of Christ, as theirs.

Isn't this a wonderful doctrine, my brethren? Does it make you love one another? Does it bring you to bear one another's burdens? Does it bring you to the feet of your dear brethren; and to esteem your brother better than yourself? Yes, it does! I can't do that of myself — God Almighty can enable us.

The ministration of the Spirit is more glorious because God has said that his people shall be willing in the day of his power. Not be made willing, but the very power that brings to them the assurance of the blood of Christ, brings to them a willingness; and there's an obedience that all the conditionalist preachers in the world can't bring about. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth."

It's the beauties of holiness I'm talking about; and the Spirit is able to take care of a man, or reach a man in the jungles of Africa — anywhere he may be, He is able to reach the vilest man that ever lived, and turn him around, and teach him to know God. It's able to feed a man in the wilderness: He sent a raven to bring him food. Sometimes I am afraid that I am just a raven; and I get fearful about my preaching. You brethren may not get fearful about your preaching, but I am afraid that of all I am preaching, I'm not in it. But when assurance has come, I know that the things I am preaching will stand when this world is on fire: when the Saviour comes, I know that this is the doctrine of God — the only doctrine that will do a sinner any good. The ministration of the Spirit is glorious: — and the raven went to Elijah every day.

Moses' face shined: (the grace of God makes a man's face to shine,) but they could not see to the end because of the glory of his countenance. He represents the law. And it is said that when Moses is read today, the vail is upon their heart. When people look unto the old testament, the law, the vail is upon their hearts: but when it shall turn to the Lord: when the Spirit I am talking about turns it unto the Lord, the vail is taken away. Now we see through a glass darkly. I see something: I'm not a blind man. You brethren see something, don't you? but its like through a lattice. A lattice is made up

of crosses, — you see as through a glass darkly. But in the work of Sovereign Grace, wherein a man is brought to see all the merits of Christ as his, he is changed into the same glory as that which he sees. He believes that he has a part in the precious blood; he believes that the righteousness of Jesus is all that he will need to enter heaven; he believes that the intercession of Christ in heaven today will answer his prayers. He believes the second personal coming of the Lord of Glory, will be the fulfilling of his hope, when our vile bodies shall be changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body. It is called the resurrection of the dead: We hope to go home.

This meeting will soon come to a close, my friends. We feel we are on the way home today: We are journeying home where congregations will never break up, and Sabbaths never end. Where, as the poet says:

"When we've been there ten thousand years
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days his name to praise
Than when we first begun."

In the righteousness of Christ, and in the perfect redemption of Christ, you sometimes can sing, "When I can read my title clear." The title I'm talking about, is to heaven; a clear title: has never been clouded, and never will be; because it is according to the will of God.

"When I can read my title clear
To mansions in the sky,
I'll bid farewell to every fear,
And wipe my weeping eyes."

(The above is from a recording, and is somewhat condensed for publication. — J. D. W.)

LETTER TO SISTER STANLEY

Pippa Passes, Ky.

Mrs. Mildred Stanley,
Huntington, W. Va.

Dear Sister Stanley:

This morning finds me still thinking of you, and those I met at the church, which has been my uppermost thoughts, and it was pleasant to dwell upon. The songs we sang, and the good words we heard from the two we feel have been called of God.

Elder Weaver's text — Faith, hope and charity, but the greatest of these is charity. He made this so plain: charity, the love of God shed abroad in our hearts. If we have the love of God, then these others are added. As you remember, in his discourse he said that all these others would have an end, but the love of God, Charity, never fails. Where there be prophecies, they shall fail; and tongues shall cease. Yes, we know these things cease, but the love of God is eternal. What a strong consolation! It is not as the world teaches: You have it today, but can lose it tomorrow because of something you do. But we are told that it is not by works of righteousness which we have done but by the calling and washing of regeneration. Again Jesus said, "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you."

What a comfort it is to know that it has been done for us. Jesus is the end of the law. He said, "I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it." If he has fulfilled the law for us, there is no longer a penalty hanging over our heads. I do not wonder at us feeling so unworthy, when we realize what we hope He has done for us: Our boasting is excluded, but we do desire to beg for his mercy.

Christ showed the difference in the two people, the Pharisee and the publican, when one stood and prayed and thanked God he was not as other men, telling all the great things he did; but the poor publican, who had been made to see himself, begged for mercy, and went down more blessed than the self-righteous Pharisee. Oh how lean we get when we try to live like the independents of the world! Yet, according to our nature, that is what we would do if left to ourselves, for we still have that pride that was a thorn in Paul's

flesh. He asked for it to be removed, but was told: "My grace is sufficient for thee."

"Poor and afflicted, Lord, are thine,
Among the great unfit to shine;
But though the world may think it strange,
They would not with the world exchange."

How beautiful is your little church, compared with the great cathedrals of the world. For the last few years I have been in some of these buildings, trying to ease a longing by going to some of these places, but with you people I felt at home in the little house.

. . . Hoping to see and meet you dear people again soon,

Yours in hope,
Mrs. D. C. Turner

"NEARER MY GOD, TO THEE"

This morning I heard on the radio, "Nearer my God, to thee." And I was so overcome by the sweet thought of living near Him, I could not hinder an overflow of tears. I wonder how many people sing it with such feeling, or any feeling at all, — I have sung it many times without any spiritual feeling. But it is impossible to tell my feelings when such demonstration of the spirit is given me. My thoughts have been for some time on the joys of living near, and closely following, our Saviour. I wonder how many seriously think what it is to be near Him.

The writer said, "E'en though it be a cross that raiseth me, still all my song shall be, Nearer, my God, to thee." I am sure he had experienced the joy of being drawn near to Jesus, or he would not have known the joys of his presence; and desired to be drawn nearer. If I am not badly deceived, I know a little of the joy of being drawn away from the world, to feel His presence; and to be weaned from the world, so that I do not want any of its imaginary, fleeting joys. These things fade away when we are near him; and we are made willing to suffer anything He is pleased to put on us, for His sake. The world has no attraction for us when we can live at His feet; and no matter how heavy the cross, it is a joy to bear it for His sake. We can thank and praise Him for, or in, our trials, when we realize they are for our good and His glory.

The thought that impresses me so much, is that we cannot live near Christ while we are living after the flesh: following the world in pride, worshiping worldly idols, and living so much like the world, that they cannot see that we differ from them very much. Neither can we live near Him without trials, sorrows, tribulations, persecutions, etc. We cannot live near him when left to ourselves, for the flesh is prone to sin, and will not — cannot come unto Him unless the Father draws us.

I have read hundreds, perhaps thousands, of Christian experiences; and there never was a faithful follower of Christ who did not suffer many things for His sake: things which were grievous at the time, but afterwards proved to be the richest of blessings; and they will filled with rejoicing and praise.

When a faithful one begins to feel at ease, he is fearful; for he knows he cannot live long in this condition, and escape the temptations, trials, etc., which must come, to draw him from the world. When a faithful one is living in ease, he knows he is in a dangerous condition. For, without the leading and protection of Christ, he is subject to temptation; and knowing by sad experience that he is not able in his own strength and wisdom, to fight the fight of faith, he begs God to restore unto him the joys of "thy salvation". He wants to be led in the right way, for he can do nothing without Christ; and to be protected from the undermining work of Satan.

As I grow older and nearing the home of rest, I hope, spiritual blessings grow sweeter, and so grand and glorious, and beyond my ability to tell as I would like, I have hesitated to try to write for several months.

I will close with the following copied from the Gospel Standard of 1868:

"In the path of tribulation,
Lacking wisdom what to do;
Tried almost without cessation,
Keep me with the crown in view.
Be my Helper,
That I may the way pursue.

Lord, thou knowest all my sorrow;
Thou wast once a man of grief;
Bid me trust thee for tomorrow:
Grant me day by day relief.
By my Helper,
And when needful send reproof.

Chooser of thy people's crosses,
Thou hast chosen mine for me;
All my gains and all my losses
Ordered are by thy decree.
Be my Helper,
'Till thee face to face I see.

In me, Lord, fulfill thy pleasure;
Work in me to will and do;
Be to me my chiefest treasure;
Lead me all this desert through.
By my Helper,
That I may the crown pursue."

Hoping for that crown,
George W. Jackson,
1884 Connally Drive,
East Point, Ga.

JOB

In this book of Job, it has pleased God to reveal to his children his purpose in their afflictions and sufferings in this life; Job being in some degree an example.

At the beginning of this account, Job appears to have been favored with wealth of worldly goods and a manifested favor of God's Spirit in him, for God said of him, "A perfect and upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil," which no man can do except God be with him in Spirit. Satan himself acknowledged that God had "Made an hedge about him, his house and all that he had on every side." Since Satan is the instigator of all sin and evil, he had not been able to touch Job. No doubt he had examined this hedge in his "Going to and fro in the earth." The presence of God's holy Spirit in His children is this hedge and only as God gives Satan power to afflict, persecute, rob and destroy can he touch them. This power God gave to Satan over Job. But notice, Satan does not have this power of himself, for he said to God, "Put forth thy hand now, and touch all he hath and he will curse Thee to thy face." God said, "Behold all that he hath is in thy power, only upon himself put not forth thy hand." Later God gave Satan power to afflict Job with sore boils.

Here it is plainly manifested that "There is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God." That for any evil deed to be performed in this life by Satan God first gives him the power and a set time to accomplish it. This set time for the loss of all his possessions and the death of his children occurred in rapid succession, for the reports came to Job one after the other.

The purpose of God in Job's afflictions and losses was hidden from him and his three friends, and in searching for the cause we have one of the great debates of all time. In this argument, Job's reasoning passed thru three phases. First, his natural reaction. Second, the inspired portion. Third, his self-righteous claims in which he claimed as his own the righteous works he did, not honoring God for them, for it was God's Spirit leading him to do them.

His natural reaction at first was to wish he had never been born "Or as a hidden untimely birth I had not been; as infants which never saw light." And that now, "Oh that I might have my request, that God would grant me the thing that I long for even that it would please God to destroy me."

Then began his three friends to give their reasonings for Job's afflictions. In these reasonings, we have in substance the present day doctrines of man, though a more subtile form. Here are a few: "Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished being innocent?" "They

that plow iniquity and sow wickedness, reap the same." "If thou would'st seek unto God betimes and make thy supplication to the Almighty, if thou wert pure and upright, surely He would awake for thee and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous." "If iniquity be in thy hand put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacle, for then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot."

The substance of all their reasonings was that the cause of all Job's sufferings and losses was a punishment for his wickedness, and that the only remedy lay in his return to God. "Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee." "If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up." Both the cause and remedy as proclaimed by the three were lies, for God, Himself testified, "And still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou (Satan) movest me against him, to destroy him without cause." As for the remedy, Job had never departed; how could he return? For God by His Spirit had been in Job all the while, for nothing "shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

This Holy Spirit in Job gave him utterance, "Oh that my words were now written. Oh that they were printed in a book that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever: for I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself and mine eyes shall behold and not another though my reins be consumed within me." God granted Job his request in that we have his words this day, and no doubt they will continue forever.

In the heat of the argument near the end, Job made the same mistake Moses made when the children of Israel complained bitterly to him about the lack of water in the desert Zin. God had told Moses to smite the rock and the water shall come forth, but Moses in wrath said, "Hear now, ye rebels, must we fetch you water out of the rock?" Which made it appear that Moses had power by striking the rock to bring forth water. The Scriptures said that he smote the rock twice before the water appeared. No doubt the first stroke showed Moses' power; the second God's power which produced the water. Moses did not sanctify God in his speech, neither did Job in his final argument, in which he records about every dealing which the children of men have with each other, in which he affirms he had not transgressed or dealt with evil intent in any, but if he had, let a suitable punishment be placed upon him. In this, "He was righteous in his own eyes", not giving honor to whom honor was due, for no doubt he performed all these deeds, but it was the Spirit of God (Grace of God) that led him to perform them. Paul was careful to render to God His due, saying "I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I but the grace of God which was with me."

God had but to speak to Job, when he said, "I uttered that which I understood not, things too wonderful for me, which I knew not wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes."

In this book, God shows His children that the things they suffer in this life is not a punishment for their sins, for they were put away by the sacrifice of Christ. Even their chastisements are for their good, for, "Whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth." Had Job been granted his desire, "Are not my days few? cease them, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little", the memory of him would have ceased with the passing of his generation; but since God had His own way with Job, his memory will continue throughout all generations. He, like Abel, though dead yet speaketh.

W. L. Crowley
Gordo, Ala.

295 E. Princeton,
Pontiac, Michigan

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

. . . You will find enclosed money for two years' renewal to the *Signs*.

I have been wanting to write to the editors for some time, but am a poor writer. I will try to write of some of what I have experienced. In 1928 I had a dream that my Dad and I were in hell, and in the room where we were there was nothing besides us and one stool about the size of a nail keg. All around us was a solid wall with one large, wide door. It was black, and had heavy latches on it. I knew that behind that door was where the old Devil was. I heard the latch click and the door open, and in walked the Devil. He was in the form of a man but about four times as large; and he talked with us just like a human being. When he left, going back through the door, he said he would be back in a few minutes. I pleaded with Dad to let's go before he returned; but he said, "No, let's stand our ground and see what he is going to do." I cried, and said, "Let us not wait until he comes back." But Dad just walked over to the stool and sat down.

I looked up, and saw a small daylight hole, — and something happened which I can't explain: I was picked up and went out through that hole, and was on top of the earth on the ground, and was scared. I started to run, but couldn't stay down on the ground, and was lifted up in the air and flew away. When I came down to the ground, I was so happy; but was in a large wilderness in a path just large enough to walk in. I met Dad's sister and she asked where he was; and I told her what had happened. She wanted us to go back and get him, but I would not agree, saying that I had tried to get him to come with me, and he would not. Then I was picked up out of that wilderness, and flew away; and was, Oh, so happy.

This was the first of my experiences, and I may sometime write more. The Lord is our life, and without him we can do nothing. This is his world, and he will do his will in heaven and in the earth, and in outer space. He is all in all: there is no power but of God: the powers that be, are ordained of God. He speaks and it is done; commands and it stands fast.

May the Lord bless you to keep publishing the paper. I love to read it, and get food from it. Where I live, we don't have anyone who preaches this doctrine, and this is the only preaching I can believe. I have tried very hard to believe in a doctrine in which I could help do something; but when I try I don't know what to do or say, and I am so helpless. "Lord I am not worthy of your notice; have mercy on me, or I am gone."

From a poor, unworthy reader of the *Signs*. Pray for me. My hope seems awful dim sometimes.

A brother in the Lord, I hope,
Larkin Jackson

"FEAR NOT, LITTLE CHILDREN"

There are, perhaps, a few of God's poor here and there, who have no opportunity to meet often with the household of faith, whose lot it is to dwell in a great measure alone, and who like their parents of old, are ready to exclaim: "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song, and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." (Psalms 137:1-6)

To such I would say: Fear not, little children; the Lord is ever gracious, ever wise: Himself has engaged to teach you and to lead you about, to instruct you and to keep you as the apple of his eye. Your eyes may often overflow with tears and you be ready to halt; your heart may seem to almost break with sorrow and grief; your path may lead through gloomy deserts, and cloudy and dark days; you may be pursued upon the mountains and laid wait for in the valleys. It may seem, sometimes, as though God, even our own God himself were against us in providence. Satan, as a matter of course, is against us, doing all he can, (not all he would) to hurt our feelings, going about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Yea, more! our own hearts condemning us, because we say, do, and think so many things that are not of faith, and whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Hence the sad lamentation: "O! wretched man that I am!"

These and many more of like trials may be brought to bear upon us. Still, my dear fellow pilgrims, beloved of God, this is the way God has marked out for you. "Walk ye in it." Ere long God will open your eyes, himself will wipe away your tears, and then you will be able to see Jesus, who indeed is engaged first and last in all your trials. This is the way of holiness. Christ has walked that way, and you, his followers are to follow him: you have the assurance that he will bring you safe home through every storm, every obstacle overcome, every foe conquered, every stumbling block removed and yourself washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. Then (oh! the blissful thought!) you shall come off more than conquerors through him that loved us. Then we'll cast our souls at Jesus' feet, and crown Him Lord of all.

Elder Bernard Greenwood

(Written in 1866 by Elder Bernard Greenwood and submitted by Elder W. W. Hudson for publication.)

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415 W. Lee Street,
Kingsville, Texas

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is money order to pay for the renewal of my subscription for two more years.

The *Signs of the Times* has brought glad tidings of great joy to my soul for over fifty years.

Mrs. J. O. Hobbs

NOTICE OF UNION MEETING

The Cross Road Primitive Baptist Union Meeting will be held with the Hillsdale Church, near Summerfield, N. C., the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in March. Commencing at 2 o'clock on Saturday.

We welcome all who can come and be with us.

R. D. Newman, Clerk

NOTICE OF UNION MEETING

The next session of the Skewarkee Union is to be held, the Lord willing, with the Briary Swamp Church, Pitt County, N. C., the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in March, 1963. The church is located one mile East of Stokes, N. C., on Highway 33. Elder L. H. Harrison was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder E. C. Harrison, Alternate.

E. B. Peele, Clerk
Williamston, N. C.

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(To February 1, 1963)

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Mrs. Joe MacKenzie, Canada	5.00
J. W. Black, Canada	2.00
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PLEASE NOTE: — The Post Office department has changed our Route number, so please address the *Signs of the Times*, and Elder Spangler, as follows: Route 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane, Danville, Virginia. — J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

"PREDESTINATED UNTO THE ADOPTION OF CHILDREN"

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hast blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." (Ephesians 1:3-5)

This subject has been on our mind for quite a while, and even after using it as a text, it still lingers.

In this epistle of the Apostle Paul to the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus at Ephesus, he blesses the Father for the spiritual blessings he has bestowed upon the saints; and states that their blessings were according as God has chosen them in Christ before the foundation of the world; that the consequence of their being blessed, was that they should be holy and without blame before Him in love; that they were predestinated unto the adoption of children unto God by Jesus Christ; and that all of it was according to the good pleasure of God's will.

So it is evident that these things had their beginning before the world began, and were for the praise of the glory of God's grace, in which the saints were made accepted in the beloved of God, as Paul says in the same epistle.

Since our chief desire now is to consider the subject of ADOPTION, we hope to show what is meant by the adoption; who the adopted are; and when the adoption takes place.

There is a very close analogy between adoption as we have it in the affairs of men, and as it is spiritually in the family of God. Truly it is a most interesting subject: When a person desires, (and it is always according to the person's own desire), to make a child his own which is not his by birth, he, by meeting certain qualifications of fitness, responsibility, etc., and with certain legal procedures, is able to make the child his in fact, and in consequences. It is the taking out of one family, (usually to the profit of both the child and the new parents), and receiving the child into another family: There is a separating from one, and adding to the other.

Now this is exactly what takes place in the Adoption we have under consideration: the child of Adam is taken out of the family of Adam, and added to, or adopted into the family of God. But it is so much more wonderfully done than it is in a natural adoption. In the first, the parents must meet certain qualifications; in the other, the child must be made suitable, or qualified to

come into the family. So, it is the way and manner in which the child is qualified to be brought into the family of God, that gives our subject the depth and importance it has.

The procedures of legal adoption are written in the statutes of our states; and, as pertaining to the spiritual adoption, they are written in the revealed law of the Spirit of life in the word of God. Yet the roots are so deeply embedded in "before the world began", that nothing but revelation can make its provisions and manner of accomplishment known to us. And it also requires a "being kept" by the power of God through faith, in order to receive the adoption. This is because the adoption in its fullness is not completed this side of the "deliverance from the bondage of corruption". The children are described as "being sealed with the holy Spirit of promise" after the "beginning of a good work in them"; which is the **earnest** of their promised inheritance.

We are treading in deep water, so we must be taught of the Spirit else we cannot understand, nor have assurance of our being "accepted in the beloved".

In order to understand why the adopted one **must be made suitable,** or qualified before he can be adopted, we must know in what an un-qualified condition he is.

In our nature we are children of the family of Adam, and are flesh of his flesh, being Adam multiplied in generation. Of us it is said, ". . . by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation." And it is declared that there are "none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seek after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." etc. (Romans 3:10-12; and 14th Psalm) In our nature we are alienated from God by reason of our transgressions; and the Scriptures, as well as our own experience, show the impossibility of our making atonement for our sins, or in any way satisfying the righteous demands of God's law. This is the **real condition of all men,** though many may claim much for themselves. But they do it in ignorance, not having been brought under the convicting power of God's law: even as Paul testified that he was alive once without that law.

"The soul that sins shall die." "Dust thou art, unto dust thou shalt return." Justice is inflexible, demanding perfect obedience. But there is no possibility of obedience in men, because they are dead in trespasses and sins. So obedience, and redemption and forgiveness of sins, must come from another source; and those who receive the blessings of God find that this is included in their being made holy and without blame before him in love; as the Apostle says in the 7th verse, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." And as Peter said of them, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 1:2)

While we are about it, we should look at men a little further: they are wonderfully endowed for the life they now live in the world, — they are fitted to live and die in this element. They know as far as the limits of "the spirit of man" that is in them; they see, hear, and understand that far, but are unable to rise up and go beyond.

Yet the Scriptures declare that there is much beyond the comprehension of humans, — much that is seen and entered into by being born of the Spirit of God. And they declare also that there are those who are born of this Spirit, and see and enter into these things. The question is, Who are they? And the Scriptures declare that there are those who are redeemed from their sins, and saved from the wrath to come. Who are they?

Our text states that these are those who are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ, according as they were chosen in him before the foundation of

the world.

Who are they? Why these are they who were predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto God; and of whom it is written that they have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." So, we want to know more about them: we want to know what is further said about them. It is said that they are quickened: they were dead, but are quickened. They once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that still works in the children of disobedience: They once had their conversation in the lusts of the flesh, and were by nature the children of wrath. But!!

Yes, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved them, even when they were dead in sins, hath quickened them together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved): and hath raised them up together, and made them sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that, **in the ages to come** he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward them through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."

Something is done for them! They were first born of the flesh: they are now born again, — born of the Spirit. To understand this is of great importance; for otherwise an unscriptural position will be taken. To be born of the Spirit, or to be born again, does not mean that there is a re-birth, or that the flesh is re-made, or done over. Not that! But there is something begun, which is a part of the whole which shall be done for the sinner. Evidently the Apostle had this under consideration when he said, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Philippians 1:6) And we must faithfully say that this is not a "progressive sanctification", as some have vainly imagined, wherein the person is gradually advanced in holiness until he is ready for heaven. There is no scriptural authority for any such thing, neither is it in the experience of the Lord's people.

Now this being born of the Spirit is a great mystery, both in its manner of accomplishment, and in its affect upon the one born. But it is real, — just as real as the natural birth. It is a mystery because it is something wrought in the person; not by him. It is beyond his immediate comprehension, — beyond his control. In his first birth, he has his natural life and existance; and it is evident that it takes his body, soul, and spirit to make up his natural, living existance; and that he must have these throughout his natural life. All that he is physically and mentally is born of the flesh, and remains flesh until death.

The best way we know how to state the matter, is to say, that, as this man is partaker of the nature of Adam in being born of the flesh, he is also, in his new or spiritual birth, partaker of that life he has in the vital union in which he was chosen in Christ before the world began. Thus, he has both the nature of flesh in himself, and the nature of the Spirit in himself, — in his one-self. One is completely distinct from the other: as distinct as the sources from which they come: one of Adam, and one of God. They are as opposite as light and darkness, truth and error, purity and sin. It is easy to see, therefore, what we mean when we say that it is not a re-birth; and it is confirmed by Jesus when he said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

That this is true, is evident both from the Scriptures and from our daily experiences. As long as this person is in the world, he has these two natures in him; and he well knows it, for there is conflict, — and he is the battleground. It may well be that he is the company of two armies, of which we read. The flesh lusts against the Spirit,

and the Spirit against the flesh: these two are contrary one to the other, so that he cannot do the things he would. (see Galatians 5:17) He well knows that he has flesh and spirit, old man and new man, outer man and inner man, flesh and mind, as described in the Scriptures.

With all this we want to know what is done for the sinner: What does it mean to the sinner?

First of all, in being blessed, those who are predestinated unto these things, are brought to the realization that they are justly condemned sinners — dead in trespasses and sins. And try as they do with all their might and desire, they are not able to make peace with their offended God. This is conviction; and it beggers description: He faces Hell, and eternal damnation is his sentence.

But, after a time of enduring this conviction, there comes a further blessing of God: There comes an amazing grace, the manifestation of God's mercy, in which the victory of the suffering and triumphant Christ is shown as accomplished for him; and Christ is become his Deliverer from all sins, and is in him the hope of glory. So that now he is, "In hope of eternal life which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began." He has not yet received redemption, but the sealing until the day of redemption. (Ephesians 4:30) He has not received deliverance from the body of his flesh (death), but he thanks God that he shall through Jesus Christ his Lord. (Romans 8:25) He has not yet received the adoption, but he has received the Spirit of Adoption, and is enabled to say, Abba, Father. (Romans 8:15) For the Spirit bears witness with his spirit of which he is born, that he is a child of God; and his earnest expectation is for the manifestation as a son of God. His vanity is subjected in hope, and he shall be delivered from the bondage of his corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

The certainty of the fulfillment of his hope is an amazing thing; for, after these exercises and belief, he is **sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,** which is the **earnest of his inheritance.** This means that he receives a fore-taste of the glory of his inheritance, into which he shall fully come. He has the earnest or the pledge which binds him in the assurance of the whole: And he has this until **the redemption of the purchased possession.** Surely it means something to the child to be, "begotten again unto **a lively hope** by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." (1 Peter 1:3)

What does this mean? It means that the elect sinner, loved of God with a love beyond description, is so assured that he shall be redeemed from his sin and condemnation by the sacrifice of the Son of God, that he receives a token of it while he yet remains in his mundane existance.

All of this adds up to the glorious conclusion that it is the sinner who is saved; that he who was made to mourn on account of sin, and to feel the condemnation of it, is the one who is saved; that the very one who received his hope in the pardon of his sins, is the one who is saved. The sinner, chosen in Christ and predestinated to be adopted into the family of God, is the recipient of all of God's blessings. He is the purchased possession that is redeemed. He is the one who now bears the image of the earthy, but who shall bear the image of the heavenly; he is the one that is sown in corruption, but shall be raised in incorruption.

Yes, he is the one. And though he must die before he receives it, he shall nevertheless come into his inheritance: He is waiting for **the adoption,** to wit, **the redemption** of his body. Jesus had to die before he could be resurrected as the conqueror of death for his people: so shall his people be raised conqueror through him. And in it all they shall be conformed to His image, for God has predestinated them to be thus conformed.

So, when all the things which God

has determined for his people, shall be accomplished for them and in them, they shall be completely freed from even the stain of sin, and shall be perfectly at home in the immediate presence of God, because they are sons of God: They are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. Their prospects are beyond all imagination. Perhaps John expressed their emotions best when he said, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God . . . Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. (1 John 3:1-2)

Thus we have tried to present our understanding of what is meant by the adoption; and have found that the blessings of God are upon his people; and that they have nothing in the way of rewards, or deserved credits towards eternal life. Indeed the whole gospel concept is entirely contrary to such contradictions of God's love, mercy, and grace.

If we have made our position clear, we have said that the adoption is not consummated until the resurrection: it being fully realized by each of us that we groan within, and are awaiting something, which is, ". . . awaiting the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." And we understand that our presence experience of the blessings of God, with all that they mean to us, is our assurance of the redemption of the purchased possession.

When we remember the cost of our redemption; the cost of making us heirs of God; the cost of giving us this inheritance, we are amazed at the love our Father has bestowed upon us. And knowing that it was the good pleasure of God's will; that it was for the joy what was set before him in the salvation of his people, that Jesus endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God, we are glad we know it is all to, "The praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

J. D. W.

1168 High Avenue,
Topeka, Kansas

Dear Editors:

I notice my subscription is expiring, so am enclosing three dollars for another year of the Signs of the Times.

May heavenly blessings rest upon you that you may be enabled to continue its publication for the comfort and edification of all the readers scattered abroad.

I would like to mention that I have a number of the old Beebe Hymn Books, if there are any who might desire to have them. They were the only ones used in the three churches comprising the First Kansas Association for many years . . . As one time Clerk of the association I have them left in my possession, and would be glad to see them placed where they would be appreciated as they deserve, since the association is now extinct. We that are left are few and scattered, but we still love and desire the assembling of the saints of the household of faith.

In hope of a life beyond when done with the trials and tribulations of this tumultuous world.

Della Davis

(Those who are interested in these books, please write Sister Davis. — J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Portland, Ind.
August 16, 1887

Dear Brethren Beebe: — I had thought for a long period of time that I would refrain from intruding upon your brotherly forbearance in the way of submitting anything for your patient inspection, feeling that your

watchcare over the subject matter that is given space in the Signs is a care that has many times been a grievous burden; for I often think that at many times there are submitted to your judgment many things that, were they printed, would not be just what the saints of God should have as healthy food. Now, dear brethren, if any doctrine or exhortation which I humbly submit to your inspection shall be found unstable, you will confer a favor on me if you withhold it from publication.

My mind has been led to reflect on the subject of God's certain foreknowledge of both the virtues and vices of men, of their good and evil practices, and of his foretelling such events, and also of foretelling how at a certain time men should do things rewardable and punishable. First. If God does not foreknow, he cannot foretell such events. To positively foretell is to positively foreknow. Second. If God does not certainly foreknow the future volitions or choosings of men, then he cannot certainly foreknow the consequences dependent upon those volitions and choosings of men. The knowledge of the existence of the one depends on the knowledge of the existence of the other, and the one cannot be more certain than the other. In other words, if God does not certainly foreknow the acts of men, how can he provide for the consequences? If he does not foreknow them, it is certain that he must be ignorant of all the consequences that follow. If we admit for a moment that he is ignorant of their acts, and the consequences of their acts, then we will be at a great loss for words and ideas to reconcile the following passages of Scripture: "But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause." Here Christ tells them that it was written in the Jewish law, or the Old Testament, just what those Jews should do. It was foretold; and if so, was it not foreknown? Yet who can say that it was a Christian act to hate Christ? Yet it was foretold; and who will profess that those Jews did not follow their hearts' desire — the liberty of their minds?

Now, was this in the **permissive** decree? If so, why should such permissives, and such liberty of action of those Jews in hating the Lord, transpire at the time foretold, and also be wholly without a cause? Likewise Pharaoh's conduct, in refusing to obey God's command to let God's people go, was foretold. God said to Moses, "I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go." — Ex. iii. 19. Here God professes to know Pharaoh's future disobedience. God says, "But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt." — Ex. vii. 4. Here it is plain that God knew just what Pharaoh's mind would be, and how his heart would be inclined, and also told the consequence of Pharaoh's disobedience; and it certainly cannot be denied that Pharaoh did follow his own free will. It is here that I would have the reader notice that Pharaoh's will, and his desire, and his heart's pleasure, was the very thing that God had foretold; and in following his own carnal desires he fulfilled what God had foretold of him. His heart was inclined to its own lusts. Yet it must be noticed that in all he did, in binding burdens on the children of Israel, and all his persecutions, and his obstinacy, he only fulfilled a decree; and the consequence of Pharaoh's obstinacy was foretold as a thing that God knew, and not what he guessed at.

Then was it **permissive**, or was it decreed, "that I may lay my hand upon Egypt?" Likewise the cruelty that Hazael should be guilty of is foretold in 2 Kings viii. 12: "I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel. * * * Thou wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child." Yet Hazael seemed surprised to think he should ever be guilty of such cruelty, and he said to the man of God, "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" Yet, as much surprised as Hazael was at this prophecy concerning him, we find that when the time came for this prophecy to be fulfilled

Hazael's mind and heart were so set that in fulfilling his heart's lusts he then and there did do just what God foretold, to a jot. His free moral agency, as some would term it, did not vary in the least from following God's solemn decrees. — See 1 Kings xv. 16. Likewise the moral conduct of Cyrus was foretold long before he was born in his mercy to God's people, and his regard to the true God, in turning the captivity of the Jews and promoting the building of the temple. — Isa. xliv. 28; xlv. 13. It was foretold of Cyrus how his heart should be inclined at that time, and what he should do; and still he was not yet born. Now this was one of the great morals foretold, and also the consequences of it were foretold. Then can it be successfully denied that God does foreknow the future actions of men, and also the consequences of those acts, both of the virtues and vices? How many instances of the moral conduct of the kings of the north and south, particular instances of the wicked behavior of the kings of Syria and Egypt, are foretold in the tenth chapter of Daniel. Their corruption, violence, robbery, treachery and lies; and particularly how much is foretold of the horrid wickedness of Antiochus Epiphanes, called a vile person in that chapter; and also in the eighth chapter, verses 9, 14, 23, to the end, are foretold his flattery, deceit and lies; his having his heart set to do mischief, and set against the holy covenant; his destroying and treading under foot the holy people in a marvelous manner; his having indignation against the holy covenant, setting his heart against and conspiring against it; his polluting the sanctuary of strength, treading it under foot; taking away the daily sacrifice, and placing the abomination that maketh desolate; his great pride, magnifying himself against God, and uttering marvelous blasphemies against him, until God should destroy him.

Yet, with all the pride, liberty of action, and in fulfilling his heart's desire, it was foretold that he should do this. Then again in this event, when whole nations were involved in this terrible ravishing of nations, when two hundred thousand Israelites fell by the sword of Nebuchadnezzar, in all these bloody years of wars and pestilence, I ask, did not the Lord's prophets foretell this? Did not also the consequences follow in line? If God both foretold the acts and the counsequences, then what wisdom we see. Our God sees and foretells the events, and not one jot or tittle can fail, but all must be fulfilled. With all the moral conduct of the Jews on the occasion of this persecution, as predicted, it is foretold that he should corrupt many by flatteries (Daniel xi. 32-34), but that others should behave with a glorious constancy and fortitude in opposition to him (verse 32), and that some men should fall and repent (verse 35). Here both the virtues and vices are foretold.

Likewise Peter in denying his Lord, with its circumstances, and that great sin of Judas in betraying his Master, and its dreadful punishment, were foretold in like positive manner. — Matt. xxvi. 21-25. Here the conduct of Judas was specifically foretold, centuries before he was born; and when our Lord and Master was to be betrayed into the hands of wicked men Judas, as it was foretold of him, proceeded in the manner and form, with his heart set by the devil, as Christ said, "What thou doest, do quickly." I ask, did not Judas do just what his heart desired? Did he not use all the "free moral agency" that any Arminian could ask? Did he not follow his own will? Yet, I ask, did he not fulfill a decree as specifically and as pointedly, and with all the treachery that the man of God had foretold of him? The thirty pieces of silver that were offered by the Jews as the price of blood; was it not done with all the desire and heart's choice possible? Yet did it not fulfill a decree that had gone before? Also the accepting of it by Judas, as a free act on his part, and also the dividing of Jesus' raiment ("For my vesture they did cast lots"), were done with all the hatred that mor-

tal man could wish or desire; yet in all this was anything done that did not fulfill a decree foretold?

Then how much is gained by denying the absolute predestination of all things, if it puts us in any better condition to compromise with Arminians by saying, "Just so far as the church is concerned," or, "So far as the church goes?" Then that passage of Scripture which says that he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will" should read, All things in the church; and where it says, "All things work together for good to them that love God," it should read, All things in the church. But as a believer in the Bible, I only wish to leave it as the Bible has it, unlimited. When the Bible is so full of the things foretold by God, both of the vices of some and of the virtues of others, and especially when he foretells how good some should act, and how wicked others should act, it certainly must be admitted that our God is wisdom. To foretell is to foreknow; and how can our God foretell or foreknow an uncertainty? Can he foretell a thing he does not know? If he knows it, is it not a fact? If so, are certain facts certain to come to pass? If so, are they not fixed? The happiness of the saints is firmly assured; and how can it be thus unless the opposers of their happiness have their bounds? To all those whom our Lord has called, and who have tasted the good things of God, if any shall think this Scripture hard to reconcile, I would say, I have realized that among Baptists there are a diversity of gifts. All is not an eye, all is not an ear. It is the same God who is rich over all things to the church; and while in this vale of flesh we are not a perfect body.

Seeing the Scripture foretold events of the future, and also that many of the events have already transpired, how necessary it is that we render due credit to the wisdom set forth by our God. Our God has in many instances foretold just the acts of certain creatures, and at many times whole nations, as in the interpretation of Daniel's dream in regard to that great image whose head was of fine gold, whose arms and breast were of silver, whose belly and thighs were of brass, whose legs were of iron, and whose feet were of iron and clay mixed, each different metal to represent the overthrowing of the kingdom preceding it. In this were involved the acts of kings, rulers and their subjects of the different nations of the earth, which were to continue from Daniel, at the time of the Jews' captivity at Babylon, until the coming of Christ, which was that stone taken out of the mountain without hands, which should smite the image on its feet; which was a fulfilling of another decree, that the sceptre should not pass from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, till Shiloh come. The terrible slaughter of kings, rulers and their subjects was as specifically foretold as if it were then enacted. Now, who will assume that this was merely **permissive,** when it was an absolute decree? If all the acts of whole nations of men, with their minds so inclined that they all with one accord follow right in line with the things foretold by Daniel, how can it be mere permission or accident? How much is gained for Arminians, who claim liberty of action when they follow the dictates and inclinations of their minds, and do not in the least get away from the very things that were foretold of them? If they are allowed liberty of action, how much is gained by this liberty? Is it not in accord with that Scripture which says, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps?" — Jeremiah x. 23. Also that Scripture which says, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord." This we can realize as true when we look back at Daniel's prophecy in regard to what certain kings for centuries should do. Think of Nebuchadnezzar when it was foretold of him that his reason should depart from him, and that his dwelling should be with the beasts of the field, and that he should eat grass as an ox, and that his hair was to be like eagles' feathers,

and his nails like eagles' claws; which was all fulfilled as specifically as prophecy could tell it. Even his haughtiness and pride were foretold; and was it merely **permissive?** Yet his mind and heart were set to do the things which prophecy had foretold.

Now we will return to David, when he committed that noted outrage with Uriah's wife, and had Uriah put in front of the waged battle. It was then told David that God would surely visit his iniquity upon his own household; which was fulfilled by his own son Absalom lying with his father's concubines in the sight of the sun. Yet while this was so specifically visited upon David's household, can it be allowed for a moment that it was merely **permissive?** I count that such a conclusion is a mild form of compromise with those who are not able to realize that man in all his career has only been fulfilling some wise decree.

It is further to be observed that many things are spoken of by John in Revelation concerning the acts of men, both wicked and righteous, yet to come, when Gog and Magog shall be gathered to battle; and that great red dragon that is to be let loose in the last days, which shall deceive the nations of the earth, and shall cause all, both small and great, to worship the beast and his image; whose names are not written in the book of life. They are to encompass the camp of the saints, and make war against them, and overcome them. This is all to transpire in the future. Now, is this all to come by mere permission, or is it to come pointedly and in the very line as John tells us? Is there any question about it? Will not men's hearts and minds be so inclined and corrupted at that time that they will worship the beast and his image? Will not those whose names are written in the book of life be so instructed that they will worship the true God, and suffer martyrdom, and their camp be encompassed by the worshipers of the beast and his image? If this is all to be merely permissive, and yet so certain to come to pass, what will those who advocate permissive decrees harmonize those things with that are certain, fixed and unalterable? John tells of this matter as a fixed decree, and that he was instructed by the angel. Likewise the prophecy of the bringing in of the Gentiles was foretold long before Christ was born of the virgin Mary. Then in the place where it is said, "Ye are not my people," they shall be called my people, or the people of God. The scattering of the Jews to the four winds of the earth, among the people of every nation, and the gathering together of them, was foretold in like manner.

So when the particular acts and conduct of men for ages to come have been so specifically foretold, how that some should believe on Christ and be saved, and that others should reject him, and that he should be wounded in the house of his friends, are things not to go unnoticed, but to be looked upon as the wisdom of him who created all things by himself, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven, whether they be visible or invisible. Can there be anything besides things in earth and in heaven, things visible or invisible? If not, God has made all these for himself, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; he made them all. — Col. i. As these things, which Paul claims God made or created, cover all creatures, what then is left out? Yea, he made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil. There is no power but of God, and all the powers that be are ordained of God. If all the powers are ordained of God, and men's actions and minds follow to a jot in the very things foretold, how much of the way of man is in himself?

Brethren Beebe, you alone must be the judge as to whether this argument in proof of God's sovereignty will be profitable and edifying to that camp of saints who shall not worship the beast and his image, whose names are written in the book of life.

NEWTON PETERS

(The above by Elder Newton Peters is copied from the December 15, 1887 issue of the Signs.)

OBITUARIES

THOMAS DAMERON DODSON

God in his infinite wisdom and mercy came down to earth and removed from our midst our Brother and Deacon Thomas Dameron Dodson.

Brother Dodson was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, on May 12, 1874, departed this life August 13, 1962, making his stay on earth 88 years. Brother Dodson united with the church at North Fork the second Saturday in May, 1917. Brother Dodson was a farmer for many years.

The son of Joshua G. and Nannie Dodson, was married to Alzia Adams in the year 1900; who proceeded him in death November 1, 1953. They moved to the Figsboro Community early in their married life where he united with Camp Branch Church by letter on April 21, 1918. Brother Dodson was made clerk of the church in August, 1919, and remained clerk 36 years, or until June 4, 1955, when he asked the church to accept his resignation due to failing health. Brother Dodson was ordained Deacon of Camp Branch Church July of 1925, and remained Deacon until God called him to rest. He had been in declining health for quite a few years.

He leaves to mourn his loss the following children: Roy Dodson, Jessie Dodson, Howard Dodson, G. T. Dodson and Herbert Dodson all of Martinsville, Virginia. Sgt. Robert L. Dodson of North Carolina, Mrs. Belva Wagoner, Mrs. Lottie Kirks, and Mrs. Doris Mason. Nineteen granchildren and five great grandchildren.

We know and feel that the church, community, family and friends will miss him greatly since God saw fit to take him home to the Great Beyond, where pain and sorrow are no more. We deeply feel that our loss is his gain and that he is at rest with God waiting the resurrection, when God will say, as the Scriptures read, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

Brother Dodson had requested that Elder R. A. May and Elder C. E. Turner preach his funeral, and had told Elder May if he had a mind he would like for him to use Scripture found in Revelation, Chapter 14, Verse 13.

His funeral was held at McKee Chapel at Martinsville, Virginia, August 15, 1962 by Elder R. A. May and Elder C. E. Turner. His body was laid to rest by his wife in the family cemetery at Figsboro.

Done by order of the church at Camp Branch, December 1, 1962.

Elder J. E. Burgess, Moderator
Elder Rufus Brown, Assistant Moderator
Nancy Haynes, Clerk

MRS. SABRA C. DAVIS

Mama passed away October 14, 1962, and was eighty-nine years old. Though she was helpless three weeks, she was so patient and did not complain. It seemed that everything done for her was just right. She had always visited the sick and shut-ins, sitting up with the sick many nights.

Mama's passing is the greatest loss we have ever known, but we feel that as the loss is ours, the gain is hers. Papa and Mama were married December 24, 1894. He passed away January 13, 1947, at the age of eighty-six. Surviving are three sons and one daughter: L. H. Davis, Raleigh, N. C.; L. J. Davis, Goldsboro, N. C.; Grover Davis, and Miss Grace Davis, at the home, Davis, N. C. We feel that we have much to be thankful for, since we had them with us so many years.

Mama was a member of the Atlantic Church, but Papa did not unite with the church, but was a strong believer in Old Baptist doctrine. They are laid side by side in the old family cemetery. Elder Carl Edwards conducted Papa's, and Elder Godwin, Coats, N. C., conducted Mama's.

A large group of relatives and friends attended, and there was a large number of the most beautiful flowers. The service was conducted at the grave, as the sun was shining so brightly. Written by her daughter,

Grace Davis

LELLA MAY BURKHALTER

Lella May Burkhalter was born in Stockton, Missouri, March 23, 1872, and died November 10, 1962, making her age more than 90 years.

She moved to Texas with her parents to near Simms, Texas and was married to Henry M. Burkhalter. They lived together for thirty-five years, when he passed away in 1922. She lived in Simms until about seven years ago, when she moved to Texarkana, Texas, to live with her daughter, Mrs. Ruby Richardson. She entered the hospital on October 3rd, and remained there until she passed away.

She was given a full life. She was the mother of eight children; five of whom survive: two sons, Willie B., and Johnie L. Burkhalter; three daughters, Tennye Collyer, Ruby Richardson, and Ruth Braley. Surviving also are, one sister, Miss Pearl Jennings; sixteen grand-

children, twenty-nine great grandchildren, and four great great grandchildren; and a number of nieces and nephews.

She united with Prospect Primitive Baptist Church in October, 1910, and was blessed to be with the brothers and sisters for fifty-two years, thanks to the Lord.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Lloyd Wall and Elder Malcolm Burkhalter, a grandson, in Texarkana, Texas. The pallbearers were grandsons: Jack, Joe, Billy, Donny, Ricky, Braley, Winford and James Burkhalter.

Written by a grandson.

Elder Malcolm Burkhalter

CARY A. ROBERTS

Cary A Roberts, son of the late Brother and Sister James B. Roberts, was born in Brown County, Texas, August 9, 1917; and passed away December 5, 1962. He was married to Miss Pauline Landers December 7, 1942.

To this union three children were born: two sons, Cary Douglas, and Loyd Jack; one daughter, Paula Jean. Besides his wife and children, he leaves to mourn their loss, two brothers, J. B., Jr., of Marfa, Texas, and Loyd R. stationed with the Air Force in Canada; and three sisters: Mrs. W. C. Cate, Odessa, Texas; Mrs. Wilburn Kinkel, White Oak, Texas; and Mrs. Claude Cunningham, Chickasha, Oklahoma; also uncles and aunts, nephews and nieces; the entire family of his father-in-law and mother-in-law; and I believe I can truthfully say, every old Baptist that ever knew him; and a host of friends.

Cary had for several years owned and operated Cary's Little Bear Grocery and Market, here in Coleman; and I believe all that knew him would vouch for his honesty and fair dealing. He never joined the church, but was a strong believer in salvation by grace, and the eternal purposes of God. A number of times he told me, "I wonder where my lot will be; I just hope it is yonder with Him." He was always ready to do anything he could for the convenience of the brethren and sisters. Many times he and his wife took my wife and I in his car several hundred miles to a three-day meeting. If he couldn't go, and wife and I did go, he would know about what time we would get in from church, and he would be here to learn about the meeting, and talk for an hour or two. We miss him more than the tongue of man can express.

Services were conducted in Coleman by Elder D. B. Wallace, of Athens, Texas, assisted by Douglas Robinson. He was laid to rest in Coleman Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour; when His people shall see Him, be like Him, and be with Him forever. That was Cary's hope. Can we say more?

Written by his father-in-law, and I hope brother in Christ.

C. U. Landers

MRS. DORA WOODALL MILLER WREN

Sister Dora Wren was born May 30, 1898, in Cherokee County, Texas; and passed away September 1, 1962, in Baytown, Texas; at the age of sixty-four years.

She leaves to mourn their loss, one son, Bernard Miller, Baytown; six daughters: Mrs. Mondell Comar, Anchorage, Alaska; Mrs. Burnell Jones, Fort Worth; Mrs. Bertha Winkler, Anson, Texas; Mrs. Yvonne Sarter, Baytown; Mrs. Janice Day, Dallas; and Mrs. Bernice Mae Hardison, Baytown. Surviving also are four step-daughters: Mrs. Belle Sarter, Arlington, Texas; Mrs. Ronelda Sarter, Arlington; Mrs. Florence Fitch, Teague, Texas; and Mrs. Lela Woodall, Franklin, Texas; two sisters: Mrs. Lois Suttle, Freestone, Texas, and Miss Lizzie Woodall, Freestone; two brothers: Dan Woodall, Baytown; and Charlie Woodall, Franklin, Texas; and eighteen grandchildren and three great grandchildren. Brother Wren passed away in January, 1962.

Brother and Sister Wren were married in August, 1927, in Freestone, and moved to Baytown in the late fifties. They reared a family that you couldn't tell children from step-children, unless you knew them personally. They were Dad and Mother to all the children alike. Children are blessed to have such parents, and parents are blessed to have such children.

Brother and Sister Wren were members of the Fort Worth Church, where he served as deacon for several years. Sister Wren, we feel, manifested "the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price." For the children, the apostle says, "Sorrow not as for those who have no hope."

We, the brethren and sisters, desire to be reconciled to the will of our God, knowing that another member of our little church has passed on. May He grant us grace to trust in Him in all our tribulations. Services were conducted in Teague, Texas, by the writer, his pastor, assisted by Orville Barger, of the Missionary Baptists. She was laid to rest beside her husband near Teague; there to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour, when His children will see Him, be like Him, and be satisfied.

Written and sent to the *Signs of the Times* by request of her children.

C. U. Landers

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God in his perfect wisdom was pleased to call from time to himself, our beloved sister in Christ, Mrs. Vio (Thornton) Matthews Dolin. After severe suffering and a long illness, she peacefully and quietly passed away June 7, 1962. She was a daughter of the late William P. and Nancy (Bird) Thornton, and was born December 13, 1899, in Putnam County, W. Va.

She was first united in marriage to William Matthews, who preceded her in death, leaving two sons, Ovid F., of Arlington, Va., and William P. Matthews, Rose City, Ohio. Several years after the passing of Mr. Matthews, she was united in marriage to Lance H. Dolin — May 2, 1928.

After deep trial and weighty conviction for sin, she was given a sweet hope in Jesus, and was received and baptized into the fellowship of Providence Primitive Baptist Church on September 4, 1926, by the late Elder Isaac R. Greathouse. She lived a faithful life, filling her seat at the meetings when possible. She and her beloved husband resided at St. Albans, quite a distance from the church house, therefore she was not always able to attend the meetings. Her high joy was in the church meetings, and her rejoicing was great in hearing the proclamation of the gospel. She was steadfast in her convictions: salvation by grace was the theme of her song. She was widely known and esteemed by the Primitive Baptists in this section.

In addition to the two sons and her husband, she leaves to mourn four brothers: A. C., C. A., and R. L. Thornton, St. Albans, W. Va., and M. F. Thornton, Hurricane, W. Va.; four sisters: Mrs. Ida Hill, Phoenix Ariz., Mrs. Virgie Meadows, Mrs. Alma Spurlock, and Mrs. Agnes Cessell, St. Albans; and four grandchildren.

We, the church, keenly feel our great loss, but the stroke is softened in the sweet conviction that our sister is at rest in the glorious presence of her Redeemer God. May sustaining and reconciling grace be unto her husband and family. Funeral services were conducted by Elder V. B. Linn, and burial was in Cunningham Memorial Park, St. Albans. Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the will of God, and

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be tendered the family, a copy be made a part of our church records, and a copy be sent the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference on Saturday before the 4th Sunday in September, 1962.

H. J. Bird, Pastor
H. L. Byrnside, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God in his infinite wisdom has been pleased to call from our midst by death, our beloved brother, Deacon Waldo Oswald (Dora) Sloan, who quietly passed from this life April 27, 1962, after a long illness and much suffering. He was born November 7, 1873, in Franklin County, Virginia, a son of the late James Y. and Eliza (Hale) Sloan. He was united in marriage to Mary D. Wade December 29, 1892; and to this union seven children were born, five of which survive: J. H. Sloan and W. E. Sloan, Hurricane, W. Va.; Creed Sloan, Batavia, Ohio; Mrs. Sallie Johnson and Mrs. Eula Carpenter, Hurricane, W. Va. Mrs. Ethel Bird and Mrs. Georgia Bird preceded him in death several years. Surviving also are three sisters: Mrs. Lydia Hamilton, Mrs. Della Sumner, and Mrs. Bertha Traupt, all of Virginia; twenty-four grandchildren, and forty-nine great grandchildren.

In early life Brother Solan moved to Lincoln County, W. Va., spending the remainder of his life in this state as an industrious farmer. After travail and deep conviction of sin, he was given a good hope in the shed blood and imputed righteousness of Christ. He united with and was baptized into the fellowship of Providence Baptist Church more than fifty years ago. At his passing, the church has lost one of its oldest members.

He was ordained a deacon and served many years. He was also elected Clerk, and served many years in the capacity. He was an unassuming man, a good neighbor; and keenly feeling to be unworthy and unprofitable, his hope and faith was staid alone in Jesus. His wife, Sister Sloan, preceded him in death on January 21, 1953.

We, the church, have sustained a great loss in his passing, yet we grieve not as those who have no hope. We believe his spirit is wafted home to glory, the blessed portal of peace. In his illness and suffering he so often expressed his yearning desire to go home.

Funeral services were conducted at the church house by his pastor, the unworthy writer, and burial was in the family burying ground beside his wife, near his old home.

We desire to bow in humble submission to the sovereign will of our God; and desire sustaining and reconciling grace upon the family.

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be tendered the family; a copy be made a part of our church records; and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference Saturday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1962.

H. J. Bird, Pastor
V. L. Byrnside, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 131 DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1963 NO. 5

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5/63
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"GOD HATH SHINED"

"Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. (Psalm 50:2)

Zion represents the church of the Living God. "But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels," (Hebrews 12:22)

Will we do any violence to the text if we say that God hath shined out of Zion? Without God, she has no light. Zion cannot shine of herself. Christ said, "Without me, ye can do nothing." This reminds us of the moon and sun. The moon has no light of herself. But, the sun shines on the moon, and the moon gives her light.

When Moses came down from the Mount, his face was shining, and the Children of Israel could not bear to look at his face. (see Exodus 34:29-30) Isn't it true that God caused his face to shine? In other words, God shined through Moses. Moses was just as any other man, but God raised him up to be a prophet.

Notice the expression, "the perfection of beauty." This qualifies or tells what Zion is. So, Zion is the perfection of beauty. Now, how was she perfected? Was it by any of her deeds or merits? "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, *make you perfect in every good work to do his will,* working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." (Hebrews 13:21-22) God has perfected the Church. God works the will and the do in his people. God puts his spirit in his people and causes them to walk the right way.

By nature, there is no difference between the Church and the world. "By nature, ye are children of wrath, even as others." But, yet a difference is made, and it is made by God. ". . . that ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel." (Exodus 11:7)

Zion is something special, and is different from the world. "I have chosen you out of the world." "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." (1 Peter 2:9) Therefore, God hath called Zion out of nature's darkness, and shined through her. Christ said, "I am the light of the world", and "You are the children of light" Darkness hates light, therefore, Zion is hated by the world. (see John 3:19-21, 8:12)

Zion does not walk in her own light, but walks in the light of God. She does not have any light of her own. God hath perfected Zion and shines through her. Notice what the Church says in Song of Solomon 1:6, "Look not upon me because I am black." This is some evidence that God is shining upon her. She is made to realize her sinful condition.

We cannot realize our condition, until we are awakened and quickened by the Spirit of Almighty God.

"And ye hath he quickened." You were dead in sins, but God has quickened you and given you life. He has called you out of darkness. My friends, it takes light in order to see the darkness in your soul. God teaches you to know your sinful condition, and causes you to look to Him who is able to deliver you. Christ is our only hope. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

"Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." God shines in the Church. Since the Church is composed of members then we may say that God shines in each individual. God shines in his people. "But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after *ye were illuminated,* ye endured a great fight of afflictions." (Hebrews 10:32) You were illuminated by the light of God. Then you endured a great fight of afflictions.

God teaches his people to know his doctrine. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free. First, you are taught to know the sorrow of darkness; and next you are taught the beauty of the blessed light of God. "For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." (Psalm 30:5) You experience night before morning, winter before spring, and bitter before sweet, and weeping before joy.

When God first shines his light upon you, it exposes your sinful condition, and your eyes are opened to view the darkness that is in your soul. This is darkness that is felt. "Look not upon me, for I am black." It may be noon day naturally, but you find that it is midnight in your soul. You look for light but cannot find any. You find that your strength has failed you, and that you cannot deliver yourself out of this condition.

All is darkness within. You feel the wrath of God and it burns like fire, and your soul is tormented. "How long, Lord? wilt thou hide thyself for ever? shall thy wrath burn like fire?" (Psalm 89:46) You realize that you are a guilty sinner in the hands of a just and perfect God. You know that you could not reply against God if your soul would be cast into hell, for you know it is exactly what you deserve. Justice demands death. "But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us;" (2 Cor. 1:9-10) You experience the sentence of death, and then the deliverance from it.

Oh! How miserable it is when God hides his face from us! "In a *little wrath* I hid my face from thee for a moment: but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy redeemer." (Isaiah 54:8) His smiling face is hid from you. The beauty of his glory cannot be felt nor seen. Oh! How terrible is the wrath of God! It burns into your soul! It brings you down. "Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord." (Obadiah 1:4) Your own light is put out and you lie down in sorrow. (see Isaiah 50:11) You find that you are in great trouble, and you cry unto the Lord. "Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses." (Psalm 107:6) The poor publican was made to cry out, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The Lord heard the cries of the children of Israel and delivered them. The God of Israel is the same God today. David said, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations." (Psalm 90:1) God hears your cries today, dear friends.

In due time, God commands the beau-

ty of his light to shine in your soul. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. 4:6)

As you were first taught the sorrow of darkness, and then taught the beauty of this light, it is precious to you. You know that Jesus is altogether lovely. He is the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. (Rev. 22:16)

You do not feel worthy of the wonderful things which God has done for you. Jesus died for you and shed his precious blood for you, my friends. He lay down his life for you, because he loved you. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13) How pleasant it is when these words are applied to us: "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." (Song of Solomon 4:7)

The light drives the darkness away and you view the beauty of Zion. But do not forget the source: God shines in her. Your eyes are opened to see the beauty of Zion. The fellowship of the Brethren is so sweet, and you desire a home with them. As Jesus said, "Go home to your friends and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you."

Again, let us not forget the source of the light. God has finished the work, and did not leave anything undone, and God will not divide his glory with another. All praise and honor and glory belongs unto the Lord.

Yours in Hope,
W. W. Hudson, Jr.
1508½ Country Club Road
Bastrop, La.

THE TWO OF US

Man is a strange mixture of contradictions, while he sojourns in this time world. His values change according to the changes of the material things around him. The Adamic nature which he possesses from birth, teaches him to love all that is worldly. He knows nothing of the love of the Spirit of God.

How often we take pride in life as it goes on around us. Our children, our homes, and our companions are prideful interests of man at his very best in nature. These are temporal things, however, that pass away with time. Our eyes behold the pride of the flesh and we grasp it to our stony hearts. We live in an involved trap of material things that we see, hear and handle. We are satisfied in this condition until Something gets hold of us and makes of us dual beings.

Our old man or outer man continues on as long as we live; but the heart of stone in him is changed. That heart that knew only of the things we feel, see and hear, with the natural senses, changes. It becomes a heart of flesh, a new inner man, that wars on and contradicts the old man of sin, and behold, a new view is spread before us. Material things that meant so much to us before are brought to nought. This view is so wonderful and unattainable, naturally, we are made to know that we are looking at things not seen, with a new heart that is different, spiritual, eternal. We are never again content with the carnal man and the things that he loves. The new man looks for upper and better things. But Paul writes to the Romans, "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." He was a dual being just like all of the elect.

The natural man still draws our minds away from the things of the Spirit, so that the war within us gives us only partial views of things eternal. "Now we see through a glass darkly", but these glimpses renew our hope and strengthen our faith.

Paul wrote to the Corinthian brethren, "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are seen are eternal." Had the new man not been added to the old, we would never have believed we could *look* at things *not* seen. It is impossible for the natural eye to see "things that are not seen." The only things the natural eye, or outer man, sees are material things and will pass away with all the rest of "all that is in the world".

When you are permitted to look with an eye of faith, do you remember all the beautiful things you are allowed to see? These things cannot be seen, touched or handled by the outer man. Only the new man, when allowed through the grace and mercy of God, can see the spiritual things meant for his children, his elect, to see: Faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity. These things are not temporal but eternal. As fed by the Spirit, they quench the thirst and satisfy the hunger of the inward man.

The world knows them not, neither can they know them, for they are spiritually discerned. I believe them to be the "all things that pertain to life and godliness". How we do long to look at them and feast on them from day to day.

Faith pertains to life and godliness. It means to trust in God. It is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Now and then we are led by faith beside the still waters, made to lie down in green pastures and while there, allowed to *look* at those things *not* seen. The flesh asks to feel the wound in his side and the nail prints in his hands. Doubts beset us and the beautiful scene is cut off. But while resting in the green pastures beside the still waters, He speaks, and the inward man says, "My Lord and my God." How wonderful is the sight, as beheld by the new, spiritual man, when we have wandered in darkness so long. Through faith the new heart looks again upon the Lord and all doubts are wiped away. We do not have to use the natural senses of sight and touch to know that our Redeemer liveth. He speaks and it is done. He opens the eyes of the blind, so that they behold things that are not seen. Our new heart recognizes his voice, believes through faith, and is made to cry out with joy unspeakable, "My Lord and my God."

How soul cheering it would be if it were always thus with the little child of God. But because of the dual characteristics of the inward and outward man, "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh." We are drawn again and again after the lusts of this world, and again made to thirst and hunger after righteousness. We are led to cry and beg in our despair for just a glimpse of the things not seen. When in mercy He answers our prayer and takes us under the wings of his love, we are permitted once again to behold beauties meant only for those with a heart of flesh, and our inward eye sees again through a glass darkly, heavenly sights that cannot be told. "The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light sprung up."

This continuous warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, makes of his children beggars for mercy. They are poor and afflicted. They hunger and thirst after righteousness and are made to mourn under the curse of the outer man. They are taught by this dual personality to distinguish between natural and spiritual things. They know by this inward light, of the false doctrines, the little gods and the spiritual darkness around them. The child of God is taught by the Spirit of the inward man, "all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away and the lust thereof."

Even though the seeing eye of faith, the inner man, abhors the lust of the world, the outer man of earth and carnality clings on like a leech, till the man is released in death. Oh! to be rid of him, to be able to bask forever in the beautiful light of God's love, without these gloomy, starvation periods, when we are not allowed even a glimpse.

But we live by hope and our hope, if we know our heart, is to be led to "look at things not seen for they are eternal." They are the all things that pertain to life and godliness, the things not seen by natural man. We cannot practice any of them except the inner man be lighted by God's eternal truth, which is the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He it is, who working in us, brings forth faith, virtue, knowledge, temporance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity. At times, hope makes us bold to lay claim to these heavenly virtues and, through his name, to practice them. At others we stand afar off with the lowly publican and beg "God be merciful to me a sinner." These are the wars that toss us to and fro, but are so good for us, because they teach us from whence cometh our strength.

Through faith and hope we look for that bright tomorrow where time and timely things will be no more, where charity, as revealed to the heart of flesh, is the one attribute that goes beyond death and endures forever. Charity is love. It is so strong it leads men to forget jealousy, envy and strife. Through charity a brother forgives a brother and has compassion on his enemy. It leads us to put ourselves in the offenders place and ask the reason why. It is the strength that impels a man to lay down his life for a friend. However, charity is not practiced by any man save those who are dual beings; those who look by faith at things not seen. Blessed is he whose heart is filled with charity, for it is Christ, the truth and the light, the hope of glory.

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." I believe this to mean that the natural eye, the natural ear and the stony heart of the natural man, have not sensed these things. This natural or outer man may be dutiful, upright and above reproach morally, as he walks before his fellow man, but until he is given this dual personality and his old stony heart changed to a spiritual heart of flesh, he will never be able to see, hear or know of those wonderful things "God prepared for those who love him."

Paul told the Corinthian brethren that, "God hath revealed them unto *us* by his Spirit." The us are those who have the new man. They are the ones who can look at the things not revealed to all of Adam's race, but only to the household of faith; the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

As long as we live, we are burdened with this outer man. Like the "Old Man of the Sea" he fastens himself to our backs and we have to carry him wherever we go, no matter how tired or weary of him we become. "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God: but with the flesh the law of sin." (Romans 7:25) However, we also have within us (if we are what we hope to be) "the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our body," and "though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."

We have nothing to fear if we are two in one; if we are troubled on every side, persecuted for his name's sake, perplexed in a world we cannot understand, cast down and afflicted. These are marks of God's children, chosen in the furnace of affliction, but with his promise that while here we are permitted to lie in green pastures, by still waters and to look at things eternal; things the world and the old outer man neither see nor care about. Hope for a togetherness with him in that future home, and faith in his promises, keeps the inward

man confident that he will shed the sinful man of flesh in that day. The warfare will be over. He promised that we would be shown the things not seen by the natural eye, when he went away. "If I go away I will send the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, who shall take things of mine and show them unto you."

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Spearsville, La.

TRIALS AND COMFORTS

Very Dear Brother Joseph Smart:

It has, for some time, been the desire of my mind to write you. At times, I have proposed sending you a long letter, believing you to be one of the Lord's tried, tempest-tossed children; and then again, under a sense of my unworthiness, I have thought that few words would better become me, as I am made to doubt your being benefited by anything I could write. For truly of all the saints, I am less than the least, and of sinners the chief; unworthy to be called a minister of Christ, since my heart and my mind, unfilled with the doctrine of redeeming grace, have often strayed after the vain, foolish things of the world, working in me that which is unworthy of my blessed Lord, and hurtful to the soul. But I am made to hope that I did it ignorantly. God did not allow me to continue that way. He set his hand a second and a third time to the work, and brought me to a feeling sense of my need of power and unction from the Holy One. And now I could wish to give you a faint view of what we have heard with our ears, and of which our eyes have seen, and our hands have handled of the Word of Life.

I know this will do my brother's heart good; for it has graciously pleased the Lord to make you manifest to my poor soul as a father in Israel as one through whom He has turned many to righteousness. And as I call to mind your labors of love, I would earnestly invoke Israel's God to bless you with the choicest blessings from on High; give you beauty for ashes, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. May the fragrance of the sweet name of Jesus perfume your heart and tongue, and may you long be enabled at times to sound forth the praises of our God.

From day to day I am made to feel more and more the richness, freedom, and sovereignty of God's grace, finding it in my straits just suited to my fallen and undone condition. From the ocean without bottom or shore, flows every stream of mercy and rill of comfort to the church of the living God, on their way to the kingdom of glory. From the treasury and storehouses of divine grace, what a sum of mercies have proceeded. From thence the first ray of divine light entered the mind; the first conviction of guilt stung the conscience; the first sense of condemnation filled the soul with terror; the first desire after reconciliation, the first home in God's mercy, and a sense of pardoning love, brought unutterable joy and peace to the quickened soul:

> "Oh to grace how great a debtor,
> Daily I rejoice to be"

This grace has been and is applied to quicken, to uphold, to support, to lead and comfort every subject of the entire "election of grace" on their way to the City, where they shall at length appear "to the praise of the glory of His grace." I rejoice to believe that it was by this glorious and reigning grace that I, even I, a vile, ungodly sinner, was enabled to hear the voice of the Son of God. By this Jehovah made me to tremble at His word. Grace convinced me of my sinful and ruined condition, and made me a subject of mourning, trembling and distress. O the sighs and tears and bitter groans, when first awakened to see my wretched condition! The pit of despair yawned before me, and the dreadful thought of dwelling with devils seized my mind while I was made to acknowledge God's justice in such a doom. Night and day for a long

season, sad complaints and groans were my only companions. Seeing only my evil and depraved nature, I felt ashamed, condemned, convicted and guilty. Many a time I felt tempted to destroy myself, but as often did grace whisper, "who can tell but what there is mercy yet;" and so I was rescued out of the mouth of the lion. Blind and ignorant, I knew not that it was God the Holy Ghost affording me relief, and ministering grace to keep me from sinking in despair.

At last I fell a broken vessel at the feet of Jesus, with a full conviction and desire that if I must perish, to do so at Jesus' feet; and, O wonder, grace had never left me! O sweet moments never to be forgotten! I cannot describe the glory I discovered in my blessed suffering Saviour. Was it for me He endured such agony upon the cross? for me His sacred hands and feet were pierced with iron nails, while from his wounded side the blood that cleanses from all sin gushed down his holy body on the tree? Was it for sins of mine he bore the curse, the wrath and vengeance of God's holy law, while his very soul, forsaken of God, poured forth in anguish his bitter cry? At such a view, I stood speechless and amazed. I wondered and adored. I was overwhelmed that such a worm should receive of his mercy, and yet I could not doubt. Sweet words of comfort cheered my heart; "Come unto me thou weary and heavy laden and I will give thee rest." Rest for my soul was promised both for this life and that which is to come; while joy, peace and hope were the welcome guests of my heart. I was filled to overflowing with gratitude, while tears of love streamed down my face. How can I tell the beauty I found, the wealth and preciousness of Jesus, the Pearl of great price? Blessed promises were revealed to me, and sweet views of the plan of salvation, embracing, as it does, sinners of the deepest dye. How dearly did my poor soul love the King of Zion, and dread the thought of sinning against Him more!

But, O, my beloved brother, what can I say? Twenty and two years have passed since the time the Lord first appeared to me in pardoning love, and what am I now? Oh! woe is me! my vileness and proneness to sin are still the plague of my heart, and for this I often go mourning and bowed down, tossed to and fro until the dawning of the day, or until the Morning Star arises again in my heart. But adored be the Lamb slain; adored be God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who under all my misgivings and unprofitableness in all my slips, stumblings, and falls, still remain the same. He cannot deny Himself. His poor Peters may deny him thrice in one night, but one look from Jesus will make them go and weep bitterly; His poor Davids may transgress, time and again, but the Holy Ghost will expostulate with them, and then their couch will be wet with tears. When his unbelieving Thomases *will* not believe he speaks, and they cry, "My Lord and My God!" When His sick ones are enabled to touch the hem of his garments, their health is restored. When His blind people cry, "Have mercy upon me," he speaks the word, and mercy flows from his dear heart and eyes. And what shall I say more? I have sinned against the best of brothers seventy times seven times a day, and seven times seventy times a day he has forgiven me. I have been sinking innumerable times, and Jesus has stretched out his hand and rescued me. I have been hungry, and he has fed me; in prison, and he has delivered me; sick and he has visited me; wounded have I been, yea, my soul has been torn in sunder by the hand of the terrible enemy sin, but Jesus has healed me. I have been an outcast by the highways, but Jesus has sent his angel and brought me to his banqueting house, and spread over me the banner of love. When weak and wounded, he became my strength, and in mourning, my joy; and when almost sunk in despair, Jesus has entered the vessel and

immediately we were landed on the shores of sovereign grace.

Time would fail me to tell of all my distresses, and sorrows, and mournings on account of my sins against my blessed Master, and of the joy it produces when he makes himself manifest to me as he does not unto the world. But you, my brother, are no stranger to these things; therefore I write freely to you, feeling it a privilege to meet a companion on the way, whose exercises are like my own. There is around me much building of wood, hay and stubble, and but few pilgrims to share the field of gospel trial and gospel comfort, proclaiming Jesus the burden of the song.

I have often sat in darkness and sorrow having many ups and downs. I have been pursued upon the mountains, and laid wait for in the valleys. I have sometimes felt as if I were a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls; the old man, and Satan working thereupon, often cause the sad outcry "O wretched man that I am;" and, in the language of Paul, to say, "When I would do good, evil is present." Blessed be God, however in our worst moments, Satan cannot rob us of this *will* to do that which is good, for we are kept by the power of God unto salvation. Comforting assurance, we have not to keep ourselves nor yet salvation, but we are kept for it and it is kept for us, ready to be revealed in the last day. And now, dear brother, let me ask you to pray for me.

Your fellow pilgrim, a poor worm on earth

Bernard Greenwood

(Copied from *Dealings of God with a Laborer,* by Elder Bernard Greenwood, 1869. Submitted by Elder Woodrow Hudson for publication — J. D. W.)

Rt. 1,
Tennessee Ridge, Tenn.

Dear Editors:

Enclosed you will find check for two years subscription for the *Signs of the Times.* I am compelled to agree with the writers and readers of the *Signs.* My wife and I both read and get so much comfort that we do not want to be without it.

My father and mother had been subscribers ever since I can remember, until my mother passed away January 21, 1950. My father is still here at the age of ninety-one years, passed. After that I subscribed for my father until he could not see to read. Following this, I have a friend and relative who gave me seventy-five or more copies, which I am reading at present.

In the Scriptures, Jesus spoke to his disciples, saying, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." In this quotation there is much comfort to me, for, if I am not deceived, I believe in the doctrine of Jesus Christ and him crucified; which I know is the doctrine the Old Primitive Baptists uphold. I believe it is the truth once delivered to the saints. The thing that worries me is, Do I believe? Have I been baptized of that baptism? The way I see it, that is a spiritual baptism.

When I go to church and hear that blessed word spoken by the precious ministers, I am fed on that Spiritual food. Sometimes, I feel that it is not for me, for I am so full of sin; and find that there is nothing I can do to help my condition. In the flesh dwells no good thing. There is no one good except the Father. I believe it is every person's duty to live the best they can in this world, but that does not help him hereafter; for Christ told Nicodemus, You must be born again: be baptized of that spiritual baptism in order to have a home in heaven.

I believe the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone, not of works. Salvation was predestinated before the foundation of the world: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ

to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

In hope of eternal life,
Harvey Vick

ENJOYED ELDER LAMBERT'S EDITORIAL

Rt. 1,
Jack, Alabama

Dear Editors and Brethren:

Tonight, as my wife and I sit with my dear old mother, who had a stroke and is in critical condition, I have been reading Elder Lambert's article in the April, 1962, *Signs of the Times,* on 2 Corinthians 7:10, "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death."

And I want to say that if I have ever had any experience, or have ever been taught of God, Elder Lambert has preached my experience in this piece. I believe if one has been blessed with a second birth, it will cause him to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. And I believe that the world will hate you, for you are not of the world, but are a new creature in Christ Jesus. It is not until then that one can go home to his friends and tell them what great things the Lord has done for him. We must be born again, and it is not of anything that we can do, for it is of the Father's good will and pleasure. If God works the will and the do in you, I believe it will show in your walk and talk.

I believe that God knew every one of his children from the beginning of time, and that everyone of them will follow him. He said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." "A stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers."

I do hope and trust that I am in that number that hear his voice and follow him. If I am on the other side, I believe he is still just, and a righteous God.

C. D. Mobley

R. F. D. 3,
Greenville, N. C.

Dear Editors:

For a long time I have been wanting to write how much the *Signs of the Times* has meant to me, though I am a poor writer. I am so thankful that I can read your paper, *The Signs of the Times,* and that He blesses me with so much comfort from it. Brother Hails visited me often in the sanitorium, and said that I would get the paper regularly, and I am so thankful for it. I was in the sanitorium twenty months and was not able to get to church, so it was food for my hungry soul.

My dad was a Primitive Baptist minister, and my mother a faithful believer. They went to church when they were able to go. His name was Elder George M. Corbitt. I would take him around to his churches, but didn't get anything out of the preaching. Once I took him to church, and there was only one poor old lady there. He built a fire, and went across the road to get a pitcher of water; and I asked him if he was thinking of going on with the meeting. He said that Sister Smith came to hear preaching, and if the good Lord would bless him, he was going to offer all he had. He and she seemed to enjoy it, but it looked like foolishness to me. But after my mother and father passed away in 1942, I felt that the blessed Lord arrested me and killed me to the things of the world, and put a new song in my mouth and established my goings. The things I onced loved I now hated, and the things I hated I now loved, and they were precious to me. I have often thought of how happy dear old Sister Smith and my father looked at their little meeting. I feel at times that I have been fed a few crumbs from my great Master's table.

My dear companion and I have had to live separated for three years now. She is an invalid, has hardening of the arteries and had a heart attack, and had a leg amputated, and is now strick-

en with a stroke at our daughter's. I am here with my sister, and am just getting out a little after an operation. But I do thank my King of Kings that he has been with me through all my trials and tribulations, and made me strong enough to bear them. I read that we shall have trials and tribulations in this life, but He always gives us grace sufficient for our needs. Through Him we can do all things. I beg of him each day to have mercy on my dear companion and I, and I believe He has given me to see some of his great power. God has worked wonders for us. He is able to raise the dead, and to move mountains; and I hope I trust in him from whence all my strength must come. I would give him all praise and honor, and pray he will continue his blessings upon us all.

I can only hint at the great joy my Lord has shown me through all my trials and sorrows, and how much I enjoy reading the *Signs*. I believe it stands for the truth that was once delivered unto the saints, and I thank you again and again. I desire to be at the brethren's feet, for I feel to be the least of all. I know I am not worthy of the great blessings He has blessed me to see and feel. Many times I try to pray, and it seems He is clean gone forever: Then I see a little light shining, and I want to praise and honor his name.

May our God guide and direct all the Editors, and all pertaining to the *Signs of the Times,* for it is sound and contends for the truth. When any of you are at the throne of grace, please pray for my companion and me. May God bless you many more years in your labors.

George T. Corbitt

Stockdale, Texas

Dear Brethren and Sisters:

I am writing to renew my subscription to the *Signs* for two more years. It brings glad tidings to my soul each month . . .

And I want to tell you of our good meeting we were blessed with the second Sunday in February. As some of you know, we are few in number in this part of Texas, so the members of the church at Weslaco, Texas, came to be with us this time. It was about two hundred and fifty miles, and we were over-joyed to have them with us. We hope to return the visit soon.

I want to again invite any and all who love the Old Baptist doctrine to visit with us whenever they can. Our meetings are held on fourth Sundays and second Sundays and Saturday nights before in the church house near intersection of highways 87 and 123. Elder Gerald Shipman is our beloved pastor.

In hope of the saving grace of God.

Lela Culpepper

NOTE OF APPRECIATION

I wish to express through the *Signs* my appreciation and heart felt thanks to the many brothers, sisters and friends who were so thoughtful to write and send cards to me during my seven weeks' stay in the hospital.

It was a great comfort to both my companion and me in receiving the messages of love and fellowship, and best wishes, from those we love for the truth's sake, believing as I do that God directs the minds of his people. Praise his Holy Name!

From one who feels so unworthy — if a brother, one of the least.

Arthur Merigold,
Whitefield, Maine

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(To March 1, 1963)

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CHURCH NOTICE

The Pleasant Valley Primitive Baptist Church of Kingman, Kansas, meets with Mrs. Verda Machesney at 516 E. Avenue C, every second month — January, March, etc. on the first Sundays.

W. A. Winfrey, Pastor

Danville, Virginia **May, 1963**

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TO

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EDITORIAL

ZECHARIAH 11:7, 9

"And I will feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock. And I took me two staves; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bands; and I fed the flock. Three shepherds also I cut off in one month; and my soul lothed them, and their soul also abhorred me. Then said I, I will not feed you; that that dieth, let it die; and that that is to be cut off, let it be cut off; and let the rest eat every one the flesh of another."

Prophecy is delightful when the spirit of it dwells in us by the work and presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. Favored indeed is that reader that is able to read it and find Christ hid in its sacred pages; still more favored is that worshipper who is able to read the prophecy fulfilled and see in the fulfillment Jesus Christ. Methinks that all of the wonderful dealings of God with his people will be found in counterpart in the dealings of Jesus Christ with his blood bought people. If any of the things written in the Old Testament do not pertain to the Gentiles, then, by all means, we should dispense with talking about types and shadows, anti-types and substances.

Perhaps I do not know anything about what it is to be spiritually hungry; perhaps I do not know anything about feeding the flock, or, for that matter, about being fed. However, there are some things that mean a lot to me — they mean everything to me. The most important thing to a hungry citizen is that some one feed him. The hand that furnishes it is not so important; the manner of administering the food is not as important as the quality of it. To God's dear children, there is nothing as good as wholesome food. On the other hand, nothing can be as demoralizing as a long hard journey to make and no food at hand. Thus, my brethren, that gospel which talks about food for the weary and hungry child of God is precious to me. When blessed with the leadership of the Holy Spirit, no fatigue of this fading and perishing body is enough to deter one from going forth among the Lord's people proclaiming the good news of the gospel; and when one is hungry he or she will forget every earthly care to be in attendance when the living word is proclaimed.

Often we speak of the law dispensation as though none of them enjoyed the fulness of God's love to them. However, if sought carefully, there is always a remnant all the way back that

can be found. God's denunciation of transgressing Israel was rigid and exacting, but underneath them all there were a few that had not "defiled their garments." The text under consideration shows the fury of God against the sins of Israel, but threaded through it is a sweet smelling savor that would lead the hungry to seek food and water in the midst of it all.

It is the Lord that feeds the flock. His methods may not suit the ones that have a full larder. One who is not hungry will find a lot of fault with the husbandman's method of feeding, and this fault finding will spread until it covers all the poor and needy that eat at the feeding place of the sheep. How well I remember a picture and story in an old reader of childhood. The dog would not let the toil worn ox to the hay. Without are dogs, and how true it is that their nature is put forward sometime in the kingdom as though it was *all* right to keep the sheep from the fold and the food. Before we are through, the Lord willing, we will see more of this. Suffice it is to say just here, that it *is* the hungry that are fed. None others will be found hungering and thirsting, except those that are hungry and thirsty. The feeding of sheep carries with it a strong suggestion that the sheep are hungry. In this feeding of the flock, God is not circled so that it must be done a certain way and place and time. The Lord often feeds his people when there is not a minister in miles of them. They may be in the field laboring; they may be in an office running machines as fast as the eye and hand can move; they may be on a bed of affliction; and it may be a thousand ways. He may feed them while they are silently reading the word. He may feed them by the publishing of the truth on the printed page. Often they are fed by the ministers that he sends forth among them.

"I will feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock." Gather around saints. Here is that wine and that honey and that milk that flows in Canaan; here is meat and drink for every season; here is that Bread, even the Bread of life, that comes down from heaven; here is the water of life flowing in an inexhaustible stream. God feeds his flock in season, and I want to say once and forever that the season of hunger and feeding comes at the Lord's bidding. The hunger can not be created, and when it comes they that are hungry can not feed themselves. This flock is killed all the day long for his sake; this flock is counted as sheep for the slaughter. And God does the counting. You need not come at me with that Ashdod doctrine that I can escape the slaughter if I will get acquainted with God; you need not come at me with that Bildad doctrine that God's children have done something mean and that the slaughtering will cease when they get rid of the golden wedge. They are a flock of slaughter, counted as sheep, and yet the Lord feeds them all the times that they are fed.

Subject to being killed all the day long; subject to be counted as sheep for the slaughter. *And yet they are fed.* They do not have any say so about the being killed. If they did, who would be killed? Did David perpetrate a false premise on the church of the living God? Did he say that we are killed all the day long, and God calls somebody today to tell us that it is needless to come to this death? Were David and Paul both wrong (Psa. 44:22; Rom. 8:36)? No, they were right, setting forth the gospel truth that God's people are poor. Ah, drink deep dear child of grace. Let thy soul delight itself in the sweet promises of God. In this life you will be brought to face death and slaughter by tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and sword, but God will feed you.

"And I took unto me two staves; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bands; and I fed the flock." It does not read, I called for help to take

two staves; it does not say, I asked somebody to get the gospel food to them. Whatever else may be said about the two staves, the fact remains that God handled them, and that he fed the flock, using them in some wonderful way. Many interpretations have been given about the two staves, they having been applied to many things. Let us remember that the Lord has always fed his sheep; that the food is everything to the flock of Jesus Christ; that it is varied to suit the lambs and the full grown of the flock; that it is well balanced, the Lord being a strict dietitian in administering the food to the flock. There are not any cases of malnutrition in the flock of Christ; there are not any cases of spiritual indigestion. In Paul's charge to Timothy he is told to "preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." This is preaching the whole counsel of God, and it takes the full gospel to feed the church of God. If the Lord used Beauty and Bands in feeding the poor of the flock in the long ago, unless he has changed, he is still using them. God's little flock need that shepherd that has both a rod and a staff. From a natural standpoint, a shepherd has only a staff, but the Good Shepherd has both. This taking of two staves shows conclusively that God is sovereign over his church and people. He feeds them in due season as it pleases him, for he does as it pleases him in heaven and in earth. He rules them by his rod and his staff; he feeds them on heavenly food.

The two staves are not, as has been suggested to me, parts of a barrel with which he ruled and fed his people. The word "staves" is plural for staff. One staff is Beauty; the other is Bands. The meaning in Greek for the word Beauty is pleasantness, and I can not think of anything any more like the gospel than that word. This is the gospel day, that is, it is the gospel day, if we have gotten through the practice of law. If we are not weaned from the law; if we are not made wise unto salvation to know that we can not argue law before the court, but that our only hope is through mercy by the court of Jesus Christ, it is as much a day of legalism as it was with any of the lawyers and doctors under the law dispensation. Before Beauty was used in governing Israel, the law held full sway. It said do this and get the good of the land; do that and be cut off from the good of the land. But when Jesus Christ arose from the grave, he sent men to preach the gospel of grace. That good news; that ruling principle of Beauty, it now going forth by the mouth and pen of those sent of God. Behold them go. And as they go, listen at the beauty that falls from their lips. Watch ye well their walk, for as they go, they preach, yes, may I suggest that they preach with their feet as they do with their hands, for "how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel" and "none shall ascend unto the holy hill of the Lord save he that has clean hands." This gospel ministry is God's gift unto his people, even the poor of the flock (the poor have the gospel preached unto them), and this ministry is made able by the grace given according to the measure of the gift that is in Christ. It is well balanced, well administered, well sent. In the use of this beautiful staff there are many gifts of the spirit. Jesus did not, as is often quoted, give some apostles and prophets and teachers and evangelists. But to some, he gave apostles; to some, he gave prophets; to some, he gave teachers, etc., and had as an object that the flock, even the poor of the flock might be fed. This gospel sent down from heaven; this Beauty which sprang forth in the morning of the church, yea, in the morning of our experience (2 Sam. 23:4, 5), is for the perfecting of the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ until it (we all) come in the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man,

unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Chirst: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things which is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. (Ephesians 4:11, 16)

The Jews boasted that they had many things, including the oracles of God, delivered unto them. This was not enough for them to know Jesus when he came into the world. But when God took Bands and bestowed them among his people, it will comfort and feed the children of God when carried out. The ordinances of the church, baptism and the Lord's supper, will assure the church of somebody to feed and something to feed them. This ordinance of baptism was tossed out by one faction of the English Baptist some time ago, and we see the advocates of that same thing in this country rising and growing and daring to set bounds for the true worshipper, the poor of the flock. The poor of the flock know that baptism is the only entrance into the church of Jesus Christ, and I feel to encourage them to obey their Master in submitting to baptism, seeing that Jesus was baptized. The poor of the flock also know that the ordinance of the Lord's supper belongs to the flock, the baptized in Jesus' name. These poor are waiting on the Lord to feed them in this way by giving them the benefits of Bands, but the rich, the high, the noble are trying to get into the militant kingdom some other way than by Bands.

"Three shepherds also I cut off in one month; and my soul lothed them, and their soul also abhored me." Many commentators have ventured to tell what the three shepherds were, and how long the month. The question comes up like this: What was cut off? What is being condemned all the time? Who did Christ denounce from time to time? What system of religion did he drive out of the temple? What ended when the midnight of the law dispensation came? What had to end before victory could come? Who was it that was triumphed over openly? The princes, the prophets, the priests of the law were. All of this took place in the month of Nizan, the time in which everlasting righteousness was brought in (Daniel 9:24). The bringing in of everlasting righteousness brought to an ignominious end the tempting, the challenging, the boasting, the jeering of the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes. Truly it could be said that Christ loathed them, and that they abhorred him.

"Then said I, I will not feed you; that that dieth, let it die; and that that is to be cut off, let it be cut off." The assertion that God will not feed them is as strong and positive as his assertion that he will feed the flock, even the poor of the flock. There is not any compromise, there is not any yielding, there are not any exceptions. There is none of the anxiety in God that we hear the world allude to so often. It is not that he *wants* them to get right with him; it is not that he *wants* them to come to him and to let him feed them. God's people are commanded to fret not themselves because of evil doers (Psalms 37:1); the angel left a clear record as to the unjust and the filthy (Revelations 22:11). Just let them be. He that is to be cut off, let him be cut off.

"And let the rest eat every one the flesh of another." For they that die there is not any provision for them. There is not any antidote given for this death. God is the God of wrath; he is the one to take all vengeance. No mercy is shown, no meetings are arranged, no overtures are made. Let them die. They that are to be cut off, do not have an avenue left open. No way

of escape is made, no leniency is promised, no mercy is shown. But what grace and mercy are shown to the rest! God cuts off them that are not heirs with the chosen people. Regardless of what it is: idols, silver and gold, wood, hay, stubble, or any such thing, be assured that God will cut it off. He took away the first, that he might establish the second; and in the taking away of the first, he cut off all that go with the first. Everything and everybody that makes for a lie, he will cut it off. What lies have been told in the name of God's law; how many of the poor of the flock have been tantalized by lawyers and doctors using great swelling words, coming to them in the wisdom of men, deceiving them by taking God's law out of its true setting and putting it into a law of their own; how these same Scribes and Pharisees, princes and prophets and priests, howled over the precious Redeemer, mocking not only the law, but mocking Him that came to fulfill the law. Ah, yes, let them die, let them be cut off. Let Ishmael and all of the offspring of the bond woman be put out from the household of faith; give not any place for appeasement, yield not to compromise, make not a league or confederacy with any of them.

As Samson slew more at his death than he did in his life (Judges 16:30), just so did Jesus, by his death, forever cut off from any future reign all that would bring the tidings of Job's three conditional friends. The Rock of Israel has spoken many times; this rock is perfect in all of his work. In the death of Jesus Christ he triumphed over the three shepherds (a full and complete number) openly; he forever cut off all Pharisacal religion (paying tithes, fasting, etc.); he by his death, put to open shame and utter confusion all that would advocate a doctrine, which, when carried to its final conclusion, would put to open shame his death on the cross. (Hebrews 6:6) That is not all that was done by his death. As well as that was done, something else was done equally as well. (Ezekiel 18) Jesus Christ was the Bread that came down from heaven. He did not come as God; he did not come as man, but he did come as the Man Christ Jesus. (I Timothy 2:5) Only he could mediate the differences between the offender (God's chosen people) and the offended One; only he was prepared in body to do this; only he was made manifest as God in the flesh; only he could die to cut off (destroy all false religion); only he could come from heaven and unseat Satan from the seat of authority that he thought he had; only he could be the Offering and the Offerer; only he could be the Samson that put to death and cut off more in his death than in his life; only this well bruised corn (Isaiah 28:28; 53:5, 10) is given to the children of God.

They can not live on the things of their own preparation; they can not produce anything by the works of their own hands; if they had been left to themselves, being like unto all men (Ephesians 2:3), they, too, would have died, they, too, would have been cut off. But God prepared Jesus Christ as their food and drink. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven, for the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world (John 6:32, 33), and this world is the "rest" that were to eat the flesh of another. "I am the bread of life, he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give *is my flesh,* which I will give for the life of the world." (John 6:35 and 51)

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and

drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day, for my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." (John 6:53, 56)

"And let the rest eat every one the flesh of another."

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

REMARKS ON JOHN XIV. 1-3

"Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and reecive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also."

The last solemn Passover supper that was ever to be eaten by divine authority, had just been celebrated by our Lord with his disciples. The last lingering moments of the legal dispensation were ebbing away. Judas had received the sop, and Satan had entered his heart and taken the helm of his covetous, traitoruos, prefidious mind, and he was at this moment negotiating with the priests and rulers of the people to betray the Son of man. The hour beyond which Divine Justice could defer his claim for vengeance no longer, had arrived. The lowering clouds had gathered thick and darkly around the dear Redeemer; his soul oppressed with sorrow was bowed within him as the sin-bearing sacrifice now about to be offered. Yet, painful as was the bitter anguish of his holy soul, his thoughts were turned to his disciples; and amidst his stifled groans for what was now crushing his own soul, he said to his disciples, "Little children, yet a little while I am with you." And that little while the golden moments were closely occupied in fortifying their minds for the dreadful scene which they were about to witness. Every moment was fully occupied from the eating the passover and institution of the supper, to the time of his arrest, in instructions to the disciples, and in communion, prayer and intercession to the Father. The substance of all these instructions and prayers are recorded in the xiii, xiv, xv, xvi, xvii, and xviii chapters. Let them be often read and solemnly considered by all who love the Lord and hope in his salvation.

On such an occasion how deeply interesting and vitally important are the words which we are about to consider. Never was there such an occasion before; never can there be again, to try the faith and confidence of the saints of God. How suitable and how consoling the words: "Let not your heart be troubled.' Although these words were addressed to the eleven, and through them to all the church of God, but one heart is recognized; he does not say *hearts*, but heart, for the primitive disciples were of one heart and one mind. There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith and one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. Not the heart of stone on which the Sinia covenant with Moses and the whole commonwealth of Israel was written, which was the centre of their national vitality, by which they were embodied in distinction from all other nations; but that heart of flesh which was given to the mystical body of Christ, for Christ in his church is the centre of spiritual vitality, of love, of unity, and identity. He is the life and immortality of the church, which is his body. This spirit of Christ in the members of his church is but one spirit, or heart, sending its vitality to every member. This heart was to be assailed by a dreadful trial which was now about to fall with such crushing weight upon them. But, as though at once to let them know that he was fully aware of the approaching trial, and to give them a comforting assurance that it should result in their

good and his glory, the kind, sympathetic words of encouragement are graciously spoken, "Yield not to despair; let not your heart be troubled.

"Ye believe in God, believe also in me." The trial now approaching was peculiarly calculated to test their faith in him as the true Messiah that was to come. Although it might not shake their confidence in God, or lead them to fear that there is no God, was it not calculated to make them fear that Jesus was not the Son of God and Savior of his people, as they had understood him to be? It certainly did have that effect. They said, despairingly, "We verily thought it was he that should redeem Israel;" but alas! that confidence was shaken when they saw him cricified, and his lifeless body laid in the grave. Still, though fearing that they had been mistaken in regarding him as the Son of God, they betrayed no lack of faith in God. Now these words of assurance seem to imply that there was in all they should witness, if properly understood, nothing that ought any sooner to be allowed to shake their confidence in him as the Meditorial Head of the church, than to shake their faith in the eternal Father.

Again, the same faith which recognized the Father, also must necessarily recognize the Son of God as one with the Father, for none can know the Father but by revelation of Christ, and none can come unto the Father but by him. Our faith cannot be so divided as to believe in God and disbelieve in Christ, for there is but one faith, as we have proved, and he that has by that one faith seen the Son, hath seen the Father also. For the Father is in him, and he is in the Father; he and the Father are one.

"In my Father's house are many mansions." This is the affirmation of an existing truth, and a most glorious truth. And his ability to describe his Father's house was in evidence that he was the Son of God. A stranger could not describe that house which is made without hands, and which is eternal in the heavens. But Jesus is the Faithful and true Witness. No man hath ascended up into heaven; but the Son of God has come down from heaven, and reveals all that is necessary for us to know of the house of God, and if there were anything more concerning his Father's house which his children ought to know, he would have told them. The house of God is his dwelling place — his place of permanent abode, where he makes his home. His house is figuratively set forth in types and shadows of the Old Testament, as the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, as the Temple in Jerusalem; and in a more spiritual manifestation made to the partiarch Jacob, when in rapture he exclaimed, "Verily, God was in this place, and I knew it not; this is none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven." The gospel church and kingdom of Christ is called the house of God. Ye are God's building. — 1 Cor. iii. 9. "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ." — 1 Pet. ii. 5. The house of God is frequently mentioned in the Old Testament scriptures, as Gen. xxviii. 17, Josh. ix. 23, Judg. xviii. 31, and xx. 18, Psa. xlii. 4, lv. 14, lii. 8, lxxxiv. 10, Isa. ii. 3, Mic. iv. 2, and in very many other passages. And yet we are informed that the Lord dwelleth not in houses made with hands. Figuratively he was said to dwell in the tabernacle in the wilderness, in the temple at Jerusalem, but all these were types, pointing to Christ and his church, or body, as the true spiritual dwelling place of our God. "For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever; here will I dwell, for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her poor with bread." — Psa. cxxxii. 13-15. "His foundation is in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God." — Psa.

ixxxvii. 1-3. Therefore the holy psalmist could say, "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord." — Psa. cxxi. 1. "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee" — Psa. lxxxiv. 1 & 5. The psalmist exulted in the certainty of dwelling in the house of the Lord forever, because the Lord was his Shepherd. — Psa. xxiii. 6. This was the fullness of his aspiration. "One thing have I desired of the Lord; that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple." — Psa. xxvii. 4. This is the house which our Redeemer calls "My Father's house," in which he says, "are many mansions." Many opinions have been expressed in regard to the figurative import of the many mansions here spoken of, and to our mind the precise meaning is not so clear as we could desire. The true meaning, whatever it be, must be important, as we infer from the words of our Lord, "If it were not so, I would have told you." A mansion, in the modern application of the word, is a dwelling place, sometimes applied to a house, and sometimes to apartments or rooms of a house. In our text a distinction is implied between the house and the mansions. "In my Father's house are many mansions." The mansions are many, but the house of God is but one. So when other figures are used to express the same idea — one body and many members, or one city and many inhabitants, "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High." — Psa. xlvi. 4. In the text last named the city of God, which is but one, contains many tabernacles of the Most High. The same idea is expressed 1 Cor. xii. 12-14. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit, for the body is not one member, but many." "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. — 1 Cor. xii 18-20. In changing the figures which represent the same kingdom or church, from a house to a city, what in the former would be appropriately called mansions, in the latter would be more clearly expressed as houses, or tabernacles, and when a body is the figure, members of that body convey the same meaning. This to every citizen of the city of God is an appropriate dwelling, for Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together; whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord. For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David." — Psa. cxxii. 3-5. There is in the house of God a place or mansion for every member of the household of God. Thrones of judgment to be occupied by the apostles to sit upon, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. The sons of Zebudee could not change their allotted mansions or positions, so as to sit one on the right and the other on the left hand of the king, when he should come into his kingdom. And as members of Christ, God has set each one in its appropriate place in the body of Christ as it hath pleased him. In the types of the ceremonial law the inheritance of each tribe was distinctly marked out and secured to each by an inalienable title. And so also in the positions assigned officially to patriarchs, prophets, priests, levites, captains, kings and subjects. These types all pointed to the order of the house of God under the gospel dispensation, for in them were exhibited the patterns of the things of the heavenly kingdom, and although

they were all confined to the worldly sanctuary and carnal ordinances of a fleshly or carnal Israel under the law, undoubtedly prefigured the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, under the gospel dispensation in the true tabernacle which God has pitched and not man.

The question may very naturally arise, if this be the sense in which our Lord spake of the many mansions of his Father's house, why this special mention should be made of them on this most solemn occasion? All the words of our divine Lord were fitly spoken, well timed, and full of vital interest to the saints. The organization of the gospel kingdom was now very soon to be manifested. The law and the prophets were until John; from the coming of John the kingdom of Christ was preached, that it was at hand, but the places in the gospel kingdom could not be attained until the last jot and tittle of the law should be fulfilled, until Christ should do and suffer all that was written of him in the law and in the prophets and in the psalms; for he must suffer and then enter into his glory, in coming into which he would ascend his Mediatorial throne, and when the Son of man should sit on the throne of his glory, the apostles who had followed him in the regeneration should also sit upon their twelve thrones. The deliverance of all his people should then be effected, and each should receive the mansion which was prepared for him in the house of God. Fully with Christ in his death, all his members were quickened together with him, and they were raised up together and made to sit together in Christ Jesus. But, in all this, as in all things, Christ must have the pre-eminence. He must go before them in sufferings and death, must be the first fruits of them that slept in his resurrection, yet by vital union and identity of spirit "bearing his sheaves with him." Hence the suitableness of this solemn occasion to speak to them of the mansions, or heavenly places so soon to be occupied by them, when he should remove the bars of death by abolishing death, and bring immortality to light in his resurrection — when at his command the everlasting doors should be opened, and the everlasting gates should lift up their heads, and the king of glory should come in with all the trophies of his deathless victory, and by his triumph prove that to believe in God, is to believe also in him, and that the throne of his kingdom should be as firmly established and forever continue as unshaken as the throne of his eternal Father.

"If it were not so, I would have told you." They had been led to expect this, and he would certainly have undeceived them if it were not so. Notwithstanding the terrible scenes immediately before them, which should so much try their confidence in him, the gloomy night of trial would soon be terminated, and the sable shades of darkness should be driven from their skies by the bursting light of his resurrection and the establishment of his kingdom and government as the Prince of Peace.

"I go to prepare a place for you." From the explanation which he gave the disciples in this connection, we learn that he was going to his Father; for he said to them, "And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." And in reply to the inquiry of Thomas he said, "I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." This agrees with what he said unto Mary after his resurrection, and commanded her to tell the same to his brethren: "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and to your God." — John xx. 17. He had also informed them that he was going to receive a kingdom, and to return again unto them. "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on the thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." — Luke xxii. 29, 30. This kingdom, which was appointed unto him of his Father, is the place which, according to our understanding, he was going

to prepare for his disciples. Although as an inheritance of the heirs of God, and joint heirs of Christ, the kingdom of heaven was prepared for them from the foundation of the world, according to Mat. xxv. 34, yet its manifest redemption and gospel organization awaited the resurrection and ascension of Christ. The God of heaven was to set it up in the days of those kings of whom Daniel had prophesied. "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." — Psa. ii. 8. "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee," &c. "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore God, even thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." — Heb. i. 5, 8, 9; Psa xlv. 6, 7. Thus it was written, and thus it behooved him to suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and then to enter into his Mediatorial glory, as the King eternal, immortal and invisible, the only wise God our Savior.

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." The *if* in this case is not to express doubt or uncertainty, for he had told the disciples that it was expedient for them, and that he would soon go away, and that his object in going away was to prepare a place for them where he would dwell with them uninteruptedly forever. "Yet a little while and ye shall see me no more; and again a little while and ye shall see me." Whither I go thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me hereafter. It was necessary that he should first suffer, and be the first to rise from the dead, but he assures them that he will come again and receive them unto himself, that where he is there should they also be. True and faithful to his words of promise, he came again unto them, after his resurrection, and abode with them a sufficient length of time to demonstrate his resurrection, and after his ascension he came unto them by his Spirit, on the day of pentecost, organized his kingdom in its gospel order, and into it received his disciples to go no more out forever. And again will he come to them in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory; and, in their final resurrection in his image will he receive them to himself, that where he is there they may be also. It is the will of the Father, that of all he has given to Christ he should loose nothing, but that he should raise them up again at the last day. And this is also the will of the Son, who in his intercession has said, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory," &c. — John xvii. 24.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe May 1, 1865)

CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH
(Matt. 16:18; Eph. 5:25-27)

I love the Church that Jesus built;
She is all glorious within;
He took away her dreadful guilt,
And washed away her sin.

To redeem and clothe His bride,
Whom the world doth hate,
He laid His robes of glory aside
And became incarnate.

By the flesh His glory was veiled,
That He might suffer death;
To the Roman cross He was nailed,
And ceased to draw life's breath.

But death could not be the cessation
Of His own life Divine,
And He arose for the justification
Of a favored royal line.

They are indeed a royal priesthood,
As the Bible doth declare,
And being washed in Emmanuel's blood,
A change of raiment wear —

Raiment of needlework so bright,
Clothing of wrought gold,
Of fine linen, clean and white,
As in the Scriptures told.

This is Christ's robe of righteousness,
In which the saints appear,
The wedding garment, the glorious dress,
Wrought by the Saviour dear.

'Twill be worn by the glittering bride
At the marriage supper of the Lamb,
Whose sacrificial death was typified
By the offering of the ram.

From the foundation of the earth,
He stood as a Lamb slain;
Before His elect were given birth,
He engaged to remove their stain.

Oh may I be found in glory at last,
Among the blood-washed throng,
With no more clouds to overcast,
And never more do wrong.

There Zion's King doth reign supreme,
"Which is blessed for evermore;"
His praises there shall be our theme,
While His beauty we adore.

Blessed is the church triumphant's state,
For she's sheltered within the veil;
How joyous 'twas once to contemplate
Her joys which never fail —

Ineffable joys of a land Elysian,
Where all is unfeigned love —
Paradisic bliss of the beatific vision —
Direct vision of Christ above.

He's fairer than the children of men,
Indeed, He is exceedingly fair;
How truly great to be His near kin,
And with Him a joint-heir.

With Him the saints all things heir,
And reign in endless light,
A crown of righteousness to wear
With rapturous delight.

By His presence and intercession,
He prepares the heavenly home;
For His bride He has taken possession,
And for her He will come.

Yea, with a shout, He shall descend,
And the saints, at His word,
Shall rise to meet their dearest Friend,
And ever be with the Lord.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, N. C.

"THY WILL BE DONE"

So hard to say "Thy will be done"
When clouds so gray obscure the sun —
When things go wrong, and won't go right;
When loved ones fade and lose their sight,
With breaking hearts and tear dimmed eyes,
We turn our faces toward the skies.
With outstretched arms we plead with God
To merciful be, and spare the rod.
When all seems lost — our faith sore tried,
Within His loving arms we hide.
The storms they rage, the billows beat
Upon our craft so incomplete:
Then a voice saying, "Peace, be still",
And storms and waves obey His will.
Troubles and cares just melt away
When we see the Master's way.
Then we can say, like the dutiful Son:
"Yes, dear Father, thy will be done."

Mrs. Lillie M. Colburn
(Submitted by Mrs. A. M. Tipton,
Hollister, Calif.)

OBITUARIES

ELDER ZEB RHODES

It is in sweet memory, yet with a sad heart that I attempt to write a little memorial of Elder Zeb Rhodes, a long time friend and a fellow yokesman in the ministry.

Elder Rhodes was born in Stokes County, December 28, 1885. He departed this life November 23, 1962. Thus making his stay here on earth seventy-six years, eleven months and twenty-five days. He had lived the last thirty-seven years of his life in High Point. He was a wood workman by trade. In his early life he was united in wedlock with Grace Pearl Taylor. To this union were born six children — one preceded him to the grave, leaving five to mourn their loss together with his dear wife.

Elder Rhodes was a gifted minister. He was able in doctrine and faithful to the cause, never turning down his brother when he was called upon. He was always ready to spend and be spent for their comfort. A great soldier has fallen on the battlefield, in honor to his captain and to the government of his King.

Elder Rhodes joined Snow Creek Church in Stokes County in the year 1919. The church shortly after saw fit to ordain him to serve as deacon. He served in this office until he manifested a call to the ministry. The church having felt his gift again called a presbytery and ordained him to the full work of the ministry in June, 1939. He served his brethren faithfully until he was called home by his Heavenly Father. He was serving Sardis Church and Lexington Church at the time of his death.

Elder Rhodes will be missed greatly by all who knew him, especially by those that enjoyed hearing him preach so much. I most surely will miss him more than anyone else. I have been serving his Church twenty-nine years and always looked forward to meeting him there every fourth Saturday. His presence was of great strength to me, but I can not wish him back. We all desire to be resigned to God's will, and wait until we can meet him on the banks of sweet deliverance together with the whole family of saints to join in a

song of eternal praise to our precious Lord. Elder Rhodes was a humble man, mild tempered, and the same every time you saw him. He wore but one face: he was the same person to one and all. I am sure that he did not realize his value to the Church and how much he was esteemed by the church. I, together with all of his friends, wish to extend our deepest sympathy to Sister Rhodes and the children in their bereavement.

Written by request of Sister Rhodes, his dear wife.

D. A. O'Bryant

MAY HILL SCARBOROUGH

Sister Scarborough was the widow of Mr. Elliott Scarborough who died several years ago. She was a member of Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church, and a lovely Christian. She loved the doctrine of sovereign and saving grace of God, and was deeply exercised of the Spirit. She was lovely in the eyes and esteem of the brethren, and as long as she was able, she was a regular attendant of her meetings. Several years ago she was severely stricken and became a wheel-chair patient, suffering much until she passed away January 20, 1963.

She lived with her daughter and son-in-law, Brother and Sister Haywood Taylor, of Farmerville, La. Surviving also are two other daughters: Mrs. Woodie Albritton, of Farmerville, and Mrs. Ira Mathews, of Marion, La.; and by four sons: George, of Bastrop, La.; Shady Lee, of Marion; B. J., of Ponte Vedre Beach Florida; and Sim, of Los Angeles. We feel that our great loss is her blessed and glorious gain in heaven. Surviving also are twelve grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder J. L. Smith, at Liberty Hill Church, in the presence of a large congregation, though the weather was very cold and disagreeable. There were many beautiful flowers, which showed the love and respect in which she was held.

May the dear Lord richly bless her dear family, and the brethren and friends who will miss her very much; may He comfort them in their great loss.

R. W. Rhodes

IN MEMORY OF ELDER W. R. DODD

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst, our dearly beloved Pastor, Elder W. R. Dodd, whom we loved so very much.

He was very faithful, always stood firm for the doctrine and faith of salvation by grace. I had the pleasure of being with Brother Dodd a lot. Just to know him was to love him.

He was highly esteemed among his brethren. His advice in Church matters and doctrine was very sound. We miss him very much. His place can never be filled. He loved his church and always filled his place unless hindered by sickness, and the Lord blessed him with very good health until near the end.

According to Brother Dodd's faith, we believe our loss is his eternal gain. He believed that God rules all things according to the council of his will, and asked not the council of men. I believe Brother Dodd preached every sermon God intended for him to preach. He often made that remark. I believe God revealed that to him.

I visited him just as he was preparing to leave for the hospital. He quoted this scripture to me. 2nd Timothy, 4th Chapter and 5th through the 8th verse. "But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

Elder Dodd was born April 21, 1877, and departed this life August 26, 1962. He was first married to Fleetwood Green, December 26, 1899. She passed away July 14, 1947. To this union were born six children, 4 boys and 2 gilrs. He later married Josephine Nuckols, whom he left to mourn his passing.

Brother Dodd joined Strawberry Church, August 5, 1911, and was ordained minister in a short time. He served Strawberry Church as Pastor for 37 years. I feel this church will long miss and never forget his loyal and sweet fellowship.

He was chosen moderator of Staunton River Association in 1937 and served until his death. In this place he will always be missed. For he always stood for the doctrine that was once delivered to the saints.

Elder Dodd's funeral was conducted by his Pastor whom he loved very much, Elder Raymond Payne, and was laid to rest in the family cemetery at Hinesville beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

May the Lord bless and comfort and give reconciling grace to his dear wife and family.

And may we all be submissive to the Lord's will, for he never makes a mistake. He gives and He takes away, at his appointed time.

By the Order of Strawberry Church, January 5, 1963.

Written by a brother and sister in hope,
P. L. Holley and Wife

ALVIS SYLVESTER ROWE

As the sickle of the grim reaper is thrust forth into the army of the Lord, we once again are made to feel its universal sway over the sons of Adam in the removal by death of our brother in Christ. He was born January 6, 1882, the son of the late Elder Joshua Tillman and Ella Harrison Rowe, and passed from the shores of time on November 6, 1962.

He was married to Elisabeth Wilson on September 19, 1908, and to this union five children were born, to wit, Joshua Wilson Rowe, Miss Ella Rowe, Mrs. Mary Elisabeth Brown, Mrs. Hannah Wilson, all of Baltimore, and Mrs. Sarah Kelly of Long Island, all surviving, with their mother, also his step-mother, our sister Mamie W. Rowe.

Our dear brother joined Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore, about 1910. As the old church book is in the historical archives at Annapolis, we were unable to ascertain the exact date. He was baptized by his father, who was pastor of the church at that time. He was chosen clerk of the church in 1911, and remained so until his death. It has been my privilege to examine many church records in my time, and I have never seen as well kept books as he kept of church transactions. His interest in Ebenezer did not wane as age approached. But few knew anything about how many trips that he made in the interest of the welfare of this little church. He often visited the sick and the needy. When I moved to Baltimore, he knowing the city for more than sixty years, we would go to see many of the afflicted that could not get out.

In addition to the widow and the children, he also left three brothers, to wit, John I., of Baltimore; William H., of Durham, N. C.; Charles A., of Dallas, Texas; one half-brother, Joshua Tillman Rowe, of Richmond, Virginia; one half-sister, Mrs. Mamie Rowe Marshall, of Danville, Virginia; and eleven grandchildren. Two sisters, Miss Frances B., and Mrs. Ada Gahill, preceded him in death.

Funeral services were conducted in Baltimore by Elder P. E. Thompson, after which his body was deposited in the grave at Black Rock Old School Baptist Church, there to await the summons in the morning of the resurrection of the dead. May the Lord comfort all that mourn, giving us another faithful clerk in the church, being a father unto the children and a husband unto the widow.

Written by his pastor.

W. D. G.

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

The Church of Christ of the Primitive Faith and order at Ebenezer in Baltimore, Maryland has sustained a loss of magnitude to us in the death of our clerk, Brother Alvis Rowe.

We, the church, desire to express our sorrow at the passing of our brother, and to send this Resolution of Respect to our family paper, a copy to the family, and to enter it on the pages of the churchbook.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the will of our heavenly Father, realizing that we will often have to face the loss of our fellow travelling companions, but that the loss is accompanied by the gracious promise that God will not leave himself without witnesses. Our hope and trust is that our brother has entered into the joys of the Lord, and that shortly, we, too, shall join all the blood washed throng, ever to be with the Lord.

Done by order of the church while in session on the 3rd Sunday in December, 1962.

Elder W. D. Griffin, Moderator
Sister Emma Parker, Clerk

ELISABETH LEEDOM FETTER

Our dear sister in Christ was born into the realm of earthly existence on June 20, 1877, and died on November 26, 1962, making her stay on earth eighty-five years, six months and six days. She was the daughter of our late kindred in the Lord, George and Elisabeth Leedom. She was a member of the Old School Baptist church at Southampton, Pennsylvania, having joined August 14, 1892.

She was united in marriage in early life to our lamented brother, Casper G. Fetter, who preceded her in death by eleven months and one day. This union left two children, to wit, Claude and Mary, who live in Trenton, New Jersey.

Our sister had a precious background of Old Baptists in her family life. This did not make her an Old Baptist, but it was a delightful home for a child of grace to dwell in. Our sister had a wonderful insight into spiritual things, and in earlier years had written many fine letters and articles on spiritual subjects. She lived the greater part of her life at Southampton Church.

It was my favor from the Lord to know this dear couple in the last seven years of their life. When asked how she was getting along, she would always reply, "I am all right", although she suffered intensely the last few years of her life. I visited her in the home a few days before her death, and although the body was weak because of the ravages of disease, her faith was strong in the Lord.

The funeral was largely attended in the funeral home in Southampton where the writer spoke words of comfort to her children and other relatives, together with the kindred in

the Lord. Then all that was mortal of our sister was planted in Southampton cemetery there to wait until the glorious scene depicted in I Thessalonians 4:13, 18, becomes a rapturous reality.

W. D. G.

SISTER DELLA BOYD NEWMAN

Our dear Sister in Christ, Della Boyd Newman, was born September 25, 1892, and was called from our midst January 10, 1963, — called from this sinful world of toil and suffering to the arms of her loving Saviour, to rest and praise his holy name in that bright world which shall never end. Her toils and sufferings were more than most are called to endure, still she was enabled by her Heavenly Father to rear her family of eight children to be fine examples of the high standards she believed in.

She was given a desire for a home in the church of the living God, which she asked for September 24, 1944. She and her brother, Albert Boyd, were received into Mt. Olive Church Stockdale, Texas, and were baptized the same day by Elder E. B. Ault.

Sister Newman did not have the privilege of her church meetings often, but enjoyed them very much when she did. Only a few weeks before her passing, we received a letter from her saying she wished she could be with us and hear more good preaching.

She was united in marriage to Chester Newman, and to this union eight children were born. Surviving are: Maurice, Thomas, Chester, Jr., Percy, Richard, Nathan and Don Newman, of San Antonio; and Mrs. Nell E. Lee, of Enterprise, Alabama.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That we of Mt. Olive Church thank our Lord for the gift of this lovely sister, and pray for grace to bow in humble submission to His holy will; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we extend our heartfelt sympathy to her sorrowing family, and send them a copy of these resolutions. Also that we enter a copy on our church records, and send a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Read and approved by Mt. Olive Church in conference the second Sunday in February, 1963.

Elder Gerald D. Shipman, Moderator
Lelia Culpepper, Church Clerk

SISTER KIM JONES

Sister Kim Jones was born January 2, 1874, and died June 9, 1960, at the age of eighty-six. She moved from Georgia to Arkansas at the age of six, where she lived the rest of her long and useful life. She was married to Mr. Kim Jones January 2, 1890, her sixteenth birthday.

She is survived by the following children: two sons, Murl Jones, Mineral Springs, Ark., and Jester Jones, Malvern, Ark.; seven daughters: Mrs. Eva Nutt, Mrs. Lois Parish, Mrs. Blanch Burrow, all of Malvern; Mrs. Nancy Sawyer, McCamey, Texas; Mrs. Edith Williams, Sheridan, Ark.; Mrs. Grace Fitzhugh, Little Rock, Ark., and Mrs. Kathleen Billings, Helena, Ark.; and by thirty-seven grandchildren, eighty-four great grandchildren, and two great, great grandchildren.

Sister Jones, though a firm believer and contender for the faith, and faithful in attendance and support of the church and ministry almost all her life, was not enabled to join the visible church until after she was eighty years old, when she united with Good Hope Church, DeQueen, Arkansas, while on a visit; later transferring her membership by letter to Macedonia Primitive Baptist Church (Predestinarian), Malvern, Ark., of which she was a member when she died.

Though her life in the church consisted of but a few years, she seemed to reap more joy and comfort from it than anyone I ever knew for that time. She enjoyed church services and the fellowship of the saints so much that it showed in every feature; and she was a great help to her pastor, who many times while speaking felt destitute of the Spirit and should sit down, feeling that no one was feeding on his discourse, would glance at Sister Jones, and find her face beaming with joy, which encouraged him to speak on; for as long as we know we are feeding one of God's sheep, we know we are not preaching in vain.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. T. Everett, who baptized her, assisted by Mr. Sawyer, one of her sons-in-law, amidst a large congregation of relatives and friends; after which her body was laid to rest by the side of her late husband who died January 9, 1953, to await the coming of her blessed Saviour and the glorious resurrection of the dead, when she shall awake in the likeness of Jesus, and, with David, be forever satisfied.

Precious sister, how we miss thee
On this rocky road of time,
But we hope and trust to meet thee
In that sinless home sublime.

There in Jesus' glorious image
We shall praise Him and adore;
Nevermore to sigh or sorrow,
On that happy, golden shore.

By her unworthy pastor,

C. B. Britt

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 131 DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1963 NO. 6

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/63
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE DECREES OF GOD

Elder J. C. Sikes

If Jehovah is infinite in all His ways;
Giving life to man and numbering his days,
Who dares to impeach Him if in His wise plan
He gave shape and direction to the ways of man?

If He in His wisdom did all things create,
Should He turn the helm and leave things to fate?
Did He not have the right in His sinless decree
To mark out the ways both for you and for me?

If He did decree just what we shall do,
I cannot arraign Him; Say, brother, can you?
Before whom will you try Him as judge of your court
Who will act as your clerk and make your report?

If all things are in the decrees of His will,
And all things are working the same to fulfill,
Who but a vile sinner too wicked to bow,
Would call Him in question, or say what do'st Thou?

If He did decree the death of His son,
The sinless, the righteous, the most holy One;
And this did not make Him the author of sin,
To make Him the author where will you begin?

Will you start with Judas, whose act was foretold?
And as was determined, his Master he sold;
Did not the dear Saviour say: Woe to that man,
I go as determined in God's holy plan?

If Pharoah be one you think would no doubt
Prove that God's purpose was not carried out;
Did not God command him by Moses you know?
Saying "Thus saith Jehovah, let my people go."

Yet will I harden, yes harden his heart,
That He shall refuse and not let them depart
Till I bring my just plagues on all your foes,
And thus get honor on him and hosts.

But sinners most wicked will oft Him arraign;
Against His just counsel they often complain,
And say, "If He decrees all things to the end
Then He is unjust, and the author of sin."

The heathen may rage and imagine vain things,
The lowest, the highest; yes even their kings,
And shout till the world hear the sound of their din:
The author, the author, the author of sin!

His saints will still praise Him and shout as they go:
Jehovah most holy, dost all things foreknow;
His counsel did settle just how they would be,
So shout on you heathen, you don't disturb me.

We learn from an angel that time shall soon end,
And saints shall be welcome by Jesus their Friend;
This all is established by holy decree:
For thus it is written and thus it shall be.

If all things are certain, then how came they so?
If things are not certain, how could God foreknow?
Were all things to which foreknowledge relate
Made certain by the old heathen goddess of fate?

We surely all know at a thought or a glance,
That things are not left to haphazard of chance ;
Then some one please tell me, that I may once see,
How things can be certain, yet uncertain be?

Now, while you are thinking, I'll come to a halt;
If you don't see the point, it isn't my fault:
But brother, please tell me how this thing can be
All things were made certain without a decree?

(Submitted by C. B. Britt for publication.)

EARMARKS OF GRACE ABOUNDING

Dear Friends and Loved Ones:

It seems I must try, the Lord willing, to tell some of the blessings I have received at His Hands.

I am such a poor, feeble soul who, it seems, has always been a backward child. I never seem to be able to talk or act as I would like to. Ever since just a small child I have had the feeling that I didn't belong: I wasn't able to join my friends and companions in their activities, though I greatly desired to be popular. Even at a very early age I would read my father's Bible in secret, for I didn't want anyone to see me. I do not know why I felt that way. I would sit and listen to my elders talk on the Scriptures, but didn't want anyone to know that I was interested.

I have always felt that the Primitive Baptist people were a chosen people, but I thought I was as good as anyone else, for I had never done anything that I though was such a great wrong. But, bless your souls, there is one who can show us just how far from good we are. It was in my late twenties that I was made aware of just how sinful and lowly a creature I was. I was reading my father's Bible one day, which I had read many times before, when it seemed I saw myself a lost soul, doomed, and without any way to turn. Oh, what a terrible feeling it is to become aware that you are standing naked before God; and to know that there is nothing in this world that you can do about it!

I thought perhaps that if I would go to church, I would find some comfort; but not so. I tried reading the *Signs of the Times,* and opened to where someone had written about the prodigal son, but, instead of comparing myself with the prodigal, I saw myself as the brother. I even thought that if I were just a dumb brute, Oh, what a blessing it would be. I suppose I was envious of the dumb beasts of the fields who have no soul to go down into Hell.

All I could do, was to think, Lord be merciful to me a sinner; I could not open my mouth. Oh, I thought, if only I could fall down on my knees and pour out my heart to Him who was all power, then surely I would find relief; but I could not open my mouth.

This feeling of dread and doom stayed with me for some time — it seemed longer to me I'm sure than it really was. Then, one day just as this terrible feeling had come upon me, it left, and a wonderful peace came over me. I went around with a song in my heart, but, just as I hadn't been able to open my mouth in prayer, neither could I sing. But I thought, Oh, to be able to sing His praise from the highest mountain! For I was persuaded it was He and He alone who had helped me, for the arm of flesh had failed.

Since those days, I have had wonderful feelings of rejoicing; then there are times of great doubt and fear that perhaps I have imagined it all. This is the reason, I suppose, that I have been fearful of telling anyone: for fear that I am deceived and trying to deceive. I can only hope that God will keep me by his power, for, if left to myself I shall surely fall. I feel to know that poor, beggarly man has not the power to stand of himself.

I don't know why I have written this, but it seemed that I should tell others.

Unworthily,
Lena Mae Johnson

(We do not have the address of the above writer, but are glad that Elder Bird sent it to us to share with our readers. — J. D. W.)

SERMON BY THE LATE ELDER A. B. AYERS PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION 1960

I will read to you the third verse of the fifteenth chapter of Romans: "For even Chirst pleased not himself; but as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me." The

word "me" here implies Christ himself, as we understand. The Psalmist uses almost the same language in the 69th Psalm, 9th verse: "The zeal of thine house has eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me."

As we understand the word fallen and the word fell, both signify the past tense as to when the "reproaches fell on me." We read also in 1st Timothy where the Apostle said that Adam was not deceived, but Eve being deceived, was in the transgression, but she should be saved in childbearing.

Now the question is, When did the reproaches fall on "me?" My mind goes out to believe with all sacredness of heart and soul that in the garden of Eden, when there were but the two, there was the transgression. And in thinking about it, a thought is formed in my mind that there never was but one transgression, and that was in the garden of Eden; and that transgression has been multiplied as the human family has been multiplied. My thought is that in the transgression there was every conceivable sin that has ever been practiced by mortal man. The Apostle tells us in the 4th chapter of Ephesians that there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism. There is one salvation; and that salvation was prepared in the Son of God, upon whom the reproaches fell in the transgression. This woman, was in the transgression, yet she shall be saved in childbearing. Now to me, in the transgression the church was figuratively in Eve; and the seed of the woman concerning whom God spoke to the serpent, was the salvation of his people: "It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

The Apostle Peter tells us that He stood a Lamb without blemish from the foundation of the world. Christ has been without blemish from the foundation of the world; yet there was the promise that he should bruise the serpent's head; and there was the promise that she shall be saved in childbearing.

Well, what child is under consideration here? It didn't say, In children bearing; but in childbearing. The very child, to me, brethren, the very child, the seed of the woman that was promised there in Genesis, is the very one in which Abraham received the promise that in his seed this child should come forth, "For in Isaac shalt thy seed be called." And in Isaac Jesus did come forth, that is, in the genealogy of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Jesse, David, Solomon, etc., — the genealogy right on down, did the seed of the woman come forth, on whom the reproaches of the transgression fell. That is, "All the reproaches have fallen on me."

Therefore, he stood as a Lamb without blemish and covered every transgression of the household of faith — of the church of the living God. The old prophet Zachariah tells that, "In that day", (a specific day, which to me is the very day in which the seed of the woman was crucified,) "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleaness." "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem: half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea." That was the blood that had the atoning power in the day of the crucifixion of the blessed Lamb of God, upon whom all the reproaches had fallen. He came at the appointed time of the Father, as we are told in Galatians: "When the fulness of time was come God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law."

What a blessed promise, brethren? The promises of God can't fail: never have, and never will. If the promises of God could fail, then none of us would have salvation, nor eternal life. What a blessed promise we have in him, that he should bruise the serpent's head. All the promises were based on him. In Hebrews the Apostle wrote, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or

the son of man, that thou visiteth him?" He did visit the Son of Man. The man that is under consideration is figurative of the church; and here we have the Son of Man whom God visited with the wrath that we deserved — that the church deserved in their transgression, because the whole church went down in that transgression and was never able to lift itself up. You can't lift yourself up by your own boot-straps; you can't lift yourself up with nothing to cling to, but He has the power to lift us up. The Psalmist declares that He brought him up from the horrible pit and the miry clay, and placed his feet upon a rock.

Brethren, friends, and neighbors, do you have your feet upon a rock this morning? If so, what rock are you standing on? Not the common rocks that I see in the land and soil up here, but the Rock of Eternal Ages. That is the bed-rock. That's God's salvation and eternal truth, who arose from the dead, and became the first fruits of them that slept.

So the reproaches of them that reproached thee have fallen on me. Now can you fathom the greatness of God: his mercy, his love, and his truth and salvation that he has in store for all his people that love him. All of us were in the transgression, yet He chose the church in Christ, for he tells us in 2nd Timothy, "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace that was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

So, brethren it can't fail. There was your promise that all the reproaches of them that reproached thee have fallen on me. Yet he stood in that capacity from the foundation of the world; and before there was a people God made this covenant of redemption with the Son. Can you fathom the greatness of that mercy that God had on you, knowing what would take place? There is not a sin or shortcoming that you have ever come through in life's journey that was not known to God from all eternity.

He knows how vile and depraved we are today. But the question is, do we believe by faith? The Apostle John tells us, "He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." Do we believe this morning that God the Father from all eternity did embrace that grace in him, and send him forth at the appointed time? Can you conceive that all the salvation of the whole church of the living God, coming in the very small package, in the oneness of that infant babe that was born in Bethlehem of Judah, and wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in the manger. Can you conceive that there was a sufficiency for every child of promise, every heir of promise, every child of grace in every age, from the creation to the final consummation, he standing as a Lamb without blemish from the foundation of the world, and the reproaches of them that reproached us are fallen upon him? Brethren, if you can conceive that, then you have something that is far beyond the capacity of the mind. I have thought about it; and the more I think of it, the more it becomes a sea without bottom, without brim, without shore: The greatness and mercy of God, and what we call eternity; and to live through eternity in the bliss and splendor of the Son of God, clothed with the garments of righteousness that will never fade, never decay.

It is said by a propeth of old, "Let the foundation be strongly laid with three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber; and let the expense be given out of the king's house." Oh, brethren, here comes your expense again: that one that the reproaches fell upon. He is the expense of the king's house; and here is the foundation strongly laid: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And there is life in every one of those layers of stone. Let the foundation be strongly laid of three rows of great stones — and they are great stones, brethren. It is the very

foundation upon which the church of the living God is built. Every house must have a foundation, a good foundation, otherwise the building will soon fall and decay.

But I assure you, brethren, if we have faith to believe that Jesus is the Christ, then we are born of God; and he that is born of God doth not commit sin, because his seed remaineth in him, as the Apostle tells us. Who is it that is born of God? It is not this corrupt man here; it is not this earthly body of ours, but it is the Spirit of God born in you. That is the new birth to me: When he sheds abroad that quickening power that brings us to the knowledge of how vile, how sinful, and how lost we are, and how depraved we are; and, with that, always gives the knowledge that there is power that is able to save the most vile sinner. If he was willing to reach my case, that was always my thought, for mine is an outstanding case; if he was just willing to reach down that mercy to me. I believe he has brethren, because I have a precious hope that is superior to me to all the hopes of this congregation. I wouldn't give you mine this morning for all of yours, because it wouldn't do me any good. But this blessed hope is that all the reproaches not only of the whole church of the living God, but this poor servant, was embraced in that same promise of covenant grace there, and redeemed by that blood. And I want to give you, in my way of seeing and understanding, the full assurance that none of you will ever enter heaven and immortal glory, only through the merits of that blood that streamed from the side of him that said, "The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen on me.": Just the merits of that blood, and the sacrifice of that body.

When he came into the world, he didn't come as the other high priests did, offering the blood of bulls and goats as sacrifices. He, being the High Priest himself, did not have to offer for sin for himself, as the other priests did: for all the Levitical priesthood had to offer sacrifices for themselves and not for the people only; and that had to be every year. But once in the end of the world, the Apostle tells us, He made one sacrifice: and by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, because the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen on me, and the zeal of thine house has eaten me up.

Brethren, what a wonderful God this is, that made a promise that can't fail. Abraham his servant received faith to believe that the promise of God could not fail, when the Lord said, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest . . . and offer him for a burnt offering." He had faith to believe that though I go and slay him, he is coming back. He testified to that when he said to his servants, "Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again unto you." He is coming back, though I go and slay him. Brethren, here is your resurrection from the dead. He is coming back with me! That is a glorious thought with me — the resurrection from the dead.

This life here is such a short span, its just a few days. The servant of old said, "A few days, and full of trouble." If we live to be four score years, we soon pass on just the same. There is no time limit with God, but we must all go the way of the earth. But the blessed thought is that there was a day coming when this one that all the reproaches were laid upon should come forth, for the Lord said, "Thou shalt bruise his heel, but he shall bruise thy head." That is to me, brethren, when the reproaches, the one sin that has been multiplied that was committed in Eden, like a tree that comes forth from the seed — just one seed brings forth the tree, fell upon him. Here is a figure, that one sin back there has been multiplied, and all of us have been bitten by that same poison, and that same poison will cause all of us to wither. If

you chop around a tree and break the sap and bark, you will soon see it wither; and it will soon die. So sin has been multiplied, and caused us to wither in body, to wither in mind and thought, and this old body will go back to the dust. But the thought is now, that He has borne the reproaches — they have fallen on him. He was bruised for our offences, buried for our iniquities, and arose for our justification.

What a blessed thought, that death couldn't hold him! Neither will it hold you. Because just so sure as Jesus came forth from the dead, just so sure there will be a resurrection day. Abraham saw that when he was assured that, I will slay him, but he will come back with me. I have thought of that many times: "While we go yonder and worship" What was he going to worship? He was going to take the life of his son, but that unfaltering faith and the all abounding love of God was so strong in him that he saw the resurrection there. And when he went to perform the very thing that God commanded him, there God placed a ram, — which is a figure of this one that bore the reproaches. There the ram was slain, and Isaac went free. Again here is a pertinent figure of the church: Isaac went free: the lamb was slain.

Here is that blessed Son who knew no sin, who bore the reproaches of sin of all his people, the whole church of the living God. He was bound upon the cross. God delivered him there, and withdrew himself from him, that he might die and pay the ransom price. Your purchase price is the blood of Christ. Your passport, if you enter heaven and immortal glory, has been written in the Lamb's book of life with that blood; because the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.

"For the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen on me."

(The above is from a recording, and is somewhat condensed for publication — J. D. W.)

ENJOYS THE SERMONS

Titusville, New Jersey

Dear Brother Wood:

The recordings you have published of sermons have brought glad tidings of great joy to me. I do not get to Associations, which make them especially precious to have and to read. It is like having the privilege of being among these venerable brethren.

The publication of these sermons is a wonderful thing for those readers of the *Signs* who seldom hear the preached word. And to all those who are faced with adverse situations, whose suffering in body and spirit is known only to the Lord, they are much needed to keep alive the spirit of the love of God in the heart. They are like messengers of glad tidings coming to the "one here" and "one there" who feel to be standing alone in their doctrinal belief.

Yes, these sermons and articles give those who are hungering for righteousness a richer understanding in the gospel as they grow in grace and the knowledge of the truth. It gives them a peace that passes all understanding, because peace is a divine gift. "He is our peace", says the Apostle Paul, "and coming He preached peace to you that were afar off and peace to them that were nigh; for by Him we have access both in one spirit to the Father."

May this gift of peace give each and everyone of the dear readers of the *Signs* an awareness of the increasing light from the Sun of Righteousness. For in His light is a constant newness of life. Just as Christ came among the people and worked miracles, died and rose again to glory, so the called of God do not experience life and glory without knowledge of the truth. They know the joyful sound. Liturgical services may attract many of the people today, but they who walk the way of the godly have beauty in the heart, and their countenance is like the light of the gospel.

In your efforts to bring these beautiful sermons and articles to the readers

of the *Signs,* may you, God willing, be given both strength and joy. May the Lamb of God who always had a predilection for all the little ones in the church, the humble ones, and the fearful ones, keep them in the way, the truth and the life, and give them peace. May there be more sermons and articles to overcome the barriers that divide brethren, more of the written word to strengthen the bonds of brotherly love, to sympathize, and to pardon, so that the little ones, the humble ones, and the fearful ones, may unite in the Saviour's name, and in His peace experience triumph, that the God of peace may be with them.

May the Lord bless you.

Sister Mary Hellings

WHERE ART THOU?

"And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, where art thou?"

One of the differences between the doctrinal belief of Old Baptists and all other faiths of the world is, they believe man to be totally depraved; that he is wholly corrupt and can do nothing at all to extricate himself from his fallen state in Adam. He cannot in anywise fulfill the law, neither can he by any act within and of himself, obtain eternal salvation. He is destitute, lost and undone, without hope in this world or the world to come, except for the intervening love and mercy of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Now when he had partaken of the forbidden fruit, seen his nakedness, become ashamed and hid himself; when the Lord called, "Adam, where art thou?", it was not to get information or learn something he did not already know. It was a question to cause Adam to take a good look at himself. Oh! what a pitiful, groveling, hell deserving wretch he saw, when he was forced to face himself. Do you remember? Suddenly he had fallen from the sinless state in which he was created, to a creature who was nothing and less than nothing in the sight of God.

Not only did he fall from this happy state, but in his disobedience he incurred the wrath and anger of God and, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Heb. 10:31). God in his wrath expelled him from the garden and decreed, through Adam, death on all mankind. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. 5:12) and also, "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation."

Following the fall and expulsion, God set a flaming sword to guard Eden, so that man could not enter again. This left him out in a world of sin, lost and without help, to face the wrath and judgment of a jealous God.

Then Adam learned so many things about himself. The forbidden fruit did exactly what the wily serpent had promised. It made him know good and evil, and the things he saw in himself were only evil. Satan was no help now, in saving him from the awful judgment into which he had led him.

Man learned that the Lord had formed him from the dust of the ground, which was a very humble beginning. He was shown also that he was made a little lower than the angels, who are servants of God. He learned that man at his best state is altogether vanity. He came to know that all nations are nothing, less than nothing and vanity, before this God with whom he had to do; that these nations are as a drop of of a bucket and are as the small dust in the balance. When *all* nations are as such, small, puny man looks really, totally depraved to himself, when asked by God, "Where art thou?"

As Adam stands before an angry God in judgment, words cannot describe the littleness of his feelings or his destitute condition. He tries to reach across the deep, awful chasm that separates him from safety, and knows a desperate, indescribable futility. His own efforts

to span the mighty gulf are in vain.

David asks, "What is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?" (Psalms 8:4) and James asks, "For what is your life?" and answers, "It is a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

Adam feels that vanity, less than nothing, small dust of the balance, the drop of the bucket, and vapour are as small as man can get, in nature, but the law condemns him even lower than any of those things. It puts him in a devil's hell. So when man is really shown what he is in the eyes of God, he does not question, but that he is totally depraved. He knows that, "Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering," and that, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good," so where can he flee?

God asked Adam, Where art thou? then left a record of many, many places where He found him. If you are a child of God, you have been in those places, and felt your own sinfulness and weakness at such times. You have looked here and there, and found no hiding place from his all seeing eye.

At one time man was found in a desert land and in the waste howling wilderness. Another time he was found in a horrible pit, in the miry clay. Jonah was in the belly of hell. One of the apostles was found on the way to Damascus to persecute God's children and another lied about knowing the Saviour. As an idolater Adam (man) threw the Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, and as a thief he was crucified on the cross.

These all faced God in judgment. Their sins were as scarlet, they were helpless, empty, famished, unable to help themselves, no matter what the sin or situation in which they were involved. They had sinned and were sinners, and the wages of sin is death. Their sin was ever before them and in their anguish they cried with David, "There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin."

Unknown to Adam, God from eternity had set up a means for his deliverance. His anger and justice were tempered with mercy. He sent his own Son, who was himself Manifested in the flesh, to be a mediator between God and man; to bridge the gap that was impossible for Adam to cross. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." (I Tim. 2:5) This mediator was sent to satisfy and fulfill the law that Adam had transgressed. The Father gave all things into his hands. He came to seek and to save that which was lost.

All things given into the hands of the Son included judgment and justification. This mediator set things right between Adam and God, by taking all of Adam's sins on his own shoulders, and satisfying the law by dying in Adam's place. Only death would satisfy the law for the wages of sin is death. This delivered man from the transgression of the law and its dreadful consequences. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (I Cor. 15:22) And again, "Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people; thou hast covered all their sin."

When at this point in his experience God asks, "Adam where art thou?" there is One who answers in his place. Man still knows himself to be unworthy, and will not lift his eyes, but can cry only, "God be merciful to me a sinner." He knows he is naked before God and begs to be hidden. He finds hope through promises made him by the great Mediator. He has a witness within him that causes him to hunger, to thirst, to beg for mercy, and to look forward to the deliverance of the body from this death.

He also finds in the scriptures, where those of like or similar experiences, were lifted up and delivered. The wanderer in the desert land and wilderness was led about and instructed. He who

was in the pit and miry clay was lifted up. His feet were set upon a rock and his goings established. Jonah was vomited from the belly of hell and preached, "Salvation is of the Lord."

Paul and Peter continued in his way, and were kept as fountains, through which his mercy and grace was preached to fallen man. Nebuchadnezzar, the idolater, praised and extolled him, after being shown his own weakness by the "Fourth man." The prodigal son returned, begging his father's forgiveness, and confessing his sins and weakness. The thief on the cross died with the precious promise, "Today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." Adam in all these found mercy and grace.

All creation in Adam fell under the law, but we have written only of those, who are that portion of his posterity, for whom the Lord died. The precious chosen ones He redeemed from under the law and clothed in his own righteousness, after finding them naked and undone.

According to David, the wicked will not seek after God and they shall be turned into hell. But we hope to be one of that number found through his love, and made to answer his call, by begging for grace and mercy, and praising and extolling his wonderful name. He said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Once in the first Adam we feared Satan and all he could do, not knowing the bounds of the wicked serpent were set, as is all created things. Now, we trust that the second Adam found us lost and undone, taught us Godly fear and clothed us in his own righteousness. This is our only hope for that bright tomorrow, when He calls Adam where art thou; that the One who died for us, to wipe away our sin, our sorrow and our shame, will answer for us, Lord, here am I.

"And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit." (I Cor. 15:45)

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Spearsville, La.

LETTER TO SISTER DeHART DURING ILLNESS

Delmar, Delaware

Dear Sister DeHart:

I received a card from Sister Christine yesterday, saying you were in the hospital; and in addition to your other affliction, you were suffering from an attack of shingles. Upon hearing this news, my mind was directed to the 8th Chapter of Romans, verse 18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

It is not necessary for me to relate the different kinds of suffering to which Paul was subjected, because I am sure you are well acquainted with them. We learn that he has reckoned, or added together, all his suffereings here in time, and that there is no comparison to be made with the glory that awaited him; and not only to him only, but to all who are awaiting the redemption of their bodies in the day of the great resurrection.

In verse 19, the apostle says, "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." But while we remain here in mortal flesh, we are saved by hope, says the apostle in verse 24. I understand the words "saved by hope" to mean we are saved during the hour of temptation, when Satan subjects us to his awful thoughts and suggestions. So hope is, indeed an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. But those who are embraced in the covenant of redemption through Christ, someday will no longer hope, but will come into full possession of that for which they have hoped. Suffering is the lot of God's elect. All the Apostles except John were murdered. So it is through much tribulation that one enters the kingdom.

I could continue this writing, but I don't want to tire you, so will be brief.

And now my sister, (if you will allow me to so address you), when you have finished your allotted time here on earth, may that peace which passeth all understanding be with you; and may these words of Paul come sweetly to you: "I have finished my course; I have kept the faith."

Unworthily yours,
A. T. Benson

LETTERS FROM PRISON

Among us who read this, there may not be any who have had some loved one in prison. So, if we have never read a letter from one of our prisons today, we would not be able to fully comprehend the very hopelessness of such a letter. There would be the agony of the very thought of losing one's freedom. I imagine this thought that takes possession of one's heart eats like a cancer. The prison walls are a painful reminder that one has lost his freedom. Rebelling against this situation is not the answer, but where is the one who wouldn't rebel? Not only losing the very valuable prize of freedom, but having on the conscience the awful weight of guilt.

With all this in view, then what attitude would one take, for there must be some sort of avenue for the mind to follow. They do not just sit and look at the gray walls of the prison. It would be one of these two: they would become bitter, or they would repent of the wrong they had committed. Good and evil are set before us. In this case one must watch his conduct. Now I've written of one in prison, but my main object is to write on another case — of other letters from prison: those of the Apostle Paul.

This one said that in all things he could adapt himself. Now we know the prisons in those days were horrible indeed. We can imagine them cold and bare; without one sign of the flickering light of the sun. We do not feel it was total darkness, but the light must have been faulty, the food poor, the hours long and lonely. In this last imprisonment there was not the slightest hope of ever being free again, only by death. Now what was the attitude of this prisoner? It was not hopeless, it was not one of despair, as one who had reached the road's end. It was one filled with bright anticipation; one that could look beyond prison walls to a brighter country. Even in this bleak and bare prison, there was sweet communion with God. David once said, "Whither shall I go from the presence of thy Spirit?" He goes on to say that wherever he went the presence of the Holy Spirit went with him.

So, then, some of the sweetest letters come from one in prison. We notice he spoke very little of himself, but told of the love of God to all the saints. To have drawn our attention to his sufferings, at the moment, would have relieved him somewhat, but his mind was not on things temporal, but on things eternal.

We find in Second Corinthians 4:17, some of the words of encouragement that must have filled his mind while in prison. Here it says, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." Ah, how it would lighten our burdens to see the things eternal! It took a man in prison to tell us of the glories of these things. Earthly prison bars held him fast, but this did not dim his keen anticipation of a final release. I believe this prison life had helped him; and at first consideration, the question would be, How? We can answer this question when we contemplate our own life here. There are times when we all feel imprisoned; and, like David, there seems no relief. We could beat our hands upon these prison walls, but to no effect. It's when we find that God comes to us even in the prison of trials,

and a troubled heart, that we can see the joys set before the Apostle Paul. His were through the gates of death; but ours, oft-times through having the burden lifted. In contemplating his last prison term, we'd do well to visualize what he suffered there. There was probably no way of measuring time but by the flickering light that failed when the day was done. It must have been cold throughout the night and day. There would have been little companionship of anyone, maybe a guard now and then; but that too would be fleeting. One thing he had that we do not have: he'd been to the third heaven and saw such splendor that there are no words to describe it. He had viewed the eternal home of all the redeemed. In that cold dark prison those visions came back again to him.

We find him saying, "The time of my departure is at hand." Such confidence, such complete calmness of mind! We will fail to get any benefit from this, if we don't get off to ourselves sometimes, and just contemplate how we'd feel if we knew that our time here on earth was finished. Now we're not leaving a cold prison; no, not in the sense he did. Of course, I know this whole world is a prison that holds us here, and we all wait for freedom into the blessed eternal day over there; but actually, we do not have a natural prison wall around us.

From a natural standpoint, we'd think those outside these walls would be the ones to encourage the prisoner; but in this case, it's the prisoner that writes letters of encouragement. Oh, the unsearchable riches of Christ; and those riches come through the pen of one behind prison bars. These are some of the mysteries of God revealed to us. We often wonder why he let his servant go to prison; but there was a purpose in it, so we are not to question it. There have been thousands who have given their life for the sake of the gospel.

If ever we find ourselves so overwhelmed with troubles and disappointments, let us read those letters from prison to cheer our hearts. We will never have a heaven here, but we can read about one in those letters of a prisoner, who had already been there. In another place he says, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

The one main prison that holds us here is this body of clay; and how well we know this. We say, along with the Apostle Paul, "Who shall deliver us from the body of this death?" We see it dying day by day, but we have this hope within of one day having a body like unto His body. Our Lord says, "Let not your hearts be troubled: Ye believe in God, believe also in me." What comforting words to the troubled heart, the promise of eternal life given to all the redeemed. Along with these words from our Lord are also these comforting letters from prison.

Myrtle Cross
429 E. Chevy Chase Dr.
Glendale, Calif.

MR. GOSDEN TO ELDER HAYGOOD

Maidstone, Kent, England

Dear Mr. Haygood:

There is a very strong and I fear wide-spread movement among nearly every section of the professing church, called "Conditional Immortality," which teaches that only the righteous are raised; that the ungodly are annihilated at death. It is, of course, a terrible error and is really like a premium on sin. To handle it, however, is very difficult, seeing the whole subject is profound. Scripture is very definite, as in the parable of Christ concerning the rich man and Lazarus. So much literature is speculative, and the closer we can keep to God's Word the better. Only we need the Holy Spirit as Interpreter.

I feel it is probably an effort of Satan not only to deceive the world but to perplex and entangle even the Elect with a profound subject. It is far bet-

ter to be seeking an assured interest in Christ and eternal salvation by His death, than to be always considering the state of the lost. Satan's success when he deceived Eve, was to suggest against God's goodness and veracity: "Thou shall not surely die!". One great argument adduced against everlasting punishment is that it is contrary to a God of love. There is an attempt to stir up enmity against Him, if the doctrine of eternal punishment is true. But surely in the precious suffering sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ is seen the infinite evil of sin and the inflexible justice of God in punishing it, as well as the unquenchable nature of divine love and the planitude of divine Grace in permitting and providing a substitute capable and willing to sustain, suffer, and exhaust in His own sacred person, the penalty due to his people's sins. Surely God did not send his dear son into the world merely to save sinners from corporal death and annihilation!

Scripture gives us no warrant for the doctrines of annihilation or purgatory. "After death the judgment." The judgment is either to eternal life or to everlasting punishment. (Matthew 25:46)

It is given us through Grace not only to be saved from the "Wrath to come," but to obtain a fitness and title of heaven. Just now, I am not able to give the time needful to write adequately upon so deep and solemn a theme. The following scriptures among many which are worthy of consideration in relation to the solemn matter: Dan. 12:2; Matt. 10:28; Mark 9:48; Luke 16:22-26; John 5:24-29; 2 Thess. 1:9; Rev. 20:10-15; 21:8.

The errorists seem to me to pervert Scripture, and confuse Spiritual death in trespasses and sins with mortality.

May the Holy Spirit give us sincerity in seeking to receive the word of God, the fountain of truth. And may we be united to him who said: "Because I live, ye shall live also."

Yours very sincerely,
J. H. Gosden

P. S. We greatly need the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth (John 16:26) and to defend us from our carnal reason, especially upon highly spiritual mysteries, and to deliver us from Satan's dreadful temptations.

(Submitted for publication by Elder W. W. Hudson.)

WALKING ALONE

7814 North Yale,
Spokane 52, Washington

To the Dear Old *Signs:*

Well my check is late again, but I hope you will renew my subscription to the *Signs* just the same. Sometimes I get so much good out of it; and again I hardly open the pages . . . It's been my spiritual experience, if I have one, that I cannot even desire spiritual food unless God gives me that desire.

I hope you don't think I am arrogant and boastful of these things. I suppose I would be except God in his infinte mercy and kindness, keeps me humble.

Last Fall, at our church meeting, my husband was taken sick, and my brother and I took him to the hospital; and as I waited all alone — no one knows how alone I felt to be: God, friends and loved ones all were gone, and I climbed the rugged, rocky hills all alone. And I believe it is in these cases where the spirit groans, and makes intercessions which cannot be uttered. Yet I know my loved ones were with me, and pleading with the Father to spare my loved one to me yet awhile; and I know God upheld me. These things I know, but I could not feel them, or accept them, for I was cut off; and God said, "This is the way, walk ye in it." And walk I did. I have always believed — at least it has been my lot that in our darkest paths we must walk alone. For only then do we realize the power of Almighty God.

But after my husband began to get better, as I stood alone looking at the evening sky, I was completely surround-

ed by the presence of God, and there was a flowing through me of love and compassion, 'till I was almost overcome. The only thing I can see is that surely He has to empty us before He can fill us; and when we have been empty so long, and the spiritual life flows again in our being, sometimes it is almost too much.

So once again I was made to rejoice, and Oh, how many time have I felt and thought: Oh that my soul might praise Him as it ought for his wonderful works to the children of men. I always think the scripture is so beautiful where the blessed Saviour says, "I am the root and offspring of David, and the Bright and Morning Star." How true this is: He started it all — the root; and He finishes it all — the offspring. And when our darkness has flown, as it does at His appearing: "I am the light of the world", how we are made to rejoice in Him, and can see nothing, and less than nothing in ourselves.

I hope someday to be at meeting again, where I hope we can kneel and worship at His feet; and if I do not enter that glory-world, I feel I have been so richly blessed that He has given me to know him here. And when I leave this time world and take the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost parts of the sea of eternity, yea, He will be there. For by him, and of him, and through him we are: He is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. Can we ask for more?

May our God bless and keep you, and keep the *Signs* as pure as man can make it, for we cannot look at the sun in all his noon-tide glory.

A sinner,
Mary L. Eckard

---

388 McPhail Street,
Lebanon, Mo.

Dear Brethren:

It is time to send renewal for another year; and I will try to write a few thoughts for your consideration. I know I am not able of myself to say anything to the comfort of the Lord's people; and I don't want to injure the feelings of anyone, so desire to be careful what I say.

What I would like to write about is the Ten Virgins. Are there not two classes of people there? Now would it be right to say that one were law worshipers, and the other worshipers after the Spirit. As long as it was natural all ten lamps burned. Was not Paul's light burning until a brighter light shined — then his light went out. When the commandment came, the law light went out. It could shine in the sunlight, but could not shine in that light that was brighter than the sun. Paul was working against God with all his power, feeling he was doing God's service

So the five wise virgins were the ones that were saved in Christ from the foundation of the world, and had oil in their vessels. Now was not this oil the same as Paul received when on his journey to bind those that believed in salvation by grace. The five foolish could not see where the oil was. None know where that oil is except those who have experienced a change. The five foolish went to buy oil, but it was not the right kind. Read Luke 13:25-28.

So it is not by the deeds of the law, but by grace — something that was freely given us in Christ. By the deeds of the law none are justified. Read Matthew 7:22, 23. I would like for someone to write on this subject. From one who desires to know the truth.

W. W. Kenoly

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To April 1, 1963)

Mrs. Milton Tipton, Ala.	$ 2.00
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CHURCH NOTICE

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, at Altus, Oklahoma, has changed their meeting time from second Sunday to the fourth Sunday in each month, at 10:30 A. M., and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. M. Haygood, Pastor
Nina Stallings, Clerk
Rt. 2, Box 54,
Altus, Okla.

ANNUAL THREE DAY MEETING

THE BETHEL CHURCH of Riffe, Washington, will hold its annual three-day meeting the second Sunday in July, and Friday and Saturday before, at their usual meeting place in Riffe. Those who are able to meet with us will be welcome.

Elder E. J. Attebery, Pastor
Sister Opal Huntling, Clerk

CORRECTION

Please make the following correction in your copy of the April *Signs:* The second line of the third verse of Elder Smith's *Father Keep Me,* should read "And the song birds lose their voices:" — J. D. W.

ANNUAL MEETING

The **ANNUAL MEETING** of the **HARMONY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH** will be held, God willing, all day Saturday and Sunday, June 29 and 30, 1963. Services to begin Saturday at 10:30 A. M., and Sunday at 10:00 A. M.

The meeting house is located one mile East of Huntington, W. Va. city limits, on Cedarcrest Drive; and about one-quarter mile off U. S. Route 60, at Eastern Heights Shopping Center. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

Elder J. R. Lane, Moderator
Mrs. Mildred Stanley, Clerk,
1046 Cedarcrest Drive,
Huntington 5, W. Va.

SULPHUR FORK ASSOCIATION

The **SPRING SESSION** of the **SULPHUR FORK ASSOCIATION** will be held with Pleasant Hope Church, 9 miles South of Atlanta, Texas, beginning on Friday before the 5th Sunday in June. Regret we won't be able to attend Brother Wall. — J. D. W.

Danville, Virginia **June, 1963**

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EDITORIAL
ISAIAH 55:9

"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

While meditating upon God's mercies in opening the door of faith unto the Gentiles in the remarkable way in which he prepared his servants for the work he intended them to do, which is so wonderfully shown in the Acts of the Apostles, the above Scripture seemed to come, filling my soul with a sense of nothingness, and with it a desire to proclaim our God as God over all and blessed for evermore. Surely "THY WORKS shall praise thee, O Lord, and thy saints shall bless thee."

At the beginning of the Gospel harvest, when there were a multitude who believed, the twelve apostles called the brethren together and they chose seven

men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, who should serve tables, while they desired to give themselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word. Acts 6:2-4. The first two of the seven set aside were Stephen and Philip; undoubtedly God had a higher calling for those two and it must have been clearly seen, for verse 8 tells us that "Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people." How quickly enemies arose to resist him, but "Death and hell can do no more than what my Father please." When they brought him to trial, Acts 6:15 says, "And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel."

What a glorious testimony this dear man gave of the Sovereignty of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, of Moses also, in whom the Jews trusted. When he had a sight of the burning brush, representing the Church of God, with the Angel of God, the Son of God, in in the midst, he had to take off his shoes, for the place whereon he stood was holy ground. What a revolting picture Stephen gave of their forefathers, who slew the prophets, he accused them also of slaying God's only begotten Son. While they gnashed on him with their teeth, what a glorious sight he could witness to. "Behold, I see the SON OF MAN standing on the right hand of God." Such an one, after such a sight, could face death by cruel stoning, yes, and pray for his persecutors, kneeling ing as a victor, (just as Jesus did,) down before such a Holy God and cry- "WITH A LOUD VOICE, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." How strange are God's ways! Stephen taken so quickly from a world of sin to a world of glory. Philip, though set aside by man to serve tables evidently had other work to do.

In John 4:4 it is said of Jesus, "He must needs go through Samaria," and we read in verse 39 that "many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did." In verse 41 it is stated, "and many more believed because of his own word." It was not the pleasure of God Almighty that the saints should be crowded in one place, even though it must have been wonderful to sit down and eat at the same tables with godly brethren to wait upon them. He therefore raised up such a persecution, in which a man named Saul was a ringleader, that the saints were scattered abroad. Was not this according to God's word? God stirred up Jacob's nest. Deuteronomy 32:10-11. This truth is often not seen at the time, for we are so ready to look at second causes. Moses, recounting the ups and downs of Jacob, could, at the close of his days, "View the landscape o'er," and testify that God's ways are above our ways.

Persecution seems to have forced Philip to leave his brethren and go down to the city of Samaria and preach Christ unto them. "And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. — And there was great joy in that city." How long could that last? The next few verses of Acts 8:9-24 show. The case of Simon the sorcerer, exposed by a visit from the Apostle Peter to be an impostor, must have been very distressing to poor Philip. Yes, God's ways are above our ways, Philip must have been crushed so badly that he would perhaps not have a thought that there was a Judas among the twelve that Jesus chose. How good God is, without a doubt Philip would wish to be alone, but God's thoughts are higher than ours. "And the Angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, ARISE and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert." Poor Philip must have thought such a place was most suitable for such as he felt to be, and in his circumstances he needed little persuasion. Simon's case had brought him to the same spot where

many of God's humble servants are feelingly to-day, UNPROFITABLE. Let such take courage from God's tender dealings with Philip. "And he arose and went: and, BEHOLD, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalm for to worship," was then passing that way. The same God who said, "Go down to Gaza, which is desert," spake again to him and said, "Go near, and join thyself to this chariot."

Philip alone, yet not alone, ran thither and with a holy boldness said, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" Here he saw a man of great authority humbled before God's holy word, while he read of the Lamb of God being led to the slaughter. The same leader was leading him, but he knew it not. He had been up to Jerusalem for to worship, but the temple's gates would be closed to him, for he was of a different race, yet God was his instructor. David's God, who had long ago said, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye," guided Philip and the eunuch to that spot, and there Philip preached unto him Jesus, the Shepherd that leads his own flock, the One who had guided both of them to see Jesus the chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely, the same person who looked upon Peter in his awful humiliation and guided him with his eye.

In Matthew 16:19 Jesus told Peter, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." In Matthew 18:18, also in John 20:23, we see clearly that the gift was to all his apostles and to all his God-sent servants. These keys of the Kingdom of Heaven are manifest in a faithful ministry where one divides between the precious and the vile. The words "The Kingdom of Heaven" appear many times in Matthew, one reason is that Matthew sets forth the Kingship of Chirst. The wise men said, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" and in the last chapter of Matthew, Jesus told the eleven, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations." He did not give them the keys of the Church of God nor of the Kingdom of God, but of the Kingdom which in Matthew had wheat in it, which was sown by the Son of Man, and tares, which were sown by Satan.

In this kingdom it is the work of God's humble servants to loose some, just as Jesus said after he had raised Lazarus, "Loose him and let him go." John 11:44. Now this Ethiopian had gone up to Jersualem for to worship, and we are told by Paul in Galatians 4:25 that "Jerusalem which now is, is in bondage with her children." God would not have sent Philip on such an errand without giving him the keys, for this Ethiopian eunuch was in bonds and needed to hear that it was Jesus, God's dear and only begotten Son, who suffered the just for the unjust. Philip, seeing clearly the goodness of God to himself, "like a hind let loose, who giveth goodly words," Genesis 49:21, began at the same Scripture and preached unto him Jesus. In his testimony he had to show why Jesus was led as a lamb, and no doubt the key fitted well, for "all we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isaiah 53-6.

Preaching of the truth is what God's children need. The devil would say, "if you will let him" or "you have to accept him, etc." Those who believe and receive such lies are the tares that must be bound. It is evident that the eunuch needed nothing of what man must do, for Philip preached unto him Jesus. No wonder he desired his whole body to be buried in the liquid grave. Here then we see Philip open the door of faith

to the Gentile eunuch and we are told that after he was baptized he went on his way rejoicing. I am glad we are told that Philip was not left there, but that he was caught away by the Spirit. Some of us can witness to the same heavenly experience.

Now we desire to consider Peter, who had learned upon whom to rely, so that when he and John were going up to the temple and he healed the lame man, he would take no credit for it, but ascribed the miracle to Jesus, whom they had crucified. We see in Acts 9 that he also raised Tabitha, or Dorcas, from the dead. We are sure that Peter would lay no claim to any power of his own in this miracle, but as he did in healing the lame man, would assert that faith alone in Jesus Christ had raised up Tabitha to the joy and comfort of all those present. Soon after this it was God's pleasure that Peter should preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. One would expect that he was fully prepared after all we read concerning him, but Peter, a Jew, had been steeped in Jewish customs and traditions. For centuries the Jews had groaned under the heel of the Gentiles and there could have been little or no incentive for the early Jewish Christians to have ought to do with them, but God's ways are higher than our ways, and Peter must be prepared from above to go to the Gentiles, for let us not forget that this is the Kingdom of Heaven and "the preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." Proverbs 16:1. It is often said among us that the Lord works at both ends, Is there a eunuch seeking, there is a Philip sent. There is also a Cornelius, and we have a God who knows them that are his, who has known them from before the foundation of the world, and Jesus his Son said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37.

While Cornelius is being taught, God knew where Peter was staying and gave Cornelius correct instructions to send men to Joppa for him. Peter in his devotions went up on the housetop to pray, and there God gave him a vision. He saw heaven opened and a certain vessel descending unto him as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners and let down to the earth. In it were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air, creatures of God presented in their own nature in Peter's eyes just as they were, yet in that vessel secure, so that none could fall out of it. We do not believe that there would be room for more if anyone tried to add to its number. A voice said, "Rise Peter! kill and eat." Peter knew that voice, he had heard it before, but looking at such a motley collection, he could even deny his Lord and say, "Not so, Lord." How many men like Peter have done the same since that day. His stomach turned at such a mixture, so common and unclean. The voice spake the second time, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common."

This was done three times and the vessel was received up again into heaven. How perplexed and frustrated Peter must have felt; such a vision carries a lesson that only heaven can teach the sons of men. While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, "Behold." Let us remind you that there was a "Behold" in Philip's heavenly guidance, as much as to say, "Pay attention." "Behold, three men seek thee, arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with thm, doubting nothing: for I have sent them." God owns and blesses his own work. Philip went on God's errand alone but Peter took certain brethren from Joppa with him. On the morrow they entered Caesarea and found Cornelius waiting for them, and he had called together his kinsmen and near friends. As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell at his feet and worshipped him. Peter could not stand that, he, who had a day or two before ignorantly said, "NOT SO, LORD," was now schooled enough to know to whom alone worship is due. Peter took him up,

saying, "Stand up; I myself also am a man."

As Peter went into the house, he found many like the many creatures he had seen in that vessel, how varied by nature, some feeling to say, "I am a worm and no man," others esteeming even their host and his visitor so much better than they felt to be. They could have used Asaph's words in Psalm 73:22. "So foolish was I and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee." There could not have been one creature in that vessel that felt he had a right to be there. Surely God had gathered them there as he also gathered the beasts and birds into Noah's Ark, and God had also gathered this company to meet Peter in the house of Cornelius. Here we see Peter making a confession, and today we need to do as James says, "Confess your faults one to another, that ye may be healed." "And he said unto them, ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but GOD HATH SHEWED ME that I should not call any man common or unclean." In this confession Peter sees himself as no better than the strange-looking creatures he had seen in that vessel, and in that humble condition he preached unto them Jesus. While Peter was speaking, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the Word, to the astonishment of those who had come with him, for they heard those Gentiles speak with tongues and magnify God. There was not one who had come with him that could forbid Peter from baptizing those who believed.

We mentioned earlier that Philip was alone, he was Philip the evangelist, who was caught away by the Spirit and was found at Azotus: and passing through, he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea. This evidently was his home town, for in Acts 21:8-9, Luke, the writer of Acts, says, "And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, (from Ptolemais) and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him. And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy." Peter and his company returned home to Jerusalem, and in Acts 11:2, we are told, "when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, saying, thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them." Peter recounted everything that had occurred, even telling them in detail his vision and the results. We are glad that they believed his testimony without the corroboration of those who went with him. "When they had heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."

Might I in closing this article relate an incident that happened over thirty years ago. The writer had become pastor in Canada and was visiting a sick member who spoke of a man and his wife who were excluded members. He said, "that brother goes out to all the funerals you preach to hear you, I wish you would call and see him." I said, "He doesn't come to meeting, I want first to visit those that come, before I visit those who do not," thus pushing the thought out of my mind. I bid him good-bye and was walking to my car, planning to make another call. Just as I stepped into my car the words were loudly spoken in me, "What I have cleansed, call thou not common or unclean." I turned my car around and went eight miles in an opposite direction from where I had planned to go. I got to that man's home, saw his wife and told her what had been said in me. With tears streaming down her face she said, "O, how glad my dear husband will be when he hears that those words were given to you concerning him. He has been so broken-hearted and down so low, feeling too unfit even to mingle with the people of God." They both came home at the next meeting, confessing their faults, humbled like those beasts and creeping things in that wonderful

vessel. Long since they have been taken up to heaven, to a better world on high.

G. R.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

REMARKS ON 1 COR. III. 10-15

"According to the grace of God which is given me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is lain, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

As an apostle, Paul was a wise master-builder; and his gift for the apostleship, and wisdom in establishing the fundamental principles of the gospel among the Gentiles, was precisely according to the grace which God had bestowed on him to qualify him for the work. By the infallible inspiration of the Holy Ghost, as an apostle of Christ, he had, in all his apostolic teachings, presented doctrinally and practically, Christ as the only foundation; first, on which the eternal salvation of the church is built up, Christ having obtained eternal redemption for his people. Their deliverance from wrath, from guilt and condemnation, and their full, free and complete justification, is all founded on him. Secondly, and in the immediate sense of this text, he has shown that all the doctrine taught, all the works performed, all the hopes inspired, with every theory entertained by the saints, if not founded on him, must come to nought. If our faith should lead us to believe what Christ by his word and spirit has not taught, it is hay, wood or stubble, that cannot endure the fiery ordeal that shall try every man's faith. What will it avail for a Christian to persuade himself or others to believe any proposition which is not founded on truth? For a time the theory may seem plausible, and pass for truth; but when tested by fire, the delusion is exposed, and all the labor and ingenuity that has been employed in its propagation is lost. In building up the saints in their most holy faith, the apostles have testified, that unless our faith be in Christ, on Christ, and the faith of the Son of God, it will be consumed in the day of trial. All the works also of the children of God must be wrought in God, and rest on Christ, as our Commander, or they will be burned up. Whatsoever he has not commanded us, he has forbidden. If then we do the works which he has commanded, these works are founded and rest on him; if they do not rest on him, they are without authority or foundation; for other foundation can no man lay; and if without foundation, they cannot stand. Read the concluding paragraph of Christ's sermon on the mount. "Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him to a wise man which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock." But quite the reverse is the case of those who hear his words, and do them not. See Matt. vii. 24-27. Whatever we may do religiously, if Christ's words have not authorized us, will be labor in vain; unprofitable, and subjecting us to loss.

We have an exemplification of these words of the apostle in the Corinthian church, to whom they were addressed. Paul had been laboring among them, and as a wise master-builder had preached Christ to them, as the only foundation. They had accepted his doc-

trine, discarded their former idolatry, and had in many things walked orderly; by conforming to his laws obediently, they had been building on that foundation; but they had also been building on the same Christian foundation many things for which the apostle reproved them. That which they had done by the authority of Christ, was like gold, silver, and precious stones, which could endure the fire; but what they had done without his authority, was like hay, wood, and stubble, all to be burned, and all that labor lost. The churches also of Galatia, before whose eyes Jesus Christ had been evidenly set forth, crucified among them, and run well, began right, had built on that foundation, gold, silver, and precious stones; but listening to Judaizing teachers, they, who had begun in the spirit, were so foolish as to suppose they might be made perfect by the flesh; and had been building with hay, wood and stubble. We have numerous examples in the present day.

Churches and individuals, who have once received Christ as their only foundation, have, in some instances, thought they could build faster, and get up their building quicker, and make it much larger, by working in some materials which will make a fair show, when there is no fire to try their works. See churches, gathering in front-bench converts, suppressing unpopular truth, embracing popular error, and construing their wonderful enlargement as evidence of divine approbation. All seems to go on well until the day of trial comes, when their works are tried by fire; then all that have come in by any other way than the door, go out without divine favor.

It is hardly to be supposed that their lives a saint on earth, who has not, in any way, at any time, been building on this foundation, to some extent, with hay, wood and stubble. But the admonition is, "Let every man take heed how he buildeth upon this foundation.

We take the inspired testimony and instructions of the apostles, as the basis of our doctrine and practice. They, as wise master workmen, have preached Christ to us as our foundation; on the apostolic platform, or foundation, we go on to build. All our works which are supported by a "Thus saith the Lord," will stand the fiery test; but all we do without that authority will burn like stubble in the day of trial.

We have reason to fear that many of God's children have spent years in trying to establish theories, and works which shall at last be given to the flames, and they shall suffer loss. But although all the vain works, and unwise, unauthorized building of the children of God shall be consumed, and they shall suffer loss, yet they themselves shall be saved from themselves, from their works, and from their follies; yet so as by fire. He who sitteth as a refiner and purifier of silver, shall consume their dross, burn up their hay, and wood, and stubble, and bring them out of the fiery furnace like gold that is seven times tired in the fire. "Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe October 1, 1868.)

OBITUARIES

ELDER H. MATTISON BROCK

In memory of Elder H. Mattison Brock, who was born Feb. 23, 1890, and married to Mary Loftis Oct. 15, 1911. She departed this life March 6, 1923. On Nov. 29, 1923, H. Mattison Brock was married to Elsie Loftis. To these unions were born twelve children, of whom ten survive.

He joined the Church at Little Hope on the second Sunday in September, 1929, and was ordained elder on the second Sunday in December, 1936. He has served from four to seven churches ever since.

It is with much grief and sadness of heart that we try to write the obituary of our much loved and affectionate deceased brother, Matt Brock, who passed away Feb. 15, 1963. He was a life-long resident of the Covin community, Fayette County, Alabama. His fellow citizens elected him to serve for eight years as tax collector of his county. He owned and op-

erated a grocery store and service station at the time of his passing and had been doing so for many years.

Our highly esteemed Brother Brock served as moderator of the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Association for the past twenty years. At the time of his passing he was the pastor of six churches in the Hopewell and Buttahatchee Associations.

His body was laid to rest at Union Chapel Church cemetery in Lamar County under a huge mound of flowers. The services were held on the third Sunday in February and were attended by the largest congregation of relatives, neighbors, friends, and brethren we ever saw assembled at a funeral. The funeral was conducted by Elder H. C. Moon of the Five Mile Creek Association and Elder W. L. Norris of the Hopewell Association.

Elder Brock was well known throughout Alabama and in the sister associations with whom we correspond. He often visited the associations in Tennessee, Kentucky, Louisiana, Arkansas, Texas, and other states.

He will be greatly missed by everyone who knew him because to know him was a joy. He had a smile and a kind word for everyone. His passing has left us with a job that no one but the Lord can fill. He was well read in the Bible and highly gifted of the Lord to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.

We want to say to the bereaved family: Look to the Comforter who is Christ the Lord, who can fill the vacancy. We know that our loss is his eternal gain. Weep not as those who have no hope. We feel that Elder Brock's spirit has gone to the Paradise of God, where sick ness, pain, separation and heartache never come — the body lying in the dust of the Earth awaiting the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We believe that when the last trump shall sound and the voice of the archangel shall call that Elder Brock will be in that number to hear the Master say, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Let us conclude with these remarks to his dear wife, Sister Elsie Brock, and the children .Look unto Jesus; lean on His everlasting arm, and may the Lord grant us grace to be submissive to His will and purpose. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the Name of the Lord.

This is written at the request of Sister Brock and family who also request that a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, one copy be sent to the Little Hope Primitive Baptist Church of which he was a member, and that a copy be sent to the Brock Family.

Submitted at the request of Sister Brock by Deacon Bruce Sullivan and Elder W. L. Norris of the Hopewell Association.

MRS. DAISY DAVIS DYE

Mrs. Daisy Davis Dye, of Reidsville, N. C., passed away in December, 1962, at the age of eighty-five years.

She is survived by four daughters: Mrs. Miller and Mrs. Arnold Phelam, of Indianapolis, Indiana; Mrs. C. V. Mathews, Stokesdale, N. C.; and Mrs. J. D. Fergerson, Danville, Virginia; five sons: H. L. Dye and G. O. Dye, Newport News, Va.; Z. W. Dye, Louisville, Ky.; H. S. Dye, Indianapolis, Indiana; and H. J. Dye, Madison, N. C. Surviving also are two brothers: J. M. Davis and R. B. Davis, Ruffin, N. C.; and a number of grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Sister Dye united with the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in July, 1934, and was baptized by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, in August of the same year. She was devoted to her church, and adorned her profession with an orderly walk and Godly conversation, manifesting to those about her that her affections were set on things above. While physically able, she attended her church services, and manifested a great love for her Saviour and brethren; which love is inseparable.

Her funeral was conducted at Pleasantville Church, where her husband, James D. Dye, who passed away in 1932, is buried. Services were conducted by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, assisted by Elder H. W. Wray. Interment was in the church cemetery, there to await the coming of him who said, "I am the resurrection and the life."

D. V. S.

MRS. NANCY LENORA ALLIGOOD

It is with much sorrow and loneliness, but still with thankful heart, that we write the obituary of our dear mother. She was our mother by the ties of nature and Mother in Israel, we hope. She meant so much to her church — something she put ahead of everything else. Our vocabulary is too small to put in words the feeling of our hearts about her.

Mother Alligood was born in Scranton, N. C., February 13, 1890, and passed away October 7, 1962. She was united in marriage to W. P. Lupton in 1903, and to this union ten children were born, but God saw fit to call five of them home in infancy, leaving five to mourn her departure: Allen T. Lupton and Walker E. Lupton, Portsmouth, Va.; James L. Lupton, Hampton, Va.; David C. Lupton, Norfolk, Va.; and Mary E. Raburn, Swanquarter, N. C. Surviving also are one sister, Mrs. M. D. Carrow, twenty grandchildren, and twenty-four great grandchildren, together with several nieces and nephews. She was married to J. M.

Alligood in 1928, and he preceded her in death in 1960.

She united with Beaulah Church, Scranton, N. C., in 1913, and was baptized by Elder E. E. Lundy. She was a faithful member for forty-nine years. She was acquainted with many troubles and trials in her life, but relied on her Saviour for strength to uphold her; and we believe He did until the end. She believed in an all powerful God that does his will in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. She was made submissive to the will of God a good while before she passed away, for she would often say, "Son, I'm tired and want to go home." We believe she was blessed with that faith to live with, and faith to die with. The departure from this world means the end of sorrow and pain, for her poor body was so afflicted. We believe she is at rest with her Saviour.

Her funeral service was held by her pastor, Elder A. L. McKinney, and Elder I. S. Conner. We the church, and her children, loved her, and miss her so much, but believe God loved her best. May God grant us the faith to carry on, as He did her.

Written at the request of the church by her son and his wife.

W. E. Lupton and Beatrice Lupton

EZRA RANDOLPH FAULK

Ezra Randolph Faulk passed away in a hospital in Gladewater, Texas, on March 30, 1963, at the age of fifty-nine years, eight months and five days. He had been ailing for several months with a heart condition.

Ezra was born in Upshur County, Texas, July 25, 1903, the youngest son of John C. and Mary Faulk who preceded him in death many years ago. He is survived by his wife, Rubye, of Big Sandy, Texas; his daughter, Mary McDonald, and two grandchildren of Gilmer, Texas; and the following brothers and sisters: Philip Faulk of Marshall, Texas; John W. Faulk of Big Sandy, Texas; Hubert T. Faulk of El Paso, Texas; Houston Faulk of Hawkins, Texas; Pearl Smith of Pittsburgh, Texas; and Tura Bauman of Big Sandy, Texas.

The funeral service was conducted by Elder E. J. Lambert of Winnsboro, Texas, at Paron Church where Ezra's parents were members for almost a half century, and where Ezra attended services as often as he could. Only one month before his death he suffered an attack while services were being conducted by Elder Lambert at Paron. He never offered himself for membership in any denomination or church but with his walk and manner of life and living, he would have proved a most valuable member had he joined. The many friends from far and near in attendance upon his funeral, gave mute testimony of the high regard in which he was universally held by all who knew him. He was for most of his adult life a strong believer in the doctrine his father and mother loved, and we have no doubt or fear but what he is now a member of that blessed congregation that shall for all eternity sing God's praises in the climes of eternal glory.

Elder Lambert delivered the sweetest funeral discourse that it has ever been our privilege to hear. Knowing Ezra as he did, he could speak with confidence that what he said would be testified to by the large concourse of friends and relatives present. We were a closely knit family of brothers and sisters, and were it not that we know Ezra has gone on to a land where there will be no more of the sorrows and sufferings God's people must bear in this time world, our grief would be almost beyond endurance. After the funeral service at Paron Church, the body was carried to Chilton Cemetery near Big Sandy, Texas, for burial and to await the morning of the Resurrection and the final consummation of the victory over death and the grave, a victory for God's children initially won for them when the blessed Saviour arose from the tomb and ascended to the Father on high.

We would not close without expressing to Rubye our gratitude for her faithfulness and tender care of our departed brother in the flesh. Theirs was an exemplary marriage and theirs was a home to all who entered its portals. Personally we have never thought of Rubye as a sister-in-law but had a feeling for her as a sister in the flesh.

A Grieving Brother,
Hubert T. Faulk

JAMES HENRY TIDWELL

James Henry Tidwell was born in 1882, and died July 19, 1962, making his stay on earth seventy-nine years. He is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Grace Eaton, Naples, Texas; one sister, Mrs. Pearl Foster, Simms, Texas; five brothers: Pete, Doc, Ben, Burl and Earl Tidwell; and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral service was held at Old Union Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Loyd Wall. Pall bearers were Herman Tidwell, James Tidwell, Billy Tidwell, James Henry Tidwell, J. L. Johnson, and Harvey Daniel.

Prepared by W. B. Burkhalter, Church Clerk, for publication in the *Signs of the Times.*

MRS. SALLIE SMITH

With a sad heart I attempt to write of the death of my dear mother, Mrs. Sallie Smith,

who departed this life January 12, 1963, making her stay on earth more than eighty-two years. She leaves to mourn her passing one sister, Mrs. Jennie Cobb; seven children, seventeen granchildren and twenty-four great grandchildren.

She was a member of Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church for forty years. She loved her church and always attended her meetings when able. She will be greatly missed by her church, her children, and many friends. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery, beside her husband, who passed away April 12, 1938. There were many beautiful flowers and a lot of friends and loved ones at her grave side.

I feel sure she is resting with Jesus. The hope and faith she had in the Lord, and her daily walk in life, causes me to believe her spirit is resting with the one who gave it. "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away." If not deceived, I have a little hope that when my troubles are over, I will meet her on that happy shore, where sickness, sorrow and pain are no more, for Jesus himself will be there.

Written by her daughter,
Mrs. Lila Smith Baker
Burlington, N. C.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT FOR
SISTER SALLIE SMITH

We, the church at Pleasant Grove, wish to bow in humble submission to our gracious heavenly Father in removing by death a beloved sister, Sallie Smith. She was so faithful to attend her church, and was an example of Christian humility. Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That in the passing of Sister Smith, we feel our loss very keenly, but bow in submission to One who doeth all things well. And

BE IT RESOLVED, That we extend to the family our heartfelt sympathy; and that a copy of these resolutions be spread on our church records, one be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and that a copy be sent to the family.

Done by order of the church in her conference January meeting, 1963.

Elder J. Harvey Smith, Moderator
Robert F. Walker, Clerk
By Sister Lena Walker, Asst. Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT
MRS. LOU STAR KESTER

God in his love and tender mercy has called from our midst another one of our beloved sisters. Sister Lou Kester died at the home of her daughter, Sister Anna Lou Stults, in Hurst, Texas, June 10, 1962. Funeral services were conducted by Elder W. W. Taylor at the Henderson Funeral Home, Vernon, Texas, June 13, 1962.

Sister Kester was born in Morgan, Georgia, April 29, 1879. Moved with her parents in 1888 to Wilbarger County, known at that time as the White Community. She was united with the Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by Elder J. L. Hughes over 60 years ago. She joined the Little Flock Church at Altus, Oklahoma, by relation and served as Church Clerk for 14 years. She has been sorely missed by the Church but we feel our loss is her eternal gain.

She is survived by two daughters, three sons, one foster son, three sisters, one brother, twelve grandchildren, seven great grandchildren and two great great grandchildren.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to Him who doeth all things well. and

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this writing be sent to the family, one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and one placed in our church records.

Done by order of the Little Flock Church, while in conference on Saturday before 4th Sunday in July 1962.

Elder C. M. Haygood, Pastor
Nina H. Stallings, Church Clerk

MEMORIAL

At the request of New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Rockingham County, N. C., in conference at her November meeting, 1962, I have written the following Memorial for Sister Lessie Smithy.

Sister Smithy departed this life in October, 1962. Since she was my senior by several years, my pleasure of being with her was not very often, and she being confined to her room at Umstead Hospital the last years of her life, I was never blessed to meet with her as a sister, yet I well remember her faithfulness as a member. Though she had failed somewhat mentally, her memory of each meeting day, and her kindness and desire to be honest, and do what was right, never failed.

Sister Sue Paschal said that she well remembered what Sister Smithy said as she came from baptism: "Hallelujah, I love everybody". It is so wonderful to me, to know I have been loved by one of God's little ones.

Her funeral was conducted at New Hope Church by her pastor, Elder J. C. Paschal, and her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery, to await the appointed time for the coming of her Saviour Jesus Christ; to be carried home where there will be no more failure of body or mind; no separating from loved ones; no more hearaches, pains nor death. To be like Jesus is such a glorious thought to me.

In memory of a sister dear,
Who has left this world of sin and fear:
Now awaits the coming of the Son,
The only holy, faultless one.
A member, and a faithful one,
And now her toils on earth are all done.
In pre-sweetened tomb she's resting now:
In humble submission we bow.

An humble sister, I hope,
Fannie Sue Ware

SUSAN ALICE SHANKS

Susan Alice Gilmore Shanks was born October 9, 1885, and died January 3, 1963, at the age of 77 years and three months. She was the daughter of Elder William H. Gilmore and Alsie Darland Gilmore. They moved from their home in Goldendale, Wash., in October 1895, to Yakima, Wash., where she was married to Charles D. Shanks April 5, 1908.

She lived most of her life in Naches, Wash., until her last illness when she was taken to her son's home in Seattle where she died. Her body was brought to Yakima for burial beside her husband who preceded her some years before.

Her Christian experience began early in life. She joined the church and was baptized by Elder B. O. Jeffrey April 11, 1947. Her greatest pleasure was meeting with her church friends and singing the songs she loved so well.

She is survived by one son, William N. Shanks, two grandchildren, Jon and Sue Shanks who reside in Seattle; two sisters, Mrs. Olive Yegge and Mrs. Florence Hammer of California and one brother, Dan Gilmore, who lives in Naches.

She was loved by Baptists far and near and by many friends who expressed their affection with many beautiful floral pieces at her funeral.

She will be greatly missed by the members of Pleasant Grove Church as well as the other Baptist churches that she enjoyed visiting. But she, like Paul, thought it better to depart and be with the Lord and was submissive to His will. May He comfort those who mourn and teach us to wait with patience for the fulfilling of His promises in the resurrection of the dead.

Josie Mitchell, Clerk

ALFRED O. EDWARDS

On the 28th day of November, 1963 Deacon Alfred O. Edwards answered the call of the Saviour he loved so dearly, to be in that heavenly home on high where sorrow and suffering are no more.

In the passing of Deacon Edwards the Providence Primitive Baptist Church, near Hurricane, W. Va., lost one of her most beloved and highly esteemed brethren. The effect of this loss was felt far and near, wherever our people had the blessed privilege fo walking with him. He was one of the tall cedars that stood firm in the sovereign doctrine of God our Saviour, trusting only in the finished work of Christ. He loved his church and always filled his seat and attended services as long as he was able. He fulfilled the office of Deacon to the utmost in the spirit of love, and in the delight of our Lord. He was an humble and sincere servant and pillar in the church, a great strength and comfort to his pastor, and was loved by all who knew him.

He suffered a stroke in May, 1962, and during the months that followed the kind and tender hands of his wife and children administered unto his needs. During these months the satisfaction of viewing the beauties of heaven was his to enjoy, administered by our Redeemer God, so we are confirmed that our Heavenly Father called him at his appointed time; and in death his spirit returned to God. We desire to bow humbly to God who does all things well, and ask to be made submissive to His holy will in all things, and be reconciled in his passing.

Brother Edwards was born in 1887, in Putnam County. He was a farmer, a good neighbor and citizen. He joined the Providence Primitive Baptist Church June 26, 1920, and was ordained into the office of Deacon May 22, 1937, and served faithfuly until death. He served also as a church trustee since February 5, 1951. His doors were always open to the Primitive Baptists, and he greatly enjoyed entertaining them. It was a gracious home to visit.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder V. B. Linn, assisted by Elder J. C. Hammond, December 1, 1962, at the Mount Moriah Baptist Church; and he was laid to rest in the Bird Cemetery to await his Master's call.

Left to mourn are his wife, Lelia, and nine children. The surviving sons are: Woodrow and Kermit, St. Albans; Clay, of Hurricane; and Roy, of Nitro, W. Va. The surviving daughters are, Rosetta Thornton and Beulah Bird, of Hurricane; Audry Purdy, of Poca, W. Va.; Reba Bird, of Rock Cave; and Doris Jean Lambert, Huntington, W. Va. Also surviving are four brothers: Wilbert, Delford, Thomas, and Bryan Edwards; one sister, Elfie Buzzard, all of Hurricane; and twenty-five grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren.

May God comfort the members of this family and the friends, and give us all a reconciled mind to his sovereign will in all things.

V. B. Linn

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 131 DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1963 NO. 7

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/63
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

GRACE

Though I be nothing Lord, and less —
And this I freely do confess,
Yet through thy all abounding grace,
I hope and trust to see thy face.

I hope the blood that Jesus spilt,
Has cleansed my soul from sin and guilt;
That all he suffered on the tree
By grace was imputed to me.

By grace I live, in grace I trust:
Through grace I hope that I am just.
Through grace, dear Lord, and grace alone,
I hope to praise thee 'round thy throne.

This grace e'er time in Christ was giv'n,
That we might have a home in heav'n.
And, since it more than sin abounds,
Its objects must in heav'n be found.

Not one believer e'er shall be
Lost here nor in eternity,
But each one shall in heav'n be found,
Where praise of grace will always sound

O boundless, matchless, sovereign grace,
That gave rebellious foes a place
At God's right hand, where they shall be
All freed from sin eternally!

C. B. Britt
ElDorado, Ark.

GLAD THEY CAN READ THE *SIGNS*

Rt. 3, Box 100,
Crockett, Texas

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is $5.00 for two more years of the *Signs*. We may not be here two more years, as we both are in our eighties, but maybe it will fall into the hands of some who will enjoy it. We have been taking the *Signs* for several years, and enjoy it so much; and would feel lost without it. According to our thinking, it is the best: Thank God for all its editors.

We don't get to our meetings as often as we would like, but thank God we can read the *Signs* at home. We feel it is of the Lord, and is what we believe. We know there is nothing good in this flesh of ours, and often feel we are the weakest of all men, and desire our God just to give us a few crumbs from his bountiful table. We believe fully in predestination of all things, and if we are saved, it is for always. When we read of the Lord's prayer to God for his people, the sheep of his pasture, our hope is in the blood of the Lamb. When we read of that multitude of the saved that John saw, our hope is that we are in that number. I dreamed one time that the Lord was coming, and there was a large army of folks all naked, and my husband and I and the baby were there on the bank of a river. They were not concerned about each other, but were all looking up to see our Lord come.

A few years ago my daughter, her son, and I were driving through Houston, and there came up a thunder shower; the lightning clipped a live wire, and it fell just behind our car. I said, "Lord help," and a small voice said to me, "God careth for his sheep." Oh, how sweet that voice was to me!

I can't find where we are to accept Christ, but we hope he will accept us. A missionary once asked me what church I belonged to. At that time I was

not a member, and I said, "I do not belong to any." And he said, "Haven't you ever accepted Christ?" And I replied, "I am wondering if he will accept me." And he said, "Oh, that way!" and that ended our conversation.

In my experience I had a vision. I was walking behind two missionary preachers, and we walked by a Primitive Church. I had a great burden on me, and as we passed, I looked toward the building and saw a tower, and in the top of the tower there was a light. Then I heard my sister's voice say, "Mollie, it is the Hardshells." That sister was the late W. O. Beene's first wife, a full believer in the Primitive doctrine; and which I love.

I am an old woman — eighty-one years old, and this is my first attempt to write to the *Signs*.

In love and hope,
Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Rich

"WHEN AS YET THERE WAS NONE OF THEM"

Larkslane, Ky.

Dear Editors:

You will find enclosed check for $5.00 to renew my subscription to our paper for two years. I do not want to miss a number, for all are precious writings to me.

The Editorial by Elder J. D. Wood was rich and wonderfully described. "Predestinated unto the adoption of children." Brother Wood, this morning, before I had read your editorial, this thought flashed through my mind, (not thinking on any spiritual subject, and about my usual morning duties), it was a dim thought, "When as yet there was none of them." I did not know where, nor who had penned these words, but I found from the concordance that it was David's language recorded in the 139th Pslam, 16th verse: "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." I read the entire chapter. It teaches and sets forth so strongly the doctrine you so beautifully set forth. I think this prepared me to get the rich food that you sent out.

In my nights of sorrow I have been made to feel what this great writer meant: "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea: even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." He goes on to prove that God is and will be the great I Am in all time and eternity. So we learn and know the spirit of man never dies. If we quit the walks of life, and this body is fastened in the tomb, no matter how much dirt is piled on the box this body is in, He still sees and knows where we are, and what we are.

Though we may feel our sins to be so great that we would at times hide from his all searching eye: He knew before we were formed and brought forth what we are, and that we are sometimes tempted of Satan to follow some of his deceitful plannings; and if we are not kept by the power of God unto salvation, then we fall. And for the fall we are made to cry and beg God for mercy; and at the time we are begging, we are made to feel so unworthy to ask of Him the peaceful fruits of righteousness. They that sin willfully after they have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall destroy the adversary. Yes, sometimes we do things we should not, but at the time it doesn't seem so; but, as we find in the 139th Psalm, we cannot hide from the all seeing eye of God. Then we are shown that we are wrong, and suffer that fearful looking for of judgment and fiery in-

dignation, which causes us to say, "Why did I do so and so?" It is because we are left to the human side of us. Paul said that "It is no more I, but sin that dwelleth in me." So this warfare is still going on that Paul complained of, and asked God to remove it; but He said, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

Broher Wood please pardon this; I did not mean for it to be so lengthy, but I did so enjoy your editorial. Of course, we are strangers in the flesh, but I hope we know and are known by the grace that has been, and is still being delivered to the saints.

Yours in hope of pardoning love,
Mrs. D. C. Turner

LETTER FROM SISTER DYKES

1114 Mt. Hermon Rd.,
Salisbury, Maryland,
January 2, 1961.

Dear Elder and Sister Ruston:

It was a joy to hear from you again and to read your good letters. I realize that you have a large correspondence and that you cannot do all the things you once could and for that reason, I appreciate the more, your effort in writing me. It is so heartwarming to hear our brethren tell the old story and of the way along which they are led; and to speak of our dear Redeemer. This is because we humbly hope we are being led along the same way. You know, it is lovely to hear the dear brethren tell of their "experience" when the Lord first appeared to them and revealed Himself in all His beauty, but also I love to hear of His continual dealing, His abiding presence, resulting in "growth in grace and in the knowledge of Him." I feel that if we have any assurance of our salvation — and I do believe we have — and that at times that assurance is as firm as the Rock on which it stands; that assurance lies in our growth in grace and in the constantly enlarging view of our glorious Lord Jesus Christ.

I know so little now that perhaps I should not say this, but I say it with a thankful heart — a heart which ascribes my hope, my life, my everything to Him: About thirty-five years ago when He sought me from among the dead and drew me to Him and made me to love Him, I knew *nothing* about Him except that I loved Him. A new-born babe knows nothing of the character or virtues of its mother — it knows nothing of the suffering she endured; it knows not that she went down almost to death to deliver it; it knows not that she will labor for it, sacrifice for it, and if necessary, die for it; *but it loves her.* Then as she feeds it, shows her great love for it, as she soothes its childish fears and kisses away its tears; as she teaches it and reveals her character to it and her love for it, the child's view of the mother enlarges, and he appreciates, as well as loving her; and if he is an obedient child, his love for her grows and his appreciation deepens and the older he grows the more he loves her.

This has been my experience if I have any, and as the years go on I see Christ in every event of my life more and more; and more and more He fills earth and heaven. And the more I know of Him, the larger my view of Him, the less I think of myself; and the more I know that "without Him I am nothing." "He must increase, but I must decrease." As He increases in the believer's experience, the believer decreases; and I can say in deep humility that this is my testimony. As we behold "The Lamb of God" everything else loses its significance, and we "see no man save Jesus only." I know not whether the Lord is preparing me and fortifying me for some great natural or spiritual trial, but for these last three or four months the sweet communion with my Dear One has been almost unbroken and it has been heaven; and I shrink at the thought that at any moment He may veil His face and leave me forsaken for awhile, without the "joy of my salva-

tion". But whatever the condition may be, I long to be conformed to Him, knowing as I do, that it will be good for me and that *nothing* can separate me from Him, if I'm so blest as to be one of His little flock.

How many many times I've thanked my God with tears of joy for the "or any other creature" of Romans 8:39. What great comfort my precious Bible has been to me these past years, the written Word of God, yet there are at times when I can derive no comfort from it. Even His word is closed to us except the Holy Spirit apply it to our need. How strange and how very glorious are the dealings of our God!

We did have a good Association and we all enjoyed it, but we missed you. My little house was filled to the brim all the time. Elder Wood, Elder Ayers, and others visited with me through the meeting and on Thursday night after the meeting ended, dear Elder Spangler went home with me and others came over for supper and the evening, and we had a good time talking of Him and His great love.

Elder Griffin has been a great blessing to us in Elder Spangler's absence and we love him just as much. I've seldom seen anyone more "full" than he was yesterday, and Saturday. I was with them most of the time and we had a wonderful time.

You spoke of and asked permission to publish my last February letter. Well, I have no idea of what I said, and I've felt all along that what I could write was not worth publishing but Elder Griffin and Elder Spangler have often told me in reply to that, that I should let the Church be the judge of that. They so often say that there is need for something to publish and have urged me to try to write something, so if you really think the letter may be a bit of comfort to someone, or conform to someone's feelings and correspond with their experiences, you may be the judge; I will not refuse. I do know that what Mildred Dykes could write would not be worth reading, but I also know that the Lord can speak *through* His least of all saints to the comfort of others. I do hope you may be given strength, and I know you will, to do that which the Lord requires and as He gives me an heart to pray, I shall seek His face in your behalf, and I beg you to do the same. I need the love and prayers of my dear brethren, at the same time that I need our dear Savior's abiding presence. It all works together for our oneness in Him.

And now, the Lord bless thee and keep thee and may we all be drawn ever closer and closer to one another and to Him, as the day approaches.

Yours, in the tie that binds,
Mildred Dykes

TRIALS AND DELIVERANCES

807 Pope Street,
Memphis 12, Tenn.

Dear Editors and Readers of the *Signs:*

Last month brought a severe trial of our faith, and much suffering and heartache, which caused us to beg God to show mercy, and give us grace that our enemies (in the flesh) not triumph over us, but be subdued by love; that we be led, guided and directed in the way of peace and good for this precious band of believers here and elsewhere. And, if I am not badly mistaken, I believe we have seen and felt the effect of the mantle of love cast over us in a manifest sense. How able God is to dispel confusion and make peace!

Could we ever know really how great he is, if he did not manifest his power, love and mercy in our lives; in our trials and sufferings? How good it is to fall at the throne of grace, and acknowledge our sins before him, that we might obtain mercy to help in time of need. He knows us altogether, and he alone knows the hearts of all men. How wonderful it is that in him, of him, and through him, is forgiveness, mercy,

and love, all treasured in Christ before the world began. Who is it that can condemn? it is Christ that died. Oh, how awful if this were in the hands of mortal men! But it is not. "If God be for us who can be against us?" He knows his own sheep, and they know him and are taught of him.

When He gives them repentance, and turns them from dead works, and says, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, but come from among them and I will receive you," God help us to not turn them away. I am so frail, so weak, and so guilty, if Christ was not made unto me wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, then there is no hope for me. And if he was made all these things unto one of his children, is he not made the same to all for whom he died? Then what preeminence would one have over another? If one is forgiven little, and another more, and yet their sins are *all* forgiven, where is the complaint?

But there are complaints, as also there were by those who labored in the heat of a whole day, and others only part, or came in later in the day; but they all received a penny. Oh that it would please God to give us all knowledge and understanding, and above all, fill our hearts with charity, compassion, and humility, that we might be able to judge righteous judgment, and judge not according to appearances; or sins committed while in ignorance and unbelief, but according to confession from the heart. With the heart man believes, and with the tongue confession is made. What could they repent of, or what could they confess, but guilt and sin?

There were Pharisees who thought they needed not a physician: they couldn't see their sins, and they did not repent. Jesus told them the publicans and harlots shall go into the kingdom of God before you. Repentance, faith and belief are the gifts of God. His judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out. He chose his people in his Son before the world began; and though man might sometimes call unclean that which God has cleansed, it comes to naught. It is the Lord who builds the house, and it is He who keeps the city. Even Jesus was set at naught of the builders, yet he was the chief corner stone. These things are far too high for puny man to know (or think they know) and understand. I do not know how we who have received such mercy, could fail to be merciful.

Last Sunday at meeting the Lord poured out such a blessing upon us — one which I believe all will long remember. Our pastors, Elders H. G. Brown and H. R. Prince, were so filled with the Spirit, and their minds lifted above earthly things, to declare the unsearchable riches of Christ in such beauty and power. The comfort was such that we truly felt we had received double for all our sins. How could we live if we did not believe in this complete, finished salvation? As they talked, we felt a union of Spirit which led them into such wonderful truth. It was a heavenly place.

The *Signs* has been full of such good articles the last two or three months. What a blessing to have such gifts to tell of the Way, the Truth and the Life which is in Jesus; each in his own tongue, or with his own gift. The fullness of God is so great that, though millions of years may run, their song will still go on; and then the half can never be told, and His fullness will be just as great. These gifts to me come down from our Heavenly Father, and they are for the comfort and edifying of his children. How good it is to think on these things!

. . . I confess that I am still a sinner, and unworthy of so great salvation; but by the free grace and unmerited love of Christ, I hope I am owned a child: And in this hope I live.

Mrs. James E. Young

DESIRES THE JOY OF HIS SALVATION

309½ Hagerman St.,
Houston 11, Texas

Elders Spangler and Wood:
Dear Brethren in Christ, I hope:

This is to let you know that I am yet in the land of hope, through the mercy of our kind, loving and gracious God. Due to being on the move so much of the time in 1962, I missed several of my precious papers; and they are almost all the preaching I have, as I seldom get to our meetings. I haven't been since October, 1962, nor have I seen an Old Baptist since that time. There are only a few of our faith and order in Houston that I know of, and they don't live near me; and being working people, they do not have much time for visiting. So, dear brothers, I am starving and thirsting for the sight of some of our dear ones.

Though I hunger and thirst for these precious soul satisfying provisions that come down from heaven, I am made to feel that He gives me all I need. He has promised to supply the needs of his people, and his promises are sure and steadfast, for he cannot lie. "I am the Lord and I change not." I hope I am thankful to our dear Heavenly Father, as he has blessed us with all natural things.

Dear brethren, I am much of the time down in the "slough of despondency", feeling so far away from all that is so dear to me. I seem to be dead to all spiritual knowledge — dead yet alive, just drifting and struggling along with bowed down head, begging, "O Lord, restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." If not deceived, I have felt that joy and peace which the Lord alone can give. I know that if I am one of the redeemed of the Lord, and have been born of his Spirit, and made to praise his holy and glorious name, that I need not fear. But I do doubt and fear, fear I am a poor deceived soul. The flesh is weak, and when things seem to go wrong (not as we wished or planned), we (at least I) feel forsaken; and when trials and tribulations come, we seem to forget that it is through many trials and tribulations and such that we enter the Kingdom.

"Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." I have indeed felt the rod, and his staff comforts me. What a wretched thing it would be if we did not have his staff to lean upon.

I feel so sinful and rebellious, so unworthy of any of the many blessings He has bestowed upon me; and I get so low down in the valley — cast down in darkness — that I tremble with much doubt, fearing that I have never tasted of His goodness. Yet He says he will never leave nor forsake us: and when the sun shines again, we are enabled to say with the sweet Psalmist David, "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever; with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations." We can sing:

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

and

"Amazing grace (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."

Brethren, it has now been almost three months since I commenced this: I have been so poorly I could not write. For the last two or three months especially I have suffered much pain and weakness. Even so, I would not complain, but it seems I just "can't help it." But the dear Lord will not put more on us that He will make us able to bear.

. . . I was blessed to meet with the dear ones at our association, and it was a lovely meeting; and if I know what sound doctrine is, the ministers preached it, and seemed to be filled to the brim, so to speak. How sweet it is to be blessed to sit under the drippings of the sanctuary, and hear God's dear old servants ring those golden gospel bells; to declare the whole counsel of God, of

Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, and him crucified. Indeed, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined."

Now may God bless and keep you both and the associated editors, and the household of faith in his tender love and care, is my humble prayer for Christ's sake. Please remember me when at the throne of grace. From an old sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all.

Harriett Little Gray

P. S.: Brethren, I fear these will be the last words I will ever write you, for I am failing fast. I can only get up and down now, and at times not even this. God has been good to me and blesses me every day of my life, and I feel that I do not merit even one little blessing. I realize that I can't be here long, but I know I shall not go before my appointed time. God has a purpose for me living here; I know not what, but whatever it is, it shall be fulfilled before he calls . . .

H. L. G.

Rt. 1, Box 114,
Atlanta, Texas

Dear Editors:

You will find enclosed a check for another year's subscription to the *Signs*. I reap so many rewarding benefits from it; and especially did so in the issue just received.

God has a time and purpose for the feeding of his sheep; and sometimes the articles in the *Signs* bring that food to God's humble poor, and comforts a heart filled with doubts and fears; and brings him out of the darkness into the light of God's love.

May the Lord bless you to continue on with this work to His glory, and the comfort of the elect according to grace.

Yours in hope,
Mrs. James R. Cox

THE ATONEMENT

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." (Romans 5:10, 11)

I have long been impressed with the strikingly sweet words THE ATONEMENT, and for sometime I have had a desire to write something on this sublime subject. I hope this desire is of the Lord, for otherwise what I may write will be of no avail spiritually.

With tearful eyes, these words of the dying Lamb once engaged my thoughts: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Following this, I was in a forlorn and wretched state for sometime, but at long last sweet relief was experienced and I walked at large again; for I had been cast down before and was lifted up from the depths to rejoice in hope under the joyful sound, pouring forth a flood of tears under the preaching of Elder Helms, when I had not expected to get a crumb in my sad condition. How sweet it is "when darkness long has veiled my mind, and smiling day once more appears!" It is then that the rest that remaineth is enjoyed with thankfulness and acknowledgment. If I am not deceived, I have felt what is expressed in these lines of a song:

> "O what a rest is Christ to me!
> How precious and how true!"

In the atonement, in this momentous event, by this meritorious and endearing act of the dear Redeemer, the One mighty to save and full of grace and truth, is made manifest His wondrous, dying love for a chosen generation. He died in their room and stead, and His precious blood was, therefore, a ransom procuring the pardon of their sins. Then He was laid in the tomb, but He was raised again for their justification,

ascended up on high, and is now making intercession for them on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens (Hebrews 8:1). So we would:

"Sing of his dying love;
Sing of his rising power;
Sing how he intercedes above,
For those whose sins he bore."

The word atonement has been defined as meaning at-one-ment; and I would say that this is mediatorially and meritoriously setting at one with God the whole election of grace by the one Mediator between God and men, by expiating their crimes upon the cross. And the all-important question with me is this:

"Was it for crimes that I had done
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity! grace unknown!
And love beyond degree."

Further, the word means reconciliation as indicated by the text: rendering satisfaction for sin, resulting in the forgiveness thereof.

There has been considerable controversy over the extent of the atonement down through the ages. The Arminian world believes in a general or universal atonement. In other words, the advocates of this theory believe, or profess to believe, that Christ died for every individual of the human race, but to make His death an efficacious sacrifice or propitiation for sin, it is necessary to believe, or "make a decision," or "accept Christ as your personal Saviour," as if He is offered to be accepted or rejected at will. I like the phrase "accepted in the beloved" much better, Furthermore, they erroneously believe that the power or ability to believe is inherent in every person, thus denying the total depravity of mankind, — that man in a state of nature is dead in trespasses and sins. But those who "earnestly contend for the faith (the doctrine of faith) once delivered unto the saints" reject this heresy. You do not believe of yourself, for faith (the grace of faith) is not of yourself. According to the Scriptures, it is the gift of God.

"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." (Philippians 1:29) "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Those first quickened into spiritual life are the only ones "who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead . . ." (Ephesians 1:19, 20) Quoting from one writer, "Get grace, get faith, get an interest in Christ," say the Arminians. When, in truth, grace is not of man's *getting*, but of God's *giving;* nor is faith of man's acquisition, but of God's operation.

Now the atonement is full and complete, and needs nothing to bolster it up or assure its efficacy. Without the aid of helpless man, it issues in a perfect and whole salvation. "And I looked, and there was none to help; . . . therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me . . ." (Isaiah 63:5) As the hymnist wrote,

"Salvation through our dying God
Is finished and complete;
He paid what'er his people owed,
And cancelled all their debt."

So salvation is not conditioned upon the works of fallen man in any sense. All blessings of the covenant of grace are unconditional; they are freely bestowed on the vessels of mercy.

Primitive or Old School Baptists believe in a limited atonement and particular redemption, as taught in the Scriptures of truth, that Christ laid down His life for the sheep (John 10:15) only, nothing being said about His dying for the goats. He died for the elect only, and the atonement is no broader than election. Moreover, we believe that everyone the Redeemer shed His precious blood for will surely be housed in heaven without one single exception. According to the Arminian doctrine, many will suffer the second or eternal death for whom the Saviour suffered, bled, and died on the shame-

ful tree of the cross to save from that death. Away with such false doctrine; it is a strange doctrine, irrational and unreasonable. It, so to speak, tramples the blood of Christ under foot, "making" it not avail on such a broad scale. Herein is reflected an evident lack of understanding as to the scope and sufficiency of the atonement, even by one who claims to be infallible.

We maintain that the Son of God did not die in vain with respect to any person. ". . . he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief . . ." (Isaiah 53:9, 10), and there was no failure in what this accomplished for the good of lost sinners and the glory of God, for "God is glorified in him." (John 13:31) "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." (Isaiah 53:11) I can't conceive of His being satisfied if even one should be eternally lost for whom he suffered an ignominious death. God is a God of justice as well as a God of mercy, and most assuredly does not exact the double payment of the sin-debt. As Toplady so aptly stated,

> "Payment God cannot twice demand,
> First at my bleeding Surety's hand
> And then again at mine."

If I only knew that Christ died for me then I would know that heaven is my ultimate home, but I don't know this. I don't know that my name is written in the Lamb's book of life. I hope it is, from what I have experienced; that I have been convinced of sin and of righteousness; that some day I shall see the King in His beauty; that I shall behold His glory with ineffable joy, and that His praises shall be my eternal employ, for He is worthy of all praise and adoration. By the atonement is plenteous redemption, and if every individual were redeemed then everyone will be saved in heaven; but it isn't so, for according to the Scriptures many will be destroyed while only a comparatively small number will be saved, will enter in at the portal of glory — a remnant, a little flock, a little city; yet it is a number that no mere man can number, redeemed to God out of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

The grace of God cannot be frustrated. It will be bestowed on everyone for whom it was intended in the covenant ordered in all things and sure. It cannot fail, and it will not fail, Arminian opinion to the contrary notwithstanding. Alas! the obscurity that one, who was said to be a great preacher, came to with reference to the work that God gave His only begotten Son to do. This man was a resident of Brighton, England, according to a religious periodical in my possession, and it is said of him that he "believed that Christ did something or other, which somehow or other, had some connection or other with salvation." Now there is nothing certain or sure about this circumlocution.

It is at quite a variance with this definite and solemn declaration: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 5:12) Christ definitely is the salvation of His chosen people, as evidenced by this testimony of David, a man after God's own heart: "THE LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" (Psalm 27:1) This is an instance of faith being drawn out in exercise by its Author and Finisher, Jesus Christ. But we are often found doubting and fearing in this realm of sin and sorrow, for we are not always blessed with the felt presence of "our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement," as we humbly hope.

Submitted to the readers of the *Signs* in defense of the truth as it is in Christ, which is our hope and our peace.

C. W. Vass
307 New York Avenue,
Elizabeth City, N. C.

Rt. 1, Box 111
Gustine, Texas

Dear Editors:

Enclosed you will find check for the renewal of my subscription to the *Signs of the Times,* which has been coming to our home for more than sixty-five years. I do not recall that we have missed receiving any issues during this long period of time.

I would like to write something that would comfort and edify some of the dear Lord's little ones, but any effort on my part would be useless, for of myself I can do nothing well pleasing in His sight. But will say that I still love the doctrine this dear paper contends for, and hope to be able to read it as long as the dear Lord keeps me here below. It is most all the preaching I get now, since I am confined to my home most of the time.

With sincere thanks to the editors for past courtesies, and with a sincere desire, and I hope a prayerful heart, that the God of all grace will enable you to continue the publication of these precious truths for many years to come. I bid you once more adieu.

Ida Bowers

P. O. Box 404,
Emmett, Idaho

Signs of the Times:

Dear Brother Spangler, Brother Wood, and all who believe in an all wise, and all powerful God: A God who works and none can hinder; an ominpotent God who does not need the help of poor, puny man to help him save his own. How foolish can foolish be! I remember when they have started early in the Fall with their foolish preaching, saving souls, they call it . . . But I don't remember ever hearing one of these say anything about grace, or you can't come unto me, except my Father which sent me draw him. You can be saved today, and be lost tomorrow, they will tell you.

It has been a long time since I have gone to hear that kind of preaching. I am nearing my eighty-seventh birthday, and still drive my own car. I drive forty-two miles to church, and go once a month pretty regularly. I have been asked, "Haven't you got churches nearer you?" My answer is, "Yes, but their preaching doesn't suit me." I am a Primitive Baptist — Hardshell, some call us. I am not a half-way believer.

I think I am a bit late in sending my subscription. I don't want to miss a single copy. It is my choice reading, and I get a lot of comfort from it. It carries nothing but sound doctrine. I love all of God's children.

W. H. Thomas

Rocky Mount, N. C.

Editors of the *Signs:*

Enclosed is $5.00 for the *Signs* another year; use the remainder as you wish.

I truly appreciate the *Signs* — what comfort it does give, with the rich writings from the pens of the gifted, ready writers. We deem them qualified to delve into the deep mysteries of God and bring out the hidden manna that feeds our hungry souls; and cause us to rejoice in that glorious hope of salvation by the grace of God.

Sometimes our hope seems faint, and we are made to beg for renewed evidence and more sweet assurance that we do have a hope in Him, who has done wondrous things in our behalf: So good, immensely good, and kind in all his ways. In my life of fifty years among the Primitive Baptists, it has been a great privilege, a joy unspeakable, a comfort of love and sweet fellowship. I am often made to wonder why the many good things have come my way; the sorrows and conflicts I've had are my due — I dare not question them.

It has been a precious season the last few years to see the young members coming into our church, telling of what

God's mercy has done for them, making them desire a home with the people of God, rather than dwell in the tents of sin for a season. May His name be praised! In bonds of Christian love,

A little sister I hope,
Emma Brake

SISTER PAGE WRITES HER PASTOR

Rt. 2,
Elon College, N. C.

Dear Brother and Sister King:

We had such a good meeting at Bush Arbor the second weekend, I've had a desire to write you about it. It was so good to have you both back again. If I know anything about the gospel, I believe it was preached: it was a feast for the soul.

Saturday you took your text: "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from hence forth even forever." I felt I could witness with you: In a dream a few years ago, I was blessed to see this mountain, if not deceived. It was a steep mountain, made of smooth, solid rock, shaped in a circle. It was the same height all around, and came to a sharp point at the top. It was the same on the inside as the outside. There was nothing at all growing on it, not even a tree. It was impossible for man or beast to cross over this mountain, from the inside or outside. Little children of God, inside the wall of salvation you are safe from everything! Don't we have a wonderful God? All the praise, honor and glory belong to him: He has blessed us in so many ways.

One of the greatest blessings is to have you ministers preach to us. Yet it is not the minister alone, but the Holy Ghost working through the minister when the gospel is preached; and God is praised and his people are fed.

One night this was shown to me in a vision. While lying awake in bed I heard Elder Staples say, "The Father, Son and Holy Ghost." As he said these words, my body was lifted to about a foot from the ceiling; and while he was preaching, something was moving behind the wall paper right above my head, and it kept moving all the time he was preaching. When he finished, an opening was made in the ceiling and roof, and I saw a beautiful white bird fly out and away; which I believe was the Holy Ghost. So you ministers through the Holy Ghost, are enabled to take a text, sometimes just a few words, and bring out so many beautiful things we had never thought of before, and can explain them so good. I can't explain them or understand them unless they are revealed to me; but its enough just to hear and feel the sweetness of it. Sometimes we can't hear it and feast, we get just a few crumbs; but it is enough — we get all we need. It is a blessing to be able to meet, and see the saints of God come into the meeting house with their happy smiles and warm handshakes — we have so much to be thankful for.

One evening late I felt the presence of the Lord with me, if not deceived. It was the most fearful feeling! Every room I entered, He was there. When I went to bed, I covered up and tried to hide, but He was everywhere, and I couldn't hide. I was so scared, I could witness with Peter when he said, "Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man." I wanted Him to leave, lest I be consumed. It is such sweet mystery why He who is without sin, would come to the "chief of sinners" like me, of which I have a sweet hope. Do I have the right to claim such a hope, as sinful as I am? Do I have the right to deny it, with all these wonderful dreams and visions He has given me? There is no other power that can show people the mysteries of God, or make them fear him. Praise his holy name!

You have comforted me so many times I wanted to tell you about it. I am such a failure when it comes to talking; and everything else too. But I hope I am thankful (part of the time, at

least), for the privilege of going to meetings and seeing the children, and hearing His name praised.

May He bless us and keep us all. Without his mercy and grace, I'm lost.

A sinner,
Glady Page

IN TRIBULATIONS

46 Cedar Street,
Kingston, N. Y.

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

Just a few lines to say that we hope you both are enjoying the great God given blessing of good health, and a feeling of the presence of the blessed Lord with you in your daily walk in the field of your gospel labors in the Lord; that He is a lamp to your feet and light to your path.

I am as well as could be expected at my age of four score, but Sister Slauson is not very well, and is in bed most of the time, requiring nursing. I am enclosing a short letter from Sister Laura Dittmar, of the Middleburg Church, of which I am pastor. I thought it a sweet little letter to us in our tribulations, and felt it would be good reading for the *Signs,* and food for some poor souls who need words fitly spoken, to give the heart new courage; and lift up the hands that hang down, and confirm feeble knees.

. . . Much love and sweet fellowship to you dear ones, of our precious Lord of love and mercy. Remember us in prayer.

In tribulations,
A. J. Slauson

Schoharie, N. Y.

Dear Elder and Sister Slauson and Sister Elnora:

I received your letter, but am so sorry to hear the news. It seems too bad to be true. If we had our way, we wouldn't have anyone suffer; but our ways are not God's ways. We are told in the Word that we shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us."

We read in Isaiah, "When thou passeth through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned: neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

I opened the Bible and the first words I read were, "I the God of Israel will not forsake thee." Surely we are poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon us. Surely we all desire to be submissive to God's will at all times, but when such severe trials come, only God can reconcile us.

May God be merciful to our unrighteousness, and remember our sins no more; for surely without God we can do nothing. We are just helpless sinners, but God has promised, and we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for it. But do we love the Lord, or no? Am I his, or am I not? We can only hope. May God enable us to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we hope we have been called.

. . . We certainly can not understand why some are taken without much suffering, and others have to suffer so long. We can only say, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." This is the only answer. With Christian love to all.

Your unworthy sister,
Laura B. Dittman

THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Pigg River Association is appointed to be held with the Martinsville Church, Martinsville, Virginia, the Lord willing, on August 2, 3, and 4, 1963. Brethren will please note that the meeting on Friday will be held in the meeting house in Martinsville; and on Saturday and Sunday at Leatherwood meeting house, where the association was held last year.

This is because of the limited space at Martinsville.

Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

John D. Wood, Clerk

SLATE HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST MEETING

There will be an all-day meeting held, God willing, at the **Old School Baptist Meeting House at Slate Hill, N. Y.**, the first Saturday in August. Lunch will be served. All lovers of gospel truth are welcome.

A. J. Slauson

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with Town Creek Church, Edgecomb County, near Pinetops, N. C., the 5th Saturday and Sunday in June, 1963.

All who love the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk,
Tarboro, N. C.

Elder D. V. Spangler, of Danville, Va. is expected to attend the three days' meeting to be held with the church at Riffe, Washington, the second Sunday in July, and Friday and Saturday before.

The Staunton River Association is appointed to be held with Mt. Ararat Church seven miles northwest of Danville, Va. on Friday, Saturday and second Sunday in July. Those attending from a distance will go to Danville, Va. Inquire for the Mt. Cross Road, and follow it for about seven miles to the meeting place.

Burnell Williams, Clerk.

ELDER WEAVER IMPROVING

Elder George L. Weaver desires us to say to the brethren and friends that he is now back from the hospital after a heart attack, and is improving slowly. He appreciates the cards and notes from the brethren, so those who feel to should write him at the home of his daughter, Mrs. George Hall, 3415 Westbury Road, Cleveland 20, Ohio. — J. D. W.

UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

The Upper Country Line Association is appointed to be held with McCray's Church beginning at 11 o'clock on Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in July, 1963, and continuing through Monday. Please note the following directions:

DIRECTIONS TO
UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

To be held at McCray's Church, near Burlington, in Alamance County, N. C.

Coming from the east via old highway 70, take 49 where it intersects with 70 and 49; follow 49 to Pleasant Grove High School where 49 and 62 intersect; take short left on 62 for three miles to McCray's located on highway 62.

Those coming over old 70 highway to Burlington from the West take 62 out of Burlington, 7 miles to McCray's Church and the Association.

Those coming from Reidsville off of 29 take 87 out of Reidsville; follow same to Altamahaw, take hard surface to Union Ridge Church, take right one mile, and then take left hand top soil road to McCray Church, about 2 miles.

J. W. Gilliam, Association Clerk

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the **Skewarkey Union** will be held with Mt. Zion Church, the Lord willing, the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in June, 1963. The church is located in Edgecome County, N. C., about 2 miles West of Hobgood on Highway 122.

Elder B. D. Handy was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder E. C. Harrison, alternate. We invite the brethren and friends to come and be with us, especially our ministering brethren.

E. B. Peel, Union Clerk
Williamson, N. C. Rt. 2

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Union Meeting will be held with Weatherford Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in June.

L. H. Doss, Clerk

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(To May 1, 1963)

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EDITORIAL

HEBREWS 11:35

"Women received their dead raised to life again: others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection."

If my readers could know what a back log of unanswered questions are ever before me, they would hesitate to ask me to write on portions of the Bible. I am, as one walking in the dark, fearful that I do not have any light (Isaiah 50:10), continually suing at heaven's court for more light and knowledge, and as deeply finding more that I do not know. If my people knew how my efforts to find light on scriptural subjects were all a failure as far as I am concerned, they would hesitate to want any of my expounding of the mysterious things of God. And yet, there is great enjoyment and fellowship with the saints of God, as we each desire to find out more about that salvation that is hid in Jesus and revealed unto us as it seemeth good unto him. It is, I trust, with a profound regard for my limitations but with an equal regard for the height and depth and breadth and length of the love of God, that I attempt to write about the sacred things that are in this passage. The things that I advance are mine; I do not want anybody to accept them unless they are supported by a "thus saith the Lord."

How did women receive their dead? how did somebody raise the dead? how are the dead raised? We could go on asking questions and they would not be any different than the ones that Paul saw by faith and answered before they were asked. That which seems incredible to us, we will question it, even though it is God himself that answers. Men have questioned the incredibleness of the new birth (John 3:4, 9); they have questioned the incredibleness of God doing as he wills to do and yet finding fault (Romans 9:19); they have thought that it is incredible for God to raise the dead (Acts 26:8; I Cor. 15:35). Strange as it may seem, people sometimes think that it is not incredible for God to do a thing, and then on some other matter join right in with incredulousness in regard to something else, when each matter was presented by the same divine teaching. This is too much for my understanding.

It would be extremely foolish in me to say that the resurrection of the dead did not present perplexities to me, but it would be still more foolish for me to deny it just because I am not able to explain it to my own satisfaction. If this way of thinking was my guide, I, too, would not believe the new birth, the sovereign and eternal bestowal of eternal life on one vessel and eternal damnation on the other, as well as the resurrection of the dead. These truths still, after nearly forty years study of the scriptures, present difficulties to me. Shall I cast them from me? Must I discard that which I do not under-

stand? God forbid. May it be his will to give me understanding, but where that is denied, that he give me faith to accept and believe it as the truth.

There are several instances of people being raised from the dead in which we are not told what future life they lived. This has been a favorite query of the saints over the years. What became of Lazarus? did he live on and die a second natural death? what became of the bodies of the saints that got up out of the graves and went about the city when Jesus was crucified? did they resume their place in society and later die the second time? We have the instance of Elijah raising the son of the woman in his day. This is not the only miraculous thing performed by Elijah, but it is one deed that has baffled the minds of men of God.

How and why was it done? did the son live on and die a second time? These are things that we will never know. Even our delving into secret things calls for questions, for it has not pleased God to tell us these things. Our surmise about the widow's son, about Lazarus, is that they lived a natural life afterwards and died, but the Bible does not say so. Any attempts to fathom the coming out of their graves by many when Christ was crucified is lost in mystery. We do not know. It is a blessing to be satisfied with what has been revealed.

The text would read, The time would fail me to tell of (among other things) women, who, through faith, received their dead rasied to life again. Undoubtedly this refers to Elijah raising the widow's son. The other prophets did not do such a miracle. His name means, My God is Jah or God himself. Jah is short for Jehovah. If truth is our object, his very name is wonderful. While his name means "God himself" yet he is a man, and as a figure of Him that was to come, he did not claim the power of raising the dead son. As Christ was dependent on His Father, so are we dependent on him for everything. He prayed "O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again." By this work the woman knew that he was a man of God with his word in his mouth. (I Kings 17:17, 24) By faith this woman received her son as raised from the dead. This is the first case of a bodily resurrection of a dead person. *Was this a bodily resurrection?* This resurrection was by faith. I would not say that our future resurrection is by faith, but I would say that our refusing to accept deliverance, being in hope of a better resurrection, *was by faith.*

It is not my understanding, as has been suggested to me, that this has under consideration a number of women; that some of them (by faith) received their dead, while some of them were tortured. The women that received their dead again were not grouped with those that were tortured. It is talking about the faithful, but some of them did (by faith) get blessings and some of them (by faith) disdained that blessing for a better one. By faith, women received their dead raised to life again. Others, not necessarily women, perhaps in unrelated circumstances, were tortured. It has always been the practice, whether under paganism or papalism, that if the hertic (as they called them) would recant their position that they would be delivered or spared torture. The faithful have not given up their faith to escape the stake and the fagot, choosing rather to suffer afflictions with the people of God. Had these recanted, they would have been free from further torture. Often I am asked, "If persecution comes again, will we in this day be able to stand?" My answer has been that if we were blessed with the measure of faith that they of that day had, that we, too, would be found accepting the torture and remaining steadfast in the faith. Without this faith, they, nor we, would be able to stand, but with it, hell has no scheme that would be successful in

getting any to deny the Lord, to be apostate to the faith. This doctrine has been promulgated longer than any other false idea; it was quite prevalent in the day of Job. His three good friends advocated it (Job 22:21), and his wife fell a victim to its allure (2:9).

When we consider the pain that accompanies torture, it is inconceivable that the human or natural will is able to withstand the deliverance that would come by just a word of recantation. It is true that some do endure that do not give any evidence of acceptance with the Lord; some dying for others, some dying for causes other than the cause of Christ. This is not the accustomed way of doing. It is the custom to give in and thus end the torture, and this we all will do unless we are blessed with faith. What a blessing to refuse deliverance at the price of denial; what a boon and an example to us to endure hardness as a good soldier rather than the weakness and temporary deliverance that is gained by recantation.

This deliverance or resurrection could never be anything except an escape from torture and persecution; it could never be known as an evidence of faithfulness. It would never surround or compass the church of God as a witness to be followed. It would never cause truth and faith to blaze forth in their refulgent glory in praise to the mighty workings of God's grace. Gaining this deliverance, or being allowed to escape the lash or the beheading block, or to be removed from the stake and fagot, would be for the benefit of the physical body. But what about living with one's self afterwards? Would that be anything to look forward to? How would one feel after this kind of deliverance? To know that others had counted it all joy to suffer for the sake of Christ; to know that the things which awaited them had not been enough to move them; to have it sounded in our ears, "Could you not watch with me one hour?", on and on; to hear the blessed words of our sorrowing Captain, "Will ye also go away?", to be with us where we went; these things would all come up in the mind of the faithful, and the power of Jesus' word, to wit, "Fear not them that are able to destroy the body, but fear Him that is able to destroy both soul and body", would cause them to say in all earnestness and faithfulness, "Get behind me, Satan."

But what could come up at a time of torture that could be a deterrence to accepting deliverance? Faith, you say; yes, but faith works by love. What kind of lovely things would faith present in a time like that? Remember, that a time like this is something that none of us have faced. We know next to nothing about bodily suffering for Christ; the most of our suffering for righteousness sake has been mental anguish, some degree of boycott, but physical torture from our enemies, no. It would be helpful just here to make this inquiry: what would I do under circumstances like this? Without faith, we would all accept deliverance, even though it is not worthy of comparison with the better deliverance or resurrection. But the faith of God acts upon us and in us. I must insist, even though it brings me ridicule, and perhaps boycott, that faith is active, being a fruit of the Spirit and growing out and up in us. This faith causes action in the one that it is exercised in. Much talk is made that "I believe in sitting on the stool of do-nothing." There is not, and can not be, any sitting on such a stool. In fact, there is not one in the kingdom of heaven. The body of Christ is an active body, because it has an *active, thinking,* head. If the body of Christ is not active, it can be for one reason only, to wit, the Head is not active. If the Head thinks, the body acts; if the Head sends, the body goes; if the Head calls, the body comes; if the command from the Head is to stand still, the body stands still; if the command is to go forward, the body goes forward, and it is as active in one part of this obedience as the other; if the Head makes one to lie

down in green pastures, there is a willing obedience and submission; if the Head commands the body to go quickly, there is a willing hurrying to obey; whatever the Head commands, there is action by the body of Christ. First, because God's people are willing (not made willing, as is often quoted) in the day of his power. Second, there is not a command given but what there is a working of the will and the do in them to where the command is complied with.

"Fear none of these things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Revelation 2:10) I do not pretend to know what the ten days tribulation refers to, but when this command is uttered in our own mind there will be an active faithfulness unto death. This faith of God is wrought in the soul and it works by love. Love does not present unlovely things: love does not work at, but it works in, and its work is an effectual work. Love, like hope, abides with faith; they abide together in the hearts of God's children. These abiding principles working in the child of God would enable them to say, "I do not know what is to befall me, but the Holy Ghost would say that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy." Why? Why would they be moved like this? Because of the lovely things that faith, working by love, would present to them. Having tasted of the good things to come, and that taste being so pleasant, it causes us to reach after more of the fullness. But let us pause a moment. This reach and this coming into possession of that which we are reaching after, carries with it more than an escape or deliverance from earth's trials; it embraces things which the flesh is not prepared to accept; it will carry us through the fire and the flood. But this pause is only for a moment. As the joy set before Christ caused him to despise the shame of the cross, just so, it causes us to despise the things between us and the better things.

There always has been the Jordan to cross in the flood season; there always will be the Red Sea to cross as we flee Pharoah; there always will be the fire and the flood, the rage of persecution; yes, as there was the leaving of all near and dear to Rebekah that she might become the bride of Isaac, just so, not any less, not any more, will there be the refusal to accept the lessening of torture that we might gain the lessening of the kind of a resurrection we get. Faith presents the reign with Christ, and that presentation is so lovely that suffering with him becomes an incidental to the reign. What does it matter if I suffer, Faith would say, when, after I have suffered a while (I Peter 5:10), I shall enter into an everlasting reign with him. As the rich gospel preached by the servant to Rebekah was the power of God unto salvation, just so, the rich gospel, telling and showing us of the glorious reign with Christ, is the power of God to enable us to despise their deliverance from torture that we might obtain a better deliverance or a better resurrection.

That being raised from the beheading block would be enticing to the flesh; being turned loose from the torture chamber would cause a hesitancy, but only for a fleeting pause, for grace, as it so often did with the beloved Paul, would assert itself and there would be an instant and firm assent to the faith, looking beyond what they would do to the body, and looking for that which God would do *for* the body.

An escape to this deliverance would leave us open to be brought back for future torture; it would not give us any assurance of future safety from being brought to the torture rack again. But faith, having wrought by love, brings us to see that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be com-

pared to the glory which shall be revealed in us, and the present torture, while painful and excruciating to the flesh, will pass away, and in its passing will come that better resurrection, that final deliverance from death.

I am not much on the resurrection of the non-elect. I believe in it; I believe their torment will be as lasting as the felicity of the elect, but just when (and if it is after, as I think the Bible would teach), and how long after the resurrection of those that sleep in Christ, I do not know. If there is anything that would cause a poor tortured saint to rejoice, it would be looking by faith to the consummation of our hope. The language of Paul confirms us in that hope. It is enough to cause us to despise the shame and to endure the cross, to be subjected to humiliation, that we might obtain that which reaches beyond the cross, beyond the shame, beyond the gifts of tyrants and torturers in a temporary deliverance, and to cause us to look for the better resurrection.

Let us remember that these all died in faith (Hebrews 11:13); let us remember that, since we are surrounded or compassed by these witness and are to run the race set before us, which race may, as it did with them, lead us into death in many ways, we are not to sorrow as those that do not have hope. Faith led them to hold fast their profession, even though death was at hand, that hope sprang up. Hope of what? The language echoes and the reecho of it has come down the ages, bringing comfort and joy to those blessed with it; the reverberations of it has shook the foundations of every avowed enemy of the glorious doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. Are we to sorrow about these that fell asleep in Christ at the despot's hand? Are we to sorrow today, or tomorrow because we, or our loved ones die in the torture chamber? No, we are not to sorrow as those that do not have hope. Hope for what? If our people had the mind to let Paul tell us, we would be at a unit on this glorious doctrine. We do believe that Jesus died and arose again. Dear readers, do we believe that? if we do, then, *even so* them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

Paul preached the better resurrection by the word of the Lord. If I preach the gospel, I also preach the resurrection by the word of the Lord. Why is it that we which remain will not prevent (precede) those that sleep? The reason that we will not is this: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (I Thes. 4:13, 18) I have repeatedly asked this question: If Paul did not mean to teach the better resurrection, which, to me, is the raising of this body, what did he mean to teach? If there is not a body resurrection, what was Paul teaching? If the dead do not rise out of the tomb, why say that they arise first?

I would beg God to teach me and keep me that I might desire the better resurrection, and that I might comfort those that have lost loved ones, whether by torture or on the sick bed, with the words that Paul used. These words can not be used to comfort one another unless there is a resurrection like unto that which the apostle has described.

This has been written at the request of Sister Buena Wright of Texas.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

ACTS XII. 5.

"Peter therefore was kept in prison:

but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him."

Concerning the matter of prayer there seems to be much confusion in the minds of many people. Some seem to think that the Lord can be and is influenced by prayers, that the will of God is determined by prayers, that the Lord waits to hear the petitions of men before deciding in his own mind what he will or will not do. This confusion of thought regarding prayer arises from the human error of trying to conceive of the Almighty as being one like ourselves. This is an entirely wrong idea of God, but one which is characteristic of all human thoughts of God. God being infinitely above the comprehension of the human mind, it must be that the human mind by no sort of effort of its own can possibly grasp one right thought as to who God is, or as to how he works. The Scriptures declare that God is of one mind and none can turn him, that he is the same yesterday and to-day and forever, that he changes not. Any idea of prayer which implies that God can be influenced by prayer, which seems to indicate that God is subject to change because of prayers, does violence to numerous declarations throughout the Bible concerning the true character of God. On the other hand, concerning prayer itself, it is not a matter within the control of mortals to know when to pray, or what to pray for. We cannot appoint times and seasons for prayer ourselves, for no one of us knows when or where it may please the Holy Spirit to indite its petitions in our hearts, and without the Holy Spirit leading and teaching us in this matter of prayer no prayer can be made. If the apostle Paul himself confessed it to be his infirmity that he knew not what to pray for as he ought, and if he even went so far as to include the Roman brethren as being in this same weakness with himself, we are confident that not one of all the Lord's people since Paul's time has grown any stronger in this regard, and that it is still the weakness of every child of God that they cannot pray of themselves. The work of the Holy Spirit must be going on in the believer's heart if true prayer is ever offered up unto God. Since, then, prayer is in no wise has any influence with the Almighty so as to in any sense change his plan or purpose, and since true prayer must always be, and is, the fruit of the Holy Spirit in the believers' souls, then prayer is not for the instruction of the Almighty to instruct him in his people's needs, but it is for the instruction and edification of those who believe in God.

It is through the experience of prayer that believers are shown their spiritual need of, and their entire dependence upon, God. If God has not all power in heaven and in earth what would be the need of prayer? Would it be worth while to petition a god that could not grant our petitions? We mention this because our enemies have said, and do say, that Old School Baptists have not much use for prayer. They say this because they think that the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God does away with the necessity for prayer; that if God has purposed all things whatsoever come to pass, and that all things shall come to pass just as God wills, whether we pray or not, or whether we want it to be so or not, why pray at all? Well, if prayer, as said before, be for the purpose of telling God what to do, then there is no sense in it, for whoever prays with the thought in his or her mind that God is in anywise to be influenced by the prayer is not really praying at all. Prayer arising from any such wrong notion of God is the fruit of nothing but the flesh, and has not the Holy Spirit for its cause. But, to come at the matter rightly, predestination is the very backbone and sinew of prayer. It is because God has purposed from eternity to do certain things for his children that he does by the intercession of the Holy Spirit cause them to pray for and to desire the very things which it is in his eternal purpose

to give them.

Every true prayer, the fruit of the Holy Spirit, is in entire harmony with the will of God, never in harmony with the will or lusts of the flesh. The experience of real prayer cannot be otherwise than a crucifixion to the flesh, a humbling of our carnal nature. That is why, in ancient times, the posture of kneeling or prostrating the body was generally considered the right position for one to be in when praying. It showed outwardly the humiliation and self-abasement that was felt, or ought to be felt inwardly in the soul by the one praying. As it is impossible for us with our finite minds to know what is the will of God, and since every prayer worthy of acceptance with God must be in accord with his divine will, how necessary then, if we are ever to pray, that we be taught in some way what the will of God is in order to pray. Inasmuch as the Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God, and since nothing in all the will and purpose of God is hidden from the mind of the Spirit, how well it is that God has ordained his Spirit to help us in this our infirmity regarding prayer, and to teach us how and what to pray for.

All this leads up to the subject of our text at the head of this article. The church suffered great persecution for Christ's sake during the days of the apostles and of the early church. The twelfth chapter of Acts records one of these persecutions. During one of the Jewish passovers, the authority of Herod, ruler over Judea as the representative of Rome, arrested Peter and put him in prison. This, of course, distressed the brethren greatly, and they prayed unceasingly for Peter's release. Did the prayers of the church cause or bring about Peter's release? No, positively not. Prayer never causes anything unless it may be the comfort and edification of the Lord's people, but as for prayer being the cause of any event in the history of men, or of the church, it is not so. Prayer is itself an effect or fruit of the Spirit, as we have said, but prayer itself is not a cause. It was all in the purpose and will of God that Peter was to be released from prison, and his release did not wait upon, nor was it caused by, the prayers of the church. How do we know this? Simply because Peter was one of those selected by Christ to preach his gospel, thus to feed the lambs and the sheep. Having thus a work to do in the vineyard of the Lord, he was perfectly safe from any vital injury until his work should be accomplished. It was just as impossible for Peter to die before his work was finished as for the sun to be blotted from the sky.

The prayers of the church did not lengthen Peter's life, nor did they effect his release from prison. His marvelous escape when an angel came to him and bade him follow, when the chains fell from his hands, when the iron gate opened before him and he went out safely into the street, all this was a demonstration of the power, not of effectual prayer, but of the power of almighty God, who alone is wonder-working. The prayers of the church were spiritual, because the Holy Spirit indited this prayer for Peter's safety in the heart of the church. Had not the Lord before determined upon the release of Peter the Holy Spirit would not have put it in the minds and hearts of the brethren to pray for him. True prayer invariably asks for what is already God's will to give. When the late President Wm. McKinley was shot it will be remembered how special prayer services were held all over this country, and by various religious denominations, asking the Lord to spare his life, but he died. The will of God was not that McKinley should be spared. This proves that in all the so-called prayers that were offered up for his recovery there was not one single spiritual prayer.

Had there been one true prayer in all that multitude his life would have been spared; not that the prayer would have caused God to spare him, but the true

prayer would have been the fruit of the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit never gives rise to a prayer contrary to the will of God. Had it not then been the will of God to release Peter from prison the brethren would not have found themselves able to pray for his release. They would have been, no doubt, crushed with sorrow for Peter, but as to prayer, would have been dumb. We met a mother this summer who had suffered the loss of a dear child, and through all this child's illness she was convinced it was going to die, simply because she found herself unable to pray for its recovery.

The fact that she could not pray for nor desire its recovery was an evidence to the mother that it was God's will for the child to die. Had it been God's will for it to live doubtless she would have had in her heart a petition for it to live. This is an instance proving how prayer runs counter to one's natural inclinations. We are glad we have been made to believe in the immutability of Jehovah. What comfort to a poor soul could there be in a God who could be led about willy-nilly by the desires of now this one, now that? Prayer is an experimental exercise of the Spirit by which the believer is brought around into harmony with the will of God, not a process by which God is brought into our way of thinking.

(Editorial by Elder H. H. Lefferts October 15, 1919)

OBITUARIES

BENJAMIN LAYTON JOHNSON

Benjamin Layton Johnson was born February 6, 1950, at Hurricane, W. Va., the son of Lewis Mose and Nancy Elizabeth Bird Johnson. He perished in a fire that destroyed the family home January 17, 1963. His stay on earth was nearly thirteen years.

He left behind to mourn for him, his parents, five brothers and three sisters: Eldon, Willard, William, Lewis and Harold all of Hurricane; Mrs. Mae McCoy, Garretts Bend, W. Va.; Mrs. Manie Crouch and Mrs. Arbutus Carpenter, Hurricane. Surviving also are twenty nieces and nephews and many other relatives and a host of friends. An infant brother preceded him in death.

He was a seventh grade student at Hurricane Junior High School. His funeral was conducted by Elder J. R. Lane at Mt. Moriah Church. He used as a text the fifth through the thirteenth verses of the sixth chapter of St. John, and was blessed to expound the beauty and the immensity of the text; which seemed to impress Layton's classmates and teachers, as well as others. Burial was in Carpenter Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers. His classmates served as pallbearers and flower girls.

May it be the will of our Heavenly Father to reconcile Brother and Sister Johnson, Layton's brothers and sisters, and all who mourn for him. "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Mildred Stanley

RUTH BLALOCK CLAYTON OAKLEY

In as much as it has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our Sister in Christ, Ruth Blalock Clayton Oakley; we must bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father.

She was born in Caswell County, April 1, 1908, passed away, December 18, 1962, making her stay here on earth 54 years. She was married to the late Lelan Clayton; unto this union were born two sons and two daughters. In later years after the passing of Mr. Clayton, she was married to Claude S. Oakley.

Sister Oakley was a faithful and loyal member of the Primitive Baptist for 27 years, and was blessed to walk softly and humbly before her brethren in meekness and humility. At the time of her passing she was a member of Bush Arbor Church.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder J. Harvey Smith and Elder Ernest F. Oakley at Bush Arbor, and her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

May the vacancy that has been left in the hearts of her companion, children, brothers, sister and all of those who mourn her passing, be filled with the love of God. May they be reconciled that their loss is her eternal gain.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to the family, *Signs of the Times*, and a copy kept for church records.

Submitted by a brother in hope,
Wallis A. Smith

Read and approved in our conference meeting on April 13, 1963.

W. C. King, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

JOHN LESTER WALKER

God in His infinite wisdom saw fit to remove the spirit of Brother Walker from the

trials and afflictions of this world to be with Him in glory February 17, 1963. He was born September 8, 1890, making his stay on earth 72 years.

He was the son of the late Albert and Frances Simpson Walker. He was married November 20, 1910, to Lena King who survives him to mourn her loss, together with one daughter, Mrs. Mary Pruitt of Greensboro, N. C.; one son, Louis Walker of Route 2, Burlington, N. C.; one granddaughter; and one brother, Dr. R. C. Walker of Martinsburg, West Virginia.

Brother Walker united with the church at Bush Arbor some 40 years ago, and was church treasurer for 30 years. He was a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, having no confidence in himself or the works of men pertaining to the salvation of souls. He suffered much for the past two years, had spent most of this time in hospitals or confined to his home, but never forgot to ask about the meeting and express his desire to attend. Surely he could witness with John of the new heaven when he said, "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."

Brother Walker's funeral was largely attended, with Elders J. Harvey Smith, Wallace Smith, and the writer taking part.

We shall miss him but God knows best and does all things well. Therefore, may the Church at Bush Arbor bow in humble submission to His holy will, and may each member of his family find grace for their hour of sorrow. Done by the request of Bush Arbor Church and approved by same at her April meeting, 1963.

W. C. King, Moderator
Earl Rudd, Clerk

MRS. R. S. WILLIAMS

Mrs. R. S. Williams departed this life February 28, 1963, at the age of more than 90 years. She was the daughter of Thomas H. and Lucindie Philpott McCune, and was born in Franklin County, Va. December 14, 1872. She was married to R. S. Williams October 29, 1899.

She united with old Chestnut Church July 15, 1901, and was baptized by Elder Taylor Turner. She was bed fast for eighteen months, having broken her leg twice. She bore her suffering well, and realizing that she could not get well, she desired that the Lord would take her. I feel that she is at rest until the resurrection of the dead.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder C. E. Turner, and interment was in the Bassett Cemetery, Bassett, Va.

Written by her husband,
R. S. Williams

IRENE LUCINDA RAKES SENTER

Sister Irene Lucinda Rakes Senter was born February 8, 1877, near Clintwood, Virginia, and passed away July 8, 1962, in Chehalis, Washington, at the age of eighty-five years and five months. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church in Virginia, by experience and baptism when she was a young girl.

She was united in marriage to Mr. Stephen H. Senter January 3, 1895, in Virginia. They moved to Washington in 1907, and settled near Riffe, where she joined the Cowlitz River Church by letter: this church and the Sulphur Creek Church were united under the name of Bethel. Mr. Senter passed away August 11, 1946, at the age of seventy-five years. Three of her ten children preceded her in death. Surviving are three daughters, Mrs. Effie Care, Mrs. Fay Kepford, Mrs. Ruth Clayton; four sons: Delman F., Lindsey L., Ferd W. and Norman W. Senter. Surviving also are two sisters, Mrs. Minnie Rakes and Mrs. Madeline Asher; one brother, Lawrence W. Rakes; twenty-two grandchildren and twenty-four great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at the Boone Mortuary Chapel in Chehalis, with Mr. Cecil Christian officiating. Burial followed in the Klickitat Cemetery, Mossyuch, Washington.

Done at the request of Bethel Church, Riffe, Washington.

Elder Ernest Attebery, Moderator
Mrs. Opal Huntting, Clerk

SISTER OPHEE CHESTER

Sister Ophee Helen Chester, daughter of Stark D. and Sarah F. Thomas, was born January 9, 1872, and died January 12, 1963; age 91 years and three days. She was married to the late Elder J. C. Chester January 18, 1894. Surviving are two daughters: Mrs. Lula Matthews, Mayfield, Ky., in whose home she passed away, and Mrs. Loyd Lawrence, Murray, Ky.; and one son, Guy Chester, Humboldt, Tenn.; also five grandchildren and nine great grandchildren. Her husband died October 29, 1936. Sister Ophee wrote his obituary, which appeared in the *Signs of the Times* in February, 1937.

She united with the Soldier Creek Church of Old School Primitive Baptists of the regular order, in the year 1915, and was baptized by the later Elder J. M. Perkins. When she

married, her husband was then a young school teacher, and had been a member of the Soldier Creek Church less than a year. She often told us of how she was led about and instructed in the truth, and away from the works of the creature to the finished work of the Lord Jesus, as she hoped. At the time she was burdened, her husband, Elder Chester, was burdened with the call to the ministry, which call he obeyed for eighteen years before his death.

She was a beautiful singer — a sweet singer in Israel. While Elder Chester lived their home was a resting place for the visiting elders and friends, where believers of the truth often congregated to have services, sing, pray and preach, and discuss the Scriptures. After she was a widow, she continued to counsel with her church friends and ministers, and encouraged them in their calling.

Her funeral was preached by Elders Paul Poyner, moderator of her church, and J. N. Darnell, of the Little River Association, the 2nd Sunday in January, 1963, at a funeral home in Benton, Ky. Elder Darnell spoke from Isaiah 32:2. Burial was in the Soldier Creek Cemetery beside her husband; there to await the second coming of the Lord, when the redeemed family will be fashioned like their Redeemer and be forever with Him, and be satisfied. Written by request.

Effie Bowden,
Benton, Ky.

JOHN PAUL McMILLIAN

John Paul McMillian, Merryville, La., was born May 9, 1876, and died October 25, 1962. His pilgrimage on earth was more than eighty-six years. He was a Predestinarian Primitive Baptist.

Mother preceded him in death over eight years; also a son John Paul, Jr., in World War II — 1942. Father lived with my husband and me nearly eight years. He leaves to mourn his passing, three daughters and two sons: Wm. F. McMillian, Ray McMillian, and Mrs. J. L. Marze, Merryville, La.; Mrs. D. D. Cryer, West Lake, La.; and Mrs. V. H. Moffitt, Chicago, Ill. Also fourteen grandchildren, three great grandchildren; and one brother, J. D. McMillian, Beaumont, Texas, and one sister, Mrs. Mary Penny, Oakdale, La.

Oh how we miss our dear ones, but we have great hope they are at rest with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. His funeral was conducted by Elders Ezra Bailey and Hamp Newton, and he was laid to rest in the Cooper Cemetery by our dear mother; both waiting the resurrection when the last trumpet shall sound, and the graves shall give us the sleeping, and these bodies will be changed and fashioned like unto our Lord and Master's glorious body, and carried home to reign with him forever.

Written by their daughter,
Mrs. J. L. Marze

IN MEMORY

James Dameron Windsor: A man of few words, whose accountability spoke louder than many words.

Uncle Jim, as he was called by his loved ones, died in a brush fire on March 28, 1963. We were all so hurt and wondered why it had to be this way, but God works all things after counsel of his own will; and we have no right to say, "Jehovah, why doeth thou this or that," for the purpose of God is not for mortal man to understand. We believe that before the foundation of the world God appointed a time for Uncle Jim to be born, and this same God did also appoint the way, time, and place for him to depart this low ground of sin and sorrow.

Uncle Jim made his home with his niece, Sister Maude Gann and Brother S. W. Gann, who cared for him with much love and kindness and gave him a good home for many years. His name was not recorded on the books of the Church, but we hope and do believe it was recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life. The Lamb of God, and he alone, knows this; for we live by hope, and he was the only one worthy to open the book with seven seals.

We hope and do feel that Uncle Jim was made to know that Salvation is by the grace of God, the only name given under Heaven whereby men must be saved. We feel he was baptized with the spiritual water, and we have enjoyed much fellowship and love for Uncle Jim.

I could not help but notice at Church while others talked, he would walk among the lonely tombs. He spent much time alone, and yet, I feel, not alone but in supplication to the Lord.

I believe the same grace that brought him safe to the age of 79 years has now received his spirit home, and his body shall be changed on that day to walk the streets of gold.

Even though we feel our loss is his gain, we cannot help but mourn the loss of Uncle Jim.

By a Friend, I hope,
Clifton Robertson

MEMORIAL

DORA COLLINS BRUMFIELD

It has been our Heavenly Father's will to remove from our midst another member of our little flock, namely, Sister Dora Collins Brumfield, on February 22, 1963.

She was born in the Whitmell community of Pittsylvania County on February 2, 1881, a daughter of the late David Rudolph Collins and Elizabeth Talley Collins. Surviving are four sons and four daughters, two brothers, one sister, fifteen grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren.

The children have lost a true and faithful mother. Her heart was centered on the welfare of her home and church, and she was always ready to help her friends and neighbors in time of need.

Sister Brumfield and deceased husband, Brother Luther Brumfield, joined Strawberry Church May 6, 1916, and were baptized by the late Elder C. O. Boaze.

We, the church at Strawberry, greatly feel our loss which is her eternal gain. She was truly a mother in Israel, faithful to her profession as long as she lived. Despite her feeble condition she was blessed to attend meeting in December. The next meeting day her mind was with her church people, for she said, "I wish I could go."

Sister Brumfield's funeral was conducted by Elders R. S. Payne and R. A. May at Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Chapel, with interment in Highland Burial Park beside her husband, amidst a beautiful mound of flowers; there to await the Resurrection morn when her Saviour returns to call His jewels home.

We extend our sympathy to the children who so devotedly cared for their mother in her declining years. Also brothers, sisters and others who mourn her departure.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to God who works all things after the counsel of His own will. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be His holy name. And

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this memorial be recorded on our church records, a copy sent to the family, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by the order of the church, Saturday, March 3, 1963.

Elder R. S. Payne, Moderator
Josephine Dodd, Clerk

IN MEMORY OF SISTER GERTRUDE BOWEN

As requested by the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church, I will attempt to write in memory of our beloved sister, Gertrude Bowen, who was called from this stage of action June 16, 1962, making her stay here 81 years.

Sister Bowen's lot was cast into the lap and the whole disposing thereof was of the Lord. An admonition given in the scripture, "Not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is" by God's power, was fulfilled in our dear sister. Until it pleased God to afflict her body, she was blessed to mingle with her brethren and sisters, not only at Norfolk where she asked for a home and was baptized by Elder R. B. Denson in November, 1947, but other churches far and near.

She will remain in the memories of those that loved her and knew the reasons for her hope in Christ Jesus. We wish to extend our deep felt sympathy to her children: Mr. Harry L. Bowen, Mr. Claude V. Bowen, Mrs. Maud Dawson, Mrs. Hazel Biggs, Mrs. Helen Read, and her sister, Mrs. Minnie Chesson, who we know dearly loved her and have suffered a great loss. However, we feel your dear mother and sister sleepeth awaiting the morning of the resurrection when King Jesus shall say unto her, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

May it please God to shower his love upon her family and all that were near and dear to her. Remove all feelings of sorrow and loss and make them to know that all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, and He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?

Done by order of conference Saturday night before the 3rd Sunday in September 1962.

Ruby E. Coward, Church Clerk

MEMORIAL

WHEREAS, The Divine Providence has removed from our midst in the fulness of years our esteemed Secretary, Casper G. Fetter,

BE IT RESOLVED, That a record of appreciation be made of his many years of loyal service as a member of the Trustees of the Southampton Church and Corporation.

He served well the interest of the church as a member of the Trustees for forty-eight years: the last twenty of which he held the office of Secretary. During this long term of service he was faithful to his trust, and served the church with sincere devotion and wise judgment. The loss of our late Secretary will be greatly felt, but the memory of his devotion to our organization will inspire those who continue the work, to renewed zeal and faithfulness.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this tribute to his memory be spread upon our trustee books, a copy sent to his family, and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

George S. Hobensack, President
Martha A. Addis, Secretary

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 131 DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1963 NO. 8

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8/63
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE LESSON OF THE LEAF

Today I behold a large Maple tree
Its color of gold has a lesson for me.
A fortnight ago with foliage green,
Now bright is the hue and gorgeous its sheen.

God's miracle happens in so brief a time,
A law of creation and power divine.
Nature is telling the whole human race
Of change always silently taking place.

So simply revealed with each passing year,
Their mission fulfilled, the leaves disappear.
A quiet reminder, whatsoever its birth
All things created return to the earth.

No humans exempted from that law and decree
And all in good time will include me.
Then may I in submission and faith of a child,
To death dissolution, become reconciled.

For as of today, what I cannot now see,
By His love in good time, will be shown unto me.
And knowing in part, then will see face to face,
With joy through forgiveness, and God's saving grace.

When God in His love has power displayed
Shall I His own child then of death be afraid?
In fullness of faith, without tremble or fear,
I hope with Him in glory again to appear.

Under maples of Eden to rest in the shade.
Where all seasons summer the leaves never fade.
To again meet my own in perfection above,
At last in its fullness, the meaning of love.

J. S. Zimmerman
Penbrook, Penna.

GIVE MY FLOWERS TODAY

I'd rather have some flowers strewn
In life's path: I need them more
Than the room full when I'm gone,
And a wreath out by the door.

I have no choice — color or kind
Red roses, white, or pink;
With thoughts to linger in my mind,
That taught my heart to think.

Pray bring my flowers in person,
So I may clasp your hand:
Orchids, lilies, or just a rose,
While I can understand.

Strew my flowers not on my tomb,
So I'll know from whom they came:
I'd rather have one little bloom
Than a room full with your name.

Eliza Turner,
Floyd, Virginia

"DON'T BE DECEIVED, LITTLE DAUGHTER"

Patrick Springs, Va.

My dear Sister:

You asked me my views on God's wisdom and power. Do you realize what size article that would be? I know I have not the ability to hint of the great wisdom of God, but I am trusting in one who performs miracles.

You spoke of your daughter wanting to know if God knew her future. Let's go to the Bible: Turn to Romans 11:33, "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out." "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counselor?" (verse 34)

In the 4th chapter of Daniel we read, "And all the inhabitants of the earth

are reputed as nothing, and He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doeth thou?" And in the 2nd chapter, "And he changeth the times and the seasons; he removeth kings and setteth up kings; he giveth wisdom unto the wise and knowledge to them that know understanding." So then presidents are only instruments in God's hands. We also read how that God made known to Daniel the king's dream and the interpretation of it.

In the 48th chapter of Isaiah, we read, "I have declared the former things from the beginning, and they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them; I did them suddenly and they came to pass, because I knew that thou art obstinate and thy neck is an iron sinue, that thy brow brass. I have even from the beginning declared it to thee; before it came to pass, I shewed it thee, lest thou shouldest say, Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image and my molten image hath commanded them." And isn't that just what poor man will do?

Now turn to Psalm 44: "Shall not God search this out? For he knoweth the secrets of the heart." These are our thoughts before we think them. In Psalm 49:11, "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity." In Job 42:2, we read, "I know that thou can'st do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee."

"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?" we read in Matthew 10:29, "and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father." "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered." What great knowledge is this! Turn to Isaiah 46:10, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times, the things that are not yet done, saying my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." There is no doubt in my mind but that God knew before time every event, and the appointed time for it to take place. David said in the 31st Psalm, "My times are in thy hand; deliver me from the hand of mine enemies." etc. In Matthew 9:14, we read, "And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?" Jesus knew who would betray him, we are told in John 6:64. In Proverbs 21:30 we read, "There is no wisdom nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord."

To me this means there is nothing God doesn't know, past, present nor future. "The horse is prepared against the day of battle, but safety is of the Lord." We hear of building fall-out shelters, etc., yet safety is of the Lord. If America could be blessed to bow down to the living God, what a difference we would see. As for myself, I can trust in no other God; for by experience I know there is no help in another. I am not afraid of the great bomb men are so fearful of; for God owns the bomb: and he owns the man. Nothing can come to pass without him ordaining the power. "The anger of the Lord shall not return until he hath executed, and till he hath performed the thoughts of his heart. In the later days ye shall consider it perfectly." (Jeremiah 23:20) "Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord."

Tell your daughter God is so big he fills the heavens and the earth; and he is so small he can come into the hearts of poor sinners.

In Isaiah 14:24, we read, "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed so shall it stand." Who then can describe such wisdom and power? Tell your daughter that, If God told the old prophets what would come to pass in the future, surely He knows her future . . . You said she believed everybody was born with the same chance. I agree — but it isn't by chance we are saved. Read Luke 10:30 to 36: It tells of a poor man who

was on his way to Jericho, when he was overtaken by thieves, and was stripped and beaten, and left half-dead. Read what the man by chance did. When he came by, he passed on the other side. The chance system cannot reach the case of poor half-dead sinners. But read what the good Samaritan did, who is a type of Christ. May God open your eyes, dear little girl, for there is a beautiful picture in this scripture. But only spiritual eyes can see. I know the world is telling you that Jesus cannot come unto your heart unless you open to him. Don't be deceived, little daughter. Read Isaiah 22:22: "And the key to the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder (Christ); so he shall open, and none can shut; and he shall shut, and none can open."

Now let's read Psalm 22, verses 9 to 11: "But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts." etc. The Lord did not wait for David to become old enough to decide for himself whether or not he would accept him, did he? So with all his children: He knows they will trust in their own self-righteousness, which is but filthy rags; but at his own appointed time God reveals his Son to his chosen people. And this is the only way we can ever know the Lord.

In Matthew we read, "And she shall bring forth a son and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." He didn't come then to give anyone a chance, but a sure salvation. The seventeenth chapter of John proves that Jesus saved everyone for whom he died. Jesus said, "Ye must be born again." With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible. My son-in-law, who is studying for the ministry, said that my husband had been under conviction for some time, also he said where he went to church they believed a miracle had to be performed to change a man, and that he only needed to surrender to God. I say that when the great law-man sounds the alarm, one is under arrest; then my husband will fearfully surrender. Why does a person need to surrender until he is made to know he has broken the law? Jesus is the only one that has ever kept the law, and he is the only one that can arrest a man.

I agree there must be a miracle performed for a dead man to be raised from a dead state, and quickened and made alive in Christ. We are all born dead in trespasses and in sin — it is a state we know nothing of until we are quickened. Read Matthew 16:15-17, "He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said to him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." In Jeremiah 17:5, we read, "Thus saith the Lord: Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." etc. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." (seventh verse)

Tell your daughter to never try to limit God's power or wisdom. "He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing." (Job 26:7) He created all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil. Ah, how well do I remember when I started on this pilgrim journey! I too stopped at the same old stumbling block where your daughter is now sitting. It seemed good then to feel that you were doing things for the Lord. Ah, how it makes the flesh swell! Yes, I'm well acquainted with the Pharisees' language. I tried to rest there too, but my inability and shortcomings were such that I rested not; and my Lord gave me an eye of faith to look ahead, and I saw beauties beyond description. I have traveled on, and am resting in the work of the crucified Saviour. But I am as this poem:

Sometimes I'm on the mountain top,
Then I can view the scene more clear,

And enjoy the good things that fell my lot
And feel free from sorrow, pain and fear.

But sometimes I'm in the valley deep:
I think then I've surely lost the way,
And lost the hope of the golden peep
I had of heaven in the prior day.

Down in the valley where the lilies grow,
It is there that we learn to pray:
We must go there in order to know
It is the Lord who shows us the way.

Your sister,
Minnie Foley

(Sister Foley has given a faithful reply to her sister. Such is necessary, since there is no compromising the truth with any form of error. There are many commandments of men which seem right and good to the unregenerated, but these have no part in the doctrine of God our Saviour. — J. D. W.)

Maben, W. Va.

Dear Brethren of the *Signs:*

My subscription is almost due again, and I am enclosing payment with this letter.

I am now seventy-six years old, and can't see to read long at a time, but I hope I won't miss one copy as long as I am able to read it. If I have been blessed to understand God's word, the *Signs of the Times* is the soundest paper I have ever read, and I hope that God will bless you all to keep it so.

If a brother, the least of all,
Z. R. Canada

WORD FROM ELDER AND SISTER DAVENPORT

809 Sycamore Street,
Mineola, Texas

Dear Elder Wood:

I enclose money to renew our subscription to the *Signs of the Times.* My husband's eye sight has failed so that he can no longer see to read, but I can't bear the thought of not getting the *Signs* once a month, after having it come to our home since 1903, with the exception of one year.

My husband is not improved much, but can be up most of the day, for which I am thankful to the blessed Lord. He has blessed us to walk side by side, and share each others trials and troubles, as well as joys, for sixty-five years.

May the rich blessings of God remain with you all to continue to publish the dear old *Signs of the Times.* When at the throne of grace remember us. My husband joins me in love and fellowship to you and yours.

Mrs. C. S. Davenport

STUDYING TO SHOW OURSELVES APPROVED UNTO GOD

204 11th Street
Ballinger, Texas

Dear Elder Hudson,

We received your good letter and were glad to hear from you and to know that the Lord was blessing you. May he continue to bless your labors to the flock of slaughter, making you a true soldier of Christ.

I have found in my ministry and labors among the flock just what you mentioned: some seeming indifferent, which among the ministry is worse — "if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." We feel that this is a laborious work. It seems to us the weight of the ministry has become very light to some of us; and it manifests itself in the falling away and the leanness of our flocks. Oh, that we might consider more the weight of the ministry our responsibility as stewards of God. To gather in and watch over the sheep is our duty. There should be no indifference here but laboring with those we come in contact with, counting our lives not dear unto ourselves (Acts 15:26; 1 John 3:16; Rev. 12:11) bearing the burden and heat of the day, putting all we have into the battle: time, strength, substance and health, keeping nothing back, but joyfully giving all.

My dear young soldier, again we come to another great consideration of our ministry and our labors; PATIENCE. Oh, how hard this fruit of the spirit must come. Only the Lord can give it to us. Oh, how I have sometimes been impatient and even used rash steps to try to, as though it were to force a revival in some. The results were bad. Oh, how we need His Spirit of love not only to preach comfortingly but also to drop a word of reproof, pointing out the dangers and evils of a sleepy state. Not lash them in a pharisaical spirit or scold them angerly, as if they could bring themselves out of such a state, but in love and kindness reprove, rebuke, and exhort the flock. Reproof, rebuke, and exhort, the greatest testimony that we can give against coldness and indifference, is the life that is manifested in our own soul.

Many times in our labors we are so disheartened with what sometimes seems a fruitless round of toil. "Behold the husbandmen watieth for the precious fruit of the earth and hath long patience for it until he receive the early and latter rain." (James 5:7) Oh, may we in patience toil in conjunction with the most intense longing and pray for success. "He that believeth doeth not make haste." (Isaiah 28:16) "In your patience possess ye your souls." (Luke 21:19) In faith and patience not to be discouraged, giving battle though it be one against a thousand, labor much, visit much, and above all, pray much, redeeming your time that by his grace there may be a Power about your preaching.

Oh, may the Lord give us a searching ministry, enabling us to wield the sword of truth, to cut away from ourself and others every false refuge of the flesh and apply the wonderfulness of the healing of the spirit, setting forth the super abounding wonders of amazing Grace.

The work of the ministry is not only to comfort, but "to root out and to pull down and to destroy and to throw down" as well as "to build and to plant." (Jeremiah 1:10) May the Lord give us wisdom in this work. If left to ourselves in trying to root out, pull down, and destroy, (seeing the coldness and indifference, deadness, wordliness, and even in some we wonder if grace has ever had anything to do with them) we are caught in our own spirit and use unbecoming rebuke and sharpness. Then instead of it having the desired end of provoking to love and good works, they look upon us with an eye of suspicion.

May He give us wisdom to plant and build up, as well as wrestle against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Elder C. M. Haygood

SOMETHING WONDERFUL TO TELL

46 Cedar Street,
Kingston, N. Y.
Oct. 1, 1962

Very dear Brother and Sister Wood:

Your letter at hand, and glad that the Lord so willed it that you arrived home safely; and we were glad that He willed it that you could be with us in our little gathering called an association. I sure did enjoy feeding upon the crumbs that fell from the Master's table. It appeared to me that you servants of God were blessed to bring out from the storehouse of our God things new and old, and that there was an emptying from vessel to vessel: God enabled you vessels of mercy to feed other vessels of mercy; thus there was an emptying from vessel to vessel.

How good it is of the blessed Lord that even when the numbers are few, he does not withhold his presence from us; and that his blessed Gospel is just as sweet to us with few in number, as when a large company is present. So that regardless of the number present, each one will receive the portion the Lord intends for that one to have. No place on earth is there any such food to be found as in Christ's Gospel. It sure

is life to the living: to those who have been made alive by the Holy Spirit; to those that hunger and thirst after righteousness. To those who are saved it is the power of God, but to them that are lost it is foolishness. The dead never hunger, neither do they thirst.

What a great blessing from God that he has provided food for his little ones, that they do not starve and die: Christ being the Bread of Life to them. Though they are feeble and weak, lame and halt, and helpless as a child, through Christ being the Bread of Life to them, at times they are given strength in their feeble knees that they can go leaping and praising God, as the lame man did in the name of Jesus; and walk about Zion and tell the towers thereof: wonderful towers in the gospel of the blessed Son of God.

We feel that we have something wonderful to tell when we can walk about Zion and tell the towers thereof, or tell His little children the wonderful works of God to the lost and helpless sinner. As natural towers, they all point up — toward heaven. All of God's promises to his little children are as towers to them, as they tell of God's arrangement of his finished work for the complete salvation of his children. No other towers point toward heaven so wonderfully as God's promises to them. So when the feeble knees are strengthened, one can walk about Zion and tell the towers thereof. Christ then is their strength and surety, and they can say as one of old: Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.

I feel that the dear servants of the most high God were able to walk about Zion and tell the towers thereof — not walk about the world, but about Zion, the City of our God. These towers belong to Zion, and those in this city love to hear these towers spoken of . . .

Will close, with much love from Sister Slauson and myself.

I hope your brother in Christ,
Amasa J. Slauson

EXPERIENCE

Pineville, W. Va.

Dear Elder Bird:

I was sorry to hear of the passing of Elder Dolan and Brother Edwards; but our love for them, and their memory, lives on with us.

It has been on my mind for some time to tell you why I believe what I do, and how I came to be among the Primitive Baptists. I was an enemy to them until I was 28 years old; and did not even know there was a God. I believe I heard the gospel preached in 1917, and from then on there was a power pressing me toward the church. It was then I saw what a sinner I was, and that I was not worthy to be there. The burden got so heavy I would wet my pillow with tears at night. One night my companion woke up, and asked me what was the matter. I told her it looked like I was being taken into the church, and I was not fit to be among those good people, for I felt to be the worst of sinners.

In September, 1920, I had a dream or vision: It seemed that the earth was on fire, and all the people were running ahead of the fire; and I ran with them until we came to a great gulf, which seemed to reach all the way across the earth, and about sixty feet wide, with smoke coming up out of it; and there was no way to cross it. I stood on the edge of it and watched those people run off into that gulf, and go out of sight in the smoke. Then the thought came to me, Where are the Primitive Baptist people — there are none of them here. Then I was made to cry unto the Lord to have mercy on me that I might see those people once more that I loved so well. And some power lifted me up and carried me away and put me down in a wilderness. I never saw a place like it on earth: there was no under-brush, all large trees and green grass as far as I could see. I could not see a living creature of any kind. After viewing,

this place, I started walking in the way I thought the Primitive Baptists were, but I did not go far until I came to a great river, and it looked to be very deep, and the water not moving; and there was no way to cross the river. The whole mountain was on fire on the other side of the river. Here I was made to cry again unto the Lord to have mercy on me that I might see those people once more whom I loved so well. And I heard a voice at my back saying, "You shall see them at my appointed time."

I was facing the river and could not turn my head to see who spoke. Here I was lifted up again and carried to the Guyandott Church, and let down to earth again. The preaching was over, and they were singing and shaking hands. One elder came and met me, and asked me where I had been. I told him "In a miserable place." They were singin "What wonderous love is this, O my soul," but because of my unworthiness I made up my mind not to join the church: That if the Primitive Baptists would let me follow them along where I could hear them sing and pray and preach, I would be glad.

But I saw this dream or vision come true on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in June, 1921. There was preaching at Guyandott Church, and I was there; but would always go out of the house when they arose to sing for dismission. But when I turned to go out that day, one of the elders asked me to come up and help them sing the song for dismission. I love those people so much that I would do anything I could for them; so I went up and got behind them so I could see the book. They were singing "Amazing Grace," but before we sang the first verse, my strength left me, and I fell. My thought was that I would not tell them anything, and maybe they would not pay me any mind, but my mind left me, and when I came to myself I was talking, and I don't know what I told them, but I hushed right then, because I was under the impression I would have to preach and I meant to kept that a secret. I asked them not to take me into the church as I was not fit, but they said that the church would decide that. So they asked me when I wanted to be baptized. They had an appointment near my home in two weeks, and it was set for then; but I had it in my mind not to be baptized. But about three days before the time, there came a desire in me to be baptized, and the desire got so strong that I could hardly wait until Sunday.

I was received into the church about twelve o'clock that Saturday, and that afternoon was the brightest day I ever saw in my life: it was a heaven below for me, even the mountain, the trees, the rocks, and everything I could behold, were praising God, and "not a wave of trouble rolled across my peaceful breast."

Later my father appeared to me in a dream, and told me I would have to declare the same doctrine he had set forth, and that I would have trouble as he had had. I told him that I could not do it, and he said that the Lord could make me; and I replied that I knew that. He asked me to help him sing a song and we began singing, "How lost was my condition 'till Jesus made me whole." I picked up the Bible to see if I could read something for relief, as my sins had become exceedingly sinful. I read, "Be ye holy as I am holy." That ruined me for I was the worst sinner, and felt that that was not written for me.

My troubles became grievous, as my dear companion was taken sick, and at the hospital they found T. B. of the bowels . . . but she lived until March 24, 1923. Nothing seemed to hurt her and she walked around everyday. She asked me to sing hymns for her three or four nights a week. She had a dream one night: she said she was at a meeting and heard me preach. She said that she hoped that she would live to see it. I replied that I hoped she would lived with me as long as I lived, but I hoped

I never would have to preach. Yet I knew I would have to preach, or die; and I had chosen to die and not tell her, for I was afraid she might tell someone: I had decided to die and go with her rather than tell anyone.

. . . She was buried March 21, 1923. It was a clear day and the sun was shining bright, but that was the darkest day I ever saw. It seemed that everything I had on earth was gone; and the hand of the Lord was heavy on me with the burden to preach. To know just how I felt, please read the 3rd chapter of Job. I love him for what he wrote. The evening after she was buried I was watching the sun go down, and it seemed it had life in it and was looking on me with pity. I thought of my gun hanging on the wall, and I would get it and end it all. When I got up to go into the house, I said, Farewell sun, I'll see you no more. But there was no strength in my arms: I could not move a hand toward that gun. So, don't tell me a man can die before his time. If so then I would have died March 25, 1923.

Then I decided to move into another country, and not go to meeting any more. Since I had four children, one of my brothers-in-law moved with me so my sister could care for the children. I did not go to meeting for over a year; and as my father was Moderator of the Elkhorn Association, I wrote him a letter, telling of my travels along the way. I made my first attempt in June, 1925; and while I was running fom preaching, I was preaching most of the time. Two of my brothers and I were ordained at the Elkhorn Association in 1928.

There was a meeting near my home, and I had decided never to go into the stand again to speak in His name, but someone opened services, and they were so persuasive I had to get up. I said but a few words, and sat down. I was determined not to preach. Someone else went to the stand, but in two or three minutes I felt a fire in my breast, consuming my body, and my breath was so short I could hardly breathe. I thought I would ask to talk for a few minutes. Then I thought, No, I had just as well die here as anywhere. And I did not think I would live to walk out of that house.

Sometimes I can say with the poet: "The steps that I tread, and the station I fill, my Father determined, and wrote in his will."

Remember me when you feel in need of God's mercy.

Otto Tilley

NOTHING SO SWEET AS THE LORD'S PRESENCE

Rt. 4,
Reidsville, N. C.

Dear Brethren:

I have had a strong feeling to write some of the dealings of the Lord with me, but this impression comes and goes; and when it leaves me, I am left so empty that I can barely claim a hope in Jesus. Yet the sweet memories of his visitations with me are such that it seems I must confess Him before men and angels. While I cannot say for sure that I know He has visited me at these times, there is one thing I do know: I was left rejoicing in his great and marvelous name; I was so happy that I shed tears of joy, for I felt that the Lord had come to my bedside. I know that I am not worthy of so great a blessing. There is nothing so sweet as to feel the presence of the Lord.

I want to relate an incidence which took place before I became a member of the church, which gave me some hope of being of that heavenly band, and which might be of some comfort to others. My oldest son was about ten years old when he began to suffer with epilepsy. Oh how it hurt me to see this! We did everything for him that we knew, and several doctors attended him for a year or two, but there was no relief. One morning I saw him fall, and I ran to him. As I was running, I

was given a prayer as I thought, that God would relieve him of those awful spells. A voice seemed to speak into my very being, and said, "He will never have another one." I believed it was from God, for I felt it so strongly and was made to have faith and I did not doubt it. I carried the boy to the house, feeling so happy; and I told my wife what had happened, and said that he will never have another one. He is now nearly forty-nine years old, and as far as I know he has not had another attack. I feel so thankful for so great a blessing; and I might add, we feel he is the healthiest one of our seven children.

My wife and I are in bad health, and I have not been able to do manual work for over twenty-five years, and she has been disabled for about twelve years. I have been asked if my faith continued in the Lord. I will answer here that it is stronger if anything, thanks to the Lord in whom is my trust. I have many dark hours and days, yet to whom shall I go but the Lord. Many times I feel he has visited me with a smile, whether or not I could go on rejoicing in the Saviour's name; and it means so much to me at the time, and I do not doubt for a while.

I have had many temptations. A man said to me once that if he was afflicted as I am, he would kill himself. I felt that rather than this, I would prefer being afflicted as I am the rest of my life. This man has since passed on. I felt that he spoke as one of the foolish women. It seems that my faith is made strong in my weakness. Sometimes I feel that Job was afflicted for more reasons than just to show the Devil God's power; that is, for one like me to be comforted. For we find that he was an upright man and was afflicted not because of sins, as some Bildads would have us believe. I don't believe that our bodies suffer by reason of our sins, for Jesus bore our sins on the cross. We sin because we are sinners. Jesus came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. The righteous don't feel the need of repentance. One said that all our righteousness is as filthy rags. So, what have we got to offer? We may try to beg God for a dream or a vision, but he does not give it as we wish.

I remember one time, as I sat on my porch, feeling cast down and convinced I didn't have a friend on earth nor in heaven, I verily believe God sent a comforter to my poor soul. For some reason I turned my head and looked over my right shoulder, and I saw a woman clothed in white. It seemed that she came from across the road up to the edge of the porch where I was sitting — then in a second she was gone. For a few seconds I couldn't immagine what it meant, but in a flash all my sorrow and sadness was gone also. Then I felt that my brethren and sisters did love me, and God had sent this woman to comfort me; for whereas, I had been in sorrow, now I was in great love for our poeple, and for my God in whom is all my trust. I have told this to some, but some of them do not seem to understand it.

At times I cannot see why I am as I am: I cannot work, nor can my wife, so what am I here for? Then at times I am reconciled to God's will. My children are all very near to me and good and kind. But of all these there is none that can comfort me as the great Comforter from above. Once I spoke unkindly to my wife for no reason at all, and as I reached the bed where I sat a lot, I realized I had spoken harshly to her, and asked her to forgive me one more time. In a second it came to me that God was our only true forgiver. And as I sat on the edge of the bed, I saw a man standing at my feet; and I knew it was me. Yet I knew I was sitting on the bed. And I saw something as it seemed, stripped from the top of my head down to my feet. I could not tell what it was, nor whether I was in the body or in the spirit; but I felt that it was the working of the Lord: that what I saw lying at my feet was the filth

or sins that God had stripped from me, and I felt clear and acquitted from all my sins. Oh, how I did rejoice in this vision, though sometimes I feel surely it is not for so great a sinner as I am; yet I must confess the Lord before all men:

"I'm not ashamed to own my Lord
Or to defend his cause;
Maintain the honor of his word,
The glory of his cross."

This was a comfort to me for many days, and then I began to weigh the matter, and it seemed that it made it too plain that I was one of the redeemed; and I got very low again, because I remembered that it is written that we must live by hope if we are the children of God. My great worry is that I cannot honor and praise Him as I ought.

. . . Paul speaks of being instant in season out of season. I think we are in season when we are stirred up by the Holy Spirit; and out of season when we don't feel the blessed Spirit. We realize that the Lord is near, but not in a feeling sense. There is a time for everything, and God's people know it. Yet. they fret about things. I have gone for a long time without any visit that I could claim from God that I really rejoiced in, and was in doubt much of the time. Once after being in the hospital for six or seven weeks, and I was able to read a little, I felt the good articles were written for my comfort, and I rejoiced in a Saviour's love again . . .

Now I must close. May the blessings of our God lead and guide us all. May we ever look unto Him for everything, and thank Him for his blessings every day we live.

C. C. Shreve

MEANS MORE THAN SILVER AND GOLD

Mebane, N. C.
Rt. 4,

Dear Brother and Sister King:

I feel so unworthy to write to you, and I don't know just how to begin, but I feel there are a few things I would like to tell you since I haven't had an opportunity to talk with you since I was united with the church.

It seems this is the most wonderful thing that has ever happened to me. I have often wished that I could be as good as the Old Baptist, because they seemed to be God's people, and were so wonderful. I know that it was God's power that showed me and led me the way I have come. I feel my prayers have been answered. I don't feel worthy to be with them, but I am thankful I have a home with them — a place where I feel welcome and satisfied with the dear brothers and sisters, and can fellowship with them.

I used to slip into a room by myself and read the Bible. I was ashamed for my parents to know what I was doing; and was ashamed to let my classmates at school know I went to a church that did not have Sunday Schools. But now, Brother King, I am not ashamed to let anyone know what and how I believe. I don't believe anyone understands anything about it though, unless they have experienced something of it. I don't believe that everyone's experience is alike, but I do believe that our own experience is something that will always be with us, and means more to us than all the silver and gold in the world. I know mine does.

The pastor of another church came and talked with me several times, trying to get me to join his church. So, at one time, I decided to make everybody else happy and keep people quiet, I would go ahead and join his church: it had become a great burden to me, and I thought this was the way to clear it up. But, Brother King, how wrong I was! I prayed, asking God to show me and lead me the right way; and that night reading the Bible and going to bed, I had a wonderful dream. I dreamed of seeing Bush Arbor church sitting by itself upon a hill, and it was the most

beautiful place I had ever seen. It was so beautiful and such a wonderful place to me, I couldn't join the other church - I felt like that if I did I would just die. Later I had another talk with the pastor, and told him I felt it had been shown me it was not the place to be.

After this talk I couldn't sleep, and at work I couldn't sit still—I had to talk to someone. Brother King, I felt I really should have talked with you, but you were away, so I went to another dear brother. I felt that what I had to say was not worth taking up anyone's time, and I felt that he could use his time with someone else, or something else, that would have meant more to him. But I was so wrong: It was a great relief to me to see how patient he and his wife and children were, to have so much time to talk with me. It was a great relief, but still it was not all the comfort I had been searching for; yet I felt a lot better. At times things became a great burden, then I would think there was nothing to what I believed. Sometimes the burden would be lifted, but suddenly it would come back again heavier than ever. I prayed and searched the Scriptures trying to get some comfort; then finally I was given to leave everything to the Lord, and said, "Not my will but thine be done."

I had another dream of joining the church at Bush Arbor, and being baptized. I felt this was the answer, but didn't know how or whether it would come true or not, but I hope and prayed that it would.

The second Sunday in February, when Brother Smith preached, I felt it was a sermon preached to me. It was so wonderful to hear the true gospel preached and know it was the work of God, not the work of man. When Brother Oakley opened the doors of the church, and the song, "Oh, when shall I see Jesus." was being sung, I had no control of my feet: I had to go up and ask for a home with the church. I had often thought how wonderful it would be to tell God's little children what wonderful things He had done for me, but my lips were closed tight, and I couldn't say anything, but just asked the dear brethren to let me have a home with them, and be with them, because I loved them.

Brother King, I am thankful for all the things that have come to me. The morning you baptized me I left a great burden in the water, and was the happiest I have ever been in my life. It was the most beautiful water I had ever seen. I am very grateful to you for baptizing such a vile and wretched sinner as I am — it means so much to me.

I was hoping and praying my husband would be shown the way and go with me, but it was not God's will. I am waiting patiently, hoping someday he will be shown the way. I think of my grandfather Byrd so much when the song "Amazing Grace" is sung. This was his favorite. I'll never forget him asking me to sing it for him while he was on his death bed.

I feel that if my mother and father are never united with the church, they love the Old Baptists, and have a hope to be with God's little ones. I am thankful that they took me to hear the true gospel preached, but I do not believe that is what made me love God's people. I feel it was the work of God; no man could have done it.

It would make me happy to have you and Sister King come to see us sometime. I hope you will understand me writing to you; I just had to do it. Love.

A sister, I hope,
Elizabeth Foster

Box 85,
Ingalls, Ark.

Dear Editors:

You will find enclosed a check for my renewal to the *Signs*. I certainly don't want to miss an issue. May God's blessings abide with each one that has a part in the experiences that go into the making of this paper, and enable the editors

and elders, and others, by His Spirit to continue to pen the great truths therein.

When at a throne of grace, please remember a poor sinner and family in these days of great trials and tribulations. The ones who write for the *Signs* tell my experiences far better than I can. If I am saved, I am saved by grace and not of works. I have nothing whereof to boast — works are excluded, and it is by grace through faith we are saved. My sins are many. When I would do good evil is present. I cannot order my steps in straight paths, or avoid evil thoughts.

May our Heavenly Father watch over us and keep us, and bring us to the heavenly mansions, where there is no war, no trials, no tears, and no tribulations, but peace and love; where He is the light of that Bright City.

Yours in hope beyond this life,
Charlie Harrod

THE WITNESS WITHIN

1302 Walnut Street,
Benton, Ky.
Sept. 10, 1962

Elder D. V. Spangler,
Dear Brother in the Lord:

Enclosed you will find check for renewal of the *Signs* for Elder Paul Poyner.

We attended Little River Association the fourth Sunday in August, and Friday and Saturday before — a three day meeting. This association has Elders J. N. Darnell and W. Y. Chandler, as their ministers. Elder Chandler is moderator of Rock Springs Church, which is in the Soldier Creek Association. Elder Poyner told me that Elder Chandler baptized four the first Sunday in September into the Rock Springs Church. We have had an addition to Soldier Creek Church this year, Brother Ellis Wiley.

The Lord adds; we can't. We are taught, we hope, that our Lord is able; and we are without strength. We enjoy seeing them come home, telling what great things the Lord has done for them. You know, before they ever offer to the church, they are continually telling about their hope.

Elder Poyner's sermon Sunday, September the 9th, at our church was so very comforting. He read, "You that are troubled, rest with us," found in 2 Thes. 1:7; and then read 1 Thes. 5:23, pertaining to "Preserving God's children blameless." The resting was so graciously described and proclaimed — it was good to be there. The thief would break through and steal what we have, if possible. Thieves climb up some other way, other than The Way; and they tell us we have nothing, and we should join with them. And, now that some of us are old, they hate to see us go on in our way; which way we are so satisfied is God's way we are traveling. But none can steal what we have, because God does not leave himself without a witness; and that witness is within his children, testifying to truth, as Jesus is the truth and the way.

. . . In fellowship of the truth for Jesus' sake.

Effie Bowden

---

343 E. Pine Street,
Lodi, California

Dear Elder Spangler:

As my subscription is up with this issue, I am renewing for another year. Illness delayed me sending it earlier. I received the February issue today, and have read the most of it. I am supposed to read a half-hour and then rest, but when interested as I am with the *Signs of the Times,* I forget all about time, and my eyes will tire. I enjoyed so much the Editorial in the January issue on Isaiah 11:6-8; it gave me a better understanding of it. The editorials are all soul cheering; also the "Voices of the

Past," and many other good articles.

For the two years past I have been blessed to enjoy good meetings, and hear several elders proclaim the true word of God, which I love to hear, if indeed I know anything about it. I hope I know enough to know if the word doesn't ring true. I am withdrawn from those kind, and feel the dear Lord has led me to green pastures and beautiful gardens I had visions of in the past several years while I was seeking the dear Old Baptists I had always been used to in the years gone by.

Oh, to praise the dear Lord as I ought for all the sweet benefits to me. I feel he has kept me in his watch-care all along, while longing to be near good Old Baptists. My original home church is in Missouri. I just live for my meetings, and the older I grow it seems my mind dwells more and more on the blessed church the dear Lord set up, with the foundation firm and secure. In this city I am surrounded with many church-houses. Mine isn't there, but is not too far away from the city.

I am nearing seventy-three years of age, and hope, the Lord willing, to be able to attend meetings while I am here. The sweetest haven of rest on this earth is in the assembly with the dear saints. Oh, I hope I am one! I do fear and tremble; at times trying to pray in my weak way, and hoping I am sealed in His sweet promises.

May the dear Lord bless you to carry on in your labor. "As thy day, thy strength shall be."

A little one, feeling the least,
Mrs. Mabel Lindsey

Gen. Del. V. A. Branch,
Los Angeles 25, Calif.

Dear Brother Spangler:

Of late my mind dwells on "the remnant", which, to me, represents His people, or His church. "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call." (Joel 2:32) It would be impossible for them not to call on Him, for they are united to Him by the blood of Jesus, and also by the Adoption, as Brother Wood brought out so plainly.

If there had never been sin there would have been no calling on His name. Hezekiah's concern in 2 Kings 19:4, was for Isaiah to pray for the remnant that was left, but later he prayed to the Lord for deliverance; and the Lord heard his prayer, and Sennacherib was discomfited. He was finally slain by his sons. Therefore the remnant spoken of in the 30th and 31st verses of the same chapter, were saved from the king of Assyria. The remnant is safe in Him at all times.

The *Signs* is full of the theme of Jesus, which makes them so precious and valuable. It seems too precious, as I sometimes spend more time with them than the Bible; yet I try to read the Bible some every day.

. . . I was surprised to get a letter from Brother Weaver today. It is remarkable how he sustained the heart attack, and can now be up and about.

I am mentioning something that is of great concern to me, as no one has talked or written as I see it. Sister Cobb touched on it to a certain degree, I think. So many write, and I have heard it from the pulpit: "If God should send my soul to Hell, he would be just", or similar expressions. This is not harmonious with my experience, and makes me wonder at times if David's words apply to me, when he says that "They are not in trouble as other men," etc.

From what the Holy Ghost has taught me, He would be unjust to send one to Hell that Jesus shed his blood to redeem from sins. They are prepared for heaven and immortal glory. I have felt that He would be just should I have to suffer all the tribulations that Job did; yet I quake to think that I should have to suffer as he did. It is impossible that

one of the saints should be found in Hell.

We read in the scriptures that, "There is none good, no not one." And that our righteousness is as filthy rags. Also, "The heart is deceitful and desperately wicked above all things", etc. After his Spirit enters into our hearts, we have a perfect Being working for us. My desire is to dwell on him in love. If his love abides in us, we have faith, hope, and charity — without boasting. We do have thoughts of our good works at times perhaps, but they do not afford us pleasure for long, for the "thorn in the flesh" is ready to buffet us.

Usually when I have been concerned enough about anything, I see something in the *Signs*, or hear something from the pulpit that relieves me; but I have thought much on this statement. A few times in reading the Bible, I read something that stands out plainly; but rarely does that happen.

I wanted to make a small donation to be used as you deem necessary. I trust I have not said anything dishonoring to the cause. May His grace abide on all, especially the writers and ministers, and all connected with the *Signs*.

In gospel bonds a brother, I hope,
Harry T. Vories

(We appreciate your donations, Brother Vories, which go into our Indigent Fund. We have often heard similar expressions to the one you quoted: "If God should send my soul to Hell, he would be just." The hymn "Show pity, Lord", by Watts, has it:

"Show pity, Lord, O Lord, forgive,
Let a repenting sinner live!
Are not thy mercies large and free?
May not a sinner trust in thee?

My crimes are great, but can't surpass
The power and glory of thy grace;
Great God, thy nature hath no bound,
So let thy pard'ning love be found.

O wash my soul from ev'ry sin,
And make my guilty conscience clean.
Here on my heart the burden lies,
And past offenses pain my eyes.

My lips with shame my sins confess,
Against thy law, before thy face:
Lord, should thy judgment grow severe,
I am condemned, but thou art clear.

Should sudden vengeance seize my breath
I must pronounce thee just in death:
And if my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well.

Yet save a trembling sinner, Lord,
Whose hope, still hov'ring round thy word,
Would light on some sweet promise there,
Some sure support against despair."

It is the confession of one whose eyes have been opened and brought under conviction of sin; and they may well have such feeling, or there would be no conviction at all. It may be expressed in remembrance of that feeling of just condemnation, but never can it have an application to one who has experienced the pardon of sin and has a hope of eternal life, "Wherein they greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

It is in this sense the expression may properly be used; if otherwise, it would belie our hope; which cannot be, since, "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." — J. D. W.)

MAINE ASSOCIATION

The **Maine Old School Baptist Association** will convene, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, on August 30, 31, and September 1, 1963. An invitation is extended to those of nur faith and order, and interested friends.

Mrs. Sanford Bartlett, Clerk

THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The **Pigg River Association** is appointed to be held with the Martinsville Church, Martinsville, Virginia, the Lord willing, on August 2, 3, and 4, 1963. Brethren will please note that the meeting on Friday will be held in the meeting house in Martinsville; and on Saturday and Sunday at the Leatherwood Meeting House, where the association was held last year. This is because of the limited space at Martinsville.

Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

John D. Wood, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To June 1, 1963)

R. L. Buckner, Okla.	$1.00
James Howell, Ala.	5.00
Mrs. J. B. Simmons, Tex.	3.00
Mrs. J. Luther Brake, N. C.	2.00
Mary E. Hendricks, Okla.	1.00
Mrs. J. F. Thompson, N. C.	2.00

NOTICE OF SPECIAL REQUEST

It is our desire to be of as much service and benefit to our readers as we can, and to do so we need the cooperation of the brethren. So please note the following: Often we receive notices of meetings, associations, etc. too late to be included in the issue that they should be, so that all would have proper notice. We are therefore again requesting that such notices be in our hands about thirty-five days before publication date. (For instance: For the August publication we should have them not later than the 25th of June). And we again request that they be sent directly to us at Post Office Box 186, Manassas, Va. This will save us postage and handling delays.

Again, it is felt that obituaries should be much shorter than many of them are, since most of them are of local interest to the readers of the *Signs*. We request therefore that this be kept in mind when obituaries and resolutions of respect are written. And it will be quite a saving to us if they are mailed directly to P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va. — Editors

Danville, Virginia **August, 1963**

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TO

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R. F. D. 1, Box 539 **Beechwood Lane**
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EDITORIAL

THE TRANSFIGURATION ON THE MOUNTAIN

In my mind the transfiguration on the mountain was the most beautiful scene to be witnessed by man on this earth. If it pleases God to enable me, I desire to write of some of the beauties I see in meditation upon the grand story. Jesus took Peter and John and James and went up into a mountain to pray. He chose the ones to go with him. He did not give a broad opportunity to the multitudes, disciples or apostles, with the invitation "whosoever will," but "took" a special three of his special twelve of the disciples. These three that he took with him up into the mountain were the same that he took with him down into the garden of Gethsemane. Peter, John and James not only witnessed the most agonizing scene, when Jesus was agonizing in prayer, and

sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, but also witnessed the most beautiful scene of His transfiguration. The thought we get from this fact is that those who are destined to suffer the greatest afflictions and tribulations in the valley of distress are also blessed to experience the greatest joys and brilliancy in the mountain of gladness. Peter, John and Jesus must not have been of the progressive type of Christians we have today, who seem to think that Jesus needs help. Instead of helping Jesus pray they were "heavy with sleep" both in the garden of Gethsemane and also on the mountain of transfiguration. "As he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias."

The questions that come to mind are, Who was Moses? and who was Elias? We find that the law was given to Moses by Jehovah. The law is referred to in the Bible as "the law of Moses" (Ezra 7:7; Neh. 8:1; Ezra 6:18). The ten commandments on tables of stone, together with ordinances, were given to Moses, who taught the law to the people. We find Moses connected with the law all along, therefore we conclude that Moses represented the law in that trio of talkers on the mountain.

Who was Elias? Elias was that great prophet who predicted the drouth to king Ahab (1 Kings 17:1). Elias hid at the brook Cherith and was miraculously fed by the ravens. He raised a widow's son and contested with Baal's prophets, by whom God manifested Himself as God. He later slew these prophets at Kishon (1 Kings 18). God so blessed him and honored him that Elias ascended into heaven. (2 Kings 2:11) He was most honored of the prophets, therefore we conclude that Elias represented prophecy in that trio of talkers on the mountain.

The third in that trio was Jesus Christ. They spake of his decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem (Luke 9:31). In meditation, we hear Moses, representative of the law, giving the requirements of the law, that the law must be kept and punishment for disobedience of the law must be meted out, and justice satisfied. We hear Elias, representing prohecy, saying that these requirements of the law, and penalty for disobedience, will be completed and justice satisfied. Then we hear Jesus saying, Think not that I am come to destroy the law (Moses), or the prophets (Elias); I am not come to destroy but to fulfill. Then Moses and Elias departed and Jesus was left alone. Peter said, Let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, one for Moses and one for Elias, not knowing what he said. In my experiences I have wanted to make three tabernacles. I have desired to live up to the law requirements of duty as we read in Ecclesiastes 12:13, "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Thus erect a tabernacle to Moses. I have desired to fulfill prophecy, in accomplishing the warfare and obtaining pardon for my iniquities (Isaiah 40:2). Thus erect a tabernacle to Elias. And at the same time I have desired to pay homage to that Scripture which reads, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them". (Eph. 2:8 10) Thus erect a tabernacle to Jesus. In my experience there was a time when I verily thought the law, prophecy and grace were contrary. As Peter, I could not see how the three tabernacles could be constructed in one. While Peter was in a confused state of mind, the God of heaven spoke thus from the cloud, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him." It was needless to build three tabernacles. The law of Moses and the prophecy of Elias were being fulfilled by Jesus Christ. This command from the clouds (I verily believe) removes the seeming contradiction of the Scriptures. The require-

ments of the law must be met, and Jesus was the only One who did it. Prophecy must be fulfilled, and Jesus was the only one who did it. Therefore, pay no more heed to the law and the prophets, for they were fulfilled by Jesus.

"Jesus was left alone." Yes, He was sufficient to tread the winepress alone. He did not need Moses and Elias any longer. His services pleased the God of heaven. It so pleased the Father that this command from the clouds means (to me), pay no more attention to the law and the prophets, for they were fulfilled in Jesus Christ therefore, "Hear ye Him." What do we hear him saying? We hear him saying, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." "I am the door, by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture". (John 10:9) "No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:44). We are made to realize we are not saved according to our power or works, but according to the power of God, who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. (2 Timothy 1:9) Therefore, the law system has disappeared as Moses disappeared. This law system was not destroyed, but fulfilled by Jesus Christ. If I am one who was chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the law for me, and my account is so accredited. All the sins that I have committed, or will commit, were laid upon Jesus' shoulders, and He bore them on the cross and paid the penalty by shedding His precious blood for me.

Brethren, my mind has traveled faster than I could write, and I know this is very imperfect and scattering, but may God be pleased to enable us by His grace to feast upon some of the beauties contained in the record of the transfiguration on the mountain.

(The above was written by Elder Lambert, and appeared in the Signs of June, 1938; and was included in his book "Tried in the furnace". We enjoyed re-reading it, and felt our readers would to. — J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

REMARKS ON ROMANS VIII, 38, 39

The text proposed is plain, emphatic, and full of consolation to the saints of the Most High.

"For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus."

This chapter begins with a declaration that there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, and concludes with the assurance of our text, that there can be no separation from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. This was not only the firm conviction of the mind of the Apostle, but the inspired truth of the Holy Ghost. This blessed security from condemnation, and assurance of the immutable love of God, belongs to them who are in Christ Jesus, and to none other. As we are deeply interested in the subject, it becomes us to enquire earnestly, and to search diligently whether we are in Christ Jesus, and numbered with those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. If we are not in him, we certainly have no part or lot in these great and precious declarations. If we are in him we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, according to Eph. i. 4, for Christ Jesus is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. Heb. xiii. 8. The exceeding greatness of the mighty power of God is exemplified in him, all things are put under his feet, and God has given him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is his body,

the fulness of him that filleth all in all. — Eph. i. 19-23.

Consequently if there ever was a period in time or eternity when any of the members of his church were not in him, then there has been a period when his body was not full. But to imagine the existence of a head without a body, or a body without a head, or a perfect and complete head, and an imperfect and deficient body, does not suit our understanding of the declaration that it pleased the Father that in him all fulness should dwell. — Col. i. 19. Again it is written, "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and ye (the saints and faithful brethren in Christ,) are complete in him which is the Head of all principality and power."—Col. ii. 9, 10. All the members of Christ are in him, even as the eternal Father is in him. He is the dwelling place (not of one-third part of the Godhead, as some seem to understand it,) but of all the fulness of the Godhead. "That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one," &c. — John xvii. 21-23. If the church is in Christ as the eternal Father is in him, must they not have been in him from everlasting. Would Christ be complete if the Father were not in him, or if all the fulness of the Godhead were not in him? Or could the fulness of the Godhead dwell in him bodily, if any part of the Godhead did not dwell in him? Certainly not. Equally certain is it then as the church is in him as the Father is in him, and they are his body and the fulness of him, that all the members required to make his mystical body perfect and complete, must have been in him as well before the world began, as they will be when this world shall be no more.

We are not contending that our earthly, corrupt, and depraved natures were in him, and were a part of his fulness before the world began; for they were not even in the earthly Adam until after the world began. Nor did Christ himself come in the flesh until he was made of a woman — until his advent. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of the flesh and blood, he (Christ) also himself likewise (or in the same manner) took part of the same." — Hebrews 2:14. His children partaking of flesh and blood, shows that their relationship to God as *children* was perfect before they partook of flesh and blood; and that participation of flesh and blood no more constituted them children, than Christ's coming into the world, and "also himself likewise partaking of the same," constituted him the Son of God, or the Head of Immortality to his body, the church. "That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." (Romans 9:8.) If that earthly life which was given us in the earthly Adam could be distinctly identified as to involve us in the guilt of Adam's transgression, almost six thousand years before we were born of the flesh; is it hard to understand in the anti-type, Adam, that our spiritual, immortal and eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested? 1 John i. 2. And which was given to us in the unspeakable gift of God's dear Son, according to the record borne by the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost. — 1 John 1. 7 and 11 — should as fully identify us in Christ, that it could of truth be said of us that we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. — Eph. i. 4. Or as still more expressly stated — Eph. ii. 18 — "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

This term *created* has reference to the new or spiritual creation. It is not like the creation of the natural world, the creation of something out of nothing; but it is the giving of the members of Christ a place, a standing in,

and identify with him who personifies their immortality, or their eternal life. This life instead of being called into existence after the manner of the old creation of the natural world, is the manifestation of a life which is eternal, which always was hid with Christ in God. For it was, as we have proved by 1 John i. 2: "For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that *Eternal life which was with* the Father, and was manifested unto us." "And we know that the Son of God," (in whom the record of Father, Word and Holy Ghost declares that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son,) "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and *we are in him* that is true; even in his son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.' — 1 John v. 19, 20. Thus to be in Jesus Christ seminally, as the spiritual embodiment and progenitor of a seed that shall serve him, and be counted to the Lord for a generation, according to Psalms xxii. 30. Isaiah liii. 10-12. 1 Peter ii. 9 involves the Bible doctrine of Eternal Union. A union of life, love and immortality. One with Christ even as Christ is one with the Father.

But to be in him manifestatively by a new and spiritual birth, implies that we are, or must be born again; not of a corruptible seed, but of that seed which was in Christ our spiritual progenitor, from everlasting. By the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever — not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. — 1 Peter i. 23. John i. 13. A birth is not the creation or origination of life, but the manifestation of life by what is called *pro*-creation. Our earthly nature which in Christians is called the *old,* or *outward man,* was created in Adam, but pro-created by natural generation. But that immortality which is in the Christian, and which is denominated the *new,* or the *inward man,* was given in Jesus Christ, and is manifested by spiritual generation when born of God. As we are, and were strangers in our earthly character, to this spiritual life which is hid with Christ in God, until he who is our life appears, or is revealed in us, so when that revelation is made, we are no more strangers, we are brought forth bearing the image of the heavenly progenitor, as we have in our flesh borne the image of the earthly Adam. Hence, if any man be in Christ Jesus, manifestatively and experimentally, he is a new creature — a subject of the new or spiritual creation, and as an evidence of this, old things have passed away, and all things have become new. His old element, which was sin, darkness and death, is passed away — he is quickened by eternal life implanted — the light of life shines in his heart to give him the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ — the love of God is shed abroad in him — he is delivered from wrath — he is taken up out of a horrible pit — his going is established, and a new song is in his mouth. All these things are entirely new to him, for they are not the productions of his flesh, but they are the fruits of the Spirit of which he is now born. He is delivered from the power of darkness in which he was before held, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

As the love of God from which the members of Christ cannot be separated is in Christ Jesus, we have dwelt the more particularly on the unity of Christ and his members; for if the love of God is in Christ Jesus, and we are not in him also, then there is no connection between us and the love of God which is in him; and it would be preposterous to talk of the impossibility of being separated from that with which we are not and never were connected.

We think it will be admitted even by those brethren who dispute the doctrine of Eternal Union, that God loved his people *even when they were dead*

in sins. — Eph. ii. 4. 5. That he even loved them as he loved our Lord Jesus Christ, whom he loved before the foundation of the world. See John xvii. 23, 24. Admitting then the testimony of our text that this love is and eternally was in Christ Jesus, must not the objects of it also have been in him as anciently as they have been loved of God in him. So we confess it looks to us, and for this blessed assurance we are more than willing to bear all the reproach, slander, abuse and persecution to which we have been subjected for trying to set it forth.

From the foregoing considerations it strikes us that so long as God himself maintains his eternal immutability, there can be no separation of the saints from his love which is in Christ Jesus. Paul was persuaded that death could not effect a separation. Death's boasted power is impotent and weak compared with the love of God in Christ. Our death in trespasses and sins could not abate the love of God; since it is written that "God, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins," &c. Death could enfold our earthly nature in its cold embrace, but all the dark floods of death could not quench its eternal flame. Again, Death and the Love of God which is in Christ Jesus, met in dreadful conflict on Mount Calvary. But Death was vanquished, and Immortality was brought to light in the sequel of the contest, and God commended his love, in that when we were yet sinners, in due time Christ died for us.

> "He saw us ruin'd in the fall,
> Yet loved us notwithstanding all."

Neither shall Death in his last assault upon these mortal bodies, tend to separate us; but instead of alienating that love, it shall only remove the intervening curtain, that we may realize its eternal fulness in unclouded glory forever. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is Death, and then "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit which is in us. — Rom. viii. 11.

Nor life. Young Christians in their early experience of this love, desire to die, to depart and be with Jesus, not only from the powerful attractions they feel drawing them to him, but from fear that their life in the flesh may bring some reproach upon the blessed cause, and that they may by some waywardness on their part lose the sweet and heavenly enjoyment of that love. But although the children of God do not always while here in the flesh enjoy the vivid evidences of the love of God, yet in Christ where it is treasured up for them, it is immutable, and never can abate. It is among the "All spiritual blessings with which God has blessed them, according as he hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world." — Eph. i. 3, 4. He has established our goings, and he controls all things, and causes all things to work together for the good of them that love him — to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Nor angels. Holy angels have neither the disposition or the power; for unto the angels he (God) hath not put in subjection the world to come, of which we speak. — Heb. ii. 5. Wicked angels have tried all their power, but never have, never can possibly produce an abatement of the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

Nor principalities. Should all the governments of earth combine their forces, as many of them have, they may indeed be permitted to annoy and harrass the saints, they may, if permitted, torture these frail, dying bodies, chain them to the stake, and consume the earthly tabernacle with fire, but the love of God is in Christ Jesus, and therefore out of their reach.

Nor powers. Of whatever sort or kind; for all powers both in heaven and earth is vested in him in whom this love of God is seceured that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him. There is no power but that is of God, and that perfectly subject to the orders of his throne. The

power of sin, the power of darkness, the power of the law, cannot effect an alienation, for Christ has redeemed his people from all these; nor are there any powers in existence that are or shall be able to succeed.

Nor things present. Although for the present, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations — though clouds may obscure our skies, tempests may beat, and thunders shake the world, there is nothing in the present tense that can lessen the love of God to his saints in Christ.

Nor things to come. The coast is clear! O, Christians, look ahead. Look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith; there is nothing in the impenetrable future to fear.

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread,
Are big with mercy, and shall break
With blessings on your head."

Should the mountains uprooted be hurled into the midst of the sea, should the waves thereof swell and roar, should death sweep over the earth, and sun forget to shine, the moon turn into blood, and the pillars of the universe totter to their fall, there is nothing in all that can come to pass that can separate you from the love of your God and Savior.

Nor height. Look upward then, and trace the fearful omens of the heavens. See blazing comets approach with sevenfold speed of lightning; if your God commands them so they may come in contact with this little dwelling place of worms and dash this world to atoms. Pestilence, like winged warriors, may come on every wind, thunders may shake the earth, lightnings may bear the bolts of almighty vengeance far and scatter death abroad, but no heights, with their infinity of space can possibly deprive you of the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, treasured up for you.

Nor depth. No hidden fires in secret caverns burn beneath your feet, nor volcanic terrors which may tear the earth, can change the love of God towards you; and could your eyes unbar the doors of death, gaze into the gloomy chambers of the grave, and sepulchres of the mighty, or could you even penetrate the deep confines of hell, and scan the horrors of the damned, still undismayed let faith lay hold upon the infallible assurance, it cannot separate you from the love of God.

Nor any other creature, death and life, angels and principalities, powers, and things present and things to come, and heights and depths, are all the creatures of God. He has created them not in vain — they shall accomplish his purpose and do his pleasure. Neither these nor any other creature, is to be regarded by the saints as having power to dispossess them of what God has given them in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

If then, there is nothing in death nor life, nor in principalities nor powers, nothing high nor low, nothing present nor to come, that can remove the saints from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, may the Lord pity the graceless wretch who dares aver that the children of God may fall from grace, lose their interest in the love of God, and sink to hell at last.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, November 1, 1858.)

ORDINATION OF AN ELDER

March 10, 1963

The J. H. Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church, Granville County, Stem, N. C., called a Presbytery to meet with them for the purpose of examination of Brother Julian M. Daniels as to his fitness and qualification, and ordination to the full work of the ministry.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder J. Harvey Smith, Moderator, and Deacon C. T. Hall, Clerk. Brother O. Y. Clayton was appointed spokesman for the church, and presented Brother Daniels to the Presbytery. After questioning, which was conducted by Elder Harvey Smith, and being satisfied as to his fitness and qualifications, the ordination prayer was offered by Elder Wallis Smith, and laying on of hands was by all the Presbytery. The charge was delivered by Elder W. C. King. The work of the Presbytery was accepted by the church, and Elder Julian M.

Daniels was delivered to the church duly ordained. On motion the Presbytery was adjourned.

The Presbytery was composed of the following Elders and Deacons: Elders W. C. King, J. Harvey Smith and Wallis A. Smith; Deacons C. B. Davis, Jr., C. T. Hall, Jr., and C. T. Hall, from Shiloh Church; N. E. Davis, from McCray Church; Roy Simmons and G. F. Squires, from Bush Arbor Church; C. R. Massey and S. F. Faucett, from Durham Church; Tommy Batts and C. W. Cagle, from Greensboro Church; S. L. Slaughter, from Old Mountain Church; and L. Otha Goss, from Gooch Memorial Church.

Elder J. Harvey Smith, Moderator
C. T. Hall, Clerk

OBITUARIES

MRS. ALLIE GOOCH REID

Mrs. Allie Gooch Reid, daughter of Henry Spraggins Gooch and Jane Rebecca Holeman Gooch, was born in Granville County, N. C., May 5, 1874. She departed this life January 22, 1963, in Winston-Salem, N. C., where she resided. She is survived by her grandson, John David Reid, her nearest relative.

In 1911 she was united in marriage to David Settle Reid, Sr., and moved to Winston-Salem, where she resided until her death. To this union was born one son, Gooch Reid, who preceded her in death several years.

Sister Reid went before the church at Gooch Memorial, in Granville County, N. C., May 12, 1957, and was joyfully received. She was baptized by the writer July 14, 1957. Many precious memories linger in the hearts of her many brethren and friends. I have never known a person in the many years I have been associated with the Old School Baptists, who manifested more love for her Master and the cause, than Sister Reid. It was the joy of her heart to be in an assembly, either in a home or meeting house, and listen to preaching; and talking upon the Word of God.

Her funeral was conducted from her home in Winston-Salem by the writer, assisted by Elder W. C. King, and Elder Julian Daniel, according to the request she made before her death.

Her family, brethren, and friends have suffered a great loss, but it is her eternal gain. She has departed to be with Him whom she adored. Her voice will be heard no more in our midst, but fond memories will remain until that day when we hope to meet her and all the redeemed around the throne, to see Him as he is, and ever be with Him.

D. V. Spangler

SISTER LOU MONTGOMERY

Sister Lou Montgomery was born at Moore's Bridge, Tuscaloosa County, Alabama, February 2, 1879, and passed from this life February 26, 1963, at York, Alabama, where she lived with her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Lynn Montgomery. She was the daughter of Elder D. L. and Jerusha Moore; and was married to the late Joe A. Montgomery. To this union were born two sons, Lester Montgomery, Reform, Alabama; and Lynn Montgomery, who preceded her in death just one year.

Sister Montgomery joined the Pleasant Ridge Primitive Baptist Church in May, 1927, and was baptized by the late Elder E. Z. McCool. She was a faithful member, and always enjoyed attending the meetings as long as she was physically able. She believed in the only true living God, and was firm in the doctrine of election by grace according to the foreknowledge of God. She believed that God chose his people in Christ before the foundation of the world.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder J. M. Freeman, and Elder W. L. Norris; and her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, in the presence of her many friends and relatives.

May the Almighty God comfort all those who mourn her departure. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

This was read and approved by the Pleasant Ridge Church while in conference the fourth Sunday in April, 1963.

Elder J. M. Freeman, Moderator,
Sister Dannie Strickland, Clerk

ELDER HURSHEL HICKS

Elder Hursel Hicks was born in Calhoun County, W. Va. April 30, 1896, and died February 11, 1963, a son of the late S. P. and Louisa (Truman) Hicks. His last illness was of short duration. He had returned from the hospital after treatment for a heart condition and complications, and seemed to be recuperating nicely. The end came suddenly while in his chair. We believe in very truth that he fell asleep in Jesus.

Brother Hicks had spent the last several years at Hampton, Virginia. He was reared by Primitive Baptist parents, being a grandson of the late Elder David Hicks, of Stinson, W. Va. He was brought under trial and conviction in his early life, and peace was spoken to his troubled soul, and he was given a sweet hope in Jesus. He united with the West Fork Primitive Baptist Church, in Calhoun County, and was soon licensed to preach, and later ordained to the full work of the ministry. He

served his church as pastor for several years before moving to Hampton. I knew Brother Hicks from our boyhood days, and the bond of love and fellowship between us was great. His ministerial labor was in a spirit of humility and meekness. He was conscientious in his belief and declarations, and uncompromising in doctrine; and was unassuming, upright and honest in all his dealings. West Fork Church has lost a worthy, useful member. All who knew him feel their loss, but sincerely believe that our brother is at rest, and is therefore better off than we who remain.

Surviving are his wife, Mrs. Alice Hicks, Hampton, Va.; one step-daughter, Mrs. Darlene Starcher, Hampton; two sisters: Mrs. Mary Jarvis, Minnora, W. Va., and Mrs. Cynthia Ellis, Spencer, W. Va. Also five brothers: Truman Hicks, Cedar Grove, W. Va.; Roscoe Hicks, Hudson, Ohio; Harley Hicks, Parkersburg, W. Va.; Huey Hicks, Chloe, W. Va.; and Everett Hicks, Charleston, W. Va.; and many other relatives.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Methodist church house at Douglas, W. Va., and burial was in the Hicks Cemetery, near Stinson, W. Va. I tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved family and friends, using as a text 1 Cor. 13:13.

May God visit the healing balm of his grace upon all who mourn, for Jesus sake.

A little brother in hope,
H. J. Bird

HENRY PAULIN HEDRICK

God in his infinite wisdom has been pleased to call from time Mr. Henry Paulin Hedrick, son of James H. Hedrick and Sarah Ann Bobbitt Hedrick. Born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, March 31, 1887. After about two years of affliction or more, he passed away November 16, 1962. His first marriage was to Sallie Bet English in 1909. To this union were born ten children. On October 19, 1940, he was married to Hattie Annie Holland. Mr. Hedrick was a good father and husband and a good stepfather; always ready to help those in need; always glad to have God's people around. His home was a home for the Primitive Baptist folks. A firm believer in salvation by grace, he always enjoyed going to church and he visited as long as he could; and when he couldn't go, he wanted them to come to see him.

He bore his affliction and did not complain. He did not join any church, but I feel that he was a Brother. I felt many times that he wanted to join, but he felt unworthy and declined. He leaves to mourn, his wife, Sister Hattie Hedrick; five daughters, Mrs. Elsie H. Tuck of Sandy Level, Mrs. Pheobia Cheatam of Williamsburg, Mrs. Faris Cavenaugh of Newport News, Mrs. Dotsie Cox of Richmond, and Mrs. Nannie Belle Russell of Japan; and four sons: James L. Hedrick of Appomattox, T. Howard Hedrick and Randolph M. Hedrick, both of Williamsburg, and J. D. Hedrick of Chatham.

He also leaves two step-daughters: Mrs. Beulah Board of Roanoke, and Mrs. Bertha Pitzer of Silver Springs, Md.; three step-sons: Perry Scott and Wilson Scott, both of Roanoke, and Wallace Holland of Tipton, Ind.; two sisters: Mrs. Lucy Anne Mattox of Chatham, and Mrs. Kizzie Bowen of Danville; one brother: Allison A. Hedrick of Chatham; 13 grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren, six step-grandchildren and eleven step-great grandchildren.

Mr. Hedrick's funeral was conducted at Oakey's Chapel in Roanoke, Virginia, by the writer with a host of friends and a large arrangement of flowers present. His body was laid to rest in Mountain View Cemetery in Franklin County, Virginia, to wait the Resurrecton. We give our deepest sympathy to his wife and family. We bow in humble submission to the will of our heavenly Father who does all things well.

Humbly submitted,
Elder Leonard J. Brammer

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It has pleased our sovereign God in his wisdom to remove from our midst and call unto His embrace, his humble servant, our beloved Brother, Elder Aubrey Dolin.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we the Sarah Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, Boone County, W. Va., desire the grace to bow in humble submission to the will of our God in the sudden passing of our brother. It came as a shock to us. He was at work in the coal mines near Lebanon, Va., when the fatal attack came. His passing was swift; and we are so weak and human it was unexpected, for we were resting in the false premise that since he was a young man forty-four years of age, our God would spare him many years to serve in his vinyard. Though it is impossible for our human minds to comprehend the will and purpose of our God, we are firmly entrenched in the conviction, and find rest and solace in the conviction, that the span of life, and the ministerial labors of our brother were full to the measure of the will and purpose of God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will. We rest in the sweet assurance that our brother is at rest in perfect peace.

Elder Dolin was born August 18, 1918, a son of N. D. and the late Lousisa Belle

(Woodrum) Dolin. Early in youth he was brought to repentance and weighty conviction for sins, and after much travel he was given a good hope in the blood and imputed righteousness of Jesus. He was received and baptized into the fellowship of Sarah Church, and baptized by the writer during a mixture of light snow and rain in the cold waters of Little Coal River. (Sacred to my memory still is the very sanctity of this ordinance, and of this instance). The church soon licensed him to preach, and soon afterwards ordained him to the full functions of the gospel ministry. His preaching was in a spirit of meekness and love, and in demonstration of the Spirit. He was well indoctrinated, a sincere, conscientious man; truly his labor was a heart matter, a labor of love. His preaching was edifying, and well received among those with whom his lot was cast. He was highly respected and well loved by all who knew him.

He had sustained a spinal injury as a result of a fall; and in addition he had an organic heart condition for some time. When the attack came he lingered only a little time: departing this life November 28, 1962. Funeral services were conducted by Elders J. C. Hammond and H. J. Bird, in Madison, W. Va.; and burial in Madison Memorial Gardens.

Left to mourn are, his faithful wife, Sister Mee Dolin; two sons: David, with the Coast Guard at Virginia Beach; and Herbert, Lakehurst, N. J.; two daughters: Mary and Nancy, at home, Madison, W. Va. Also his father, N. D. Dolin, Bob White, W. Va.; four brothers: Herman, Bob White; Lance, St. Albans; Clarence, Sutton, and Herbert, Madison; three sisters: Mrs. Erma Cladwell, Greenwood, Mrs. Hartzel Nelson, Cedar Grove, and Mrs. Lousisa Hogge, Wharton, W. Va.; and many near relatives.

Elder Dolin was a kind husband and father, and good neighbor. He was an ex-service man of the Second Word War.

BE IT RESOLVED; That we have sustained a great loss in the passing of our Assistant Pastor. May God in mercy visit the healing balm of his felt presence upon all who mourn: and that a copy of this Resolution be made a part of our church records; a copy tendered the family; and a copy be sent the **Signs of the Times** for publication. Done by order of the church in conference. Written by H. J. Bird by request

J. C. Hammond, Moderator
Mae Dolin, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God in his infinite wisdom has been pleased to call from our midst unto his bosom, our esteemed Sister and Mother in Israel, Mrs. Lousisa Bell Dolin,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we the Sarah Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, Boone County, W. Va., desire to bow in humble submission to the sovereign will of our God, feeling to rest in the sweet conviction that our sister is at rest; and that for her to die was gain. She was born May 21, 1883, a daughter of the late Brother Green Woodrum and Sister Louisa (Dolin) Woodrum.

Though she was afflicted for many years, she bore her affliction in a spirit of sweet resignation, and after a lingering illness she fell asleep October 11, 1962. Funeral services were conducted in Madison, W. Va., by Elders J. C. Hammond and H. J. Bird. Burial in Madison Memory Gardens.

Sister Dolin was well known and dearly loved by those who knew her; she had many graces which endeared her to her many friends, and especially the household of faith. Her marked humility, her steadfastness in the faith, her deep convictions and endoctrination truly marked her a Mother in Israel. She was a good wife, a kind mother, and a good neighbor. The gracious hospitality of her home was shared by many of her kindred in Christ through the years, as she and her humble husband Brother N. D. Dolin entertained in their home. She was given a good hope in Jesus, and peace and deliverance was spoken to her troubled soul. She found shelter and a home with the Sarah Primitive Baptist Church many years ago. She will be long and sadly missed in the church.

Left to mourn are: her devoted husband, N. D. Dolin, Bob White, W. Va.; five sons: Herman, Bob White; Lance, St. Albans; Clarence, Sutton, Elder Aubrey Dolin (since deceased); and Herbert, Madison, W. Va. Three daughters: Mrs. Erma Caldwell, Greenwood, W. Va.; Mrs. Hartzel Nelson, Cedar Grove, W. Va.; and Mrs. Louisa Hogge, Wharton, W. Va. Also two sisters: Mrs. Dora Triplett, Pedro, Ohio; and Mrs. Geneva Miller, Danville, Va; And twenty-three grand children, thirty great grandchildren.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That the church has sustained a great loss, which we keenly feel. May God in mercy heal, and visit sustaining and reconciling grace, for Jesus' sake. That a copy of these resolutions be made a part of our church records; a copy tendered the family; and a copy sent the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference. Written by H. J. Bird.

J. C. Hammond, Moderator
Mae Dolin, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 131 DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1963 No. 9

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/63
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"HE'S THE ONE"
(Job 33:15, 16; Isa. 57:15)

One night, in a sweet, sweet dream,
I exclaimed, "HE'S THE ONE!"
I was affectionately referring to
God's only begotten Son.

Others have claimed to be the Messiah,
But indeed He's the One;
Jesus, who came to seek and to save
Sinners lost and undone.

"The chiefest among ten thousand,"
My Father said to me,
And I said, "Millions, billions!"
Saying so in sincerity.

Indeed, He's "the high and lofty One
That inhabiteth eternity;"
One with the Father and Holy Spirit,
And Second Person in the Trinity.

Isaiah saw Him "sitting upon a throne,
High and lifted up,"
After His humiliation here below,
Where He drank the bitter cup.

He saw Him ". . . high and lifted up,
And his train filled the temple;"
This language is so sweet to me,
And it is very simple.

As God our Saviour, He's the One
That fills immensity,
And He descended from heaven above
To set His people free.

He's the Holy One and the Just
That dwells in infinite light,
Far beyond this realm of sin,
Where there is no night.

He's the One who was given "a name
Which is above every name,"
And He was exalted as Zion's King,
Who will eternally reign.

He's the head of the body, the church,
In all things having preeminence,
And when we the Scriptures search,
We find He is Omnipotence.

He's the One who is "the same
Yesterday, and today, and for ever;"
He sticketh closer than a brother,
And He'll forsake His never.

He's the One altogether lovely,
Yet He was made "to be sin,"
That guilty sinners "might be made
The righteousness of God in him."

He's the One who died vicariously
An ignominious death,
Being nailed to the shameful tree,
On which He resigned His breath.

He was delivered for our offences,
As the Scriptures do declare,
Then raised for the justification
Of every kingdom heir.

He's the Sun of righteousness who rises
"With healing in his wings,"
And how great it is to have a hope
In Him, the King of kings.

He's the One who is my Hope,
And I love His adorable Name;
O could I feel His presence more,
For it doth hide my shame.

He's the One that did clothe me
With a long, long robe,*
And I hope it betokened my title to
Eternal life beyond the globe.

He's the One who is coming again
To receive His ransomed bride,
And take her to that blissful abode,
Where she will forever abide.

"All the days of my appointed time
Will I wait, till my change come,"
Then I shall see my Redeemer God,
And dwell with Him at home.

*In a dream.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, North Carolina

R. D. 1,
West Point, Miss.

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing a check for another year's subscription to the good paper. It is always full of good reading. We have had it in our family for many years.

I have been a member for fifty-five years, and I still love the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone: there is no man's work in it for me. I will be eighty-three years old in October, and God has been good to me; he has blest me to be able to see and to get about pretty well, but I am failing now, and I cannot get to my church much. I live sixty-five miles from it, and have to get some of the children to drive for me.

May God bless you all, is my prayer.

Yours in hope of a better world to come,

L. M. Cook

THE LATE ELDER HERNDON TO ELDER RUSTON

Danville, Va.
October 20, 1939

Dear Brother Ruston:

I have just received the October *Signs* (1939), and among the other good articles which I have read, was yours on James 2:26; and I am writing to let you know I have greatly enjoyed it, as I am sure it will stand a scriptural investigation.

I am real glad that the Lord impressed your mind to write upon this subject, and I feel it will be beneficial to the household of faith.

Although you have given a "thus sayeth the Lord" for what you have written, it is somewhat out of the line of the ordinary, because so few of our brethren preach or write upon this subject; but I feel like this is just as important as any other portion of the word, for we are told that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Timothy 3:16-17) The Apostle Paul was faithful to write and preach about predestination, election, salvation by grace, not of works lest any man should boast, the resurrection of the bodies of the saints to immortal glory, justification by faith, the preservation of the saints, and many other good and precious things that we are so much concerned about, which I cannot mention here.

And not only these things, but Paul and the other writers have left on record many admonitions to the children of God, telling them how to conduct themselves while they live in this world: and what the consequences of disobedience are. In Romans 8:13, Paul tells the brethren, "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

In this admonition Paul strikes the key note: he not only tells them what the result would be if they live after the flesh, but he tells them how they mortify the deeds of the body: They do it through the Spirit. To mortify means to subdue, or bring into subjection; to restrain. We cannot do this of our own strength, but we do it through the Spirit. In 1 Corinthians 9:27, we read, "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." Paul does not mean that he did this in his own strength, but he means that he did it through the Spirit. As a proof of this, read Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me."

Now, in Acts 20:27, Paul declares, "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." I think I would be safe in saying that about four-

fifths of Paul's epistles to the churches is in the form of admonitions. He was faithful to preach them, and to write them for the benefit of the brethren.

In 1 Corinthians 4:1-2, Paul classes the ministers of Christ as "stewards of the mysteries of God". And in the 2nd verse he says, "Moreover it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful." If any minister of the gospel shuns any portion of the word, and does not preach it, he is not faithful, and he has not preached a full gospel; or, in the language of the Apostle, "He has not declared all the counsel of God."

In the 1st epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, which is composed almost entirely of admonitions, in chapter 5, verse 27, it reads, "I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren." If these admonitions are not very important, why does he make this special request? If they are very important, why do some ministers shun them? In his epistle to Titus, we read, "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men." Paul did not condemn good works and speak lightly of them, but rather, commends them; and he is here instructing Titus, a young minister, like he did Timothy, what to teach and preach, that it might be in line with sound doctrine. Not just simply speak of it once or twice, but to affirm it constantly; and the reason that he gives for doing this is that, "These things are good and profitable unto men."

Good works are an evidence of faith: the fruit of the divine work of grace in the heart. Good works do not produce faith, but faith, (if it is a living faith), produces good works. You cannot separate faith and works, because they are like wisdom and prudence, they dwell together. (Proverbs 8:12) That is why the Apostle James says, "For as the body without the Spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. (James 2:26)

Now, in conclusion, you say in your excellent article, "It is not easy to pray for our enemies, to do good to those who despitefully use us, yet it becomes us so to do, even though it is painful work." I most heartily agree with you, my dear brother. It becomes our duty to love and pray for our enemies, because Jesus said to do it. (Matthew 5:44) Yet, of our selves, we are not equal to the occasion; according to the flesh we do not feel willing to do it, but as we wait on the Lord, as we are told to do, He will renew our strength. (Isaiah 40:31)

We have to be prepared of the Lord, like Stephen when he was being stoned to death: he saw the heavens open, and said, "Behold I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God." Then he could pray for his enemies: "And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep." (Acts 7:56-60) You have to be blessed with the same Spirit that was in Jesus when he was expiring upon the cross; he said, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

J. E. Herndon

(See the editorial referred to by Elder Herndon, which is republished in this issue. — J. D. W.)

GOD'S MERCY MANIFESTED

772 Alonzo Court,
Greensboro, N. C.

Dear Editors of the *Signs of the Times:*

I feel I must write something of what I believe to be a knowledge of the power of an Almighty God. I have been hesitant to write thus far because I feel small attempting to say something to a people who already know the things I believe I have received by revelation of Jesus Christ. I think I know something of what Elder King meant recently at Greensboro Primitive Baptist

Church, when he said something of how small he felt attempting to preach to the world's wisest people (godly wise).

Nevertheless I consider how much and how many times I've been exalted in the Lord when reading the writings of others in the *Signs*, even when I had already received the same revelation of the Lord beforehand. These things confirm the things I believe I understand, and I'm lifted in hope that I haven't been deceived.

I knew nothing of the power of God three years ago, and it is possible I know nothing of the knowledge of God even now, but one thing I am sure of, and that is the Power of God. This may seem somewhat boastful, but I cannot lie about that which I have experienced. I never knew such mysterious power before that one particular day about two and one-half years ago: Somehow I knew it to be the power of God. No visible man was present beside me. I was scared and bewildered. I hadn't been to any church more than three or four times in my whole life, and I didn't know what to do to get relief, but I felt that I would surely die if I did not get relief. I went to a couple of people to ask what I should do, and my mouth was shut so that I couldn't even speak. I called two so-called preachers by phone: one didn't answer, and as soon as the phone began to ring at the residence of the other, I hung up, because I knew I couldn't speak if he did answer.

Then, after about an hour of sitting, thinking, and considering whether or not I was only in a poor state of mental or emotional upset, (as is rumored), I concluded this is not the case. I was most miserable by this time, and the thought came to me, to race home from work and ask mother what I should do. I felt surely she would know because she was almost continually studying the Bible. I only got to the point of telling her I had a question to ask her: When she asked what the question was, I could say no more. Here I was at my wit's end, and I had to bow down; and the words came, and I cried, "God help me". The help came instantly, and the burden rolled away. I came up rejoicing and glad, with a serene stillness of peace within.

Dear Brethren, I can see nothing in all this except the almighty power of God. Any man who would say that one has the privilege or will of his own to accept or reject the power of God, I fear the power of God was never upon him. I felt that I would surely die, if this burden stayed upon me another thirty minutes or so.

I hope this writing will not disturb anyone in that they have not known a similar experience. God knows the needs of every heart, and has a particular purpose for all his children; and bestows upon each of them the measure of Spirit necessary for that purpose which he has intended.

Again, I say I have hesitated to write because I am young in this faith; but if you will read the 32nd chapter of Job, I believe you will see me, as in the case of Elihu, and know I must write and tell these things to someone who will understand. If the editors of the *Signs* see fit to publish this, God willing, I will try to write of my experience since the time of the happenings stated here. I feel I've had an unusual experience: being dragged through the Missionary Baptist, and other armenian churches, miserable and afflicted. But now I am satisfied though poor (fleshly speaking), despised by the world at large, and with no friends except those of Primitive Baptist, or like faith.

I believe I understand that all things were predestinated by, and according to the will and purpose of the one and only Almighty God (Father, Son and Holy Ghost). I know nothing of myself, but I hope by the revelation of Jesus Christ. I believe I have the mind of Christ in this writing; and even if the letter here is wrong, I am sure God's

Holy Spirit can show his own the things they should know, and block from their vision the things they should not see.

I hope I have ascribed all honor to the almighty God, and that someone may be edified by the Spirit in reading. Hoping to soon be with you all in everlasting glory and peace.

A brother by God's mercy if at all,
Carl Hoffman

HOPE AND ASSURANCE

There are two opposite extremes concerning Assurance and Hope. "Many shall say, Lord have not we done many wonderful works in thy name?" The answer is in effect: "Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, for I never knew ye" These had a false hope of Eternal life. Their assurance was presumptious. Their faith is dead. In return, their works are dead. Meaning, creature works are dead works. Their hearts are not right. They may be clean outwardly, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. They may have a show of religion, but a foolish motive prompts it.

The doctrine that the Children of God, after regeneration, have perfect assurance of their hope for eternal life without a doubt at all, is an erroneous doctrine. The advocation of this doctrine tends to drive God's people to despair. Consider one who is experiencing a season of doubts and fears, or one who is under heavy conviction, and cannot find any light at all, and whose burdens are weighing him down, and feels as David expressed it: "For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as **an heavy burden they are too heavy** for me. My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness. I am troubled: I am **bowed down greatly:** I go mourning all the day long." (Psalm 38:4-6) What if he hears the doctrine expressed as this: "You should be certain that Heaven is your home. If there is any doubt about it, then something is wrong with your faith." Preaching as this drives the poor one down deeper. Satan puts thoughts as this in his mind: "You don't have any faith. Your case is hopeless. You have plenty of doubts and hell is your home. You have sinned wilfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth. What is the use of you trying to do that which is right? You are going to hell, anyway. You know faith is a gift of God, and you cannot get it. God will not hear your cries, so what is the use of you praying?" The poor one is bowed down under the just demands of the laws, and under the accusation of Satan, and finds that such preaching mentioned above is like pouring salt over wounds.

The other extreme concerning Hope and Assurance is this: "You have doubts all the time, without any degree of assurance; you experience the corruption without any redemption from it; is a doctrine which tends to drive God's people to despair. Hope is drilled upon to the extent that the **sentiment** is that there is no degree of assurance at all to God's people. The sentiment is that the Children of God have doubts and fears all the time, and if any has any assurance, then he just thinks that he has this assurance, according to this doctrine. Consider this situation: One is lifted up from the dead state. He is lifted up from his doubts and fears, and from the sorrows and distress of mind which he has experienced for some time. In other words, he is lifted up from this miserable state of darkness, and is blessed to sit together in Heavenly places as it is in Christ Jesus, and it is Spring time with his soul. It is the time of rejoicing with him, and he is singing praises in his heart (Eph. 5:19), and is given to see Jesus through the eye of faith. The doubts have left him, and he is enjoying sweet meditations. What happens when he hears someone advocate the other extreme concerning assurance? What if it is advocated something like this: "Only the pharisees have assurance; and their doom is destruction. They just think they have this assurance, and it is a false hope. The Children of God do not have any

assurance here at all." Satan drops in thoughts as this: "You never were lifted up by the power of God. You did not have sweet meditations with the Lord. You just imagined the whole thing. You just daydreamed the whole matter. The preacher just said that you are supposed to have doubts about your hope all the time. You don't have any doubts. In fact, you know it, and it has become a reality with you. So, you don't have a hope. The scripture says that one is saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? (Rom. 8:24) Therefore, you are not saved, and you are bound for Hell."

The poor one is bowed down and is confused, and cannot find any food in this other extreme concerning Assurance.

In reading Psalms, we note that David was brought down low quite often. We quote: "How long, Lord? Wilt thou hide thyself for ever? shall thy wrath burn like fire?" (Psalm 89:46) Also, "Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? doth his promise fail for evermore?" (Psalm 77:7-8) Notice that David was doubting. He was brought down low, and made to lie down in darkness. This is the pattern of the seasons of darkness or the winter and rainy seasons: the season of despondnacy. In these seasons we are made to cry for deliverance. We desire reassurance, and a reviving. "Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?" (Psalm 85:6)

Therefore the above scriptures show that the Children of God do not experience a continuous road of "smooth sailing" without any doubts and fears along the way. There is not a continuous season of rejoicing, not a continuous season of basking in the sunshine of God's mercy without a cloud in sight. But, our experience is that we have seasons in which the storm clouds arise upon us, and they trouble us for they are so fierce and black, and we cannot see the sun shining. Our souls are troubled. ". . . . thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled." (Psalm 30:7, see Psalm 90:7)

On the other hand, thanks be to the Grace of God, there is not a continuous season of being in despair, not a continuous season of doubting, not a continuous season of winter and rain, not a continuous dark and stormy season, etc.

In Song of Solomon 2:10 we read: "My beloved spake, and said unto me, rise up my love, my fair one, and come away. For. lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of the birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." This deals with the deliverance from the winter and rainy season into the spring season, or the deliverance from the season of despair unto the season of assurance, or the deliverance from the season of mourning into the season of rejoicing. (read Psalm 40:1-3)

Let us quote this scripture in reference to the deliverance from one night season: "For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a **night**, but joy cometh in the morning." (Psalm 30:5)

Psalm 126 gives a beautiful picture of the seasons of deliverance. We quote the first 2 verses: "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, the Lord hath done great things for them."

Psalm 23 gives a good picture of the seasons of Assurance, and the felt sense of the presence of God. Let us examine our experience. Have not there been times when we felt the presence of God leading us through heavy trials? (and manifold temptations as mentioned in 1 Peter 1:6) Have not you felt the guiding hand of God? " . . . He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for

thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

David felt the presence of God, and we trust that we have also. Notice the sweet assurance that was given him as in the 6th verse. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." In this sweet season of deliverance, he did not experience any doubts. He was lifted up above the doubts and fears he so often experienced. Have not there been times when you were lifted up as David was? (Even though it was for a short while?) But, we do not experience these sweet seasons continually while we are on this earth. The thorn in the flesh is needful for us. (see 2 Cor. 12:1-9) I think of these sweet seasons as a foretaste of the hereafter, or of life beyond the grave. Notice David's song of deliverance in 2 Samuel 22nd chap. In a sense, this is Jesus' song of deliverance, as he rose from the dead on the 3rd day. And, we trust that this is a pattern of our song of deliverance.

In David's last words, (2 Samuel 23: 1-5), we note that he was given this sweet assurance. A portion of the 5th verse reads ". . . . yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant . . ." As we read his last words, we cannot find any hints at any doubts, but we find that he was blessed with sweet assurance. He felt included in this covenant, and in that blessed number.

Let us briefly notice Paul's assurance. In Ephesians 1:4&5, we read: "According as he hath chosen **us** in him before the foundation of the world, that **we** should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated **us** unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his wife." And note a portion of the 11th verse: "In whom **we** have obtained an inheritance . . ." Now, if Paul had any doubts **at this time,** he would not have included himself in the matter, would he? He would have said, "God chose his people," and not use **us** to refer to himself.

"Who hath saved **us** . . . "(2 Tim 1:9) Paul was inspired to write. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2Peter 1:21) They suffered trials that we do not suffer, and we cannot expect to be lifted up to the same degree as they were. In other words, we cannot expect to be endowed with the Holy Ghost to the same degree that they were. They were given the gifts of healing, which we do not have. We may say that the Spirit of God drove out the doubts and fears as they were given to write concerning the assurance of Salvation. Yet, God's people do experience the same things, and do travel the same road that leadeth to life. But, all do not have same manner of experience. In other words, we cannot expect to have the same manner of experience that Paul had. And we find that some of God's people have more doubts and fears than others; some are given revelations that others do not have; some are lifted up to a greater degree than others are; and some endure trials, afflictions, temptations, etc. which others do not have to endure. "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the **measure** of the gift of Christ." (Eph. 4:7)

We notice that Paul was brought down low as David was. (I believe that David's writings deal primarly with the experience of God's people, while Paul's writings deal primarly with the doctrines of Grace.) Read the 7th Chapter of Romans. We quote the 24th verse: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" This is experiencing the corruption. The next verse gives the answer: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord . . .". Christ is our deliverance.

Let us notice the sweet assurance that Paul was blessed with at the time his death was at hand: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous

judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Tim. 4:6-8). Paul was given "dying grace." Meaning, he was given the grace to die for Jesus's sake. He was given grace to endure afflictions, hardships, etc. We do not find any doubts in this scripture. Paul was lifted up in the Spirit of God.

Let us briefly consider the experience of John the Baptist: He received the Holy Ghost while he was in his mother's womb."And it came to pass, that when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:" . . . "For lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for **joy.**" (Luke 1:41 and 44) This was a wonderful experience. But, the Scriptures point out that John the Baptist did not experience a continuous season of joy, of rejoicing, etc.

"Now when John had heard in prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, And unto him, art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" (Matt. 11:2-3) If John did not have any doubts, do you believe he would have asked the question he did? No, he would not. Notice the wonderful experience he had, yet he is in prison and doubting. Have not you had wonderful experience, my friends, and then later on have doubts concerning your state? Do not you desire reassurance? Do not you yearn for the visitations of God? Do not you yearn for his presence, and do not you yearn for a closer walk with God?

"Jesus answered and said unto them, go and **shew John again** those things which ye do hear and see:" (Matt. 11:4) Notice the expression "Shew John again". John has seen and experienced these things before, and Christ says that he must be shown these things again. In other words John needs reassurance. Isn't that your case my brethren?

Let us state again that God's people experience a cycle of seasons: just as we have a cycle of natural seasons in this country. We have night and day, rainy seasons and seasons of sunshine, winter seasons and spring seasons, etc. In our experiences, we have dark and gloomy, and bright and sunny seasons; we have seasons of mourning, and seasons of rejoicing; we experience seasons of despondency, and seasons of the sweetness of assurance. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in **despair;** persecuted, but not forsaken, cast down, but not destoryed;" (2 Cor. 4:8-9)

We hope for things we see not. We do not see the Resurrection of the dead. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," (Hebrews 11:1) We are given this "lively hope" that our experience is not imagination, and that there is a God who controls all things. We are given this hope that our life reaches beyond the grave. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (1 John 3:2) "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Phil. 3:21) Notice the expression, "Who shall change our vile body." This refers to the future. We do not see it, yet we do believe it, and we believe that God is able to change this vile body, and fashion it like unto his glorious body. We do not see it, yet we hope for it. You have experienced the sorrows of death, and you have experienced the joys of life. In others words, you have experienced the sweetness of deliverance. "Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that **he will yet deliver us;**" (2 Cor. 1:10) This is a beautiful text. In it we see Jesus who died for his people, and rose again the third day. As it is written, "Who was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification." (Romans 4:25) In Cor. 1:10, we also see the

experiences of God's people as they so journ here upon this earth. This text also tells of the future deliverance, and you have the evidence within that it will take place. Meaning, the power of God is felt within your souls, and it is not just a theory, but it is a reality with you. In other words, your religion is felt within your souls. As Paul stated, "That I may **Know him, and the power of his resurrection,** and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death:" (Phil. 3:10) You know the power of his resurrection when you experience the deliverance from corruption.

We are given this foretaste of Eternal life, and made to yearn for it, and to look forward to the time when time shall cease for us, when the Lord will carry us home. We realize this world is not our home. It is just a temporary dwelling place. We trust that we seek a heavenly country. "And they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city." (Hebrews 11:13, 16) Their main desire was life beyond this life, and we trust that this is our desire "Seek those things which are above."

"For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (Rom. 8:24-25) As we read the verses before this, we note that Paul is treating upon the wonderful subject of deliverance in the future. We experience seasons of deliverance from corruption, but in these passages of scripture Paul is treating upon the resurrection of the body. Let us notice verse 11: "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Paul is speaking to a people who have been called out of darkness unto the marvelous light of God. He is speaking to a people who have been quickened by Grace. "And you hath he quickened." (Eph. 2:1)

But, this old body is not quickened in regeneration. This body shall die. " . . . shall also quicken your **mortal bodies** by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." It means that this **shall** take place in the future.

In the 21st verse of 8th chap. of Romans, we read, "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." We do not see this deliverance, but we are given this hope that it shall take place in the future.

"For we are saved by hope." We are saved from despair. Without this hope, we are of all men most miserable. (see 1 Cor. 15:19) This hope gives us courage to press on. Although we experience so many troubles, afflictions, etc. along the way, we press on through all difficulties knowing that some sweet day we shall enter that eternal rest. Notice Romans 8:18, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." This hope enables us to press on, and not give up and sit down in despair . This hope enables us to view this beautiful, this everlasting place of rest.

"We are saved by hope". We are saved from this untoward generation. We are saved from the rudiments of this world. We are saved from following after the ways of this world. "The sorrow of the world worketh death."This hope gives us fresh courage to travel the strait path that leads to life.

Our afflictions here are termed as light afflictions: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." (2 Cor. 4:17) "For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face then to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." (1 Cor. 13:12). This hope enables us to view Jesus through the eye of faith. We know in part here,

but then we shall know all things.

The joy of Eternal life is the goal of God's people. We do not see it here. This body of ours is getting older and weaker as time passes on. It is subject to sickness, diseases, and lastly, death. As it is written: "Although the outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." It is renewed by fresh supplies of grace. This hope is strengthened. These natural eyes get dim, and we realize that as each day passes by, we are getting nearer to death. At times this causes us to fear, and we would hang our heads in despair, if it were not for this hope to enable us to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling. This hope enables us to look forward to the time when we shall see Jesus face to face. It enables us to look forward to the time when the Lord shall carry us to our heavenly home where we can rightly sing praises unto his wonderful name for ever and ever — and where there will be no more dark seasons, no more seasons of despondency, but where there will be an eternal season of singing and rejoicing, and basking in the sunshine of God's mercy: An everlasting season of rest! Is not this wonderful, my friends? Then hope shall be done away with. It will be an everlasting reality.

Yours in Hope,
W. W. Hudson, Jr.
1508½ Country Club Rd.
Bastrop, La.

Kennedy, Alabama

Dear Editors of the *Signs:*

I am sending a little money to help on the Indigent Fund. I get the paper regularly each month, and I enjoy reading it; and I hope to receive it as long as I live in this world. David said, "Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound." I hope I am one of that number.

I believe that every one of God's chosen and elect people will be saved without the loss of a single one: "Having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his." Their names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. There has never been one added, nor one taken from it; and there will never be. I hope I am one of that number.

In hope of eternal life which God that cannot lie promised before the world was made.

Charlie Stripling

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association** will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Old Beulah, Johnson County, N. C., on October 25, 26, and 27. The church is located about four miles Southwest of Kenly, N. C. Those coming from the South on 95 and 301 Highways will turn left at the stop light in Kenly; go about two blocks; turn left at the crossroads and follow on to the church. Those coming from the North will turn right at the stop light and follow the same route as above.

The Saturday and Sunday sessions will be held at the Micro School Auditorium located on the main street of Micro, between 301 and 95 highways.

W. E. Turner, Clerk

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

Elder R. W. Rhodes now has his book of the above title ready for distribution. It may be had by addressing him at P. O. Box 625, Spearsville, Louisiana. The price is $2.00 postpaid.

UNION MEETING

The Lord willing, the Union Meeting of the churches of the Predestination Old School Baptists of California will be held with the Bakersfield Church on Alpine Street, near Baker Street and California Avenue in the Oddfellow's Hall, on September 27, 28, and 29, 1963.

For information call Sister Bertha Wright, 108 Circle Drive, Bakersfield, Phone EX 9-0429.

Walter Wilson, Clerk

VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING

The **Virginia Corresponding Meeting** will be held, the Lord willing, at the Mt. Zion Meeting House, Wednesday and Thursday, October 16 and 17, 1963. The meeting house is located on U. S. Route 50, about three miles East of Aldie, Virginia.

A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends to meet with us.

L. D. Duke, Clerk

CORRECTION

In Elder Lambert's article in the August issue, on page 184, first column and tenth line, it should read, "Peter, John and James must not have", instead of, "Peter, John and Jesus must not have". Please make the correction in your copy. — J. D. W.

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Primitive Baptist Union** will be held with the church at Scotts Meeting house, Wilson County, N. C., the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in September 1963. The church is located about seven miles Southwest of Wilson on a blacktop road. Those coming South on 301 highway turn right after crossing Contentea Creek about two miles below Wilson. Coming from South on 301 highway turn left at Lucama follow to intersection, turn left about two hundred yards, turn right follow to church.

Eli Smith, Clerk

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association** convenes with the Church at New Bay, Onslow County, N. C., to begin Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1963, continuing through Sunday. The church is just off Highway 17, about three miles South of Jacksonville, N. C.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

E. M. Smith, Clerk

SALISBURY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The **Salisburg Old Baptist Association** will be held with the Indiantown Church at Powellville, Maryland, Wendnesday and Thursday October 23 and 24, 1963. Those who come on Tuesday go to the home of William S. Adkins, Rt. 50, Mardela, Md. (telephone Salisbury Pioneer 2-2198); or Elder Arthur R. Warren, Berlin, Maryland. (telephone Berlin 1036. All those who come on Wednesday go to the church.

All ministers and brethren of our faith and orders are cordially invited.

William S. Adkins, Clerk

NOTICE OF MEETING

Elder J. D. Wood of Manassas, Va., Editor of the Signs of the Times is expected to attend the Meeting of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, the 4th Sunday in September.

Danville, Virginia September, 1963

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EDITORIAL

JAMES 2:26

"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

The chapter from which the above verse is taken is very plain and simple, so that a child might understand it. This is one of many Scriptures that deal with practical religion, teaching that there is something else besides a be-

lief in, or assent to, the word. While in this chapter James says that one is doing well if he believes there is one God, yet he tells us that devils also believe and tremble. Not all that hear the word do it, therefore James also said, "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his nautral face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." — James 1:22-25.

It is true that faith does come by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, but there is as decided a difference between a living faith and a dead faith as there is between a living child and a doll. The doll can be dressed up with a dress, shoes and hat, as the living child, but it is still a doll, it is dead. In the child is life, and life must always be there before any evidence of life can be manifested. The heart beats, breathing and movement of limbs, the crying, hearing and seeing, are evidences of life, which, as others see them, cause them to conclude that this is a living child. True faith is a living principle in the soul, that works by love, causing the possessor to do the word of God, as well as to hear it, while false faith stalks about in an empty profession. Paul says, "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." — Titus 1:16.

To some, perhaps, as they read these things, it will seem hard to reconcile them with the utterance of Paul in Romans 3:28, where he tells "That a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law," using the testimony concerning Abraham as a proof; but does not James also use the same testimony in the chapter before us to prove his assertion that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only? Paul refers to works of the law; James is referring to very different works, as we shall try to prove. We fully believe that Paul and James were agreed, for the Holy Spirit inspired their testimony, and neither of them would have been faithful had he tried to mix works and grace, or law and gospel. One who has never been delivered from the law by the body of Christ does works which he, in his own mind, feels will help him to get to heaven and God's presence with a *"well done"*. Working for a blessing. One under the gospel led by the Holy Spirit, and blessed with a living faith, which is the fruit of the Spirit, will do those things that are well-pleasing unto God, and such an one is blest in his deed. We would have our readers note that he is blest, not for his deed, but in his deed.

How strange that we should find such unruly characters, who were so high-minded and indifferent as to their walk and conversation. They had "crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation." — Jude 4. It was so that God's servants should contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. There have always been those who seem to have a strong faith, a faith that could move mountains, and have not charity; and Paul says of such, "They are nothing." They can speak with tongues of men and angels, yet they know not how to bridle their tongues; they deceive their own hearts, and their religion is vain. Paul and James were both agreed in the cardinal truth of justification by faith. In Hebrews Paul tells us of the works of those who walked by faith, while James in the afore mentioned chapter is insisting upon the evidence of true faith in the every-day life of the brethren. He would not have them rest in a head knowledge, which they might call faith, and reckon that such is sufficient for salvation, when it does

not affect the heart, nor influence the walk and conversation. Thus he first mentions "respect of persons": "For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou here, or sit here under my footstool." — James 2:1-3.

"If ye fulfill the royal law, according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors." — James 2:8. 9. Again, "What doeth it profit, my brother, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can (such) faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doeth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works."

Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only thing that can make us acceptable unto God, but such faith proves itself true and genuine, for it works by love and is accompanied by every good work. As faith in the Lord Jesus Christ makes us acceptable unto God, so the works of faith make us acceptable unto the brethren. A person professing that faith, yet who is at home in the world, having little or no care for better things, while he is enslaved by the love of money, and under the dominion of sin, his religion is vain. No doubt it was such people that James had seen. He noticed that in their excitement to bestow attention upon the man with the gold ring and goodly apparel, that they would slight God's humble poor.

As an example of a true and living faith, James takes our father Abraham, who is called the father of the faithful. He says, "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God." "Faith wrought with his works." Though he knew that in Isaac his seed should be called, and was told by God that that seed would be innumerable, yet he believed God, and went to offer up Isaac, doing the work, going under the power of faith, or, as James says, faith wrought in what he did. Such a work was to be fulfilled of the Scripture. Every word of God shall come to pass, the things that God has said his people will do, faith will work in them, enabling them to work out those things well-pleasing unto God. This is what Paul meant when he said to the Philippian Church, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." — Phil. 2:12, 13.

Many who believe that there is one God, creator and disposer of all things, who has planned and purposed all things whatsoever come to pass, reason with a carnal mind, and say, that seeing that God has declared the end from the beginning, etc., and that his people are to be blessed, then why pray for a blessing which is purposed for us? With the same reasoning, Why go to meeting? Why read the Scriptures? Why try to influence our young to attend where the truth is preached, for if they are to be saved they will be saved? Why ask God for anything when he knows what we need, and in asking we might ask amiss? Why profess his name, or strive to live godly, for if we are to be saved we will be saved anyhow?

We call all such reasoning carnal reasoning, and it is from our carnality it springs, and it is God-dishonoring, resulting in this day from ignorance of the Scripture and of the power of God. There is a place for prayer in God's purpose, a very special place, it is called a throne of grace, and God's children rejoice that there is a throne of grace, and they know that praise is comely to the upright, and it is said that "God inhabiteth the praises of Israel." — Psalms 22:3. God has not only purposed the end, but every link in the chain of events, and his worship is in his appointments. The woman of Canaan was in trouble, her daughter was vexed with a devil. The Lord had sent this trouble; other women, perhaps, had the same trouble, but God's Spirit was in her, and a God-given faith was there also, and she pushed aside every obstacle. So mightily did faith work in her that she faced a rebuff from Jesus, and opposition from his disciples, and she worshipped him (what a work of faith), saying, Lord, help me. (Matthew 15:22-28)

Public worship is also of God's appointment, and it is longed for by those who are deeply tried, to them it is a relief to leave the world and its noise; they have a gladness of heart, as when David said, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." — Psalms 122:1. Where true faith is there will be an exercise or work that will redound to the good of the soul and the glory of God. In the preacher, it will prompt him to go, leaving his home, and, if necessary, suffer privation for the cause of truth, he will endure the cross and despise the shame. He will lose sight of the gold ring and goodly apparel as in his heart he feels to be at the footstool of God's humble poor, and he is blest in his deed. Although he may feel that he cannot pray, yet many will desire an interest in his prayers, and it is good when his faith is exercised in the word of God to the comfort and edification of the saints. It is in faith and by faith that brethren will esteem others better than themselves, it will enable those who have it to choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. What sweet fellowship there is enjoyed in the church of God when brethren are doers of the word as well as hearers.

It was a work of faith when the jailer took Paul and Silas and washed their stripes, when he submitted to the believer's baptism and received them into his house and set meat before them. (Acts 16:33, 34) What a work of faith was Abraham's and Isaac's as they journeyed into the mount. Isaac said, "My father, behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" And faith working in him mightily, "Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb." What a blessed road, and what solemn thoughts were theirs as they journeyed! James not only gives us Abraham as an example, but he seems to go from the greatest to the least, bringing in the harlot Rahab, the last one man would expect to look to for an example of good works. A fallen creature, like ourselves, who had done nothing good, and of herself could do nothing good, yet it is said "she believed in God." The proof of that were her works. She received the spies into her house, and sent them out another way, and she perished not with them that believed not, when she received the spies with peace. Her faith did not fail, for after she had sent the spies out another way, she confessed her belief in the God of heaven and earth, and she displayed the scarlet thread in the window. Steadfast in the faith, she waited until she was taken by the spies, with all that she had, into Israel's camp in peace.

We cannot possibly see how our subject can be twisted to strengthen a system of duty religion in which the soul would build up a store of works which would force God to change his mind. "He is in one mind, and who can change

him?" There is no way of acceptance with God but in Jesus Christ our Lord. The creature by nature has no righteousness acceptable unto God, all he may have is a righteousness of the flesh, which Paul had much of, but of which he spoke when he said, "Yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." — Phil. 3:8, 9.

To those who have another and different way to that which Paul had, in which they would set up the old creatures to work for heaven, we would say, should God, who is rich in mercy, lay judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, "hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and waters shall overflow the hiding place." — Isaiah 28:17. Then they would confess themselves vile, without ability to do any good things. Jesus, the Savior of sinners, would then be the one thing needful and they would want to feel the word with power. It was the word with power that enable Abram to leave his father's house and go to a land that God would show him. This word with power is "a springing well," within the persons to whom it comes, enabling them to walk and do those things that are acceptable unto God. Faith that embraces the beginning and the end, and every step of the way, it believes God and embraces the faith once delivered unto the saints. It enables the possessor to "hold fast the form of sound words," and accounts that "the words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times." — Psalms 12:6.

A respect unto the word will often bring about a self-examination, while a neglect of the word in its precepts and exhortations will result in a coldness, and the soul will soon find itself lusting after, and minding the things of the flesh. The carnal mind ever results in death, a death to all joy and peace in believing; but it is a work of faith, a faith of the operation of God, that makes one remember God, and be troubled. Those precepts and exhortations are given that we may see our shortcomings and realize that only by faith, which is the fruit of God's Spirit, can we do them. They are given by inspiration of God, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Some, of course, will say that it is a lack of faith when one is troubled. We do not think so. True faith lives and labors under loads: though damped, it never dies. It, like a star, shines brightest in the darkest night. There may be a fearfulness lest we slip, yet such are kept by the power of God. It is through much tribulation, yet faith enables them to wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. While passing through trouble, Job, a possessor of faith, could say, "The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure; into whose hand God bringeth abundantly," as much as to say that there are no bounds in their death, their strength is firm; while the child of God often seems ready to slip. Surely this is for the trial of faith, which is more precious than of gold, though it be tried by fire.

Many of us can look back to the time when we knew the Lord helped us, but this is not sufficient, faith wants a present help: past helps will encourage us to wait upon the Lord, knowing that he who has promised is able to perform. It will cause us not to despise the chastisement of the Lord, not to faint when we are rebuked of him. We may not be able to say that our prayer is a prayer of faith, and we know that whatsoever is not of faith is sin, but our needs will be such that pray we

must; it will seem to be our life's breath, and whether we are answered or not, we know at such times it is right to pray. The same applies to all our ways: if it is going to meeting, we do not know that there will be a blessing for us, but the word saith, "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is," and we know it is right to go, and wrong to absent ourselves. If it is not our pleasure to go, it is our duty, for we should not please ourselves. If we are concerned as to our duty to the Lord and to those who have offended against us, the word of God is plain, and will be followed if we walk in the faith, though often such work will be very unpleasant to the flesh. It is not easy to pray for our enemies, to do good to those who despitefully use us, yet it becomes us so to do, even though it is a painful work.

Much could be said bearing on this subject, but we close with the observation that in the foregoing chapter James tells us in the last ten verses no less than three times that faith without works is dead.

G. R.

(The above was published in the October, 1939 issue, and is re-published in conjunction with the letter of Elder Herndon in this issue. Both should be of much interest to the brethren. — J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

SUFFERING WITH CHRIST

Beloved Brethren in Christ: — In mind and heart I have been much exercised recently upon the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, and to-day am impressed to write to the members of Christ upon this heart-touching theme, with the hope that they may be comforted with the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God, and that their confidence in him may be strengthened, and their love abound. As a text, let me use the brief words of Paul the inspired: "If so be that we suffer with him." — Romans viii. 17. May it please the Spirit of truth, the Comforter, to quicken and illuminate my spirit, and guide my mind and thoughts while I dwell upon these expressive and wonderful words of this suffering servant of Christ. He is writing to the "beloved of God, called to be saints," of the evidences of their filial relation to God in an everlasting and ever blessed sonship, first telling them wherein this divine sonship exists, saying, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Their sonship therefore is in the Spirit of God, but not in the flesh of man. He next assures them that they "have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." So Paul, as well as they, had received this Spirit, and now it was by this blessed Spirit that they were the children of God, and he was their Father. Their Father in the new and everlasting covenant of life and peace, and their Father in the holy and blessed eternal life in Christ Jesus.

So then their sonship to God the Father is in the Lord Jesus Christ, in his sonship and name, life and nature; for Jesus is "declared to be the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell," writes Paul. Hence to the children of God, "Christ is all in all." "And ye are complete in him, which is the Head of all principality and power." "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Thus are all the children of our God connected with his beloved Son, in and with whom they have eternal life, and all other spiritual blessings, and are his brethren and members. Paul declares this oneness with our living Head, in sublimely

simple and wonderful words, saying, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved,) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." And as we are and shall ever be thus one in and with Christ, as we have been regenerated, and shall be resurrected, so truly was and is he also one with us in his incarnation, as both the Son of God, and Son of man. So it is written, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same," &c.

"Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." — Heb. ii. For this cause, and in this way, was Jesus joined with his brethren in suffering, even unto death; yet he suffered for us, and for our sins, "The just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." We thus learn that the brethren of the meek and lowly Jesus, the children of God, are the children of men, partakers of flesh and blood, and are therefore sinners in their fleshly nature and existence, subject to affliction and suffering, disease and death. In all this the man Christ partook with them, as their Brother, Mediator and High Priest, that he might redeem them from all iniquity, save them from their sins, and present them to God a holy priesthood. Jesus was therefore a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, not only in coming in close touch with the woes of others, but also in his own sinless person. So he was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and knew how to succor the distressed and tempted, in that he was tempted. He was even made to be sin for us, although he knew no sin, and did no sin, that he might put away our sins, and make us partakers of his holiness.

Now unto this end God has chosen his beloved people in Christ, who died for them, and rose again, that he might wash them from all their guilty stains of sin in his own atoning blood, purify them unto himself a holy people, and raise them up unto God and glory, in immortality, in the power of an endless life, to evermore be with him. The beginning of this work of righteousness in the heirs of eternal glory, is their regeneration by the quickening and sanctifying power and operation of the Spirit of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who raised him up from the dead to heaven, and gave him glory. This life-giving Spirit in them, is to them "the Spirit of adoption," and it seals them in their hearts as the heirs of salvation, and gives them character as the children of God, because they are now in living union with his Son Jesus. Thus are they quickened together with Christ, and raised up together with him in his righteous life above the law of sin and death, and shall forever live, because he lives in them, and they live in him. Before they were thus quickened, and raised up from under the law and its curse, they were dead in their sins, and in the uncircumcision of their flesh, having no hope, and without God in the world.

But now they are made nigh unto him in Christ Jesus, and cry to him, "Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name." They have passed from death unto life, and now live in the Son of God, who loved them, and gave himself for them. Yet this life they now live in the flesh; therefore they are the children of God by the Spirit of adoption; for they have not yet received the adoption itself unto God their Father, but wait for it in hope, namely, the redemption of their bodies from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the Son of God. Hence now, from the time when they are quick-

ened together with Christ, they also begin to have fellowship with him in his sufferings in the days of his flesh; for now they die indeed unto sin, but live unto righteousness through our Lord Jesus Christ. He is their Leader, and in all the way they must follow him, and walk in his footsteps. From the manger to the cross, every "new-born babe" in Christ must go after him, and be made conformable unto his death, that they may also know the power of his resurrection unto life, and unto God. They must drink of his cup, and be baptized with his baptism. As he was afflicted in all their afflictions for their salvation, so in coming into this salvation, they must come into his afflictions.

Thus and in this way they personally know the preciousness of Christ in his sufferings for their sins, and the joy of his salvation, in all of which they are joint-heirs with him. Tribulation, suffering and sorrow filled the cup of the meek and lowly Son of God on earth; and his baptism, in which he fulfilled all righteousness, was into death. Thus it must be with all his members, because they are joint-heirs with Christ. "In the days of his flesh, he offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." And it is in him, and through his sufferings fulfilled in us, that we shall be made perfect; for it is by his obedience that many shall be made righteous, and obtain eternal redemption and salvation. All this shall be fulfilled in them that are Christ's, as well as for them. "For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him." "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake," says Paul. Hence not the faith only is God's gift to us for Jesus' sake, but the suffering as well.

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Suffering with Christ, therefore, is itself the blessed evidence given us by the Spirit that we are the heaven-born children and heirs of God; that he is our Father and our blessed God, and that his now glorified Son is our Brother, while we are also his brethren and joint-heirs, both in his sufferings, and in his victory and glory. O how consecrated and sanctified then are the sufferings of the children of God in the days of their flesh! For as the loving Father appointed the sufferings of his dear Son, so has he in his love and faithfulness appointed unto his dear children their afflictions and sufferings in all their sojourn on earth, from the cradle to the grave. It was in view of this truth that Paul wrote to the dear, suffering kindred in Christ, saying, "That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know. * * * Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith; for now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord." Their distresses and reproaches for Jesus' sake not only tried their faith in him, but purified and strengthened it; and not only so, but their afflictions likewise brought them nearer in Christ, and nearer to him. So in a time of sore distress and persecution in Jerusalem, the disciples lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and fervently called upon the name of their now glorified Lord in strong assurance

of faith in him. "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness."

They now suffered with Christ, and for his name's sake, and he was near and precious to them. It was as when Jesus endured the dreadful temptations in the wilderness, and the awful suffering in the garden, and God sent his ministering angel to succor, strengthen and comfort his beloved Son, and so he the more preciously manifested his watchcare and love. It is so in all the varied and many afflictions of God's suffering and dependent children on earth; for having loved them with an everlasting love, it is in this way that with loving-kindness he draws them to his mercy-seat, and to their precious Christ, and away from an arm of flesh, and all mortal power and dependence. And so he prepares them to say, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up." This discipline teaches them their need of being bound up and healed, and that it is the Lord that does this. Hence what a blessed experience this is! So must we all be emptied of self, and all confidence in the flesh, before we are prepared as earthen vessels to be filled with the fullness of God, and reflect the image of our precious Redeemer, who through suffering manifested that our perfection is in him. We come into his perfection only through his sufferings; and in no other way can we know the love of God for us. Remember, dear child of God, that in your first experience, and heartfelt burden of sin and sorrow unto death, the sowing in tears of deep repentance and contrition, and your unutterable soul-anguish, prepared you to feel your absolute need of God's rich mercy and infinite love; then he shed his love abroad in your heart, and gave you to reap in joy. It is thus in all our pilgrimage from earth to heaven, for our Father and God, in his love in Christ towards his dear people and children, "Worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

This divine truth moved Paul to say, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." "All things," include all the afflictions and sufferings of all who are Christ's, of whatever nature and kind; for just as this was true in all the temptations, persecutions and sufferings of the beloved Son of God in the days of his flesh, so is it true of all the brethren and joint-heirs of Christ, because the Father "loved them, as thou hast loved me," said Jesus in his prayer. "The everlasting Father," in the infiniteness of his wisdom and love, and the omnipotence of his power, will not permit any affliction or suffering to any of the dear objects of his love, only as he please; hence it is all for their salvation and good, and his glory, and the glory of his grace. The love and power and glory of God shone more brightly in the three Hebrew children, when in the fiery furnace, than ever before. It is so when the "beloved of God" encounter all perils and enemies, even "the last enemy, which is death." So when it was told Jesus, "He whom thou lovest is sick," he said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." Yet he knew it all, all the suffering and bodily death of his friend Lazurus, all the heart-anguish and bitter sorrow and weeping of the stricken sisters; still it was in this way that the loving Father, and loving and dying Son, should be glorified. This covers the whole ground in all the sufferings of all the friends of Jesus, the now glorified Son of God. He lovingly chided his two complaining disciples, and said, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to have entered into his glory?" This applies to all who are his, and who come after him, that they

may be glorified with him.

Let us follow the weeping Son of God and his fearful disciples to the tomb of Lazarus, and with solemn wonder behold sorrow and weeping, suffering and death, turned into joy and gladness, glory and life, at the coming of the Master, the Physician, the Resurrection and the Life, that we may understand how the Son of God was glorified thereby; and his beloved disciples were with him, and beheld his glory. So it will be in the consummation of all things, when "death is swallowed up in victory." In assurance of this, Paul could say, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." And Peter also says that the prophets spoke of the grace that should come unto the children of God, and that the Spirit in them "testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." The sufferings of Christ in us then go before the glory, as the night before the day, and the law of penalty, before the gospel of victory. So Paul would thus comfort us, saying, "And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation. And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation. For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of the trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life; but we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us." Paul here brings out the divine purpose and goodness in all these fearful trials, "That we should not trust in ourselves, but in God." They are needful, and sanctified unto this end. Blessed God! and blessed trust.

Many years ago, with brother Chick, I visited a precious brother in Baltimore, greatly emaciated, and fearfully suffering from cancer of the face, insomuch that my mind murmured at such a distressing providence when we first entered his room, and I never felt to more deeply pity and commiserate any poor sufferer; but as we sat and listened to the gracious words with which he spoke to us, expressing the sweetest reconciliation to the will of God, so that in spirit he was happy, and full of divine light and peace, entirely cut loose from the world, and raised above all its sorrow, full of heavenly mindedness, and rejoicing in the consolations of Christ, I felt and realized that he was in the very door of heaven, and inexpressibly blessed, while I myself was far beneath him in spiritual blessedness. Then I pitied myself, rather than him, and when he asked me to read in the Bible and pray for him, with tears I said, "Dear brother, I feel that I have need to ask you to pray for me."

"That we may be glorified together with him." Our suffering in the flesh is sanctified of God unto this end. He gives to the children of his perfect love the cross of Christ first, then the crown of glory. We ourselves shall be his brethren in his infinite bliss and glory, as we were in his sufferings in the flesh, and shall bear his heavenly image, and be like him. This is the Father's glory of perfect holiness and love, immortality and eternal life, in all their infinite fullness and everlasting blessedness and joyfulness, thrilling the enraptured "children of the resurrection" with heavenly transports of divinest bliss, adoration and praise. In the full assurance of this coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in triumph and glory, when he shall have put all things under his feet, and destroyed the last enemy, "our beloved brother Paul" comforts us with these words, "For our light affliction,

which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." A glory which infinitely exceeds all our affliction, and shall never fade away. This is the inheritance of the children of God, who is blessed for evermore. It inspired Paul with the earnest "desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better."

My beloved brethren, these heavenly promises and prospects comfort me now in the midst of many distresses, suffering and sorrow, and may your Father in heaven thus comfort you, and give us all patience in tribulation, knowing that the time is short, and that the day of our full redemption draweth nigh, when we shall follow Christ into his glory. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."

In this hope of glory and immortality through our Lord Jesus, your brother in tribulation,

D. Bartley

(The above was written by Elder David Bartley, and appeared in the *Signs* November 1, 1897.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. JOE H. DANIEL

It is with a sad heart that I write a few words in memory of my dear mother, Senie T. Daniel, (Mrs. Joe H. Daniel), who passed away in her sleep on the morning of May 12, 1963. She was born in the house that she died in, Granville County, N. C., December 6, 1898, making her age 64 years. She was the daughter of P. L. and Minnie S. Thomasson, and was married in January, 1918 to Joe H. Daniel, who died April 17, 1960. Surviving this union are two daughters, Mrs. Josephine Hardy, of Stem, N. C. Mrs. Mary Lou Crissman of Sanford; and one son, Julian M. Daniel of Stem, N. C., and four grandchildren.

All my life my mothers' home has been an old Baptist home. In about December 1920, around the fireplace in the kitchen, her father and mother with several other dear brothern, planned what is now our meeting house, Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptisit Church. On July 5, 1930, my mother asked for a home with this church, where she was warmly received, and was baptized into full fellowship on the next morning. She lived the love that she had for her Church and Brethren, always ready to do what she could at the meeting house and what she could at home, so that all lovers of the truth could visit with her and enjoy the best that her strength and finances would provide, and always with a warm reception.

She believed that the God of Heaven had all power and had a soverign will, and did all things right. She would tell me oft times that the Grace of our dear Father in Heaven was sufficient, and that she longed for the time when we would be gathered home.

It was sad to give her up and there is an aching void, but we believe God who does all things well and works all things after the counsel of his own will, fulfilled His purpose with our loved one. We realize that death is essential, that she might go to ever be with her dear Saviour

Funeral service was conducted in the meeting house by Elders J. H. Smith, D. V. Spangler, W. C. King, Wallace Smith and J. W. Gilliam, who spoke so beautifully of our dear Heavenly Father, and of his perfect work. There was a large gathering of relatives, brethren and friends. The array of beautiful flowers was an expression of the high esteem in which she was held. She was laid to rest beside her husband in Elmwood Cemetery in Oxford, N. C. Though it leaves us with a broken and sad heart, we desire grace to be reconciled and say, "Thy will, Oh God, be done, and not ours". We believe that our loss is her eternal gain.

May the peace and love of God which alone can come from Jesus, be with her children and loved ones, as they journey through this life, is my prayer for Christs' sake.

Written by her son, Julian M. Daniel.

MRS. PATTIE N. DEAN

Mrs. Patti Norris Dean passed away at the home of her son, in Manchester, Georgia, on May 17, 1963. She was born in Greenville, Ala. on April 6, 1884, and was the daughter of Young Columbus and Fannie Lloyd Norris, both parents preceded her to the grave many years ago. She was a grand daughter of Elder Benjamin J. Lloyd, of Greenville, Ala. who compiled the much beloved Lloyd Hymnal, which has been used by many churches so many years, and is still used by many of our churches. She is survived by three sons, two daughters, sixteen grandchildren, and one great grand daughter, also several nieces and nephews. Two brothers who are, Young C. Norris, Glennwood, Ark., Zack Norris, Camanche, Okla.; and four sisters, Mrs. Kate N. Alston, Decatur, Ga., Mrs. Naomi N. Hoey, and Mrs. Ruth Mayberry, both of Orlando, Fla., and Mrs. Geo. W. Smith, of Columbus, Ga.

The graveside services were conducted by Elder O. J. Croker, interment being at the Chalybeate Cemetery. The small congregation sang 'Rock of Ages', afterward Elder Croker endeavored to extol the name of Jesus, the obedient Son of an Allwise and Allpowerful God, who in his resurrection, conquered death and the grave, forever, for his people. Many relatives and friends gathered together there to pay their respects of love to her, and to show sympathy to her dear children.

She loved the sweet doctrine of God, her Saviour, in it's sweetness and purity and she loved no other doctrine. She never offered herself to any denomination or church, and as there wasn't any Old School Baptist Church near her, most of the preaching she enjoyed came to her through the church's dear old **Signs of the Times** which holds the Lord's people together. She loved every church represented in it and loved the elders who wrote the sweet things about the oracles of God, the experiences of the good people who wrote down their gospel or good news; in fact, she felt certain every word contained in it was inspired because Jesus was adored in it, she believed it is all of grace. She looked forward to it's arrival each month and had been a subscriber for many years. Her bible and the "**Signs**", as she called it, were at her reach all of her time. She belived the **Signs** was kept pure by the power of God.

Now, let me tell you something of her last few hours before I close. She was conscious until the end, as she lay upon her dying pillow. She refused transquilizers when offered, and would say, "No, children, it isn't natural." A loving daughter sat on the side of her bed a short time before she passed away, and she sang to her her favorite hymn, "Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me," very softly: Sung it in it's entirety; and at the conclusion of the last verse, she opened her eyes, and smiled, making known her pleasure and adoration. In a short while, she turned her head on her pillow and breathed her last breath, and we feel she has gone home to be with Jesus, realizing while it is our loss, it is her eternal gain. She loved the prophecies that foretold of the Second Coming of Jesus and believed it was near.

To the only wise God, be glory through Jesus Christ forever, Amen.

Written by a Niece,
Zula T. O'Neal

MARY ELISABETH (WILES) ROWE

Through the divine workings of God's providence He has called from the shores of time our beloved sister, Mary Elisabeth (Wiles) Rowe. She was born February 25, 1885, the daughter of Erasmus A. Wiles and wife, Sallie Ann (Dodson), and died on May 4, 1963, in Baltimore following a coronary thrombosis on April 23rd. She was married to Elder Joshua T. Rowe on April 28, 1920. To this union two children, were born to wit, Joshua T. of Richmond, Virginia; Mrs. Mamie Marshall of Danville, Virginia. Also surviving are seven grandchildren; two brothers, Leslie and Felix Wiles of Ringgold, Virginia; three stepsons, Johns I, William H., and Charles Rowe.

Our sister joined the Old Baptist Church at Cane Creek, near Ringgold, Virginia. She was baptized on October 20, 1912, by the late Elder T. W. Walker. After being united in marriage to Elder Rowe, she moved her membership to the Ebenezer Church in Baltimore, Maryland, where she continued in sweet fellowship the balance of her life.

It is so sad after the manner of men to think that the bright and shining face of our beloved one will be seen no more; to think that the old Rowe home is gone out of the Baptist family not to have the cheery presense of our sister and the talk of heavenly things sounding through it any more, but we knew, as she knew, that our time is allotted well by Him who allots us all things, and that this day would come. It is sad in the natural realm, but in the heavenly realm we do not sigh for her; we do not have any regrets about her leaving; we would not wish her back. We are delighted in her having gone to be with the Lord in spirit, there to join in with the spirits of all the heavenly hosts in singing the worthy praise of God, and to await there the second and final, and triumphant descendsion of the Lord; to have the bodies of the saints arise to meet and be with the spirits of those that He brings with him. This was her meat and her drink; this was what made her so precious to the saints of God, because she showed so wonderfully that this world was not her home.

When I arrived in Baltimore on Friday before the third Sunday in April, I called her up, as was my custom. She told me that she was not well. She had requested that a goodly number of us come to her house for lunch after services. I suggested that it was too much for her to do all the extra work, but she would not have it any other way. The most of the congregation did go, and I am sure that it was one of the most lovely days that we had enjoyed together. Her demeanor was of one that soon expected to go home. I felt when I told her goodby that it was telling goodby to one that was then crossing the great divide. I visited her once in the hospital as death was stealing over her, but her greeting was, "My dear pastor, how glad I am to see you."

It was she, with her endearing little messages, that helped to bridge the terrible conflict of soul when we were thrown into so much misery in Alabama before coming here. They spoke the langauge of Canaan, for this

language she spoke without an inpediment in tongue (Mark 7:35). She was loved by one and all; her step children loved her as their own mother, her brethern beheld her glory, even the imparted glory of the Lord, all, all, will cherish her memory while memory holds.

Funeral services was conducted in the Brooks Funeral Home in Towson, Maryland, on May 6, 1963, by the writer, after which she was buried in Black Rock cemetery there to wait the coming of her Lord.

W. D. G.

ELDER ELZO C. LOWRY

Elder Elzo C. Lowry passed away at his home near Fulton, Ky., December 28, 1960, at the age of almost seventy-five years. He was the son of Marshall G. and Mary Yates Lowry, and born in Hickman County, Ky., January 21, 1886. He was united in marriage to Inus Foster in 1904; and to this union two girls were born; both dying in infancy.

He joined the Bethel Primitive Baptist Church in the early thirties, which church was one of the churches consitituting the Bethel Association in Kentucky and Tennessee. After uniting with the church, his brethren saw that Elzo was concerned very deeply with the Scriptures, and he was shortly liberated to talk publicly, and then was soon ordained to the ministry; and he served the churches in the Bethel Association, and served as Moderator of the association until death took him away. His first wife passed away in February, 1955, and he later married Sister Clifford Leggett Duvall, who survives. Surviving also are three brothers, R. K., B. H., and W. D. Lowry.

The last sermon that I heared him preach was delivered at the Soldier Creek Church, using the text Acts 8:34. "And the enunch answered Philip and said, I pray thee of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself or of some other man?" Elder Lowry, like Philip, preached Jesus the man, Jesus the Saviour, and Jesus as God in the world reconciling the world unto himself. The sermon was wonderfully delivered, and graciously received, and very pleasant to remember. We who knew him and were acquainted with his mannerisms and delivery could well say he fought hard for the truth which was once delivered unto the saints. He finished his course which the righteous God set before him, always professing a good hope in Christ Jesus the Lord. Peace be to his memory.

His funeral was preached by Elders R. L. Biggs, of the West Tenn. Association, J. N. Darnell, of Little River Association, and O. W. Perkins, of Soldier Creek Association. A large crowd of Primitive Baptist friends and elders were present, as well as relatives, to pay their last tribute of respect to this their brother, who always felt to be the least of all saints.

Written at the request of his brother, R. H. Lowry and wife.

Effie Bowden

MARY OLIVA MEADFORD BRYANT

It is with a sad and heavy heart that we attempt to write of the death of our dear mother, Mary Olivia Meadford Bryant. She was born June 13, 1876, and departed this life February 1, 1963, at the age of 87 years, 7 months, and 18 days.

She was married to our daddy, John Henry Bryant, in the year 1895, an to this union was born 11 children, 10 now living. He was a widower with five small children whom she mothered and raised as her very own. We are all one big family.

There are 14 of us surviving her: 4 girls and 10 boys. She also has two brothers, 49 grandchildren, 86 great-grandchildren, and 6 great-great-grandchildren.

Daddy died May 26, 1936, and Mother broke up housekeeping and came to make her home with me, her oldest daughter. We have lived the most part of our life together. My home will never be the same any more.

She was a good wife, a precious mother, and a wonderful neighbor; always ready to do good deeds for others. She was in declining health several years, and seriously ill for 10 days. She died in Edgecombe General Hospital in Tarboro, N. C. The doctors, nurses, and family did all that helping hands could do and although we did love her so, God loved her best.

In early married life, Mother joined the Missionary Baptist Church in Bethel N. C., and in December, 1938, she joined Flat Swamp Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by her pastor, Elder W. E. Grimes. She was a faithful believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. Her hope and faith was strong in the Lord Jesus Christ. She loved to fill her seat in her church when able to do so. She loved the faith and order of the church of God. The walk of life she was blessed to live proved to her church that she loved the Lord and his people.

Her funeral was held in Flat Swamp Church by her pastor, Elder W. E. Grimes, Elder P. C. Harrison, and Mr. R. B. Crawford. She was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers and beside her beloved husband in Robersonville Cemetery. Truly she left a noble life for us to endeaver.

That the Church of Flat Swamp bow in humble submission to the will of God, believing our loss is her eternal gain; that a copy of these resolutions be recorded in our church book, and one be sent to the family and one to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference

March 2, 1963.

Elder W. E. Grimes, Moderator
Lester Bryant
Cornelia Keel
Committee

IN MEMORY OF BROTHER J. D. CAGLE

It is with a sad heart that we attempt to write this memorial of the death of our dear Brother and Deacon J. D. Cagle.

Brother Cagle united with the Church at Rock Hill September 27, 1959. He was baptized with his wife October 4, 1959. He was ordained a Deacon November 29, 1959. Brother Cagle was a devoted husband and father and his home was a place of welcome to all those that loved the Truth as in Christ Jesus.

The passing of Brother Cagle was sad indeed and our church will greatly miss him. He gave a lot of time and attention to our church needs. He manifested a sweet hope in Christ and we believe our loss is his eternal gain and that he was called Home at the appointed time to be with our Lord and Saviour where there is no more sorrow, pain or death.

Brother Cagle was born in Cabarrus County on July 13, 1903, and departed this life on May 15, 1963, making his stay on earth 59 years, 10 months and 13 days. He married Sister Grace Honeycutt Cagle on September 3, 1923, whom he leaves to mourn his death. Also, four daughters and one son and several grandchildren. His body was laid to rest in Randolph Memorial Park Cemetery after funeral services at Rock Hill Primitive Baptist Church by his pastor, Elder Z. L. Rhue, Elder D. A. Obryant, Elder D. R. Pyrtle and Elder J. J. Rhue.

We at Rock Hill Primitive Baptist Church bow in humble submission to God's will, for we believe that all things work together for good to them that love God and to them who are the called according to His purpose.

It has been requested that one copy be sent to his widow, one to be recorded in the minutes, and one copy to the *Signs of the Times*.

Done by order of Rock Hill Primitive Baptist Church.

Z. L. Rhue, Moderator
W. A. Carter, Clerk

IN MEMORY OF
WILLIAM FRANKLIN ADAMS
MANSFIELD, GEORGIA

William Franklin Adams was born near Monroe, Walton County, Georgia, April 15, 1874. He died June 3, 1963, at Newton County Hospital, Covington, Georgia, after a steady decline in health for a year, and being seriously ill only three weeks at the end.

He married three times, to a widow of the Primitive Baptist Faith each time, and was a kind and faithful husband to all three wives and their children. The first and second wives both preceding him in death. The first marriage was to Mattie Knight East of Morgan County, Georgia. The second was to Zora Letty Chandler of Madison County, Georgia; and the third to Maude Welch Gipson, who survives, of Luverne, Alabama. He had no children.

He joined Harris Spring Primitive Baptist Church in October, 1901, by experience and baptism. He served his church as clerk from 1940 until 1955. He enjoyed visiting the churches and association thoughout the Eastern part of the United States for many years, and also visiting in Canada. He was devout believer of the old order of the church; and was reconciled, to the fact that the end was near for him and he was ready to welcome that eternal rest.

In accordance with his request, there were no flowers except blanket for the casket. Funeral services were held in the chapel of the J. C. Harwell Funeral Home, Covington, Georgia, June 5, 1863. The remains were laid to rest at the Adam's Cemetery near Covington, beside those of the first wife, with whom he lived more than thirty-five years.

IN MEMORY OF
OUR DEARLY BELOVED MOTHER
MRS. C. C. SHREVE

On May the thirty-first of Sixty Three,
God called our loved one, on to Thee;
Our hearts are filled with sorrow and grief,
Many years she was with us, but it seemed so brief.

Her loving smile, was so precious to see:
When we each appeared, she was filled with glee.
She was full of kindness, love, and cheer.
It made her happy, when we all were near.

Our hearts are so empty without her today,
But God needed her, in his own special way.
She is resting in peace in God's loving hands,
One of the most precious of Mothers in this fair land.

Her beauty of soul, face, and heart
Will always linger, tho we are apart.
We'll remember her always, with unfailing love
And know she is happy, in her new home above.

Her death will be remembered in all our hearts
But as Mother often said,"We all have to part,"
She will embrace us again tho, in her Heavenly Home;
And we'll all be together, never more to roam.

Written by Mrs. Jack Shreve
Approved by the family

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 131 DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1963 No. 10

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10/63
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

FAINT HOPE

My sins! My God! my sins!
How awful they do be;
And I have naught to make amends —
To make amends to Thee.

The terrors of thy law,
Pursue me day and night;
And, from them I cannot withdraw,
Nor courage find to fight.

My weapons carnal are,
Until thou give me light;
And Satan hails me from afar,
And dares me him to fight.

My hope is almost gone,
I fear I am deceived;
No prop have I to lean upon:
Thy Spirit I have grieved,

Yet, Lord in thee I trust,
Thy mercy I implore:
Remember, Lord I'm made of dust,
Thy peace, O Lord, restore.

Remember I am vain,
My flesh is only grass;
My faith and hope, alike seem slain —
Foes mock me as they pass.

Recall thy works of old;
Thy covenant of grace:
Refine me, Lord, as purest gold,
Of self leave not a trace.

Turn thou-O turn me Lord,
From Satan unto thee;
Then I will gladly kiss the rod,
In kindness sent to me.

My strength again renew;
Thy joys my God restore;
Then I can shout thy wondrous love,
And all thy ways adore.

Forever let me praise
Thy mercies, O my God:
Give me the gift of endless days,
In Thy divine abode.

C. B. Britt
Eldorado, Ark.

"I'M WITH YOU"

307 S. Daniel Creek Rd.,
Collinsville, Va.

Dear Friends:

I am not a member, but I hope that my name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. I've felt that I have known the Lord and his wonderful work since the age of ten, and I am fifty-five now. About twenty-two years ago I was troubled and worried: One night as I prepared to lie down, I felt the need of protection, and these words came in my mind: "Lord, Lord, what am I to do? I am afraid to put my children to bed, or to lie down myself." I heard a small still voice saying, "I'm with you, and no one can harm a hair of your head."

I went to bed and slept without a worry. I am still trusting in this today, and find it most comforting. We hear of the use of seat belts in cars to keep so many people from being killed on the highways. Don't they know there's not a single one of us that the Lord doesn't know about; and has a purpose in taking all who are taken. The time, place, and way are all fixed in His power, in which we are to pass from this earth.

We often ask ourselves why this or that happened. And there is only one answer: The Lord's will. It will always be filled. It is so plain that He has all power in heaven and on earth. "He plants his footsteps in the sea, and rides upon the storm." It rains where it pleases the Lord, and even without any rain, if it is His will the fields will flourish.

A few years ago I could have sat comfortably for a day and listened to the good preaching, and wished so much to be with those shaking hands. But it seems the sweetness has disappeared, and sometimes I wonder and worry about it, wishing that I could feel the same again. I have heard some people say that the Lord will deal with a person so long, and if they don't accept he will leave them. I know that something happaned, but I feel he will come again, and I will feel his presence, and rejoice.

I doubt that you will feel to print this, is seems so weak. If you do not, it will not hurt my feelings, for it seems so unworthy to be in your book. Please remember me when you feel to pray.

A sinner,
Edith Brooks

(There are many things that people say which are not according to the doctrine of God our Saviour, but with which they seem to be satisfied. Who ever heard of such a thing in truth that the Lord has to give up because someone just will not "accept him"? The Saviour gives the answer, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

The writer of the above has a treasure in an earthen vessel, for she is, " . . . troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." It was good to read: "Of course I know something happened, but I feel He will come again, and I will feel His presence, and rejoice." — J. D. W.)

Titusville, New, Jersey

THE DAY THE LORD HATH MADE

Dear Brother Wood:

Sometime if one of the brethren is in need of a subject when writing for the SIGNS, I would like them to use the 24th verse of the 118th Psalm.

"This is the day which the Lord hath made,
we will rejoice and be glad in it."

These are living words to me, even though they were directed to the coming of Christ is His Kingdom, for I rest upon them as a daily staff.

When I awaken in the morning with these words in mind, they stay with me all day. I look upon the morning as the begining of a new day. "This is the day which the Lord hath made." One must have spiritual discernment to rejoice and be glad in this day. For the day is not just another calendar day. It is the day which the Lord has made. To me it is refreshing and strengthening to know that this day is a gift from God. And it is His world He is leading me through from morning until night. His presence and His guidance give me the "needed strength" for the day.

How well it is with us when we can work out our day in fear and trembling. To do one's very best with God's help day by day, rounds out the weeks and months with rich rewards. It gives peace to one's mind. It gives one time to grow in grace and the knowledge of the truth, and Life does grow more meaningly beautiful because the fruits of the spirit are manifestly revealed in one's walk and talk each day.

"How beauteous are their feet
Who stand on Zion's hill!
Proclaim salvation with their tongues,
And words of peace reveal."

In Christian Love,
Sister Mary Hellings

MORE CONCERNING
HOPE AND ASSURANCE

In connection with the article, "Hope

and Assurance," (September issue) we quote from the following well known writers who share our views: Elder S. H. Durand, **FRAGMENTS**; J. C. Philpot, **THROUGH BACA'S VALE, & SELECTED SERMONS**; Elder A. H. Bellows, from a sermon published in the **SIGNS** March, 1963.

"For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." This earnest expectation is entirely of the Spirit. It is the view of faith, looking to things not seem by mortal powers. It is the expectation of things promised in Christ, and revealed to the faith of God's people. Faith makes no guesses,but sees eternal realities. Concerning these things it is said, "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." Therefore, while there is deep suffering because of the corruption of the flesh, there is at the same time, down in the depths of the soul, a calm and confident waiting for that which the quickened soul so earnestly desires, to see in ourselves the manifestation of that relationship as sons of God. We cannot see it in ourselves now, but we long for it, hunger for it, have been made to expect it, and quietly wait for it. We are saved by this sweet and sure hope. All this earnest expectation is in the Spirit; not in the Spirit of Christ considered in itself, but in that spirit as given unto us, and as living in our poor hearts, and as able to turn our thoughts toward heavenly things, and to set our affections on things above.

Now the apostle shows against what great and dire obstacle the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for such a wonderful and holy manifestation. That obstacle is the vanity of our fleshly nature, which he afterward calls the bondage of corruption. This is why we do not see in ourselves evidences of sonship, such as we desire. Though to our faith may come **assurances at times** that "we are now the sons of God," yet "it doth not yet appear what we shall be:" and we are often left to **doubt** that we bear such a relationship, because of the vanity of the flesh." (pg. 101-102)

"Then how sweet and comforting the assurance that this subjection of God's gracious work in us to vanity is in hope. We cannot see in ourselves now what we wish to see (verses 24,25—Rom. 8), but **we are given good ground to hope for it.** For the apostle by inspiration positively asserts that we shall be delivered from this vanity, from this "bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God." This we are given faith to believe shall be. We long for it, and in the Spirit we expect it, and thus we have that hope which **saves us** from being overcome and brought down to the gates of **despair** by this vanity. "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." No child of God can see himself as he wants to be, therefore he can never be pleased or satisfied with himself while in the flesh. He must see himself compassed with infirmities, held down by a bondage of corruption, therefore he cannot see himself as a son of God now, cannot see himself without sin, cannot see in himself, that is, in his flesh, any good thing. Therefore he is not only subject to vanity, but is subject to the temptation with which Satan tempted Jesus, **"If thou be the** Son of God." (pg. 103—**FRAGMENTS** by Durand)

Now, we quote from Philpot: "A time to kill, and a time to heal" (Ecc. 13:3) All through the Christian's life there will be "a time to kill, and a time to heal." We sometimes read in books, and hear in conversation, an experience of this kind—a work of grace commencing with powerful convictions of sin, and the soul brought almost to the very brink of hell, and then a wonderful revelation of Jesus Christ, a powerful application of his atoning blood to the

conscience, and a blessed manifestation of God's love to the soul. And then what follows? If we can credit their account, and they are not deceiving us, or not deceiving themselves, or if we do not misunderstanding their statements, they possess an **unwavering assurance** during the remainder of their sojourn upon earth. Sin and Satan never distress nor wound them; the flesh lies calm and tranquil, like the summer sea, never lashed up by angry gusts into a storm of fretfulness and rebellion; the sea birds of doubt and fear never flit with screams around them, as harbingers of a tempest, but the gale of divine favor gently fills their sail, and wafts them along till they reach the harbour of endless rest. Is this consistent with Scriptures of truth? Does not the word of God set forth the path of a Christian as one of trial and temptation? Can a living soul pass through many scenes without ever being experimentally in his feelings as one of "the flock of slaughter?" Does not a chequered experience run through the whole of a Christian's life? Does the Scripture ever afford us the least warrant to believe that a man can be walking in the footsteps of a tempted, suffering Lord, who continues for months and years together at ease in Zion, without any trouble, exercise, grief, or distress in his soul? David never was there. Jeremiah never was there. Paul never was there. Heman never was there. Asaph never was there. You will find that no saints of God, whose experience is left on record in the Bible, ever were there; but their path was one of change and vicissitude; sometimes down, sometimes up, sometimes mourning, sometimes rejoicing, but never long together in one unvaried spot. The Spirit of the Lord, in carrying on this grand work in the hearts of God's people, will be continually operating in two distinct ways upon their souls. Jeremiah was a prophet of the Lord, and he was "set over the nations and over the kingdoms to root out,and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down"—thus ran one part of his commission: "to build and to plant"—that was the second part of his office. These two distinct operations were to run through the whole of his mission; they were "the burden of the Lord," laid upon him at his first call to the prophetical office, and they continued during the whole of his ministry, a space of more than forty years. Did he, then merely on one occasion pull down, and on one occasion build up? Was not the whole of his ministration, as evidenced in the prophecies that are contained in the book that bears his name, a **continual** pulling down with one hand, and building up with the other? So is it then with the ministration of the Spirit of the Lord in a vessel of mercy. He is continually healing, continually casting down, continually raising up, now laying the soul low in the dust of self-abasement, and now building it up sweetly in Christ." (THROUGH BACA'S VALE, pg. 226-227, by J. C. Philpot) Let the reader please examine carefully the last sentence, as it sums up the subject in a "nutshell".

At this point, we will quote from one of Philpot's sermons, "The son of the Living God". We quote where he is treating upon the subject of **Assurance:** "But Peter speaking for himself and fellow-disciples, added, "And we are sure." Here is assurance, certainly, undoubting persuasion. To believe is not enough; we must be sure. But how can we be sure? If we have seen a thing with our eyes, we are sure of that. If we have touched a thing with our hands, we are sure of that. And if we have walked to any place with our feet, we are sure of that. So it is in spiritual things. If I have seen the person of Jesus with a believing eye, if I have heard the words of Jesus with a believing ear, if I have touched the hem of Jesus with a believing hand, if I have walked in Jesus with believing feet, then I not only believe, but I am sure that He is the Christ. Now this believing **assurance Peter had,** and this **all** the **saints** of God in their **measure** have. It **does not say**

that you are always sure of your interest in Him, and never doubt nor fear; it doesn't not say that you have no infidel temptations, no departings in thought, no waverings of mind, no sinkings of feeling. But have there not been times and seasons when you believed and were sure that Jesus is the Christ? You have had such a manifestion of His Person, discovery of His grace, revelation of His love, or of His sufferings, as received by a living faith, that you are sure that He is the Christ. Now this kept Peter, and this will keep you. Nothing else will. Sin, Satan, the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, with the various temptations spread in your path, will surely draw everyone aside who has not Peter's faith wrought in his heart by Peter's God, so as to believe and be sure that Jesus is the Christ." (pg. 134-135, SELETED SERMONS, Philpot)

Notice that Philpot was given to enter deeply into the beauty of the subject of Assurance. Did not he describe your experiences, my friends? "Let us draw near with a true heart in **full assurance of faith,** having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." (Hebrews 10: 22)

In closing, we quote Elder Bellows: "Now let us see the result of the outpouring of this water. And this seems like a climax to me. "One shall say I am the Lord's." I have often wished I could say this with all my heart, without doubt; but most of us have doubts and fears, don't we? Sometimes those doubts are removed, but often we go in darkness: a mourning people; but sometimes, Oh, sometimes, we say, that we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the Brethren. I have come down to Salisbury for twenty-five years, and have grown to love you; and have dared to embrace many of you, because I loved you; and do not apologize for the demonstration of a love which makes you seem unto me dearer than any person that was not a professor, or confessor. Yes indeed, many witness that love shed abroad in the heart: a fulfillment of a promise,—the result of the outpouring of the Spirit. Now, don't you see there are times when you can say, as one of old did sweetly say, "My beloved is mine, and I am his; he feeds among the lilies." Jesus said, "Consider the lilies, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin, yet I say unto thee that Solomon in all his glory, was not arrayed as one of these." Therefore, when the water of the word is life to your soul, there comes a sweet time; it may not be **too often,** but you can say, **"I am the Lord's."** (pg. 55, March, 1963 issue of the **SIGNS**)

I trust that you all have been comforted by the above writings.

Yours in hope,
W. W. Hudson, Jr.

ELDER HAMRICK TO SISTER JONES

1010 S. 16th St.
Harlingen, Texas

Dear Sister J. U. Jones;

We are still rejoicing in our thoughts upon the wonderful visit the Lord enabled us to have with the dear people of Pilgrin Rest Church.

You asked me my views upon a passage of scripture just as we were getting ready to leave for home. I hope the Lord will enable me to write something not of my own, but as it pleases Him through His Holy Spirit to reveal it unto me and that it will be to your comfort and of glory to our Lord.

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." (Philippians 2:12, 13)

First of all, let us examine the word "salvation" as it is used in our text—which the apostle Paul told the Philippian brethren to "work out with fear and

trembling." And by examining it, let us consider first what it does not mean and then what it does mean, according to the gift of our understanding.

The Armenian world, the unregenerate, who profess to be wise, take great delight in the passage of scripture under consideration, along with "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) They no doubt, according to their understanding of them, can see where they must have a big hand in working out the salvation that will house them in Heaven and eternal glory. Can this be ture? God forbid. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." (Eph. 2:8). "Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" The Armenians, I'm sure, are sincere in their belief for "there is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Prov. 16:25).

Salvation as used in our text cannot mean the eternal salvation of the soul for that is already worked out to a jot and tittle. The Lord Jesus came down to redeem all the elect of God from the curse of the law. He met every requirement the law could place upon Him, bringing in eternal salvation for His people. Was His work a finished work? The angel said, "He shall save His people from their sins." Not one word is said about man having to, or being able, to help in any way. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." (Rom. 8:7, 8). For man's works towards working out his eternal salvation are but "filthy rags" in the sight of God, "who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Tim. 1:9). "By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." (Heb. 19:14). The Lord said in His prayer to the father, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." (John 17:3) And His last words while hanging upon the cross were, "It is finished." The price has been paid in full, yea, "double for all our sins" bringing in eternal salvation, which is sure and steadfast. For in the bloodshedding sacrifice, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus salvation stands upon a rock that can never be moved. Let us not be tempted to believe that the salvation spoken of in the text is the everlasting salvation of the soul. Man cannot work that out. It has already been accomplished by the finished work of Christ.

We have tried in our weak way to show that the "salvation" spoken of does not mean the eternal salvation of the soul. May we now come to the meaning of the word "salvation" as we have been given to see it in our text.

First of all, let us consider the very close union between Christ and His Church. For without union with Christ we have no saving, sanctifying, or experimental religion. We must and shall have union in all that He did while He sojourned here upon earth. "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps." (1 Peter 2:20). Christ is the head of the body, the Church, and from Him all spiritual blessings come into His mystical members. "I am the resurrection and the life," "I am come that they may have life," and, "For whom he did foreknow, him he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son that he might be the first born among many brethren." (Rom 8:29). May we be able to see in part, that the whole of Christ's journey from the manger to the cross was through much suffering with many afflictions and great tribulations. If Christ's people are to follow His footsteps, they must to some extent experience the same things, but to a much lesser degree that He experienced while

He was working out the everlasting salvation of the souls of His people. Now in following His footsteps we are working out our own salvation, which is an internal, an experimental salvation, which is a salvation wrought by the power of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of them that have been born again. This begins with us after being killed by the Holy Law of God, for the law is called the killing letter and the ministration of death and condemnation (2 Cor. 6,7,9). Also "it acted as a schoolmaster to bring us into Christ." (Gal. 3:24). We are taught by this Holy Law that all our works are but filthy rags in the eyes of God. We now see ourselves for the first time as the greatest or chief of sinners. "O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7:24).

Let us look at the word FOR: a preposition that shows a relationship, one depending upon the other. "Work out your own salvation" depends solely upon the following, "for it is God that worketh in you." Let me say, my friend, that unless God works in us, there will be no working out on our part, for we have neither the will nor power, but only as it pleases God to work in us.

God works in us a feeling of being the chief of all sinners. This feeling we work out with cries and sighs to Him. He works in us a feeling of helplessness. This is worked out in our confessing in our prayers before God, "that in us, that is our flesh, dwelleth no good thing." We see ourselves standing before the cross naked and empty handed, not an ounce of creature strenght to lift one finger toward the eternal salvation of our souls. Are we not standing in much fear and trembling? Did not God work in us a desire to offer ourselves to the Church? God worked the desire in us; we work it out by offering ourselves to the Church. Is not this done in much fear and trembling? What is a prayer but as sounding brass unless God first works in our hearts what to pray for? He gives us the will to pray for that which is to come to pass all in line with His predestination and will. We work this out on bended knees. For unless God first works a prayer in us "we know not what to pray for, or as we ought."

Jesus said, "I am the true vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." (John 15:5). Here Jesus is using the natural vine to illustrate spiritual meaning. Can we not see how the branches of a grape vine solely depend upon the vine for their very existence as well as any fruit? By the vine working certain substances into the branches, the branches in return bring forth fruit. In the spiritual realm, God works in us love, faith, hope, patience, joy, goodness, knowledge, temperance, peace: these are fruits of the spirit. When God works a love for our brethren in us, we work that love out by demonstrating our love towards our brethren. Have you not seen and felt that love flowing from breast to breast? But then old unbelief makes us to fear and tremble as to the reality of it during periods of darkness. Does God work hope in the soul? This hope is worked out that it might become an "anchor to our soul both sure and stedfast within the veil." As God works all these different events and fruits of grace into our living consciences, they do not lie in the soul as dead things but they bring about actions. They bring about good works for "faith without works is dead." Can we not see how God worked in the apostle Paul and how Paul worked these things out? "For he was made willing." He, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what will thou have me to do?" The same God works in all His elect and they are all made willing. When man is first shown the strait gate and narrow pathway, filled with suffering, tribulation, and temptation, God works in him "to will" and also works in him "to do." He is made willing to walk in the narrow way to undergo all afflictions, to be what God makes him. "Not

as I will, but as thou wilt."

A few of our brethren seem to have a different light or view upon the meaning of our text. I know of some few who interpret it as that salvation which they imagine they were helping to secure by their good works, even, "wherein in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others." (Eph. 2:2,3) Possessing self righteousness, creature strength, creature wisdom, etc. now you have to work all this out, get rid of it, for it was only an imaginary salvation. Yes, my friend, I agree that self righteousness, creature strengh, wisdom, etc. belong only to a self righteous Pharisee; but how long does it take the Holy Law of God to work this out? The law is called a fiery law. (Deut. 33:2) When this fiery law acts as a "schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ" and is brought home to our conscience, it sets fire to all self righteousness, creature strength, etc. Yes, it burns up all hopes of heaven and eternal glory upon the strength of our good works, and for some it burns in a hurry. When the Spirit of God blows upon an elect vessel, he fades to nothing. "The voice said, "Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flowers of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass." How long did it take the apostle Paul to die of, or get rid of, his false salvation? He said, For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." (Rom. 7:9). Yes, he died of all creature strength.

Let us now look at the passage of scripture preceeding our text. The apostle Paul, in speaking to the Philippian brethren, was speaking to a people who had already experienced having the commandment come to them, had already been killed by the law as to fleshly strength. For Paul says, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed." How did they obey? "That ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind" obeying the law and ordiances. "Not in my presence only but much more in my absence." Here is a people already "going forth by the footsteps of the flock" as the flock went forth entering through the strait gate and narrow way following the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ—enduring the sword, famine, tribulation, persecution, and suffering. Now He tells them to "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His own good pleasure." That internal, that experimental salvation, which is a salvation wrought by the power of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of those following after the footsteps of Christ and the saints who have gone on before. "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."

Sister Jones, if what has been written is in accord with the truth, may it be of comfort to your soul. And if so, yield to the Lord the glory due His name. Oh, if God would be pleased to give me wisdom and knowledge to write upon such important subjects in a more truly spiritual and manifest way.

May the unction of the Holy Spirit rest upon you that you may grow and increase with the whole increase of God.

Humbly written
Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4,
Reidsville, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am enclosing a poem about my dear wife who passed away May 31, 1963. It was written by my daughter-in-law,

Mrs. Charlie J. Shreve. We would be glad to see it published in the *Signs of the Times*. We feel that she died in the faith of the Lord.

. . . It is not likely that I will ever recover from the shock of her passing; and I feel that I just want to go on into that bright world above where we feel she is resting in praise to God. She left such sweet evidence from time to time.

I just sit here alone, feeling forsaken. But I feel as Job said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." I have no other place to go. At times He comes to me and does comfort me, if I am not deceived. Much of my time I feel to be the most wretched man on earth, and feel to say with Job, "Oh, that I was never born."

May He keep us humble at his feet, is my prayer for Jesus' sake. I enclose my check for renewing the *Signs* for one year.

A brother in hope,
C. C. Shreve

"MY GOD SHALL SUPPLY ALL YOUR NEED"

Route # 3
Arab, Alabama 35016

Signs of The Times,
Danville, Va.

Dear Editors:

I see my subcription is past due. Find enclosed a check for $5.00 to cover my paper for two years.

On August 11, 1962 I was critically injured in an automobile accident. My life hung in the balance for several days. I, the doctor, nor any one else thought I would live.

I had often wondered when a person reaches a certain point, if God does not reconcile one to die. Now I know that He does. While I was yet in the very jaws of death, (Yes, I feel I was walking in the valley and the shadow of death), I was not afraid. "I will fear no evil". About this point I saw two roads. One, leading in one direction, was smooth, clean, wide, light and bright, with no obstacles to hinder its travel. It was not even upgrade, but looked so very inviting, and easy to travel. Leading in the opposite direction was another road. It was steep, narrow, rough, rocky with gullies and rubbish all over. This road looked like it would be **very-difficult** to travel. I was not only made willing, but I was made to want to travel that smooth road. Which was to me, as I hope, the road to eternal life. Or the passing from this rough and rugged world to a better one. The other was the one I must travel if I came back. I did not want to travel that rough road.

After several days, as I was coming out of the semi-coma, this scripture was given to me; "My God shall supply all of your need". What a great comfort! When one is actually made to feel that HE WILL supply all of your need. Many, many times a day, while my suffering was so great, and almost unbearable, that scripture came to me, and I was comforted, and made to feel I was not alone. "For thou art with me".

Over the weeks, when my recovery was so slow, and it seemed to me that time had slowed to a snail's pace, in all my trying times, it was given to me over and over again, and each time it was put in my mind, it gave me comfort. "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me".

Sister Ruth Redmond made mention in one of the many, many wonderful cards and letters she sent me, of our chastisements. I had not felt or thought of my injuries and suffering as being a chastisement. I began to give it a lot of thought. I read the book of Job, and all the other scriptures I could find on the matter. I felt that if it was a chastisement, that surely God would reveal to me for what I was being chastised.

While I was yet unable to be up much, I received the November 62 **Signs**, with Elder Griffin's editorial, "Yea, though I

walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me". Oh! what food to my soul that was. I read it again and again, over and over again. I felt that I truly had walked through the valley of the shadow of death. I was not afraid, nor did I fear evil. But the greatest comfort in the article to me was where he said that if we felt no guilt, our tribulations were not chastisements, but suffering for Christ's sake. There was my answer, for I had felt no guilt, but had not been given any light on the subject. I do not have words to express how much comfort I got from that editorial. Surely it was the wonderful, all wise, working power of God that caused his mind to be directed to write it. As though he knew of my afflictions, and was writing it just for me, but I am sure he knew nothing about it. Too, the editorial was timed so that it came to me when I felt such a great need.

Surely all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are the called according to His purpose. How wonderful it is to be blest, as we hope, to believe that He does do ALL things after the council of His own will, and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, what doest thou.

I feel His sustaining Grace was with me as my car was knocked 40 feet, and I fifteen feet further. As I lay completely helpless on the pavement, a young girl, a stranger, came to me and kindly put her hand under my head. Yet I am here to write this letter. For some purpose, I know not what, it pleased Him to bring me back. How great it is to really feel, "for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me". He gave me scripture to comfort and sustain me. Though I am now able to be up and about most of my usual activities, I still get comfort from those words; "My God SHALL supply ALL of your need."

I do not feel worthy to have been so wonderfully blest. Tribulation worketh patience, patience experience, and experience hope. Though suffering and tribulation we are made humble. Yet He made me to feel His presence, and I pray He will ever keep me at the feet of the brethren and sisters.

Elder Griffin, may it please God to keep you, all the other editors, and enable you to write many more words that are a comfort to God's humble poor, and this poor little worm of the dust.

A little sister I hope,
Fannie R. Hyatt

"SUCH KNOWLEDGE IS TOO WONDERFUL FOR ME"

New Cumberland, Penna.

Dear Elder Wood:

Just a few lines tonight to you, for you are often on my mind.

It seems so difficult for one so worthless as I, to come among you with whom I am bound by hope. My desire to visit is strong, yet I feel restrained by fear. I am given a knowledge that it has pleased our God to do all the things that he has purposed to do from the foundation of the world. It is, therefore, a consoling thought that, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

We are bound, then, by his firm decree, and are thankful unto him for all things which are given of him according to his mercy and goodness. We find ourselves poor and needy, and worthless sinners; and, except for his grace, eternal damnation would be ours.

In the vanity of our wordly minds, we think that we may do this or that, or go here or there, but are brought to the realization that we can do nothing of ourselves, and that God's will be done according to his good pleasure.

I do not intend to try to make excuses for my total deparvity, for which none can be charged but myself. But I find also that if it pleased our Father that his only beloved Son should bear our sins for the salvation of his body, or the

redemption of sinners by his grace, then I can only hope that we are accounted for in the Lamb's Book of Life. Otherwise there is no hope. So I make no excuse for myself, but ask forgiveness for my failures and inability to comply with my desires.

. . . We have only what it has pleased God to give us, — no more, no less. And I must freely confess that my lot has been exceedingly more than I could possibly deserve. How richly have I enjoyed the fruits of his kindness! Mere words can never tell. My heart does sing and rejoice with gladness that a revelation has been made to such a worm as I. We tremble before such majesty as his. And, as David was inspired to so aptly write in the 139th Psalm, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." Oh what joys we behold by his loving mercy, grace, and tender care!

. . . I felt to write to you concerning those things which I have found the Lord has done for me. May He continue to bless and keep you and yours according to is purpose and pleasure, in my prayer. Above all things else, may his will be done.

In humble hope,
B. K. Smith

OUR PEACE IS IN HIM

1302 Walnut Street,
Benton, Ky.

Dear Brother Wood:

. . . A few of us are permitted to meet together at different churches of our faith and order each Sunday. The second Sunday in each month is our meeting time at Soldier Creek Church. Elder Paul Poyner is our moderator. On the third Sundays he preaches at his home church, New Providence, near Murray, Kentucky. And Elder O. W. Perkins, of our Soldier Creek Association, preaches on that date at a church in the Bethel Association. Elder R. L. Biggs, on the same date and Saturday before, has appointments near Dawson Springs, Kentucky.

So it is throughout the month, each Sunday there is a meeting near enough to us, that in a little while we can be with our sisters and brethren and friends as they assemble together for no other purpose than to worship the living God our Father, as we hope: Who did from eternity elect his children for a bride for his Son. Before there were any of them the choice was made, and their names written in the Book of Life. What is that book? Is His Son the Book of Life? He is life, and his life is the light of the world, so the Apostle John said. Without this Son being in us the hope of glory, we have no light, and are not alive. But if indeed we see him as he is, we have been given eyes to see him, and our understanding is opened: and we understand just who we are, and why we need a saviour: One who is able to save to the uttermost, and to make known unto us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in himself.

In this Son we have peace and joy. In the world as we go from one incident to another, one circumstance to another, one situation finished and another opened up — all filled with cares and sorrows of mind: Just enough to make us see that our **peace is in Him** who is full of grace and truth; and in whom we hope we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

So, with Paul, we can say, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Surely he has made us to sit together and hear the joyful sound of the Gospel; and I mean, Brother Wood, the preached gospel. I know the gospel is the power of God, and you can't carry it around. But the power carries you, and makes you weary and desirous of going, and you can't keep from going. Job said, "I was at ease, but he hath broken me asunder." He then ceased to be at ease: He was

troubled in that he had uttered things that he understood not — things too wonderful for him, which he said he knew not. And when his eyes beheld the greatness of God, he saw and knew that not even a thought could be with holden from him. God told him to gird up his loins like a man, and he was demanded to declare unto God. He could only declare the power of God in all things, and that salvation was of him.

What else is there now to declare to our Lord? In silence often, and in groanings often; but still declared.

A sister in hope,
Effie Bowden

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with Moors Church, Edgecomb County, on Highway 42 between Pinetops and Wilson, N. C., the 5th Saturday and Sunday in September.

All who love the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. S. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Tarboro, N. C.

MEETING AT NEW VERNON, N. Y.

The Lord willing there will be an all day meeting in the Old School Baptist Meeting House at New Vernon, N. Y., Saturday October 5th. Lunch will be served. All lovers of gospel preaching are invited.

A. J. Slauson

KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

The one hundred and ninty-eight annual session of the Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association is to be held with the Robersonville P. B. Church, Robersonville, N. C., Martin County, October 5th, 6th, and 7th, the Lord willing. Elder W. E. Grimes was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, and Elder E. C. Stevenson, alternate.

We extend a cordial invitation too our ministering brethren, brethren and friends.

E. C. Harrison, Assn. Clerk

CORRECTION

In Elder Hudson's article in the September issue, on page 199, first column, eighth line from the bottom, it should read, "good pleasure of his will." Please make the correction in your copy. — J. D. W.

LEAD KINDLY LIGHT

I know not how soon the storm may beat
On my uncovered head,
Or when for me will separate
Life's slight and slender thread.

I know not why ordained and fixed,
(An overall decree)
My joy and sorrow shall be mixed
On the journey to the sea.

Unknown to me, wherefore and why,
To never understand.
The unchanging constant course
Of the Creator's hand.

If program, plan and purpose
Are not to me revealed,
May I accept a wise precept
In faith submission yield!

I know that in full measure
Were all my needs supplied.
When wished for, wanted treasure
Were forbidden or denied.

Contented, not to question,
If never understood,
In late surprise to realize,
All for my greatest good.

I know in life's late season,
Of pleasure long deprived,
To learn at last the reason,
In weakness have survived.

Did voices of experience,
Remind me constantly,
Or friends unseen, with a cloud between,
Create a mystery?

Oh source of wondrous wisdom,
As I journey to the sea!
I know a kind Creator's mind
Is not revealed to me.

J. S. Zimmerman
Penbrook, Penna.

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association** will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Old Beulah, Johnson County, N. C., on October 25, 26, and 27. The church is located about four miles Southwest of Kenly, N. C. Those coming from the South on 95 and 301 Highways will turn left at the stop light in Kenly; go about two blocks; turn left at the crossroads and follow on to the church. Those coming from the North will turn right at the stop light and follow the same route as above.

The Saturday and Sunday sessions will be held at the Micro School Auditorium located on the main street of Micro, between 301 and 95 highways.

W. E. Turner, Clerk

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

Elder R. W. Rhodes now has his book of the above title ready for distribution. It may be had by addressing him at P. O. Box 625, Spearsville, Louisiana. The price is $2.00 postpaid.

VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting will be held, the Lord willing, at the Mt. Zion Meeting House, Wednesday and Thursday, October 16 and 17, 1963. The meeting house is located on U. S. Route 50, about three miles East of Aldie, Virginia.

A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends to meet with us.

L. D. Duke, Clerk

SALISBURY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The **Salisburg Old Baptist Association** will be held with the Indiantown Church at Powellville, Maryland, Wendnesday and Thursday October 23 and 24, 1963. Those who come on Tuesday go to the home of William S. Adkins, Rt. 50, Mardela, Md. (telephone Salisbury Pioneer 2-2198); or Elder Arthur R. Warren, Berlin, Maryland. (telephone Berlin 1036. All those who come on Wednesday go to the church.

All ministers and brethren of our faith and orders are cordially invited.

William S. Adkins, Clerk

Danville, Virginia OCTOBER, 1963

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EDITORIAL

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee, for, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee, and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy

daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thy heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, and the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee." (Isaiah 60:1, 5).

How pleasant it is to think upon the experiences of Joseph and his brethren, of Moses and the children of Israel, of the Jewish household of faith, and to be able to claim them as our brethren in the Lord. To me, God first appeared to the Jews; after their rejection of the Saviour, and their dispersal among the nations of the earth, he then turned to the Gentiles. As far as my limited understanding of the Scriptures go, I do not see God dealing with any people after the Gentiles. The order of God's dealing is to the Jews (or the law dispensation) first, after that to the Gentiles, and to me, that order ends in time with the Gentiles. However, that view is not a criterion, nor is it a standard, by which the Old School Baptists are to be judged, and by which they must abide.

The apostle tells us in the Hebrew letter how important both the Jews and the Gentiles are to each other. It would seem sometimes that brethren think of God as having provided something better for the Jews, but Paul does not seem to think so. All of the ones that accomplished so much by faith are of Israel as a nation. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better things for us, that they without us should not be made perfect (Hebrews II:39,40). God has provided something better for us, not something better for them. And yet, it is provided for them, for without us having had something better provided for us, they never would have been made perfect. And had not God first chose Israel and delivered to them the oracles of God, and blessed them down the pilgrimage of their journey, we never would have been blessed with some better thing, seeing that God blessed us with it, so that Israel would be perfect.

Light changes everything. It reveals to us that darkness has been in us, and around us. To me, it is extremely dangerous to urge people that are in the dark to move. This is one of the first objections of men to the Old Baptist doctrine. They say that we do not have any message for the unsaved. If brethren have a message for the unsaved, let them speak; if they have a commandment to those in the dark, let them deliver it. But if there is to be a message to those unsaved, to those in the dark, then I am still in the dark, for I have not been able to see it. Since it is dangerous to tell people that are in the dark to get on the move, I will, as long as I am presently inclined, confine my preaching to those whose light has come, for, mark my words well, if you tell a man that is in the dark to get on the move, that man will be as apt to go one direction as another. It would be the heighth of foolishness to tell him to come to the light, for to him there is not any light. If he moves, while in the dark, he will be as likely to move away from Christ as he would be to move towards him. There is not any change to one that is in the dark; all change is in the light. It is not a change in the man, but the light makes the change.

Do you remember when you first saw the light? Have you forgotten the first time that you saw the church? Have you forgotten the first time that you heard and saw the truth? I am not afraid to tell God's people that there has not been a day as important to them as that day was. If they have **seen** this day, this light, the glory of the Lord rising on them, they will never forget it. It can not be forgotten, rather it is remembered (John 14:26), It is the most important day that has come to them yet. This light had to come; it is not something that another can bring to you; nor is something that you can go and get and then come to it. It must always be remembered that a voice is

present and accompanying this light. They are not separate; they do not work singly. O send out thy light and thy truth: let them (notice the plural) lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles (Psalms 43:3). The light upon the apostle's path was accompanied by the voice of Christ (the truth), and the two of them led the apostle to the holiest hill in all the world, the Old Baptist church at Damascus. Do you remember when they appeared to you, and how they have led you on in that course that is so strange to a Christian? for,

"How strange is the course that a Christian must steer;
How preplexed is the path he must tread
The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
And his life he receives from the dead."

When light is come, it is then time to preach the gospel to a sinner. This gospel is truth but is is also light, seeing that it is the power of God, and that in him there is not any darkness at all (I John 1:5). It is the light and the truth that has brought the sinner into the kingdom (John 1:9), and it is the same that has brought him to the gospel privileges or blessings. This glory that arises on the sinner is the same glory that we see in Jesus. We do not see him as a losing Saviour; we do not see him as a would be Saviour; no, sir, we do not, but we would, sir, see Jesus crowned with glory (Hebrews 2:9), and our fondest hope, sir, would be to have that same glory that God has given his Son, given unto us (John 17: 22), and we would above everything else given us, have that light of God which enables us to see light (Psalms 36:9).

Draw near, you that feel to be poor and needy! Come hither all ye weary and troubled sinners! Hear the word of the Lord to his people. To those that have been sitting in darkness (Matthew 4:16; Acts 26:18), the Lord has come, the gospel has been brought to those that were not a people that they might be called his people (Romans (9:25). If you feel to not have any light, then that is the best evidence in all the world that the promise is yours, but if the making of light is yours, if the coming to the light is of yourself, then let me urge you to sit still. It is still dark to you, and I would not want to be the cause of you walking the wrong direction (Isaiah 50:10,11).

There is not any darkness in God, but I do want to say time and again that He is the God of the darkness. Darkness is left on the earth as it has always been where nullity and voidableness is its only characteristics. Its scope is as sovereignly set by him that has appointed all things as the light's bounds are set. At the time of the coming of Jesus darkness covered the earth; it was gross darkness that covered the people. Methinks that this gross darkness is illustrated in the langauge of our Saviour (See Matthew 6:23). This people is not the same people whose light is come; it is not the same people whose glory is risen upon them. This people would call light darkness and darkness light. This people will never be called to arise and to shine, and this people will never have the glory of the Lord to rise upon them.

This light and this glory does not have a comparable thing on earth to compete with it. It is not secondary in God's gifts to his children. It does not take a back seat to anything that men can produce. It is not relegated to the place of obsolete and useless items that at one time were beneficial to the church. Today so much printer's ink and so much time and sound and whirlwinds are being used to tell us how we need to return to the light, and how much we need to walk in the glory of the Lord, and how much we need to get up from our lethargic sleeping. Ah, my precious reader, that is not the gospel; that is not the truth; that is not the glory of the Lord; that is not the good news that afflicted and work ridden sinners desire to hear. If I refuse to come to the light it is because of darkness. Well, sir, let me tell you something that seemingly, you do not know. The light

that my message is predicated upon; the light that is the center of my message; the light which my hope of happiness here and hereafter is founded upon, is a light that does away with darkness, that disperses unbelief and indifference. This light, when it is come, is accompanied by a voice werein even the dead are made alive and blessed to hear and obey; to get up, to arise, to shine. This glory is given to be seen. It is not given to be hid by the recipient, nor eclipsed by the enemy. It is put on by the recipient, and it stops the mouth of the gainsayer.

I am not condoning the imperfections of the Old School Baptists. I am not glossing over the wrongs and divisions and shortcomings of my people. I am not glorying in our sin and ignorance and age and laurels (as though we had any), but I do hope that I am glorying in the Lord, and that his glory has arisen upon God's children in general and in the Old School Baptist in particular, and that this glory has been seen. We have our faults, yes; we are divided and subdivided, yes; we have sinned and we are come short of the glory of God, and we would, if iniquity was marked against us (Psalms 130:3), be unable to stand, yes; but the gospel of peace is not found in our shortcomings. So many places are stinking with the dead flies, the reeking ointments, the leeks and onions of Egypt, and not a word of good news; so many voices are being raised in condemnation to the dear children of God, and not a word of encouragement and comfort and gospel is to be found and heard. This light and this glory is still springing up in the hearts of God's humble poor, and this unsullied glory is still rising on those that sit in darkness. When it does come, it is seen **now, as it has ever been seen.** Even ungodly men are seeing **something** in the Lord's people that is different to anything that their bodies have.

The doctrine of God our Saviour is linked together. This chain is all of God's forging. The link wherein we were chosen is a link of God's everlasting work; the link wherein Jesus came to earth in the midst of his enemies (definitely not in the midst of a people that had sued heaven for His coming; definitely not in the midst of a people that accepted Him at his coming) and bled and died for his people; a link wherein the ones thus chosen and thus died for were all brought to a knowledge of the truth, being born again, being effectually called, even though they had all been in darkness; a link wherein the light of God came to them, the power of his Voice made them arise, and the glory of the Lord arose on them. So much is said about letting God do something. This is not just said among what we call Arminians; it is not said just among the other fellows among us, but it is that unbelief that is in **our** hearts. To me, I do not find a god any more repulsive to me in one place of weakness than another. If the God of Israel is a losing God before regeneration and a new birth, he is just as likely to lose **after** that work. If he is a losing God **after** the first work of his Spirit, then by what line of reasoning must I infer that he does not lose cases **before** his work? Now let us look once more at the text. The light comes before the commandment, the glory has **already** arisen before the command to shine had come. God moved first. Let us keep first things in their place, yea, let us, as blessed with grace, have a place for everything, and let us have all things in place. What place does Christ occupy in your life? Is he first? If he **is** first, then he will **be** first. As he appears to you, so you will appear before his people. If the first link in your chain of hope is of the Lord, the most important thought in all your life is this: Am I serving God ever cognizant of who formed the first link? Am I arising, am I shining before men because I have received a link in the chain of God's saving grace? Am I **walking in him** as **I received him?** Are the two chains, the one of his bringing me into the kingdom, and the other of my walking in his kingdom, different? Is the one of grace, wholly and solely by the

sovereign work of God, and the other just a tiny little bit forged and made effective by the will and work of the creature?

The arising **must** be done; the shining **must** be done, but the lifting up of the eyes **must** also be done. Two kinds of links will not do here nor hereafter. The believing Jews in the time of Christ, as the believing child of God now (one who is a Jew inwardly), is now arising at the command of God; if not, his commands are as worthless and ineffectual as mine; Those that have been given a light are now letting that light shine; if not, the light of God is not anymore effectual than is a light of my kindling. And another thing. Men do not put a candle under the bushel. **Men do not do that.** I am not being smart, and I am not being bombastic, and I am not being sarcastic, but I am saying that **men do not put a candle under the bushel.** The world is rife with pulpits and men and periodicals that are telling us that we have hid our light under the bushel. It isn't true. Why? Because men do not ever put their light under the bushel? Did you ever see a farmer go to the barn and put his light under a bushel. The most of the brethren of any age know something of going to the barn after sundown or before day to feed. Did you put their light under the bushel? Did you? No, for men do not put their light under the bushel. They **do** put it to where it gives light. Isn't that true? When God puts a light in his house, will he put it under a bushel? or will he put it to where it will give light. The children of God are not as brass lamps or tallow candles to be moved without feeling, without experience. No, sir, they are not moved as is a piece of machinery, for the machinery will never feel the touch of the engineer; it will never feel the power of that which sends its wheels into revolutions; it will never hear the sweet voice and commands of its owner, but with all of this the movement of God's children is not any less sure than is the movement of the machinery. The machinery is moved by the sending forth of power which is sufficient to drive the cylinder; the children of God are likewise moved by the sending forth of power—the love of God shed abroad in their hearts. Thus the sending forth of light (which is God, and He is love) causes the seeing eye to see; it causes the lifting of the eye on scenes that arise. How pleasing it is to God's humble followers to see those that we feel have received the gift of grace, the power of faith, the enlightened pathway, coming home to the fold. Not one of these little ones will ever be turned away who come begging for mercy. What a delightful pursuit it is to have the church in one mind as she watches those on the outside as they begin to gather in, to come a little closer to the fold of lovely brethren. How pitiful it is today to see those who we one time took sweet counsel together now doing all they can to destroy the faith that they once embraced and espoused. Have they **seen** and **felt** the light? It is not mine to say, but it is mine to say that they do not act like it, for, those that have seen and felt the light are **walking** in the light. One has already been brought to the light, have arisen and are now going about the city (Psalms 48:12; S.S.3:2); they are now keeping house with the furnishings given, they are now occupying until He comes again. They are not, as is often charged, unconcerned about anyone else, but they do desire above everything else to have them gather **after** the light has come, **after** the command to arise has been given.

It is sad to know that often a dear one only gets to the threshold of the door. I encourage those that give evidence of having seen the light and heard the Voice of commandment to come home to the church. I do not fear any man in this, for the Bible is full of encouragement, full of pithy admonitions to the followers of the Lamb. I am fully persuaded that the distance that we come in gathering together is wholly of the Lord, that none will come any further

than that which the light and the Voice commands and brings us. Since this is true, many will only get to the threshold of the door, and will not have sufficiant light and grace to gather all the way, but if they are not brought all the way through the door perhaps the door must be guarded, and it is much better to have the door guarded by a well wisher than to have it left uncrowded and spies get in, later to turn their venon against the very ones that give **too much** welcome. Let us rejoice and be glad for the sons of God and the lovely daughters of Zion will all gather together as close in as the light and Voice commands.

One usually finds what you are looking for. The most important question in all the world is this: How does the church appear to you? Is it a sinkhole of sin? Perhaps that is what you are looking for. Is it a place where unclean things appear? Perhaps that is what you are looking for. Is it a place where everyone has a defect except you? If so, perhaps a Man needs to remove the beam from your eye. Or is it a place of rest and beauty and sweet fellowship? Is it a place where you are made to cry out, "What is thy servant, that thou shouldst look upon such a dead dog as I am?" Ah, if we could just feel once again that the table of the Lord had covered our crooked feet, what fellowship would exist. If we could sit down as in days of yore a poor crippled beggar begging for the crumbs, what a flowing together there would be (2 Samuel 9:8). Ah, if we were humble under the teaching of Jesus it would, (with the negro spiritual) be us standing in need of prayer; it would be us gathering to Jesus and to the light and asking for the old ways and for faith and grace to walk therein. Ah, yes, if the text means anything to us, we will gather to the watering and feeding place of the lambs, even though we were reminded that we were foreigners and dogs as pertaining to the kingdom, we would acknowledge all that and yet keep begging that we, poor and ragged and an outcast without a land of our own, that we be permitted to gather with the children of God, that we be permitted to travel with them, to die with them, and to eat what crumbs and handfulls that are given us (see Ruth and Matt. 15:21,28).

When this flowing together comes there is great rejoicing. These who had been given light; these who had been cut down and floated in floats (I Kings 5:9) to the building place of the temple of God will come with shouts of praise to the Rock and Captain of their salvation. These floats (rafts) tell me of the little churches of Jesus Christ bound together by the love cords of God. The coming together of God's people is always up hill. Men can not float uphill; men can not climb in the kingdom of God, but the grace of God, the love of God, the power of God, is all, **all**, ALL that is needed to float his people together, causing them to flow together, to blend into one body, as God the Father and God the Son are one.

Did you notice that this coming together is accompanied by two characteristics most lovely and desirable. "Thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged." What are you afraid of? Afraid of your brethren? My God, what a question! Afraid of the testimony they bring? No, no, not that, my God, not that. Then what fear? Ah, I look back over these pages. They are setting forth the glorious doctrine of God's reigning grace. They are going forth to the lovely children of God. Nothing there to be afraid of. Nothing there to cause anxiety. The doctrine dressed in all the attributes of God; the children dressed in the imputed righteousness of Christ. What could startle us there? What could cause anxiety there? What could cause fear there? Nothing at all. Where is this fear to come from? What is it about? Look in child. You have looked at the doctrine. You have found it palatable and lasting and beautiful. You have looked at the Bride. She is decked in all the resplendent glory of her Husband. How you desire it for your covering, how you desire to be found in Him. But look within. Look there for the trouble. Look

deep into the dark recesses of your heart. Have you looked? Are you looking within, or are you bent on looking into the motives and hearts of those that are gathered together? If so, you will never know the fear. Condemnation attends all that you say, and write, and the ways of death are scattered along the path that you are treading. If you have looked within, ah, what sore soul forebodings are felt. This fear is because of the spectacle seen within, not because of what is seen among the lovely ones gathered together. What is it that is producing your fear?

Following the fear there will be an enlargement of your heart. This enlargement of heart will not be found in magnifying your brother's faults; it will not be found in examining your brother to see if he is in the faith. None of that, none of that at all, It will be in tender compassion towards your brethren; it will be in royal welcome to the children of God, regardless of their age or social standing or geographical location or earthly wisdom. This fear will cause you to fear that you are not one, but drinking from the dews of heaven you will be enlarged in heart to welcome one and all that comes begging for mercy for Jesus' sake.

"The abundance of the sea shall be converted to thee." The sea is troublesome to God's people. It often seems that it will overflow and sweep us from our moorings. So many times it seems that all of the trials of life are against us (Genesis 42:36). So often we feel that we are carried out into the wilderness to perish; so often it seems that we have left the only safety that we knew, the only bed that we had to lie on, and have been brought to a mountain pass only to be trampled under foot by the pursuing enemy or to be drowned in the raging sea. But behold the sea is converted unto us. That which seemed to be our sure destruction has become our salvation and deliverance.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

LUKE XI. 9, 10.

BROTHER BEEBE:—I am an inquirer after the right way; will you please give me your views on Luke xi. 9, 10? "And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

Yours in hope of eternal life,

J. C. L. MILLER.

The gracious encouragement given in this text to pray, and the assurance of the answer of prayer, is too plainly written to require much labor or argument by way of explanation, yet plainly as the subject is stated to the enlightened child of God, who honestly inquires after and desires to know and walk in the truth as it is in Jesus, it is like all other Scriptures, dark and obscure to the natural man, who receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, and even the saints may be perplexed by the perversions of ignorant or designing men, who handle the sacred word of God deceitfully, and darken counsel by words without knowledge. Those who, in defiance of heaven and contradiction of the express testimony of the Scriptures, preach a conditional and work-mongrel doctrine of offers and proffers of grace, indiscriminately made to all mankind, often repeat the text under consideration as though it had been addressed alike to all, and represent the Saviour as saying to carnal, graceless and dead sinners that they may have eternal salvation by asking for it; that the Lord has made the terms so easy as to bring the salvation of sinners within the reach of all men, and so cheap that all may secure by purchase an interest in the kingdom of God.

But if such a theory were true, would

not salvation be attainable by works? If the sinner must do something to secure his salvation, however little that something may be, or however easily performed, the doing of it would be an indispensable condition, and his salvation or damnation would rest on his compliance with the terms. But such we know is not the case, for God has said of all who are saved, "And their salvation is of me, saith the Lord." By grace are ye saved, though faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." If salvation be of God, it is not of men, and if grace, then it is not of works, otherwise grace is no more grace. The apostle informs us that all the promises of God are in Christ Jesus yea, and in him amen, to the glory of God by us. This being the case, to be interested in them we must be in Christ, as the branch is in the vine. There are no gospel promises out of Christ, but unto the members of the body of Christ, who were chosen of God in him before the foundation of the world, are given exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature. (2 Peter i. 4.) "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

In the chapter from which our subject is taken, one of his disciples said unto him, "Lord teach us to pray," &c. "And he said unto them [that is, to his disciples, one of whom had asked for this in struction], When ye pray, say, Our Father," &c. None but the children of God can in truth call God their Father. If he is indeed our Father it is because our spiritual, immortal or eternal life was with him from everlasting, and because he hath of his own will begotten us by the word of his power, and we are consequently "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." To such, and only to such, gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. These are the children of God, and God is their Father. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."—Romans viii. 14. "Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."—Romans viii. 9.

To be a son or child of God, and entitled to the privilege of calling God our Father, is to be begotten and born of God, and to possess the Spirit of Christ, and but by that Spirit, and that Christ alone, can any man have access to God, for Jesus expressly declares, No man can come unto the Father but by me. All his children are taught of God, and every one that is taught of God cometh to Christ, while no man cometh unto Christ except his Father, which sent him, draw him. It is therefore preposterous to pretend that Jesus was teaching any others to pray but such as were by a spiritual birth qualified to worship God in spirit and in truth, by praying with the spirit and with the understanding also, for God is a Spirit, and can only be approached by the spirit, though Christ Jesus our Lord. We know not how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, and maketh intercession for us according to the will of God.

To such as are born of God, led by the the Spirit of God, and are followers of Christ, is the distinguishing appellation, disciple of Christ, given in the Scriptures, for except we obey and follow him we cannot be his disciples, but, Then are ye my disciples indeed, if ye do whatsoever I command you. To his disciples Jesus said, "And I say unto you." Are any so dull as to believe that this form of words means that he saith this to all mankind? Can these words without violence be applied to those to whom he had said, Ye shall seek me, and Ye shall not find me, and ye shall die in your sins, &c.? "I say." It is Jesus that speaks; it is the voice of him who called the world into being, who speaks the word and it stands fast, who commands

and it is done. There is power and majesty, grace and salvation in his word, for he says, The words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life, and when the word goeth forth out of his mouth it shall not return unto him void of the work whereunto he hath sent it. Nor can his word miscarry, what he says to you does not mean somebody else.

Well, what does he here say to his disciples? "Ask, and it shall be given you." The disciple in asking, virtually acknowledges his need of that for which he asks, and his dependence upon God to supply his needs. He acknowledges that the name of Father is a hallowed or consecrated name, expressive of vital relationship, and that he has confidence in his Father which is in heaven, that he is able and willing to supply all that he is led by the spirit of prayer to ask for, and the faith of the Son of God in the heart of the disciples lays hold of the blessed assurance that what he is so led to ask for shall be given to him. Not that all that our fleshly lusts may desire or prompt us to ask for is pledged to us in this sacred text, for we sometimes ask amiss, for things to consume upon our lusts, and then we ask and we receive not. God in great mercy to us withholds such things as would be injurious to us. But what we are taught by Christ to ask, in spirit and manner and form as expressed in the prayer in the context, from the second to the fifth verse of this chapter, in the spirit of that submission which says, Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth, when looking to God day by day for daily supplies of temporal and spiritual support and subsistence, and when cherishing the same spirit of forgiveness to our enemies that we ask God to bestow on us. "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses."—Mark xi. 25, 26.

This last quoted Scripture may explain to us why many of our prayers are shut out, especially when we are desiring that God should crush our enemies and lavish his gifts on us and on our friends. "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you. That ye be the children of your Father which is in heaven." &c. (Matt. v. 44, 45.) If God forgives us only as we forgive those who trespass against us, what will be our fate? Do we mark iniquity against our neighbor, brother or fellow-being, and ask God to blot out our transgressions? How vain are such prayers! Do we ask God to be merciful to our unrighteousness and remember our iniquities no more? Then let us not seek revenge on those we deem to be our foes. The word and spirit of our God must teach us what to ask for, how to ask, and in what spirit and in what name to approach our heart-searching and rein-trying God, and thus directed we shall ask, and God will hear, and we shall receive all that we ask for, for the Spirit of truth and holiness will not lead us to pray for anything that God will withhold from them that walk uprightly.

"Seek, and shall find." Seeking not only implies a desire to find a cherished treasure, but also such qualifications as blind or dead men do not possess. To seek is to look or to search for something that is hidden, and in order to seek we must have life and sight, but unquickened by the Spirit we are both dead in sins and blind to everything of a spiritual nature. Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God, and that is the very first thing the children of God are commanded to seek for. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things [temporal mercies] shall be added unto you."—Matt. vi. 33. All that we require to seek is embraced in the kingdom of God and the righteousness of God. These we need, for under no other government can we be happy or at home,

and in no other righteousness can we be holy and acceptable to God.

But as the kingdom of God is spiritual, the natural man cannot see it, or receive it, for it is only spiritually discerned. In that blessed kingdom we should be but aliens and strangers unless qualified for fellow-citizenship with the saints by the righteousness of God. To seek for some popular religious establishment, called a church, and our own righteousness, requires no new birth, no circumcision of heart, of ears or eyes, for the world will recognize its own, to seek successfully the kingdom over which the blessed Jesus presides, and the flaming righteousness of God, without which we can in nowise be saved, requires that we shall be of him in Christ, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

"Knock, and it shall be opened unto you." This familiar figure presents the prayers of the saints as knocking at mercy's door. As the weary traveler would gain admittance in the house for rest, food and comfort, approaches the door and knocks for admittance, and as the child would come into his father's house and mingle with the children, and with them participate in the provisions and comforts of the family, so the heavenborn child of God seeks for the church of God, and approaching the door of the sheepfold (for he would not climb up some other way) he knocks, or gives the signal, saying, perhaps in the language of the psalmist, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." This kind of knocking never fails to receive a happy response: "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord." "Why tarry thou, arise, and be baptized, &c.

Or if we apply this figure to our knocking at mercy's door, the result is certain, for God himself has promised to open the door to all such. This is attested by all the inmates of the house of God, for every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. What child of God has ever been turned empty away when asking supplies at the throne of grace, with the spirit and with the understanding, and in the name of Jesus? Not even Jonah when in the belly of hell was unsuccessful in seeking his God with his face turned towards the holy temple at Jerusalem. And when we knock at the door of mercy how consoling is the assurance given in the text: "To him that knocketh it shall be opened."

"Enough, my gracious God,
Let faith triumphant cry,
My heart can on this promise live,
Can on this promise die."

The subject affords great consolation to the humble, tried and trembling children of God, who feel that they have nothing in their hands to bring as an oblation or offering to God to procure his favor, but are unworthy to pronounce his sacred name. Hungry, thirsting, naked, destitute and helpless, Jesus bids them come, approach his mercy-seat, come boldly to the throne of grace to ask for mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need.

"Poor, tempest-tossed soul, be still,
My promised grace receive;
'Tis Jesus speaks, I must, I will,
I can, I do, believe."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe September 15, 1864.)

OBITUARIES

ELDER CHARLES B. TEAGUE

The Lord gives and the Lord takes away. May we all be graced to say, from the depth of our hearts, "blessed be the name of the Lord".

Yes, the Lord gave this earth a blessing on April 1, 1874 when he sent by birth Elder Charles Bartley Teague into this world, the son of the late William R. and Esther Daily Teague of Denton County, Texas.

On September 16, 1894, Elder Teague was married to Miss Ella Owens in Denton, Texas. Again God showed his love in gracing their home with four daughter, one of which preceded Elder Teague in death, Mrs. Ruby Lee, who passed away in 1947. Sister Teague bade farewell to this vain world in 1950.

Elder Teague received a hope in Christ at the age of seventeen years, while attending his father's funeral. In 1907 Elder Teague related his experience to the Primitive Baptist Church of Macedonia, near Rising Star, Texas,

and was baptised by the late Elder J. C. Kilgore. In 1921 a presbytery was called by Macedonia Church to ordain Elder Teague to the full work of the ministry. The presbytery consisted of Elders W. W. Slaughter and J. O. Burgess and Deacon A. Leather Wood. Following this ordination, Elder Teague served Macedonia Church as pastor until he moved to Dallas, Texas in 1924, where he became a faithful and much useful member of Saint's Rest Primitive Baptist Church, remaining faithful and loyal until his death on May 4, 1962.

Leaving to mourn his passing three daughters, Mrs. Pearl Lee, Mrs. Fora Boyd, both of Dallas and Mrs. Pruda Rhodes of Grand Prairie, Texas, one brother, Carrol Teague of Pawnee, Oklahoma, also the entire congregation of Saint's Rest Church as well as all who knew him.

Elder Teague's life was an inspiration to those who were acquainted with him. His humbleness, his kindness and ever loving manner will never be forgotten by his family, his bretheren and friends.

While we are saddened by his going away, we must say "we weep for ourselves", realizing that he departed this life in the full triumph of the faith and we feel that he departed to be with Christ, which is far better.

Now, may God bless us all, who miss him so much, to be reconciled to the will of God and to press on, looking forward to the glorious resurrection morning when all of God's children will be gathered around God's throne to never depart or be saddened, but to forever rejoice in the sunshine of God's love and share in glory forever and ever. Amen.

His pastor, who loved him dearly,
W. W. Taylor

IN MEMORY OF
ELDER JULIAN M. DANIEL

It is with a sad heart. as unworthy as I feel, to make an attempt to write the memorial of our dearly beloved brother, Elder Julian M. Daniel.

He was born July 29, 1922, on the same farm where he live all his life. He was the son of brother Joe H. Daniel and sister Senie Thomason Daniel, who are both deceased. Brother Daniel passed away June 30, 1963. He leaves his wife, Mrs. Helen Daniel, and two daughters, Vera Helen and Harriett Ann; and two sisters: Mrs. Josephene Hardy, Stem, N. C., and Mrs. Mary Lou Crissman, Lemon Springs, N. C. He leaves a host of brethren and friends, and his church which he so dearly loved and took a big interest in. It is so hard to give up a brother that you love so dearly, but we do feel that our loss is nothing to compare with his eternal gain Our heavenly Father never makes a mistake. Brother Daniel did enjoy talking about the true and living God.

He joined the J. H. Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church, Stem, N. C., May 8, 1954, and was baptized the next morning. He was ordained a deacon September 10, 1960; and ordained to the full work of the ministry March 10, 1963. He served only a very short time, but served well. He was pastor of Bannister Springs Church in the Staunton River Association.

Funeral services were held at Gooch Memorial Church July 3, 1963, conducted by Elders P. E. Ingram, W. Curry King, Wallace Smith and J. W. Gilliam. His dear pastor J. Harvey Smith was sick and could not attend.

May the God of grace abide with us through this great loss.

This memorial was read and approved in our conference meeting August 10, 1963. One copy was sent to the family; one to the Signs of the Times for publication; and one copy recorded in our church records.

O. Y. Clayton, Clerk

EASON COBURN THOMAS

Eason Coburn Thomas of Sims, N. C., was born in November, 1883, and died March 7, 1963, after a brief illness. He is survived by his widow, Mary Lula Thomas; and three daughters: Mrs. Robert Norfleet, Greensboro, Mrs. Vivian Hardee and Mrs. Talmage Flowers, both of Sims. Surviving also are eight grandchildren.

He was a member of Old Contentnea Church for more than forty years, and was baptized by Elder George Boswell. He remained a faithful member until death.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder D. B. Stokes, Elder W. G. Pate, Elder C. N. Bunn, and Elder Ransome Boykin, who were blessed to set forth the doctrine he believed and loved so much.

He fought a good fight and kept the faith until the end of his journey here; and we desire to praise and thank the Lord for his life. He loved to talk about the wonderful works of his Saviour, and was strong in the belief that the God of all grace controls all things, and causes them to work for good to them who love Him and who are called according to His purpose.

Daddy was laid to rest on March 9, 1963, in hope of that blessed immortality; and there will sleep in peace until that glorious morn when they shall be awakened to be made like Him, see Him and be satisfied; and ever to sing his praises. Submitted by a daughter who loved him.

Mrs. Vivian Hardee

CHARLES HENRY LOCK

Charles Henry Lock, son of William and Martha Thomas Lock, was born July 29, 1880, in Morly, Mo., and died April 13, 1963. He was united in marriage to Lena Perkins, daughter of Elder J. M. and Wenifred Perkins, November 19, 1899; who survives. To this union were born eight children: surviving are four sons and one daughter, Mrs. Imogene Creason, Elmer, Harry and Vernon Lock, of Detroit, Michigan, and Warnard Lock, of Benton, Ky. Surviving also are one brother, Linsey Lock; ten grandchildren, and twenty-five great grandchildren, and other relatives.

Brother Lock joined the Methodist Church when quite young. In 1915 he became a member of North Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, and remained a faithful member and a true believer as long as he lived. He was a strong believer in unlimited foreknowledge, unconditional election, unlimited predestination, and the final preservation of the saints unto life everlasting by Jesus Christ. He always filled his set if his health permitted. He loved his church and the cause it contended for, wanting the truth in its purity and not sugar-coated. He was well known among the Baptists and was held in high esteem by them.

He and Sister Lock reared a lovely family of children, and they all loved to take care of the Baptists, and their home was a lovely place to visit. He and Sister always did all they could to make one welcome. He will be greatly missed by all.

He was ordained a deacon in 1937, and he filled that office well. The writer has been moderator of North Mt. Zion Church for about thirty-five years, and I went to see him a few days before he passed away; he said, "Wade, there are just two members of us left, and I am going home soon. When I go, don't quit going to Mt. Zion—go on, and preach that same old doctrine you have always preached: it is the only thing that will do anyone any good . . When you preach my funeral, don't praise me, but preach that sound doctrine you have worn your life out preaching—about forty-six years.

Elder P. E. Poyner and I preached his funeral at Mt. Zion Church in the midst of a large crowd of brethren neighbors and friends. May the God of all grace, in whom Brother Lock believed, comfort and reconcile Sister Lock and her children, and the church, by his Spirit. May they realize that their loss is his eternal gain. May God bless all who mourn. Written at the request of Sister Lock and children.

O. W. Perkins

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

DEACON C. H. LOCK

Resolutions of love and respect of the North Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church for Deacon C. H. Lock, of which he was a member since 1915. He held the doctrine dear to him with a pure conscience. He and his wife, Sister Lena Lock, joined the church at the same time. He lived a faithful member for forty-eight years. In the year 1937 his brethren saw a gift in him of a deacon, and he was ordained to that office, and filled it well.

On April 13, 1963, the Lord saw fit to release his faithful servant, and he quietly fell asleep in Jesus, to sorrow no more, but to rest in peace until his Master comes to call his loving children home. There they will be in his image, and be like him, and praise him forever; where there will be no sorrow nor death, or sad farewells, and be in his presence who did so much for his chosen people.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we the church at Mt. Zion bow in humble submission to our God, who is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind, in calling our beloved Brother Lock from our midst. We greatly miss him at our meetings and in our homes, but we feel he has gone home to mourn no more. And be it further.

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be written in our church book, and a copy be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Written at the request of the church.

O. W. Perkins

MRS. EMMA RABUN

Sister Emma Rabun was born in Union Parish La. on April 27, 1883, and passed away at her home in Farmerville, La. on August 3, 1963. Surviving are: one son, James A. Rabun. and one daughter, Mrs. Doyle Smith both of Farmerville La.; two sisters, Miss Lizzie Flowers (also a Sister in the Church) and Mrs. Josie Pace both of Farmerville, La.

Sister Rabun united with Liberty Hill Church, near Farmerville, La. in July, 1917, and was the first candidate that Elder R. W. Rhodes baptised. She was well read is the Bible, and she loved Scriptural Conversations.

Her funeral was conducted at Liberty Hill Church by the writer, assisted by Elder R. W. Rhodes, according to the request she made before her death.

Sister Rabun is especially missed by those who loved to visit her and engage in Scriptural conversation.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 131 DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1963 No. 11

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/63
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

IN HEAVEN IS THY HOPE

O Christian, heavenward turn thy eyes!
From earthly hopes direct thy cares:
What to thee is the wordling's joy
But a long penitence of tears?

From sin and from Satan's wiles,
And from hell's gathering alarms,
The Saviour calls thee; and with smiles
Allures thee to His willing arms.

Long hath Doubt's malignant form
Filled thy heart with wild dismay;
But hope sits smiling o'er the storm,
And chases all thy doubts away.

Hope, like a star of holy light,
Smiles on the waste by tempest riven;
And, in affliction's darkest night,
Directs the wandering soul to heaven.

Then, Christian, heavenward turn thy eye;
Behold thy title writ in blood,
By angels chanted through the sky,
And owned and ratified by God.

O, what to thee is earthly sorrow
But a short, cloudy, wintry day?
Unclouded skies await tomorrow,
With joys that never fade away.

And thy Redeemer's gentle hand
Shall lead thee on through storm and blast,
And, through a dark, benighted land,
Shall lead thee to thy heaven at last.

Written by Georgius, in Gospel Standard, 1863. (Selected by Bro. George W. Jackson.)

LONGING FOR HOME

"Weary of self, the world and sin,
From Sinai's terrors free;
I groan, and pant, and long within,
With Christ my Lord to be.

His blood I've felt, his name I love,
On him I cast my care;
I sing, and weep, and look above,
In hope to praise him there.

The war 'twixt grace and sin, for years
Has pained my troubled breast;
How sweet, here in this vale of tears,
At Jesus' feet to rest.

But if so sweet while here below,
What must it be above?
The thought, while yet my sorrows flow,
Fills me with joy and love.

Tossed to fro, midst hope and fears,
Then conquering, now o'ercome;
"Lord", hitherto I cry in tears,
"When shall I reach my home?"

Then treacherous calms nor tempest's roar
My soul no more affright;
When once safe on yon heavenly shore,
With Christ my dear delight.

Now blood and love form my repast,
Though sin still makes me groan;
Faith in my breast clasps Jesus fast,
And sings free grace alone.

In tribulation joyful still,
Still pressing toward the prize;
My heart is there, on Canaan's hill,
There, there my treasure lies.

My brother, thus it fares with me,
The Lord thus bless thee too;
And daily, till his face we see,
May he our strength renew."

A mourner, Gospel Standard, 1864. (Slected by Brother George W. Jackson.)

GOD IS ABLE TO DO ALL HIS PLEASURE

P. O. Box 698, Unit 1
New Cumberland, Pa.

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

It is difficult for us to abide in our daily tasks, though we are confident that it has pleased God that these things must be, according to His purpose from the foundation of the world.

We verily hate our carnal, sinful, finite selves because of our transgressions against Him, who, because of them, died; if so be that we are in Him, and He in us. This present world holds no pleasure for us, even as we are blessed to have the things that are cherished by the flesh. Our lot has been abundantly rich in those who are dear to us according to natural kinship; and also rich in hope. We know that while we sojourn in this world we are absent from our heavenly home, for which we live in hope.

We have assurance that God is able to do all that it pleased him to decree from eternity; and this enables us to bear the sorrows of this life, always looking to those things which are not temporal, and which are not yet clearly seen. Our beloved brother Paul, (according to our hope), was enabled to write in 1 Corinthians 13:12, "For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then I shall know even as also I am known."

The fact is that we are so weak we are unable to contend outwardly for those things we so strongly feel inwardly. Yet we are persuaded that we are given to do all things that were given us to do. The shame we bear is not for our belief or hope, but for the miserable, wretched, poor, blind and naked ways of our flesh; for we bear witness with David of old, that there is a new song in our mouths, even praise unto our God. (Psalm 40) We feel the lifting from the horrible pit, and hope that the foundation whereon we stand is that rock, the solid and only foundation, Christ Jesus.

When we consider the Lord Jesus, we are confident that those called in him are one with him; for we find many witnesses of this: "The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven." (1 Cor. 15:47) In Romans 12:5, we read, "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." And in 1 John 3:9, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

The many witnesses, even one to another, add to our confidence that we are not left alone in this world forever. While we abide here we must continually suffer death for Christ's sake; and we know that while we live after the flesh (world), we are dead to Christ: and if so be that we live in Him we are dead to the world. What glorious liberty we enjoy, being dead to this present world. Paul often wrote of liberty; and it seems to me that unless the Spirit abides in us, there is no liberty.

My desire is that I could interpret the mysteries of the Scriptures to the edification of the body of Christ; but how poor, and without understanding I am, and am not gifted as are so many of the brethren . . . In Romans 7:18 we read, "For I know that in me (that is, in myflesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."

I write of these things to you, that you might more readily understand my condition, if it is possible. It is not my desire to take up so much of your precious time, as it is your lot to nourish the household of faith, and should not be taken up or consumed by the woes of one so unworthy as I.

If it be that you are given a mind to do so, I would that you might include in your prayers a plea for mercy on this unworthy worm of the dust; as also I would for you, if it were possible that God would give ear to a wretched and unclean begger; who can offer nothing of himself, and can lay no just claim to the body of Christ, except for the mercy of the Father, if it be his will.

May your journey to the brethren

South be fruitful to all concerned, is my sincere hope.

With love untold, forever, I hope,
B. K. Smith

SERMON BY ELDER E. J. LAMBERT AT THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION 1956

. . . We would like to call your attention to the 4th chapter of Philippians, the 19th verse, as a starting point: "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

If I believe in God at all, I believe He supplies ALL of your need. He does not supply just part of it, and leave the rest up to you to work out. But he will supply all of your need. All your need will be to its entirety; all your need will be that you will want nothing, nor lack anything. I am glad that this term NEED is in the singular, because all we need is Christ Jesus and those things that come by him. If we have Christ, we have all we need.

In connection with this, I would like to call your attention to the 23rd Psalm: (here he read the entire psalm). I am reminded now of a great orator who was so blessed with eloquence that he could hold an audience spellbound in his recitations. It is said he was invited to speak in a great auditorium, and a great concourse of people were gathered to hear him. He spoke a precious gem of literature; and he spoke so forcibly and exercised such magnetic powers that there was silence, dead silence until he finished speaking. Then there was a great applause that went up from the audience. And they kept applauding until finally he came back to the platform, and made this proposition: You select a gem of literature that you would like to have me recite.

There was an old man about 80 years of age in the congregation, who arose tremblingly and asked, "Will you please recite the 23rd Psalm." The orator said, "Upon one condition: that you will recite it after me." The orator recited the Psalm, putting the emphases where they belonged as far as oratorical elequence is concerned. And after he had finished there was another great applause that went up from the audience. Then he turned to the old man, and said, "Now you recite the 23rd Psalm." The man falteringly, with the aid of a cane, came to the platform and stood before the mike. He tremblingly, falteringly, cheerfully recited the Psalm. Instead of silence, there was weeping; instead of applause at the recital, there was quietness, yet weeping. It so astonished the orator that he came before the people, and said, "The difference between me and this old man is, I only know the 23rd Psalm — **he knows the Shepherd.**

That is the great difference, brethren — to know the Shepherd. You may be able to recite doctrine; you may be able to recite scripture very forcibly as far as natural recital is concerned, but unless you are acquainted with the Shepherd; unless you have the felt sense of His presence, it will do you no good; nor anyone else any good. I have been made to know that the truth dryly uttered, is so dry that is doesn't have any affect. Yet I have experienced, if not deceived, the calming influence of the Holy Spirit, the felt sense of the presence of the Holy Spirit, in such a way that I have been made glad and joyful in speaking and hearing the wonderful doctrine of God our Saviour. I trust this morning that we will feel His presence, that we will experience the calming influence that brings about such a peace and quiet that there will be no commotion in our souls, and we will realize this as a solemn assembly: a place of quietness, a place of solemnity, a place that is separate, and a time when we can rejoice in the flowing of the Holy Spirit.

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." At this time it seems that this expression "I shall not want," impresses me more than anything else in the Book. What does the term mean? Many of us use the term "want" in ex-

pressing a desire, and many of us use it expressing something that we wish. But to me it means that **we shall lack nothing: We shall have all that is necessary for us.** "I shall not want." Why shall I not want? Because the Lord is my shepherd. You know that it was the duty of the shepherd to lead his flock into the pasture in the morning, and bring them in at night. It was the duty of the shepherd to count his sheep each day. I believe the Lord is close enough to us to lead his people — to count them day by day. Have you ever felt that he has counted you?

"My shepherd!" Sometimes we think of the Lord as being someone else's shepherd. We might be like the one that said, "Your God is the God of the heavens and the earth." There is a difference in saying "your God," and saying, "My God." Have you ever felt His presence in your very soul that you could say, "My God." Have you ever felt that though you knew you were so sinful, and that your sins were so many, and the best of your righteousness was as filthy rags in God's sight; that you had nothing whatsoever to offer him, yet he came to your rescue — he picked you up, he is your Saviour. If so, then you can truthfully say from your heart that the "Lord is my shepherd."

"I shall not want." I shall not lack anything. The blessings that I shall receive will be all that are necessary for my existance. "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." I feel that it has been a blessing afforded me that is very rare, in being privileged to attend this meeting from Friday morning: to hear most of the Introductory Discourse, and to this present time. I am so encumbered until I do not have this privilege often. This has been a green pasture to me.

In the Introductory Discourse the principles of the doctrine of God our Saviour were so plainly set forth. These are the things I believe; these are the things that are my meat and my drink: the fundamental principles of the doctrine of God our Saviour — salvation by grace through the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." When we are going along in the turmoils of this life, in the vicissitudes of life, in which we have so much trouble, trials and tribulations that get us down so low, and we are in such a commotion, isn't it a great joy when we are blessed to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and feast upon the manna as it falls from heaven. Yes, they are green pastures. The greenness of the grass that grows is a manifestation of life: there is life in green pastures. There has been a manifestation of life here, as the ministers who have come before you, have preached the unsearchable riches of our Lord and Saviour.

"He maketh me to lie down." This is an inactive position. In the experience of every child of God they have come to the place, and do come to the place, that the command is for them to be still and know that I AM GOD: they come to an inactive position, to a being still. When we are made to be still, we are made to rest upon His promises; we are made to realize that of our own efforts we can do nothing. We come to the place, (to the very end of our own strength, and, as it were, to the end of the earth), to the opportune place when God has said, as he said to the prophets, "Look unto me all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved."

It is an inactive position that we are brought to: just like the children of Israel when they were brought up to the Red Sea; when they were hedged in, with the Sea in front of them, the desert and the mountain on the sides of them, and the army behind them, they could not go forward, they could not go backward, they could turn neither to the right nor the left. What were they told to do? — the only thing they could do: "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." It is an inactive position that comes in the experience of the children

of God: they are made to stand still and see his salvation. Many times we have gotten into trouble, and have been so confused, and the obstacles are so great until we wonder how we can deliver ourselves from these things. When we have come to the point and place that we find the very best of our efforts will not deliver us, and we have nothing to trust in, it is a time that we are enabled to stand still and pray to God, and look to another source for relief, for salvation; another source to remove the obstacles and bring us out of the confusion we are in.

Yes, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." I shall not want or lack for all these times that I shall be made to stand still to see the salvation of the Lord; to rely on his promises; to stand still and take cognizance of his blessings toward me.

You know, if this scripture should stop here, or if our experiences stop here, then we might measure up to the accusations that are against us: of sitting on the stool of do-nothing. But this is not the last of this Psalm; this is not the last of the experience of the child of God — it goes further. He doesn't stop by saying that He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, but goes on to say, "He leadeth me beside the still waters."

I think now of the children of Israel after Moses stretched forth his rod and the waters of the Red Sea divided. There was a leader that led them; and there were those who followed them. But the leader was leading them to safety. Those who followed, their motive was to destroy. But God had ordained that even their motive, even their actions, though their motive was for destruction, worked together for good to those who were being delivered. The children of Israel followed their leader. They were walled in by the waters, and behind they were pursued by the enemy. Someone said to me several years ago that as far as the travels of the children of Israel were concerned, when they got to the Red Sea, it was left optional whether or not they would go on and be delivered, or whether they would turn back. And it came to me, and I asked this question, "How could they turn back when the enemy was pursuing them?" Could they, after being delivered across the Sea, say that we have delivered ourselves? Or, "We refuse to turn back?" No! they were hedged in: they were being led — and they were being driven. God has ordained those powers whose motives are against us, to be for us.

"He leadeth me beside the still waters." Waters that are wrought upon by God, are still waters. We read of troubled waters, or turbulent waters; waters that are swift, that roar, that are noisy: It is a figure of confusion; it is a figure of those things that are not peaceful. But the waters that come from the stream that flows from the throne of God, are **still** waters. There is a river, says the scriptures, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of our God. How wonderful are the streams that come from that water into our very soul, that comfort us and bring peace the world knows nothing of. The promises of Almighty God: his loving favors, his mercy, and his grace; our Shepherd leads us by these, and we are enabled to behold them and drink of them, and rejoice in them. It is wonderful rejoicing, indeed; it is a wonderful state to be in — to be led by our Shepherd.

Many years ago we sang a song, "Where he leads me, I will follow." I believe that to be true; as much true as any thing. I shall not want, or lack the leadership of my Shepherd. He shall lead me beside the still waters. A good leader has a good following. Do you believe your Shepherd is a good leader? There are would-be leaders in commuities who would attempt to lead, but they cannot, because they cannot get a following. A leader is one who has a following. The good shepherd is followed by all his sheep. In the 10th chapter of St. John, it says that he calleth his sheep by name, and leadeth them out. It also says that his sheep hear his

voice. I believe in the effectual working of God's almighty power; I believe in the strong voice of the Shepherd; I believe that that voice never returns unto him void, but that his voice is heard by his sheep.

I shall not want for the voice of my shepherd. I shall not want for his leadership, because he is a good leader; and I am made willing to follow him. Those upon whom the Spirit of our God works, will not be negligent and indifferent toward the matter. Why? Because the work that God does in their heart and soul causes them to have a great desire to follow the biddings of their Shepherd. Yes, where he leads me, I will follow.

"He leadeth me beside the still waters." Not only that, "He restoreth my soul." The restoration of the soul is a wonderful thing. In the 107th Psalm we read concerning the children of Israel: "Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them." A fainted soul is one who has no trust, no confidence, and has come to the end of his own rope, to the end of his own way, to the end of his own path, and has nothing more to trust in. I will tell you that I was brought to the place that I had no hope in this world, nor the world to come. I felt that Hell was my doom, and justly so. There was nothing whatsoever I could do. There was no confidence in my own self, because the very best of my righteousness had come up as filthy rags. There was no ability in me to perform, because I found that the efforts that I would make sunk me deeper in the pitfalls of sin and perdition; in the miry clay. Then it was that my soul fainted in me, and I cried unto the Lord. I thought I had prayed before, but it was only hypocritical prayer. A person never prays for a thing he feels capable of doing himself — that just is not prayer. You must feel the need of something before you pray for it. It would be inconsistent for me to pray that God would save your souls, and then get up here and tell you that it was up to you; and that you have the power by your own ability to accept the proposition and be saved. We pray for that we cannot do for ourselves. When we become so hungry and thirsty that our soul faints in us, and we find that we cannot do it, then it is that we pray to God.

Many times in the past few years there have been troubles and confusions that I have experienced, and I went about in such turmoil trying to right them, trying to do this thing and the other to make things better, depending upon my own self; then finally when I got to the place I found my efforts were in vain, I was shook and brought to my senses to know that I can do nothing. Then it was that I prayed to God to take hold; and the consequences have been that the Lord has delivered. The restoration of the soul comes after the soul faints, and you cry to the Lord.

As far as crying is concerned, it is an involuntary thing. You may utter, you may speak, you may talk, but no one ever cries voluntarily. It is an involuntary thing to cry: circumstances over which you have no control, stimuli from the outside has wrought you to the extent that you cry. It is an involuntary act. And when you cry to the Lord in a state of heaviness, you can't help yourself; and you pray to God to take control of you. And let me comfort you with this thought, that our God hears our cries. There has never been a cry made in vain. Our God's ear is not deaf that he cannot hear your pleas: his arm is not short that he cannot save. Anytime a child of God is made to cry, He hears him. Even when Paul cried that the thorn in the flesh be removed, the Lord heard him, and answered that cry. How did He answer it? He said, "My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in weakness." That is the way he answered Paul. That is the way he answers every child of God who's cries are for things that are not needful for them.

"He restoreth my soul." In the 107th Psalm, they cried unto the Lord in their troubles, and he delivered them out of their distresses. You know, God does

not begin a work and then leave it. "But being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." When He moves in your heart and mind to cry unto him, or to look unto him, you look, you cry; and he delivers you. And when he delivers there is a restoration of the soul. The soul is converted from trusting in self, to trusting in the Lord.

Somebody might say that all you have to do, is to believe in the Lord. Yes, that's true. Now, may I ask you a heart-seaching question? Do you believe in the Lord? — Have you answered? To the extent that you believe in yourself, you do not believe in the Lord. If you believe that you are capable of doing some things, to that extent you do not believe in the Lord. But if you feel dependent upon him for it all, for the entire thing, for all your need, then you believe in the Lord. And he will be gracious to you. He has promised that, and he is not slack concerning his promises, but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. Everyone that is in that category shall be brought to repentance, and shall be blessed with deliverance into that heavenly rest.

Our trust is in God, in his power, and in his strength. Further on he says, "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. There is a leading of the people of God, not only beside the still waters to rest upon his promises; not only in green pastures to be fed with the manna from heaven and to enjoy his blessings, but also, He leads his people in the paths of righteousness. That path brings in the steps that are for the children of God to take; and they take these steps because they are led by the Good Shepherd in the paths of righteousness. He leads me for his name's sake. Do you think that the name of Jesus should be brought to nothing by the ungodly walk and conversation of his people? Should the name of Jesus be reproached? No, it should not be reproached; therefore, he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness **for his name's sake.** In the Psalms it is said that the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.

If the Lord has ordered the steps of his people, pray tell me who can prevent them from taking those steps. I verily believe with all my heart and mind and strength, and as much as in me is, I want to proclaim a God who directs his people in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. These paths of righteousness are not necessarily the paths that would conform to the worldly opinion of paths of righteousness.

One of the steps that we must take, is repentance. The prophet Jeremiah prayed, "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned. Surely after that I was turned, I repented." What is repenting? It is a turning. What did he do? he prayed to God. No doubt but that he had tried to turn himself, for he said, "I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Therefore, he prayed to the Lord, "Turn thou me and I shall be turned." Then he goes on, "Surely, (there are no ifs or conditions about it), after I was turned, I repented." I like the term "I repented". Some person said that it was I that was baptized; it was I that confessed Jesus as my Saviour; it was I that repented. Yes, it is granted that the children of God repent, but it is in accord with the effectual working of God's mighty power that has worked within, working both to will and to do of his good pleasure. It is you that repents the same way as Jeremiah.

As far as the walk of the children of God is concerned, they believe with their heart. In Proverbs 16:1, we read that the preparations of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is of the Lord." Preparations in the plural — more than one. They are of the Lord. Do you say that brother or sister? or do you say

that you have refrained, or that it was because I decided that I would live faithfully. No, you say that the preparations of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is of the Lord. He said that he would take from them the stony heart, and give them a heart of flesh. He doesn't stop with the primitive preparations, but he said, "I will write my laws in their hearts, and put them in their minds." To put it in their minds means that he gives them knowledge of the law; to write in their hearts, means that he gives the desire and the will to obey that law: in other words, the desire for it, and the desire to obey his law.

Again, we read in the Psalms that the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. Therefore it is the Lord's work in the conversion of the soul, and the restoration of the soul, and the belief in the heart. We read also that with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Do not tell me that there is a believer under the sound of my voice that has believed in his heart, and has believed for years, yet has not confessed it with the tongue. You may think you have hidden it from your brethren; you may think you are hiding it now, but your brethren have seen it, and have heard the expressions you have made, and they have been drawn towards you. You cannot hide these from the children of God, because with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the tongue confession is made unto salvation. That is the work of the Lord, because the preparations of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is of the Lord.

Those upon whom God works mightly in their hearts and tongue will believe the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and they will sing a new song. This new song will be praises unto God, and will not contain anything that will make a discord. The old song is praise unto man, — one is sung in the key of man, and the other is sung in the key of our Lord and Saviour. They will not harmonize though we might try to sing them together. May God bless the people in this section of the country to sing the new song, and to give praise and honor unto Him, and speak of his goodness and grace, and the things that Jesus has done for us, is doing now, and will do for us; and not be speaking of the workings of iniquity. You know that the Scripture says that the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. And let every man that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

Let us see what about this iniquity. In that day it will be said by that King to those on his left hand, "Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you." What kind of work had they done. They said that they had done many mighty and wonderful works. In other words, they were praising themselves and proclaiming the works they had done. So I do not have any confidence in people who tell how much they have done for the Lord; because it will be said to them, "Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you." I think it is iniquitous working to attempt to do things that our Lord has done. He hath saved us; and it is not within the volition of the will of man, or within his capacity to save himself.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." Haven't you walked through the valley of the shadow of death? Yes you have been in that valley. When we are in a state of despondency; when we are in the pitfalls of sin and perdition; when we are so cast down we feel that every thing is against us, there are so many obstacles before us, yet there is no necessity of fearing any evil. Why? Because He is all I need: He is all I want. He is sufficient to over ride all obstacles; and he has promised, "Lo, I am with you even unto the end of the world." Once he has taken up his abode in your heart, he will not leave you. You may not feel his presence; you may have forgotten that he is gracious; you may be tied up with the thoughts of this

world, and be so engrossed in worldly things that you do not think of him, but let me say to you that our Lord and Saviour has promised to be with us unto the end of the world. And this being true, he will continue to be with us, to guide and guard us, and to keep us from the evils of this world. Therefore we will not fear what man shall do to us. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil."

You have walked through more than a valley of the shadow of death: You walked through death in the act of regeneration: that state that Paul speaks of, saying, "Who hath delivered us from so great a death; who doth deliver, and in whom we trust will yet deliver us." Who is this? It is our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. What has he delivered us from? He has delivered us from so great a death.

No, it is not when the breath of natural life shall return unto the God who gave it, and our bodies shall lie cold in death. But I want to tell you what the great death is that we have experienced. That was the death in the condemnation and conviction that you felt in your soul: you were brought before God and judged and condemned to Hell, and you had no hope in this world nor the world to come. That was a great death to you, and is the great death our Saviour delivered us from. He delivers us from it now, and he will still deliver us. Yes, we walk through the valley of the shadow of death many times, but he has promised to be with us, and will deliver us.

"I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." I shall not want for the rod; I shall not lack the chastisement of Almightly God. The Lord chastises every son that he receives. If we receive not chastisement whereof all are partakers, then are we bastards and not sons. I shall not lack the chastening rod, because he chastens, and will chasten, whenever it is necessary for us to have the chastening rod applied. God, speaking through one of the prophets, said, "I will cause them to pass under the rod." It is in accordance with the will of God that you pass under the rod. The rod is necessary: the rod breaks you down and causes you to lean upon the staff. Yes, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." After this has been accomplished we can thank God for it; and it is a comfort to us to know that we shall not lack for the chastening rod of God, but that when we go astray, he will correct us; and because of the love he had for us, these scourgings we receive are not in vain.

The child of God will not say that because everybody has them, I will pay no attention to them. I say to you that God's people pay attention to the chastening rod. You know that, though he was the Son of God, Jesus learned obedience by the things he suffered; and if Jesus learned obedience, surely the children learn obedience by the things they suffer. Paul was made to glory in them, for we read, "We glory in tribulations also." Why did Paul glory in tribulations? Because tribulations worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; and this hope maketh us not ashamed, for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given us.These are steps given us, and these steps we shall take, because God leads in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. We shall have these tribulations, the chastening rod of Almighty God, which are for the purpose of **correcting** us, (not punishing us) in order to make us right, and make us to want to obey our Lord; and to lead into this patience, and into this experience, and into this hope that makes us not ashamed to own him as our Lord.

In this scripture it says, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." The food that God has prepared for his people will not be relished by those enemies. They will not receive it. We relish it because God has prepared us for the table, and the table for us. "Thou anointest my head with oil" shows how He prepares us for the table. David sums up the preparations of us for the table and the table

for us in Psalms 104:15, "Wine that makes glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart". The time and manner of serving is in His hand. It is served in courses. Upon the table of circumstances are the experiences of grace for every heaven-born child. Sometimes the bread may be bitter to the taste but it will give strength to the heart. Christ is the BREAD of life. We are to preach Christ and Him crucified. Sometimes when we are given to experience that it was our sins that made it necessary for Jesus to be crucified, it is bitter to the taste. It is necessary for us to taste his crucifixion in order for us to know a little of what He suffered. When we are given to see that He died for ME it is sweet to the taste. His anointing with oil causes your faces to shine with a brilliance that cannot be seen in the faces of those who have not been so anointed. Your cups have been filled with wine which has caused the gladness of your heart.

"My cup runneth over". David's wine glass had been filled with gladness of heart to the extent that it was full but the wine kept flowing. This overflowing of wine was not wasted. The 23rd Psalm is the overflowing of his cup. We are drinking of it today. A minister's cup must first be filled before gladness of heart can be experienced by the hearers. I trust my cup was full when I began speaking. I feel that the wine has kept coming. None of it has been wasted for I feel that many of your hearts are being made glad by the overflowing of my wine glass. Yet, when you are given to receive it in your cup it is yours, and the Lord has poured it. I shall not want for the emptyings and fillings of the wine cup.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever". I shall be supplied with sufficient goodness. I shall not lack for His mercy. It certainly will be supplied for every day. Even cloudy days when the clouds of doubts and fears shall hide the SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS from your soul, God's mercy will follow you. His grace will be sufficient for the cloudy days when even your faith is completely out of view, and you are made to cry, "Help thou mine unbelief." His goodness and mercy will be sufficient for the nights in your experience when you have completely forgotten God and are taken up with only the things of this world.

I trust today is a bright day for the thousands of you who are now feasting upon His goodness and mercy. You have a view of the Sun of Righteousness. You are anticipating that Eternal Day when you shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever. There will be no night there when you forget God. There will be no cloudy days there when your faith is weakened and your hope blighted. There will be no periods between associational meetings. That meeting will not be just a three days meeting: of short duration. That Association shall never break up. That Sabbath shall never end. Thank You.

(The above is from a recording and is slightly condensed — J. D. W.)

A MOTHER'S CONCERN THAT TRUTH BE TAUGHT

Collingsville, Va.

Dear H. D., Lucille and girls:

I take great pleasure in writing to you. We arrived home safely, and found that we had had a good rain while we were down there, although it is very dry in places.

We enjoyed our trip; and since going and looking over your church building, and knowing that you and Lucille are teaching Bible School, I have a mind to write you in reference to teaching.

We read of teaching in the Bible. But we should be very careful what we teach, and not teach anything that is contrary to sound doctrine, but the true doctrine of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. God spoke in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, and has

in these last days spoken unto us by his Son. By the prophets: read Isaiah 43:10, 11, 12, and 13; also chapter 46:9, 10; and Jeremiah 31:33; also chapter 32:27.

H. D., if we should teach otherwise — that God wants to save people but they won't let him, it would be lying against God. Christ didn't do that, but honored Him. Read St. John 6:37, 28, 29, 40, and 44. He preached the wills and shalls of God — something sure and certain — honoring Him. To deny this would be blasphemy: unsound doctrine, not sober minded.

The Apostle Paul at one time persecuted the church. He obtained mercy, doing it ignorantly in unbelief. Read Acts 9:4. After he was converted, he preached the true doctrine of God our Saviour; which is the doctrine and faith of the Primitive Baptists. Read the following scriptures:

Acts 17:24, 25, 26; 1 Corinthians 1:17, 18; 2 Corinthians 4:3, 4, 5, 6; and 6:14 through 18; Romans 5:2 through 9; and the 8th chapter; and 10:1 trough 4; and 13:1, 2.

Also Galatians 1:7, 11, 13, 15; Ephesians 2 chapter; Phillipians 2nd and 3rd chapters; Colossians chapters 1 and 2; 1 Timonthy 2:1 through 7; and the 3rd and 4th chapters. And notice in the 4th chapter, the 16th verse, "Take heed unthyself, and unto the doctrine, continue in them, for in so doing thou shalt save thyself and them that hear thee." This means not to deny God's word, nor his power; nor resist it.

Read 2 Timothy 1:7-10; 2:15; and the 3rd and 4th chapters. Also read Titus; and Hebrews 18:10, 11, and 12; and 1st Peter 1:18, 19, and 20; and 1st 2nd and 3rd John; also Acts 8:18-22. The love of money is the root of all evil.. Notice that He said to repent of thy wickedness.

In the 4th chapter of Luke we are plainly told that the Devil claimed he had power, and wanted to be worshiped and honored, and to gain the whole world; but Jesus answered in the 8th verse: "Get thee behind me Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." In the 9th chapter and 25th verse read, "For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?"

This means that if he should get everybody in the church by lying against God, what would he gain? Nothing, but be cast into the world. Because he doesn't have the keys to the kingdom of God-which is the word of God. Christ is the door of the sheep, as shown in the 10th chapter of St. John.

The drinking of whiskey is a sin, but if you should teach or preach unsound doctrine, which is contrary to the doctrine of Christ, it would hurt me worse, for it would be a worse sin. I hope that you or your pastor are not guilty. If so, my prayer is that God will open your eyes to see, and give you a heart to repent, and that He will have mercy and forgive all. It is only by the Spirit of God that we are saved-by his love and mercy only can we do anything good. This is my experience, for I have seen and felt my sinfulnes and weakness; and it is only by the love and mercy and grace of God that we are saved. I believe that all that Christ gave his life for, will be saved eternally in heaven. "The Lord knoweth them that are his."

I hope you will be interested in reading this, for it is a serious matter, and I hope you will be taught the true doctrine of God our Saviour, and know the brethren who contend for this faith.

I have mentioned only a few verses of scripture: would like for you to read the entire chapter of Revelation. With love and best wishes.

Mom
(Mrs. Mattie Underwood)

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

2490 Montana Ave.
Hurricane, W. Va.

Signs of the Times
Danville, Va.

Dear Brethren:

The Lord willing, I will be moving to the above address, and as I do not wish to miss a copy of the dear old Signs of the Times, I am writing to ask you to change my address on your mailing list. And I would appreciate it very much if you would publish notice of the change to that shown above.

The August issue of the Signs was richly laden. The editorial, "The Transfiguration on the Mountain", as well as the re-print from the pen of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, was so suited to my need that tears flowed as I read these rich doctrinal articles.

In hope of that blessed immortality,

Elder H. J. Bird

SIN, WHAT HAST THOU DONE?

O sin, O sin, what hast thou done?
What havoc hast thou wrought?
Thou hurtest man from sun to sun;
No good thing hast thou sought.

When wilt thou cease thy dreadful work,
And peace, sweet peace, come in?
This can't be done by Jew or Turk;
And never by thee, sin.

If man sets out by war to cure
The awful scourge of war:
He finds, alas! he's not secure;
That sin will still be there.

So sin is not the cure of sin;
Nor war the cure of war:
Man's worse off seeking thus to win,
Yea, much worse than before.

Man seeks and seeks, but cannot find
The long-sought cure of sin:
His poor, depraved, deluded mind
Has never been made clean.

What then, poor man, what canst thou do
In this bad strait of thine?
Thou can not thy poor soul renew:
Thou art a slave to sin.

Then cease thy work, proud nature, cease,
And trust in God alone;
Though thou can't do this thing unless
His works displace thy own.

Thou mighty God, this monster kill
(The monster sin, we mean);
With love and grace thy people fill,
And make them white and clean.

Do fill their hearts with love and zeal;
With fervent holy fear.
For those who have this blessed weal
Must surely persevere.

Elder John Lee Smith,
Rt. 2, Box 59A,
Spearsville, La. 71277

Danville, Virginia NOVEMBER, 1963

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EDITORIAL

UNITY OF BRETHREN

"Behold, how good and how pleasant

it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Psalms 133:1

Amidst this world of confusion, strife, and uneasiness, give attention to that which is so good and pleasant that mortal tongues can never be able to express the joy of it: brethren dwelling together in unity. Amidst the numerous churches where troubles and confusion prevail, take notice of rare places where brethren dwell together in unity. Behold its goodness and its pleasantness. May we pause for a moment and gaze with admiration upon its goodness and pleasantness. May we desire it with all our hearts and minds.

We may ask, "Why is it good for brethren to dwell together in unity?" One reason is that God is the author of of it: "For God is not the author of confusion, but of PEACE, AS IN ALL CHURCHES OF THE SAINTS". (1 Cor. 14:33) The devil sows seed of discord and is the author of confusion in churches. Another reason is that Jesus prayed for unity: "That they ALL MAY BE ONE: as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." (John 17:21) Paul beseeched the brethren to ". . . Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love: ENDEAVORING TO KEEP THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE". (Eph. 4:1-3) Brethren in the church enjoyed it in its early age as you will see while reading THE ACTS. We shall quote one verse; "These all CONTINUED WITH ONE ACCORD in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren." (Acts; 1:14) Let us quote another for emphasis: "And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God WITH ONE ACCORD, AND SAID, LORD, THOU ART GOD, WHICH HAST MADE HEAVEN, AND EARTH, AND THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IN THEM IS." (Acts 4:24) We shall prove beyond any doubt the existence of unity of brethren in the early church by quoting Acts 2:46-7: *"And They continuing daily with one accord in the temple and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."*

Brethren who are of the same precious faith desire the pleasantness and goodness of dwelling together in unity. The fact that the possessors of this faith are BRETHREN comes often as proof that petty trifles and peculiar opinions should not separate us. Abraham used the term, brethren, as an argument to attempt to remove the strife between Abraham and Lot: The strife was really between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle. "And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between ME AND THEE, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen: FOR WE BE BRETHREN." (Gen. 13:8) The fact that we are believing in the same God should influence us not to let trifling matters separate us in like manner as infidels are separated. Beware of those who initiate discord among BRETHREN because they are of the devil and rejoice more in confusion than they do in peace, fellowship, and unity. Paul said, "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, THAT YE STAND FAST IN ONE SPIRIT, WITH ONE MIND STRIVING TOGETHER FOR THE FAITH OF THE GOSPEL."

How sweet are the seasons when brethren DWELL TOGETHER. I admire watching those of like precious faith as they meet together for worship. The love of God beams in their facial expressions as they meet those of their brethren from whom they have been absent for some time. Did you ever notice that some want to get to the meeting place early so they can greet each and every one as they come from their re-

spective homes? Have you watched the different ones at the close of the meeting how they linger around proving the desire to dwell longer together? Such good and pleasant relationship is not to be found anywhere else but in Zion. Their greatest joy is not just to meet together and come together, but to DWELL TOGETHER IN UNITY.

What do we mean by brethren dwelling together in UNITY? The Apostle Paul exhorts to be all of one mind; "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; BUT THAT YE BE PERFECTLY JOINED TOGETHER IN THE SAME MIND AND IN THE SAME JUDGEMENT. (1 Cor. 1:10) It is Satan that sows the tares of division. It is God that delivers us from his clutches and makes us one in mind and judgment. It is God who leads us to follow peace and love and concord and mutual agreement. Brethren are made willing to sacrifice peculiar opinions and ideas in order to dwell together in unity. Brethren in general will not agree to compromise with the world because God has been gracious to them in the mighty working of His spirit to completely convert them from error to the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. God has so wonderfully provided "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, ACCORDING TO THE EFFECTUAL WORKING IN THE MEASURE OF EVERY PART, MAKETH INCREASE OF THE BODY UNTO THE EDIFYING ITSELF IN LOVE". (Eph. 4:14-16)

When one tries to enforce his peculiar opinion upon the brethren to the extent of causing discord you may properly conclude that he is esteeming himself higher than the brethren and that he values his own peculiar judgment as more righteous than the common judgement generally accepted among brethren When one says, "I will stand alone before I will tolerate this", you may know that this attitude is foreign to the language of those who feel to be "less than the least of all saints". When one is so persistent upon forcing his brethren to agree with him in his peculiar opinions, he will finally separate himself making manifest that he is not of the brethren. John reasons in 1 John 2:19, "They WENT OUT from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would NO DOUBT have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." *Brethren who are true brethren do dwell together in unity.* Every attempt to bring discord among brethren in order to divide them has had the good and pleasant result of bringing true brethren closer together. Just as soon as brethren are awakened to the fact that the enemy is attempting to bring discord among brethren their pure minds are stirred anew to realize that they have the same Father; the same Elder Brother, who is their Saviour; they are regenerated by the same Holy Spirit; they are members of the same church; they have the same precious hope; and, they believe in the same fundamental principles of doctrine. This renewing of their pure minds enables them to separate the precious from the vile; causes a lively exercise of a renewed convenant-relationship with brethren; and, it causes them to realize the goodness and pleasantness of brethren dwelling together in unity.

Christ, our Master, said: "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and ALL YE ARE BRETHREN. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant, and whosoever shall EXALT HIMSELF shall be abased, and he that shall HUM-

BLE HIMSELF shall be exalted". (Matt. 23:8-12) Christ is giving here the KEY for brethren to dwell together in unity. Jesus is impressing the fact that all brethren are on the same level and that it is unbecoming to His disciples to do as the Pharisees did: "Love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues". And to be called of men Rabbi, and to be especially greeted as being above others. I am persuaded that all discord among brethren stems from the root that some are exalting themselves. Some are not considerate of the views of their brethren and attempt to enforce their own peculiar opinions to the extent of causing divisions among brethren. Those who ride their hobby-horses to this extent seem to be satisfied that they have won a high seat and have become masters of disciples. Each one of these self-made masters is fluent with his instructions, and is peeved when one of his disciples disobey. Have you, dear precious one, been caught in such divisions? Do you look to some man instead of the Scriptures for words of wisdom? Do you look to some man instead of Christ as your master? Jesus Christ said to the leaders of the children of Jerusalem: ". . . How often would I have GATHERED THY CHILDREN TOGETHER, even as a hen GATHERETH her chickens under her wings, and YE would not." The Leaders of Jerusalem were desirious of retaining their leadership to the extent that the Lord's prophets were killed and those who were sent to them were stoned. There are leaders in these divisions at this time who would go their full strength to keep God's called ministers from preaching to their flocks. They do all that is in their power to prevent the re-uniting of divided brethren.

There have been many divisions and sub-divisions of brethren brought about by numerous declarations of non-fellowship which have prevented the affiliation of the Lord's people in worship. Many man-made rules, regulations, and restrictions prohibit membership in churches of many who give evidence by their walk and conversation that they have been born of the Spirit and have an experience of grace. Many believers who seek baptism are denied this sacred rite because they do not measure up to these "laws". Even though they bring forth fruit which measures up to repentance, it is "unlawful" to baptize them. Even though you have the greatest fellowship for some brethren you can no more dwell together with them in worship because of these man-made bars. It seems a pity that it becomes necessary now to inquire of a minister with whom you have rejoiced in his preaching and enjoyed his sweet fellowship:- NOT, "Are you preaching the same doctrine?- BUT, With WHOM do you preach? Trifling matters have severed affiliation of thousands of the Lord's humble poor and but very few of these many thousands know why they are separated. They hear the same God preached. They rely upon the same Lord for their salvation. They hear the same experiences of grace related. They sing the same hymns. They feel the same calmness of the Holy Spirit. They practice the same ordinances as before. These thousands walk in the same spirit of humility. They sincerely ask, Why are we separated from those with whom we have DWELLED TOGETHER IN UNITY? Dear MINISTER OF GOD, how do you answer such question that is so sincerely asked by many earnest inquirers? Do you try to evade the question by saying, "You wouldn't understand"? Do you pass judgment upon churches beyond your domain by saying, "They are in dis-order"? I am of the opinion that there are true brethren dwelling together in unity and enjoying the goodness and pleasantness of it in many local churches notwithstanding the sadness experienced because these churches have been separated from each other by the cunning craftiness of designing men.

Paul wrote to "The church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in EVERYPLACE CALL UPON THE NAME OF JESUS

CHRIST OUR LORD, BOTH THEIR'S AND OUR'S"; of information that he had received that there were contentions among them. These same contentions are among us today. Even in the face of these contentions, Paul terms them, "MY BRETHREN". He besought them to be perfectly joined together in the same mind and judgment. Even though, "Everyone of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. IS CHRIST DIVIDED? WAS PAUL CRUCIFIED FOR YOU? OR WERE YOU BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF PAUL?" (Read 1 Cor. 1:10-13) Read the 3rd chapter of 1st Corinthians and you will find the explanation of the different gifts in preaching which gave rise to these divisions. Some among us are guilty of judging that a minister is not "gifted" if he does not always "lay the FOUNDATION" all through his sermon. There are those who are given to exhortation and admonition who take for granted that the hearers are already established in the "Principles of the doctrine of Christ". Read the 6th chapter of Hebrews. Exhortations and admonitions are necessary today and are profitable to those of like precious faith with us in Christ Jesus.

Paul mentions a few things in the 14th chapter of Romans about which different brethren disagree. Then, he asks: "Why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? FOR WE SHALL ALL STAND BEFORE THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall BOW TO ME, and every tongue shall CONFESS TO GOD. So then every one of us shall GIVE ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF TO GOD. Let us NOT therefore JUDGE ONE ANOTHER ANY MORE. But JUDGE THIS RATHER, THAT NO MAN PUT A STUMBLING BLOCK OR AN OCCASION TO FALL IN HIS BROTHER'S WAY." Paul reasons with us that we are not the judge of our brethren but the Lord is the judge. We are not to take revenge upon our brethren because vengeance belongs to GOD. The Lord chasteneth every son that He receives and gives them proper scourgings. This is NOT our responsibility. Paul tells us that the Kingdom of God is "RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND PEACE, AND JOY IN THE HOLY GHOST". Then, he gives us the KEY for brethren dwelling together in unity, "Let us therefore FOLLOW AFTER THE THINGS WHICH MAKE FOR PEACE, AND THINGS WHEREWITH ONE MAY EDIFY ANOTHER". He further states in the 15th chapter of Romans, "We then that are strong OUGHT TO BEAR THE INFIRMITIES OF THE WEAK, AND NOT TO PLEASE OURSELVES". Christ did not please Himself but our reproaches against God fell upon Him and Christ bore the brunt of them. "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another, AS CHRIST ALSO RECEIVED US TO THE GLORY OF GOD." We are to bear the reproaches of brethren and forgive them even as God forgave us for Christ's sake.

Negotations for peace should be based upon fundamental principles most commonly believed among brethren. Peculiar beliefs upon minor matters which would tend to confuse brethren should be discarded in these negotiations for peace. Weightier matter should serve as the basis for determining unity of belief and practice. These weightier matters of belief are generally briefed in the ARTICLES OF FAITH of the several churches. The covenant relationship and duties of brethren toward each other are generally briefed in THE CHURCH COVENANT. It is interesting to note that many divisions among us have come about by emphasizing some belief or practice that is neither mentioned in the ARTICLES OF FAITH nor the CHURCH COVENANT. Strife

over words and expressions because of different conceptions of the meaning of terms often cause discord and divisions when really there is no difference in belief. The only difference is in the expression. Unintentional mis-representations of other's belief and practice often result in wrong judgment and divisions.

There is UNITY OF BRETHREN in belief. How good and how pleasant it is for this unity to be recognized to the extent that they can dwell together. The belief in salvation by grace through the merits of Jesus Christ and the practice of walking in humility are so different from the belief and walk of those who have not been born again that there can be no compromise with the world. This disagreement is so vivid and distinct that false and true churches shall never unite. The true church contends that salvation is by GRACE. The false church contends that salvation is by WORKS. The true believer contends that he can do nothing toward salvation without the enabling power of God and the unbeliever contends that he has the power to save himself. The unbeliever proclaims the power of man. The believer testifies of the power of God. The believer seeks to please God and his brethren. The unbeliever seeks to please himself. The believer hates himself and loves God and His people. The unbeliever loves himself and hates anything that puts an obstacle in his way that would hinder him from fulfilling the desires of his flesh.

Sometimes a brother will "exalt himself" to the extent that he may say, "I cannot fellowship John Doe". A brother "humbles himself" when he inquires, "How can John Doe fellowship me?" A brother is inquiring of something that concerns him when he prays, "What wouldst Thou have ME to do?" Peter inquired of something that was none of his business when he asked, "What shall this man do?" See John 21:21-22. How good and how pleasant it would be if brethren could use the KEY given by Jesus Christ in the 23rd chapter of Matthew and all sweetly experience dwelling together in unity.

We do have foretastes of that blessed abode beyond time in this life. There are short seasons here and there when we experience DWELLING TOGETHER IN UNITY. The goodness and pleasantness of it cannot be expressed. We have tasted just enough of it to cause us to yearn for that Eternal Dwelling Place. We taste it often enough to keep us from sinking into desperation. WE experience such a degree of it that our faith is strengthend and our hope is renewed to press on seeking a city whose builder and maker is God. We dwell together in that city for very short durations now. Just enough to make us know, "For here we have no CONTINUING city, but we seek one to come." All God's people shall forever dwell together in unity. No difference in customs shall separate them there. No petty bars set up by men shall enter there. All mis-representations and mis-understandings shall be abolished. Persecutions and separations of brethren shall be no more. Then, we shall throughly understand and fully experience the meaning of the expression, "BEHOLD, HOW GOOD AND HOW PLEASANT IT IS FOR BRETHREN TO DWELL TOGETHER IN UNITY".

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

Corydon, Ind., March 8, 1876

Dear kindred in Jesus: — I have read this evening to my dear wife the sweet book of Ruth, and as we have enjoyed together its interesting contents, I would love to send you some thoughts that yet abide with me, hoping thereby to lengthen the pleasure that arises from such a beautiful presentation of the Lord's wondrous truth.

Occurring, as this dear narrative does, in the turbulent and stormy period when the judges ruled in Israel, it stands in

striking contrast with the disturbed and impetuous spirit of the age, in sweet relief, as would the soft flowing of a meadow-brook compared to the wild, fretful and leaping torrents of the mountain side. The touching story opens with a famine in Israel; a famine in that goodly land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; that land of wheat and barley, and vines, fig trees and pomegranates, and of olive oil and honey; and the word seems strange to us in the midst of modern plenty, though the nations and people are exceedingly multiplied. But God, who maketh the wilderness to blossom as the rose, can also, in the furtherance of his divine purpose, make waste the hills and valleys, turn rivers into islands, and dry up all the pools, and it would doubtless be a profitable study to trace the influence that famines have had in bringing to pass the deep counsels of Jehovah among the children of men. But it is enough at present to read in the light of this bright episode of Jewish life, that in the wise designs of the mighty God it was necessary that the blood of Moab, a people forbidden to enter the congregation of the Lord, should mingle in the Messiah's veins, and thus, deep in providence, too deep for the scrutiny of poor, blind reason, every event is laid, each to work out its appropriate result with certainty and perfection. It is enough to know that under the pinching power of the famine of which we speak, Elimelech of Ephrath or rather Bethlehem, became an emigrant from his own land to the fertile Moab, a country long at variance with Israel, but able to afford sustenance to the careful sojourner, his wife and sons, till the Lord should again visit his people in giving them bread. But this moving Jew is to eat no more the bread of Israel, for it shall be his hapless fate to prove the words of Zion's King, that whosoever will save his life shall lose it. Elimelech shall not return again to the goodly Canaan, to worshiping Israel, his peculiar tribe, or to his native Bethlehem. Death claims him in the new home, bringing sorrow to the household, and laying a crushing weight upon the heart of Naomi.

But her sorrow was not altogether unmingled with hope. She had yet two manly sons who would comfort her widowed lot and carry the name through coming years, and in whose seed their honor and inheritance should be maintained among the families of the earth. And so another link in this interesting chain was the marriage of the sons to Moabitish damsels. They find favor with the Moabites, and Orpah and Ruth become their chosen wives, and we may suppose that gladness once more rests in the heart and home of Naomi, as cherished hopes seem to be resolving into realities. But alas for her! The Lord has but commenced the bitter discipline that shall afterwards yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness to her exercised soul. The sons, her stay and hope, are borne away by death, leaving her whose name was pleasant, most grievously bereaved. O how dark and wretched was her home in Moab, with husband and sons buried from her sight, and three widowed hearts mourning in concert their untimely end. With no issue on which to build hope of the future, or perpetuate the stricken name, her afflicted soul turns in bitter desolation once more to the land of Judah, and there she resolves to return, for the good news reaches her that God's blessings again rest upon his people.

Her companions in sorrow, drawn by the tie of sympathetic love, arise to go with her on the mournful journey, willing to forsake their gods and people rather than forego companionship with one through and by whom they were bound in sorrow to the dead. But Naomi, self-forgetful even in adversity, bids them return, each to her mother's house, as she will not consent to add to their sorrow the trials of poverty in an unknown land. And O how sweet the benediction of her parting words: "The Lord deal kindly with you as ye have dealt with the dead and with me. The

Lord grant you that ye find rest, each in the house of her husband." Dear, tender words, followed by the motherly kiss. No wonder these tried women lifted up their voice and wept in sacred lamentation. And as love to good Naomi struggled with their grief, they answered again, "Surely we will return with thee unto thy people." But the loving matron was firm in her entreaties. She had not, nor could have more sons to raise up the name of the dead, and for their sakes more than her own mourned that God's afflicting hand had gone out against her. They listened in silence to her dirge-like sentences, and again their wailing voices and streaming tears gave vent to bursting sorrow, and one of them, receiving the offered kiss, turned gloomily away. And now another argument is pressed upon the determined Ruth: "Behold thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister-in-law."

O what great things hang upon a seemingly tender thread! Here is Ruth, having every incentive to return to Moab and its idolatry. The associations, customs, worship and friends of her early youth, her kindred, her mother and her husband's house, her companion Orpah turning to go, and even the loved woman she would follow, strangely and strongly repelling her devoted filial service! Aye, why is it? Will the advocates of an uncertain, ever-changing and contingent theology ever find the reason? Is there not something here to baffle human conclusions and crush the mutable yea and nay systems of mankind? O, my friends, do we not know that the Lord himself has set hand to this work, and that he will not be frustrated? Do we not know that the three-fold cord of his designs cannot be sundered in the midst? Have we not reason to conclude that this break in the Jewish line of our Lord's ancestry is typical of the final breaking down of the partition wall, whereby all barriers would be removed, and the triumphs of the gospel reach to earth's remotest verge? Has not the rapt seer in Israel thrilled our hearts in proclaiming the rising glory of the church as a Gentile world comes to its beaming light? "Lift up thine eyes round about and see: all they gather themselves together; they come to thee. Thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts." It is his gracious purpose that the ends of the earth should mingle in one common lineage, to inherit common blessings. Before the glorious incarnation, we are to see the meeting of the far off and the nigh in the royal line, a sweet type of the branches of Joseph running over the wall in the gospel day, an intimation of the uprising kingdom that should girdle the earth in extent, and outlive the ages in duration.

Then, as we turn back to Ruth, with her face toward Bethlehem, who shall speak of contingencies, of a trembling in the scale of mighty providence, of a possibility of failure on the part of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will? If any man hath aught to say, let the disciple answer that the Lord hath need of her in Israel, yes, and in Bethlehem, too; and having sent an escort into Moab, and sanctified the heathen woman as a chosen vessel of his mercy, that through her may be the genealogical descent of the Prince of Peace, all these obstacles in her way became as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor. It is the Lord God preparing his goodly cedar tree that shall bring forth boughs and bear fruit, and in the shadow of whose branches shall dwell all fowl of every wing. It is God's way of bringing down the high tree of Israel's exclusive pride, and exalting the low tree of Gentile adversity. In the strength of her resolve she appeals to the dear Naomi, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee." She wishes to obey, but cannot go back

to Moab. She has foresworn forever Chemosh and Baal-peor, and from henceforth her God will be the God of Israel, her people the people of Naomi, and even in her death and burial Moab should forever be forgotten! Noami could say no more. Such steadfastness silenced every objection. The two became one in heart, purpose and life, to be parted, as the constant Ruth declared, alone by the power of death.

And so it will ever be: each returning Ruth will be received into the spiritual Israel with open hearts, into a union for life; yes, a union that even death shall not be able to dissolve; but it can only follow where transforming grace has withered former pleasures, and given the dawning of a better life. There must be a fellowship in suffering, a conformity in need, a unity in hope, or the building will be erected with untempered mortar, to fall before God's overflowing shower, his great hailstones and stormy wind. Let the queens and concubines of a spurious gospel, if they will, spread their nets, their angles and their drags. Let an ambitious priesthood, as in former days, compass sea and land to make proselytes. Let these mystic women sew pillows to armholes, and kerchiefs upon the head, to hunt souls. Let anti-christ, with fits of periodical zeal, erect its brazen altars and nightly catch, as do the open flames of attractive torches, hapless and almost uncounted victims in the deathly light, or whose folly, if they escape, will only be to repeat the heedless flight upon every new occasion. But it will not be so in the true Israel. The dove, the undefiled, she that is but one, the choice one of her that bare her, shall not in gaudy attire pass from street to house, from house to street, to seek the simple and beguile unstable souls. She is not a boaster of peace offerings and paid vows, and of luxuries at her command. Oh no! She gently bids the unproved stranger to return to her gods, for her own state is one of affliction and humble poverty. How often did the inconsiderate spectators of our Lord's divinity, when their too eager and half-formed purposes to follow him were subjected to the feeblest test, prove their insincerity and instability of mind, by walking no more with him; while to others, every repulse and difficulty but confirmed their resolution and quickened their desire to obtain the blessing of gospel favor. And so writes one, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God." And when they are tried, and proved, and manifest, then there is union and peace, such as cheered the pilgrims, Naomi and Ruth, with their faces toward Bethlehem.

And so they two went until they came to Bethlehem; and as they entered its quiet streets all the city was moved; for they remembered Naomi of former years, as a citizen in their midst. They had not forgotten her departure with husband and sons, in the days of the famine, and now, after years of sorrow, she treads once more the dear, familiar walks, and feels almost reproached by the inquisitive concern of friends and neighbors as they exclaim, "Is this Naomi?" Is this stricken form and sad face the happy wife and mother that sought for bread in the land of Moab? "Call me not Naomi, (that is, Pleasant) call me Mara, (that is, Bitter) for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty. Why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?" It is as Rachel again weeping for her children, and who will not be comforted, because they are not. It is the chastened Ephraim bemoaning himself, for the yoke is heavy. But Ephraim is yet a dear son, a pleasant child, and so, too, Naomi is pleasant to the Lord; for, as emblematical of the Gentile church, afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted, the Lord shall lay her stones with fair colors, and her foundations with sapphires, and make all her borders of pleasant stones. "Fear not then: thou shalt not be ashamed or confounded: thou shalt not remember the reproach of

thy widowhood any more. The Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth. For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee."

Wonderful are the prophecies concerning the Gentile woman. The place of her tent was to be enlarged, the curtains of her habitations stretched forth: she shall break forth on the right hand and on the left, and desolate cities shall be inhabited. And, O Naomi, those gathering mercies shall, as in the substance, gladden thy heart and thy dwelling. The name of the dead shall not be cut off from among his brethren; there is yet to be a restorer of thy life, a nourisher of thine old age, and she whom thou wouldst have sent back to Moab shall in her love be better than seven sons; and the women that met thee with wondering faces in the gates of Bethlehem shall yet say, "Blessed be the Lord which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel."

But we anticipate the promised glory to the house of the dear Elimelech. These widows in their destitution are yet in the hands of the widow's God, and are yet to prove his providential mercy, his sustaining grace and his guiding wisdom, till the crown of rejoicing is placed upon their heads. The aged widow must know what care and want are, before she can lay in her bosom the son born to fulfill the expectations mourned as lost. The gentle Ruth, before she is fed on the finest of the wheat, must become a timid gleaner in the barley fields; must, in the desolation of widowed exile, seek the kinsman that is near, a kinsman that has the right as well as the power to redeem; and the discovery is to be a happy turning point in her eventful history. Yes, she must go out a simple, trusting maiden, into the fields of Bethlehem, for aught we know to the place where her grand-son Jesse should feed his flocks, and where from among whose sons the prophet should seek the Lord's chosen ruler of his people Israel, or, peradventure, in the selfsame fields where, thirteen centuries later, to shepherds keeping watch by night, God's angel came in shinning glory, bearing the good tidings of great joy, that in the quiet Bethlehem, so little among the thousands of Judah, a Ruler far greater and more glorious than David was born into the world.

At all events, it was to the fields adjacent to the city, that the unknown and lonely young widow made her way, and, her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz. It was indeed **her** hap; but with the blessed Lord, who careth even for the fall of a worthless sparrow, there is neither hap nor mishap. By his invisible leadings her feet ventured into the field of her dead husband's kindred, where, after the reapers and among the sheaves, she gathered up the lost ears of golden grain. Sweet type of the gleaner in gospel fields. Trustful, though timid, humble, though worthy, grateful, though receiving nothing, compared to the goodly store to be given with lavish hand by and by. The words of encouragement she hears and the kind treatment she receives bows her soul in grateful humility, and that peculiar wondering cry of the Christian escapes her lips, "Why have I found grace in thine eyes, seeing I am a stranger?" But the inquiry is only answered by repeated and increasing proofs of kindly interest in her welfare. She has his promise of protection and continued favor. She is made to eat and drink with the maidens and reapers of the kinsman's field, and they are bid to let fall some handfulls of purpose for the happy gleaner.

Will the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty ever forget the springtime of their soul's experience, when they came into the garden of the Lord, feeding timidly among the lilies and flowing spices of his people? Can they forget the harvest-time, when they too were gleaners, and found here and there, as it were by chance, some handfulls of the precious grain, but in truth let fall

on purpose for them? O may the dear Lord of the harvest often constrain his reapers to let fall in love some handfulls of the winnowed corn, that every returning Ruth, faint, yet pursuing, may be encouraged, comforted and fed, received with peace and not with reproach, built up in love, and not rebuked, that she may receive the recompense of joy in her trusting soul, the full reward of righteousness in that Lord under whose wings she comes to trust. Let the world-hardened rich men of earth, surfeited with their corrupted riches, their gold and silver cankered with the rust of fraud, smile if they will at the simple incidents attending the life of this lowly stranger in the borders of Israel; but her experience will be ever dear to all who answer to her likeness in the kingdom of grace; who too, are lowly and contrite in heart; and their sympathy and fellowship for her in the valley of humility will be transformed into rejoicing with her brightening destiny as it leads on to the unfolding of honor, happiness and wealth in later life.

Happy Ruth, these unfolding blessings are not far away. Like Esther, of later times, Ruth must prove the love of one who, concerning her welfare, holds everything within his hands. Who can speak unmoved of the spirit of simple trust with which she came softly to the feet of Boaz, while her dear, sweet pleadings are that his skirt may be spread over her, for he is a kinsman? Surely not the awakened sinner who, finding every refuge cut off, comes to the feet of Immanuel, bowing heart and soul at the footstool of sovereign grace, pleading for the robe of sheltering mercy, the imputed righteousness of a near kinsman, to protect and save in the day of desolation. Glorious venture of a needy soul! Esther was not more fortunate in touching the golden sceptre bright with mercy.

What a precious interview with one she loved and trusted. How sweet were the words that rang in her ears; words of comfort, of encouragement, of promise and of blessing. Can she ever forget the thrilling music? "Fear not; I am thy near kinsman: the part of a kinsman I will do." O! it is well for her this day, the exile from home, the sad widowhood of life, the poverty of her station, all are forgotten in the dawning of most glorious hopes, as she departs in the early morning light, with both heart and shoulders burdened with the evidences of loving kindness, and with the breaking day and fleeing shadows gets her away to the mountain of myrrh and to the hill of frankincense. But blessed be the God of the afflicted and the poor, the hand of mercy is not yet closed to the favored Ruth. The part of a kinsman does not end with words and promises and trifling deeds. It reaches to the full payment of the redemption price, to the covering of every debt, aye, does it not even include the crown with which she is crowned in the day of espousals? Does it bring her a glorious home, an overflowing cup, and all the joys her heart could wish?

May it be given you, my kindred, to find in this dear story some of the joys of the Christian race. If you have known the bitterness of wrestling with sin, and enduring the trials of spiritual poverty, you shall also join in the song of victorious triumph and know the blessedness of union with the precious Redeemer. His precious blood shall be your cleansing fountain, his righteousness your raiment of wrought gold and needlework, and his love your happiness forevermore.

And so this delightful account that opened with a famine, closes with a feast of wondrous joy. It foreshadows the good things of the gospel day, and encourages our hearts to patient waiting in the paths of tribulation. But, my dear friends, leave my feeble thoughts for the book itself. You will find the sweet waters more pure and sparkling at the fountainhead than when they have been emptied from vessel to vessel. May the dear Lord, who gave honey and oil from the flinty rock, give you peace and joy in all you read.

Your fellow-gleaner for Jesus' sake,

S. B. LUCKETT

(We have seldom enjoyed any writing as much as we did the above, and we hope our readers will be comforted and edified by it too.

It first appeared in the *Signs* of May 15, 1876 — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. A. C. COX

It has pleased the Lord to remove from our midst Sister Sallie Bett Cox. Sister Cox was born Aug. 6, 1895, and passed away June 29, 1963, at 4:30 P. M., making her stay on earth 67 years. She was married to A. Coley Cox on April 28, 1912. Besides her husband she is survived by two daughters, seven sons, seventeen grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

Sister Cox united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church the 4th Saturday in October 1938, and was baptized the following Sunday. She remained a loyal member and was most always found filling her seat. We feel that her walk and talk and her way and manner of life made manifest that she was kept by grace. We think of her now as we bow our heads in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father; we think of her faith and the patient love and devotion to her husband, to her children and grandchildren and her church. Our sympathy and our prayers go out to the family, we all miss her so much, but we feel that our loss is her gain.

Funeral services were conducted in Dan River Church by Elder Curry King and Elder John Gilliam. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord, and we hope that we can join with Sister Cox and sing praises unto the Lord of Lords forever.

Coley S. Strader,

CLAY E. DENNIS

Our good friend, and, we believe by evidence left behind, our brother in the Lord Jesus Christ, passed from this dismal shore of time on March 20, 1963 at his home in Snow Hill, Maryland. He was born in the city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on August 31, 1903. His father was Garley E. Dennis; his mother Annie (Brittingham) Dennis.

There has never been a greater miracle performed in our day than in the case of this man. From evidence at hand he was not too much of a devout church attendant, but certainly not one to attend the meetings of the Old School Baptist. He was an undertaker, this being where I first met him. As I have found them nearly all nice men to work with, I could not, at the time, attach any importance to his kindness to me, a stranger holding a funeral where customs were different. I do not know whether the services meant anything to him or not, but not too long afterwards he was at a baptismal service for the Snow Hill church. He was struck with amazement at what was said and in the performance of the ordinance. Soon after that he became as regular in attending services as his work would allow.

It soon became apparent that his health was not good. It became necessary for him to seek treatment in Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. Before leaving home, he gave orders that he wanted the Old School Baptist ministers and members to visit him in the hospital, but that he did not want the other ministers. What made this great change? Who had been attending the ailing heart(new heart) of this man? Not these that had been seeking his approbation all the while; not the Old Baptists that he had come to love, no, no, not that, but God was fulfilling the outstanding feature of the New Covenant, to wit, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." He came from the hospital improved, but not a well man. He continued to attend our services, but soon told me that he had to return for further treatments. It soon was shown that he did not have too much time, but as the shadows of life begin to lengthen out, his faith in the God of all grace began to increase. From a human standpoint, it was sad to visit him, but from the standpoint of God's sovereign grace it was good to see him.

It astounded the town when it became known that the Old School Baptists were to preach the funeral. They could not understand why a man like this would prefer these backward people over the elite of the religious world. This man's answer would be, Because of the difference in what they preach; because they preach salvation by grace, which I need, and not by works, which I could not do. His last was in keeping with one whose trust was in the Lord; he died in confidence that God was his only hope of salvation.

From the standpoint of philanthropy the town lost one its best citizens, but the church lost one of its good friends and kindred in the Lord; his wife and two sons have lost a good husband and father.

He is survived by his companion, Mrs. Eva Lowe Dennis, and two sons, Clay E. Jr., of Philadelphia, and Norman F., of Snow Hill, who continues to operate the business.

I was away at the time of death, but was located and was blessed to get there in time for the funeral, which was conducted in his own funeral parlors with a Salisbury director in charge, after which he was laid away in body

to wait the appointed change of it from mortal to immortality, while his spirit is now in the glory of God and of the Lamb.

May the Lord comfort his family with the glory that Clay was blessed to see the last few months of his life. It will stand the test of time and eternity; it will take care of God's family when all has decayed.

W. D. G.

ELDER W. T. FUGATE

Elder William Thomas Fugate, son of Sam H. and Frances Fugate, was born October 11, 1879; and died after a lingering illness February 14, 1963, at the age of 83 years, four months and three days. He born and spent most of his life in Van Zant County, Texas; but moved to Palestine, Texas, in 1952. He was a retired farmer and gin operator.

He was married to, Miss Affie Lee Stamps November 28, 1897, and to this union were born thirteen children, five of whom died in infancy. His wife passed away October 11, 1949. Three years later he married, Mrs. Mary Velma French, of Palestine, Texas.

Elder Fugate was an ordained minister of the Primitive Baptists, of the regular predestinarian faith and order. He had served as pastor of Cool Springs, Corinth, Mt. Olive and Holley Springs Churches of the Union Association for several years, and is sadly missed by all who knew him. To know him was to love him. He was a faithful servant, and a strong defender of the doctrine of God our Saviour ,which he dearly loved.

Funeral services were held Februay 16th, in the First Baptist Church at Canton, Texas, with Elders P. E. Weisinger and D. B. Wallace, assisted by Mr. Don Brown, officiating. Burial was in White Cemetery, Wills Point, Texas.

Survivors include his wife, and the following sons and daughters: Calvin Fugate, of Canton; J. W. Fugate, of Dallas; J. T. Fugate and Rudell, of Wills Point; Mrs. Charlcie Martin, of Canton; Mrs. Opal Swinney, of Lancaster; Mrs. Linnie Foster, and Mrs. Montez McLeod, of Wills Point. Also surviving are two sisters: Mrs. J. W. Strait, of Terrell, and Mrs. E. N. Sides, of Canton; and thirteen grandchildren, and thirteen great granchildren. Pallbearers were brethren Alvin Burns, J. F. Morris, Kirby Groves, Clark Hollingsworth, Hubert Boyd and Cullen Allen.

Written by his devoted wife and sister,

Mary Velma Fugate

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

The Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church, Caswell County, N. C., while in conference at the June meeting, 1963, asked that this weak one write the obituary of our departed sister, Mary Apple Fitch, who passed from this world Sunday May 19, 1963, at the age of 67 years.

We feel deeply the loss of our lovely sister, who had been a member of our church almost fifty years: she united when eighteen years old, and was baptized the third Sunday in May; she also died the third Sunday in May, which was our communion day.

We desire not to eulogize man, but rather praise God for the orderly walk of our Sister, and her lovely character. Mere words just can't express what we feel in our hearts — they appear empty in comparison with how we miss her presence among us: her warm hand clasp, and her voice singing among us, which to me was rich in spirit — it sounded full of grace and truth; and we miss her smile, which was an encouragement to press onward and upward towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God.

Her sufferings, toils and trials now are over, and we feel she has fallen asleep in Jesus, to await His second coming, when he shall gather his jewels home to forever praise him in the world that hath no end.

Sister Fitch was the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Joe Apple. She married Charlie Fitch the second Sunday in January, 1920; an to this union were born four children, all living; also her husband is left to mourn her passing. The children are: Glenn M., Lina Sue, Ralph and Ruth, who are twins. Surviving brothers and sisters: Brother Robert W. Apple, Joseph Elisha, Arnold B., Morris A., and Clyde Apple, Julia Jackson and Myrtle Pebbles. For a long time she lived in the Page Town Community, Caswell County.

Though we, the church at Pleasant Grove, miss our sister so much, we would not call her from her rest, if it were possible; but rather, hope to meet her beyond this vale of tears. We desire to extend our sympathy to all her family: we know you miss her, too.

Her funeral was held at the church by her pastor, Elder J. Harvey Smith, Elder Wallis Smith, and Mr. Jack Anderson. Her body was laid to rest in the Apple Burial Grounds near the church. The florial tribute was beautiful.

We desire a copy of this writing be given her family; one be placed on the pages of our church book, and one sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Written by one who loved her, and felt to be in her sweet fellowship. Though I feel I am less than the least of all saints, I hope in the sure mercy to God's suffering little children, — Mrs. Fred Cobb.

Sister Robert F. Walker, Asst. Clerk
Elder J. Harvey Smith, Moderator

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 131 DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1963 No. 12

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12/63
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE REDEEMED

Can any one accept the spoken word
If it doesn't agree with, "Thus saith the Lord?"
In searching the scriptures, do they anywhere say
That God gave His Son, just hoping to pay

The debt of transgression; that if we believe
And accept the Lord, He will achieve
His mission on earth; if we refrain,
He will have failed, and died in vain?

The tenses of the verbs tell the story, indeed.
Redeemed means those under bondage were freed.
They belong to the Redeemer; they're His by law;
The law of God which contains no flaws.

If the Bible is true, we are surely persuaded
That the Father and Son were entirely unaided
In deciding upon the price they knew
Would complete redemption, when carried through.

The purchased flock, though unworthy they be,
Are said to be as innumerable as the sands of the sea;
While still being sinners, it seems quite odd
That nothing can separate them from the love of God.

How humble and thankful, how free from false pride,
Should be this body called the Saviour's bride.
He loved and honored them enough to give
His life on the cross that they might live.

Many who are still on the Damascus way
Have not seen the light of Eternal Day,
But like the apostle, blinded by surprise,
They, too will be given new Spiritual eyes.

(Galations 3:13 — Revelation 2:9)

Mrs. Mabel Bell
Quincy, Fla.

IT IS ENOUGH!

3767 Blenheim Street,
Vancouver 8, Canada

Signs of the Times, Inc.,

Dear Friends:

Enclosed please find money-order for $5.00 to renew my subcription to the **Signs,** which brings me such good reading each month. Like many Old Baptists, I get most of my preaching from it; but not all. I go to the annual three day meeting at Riffe, which is in the southern part of Washington, about two-hundred fifty miles from here. Elder Attebery is pastor there, and at three other points in Washington, Oregon and Idaho. He is a servant of the Lord to whom I love to listen, and wish I could hear him more often. He travels thousands of miles to serve four churches, and an extra one when there is a fifth Sunday in the month. At the moment, I am hoping to make one more trip this Fall for a Sunday meeting, and visit with the dear people there, who give me the love and fellowship that I do not deserve, but which I carry in my heart; and treasure much.

I would like for Elder Spangler to know that I am still living the grand meeting we all had at Riffe in July; at which time he preached so ably to us. I shall not forget those days for a long time, if ever.

I cannot write about any grand experience like many who write for the **Signs,** but I feel a great love and fellowship for them as I read their writings. I stand for the unconditional predestination of all things, and salvation by the grace of God; and no other way; and I love the Old Baptists. Is that enough?

I am the smallest of all, but the greatest of sinners, daily beseeching God's mercy.

In great weakness,
Duncan Black

THINKING OF THOSE TRIED IN THE FURNACE

This morning I am thinking of all who are tried in the furance of affliction, and melted down in love for him who saved us and called us with an holy calling (effectual), not according to our works (self-righteousness), but according to his mercy and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began. It is then we testify of Him: not what we have done for this dear one, but what he has done for vile sinners in mercy.

It is a feast indeed when our Lord works in the heart of a poor sinner, causing him to desire a home, and to be baptized in the liquid grave; which typifies the death, burial and resurrection of the dear one who hung on Calvary's cross for our sins; and redeemed us to God by his blood. How precious is his blood! and how humble we feel when we are carried to the home of his mother (church), and bid to eat with our husband at his table with his little family.

Dearly beloved, these are far too sacred things for poor men to trifle with: Partaking of the bread and wine, his broken body and his blood shed for love of you and me; a love that melts the hardest heart, and cause us to love all the family of God. They are scattered here and there, but you don't have to talk long with one who has been tried in the furnace, to feel a fellowship the world knows nothing about.

"How can two walk together except they be agreed." One writer wrote some time ago: Walking, (think of it, dear ones,) walking, not running, not jumping, but walking. This is not rushing headlong, and falling into a pit; but walking by faith and not by sight. There is carefulness in walking, being led by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit causes us to love one another, to forgive one another, and brings us to each other's feet begging forgivness if we have hurt one.

What does it mean to wound the cause of Christ? Am I guilty? I surely know that should I be left to self, that would be the case. I beg humbly to be kept. Don't allow it, dear Lord, that I should cause one for whom Christ has died, to turn away weeping and hurt over my folly and error of my way. It is the error of my way that brings darkness of soul: and if I am a son I can expect the chastening rod applied, and grief will follow. How do I know this? By sad experience: When I was questioned about a certain person once, I blurted out unthinkingly and unconsiderately, and fell into a pit where there is no water. I blamed no one but self, and my suffering was horrible. I felt Judas was a good fellow in comparison with me. I deserved nothing but to be cast out forever. If I could have seen the beam in my own eye, and what a sinner I was by nature and practice, then I would have had no time to behold the mote in another's eye.

So I know by bitter experience and through suffering who our obedience is. If I can claim a part in the merits of His blood, it is grace and mercy that put me in that number . . .

Oh Lord, undertake for us; Oh Lord, keep us in the way! The only time we can see we are in the way, is when the light comes down before us, pushing out darkness, showing us we are in the way. There is no room on this highway to pass, there is togetherness here: moving forward in a strait and narrow way — slowly walking, carried along by a power, a higher power. He moves all obstacles; he overthrows all enemies; he pleads our case, and he will see us safely through all the journey.

Though the thunder clouds roll in so much that all is darkness, yet out of the darkness He makes the light to shine whenever and wherever it pleases Him. His work is perfect, nothing can hinder

that, and he will care for every son that he causes to approach unto him. I saw this in a dream: I saw a man standing before New Hope church. Thunder clouds and storm had arisen and became so terrible. The storm was raging "outside", and had shut off the natural light. As this little band of believers sat together, one stood up and came forward begging a home. When he came forward, the light came on around him — that same light I saw in the forgivness of my sins back in old Tennessee years ago — the light that penetrates darkness. This man was asked to express his feelings. He began by saying that he had a dream, and that God told him something in the dream. It was something that I could not hear as he spoke, since I was not close enough.

God works and none can hinder; when he hinders, none can work; when he opens, none can shut. Ah, how wonderful is the God of Israel! He is able to speak to the water to stand up, and it is so. He has delivered, and he will yet deliver all who call on him out of a pure heart, a heart made soft.

There never came a storm so terrible; there never were clouds to thick that they could hinder the work of Israel's God. When He says, "Let it be," it is done. He controlls all things, holding the winds in the hollow of his fist. Who am I, poor puny weak mortal, that I should contend with so great a God? God is not the author of confusion: confusion of face belongs to man.

> "Love without dissimulation
> Reached into the Gentile nation:
> I'm melted down when I can see
> That He has died for such as me."

"He hung upon Calvary's cross, and said, 'It is finished,' — finished all the types and shadows of the ceremonial law; finished all that God had promised. Death and Hell no more shall awe: It is finished, Saints from hence your comforts draw."

"In him we live and move, and have our being." "I am the light of the world."

A little one,
Mrs. Fred Cobb,
Ruffin, N. C.

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Sister Arthur Merigold)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, meeting at Whitefield, Maine, August 30, 31, and September 1, 1963, sends greetings to the churches and associations with which we correspond:

Dear Brethren in the Lord:

The task of writing the Circular Letter which was assigned to me, I feel so unable to fulfill, knowing that of myself I can do nothing. Thus unless the good Lord directs my thoughts, this one so unworthy of the least of His benefits can only fail to achieve that which is our custom, to send words of greetings and cheer to all with whom we correspond.

I can think of nothing more fitting than the love, goodness and mercy of our God, the Great I Am.

Through the love and mercy of God we are permitted to assemble together to worship in His name; may it be truly in spirit and truth. Only through the love and mercy of God are we given a hope; that it is in him that we live, move and have our being, and have a desire to know and to do his will. Even though at times our hope seems so small, we are brought to a place that we do hope that we have a hope. Scripture relates, "For we are saved by hope; but that which is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" (Romans 8:24) And, "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast." (Hebrews 6:19)

Thus, through his love and mercy, we are at times lifted above the trials and tribulations of this life, and blessed with that peace that passeth all understanding; and given faith to press on, or as Paul relates, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of

God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:14)

Again, through the love and mercy of our God, we are given faith to believe. It is written, "The just shall live by faith." (Roman 1:17) If we are given faith it must be, and is, given us from on high: we cannot reach out and grasp that which God alone provides to those who are his — those who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, whose names are inscribed in the Lamb's Book of Life.

Brethren, what a blessed promise to his children; what a sure foundation! "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his." (2 Timothy 2:19) His promises never fail; his care and protection through his love and mercy never ceases: an ever present help in time of trouble. He watches over his even when we are so unmindful of Him.

"If God be for us, who can be against us? Who can separate us from the love and mercy of God in Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, or things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:35, 37-39) Through his love and mercy we are saved by grace.

"Amazing grace how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lose but now am found,
Was blind but now I see."

RECEIVES MUCH COMFORT

Lake Charles, La.

Dear Editors:

It is again time for my renewal of the dear **Signs.** I am enclosing renewal for two years, and five dollars for the fund.

The **Signs** is so precious to me, and I trust that I have been blessed many times to rejoice in the wonderful feeling of sweet fellowship from all sections of the country. I feel the writings are inspired, and I have received much comfort from many of the articles. It is indeed wonderful to me to have the **Signs,** especially since I feel to be all alone here, with no church near. I must not complain though, for I am blessed to attend our regular meetings at my home church, although it is two-hundred miles from here.

I have just returned from our association near ElDorado, and I feel we were blessed with a wonderful meeting. We were happy and I hope thankful to have several visiting ministers with us. It was a wonderful surprise to have Brother and Sister Griffin with us. I hope we are made thankful for all the blessings which have been bestowed upon us.

May the rich blessings of God Almightly continue to enable each and every one of you to publish our dear **Signs.** Remember me when given a desire for prayer.

In bonds of love
Mary Davis

Mardella Strings, Md.

Dear Editors:

I find it is time to renew my subscription, and I feel I must tell you as best I can, how thankful I am that it has pleased the Father to preserve and keep a small number, for so it is compared to many that do not believe, uphold, teach or preach the truth and gospel as the **Signs of the Times** do, and has always done these many years. I might add here that I have read them ever since I could read anything.

We readers know that it was truth when the first copy was published: It was truth then, and what was truth then, is still truth. That is what every child of God hungers to hear. Nothing

else satisfies or gives them any comfort or hope. I find some hope in that I do not find any comfort in the modernistic periodicals that are so numerous all about us. I do find comfort in the **Signs.**

I would like to say, and I feel for every one that finds comfort and spiritual food for their hungry souls in reading the **Signs,** that I hope you will be kept able finanicially and spiritually to continue publishing them as they always have been.

May God bless and keep you all. Remember me when at the throne of grace.

A little sister, if one at all,
Minnie E. Gambrill

SERMON BY ELDER W. C. KING AT THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION 1960

I read from the 31st chapter of the prophecy of Jeremiah, beginning with the 31st verse:

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

If there is any part of this that would claim my attention more than another, it is the last part of the 33rd verse: "I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

I have listened attentively to the preaching this morning, and have been much elated; and have rejoiced that I am permitted to be in your midst again, to behold your faces, and renew the blessed fellowship that has been so precious to me through the years.

I desire most of all that I might be endued with wisdom from on high, that I might be able to rightly divide the word of truth, and set forth the things in order that are believed among God's people. I do not desire to bring something new to you, something foreign to your experience, if you have an experience of grace. If God would bless me, I would comfort the Lord's people, and, "Speak comfortably unto Jerusalem, and cry unto her that warfare is accomplished, and that she has received double at the Lord's hand for all her sins."

I feel it is such a great privilege and such a great blessing that this great concourse of people could be gathered here from all over the regions around about; that we might come for one purpose, with one desire in our hearts: that we might worship God in spirit and in truth.

The prophet spoke concerning the coming of this great day, — of the gospel era that was to come; this covenant that God was to make with his people; this covenant of the Lord Jesus Christ — how that it should be written in their hearts, and put in their inward parts. We feel that this was so perfectly done that it has never failed in any sense of the word. For where God has begun this work in the heart of a poor sinner, he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

Now there may be periods in our lives — certainly when we have first been brought into the knowledge of this glorious truth, that we have been made to inquire, "Is this the way; is this the Christ?" With much anxiety,

and much prayerful thought, these things have come. Notwithstanding, I feel that I can say that when this deliverance has come, (and you feel that you can point back to a place and time when the Lord translated you from the kingdom of darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God, and you were made to rejoice in a blessed hope in the Lord Jesus,) you may then have felt that you would never have another doubt about a hope in the Lord; but I believe that your experience has taught you that time and again you have been made to ask, "Is this the Christ, or shall I seek another?" "Is this the way?" You desire that you might have greater knowledge; you desire that you might have a clearer conception of this blessed hope. Yet you would not exchange it for anything in this world. I asked a dear, precious sister a few days ago when my wife and I visited her in her sickness, and she began to tell of someone who had such good evidence of a hope, and that if she had such experience she felt she wouldn't have a doubt; I asked, "Would you exchange the hope you have for your sister's hope? Would you exchange your hope for anybody's?" And she replied, "No! I would rather have my hope than anybody's I know of."

So I want to say to you, my beloved, that your hope may seem small at times; you may feel a leaness and poverty of soul at times as you travel in this low ground of trouble and sorrow, for this world is not a place of ease for the church of the living God. "In this world ye shall have tribulation." Jesus told his people that: just as surely as he told them that they would have peace. It is just as necessary for the church to have trials and afflictions, as it is for them to have peace. But I want to assure you that God will never suffer more to be placed upon you, than he will give you grace to bear. He will never suffer what he has placed in your bosom, which has been an anchor sure and steadfast to your soul, to be removed forever. I feel just as sure of that, as that I stand before you today; and I am confident that he will continue to manifest his love to you, and his mercy to you.

The Scriptures tell us how He led Israel as a father when He led them by the hand. We think of such compassionate love, and such care and thoughtfulness, as an earthly father caring for his own children as he leads them by the hand. How many times have you had that experience? You know that if a child would grasp your hand, he would have no more strength than that which he possesses; but if you grasp the child's hand, then you can bear the child over many of the rough places of life, because you have sufficient strength to care for it.

So, my friends, if you were left to grasp the hand of the eternal; if you were the one who had to hold the hand of God in order to be securely carried over the pitfalls, you would fall by the wayside. But the blessed arm of the eternal Father is underneath his people: that one who cannot fail, that one who never sleeps nor slumbers, and is ever mindful of the cries of his people. There has never been a time when the child of God has been out of reach of the Father's notice. Though they walk through the valley of the shadow of death, they are made to feel, "I will fear no evil." Why? because, "Thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

Beloved, if our Father did not go with us in these places, wouldn't there be weeping and wailing? But as we are made to feel that his precious presence is with us, and he gives us grace to bear every thorn, and grace to bear every opposition that comes, we are made to say that we know that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

How blessed, indeed, is this: "I will be their God." Sometime ago, as I read this scripture, I thought how perfect it was that first things were put first: that God said, "I will be their God."

He did not say that if we would be a people unto him, he would be a God unto us. He didn't place it that way; but he placed first things first, that, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

So, my beloved, we would not have that allegiance to God; we would not have faith to trust him; we would not have power to believe in him, if he did not first manifest himself to us. He loved us — he manifested himself unto us. We love him because he first loved us: that's the reason why. You would still be in the world; you would still be yonder in some place of amusement, where you could find diversion for your carnal and sinful mind, if it were not for the grace and mercy of God.

But God stirs you up: he found you somewhere along life's highway and there caused you to be concerned, as the fire that burned in the bush and consumed it not. There was something that caused your attention to be turned, and God hasn't failed to make things attractive to you. And we might ask ourselves why we were attracted to the Old Baptist Church; why we were attracted to this people, of whom it has been said so many times that they will all soon be dead — all soon be gone.

This morning someone told me that this church (Chestnut Church — Ed.) was organized in 1828, and as I thought of this span of years, I wondered how many ministers have labored here. And as I came here today and beheld the order of this crowd, and saw their attentiveness, I saw their steadfastness and their faces turned toward Zion, and was made to rejoice that God is still alive, and still stirring up the pure mind of his people. Therefore He could say to them, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." There are **shalls** here. They are brought into this sweet relationship with God; and I don't believe that it is possible for you to turn back into the beggerly elements of this life: I don't believe you even want to. God works the will in you: both the will and the to do of his own good pleasure. He establishes that will there, and you are made willing in the day of his power.

God's people are not brought into this relationship against their will. They come humbly, feeling their unworthiness. They come to the church feeling their unprofitableness to the church of God. But notwithstanding, they see the church as a city set upon a hill; they see her in her beauty and her glory, and they long to live with her, and be tied together with the cords of His love. They desire that fellowship; they desire the ordinance of baptism — they want to go down in the liquid grave as their Lord and Master went. They want that: I just believe they do.

How many times have we seen the hungry sheep around the fold — on the outside, hungering for the word of God, thirsting and panting as a hart panting after the water brook. When God removes everything out of the way, it is removed. How many times have we seen the saints of God, and heard them express themselves that they would like to go to the church, but feel they can't go. But one day something takes place that removes these obstacles, and they are made willing to go home to the church and tell them what great things the Lord has done for them, whereof they are glad.

My beloved, God is reigning above just like he is on the earth. He sends his showers, his blessings, and they are all from his bountiful hand. We have a blessed hope that one day we shall be gathered together in one innumerable host, and be brought into that sweet relationship with our Lord and Saviour, to see him as he is, and be like him and be satisfied forever.

So, if we are separated to meet no more here, I feel that in that bright and glorious day our ship is going to land in that peaceful port, where peace and joy will be forever; where neither sickness and sorrow nor death will ever come; and where we shall be able to

ascribe honor, and praise, and glory to Him forever. May God bless you.

(The above is from a recording and is slightly condensed for publication. — J.D.W)

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church at Halcottville, New York, Wednesday and Thursday, September 11 and 12, 1963.

Dear Beloved Brethren in the Lord,

Again we address you by the way of a Circular Letter to be circulated among those of like precious faith in the true and living God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who are "sanctified by God the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ and called". Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, has told us that such one's should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the Saints. Dear ones, how close this causes us to examine ourselves, as to our standing before God in this faith, as this faith was once delivered unto the saints. How come they were saints? We are told because they were "sanctified by God the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ and called."

Dear ones, has God dealt with us in like manner? If so then we are Saints. Oh, doesn't it make us fear and tremble and wonder at times? If so then Jude's message can apply to us, and such ones can and will contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the Saints. This faith which is the gift of God, being delivered unto them, then belongs to them as a gift from God. We do not understand that there was any effort on their part to come in possession of this faith. When anything is delivered to one it comes right where they are. And no charge was made to them for it being delivered to them. Much different than worldly gifts. When worldly gifts are delivered or given to us, if we feel so disposed, we can pass it on to someone else or give it away and make no use of it, or sell it, or someone can steal it. But not so with this gift from God. No one can steal it, neither can one give it away. You cannot teach your neighbor or your brother saying, "know the Lord".

We are told that this faith is more precious than gold that perisheth. We feel sure that is true, for we feel that this God given faith delivered to poor sinners is the beginning of a heavenly life, for such ones know God. And we are told to know God is life eternal. Dear ones, is it not the time right now that Saints should contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto them.

Is it not a dark and cloudy day? Does it not look as though darkness had covered the earth and gross darkness the people, people loving pleasure rather than righteousness, and people going to and fro like mad. Is it not true that the Believers should be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, contending earnestly for what God has given them. This faith which the children of God has delivered to them cannot be wasted or mortgaged or sold. How wonderful that God has so arranged it, that His little children, poor helpless needy sinners, lame and halt, and by nature the children of wrath, even as others, for His great love for them, gave them something to walk by, something that no one can take away from them. They can use it as long as they live and are in their right mind. They are using it many times a day or night. They being delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the glorious Kingdom of the Son of God, set apart by God the Father and preserved or kept in Jesus Christ, and called with a Holy calling not according to their purpose but according to the purpose that God had for them before the foundation of the world. So this faith that has been delivered to us gives us courage and comfort, for we trust that we have something that God has given us.

The word of God says, "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ". So if we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, God help us, that we can fight the good fight spoken of by the dear Apostle Paul, and through the imputed righteousness of Christ, look forward for the crown of righteousness laid up for us, with the faith that has been delivered unto us.

Amasa J. Slauson, Moderator
Woodrow Bellinger, Clerk

JOHN 12:32

Route 1, Box 202
Hermiston, Oregon

Dear Brother Hamrick:

Would you write me your views on John 12:32 for a friend? As you have written so beautifully on Phil. 2:12,13 in October **Signs of the Times**. I am unable to write or travel at present on account of an injury in my back.

Will try to write you later. With love and I hope sweet fellowship, I remain just an old sinner saved by the Grace of God.

Ernest Attebery

1010 South 16th Street
Harlingen, Texas

Dear Brother Attebery:

It's rather hard to express my feelings when those I believe to be the children of Light ask me my views upon the Sacred Holy Writ of God. Oh, how weak and unfit I know myself to be when attempting to speak or write upon things pertaining to God and godliness.

You asked me my views on John 12:32. I have never read anything written upon this passage of scripture, neither have I ever heard anyone speak upon it. It is with fear in my heart that I undertake to reply to your request. But I believe I have been made to know and realize that unless my hand is guided by the Holy Spirit, nothing will be written that will be of any comfort to you or of glory to our Lord.

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."
(John 12:32)

Let us now with God's blessings endeavor to write our views upon the passage of scripture under consideration. First, by attempting to explain "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth" and secondly, "will draw all men unto me."

We learn from the verse of scripture following our text that Jesus in saying "and I, if I be lifted up from the earth" is "signifying what death he should die." His death was to be by crucifixion and he was to be lifted up between heaven and earth. The word IF, in our text, does not mean that there was some doubt in the mind of Jesus as to what type of death he would suffer, or whether or not he would be lifted up while hanging on the cross. He knew from before the foundation of the world what type of death he must suffer. "Behold we go to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him and the third day he shall rise again." (Matt. 20:18,19.) Jesus knew he was as a "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." He prayed to the Father while in the garden of Gethsemane: "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." He knew his death was to be a violent one with painful trial and intense suffering. But notice, he was to be lifted up between heaven

and earth, between God and man. Does this not show that he was and is the mediator between God and man? "For there is one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. (Timothy 2:5.) Could there have possibly been anyone else that could qualify as mediator between God and man except Christ Jesus? No, there could be no one for it was his being " the man Christ Jesus" and the Son of God that made him equal to this task. As being equal in essence with God, as being divine, and as being God, Jesus could stand before God and speak to God for man; as "the man Christ Jesus" he could speak to man for God, Jesus being equal to the Father in his divine and with man in human nature. "For verily he took not upon him the nature of angels: but he took upon him the seed of Abraham." (Hebrews 2:16.)

Let us look at the passage of scripture just proceeding our text. "Now is the judgment of the world: now shall the prince of the world be cast out." Let us first consider the new covenant that Jesus established with the tribe of Israel, the house of spiritual Israel, meaning only the elect of God, the spiritual seed of Abraham. "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel." Jesus "taketh away the first, that he might establish the second, "— the second covenant. Let us see what this second covenant consists of: "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for they shall know me, from the least to the greatest." (Hebrews 8:10.) All of whom? All of the spiritual seed of Abraham, the house of spiritual Israel, the elect of God whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. His sheep. "For they shall all know me"; "and this is life eternal that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." (John 17:2.)

Who else could Jesus be speaking of if it is life eternal to know him; and he "says they shall all know me." Could he be speaking of all Adamic race? Could he be speaking of Cain as well as Abel, Esau as well as Jacob, Pharaoh as well as Moses, the rich man as well as Lazarus, Judas Iscariot as well as Peter; in other words, the goats as well as the sheep? No, only the elect of God. For "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually against God." The Holy Spirit must take up his abode in the hearts and souls and consciences of men before they can know Christ. Then Jesus says "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their inquities will I remember no more." (Hebrews 8:12.) What wonderful news to those who have been given a true hope in Christ Jesus.

Can we not now begin to see the meaning of the verse of scripture preceeding our text? It shows that there is a "judgment of the world" and that "the prince of the world be cast out." The prince of the world is the devil who will be cast out of the inward heart and soul of those born again of the Spirit of God. Does the devil not rule in their hearts while they are still dead in trespasses and sins? "Where in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." (Eph. 2:2,3.) "And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." What happened to the man who

was possessed of the devil while living among the tombs? Did not Jesus cast the devil out from dwelling in this man? Yes, my friend when Jesus writes his laws in the hearts of his little ones and the Holy Spirit sets up his kingdom in their hearts and souls, there is no more room for the devil and his angels, for that ground now becomes sacred ground. Oh, yes, he still has access to the flesh, for the Spirit does not act upon the flesh making it holy or spiritual. The Holy Spirit does not transform flesh into or sanctify nature into grace, but acts upon the new man of grace under the new covenant. Yet the devil has dominion over the elect of God until the time of judgment which will come during their lifetime here on earth when the devil will be cast out and the Holy Spirit will take over in the soul and conscience of the sheep of God. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." The new man of grace keeps the commandments of God, for "whosever is born of God doeth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." (1 John 3:9.) This is what causes the warfare between the flesh and the spirit. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." (Gal. 5:17.)

May we now be given to see the working of the triune Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, upon the Elect of God, showing the power and mercy of God toward those whom he has chosen for himself from before the foundation of the world. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God." And that "they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." (Hebrews 9:14.) They are those who are called not by an outward calling but by an inward calling. Is this not the same as being drawn to Christ?

Now the second part of our text which reads, "I will draw all men unto me." This part of the text seems to have a two fold meaning. But let me ask, does the word ALL mean all the Adamic race? Or does it mean all of the spiritual seed of Abraham in whom the Holy Spirit sets his kingdom? What does Jesus say concerning his coming down to this earth of sin and sorrow? "For I came down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." He will and does draw all of the elect of God unto him, all that the Father hath given him. And he says: "no man can come unto me, except the Father sent me draw him." Also "and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me." Nowhere in the entire Bible does it mention where the goats or nonelect will be drawn unto him, or where he came down for the benefit of the goats. His precious blood was shed upon the cross for the benefit of his sheep. For Jesus says: "I am the good shepherd: The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." "I told you and ye believed not." Why didn't they believe? "Because ye are not of my sheep" but remember "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Were the goats ordained to eternal life? Concerning the goats, he says: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

There are many, many passages of scripture throughout the Bible to show beyond a shadow of a doubt (at least to those who have been given light to see) that the elect of God are the only ones who are spiritually drawn to Jesus. "Now I will draw all men unto me." As mentioned before, this part of the text seems to have a two fold meaning. First, as we have tried to show that all the elect of God are, and in time, drawn out of darkness (dead in trespasses and sin) by Christ through the Holy Spirit

into his marvelous Light. Secondly, when those that have been born again are drawn to his cross for a blessed spiritual view of Christ and his precious blood, what a glorious effect this has on the children of God. Look at the outward or literal effect it had on the children of Israel while in the wilderness. After three days of wandering in the wilderness without water, they came to Morah. "They could not drink of the waters of Morah for they were bitter." The people began to murmur against Moses. Moses "cried unto the Lord, and the Lord shewed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the water became sweet." Notice that the tree had to be shown unto Moses, for Moses like all of the children of God had a veil over his eyes and until the veil is lifted by the Holy Spirit, he could not have a spiritual view of Christ and his cross. When the tree was cast into the water, the water became sweet. The dealings of the Lord with the children of Israel in the wilderness is typical of his dealings with spiritual Israel today.

With God's blessing may we be able to see the spiritual meaning of this passage of scripture. What does the tree represent? Does it not represent the tree of life, the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ? Now the elect of God (after being born of the Spirit) traveling along the narrow pathway of life, following after the footsteps of the saints who have gone on before, must endure many trials and afflictions. "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." When all different types of trials come upon the elect of God, such as financial set backs, crop failures, overdue debts, sickness and deaths among their loved ones, the whole world seems to be against them causing their future to look dark and gloomy, outwardly speaking. Inwardly, old unbelief takes hold giving them a feeling of being so far removed from God, while God seems to turn his back to look upon them no more. They feel nothing but sin, sin within and troubles without. When it seems that their pathway has become so bitter that they can go no farther, they are compelled to do as Moses did: to pray unto their Lord. As the precious Saviour draws them unto him, they are, by the power of the Holy Spirit, given to see with spiritual eyes of faith (for it must be shown unto them) the cross of Christ as the "tree of life" and their interest in it, his blood and righteousness being sufficient to cleanse them of all their sins.

Does this not make all their trails and afflictions sweet? What can all the troubles that could be placed upon them amount to, if they are given some evidence of their interest in the cross of Christ? Their whole time here on earth is not a drop in the ocean compared to life eternal. When they are drawn to Christ with power, giving them new evidence of their interest in Christ, it will do something for them in a minute that nothing else can do in a lifetime. "These things I have spoken unto you that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulations, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (John 16:33.)

Humbly written,
Joe L. Hamrick

THE UPPER COUNTRY LINE UNION

The 5th Sunday Union Meeting in December of the **Upper Country Line Association** is purposed to be held with the Pleasantville Church. The meeting house is located on 704 highway, 5 miles out of Madison, N. C. We extend an invitation to all brethren, sisters, and friends to come and be with us.

Rachel Wray, Asst. Clerk

THE JOYFUL SOUND
(Psalm 89:15)

The Bible says, "Blessed is the people
That know the joyful sound,"
And rich indeed is everyone
Among these people found.

This is the sound of the gospel,
Glad tidings from above,
The power of God unto salvation,
Manifesting omnipotence in love.

It is good news from a far country,
To cheer the drooping heart,
Delivered by God's humble servants
To those who "know in part."

How sweet it is to the people,
Who are blessed to hear;
It is food for the inner man,
And lifts high the Saviour dear.

We delight to extol His virtures,
And to sing His praise;
It will be our delightful employ
In everlasting days.

The sum and substance of the gospel:
He makes His power known;
All honor and glory be to Him,
Who sits upon a throne.

I've had a home in His church
For lo these many years,
And often, under the joyful sound,
I'm melted down in tears.

O may it be my exceeding joy
To meet Him in the sky,
To behold Him in great glory,
And reign with Him on high.

C. W. Vass,
Elizabeth City, North Carolina

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with Upper Town Creek Church, Wilson County, near Elm City, N. C., the 5th Saturday and Sunday in December. (December 28th and 29th)

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Tarboro, N. C.

SKEWARKEY UNION MEETING

The Skewarkey Union will convene, the Lord willing, with the church at Skewarkey, Martin County, N. C., the fifth Sunday and Saturday before, in December, 1963. The church is located in Williamston, N. C. at the intersection of Highway 17 and 64 by-pass.

All brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

E. B. Peele, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To October 1, 1963)

Hubbell Brothers, N. Y.	$ 5.00
Mrs. V. G. Williams, Ala.	10.00
Mrs. David Farnie, Va.	1.00
Mrs. Isaac L. Kip, N. J.	2.00
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Eunice B. McClendon, Ill.	5.00
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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

John 15:2.

"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

We have a request from one of our brethren that we give our views upon the above scripture, and our humble desire is for guidance, that we might rightly divide the word of truth. In this

request we were asked, "How can a branch be in him, yet be taken away?"

At the time that our Lord spoke these words there was one of the twelve apostles about to be taken away, Judas, who was chosen and had been given the job of carrying the bag, and had also gone with the others to preach that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. Matthew 10:1-16. We suspect that he had a head knowledge and was smart enough to deceive his companions, yet we know that he could not deceive the One who had placed him among the twelve. When he found fault at the home of Lazarus, where his sister Mary, six days before the passover, took the ointment of spikenard, very costly, to anoint the feet of her Lord, perhaps to the other apostles he appeared to be very good, although walking "in a vain shew." "This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein." John 12:6.

We find the account in Matthew 26 of another Mary coming into the house of Simon the leper, where Jesus sat at meat, two days before the feast of the passover. She had an alabaster box of very precious ointment and poured it on Jesus' head. In this incident we find all his disciples filled with indignation, saying, "To what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much and given to the poor." Here we see that they could all be honestly mistaken, but Judas was different from them and he showed it by going to the chief priests to betray his Master for thirty pieces of silver. Those of Christ's disciples who were to abide in him, had much in themselves that must be purged, Peter for instance. The twelve had been so much together and had endured much, yes, had left all to follow him, yet such was the knowledge of their own weakness, that when Jesus said, "One of you shall betray me." they all said, "Lord, is it I?" No doubt those who were vitally in Christ said it, knowing their own frailty, but not so Judas, he had his own plan, outwardly using the same words they did. How soon after that occasion his whole life as an apostate was fully exposed, fulfilling Psalm 109:8. "Let his days be few, and let another take his office." Judas, not having been given a new heart, did that which his natural mind and heart loved, doing that which he was of old ordained to do. God left him to himself! Those who had been given new hearts did abide in him, there was a devil's work to be done, and Judas proved to be that one of whom Jesus spake when he told his disciples, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" It was not long after Jesus had ascended into heaven that men arose, who, professing the truth, under Satan's power, denied the doctrine. Some, as in the Galatian church, were legalists, who would pervert the Gospel of Christ. The apostle John warns his brethren not to believe every spirit, but to "try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." How were they to try them? By testing what they preached by the Word of God. Jude exhorts his brethren to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares (unawares to them) who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." When men deny God's word, they deny God. Jude also refers to Cain, Balaam and Core. Cain believed in God just as "devils also believe and tremble," but there is no love of God in devils, there was no desire seen in Cain to worship in God's ordered way, he, like many to-day, chose his own way to worship God, he took of the fruit of the ground to offer unto the Lord. Abel sacrificed according to God's word, for "without shedding of blood is no remission." Hebrews 9:22. Abel's was a heart religion, wrought in him by God's Holy Spirit. Cain's was a head religion. "And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering, but

unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell."

Balaam was different to Cain, we believe he, like Judas, had the WORD put in his mouth but not in his heart. Peter spoke of those in his day who walked after the flesh and were selfwilled, who had forsaken the right way and were gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness but was rebuked for his iniquity, the dumb ass speaking with a man's voice, forbade the madness of the prophet. Yes, God put wonderful words in the mouth of a hireling who went to curse God's people. God said, "Return unto Balak, and thus thou shalt speak. — How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy, whom the Lord hath not defied? For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations. Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous and let my end be like his!" Read Numbers, chapters 22, 23&24. How could such an one die the death of the righteous when he had no desire to live the life of the righteous? He died fighting against the people of God. Joshua 13:22.

In Acts 8:9-21, Simon Magus professed Christ and was baptized by Philip, yet he showed just what he was when he offered money to obtain power to bestow the Holy Ghost, but Peter said, "thy money perish with thee: — Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God." There were those who got into the primitive church, just as there are those who make a profession in this day, whose hearts were not right with God. The parable of the sower, Matthew 13, shows various kinds of hearers. In the case of the wayside hearer, "The wicked one catcheth away that which was sown in his heart." The stony ground hearer received the word with joy, "Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. He also that received seed among the thorns, is he that heareth the word, and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word and he becometh unfruitful."

Those who received it in GOOD GROUND did not make themselves to be good ground. The Mighty God, the True Husbandman, makes the good ground, by nature the human race is all of the same lump. God taketh away the unfruitful branch as he took away Judas, who went to his own place. Our Lord, who is the WORD OF GOD, has given God's word to those who are his own, "and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled." John 17. How many sons of perdition have come since the apostles' day who have denied God's word, and instituted orders and customs that came from the Pagans and are found nowhere in the word of God. If we have been made to differ we have no right to boast. To all the disciples it was a personal matter, they all said, "Is it I?" Is it not a personal matter with us? Paul said to the Galatians, "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." The testimony of our Lord to Peter has the same ring, "Blessed are thou, Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Our Lord in another place said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me: and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." How true are Christ's words in Matthew 25:29. "For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that

hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. "We are sure that the dear friend who asked us to write this article believes the truth as expressed in Joseph Hart's hymn, 1297 in Beebe's Collection.

"The sinner who, by precious faith,
Has felt his sins forgiven,
Is from that moment, pass'd from death,
And seal'd an heir of Heaven. —

The man that would this truth withstand,
Would pull God's temple down
Wrest Jesus' sceptre from his hand,
And spoil him of his crown.

Satan might then full victory boast,
The church might wholly fall;
If one believer may be lost,
It follows so may all."

"Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." The apostate Simon Magus was willing to give money to obtain the power, but the scripture states it is "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Zechariah 4:6. The Spirit works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and if they are without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are they bastards, and not sons. In the spirit's teaching, the child of God learns to glory in tribulations, "knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." This same writer, in Galatians, tells us what the fruit of the Spirit is, and how blessed we are if we are so favoured as to bring forth such fruit. The hymn from which we have quoted mentions one of these fruits and calls it precious faith. In the nine kinds of fruit Paul lists, faith is the seventh but love is the first. We will give them as he does "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." Branches where such fruit is found will be seen to serve the Lord with fear and to rejoice with trembling. They will desire to crucify the old man and his lusts in themselves and to take the spoiling of their goods joyfully. Though living in the twentieth century they will want to be identified in belief and practice with the faithful in Christ Jesus of the first century. Paul said, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Christ Jesus is in you, except ye be reprobates?" When our Lord began preaching that he was the living bread that came down from heaven, that it is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: that the words that he spake unto them, they were spirit and life, from that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him. "Then said Jesus unto the twelve, will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." Do we not have the same answer to-day? Those who have been strengthened by him and kept alive, rely entirely upon him, and receive from him, in due time, strength for their day.

G. R.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

TITUS 1:2

"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."

Toronto, Ont., Jan. 16, 1877.

To the Editor of the Signs of the Times — Dear Sir: — Some time ago I, as a seeker after truth, requested your views on the above passage of God's word. If you can find time, and feel it in your heart to do so, I should feel extremely thankful, particularly on the words, "promised before the world began." To whom was the promise made?

WILLIAM RICHES.

REPLY.

If the promise of eternal life did not specifically embrace those who were to be the recipients of it, it would not afford any certain and reliable hope either to Paul or to any of those for whom it was designed. The point on which our friend desires to be enlightened is, Unto whom was this promise made? Our understanding is that this gracious promise was made to our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Mediatorial Head of his body, the church, which was chosen in him before the foundation of the world. But as life could not be given to the Head without including the vitality of the body in union with the Head, the promise was made to the church of God in Christ, and with all spiritual blessings, was given to the church in Christ, according as God had chosen her members in him before the foundation of the world. Of David it was said, in vision, " I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant. Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations." "The Lord is our defense, and the Holy One of Israel is our King. Then thou spakest in vision to thy Holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon one chosen out of the people. I have found David my servant, with my holy oil have I anointed him. With whom my hand shall be established; mine arm shall also strengthen him." "My mercy will I keep for him forevermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven." "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established forever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven." — Psalm lxxxix. 3, 18-21, 34-37.

There is no doubt that all that is promised and secured by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, applies to David, as the type of Christ; to him as a man, his throne, and his seed, and his personal government have not endured forever; for the apostle Peter, on the day of pentecost, said, "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens; but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool." — Acts ii. 29-35. From this inspired explanation of the prophecy we are assured that, not unto David, as a man, but unto Christ, the Holy One, this life and immortality was promised before the world began, as the Mediatorial Head, and to his seed as his body and members in particular. Of Christ, then, as the anti-typical David, and as the Mediatorial Head over all things to his church, it is written, "He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him; even length of days forever and ever." — Psa. xxxi. 4. Our Saviour's own words conform this testimony of the psalmist: "For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." "For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of Man." — John v. 21, 26, 27. When the Son of God made his advent to our world, when the Word was made flesh and dwelt

among us, it was testified of him that, "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." — John i. 4. And he said to the Father, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." — John xvii. 1-3.

By this same inspired apostle God has given us a record of this eternal life, "For the life was manfested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." — 1 John i. 2. Here we have explicit testimony that this life has its origin in God the Father, and is the same he promised before the world began. And in chapter v. 11, he testifies that it was given to the saints in Christ their Head. "And this is the record that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." And we are further informed that this life of the sons and heirs of God is hid with Christ in God. — Col. iii. 3. This is a safe place. Were it entrusted to our keeping we might lose it, if possible, a thousand times a day; but it is far too precious to be exposed to any peril. But the promise secures the interest of all the saints. Not only have they when quickened by it the promise of it, but they have the earnest of it. It is in Christ, and with him hid in God, and therefore Christ is our life. We have no eternal life out of him. " He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." — 1 John v. 12. And John adds in the next verse, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." Jesus saith, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." — John v. 24. Jesus said unto Martha, "I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." — John xi. 25, 26. Although every believer in our Lord Jesus Christ has everlasting life, yet they have it only as they have Christ; for this life is so identified with him that it is their life; and his eternal Godhead. Hence Paul sets forth this all-important truth in the introduction of his epistle to Titus. He did not rest upon the hope that if he held out faithful he would be found worthy of life; but was "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." And also 2 Tim. i.1: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus." This hope in which Paul could toil and suffer was not in himself, but in Christ Jesus; for he testifies of himself, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." — Gal. ii. 20.

Having written this much in reply to our inquiring friend, we will volunteer a few thoughts on this soul-cheering text, in regard to its more general import. The strength and comfort which we realize from any hope based upon a promise, depends much on our faith and confidence in its validity. If we doubt the reliability of a promise, or the veracity of him who has made it, or his ability to accomplish what he has promised, we cannot rest perfectly satisfied that we shall ever realize its fulfillment. But the hope of the saints is like an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, entering into that within the vail whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. — Heb. vi. 19, 20. Even the

promises of God, who cannot lie, when made to the carnal Israelites under the covenant of works, being conditional, did not afford comfort, because the fulfilllment of the promise was on condition of their faithful performance of the precepts. But the New Covenant contains better promises; for it abounds in the **wills** and **shalls** of the immutable God, who cannot lie. The promise of eternal life is not only made certain by the impossibility that God should lie, but by two immutable things, in both of which it is impossible that God should lie; and he has even condescended to confirm it by his oath, and this gracious condescension was to give us strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope thus set before us. And the perfect security of the saints God has provided for, and given to them a Surety of this better covenant, who stands engaged to save them unto the uttermost who come unto God by him, seeing that he ever liveth to make intercession for them, and holds his priesthood, not by the law of a carnal commandment, but by the power of an endless life. He says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Of them he says, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." — John x. 28. "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." — Rom. vii. 23.

These precious promises of God to the saints in Christ Jesus are not yea and nay. "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God by us." — 2 Cor. i. 20. All the promises of God to the church are in Christ Jesus; none of them can be found out of him; and as he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, they were in him before the world began. There was no need that any new promises should be made; for God, who cannot lie, who made them, has "declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." — Isaish xlvi. 10. And Jesus assures us that it is the Father's good pleasure to give to his "little flock" the kingdom. — from Luke xii. 32. "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." — John vi. 38-40.

The antiquity of the promise of eternal life which gave hope to the apostle and to all the heirs of the promise, is worthy of grateful consideration. The highest aspiration of human thought cannot transcend or reach beyond the transient limitation of time; "for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." Eternal things are only known by those who have eternal life; and they are made known to those who have this eternal life in Christ by revelation of the Spirit to their faith. So the promise of eternal life by God, that cannot lie, before the world began, is free from all the mutations of time. No event of time can change or in any wise invalidate it. Our God, in whose promise we have "everlasting consolation and good hope through grace," is not only a God who cannot lie, but he is also a God who cannot change. We do not mean to imply any limitation of power with him, but it is not in his nature to either vary from his purpose or from his truth. From his imperial throne in heaven he has proclaimed his immutability, saying, "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." — Malachi iii. 6. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." — James i. 17.

"He will not his great self deny;
A God all truth can never lie:
As well might he his being quit,
As break his oath, or word forget.

"Let frighten'd rivers change their course,
Or backward hasten to their source;
Swift through the air let rocks be hurl'd
And mountains like the chaff be whirl'd;

'Let suns and stars forget to rise,
Or quit their stations in the skies;
Let heaven and earth both pass away,
Eternal truth shall ne'er decay.

"True to his word, God gave his Son
To die for crimes which men had done:
Blest pledge! he never will revoke
A single promise he has spoke."

Eternal life. What is it? A time life was given to the seed of Adam when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul; but that life was not eternal. It had a beginning, and it has an end. Before sin had entered the world, or man had fallen, that life was staked upon the condition of man's obedience to God, and its termination limited to the day of man's transgression. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." —Gen.ii. 17. If the life with which Adam was inspired was not the life of all his numerous seed, the offense of this one man could not have involved them in death; but we are informed in the scriptures that "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." — Rom. v. 12. How could it have been otherwise? All men, as the seed of Adam, were in him undeveloped when he sinned. Not in him merely, as distinct from him, but as parts of this one man into whose nostrils God had breathed the breath of life. As the woman that was taken out of the man, was subsequently to her formation as well as antecedently, bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, so are and were all who were created in and have descended from him. We need not argue this point; it is conclusively settled by the express declaration of God, who cannot lie, through the inspired apostle, "By one man's offense death reigned by one." "Therefore, as by one man's offense judgement came upon all men to condemnation." "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners." —Rom.v. 17-19. Thus we see the seed of Adam was a corruptible seed, for it became corrupted by sin, which could not have been if it were incorruptible; as it is corruptible, so it is mortal, and consequently not eternal. But of this corruptible seed, of which all mankind are born when born of the flesh, all the elect family of God are born into this world, in their time state, and in this earthly nature all have sinned; consequently God's people, being partakers of the same flesh and blood, are involved in mortality and death, for they are and were by nature children of wrath, even as others. But this corruption which has passed upon all that are born of the flesh, cannot extend to that life which is born of the Spirit, or of an incorruptible seed. It is only then in our earthly nature, as the seed of the earthly Adam, that we are sinners, or mortal. Our conception and birth are not the cause of our relation to Adam, nor of our complication with his transgression and death; but the life which we had in Adam, as his seed, is cause of our conception and birth. The birth is not the origin or cause of either natural or spiritual life; it is only the manifestation of the life which caused the birth, for life always precedes birth.

Now as "Adam is the figure of him that was to come," (Rom. v. 14,) so we are assured that the eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began, was given us in the Son of God, who is the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, who is the progentive Head of the "chosen generation, royal priesthood and holy nation." As the only begotten of the Father, Christ is the Life of all who are or shall be, born of God. "Now unto Abraham and his seed were the promises made." ("And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.") "He saith not, And to seeds, as many; but as of

one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." —Gal. iii. 16, 29. This eternal life, begotten of the Father in the Sonship of Christ, is through him, as the second Adam, in the fulfillment of the promise of God, that cannot lie, made manifest in all the seed of Abraham, in due time, by their spiritual birth. In him, as the corn of wheat that was required to fall into the earth and die, (John xii. 24,) and in him alone, "Who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality" or eternal life. — 2 Tim. vi. 15, 16. This immortality or eternal life, begotten of God the Father, and securely treasured up in his only begotten Son, is the eternal life which God promised before the world began, and gave us, according to the record of the Three that bear record in heaven, "the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost." "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." — 1 John v. 11. Strictly speaking, a life to be eternal must be without beginning as well as without ending; and such a life could only emanate from God the Father, and descend on us through Jesus Christ his Son. And as he only hath immortality, we can only have eternal life as we have him. "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that not the Son of God hath not (this) eternal life." He is our Life, and when he shall appear, then shall all those who have life in him also appear with him in glory. As Christ is the only begotten of the Father, how could any of us stand in this vital relation to God, as our Father, if he were not our Life? In him, as our Life, we were, if indeed we are the sons and heirs of God, begotten; and in his life alone is our eternal life, in his Sonship is our sonship, and this makes us heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. One, in this relation, with him, even as he is one with the Father. Our spiritual, eternal life is in him, and with him hid in God. He is in his children as his Father is in him; and the church is in him as he is in the Father. "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou hast given me (he was raised from the dead by the glory or immortality of the Father, Rom. vi.) I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." — John xvii. 21-23.

In hope. Hope implies desire and expectation, or the anticipation of that for which we hope. This is illustrated by the apostle in Romans viii: "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him." — 1 John iii. 2. The creature, which is now held in the bondage of corruption, is inspired with hope by the promise; for the same is subjected in hope of a glorious resurrection from the dead, and conformity to the risen and glorified body of Christ when he shall appear; for then shall he deliver us from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, by changing our vile body, and fashioning it like his own glorious body.

Our bodies are now quickened only by the creature life which was given us in the earthly Adam; but when it shall be quickened by the Spirit that raised Christ from the dead, it shall put on immortality, and mortality shall then be swallowed up of life, and this shall be accomplished by the Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead, and which dwells in us, who have received the earnest of it; for it now dwells in us, bearing witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. For we who have in the new birth received the first fruits or earnest of the Spirit, do groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

"For we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Paul's hope evidently embraced the resurrection of the dead; and of the hope of the resurrection of the dead he was called in question. — Acts xxii. 6. Unto this lively hope of the resurrection, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath begotten us, (all his chosen people) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; and it assures the saints of the inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, which is reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." — 1 Peter i. 3-5.

"This glorious hope revives
Our courage by the way;
While each in expectation lives,
And longs to see the day.

"From sorrow, toil, and pain,
And sin we shall be free;
And perfect love and friendship reign
Through all eternity."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe February 15, 1877.)

OBITUARIES

STELLA E. WALKER

Sister Stella E. Walker departed this life on March 29th, 1963, at the hospital in Margaretville, New York, where she had been a patient for nine days.

She was born June 30th, 1880, daughter of Orrin and Melissa (Craft) Slauson, who resided in the town of Roxbury, New York. On December 25th, 1902, she was married to John Walker at Vega, New York. Surviving are her husband, one daughter, Mrs. John Shultis (Mildred) of Denver, New York, three grandchildren, fourteen great-grandchildren, one sister, Mrs. James E. Peet (Blanche), of Miami, Florida, one niece and three nephews.

Sister Stella united with the First Church of Roxbury at Vega, New York, on October 10th, 1909 and was baptized by her uncle, Elder J. B. Slauson. She was a faithful and devoted member of that church for over fifty-three years. She had a kind and affectionate disposition, which, combined with her fervent love of her brethren, rendered her dearly beloved by her church and friends. She showed by her walk and conversation that she "had been with Jesus." She loved to entertain her kindred in Christ as long as she was able. She was very afflicted for several years, but was cared for most tenderly by her dear husband, who even took her to meeting, with great difficulty, and to visit her friends whenever possible.

The writer, in his early ministry, was her pastor for nearly thirteen years, and Sister Walker and other precious brethren and friends were a tower of strength to him.

The funeral services were conducted at the Halcottville meetinghouse by Elder W. D. Griffin and interment was in Kelly Corners Cemetery.

G. R.

Elder Ruston requested that I add anything to the above that I thought was pertinent. Suffice it is for me to say that all he has said concerning our sister has been well said. That she was held in high esteem by her friends and neighbors was shown by the large crowd in attendance at her funeral.

Text used on this occasion will be found in the writing of that suffering patriarch, Job 14:14,15. But few humans have suffered more in body than she; certainly it was her food and drink to talk of the same God that Job trusted in.

W. D. G.

MIRANDA DILLON SAWYER

In as much as it has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove form our midst our beloved sister, Miranda Dillon Sawyer, and at the request of her bereaved family, and as ordered by Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church, I attempt to write an obituary in memory of her.

Born in Carteret County, North Carolina, four score and three years ago, she was called away from her earthly existence 11 December 1962. Her parents were William and Cornelia Dillon and she was the widow of Joseph M. Sawyer. She leaves to mourn her passing and to miss her more than we can express in words, three daughters, Mrs. Walter Kaviel of Atlanta, Mrs. C. R. Branch of Richmond, and Mrs. Ralph Reedy of Rome, N. Y.; one sister, Mrs. Venetia Hollowell, Scranton, N. C.; three brothers, Ernest Dillon, Howard Dillon of Scranton and Jesse Dillon of Dundalk, Md.; five grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

She united with the church at Beulah, in Hyde County, Tuesday after the 4th Sunday in May, 1912, and moved her membership to Norfolk, Va. church 16 May 1948, making her life in the church more than fifty years. As we think of her long life in the church and on earth, we are comforted at the evidence of hope given her by God in his commandment,

"Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long upon the earth that the Lord thy God giveth thee." Surely as we remember the beauty on her countenance as she sat and listened to the gospel being preached, we can have no doubt but that her hope was anchored in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that it was indeed an anchor to her soul both sure and stedfast.

Truly, a mother in Israel is fallen in the flesh but we cannot help but know that as her soul and body parted her soul must have heard the voice of her Saviour saying; "Come unto me who labor and are heavily laden and I will give you rest."

The helping hand and wonderful words of encouragement that she gave the writer and others, was not done seeking self glory, but to us is real evidence that God had touched her life in the person of His Son and ordained unto perfection the sanctuary of her soul in the paradise of God. Certainly we will miss her, but we so strongly feel that our loss is her eternal gain, and that even now her soul doth rest in the paradise of God to await the glorious day of the resurrection of the dead, when her soul will be reunited with her glorified body and will be taken by Jesus to his Father's home, where she will forever bask in the sunlight of God's love in the wonderful celestial city whose builder and maker is God, eternal in the heavens.

Written by one who loved her in hope,
Elder A. P. Mewbern

JOHN BERL WARREN

Brother John Warren was born in Orange County October 27, 1887, departed this life June 9, 1963. He was married to the late Fannie Ward; unto this union there were no children. He is survived by one brother Robert Warren, and four sisters, Sister Nannie Baker, Mary Capps, Emma Horne and Liza Byrd, and a host of other relatives and friends.

He professed a hope in Jesus Christ and united with Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church June, 1955, and was baptised by his pastor, Elder W. C. King. He was loyal and faithful to attend his meetings as long as his health permitted.

Brother Warren was blessed to walk softly and humbly before his brethren and fellow men. It has pleased our heavenly father to call him home to glory, where there will be no breaking up of congregations, no sorrows, trials, troubles, and afflictions but there will be joy and peace forever.

His funeral was conducted by Elder W. C. King assisted by the writer, and he was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

May Bush Arbor Church and all those that mourn his passing be blessed to feel that their loss is his eternal gain.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to the family, one to the **Signs of the Times** and one kept for church records.

Written by the request of the church.

Wallis A. Smith

SARAH (SALLIE) JANE SMITH

Through the workings of God's providence he has called Sister Sarah Jane Smith home. She was born December 9, 1887, to William Francis and Minerva Carpenter Johnson in Putnam County, W. Va. She passed away at her home in Charleston July 26, 1963.

She had been a member of Harmony Primitive Baptist Church of Huntington, W. Va., since August 11, 1951, and was a firm believer in salvation by grace and grace alone through the merits of Jusus Christ; and the resurrection of the body. She manifested a love for her church and its members, and filled her seat whenever possible. She was steadfast, unmovable always abounding in the work of the Lord; and rejoiced to hear the doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ preached. Through all her trials and tribulations in this life she was, by the grace of God, endowed with patience. Her close neighbor of many years spoke of her as having the patience of Job.

Surviving are two daughters, Mrs. Preston Crouch, of Oregon, and Mrs. Herbert Shanahan, of Florida; seven sons: Noble, Albert, Cecil and Robert, of Charleston; Opie, of Dunbar, W. Va.; Virgil, of Los Angeles, California; and John Jr., of Hurricane W. Va. Also surviving are one sister Vera Bird, of Huntington; and the following brothers: Lewis Mose Johnson, Hurricane, W. Va., Hugh C., Noel C. and Asa Forrest of Huntington. Also 31 grandchildren and 38 great grand-children.

Sister Smith had been in poor health for several years with heart trouble, and suffered a cerebral hemorrhage March 23rd, and suffered much pain until she passed away.

Her funeral was conducted as she had requested by her beloved pastor, Elder J. R. Lane, at the Mt. Moriah Church. Her body was laid to rest in the Carpenter Cemetery in Putnam County, beneath a mound of beautiful flowers. She is sadly missed by all who loved her, but we feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by her niece,
Mrs. Mildred Stanley

HORACE FREDERICK KELLY

Horace F. Kelly, of Hampstead, Maryland, was born August 25, 1873 and departed this

life January 13, 1963. He was the son of John P. and Sarah J. Kelly; and was united in marriage to Mary Ella Ports, who died March 19, 1951. One daughter survives: Mrs. Myrtle Kelly Baublitz, of Baltimore County, Maryland.

Thought not member of the church, Mr. Kelley was long an attendant of Black Rock meetings, and loved the doctrine and order of the church. His parents and a sister, Emma, were members there, being baptized by Elder F. A. Chick.

Funeral services were held at a funeral home in Hampstead by Mr. Harry G. Hagar, and Mr. Lee Powell, and his mortal remains were laid to rest beside his wife in the Black Rock Cemetery, there to await the great day of the resurrection.

J. D. W.

SISTER IDA WILLIAMS ROBERTS

Sister Roberts was born in Rockingham County, N. C., near Madison, and lived all her life here. She was the daughter of Abel and Susan Williams. She passed away August, 15, 1963, and left 4 sons; Charlie, of Reidsville; Jess, of Madison, Glenn and Jack, of Route 4 Reidsville; 3 daughters; Mrs. Myrtle Smith, Mrs. Charlie Williams, of Reidsville, and Mrs. Henry McCollum of Madison.

Sister Roberts was a member of Pleasantville Primitive Baptist more than 40 years. She loved her brethren and church friends and always attended until the last few years, when she was too frail to do so. She was a lovely and pleasant sister and was loved dearly by family and friends. She loved to have visitors come to see her and enjoyed them, especially the Baptist. She was blessed to be up some until the last and was never greatly afflicted, but being frail, grew weaker until she fell asleep. She was so sweet and patient and full of love that she was an example of a dear Child of God. We miss her and sorrow to know she is gone from our midst forever, but we want to be submissive to Him who gave her and every good gift to the Church.

Her funeral was conducted at the Pleasantville Church house by her pastor, Elder H. W. Wray, assisted by Elder D. V. Spangler; and she was laid to rest in the family plot in the Church cemetery.

Written by request of Pleasantville Church

Rachel Wray

NANNIE SUE RUDD

BE IT RESOLVED: That we, the Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church, Caswell County, N. C. this 12th day of October 1963, bow in humble submission to God who executes his judgements in righteousness.

Sister and Aunt Nannie Sue Rudd expired at a Danville hospital August 17, 1963 after one week of critical illness. Left to survive are brother Joseph Rudd, her husband; three sisters, Mrs. Polly Pulliam and Sister Jennie Blaylock, of Prospect Hill; Mrs. Elsie Cook, of Yanceyville; and one brother, Joe Tate, of Burlington.

Sister Rudd united with the church in November, 1951. She manifested her great love for the church by walking softly and meekfully, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace before the people who gave her a home and faithfully attending her meetings.

It was my pleasure to visit her on different occasions, and one of her frequent expressions was, "God has been good to me."

I feel that the Lord who raised the immaculate Lamb of God from the dead, has called the spirit of this bleating lamb home and her body to await the second coming of Jesus to resurrect this body like unto his own glorious body to be like him be satisfied.

Indeed she could truthfully be called a helpmeet for her campanion, administering in every conceiveable way in making his life confortable and happy with devoted affection.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder W. C. King, assisted by Elder Harvey Smith, at Caswell Funeral Home. Her body was deposited at Prospect Methodist Church, Caswell county, under a beautiful mound of flowers.

May God's richest blessings rest with her dear companion and with all that mourn. May He pour in the oil of healing like the precious ointment upon the head of Aaron that ran down upon his beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments, as the dew of Hermon and of Zion, for there the Lord commanded the blessing life evermore.

That one copy be spread on the church records, one copy be sent to the deceased husband and one copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

This obituary written by one who loved and esteemed her for Christ's sake.

Done by order of the church.

Donald E. Smith
W. C. King, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 132 DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1964 NO. 1

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1/64
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

LOVE

Love is something like a wheel,
It has no vivid end.
Love is something you can feel
When you are parting with a friend.

Love waits for the weary traveler,
And the sailor home from sea,
And the scarred and wounded soldier
Back to home and family.

Love can make the world be better,
Love can conquer every foe.
Love can loose us from the fetter
Binding us to sin and woe.

Love can help us to forget
Unkind words that oft are spoken.
Helps us to remember yet
Some dear one whose heart is broken.

Love will help us trust each other —
It will help us understand.
Love can bind us to a brother
When he's on some distant land.

Love can lift us when we're falling
Into pitfalls by the way;
It will answer when we're calling
For His help from day to day.

It is like the bud of Gilead
With it's precious healing balm:
By it's essence we are fed
And we find a peaceful calm.

Love can smooth out the wrinkle
On a face that's worn with care.
Like the heavenly stars that twinkle
It will shine for us up there.

So at night when you are kneeling
By your bedside there in prayer —
When in sin the world is reeling,
We must ask God's loving care.

Mrs. Evelyn Walker
Greensboro, N. C.

Leesburg, Virginia
December 25, 1943

Mrs. J. H. Grooch,

Dear Sister in Christ:

As the present year draws near its end, I take this way to assure you of our continued love and fellowship for you in the Kingdom of God.

We have not sent any cards this year, nor last, because the usual greetings on commercial cards seem so trite and superficial that we do not feel to use them.

Further, this seems no right time for those who hope they are God's people, to be conformed to the fads and fashions of this present evil world now under God's righteous chastening. So far as in us lies, we desire to walk apart; not in any self-righteous spirit as feeling ourselves to be better than other men, but as endeavoring to honor God with a becoming walk insofar as He enables us so to do.

For some time past, I have been impressed with the error of many theories and practises which I used to fall in with, without giving them much examination or consideration. My experience is that as I grow older, I see much in my own life and teaching that needs rectifying in the light of His World. I am humbled more and more by a recognition of my many shortcomings in every way, and my conscious need of His forgiveness and mercy deepens with me constantly.

I trust you are well, not only in body and in mind, but much more in your soul-life as before God. The soul is more than the body, though we emphasize all too much our temporal and

earthly needs to the exclusion of that which is far more important: the well-being of our inner and spiritual nature.

You may rest assured that, so far as I can see, there is no abatement of our love and fellowship for you in the Truth. Indeed, though you may hear from us seldom, the bond between you and us is such that it strengthens and does not diminish. The Lord be praised that it is so.

May you dwell ever under the shadow of the Almighty, and may you realize to your comfort that you are vitally joined with the Christ in glory, as your living Head. As Abigail said to David: "Thou art in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God." May it indeed be truly so with you. As the war-torn world crashes to ruins around us, may you find abiding rest in the Love of your Redeemer.

With sincere love to you from both Mrs. Lefferts and me, I hope that I am truly,

Your brother,
H. H. Lefferts

(Those who knew Sister Gooch and Elder Lefferts will be interested in the above letter of twenty years ago. — J. D. W.)

EXPERIENCE

117 Orchid Street,
Collinsville, Va.

Dear Brother Spangler:

For several days I have been impressed to write my experience before I go to the hospital for a serious operation.

When I was four years old, I was lying in bed crying: and the housetop opened and Jesus came down to me, and said, "You have a rough road ahead and lots of suffering. I am going to show you what it is all for." He led the way, and as he would raise his foot it would leave a white stone for me to go upon. I was carried to heaven, and showed that I was there.

When I was six years old, my mother carried several of us up to be saved at the Methodist church. While the preacher was calling himself saving them, a voice spoke to me, and said, "Who has the power to save but God alone?" I was drawn back to my seat, but do not realize how I got there.

The next week the weather was very cold, and I was out playing with the other children, when the same voice spoke to me, and said, "You shall pray for your soul's salvation." I was made to leave the children and go lie flat on my face under a white pine tree and pray; and I knew nothing of this world for awhile . . . I felt a few happy hours, then was back in a dark and desert place; yet kept trying in my weak way and manner to beg God to have mercy on me a wretched sinner, for I felt that if I died, hell would be my doom.

When I was eight years old, I prayed for three days for God to save my soul, and not let me die and go to hell. I couldn't get low enough, and crawled under the bed and tried to beg for mercy, not justice. As I came out from under the bed and went through daddy's room, the clock struck four o'clock; and I thought that would be the last time I would ever hear the clock. I went to a deep hollow and fell upon my face and begged God to forgive me of my many sins, and save my soul. I prayed until I knew nothing of this world, and when I came to myself, I was half way to the house, and the sun was shinning bright; and I was praising God as loud as I could.

I rejoiced much that day; and that night, for the first time in several nights, I went to sleep, and hope I can say of a truth that it was the sweetest night I had ever spent. The Lord showed me joining the Primitive Baptist Church at Bassett, Virginia; and at the appointed time I asked for a home there, and was received. I was then fourteen years old; and I love the Old Baptists better every day I live. When at the throne of grace, remember this

poor little sinner — the least if one at all.

A little sister in hope,
Gladys Wray

"IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD, AND THE WORD WAS WITH GOD, AND THE WORD WAS GOD"
ST. JOHN 1:1

Dear Editors of the Signs of Times:

This Scripture has been on my mind for a time and, if the Lord gives me the ability to bring forth something of interest to those who read your good publication, then so it will be. If left to my own poor mind, nothing good can possibly be advanced.

First, we must get away from the worldly or natural meaning of the very common word, "word," and see that it pertains to the spiritual world and is synonymous with God himself — in fact this "WORD" John said, "was God." Too, the WORD spoken of includes the plural for we find in all instances where God spoke many words to various ones in olden days and Jesus did likewise in the latter times. The Sermon on the Mount, seems to be the longest continuous discourse of words of record in the Scriptures.

Second, we must be apt in separating the use of the word of men throughout the Scriptures from those instances where it pertains to the Diety. One instance is found in Deuteronomy 30th Chapter. Moses was speaking (Verse 8) of the commandments and the voice of the Lord, and also commanding with his own words, that the people follow the Lord's commandments. Man's words are stated many hundreds of times in the Bible.

Third, if we accept the full meaning of "AND THE WORD WAS GOD," then we have to believe that in His WORD HE is transmitting himself — His Spirit, His Power, His Mercies, His Love; and likewise His condemnation, chastising, etc., when He wills to so speak the WORD. This pertains to the past, present and in time to yet come.

Fourth, we must also accept the fact that God did transmit or give to His Son, this power of WORD, for John says in Verse 14 of 1st Chapter, "And the WORD was made flesh and dwelt among us"; etc.

Fifth, that it was the Lord's will and pleasure to transmit to certain Prophets of olden times and to Apostles of latter times, the power of HIS WORD when they so spoke; and the miracles were done. In I Kings 18:36 Elijah said ". . . and that I have done all these things at thy WORD." Then followed the miracle of fire coming down from heaven after Elijah asked the Lord to hear him. Acts 8:6 says "And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Phillip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles he did." In Romans 15:18 and 19, Paul tells that it was through the power of the Spirit of God, that mighty signs and wonders were wrought by him. Many acts of Peter and Paul reveal that God gave them the power of his WORD.

Now I have stated that God, through his WORD, sends his power and other attributes into action. This would infer that he speaks or directs his words from a place different from that at which the effect takes place. I am inclined to believe that God is everywhere — His Spirit and power reach into the depths of the water and into the bowels of the earth as well as to all parts of the etherial heavens and spaces far beyond the knowledge of man. He is Onmipresent and is with every individual, everywhere. The shaking of the earth coming from great depths below, and the great storms on and above the face of the earth are of his being and power, as the Hymnist of earlier times wrote.

"God works in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps on the Sea
And rides upon the storm."

Then, actually, He speaks his WORD when he designs, to people, His chosen ones, as if it came from very close to them, since He is everywhere. Yet there

are instances of where His voice seemes to come from Heaven, or from above and from great distance. In Daniel 4:31 it says — "While the word was in the King's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven," etc. As to whether his voice comes from great distance or originates close by our side, makes no difference in it's effect. I can witness to that by saying that His voice was heard speaking in the dark hours of night in what seemed to be dreams, and once very definately in broad daylight when it said "You are nothing — less than nothing"; and it pierced me like an electric shock. This was after I had silently boasted of my self-righteousness and works of my own, that made me become a worldly Church member and a great worker therein. I was so certain of where I stood with the Lord — then it happened. What a let-down. I quickly begged, " Lord have mercy on me, a sinner."

Since we are dealing with the power of the WORD and showing where God works thru and by it, yet it must be mentioned that He at times sent his power into action where there was no account of words being spoken, or where the effect of his power came first and his WORD later. Also he acted on at least one occasion by writing on the wall at the great feast of Belshazzar in Daniel Chapter 5. When Paul was struck down on the road to Damascus, the great light shone about him first and and then the spoken words "— why persecutest thou me," etc.

We find that God's WORD when spoken to an individual, or to a number of people, or through a chosen one to speak in his behalf, contains the same power in every instance. We find he spoke his power into action before man was created, for in Genesis 1:3 we find, "And God said, let there be light and there was light."

David well knew that God's WORD contained his very being and power, for in Psalms 33:6, he wrote, "By the WORD of the Lord were the heavens made," etc. In 33:9, it says, "For He spake and it was done, He commanded and it stood fast." Further referring to the Lord's words. David in 12th Psalm, 6th Verse says, "The WORD of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times." Isaiah in 55:11 says, "So shall my WORD be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return to me void." etc. We can see that there was much more than words going out of God's mouth, and that it was God himself — his power and very being — going out, — He would not so use himself if it would accomplish nothing. Mere words never return to the person speaking them, — they are without any substance, form or being, just a sound. Man speaks, commands, and the thing may or may not be done, depending upon if he speaks with due authority behind him or backed by a weapon or means of inflicting death or distress to the one spoken to. How different then is the WORD that God speaks. His words are as much higher than man's as the heavens are above the earth. There is positively no comparison. He chose this means of dealing with man because He has been from the beginning, is now, and will always be in time to come, INVISIBLE. St. John in 1:18 said, "No man hath seen God at any time." How thankful are his chosen ones that He is Omnipotent, Omnipresent, and his WORD is immutable.

A few references to the New Testament wherein is shown more of the wonderful power of His WORD. St. John 1:14 says, "And the WORD was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth." Therein was the WORD changed from the Spiritual existance to the flesh or natural man, to dwell therein while Jesus was on earth. In Matthew 8:18, we see that the Centurian knew Jesus needed only to speak the WORD to cause the healing of his servant some distance away. Peter knew thereof for in St. John 6:68, he said ". . . Thou hast the words of eternal life." This follows Jesus's words in

Verse 63, " — The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Further in St. John 12:43, we hear Jesus speaking three words, definitely containing the power of God, when He said, "Lazarus come forth"; and raised Lazarus from the dead to life again. This shows that He spoke exactly in this instance, what he meant in verse 63 of chapter 6: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." To me, it means that his words could bring forth again a natural life as well as to bring eternal spiritual life.

Paul says much about the WORD being associated with or containing the power of God. In Thessalonians 1:5, he says, "For our gospel (they preached Christ and him crucified, and Christ being the WORD, they preached God and His WORD) came not unto you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost." 1st John 1:1 is almost identical with the declaration of St. John 1:1 — "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the WORD of life." He also wrote in next verse about "that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us." Thus we see he says Christ was the WORD of life and "that eternal life" which was with the Father, etc.

Turning back to St. John 1:14 — "And the WORD was made flesh and dwelt among us." etc., let us examine St. Luke 1st Chapter and note God's dealing with Zacharias by sending an Angel to bring his WORD to him about the aged and barren Elizabeth bearing him a son that was to be "great in the sight of the Lord and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his Mother's womb." After this Angel Gabriel further spoke to Zecharias, saying "I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of the Lord and am sent to speak unto thee and to shew thee these glad tidings." We find that after the Angel Gabriel finished his mission by making Zacharias dumb through the power of God, through the WORD he spoke, and Zacharias in due time returned home, it is shown, "And after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived," etc. This would lead us to believe there was a short lapse of time before the conception occurred.

Then we find immediately following this record of the miraculous power and dealings of the Lord, Luke tells of the same Angel Gabriel being sent to the Virgin Mary, and after informing her of the Lord's will, Mary marvelled and said, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man." Notice that the Angel Gabriel said, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee and shall overshadow thee," etc. Notice how Mary's last words to the Angel were those of complete submission to the Lord's will by saying, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy WORD."

I have referred to these two incidents quite at length, to bring out the difference between them. If I am led to see it right, Mary's conception actually took place while the Angel spoke God's WORD and power to her for she said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord" which could only mean that she had been changed from an espoused Virgin to that of a servant of the Lord through and by the conception by the Holy Ghost. As mentioned, Elizabeth's conception is shown to have occurred at a time after the Angel departed. Nothing is recorded as to a later time of conception of Mary, and this causes me to believe as I have just stated. It was a most miraculous act of Almighty God, fulfiling the prophecies of olden times as to the Virgin's conception by the Holy Ghost whereby a Son would be born, being born of the flesh and a Son of man, yet the Son of God through the conception by the Holy Ghost. "And the WORD was made flesh," sayeth St. John; and here it was so clearly told of by St. Luke who related of the very similiar conception by man's action, ordered by God, who was to fill the

child with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.

It is worthy of notice and mention, how Mary's words of salutation (Verses 39-45) when she arrived in the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elizabeth, caused the babe in Elizabeth's womb to leap. Since the Angel Gabriel told Mary that "The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee"; and since this means God's power would be over her and in effect in her because of her being with child of the Holy Ghost, I am led to believe her salutation was directly that of God's WORD and power, and since the babe in Elizabeth's womb was filled with the Holy Ghost, those words of salutation being of the Spirit, pierced the babe and caused it to act not unlike others of God's little ones when His WORD, and power, is directed to them unexpectedly and suddenly. Witness the actions of St. John in Revelation 1:17: "And when I saw him I fell at his feet, as dead." Other such incidents are to be found in the Scriptures.

I have, in my very limited way, only touched on this most wonderful and inspiring text. To go further would undoubtedly lead into repetitions on my part. Concluding, I will say I hope what I have set forth will be of some interest and benefit to those to whom the WORD has come. I ask that you remember this unworthy one when at the throne of Grace.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Wm. O. Hall,
P. O. Box 595,
Mount Vernon, Washington.

LOVES THE SHALLS AND WILLS

Rt. 4, Box 204,
Kinston, N. C.

Signs of the Times,
Danville, Virginia.

Dear Brethren:

I see that my subscription has expired, so am sending check to renew another year. I would surely not want to miss a single copy, for I like to read all the articles in them so much. I save the papers and read them again from time to time, and always find good food for the needy such as I am.

I read the sermon of Elder W. C. King at the Pigg River Association in 1960, and it was rich to me. I love the good Lord's shalls and wills. We are told that the Lord's people shall be a willing people in the day of his power, and, if not deceived, I believe that with all my heart and soul. I believe I have experienced it to some extent, and I long to know more about it all. I was in such a place and in a great deal of trouble, and I begged the Lord, if it was his will, to show me the right church to go to. There was only one that I loved above all others, and I thought those good people would not take me, as vile and sinful as I was. Others preached just join the church, be baptized and you would be alright. I went to join them one time, but just couldn't. I didn't believe what they preached, so I went on four or five years longer.

Will close by asking an interest in your prayers when at the throne of grace.

A poor, needy sinner,
Mrs. Lena Smith

SPECIAL REQUEST

It is apparent to us that the Notices of Meetings, which are carried in each January issue of the Signs, are in need of being brought up to date. Will the Clerk or Pastor of any church whose notice needs revising, please inform us of such changes so that we may make the corrections when they are next published.

These should be addressed to us at P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va., as should all obituaries and notices of meetings and associations. This will save us considerable time and postage.

— J. D. W.

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BEGINNING OF A NEW VOLUME

This is the beginning of a new volume of the Signs of the Times — the 132nd; and we enter upon the labors in connection with its publication with the solemn realization that the Lord alone can sustain us in the future as He has in the past. We are confident that as long as He has a use for the Signs among his people, He will cause it to go forth laden with those things which are edifying and comforting to his little ones, and to His praise, honor and glory.

The loyal support of the brethren and friends during the past years is greatly appreciated; and at the same time we are acutely aware that it is the Lord alone who gives the love and desire for the doctrine which is upheld and preserved in our columns. Unless one is delivered from his native darkness into the kingdom of God, he cannot find in his heart a love for such as we maintain. And it is for this reason that we are made to lean not upon worldly wisdom nor learned arguments to maintain the status of those principles which the brethren, (and particularly Elder Gilbert Beede), under God's direction, set their determination to hold forth both in the pulpit and in the press before a divided body, only those things delivered by the Lord and his Apostles; and to show clearly those things of men's doctrines which were being advocated, and more highly prized, than the things which had been delivered of old to the church.

The condition which prevailed at that time was in a great measure similar to that of the Jews before and at the time of the coming of Christ into the world: For the most part the Jews then held the doctrines and sayings of their rabbis of more importance and value than those things which had been delivered to them by Moses from the hand of God. The new things were then considered to be of vast importance by many who evidently knew nothing of the power of God, nor his ancient decrees.

But just as there were at the time of the coming of Jesus a few who were born of God and knew the truth, so there were those at the beginning of the 19th century who could not follow "every wind of doctrine" which was being palmed off as genuine. It was then that the Signs of the Times had its inception, and the brethren gave a statement of the principles to be maintained as being Bible doctrine, and fully approved the Black Rock Address, which Elder Beebe had a part in preparing.

It is the sincere desire of all connected with the publication of the Signs, to continue in those things, and to publish nothing that leans towards free-willism or creature ability. We believe them ourselves without reservations, and both in the pulpit and in the

press would earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. These things alone uphold the honor and glory of our God. They were taught by the Saviour and his Apostles, and give comfort and assurance to the pilgrims and strangers in the world, who know that if they are saved, it can only be by the grace of God.

So far as secular things are concerned, these are serious times. Just what the new year and beyond will bring, we do not know. As we write, a profound shock has just been felt — the assassination of the President; and a new adminstration under the former Vice President is in office. Many other things of local and national importance trouble an unsettled nation; and these are augmented by the disturbed affairs of many other nations.

We repeat that we do not know what the future holds, but perhaps unlike any other people, the Old School Baptists have a settled conviction that the true and living God is not frustrated in the least by any of these matters, for he reigns over all times and events.

The Lord is at the right hand of his Father as the Mediator; and shall remain there until his Father makes his enemies his footstool. The man of sin, the son of perdition, is having his day, and will continue until he is taken out of the way. (2 Thes. 2:3-8) "Another gospel", against which the Apostle admonished, is the popular theme of the day. A confederacy of many is in the offing, which can only bring further corruption from the simplicity that is in Christ.

Those who believe the things the Signs of the Times stand for should thank God they do. We feel impressed to say that all who profess these things should take stock, so to speak, and examine themselves whether they be in the faith — to study to show themselves approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed, as the Apostle admonished. Under the searching of the Spirit things are often brought to light which startle us. "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountains of Samaria," cried Amos against Israel in his day. It is far better to have a searching of heart; to have our reins tied, and be concerned as to our lot in the matter, and the truth of God, and peace among brethren, than it is to think we stand and feel complacent that all is well with us. A fearful, questioning, praying brother or sister answers well the admonition of Peter: "But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." One who has a seared conscience cannot realize a fault in himself and becomes egotistical; but one made tender under the Spirit, is an humble confessor and forgiver of trespasses.

We need the continued support of brethren and friends both in writing for publication and in renewals and new subscriptions. Some prefer articles in which scriptures are expounded, and some like the experiences of the brethren; and we desire to publish both with a variety which makes our readers anxious for the next issue to arrive.

We appreciate the personal correspondence of brethren and friends. They often give encouragement in a sometimes arduous task. Our regret is that we cannot always give a ready reply due to the lack of time and energy, but we hope to continue to receive your letters, for they are much appreciated.

In a subsequent issue we expect to publish the Introductory Preface by Elder Beebe, to the first volume of The Editorials of the Signs of the Times, which we feel will be both interesting and instructive; and presents the faith and doctrine we believe and advocate.

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." (Jude 24 and 25)

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

CHARITY IS THE GREATEST

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." (1st Corinthians 13:13)

Paul used the entire 13th chapter of his first letter to the church at Corinth in emphasizing that charity had pre-eminence over every other gift of the spirit. We may have all faith; we may speak with angel's tongues; we may sacrifice everything we have; we may even give our bodies to be burned at the stake; — yet, if we have not charity; — it all will be unprofitable to us. We may earnestly covet the best gifts yet there is a more excellent way. Thomas Kempis sums up the thoughts on the subject of GIFTS as follows: "He who loves with purity considers not the GIFT of the lover, but the LOVE of the giver." Sometimes we become so interested in the gifts that we forget the giver and the love that motivated it.

Charity is the greatest because it makes us like God to the extent that it exercises us in a godly way. It is the most honorable because faith and hope cannot make us like God; whereas John says, "God is LOVE; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God" (1 John 4:16) John makes this statement in his treatise on TRYING THE SPIRITS. He says in the 7th and 8th verses of the 4th chapter, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God, and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for GOD IS LOVE." Paul tells us that we may have the gift of prophecy, the understanding of all mysteries and all knowledge, have all faith so that we could remove mountains, and HAVE NOT CHARITY: Even though we have all these, WE ARE NOTHING. All the gifts of God cannot make us like God, but when God gives Himself to us — which is LOVE — we are like Him. Therefore, we maintain that charity is the most honorable and God-like.

Charity is the greatest in duration. Faith and hope can only accompany us to the end of time. Charity will accompany us in eternity. Faith and hope step aside when reality is experienced. Faith and hope are necessary companions in reaching a goal but is un-necessary when the goal is reached. I think of Faith, Hope, and Charity as the three sisters from Heaven who abide with us while here below. Faith and Hope are essential to us to hold up our hands and to strengthen our feeble knees while trodding through this world of confusion, doubts and fears. They will assist us in trouble and will go with us through great tribulations and persecutions along with the greatest sister, Charity. Charity will abide eternally even after the stormy winds of this earthly life have subsided. Faith and Hope are with us until death. Charity will enter Heaven with us. Therefore, we insist that Charity is greatest in perpetuity.

Charity is more noble than faith and hope because faith and hope takes, but love gives. Faith and hope are personal gifts to us while love inspires us to give to others. Faith and hope are within the limits of our own personal selves as gifts to us, while love causes us to give ourselves to others. We read the words of the Lord Jesus as recorded in Acts 20:35, "It is more blessed to GIVE than to RECEIVE." The blessings of faith and hope which are received by us are great blessings but the blessing of love which causes us to give, is the greater blessing. Faith teaches us that good things are prepared; Hope enables us to feel that these good things are prepared for us; Love causes us to endeavor to walk worthy of them. Faith and hope enables us to believe God's promises are true, and are ours, and we patiently wait for them; whereas love brings forth the testimony by our actions of this faith and hope. Faith enables us to believe with all our hearts; Hope causes us to wait patiently with all our souls for the gifts and promises included in our faith; and Charity affects not only our hearts and souls but also commands all our strength in prais-

ing God and doing good to all men, especially unto the household of faith. A true faith begets a constant hope; and from hope and faith proceeds charity. Faith apprehends both reward and punishment; Hope looks to good things for ourselves; and, Love desires the glory of God and the good of all brethren. Faith is relief for ourselves, but charity is relief for our brethren. We can have faith yet be selfish; but if we have charity it is impossible to be selfish. Faith does not fulfill the law yet charity does fulfill it. Thus, we are convinced that charity is the greatest in nobility.

Charity is the greatest in titles because it is called the bond of perfectness. We quote Colossians 3:14: "And above all these things put on charity, WHICH IS THE BOND OF PERFECTNESS." We find in Romans 13:10 that LOVE IS THE FULFILLING OF THE LAW. Love is the NEW COMMANDMENT as entitled by Jesus when He said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." John 13:34. Jesus called it the great commandment as well as the first commandment, "Thou shalt LOVE the Lord thy God with ALL THY HEART, and WITH ALL THY SOUL, and WITH ALL THY MIND. This is the FIRST AND GREAT COMMANDMENT and the second is like unto it, THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF. On these two commandments hang ALL THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS. Love is great enough to hold up all the law and the prophets. LOVE is the one word used as a title for God as we have before quoted, GOD IS LOVE. Neither faith nor hope can be called such wonderful titles as, The First Commandment, The Great Commandment, The Bond of Perfectness, nor The Fulfillment of the Law. So, we sincerely believe charity to excel in titles.

Charity is greatest in our experiences. God is NEAR us when we call upon Him; He is CLOSE BY when we suffer with Christ; yet He is WITHIN us who love God and the brethren. Charity is greater in manifestation for charity is not without visible fruits while faith and hope remain unseen. We must have LOVE to be true Christians, whereas faith keeps us from being reprobates and hope keeps us from being wretched. Charity gives itself rich, for the more we give of ourselves and of our possessions the richer we are in the peaceful experiences of happy souls. Let me here quote a German Proverb, "Charity gives itself rich; covetousness hoards itself poor." Charity will not allow you to hoard the riches of the gifts of the spirit nor the riches of earthly possessions to our own selfish interests, for our joys will be experienced in giving rather than receiving. Some of us may feel that we are charitable and are proving it when we remember those less fortunate **only** in our wills. If we wait until death to do our charities, will we not be more liberal with the other man's goods than with our own? Because when we die it will no longer belong to us but will belong to our heirs. Every good act is charity when accompanied by good thoughts. A little thought and a little kindness are often worth much more to us and to others than a great deal of money. To give alms is nothing unless we give thoughts also. Mulock says, "When faith and hope fail, as they do sometimes, we must try charity, which is LOVE IN ACTION. We must speculate no more on our duty, but simply do it. When we have done it, however blindly, perhaps Heaven will show us why."

Love is the greatest pleasure experienced in life. It is a heavenly paradise in the heart and soul that is filled with love. When love comes into the heart it does to hate the same that light does to darkness; — drives it out and causes the possessor of the heart to feel swept and garnished of all things ungodly. Love brightens, warms, and fills the heart with virtue and purity which pacifies the soul. It makes obedience to God's commands lighter than liberty

from them. Love causes us to rejoice more in attempting to do the will of the Father than in trying to pray that we be relieved from acts of obedience. Love affords us more happiness in giving up our peculiar ideas at the demand of our brethren than when our brethren are forced to adopt ours. Luther said, "Faith, like light, should always be simple and unbending; while LOVE, like warmth, should beam forth on every side and bend to every necessity of our brethren." When we are inspired with charity we place not our happiness in ourselves but in the happiness of others. Love is the ridding of our heart from self, which is divine purification. It causes us to enjoy higher motives and nobler aims in every action of life. The power to love with such devotion is certainly the noblest gift of God which brings so much happiness to us while we act for the benefit of others. All of our toils are sweet when our actions are graced with love. Hervey said, "Divine love is a sacred flower, which in its early bud is happiness, and in its full bloom is heaven." The peaceful calming influence of this love in our hearts is indeed heavenly for us who experience it. It surely is the golden link that binds us to God and to one another. It binds us to duty and truth. It makes duty a grand opportunity in stead of an obligation. If I could choose between more knowledge or more love, I would say now, Permit me to love more. Surely it is the sweetest experience.

"Charity suffereth long." The first characteristic and property of Charity which Paul mentions is longsuffering. We who possess it are patient in our afflictions which come by God's providence. We know that we are chastened because He loves us. We are longsuffering with the reproaches and persecutions of men, and sometimes love blinds us to them to such extent that we cannot even see them as reproaches and persecutions. God's love enables us to bear much persecution and reproach without kindling anger in our hearts to them. Even though they may try to harm us we will not do other than doing to them as we would have them do unto us. Charity inspires working, trusting, and patiently waiting even if we can see no fruits of our endeavors.

Charity is kind. The second property of charity as mentioned by Paul will enable its possessor to use the part of the Proverb that says, "A soft answer turneth away wrath." Those not in possession of it will find that "Grievous words stir up anger"; unless, these grievous words are spoken to one possessed with charity in lively exercise. Kind looks, kind acts, kind words, warm hand shakes — these are all the production of charity and mean much, especially to those who are in trouble and in the midst of fighting unseen battles. Charity will cause one to display a kind disposition to an ill-minded person. Sometimes a few words uttered with charity and meekness will do more good than ten thousand words, though they be true, spoken in a different manner. When we are given to take a glance backward it is our severity that we desire to repent of — never our tenderness. Charity makes one rather never to receive a kindness than never bestow one. Kind words, tones, gestures and looks bespeak love in the heart. The longer love reigns in the heart and soul the more tender we become toward the hard, forbearance toward the un-forbearing, warmth of heart toward the cold. Washington Irving said, "How easy it is for one benevolent being to diffuse pleasure around him, and how truly is a kind heart a fountain of gladness, making everything in its vicinity to freshen into smiles." To be charitable is to be kind.

"Charity envieth not." The third expression Paul made about charity is negatively stated. I am glad that all writers in the Bible told how things were NOT as well as what — or how — they were. Charity is not envious of another's more excellent gift, nor is another's good fortune liable to make us jealous. Another may have greater gifts, usefullness, honor and respect than we, yet, instead

of envy, our hearts are made glad. I am thankful to God when other ministers are blessed to preach more gracefully than I, because I, as well as others, receive the benefit of it. If we have **not** charity we feel pain when we hear of the good fortune of another in rising to the height that we have so desperately tried to reach but have failed, and feel joy when another is brought down to our own level. If we have charity it is the reverse. Envy will cause us to stand up and pull another down; yet charity will cause us to sit down and push another up. Envy is happy in the downfall of others only when they fall as low as we feel ourselves to be. Charity is the reverse. Abraham's riches were the Philistines' enemy and Jacob's blessings had Esau's hatred. These are examples to show that the best gifts, the fairest fruits, and the most successful people are the targets of envy. If we are beat down and our brother is highly favored, only charity can keep us from being envious. Colton said, "The envious praise only that which they can surpass; that which surpasses them they censure." If only charity would dwell in us that we may not be envious of those who surpass us.

"Charity vaunteth not itself." This is the fourth statement Paul makes about charity. Those of us who boast show that we are not inspired by charity. We may say many times, "I love you"; Does this prove it? No. If I really love I will prove it by my actions, I will not boast of this love. Is it necessary for me to be always talking about my love for people and what I have been doing for them? Is it necessary for me to boast of my love to God and to the brethren and to the doctrine in order that people recognize it? When we vaunt our own actions, though they be noble and glorious deeds in themselves, we are proving these deeds were not motivated by charity. Those of us who hasten to proclaim our good deeds are proving that we have pride instead of charity. Pride may parallel charity in feeding the poor, caring for the sick, and doing good unto all men; yet, they are in contrast in this respect: pride takes her praise and glory from man; charity gives her glory to God. It is easy to distinguish the two. Pride is the master sin of the devil that makes us want to appear charitable before men. Charity is the master gift of God which inspires praise to God in secret for this amazing grace given us through Christ Jesus.

"Charity is not puffed up." This is Paul's fifth statement concerning charity given in his definition. Swelled pride and vain conceit is the reverse of charity. Conceit puffs up but it takes charity to prop us up. To puff up a thing is to make it appear bigger than it really is. Charity cannot be puffed up, but we who exaggerate the good deeds we do deflate the virtue of them in ourselves. It is not charity that makes us want to appear to others greater than we are, but self conceit and vain glory. I seriously wonder at this moment whether or not charity is prompting the writing of this article? Could it be swelled pride? Can it be vain glory and self conceit? Is vanity so anchored in my heart that while I write against these things that I wish to have the glory of having written well? Would I be more pleased for you to tell me that I had written well upon this subject than for you to just discuss the subject with me without reference to this particular article? (Lord, if I see anything in myself which may make me proud, enable me to see a little further that I may be humbled.) Charity does not incite exaggeration.

Charity "Doth not behave itself unseemly." This is Paul's sixth characteristic of charity as stated in his definition. Charity inspires us to talk and act in a becoming manner. It does not allow indecent words or actions. It prompts our conduct, manners, and appearance to be well fitting. A calm quiet manner pervades all actions and habits when charity is in exercise. It will not allow us to conduct ourselves in such manner as to draw attention from others

by uncommon behaviour. Charity will not allow us to be boisterous in any of our dealings. I read of a preacher who once said of his pulpit efforts, "I always roar when I have nothing to say." When charity is inspiring us our hearers are giving attention to the subject matter instead of the manner of the speaker. Gilbert Burnet said, "That is NOT the best sermon which makes the hearers go away talking to one another, and praising the speaker, but WHICH MAKES THEM GO AWAY THOUGHTFUL AND SERIOUS, AND HASTENING TO BE ALONE." I had rather try to conform to the custom which prevails, if I have no conscientious objections to it, than to draw attention by the introduction of a change. Charitable behaviour will tend to disguise contempt of others, it will cause us to rather conceal our authority than to show it. It suppresses any airs of superiority. Charity says, as my mother used to say to me, "Behave yourself."

Charity "Seeketh not her own"; is the seventh characteristic given by Paul. If we could be given at all times to seek to please God and the brethren; and, to help those who are in trouble: we would have no time for self-pity or self-gain. To seek much for others, and little for ourselves; to curb our selfish, and to exercise our kind affections, constitutes the godly seeking of charity. Seek first to please God and to do good unto men; then, if there be any time left, we may use it to our own advantage. The reason for us concluding that we are in worse condition than others is because we have not searched anywhere else but our own selves. Charity will cause us to seek not our own troubles that we may lament because of them; but rather, that we seek others who are in trouble that we may help them. Instead of sorrows we will find joy in lifting others from their plight.

The eighth characteristic is that charity is not "easily provoked." You may say unbecoming things to me and about me but if I have charity I will be slow to anger. Those of us who possess charity know that to be easily irritated or vexed is a human weakness which is the reverse of charity. We know it is improper to do things which would tend to incite anger in another person. "The fire you kindle for your enemy oftens burns yourself more than him." (A Chinese Proverb) I have thought a good rule to follow when angered or provoked would be to count to one hundred before making a reply. If charity is not possessing me when angered I will abruptly react, adding fire to fire. Charity will enable me to forgive an insult but the felt-sense of the lack of it causes me to shun those who desire to provoke me to anger. I am persuaded that he who is capable of being my bitter enemy can never possess the necessary virtues to make him my true friend, unless charity should miraculously intervene. May God forbid that we be easily provoked by giving us charity.

"Thinketh no evil" is the ninth characteristic of charity. Charity works on our thinking as well as our speaking and doing. This thinking which is of charity is catalogued in Philippians 4:8: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are TRUE, whatsoever things are HONEST, whatsoever things are JUST, whatsoever things are PURE, whatsoever things are LOVELY, whatsoever things are of GOOD REPORT; if there be any VIRTUE, and if there be any PRAISE, THINK on THESE THINGS." Surely there is enough of all these things to keep us busily engaged in sweet meditation. Thinking is the talking of the soul with itself. When my soul is infused with charity my meditation is upon good things. All grand thoughts come from the heart filled with charity. If I am a great thinker I will answer other men's arguments by stating the truth as I see it instead of disputing with them. If I could just have good thoughts in my mind I would have a good life. Spurgeon said, "Good thoughts are blessed guests, and should be heartily welcomed, well fed, and much sought after. Like rose leaves, they give out a sweet smell if laid up in the

jar of memory."

"Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." This is the tenth part of the definition of charity. Rejoicing is indeed a superlative property of charity. Tears of joy will grace the face of us who rejoice in the truth as truth is proclaimed. Rejoicing of heart causes the face to beam and it gives forth a radiance that nothing else can outshine which causes us to rejoice with those who rejoice. Charitable rejoicing will mellow the harshest voice so that it will be soothing and winning. When we are given to rejoice in the truth we are also given the knowledge that truth lies in character. Jesus Christ did not just speak the truth — HE IS TRUTH, through and through; truth is a thing, not of words, but of LIFE and BEING. TRUTH shall make me FREE; if I have charity, and I shall rejoice in it.

"Charity beareth all things." This is part number eleven of the definition. May we read, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with LOVINGKINDNESS have I DRAWN thee." (Jeremiah 31:3) The strong wings of God's love bore the man, Christ Jesus to His people and His people to Him. Jesus Christ is the embodiment of LOVE. God makes the clouds His chariots but the power that conveys them to the right ones at the right time in the right circumstance, is LOVE. Charity bears the sins of us to Christ, the man; Charity embodies itself in Christ, the Lord, and bears Him to us with all the blessings which are stored in Him. Charity bears all things that would be against us to the proper channel and makes even these things serve for our good. LOVE is the strength of God to bear all things and to set them in their right order.

"Believeth ALL THINGS," is the twelfth grace of charity. Christ said, "With God ALL THINGS are possible" Charity emboldens us to believe, as it believes, that no thing is of itself but of God. We, as finite beings, see such a huge mass of evil as it rolls and swells; but when charity swells in our heart, we can see that even this is working toward deliverance and triumphal victory. Charity insures us that every hair of the head is numbered; every blade of grass is measured; every tree of the forest is watched; and, every star in the firmament wheel in minutely calculated orbits. Charity convinces us that God governs in the affairs of men. If a bird cannot fall without Him, surely a government could not be formed without Him. Charity sees as direction all that men may see as mere chance.

The thirteenth thing said about charity is, "Hopeth all things." Knowing that all things are certain, charity does not doubt them coming as they are ordained. Knowing each and every thing to be necessary; charity desires their fulfillment. The fourteenth definition is, "Endureth all things." Charity knows that God rules the world and all is well; and whatever befalls is just, right, and true; therefore endurable. This being true, all things are endurable.

The fifteenth statement made of charity is, "Charity NEVER FAILETH." Re-read the third paragraph of this article for my thoughts on the duration of charity. . . . Now, you may resume reading. Charity will not fail us in bearing us through the greatest of infirmities. There may be times that we cannot see faith and hope but we can feel charity. It causes us to cry to God, "Help thou mine unbelief"; and "Re-new my hope." Charity so softens the hard heart until it will forever have that softness. We may say, I am so hard-hearted; yet, the very realization of this condition could not be felt unless charity had softened it enough to feel. The really hard-hearted ones know nothing of their hardness and have no concern about it. Nothing but charity, which is the love of God, could keep us from sinking in despair and oblivion.

Thanks be to God **who is LOVE** that He embodied Himself in Christ Jesus to cause salvation for His chosen; and that because of this, all of us who are in that number will finally be embraced eternally in one bundle of love. Then we will

fully understand why it took the reverse of each and every virtue to bring out the glory of the love and mercy of God.

May God bless this to our comfort and edification and encouragement is my prayer for Christ's sake.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

Elder Beebe.— I have been a reader of your paper for the last few years, and am pleased with them. I would like to have your views on Rom. v. 12, 18 and 19 verses. By giving them you will oblige,

Yours, respectfully.
JOHN W. FERGUSON.

Reply. — The scriptures referred to read thus: "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all men have sinned." "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For, as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

These scriptures have often been so perverted by those who neither know nor love the truth as to perplex the minds of some of the children of God. Universalists and Arminians exultingly repeat them, as insuperable obstacles in the way of establishing the doctrine of election and sovereign grace, and scoffing skeptics and infidels use them to prove a want of harmony in the testimony of the Bible. It would seem unaccountably strange to find Paul, in these passages of his testimony, laboring to prove that what he had, in the eighth and ninth chapters of this same epistle, and in his epistle to the Ephesians, first and second chapters, positively asserted, was not true; but such would be the case, if these scriptures were justly liable to the constructions which the arminians are anxious to establish. To prove their unscriptual dogma of general provision and offered salvation, they blindly seize these passages without observing that they are as fatal to their cherished heresy as are all other portions of the word. If the words **all,** and **all men,** in these passages, are to have the universal application they are so eager to establish, they would prove quite too much for their purpose. Instead of leaving the matter of justification to be brought about by the will or works of men, it would establish the justification and salvation of all mankind quite as independently of the volition, instrumentalities and works of men, as does that doctrine of the Bible which they desire to refute. And if Universalists can satisfy their own minds, and even succeed in perplexing the minds of others in regard to the true import of these scriptures, their delusions would not change the truth, nor better their condition. It could make them neither wiser nor safer, while to those who know the truth it would give fearful evidence that these perverters of the word were among those to whom God has sent strong delusion that they may believe a lie, that they all may be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteouness.

In replying to our correspondent, who asks for our views on these passages, whether we shall clearly, truly and fully elucidate them or not, will not alter their true import and scriptural meaning; therefore our views will give no just ground of assurance or comfort to those who live in darkness and unbelief. As a safe maxim for us to adopt and observe, we should accept as true, that the scriptures being inspired by the Holy Ghost, must be in perfect harmony whether we can understand them or not. Any interpretation therefore, which conflicts with other portions of the whole volume of the divine testimony, must be wrong; and, if we can persuade ourselves to believe such interpretations, it only shows that we are permitted to believe a lie.

In the discussion of our subjects, and

in giving our views on the passages proposed, it will be necessary to observe the grand theme of our apostle in the whole connection; that he is stating and demonstrating the doctrine of the redemption, and free, full, and everlasting justification of all the people of God, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and not by the good works which are or were found in them who are justified. See chap. iii. 24. And of this justification, he says that He whom God has set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, that he, and not ourselves, is the justifier. That he, in his righteousness, as declared by the apostle, is just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus, and in such a way as to effectually exclude boasting; "not by the law of works, but by the law of faith." And summing up, he draws the conclusion, "that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law.

In illustrating this doctrine of justification by the faith of the Son of God, the apostle brings to view the two distinct headships of the natural and the spiritual creations. The one a natural, the other a spiritual man. The first of the earth earthly, and the head and embodiment of all his posterity as such; the second Adam, he says, 1 Cor. xv., is the Lord from heaven. The one was made a living soul, and the natural progenitor of all living souls as his natural descendants. The other is a "Quickening Spirit," and the life and immortality of all who are born of God. In the same chapter, which containing the passages under consideration, and inseparably connected with our subject, he says that, Adam is the figure of him that was to come; and in pointing out the analogy disparity and of the figure to that which it represents, has employed the passages on which our views are required, Observe, When the term **man** is applied to Christ, except when applied to his incarnation, it is in speaking of his Mediatorial character as the Man, Christ Jesus; the Man which is the fellow of the Lord of Hosts, and is designed to identify the Head, body, and all the members of the church of God. It is in this Mediatorial sense that he is called the "Second Adam," for in his eternal God-head, he is the Lord from heaven, in which character he can be resembled by no figure, for nothing in earth or heaven can or may be compared to him. Then as the second Adam, there are points of analogy to which the apostle calls our attention, and at the same time carefully instructing us of those points of disparity wherein the figure is not applicable.

In the creation of man, God said, "Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness." God is represented by no image but by him alone who is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person. Christ is the only image of the invisible God; and the making of Adam in "our image," was the making him the type of Christ, who is that image; and Paul, as we have seen, sets that matter at rest by declaring in our context, that he "is the image of him that was to come"; and Christ is him that was to come. Adam was not like the invisible God, in infinity, self-existence, independence, spirituality or immutability, but he was clearly a type of Christ, as the progenitive or seminal head of a progeny and the embodiment of a race, and in many other particulars which we will not now trace.

As the seminal head and progenitor of mankind, all the tribes of the earth were created in him, and were all embodied in him when he offended. He comprehended all the race of human beings which were created in him, and he was personally the whole human race, before any of his sons or daughters were developed. Thus Adam and all his born or unborn seed or members are called **man,** and are embodied in the **one man.** It was thus, as a unit, the offence of **one man** was committed by us. "Wherefore, as by one man" (embracing all his posterity), "sin entered into the world; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." This declaration was made some four thousand years

after the offence was committed, and all that had been born since this declaration was written by Paul, and all who are yet unborn, sinned. It takes them all to make this one man. They are this identical one man, by whom the offence was committed. And **so death passed** upon all men for that all **have** sinned. Those who are yet to be born **have** sinned. So death passed. When God said to Adam, he said to us in Adam, and to us **as** Adam, "Dust **thou** art, and unto dust **thou** shalt return." Death, in its irrevokable sentence then and there passed on all the kindreds of the earth. The dreadful reality **is** upon us. Our belief or disbelief cannot alter the fact. We cannot parley or argue to the contrary with death. From the decree by which death has passed on us, there is no available appeal. Passing now from the consideration of the twelfth, we come to the eighteenth and nineteenth verses:

"Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation," or death passed; for that was the judgement which came to condemnation in this case. "Even so," or **exactly** so." After this similitude, according to the true import of this figure, "by the righteousness of one," which one, he says in verse 17, is Christ. "the free gift" (not offer or sale) "came upon all men justification of life." Now, how must this be, to have the thing prefigured agree precisely with its figure? Why it seems to us more difficult to pervert than to understand, that as all the human family were in Adam, and were Adam, in committing the offence, and receiving the judgement or sentence of death, so all the spiritual family in heaven and earth were in the second, spiritual and anti-typical Adam, when he performed that righteousness of obedience by which the free gift came upon them all, unto justification of life. The grounds of relationship and identity by which Christ and his members are vitally and legally connected, are two-fold. First as their spiritual Progenitor, they have and do exist in him, as the human family existed and do still exist in the earthy Adam, and have so existed in him as long as he has held the Mediatorial office, which we understand to be from everlasting, or ever the earth was. And secondly, in his having assumed their nature and law place, by taking on him the seed of Abraham; being made flesh, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

I. As the "Second Adam," and the "Lord from heaven," his church existed in him from the Beginning, just as Adam's wife and posterity existed in him from his beginning. Hence, we read that God has blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." "For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." "Sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called." The vitality of this relationship is that eternal life which John says was with the Father, and was manifested. Jesus says, "I give unto them," (his sheep), "eternal life, and they shall never perish." This imperishable and eternal life "is the gift of God through our Lord Jesus Christ." "And this is the record that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." And his Son is eternal life. "He is the way, and the truth, and the life"; he "is the Resurrection and the Life." "He that hath the Son of God hath life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." This life is manifested by a new and spiritual birth. Christ is the spiritual progenitor of all his members, as the earthly Adam was the natural progenitor of his posterity. But no progenitor can develope life that is not in him. Our very ex-

istence in the flesh proves that God gave us natural life in the natural Adam. And our possession of spiritual life demonstrates that God gave us spiritual life in Christ before the world began. By virtue of this, we are in due time "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." As this eternal life cannot be separated from Christ, it is hid with him in God, and Christ liveth in us. Now, if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. But as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God. "A chosen generation." "A seed that shall serve him, and that shall be counted to the Lord for a generation." As in the book of the generations of Adam, God called **their name** Adam in the day when they were created. — Gen. v. 2. So, "in the book of the generation of Jesus Christ," (Matt. i. 1.) "All his members are written, which in continuance were fashioned,when as yet there were none of them." When none of them had been brought into manifestation, and when none but the omnicient eye of God could see them. — Psa. cxxxix. 15, 16. And as all the natural seed of the first Adam, constitute but the body and fullness of the man Adam; so all the seed of Christ are but the fullness of Christ's body. For "God hath given him to be the head over all things to his church, which is his body, and the fullness of him which filleth all in all." Eph. i. 22, 23.

II. As the law which Christ's members had trangressed, and from which they required to be redeemed was given them in their earthly or Adamic standing; to redeem them, required that Christ should be made flesh and dwell among them; that he should come under the same law. Hence we are informed that "He was made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law." In doing this we read, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also, himself, likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them, who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." — Heb. ii. 14. In this chapter the first Adam is referred to as the type or figure of him that was to come. We see not all things put under the earthly Adam, "But we see Jesus, who was made" (in his incarnation) "a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him for whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." Here again cavilers harp upon the words **every man,** as in our text, they play upon the words **all men.** But, every man of whom? He is here brought to view as the second Adam, representing his own chosen generation and royal priesthood; not representing all the seed of the first Adam. He is the captain of the salvation of every man that is saved by him. But there can be no captain of the salvation of such as are not saved. A captain always represents a definite company, and when he says every man, it is understood every man of his company or command; but not every man in the world. Besides, these are more clearly and unmistakably designated as being one with him, by whom they are sanctified, and his sufferings were to bring **sons,** not aliens to glory. He took part of that same flesh and blood which his children were partakers of, and to deliver them. Instead of taking on him the seed of the first Adam, "He took on him the seed of Abraham, which is comparatively a small part of the seed of Adam; but it embraces as many as the Father has given him; and he has given his word that they shall all come unto him, and he will raise them up again at the last day"; and as their captain, he will bring them all to glory. "For he took

not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham." And who are they? Not the children of the flesh; these are not the children of God. But, "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Who, then, are Christ's. As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God; and if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. Who, then, have the spirit of Christ? Only they who are born of the spirit; for, "That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit, is spirit." Well, Christ took on him the seed of Abraham, as thus defined, them that were his; his sons, his seed, his sanctified or set apart, his members, his body, over which he presides as the head in all things; those for whom he, by the grace of God, has tasted death, and whom, being made perfect through sufferings, he will bring to glory.

"Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." All being in him, all are guilty, for judgment cannot righteously pass to the condemnation of the innocent, therefore the passage of this judgment from the infallibly just and holy Judge is proof sufficient of their guilt, and the certainty that all die is positive proof that all have sinned. "Even so, by the righteousness of one," or as the margin reads, "by one righteousness, the free gift came upon all men." That is all his seed, all whom he had taken upon him; all whose iniquities were laid on him. As Adam, by the offence, plunged head and body, all his seed or members, into condemnation and death, even so Christ, identified with all his body, seed, or members which he took on him, and of whom he was the progenitor, high-priest, captain of salvation, has raised up, and through him as their living head the free gift. which is eternal life, has come, to justification of life; for, "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord even as the wages of sin is death, through our earthly head." "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners." As a unit, Adam and all his posterity, by a single offence, were made sinners, guilty and subject to the judgment of condemnation and death, so as a unit, Christ and all his posterity or seed, by his righteous obedience, were made righteous. His blood cleansed them from guilt, took away their sins; for he was delivered for their offences, and was raised or their justification.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe June 1, 1866)

OBITUARIES

ELDER JOHN E. BURGESS

Elder John E. Burgress, son of William and Mary Lovell Burgess, was born July 27, 1876, in Henry County, Virginia. He was married to Fannie Sue Jamison April 10, 1907, who was taken from him by death February 7, 1918. To this union one daughter was born. He was married again September 1, 1918, to Mrs. Mary L. Lester, who died April 2, 1930. He was married the third time to Miss Rosa B. Jamison October 11, 1930; who survives.

He passed from the shores of time April 15, 1963, at the home of his daughter, at the age of more than 86 years. He joined Camp Branch Primitive Baptist Church in March, 1910, and was baptized by Elder Z. T. Turner. He was ordained in August, 1918, and was chosen pastor of Camp Branch Church in 1923, and remained pastor until his death.

He was faithful to his church, always filling his seat unless providentially hindered. He lived a plain, quiet, clean life; which was an example to his community. He was a devoted husband and father, a good citizen and kind neighbor; and provided well for his own household. He was always happy to have his brethren and friends visit him in his home. He was a believer in absolute predestination of all things. He never preached to suit men, but was firm in his own convictions. Brother B. L. Snyder had this to say of his pastor: "I have known Brother Burgess since 1921, and can say of a truth he was a kind neighbor, a good spiritual brother. I recall many times when we came together that our subject was "thus sayeth the Lord," and we could agree there was no other name given under heaven whereby we must be saved. He was sound in the faith and earnestly contented for the faith once delivered to the saints. Our talks were never on carnal things, but spiritual things; and we never disagreed, but were in harmony. I will miss him, as will the church family and friends. My consolation is that he is not dead but sleepeth, awaiting

the final consumation of all things pertaining to the purpose of our God from the foundation of the world. He is awaiting the second coming of our Saviour, when the dead shall be awakened to eternal glory and bliss. I believe Brother Burgess had part in the first resurrection, upon such the second death hath no power. This applies to the spiritual kingdom, and the natural kingdom has no part in it."

His funeral was preached at Camp Branch April 17, 1963, by Elder Rufus Brown and Elder Harvey Prillaman, at his request. His body was laid to rest in the family cemetery near the church.

The great throng of people who gathered, and the beautiful floral arrangements attest high esteem in which he was held. He leaves to mourn his departure, his sorrowing widow; one daughter, Mrs. Nina B. Hurd, Martinsville, Va.; two grandchildren; three sisters: Mrs. Wylie Jamison, Mrs. Posy Turner, of Martinsville, and Mrs. Jesse Boudurant, Princeton, W. Va.; and a host of friends.

Memoir from Camp Branch Church, Written by his widow, Rosa B. Burgess.

Elder Rufus Brown, Moderator
Nancy Haynes, Clerk

FLOYD NEWTON MORGAN

Floyd Newton Morgan was born November 6, 1881, and passed from the walks of this life October 4, 1963. He is survived by a daughter and two sons: Vona Carter, Monticello, Arkansas; Knighton and Lem, of Crossett, Arkansas. Also by two brothers: Ganes Morgan, Eudora, Arkansas; Lee Morgan, Bastrop, La.; two sisters: Floy Hoggin, Atlanta, Ga. and Birdie Benson, Atlanta, Ga.; and also by two half-brothers and three half-sisters: John Morgan and Charlie Morgan, Ingalls, Arkansas; Lillie Mae Best, Ingalls, Arkansas; Flora Vickers, Pensicola, Florida; Mary Easterland, Monroe, La.; and six grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

The writer had several scriptural conversations with Brother Morgan, and he believed in salvation by the sovereign grace of God. Those who believe are the ones who were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his."

Brother Morgan's funeral was conducted by the writer.

David E. Turner

PEARL MATTHEWS

It has pleased the Lord to remove Sister Pearl Matthews from our midst. Miss Pearl, as she was called by many, was born March 5, 1889, and passed away April 12, 1962; making her age seventy-three years.

She joined old Mud Creek Church at a fifth Sunday meeting at Graves schoolhouse in October, 1922, and was baptized by her pastor, Elder O. W. Perkins. She first had joined the Missionary Baptist Church in her neighborhood, but later, finding that she couldn't go along with them, felt she was one alone. She knew nothing of the Primitive Baptists, but circumstances caused her to find them — a people who believe in a God of all power, love and mercy; who preach Jesus the way, the truth and the life. She had thought that some day when at Mud Creek Church with just a few there, she would ask for a home with them, if God would enable her. But when God's time came, he enabled her to come when meeting was being held in the school house near her home, when many of her friends and neighbors were present. She came with a sweet manifestation of God's love in her heart, telling of her love for them and wanting a home with them. She was joyfully received, and was greatly loved by all who knew her. But her life soon became a life of suffering, often not being able to attend her meetings; but she was faithful to the end. Often, when she came, the marks of great suffering were written on her face; but she always had a sweet smile and a cheerful word for all who spoke to her. To know her was to ove her; but our loss is her gain. She and her husband made their home with their only child, a daughter, Dathol, and Billy Stafford, her husband. They gave her every comfort and assistance that earthly hands could give .

Our prayer is that God will reconcile all to his holy will, and to enable them to lay hold of the hope that is set before them. She leaves also a half-sister, Helen, and two half-brothers, Earl and Madran.

Though we miss her, yet we saw her suffer until we felt thankful to God when he called her out of it all. We hope to meet her, together with the whole house of Israel, when those that are in the graves come forth, not being hindered by those that remain, but will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and forever dwell with him in glory. Written by request.

Lucille and Carrie

IN MEMORY OF OUR BELOVED BROTHER HUGH L. KNIGHT

By request of some of his family, I attempt to write a little memorial of our much loved brother, Hugh L. Knight.

Brother Knight was born June 13, 1885, and was called to his eternal home May 24, 1963, making his stay here on earth 77 years, 11 months and 11 days. He was the son of the

late Rufus Knight.

On May 11, 1910, he was joined with Ora Kate Dallas in the bonds of matrimony. To this union were born eleven children, six sons and five daughters. One daughter preceded him to the grave, leaving the others to morn his passing. His dear wife was taken from him October 27, 1957, leaving him in much lonliness, but he bore his lonliness with as much patience as could be expected, being reconciled to the will of God, whom he trusted.

Brother Knight was a good neighbor, and is missed by his many friends, his brethren and his family. He was, also a good father to his children. They all understood, and loved him, together with all who knew him. He was almost a life long friend of mine. I always held him in the highest esteem over the many years which it was my privilege to know him.

He united with the church at Hillsdale (Cross Roads) early in 1947, and remained a faithful member as long as he lived. He was a firm believer in the absolute sovereignty of God. He had no faith in any other doctrine than salvation by the grace of God. He proved that by his loyalty to his faith and his church. He was not ashamed to own what he felt his Lord had given him. The church will miss him. So will his neighbors and friends.

The Church desires to bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, and to thank him for the life of Brother Knight and the sweet fellowship that we enjoyed with him. So, may we say to his dear children, "Do not grieve after your father as you would one who had no hope. He is at rest, sleeping that peaceful sleep from which one can never be awakened to grieve, but will, one day be awakened in eternal glory. May we all hope to meet him there."

Written by his pastor,
Elder D. A. OBryant,

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M.

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M.

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 11 A. M.

WRIGHTS' CREEK CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 11:00 A. M.

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., six miles SE. of Sulligent, Alabama.

MACEDONIA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located one and one-half miles Southwest of Sulligent, Alabama, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT R. PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
HURTON PITTS, Clerk
Sulligent, Ala.

OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each Saturday before the fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Alabama.

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles SW. of Fayette, Alabama.

ELAM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located two miles North of Goshen, Pike County, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 o'clock.

J. P. MORGAN, Pastor
A. C. CARTER, Clerk
1335 Avalon Lane,
Montgomery 6, Ala.

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before.

E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Pratt City, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. Meeting place at Alder Street at top of hill, first car going into Pratt City from Birmingham.

H. C. MOON, Pastor

LIBERTY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., eight miles South of Gordo, Alabama.

O. G. GARVER, Pastor

MT. CARMEL CHURCH, Coffee Springs, Alabama, meets each first Sunday 11 A. M.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

REHOBETH OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located five miles North of El Dorado, Arkansas and half-mile West of Highway No. 7, meets second Sunday in each month and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

R. W. RHODES, Pastor
W. A. SPEER, Clerk

WHITE WATER OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located about one mile Northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

W. A. SPEER, Pastor

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Stockton, California, meets second Sundays, 10:30 A. M., at 5620 E. Marsh Street. All lovers of the truth invited.

T. R. JEFFERSON, Pastor
WM. ECHOLS, Clerk
Chowchilla, Cal.

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Compton, California, meets each fourth Sunday at the home of L. W. Langwell, 12812 S. Williams Street.

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in the United States), meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is located one mile south of Newark, Delaware, just off of Highway 896.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK CHURCH, Miami, Florida, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before, SW. 29th Avenue and 6th Street. We extend an invitation to any interested to visit us.

MRS. J. M. FUTCH,
7005 SW. 21st Street,
Miami, Florida

NEW HARMONY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Hiram, Ga., meets every 1st Sunday at 11 o'clock.

O. J. CROKER, Pastor
J. F. JORDAN, Clerk

ELAM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located at Forest Park, Clayton County, Georgia, meets every 3rd Sunday at 11 o'clock.

O. J. CROKER, Pastor
MALISSIE STEWART, Clerk

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located at 5th and East Park Street, Weiser, Idaho, meets each 4th Sunday at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Address any communications to Deacon A. L. Turnidge, Weiser, Idaho.

ERNEST J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
FLOSSIE ATTEBERY, Clerk

PLEASANT VALLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas. Meets with Mrs. Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C, each second month — January, March, etc. on the first Sunday.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE LOST CREEK CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, meets first Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Kentucky, ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton, on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

NEW HOPE CHURCH (better known as Lick Creek) meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Kentucky.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE ZION CHURCH OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS, Mayfield, Kentucky, meets first Sunday each month at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M., on South 7th Street.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Baltimore, Maryland, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Street, near Calvert.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on Falls Road about twenty miles north of Baltimore.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

HOPEWELL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Hopewell, N. J., meets each first Sunday at 10:30, and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

ARTHUR R. WARREN, Pastor
LETHA A. BLACKWELL, Clerk

OLIVE AND HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Shokan, N. Y., meets each 2nd Sunday at 1:30 P. M.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
MRS. NEVA BROOKS, Clerk

The **WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,** Warwick, Orange County, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are at 10:30 A. M. DST.

The **MIDDLETOWN AND WALLKILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,** Middletown, New York, holds monthly services on each

fourth Sunday from April to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. Meetings are at 2 P. M. DST.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, New York City, meets every first and third Sundays at McBurney Branch Y. W. C. A. 215 W. 23rd Street, corner of 7th Ave. (Elevator to 2nd floor.) 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M. All visitors are welcome.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

THE WILSON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Wilson, N. C., meets each second Sunday at 3 P. M., and Saturday evening before at 7:30 P. M. The location is on the corner of Green and Jackson Streets.

MRS. BETTIE RICHARDSON, Clerk

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:00 P. M.

C. M. HAGGOOD, Pastor
NINA STALLINGS, Clerk
Rt. 2, Box 54
Altus, Okla.

BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin, Oregon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes.

ERNEST ATTEBERY, Pastor

ROCK SPRINGS OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, meets each first Sunday at 10:30. The meeting house is located on highway 222, about one-quarter mile of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line.

JOHN D. WOOD. Pastor
CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets each 5th Sunday from May through September, with all day meeting the 1st Sunday in May; and meets at Needmore, Pa., on 5th Sundays from October through April, with all day meeting the 2nd Sunday in October.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
ORIEN MELLOTT, Clerk
McConnellsburg, Pa.

THE PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Memphis, Tennessee, meet in the Primitive Baptist Church, on Andrews Road in Ellendale, about a block from Highway 70, each Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

H. G. BROWN, Pastor
791 Watson Street
H. R. PRINCE. Ass't. Pastor
HAROLD TONEY, Clerk

CANE CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and is located nine miles Southwest of Martin, Tennessee. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
J. B. JONES, Clerk
Rt. 1, Martin, Tenn.

BORDEAUX PREDESTINARIAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Nashville, Tenn., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. The church is located on the old Hydes Ferry Road in Bordeaux, in Nashville. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

The **WALNUT FORK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH,** near Cottage Grove, Tennessee, meets on the second Sunday of each month.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor
R. L. VEAZEY, SR., Clerk

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, Houston, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before 10:30 A. M. Church is located at 815 Little York Road between Highway 75 and East Texas Freeway 59.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
IRENE WISENBAKER, Clerk

MT. ZION CHURCH, Weslaco, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.; and each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday before at 2:00 P. M., at their new location: seven miles West of Weslaco, on highway 83.

JOE L. HAMRICK, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk

SARDIS CHURCH, Amarillo, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 10:30, in the home of E. J. Parsons, 1711 Lincoln Street.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, has moved their meeting place to 3629 8th Avenue. They meet each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Take College Ave. bus to Butler and Ryon; go one block West, then half block North to church.

C. U. LANDERS, Pastor

THE ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST CHURCH, Lawn, Texas, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
MRS. NOLA STEWART, Clerk

AN ARM OF PILGRIM REST CHURCH, meets each second Sunday and Saturday night

before at Earth, Texas.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
A. A. CHAMBERS, Clerk

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30, and Saturday night before, at the home of M. J. Culpepper. Lovers of the truth invited.

LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk

THE OLD SALEM CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS, four miles South of Teague, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

SAINTS REST OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday evening before at seven-thirty, at 4614 Sylvester Street.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
D. G. CONNELL, Clerk

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday afternoon at 2:30.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located on Route 28, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia.

ARTHUR L. CARTER, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. each second month (February, April, etc.), and is near Lucketts, about eight miles north of Leesburg, Virginia.

and

BROAD RUN CHURCH, Poolesville, Maryland, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. each second month (January, March, etc.)

L. D. DUKE, Clerk
Charlestown, W. Va.

MT. ZION CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, Virginia, on Route 50, between Washington and Winchester, Virginia.

MRS. DAVID FARNIE, Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are always glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Deacon G. C. Spindle, Lincoln 3-3782.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 8:00 P. M., Fairmont Park, 2023 Tidewater Drive.

C. N. BUNN, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Richmond, Virginia, meets each fourth Sunday in their new meeting house about ten miles South of Richmond, just off highway 360 South.

R. S. PAYNE, Pastor

DAN RIVER CHURCH, between Danville, Va. and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville, Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday night before, on Bradley Road.

W. R. DODD, Pastor

LITTLE ZION PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Chehalis, Washington, meets in the home of Sister Effie Parke, 1360 First Street the first Sunday of each month at 11 A. M.

HOWARD EASON, Pastor

BETHEL OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, of Riffe, Washington, meets each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before at 11 o'clock. For information write the Clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. VERNIE SCHOONOVER, Clerk
Box 612, Morton, Wash.

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, Naches, Washington, meets at 10:30 A. M. each second Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. DASIE BAKER, Clerk
Rt. 1, Naches, Wash.

HARMONY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, about four miles East of Huntington, W. Va., near Route 60 at Russell Creek, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

J. R. LANE, Moderator
MILDRED STANLEY, Clerk
Rt. 2, Huntington, W. Va.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 132 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY 1964 NO. 2

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/64
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

MY DESIRE

At Jesus feet the man was found,
When he was clothed in his right mind;
And though we search the world around
At Jesus' feet true saints we find.

Though almost all mankind profess,
Our Lord and Saviour here to serve.
Most boast their works of righteousness
And men's commandments do observe;

God's finished work they do despise,
And countless thousands they would add;
Their ways are right in their own eyes,
Though vile and wicked; Oh how sad!

At Jesus' feet they will not sit,
But rather wander midst the tombs;
In filthy rags that do not fit,
They dress, and boast they are well groomed!

But at thy feet, thy precious feet,
Lord let me serve thee all my days,
I would forever there repeat
My great redeemer's glorious praise;

Thy feet, dear Lord, thy precious feet,
So beautiful they look to me;
May I from all my works retreat
And all my trust be placed in Thee;

Who would forsake the nail scarred feet
That in his stead bore such great pain?
Though lured away by man's deceit,
In my right mind, I turn again,

And when my stay on earth is o'er,
O may I find a sure retreat
When I arrive on Canaan's shore,
And dwell forever, at Thy feet!

C. B. Britt
Rt. 6, Box 282
El Dorado, Ark.

FEELS MORE DEPENDENT THAN EVER

Eldorado, Ark.

Dear Editors Spangler and Wood:

Well, thru the grace and mercy of God I have almost completed my 67th year, and feel more dependent on His grace and mercy than ever before in my life. I have no confidence or hope in any thing else for time or eternity — something I feel that this troubled sinful world will soon enter into. O may we, thru the grace of God, long, look and pray for this event — the return of our blessed Saviour and Redeemer — to take place. I believe it was Philpot who once said, in answer to a friend's query as to when he thought Jesus would come replied: "I have no idea, but should he come tomorrow I would be glad to see him." How I wish that I could be and stay in that frame of mind always. But so much of my time I spend in the slough of despond and get what comfort I get from such songs as:

"What jarring natures dwell within, Immortal life, indwelling sin," etc.; and, "Tis a point I long to know."; and, "How long, O Lord shall I complain, like one who seeks his God in vain; wilt thou thy face forever hide, and I still pray and be denied." But these crosses like all others work together for good to the children of God, and I have a little hope they do for me. They make us sick and tired of this vain world, and make us long for a city that hath foundation, whose builder and maker is God. Then we can sing, "O land of rest for thee I sigh," etc., and long to quit this house of clay and dwell with Christ at home.

Dear Brethren, I am enclosing a letter from a dear and highly esteemed brother, Deacon J. B. Wetherington, to another just as highly esteemed and also a deacon, Brother J. M. Proffit, that seems to be very comforting, and Brother Proffit and I feel you would like to publish it; and if so, would like to surprise him with it as he has no idea of it being published, but feel sure he will have no objection. Brother Wetherington has been tried in the furnace, both in church, and earthly troubles, having lost two wives, the second one being a helpless invalid for many years, he even had to dress her and comb her hair, yet I have never heard him complain of his lot; and in addition to this we had meetings at his home for many years and he had to take care of them. Others got the church buildings, so he took care of the meetings in his home, and throughout all the church troubles in the division, stood as a mighty bulwark against conditionalism, as well as other unsound doctrine and practices.

I had no idea of writing this much when I started, but hope it has not tired or burdened either of you. May God bless and keep both of you and guide and prosper the *Signs of the Times,* is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

Yours in hope,
C. B. Britt
Rt. 6, Box 282
El Dorado, Ark.

PRAYS HIS WILL BE DONE

144 Oaklawn Street,
Malvern, Arkansas

Dear Brother and Sister Proffit:

After a long delay, on this Thanksgiving day I will in my poor way, try to answer your good letter. Sure hope you both are well and not feeling too old. I am beginning to realize that I am getting old. We are both feeling some better in a general way than we have for some time. However my wife has an allergy which gives her trouble, and my hand is still bothering me, but the sore is getting smaller, and I hope will be well in a few weeks. I am in good enough health that I am gaining weight, but have to take it slow on account of my heart . . .

I hope to be very thankful that it is as well with me as it is. I feel that all I have ever received in this life, or ever will receive, is a direct gift of mercy from the giver of all things; and not because of any thing I have done to deserve any of it. But I hope it has come to me through His purpose and love, as to one of that number chosen in Christ before the world began. I say this is my hope — if I look to myself, I have no hope.

Sometimes when I feel needy and impressed with a burden to ask God our Heavenly Father to hear my cry, I just can't feel to ask just for what I feel to be in need of, but implore Him that his will be done. I hope I never ask in prayer for something He didn't purpose in eternity to give me; for I don't believe we change God's mind with our prayers, or cause him to change his purpose for us. You know our blessed Saviour prayed that this cup pass from him, but wound up by saying, "Not my will but thine be done." Also poor Paul prayed thrice for the thorn to be removed, but the God who has always taken care of his little ones, told him that, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

Most of our neighbors and friends believe that they can pray and cause God to give them whatever they ask for. We trade at two grocery stores which give a "jackpot" of $100.00 each week. We take tickets just like the others, and one of the stores hadn't had a winner until the pot was $300.00. One man told me that he had prayed to God that he get it. I told him that I had asked God that his will be done in all things, and that if it was in his purpose before the world began for me to get it, he knew I needed it. The man

made light of me for believing such stuff, but I got the $300.00. Some call such good luck or bad luck, if so, I have had both — with my hand, and winning the $300.00. The hand has cost me most of it. I have to believe it is all the lot of life, not just something that happens to us as we go through life; nor for something we have done to deserve anything. I know if I had received my just punishment for one sin in ten thousand, I wouldn't have lived to see my 80th year.

Please excuse this scribble, and think of us when at a throne of grace.

In hope of mercy,
J. B. Wetherington

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Elder D. V. Spangler)

To the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Indiantown Church, Worchester County, Maryland, October 23 and 24, 1963: Greetings in the Lord.

Beloved Brethren:

It has fallen my lot to address you in what is commonly called a Circular Letter. It appears from past observations that the purpose of these letters is to refresh our memory, and inform our correspondents and visitors as to the doctrine and order of this association.

Recently, while looking over one of the old church records of the Salisbury Church, some notations had been made on the front page, and signed by the three deacons, Henry Rounds, Dewit Rounds, and George Messick. I would like to call your attention to one of the scriptures appearing over their signatures. They must have in a measure presented their views concerning church order and discipline.

"Let all things be done decently and in order." (I Corinthians 14:40)

One of the meanings of the word *Decent* is, Appropriate to the circumstances. By this we are admonished to conform our discipline and order appropriate to the circumstances, seeking to adhere to the word of God, not only in the letter, but seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

In the sixth chapter and first verse of Galatians we find an infallible rule to guide us in seeking adherence to the scriptures in doing all things decently and in order: "Brethren if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." This clearly shows that only as we are led by the Spirit, or blest with spiritual minds, are we qualified to walk in the good old way in the house of God. Also, how necessary it is that we are given to consider ourselves, or examine ourselves, whether we be motivated by a desire for the glory of God, and the welfare of his church.

The true church of God can never recognize but one head over the church. Our Lord Jesus is head over all the church, which is his body. His teachings, whether they be by himself or through the inspired word of the Apostles, can never be annulled, or changed. No man made rules, regardless of their merit, can be substituted for these teachings. It behooves us, as professed followers of Him, to seek more and more *a thus saith the Lord* in the discipline and order of His house. Only by so doing can all things be done decently and in order. Many excellent things have come to us by tradition, but we are ever to remember that no tradition, if contrary to the teachings of the Word, is to be accepted.

In the Lord's house He has blessed us with His Word as to the duties of the officers of the church, and all members.

I will first make mention of the authority and duties of pastors. I call them pastors because, in the admonitions of the Word, the ones they serve

are referred to as "the flock of God that is among you." "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." (Acts 20:28) "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever." (Hebrews 13:7, 8) "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine." (1 Timothy 5:17) And in 1 Peter 5:1, 2, "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."

Many more scriptures could be brought to show that the pastor is an overseer of the church, and has rule over them to the extent that it falls upon him to see that the order and discipline of the church is carried out in decency and in order. Nowhere in the scriptures is he given authority to lord it over God's heritage. In doing these things he is admonished to take heed first unto himself, and to the doctrine, and continue in them; and in so doing he saves himself and them that hear him. This salvation has reference to saving from error by holding fast to the teaching of the word in the order of the house of God.

The question has been asked from time to time, where does the duty of the deacon enter the picture, and what part does he have in the church in seeing that all things are done decently and in order? It is evident that he does not have the rule over the church, and is not an overseer, as is a pastor. Nowhere in the scriptures is he authorized to use such authority.

In the sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles we have an account of the appointment of the first deacons in the church. They were chosen primarily to relieve the ministry of the daily ministration of material things among the widows. There had been a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the ministration. By reading the sixth chapter of Acts we find their qualifications. The work of the Deacons was to serve tables. We cannot say how many tables, for the scriptures do not so state; but they were in the plural. The church was commanded to look out among themselves seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, to be appointed over this business. It will be noted that the church made the selection, and the appointment was made by the Apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. We see then that the duty of the deacons is to relieve the ministry in every way possible: in seeing after the financial needs of any in the church who may need help, and bring it before the church; to serve the Lord's Supper; to relieve the minister in keeping in touch with the membership; and when necessary, to bring before the church such matters as require her attention pertaining to the discipline and order of the Lord's house. Let us not lose sight that in all these things, the purpose of deacons was to relieve the ministry, that they not be hindered in going forth preaching the Word. The deacon is the servant of the church; and in being blessed to fill the office, is also the servant of the Lord. The minister is the servant of God unto the church.

There have been throughout the ages questions which have arisen, and they will continue to arise, pertaining to the order and doctrine of the church of God. There have been, and will continue to be, "Lo heres, and Lo theres", but the

solemn question is, What does the Word of God sustain? What are the gospel steps to be taken in churches in offenses of one against another?

The infallible rule is laid down in Matthew 18:15-17. Jesus said, "Moreover if thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a Publican." How explicitly the Lord laid down these rules; and if we keep house in an orderly way, and all things are done decently and in order, we cannot deviate from these teachings without bringing confusion into the house of God.

If one becomes offended at another, then the one offended is the one required to go. If the offended takes someone with him before going alone to the offender, he himself becomes a transgressor. If he goes to someone else and tells his grievances before going to his brother first, he becomes a transgressor. No substitute will ever take the place of the infallible teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ; and when other steps are taken that are not explicitly taught by Him, decency and order are forgotten.

The above rule is laid down for offenses between two individuals. There are offenses we may call public offenses: When the life or conduct of a member becomes such as to bring reproach upon the cause of Christ, unless there is godly repentance for such things, we are commanded to put away such persons from us: to withdraw from those who walk disorderly; to turn them over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh.

In Paul's epistle to Titus, second chapter, he is told to speak the things that become sound doctrine. Sound doctrine is doctrine wherein the order of the Lord's house is in accord with the doctrine taught; the practice or usage of the doctrine is the adorning it with godly walk and conversation, that all things might be done decently and in order. The admonition to Titus was to speak the things that become (or adorn) sound doctrine: "that the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in the faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded. In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you . . ."

As the capstone of the matter he says, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.

May it be His holy will that these things are not only found in his word, but engraved in our hearts; that not only in this meeting, but as we go forth proclaiming the riches of His grace, we may be given to walk softly before Him, esteeming our brethren better than ourselves; and adorn our profession, as becometh the followers of the Lamb.

"THIS IS THE DAY WHICH THE LORD HATH MADE"

The Lord willing, I will endeavor to write concerning the 24th verse of the 118th Psalm, which was mentioned in Sister Helling's letter published in the

October **Signs.** I don't feel qualified, but the subject came to my mind about four o'clock this morning, and I feel I must attempt to write a short passage on how it appears to me.

We know that the natural mind cannot discern spiritual things. Therefore it is my hope that the Lord will lead my thoughts that a comfort might be given to the household, and that they be not deceived by the inability of the flesh.

"This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." This day is now, and forever **today.** According to our understanding, there is no night in eternity at the throne of grace. There is no time limit set to the power of God. Today He created the heaven and the earth. Today Christ is with the Father. Today He is delivered of the Father a perfect sacrifice for his body, the Church. Today He is risen. Today His people are delivered up into glory with him, to be with him forever — which is today. Today is this day, the first day, and the last day. Today is a spiritual day that God has made for Jesus Christ: (His people being Him, as members of one body). We know that the natural man has been given a limitation, or time being divided into days, each differing one from another, so that the natural man cannot discern the things that are spiritual. The natural man lives in the days of this world: and the days of this world are not pertaining to **This, the Lord's Day.**

Now we are persuaded to believe that everything, carnal as well as spiritual, is the gift of God through the Lord Jesus Christ. Colossians 1:16: "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: All things were created by him, and for him." So we realize that our natural days are also of Him. But we look not to those things which are temporal — which are things seen, but we look to those things which are not seen. (see Corinthians 4:18) This day which the Lord hath made is not seen by the natural man; but, just the same, it is now, and is seen by the spiritual man.

We find in Hebrews 13:8 "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever." In Malachi 3:6 "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." We find that God is no timely being: timely things pass away with the using; but He is the Sovereign, all powerful Creator of all things. Neither is his day divided: it is eternity.

"We will rejoice and be glad in it." The wording here is so made that there is no mistaking the truth of the matter. There are no probabilities, no possibilities of rejoicing and being glad; but rather, a statement of fact: a surety of the matter. For the Lord deals in a manner that is sure. No ifs, buts, or maybes in the wondrous working of the power of God.

"Dark and thorny is the desert
Through which pilgrims make their way:
But beyond this vale of sorrow
Lie the realms of endless day.

Will stop here for the present, hoping that what is written is sufficient, and a comfort to the dear ones. "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." (Proverbs 16:33)

Weak and unworthy, your servant for Christ's sake, I hope,

B. K. Smith
P. O. Box 698
New Cumberland, Pa.

Rt. 3,
Chestertown, Maryland
October, 1963

THE PLEASURE OF MEETING WITH THE BRETHREN

Dear Editors and all the Brethren:

Having just returned from the Virginia Corresponding Meeting; the Yearly Meeting in Baltimore, and the Salisbury Association, I feel that I must write and tell you what it has meant to me. I am sure everyone present, and blessed with

a hearing ear, feels as I do. Yet I feel as though there is no one anywhere as blessed as I am to have been there.

Even though our preachers were few in number, seven in Virginia and four at Indiantown, the banqueting table was piled high with delectable morsels of tasty food for our enjoyment, and Oh, how our souls did feast! I feel every child of God there was able to partake of exactly as much as was necessary, not one bit more, or less, for that is God's way of feeding His children. He never lets them go hungry nor thirsty for long. We have much to mull over and digest, as the days go by. There was no lack of praise and glory to God in the gathering together. The conversation was of good things and wholesome. An added feeling of closeness was felt, because we realize more fully than ever the frailness of man, and each time we meet we are keenly aware that our time is running out; and, Oh, so thankful it is in His hands. Our stay here is limited, and as He makes ready a place for each of us we await His call. When that call comes, His sheep will hear His Voice and know it is the Master's. They will come willingly, entering the fold with Him. As Brother Spangler so sweetly said, "He is the door, and His sheep enter the fold through Him. There is no other way — not over the top, nor any other way, for such are thieves and robbers."

When one has been blessed to hear such preaching as we have listened to, and tasted the sweetness of, the past few days, it is joy unspeakable. Such sweet fellowship for those who are inspired from above, to speak, as well as for the dear Brothers and Sisters who share it with you. Not of this world at all, but there can be no doubt whatsoever that it's all manna from heaven and distributed by our beloved pastors. It makes me feel so humble and unworthy, and I treasure the sweetness and love I feel for the brethren everywhere, who are of like mind and love the same doctrine of Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. We call our pastors ministers of the Gospel, and, we feel them to be true witnesses of God, giving inspired and revealed testimony of the prophets and apostles, and all that came before and after. Only by inspiration could such messages be brought to His hungering and thirsting children.

Oh, how I do praise Him and desire to give Him all the Glory! When feeling low and forgotten because of my worldly nature, I think of how the Lord never leaves one alone for long. Just enough for us to know we are no good without Him. We wait His appearing, impatiently at times, but when He is ready He appears, and we know not how, when or where it will be. In some wonderful manner we feel His presence and once again we are high upon the mountain top. These seasons of feasting are far between sometimes and when we seem to wait His coming for a long time and get down deep in despair, it is a wonderful, glorious thing to feel to be gently lifted up and know He is once more near. Of course He really never left us at all, we just get so buried under with worldly things we cannot see Him or feel His presence because of the hard shell we have surrounding us.

The many letters and articles in the **Signs** are feasts to us when we cannot hear other preaching, but when we can be with the brethren in person and **feel** that closeness it is much better and so much sweeter. "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go unto the House of the Lord." That's how I have felt, and I think of Paul's letter to the Hebrews in the 10th Chapter, 25th Verse, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is", etc. We have that authority to assure us it is pleasing to God that we meet together as an association, meeting and exchanging greetings of love and fellowship. Always careful of our deportment, lest we offend our brother, advising and guiding when necessary, to keep an orderly house, before God. As our hearts have been filled to over-

flowing the past few days, we can only feel to say, truly the Lord has been in the midst and smiling upon us, giving us that precious Water of Life and lighting our dark pathway with the sunshine of His love, — our life renewed and our hope restored.

The world teaches that we know when we are saved. If we knew that for sure, what would we have to hope for? Knowing my sinful nature I can only **hope** I am saved, and if so, it will only be by the Grace of a Merciful God, who knows all things and sees all things. Our hope lies in His promises to His children. When we are brought to the place where we see how hateful and self centered we are, we wonder how one so pure and holy as He, can be mindful of us, for He knows us far better than we know ourselves. He knows we are in constant warfare, the flesh with the spirit. I have wondered more than ever, as I grow older, why is he so good to me! Why do I feel so richly blessed, when I do not merit one thing! So small and unworthy, with thoughts so often wrong, desiring above all things to be good and clean minded in His sight, but failing miserably so much of the time.

Yes, "He is good, immensely good, and kind are all His ways." Thinking of His promises to His children, as we sang the hymn on Thursday before lunch, "How Firm a Foundation", I felt again the sweetness of the wonderful day Elder Lefferts led me into the baptismal waters, as that hymn was sung. He promises His people that in **every** condition, everywhere they may be, as thy days may demand, shall thy strength ever be. He promises to keep them strong, give them aid, carry them through all the deep waters they find themselves travling through; all the trials and troubles will be taken care of. All through the ages His people prove His all sovereign, unchangeable love and He says He will never desert them to their foes. Isn't that chapter of Second Peter a beautiful chapter? And His promises are never broken.

"Rock of ages" is another favorite of mine. He showed me before I was united with the church nothing **I** could do was of any value in His sight; and I was made to sing, in my dreams, as I stood before Him, "Not the labors of my hands, can fulfill thy law's demands", and "Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to thy cross I cling." These experiences are so sweet no one could ever take them from me, no more than money could ever buy the precious hope I feel I have been given. Feeling these things deep in my innermost being is why I want to tell all of you how lovely the hours spent with each and everyone have been. The material food was immaterial to me, although very good, but it was the spiritual food that was essential and vitally necessary for our future existence.

One might ask why our people travel so far to hear preaching, when they could hear some kind of preaching, in many places, much nearer home. There are many, many reasons. When the doctor prescribes a special medicine for his patient he does not expect them to go get an aspirin or anacin and expect to recover. Only what is prescribed will do the work. So it is with God's word. If the others feel the way I do, and I am sure they do or they would not be there, they desire to hear the doctrine of Salvation by Grace expounded. It is a sound doctrine and the ministers love the truth, so that is what we hear. The folks come far, in all degrees of health and all ages. Some barely able to travel, some with defective hearing, but the Lord draws them and takes care of them all along the way. I had an uncle in Virginia, many years ago who was nearly stone deaf, yet loved to go to meeting. He said even though he could not hear, he could feel and see the love evidenced all around him, and he always sat on a front bench.

The folks travel far to hear the sweet tidings of their Lord and Saviour, one whom they feel has led them safely

along the highways and byways of life, and they trust Him to continue to be their Shepherd to the end. They come, desiring to hear the pure, unadulterated truth preached; the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and how He came to redeem His people and nothing else; not to hear what the Russians, Chinese or Castro is doing or going to do, but what concerns the welfare of their souls, their future and their hope of eternal salvation. The Lord will take care of the rest of the world in His own time. It's all in His hands; and what capable hands they are! They come to get comfort and reassurance in the things they already believe and know so well, as John, in prison, needed reassuring that Jesus was the Christ and none other. All these things and more bring us together as one. They are seeking an uplifting of their sometimes sagging faith. In this world, torn apart by wars and friction on all sides, worry and cares weaken the strongest heart and Jesus Christ is our only help in time of weakness. He gives that much needed shot in just the right place, at just the right time, and regardless of how weak and run-down we feel to be, in a short time there is a completely renewed vitality and all is well again. The aged and infirm know the God of all Grace has promised that He will repair, and strengthen them. No ifs, ands or buts, only the solid wills and shalls. Its an everlasting and life-giving comfort to know these things for sure, and since God has promised them we **know** they are sure. The hope we all carry with us as we travel along is anchored in Christ Jesus and is strengthened as we go.

As I looked about the church and on the grounds at the folks, I studied their dear faces, seeing much beauty there. Lined and seamed with age as many were, some painfully moving about, eyesight and hearing dim, perhaps, but strong in their faith and seeing many things in the bright future with the eye of faith that ordinary eyes could not see. Hearing sounds that we cannot hear as yet; voices never weak when singing praises to God: a lovely place to be; and they feel it too. Ask me why they come so far by whatever means they can, and I will tell you. It's a mutual drawing from all corners of the earth, as a magnet, to come together in His name and for his sake. What a wonderful love it is, beyond human understand. As Elder Smith tried to find words to describe it, he finally gave up and said, "What are adjectives! Only words, that do not describe it at all." And so it is. There are no words to describe heavenly things or anything pertaining to Jesus Christ or His Kingdom. It can only be tasted and felt. It has to be experienced to be understood in even a small way.

Working in a store as I do, where the world flows over, under and around — and at times through you, if I did not have Jesus Christ and all He means to me, to steady and guide me, I know I would sink beneath the weight of it all. He is my refuge in time of need, and strength in my weakness.

Many times I have wanted to write to the household of faith, but others have written my comings and goings, my ups and downs, in far better language than I ever could. Their road is often the same as mine; I have it all stamped in my heart but the gift of words is not mine. Today has been an exception. The beauty still lingers on. In Psalms we often see the word, Selah, as the writer finishes a verse. The meaning is so sweet. The words have ceased but the melody of the Psalm lingers on and on. That's it exactly. I just do not feel I can keep silent on the thoughts I have. I know in a few more days perhaps the picture will fade and I will only have sweet memories of the world I've been visiting in. No special rushing about, peace and harmony within the ranks. No sound of discord and it raises me to the highest peaks of Joy in Him it seems.

Elder Spangler spoke so sweetly in the home of Brother Wm. Adkins, dur-

ing the meeting, of our hope in Jesus. How we see only in part, as we travel along; just a portion revealed to us here and there. And, dear ones, doesn't it seem to you sometimes that when you are blessed to see and understand some of these things, as He gives you a glimpse into Heaven, that the brightness and beauty are so great, the glory so wonderful that it blinds the eye, as we behold it. The ministers open the Bible, reach in and pick out a few words to speak upon, if so be the Lord blesses them to speak. As they unfold it to us, spreading it out clearly and sweetly before us, we see the unspeakable beauty of it as we never could with a natural eye. Elder Weaver spoke upon Love. What a wonderful subject! A thousand sermons from one four letter word and still not really described! Love is the very foundation of our lives and without it we could not go far. Who could long survive without it! I do not believe anyone within hearing distance, and by that I mean having a hearing ear, could help but be moved deeply by the love evidenced and preached. The story of God's love is an old, old, story, yet ever new. Try to find something new that man has created or devised and you will find something that has been used years and years ago. There is nothing new under the sun.

Elder Griffin preached a wonderful sermon in the Baltimore Church on the leaven in the three measures of meal. Following it up at the door with a fuller explanation, and to me it was completely rounded out and explained as never before. Then Elder Smith spoke of the new birth, and its meaning, of which there can never be enough said. Just one more good reason why God's children travel so far to hear the Gospel. They desire to hear again and again how Christ died to save sinners and arose from the grave that we might have eternal life with Him; how His children were chosen in Him before the World began; how one must be born of the spirit before they can enter the Kingdom of Heaven. They desire to hear again the words of comfort, spoken by Jesus before he ascended into Heaven, "I must go, but I will send a Comforter". He sent the Holy Spirit to carry on until He comes again to carry us home. There shall be no night there, neither light of the sun, for the the Lord God giveth them light (Rev. 22:5).

Just a few more words and I will be through. I know I have taken up many precious minutes of your time but I hope you will stay with me a little longer. Brother Wood, I believe this has been the first Association I ever attended that I did not hear even one sermon by you and I really missed it. That has been the only fly in the whole tree full of honey that I can find. So many of our dear ones were absent and so many more gone on to a better, happier world. Please dear brethren, cast the mantle of charity over the mistakes herein, for I have no desire to say one word out of place or cause offense to anyone in any manner. I try only to speak of the things which I have seen and heard and found so very good. If we could only remember that to hear the Voice of God we must keep silent and listen. We so often find we are telling Him that we want. "Keep silence all created things, and wait your Master's nod! My soul stands trembling while she sings, the honors of her God." And the latter verse goes like this: —

"My God, I would not long to see
My fate with curious eyes,
What gloomy lines are writ for me,
Or what bright scenes may rise;
In thy fair book of life and Grace,
O may I find my name
Recorded in some humble place
Beneath my Lord the Lamb."

May the Grace of God be with each of you always,

Your little sister in hope, if one at all,

Ruth Lucht

REPORTS A GOOD MEETING

Route 2,
Luverne, Alabama

Dear Editors:

I see my subscription expires with the November issue, so find enclosed check to cover my paper another two years.

Another year will soon be past and gone, and we are glad that a few of us are still here to meet together in sweet fellowship at Daren Church. Each third Sunday afternoon is our meeting time, and Elder J. P. Morgan is our pastor. We dearly love and appreciate him so much. We would like to extend an invitation to all friends and members of our faith and order, to visit with us any time they can.

Our Association, the Conecuh River met this year (1963) with Hopewell Church in Pike County. We had a good meeting. Elder Wall from Texas was with us and several other able ministers, and we enjoyed them all so much.

I feel that I have been so wonderfully blessed, for the Lord has been so good to me. Words can never tell the joy I feel in my heart. ". . . all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are the called according to His purpose." I hope I am among that number, — such wonderful thoughts to a poor sinner like me.

May the Lord bless and keep you and yours is my prayer.

Yours in hope,
Audra Williamson

IT IS GOOD TO VISIT WITH THE BRETHREN

307 New York Avenue
Elizabeth City, N. C.

Dear Brother Wood:

I had the pleasure of attending the Salisbury Association again, accompanied by my companion and others, and was disappointed in not seeing you there as heretofore. The attendance was about as usual, except there were fewer ministers present. The preaching was with much power and liberty to the profound comfort and spiritual edification of the hearers, bringing forth tears of joy and gladness. So it was indeed good to be there and enjoy "a feast of fat things." (Isa. 25:6) "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God," and the good news from a far country makes glad the hearts of God's people; it is glad tidings of great joy from above, from that flowing fountain of everlasting love shed abroad in the hearts of those made wise unto salvation, and who know the joyful sound. I sometimes wonder how long we may be privileged to assemble ourselves together unmolested by those who would deprive us of this sweet privilege, which is indeed something to be thankful for. How good and how pleasant it is to intermingle with the saints and sing the songs of Zion. As the song goes:

> "I love to meet among them now,
> Before thy gracious feet to bow."

"Of the Baptists it may be said that they are not reformers, These people, comprising bodies of Christian believers known under various names in different countries, are entirely distinct and independent of the Roman and Greek churches, and have UNBROKEN CONTINUITY OF EXISTENCE FROM APOSTOLIC DAYS DOWN THROUGH THE CENTURIES. Throughout this long period, they were bitterly persecuted for heresy, driven from country to country, disfranchised, deprived of their property, imprisoned, tortured and slain by the thousands; yet they swerved not from their New Testament faith, doctrine and adherence" ("Crossing the Centuries").

Mosheim, the learned Lutheran historian, said of the Baptists of his day that "their origin was hidden in the remote depths of antiquity," according to Hassell's Church History, an authentic history, which ought to be in the home of every Old School Baptist. O that more might have access to reliable church history, that they might learn what has taken place in the past and

judge of what to expect in the future. It is said that history repeats itself. and we see the signs of the times.

We were so glad to have Elder John Lee Smith of Louisiana come home with us from the Association. He preached at our church and was much blessed to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ there as well as at the Association. We have had several visiting ministers of the New Testament with us this year, and would be pleased to have you with us any time you can, in the providence of God, visit us, also Sister Wood. My companion joins me in extending wishes and kindest regards to you and her.

Yours in the Beloved,
C. W. Vass

CONFIDENT THE LORD WAS IN THE MATTER

Patrick Springs, Va.

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood:

It is with much sadness, and also joy, that I write you this. I just want to say that God works at both ends of the rope. My second child was a diabetic from the time he was sixteen years of age. I have seen him suffer through coma and shock. With the coma, it was as the dead being raised. That was fifteen years ago. About a year ago I dreamed that I stood in the road below my house, and my two boys, seventeen and fifteen, were behind me. I looked up and saw the head of an angel; and I said, "Yonder is an angel," and repeated it the second time. It said, "You think I am a ghost, don't you." And I answered, "No, for I see other angels with you." The first one smiled and burst the sky, and came sailing down close to me, then made a turn up to my house. I said, "Lord, have mercy: It is the death angel, if it lights on the house, one of us will have to go with it." But it did not light on the house, but in a tree near my son's window, (the diabetic).

I told the children next day that one of the children was going to get sick and almost die. In about two weeks my son, the diabetic, was taken on his job as if dead. He was rushed to the hospital, and after treatment he finally came out of it. But I felt the angel was waiting for him; and on the fifteenth day of September, 1963, he was taken from us. I wanted Elder Posey Ingram and Elder James Gardner in the funeral. Elder Gardner worked with my son.

About twenty-five years ago I was rocking my baby daughter, and looked on her face, knowing how much I loved my children, and I wondered how God felt towards them. I began to pray for them; and something seemed to say that I should go to the scriptures, for I had gotten comfort from them before. The Bible opened at Isaiah 54:13; and it seemed outstanding to me. I looked up with tear-dimmed eyes, and said, "Lord, I'm not worthy." I felt assured about my children.

So, when we were planning the funeral, I wanted to speak to one of the Elders, but it was not convenient; again, something seemed to say, "Why not leave it to the Lord; he does all things well." When Elder Gardner was speaking, he brought out the very scripture mentioned above; and I was glad then that I had not seen the Elders to tell them.

It gave me once again confidence that the Lord was in the matter. Oh, what a wonderful God! he knows all things, and needs no help from man. My son, about two weeks before he died, said, "Mama, I say things I ought not, but there is never a time that I don't wish I had not; and wish I could grasp it back." To me, this means that he had godly sorrow.

From a little one, looking for the return of the blessed Saviour, when all the elect will be housed in heaven.

Minnie Foley

Rt. 2, Box 518
Bassett, Va.

Dear Editors and Much Beloved Brethren:

The *Signs* has been coming each

month laden with good tidings from a far country, from our blessed Lord. O, that He might bless me, a poor vile sinner, to humbly thank him for the wonderful privilege of reading this good, sound paper, which He has so wonderfully blessed you dear editors to publish and send to us hungry ones. May he continue to bless you with his great love, mercy, and grace to carry on with the good old *Signs,* for it is food to our hungry souls, when the blessed Lord is pleased to give us understanding hearts.

I look forward to receiving each issue. It has been coming to me in my mother's name, Mrs. J. M. Brammer, but since she is now living with a son, who receives the *Signs,* please send the paper in my name. I enclose $10.00 — half for two years' renewal, and half for the Indigent Fund. I hope to get the *Signs* as long as I live, if it is the blessed Lord's will.

May He who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast, lead, guide and keep us all in the way that is well pleasing to him, is my humble desire.

Your little sister I hope in our Lord.

Callie Clark

Rt. 4
Reidsville, N. C.

Dear Editors:

I am sending you a letter I received from dear brother George W. Jackson, with his permission to be published in the *Signs,* if you feel to do so. He says that he does not get to hear the old time preaching as often as he once did; and I feel that if we could write it would help cheer him.

I am a poor hand to write, and feel so unworthy of the blessings I have received at the hands of God, that at times I feel to hang my head in shame, and should do so. "Do I love the Lord, or no?" When I am made to search my heart, I find only a little spark of love; and again, after a visitation of the Spirit of God, if the whole world should tell me I have no love in my heart for God or his people, I could not believe it. This love is stronger than death.

At this time, we are not ashamed to own our Lord, nor to defend his cause. We read where He says that if we deny him, he also will deny us. This is not conditional, for we know that the Spirit of God does not dwell in us in a feeling sense at all times. C. C. Shreve

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1884 Connally Dr.
East Point, Ga.

Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Shreve,
Reidsville, N. C.

Dear Ones in Christ:

I read your letter in the *Signs* a short time ago, and it dug so deep in my heart I want to write you. I was so full I actually wept. I could rejoice with you, but O the grief it brought to mind over my dear companion's affliction. She has been in the state hospital more than four years, beyond human help. O how I have begged the Lord to restore her, but it seems He is too far away to hear. Of course I know this is not true.

I have read of many cases that doctors said there was no possible cure for, that God cured and have never had any symptoms since, and nearly every time I read of such I cannot keep from weeping. Why does He cure others and pass me by? O what a rebellious heart, it is His will and He has a wise cause, for He does all things well.

I think I know why He ignores me; I am one of the most wicked persons that ever claimed a hope, and I deserve what I am getting and worse. I try to pray for her, but it seems that when I do, I feel a guilty consicence, rebelling God's will.

Some times I think if some one with your faith would pray for her, He might hear, yet I know you have only the faith He gives you, and you do not feel that faith all the time. It was given you at that time for the occasion. He gives faith according to our needs.

I am 82 and live alone. Have many

friends who come and carry me to meeting. I have been every Sunday this year, but do not hear the old time doctrine every time I go, but I usually get a crumb from the singing. Many times a few words of a song, like "Nearer My God to Thee," strikes deep in my feelings and I am filled to overflowing. My greatest joys and sorrows came during the last 12 years. I know a little of the joy of being drawn closer to Jesus in affliction, and made to rejoice in trials, fire, etc. I have mourned much over the condition of Zion. Have tried to warn our people of their sins and the most terrible judgment that ever befell any nation is rolling fast this way. We can rejoice in the hope that it will soon be over with us, and we hope to be forever with God to shout victory through His blood. Pray for us. May He bless you.

Yours in hope of that home,
Geo. W. Jackson

Danville, Virginia **February, 1964**

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EDITORIAL

"I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all. For man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them." (Eccl. 9:11, 12)

At times there is a temptation thrown into my path which would say, Why not just let the scriptures speak for themselves? Why spend time in expounding what the Holy Ghost has said? Why spend a lot of midnight oil in elucidation on the Bible? At times like this the question is propounded to me, What and Who are you to think that you can improve on what inspiration has said? This querist would say, Isn't it better to leave the children of God with the movings of the Holy Ghost than it is to interpret and expound to them, seeing that oftimes, if not at all times, you are moved by other than holy principles? This tempting line of questioning is none other than that of Satan, he having long ago captivated the natural mind. It comes from within, and from within also must come the com-

mand, "Get thee behind me Satan," for it is within the quickened heart that Jesus dwells and it is he that must put that challenging power to flight.

In my pulpit I am the world's worst scripture quoter. For a number of years it worried me, and Satan used all kinds of tempting arguments to convince me that I was not called to the ministry. Only those that know something of the doubts and fears of this calling will have any knowledge or appreciation of times like unto this. I labored and wrestled for months and I was losing to him. One night, whether asleep or awake I know not (nor does it matter), as I lay in deep meditation over the problem, another came into my line of vision and He spoke to me. There was power and convincing love in his address to me. He said, "I have not called you to quote scripture, but to expound." From that day until the present I have been more or less satisfied to stand in the pulpit, or address the church of the living God by way of the printed page, and to expound to them the vital and living and fundamental truths with the ability that the Lord is pleased to give.

From a human standpoint it would seem that Solomon could be accused of being sore at the world and life and mankind. Oftimes his writing seems melancholy and the expression of one that has found life a puzzle and a deterrent to enjoying what the Creator had endowed one with. However, such is not the case. Nor is it true that Solomon is writing the "other side" of the picture, that is, the legalistic or works side of salvation. He is dealing with things as he finds them. It would be wonderful if we could deal with the things that the Spirit has so bountifully given us through this wise man's writing, and not to go witch hunting, and not try to destroy the effectiveness and truthfulness of his writing by the quoting of someone else's writing.

The sun shines on all parts of the earth at sometimes during the day (Psalms 19:5,6). It is over this wide scope of God's creation that the wise man cast his eyes. He saw things that have been denied by other men, and will be denied until men are not any more. If men did not deny the inspiration of the scriptures; if the devil did not subvert what God has said; if gainsayers did not taunt the tired people of God, there would not be any need to repeat the promises of God; there would not be any need to show John these things again. We see the sun as a strong man rejoicing while running a race. Where this running takes place, where this strong man goes forth, where this rejoicing takes place, where this heat is felt, there is not any room for another. He with whom we have to do will not divide the honors with another.

I am not coming before you to tell you that there is not a race for the people of God to run. Nor am I before you to tell you that it does not make any difference as to how you run the race. Nor am I before you to tell you that all you do and say is part of the race. Perhaps it is a hobby of mine, but I do not want to cast asunder the church under the law from the church under grace. They are both a part of the family of God, and I feel to hope that I have experienced both their travels. If you will notice, all of the miracles of faith were accomplished by men and women of the law dispensation. I am as sure that their faith was not any different than ours. The apostle reckons along this same line when he instructs us with, "wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." It will be noted that this race is set (lies before) for those that run it. It is not, nor can not be, implied that we have chosen the race and put it before us, for that, within itself, would be contrary to what Solomon saw under the sun. He saw the race as set, as did Paul, and encourages a careful running of that race (V. 10;12:I).

There are a number of classes that the race is not left in their hands. The race is to be run by the children of God, but the outcome of it is based on Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith. It is not left to the swift. That is dead certain. If, as men are apt to teach when not taught of God, the race is to him that will get up and get on the go, it would have given the outcome of that race to the prodigal son; to the Pharisee; to those that knock and inform God of what they have done in his name; to those that had already gone into the pool and crossed on over beyond, but it would have cut out such as lay at the pool thirty eight years, and though the water in Jacob's well was sufficient for well being, the poor publican had not gone forward in anything except sinning; and last, but the saddest of all, it would have cut out such as read these lines. Becoming a child of God, as well as the perseverance, is not he or she that runs and is willing to run. It has always been so strange that men will subscribe to a thing and then spend their time denying and fighting that which they have set their names to. Winning the race and obtaining salvation is always considered as subjects for Bible readers to discuss; they are always thought of as objects in which sinners were vitally interested. If so, our discussions and our interest will never stem from being taught of God, if we lay claim to the winning of the race and the obtainment of salvation as being in ourselves.

"The battle is not to the strong." Never let it be said that there is not a battle for the Lord's people. Much is to be found in the scriptures about the fight of faith, about the contention that must be carried on between the saints and Satan, about fighting the good fight. If I am behind in my studies I hope to be dealt with patiently and kindly, but I do not think of Paul as fighting well. That he did fight well, I am sure, **but that he felt that he had fought well,** I doubt. He said "I have fought a good fight," and this I believe is the thought of every one called to the soldiership of Jesus Christ. The fight that I am fighting is a good fight, yes, sir, I say this without any reservation, but that I am fighting well I can not say. For, if I am fighting well, then the ending of the fight, as well as the dividing of the spoils, will be dependent on me, and my text is out of line with my deportment in the kingdom of heaven. None have realized their weakness more than the apostle; none have acknowledged their lack of ability more than did he; none have been more ready to acknowledge these deficiencies than he has. Now for him to come out and say that I have been fooling you all the time by saying that I have fought well is more than he says to me.

Ah, dear child of God, what weakness is seen and felt as we journey here. If you feel to be weak, I feel that way also. May the dear Lord be our daily comfort, and may he wage the battle to final victory. As we journey, let us sing,

"Children, rejoice; he died for you;
For you prepares a place:
He Spirit sends to guide you through,
With every gift of grace.
His blood, which did your sins atone,
For your salvation pleads;
And, seated on his Father's throne,
He reigns and intercedes."

And let us, by grace, talk of the Son of David that went forth and did battle for the land of Israel, pointing out that he who **thought** of himself as being strong was vanquished in death, and let us speak often that this lovely Son went to death at the hands of the strong, but arose a conquering King, having made an open show of his enemies in his glorious triumph over them (Col.2:15).

"Bread is not to the wise." O for grace to know the difference between the wisdom of the world and that which comes from God. God's people are all endowed with the wisdom of God. It would not do to say that they all have the same amount of wisdom for this is measured to them according to the

gift of the measure that is in Christ. This measure of wisdom enables some to be ministers of the word; some to be deacons in the church; some to be willing to sit and listen to the ministering of others, but the wisdom is from the Lord. Bread is given to these that are thus made wise, but it is not given to them because that they sought and found wisdom.

The brethren of Joseph were wise in their own way of thinking. They could well lay alongside of us today. Their thinking and our thinking are parallel with each other. They knew how to get rid of their brother in the most advantageous way to themselves, but their wisdom would not get them bread when starvation stared them in the face. How useless it is for men to talk about the wisdom of men, when this so called wisdom got our first parents, together with all of their ancestors, into a condition that, when the famine gets sore in the land, we have to beg for bread. The world by wisdom does not know God, for this certainly is made manifest when Jesus came into the world. He was the Bread that came down from heaven, and yet the wisdom that men had did not know their need nor recognize Him when he got to earth. The wisdom of the Pharisee was such that he informed God of much that he had been doing, but did not know that he stood in need of mercy.

"Nor riches to men of understanding." The riches of God's grace does not come by having an understanding of God. The riches of his grace is given at the beginning to one that is simple. It is the simple that are commanded to hear the word of this salvation; those that **do not have** understanding are commanded to come, to eat the bread and drink the wine which wisdom has mingled (Prov. 9:4,5). God's people do not come to Him **because** of their understanding, but they come to him **for** their understanding. The children of God are commanded to get understanding, but they are not to lean on their own (Prov. 3:5). If the understanding of men procured for them the riches of God's grace, the poor, the depraved, the undone, the ignorant, would all come short of those riches. Furthermore, the riches of God's grace come as they are furnished by the Lord (Phil. 4:19); also they are bestowed on vessels of honor. The question comes up, Who made them vessels of honor? And the answer appears so clearly and so outstanding. The potter has formed them for his glory and he is presently bestowing upon the vessels of honor the riches of his glory. Thus it is that we, who, like Paul, did not have an understanding of Christ (Acts 9:5,6), have in this life the riches of his glory, so that salvation is in time by the grace of God, and in the life to come we have the Glory of Christ given us so that, for time and eternity, all of the rich grace of God saves us.

"Nor favor to men of skill." The Bible is filled with men who were talented in many fields of labor, but not one of them were favored because of that skill. God has not done the work of grace because of what he finds in in the sinner. It is all based on the love of God. That has been the difference between Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau, he that serves God because of love, and he that serves him for reward. God favored the church in Christ in eternity, and all of the favors, graces and benefits that she has since received have come to her because of that favor before the world begun.

"Time and chance happeneth to them all." Whether one believes in salvation by the grace of God or by having all the virtues that Solomon names, have nothing to do with becoming a child of God, time or chance still comes to them both. It is a great blessing to believe that God has assigned a time for all things, and that all of the assigned things come on time. The things appointed and the time for their fulfilling comes by the appointment of God. The time comes, with its blessings or sorrows, without the children of God being apprehensive about it.

Let me digress here. The servant of God must be apt to teach (I Tim. 3:2; II Tim. 2:24). Since one of the works of the ministry is to edify the body of Christ, it seems too much for us to say that the minister does not teach the people of God. Men send students to school and they fail, but when God sends a man to school he studies and becomes apt in his work. The charge of Paul to Timothy is still in force to us that are called today. He says, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (II Tim. 2:15) Did he mean for him to study? If not, why did he command it? He had already given him minute details as to the scriptures. Certainly Paul did not give him a list of histories to study, but he had mentioned time and again about the scriptures. Surely there is a right dividing of the word of truth, and it is needed here to ascertain "time and chance happening to all men", and to be blessed to see the beauty in Solomon's declaration.

Going too far to the right or left will land us in an untruth. If we can leave off something, certainly we can add something. If we are liable to error in one direction it has always been hard for me to see why there wouldn't be as much danger in going too far the other way. It would seem that the Preacher is getting at this in this text. To one person the lesson is not seen, and he or she teaches that everything depends on the sinner being the kind of man that we are told, does not obtain. But there is another person that comes under our observation just here. He is the fellow that thinks in terms of helping God carry out the time of things. Let us admonish them to do that which is right to do. Their answer? It runs like this. "O, I do not think that it is the time. I am afraid that it is not the time." This is begging the question, and our text assures us that the time will happen to him, as well as the chance (occurence) will happen to the person that believes in salvation by the works of the creature.

"For man also knoweth not his time." As far as the Bible is concerned, it is time now to obey the commands of the Lord. The trying to do a thing so that it will conform to the set time of the Lord; the putting off of that which we feel a desire to do, and know alright that it is commanded in the Bible, is the same kind of doctrine that it is to teach that a child of God gets the blessings from his Father because of his aptness to do his commandments. Neither one of them is supported by the written word. The text says that a man does not know his time. He does not know his times nor the Lord's time, and it has not pleased the Father to reveal to us when the time is ripe for things, but He has given us a Book and it testifies of him. To be a disciple or follower of the Lord does not come about by knowing when to do a thing. The declaration of the Lord does not leave room for quibbling about the matter. If a man has a desire to follow the Lord "let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me." If there is a better rule than this I do not know about it. It is the Lord that is the author of this desire, and it is the Lord that must work out the whole to his name's honor and glory, for, mark my words well, we must have the whole counsel of God, and that embraces the glorious fact that to be a follower of the Lord the swiftness, strength, wisdom of men , the fallen understanding of men, the skill of all earthern vessels, must be reduced to a nonentity before there can be a compliance with these commands and it be acceptable before God. They that love God, do two more things; they love those that are begotten of God, and they love his commandments. To deny either one of these mandates is to deny the first one. We love God because he first loved us. He loved us in eternity, and he draws us to him in time. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and gave his Son to be the propitiation for

our sins (I John 4:10). There is a keen felt sense of joy and satisfaction in the commandments of God, and **in the doing** of them, but not for doing them. And all of this, from the first holy impulse and desire, is wrought in us by the power of the Holy Ghost, and, since God will have a desire towards the work of his hands (Job 14:15), it follows that he will not leave the outcome of his kingdom to those that would select the time for obedience nor to those that would depend on the merits and talents of men, seeing, "that man knoweth not his time."

Men are not able to select the time for the obedience to the commands of God. The time will come to God's children like unto the birds that are caught in the snare and the fishes that are caught in the net. God has declared the end from the beginning (which is based upon his oath), but that has not been made known unto us. We do not know what a morning will bring; we do not know the purposes of God. We know that he is a God of purpose, and that the counsel of God makes certain the culmination of every purpose. We do not know anything of this, save as it is revealed to us.

If you feel to be without these virtues that Solomon has looked at and found lacking in saving qualities, be of good cheer. There is not any experience as worthwhile and as glorifying to our heavenly Father as to feel that you are destitute of these virtures.

If you feel this way, may I continue to have your patience and love and fellowship?

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

AN APOSTOLIC CHARGE TO THE ELDERS WHOM GOD HAS CALLED TO FEED HIS FLOCK

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood." — Acts xx. 28.

This solemn charge was given in a most impressive manner by the apostle Paul to the Elders of the church at Ephesus, in the last interview he was ever to have with them personally in the flesh, for he knew that they would see his face no more. This was a most solemn and interesting time; when with the inspiration of a true prophet of our God, he foretold them of the sore trails they should be called to encounter after his departure, when grievous wolves should enter among them, not sparing the flock; and what was still more appalling, of their own selves should men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. And after having faithfully warned and charged them, he closed his valedictory, commending them to God and to the word of his grace, and knelt down and prayed with them all. So affecting was the scene, the Elders all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him; sorrowing most of all that they should see his face no more.

We cannot for a moment believe that this charge is any less applicable to the Elders in the church of Christ to-day, whom the Holy Ghost has made overseers, than it was to those of the church of Ephesus, or that we have any less occasion to heed the admonitions and accept the charge. None but those whom the Holy Ghost has called, qualified and made overseers, have any commission from God to feed his flock, or church. Men may be qualified in the schools of men to feed the swine, and may, like the prodigal, hire themselves out to citizens of the world for that purpose; but our God has entrusted the feeding of the sheep and lambs which he has purchased with his own blood to none but those who are qualified by the Holy Ghost. It may be well for those of us who hold the office of Elders in the church of the living God to

examine this apostolic exhortation, and to examine ourselves and our ministry, and to prayerfully inquire whether we are abiding steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship; for as far as we depart from their doctrine and admonitions, so far do we depart from their fellowship.

The first of all we are charged to take heed unto **ourselves.** This charge was also given to Timothy, 1 Epistle iv. 16: "Take heed unto thyself," and then to the doctrine, and to continue in them; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee. No man is to rush heedlessly and uncalled into the work of the ministry. "And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." — Heb. v. 4. Is it not to be feared that many even of God's children have heedlessly assumed the work unto whom God has given no ministerial or pastoral gift, and involved themselves and their brethren in much trouble and perplexity? But those who have the most unquestionable evidence that they are called to the work, are to take heed that they obey the high and holy calling. And give themselves wholly to the work, and suffer nothing of worldly profit, pleasure or opposition to keep them from the faithful discharge of the work whereunto the Holy Ghost has called them.

Again, they should take heed that their life and conversation before the world and before the church be such as becometh the gospel of the grace of God. "For a bishop (Elder or pastor) must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, temperate, holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." — Titus i 7-9. "A bishop then MUST be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, APT TO TEACH." "Not a novice, (or one who has come newly into the faith, see margin,) lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, HE MUST HAVE a good report of them which are without, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." — 1 Tim.iii. 2-7. No minister of Christ has a right to be heedless or indifferent in regard to these indispensable qualifications, or careless as to whether his calling, gifts and deportment are in conformity with these rules.

By a heedless disregard of this solemn charge, a minister may so far forget himself as to attempt to feed the swine, the children of this world, or to bestow his ministeral labors in chaplaincies for armies, navies, legislative assemblies, or to regulate the politics and secular affairs of the world. A due attention to the divine rule will lead the ministers of Christ to "Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness," and in that kingdom they will find the flock of their special and exclusive charge. Not only are the Lord's bishops to take heed unto themselves, but they are commanded also to take heed to **all** the flock. If the Holy Ghost has made us overseers of the flock or church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood, how great is the responsibility which rests on us?

Can we, like Paul, take the people of our charge to record or witness that we are pure of the blood of all men, and that we have not shunned to declare all the counsel of God?

Paul did not hold himself responsible for the blood of any but those of the church of God, and in the application of the figure, which he borrowed from the ceremonial dispensation, in which the watchmen whom God commanded to give due warning to the Israelites when their enemies were approaching, or to faithfully warn them when God had said they should die, &c; if they neglected to warn them, and through their neglect an Israelite perished,

their blood was required at the watchmen's hands, or they were held responsible to God for the consequence of their heedless neglect. Paul had faithfully warned the brethren, publicly and from house to house, and had kept back nothing that was profitable for them; therefore he was free from any responsibility arising from their failure to be profited by his labors. He was pure from the blood of all men.

Having therefore the apostolic example as well as precept, how important it is that the ministers of Christ should in like manner "feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." The manner in which the ministers of Christ should take heed, is shown by the manner in which Paul had acquitted himself in his work. From the first day he came into Asia, or among these Gentile saints, his manner of life at all seasons — and on all occasions had been an open epistle of instruction for all the saints to feed and feast upon. Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears. Not in heedless and vain jesting and trifling levity, as some of us in the present day are too much addicted to; but under all his many temptations, and the lying in wait of the Jews, watching to find occasions to accuse and harrass him, he was neither allured by flattery nor intimidated by fear of persecution, and his indefatigable labors were unremitting in looking up and feeding the church of God, teaching them publicly and from house to house. And as a pastor after God's own heart, he fed the church of God with knowledge and understanding. — Jer. iii. 15. Testifying to both Jews and Greeks, repentance toward God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. Feeding all who were born of incorruptible seed by the word of God, on the sincere milk of the word.

In feeding the Lord's flock, constant care and unremitting heed should be taken that we feed them only on such food as the great Shepherd and Bishop has provided. When they ask for bread we are not to give them a stone, or if they ask for an egg to give them a scorpion. Timothy, as we have shown, was admonished not only to take heed unto himself, but also to the doctrine. **It will not answer to heedlessly mix up our own vain speculations with the doctrine of Christ.** Great care should be taken that we know nothing among the saints save Jesus Christ and him crucified. It is on his flesh they shall feed, and his blood in the New Testament they must drink; and they must live on every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

The old man, or carnal nature of Christians, may be fed on doctrines of men, and even on doctrines of devils. Their depraved nature will receive and eat it greedily, and it will inflate and puff them up with pride and vain glory. Their carnal passions may be excited by what is called emotional or sensational preaching, but such food is unwholesome and poisonous to the flock of God, and woe to heedless pastors who teach for doctrine the commandments of men.

The Saviour charged his apostles to teach the saints to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them; no more, no less. His laws and ordinances are perfect and complete; they need no amendment, modification or improvement. Take heed unto the doctrine, and remember that Christ has said through the mouth of his apostle, "But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." — Gal. i. 8, 9.

The great object of the gospel ministry is to feed the church of God; for this purpose all the gifts requisite are supplied to those whom the Holy Ghost has made overseer, according to the measure of the gifts of Christ. "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. And he gave some apostles, and some evangelists, and some

pastors and teachers," (and what were they given for?) "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." — Eph. iv. 8, 11-13. This scripture defines the object and design of all the gifts which Christ received for and gave to the church when he ascended up on high, and sat down upon his Mediatorial throne at the right hand of the Majesty on high. These gifts were none of them designed for nor given to the world, but exclusively to the church, which is the body of Christ, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. The Elders, in taking heed to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers, should not heedlessly forget that their holy vocation is for the edifying of the body of Christ, to feed the church of God. The Holy Ghost has not made them overseers of the world, nor called them to feed the world. They are not qualified to give life to the dead, but to feed the living. The quickening power belongs to God, it has never been given to men; but when God by his Spirit has given life to the subjects of his saving power and grace, then let the ministers of Christ take heed that none of them be overlooked or neglected. "Feed my sheep, and feed my lambs," is the command of the great Shepherd and Bishop of Israel.

The solemn charge to **take heed,** implies a constant watchfulness that no part of the flock suffer through our neglect to feed them with the wholesome food of the gospel, rightly dividing the word, and ministering to each his portion in due season. Great care should be observed lest we as Elders, evangelists, pastors or teachers should heedlessly feed the flock on any other food than the provisions which God has abundantly blessed, and with which he will fill his poor.

The necessity of a vigilant watchfulness is suggested by the warning given to the Elders, of grievous wolves and sad apostacies that should distress the flock or church in the last days, when many should depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. The faithful watchman may not sleep at his post. As Paul said to Timothy, so he says also to each of the ministers of the word, "If thou put the brethren in rememberance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine." — 1 Tim. iv. 6.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe August 15, 1877)

OBITUARIES

IN MEMORY OF ELDER JOHN W. GILLIAM

We, the church at Pleasantville, sadly make mention of the passing of our dear brother and former pastor, Elder John W. Gilliam, whom we all loved very dearly. We miss him the more because of his faithfulness to attend meetings everywhere, and at home; and his being active to the last day of his life will but make him be missed the more.

We feel the sorrow of his passing with his dear family and many friends everywhere, but wish to be reconciled to His will who gave him the gift to preach the gospel of the Son of God, which he loved to preach to us; and wherein he was faithful and steadfast in the truth to the end.

We believe he, as a true soldier of the cross, endured all things, and his spirit is received back by the Holy One who gave it, into the sweet rest of Jesus his Lord.

My wife dreamed of his going to sleep the night of his passing, and we believe that he is asleep in Jesus, and resting from his labors, in the presence of Him whom he preached for many years as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. We have seen him go bearing afflictions and many distresses, and groaned to overcome them, that he might preach the whole counsel of God.

May the blessings of God be with his wife and family, giving them every needed blessing each day.

Written at the request of Pleasantville Church while in conference the first Saturday in November, 1963, by one who loved him very much.

H. W. Wray

BROTHER GEORGE FRANCIS MURPHY and SISTER JENNIE MURPHY

Brother George Francis Murphy passed away October 26, 1946, at the age of seventy years. His widow, Sister Jennie Murphy, survived him many years, and died May 12, 1963, at the age of eighty-four. They were the parents of four sons who survive them: Ellis, of Smackover, Ark.; Rufus, of Keethville, La.; O. P., of Houston, Texas; and Curtis, of Combe, Texas; and three daughters: Patty Red French, Baton Rouge, La.; Oma Lee Scheren, Kilgore, Texas; and Emmodel Murphy, Smackover, Ark. They are also survived by fifteen grandchildren and twenty-seven great grandchildren.

They were both lovely and devoted members of Rehobbath Church; and Brother Murphy was a loving and faithful deacon to the cause for which the Primitive Baptists stand. They both were faithful in the attendance of their meetings as long as they were able; and their home was a resting place of many of the brethren and friends.

They were both buried side by side in Rehobbath Church Cemetery, and their funerals were conducted by the writer; and Elder W. A. Speer was in the services of Sister Jennie. There were large congregations at both funerals, and the love and devotion of their families and relatives was much in evidence, as it was also by the brethren and friends.

May the Lord bless and comfort all who mourn their passing, They are much better off — their spirits have gone on to God who gave them, and they are beyond suffering, trouble and distress. Soon the great day of the Lord's second coming will come when all of the Lord's people will go home after the resurrection, to be with Him forever. May the Lord comfort you.

R. W. Rhodes

JOHN E. GAYNE

John E. Gayne, age 90, of Crossett, Arkansas, a retired farmer, died at his home November 24, 1963.

Survivors are: two sons, Ersel and Oris Gayne, of Crossett; seven daughters: Mrs. Lois and Mrs. Lena Moore, Memphis Tennessee; Mrs. Averia Winberry, Waldo, Arkansas; Mrs. Ester Josey, Crossett, Arkansas; Mrs. Ella Freeland, Mrs. Irma Blanchard, and Mrs. Virdell Worley, all of Louisiana. Also a sister, Mrs. Julia Jones, of Louisiana, and eighteen grandchildren, forty-one great grandchildren, and five great great grandchildren.

I have reasons to believe that Brother Gayne was one of God's elect. I remember the last visit I had with him, at the age of 90 years, his mind was so clear on what we hope to believe the Bible advocates. I was amazed how he could quote the scriptures. I believe that everyone who has the understanding of Hope and what it means, as Brother Gayne had, also has Christ. Christ is our hope which we have as an anchor of our soul.

The writer conducted his funeral.

David E. Turner
Bastrop, La.

IN MEMORY OF VICEY W. BARNES

We, the members of Red Banks Church, bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, who does all things well; and who saw fit to remove from us our beloved sister, Vicey W. Barnes. She was born August 14, 1891, and died November 3, 1963.

She was united in marriage to June Barnes May 22, 1910, and to them were born two sons, Loyd and Charlie, of near Greenville, N. C. Surviving also are six grandchildren; one brother, James Williams, of near Grifton; and one sister, Mrs. Stella Allen, of Greenville, N. C.

Sister Vicey and her husband were received into Red Banks Church on February 19, 1929, and were baptized that afternoon by Elder Luther Joyner. She was a faithful member of her church and attended as long as she was able. Her humble spirit showed throughout her life, and her greatest delight was to hear the gospel of Jesus preached, and to converse with those of like faith of the things of God.

We believe our sister is at rest with the Saviour she loved, and in whose trust she lived. We deeply mourn our loss, but feel that we may say, "Thy will be done." May the God of all grace comfort her loved ones, and all who mourn her passing.

Done by order of Red Banks Church in conference.

Mrs. Bessie Brooks Gay

SUGGS NATHAN VICK

It is with a sorrowful heart that I write of the passing of our dear father, Suggs Nathan Vick, at the age of 92 years 5 months and 1 day. He was born June 28, 1871, in Stewart County, Tennessee, and lived there all his life until moving to live with his daughter in Weakly County near Dresden, Tennessee. He died November 29, 1963. The funeral was held at Saline Primitive Baptist Church at Bumpus Mills, Tennessee. Services were by Elder J. N. Darnell, of Cadiz, Ky.

He was married to Emma G. Morgan near Dover, Tennessee, who preceded him in death January 21, 1950. In their early life, to this union were born four children. Mrs. Lula Brown, Dover, Tennessee. Harvey Vick, Tennessee Ridge, Tennessee. Odus Vick, who passed away in early childhood, and Betty Chandler, Dresden, Tennessee. He had 8 grandchildren, 19 great grandchildren and 2 great, great grandchildren.

He united with the Saline Creek Primitive Baptist Church at Bumpus Mills, Tennessee, on the fourth Sunday in August 1902. Baptized by the late Elder J. L. B. Darnell, where he remained a member for 61 years. Was faithful in his belief until death. He loved the doctrine of Jesus Christ and Him crucified. The doctrine once delivered unto the saints, as it is written: "And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name, Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins". (Matt. 1:21).

Again it is written, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together, with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus": (Eph. 2:4,5,6.) "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For are we his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2:8,9,10).

He now rests from all his labors in a blessed sleep by the side of our dear mother in the George Wallace Cemetery about 2 miles West of Bumpus Mills, Tennessee, from which none ever wake until the time comes which God has appointed that his Son shall come with the trump of God and the arch angel, and the grave shall give up its dead, and those that live and remain shall all be changed in a moment and the twinking of an eye, and caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall ever be with the Lord.

Written by his Son,
Harvey Vick.

FLORA DARNELL CROFT

Sister Flora Darnell Croft, age 81, departed this life September 7, 1963, after being under the care of a doctor for several months. She was able most of the time to attend church services, and do some household chores.

At the age of nineteen she asked for a home in the Soldier Creek Church of Old School Baptists; she was received and baptized, and remained a faithful member, always filling her seat unless providentially hindered, for these many years.

She prepared herself to teach school when a young girl, helping her father who was a school teacher; and taught only one herself before her marriage in October, 1902, to Joe Darnell, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Marion Darnell.

Flora was blessed in so many ways. Her father and mother, J. D. and Alice Chester Mathis, lived most of their lives in the Soldiers Creek Church, where her father was clerk for many years; and her father-in-law, Uncle Marion Darnell, was deacon there for more than fifty years. She was the niece of the late Elder J. C. Chester, pastor of the church for many years. It can truthfully be said that she spent her life in the fellowship of Primitive Baptists. Her home was a resting place for those who visited the church. The visiting elders held services in the home — where prayer and supplication were want to be made.

In the Spring of 1936 Joe Darnell passed away, leaving sister Flora with four sons, Paul, Clay, Joe Jr., and Roy Darnell; and two daughters, now Mrs. Lena Walker and Alice Kathryn Duke. After these children had homes of their own, she married O. C. Croft, whose home was near Fulton, Ky., where they lived and made their home a home for the church folks and friends. This was near the churches of the Bethel Association, and services were held in this home to the comfort and joy of the friends, and the praise and honor of God. Many who read this notice will remember the care and comforts of this home.

Funeral services were held the second Sunday in September in Benton, and the funeral home was filled to its capacity. Elder Paul Poyner, Moderator of the Soldier Creek Church officiated. Interment was in the Soldier Creek Cemetery where her first husband was buried. She leaves her husband, her children and families, except the oldest son, Paul, who died in 1960. Also three brothers, Luther, Willie, and Oather Mathis and their families; and one sister, Sister Grace Lyles. She is greatly missed at the church, which she called home. We hope to be submissive to the will of God, believing our loss is her gain. She often quoted Proverbs 16:33, "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." In the Goble Hymn Book she loved hymn 108. She felt much of her time had run to waste, but that her God forgave all follies past, and when her flesh should rest in the tomb, there would be a voice to arouse the tomb with sweet salvation in the sound. Written at the bequest of her sister, Grace Lyles.

Effie Bowden

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 132 DANVILLE, VA., MARCH 1964 No. 3

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3/64
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

SPEEDING ALONG LIFE'S PATHWAY

Speeding along life's pathway
We struggle, fight and climb,
That we might leave our footprints
Upon the sands of time.

Each one an eager actor;
Each one a part to play:
Time and tide for no man waits —
This too, shall pass away.

For these few lucid moments,
How short their glories seem:
So quickly is their passing,
Become an empty dream.

Oh! mortal man, you creature,
How small a part you play:
The ebbing of waves and tide
Your act will wash away.

If God in his great mercy,
Directs this hand and heart,
And humbly makes me to face
This lonely actor's part:

It will so important be
That He my part did play:
It is His word — this alone,
That will not pass away.

Haseltine Allen — August, 1963

(Submitted by Sister Mary Eckard
Spokane, Washington.)

EXPERIENCE OF ELISABETH INGRAM

Dear Brother:

I will endeavor to tell you some of the travail of my soul, as I hope, from nature to grace, as you requested me. When I was in my nineteenth year, the first year after my marriage, I was struck down sick suddenly, and while I lay sick, news came to me that one of my sisters-in-law, a single lady, had professed a hope and was to join the church next meeting. I was glad for her, but so troubled about myself that I could not help crying every time I thought about it. I wanted to be fitted to be with her. It came like a thunderbolt to me. Suppose I had died the other day when I was so bad, I certainly would have gone to torment, I had lived such a wild frolicsome life. I was ringleader in all special amusements, meanwhile at times promising myself to do better at some future time, when I got old, or when I got married, but I was never ready to change my habit of living. But now I was tired of sin and was resolving in my mind to try and live a better life than I ever had lived, but was afraid there was no chance for me.

By the time she was baptized, I was able to go but I felt miserable; I could hardly hold my head up for crying. It seemed to me that everybody was looking at me, and sister looked so sweet and happy.

Very shortly after this I had a dream that I didn't know what to think of. I dreamed that I saw Jesus coming in the clouds toward me, and it was judgement day. I fell to the ground with fear but as he got over to where I was somehow I was not afraid, and arose to meet and kiss him; then I awoke. I thought much about this dream. Sometimes I would think it was a pardon of my sins, but could not quite think it was. So time passed, three or four years, and I trying to do the best I could but alas I found that I could not do good; that

everything that I thought of was evil. Once I broke out so far as to sing a love song to please a young school ma'm who was staying with us, and, Oh, how it did grieve me afterward.

Several times I would dream that I had already joined the church, and had come to the conclusion that I was not fit to be there, and that troubled me very much. I would actually awake crying. When I went to meeting I would think that when I get home I will seek some place where no one will see me, and, will try to pray. But my heart would fail me. I dared not move my lips to pray, for I could not pray. Sometimes I thought, Oh, that I could be humbled to the ground, and then try to pray, for I thought I was sure to die in a few months. I craved to die in my right mind. I thought that if I could know that I was dying, maybe I could try to pray. I read my Bible much, but not a promise there for me; all was against me, for I was wicked. At length the time came that I had expected to die, and I fared very well. Then my fears were not so great for nearly a month, when I took a backset and was brought very low.

One day all in a moment of time I thought I was dying, and never shall I forget the agony of that hour 'till my dying day. Everything turned dark before me, and I was in a shake and tremble from head to foot. I thought every breath would be my last.

It seemed to me that I was on the brink of torment just ready to be plunged in. All that I could think of to say was, "If I must die Lord, have mercy on me." My husband and Grandma told me that I was not dying but the world could not have made me believe it. At last I saw in my mind these words written in big letters, "WILL NOT THE JUDGE OF THE WHOLE EARTH DO RIGHT?" I thought he would. My fear of death at that began to wear away and it looked light in the house again. I wondered if my sins were pardoned. I had always thought that if I ever met with a change I would know it; that I would be overjoyed like I hear the preachers tell of. I thought that I would know it plainly, but I did not. I knew that there was some sort of a change, for I wondered if what I have related was anything to hope from or not. Before that I knew I had none, but the next morning I awoke with the most pleasant feeling, nothing hurt me; I felt as if I had dreamed a sweet dream but did not know what it was. In about three weeks I began to get very uneasy. It could not be that I was changed. I wanted to feel that burden and its removal again to better understand it, but it never came with the same weight as before. I turned on my face and cried while praying to the Lord to have mercy on me, when suddenly these words dropped into my mind. "My yoke is easy and my burden is light. Take up thy cross and follow me." I did not know what taking up the cross meant at that time, but Oh! how I felt that I loved the church; how I longed to be baptised, if it was the Lord's will, and how I craved to hear Elder Cassell preach. I could not think of it without shedding tears.

One day I felt like singing, "How lost was my condition," but didn't because of those around me. However when I became able to go to meeting a coldness had come over me and I could not hear preaching. I would not have tried to unite with them for anything in the world. For, it seemed to me that I had nothing to tell; I felt ashamed for ever having such thoughts as I had. I felt that if I had been changed by grace that the Lord would make my duty plain at his appointed time. About a year after I thought that I had a little hope, I read some experiences in the Gospel Messenger. I thought surely that I had experienced something. I wanted to talk to some Baptist, but found it inconvenient.

I began to be in much troubled about my state. I pondered these things over and over again. I was afraid that I was not doing my duty. I tried to pray to the Lord to show me my duty. At

length I slept and dreamed that I was at church and in great distress when an Elder asked me why I did not join the church. I told him that I was afraid that I was not prepared. He said, "If you can beg the Lord to save you that is enough," and motioned for me to go on. I went to the February meeting and if I ever heard preaching I heard it that day. At first I didn't understand the preachers text, which brought me very low, but before he finished, my hope was brighter than it had ever been before . . . When the invitation was given I went forward with much fear and trembling, and to my joy was received, and my joy continued for some time by day and night with sweet dreams and visions. One night I viewed a shining light which I thought was Christ. I thought my husband saw it too and was going with us to that light. I was so glad and kissed him in my sleep. I told him the pretty dream was the cause. After that I had no doubts but that he would be changed. Later on he told me that his burden had been removed. (He joined the church in latter years.)

When I was baptized I was feeling as well as I ever did in my life. I hardly know how I got out of the water for there stood with outstretched arms my dear old deaf and dumb father, who was a member and I believe a Christian, to receive me. Many are the trials, temptations, sickness and afflictions have I had since that time but the Lord has brought me thru them all. Praise his Holy name, I can say that I am not worthy of the least of his blessings. Much of my time I go groping along in the dark but occasionally get a crumb from my Master's table.

One night in a vision I saw myself going up a hill and it nearly dark. I could hardly get along for the weight of my burden, and I prayed the Lord to show me once more something whereby I might know that I was his child. As I raised my eyes toward heaven I saw streams of light from the Lord to comfort me and my burden fell off, leaving me light as a feather. I leaped up to the top of the hill, nothing doubting, shouting praises to the top of my voice; saying, "Blessed be God forever." Was not this a sweet crumb for me? I've never seen anything like this with my natural eyes but often longed for it. I should be content with what is given me but sometimes complain. I can't help that old nature of mine. So much of the time I find myself out of the way. I ask myself, Oh, wretch that I am, who shall deliver me? I thank God through Jesus Christ. One day in my grief I was crying because I could not live up to the law, when it came into my mind, that "Jesus Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believe." I asked myself, "Do you believe?" I answered. "Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief." I had read the above quotations before but never understood them.

My chief joy is to be in company with Old Baptists, especially the preachers and hear them preach, for the gospel in its purity is perfection to me. I want you to pray for me and that the Lord will give me a heart to pray for myself and my family.

Your unworthy sister in hope of eternal life.

Elisabeth Ingram

P. S. Brother Wood, the above is the experience of my sainted mother who was the most religious of anyone that I have ever met. She sets forth clearly that it is thru much tribulation that we enter the kingdom.

The above has been slightly revised for brevity. If you think it is good to remind our brethren of the journey from "Nature to Grace," you may let it appear in the Signs. We hear such a little of late of a pilgrim's progress.

With love and best wishes to the household of faith, I am,

Yours in bonds,
(Elder) P. E. Ingram
Martinsville, Va.

DISCIPLINE

(An editorial from the Gospel News published by the late Elder J. M. Perkins of Kentucky.)

The question of Discipline is one of great importance, and none of us have studied it as we probably should. Grievious mistakes have been made on account of not knowing how to conduct business. It is very unbecoming on the part of moderator or chairman to take advantage of the unfortunate who does not know how to bring business before a body, and especially religious meetings. All Baptist churches (as probably all others) have written rules by which they are to be governed in all their business. Those rules are supposed to be founded on the Scriptures.

As to grievances, the Saviour's language is plain enough. "If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear thee, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." This certainly has reference to individual cases where one member trespasses against another, and is not the rule in public offenses. Many times a member is guilty of an offense against the body, and in such cases there would not be one or two to take, nor a church to tell it to after the above rule had been compiled with. Private offenses should be dealt with privately, and settled that way if possible. If not, they have to be brought before the body. Public offenses should be dealt with publicly. Public offenses settled privately, rarely give satisfaction. Sometimes a brother is guilty of a public offense and some one brings a charge against him, and he will endeavor to screen himself by referring to a case of a single individual, by saying, "You have not taken gospel steps." He would have each member come privately in turn and then one or two more in order, and then for them to tell it to the balance of the body, when at the same time the body is already offended. In this way, many churches have been prevented from executing the proper course of discipline, and, as a result, confusion and discord prevails.

Some have argued that a member could not be excluded from a church unles the vote was unanimous. If such was permissable a church could never exclude a member unless among Baptists in which unanimity is required and that is in receiving, and in dismissing by letter. All other is by majority. However, there are some isolated cases where churches have some special rules requiring unanimity. It is not supposed (because it is said a majority shall rule in all other cases except the ones referred to) that the majority is always right. A majority may be wrong. The act of a majority is not legal except it be in accordance with the rules and faith and practice of the order of the body. As an example, a majority may be in favor of adopting some new doctrine or practice that is different or contrary to the principles on which the church was constituted, or a majority may be in favor of embracing entirely a new doctrine; in all such cases, the act of a majority would not be a valid act at all. We will quote from high legal authority where property is conveyed to trustees for the use of a church, having a well known and established doctrine and faith and practice:" A majority of the members have not the power by reason of a change of religious views, to carry the property thus dedicated, to a new or different doctrine. A rule of decorum of Baptist churches authorizes a majority of the members to determine all questions coming before it, except the reception of members, but this does not give the majority a right to change the faith of the church against the objection or protest of the minority."

Here it may be seen from the highest authority that for a majority act to be valid it must be in harmony with the faith and practice and constitution

of the church. Even though the rules of decorum say a majority shall rule in all cases (except receiving and dismissing members), yet that majority is not at liberty to act outside of the limits of the constitution.

It has often been asked, What can a church do to unchurch herself? It would be a clear case of such when she departs from her former principles and adopts a new doctrine contrary to that which she was founded upon; she would have unchurched herself. Likewise when an officer of a church, be he minister or deacon, who has been ordained to a certain faith or doctrine or practice, departs from those principles, evidently he has forfeited all authority vested in him by the church or presbytery.

There is a great diversity of opinion about how business should be conducted in conference of church meetings or other religious bodies. Motions made in order and receiving a second, should be considered by the body unless the maker withdraws them. For a motion to be in order, it should be in accordance with the rules of decorum. It is a mistaken idea for a moderator to think he has the right to declare any motion out of order, when it is made in order. The moderator is equally bound by the rules just the same as the member who makes the motion. When a motion is made and receives no second, it fails; it should not be debated. Motions made and seconded, while under consideration any member may move an amendment, and if the proposed amendment gets a second, it is to be considered and voted on first, and if a majority be in favor of the amendment then the first motion and the amendment become one; and the final vote is then to be taken. It is a sad mistake for a moderator or chairman to rule that a number of members having a charge preferred against them that they should not be allowed to vote or even to speak in their defense at the proper time. We have heard of such a ruling, and it is not recognised by the best authorities. Mr. Roberts, in his work on rules of order, tells us that no one can vote on a question effecting himself, but if more than one name is included in the resolution (though a sense of delicacy would prevent this right being exercised except when it would change the vote). All are entitled to vote, for if this was not so a minority could control an assembly by including the names of a sufficient number in a motion, and by preferring charges against them, and suspend or even expel them from the assembly. Such a proceeding would be unjust and unkind, and would give designing men an advantage over the helpless. Mr. Roberts says in a footnote that after charges are preferred against a member, and the assembly has ordered him to appear for trial, that he is theoretically under arrest and is deprived of all rights of membership until his case is disposed of. He further says that when a tie vote is given the motion fails, unless the chairman gives his vote for the affirmative, which he is at liberty to do, as he has the right to vote whenever his vote will effect the result; if he gives his vote for the negative, the measure or motion is defeated. If there is an appeal to the moderator's vote, even a tie vote will kill the motion because the chair is sustained by a principle that the chair can be reversed only by a majority.

Just here I want to give one more point on order, and that is in cases where a church petitions for membership in a union or association, the ones desiring to be received are not allowed to vote for their own reception. In all such cases I give it as my opinion that such receptions ought to be unanimous, and further I think that where points of fellowship are involved, that the vote should invariably be unanimous.

I have only given a few points on order.

(We are glad to re-publish the above, that the brethren may be better acquainted with such important matters. Submitted by Elder J. N. Darnall — J. D. W.)

A SERMON BY ELDER LEFFERTS I SAMUEL 25TH CHAPTER

I desire this morning to talk to you of some things in this chapter. It is a very interesting chapter, telling of a woman named Abigail: once the wife of Nabal, she afterwards became the wife of David. David is spoken of as a man after God's own heart. He was the second king over the Israelites — Saul was the first king, but God gave Saul to them in his wrath, for the Israelites were not content until they had a king like the nations around them. Saul was not a man after God's own heart; rather he is somewhat a type of anti-Christ. The devil has always persecuted Christ; and Saul persecuted David, who in many things is a type of Christ.

However, David was as weak as any of us when left to himself. We can none of us stand one moment longer than as we are kept by God. There are people today who say that if they could rewrite the Bible, they would cut out those things which tell of the weakness of bible characters; and tell only of their virtues. But the Scriptures are written for our learning, and the Holy Spirit's teaching is not as man's. There were many who were sometimes strong in faith, but they sometimes broke down. There are such things as "spiritual breakdowns". Moses broke down. In the wilderness the children of Israel murmured against him for water. God told Moses to **speak** to the rocks, but Moses **smote** it twice. (Numbers 20:8-11) This was, in a figure, to belittle the work of the Lord Jesus.

This rock which Moses smote twice, had already been smitten once, and the water poured forth. (Exodus 17:6) It was only necessary for Jesus to be smitten once for salvation to be accomplished for his people. Not only that but Moses spake unadvisedly with his lips: In his anger, when he smote the rock on this occasion, he said, "Hear now, ye rebels, must **we** fetch you water out of this rock?" Must we do it? Salvation is wholly of God and not by any works of our own, yet Moses said, "Must **we** do it?" The Lord told Moses that he had not sanctified the Lord before the people of Israel. Moses fell down!

Elijah fell down. He was so bold in faith that he could face four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and prove who was the true God: "The God that answereth by fire, let him be God." The prophets of Baal called on him for hours, pleading for him to send fire for the sacrifice, but Baal heard not. Afterwards Elijah prayed unto God and fire came and consumed the sacrifice, and licked up all the water round about it.

Yet, see the weakness of Elijah! Because Jezebel threatened his life, he fled. Elijah fell down!

Peter broke down. In the garden of Gethsemane he was so bold, he drew his sword and smote off the ear of Malchus, the high priest's servant: Yet how soon he was afraid to acknowledge Jesus before his enemies.

Paul, too, broke down. How weak he once became! If we turn to the Acts, we find there an account of it. He allowed himself to be persuaded to join with four men who had the vow of a Nazarite on them, to save himself from the Jews. Turning to the book of Numbers, we find there that on the eighth day of their separation a blood sacrifice had to be offered. Paul was with these men until the seventh day was nearly ended — the eighth day almost there; but for God's providence how far would Paul have fallen! For Paul to have offered a blood sacrifice would have been no less than trampling under foot the blood of Jesus Christ; but God's mercy prevented Paul, for an angry mob drew him out of the temple to kill him, but he was saved by the soldiers. God used this mob in his providence, to keep Paul.

I cannot understand those who laugh at the idea of God's providences. He has appeared for me many times in my life providentially when I could see no way.

All these men proved how weak in themselves they were; and all of us, when left to ourselves, break down. There is no telling how far we would fall but for this: that the everlasting arms are underneath. We cannot fall out of them, and they are ever there underneath however low we may fall. God tells us of Jacob, that, as an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord did lead him. You know the mother eagle stirs up the nest from under the little eaglets, and in falling they involuntarily use their wing muscles; but the mother eagle swoops under them, catching them in their struggles. This is done over and over to exercise the wing muscles until the young birds are able to fly. **If we did not have the trials of our faith, we never would use the wing muscles of prayer by which we soar to the Throne of Grace.**

David, though a man after God's own heart, was very weak many times. When he was a young man he went in the strength of the Lord and smote Goliath the Philistine giant. Saul, who was then king, made David put on his armour, but he said he could not go in that, and he put it off. All David had was a sling and stone; and the stone struck the giant in the forehead. You may say that required good marksmanship, but I believe God directed that stone. If you say, "But the giant had on an helmet of brass." I believe the stone went right through the helmet and sank into Goliath's forehead: then David drew Goliath's sword and smote off his head with it.

David was strong then; but not long after we find how weak he became. After his killing of the enemy, one would have thought Saul would have been proud of David; but he was jealous of him, and sought his life: and David fled from Saul. Instead of putting his trust in God now, what did he do? He took Goliath's sword, saying, "There in none like that", using a weapon of the enemy of the Israelites.

On one occasion David and his men went into a cave in the wilderness of En-gedi. Yes, David was not alone, for it tells previously that at the cave Adullam every one that was in distress, or in debt, or discontented, gathered themselves unto him: and he became a captain over them. Even so, Jesus is the captain of our salvation, made perfect through suffering: and every one who is distressed on account of sin, a thousand talents in debt, with not one farthing to pay, discontented with the pleasures this earth affords, gather themselves unto him.

While David and his men were in the cave, Saul, unaware of their presence, came into the cave, and lay down to sleep. David's men tempted him to destroy Saul, saying that God had delivered David's enemy into his hand; but David stayed his men by telling them not to put forth their hand against the Lord's anointed. David did, however, cut off a piece of Saul's skirt; but he was sorry afterwards, even for that. After Saul awoke and started out, David went out also, and cried after him, "My lord the king", and stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself. Then in meekness he said to Saul, "Why do you listen to those who say David seeketh thy hurt?" He brings the relationship still closer, and says, "My father," (for David was Saul's son-in-law), and shows Saul the proof that he could have killed him: the piece of Saul's skirt. David then says, "The Lord avenge me of thee, but mine hand shall not be upon thee."

Here we see David reposing his confidence in his God; but how weak he sometimes was! He said, "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul." At another time he said, "There is but a step between me and death", but it was not so. David was not to die that day, nor the next day, nor for many years. Had not God already anointed him to be king over Israel?

We now come to the account in the chapter we have before us as our sub-

ject. David and his men became hungry; and David, instead of trusting God to provide for them, sent ten young men to a man named Nabal. This man had great possessions; and it was sheep shearing time. This meant much food prepared for the shearers; and David knew there would be plenty, and to spare. So David sent these ten men to ask Nabal for food, with the plea that he and his men had done no hurt to anything that was Nabal's all the while they were near his shepherds and flocks; and that Nabal's shepherds would bear him out. Nabal answered David's men roughly, refusing them, and saying, "Shall I take **my** bread, (I want you to notice that word **my**), and **my** water, and **my** flesh, that I have killed for **my** shearers, and give it unto you?

Nabal's character is exactly shown in a parable which Jesus spake of a rich man whose ground brought forth plentifully. He asked himself what he should do, as he had no room to bestow **my** fruits: "I will pull down my barns and build greater; and there will I bestow all **my** fruits and **my** goods; and I will say unto **my** soul, Thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry." But God said unto him, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?"

This exactly fits Nabal's case, for the name Nabal means "fool". Nabal said these things are **mine**, not considering at whose hand he received them. At the return of his men, David became angry, and vowed vengeance on Nabal and all that he had, saying, "Gird ye on every man his sword." Oh! David, where is now that humble waiting upon God that you had when you could not lay your hand upon Saul? The name of Nabal's wife was Abigail, a very different character from her husband. Their marriage, which probably was not a love marriage, (but one put on them by their parents as was often the case in those days), was not at all congenial. One of Nabal's men told Abigail all that had happened, saying indeed that the men were very good to us, and were a wall of protection unto us all the time they were with us. The man went to Abigail, for he knew it would be useless to try to plead with Nabal. So Abigail made ready food for David and his men, and went out to meet David; but not telling her husband what she was doing. In those days a woman was subject to her husband, and it was a very unusual thing which Abigail did in acting without her husband's knowledge. But Abigail knew the uselessness of telling Nabal, and unless peace could be made with David, all the men of Nabal's house would be destroyed. Necessity was laid upon her. After her pleading with David, David blessed the Lord which had sent her to meet him, and blessed her that had kept him from shedding blood, and avenging himself with his own hand.

We said in starting out that David was in many respects a type of Christ. Abigail well represents a poor sinner under condemnation, feeling guilt and the consequent wrath of God: from whom there is no escape but through the Lord Jesus to whom the soul flees for refuge. Abigail at first is the wife of Nabal, a man of thorough worldiness. There was no congeniality in this union: neither can the sinner, feeling the burden and guilt of sin, find any good in the world. They had no children — neither can one married to the world bring forth fruit unto God.

Abigail, when pleading with David, took all the blame on herself: she did not put the blame on her husband. Neither will the one convicted of sin, try to put the blame on anyone else: they will be like David, who said, "Against thee, and thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." We shall not try to make excuses, but beg for mercy and forgiveness, as Abigail did, knowing God's anger is just. She said unto David, "The Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house . . . yet a man is risen to pursue thee and

to seek thy soul: but the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God . . . and when the Lord shall have appointed thee ruler over Israel, then remember thine handmaid."

Do we not see Jesus in all this? When Jesus was born, Herod did his best to destroy him, but he could not. Abigail's plea to be remembered, reminds us of the thief on the cross, who said, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." David gave Abigail an answer of peace, and told her that he had harkened to her voice, and accepted her person, even as Jesus did to the thief.

Now Abigail returns and tells her husband what she had done; and when she told him, his heart died within him and he became as a stone, and soon after he died. The law says that a woman is bound to her husband as long as he liveth, but if he be dead she is free to marry another. Here is a sinner once married to the world, as it were, but now the world is dead to him and he longs for another, even Christ.

When David knew that Nabal was dead, he sent his men to commune with Abigail, to take her to him to be his wife. He does not go himself. So the Lord by the Holy Spirit woos us, and espouses us unto Christ, until the time shall come when he shall come for His bride.

The name David means "Beloved," and the name Abigail means "Delight"; so is the Lord Jesus our Beloved, and his church or bride is his Delight. Nabal was a very rich man, and all that was his when he died became Abigail's: but she turned her back on it all, to become David's wife: She no longer desired Nabal's riches: David was more to her. So the Lord Jesus appears the Altogether Lovely to his people: the world loses its charms, and He becomes their ALL.

(The above was a sermon by Elder H. H. Lefferts at Mt. Zion Church in Virginia September 24, 1933, and reported by Sister Grace Aston, who was a sister of Sister George Ruston. We feel that all will enjoy reading it. — J. D. W.)

REVELATION 14:13

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write." Write what? Answer: "Blessed **are** the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

All who die in the Lord are different, and very different from those who die out of the Lord, or without hope. Paul says in First Thessalonians, 4:13-14: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him."

Death is something no doubt all in nature dread to think about. But to those who have a hope, it is the gate to endless joy. Gibbons was inspired to write a beautiful hymn on the subject of death. I will quote one verse:

"Why should we start and fear to die?
What timorous worms we mortals are!
Death is the gate of endless joy,
And yet we dread to enter there."

This dread comes from the weakness of the flesh. In nature, those who have a hope still want to cling to life, even as those who have no hope. Thus when we get very sick we send for a doctor. No one knows the last thoughts of those who die out of Christ; neither does anyone know the last thoughts of those who die **in** Christ.

But I have wondered if those who die in Christ do not have a feeling that they are just passing out of a world of sorrow, into a world of joy and peace. Even though there is suffering, yet there is a willingness to suffer, knowing that Christ suffered first for their sins, and without the shedding of His blood there could be no remission of their sins. I am reminded of what someone has written:

"Though our cup seems mixed with gall,
There is something secret sweetens all."

Getting back to Thessalonians, Chapter Four, there is something in Verse 15 that puzzles me: "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are live and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep." **We** in verse 15 is the word that puzzles me. This word seems to indicate that Paul expected to be alive and remain at the Second Coming of Christ; but the apostle has been dead a long time, and Christ has not yet appeared in bodily form, so that every eye should see Him. How then can this seeming discrepancy be explained?

What I notice particularly, is the positive language used in Verse 15, first clause: "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord . . ." This shows that the apostle affirmed he was speaking by the authority of the Lord. I wonder if there was a mistake made in the translation. I have heard and read of some Bible scholars who say they have discovered errors in translation of some passages from the original manuscript. It seems to me there are some words left out in the last clause of Verse 15: "That we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep." Prevent them from what? We are not told what. But the supposition is, that those who are alive and remain at the coming of the Lord, will not go before those who are asleep to meet the Lord in air; but all who have died in Christ will be resurrected and they will all be together, caught up to meet the Lord in the air. This supposition seems reasonable, and I have nothing to say against it.

Now a few thoughts relating to the Second Coming of the Lord, and I will close. A universal church is being advocated as a means of bringing unity among the different denominations. Eugene Corson Blake of the Presbyterian Church is at the head of this movement. I read a sermon he preached on the subject of unity; and in this sermon he advocates that the four leading Protestant denominations unite with the Roman Catholic Church, and thus form a universal church, but leaving the way open for others to join if they so desire.

It seems to me I see all this portrayed in Revelation, Chapter 17, Verses 12 and 13: "And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast." We notice these ten kings only have power with the beast one hour; thus showing their kingdom will be of short duration. But during their reign, they will make war with the Lamb (Christ) and will be overcome by Him. The remainder of this chapter has to do with the destruction of the whore. (Verse 15) Chapter 18 gives a complete account of this destruction. How near this time is, no one knows, but judging from what we read in Matthew, Chapter 24, and Luke 21, it looks like this time is near.

I know of no words more fitting with which to close this writing, than those found in Rev. 16:15: "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame . . ." I do not feel to comment on these words, but leave them for the consideration of those who may read.

A. T. Benson
Delmar, Del.

(In commenting on the above, and also replying to a request by the same writer in a separate letter concerning the use of the word WE by the Apostle, it seems that it is not difficult to understand the phraseology used by the Apostle.

Certainly from the thirteenth verse to the end of the chapter, the Apostle is writing by the same authority by which he wrote and preached all other

things pertaining to the doctrine of the gospel. I should never want to hear one say anything that would leave the impression that the Apostle was mistaken in what he said, or that there were many mistakes in the Authorized Version. Let others deny such as they will of the truth, but it is much better for one to say of any point that he doesn't understand it, rather than to make a rash statement concerning it.

The purpose of the Apostle here was to comfort the brethren, and confirm them in the truth of the resurrection, and their hope of it; that they might not be ignorant concerning those which were asleep, and thus have an intense degree of sorrow as did those who had no hope of the resurrection. He uses the very evidence and faith that they had that Jesus died and rose again, to say that those who had died (or should die) in that faith and hope, were asleep in Jesus, and that God would bring them with Jesus at his coming.

Then, assuring them that what he wrote was by the word of the Lord, he said that there should be some of the Lord's people yet living at the coming of the Lord; using the pronoun WE: "We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep."

He is not here saying that he himself, or those unto whom he was writing, would be alive and remain at the coming of the Lord, for by turning to the second epistle to the same Thessalonians, in the second chapter, we find he settles any such thought they might have had concerning it, by saying, "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;" etc.

It is evident that he was speaking of the whole family, the whole number composing the body of Christ. The doctrine is that all of the redeemed of the Lord should have part in the resurrection — all should ever be with the Lord. Though an untold number should be asleep in Jesus at the time of his coming, there should be those who were yet alive. But all should be in order, for the living should not prevent those that sleep: The dead shall rise first, then those who are yet living at the time, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and should all ever be with the Lord.

The word WE as he used it, is used representatively and not personally. So the Apostle was not in any sense mistaken in what he wrote; neither is there a mis-translation, since the Authorized Version retains the literal meaning of the Greek as closely as possible in a translation, as shown in any Interlinear New Testament.

Now let us look at the word "prevent" as used by the translators. This is rarely used nowadays in its meaning here, but the Greek word from which it is translated means, "to precede, or go before", according to the Greek-English dictionary. Thus the living at the time of the coming of Christ shall not precede the dead in Christ in rising, for the dead shall rise first, then the living shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall the redeemed ever be with the Lord.

Many other things pertaining to the resurrection and eternal life follow what we have said above, but we leave off here, hoping that what has been said will be sufficiently clear to Elder Benson and others. It is to be noted that the resurrection of the unjust is not mentioned here, and that what is said applies only to the redeemed. — J. D. W.)

ELDER DAVENPORT PASSES

325 West Missouri Avenue
El Paso, Texas
December 8, 1963

Dear Brother Spangler:

I hand you herewith two letters; one from our daughter, Mrs. Edith Little, and one from our grandson, Edith's son, written to their grandmother and great-grandmother, Mrs. S. C. Davenport, immediately upon their learning of the passing of Papa Davenport. I trust that you will find space to publish them.

A brother in hope,
Hubert T. Faulk

1408 Hank Avenue
Artesia, New Mexico
December 3, 1963

Dear Big Mama:

Even when we see it coming, the loss of a loved one catches us not quite ready to accept it. Our hearts are with you today as they have been in the last few days and will continue to be. We regret so much the circumstances that keep us from coming at this time to be with you, and we will try to be reconciled that the same great God whom Papa served can draw us together in spirit no matter where we are. Since we cannot be there to pay our last respects we will try to conduct our lives in such way that we can be living testimony of the respect we hold for him.

We are all physically well at this time for which we are thankful.

I will write more when I can find words to express myself. I find cause to rejoice even in our saddest hour, that we do not mourn as those who have no hope. Thanks be to God who giveth the victory — even over death.

Thank you Big Mama for your example of a life of humility, service, love and patience. That is a legacy that no power on earth can take from us. Love,

Edith

New Mexico Military Institute,
Roswell, New Mexico
December 4, 1963

Dear Big Mama:

I just got a letter from mother telling me about Paw Paw's death. I had called her on Sunday and at the time she said he was having a hard time. I'm sorry that I won't be able to be there in body but I will be there in spirit. He is with his Lord now and is happy. I hope that I can carry his name justly and not bring shame on it.

Did he have much pain in his last moments? I pray that the good Lord spared him of this. My thoughts are of you and everybody that was with him at the last. May God bless them and keep them always.

I have to go now. Remember that I am thinking of you and keep your head high.

With love,
Geral Steven Little

(We regretted to learn of the passing of Elder Davenport, though it was not unexpected at his age. We shall not soon forget a night we spent with him and Sister Davenport, and how closely we were drawn together as we conversed of the things the Lord has done for his people.

We hope a suitable obituary will be sent for publication. — J. D. W.)

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726 Falls Road,
Rocky Mount, N. C.

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing a money order to renew my subscription for another year. I surely enjoy it a lot, and always have: it is the next thing to going to church.

I hope the Lord will see fit to bless your staff in the publication of the paper for

many years to come. I am also sending one dollar for your Indigent Fund. I know how good it would seem for someone to send it to me if I could not pay for it. I hope to be able to subscribe for a long time yet.

From a little sister saved by the grace of God, if saved at all. Many thanks, and love to all of the household of faith.

Mrs. Lessie Davis

THERE IS NO OTHER REFUGE

3347 Tutwiler,
Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Editors:

Enclosed you will find check for two years' subscription to the *Signs,* which will be due soon. It would be lonely without it coming. Its pages hold many lines of experience of dear ones far and near, who are taught of the Lord: Each in their own way telling the same sweet story of salvation by grace and grace alone.

The Lord works in mysterious ways his wonders to perform. The world is dark and stormy, and fear of many things are mentioned all around us; yet we do know that God is still on his throne, having all power in heaven and earth — not even a sparrow shall fall to the ground without your Father, and the very hairs of your head are numbered. What a wonderful blessing it is to believe in God; to believe he is able to save from the fiery furnace. How can we think for one moment that he is not able to do his will!

As we see terrible things taking place that bring added sorrow, distress and grief, and untold suffering, we are helpless creatures; and as we consider our weakness, we know of no other refuge but in the Lord. We beg to be kept by his grace, and be given renewed strength and courage for our day. He promised never to leave nor forsake his believing children; and I don't believe He will. He watches over them, and no weapon formed against them shall prosper.

So much of the time we are in prison, and, as John, we want to be shown again the working of God's mighty power; and have more evidence to strengthen our hope as we travel, feeling unworthy of his mercies. Then when he speaks peace to our souls, he shows us wonderful things which are seen only with spiritual eyes. We are then filled, and say, It is enough. We are humbled and see so much in our own nature that we would esteem our brethren better than ourselves.

"In this world ye shall have tribulations, but in me peace." There have always been hurtful things along life's way to be borne, but Jesus said, "Fear not for I have overcome the world." When he walked here among men, (he being Lord of all), when he was reviled, he reviled not again. This same one taught us to forgive one another, and if we forgive not a brother neither will our heavenly Father forgive us. This has always been a strong statement to me, and fearful, for we find that of ourselves we can do nothing; yet Jesus said that in him we can do all things. So we have to beg him to be merciful to our unrighteousness. O, that we could look away from the fruits of the flesh, and think more about the fruits of the Spirit.

When we see a fault in a brother or sister, if we could but examine our own selves, we would see enough to cause us to bear with them, and desire to reason with them. ". . . he which converteth the sinner from the error of his shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

. . . Oh, how I desire to know the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving." (Col. 2:6, 7) These things are precious, and certainly worthy of our sincere consideration and prayer to God that

he enable us by his grace to walk in Him. May we be enabled to praise him for the blessings of his mercies to usward in his loving watchcare over us all the days of our lives. Praise his holy name.

In a sweet hope,
Mrs. Luther Campbell

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UPPER COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The next session of the **Upper Country Line UNION MEETING** will be held at Gilliam's Church, the Lord willing, March 29th. The church is half way between Burlington and Reidsville, N. C., on Highway 87.

Brother Sam Gwynn, Clerk

DEDICATION SERVICE

Dedication services for their new building are appointed by the brethren of Saints Rest Church, at 2710 Engle Street, Dallas, Texas, to be held the 5th Sunday in March, as follows: Friday evening before at 7:30; all day on Saturday with services again at 7:30 that evening; and on Sunday morning until noon. The brethren and friends are invited to meet with them. Elder W. W. Taylor is their pastor.

EDITORIAL

DANIEL 4:17

"This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men."

There is much instruction and food for thought in the events recorded in the first four chapters of Daniel. In them we see God's sovereign power manifested in using Nebuchadnezzar to accomplish his judgments upon Judah and upon the other kingdoms of the then known world. There is also evidence of God's dealing with him as a man and bringing him down to the level of the beasts that perish, then revealing to him a true knowledge of God in the affairs of nations and also of individuals.

In Deuteronomy 11:26, Moses set before Israel as a whole, a blessing and a curse, and in Deuteronomy 28:49-50 it reads, "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth, a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand." The twelve tribes of Israel soon departed from their God and followed after the gods of the nations around them. When the tribes were divided into two kingdoms,

the ten tribes were led into idolatry by their rulers and at last Israel's cup of iniquity was full to overflowing, and God used Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, to carry away the ten tribes captive with their wicked king Hoshea. 2 kings 17.

For over a hundred years the kingdom of Judah was spared, but when their cup of iniquity was filled to the brim, Nebuchadnezzar was used by our God to carry Judah into captivity. 2 Chronicles 36:1-20. In Daniel 1, we see that there were young princes, relatives of the king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar commanded to be brought into the king's household. Food was to be provided for them of the king's meat and of the wine which he drank, so nourishing them for three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king. Among those so favoured were Daniel, Hananiah Mishael, and Azariah. There were those, no doubt, who had no scruples about eating or drinking what came from the king's table, but these four had. Undoubtedly they had been taught aright, for we have seen that even wicked kings sometimes had servants who were godly men, as Obadiah, who was governor of wicked Ahab's house. 1 Kings 18:3. These young men, nurtured in Jewish worship and laws, and prompted by a right spirit within, could not, without protest, eat of the king's food. They were captives, but no doubt they said, as some of their brethren of a later day, Peter and John, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye." True, they had seen calamity to the full come upon them, their king and temple, but God, the God of Israel, was their God, and had not they sung Psalm 105:14-15? "He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reproved kings for their sakes; saying, touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm."

God's covenant love, spoken of in Isaiah 55:3 and Acts 13:34, as the "Sure mercies of David," was soon to be clearly seen and felt by these Hebrew children in the fiery furnace. How lovely to read that "God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs." Daniel 1:9. Favoured and advanced though they were, the fear of God was manifest in those four Jews.

"This fear's the spirit of faith,
A confidence that's strong;
An unctuous light to all that's right,
A bar to all that's wrong."

To them it would not have been to the honour of God for them to eat swine's flesh or any other food that was not allowed under Moses' law. Such trust in God brought the desired effect. Daniel 1:17. "As for those four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams." When the appointed time came that they were to appear before the king, they were found to be ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm. Above all this, these Hebrews were men possessing a faith that could look higher than this great king, to their God who was proving that he alone was King of kings and Lord of lords. May we, in this trying day, realize that their God is our God, and that if he gives a grain of faith, that faith must be tried.

The king, in the second year of his reign, had a dream which worried him, and his spirit was so troubled that his sleep brake from him. He commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, to shew the king his dream, but they were not able to do so. As we read in Daniel 2, we see that though the four Hebrews were reckoned among them, yea, had proved before the king that thy were ten times wiser, yet they kept their own company where they could worship their God and have sweet fellowship in BETTER THINGS. When the anger of the king was so great that his decree went forth that all the wise men should be put to death, and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain, Daniel, trusting in his God, went

before the king, desiring that he would give him time, and he would shew the king the interpretation. Then Daniel went to his house, and told his companions the trouble they were in. "That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret: that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon." Daniel 2:17-18. What an example this is to God's afflicted and poor people in this day of trouble, when their enemies are looking for their destruction. Let us remember that our God does not slumber nor sleep; long after the times about which we are writing, another king, Herod, had slain with the sword, James the brother of John and it pleased the Jews, so he took Peter, planning to also slay him. Acts 12:5. "Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made WITHOUT CEASING of the church unto God for him." These four Hebrews were of like precious faith, the cross of one was the cross of them all, no wonder that such exercise and communion brought the desired effect. "Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: and he changeth the times and seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding, He revealeth the deep and secret things: He knoweth what is in the darkness and the light dwelleth with him. I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto ME now what WE desired of thee: for thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter." Daniel 2:19-23. The dream, covering in one great image the various kingdoms of Gentile peoples to the present day, yes, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, (Romans 11-25) was shown unto the king as Daniel told the dream and its interpretation. Some would think that the king would be a changed man from that day, he even commanded that they offer an oblation and sweet odours unto Daniel, and said, "Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing THOU couldest reveal this secret." The king's heart was not changed, though, at Daniel's request, he set Daniel's three friends over the affairs of the province of Babylon, "but Daniel sat in the gate of the king." Positions of trust of God's children in this world will make them objects of envy, and they will find the world and Satan will seek their destruction, as we shall clearly see in the account of these Hebrew children. Soon after, the king made an image of gold, why not, when Daniel had said that the king was the head of gold in chapter 2? The princes and governors and those in public offices were first commanded that at the sound of musical instruments they were to fall down and worship the image. The Chaldeans, whose lives had been spared when Daniel had been given wisdom to tell the king's dream and the interpretation, were on hand to accuse the three Hebrews. Some might say, where was Daniel? No doubt he was faithfully serving his master at his seat in the king's gate.

These envious accusers had what they thought was a clear case, Jesus said of such, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." John 8:44. What a frightful death they appeared to be facing! How blessed they were to have a trust in the living God. How seemingly free of the fear of man were these favoured men. They answered the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, (that we be cast this hour into a burning fiery furnace,) our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor

worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

The king, still a natural man, whose imperious pride was hurt, was filled with fury, and commanded his most mighty men to bind the three Hebrews in their coats, their hosen and their hats and other garments and cast them into the furnace. The king, astonied as he looked into the furnace, said to his counsellors, "Did not WE cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." Was not this enough to open his eyes? One would think so. It brought forth a lip service, but he must be led still deeper into a knowledge of himself. This king had to be brought down to the level of the beasts that perish. Our God alone knows how to humble the proud and to exalt the lowly. The people of God can never do without their Lord, but at times he seems to hide his face. In Job's distress he cried "Oh that I knew where I might find him! .....Behold I go forward, but he is not there; and backwards, but I cannot perceive him: On the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him: But knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Job 23.

With all that had taken place, Nebuchadnezzar was still high and mighty, or as some in this day say, "Master of his fate." He not only promoted the three Hebrews but commanded that any of his subjects that spoke anything amiss against the Hebrews' God, should be cut in pieces and their houses made a dunghill. The wonders he had beheld, that were to the glory of the MOST HIGH, did not disturb him enough to take his mind off his own works. In Daniel 4:4-5 we read, "I Nebuchadnezzar was at REST in mine house, and FLOURISHING in my palace. I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me." Again, as in his first dream, he looked to those who were wise men after the flesh, to explain to him the interpretation, but they utterly failed him, and again at the last Daniel came in before him and told him what his dream meant, he also gave the king words of wisdom as to his future course. "Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity."

One year passed by and the king walked in his palace looking upon his beautiful city, speaking aloud to his own praise. "Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty? While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee, and they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until THOU KNOW that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws."

It has been thought that for seven years his mind was deranged; and that when those seven times had passed over him, a merciful God restored him, and then he knew the truth. We give his own words to show what a blessed change had come to this man. "And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar LIFTED UP MINE EYES UNTO HEAVEN, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honored him that

liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou?"

How well could those four Hebrews who had witnessed what we have on record of this man say, "WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT."

G. R.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

INTRODUCTORY PREFACE BY ELDER GILBERT BEEBE TO THE FIRST VOLUME OF HIS EDITORIALS 1868

From the early settlement of our country by the Puritians in New England, and the Church of England in the Southern colonies, whose religious supremacy was established by law in their several localities, the Baptists, and indeed all other dissenting orders, suffered great opposition by proscription and oppression from the dominant parties. The Baptists, perhaps, more than any other, were violently treated, and suffered the most cruel persecution. Disfranchisement as citizens, fines, confiscation of property, incarceration in prisons, and banishment for nonconformity, to which was added corporal punishments, public whippings at the stocks, cropping of ears, boring their tongues through with hot irons, tying their heads and feet together, and torturing them in the most barbarous manner for days and nights, and in many cases they were put to death for their persistent and inflexible adherence to the faith and order of the gospel by which they were distinguished from all other orders. In those days of trial there were no worldly inducements offered to attract the worldly-minded to connect themselves with our churches, and there was harmony of sentiment and uniformity of practice among the Baptist churches throughout the whole breadth of our country.

It is true that in those trying times, the general principles of the doctrine of the gospel were not so clearly and fully preached and understood as at earlier and later periods in the history of Apostolic Baptists. As the bible doctrine and order of baptism held by them was the most objectionable to their adversaries, they were constantly called to defend the truth in relation to that ordinance against the assaults of their opponents. And when the violence of persecution began to abate, and by the interposition of the British Crown, and subsequently by the prevalence of more liberal views which were entertained by the patriots of the Revolution, the powers of the Puritians in the East, and of the Episcopalians in the South were so far curtailed as to prevent farther corporal severities; still for many years after the establishment of our federal and state governments, the Puritians of the New England States were patronized by their state legislatures, and allowed to collect their parish tax from all within their parish limits. Afterwards dissenters, by procuring certificates from religious denominations to which they belonged, certifying that they were paying to their own respective orders, were released from the burden of the parish taxes, and finally the whole legal distinction in favor of the Puritians was abolished. Under all the trials and persecutions thus far experienced, the Baptists were a humble, meek, loving and harmoniously-united people throughout our country. But as soon as this oppressive yoke was broken, Satan was ready with other elements of discord to bring trouble and divisions into our churches.

No sooner were the Baptists of America relieved from the galling yoke of Puritanic and Episcoplian priestcraft than the doctrines of Andrew Fuller were introduced, with the professed de-

sign to raise up the Baptists from the dung-hill, to rank respectably with other religious denominations. All who were inclined to the doctrine of Arminianism, with many others who had been led but sparingly into an understanding of the cardinal doctrine of salvation alone by grace, were ready to embrace the plausible and deceptive views of Fuller, and became at once ambitious for the promised elevation.

At this period, which is still fresh in the recollection of the editor of the "Signs of the Times," there was not known among the Baptists of America a single organized institution in connection with, or under the patronage of the Baptists. Theological seminaries, on a very small scale, then began to be talked of, and a small school of this kind was started in Philadelphia, under the direction of Dr. Staughton, to give some grammar lessons to a few of our illiterate young preachers, and soon a college was founded in Washington City, and another educational and theological institution at Hamilton, N. Y., and similar schools began to spring up in various directions. Simultaneously with these, missionary enterprises were set on foot, both domestic and foreign, and Sabbath-schools and Sabbath-school unions, in which various denominations were recognized as hand and glove with Baptists in building up these unscriptural **nurseries for the church,** as they were modestly called. Then followed Bible Societies, to give a semblance of piety to the whole system of religious machinery, followed in turn by Tract Societies, Temperence Societies, Magdaline Societies, Dorcas Societies, and a host of other equally unscriptural institutions under the name of Benevolence and Religion, until, to bring up the rear, the Abolition Society, which had for a time been struggling into life and power under the patronage of a few New England fanatics, was with due ceremony let in and adopted as a pet institution.

While these innovations were being made upon the faith and order of the Baptists, true enough, the Baptists began to rise, according to the prediction of Andrew Fuller, and soon came to be regarded as unsound and as respectable as any other of the worldly churches of this degenerate age. The Baptists were now no longer obliged to pray the Lord of the harvest to furnish preachers; they could supply themselves with a more refined and educated class from their own schools. Converts could now be made to order, and the churches supplied with members from thier **nurseries** and other institutions. Their machinery was now so complete that grace was no longer needed to make their members orderly; for they were supplied with societies to keep them sober and benevolent; and if perchance many of them should lose their piety, their machinery was so ingeniously geared that they could be run through again, and re-converted as often as might be thought advisable.

It was during the prevalence of these abominations that the "Signs of the Times" was commenced. The new order of Baptists had many religious newspapers in the field, which without an exception advocated the institutions named in the foregoing, and the general impression was entertained that there were no churches or preachers left that had not enlisted in this new enterprise for worldly popularity and respectabilily. A few were found here and there, isolated and despised, who signed and groaned on account of the prevailing abominations. Yet few as we were, and far between, we were denounced violently as illiberal, inert, slothful, behind the spirit of a progressive age, and enemies to the spread of the gospel, and opposed to all that is good.

Feeling deeply the need of a medium of correspondence, and excluded from the columns of the so-called Baptist papers, after much deliberation it was concluded to attempt to make ourselves heard by our brethren scattered abroad, by publishing a paper devoted to the cause of truth, and through which we

could enter our solemn protest against all the innovations, new theories and new institutions which, under the name of Baptists, had so greatly prevailed. With these objects in view, in the year 1832, we issued the following prospectus, viz:

Proposals for publishing a semi-monthly paper, to be called the "Signs of the Times," devoted exclusively to the Baptist cause, maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfections of the Great Jehovah — the Revelation which God has given of himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These Three are One." — 1 John v. 8.
2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.
3. Eternal, Unconditional Election.
4. The Total Depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.
5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the Elect only.
6. The Sovereign, Irresistible, and in all cases, Effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in Regenerating and Quickening the Elect of God.
7. The Final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God, by Grace.
8. The Resurrection of the dead, and Eternal Judgement.
9. That the Church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers — that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God.
10. That there is no connection between Church and State, and as touching the proposition for a marriage between them, the Hon. R. M. Johnson, in his Report on the Sabbath Question, has expressed our faith.

The "Signs of the Times" will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath Schools, &c., &c., making war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of Institutions.

The violent opposition manifested by the New Order of Baptists, when our Prospectus appeared, was overruled to our advantage. Immediately on its appearing the batteries of our opponents were opened against us, through both the pulpit and the press. The papers of the New School sounded the alarm and warned the people to beware of the forthcoming paper; and in the Minutes of many Associations the churches were warned to withhold their support and countenance from us. In the ardor of their zeal portions of our Prospectus were copied to show that we were hostile to their newly-invented institutions; and by this means, instead of retarding, as they designed, their efforts were of great service in letting those who were imprisoned among them know that such a paper was about to be published. The response to our Prospectus from all directions was liberal, so that we were able to proceed with our work. Thirty-five years have since elapsed, and thirty-five volumes of our paper have been published, and still the publication is sustained, and we are now enabled to greatly enlarge and improve it.

The publisher of the "Signs of the Times" has been, from time to time, charged with vacillation, changing his views, or departing from the principles formerly held. Let the readers compare the articles here re-published with the platform laid in the Prospectus, and judge for themselves, if there has been any departure from the principles first announced.

One important object in the compilation of this book is to present, in as condensed a form as may be, the most important Editorial articles which have been published from the commencement, in 1832, whereby to show what has been sustained by the entire Old School or Primitive order of Baptists for so any years, and incidentally to embody such historical reminiscences as may be useful, not only to the present, but to succeeding generations. Many of the articles which we shall reproduce will necessarily allude to what the Old School Baptists have held, the manner in which they have asserted and defended their faith, and what they have encountered of reproach and persecution, and the divine support by which they have been sustained.

It is not claimed that all the supporters of the "Signs of the Times" are pledged to endorse all the articles which have been published, and are herein re-published, for such is not the

fact. Some of the articles may set forth the peculiar views of but a minority of the Baptists of our faith and order, and for whatever of error any of them contain, only the Editor is responsible. But inasmuch as the "Signs of the Times" was the first periodical paper devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause, and the only one of some twenty periodicals which have subsequently been started that has been sustained by the Baptists of our order, it must be inferred that it has faithfully reflected the general sentiments of that people, to the support of whose cause it has been humbly devoted.

We do not propose a reproduction of all that has appeared under the Editorial head of the "Signs of the Times," for there are many items of a local interest, bearing on what has long ceased to be of general interest. And some articles on the same subjects, which would appear tautologous and uncalled for. Still it is our intention, so far as possible, to condense, in such cases, the substance of the several articles on the same subject, so as to preserve all that is deemed of sufficient importance to be preserved.

GILBERT BEEBE.

OBITUARIES

ELDER J. W. GILLIAM

The recent death of Elder J. W. Gilliam, an imminient gospel minister and clerk of the Upper Country Line Association for over forty years, brought exceeding sorrow to a host of brethren, sisters, churches and the generality of Primitive Baptist.

A native of Alamance County, he was the son of the late John Wesley and Mrs. Mary Jane Leath Gilliam. Surviving are his wife, Mrs. Mary Idol Gilliam of the home; three daughters, Mrs. H. E. Sadler, Jr. of Route 2, Burlington, N. C., Mrs. D. C. Davenport of Tazewell, Va., and Miss Sarah Gilliam of the home; six sons, Fred K. Gilliam, John J. Gilliam and Charles G. Gilliam of Burlington, Robert D. Gilliam of the home, William R. Gilliam of Route 2, Elon College, and Theron I. Gilliam of Richmond, Va., two sisters, Mrs. C. Edward Benard of Greensboro and Mrs. Eva Matkins of Burlington; three brothers, Dr. Frank E. Gilliam and Ernest Gilliam of Burlington and Paul Gilliam of Charlotte; and 11 grandchildren.

He joined Gilliam's Church in 1908, was given liberty to speak in his church in 1912, and was ordained to the full work of the ministery in 1915; also becoming clerk of the Upper County Line Association 1916.

Elder Gilliam was well versed in the execution of church discipline and order. Twice in his life he was called for the defense of the doctrines of Old School Baptist in the courts of the land, pleading their cause salvation by the grace of God.

To know brother Gilliam was to love him. His kind affection to his brethren was unequaled preferring them before himself, not slothful in the disposition of church business, fervent in spirit serving his Master. Rejoicing in a glorious hope, he would most always express his fervent love for Old Baptist while preaching from the pulpit. He believed in the doctrine of election, predestination, salvation by the grace of God, resurrection of both the just and the unjust, and the final glorification of God's children through the atonement of the blood of Jesus Christ.

He was patient in tribulation trusting his God for sweet deliverance. His loyalty, faithfulness in distributing the necessities to the saints of God was unexcelled, rejoicing with them that rejoiced and weeping with them that mourned, condescending himself to men of low estate, blessing them that persecuted him, living peaceably with all men as much as possible, having a good report without as well as within. It is doubtful that any minister visited the sick more or conducted more funerals than he.

A punctual and faithful servant he was, not only in serving his churches but attending our union meetings and representing our association in visiting our correspondence from the mountains to the seacoast, not boasting of his good works, rather walking in the good works which the apostle Paul stated as being the good works that God hath before ordained that we should walk in.

Elder Gilliam had served seven churches as pastor, Monticello, Lick Fork, McCray's, Pleasant Grove, Durham, Pleasantville and Gilliam's.

The vocation of his life was as business manager of Gilliam's Academy where he taught all business subjects, farmer, salesman, and served the 1933 General Assembly of North Carolina.

He was educated at Gilliam's Academy, Smithdeal Business College, in Richmond Va., and graduated from Eastman Business College in Poughkeepsie, N. Y. and Wilbur R. Smith Business School of the University of Kentucky. With this wonderful education he did

not attend worldly institutions to learn to preach the gospel, nor did he believe he could be taught of man, but preached the gospel to the poor which God had him to preach.

His last sermon was preached at Lick Fork Church August 4, 1963. His text was the 8th chapter of Romans, 31st verse, "If God be for us who can be against us." What an inspiration to us who are left behind to fight the good fight of faith.

The funeral of Elder Gilliam was held the 7th of August, 1963, at Gilliam's Primitive Baptist Church by Elders: W. C. King, D. V. Spangler and J. H. Smith. There were 18 Primitive Baptist ministers attending with an overflowing group of people which the church building could not accommodate. The funeral director stated that his body was viewed by more people than anyone he had ever had charge of.

Once I heard that it was his hope that when he had passed the scenes of this life, his brethren would remember him in some small way and would miss him just a little.

In conclusion I hope it has been God's will, though unworthy I feel to be, it has been though unworthy I feel to be, that I remember him in some small way. Written by one who esteemed and loved him for Christ sake, believing the doctrine he preached was that which was once delivered to the saints.

BE IT RESOLVED; That one copy be placed on the church records, one copy sent to the family, and one copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of Gilliam's Church this 21st day of December 1963.

Humbly submitted,
Donald E. Smith
Deacon Freeman Somers, Clerk
Elder Wallis A. Smith Moderator

JAMES RILEY RAYNOR

Brother Raynor, the son of John Larkin Raynor and Susan Raynor, was born in Pender County, North Carolina, June 1, 1881 and departed this life on August 28, 1963, making his stay on earth 82 years, 2 months, and 27 days. He was a retired employee of Southern Railway after more than 40 years service.

Brother Raynor united with the Tate Street Primitive Baptist Church of Greensboro, N. C., the first Sunday in January, 1947, together with his wife and daughter, Mrs. Oscar Ward. It was the privilege of the writer to baptize the three of them at our February 1947 meeting. He was faithful to his church, always attending her meetings when his health would permit. He had a heart condition that put limitations on his activities.

He was married to Sallie Henrietta Osborne September 22, 1912 and is survived by his wife and three daughters, Mrs. T. Oscar Ward, Jr., Mrs. Walter W. Parrish, and Mrs. James Lee Lashley, all of Greensboro; two sisters, Mrs. Ida King and Mrs. Della Garnto, both of Durham; seven grandchildren and one great grandchild. May God's richest blessing be upon each one who mourns the passing of this faithful and loving husband and father.

Brother Raynor's funeral was conducted by Elder Kenneth Key and the writer. His body was laid to rest in the Lakeview Memorial Park at Greensboro, N. C. to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who shall call the sleeping dead to arise and come forth to be made like His own glorious body to be presented to his father where sickness, sorrow, and death can never come.

May each of us be given to say, not our will but thine be done, knowing that God is too wise to err and too good to be unkind.

Written by request of the family.

W. C. King

DEACON CHARLES EDWARD BUTCHER

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove our beloved Brother, Charles E. Butcher, from our midst. He departed this life October 7, 1963. He was born October 25, 1884, the son of the late Benjamin Thomas Butcher and Lucy Hodnutt Butcher. Brother Butcher was first married to Sallie Jamerson, who departed this life July 22, 1960; to this union were born one son and three daughters: Charles Pritcher Butcher, Richmond, Va.; Mrs. May Hudson and Mrs. Ruby Adkins, Danville, Va.; and Mrs. Mamie Wallace, Whitmall, Va. Surviving also are the following brothers and sisters: Fred Butcher, Andrew Butcher, Mrs. Nannie Varnier, Mrs. Annie Sparks, Mrs. Lena Butterworth, Mrs. Lillie Sears, and Sister Ida Reilly, all of Richmond, Va.; and Brother J. Lester Butcher, Danville. In January of 1962 Brother Butcher married Sister Ida Barber, who is left to mourn his passing.

Brother Butcher did not join the militant church in his younger years, but had taken a great interest in the welfare of the church for many years. But on September 18, 1955, at God's appointed time, he came home to his friends telling what great things the Lord had done for him, and was received, and was baptized by Elder W. R. Dodd. Brother Butcher was a strong believer in salvation by grace and grace alone. He believed in a God who does his will in heaven and on earth, and none can hinder him. In January, 1956, he was ordained a deacon of the Danville Primitive Baptist Church, and performed his duties well as long as his health permitted. We feel he is just sleeping, waiting for the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

His funeral was held at the Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Home by his pastor Elder H. W. Wray and Elder Raymond Payne; and he was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park beneath a mound of beautiful flowers; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the family; one be put on our church records, and one sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Written at the request of the church by
Russell Holley

MR. VELMA GRAY HALL

Mr. Velma Gray Hall was born December 3, 1904, in Union Parish, Louisiana, where he lived the most of his life. He was married to Miss Evelin Hudson September 5, 1925.

He was very active at work until close to the last, when he became ill and sorely afflicted. I had the privilege of visiting him and he seemed to fully realize he did not have long to live, and from his humble appearance and talk, he gave plenty of evidence that the Lord had deeply taught him the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. He had been taught his weakness and total dependence upon the blessed Lord for salvation, and that there was nothing that any depraved Adamic creature could do of himself in order to be saved. He manifested the gracious dealings of the Lord in giving him a precious hope of salvation by grace through faith, and that not of himself — not by works, as Paul says, but by grace are ye saved.

This dear brother and friend was not a member of the Primitive Baptists, but I feel that he was an humble, saved child of God, and that he is gone from all his sufferings; and in the morning of the resurrection, he will arise in the glorified image of Jesus Christ, see Him as he is and be satisfied.

He is survived by his very sad widow, Mrs. Evelin Hall; three daughters: Mrs. C. R. Laningham, Maplewood, La.; Mrs. John Laws, Alexander, La.; and Mrs. James Jones, Jackson, Miss. Also by five grandchildren; his step-mother, Mrs. Hubert Hall, Farmerville, La.; one sister, Mrs. J. E. Mathus, Estiee, Miss; and one brother, James Heard Hall, Omaha, Nebraska.

He died June 28, 1963, and was buried at Liberty Hill Cemetery, near where he was reared, and where many of his loved ones are buried. The writer conducted the funeral with two other ministers assisting. The humble and respectful congregation at the funeral and the display of flowers showed the high respect in which he was held.

May the Lord bless and comfort those who mourn his passing. You have lost a very dear one indeed, but your loss is his eternal gain.

A brother and friend through Jesus Christ
R. W. Rhodes

DEACON A. O. McLEOD

Brother Arthur Oneal McLeod was born September 21, 1882, near Atlanta, Texas; and passed away at El Dorado, Arkansas, September 21, 1963.

He is survived by his wife, Sister Alty McLeod, and by three daughters and three sons: Mrs. M. E. Gibson, Mineola, Texas; Mrs. A. E. May, Greenwood, La.; Mrs. W. J. Hughes, Premont, Texas; Harry O. McLeod, John H. McLeod and Woodrow McLeod, of Shreveport and Bossier City, La. He is survived also by a number of grandchildren, stepsons and step-daughters; and by three sisters and four brothers: Mrs. David Taylor, Atlanta, Texas; Mrs. C. Simpson, Abilene, Texas; Mrs. D. Blanchard, McLeod, Texas; J. B. McLeod, McLeod, Texas; H. G. McLeod, Atlanta, Texas; W. H. McLeod, Maplewood, Texas; and Morris McLeod, Vivian, La.

Brother McLeod was a very highly esteemed deacon among our people; his membership was at Rehobbath Church, and as long as he was able, he and his afflicted wife were regular attendants there, and many other churches and the associations. He was a good singer, and widely known as such; and he was known and recognized as a great leader among the Sacred Harp singers.

He was a very fine and manifest believer in the precious gospel of God our Saviour, and a lover of the believing children of God; and was blessed of the Lord to visit among them in several states, including, Virginia, N. Carolina, Alabama, W. Virginia, Texas, and Oklahoma. He was devoted to the cause and liberal in helping in every way he could.

His funeral services were held at Rehobbath Church by the writer and Elder W. A. Speer, and he was buried in the church cemetery. May the Lord bless and comfort each of those who mourn. He is better off, though it is sad to give him up.

Your brother in hope,
R. W. Rhodes

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

The Pleasant Grove Primitive Church, Caswell County, N. C., while in conference June, 1963, asked that we write the obituary of our departed sister, Mary Apple Fitch, who passed away May 19, 1963, at the age of sixty-seven years.

We feel deeply the loss of our lovely sister, who had been a member of our church for fifty years: she united when eighteen years old, and was baptized the 3rd Sunday in May, and also died on the 3rd Sunday in

May. We desire not to eulogize man but rather to praise God for the orderly walk, and lovely character of our Sister. Mere words just can't seem to express what we feel in our hearts: they are empty in comparison to how we miss her presence — we miss her warm, sincere handclasp, and we miss her voice singing with us, which was rich in spirit. It was good to see her among us, manifesting her love for the things that be of God. She tried to fill her seat unless providentially hindered. Her suffering, toils and trials now are over, and we feel she has fallen asleep in Jesus to await his second coming, when he shall gather his jewels home to praise him forever.

Sister Fitch was the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Joe Apple. She married Charlie Fitch the second Sunday in January, 1920. To this union were born four children, who, together with her husband, are left to mourn her passing: Glenn M.; Lena Sue; Ralph and Ruth, who are twins; also two half-brothers, Ralph F. and Lowell N. Apple; and the following brothers and sisters: Brother Robert W. Apple, Joseph Elisha, Arnold B., Morris A., and Clyde Apple; Julia Jackson and Myrtle Pebbles. For a long time she lived in the Pagetown Community of Caswell County, N. C.

Though we miss our sister very much, we would not call her back if it were possible, but rather hope to meet beyond this vale of tears. We desire to extend our sympathy to all her family: we know you miss her too.

Her funeral was held at her church by her pastor, Elder J. Harvey Smith, his son, Elder Wallace Smith, and Mr. Jack Anderson; and her body was laid to rest in the Apple Cemetery near the church. The floral tribute was beautiful.

We desire a copy of this writing be given her family; one be placed on the pages of our church book; and one be sent to the **Signs of the Times for** publication. Written by one who loved her and felt in her sweet fellowship, though I feel less than the least of all saints.

Mrs. Fred Cobb
Elder J. Harvey Smith, Moderator
Sister Robert F. Walker, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Our Heavenly Father has called from our midst our beloved brother **Hebe Tatom,** who was born in Hunt County, Texas, March 14, 1892, to George Henry and Polly Tatom. He moved with his family to Davidson, Oklahoma, in 1906, where he has maintained a home until his death on October 4, 1963. He was married to Miss Myrtle Williams, March 11, 1932.

Brother Tatom united with the Primitive Baptist at the Little Flock Church in Altus, Oklahoma, September 23, 1962, by experience and baptism by Elder C. M. Haygood, Pastor. Brother Tatom is survived by his wife and two children. Son, Dr. John Tatom; Daughter, Mrs. John Moore; and one granddaughter.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the Father's will, believing that our loss is his gain. Further resolved that a copy of this be sent to the bereaved family; one copy for the church record; and one copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of the church,

Elder C. M. Haygood, Pastor
Nina Stallings, Clerk

SISTER ELIZABETH SMITH

Mrs. Elizabeth Jane Smith, who had lived in the vicinity of Calion and Union County, Arkansas, all her life, died November 1, 1963, at the age of 79. She was the mother of three daughters and two sons: Mrs. Boyd Evans, Mrs. T. J. Trosclair, and Mrs. Tom Turner, of Waynesboro, Miss.; J. A. Smith, of Calion, Arkansas. Surviving also are nine grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren; and four sisters: Mrs. Emzy Cezgaux, of Humble, Texas; Mrs. Ellen Bush, Norphlet, Ark.; Mrs. Mary Bird, Vivian, La.; and Mrs. Blanch Freeman, Sheridan, Ark.; and four brothers: Jack Murphy, Len Murphy, Johnny Murphy, and Jimmy Murphy, of Norphlet, Ark.

She was a very lovely and humble member of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church the greater part of her life, and manifested a great interest in the precious doctrine of Christ Jesus our Lord. She was a regular attendant of her meetings until she was no longer able to attend due to her health and handicapped condition.

Sister Smith passed away suddenly and unexpectedly, and was buried in the Bethel Cemetery. There was a large and attentive congregation in attendance at her funeral, which was conducted by the writer and Elder W. A. Speer. We feel that our sister is better off, and her sufferings over; and that when our Lord comes again without sin unto salvation, she, together with all who are included in the holy covenant of God's love, will be raised, changed, and carried home to heaven and immortal glory, to be with the Lord forever.

May God bless and comfort all those who mourn the loss of this loving, humble sister.

Your brother in hope,
R. W. Rhodes

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 132 DANVILLE, VA., APRIL 1964 No. 4

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4/64
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

GOD IS PRESENT

We know not where our feet will tread,
Nor in the morn if there be bread;
But He who called us of the earth
Will fill our needs and warm our hearth.

He'll send His love and tender care:
If we be gay or in dispair,
His presence always will be there —
His Spirit permeate the air.

Chrystal J. Severson,
5 Hamilton Street,
Binghampton, N. Y.

MY SONGS IN MY DREAMS

(Ex. 15:1; Job 35;10)

A number of years ago, these words
Came to me in a dream:
"To God and to the Lamb, I will sing,"
And may I join the theme.

I was returning from the Far West
On a fast western train,
And from singing "What wondrous love."*
I could hardly refrain.

I did have such sweet meditations
While the train sped along,
But owing to my manner of travel,
I could not sing the song.

Along the way, I attended the meeting
Of a lovely little band;
'Twas good to be with God's people,
Who extended a welcome hand.

These words came in another dream:
"O happy day, when saints shall meet . . .!"
And indeed it will be a glorious day,
The Savior and saints to greet.

It seems I realized as never before
What a happy meeting it will be,
When the King in his beauty, first,
The saints will rejoice to see.

I felt that I would surely be there,
In the general assembly,
For I did say, "I don't believe
The Lord will disappoint me."

It seems that faith was in operation
In this impressive dream,
Faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ,
Whose promises we esteem.

And again, in slumberings upon the bed,
These sweet words came along:
"Then we will sing more sweet, more loud,
And Christ shall be our song."
*The next day

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, North Carolina

THE LETTER, THE WRITTEN WORD AND THE WORD OF LIFE

The child of God, I believe, can be saved in a manifest way, in this world, without any knowledge of the scriptures. His being able to read and interpret the written word, has nothing to do with the love of God being shed abroad in his heart. The change of his corrupt and stony heart to a heart of flesh, with love and understanding, is not brought about by his reading and searching the scriptures.

The promise in Hebrews is, that God will put his laws in their minds and write them in their hearts. Another comforting promise made to the disciples in John 14:26, reached their sorrowing hearts without benefit of the written word: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the father will send in my name, he shall

teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." If the Holy Ghost teaches you all things, little child of God, this Word that dwells within you is its own witness and testimony. All things are locked in your heart by the Spirit and not by reading the Bible.

Personal experience taught me, that the sinner comes into condemnation and sinks into a slough of despair, without having read about his death in the scriptures. When he is made aware of the awful sinner and the vile creature he is, he wonders how he must appear to an all wise, all seeing God. This is his first awareness that there really and truly is a God, and this God sits in judgment on him. The reading of the written word means nothing to him now. He begins to try to help himself, by searching for relief and an escape from the wrath of this judge.

He has lived in the world until now, and is of the world. He has known only the laws of the society around him. Suddenly he is faced with a law that condemns him to death. "The commandment came, sin revived, and I died."

The Bible may or may not have meant much to him. In my case, mine was treasured as a graduation gift from my grandparents. The reading I did (looking backward) was of the letter, without understanding or inspiration. It was historical by way of interest and a searching for scriptures to bear out the doctrines and teachings of men.

The scars on my heart are deep and sorrowful, when I remember turning through those dear pages to find just one little reason for my being, just one reason why I was allowed to live and breathe the fresh air of God's creation. I only found and really saw such passages as, "By the deeds of the law there shall be no flesh justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin." It is a mystery of Godliness, that the very same book that gives me comfort and consolation at times now, I trust, only condemned me further, as I read them. Certain scriptures would stare back at me and captivate my tortured mind with delusions and imaginations that are beyond description.

All of the beautiful promises, the comforting words of peace and love and mercy were cut off from me as though they were not there. I dreamed sad dreams and would search for their interpretations. I feel that you, dear reader, know the ways of the wanderer in the wasteland, the poor prodigal son and the lonely publican. My reason for taking you back through the darkness with me is to show that the letter killeth. By this, I mean the law of sin after the outward man. The sinner's knowledge of God while in this state, is fear.

That God in mercy, sent the dear Saviour to suffer, bleed and die, and to go away and send a Comforter to tell me all he had done for an unworthy piece of potter's clay, such as I, seems beyond comprehension. But I cling to the hope that sprang up within me. At times I am made to rejoice with the household of faith under the dew drippings of his fountains. Sometimes my heart near bursts with a felt sense of his presence; but I deem it a merciful blessing so much of the time to be allowed to beg for crumbs at the Master's table. Oh my dear ones, if we were never further away from God, than a prayer for mercy.

My mind was led to dwell on the written word and the Word of Life, on hearing a conversation between my husband and son, recently. We came into possession of a copy of the Articles of Faith of the Waldenses. My husband, after reading them, commented that he agreed with their belief, but liked to see such documents backed up by scriptural references, as proof of their faith. Our son said, "Daddy, I think I know what I believe, but I can't quote the Scripture to prove it." My heart

was made glad at the assertion, as was his father's, and I was made to feel that the Witness within is the one that counts.

I thought immediately of the effect of the Bible on believers and what it would do to me if mine were suddenly taken away from me. Can you imagine your faith without the written word, without the preached word, without a brother to share that faith unto faith? Then I thought of the blind, the deaf, the untutored, those cut off from the brethren.

My mind, in its wandering was led to the carnal law or letter, and to the spiritual law. I thought of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit and then the Word, that wonderful Word of life. My thoughts turned back to the time when I hope to have been killed to the love of sin. "But now, we are delivered from the law, that being dead, wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." And again, "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." (2 Cor. 3:6)

Now in the newness of the spirit, the written word takes on new meaning. Whereas, under the letter, the Bible condemned the elect or child of God, when he is revived by the spirit it is a comfort. "For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." This power that set the universe in motion also takes note of a sparrow's fall. It is very consoling to the thirsty and hungry, when the word reveals the Power that satisfies these longings.

The scriptures are written to those God gave his Son out of the world, not to the whole world, but to the elect, the house of God. I believe them to be written for and to the man of God. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." The word *salvation* is noticeably absent in the above quotation. Jesus told the Sadduces on one occasion, that they erred, not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God. These Sadduces denied the resurrection, which was revealed to the man of God, who with God's power, read and understood the things pertaining to life and godliness in the scripture. "For whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." The we, in this quotation, are those who have received the Comforter through the direct operation of the Holy Spirit. They are led to search out and profit by the reading of the Bible as it is revealed to them.

But, dear child of God, all scripture, like all mysteries of God, is locked behind a closed door. It is as confusing to the world as the tower of Babel. All doctrines of men stem from an unrevealed knowledge of the Bible. They set their tower toward heaven but its foundation is weak and it crumbles, because their searching is without a Key to open their understanding. No one can see the wonderful Light hidden in the darkness of a multitude of words, unless the "One who closes and none can open" sees fit to unlock the door. "Then opened he their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures." (Luke 24:45)

We know of those we believe to be saints, who can neither read nor write, and some who are deaf and cannot hear the word of God, but the arm of the Lord is not short that he cannot reach down and comfort and guide them by the Holy Spirit. However, searching the scriptures is a happy experience at times with the writer, and at others a baffling mystery. Hope and faith seem to be strengthened at times, when we feast on his promises through the inspired words of the Bible.

This winding road of experience over which the wanderer is carried, through

the just condemnation of a just law, through fear and hope and gladness, to a new love, in which the old ways have grown bitter and hateful, leads to the last word in our title, the Word. In our fervent prayers, in our groveling supplications, in our hopes and dreams, we reach out and try to touch, to feel this unattainable Word. We are tossed about in a world of wickedness and materialism. Our little ship of hope is so far from shore, the raging billows hide the Lighthouse.

We search the Scriptures, but it seems in vain. We read the awe inspiring words of John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." This verse of scripture has fascinated me as long as I can remember. Somehow, the actual wording of it seems to carry with it the thunderous, powerful voice of Jehovah God. It shrinks and dwarfs my being to all the nothing and less than nothing spoken of in the Bible. It brings to mind such things as creation, eternity, height, depth and void. Human mind or reasoning cannot conceived such immensity, such a Being. It is impossible for me, in my own experience to separate the Word from God, in his power, greatness, majesty and wrath, as spoken of here.

However, still searching the scriptures, we find this same Word again. It brings hope of mercy and a felt sense of nearness that I have never been enabled to feel, concerning the first quotation. Knowing it is too high, that I cannot attain unto it, I have hoped a few times, that it reached down a gentle hand and soothed my aching heart. His mercy and love seems to sing out the words, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth."

Flesh is the word that brought him down to this sin cursed world, to suffer, bleed and die for fallen man. It is the word that brought him from the throne of God and made him an heir with poor sinful worms of the dust, such as I. Hope springs up, when we know he was tempted in all things (as we), yet without sin. We are made to feel that this Word that dwelt among us, is compassionate and merciful after suffering in our stead and shouldering our load of guilt and shame.

Ah, this wonderful Word of life everlasting. He is now at the right hand of the Father, interceding for those whose sins nailed him to the cross. This intercession is an anchor of the soul to us, who were dead in trespasses and sin, facing the wrath of an angry God, if our hope is sure.

"And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name was called the Word of God." I long to be made to pray without ceasing, that that garment was stained for me, that this One whose name was called the Word of God, condescended to lower himself to man's estate, without sin, and marked my plight as he did the fall of the sparrow. If our hope is sure and steadfast, the vesture dipped in blood covered our sins and presented us without a spot or blemish to that God, that sat in judgment. This was the finished work of the blessed Son of God, who was the Word made flesh, dwelling among us.

All three, the letter, the written word and the Word, have their places in the purpose of God dealing with his people. The letter kills us to the love of sin and makes us know our depraved condition and the need of a Saviour. The Bible, or written word, edifies, comforts, strengthens our faith and hope, and instructs, the traveler on his weary way. But the Word, that reaches the stony heart, through the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, and makes of it a heart of flesh, is the Light and Truth that dwells within us. This Light guides us as a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, through the letter, the written word and to the Word at the throne of God, where we

will live with him through endless ages.

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Spearsville, La.

"HIS MERCY WAS OVER ME"

4511 NE Prescott,
Portland 18, Oregon

Dear Brother Wood:

I finished reading the January *Signs* last evening, and was so comforted by your *"Beginning Of A New Volume"*; and have just re-read it, and felt like writing and telling you. I hope I felt a gratefulness in my heart to the dear Lord for his continuing to raise up men to declare his truths; and trust He will as long as the world stands.

When I was young, and first in the church, I read my parents' 1st and 2nd Volumes of Elder Beebe's Editorials, and they seemed so wonderful to me; and do yet. They coincided with the Bible, having a "Thus sayeth the Lord" all through; and how I rejoiced in it. I've had many dark seasons along the way, but, as I look back, his mercy was over me, (and it is still so), even when I knew it not: and I do desire to thank him and praise his holy name.

. . . Among the books I have are two or three of Uncle David Bartley's books, and letters he wrote my parents. He baptized my mother and father: his wife was my mother's eldest sister. Sister McKinney years ago sent me the *Signs* with my experience in it, and in our moving here from Missouri, I have not been able to find it. Sister Adela Jones sent it in to the Signs, and it was published June 1, 1908. I was Margaret Startzman then. If anyone has a copy they would part with, I would be so glad to have it — not for myself, but I felt my daughter would appreciate having it when I am gone.

Speaking of dark seasons, the love of the brethren and sisters has never left me. Let them come to our door, and what joy fills our hearts that we do not experience from others. My sincere desire has been that I would be kept from harming one of them by word or deed; and so far, the dear Lord has granted that, but I have to keep begging for mercy, and beg him to "Lead, and we will follow." We know that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

. . . I had not meant to write so much, please cast a mantle of charity over it all. In an humble hope,

I am sincerely,
Mrs. J. W. Taylor

(If anyone has a copy of the June 1, 1908, and would part with it, please note the request of Sister Taylor.

— J. D. W.)

SERMON BY ELDER J. P. HELMS AT THE VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING IN 1959

Brethren and friends I have been enjoying the meeting very much — thankful to be spared to see your faces again, and to see the love and fellowship that is manifest among you. When your Moderator informed me that I would be called on to speak first this morning, I can't find words to describe my feelings, for my very being cried, Impossible: that something is demanded and required of me that is impossible for me to do.

I am before a people I verily believe have been taught of the Lord; and I come before you as the weakest of the weak, and poorest of the poor, with the desire that the Lord of heaven would bless me to bear testimony among his children of the glorious things He has wrought for them, and given them. And what it means to meet together and greet one another as brethren, for often we consider these things lightly. We are all by nature the children of Adam, but we greet each other not as brethren in Adam, but as brethren in the Lord. How this wonderful relationship comes about — the cause of it, and the consequences of it, will at best never be told, but only hinted at.

If there is any scripture resting on

my mind more than another at this time, it is, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God, . . ." It is the peculiar relationship that exists between God's people here that I desire to speak about. There is certainly a cause beyond the reach of human hand, or human thought, that brings this relationship about. Here we have affirmed something that is the cause. Why this blessing has been poured out and bestowed upon us, passes our understanding.

When did this love that we are told to behold the manner of, have its beginning? How long has this love of God existed towards you and me? It is spoken of as before the world began. And I affirm that the love which is mentioned in this Book, is God himself, and is the love that we would approach with fear and trembling, and desire grace to behold the manner of.

I believe that before the earth had any being; long before the stars which decorate the high dome of the universe — before they ever came into being, that God loved us; and then, because of that love, he made choice of you and me of the posterity of the first man formed of the dust of the earth; and that never one will be added or one taken away from that choice that He made: because it was in keeping with his own eternal will and purpose.

Often during this meeting, (and on and on), it will be mentioned concerning that which was done in eternity: That God predestinated every one who will ever reach the high clime of eternal glory; that He predestinated us unto the adoption of children: not by our efforts or the efforts of any human, but by the Lord Jesus Christ, He predestinated us to be conformed to the image of his Son.

Now in this act of God in eternity that set and sealed the destiny in that wonderful work of His, there was a cup for you and for me — a walk laid out for us in such a wonderful way we will never fail nor falter, but will be found walking, living, and abiding in the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom, and by whom we serve God acceptably. This glorious blessing was made manifest in New Birth in such a way that we were made to fear and tremble, and to look upward and call the God of the universe, Our Father. No wonder, then, this writer says, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."

I know that the finger of scorn is pointed at us; that we are called old fogies; and this and that, but it matters not when we are given grace to consider what we are by the work of God's grace, and all because of the love he had for us; and that He has placed every blessing we will ever receive here, or in the hereafter, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. For the Lord of glory was made manifest and laid in the manger; and given to you and to me.

When we talk about the Gift of God: what it is, how it is? it is all contained in our Lord, our Elder Brother, who came down and took upon himself our flesh in a wonderful way, and was made a sin-bearer for us: "Behold", indeed, "what manner of love", is this that caused him to lay his head low with the beasts of the stall, yet came with the power with which he made the world. We hear today that He needs help; that he can be hindered, and all this: Away with such untruth!

I stand before witnesses this morning who know something. Though we are called "hope" folks, I want to say that we are the only folks who do know anything. For there are two things that we know: that we are sinners, and that there is only one Saviour, and who He is. You have been taught not by men; for, as with the apostle, we learned it not of man, neither were taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. That is God's gift to you. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us": his own self in the person of his Son. That is what it means: That he gave Jesus not a Saviour of the whole world, but the Saviour of His children, his people; and He came down to be

with them.

And so, he has become our brother. Such a wonderful thing is too much for words; too much for us to lay hold of, or to comprehend: It has to be revealed to us, and wrought in us in such a way that we are made to know that we are sinners; and that there is only one Saviour, whose arm is never shortened that he cannot reach the worst case: There is no place too far for him; there is so case too hard for him.

They talk about taking little children when they are infants and putting them on the Cradle Roll, and bringing them up step by step; and of a man getting so old that he has passed the day of grace. Away with such an untruth! I tell you that the love God gave his children, reaches the infant's case, and the old man's and old woman's case. It doesn't make any difference as to age or condition, color or clime, where this love has been given them in eternity, it will be made manifest to them here.

The first thing that is ever made manifest to them, is their condition before a just and holy God. I stood by the bank of a stream and saw my mother immersed into the Old Baptist Church when I was five years old; and was seven when my father united with the church. I was born and reared among the Old Baptists, and respected them as honest and honorable people, but there was a thought in me, (and it grew as I grew), that our destiny was in our own hands: that we could work ourselves into the favor of the most high God: I thought it was all in our hands. Talk about Arinianism, I had a full dose of it: It was born in me. Don't tell me you are an Old Baptist because your father or mother was one: I know better than that. I was everything in the world but a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ: I believed in Helms, that he could work himself into the favor of God, and receive every gift for what he did. But, Lo! the difference:

In the seventeenth year of my life, (and if it were not for these things you would not be my brethren, and this would not be a home for me), in the night time, I saw something. It appeared in the East, and there was a light which no man's eyes could penetrate: and there was a Being in it. And a voice came out of that light — and the graves gave up their dead. and behold, there were only sheep and goats: And I was a goat. I awoke with a prayer for mercy, and tears of sorrow in my eyes, because it was here I found that I was a sinner — a condemned sinner in the sight of God. For seventeen years no man ever undertook more than I to get right with God.

Sometimes I boasted that I had conquered this old flesh: I had laid this thing down, and taken up that. But then I would fall and become ten times worse. I remember, (because profanity was one of the worst things that ever tormented me), that I quit profanity for three months; and I began to look at myself that I was getting better. Then, as I was walking along, I stubbed my toe on a stone: I threw my hat down and stamped it into the ground, and more profanity than ever I had thought of rolled out of me. Then it was that I fell down deeper and deeper. Talk about a man climbing upward, I want to tell you that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. When you walk in these things, you go down, down, unless this that God gave — not offered, in the person of Jesus Christ, is for you.

In my thirty-fourth year, everything had failed: I had sinned away the day of grace; I had gone beyond the reach of God's mercy. But my hope is that He came to a cabin home, and spoke words of life, and brought life and light unto a poor sinner, and raised him up. I was lying on a stone hearth, and he raised me up, and for a few minutes there was no doubt but that He loved me, and that he had given himself for me; for he affirmed to me that, "I made heaven and earth, and I am your Saviour." I walked out of that cabin, and behold everything was perfectly attuned to the praise of the glory of God, who had borne my sins in his own body; died

for me upon the cross; and was raised for my justification. He has not left us comfortless, but is with us day after day, and night after night. This is the love of God that passes all understanding. The Lord of glory has done all of this for us.

Then the thought is, if he has done all of this for us. what do we do? I tell you one thing: his children love him. Why do they love him? because he first loved them; that is why. Do we love one another? Yes; because God has begotten us again and has implanted the love of the brethren in us. Can you keep from loving your father and mother? You can't do it; neither can you keep from loving your brethren in the Lord.

I did not have to learn to love Old Baptists. I thought one time they were the ugliest folks I ever saw, and that every old ugly man and woman in the country joined the Old Baptist Church. But, Lo, something took place! I went to church after this memorable occasion, and I saw them as I had never seen them before: They looked so different — I knew their faces all right, but I saw something shining in their countenances, and they had a different appearance: and I just loved them. I couldn't help it — and I didn't try to help it either.

So, what do we do for him? He puts something in us that causes a work: don't tell me that you won't praise him; don't tell me that you won't thank him. When he takes you up out of an horrible pit and places your feet upon a rock, and puts a new song in your mouth, don't tell me you won't sing. But when you do all of this, I don't want to hear anyone tell what **they** have done for the Lord, for when he gives you grace to sing his praise, and when he gives this old sinner grace to testify in his courts, it is a wonderful thing that he does. Preaching is the easiest thing in the world when God gives you something to preach, but it is the hardest thing in the world to try to preach.

God does everything for his people: He gives them faith. "The life which I now in the flesh", said the apostle, "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." So we work by faith through grace that is given us, and we don't claim praise for ourselves, but for Him from whom all blessings come.

The whole thing is stated briefly, "If Christ be in you." If Christ be not in you, you are none of his; you are not akin to him, and you dare not call him brother, or king, nor mention his name, if he is not in you. If He is not in you, you are dead, but when he who is our life appears, then we also appear with him in glory.

If God opens the windows of heaven and feeds you a little bit, you won't go from this association praising these elders who preached: you will go home praising the Lord. "The Lord has done great things for us whereof we are glad." So, "Behold what manner of love." You can't explain why you love your companion; much more, ten thousand times more, the love of God that was given in Christ Jesus. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us," — not offered it to us; not put it somewhere that we have to go to get it, **but bestowed upon us.** Does it go back to the morning of time? Yes; to that one who offered a more acceptable sacrifice than his brother: It reaches on down — it is the same grace; it is the same gift you receive that was given Elijah of old; and those prophets who by faith were imprisoned, or put to death.

I know that we say sometimes that if we had the same evidence that sister or brother so and so has, we would not doubt any more. But if you ever get without doubt, you lose the most precious thing in the world. When you get to the place that you know too much, you can't call a poor old sinner like me brother. And when it comes to the place we can't call each other brethren in the Lord, we are in a terrible condition. It is your weakness and your failings, that, in some wonderful way, I have fellowship for: I have fellowship for your sufferings; I have fellowship for your

doubts; I have fellowship for your fears; I have fellowship for your staggerings, and you can't walk to suit yourself; I have fellowship when you can't control your tongue: because that is me. It takes the grace of God to straighten my walk; to control my tongue; and make me live right and do right here in the world. So I haven't a thing in the world to boast of; only, when I glory, may I glory in the Lord.

He's done everything and brought this relationship about. You can't get it by joining the church; you can't get it by baptism; and you can't get it by praying or singing. "Verily,verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This is the only way that you can come into this family of our God: By being born again of incorruptible seed, which liveth and abideth forever.

The whole posterity of Adam was in his loins, and Adam was a figure of him that was to come. And I tell you, children, that the incorruptible seed that is mentioned in the scripture quoted, was in the Lord Jesus Christ in eternity; and everyone that is born again, is born of that seed; and heaven is their home. Nothing can ever be brought against you, for in a wonderful sense, you are already there. The only way we can know them in this world, is that there is something perceived in them that is a mystery to the world. I may never have heard you speak, or sing, or mention these things, but there is something in your face that you can't hide.

I have talked longer than I thought possible. May the Lord keep you, and give you grace that you may realize more and more how dependent you are upon him; and how sure it is that He will supply all your needs.

(The above is from a recording. Eld. Helms' address is 327 W. Cleveland Ave., Vinton, Va.)

A REQUEST FOR RE-PUBLICATION

Belington, W. Va.

Dear Editors:

In looking over some old **Signs** recently, I came across an article I would like to see re-published, if it meets with your approval. It is the July, 1926, Editorial on "Denominations" by Elder H. H. Lefferts who was then the Editor. He wrote it in response to a request of (Mrs.) Rhoda Louise Cooper, of Union, N. J.

In my humble opinion, its re-appearance would not only be interesting, but instructive to many who desire to know the truth, but who are more or less confused as to the origin of the true church, and the "Protestant Reformation."

In meekness and hope of immortality,
Mrs. J. W. Gainer

(See **Voices of the Past** in this issue. — J. D. W.)

THOUGHTS FROM ELDER WEAVER

3415 Westbury Road,
Shaker Heights 20, Ohio

Dear Brethren:

I have been asked to write on the words of Paul: "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." (1 Corinthians 13:13)

Faith: There is a natural faith, which we all have; and there is Spiritual faith. We speak of natural faith which we use in our natural business, no matter what line we follow. Most young men sometime in life want a home, automobile, or other things: if they have natural faith, and work faithfully to that end, they will be able to have the home or auto. Then, after they have it in possession, the faith that enabled them to plod along believing they should obtain it, is laid aside, and is no longer needed.

And the faith of our text, the faith given to all of God's people: the faith that is the substance of things hoped for, and evidence of things not seen, and applied to us while we live, will be laid away when we come into possession of that eternal home promised to all the heirs of God: after we have lived in

the hope of the glorious resurrection.

But Paul tells us that greater than faith and hope is Charity; and it causes us to ask, "Why?; how can it be?" And ask prayerfully. "What is charity?" One would say that it is love; but that is not a sufficient answer. And we ask again, "Where does it come from?" And the answer comes to me that Charity is the love of God in action in the hearts of everyone that has been born of the Spirit; and that it does not end at our death, as does faith and hope. This is the reason it is greater. The implantation of God's love in us, is the cause, and it brings his people back to Him; like when Joseph hid his cup in Benjamin's sack, he knew it would bring Benjamin back to him.

To have faith in God is one of the great things God has given you, my brethren; and it is by grace through faith he has saved you, and given you hope. Many hours you have thought about your faith and hope, and shed tears of joy when realizing what love He hath bestowed upon you.

I wish to say to my brethren scattered here and there, who ask why I do not write for the **Signs** as I once did. Most of you know of my illness last year, from which I have not fully recovered. Last month I passed my 91st birthday. I am feeling better, and my appetite is better, but my eyes have been bothering me, and some days I am not able to use the typewriter. But how thankful I am that God has given me, Faith, Hope, and Charity. I may be able to visit some among the brethren this Summer, if it is His will.

To the many brethren and friends who sent me notes and letters of goodwill at Christmas time, and at my birthday, I want to say, Thank you. They were appreciated and enjoyed very much, though I will not be able to write each of you. Write me again when you can. May God's mercy be shed upon you; and remember me in your devotions.

In Christian love,
George L. Weaver

ENJOYED ELDER LAMBERT'S EDITORIAL

Rt. 1, Box 119,
Stantonsburg, N. C.

Dear Children of God Everywhere:

With fear I attempt to write another annual greeting to the household of faith, realizing my inability to write and my limited knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures.

In making this attempt, I am trusting only in God my Saviour to direct my train of thought and guide me in setting forth such things as becometh sound doctrine: the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. I know that there is a large variety of beliefs in the world today, and among Old School Baptists. It makes me tremble to think about writing: not because I am afraid of my brethren, but because I fear that I may not be able to rightly divide the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15)

The Apostle admonished Timothy to study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed. The poet has said:

> "I'm not ashamed to own my Lord,
> Nor to defend his cause,
> Maintain the honor of his word,
> The glory of his cross."

But I am ashamed of this sinner which I see myself to be. However, I am thankful I hope, that God has given me to see and know that I am a sinner; and that without His love and mercy being extended to me, I am eternally lost.

I have just read Elder Lambert's editorial in the *Signs* on the subject of Faith, Hope and Charity — and the greatest of these is Charity. I have heard ministers preach on that subject many times, and have read articles on the same subject by various writers, but have never heard it expounded in its fulness, as Elder Lambert was blessed to do in his Editorial. May God continue to bless him, and others in the ministry, to write and preach with power and in demonstration of the Spirit. No man, regardless of his stand-

ing in life, has ever been able to write in such a manner as Elder Lambert has, except God be with him. Regardless of how highly educated a man may be, he cannot learn these things of men, for they come only by revelation of God; and I know that all God called ministers know that this is true.

I have heard it said that jealousy is the cause of trouble and divisions. But, dear children of God, if charity prevails in our hearts, we will not be jealous of any minister who is given a superior gift to ours. Brethren, let me freely speak my personal feelings. If I am a servant of God, I am the least of all; and I thank God that he has called ministers and given them greater gifts than he has me. For I am profited by them, and I love them; and enjoy hearing them exercise their gifts, and am fed with that bread which comes down from heaven. If the love of God is in our hearts, we will welcome our brethren in our midst.

Now brethren, I know, and so do you, that there are men crept in unawares, (Jude 1:4) who were before of old ordained to this condemnation: ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. It seems to me that Paul had just referred to these, when he said, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his." There are still tares in the field, for the day of harvest is not yet come: Jesus said that the harvest is the end of the world.

When Jesus ascended, there were witnesses, living men who saw him; and heard a voice saying, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go up into heaven." May the great God of heaven prepare each of his saints to hear the voice of his dear Son, when he comes again, to call his precious bride, and take her on the wings of his love, and presents her before the presence of his Father in love; without spot, or blemish, or any such thing. There to praise his great and adorable name world without end.

Elder W. B. Barnes

"I FEEL LIKE I HAVE MET HIM"

1042 Cedar Crest Drive,
Huntington, W. Va. 25705

Dear Editors:

Am sending a check to renew my subscription for two years. We don't want to miss a single copy, as we enjoy reading the dear **Signs** so much — especially the experiences of God's little ones. I was deeply touched by Sister Wray's experience in a recent issue; and I know many others were also.

I never pick up a copy of the **Signs** that it doesn't bring to my mind a very dear old uncle of my husband's, who passed this life August 3, 1960, at the age of eighty-five years, that he loved to receive his copy of the **Signs** each month, and would read it from cover to cover before he laid it down: and then read it over and over again. Many times he would ask me to describe an elder to him, who had written a piece that he especially enjoyed. When I would finish describing the person as best I could, he would say, "Now I feel like I have met him: how I would like to shake that man's hand." Then when his eyesight failed and he could no longer read I would read for him each time we visited him.

May God give you editors the strength and grace to carry on in His name, and send out the truth to many who are not able to get to church, and get so hungry to hear the truth. We can't know, unless we were in that condition, just how much the **Signs** means to these people. May God bless and keep you ever, in our prayer.

(P. S.: the check is for two years subscription; put the $1.00 in the Indigent fund.)

Mrs. Lee Johnson

"EVIDENCE AND TESTIMONY"

Arkansas City, Ark.

Signs of the Times:

Some things we believe, and a few things we know: There is a great difference between what we believe, and what we know.

"Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me." (John 5:39) We believe these words to be the true testimony of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But testimony without evidence is dead; so is evidence without testimony. Having the evidence coupled with testimony, plus experience and revelation, we know the same to be true. We find all the good Editorials and writings of the brethren coinciding with our own experience, so beyond a doubt we know these truths are from and by the decrees of an all wise, merciful God: Who fails not, and visits the afflicted and humble of the low ground of his habitation, blessing and keeping his promises unto them.

My time to the **Signs** has expired, and as I find so many truths, and fellowship by the correspondence, I want to continue my subscription. We walk not after the flesh, neither do we have any confidence in the same; yet all the testimony published in our good paper proves accepted fellowship.

An humble, wayfaring begger,
Ben Parrish

1209 Etowah Street,
Tarrant 7, Alabama

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed you will find payment of subscription to the **Signs** for two more years, and two dollars to use as you please.

My wife and I enjoy reading them very much, and in the January issue we enjoyed the writing of Elder Wood and Elder Lambert, as we always do. The "Voices of the Past" is always good, as are all the writings. It is good to know that the **Signs** is the same as it was when it started; and as good as it has ever been. It is good to read the experiences of the loved ones in the Lord.

May the Lord continue to bless you editors and all the writers of the **Signs.**

Yours in hope,
J. A. Owen

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the **Skewarkey Union** will be held with the Rocky Swamp Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in March, 1964, the Lord willing. The church is located in Halifax County, N. C., near Heathville, just off Highway 561.

Elder W. E. Grimes was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, and Elder B. D. Handy, alternate. We extend an invitation to all brethren, sisters, and friends to meet with us.

E. B. Peele, Clerk,
Williamston, N. C.

BLACK CREEK UNION

The **Black Creek Union** will convene with the church at Sandy Grove, Nash County, N. C., the fifth Saturday and Sunday in March. The church is located on Highway 97, one mile South of Stanhope, N. C.

Elder W. E. Turner was appointed to preach the Introductory Sermon. All who have a mind to come, are invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk,
Fremont, N. C.

ANNUAL MEETING OF
HARMONY CHURCH

The **Annual Meeting** of the **Harmony Primitive Baptist Church** will be held, God willing, all day Saturday and Sunday, May 30 and 31, 1964. Services to begin Saturday at 10:30 A. M. and Sunday at 10:00 A. M.

The meeting house is located one mile East of Huntington, W. Va. city limits, on Cedar Crest Drive; and one-quarter mile off U. S. Route 60, at Eastern Heights Shopping Center. All who are interested are welcome to come visit us.

Elder J. R. Lane, Moderator,
Mrs. Mildred Stanley, Clerk
1046 Cedar Crest Drive,
Huntington, W. Va.

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with Meadow Church, Green County, West of Farmville, N. C., the 5th Saturday and Sunday in March.

All who love the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Tarboro, N. C.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To February 1, 1964)

Roxie Conner, Va.	$ 2.00
Durwood Bradley, Tex.	25.00
Mrs. Charles B. Gordy, Mich.	2.00
Mrs. S. D. Campbell, Can.	5.00
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Mrs. Billy Stafford, Tenn.	5.00
Luther Reed, Tex.	2.50
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Miss Beckie McLaughlin, Can.	1.00
Mrs. M. L. Lucas, Ala.	10.00

Danville, Virginia **April, 1964**

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 **Beechwood Lane**
Danville, Va.

EDITORIAL

ADMONITIONS AND EXHORTATIONS

Should some one suggest that he wished to *admonish me,* I would expect a warning, notice of danger, rebuke, reprimand, severe criticism, or reproof. Should he state that he desired to *exhort* me, I would be listening for words of inspiration, encouragement, persuasion, or earnest recommendation to pursue some specific course of action. *Exhortation* implies urgent advice, and *admonition* implies warning against some danger. These two words blend in their meaning but they are not strictly synonyms. We will find examples in the 27th chapter of THE ACTS where the two words are used, which prove their difference. The 9th verse says: "Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul ADMONISHED them." Now let us read the 22nd verse: "And now I EXHORT you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship" . . . In the first quotation the prevailing dangers were that which necessitated the *admonitions,* while in the second, the need for encouragement and inspiration to cheer them brought about the *exhortation.* I recall a familiar quotation which I shall paraphrase in order to further define the difference between the two words. Swift asks, "How is it possible to expect mankind to take *advice* when they will not so much as take *warning*?" My paraphrasing is, "How is it possible to expect mankind to take EXHORTATION when they will not so much as take ADMONITION?".

The Holy Bible contains too many admonitions and exhortations for us to ignore them and pass them by as not being applicable to us. There are too many for us to even mention in this article. However let us treat upon a few passages in which these terms are mentioned: notwithstanding, there are

hundreds of them where the terms are not mentioned.

Let us examine Colossians 3:16, in view of the aforestated conclusions: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and ADMONISHING one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" . . . Let us re-arrange this quotation in order to show what Paul said: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom: singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs; teaching and ADMONISHING one another." (E J L ARRANGEMENT) A person cannot teach or admonish the Lord. If the word of Christ richly dwells in us, we are enabled to sing with grace in our hearts in hymns, psalms, and spiritual songs to the Lord. If we be so richly blessed, we can teach and admonish one another. We sing to the Lord. We teach and admonish one another. This includes warnings, notices of dangers, rebuke and reproof.

Let us notice 1st Corinthians 10:11, "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our ADMONITION, upon whom the ends of the world are come." Paul is warning us by giving historical experiences of Israelites who conducted themselves in such manner that it was not well pleasing to God. Even though they were among the number who were delivered and had part in the same spiritual meat, drink, and Rock, many were overthrown in the wilderness. Paul tells of the bitter happenings to many Israelites who were idolaters, fornicators, and tempters of Christ. Even those who murmured were "Destroyed of the destroyer". These same conditions are prevalent today. We not only read these admonitions in the Scriptures, but if we look around us, we can see the same principle in force now. We have both the scriptural admonitions and present-day examples to doubly warn us of the dangers of falling into these snares. Therefore we strongly urge a positive course of action. While doing this we are *exhorting* you in accord with the statement of Paul in 1st Thesalonians 4:1 — "Furthermore then we *beseech* you, brethren, and *exhort* you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more."

Let us quote from THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, chapter 14, verse 22: ". . . And *exhorting* them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." Stedfastness in the faith is evidence of God-given faith. "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. But *exhort* one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, IF WE HOLD THE BEGINNING OF OUR CONFIDENCE STEDFAST UNTO THE END." (Heb. 3:12-14) Many who seem to have a good beginning fall by the wayside. When troubles come some become offended and step aside. Some hear the gospel preached and follow it for awhile; yea, as long as things are pleasant and going to suit them they appear to be true believers. They fall from their own stedfastness. The gospel has not profited them for it was not "mixed with faith in them that heard it." "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest any of you should seem to come short of it." See Hebrews 4:1-2. Peter exhorted them to continue in the remembrance of the exceeding and great promises of God to His children to give them all things pertaining unto life and godliness. He exhorted them to be diligent in adding to their faith the many virtues the Lord has given them in order to walk Godly in this present world. He tells us that if we do these things we shall never fall. He admonishes us against walking after the flesh by cit-

ing many examples of destruction and ungodly vices that were prevalent among those who followed the false prophets who led them astray. Peter plainly states that "There shall be false teachers among *us* who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves SWIFT DESTRUCTION." Peter admonishes us against these seducers and gives a full vivid description of their many deceptive ways to allure disciples — to get and hold a host of followers. Yes, they promise them liberty and speak great swelling words of vanity; yet they themselves are the servants of corruption.

Peter further reasons: "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." (2 Peter 2:20-21) Evidently those who are of these characteristics afore described and do these ungodly things only possess a head-knowledge of Jesus Christ, and have resolved to begin to walk in covenant-relationship with the Lord's people to take away their reproach. They only profess to know Christ and surely do not possess the great gifts, nor the virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity. As Peter says: "But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed"; and, "But it happened to them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

It is interesting to note that there is a limit placed upon the times of *admonition* to those who will not heed them. There is no such limit placed on *exhortations* to the true believers. Jesus limits the number of times for one to tell his brother of his trespassing against him, to two times. See Matthew 18:15, 16, 17. Paul places a limit on the times to admonish an heretick. "A man that is an heretick after the first and second *admonition* reject." Paul instructed Timothy to ". . . *Exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine*". We read in the concluding chapter of Paul's second epistle to the church of the Thessalonians: "But if any man obey not our word by this epistle, NOTE THAT MAN, AND HAVE NO COMPANY WITH HIM, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but *admonish* him as a brother." If Paul had said, *Exhort* him as a brother, it would mean that we should not cease in our endeavor to keep company with him. Since he used the term, *admonish*, it is consistent with the advice to note him and have no company with him. Jesus' instructions and Paul's advice limited to two the times to admonish before treating him as an heretick, heathen, or as one from whom we shall withdraw our company. When we admonish one as a brother — not as an enemy —, we should use the softest terms and the utmost delicacy in delivering painful truths. Admonition free from harshness which is meekly administered often is like snow upon the earth: the softer it falls, the longer it stays, and the deeper it sinks into the heart. However, if a man will not heed to admonition how could we expect him to receive exhortations? Therefore, if one does not heed after the first and second admonition, it would be of no avail to keep harassing him. There are too many of the Lord's little ones who are in need of exhortation whose hearts are prepared of the Lord to hear them, for us to waste time and energy admonishing heathens and hereticks. We are in much better work when we are feeding and eating with sheep than for our time to be spent in skinning or petting goats.

YOU who have been possessed with enough interest upon the subject of ADMONITIONS AND EXHORTATIONS

to read this treatise to this point, I consider you as fit subjects for admonitions and exhortations. If you, dear reader, are among those who have departed from the old paths, I sincerely admonish you of the dangers and terrible consequences that are in store for those who are careless relative to their deportment. I admonish you of the pit-falls that are certain to engulf those who "Walk after the flesh". I warn you that to be carnally minded means death. I sincerely rebuke those of you who are inclined to put your whole mind in laying up for yourselves treasures here upon earth. I frankly tell you, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Luke 12:34) You may be some of the Lord's people who have been deceived by false teachers, who, to cover their own sinful walk, have tried to make you believe that it makes no difference what you think, say, or do. It does make a difference because the Spirit of God works mightily in effecting a change in the thoughts, desires, conversation, and actions of His little ones.

The above admonitions are sufficient now. If you have not been affected by what I have said in these warnings, what I might hereafter say, would do you no good: I have come to the place in this treatise when further admonitions would be a waste of time and space. Let us leave admonitions and go into exhortations, and meditate upon the value of a Godly walk, and cheer and encourage those who are despondent and depressed, and advise all of you to forget those things that are behind, and reach forth unto those things which are before, and press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus.

I trust that you have been examining yourselves while reading this to ascertain whether or not you are in the faith. Paul exhorted, "Examine yourselves, whether you be in the faith; prove your own selves." (2 Cor. 13:5) If you find that you have left your first love and have become entangled with the unbelievers, and are yoked with them: I earnestly exhort you, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore *come out from among them, and be ye separate,* saith the Lord, and *touch not the unclean thing* AND I WILL RECEIVE YOU, AND WILL BE A FATHER UNTO YOU, AND YE SHALL BE MY SONS AND DAUGHTERS, SAITH THE LORD ALMIGHTY. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us *cleanse ourselves* from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 7:1) If your heart has been turned by the Lord, I exhort you, *turn yourselves* from this generation who have no goal to press toward. "Why tarriest thou? *arise and be baptized,* and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Baptism is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh but is in answer to a good conscience toward God. It is a step toward following and walking in the footsteps of the flock. Baptism is a sign that you desire to bury your past and henceforth by God-given strength to walk in newness of life. Baptism is an outward manifestation of your trust in being baptized in Jesus Christ and into His death. Baptism shows that your trust in self is being buried, and is an outward sign that Christ's life merited all the blessings ever to be bestowed upon and in the Lord's people, as well as paying the penalty of all their sins by His death.

I exhort you to *put on the whole armour of God* that you may be able to

stand against the wiles of the devil; yes, that you may be able to stand in the evil day. "Stand therefore, having your *loins girt about with truth* and having on the *breastplate of righteousness;* and your *feet shod* with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all *taking the shield of faith,* wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, and *take the helmet of salvation,* and the *sword of the Spirit,* which is *the word of God. Praying always* with all prayer and supplications in the Spirit; and *watching* thereunto with *all perseverance* and supplication for all saints." (Eph. 6:14-18) If you have the *will* that God worked in you — it is a *strong* will. God has also promised to work the *do.* If you have both, you will persevere even through great tribulations. If God has begun it He will perform it. Do you have the confidence that "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ". H. W. Beecher said, "The difference between perseverance and obstinacy is, that one often comes from a strong will, and the other from a strong won't." The will that the Lord works is stronger than the won't which the devil works.

"Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man: but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves and to all men. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. FAITHFUL IS HE THAT CALLETH YOU WHO ALSO WILL DO IT. Brethren, pray for us." (1 Thes. 5:14-25)

I exhort you, brethren, "To know them which labor among you, and are OVER YOU in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake, and be at peace among yourselves." (1 Thes. 5:12-13) Those who have the rule over you and truly serve in the capacity as pastor, have been made your overseers by the Holy Spirit. Heed their admonitions and exhortations. Know that they have been called as God's servants *to* the church. They are the under shepherds who have been called by the Chief SHEPHERD OF YOUR SOULS. Their service is not to please you but rather to please God. They are not under your dominion in their ministrations. They are servants *of* Jesus Christ *to* you. "Let the elders that RULE WELL be counted worth of DOUBLE HONOR, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine. For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And the labourer is worthy of his reward. Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses." (1 Timothy 5:17-19) Provide for his natural sustenance by giving to him some of your earthly treasures as the Lord has prospered you, that he may be able to spend more time in studying the Scriptures and in administering spirtual things to the household of faith, without being hindered with lack of funds. Do you possess earthly treasures? If so, use them as your servants in the right way. Do not let them possess you and use you to serve them. A covetous person is a slave to his earthly possessions. He lives to take in everything he can and parts with as little as he can. Give as the Lord has prospered you to those who are in need.

I exhort you, deacons, be faithful to your charge of relieving your pastors of some of their responsibilities in order that they may devote more time to prayer and ministry of the word. Deacons, visit the sick, widows, orphans, the poor of the flock, and your pastors,

to acquaint yourselves with their needs, and to see that not any of them are neglected. It is not your sole responsibility to supply the funds. It is your business to distribute the funds that have been supplied by the church. Let the church know the needs if funds are not sufficient.

I admonish the deacons who have been led to believe that you have any authority whatsoever over your pastor, that the result of this error is deacon rule. Anytime a deacon attempts to interfere with the spiritual welfare of the church to regulate its functions, you are out of your place. You must recognize the fact that God calls and sends forth His ministers and holds them accountable only to Him in their ministrations of preaching the gospel and baptizing believers. You, deacons, are selected by the church upon the recommendation of your pastor. I have never read in the Scriptures of the New Testament anywhere of an occasion or a stipulation which gave the authority for a church to select or choose a pastor. Let us read Acts 14:23 "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed." Let us quote Titus 1:4-5, "To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour. For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ORDAIN ELDERS IN EVERY CITY, AS I HAD APPOINTED THEE." There is no hint that these selections were left to the vote of the churches.

I exhort you, elders, bishops, pastors, and, or, evangelists: "Take heed unto yourselves therefore, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." (Acts 20:28) "Exhort with all long suffering and doctrine." ". . . Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself *wholly* to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thy self, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." (1Tim. 4:13-16) This was Paul's instruction to his son in the ministry. Gospel ministers continuously study the Scriptures. This is necessary in order to rightly divide the word of truth. May God forbid that we, the ministers of the gospel, ever be enslaved in the clutches of designing men who would dictate for us where, when, and how to preach. May we never be brought into captivity of those who would set themselves to the task of limiting us as to what we preach, and what not to preach. If the Lord has impressed you to comply with a request to preach in a place where His providence has directed you, do not let threats of men hinder you from going. Threats of non-fellowship and breaking off affiliation come only from those who would usurp authority over you and bring you under the jurisdiction of their selfish pride. Dear elders, remember that "A man's gift will make room for him." Go wheresoever and whensoever God in his providence sends you. Preach the word in the fear of God — not of man. Baptize believers who bring forth evidence of repentance. May God grant us strength and grace us with His Spirit that we be enabled to break the bars asunder which man has put up that hinders the inter-communion of the Lord's little ones. May we fight the good fight of faith. May God bless us to rule well the churches of our pastoral care. Do not permit other elders of other flocks to dictate to you whom you shall fellowship or accept in to your membership. You are not accountable to men for your ministrations in the capacity of pastor, because the Holy Spirit has made you

overseers — not man. You are accountable to the church of your membership, dear pastor, as a member. Each and every member of your church has a right to say with whom they shall walk and affiliate. Dear pastors, preaching the gospel, baptizing believers, feeding the sheep, and taking the oversight of the flock, is your sole responsibility under the command only of the Chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ. I have baptized some, as Philip baptized the eunuch — a man of Ethiopia, before their cases came to the church for consideration. When these persons presented themselves to the church for membership, I informed them that my baptizing them did not make them members of that individual church, and that the members of that church had the right to reject them in their own local covenant relationship as members of that individual church. On the other hand, I have refused to baptize those who stated that they did not want to walk with any group in church relationship. Individual churches have the right to determine, or select, with whom they shall walk. Yet, churches and, or, pastors have the right only within their own dominion. Respect the judgment of other churches in dealing with their own affairs, and reserve the God-given right to tend your own business and let not outside intervention rob you of this liberty. Do not let your church be governed by decrees passed by other bodies. You cannot speak for your church relative to a matter until it has been taken up and orderly disposed of in your church conference.

This treatise has been written after much reading, meditation, and prayer. I am convinced that it is timely for such scriptural admonitions and exhortations. I submit it with the prayer to God to use it to your good and His praise. This treatise contains *my* views. It is not necessarily the views of the other editors of this periodical.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

DENOMINATIONS

In trying to follow out the sister's request, it is true that we do remember the conversation to which she alludes. It would, however, be as impossible for us to reconstruct exactly that conversation as it would be for us to create a world. At best, we can but write down here some of the thoughts which have been ours regarding the wide distinction which chasm-like exists, and has always existed, between the true Baptist Church and all other so-called churches and religious organizations and institutions. In this article let it be understood that whenever we use the term "Baptists" or "Baptist Church," we mean only those Baptists of the Primitive or Old School faith and order, for we do not recognize that any other than Baptists of the Old School have any right to the term "Baptist." Others have forfeited their right to the name by their gross departures from the doctrine and order of the Baptists of the days of Jesus and his Apostles. This may seem like bigotry, but we cannot help it. We do affirm that the true Baptist Church is to be found in this present age only among the primitive or old school faith and order. These alone hold to the doctrine and order as prescribed in the inspired Scriptures of the New Testament.

It used to be, an hundred and fifty or more years ago, that the name "Baptist" meant but one thing, and that thing was then just exactly what the Old School Baptist stand for now: salvation by grace and grace alone. But during the past century and a half, Baptist became so divided and subdivided that the name came to stand for almost anything, and a mantle to cover all kinds of sectarian sins. The International Cyclopedia give a dozen different subdivisions of Baptists existing in the United States at the present time. Out-

side of the one thing of baptism by immersion, these have no right whatever to the name "Baptist," for, with the exception of the Old School or Primitive Baptists, they are all of them distinctly Arminian in their preaching and practice.

The one main distinguishing feature of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the one feature which embraces all and every principle of the doctrine of God our Saviour, is that the salvation of the elect church of God is by grace, first, last, and all the way through. No body of people in this day and time, aside from the Old School Baptists, are contending for this doctrine of salvation by grace, and wholly by grace. It is the one mark which more than any other one thing, distinguishes the true church from all other religious bodies or denominations. No person with an enlightened understanding can possibly read the Scriptures of the New Testament and fail to grasp the great truth of salvation for the elect wholly by the free and unmerited grace of God; and no body of people preaching any other doctrine than this, can expect, nor ought they to expect, to be recognized as the true church of Jesus Christ.

If we are to know religious professors by their works, there can be no surer way to judge them than by their confession. If they therefore, confess that which is antagonistically opposed to the teachings of Christ and his apostles, they must expect to be branded as deceivers and falsifiers. We cannot recognize them nor fellowship them if they advocate that which the Saviour himself and his apostles did not. They must, therefore, be accursed so far as as we are concerned. Let them be **Anathema Maranatha.** (1 Cor. 16:22)

That which proves Old School Baptists to be in line with Christ and his apostles, is that we today are preaching and believing the same things taught anciently by them; and that we are the only people doing so at this present time. They came to be called Baptists at the first because they were baptizers; that is, they immersed in water their candidates for church membership. John, who Baptized Jesus, was called "the Baptist" because he was a Baptizer or an immerser in water. He was the first Baptist of whom we have any record. Jesus commanded his diciples to baptize believers in water, thus making them all baptists. But if any one thinks he can hold to immersion and preach any other doctrine whatsoever than that which Christ and the apostles preached, and still be called a Baptist, such an one is in error.

It takes vastly more than mere water-baptism to make one a Baptist. There must, of necessity, in priority be a baptism from above, a baptism of the Holy Spirit sent upon the believer by the risen and exalted Head of the church, Christ Jesus himself. Men can turn out Arminians by their thousands, but it takes God to make a Baptist. All the various denominations of the Protestant and Catholic religious worlds today are distinctly Arminians in their teachings and tone: all of them without exception worship some phase of the idol "free-will." The true Baptist is not, and never has been a "protestant", and it is a mistake for him to think of himself as a "Protestant". His spiritual lineage goes much further back than the days of the Protestant Reformation. All of the various Protestant denominations of this present day had their inception and rise during the days of the Reformation, when Martin Luther, John Calvin, and many other bold spirits of that time, revolted against the Catholic church and protested against its teachings and practices.

For these reasons, these protesters were called "Protestants." The Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcopalians, and other religious bodies of that genus, all had their rise in the days of the Reformation, when a great and widespread revulsion against Catholicism swept over Europe, giving birth to these protesting bodies. But if Baptists think so little of their splendid heritage as to consider themselves on a par with

these offshoots of Romanism, we feel sorry for them.

As these came out from Romanism, and are unmistakably the daughters of Rome, the day will sometime come when these wandering daughters shall return to their ancient mother and be again nestled fondly in her bosom. Not Baptists, however, for their origin goes away back beyond the first establishment of the Catholic regime, to the very days when Christ walked this earth, and was baptized by John in Jordan. Not that we mean John's baptism to have been gospel baptism, but that he was the first "baptizer".

At the very time when Luther and Calvin were protesting against Romanism, Baptists were in Europe then preaching salvation by grace; and had been doing so ever since the days of the Apostles. Baptists are an affirming people, not merely protesting ones. We should hate to spend our lives merely protesting. We must affirm, we must be positive. It does not satisfy true Baptists to be merely negative. Baptists do now, and always have affirmed the illimitable sovereignty of Almighty God; they affirm his predestination and foreknowledge to be as boundless as his sovereignty; they affirm salvation to be wholly free to all his elect chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, on the one and only basis of grace and grace alone; they affirm the resurrection of the dead and the final and unfailing preservation of the saints to glorification at the right hand of God.

True Baptists have a noble and splendid spiritual heritage: the only religious body of people on earth today that are the spiritual heirs of the apostlic church. All other so-called religious denominations were spawned by their mother, Catholic Rome, and will eventually return to her — even now they are making overtures to her in every conceivable way. There have been several historians who were haters of Baptists, and yet who were honest enough to confess that their origin went back beyond the Reformation. For instance, early in the nineteenth century, the king of Holland appointed two learned men to examine into the origin and history of the Dutch Baptists, and to report to him. Both of these men were members of the Dutch Reformed Church, not Baptists at all. One was professor of theology at the University of Groningnen; the other was the royal chaplain. These men, after due research and study, reported their findings to the king in 1819. Here is what they reported:

"The Baptists may be considered as the only Christian community which has stood since the days of the apostles, and as a Christian society which has preserved pure the doctrine of the gospel through all ages. The notion of the Catholics that their communion is the most ancient, is erroneous."

Is not this strong testimony for Bible Baptists from the pens of outsiders? Mosheim, the learned historian of the Luthern Church, a man who hated Baptists, had the good grace to acknowledge that the true origin of Baptists is hidden in the depths of antiquity, and is, of consequence, as he said, extremely difficult to ascertain. He goes on to say that before the rise of Luther and Calvin, there lay concealed in almost all the countries of Europe, particularly in Bohemia, Moravia, Switzerland, and Germany, many persons who adhered tenaciously to the doctrine that the kingdom of Christ, or visible church which was established upon earth, was an assembly of true and real saints, and ought, therefore, to be inaccessible to the wicked and unrighteous; and further that this visible church of Christ has nothing to do with all those institutions which human prudence suggests, to oppose the progress of iniquity, or to correct and reform transgressors.

We ask, is not this exactly what Bible Baptists today believe? And this testimony, you must remember, comes from a Baptist hater. The Waldenses of the Alps Mountains in Switzerland, northern Italy, and southern France, during the middle ages, were true Bible Bap-

tists. They believed in immerson for believers only; and in their Confession of Faith, they state, "In him (Christ) all the fullness of the Godhead dwells, and that by him alone we know the Father." "We believe in the Holy Spirit as the Comforter who creates us anew unto good works, and from whom we receive the knowledge of the truth." Dr. Alexis Munston says, "The Waldenses of the Alps are, in our view, primitive Christians or inheritors of the primitive church. It is not they who separated from Catholicism, but Catholicism which separated from them." Yet, Dr. Munston himself was not a Baptist. Nobody can possibly accuse any of the above historians of being unduly biased in favor of Baptists.

In conclusion, therefore, we affirm Old School Baptists not to be Protestants, but to be the present spiritual heirs of the apostlic church. They have never had any quarrel with Catholicism, inasmuch as Baptists originated far back beyond the setting up of the see of Rome. We are not protesters, not merely deniers, not sitting on the negative side, but we are affirmers, and we feel that we have an infinitude of glorious things to contend for with all our might.

(The above was an editorial of the late Editor, Elder H. H. Lefferts, and appeared in the July, 1926, issue of the *Signs*. It was written at the request of Sister Cooper, of Union, N. J., to follow up a conversation she had with him at Frying Pan Meeting house. We republish it at the request of Sister J. W. Gainer, of Belington, W. Va. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

SISTER ALICE GLADDING

God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to call our precious sister from this world of suffering. She had a stroke on Monday night after the second Sunday in December, and died in the hospital the following night, December 10, 1963. As with a great many cases afflicted as she was, she had seemed better several days before death.

Our sister was the daughter of Henry C. and Mary V. (Turner) Caines. She was born and reared and spent her entire life in the Baltimore vicinity. In early life (July 1912) she was married to our precious brother, Quincy Gladding, and they lived together more than fifty-one years. She left three children, Melvin B., Henry A., and Jenny A. (Peggy) Osborne, six grandchildren, with Brother Gladding to mourn for her, and yet as they had had to watch her as she suffered from the deadly effects of surgery that left her nearly blind, they all bowed in gracious submission to the will of our heavenly Father. She was the last of her father's family.

Sister Alice joined the Old School Baptist church in Baltimore (Ebenezer) in 1916 and was baptized by the late Elder Joshua Rowe, who was the worthy pastor of the church for many years. It would seem that it could well be said of her that she did what she could. Only once after I came to Baltimore church was she absent from meeting, and that was because of illness. Such faith as God blessed her with is indeed rare, for so many that are well, and doing well, are looking for excuses to keep away from church, but she, in spite of her continued suffering, went far and wide to meeting each Sunday.

She enjoyed entertaining the people of God, and many of the saints will rise up and called her blessed because of her unstinted care in providing for them, and in sharing with them what the Lord had given her. One of the things that gave her the most delight was in preparing dinner at the church. It was her pride and joy, and she always would rather have a lot too much than a little to less.

Sister Alice was firm in the doctrine of the sovereignity of God over all his creation, and yet she desired the gospel in its fulness expounded. She enjoyed preaching that had a variety to it, and stereotypical preaching and a pattern in preaching for the pattern's sake, did not appeal to her. God had given her a keen perception, and blessed her with an active mind in spite of brain surgery.

Her funeral was held in the local undertaking establishment on December 13, 1964, and was conducted by the writer and Elder John D. Wood. The burial was in Black Rock cemetery, where we deposited her body in the earth from which she was formed, there to await the day wherein He that formed the body will bring it forth in victory over the grave and every opposition, to be carried soul and body and spirit, the complete dear sister that we loved, into the haven of rest.

Her unworthy pastor,
W. D. G.

W. B. TART

On October 6, 1963, Brother Tart passed away at North Carolina Memorial Hospital, Chapel Hill, N. C., after being critically ill for three weeks with the dreaded disease

cancer, and had been in declining health for a long time.

He realized a few days before his death that he had to leave his loved ones, but the God of all grace made him willing, and he said he was ready if it were the Lord's will. Brother Tart was a deacon of Liberty Church, and served his purpose well. He labored many weeks and days to get the building, and was ever ready when something needed to be done, and looking after the welfare of the Church, as long as his health permitted. He was faithful to attend church services, not only at Liberty Hill, but others also. He attended the Seven Mille Association one day three weeks before he died, but could not remain through all the services.

Brother Tart was born in Johnston County, N. C., March 6, 1886, a son of the late Nathan and Sara Tart. He was married to Sister Lillar Byrd May 25, 1906; and to this union eleven children were born. Surviving are his wife, eight children, thirty-nine grandchildren and twenty-one great grandchildren.

He and Sister Tart first united with Bethsaida Church on Saturday before the first Sunday in July, 1925, and were baptized the following day.

His funeral was conducted at Liberty Church by his pastor Elder Lester Lee, assisted by Elder W. D. Godwin, Mr. Carrie Wadkins, and Mr. Sam Hardison. He was laid to rest in the cemetery at Banner's Chapel Church. We, the church at Liberty Hill, feel our loss, but believe it is his gain. We extend our sincere sympathy to the family.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to God who doeth all things well; that a copy of this Memorial be sent to the family; that one be recorded on our church record; and that one be sent the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference Saturday before the 1st Sunday in November, 1963.

Sister Liddie Byrd
Brother James G. Young
Sister Hattie Denning, Clerk
Committee

ORA HALL SMITH

Sister Ora Hall Smith was born February 7, 1902, and departed this life October 17, 1963, at her home near Reidsville, N. C., at the age of sixty-one. She was married to Joe Albert Smith February 7, 1921, and to this union were born one son, Marvin, of Reidsville, and one daughter, Mrs. George Perdue, of Reidsville.

She had an illness several mounth before her death. On Sunday September 1, 1963, it was her request that the pastor of Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church, Elder Harvey Smith, and the members, come to her home and hold services, since she was not able to attend. Elder Harvey Smith, having promised to fill another appointment, asked his son, Elder Wallis Smith, to go to her home. It was my pleasure to be there with many of the other members, to meet this lovely sister, and hear the wonderful sermon by Elder Wallis Smith. As she lay on her bed with earthly afflictions,, her spiritual value seemed great. She asked for a home in Pleasant Grove Church, and was accepted, while each of us shook her hand. I felt she was a dear humble sister.

Her funeral was held at Pleasant Grove Church by her pastor, Elder Harvey Smith, and Mr. Dubost, with burial in the Church cemetery.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the family; one to the **Signs of the Times** for publication; and one kept for church records.

Written at the request of the church.

Mrs. Jimmie Hodges
Elder Harvey Smith, Moderator
Sister Robert F. Walker, Asst. Clerk

IN MEMORY OF OUR DEARLY BELOVED PASTOR OF MONTECELLO CHURCH, ELDER J. W. GILLIAM

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write in his memory. Elder J. W. Gilliam served our little church as pastor for more than forty years. Each year he seemed to grow in grace, and in love and respect of our little flock.

Although discouraged many times, he always was faithful, and worked hard to prove his faith; and usually succeeded. He was a recognized leader in every phase of church, community, county and state interest. He took an active part in getting our present church building completed and furnished. It was a joyous day for him and our membership when the building was dedicated. He was a good pastor, as well as preacher of the gospel.

He was a true father in Israel. Though all his ministerial life, he was noted for his firmness, and always took a "Thus saith the Lord" for all that he preached and contended for. He stood firm but meek in defense of the doctrine. He was a servant of all, not only the people of his faith, but ready to help all in trouble. He traveled far and near to serve his people in his modest and meek way. His counsel and advise was sought by

many, and was heeded. The Lord blessed his labor everywhere he went. The greatest joy of his life was preaching the gospel he loved. I feel that of the greatest joys of his pastorate, which came in the last four months of his life, was when he baptized six into the membership of our church.

So has one of God's humble servants lived and died in the faith. He preached the last sermon in our church the second Sunday in July, 1963. Our loss is his eternal gain. He is now sleeping that peaceful sleep, waiting the second coming of Christ, to meet with those that love and serve God for what he has done for them. May we all meet him in the great beyond, in my prayer. Written by

Sister Vallie Chrismon, Clerk

ELDER S. C. DAVENPORT

Elder Steven Clarence Davenport was born April 20, 1869, in Stewart County, Georgia, and moved to Texas with his parents when he was eight years old. His father and mother were Briant and Anretta Davenport. His father died when he was fifteen years old, leaving his mother with seven children; and he, being the eldest, had some strenuous and sad experiences with his mother and family in providing a living by hard work; but, with the mercy of God, they made it through. He died December 3, 1963.

In 1890, he was married to Miss Ann Darden, and to this union two children were born. After her death, he was married to Mrs. Lena Attaway in 1898, and to this union seven children were born. He is survived by his wife; two sons: Harmon, of Denver, Colorado, and Jim, of Dallas, Texas; three daughters: Mrs. H. T. Faulk and Mrs. L. B. Alir, of ElPaso, Texas, and Mrs. George Crow, of Vanderpool, Texas. Also by twelve grandchildren, twenty-eight great grandchildren, and five great, great grandchildren.

Elder Davenport was baptized into the fellowship of Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, and was ordained to the ministry in 1918, at Oak Grove Church in Wood County. The writer can very pleasantly recall how he was wonderfully blessed of the Lord to preach the glorious and comforting gospel of our God and Saviour, to the glory of God and to the comfort of God's little children. Brother Davenport was in a very weak and bad state of health for several years.

He was wonderfully blessed with the evidence of the fruits of God's Spirit in preaching, and was humble and firm in these sacred things. He was deeply loved, and held in high regard in the minds and hearts of his brethren, and his neighbors and friends. We have suffered a great loss, but our loss we feel, is his eternal and heavenly gain.

The writer, Elder J. L. Smith, Elder E. J. Lambert, and Elder W. W. Taylor all had part in his funeral, which was largely attended, and there were many beautiful flowers; all of which showed the high regard in which Elder Davenport was held. We desire that we might comfort his beloved and ageing wife, together with his family. May the Lord lead, keep and uphold you through every trial and affliction of this life. Our beloved brother is through with suffering, and it will not be long until Jesus will come again, and his saints who sleep in death, will awake and be like Jesus, and go home to praise the Lord forever.

In hope of mercy, grace, and salvation through Jesus Christ the Lord and Redeemer.

R. W. Rhodes

LAURA ANN EVERS

Sister Laura Ann Evers, widow of Brother L. B. Jack Evers, was born February 19, 1877, and died February 7, 1964, at a nursing home in El Dorado, Ark. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jim Gibson; and was born in Claibourn Parish, but lived in the vicinity of El Dorado about seventy years.

She is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Charley J. Lee, ElDorado, and Mrs. Edna Berry, West Lake, La.; and one son, Prather Evers, of the Veterans Hospital, Big Springs, Texas. Surviving also are nine grandchildren and fifteen great grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews.

Sister Evers was an humble, affectionate mother, and worked very hard as long as she was able to do so. She was most loved and respected by the brethren, sisters and friends of her church, which was Smyrna Primitive Baptist, eight miles South of ElDorado; and by the brethren wherever she was known. She was deeply devoted to the church and doctrine which she had been so sweetly given to believe and love for many years. She will be greatly missed by the many who knew her in the fellowship of the Spirit.

Her funeral was held at Rumph Funeral Home by the writer and Elder David E. Turner, in the presence of a large congregation, with many florial offerings. She was buried in the Smyrna Primitive Baptist Cemetery.

May God bless and comfort her bereaved family and all who mourn her passing. I visited her three times while she was so sick and suffering, and I feel that she is much better off, for her sufferings are all over now. Soon the Lord will come and resurrect her and all his people, and receive them into heaven to forever praise him.

R. W. Rhodes

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 132 DANVILLE, VA., MAY 1964 No. 5

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR SUBSCRIPTION DATE
IS 5/64
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

A PRAYER

Dear Lord give me a prayer to pray,
Not only tonight but every day,
To seek thy mercy and love to know;
To direct my steps wherever I go.

Keep me, Lord, from presumptious sin:
Thy grace sufficient cleanse me within.
I pray tonight not only for me,
But thy dear people wherever they be.

If prayer be true it comes from thee,
And answer with joy sure to be.
Thy mercy is greater than my heart:
How could I praise thee if it should depart.

But I've found thee a faithful friend:
Burdens lessened and covered sins.
Help me Lord to glorify thy name,
And sinners to see thee and do the same.

If this is not my sincere prayer,
Be pleased, dear Lord, to make it clear.

Elder D. R. Pyrtle,
Star, N. C.

Rt. 1, Box 8,
Simms, Texas

Dear Editors:

I see my subscription to the *Signs* is about to expire. Enclosed you will find five dollars for two years: I don't want to miss an issue.

The good letters the brethren and sisters write are uplifting, and are manna to my poor soul, if you will allow me to call you brethren. I am a strong believer in the Primitive Baptists, but am not a member. I had an experience last September under the sound of Elder W. W. Hudson's voice, at Paran Church, near Hawkins, Texas. The thought came to me that Elder Hudson was small, but mighty; and after that thought, a soft voice spoke to me out of nowhere, saying, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord."

These words were just like a commandment. They have been so sweet to me, and I hope I will be permitted to see some of that salvation.

Yours in bonds of love,
Mrs. Minnie Smith

"THE NEW COVENANT HAD NO "IFS".

Dothan, Alabama
Box 268,

Dear Editors and Household of Faith:

It has been my mind for some time to write some of my thoughts on Jeremiah 31:31-34, which reads as follows:

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the days that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know

the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

The covenant which the Lord made with Israel when he brought them out of the land of Egypt, was based on their compliance with his statutes and judgments. If they did those things which he commanded them to do, and abstained from those things which he commanded them to abstain, they were promised certain material or natural blessings; and if they didn't keep these statutes and judgments, they would fail to receive them. They were commanded not to make a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, and worship it like the heathens were doing in the land they were to possess. They were also commanded to destroy the inhabitants of the land, and their cattle and sheep.

The covenant stipulated that if they did all the things which were commanded them, the Lord would fight their battles for them, and bless them in many ways: There would be none of them barren, neither would there be any barren among their cattle and sheep. If they did not do these things — comply with his statutes and judgments, they were to be utterly destroyed: they would be scattered amongst the nations and left few in number among the heathens.

We notice that this covenant had "ifs" in it. The New Covenant had no "ifs" in it. The Lord said "I will" and "you shall". I don't recall any place in the sacred scripture where the word "if" was used by the Lord, that the persons addressed met the requirements. We know the children of Israel didn't. We know also that the young man who asked our blessed Saviour what good thing he should do that he should have eternal life. Jesus said unto him, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." And he asked "Which"; and Jesus quoted a few. The young man, thinking he was as good as anyone, said, "All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? And Jesus said unto him, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions."

The Saviour knew he would not do that, or he would not have used the word "if". When the Lord told Abraham to go into a land that he should be shown, he didn't use an "if", but Abraham obeyed in each instance. When the Lord appeared to Moses in the burning bush, and told him, "Come now therefore and I will send thee unto Pharoah, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt"., Moses obeyed, because the Lord had spoken; and there were no "ifs".

When the Lord commanded the prophets to prophesy, they did it because it was "all power" speaking. When he told Jonah to go to Ninevah and preach the preaching that he bid him, Jonah thought he wouldn't go, and resisted to the fullest extent; but he went. When Jesus called the disciples, they each one quit what they were doing and came and followed him. When Saul of Tarsus was on his way to Damascus, and was stricken down by God himself, he was told to go into the city and he would be told what he should do; and what great things he must suffer for "my name's sake". Saul went just as he was told. When Ananias was told to "arise and go into the street that is called straight and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold he prayeth", though he was afraid of Saul, he went as he was commanded.

When the angel of the Lord told Philip to arise and go toward the South unto the way that goes from Jerusalem to Gaza, which is desert, Philip obeyed. And there was a man returning from Jerusalem, an eunuch, sitting in his chariot reading in the prophesy of Isaiah, "He was led as a sheep to the

slaughter," etc. Then when the Spirit told Philip to go near and join himself to the chariot, Philip obeyed; and he began at the scriptures and preached unto him Jesus.

These all obeyed because "all power" had spoken. Our blessed Saviour told Pilate that he could have no power at all against him, except it were given him from above.

What we have written is enough to prove there is no power but of God: as Paul says, "The powers that be are ordained of God." The angel of the Lord said to Joseph to "fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost, and she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shall call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."

Paul in his admonition to Timothy, says, "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner; but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Jude began his epistle by saying to them that we are "sanctifified by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus and called. Mercy unto you, and peace, and love be multiplied." In the tenth chapter of Hebrews, we read, "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." Then again we read, "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."

After the grace of our God has done the work of saving, sanctifying, justifying and glorifying, we are "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world."

After we have the good word of God, and experience the powers of the world to come, we are given that sweet hope which we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail whither the forerunner is entered for us. This hope keeps us pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

I am enclosing check for $5.00 for two years renewal to the Signs. With best wishes to all those connected with the publication of the **Signs,** I remain

Your humble brother in hope,
Elder J. A. Tew

"THE REDEMPTION IS THINE"

Rt. 6,
Hopkinsville, Ky.

Elders Spangler and Wood,
Dear Editors:

Dear Brethren and sisters I have had a desire to write upon a subject for some time, but could not bring myself to do so until now; and I also realize that I cannot write except the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob direct my mind to the edifying of his humble poor.

"Ah Lord God! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee." (Jeremiah 32:17) If I understand aright, this was written while the prophet was in prison for his prophesying the coming of Jesus Christ and the new covenant. When the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah that Hanameel should come unto him, saying, "Buy my field, I pray thee . . . for the redemption is thine." Then Jeremiah bought the field, weighed the money, and gave the evidence to Baruch in the sight of witnesses present, saying "Take the evidence and put it in an earthen vessel that it may continue many days."

I know I have not quoted all of it as it is written, but hope I have not lost the substance. In Jeremiah 31:33, we read, "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will

be their God, and they shall be my people." This brings to mind Malachi 3:1, "Behold I will send my messenger and he shall prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in." etc.

Brethren, it seems to me that Jeremiah is prephesying of our Saviour, for there is, it seems, something precious in the field, so much so that he sealed the evidence before witnesses that it be not destroyed, and placed it in an earthen vessel, that it might last many days: And I believe that will be as long as there are any of these earthen vessels left here in the earth to carry that evidence about before the world; for there was evidence that was sealed, and evidence that was open, which was to occupy the earthen vessel. The open evidence to me, is the earthen vessel in his nature: he is no different from other men. I know there is a difference in deportment, and I am glad that it is so. Solomon says that man in his best estate is altogether vanity — what must he be in his worst estate? The man when left to himself, turns back to Jericho, back to the idol gods of works; wherein he must fall.

But let us consider the sealed evidence. This is something that is precious to every child of God, for the prophet wrote, "I will put my laws in their inward parts, and write them in their hearts." Brethren, I believe this means the law of grace, which is of faith, that precious hope which makes us not ashamed to declare the power of God, and his Christ. "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." How many times would you have laid aside this hope, if it had been possible? The apostle said, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel." He could not lay his calling aside, neither his hope; for he received it not of man, neither was he taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

So, dear children, there is something precious in this field; something chosen of God, for He sent his darling Son according to the purpose that he purposed before the world was, that he might redeem that jewel which had become lost according to the law of works. That precious Son, in whom there was no guile, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. He hung between the heaven and the earth a perfect sacrifice, and poured out his blood in order that our sins should be remembered no more; for, if we are Christ's, he stood a Lamb slain before the foundation of the world for the sins of his people. His coming here in time was manifesting that truth; and when that blessed messenger is come, and prepares the way, and the Lord whom ye seek, comes into his temple (your body), and you are made to see the Christ like appearance in the faces of your audience, or the brother who is delivering the discourse, is it not so, my brethren, that you are made to feel that the messenger has come indeed and in truth. Your hope rises to the mountain tops, and you are made to rejoice in the Saviour's love, and to know that you love Him because he first loved you.

Yes, we have offered incense to Baal, and have been a provocation to our God, but he has loved us with an everlasting love; and the stake (Jesus) cannot be moved, neither the cords of his love be broken, for they are from everlasting to everlasting. He who clothes the lilies of the field, has promised never to leave nor forsake us, but will be with us through these dark and stormy travels here in time. The apostle said, "My God will supply all your need (not wants), according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus." "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." He shows loving kindness to his children here in this life.

He is the Lord of hosts, great in counsel, and mighty in work, for his eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men. Great is he in knowledge: he knew all things from the beginning to the end; great in purpose: he pur-

posed all things whatsoever comes to pass. He has declared that not even a sparrow shall fall to the ground without him; even the hairs of your head are all numbered.

Dear children, He, even, Jesus, by his loving Spirit, gives us the desire to worship Him at one another's feet, for it is not in the natural man to humble himself to another. But when we are shown, as was David when he convicted himself, saying, "Lord I have sinned against thee," then we are made to recognize our nakedness and undone condition, and are but filthy rags before God. "There is nothing too hard for thee, O God."

"Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, sayeth your God; speak ye comfortably unto Jerusalem, and cry unto her that he warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned . . ." What does pardoned mean? Surely not to be bought, but is a gift whereby we go free, (not may go free), for we are made free by the blood of the blessed Lamb of God; and we are washed in that pure river of water of life that flows from the throne of God and the Lamb. I believe that was manifested when the soldier pierced the side of the Saviour when he hung on the cross. It takes the blood of our Saviour to save, and that pure river, or that pure life, to cleanse. It is represented as having the tree of life on either side, and in the midst of the street thereof, covering Israel, and reaching into eternity. Yea, we are pardoned, set free to enter in by the door, which is Christ. He opens and none can shut; shuts and none can open. He is the way, the truth and the life, he that entereth in by him shall go in and out and find pasture. "No man cometh unto me except my Father which sent me draw him; and no man cometh to the Father but by me." "Ah, Lord God! there is nothing too hard for thee."

The Lord God in declaring his purposes said, "I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass." Some people say, "If we will let him;" but they are burning incense to Baal, for that is their nature, and being blind, they cannot see the truth. But the God we worship is able to bring to pass whatsoever he has purposed; and will cause every little child who is ordained to life, to come to him. I believe the world is the field represented, and God's children the jewel, and they are gathered together in Zion, (the militant church), and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ with the brethren. This is just a foretaste of what shall be at His coming.

I realize that I have hardly touched upon this great subject. May it be His will to sustain you many days for the work set before you, is my wish. A sinner saved by the grace of God, if saved.

(Elder) Wade Y. Chandler

(We regret our delay in publishing the above — J. D. W.)

"WHEN BLESSED WITH REMEMBRANCE"

218 Shad Point Road,
Salisbury, Md.

Dear Editors:

Elder Griffin sometimes asks why I do not write something for the *Signs*, and I always answer that I cannot; but since the first of the year, I have felt impressed to try. I hope this comes from the Lord, if not, what I write will be of no comfort to anyone.

I cannot remember the time that I did not love the Old School Baptists, and felt they were the people who preached the Truth. This has been a great trial to me, and I have tried so hard to go back in my mind to the time when I first understood what they preached. So many dear ones can tell of the first sermon they heard with understanding; and I have felt that I would feel more sure of a home in heaven, if I knew this.

When I was thirteen, I was in the

hospital to have my tonsils out, and I was sure I was going to die. I knew I was a sinner, and was very afraid. I could not sleep, but after a while felt a presence, and something told me that my sins had been taken care of. I went to sleep, and through the operation, with a perfectly satisfied mind; but that condition did not last.

For several years my main thought was wanting a home in the church, but felt I had nothing to tell them; and felt so young and knew so little. At the association Elder Walker spoke from the eighth chapter of The Acts: When the eunuch wanted to be baptized, Philip told him, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." It seemed after that sermon that nothing stood in my way, and the next Sunday I asked for a home with the Forest Grove Church; and they took me in. At times I wonder why, but have never been able to tell just how much this union and fellowship means to me.

One Summer I had been very low both physically and spiritually: I went to meeting each Sunday, but the preaching meant nothing to me. I felt that maybe it had all been a mistake, and that I really did not know anything. On Labor Day my husband and I had been to Rehoboth Beach, and he wanted to take a nap, but, as we had a house full of young people, we decided to go to the park. He went to sleep as soon as the car stopped; and I sat there thinking how far I felt from God, and wondering how I could continue, when someone seemed to tell me of all the times the Lord had helped me when I could not help myself; and reminded me of some of the very comforting sermons I had enjoyed. I felt as if I had been to meeting, and left the park rejoicing in the Lord.

In March, 1961, we were living in Ocean City, Maryland, when there was a Northeaster: the most destructive storm the town had ever seen. Before we knew there was any danger, the water was all around us and the street was under water, and we could not leave. When we watched the big house on the next corner break up and go into the ocean, I was the most terrified I have ever been in my life. I went down on my knees to pray, thinking I would ask for our home to be spared, but when I started to pray, I could only ask for strength to see through whatever was before me. My terror left me, and through that night when the State Police came and took us to safety — and even when we went back and saw the dreadful damage to our places, I felt the Lord was with me, giving me strength.

I cannot always remember these Bethel spots, but when I am blessed with remembrance, it is a great comfort to me; and then I feel that nothing in the world can overcome me as long as God is my strength. Like the poet,

> "I muse on the years that are past,
> Wherein my defence thou hast proved:
> Nor wilt thou relinquish at last
> A sinner so signally loved."

Yours in hope,
Ethel Holloway

SERMON BY ELDER W. W. TAYLOR DURING THE VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING 1956

"The Lord called unto Adam, and said, Where art thou?" (Genesis chapter three, verse nine.)

I wonder how many of us have experienced these words. If we have, they mean much to us; if we have not, they mean very little, if anything at all. The important fact is that it was the Lord calling, and we are taught both by the Scriptures and by experience that the Lord never speaks in vain. He surely did not speak in vain when he spoke to Adam: It produced its proper result when he said, "Where art thou?" It is not proper for a man to do or say anything without a purpose, and we should not suppose that God would do or say anything without a purpose.

Then we would like to know what was his purpose in speaking to Adam, saying, "Where are thou?" God is everywhere present and nowhere absent, and he knows all things — and always has known all things, so it could not have been that he was making inquiry that he might know where Adam was.

If these words include us from an experimental standpoint, if we have felt the power of that voice, saying "Where art thou?", then we know something of the purpose that God had in asking. If we have not felt any part of it in our experience, I cannot tell you what it means.

God came into the garden, according to the scripture, in the cool of the day; and Adam heard his voice walking in the garden, and Adam was afraid. Here again, for it to really mean anything to us, I believe that it is necessary for us to know by experience why Adam was afraid. I believe there are some things that I know in part. I do not know anything with a perfect knowledge, because I am not perfect. When I speak of not being perfect, I speak in the sense in which Paul spoke of himself. He says that we know in part; and I believe that we know something about this to the extent that God has revealed it unto us.

The occasion upon which this call was made, was brought about by the fact that Adam had become a sinner. Now he said, "I heard thy voice walking in the garden, and I was naked, and I hid myself among the trees of the garden." Was Adam any more naked at this time than he had been before this time? There is no record of it being so. But there was a knowledge brought about — he had become a sinner; and God had come and asked a question, "Where art thou?"

Inasmuch as we are Adam multiplied, and inasmuch as we are sinners, and we trust that God has done something for us and has made himself known unto us, I believe we know something about that being afraid — we know something about how Adam felt: He had become a sinner, and God had come into the garden where he was. Adam heard his voice. and was afraid because he had become a sinner; and the fact that God spoke to him, made him realize what it meant to be a sinner in the presence of God. I believe the children of God in their experience are no more sinners after God speaks to them than they were before, but they are **made to know** that they are sinners, — sinners in the presence of God, for God has come and called unto them, and they hear his voice.

If I know anything about it, it is in our experience that God has called unto us, the same as he did to Adam. We may not have heard audible words. but there has been an experience that has produced the same effect in the depths of our very being.

Has He called unto you? Have you ever been brought to the place where you had to give an answer as to where you were? and answered as Adam did: I was naked and hid myself. Have you ever wanted to hide yourself from the presence of the Lord? but there was no place to hide. The things of nature could not cover you from the face of the Lord when He called you. You had to give an answer; and the answer was in the form of a confession, "I am in a sinful state". Being in a sinful state, it is true that God's presence, God calling unto us and speaking words of life into the depths of our soul, we are then made alive, and certainly have the power given unto us of hearing, seeing, and feeling; and as we are brought into that position, we are made to realize that we are sinners. That's what Adam answered: I was naked, and hid myself among the trees. God asked, "Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou partaken of the fruit that I commanded thee not to partake of? meaning, Hast thou committed sin?

This is what it means, that we are made to realize that when that voice sounds, when our sins, our sinful self, are open before Him, (not anymore than they have always been, but we are

now made to realize it because He has spoken unto us), and his word has produced life, because: He that heareth the voice of the Son of God, though he were dead yet he shall live. I do not believe in a divided God. If the Son of God has spoken to us, it is God speaking, and you hear the voice; and when we hear that voice we are made alive; and when we are made alive, we are made to realize that we are sinners and are in the presence of God. We then confess that we are sinners, and realize as Adam did that we are naked, and try to hide. It seems to me that we begin to see the experience of the children of God unfold right here in the experience of Adam.

First of all, when he became a sinner, when he committed sin and transgressed the law by partaking of the fruit, he became ashamed of himself; and as he became ashamed of himself, he did the best he could to cover himself — he wanted to hide his sinful self; but the best he came out with was a fig leaf apron. Are we able to make any better job of righteousness today than Adam was when he came out with a fig leaf apron? I just don't believe that the best we can do, we will have any better robe of righteousness than Adam did with his fig leaf apron. Leaves are no good for a garment, no matter what kind of leaves they are, and fig leaves are the sorriest leaves there are.

That's the kind of garment he had — an apron; and we are poorly dressed if we have nothing more than an apron of whatever material. But that was the best he could do: He still wanted to hide when he heard the voice of God. Where did he go? He went among the trees of the garden: he was among the things of nature. Have we ever tried to hide among the things of nature to get away from the face of God? to get out of his presence because we are made to know that we are sinners, and that when he looks upon us, all our sins are naked and open before him. Certainly when we hear his voice, we feel the presence of God, and are made to know that we are sinners before him, and we want to hide ourselves from him.

But there is no where to go. His voice calls, and that call we must answer. Adam answered it, didn't he? "I heard thy voice." He confessed that he was naked and had tried to hide himself. And God began to reckon with him. The thing that stands out so much in my mind when I think about this text, is the fact that God called to a sinful man and asked him where he was. This is what means much to us today, because He calls to sinners today, and asks where they are — not that He might acquaint himself with where they are, but causes them to realize right where they are. Every sinner that he calls, first of all realizes where he is. Now where is he? He is standing a sinner in a condemned state before God, and he is not able to hide himself, and is not able whatsoever to clothe himself with a garment of righteousness. He must have help from some other source if he is ever to be in any better shape than that.

What is the help that he must have? The Apostle Paul answers that for us in the first chapter of Ephesians, when he spoke of the spiritual blessings that God gives to his people: "Blest be the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who has blest us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus according as he has chosen us in him from the foundation of the world: that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

Here is the answer to what must be done for the sinner and here is a beautiful picture laid before us: that everything that is necessary to make this poor, naked sinner that God has spoken to, holy and without blame before the God of heaven in love, is given him in Christ Jesus. Every spiritual blessing he ever has had, or ever will need in order to make him holy and without

blame, is given him in Christ Jesus according to the choice that was made. The choice was made for the very purpose of their being made holy and without blame — the very ones that he made choice of. He gave them everything necessary to bring about that purpose of holiness and being without blame in the state of love before the Father, in the person of Christ Jesus.

When Christ Jesus is given unto the poor trembling sinner, he has everything that is necessary to make him a saved character, a holy character, a perfect character before the Father in love. Outside of Him he does not have anything. There is where his clothing comes from. Adam could not clothe himself, but God could clothe him with skins, which are durable and will last and last. Jesus Christ supplies the robe of righteouness unto the sinner, and he is blessed with all spiritual blessings: Not with one spiritual blessing, but with every one that is necessary — every one you will ever have, and they were given in Christ Jesus before the world began. You had not come into possession of them before the world began: you had not come into existence only in the mind and purpose of God, not into this present world.

But when we came into life in this world, first of all, what did we do? Every descendant of Adam inherits a proclivity to sin, and he begins to put that into action; and when he puts it into action, he is a sinner by practice just as much as Adam was when he partook of the fruit that God told him not to eat. Then he goes through the experience of realizing that he is a sinner. I am talking about the children of God — they want to hide themselves.

I don't know how it was with you, but I tried to put on a robe of righteousness; and I had to make it, for I couldn't find one already made. And when I tried to make one, I did not come out any better than Adam did; and I was made to know that the kind of robe I had was no better than a fig leaf apron. When the Lord appeared to me and called me to take a look at my life, it stood out before me as bright as bright could be, and it was impressed into my very being that it was my sinful life that I was looking at, and I had to confess, as did Adam, that I was a sinner, a sinner naked and fully exposed before Him; and all my efforts to prepare a robe of righteousness had failed, and I must go down a condemned sinner, with nowhere to expect to go but into eternal woe and misery.

I just cannot believe that anyone will ever appreciate the expression of God's mercy until he has been made to know something of the necessity of the mercy of God; and the only way that he can know of that necessity, is to feel that condemnation when they are made to know what they are, made to know that they are sinners, and have purchased eternal destruction by their own actions. I don't believe in trying to soften the matter by going back and saying it is something I inherited from Adam. My sins are mine, and I do not find anyone took blame for it but me, for I am the one that has acted; I am the one that committed sin. Therefore I had to cry that I was the one who was naked before God, the one who was a helpless sinner; and then realized that condemnation belonged to me if I were given what I deserved. Then the mercy of God looked good to me, and I believe it looks good to all the children of God when they face condemnation.

Where does it come from? It is a spiritual blessing and was treasured in Christ Jesus for you before the foundation of the world, but you didn't know about it. It would have been sweet relief to me when I saw myself, had I known that mercy was in store for me; but I did not know there was any mercy for me, nor could I see any reason why there should be. All I could think about was, I have trangressed thy law, O Lord, I have sinned in all my ways. I must admit that I deserve eternal destruction, and the sooner I get what I deserve, the better it will be — to get

out of the misery I am now in. It seemed that I could see other people's eyes looking through me and seeing everything I saw, and I would be glad to get completely away from them.

But God has given his people everything in Christ Jesus: Then it seemed something else came — does my experience fit your experience? — that when you felt you were condemned, something else showed up: It was Christ Jesus showing mercy; it was the grace of God that brought Jesus down to where he could lift you up from your condemned state, and give you relief from that awful feeling. The purpose of God is embraced here: the blessings of God are being bestowed upon a sinner who was chosen in Jesus Christ, as Christ showed mercy, giving you a hope that he would grant you strength to press on as you traveled along in this world; then you have hope that He will come again and lift you up.

He said to Adam, "Where art thou?" He found Adam naked before him; and Adam confessed it. What did he do for Adam? he clothed him with skins. What did he do for you? Did he give you something that lifted you up in your feelings from the place you were? That was an exposition of the purpose of Almighty God to show you what he already had in store for you; and you were given hope that he would take care of you all along the way, and give everything that was necessary to finally make you stand before him without blame in love.

I believe just this, that the purpose of God covers everything about us; and as time goes by, it unfolds and we experience it step by step, until we shall experience the final outcome of it, which is the resurrection and ascension into eternal glory to be with God and all the holy angels. Then it would be sweet to be called unto, "Where art thou?", standing in a redeemed state before God, eternally singing praises unto Him.

Everything that is necessary to make you that way, is given you in the person of Christ Jesus.

(The above is from a recording, and is condensed for publication — J. D. W.)

Rt. 2, Box 59A
Spearsville, La.

Dear Elder Wood:

Inclosed are some thoughts that poorly express my feelings while visiting with so many of those we feel are saints of God in your section of the country . . .

Before leaving home with my husband to make the trip, I feared that my desire to go was only natural, and I desired that God would keep me from going, if such was the case. While in some of those hallowed places along the way, I was made to feel that I had been given a desire for the better things.

"Could I joy his saints to meet,
Choose the way I once abhorred,
Find at times a promise sweet,
If I did not love the Lord?"

I have always felt so little, and have such little writing ability, if any, but sometimes I must express with David, "My cup runneth over . . . Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever." (23rd Psalm) Then again, I'm so low that I am made to cry, "Draw me, we will run after thee." (S.S. 1:4) and, "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned." (Jeremiah 31:18)

I asked for a footstool at the Old Baptist's feet when I was only sixteen years old. I haven't grown any; and my prayer is to always be kept at their feet.

Hoping all is well with you and Sister Wood. John Lee joins me in love and sweet fellowship.

Your unworthy sister in hope,
Mrs. John Lee Smith

WHEN TOUCHED BY HIS LOVE

How beautiful are the faces
Of those who are made to love
To gather in heavenly places,
And sing praises to our God above.

Such a mystery no man can unravel —
The love of God's children for each other:
No matter how far away they travel,
Perfect strangers are our sister and brother.

No natural sight can e'er compare
To the view of an eye of faith;
Though withered with age, they are most fair,
When joined by this wonderful grace.

We meet with our fleshly kinsmen,
Or those from a far away state,
As long as they are taught by Jesus,
In our hearts they fill the very same place.

How could we know the same language,
Though thousands of miles apart,
But for Jesus who loved us and changed us,
And took away the cold, stony heart.

He is our meat, our drink, and our comfort,
Our refuge in the time of need:
Our joy and delight all must come from
The One who for our sins did bleed.

'Tis a foretaste of heaven to us mortals
When gathered to sing praises to God,
To feel in our midst that precious Spirit
Of the one who alone the winepress trod.

When our sins beset us on all sides,
We sink but for the words from above:
We know we have passed from death to life
Because of our brotherly love.

Should I never reach the fair heaven
So sought for and desired by man,
I have so much more than I merit:
A cup of cold water from my brother's hand.

Mrs. John Lee Smith,
Spearsville, La.

"WHEN WE FEEL THE NEARNESS OF THE LORD . . ."

Rt. 1,
Yanceyville, N. C.

Dear Sister Smith:

At your request I shall try to write my experience. In the beginning, let me say that I have always loved and honored the Primitive Baptists. Some may think that is because I was raised in a Baptist home, and brought up by two wonderful and lovely parents; but that is not the reason: It is for what they stand for — Salvation is of the Lord.

When I was a small child, father and brother and I were up early one morning, when something happened to brother, and he passed out. It scared father and I; and he told me to go to the kitchen and get mother. I went by the kitchen and told mother, and I went on out into the yard and laid flat on my face in the grass, and there, I think I prayed my first prayer. I felt that I knew who to pray to for life, death, and everything. Before I got up, I felt that I had been with the Lord. I went into the house and brother was all right; and I had two things to be happy for.

However, as life goes on, and troubles arise, I have often wondered if He ever knew me. I wanted to join the church a long time before I did, but it seemed too great for me to be a part of.

I had a dream, and it seemed the end of time had come; and I was worried as to where I would go. There was a large crowd gathering on one side, and a small, narrow path on the other. I saw mother going down the narrow path, and I ran to her and told her that I didn't know where to go: I had tried to pray, I had tried to find the Lord, but couldn't. I didn't know whether he knew me or not; or maybe I didn't know him. Mother just smiled and went on her way. Then I drifted around awhile, and saw a bench over in a green pasture. I thought that that must be the mourner's bench. I gave completely up and went over and sat down on the bench; and then it seemed like the Lord came into my heart and told me to go down the narrow path. I ran and caught mother and told her that the Lord had come to me, and I loved him, and wanted to give him all the praise and glory.

This was only a dream, but I have been just that helpless and low since then, that I was willing to do anything the Lord would have me do, for I knew it would be just. When I awaked from that dream, it worried me to think that mother did not try to help me in any way. Then it seemed a voice said to me, "This is your salvation, you will have to travel this way alone."

The week before I joined the church, I kept wondering if they would accept me; and what Brother Smith would

think about it. I wanted him to know, but I was afraid to tell him or to write him, because I thought my mind might be changed; yet I wanted him to know. Finally it came to me that if there was anything to all this, the Lord knew all about it; and if I was going to join that day, the Lord had the power to send the message. At the meeting, when the doors were announced open, I went up. I was in tears and couldn't say much. Brother Smith said, "I knew she was going to join just as well as if someone had told me." I was amazed. Not that I doubted the power of God, but that he sent the message. Whenever I get low in spirit, and everything else is gone, I often think of this sweet experience, and the thread of hope lingers: It gives me look upward, and press onward toward the prize of the high calling; and to give the Lord all the praise and honor, for life, death, and universe.

Some mornings, I get up about four o'clock; and the first thing I do is to go out and gaze up into the sky: and, seeing all the stars and wonderful works, I can understand the 19th Psalm: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knoweldge." Another one of his wonderful works is the pretty white snow that is falling today. When we can feel the nearness of the Lord, everything is wonderful!

May his reigning grace be with us all.

Nellie J. Hodges

---

158 E. 17th Street,
Hialeah, Fla.

Dear Editors:

My last issue of the *Signs of the Times* reminded me that my subscription has run out. Enclosed is three dollars for another year, for I don't want to miss a single copy. The letters of God's saints speak for me much better than I ever could, for through them I re-live so many of my experiences. I can't help but believe that it won't be too long until our blessed Lord will come again, and take "his own" to ever be with the Lord. I have a hope that I shall be in the number, for He saves us by his grace, and keeps us by his power.

May he bless and keep the editors of this paper, and his sheep wherever they may be.

Mrs. Chas. M. Hartman

"REMEMBERING"

Rt. 1, Box 134
Meadows of Dan, Va.

Dear Brethren in the Lord:

Enclosed is $5.00 for two years subscription to the *Signs*. We have enjoyed reading the ones we borrowed from Brother and Sister Terry.

I would like to write a comforting letter, but my heart is a closed book today. I can see the beautiful snow capped mountains in the Blue Ridge, but I can see nothing spiritually. I have been a member of Bell Spur Church for almost a year now, and I feel today to be so much of a burden to them. But, if I am not deceived, our Saviour led me to this place; and I hope he is leading my dear husband there . . . May I ask that, the Lord willing, you pray for us and our family, which consists of one son, eighteen, and a daughter, seventeen. The son is away at his job in Richmond, and our daughter is to graduate this Spring and then go into nurse's training. We feel the need of the prayers of the dear people of God, which I do believe you are.

I shall never forget Elder Spangler's sermon, (or the Lord speaking through his servant,) at Green Hill at our association last year. His text, "And sitting down, they watched him there." My heart does rejoice when I can meditate upon the beautiful words that were spoken: and remembering, the tears start anew. How gloriously he pro-

claimed the beautiful truth. I shall never forget his countenance as he spoke. I have already written too lengthly, but my heart does rejoice, "remembering".

It seems to be a sad time for us; and again it seems to be a grand time: so much turmoil in our land. But when we see all the things that are coming to pass, the scriptures unfold so much to me: "Look up for your redemption draweth near."

May the blessings of our Lord and Saviour abide with you and yours, is my prayer today.

An unworthy one,
Mrs. Lewis C. Spencer

55½ Maple Avenue
Warwick, New York
10990

Dear Brother and Sister in Christ: —
(Elder and Sister Ruston)

It is indeed an honor and a privilege to write, live and speak to others as "Brother and Sister in Christ," and it was wonderful to receive your letters of January 27th. Yes, we are truly happy with both our little girls. We are given to understand, however, that although our children come through us, we are but "earthly guardians" so to speak, and that we cannot be the possessors of their souls, that their lives are truly in God's hands.

You have certainly gone through your share of trials, we too have had a few of our own, but always when we look about us, we can find some who have gone through much more. As someone once wrote, "I complained because I had no shoes; then I met a man who had no feet." The knowledge of Christ is the great reconciler. Religions are but systems of BELIEF, but always did I seek something more than mere belief. Belief is of the intellect, but faith is of the soul, a fruit of the Spirit of God.

While in college in 1945-46 I was led to read the Bible, particularly the book of Acts. I do not claim to have understood it at that time, although I had my own conception of what it might be about. Since then I have studied in the field of morals and ethics, philosophy, psychology, psychiatry and religion, always to find something lacking, and continually seeking, and always would come to mind, "Seek and ye shall find", or "The truth shall make you free." Then, especially during the weeks of October and November of 1963, I underwent some of what, at the time, seemed the strangest experiences. I would find myself in deep trouble, seemingly not of my own making. Each time shortly thereafter it would melt away, and some mysterious power would always "save" me from it; and each time I would afterwards find myself strengthened inwardly in some strange way to where I dared to face life about me a little better, and discovered that I had been enlightened in fields not material, but in things not seen, which would always have some direct bearing on my so-called physical life. Often I feared, but was never quite sure of what, then would come to mind such words as, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," or "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." These acted as a sort of buttress, and, too, came to mind a prayer my grandfather, Elder Vail, often used, "Prepare us for that which Thou hast prepared for us," and I felt that I was being prepared, but for What? Much that transpired during this time cannot be written in these few pages, so I will not even attempt to go into all of it. Then one night during November I found myself suspended, taken up, but I knew not where, something like a negative was before my eyes, a few light spots showed up, but mostly it seemed black to my human perception, and my mind interpreted it as a black sinful life. Some time during the dream I could feel myself (not as a body, but as a soul) about to be lowered into water. At first I was scared but then

fear left. Shortly after, I awoke, feeling half frightened and half refreshed, so much had gone on in so short a time, more than in any other dream I had ever had. As time went on I seemed to be told not to worry, that I of myself had no power and never did have. One morning soon after the dream I awoke feeling as if I were at THE BOTTOM, and I cried out, "God help me." I felt almost as if my heart were being cut out. I asked my wife if I would be out of order if I were to ask a name in the church. I had truly never contemplated it before and even then I did not know that I ever would.

On December 1st I was let down into a stream of water. The day before, it had snowed and it was cloudy and cold up until the afternoon when I was to be baptized, and a short time before the baptism the sun came out brightly, and it gave me a lot of courage and faith. Now I find that God is ALL POWER, that even the amount of faith and hope that I have in Him is in His hands. I cannot humble myself, nor can I exalt myself, that too is of His doing. I never have, and never can of myself DO ANYTHING. I now feel that I can go on living in a totally different and wonderful light, and when persecuted it comes to mind that "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." Please forgive anything amiss.

With brotherly love,
Albert Vail, Jr.

Rt. 1, Box 240,
Snyder, Texas

Dear Editors:

I notice that it is time to renew my subscription, so am enclosing a check for two years.

Brother Wood, I heartily endorse your statement that God is not frustrated in any of the perilous events that are taking place in our nation, and the world at large. I believe He has the knowledge and power and takes care of each event without the advice of men. I hope I am thankful that God has given me the grace to believe the doctrine set forth in the dear *Signs;* and, as Brother Wood stated, I am certain the *Signs* will be published as long as God has a need for them to be published.

God is still inspiring his saints to write glad tidings for us to read, the same as he inspired the apostles and prophets to write the scriptures for our comfort and instruction, and his glorification. Praise His holy name!

May God's richest blessings rest upon each of you editors, those who write, and the many readers everywhere, is my prayer for Christ's sake. Much love from a little sister in Christ Jesus, if not deceived.

Mrs. J. P. Madding
(nee Minnie Lee Williams)

Dear Editors of the *Signs:*

I am enclosing a check for renewal of the *Signs* and for the Indigent Fund.

I do not see how I could get along without the paper: It is comforting to read such good, sound writings. It lifts us up, and we are made to rejoice and and to praise the Lord for the dear writers coming our way. We do not get to go to hear preaching very often, so it is food for our hungry souls. Let us praise the Lord for everything!

I feel sometimes that surely I am not one of the redeemed of God; then unexpectedly I am assured that I am included in that number before the world was. Oh, I know it is for nothing I have done: how sinful I do feel so much of the time.

May the Lord bless and keep you editors in your untiring efforts in putting out such a sound paper.

Unworthily,
Mrs. A. T. Couch

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the Staunton River Union will meet, the Lord willing, with Strawberry Church the fifth Saturday and Sunday in May. The church is located on Highway 750, one mile from Wood's Store, on Highway 41, twelve miles north of Danville, Va.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Josephene Dodd, Clerk

NOTE TO ELDERS

As an encouragement and incentive for our ministering brethren to put the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in the homes of more brethren and friends, we will be glad for them to retain one dollar for each NEW SUBSCRIPTION sent us. This applies to new subscriptions only. Please keep the dollar when sending the subscription. The price is $3.00 for one year, or two years for $5.00.

Those elders who esteem the SIGNS OF THE TIMES should mention it to the brethren; and those who desire to subscribe can assist the elders in this way by subscribing through them. — Editors

NOTE OF APPRECIATION, AND REQUEST

We appreciate that some of the brethren and friends are complying with our request that notices of meetings and associations, and obituaries, be sent to us at Box 186, Manassas, Virginia. But there are some who have not complied, and it puts an additional burden and expense upon us; and also often causes the notices to reach us too late to be published in the issue desired. They should reach us at least five weeks before publication date; if they come earlier, we will hold until proper date.

All subscriptions, renewals, and business communications should continue to be mailed to Route 1, Box 539, Danville, Virginia. — **— Editors**

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va.

EDITORIAL

MATTHEW 18:15,20

"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done

for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

For some reason not given, a precious brother has asked me to write on this passage of scripture. His request was accompanied by another request, which was that he remain incognito to the readers. Had the request come from one that had come under the censure of the church, I would have hesitated to comply with his request. Suffice it is to say that his standing among the brethren is unimpreachable, therefore I come before you to write on this much ignored scripture.

Before I venture too far, let me confess my sin. None among us have been more guilty in breaking this command of our Master than I have. How wonderful it is that we can see the truth in the Apostle's language, for, says he, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God," and it was the lovely inquiry of our brother that caused me to have a train of thought that I had not had before. As the Lord blesses me with the Christ-like mind, will my efforts be worthwhile to the children of God.

There has been from time to time in the history of the church a great display made about the difference between public and private offences. How I need wisdom from above to deal with the solemn truths in this text. Not only that I have wisdom to deal with it, but likewise to deal with it in love to my brethren. I hope that I do not want to antagonize them, but so often it comes to the point where I must please God or men, to where I must obey God or men. The Bible does not say anything about public offences by name. What might be a public offence to one would not be to another, thus the treatment of private offences alone. One person in an assembly of believers might understand a minister to teach something, and no one else understand what he said. This could not with propriety be called a public offence. However, we well know that there have been what would, with all reason, be called public offences. I know that sometimes a case could be so plain and so much in the public (not world, but publicly to the church) that the procedure in handling it would come **first** before the church. But even this is a matter that needs careful handling. It is true that a member of the church is to be well spoken of by those that are without; it is true that we are commanded to obey magistrates. But let us, as given grace, rightly divide the word of truth; let us search **and apply** all the truth. We are not to cast our pearls before swine, nor are we to go to the world for our final decision in matters that pertain to our internal affairs.

This world is not a friend to grace, nor is it a friend to the recipients of grace any further than what it is worth to the world for it to be. But the saddest thing that has ever occured has been when the members of the manifest body of Christ have joined together with the world to crucify one of the little ones in the kingdom. The testimony of the members is to be received, but it needs weighing and examination to see what it is that motivates the **giving** of the testimony. If it is joined with the world, there should be a separation of the testimony from that which comes from the outside. There have been cases among our people when the brethren refused to hear the decision of the courts, although the court had found a minister guilty of bad conduct. This is not ordinary among our people, but in this case the brethren felt that it was a case of jealousy in the church and that nominal Christians had joined in with the world to crucify and put to death a lovely minister. Here, as in all things that the church is called upon to consider, there should be careful consideration given to matters that we call public offences.

Now for private offences. Let me draw you a picture. How many times have you been in an assembly of Old

Baptists when they spent half (a lot of the time that is a liberal estimation of the time) talking about personalities? How many times were they discussed and that about things that no one had ever mentioned to them? How many times has such conduct been justified by saying, Oh well, the predestination of God must be carried out. I do not know of any sadness that is equal to that of a people that professes the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, that hides behind the predestination of God to justify their wickedness. I do read of God's people meeting to worship God; I have found right much evidence of them meeting to confess their faults to one another; I do remember of ministers meeting to pray for the sick, but I have yet to find in the scripture of any meeting to find fault with one not present, to accuse and insinuate and to pick flaws in their walk and belief and preaching.

If predestination justifies our wrongs; if it is our man of counsel; if we are using it to cover up our breaking the command in the text; if it is more important to us than to know the will of God and do it, as did the man Saul when struck down, then all of the reasoning and expounding of the scripture will be useless and fruitless as far as good to the household of faith is concerned. But if the love of God is in our heart, this, with all other commandments, will be a joy to obey; if we desire to know the will of God, and are a constant beggar at a throne of grace for help in each hour of need, there will be a careful bridling of our tongue lest we be found as a broken down city (Prov. 25:28). In short, if we are interested in the Lord Jesus Christ we will be interested in his kingdom, and in the subjects of that kingdom. Our picture may not look so good, but I need to look long at it, for I assure you that it shows me up as being in rebellion to my Master's commands. The love of God has been discussed so much in an abstract way, as though you could say a lot of times that you loved God and that it was true because you said it. This is about as far from our true condition before God as we could get. Our assertions mean nothing unless our action shows as the result of what has been said. To talk about loving our wife or husband and then treat them every way except as they should be treated; to talk about loving the Lord, and loving his people, and loving his doctrine, and loving the ordinances of the church, and then spend our time and strength and money in serving this ungodly world, is nothing more nor less than mockery, and I feel that it is my duty to warn one and all that God is not mocked, and I do hope that I desire that he engrave that upon my heart.

There is not much said among us about the so-called Golden Rule. WHY? Why do we not say anything about it? I think that I can tell you why that I do not. **I am afraid of men.** I am afraid that I will be called soft; that a charge will be placed against me which will label me as an Arminian. I am more afraid of the creature than I am of the Creator. I am free to say to you that I had much rather have an afflicted saint of God to live as my next door neighbor in whom this so-called Golden Rule is the criterion of their walking before the Lord and of their treatment of their fellow-saints, even though they do not understand deep doctrines, than to have a professor of deep doctrines and a lack of the true concept of this good rule. Does this rule give us any concern? **Does it?** Does it ever cut us to the quick when we maliciously spread rumors about someone who is absent, or about someone that has done us a fancied wrong? Or do we excuse ourselves by saying "It is all predestinated and I cannot help spreading this venom?"

Our text is not dealing with us and the world. The only rule that has been given about our dealing with the world is this: Do not have anymore to do with it than you can help. Our writing and preaching, if acceptable and well pleas-

ing to God, and beneficial and consoling to God's people, must be directed to the family of God. If men (ungodly men) do wickedly, let them alone; if men justify themselves in their evil conduct, let them alone, but if God's children need it, reprove them, rebuke them; if the ministers of Jesus Christ do not get their charge from the one that Paul gave Timothy and Titus, they are not charged according to Holy Writ, and if they have been so charged and are neglecting it, they need a Peter to talk to them (2 Pet. 1:10,12;3:1). Now, dear brethren, let us look at the scriptural reading. If our brother trangresses against us what are we to do? Will anything "just as good" do? If it will, nothing at all will do just as well. If we are rejecting what He said, or if we are substituting something for what He said, where does it place us? If it does not place us in rebellion, what would place us in it? I am not putting words in anybody's mouth, but it places me in rebellion to the Lord Jesus Christ. The only action that is Christlike in a case of offence is to go to the offender. There is not any exception to this rule. To say one word to any one about an offence by another is an offence on our part.

What is the first step necessary in order to comply with the command of Jesus? If a brother does something to you, what is the first Christlike step? What is the first thing that you can do not to become an offender? Is it to meet around somebody's hearth and scatter what has been done or said? Is it that? Is it to see a brother across the street and call to him and say, "I do not want to talk about anybody, and I want you to not tell this, but I think that So and So is this way or that way, or Brother So and So has treated me with contempt?" Is any of this permissable? Is it ever permissable? Are there any extenuating circumstances whereby we have the authority to abrogate the rule given us? If so, where is the authority, and who is it that Jesus has abdicated His throne to?

When a man or woman of Adam's race is born again, comes into the kingdom of Jesus Christ, he or she then becomes under his jurisdiction. As far as I remember there has never been a rule given that would exempt any of us. Have we done this? Have we first gone to our brother when we became offended? Have you done this? Has this been my rule since I have professed a hope? No, I am guilty of breaking it many times. But does that abrogate the rule? Does that lessen the force of it? Our text tells us to go first to him. It does not suggest that we take somebody with us at first. It does not say that we should consult Elder John Doe before we go. What does it say? Our Lord and Master tells us to go to him alone. If He is our Master that is what he has said to us. If we have not always done that, at the time that we did something else, he was not our Master.

Now what do we do? He hears us. That closes the matter. If we are led by the Holy Spirit, no one in or out of the church will ever know of this. But he does not hear us. What then? Are we to build up our standing with one or two others, showing how free of fault we are in the matter, and then take them to hear the matter out? No, that is not what we are to do. Have we always done that? I have not. Have you? The fact that we have not always complied with the command has not removed it, nor has it lessened the force of it. If he will not hear us when we go alone, then we are to take one or two more. What for? Who is it that is to be the object of this work? Who are we to save by doing this command? If we **are doing** the command, it is to save our brother.

But when we take one or two more what do we do? If he hears us, that will be the end of it, and no one inside or out of the church will ever hear about the incident. But if he does not take our coming to him in the right way. What are we to do? It is now to be told to the church. Why is it told to the church? Both of you belong to the Lord;

both of you are professed followers of the Lord; both of you have come before the church. If he does not hear you then what? Do we have the privilege to scatter it now? Never. It is to be told to the church, the whole of the offended and one or two others taking part and witnessing to what has been done. The offender is now as an heathen and a publican to the church. This going with one or two others is not to be the whole church. It is one or two others. That is all. This meeting is outside the church. It is not the church. It is what is under consideration when the Saviour says "that whatsoever is bound on earth shall be loosed in heaven, and whatsoever is loosed on earth is bound in heaven."

Now there is one other thought that must be stressed. All of this must be done in His name. If the so-called offended one is in the wrong, he cannot meet anybody in a right way. He could not take one or two others and have a meeting for the purpose of settling the matter when his motive was not for the glory of God. If two or three meet in His name, God is there. If they do not meet in His name, God is not there in this sense.

I acknowledge my shortcomings dear brethren. But my sin has not proved the Saviour's command wrong. I feel to acknowledge him in all my ways (Prov. 3:6), and if this feeling is because of a desire to meet in his dear name, I feel sure that a closer following after the command of our Saviour would be followed by less bickering and backbiting among us.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE TWO LAWS

"But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." (Romans 7:23)

In our meditations on this subject we have arrived at the conclusion that there are two separate and distinct realms in which these two laws or principles, (for such we understand them to be), operate, and that it is so arranged in the eternal fixedness of things that it is impossible for one law or principle to invade the territory or realm of the other.

These two principles are variously termed in the Scriptures: the "flesh" and the "spirit"; the "old man" and the "new man"; the "law of the mind" and the "law of the members"; "my mind" and "my flesh"; the "inner man" and the "outer man"; and numerous other expressions, all referring to the same two principles. These various names are suggestive of the operations of the two principles, and their manifestations to the children of God in their experiences; and when it is all summed up and simplified, it is but two lives and natures which have been derived from their headships, to wit: Adam and Christ, and the fruits and developments of evidences of those two natures as revealed in the exercises of the children of God in their daily experiences.

The one of these laws or natures which we derive from our earthly parentage Adam, is manifested in our natural birth, and is corrupt, sensual, and devilish, and is not capable of higher ideals than that which exalts self, and fosters selfish ambitions. It seeks places of honor and nobility among men, such as the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost seats at feasts. It leads to such conduct as will receive the praise of men, and cares little or nothing for the approval of God. It is capable of the greatest flight in the forms of religious ceremonies and religious pretensions, when it is popular to do so; but is careful to make that service conform to the manner which insures to its devotees the kingdom of this world and all the glory of them.

(Matthew 4:8, 9) Self denial is an unknown quantity, a misnomer with it; and the highest incentive of which it is capable of suggesting to induce religious service, is the hope of reward, or the fear of punishment. It is wholly incapable of originating one thought, word, or deed which is spiritually good, but it often deceives the child of God and makes him believe he is performing righteousness, when self alone is being served. It approves and commends us for doing that which is looked upon by the world, and suggests that an ease of mind and an approving conscience is assurance to us that we have done our whole duty. In this way, and numerous others, we are deceived and misled by this carnal nature or "law of our members".

The one of these laws or natures which we derive from our spiritual head, Christ, was manifested in our spiritual birth, and it is from it that all our spiritual exercises arise. It is said to be pure, peaceable, easily to be entreated, and full of good fruits. It has for its aim the glory of God. It abases man, discovers to him his weakness, pollution and utter worthlessness; reveals the unprofitableness of the flesh and the impossibility of any good thing emanating from the earthly Adam; teaches us to crucify the flesh and the affections thereof, and points out the righteousness of Christ as the only fit and acceptable offering to the demands of divine justice. It makes us abhor and despise self-righteousness, and at the same time creates in us hungering and thirsting after righteousness that is in Jesus Christ, so that it becomes our meat and our drink to do the will of God, and walk in his commandments. It lifts us above the level of a slave or bond servant, and introduces us into the family of God, and makes us His children. It binds us under the sacred obligations to God of children to parents, and leads us into the discharge of our duty toward Him for His sake, and because we love righteousness. It leads us into the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ, and makes us drink from the bitter cup of self loathing. It makes us rejoice with exceeding gladness in the midst of fiery trials and bitter persecutions. It causes us to feed upon the flesh and blood of Christ, which is sweet as honey in our mouths, but stirs up the bile and gall of our Adamic nature, and becomes bitter in our bellies. It makes us suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock. It teaches us that God's ways are not our ways, and His knowledge is too wonderful for us. It reveals unto us that the smallest blessing in all of God's storehouse far exceeds in value our richest and most costly service.

All this, and much more, is taught the child of God: precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little, until we come to the knowledge that the heavens do rule, and the Lord doeth according to His will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and that none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, "What doest thou?"

These two laws or principles are, in their very natures, opposed to each other, and there is no process by which they can be reconciled, no terms upon which a peace treaty can be agreed upon, and consequently no suspension of hostilities can be looked for until a final victory is gained by one, and the other is completely overthrown and destroyed. This will come when death is swallowed up in victory, and when we are raised in the image of the heavenly Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The battle field is the chosen vessels of mercy, in which the strong man is armed and keeps his palace and his goods in peace until the stronger comes upon him, and overcomes him, and takes away from him all his armour wherein he trusted; and divides the spoils. From this time hence there is a constant warfare between these two opposing principles, and makes our lives and exercises of mind a mystery to our-

selves. Such a profound mystery is it that the weakest child who has been born of God, knows much more of these exercises than the wisest scholar in the school of Christ has ever been able to describe.

We would not be understood as teaching that these two laws are not a part of ourselves, for they are as much a part of our being as are our bodies, and are that which identifies us in our relations with our two headships, Adam and Christ. In the former is the fountain and source of all our natural thoughts, actions and impulses; in the latter originates all our spiritual impulses and exercies. And what we meant when we said in the first part of this article, that it was so arranged in the eternal fixedness of things that it is impossible for one of these laws or principles to invade the territory or realm of the other, was that no natural fruit could grow upon this spiritual tree, and that no spiritual fruits could be produced from the natural tree. Before this can be done, the unchangeable decree of Jehovah which went forth in the morning of time, must be changed; and everything would cease to bring forth after its kind. If we, in the observance of the directions of a natural law, can render spiritual service, or perform the works of the flesh, then men may gather grapes of thorns and figs of thistles; and we can no longer know a tree by its fruit. But this is impossible, and the natural order of things is preserved here also, that a good tree brings forth good fruit, and an evil tree brings forth evil fruit.

Sometimes the child of God is led by one of these princpiles, and sometimes by the other. One of these principles always inclines us toward carnal living, and the other leads us to spiritual things; and one of the hardest and most perplexing problems which confronts the children of God is determining by which principle they are being actuated in their exercises of mind, and in their services. For they well know that if they should do the things commanded under the directions of the law of the flesh, their services would be an abomination in the sight of God, as they would neither be actuated by the right principles in performing the act, nor have the right aim in view by its accomplishment.

The law of the mind never exalts us, never makes us jealous or envious of others; it forbids all of our complaining that we have not received as good as we deserve; it gives us a right conception of self, which is by no means gratifying to our carnal pride; it reveals our greatest wisdom as foolishness; our purest righteousness as filthy rags; and our most cherished riches as the dung hill.

But the law of the flesh gives us an exalted view of self; makes us stand up in the temple and thank God that we are not as other men; makes us boast of what good and great things we can do, and have done; makes us despise those who acknowledge their insufficiency and nothingness, and hurl at them the appellation "can't-help-it" as a derision; and even makes us claim the rich and priceless mercies of God as a reward for our service — as compensation for what we have done for the Lord.

These are some of the fruits of that warfare which is going on within the children of God by these two opposing principles. The apostles described it as the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that we cannot do the things we would. The child of God is under the reign of grace, but not always under the influence of grace; for sometimes they are taken captive by the law of sin which is in their members. When one is taken captive, they are under the direction of their captor: they are prisoners, and so must remain until reigning grace comes to the prison house of sin and sets them free, and leads them back to the shepherd's tent, and makes them

sit down under the shadow of His wing, where His fruit is sweet to their taste.

By and by this warfare will cease: when our relation with the earthly Adam has been dissolved; when mortality is swallowed up of life; when the grave shall have yielded up its dead; when the mortal bodies of the saints shall have been raised and put on immortality, and changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ. Then the last enemy shall be destroyed; and perfect peace shall reign throughout the entire family of the redeemed saints; all tears shall be wiped away from our eyes, and there songs of redeeming and preserving grace shall ascend in thanksgiving and praise to God for ever and ever.

(The above is an editorial of Elder J. R. Hardy, in his *Advocate of Truth,* November 1, 1913. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

J. R. CULPEPPER

J. R. (Uncle Jake) Culpepper passed from the cares and sufferings of this earthly life November 26, 1963. He was one of fifteen children born to James L. and Margaret Culpepper. He is survived by only one brother, Everett, of Beeville, Texas; and three sisters-in-law: Mrs. Everett Culpepper, of Beeville; Mrs. Curtis Culpepper, of San Antonio; and Mrs. Matthew Culpepper, of Stockdale; and by numerous nieces and nephews.

Uncle Jake was born January 29, 1876, in Lavaca County, Texas; and was married to Miss Nannie Dykes December 15, 1897, who preceded him in death by several years. Her father, Deacon M. V. Dykes, made his home with them many years; and theirs was a home, real home, for Old Baptists. Uncle Jake was a good singer, and loved to sing the old hymns which are so dear to all of us. He freely gave his financial means for church expenses, but through a felt sense of his unworthiness, he never united with the church. We are glad we have a Lord who is not limited to saving those that belong to the visable church: one who knows all of his own and causes them to walk in the way He would have them go; one who reveals himself to his children and gives them hope and comfort according to their needs. "As thy days so shall thy strength be."

Uncle Jake's passing makes the writer of this notice very sad and lonely, as she is the last of four couples of Culpeppers: Deacon Jack and wife, Sister Alice; Uncle Jim and Aunt Allie; Uncle Jake and Aunt Nannie; and Matthew and myself. The eight of us for many years never missed one of our meetings unless providentially hindered.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders H. L. Ballard, G. D. Shipman, and J. W. Shipman in the Funeral Chapel in Stockdale; and interment was in Stockdale Cemetery.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this memorial be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication, and one entered in our church records.

Approved by Mt. Olive Church in conference the second Sunday in January, 1964.

Elder G. D. Shipman, Moderator
Lela Culpepper, Clerk

EDITH RISLER

Sister Risler was born August 24, 1873, in Mardela Springs, Md.; and it pleased the Lord to take her away from these mortal shores on August 1, 1962. We bow in humble submission to the will of our God, believing that she had spent her appointed time here.

Sister Risler was baptized on November 1, 1896, by the late Elder A. B. Francis in Washington, D. C., and remained a member of the Shiloh Church, which has become extinct, until December 2, 1900, at which time she moved her membership to the Ebenezer Church of New York City. She remained a faithful member of that church until death. Sister Risler was also a trustee of the Ebenezer Church for many years.

Sister Risler was married on June 6, 1900, to the late Brother Cyrus Risler who preceded her in death; and to this union was born one son Clark B. Risler, of Pittsburg, Pa., who survives; and where she spent her last days on this earth. There are also two grandchildren who survive her.

Sister Risler was a strong believer in salvation by grace, always giving God the praise for all things. The writer had the privilege of conversing with her on a few occasions and always found her rejoicing in her hope of a rest beyond the grave.

Funeral services were held by the writer, in the Holcomb Funeral Home in Flemington, N. J. August 4, 1962, and she was laid to rest in Rosemont, N. J. May it please the Lord to bless her son, and grandchildren, and all who knew her, to feel that their loss was her eternal gain, is the humble prayer of the writer.

Arthur R. Warren

(We would mention the much labor and assistance Brother and Sister Risler gave Elder Dodson while he was publishing the Signs. This should not go unnoticed in the passing of Sister Risler. — J. D. W.)

JOHN ALBERT ALDRIDGE

Brother Aldridge was born in Caswell County, North Carolina, April 8, 1873, and spent his entire life in the same community. He was the son of the late William and Betty Donahue Aldridge. Brother Aldridge departed this life May 2, 1963, at the age of 90 years and 24 days. He was married to the late Nancy Jane Vaughn and to this union were born four sons, Lonnie B., W. M., Amos A., and J. B. Aldridge; two daughters, Mrs. A. W. Chandler and Mrs. C. B. Stainback. He also leaves to mourn his departure 19 grandchildren, and one brother, Richard Aldridge.

Brother Aldridge was received into the fellowship of Bush Arbor Church at her October meeting, 1909, and at his death was the oldest living member of the church. His life was most beautifully spent, always attending his meeting if possible.

We feel that his spirit is now resting from all pain and sorrow with God, awaiting for the adoption of his body into the glorious family of God where sickness, pain, or death shall never come.

His funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Church by Elders W. C. King, J. Harvey Smith, and E. F. Oakley. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the coming of the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, to call his sleeping dust to come from the grave and to be made like unto His own glorious body.

May God richly bless all who mourn his departure and that the church at Bush Arbor may continue to be thankful for such a member.

Done by order of Bush Arbor Church at her July Meeting, 1963.

W. C. King, Moderator
Earl Rudd, Church Clerk

SISTER CORA ROWLES

Sister Cora Rowles, another dear member of our little flock was removed from our midst by death November 27, 1963. She was born June 20, 1887. She joined Springfield Primitive Baptist Church October 13, 1957 and was baptized by Elder O. K. Tench. Her husband, Brother Ashby Rowles, passed away March 17, 1944. Surviving are six children, Berkley and Ollie of Gretna, Virginia; Russell of Altavista, Virginia; Lonnie of South Sterling, Pennsylvania; Leewood of Princeton, New Jersey; and Mrs. James Owen of Jacksonville, Florida; and 9 grandchildren.

Sister Rowles loved the assembly of the church and filled her seat when possible for her to do so. She enjoyed having the members in her home and talking of the goodness and mercy of God her Saviour.

Funeral Services were held at Springfield Church, conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench. She was laid to rest in Gretna Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, there to await the Resurrection Morn when her Saviour returns to call his jewels home.

May it please God to shower his love on her family and remove all feelings of sorrow and loss, and let us all be submissive to His holy will who makes no mistakes.

Annie Tosh
Done by order of Springfield Church
Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. R. Willis, Clerk

IN MEMORY OF SISTER SALLIE NYE

Sister Sallie Lupton Nye was born May 15, 1888, and was called from this stage of action May 2, 1963, making her stay here almost 75 years. She united with the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church the 3rd. weekend in June, 1946, and was blessed to be a faithful member until ill health prevented her attendance at meetings.

May 5, 1963, the writer attended Sister Nye's funeral, and as I listened to the beautiful words of comfort and sure promises of God that fell from the lips of Elder Leslie Coker and Elder W. E. Turner. I was made again to know for a surety, that for those that have a hope in Christ Jesus it is far better to fall asleep and be with him, than to be in this time world which is full of sorrows, disappointments, trials and tribulations. Jesus plainly tells us in this world ye shall have them, but in me peace. When I looked into Sister Nye's face I felt no sadness, just a sweet feeling of peace. Christ Jesus being her foundation I believe heaven and immortal glory will surely be her home. Sister Nye spent approximately 75 years here, and, like all God's little ones, most of that time was spent in what she felt, was groping in darkness. However, I believe she was being led all the way, for Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice and they follow me and another they will not follow."

Now if any are grieved at her being called home, may it please God to bless them with that peace I felt, for it removes all nature and turns your thoughts to heavenly and divine things and makes you to know God is to wise to err.

Submitted in love.
Ruby E. Coward

E. J. PARSONS

Brother E. J. Parsons was born January 26, 1906, in VanZandt County, Texas; and passed

from this life January 4, 1964, in Amarillo, Texas, at the age of fifty-eight. He leaves to mourn his departure his wife, Mrs. Hazel Parsons, Amarillo; one son, Bobby Parsons, Perryton, Texas; a daughter, Annette Parsons, Amarillo; his mother, Mrs. Olive Parsons, Hereford, Texas; three brothers: Oren, Grady and Buck, Hereford, Texas; two sisters, Mrs. Pauline Johnson, Lubbock, Texas, and Mrs. Maude Talley, Plainview, Texas; and one grandchild.

Brother Parsons was laid to rest in the Claude Cemetery, Claude, Texas, where his sleeping dust is being watched over until the dawn of the resurrection morning, when He comes to raise, own, and crown his heirs into that better kingdom above. We are made to feel assured that Brother Parsons will be among that blood washed throng of the general assembly and church of the first born. In the connection of all the brethren with this dear brother, all could say that he was a lovely brother; being so humble, and enjoying only the truth pertaining to his Maker.

Brother Parsons joined the Sardis Primitive Baptist Church in Amarillo in the Spring of 1951, and served the church well and faithfully, dispatching his duties without murmur. The little band in Amarillo will miss him no end. However, our loss is his gain, as he has been called to the eternal rest where pain and sorrow are no more, and his glass darkly has been removed, and he no more has the doubts and fears that befall all the children of God while here in this low ground of sin and sorrow. May God bless his family of loved ones, and make them to realize he is much better off than we who are left behind.

The services were conducted by Elder W. A. Winfrey, using a text from the 46th Psalm.

May the Almighty God, the maker and righteous dispenser of all things, be with all who are still stumbling and falling here on earth. We that are left feel the need of prayers: all His dear ones that are called home need not our feeble efforts, as they have been brought face to face with their Maker, leaving all carnal things and weakness of the flesh.

Written for the record of the Sardis Primitive Baptist Church, and for the **Signs of the Times**, for all who believe the truth to read.

W. A. Winfrey

ROBERT LEONARD BUCKNER

Robert Leonard Buckner was born May 27, 1878, to Mr. and Mrs. L. F. Buckner; and passed this life November 27, 1963, in the hospital at Mangum, Oklahoma; making his stay in this life eighty-five years and six months. Brother Buckner moved from Alabama to Greer County, Oklahoma, about the year 1900; and was united in marriage to Miss Lottie May Davis June 23, 1912, in her family home near Reed, Oklahoma. To this union were born four children — two sons and two daughters, who are yet living.

He joined Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church August 9, 1913, when they met in Jay Buckle School House near Reed. The church later met at Brother Buckner's home, and then later at his sister's, Mrs. F. H. Hatchett; where they continued until disbanding. After this he placed his membership with Little Flock Church, Altus, Okla., where he continued a very faithful brother until his death.

Surely we can say of him and his wonderful life which he manifested before us: "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile." (John 1:47) One could not be around him long but what he must manifest his great love for his God, and the wonders of amazing grace. We have spent many heavenly seasons in the presence of this father in Israel. His life before his family, friends, brothers and sisters, was one of kindness, friendship, and courtesy. He was a hard worker all his life, with strict integrety and fair dealings. He had no ambition for the pomp and splendor of this world, but rather was averse to the gayety and luxury of the age: with Moses, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. He lived a very simple life, and desired no great show at the time of his death. This was manifested in the arrangements he had previously made for his funeral service.

His survivors are his precious wife; two sons, Sherman, Oklahoma City, and Herman, Sacramento; two daughters: Mrs. Madora Gibson, Mangum, Okla., and Mrs. Ed. Whisler. Chelso, Okla.; eight grandchildren, and three great grandchildren. Surviving also are two brothers: J. C. Buckner, Tony, Alabama, and W. D. Buckner, Pell City, Alabama; and two sisters: Mrs. F. H. Hatchett, Mangum, Okla., and Mrs. Rena Ferguson. Decatur, Alabama.

Brother Buckner's death was our loss, but his eternal gain: not gone to be no more, but only gone on before. As Watts says, "Why do we mourn departing friends, or shake at death's alarms? 'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends, to call them to his arms."

He was laid to rest November 29, 1963, in Riverside Cemetery, Mangum, Okla., to await the second coming of Christ, "Who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Phil. 3:21) The funeral service was conducted by his pastor; and at the request of the family and Little Flock Church the above was written.

C. M. Haygood

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 132 DANVILLE, VA., JUNE 1964 No. 6

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/64
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

EASTER

Our Lord was crucified
Like a lamb he bled and died,
And then they laid Him in a borrowed tomb.
Then the sun refused to shine
From the hour of six 'til nine —
How sad and doleful was the midnight Gloom.

Come and see the broken stone
Where they laid Him there alone.
They placed the watchmen there beside the door.
Tho' in secret He arose
Never hindered by His foes,
He arose and now He lives forever more.

They placed a crown of thorns
On His weary head so torn,
And led Him to the place in agony.
Did the crimson tear drops flow
As He bent beneath each blow
While He Meekly staggered on to Calvary?

Round His weary thornpierced head
There's a halo now instead,
And no more He'll tread the winepress all alone.
What a price the Lord has paid
While on Him the cross was laid
Oh! Was it for the sins that I have done?

No mercy then He knew
Distilled as drops of dew,
For God had turned away from His dear Son
But when the moment came
He called His father's name
It's finished-now the victory has been won.

This story now is old
Yet the sweetest ever told,
How Jesus came and died for you and me.
How he bowed His princely head
And numbered with the dead —
Yet He rose again and lives forever more.

April, 1955
Mrs. Evelyn Walker
Greensboro, N. C.

LUKE 23:28-31

"But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?"

A brother in Texas has requested that I write my thoughts on the above Scripture and send them to the Signs or certain other religious periodicals. So I shall endeavor to comply with his request, though I feel some hesitancy, not being in the ministry, in undertaking to offer my comments on a text from Holy Writ through the medium of a religious paper.

These words of Jesus were uttered on the eve of his crucifixion at the instigation of the caviling, stumbling, and unbelieving Jews though the Roman soldiers actually accomplished His ignominious death, by his sufferance, for He said, "I lay down my life . . ." (John 10:17,18) Then, in another sense, the sins of HIS people nailed him to the shameful tree of the cross, which sins He bore thereon to satisfy the demands of the moral law and the claims of divine justice, and to save these same people, and no others, from their sins, to the glory of God. He knew that his hour, which he more than once spoke of, was coming, and in his humanity there was naturally a shrinking from it, for He said, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." (Matt. 26:39) He drank the bit-

ter cup in sorrow, for He said that his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; and his people "take the cup of salvation" in joyfulness. And, "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief . . ." (Isaiah 53:10) But this solemn matter was agreed upon in the covenant of grace between the Father and the Son before the foundation of the world, and could not be otherwise. "It behooved Christ to suffer . . ." (Luke 24:46) The Scriptures must be fulfilled, but this did not excuse the wickedness of men in effecting the death of the King of saints, who anticipated the glory He would have with the Father after his suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven, where He "lives after the power of an endless life." However, He prayed for the forgiveness of his people among his crucifiers, and He is always heard.

So, upon the near approach of his crucifixion, the appointed Sinbearer tells the daughters of Jerusalem not to weep for him, but to weep for themselves and their children. This was said in view of the impending destruction of that city and the temple therein. "There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." (Matt. 24:2) The Roman army laid siege to the city in the year of 70, and the inhabitants thereof were reduced to starvation for the most part. ". . . but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened," meaning the duration of the siege. Evidently the elect among the besieged were saved from the calamity which befell the city. According to Josephus, a Jewish historian, who joined Titus (Roman General and Emperor) in the prolonged siege, "when Titus had so closely encompassed the city with a wall, there was no coming out for provisions, upon which a sore famine commenced, so that they fed on dung and dirt, and shoes, and girdles, one rich and noble woman, whose name was Mary, the daughter of Eleazar, being stripped of all she had by the seditious, killed her own child, and dressed it, and ate part of it; and the other part being found by the soldiers that broke in upon her, the news of this shocking fact was spread all over the city, and every one looked with horror upon it." No wonder that they should say, "Blessed are the barren . . .", for "though starving themselves (they) were under no temptation to do such a detestable action."

Such horrible conditions as those related in the foregoing led the people to "begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, cover us," to the end that they might be free from their sorry plight, which they brought on themselves and their children by their rejection and crucifixion of the Lord of glory. They said, "His blood be on us, and on our children" (Matt. 27:25), and it was so. The Jews have been scattered throughout the nations of the earth, following the end of the Jewish state, and millions were brutally put to death during World War II. It seems that it was Hitler's aim to exterminate them, but they still exist in great numbers, and of them there is a remnant according to the election of grace (Rom. 11:5). They deny particular responsibility for the crucifixion of Christ, and the man of sin seems ready to defend them in this denial. However, according to the New Testament, which they also deny, they stand chargeable with the crime of crimes. Denying that Jesus is the Christ, the true Messiah, they are still looking for another, but they will be disappointed, for "HE'S THE ONE." In I John 2:22, we read: Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?" This is a fitting characterization of the Jews and all other deniers of the Lord Jesus Christ, including the Mohammedans, and there are multitudes of them in the world. Jesus said to the Pharisees, "Ye are of your father the devil . . . when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." (John 8:44)

As to the green tree, this evidently refers to Christ. He is an evergreen

tree, for He ever lives to impart life and strength to His people, and to make intercession for them "on the right hand of the Majesty on high." He is the Tree of Life in whom all fulness dwells to supply the needs of the saints, who are called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord. (Isa. 61:3) He is compared to an apple tree among the trees of the wood, and his fruit is sweet to the taste. (S. of S. 2:3) Now if the generality of the Jews hated the Lord of life and glory, who is comparable to a green tree, and delivered him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him . . . (Matt. 20:19), what was to be done with those dry trees? They, being dead trees, dead in sin, devoid of the sap of spiritual life, graceless and wicked, hardened and seasoned, were fit subjects for everlasting destruction by the fire of God's wrath. In Deut. 4:24, we read that God is a consuming fire. Yet He is love in Christ, who is the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely. His transcendent beauty and loveliness will occasion the most profound admiration and approbation "when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." (2 Thess. 1:10) His is the very acme of goodness, and He is the embodiment of all that is pure and holy. I dreamed one time of saying that He is the greatest Personage that ever lived, and it is even so. His visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men. (Isa. 52:14) Yet he was fairer than the children of men, and grace was poured into his lips (Psalms 45:2), as the one Mediator between God and men. I like what the poet said of him in harmony with Scripture:

"No mortal can with him compare
Among the sons of men,
Fairer is he than all the fair
Who fill the heavenly train."

I cannot command language to adequately set forth His divine perfections, and the sublimity of His glorious attributes. And it will be the height of celestial joy to view his endearing charms in glory without interruption to all eternity, for there will be nothing to obstruct the beatific vision of the saints in unearthly light.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, N. C.

ELDER WEAVER TO ELDER HELMS

3415 Westbury Road,
Shaker Heights, Ill. 44120
April 12, 1964

Elder J. P. Helms,
Vinton, Virginia.

Dear Brother Helms:

Your good letter came, and I enjoyed it. I also enjoyed the April **Signs of the Times:** Your experience that was preached at the little church of Mt. Zion in the Corresponding Meeting, will go down in history. I feel proud to be a member of the church called Frying Pan there. I also enjoyed Elder Leffert's article on "Denominations," and Elder Lambert's Editorial. All were good reading. Elder Lefferts was pastor of Frying Pan at the time he wrote the article.

Brother Helms, it is good when brethren of the same faith and order can be together, for we can say, "Your God is my God". I remember well that in my boyhood days I would argue with the Bible. We had two or three around the house, as my grandparents were Old School Baptists; and grandpa was a deacon.

I would read the Bible, and get so disgusted with it that I decided to buy a new one with a shiny cover. As I read along, and would compare, to my surprise the both read the same. I said, "What's the matter with me?" and I found they were both the King James Version. I gave up; that there was nothing to religion and I could get along all right without any. So I tried to avoid reading the Bible, and quit going to church, and thought to attend to business and make some money.

After about a year, it seems I was

told I had to preach; and I laughed at the idea: I was not a member of any church — why does that preaching business bother me so? Something would say, "Preach the Word." And I would say that I was not able: "I cannot, I won't do it." At times I would feel my inability, for something had told me that I was a lost sinner; and I couldn't get it out of my mind: A lost sinner.

At last, as I sat, a man sat beside me, and said, "George, do you know me?" And he looked at me with eyes of fire which seemed to burn a hole in me when he spoke, and I was drawn to him with tears. "I am Jesus whom you have crucified. Think of the trials I had on earth: what I suffered for you; and I asked you to preach the Word, and you say, 'I won't do it,.' That brought me down in tears. I said, "O, Lord! take me back. What do you want me to do?"

"The preacher that has preached for the church here, has had a stroke, and will never preach for the folks again. I have sent a brother from Iowa; and they will call a meeting. You go to that meeting and offer yourself to them." And I said that my wife was expecting anytime now: "She will be all right, you do as I have told you."

I went to the meeting, and when the preaching was over, he said, "If there is anyone here that feels he would like to become a member of the church, to make it known." I arose about halfway in the room, and the preacher said for me to come down to where all could hear. I stood weeping, and could not talk. Finally I said, "Oh, that God could be merciful to me a sinner." One of the deacons arose and asked me if I desired to join the church; and I replied that it was my intention, but seeing I had made such a failure, and was so sinful, they had better put it off.

The deacon said that he had noticed quite a change in this young man of late. We were close neighbors; and we both stood still for a moment. Then the pastor said, "All who were in favor of taking this young brother into the church, to raise their right hands." Every hand went up. Then two sisters joined also, and we went to the water and were baptized. I had never said a word about preaching to any one, but, as they were leading me up, my father came to meet me, and the preacher said to him, "John, (my father's name) here is a preacher for you." Then, as I stood, the sound again came to me, "Preach the Word." I started to say that I was not a member — and caught myself, and said nothing.

As near as I can remember, it was February 2, 1895, I was chosen Clerk of the church; and in two months licensed to preach the gospel wherever God should see fit to cast my lot. In February, 1900, I was ordained a minister of the gospel, of the Old School Baptists. And here I am at past ninety-one still proclaiming the same faith and order given me by Jesus Christ. Amen.

Brother Helms, here is my experience, as near as I can remember. Do with it as you like.

Yours in hope
George L. Weaver

BELIEVED WHAT ELDER PERKINS PREACHED

Rt. 1,
Naches, Washington

Dear Elder and Sister Spangler:

When I read the article by Elder J. M. Perkins in the Signs, my mind was carried back to a Sunday in July, 1900 when I heard him preach the first time. I was eighteen at the time, and had never heard anything like it, having always attended the Methodist Church; but I had married into a Baptist family, so couldn't help being exposed to their belief, (for which I am thankful).

The whole neighborhood had come out to hear a new preacher; so there were two or three denominations represented. I believed what he preached, and realized it was the true gospel. I

could see the mixed crowd shedding tears; and remember a young man saying on the way home, that it must take a lot of education to be able to preach like that. It didn't occur to me then that I would ever be a member of any church but the Methodist.

In March of the next year, he had an appointment to preach at the church where my mother and I were members. By that time I knew I wasn't a Methodist. I was anxious for my Methodist friends to hear him preach, thinking that he could make them see the truth: You see how much I had to learn. In fact we never cease learning; and what a wonderful teacher we have! Sometimes the schooling seems hard, but, looking back over the way the Lord has brought us, we can see all things were working for our good, and His glory.

In April of that year, the Union Meeting was held at South Mt. Zion Church near us. We entertained many visiting Baptists, and I enjoyed their heavenly conversation. "It was heaven below my Redeemer to know." Elder Perkins told my experience so well in his preaching on Saturday, I thought someone must have told him about me. I learned afterward that some expected me to ask for a home in the church at that time; or hoped I would. In October, 1904, I did ask for a home in the church, and was received. Of the members at that time, I'm the only one living.

We came West in 1917, and I wrote for my letter, and it was accepted here at Pleasant Grove Church in 1921. We have always been blessed to meet and be with those of like precious faith in California, as well as here. What a wonderful relationship is ours who believe that our redemption was accomplished in time without beginning, when Christ stood as a Lamb slain before the foundation of the world.

When I read the letters and articles in the **Signs,** I long to try to tell what great things the Lord has done for me; and trust that all I have written is in His praise.

Hope you are all well. Love and best wishes.

In hope of eternal life,
Daisy Baker

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976 Maxey Street,
Memphis, Tenn.

ELDER'S OR PASTOR'S DUTY

In all respects the Scriptural definition of a Pastor, his qualification and his work, is essentially different from, and in many ways directly opposite the ways of carnality. The Apostle Peter, who was an Elder, exhorted the elders or pastors among those to whom he directed his epistles, and clearly stated the proper work of the pastoral office, thus: "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." (1 Peter v:1-3)

Pastor and Shepherd are related terms, and imply the existance of a flock: the flock of God is to be fed — and will be fed by pastors whom God gives for that purpose. This, however, is not the world, nor worldly congregations, but the flock of God which he has purchased with his own blood. "I lay down my life for the sheep", said Jesus. The sheep then are the flock which He purchased with his own blood; and his sheep exclusively. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life: and they shall never perish; neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." This flock is comparatively little: "Fear not little flock for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." It is composed of none but those who hear the Shepherd's voice.

The pastor is instructed to take the oversight of the flock of God: by which we are not to understand that he is endowed with kingly authority, for that would make him a lord over God's heritage. But what is implied by the oversight which the pastor has, is to see

that they are well fed, and to watch against false prophets coming among them in sheep's clothing, while inwardly they are revening wolves. If by oversight we would understand regal authority, it would seriously clash with the words above quoted, which expressly forbids ministers to exercise lordship over their brethren; and also with the language of Jesus: "And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ." (Matthew 23:9,10)

Timothy, it is true, was to teach with all authority; but all authority that is connected with the pastorial office, is the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ who is head over all things to the Church, which is his body, and the fulness of him that filleth all in all. Ministers are to preach the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, having no confidence in the flesh. They are to feed, admonish, and teach the flock, not by a written contract, but of a ready mind. Those whom God has given to his church, are by him made partakers of the Gospel which they are to preach to the flock of God.

They that worship God must worship him in Spirit and in truth: God has directed in what manner He will be worshiped; and they who are given wisdom will testify with Peter that there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved; for there is salvation in no other. (Acts 4:12) He that hath God's word is to declare it faithfully, whether men will hear or forbear, knowing that the more faithfully and plainly they are enabled to preach it, the greater will be the opposition they will encounter from the world, the flesh, and the devil. But they can not turn back, but have to go preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ. "And Jesus unto him, No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:62)

We do not find where anyone that God called to preach, ever failed to; or told to perform a duty, but that he did it. Philip was sent in the way that all servants are sent: where to go, and how to get there (by faith), and they always arrive on time, and deliver the message that is given them — and he gives the hearer an ear to hear, and to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. The Gospel is preached by the commandment of God our Saviour, and is not by the volition of men. They preach Christ and him crucified, and it is heard in the same Spirit in which it is preached, and is believed by those called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to God's purpose and grace given them in Christ Jesus before the world was.

These are some of our views on the work of pastors of God's church; may he give us a ready mind, to be instant in season out of season, and always abounding in the work of the Lord. May the Lord lead, guide, and uphold us in the truth, is my prayer. I would like to hear from any of the brethren.

Elder H. R. Prince

"RESTORE UNTO ME THE JOY OF THY SALVATION"

After attending the meeting at the Reidsville Church Sunday March 8, 1964, and hearing such wonderful preaching by my dear pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, from the text, "And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds: but the wind passeth, and cleanseth them," (Job 37:21) somehow old memories were restored unto me.

Upon returning home, I listened to a recording of Elder Griffin's sermon that was preached at the association in 1961, at Pleasantville, from the text, "There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; . . ." And although several months divided the time between the two sermons, and several pages of the Bible divided the two texts, except for the voice of delivery, they seemed to be preached by

one man, or one mind.

The same night I attended services at Dan River, my home church. Before I left home no one could have told me of the joy that was in store for me that night. Somehow the clouds spoken of in Reidsville Church that morning had been removed, during the preaching from the text, "Oh, Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jeremiah 10:23) This text was several pages removed from the text of the morning, but seemed to have a more joyful sound, (to me, that is,) than the morning text. Several times during the preaching I was made to remember a favorite text of a lovely brother to me, Elder Rufus Brown, Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, concerning the time for the God of all heaven and earth to manifest his wondrous power to us frail mortals. During the meeting it seemed that more scriptures were brought to mind than I had experienced in several months. One of them was made to stand out: "The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." (Proverbs 16:1)

I was sitting behind a dear brother and, although I could not see his facial expressions, I could tell that he was experiencing some of the same joys I was being blessed to share. The heavens and clouds seemed to open up, as the pastor began to bear down on my favorite doctrine, absolute predestination. He made the remark that he only intended to speak a few minutes, but, "Now I don't know when I will stop." As long as the joy lasted, I would have been willing to sit there drinking it in.

Oh, the thoughts that went through my mind; whether false or not, I don't know. I could not help but envy one who was blessed to stand before a body of believers and expound such wonderful doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I am fully aware that we should envy not. For a fleeting moment, I felt that if I had the wonderful privilege to stand before a body, the good Lord would enable me to speak words of comfort to his children. I actually felt that I could have added to what was said from the pulpit, without fear of being booed or scorned out of the meeting house. I would have told them of the futility of the carnal weapons of Saul to prevail over David; that our Lord had said that unto us a Saviour would be born out of the city of David. Oh, the wills and shalls of our dear Lord! How frail is man, to think he could frustrate His wills and shalls. He is of one mind, and who can turn him.

The Bible speaks of lighting a candle and not covering the same with a measure. Brethren, there are some things that you cannot hide; and I believe that God has a purpose in that, too. Our pastor was receiving as much joy from delivering the sermon, as were his hearers: The joy he could not hide, but the sweetest of all is the thought I had: I didn't believe he wanted to hide anything. To prove we are not all fed alike at the same time, after the service a brother remarked to me that he didn't get too much out of the morning service at Reidsville, but the tonight's sermon was as good as he ever heard. Well I could not witness with him, for I felt it was the best sermon I had been blessed to hear for a long time. Still, I had to agree that I received more joy from the night service than the morning.

Another brother brought to mind some of my experience of months or years back: he asked me what the text was, for he knew some people he wanted to show it to; and I answered, "Brother, you know better than that. You might show them the words, but never the meaning. The meaning must come from him who sits on high, and rules and reigns over the heavens and earth and the inhabitants thereof."

How vivid now is my experience when I thought I was well advanced on the road to evangelism, after being accepted into the membership of Dan River Church. Immediately after coming out of the water, it was plain to me that all I had to do, was to tell it to others, and they would see it as I did. As I

had no dry clothes, I had to go home to change; and as I was so filled with joy, and I so wanted to share it with my dear sister who lived across the street from me, instead of going back to the church for services, I went to her house. It seems that my visit with her should have taught me that I could not share my joys: that they were mine personally; just as they could not gather more manna than actually supplied their needs; they could not gather enough to share with someone else.

But instead of the experience teaching me, I was more determined than ever: I thought evangelism was one purpose God had determined for me. But all I ever received from that road, was ill will from some good friends, and even my own kin. Now referring again to Elder Brown's favorite scripture concerning God's time and purpose, for almost two years I had been on the evangelistic road, and I believe I can witness with Saul: His mission was to bind the saints, and mine was to tell them certain things; when in fact neither of us had at the time seen the light. The time came, and I believe it was God's time, when I saw the light. Elder Lambert, on one of his visits, quoted a scripture concerning when they were led captive by the river in Babylon, they hung their harps on the willows; and when taunted by their captors to sing one of the songs of Zion, they replied, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" From that day until this I have never had the desire to impose my sweet belief on someone who did not already believe as I do.

Since my evangelistic desire has been taken away from me, I have had the feeling I would like to stand before believers and tell them of the wonderful things the Lord has done, but the obstacle there is, they know better what He has done for them than I do. Speaking before God's people and talking evangelism, are as far removed from each other as the East is from the West. I learned that lesson well, Brother Spangler, on our trip to Canada: After we had our rooms and were settled for the night's rest, you asked Sister Spangler to get the Bible, and asked Elder Wray to come over to your room; and I had the thought that it would be a wonderful opportunity for me, if you should ask me to speak, and I remember the joy that filled my heart when I first had the thought. How well I remember when you said, "Jim, I want to hear you talk some; I haven't known you to have much to say in a good while now."

How well do I remember the first thought that came into my mind after you spoke: What a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of a living God. Oh, how I know how helpless a condition one can be brought into. How little and insignificant I felt. I was as Peter when he compared Moses and Elias with Christ on the Mount. My experience seemed to all fade away.

Now to get back to what I started to write about: Job 37:21. The clouds spoken of seemed to fit my case. First, I came out of the water on the morning of my baptism on a cloud which I did not purchase with my works; and I rode that cloud around two years without having to renew my ticket. The moisture content of the cloud always seemed to be perfect. Then, almost suddenly, the cloud seemed to dry up, and conditions were not just right for that joyful feeling. True there were times when there was a light sprinkle, now and then. I know at least there was enough for me to fear to say that I had a hope, or that I didn't have one. The cloud seemed dry almost two years. I wanted to be among the dear children of God; wanted to hear them talk, but to say anything myself, I couldn't find words.

Then, Sunday morning March the eighth, how well watered the cloud seemed to be! It was just right. (I would go to meetings before that determined to receive the joy I saw evidence of others receiving; but it was not for me.) If I know anything of David's

prayer, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation," I believe I was taught that morning where those joys come from. The sweet part was that they came freely — something I could not attain by my own determination.

Yours in bonds of Christian love,
James Carter
Ruffin, N. C.

Box 512,
Fayette, Alabama

Dear Elder Spangler:

I have thought of writing you so many times, to thank you for sending the dear *Signs* to me. It comes regularly, and I can't tell you how I do appreciate it. My dear husband was taken from this old world of trouble some years ago, but the good old *Signs* still comes every month. I would miss it so much, if it did not come. I feel so unworthy of such a blessing.

I am still able to attend church when I have conveyance. There is not a Primitive Baptist Church in Fayette. But through the kindness of others, I get to attend our churches out of town most every Sunday; which is the greatest pleasure I have, spiritually speaking. I live alone, but my home is near two of my children, Newton Poe, my oldest son, and my only daughter, who owns Moore's Flower Shop.

Wishing you a prosperous New Year, and hoping you can visit us again. Please remember a poor old sinner at the throne of grace.

Mrs. George W. Poe

UPPER COUNTRY LINE UNION

The next session of the **Upper Country Line Union** is appointed to be held at Bush Arbor Church the fifth Sunday in May. The church is located on Highway 62, about sixteen miles north of Burlington, N. C., about nine miles south of Yanceyville, N. C.

All lovers of the truth are invited. Meeting time is 10:30 A. M.

Earl Rudd, Clerk

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Aycock's the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in May. It is located about five miles north of Fremont, Wayne County, N. C., on rural paved road. All that have a mind are invited to attend.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

BRETHREN PLEASE NOTE

Elder Julius Bocock left his home in Roanoke, Virginia, several months ago, and, as far as we know, has not been heard from since. The brethren are concerned about him, and are anxious to know if any of the brethren or friends know of his whereabouts. If any should have seen him, or know anything about him, please write Elder J. P. Helms, 327 W Cleveland Avenue, Vinton, Virginia — J. D. W.

Danville, Virginia **June, 1964**

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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EDITORIAL

DANIEL 4:35

"And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"

How wonderful it must have been and confirming to the faith of Daniel and his three Hebrew brethren, to witness step by step the God of heaven humbling this mighty king and to hear from his mouth, "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of Heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase."

The will and purpose of God are, like himself, perfect and complete. He doeth his will in the army of heaven. "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handywork." Psalm 19:1. In Isaiah 40:26, The Holy One saith, "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth." All these wonderful orbs are, according to the above Scripture, sustained by him that created them, they are inanimate yet declare the glory of God.

"The unwearied sun, from day to day,
Does his Creator's power display:
And publishes to every land
The work of an Almighty hand."

David in Psalms 33:6 says, "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." From this we believe that angels were made by the breath of God: this heavenly host were God's messengers, to come and go at his command: but we learn from God's word that there were some of them who disobeyed. Jude 6 tells us, "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." The same breath of God that made angels, was also breathed into man, and man became a living soul. As angels are in the presence of God, so man, in his innocence, could walk in the garden of Eden with his God. We are told, "By the law is the knowledge of sin;" man disobeyed as also did angels. When man sinned, he fell as angels fell, and died to that innocence in which he was created. The angels who kept their first estate were kept by the power of God and they are called by Paul in I Timothy 5:21, "the elect angels." We have said that those who were not kept, died to the innocence in which they were created, but they, like mankind, still live on in sin. How many of God's dear children in soul trouble have envied the beasts of the field, why? Because they know that they have a soul that they fear will live eternally estranged from God. Our Lord Jesus makes that very clear in Matthew 10:28 "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

Now it has been a truth that has astonished angels and men, that the Mighty God would leave the angels that sinned to await a judgment to come, and yet would reveal a purpose to fallen man which he had purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began. No wonder that dear John Newton, who declared himself to be once an infidel, a libertine and a slave of slaves in Africa, could write.

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me."

Before going further I would like to show that among angels, elect as well as fallen, God doeth his will. Turn to 2 Chronicles 18. A good king, Jehoshaphat, is persuaded to join a wicked king, Ahab, to go with him to war. Ahab had many false prophets who promised him success; Jehoshaphat, having no confidence in Ahab's prophets, asked if there were not there a prophet of the Lord, that he might enquire of him. Ahab said there was one, but, said he, "I hate him, for he never prophesied good unto me, but always evil." The messenger that Ahab sent unto Micaiah would have him give the same word as the false prophets. Micaiah said, "As the Lord liveth, even what my God saith, that will I speak." Among the things he spoke I give the following as it bears upon my subject. 2 Chronicles 18:18-22. "I saw the Lord sitting upon his throne, and all the host of heaven standing on his right hand and on his left. And the Lord said, who shall entice Ahab king of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? and one spake saying after this manner, and another saying after that manner. Then there came out a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will entice him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go out, and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And the Lord said, THOU SHALT ENTICE HIM, and thou shalt also prevail; GO OUT AND DO EVEN SO." We give this instance to show, according to God's word, that that evil spirit could not go until sent. God uses a devil to do a devil's work, even in the host of heaven. God's purpose which he purposed in Christ, as we have before referred to, comprised a number that no man can number, of whom, from the start of a work of grace in them, it can be said that they are not of this world. These are the Army of Heaven and Jesus is their Captain, the captain of their salvation. They are THE SEED that serve him: "it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." Psalm 22:30. "This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob." It was distinguishing grace that made Abel a citizen of heaven and left Cain an inhabitant of the earth. The spirit of Abel's mind was renewed or he never could have offered a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain. In that early age it was, just as it is to-day, the work of God that any believe to the salvation of their souls. This Army of Heaven is spoken of in Hebrews 12 as a great cloud of witnesses, who walked by faith and moved with fear, and it says, "but now they desire a better country, that is an heavenly." When Abram was called out of Ur of the Chaldees, it was a sovereign act of God, and Abram went, not knowing whither he went. Enabling faith was given when he received God's word, for faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. God's time is always the right time, from Abel to the present day. Jesus said in John 5:25, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." God's people in this world were all of the same lump, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel to honour, and another unto dishonor?" God called Abraham alone and blessed him; while the nations of the earth were left to follow their own desires, Abraham desired to be led of God.

Sarah was blessed with a son, Isaac, and God said to Abraham, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." Abraham could not change God's will even though he prayed "O that Ishmael might live before thee." "The children of the promise are counted for the seed." for God ruled in this number that no man can number. When Joseph's brethren saw him coming afar off, they conspired against him to slay him, but Reuben pleaded for him. Why did not they kill him outright? Because God had a purpose, and "His purposes will ripen

fast, unfolding every hour." A sovereign God sent a famine which brought them down where Joseph was, and when he made himself known to them they were troubled, but Joseph, a type of Jesus, said "Be not grieved: for God did send me before you to preserve life . . . So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God."

In the following history of the family of Jacob there is continued evidence of God's word being fulfilled, which he spake at sundry times and in divers manners unto the fathers by the prophets, and their prosperity and adversity, as a people, are told in the various books of the Old Testament, proving the words we have at the head of this article.

Perhaps, at the time of Mordecai and Esther, after Ezra and Nehemiah had led some of them back to their land, many remained settled and prospering in various parts of the Assyrian empire, buried in the world, far away from the remnant who had been sent to restore the ruined walls of Jerusalem. In the book of Esther, a strange book where we do not find God's name mentioned even once, although God is in it from start to finish, the whole book is a proof of Proverbs 16:33. "THE LOT IS CAST INTO THE LAP: BUT THE WHOLE DISPOSING THEREOF IS OF THE LORD." Haman, an Agagite, represents the flesh. In Exodus 17:10-16. we find that "The Lord hath sworn that the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation." Remember here how in I Samuel 15, king Saul lost his throne for not fully doing God's command, sparing Agag, the king of the Amalekites. Joshua discomfited Amalek and Moses built an altar and called it Jehovah-Nissi, which means, "The Lord my banner."

Such was the distress of Mordecai, Esther's cousin, that he rent his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes. Haman had got the king to make a decree that all Jews should be destroyed, and none could change it, for the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not, could not be changed. Daniel 6:8. God ruled even there, and the wicked Haman was hung on the gallows he had erected, on which he had planned to hang Mordecai. Though they began to cast lots to find the time that they should carry out Haman's scheme, the lot did not fall, day after day and month after month, until the 13th day of the last month, giving all the time needed for the Jews to be warned to defend themselves. No wonder that ever since, the Jews hold feast on those days called the Feast of Purim or Pur, which means lots. None could stay God's hand or say unto him, "What doest thou?"

Coming to the New Testament times, when the fulness of time had come that God's Word should be made flesh and dwell among us, the Romans had conquered much of the known world. God had said by the mouth of Isaiah, "A virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Isaiah 7:14. The virgin of God's choice was also Joseph's choice, and it grieved him when he found that she was with child, but the angel of the Lord assured him, "That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." Ere long he had other matters to worry him, for the Emperor Caesar Augustus commanded all the world to be taxed. Joseph was forced by the powers that be (and we are told that they are ordained of God) to take Mary, his espoused wife, great with child, from Nazareth to Bethlehem, a long distance, over hill and dale. No doubt when they arrived at Bethlehem, he wanted the best room he could get, but that was not to be, Mary's babe was laid in a manger. Wise men, guided by a star in the East, came to Jerusalem and inquired, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the East, and are come to worship him," naturally thinking a king would be born in a palace. "Herod was troubled and all Jerusalem with him." Matthew 2:3. He gathered all the chief priests and scribes together and demanded of them where Christ should be born. They

told him in Bethlehem, for God had settled that by one of his prophets, (Micah 5:2) and Augustus had to help to accomplish it, for God was ruling among the inhabitants of the earth. Herod sent the wise men to Bethlehem, "And lo, the star, which they saw in the East, went before them. . . . When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding joy." Evidently, they had lost sight of the star while inquiring in Jerusalem. The testimony of the shepherds, who were abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night, must have given Joseph and Mary a peculiar joy as they told of the multitude of the heavenly host praising God. That wicked Herod, like a dragon ready to devour the child, Revelation 12:4, was slowed up some when the wise men, warned of God not to return to Herod, departed into their own country another way. We will pass over what occurred in the temple when Simeon, to whom it was revealed by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ, came by the Spirit into the temple and adoringly took up the child in his arms, confessing himself ready to die in peace, for said he, "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation; which thou hast prepared before the face of all people: A light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel."

Jesus had come to save all those that the Father had given him, they are the elect, the flock of God, which he purchased with his own blood. They are the ones who can truly say, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isaiah 53:6. Paul could therefore truthfully say, "But the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded (according as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear:) unto this day." Romans 11:7-8. "He is despised and rejected of men." Nathanael expressed the popular opinion, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46) yet there were a number then who were to know his love and see his power. When John the Baptist sent his disciples to ask Jesus, "Art thou he that should come or do we look for another?" Jesus said, "Go and shew John AGAIN those things that ye do see and hear: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached unto them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me." Matthew 11:3-6. The Jews hated him; Jesus told his disciples, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." John 15:18. They called him a devil and said he was mad. They would have slain him, but his hour was not yet come. When it did come, it was God who said, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the MAN that is my fellow." Only a devil could have betrayed him, and the devil was there in Judas; our Lord knew what he was and could have stopped him, but instead he said, "That thou doest, do quickly." How pleased those rulers of the people were to have him betrayed into their hands; yet he was still God, fulfilling the purpose of God which he had purposed before the world began, for he was the lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

When they came to take him, "Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? As soon as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward and fell to the ground," fulfilling Psalm 27:2. "When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell." He said, "If therefore ye seek me, let these (his disciples) go their way." Simon Peter, still thinking that he had something to do, having a sword drew it, and smote the High Priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. Jesus said, "Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear and

healed him." Luke 22:51.

Pilate, remembering what his wife had said, after examining him, would have let him go, but such was the hatred of men and devils, they said, "If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend." They chose Barabbas to go free, and cried of Jesus, "Crucify him". And when Pilate took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person, see ye to it;" then answered all the people, "his blood be on us, and on our children."

When Joseph begged for Jesus' body and they laid him in Joseph's tomb, they knew not that this was fulfilling God's word, nor did the soldiers know, when they left his legs unbroken that God's word had said, "A bone of him shall not be broken." The Jews knew that his disciples loved him and lest they should go by night and steal his body, Pilate set a watch over his grave, telling them to make it as sure as they could. Jesus had said early in his ministry, "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." How wonderful! On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, "Behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. . . . And for fear of him the keepers did shake and became as dead men." God rules still, and "None can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"

In conclusion, has not his blood been upon the Jews and their children just as surely as he said himself in Matthew 23:35. "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar?" So all the words of God's judgments spoken of by Moses and the Prophets, in which their children should be wanderers among the nations, have been poured upon them. Through it all they have been kept as a nation, for God still has a purpose concerning them, that his word shall be fulfilled. G. R.

EDITORIAL

"Now learn a parable of the fig tree: when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh." (Matthew 24:32)

The Saviour used the above parable when telling that a great event was unfolding, and that certain things pointed to the fulfilling of that event. It is quite easy for us to look back and see that certain events were pointing to things which proved of great importance; but it is another thing to be aware of events in the making.

We are glad that Isaiah wrote: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it. (Isaiah 46:9-11)

These things are characteristic of God, and it is not to be questioned but that he causes all things to work together for good to them who love the Lord, and who are the called according to his purpose: For He that forknew, predestinated, called, justified, and glorified them, also fixed it so that nothing could separate them from his love. It is evident, therefore, that tribulations, distresses, persecutions, famines, nakedness, perils, and swords, are used just as it is written: "For thy sake we are killed all the day long: we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Nevertheless " in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." So we are fully persuaded with the apostle that neither

death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

It is certain, therefore, that all these things, (all things, for there is nothing omitted), are under the positive control of Him who will not let anything separate us from his love.

It is true that we are often brought to ask the reason why for many things, yet so often have no answer other than, "It was the Lord's will, and good in his sight." It is then that faith which He gives us, certifies that all is well; and we "sit still" with Ruth to see the end of the matter, or "stand still" with the children of Israel, and see the salvation of the Lord.

For some years we have been rather silently wondering just why there is so much to distress the children of God (the church) in their pilgrimage, causing them to mourn and be disquieted; why there have been divisions and such things throughout the many years. And we have wondered why there are those who love the distinguished name, but not the full truth which Primitive or Old School Baptists have declared since this name was given them at the separation in 1832; for which those who have remained firm in this truth, still rejoice and praise their God, because it is as old as their great Redeemer.

Yet we are persuaded that the following scriptures are not just fruitless assertions: "Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh." (Matthew 18:7) and, ". . . I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be manifest among you." (1 Cor. 11:18,19)

We are glad that we now have an encouragement: we detect "a going in the tops of the mulberry trees." The minds and hearts of the brethren and friends are being stirred up. We have of late more correspondence and writings for the **Signs of the Times** than we have had for a long time. We hear it said that in various places the Lord's servants "are doing the best preaching of their lives." In places the congregations are large, and many are eager to hear the un-adulterated gospel; and we hear of additions to the churches.

And there is more! Many are being awakened to the fact that they have been fed "a do-it-yourself, conditional, time salvation, work system for years", as one of our correspondents put it, and "there are many holding the name of Primitive Baptist, who are Arminian from the new-birth to the resurrection, and only recognize God's power in the quickening of his people." Is this the doctrine of Baptists of the Old School?

Are there not many preachers who declare to their congregations that those who hold to the absolute sovereignty of God, make God the author of sin? and who are not willing to concern themselves as to what these really do believe, or note what their confession of faith declares to be their scriptural position.

It is evident that there are those who are not "discerners of spirits", so to speak, for some receive just about anything said or preached in the name of Primitive Baptist; yet again, there are those who detect the cunning, or not so cunning, handling of the scriptures, who are led to "search the scriptures whether these things are so"; and to search their hearts whether these are the things they have been taught of the Spirit. And, detecting a "wresting of the scriptures", they are turned away from such teachers, and become contenders for the truth, perhaps more earnestly. There is nothing that sickens the heart more than to hear it proclaimed in the name of Primitive Baptists, that we can earn blessings by our obedience; while at the same time the cry of "grace, grace" loudly sounds from the same lips.

Quoting again from our correspond-

ent: "When I read the London Confession, the Philadelphia Confession, and Church History, and then compare them with the only infallible rule, the Word of Truth, I see that somewhere in the last hundred years (or more) some have imitated the true church, with one very near it in many ways, yet lacking the Sure Foundation."

These are our sentiments also, for there is nothing in the writings of those Old School or Primitive Baptists of the Black Rock Meeting of 1832, and their declarations, to indicate that anything other than the absolute sovereignty of God was their doctrine; or that their blessings were of any other source than according as they were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began; or that the fruits of righteousness are by any other than Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God. From all contrary doctrines they were separated.

Isn't it sensible to say that the name of Primitive or Old School would mean nothing by way of distinction, if some of the underlying causes of their separation were to be yet believed by them. Does not a little leaven permeate the whole lump?

It may come as a surprise to learn of some things that have come to our attention over the years, which have been preached under the cloke of Primitive Baptists, such as: universal salvation, the annihilation of the wicked, conditional time salvation, limited predestination, no hellism, two seedism, etc. Some of these have been more widespread, of course, than others.

What we see is that the Lord uses the publicity which has been given the name Primitive Baptist through the pulpit, press, etc., where the truth has been preached through the Spirit, to confirm, comfort and edify his people. But, where the whole truth has not been preached under this name, He is awakening many who have heard it, to discern the departure from the truth: some to renounce it, and separate themselves from it; and some to be strongly confirmed in the doctrine which has been believed from the beginning; and to know that it is Bible doctrine.

How easy it is for those who know these things and see the hand of God working, to believe that the counsel of God stands, and that He does all his pleasure: even that the unwary are executing his counsel, though they be a Pharaoh, a ravenous bird from the east, or a Judas.

These are serious and important matters, brethren. Every one who claims to be a Primitive Baptist should know that God is not mocked; and that, though there are those things which eat as a canker, and there are those who concerning the truth have erred, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every man that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." (see 2 Timothy, 2nd chapter)

Each one who is blest to be vitally concerned as to his state before God, will be found to, "Study to shew thyself (himself) approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." and to, "Examine yourselves (himself), whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates." (2 Cor. 13:5)

The branch is yet tender, and it is early in the season, but the leaves are beginning to come forth. May the Lord of the harvest grant a good growing season.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

FATALISM.

From my earliest acquaintance with the Old School Baptists I have heard all the Arminian tribes calling them Fatalists, and the doctrine preached by them Fatalism. When an enemy of the truth desires to bring odium upon the doctrine of Predestination, and to ca-

lumniate maliciously those who believe in salvation by grace, the choicest word that his vocabulary can afford him, is Fatalism. I find of late that some of our brethren have caught this favorite Ashdod word, and wield it with as much enthusiasm, skill and self-satisfaction as the most hot-headed Arminian in his rashest, bitterest and most malicious invectives against the truth. I have never been in favor of striving about words, but cannot allow this use of the term Fatalism to go unnoticed any longer. There are no two words in our language more directly opposite in their meaning than Predestination and Fatalism. The one is the strongest antithesis to the other. The most astonishing thing to me is that classical scholars, or even men of general intelligence, would weaken their claim to reputation as scholars and men of intelligence by confounding the meaning of these terms. I shall, for the benefit of the candid reader, endeavor to inquire into the origin, nature and import of the doctrine of Fatalism, and leave each one to draw his own conclusions as to the fairness or the correctness of the use of this term as a calumniation of the doctrine of Providence or Predestination.

Fatalism as a doctrine, system of philosophy, or religious belief, originated among those nations of antiquity that knew not God; hence it is of purely heathen origin. The idea of fate must have been evolved in the following manner. Observing men of all nations, especially the shrewd, intellectual, ever watchful Greeks and Romans, discovered in the visissitudes of every day life, both of individuals and nations, things of great import transpire over which kings and sages had no control. They saw plagues, pestilences and famines consume and waste men, as winter cold blights, withers and scatters the leaves of the summer forest; they saw storms and earthquakes do their work of wholesale destruction, sweeping away men as grasshoppers, swallowing up cities as ant hills; they saw the weak perish before the strong, as the morning mists melt away before the advancing sun; they saw the overthrow of kingdoms, the downfall of nations, the laying waste of empires. Against all such things they found themselves utterly powerless, and in their helplessness were swept away in the bosom of destruction. In the midst of distress they resorted to their temples, they sacrificed to their gods, they invoked their patron deities, but all in vain; no help came, no deliverance from their dire distresses. Under such circumstances it was perfectly natural for men to conclude that there were either no gods, or that the gods themselves had no power to help and protect them. Some came to the conclusion that there are no gods, and that all events came upon men inevitably by blind destiny. This is original Fatalism. Others who could not give up their traditional deities, and the charms of a delusive worship, were driven to the conclusion that there is a power above the gods, to which the gods themselves were subject. This is the secondary phase of original Fatalism. This was the view held by many prominent men, among whom was Cicero, who defined fate as the power that the gods themselves were subject to.

This last phase of the doctrine of fate developed until finally an imaginary trinity was invented, called by the Latins, Parcae, and by the Greeks, Moirae. This trinity was composed of three women, called by the English reader the **Fates,** whose names were Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos, and who controlled the destinies of gods and men after the most irregular, vindictive, and capricious manner. Shrines were consecrated to them, and temples built in their honor in many parts of Greece and Italy. The worship and doctrine of this imaginary female trinity was called Fatalism. Fatalism in its various ramifications formed the prominent features of all ancient literature, except that of the Jews. So clear was this people of the idea of fate that there is no word in the Hebrew corresponding to the For-

tuna or Parcas of the Latin, and the Mairoe of the Greek. The reason of this is that Moses and the prophets taught them that one supreme God rules this universe.

In Sophocles and some others of this time the term became synonymous with the word chance. At first glance it seems that these two words are directly opposite in meaning; but a little reflection will make it plain that chance and blind destiny are about the same things after all.

It will now be seen that Fatalism is first the belief that all things come inevitably upon the human race by blind destiny, with no God to send, direct or avert them. Second, the belief that there is a power above the gods to which they themselves are subject. And, third, that all things come by pure chance. Now who ever saw any one purporting to be an Old Baptist who believed any of the foregoing phases of doctrine? Who ever saw an Old Baptist that believed there is no God, and all things come by a blind and necessary destiny; that all events are fortuitous or by chance? Who ever saw a Baptist who believed there is a power above the gods, and that Clotho spins the thread of life, Lachesis determine the length, and Antropos with her inevitable shears cuts the thread. Then how silly, foolish and impertinent is this cry of Fatalism in Baptist pulpits and periodicals.

Now, if any one will consider the difference between events coming to pass that God himself cannot hinder, but on the contrary is bound to permit, suffer or endure, and events coming to pass as He himself has ordained by His own determinate council, such a one can see the difference between Fatalism and Predestination; he can see how ignorant a man must be of the meaning of his language when he calls a Predestinarian a Fatalist. Strange as it may seem, those very Arminians who are most vociferous in charging Old Baptists with Fatalism are really Fatalists themselves. It is true that they do not think so, but they think that the ground of this charge is far from them; but upon a very slight analysis of their doctrine it will appear most clearly that the sin justly lies at their door. One sentence from their daily teaching will establish the truth of this assertion. Do they not persistently proclaim that men go to hell against the will of God? that God desires all men to be saved and has done all He can to save them, and yet men go to hell? that Christ made a full and complete atonement for the sins of all the world, and yet men go to perdition? If all this be true what takes men to hell but fate? Is there not some power that God himself is subject to?

I once heard Bishop Wilson, of Baltimore, say that when the will of man makes its choice, that God Himself cannot change it. Bishop Wilson may very justly and correctly be called a Fatalist upon the authority of his expression. Numerous quotations might be given from representative Arminians of all ages, as well as from the populace, to show the likeness of their doctrine to ancient Fatalism.

Again the Arminian rejects the decree of election on the ground of the certainty of the result decreed, and at the same time admits the foreknowledge of God. Is not the result as certain by foreknowledge as by the decree? There is nothing gained by denying the decree and substituting for it the divine foreknowledge. This denial involves the objector in a greater difficulty than that which he sought to escape, and which he imagined was chargeable upon Predestination alone. By rejecting the decree, and admitting the foreknowledge of God, he has shut himself up to the dread alternative of blank Fatalism, which rules God out of the empire of human history, including even the divine redemption. The question which now arises for all Arminians and partial predestinarians to answer is, as the whole future is known to God, and therefore **certain,** therefore determined, by whom or by what has it been

determined and rendered certain? The objector has ruled God out, let him bring forth his substitute. He has now dethroned the eternal Jehovah, will he leave the throne of the universe vacant, or whom will he place upon it? He here places himself in a dilemma from which he cannot escape. He has on the one hand a vacant throne, and on the other an absolutely certain future. He has to account for a determined future, while his principles will not allow him to admit an intelligent, personal determiner. Here it can easily be seen that outside of God's decrees as the determing cause, all must be attributed to the soulless, passionless, unintelligent idol, Fate.

It is not so much the Arminian that I desire to deal with in this article, as those of our own brethren who, when they wish to dispute the doctrine of Predestination, call it Fatalism. It has just been shown that Predestination and Fatalism are terms of directly opposite meaning, and it may now be positively asserted that Predestination is the only thing that can rule Fatalism out of the universe. Wherever Predestination stops fate steps in. There is no place between to be occupied by any other species of events. History is full of instances where the fortune of dynasties, the downfall of nations, the course of empire, depended upon what seemed to be the most trivial matters, mere trifles, which came without the agency of the leading spirits, or even in defiance of their wills. Oliver Cromwell was about to emigrate to this country, when the departure of the ship in which he was expected to sail, was hindered. He remained, and assumed the leading part in affairs at home. Had he not remained, Charles the first might have retained his head, and Blake certainly would not have laid the foundation of the maritime supremacy in England. The treaty of Utrecht, which materially affected the social and political life of great nations, and was occasioned by a quarrel between the Dutchess of Marlborough and Queen Anne over a pair of gloves. The difference between one color and another in the livery of horses begat two most inveterate factions in the Roman Empire, the Prosini and the Veneti, which never suspended their hostilities until they ruined that unhappy government. The negotiations with the Pope for dissolving Henry the Eighth's marriage, which brought on the "Reformation" in England, are said to have been interrupted by the Earle of Wiltshire's little dog bitting the Pope's toe as he held it out to be kissed by that ambassador. The Tory ministry, which gave new shape to all Europe, was brought in by the Dutchess of Marlborough spilling a pail of water upon Mrs. Masham's gown. Mohammed when flying from his enemies, took refuge in a cave which his pursuers would have entered had they not seen a spider's web over the entrance, but on seeing this they concluded that there was no one within, and passed on. Thus a spider's web changed the history of the world. The turning point at Waterloo, one of the great decisive battles of the world, resulted from the singular circumstances that prevented the arrival of General Grouchy. The well planned attack of the Barbarians upon Rome was averted by the cackling of a goose. A series of most trivial events ended in the overthrow of Antony. Louis the Sixth cut his hair and shaved his beard to obey the order of his Bishop. Eleanor his wife found him very ridiculous in this condition, and avenged herself as she thought proper, and Louis obtained a divorce. She then married Count Anjou, who afterward became Henry the Second of England, and thus gave rise to those wars that afterward ravaged France for three hundred years, and cost the French three hundred thousand men.

Was the prevention of Cromwell's departure from England a mere fortuitious event, or was it the intervention of an active, working, ruling Providence? Did blind destiny spread the spider's web upon Mohamet's cave, or

was it provided by God, who works all things after the counsel of His own will? Was the biting of the Pope's toe by the little dog a mere caprice of the Fates, or was it one of the all things that work together for good to them that love God? We must here strike the balance between Fatalism and Predestination. If nothing is predestinated then all things are by fate. If all things are predestinated, then there is no such thing as fate. If some things are predestinated, and others not, then the government of the universe is divided between God and the Fates. The man who does not believe in predestination at all is in reality a Fatalist. Let him deny it as he may, and reason as he will, there is no other subterfuge for him. The dilemma has but two horns, and one of these he must take. Then just in the proportion that a man divides the affairs of this world between Predestination and that which is not predestination, just in that proportion that man is a Fatalist. This article is not intended for a defence of the doctrine of Predestination, but is merely meant to submit to the reader a fair presentation of Fatalism, and to show the difference between it and Predestination, and to point out the inconsistency and confusion of those who confound the one with the other. Those who insist upon a limited predestination, and who call our brethren who place no limit on God's decrees, Fatalists, are really much nearer the borders of Fatalism than brethren who are thus inconsistently stigmatized.

Again, if the term fate by modern usuage means unalterable destiny, all Predestinarians, whether contending for limited or unlimited decrees, are alike Fatalists; for they all believe in the fixed destiny of the human race. Then why should the pot call the kettle black?

A minister passed through the churches of my care, railing against Fatalism, as he called it; but many of the brethren could not tell what he was driving at. They had heard Methodists talk that way, but thought rather strange of a Baptist to speak so. At one place his argument was that a certain man who was a member of a church believing the predestination of all things, was caught in very disorderly conduct; and when brought before the church in discipline, he put them all to silence by gently reminding them that it was all predestinated, and he could not help it; and they could not exclude him for something that, according to their own doctrine, he could not help. Now this is very poor argument against Predestination; but I suppose that in the absence of better it is often used. In the first place, I do not believe such a circumstance ever occurred, that this is a lie concocted by some Arminian three hundred years ago, to bring odium on the doctrine of grace. In the second place, if such really did occur, the man did not love the doctrine he professed; it was not the doctrine of his heart, but was mere tradition; perhaps not so much as tradition with him. Instead of exposing the doctrine and the church, he exposed his own vile hypocrisy and insincerity in the truth he professed. This is about as pertinent against Predestination as the old saying, "If God has ordained me to salvation, I will take my fill of sin, and be saved any how," is pertinent as argument against unconditional election. The terms are of the same piece.

Where does Predestination cease to be a wholesome doctrine, and become a baneful Fatalism? Where is there any well defined line setting forth the limits of one and the beginnings of the other? What proportion of the affairs of this world can a man believe is predestinated, and not be a Fatalist? if Predestination of all things is Fatalism, is not predestination of some things some Fatalism? If the whole of anything is poisonous, is not any part of the same thing poisonous? Is it true that a quarter of Lamb is wholesome food when only a quarter is taken, but becomes putrid carcass when all the body is

taken? Those that call Old School Baptists Fatalists, in order to be consistent with their principles, should call Christ a Fatalist, for He said, "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?" (Matt. 6:27) Or when he also said, "Not a sparrow falls to the ground without your heavenly Father." Paul subjects himself to their odium by testifying that He will have mercy on whom He will, and whom He will He hardeneth. (Romans 9) Peter is also guilty of a like offense against their zeal for God's honour when he said, Herod, and Pilate, and the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together against Christ to do whatsoever God's hand and God's counsel determined before to be done. (Acts) Also when he declared that those who stumbled at the stumbling-stone being disobedient, were appointed to it. (1 Peter 2:8) James places himself in the same company when he said, "For ye ought to say, if the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that." Jude identifies himself with the same kind of Fatalists by saying, "There are certain men crept in unawareness, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation." Jeremiah must also be classed with them, for he said, "I know, O Lord, that the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Solomon belongs to the same company, for he declared that, "That which is to be hath already been, that which hath been is now, and God requireth the past." Upon the same ground these objectors must stigmatize all the divine writers as Fatalists, and call the Bible itself a book of fate. The charge of Fatalism against predestinarians is no new thing. The Pelagians were loud against Augustine in this charge, the Arminians against Calvin, and all manner of workmongers against men who held the truth in every age.

Elder H. M. Curry, Lebanon, O

(The above by Elder Curry was first published in the Signs of February 21, 1894, and was re-published in other papers, and included in "Feast Of Fat Things". We are glad to publish it again by request, and because we feel it presents the subject clearly. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

ELDER JOHN W. GILLIAM

The members of the churches of the Upper County Line Association were shocked and saddened by the sudden passing of Elder John W. Gilliam on August 10, 1963. Elder Gilliam was a former pastor at Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church which was my home church. It is with a sad and heavy heart that I attempt to write of his death.

John W. Gilliam was a native of Alamance County, the son of John Wesley and Mary Jane Leath Gilliam. He was educated at Gilliam's Academy and Graduated from Eastman Business College in Poughkeepsie, N. Y. and Wilber R. Smith Business School of the University of Kentucky. Later he became business manager and professor of the business department of Gilliam's Academy. He also served in the 1933 General Assembly of North Carolina.

Elder Gilliam professed a hope in Christ and joined Gilliam's Primitive Baptist Church in 1908, and was licensed to preach the Gospel in 1912; and was ordained to the full ministry in 1915. He was chosen Clerk of the Upper County Line Association in 1916 and served ably and graciously for over 40 years. His real pleasure was in serving his churches and mingling with his brethren and dear friends. Elder Gilliam had served seven churches as pastor: Monticello, Lickfork, McGray, Pleasant Grove, Durham, Pleasantville and Gilliam's. He loved his Churches and was willing to toil and labor for them. He was sound in the doctrine, proclaiming the fundamental truths of the crucified Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and for the great cause of his church. Never at any time did he deviate from preaching Salvation by Grace and Grace alone giving God all the glory, honor and praise. He had many heartaches, trials, and persecutions, but his trust, hope, and faith were in his Lord whose maker and builder is God. Elder Gilliam served our church faithfully, with humble love and care that I will always remember. His services were not confined to the pulpit, always remembering to visit the sick and afflicted. He not only preached the word, but lived it in his daily life, work, and conversation.

Surviving are his wife, Mrs. Mary Idol Gilliam of the home; three daughters: Mrs. H. E. Sadler, Jr., of Burlington; Mrs. D. C. Davenport, of Tazewell, Va.; and Miss Sarah Gilliam of the home; six sons: Robert D. Gil-Gilliam and Charles G. Gilliam of Burlington, William R. Gilliam of Route 2, Elon College, and Theron I. Gilliam of Richmond, Va.; two

sisters: Mrs. Eva Matkins, of Burlington, and Mrs. C. E. Bernard, of Greensboro; three brothers: Dr. Frank E. Gilliam and Earnest Gilliam, of Burlington, and Paul Gilliam of Charlotte; and eleven grandchildren.

We shall miss his wise counsel and encouraging words, but we desire to bow in humble submission to the will of God. I feel that he realized in death what the composer of one of his favorite hymns was blessed to record:

"Death is no more a frightful foe
Since I with Christ shall reign.
With Joy I leave this world of woe
For me to die is gain."

Funeral services were conducted at Gilliam's Primitive Baptist Church by Elders, W. C. King, D. V. Spangler and J. H. Smith, where an overflowing congregation of brethren and friends were gathered in respect and sympathy, and where the many flowers gave silent tribute of those who loved him .

Interment was in the church cemetery where he awaits the second coming of the Lord, when he will be raised in glory and be fashioned in the likeness of the blessed Savior, be satisfied, and ever be with the Lord.

Written by the request of his dear wife by Emma S. McCollum.

(Please note that in the obituary in the March issue of the Signs, the name of Elder Gilliam's sister was erroneously given as Mrs. C. Edward Benard, instead of Bernard. — Editor)

ELDER J. W. GILLIAM

In loving memory of our esteemed brother, Elder J. W. Gilliam, who was born December 18, 1888, and died August 4, 1963. He was born and raised near Gilliam's Church, Alamance County, N. C., where he spent his entire life. He endeared himself to all classes of people, old and young, poor and rich, alike. He was firmly established in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and believed in good works as the evidence of faith. He was a kind and humble servant of God, and stood on the rock that cannot be moved, feeding God's little ones from the Master's table, and declaring the work of God until the end.

Brother Gilliam was chosen pastor of Lickfork Church in 1917, and was a faithful pastor for thirty-six years. Words cannot express how much he meant to us. Always on time, never too late, through rain, snow and ice, he came with a smile, greeting everyone with a handshake. He would have his dear companion with him whenever possible. He was widely known, being the senior elder of our association; and was loved by all who knew him. He will be greatly missed, but God saw fit to take him home. He fought a good fight, the battle was won. He is now free from sin and sorrow — no more to strive with trials of this life, but at rest with God. May our heavenly Father comfort his dear family, and all who loved him.

We are glad that our dear Father saw fit to have him preach his last sermon in the Lickfork Church, a church he loved so well. We will never forget his text: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" No sweeter words will ever be spoken. He was declaring the truth from beginning to end. When the service was over, my dear husband (Brother Lee) went to Brother Gilliam and hugged and kissed him, feeling in his heart that it was the last time he would have to show how much he loved and esteemed him. It was a wonderful meeting for us all.

Brother Gilliam's body is resting in Gilliam's Church Cemetery, to await the resurrection morning, when it will be raised and fashioned like our dear Saviour's body. "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord." We can only trust in one who doeth all things well, and ask Him to give us grace and strength to carry on without our brother, that our loss is his eternal gain. He was always reconciled to whatever his lot might be, never murmuring or complaining. His kindness and Christian walk will not be forgotten. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the council of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sin ners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night." "Blessed be the name of the Lord." Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, 1st. That the church at Lickfork bow in humble submission to our Father's will. 2nd. That we extend to the family our heartfelt sympathy and love. 3rd. That a copy of this resolution be sent the **Signs of the Times** and **Old Faith Contender;** and to the family; and that it be recorded on our church minutes.

Done by order of the church at Lickfork.
Willie Lee, Clerk

MEMORIAL
ELDER JOHN W. GILLIAM

The church at McCray extends their deepest sympathy to the family of the late Elder John W. Gilliam whom God saw fit to remove from this world of trials and afflictions "to be with God which is far better," so suddenly on August 5, 1963.

Elder Gilliam served this church as a true shepherd for nine years (1915-1924) and has been a regular visitor since, bringing the same sweet message from a far country, salvation by grace ascribing all power and glory to God.

We shall miss his lovely visits, his wise counsel, and encouragement. May God grant that we all can say, "Not our will but thine be done."

W. C. King, Pastor

MEMORIAL
ELDER JOHN W. GILLIAM

On August 5, 1963, God saw fit to remove from us our highly respected and esteemed Elder John W. Gilliam by death. We can't question God's ways or His reason for doing anything, knowing that His ways are as high as the heavens from our ways, His thoughts from our thoughts. May God grant unto each of us the spirit of submission to His holy will.

The church at Bush Arbor has lost a faithful and precious correspondent, together with all our sister churches of this association and corresponding associations.

We pray God's richest blessing be upon his dear wife and children and all who feel this departure so keenly.

Written on behalf of Bush Arbor Church.

W. C. King, Pastor

IN MEMORIAM
MRS. NANCY LENORA ALLIGOOD

In the taking of dear Sister Alligood
To the land of eternal rest,
We bow to the will of Jehovah,
Who always knoweth best.

It was my pleasure to know her
For a number of years,
And I was always glad to greet her,
Who now with Christ appears.

She was a worthy Old School Baptist,
Who loved the doctrines of grace,
And now celestial joys are her's,
While time rolls on apace.

She walked "worthy of the vocation
Wherewith ye are called,
With all lowliness and meekness,"
And with salvation walled.

She was truly a Mother in Israel,
By the ties of nature too,
And was beloved by her children,
For she was kind and true.

May we be blessed to meet her
Where sorrow is unknown,
And reign with the King of saints,
Who did for sin atone.

O glorious day when saints shall rise
To see Him face to face,
And to behold His glory for evermore,
Saved by sovereign grace.

C. W. Vass

BETTY (RAMSEY) PETERS

We, the Primitive Baptist Church of Christ at Camp Branch, Henry County, Virginia, mourn the passing of our sister Betty May Peters.

Sister Betty May (Ramsey) Peters was born to Willie Lee and Laura Gardner Ramsey April 29, 1896, in Henry County, Virginia. She was married to Henry Lee Peters April 2, 1916, who preceded her in death. She united with Camp Branch Church by experience July 25, 1959, along with her husband; and they were baptized by Elder Rufus Brown on Sunday morning July 26, 1959. Sister Peters attended church regularly, and was faithful in helping in every way she could.

She was dressed and ready to go to church at Martinsville the night she was taken sick: she had an heart attack from which she never fully recovered. She passed away at Martinsville General Hospital November 16, 1963. The following children survive: Clyde Peters, Louisville, Ky.; Henry J. and Zera Peters, both of Martinsville; Mrs. Barbara Powell, Richmond, Va.; and Mrs. Louise Biggs, Roanoke, Va.

Sister Peters was loved by all who knew her, and will be greatly missed by her church, loved ones and friends. But we feel that our loss is her eternal gain, and that she is asleep awaiting the second coming of our Lord, when the ransomed shall all meet Him in the clouds, and go home to be with Him in that Spiritual Kingdom.

Her funeral was held at Martinsville Church by Elder Rufus Brown and Elder P. E. Ingram; and her body was laid to rest in Roselawn Cemetery by her husband's side, beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

Done by order of the church while in conference.

Elder Rufus Brown, Moderator
Mancy Haynes, Clerk

TRIBUTE OF RESPECT
IN MEMORY OF ELDER
S. C. DAVENPORT, MINEOLA, TEXAS

WHEREAS, GOD, in accord with His divine providence, took from us our beloved brother, minister, pastor, and friend: ELDER S. C. DAVENPORT, 1869-1963: during the 95th year of his sojourn here; who had graciously served Cana, Good Hope, Hopewell, and Paron churches of Christ as pastor for several decades: — AND

WHEREAS, HIS gracious preaching, wise counsel, godly walk, and pious conversation will long be remembered and highly treasured by members and friends of these churches — together with the young ministers who came up under his tutorship: — AND

WHEREAS, ELDER DAVENPORT was blessed to never waver from the fundamental principles of the doctrine of Jesus Christ, THE COMPLETE AND PERFECT SAVIOUR; AND WHEREAS, HE emphasized the proven fact that a godly walk and conversation were evidences which confirmed the work of grace; AND, his firm belief that ministers and churches should be careful to maintain good works with proper dignity and due regard for good order and right discipline: ALL THESE OUTSTANDING CHARACTERISTICS OF ELDER DAVENPORT SHALL LONG INFLUENCE HIS CLOSE FRIENDS:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That we thank God for those many gracious favors bestowed upon us through the ministry of ELDER DAVENPORT: AND for having blessed us to share the benefits of his life; AND, that we pray God's blessings upon his wife, children, relatives, and friends: — AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this be filed in our church records; copies sent to his family; and copies sent to **The Signs of the Times** and to **Old Faith Contender** for publication.

(I certify that the above was unanimously adopted in church conferences of Hopewell, Good Hope, and Paron churches; and was approved by members of Cana Church.)

Elder E. J. Lambert

ROBERT ELTON NULL

The subject of this notice, Robert Elton Null, was born December 13, 1919, and departed this life December 4, 1963. He was a son of the late James Null and Ernie (McClanahan) Null. Besides his wife, Mrs. Verneeda Null, he leaves the following to mourn his passing: One son, John; two daughters, Carol Jean and Juanita Null, at home, Route 4, Charleston, W. Va.; six brothers: Guy and Marvin Null, Charleston; Lee Null, Charleston; Leonard Null, Raymond City, W. Va.; Andrew Null, Akron, Ohio; and George Null, Denver, Colorado; four sisters: Mrs. Marie Dolan, Detroit; Mrs. Letha Miller, Bancroft, W. Va.; Mrs. Ann Dolin, Allum Creek, W. Va.; and Mrs. Ruth McClanahan, Rt. 4, Charleston; and many other relatives.

Our friend, Mr. Null, never united with the church, but he was indeed a friend to the Primitive Baptist cause; and gave gracious evidence of a good hope through grace in the blood of Jesus. In our visiting and conversing together, his speech and conversation attested to his deep conviction and love for the doctrine of salvation by grace, and hope alone in the merit of the crucified and risen Jesus. He was a most humble, kind, and unassuming man: His walk and daily manner of life gave evidence that he had been moulded as clay in the hands of the Master Potter.

Mr. Null had been sickly much of his life. He served in the armed forces in World War II, and had been plagued much with a nervous disorder. His passing was sudden, after a shot of penicillin had been administered by his family physician. We know not the ways of the Lord. We feel and do believe that he fell asleep in Jesus. We keenly feel our loss.

At the request of the family, the writer was called to conduct the funeral, assisted by Elder J. J. Smith, at the Cunningham Funeral Home, in the Big Tyler Mountain section; where I humbly hope I was blessed to briefly set forth the doctrine of grace, which he most surely believed. The song service was beautiful, sung by those who loved him. He was laid to rest in the family Cemetery on Poca River, near the old home, to await the resurrection of the dead.

May God in tender mercy comfort the bereaved, and visit the grace of reconciliation, for Jesus' sake. Written by request.

H. J. Bird

MAUDE ASENATH MILLER

Maude A. Miller was born at Edella, Penna., April 20, 1882, the daughter of the late Deacon Charles E. Miller and Sarah E. Stanton. She passed away January 11, 1964. She was united in marriage September 20, 1905, to Walter A. Johnson, who passed away November 15, 1942. Later she married Richard F. Miller, who survives.

Our forefathers were of the Pilgrim stock, and Old School Baptists, which was the doctrine she loved and lived by. For many years she wanted to be a member of the church, but felt unworthy. On July 7, 1944, she and her husband went to Kingston, N. Y. on vacation: the regular meeting was not being held, but the members called one at Elder A. J. Slauson's home that evening. At which time she told her experience, and was received a candidate for baptism; and later at a meeting at Sister Fanny Woodin's home on July 30, 1944, Elder Bellows baptized her in the Delaware River at Union Grove.

Mother's health had been failing for some time, so I asked them to come and live with me, which they did on December 3, 1963. On Christmas night she fell, and was taken to the hospital and later to a nursing home, but she lived only until January 11, 1964. She is now at rest in the Miller Cemetery, Edella, Pa.

The *Signs* was her constant companion through the years, and she re-read some articles many times. Written by her daughter,

Chrystal Johnson Severson

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 132 DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1964 NO. 7

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/64
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

WAS BLESSED TO ATTEND MEETINGS

Box 77
The Dalles, Oregon
August 20, 1963 97058

Dear Elder Spangler:

I was happy to receive your very kind letter and to know you had returned safely to your home. It was sad to hear of the illness among the brethren and friends there, and about the amputation of the dear brother's leg. But we are made to know that God rules: "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" He is a God of love and mercy, and able to comfort and make his children submissive to his will and reconciled to their lot in this time world of sin, sorrow and heartaches.

I was up to Naches to the last meeting, going on Saturday afternoon. Elder Attebery and wife also came that afternoon. I went by to get Mabel Schleismayer, but she was coming over Sunday morning with Johnnie Simpson and wife. So I then went by Josie's, and she was all alone. She decided to go over to Daisy Baker's with me, so we could all be together and visit for awhile. Mary and Jack Eckard also came in from Spokane. We spent a pleasant evening there, and then the Eckards and I stayed over night with Josie. Sunday morning Elder Davis and wife came over. Elder Davis and Elder Attebery were both blessed to speak comfortingly to the little group assembled there. Elder Attebery said he was feeling much better that he was at the three day meeting.

I do feel so thankful that I was blessed to attend as many of the meetings as I did while you were here, and to get so many recordings, whereby I may still be enabled to feast upon the great truths of our blessed Lord and Saviour. I have felt myself to be a sinner so burdened with sin and guilt, and so unworthy of the many blessings that have been mine to enjoy. Oh! that I might praise him more. I know that if I am one of his little ones, that it is not because of anything that I have done, but all of God. "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast."

I was pleased that you were one who seemed to delight in speaking upon the things of God, and giving your views on different scriptures while visiting among the brethren in the home. I do enjoy that so much.

.. I must bring this to a close. With much love to you. I extend my love and best regards to your wife, Mrs. Kepley, and Sandra.

A sinner in hope of God's grace and mercies,
Ben F. Preston

HIS POWER MAKES HIS PURPOSES EFFECTUAL

Rt. 1 Box 268,
Dothan, Alabama

Dear Editors, and the
Household of Faith:

I have a desire to write you some of my thoughts on the purposes of the eternal God here on earth, and his omnipotent power that he manifests in making that effectual.

To begin, I believe that the scriptures both of the Old and the New Testament are the revealed word of God. In Genesis we read: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." He also said: "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." If I haven't made a miscount, the word "let" appears twelve times in this first chapter. We know that God wasn't just suggesting, or asking permission for these things to be done. It was "All Power" speaking, saying, Let these things be done.

By the same authority when Christ said to his disciples — remember that only his disciples were present — "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" It was "All Power" that gave the command, and not a request, they could not refuse. If it were left up to us and our willingness to respond to the purpose of God and of his kingdom here on earth, Jacob could have refused to obey; Moses could have refused — and all the prophets could have refused. The disciples could have refused when told by our Lord "to follow me;" and when He told them to tarry in Jerusalem until they be endued with power from on high. Then Peter and the other disciples could have refused to preach those memorable sermons on the day of Pentecost; and Peter to preach to Cornelius; and Philip to go toward the South; and Paul could have refused to be a minister to the Gentiles.

Suppose all these I have referred to, had refused, where would we be today as far as the church is concerned? Our God speaks and it is done; he commands and it stands fast. He works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world.

Paul says in his letter to the Ephesians: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." These blessings do not come because of our obedience, but because of the love he has for those that believe according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him on his own right hand in the heavenly places. And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. (1st chapter of Ephesians)

David said in Psalm 110:3, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power . . ." In Job 23:13,14, we read, "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the things that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him."

I feel to know that God has blessed me bountifully, for which I hope I am thankful; and pray that his blessings will continue, not only for me but will all the blood washed throng. Amen.

Elder J. W Tew

EXPERIENCE

831 N. Woodland,
Amarillo, Texas
June 7, 1963

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood,
and all the Household of Faith:

It is after another night of tossing and turning, and writing my experi-

ence in my mind as I have many times since we were received by the Old School Baptists December 16, 1951. I even tried writing it the 17th, but never mailed it. But I have a desire to write this morning, and if it is worthy of space, please publish it in the **Signs** for the benefit of the brethren of our home church, Bethel, near El Dorado, Arkansas. I have never felt satisfied with what I remember telling them. Also for our two sons, three grandsons and granddaughter, sisters, brother, and nieces and nephews.

As I cooked breakfast this morning, I hummed hymn number 382 in Lloyd's hymn book:

"While sorrows encompass me round,
And endless distresses I see,
Astonished, I cry, can a mortal be found
Surrounded with troubles like me?" etc.

After my dear husband left for work, I softly sang the hymn; then got paper and pencil to write. I grew up attending Sunday School and church with the Missionary Baptists; and at the age of fourteen I joined and was baptized — not knowing what they believed. All along for many years I would find things that I believed that they did not. I believed in washing of feet and communion. My husband was reared by Primitive Baptist parents, which I never heard of until I married. As J. J. Davis said in one of his writings: "I was at home in the body." All the time I felt that way, I felt myself to be good, (Oh, how wrong I was!): I lived a moral life not to be ashamed of, I thought, and I was more concerned about my husband and other loved ones. He drank some, and to me that was so horrible and it caused me much grief. My troubles, trials and tribulations have been great. I am a child of sorrow and acquainted with grief. I believe the Lord saw fit to chasten me with the rod. I worshiped my husband instead of God. In 1941 my troubles were so great I was utterly cast down: worked out of tools and timber, and made to know of myself I could do nothing.

We had two sons at the time, one ten and the other one and one-half years old. I was so despondent I felt I had nothing to live for. Oh, how could I ever think such a thought, with those precious sons to raise. I had it all planned: I'd take them to my sister's, who was living on our old home place, and I would go over the field and drown myself in the creek to get out of my troubles. But thank God that was not his plan.

About the time I was satisfied with my plan, my dear mother, who had been dead more than two years, appeared at my bed in a long white robe, and said, "They who endure until the end shall be saved." The many times I had read the Bible, I didn't remember reading that, but came across it later. This gave me a will to live, and I started reading the Bible more, prayed and wept most day and night for three weeks. Then my prayers were answered. Of ourselves we cannot pray; we have to be made to pray, and when we do, it is answered. We have to be made to hear and understand or preaching is no food for our hungry souls. My burden was then lightened to some extent.

In 1942 we moved to Mobile, Alabama, where my husband worked in a shipyard three years. I was still despondent; and after being there over a month, our baby fell and fractured his skull, and was in the hospital not expected to live: and I was sick in bed and not able to be with him; and my husband came down with pneumonia. We were among strangers, except for my brother and his family — and my sisters came from home. My husband grieved over our baby, and felt that he was being punished for the wrongs he had done.

While we were in this condition, I got a letter from church with envelopes to mail my tithes — and that turned me more against what I had once believed. Over the years we had gone with my husband's father to Bethel a few times: I felt it my duty to fix and carry lunch for him at communion time. I didn't enjoy the preaching: the seats

were so hard, and I would starve waiting for the ministers to quit preaching, so we could have lunch. I heard Elder E. J. Lambert preach his first sermon at Bethel, and it was interesting. I told my father-in-law that he was a good speaker, and didn't sing-song his sermon as some did. Oh, how sweet all the Old Baptist preaching is; and to think, it was then foolishness to me.

We moved back home in 1945, and soon afterwards my husband's father passed away. We started going to Bethel, and Elder John Lee Smith preached the first sermon I heard. When I realized what I was doing, I was holding the seat with both hands, and tears were rolling down my cheeks. My depressed feeling stayed with me for five years; but there was something Elder E. J. Lambert said at Mr. Aleck Smith's funeral that caused my grief to vanish, and I don't grieve over it any more. I still have my troubles, but they are about myself.

"Dear Lord, if indeed I am thine,
If thou art my sun and my song,
Say why do I languish and pine,
And why are my winters so long."

Another thing happened to me while in Mobile: I went to bed, and all of a sudden I started quoting scriptures, such as, "Come unto me all ye who labor and are heavy laden", etc; and, "I go to prepare a place for you", etc. I quoted it like I was reading it in the Bible, which, of course, I was not. A man passed by whistling, "Precious Memories", and I sang the song through. I realized I was doing it and that my husband was talking to me, (he was afraid I was dying), but I could not stop until I had finished. He called a doctor; and when they would stop rubbing me, I could feel myself going to sleep and drifting away.

After we moved back home, we attended Bethel Church regularly. Elder Lambert was the pastor, and still is. Thank God for him. We both desired a home with the dear brethren, but did not feel fit to ask. I didn't feel I had an experience of grace. Sister Cisco Barron said in a letter to Sister Roswell, "No two people can have the same experiences." She writes so many good articles for the *Signs*. Her walk and talk bear signs of good fruit, and we love her so much.

I felt vile and unworthy, and still do, for, "When I would do good evil is present with me." On December 15, 1951, I wanted greatly to ask a home with those dear people, but couldn't go forward. After services were dismissed, I felt I could not leave without it, and I went up to talk with Elder Lambert, and my husband was telling him how unworthy he felt himself to be; and I started telling him a part of what I have written. He called the members in conference, and they received us joyfully. I still wonder why — I have so many doubts and fears.

The baptism was not until the third Sunday in April, 1952. My husband's youngest brother was a deacon of Bethel Church, and he talked with us and explained scriptures the night before he was killed December 31, 1951. Their father left six sons at his death: three of them united with Bethel Church — the youngest first, and the eldest last. "The last shall be first and the first last."

During the time when we offered and was baptized, I had a dream: There was a great fire, and a lot of people running; but at last it was only my younger sister and me. She would fall down, and say, "I can't go any farther"; but I would help her up, and say, "See yonder, when we get there we will be safe." And she would get up and go farther. At the water's edge she asked a home with the Old Baptists, was received and baptized along with my husband, Sister Bishop, and me. We have had many hours rejoicing, sharing our joys and sorrows: sometimes on the mountain tops, and then in the deepest valleys. We were made to believe in an all wise, all powerful God who needs no help of puny man. If our names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life before the foundation of the world, there is noth-

ing that can keep us from heaven and immortal glory; and if not, there is nothing we can do to get to heaven.

When my sister and I asked for our names to be removed from the Missionary church record, one of the ladies said, "You all better come back where you belong: all the Hard Shells preach is hope, hope, hope, I want you to know." But we would not trade our little hope, however small at times, for all their "know".

Many times I prayed, or tried to, as our sons were growing up, that we be spared to see them grown, and able to take care of themselves — and our prayers were answered. They are both married, and have children; the oldest has been married three years, and the younger one year. The younger joined the Navy when he was eighteen, and I thought he was so young to be on his own, and I felt he needed our guidance. He was in the Philippines, and I had many sad times, and shed many tears. Then a sweet calm would come: the same God would keep him over there that kept him here, and I couldn't guide him, for that was the Lord's business. We didn't see him for almost two years, and at times I felt I would die if I couldn't see him; but the Lord blessed me to be reconciled to his will. In my feeble way I try to pray, Thy will be done and not ours.. Make us humble and reconciled to thy will, and content with our lot. We were in a car accident October 21, 1962, and suffer much, but we try not to complain. Jesus suffered, and he knew no sin; why do we think we should not suffer. I believe we will suffer every pain intended us to suffer. We learn obedience by the things we suffer. May we be enabled to thank God for the many blessings he has bestowed upon us.

A sinner vile and needy, who stands in the need of prayer. When at the throne of grace remember us.

Annie Lee Davis

P. S. Following is a poem I wrote in memory of my husband's brother, Dewey, of whom I spoke above, and who was killed. I wrote as if I were his eldest son, Mickey:

It was the 31st day of December,
Nineteen hundred fifty-one;
About 8:15 Monday morning
God said our dad's word was done.

When he left home that morning,
He was happy and walked with grace:
We didn't realize at that moment
We would never more see his face.*

He went to weld an oil tank,
And when he struck his arc
There was a great explosion
That broke our dear mother's heart.

About 9:15 that cold morning,
Uncle Johnie came to our home:
He said, "God bless you honey,
Our darling Dewey is gone."

Now we had a very dear neighbor
Who on bended knees did pray;
And we believe it was Jesus
Who sent him to help us that day.

Now we know the Lord is our shepherd
So it reads in the 23rd Psalm:
Elder Lambert beautifully preached it:
God made us loved ones calm.

Now we feel our daddy's in heaven —
He was so honest and true;
Someday we hope dear daddy
To be in heaven with you.

* The casket was not opened

HE WATCHES OVER HIS LITTLE ONES

P. O. Box 96,
Rising Star, Texas

Dear Brother Wood:

. . . I surely do enjoy reading the letters and articles in the *Signs of the Times,* and I don't want to miss getting each number. Words fail me to tell you just how much I do enjoy the contents in each number. It is good news and glad tidings from a far country, and is meat and drink to my poor soul.

The dear writers tell my belief and experience far better than I can. It is all the preaching I have now — reading the writings from the gifted writers, who can write so lovely of the goodness and wonderful workings of God our

Saviour to the children of men.

I feel that if it were not for my Bible and the writings of His dear servants and other saints, there would be nothing in this wicked and strife-torn world to live for. But thanks be to his great and holy name, his all seeing eye is ever watching over his little ones, to comfort and feed them, and shield them from harm, as it pleases him; not according to our will, but according to His will.

May the dear Lord ever bless you in your labor of love. If not asking too much, please remember me in your prayers, for I feel the need of the prayers of the saints. In hope of a better life beyond this world.

Mrs. Julia Boyd

Rt. 2, Box 460,
Corpus Christi, Texas

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am enclosing an article for publication, if you deem it worth valuable space in the Signs.

Alba L. Dean

"But sanctify the Lord in your hearts, and be ready always to give a reason of the hope that is in you, to every man that asketh you, with meekness and fear." (1 Peter 3:15) "Let your speech be alway with grace seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." (Col. 4:6)

I am, by the help of God, going to try to give a reason why I believe I have evidence of having been given a hope in Christ.

I was made to realize that I was a sinner and was greatly burdened; and had a desire to know the truth. I begged the Lord for mercy and to show me the truth; and, I believe, by faith I was given to look above me and saw the Lord God looking down on me; and I was filled with indescribable love, joy and happiness, and Christ appeared by his side, and I saw him as my Saviour. My burden left me and I was relieved, and was given a love for the people of God and a desire to have a home with the church, and to be baptized. This was in August, 1913; and September 5th I offered for membership, and recited what I hoped was an experience of grace, and was received and baptized the same day into the Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Martin Stone, co-pastor with Elder J. H. Fisher. The church was known as Shilo No. 2 meeting place at the Acker School Building, five miles South of Wayland, Stephens County, Texas.

I feel that I was raised to a newness of life. When I came up out of the water and saw the church members standing beside the water, I could see a soft and heavenly light over their faces; and I was filled with love for them. For days I went praising the Lord for what he had done for me, and I seemed to be a completely changed person. My husband and two little daughters were at the water's edge when I was baptized. He was not a member but was a firm believer in absolute predestination of all things, and told me that he had gone for three months with the prayer in his heart that I would be shown the truth in Christ Jesus, we agreed on doctrine, and were thankful that the Lord had heard and answered our prayers. It is by revelation of Jesus Christ that we learn of Him: He reveals his truth in many ways, sometimes by dreams, visions, by a still small voice, and by "putting his laws in our minds and writing them in our hearts." (Hebrews 8:10)

The doctrine believed by the Old School Baptists, and as set forth by the **Signs of the Times,** came to me faster than I could tell it; and I wondered how I could see it, when I had not known it before. I was made to sing

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me:
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind but now I see."

The more the light of God shined in my heart, the more I could see and feel the sinfulness in my nature; and I decided that I had been deceived in thinking I had really seen the light. I thought of going to the church and telling them that I was afraid I had been deceived, but I could not give up completely. Doubts and fears would come and go: sometimes the Comforter would be with me, and sometimes I would seem to be left alone; and sometimes His goodness was so great that I would forget my trials. Sometimes I could see His likeness in the countenances of the brethren and sisters, but could see nothing good in myself.

In the School of Christ, after having been born again and have the Spirit of Christ in us, we are given knowledge and wisdom, and grow in grace as He sees our need. He says, "My grace is sufficient for thee." He makes us able to accomplish that which He purposed for us to do.

Some of the dealings of the Lord with me are as follows: I dreamed that I was in school, and was given a glass partly filled with milk for lunch. In 1st Peter 2:2-3, we read, "As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby. If so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." It takes sometime for children to eat meat and solid food; so it is with children just born into the kingdom of God. He gives them spiritual food as the need arises for those called by him. Strong doctrine (meat) is not understood until learned in the School of Christ. We get lessons from our daily trials, and can see the hand of the Lord in them: he comforts his little ones and strengthens them to bear many sore trials for Christ's sake.

During some of these trials I have wondered how I was going to continue on, and a still small voice would say, "It is I, be not afraid." Or at other times would say, "I will never leave nor forsake you, even unto the end of the world." I had a vision of a small black heart in a circle of light; and as I looked at it, I thought: That is my heart. Then it came to me that I had been given a clean heart. "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

We know that without him we can do nothing. I was in much trouble of mind, feeling a need for comfort, I looked up and in a vision saw Jesus walking slowly up a hillside: I felt as a little child and wished that I could have him take me by the hand and lead me along the way, for I felt that I could not keep in sight, and was not worthy. I was reading the scriptures, "Follow thou me", and it seemed to be spoken to me by the Saviour. My desire is to follow Christ and not man. Man's ways lead unto death, and God's ways lead unto life everlasting.

In my early travels, I dreamed I was in a small cabin, out in a grassy glade with a group of small children, and I looked out and a grass fire was burning towards us; but I seemed to have no fear; it passed on, and we did not feel it. In Isaiah 43:2, we read of the promises of God to his people: "When thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fires thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flames kindle upon thee." We know that God's promises are sure, and we are happy when given faith by him to trust our all to him.

I dreamed of seeing a pure white tree; all of the limbs had been trimmed evenly so that all were equal in size. In a figure Christ is the tree, and we are the branches, if we are one of his, we will all be made equal in Him, from the tiniest infant to the most aged. I had heard it said the Primitive Baptists did not believe in infant salvation: this dream clearly showed me that all are equal regardless of age or race; if one

of the children given to Christ by the Father, not one will be lost.

In 1913 I dreamed of seeing a stone, like a corner stone, suspended over a dark pit, and there were people standing on it. I seemed to be standing by looking at it. Later I felt the answer was given when I read in Psalms 40:1-3, "I waited patiently for the Lord, and He inclined unto me and heard my cry: He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings; and he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: Many shall see it a fear, and shall trust in the Lord." Also, in Psalms 27:5, "For in time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion; in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me: he shall set me upon a rock." I was given a hope that I was one who had been delivered from the deep, dark pit, and my feet set upon a rock. I also had dreamed that I had been given a new song, and had sung it with all ease up before a congregation.

I dreamed of seeing a house placed in the yard beside our home; the house and everything in it was all new and bright, and exactly like the house we lived in, but that it was new. I wondered what it meant at the time, for I felt it must have spiritual meaning. In time I was directed to the Scriptures in 2 Corinthians 3:18, "But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." In the beginning God said "Let us make man in our image." He gives us a precious hope that we will be glorified in the image of God and Christ, and will praise Him forever.

Like Paul, I believe that what I have been taught, was not of man; but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Yours in hope,
Mrs. Alba L. Dean

"HELP THOU MINE UNBELIEF"

Caledonia, Miss.

Dear Editors:

This is to notify you of my change of address to Caledonia . . . I do not want to miss any of the papers, for I enjoy them so much: they are my meat and my drink. They are each one filled with food from the hand of God, for from him comes all our blessings, both natural and spiritual. I feel so unworthy of the least of them, and I cannot find words sufficient to give Him thanks for the love and mercy he has bestowed upon such an one as I. But I pray for grace to praise him as I ought: I pray for that love which is of God — for God is love; love to love my brethren and sisters and my neighbors as I ought; love to love Him who first loved us, and gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Many times I have had to say, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." And sometimes as did Thomas, "My Lord, and my God."

We had some wonderful preaching both at the Buttahatche and the Hopewell Associations. Though I was only able to attend the Hopewell one day, I surely enjoyed it.

May our Heavenly Father keep us and lead us in the strait and narrow path that leads to eternal life, where there will be no hate, no sin, no wars, trials or tribulations, tears or fears, but joy and praise around his throne, where Jesus is the light of that city eternal in the heavens.

Yours in hope of that peace beyond this veil of tears,

Minnie Seay

2768 Clifton Ave., N. W.,
Roanoke, Virginia

Dear Editors:

. . . Please renew my subscription for two years; I am enclosing check for $5.00.

I may not be able to absorb or rightly understand all I read, but I feel the hymn with these words:

"One thing, with all my soul's desire,
I sought and will pursue;
What thine own Spirit doth inspire,
Lord! for thy servant do.

Grant me within thy courts a place,
Among thy saints a seat,
For ever to behold thy face,
And worship at his feet.

In thy pavilion to abide,
When storms of trouble blow,
And in thy tabernacle hide,
Secure from every foe.

'Seek ye my face;' — without delay,
When thus I hear thee speak,
My heart would leap for joy, and say,
'Thy face, Lord, will I seek.'

Then leave me not when griefs assail,
And earthly comforts flee;
When father, mother, kindred fail,
My God! remember me.

Oft had I fainted and resign'd
Of every hope my hold,
But mine afflictions brought to mind
Thy benefits of old.

Wait on the Lord, with courage wait;
My soul! disdain to fear;
The righteous Judge is at the gate,
And thy redemption near."

No. 921, Beebe's Hymn Book

The hymn expresses a feeling of prayer, and so, though plain language many confuse me in certain matters, and points of what is understood as doctrine, I still desire to read, not only the Bible, but the *Signs,* and to hear the expressions and confessions of a people that I once saw in a company: A great stream of people moved by an outstretched hand, bringing them to the feet of Jesus; and saw this one stoop, lifting them to His bosom, and placing them on His shoulder, and carrying them; and I wondered much. I desired to be a part of this company, even though they seemed so afflicted. I felt so in need of being carried; and I still feel that need.

For a long time I considered this *shoulder;* and the words came, ". . . and the government shall be upon his shoulder." That is what I feel I want to see among us: To be found seeking that government. At least, I feel I am not able to walk: I must be carried. I do not feel excusable in any sense: so many sorrows, so many trials, and too weak to walk to meet them aright to the honor and praise of God; and not worthy of being brought and lifted and carried, but begging for that to come to me, that I may be in that number which is carried, and moved in and with that government. We cannot carry the government, as I see it; but it is already upon His shoulder, and we want to be found there.

These words, "Am I not worthy?" came with some force. Yes, Lord, thou art worthy of every thought, every effort to walk, talk, think, or breathe praise upon thy name. Yet I feel as these words express:

"Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and thou alone."

And so I yet cling, and cling: O Lord, do not let me go.

A sister, I humbly hope,
Catherine A. Houchins

Box 693,
Quitman, Texas 75783

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood:

. . . I am writing you concerning the change of address of my mother-in-law, Mrs. S. H. White, to 1210 Harrison Road, Longview, Texas. She has recently had to give up her last son, and is now going to live with her daughter in Longview. She is now past ninety-three years of age, and has been an invalid for more than a year. Although her body is weakened, her mind is just as alert as ever, and she looks forward to the coming of the *Signs,* which her daughters always read to her.

Brother Wood, you may remember her when you were here at Cana Church several years ago. She still speaks of you, and how she enjoyed your preaching. She has been a faithful member of Cana Church since the day it was organized forty-eight years ago last Oc-

tober. She has been a real mother to me for fifty-three years, I having been in her family that long. She and I are the only charter members still living.

In Christian love and dear esteem, I am an unworthy sinner saved by God's mercy, if at all.

Buena White

(Yes, we remember these two sisters, and many others we met while in that part of the country; and our memories are very pleasant. We found them loving the same things we do, which made it so pleasant to meet with them, and to talk of the Lord's goodness and mercy. We are glad that Sister White looks forward to the coming of the *Signs* each month. — J. D. W.)

HER HEART IS HAPPY

307 East Pine St.
Winnsboro, Texas

Dear Brother Lambert:

You can tear this up or do anything you want to do with it, but I have felt for some reason that I wanted to write my experience — the Lord being my helper. I believe it to be true that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. I did not direct my steps as I had nothing to do with directing my experience.

When I was about twenty years of age I had a wonderful dream. I dreamed I was an angel and could fly from place to place. Even when I awoke it seemed to be true. I felt so bad when I found it was not true. That dream has stayed with me for some reason.

I have gone to Good Hope Church ever since Brother Tatum and the older preachers were preaching there. Since then I have gone and heard Brother Lambert preach and have enjoyed his preaching very much. For a long time it would come to me that I wanted to be baptized before I died, but every time that feeling would come it would leave me. Then I would pray for God to guide me and lead me in the way He wanted me to go, as I knew no one else could. Then, joining the church would come to me, but with it, it would come to me that I wasn't good enough.

One week it kept coming to me that the Bible says, "There is none good; no, not one." On the coming Sunday, January 22, 1964, we, Morris and I, went to church to hear Brother Lambert preach. His preaching was so wonderful that I sat there and cried. My heart was filled so that I thought I was having a heart attack, as so many have now. That night I couldn't sleep. Brother Lambert's preaching was going over and over in my mind. I felt I knew the Lord was with me, and He had all power and could do all things; He left nothing undone; He knew from the beginning what would take place all down through our lives. The Lord has been good to me; and, He being my helper, my hopes are all on Him. I believe once saved, always saved. I don't think our God is changeable, like man is. I think men just don't have any power at all.

On February 2, 1964, I joined the church at Good Hope and was baptized by Brother Lambert, he being our pastor. I am glad to say that *my mind is settled and my heart is happy.* I am proud to be a member of Good Hope Church; although I feel very weak and helpless. But I know there is some One stronger, with all power, who can lead us through this life. IF HE CAN'T — THERE IS NONE THAT CAN.

Mrs. Inez Hewett

A VISION AND A DREAM

112 Bunard Court,
Danville, Va.

Dear Brother and Sister Spangler:

As I enjoyed the good preaching so much this Thanksgiving night, it gave me a mind to write you a few lines. Since I started coming up there to church, and especially since I united, I have repeated it so many times: It has just seemed like an old fashioned Thanksgiving day ever since.

My daughter was born on Thanksgiving day twenty-one years ago this week; she was born with a "V" in her forehead that remained there for a good while. I believe the Lord through her has brought victory to my life in many ways. I feel the Lord has blessed her with a good husband, who has brought much sunshine into our home; because we love him. Only the good Lord knows what we are in need of.

Brother Spangler, I have wanted to tell you the vision I had on the 4th Sunday in April after I joined the church the night before. There were a lot of people there that day; and we had had such good preaching. It was after the services were over, and just about everybody had gone out of the church ahead of me. As I was going down the front steps, I glanced towards all those people there on the front, and, as I saw you shaking hands with them, suddenly they appeared to me as sheep in a beautiful pasture; and I could see you as a good shepherd over them. I could see you tending and caring for them, and keeping them in place with a staff in your right hand. It was made as plain to me as if a voice had spoken and said, This is the voice his sheep follow, because he has known all of their problems, and what they were in need of — just as he has known what you were in need of.

For weeks later I continued to see a staff in your hand caring for those sheep. I have wanted to tell you this ever since, but I didn't know how. I felt like everybody there had seen just what I had: it was all so plain.

I want to tell you a dream again that I had when I was about eighteen years old, because I have felt it come to pass in Dan River Church. I dreamed I was walking alone at night on a country road; and finally I came to an opening and could see this little white church on the side of the road. It was lighted up inside and out; and I could see all those people going in ahead of me. It seemed that I was the last one to get to the doorway; and just as I stood in the doorway, my eyes went towards the pulpit, and Christ was standing there with his eyes on me. I started walking on down the aisle, and there was only one seat left on the right hand side; and as I sat down Christ was still watching me, and gave me a look of satisfaction, as if to say, All are here; and he was ready to start his sermon.

In the past year Christ has become so alive to me that I don't believe the glory of it could ever be told — especially the day I was baptized. And that afternoon when I partook of the Lord's Supper, it couldn't have been any different to me if Christ had been sitting there in the midst. It just makes my heart rejoice so, to know that all this has actually come to pass after so many years. I know that if salvation came by works, I could have never been numbered among the saints; because for many years I felt to be the black-sheep of my family because of the terrible sinner I felt to be. Only the goodness and mercy of God could have kept me through it all.

I hope that I haven't been too much of a burden to you good people; I often feel that I am. I would like for you to continue to remember my family in prayer.

Love from above,
Annie Barber

MEETING AT SARDIS CHURCH

831 N. Woodland
Amarillo, Texas
March 17, 1964

Dear Editors and Household of Faith:

I don't remember of ever being elevated to this height before. I feel I can say that I know my Redeemer liveth, and I want to tell it to every one. There is no one for me to talk to, so yesterday I wrote my sister, Viola Fitzhugh. I still wasn't satisfied, and I wrote Elder E. J. Lambert and wife, the beloved pastor of our home church near

ElDorado, Arkansas. But this morning I have to write more, hoping some little one will get a crumb from it, as I have from many letters in the *Signs of the Times.*

Sardis Primitive Baptist Church here in Amarillo had their meeting Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning. There were four sermons preached, and the ministers were blessed to preach the power, grace, and mercy of Almighty God, giving him all the praise, honor and glory; and we were blessed to hear and to feast on His unsearchable riches. We don't feel worthy of such a blessing, but I am so happy He saw fit to bless even me.

Saturday Elder Lloyd Wall preached, and Elder Winfrey was so filled and happy it seemed as if there was a halo around his head. His face just glowed, and he was so full he could not preach, and made only a few remarks. On Sunday Brother Oren Parsons was ordained a deacon. Brother Bradley from Lubbock, Texas, preached first, and it was so good; followed by Elder Wall, and then by Elder C. M. Haygood. Elder Winfrey made a few remarks between each one. He said that on Saturday he couldn't preach and on Sunday he couldn't keep from it. They all preached the same precious truth, if I know anything about the truth.

The ordination was impressive to us: Brother Parsons is so humble. There were brethren from Kansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and different parts of Texas there, and much love shown among the brethren. I feel that God's presence was surely there. Elder Haygood worded the prayer, and Elder Wall delivered the charge. It was a sacred occasion. After the ordination, Brother Bradley asked Elder Wall to remember him to some of the ministers. The ones I recall were Elders Rhodes, John Lee Smith, and Everett. When we shook hands with him and told him how much we enjoyed his sermon, we told him also that the ministers he mentioned were from our section of the country. And he told me that his sister Leila McCann used to live in ElDorado; and we have known her for years.

Here is a thought I would like to pass on to all of God's little flock: Let the ministers know how you feel. When they feed you, tell them so. We often fail in this. The third Sunday in February Elder Winfrey was ill, and felt that he didn't preach anything of comfort to any one, but God blessed me to hear, and I told him he preached to me, if no one else. I was still feasting the next week, and I wrote and told him so — not dreaming that my letter could be of any comfort to him, but wanted him to know the comfort he had been to me through almighty God. He wrote a sweet letter to us; and he and his wife told us Sunday that that letter was just what he needed — he was so low. I just wanted to pass on to others this thought. There are many ways to give a cup of water to His little ones.

I fear this is lengthy, so will ask to be remembered when at the throne of grace. We have subscribed to the *Signs* for a good many years, and get much comfort from the writings in them. Since we move a lot, in many places we live it is our only preaching. May God bless you all to keep the dear paper as it has been all these years past.

Mrs. J. A. Davis

Rt. 3,
c/o Watts Nursing Home,
Jonesboro, La.

Dear Editors:

I enclose money order for which please send me the *Signs of the Times.* . . . Also I would like for either of the editors to write their views on the 21st chapter of St. John.

It seems that I can see something in this chapter relative to His disciples being fishers of men; also, as they were not able to "draw the net" after placing

it on the "right side", it seems that this fact bears relation to the fact that Jesus said, "No man can come unto me except the Father that sent me draw him." And that, "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

I feel that your scriptural understanding is far superior to mine, so I would like your general views on the chapter.

I have heard both Elder Lambert and Elder Griffin from the stand, and feel that the Lord has given them spiritual wisdom to declare His great and adorable name. And I have read the *Signs* much of the time for many years, and remember such writers as Elders Chick, Lefferts, Beeman, and others. I have noticed that in all the writing in the *Signs* that self-boasting is absent; and that suits me, for I feel that the love of God, the holy Spirit shed in men, never fails to humble one, and causes him to give not just part but all praise to Him.

Should you feel to comply with my request, it will be greatly appreciated. Wishing for you much spiritual joy and comfort. I feel to be among the very least, if one at all.

Yours in hope,
W. A. Chandler

"KNOWLEDGE FROM AFAR"

1718 Champagnolle Rd.,
ElDorado, Ark.

Dear Editors:

If the Lord is pleased to guide me, I hope to write a few words in praise unto my maker. "I will fetch my knowledge from afar; and will ascribe righteousness unto my maker." (Job 36:3)

When faith and grace is given us, then we ascribe unto him the time setter and the season maker, for he says there is a time and a season to all things; and we see him as the upholder and disposer of all things that were made, for he makes his light to shine in the hearts and minds of his people.

He is the creator and maker of all things. He said, "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." He is Lord of lords, and King of kings. The knowledge of his people is fetched from afar, when they are made to see, though through a glass darkly, the things that are prepared for them from the foundation of the world, by an all wise God who is from everlasting to everlasting. They see him as the way, the truth, and the life; the alpha and omega — the beginning and the end: the Saviour of his people, and one who does his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. He is the giver of every good and perfect gift.

We had the privilege of attending the association this Fall. The brotherly love and fellowship was wonderful towards each other. They ascribed righteousness to their Maker; and it seemed that the love and grace of the Lord was joyfully present. The joy and happiness there we don't have words to express.

Our meditations are often at night as we lie upon our bed, and the renewed memories of them are ours to enjoy during the day. But then come doubts and fears: our sinfulness causes us to wonder if the Lord gives us knowledge from afar, and enables us to ascribe righteousness unto our maker.

Through the given eye of faith his children see Him as the one who parted the waters, and they went over dry shod; and the one that hung on the cross for the sins of his people. We are made to realize each rising of the sun and going down of the same, that each beat of our heart is closing the gate of this timely life. It is through the grace of God that we are what we are, and sometimes we see the way opened unto the children of God, the elect family, to be received into that heavenly body; where praise, joy, and adoration never will end.

Oh! may He richly bless us daily with

knowledge from afar, that we may ascribe all righteousness unto our Maker. Realizing our sinfulness and short comings, our desire is that He will keep us and sustain us as we journey through this life.

J. J. Davis

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The **Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association** will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Canaan on July 10, 11, and 12, 1964.

Visitors should proceed to Danville, Virginia, and turn onto Highway 41 off Alternate Highway 29, and go approximately fifteen miles, or until reaching Highway 844 at Francis' Store. Turn left at the store, and follow 844 a short distance to Canaan Church.

The presence of the brethren of our faith and order is desired, and will be appreciated.

Burnell B. Williams, Clerk

PLEASE NOTE: We have on hand about thirty **Obituaries** and **Resolutions of Respect** yet to be published. These and any new ones will appear as we have space. When writing them, please condense as much as possible. — Editors

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UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

The fifty-eighth session of the **Upper Country Line Association** will be held at McCleansville High School, beginning Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in July, and continuing three days. The host church is Greensboro.

Directions to the association are as follows: Travel six miles East of Greensboro on old 70A, and watch for pointers leading North approximately three miles to McCleansville. Our correspondents and visiting brethren are invited to meet with us.

SLATE HILL MEETING

There will be an all-day meeting, the Lord willing, at the **Old School Baptist Meeting House at Slate Hill, N. Y.** the first Saturday in August. Lunch will be served. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

A. J. Slauson

THREE DAYS MEETING OF BETHEL CHURCH, RIFFE, WASH.

The annual **Three Days Meeting** of the **Bethel Primitive Baptist Church of Predestinarian Faith** of Riffe, Washington, will be held, the Lord willing, the third Sunday, and Friday and Saturday before, in August. All interested brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

E. J. Attebery, Pastor
Mrs. Opal Huntting, Clerk,
Silver Creek, Wash. 98585

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The **Pigg River District Primitive Baptist Association** will be held, the Lord willing, with the Roanoke Church, Roanoke, Virginia, July 31st, August 1st, and 2nd. Services on Friday will be held at the meeting house, which is on Burke Street, at the West end of Maiden Lane Avenue, S. W.

On Saturday and Sunday the services will be held at the Church of God State Camp, on highway 117, opposite the Woodrum Airport. The following are directions to reach the association grounds:

Those coming from the South over Highway 220 will continue on this route through the city, to the junction of the Airport Road, or Highway 118; take this for about two miles to Highway 117, then turn left one mile to a sign pointing to the association grounds.

Those coming from the North over Highway No. 11, before entering the city turn right on Highway 117 for two miles to the sign.

From the West, go through the town of Salem on Main Street for about two and one-half miles, turn left on Highway 117, and go three miles to the sign.

Our correspondents, brethren, and friends, are cordially invited to meet with us. Additional information may be had by calling DI 2-3183, in Roanoke.

John D. Wood, Clerk

WE ARE NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY OTHER PAPER

We feel it necessary to state that the Signs of the Times is in no way affiliated with any other paper, and consequently is not responsible for anything published elsewhere. Any appearance of endorsement by the Signs of the Times is entirely without authority.

— Editors

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Mrs. Drusiler Gillispie, Md.	1.00
N. R. Roberson, N. C.	2.00
James Carter, N. C.	2.00
Mrs. Eliza Turner, Va.	2.00
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Danville, Virginia **July, 1964**

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R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va.

EDITORIAL

PREACHING

The most sacred and most noble profession is that of a gospel preacher, yet it is considered as the poorest trade. The preaching of the gospel is so sacred and great that I am continuously reminded of my weakness and unworthiness to fill such a sacred position. I take comfort in the thought that Paul felt the same: "Unto me, WHO AM LESS THAN THE LEAST OF ALL SAINTS, is this grace given, that I should *preach* among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." (Eph. 3:8) Paul considered preaching grace as a mighty and wonderful gift of God. I do not believe that a gospel minister can think too humbly of himself — nor can he think too highly of the Prince who called him into this noble profession. Our felt sense of unworthiness really graces us to bear great treasures to others. Many poor messenger-carriers have delivered great treasures to others. I may be an evil messenger but I know that I am not bearing an evil message. I may be as one of Noah's carpenters who helped in building the ark but had no place in it when the floods came; yet, my comfort is that I have part in bearing the message of God's love and grace.

I may be a castaway but I feel that I will be compelled to thank God for having blessed me to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the afflicted and poor people. When you see the despondent ones raised up to the point of rejoicing, it gladdens your heart to see that the Lord has graced your preaching to their comfort. A gospel minister could not conscientiously require a congregation to pay him for his preaching, because, if he has been given preaching grace, he has already received more reward of the Lord than he could possibly receive from the congregation. No true minister will ever complain of the sacrifice he has made in order to pursue this noble ministration. Paul said in 2 Cor. 12:15: "And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved." What great love Paul had for the Lord's people!

Considering the sacredness and the success attached to gospel preaching, we are next inquiring as Paul did: "*Who* is sufficient for these things?" Read the last 6 verses of the 2nd chapter and the 3rd chapter of 2nd Corin-

thians and you will note the happy success which God gave to Paul's preaching; as well as this success being wholly accredited to God. Paul says, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but OUR SUFFICIENCY IS OF GOD." We are convinced that God's ministers are called, qualified, sent forth, and used of God for the good of His people, as well as to praise the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The outstanding evidence that God has called one to preach is that he preaches the power of God, for a person will preach the power that sent him as the excellent power. Listen to one's preaching for he will unconsciously identify his caller; whether it be money, man, the devil, or God. God qualifies his ministers in the furnace of affliction, and they come through great tribulations which burn the dross of pride, selfishness, vain-glory, and any other vice; which makes them beggars at the footstool of God's throne.

God's ministers experience to a greater degree all of the phases of Christian experience, both pleasant and unpleasant, in order to orient them properly for the profession they must fill. God sometimes suffers his ministers to follow the bidding of designing men, and to experience the consequences, in order to make them more willing to heed His commands. The minister must be well taught to go wheresover and whensoever the Lord sends him. God uses His ministers as message-bearers and they are ordained to go forth in the fear of God — not man; to please God, not as men pleasers.

His ministers must be of good report within as well as without. They may become victims of false brethren and outsiders who give bad report; yet, their lives and conduct should be so that the mouths of gain-sayers may be stopped without the minister having to come to his own rescue. True brethren are always ready to defend their elders from vile effects of erroneous and damaging reports. God blesses the ministers' gifts to find room in the hearts of true brethren sufficiently that it is needless for ministers to use valuable time in self-defense. Offenses must come but the woe is pronounced upon the offender, not the offended. A minister must realize that his temptations are more varied, that he is more closely watched, and he is the target of more envy and jealousy than anyone in the church. How careful we should be in our deportment.

A minister should be "Apt to teach." He should study to rightly divide the word of truth. He should be one who is given to use simple terms in explaining the scriptures and placing scriptural expressions in their proper settings. When one lifts a scriptural expression out of its context to such an extent that it has a very different meaning, he does violence to the right division. A minister should not take a few words and dwell upon them exclusively to get them all out of proportion, until they become vain imaginations which are foreign to their intended meaning. I have heard much of this, which results only in entertainment and arousing emotions, and the audience dismissed without being edified on the proper meaning of the expression. Sometimes we are tempted to use a few words to this extent in order that the hearers may talk about how wise we are, to get so much out of so little. Let us ask our hearers, who make such expressions, What did YOU get from it? I am convinced that the fact is the congregation was more entertained than edified.

Meandering preaching generally aims at nothing and hits nothing. I have heard people talk a long time, yet they never did tell me what they were talking about. I cannot tell what purpose they have in saying what they say. A true preacher preaches his convictions and attempts to support them with the scriptures. He does not emphasize his wisdom but his convictions. We read a scripture which says, "We also believe,

and therefore speak." (Read 2 Cor. 4:13.) I am becoming very conscious of how precious the time is which is devoted to preaching. This time must not be wasted by idle talking and vain repetitions. Some must travel a long journey to hear preaching and are not privileged to sit more than an hour or two under the audible sound of preaching each month. May God forbid that this precious time be ill-used by a careless person who seeks not to edify his hearers. This time should be used for the good of others and not for the speaker's own vain-glory. None but those who are as diligent to sow the wheat of good doctrine, as the devil is to sow tares, should occupy the time allotted for preaching. We should seek to use only enough simple words to clothe our thoughts, and only thoughts which tend to promote truth and virtue should be emphasized. Preaching time is too precious to be wasted by saying things without a purpose for saying them. Time is too precious for long preliminaries or telling amusing stories. The profession is too sacred to treat lightly and to talk loosely and for any display of ignorance.

God's use for preaching is so important that we should use proper dignity in the pulpit so that what we say may be properly enunciated. Our true hearers are interested in understanding every word spoken, therefore they listen carefully and appreciate it when every word is distinctly spoken. They are not so much interested in *how* we say things as *what* we say. Sometimes peculiar mannerisms of the preacher so attracts the hearer that he loses the thoughts expressed. Sometimes we become so emotional while preaching that our speaking is marred with incoherent sounds and our hearers do not distinctly understand what we say. If the things we are speaking are worth the time used in speaking them, surely they are worth being understood by our hearers.

Proper characteristics and suitable manners of God-called ministers are especially stressed in Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus. These principles, tempers, and proper conduct are minutely named and specifically defined in these books of the New Testament. It would be well for ministers to read them carefully and often as letters of instructions addressed individually to each one of us. Each one of you have Bibles to read so it is not necessary for me to include them in this treatise, but is necessary for me to request you to read both letters to Timothy and the one to Titus as a part of this article. Cataloging scriptures is not preaching. Hearers have Bibles to read, and the earnest hearer reads it often. They are more interested in hearing you expound the scriptures than your precise quotations of them. Interested hearers often check your scriptural references, and, when they get to themselves, read the scriptures which are before and after your quotations. Then, they compare your treatise on them with the context.

Some may ask, Why preach? I have heard it vehemently proclaimed that God saves His people wholly and completely in every sense without the necessity of preaching. I fear that some who fill the pulpit feel exactly that way about it, considering the carelessness manifested while attempting to preach. If our preaching be not necessary, Why preach? I am thoroughly convinced that Paul spoke rightly when he said, ". . . it pleased God by the foolishness of PREACHING to *save* them that believe." God has use for preaching in saving the believer. What is the central text of Gospel preaching? Paul says, "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Why preach Christ to a believer? Christ said, ". . . Ye believe in God, believe also in me." The eunuch of Ethiopia as well as Cornelius believed in God before they believed in Jesus Christ. God was pleased to use a minister to effectually preach Jesus Christ to them. In each case God commanded the minister to go, and it

pleased God that through these ministers' preaching that these should also believe in Jesus Christ. Let us quote Romans 10:13-14, "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things."

Our reasons for preaching from the pulpits, by medium of writing, and in private conversations should be for God's glory and for the benefit of hearers and readers. Sometimes it is to stir up pure minds by way of remembrance of the things they have heretofore been told and have experienced. Sometimes it is to inspire a desire for spiritual development that the auditors may pray the Lord to bless them. Sometimes it is to admonish one who has strayed from the becoming walk of the Lord's people. Sometimes it is to unconfuse the confused so that the little bits of beliefs may be unscrambled and placed in an orderly manner to such extent that the hearer is more aware of what he believes. Spiritual stimulation and nourishment should be the aim of every minister.

Yes, preaching comforts the depressed ones, encourages the discouraged, and renews hope, as well as strengthens faith. No minister of God preaches for filthy lucre, nor to gain himself a reputation, nor to get a personal following. His purpose sometimes is to exhort his hearers to righteous and Godly walking; yet, while so doing he does not forget the sacred truths of sovereign grace. Should one treat upon vices and virtues only without the grand principles of grace and the mighty power of God, it would be like placing the wheels properly in a watch, setting the hands, and forgetting to put in the mainspring which makes the watch work. On the other hand, should you preach the sovereignty of God only, it would be as though you observed only the mainspring and paid no attention to the works in the watch, nor the position of the hands on the face of the watch. It is often a vital question to me, What should I preach in order to preach a complete gospel sermon? When I first began to teach in the schools I was told to stress three "R's": 'Riting, Reading, & 'Rithmetic. I am convinced now that ministers should stress five "R's": Ruin, Redemption, Regeneration, Righteousness, and Resurrection.

Ministers preach that all of Adam's posterity was *ruined* through the sins of Adam to such extent that man could not reform himself to the original condition of Adam. All who were in the loins of Adam could hope for nothing but eternal death. All who were chosen in Christ were *redeemed* through the righteousness of Jesus Christ to such an extent that God's chosen ones would be delivered from the clutches of eternal death. All who were in the loins of Christ could be assured of eternal life because of this redemption by His life and His death. All those who were redeemed by Jesus Christ are subjects of *regeneration* by the mighty power of the Holy Spirit. All the redeemed are born again, being regenerated by eternal life. True ministers preach that *righteousness* being manifested in the walk and conversation of the regenerated ones is the evidence and effect of regeneration. All who are regenerated and have the gift of the living faith will be careful to maintain good works. All God-called ministers will point out to his hearers the goal of the high calling which is the *resurrection.* The crowning work of God's grace is the resurrection from the dead. We point forward to the change when this mortal shall put on immortality; when this natural body shall be raised a spiritual body. We point forward to the prize which will be the transition from time into eternity. When we are under the dew-drippings of God's sanctuary and

while feasting upon the gospel of Jesus Christ, we taste a little of Heaven. This makes it easier to endure the tribulations for a season.

Ministers love Jesus Christ and his people better than anything else in the world. The other day I read the first ten verses of 1st chapter of 1st Corinthians. I noticed that Paul mentioned Jesus Christ ten times in these ten verses. Even though I was alone I said aloud, "Oh! what love Paul had for Jesus Christ!" Dear Ministers, you are promised persecutions and you will go through great tribulations, but God has also promised to be with you unto the end. False brethren may turn their back upon you and attempt to do all the harm they can, but may God bless you to preach Jesus Christ as Lord of the salvation of His pople. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 16:22, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha." This means to let him be accursed, suspended, and not worthy of attention.

May our ministration be blessed in our conduct and preaching that we may truthfully say, "But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us. For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God. Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly, and unblameably we behave ourselves among you that believe: and ye know how we exhorted, and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews: Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men." (1st Thess. 2:7-15) The afore-quoted is what Paul, Silvanus, and Timotheus said to the church of the Thessalonians. Can we truthfully say the same things to the churches of our pastorate???

Our sincere prayer is that God will so grace us as ministers to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"GRACE FOR GRACE"

"And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." (John 1:16)

We offer a few thoughts on the above portion of the inspired testimony by request of Brother W. B. McAdams . . . It is with a felt sense of my weakness and utter dependence upon Him who has the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, that I ever venture to write or speak on a Bible subject; and often, when I have finished and have time to reflect over what I have said or written, I think that I see so much of self in it, that the glories of Christ and his precious fullness are all obscured from the hearer or reader. Yet I hope I love the comforting truths of the gospel, and therefore delight sometimes to submit my meditations to the charitable consideration of my brethren in the common faith.

The quotation above was spoken concerning Christ. In the 14th verse of this chapter, Christ is said to be "full of grace and truth"; and in this 16th verse

it is declared that we have received of that fullness. And the following verse says, "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Herein the apostle seems to be contrasting what we were, and what we received under the law, with what we were, and what we received under Christ.

The law is the ministration of death: there is no peace, or life, or mercy, or pardon, or justification under its unyielding justice, for we all have sinned — we are all, therefore, unequal to the law's demands. We may come with our very best offerings, and, if produced by our own efforts, they are no better than Cain's offering; which God did not respect. If we bring all of our righteousness and ask justification from even the most trivial offence upon their merits, they are utterly condemned, for they are as filthy rags. We are ten thousand talents in debt, and have not so much as one farthing to liquidate the debt. It is not to be wondered then that Paul said, "That which was ordained to life I found to be unto death." Even so it was with us: when the mighty thunderings of Sinai demanded what we owed, we saw no escape from death, though we fled from percept to precept in search for one that we might shelter under, and be safe from the sword of justice in the hand of our "school-master"; but

> "In vain we ask God's righteous law
> To justify us now,
> Since to convince and condemn
> Is all the law can do."

The price of justice was not found in heaven, nor in earth, nor beneath the earth, but in Christ, "the Lion of the tribe Judah", who was full of grace and truth; this one in whom that truth which sprang out of the earth, and the righteousness that looked down from heaven, were sweetly blended. He came with all the redemption price and procured the release of the captives from all iniquity. He redeemed us from under the curse of the law; He redeemed us from death; He redeemed us to God by his blood with eternal redemption; He justified us freely by his grace, and granted full and entire pardon; and sanctifies, preserves, and calls us in Christ Jesus, and keeps us by his power through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Herein is some of the fullness of Christ declared; and yet we are told that, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love him."

"And of his fullness have all we received." Paul said, "It pleased the Father that in him (Christ) should all fullness dwell." In Him then is everything that poor sinners need here, or hereafter:

1st. In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (Colossians 2:3) Then all we know, and all the capacity we have for knowing, must be given from His hidden treasure. If we know Him, which is said to be life eternal, it must be given; and we have received of his fullness.

2nd. He is rich in mercy and possesses great love, (Ephesians 2:4), and "Justice and judgment are the habitations of his throne; and mercy and truth shall go before his face." (Psalms 89:14) While the justice of the law inflicted its penalty upon Christ, the same justice set the lawful captive free, and wrested the prey from the mighty. We received the fullness of his love when our Elder Brother became "sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Justice accepted Him as the ransom and perfect fulfillment of all the law's demands; and we are declared to be justified when he rose from the dead. Mercy had been extended, and the violator of God's holy law was made "an heir of God, and a joint heir with Christ." How abundantly have we received His fullness! "We who were sometimes afar off are now made nigh by the blood of Christ." (Ephesians 2:13) And though we were enemies to

God, we are now declared to be his sons. Not only this, but we are also given to believe on Him and to suffer for his sake. (Philippians 1:29) As the son of Mary, He was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief: and in order that we partake of his fullness, we must be made acquainted with his sufferings also.

3rd. He is full of power. "There is no power but of God." He mightily displays that power in subduing our enemies; delivering us from the weapon of the master, and the tongue of the accuser: for they both shall rise against the servants of the Lord; and yet it is declared that they shall not prosper." (Isaiah 54:17) By his power we are kept in his grace through faith unto salvation to be revealed in the last time. Then shall the glories of his power triumph over death and the grave, and mortality shall be swallowed up of life; and we shall all come forth bearing no longer the image of the earthly, but in the full triumph of the glory of Christ's image.

In contemplation of this glorious fullness of which we are made partakers, we feel constrained to adopt the apostle's language, and say, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God: how unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out." In a word: His precious fullness makes all things work together for good to them that love God: whether they be thrones or dominions, principalities or powers, life or death, things visible or invisible — all shall work together for good to them that love God; all shall be directed to that one grand event toward which the whole creation moves: To the praise of the infinitely perfect God, and his infinite fullness.

"And grace for grace."

The word *anti* from which "for" is translated in this verse, is also translated by some authors, "upon," making it read, "grace upon grace." This does not do violence to the truth, for we do receive grace upon grace — we must have this heavenly manna everyday. Yesterday's, or last week's, or last year's supply will not suffice for the present time. Hence the apostles were taught to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." Jeremiah confessed the same when he said, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning." (Lamentations 3:22, 23) Yet, in a more common use of the word, "for" seems to be preferable to "upon"; and I think the expression is interpreted in Ephesians 13:4: "Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

Grace was bestowed in Christ, where God purposed that his children should be brought, and made to enjoy these divine favors. And now, in the manifestation and unfolding of the eternal purpose, we receive grace for, or because of, the grace that was eternally bestowed on Christ. No one for whom grace was given eternally in Christ, can fail of that grace in time, for He was made not only the receptacle of it, but the dispensator of it as well.

Let it be borne in mind that we do not receive, nor never have received, grace for works — but grace for grace. If one particle of the fullness of Christ was received for works, this text could not be the truth; for it must then read, And of his fullness have we all received, and grace for grace and works combined. But it is not so says Paul, "For if it be of grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then is it no more of grace, otherwise work is no more work." (Romans 11:6) But it is by grace, both our salvation here and hereafter, and everything pertaining to Christ's fullness, to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed.

(The above is an editorial of Elder J. R. Hardy, which appeared in his

Advocate of Truth January 1, 1906 — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

ARCHIE WILLARD MARRINER

We desire to express our love and fellowship for our friend and we truly believe, a brother in the Lord, Archie W. Marriner, who passed away at his home in New Church, Va., in September, 1963. He was born at New Church, Va., October 1, 1884, his parents being William S. Marriner and Margaret L. Marriner. He is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Ruby M. Collins, Snow Hill, Md., and Mrs. Doris M. Young, New Church, Va. Also four grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

He was not a member of the visible church but was a lover of the truth, and a faithful, loyal friend. In him was manifested the love and devotion to a sovereign God of all grace and mercy that is characteristic of the experimental regeneration of the Lord's people.

Those who knew him in the faith and belief loved him, and he was devoted to those who loved the doctrine of God our Saviour. We knew no one who suffered as much with such a degree of patience and forebearance. He was a man acquainted with grief and sorrow, but with all, he still was enabled to smile and say, "The Lord has been good to me, of which I feel so unworthy."

While visiting with him the night before he passed, he kept repeating, though so very weak his voice hardly audible, "I see a field and they keep coming over it — they are scattered and few but they will all be there that he died for." What a lovely experience for one to witness, with such a sweet and lovely countenance on his face as he tried to talk. We shall long remember our dear departed friend in Christ.

Written by,
Evelyn Davis

DEACON JOE E. CRAFT

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints." (Psa. 116:15)

The above quotation is a fitting benediction for our beloved Brother and Deacon, Joe E. Craft, who peacefully fell asleep in Jesus March 10, 1963, at the age of eighty-three years.

Deacon Craft was born August 10, 1879, in Wilson County, N. C., and was thrice married: Firstly, to Jenny Rodgers, to which union were born six children, Raymond P., Rural E., Burton, Ethel, Virginia and Mabel; secondly, to Rosa Wheeler, by which marriage were born two children, namely Douglas and Ida Rose. His third marriage was to Mary Speight who, together with all his children, survives.

Brother Craft united with the White Oak Primitive Baptist Church at Saratoga, N. C., in the year 1933. His meek disposition and sound judgment soon found their way into the hearts of his brethren who set him apart to the deaconship of his church. His gift in discipline and faithfulness was acknowledged by all with whom he associated.

The funeral service for Brother Craft was conducted by his pastor, Elder A. P. Mewborn, and the writer. His interment was in the family plot near his home.

Elder W. E. Turner

BROTHER OREN WREN HALES

"By grace are ye saved through faith." (Eph. 2:8)

The above quotation expresses fitting words as a last tribute to our beloved Brother, Oren Wren Hales, who fell peacefully asleep in Jesus on July 9, 1963.

Brother Hales was born April 15, 1897 in Nash County, N. C., and was married to Julia Hilliard June 10, 1917. To this union were born two children, Roxanna H. Lancaster and Charles W. Hales.

On the second Sunday in June, 1937, Brother Hale was baptized into the fellowship of Healthy Plains Primitive Baptist Church. He served this church as Clerk. His amiable disposition won for Brother Hales a host of friends who join with his family in mourning his loss. He was ever faithful in visiting the sick and attended with regularity his church services.

At the time of his death Brother Hale had been a resident of Wilson, N. C. for many years.

The funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Elder C. N. Bunn, and the writer. All visiting ministers present were asked to express their heartfelt sympathy.

Interment was in the family plot at Middlesex, N. C.

Elder W. E. Turner

GEORGE B. GENTHER

Our well known and much loved friend George B. Genther, of Hopewell, N. J., passed away March 17, 1963, and we bow in humble submission to the will of our God, believing that he had spent his appointed time here on these mortal shores.

He was born August 8, 1896, and his parents were the late Henry E. and Sadie B. Genther. He was married on October 4, 1922 to Alma Hixson, who survives. The writer knew him well, having spent many days and nights in his home and knows of no one who was more anxious to help someone in time of need. He was a trustee of the Old School Baptist Church in Hopewell, N. J. for many years, and, though not a member, was always ready to do anything he could for the welfare of the Church. He had many friends in Hopewell and elsewhere in whose minds will linger his kindness for many years to come.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder John D. Wood, of Manassas, Va., on March 20, 1963, and he was laid to rest in the Old School Baptist Cemetery in Hopewell, N. J.

May it please the Lord to reconcile his widow and his many friends who knew him so well to feel that their loss is his eternal gain, is the humble prayer of the writer.

Arthur R. Warren

ALBERT LEE GUTHRIE

It is with a sorrowful heart that I write of the sudden passing of my dear husband. On June 11, 1962, our Heavenly Father called from us our beloved husband, father and grandfather, Albert Lee Guthrie. He was born August 11, 1887, in Floyd County, Virginia, and moved with his parents to Montgomery County at the age of fifteen, and worked on a farm until our marriage April 17, 1912. We moved to Salem, Virginia, in November of that year, where we spent the remainder of our fifty years of happy married life.

To this union six children were born: our first boy, Willard Erskine, was born August 8, 1915, and passed away September 28, 1921, with typhoid fever. He was a darling child. Surviving are his wife, Annie Howell Guthrie; and the following children: Mrs. Myrtle Rhodes, George B. Guthrie, and Wilfred A. Guthrie, of Roanoke; Mrs. Dorothy I. Jones and Darius T. Guthrie, Salem, Va.; and twelve grandchildren. Surviving also are the following brothers and sisters. William N. Guthrie, Sibert M. Guthrie, Mrs. Beulah Reynolds, and Mrs. Carrie Hill, of Salem; and Wiley L. Guthrie, of Roanoke.

The good Lord had given him a sweet hope in the Primitive Baptist faith, and at God's appointed time he asked for a home with them, and was received into the church at Roanoke, Virginia the third Sunday in July, 1961, and was baptized by Elder Cecil E. Turner the fifth Sunday of that month. God only knows the happiness we shared. He believed in a God of all power in heaven and earth, and not in the works of men. He was a true, faithful and devoted husband; a loyal friend and neighbor willing to lend a helping hand where help was needed.

Funeral services were conducted at Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Cecil E. Turner and Elder David V. Spangler; and he was laid to rest in East Hill Cemetery, Salem, Va., under a huge mound of flowers: which showed the high esteem in which he was held. The last sermon he heard shortly before passing, was by Elder David B. Spangler, at the Roanoke Church; and on the way home he remarked what a wonderful sermon it was; with which I agreed.

Two loving souls have winged their way
To life in blessed glory:
There to praise instead of pray,
There to live the blessed story.

Written by a sad hearted wife, mother and grandmother.

Annie H. Guthrie

SMITHY FULGHUM

Sister Smithy Fulghum departed from this life December 11, 1962. She was born in Wilson County, North Carolina, June 25, 1901. Her stay here in this life was 61 years.

She was the daughter of Dempsey and Watie Coleman and was married to Kenneth Fulghum December 1, 1923. Three children were born to this union, Mildred, Jane, and Kenneth Daniel Fulghum.

Sister Fulghum united with the church at Healthy Plains in September of 1913.

She was a faithful God-fearing Sister, believing in the glorious hope of that eternal life with her Lord.

Funeral services were held at Healthy Plains Church by Elder W. J. Berry.

Cleveland Coleman, Clerk

MARY JANE WILKERSON

Sister Mary Jane Wilkerson passed away June 8, 1963. She was born in Wilson County, North Carolina, August 6, 1873. Death came to her in her 89th year.

She was the daughter of Monroe and Jenny Boykin and was married to Richard Fulghum December 20, 1893. Born to this union were five children, Myrtie, Carl, Claude, Monroe, and Pattie. Her husband passed away February 4, 1907. Her second marriage was to Henry R. Wilkerson.

Sister Wilkerson united with the church at Healthy Plains in June of 1910.

As her health permitted she was a faithful member, believing in the glorious hope of that eternal life with her Lord.

Funeral Services were conducted by Elder W. E. Turner, Mr. Wallace, and Mr. Wilkerson.

Cleveland Coleman, Clerk

ELVIS E. ANDERSON

Mr. Anderson was a life time citizen of the Downsville Area of Union Parish, Lousiana, being born in this area in July, 1874; and passed away at his home March 1, 1964.

He is survived by his widow, Sister Beula Calk Anderson; six sons: Berton, Ackerman, Miss.; Jessie, Bownesville; George, Texarkana, Texas; Jack, Thomasville, Ga.; Curtis, Baton Rouge, La.; and Paul, of Dallas, Texas. Surviving also are a sister, Mrs. Pearl Dobkins, Ft. Worth, Texas; and fifteen grandchildren and six great grandchildren, and other relatives, and many friends.

He was not a member of the Primitive Baptist faith, but he gave many evidences in his regular attendance with Sister Anderson and his family, and in his conversations, that he loved and believed the doctrine of God's sovereign and saving grace. He related many experimental things which were convincing that he loved the gospel of God our Saviour; and this being true, we would comfort his sadly bereaved family for he is much better off, and is through with the pains, troubles and sufferings he went through while here.

He was a Spanish-American soldier, and in his declining days spent quite some time in a Veterans Hospital. He passed away at his home, and was buried at Mt. Nebo Cemetery, after his funeral at the Mt. Nebo Methodist Church, conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder J. L. Smith, in the presence of a very large congregation, and many beautiful flowers.

May God bless and comfort each of you. He is better off; his spirit has gone to God who gave it, and his body is awaiting the glorious resurrection. Your unworthy brother in hope of mercy, grace, and salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord.

R. W. Rhodes

EARL WILLIAMS

Mr. Earl Williams was a life long resident of near Farmerville, Louisiana, and was well known and loved by the brethren and sisters of the Primitive Baptists and many others of this vicinity. He was a regular and loving attendant of Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church, and it was evident that he was a devoted believer of the doctrine. He was very kind and liberal in his assistance, which showed that he loved the church and the brethren.

This dear brother in the Spirit passed away suddenly March 31, 1963, with an heart attack while at the Norris Clinic. He leaves his devoted wife, Mrs. Lois Williams, and his mother, Mrs. Joe Williams, of near Farmerville; one brother, Nash Williams, and two sisters, Mrs. Jurd Osborn, Bishop, Texas, and Mrs. Jessie Brantley, of Farmerville; and other relatives and many friends, to mourn his passing.

The writer and Elders J. L. Smith and W. W. Hudson were in charge of the funeral at Liberty Hill Church, in the presence of a large congregation and many beautiful flowers.

I desire to comfort his wife and mother, and all others who mourn. I feel that his God given love and devotion to the doctrine of God our Saviour, makes it evident that he is much better off, and we feel that he died in the Lord; and is far beyond any suffering or pain; and is waiting the glorious resurrection, where all will be love, joy and peace forever. May God bless and comfort each of you.

R. W. Rhodes

SISTER MITTIE (SPELLS) TAYLOR

Sister Taylor was born in Union County, Arkansas, near El Dorado, November 14, 1884; and died July 15, 1963. She was united in marriage to Martin L. Taylor November 10, 1899; and to this union six children were born: Mrs. Herman Cogdill, Pollack, Louisiana; Mrs. Mrs. R. E. McPherson, Madera, California; Mrs. Dave Dogwell, Denver, Colorado; Martin N. Taylor, Panama, Florida; Norman L. Taylor, Strong, Arkansas; and Elder W. W. Taylor, Dallas, Texas.

She and Dad lived most of their lives in Arkansas; and Dad passed away March 2, 1953. She joined the Old Baptist Church at Tinsman, Arkansas, in 1941, and was baptized by her son, Elder W. W. Taylor. She later moved to El Dorado, and placed her membership with the old Good Hope Church; where she was Clerk for several years, until her health failed her. She was in very poor health for two years before she passed away.

Many of the Elders visited her often, especially Elder Rhodes and Elder Hudson, her pastor, who had to travel many miles to see her. She loved the church and what it stood for; and was faithful in her belief until the end. We miss her and Dad greatly, but try to be submissive to God's will; for He is too kind to be cruel and to wise to make a mistake.

She was laid to rest in the old Good Hope Church Yard, to await the resurrection. Her funeral was conducted by Elder E. J. Lambert, Elder R. W. Rhodes and Elder W. W. Taylor. She left a written request for my brother, Elder Taylor, to read the 23rd Psalm.

Written by her oldest daughter, who loved her very dearly, and who misses her sweet smiles and kind words so much.

Mrs. R. E. McPherson

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 132 DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1964 NO. 8

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8/64
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE LORD'S DOINGS ARE MARVELOUS

"Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." (Psalm 50:2)

Dear Elder Wood, and Brother in the Household of Faith:

Beloved servant of God, whom He has called, and committed his glorious gospel unto your trust: We feel he has enabled you, and counted you faithful in putting you into the ministry. This we know by faith to be the work of God, when given grace to see; and the perfection of beauty that God has shined, does in a measure elate the soul, and quickens the desire to praise his holy name in spirit and in truth, and to confess that it is all of Him and in Him, that these glorious things are made manifest to poor, lost, helpless creatures.

If it please God, I would pen a few thoughts that so impress my mind, knowing that it is impossible to write as I have been made to see, and hope to feel, if not deceived. For the wonders and the beauty of the perfections of God do so shine forth that my soul is overwhelmed when given the eye of faith to see the work that God has wrought upon and within a poor and affilicted people lost in sin, whom He has ordained to be saved by the sacrifice of His only begotten Son Jesus Christ.

I was privileged to attend the three-days meeting at Prospect Church, at Sims, Texas last weekend, and it seemed that this poor, weak worm of the dust did behold the perfection of beauty in such a measure that my poor soul desired with all that is in me, to magnify His thrice holy, and ever to be adored name: Seeing the people begin to gather, as they would meet and clasp the hand in such warmth of love and welcome, or embrace with tears of joy at once again being permitted by God's grace and divine providence, to look upon each other's face, and to behold in their countenance the image of Him who has shed this love abroad in their hearts, to the point of drawing them to this very place, to mingle their praise together unto Him in their conversation, in singing, and in hearing His precious gospel preached by the dear servants, whom He has called and sent to this purpose.

As I behold this, the words above, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined," so abounded in my heart that this poor soul must confess that this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes. But more of the perfection of beauty shined in my heart as the ministering servants from far and near, began to appear in the assembly. Oh! how poor, how weak, how dependent upon the blessed Lord they came forth: nothing, nothing in themselves to give the little ones there who were hungering and thirsting, and looking to the undershepherds for a crumb of comfort, a word of reproof, a word of instruction in the mighty things of God. They, having been taught of the same teacher that schooled the minister, knew that it must come from

God through His servants, if they were to receive it.

In seeing this beauty in His appointed measure, we were made to rejoice: We saw, as it were, this people, a peculiar people so few in number, whom He in his love and mercy had called out of nature's darkness into the light of His dear Son, and made them to hunger and thirst after His righteousness; and by His love caused them to flow together to receive that which he will supply through his servants. Surely they are the servants of God, and just as surely they are the servants of the Church, for the church is the body and Christ is the head. Therefore, to be a true servant of God, he must be a servant of the members of the body. Paul says, "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord: and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." (2 Cor. 4:5)

Surely these God called servants are to be counted worthy of double honor: not honoring them for their own works, but the love of God in the hearts of the saints honor them as the workmanship of God the Creator; and honor the gift that is in them, which is of God. ("But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." 2 Timothy 4:7)

The calling of the members of his flock and the calling of his ministering servants, both are the work of God our Saviour. Therein does the perfection of beauty shine. As said above, the true ministers of His gospel are to be counted worthy of double honor. Oh! how we are made humble, and drawn down at our Saviour's feet, when He blesses his little flock with a true and faithful Pastor to serve the poor and trembling ones. How we desire to praise God for his goodness to the children of men! and to thank our Lord for the precious gift. As we see him go into the sacred place with fear and trembling, to proclaim the truth as God is pleased to give him, we are made to say, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." (Romans 10:15) And when he is filled from the Master's storehouse on high, and given tongue and utterance to speak forth the glad tidings in the power of the Spirit, the hearts that have been prepared by the same Heavenly Master, to receive the good things He has prepared for them, will be lifted in praise to His holy name; and at the same time will melt and flow out in love to the servant. And each heart is ready and willing to give of their temporal things to the utmost to succor his needs. No one is needed to ask for tithes; no one need say, "Pay your pastor", for, as it is said, "every servant is worthy of his hire." When God endows the servant to serve in spirit and in truth, He will also open the hearts of those he serves: even so much as to cause the poor widow to throw in her two mites — her all. Surely, "Out of Zion the perfection of beauty, God hath shined."

We believe that in God's sight each little child of grace is just as worthy of honor as His ministering servants, for we find Paul saying, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the righteous judge shall give me at that day: *And not for me only,* but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Timothy 4:8) And His word testifies that this love dwells in each little child of grace; and we are admonished to esteem others better than ourselves, and to assist the poor and needy: The same unction of love that constrains the heart to assist the pastor, will cause God's elect to spend and be spent for one another.

And in the perfection of beauty which God hath shined, we were made to behold the deacons of the several churches represented there. Adorned by the grace of God, with the qualifications laid down in Holy Writ, they in much humility and love were attentive to the duties that office entails, as they went

about seeing to the material needs of the church. And filled with wisdom and the Holy Ghost, which none but God can give, they are ever ready to withstand those who would come against the true doctrine of our Lord and Saviour; even as did Stephen. We feel that the duties of a deacon are indeed grave; and we feel that as God calls and qualifies his ministers to a certain purpose, he likewise calls and graces certain men with the qualifications as left on record, to perform the duties of deacons. And furthermore, we believe that God calls *every one* of his little ones, and graces them for the very purpose he has fitted them.

As long as each one, minister, deacon, or the least of the flock, are kept in the Spirit of Christ, one will not want to rule over the other; nor would one ever think of lording it over God's heritage, but will all be of one mind and accord, seeking not every man his own, but every man another's wealth; and are in subjection one to another, clothed in humility, and kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; and in honor preferring one another. When it is thus with the dear saints of God, they can say with David, "Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." And they sing in the Spirit

"How sweet how heavenly is the sight,
When those who love the Lord
In one another's peace delight,
And thus fulfill his word."

To this poor one, these are some of the beauties that the Lord our God has shined in Zion, though our expressions are very imperfect; and we are persuaded that they will continue to shine in God's appointed measure, in the little flock, in the ministers, in the deacons, and in the assembling together in the little sanctuaries of God's own right hand planting, as long as time remains.

If not deceived, these thoughts have been written in bonds of love to His holy name, and His redeemed family whoever and wherever they may be, in whatever place, condition, or position He has called and placed them in their sojourn in this life.

One who is unworthy of the least of his mercies, yet whose only hope is in his mercy and free grace . . .

Buena V. Wright,
2713 White Oak Drive,
Houston, Texas 77007

Rt. 1, Box 59A
Spearsville, La.

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Merigold,
Whitefield, Maine

Dear Brother and Sister:

Your letter of December 16th caused my wife and me to rejoice greatly. I trust the Lord was in the matter, or else it would all prove of no avail.

You desire my views on the following scripture: "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." (1 John 2:3-4)

How happy I should be to be able to write to your comfort and instruction, as well as to God's praise and honor. But, alas! I do not possess the pen of a ready writer; though I confess I have for the past several years have had no small desire to communicate with the Lord's dear children in this manner. I have held back, I think, from a sensible realization of my inability to thus express myself as clearly as I might desire, as well as of a great lack of spiritual understanding in the Scriptures.

However, I feel no disposition to offer any excuse to you blessed ones, the request coming from such "salt of the earth" as I deem you two to be, I feel a refusal to endeavor to comply would be downright uncharitable and unkind in me.

Whatever the considered text may teach, of one thing I am fully convinced: it is not Arminian! If so, then I would have to conclude the whole

Bible such; for certainly there can be no discord or contradictions in the blessed Word of God. Where any seeming discrepancy might appear (notice I said seeming), it would be due to a want of understanding in the reader; with no fault whatever in the scriptures. Never!

In order to a proper understanding of any portion of divine testimony, one must be born of God. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14) I observe from your letter a feeling, or fear, within you that you have never been able to obey God, or keep his commandments. On that point, I would encourage you not to be unduly disconcerted. That feeling, dear saints of God, has ever, in a measure more or less, characterized the children of God while here; nor do we find any abatement of the same humbling distinction with the blessed sheep of God, as in sharp contrast to the goats, even in the awful hour of final separation. (Matthew 25:31-46)

The first verse proposed, the 3rd, speaks of our knowing, "Hereby we do know", etc. Do, then, the dear children of God know these things? Our answer must be "Yes", if we stay with God's word. "If we keep his commandments." But do I keep his commandments, is the question, doubtless, that stops the poor child of God stone-still in his tracks, when he has a view of himself as a poor, helpless sinner, feeling his just condemnation; not being able to think one good, sober, wholesome thought, let alone perform one righteous act. Can such a person thus described do these things? Can a poor, fallen sinner lay claim to such high honors?

In answering these two questions, I must, for the moment, state it in a twofold sense: Yes, and No. Let me quickly clarify my meaning, lest I appear to speak in riddles. Yes, if he be in that happy category with the great Apostle Paul: "I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me." (Phil. 4:13) No, it must be when our case is as described by Christ, "For without me ye can do nothing." (John 15:5)

But how, you may desire to know, can this be accomplished? how does the poor sinner do these things? I answer: Love is the one grand requisite; love is the paramount thing; though in such cases, I feel confident that love and faith never work separately, but that they work together — team-work, as it were, hand-in-hand — and that both (with all other things that pertain to life and godliness) are the gifts of God. (2 Peter 1:3)

And how does one obey from the principle of love? Let Paul answer for us: "Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law." (Romans 13:8) Also verse 10, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." How do we love God, and thereby do these things, and assure ourselves? Again we must let the Bible speak, "We love him because he first loved us." (2 John 4:19) There we have it in plain, positive language: God's love the cause, our's the effect of his love upon, or within, us. The love of God's people is a mutual thing; it is reciprocal. We have it from 2nd John 5:1, "And every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him."

Now, we must consider this form of knowledge, not in an absolute but in a relative, or comparative, sense; being therefore nothing more or less than the seeing "through a glass darkly", the "knowing in part" spoken of by Paul the Apostle in 1 Cor. 13:12. Paul says this form of knowledge is "now"; but in reference to the future, he says, "Face to face", where there will be no "glass darkly", but where the saints — all of them, including of course Paul, shall "know as they are known". Here I deem it would be unwise to overlook Paul's words nearby, in verses 9 and

10, and I quote them without comment, though by way of emphasis, "For we *know in part,* and we prophesy in part. But when that which is *perfect* is come, then that which is *in part* shall be done away."

Relative or comparative knowledge does not conflict with the Bible doctrine of one's hope while here; the idea of absolute or perfect knowledge, would. The former only is experienced in this life, and ties in without conflict with hope, desire, faith, expectation, trust, confidence, etc. While, if one possessed absolute, or full, or complete, perfect knowledge, there would be no need for any of those blessed items enumerated above. But, no, such is not true; the latter knowledge is not applicable to man in his present, imperfect mode of existence. But the saints of Almighty God without exception, shall possess this knowledge in the fadeless climes of eternal glory.

Though this letter is being swelled to a greater size than prudence might require, I feel I must touch, if but briefly, upon the 2nd verse proposed, the 4th, "He that saith that I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." To me, the obvious import of this language, is to show forth the false, rather than the true professor. It is, I think, the same as if the apostle had said, "He that saith I know him, without the love of God in his heart, is a liar or deceiver, and the truth of God is not in him." In this connection, I think the case of Cain and Abel is quite an apposite one. Here I make a last citation from 1st John 3:11-12, "For this is the message that ye have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of the wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? *Because* his *own* works *were evil,* and his *brother's righteous.*" The difference is sharply drawn here. Why? The points I have emphasized are the keys by which we are to judge the case. A final allusion to these two blood-brothers, so vastly different the one from the other, is the citation from Hebrews 11:4, "By *faith* Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, *by which* he obtained *witness* that he *was righteous.*" etc. So it is most clearly shown that, instead of Abel's offering *making* him righteous, it only served as proof that he *was* such. The same rule will always apply to you, dear children of God.

In conclusion, I inserted Hymns numbers 305 and 607 of the Beebe Collection, which show, I think, clearly and implicitly the pros and cons of what I have endeavored to set forth. The first one is by John Newton, and is one of my choicest hymns:

"Great God! from thee there's naught concealed,
Thou seest my inward frame;
To Thee I always stand revealed,
Exactly as I am.

Since I can hardly, therefore, bear
What in myself I see;
How vile and black must I appear,
Most holy God, to thee!

But since my Saviour stands between,
In garments dyed in blood;
'Tis he, instead of me, is seen,
When I approach to God.

Thus, though a sinner, I am safe:
He pleads, before the throne,
His life and death in my behalf,
And calls my sins his own.

What wonderous love, what mysteries,
In this appointment shine;
My breaches of the law are his,
And his obedience mine."

NO. 607 — ISAAC WATTS

Had I the tongues of Greeks and Jews,
And nobler speech than angels use,
If love be absent, I am found
Like tinkling brass, an empty sound.

Were I inspired to preach and tell
All that is done in heaven and hell,
Or could my faith the world remove,
Still I am nothing without love.

Should I distribute all my store
To feed the bowels of the poor,
Or give my body to the flame
To gain a martyr's glorious name:

If love to God and love to men
Be absent, all my hopes are vain;
Nor tongues, nor gifts, nor fiery zeal
The works of love can e'er fulfill."

My wife is staying a short time with our third son, Lyle, and his sweet wife, Charlene, and their new baby, their first one, and I am sure that she joins with me in declaring our steadfast, unshaken love to you, and all those blessed ones in your section; and to all the many loved ones we were blessed to mix and mingle with on our never-to-be-forgotten trip . . . God bless his saints everywhere. Praise be unto his holy name! I trust I am yours to serve in the gospel of Christ, and in hope of the mercies of God.

(Elder) John Lee Smith

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338 McPhail Street
Lebanon, Mo.

Dear Editors of the *Signs:*

It is time for me to pay for the paper another year. I get lots of comfort in reading it, but this one thing I know, I am not worthy of reading the truth it sets forth, for I can see my sinful life. All I can do is to try to ask for mercy to enable me to walk in the straight and narrow way. I know that if I am left to myself, I will do just like David, and maybe worse. But we are not left to keep ourselves — does not the Father keep them that believe on the Son of God?

Could we see our own selves before our eyes were opened? It takes Christ to open the eyes of one that is born blind. I hope the God of all grace has let me hear his voice, saying that he that climbs up some other way is a thief. How I do long to walk in that narrow path! Sometimes I look at myself and ask, "Am I what I profess to be, or am I just a man following for the loaves and fishes, or for popularity's sake?"

You will find enclosed check for $4.00; the extra is for you to use as you see fit. As ever, your brother, I hope, in the determinate counsel of God.

W. W. Kenoly

Rt. 4
Bassett, Virginia

Dear Brother Wood:

It is on my mind so much to write a little of what I hope the dear Lord has done for me, that I can't be satisfied. As I am getting older and my eyes getting dimmer, I feel I want to write while I can see.

When I was just a child I would have thoughts about my soul — would I be saved when I died, or would I be lost; I would wonder if the Lord would save me. I felt so little; I felt just like a dot, but still I was large enough to be lost. I grew up in a large family, but I was the least one, though sometimes the loudest, and was very jolly when I was with my young friends: I was the show-off. Then I began to feel that I was too wild when I was at a party. I liked to dance, and when I would get home I would feel bad, that maybe I was too jolly; and would think that the next time I went, I would do better. But the next time I would do worse. I said that I would just quit going, but my friends would come after me, and off I would go again.

I was married at the age of eighteen, and felt that then I would settle down. My husband and I went to a ball game and a stage dance, and I saw many of my friends on the stage having such a good time. I thought that I would go up and speak to some of them; and when I got on the stage, I felt like I was sinking: I felt so condemned, and looked around to see if any one saw me. I got off of that place, and have never danced any more. My husband and I liked to go to my mother's church, the old Primitive Baptists. I loved to hear them sing, and got so that I didn't like anything else: I didn't like the songs I used to sing; I didn't like the things I used to do; I didn't like the

places I used to go — I wanted to go to church, and wished so much that I could be fit to be one of them; but, Oh, what a sinful child!

I dreamed one night that I was in Roanoke, (I always liked the city of Roanoke), and it was night and the lights were beautiful. I looked a little ways from me, and saw a beautiful table: it was the most beautiful sight I had ever seen. There were about six people around it — the prettiest people I ever saw, and they were all just alike. But one was Jesus, and I knew him from the others. He came near me, and asked me to come and dine with them; but I said that I was too unworthy to dine with such people.

I awoke, and could hardly sleep any more that night for thinking of the dream. I told my husband about it, and wondered what it meant. He said that I should tell it to the church, but I said, "No, its only a dream." But I have never forgotten that dream. I went on for a long time feeling that I was such a sinner. I would like to play my organ, and sing to the top of my voice:

"When thou my righteous judge shall come,
To fetch thy ransomed people home,
Shall I among them stand?
Shall such a worthless worm as I,
Who sometimes am afraid to die,
Be found at thy right hand?"

This hymn was so dear to me. I went on until my family was six, and I was in much trouble, and my burden got so heavy that I wanted to be baptized. One day my baby took sick, and I felt that if I didn't go, I would lose my baby. I knelt beside its bed and tried to pray, and to ask the dear Lord to spare my baby, and that I would try to go that Saturday. The baby got better; and that week I dreamed that I was down at the spring, and saw two pipes hanging down and the clearest water was pouring out of the pipes. One was a little lower than the other; and I thought one was for me, and one for my husband. Something spoke to me, and said, "This is the water of life; take the water of life freely." We both drank, and were satisfied.

When I awoke, I was willing to go and ask for a home with the church, which I did, and was received; then my husband came and was received, and we were baptized the next day. We have been members more than forty years, but I have never been able to live a Christian life as I would like to. If I am one, I must be the very least.

Mrs. J. T. Turner

FEELS UNWORTHY TO OFFER

307 S. Daniel Creek Road
Collinsville, Virginia

Dear Friends Over the Country:

I am supposed to be ironing, but as I look out over this beautiful land which the dear Lord made for us to live in, it seems I can see and feel such wonderful works of His hand. Doesn't it make us rejoice to see the beauty of the sun, moon, and stars? I don't have a single complaint to make against this world our dear Saviour made: its beauties are so wonderful, and with all the fresh air and water we need all the time. The trouble, I feel, is how we abuse all He made for our use while on this earth.

I was in the hospital yesterday waiting on my husband, who was a patient there. Another patient was admitted, and was in my husband's room. This patient was in an oxygen tent; and one of his relatives remarked that those things had saved many a life . . . and I said that when the Lord calls, none can stay his hand.

In November, 1949, our floor lady was taken away. We all dearly loved her; and for three days after the funeral I was so burdened that I could hardly work; but felt that the foreman would not let me go. I was told to go to her grave, and someone would meet me there. I wondered and wondered who it could be. I didn't feel to tell anyone about my feelings. But since then I feel I know who would have met me: it was my Lord and Saviour; who I hope is mine. I have regretted much that I did

not go. After the three days it all left, and I have wondered what this could have been.

Our children are all married and gone from home, and with my husband working and gone much of the time, I am left alone in the flesh, but not in spirit. I feel the presence of my Saviour, if I am not deceived. I have never felt worthy to offer to the church, but feel a part of it, somehow. When at the throne of grace, please remember a sinner.

Edith Brooks

NOTES OF A SERMON BY ELDER LEFFERTS AT THE BROAD RUN MEETINGHOUSE, JULY 2, 1933

(Taken by Sister Grace Aston)

"Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Romans (5:20)

Grace abounded! Where? Just in the same place that sin abounded, not somewhere else. Verse 19 tells us, "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Why did Paul say MANY were made sinners, instead of ALL? because it is the same many that shall be made righteous which were under consideration. The one man who was disobedient was Adam, the one who was obedient, the Lord Jesus Christ. Adam was created sinless, and lived in a beautiful paradise. God gave him a law, but Adam broke it, and so lost his paradise. This was no surprise to Adam's Maker. God did not have to change his plan because Adam transgressed, for he knew Adam would do so, and had provided for the salvation of the elect of Adam's posterity. Jesus stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, which was before Adam was created. Although the fall of man was in God's purpose, man is the sinner, and the child of God cannot hide behind predestination as the cause of his sin. Some have sought to prove Cain a child of God, but Cain said after he had killed his brother, "My punishment is greater than I can bear." He thought he was getting more than he deserved, but God's children know that they deserve the pains of hell. When David's sin was discovered to him, he said, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned."

There is such a thing as embracing predestination with the natural understanding without being a partaker of God's grace; but such an understanding is but to allow one to live as one lists. The believer is dead to sin by the dead body of Christ, so how can he live any longer therein? It is true that we do sin, our nature is not changed, but another mind is given us, warring against the old man of sin. The Scripture says, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." But living in sin is very different from being plagued with it. When God spoke to Adam of his transgression, he said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat." Eve said, "The serpent beguiled me and I did eat." Not much repentance there! They had made themselves aprons of fig leaves sewn together to hide their nakedness, but before they transgressed they knew nothing about nakedness. How foolish to think such a garment could hide them: but see the goodness of God: he made coats of skins and clothed them. This meant the shedding of blood, life to be laid down; for "without the shedding of blood there is no remission."

What is grace? We have often heard it said that it is the free unmerited favour of God: but it is much more than that. If a tramp should come to our door, asking for something to eat, there would be no reason why we should give to him. We might give to him, but that would not be grace, but kindness: but should the tramp beat us and ill-treat us, and then we rise up and set a meal before him, that would be gracious, so it is with God's favour. Not only is there no reason, no merit in us, why God should be gracious unto

us, but there is every reason why he should not. Not only is there NO merit, but POSITIVE DEMERIT. Grace did not merely abound where sin abounded. Man lost his EARTHLY paradise through transgression, and had grace only abounded where sin abounded, man would only have been placed from whence he fell, so would still be where he could fall again, but grace much more abounds and places the elect of God beyond the reach of sin, and into the presence of God, to go no more out. This grace abounds unto us through the suffering life and death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Going back to Adam, we find that God told him that because of his transgression, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake." When we view the sufferings of the Son of God, how much more did grace abound than the guilt and consequence of man's sin! Jesus was made a curse for us, for "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Galatians 3:13. Though he knew no sin, yet our sins were imputed unto him, and as such (with all reverence we say it) in the sight of God, Jesus became an "accursed thing." In an agony Jesus cried out, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Some say that God did not really forsake him, that Jesus only felt forsaken; but, for one awful moment, God really did turn his face from him, for Jesus had to endure the hell due to his people, banishment from God, the just desert of their sins. God told Adam, "In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life." Jesus was a "Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

The Scriptures tell us "His visage was so marred more than any man," and that "When we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him." We esteemed him stricken, smitten of God, when all the while he was smitten FOR US. "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee." When Jesus was delivered to be crucified, they platted a crown of thorns and put it upon his head: oh, what thorns! they also smote him on the head. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground," and Jesus, in the garden of Gethsemane, was in such agony for sinners that his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling on the ground. "For dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return."

You may say, but Jesus' body did not turn to dust. Let us turn to Psalm 22. This Psalm is testifying to the sufferings of Jesus, and verse 15 says, "Thou hast brought me into the DUST OF DEATH." Those of us who in days gone by went a long way at a funeral with horses in hot dry weather, will remember how we would be covered with dust. It was in our eyes, in our nostrils, in our mouths, and we were covered in it from head to foot. This is NOTHING compared to the dust of death into which Jesus was brought. Wretches who, but for the suffering and death of Jesus, would have been doomed to eternal torment, were the cause of his suffering, dead in sin, and Jesus was brought into this very dust of death. While the book of Genesis records the beginning of things, Revelation closes the sacred canon with the final consummation of things. Many things in Genesis, the first book, are verified and rounded out in Revelation, the last book; and Revelation closes with this awful warning, "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life." God verily told Adam that in the day that he ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he should surely die. Salvation, or our having a part in writing our names in the book of life, is not a co-partnership work between the sinner and God. The sinner has no part in it. He is the blessed recipient of it, but has no part at all

in its accomplishment. Had Adam and Eve held to the command as God gave it, they might have saved paradise for themselves and so have avoided death, and so have had a part in the book of life, but they lost it, so that salvation is wholly of grace. Our federal head having anything to do with our salvation is blotted out. I would impress on your minds these two words, "MUCH MORE." Man's sin brought the loss of an earthly paradise, but this grace "much more" abounds, in that God will bring us into his presence with joy, placing us where we CANNOT lose it.

This sermon was followed by the observance of the Lord's Supper. How fitting! It was as the setting to a precious stone. As never before did one ENTER IN to this ordinance, one's feelings being that of mingled shame, sacred sorrow, and a holy quiet joy.

Grace Aston

THE WRITERS TELL HER TRAVELS

R. F. D. 1, Box 92,
Marryville, La. 70653

Dear Editors:

I am sending check for $5.00 to renew the *Signs* for two years. We do enjoy reading them so much, and have been a subscriber for several years, and my parents were for years; as were my grandparents.

We enjoy the *Editorials* and *Voices of the Past,* and also the experiences. The writers can tell my travels better than I can. Oh! if I could only pen some of the wonderful things I've been through, it seems it would help my feelings so much. But I realize that unless the help comes from the Higher Power, its worth nothing; for in me dwells no good thing — all must be by the giver of all perfect gifts; by him who has power both in heaven and in earth. Man is nothing and less than nothing within himself.

God gave his only begotten Son to save such sinners as you and me: He suffered, bled, and died to cleanse us from all our sins; that is, if I am among the chosen from the foundation of the world. And, if I be one of the dear children of God, it is not for something I have done. It is of His choice and no other way.

When at the throne of grace, if not asking too much, please remember me, one of the least, if one at all.

Mrs. J. L. Marze

Star Route, Box 70,
Poca, W. Va.

Dear Editors:

Am enclosing check for $5.00 for another two years' subscription to the dear old *Signs.* I wouldn't want to be without it.

I love all the reading, and especially liked the Editorial in the January issue, *"Charity is the Greatest",* by Elder Lambert. I wish I could express how I feel about all the Elder's writings, for I enjoy them all.

I wish I could meet all of you in person, and hear you talk. I hope all of you have many years to publish the good word.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. Anthony McClanahan

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The **Smith River Primitive Baptist Association** is appointed to be held at Long Branch Church, the Lord willing, Friday, Saturday and first Sunday in September. (September 4, 5, and 6.) The church is located on Route 40, about ten miles West of Ferrum, Virginia.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Amos I. Hash, Clerk

THE SKEWARKEY UNION MEETING

The next session of the **Skewarkey Union** is appointed to be held with the Bear Grass Church, in Bear Grass, Martin County, N. C., the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in August, 1964. Elder C. E. Harrison was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder I. S. Connor, alternate.

We invite brethren and friends to visit with us.

Elmer Peele, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Williamston, N. C.

LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The **Lexington-Roxbury Association** is to be held in the Holcottville Meeting House the 16th and 17th of September (Wednesday and Thursday), 1964.

All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. Entertainment will be at The Maples, the home of Mr. and Sister James Peet, in Holcott Center, as before. Those coming on Tuesday turn right at the Esso Station as they enter the town of Fleischmanns, N. Y., for Holcott Center. Those coming on Wednesday morning will go directly to the Meeting House in the town of Holcottville.

Prudence O. Hinkley, Church Clerk

MAINE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The **Maine Old School Baptist Association** will be held, the Lord willing, at Whitefield, Maine, September 11, 12, and 13, 1964.

An invitation is extended to those of our faith and order, and interested friends.

Mrs. Sanford S. Bartlett, Clerk

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The **Pigg River District Primitive Baptist Association** will be held, the Lord willing, with the Roanoke Church, Roanoke, Virginia, July 31, August 1 and 2. Services on Friday will be held at the meetinghouse, which is on Burke Street, at the West end of Maiden Lane Avenue, S. W.

On Saturday and Sunday the services will be held at the Church of God State Camp, on Highway 117, opposite the Woodrum Airport. The following are directions to reach the association grounds:

Those coming from the South over Highway 220 will continue on this route through the city, to the junction of the Airport Road, or Highway 118; take this for about two miles to Highway 117, then turn left one mile to a sign pointing to the association grounds.

Those coming from the North over Highway No. 11, before entering the city turn right on Highway 117 for two miles to the sign.

From the West, go through the town of Salem on Main Street for about two and one-half miles, turn left on Highway 117, and go three miles to the sign.

Our correspondents, brethren, and friends, are cordially invited to meet with us. Additional information may be had by calling DI 2-3183, in Roanoke.

John D. Wood, Clerk

Danville, Virginia **August, 1964**

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All letters for this paper should be addressed and remittances made payable

TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va.

EDITORIAL

Dear Brethren;

I have been handed the following list of questions, and I purpose to answer them by way of the editorial page. I wish to call your attention to this fact. My answers may not agree with the

answers of some of our other associates and Editors. What I say in these answers are my own feelings in the matter.

1. Does the Bible teach the Absolute Predestination of all things?

2. Do you subscribe to that doctrine?

3. Do you believe that it does not make any difference whether we do right or wrong?

4. Do you believe that all men in their actions are doing the will of God?

5. Do you believe that God introduced sin into the world?

I am not sure about the motive of my querist, but I will leave that in the hands of the Lord. If his motive is to trick somebody or to cause confusion, I will leave that in the hands of God, believing, as I trust that I do, that God will get praise unto himself.

In the experience of God's children, there are two witnesses as to their standing before God. The first of these witnesses that they see and hear and feel, is their own experience; that which God has wrought in their heart and mind and soul. We might well ask what was the state of their mind before that. What did Paul think about himself when he was persecuting the church of Jesus Christ? Did he acknowledge anybody as his Lord and as his Master? I would to the Lord that I could ask this question of every professor under the sun so that the full import of it would reach their heart. Did Peter acknowledge Jesus as his Master when he refused to feed Gentile sheep? Did he acknowledge that when he denied knowing Him? Did he acknowledge Him when, after his death and burial (and before his resurrection), he went fishing again? Did Jeremiah acknowledge God in his refusing to go preach to Israel? Did Isaiah acknowledge God when he refused to go because of the uncleanness of his lips? Did Jonah acknowledge God when he refused to go to Nineveh and preach to them? No, none of these acknowledged the absolute sovereignty of God until he made them do it. Not that they did because he permitted them to, nor because he let them do it. God made them do what they would not have done otherwise. Now have we had an experience like unto this? If so, we have acknowledged the absolute sovereignty of God.

Did you have any interest in the Bible before this? I am not talking about literature; I am not referring to the acknowledgements of nature to her Creator. I am asking you if you had a saving interest in the Bible as a living testimony of Jesus Christ? **And I am sure that you did not.** How could you, who were dead in sin, have an interest in the Bible as the **living** testimony of Jesus Christ? Until you were made alive you did not have an interest in something that lives. To you the Bible was a book, yes, but not a book showing where salvation was, for before this having been made alive, before this sovereign work of God in your heart and mind and soul, you thought salvation was in your hands. **After** the sovereign God of the universe made himself known to you, **only** then did you go to His Book for instruction and consolation.

Now if you helped him in saving your soul; if any part of that salvation came about by something of yours, then you will find in His Book the testimony befitting Him as a weakling dependent on you doing your part, and YOU as the man or woman that holds the destiny of your own soul as well as the destiny of God. But if He saved you, if He rescued you from the fiery domains of endless hell, without such rescue you would have been lost, **then** you will find in the Bible such a Character described.

Does the Bible teach the Absolute Predestination of all things? Now I am aware of the opinions of many good and honest men. I am not mad at them. I have mixed and mingled with brethren and sisters that do not believe that the Bible teaches this. I am aware that the most of them that do not believe this, do not have any fellowship for me and the doctrine that I advocate. But I want to go on record once again as not having

declared non-fellowship for a child of God just because that they are not able to subscribe to this doctrine. I am also aware of the fact that many of my brethren seem to think that if you believe this, that it does not matter how you live, what you believe, whether you obey or disobey. I have much less use for this than I do the inability of a child of God to believe in **what men call the Absolute Predestination of all things.** To be so blinded as to think that being a so-called Absoluter is all that is necessary to be a sound Old School Baptist, I would like to urge that more people believe that doctrine that do not even mention the name of Jesus Christ in their religion than believe any other tenet of doctrine. The followers of Buddha and Hindu and Mohammed (numbering close to one billion people) profess the eternal fixedness of all events, but none of them believe in Christ. If being an Absoluter is all it takes, **you take it all.**

God does not become a sovereign by something that comes up unlooked for in His governing of the universe. He is not a sovereign by being forced to act. So many acknowledge that he is a sovereign, but the things on which he carries out his sovereignty could have been otherwise. This is begging the issue, and places God in such a ridiculous position that we could not worship him as a Sovereign at all. God is the present Sovereign of His whole creation.

But does the Bible teach it? If there is one instance wherein God surrendered his sovereignty to some created dignitary then I will be first to never refer to the predestination of God — in fact, I will quit the Old School Baptists. But I want it understood that all of his actions of sovereignty are the actions of an independent God; that he does not act in order to salvage something from chaos which his creatures have produced. It does not take the Bible to establish Absolute Predestination. All it takes is any one man or woman. They never, never, never, would relinquish the reins of governing over their own domain. They never would begin something that they did not have it fixed all the way as to how it would come out. I do not say this to hurt anybody's feelings, but a man or woman is not telling the truth when they say that they would do different than this. The whole fabric of human nature does not act that way. There is not a man in the universe that by nature serves in a subordinate position. At least I have not met him, and my Bible does not mention him. Now does God ever become a subordinate position? Does God ever become a secondary actor in **any** event? If so, tell me where, in the Bible, that I will find it? If it is not there, then God is an Absolute Sovereign, doing his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. If there is a passage of scripture that will give the charge of falsehood to what Daniel said about God then God did not purpose all things. But if Daniel could say that God doeth his will, has something come about since that day that will not allow me to say that God does his will now? If so, then the thing that changed the situation from that in Daniel's day to what it is in my day, is the Sovereign of the whole universe and holds the destiny of my soul and God and Christ and the world and the kingdom of heaven in its hands, and the Bible becomes a myth. The experience of this Sovereignty is wrought by a Sovereign, and it carries us to read and search the Scriptures of One who is Sovereign.

"Do you subscribe to this doctrine?" As noted above, the experience of every heaven born soul bends under the sovereign work of God. This lesson is learned in the outset. If I have not learned this lesson, then I have not been taught of God. I have said repeatedly for forty years that my hope here and hereafter is in the sovereign work of God. As to what I understand the term to mean I subscribe wholeheartedly to what it says. But I have not, and I do not purpose doing it at this late date, agreed to subscribe to what men say that it means. It means certain things

to me, but it does not mean to me what it would seem that it means to others. Elder Beebe is given credit for coining the term, but he did not do it. I am not a stickler for the phrase; I seldom use it, and not at all as being necessary to preach the gospel. But I do desire to adhere closely to preaching the sovereignty of God in his relation to all times, events, places, creatures and things.

"Do you believe that it does not make any difference whether we do right or wrong?" While this question is placed before us in an ambiguous form, I will answer it as best I can. If the reader will go back to his file of the Signs for August, 1960, he will see an answer to portions of the question. In the commands of our Lord, in the admonitions of His apostles, there is not any reference made to predestination. To me, it comes down to this: What is the criterion of our obedience, our walk and our talk? When we are impressed to do a thing are we then compelled to get us a prize pole and prize into the purposes of God as to whether we are to obey or not? When we read the Bible, and find the many lovely admonitions given to the church, the man of God, have we got to spend a lot of time wondering whether it is the time to do this or not? If so, then who is our Sovereign? Who is our Guide? Who is our example? I do not know of any phase of falsehood that I have less use for than I do this: It does not make any difference whether we obey or not; it does not alter our standing before God in any way; it does not change our feelings in anyway; we are just as well off when we disobey as when we obey; God is just as well pleased with our disobedience as with our obedience.

This is the most inconsistent thought that has ever come up among men. Several years ago I had an article in the Signs in which I wrote about the work of the ministry in admonition (See Signs for January, 1942). A very precious sister wrote me a strong letter of criticism, rebuking and reproving me for the soft doctrine that I advocated. Imagine that. She did not believe that the minister had any authority to admonish, to reprove, to rebuke, but she really used it on me. In the last forty years I have been the object of more bitter rebukes from those that I labored among because that I contended for admonitions, exhortations, etc., than I have ever had from others because of the extremity of my position about predestination. If our brother has been prompted by the love of God to ask his question, then I would say to him, Do not be misled into thinking that it does not make any difference as to whether we obey or disobey. If is doesn't do any more, it will show whether we love Jesus Christ or not (I John 5:3). The obedience to the command of Jesus Christ comes from being born again, from the love of God being shed abroad in our hearts.

"Do you believe that all men in their actions are doing the will of God." I certainly do not? If so, they are all your brother and your sister (Matt. 12:50). If all men, in their aims and actions and intentions are doing the will of God, then all men, even the devil himself, is the brother and sister of the Lord Jesus Christ, and is ours as truly as they are his. To say that all men are doing the will of God is to make the New Testament the most ungodly and deceiving book that has ever been sent forth. If all men, in their actions, intend to do God's will, why did David say, "Teach me to do thy will?" seeing that all men are doing his will? Further, why did the apostles make such a broad distinction between those doing his will, and those not doing it?

But the question comes up, If God does His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, how can you say that all men are not doing his will. God doing his will, and man doing the will of God is something else. There was not any interest in the will of God when Jonah paid his fare and went to Tarshish. He was doing his will, but did not have any intention of doing God's will. God's will was for

him to go to Nineveh. Jeremiah was not refusing to go preach because of his delight in the will of God. He quit because he got mad, and Jonah also got mad. They did not desire to fulfill His will but to break His will. All of the wicked men in this world are not wicked in their eyes; they do not know God in their wickedness. The will of the Jews and Gentiles, of Pilate and Herod, was not to do the will of God but to thwart his will. The delight of God's spirit led children is to do the will of their Father, but wicked men are not delighted in what they are doing with the thought in their mind of doing God's will.

What will we do with the declaration of Daniel that God doeth His will in heaven and in earth, and the declaration that you have made that wicked men are not doing His will? For me, if the Lord is willing, I am going to rest in it, to rejoice in it. How will you rejoice in it? Because the wicked are the sword of the Lord. A sword does not feel does it? Is the inanimate sword a living object that feels the desire of the wielder? I hope that my handling of these things does not cause antagonism; I would to God that they cause us to answer the questions that I am propounding to you (not from the head with smart and cutting answers, but) from an humble heart, made so by the sovereignty of God. Let me ask again, even at the expense of being called trite, Does the sword have any interest or feeling in what the owner and wielder of the sword is doing? No, we know that it does not. Then why say that wicked men are doing the will of God? The righteous are not used as a sword, indeed not, for they have an interest in what they are being moved to do. It is their delight, but not so with the wicked. The wicked are the sword of the Lord.

Our people here in America (where the most of the controversy among theologians about the predestination of God has taken place) have all had an article of faith that reads about like this: We believe that the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the word of God and the only rule of faith and practice. And yet, when the sentiments that I am writing are read, my name is cast out by a lot of those that have subscribed to their article of faith. The wicked are the sword of the Lord. All of them? Did the prophet say how many of the wicked were included in the sword? No, and neither do I. The wicked are the sword of the Lord, and the Lord wields His sword and accomplishes His will with it. But do you mean that God's children are a part of that sword? Why ask me? Ask God. The writer declared without any reservation that the wicked are the sword of the Lord (Psa. 17:13). Let me say again that the sword is not conscious of doing the will of its wielder. Was Peter conscious of doing the will of Jesus Christ? Was he? No, for he did not know the Man. God does his will in heaven and in earth, in his children with the sword of the Spirit, with others, the wicked sword.

"Do you believe that God introduced sin into the world?" As far as I have read in the Bible, I have not found that sin came by God. I am, I humbly trust, by the grace of God still searching that dear volume, and if I find that God bought sin into the world I will then quit asking him for mercy. I will then quit asking God to have mercy on me a sinner. I will quit my wearisome days and nights because I loathe my sin. By man came sin, and the man or woman, however long and loud that they may sing and shout, that is not willing to stop there, is not reconciled to God's revealed will, but is going about to establish his own. Sin is the act of the creature which God made. Is that not where sin came from? If sin did not come from man, why say that by man came sin? Why?

To our brother, I have endeavored to answer the questions. I do not deceive myself into thinking that I have satisfied all that read this. But I would beg for your patience that I might be found at his feet fully clothed and in my right mind.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

SOME CORRESPONDENCE

The early part of this year, (1938) one of our friends here in Rutherford gave us a pamphlet, entitled "God for Us," to read. The crux of the whole matter as we viewed it was that God had done all he could for us and that the final outcome depended upon the creature's acceptance to make it effective. In returning the pamphlet to our friend we stated frankly that in our opinion it did not set forth the truth. Then ensued the correspondence which follows. In meeting our friend a little latter he apoligized for not having replied to our letter, but said he would do so soon, and that he would cite a number of Scriptures to prove his contention that it was left for the creature to accept the salvation which God proffers to sinners, otherwise they will be lost. We suggested that we would save him the trouble of looking up a lot of Scripture to support his argument, and that all we would require to prove his point would be just ONE single, solitary Scripture from the whole of the Bible that sustained him. This has now been many months ago, and, although he is a Bible student, up to the present time he has not yet produced the ONE Scripture we demanded. Being convinced that he will never be able to do so, since there is no such thing in the Bible, we are passing this correspondence on to our readers in the hope that it will be both interesting and edifying to them.

R. L. D.

THE LETTERS

Dear Mr. Dodson: — Thanks for yours of the 12th, with inclosure "God for Us." Commenting on it you say, "To my understanding it does not set forth the truth. Salvation, from first to last, according to the Bible, as I read it, is of the Lord; therefore it is not left to, nor depends upon, whether the creature accepts or not." If that be the case, you have no responsibility whatever, and if you find yourself in hell after death it will not be your fault, I suppose you would logically argue. I assure you, Mr. Dodson, I am very certain you do not read your Bible right, nor do you give God thanks for his great salvation. Paul, by the Eternal Spirit, defines the gospel in 1 Corinthians xv. 1-8: Christ died for our sins. He was buried. He rose again. He was seen. The Corinthians had heard it from Paul, received it and were saved. (Verses 1, 2.) Also in Romans i. 16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation, *to every one that believeth.*" There is your responsibility and mine. Also see John iii. 36. I sincerely hope you will not be in the class described in 2 Corinthians iv. 3, 4, blinded by the god of this world, even Satan, until it is too late. Please read my wish for you in 2 Corinthians v. 18-21.

Sincerely yours,
A. S. M.

Dear Friend: — Your letter of the 14th instant is before me. Various pressing duties have prevented an earlier acknowledgment. Any sincere discussion of true religion should be based upon the Bible. You should have no objection to our taking the word of God as the man of our counsel and accepting, as final, the divine record of Holy Writ. Presuming you will agree to this, I shall undertake to prove by the Scriptures of eternal truth, not only that my contention that "salvation, from first to last, is of the Lord, and that it is not left to nor depends upon the creature even to accept," is the doctrine of the Bible, but that your doctrine that "salvation depends upon the

act of the creature," or creature works, is absolutely false, and opposed by the Bible.

First, let me say that if Adam, in his upright state, was not able to keep the law and do that which was well-pleasing in the sight of God, it is not reasonable to claim that his posterity, who are steeped in sin and depraved in nature, can rise above their level to meet God any part of the way. Creation, from the highest to the lowest degree, shows conclusively that the higher must condescend to the lower, and not the lower ascend to the higher, only as it may be constrained by a power superior to its own.

May I take you back to Cain, the very first son of Adam, who was a tiller of the soil and brought forth of the fruit thereof an offering to the Lord, which was not acceptable to God, as an example, which holds true throughout the Scripture, that it is not by works of righteousness which we can do, but that it is because of his mercy he saves us. Let me quote the apostle Paul on this point, as found in Romans ix. 15, 16: "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. *So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.*" Please listen to this apostle further: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." — 1 Cor. ii. 14. Come with me back to Romans viii. 5-8. "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death: but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. *So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*" Jesus, the great head of the church, said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." — John iii. 3. Nicodemus marveled at this doctrine, since it forever did away with the chance system, or the creature having any part to perform in the matter, and Jesus continued to emphasize this vital point by saying, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh: and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, *Ye must be born again.* The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." — John iii. 6-8. What power hath puny man to command the winds to blow, or to direct the course they shall take, or where they shall end? As man has absolutely no control over the wind, neither has he any power whatsoever over the Spirit to obtain or retain it.

Again, may I take you to the ninth chapter of Romans, verses eight to thirteen inclusive: "They which are children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son. And not only this: but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even our father Isaac: (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." You will see from this that the election was over and the polls were closed even before the children were born, so they could not have had any part in the matter, and it was to the end and purpose that to him to whom salvation belongeth, which is the Lord, should have all the honor and praise that is due his adorable name. You will gather from what I have said thus far, my conclusion is that if my

soul were sent to hell, God's righteous law would approve it well, but that if I am among the redeemed of the Lord, it is all due to mercy and his grace, which means unmerited favor on my part.

May I also say that I am made to earnestly hope that I do read my Bible aright, since there is often a witness within my own breast, which causes a burning within my heart, giving me the assurance that God is mine, and I am his, and then there is nothing that I can want beside. Contrary to the teaching in the pamphlet which you gave me, and which has brought about this discussion, the title of which is, "God for Us," and which maintains that the creature must accept of God's salvation in order to be saved, the apostle Paul in writing on this matter, from which no doubt the title of the pamphlet was taken, shows as plainly as is possible for language to state just the opposite to what is set forth in said pamphlet. Look at the record as it is found in the eighth chapter of Romans. In the twenty-eighth verse the apostle begins by declaring, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." He then goes on to show that whom God did foreknow, "he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son."

And, moreover, he says, "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." The question is then asked, "What shall we then say to these things?" And the answer that is given is, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" I can assure you, my friend, if God be for us, it matters little about the legions of devils who are seeking to devour our souls, or all mankind, including our own sin of unbelief, it has nothing to do with the matter, for God is above all, and where there is the word of a king, at least Israel's King, there is power, and none shall ever be able to pluck one of the least of the flock out of the hand, or power, of the Shepherd who gave his life for the sheep. Paul carries on this connection about God being for us, by saying, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Read the balance of this chapter and see how secured and safe are those for whom Christ died.

And as to whether all will be saved for whom he came into the world to suffer and redeem, let there be a "Thus saith the Lord:" "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." — Matt. i. 21. "*All that the Father giveth me shall come to me:* and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." — John vi. 37-39. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it thee." — John xv. 16. He came to seek and to save that which was lost, those who were given him by the Father before ever the world was, and he said on leaving this earth in addressing his Father. "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." — John xviii. 4.

I wish to devote some time and space to answering the scriptural references which you cite. In the order you have them, 1 Corinthians xv. 1-8, is the first to engage my thought. You say that "Paul, by the Eternal Spirit, defines the gospel," and that "Christ died for our sins. He was buried. He rose again. He was seen [you do not say by whom], etc." You say that the "Corinthians

had heard it from Paul, received it, and were saved," etc. Let us be more specific. Paul said, "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord," etc. There can be no question but that he is addressing the elect of God, and no others. In writing to Timothy (2 Tim. iii. 16) he says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: *that the man of God may be perfect,* thoroughly furnished unto all good works." You could not rightfully claim that this letter which I am now addressing to you is intended for the thirteen thousands of people there are in Rutherford, assuming that there are that number here. Therefore, the "our sins" for whom Christ died, are those under consideration; no more, and no less. Those by whom he was seen after his (Jesus) resurrection were his disciples, and I hereby challenge you to name one outside of this group and prove it by the Bible. Next, you quote Romans i. 16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation *to every one that believeth.*" The emphasizing here is yours; I wish to emphasize it also. First, I want to remind you that the apostle says the gospel is the power of God, and then I want to ask you, Is there any power in heaven, earth or hell, that can resist the power of God? Further, let me remind you that it is unto salvation to every one that believeth. This is quite different from saying that it is to any one who may if they will believe.

God's word does not leave us to guess or in ignorance as to how one believes. If you will accept the word of Jesus for it, he said, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." — John vi. 29. You say that the responsibility for believing is mine and yours, and then refer to John iii. 36, which reads as follows: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." Are you so blind that you cannot see there are no conditions there? It says, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." He already has everlasting life and this is why he believes. In Acts xiii. 45, we find it declared, "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." God alone could ordain them to eternal life, and should the whole world join you in telling me that they will not believe, when God says they shall, I would not believe you. The psalmist said, if I remember correctly, "Let God be true, and every man a liar."

Next, you say you "sincerely hope I will not be in the class described in 2 Corinthians iv. 3, 4, which I will here quote: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." It is considerate of you to feel this way toward me, and I wish to assure you that I feel the same way toward you, but taking the scriptural method of deciding the matter, I am compelled to decide against you, since the Bible rule is to judge the tree by the fruit it bears, and you are not bearing spiritual fruit in the testimony which you have made. I must conclude according to the evidence in the case that you are among that number to whom the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is hid.

Finally, you ask that I read your wish concerning me, which will be found in 2 Corinthians v. 18-21. May I again remind you that the apostle is not writing to the whole world, but to the church and the saints of God. Paul in this portion of the word speaks of the servants of God as being "ambassadors for Christ." An ambassador speaks with authority only as he utters that which

he has been commanded by the Government, or power, which he represents. God's ministers must of necessity be called and qualified by him, for how can a man preach except he be sent? and as Jesus commanded Peter after he was converted from the error of his way, the belief that he could stand in his own strength and go with his Master into prison, death, etc., and having experienced his utter weakness in even cursing and swearing that he never knew his Lord, then realizing that the compassion of Jesus never fails, he was prepared to do as he was told, to feed the lambs and the sheep of God's fold. I am afraid that you need considerable sifting. God is able to consume the dross in you if you are a chosen vessel of mercy. I repeat what I said to you in person this morning, that preaching is for the purpose of feeding the living sheep; they cannot thrive on anything short of that which proceeds from the very throne of God, therefore he must fill the mouths of his servants who proclaim glad tidings to the poor and needy.

The chance system absolutely will not work, my friend. It failed in the case of the man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. Both the Levite and the priest came that way by chance, but neither of them administered to the poor man's needs. It took the Good Samaritan, as he journeyed, or came that way on purpose, to do that which was so much needed, and neither was anything from any other source whatever required. Not only did he have everything that was necessary done for him, but he was not left to even walk in his own strength, but the means of his transportation to the inn was supplied and every bit of the cost was paid by the Good Samaritan. This illustrates what I mean when I say, Salvation is of the Lord. It was perhaps more pointedly portrayed by Jonah when he was in the fish's belly, beyond even the sight of mortal man, to say nothing of his reach. It was when in the place where he was cut off from all communication with human endeavor that he was taught of a truth that salvation is of the Lord, and he declared it in no uncertain terms. This is God's school, and not man's. Paul's language to the church at Ephesus is as follows: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." — Eph. ii. 8, 9. And in Romans xi. 5, 6, he says, "Even so then at this present time also there is remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." You must get off the fence, or out of the middle of the road. It is one or the other, and not a combination of the two. Oil will not mix with water.

You said to me this morning that if your letter seemed to be couched in strong language, or words to that effect, it was meant for my good, and may I likewise reply in a similar strain by saying that if my sword seems sharp and penetrating to you, believe me when I say that it is because I feel I have been called in defense of the truth, which I have no desire whatever to compromise. May the Lord enlighten the eyes of your understanding, if it be his will, and may we both desire to preserve and not destroy that which is truth.

Sincerely yours,
R. L. D.

(The above was written by Elder R. L. Dodson and published in the August, 1938, *Signs*. It impressed us so much as being a faithful presentation of the subject, we felt it belonged under "Voices of the Past", for our readers to know our endorsement. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

DOTTIE B. ANDERSON

At the request of Hopeland Primitive Baptist Church, Whitakers, N. C., I attempt to write the obituary of our beloved sister in the Lord, Mrs. Dottie Bell Anderson; 78 years of age. She was the widow of Mr. S. T. Ander-

son, who preceded her in death a few years ago. She passed away June 21, 1963, and her funeral was held at the Whitakers Funeral Chapel on Sunday by the writer and another minister whose name I do not remember, and she was laid to rest in Pine View Cemetery, Rocky Mount, N. C.

Sister Anderson united with Hopeland Church in 1939 or 1940. She was a faithful and devoted member until death. She was a loving and devoted wife and mother. Surviving are five sons: R. C., of Rocky Mount; E. J. and D. O., of Endfield, N. C.; O. L., of Scotland Neck, N. C.; and W. D., of Newport News, Va.; and three daughters: Mrs. George Robinson, Warrenton, N. C.; Mrs. Trueblood, Goldsboro, N. C.; and Mrs. Gordon Campbell, Newport News. Surviving also are two brothers and two sisters: J. W. Bell, Spartonsburg, S. C.; Dr. John Bell, Elizabeth City, N. C.; Mrs. Walker Johnson, Richmond, Va.; and Mrs. Sallie Crutchin, of Whitakers; and twenty-two grandchildren.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we the church at Hopeland, bow in humble submission to Him who doeth all things well. That the church has lost a devoted and loving sister in Christ, and the family a devoted and loving mother. May the Lord comfort the family in their bereavement, that they may remember that the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

It is the request of the church that this notice be published in the *Signs of the Times*, and that a copy be spread on the church records, and a copy be sent to the family. Written by

W. B. Barnes, Pastor

SISTER LULA MOORE WHITE

The subject of this notice was born September 18, 1877, the daughter of the late Elder Andrew J. Moore. She was first married to Mr. George W. Price June 12, 1901, and to this union one son and two daughters were born, the son preceded her in death several years ago. The daughters are, Mrs. Margarette Davenport, Whitakers, N. C.; and Mrs. Elizabeth Hines, Roanoke Rapids, N. C. Surviving also are one sister, Mrs. Ruth Stallings, Littleton, N. C.; and one brother, Andrew J. Moore, Jr., of Wilmington, N. C.

In later years Sister White was married to Elder Jarrette White, on September 13, 1928; and she united with Hopeland Primitive Baptist Church in August, 1948, and was baptized by her husband. She remained a faithful and loving member until death. She served as Clerk of Hopeland Church from 1956. She fell asleep the 11th day of February, 1964, making her stay on earth more than 86 years. She was held in the highest esteem by those who knew her; and she leaves a host of brethren, sisters and friends who deeply feel their loss. But our loss is her eternal gain.

THEREFORE, Be it resolved that we, the church at Whitakers, bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, who doeth all things well; and that we pray our Father will comfort and console the troubled hearts and souls of the bereaved family and loved ones; and that this notice be published in the *Signs of the Times;* and that a copy be spread on our church records; and a copy be sent to the family. Written at the request of the church by

Elder W. B. Barnes

BROTHER FRANK SAUNDERS

It has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst our brother in Christ, Frank Saunders, who passed from this world of sorrow and sin, January 11, 1964, making his stay sixty-seven years.

Brother Saunders was a member of the Primitive Baptists for many years. We at Gilliam Church bow in humble submission to the will of our heavenly Father.

He is survived by his wife, Sister Annie Saunders; one son, Otis Saunders; and one brother, George Saunders.

Brother Saunders was partially paralized for about twenty years, yet in all his afflictions, he was blessed to bear them patiently. Like Job, though he had many afflictions and much suffering, he was given faith that he could say, ". . . I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." (Job 19:25-26) I visited Brother Saunders from time to time, but I never heard him complain about his condition. Everything was done for him that earthly hands could do.

May those who mourn his passing be given grace to feel that their loss is his eternal gain.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the *Signs of the Times;* a copy be sent to the family; and one made for our church records.

Approved by the church in their regular conference meeting, February 22, 1964. Written at the request of the church by Wallis A. Smith.

Wallis A. Smith, Moderator
Freeman Somers, Clerk

MRS. REBECCA MARTIN

God in his infinite wisdom, and according to his own righteous purpose, has taken to her

eternal rest, our dearly beloved sister, Mrs. Rebecca Martin, on October 20, 1963. Though she was more than ninety-one years of age, aside from partial blindness, she was blessed with a good memory, and remarkable health until a short time before death.

She united with Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church early in life, and was baptized by her grandfather, Elder William A. Melton, who was at that time pastor of Hopewell Church. Elder Melton died in December, 1903. This dear mother in Israel was the oldest member of our church. She was well grounded in the principles of the doctrine of Christ our Saviour, and was ever faithful to her belief in the Supreme God. who has all power both in heaven and on earth. She put no trust whatsoever in poor, weak, fallen man.

Her funeral was preached by her pastor, Elder J. C. Hammond, assisted by Elder John Smith, at Gaten's Funeral Home, Poca, W. Va., on October 23, 1963.

Survivors are: three daughters, Mrs. Virgel Spears and Mrs. Clennie Trevillion, Poca; and Mrs. Beulah Eastwood, Nitro, W. Va.; two sisters: Mrs. Lucy Lallance, Huntington, W. Va.; and Mrs. Ersa Stuck, Dayton, Ohio; one brother, Albert Burgess, Dayton; and by three grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

Done by order of Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, Charleston, W. Va.

Elder J. C. Hammond, Moderator
Nanna Carney, Clerk

POSEY PICKREL

In memory of Brother Posey Pickrel; born December 5, 1895, and died February 22, 1964. Brother Pickrel joined Springfield Church July 10, 1921. He was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. He enjoyed meeting with the Brethren and talking of the scripture and the goodness of our Lord. We feel our loss of our brother is his eternal gain.

He leaves to mourn their loss his wife, Sister Eva Brown Pickrel; one son, Sammy Pickrel, of Gretna, Virginia; one brother, Turner Pickrel, of Altavista, Virginia; one sister, Mrs. Mattie Kimsey, Danville, Virginia; six grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Our desire is that the Lord of all mercy will reconcile his family and the Church to his holy and righteous will.

His funeral was held at Springfield Church by his Pastor O. K. Tench, and his body laid away in Gretna Burial Park to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour. Written by L. R. Willis.

Done by order of Springfield Church.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. R. Willis, Clerk

MRS. RACHEL L. BECKETT

It has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst a precious sister, Mrs. Rachel L. Beckett. This beloved sister was sound in belief, humble and kind in person, and faithful in attendance when not providentially hindered.

She was born September 14, 1880, and died January 21, 1964, at the age of more than eighty-three years. She is survived by her husband, Johnny R. Beckett; one daughter, Mrs. Myrtle Fizer, Dunbar, W. Va.; and two grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted at Allen and Casdorf Funeral Home, St. Albans, W. Va. by her pastor, Elder J. C. Hammond, assisted by Elder Harvey Bird.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we desire to be enabled by Him to bow in humble submission to His holy will; that a copy of this obituary be sent to the family; a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; and a copy be recorded in our church records.

J. C. Hammond, Moderator
Nanna Carney, Clerk of
Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church,
Charleston 2, W. Va.

MRS. DELIA F. MANNING

Mrs. Delia F. Manning, daughter of the late John and Laura Fulk, was born Sept. 17, 1893 in Pilot Mountain, N. C. and departed this life April 4, 1964 in a Roanoke, Va. hospital. She was united in marriage to Claude S. Manning of Roanoke, Va. on April 11, 1921, who preceded her in death July 16, 1961. To this union were born three daughters and one son who survive; Mrs. Frances Kitts, Roanoke, Va. (with whom Sister Manning made her home). Mrs. Lucille Upshaw, Decatur, Ga.; Mrs. Claudine Owen, Sumpter, S. C. and Harold S. Manning, Roanoke, Va.; six grandchildren; two brothers, E. D. and Sam Fulk, three sisters, Mrs. J. F. Lawson, Mrs. J. R. Bullington, and Mrs. Ed Hill.

Sister Manning joined Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church on June 1, 1930, and was baptized by Elder Randolph Perdue, and she lived a faithful member until her death.

Words will not describe the love and esteem we all had for our precious Sister. Her quiet, humble, sweet manner endeared her to all who knew her. She was such a wonderful mother to her family. She was also a Mother in Israel and a humble follower of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, whom she adored. Her walk and conversation proved how much she loved her church and her pastor.

She suffered much in the past few years but never complained of her condition, always the welfare of her lovely family and her church came before herself. I personally have suffered a great loss as her love and prayers have been such a comfort during many trying times. Surely my life is richer by far for having known her.

Her children will greatly miss her but she has left a beautiful memory and example which is worth far more than anything of this world. May the God of all grace comfort them and reconcile each of them to His will and fill her absence with His presence.

Her beloved pastor Elder Cecil E. Turner conducted the most beautiful and comforting funeral service at Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church, after which she was laid to rest in Evergreen Cemetery beside her husband under a beautiful mound of flowers.

We feel she is now sleeping in the arms of Jesus waiting the resurrection morn when she will be brought forth to join around the throne "Where congregations never break up and Sabbath's never end."

At the request of her daughter, Mrs. Kitts, I have written this memorial of one whose memory will always be cherished in my heart.

(Mrs.) Rlee B. Houchins

ELMO FAUCETTE MASSEY

Brother Massey was born in Orange County, North Carolina, on May 8, 1901, the son of Albert A. Massey and Georgianna Massey. He departed this life on February 22, 1964, at the age fo 62 years, 9 months and 14 days. He was married to Ollie Jane Massey on January 7, 1920. To this union were born three daughters, Mrs. Ann Riley, Mrs. Allene Murray and Mrs. Bertha Fisher; two sons, Albert T. and Dewey F. Massey. Besides his lovely and faithful wife, these sons and daughters, he leaves to mourn his departure 15 grandchildren, 2 sisters, 2 brothers, 2 half-brothers, and 2 half-sisters, together with a host of friends.

Brother Massey joined Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church on the second Sunday in May, 1947. He was greatly gifted in singing, was known and respected far and near, truly a sweet singer in Israel.

He had suffered for several years with a diseased heart and had spent much of his time in bed. It was the privilege of the writer to be by his bedside only three hours before his death. At that time he seemed better, talked freely of the goodness and mercy of God, and was hopeful of getting out again; but had another attack and was gone from this world of suffering, to one where sickness, sorrow and pain will be felt no more.

Brother Massey's funeral was conducted by Elders J. Harvey and Wallace Smith and the writer at Bush Arbor Church. It was very cold, rain and snow had been falling all day, yet the church building was filled to capacity from far and near. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a lovely mound of flowers.

May the blessing of our Heavenly Father be upon his dear wife and children, and to all who mourn his departure.

While his voice will be heard no more on this earth, his memory will live on. He was faithful to his church and to all who called on him for singing at funerals or wherever his service was needed.

Written by one who I hope for Christ's sake loved him, W. C. King.

Read and approved by Bush Arbor Church in her regular conference May 9, 1964.

W. C. King, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

ARCHIE LESTON TURNIDGE

Archie Leston Turnidge, of Weiser, Idaho, was born April 16, 1890, at Moscow, Idaho, and departed this life July 29, 1962. He was the youngest of eight children born to the late Elder and Mrs. James Calvin Turnidge. He came to Weiser at the age of two years with his parents, where he lived the remainder of his life.

On November 7, 1911, he was married to Miss Isabel Wood; and in September, 1922, they were both baptized into the Salem Primitive Baptist Church at Weiser. She preceded him in death December 26, 1958. The baptizing was conducted at a specially called meeting, at which time Elder J. W. Peters, of Riffe, Washington, was present. In August, 1950, Mr. Turnidge was ordained Deacon by Elder R. W. Rhodes — which position he faithfully served until the time of his death. In 1959 he was married to Mrs. Florience Cannon, of Huntington, Oregon.

Survivors include his wife, two sons: Ralph, of Seattle, Wash.; James C., of Spokane, Wash.; one brother: Oliver, of Weiser; five grandchildren, and ten great grandchildren; and also one step grandson.

Funeral services were conducted August 1st at the Northam-Jones Funeral Home, in Weiser. Due to the illness of the pastor, Elder Ernest Attebury, Mr. Wagnon, of the Christian Church, conducted the service. He was laid to rest beside his first wife in the Hillcrest Cemetery to await the resurrection morning. Submitted by his sister-in-law,

Viola Turnidge

JOSEPH COLUMBUS RUDD

BE IT RESOLVED; That we, the Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church, Caswell County, N. C., this 9th day of May, 1964, bow in humble submission to God who is at the helm of all things.

Brother, and uncle, Josie died suddenly at his home December 11, 1963, of a heart attack. A native of Caswell County, he was a retired farmer and was a member of Bush Arbor Church. He was the son of the late John and Mary C. Rudd.

Surviving are his wife Mrs. Edith Robinette Rudd, and four half-sisters Mrs. Gracie Johnson, Hattie Lollar, Noel Carleo and Sister Alice R. Smith, nieces and nephews. His funeral was conducted at Prospect Methodist Church in Yanceyville by his pastor Elder W. C. King and Mr. George Johnson.

He had been blessed to live a full life and an old man. His course is finished and has gone the way of all men. We hope we are both grateful and appreciative for the life God had given to be among us, for the beautiful boxwood in landscaping the church yard when the present building was erected, and the gift to the church at his death.

May God's richest blessings rest with all who mourn his passing. We believe that all the Lord's people could say with Job, chapter 19:25, "For I know that my redeemer liveth and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God," and with David, Psalms 17:15, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness."

One copy be spread on the church records and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of Bush Arbor Church.

Humbly submitted,
Donald E. Smith
W. C. King, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

In loving memory of our highly esteemed Sister Mary Thornton Barefoot. Her kindness and Christian walk will never be forgotten.

She died as she lived, trusting in the Lord, and was so patient and reconciled to the will of her heavenly Father. Sister Mary was born November 15, 1882, and died November 15, 1963. She told her family she would die on her 81st birthday, which she did.

She united with the church at Hickory Grove, in North Carolina, in March, 1911, by experience and baptism and lived as a faithful member as long as she was able to attend. She had been in very poor health for many years, and died in a convalescent home in Dunn, North Carolina.

She was first married to Jonathan Godwin. After his death she married Minson Barefoot. She leaves behind one brother, two sisters and a host of friends to mourn her loss.

Her funeral was conducted at Hatcher, Skinner and Drew Funeral Home by Elder Lester E. Lee, W. D. Godwin and C. W. Kirby. Burial was in Beulah Church Cemetery.

THEREFORE, Be it resolved we bow in humble submission to God's will and we deeply sympathize with the family, and

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be put on our church record; a copy be sent to the family; and a copy to *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference Saturday before the third Sunday in January, 1964.

Committee,
Vara Johnson
Iola Godwin
Georgia Hill, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Whereas it has pleased our Heavenly Father in his divine will to remove from us by death, our dear Brother Zack Thornton, who was born July 20, 1891, and died May 26, 1963.

He united with the church at Hickory Grove in North Carolina by experience and baptism, January, 1911. Those who survive him are his wife, two daughters, several grandchildren, one brother and three sisters.

Brother Thornton's health had permitted him to attend church only a few times in several years.

THEREFORE, Be it resolved that we bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Father's will. We extend to the family our heartfelt sympathy.

His funeral was conducted at Hatcher, Skinner and Drew Funeral Home by Elder Floyd Adams and burial in Sandy Grove Church Cemetery.

RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to *Signs of the Times* for publication; a copy placed on our church records and a copy sent his family. Done by order of the church, Saturday before the third Sunday in January, 1964.

Committee,
Vara Johnson
Iola Godwin
Georgia Hill, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 132 DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1964 NO. 9

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/64
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB
(Zech. 13:7; Rev. 19:7-9)

According to Holy Writ, the Holy Lamb
Did bear the awful stroke
For the elect who were betrothed to Him:
Against whom the sword awoke.

They were redeemed out of every nation
By the Redeemer's blood;
Justified by His imputed righteousness,
And made heirs of God.

And they are joint-heirs with Christ,
As in the Scriptures told;
By adoption, their inheritance is safe,
And it's more precious than gold.

They are kept by the power of God,
Who fills immensity;
Preserved unto the coming of Christ,
And eternal felicity.

There is a remnant on these shores
"That love his appearing,"
And from the signs of the times,
His second advent is nearing.

"And unto them that look for him
Shall he appear the second time
Without sin unto salvation,"
Which is a thing sublime.

Then will they be adorned as a bride,
"For the marriage of the Lamb is come,"
And how they will rejoice to see Him,
Who went to prepare a home!

All of the redeemed will be present
At the marriage supper of the Lamb;
All clothed with the wedding garment,
Being the spiritual seed of Abraham.

They will ascribe their victory to Him,
Who was their Sin-bearer,
For in the victories of the Lamb,
Each will be a sharer.

The nuptial feast of the heavenly King
Will be a spiritual repast,
And the consummate bliss entered into
Will for ever last.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, North Carolina

WILL I BE NEXT?

Oftimes I visit in the house of sorrow, the humble homes of my departed brethren, and I realize that to everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; and I often wonder, Will my time be next?

I cannot speak comforting words as others do, for I am slow of speech and of a stammering tongue; and it seems that all I can say, is, "I'm sorry." And I truly am, for my heart is grieved for those who mourn. I, too, am acquainted with grief. The wound has never healed from the loss of my father: since I was the only child, we were very close.

As I visited in the grief stricken home of our beloved brother, Elmo Massey, I saw faces covered with a veil of tears; and I thought it would be inhuman to ask them not to weep. I oftimes weep with those who weep. Yet, when we feel the presence of the Lord, we glory in tribulations. As I looked upon his body for the last time I felt, Thy sleep be sweet in Jesus. They are going home so fast, will I be next? or do I have a home where I feel they are going? will I follow a brother whose tenor voice was tuned to the songs of Zion; whose faith was anchored in his Lord through the hope that was in his heart; and known by many who knew not his name.

Our brother's face, along with many other precious brethren, shall be seen no more as we are assembled at Bush

Arbor, but there is a precious memory that will live on in our hearts. As humbly as we know how, we accept the working of our Lord, that one generation passes away, and another generation comes. I feel that when my time shall be no more, my seat will be easy to fill, and my face soon forgotten. Right now, I cannot say that I want to die: I do not feel the grace by which to die, but I hope and pray it will be given me at the appointed time for me to go. With all the sorrows, there have been seasons of rejoicing. I feel that life is precious to every living creature — even the birds of the air and the beasts of the field flee for their lives.

If not deceived, when sin revived I could say with one of old, "Come welcome death, I will gladly go with thee." Sometimes my soul feels tired and weary, and I want to rest. I feel that the grave is a sweet resting place, where it will be as one night's peaceful sleep until the coming of our Lord. Some day I will be next to go, and I want the people I love to know that there has been much rejoicing, along with many sorrows in this life; and that the greatest and most precious of my joys have been those I felt the most unworthy of: to be assembled together in love and fellowship with my brethren; and walk together in an humble and peaceful way, I hope in the paths of righteousnes. When the sorrows of this old world shall be no more, may I have a peaceful hour in which to die, looking to Him who made a way, when there was no way.

Clifton Robertson,
Rt. 1,
Reidsville, N. C.

EXPERIENCE

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him: and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life: and the life was the light of men."

"My trials and sorrows, my conflicts and cares,
The spirit of prayer and the answer of prayers
The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will."

The above quotations express very well where I trust my hope of anything in this world or for a world to come has come to be founded.

At the request of Elder Ruston, I have set down for the readers of the **Signs,** what I truly believe has been my experience. All the praise I desire to be given to the Lord as I have been instructed that of myself I can do nothing. Once before an article appeared in the **Signs** over my name. A dear Sister (now deceased) and with whom I frequently corresponded, sent one of my letters (unknown to me) to the Editors and asked them to print it if they felt it was sound. This matter proved to be of considerable concern. It was not that it was anything of mine that I wished to be in the **Signs,** but for the first time really in my life what was written I felt, was of the Lord, and if it did not appear, there was nothing for me here nor hereafter. For that reason, then, thankfulness filled my heart when it appeared in print.

It was my lot to be born at the beginning of the second quarter of this century into a lovely home. Both of my parents were members of the Covenanted Baptist Church, my father being a Deacon (now deceased) and my mother a gracious Sister. This in itself was a great blessing. Never was religion thrust upon us (three boys) so to speak, but we were brought up by kindness, by firmness, by always trying to do what was right, and by a good example. No doubt, if the work of my experience is felt to be of the right source my parents would feel it to be an answer to prayer.

For nearly thirty-five years, it has been my pleasure to sit under the searching ministry of Elder George Ruston, a faithful servant. This I count

another great blessing. So my youth and young manhood ran for twenty-five years and more. Perhaps my life was not given to outward sin as some, but Oh! the sins of my youth. My life seemed to become less than satisfying and though I tried to read some of the Bible daily to satisfy myself, it seemed to no avail. A prayer seemed to be laid on my mind to know "the way, the truth and the life."

Well, do I remember about eleven years ago when a change did come. Then something of the experience of Saul on the Damascus road was felt when he trembling and astonished said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Rest was not to be had anywhere, in my teaching, on my bed, on the street, or in the fields where I used to stroll. The writer had no real sense of what was happening but felt a burden, a burden that sometimes was so heavy that I felt I should lose my mind. Well do I remember when studying a foreign language (always my weakest subject) to finish up my degree, that sometimes the lecturer would be talking, and try as I would I could not follow a thing he was saying, and the whole lesson was seemingly a blank. Studying proved to be the same and yet the results came out fine. For, perhaps the first time, the praise for being fortunate in getting suitable grades was given to the right source.

In retrospect, through all that, I can say now:

"Thy ways, O Lord! with wise design,
Are framed upon thy throne above;
And every dark and bending line
Meets in the centre of thy love." and

"God shall alone the refuge be,
And comfort of my mind;
Too wise to be mistaken, He,
Too good to be unkind."

For nearly two years there seemed to be no rest any place; my health was affected, and yet no ease of the burden was felt. Finally relief came from that terrible distress of mind. For the first time I knew something of what it was like to feel that even the trees were praising him. "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord."

The relief lasted for several weeks and it was wonderful. It was a love above the love of this world and I felt free. Then came more trouble and, as I had not known freedom before, it seemed worse than the previous experience. Certainly I was being weaned from hope in earthly things. Again my health was affected and no real relief could be found. No pleasure yet seemed to be given in the scriptures or hymns. Finally over a year later came the words from the seventh chapter of Romans. "When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." As the meaning of this scripture was made clear, I again saw my righteousness as filthy rags and my nothingness before Him. Then was my very soul made to trust Him. All that I hope to be I owe to Jesus. "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yielded the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

Many times the above scripture or a comparable one was a comfort to me. Things that I seemingly was holding on to for dear life, were in such a state that I was made to know that I could do nothing about them any longer. Then was the writer made to fellowship Paul when he asked the Lord to remove the thorn in the flesh and the answer came to him. "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

Needless to say my health was better, and no more medicine was necessary. Then was comfort found in the scriptures, and much pleasantness in the reading of the hymns. Space would not permit me to tell of all the hymns that were sweet to me, that were my meat

day and night. Through the next few years I was given to read the scriptures and other good things. My way was hedged up and many times was I driven to read. The Bible was read from beginning to end, and as well, I trust I searched the scriptures daily. Well does the writer remember when the scripture in Genesis twenty-two left its impression. "Behold the fire and wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering." The above came to me as a question and the answer did not come for several days. Then came the scripture from St. John 1:29 "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Then I could see that the Old Testament was the New Testament concealed and the New Testament was the Old Testament revealed.

Sometimes I was raised high enough to lisp;

"Far from my thoughts, vain world be gone,
First weaned my soul from earthly things;
Let my religious hours alone;
Fain would my eyes my Saviour see;
I wait a visit, Lord, from thee." and

"I thirst, but not as once I did,
The vain delights of earth to share;
Thy wounds, Emmanuel, all forbid
That I should seek my pleasures there."

"It was the sight of thy dear cross,
First weaned my soul from earthly things;
And taught me to esteem as dross
The mirth of fools and pomp of kings."

Changes seemed to come quickly in my life, at least in my mind, and I was made "to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." In the spring of 1957 the scripture in St. Matthew 11:28-30 came as a comfort and with much sweetness. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." If there is a spark of faith, that faith will be tried and surely it was so with me. My mind would be so troubled that I could fellowship Jesus in the wilderness. Is it not commanding in St. Matthew 4:10 when he said to the devil?, "Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him." What a welcome relief this scripture would give when it came with power.

During this period I was given a desire to cast my lot in with the people of God. For over thirty years it had been my privilege to be among Baptists, but circumstances led me to pray that if these people were not the right people that I would be given to join with the right people: Perhaps this prayer was prompted in some measure by the fact that in those with whom I lived, worked, and associated I could see things so much better than I could see in myself. Yet every time, I was driven to desire to be among Old Baptists and with them I felt a safety and a oneness that they knew the truth.

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love!
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

Sometimes I longed to go to the Church to join up with them, but when the time to go before them came, only trouble was given. I looked and looked and finally gave up looking.

About 1958, the scripture in Peter 1:-Chapter 5:10 came to me. "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, s t a b l i s h, strengthen, settle you." In retrospect, I believe I can see how these things came and worked about in a way that was laid out before me. "And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand and when ye turn to the left." Many times have the words in this scripture from Isaiah 30 come and settled my mind.

We did not have a television at our house until some time after others had

one. However, we did get one when we felt the time was right. Never have I been able to watch it as others. Others have wondered why and so have I. Some three or four years ago I had been watching it some in an evening and always seemed to be torn between reading and viewing. I got up from the T. V. and went to the den. Psalm 128 was read. For me that Psalm has given such sweetness, such comfort, and such guidance and such promise that I trust it was given to me by the Lord. There are better things for a man to do than spend his life too taken up with the passing pleasures of this world. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

And so the years went on until the spring of 1963. Then came a feeling that it was time to ask a name with the church, to go home to my friends and tell them how great things the Lord had done for me. Each time it came to my mind, I wondered if the end would be the same as before, but the answer would come, "You will not stop it this time." And so it proved to be. At our June Quarterly Meeting two years before, Elder Ruston's sermon cut me down, but everything in his Saturday sermon in 1963 seemed to persuade my still wavering mind that this was the right time.

The writer had no emotion when asking a name with the Church in June or at the baptism in August. This was something I had been given to long for and now it was a reality. It was a pleasure for me to have Elder Spangler and Elder Wray at the June meeting. Both of these servants' lives and previous visits had meant much to me. It was a pleasure for me to have a dear one baptized on the same day as I was. That morning the words came from St. Luke with such sweetness as I awakened, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Surely "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it," is a fitting expression for such a time.

Several years ago, when I was seemingly made to stand still as far as accepting any promotion or going on with any studies, the only answer that would come would be from Peter 1:Chapter 5:6 "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."

Such is the way I have been led. All that I am or hope to be in this world or for a world to come I owe to Jesus. In my flesh dwelleth no good thing and I feel to be unworthy of the least of his mercies, yet asking the same.

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again." and

"Thus far my God hath led me on,
And made his truth and mercy known;
My hopes and fears alternate rise,
And comforts mingle with my sighs."

Recently on a Sunday evening just as I was putting the car in the garage the words came to me from St. John 14. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself: that where I am, there ye may be also." Such beauty of language and thought has such a calming effect that all our trials and tossings are laid aside and we are enabled to feast on these good things.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

It has been a pleasure and joy to write of the way I have been led. I trust nothing has been said but what has been given to me. So has run my

course, and so I beg of a people that know the joyful sound to pray for me and mine, a lovely wife and four healthy children.

D. Alex McCall
594 Cayley Drive,
London, Ontario, Canada

Marion, La.

Dear Editors of the *Signs:*

Find enclosed $5.00 to extend our subscription two years. We do not mean to miss one number, if it can be avoided. Except the radio half-hour, the *Signs* is about all the preaching we get, as neither of us is able to go to church often.

When the *Signs* comes, whichever one of us gets it first, reads it through; then the other does the same. Sometimes we feel as if we had been to a service in person. May your good work continue, as it does have the joyful sound, and helps to satisfy the hungry soul.

Yours in hope,
Mrs. H. A. Patterson

---

252 W. Broadway,
Lexington, Ky.

Dear Editors, and Brothers in Christ:

I greet you in bonds of invisible love and gratitude. I have really been blessed by the wonderful messages coming to me so promptly. I eagerly search the paper, and always it soothes and calms my weary heart. It is so good to hear and read the true Primitive back to the Bible experiences of my beloved church.

I am still able to be up and to go to church, and to have a clear mind. On March 10th I will have reached my 84th birthday; and also the reminder of my husband's death. He was buried on my birthday just three years ago. I am still most lonely, and groping for crumbs from my dear Lord's hands. I am glad to tell you that blessed Jesus is ever near me; and Oh! what joy to know He will ever lead me, even when I go through the valley of the shadow of death.

I have dear friends and brothers and sisters in our little church. I often have wished to visit your churches in Virginia, and wish that I might see you in this world, before I depart for my home not made with hands. I met a dear saint, Mrs. Addie Quesinbury, who was visiting her daughter here. She was a real Primitive Baptist, and we sure enjoyed wonderful fellowship while she was here. I hated to see her go back to Virginia.

I do not want to tire you, but I do want you to know that I have not words to thank you for the manna that your paper supplies. After I read it — I mean read it all, I pass it on to our dear pastor, Elder Harter, who supplies our church at present. He was a Methodist who found what he was seeking in the Primitive Baptist Church; and he loves the *Signs of the Times.*

. . . Again I thank you for the paper and for your wonderful work. I need your prayers. Please number me among the throng that loves you.

In hope and love,
Emma H. White

JOHN 3:1-8

A brother desires the explanation of a Scripture. He would like my explanation of the above Scripture through the columns of the *Signs,* and I would that I might be enabled to explain the same in a satisfactory manner.

It appears that Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews and a brother of Josephus referred to in my last writing in the *Signs,* was an eminent man among the Pharisees, that he was a member of the Great Sanhedrin, the supreme court of the Jews. Evidently fearful of incurring the wrath of the inveterate enemies of Christ, he came to Him by night seeking information as to how a man could be born when he was old. Some understand that the term by night

means soul darkness, but I do not so understand it, although from his second question he seems to have been in gross darkness concerning the spiritual birth, regardless of his natural attainments. I am bound to believe that literal darkness is meant, the time from sunset to sunrise. Nicodemus knew that Jesus was a teacher come from God, as stated, because of the many miracles performed by him. However, the generality of the Jews did not believe this, and sought to put Him to death.

Christ impresses upon Nicodemus the necessity of the new birth in order to see the kingdom of God, which "cometh not with observation," and is set up in the hearts of His chosen people as a principle of grace. "Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." (Luke 17:21) It is a spiritual kingdom, a kingdom of grace, and cannot, therefore, be seen with the natural eye. In verse 3, Jesus tells His questioner that, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." — cannot have any true conception of it. And in verse 5 He informs him that "Except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." — into the kingdom of glory beyond the shores of time. I don't believe that water here has any reference to baptismal water, for water baptism is not essential to salvation as the papists and Campbellites would have us believe. It is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, as the Bible plainly declares. (I Peter 3:21) By water baptism one enters into the church militant, but it has no virtue in it as a means of entering to heaven above; it does not give any title to a heavenly mansion. The thief on the cross went to heaven without water baptism, and it is said that Simon Magus, who wanted to buy the power of the Holy Ghost (Acts 8:18-24), went to hell with it.

Water mentioned in the foregoing is apparently used figuratively, even for the Spirit, for in Titus 3:5 we read: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit." We know, of course, that literal water is the medium made use of in washing, in cleansing, and the Spirit cleanses and sanctifies. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you." (Ezekiel 36:25) This refers to regeneration or being born again of the Spirit, to the "renovation of the soul by the Spirit and grace of God."

Again, water may have to do with the water that flowed with the blood from the pierced side of the Redeemer, as He hung upon the tree of the cross to cleanse His people from all sin, and bring in a justifying righteousness as their title to eternal life in the heaven of heavens. As one of our good old songs goes:

"Let the water and the blood
From thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure —
Cleanse me from its guilt and power."

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Like produces like, under different considerations. By the first birth, we are born naturally of the flesh, conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity, with a propensity to sin. We are naturally vile and corrupt, being born of corruptible seed and needing cleansing, which can only be done by the washing of regeneration. Being born of water and of the Spirit, one becomes a spiritual person, a new man spiritually with spiritual tastes, desiring spiritual food; thus he now has two natures, carnal and spiritual, for the old nature is not changed in regeneration, hence the warfare between the Spirit and the flesh. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye

would." (Eph. 5:17) In unregeneracy, man has but one nature — a totally depraved one. And in glory he will have only one, a pure and holy one suited to his blissful abode. He will be like Christ and be satisfied according to Holy Writ. How wonderful it will be to awake in His likeness on the morning of the resurrection and ever be with Him in glory!

"Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." This has reference to those given to Christ in the covenant of grace, and not to every individual of the human race, for all will not be born again. It means that if one is to enter heaven and immortal glory it is absolutely necessary to be born again, and Nicodemus had no conception of what that meant. To him, it was a strange doctrine, but possibly his understanding was later enlightened to apprehend something of the direct and immediate work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration.

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Here something natural is taken to illustrate that which is spiritual, which is frequently done parabolically in the Scriptures of truth. Man has no control over the wind, which is comparable with the Spirit, and he can neither command nor resist the Spirit in regeneration. The Holy Spirit is a free Spirit and is irresistible in His internal operations. "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.' (Psalm 51:12) We cannot, of course, see the wind, but we can feel it and see the effects of it. The Holy Spirit cannot be seen in the process of regeneration, but His operations can be felt in the conscience when "He hath begun a good work in you;" when conviction of sin begins, and later in deliverance therefrom; when pardon is experienced and there is a believing to the saving of the soul. (Heb. 10:39) "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that (faith) not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." (Ephesians 2:8)

This is a time of rejoicing with joy unspeakable. It is a time of love when Christ becomes exceedingly precious to the soul. I once spoke (in a dream) to a Sister in the church about the joys of deliverance, and while speaking to her it seems that I was freely weeping for joy. But O how wretched I have felt to be in dreams and in my waking hours! I am not a stranger to doubts and fears, but I am not without hope, and am "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

What I have written may be taken for what it is worth. I do not claim to be a Scripturist, and my explanation of the Scripture requested by the brother may not be acceptable.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, N. C.

"WE OLDER ONES NEED IT SO MUCH"

828 Belmont Avenue,
Wilson, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

Enclosed you will find check for $10.00 for two years renewal and the other to be used as you desire.

We enjoy so much to read the good writings in the *Signs*, the Lord willing, I hope to be able to read it as long as I live. I am getting along in years, and don't feel that I have too many more days here on earth. But, if I be one of God's children, and I feel to have a blessed hope I am one of his, what is there in this land of sorrow, to want to stay here? I hope to write more regarding my feelings, in the near future.

May you all be blessed with the grace of God to keep on with the good old paper: We older ones need it so much!

In humble hope,
J. B. Barron

HOPES TO BE LIKE HIM

Caledonia, Miss. 39740

Dear Editors:

I enclose money-order for the *Signs* for another year. I had waited, hoping to have a mind to write something about the experiences of my life, or the way it has pleased the Lord to lead me; and to tell some of the great mercies he has bestowed on me, a poor undone sinner.

I feel I know in part of the great fear the apostles felt when the storm arose on the sea, and they awoke Jesus, saying, "Carest not thou that we perish?" And Jesus arose and rebuke the wind, and there was a calm; and He said, "O ye of little faith." Then there was a time he appeared walking on the sea, and He said, "Be not afraid, it is I." Only when He speaks, are we made calm. God appeared to Job out of a whirlwind, and to Moses in a burning bush. When Paul was shipwrecked, an angel stood by, and told him that not one should lose his life; and the record is that they did not.

Have you not, dear way-worn child, come to the place that it seemed all hope had vanished, and that you were doomed to destruction; and that it was justly due you. And all you could say was, "Lord have mercy on me a poor sinner." That is the prayer the publican prayed, and he went down rather justified than the Pharasee, though the Pharasee felt he was so good, and didn't do wrong. There is nothing good I do, or have done, that would indebt God to save me. It is not our righteousness, but the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

Jesus is the good Shepherd, and his sheep hear his voice, and a stranger they will not follow. Jesus told Peter to "feed my sheep, feed my lambs", not to make sheep of goats, but to feed my sheep. And Jesus told Peter that when he was young, he girded himself and went where he would, but when he was old, another girded him and carried him where he would not. I feel I have tasted of some of these things in my journey here. It is "line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little", but it has always been sufficient. I hope someday, if it please the God of heaven to give me a mind, to pen some of the deep and bitter things of my life. I've been given to drink of the cup of gall; and then some of the most powerful and wonderful goodness of God's grace and mercy to one so small and insignificant.

Somewhere in the Bible it is recorded that God said that he that touches Israel, touches the apple of his eye. An eye is a very tender member of your body; and we find that God avenges his church, his body, his bride. I recall in my experience on the "road to Jericho", when I was robbed, beaten, and left for dead, the good Samaritan came along and carried me to the inn, and washed my wounds; and left two pence, and said that what she owes when I come, I will pay. I feel no sinner on earth so great as I: I have not found him or her within the lids of the Holy Bible. What I haven't done, I thought to do it; and I am told in this Book that it's not what goes in that defiles a man, it's what comes out of the evil heart; and our thoughts are evil continually. But God said that he would take away the stoney heart and give a heart of flesh; and that he would write his laws in the heart and put them in the mind; and that man shall not teach his neighbor to know God, for they will all know him from the least to the greatest.

My hope is that God has wrought this work in me, and given me a hope that when I see him, I will see him as he is, and be like him. For he is my refuge and hiding place, and there is no other. We are looking for him one of these days, coming in the clouds with ten thousands of his saints, to catch away his own, to forever be where he is, and be like him.

. . . May He bless the editors, and associate editors of so great a paper as the *Signs of the Times* until time be no

more.

Yours in Christ, if saved,
Minnie Seay

"VANITY OF VANITIES: ALL IS VANITY"

(ECCLESIASTES 1:2)

I am moved to write something on this Scripture, but if the Lord does not direct my thoughts, but little or nothing can come forth from this poor creature, who could well be held to be a true personification of vanity so much of the time.

If we consider first what the general meaning of the word vanity is — "That which is empty or idle, or useless" and search out what the great and wise Solomon referred to in the opening of his sermon (this old testament book) then we begin to get at the "meat" of the matter. Then consider that he says ALL is vanity, not just a part of it. Also consider his qualification for making such a determination — that ALL is vanity. Was he not the wisest of men of all this time world, being next only to God? He wrote this old book after he had lived and ruled forty years over Israel as their King — Chapter 1, verse 12, and after he had "given his heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning ALL THINGS THAT ARE DONE UNDER HEAVEN: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith." He gave his heart to whom? Certainly it was to God who had wrought on him by the Holy Spirit and inclined him thusward. He goes on to say in verse 16, "and have gotten more wisdom THAN ALL THEY THAT HAVE BEEN BEFORE ME IN JERUSALEM."

Does this not mean that he was given more wisdom than all the other Kings before him, including his Father David, — more wisdom than all them put together? He says in Chapter four, verse one, "SO I RETURNED" and again verse eleven, chapter nine, "I RETURNED," etc., yet there is no indication that he had traveled to foreign countries or other distant places. Could it have been that he was lifted up by God into heavenly places where this great wisdom was imparted to him and where he viewed (verse 14, chapter 1) as stated, "I HAVE SEEN ALL THE WORKS THAT ARE DONE UNDER THE SUN," etc. I believe that he saw all the earthly works of mortal man from the beginning to the end of time, and also was shown the works of the Spiritual World to a great extent, so he was wise in both of these "opposites"; and that is why he so said of the earthly works of man, "VANITY OF VANITIES: ALL IS VANITY."

It is very interesting to note the closing verse of Chapter 1 — "For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge, increases sorrow." It seems to me that he was shown very clearly this present era when man has attained to great worldly wisdom and worldly knowledge beyond the comprehension of all but comparatively few persons, and we find we have the most sorrowful and perilous times yet known to mankind. Think upon this and upon the fact that we are being shown many signs and evidences that the end of this time world is drawing near, yet mankind goes madly on with more and more foolish experiments, and says we will soon be placing men on the moon, etc. No wonder Solomon, after viewing all this, was led to write those words: "VANITY OF VANITY: ALL IS VANITY."

I have stated that Solomon's wisdom was second only to God's, and further proof of this is seen in his knowledge as shown in verses 9 and 10 in Chapter 1, as well as verses 14 and 15, Chapter 3. Yet he goes on to prove his right to make such a statement as we have under consideration; and in Chapter 2 he relates of his great wealth and estate and after a seemingly extended period of time of "mirth and pleasure" (verse 1) which was to prove to him-

self whether it was good or bad, he tells in verse 11 on to the end of the Chapter, that he found it "all vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun." This "vexation of spirit" refers to the natural spirit of man to perform works, I believe, and not to the Holy Spirit. Note that in verse 17, he says he hated life because the work (man's work) that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit." And in the next verse, he says "Yea, I hated all my labor which I had taken under the sun: because I leave it unto the man that shall be after me." Then he turns to the Spiritual or "opposite" side of the matter in verses 20 on, showing that it was God's plan that man was to do earthly labor (verse 24) and "eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labor."

In verse 26 he sums up the difference as to the man of God and to the sinner. To the one, the earthly labor necessary for his earthly needs to make his soul enjoy the good of his labor, and nothing more because he can take not one bit of the fruits of his earthly monetary gain with him when he departs this life; and to the other He giveth travail. Verse 13, 1st Chapter, "This sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith." How many do we find today who have amassed great fortunes, who are in sore travail and greatly exercised therewith? How many do we see daily that literally worship their money, and wealth of other types? They live solely for it and labor hard to gain more in their last days.

As to this "vexation of spirit" referred to so many times by the wise Solomon, is it not well to look about and notice that those who follow along closely, or very close to the teachings of the Old Baptists, go about daily telling of their departure from the joys, pleasures, glory, riches and worldly gain, and seek after that which is to endure after this worldly life ends? Are they not, generally speaking, "vexed" when they labor at some kind of work, building or manufacturing something, that will come to naught the moment that the Lord shall appear in the clouds to signal the end of time; which could be on the morrow? Do they not think seriously as did Solomon when he wrote, "Yea, I hated all my labor which I had taken under the sun," etc.

It has been my privilege to travel thruout this country in recent years, thru parts of Canada, down thru the Western states into Old Mexico, and just this year from the West coast to the Eastern coast and South thru many of the states of the deep Southeast and South, and back thru Central States, passing thru many of the areas where great projects of various kinds were under construction. In total, they represented many billions of dollars of expenditure and everywhere there was evidence that many other billions of dollars in projects had recently been completed. I could not help but think on these words of Solomon and of how these great Highways and other things of great cost would be of no value whatever except to mankind for the brief space of time left for this old world. If not mistaken, it was "vexation of spirit" to me.

In closing this, it seems well to refer to beginning of Chapter 9, which shows that Solomon was moved to "declare all this, that the righteous and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of God," etc. Read it carefully, and note verse 5, "For the living know that they shall die, but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward." So we have a "Living" people and a "Dead" people and it would seem that Solomon was given to see both so clearly and he wrote it — declared it — for the Lord's people to guide by in the time to come. The closing words of the old Book are timely — "Let us hear the conclusion of the

whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Yet how far did he stray from this, his own conclusion? It is hard to believe that he was in his latter days, led into idolatry and other sins by his numerous foreign wives and concubines.

This is but a brief summary of all that is contained in Ecclessiastes. I have read it over and over again, many times, and each time I find something timely that was not previously seen.

The May issue of the *Signs* came at a time when it could not have been needed worse. It found me in a dejected and sad state of mind and being, seemingly left alone and on my own weak and trembling worldly legs, as-it-were. After reading the timely writings of others who are scattered about, and the sermons by the Elders and publishers, I was strengthened wonderfully and I hope I am again on "sound ground," and as Elder Ruston, in his Editorial, on page 113 says, firmly resolved against "spending time and strength and money in serving this ungodly world." How ungodly it is now and how fast is it getting worse? I shudder to think of what lies ahead. My faith and hope, tho sadly lacking at times, are the most precious possessions one can have in this cruel, cold and ungodly world. Recently, when meditating on this faith and hope of eternal life, I was pricked with the sudden thought — "What if this faith and hope were taken from me and I was thrown back onto worldly teachings and works that I once followed?" What a sickening feeling for the moment! What a glorious feeling . . . after being assured that no one can rob me of them, and if once the Lord has, thru his Grace, bestowed such upon man, it will never — no never, be taken from him.

May I ask that those of the Household of Faith, please remember this unworthy one when at the throne of Grace.

In hope of that eternal life, tho unworthy I am

Wm. O. Hall
Mount Vernon, Washington
P. O. Box 595,
98273

MUSING ON THE THINGS OF THE KINGDOM

809 Sycamore Street
Mineola, Texas

Dear Elder Spangler:

In a precious hope beyond this world of trouble, trials, and tribulations, I am sitting here alone, and my mind has fallen to musing upon the things of the Kingdom; and how the Lord leads his children through the wilderness; and how strange it seems to me to be remembered by God's dear children.

Dear brother, I have come to the place where nothing seems to give me joy or comfort except the blessed things concerning Jesus. The world is gay, but it has no charms for me: I had rather sit and talk with a dear saint of God, or a little child learning to walk. Oh, if I could only feel that I am worthy of such pleasures. How often I am made to cry, "Oh, Saviour, thou knowest all my conflicts; how buffeted I am by the world, flesh and the devil." If I could only feel that all was well in His sight, and with the blessed Saviour. I would not care what people said, or called me.

I can only say that I believe in a God that saves without the help of poor, puny man: I hope I have evidence that I am one of those that Christ shed his blood for. I look back over my life, and see so much of his loving kindness, and how rich his love has been to this poor worm of the dust, and I then have new courage and am drawn near with a true heart.

I did not intend to write so much. I can never forget having you and your wife in our humble home, and can never forget the wonderful sermon you de-

livered at Hopewell Church on Sunday. The Lord wonderfully blessed you from on high. My love and fellowship to you and your dear wife. May you be blessed with strength, and years of usefulness to carry on your good work. Pray for me when at the throne of God.

Your sister in hope of mercy,
Mrs. S. C. Davenport

2118 E. 10th Street
Odessa, Texas

Dear Editors:

I enclose check for another two years for the *Signs*. I do enjoy so much reading the wonderful truths set forth in it. Oh, it means so much to me.

Brother Wood, I would like so much, if you can have a mind to do so, (you, or some one of the dear preachers) to write on Ezekiel 3:16-21. For several years I have been bothered about that, and have run references so much upon it; but still can't understand it. I have asked some about it, but they have no comment on it.

I want to thank each and everyone that writes for the *Signs*, for it is food to my hungry soul, since I do not get to attend meetings often. Dear writers and readers, please remember me in your prayers. My path has been rough for the last two years, and but for the sweet mercies of God, I could have not stood up under it. Bless his holy name, he knows and takes care of his own; and I have a sweet hope that I am one of his.

"Jesus Saviour, pilot me
Over life's tempestuous sea:
Unknown waves before me roll,
Hiding rock and treacherous shoal;
Chart and compass come from thee:
Jesus Saviour, pilot me."

Georgia Skelton

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** convenes with Damascus Church, Farmville, N. C., Pitt County, the 29th and 30th of August, 1964.

We desire the presence of all lovers of the truth.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND
(To July 1, 1964)

Miss Kathrine Gillies, Can.	$ 5.00
Loy P. Rodgers, Ark.	3.00
Mrs. R. L. Buckner, Okla.	2.00
Mrs. Pattie B. Krewatch, Md.	5.00
A Friend, Calif.	10.00
J. B. Barron, N. C.	5.00
Mrs. Lettie Sanders, Ariz.	5.00
F. J. Cain, La.	2.00

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association** convenes with Upper Town Creek Church in Wilson County, N. C., to begin Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1964, and continuing through Sunday. The meeting house is located three and one-half miles Southeast of Elm City, N. C.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

E. M. Smith, Assn. Clerk

SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION will convene, the Lord willing, with the Snow Hill Church, at Snow Hill, Maryland, October 21 and 22, 1964.

All ministers, brethren and friends of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us.

Those arriving on Tuesday will please contact Deacon Harry Ward, Bay Street, (Telephone 201) Snow Hill; or Deacon Bill Davis, New Church, Va. (Telephone Temperanceville Va 44421) Those arriving on Wednesday go directly to the church on Washington Street.

Maude P. Truitt, Church Clerk

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The 1964 session of the **Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association** will be held with the church at Creeches, Johnson County, N. C., beginning at 11 o'clock A. M. Friday before the fourth Sunday in October and continuing through Sunday.

The church is located on a black top road about two hundred yards South of Highway 42, one-quarter mile East of the junction of

39 and 42 highways. A marker will be placed on Highway 42 pointing to the church.

W. E. Turner, Clerk

THE VIRGINIA
CORRESPONDING MEETING

The next session of the **Virginia Corresponding Meeting** will be held, the Lord willing, at the Mt. Zion Meeting House, Wednesday and Thursday, October 14 and 15, 1964. The meeting house is located on U. S. Route 50, about two miles East of Aldie. Virginia.

A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends to meet with us.

L. D. Duke, Clerk

SEVEN MILE PRIMITIVE
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The **Seven Mile Primitive Baptist Association** will be held, the Lord willing, with Hickory Grove Church, at Hichory Grove Meeting House in Johnston County, N. C., located on Highway 50 about eight miles East of Benson, N. C., Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, September 18, 19, 20, 1964.

We desire the presence of our corresponding brethren, sisters, and friends.

W. D. Godwin, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The next session of the **Staunton River Union Meeting** will meet, the Lord willing, with Union Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in August. Union Meeting House is located on Highway 605, West of Gretna, Virginia. All lovers of the truth are invited.

H. M. Mattox

DURAND AND LESTER
HYMN AND TUNE BOOKS

We have placed an order for an edition of Durand and Lester Hymn and Tune Books, in the shape notes. We should have delivery by the first of August.

The prices will be; $3.00 each or $33.00 per dozen delivered. Send orders to:

P. G. Lester, Jr.
2246 Memorial Ave., S. W.
Roanoke, Va. 24015

or

F. D. Long
Box 496
Roxboro, N. C. 27573

Danville, Virginia **September, 1964**

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All letters for this paper should be addressed and remittances made payable

TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va.

EDITORIAL

EZEKIEL I:16-17

"The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the colour of a beryl: and they four had one likeness: and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel.

"When they went, they went upon their four sides: and they turned not when they went."

We have been asked by Sister Harriett L. Gray to give our views upon the visions of God seen by the prophet Ezekiel by the river of Chebar, chiefly respecting the wheels, their appearance and work. The whole subject is so profound, that a poor creature of a day, as the writer feels to be, has no expectation in and of himself of giving any light upon it, unless the Holy Spirit shall enable him so to do. "VISIONS

OF GOD." The very expression seems to carry so much in it, that one desires to stand in awe in even attempting to write upon such a glorious subject.

Ezekiel had been carried away captive to Babylon. He was a priest and conversant with the dealings of God with national Israel, living under the fearful judgements that God had brought upon them, who, in his wrath, had enslaved them to a nation that knew not God. BABYLON, a place ever to be dreaded by Israel when walking in the fear of God, stood as a synonym of shame to God's afflicted and poor people, here his people had been taken by a foe who in carrying out God's judgements would strip God of his glory. 2 Chronicles 36:18-19.

We have looked for the River Chebar on the map but cannot find it, it was probably one of the great works of man. It is said that the king who led them captive used many of them as slaves to dig deep cuttings in the earth to irrigate the land, man-made rivers dug by Israel in servitude when God's hand was heavy upon them. By the rivers of Babylon these captives wept when they remembered Zion, they hanged their harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. Psalm 137. Seven times in the book of Ezekiel we read of THE HAND OF THE LORD being upon him; at such a time, by one of these man-made streams, was the hand of the Lord laid upon him. He looked, "and behold, a whirlwind came out of the North." "He commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind." Psalm 107:25. God fully controls the whirlwind as he does all things whatsoever come to pass. "Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven." 2 Kings 2:11. The Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind. Job 40:6. The wicked shall be taken away as with a whirlwind. Psalm 58:9. A whirlwind is an alarming thing, coming from the North it carried a cold blast. The Spirit of God in some of his dealings with the sons of men is like the wind which no man can control, it bloweth where it listeth, blasting our ambitions and chilling our expectations; he is also as "a great cloud" in their seemingly God-forsaken condition. Jeremiah could say, "Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud that our prayers should not pass through." Lamentations 3:44. This great cloud takes us back to God's bringing his people out of Egypt, a pillar of a cloud went before them, and when they came to the Red Sea and the Egyptian army was following them, this pillar of the cloud came between them and the camp of the Egyptians. There is mystery in a cloud, Paul speaks of the wisdom of God in a mystery, "even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory." I Corinthians 2:7. This mysterious cloud, spoken of as "so great a cloud of witnesses," told clearly what it was given them to see. Ezekiel saw "a great cloud, and a fire INFOLDING itself." Moses told Israel, "The Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God." Deuteronomy 4:24. and Paul told his Hebrew brethren, "Our God is a consuming fire." Hebrews 12:29. This fire then we believe to be God's glory, which he will not UNFOLD and give to another. He is a God of purpose, accomplishing that purpose in his own way. His word burns like a fire and it is for ever settled in the heavens. It does not return unto him, or unfold, without doing what he wills, it burns up the hay, wood and stubble of man's inventions. "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." I Corinthians 3:13. The Word of God is like the sun which infolds itself. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handywork." Psalm 19:1.

"Out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire." Gold and silver and brass were mixed together in ancient times and became the colour of amber. In the tabernacle set up in the wilderness there were boards covered over with gold with silver sockets to link them together, sil-

ver the price of the soul, and brass reminding us of the brazen altar, typical of the intense suffering of our Lord Jesus. Peter could say, "Silver and gold have I none;" but he had Christ Jesus who was and is in the midst, not as a God of judgment, which would be seen as Red, but as a God of Mercy, whose appearance in every age to his suffering children has brought a living faith and hope; how we love to read of that "so great a cloud of witnesses" that Paul mentions in Hebrews II.

We would here dwell briefly upon the living creatures that also came out of the midst, they are identical with the living creatures seen by Isaiah, also told of by John in Revelation 4:6-8, except that Ezekiel's had only four wings, their feet not being covered. Of this variation in number we will give our view later. They represent all God-sent servants whether prophets, apostles or preachers, who have gone forth in all ages testifying of Jesus upon the throne. Ezekiel 1:26 and Revelation 4:2.

During the old dispensation the fire of the Word infolded itself, yes, men testified of him, his sufferings, and the glory that should follow, they spoke the very things that he would do, but all that they told was secret, as was his name until "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory." The natural sun infolds itself, we get its rays. Saul had a light shine upon him brighter than that sun, and it was in this light that he saw light. Each of those beasts had four faces, which shows that they did not vary in their testimony. we have said that those that Ezekiel saw had only four wings, which seems to suggest the humbled condition of Israel in captivity. Ezekiel was a priest under the law, their temple was defiled, and their feet were exposed, how wonderful to be given in such a low place a revelation of the Glory of God. Isaiah seemed to be given a more glorious view of a day of Grace, the Gospel day, when types and shadows would be lost in sight. He could herald the good news, even in the dark night of Judaism, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given."

The four gospels, which told of Christ's advent into the world, seem to set forth the four faces clearly. Matthew sets forth the Kingship of Christ, the Lion of the tribe Judah. Matthew 2:2, 21:5, 28:18, and Revelation 4:7 reads, "And the first beast was like a Lion, and the second beast like a calf." Ezekiel called that calf an ox. Mark sets forth our Lord as an ox who goes forth at his master's word, treading out the corn, DRIVEN of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of Satan. Mark 1:12. Walking in submission to the will of God, yet despised and rejected of men. True, Mark sets him forth as king, he could not have had a full ministry if he had not embraced in it the four characteristics of the Gospel. Luke was not an apostle, just a man spoken of as the beloved physician, one who accurately observed the work of the GREAT PHYSICIAN who never lost a case.

Luke tells us of the two men walking in a fellowship of sorrow to Emmaus and a MAN Jesus going with them, whose conversation made their hearts burn within them and who was made known unto them in the breaking of bread. Returning at once to Jerusalem to tell the good news, as they were rejoicing together, Jesus, the MAN, stood in their midst and said, "Peace be unto you." The man, Jesus, raised from the dead, said, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet."

The fourth winged creature had the face of an EAGLE. John was the youngest of the disciples and lived long enough to see men arise who denied the divinity of our Lord. John therefore was blessed with an eye, as the eagle's, to look into the heavens, opening his Gospel with the same words with which God's Holy Word begins. "IN THE BEGINNING was the WORD, and the WORD was with God, and the WORD

was God." As Ezekiel's, they all four had these faces, and verse 12 says, "They went every one straight forward: whither the spirit was to go, they went; and they turned not when they went."

We have said that the winged creatures that Isaiah saw, and which are also spoken of in Revelation 4, had six wings, with twain they covered their faces, for they were in the presence of the God of all the earth. With twain they covered their feet, out of a consciousness of their being as beasts before him, they had calves' feet and felt their unfitness for such an exalted service; and with twain they did fly. Isaiah 6:2. In Revelation 4, we are told that these four beasts were full of eyes before and behind, in their ministry they must never lose sight of the way they have been led, looking back and remembering all the way they had come, looking not only to the hole of the pit, but also to the Rock from which they have been hewn. Isaiah 51:1. Ezekiel tells us in verse 13, "As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning." In preaching the word by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, that word will burn like a fire. Some may not receive it, they may say like Wicked Ahab did of Micaiah, "I hate him; for he never prophesied good unto me, but always evil." 2 Chronicles 18:7. God grant us in this dark and cloudy day a searching ministry, men who shall be humbled under a sense of their nothingness, especially when they see God's truth penetrate like lightning the hearts of poor guilty sinners as they themselves feel to be.

"When the living creatures went, the wheels went by them." I can give only what I feel to be the meaning of verse 16 which reads, "The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the colour of a beryl: and they four had one likeness, and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel." The colour of beryl is a living green, the wheel in the middle of a wheel seems to my mind to set forth God's purpose in Grace as the outer wheel, and God's purpose in Providence as the inner wheel. We do not see them as on one axle, but rather working from one centre and being in the form of a cross, so that the four sides could be seen at once. God's grace and providence go together, compatible with his will and purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began. If there is no cross there can be no blessing. Genesis 48:13-20. One need only to read the word of God to see the strange working of Providence in the lives of men, God using what he will, "even the wicked for the day of evil," as in the case of Pharaoh and many others, also famines and plagues. David declares the wicked to be God's sword. Tribulation and affliction are all in his purpose. "The spirit of the living creature was in the wheels." Wherever our Lord sends his servants, who are represented by the winged creatures, there they will find the spirit's work and witness. How often we read in the word, "That the Scripture might be fulfilled." These wheels having four sides go on, if there is a Nineveh, there will be a Jonah, at the right time and place, to preach the preaching that God bid him. Jonah 3:2. God's servants are not sent by man, which is shown by what Ezekiel saw in verse 22. "And the likeness of the firmament upon the heads of the living creatures was as the colour of the terrible crystal, stretched forth over their heads above." In Revelation 21:-10-11, John saw "That great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." God's servants, whom he has sent in all ages, have gone forward in a light brighter than the sun, set forth by that crystal, they have told of a better country, that is, an heavenly, to the glory of God.

"Above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone." The sapphire stone seems to set forth that which is positive and clear. "In him is no darkness at all." In Exodus 24:10, Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and seventy elders of Israel "saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness." Ezekiel saw "the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it." How wonderful to be given to behold the MAN who was the man so often spoken of in God's word, a man who overcame death, hell and the grave. "Wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is THE SAME also that ascended up far above all heavvens that he might fill all things.") Ephesians 4:8-10.

Job did not credit the devil, who is the father of lies, with any cross providence, even when messengers, four in number, came one upon another with ill tidings. "Job arose and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell on the ground AND WORSHIPPED, and said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: THE LORD gave and THE LORD hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." To the determined Glory of God the four living creatures and the wheels of Providence and Grace, with the spirit therein, must go forward, their wings joined, setting forth a fellowship given them above. One of these winged creatures, John, with the eagle's eye, could say, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." I John 1:3.

In conclusion, the writer has presented some of the wonderful things that are given to us in God's Word, feeling a needs-be to fall on his face before him whom we love and adore. When Ezekiel saw those things he fell on his face. Isaiah cried, "Woe is me! for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." How wonderful was the effect of the word, spoken of as a live coal, the living word applied. "Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away." How we need a living ministry to-day to preach the truth, the whole of it and not a part. G. R.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

FAITH

Birmingham, Alabama
May 17, 1910

Elder J. R. Hardy,

Dear Brother:

From some cause I am led to write you on the subject found in the 11th chapter of Hebrews. It seems I have had some exercise of mind on that subject and will offer such as I have, hoping that it may bring a degree of comfort to some reader, as it has to me.

No one can read the chapter and have to guess at what Paul had under consideration. It is **Faith** — the simplest, and in some respects the sublimest, subject for the consideration of the saints. While it is simple indeed to some, it is a great mystery to others. There seems to be a dead faith, a temporal faith, a historical faith, a literal faith, but the true, evangelical, living, gospel, saving, justifying faith differs from all others, and is the **faith of God's elect.** It is a principle, and to the elect of God a special, peculiar gift. It is also uncreated, as it is said to be born of God, and is therefore a divine principle. It is also called a perfect gift, differing from a good gift. It seems to be interchangeably joined to life and love, and is said to work by love. It also has a

purifying effect: it purifies the heart; and also an overcoming effect: it overcomes the world. It has a moving effect: it moved Noah to build the ark; it moved Abraham from among his kindred; and moved him before day to arise and take a three days journey to offer up his only son.

As a principle, faith is the quality, and not the quantity. Christ said, "If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you can remove mountains." Scientists say that radium, a substance taken out of the earth, is likely to supercede other things as an explosive. A small quantity will blow up a navy. It will heat and light, and is said to possess curative power. We could reason, and say that if a part of God's creation has such power, what must the heaven born, uncreated, divine principle have?

We would not say, as Andrew Fuller said, that it is the act of the creature, but that it is the power of God which causes the creature to act. It exercises the creature, instead of the creature exercising it. It is called an eye by which we see, and compared to the hand which receives the blessing, the foot that walks, and wings that fly. It is said to be the gift of God. All men have not this faith.

It is the same in all ages — "the one faith", one Lord. It embraces Jehovah in all his perfections; it beholds him in glory; it recognizes every attribute, and will in no sense limit God. It likewise embraces God's word of truth as a testtimony of God, and accepts as truth all that God says; and what it fails to understand, it blessedly believes. It embraces every doctrine, precept, command and exhortation found in the Scriptures. It brings the subject into resignation and submission to God's divine government. It sees God in everything — unbelief sees him no where. It does not consult human policy, but is a principle far above it. It is conquering in its nature and effects. It has always accomplished what God intended it to.

Every instance in the 11th chapter of Hebrews, as cited by Paul, it overcomes. In all subjects alike its triumph and glory is seen. It is a marvel as a gift, and characterizes God's children; and, as Paul truly said, they were all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Paul declared that he lived by the faith of the Son of God. It is capable of solving every mystery needful for the subject of grace to know; and so satisfying that it makes him patient to wait for what remains. By faith we know the worlds were made: not by human philosophy. Faith causes us to contemplate the subject of love, and it reveals every grace needful.

If by faith we know the worlds were made, doesn't the same principle enable us to know they are controlled and governed by the same power that made them? It positively knows that God's entire creation and government, is controlled by an all-wise Sovereign who does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth: But unbelief and human wisdom denies it, because they have eyes like the owl and the bat, unlike the eye of faith which can look at the sun. It sees both ways: things thousands of years ago, and thousands of years to come: spans time, and presents eternity. It embraces all we shall need to know in time, and what we shall know in eternity. It is an all essential element in Christian life. We cannot approach God without it, or can we please him unless it directs us in the channel of that which is well pleasing to God. It abides in the heart, and has to do with the very life principles. Tongue can never express all its fulness, and Paul said that time would fail to tell of all its wonderous deeds.

It embraces the system of God's salvation, and every part of it is revealed from faith to faith in the gospel. "Herein," says Paul, "is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith;" not from reason to reason, as some would suppose. It is called in the word a faith which is nigh you, even in your heart. It is a principle which stands allied with truth, and cannot be deceived. It fixes

its subjects upon the unshaken rock, from which they can never be moved. It embraces and discovers to us in Christ the grandest, the most mystical and sublime character ever known in heaven or in earth. It sees Him in his divine and infinite perfections as the God-Man and the Man-God; as the Prophet, Priest and King; the Head and the Husband of the Church; the Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace; the only Mediator; King of Kings and Lord of Lords; our Elder Brother, and Friend of sinners.

It presents the Scripture as the testimony of Christ, from Genesis to the end of the book of Revelation. It maps out every duty and obligation, and bids us obey the Mandate of heaven. The obedience of faith embraces all of this. It also imforms us that, "he that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith shall be counted for righteousness." It shows by the divine power of God that we are above the law, and are under grace. It apprises us of the beguiling influences. Truly does the poet say:

"Faith adds new charms to earthly bliss,
And saves us from its snares;
It yields support in all our toils,
And softens all our cares.

The wounded conscience knows its power,
The healing power to give;
That balm the saddest heart can cheer,
And make the dying live.

Unveiling wide the heavenly world
Where endless pleasures reign,
It bids us seek our portion there,
Nor bids us seek in vain.

Faith shows the promise fully sealed
With our Redeemer's blood,
And helps our feeble hope to rest
Upon a faithful God.

There still unshaken would we rest
'Till this vile body dies;
And then on faith's triumphant wings,
To endless glory rise."

The Redeemer required it, and said, "According to thy faith, be it unto thee. To him that believeth, all things are possible. He that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me." He also said that if we believe, we have it. By it people were healed, and by it only can we expect salvation in the true sense: for we are saved by grace through faith; and grace and faith and salvation are the gifts of God. True faith makes us rejoice that it is so; and under its influence we would by no means desire any change or alteration in God's way. But faith makes us say, "Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

I have perhaps written enough as I do not desire to be tedious. But let us remember that faith is a substance and an evidence, and no faith without it; and spiritual, living faith has spiritual, living evidence and substance. I may also bring to bear the testimony of faith from another poet.:

"Faith is the brightest evidence
Of things beyond our sight:
It pierces through the veil of sense
And dwells in heavenly light.

It sets time past in present view,
And brings distant prospects home,
Of things a thousand years ago,
Or a thousand years to come.

By faith we know the worlds were made
By God Almighty's word;
Abra'm, to unknown countries led,
By faith obeyed the Lord.

He sought a city fair and high,
Built by the eternal hands;
And faith assures us, though we die,
That heavenly building stands."

May the Lord give us faith, and may we say as one of old: "Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief."

Yours to serve,

W. Lively

(The above by Elder Lively was copied from the **Advocate of Truth** of July 1, 1910, which was published by Elders J. R. Hardy, J. C. Sikes, H. B. Jones, and others. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

ELDER JAMES GRIFFIN GASKILL

God, in His wonderful mercy, has called from our midst, out of the darkness of nature, our beloved and highly esteemed Elder and Father in Israel, Elder J. G. Gaskill. He was born on November 20, 1881, and was called

away February 29, 1964, making his pilgrimage here more than 82 years. He is survived by his beloved wife, Sister Challie Ann (Hopkins) Gaskill, and to this union were born ten children. One son preceeded him in death at the age of 3½ years; and his nine children who survive and mourn his passing are: Mrs. Grant Mayo, Mrs. Robert Hopkins, Mrs. Charity Dowdy, Mrs. Evelyn Spain, all of Hobucken, North Carolina; Mrs. Thelma Harris of Swan Quarter, North Carolina; Mrs. Woodrow Russell, of Portsmouth, Virginia; Eddie K. Gaskill, Luther P. Gaskill, and Marcus Gaskill, all of Hobucken, North Carolina. He leaves one brother, Christopher C. Gaskill of Bayboro, North Carolina; and twenty-three grandchildren and ten great grandchildren.

His church saw a gift and set him apart to the office of deacon on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in November, 1935. His church saw a gift to the ministry in him, and gave him liberty to exercise his gift whereever he felt to be called. In June, 1936, his church called a presbytery for the purpose of examining his gift, which they found orthordox and ordained him to the full work of the gospel ministry. The Presbytery was composed of Elder J. H. Edwards, Elder E. F. Pollard, Elder J. W. Wyatt, Deacon B. F. Robinson and Deacon C. J. Lewis. His funeral was conducted from his beloved church, Goose Creek Island, by Elders: S. R. Boykin, A. P. Mewborn, E. M. Smith, and W. T. Brown.

Although his natural education was very limited, it did not detract from the wonderful gift his Heavenly Father gave him, but tended to show even more vividly that indeed, preaching comes from the Lord. He earnestly contended for, and preached ably, the doctrine of the gospel, salvation by the grace of God; and was always especially gifted when he was given his favorite subject as a text, "Mercy." His gift was profitable to the church and to all with whom he came into contact. It seemed such a joy to him to preach Jesus Christ and Him Crucified. He was such a comfort, and his gift such an inspiration to all who knew him, that we can best describe his passing by quoting, as we feel we can yet hear him say, "I am ready to be offered, I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, hence forth I know there is a crown of righteousness laid-up for me, and not for me only, but for all who love His appearing."

He bore his tremendous suffering uncomplainingly, and although his beloved ones did all they could for him, his groanings were tremendous. Our hope is that one day we can again be greeted by him when Jesus gathers all his children together and takes them to His Father's Home: that celestial home where trouble, heartache, and suffering cannot enter, but the children of the Father will live together in perfect peace, love, and fellowship, as they are entered "into the joys of the Lord."

Written at the request of his wife and children by one who loved him for Christ sake I hope.

A. P. Mewborn

LULA MAY PUTMAN BELLINGER

The Lord, in His infinite wisdom and mercy, saw fit to remove from the shores of time and our midst, according to His foreordained plan, our mother and sister in the church, Lula May Putman Bellinger on May 25, 1964. She suffered a severe stroke on May 22, 1964, and spent only three days in the Ellis Hospital, Schenectady, New York. Born on February 19, 1886, at Flat Creek, Montgomery County, New York, she was the daughter of Norman and Esther Malick Putman. She was united in marriage December 18, 1907, to Voorhis C. Bellinger of Seward, Schoharie County, New York, and spent all of her married life as a housewife and mother on the family farm of her husband. Her husband passing on to eternal rest on her birthday February 19, 1935. To this union two children were born: Woodrow W. Billinger in 1918, and Margaret Esther Bellinger Carrigan in 1923, who survive with four grandchildren. Also surviving are a brother Floyd Putman, Canajoharie, New York, and a sister Mrs. Nellie Kimmey, Cobleskill, New York.

After the death of Mr. John C. Voorhis, a Reformed minister of New York City, and for whom her husband was a namesake, she, her husband and family were led of the Lord to the meetings of the Middleburg Old School Baptist Church at Brother James Livingstone's home at Cobleskill, New York, under the pastorship of Elder George Ruston, and attended faithfully through the years under his preaching; then Elder Arnold H. Bellows, and, after his passing, under Elder Amasa J. Slauson. Her husband never joined the visible church, but Sister Bellinger and her son, the writer, were baptized the fourth Sunday in July, 1955, by Elder Arnold H. Bellows. The miles were never too long for her to attend Old School Baptist meetings, traveling to Roxbury, to the Yellow Meeting House, then the past few years to Halcottsville to 4th Sunday meetings to hear Elder W. D. Griffin's preaching (She always loved to meet with these brethren and sister's). She also journeyed with her son and his family to meetings at Salisburg, Maryland, Welch Tract, New York City, Shokan and Slate Hill. Last year, though failing in health after a slight stroke, she went to the quarterly meeting in Canada, staying at Elder Ruston's home.

Elder Amasa J. Slauson, of Kingston, New York, her pastor, conducted the service at the Mereness Funeral home, Cobleskill, New York,

reading the hymn Amazing Grace, and preaching from the 39th Psalm, and reading hymn 1249. She was laid to rest beside her husband in the Slate Hill cemetery, Sharon, New York, to await the day when the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout and the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall arise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. (1st Thes. 4:16,17)

The writer is thankful that the great and all merciful God granted him the blessing of this dear mother for over 46 years.

Written in humble submission of His will.

Deacon Woodrow W. Bellinger,
Middleburg Old School Baptist Church

MRS. DOROTHY MORRIS

It becomes my sad duty to place on record the passing of another of God's little children in the person of Mrs. Dorothy Morris. In all my ministry of thirty years I have not witnessed anything to make men more sad than her case; nor have I seen a case that would serve as warning to God's children more than hers; nor have I seen anything that would extol the name of Jesus Christ and our God and Father of us all than in her triumphant going away.

She was the daughter of our venerable brother, Merrill Shockley. Her mother has been dead many years. She left her aged father and several brothers and sisters, together with her husband and our friend, Ralph Morris.

She retired several months ago after having taught in the public schools of Eastern Maryland for forty years. From the standpoint of men's knowledge, it seemed that she was ready to live and enjoy life, as she loved nature and travel. But the wise Disposer of all events saw different, as she was struck with that dreaded disease, cancer. All was done for her that modern medical science could do, but they could not stay the hand of death. Slowly and relentlessly it marched until it brought her through that tremendous vale that all, save by the grace of God, would evade and escape.

In our endeavor to have the Salisbury Association at the Nassawango Church in 1962, it was she that was so concerned about it being held there. Her father was about eighty-five at the time and the other members were all old and afflicted. She pled that it be there for their sake, saying that they probably would not live for it to come to them again. How little we frail mortals know of the future, for it was she that would not live to see another. How zealously she worked and planned to have everybody well fed and cared for at night. I am sure that it was the happiest moment of her life.

When I first knew her she was the dutiful daughter that carried her father to the meetings and the gatherings of the followers of the Lamb. Then out of the unchangeableness of God's love she begin to walk just a little closer to the church, to admire her situation, to enjoy her bulwarks, to defend her doctrines. Then for some purpose best shown to God, her condition became so serious that she could not go anymore. Each month she would say, "I hope to be able to go next time." That time did not come, and towards the last she asked me to pray that God would spare her to go one more time that she might come into her courts. But the Lord did not grant that. She later became reconciled to it, but regretted that she had not been spared to throw in with them as they journeyed heavenward.

She planned her own funeral, and asked that I preach from the twenty-third Psalm. This I tried to do with that ability that the Lord gave. Elders David Spangler and Arthur Warren both spoke comfortably to one and all. She died on March 29th, 1964, and was buried in Salisbury, Maryland, the following Tuesday, in the full triumphs of a living faith. Her husband has lost a faithful companion, the father a loving daughter, the brothers and sisters a noble sister, the community a good citizen, and Zion one of her best friends.

W. D. G.

MRS. ELSIE M. LOEFFEL

That monster death, from which all creation has been fleeing since the early morning of time, has overcome another one of the Lord's people as far as the removal of the body is concerned, and the Lord has taken home another jewel to glory.

But few sisters have enjoyed the love and fellowship of the Primitive Baptists as did she. For about thirty years her writings have graced the pages of the **Signs of the Times,** and she loved the paper devotedly, having served on the Board of Trustees for a number of years as the Secretary. She had taught school for about thirty-five years, having started her career in the educational field in her native state of West Virginia, when a young girl, and finished just a few weeks before her death as the head of the Mathematics Department in the Union, New Jersey, system. Her retirement would have become effective the first of June.

She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Gall of Elkins, West Virginia, and was born on September 14, 1903. Her mother, quite feeble and aged, still survives her, to-

gether with a brother, Brooks Gall, two sisters, Mrs. Virginia Cox, a teacher in the schools of Ohio, and Mrs. Grace Dingess. She was married on November 5, 1935 to Mr. John C. Loeffel, of Union, New Jersey, where she made her home at that time and ever since.

She joined the Old School Baptist church at Mt. Olive, near Phillipi, West Virginia, on May 21, 1921, at the age of eighteen, and was baptized by the late Elder J. S. Murphy. After her removal to Union, she joined the Old School Baptist Church (Ebenezer) in New York City, and continued in love and fellowship the balance of her life. It was in the church that her true worth was made known. While she had made a success in the material things of life, her whole life was spent in serving the Lord's people. She was one that wanted to stay out of the limelight, and, while her means had gone to help many afflicted and poor saints, but few ever knew who their benefactor was in the hour of trouble. She was by nature retiring, never pushing her views, never being burdensome to anyone with her requests or needs. While her colleagues could scarcely wait for vacation that they might hie away to play grounds, she could scarcely wait that she might hie away to some Old Baptist meeting, or home.

About two years before her death she became greatly concerned about the resurrection. She acknowledged that she had grown into the thought that at death the body was not any longer the desire of God; that it no longer was a part of the child of God. She got to where she could not rest, she could not sleep, she could not enjoy her food. In my lot among the Lord's people, I have never seen anyone so deeply concerned. She did not want to believe in the resurrection of the body because of any man's views or teachings. It was for weeks that we despaired that she would lose her balance over it, but that God who mastered the waves and the wind, came to her in the hours of night, speaking to her with assurances, and the next morning she awoke in joy and peace and became settled in her mind that she had been wrong, and her praises were continually before the Lord for his teaching power.

The last six months of her life was a nightmare to many of us. She had never been too robust in health, often minding her classes when she should have been abed. She had a prolonged premonition of death, and set her worldly affairs in order as well as one could under the trying circumstances. Death relieved her suffering on the morning of May 4, 1964. Her funeral was conducted by Elder A. J. Slauson, her pastor, and the writer on May 7th, after which she was buried in the cemetery in Union, New Jersey, there to sleep until called for by the Saviour of His people, soul, body and spirit, there to mingle with the saints in glory forever and forever.

To one and all, I would say, weep not. Especially would I say to the family, you really do not know what a jewel you had in your daughter and sister, and her whole life is one of evidence that she was accepted in the Beloved. Having been accepted by Him in covenant, having given his life to redeem her, we are fully persuaded that her preciousness to Him would hold her in His embrace under all the tragic circumstances of life, including death. To our people we would point a finger at her life as an example to others and worthy of being emulated in the church of God.

W. D. G.

WILLIAM PAUL PHILLIPS

In as much as it has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our brother in Christ, William Paul Phillips, we at Gilliam Primitive Baptist Church must bow in humble submission.

Brother Phillips was survived by: his wife Sister Etta Phillips; two daughters Mrs. William Boone, Mrs. Leonard Page; two sons Mr. Cosmo Phillips, Mr. Elmo Phillips; two brothers Mr. Pleas Phillips, Mr. Edgar Phillips; four sisters Mrs. Annie Paul Blanche. Mrs. Alice Gammon, Mrs. Leslie Phillips, Mrs. Lela Harrell, and a host of other relatives and friends.

Brother Phillips was born January 27, 1883, departed this life February 1, 1964, making his stay on earth 81 years.

Brother Phillips was blessed to unite with the church at Gilliam the fourth Saturday in August, 1935, and was baptized by his late pastor Elder J. W. Gilliam. He was faithful to attend his meeting as long as health permitted. I was blessed to visit in his home during his illness and how wonderful it was to hear him talk from his death bed of better things, not concerning this world but that world which is to come; telling me that he had lived 81 years and it was but a short while and he felt that this world was not his home. How encouraging and strengthening it is to his unworthly pastor to hear one whom we felt to be a father in Israel, who had weathered many storms in this life and blessed to endure the trials and tribulation and afflictions of this world, and yet come to the end and be blessed with such faith. We cannot but think of Job, though everything he had was taken away yet he could say, "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth".

He was loved by many, and we feel that the attendance at the funeral proved this. His funeral was conducted by his pastor, assisted by Elders W. C. King and J. Harvey

Smith at Gilliam Church. May all those who mourn his passing be blessed to feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to the family, one to the **Signs of the Times,** and one kept for church records.

Written by request of Gilliam Church, and approved in their conference meeting on March 21, 1964.

Written by his pastor,
Wallis A. Smith

Wallis A. Smith, Moderator
Freeman Somers, Clerk

DEACON WALTER THOMAS SLUSHER

It is with a sad heart I try to write this obituary for Brother Walter Slusher.

Walter Thomas Slusher was born December 4, 1873. He united with Indian Creek Baptist Church in 1921. Shortly afterwards he was called to the office of Deacon in which he served for more than 40 years. Brother Slusher lived a quiet and peaceful life on his farm near Indian Valley, Virginia. He died March 9, 1961, at the age of 88.

Services were Sunday March 11, 1962, at Pleasant Hill Church of the Brethren with Burial in church cemetery. His funeral was conducted by Elder B. O Thompson and Elder J. P. Helms.

He leaves to survive three daughters: Mrs. Ted Quesenburry, Mrs. Marvin Huff, both of Hillsville, Virginia; and Mrs. Paul Cox, Permier, W. Va. Two sons: Cleve Slusher, Blacksburg; Arbra Slusher, Willis. Three sisters: Mrs. Sam Weeks, Bedford, Virginia; Mrs. Lloyd Kendall, N. Dakota; Sister D. P. Farmer, North East Md. One brother Fleet Slusher, Tacoma, Washington; eleven grandchildren, and four great grandchildren.

Written at the request of the church.

Jack W. Cox

DEACON JAPHETH (JEP) COX

It is with a sad heart I try to write this obituary for Brother Jep Cox.

Brother Japheth (Jep) Cox was born August 5, 1879. In October, 1917, he united with Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church. Shortly afterward he was called to the office of deacon for which he served for more than 45 years. Brother Jep lived a quiet and peaceful life on the farm where he was born. He passed away November 16, 1963, at the age of 84.

His Funeral was preached at the old Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Indian Valley, Virginia, on Monday the 18th by Elder B. O. Thompson and Elder J. P. Helms.

Survivors are his wife: Lillian Cox, Willis, Va.; one son, Wiley W. Cox, Willis, Va.; one daughter: Mrs. Troy Bishop, Copper Valley, Va.; nine grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

Written at the request of the church.

Jack W. Cox

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

BROTHER J. LIBSON LEE

The members of Hickory Grove Church bow in humble submission to the will of God in the death of J. Libson Lee, a much loved brother and deacon of the church which he served for many years.

He was born October 11, 1880, in Johnston County, N. C., where he lived through his entire life. He died February 13, 1964. He joined the church at Hickory Grove in 1908, and was a faithful member, but due to ill health for several years greatly affected his attending regular. He was a devoted husband and father, always doing what he could for his family, church and friends. At the age of twenty his father died leaving him to help his Mother bring up three younger sisters. Later in the years he was guardian over several nieces and nephews. His influence was far reaching in the county. For twenty-five years he served on the Meadow School Board. He worked unceasingly for better schools through out the country. His kindness, willing hands and his humorous will, made him the center of all groups both old and young.

He was married to Mary Stella Smith who preceeded his death by three years.

Elder Lester E. Lee, his nephew conducted his funeral at the home. He was laid to rest in the Lee Cemetery. The many beautiful flowers were a tribute to him and the high esteem in which he was held in his community. Surviving him are two daughters: Mrs. Ludie Lee Alford, Mrs. Mary Lee Barefoot, and one son Eugene Lee. Four sisters: Mrs. Lessie L. Johnson, Mrs. Hettie L. Smith, Mrs. Vara L. Johnson, and Mrs. Mamie Lee.

The church extends its deepest heartfelt sympathy to his family.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions of respect be sent to the family, a copy for the church record and a copy to the **SIGNS OF THE TIMES** for publication.

Done by the church while in conference Saturday before third Sunday in March, 1964.

Submitted by:
Elder Lester E. Lee
Sisters Hattie Smith
Vara Johnson
Georgia Hill

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 132 DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1964 NO. 10

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10/64
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

Rt. 1,
Kennedy, Alabama

Editors of the *Signs*,
Dear Brethren:

I am sending you a little mite for the Indigent Fund, and to let you know that I am still getting the *Signs* regularly each month, and that I enjoy reading it; and get comfort from the good articles written by the brethren and sisters, and ministers.

I don't remember how long I have been reading the *Signs*, but for several years. I have never received one single issue that I couldn't endorse its contents, and agree and believe what was written. I don't believe that the editors of the *Signs* will publish anything in it that is not sound doctrine, and the truth.

I hope that I have been made to believe the same doctrine that you believe; that is, salvation by grace, not of works lest any man should boast. I find in His word that He says his sheep hear his voice, and that he knows them, and that they follow him; and a stranger they will not follow. And that he gives unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. He does not offer, but gives.

I hope I am one of his little lambs.

Unworthily,
Charlie Stripling

P. O. Box 96,
Wittmann, Arizona 85361

Dear Editors of the *Signs:*

I am enclosing a check for $10.00 for 2 years' subscription to the *Signs*, and the balance to use as you see fit.

I don't want to miss a copy, if I can help it, as that is all the truth I get. As far as I know, there is not a Primitive Baptist Church in Arizona; and I just can't go to the other churches, where they say that God wants to save you, but some won't let him. It makes my heart sad to hear people talk like that, for God tells us that he is God and there is none else, declaring the end from the beginning, and saying that his counsel shall stand, and that he will do all his pleasure. It is all by grace, and grace alone; there is nothing we can do. I hope I am one of His little ones; and if so, it is by his grace.

I want to thank you for sending my paper, as I found I was quite behind. May the Lord bless you and keep you in putting out the sound paper, so that poor sinners as I can read the truth.

Mrs. Lettie Sanders

"PECULIAR PEOPLE"

P. O. Box 207,
Weatherford, Texas

The Signs of the Times,
Dear Editors, and Household of Faith:

Greetings in the Lord. I am sending three dollars to renew my subscription, though I am somewhat late.

I would like to write a bit about these "peculiar people", so different from others. I am across the highway from one of the modern missionary churches

— we never hear them or go near them, but yesterday I went over thirty miles through a lot of traffic, to hear Brother Landers preach at Fort Worth about a God that does all his pleasure, — not part of it. He went all the way by saying, "All things work together for good to those who love the Lord, to them that are the called according to his purpose."

And he spoke about us loving to go so far to be with each other a little while, to talk of God's goodness and mercy. How right he was! But we would not go two hundred yards to hear about someone helping God with his work. I thought of his expression as I bid them goodby; and had to cry a bit to say goodby to those dear ones, knowing I could not be there on Sunday. Cheer up dear ones, it will not always be this way: sometime we will be where congregations never break up; where we will never more say goodby; and where we will never dread to die.

These Old School Baptists are very peculiar. We had a visitor last meeting time who came about two hundred miles to hear poor, unworthy me; and before that we had a deacon who came one hundred and fifty miles. Once a brother and I walked eleven miles to meeting; and he told a relative of mine about it, and said that he could have gone two blocks to two other churches. She quickly told him that there was "something wrong with us". Something has changed us, I will admit. A long while ago my wife told one of my children in answer to a question he had asked, that I had gone two hundred miles to a three-day meeting. He said, "What I can't understand is why anybody goes so far just to church." If they could see the reason why, they would want to go too.

If we Old Baptists are fooled, and wrong in our belief, we are the worst fooled people in all the world, it seems to me. One writer put it this way about those who hazard their lives for the truth, "If in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable."

May God bless you and yours, is my prayer.

As ever a brother in hope,
W. C. Purdy

REPORT OF MEETING

1302 Walnut Street,
Benton, Ky.

Readers of the Paper, Editors and Friends:

We have just finished a three-day Union Meeting of the churches of our Soldier Creek Association: May 29, 30, 31, this year of our Lord, 1964. Truly we could say in the beginning of each day, each night, and each hour while in this meeting: "This is the day the Lord hath made."

"He calls the hours his own —
Heaven surely did rejoice,
And praises surrounded his throne."

What a Union Meeting of our several churches! The poor of the flock, an afflicted people, not only stooped in stature, but bowed with their many heavy burdens of the day, yet surely it did please our gracious Father to oversee all, (yes, each gathering together at the church, and in the homes opened to take care of the friends of this meeting), to his praise, honor, and glory, and to the edifying and comfort of these few little ones gathered together in Jesus' Name.

It is not any glory to man, or any honor to our churches of the Union meeting that they answered in peace; that the business part was transacted in order, fellowship and peace, — no, not any glory to feeble, weak mortals, but all praise and glory was due to that Just One, who sends out his ministers to preach the unsearchable riches of God's grace to weary travelers. Our Lord is still able, and does feed the flock that he purchased with his own blood, in whatever place he chooses, and whenever he wills to do so.

It was His good pleasure to make a way for Elders J. N. Darnell, W. Y. Chandler, R. L. Biggs, and W. D. Griffin to come to be with us, and our own ministers of the Soldier Creek Union, Elders O. W. Perkins and Paul Poyner. We were graced, as we hope, to hear sermons from texts which have been used often before, and admonitions often used before, but they were new — just as new as though we had never heard them before. On Saturday Elder Chandler used as a text, "I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I will also do it." Elder Darnell followed with, "Oh the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God." etc. Elder Griffin preached on the "Resurrection". These texts will never be worn out, or become obsolete.

On Sunday Elder Biggs, in well chosen words, admonished the hearers to stand fast, to press on, and faint not because of the few in number, and the rumors of wars and distresses around us. Elder Griffin's text was, "Now thanks be unto God which always causeth us to triumph in Christ." Part of the 14th verse of the second chapter of second Corinthians.

There was much rejoicing in these truths, and we desire to thank our God for such meetings and fellowship with the saints, and permitting a few of us to eat at His table one more time. If not deceived, each of us long to be made submissive to God's will, and to be brought together again in peace with Him and all the saints of God, in His way and at His time.

This Union was held at the Rock Springs Church in Illinois, near Simpson. The members of this church and the friends of the Baptists opened their doors for the visitors to have lodging and food while in their midst.

In hope,
Effie Bowden

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 2,
Reidsville, N. C.

At the request of some of the brethren, I will try to write some of my experience.

Something over nineteen hundred years ago, our Saviour died and arose, a conqueror over death and hell. As so much is being said about it at this season, is probably the cause of my mind being stirred up at this time to the extent that it is. For some reason since Friday night or Saturday morning, the time has been very solemn and sad. Saturday morning as I lay on the couch in deep meditation over the event, my mind was carried back over a long period of time, and many experiences refreshed themselves in my mind; and I reviewed them in humbleness, and my heart was melted within me, and I lay there in tears as I remembered some of the things I had seen and felt.

While in meditation the scripture in St. John came to my mind, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." (John 5:25) These words were so rich and soothing to my soul. And I was reminded that Jesus said, "As I live, you shall live also." What precious words these are.

Then I remembered an experience that took place with me forty-two years ago Easter Sunday night. On Monday morning following the day that is celebrated as the day our Saviour Christ arose from the grave, I got up with a confused mind, for I had seen something that I did not understand, and was greatly disturbed about it. On that memorable night, as I lay on my bed in deep slumber, I had this dream: One of my brothers in the flesh was with me, and we were walking in the night, and it was so dark that it seemingly could be felt. I did not seem to know where we were going, but in the way we came in contact with a large cat.

(At this time in my life, profanity was a common thing with me.) I cursed the cat very bitterly, and fought with it, and killed it. At this time my brother had dropped out of the picture, and there was a voice that called to me, using a name that an old negro gave me when I was a small boy. The voice was sacred, and accompanied with power and authority; and I was condemned for having cursed the cat. But I was constrained to continue on the way, and something in the voice seemed to tell me that I had to go to a place that was sacred, and that I had to do something that I was not fit to do, or worthy of. There was no turning back, so I continued to go on. I came to a meeting house and there the door was opened to me, and as I stood in it, I saw in the back several people who were wearing white robes; and as I looked around, I saw in the front of the building a little table, and on it was a coffin with the lid off, and it was filled with bread in the form of biscuits. These people came up and ate the bread.

Then I looked on the floor, and there laid a body in front of me, which was torn and bruised, and looked as if it had been badly abused. As I looked on it, I saw it move, and I cried to the people in the back that this man is not dead but he is alive. And as I stood looking on him, he began to get to his feet; and as he arose his face began to shine, and shined more and more. He came toward me, and came so close that I could have put my hand on him; and he said, "I am your Saviour." I awoke singing "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me." Surely there is nothing that sounds like these words do to a wretched sinner like me; they are sweet indeed.

As I lay there last Saturday morning thinking about it being Easter time, this dream came before me, and I remembered how his body looked lying there; and I was made sad because my sins helped to bruise his sinless body. Yet, I was made to rejoice that His love for his people was strong enough to bring him down here to redeem them from the curse of the law. Jesus said that greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. Yes, he laid down his life for his people; no man took it from him. "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it up again." It was pure love that brought him here; and oh, how we love him when we realize and feel what he has done for us.

I hope that I have understood much that was given me in that dream, and have had many sweet and wonderful experiences during the forty-two years since I saw my Lord lying in death; but death could not hold him: I saw him come from under the power of it; even while he was lying there in death, he was the Saviour of his people. The bread that those people came and ate out of the coffin, was a symbol of his flesh. So we do eat his flesh and drink his blood: There has never been a time when he was not the Saviour of his people. Our spiritual life subsists upon his death; so his body is bread indeed and his blood is drink indeed. It is all too mysterious for the natural mind to understand.

This vision was not the beginning of my experience, if I have one. It started with me when I was a small boy eight or ten years old. One said that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. In about 1919, I was shocked with lightening very badly. It came so near killing me that I could not get over it; every time after that, when there would come up a cloud, I was scared, for I was sure the Lord was going to take my life. I did not want to die, for I knew I was a sinner, and was afraid I would be sent to hell; and I could not stand the thought of that. I was disturbed about the end of time and the judgment: How horrible it was! At times I would try to pray, but did not know how. Even when neighbors would burn brush and I would see the smoke, the first thing that would come into my mind, was that the Lord was going to destroy everything; and I could see fire

coming toward me burning great canals through the earth, and it seemed it would be impossible for me to escape. Words cannot express the agony I was carried through. As I grew older the seasons became farther apart, and not so severe.

I recall an experience just before I was married. I was at church, and the preacher seemed to preach to me, and I could not refrain from tears. Some of my young friends were present, and they accused me of getting good and having religion. I cursed and denied it, for I didn't want them to think I was any different, or that I cared anything about it. Many times since I have thought of poor old Peter when he denied his Saviour, and have been so ashamed of it: there have been many things in my life that I am ashamed of. I was married the day before Christmas in 1919, and began to go to church more often. I believed the doctrine and loved to hear it preached, but much the preacher said condemned me. And now, after all these years, I still feel condemnation in the flesh. I am glad that Paul expressed himself as he did, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death." Many other things I have experienced, but it would be impossible to record them all.

I would like to say a little about my call to the ministry. Some of it has been soul-searching. I want to go back to the dream that left me so confused I could not sleep nor eat. About two years after I was married, I became deeply interested in the church, but did not have a mind to join until sometime after I had the dream on Easter Sunday night. I went along in this confused state for a few months, and then got in so much trouble I felt that I could not live much longer. One day I came in from work, fed my mule, and went to the house to eat lunch; I sat down to the table but could not eat anything. I got up and went into another part of the house and fell across the bed and hid my face, to hide my tears, when something said to me to go see Elder G. M. Trent, and tell him the dream, and he will give you ease. The next day I went to see him and told him what I had seen. He gave me some ease of mind, but did not interpret the dream, but did admonish me to join the church and be baptized.

I still did not have a mind to do that, but some months afterwards, when I came in from work and was resting awhile, I had a very peculiar feeling, and was sure something was going to happen that night. I did not know what, but felt reconciled to whatever it was. Some time in the night I got into some sort of condition that I cannot describe: it seemed I was being vaporized, that I was just a vapor and could not speak, but was trying with all my might to call upon the Lord to save. When I could speak, I said, "Lord, save me"; and I felt his arm under me, and I was delivered from that condition, and my whole body and soul was praising His holy name. What a wonderful feeling it was!

After this I was given a mind to unite with the church, but couldn't do it for some time. I would go to the meetings with that in mind, but just could not do it. Then sometime in 1923 I was given to ask for a home with these good people; and pretty soon I was impressed to try to tell them something about what the good Lord had done for me. Then the burden came: I had no learning, and was backward, and it seemed out of the question; yet the pressure was so strong I saw no way around it, yet I could not see how I could do it. I tried many times to pray over this matter, and made many promises; only to break them.

The first of June, 1924, I was in the field shocking wheat with my father; and something said for me to go to Wolf Island on Sunday — this was after I had been given liberty to speak. I answered, "No, for these people know I have been liberated, and they will expect me to try to preach, and I can't do

it." But something said for me to go on, "And, lo, I am with you." This melted me down, and I went into the woods and fell down and tried to beg the Lord to give me evidence in a dream before Sunday, and I would go and offer myself. The dream came that I asked for, in which I was shown the order of the services. I went that Sunday morning, feeling good over having the dream, and was encouraged very much; and when I got there the preachers that I saw in the dreams were there; and the order of services was just like I had seen it, up to my part. It seemed I was tied to my seat, and I could not get up. After the meeting was over, and I stepped out of the building, something asked me what I was going to do now, that I had lied to God, and did not keep my promise. I felt so sinful and so mean, I knew it would do no good to try to pray, for I was sure the Lord would not hear me. All my hope was gone, and I was sure in my feelings that from now on I would be a cast away; and that the good Lord was just in it.

I made up my mind to stay away from his people; and I wrote my pastor, Elder G. M. Trent, to have my name taken off the church book, that I never expected to go there again: and I was honest about it, for I did not think that I could. When he got my letter, he and one of the brethren came to see me, but I was in so much trouble that I did not want to see them. But they talked with me and tried to help my feelings, but there was nothing they could do, so they left me as they found me.

Elder Flinchum was to be with Elder Trent that week end, and they had an appointment at a school house that night. They came by where I was Saturday morning to see if I would go with them to church that afternoon, but I refused. I did promise them that I would come to their appointment that night; which I did. I had no intention of taking any part in the service, but they begged me so hard that I gave way, with the feeling that it won't make any difference now, because nothing I do can make matters worse. I went ahead with that feeling, and opened the hymn book to the first hymn I saw, and after singing, I knelt to go through with just as short of a form as possible, and then get out of the way. But, to my surprise, it seemed the windows of heaven were opened to me, and "heaven came down my soul to greet." Oh, what a deliverance it was! I could then say with David that surely his goodness had followed me all the days of my life, and I should dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

This is some of the way I have been brought along. It has not been easy, for a lot of it has been rough; yet there has been pleasure and enjoyment in it. Sometimes my heart is melted with thanksgiving, and my whole being is in praise to my God for his mercy and love, and longsuffering towards me. What I have mentioned here are just a few of the things that stand out in my mind, and in my life, for I could not begin to record all I have seen and felt. My mind is often taken back to some experience, and I am given renewed strength and courage to continue on. After being in the ministry thirty-eight years, and serving churches most of the time, my greatest desire is to meet with my brethren and tell them something about Jesus who died for his people. I am so often reminded of the dream — how his body looked lying there on the floor so helpless and lifeless, but so quickly changed into a living Christ, the Saviour of his people. What wondrous love it was that caused the "Lord of bliss to lay aside his crown for my soul"! What love in all his actions ran, and what wondrous words of grace he spoke. There is nothing that sounds so sweet as the name of Jesus in a believer's ear, for it soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds, and drives away his fears, as the poet wrote. Oh, what a joy to be able to tell his little ones about him: tell them how He loves them, and how He provides for them, and that there is plenteous grace in him for all of them.

Little children, be of good cheer, for

Jesus has overcome the world, and greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. Jesus died for your offences, and arose for your justification; and now is seated at the right hand of the Father making intercession for you; and is touched with your infirmities. Little children, love one another.

D. A. OBryant

Rt. 1,
Elora, Tenn.

Signs of the Times:

I am sending a check for $3.00 for renewal of my subscription; and I am writing a few lines upon absolute predestination, which I believe to be a bonding liquid or cement flowing out from the triune God-head, regulating our being; and binding together a line of cables that have their beginning in the same triune God-head, and extending down through time and flowing back into the same triune God-head. A few of these cables are: providence, overruling and controlling every act and event that has ever taken place, now taking place, or will take place; wisdom, foreknowledge, judgment, election, revelation, love, truth, the way, life, righteousness, resurrection, repentance, grace, vengeance, etc.

Now these cables are just as firm and absolute as God is, and sure and certain; and no "stake-setter" can find any other beginning or ending; neither can he shorten or lengthen either one of them, because they are set in order and created in Christ, and manifested at God's appointed time by his operation. In regard to the fall of man in Adam, he was created of the earth and was a product of nature — an upright product, a perfect product. There was no holiness about him as far as perfection was manifested. I explain his fall in this way: if yesterday there was no law against speeding on the highway, and a man went down it at 120 miles per hour, did he violate any law? Certainly not. Last night there was a law passed limiting the speed. This morning the same man was doing 120 miles per hour, and the law captured him. This shows that a man by nature is a law breaker.

I know that this doctrine does not suit "stake-setters," but I feel as an old elder who was reared in Tennessee, and died in Texas, expressed it:

> "So shout on ye heathen,
> You don't disturb me;
> For thus it was purposed,
> And thus it shall be."

A. M. Campbell

"GOD MOVES IN A MYSTERIOUS WAY"

Rt. 3,
Pocomoke, Maryland

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

I hope this finds you both well; I was sorry to hear that Sister Wood has been sick.

We had a wonderful association last Fall. There was one thing missing, for it seemed you two should have been there; we surely missed you. We have had a wonderful week; and I have been taught another lesson that I much needed, and I would like to tell you about it.

It started sometime back: I seemed to have "dried up", and had no desire to read the Bible — it didn't matter whether I attended the gatherings of our people, or not; though I attended the meetings at the meeting-house regularly, but didn't seem to get much out of it. We were invited to Brother Ward's last Thursday night, when Elder Spangler was to be there. After lunch I asked my wife if she wanted to go; and she said that she would like to. I planned to come home early from my work in the hay, but when I got the wagon loaded, it was later than I expected. Then I remembered that I had left a wrench on the mower, and went to look for it, but it was lost in

the hay. I was quite disgusted, for I knew that if I picked it up in the harvester, it would do considerable damage to the machine. So I started looking for it instead of coming on home: I didn't want to go anyway. But I couldn't find the wrench, and went on home, thinking that I would tell my wife that it was too late to go, and that I would go to bed and try to get some sleep.

When I got home, I found that Brother Albert Fooks had been down to see us, and had left his granddaughter for us to bring to Snow Hill. So we went to Brother Ward's, though I didn't want to, but had to anyway. I was as contrary as a bear with a sore paw. We walked in at Brother Ward's a little after 9 o'clock, and Elder Spangler was talking; and the first thing I heard him say was, "The man was only lukewarm." I thought that he was talking about me. I looked around the room at the brothers and sisters, and it seemed that I had never seen such lovely faces. Something seemed to be springing up inside of me, and I began to rejoice; and I surely was glad that I was there.

We discussed many things in the Bible, with several asking questions, and making comments. I was getting more out of what was being said than I had for a long time. Later, when the brethren were getting ready to leave, Brother Ward asked for us to sing the parting song, Number 335. And my wife said, "Don't sing that, sing Amazing Grace for me." We sang it, and she broke into tears, and asked for a home in the church; and was accepted. Thank God for what he has done for my wife, and for the lesson I was taught. I can see the Lord's hand in the whole thing; and I couldn't keep her home when it was time for her to go. My joy has been restored. I feel that I see the power of God more every day, and the weakness in worms of the dust.

Saturday night was our quarterly-meeting time, and Elmer Hastings and his wife, Olive, and George Mariner came before the church asking for membership, and were received; and on Sunday morning Elder Spangler took the four into the water together, and baptized them. It was a lovely sight.

We hope to see you and Sister Wood soon.

In bonds of love,
Frank A. Holland

P. S.: When I went back to work next morning, the first trip around, I found the wrench.

A LETTER FROM SISTER HOLLAND

Pocomoke, Maryland

Dear Elder and Sister Spangler:

I am sending you the letter I wrote in December. I didn't tell you the dream, but in this letter I will.

I went to bed one night very disturbed about what I believed; and the world in general; and what I believed was right. I knew that I believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, the grace of God, and that everything was in his hands. In the dream, I saw you standing at the foot of my bed, just as plain as you were Sunday morning when you went out into the water and turned around to take us out to be baptized. I awoke, and it was a beautiful dream.

But the next morning I was disturbed about whether I was fit to ask for a home in the church; and it continued until Thursday night at Brother and Sister Ward's. I got so that I was not satisfied at home, or when I was with the ones that believed in the grace of God; I felt like a worm in hot water, and couldn't get out. But Thursday night it seemed that everything had changed.

When I saw you all sitting there talking, it seemed as though I had been lifted out of the deep. When they were ready to sing the parting hymn, I just couldn't stand to see them leave, and wanted them to sing "Amazing Grace".

As they were singing, I felt that the Lord had come to save a wretch like me, and that grace had brought me to ask for a home with the brethren. After they received me, I had a great fear as to whether I was fit, or not. After Sunday morning, the fear is still with me, but I know that I feel satisfied.

I hope that you and Sister Spangler are well.

Yours in hope,
Marie Holland

1508½ Country Club Road
Bastrop, La.

Mrs. Lillian Sutton,
Emmet, Arkansas

Dear Sister Sutton:

It was good to hear from you again, and we appreciate the gift very much.

Many times we feel to be alone, and yearn to talk with the few who speak our language. As you mentioned about being a stranger to your neighbors and children, the thought came to me: What a difference it is between the natural seed and the Spiritual seed. I had rather be with my Brethren than with natural kin who think my belief is so odd and foolish.

We find that there are no ties in the flesh which cause us to love our Brethren. There is something deeper than natural ties, and it is a hidden principal which we cannot show to others, even if we tried. We profess that we love God whom we have not seen, and trust that we possess the love of God.

There is something about the sound that touches our souls. As it is written, "Blessed are they that know the joyful sound." (Psalm 89:15) This type of **joy** is different from worldly joy, and the world does not know anything about Spiritual joy. The natural man does not know anything about a heart that is broken because of the knowledge of its sins, nor does he know anything about soul afflictions, nor anything about being shut up in darkness, and longing and yearning for the presence of God, and desiring his visitations. This is something that must be experienced, and it is not a theory which can be taught to others.

Now, it is true that we can teach others to know the letter of the word, or even teach some to know the basic principals of our doctrine, but if that is all that they have, then it is just a "head religion; and I often fear it is all that I have. We cannot teach one to know God in spirit and in truth, nor can we teach one to mourn over his sins, and to beg God for mercy. We may tell someone about a good natural doctor, but if he is not sick, and does not need a doctor, then he has not experienced the need of a physician, and only has my word for it. But if one becomes sick enough that he desires a doctor, and the doctor comes and works wonders, then he has experienced and knows that the doctor is a good physician. Then, we both have something in common, even naturally speaking. If two people have been at the point of death and had the same disease, and recovered, then they have something in common. They have experienced the same things, and may tell it to others, but find that other people do not really know anything about it, because they have not experienced it.

Let us assume that a mother has lost her only child. Who can comfort her the most? (naturally speaking) Someone else who has experienced the same sorrow of losing her only child.

If the season is dry and dull with you, and if you have gotten to the point that you wonder if Grace has touched your heart, and you wonder if the Lord has forgotten you, and wonder if his mercy is clean gone forever, and wonder if your religion is just imagination, and in this condition of experiencing a season of being in despair, who can comfort you the most? I mean, what person can speak words of comfort to you? just anybody, or someone who has experienced the same thing you are experi-

encing? Of course, we know that all our comfort comes from God. "Blessed be God even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the **God of all comfort;** Who comforteth us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." (2 Cor. 1:3-4)

In reading the scriptures, we read about the travels of the prophets of old; we read about doctrine; and we read the experiences of the prophets. If we have not traveled the road they traveled, then their experience does not mean anything to us, but if we read our feelings in the scriptures, then we rejoice in the matter that our experiences coincide. If you have experienced seasons of despair as mentioned above, and read: "I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak. I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times. I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search. Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah." (Psalms 77:-3-10) Then as we read this and have felt the same things that David did, it causes us to rejoice, and it gives us comfort.

When we see and feel the love waxing cold in Zion, it causes us much sorrow. We think of the scriptures mentioned above, and we think of the experiences of the Children of Israel, how that they were driven from their own country, and that they were scattered across the earth, and that God had withdrawn his presence from them, and was not blessing them as a nation as He had done before. As Jesus said, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." (Matthew 23:38) We think of Jeremiah, of his discouragements. He was told by God to speak unto the people, and they would not take heed to the exhortations. He was saddened by the captivity of Israel.

I wonder, are we experiencing the same things in a sense that the children of Israel did in their desolations? It seems that the fulness of the Gentiles is getting nearer.

May the Lord richly bless you, and enable you to meditate sweetly upon heavenly things, and continue to bless you with the zeal to press on for the mark of the prize of the high calling as it is in Christ Jesus.

Yours in Christian love,

W. W. Hudson, Jr.

Rt. 3, Box 44,
Sulligent, Alabama

Dear Editors:

We enjoy the **Signs of the Times** so much. The Editorials, Voices of the Past, and each letter of those who have been made to know the truth, are so uplifting to us.

We are so little and weak, and have so many doubts and fears, that we often wonder if we are deceived, and did we deceive the dear people of God when we asked for a home with them, thinking that we had been given a hope in Christ — an anchor to our soul both sure and steadfast. Though the way often seems dark, and the sun gives no light, at God's appointed time we are lifted up, and our hope seems so great, that we can say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." It is then that we are given grace to say that we do love the people of God, and the doctrine they have loved and contended for through the years.

It is now time to renew our subscriptions for the two names listed on the sheet inclosed. May it please God to bless the Editorial Staff, with all the household of faith, that the **Signs** may continue in the future, as in the past, to

contend for the doctrine of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: That He finished his work that He came to do, and nothing can be added, or anything taken from it.

A sinner saved by grace, if at all,
Miss Tennie Egger

Notes of a sermon delivered by Elder Lefferts at Mt. Zion meeting-house June 25, 1933.

(Taken by Sister Grace Aston.)

2 CHRONICLES 24:8-14.

The word here translated chest, in the original, is the same as that, in other places, translated ark and coffin. There are five of these mentioned in the Old Testament. 1st, Noah's ark, denoting salvation. 2nd. The ark of bulrushes in which Moses, when a babe, was laid, denoting preparation. 3rd, The coffin in which Joseph was laid, denoting sanctification or separation, 4th, The ark of the covenant, over which was the mercy seat, denoting acceptance and 5th, The chest in which were placed the offerings of the people, denoting dedication.

It was no accident that these five different arks appeared in their order, for salvation is first in the experience of the believer and the things which accompany salvation follow in their order. Noah's ark was ordained for the salvation of those whom God chose. The LORD shut them in this ark of salvation, they did not shut themselves in. There was but one window, which was in the top. Here we see God's mercy in sparing Noah the sight of the destruction around him; also, to see the light, Noah had to look up. What a mercy in times of stress to be enabled to look away from all that distresses us, all the turmoil around us, and to look up by faith to Jesus. The second ark, in which Moses was laid, was at a time in the history of the Israelites when they were oppressed by the Egyptians. The Hebrews were multiplying so, that the Pharaoh, which knew not Joseph, feared they would revolt. To prevent this, he ordered all male babies to be destroyed. Moses' mother hid her child until he could no longer be hidden, then she made this ark of bulrushes, put her child therein, and laid it in the flags by the river's brink. Pharaoh's daughter, coming to bathe, took the child and he was brought up in Pharaoh's house, as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, where he was educated as a prince. Here was an opportunity for Moses to be a great man in the world, but Moses, by faith, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, recognized his own people, and chose rather to suffer with them. The Lord was watching over the infant Moses, preparing him for the work that He had for him to do, in the deliverance of the Israelites. So the Lord watches over his people, preparing their hearts to seek him for deliverance from the bondage of Satan and Sin.

Joseph, before he died, took an oath of the children of Israel, that when the Lord should visit his people with deliverance, they should carry his bones with them; so when he died they embalmed him and put him in a coffin in Egypt, and when their deliverance came, they did as Joseph had commanded, carrying his coffin through the Red Sea and in all their wanderings in the wilderness until they went into the land of Canaan, Joseph was a type of Christ, and Joseph's body journeying with them was a token of their being a people separate unto the Lord. When the Israelites passed through the Red Sea Joseph's body was with them and the Red Sea closed behind them for them never to return to Egyptian bondage, and even though in their hearts they might lust after the things of Egypt, they could not go back to it, even if they would, and in all their murmurings and lustings after the flesh-pots of Egypt, there was Joseph's body, a silent testimony that they were a separate nation, and could not go with the world. What a picture of the believer! even after

experiencing many mercies at the hand of the Lord, our hearts are so desperately wicked that were it not for God's grace we should turn back to the world: but those who are a separate people unto the Lord are dead to sin, so how can they live any longer therein; and if our hearts would turn again unto sin, we cannot live in it, for we are dead to it by the body of Christ. When the believer has the remembrance of His body, His sufferings and death in sight, sin becomes exceeding sinful.

The next ark was the ark of the covenant, over which was the mercy seat, and in which was the pot of manna, the unbroken tables of commandments, and Aaron's rod that budded. This ark was made of shittim-wood, a desert growth. In this ark, being a type of Christ, the wood signified his humanity, and being a desert growth was in accord with Isaiah, who, when prophesying of Jesus, said he should be "as a root out of a dry ground." The over-lay of gold signified his Deity. The unbroken law was laid in this ark, and in Jesus is the only place where the law is kept; here also was the manna which kept alive the Israelites, and in Jesus is the sustenance of his people. Aaron was the High Priest for the Israelites, so Jesus is the High Priest of our profession. Over the ark was the mercy seat. This ark and the mercy seat were in the holiest place, where only the High Priest was allowed to enter to make atonement for the people. The High Priest's garment had bells upon it, and as long as the people heard the bells they knew that the High Priest lived. We, in this age of grace, know that our High Priest still lives, we hear the joyful sound — the proof of it — in the ministry of the gospel. The people also knew, when the High Priest presented himself alive, that his offering had been accepted. All this is symbolical of our great High Priest who still lives to make intercession for us.

The Fifth ark was the chest of the text, which was placed at the gate of the house of the Lord for the reception of the offerings which the people gave WILLINGLY, which commandment the Lord laid upon them by Moses in the wilderness, and consisted of such things as the people had to give, not simply money. Turning to the New Testament we find that this was still kept up in the time of Christ, for Jesus watched various ones casting into the treasury: among them was a poor widow who cast in two mites which make a farthing. We hear people speak of giving the widow's mite when they perhaps give five or ten cents for some purpose, but this is not the widow's mite at all. The Scripture says she "cast in ALL that she had, even all her living." In so doing she was casting herself wholly in dependance upon her Lord. So, the Lord's people, when moved by the love of God and the remembrance of his mercies to them, surrender their all to him. All they have is willingly given in his service, their joy is to minister to the brethren of their substance, they love to lay aside earthly cares and assemble themselves together to hear Christ preached, sometimes having to make sacrifices to get there, but the love which they have for their Lord makes them do all these things out of a willing heart. In Acts we read of the church having all things in common, not counting anything their own, but Ananias and Sapphira kept something for themselves, and then, lying about it, they were stricken with death. So a death-like spirit comes upon those who hold back ought that they have, they lose the joy that there is in spending and being spent in God's service. Paul exhorts believers (notice believers, not those dead in sin) that they present their bodies a living sacrifice, which is their reasonable service, their willing service, but as the hymn says, "Yet if I might make some reserve, and duty did not call, I love my God with zeal so great, that I should give him all."

Thus, from these five arks, we see that these blessings are for believers: that their salvation is of God, and comes first, before any of these other things

can follow. The ark of dedication was the last, and so it is with believers, their service to the Lord is the result of first, their salvation, second, the preparation of the heart to receive these things, third, the consequent separation from the world, fourth, their acceptance in the Beloved, and fifth, dedication, their sincere desire to show forth by their walk and conversation the praise of him who has called them out of darkness into his most marvelous light.

COMFORTED IN READING THE *SIGNS*

Rt. 1,
Walkers, Ontario,
Canada

Dear Editors:

Please renew my subscription for one year; the remainder to be used to aid the *Signs,* or as you see fit.

I get much comfort from reading the *Signs of the Times,* yet, due to failing eyesight, I cannot read much at a time; yet I desire to thank God for even partial sight, which is more than I deserve.

I hope God may bless each of the editors and those who write for its contents, with wisdom in rightly dividing the word of truth. And may God bless all his children everywhere according to their need, both in providence and in grace, as all things must, and do, come from our blessed Triune God; to whom all praise and honor belong.

In love of the truth,
Flossie Bishop

UNION MEETING

The Lord willing, the **Union Meeting** of the churches of the Presdestination Old School Baptists of California will be held with the Bakersfield Church on Alpine Street, near Baker Street and California Avenue in the Oddfellow's Hall, on October 30, 31 and November 1, 1964.

For information call Sister Bertha Wright, 108 Circle Drive, Bakersfield, Phone EX 90429.

Walter Wilson, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To July 1, 1964)

J. A. Davison, Ala.	$2.50
Charlie Stripling, Ala.	2.00
T. J. Yelverton, N. C.	5.00
Mrs. D. H. Baker, Wash.	1.00

BRETHREN PLEASE NOTE

We have long felt that obituaries sent for publication should be much shorter, so as not take up too much space in the SIGNS. The number of these sent to us is increasing, and we must request the brethren who write them, to greatly condense them. It is difficult for us to have to edit obituaries, so the brethren will please keep this in mind when writing them. — Editors

Danville, Virginia **October, 1964**

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TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

MATTHEWS 24:22

"And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

There has never been a scene just like the one that is here being described. In all the history of mankind there has never been an economy brought into existence for the safe government of the inhabitants of it, that has been brought to a miserable end as was this one. We may look where we will, we will not find anything like this in ancient, medieval, or modern history. Like all of the other pages of history, we will call in question the right of God to govern his creatures. Our carnal mind will not allow the thought of God doing that which, to us, is contrary to that which is right.

God has been arraigned before the tribunal of the carnal mind many times. One time, while discussing the sovereignty of God with one that claimed to believe in God, I made mention of God commanding Joshua to destroy Jericho with its men and women, young and old. He told me that he did not care for the God of the Old Testament, and that he did not have fellowship for those that did. This tribunal that would deny God the right to govern his own, to do with his own as it pleased him (Mat. 20:15), condemns all of the carnage that has been carried out against the Jews. So many times I have had people to tell me that the fiendish work of Hitler against the Jews would never be in the United States. But as I write, there are in my room periodicals telling about the **hate** groups in the United States, and not least among the list is one for the persecution of the Jews. Yet, this same carnal mind advocates a law system for salvation, which system tells us that if we do this and that contrary to God's laws that we will suffer the retribution of His punishment. Let me hasten to say that I believe this also that every mistake that we make is brought into judgment. I agree that the wrongs or sins that we do, have not been winked at by the Holy Creator, but rather that all are given account for. This meeting the account was done by the Lord Jesus Christ. What I am trying to meet is this: The religion of men argue a conditional system of salvation which, if kept, will get blessings in this life and that which is to come. Then they turn around and tell us how shameful it is that the poor Jews are being treated as they are, when, as a matter of fact, their treatment is certainly the righteous judgment of God, and is coming to pass as he told them that it would.

The terrible judgments of God that were executed on the Jews here were predicted by Moses, Joel, Daniel, and other prophets. These judgments are now meeting in this one common center of destruction. Josephus computes the dead in this siege as being well over one million. This wholesale destruction was according to the purpose of God. God not only takes away the first, but he also establishes the second. Regardless of the carping of the world about keeping the law of God for salvation, it must be brought to an end; regardless of the carping of those that would throw sneers at the purposes of God, this judgment, this vengeance taking, was in keeping with the removal of one religion and the setting up of another. It is not in the nature of man to give up his fortress voluntarily; moreover, our God will not divide the honors of salvation with another, he will not reign (let us say, semi-reign) on half of a throne, therefore, this terrible carnage, which the carnal mind of man, (mine as well as any other man) will always arraign God for carrying out, is all according to his purpose. While Titus, the general that played havoc with these Jews, attributed his success to God, yet he, as are all wicked men, was but a sword in the hand of God (Psa. 17:13); He used him, as He uses all wicked men, to accomplish his purposes.

This coming to the end of the Jewish

economy serves a three fold purpose, either of which leaves God vindicated in bringing it to pass. 1st. The sins of the Jews as a nation. This was in every day practice as well as in the rejection of the Saviour. 2nd. This was a great mercy in breaking up and discontinuing the following of Judaism. 3rd. It brought to an end all of the ancient sacrifices, showing conclusively that the national prosperity of the Jews as a nation was at an end, and in making ready the coming in of the Christian or gospel or grace dispensation.

As I have stood on the beach and watched the waves come in, it has often seemed that the next one would certainly sweep around me, but not so. They would get so far, and then break and go back to the body of water. How wonderful it has been to view the work of God in this way. I would not thrust my views on any one, but it has seemed in many cases in the Bible that the sea is trouble to God's people. This I am sure of, that the sea is treacherous, and what a deadly thing a little sin is. How easy it is to go out into the sea and then not be able to turn back; how easy it is to make a habit of doing wrong, but how hard it is to be able to turn back from it. As the Lord Jesus Christ mastered the wind and the waves so that they obeyed him, just so, did he triumph over sin and brought it to a standstill on Calvary; just so did he command Satan to the rear, and he got to the rear. This sea was stayed at the coming of Israel out of Egypt; it could not destroy Ezekiel when led forth into the waters; Peter could not drown in it; the storm did not destroy Paul, but rather his vessel was driven to the right place. The waves of it have always come so far but not any farther. Now as I write, I am carried away in wonder as the waves of soldiers were thrown at this great city, as the wickedness which was being used as a rod in the hands of God, came in waves to crush and destroy this old Jerusalem, this stronghold of the legal system of salvation, this bringing to the end of the world for the Jews.

The days were not shortened for the sake of the Jews as a nation. They were not shortened for the sole purpose of saving flesh, for had that been the purpose in the days being shortened, God would never have used the sword in the first place. If it had been God's desire for the city to have continued, for the inhabitants to have gone on in their peace and ease of mind, for the legal system to have continued until now, it is with assurance that I say that none of the carnage would have ever come to pass. This shortening of days was in the number and not in the length of each day. We have the same expression in other places (Psa. 89:45; 102:23; Prov. 10:27), and we have the one case of years (and thus days) being added (2 Kings; 20 Isa. 38). We do not have any instances of days being shortened from the full evening and morning. We have one instance of a day being made longer (Joshua 10).

Behind every move and work that God has done, it has been for the sake of his elect people. He has, and he does, save all men with providential blessings, but they are in time and for time and will end in time. None of them will be a blessing towards the lessening of eternal punishment. All through the law dispensation there were acts of mercy seen to His people. How wonderful are the directions for their escape in this awful destruction. It may be that these instructions are given to be used as it seemed good to the elect, but if so, we are preaching the wrong doctrine. They were given to the people of God, and the gifts and callings of God are without repentance. They were given to the people that the days were shortened for, and shall we say that the instructions were lacking? Either the instructions were not thorough, or the power in the One commanding was not enough, or the days were not shortened enough. If the God of the whole earth used his sword to remove the first, did He remove even one of those that he shortened the days to save? Me thinks not.

They were shortened for the elect's sake. The conflict was too intense for men to endure very long. God did not have any pity on the Jews as a nation; He does not show pity on ungodly men. But how lovely it is that he is pitiful toward his chosen people (Isa. 63:9), and this pity moved him (not upon him) to shorten the days to a befitting number for the sake of the elect. Had he not done so, the elect would not have been saved.

The things that were written afore time were written for our learning (Rom. 15:4). Primarily, that has reference to the Old Testament, but as this great destruction of Jerusalem was foretold by the prophets, we are safe in taking it as being for our instruction. In what way is this narrative benefical to us? It has to do with the ending of the Jews as a national power; it has to do with their world coming to an end. Perhaps there is a question in the minds of some as to how this concerns us. We were not there; we are not to expect that many of us will ever be in or near the present Jerusalem. We go back and reread the narrative and we wonder still more. We see what a little value was placed on what they possessed; we see that one time for these things would be better than another; poor mothers-to-be often get worried about being with young at a time like this. What significance has these things to us? Let us read carefully the ordeals of this time. Let us remember how thick the air was with flying instruments of destruction; let us behold the cries of warriors and the victims; let us remember what an awful time it would be for a woman that was expecting to bear a baby; let us remember all of these things of horror, but let us remember that the time of horror was shortened for the sake of the elect.

The history of the Jews under the law is the history of us under the law. I do hope that each of my readers will have their mind arrested by the Holy Spirit that we might all see our history as it is unfolded in our experience. The pride which the ancient Jews had in their city is close kin to our pride in the citadel that we have erected as we lived under the law. There is not any ease and security felt by mortal man like unto the man or woman that is under the law. They are in peace, their palace is well kept, their goods are plentiful and good. No one that has a city like this; that is able by deeds of his own to keep it in good shape; that goes and comes as he pleases, will ever think of it being attacked, or, if being attacked, that the repulse of any and all enemies will be quickly brought about. Have you had this ease? Have you consoled yourself that your barns were well filled? Have you felt that you were armed to the teeth with a roll under your arm of deeds well performed? These are pertinent questions, for the day will come for the elect that are thus exercised, when the foundations of the city will be shaken. At every place in our defences there will be the finger of God pointing at us. We will run here and there mending breaches in our wall of protection, and the breaches will become more and greater as we endeavor to stem the attack and to repel the invader. The archers will hurt us (Gen. 49:23; Judges 5:11; Job 16:13), and the thundering voice of the Law-Giver will denounce all that are fallen short. When this time comes we will have to count off all that we had depended on. Our weapons will be removed, and what is more our goods to live on will be spoiled. How can any survive such a conflict as this?

How has it been with you? Was it easy? Were you permitted to retreat with your goods intact? Were you dealt with so generously that you do not look upon the transition from law to grace as anything to be affrighted about? If so, you have read somebody's history of the transition, but you have not been translated out of darkness into light. You are reading the history of some one else by sparks of your own kindling (Isa. 50:11). The type (Deut. 5:5,-

25; 18:16; Heb. 12:18,21) must all be brought to bear in anti-type in our experience. We must see and **feel** that the battle is going against us; that the conflict is more than we can stand up under; we must be made to realize that the palace which we gloried in has been so completely razed that not one of the precious stones of thy building is left standing (Ezek. 27:22; 28:13); that ruin and desolation has come to us, and that we have had to count all of the things of this legal city of ours as being counterfeit and not sufficient to prepare a sinner to stand in the presence of God.

How long would a poor down cast prisoner of hope be able to continue under such conditions? If the Lord had not opened the Red Sea when he did, is it not a fact that the evidence is such that would lead to death for **all** of the Israelites? But his opening of it saved **all** of them from perishing. If God had not prepared every step of the way, how could **any** have gotten across Jordan? But isn't it true that his preparation enabled **all** of them to get across? Isn't it true that Peter would have perished had not the Lord reached his hand to him? Follow this people, this elect people whithersoever thou wilt, and deliverance came at the precise moment that they lost all confidence in themselves. At the Mount of Sinai and at every other place the times looked as though all would perish, but the great stress was alleviated by the shortening of the days or hours or fleeting seconds in such a way that it was exactly on time — at the set time when all of the resources that a sinner **thought** he had in the city of legalism had been used up and death stared him in the face. If these deliverances had not come when they did, isn't it true that death was at hand? Do you have a remembrance of the hour when death was at hand for you? Do you remember that the enemy did not have time to get you because One came and delivered you? Do you remember all this? If so, you have an experience of the shortening of the days that the elect might be saved.

This is the answer to our sister in the Lord, Mrs. Mabel Bell of Quincy, Florida.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ROMANS IX. 6-8.

"They are not all Israel which are of Israel; neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children; but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."

The paramount importance of the doctrine of vital relationship to God in Christ Jesus, and joint heirship with him, as indispensable to salvation, may well be inferred from the indefatigable labor of the apostle in all his epistles, especially those addressed to the churches of Galatia and Rome, in elucidating the doctrine of the new birth, as stated by our Lord to Nicodemus, John iii. 3-7. As that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and as only that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, we need not marvel that it is so positively declared, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The first Adam, as the seminal head or progenitor of all his posterity, was of the earth, earthly; and in his first estate, before he transgressed, he was not spiritual, but natural. — 1 Cor. xv. 46, 47. Consequently he was, even in his best estate, elementally qualified only for an earthly paradise; for as the things of the Spirit of God can only be spiritually discerned, he could not, without being born of the Spirit, see the kingdom of God, or know the things of the Spirit. No amount of reformation, or of mental or physical improvement, education or moral discipline, can

supersede the imperative necessity of a spiritual birth to enable any man to see the kingdom of God, or to develop a spiritual, vital relationship with God. Flesh is not the production of spirit, or of spiritual relationship to God; nor can fleshly or earthly seed produce spiritual or heavenly life, or qualify man for the enjoyment of that which is spiritual.

In all the various branches of antichrist the radical error is cherished and pertinaciously contended for, that natural men possess moral ability to acquire by their persistent efforts, not only a discernment of, but also a participation in the kingdom of God; and that the influence of religious training in Sabbath Schools, bible classes, protracted meetings, anxious benches, and missionary appliances, can effect or produce all that is essential to make children or adults savingly acquainted with the things of the Spirit of God, and prepare them for heaven and heavenly things. This fatal error is as prevalent to-day among all the Arminian tribes of the earth as it was in former times with the carnal Jews, who thought their fleshly descent from Abraham secured to them eternal life.

The Gentiles churches, beset as they were in the days of Paul by Judaizing teachers, required the labors of the inspired apostles to teach them the way of the Lord more perfectly. In the eighth chapter of John the carnal Jews claimed to be Abraham's seed; this claim Jesus admitted, so far as related to their fleshly relation. He said to them, "I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. . . . If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." They truly were the lineal descendants of Abraham according to the flesh, but they were not of the faith of Abraham. Religiously, they were of their father the devil. That is, the spirit of falsehood and murder was the spirit of Satan, not of Abraham. In writing to the Galatians, Paul says, "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Here the apostle evidently alludes to the promise which God made to Abraham: Now to Abraham and to his seed were the promises made; he saith not unto seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. This covenant was made with Abraham, and confirmed of God in Christ as his seed, four hundred and thirty years before the law was given from Sinai to Israel; and being so confirmed, it could not be disannulled by the Sinai covenant. "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could sware by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, Surely, blessing, I will bless thee, and multiplying, I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise." — Heb. vi. 13-15. Observe: this promise, solemnly confirmed by the oath of God, was not only made to Abraham, as a man, but to him as a patriarchal type of Christ, as his seed. "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise" (who being Christ's, are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise) "The immutability of his counsel, confirmed it" (in Christ) "by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we" (who being Christ's and Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise) "might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." — Heb vi. 17, 18.

Now to return to our text — "They are not all Israel which are of Israel." "Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved." — Rom. ix. 27. "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work." — Rom. xi. 5, 6. It cannot then be partly of grace and partly of works; if it be of one, it cannot

be of the other. Of which then is it? Well, this same apostle tells us, "For by grace are ye saved, through faith: and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." — Eph. ii. 8-10. As the number of God's children among the thousands of the carnal Israelites were as a very small remnant compared to the sands of the sea, so is the election of grace at this day compared with the popular multitudes who profess christianity.

"Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children." On this part of our text we have already dwelt. Although they were recognized under the old covenant, in the worldly sanctuary, and in the carnal ordinances, John the Baptist, in the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, drew the line of discrimination, and declared that the axe was laid unto the root of the trees, to cut those fruitless trees off from Abraham as their father, as their root, and refused them the ordinance of baptism on the ground of that relation. Only they who brought forth fruit meet for repentance were accepted, and all others of them were rejected as a generation of vipers.

"But, In Isaac shall thy seed be called." That is, the seed of Abraham should be called in Isaac. Now, "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye hear the law?" If not, listen: "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons; the one by a bond maid, the other by a free woman. But he who was born of the bond woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." "Which things," says the apostle, "are an allegory; for these are the two covenants. The one from Mount Sinai, in Arabia, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar," or Hagar, and represents Jerusalem, which then was, in bondage with her children, the carnal Jews, who under the Sinai covenant were in bondage. But the other son, who was born unto Abraham by Sarah the free woman, represents the covenant of promise, which was made with Abraham and his seed, and confirmed of God in Christ as the seed of Abraham, four hundred and thirty years before the Sinai covenant was given. Now, as in the allegory, Hagar represents the legal covenant, so her son represents the children of the flesh. And as Hagar was herself a bond maid, she could no more entail freedom to her children, than the law of a carnal commandment could give spiritual life to those who were under it. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse. And if a law had been given that could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law; but instead of this, it is postively declared that by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified in the sight of God. Therefore the children of the flesh, with all their law-righteousness and legal works, although they, like Ishmael, may for a time dwell in Abraham's house, and be nurtured on the lap of Sarah, cannot be heirs with Isaac, in whom the promised seed is called, because he is a child of the flesh, gendered in bondage, and born a slave, and being a child of the flesh, is not a child of God. He was born after the flesh, and not by the promise which God had made to Abraham, that Sarah should have a son. Neither did God recognize the result of the **means** system devised by Sarah, as the fulfillment of his promise. As a child of the flesh of Abraham, he was an illegitimate, and could not be heir with Isaac, who was the child of promise, the son of the free woman, and the free born son of the Jerusalem which is above, which is the mother of the legitimate heirs of the promise which is confirmed of God in Christ. As Ishmael represents, in this divinely inspired allegory, all the children of the flesh, Isaac represents all the

children of God; therefore the apostle says to the saints, as children of the heavenly Jerusalem, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scriptures? Cast out the bond woman and her son; for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. So then we, brethren, are not children of the bond woman, but of the free."

There is then a seed that gendereth to bondage, which seed when gendered, generated and born, is born after and of the flesh; and because it is born after the flesh, and is flesh, in it we cannot please God, because the children of the flesh are not the children of God. "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye (the children of promise) are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead." It is not in our carnal nature, which is born of corruptible, fleshly seed, that the vital relationship of the saints to God consists. For that which is gendered by and born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is produced by any kind of seed, must develop the nature of the seed of which it is produced. Spiritual seed cannot produce other than spiritual development. Flesh cannot produce spirit, nor can spirit produce flesh. But if the Spirit of God dwells in us, then our vital relation to God, as the children of promise, is not in the flesh, which is the production of a different seed. The incorruptible seed cannot produce corruption, nor anything that is corruptible. Therefore, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." Why? "For his (God's) seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." — 1 John iii. 9. But still sin dwells in the flesh of those who are born of God. This is indisputable, if Paul was born of God; for he says that when he does that which he would not, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." — Rom. vii. 25. Being born of the Spirit, he had the mind of Christ, with which he served the law of God; and also having a carnal, depraved nature, which was born of the flesh, of corruptible seed, with it he himself served the law of sin. This incessant conflict between the flesh, born of corruptible seed, and the spirit, born of the Spirit, of incorruptible seed, made him feel like a wretched man, greatly desiring to be delivered from the body of this death. Still having the Spirit and mind of Christ, his faith rested with assurance upon the hope of eternal life which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began, and that victory which God shall give through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In speaking of this promise to Abraham, confirmed of God in Christ, on which the heirship of the spiritual inheritance is secured, the apostle is very explicit. "He saith not, And unto seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Yet in speaking of the heirs of this same promise, he embraces all who are children of the Jerusalem which is above, as being, as Isaac was, children of promise. Evidently regarding them all as they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and as being included in and one with him, even as he is one with the Father. He the Head, and they the body, and all of them required to make up the fullness of him that filleth all in all. — Eph. i. 23. As in Isaac all the seed of Abraham, in the type, was counted, although more numerous than the stars in the firmament, and like the sands of the sea innumerable, still they were all embodied in one man; so the innumerable host of God's children are embodied in Christ, and their development in the fullness of the dispensations of times is not adding to Christ, but multiplying, as God said to Abraham, "Multiplying, I will multiply thee." Christ asks for no more glory than

he had with the Father before the world began. When it was promised, "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation," (Psa. xxii. 30,) he was himself regarded as the seminal Head of that seed, although they were a people that should be born. And as the germ that is to produce a harvest is in the seed, so the eternal life of all the chosen generation of Jesus Christ was secured to them in him from everlasting. None of his seed can be born, as his seed, of any other parentage than himself. None can be recognized as his, except his Spirit dwells in them; and his Spirit only dwells in those who are quickened and born of him. Jesus, in speaking of his death and resurrection, said to Andrew and Philip, "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." This is a beautifully illustrative figure; for as the germ that is to produce the fruit is in the corn of wheat, so the eternal life of all his people was given them in the Son of God. — 1 John v. 11, 12. And therefore, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." — Luke xxiv. 46, 47. Now in fulfilling the promise to Abraham, which was confirmed of God in Christ, it was necessary that he, as the embodiment of the seed to whom the promise was made, should take on him the seed of Abraham, and be made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death. That is, that in our flesh he should die and expiate our sins, that in his life and immortality, which he brought to light in his resurrection, we might be justified, and presented holy and without blame before him in love. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." — Heb. ii. 14-17. He took our flesh, that he might die for us; and we are made partakers of his righteousness, that we may live and reign with him. In no other way could we be made the righteousness of God, and without the righteousness of God we could not be saved. In our flesh he bore our sins, died our death, and met and canceled all the requisitions of the holy law, that we being thus buried with him by baptism into his death, should also be quickened together with him, and raised up together with him in the heavenly places in him. We being thus in him slain by, and dead to the law, by the body of Christ, should be married to him that is risen from the dead, and from under the law, and walk in newness of life, and bring forth fruit unto God. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin." That is, having been put to death in the person of Christ, we are redeemed from the penalty and dominion of that law; and being by the Son made free, are free indeed. "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." — Rom. vi. 6-12.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe May 1, 1877)

OBITUARIES

HERMAN GRIFFIN

Herman Griffin was born October 28, 1893, in Tuscollska County, Alabama, and passed this life November 10, 1963, in Hendrix Hospital, Abilene, Texas; making his stay a little more than seventy years. He moved to Texas with his parents in 1900, and resided in Taylor County since 1904. His father passed away in 1933, and Herman, being unmarried, continued to live in the home and cared for his mother, Mrs. M. N. Griffin, until her death in 1947. He was a veteran of World War I, having served in Europe with the 36th Division.

Survivors include four sisters: Mrs. W. H. Kelly, Houston, Texas; Mrs. Georgia Skelton, Odessa, Texas; Mrs. E. E. Stewart and Mrs. J. U. Jones, Lawn, Texas. Three brothers: Charlie, of Odessa; Troy, of Stephensville, Texas; and Tonnie, of Abilene, Texas. And a number of nieces and nephews, including Mrs. Cecil Allmond and Charles Kelly, whom he reared from early childhood, and many other relatives and friends who mourn his passing.

Although Herman never united with the church, he was a firm believer in God our Saviour, and truly a friend of our church. Funeral services were conducted by the writer, and he was laid to rest in the Dewey Cemetery, Lawn, Texas, to await the coming of Christ.

Written by request of the family.

C. M. Haygood

SISTER DORA USSERY

Sister Dora Ussery, who had been a member of Mount Zion Primitive Baptist Church, near Cash, Texas, most of her life, was better known as "Faithful" to members of her church, as well as others of the same faith and order of this area. She died April 9, 1961.

We assure Deacon J. P. (Pink) Ussery, her companion, that we sorrow with him in the loss of one so loyal, steadfast, and true, not only in the church, but as a companion, friend, and neighbor. We loved her, and are ever conscious of her absence from among us, and in our church affairs. May God give us new hope, strength, and courage in our efforts to perform the duties her passing left for us. God grant that these duties, in a manner, replace the loss by both her husband and the church.

Having no children, she dedicated her life to the church, administering to God's little children whenever and wherever their need arose. Her door was open wide to any and all Primitive Baptists every day, every year, and hundreds enjoyed her warm hospitality on visits, in associations, or just passing through this area.

Her love for the brethren was made manifest every day of her life, and so was her love for her family and friends. We feel richly blessed in various ways because God permitted her life to touch ours.

Written for Mt. Zion Church by

Mrs. Myrtle I. Smith

SISTER PHATAMA E. HAUK

Sister Phatama E. Hauk was born to Mr. and Mrs. G. H. Tatum January 22, 1890, in Hunt County, Texas. She passed from this life March 4, 1964, in the Good Samaritan Home, Hobart, Oklahoma, at the age of more than 74 years.

She came with her parents to Oklahoma in 1906; and was united in marriage to Robert Hauk in 1912, at Davidson, Oklahoma. There were no children. Her beloved husband preceded her in death, having died February 8, 1958. Sister Hauk had a stroke over eleven years ago, which left her paralyzed; and her husband was very faithful in caring for her until his death. Then a sister, Robbie Qualls, and a brother, Ed. Tatum, went into the home and continued to care for her until she needed special care about four years ago, when she was placed in the Home.

Sisted Hauk joined Little Flock Church, Altus, Oklahoma, several years ago, and was a faithful and lovely member. I, her pastor, was inspired each time I had the privilege of visiting her. Although she could not speak because of her paralyzed condition, she so plainly spoke the language of Zion by signs she made. She was always anxious for me to read from the Bible, comment on the Scriptures, and have prayer. "Amazing Grace" was her favorite hymn, which she always wanted us to sing. Sweet memories of those visits will always remain precious to me. "Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God", (2 Peter 3:12), when we, together with all the household of faith, shall be united with our blessed Master, never to be separated again. Blessed thought! Precious hope!

Her survivors are: two brothers, E. F. Tatum, Altus, and Frank Tatum, Port Arthur, Texas; three sisters: Mrs. Collie Davis, Tahlequah, Okla., Mrs. Gene Dunham, Ft. Gibson, Okla., and Mrs. Robbie Qualls, Hobart, Okla.; and a host of other relatives.

She was laid to rest near Snyder, Oklahoma, to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Written at the request of the family.

C. M. Haygood

SISTER EVA HALL

Once again death has come in our midst and called a dear sister home: Sister Eva Hall. She was born August 22, 1892, and died April 10, 1964. On December 25, 1912, she was united in marriage to John Anderson Hall, who died in 1958. She leaves two sons and three daughters, and two sisters to mourn their loss, but we feel their loss is her gain.

Sister Hall joined Mt. Arrat Church in 1914, and came to Malmaison Church by letter in January, 1915. She was a faithful member, and attended meetings whenever possible until her severe illness in March. She loved the church: and all that salvation by grace stands for.

RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to God's will; and that a copy of this writing be placed in our church book; a copy be sent to the family; and one be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church at Malmaison, in Virginia.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Kate Dodd, Clerk

CHARLES LESTER WILLIAMS

Charles Lester (Bud) Williams was called to depart this life April 21, 1964. He died at the Roman Eagle Nursing Home in Danville, Virginia.

Brother Williams was born March 13, 1881, in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, and lived to the age of 83 years. He is survived by his wife, Kate Corbin Williams; two daughters, Mrs. Mary Ramsey and Mrs. Joseph Parrish; one son, Vardelle Williams, all of Danville; and one sister Mrs. Virginia Shields, of Blairs, Va.

Funeral services were conducted at Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Home on April 22, by his pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler. Interment was in Highland Burial Park in Danville.

Brother Williams was a follower and believer of the Primitive Baptists all of his life, but did not unite with the church until late in life. He was faithful to attend his meetings when health permitted. We miss our brother but we feel that he is at rest, and will awaken on that great day to the command from on high — "Come Ye Blessed of my Father" — when all God's children shall be taken to that eternal city to praise Father, Son and Holy Spirit for a never ending eternity.

Harold D. Weatherford

DAISY BELLE GRIFFIN

Daisy Belle Griffin was born on February 18, 1882, in Mississippi, and departed this life on May 8, 1964, at Torrance, California, making her stay on earth 82 years, 2 months and 20 days. She was the daughter of Elder W. W. and Ellen Hawkins Slaughter (deceased), of Texas. At an early date she moved with her parents to east Texas where the family became one of the outstanding families among the early settlers, serving their country from the common walks of life to the Congress of the United States. At this time, her nephew, Mr. Beckworth, is a Congressman from Texas.

In June, 1899, she was married to Joseph Lee Griffin at Canton, Texas. To this union were born six sons and four daughters, four of whom are deceased. Those surviving are Willis Ivy, Oran S., William W., Tillman D., E. R. Griffin, Birdie Kuhlman, and Mary O'Hara, all of California. She and her husband moved to California in 1942, where he died on March 12, 1946. She joined Seclusia Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, Compton, California, and was baptized at the annual Union Meeting at Bakersfield on Saturday before the fifth Sunday in September, 1960, by Elder John Simpson. She loved her church and seldom missed a service. The Lord blessed her with a wonderful voice (high tenor).

At her funeral the brethren sang, by request of her family, "Amazing Grace" and "Jesus, Thou Art the Sinner's Friend." She was indeed a true believer in the sovereignty of God who worketh all things after the counsel of His will. She believed that the salvation of God's people was by grace both in time and eternity. Seclusia Church has lost one of her most humble and loyal members. Her dear children have lost a wonderful mother. Her kind, gentle voice will not be heard any more in this time world, but from the fruits she bore, we are made to feel that she is at home with Jesus. Yes, indeed, our loss is her gain. May it please the dear Lord to reconcile us all to His will. Her body was taken back to Edgewood, Texas and laid to rest beside her departed husband to await the coming of the Lord. The writer tried to speak words of comfort to her children, relatives and loved ones, but words failed me. We are thankful, dear Lord, for giving her to us. She was a source of inspiration in this life to her church. Read and approved by Seclusia Church.

Written by her pastor,
(Elder) T. R. Jefferson
Walter Wilson, Clerk

SISTER SALLIE DIX HYLER

God in His infinite wisdom, love and mercy has removed from our midst another one of our greatly beloved sisters in Christ, Sister

Sallie Dix Hyler. She was born April 2, 1902, and passed away April 3, 1964, at the age of 62 years. She had been in declining health for over a year and suffered much, but bore her suffering with great patience and fortitude.

She united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in September, 1918, and remained a faithful and loyal member until death and attended church many times when in much physical pain. She was one of five lovely sisters, all of whom were blessed with the same religious faith, salvation by grace. She lived her entire life in the community in which she was born and was loved by all who knew her. I knew her most of her life, and feel that she belonged to the family of God. We, the Church of Dan River, will greatly miss her, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

She was united in marriage to Cecil Hyler in September, 1919; to this union were born four children, three of whom survive, Mrs. Evelyn Joyce, Otis and Billie Hyler, of Spray, N. C.; and one step-daughter, eight grandchildren and four step-grandchildren. Surviving also are four sisters, Mrs. Mary Pratt of Spencer, Va., Mrs. Lelia Blackwell and Mrs. John Collie of Ruffin, N. C. and Mrs. Essie Moose of Reidsville, N. C. Sister Hyler was a loving sister, a good mother and a kind and dutiful wife, having so patiently nursed her husband through a prolonged illness, who preceded her in death four years.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, at Dan River Church, and her remains were laid to rest in the Church cemetery in the presence of her many relatives and friends, to await the resurrection morning. The lovely floral contributions expressed the love and esteem in which she was held.

We feel that instead of leaving home, Sister Hyler has gone home to await that great day when she will come into her inheritance which was prepared for her from the foundation of the world. May God bless and sustain the bereaved family who so devotedly cared for her during her illness.

THEREFORE, Be it resolved that a copy of this be placed on our church record, a copy sent to the bereaved family and a copy be sent to *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church at Dan River Saturday night before the fourth Sunday in May, and written by request of the family. I loved her very much.

Mrs. G. F. Pruitt

SISTER CARRIE WORLEY SHORT

Sister Carrie Short, wife of Joel Thomas Short, passed away in Memorial Hospital, Lynchburg, Virginia, May 18, 1964, at the age of 66. Born in Pittsylvania County November 9, 1897, she was the daughter of the late Brother Drew Worley and Sister Pattie Shelton Worley, who survive.

Sister Short was received into the fellowship of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church September 10, 1939. She attended her meetings regularly as possible. She will be greatly missed by family and friends, and the church which she loved.

Besides her husband, she is survived by two sons and five daughters: William Short, Washington, D. C.; Elbert Short, Hurt, Virginia; Mrs. W. F. Lane, Rockville, Maryland; Mrs. Glivs Rice, Altavista, Virginia; Mrs. William Lebricker, Hyattsville, Maryland; Mrs. James Reynolds, Lynchburg, Virginia; and Mrs. Earnest Crawley, Hurt, Virginia. Also surviving are two brothers, Victor Worley of Newport News, Virginia and Edward Worley of Nutley, New Jersey; two sisters, Mrs. Anderson Tuck, Gretna, Virginia, and Mrs. Oscar Denton, Newark, New Jersey; 20 grandchildren, and 2 great grandchildren.

Funeral services were by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, in New Prospect Church at Hurt, Virginia, and she was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, there to await the coming of Christ. May the grace of Almighty God fill the vacancy, that the bereaved may be comforted, and we, the Church at Springfield, bow in humble submission to God's will.

Done by order of Springfield Church,

By Annie Tosh
Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. R. Willis, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

We, the Macedonia Church of Rising Star, Texas, desire to bow in humble sbumission to the will of our Lord in removing from our midst our beloved pastor, Elder C. Y. Osteen, of Perrin, Texas, on January 21, 1964.

Elder Osteen was born June 13, 1869, and was laid to rest in Perrin Cemetery January 23, 1964. We desire to thank our God that he saw fit to leave this peaceful man among us for more than 94 years. We beg God to reconcile us to his will, and lead us in peace, righteousness and truth, to ever earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

Done by order of the church while in conference March 8, 1964.

Elder C. U. Landers, Moderator
Joe Ben Cox, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 132 DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER 1964 No. 11

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/64
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CAN'T LIVE AS HE WOULD LIKE

1901 Manchester Avenue
Nashville, 8, Tenn.

Dear Editors of the **Signs:**

Due to my wife's late sickness I have overlooked renewing my subscription. I surely do not want to miss any of the **Signs,** so enclose check for two more years renewal, though I do not know what time will bring, as I will be eighty-five the 8th of December, should I live that long. Please pray for me and mine when at a throne of grace.

I have been following these despised by the world Old Baptists for seventy-five years, since 1886, and have heard many, many of the old ministers: Wiley Simon and his son, Joe; S. F. Casey, H. W. Thomas, J. W. Curley, J. H. Newman, W. I. Carnell, etc. I know not if I have ever been worth anything to the church, but they have been everything to me. I am often made to wonder whether I know anything at all about it, but I do hope that I am thankful for the many blessings that have been mine to enjoy. Though when I look back over my life, and realize how sinful I have been, I wonder why God ever saw fit to bless a wicked wretch as I have been. And though I have never seen the time since I was seven years old, that I didn't believe in a Supreme and holy God, I can't live as I would like, yet there is something I just can't turn loose.

O God, please give us grace and knowledge. I know it will not be long before I will have to bid farewell to this world and all things therein, but I beg the God of all creation to spare me to care for my dear companion; and I hope the household of faith will join me in this prayer.

May God's rich grace bless and keep you all. Pray for a poor sinner, saved by grace if saved at all, for I know it will not be by or for anything good in me.

A brother in bonds of love,
D. C. Colvett

DESIRES TO HEAR MORE OF THE TRUTH

234 South Park Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Dear Friends:

If I am permitted to call you friends, my desire to see and hear more discussion on the Great Truths of Old, and less about the material things of this world, has made me desire to write a few lines, and subscribe for the **Signs.**

We have been in Alaska for several years now, and have not met anyone who believes the doctrines of Salvation by Grace; and many times I get down in the Valley of Despair, and crave someone to verify the truth as it is in the Great Divine Purpose being carried out by our Great Creator. We cannot deny the mysteries that we see every day, but the flesh is weak, and doubts creep in and cause me to doubt that a little mite like myself could have any part in God's work.

I lived through the great earthquake. Here in Anchorage the earth rocked,

quivered and shook for about three minutes, and my fear cannot be described in words. Mountains fell into the ocean with their houses; and people were screaming for mercy, with no place to turn. Over one hundred were killed and many others were injured. Scientists claim that they know the cause of this quake, but they can't even explain what a small blade of grass is, and what gives color to the beautiful flowers which cover the mountains during this season.

The love for material things has blinded many of God's people, but this is part of the Great Purpose to prove to man that he is not his own keeper. Disease is destroying the young people as well as the old. No place can one find the love and patience we enjoyed during the last fortnight. I would enjoy a letter from anyone who will take the time to write. I know that I am weak, and need the prayers of God's people. So, when you are at the throne of prayer, please remember this poor worm of the dust, that I may be submissive to the great God of the heavens and the earth.

William O. Wammack

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER J. N. DARNALL

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." (I Peter 3:15)

I have been impressed for some time to write some of what I hope was and is the Lord's dealing with me; but first, I will give you some of my former life.

I was born on April 9, 1895. The son of the late Elder J. L. B. Darnall and his wife, Martha Atkins Darnall, who was his second wife. My Dad was fifty-three years old when I was born and by the time I was large enough to work he had gotten to where he could not do much work, and I being the older boy had to take over. I had two sisters older than I was, and a brother younger. We all had to work for our living and did not get to go to school very much. I got no education which has hindered me from writing this. I was only in the fourth grade when I quit school and by the time I was grown I could not read or even write my name.

When I was a small boy I would have serious thoughts about death and think I wanted to join the church. But I wondered what I could say or tell them that they would take me, and I asked my Mother what did one have to say to become a member. But when I grew up all this left me. I began to indulge in all the things that were of this world. I feel I know what Paul meant when he said in Ephesians 2:2-3: "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind: and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." I was in this so much my Dad, Mother, and Sisters would beg me to quit the way I was doing and stay away from the ones I was running with. This would make me awful ashamed while they were talking to me but that was all the effect it had on me. As soon as I met my crowd, it was all on again. Things I am ashamed to tell, though I know God knows all about it.

On the 7th day of February 1915, my Dad passed away, leaving me the head of the family. But my life was as before, and in the Spring of 1916, after being out all night, getting home after my Mother had got up, I saw the light in the house. When I got to the stable, I fed my mules before I went to the house. Mother had breakfast ready, I ate and went back, caught my mules, hitched them to the wagon, loaded my plow in the wagon and went a mile from the house and started plowing. I was feeling good and everything was working perfectly it seemed with no fear

of death or anything else. About the middle of the morning I heard a voice saying, "What would become of you if you were to die". Tears filled my eyes and the good feeling I had was gone. Before I had gotten to the next corner of the land I was plowing, the same voice said, "You must preach". Here I learned what Jesus said to Saul, in Acts 9:6: "And it shall be told thee what thou must do." Oh who am I? the one that had no fear a moment ago, now is filled with fear, and can say with Job 3:25: "For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me."

But Satan, being lovely to the flesh, was ready to comfort with his enticing words, saying, "You know there is nothing to any of this, you are not fit to belong to the church, much less preach" — which I felt to know was the truth. So, if any difference, I grew worse and worse, trying to get those things off my mind, while all the time I could hear those words, "It was told thee what thou must do". My wife and I were engaged to get married at this time, but had set no time. I, being determined to get all this off my mind, was like Jonah, I paid my own fare to run away from them. But I had to learn what David meant when he said in Psalms 139:8: "If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there."

I left home and went to the wheat harvest and joined myself with all the roughnecks that I met there. Believing that there was not anything to what I had heard and that I would get rid of all my troubles. Satan continued to try to prove to me that I was mistaken by saying, "You know that God would not call one into his fold as vile as you, much less one to preach as ignorant and unlearned as you are. You cannot read much less preach."

Oh, I sank to the lowest hell. I could say with David in Psalms 116:3: "The sorrows of death compasses me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow." Again, Psalms 18:4-5: "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid. The sorrows of hell compassed me about: The snares of death preserved me." So I learned I could not run away from God. He is the same God everywhere and my troubles had become so great that I did not think I could bear them any longer. I had done all I could do to get rid of my troubles and all had failed. They got worse all the time and the words still rang in my ears saying, "I have told thee what thou must do". So I thought I would go home and get married and settle down and join some church. Then, I would get relief from my troubles. Satan was still present with his cunning words saying, "That is the thing to do and you will get relief, you can accept Christ and all will be well".

So I came home and got married and thought I would do better, for I believed I could do that, and that was all I would have to do and I would be saved. But in place of getting better, I got worse. My friends all seemed to be interested in me and they would tell me all I had to do was to believe in Christ and I could believe or I could not believe — that was up to me to do. I tried everything that I heard their preachers say to get relief, with no avail. I went to one of the Missionary Baptist Churches to join where my wife belonged. The preacher said it is just up to you to accept or reject. I knew it was not so with me for I had done all I could to reject it and could not get away from it. Now I was doing everything I could hear to accept and it had all failed me. I tried to reject it, and now I am willing to accept it and cannot do either one. I believe I had to live this that I might know for myself what Paul meant when he said, "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." (Romans 9:16.)

The regular meeting time at old Dry Creek Church was the Second Sunday and Saturday in each month. I began to go with a different feeling than I

had when I went with my Father and Mother. I enjoyed the preaching by Elder D. R. Turner, but oh, such a wretch I seemed to be among God's humble poor! I did not want them to know that I was interested in the things that pertain to godliness. But, oh, how I wanted relief! I would beg God to have mercy on a poor sinner. I wanted to know the truth. I borrowed a Bible from my Mother, trying to keep her from knowing I was in trouble. I began to try to read, but I had to spell most every word. I was ashamed for anyone to see me with a Bible in my hand. Yet, I continued to try to read, begging God to show me the truth and the True Church, but most of all I would beg God to forgive a hell deserving sinner like me. I would wet my pillow with tears. I have gotten out of bed many a night and gone to the woods and tried to beg God for mercy. When I would return to the house, my wife would ask me where I had been and what I was doing, and I would tell her, "Nothing, I was just not sleepy". I continued on this way until in the summer of 1917. I had given up all hope. I thought I had committed the unpardonable sin and God would not forgive me, and, therefore, would not hear my prayers. I thought I had just as well quit going to church for I was lost forever and hell was my doom. I was justly due it and I was only receiving my just reward. I quit going to hear anyone preach for I was already bound for Hell.

At this point I was living in a little house that I had built on my Mother's place. On the Second Sunday in July, 1917, the meeting time at Dry Creek Church, my Mother went but I would not go. But I felt like I had to know about the meeting, so I asked my wife if she wanted to go to Mother's. She said, "Yes". So we did go. I had two single sisters at home, and there were some boys there. My wife and sisters got on the boy's horses and went riding and I began to ask Mother about the meeting. She said they had a good meeting and Elder Turner preached a wonderful sermon. This was more than I could stand, so I told her I was going home and she could tell my wife when she and my sisters got back that I had gone home. I went to the house, shut the door, pulled down the window blinds, got the Bible and lay it in a chair and knelt on my knees. Laying my head on the Bible, trying to beg God one more time to forgive me of my sins. I arose more condemned than ever. I could say with David, Psalms: 22:12-15: "Many bulls have compassed me: Strong bulls of Basham have beset me round. They gaped upon me with their mouths. As a ravening and a roaring lion. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; It is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death. Oh! an awful condition to be in, yet a good one. I went back on my knees, laid my head back on the Bible and prayed God to forgive me for trying to pray unto a Just and Holy God. I don't know how long I was in that prayer, but when I arose I was calm and at ease. My fear and burden was gone. I walked out on the porch and looked toward the West at the setting sun. The golden sunshine upon the timber with their green leaves was the prettiest sight I ever saw. While I beheld the glory, the same voice that spoke to me at first said, "This is that that you have been asking God for. You are delivered from your sins." Oh, how I did rejoice and thought I would tell my wife when she got home what God had done for me. But before she came I had began to think I might be mistaken. This was on the second Sunday in July, 1917, and I began going to meetings again and I was soon impressed with a great desire to be baptized, but was afraid I was deceived. The little River Association met on Friday before the fourth Sunday in August following, and I carried my Mother to the Association. On Sunday at the close of the

meeting the Moderator announced an open door for the reception of members. I went and gave my hand and sat down. When they had finished the song, the Moderator told me to tell what I hoped the Lord had done for me in my own way and manner. I arose, walked to the bookboard and began to talk. I don't know what I said, but they said I stood ten or fifteen minutes. I was received by the church and was baptized the next meeting at Dry Creek Church by Elder D. R. Turner. When I arose out of the water, that calm and peaceful feeling came over me again. I cannot describe that feeling, but I have said if I could have the feeling I would love to be baptized every day. I left something in the watery grave that I have never wanted any more. I have never desired baptism anymore. I was now at ease and felt sure I would not have to preach. So I went on awhile with an eased mind, rejoicing in that sweet hope that had been given me.

There was an old man who lived two miles from us that was a good friend of mine by the name of John. He was a strong believer in Salvation by Grace though not a member. I had not seen him for some time and I had a dream that John was sick and would die. I dreamed the Elder D. R. Turner, Elder L. D. Seals and myself would preach his funeral. I told my wife next morning that I was going over and see Mr. John, that I felt like he was sick. Sure enough, I found him sick in bed and he only lived a few days. Everything I saw in my dream was fulfilled, only I was not in his funeral. The voice spoke to me in the field came again with great power saying, "I have told thee what thou must do." This was a greater burden than the other — only those that have gone through it can know what trouble it brings upon one. I went on this way until the second Sunday in May, 1919, and Elder J. T. Hinson was to preach at Dry Creek at that time, as Elder Turner had quit coming on account of his health. Elder Hinson, who was the Moderator of the Soldier Creek Association, came to my house on Saturday, and on the way to church on Sunday he was talking to me about my impression to preach. Being satisfied with what I told him, he asked me to let him put my case before the church, and I agreed. He did and I was liberated. I went into the stand and spoke from the text, "Verily, Verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." (John 10:1) I don't know what I said; this I know — when I quit and sat down the whole congregation was in tears, which made me wonder what I had said.

This was on the second Sunday of May, 1919, and I was at ease again and thought I would never have to speak again. The September following I went to the West Tennessee Association with the thought that they did not know I had ever tried to speak in public. But on the first day I was left on the stand with another old servant while they attended to the business of the Association and the Brother gave me my choice when to go, and I said I would go first. I got up to talk and I could not say a word and I thought I would read some. I opened the Bible to read, all I could see was black marks across the pages of the Bible. I sat down, and I went to an old sister's home with lots of others afterwards. After dinner I would not stay in the house with the rest of them, but went out on the porch, and I would have given everything I had or every expected to have to be at home. The old sister whose home I was in came out on the porch where I was and asked me if I wanted to lie down. I told her I did, and she brought a quilt and a pillow out there and made me a pallet. I lay down and went to sleep. When I awoke the brethren had come out and were sitting by me; and the Moderator, seeing I was awake, said, "Get your hat and let us take a walk". I did and he never said a thing about my failure until we got to the barn. Then he said, "Brother Darnall, they tell me you failed today". I said, "I sure did and I

would give anything to be at home." He told me that was good for me, but I could not see how that could be good for me at that time. I think I have learned that it was. But Satan was and is always ready to accuse, saying, I told you you could not preach, and now you know you can not." Oh, I went down to the bottom of the deep with seaweeds wrapped about my head. (Read all the Second Chapter of Jonah,) But with all this I could not quit trying to speak and give the reason of my hope.

It was not long until I was called to serve my home church, then two more churches called me. I had not been ordained and during this time I was praying to God to give me more evidence. I was now renting and it was in the Spring and I was repairing fence. That morning my wife and I awoke and had been talking, and she got up; and I lay there and was caught in a vision. I was carried into the prettiest house I ever saw. There were all the old servants that had gone on that I had ever known, together with my Father. They came rolling a bed in with the leanest and ugliest man on it that I had ever seen. They came to me and said, "You will have to talk to that man", and I said, "What can I say to him". One brought me a Bible, saying open and read, and what you read, preach. I opened at John 14:6. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the father, but by me." I began talking and the man that was so ugly turned into the prettiest sheep I ever saw.

Then I came to myself; I got up and went to the barn to feed and stayed until my wife called me to breakfast, wondering what I had seen. When I got to the house she asked what had I been doing and I said nothing. While wondering over the vision I had seen this text came to me. Acts 10:19: "While Peter thought on the vision, the spirit said unto him, behold, three men seek thee." I was so sure someone would come for me. I was in great fear but I went on to work, repairing fence. I could not keep from looking for someone to come for me. About the middle of the morning I saw a man coming, and when he got where I was, I asked him what he wanted. He told me a certain man was bad sick and wanted me to come as quick as I could. I had known the man all my life but had not seen him for some time. I went with him to see the sick man and when I saw him, I saw the ugly man that they had brought in on the bed that turned to a sheep. He wanted to join the church. He was so weak he could not talk. I have always believed that God knowing the condition of that man had showed me he was one of his sheep.

I was ordained to the full work of the ministry on the fourth Sunday in August, 1922. I was elected Moderator of the Little River Association on Friday before the fourth Sunday in August, 1923, and tried to serve the best I could until last year, which was 40 years. Then they elected Elder W. Y. Chandler as their Moderator. I have had many heartaches and have been made to say with Jeremiah 20:9: "I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." But if I could, I would rather suffer the afflictions of the Gospel than to give up the fellowship of God's people. I have thought that the pretty house I was carried into was the Church of Almighty God. When God's people are feasting on the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they look prettier to me than all the scenery of this world. My prayer and heart's desire to God is that he will impress many more to be baptized into the full fellowship of the Church that they may carry on after I am gone. These are some of the reasons of the hope I have for beyond the grave.

On my Dad's side, my Great Grandfather, my Grandfather and I were all

Old Baptist Preachers; and I have an old Aunt that heard all of us preach. She told me that we all preached the same doctrine: Salvation by Grace and Grace alone.

Now looking back over my life, I have left out more than I have told, but this is enough to ease my mind. So farewell in the Lord.

J. N. Darnall

THE CITY WITHOUT A TEMPLE

"And I saw no temple therein." (Revelation 21:22)

We have read this morning from the inspired record a striking description of the city of God; the city of which we have heard, and read, and sung from our earliest childhood; but we have heard that it was far away above the skies; we have sung that it is among the stars; we have read in popular religious fiction that it is the place where good people go when they die. All these notions are no better than the various heathen fabrications of heaven, and are as foreign to the true location and nature of the city as the sensual paradise of Mahomet, or the happy hunting grounds of the American Indian. Our eyes have been so long blinded by tradition that we can scarcely see the plainest facts of Bible truth; our ears have been so completely stuffed with fables from our early youth that we are deaf to the plain declarations of the inspired record; and our understanding is so darkened by material affections that it is indeed difficult for us to conceive the most prominent principles of the doctrine of Christ. May the God of all grace enlighten our eyes, unstop our ears, and open our understanding this morning, that we may hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

First, let us have a proper understanding of the location of this city. It is not in heaven, for John saw it coming down from God out of heaven. It is declared to be the tabernacle of God with men; God dwelling with men, and not men gone above the sky to dwell with God. This city then is in the world, though not of the world; it is the present abode and inheritance of the saints, and not something they come in possession of at the close of their mortal pilgrimage. It is the new Jerusalem, arrayed in the splendor of the covenant of grace revealed in living contrast with the old Jerusalem, clothed in the blackness of legal servitude. It is the gospel church revealed in the perfection of her living worship, contrasted with all humanly devised and conditional systems of religion.

The jeweled walls, sparkling, gleaming and glittering with all manner of precious stones; the new earth upon which it stands, stretching away in all the beauty of its virgin landscape; the new heavens spread above like a tent of righteousness; the pure, peaceful, gladdening river; the tree of life in the midst of its street of gold, each furnishes a theme for a thousand volumes; but more significant to me than all these this morning, is the absence of the temple: "I saw no temple there."

What a novel sight to a Jew was a city without a temple! and what would a modern Arminian think of a city without a church? The religious prosperity, the state of morals, the degree of intelligence, and even the social and business advantages of a village, town, or city, are all estimated by the number and height of its steeples; and if a community could be found without a church, the unfortunate inhabitants would be stigmatized as heathens, notwithstanding they may have attained to a high standard of morals, intelligence, piety and virtue. But the gospel church, walking in the Spirit, is the perfection of society; and the perfect society is revealed from heaven under the similitude of a city without a temple, or, in modern parlance, a city without a church.

The absence of the temple suggests, first, the complete removal of the law

of Moses. The temple was a symbol of the law, and an almost necessary attendant of all law worship. Jerusalem was the pride of the Jews; and the glory of Jerusalem was the temple. The carnal Jews were less boastful of their temple privileges as a mark of special distinction, than of their fleshly relation to Abraham. They saw nothing in the goodly stones of the temple but the gratification of their own pride; they saw nothing in the streaming blood and quivering of the evening sacrifice but the things which Moses commanded; they beheld nothing more in the gorgeous trappings and imposing ceremonies of the high priest than the pomp and splendor of an earthly priesthood. But to the remnant according to the election of grace, who were born, not of blood nor the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, the temple with all its service spoke a different language. They looked beyond the matchless pile of stones, to that temple that was to be thrown down and in three days raised up again; they saw beyond the blood that daily drenched the Jewish altars, the blood of the everlasting covenant that was to be shed for the remission of the sins of the many; they recognized in their high priest the type of Him who should offer himself without spot to God, and by that one offering perfect them forever; they heard in the tinkling of the golden bells upon the high priest's garment the joyful sound of the gospel of their salvation.

They groaned under the bondage of temple service, and waited and longed for the consolation of Israel. There was no hope for the flesh in the deeds of the law, and no rest for the spirit in the earthly Jerusalem. But God had provided some better things for them, and in the fullness of time the new Jerusalem was revealed from heaven, arrayed in bridal splendor, enshrouded in gospel glory, clothed in vestments of peace, with gates wide open to receive all those predestined to enter its walls of salvation, its towers of refuge and palaces of peace. Through the death and resurrection of Jesus spiritual Israel was redeemed from the law of Moses, having become dead to it by the body of Christ, and by him were led out of bondage, and brought with singing unto Zion, which is the new Jerusalem. They saw from afar the heavenly city. Joyous welcomes greeted them, written above the gates in letter of gold, "Come, ye blessed of my Father." "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden'.' They gladly enter, and, to their increased delight, they find no temple therein. No more sacrifice, no more burnt offerings, no Sabbath keeping, no more observance of new moons, feasts and and holy days. Even the sun and moon which mark times and seasons, days and months, are obliterated from the sky. No Easter celebration, no Christmas frolics. Every vestige of the law removed, and no temple to bring these buried things to remembrance. The justified inhabitants find themselves possessing what angels have desired to look into, and what the prophets of their fathers had searched diligently concerning.

The absence of the temple signifies the perfect deliverence of the elect Gentiles from every species of vain philosophy and esteemed and cherished idolatry. The Gentile Christians were under equally a galling bondage as were the Jews, although they owed no allegiance to the law of Moses. They were under the law of sin and death, and were by nature alienated from the life of God through their ignorance, and were brought into bondage by the lusts of the flesh and the wiles of their priestcraft. The temple is not only a symbol of the law of Moses, but is a universal attendant of every form of Gentile idolatry. Stupendous temples adorned the cities of Egypt five thousand years ago. These temples were the homes of Egypt's gods, sources of revenue to Egyptian priests, and the oppressors, enslavers and robbers of Egypt's people. Marble shrines of exquisite beauty brightened

the cities of ancient Greece; massive temples of costliest design contributed to the imposing grandeur of the once mighty Rome; and gorgeous temples of gold, of fabulous wealth, dazzled the eyes of Spanish robbers in the far away mountain recesses of Mexico and Peru. The gigantic remains found in every quarter of the earth proclaim in tongues of crumbling stone, the universal reign of temple service over the benighted sons of men. The reign of grace has broken the reign of sin, and the Gentiles have seen the salvation of God. Grace searched the dark places of heathen idolatry, and brought forth to the light of the glorious gospel the hidden objects of electing love.

Many of the saints at Ephesus had served in bondage in the temple of Diana; many of the "washed, justified and sanctified" ones of the Corinthian church had been gathered from the temples of Olympian Zeus, which adorned and burdened that opulent city; and many of the called saints of Rome had been led out of the temples of Jupiter. When Paul declared to the Athenians of Mars' Hill that God dwelleth not in temples made with hands, some who worshipped at the altar of the unknown god clave unto him and believed. All the inhabitants of this city, whether Jew or Greek, bond or free, have learned that God dwelleth not in temples made with hands, but that He is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit. They have found to the joy of their hearts, that where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. The truly spiritually minded seek no temple, but God himself. In Him they live and move and have their beings, and in this gracious environment they enjoy all the fulness of the blessing of Christ.

The absence of the temple signifies the breaking down of the middle wall of partition between the Jews and the Gentiles. The Jewish temple was the great objective distinction between the Jews and all other nations, and stood as an outward evidence of God's favor to the Jews and rejection of the Gentiles. But, as an outward evidence that God is no respecter of persons, and that the Gentiles are brought nigh by the blood of Christ and reconciled in the same body with the Jews, the temple of Jerusalem was utterly destroyed, completely thrown down, so that not even one stone remained upon another, as Christ had said before should be done. In addition to this outward evidence, the new Jerusalem was revealed to the eye of faith with no temple in it, so that the believing Jew can no more be offended by bringing Gentiles into the temple. The grounds of disputes concerning Jewish prerogatives have been completely removed from the church under the gospel dispensation, and now representatives of every nation dwell together in unity in this spiritual commonwealth, each esteeming others better than himself, all hearts having been purified by faith which works by love. All have God for their father, having been born again; all washed in the same blood, and all possessing one life, live together in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace.

The absence of the temple signifies the absence of priestcraft. There is but one city in which priestcraft is not to be found, and that is the city of God. Priests have sought to rule the world; and are still seeking. A priesthood is a necessary element of all formulated religions, whether Jewish, Mohammedan, Catholic or Protestant. The priesthood of all will-worshipping idolators has always pretended to stand between the people and their gods, and that in some way or other they are instrumental in bringing about a reconcilliation between offending men and offended gods. This important element is common to all carnal religious systems; it is found alike in heathen, Catholic and Protestant, and is a plain evidence of the common origin and common interest of all these religious enterprises. The Catholic priest assumes to forgive sins for a stipulated sum, and pray souls out of purgatory for wages. The different Protestant hirelings will not exactly promise to do

this, but they are equally cunning, and as little to be trusted. They hold out that men cannot be saved unless they hear them preach, and believe them; and some even go so far in their blasphemous presumption as to say that the heathen cannot be saved, neither can God justly damn them, until they preach to them. They array themselves in hypocritical robes of false christs, and profess to be commissioned to evangelize the world and bring it to Christ. They even ascribe the salvation of their own children to their incantations, to penny tracts and religious fiction. They have invented hundreds of schemes and tricks to delude the people, and are meeting in conventions from year to year to divise new fables, to send out their agents with new demands for money.

The absence of the temple implies the absence of all these workers of darkness and propagators of iniquity. The inhabitants of this city have been delivered from the base deceptions of both Catholic and Protestant priesthoods. They have learned that there is but one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. They are themselves a royal priesthood in Christ, prepared by grace to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. In this new creation they worship God in the spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh. They have no need of a candle, or the light of the sun or moon, all of which are emblems of worldly wisdom, as claimed by the carnal priesthoods; but the Lord God giveth them light, and the Lamb is the light thereof. Carnal worshippers seek a temple, but the spiritually minded seek no temple but God himself; the carnal worshipper delights in rites and ceremonies, but the spiritual seeks the secrecy of his closet; the carnal worshipper seeks the intercession of priests, but the spiritual is satisfied with no intercession outside of the unutterable groanings of the Spirit itself.

The absence of the temple signfies the absence of all fraud, deceit and violence. All the great temples of the world, from Thebes to Athens, from Athens to heathen Rome, from heathen Rome to Catholic Rome, from Catholic Rome to Protestant London, have been intimately connected with the blackest crimes of history; they have been the cradles of superstition, folly and vice, the nurseries of antichrist in every phase and form, the depots of hypocrisy, the resorts of religious deceivers and oppressors: the sepulchers of liberty, prison house of saints, and the high seats of spiritual wickedness. The absence of the temple from the city of God is evidence that all the works of the flesh are unknown either to Jew or Greek in pure spiritual worship. This city is redeemed from all iniquity, and in this spiritual city, the true gospel church, no guile is found. The deeds of the body are mortified, and the fruit of the Spirit abounds. The inhabitants are blessed with good and upright hearts and are in possession of charity which thinketh no ill of his neighbor. The contrast was no greater between this city and old Jerusalem, than between this city and the communities of carnal religionists now. This is an age of extravagant temple worship. The chief ambition of the different sects is to surpass each other in temple building. Religious societies in every place from the country cross roads to the metropolis of the nation, render themselves a pest to their neighborhood and a disgrace to the name of Christianity, in going beyond their means to gratify the foolish, wicked, antichristian pride in erecting fine places of worship. The huge piles of stone and stained glass, thrown together in all the fantastic forms of heathen architecture that adorn our towns and cities, are regarded with quite as much reverence and admiration by their benighted votaries, as the temples of any of the ancient heathen nations.

This city is the whole election of grace, as they in one body worship the Father in spirit, as they stand holy and

without blame before Him in love. God himself dwells in them and with them, and He is their temple, and they are His.

The glory of the city is seen only by faith; the carnal senses of the saints themselves have never seen it. But the time shall come when still more grace shall be brought to them. The city shall be unveiled until all shall see it plainly and all earthly cities with all their temples and idolatry shall be finally and forever overthrown, and the city of God shall stand a living, enduring, eternal monument to the love, mercy and power of God, and the victory of Christ over all enemies.

(The above was a discourse by Elder H. M. Curry in Lebanon, Ohio, May 14, 1893. It was first published in the Signs of October 11, 1893. We found it so interesting and significant that we feel our brethren of the present generation will enjoy it. — J. D. W.)

Mrs. Bennett to
Elder and Sister Ruston

Mardella, Md.

My dear Elder and Mrs. Ruston:

I keep thinking about you two dear ones, now I'm going to try to let you know I do. I have been wanting to write to you for some time, but I think, what can I say? I hope you two have been well this winter: good health is one of our greatest blessings, it is something money can't buy, along with so many other things. I hope I am thankful to be able to do for myself, but it is not as we want it. I just pray to be reconciled to the will of Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.

I was hoping I could get up for the association last Fall but wasn't able. I miss so much now, yet I realize I had a wonderful, happy life. One of the best husbands, and why murmur? This old flesh of mine, I suppose it will always pop up against my wishes, "For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me: but how to perform that which is good I find not, etc." Then the words will come, "God is our Refuge and Strength, a very present help in trouble," also, "Be still, and know that I am God." I feel all I can do is be still, "For in the Lord Jehovah is everlastingly strength," and "Underneath are the everlasting arms."

I hope I am made to feel His presence from time to time and will be made able to say, "For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death." What comforting thoughts!

Love and best wishes,

Virginia Bennett

My dear Mrs. Ruston:

I can't tell you how much good your kind letters did me, you know we get to feel sorry for ourselves and just to know someone thinks of us enough to write, it just boosts us up.

I so often think of you and yours, but it seems easy to neglect writing. I'm always so fearful I may do or say the wrong thing.

So sorry your eyesight is not so good naturally, but I know that you can see the things that are nearest and dearest to you. There was a lady in the home in Salisbury who lost her vision, but she said since then, she had seen more than she ever had before. "God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform."

You asked if you might send parts of my letter for publication, I don't remember a word I wrote and I don't feel that anything I could say would be a comfort to anyone, but if you feel it is fit and right, you have my fearful permission. "Oh, that the Lord would guide my ways!"

Thank you again for writing to me.
Love,

Virginia Bennett

Dear Elder Ruston:

After receiving your letter I feel I don't want to wait so long before answering, it bought tears of joy to think you two dear people would take the time to write to such a little one as I feel to be, but as we sing, "God is good, immensely good, and kind are all His ways." These words stayed by me all the time during Harold's sickness, what a wonderful Saviour is Jesus our Lord! I want to thank Him for all my blessings. I did enjoy going to your home and being with your people, you are blessed to live among such dear children of God. I feel to rejoice with you, that you and Mrs. Ruston have been spared to live a wonderful happy life, and if it be our Lord's will, may you still have many more years together. One has to experience the loss to understand the full meaning. With my very best wishes.

Virginia Bennett

---

11 Talbot Street, North,
Lambeth, Ontario, Canada

Signs of the Times,
Danville, Virginia

Dear Sirs:

Please find enclosed money order to renew my precious **Signs of the Times** subscription.

I wish to thank you for your untiring efforts in publishing the **Signs.** May God's richest blessings be with you all, to continue in the publishing of this precious and comforting paper. May God bless you all, is my prayer.

Mrs. Minerva McLean

---

521 Maple Avenue,
Reidsville, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

. . . My suscription to the **Signs** will expire next month, and I am enclosing payment for another year. This time, instead of sending my check only, I want to tell you how I appreciate the paper, and what it stands for. I believe its founders were moved by the right Spirit, and I also believe its present Editors are continuing under the guiding of the same Spirit.

I look forward to the time for each issue to come, and I feel thankful to God for the privilege of reading it, and the comfort that is mine.

Sincerely,
M. T. Smith

LETTER TO ELDER KING

Yanceyville, N. C.
Rt. 1,

Dear Brother and Sister King:

One year ago today my dear husband and I were united with the church. I have wanted to thank you many times for baptizing me, and was sure that I could today; but when I tried there were no words, just tears.

I am a poor writer but in my way I would like to try to tell you of that Sunday which meant so much to me. When we were dressing for church that morning, I could see something in David's face that made me feel that he had fought his last day, and would have to ask for a home with the church. I asked myself what I was going to do if he did. I felt so unworthy and alone: I heard little that was said that morning until you described us as having props to support us, and they were taken away one by one.

I decided that I had one more prop, and I was going to hold on to it. When you opened the door of the church, and David stepped out and walked away from me, all the tears I had fought that morning came pouring out. I can't tell you how I felt. Then I heard a voice speak to me. Brother King, that voice came from your mouth, but to my ears it was not your voice. I have not heard it again, but when I think of it, I still tremble. The prop I thought I had was gone; and I was made willing to go be-

fore the church, and with my husband, was accepted by the brothers and sisters.

Bush Arbor has meant so much to me this past year. I hope, if it be God's will, that I can always have the love for the brothers and sisters and the church, that I felt today.

A sinner,
Dorothy Rice

BRETHREN PLEASE NOTE

There were a number of copies of the September issue of the Signs which were not collated correctly. These were mailed before the error was discovered. If those who received these will notify us, we will gladly send a corrected copy. — Editors

Danville, Virginia November, 1964

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EDITORIAL

JESUS, THE CHRIST, IS KING

"Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." — Psalms 2:6

Our God created all things; yet there is a special portion which He preserves as His own. He is Lord of all nations in the world for He is the maker of all men; yet He reserves unto Himself a peculiar kingdom in which He will especially dwell. Our God gave natural life to all men; yet His special gift of eternal life is reserved for His children. Our God comprehends all space; yet He has a special place which He calls, "My Holy Hill of Zion". Our God comprehends all time; yet He has designated a special time as His which He terms as "The Lord's Day". Our God controls all kings and turns their hearts as the rivers are turned; yet His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, is referred to by Him as, MY KING.

Our God gives this KING a name which is above every name. The conferring of this name upon our Lord was not by the ordinary act of man in the natural course of events. Angels were dispatched from our God to both Joseph and Mary to inform them of His name and to tell them why His name should be called JESUS. The angel told Joseph that Mary "shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: FOR HE SHALL SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS." (Matthew. 1:21) The name JESUS is the English translation of terms in both the Hebrew and Greek

languages meaning: help of Jehovah and Saviour. The angel of the Lord told Mary, "Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke 1:30-33)

The name JESUS means SAVIOUR. This was surely recognized by both Joseph and Mary and certainly without question "when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb." Joseph and Mary marvelled at the words coming from Simeon which were so alike the words the angels spoke to them. The Holy Ghost had before revealed to Simeon that he should see the Lord's Christ before he would see death. The Spirit brought Simeon into the temple at the proper time for seeing this child JESUS brought in by the parents to do for Him after the custom of the law. The record says that Simeon took JESUS up in His arms and blessed God and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: FOR MINE EYES HAVE SEEN THY SALVATION, WHICH THOU HAST PREPARED BEFORE THE FACE OF ALL PEOPLE, A LIGHT TO LIGHTEN THE GENTILES, AND THE GLORY OF THY PEOPLE, ISRAEL. (Luke 1:29-32) When Simeon saw JESUS, Simeon recognized Him as the Lord's Christ. When Simeon saw Jesus, he desired to embrace Him. When Simeon saw Jesus, he realized that his eyes had seen God's Salvation. When Simeon saw Jesus, he saw Him as the great LIGHT to lighten the Gentiles, and the Glory of God's people Israel. Not only did Simeon see Jesus and recognize Him as Saviour there in the temple while Jesus was yet a babe, but Anna also recognized Him: "And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to **ALL THEM THAT LOOKED FOR REDEMPTION** in Jerusalem." Peter recognized the greatness of His name when he said, "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that BY THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST OF NAZARETH, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by HIM doth this man stand before you whole. This is the Stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the HEAD of the corner. NEITHER IS THERE SALVATION IN ANY OTHER: FOR THERE IS NONE OTHER NAME UNDER HEAVEN GIVEN AMONG MEN, WHEREBY WE MUST BE SAVED." (Acts 4:10-12) Be it known unto you all that when the name JESUS can be experienced in the very depths of your inner-most soul there is SALVATION. Be it known that anything less than a complete deliverance perfectly merited by the Lord alone would not measure up to the name JESUS. JESUS is all of our salvation. Our salvation is complete in JESUS. JESUS is KING.

Jesus is the CHRIST. Christ is not a proper name, technically speaking. It is an official title meaning: Messiah, the anointed one. As John was the Baptist, or Baptizer; so, JESUS is the CHRIST. Paul states in Acts 17:3: "And that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. Yes, He is the One Who was consecrated, set apart, very sacred, and many times prophesied of in the Old Testament as one destined to appear in a later age as a GREAT DELIVERER. This anointed one is termed THE MAN, THE SON OF MAN, THE SON OF GOD, THE ANGEL OF THE COVENANT, and hundreds of other terms. You may read for hours and days in the sacred writings of the prophets concerning this Holy One which was promised to God's people and you will still have much research material that you have not read. JESUS is the expression of His Mission.

CHRIST is the expression of His power and authority. All that is said of this sovereign perfect deliverer of His people in the Old Testament Scriptures is true of JESUS, THE CHRIST. He is prophet, priest, King, the great revealer of Divine truth, and the only sole divine ruler in His Church. He is the sole legitimate ruler of the consciences, understandings, and affections of men. He is the only one who is given the power to give eternal life to God's people. He is the only one who can cleanse the sinners of all guilt and present them spotless to the Father. He is the only one who performed righteousness which merits the Father's honor. YES, JESUS, THE CHRIST, IS KING.

JESUS CHRIST is KING. The definition of the word, KING, is ruler — chief ruler — a sovereign — one invested with extreme authority over a tribe, country, or nation. We read in Isaiah 33:22: "The Lord is our JUDGE, the Lord is our LAWGIVER, THE LORD IS OUR KING." We find that the term KING is used by the Apostle Paul rightly in that wonderful expression: "Now unto the KING eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen." (1 Tim. 1:17) This was addressed to God using the term KING to God as the sole sovereign and complete ruler of the universe. Again we hear Paul saying: "Which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the KING of kings, and LORD of lords." (1 Tim. 6:15) We call your attention to several scriptures where that the term KING was figuratively used to Christ as the Messiah, the Son of God, the KING of the Jews, and the sole Head and Governor of His church — See 1 Tim. 6:15-16, Matt. 27:11, Luke 19:38 & St. John 1:49 & 6:15 & 18:-32-37. Christ is KING of GLORY, of ZION, of NATIONS, and of KINGS. He is KING over sin, death, and the Devil.

CHRIST JESUS IS KING OF GLORY. You may wonder as I did for many years, What does the term GLORY signify? The best interpretation that I can find after many hours spent upon research and meditation is that glory signifies extreme brightness of shining light which makes magnificently visible; it means to be heavy, extremly powerful, rich beyond comprehension, most honorable, and of greatest reputation. Peter, James, and John beheld the GLORY of Jesus Christ when He was transfigured on the mountain. Christ was in the midst of the glow of shining light. This made Him wonderfully visible to the on-lookers. When we glorify God we show forth His praise. We read in Psalms 24:7-10: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the KING OF GLORY shall come in. Who is this KING OF GLORY? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the KING OF GLORY shall come in. Who is this KING OF GLORY? The Lord of hosts, HE IS THE KING OF GLORY. Selah." The repeating of this question and the answers glorify even these expressions because they make it more visible and doubly demands the attention of the readers. Christ being the KING OF GLORY will undoubtedly result in making Himself certainly visible and as the brightest of shining lights to each and every one of His people. When we see JESUS, THE CHRIST, all things else are invisible when He appears in His GLORY.

JESUS, THE CHRIST, IS KING OF ZION. Re-read the text quoted at the beginning of this article and you will find that His Father set Him upon the holy hill, ZION, to reign as KING. Seeing that all power in Heaven and in earth is in his Hands, and that all power is given Him over all flesh that He should give eternal life to those whom the Father hath given Him, then, we must believe that where the word of a king is there is power. You may ask, What is ZION? The word, zion, is translated from a Hebrew word which means SUNNY. The classical meaning of the term denotes brightness of light. The

most southwestern and highest hill on which Jerusalem was built was called ZION. David brought the ARK to this hill which made it sacred. David's palace was erected there and many kings were buried in the royal tomb. It has been called, "The City of David", "The Holy Hill", and "The Hill of the Sanctuary". Zion is frequently used for the whole of the city of Jerusalem and the inhabitants of the city were called "Sons of Zion". ZION is used as the representative of the city of God, the spiritual city. Read Hebrews 12:22: "But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant."

This JESUS is KING OF ZION. He rules in the hearts of her citizens. His commands are not grievious. His people hear His Voice. They heed, they follow. They love His company because He gives them peace. The greatness of the Glory of Christ's kingship works reverence in the hearts of His citizens. The multitude of this King's grace works love and faithful obedience in the words and actions of the citizens of Zion. Peace reigns in the city of which He is KING. The King found us lame and helpless but He brought us into His Kingdom. Grace adorns the Beautiful Gate of this city of ZION. This ZION stands not on earthly foundations; but ZION is built on CHRIST, who is the chief cornerstone, elect, and precious. He is the elected King. He is the one who binds these citizens together and to Him. ZION, being upon a mountain, is in a safe place; it is a high place; it is a place "Which cannot be removed, but abideth fast forever". (Psalms 125:-1) The happiness which we have in MOUNT ZION because that CHRIST IS KING may be expressed as three great blessings: Favour of God, Joy of the Holy Ghost, and peace of conscience. Peace is in this city; it is nowhere else. Joy of the Spirit which is a gladness that can neither be expressed nor suppressed can never be found anywhere else but ZION. There is something peculiar about this special joy in ZION; we do not hunger for it until we taste. We do not desire until we have it. The tastes of Joy that we have here in this world given us in the visitations of KING JESUS are few and far apart. These moments of JOY are made more precious and sweet after experiencing long durations in repentance, sadness, and bitterness. King Jesus gives us sweet peace of conscience. A satisfied mind and a contented heart is the peace that is experienced in the innermost soul when King Jesus makes Himself manifest to us as our Way, Our Life, and our Truth. What peace of conscience we have when King Jesus appears to us.

CHRIST IS KING OF ZION yet Satan is king of Babylon. There are two spiritual kings, cities, peoples, and laws. We cannot say that Christ Jesus is King OF the devil; but we do affirm the He is King OVER the devil. Paul terms Satan as the "Prince of the power of the air" in Ephesians 2:2. Satan is also spoken of as the "god of this world", and as having power over death. (Hebrews 2:14) The two cities are ZION and Babylon, the great". See Rev. 18:2. The two peoples are called the "Children of the Kingdom" and "Children of the wicked one." Christ said to some, "Ye are of your father, the devil". These two peoples are referred to as — corn and tares, sheep and goats, vessels of honour and vessels of dishonor, and Jacob and Esau. God's law says: "Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity". (2 Tim. 2:19) Satan's law is "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life" (1 John 2:16) The law of Christ is LOVE; the law of the devil is HATE. The Love of God entitled us to Zion; the love of the world en-

titles us to Babylon. The children of God are of Zion when Christ reigns in their hearts. The children of the devil are of Babylon and shall forever desire to dwell there, even though they, the children of the devil, shall come to a bitter end. These two cities were begun in Cain and Abel: Cain a citizen of the world — Babylon —; Abel a citizen of Zion. The names of Cain and Abel signify their different natures in this world Abel means weak, lamenting, mourning; whereas; Cain signifies possession with a spear or lance, and to acquire. Yes, we know that the children of the world are wiser in their own generation than the children of Light. Cain built a city but Abel did not. Cain built a city in this world but a heavenly city was built for Abel by Jesus Christ the King and Builder of Zion. The city that Cain built was natural and temporary; but, the City that Christ built for Abel was spiritual and eternal. Satan's soldiers will achieve many worldly victories, yet the King of Zion shall equip His soldiers with an armour that cannot be pierced with the fiery darts of Satan. Satan builds a temple of Idols; yet more durable, Christ builds the Temple of God. Satan is the author of confusion and strife among the Lord's little ones; yet more sublime, Christ is the author of peace as in all churches that make up Zion. Satan is the author of sin; whereas, Christ is the Author of Righteousness. Satan is the god of death everlasting; but Christ is KING of LIFE ETERNAL. Satan tempts us to a degree as he tempted Christ, by showing us all the things of the world that could be ours should we worship him; yet, Christ gives us of the things of the heavenly Kingdom which commands our worship, reverence, and willing obedience. Satan tempts us with the treasures of this earth which will perish with the using; but Christ confers upon and in us the treasure of Heaven which shall never pass away but will increase with the using. The treasures of the world will decrease as we use them; but the treasures of Heaven shall increase as we use them.

HE IS KING OF KINGS. We read in Proverbs 8:15: "By me kings reign, and princes decree justice." Some kings of political kingdoms are graced with King Jesus reigning in their hearts, who issue just decrees. He turns the hearts of kings to conform to His heavenly decrees.

He is KING over sin. "The Son of God was manifest that He might destroy the works of the devil". (1 John 3:8) Sin is the work of the devil which shall be destroyed by Jesus Christ.

Christ is King over the devil. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also likewise took part of the same; that through death HE MIGHT DESTROY HIM THAT HAD THE POWER OF DEATH, THAT IS, THE DEVIL". JESUS CHRIST is KING and will triumph over sin and the devil by finally destroying them. Devils must obey Him at His command. Sin must flee when Christ is actively working righteousness in the lives of His people. AMEN.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

FAITH

There is, perhaps, at the present day as much said about Faith, and the term is as frequently used in modern theology as any other word used in our version of the scriptures; but it is generally used in a sense entirely foreign to that of its legitimate scriptural meaning. Webster, guided undoubtedly by the decisions of learned (so called) Doctors of Divinity, defines the word thus: "Belief; the assent of the mind to the truth of what is declared by another; the assent of the mind to the truth of a pro-

position advanced by another; belief, on probable evidence. And, in theology, the assent of the mind or understanding to the truth of what God has revealed. Evangelical, or justifying, or saving Faith, is the assent of the mind to the truth of divine revelation, on the authority of God's testimony, accompanied with a cordial assent of the will or approbation of the heart," &c. And this is about the view which is entertained by a very large majority of the religionists of the present day. No idea seems to be entertained by Webster, nor by the learned theologians, from whom he borrows his theory, that the mind of man is a carnal or fleshly mind; that it is at enmity against God — not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Indeed, the prevailing doctrine of all will-worshippers and carnal religionists is that regeneration, the new birth, and all that is involved in the christian experience, is only to give some new impulse to our old carnal faculties — a new direction to the old carnal mind, and a new inclination and direction to the affections and lusts of the flesh. To be born again, in their estimation is, as Watts says, to

"New model all the carnal mind,
And form the man afresh."

This is a fundamental error comprising the ground of difference between the religion which is of the world, and that which is of God. The worldly system, supposing that man is a free agent, possessing all requisite power to will and to do that which is necessary and indispensible to commend him to the favor of God, and to secure immortal glory beyond the grave, labors to influence the carnal or natural mind by moral suasion that it would be advantagious and profitable to yield assent to such theories as tradition point out as pious, and calculated to secure the favor of God. The selfish inclinations of the unrenewed heart are appealed to, and such incentives, motives and allurements are presented, as the carnal mind can appreciate, to draw the corrupt, depraved, deceitful and desperately wicked propensities and imaginations of the mind into a new channel, without any radical change or implantation of any new principle. Under this delusion Infant and Sunday Schools, Bible classes, and all the machinery to them belonging, are employed to bend the twig the way they wish the tree to grow, without observing that the nature and character of the twig is in no wise changed by such restraints; without heeding the immutable standard set up by Christ himself: First make the tree good, and the fruit will be good. A twig growing out of a corrupt tree, will partake of the corruption of that tree, incline or bend it which ever way we may. In all the Scribes, Pharisees and hypocrites detected and rebuked by our Lord, we have exemplifications of the carnal mind religionized by traditional influences. The influence may multiply converts to Judaism, or any other work-mongrel religious persuasion, and it is employed with the same results at the present time, as when the self-righteous pharisees encompassed sea and land to make proselytes to their faith. Now if the assent of the natural mind of man to the force of testimony is the faith which accompanies salvation, why is it so called? What new principle does such an assent develop? Had not the natural, carnal depraved mind of man in its most degraded condition the requisite faculty to yield an assent to any demonstrated proposition, set home by the force of overwhelming testimony? This theory, if it can be established, will be of great service to the whole Arminian world; because it calls for no more grace now to make a christian, than was formerly required to make a Jewish proselyte.

But let us not be deceived — God is not mocked; however plausible or palatable this theory may be in the estimation of men, it cannot stand the test of eternal truth. The scriptures are regarded by us as they have always been by the church of God, as an infallible standard of our faith, both as to faith as a vital principle in the hearts of God's people, and the doctrine of the gospel

embraced and comprehended by that faith. Then let us turn to the law and to the testimony; for if any speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. The scriptures, instead of representing faith as a creature of ours, expressly define it to be the gift of God. "Unto us it is given in the behalf of Christ that we should believe on him." "We are bound to give thanks unto God always for you brethren, beloved of God, because God hath from the beginning, chosen you to salvation, through santification of the spirit and belief of the truth. For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." And we are not only assured that faith is not of ourselves, but it is the gift of God, but we are also told that Jesus Christ is both the author and the finisher of faith which is unto life. Furthermore, we are informed that saving faith is the faith of the Son of God; it cannot, therefore be an assent of the natural mind. Paul says, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved me and given himself for me. It is also distinguished from all other kinds of faith as that faith which is of the operation of God.

The inspired Paul, having analized poor fallen human nature, sums up its legitimate productions in striking contrast with the fruits of the Spirit. Now, the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envying, murders, drunkenness, revilings, and such like. That is, all the other emanations from the flesh are like those above specified, and faith is not found among them. "But," he continues, "the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance — against such there is no law." — Gal. v. 19-23. Here we find gospel faith enumerated among the fruits of the Spirit, and in direct opposition to the works of the flesh.

Another inspired Apostle, treating on the origin and power of the gospel faith, informs us that it is born of God, and that it overcomes the world. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith," — 1 John v. 4. If a faith originating in us, or born of the flesh, could overcome the world, it would show that the world is not equal to itself; that it contained in itself, and of itself, a power superior to, and capable of overcoming itself. This faith, being born of God, must be animated by the life and immortality and power of God. It is vital, but its vitality is of God, and not of the creature, hence it can and does overcome the world. The 11th chapter to the Hebrews presents us with many examples of its power to overcome the world. After many illustrious examples of the power of faith in the patriarchs and prophets, says: "And what shall I more say? for time would fail me to tell of Gideon and of Barak, and of Sampson, and Jephthae, of David also, and Samuel, and of all the prophets, who, through faith, subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of the fire, escaped the edge of the sword, and out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens, women received their dead, raised to life again; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection; and others had that of cruel mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned; they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword, they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted and tormented. Now this faith and all its power, is in this very connection, ascribed to our Lord Jesus Christ. — Heb. xii. 2.

As the faith which is peculiar to the children of God, is in all respects essentially different from the faith of men and of devils in regard to its origin, its nature, its vitality and its power, so it is equally distinct from theirs in all its workings, operations, perceptions and associations.

That of men is perfectly managable by them, and they boast that they can exercise it at their pleasure; and why should they not? If they have given it being, they ought, of course, to be able to control it, and to have much, little, or none of it, as they please. But the faith of God's elect, being born of God, and his special gift, has divine power over his children in whom its divine power is developed. They cannot exercise it, but they are exercised by it. That faith which is of the flesh, works by fear, and corrupts its possessors with all manner of delusion, causing them to believe a lie, and to suffer the consequences of their delusion. But that faith which is born of God, works by love, and purifies the soul of him who is the happy recipient of it, for it enables him to discriminate between truth and error. Hence while the Arminian will-worshipper requires the preaching of terror, wrath, fire, brimstone, and such as is calculated to excite the carnal passions of the flesh and produce fear and terror, the very melody of heaven, breathed forth by the Spirit of the gospel, and the melting stains of the gospel, which set forth the eternal, immutable, and transforming love of God, calls forth the active workings of the faith of the saints. And while the faith of the world inflates the pride of those who are under its influence, leading them to boast of their works, their piety, their zeal, and their benevolence, that faith which is of God, leads his children to worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Jesus Christ, and to have no confidence in the flesh. The perceptive qualities are equally dissimiliar. The faith of the flesh looks for signs, like the Jews, and to seek after wisdom, like the Greeks; but that which is of God, is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen; and it qualifies them to look not on the things which are seen, which are temporal; but directs them to the things which are not seen, which are eternal. It qualifies them to see the kingdom of God, and makes them experimentally familiar with the things of the Spirit, which are hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes.

The faith which is of the world has its associations with the theories, doctrines and commandments of men, the delusions, heresies, idoltary and spiritual wickedness of high places; it gives its possessors a place with the enemies to the cause of God and truth, and identifies them with those who stoned the prophets, crucified the Son of God, and slaughtered the apostles of the Lamb of God; holding then their place under the delusion that they ought to do many things contrary to Jesus of Nazareth, and that they do God service when they persecute his people and oppose his truth. On the other hand the faith of the gospel brings those who are born of God unto the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God. They have one Lord one faith and one baptism; they are but one body, having one spirit, even as they are called in one hope of their calling. The faith of Christ in his people is inseparably associated with all the other fruits of the spirit; as love, joy, peace, long-suffering, &c., and the end of this faith is the salvation of our souls. So far is this faith from receiving any support from the flesh, it is constantly opposed by the flesh and every power and faculty of the flesh; but as it overcomes the world, it shall ultimately triumph over all our corruption, doubts, fears, unbelief, and over sin and death — and bear the saints away from every opposition to that divine abode in glory where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe of February 15, 1858)

OBITUARIES

MRS. BETTY BATTEN

At the request of Creech's Primitive Baptist Church, Johnston County, N. C., in conference at her June meeting, 1963, I have written the following memorial for Sister Betty Batten.

Sister Batten was born June 19, 1891, and God in His love and tender mercy called her from our midst June 19, 1963, at the age of 72 years. She was received into Creech's Church July 1, 1950. The church felt she had been a member in spirit long before she joined, as, even then, she was faithful to attend the meetings and support the church, and continued to do so as long as her health permitted. She suffered a stroke in May, 1962, after having had a year of failing health due to a heart condition. This did not affect her love and devotion to her church and she manifested a great love for her Saviour and brethren.

Sister Batten was loved by Baptists and friends far and near. The affection felt for her was expresesd by the many floral pieces at her funeral.

Funeral services were conducted at Creech's Church by her pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, and assisted by Elder W. E. Turner. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await her Master's call.

Sister Batten will be greatly missed by the members of her church as well as the other Baptist churches she enjoyed visiting, but we feel our loss is her eternal gain.

She is survived by her husband, Brother Luby Batten, and one daughter. May the Almighty God comfort them and all those who mourn her departure. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

An humble sister, I hope,
Mavis Pittman Pope

JOHN WESLEY COX

John Wesley Cox was born October 17, 1869, in Mississippi; and died at his home in Cross Plains, Texas, March 24, 1964, at the age of more than ninety four years.

Brother Cox came to Texas with his parents when he was a very small child. He was united in marriage to Miss Texana Elizebeth McKeown at Sulphur Springs, Texas, in 1890; she passed away about thirity years ago. He leaves to mourn their loss: three sons, Shirley, of Cross Plains; John, of Copperas Cove, Texas; and Menton, of Mesa, Arizona; two daughters, Miss Jo Ben Cox, of Cross Plains, and Mrs. Georgia Graham, Cross Plains; one brother, R. B. Cox, of Los Angeles, California; two sisters, Mrs. George Adkins, Exeter, California, and Mrs. W. H. Moore, Cloves, New Mexico; also by ten grandchildren and fifteen great grandchildren.

He did not unite with the church, but was a strong believer in salvation by grace, and professed a hope of a life with our Lord and Saviour beyond the grave. Can any of us say more? "And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." "For we shall all see Him as he is; we shall be like him."

Services were conducted at Cross Plains by the writer in the presence of a large crowd of relatives and friends, at the Higginbothom Funeral Chapel; and he was laid to rest in the Cross Plains Cemetery, to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Brother Cox had attended Macedonia Church over thirty years, and rarely missed a meeting; and is missed by all the brethren and sisters. May it please our heavenly Father to reconcile the family and the brethren to His holy and divine will.

Sent in at the request of the family.

C. U. Landers

MRS. KOMA HOLMAN SATTERFIELD NELSON

In memory of our beloved Sister, Mrs. Koma Holman Satterfield Nelson, who was born Nobember 7, 1890, and passed away November 18, 1963; making her stay on earth seventy-three years, eleven days. She is survived by her husband, L. L. Nelson; and two step-sons: Ralph Nelson, Burlington, N. C., and Rudolph Nelson, Prospect Hills, N. C.

Her funeral was held at Prospect Hill Church by her pastor, Elder W. C. King; and she was laid to rest in the Cooper Cemetery.

She was loved by everyone who knew her. She did all she could to make her family happy; she loved her church and pastor very much; and she always wanted to do something to help others, never thinking of herself. We miss her very much, but God saw fit to take her away to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour.

Sister Nelson was a good nurse, and nursed at the Old Soldier's Home, at Raleigh, N. C. for some time before her second marriage. She was married to Dr. Henry Elliott Satterfield July 17, 1912; and to this union one son was born. Dr. Satterfield passed away in the late twenties; and their son in May, 1962. She was married to L. L. Nelson October 2, 1933. Sister Nelson united with the church at Roxboro the first Saturday in August, 1921; and came to Prospect Hill Church May 23, 1954.

Written by one who loved her dearly for Christ's sake, I hope, Henry Blalock.

Elder W. C. King, Pastor
Hallie Griswald, Clerk

MEMORIAL
ELDER JOHN W. GILLIAM

Since our last session of the Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association God saw fit to remove from us by death our highly esteemed and beloved brother, Elder John W. Gilliam, on August 5, 1963.

Elder Gilliam was chosen clerk of this association in 1916, and served ably and acceptably for more than 40 years. His greatest pleasure was in mingling and seeing his brethren. He was the oldest minister in this association at his death and was known and loved from the mountains to the sea coast, had traveled and preached in many states and Canada, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, salvation by grace and grace alone, Christ being the way, the truth and the life, no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

The Lord blessed him to deliver his last sermon at Lickfork Church one day before his death, from Romans 8:31, "If God be for us who can be against us?" He had served this church for 37 years (1917-1954). "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth, yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." (Revelation 14:13)

The services of Elder Gilliam were in great demand, preaching funerals far and near. The weather was never too cold, or hot, or a family too poor in material things for him to offer his service, visiting the sick, the old and infirmed who were deprived of going to church.

May God's blessing be upon each of us to bow in humble submission to His holy will, together with his lovely and devoted wife, Mary Idol Gilliam, their sons, daughters, and all who are near and dear to this precious soldier of the cross who has finished his course, and whose spirit has returned to God who gave it, awaiting the glorious resurrection when his body shall come forth from the grave to be made like His own glorious body, and be gathered home where sickness, sorrow, or pain will be felt no more, where we shall cast our crowns at Jesus' feet and crown Him Lord of Lords, the King of Glory forever and ever.

W. C. King, Moderator
D. E. Smith, Clerk

MRS. MINNIE THOMAS

When Mrs. Minnie Denson Thomas was called home by our Lord on June 11, 1964, it left a great gap in our midst. She had attended faithfully the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church most of her life, since coming to Rocky Mount about fifty years ago at the age of thirty-four.

All who knew her loved her dearly and she was ever ready and willing to help those in distress. Her bright smile and cheering words gave comfort to help us in our despair and a short time with her made us feel our hope and faith in Christ and His love.

There are many of us who will always feel a vacancy in our lives, but those who will miss her most poignantly are those near and dear to her by the ties of nature, namely: three daughters: Mrs. Clyde E. Todd, of the home; Mrs. Cary Whitfield, Portsmouth, Va. and Mrs. James Mills, Norfolk, Va.; a brother, Davis Denson, Norfolk, Va.; four sisters: Mrs. Walter Braswell, Rocky Mount, N. C.; Mrs. Carl Vick, Route three, Rocky Mount, N. C.; Mrs. J. K. Turner, Speed, N. C. and Mrs. Warren Andrews, Tarboro, N. C. Also eight grandchildren and four great grandchildren. May our Lord bless them and give them consolation and faith in His eternal plan.

Funeral services were conducted at Gay-Yost Funeral Home by Elder D. B. Stokes, assisted by Mr. H. C. Lowder, before a host of loved ones who gathered to pay their last respects. Her body was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery, Rocky Mount, N. C. to await the coming of her Lord and Master.

Nina Pearson, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, Our Heavenly Father, in his infinite wisdom and wise counsel, saw fit to call from our midst our beloved Sister Maggie Heath, to her eternal home on April 11, 1964. Strawberry Church has lost an humble, kind and faithful member who will be greatly missed in the church, home and neighborhood.

Sister Heath and deceased husband, Brother J. M. Heath, joined Strawberry Church August 5, 1922, and were baptized by the late Elder C. O. Boaze.

She leaves to mourn her loss six daughters and five sons who are living monuments to the integrity of their father and mother.

Sister Heath's funeral was conducted by Elders R. S. Payne and O. K. Tench at Scott Funeral Chapel, with interment in Hillcrest Burial Park, Chatham, Va., amidst a large and beautiful mound of flowers; there to await the Resurrection morn when her Saviour returns to call His jewels home.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the will of God who doeth all things well. We feel that our loss is her eternal gain. And

BE IT RESOLVED, That we extend to the family our love and sympathy, hoping the God of all grace will reconcile them to his will. And again

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be recorded on our church records, a copy sent to the family and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by the order of Strawberry Church, Saturday, May 2, 1964.

Elder R. S. Payne, Moderator
Josephine Dodd, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It has pleased our Heavenly Father in his infinite wisdom, love, and mercy, to remove from our midst by faith, on February 29, 1964, our dearly beloved brother and minister, James G. Gaskill, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Shiloah Primitive Baptist Church at Lowland, N. C., bow in humble submission to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who doeth all things well; and

BE IT RESOLVED, That we express our humble thanks to God for having blessed us with the privilege of having him minister unto us his great gift; and that we express our profound loss in his passing, and pray to our Heavenly Father, who can know our great loss, to reconcile us to his sweet and holy will; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we extend our sympathy to Sister Challie (Hopkins) Gaskill; and that a copy of these resolutions be sent the **Signs of the Times** and **Old Faith Contender** for publication.

Done by order of this conference.

Viola Lewis, Clerk
S. R. Boykin, Moderator

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

It has pleased the Lord to take from us by death, our dear Sister Luttie Bagget McLamb. She was born September 28, 1887, and died June 27, 1964, making her stay on earth 76 years. While it grieves us, we desire to bow humbly before God, and be reconciled to His will.

She was the daughter of Brother and Sister Allmon Baggett of Sampson County, N. C. Sister Luttie joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Harnett in August, 1908, and lived a devoted member there until December 13, 1911. She was married to Brother Eldridge McLamb of Johnston County and in April 1924, she joined Hickory Grove Church by letter from Harnett Church. Sister Luttie was a firm believer in Salvation by the Grace of God and lived steadfastly to that belief until the end. Besides her husband she leaves to mourn her loss, one son, Samuel B. McLamb, two grandchildren, one brother, one sister and several nieces and nephews with a host of friends. She was a devoted wife and Mother and a friend to all. We mourn not as those who have no Hope, but believe our loss is her eternal gain. She was in poor health for several years, but always filled her seat at her church, and visited other churches with her husband, but for two years she was confined to her bed most of the time; yet she bore her illness patiently. Her husband has lost a very devoted wife, the church a dear Sister and her family a precious Mother and Grandmother.

Her funeral was conducted on Sunday afternoon at Hickory Grove Church by her pastor Elder Lester E. Lee, assisted by Elders Dewey Turner and W. D. Godwin. Burial followed in Rose Lawn Cemetery in Benson, beneath a mound of many beautiful flowers.

RESOLVED, That we extend our deepest sympathy to Brother McLamb and the family. May God comfort them in their bereavement. Also

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family and one to **The Signs of the Times** for publication and also one on the church record. Done by order of church while in conference Saturday before third Sunday in July, 1964.

Committee Sisters
Vara Johnson
Iola Godwin
Georgia Hill

IDA MAYES

Sister Ida Mayes departed this life January 17, 1964, was born February 7, 1868 at Roxbury, New York, making her stay on earth 96 years, lacking 21 days. She was the daughter of Francis M. and Josephine Mills Travis. Sister Mayes was married in September. 1884, to William D. Mayes who passed away March, 1945. Born to this union was one son and one daughter who have passed away. She has one sister living, Mrs. Francis Whitney, 83 years old; 6 grandchildren, 19 great grandchildren and 7 great great grandchildren. Sister Mayes united with the Second Roxbury Church July 8, 1923, baptized by Elder George Ruston, Pastor at that time. She was a faithful and devoted member of the body of Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "by their fruits ye shall know them". Dear Sister Mayes was of an upright walk and godly conversation. She hungered and thirsted after righteousness and God's promise reached her for she was filled. When visiting her the Good Word of God was ever on her tongue for one to listen to, though in later years she was deaf and nearly blind of her natural body. but

not of the Spiritual body, for her tongue was ever loose and ready to talk and tell of the good things of God to poor needy sinners.

Much credit is due Mr. and Mrs. George Streeter of Halcott Center, who cared tenderly for this dear soul for nearly all of the last seven years of her life, until August 11, 1963, when she had a stroke and was helpless and in need of nurse's care.

"Blessed are they that die in the Lord, they cease from their labors and their works do follow them" and the works of Sister Mayes was the evidence of the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and no credit to the works of poor feeble, puny man. Her funeral was conducted by the weak, feeble writer at Herrick Funeral Parlor, Margaretville, New York. Burial beside her husband in the Yellow Meeting House Cemetery, Roxbury, New York.

A. J. Slauson

PLUTINA LAWRENCE WALKER

Sister Plutina Lawrence Walker was born in Guilford County, N. C., May 22, 1867, and died March 25, 1964, at the age of 96 years, 10 months and 3 days. She was married to James A. Walker Sept. 18, 1890. Two sons and three daughters survive: Miss Wilsie Walker and James M. Walker of Greensboro, N. C. (with whom she lived); Mrs. Sadie McKinney (Mrs. W. P. McKinney), Reidsville, N. C. Rt. 1; Mrs. Pat Dalton (Mrs. W. B. Dalton), Greensboro, N. C.; and Roger Walker, Lenior, N. C. Her husband died in 1923. Until her husband's death the family lived near Reidsville, but later moved to Greensboro.

Sister Walker and her husband united with the Primitive Baptist Church in Reidsville, and were baptized Nov. 3, 1905, by Elder L. H. Hardy, who was then pastor of the Reidsville Church. Her funeral was conducted at the Lambeth-Troxler Funeral Home in Greensboro by Elder David Spangler, the present pastor of the Reidsville Church, and her body was laid to rest in the Walker burial plot at Speedwell Presbyterian Church near Reidsville.

Sympathy and love were expressed by the many floral designs and the presence of a large number of her friends, both old and young, who attended her funeral.

Sister Walker maintained her membership with the Reidsville Church, and her son, James M. Walker and her daughter, Miss Wilsie, could be depended on to bring her to our church meetings 25 miles away, until she became disabled about 2 years before her death.

The church at Reidsville is fully aware of its loss in the death of Sister Walker, and we feel thankful to the Lord for the long and useful life she lived among us. Her passing is another reminder that we, too, are awaiting the final call, for "it is appointed unto man once to die."

May the Lord in his abundant mercy bless and comfort the family of Sister Walker, together with all those that mourn, including the church of her membership.

Submitted at the request of the church at Reidsville, and approved at the meeting in July, 1964. One copy for publication in the **Signs of the Times**, one copy for the family of Sister Walker, and a copy for our church records.

M. T. Smith

HER CARE FOR MOTHER AND DAD

In 1918 I left home at the age of sixteen and got a job, feeling that I was on my own; but every Friday I went home to be with Mother and Dad on the week ends, and was with them at Christmas times and every opportunity because I was needed. My sister Virgia was helpless to do for herself, and she died in April, 1942.

I was married in 1926, and my husband was always with me when I went to see them. Mother and Dad, my husband, brother Larxley and I, and sometimes my sister Virgia, attended Primitive Baptist meetings far and near; and attended associations most every year. When it was time for us to leave to go home, Dad would often say, "I hate to see you go; but you have to go, to come back again Friday night."

The Lord called Dad the third Sunday in July, 1960; and eleven months later, May 31, 1961, Mother was taken from us. During their last illnesses I was with them more than at my own home. My brother Larxley looked after them for years: he was so wonderful, and glad to care for them. He now lives on the farm but cannot see Mother and Dad: it has been awful hard on him and his family.

We do not weep for them for ones who had no hope, but we would have kept them here if we could. Though we can meet them no more on earth, we hope to meet them in Heaven.

The love I had for them no tongue can tell: They looked for my coming every Friday night. My life with Mother and Dad makes me very, very glad, because it is true.

Written by their daughter

Mrs. Joe Mangum
Reidsville, N. C.

(We regret the delay in publishing the above. It was sent some months ago. J. D. W.)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 132 DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1964 NO. 12

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12/64
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

TRAVELING THE SAME WAY
IN A DREAM
(Heb. 11:29; S. of S. 1:8)

Sometime ago, I dreamed a dream,
Which I will here relate;
Now at that time, I was residing
In Portsmouth, Virginia State.

On the banks of the Elizabeth River,
I stood with a chosen one,
Who had professed a good hope
In "the only begotten Son."

I had heard my Father speak of her,
An elect one of Adam's race,
Of how the Church was melted down
By her experience of grace.

Since we were traveling the same way,
I suggested that we talk some,
Having in mind to speak of things
Pertaining to the kingdom.

She began to talk by speaking of
The Lord's fixing things,
And He had all power to fix them,
For He is King of kings.

I spoke of the scheme of redemption,
Which is a thing sublime;
I said it was contrived in eternity,
And revealed little by little in time.

I also spoke of the joys of deliverance,
Whilst weeping freely for joy;
"And things that accompany salvation"
Are precious and will not cloy.

In the footsteps of the Sister, I walked
The bottom of the stream,
(The water gone from our pathway)
In this significant dream.

To walk in "the footsteps of the flock."
Led by a gracious hand,
Is my sincere desire, I hope,
Whilst in a weary land.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, North Carolina

CIRCULAR LETTER

(WRITTEN BY
WOODROW W. BALLENGER)

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association now in session with The First and Second Churches of Roxbury at Halcottsville, Delaware County, New York, Wednesday and Thursday, September 16th and 17th, 1964, sends love, fellowship and greetings to the several churches and associations with which we correspond.

Dearly Beloved in The Lord:

The time has come when once more, with much heart felt spiritual joy in the Lord our Saviour, we greet kindred minds and hearts in sweet communion with the Saints. Each year we look forward to the time when we can dwell together for a while in this sweet spiritual fellowship, giving God all the glory, honor and praise.

It says in the first book, first chapter, first verse of the Bible, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." This was the beginning of a time state, which God through His magnificent wisdom set up in the vast realms of eternity for man to sojourn through. Many highly educated minds of this world have tried to explain how all this came about, and the origin of man, but all have been put at naught by the account of that God inspired writer, Moses, in the book of Genesis.

God had already chosen himself a people. We read in Ephesians 1:4: "According as He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love."

In Genesis 2:8 it says, "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put man whom he had formed." It was God who placed Adam there after all else was created. Adam had no control over the matter. All his needs were provided for. This is like the Lord's chosen people, they feel at times to dwell in that garden of holiness where all their spiritual needs are supplied. They feed upon the sweet morsels of the spoken word of God's chosen laborer's inspired thoughts given them, but then the tempter comes through the man of this world, for we have two men dwelling in us: one who longs for the eternal home, to be with Jesus; the other lusts after things of this world. Satan would lead us to eternal damnation except that God has set his bounds, "so far shalt thou go and no farther." We find ourselves in great trial and tribulation, then we look to the Lord for our salvation for we cannot sustain ourselves. When we are left to ourselves we go astray and get into much trouble and sin.

It is the human nature of man to go opposite to God's way. In Isaiah 55:8 it says "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." Verse 9 says, "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than yours".

This drifting away from God continued from the time of Adam's fall in the garden of Eden and being driven from it, and waxed worse and worse until the time of Noah, when only Noah alone was left to proclaim the power of God. Things were so bad that the eternal God sent the flood to destroy the world of corruption and sin. "And God said, this is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for prepetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud. And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh." (Genesis 9:12-15)

How wonderful when we see the bow in the cloud and are reminded of God's covenant that He would no more destroy the world by flood.

Down through all the ages since He made this covenant we behold his bow in the clouds. God keeps his covenant, man can't. For when, as in Hebrews 6:-13, God made a promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself.

The three sons of Noah were, Shem, Ham and Japheth, and from these was the whole earth overspread, — reference Genesis 9 verses 18 and 19. Sin continued once more to abound as evidenced by Joseph being hated by his brethren and sold into Egypt, but God had a purpose in it. Joseph was a type of the Christ to come, as God had preordained in the annals of eternity before time began, as a saviour of his people.

They sold Joseph for twenty pieces of silver, and the purchasers took him to Egypt and resold him to Potipher, Captain of Pharaoh's guard. The Lord is with his people and sustains them as he did Joseph.

Then in the fulness of time God provided a Saviour for his people through his only son Christ Jesus who was born of a virgin, that through His death he should atone for the sins of his people. This is so wonderfully recorded in the whole 17th chapter of St. John, in Jesus' prayer.

The Lord's people cannot do for themselves; and when they try to buy corn they find their money returned in their

sacks. For they have already been brought with a price and not one of the elect of God shall be lost. All heaven would fail if one of God's little ones was lost, for God's word standeth fast from eternity unto eternity.

All that we have or will ever have is the gift of God. It was all created by him. We can neither add or take away from His creation. God provides for each of his people as He sees fit. In Luke chapter 12, verses 24 and 25 we read; "Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have store house nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls? And which of you with taking though can add to his stature one cubit?" God knoweth our needs before we ask of Him. He is an all powerful God. We moan and complain because there are so few of us at meetings, but if we read Deuteronomy 7th chapter 7th verse we find: "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people." Verse 8 reads; But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt." Pharaoh we interpret to mean the evil one; and Egypt our travels through this land of sin.

As we travel through this wilderness of sin we have many trials, tribulations and temptations until we cry, "Am I His or am I not? Do I love the Lord or not? "But we have a hope, which is the anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail. (Hebrews 6:19) This hope we carry in our breast, journeying on as foreigners and strangers looking ever to our Shepherd for guidance. The one who came and gave his all that his people might be saved from their sins. For we sing:

"While Christ is rich, I can't be poor;
What can I want beside?
O Lord, I cast my care on thee;
I triumph and adore;
Henceforth my great concern shall be
To love and praise thee more."

Christ came as low as the poorest of his people that of all that were given Him none should be lost. No matter what our sin, Christ has suffered for us and has gone that way before us to interceed at the right hand of God. Christ says: "Only those which are sick need a physican". He is the great physician that saved His people.

As we travel in our spiritual journey we find our spiritual garments wax not old, our shoes wear not out, for God's word is the same yesterday, today and forever. Jesus told His diciples to take neither script or purse. God provides for His people.

In our sojourn we must be careful to entertain strangers for some have entertained angels unawares. Also we are warned, touch not mine anointed and do my prophets no harm. If there be any tares growing among the wheat we should wait until the harvest when the reaper will separate the tars from the wheat, and the tars will be burned with unquenchable fire.

What a wonderful joy it will be for the chosen ones of God in that day, when they shall awaken to be with Him forever more. When the bridegroom cometh and the bride is caught up to meet Him in the air and carried up to dwell in that city where there are no woes or trials, only eternal praise to God. The name of that city as it is told in the last verse of the 48th chapter of Ezekiel, is "And the name of the city from that day shall be, The Lord is There."

HAD AN ENJOYABLE TRIP

409 New York Avenue
Elizabeth City, N. C.
October 13, 1964

To the Readers of the Signs, Greeting:

My companion and I recently returned from a Northern trip and I desire to write an account of it, thinking it might be of interest to some. We departed from home by bus on our sixth anniversary, Saturday, September the 12th, and were met by Elder and Sister W. D. Griffin the same day at State Road, Delaware, and conveyed to their good home in Newark, Delaware, where we remained until the following Tuesday morning, enjoying their hospitality and heavenly conversation as on a previous visit. And we were glad to meet and converse with Elder Biggs' daughter from Nashville, Tenn., and a lady friend of hers from Huntsville, Alabama, who were also visiting Brother and Sister Griffin.

On Sunday, we went to Welsh Tract Church in Newark, (The oldest Old School Baptist church in America) and felt to be blessed to hear an able sermon by Elder Griffin, who is Pastor of this historic church. I was deeply touched by his reference to the robe of righteousness in his discourse because of a dream or vision I had many years ago, which I believe to be figurative, and which I poetized for publication sometime ago. Taking leave of absence from my official duties one afternoon, I spent the time rejoicing over this experience in slumberings upon my bed. (Job 33:-15, 16) It is so comforting when a minister touches on some part of your experience.

On Tuesday, we went with Brother and Sister Griffin to THE MAPLES, the summer home of Mr. and Sister James E. Peet in the Catskill Mountains of New York, being joined en route thereto by Miss Biggs and her friend, they having gone on ahead of us in order to spend Monday in New York City. Reaching our destination, we met a number of Old School Baptists, who had come from ten different States and Canada to attend the Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association at Olive and Hurley Church in Halcottsville, Delaware County, New York. Mixing and mingling with the assembled guests, the atmosphere was conducive to genuine spiritual enjoyment, and the hospitality of Mr. and Sister Peet was greatly appreciated by all. That night, Elder Griffin was called upon and delivered a very good sermon after the singing of a few songs of Zion, and prayer.

On Wednesday and Thursday, we went to the Association. The congregation was comparatively small, whereas it is understood that in time past there were many Old School Baptists in this section of the country as well as in other sections of the North, where the number is now small. It is also understood that services are no longer held in the Yellow Meeting House near Roxbury, N. Y. We went to see this old sanctuary, which still contains the seats placed therein. In the adjacent cemetery, are many graves giving silent evidence of a sizable attendance there in former days. In this burial ground is an obelisk erected in 1880 by Jay Gould, an American financier; born in Roxbury, N. Y., May 27, 1836. This monument was erected in commemoration of his parents, who likely were Old School Baptists, and other relatives whose names are thereon inscribed.

The following Elders were also present at the Association: Elder Ruston, Slauson, Warren, and Wood. And the preaching done by these ministers, or servants, of Christ "was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power" to the strengthening of faith and hope, and the illumination of the understanding through the blessing of the Spirit. "And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. (Jer. 3:-15) One of the qualifications of a preacher is aptness to teach, to open up the Scriptures of truth as enabled, and to "stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance." He is to separate the precious from the vile and feed the flock of slaughter, the sheep and the lambs, with the doctrines of the Gospel as enabled, the doctrines of faith once

delivered to the saints, according to the Bible. He is to "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." (2 Timothy 4:2)

I am glad that I am living in a day in which there are yet a few declaring the whole counsel of God, that we can go far and near to hear the joyful sound and feast upon it as blessed of the Lord. The number of our veteran ministers is rapidly decreasing as well as the membership in some places, while mystical Babylon is flourishing, for the professing world is carried away with her false teachings, but she is riding for a fall, and great will be the fall according to Revelation. People will not assemble in great numbers to hear the TRUTH in these days of a falling away. They don't want a searching ministry. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. And they shall turn their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." (2 Timothy 4:3,4) We hear much about the dignity of man from high professors, and little about the depravity and inability of him to do anything spiritually good of himself. Cold, atheistical materialism abounds in the universe; spirituality and godliness are far less evidenced. Witness the inordinate interest in sports and the prevalence of crime in the land.

On Wednesday night at THE MAPLES, Elder Ruston preached a sweet sermon, as well as at the Association, and I was wide awake throughout his discourse. I mention this because of what occurred while he was preaching here so soothingly six years before. In 1960 we visited Elder and Sister Ruston in Dutton, Ontario, Canada, accompanied by the late Elder Ayers, Sister Beadie Meads, and Sister Myrtle Lefferts. We enjoyed our stay with them very much, also a visit with Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Thompson of Ridgetown, Ontario, Canada. We attended a three-day meeting at one of Elder Ruston's Churches and heard with joy the gospel preached with power by both him and Elder Ayers, whose passing in 1962 has been mourned far and wide. He was our beloved Pastor.

After the Association, we accompanied Sister Lefferts to her home in Nutley, New Jersey, and on to New York City. We were delighted with the privilege of visiting in her home again after an interval of four years. Upon arrival in New York on Sunday, we went to a regular meeting of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist church and heard Elder Slauson, the Pastor, preach in the morning and in the afternoon. He preached the gospel to our comfort and understanding, and we felt that it was good to be with the little band assembled to hear the word. Only eight persons were present in this great city of eight million inhabitants. What a sad commentary on the population of this metropolis! Just a handful of people saved from the flood of errors to which Babylon subscribes. It made me think of the eight souls in Noah's ark, saved from the great deluge or flood that covered the earth. But in Christ, the Ark of grace and Sun of righteousness, there is a multitude which no man can number, redeemed to God . . . out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, according to Holy Writ — the whole election of grace. The elect considered alone are many, but in comparison with all the people that have ever lived in the world when it shall have come to an end, they are few, — a little flock, only a remnant. "Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matt. 7:14)

Following the meeting referred to, we were met by relatives and had a good visit with them in Brooklyn. Sister Sallie Hutchens, the widow of the late Elder Hutchens, invited us to her home, but we did not find it convenient to visit her. We were very pleased to meet her at the meeting. On Monday, we went with our relatives to the World's Fair, which is quite a big af-

fair. "Peace through Understanding" is the eloquent slogan of the Fair, in which is located what is called the Court of Peace with the Unisphere, symbol of the Fair and the largest globular structure ever built by man, in the background. What man hath wrought is evident on every hand in this great exposition in greater New York. But how many men are there that know by faith what God hath graciously wrought and "the peace of God, which passeth all (natural) understanding?" (Phil. 4:7) Thousands upon thousands of people were milling around in the Fairgrounds viewing the massive structures of architectural beauty and splendor and the numerous exhibits arrayed therein, including the pretentious Vatican and Mormon Pavilions containing a vast display of graven images and pictures made by men (forbidden by the second commandment) to attract the unwary visitors, but they had no charms for us.

Although all may move about freely at the great exhibition, it made me think of Vanity Fair in John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, which has been widely read and enjoyed. I read this book with much interest about the time I united with the church. In it, I find this verse:

"Behold Vanity Fair! the pilgrims there
Are chain'd and stand beside:
Even so it was our Lord pass'd here,
And on Mount Calvary died."

In the dark ages, God's people were bound and slain by the thousands in the most unconscionable manner on their pilgrimage to the heavenly Jerusalem, and persecution of the remnant may be resumed in the future if union of Protestant churches with their mother is effected. Such union is diligently being sought now. Primitive Baptists are not Protestants. Church history shows conclusively that they were in existence under different names before the Reformation instituted by Martin Luther, a strong predestinarian who dwelt much on justification by faith.

Well, we returned home on September the 24th after a very pleasant journey made in safety, which is something to be thankful for in these days of heavy traffic and tragic occurrences. After all, our lives will be preserved in the providence of an allwise God until the time appointed for separation of soul and body. In Job 14:14, we read ". . . all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." This Scripture touchingly came to mind when I was traveling one day, as did the words of a song that brought tears to mine eyes and joy to my heart.

In hope of a glorious change,
C. W. Vass

LETTER FROM A CHURCH TO THE ASSOCIATION

The members and messengers composing the 2nd Church of Roxbury, New York, send love and fellowship to the different churches which meet with us, especially to the Lexington-Roxbury Association now in session with the 1st and 2nd Churches of Roxbury, September 16 and 17, 1964:

Dear Brethren:

At this time we must pen a few lines for a Church Letter, but we feel too incompetent for the task, but as it is a duty put upon us, we pray the dear Lord will help and instruct us. We feel that no one knows our vileness better than ourself, so it is with fear and trembling we make the attempt to write.

We have had some sweet meditations upon the goodness and mercies of God at times, so we feel that we must be in his hands, though vile and full of sin. We see him high and lifted up, and altogether lovely; so we have a faint understanding of the Word which dwells in us — Jesus Christ the hope of glory.

If we are not mistaken in this matter, such is the warfare of God's elect that they live in doubt and fear each day; and we could not have assurance

for anyone who was sure of his hope and glory. Those who are of the Lord fear often that they will make mistakes. We live by faith, love and hope: these are gifts of God. "The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom."

John says in Revelation, "Fear not, I am the first and the last." And in John's gospel, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Paul said, "For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

We want Jesus first and last, and then there will be no discord in the welfare of the church. Yes, everything points to Jesus when we have this desire.

"How loth we are to leave the place,
When Jesus shows his smiling face."

We want His presence to stay with us — it disperses our gloom.

The foretaste of heaven is sweeter than all the treasures of earth: we have an inheritance that fadeth not away. God's grace is sufficient for us: did we not hunger, and He fed us; naked, and he clothed us with the garments of righteousness. How many times as we sit listening to these precious truths, that the image of our dear Saviour seems before us! We lose sight of ourselves as we feed upon the milk of the Word. His precious promises are yea, sayeth the Lord, and amen.

. . . Done by order of the church.

Prudence O'Connor Hinkley,
Church Clerk

(We asked sister Hinkley's permission to publish this, for it seemed so wonderful for one to write who is 92 years of age. — J. D. W.)

ASSURANCE

Before quoting scriptures in the Epistles of John, we acknowledge that we feel dependant upon the Lord, and trust that the Lord has given us a mind to hint at this subject; and that the Lord is directing the reader to follow the same train of thought:

We call your attention to former articles upon the subject: "Hope and Assurance", in the September, 1963, issue of the **Signs.** And "More on Hope and Assurance", in October, 1963, issue of the **Signs.** In the October issue, the article is a research work, meaning there are quotations from other writers who shared our views as mentioned in the September issue. Notice especially the writing of J. C. Philpot, as he described the subject so wonderfully.

First, we quote portions of the September issue: "The doctrine that the Children of God, after regeneration, have perfect assurance of their hope of eternal life without a doubt at all, is an erroneous doctrine. The advocation of this doctrine tends to drive God's people to despair."

"The other extreme concerning Hope and Assurance is this: "You have doubts all the time, without any degree of assurance; you experience the corruption without any redemption from it; is a doctrine which tends to drive God's people to despair. Hope is drilled upon to the extent that the sentiment is that there is no degree of assurance at all to God's people. The sentiment is that the Children of God have doubts and fears all the time, and if any has assurance, he just thinks that he has this assurance, according to this doctrine."

The children of God do not have the same season all the time. You do not **always** doubt and fear whether you are a child of God, neither do you **always** possess the assurance that God loves you. In other words, there is a cycle of seasons in the experiences of God's people. As the poet said: "Sometimes I'm full of doubting, and think I have no

grace; sometimes I'm full of praising, when Christ reveals his face:"

We quote from Philpot as mentioned in the October issue: "Does the Scripture ever afford us the least warrant to believe that a man can be walking in the footsteps of a tempted, suffering Lord, who continues for months and years together at ease in Zion, without any trouble, exercise, grief, or distress in his soul? David never was there. Jeremiah never was there. Paul never was there. But their path was one of change and vicissitude; sometimes down, sometimes up, sometimes mourning, sometimes rejoicing, but never long together in one unvaried spot. The Spirit of the Lord, in carrying on this grand work in the hearts of God's people, will be continually operating in two two distinct ways upon their souls."

Now, we quote from John: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God: that **ye may know that ye have eternal life,** and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." (1 John 5:13) **"And we know that we are of God** and the whole world lieth in wickedness." (19th verse) "We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby **know we the spirit of truth,** and the spirit of error." (1 John 4:6) "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. — " (1 John 3:14)

If we take these scriptures out of their setting, then we must advocate that God's people must know or have the full degree of assurance all the time that they have eternal life. But, we do not believe this is the case. We read in one place that there are different gifts, some pastors, teachers, etc. Paul mentioned that he fed the Church at Corinth milk, and told them that they were not able to bear strong meat. "Strong meat belongs to them that are of full age." This does not mean age naturally, but spiritually. That is, of full age in growth in knowledge of the doctrine.

In reading the Epistles of John, we find that his theme was **love** and **assurance.** Now, this assurance is not to be taken in a boasting way. "Where is boasting then? It is excluded." (Romans 3:27)

Let us examine some that just **knew** that they were of the truth, but were mistaken; and in turn, take stock of ourselves. Paul said that boasting was excluded. Let us notice this parable: "And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God I thank thee, **that I am not as other men are,** extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or **even as this publican."** (Luke 18:9-14) Jesus said that the Pharisee did not go to his house justified. Notice how boastful and how sure the Pharisee was of himself. Yet, he was mistaken, and was deceived. If we get to the point that we think we are better than others, then it would do us good to read this parable, and maybe it would bring us down.

"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matthew 7:22-23) These seemed to know that they were of the truth, and must have been surprised they were not children of God — since they were so sure of themselves. If we get to the point that we are boastful, and progress to the extent that we always live above doubts and fears, and always know and can tell others that we know and are sure that we have eternal life; then let us examine ourselves and find out what condition we are in by reading Matthew 7:22,23. If we are sure and never have any more doubts concerning our destiny, then we may receive the same surprise that those did: "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity." It will

do us good to examine ourselves. The world looks at our outward appearance. "Men looketh upon the outward appearance, but God looketh upon the heart." We may be professors, that is, profess to have religion, but the question is: Are we possessors? Do we possess eternal life? If we are sure of ourselves, we may be mistaken, as mentioned in Matthew 7:22-23.

In connection with this, let us examine Matthew 25:41-44. "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee as hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and **did not minister unto thee?"** These must have received a "big surprise" also, because they were certain that they had always ministered unto the Lord, and were surprised to learn that they had failed to do so. Therefore, they must have always thought that heaven was their home, and they lived above doubts and fears that the Children of God experience.

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. . ." (2 Cor. 13:5) Please read 2 Cor. 12:1-9. Notice that Paul received wonderful revelations, and implied that he would be "puffed up" if the thorn in the flesh was not given to him. The thorn in the flesh was needful to keep him down, so that he would be humble. Notice the key of these scriptures: "And lest I should be **exalted above measure** through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the **messenger of Satan to buffet me,** lest I should be exalted above measure." I believe the expression, "exalted above measure," means the same as being "puffed up." As we think of the thorn in the flesh, we think of doubts and fears. These doubts and fears are needful, as they keep us humble, where we can be given to "esteem others better than ourselves". In Galatians 5:17, we read of the warfare within the children of God. "The flesh against the Spirit." If our soul is never tried, and if we never have any doubts concerning our state, and never mourn over our sins, then we are in a sad shape. If life is within us, our soul is exercised.

Of course, there are seasons in which the children of God are dormant, as the oak trees are dormant in the winter time. You cannot see any life manifested, since the leaves have fallen off, and cannot tell a dead tree from a live one on the surface. (The life is in the root.) At times, your soul is not exercised, as in the nighttime you sleep and you rest; therefore your body is not exercised at night.

At times you may be puffed up to the extent that you talk as the pharisees do, but the thorn is given to bring you down. "Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord." (Obadiah 1:4) "Moreover the Lord saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet: Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will discover their secret parts." (Isaiah 3:16-17)

The Lord will take care of all our needs. If we are exalted above measure, the Lord will bring us down. If we are down in the valley, and our soul is full of troubles, then we need comfort, and in due season the Lord will give us comfort: there is a bringing down, and a building up. Notice the commission to Jeremiah: "See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant." (Jeremiah 1:10)

If we need to be brought down a

"notch", the Lord will take care of it, either directly, or indirectly by his servants. If we need comfort and consolation, the Lord will take care of it, either directly or indirectly.

Some of God's people experience trials that others do not have, some experience revelations that others do not have: They all experience the same things, but **not in the same degree.** Do we not crave evidence? If your soul is exercised, you have some doubts and fears within, and you experience the sorrow of darkness, and you want some comfort and consolation, and yearn for some evidence that you are experiencing things which the saints experience.

There are seasons in which the children of God do experience **"full assurance of faith"**, and **during these times the doubts and fears are gone;** but, you find they come back later. Notice the expression: "that ye may know that ye have eternal life". This does not mean that the children of God always have the full knowledge or full assurance of faith, that they know that they have eternal life. I do not believe that the children of God progress or grow to the extent that they always live above doubts and fears.

This text is written as a comfort to you who desire evidence, and let us see if it traces your experience. Why did John write this? In order for you to gain knowledge. "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God: that ye may know that ye have eternal life . . ." The knowledge is that you have eternal life. "And **this is life eternal,** that they might know thee the only true God, Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3)

What is the benefit of this knowledge, and why did John desire for us to have this knowledge? Why did God inspire John to write scriptures as these? "All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable . . ." It will not do to shun any part of the scriptures, although we may not understand them.

The benefit of the knowledge that you have eternal life is a comfort to you, if the scripture applies to you. The question is: Does the text apply to us? The scriptures describe God's people, and tells who they are and what they are. If we are haughty, the text does not apply to us. If we know, as the pharisees do, it does not apply to us. This text **is directed to those who doubt** and fear. It is directed to those who are distressed. The Lord does not feed you if you are not hungry. In turn, the Lord does not comfort you if you do not need to be comforted. You may need bringing down instead of being comforted, and the Lord takes care of this.

God's people are different from the world. Have you felt to be an outcast, and a stranger to this world? Have you found that the pleasures of this world do not hold any charm for you? Are your affections set upon things which you cannot see with your natural eye?

God's people are an afflicted people. "I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." "I have chosen thee in the furnace of afflictions." I believe that the type of afflictions mentioned goes deeper than natural afflictions. We read in Psalms 73: "The wicked are not in trouble as other men." The wicked do not know anything about soul afflictions. Have you ever mourned over your shortcomings? Have your sins weighted you down? Has your soul ever been in trouble? Have you ever felt that God had forsaken you? Have you ever felt so undone, that you found that you could not pray, because you were afraid that God would not hear you? Have you ever felt that your case was hopeless, and could not see how God could love a wretch as you felt to be? Do you know anything about the sorrow of darkness that is felt within the soul? Does it cause you to cry out from your heart? Have you felt to be cold and indifferent, and when this knowledge comes home to your soul, does it cause you to mourn? Have you ever gotten to the place that you wondered if grace has touched your

heart? Have you ever doubted and wondered if you have been deceived in the whole matter?

Have you found that there is only one who can speak peace to your soul? Do you yearn for the presence of God, and find that it is sweet and pleasant? Do you feel unworthy of the wonderful things which God has shown you? Doesn't it make your heart feel tender when you are given to realize the wonderful love of God, and to think that Jesus suffered such a horrible death for you? Do you feel worthy of his sufferings? This is the innocent dying for the guilty. Has this knowledge been given to you? If Jesus did not meet the just demands of the law, then our doom would be everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord.

Has circumstances ever weighted you down such that your eyes were turned upward, and they were given to say as Paul: "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be present with the body, and to be present with the Lord." (2 Cor. 5:8)

If your soul has been exercised as mentioned, then it is sweet evidence that God is dealing with you, and that He has set his love upon you; and the text is directed to you. You are in the need of this knowledge. You need building up, and you find it is a comfort to have the knowledge that you have eternal life. Why? Things have gone against you, and you have experienced seasons of despair, and the future looked dark for you. But John is writing to you. He is telling that you have eternal life, and this is so much better and richer than the riches of this world.

Our life here is short, and but a span of time. Paul said: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Romans 8:18) Are you afflicted? It is just for a season, and will not last forever. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;" (2 Cor. 4:8-9) Have you experienced these things? Be not dismayed, as it is but for a span of time. "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not." (Job 14:1-2)

If you are tried and exercised as mentioned above, you realize that this world is not your home, and that you are a stranger here. Does it not give you comfort to meditate upon life beyond the grave? Have you ever experienced seasons of darkness and of being in despair? If so, the text is directed to you, and telling you that you have eternal life; and this is enough, isn't it?

As we think of eternal life, we think of one eternal day. Have you experienced seasons in which you felt far from God? If so, does it give you comfort to know that in the sweet by and by, God will dwell with you always?

Have you experienced seasons of mourning over your case, and find that your seasons of rejoicing are so few and far between? "Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the **Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended."** (Isaiah 60:20) The days of thy mourning shall be ended forever, and you will eternally enjoy the presence of the Lord, and can rightly sing praises unto his wonderful name for ever and ever.

This knowledge is needful to you who are exercised. "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." How does this knowledge benefit you? It gives you fresh courage to press on in spite of difficulties. It gives you fresh strength and desire to do that which is right. Satan may tempt you to give up, and say, "What is the use of me doing that which is right, everything goes against me as it is, and I wonder if there is anything

to religion anyway." But this knowledge revives your hope, and enables you to resist the temptations of Satan.

Although you experience seasons of "full assurance of faith", you feel **unworthy** to boast of this knowledge. Rather you rejoice and sing praises from the heart to the Lord for his goodness and loving kindness. This knowledge is given to God's people in an humble way, and they rejoice in it and do not boast about it. It is a comfort to you to know that you have eternal life, as it is the only consolation that will do you any good, spiritually speaking. Again, this knowledge is given to God's people in time of need, and if it is the time for you, then you rejoice in reading the text: there is a distinction between the ones **who boast** of the knowledge they have of their assurance, and the ones **who rejoice** in the knowledge of their assurance. There is quite a difference between the two. May we continue to examine ourselves. As we think of those that boast of their knowledge, we may well say that this is **not true knowledge,** but instead a **false knowledge,** as we have tried to point out.

I believe that God's people rejoice in the knowledge of their assurance, and it causes them to sing praises unto the Lord. Read the book of Psalms, and you will find that the writer was sometimes distressed; and was sometimes rejoicing.

We trust that the Lord has enabled us to rightly divide the word of truth, and may all praise and honor and glory be given to him.

Yours in hope,
W. W. Hudson, Jr.
1508½ Country Club Rd.
Bastrop, La.

THOUGHTS ON ANTINOMIANISM

This is a word much in vogue among the greater part of the religious world, but I believe it is a term very little understood, and is used chiefly by those whose profession and practice prove that they take darkness for light, and neither know what they say, nor understand whereof they affirm it. It is no uncommon thing to hear those branded with the opprobrious epithet of Antinomian who embrace the pure gospel doctrines, and manifest by their outward deportment that the law is written on their hearts; but reject the moral law as being a rule of life, and look alone to the obedience, suffering, and death of the Lord Jesus Christ for life and salvation. They do not pretend to obey the law of God, but protest their own inability to keep the law in any part; and that the law is dead to all true believers, and has no power over any for whom Christ has satisfied justice, and paid the utmost requirements the law could make, by becoming the sinner's Substitute, and enduring the curse it denounced against trangressors.

These are the characters that are called Antinomians, and are despised, belied, and persecuted by the generality of professors! But surely if ever a mistake was made in religious matters, there is a great one in this; for these are the very persons who receive the truth as it is in Jesus, and are led by the Spirit of God. For when He enlightens the mind, he causes the subject of his work to see his own impotency even to think a good though of himself, much less to perform a good action; and that without Christ he can do nothing; and that if he does any good thing, it is only through the love of Christ influencing him to willing obedience to the holy law of God. The good he does is not by any power inherent in himself, but it is wrought in him by the same power that raised Jesus from the dead. And as to evil, the believer cannot commit a damning sin, or if permtited to fall into, he cannot continue in sin, because his seed remaineth in him. And his body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, who purifies it throughout for God to dwell in; he new-models it for himself. And

therefore the sins he is guilty of are from the corruption lurking within, for the believer is not freed from the being of sin, until freed from the body of death which he carries about him. It is the will as much as the act which constitutes the guilt, and the possessor of true faith earnestly desires to be delivered from all iniquities, and to be thoroughly purged from all sin. He may have, no doubt has, his besetting sin, but no sin can have dominion over him, for he is not under the law, but under grace; he maintains a perpetual conflict with the powers of darkness, the lusts of the flesh and spirit; and though he fall, he shall arise, and at length overcome through the blood of the Lamb, and that alone.

These are the characters that are styled Antinomians! And this is the doctrine that is said to encourage licentiousness! But they are the persons who observe the apostolic injunction to be zealous of good works, which God has before ordained that they should observe; and these characters as strongly insist as James did, that faith without works is dead; for where true faith is exercised, love to God and man is manifested in striking colours. And the more we are under the influence of divine love, the stronger our faith is, the more we shall be concerned to mortify the lusts of the flesh and to perfect holiness in the fear of God; and where the outward conduct is not conformable to the gospel, there is no evidence of genuine faith. Is this encouraging licentiousness? Surely not in the least degree. These are the real advocates for works, not as the procuring cause of the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, but as the natural effect of the new birth being begun; for it is as natural for the child of God to aim to imitate his glorious Saviour, as it is for fire to ascend towards the source of light and water to pursue its channel to the ocean. By turning from the law as a covenant of works, and embracing a crucified Saviour in the arms of faith, we honour and magnify the law of God, and glorify its Author; but those who rest in any measure upon their imperfect obedience, reject the law of the Spirit of life in Christ, which makes true believers free from the law of sin and death. And if this be true, and Antinomians are rejectors of the law, our enemies are the very characters they conceive us to be; and Antinomianism is a rejection of the perfect law of liberty from the bondage of sin and death; and the opposers of this law, let them view characters and profession in whatever light they may, they are themselves the advocates of a system which, it is to be feared, will leave them at last among the most licentious of the human race.

(We copy the above from the December, 1849, issue of the Gospel Standard, of England. The writer's name is not given, but we presume it was one of the editors. Formerly this subject was quite prominent among various groups. We thought it would be profitable for us to meditate upon the importance of the matters contained in the article — J. D. W.)

"THE HALF HAS NEVER BEEN TOLD"

(Common meter double)

Had I all Tongues possessed by men,
All tuned to Jesus' praise;
They could not fully Him commend
For all His works and ways;
They could not for His mercies great
Bestowed on sinful me,
To Him sufficient praise relate
Through all eternity.

Nor could they all my sins confess,
If not in deed, in thought;
Their number is immeasureless,
I long with Christ have fought;
But Grace abounding unto me
In Jesus freely giv'n,
By it I hope and trust to see
A happy home in Heav'n;

By grace I hope and trust to stand
With saints around the throne,
And with the sheep on Christ's right hand
To be by Jesus owned;
Oh, how I sometimes long and pray,
When pressed with doubts and fears,
His servant He would call away
And wipe away my tears,

But if it be His will for me
More suff'ring to endure,
And though the furnace hotter be
'Tis but to make me pure;
And when as silver I'm refined
And Christ His image see,
Then I can sing, The Lord was kind,
'Twas all in love for me!

C. B. Britt
Rt. 6, Box 282
El Doroda, Ark.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To October 1, 1964)

Mrs. G. W. Mathews, Tex.	$ 1.00
Eliza Turner, Va.	1.00
A Friend, Calif.	10.00
Elder C. N. Bunn, Va.	5.00
J. B. Dunagan, Ga.	.50
Mrs. Garlon Vick, N. C.	2.00
Jno. E. Pace, Sr., Va.	2.00
Elder R. L. Biggs, Tenn.	2.00
Miss Lavenia Biggs, Tenn.	1.00

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the **Staunton River Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with Danville Church the fifth Saturday and Sunday in November. The church is located on Bradley Road in North Danville.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

R. T. Holley, Church Clerk

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Elder R. W. Rhodes now has another edition of his book of the above title ready to distribute. The price postpaid is $2.00 per copy, and may be had by addressing him as follows:

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CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** is to be held the Lord willing, with Pleasant Hill Church, Edgecombe County, just off Highway 43, between Pinetops and Rocky Mount, N. C., the fifth Sunday and Saturday before.

All who love the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 3,
Tarboro, N. C.

Danville, Virginia December, 1964

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EDITORIAL

PSALMS 17:15.

"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness."

At the heading of this Psalm, we see that it was a prayer of David, an expression of one, who, though a subject of grace, had earth and hell to face. Saul had seen David prevail over the Philistine, Goliath, with a sling and with a stone, I Samuel 17:49, but soon Saul had become very jealous of David, for "When David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistines, the women came out of all cities of Israel, singing and dancing to meet King Saul,

with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music, and the women answered one another as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." I Samuel 18:-6-7. Saul's hatred was such that he tried twice to smite David with a javelin. The cruelty of Saul in seeking the death of David, though David had served Saul well, can be read in I Samuel, 18th and 26th chapters, and though we see therein that David spared Saul's life twice, yet it is clear that David had no confidence in Saul, even though in I Samuel 26:21 Saul said, "I have sinned," confessing that he had played the fool and erred exceedingly. As we read the several incidents referred to above, we can understand why David expressed himself as he did in the 17th Psalm. A life of trouble, fearing that he would fall one day by the hand of Saul, seems to bring to our mind the warfare between flesh and spirit. Sincerity is not found when the flesh and Satan go hand in hand. David was sincere when he could say to Saul, "The King of Israel is come out to seek a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountain." How small the Apostle Paul saw himself when he said, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given," but David, expressing the humiliation of his Lord when in the flesh, cried in Psalm 22:6, "But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people."

The writer of this article, more than fifty years ago, used to hear Elder Vail say, "If only I could leave this old body at home when I come to meeting," yet he needed, for our sakes, to bring it with him, because we all have bodies. Paul said, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" This world is not a friend to grace and we are assured by our Lord that "In the world ye SHALL HAVE tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." John 16:33

Coming to our subject matter, David said, "As for me," a serious and personal thing, transcending all others, such as loss of friends, home and country, for he was about to abandon his own land, seeking an asylum among his country's enemies. He was misjudged by those who ought to have been his friends, yet having a friend in God, whose mercy and kindness had overshadowed him from the time when he was but a lad caring for his father's sheep, "As for me," he said, "I will behold thy face in righteousness." Whatever men might say or do, "God is judge himself. Selah." God knew his desires and groanings, his prayer showed where his heart was, and to-day, as then, where the Spirit's work is in one's soul, there is repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the Spirit's work to show us that our own righteousness is as filthy rags, causing us to loathe our own life. How killing is the Spirit's work to the love and pleasure of sin, and how it brings us down to feel ourselves as small as a flea; yet how wonderful it is when the Spirit takes of the things of Jesus and reveals them to us. We learn in God's school upon whose head to place the crown. Paul could have said, "As for me," "By the grace of God I am what I am." By God's amazing grace David could say, "I WILL behold thy face in righteousness." When God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, it had the same effect on us as it did on Job. When he, by the EYE of faith, saw his God, he abhorred himself and repented in dust and ashes, but there is a day yet to come for David and all of God's chosen race when their EYES (plural) shall see his face in righteousness, and they will all see him for themselves, as Job saith, "Whom I shall see for myself, and mine EYES (plural) shall behold, and not another." Job 19:-27. This has not as yet come to pass. Isaiah 25:8 declares, "He will swallow up death in victory." Over seven hundred and fifty years after Isaiah said that,

Paul said, "Then shall be brought to pass THE SAYING that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." It is still A SAYING, but it is God's truth. When shall this truth come to pass? when? "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." In Acts 13:36, Paul tells us that "David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers and saw corruption. But he (Jesus) whom God raised again, saw no corruption." There is a time yet to come, a SAYING yet to be fulfilled, when all that number that no man can number will be changed. "For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality." Not until then will come to pass THE SAYING, "Death is swallowed up in victory." "For the EARNEST EXPECTATION of the creature WAITETH for the MANIFESTATION of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creature ITSELF also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

By the glorious liberty of the children of God, we do not feel that the Apostle is here referring to "the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." Galatians 5:1, but to that glorious liberty that one must feel and enjoy when freed from this body of death, in which, as long as we live here, we shall groan and travail in pain together. Romans 8:22, experiencing often a fearfulness and trembling which almost overwhelms us. David comes in here in Psalm 55:5-6, saying, "Oh! that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest." These children of God are those who have gone before, "Set free from these prisons of clay, united in mansions of love." We do not believe in soul-sleeping, for in a subject of grace the soul is regenerated and the spirit renewed. Titus 3:5

John, banished to Patmos, beholding the glory of heaven in Revelation 7:13-17, tells us, "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night (while time lasts) in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." One will say, how satisfied they must be. Their satisfaction is wonderful, far beyond our ability to comprehend, yet, we say this, we hope, with due reverence, that it is not complete. Romans 8:16-17 says, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs: heirs of God, and JOINT-HEIRS with Christ; if so we suffer with him, that WE MAY BE ALSO GLORIFIED TOGETHER." Those who have entered into bliss, being joint-heirs, do not, as yet, enter into the fullness of glory until our Lord shall come and "Change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." Philippians 3:21. In Revelation 6:9-11 John tells us that he saw the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God asking from under the altar, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? . . . And it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season." There is an appointed time. In Matthew 24:36 Jesus said, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." The saints in heaven, set free from sinful

bodies and united in mansions of love, behold, with joy unspeakable, their Lord Jesus Christ in his glorified immortal body. Our faith is expressed in joyous strains when we sing, "The Lord's ascended up on high, decked with resplendent wounds: while shouts of victory rend the sky, and heaven with joy resounds." In heaven their joy is greatly increased as they behold that glorious likeness with which they, as well as David, will be completely satisfied.

The writer has been asked, do you believe in identity in heaven? Of course we do, David will be David, Paul will be Paul. Job said, "Whom I shall see for myself and mine eyes shall behold, and not another;" meaning, of course, that he would not be somebody else. "Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off." Isaiah 33:17. "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." I Corintians 13:12. Identity is clearly seen in our text and it is proven by Paul in I Corinthians 15:53, "For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality." For this glorious transformation the whole election of grace is still waiting, and this will take place when our Lord descends from heaven with a shout of victory. Jesus in Colossians 1:18 is declared to be "the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence." In Revelation 1:5 he is spoken of as "the first begotten of the dead." This same Jesus, now enthroned in glory, is also waiting the appointed time. The word of God in Hebrews 10:12-13 is very clear. "But this MAN, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God. From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool."

Read Paul's charge to Timothy in I Timothy 6:11-16. I will quote verses 14-16."That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: which in his TIMES he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords: who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man (in a body of flesh) can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen." John, in Revelation, saw him in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, but at the sight of him, he fell at his feet as dead.

Jesus, the MAN, whose body did not see corruption, who was raised from the dead and ascended into heaven, the man, yes, the Lamb, as it had been slain, is now in the midst of the throne with a body like our own and he only hath immortality. The writer has been asked if we shall know who we are and what we were? Of course we shall know what we were saved from and saved unto or how could we sing the song of the redeemed? Angels do not sing above about redeeming grace and dying love. Revelation 5:12. Angels said with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." Peter tells us, which things (the sufferings of Christ and the glory that shall follow) the angels DESIRE to look into. Some may say if we will then be like Jesus we shall all be the same, such speculation is without the word of God to sustain it. To repeat what Job said, "Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." David said, "I shall be satisfied." What satisfaction would David have if he knew nothing of the mercies known and felt here and could not tell upon whose head to place the crown? The writer desires to be kept from speculation, and believes the word of God to be sufficiently clear that we shall be in that innumerable company, not a part of our body left out, we shall need hands there to carry the palms of victory. Revelation 7:9. Yes, our bodies will be clothed with white robes, which is the righteousness

of the saints. Yes, and we shall see the Beloved, face to face, without a veil between. But some will raise the point, how about male and female? In the church of God "there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Galatians 3:28. Our Lord in Matthew 22:30 settles that. "For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." We shall know perfectly, ourselves, our God and our Beloved Lord, and eternity will not be too long to enjoy the love and fellowship of the whole Family of God. How could such as we feel to be, sing the song of the redeemed there, if we knew not the ways and means wherewith we were brought to love his great name?

John, in Revelation 14:13, was commanded from heaven to write (for future generations) "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." Read Matthew 25:31-46, which clearly shows that the work of faith and labour of love in them doing those things spoken of by our Lord, establishes their identity. As he owns them in that day, he will bring back to their memory things that they did when on earth. As David, so the writer hopes that we, too, can in faith say, "I will behold thy face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."

G. R.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT." 1 THES. V. 19.

Our young brother Sankersley, of Mississippi, has desired us to give our views on the above text; and it is a subject which has been much perverted by the enemies of the truth, the minds of some young christians have been perplexed to know its true meaning. As these words were addressed in admonition to the church of God, they must have a definite and important signification. The Holy Ghost has never inspired the holy apostles to write in ambiguous terms, nor to enjoin rules or restrictions upon the church of God which are unimportant. The text on which our views are desired, has been claimed by the Arminians as being addressed to the world of mankind in general, and to the unregenerated portion of the fallen race more particularly. They say, God, who is a spirit, is desirous of converting all men, and that the Holy Ghost sues for admission into every sinner's heart; knocks at every door, and makes proffers of mercy and grace to all the unconverted, on the simple condition that they accept of the terms and admit the Spirit into their hearts. And they pretend to understand this text as a warning to sinners to quench not the spirit; that is, the Holy Ghost, which they say is wooing and striving, and endeavoring to gain admission into their hearts.

Such we understand to be, in substance, the doctrine and language of all carnal, graceless, work-mongrel professors of christianity; and during the almost six thousand years in which this blasphemous heresy has been promulgated on earth, the ingenuity of man and the subtlety of satan has been exerted to the utmost to give the delusion a plausible appearance, and to transform its deformity into a resemblance of truth. The natural mind of men, in their depraved state, being enmity against God, is predisposed to favor the heresy; for they love darkness rather than light, and error rather than truth. Hence their susceptibility to the imposition, and the readiness of ungodly men to favor any sentiments which are derogatory to the character and truth of God.

Those, however, who are born of God, and taught by his spirit, have the witness in themselves that the above-described heresy is false; for they are brought to an experimental knowledge of him. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only

true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." John xvii. 3. And God has provided in the New Covenant, that those with whom this covenant is made, "Shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know ye the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." Heb. viii. 11; Jer. xxxi. 34. "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." Isa. liv. 13. Being divinely taught to know God, they have the witness in themselves, that he is not a being who can be **quenched,** baffled, thwarted, or successfully resisted, by any of his creatures in heaven, earth or hell. They know that he does not labor and strive to gain admittance to the sinner's heart; and they know that the sinner has no power to prevent the execution of the will of God. They know that their Savior has power over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. John xvii. 2. And that All that the Father has given him, shall come unto him; and they that come to him he will in no wise cast out; and that no man can come unto him, except the Father which sent him, draw him; and Christ is pledged to raise up all such at the last day. John vi. 37 and 44. They know by their own experience, as also by the scriptures of truth, that all their own efforts at reformation, their resolutions to get religion, &c., were abortive and vain; that they could no more acccomplish the work, than the Ethiopean can change his complexion, or the leopard his spots. Jer. xiii. 13. Their own experimental knowledge of God, and the testimony of his written word, compel the saints to reject the interpretation which will-worshippers and Arminians give to our text. And it is unquestionably much easier for them to detect the absurdity and blasphemy of the heresy of the enemies of the truth on this subject, than to fully comprehend the precise meaning of the admonition, "Quench not the spirit."

All who are taught of God, know that he is a Spirit; but they also know that he is infinite, eternal, immutable, omnipotent, all wise; of one mind, and none can turn him; that with him there is no variableness nor shadow of turning; that he doeth his pleasure in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of earth; that none can stay or resist his hand; that he speaks the word and it stands fast; he commands and it is done. And knowing this, they know that he does not stand wooing and beseeching the sinner for permission to do his pleasure; for he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and he hath compassion on whom he will have compassion; and whom he will, he hardeneth. Rom. ix. 15-18. They cannot, therefore, regard God as a Spirit liable to be quenched, put out, or subdued, by saints or sinners, angels or devils. Those admonitions, therefore, which warn the saints against grieving the spirit whereby they are sealed, and to quench not the spirit, cannot be so construed as to signify that God is a being subject to passions like us; that he can be grieved and extinguished by his creatures.

Let us then examine carefully and prayerfully, that we may learn what spirit it is that the saints are not to grieve or quench. While we adore and worship that God who is a Spirit, we are to remember that all of God's manifested children are born of the Spirit of God, and That which is born of the Spirit is spirit, as that which is born of the flesh is flesh. This spirit which is born of the Spirit is not God, but it is of God, and is called the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Eph. iv. 24. This spirit which is born of the Spirit, being of God, is a holy spirit, and is called the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba Father. Rom. viii. 15. It is called the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead. Rom. viii. 11. It is called "the holy spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Eph. iv. 30. It is distinguished from the Holy Ghost which is God, as an emanation from God. The Holy Ghost is not

said to be born of God — it being God — but the spirit which the saints have received, and whereby they are sealed, &c., is born of God; born of the Spirit, and is spirit and life in all the saints. This spirit which is born of the Spirit, is that by which the saints are sealed, marked, and are distinguished from all other men and women, until "the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." "But if the spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken you mortal bodies, by his spirit that dwelleth in you." Rom. viii. 11. "But ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body," Rom. viii. 23. This spirit which is born of the Spirit, which dwells in us, and is called the spiritual man, the new man, the inner man, and which is called the spirit of Christ, the spirit of adoption, and the spirit whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption, is susceptible of grief, of sorrow, conflict, elevation and depression, which changes, conflicts, depressions and triumphs, are totally inapplicable to God, the Eternal Spirit, from whom it proceeds, and of whom it is born.

This spirit, born of God, in the antediluvian saints, was grieved with the abominations which prevailed in their day; and in Noah, it was resisted by the wicked antediluvians, until the flood came and swept them away; was resisted in all the prophets by the carnal Israelites; in the apostles by Jews and Romans; in Stephen, by his murderers; and is still resisted, not only by the unconverted world, but also by the fleshly powers and passions of the saints themselves. Thus Paul himself found a law in his members, warring against the law of his mind; and he assures us, that the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that we cannot do the things that we would.

How this holy spirit of Christ in us can be grieved, and how it is grieved by opposition, reproach, persecution and malice, from foes without, and more especially it is grieved by the inbred corruptions of our own fleshly nature, our doubts, our fears, our short coming, our wicked thoughts, unholy propensities, ingratitude, sluggishness in the cause of Christ, greediness after the vanities of the world, unreconciliation to God, and the rebellion of our nature against the God we love and adore; all this the christian can sensibly feel, and measurably know; and of how it can be resisted by the world, the flesh and the devil, they are fully aware. But how the admonition of our text, "Quench not the spirit," is to be understood, still may require some explanation. Let us look to it. This admonition is connected with many others, and addressed to the brethren exclusively; and cannot without perverting the scriptures be applied to any but brethren. Thus it is presented by the inspired apostle to the church of the Thessalonians which are in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Thess. i. 1. "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble minded, support the weak, be patient towards all. See that none render evil for evil unto any; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves and to all. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. — Quench not the spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things, hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you; who also will do it. Brethren, pray for us," &c. 1 Thess. v. 14-25.

By carefully observing the connection of these exhortations, we perceive that the apostle presents them as the will of God in Christ Jesus,

concerning the saints, which are in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ. But how is this the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning us? We possess the spirit of Christ. "For if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Rom. viii. 9. The law, or will, of God is in the heart, or spirit of Christ, and Christ by his spirit dwells in his saints; therefore we find the New Covenant promise fulfilled in the saints. "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts," &c. Heb. viii. 10. This law of the spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. Rom. viii. 2 and 4. These faithful admonitions, being embraced in the spirit of Christ which he has implanted in our hearts, are to be cherished, revered, regarded and obeyed. But while this spirit which embodies them as the will of God concerning his children, is opposed by the fleshly nature and corrupt propensities which are opposed to the law of the spirit of our mind, we are to quench not the spirit, but crucify its opposite, the old man with its affections and lusts, and put on the new man. Or, in other words, to walk after the spirit, and not after the flesh. The flesh and the spirit in the christian are antagonistic to each other; both cannot at the same time predominate in us. To gratify the one is, on our part, to quench, suppress or repel the other, "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit. For to be carnally minded is death: but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. Rom. viii. 5-8.

To quench or repress the spirit, in the sense of our text, is to walk after the flesh. Study the inclinations of our carnal and depraved minds, attend to whatever will gratify our fleshly propensities, make our religion conform to our feelings, attend to the things of the spirit only when convenient and agreeable to our fleshly feelings and interests, lose no opportunity to amass the treasures of this world, or to gratify our lust for worldly fame, honor or applause, for the sake of bearing the cross of the dear Redeemer. Never offend visitors, nor neglect your worldly interest, to attend on the solemn assemblies of Zion, or to mingle with the despised followers of the Lamb. Do not follow the Master in baptism, or in any of his ordinances, until your carnal mind is satisfied with the hope which God has given you; nor so long as it will subject you to some inconvenience or mortification of the flesh. Pay no attention to such brethren as are unruly, or feeble, or weak; render evil for evil; pray only when you feel like it, and consider what you have as your own, without thanksgiving. Pursue this course, and if you do not quench the spirit of christianity, so far as its comfort and consolation, and benign influence is concerned, we have failed to comprehend the meaning of the text. We appeal to the experience of every saint, for confirmation of the words of the apostle, "to be carnally minded is death." Is it not so? Death to our enjoyments, to our usefulness in the house of God, to ourselves and to all the saints. "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead, because of sin." Bury then yourselves in the body — in the affections and lusts thereof, and are you not buried in death? The body is dead. There is no spiritual life in it; therefore, when Christians are looking to find something good, spiritual or comforting in their carnal nature, they are seeking the living among the dead; and they will seek in vain. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. Rom. viii. 13. By dying in this case, we are not to understand that the child of God can possibly lose his immortality, or fail of his inheritance of glory; but of his comfort and living enjoyment of his salvation. He that knows his Master's will and does it not, shall be beaten with many stripes. The Lord has said he would

visit the transgressions of his people with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes; but his loving kindness he will not utterly take away from him, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail.

May it be our privilege, as the followers of our Redeemer, to put on the new man, to crucify the old man; to walk after the spirit, and not fulfil the lusts of the flesh; to mortify the deeds of the flesh, and quench not the spirit; and may we deny ourselves of all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. To this end let us pray without ceasing, that we may rejoice evermore.

Greatly as we have extended this article, much more might be said on this important subject; for it is certainly no less important that the children of God should walk worthy of their high and holy calling, than that they should hold sound and scriptural views of the doctrine of the gospel.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, August 1, 1857)

OBITUARIES

SISTER LAURA DITTMAR

Sister Laura Dittmar, of Schoharie, N. Y., passed away March 6, 1964 at the age of 78 years. She leaves to mourn her passing, her husband, John Dittmar; one son, Martin, and one daughter, Mrs. Robert Ruland, of Schoharie; and four grandchildren and two great grandchildren; as well as the brethren of the Middleburg Church. She was a faithful and devoted member since 1934, and had served as Clerk for a number years.

Her death was sudden and unexpected, but God's ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts. The gospel of the Son of God was meat and drink to her hungry soul — which none can feed upon except those who are made alive by the Holy Spirit.

The Lord gave and he has taken, blessed be the name of the Lord. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, the writer.

A. J. Slauson

LEMUEL DILLON CONNER

Lemuel Dillon Conner was born July 5, 1883, and died April 20, 1960. He was the son of the late Shelton L. Conner and Sally B. Hall Conner, of Floyd and Montgomery Counties, Virginia. He was united in marriage to V. Susie Thomas of Franklin County, Virginia, on October 14, 1903, by the late Elder Asa D. Shortt of Floyd County, Virginia. To this union were born five sons and one daughter. They are as follows: Mrs. R. B. Anderson, Shawsville, Virginia; Mr. Earl A. Conner, Fincastle, Virginia; Elder I. Shelton Conner, Portsmouth, Virginia; Mr. Noel F. Conner, Roanoke, Virginia; Mr. Aaron J. Conner, Roanoke, Virginia; and Mr. Calvin A. Conner, Salem, Virginia.

At an early age he expressed an understanding of, and a love for the Primitive Baptists, a fear of God and a love and trust, and a willingness that His will be first. In his correspondence in early life, on the 16th day of May 1903, he wirtes, "I went to Salem Church today and heard three of the ablest sermons I have ever heard in all my life. Mr. Sumner was blest to talk, then he seemed just to stir cousin Valentine Cole that he got up and preached a long time; and then when he got through Mr. Asa Shortt got up and seemed to drift into a land of happiness." In his Bible reading at home he seemed to be comforted by many of the quotations so that he would be unable to continue for a short while.

He joined the Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church the first Sunday in July, 1929, and was baptized at the Association the first Sunday morning in August. He prized his home with the Primitive Baptists very highly.

After about twelve years of declining health, four trips to the hospital, amounting to about seven months, and about six months in a rest home, he passed away quietly on April 20, 1960. After funeral services in the chapel of Oakeys of Roanoke, by Elders O. K. Tench, B. O. Thompson and J. P. Helm, his body was laid to rest in Cedar Lawn, there to await the fullness of the hope that had been his real comfort while living with his brethren in this low ground of sin and sorrow.

In 1956 his hope was greatly strengthened, the most lovely felt presence of someone met him as he returned from milking, just before he entered his home and found his mother had passed away. He related how the felt comfort of that one he met that morning stayed with him all day, so that he was unable to sorrow for his mother as the manner of some.

Noel H. Conner

AND

V. SUSIE THOMAS CONNER

V. Susie Thomas Conner was born March 16, 1881, and passed away January 17, 1963. She was the daughter of the late Ira Thomas and Nancy V. Turner of Franklin County, Virginia. She was united in marriage to Lem-

uel D. Conner on October 14, 1903, by the late Elder Asa D. Shortt. To this union were born five sons and one daughter. They include Mrs. R. B. Anderson, Shawsville, Va.; Earl A., of Fincastle, Va.; Elder I. Shelton, of Portsmouth, Va.; Noel F., of Roanoke, Va.; Aaron J.; of Roanoke; and Calvin A., of Route 4, Salem, Va.

It appears from her early correspondence that she was not impressed with the Primitive Baptists, or any other order at that time, but in the twenties she expressed an interest, and spent as much time as possible reading Zion's Advocate and the Bible, and discussing the troubles that so plagued the brethren at that time. At one time, while she was so burdened with her lost condition, and while on bended knees, the feet of her Burden Bearer stood before her, and the bitter tears she was shedding became sweet, and she washed His feet with her tears, and dried them with her hair.

She attended the church regularly and joined the Roanoke Primitive Baptists the first Sunday in July, 1929, with her husband, and was baptized the first Sunday in August, 1929, with her husband and two other members, by Elder J. P. Helm at the Pigg River Association at Lake Side Park.

During Dad's illness she was in poor health also. About all the comfort she seemed to have was seeing people that were recognizable to her. She seemed to enjoy the preaching and singing at times, but at others she was very restless. She passed away suddenly on January 17, 1963. After funeral services in the chapel of Oakeys of Roanoke, by Elders B. O. Thompson and J. P. Helm, her body was laid to rest by her companion in Cedar Lawn, to await the blest morn when she will no longer see in part, but will be in the presence of Him whom she hoped was her real Burden Bearer while she journeyed here.

Noel H. Conner

ELDER ALVIA D. HUGHETT

Elder Alvia D. Hughett was born at Puenta Arena, California, January 26, 1879, and passed away June 29, 1964, in a rest home in Vancouver, Washington. At the age of five years he came with his parents to near Elma, Washington; and in 1895 the family moved to Eastern Lewis County, Washington, near the Sulphur Creek Baptist Church. He united with this church the 3rd Sunday in November, 1899, and was baptized by Elder F. L. Riffe December 10, 1899. On the 1st Sunday in January, 1900, an arm of the Sulphur Creek Church at Verndale, Washington, licensed him to preach. The next year in September he moved to Yakima, Washington, where he married Mary L. Hess, daughter of William W. Hess, November 29, 1902. His wife died July 19, 1940, and Elder Hughett is survived by the following children: Mrs. Lois Ekklekamp, Twisp, Washington; Irvin and Galen, of California; Howard of Georgia, who is in the service; and Ellis, of Battleground, Washington.

In July, 1904, he presented a letter of dismissal from the Sulphur Creek Church and was received into the fellowship of Pleasant Grove Church at Yakima, Washington. He was chosen moderator of that church, and served until he retired on account of ill health. He was ordained in November, 1925, by a Presbytery composed of Elders J. T. Barnes, W. T. Eaton, and C. W. Bond. He was a very deep and able minister, and was much missed when he had to retire.

His funeral was conducted by Elder Ernest Attebery, and he was buried by the side of his wife in Tahoma Cemetery near Yakima.

Elder J. E. Attebery, Moderator
Margaret Simpson, Church Clerk

SISTER AMANDA PITTMAN

A gracious, wise, firm believer in the sovereign grace of God in the person of Sister Amanda Pittman was taken from our midst on August 5, 1963, at the age of 83.

Brother Samuel Pittman died on March 5, 1938, leaving his beloved wife, Amanda Pittman, a widow for 25 years. Though she missed her natural companion these many years, Sister Pittman always seemed to rejoice in the presence of her Lord, never feeling that she was completely alone. How sweet that she was able to commune with the Holy Spirit, ever depending on God for her strength and her salvation. What a wonderful manifestation of God's love to His people!

Sister Pittman united with Creech's Primitive Baptist Church in Johnston County, N. C., in 1912. She served her Church faithfully these many years, always looking forward to the meetings there, and the fellowship of the saints. Her happiest moments seemed to be those she spent as she occupied her place on the front row of the church in the worship of the Lord. In our hearts at Creech's she still occupies that spot. We miss her sweet face and wise counsel, but we feel that all is well with her.

Sister Pittman was laid to rest in the family cemetery in Johnston County. Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, assisted by Elder W. E. Turner. She is survived by four children. May the Holy Spirit that sustained Sister Pittman be with her dear children and all of us.

Submitted by
Margaret C. Johnson
for Creech's Church

NORA F. ELMORE

Sister Nora F. Elmore passed away June 27, 1964, at the age of 69. She was a life long resident of Rocky Mount, N. C. and a member of the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church.

She was born in Edgecomb County, N. C., February 20, 1895, daughter of the late Jesse D. and Piety Ellen Proctor Fly, and the widow of Albert Elmore.

She was a faithful attender of her church, and a firm believer of salvation by grace. She worked hard for her church and did a lot of traveling to other churches of her faith and order. She was well known and loved by all that knew her.

The members of the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church are going to miss her far more than we can express. She had been a faithful member and servant of God since July, 1919.

We extend our love and sympathy to her family, two daughters, Mrs. Vernell Delbridge of Rocky Mount, N. C. and Mrs. Joyce E. Pierce of Smithfield, Va., two sons, Russell of Rocky Mount, N. C. and Alton of Edenton, N. C., ten grandchildren, two sisters, Mrs. Shade Felton and Mrs. F. R. Dew, both of Rocky Mount, N. C.

Her funeral was held June 28, 1964, at Johnson Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes. The large assembly of friends and display of flowers were a tribute to her love of God and her church.

Nina Pearson, Clerk

MRS. CORA E. (HARTLEY) JACKSON

Cora E. Jackson was born in Fayette Co., Ga., November 25, 1898, near Hopeful Primitive Baptist Church, where she lived nearly all her life, and where her mother was a member. We were married November 25, 1916, at her home. Elder B. C. Caldwell officiating. There is no doubt that she was a gift from God, and one of the greatest blessings ever bestowed on a sinful man. She was qualified for a preacher's wife, and why He gave her to me is one of His hidden mysteries. I thought at that time she would soon cast her lot with us, but ere long there was a disturbance in the church which seemed to drive her away.

A few years ago I was brought down in affliction, during which I hope I was weaned from the world, I felt the Lord near and, O, how sweet; I wanted to get nearer. I had no hope of any of my family ever being in the church with me. What did I have to live for? I wanted to go live with Him, but it was not his time.

In September, 1954, we saw a couple join, and she said it was all she could do to keep from going with them. They were to be baptized three weeks later. About Thursday before the baptizing, one night she was restless and could not sleep. She told me she could not wait longer, she wanted to be baptized with this couple. She joined the third Saturday in October, 1954, at East Atlanta Primitive Baptist Church, and was baptized the next day by the pastor, Elder H. O. Nash.

Only those who have had this experience can know what a surprise and joy this was to me. I did not sleep that night. But this was too good for such a sinful being as I, I had to suffer another heavy blow. Her mind had already begun to fail, and in a few months of happiness, going to meeting and talking of God's love and mercies, she had to quit going to meeting, and soon after had to be committed to the hospital, leaving me alone in sorrow and strain for more than five long years.

After she joined the church, I was reconciled to wait the Lord's time, for who knows but there are more blessings in store for me, which has proven to be true. She was helpless and speechless for some time before she died, and we will never know how much she suffered, nor whether she had any spiritual mind. It was hard for selfish, rebellious flesh to give her up, but when the Lord in love and mercy took her from her suffering it was a relief, and I could rejoice that her suffering was over. An old brother said heaven is sweeter since his wife is there. Heaven is adorned with lovely stones and precious jewels, and as each one is carried home, heaven is more lovely and prettier, then O, what will it be when they are all gathered home?

She could detect errors before I mentioned them and was faithful to remind me of my errors. She passed into her eternal rest April 18, 1964. Her funeral was conducted by Elder J. M. Hunt at H. L. Carmichael's Funeral Home, East Point, Ga., and she was laid to rest in Hillcrest Cemetery near our home. Elder Hunt was blessed with a sweet comforting message. Many people remarked how beautiful he preached. A large crowd attended from many miles, and many flowers. These tokens of sympathy have caused many tears to flow, in humbleness and I hope thankfulness.

Survivors are her husband; two sons: C. Reese Jackson, Rome; and G. Russell Jackson, Riverdale; two daughters: Mrs. Estelle Olson, New Orleans, La.; and Mrs. Helen Allen, LaFayette, Ga.; two sisters: Mrs. Elizabeth Templeton, East Point; and Mrs. E. V. Griffin, College Park, Ga.; and nine grandchildren.

Hoping for that rest,
Geo. W. Jackson
1884 Connally Dr.
East Point, Ga.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133 DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1965 NO. 1

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1/65
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Sister Minerva Dunlap)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, meeting with the Whitefield Church September 11, 12, 13, 1964, sends greetings and brotherly love to the other Churches and Associations of our faith and order.

One might inquire on what this faith and order is founded and why this brotherly love exists. We believe that the precepts of our religion, defined as the recognition of a Power to whom worship is due, are planted in our hearts and written in our minds by our Heavenly Father. We believe that before we receive that divine revelation and before we are taught from on high, we are dead to knowledge of spiritual substance. We believe that our faith and order depends not at all on what we may read or on what we may hear from neighbors, brother or friend, but on the fact that it is placed in the hearts of those whom God has chosen from the foundation of the world to be his people, to love and worship and adore Him as their Father, and as children of the same Father to love one another. We believe that the Bible was written for those chosen to be His from the beginning, to offer admonition, confirmation and comfort to His people; an inspired work and understood only by revelation. Why this revelation is given to some and not to others, we do not know, as the mind of man cannot comprehend the designs of God. As it is written: "For so it seemed good in His sight." "There shall two be in a field; the one shall be taken, and the other left" — "Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left." Those that were taken were to know the love and the glory and the power, the others not.

In Isaiah we read — "For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me." The one who was taken in the field, the woman who was taken at the mill were of that most blessed family that bears his surname. They did not choose that surname, but it was theirs because they were children of the same Father, and because they are of the same family they have brotherly love for one another. We believe our faith and order embraces those of whom it is said: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." It is the faith and order of the "chosen generation, the royal priesthood, the holy nation, a peculiar people; to shew forth the praises of Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvellous light." Spoken in Peter 2-9. We believe that this chosen generation may include the most humble person, the most ignorant so far as the knowledge of this world is concerned, and that, irrespective of color or country, he may receive the revelation of his relation to God without council from clergy or layman, and in God's good time, whether alone

or in a crowd, in the desert or on a city street. He will need no other teacher for "God is his own interpreter." We hope that we belong to this chosen generation. We have our seasons of doubt. We falter and when our winters are long, we wonder if we are mistaken and our cry is: "Am I His or am I not?" Our walk in life is so unsuited to a child of God, we feel unworthy of the least of His blessings, we wish for more evidence of our heritage and less of turmoil and worldly interference. Still always our hearts burn within us when we hear others relate a similar experience and walk, and we rejoice to hear the preaching that tells us again the things we have been shown.

"How charming is the place
Where my Redeemer God
Unveils the beauties of his face
And sheds his love abroad."
"Give me, O Lord, a place
Within thy blest abode,
Among the children of thy grace
The servants of my God."

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, September 11, 12, 13, 1964.

Dear Brethren:

Again, through the providence and mercy of our God, we have been able to meet in an association. Your correspondence has been gladly received.

Your ministering brethren, Elder John D. Wood and Elder B. O. Thompson, came to us laden with the fruits of the Spirit of him whom to know is life eternal. The preaching was in accord with Christ's teachings and our Christian experience — testifying that there is no falling away from the truth, but, instead, a meeting together in heavenly places when pure minds are stirred up by the way of remembrance.

The Lord chooses his children. He says, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." He comes to us as the wind that bloweth where it listeth. We hear the sound thereof, but we cannot tell from whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit."

Our association is small, but we hope we are a part of that remnant which the Lord shall gather from all parts of the earth.

The next meeting of the Maine Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, the fourth Sunday in August, 1965, and the Saturday preceeding. There will be a notice in the **Signs of the Times.**

Elder John D. Wood, Moderator
Mrs. Sanford Bartlett, Clerk

FELICITATIONS TO NEW BORN SON

Ballinger, Texas
August 10, 1964

Dear Timothy Dean:

We were informed of your advent into this world, 9:34 P. M., 7-9-64, by your parents. We rejoiced to know that a son had been born to Elder and Sister Hudson.

In this birth you came into the world with a cry, and as you grow we pray God's providential blessings to rest upon you.

You have already been blessed in having God fearing parents, and as this birth developes and brings forth into manifestation the nature in which it is generated and born, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh." (John 3:6) Surely you will have the same nature of the first man Adam, and through the same filthy stream of inherited sin down and through your father and mother, — we are all only drops of the same filthy stream. As David said, (Psalm 51:5): "Behold I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me." In this nature or flesh you can and will only know natural things, and if this is all you have in this life, Oh, how sad.

It is our prayer to God that if it be His will, at the appointed time you may be born from above, as you have the natural nature that you also may have a divine nature whereby you may escape the corruptions that are in the world through lust. (2 Peter 1:4) May you be led on by his spirit to have a saving knowledge of the free and sovereign grace principles that your father has preached, and held precious by both your father and mother.

Dear Timothy, we wish you blessings of every sort in this life; but when this life is over these will be gone. But, as one that shall never be lost, may he give you knowledge of this triune God, God the father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

If you have this knowledge given you, all other blessings of this life are realized to be only temporal and shall soon come to an end.

Therefore, Paul says that what is vital in our lives is not temporal, but things eternal. (2 Cor. 4:18) If we have an experience of Grace and born from above, we are so wonderfully blessed while in this life, and it shall just take eternity to know the fulness and beauty of his eternal and everlasting love.

From ones who loves you and your dear parents,

C. M. Haygood and Bernice Haygood

Box 267,
Lincolnton, Ga.

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is check for $5.00 for subscription for one year, and the remainder to go to help someone to receive the good news from a far country who are not able to pay for it. I know it means much to them to receive the **Times.** I take several of the periodicals, but would not want to do without it. I received mine today, and have read it through already.

A quotation came to me a few nights ago that I could not find, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." [Psalm 50:2, — Ed.] I have heard people preach, and have read articles that mentioned Zion, but I did not have a clear understanding of what and where Zion was. But the good Lord always comes to my rescue, for in this November, 1964, issue is the answer, which I enjoyed very much.

Sincerely,
Gordon H. McGee

WONDERS WHY SOME BRETHREN DO NOT READ THE PAPER

900 Jordan Street,
Wilson, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

I received my **Signs of the Times** today, and noticed that it is time to renew my subscription; so am enclosing check for two more years.

When I receive the **Signs** each month, I read it as soon as I can, for I am not satisfied until I have read the last word in it. Sometimes I read it through without stopping.

As I read the **Signs,** I am often made to wonder why so many of our people do not seem to care about reading. As I meditate on some of the articles that appear in the **Signs,** I feel to know that the paper should be in every Old Baptist home. To those who have been called from nature's darkness into the light of the glory of God, I believe the reading of the **Signs** would be a real feast at times.

Brother Spangler, we were all glad to have you and Sister Spangler with us at our association. We surely did enjoy the discourses the Lord blessed you to preach; and I feel that He blessed me to hear to the comfort and consolation of my heart and soul. We hope you can visit us again soon.

. . . Pray for us when you are blessed **to pray.**

Submitted in love,
(Elder) S. R. Boykin

SOMETHING WORTHWHILE TO THINK ABOUT

1639 Cowan Drive,
Scottsbluff, Neb. 69361

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I enjoy your paper very much, and feel you deserve a vote of thanks for getting it on its way to subscribers so promptly.

I will be eighty-two years old in November, and live alone, and am able to do all my housework, including canning fruit for Winter use. Am thankful that I can do what my hands find to do, with a willing heart and ready mind.

I received my paper yesterday, and have read "Notes of a Sermon" of Elder Lefferts, which I enjoyed very much. I have read the Bible over and over again, but never knew there could be so much beauty and instruction in righteousness in the study of the arks and coffin mentioned in his sermon. I will have something good and worthwhile to think about for days to come.

. . . In hope of a better life when my life's work is ended.

Dora Greathouse

FROM A YOUNG BROTHER

302 Shannon Avenue,
Huntsville, Ala.

Dear Editors:

I have written a little article concerning, What is the manifestation of the righteousness of God?

First, I believe the righteousness of God is not in thinking and advocating that within himself a man is righteous and good, because it is written that there is none righteous, no not one; and that all have fallen short of the glory of God.

I take the position opposite from the world, for I believe it is when God reveals his Son unto one, and makes him see how wicked and sinful he really is, and to cry for mercy, that one knows anything of righteousness. He is then no longer as the Pharisee who knew nothing of his inward corruption, or what a wretch he really was, who outwardly appeared religious and righteous and full of goodness, but inwardly was full of corruption.

This pharisaical deceitfulness is still being carried on in the world today as it was then; and will continue until the coming of Christ at the last day. But a regenerated child of God — one who has been born again and made a new creature in Christ, and has tasted of the grace of God — the free grace, has first been made to see himself inwardly, and what a sinful state he is in. The Pharisee was self-righteous, and thought himself to be something, but the publican could not even look toward heaven and pray, for he could only pray, "Lord be merciful to me a sinner." He knew that in his flesh he was nothing, even less than nothing, as the Apostle Paul did.

I trust that these thoughts will be of some comfort to the dear children of God, who are so dear to my heart.

A sinner in need,
Larry Hale

"IT WAS A BLESSING"

218 Shad Point Road,
Salisbury, Maryland

Dear Editors:

I have enjoyed the **Signs of the Times** so very much this Summer that I wanted you to know how much they have meant to me.

So many of the letters and editorials express my feelings and belief, but I cannot find words to express them so well. I enjoyed Brother McCall's letter. The first time I went to a meeting of the Covenanted Baptist Church, I spent two wonderful nights in his mother's home. The boys were such lovely sons, and so kind to their mother's guests. It was heartwarming to read his experience. It was good to read Elder

Griffin's answers to the questions he had been asked; and Elder Lambert's Editorial said so many things I have felt for a long time.

I have been dreadfully tired this Summer, and find that when I am not at work, I must rest more than ever before; but have decided it has been a blessing, as I have spent more time reading and meditating. I have found my mind going back to the dear ones I have been blessed to know and visit with, and how very thankful I am for each one. It seems as they grow older, and nearer the end of their time in this world, their God and Church means more and more to them. This is a great comfort as we travel along.

One morning I awoke with the words of Paul in my mind, and could not rest until I read 2 Timothy 4:7,8: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day; and not for me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." O, may the Lord bless me with that assurance when it comes my time to leave this world.

In the Summer, because of my work, I only get to meetings every other Sunday, but the ones I have attended the preaching has been so good, and the brothers and sisters so dear to me, I have felt it was a taste of Heaven. I know from experience that this condition cannot last, but I am so thankful for this season of rejoicing He has blessed me with.

Pray that I may be kept ever mindful of His goodness and mercy.

Ethel Holloway

A STUDENT OF ELDER CURRY'S

Andalusia, Alabama

Dear Elder Spangler:

I've thought for sometime of writing you about how I enjoy reading the Signs. The letters are very comforting in this age of so much unrest and corruption. I get very upset at times, but a small voice tells me, "Be still, God is still at the helm, and He makes no mistakes." It is beyond my understanding that God is so long-suffering, to allow the world to be as it is, but in my heart I know it is his will.

I enjoy all the letters from the Elders and other brethren and sisters, but the re-print of Elder H. M. Curry was very precious to me. I had a sister who taught with him for seven years at school near Sellers; and I was a student of his for two years, and I thought he was the most learned man I ever knew, and he was blessed of God in his preaching.

We were disappointed that you were not at our association this year. We were blessed with good preaching, and meeting brethren and sisters from other associations. And there were many who love our faith, but for reasons have not asked for membership. My dear sister, Gladys Van der Honing is one of these. She has been sick for some time and has to be very quiet; so if you find time, I would appreciate your sending her a message . . .

If you ever come our way again, please include Elam Church, Goshen, Alabama in your visits.

Sincerely a sister in hope,
Mrs. Fred A. Horton

HIS BLESSINGS COME IN MANY WAYS

15514 South Brentwood Street,
Channelview, Texas

Elder E. B. Ault,
Rt. 2, Box 23,
Weslaco, Texas

Dear Brother Ault:

I thought I would try to write you tonight but my mind seems to be blank. I am made to wonder sometimes if there is anyone like me.

I would like to tell you of the joy that

was given my poor soul last first Sunday (November) at the meeting here at Shepherd Fold Church. Your and Brother Fleet's presence was uplifting. I enjoyed your prayer and sermon very much. If you wondered why I requested you to offer prayer at the opening of the services, Well, my mind was carried back to the time when a dear sister of mine was on her death bed with cancer, and you were asked to offer prayer; you were blessed with one of the sweetest prayers I ever heard. And again during visits with us at Shepherd Fold I felt that you were sent to us at the appointed and right time. During one of these visits you were asked to offer prayer. Well, I'll tell you that these prayers are still in this poor sinner's heart. If these things are not a part of the experience of a wayfaring pilgrim in a waste howling wilderness and desert land, then this poor writer is lost.

I read some of your experiences in an old **Signs of the Times** awhile back; it was about your preaching old Brother Bowden's funeral. I was given to greatly rejoice in the way you were taken out of the miry clay, and were given to write in the Spirit and with power from on high. I tell you Brother Ault, we poor sinners are most certainly blessed by an all wise God and the precious blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, to have you ministering brethren. Brother Haygood, after Brother Fleet and yourself ministered to us of the Great I Am, it made the Saints to march on, or rather to press on towards the mark for the prize of the high calling which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I hope this finds you and family well; and hope to see you again soon, and that the Lord will be with you in your journeys wherever they may take you. Write me when you have a mind.

In bonds of Christian love,
James T. Lindsey

(We have been singularly drawn to the writings of Elder H. M. Curry ever since we began reading the re-publication of them in the Advocate of Truth, (which was published by the late Elders J. R. Hardy, J. C. Sikes, H. B. Jones, and others at the turn of the century for about fifteen years.) Three bound volumes of these were given us by Sister Hardy two or three years ago, and we have found the reading of them most profitable doctrinally and historically. We find that most of Elder Curry's articles were published in the **Signs of the Times** probably as they were written.

The above reference to Elder Curry by sister Horton was very interesting to us; as was the following contained in a letter from Elder Eldon A. Huchison, of Hamilton, Ohio:

"I read with nostalgic interest the reprint of Elder Hugh H. Curry's article **The City Without A Temple.** At the time of writing this article, Elder Curry was pastor of the Lebanon Old School Baptist Church, and a student and instructor at Lebanon Normal University, a great educational institution, largely patronized by Old School Baptists. Quite a number of our ministers were students at Lebanon.

"Elder Curry was the tutor of a young man from eastern Tennessee, who later became one of our greatest Secretary of State, viz., Cordell Hull. Cordell Hull used to go with Elder Curry to his three other churches in that area, viz., Tapscott, Mt. Pleasant (my home church), and Bethel. The last time I saw Coddell Hull was in 1927 when he came back for a "Normalite" reunion. At that time I was on the faculty of Wilmington College, as the two institutions had merged. I recall the very interesting visit I had with Mr. Hull, as I was at that time, in addition to my duties as Professor of History and Political Science, the pastor of Mt. Pleasant and Lebanon.

"Elder Curry was doubtless one of the most forceful exponents of the gospel of any minister to be found when he was at the peak of his spiritual, physical and mental power. The stamp of Lebanon is to be observed in his writings — of course above all else is the stamp of the Holy Spirit. His membership remained at Lebanon until death."

We were glad to receive these most interesting accounts, for we have not found anything of Elder Curry's life and experience in any of our reading. Elder Curry was a forceful writer, with the ability to express clearly what he saw in the subject he was considering. He was not timid in expressing the truth, and his writing shows that he was firmly established in the doctrine of God our Saviour. We expect to re-publish more of his writings, the Lord willing. — J. D. W.)

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the **Skewarkey Union** is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with Williams Church, Edgecombe County, N. C.

the 5th Sunday in January, 1965. The meeting house is located 2 miles north of Leggetts, N. C. Take highway 44 north one mile, turn left on first black top road. Elder W. E. Grimes was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder D. B. Handy, alternate.

We invite all brethren and friends to come and worship with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the **Staunton River Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with Cane Creek Primitive Baptist Church, the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1965.

The meeting house is located on Highway 726, near Ringgold, Va. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Fannie D. Wiles, Clerk

UPPER COUNTRY LINE UNION

The next session of the **Upper Country Line Union** is appointed to be held with Bush Arbor Church the fifth Sunday in January, 1965, on Sunday only. The meeting house is located on Highway 62, nine miles South of Yanceyville, N. C.; about sixteen miles North of Burlington, N. C.

All lovers of the truth are invited.

Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** is appointed to be held with the church at Old Beaulah, Johnson County, N. C. the fifth Sunday in January and Saturday before.

The meeting house is located about one mile and one-half West of Rt. 301, between Kenly and Micra. Those going south, turn right at Bagley, and those going north, turn left.

All who have a mind to attend are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To November 1, 1964)

Mrs. James Mason, Va.	$ 1.00
Mildred Finigan, Md.	2.00
Mrs. J. P. Fallen, La.	2.00
Mrs. John Lingle, Mich.	5.00
Mrs. Robert Wagner, Pa.	5.00
Roy S. Thomas, Del.	20.00
Elmer Hastings, Md.	11.00
Gift, A Friend, Va.	10.00
Mrs. Edgar Adkins, Md.	2.00

Danville, Virginia **January, 1965**

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All letters for this paper should be addressed and remittances made payable

TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va.

EDITORIAL

A NEW YEAR AND A NEW VOLUME

It is time again to address our readers at the beginning of another New Year, and of the 133rd volume of the **Signs of the Times.** What the Signs means to each individual is best known unto himself, and his praise and thanks should properly be given unto Him who has sustained its publication for these many years. He that believes and rejoices in the principles upheld in the Signs should thank his God for this unspeakable gift. As for ourselves, your editors trust that they are thankful for the part they have, by the Lord's blessing and enabling grace, in sending "good news from a far country" each month to many who express themselves, with Solomon, that it is "as cold waters to a thirsty soul."

We are concerned that the Signs continues to contend for the same princi-

ples on which it was founded; and especially to emphasize them in these days of apostasy of many concerning these principles. As we mellow with the years, we feel perhaps more firmly settled in these things that they are according to "thus saith the Lord." In our conscience we have no place for half-truths, for we know that to allow a little leaven to work among — not in, for that is impossible — the sacred principles of doctrine of God our Saviour, and pass the resulting muddle off as unspotted, is to approve cunningly devised fables.

In the Scriptures there are many things we are admonished to beware of; and those who are exercised of the Spirit in these things, are deeply concerned about the present state of Zion. No one can deny that many innovations in doctrine and order are current and are being ardently advocated, so that "to us belongeth confusion of faces" now as much as it ever did in Israel. It is quite disturbing to hear it said, and widely publicised, that certain things are Primitive Baptist doctrines, when, as a matter of fact, a portion of it is far from being in line with those who were originally known as Primitive or Old School Baptists. One has only to look at the records of the early days of the **Signs of the Times,** to find what Primitive Baptists then believed; and then to trace the beginnings of strange ideas — ideas foreign to those early Primitives — which from time to time were incubated by some members of the churches who were not indoctrinated, and by whom some things which were hard to be understood were not believed, and who felt that they needed to be improved upon. Here are the beginnings of divergent points of doctrine: originated by some in the churches, and finding a following they either left or were held in non-fellowship for heretical teachings; and their growth is unto the present, and in many cases under the name of Primitive Baptists.

Many have taught that predestination, in all its inclusive meaning, was the brain-child of Elder Gilbert Beebe and others of his time. This is not true. Elder Beebe believed and bodily wrote and preached this doctrine as being apostolic; but he was not the author of it, for, over the centuries this doctrine has been taught and believed, from the days of the Apostles until this very moment. And in our opinion expresses what should be expressed of the purposes and decrees of God: and this is what the Signs was founded upon.

Again, some just can't be satisfied with the gospel as being the power of God unto salvation, in all its parts, both now and hereafter; with all the blessings we receive at the hand of God being unmerited and unearned. Obedience is often used as a "catch-word" to promote a semblance of creature controlled ability after regeneration. But our understanding is that we are in Christ Jesus, and consequently new creatures in him; yet we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that we may know that the excellency of the power is of God, and not of us. It is the experience of every heir of God that he knows that every good thought, and every act of obedience to the commands of Christ, is by the enabling grace given him; that it is by God working both the will and the to do in him; and that the grace of God that brings salvation teaches his people that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. The fact that they are blessed to do these things, is proof that the grace of God has manifested His salvation in them. Were it otherwise, and under the control of the creature, why should we, with the apostle, do the things we would not? and find ourselves unable to do the things we would? Why are we poor and afflicted, and troubled on every side, and have to bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus? We ask the reason why, and must leave the answer to every man's conscience.

Then again, there are divisions, often senseless divisions from our viewpoint,

in which some sieze a point of difference among brethren and capitalize on it; but which could be settled easily, if the flesh did not get the upper hand. In some cases somebody desiring leadership, does not listen to reason, much less act with brotherly love, and seems to have no remorse of conscience that brethren are torn asunder.

These are two or three things among others which should give spiritually minded brethren much to prayerfully consider at this time when it may be said that we traditionally review the past, and look forward to the future.

If the Lord should be pleased to lay to the hearts of all involved in contradictions, and bring home to them the power of such scriptures as the following, we would see brethren dealing differently with each other; and each would rather be stepped upon, than to see the body of Christ bruised and battered:

"These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood. An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running into mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren." (Proverbs 6:16-19) And, "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." (James 3:13-18)

We want to express our appreciation to all the brethren and friends who have contributed in any way in helping us to keep the paper coming to them, and solicit their continued support. We know that the paper reaches many shut-ins, and many who are unable to attend their meetings due to distance, or lack of transportation; to these and all others we desire to say that our prayer is that the Lord may continue to remember them in mercy, and give them all needed grace to continue with patience the race that is set before them, that they may ever look unto Jesus the author and finisher of their faith. And in the vicissitudes of life that they may have grace, as in the language of Paul, to "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Phillippians 4:6,7)

To our fellow laborers, may the Lord keep us humble in the midst of the many blessings we have in going in and out before the brethren, and in spite of our being lifted up in Spirit, that we may not think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think; and surely not to act as if we were lords over God's people, and arbiters of every question. We know that none of us are qualified by nature for any position in the church, and that we are what we are only by the grace of God. It is good for us if we are sometimes sorely brought to question whether we are in the matter at all. The gifts of our Lord do not exalt one brother above another, but the flesh often does; and this is the origin of most troubles.

To the brethren in general, may we each remember that it is by God's grace that we are what we are; and that we have nothing but what we have received. We are different from nominal professors because He has made the difference. There is no place in the church for elevated ones, for all have the same identical standing in Christ. The most humble one is more Christlike in his walk and conversation.

As editors, we have more to be con-

cerned with than may appear. As said above, we do not want to publish anything which is, in our judgment, unsound, nor anything of local disturbances; and we have to screen these should we receive them. Sometimes we receive writings which we do not consider to be of enough general interest to our readers for us to publish them; that is, things which have little or no bearing on christian experience. And sometimes we received articles which are entirely too lengthy for a paper such as the Signs; and it is found that articles which have to be continued, are seldom pursued satisfactorily. We would like to publish letters, articles, obituaries, etc., soon after we receive them, but this we cannot often do, and have to hold them for space in the paper, for the opportunity to edit them, and type for the printer. We always give priority to notices of meetings, etc., if we receive them five weeks before publication date in which they should appear. Those who use the typewriter will help us if they double space the lines. We write this paragraph not to discourage any from writing, for the continuation of the Signs depends upon their writings, and the interest the brethren and friends take in the paper; but to mention some of the problems we sometimes have.

Finally brethren, may the Lord continue his grace to all of us in the days and months to come; give us a deeper sense of how great is His mercy towards us; give us to be concerned as to each other's welfare; and bless us to contend only for those things he has delivered to us, and oppose all things contrary, that He may have all the praise forever.

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL
ASSOCIATIONS OF CHURCHES

Two hundred years ago seven churches formed themselves into what is known as the KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION at a meeting house called "Kehukee" near Kehukee Creek, in Halifax County, North Carolina. This was in the year 1765 according to Hassell's Church History. Since this year, 1965, is the bi-centennial year of this ASSOCIATION; we are impressed to write a short editorial upon the subject of ASSOCIATIONS OF CHURCHES. We shall endeavor to treat upon the aims of our forefathers in forming these churches into associations and to point out the necessity of conducting such associational meetings in such manner that the churches will retain their Scriptural position as the highest ecclesiastical organizations. We shall consider associations as creatures of the churches and shall warn against these creatures attempting to discipline and to set themselves above their creators. Seven Churches of Asia were written to by John. Seven churches originally adopted what is now known as the London Confession of Faith in abridged form in 1643. (Hassell Church History, see Page 663) There were seven elders in the twelve churches constituting the Sulphur Fork Association of Texas in 1845 at Providence Church, Mount Vernon, Texas. Let us now leave the historical phase and immediately examine the purposes of these associations.

One of the aims in forming associations of churches is that personal acquaintance and contact might be enlarged to include a larger circle of brethren than would be probable with a single church in a neighborhood. It is as a good result of associations that thousands often meet together from different states to worship God in unison, and to become acquainted with many new brethren embracing sovereign grace principles. Our aim is to embrace more in our fellowship instead of trying to reduce the number. Our aim is to further unite rather than to divide; add to instead of cutting off; and, to be for one another rather than being against.

Paul said, "Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits."

(Romans 12:16) "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be prefectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Cor. 1:-10) "Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same LOVE, being of one accord, of one mind." (Phil. 2:2) David said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." (Psalms 133:1) The number TWO has been considered by some as being accursed as it is the first departure from unity. Only God who makes men's heart's can unite them. Whoever God joins together in this divine love can never be separated by the cunning craftiness of men without causing unhappiness and misery because of such separation. United we stand; divided we fall. All who possess the spirit of God's love are as harmless as doves. Doves live, feed, and fly by companies. Doves desire unity; and it was the dove that would not leave Noah's ark. (Gen. 8:9) We must warn against these wolves who have come in among us, as well as the foxes who have crept into our numbers, who care not for the flock. They connive with their plots, schemes, tricks, and "Legal justifyings" to handle churches as if they were the judges, lawgivers, and kings. They will band themselves together to annihilate churches and ministers. A whole psalm was written against this sin. Read the entire 83rd Psalm. The 12th verse is the expression of their central desire. "Who said, Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession." Those who plot together to cut off churches from the union of churches "take crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. They have said, COME, AND LET US CUT THEM OFF FROM BEING A NATION."

It is comforting to know that the Lord is the one to take vengeance on them. The Psalmist asked the Lord to "Fill their faces with shame." The Lord created the wicked for the day of evil, and created the waster to destroy. He will fight our battles for us against our enemies in His way with that which He hath designed for the work of vengeance. True brethren do not need to waste time in warring with false brethren for if God be for us none can successfully come against us. He will deliver us from their clutches. We do not need to defend ourselves but use the time and talents in pressing on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Jesus Christ. We shall press for the unity of TRUE brethren. We realize that when these false brethren have done their dirty work they will separate themselves from us and go out from us, as the CHIEF Shepherd does His mighty work in protecting the sheep from the wolves and foxes.

Another aim is to encourage intercommunion of churches. Churches formed in such associations write letters to the other churches giving such information as each church may think prudent for the good and welfare of the union. This inter-communication so links the churches together that brethren composing one church feel free to commune with the churches so linked together. We know that all members of the church universal are all the saved, and that Christ is the only Head, and the Church is His Body. (See Eph. 1:22-23 & Collosians 1:18-24) The church militant is composed of all the saints now on earth. The invisible church is all the Elect not yet called. A particular church is a society of believers called out of the world who have bonded themselves together, to be guided and governed by discipline agreeable to the laws of Christ as given in the New Testament.

Another purpose of associational meetings is to bring together the different gifts in the ministry in order that they may preach together and hear one another feeding the children of God with a variety of spiritual food. Many say they enjoy associational meetings because they are privileged to hear dif-

ferent ministers from the different sections of the country in different manners proclaiming the same gospel truth. It is indeed a blessing to be convinced that all these ministers have been brought up in the same School and have had as their teacher; — God, the Father; God, the Son; and, God, the Holy Ghost.

Associational meetings are heavenly when so many voices can be blended together in singing the songs of Zion in the spirit and God-given understanding, having their voices mellowed by the Love of God bringing them into the joys of Zion. It is wonderful to make new acquaintances and to visit so many who embrace the same sovereign grace principles which is our food and drink. It is wonderful to talk on the Scriptures together in smaller companies in the homes of the neighborhood in which the associational meeting is held. It is enjoyable to feel the warm welcome extended to us in these homes and to partake of the kind hospitalities so lovingly given us by the occupants of these homes.

When we see so many people together to worship God it inspires and encourages those who have been made to feel that there are only a very few of us, and that it will not be long until there will be none of us left. I have heard people say at such meetings: "Old Baptists are not all dead as some would have us believe." It is encouraging when you are made to know that the Lord has reserved unto himself many more than you thought existed.

Interlinking of God's people by the method of associational correspondence is a blessing when we are blessed to extend the chain rather than break any of these links. I will here quote the body of a corresponding letter which I wrote several years ago — which is yet my conscientious convictions and yearning desires relative to associational correspondence: — "Dearly Beloved Brethren: — We are bound to give thanks unto God for you, brethren, because our drooping spirits have been revived by the presence of so many of you who compose the membership of the several associations with whom we correspond. We have been greatly refreshed by the coming of your lovely and friendly correspondence. We appreciate your elders whom God hath endowed with His Holy Spirit to preach unto us salvation by grace through faith in the complete work of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in saving His Elect Family. Our aching hearts have been renewed while we are blessed to drink together from the fountain that springs up into everlasting life."

"We are bound to thank God for this medium of fellowship granted us through associational correspondence. This chain of correspondence has united in one body many of our people from different states covering hundreds of miles. May God enable us to appreciate this grand blessing to the extent that **we be given to watch and pray and so conduct ourselves that this chain will not be broken — but rather extended. May God keep us together and at one-another's feet.** May this letter bear to you love and fellowship. We covet a continuation of your correspondence and visitations."

All of these objectives heretofore mentioned, together with the practice of the apostles and apostolic churches writing to the churches and brethren, would certainly commend general meetings when we consider their visitations among the churches. Brethren and churches then desired to learn of the welfare of others as well as to inform others of their own welfare. Letters were written then and sent by messengers to each other. This would not be a departure from apostolic practice to have associational meetings regularly scheduled provided that messengers would not attempt any disciplinary action in dealing with any church or member. Associations have no Bible authority to deal in any manner disciplining churches or members. Since the church is the only organized body sanctioned by the Bible, and any other society

or combination of men would be without Scriptural authority; then associations constituted to be **continuous existing bodies** must be un-scriptural. Since we are all forgetful creatures, Old Baptists should be often reminded that there is no Bible authority for any formally organized association of God's people other than the church itself; and because of this, no organized association of churches can be properly considered as a standing organization which is to be held sacred. Churches are continuous bodies; associations are not. When we refer to "Our Moderator" between sessions of associations when speaking of the one who presided over the last associational meeting, we are sanctioning the idea that we do believe there is some other permanent Christian organization other than the church. When the associational meeting ends the duty of the moderator ends. When the churches meet again in an associated capacity, they are obligated to re-organize for that session. We enjoy visiting these associations, not for the sake of these humanly organized bodies, but for the wonderful heavenly privilege they provide, for the general assembling of the Saints of God, for the **sole purpose of worshipping God, and associating with one another.**

Have we departed from the steps of our forefathers in the use of associations? This is a vital question. We should ascertain the answer by examination. The church cannot confer authority to any one or ones to act in its behalf. Christ is its only representative. Question 1, Do you have a copy of the Articles of Faith, Constitution, Rules of Decorum, Church Covenant, and copies of minutes of preceedings of the **church** of your membership? Question 2, Do you have copies of the Constitution, Articles of Faith, Rules of Decorum, and proceedings of the **Association** in which your church is catalogued as a member? If your answer be NO to question 1 and YES to question 2 it will show that a greater regard is shown toward the **association** than to the **church** of your membership. Question 3, Has the **church** of your membership by an act of the **church** barred any church or minister from your affiliation in the past several years? Question 4, Has the **association** barred any church or minister within the past several years which has affected the affiliation of the church of your membership? If your answer be NO to question 3 and YES to question 4 it will show that your messengers have acted beyond their authority and that you respect your **association** more than the **church** of your membership. Question 5, Has the **church** of your membership desired to invite certain ministers to preach to you but because of some action of the **association** unauthorized by the church of your membership, you are afraid to invite? If your answer to this question be YES; then, you are allowing the association to infringe on your internal rights and to bring you into its bondage. Question 6, Have you ever had a church to seek affiliation with your church and a host of your membership would say to them, "We all have fellowship for you but you must present the matter to the association when it convenes"; and, you do not take any action upon the matter and make no recommendation to the association in your letter in order that messengers from other churches may present this matter to their churches? If this be the way you handle the matters, you are supporting the idea that messengers making up the association are to be the **executive board** to govern, discipline, and regulate church affiliation and fellowship. I cannot believe that our forefathers who first organized such meetings meant that they should be used in this manner. They were aware of the fact that it could easily lead to this. Therefore, safeguards were well written in their first organizations of associations with the hopes of preventing such unscriptural use. We have before us the **Constitution** of the **Sulphur Fork Primitive Baptist Association** of churches. We shall quote these safe-

guards as written by our forefathers in forming this association: — "CONSTITUTION . . . 3. The members thus chosen and convened shall not have power to lord it over God's heritage, nor shall have any ecclesiastical power over any of the churches, nor shall they infringe on any of the internal rights of any of the churches of the union . . . 11. We believe that all societies or combinations of men, professing for their object the promotion of God's kingdom, for the spiritual good of men, **except the Church of Christ** are unauthorized by the Word of God, and are a fruitful source of contention and strife. Such as Foreign and Domestic Societies, Bible Tracts, Sabbath Schools, and State Conventions, all of which we believe are unscriptural and un-Christian in the origin, operation, and tendency; and as such we will not fellowship . . ."

It is worse to esteem associations higher than the church than to approve of auxiliaries within the church. Question 7, When you travel abroad and you are questioned by Old School or Primitive Baptists relative to your religious affiliation, What is your answer??? If your answer be that you are a member of a certain association, you either esteem your association higher than your church, or, there has been more effort and expense used to make the actions of your association prominent rather than your church. When you give such answer you are aiding the idea that there is some other Christian organization that is perpetual and continuous in its operations other than the church. Question 8, Do you think it necessary that your church belong to an association?? If your answer be YES you aid the idea that the church of your membership is somewhat dependent upon someone other than Jesus Christ as its Head.

I am convinced that associational meetings are a blessing to God as long as churches are blessed to use them as tools for the promotion of bringing more and more of the Lord's little ones into affiliation of one-another. I am convinced that associations become a curse when they begin investigating, dropping, disciplining, not receiving, and barring from fellowship, churches who have had membership with them. I am convinced that as wealth is a blessing as long as it serves you and becomes a curse when you become its servant: so is an association a blessing as long as churches use it, but becomes a curse when it uses the churches as its servants.

Associations are without scriptural authority to settle difficulties. If difficulties arise in a particular church let us look to the Scriptures which contains the "ONLY RULE OF FAITH AND PRACTICE." If after much fasting, prayer, meditation, and study of the Scriptures; a satisfactory solution cannot be reached, let us, then, call upon a sister church or churches to come and sit with us to aid us in counsel and advice. If the solution is not reached after all this, WHERE ELSE CAN WE GO BUT TO THE LORD? We must patiently wait for His deliverance. Do not disturb the peace of an associational meeting with problems which you together with the combined efforts of sister churches cannot settle. Do not turn your back upon a sister church who is in trouble. True churches of Christ mourn when they are in trouble. Do not tell them that they are in "disorder," and because of this, you cannot affiliate with them. This is the proper time for you to mourn with those who mourn. Do not leave them to themselves because of this disturbance. They need your helping hand. They need the caresses of your love and the manifestation of your fellowship more then than before. When the peace of a particular church is disturbed, it is sick. It is in need of your loving care. If a member of that body is afflicted do not tell the body that we will have nothing more to do with you until you cut this member off. This would be like telling a loved one who has an afflicted arm that you will not come to visit him until he has his arm removed. Associations some-

times quickly cut off affiliation and correspondence even without a due course of **labor in order to save in fellowship,** just over rumors and mis-understandings. These things ought not to be and are unauthorized in the testimony of the Word of God.

Dear Readers: I make this personal appeal to you: My soul has been on its knees for a long time. I go groaning, moaning, and sighing, as a lone pilgrim in a weary land. I am waiting, praying, and watching. I crave to get a letter from each and everyone of you whose hearts have been melted and softened in the furnace of afflictions. I deeply desire the sweet comradeship of true friends. I want to dwell with friends who do not render harsh judgment against each other. I want the comradeship of a people who will not hold my sins against me. I confess that my sins are many and that my mistakes are great. I admit that I am weak and do not know how to walk perfectly and have erred many times. I am seeking the friendship of the citizens of Zion who **really** forgive. I want to walk with a people who — "Serve in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." (Romans 7:6) I want the correspondence of those whose theme is: The Sovereign Power of God's Everlasting Love Through Jesus Christ Our Lord and Redeemer. I have prayed for deeper convictions, richer experience, stronger faith, brighter hope, and more fervent charity; but I was perplexed when I found I must go through greater tribulations and persecutions in answer to my prayer. May we rejoice together in many more associational meetings here and finally climax it in that Eternal Session of Heaven's ASSOCIATION. Cast a mantle of charity to cover my many mistakes I may have made in this Article. Before you lay this aside, please, get an envelope and address it to:

E. J. Lambert
306 Richardson
Winnsboro, Texas

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

1 PETER III. 21.

"The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

We have in these words a clear statement of the meaning and design of baptism. It is stated to be a figure of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and its design is, not to purify either the body from outward defilement or the conscience from sin, but that a good conscience may thus give answer outwardly to the work of God wrought in the heart. A good conscience is one which has been cleansed through faith by the application of the blood of Christ, which alone can purify from all sin.

We have in this text, first, a refutation and condemnation of the perversion which nearly all professing christendom has made of the ordinance of baptism, viz., that it is essential to salvation, in the sense that by baptism souls are regenerated and made fit to be heirs of glory. When vital godliness dies out of any people there straightway comes in formality and ritualism of various sorts, and salvation comes to be no longer ascribed to the death and resurrection of Christ for justification; the new birth of the Spirit is ignored; and salvation and regeneration are held forth as the result of baptism or of other forms and ceremonies. This is true of Romanists, Episcopalians, Campbellites, and is also largely true of Presbyterians and Methodists. Some teach that baptism is essential to final salvation, as an act of obedience, and others teach that baptism is essential to salvation, not merely as an act of obedience to God, but because in baptism the soul is regenerated; without which regeneration no soul can live

eternally with God. It was the declaration of a Romanist preacher centuries ago that the wailing cry of the souls of unbaptized infants is heard throughout the regions of darkness forever. Such souls it is asserted are not in hell, neither can they enter heaven and dwell in the presence of God, therefore they roam, without rest or peace, forever in the regions of darkness. All who believe in infant baptism feel that they must have this ordinance attended to before their children die, else the children will lack something in that other world to which had they been baptized they would have attained. One many years ago said to us that she had lost one child by death which had not been baptized, and she then made a vow that no other child of hers should die without baptism. In reply to the question, "Why, do you think that your child was lost?" she said, "No, but it lacked something in that world which baptism would have secured to it." We could but say to her, "If your child is suffering through your neglect, instead of your suffering for it, where is the justice?"

Because Baptists have always insisted upon baptism as it is taught in the word of God, and have condemned sprinkling or pouring as superstitions of men, and because they have never received such sprinklings and pourings as baptism when members of other professed bodies of Christians have come to them, it has been for centuries charged against them by haters of truth, and believed by foolish and ignorant men, that they believe that baptism is essential to salvation. It has not mattered that they themselves believe and have always taught the contrary, viz., that salvation is essential to baptism. Evil-minded men continue to urge this charge against them, and foolish men believe it. If indeed we do believe that baptism must be received in order to the justification of the soul and to an entrance into the world of glory, unless Baptists do not possess ordinary human sympathy with their fellow-men, we certainly should be found urging with all solemnity and persistence upon all men the necessity of being baptized; and did we believe this there would never be any question asked of any one who came to us asking baptism; we should only be too much filled with rejoicing that another had come asking for that which would save the soul. It is not we, as Old School Baptists, who believe and teach that one must be baptized if he would be saved, but those who practice sprinkling of infants, and Campbellites, who practice immersion.

Old School Baptists could not believe and teach salvation by ordinances of any kind, because they do believe and teach with all their hearts that salvation is alone through the atonement upon Calvary. They believe that it is the work of Christ for us that saves, and in which we are to trust; and not our work. Baptism by immersion and emersion (into and from) the watery grave is essential to walking obediently in the commandments of the Lord, just as to follow all other commandments which he has given his people is essential to obedience. But obedience to the commandments of the Lord does not justify the sinner, nor secure his abode in heaven; this is secured to him alone by the finished obedience of the blessed Lord. There is no more salvation in baptism than there is in any other act of obedience which we may gladly render in token of our love to him who loved us and died for us. We have not written here of all this with any expectation of silencing the charges of ignorant men to which we have referred, but that our readers who it may be have been disturbed by these false assertions, may have somewhat to reply when they hear such things said.

In the text the apostle uses the expression, "The like figure whereunto, even baptism." Baptism here is asserted by the apostle to be just such a figure of salvation as was the water of the flood by which he declares that Noah and his family were saved. The waters of the flood then were a figure

of salvation; baptism is also a figure of salvation. Let us note that the apostle here did not say that Noah was saved from the water of the flood, but by the water. The ark, into which he was shut, saved him and all with him from destruction by the flood, but here the assertion is that there was a salvation by the water itself. What was that salvation? It appears to us that it could have been but one thing, viz., that by the flood Noah and his family were separated forever from the wicked antediluvian world, or saved from it. The same flood that saved Noah from the former wicked world, at which he vexed himself and against which he preached while preparing the ark, was the destruction of the world of wicked men. Noah was by the flood forever separated from all his former life, so also were the people said to be "baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea," when they passed over dry shod through the water standing as walls of brass on either side, and under the cloud that hovered over them.

True, the word "baptism" always signifies dipping or immersion and emersion, but here the reference of the apostle is not so much to the form of baptism as to the separating work wrought at the Red Sea, by which all Israel was forever separated from Egypt and their former life there, and were shut up to the leadership of Moses. "Separated **from** Egypt, and separated **to** Moses." So Noah was by the water of the flood separated from the old world and separated to the new world that appeared after the flood. All this was a figure of that salvation which God works for his people through the finished work of Christ by his death and resurrection. They are in like manner (not figure, but in reality) separated to the Lord and from their former death in sin and ungodliness. Now baptism is here declared to be just such a figure of this salvation in Christ as was the water of the flood. As the antediluvian world became dead to Noah by the flood, and he to it, so through Christ believers have become dead to their former life, and hope, and bondage, and have been raised up to newness of life, and now live in a new world, with new hopes and desires and blessings; and by the water of baptism they declare this work to have been wrought in them.

As Noah was saved by the work of God wrought in him, separating him from the ungodly world in spirit and feeling before the flood came, so are believers separated from their former life and love by the work of the Spirit in their hearts before they receive baptism. Indeed, had not this work been wrought in the heart of Noah before the time of the flood, salvation by the water of the flood could not have been his. The water of the flood would not have wrought this righteous principle in him, and he would have been after the flood living the life of wickedness that all the world had been doing before. So also if righteousness has not been wrought in the heart of men before baptism, there has been no real separation from others, and the water of baptism is to them but a solemn mockery.

Let us remember that, after all, the apostle declares that there is a salvation in the figure baptism, but this salvation is not that salvation which puts away sin, the filth of the flesh. The apostle declares that this salvation is now, but the putting away of sin is not now; that was accomplished when Jesus died and rose again; he was put to death for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification. Redemption, in the real sense of the word, was finished when Jesus had finished the work which God gave him to do, and was raised again from the dead. So the apostle here connects baptism with the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. "The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

The apostle Paul sets forth the same great truth which is here declared by Peter, in Romans vi. 3, 4: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were bap-

tized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Here the meaning of the apostle evidently is that by real heartfelt experience of death to sin, and life to holiness and God, we have been baptized into him, and into his death, and therefore we are in water baptism buried with him, and rise therefrom to walk in newness of life. So Peter in the text connects our water baptism with the resurrection of Christ. The resurrection of Christ is his work for us by which we are saved, while we testify to this work as having been wrought in us by being baptized, and this baptism is the answer of a good conscience toward God; it is our confession of what the Lord has done for us in the resurrection of Christ.

Baptism, then, is a form presenting a reality; it is a form, but not an unmeaning form. The ordinances of the house of God appointed in his word are all of them filled with meaning. In them we do not find redemption, or justification, or eternal life, but they all testify of these things. So the supper tells of Jesus' body and blood, upon which we live and by which we are cleansed from sin. Baptism sets forth three special things, according to the testimony of the word. In the first place, it sets forth our faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ for our justification and redemption. By our baptism we declare that our hope is in his work for us, finally finished when he died, and witnessed to us by his resurrection from the dead. In the second place, in baptism we declare that it is our hope that we also have become experimentally dead to sin by the body of Christ and alive unto holiness. Dying we are buried, and living again we rise to walk in this newness of life. And, in the third place, as our bodies are buried in the watery grave, and rise again from it, we declare that our faith is that our bodies are included in the redemption of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that they shall one day also rise as did his crucified body, and be changed into the likeness of his glorified body, and so live forever with him. In these three things are summed up all the principles of truth contained in the gospel of the Son of God.

Lastly, baptism is itself a salvation to all who believe. It does not indeed put away sin, which is the chief part of salvation, but it does separate us from our former lives in and of the world in the sight of all who love God, and indeed in the sight of all men. We are henceforth known as the professed followers of Christ, as those who henceforth do not live as others live, in the vanity of their minds, but as those who live in union with that which pertains to God and godliness. It is a great help to one who loves the Lord, and who has in heart and desire been separated unto the Lord, to have it known by all that this is his hope, and it will, we think, be the testimony of all believers that they have found a help to resist temptation after worldliness by the very fact that they have been baptized in the name of the Lord. Even the world does not expect those who have made this confession to live as they did before, or as the worldly live. There is gain surely when we know that the world no longer expects us to run in the way that we once did; at least we know that in our early life young friends did not, after we were baptized upon confession of our faith, expect us or ask us to join in many things that they did insist upon our doing before. We did find in this sense a salvation in baptism. We doubt not that many have found it so.

(Editorial by Elder F. A. Chick, December 1, 1912.

When we read this recently it seemed to open up some things we have often pondered over, but did not understand. Hope our readers will enjoy it as much as we did. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

JOHN ELMUS LEMONDS

Brother Lemonds was born April 15, 1878, in Henry County, Tennessee; and was the son of Jerome and Annis Lemonds. In 1906 he married Verne Weaks, who passed away in 1911; then in 1913 he married Julia Toombs. Brother Lemonds passed away January 31, 1964, making his stay on earth nearly 86 years.

He is survived by his wife and four children; and fourteen grandchildren, and eight great grandchildren. Also by one sister, and a host of friends.

In 1921 he united with the Primitive Baptist Church, and was baptized by Elder H. N. Oliver. He was appointed Church Clerk at Beaver Dam in September, 1921, and served as Clerk until death. He was well known among the Baptists in this part of the country; and his home was a gathering place for many brehtren. He reared a fine family, and filled a good place in the community where he lived. The writer spent many nights in his home. We all miss him, but we feel that our loss is his gain, for we feel that he fell asleep in Christ, and is waiting the glorious resurrection.

The writer conducted the funeral service at the funeral home in Paris, Tennessee, trying to comfort those that mourned by telling of the wonderful grace of God.

Elder R. L. Biggs

NANNIE LOU STOWE

Sister Nannie Lou Stowe was born December 14, 1871, the daughter of Leroy Payne and Lucinda Redd Fallen Payne. She departed this life May 26, 1964.

The following children survive: Mrs. P. G. Crane, Roy T. Stowe, Clarence and Bernard Stowe. Surviving also are one sister, Ola Payne Collins; and one brother, George Payne.

Sister Stowe united with Mt. Ararat Church in May, 1903, and remained a faithful member until death. She fell and injured her hip, and remained in a hospital until the end.

May the Lord comfort her family and loved ones, and we be blessed to say, "Thy will be done, O Lord." The funeral was held at Swicegood Funeral Home by Elder R. S. Payne and Mr. Don L. Truitt, and she was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park. We feel she is asleep, waiting for that beautiful morning when she will awake in His likeness.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the family; one put on our church records; and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* **for publication.**

Done by order of Mt. Ararat Church.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Elder R. S. Payne, Clerk

MRS. MARY ELIZABETH BAKER

Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Baker, of Marion, Louisiana, was born August 28, 1869, and passed away at a nursing home October 7, 1964, which made her age more than 95 years. She lived a long and useful life, and reared a large family: four sons, Willie, Marion, La.; John, Marion; Jean, Hamburg, Arkansas; and Whit, Marion; four daughters, Mrs. Alice Johnson, Marion; Mrs. Gertie Farrar, Bastrop, La.; Mrs. Jesse Reppond, Marion; and Mrs. Effie Johnson, Crossett, Arkansas. Surviving also are, three brothers: Willie and Bob Day, of Marion, and Ben Day, of Sacramento, California; and 105 grandchildren; 55 great grandchildren; and 5 great great grandchildren.

Sister Baker joined the Primitive Baptist Church at old Good Hope Church, near Oakland, La., many years ago, to which she was very actively devoted, and attended as long as her health permitted. She was held in high esteem by her dear brethren, and was very humble and lovely in the faith which was gloriously manifested in her actions and countenance at the meetings and among the brethren.

May the Lord bless and comfort her dear family, and all those who mourn her passing. She is now free from her sufferings, griefs and sorrows, which she endured so long.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer and a Missionary Baptist minister, and she was buried at old Good Hope Church, where her membership had been so long. There was a very large congregation of friends present, and many beautiful flowers, which was a token of the great respect in which she was held. Many of the old sacred songs which she loved were sung at the funeral.

Yours in sweet hope,
R. W. Rhodes

VINUS A. BOWDEN

Several months have gone by since the death of Vinus A. Bowden at the age of 77 years. He died December 19, 1963, at a hospital in Fulton, Ky. after a few days of treatment. His health had been failing for several months, but he was up and about his small duties of home. He had been a farmer, and a small town merchant, but retired a few years ago. He was born in Obion County, Tennessee, April 22, 1886, the son of William and Leammie Bowden. He had lived for years in Dukedom, Tenn.

He was a strong believer in the doctrine of God the Father, which embraces God's foreknowledge, predestination, special atonement, election of grace, etc. He never joined the church, but was one who was ever present in the meetings, and had a great interest and

love for the truth. His answer was always "I'm not fit," when asked to go to his friends and tell them what his hope was. We who heard him tell his hopes and fears, knew his lovely experience of hope in Jesus as his Saviour for time and eternity.

Funeral services were held at Dukedom by Elders O. W. Perkins, and Elder Paul Poyner.

Survivors include his wife, Bessie Bowden; two sons, Lorenza, of Detroit, Mich., and Whitsel, of Dukedom; and three grandchildren, and two great grandchildren. Also by one brother, Bonnie Bowden, Dukedom, Tenn., and many other relatives.

I hope I am indeed a sister in truth, as well as a sister-in-law.

Effie Bowden
Benton, Ky.

WILLIAM L. TRIPP

Born in September, 1876, he was called from his earthly existence May 28, 1962, making his age 82 years. He was united in marriage to the late Mary Smith in February, 1898; and of this union surviving him are, one son, William L., Jr.; three daughters: Sister Susie Mae Williams, of the home; Sister Betsy Avery, Winterville, N. C.; and Sister Norvella Jackson, Wilmington, N. C. In 1941 he married Pauline Wilson, and of this union surviving him are two daughters, Patsy and Loretta Tripp. Surviving also are eight grandchildren, and seventeen great grandchildren.

His funeral was conducted in Ayden, N. C. by his pastor, Elder A. P. Mewborn, and Elder D. B. Stokes, Jr.

The Lord gave him an experience of grace, and he was received into the church at Hancocks, and baptized into the faith his hope evidenced. He was given to know the weakness of man, and his inability to perform that which the law requires. He was strong in the knowledge that eternal salvation comes to God's children by His abundant mercy alone. He was blessed to see three of his daughters members of the church he loved, and he expressed his comfort to many of the brethren. His last days were full of pain, but he expressed to his pastor several times, his belief that God is able to subdue pain and destory it, even as he is able to destroy all enemies of the church.

We miss him, but would not have him back to suffer in his carnal existence. Rather, we join him in the hope he expressed, that he is resting in the paradise of God; and we look with anticipation to the day when Jesus will descend from Heaven and gather his children home into that promised land, in which suffering, sorrows, and heartaches cannot enter, but all shall have peace in the glory of God's presence forever.

Done by order of Conference.

Elder A. P. Mewborn, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

WALTER D. WILLIAMS, SR.

God, in his infinite wisdom, has seen fit to remove from our midst our beloved and highly esteemed brother, Walter D. Williams, Sr. He died April 18, 1963, at the age of 84. He was a man of good report: an honor to his family, his church and his community. He was a loving and devoted husband and father, and a true friend and neighbor; and was held in deep respect by those who knew him.

Brother Williams was a firm and steadfast believer in salvation by grace; and his godly walk and conversation in life was proof of this fact. It was a pleasure to see his beaming face radiate the joy he felt at hearing the gospel proclaimed. He united with the church at Hancocks in May, 1917, and was baptized by Elder George W. Stokes, his pastor. He was a faithful attendant, always filling his seat until failing health prevented. He loved his church dearly, and freely contributed to its welfare and upkeep. He was ordained a deacon of Hancocks Church in May, 1918, an office for which he was well qualified, and he faithfully discharged his duties.

We, the Church, have suffered a great loss, but feel that our loss is his eternal gain. We extend our deepest sympathy to the bereaved family, and pray that God will comfort them. May His richest blessing be theirs.

His funeral was preached by Elder A. P. Mewborn, his beloved pastor, assisted by Elder D. B. Stokes, Jr., and by Elder Joseph Sawyer. He was then laid to rest, to await the resurrection, when Jesus is coming to carry his children home.

Done by order of Conference.

Elder A. P. Mewborn, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

It has been the will of our dear Heavenly Father to call to her eternal rest Sister Laura Burkhalter. She was born in Queen City, Texas, November 29, 1873, to George and Mary Elizabeth Jarmen Burkhalter; and was married September 11, 1898, to M. F. Burkhalter. She departed this life at Tipton, Oklahoma, May 14, 1964.

Her husband, three daughters, and two sons preceded her in death. Survivors include a son, E. B. Burkhalter, Tipton, Oklahoma; five daughters, Mrs. Herman Thompson, Mrs. Tom Hawley, and Mrs. Huston Russel, of Tipton; and Mrs. J. B. Clark and Mrs. Elmer Philips, both of Braumfield, Texas; and by nineteen

grandchildren, and thirty great grandchildren; also by a brother, John Burkhalter, of Palestine, Texas.

Sister Burkhalter was a beloved member of the church, strong in the faith of a Sovereign God. She attended meetings regularly as long as her health permitted. She had many friends, as evidenced by the lovely floral offerings, and large attendance at her funeral. In sadness we wish to bow in humble submission to God's holy will, ever looking to Him for mercy and guidance. To the family and friends, may God comfort and bless you.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be filed with Little Flock Church; a copy be given the family; and a copy be sent to *The Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church June 28, 1964.

Elder C. M. Haygood, Pastor
Ana Stewart, Church Clerk

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M.

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M.

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 11 A. M.

WRIGHTS' CREEK CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 11:00 A. M.

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., six miles SE. of Sulligent, Alabama.

MACEDONIA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located one and one-half miles Southwest of Sulligent, Alabama, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT R. PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
HURTON PITTS, Clerk
Sulligent, Ala.

OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each Saturday before the fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Alabama.

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles SW. of Fayette, Alabama.

ELAM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located two miles North of Goshen, Pike County, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 o'clock.

J. P. MORGAN, Pastor
A. C. CARTER, Clerk
1335 Avalon Lane,
Montgomery 6, Ala.

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before.

E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Pratt City, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. Meeting place at Alder Street at top of hill, first car going into Pratt City from Birmingham.

H. C. MOON, Pastor

LIBERTY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., eight miles South of Gordo, Alabama.

O. G. GARVER, Pastor

MT. CARMEL CHURCH, Coffee Springs, Alabama, meets each first Sunday 11 A. M.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

REHOBETH OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located five miles North of El Dorado, Arkansas and half-mile West of Highway No. 7, meets second Sunday in each month and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

R. W. RHODES, Pastor
W. A. SPEER, Clerk

WHITE WATER OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located about one mile Northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

W. A. SPEER, Pastor

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Stockton, California, meets second Sundays, 10:30 A. M., at 5620 E. Marsh Street. All lovers of the truth invited.

T. R. JEFFERSON, PASTOR
Myrtle Tipton, Clerk
733 7th St. Hallister, Calif. 95023

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Compton, California, meets each fourth Sunday at the home of L. W. Langwell, 12812 S. Williams Street.

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in the United States), meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is located one mile south of Newark, Delaware, just off of Highway 896.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK CHURCH, Miami, Florida, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before, SW. 29th Avenue and 6th Street. We extend an invitation to any interested to visit us.

MRS. J. M. FUTCH,
7005 SW. 21st Street,
Miami, Florida

NEW HARMONY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Hiram, Ga., meets every 1st Sunday at 11 o'clock.

O. J. CROKER, Pastor
J. F. JORDAN, Clerk

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located at 5th and East Park Street, Weiser, Idaho, meets each 4th Sunday at 11 o'clock. Address any communications to:

ERNEST J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
FLOSSIE ATTEBERY, Clerk
Rt. 1, Box 202,
Hermiston, Oregon 97838

PLEASANT VALLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas. Meets with Mrs. Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C, each second month — January, March, etc. on the first Sunday.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE LOST CREEK CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, meets first Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Kentucky, ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton, on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

NEW HOPE CHURCH (better known as Lick Creek) meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Kentucky.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE ZION CHURCH OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS, Mayfield, Kentucky, meets first Sunday each month at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M., on South 7th Street.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Baltimore, Maryland, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Street, near Calvert.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on Falls Road about twenty miles north of Baltimore.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

HOPEWELL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Hopewell, N. J., meets each first Sunday at 10:30, and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

ARTHUR R. WARREN, Pastor
LETHA A. BLACKWELL, Clerk

OLIVE AND HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Shokan, N. Y., meets each 2nd Sunday at 1:30 P. M.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
MRS. NEVA BROOKS, Clerk

The **WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,** Warwick, Orange County, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are at 10:30 A. M. DST.

The **MIDDLETOWN AND WALLKILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,** Middletown, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday from April to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. Meetings are at 2 P. M. DST.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, New York City, meets every first and third Sundays at McBurney Branch Y. W. C. A. 215 W. 23rd Street, corner of 7th Ave. (Elevator to 2nd floor.) 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M. All visitors are welcome.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

THE WILSON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Wilson, N. C., meets each second Sunday at 3 P. M., and Saturday evening before at 7:30 P. M. The location is on the corner of Green and Jackson Streets.

MRS. BETTIE RICHARDSON, Clerk

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:00 P. M.

C. M. HAGGOOD, Pastor
NINA STALLINGS, Clerk
Rt. 2, Box 54
Altus, Okla.

BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin, Oregon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes. Address communications to Lloyd Spikes, Elgin, Oregon.

ERNEST ATTEBERY, Pastor
SPENCER BURCH, Clerk

ROCK SPRINGS OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, meets each first Sunday at 10:30. The meeting house is located on highway 222, about one-quarter mile of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line.

JOHN D. WOOD. Pastor
CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets each 5th Sunday from May through September, with all day meeting the 1st Sunday in May; and meets at Needmore, Pa., on 5th Sundays from October through April, with all day meeting the 2nd Sunday in October.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
ORIEN MELLOTT, Clerk
McConnellsburg, Pa.

THE PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Memphis, Tennessee, meet in the Primitive Baptist Church, on Andrews Road in Ellendale, about a block from Highway 70, each Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

H. G. BROWN, Pastor
791 Watson Street
H. R. PRINCE, Ass't. Pastor
HAROLD TONEY, Clerk

CANE CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and is located nine miles Southwest of Martin, Tennessee. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
J. B. JONES, Clerk
Rt. 1, Martin, Tenn.

BORDEAUX PREDESTINARIAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Nashville, Tenn., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. The church is located on the old Hydes Ferry Road in Bordeaux, in Nashville. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

The **WALNUT FORK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH,** near Cottage Grove, Tennessee, meets on the second Sunday of each month.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor
R. L. VEAZEY, SR., Clerk

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, Houston, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before 10:30 A. M. Church is located at 815 Little York Road between Highway 75 and East Texas Freeway 59.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
IRENE WISENBAKER, Clerk

MT. ZION CHURCH, Weslaco, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.; and each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday before at 2:00 P. M., at their new location: seven miles West of Weslaco, on highway 83.

JOE L. HAMRICK, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk

SARDIS CHURCH, Amarillo, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 10:30, in the home of E. J. Parsons, 1711 Lincoln Street.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, has moved their meeting place to 3629 8th Avenue. They meet each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Take College Ave. bus to Butler and Ryon; go one block West, then half block North to church.

C. U. LANDERS, Pastor

THE ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST CHURCH, Lawn, Texas, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
MRS. NOLA STEWART, Clerk

AN ARM OF PILGRIM REST CHURCH, meets each second Sunday and Saturday night before at Earth, Texas.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
A. A. CHAMBERS, Clerk

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30, and Saturday night before, at the home of M. J. Culpepper. Lovers of the truth invited.

LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk

THE OLD SALEM CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS, four miles South of Teague, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before. MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

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SAINTS REST OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each first and third Sunday at 11 A. M., at 2710 Engle Street.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
D. G. CONNELL, Clerk

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30. And second Sundays at 11:00.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor

The churches of which Elder E. J. Lambert is pastor meet as follows:

PARON, meets first Sunday mornings and Saturday night before, F. M. Road 2659, N. E. Hawkins, Texas.

H. H. FAULK, CLERK
Rt. 1, Hawkins, Texas

HOPEWELL, meets second Sunday mornings and Saturday afternoon before, seven miles S. W. of Winnsboro, Texas.

J. J. MILLS, Clerk
Rt. 2, Winnsboro, Texas

BETHEL, meets third Sunday mornings and Saturday morning before, near U. S. 67, seven miles N. E. of El Dorado, Arkansas.

MRS. JEAN BURNS, Clerk
Rt. 3, Box 210B,
El Dorado, Ark.

GOOD HOPE, meets fourth Sunday mornings and Saturday afternoon before, seven miles N. E. of Winnsboro, Texas.

MRS. GERTRUDE JONES, Clerk
905 Y Drive,
Winnsboro, Texas

All lovers of Sovereign Grace Principles especially invited.

ELDER E. J. LAMBERT, Pastor
Phone, Code 214 Dickens 2-6742,
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located on Route 28, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia.

ARTHUR L. CARTER, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. each second month (February, April, etc.), and is near Lucketts, about eight miles north of Leesburg, Virginia.

and

BROAD RUN CHURCH, Poolesville, Maryland, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. each second month (January, March, etc.)

L. D. DUKE, Clerk
Charlestown, W. Va.

MT. ZION CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, Virginia, on Route 50, between Washington and Winchester, Virginia.

MRS. DAVID FARNIE, Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are always glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Deacon G. C. Spindle, Lincoln 3-3782.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 8:00 P. M., Fairmont Park, 2023 Tidewater Drive.

C. N. BUNN, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Richmond, Virginia, meets each fourth Sunday in their new meeting house about ten miles South of Richmond, just off highway 360 South.

R. S. PAYNE, Pastor

DAN RIVER CHURCH, between Danville, Va. and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville, Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday night before, on Bradley Road.

W. R. DODD, Pastor

LITTLE ZION PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Chehalis, Washington, meets in the home of Sister Effie Parke, 1360 First Street the first Sunday of each month at 11 A. M.

HOWARD EASON, Pastor

BETHEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, of Predestinarian Faith, of Riffe, Washington, meets each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before at 11 o'clock. For information write the Clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. OPAL HUNTTING, Clerk
Silver Creek, Wash. 98585

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, Naches, Washington, meets at 10:30 A. M. each second Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. DASIE BAKER, Clerk
Rt. 1, Naches, Wash.

HARMONY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, about four miles East of Huntington, W. Va., near Route 60 at Russell Creek, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

J. R. LANE, Moderator
MILDRED STANLEY, Clerk
Rt. 2, Huntington, W. Va.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1965 NO. 2

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/65
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"GOD WORKS BOTH TO WILL AND TO DO"

"Wherefore, my brethren, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:12-13)

I have read the above many times but never saw so much in them as I did a few days ago; and, if it is God's will, I would love to tell the good news, but I feel my weakness so much that I fear to try, and I may just hint at the matter.

The world uses this to urge people to accept Christ, and work so that He will bless them in salvation; and conditional people say it is time salvation which God has left for us to work out so as to receive the blessings He has stored in Christ for us. Both are opposite to the truth: There is no such thing as conditional salvation, or conditional time salvation. All the time salvation we will ever know, is the effect and influence of eternal salvation which we experience in this world.

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." How are weak, sinful beings to work out any kind of salvation? God has saved us with eternal salvation, and there is nothing we can add or take from it: it is secure and cannot fail. Most people tell us that God has worked it in us, and has left us to work it out. But they do not tell us how to go about it — God has gone with us to a certain "stake", then left us to obey and follow Christ and receive the blessings; or disobey and lose them. This implies that we are able of ourselves to do this work: the blessings are there, just obey and reach out and take them; yet we are not told what these blessings are, nor the benefit we get from them. They forget that Christ said, "Without me ye can do nothing."

It is by the leading and strength of Christ that we do these things. If we had strength of our own to do these things, where would be the fear and trembling? We would go boldly at the work, trusting in ourselves and forgetting God; and never would think of giving Him any glory. But He has arranged that when we work out this salvation in His strength, we realize that it is the work of the Spirit leading us; and we are humbled at his feet and give him the glory. Where does the fear and trembling fit in? When we are led by the Spirit in obedience, we often fear that we are prompted by the flesh, which would not be to God's glory. But when His love reigns in our hearts, and we are led of the Spirit, we want to live for His glory; want to praise Him for what he has, and is doing for us. And this is without the least thought of reward or recompense, *for He has done it.* It is for the great love we have for Him, knowing that we do not deserve his notice, not to mention his love — and deserve nothing for obedience. In James 1:25, he says, ". . . this man shall be blessed in his deed"; in his

deed, not for it.

How many have stopped to think what this blessing is? Not many. He is blessed by the leading and strength of the Spirit to obey and follow Christ, for without this strength and leading, we would never do these things. It is not a blessing to be received for and after obedience, but blessed in being led to do these things.

"For it is God which worketh in you *both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*" How blind can a child be? Some say we do not always do when the will is worked in us. What kind of a God are they worshiping? God's word has never gone out from him void, but always accomplishes that for which it is sent. Take time to think; and notice it is said God works both the will and the do: He works one as effectively as the other; one as sure as the other — they work together and cannot be separated. Please, just why would He work the will, if He did not work the do with it?

The scripture says that He works all things according to his will, and does all his pleasure. Could it be supposed that his pleasure is done in working the will in us, if we failed to do that which He willed? As sure as the will is worked in us, the do follows. Now, what is this will which He works in us, if it is not love? It is brought about by our love for him; and this love begets a desire to do his bidding. This love and desire we cannot and do not want to disobey, for our whole desire is to do all we can to praise and honor Him. Now, if God works the will and do of his good pleasure, can anyone deny that He is going to reap his good pleasure by leading us in obedience for Christ's sake, and His glory?

It is often denied that we will walk in all the good works which God before ordained that we should walk, (Ephesians 2:10) and that we will receive all the spiritual blessings with which He has blessed us with in heavenly places in Christ. (Ephesians 1:2-4) These good works were before ordained, and we were created unto these good works in the covenant of grace, or election, before the world was created — before were were born. We were not created unto these good works *if we are obedient;* but we were ordained to walk in them. Please, O, please explain how the great holy, sinless Sovereign of all things, could be so weak, ignorant or careless as to ordain anything, and then not bring it to pass? "As I have thought so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed so shall it stand."

He has blessed us with all spiritual blessings before the foundation of the world. Did He know what he was doing? — He hath blessed us, not will bless with all spiritual blessings. How many are these all? — all that he saw in eternity that we would need; all that He intended for us — not one missing, and none too many. These are given us in time, as he purposed in that covenant. "According as He has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Can we be holy and without blame if we should fail in anything He has purposed for us to do?

If this is of the Lord, I hope it may be comforting to some of His little ones who are hungering, and asking the way to Zion with their faces thitherward.

George W. Jackson
1884 Connally Drive,
East Point, Ga. 30044

GREETINGS FROM ELDER BARNES

Rt. 1, Box 119,
Stantonsburg, N. C. 27883

Greetings to the Household of Faith, Old School Predestinarian Baptists:

This year is fast coming to a close, and none of us knows what the future holds. All that we know is past, or

present. In my fifty-three years as a member of the Primitive or Predestinarian Baptists, I have enjoyed the happiest, and the saddest days of my life. I am sure that you who have tasted the goodness and mercy of our God, can witness with the testimony of the prophets and the apostles, and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that we are pilgrims and strangers in a strange land. This world is not our home; we have no abiding city here, but we seek a city that hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God.

I am made to realize, my dear brethren, that my race is almost at an end. Of course, I do not know when the end will be with me, but according to the average life of men, I cannot expect to remain on earth more than a few more years. God has been good to me; and He still is. Oh! if I could but praise his name forever. But I have fallen so short of living to the Christian standard. I have to go weeping and mourning. When I am blessed to think upon the name of the Lord and his wonderful love and mercy which he has bestowed upon me a hell deserving sinner, it makes me hang my head in shame: to think that the Lord of glory had to suffer on the cross in my room and stead; that is, if I am a vessel of mercy which God afore prepared unto glory.

He took my sins and yours, if we are the children of God. Though I have a precious hope, sometimes I doubt and fear, and often ask myself the question, "Do I love the Lord, or no? am I his or am I not?"; that is a point I long know, with the poet, "Oft it causes anxious thought." I am so imperfect that almost all I do, or think, or say is wrong. "Oh! is there any one like me?"

Dear brethren, I confess I am a poor, unlearned man, but I believe there is a God in heaven, who has by the word of his power created this world, or universe; and inhabited it with people, animals, fowls, insects, and every living thing for his own glory. There was not a man to help in any way whatsoever, for man was the last thing that God made. I believe that God in the annals of eternity, before the creation, foresaw everything in his infinite wisdom that he would bring to pass in the process of time, from the beginning of the creation to the final consummation of all things. I believe that God chose his people (his church) in Christ before the creation; that He saw the fall of man (Adam); and that he made provision for the redemption of all saints in Christ Jesus long before the first sin was committed. And, inasmuch as the church spiritually was in Christ before the world was, Adam, being a type of Christ, and Eve his bride being in him, was a type of the Church in Christ before the world was.

Some have asked me if God did not have a purpose in sin entering into the world, and my answer is and has been, Yes. Then they ask if God did not make sin. My answer to that is, No. Sin is something that was not made, but was and is the act of the creature. Some say that God made them to sin. But I find that one of the writers in the New Testament said that God cannot be tempted with evil; neither tempteth he any man. But somebody wants to know what is God's purpose in sin. Elder Griffin mentioned in an Editorial sometime ago that the wicked are the sword of the Lord. Now the first cause of wickedness is sin. Dear brethren, as I see it, God's purpose in sin entering into the world was that He would make his power known unto the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory. (Read Romans ninth chapter.) Had sin not entered the world there would have been no sinners to be saved from sin. So this was God's way of manifesting his power in his love and mercy upon the vessels of mercy. God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God."

Man in nature has never been satisfied to do God's will, for in the dead

state of nature he has never known the Lord God of heaven, nor his Son Jesus Christ. Only those know him to whom Christ is revealed; and revelation comes to man by spiritual birth. Jesus in the third chapter of John told Nicodemus that except a man be born again he could not see the kingdom of heaven. And on the occasion when Jesus asked his disciples whom men said that He was, some said one thing and some another. So it is today. But Jesus asked, "Whom do ye say that I am," and Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus said to him, "Blessed art thou Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee but my Father which is in heaven." So we see that the spiritual birth is through and by the revealed power of God in man.

Elder W. B. Barnes

THINGS DIFFICULT TO EXPRESS

924 First Street, S. W.,
Roanoke, Virginia.

Dear Brethren:

This attempt is one of several I have made in ten years or more, and it seems I am less prepared than ever to write, but I have the desire to tell of some of my experiences. From a child I have enjoyed reading the experiences of others in Primitive Baptist publications; and I know it is difficult to express in words the beauty of revelations.

At the age of thirteen while on the way to the milking-gap with a younger sister, we stopped at a mulberry tree and my sister was eating some of the ripe berries; and asked me if I wanted some. I was standing under the tree, and when I looked up the berries had become invisible to me. I heard a voice say, "There are none for you." And I asked, "Why is this?" and a voice answered, "It is to remind you that you are in the deepest of sorrow." I became frightened and did not speak, but went hurriedly across the creek nearby; then I stopped and wondered what my sister would think. I waited for her, and we walked on, but she had not noticed anything unusual; and I was glad.

My parents were members of Reed Creek Church, Henry County, Virginia, and I enjoyed going with them to the meetings, for I liked to hear the singing, but did not get much out of the preaching. They told me of the Bible, and said to read it and *Pilgrims Progress,* but not to read dime novels. I sometimes heard my older sisters speak of stories they had read in novels, but I could never become interested in them. Often I heard my parents read from *Zion's Landmark,* and I sometimes attempted to read, but I did not have much understanding. I thought the experiences usually expressed that they were most miserable, and I felt I did not want to be a part of those people, but wanted to remain a happy child, as I thought I was. So when the above experience came to me at the age of thirteen, I was grieved because I felt I was giving up something.

I had a vivid dream about this time. I saw a very black cloud which seemed to be as low as the tree tops, and near the same path as the mulberry tree; and Christ was in the cloud robed in a deep red garment. There was just a bust view, and there was a frown on his forehead. I told my mother about these things once when there was a storm which had flattened the corn, and much water was on the ground; and I asked her what we must do. She said, "Look to the Lord." I have always remembered that, and along through life I have felt the need to "look to the Lord."

I had a sister two years older than I, she was epileptic but a very sweet, cheerful person, and very active. She sang hymns and was happy. She told mother once of seeing a light, (you know the type of light she meant); I was away from home when she departed this life at the age of twenty-three, but I had a vision of a bed made up with a white silken bedspread, and there

was a wreath of small flowers around the edge, and I saw these words, "A little flower that blooms; I showeth it here, but not forever." Then I was comforted.

One Sunday afternoon I was lying across my bed asleep; I awoke and heard a noise, and as I looked to see what it was, the wall in front of me was disappearing and Christ was walking through the wall towards me. He was wearing silvery silken robes, and I knew the noise I heard was the rustling of the robes. This was very clear to me. At the side of the room he turned to the right, walking across the room; and a stairway appeared. At the bottom of the stairway he picked up a large book from the post, and slowly walked up the steps, turning, and then disappeared. I thought that by him taking the book away, it meant that he was the Book of Life. When a child I heard my mother speak of the Book of Life, and I would imagine that she meant a large size book; and I had often wondered about that book.

One morning I awoke at five o'clock, (for a reason, I hope); it was a bright, sunny morning, and I went to the window and knelt down and looked out. Never before had everything looked so heavenly and beautiful to me: "Behold all things have become new." The street and walk looked bright and smooth; the rows of small sycamore trees on each side of the street looked exactly alike, and the leaves all the same size, bright and all twittering. This was a happy hour; everything seemed to be praising God. Since then I heard a minister say in his discourse, "Wouldn't you have loved to stayed there?", and I thought back to that glorious day, and my answer to myself was, Yes. "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear." I believe the morning I looked out the window was the day and time I was born again, or received the spiritual birth. It was fourteen years after I first heard the "still small voice". After all these beautiful things, it seemed I was pursued by Satan, and was tempted; and for awhile seemed to follow after sinful ways. I was troubled, and prayed for some evidence once again that I had been pardoned; and I found sweet deliverance in a vision of several birds the size of pigeons that were flying with folded wings, for I thought this meant there was a power that made them fly with folded wings. This gave me renewed hope.

While living in Pennsylvania, I came on a visit to Roanoke, Virginia; and my husband, my seventeen months old daughter, and I went to the Roanoke Church. Elder Stegall was the pastor then, and it seemed he preached to me that day. When he announced there was to be a baptizing, I was moved to go and say to him that I wanted to go along and be baptized. After I was asked some questions, and related part of what I have written, I was received. With several others I was baptized by Elder J. P. Helms. He spoke of baptism being a symbol of the resurrection; and it was all so beautiful — the happiest day of my life. After going back to our home in Pennsylvania, it was a long time before we found a church at Clarks Summit, and we enjoyed going there. I am now living in Roanoke, Virginia; my husband passed away in October, 1958.

I feel I could write on an on, for I have had other visions and dreams, and feel the half has not yet been told. I, being the fourteenth of fifteen children, have had many trials, and many blessings.

In precious hope of eternal life,
Myrtle Cahill Gillette

(It was necessary for us to condense the above for publication — we regret the delay in including it in the *Signs*. — J. D. W.)

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301 Rives Road, Martinsville, Va.

Mr. Wm. O. Wammack
234 South Park St.
Anchorage, Alaska.
% Signs of the Times

Dear Brother Wammack:

Your much appreciated article appearing in the **Times** has attracted my attention and as you invited anyone to write that felt to, I will endeavor to write a few lines with the thought that you may be comforted. Your Language indicates that you are one of the Blest to whom Jesus addressed his remarks when on the Mount, saying, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled."

You addressed your letter to "Friends," you addressed it correctly, for the things of God are hidden from servants but not to the friends of Christ. You speak of being weak and needy, a worm of the dust and a hunger for spiritual things. This is indicative of and experimental of a child of God who has been taught of that "Other Comforter" whom Jesus said he would pray the Father to send.

Therefore I address you as Brother, and anything that I may be blest to say to you will be of equal value to the Household of Faith, as we are all children of the Heavenly King if we possess the Hope of eternal Salvation. There are many Christians, no doubt, that do not belong to an organized Church. There may be many that are church members who have never experienced a change of heart. However it is a duty enjoined upon the Children who have been quickened to "Go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee." It is also a becoming thing and righteous act to be baptized as Jesus was in Jordan. There is no other way to enter the (church) Kingdom. It requires a new birth (spiritual) to see the Kingdom but you must be born (brought forth) of water and the Spirit (the invisible) to enter into it. "Marvel not . . ." Jesus says at these things. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." What do we poor mortal men know about such marvelous operations of the Spirit of almighty God? Not a thing as long as we are natural, but must say with Nicodemus, "How can a man be born again when he is old?", but we that are spiritual, who have been born of that incorruptible seed that liveth and abideth forever, see by an eye of faith and feel in our hearts that a mighty work has been wrought, and say with one of old, ". . . one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." That one who uttered these words had been a poor blind beggar all his life but now he could say, "If this man (Jesus) were not of God, he could do nothing." He had heard the voice of Jesus. Brother Wammack, we believe that you have heard that small still voice and are alive, for you spoke of the beauty of God's creation. Silas Durand spoke of his "winter's gloom" when void of spirit, but describes the wondrous "change in me" when the voice of his Beloved spake to him. We quote from page 249, Lester & Durand Hymnal:

"The power and sweetness of that voice,
Wrought wondrous change in me:
Made my poor heart rejoice,
And fears and sorrows flee.

In sweet amazement I came forth;
What wonders met my eyes!
Spring's glorious beauty on the earth,
Her radiance in the skies.

Grace fills the garden of the Lord,
With blooming joys from heaven
The warm south wind is in that word,
Which shows my sins forgiven."

Religion, truly, is a revelation from heaven. No wonder Christ could say, "It is the work of God that you believe on him whom he hath sent." God sent his darling Son "in the fulness of time" to redeem "his people" from their sins. His people were the subjects of his choice that he made back in the far distant past before the dust of the highest hills were laid or the morning stars sang together. God the Father and God the Son held a council meeting together and the will of the Father was made known to the Son; that his love was so great for some of Adam's race, yet to be born, that a price of their redemption must be paid. The price of

their redemption was to be the blood of his Son; "For with out the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins." Had it not been for the blood of Jesus we would still be in our sins, we would die in our sins and never see God's face in glory. But thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory thru our Lord Jesus Christ, we are free. His blood has cleansed us from all unrighteousness. He said, "If I make you free you are free indeed."

We are free because the blood of Christ satisfied divine justice and set us poor hell-deserving sinners free. Our sins and iniquities shall never rise in the day of Judgment to condemn us, for God can see the finished product and we stand in his sight just as pure, white and clean as we will in the last day.

John, the Revelator, saw a river, "A pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the midst of the street of it and on either side of the river was the tree of life." Someone has said that it was coming from a mighty good place. That is true. But this river is different from any other river that was ever beheld by the natural eye. To me, this pure, clear river represents the stream of time, and as it is the water of life it represents all living. The tree of life in the midst of it represents Jesus Christ. This tree was in the garden of Eden and later declared to be in the Paradise of God, but as God fills the immensity of space, Jesus has ever been with the Father and the Saviour of his people. Being in the midst of the Street of it, and reaching back to righteous Abel on one side, and to the last heir of promise, on the other, this tree bears its fruit every month, which indicates that it is always in season: all our sufficiency is in him. Even the leaves, that which is cast off, is good for something: for the healing of the nations. The nations are sick with a deadly disease. Sin is the deadly disease of the nations and will bring about death to all living, but the gospel speaks of another life that is eternal for the child of God. This new life is in his Son and he gives it to whomsoever he will. "I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish." Bless his holy name! There is no other name as sweet as Jesus to the new-born babe in Christ. "It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds and drives away his fear."

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise him all creatures here below
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

With Christian love and fellowship to you, Brother Wammack, and to the Household of Faith, I beg to remain,

Yours in hope of eternal life,
(Elder) P. E. Ingram

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the Mt. Zion Church at Mt. Zion Meeting House October 14 and 15, 1964, sends greetings in the Lord to the churches and associations with which we correspond;

Dear Brethren:

With much fear and trembling I endeavor to fulfill the task placed upon me, being fully persuaded that of myself I am nothing, and can do nothing, but only by the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever.

In truth the Lord shall supply our needs according to the measure of his most sufficient grace. We do not know what we shall do or say until the appointed hour wherein He makes himself manifest in the hearts of those whom He has chosen from the foundation of the world, according to his purpose which pleased him.

It is our desire to always give all praise, honor, and glory to Him that is most worthy to receive, since He works all things, times, and events, being the creator of all that is created.

We find in Psalms 135:5-6, "For I know that the Lord is great, and that our Lord is above all gods. Whatsoever the Lord pleased that did he in heaven,

and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places." It is then fitting to say that by his own pleasure he has of his own will established all things, to his own glory. Of this we are made confident; and by our own experience are made witnesses one to another, and have that holy love which abounds in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us. We have also been left a testimony of his wondrous and marvelous works as recorded in the Holy Writ, declaring that our witness is not of ourselves, but of him that "doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand." (Daniel 4:35)

We can never walk with, nor share with those that would attempt to limit, conditionalize, or reckon with the purpose and pleasure of the Almighty Creator. It is not for us to question the whys or wherefores of matters, but rather to rejoice in the grace and mercy of the allwise, all powerful, and ever present Creator, being not dismayed by the presence of the tormentor and his evil temptations and delusions, and are fully persuaded that these things must needs be, and that in them we are sorely taught that our deliverance is of the most high God, through Jesus Christ; who was delivered by the will of the Father as the perfect sacrifice for those who were written by name in the Lamb's Book of Life from the foundation of the world.

The chosen vessels are made subject to perfect love by the will of him who called whom he would; and these who are called by grace, are sealed, and "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Peter 1:5) We often have our doubts, yet we know that God knows his own, and that their calling is assured and absolute.

We desire to praise Him because he is God, and wills it so. We commend not ourselves but have hope of love and understanding towards one another, to the glory of God. We find in 2nd Corinthians: 3, that we need not commend ourselves one to another by epistles written of men, but we find the epistle of Christ "written not with ink, but with the Spirit of God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart."

Brethren, our heart's desire is that God's grace, mercy, and love abound towards you all, according to his will, which he purposed in, of, by, for and to himself, because it pleased him. Pray for these things, the Lord willing.

In sincere love,
B. K. Smith

5501 56th Street,
Sacramento, Calif. 95820

Dear Editors:

I see my expiration date was sometime ago, please forgive my negligence. I am sure I haven't missed a copy; but I can't say, as some of your correspondents do, that I read it through the day I get it: there was a time in my earlier years when I did. Nor can I truthfully say that I have agreed with every article of every issue since I have been reading it, but I am thankful that I have been privileged to read it for most of my half-century of life.

Effie Bowden has a wonderful article in the October issue. I remember her letters in the *Signs* over a period of many years.

Enclosed is a money order to bring me up to date, and for two years longer. I would that I had the faith that Whittier had when he penned a beautiful poem, the name of which I have forgotten. Two of the verses I remember strike me as being as sound as anything I have ever read:

"More than your schoolmen teach; alas
Within myself I know
Too dark you cannot paint the sin;
Too small the merit show.

"I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air:
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care."

Humbly yours,
Herman W. Buckner

Rt. 1,
Benton, Ky. 42025

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a check for $5.00 — three for my renewal and two to use as you desire. I am past eighty-three years old and am living alone. I enjoy reading the *Signs* for it is good news from a far country, and all speak the same language; and give God all the praise, honor and glory. None say that we must accept Christ before he can save us.

Paul said in the Ephesian letter: "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath *made* us accepted in the beloved." And Christ said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." etc. (John 15:16)

My father, Elder J. M. Perkins, took the *Signs* as far back as I can remember; and my husband and I have been subscribers for over thirty years, and we enjoyed it very much. Now that I am alone, though I deeply feel that I am not worthy of such blessing, I hope to be able to read it the remainder of my life.

May God richly bless and enable you to carry on the good work of publishing the *Signs of the Times*. Please remember me in your prayers.

In hope of a better life,
Mrs. C. H. Lock

NOTE OF THANKS

Sister Adline Fertney, of Route 2, Box 344, Vienna, Virginia, desires to express her appreciation of the many letters and cards she has received from brethren and friends during her illness. She is yet quite ill and is grateful that the friends think of her.

— J. D. W.

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EDITORIAL

MATT. 8:1, 4; LEV. 14:1, 7

"When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and

touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them."

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing: he shall be brought unto the priest: and the priest shall go forth out of the camp; and the priest shall look, and, behold, if the plague of leprosy be healed in the leper; then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds alive and clean, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop: and the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water: as for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water: and he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose in the open field."

Even to the carnal mind there is a great fascination in the beauty of the prophetical kingdom of heaven. Oftimes we are enraptured by the allegories, similes, comparisons, that the divine inspiration has used to clothe His language in, and to tell us of what is to come. But this carnal mind can not know Him that has done this gracious work for the benefit of those that love the name of The Lord Our Righteousness. The coordination and the correlation, while fields in which carnal professors excel, will never be seen by them until their mind is illuminated by the light of the Holy Spirit.

Leprosy is more to be dreaded than cancer. Like cancer, if unchecked, it will eat away the human body. It will never be cured from within; in fact, it is doubtful that it has ever been cured from without, as it is doubtful if cancer has ever been completely cured. When once it gains a foot hold in the body it will get worse until death is the result. The ability to attack and rout it from the body from within is not known in medical science. How fitting is the disease to compare it with sin. As it is with sin, one may have it a long time without any realization of its presence in the body. It is as sneaky as sin, but not as deadly as sin, for, while leprosy may, and, without outside medicine, will, destroy the body, sin will, without outside cure, destroy both soul and body.

It is a good thing when it is discovered in the body. As soon as it is discovered, there is immediately a seeking for outside help. This help is not sought by those that do not have the symptoms of the disease. Just as sure as a sinner finds out that he has leprosy there will be a seeking set in, and it will continue as long as he has the disease, which is as long as he is in the body. The disease may show in a sinner before he becomes aware of its presence, that is, its presence and deadly work may be apparent to those that have already known the disease. As long as they do not know it, there will never be a seeking for cure; as long as they do not know its presence there will never be any anxiety about its devastating work. *There will not be any seeking and anxiety as long as one does not have a knowledge of the presence of sin.* (Rom. 3:11, 16; John 5:40), but when it is revealed unto sinners that they do have sin, there will never be a cessation of seeking, there will never be a time when free from anxiety.

At the time of the opening of the text a leper came to him. How my wretched and sinful heart is made to leap for joy at this news. One who has no communion with Israel because of his uncleanness; one who is an outcast, and that is ready to perish (Isaiah 27:13), by the coming of Jesus, now has access to the dispensary of

grace, there to receive all of that which cleanses. This disease was looked upon as God's displeasure, none had the right to heal it except God (2 Kings 5:7). They had been shut out from all religious and even civil communion from the house of Israel. As only the priest in type could come in contact with leprosy, cure it, and he be immune to its contagion, just so, in the same manner, could Jesus cure sin, and yet be immune to its deadliness fastening itself to him. This world "behold" is not put in the Book to make it larger, but it is put therein to call attention to the precious doctrine that the priest without beginning of days, nor end of life, is at hand to cure his people of all their sicknesses and diseases.

This poor sinner is the fit representative of every sinner that has ever come begging for mercy. He that taught him that he had the disease has also taught him where to go. He has faith to believe in the power of Jesus as the One that cleanses his people. He is one that believes that whatsoever his soul desires that Jesus will do. There is not any doubt in the mind of this sinner about Jesus doing his will, but he also knows that he is not an object to be thus loved. The disease has come to light: it has brought with it the terrible odor of putrifying flesh; it shows the outcast condition of the leper; it brings out the terrible and grotesque features of one who has become a victim of the workings of this deadly disease. *"If thou wilt, thou canst."* Not any question in the mind of this sinner (as well as those that have been taught at the same source), that whatever His will is concerning him, that He is able to carry it out. Sinner reader, have you found out as much?

I am carried away in sweet meditation as I write to think that the Lord has given sinners the Lord Jesus Christ; that he has opened to them access to this grace, which access is operated by the faith of God's elect, which is wholly given them from the Lord, and is not predicated upon their exercising the faith, but that all of their enjoyment, and all of their access to it, is by and through them being exercised by the faith. Whatever a sinner asks God in the name of Jesus Christ, that sinner will get. The carnal mind will get impatient and ask, "Has he forgot, has he gone on a journey?" but not so with them that ask in Jesus' name. That which is asked for is received; no more, no less.

He has not asked in vain. As with other characters, his faith has saved him (Matt. 9:22; Mark 5:34; Luke 8:48; 17:19; 7:50; 18:42). Since the faith is the gift of God (Eph. 2:8), this salvation, this coming to Christ, this asking, is all to the praise of his grace. Immediately Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, "I will; be thou clean." Instantaneous with the reaching forth of his hand, he talked to him; equally so, the cleansing took effect. Unbelief would say what else needs to be done? Unbelief would say, if you are cleansed from sin, it does not matter from here out. Unbelief would say, that nothing more is required of them thus cleansed. Let us see.

If we love God we will keep all of his commandments. The throwing out this or that; ignoring this commandment or that; the substituting of the many chimney corner scriptures for the Bible, all of this shows whether we know much about leprosy (sin) or not. It shows whether we have come to him as the Priest or to a priest that we will have to visit again at the end of a year. The direction is simple but it is rigid and thorough. See that you do not tell a man. You do not have any right to talk to any in Israel until after you see the priest, and he has pronounced you clean.

Why did the Saviour tell him to show himself to the priest? why did He tell him to offer the gift that Moses commanded? We must remember that He honored Him to whom honor was due.

He came from His Father. While He was accused of breaking the law, he did not. The law was just and holy and good; it came from God. He came under the law. He did not come to break that law, but he did come to fulfil it. His sending him to the priest was in full recognition of that law. The commandment of Moses was in full force here, but it is reckoned as a gift. And such it is, if we are blessed of God to meditate upon it.

Have you seen the effects of sin in your members? Have you felt the infiltration of sin through and through every part of your being? If so, it has reduced you to despair, and revealed to you how helpless that you were, and how that you needed somebody to carry you to cure. Let us look in on this case. May it please God that we find ourself and find comfort for ourself. The law of a leper was that he be brought to the priest, not that he decided to come, but that One decide and bring him. This law, whether for leprosy as a disease, or for sin as its antitype, has never been changed. It will be noted that this interview was outside the camp. The cure for leprosy can not be carried on in the camp of Israel; the cure for sin is not to be carried on in the church, for it is not a reformatory. The priest, whether under the law for leprosy, or under grace for sin, must, and always does, meet the victim outside the camp. There is not anything said about how far he is to go to meet the victim. Christ went far and near; he did not say anything about it being too far.

Precious reader, it attacks first in the hand. Have you found the sign in your palm? As you looked on what you thought was a hand showing good health, did it cause uneasiness to find that spot that betrayed you? Until this did take place you did not go to the priest. Not once did you go. Suppose that you had gone? What would he have thought? What would he have said? But when it showed in the palm of your hand that you had that dreaded sin, then you did go to the priest. Not one has ever failed to go; not one has ever been failed by the love of God in carrying them to the priest. He examines it. He looks with that keen perception. You feel the scrutiny of those penetrating eyes. You writhe under the gaze. You know what the verdict will be, for you have seen your hands as unclean; you have felt the inward ruination of the silent work. But wait a moment. Is he not going to condemn you? Is he not going to continue the separation? Is he not going to leave you to continue a victim of the dreaded malady? No, no, not that at all.

This cleansing, this cure, these miracles are more than a match for our tongue, our heart, our understanding. Everything is set in motion *by* the priest *for* the victim. The cure can not come from within, but it does come from without. In the offering there are several things. None of them are supplied by the victim. There must be two clean birds. Not one, not three, but two clean birds. O Lord give me grace to declare the predestination of God; to declare that he has declared the end from the beginning, even to the kind and the number of birds that are used in the figurative cleansing of a sinner. The kind of wood that is to be carried is as important as was the wood from which Noah made the ark. Wood is not enough; it must be cedar wood. But why will wood not do? Why cedar wood? Why be so exact? If any way will do in saving a sinner, no way will do just as well. Cedar wood in the church is most useful (S. S. 1:17). It is used in the foundation of this glorious building. But why is this used in the cleansing? To show forth the duration of the cleansing. One of the best characteristics of cedar wood is its ability to last under water. But why bring that up here? we are talking about one Lord, one baptism, one faith, one cleansing.

We are talking about that which

would comfort a poor sinner. The dragon has ever been doing all that he could to engulf the woman in the flood of water that went forth out of his mouth. This water is flooding the earth ere this, but the beams of the church of God are imbedded beneath the earth into the rock. As Jesus was the Building and the Builder while here, he was subjected to all the temptations of his brethren, thus the cedar wood is used to denote the durability of this Building, this cleansing, this forgiveness. But why scarlet? For two reasons. May the Lord give us to drink deeply of each. Though our sins are as scarlet, they shall be white as snow. But how? by blood. That is the only way; no other peddler of just as good will be welcome here in this cleansing. By the blood of Jesus; by the power in his shed blood is a sinner cleansed. The piece of woolen scarlet is the sign of sin, and it is the sign of that which will remove sin. Our sin is as scarlet; his garments are dyed in his blood to remove our uncleanness.

But why hyssop? Why must that be carried? What importance is this? What bearing does such an item have in connection with our cleansing? How precious as I write are my thoughts. I look back and see my three sons as the woman in attendance washed them and anointed them with oil. What a sweet smelling baby they were to their mother and I. How wonderful it is that the fragrant odor of hyssop was to be noticed in this poor sinner after his cleansing.

Arise, poor sinner, and let us view the situation over. A sinner doomed to being outcast, to be denied communion with his people. A sinner such as we (or at least I) did not have anything to offer for our cleansing. We would have never known about the malady had it not been revealed to us; we would never have gotten to the priest had we not been carried; we would never know what it would take for our cleansing. But Christ is everything to a poor sinner. May God enable us to leave off that which divides, that which confuses, that which subverts, and know among the people of God Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Your little brother, if a brother, through grace.

W. D. G.

SERMON BY ELDER D. V. SPANGLER AT THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION AT ROANOKE, VA.

1964

Elder Turner told me this morning that there was an afflicted brother here who has hoped someone would talk on the scripture which is found in the 30th verse of the fifth chapter of Ephesians: "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." I am sure this is a wonderful text.

One of the things that stands out in the Scriptures, is that wherever God has brought his church to view, he has presented her as something complete. When he refers to the church of God, he speaks of that church being the bride, the Lamb's wife. And we find also that he tells us how, at some time in the future, he will present that church unto himself a glorious church, not having spot, wrinkle, blemish, or any such thing. When the Lord has brought Zion to view as the church, he presents her as a city set upon a hill, that cannot be hid. When he has spoken of the safety of this city, he has told us that salvation shall be her walls. Not the salvation that men talk about, but the kind that God Almighty appoints, for he said that salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.

When God brings Zion for his people to view, he brings her to view as absolutely complete in him; he brings her to view as being watered by the river of the water of life; and that stream, he tells us, makes glad the city of God. Now if your heart has ever been made glad as you heard the gospel of Christ

preached, as you mingled with your brethren, it is evidence that some of the streams have reached you.

"Makes glad the city of God." I like to think about the effectiveness of this stream — that there has never been one too poor but that the stream will reach him. Last night, as we sat on the brother's porch, I talked about people going home to the church, for I feel in my ministry to encourage God's people: if they love His name, to stand up as God blesses them, and be counted with his people. And I saw a tear in a friend's eye; and I said, "My friend, there's room for you in the house." He said, "I'm unworthy." A very acceptable answer, wasn't it?

We want to talk about the text, but we must first get to it. We want to show, the Lord willing, that we are a part of the body of our Saviour. And we are going to show, the Lord willing, that Jesus Christ did not come into the world to make a decision as to a single person going to heaven. Somebody has brought forth such false doctrine that they advance the idea that men are helping other men to go to heaven — to make a decision for Christ. Christ taught that he himself never made the decision while in this world, as to a single person who would be in glory. We find, in her earthly understanding of Christ, that a woman approached Him, and said that she had a request, that she had two sons and she would like for one to sit on his right hand and the other on his left, when he entered into his kingdom. And Jesus said, "Woman, you don't know what you ask; it is not mine to give." He didn't come into the world to decide who would go to heaven, but to make it sure to every one that was chosen in him before the world began. He said, "It shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." If any man has advanced the idea that Christ went about upon the earth trying to save sinners, making decisions as to who would enter the kingdom, this scripture forever sets it at nought.

But he brings this matter to you and me, for it is said that we are members of his body, of his flesh, of his bones. There is a depth here that I doubt whether any minister has ever reached; there is a depth here wherein our Saviour, (I hope I can say, our), has taken our flesh and our bones. We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. As we look back at the wonderous work of grace, we find that when God created a man of the earth earthy, (and in a sense a type of our Lord Jesus Christ), the woman was in the man, and a part of the man, before she was ever taken from him; and that the law that God gave to Adam, was given him while Eve was yet a part of his body. That is why Adam said, "She is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh." That is why Paul, in his epistle to the Ephesians, said that a man has never hated his own flesh, but he nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the church. "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church." In the preceding verses, how wonderfully he said, "Husbands love your wives, even as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it."

There are a few things in my life that have been most humbling to me; one is, that God would love a sinner like I am; another is how brethren could love me. Another humbling thing to the minister is when God's people tell him, "You were blessed to preach the gospel to me." This never exalts one of God's ministers. Oh, no! but the devil does sometimes. He will sometimes tell one that he preached a wonderful sermon; but a tear in a person's eye is more humbling than all the Devil has ever said to him.

He took the woman out of his side. The Bible doesn't say his side, but He took a rib, and that is where the side is; and He gave her to him to be a helpmeet. The side of Jesus Christ was torn when he hanged on Calvary's hill, when darkness covered the earth. The soldier pierced the side of Jesus. Why did he pierce his side? Two reasons: prophecy had said it would be; and the

soldier didn't know what he was doing — he knew nothing about the purposes of God. Men today are living out the purposes of God blindly, but I assert that the purposes of God shall stand. If I didn't believe that, I would be afraid to start home this afternoon. Someway, I believe with all my heart that in our journey here, the angels of God have been our protection.

But, I want to talk about the text. "You are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Eve received the law through Adam, and the Ark was the only thing that could weather the storm of the wrath of God, when his wrath for sin was poured out upon the world. The door of the Ark, the Bible says, was in the side. It didn't have two doors; it had one door, — in the side.

When Abraham sent his servant to seek a bride for his son, he caused him to swear that he would not go among strangers, but that he would go among his own kindred. What does it show? that Jesus Christ came into the world to save a people that already belonged to him — that were united with him. And the servant wanted a sign; and he said, "When I reach a certain well, have somebody there to draw water for the camels." And we find a willing Rebekah there. She even ran to meet him; and said, "Drink my Lord." And when the question arose, when the servant had told his business, "Will you go with this man?," her parents said leave her a little while, and then she can go. But they left the answer with Rebekah; and she said, "I will go." I like a doctrine that brings about in the heart a willingness to do the will of God; that not only brings about a willingness, but makes every particle of His service a delight.

"You are flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bones." We find in the wonderful works of grace that God Almighty has brought home to his people throughout the ages, two things clearly brought to view; One is, that he has saved them because he had an everlasting love for them; and the other is, that they are unworthy of everything that God has done for them.

I remember that when David went out to fight the battle for his brethren, he was just a lad; and his brethren rebuked him, saying that the naughtiness of his heart had brought him down to see the battle. Here is a giant! if we can't overthrow him, we know you can't: Goliath, the giant of the Philistines. David was of the bone and the flesh of his brethren, wasn't he? And David said, "Is there not a cause?" Yet they did not believe in him until he manifested to them his power to fight the battle. And that is when every sinner believes in Jesus Christ. David's brethren would scorn him, but he said that he would fight the battle; he would meet the giant; but he would not take the armor of Saul, for he had not proved it. David went forth saying unto Goliath, "I come to thee in the name of the Lord."

They were David's brethren, and nothing they could say would ever change his love for them; no rebuke from them would change him. Neither will anything, my friends, ever change the love of God for you; for Paul said, "I am persuaded that neither death nor life, things present or things to come, principalities or powers, etc., nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

"Flesh of his flesh; bone of his bone." Let's find out more. Joseph was a beautiful type of Jesus Christ. We find him hated by his brethren — hated because he had a dream. Did the devil give him the dream? Oh, no! But it caused his brethren to hate him. God gave him a dream in which he saw his brethren bowing down to him. One of the things that Elder Helms spoke so clearly in his Introductory was that all things worked together for good to them that love God. The hatred and malice of Joseph's brethren would have done away with their brother; but it couldn't be. They put him in a pit; and but for

the grace of God they would have left him there to die. But he had a brother to speak for him. The Midianite merchantmen come by, and he was sold for twenty pieces of silver. God took care of the situation. Sometimes in my mind I have seen that boy being led off, with his brethren watching, no doubt glad to get rid of him, thinking it was the last time they would see him. But then we find that there came a time when it was God's time to bring them to him — through famine and hunger, which God alone could bring and control. Someway I believe that every drop of water that falls on the earth, God sends it; every famine that comes, God sends it.

And, finally, I like to think of Joseph when he couldn't refrain any longer. He knew his brethren all the time: he knew them because they were flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone. They were a part of him. "Come near me; I am your brother."

Has the Lord ever drawn you near him? Have you ever felt the encircling arms of Christ? I remember what dear Elder Gilliam said, when he was at the point of death for days: "I felt those arms under me."

I'm your brother — you thought evil — God meant it for good.

Now to reach our case He came all the way to where we were. Our Saviour must take our flesh, since, as the Scriptures say, the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he himself likewise took part of the same, that he might destroy the works of the Devil. How must the Lord Jesus Christ come into the world? He must be found under the law. Paul tells us in Galatians so clearly, that when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law. He took our flesh and blood as the Son of man, taking it in union with him as the Son of God — our very flesh and blood. "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law to redeem that that were under the law."

I like to think also that it is said that he took not the nature of angels; for an angel could never reach our case. But he took on him the seed of Abraham — our flesh and our blood; and we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones; and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in their likeness, he humbled himself. Men did not humble our Saviour — he humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross. Why? because from all eternity his people had a standing in him: they were chosen in him, and their life was in him before Adam fell. They fell in Adam, but they were safe all the time. To reach his bride, Jesus could not come as an angel, but must come as the Son of man. We are glad that he spoke so many times of himself as the Son of man— more than he spoke of himself as the Son of God.

I like to think of the expression of the Apostle that there is one Mediator between God and man. Talk about the Pope, talk about the Priests of the land being mediators between God and man, there has never been a greater lie preached under heaven than that. To believe that, you would have to burn your Bibles; to believe that doctrine, you would have to preach that Jesus Christ didn't come to save a people who were already his; and to take in union with himself the flesh and blood and bones of his people.

There is one Mediator! None of these preachers here are mediators between God and man; there's never been but one. Who is he? the man Christ Jesus. The one of whose body we are members. Think of it, my friends! People of God members of the body of Christ! the mystical body of Christ, of his flesh and of his bones. We never know the full force of salvation until we have known something of how low our Saviour came: If we only know of his humiliation, and not of his glory, it won't do us any good. I cannot speak of his glory, and know the wonderful love he had for us, unless I see his humiliation.

I went for years wondering what it means when it is said in the 8th chapter

of Acts, "In his humiliation his judgment was taken away; and who shall declare his generation, for his life is taken from the earth." Then I saw it one day. I saw that God left his Son hanging in the body that He had prepared — the only body that would satisfy as a sacrifice. He left him hanging there, and turned his face away; and Jesus cried out and said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" If we are his people, every one of us was hanging there — represented in him. To be a complete sacrifice, he must be left to die.

Have you felt my friends, that He died for you? What a wonderful thing! "Gave himself," Paul said, "for me." I like to think of Him who took our flesh and blood in union with himself, when he was held up before the people of old: I like to think that every time the high priest went with the names of the tribes of Israel on his heart — with their names on his shoulder, he showed that the people of God were represented in him. I think of the high priest going once a year into the most holy place, making atonement for himself and the people, that he couldn't put away sin; but I think of one who went into the most holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. The high priest couldn't feel the groans of his people: he hadn't experienced them. But, my brethren, today we have an high priest who can be touched. We have one who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was tempted in all points. I like to think that when Stephen was dying, he said, "I see Jesus standing on the right hand of God." Standing, waiting to pour out his wrath upon the people.

What a blessing to have a great high priest in heaven, who is brought near as our brother, our very brother. We read that he who sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. These are my brethren; Who? He that doeth the will of my Father, the same is my mother, my brother, my sister. He is not ashamed to call his people brethren, because they are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. The only way there can ever be a people prepared for heaven whom God will not be ashamed of, is for he himself to prepare them.

The doctrine I am preaching to you today, will be preached on and on, until the Lord of glory comes from heaven; and the people I am talking to and about today have the grace of God wrought so perfectly in them, that God in heaven will never be ashamed of one of them.

We are told that Abraham, when he was called out, went not knowing where he went; that he sought a city which hath foundation, whose builder and maker is God. He was looking for a place where God is not ashamed to be called our God.

"We are members of his body, of his flesh, and his bones." He didn't come part of the way under the law; he didn't come just to make an offering for sin, and leave the acceptance to men, but He came to redeem us from the curse of the law. The Scriptures say that he went to heaven, having obtained eternal redemption for us. Do you know why he is coming again; and who he is coming for? He is coming for his bride; he is coming for those who are members of his body, of his flesh, of his bones.

"As by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead." When Paul speaks in Corinthians of the resurrection of the dead, he said, "Now is Christ risen and become the first fruits of them that slept." When Christ rose from the dead, it was a promise that there was a crop coming: The people of God — their bodies are going to be raised. Not like you are as I look at you now, but fashioned like His glorious body; and will be prepared to praise him.

When the priest under the law took the sheaf from the people and waved it before the Lord, it was saying, There is a crop like this. So is the resurrection of the body of Jesus Christ from the dead. He was the first fruits of his

people; and they will be like the first fruits. The glorious day is coming — the day all the saints have looked for, the day of all days, when we will be taken home. I have been coming here almost forty years; most of the old ones who were here when I began coming, are sleeping somewhere. In a few years we will all be sleeping, laid away somewhere in the silent tomb; but, bless the Lord, He will not deny his own. When he comes the dead will be raised. It is the resurrection of the dead, not merely from the dead.

You that love his name — it will be you that day. It will be the redeemed sinner; it will be one whose vile body is changed, and fashioned like the glorious body of Jesus Christ. Lift up your heads, my brethren; praise the Lord! No wonder when David started in the 22nd Psalm he said, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me." and said in the 23rd, "The Lord is my shepherd." Then in the 24th, he said, "Lift up the everlasting doors that the King of Glory might come in. Who is the King of Glory The Lord of hosts is the King of Glory."

(The above is taken from a recording, and is somewhat condensed. — J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

RESISTING THE HOLY GHOST.

(Acts vii. 51.)

Not with a self-reliant or "egotistic" presumption that we are capable of solving all mysteries or expounding all the scriptures, nor yet with an intention to draw the mind of any one to us and away from God as the only efficient and infallible teacher, do we attempt a reply to the earnest appeal of our unknown correspondent for our understanding of this much perverted portion of the sacred scriptures; but with a deep sense of our own weakness, and utter inability to speak or write so as to edify, instruct, comfort or satisfy the craving desire of such as are not advanced so far in the knowledge of the truth as to have no need of the feebler gifts which God has given for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ. Such light and understanding as we hope God has given us on any part of his sacred word we dare not withhold from those who ask for our views; but we desire none to accept them only so far as they shall find them sustained by the unerring scriptures of truth.

The cutting rebuke in our text was addressed by Stephen to the high priest and murderous Jews who were about to stone him to death. Professing to be the people of God, and the most zealous and devout people on earth, pretending to be shocked at the blasphemy which suborned men had testified that they had heard Stephen utter. Arrested, and having a mock trial, and arraigned as a prisoner before them, he was permitted to make his defense, at the conclusion of which he addressed to them the words of our text; and when they heard these things which he charged on them, they were cut to the heart. Not like those who on the day of Pentecost were pricked in their hearts, and completely subdued, and made to cry, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Theirs was a death wound, their rage and violence were checked, their hearts and ears were circumcised, their resistance to the Holy Ghost was overcome, and their circumcised ears were anxious to be informed of God's salvation of helpless sinners by and through that Jesus whom they had rejected and crucified. But these were only cut to their heart; it was but a flesh wound. They were not slain, nor circumcised in either heart or ears; but the deep and deadly malice of their heart was excited, and became more violent and frenzied with rage and violence, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

The question has often been agitated, In what sense did these murderous Jews resist the Holy Ghost? It could not be that they were resisting the

Holy Ghost, as existing in their own hearts; for if the Holy Ghost had dwelt in them, their hearts would have been circumcised, and their ears as ready to listen to the preaching of Stephen as were those at Pentecost to Peter and the rest of the apostles; but their hearts were controlled by an opposite spirit. The Holy Ghost which they were resisting was in Stephen, but not in them. In the preceding chapter and fifth verse, we are told that Stephen was full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, while his murderers were full of the spirit of him who was a murderer from the beginning; and his spirit in them was manifested by their resistance of what the Holy Ghost inspired Stephen to say and do. It was not Stephen, as a man, they felt so much enraged against; for if Stephen had not been moved by the Holy Ghost, he would not have incurred their wrath. It was only those who by the Holy Ghost called Jesus Lord, that they persecuted unto the death. Nor was it alone on this particular occasion that their resistance to the Holy Ghost was demonstrated. It was the general and constant disposition of the carnal hearts of those whose circumcision was only outward in the flesh, and not the circumcision of the heart and ears, which is made without hands. The circumcision on which the carnal Jews relied was outward and in their flesh, was made with hands, and its praise was of men, and not of God; it did not therefore circumcise their hearts to make them love God, nor their ears to hear, love or obey the truth, but left them in all the enmity of their carnal minds to resist the Holy Ghost by stoning the prophets, and killing those whom God had sent to them. The prophets were sent to the Jewish nation with the message of the Lord, whose peculiar people they professed to be, and the prophets spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; so their opposition to the prophets only manifested the turpitude of their hearts, their love of sin, and hatred of truth and righteousness.

"Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost," in the same way and manner in which their fathers did, by killing the prophets and stoning them. Jesus said to those carnal Jews, "Ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets," &c. "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation." — Matt. xxiii. 28-36. How terribly was this declaration fulfilled in that generation, not only in the tempest of divine wrath in the overthrow of Jerusalem, but in the filling up of the measure of their iniquities. God has set bounds beyond which serpents and vipers, as these workers of iniquity are called, cannot go, but to the full measure of which they are doomed to go; and in filling up this measure by that generation, Stephen, who was one of the number that Jesus said he would send to them, and they should kill, was sent with a message from God, which cut them to their heart, and made them gnash on him with their teeth. But it was not Stephen, but the Holy Ghost in Stephen, that enraged them. Stephen, being full of the Holy Ghost, spake by that Spirit; and as they were filled with an opposite spirit, and acted as moved by the spirit of the world and of Satan, they not only resisted Stephen as the messenger, but God who sent him, and whose words he declared to them.

We know of no other way in which

men ever resisted the Holy Ghost. Stephen testifies that this was always the manner. As your fathers did, so do ye; not only now, but it was always by persecuting and slaying those who were sent by him to declare his messages.

It is preposterous to contend that the Holy Ghost was, is or can be successfully resisted in its work upon the hearts of those who are quickened by it. Those who are quickened and made alive from the dead by the Holy Ghost were not consulted as to whether they were willing to be made alive. Whether we consider the work of the Spirit as agreeing with the figure of a resurrection from the dead, or a birth, both illustrations alike forbid the idea that the subjects of this work can either resist or facilitate the work. Jesus says, "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." — John v. 25. And Jesus has condescended graciously to inform us how, or in what manner, he will perform this work: "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so [or exactly so] the Son quickeneth whom he will." — Verse 21. Can any rational being suppose that in God's manner of raising up the dead he strives with them to consent and allow him to raise them up? Or that he proposes terms and conditions for them to perform, on the performance of which he will raise them from the dead? Or that he by his spirit woos, pleads, implores and beseeches them to allow or consent to be raised up, and that he thus pleads and strives with all the dead, and in the greater number of cases fails to get their consent, and after laboring to the full extent of his power and patience, leaves them sorrowfully to remain in death? Can any who know the true God and eternal life entertain such a view of him? Equally absurd and blasphemous is the thought that either in the generation of mankind or regeneration, or new birth, those who are the subjects have any volition or agency in bringing themselves into existence. Surely all who are held under such chains of darkness do greatly err, not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God.

The scriptures affirm of the power of God that he raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, not that he tries, and in most cases fails, and that in the same manner the Son quickeneth whom he will; and those who know by happy experience these scriptures, and have experienced that translation from darkness to light by the exceeding greatness of the mighty power of the Father of glory, know the scriptures and the power of God. "The eyes of their understanding being enlightened, that they may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." — Eph. i. 16-20.

Since the day that sin entered into the world, man has manifested an aversion to and shrinking from the presence of the supreme and omnipotent God, and in their aversion and alienation from him have shown their preference for gods which they could hold in subjection to their own control: gods that they can carry on their shoulders, and use to subserve their own purposes. This being the idolatrous condition of the world, we are told by an inspired apostle of many false prophets which are gone out into the world, and the saints are commanded to try the spirits, whether they be of God. He says of these false prophets, "They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error." — 1 John iv. 5, 6. The Spirit of truth is the Spirit which Jesus says the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. — John xiv. 17. But the spirit of error and delusion is a spirit of the world, and the world is in love with it. It is as easily attained as they who are led by it have and do represent it to be, and they affirm that it requires no more effort to receive it than it does to turn one's hand over. Indeed, man in his fallen, depraved state is under its power

already; and the spirit of error which already possesses them makes them as hungry for error, as the Spirit of truth in the children of God makes them to be fed upon the truth as it is in Jesus. No grace is required to qualify a man to embrace any error, or to worship any idol. But the God of our salvation is a Spirit, and only they can worship him acceptably who worship him in spirit and in truth.

Eve required no superhuman or supernatural power to enable her to receive the forbidden fruit from the beguiling spirit of the serpent; Adam asked for no divine aid to follow his bride in the transgression. Cain, unaided by the Spirit of truth, drank in the spirit of delusion, false religion, enmity and murder. But Abel required that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit of truth to qualify him to offer a lamb in sacrifice to God, to which offering God had respect. Cain resisted the Spirit of truth in his opposition to Abel, but not as existing in himself, striving to obtain his consent to be converted. If the spirit of God had been in Cain, he would not have entertained a desire to murder his brother. If God, the Spirit, had ever failed to accomplish any work by him undertaken, what assurance could any poor sinner have that he might not fail in his attempt to bring us unto glory? The antediluvians, who in Noah's days resisted the Holy Ghost, resisted it as manifested in Noah as a preacher of righteousness, by adhering to the spirit of unrighteousness which had full possession of themselves. So that Stephen could say truly, that the development of that murderous spirit in those wicked Jews who were about to murder him was the development of nothing new. It was that which always had been in the world since sin entered; and these more modern Jews were doing just what their fathers before them had always been doing, in killing the prophets, and stoning all who were led by the Holy Ghost.

Men do always resist the Holy Ghost when they pervert the scriptures, which are inspired by the Holy Ghost, when they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, when they oppose and persecute those who are called of God, and qualified by the Spirit to proclaim among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and especially when they preach salvation by any other name than that of Christ, or when they pretend to preach Christ by any other spirit than that which is from above. No man can preach the doctrine of free-will, free-agency, or any other doctrine of men, without resisting or opposing the Spirit of truth, which is the Holy Ghost. But we have great reason to rejoice that their resistance cannot prevail. While they like raging waves of the sea foam out their own shame, although the world may applaud, and lavish their encomiums upon them, and their wealth, and call them rabbi, still their resistance of the truth of God and of the spirit of holiness will ultimately clothe them with everlasting shame and infamy. No person can preach or believe that the Holy Ghost has ever failed to fully accomplish all that he ever attempted or designed, without impeaching the wisdom, power and truth of God, and thereby resisting the Holy Ghost; but their resistance can never prevent or hinder the full and perfect accomplishment of all his pleasure. Nor can any give encouragement to those who do thus preach by attending on their ministry, or contributing of their substance to sustain them in their opposition to the Spirit of truth, without resisting the Holy Ghost.

It will be well to remember that the Holy Ghost is God; and although man, in his deep depravity, may resist his government and oppose his power, yet he can by no means thwart his purpose.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe September 1, 1880.)

OBITUARIES

ELDER S. E. TERRY

The recent death of Elder S. E. Terry, a true, humble servant sent by the Lord Jesus Christ, brought great sorrow to a host of

brethren, sisters and churches of Zion far and near, and especially to the New Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church of Carroll County, Virginia. He was born in Patrick County, but lived most of his life in Carroll County. He was the third son of the late George B. and Ruth Terry, born May 17, 1899; and departed this life August 28, 1964. He was married to Dorthey Lee Jessup April 3, 1921, by Elder C. A. Vipperman. She survives, together with their nine children, as follows: Marvin, Reuben, Wesley, Samuel and David, of Meadows of Dan, Va., and Hubert, of Pulaski, Va.; three daughters: Mrs. R. O. Slusher, Jr. of Floyd, Va., Mrs. Curtis Cox, Jr. and Mrs. Owen Dalton, of Meadows of Dan. Surviving also are two brothers and three sisters: Joe Terry, Salem, Va., Mack Terry, Meadows of Dan, Mrs. Willie Shelor and Mrs. Robert Grey, of Meadows of Dan, and Mrs. Bennie Clifton, Vista, Va.; and twenty-one grandchildren. Three brothers and one sister are deceased.

In June, 1924, he united with Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church, and was baptized with his wife by Elder C. A. Vipperman. In January, 1923, he was licensed to speak in public, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry in 1936. He was chosen moderator of Bell Spur Church in 1939, and served this church faithfully for thirty-one years; and served Green Hill and Jack's Creek churches for several years. He was a faithful servant, going far and near to his appointments through all kinds of weather, and attended many associations. Even after his health became poor, he continued on and baptized some. He had a stroke and later a heart attack, and his health was poor for many years. He was so humble in all his afflictions. Being a good husband father and friend, it was a joy to visit in his home. On many occassions his home was filled with his brethren, and it seemed such a joy to him; but his greatest joy was to be blessed to preach the gospel of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: and truly this servant was blessed to set forth the true doctrine, "Salvation by grace, and not of works" in his preaching and daily conversation. I believe the thought of death became very sweet to him, and I never saw anyone look so peaceful after death.

His funeral was held August 30th at the New Bell Spur Church by the following Elders: William Holland, B. O. Tompson, J. M. Vipperman, Allen Easter, Amos I. Hash, and Leonard Brammer; and there were several other Elders in attendance. Pall bearers were deacons from various churches. There was an overflowing congregation of people, though it was a severe rainy day. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains under one hundred beautiful floral arrangements. They have faded, but his spirit went back to God who gave it, to rest in paradise.

We thank thee, O Heavenly Father, for having the privilege of living near this humble servant, and for having known him, his lovely wife and family for several years.

Written at the request of the church by

Pauline Spencer

SISTER BUENA WRIGHT

Buena Vista (Henderson) Wright was born to Mr. and Mrs. Simon Henderson October 13, 1898, in Quitman, Texas, and passed this life October 4, 1964. The church, Sheppard Fold, of Houston, where she was a charter member, and all the saints abroad who knew her, were greatly shocked by her sudden death in a car wreck near Livingston, Texas. It is with a sad and heavy heart that I, her pastor, write of her death. We feel that we have sustained a great loss, and I as her pastor feel with tender sensation of heart a great loss of a "Priscilla," (Acts 18:26); "my helper in Christ Jesus." (Romans 16:3); a "Mary who bestowed much labor on us." (Romans 16:6); a "Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labor in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which labored much in the Lord." (Romans 16:12)

In memory of Sister Wright, I would like to divide my remarks into three heads:

Love: Oh, the great love she had for her blessed Master; not that she first loved Him, but because He first loved her. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propituation for our sins." (1 John 4:10) She was so ravished with the feeling of this love at times she could say without fear or doubt, "My beloved is mine and I am his; he feedeth among the lilies." (S of S 2:16)

Dedication: to his blessed cause and his people. None of the membership wondered about the absence of Sister Wright on meeting days, because she was always there, forsaking all others, yea, even her own blood relatives, to be present when Zion met to worship her God. What a beautiful dedication of self-denial as our blessed Master directs in Matthew 10:-37-39; 16:24, 25; Mark 8:34-38. etc., and in losing her life. she surely found it — a manifold blessing was poured out upon her while she lived among us.

Humility: was a force and fruit of the Spirit manifested in her among us. Humility is a fruit that must be manifested through much tribulation and suffering one way or another. Sister Wright through the tribulation path, lost a son twelve years of age, which was a very trying time to her; as was the passing of her much loved husband; and then the following thirteen years as a widow. These losses, body afflictions and at time a great felt sense of her sins and shortcomings, and her great trouble and concern for Zion's welfare, which caused a sad

countenance to be manifested the last two months of her life. All this was set apart to humble her and keep her at the throne of grace in Zion's behalf. But in the midst of all of this God has come into his garden to gather one of his precious "lilies." (S of S 6:2) What a blessing from God to have had such a close walk with her; but now she is "absent from the body, present with the Lord." (2 Cor. 5:8)

Oh, what a beautiful life and fellow-traveler we have had by the grace of God in Sister Wright. May we be given a prayerful heart to ask the giver of this gift to us, to also manifest others among us in behalf of his blessed cause, and our comfort. I am sending with this letter received from Sister Wright May 6, 1964, which is one of many savory letters I've had from her pen. She is now silenced in death, not gone to be no more, but only gone on before.

May the Lord comfort her dear children who are left to mourn her passing: a son, R. C. Wright, Meredian, Miss.; two daughters, Mrs. Welta Scruggs, El Paso, and Mrs. Kelsay Swain, Houston. Also three sisters, Mrs. Artie Tucker, Mrs. Lizzie Atterback, Mineola, Texas, and Mrs. Floy Bair, Dallas; a brother, Burton Henderson, Dallas; and six grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders R. W. Rhodes, Lloyd Wall, and C. M. Haygood, and she was laid to rest near Quitman, Texas, to await the coming of her blessed Saviour.

(Elder) C. M. Haygood

IDA G. HOLLOWAY

As it has pleased the Lord to take from our midst on September 20, 1964 our dear and beloved sister, Ida G. Hollaway, we would bow in humble submission to the will of our God.

Sister Holloway was born September 22, 1873, and her parents were the late George and Sarah Ann Jarmon Warner. She was married December 24, 1912, to Daniel Holloway, who departed this life in 1933. To this union one daughter was born, Mrs. Gertrude Johnson, of Newark, Delaware; who survives. Surviving also are one brother, William Jarmon, of Wilmington, Delaware, and several nieces and nephews.

In 1910, while living in Baltimore, Sister Holloway was given a desire for a home in the Ebenezer Church there, and was baptized by the late Elder Joshua Rowe. In 1913 her membership was moved by letter to the Snow Hill Church in Snow Hill, Maryland; where she remained a faithful member until death.

It was always a pleasure to visit Sister Holloway, and to converse with her concerning the grace and mercy of our God. She gratefully rejoiced in her hope of eternal life beyond the grave; and was always ready to extol the name of her blessed Saviour, giving Him all the praise and glory.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer and Elder W. D. Griffin on September 23, 1964, at the Burbage Funeral Home, Berlin, Maryland; and she was laid to rest in the Evergreen Cemetery in Berlin, Maryland, beside her husband.

May it please the Lord to reconcile her daughter and other relatives, and her many friends, to feel that their loss is her eternal gain, is the humble prayer of the writer.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

SISTER JENNIE EVANS

Sister Jennie Evans passed away September 7, 1964, after a long illness. She was born near Strong, Arkansas, April 5, 1879. She is survived by one son, Johnie Evans, Marion, La.; and by the following daughters: Mrs. Whet Baker, Mrs. Sally Teal, and Mrs. Jessie Plair, of Marion, La.; Mrs. Dovie Mannine, Lake Providence, La.; and Mrs. A. O. Dopson, Strong, Arkansas. Surviving also are 17 grandchildren, 36 great grandchildren, and 5 great great grandchildren, and other relatives.

Sister Evans joined old Good Hope Church many years ago, and the writer baptized her and her husband. Her husband preceded her in death several years. She was blessed to be a devoted member of the Primitive Baptist Faith, and a very devoted wife and mother, and was held in high regard among the brethren who knew her.

She was very sick and feeble many years, and was an invalid about four years before her death. We beleieve that she was among those blessed to die in the Lord, and is now where sin and trouble can molest her no more. May we not weep, for she is much better off. May the Lord bless each of you who mourn, and give you that precious faith she manifested.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer at old Good Hope Church in the presence of a large congregation of those who knew her, and had great sympathy and respect for her.

R. W. Rhodes

MRS. LEVIE FRANCIS CHANDLER

Mrs. Levie Chandler was born near Downsville, La., August 22, 1889, and became the devoted wife of Grover C. Chandler, of near Ruston, La. She became much afflicted several months before her death, and was in the hospital quite a bit. She passed away July 30, 1964, and her funeral was conducted at Ruston, La. She was buried at Douglas Cemetery, near Douglas, La. There was a very large and devoted congregation present, and many nice

flowers, which manifested the loving devotion of her family and many friends.

Sister Chandler, as I most always called her, was not a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, but she gave great evidence that she was a devoted believer in the doctrine. Both she and her husband were very often present at the meetings. I visited her several times before she passed away, and was privileged to talk with her concerning her belief in the precious salvation of the God of heaven. It is sad to lose her, but we believe our loss is her eternal gain.

She is survived by her devoted and saddened husband, Grover C. Chandler, and other relatives, and by many Primitive Baptists with whom she had associated over a period of many years. May the Lord comfort and console all who mourn her passing, especially her husband. May the Lord bless you Brother Cleve.

The writer conducted the funeral in the presence of a very large congregation, especially at the cemetery near her home near Douglas.

R. W. Rhodes

ELDER THOMAS L. GRIMES

Thomas L. Grimes, son of William Thomas and Pattie Barnhill Grimes, was born in Martin County, North Carolina, on June 5, 1898. In this same year, when he was three months old, his mother died. As a result of this tragedy, his father gave up housekeeping, and Tommie, as he was then called, went to live with his father's oldest sister, Mrs. John Taylor, near Robersonville, North Carolina. In this home he lived and went to school until his aunt's husband, John Taylor, died. At this time Elder Grimes was thirteen years old. "Mama," as he called her since she was the only mother he ever knew, decided to break up keeping house since she was unable to manage her small farm herself. After selling the farm she went to live with her oldest sister, Mrs. J. W. Roebuck, who also lived near Robersonville, North Carolina.

As a consequence of change in circumstances, Elder Grimes returned to live with his father from whom he separated thirteen years before. While living with his father this second time, he continued his schooling through the tenth grade. A year or two later, having reached man's estate, Elder Grimes left home and, after working for a year or so, he joined the U. S. Army and served for four years. After receiving his discharge from the Army he returned to his father's home and began to prepare himself for a job with the U. S. Postal Railway Service. When he thought himself ready, he took the examination and passed with honors. He entered the postal service around 1928 or 1929. Two or three years later he met and later married Miss Appie Christman of Wendell, North Carolina, where he lived the remainder of his life. To this union two children were born: first, a son, Thomas Robert, and later, a daughter Pat. Elder Grimes retired from the U. S. Postal Railway Service in 1961.

Several years after marriage and moving to Wendell, North Carolina, he began feeling a strong urgency to preach the Gospel, and after long consideration, thought and prayer, he was convinced that the Lord had called him, and he began to read and to study the Bible as he had never read and studied it before. Soon he began talking in various churches, and a few years later was ordained a preacher in the Primitive Baptist faith.

Elder Grimes continued to serve his Lord and to preach the Gospel as it was revealed to him until his death Friday, August 2, 1963.

Written by his brother,
Elder W. E. Grimes
Robersonville, North Carolina

SISTER MARY L. ECKARD

At the request of the family of Sister Mary L. Eckard, of Spokane, Washington, I am sending the obituary of our beloved sister in the Lord. She was born in Bellingham, Washington, September 9, 1913, and passed away suddenly in a hospital July 18, 1964, following treatment for a heart condition; which shows that when He calls us, we will hear his voice and will come.

Sister Eckard is survived by her husband, H. B. Eckard; two sons, Russell Owen Eckard, Spokane, Washington; and Leander Jackson Eckard, Kansas City, Missouri; four brothers: Jack Withers, in Ohio; Steven Withers, Demming, Washington; Louis Withers and Charles Withers, in Idaho; four sisters: Ivy Jenson, Mead, Washington; Lela Lidgquist, Spokane, Washington; Hazeltine Allen, Spokane; and Evie Floyd, Tulsa, Oklahoma; and many nieces and nephews.

She was the daughter of Wm. D. and Elizabeth H. Withers, and was married to H. B. Eckard March 1, 1934. She was a member of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, Riffe, Washington; and was baptized by Elder Hughett, at Bellington, Washintgon, on March 2, 1944.

She was laid to rest in the Fairmont Memorial Park, Spokane, Washington, mourned by many friends, who will miss her greatly. The service was conducted by the writer in the absence of Elder Ernest Attebury, her pastor, who was ill at the time.

Charles W. Bond

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133 DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1965 NO. 3

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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THE SONGS OF ZION

(Psalm 137:3)

The songs of Zion, Oh, how sweet,
When the saints in harmony meet!
With the spirit and understanding too,
They sing songs both old and new.

But the good old songs, I do prefer;
They're the ones the heart doth stir:
Sung by the saints in Zion below,
They often cause the tears to flow.

And the sweet melody in Zion above,
Where all will be perfect love,
Will fill the soul with pure delight,
Forever dwelling in unearthly light.

The old song of Moses, who had led
The Israelites as from Egypt they fled,
Was sung by them at the Red Sea
When from the Egyptian host set free.

They passed through the sea as by dry ground,
While the host pursuing them was drowned:
A truly great reason for thanking the Lord,
And joining "in a song of sweet accord."

Lastly, the song of the Lamb will be sung,
A new song chanted by every saint's tongue
In the regions of glory and of peace,
Where His praises will never cease.

This song of redeeming love will be
The song of the ransomed to eternity:
"To God and to the Lamb they will sing,"
Beholding the glory of Zion's king.

To mansions celestial they will soar
And reign with Christ forevermore.
His presence will be heaven indeed,
When from sinning we shall be freed.

Oh! may it be our unspeakably happy lot
To wear a robe without wrinkle or spot;
To sing a song of Zion in heaven above,
And drink our fill of everlasting love.

C. W. Vass,
Elizabeth City, N. C.

"CHRISTIANS"
WHO ARE THEY?

I hope my mind has been directed of the Lord in studying upon the subject of Christians and who the truly made or "ACTUAL CHRISTIANS" were in ages past and in the present time. Of late particularly, we see in the many magazine and newspaper articles as well as hearing so much over the radios and television and also from the pulpits of the hundreds of churches everywhere, the word "CHRISTIANS" bandied about so much that the people of the world generally believe that they are everywhere by the millions and hundreds of of millions. One Church alone, the Catholic, claims to have over a half-billion in their fold and others claim to have many millions. The grand total of all alleged Christians, by their standards, would be a staggering number.

Turning to the Bible, we find no such word mentioned in the Old Testament, which is to be expected, since Christ, from whom the word was derived, had not yet come into the world. In the New Testament, we find it only three times and it came from man first, from those people who were enemies of the true followers of Christ — Acts 11:26. It is rather significant that the word (Christian) should spring from the enemies of the followers of Christ and that today we find so many millions calling themselves thusly.

Apparently after the word was first used, the Apostles and others accepted it generally. It is next found in Acts 26:28, when used by King Agrippa before whom Paul stood in his own defense, and Paul seemed content to be called a Christian for he said — "I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds."

The final recording of the word Christian is found in 1st Peter 4:16 — "Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf." In the preceding verses it is shown that Peter meant those truly born of the Holy Spirit, for Verse 13 says: "But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings." etc. So by no means could his use of the word have meant the multitude of people at that time, and in time to come, **who were, or who are, not born of God** but who profess to be followers of Christ by reason of parentage, training by man, or by man's conversion, or their own desire to so acclaim themselves.

Now as to the "ian" addition to a name, or adding "ian" to Christ, (which means definitely one belonging to Him), "ian" is an adjective suffix and fixes or attaches something to that to which it is added. It is used widely to denote those born in a certain country or state, such as those born in Canada are Canadians, and so on. As used by the Apostles above referred to, they meant those **born in Christ or coming out of Christ and definitely tied to Christ**, spiritually speaking. The Church being Christ's Bride, would mean that those referred to were **born in the Church or in Zion.** Turning to Psalm 87, we find a most interesting recording. David viewed the nature and glory of the Church or Zion, and in verses 5 and 6 we find, — "And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her; and the highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there. Selah." What better proof do we need? David and the Apostles spoke and wrote as inspired by God, and we must accept their word and record which establishes that the **true and only Christians of those days and of the present time,** are born-again-people having the in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit, and not the so-called Christians numbering countless millions, even billions.

Their claiming to have many millions of Christians in their ranks does not coincide with the Scriptures, for it refers to the truly predestinated and chosen ones as being a **"remnant,"** or just a small part of the whole thing or number. That word is found many times in both the Old and New Testament. The most striking use of the word is found in Romans 9:27 — "Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, though the number of the children of Israel be as the sands of the sea, **a remnant shall be saved.**" Also Paul makes the same statement again in 11:5 — "Even so then at this present time also there is **a remnant according to the election of grace.**" Since it is firmly established by the Scriptures that the true followers of Christ, or children of God, all of whom will be saved, are but a remnant or small number of the whole, then we can see that this is contrary to the claims of the worldly Churches, for their total number could not be taken as a remnant or small portion of our worldly population, at the present time or in times past.

It seems worthy of mention that the Apostle Paul, as quoted in Acts 26:28, indicated that he, of himself, would desire that King Agrippa and all that heard him that day, were such as himself, excepting the bonds. The Apostle had just finished telling the King of the Lord's dealing with him in changing him from the natural mind and actions to a **born again man of God** and Spiritual servant of God, it would seem that he, of himself, was willing that many men around him could be like him. How many of us, (if I may be so bold as to include myself) this day and age do

many times find ourselves desirous that all those around us could be as are we — possessed with a hope of eternal life based on the saving grace of God thru His predetermined will and calling before the world was. When meditating on this very Scripture — **that only a Remnant shall be saved** — as I am wont to do in the dark hours of night, I become exercised in thinking on it, and it gets hold of me to the point wherein I say — What a pity that all mankind from the beginning to the end of this time world could not be included in the saving Grace of our Lord God Almighty. Then sounder reasoning takes over and I yield, saying **"thy will be done, O Lord"** and not mine, or any earthly being's will or desire in this matter. Then I go on to think upon what would be the case **if earthly man should have any power whatsoever in determining our eternal status,** or even in directing our earthly lives and actions. While it does seem that we are affected in our earthly lives by man's actions, yet we cannot refute the Scriptures that say otherwise. In Ecclesiastes 1:9-10 we find — "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there anything whereof it may be said, See this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us." So we must believe that we live and do exactly as the Lord designed we should, long 'ere the world was, and that no man, of himself, has changed, nor will ever change the purposes and designs of God. Solomon also said, Ecc. 3:14, "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be done forever: **nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it.**" etc.

Concluding, may I say that if I have written anything that is of interest to the true Christians (and I so strongly hope that I am one) scattered about this wicked land, our temporary dwelling place, then let the honor and praise be to the Lord. I deserve none whatsoever. I ask anyone of the Household of Faith to remember this unworthy one in their prayers, that have a mind to so do.

In Christ-ian bonds, I hope.

Wm. O. Hall,
Box 595, Mount Vernon, Washington

ABLE TO STAND BUT LIABLE TO FALL

(By Elder H. M. Curry in 1895)

The Proposition that Adam was able to stand but liable to fall, came first to my ears from Methodists and New School Baptists. The expression sounded puerile and illogical to me then, and sounds so yet. To me the phrase is meaningless; but grant it a meaning, and it arrays itself against the whole tenor of Bible Truth, and all facts of human experience, as exemplified in the universal history of the human race. Such sayings and phrases as this became current through lack of thoughtful investigation. I invite the reader's attention to the following discussion of this **trite** expression; and if, after impartially considering this matter, he should still be of the opinion that "Adam was able to stand, but liable to fall," his position will be more clearly defined in his own mind, and perhaps entitled to more credit from those of contrary belief.

Let us now proceed to consider some of the *a priori* arguments. First, God had a purpose in man on the earth. When faith beholds the works of God in creation it sees nothing in vain; the domestic beast of burden, the ravenous beast of prey, the wholesome grape, the deadly upas, the useful iron, the seducing gold, the wholesome food, and the destructive poison, all answer some useful end, some wise purpose, some intelligent design of the mind that created them. Shall we confess this, and then say that man, the climax of the natural creation, was created without a purpose or design, either for time or for eternity by the God of all wisdom?

Did God create man, and turn him loose in the world to ruin himself and all his posterity, to thwart God's will and destroy all his pleasure?

The first purpose of God in placing man upon the earth was that he should multiply and replenish it. **God made the earth not in vain; he made it to be inhabited.** — Bible. If Adam was able to stand, he was able to defeat God's purpose in this; for had he stood, there is no ground to believe that the earth would ever have been inhabited; for, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (John 12:24) These words of Jesus set forth a universal fact in nature, a deep and comprehensive truth. The same truth may be stated in these words: **Without death there is no reproduction.** In the vegetable world seed must die before they germinate and reproduce their kind. The same principle, although not so plainly exhibited, extends into the animal world. The animal organism embodies both animal and vegetable life mysteriously combined, and the power of reproduction, growth and repair lies in the vegetable life. The multiplication of the human race did not begin until death passed upon the man; so from this it is seen that if Adam was able to stand, he was able to render the creation of the world in vain.

But grant that the multiplication would have gone on without the fall, what would have been done with the people who would have come into the world by this time? The garden of Eden would have been full to overflowing against this time. There would have been a continually increasing stream of humanity pouring into the world, and none going out. What would be done with them? Upon what would they subsist? Where would they stay? What would be their occupation?

Again, suppose Adam had stood, then each of his posterity would have been subjected to the same probation. Each one able to stand, but liable to fall. Some, doubtless would have succumbed to this liability to fall, and would have fallen, while some would have demonstrated their ability to stand, by standing. The human race would then be divided by death, some dying, and some living here forever. What a state of confusion this would be. Instead of the wisdom of the Creator being exemplified in the harmony of his creation, it would be impeached by this monstrous, unnatural, impossible discord.

It was doubtless God's purpose that the earth's resources should be developed, as exemplified in the various lines of human industry, enterprise and progress. The one essential element of human character upon which all industrial enterprise depends is the **love** of money. This is declared in the Scriptures to be the root of all evil. This root of all evil, then, is the prime impetus in all human progress, advancement and improvement. Without it new countries never would have been discovered, explored and settled; cities would never have been built; civilization would never have developed; the arts and sciences would have remained unknown; there would be no such thing as social or political society, no commerce, no trade, no improvements, no progress, no luxuries, no conveniences; in fact men would all be savages. The fall of Adam enters into the very foundation of all the essential elements of the qualification of men to inhabit the earth. All the lust of the eye and pride of life are essentially necessary to building up human society, either social, political or religious.

Again, the world in its present condition is either as God intended it should be, or it is not. If it is not as God intended, then God's intention has been defeated, and everything has gotten from under his control. There are only three positions to be taken with regard to the first man: God either purposed that he should fall, or purposed that he should not fall, or else had no purpose at all in the matter. If he purposed that he should not fall, but remain sinless forever, then the earth is peopled

with an entirely different race of beings from what God intended; everything has gone contrary to God's purpose. If **one** man could reverse the purpose of God, and change the whole world, both for time and eternity, of what account is God's purpose? Where is any ground of hope of salvation either for time or eternity through the purpose of the same God? Where are our obligations to call him God, or worship him as such? Where is his right to call himself God, and claim our confidence, reverence and praise? To say that God purposed him to stand, but that man fell, is to plunge into the darkest, blankest, most hopeless fatalism. If we say that God had no purpose one way or the other, then what do we mean by talking of God's purposes, and calling him a God of purpose? If we say that God purposed the fall, then there is no conflict between God's purpose and the existing state of affairs. We can then look upon the word "purpose" as meaning something; and when we talk of God being a God of purpose our speech harmonizes; and when we speak of his purpose of grace we can do so with just reverence and holy confidence.

Again, **God purposed that man should be removed from the earth by death.** "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." One may say these words were spoken after man sinned. True enough; but did they come into the mind of God after man sinned? This is the utterance of a decree; but is the decree no older than its utterance? If God did not intend in the creation that man should return to dust, why did he create him from dust? Why did he not make him of some other material? But the very fact that He made him of dust shows that the decree, **"Unto dust shalt thou return,"** was in the mind of the Creator when He made him. "It is appointed unto men once to die." — Bible. Death, then is an appointment. Who made the appointment? God made it. Has God any appointments now that he did not have from eternity?

Let us now turn to God's purpose of grace in Christ. All the provisions of grace for the salvation of the people were made in Christ before the foundation of the world. If Adam had stood, what would have become of the purpose of grace? When we say he was able to stand, we say that he was able to defeat God's purpose in Christ. It is declared in the Scriptures that Christ was foreordained before the foundation of the world. Foreordained to what? To die. To die for whom? For men who might not need it — for a man who was able to stand? If Christ was foreordained to die, and Adam was the figure of Christ, is it not plain that Adam was included in the same decree of death? When Christ died He was delivered to death by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; not by the provisional counsel, as a remedy provided to meet an emergency; not by his permissive counsel, as one permitted to be slain for the sins of others. There is no mention in the Scriptures of a **Permissive Counsel,** but **Determinate Counsel.** Then, if Adam was included in God's counsel at all, he was in his **determinate counsel.** The creation of Adam was in God's counsel, for He said, "Let us make man." God's dealings with the man after he was made were in his counsel, for He placed him in a certain environment, with certain restrictions upon his liberties.

One may say that God knew that Adam would fall, and provided the remedy before the calamity came. To admit God's foreknowledge of the event is to yield the point that he was made to stand, for how was he able to stand if God knew that he would fall? The proposition is incompatible with foreknowledge. It is argured by some that God knew that he would, but he did not fall by God's decree. By whose decree did he fall? If God foreknew the man would fall, the event was **certain, inevitable** and could in no wise fail to come to pass. Now, what made the event certain? What rendered it inevitable? What brought it to pass? One says that God's foreknowledge of an event does not ne-

cessitate its coming to pass. If God's knowledge does not, what does? "Who is he that bringeth to pass when the Lord commands it not?" (see Lam. 3:-37) Either God's decree makes the event certain, as foreknown, or it is purely a matter of total necessity.

If Adam was able to stand, how long was he able to stand, against what was he able to stand, and wherein consisted his ability to stand? Was he able to stand forever? Was he able to stand under all circumstances? If we answer yes to these questions, then his ability to stand consisted in his infinite perfection, for nothing short of infinite perfection could stand forever under all circumstances. If he was infinitely perfect, to enable him thus to stand, wherein lay his ability to fall? How did it come that he did fall? Ability to stand and liability to fall cannot exist at the same time in the same creature; for where liability to fall sets in, absolute ability to stand ends. Ability to stand, in this expression, must be absolute, or it cannot be considered, for if it is not **absolute** it must be **relative,** and relative ability to stand is entirely swallowed up in liability to fall.

Let us now pass to the *posteiori* arguments. The fall itself is evidence that the man could not stand. Had he not fallen he would thereby have demonstrated his ability to stand; but he fell, and consequently he demonstrated his inability to stand.

The transmission of his sin to his posterity is conclusive argument against his ability to stand. The total, inherent, hereditary depravity of the human race is essentially and inseparably connected with this subject. Cavil as we may about predestination in Adam's case, it shows itself in all his progeny. They are all born sinners, grow up sinners, and die sinners, without exception or remedy. What then has fixed the universal, unalterable, irrevocable reign of sin and death? Is it fixed by God, or does it come by fate? Is it the provision of infinite wisdom, or is it through the lucky intervention of some work of chance? Did God, either in ignorance or knowingly, leave the issue of life and death of unborn millions to the uncertain will of one man? If God did not know the consequence when he created man, then he is ignorant and stupid, and is no God. If he knew the consequence, and yet created the man, and gave him power to ruin his unborn progeny in sin, death and eternal destruction, knowing certainly that he would do it, is he not a strange kind of God? Is not such a course more like that of a madman than like that of an allwise God? Which is the greater display of wisdom, righteousness, justice and judgment, for God to leave the issues of life and death of an unborn world to the caprices of one man's will, or to fix all by his own infinite will and wisdom? Which would **faith** choose as a source of consolation, that the well-being of a world was left to **one** man, and he ruined it, or that God held the issues in his own eternal grasp?

The great stumbling-stone in the way of most minds is the trite, meaningless expression that this would make God the author of sin. But is it not taught in the Scriptures that God visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children? Where is there any human code of practice or standard of justice but what would pronounce that unjust, wicked and cruel? Visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children of the third and fourth generations. Punish the child for the crime of its grandfather, a crime committed before the child was born, or even before its parents were born. If we are going to impeach God by human standards we must impeach him here, and declare him wicked, unjust and cruel; and renounce his name, and abandon his worship. But again, Jesus said that the blood of all prophets, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zacharias, that perished between the temple and the altar, shall be required of this generation. Where is the justice, from a human standpoint, in requiring all the righteous blood that had been shed for four thousand years, of that

generation? Such destruction as had not been seen since the world began was sent upon that generation of men, women and helpless children, and God did it. Then, upon this point of God being unjust if he does so and so, let the words of inspiration stop every mouth, and silence every tongue.

The law in its nature, design and effect enters into this discussion. Many minds are misled by their wrong notion of the law. The law was not given for men to keep. It entered that the offense might abound. They say that God would not have commanded Adam not to eat if he intended that he should eat. How do they know what God would have done? By what or by whom do they judge? How could man transgress without a commandment? It required the commandment to answer the purpose. It is argued that God's decreeing the fall of Adam would destroy man's accountability. Would it be any worse, from their own standards of judging, to hold Adam responsible for what he was purposed to do, than to hold a babe born in the nineteenth century responsible for Adam's transgression by fixing upon it the sin committed by another six thousands years before it was born? The doctrine of hereditary total depravity will not harmonize with the proposition that Adam was able to stand.

Lastly, I shall call in the testimony of christian experience. Can a Christian live without sin? We regard those persons who hold and teach that a man can live without sin as deluded, fanatical heretics. If the Christian, who is born of God, washing in the blood of Christ, justifice, sanctified, and led by the Spirit of God, cannot live without sin, how can the natural man live without sin? Adam in his creation was a natural man, of the earth. earthy. He had natural capacities, fleshly qualifications, propensities and desires; then how could this man in nature be expected to do what the most gifted saint cannot do?

(The above is copied from the *Signs of the Times* of November 27, 1895. When we read it recently, we felt that the importance of this truth required that we pass it to the brethren for their edification. — J. D. W.)

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Elder W. D. Griffin)

Once more the wheels of time have rolled around to the time of our annual meeting of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association; and as it has been our custom through the years to write what is called the Circular Letter, we attempt it with fear and trembling; we hope realizing that we cannot write in any way comforting to the household of faith except the God of all grace and mercy sees fit to guide our minds and trembling hand.

Therefore, as we attempt to write, we humbly pray that our eternal God, who has been pleased to lead his people, though in a mysterious way, will be pleased to guide us that this letter may be to the comfort and edification of the saints of our God; of which we hope to be a part. As we have been led to believe by the mighty hand of God in the words of Moses when he said to Israel, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms," (Deuteronomy 33:27) we feel that it is a wonderful blessing to be given a mind to realize that there is a power that is above all other powers, that is watching over his little children here in the vain world, keeping them under his watchful eye and his ever shielding arm.

We believe that God's chosen people, his heirs of salvation according to promise, are led in ways they know not, through many storms of life, to teach them that they cannot direct their steps, and to show them their need of our Heavenly Father to keep and sustain them in that pathway that Job spoke of when he said, "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen." (Job 28:7) Thus we feel that the natural mind of man cannot understand the things of God,

neither has, or ever will, walk that heavenward journey by his natural mind, for we are told by the Apostle Paul, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14) We believe that man is born in this world with a natural mind, and he keeps it as long as he stays here on these mortal shores; but we also believe that our eternal God gives his chosen people another mind, a spiritual mind to see things that the natural mind cannot see, for the natural mind never sees the vanity of its being.

We feel that God has and still does throughout the world, in his own time and place, bring his chosen ones out of the darkness in which they were born, into the light and knowledge of the truth which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Darkness has always preceded light, for in the beginning the evening and the morning was the first day, and so on. Therefore, if we are what we hope to be, we are traveling in newness of life, viewing things that we did not view at one time; viewing from day to day our weakness in the flesh, and thus hoping in the mercies of our eternal God and not in our own works; for Solomon said, "There is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good and sinneth not." (Eccl. 7:20)

We believe that God knew his people before the beginning of time, and loved them with an everlasting love; that he chose them in his Son — for as Eve was in Adam, so was the church in Christ: he being the foundation of that building not made with hands, for we are told in God's holy word, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (I Cor. 3:12)

As we journey here, though, we are made to wonder, and to say with the poet,

"'Tis a point I long to know;
Oft it gives me anxious thoughts;
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not."

We do not believe that anyone knows that he or she is one of God's chosen people, but we do believe that God works in the hearts of his people in such a way as to show them the vileness of their nature, and to cause them to hope in his mercies, and to realize that it is not by our own strength, but by the grace of God we are what we are. Hannah said, "For by strength shall no man prevail." (I Samuel 2:9)

We do feel that God has a people in every nation, kindred and tongue, and that they are all taught of the Lord. It may be that some have never heard the audible voice of man speak the wonderful truth which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, but we feel they are all taught of the Lord, though in a mysterious way; for, as the poet has said:

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

We are also told in God's holy word, "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:9)

Dear Brethren, as we have been gathered here in this association, we feel a desire in our hearts that the Lord may be pleased to bless us with love for one another; that our hearts may be joined together as one; and that we may have all things in common. May it please the Lord, if it be his holy will, that we may be blessed to sit and feast on the gospel truths, and be made to rejoice together in the Lord; for the Apostle Paul said, "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say rejoice." (Phil. 4:4) Amen

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
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WOULD GREATLY MISS THE PAPER

Rt. 1, Box 111,
Gustine, Texas 76455

Dear Editors:

It is time once again to renew my subscription to the *Signs*. It has been coming to my home regularly for more than 68 years. My husband was a subscriber at the time of our marriage; and I do not know how long before. I would miss its coming almost as much as a member of the family, especially since I am now able to attend meetings but seldom — only once last year.

A few years ago I gave away most of my *Signs*, but have those that have accumulated since. I love to get them out and read them again. They contend for the same glorious truth as they did then. I love to read the letters re-printed that were written so long ago.

To the dear Editors, and all who write, I would say, May the dear Lord keep you in health, and enable you by his Spirit to continue to contend for this same blessed truth for many years to come — this gospel truth which is now so lightly esteemed, and growing more so each day, it seems to me. But it is a great source of comfort to me. Apply three dollars to my renewal, and balance as you think best.

Ida Bowers

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EDITORIAL

MICAH 5:5

"And this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land: and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise up against him seven shepherds, and eight principal men."

We have been requested to write our views upon the above Scripture, which we have often read as we have turned

to read Micah 5:2, which was the verse that the chief priests and scribes found for wicked king Herod when he enquired of them where Christ should be born. Matthew 2:6. In answering him, they gave only part of the verse, but we would like to declare faithfully who this Christ was. He is and was the Wisdom of God and the Power of God. I Corinthians 2:4-5. "Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Read Proverbs 8. Verse 23 says, speaking of him, "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Isaiah, divinely inspired, could say over seven hundred years before Jesus was born, "Unto us a child is born, (born of the Virgin Mary) unto us a Son is given," for "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." The eternal Son of God came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and such was the goodness of divine mercy that those chosen of God saw his day and were glad. Abel saw him in the innocent lamb offered in his room and stead, Abraham saw him as the ram caught in the thicket of God's eternal purpose, and through faith could receive his son Isaac as from the dead in a figure. The Old Testament is the record of his goings forth, not only to the individual, but as Captain of the Host of the Lord to lead Israel into the promised land. Joshua 5:13-15. If we read the four gospels, we see Jesus made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, finishing the work of redemption, and true to his word, linking up Jonah, who was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, with the Son of man who was in the bosom of the earth three days and three nights. He lived a holy life to produce a righteousness that would cover all for whom he came to save. He submitted to a shameful death on the cross, the penalty for the sins of those for whom he died. He arose at the appointed time, was seen of many of those who were his, and he, Jesus, ascended into heaven, crowned with glory and honour. Read I Timothy 6:11-16, in which Paul, as a faithful shepherd, charges Timothy. This Jesus, blessed Jesus, said in his last sentence in Matthew 28:20, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

This man, Micah said, shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land, and when he shall tread in our palaces. Who were the Assyrians? They represent the people of the world who think that they can build a way to heaven; you can read of their origin in Genesis 10:22. We see that Asshur was the son of Shem, during whose lifetime the tower of Babel was built, and it is said that his offspring became a nation whose capital was Ninevah, until it was utterly destroyed. Much could be written about this people, but with our limited space we prefer to direct our readers to the written word in Kings and Chronicles. Micah was living at a time when due to the wickedness of both Israel and Judah, God's judgments were about to be meted out. In 2 Chronicles 28 when one of the most wicked kings, Ahaz, came to the throne and war was on every side, Israel and Syria slew thousands upon thousands of the inhabitants of Judah, forcing wicked Ahaz, king of Judah, to ask the Assyrians to come and help him. This wicked king took the gold and silver from the house of the Lord to give to the Assyrians. He shut up the doors of the house of the Lord and made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem. He made images for Baalim and caused his children to be burnt in the fire after the abominations of the heathen whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel. In 2 Kings we read of wicked king Hoshea making peace with Assyria by giving them presents, then, proving unfaithful to their word, the Assyrians carried them away into captivity. In this dark and dreadful day, God saw fit that the son of wicked Ahaz, named Hezekiah, should come to the throne of Judah with a God-given desire to do "that which was right in

the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father did." And the prophet Micah saw one in that dark day who "removed the high places and brake down the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made, for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan." (a piece of brass)

The Assyrians in our subject are a people who have not a true regard for a "Thus saith the Lord," and would bring into Israel today, if possible, that which is contrary to what Christ and his apostles established. These men were led as those of old, by the Holy Ghost, and wrote of those things which they had heard, seen and handled of the Word of life. The apostle John wrote, "The world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."

Micah speaks of seven shepherds, this number seven comes often in the Scripture and sets forth God's perfection in dealing with mankind. For the sin of ignorance, blood was sprinkled seven times before the Lord. (Leviticus 4:6) Seven golden candlesticks are seen in Revelation 1:10-20, while John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. The seven golden candlesticks were the seven churches and One like the Son of man in the midst. He had seven stars in his right hand, which were the angels or messengers of the seven churches. In Malachi 3:1, John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus, is spoken of as a messenger, and our Lord also, who is called the messenger of the covenant. The good shepherd, who gave his life for the sheep, in his covenant, saw fit that there should be a perfect ministry. The stars are heavenly. The Rock of Ages is spoken of by Peter as "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them who stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed." (I Peter 2:8) Zechariah 3:9 tells us that this stone had seven eyes. Our Lord established a perfect testimony, and when one preaches the word by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven it is evident that he is in the right hand of him whom John saw in the Midst of the Churches. We view the churches set forth by the golden candlesticks as representing the various phases of the church during the gospel dispensation, and there are many signs that we are in the Laodicean period, when, as James 5:9 says, "The Judge standeth before the door."

We could use most of our space in showing that the Assyrians under various conquerors were finally established in Babylon, which was a type of Babylon the Great, which is still flourishing, so that all the world wonders after the Beast. We feel its likeness, history and fall are fully set forth in the word of God, so will get on with our subject. The eight principal men are the eight writers of the New Testament, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter, James, Paul and Jude. The Old Testament has much of the New Testament concealed therein. Solomon, the wise man in Ecclesiastes 11:2, says, "Give a portion to seven and also to eight." We know the eight writers were so guided so that they recorded so much of the Old to confirm the New. The worldly-wise deny that Jonah was in the whale's belly; in doing so, they deny that Jesus was in the bosom of the earth, for one confirms the other. The seven messengers, who have been in the right hand of our Lord, also have their portion in the Old Testament as in the New. We have spoken of the Assyrians as setting forth the world walking after the flesh, but there is much of the world in us, for we are still in the flesh, and in the flesh we cannot please God. Paul says, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." Are we to-day any different from the Corinthians or from the brethren of James scattered abroad? Read that faithful shepherd's testimony and you will see how much they needed a faithful ministry. In Micah's day there were only a few who feared God and looked to him for help, and there are but a few to-day. He said, "When the Assyrian

shall come into our land: and when he shall tread in our palaces." What is our land? The place where we live and walk, the palaces are heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Our Lord said, "They are not of the world." In the church we have a home, it is where Jesus is in the midst. Are we fit for such a dwelling? This dwelling might look like a cave to the world. Cave Adullam was where David found an escape from the world around him, and where HIS BRETHREN and all HIS FATHER'S HOUSE went down to be with HIM. "And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them." (I Samuel 22:1-2)

We sing "Prisons would palaces prove, if Jesus would dwell with me there." Often God's afflicted children have found a sick room a palace, and they have been blest to find themselves in sweet fellowship with all who have ever tasted that the Lord is gracious, and the Man Jesus by his reconciling love was their Peace. We have mentioned James, one of the eight, and we would like to speak of the scattered brethren to whom he wrote. One can see that the flesh or Assyrian got in there, yet how faithful James was; he did not have any variance with Paul, another of the eight, who wrote about being justified by faith, not of works lest any man should boast. James believed the same as Paul, but it is evident that already there were those who talked, but did not live, their religion, as there are to-day, and it is good when the Church of God raises up against such, the testimony of the seven shepherds and the eight principal men. There is much in the epistle of James applicable to the Church in the present day, and when prayerfully read, we hope will be to the instruction and building up of the brethren in practical godliness. There is also in Paul's, Peter's and John's, and it is becoming, when we in godly fear, study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

We remember an old brother in New York State who had seen the Church in its loveliness in his younger days, and to his sorrow and the grief of many, they witnessed the flesh get the better of good men and divide them. It grieved him the more when good brethren said such unkind things about those they had once fellowshipped. Both sides professed the same truth, sang out of the same hymn-books and read from the same bibles. That afflicted brother one day in pouring out his troubles said, "Brother, is it possible for those whom you know love the same truth that you love, and you loved them for years, for you to cease loving them?" The writer said, "No, it is not possible, if it were the Love of God, that is like God himself, unchangeable." Brothers and sisters of natural families fall out, and parents, if they are wise, will want them to acknowledge their faults one to another. How much more it becomes God's dear children to confess their faults one to another and to wash one another's feet. What stops them if they are what they have professed to be? Our answer unequivocally is the flesh, the Assyrian, and the seven shepherds and the eight principal men will ever prove it to be so, for they testify of the man, the only MAN who is our PEACE. They preach him still in the midst of the throne, the LAMB as it had been slain, slain for sinners, of whom Paul said, "I am chief." Surely the faithful testimony presented by a servant of God, upheld by the right hand of our glorious Lord, would break a heart of stone.

Do we see this MAN who is our PEACE just in pictures on the wall, or have we pictured him in our minds? That is no better, but do we still see him as we have, I hope, seen him in our brethren as he was in the Ark of old? so that "the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child (the holy child Jesus) shall

lead them." (Isaiah 11:6)

The writer is glad to be able to state that the old brother lived to see his cries and prayers answered, and estranged brethren falling on one another's necks in a loving embrace, proving that Micah's testimony was true, that this man born in Bethlehem with our names engraved upon his hands, is our PEACE.

G. R.

SUBSTANCE OF SERMON AT BLACK ROCK CHURCH

While coming from the meeting at Rock Springs Church this morning, a portion of the 3rd chapter of 1st Peter came to mind. I would like to read it to you, and if the Lord is pleased to give some light and liberty, to speak of some of the wonderful things the Apostle had under consideration. He wrote:

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear. Having a good conscience, that whereas they speak evil of you as evil doers, they may be ashamed who falsely accuse you of your conversation in Christ."

As I came into the house, I was somewhat impressed with the thought that the church of the living God in its entity, is the most exclusive organization there is. There is no other like it: No one can be dismissed from it; and no extra one can be added to it. The right of membership is eternal, for each one who is a member, was chosen by God the Father before the world began. And God alone, in his own appointed way and time, makes it known to each that he is among the number composing the church.

(The fact that the church in its visible organization, is sometimes assaulted by those who "creep in unawares," in no wise creates a problem for the Lord, for He knows them that are his; and will make the separation in due time.)

Now the reason that Jesus told Nicodemus that except a man be born again he could not see the kingdom of heaven; even as he told Peter that flesh and blood had not revealed that Jesus was the Son of God, was to show plainly the way the church was made manifest in the world. And Jesus gave assurance that all the Father had given him should come unto him, and he would in no wise cast them out, but raise them up at the last day.

In the epistle from which I read the text, Peter wrote to those who had been brought to the knowledge of the truth, that they were strangers scattered throughout those provinces, but that they were also elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. We are aware that most people believe that God gave the Bible, through men enabled to write it. for the purpose of enlightening all the people of the world concerning the way of life and salvation: that they by searching and reading may find the way by which they may come into eternal life. But I would like for us to hear well, as the Lord may give us understanding, what the Spirit has said unto the churches, for it is written, "If any man hath an ear, let him hear." Taking this epistle of Peter for one example, it is immediately noticed that he is writing to strangers in the world, but who also were elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. He was not writing to any one, either then or now, other than such as these; and to them he desired that grace and peace be multiplied.

It is not an overstatement to say that these, (and their brethren), were the only ones who knew what Peter was talking about, for they are further described as having been begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance, etc., as shown in the verses which follow. Likewise David in his 66th

Psalm wrote, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." David was not concerned for any except those who feared God; for these alone know what God does for their souls. And we find John, in his first epistle, writing to those of whom he said, ". . . ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth."

Now Peter takes up the same theme, and says to them, in the language of the text, "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." I suppose we need not expect anyone to be able to give the reason of a hope unless he has a hope. So the addressee is clearly defined. It would be of no value for a person to compose things he thought would be acceptable to the brethren for membership in the church, for he would only be victimizing himself, even if he should be received. I remember hearing of a person who knew the requirements of the Old School Baptists quite well, that they required certain evidences or they would not receive one into their fellowship. This person thought that he could fool them, and could tell things that would satisfy them to receive him into the church. He arranged things in his mind, and told them to a church on an occasion. Some seemed to be satisfied, but there was an aged sister who said that she was not satisfied with the young man, and that she could not receive him. That ended the matter. I suspect this is true, because I know that some have come before the church who did not have anything to tell as a reason of a hope. One came before one of the churches I was serving some years ago, and asked for membership. The brethren asked him some questions; but the more he talked, the farther he separated himself from the brethren. He was not received. A little later he came back, and upon being asked to tell something of his hope, he could only say that some months before he had had blood poisoning, and hoped he would get well. That was as far as he had any understanding of a hope; and you know the brethren could not receive him.

Now let us consider the preaching of John the Baptist, for he required something of those he baptized. He came, as the forerunner of Christ, preaching, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Repentance in that day, as it is in this, was not just a matter of confessing with the lips, but rather of speaking from inmost conviction. There were those who came to John in whom this was not found, and John said, "O, ye generation of vipers who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentence." He meant, as the context shows, that the claim of having Abraham as their father, was not sufficient, (as no other thing of the flesh is sufficient), to enter into the kingdom of heaven; that God's fan was in his hand, and the threshing floor should be thoroughly cleaned, and His wheat should be gathered into His garner, but the chaff should be burned. Those whom John baptized came confessing their sins, of which the "generation of vipers," the Pharisees and Sadducees, had no conviction. But those whom he baptized had something which caused a godly fear in them, that they should come and ask for baptism. These were of the wheat which was being gathered — they had profund conviction that He whom John said should shortly come, was the promised Messiah.

To be faithful, we must say that no person has a right to membership in the church except those who have evidence of proper fruits. Many thousands think that the mere act of being baptized (or even sprinkled) of water gives them regeneration, and the right to church membership; and this is all that is required by some organizations. But unless a person has been born of the Spirit, he has never seen the kingdom of heav-

en; he has never seen the glory, power, or mercy of God; nor, indeed, has he realized in his heart that the grace of God was the only thing that could ever do him any good. And unless he knows all of these things, his profession is empty and insufficient. So, though a person may join this or that organization and be baptized, if he lacks that which makes him meet to be partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light, (Col. 1:12) it will not set him on a course to heaven. One must bear the true marks of grace to find himself at home among the Lord's people.

You will remember that Isaiah said, "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised and we esteemed him not." The account of Jesus in John 1:10-12, is, "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

The Lord has not changed in his way of bringing his own out of the world, for the church is composed of those who are called out; just as Paul wrote, "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Salvation is still according to his purpose and grace alone; and it should be remembered that to each one of these the evidence of their being saved and called, is brought to them during their sojourn as strangers in the world, and they are sealed with the holy spirit of promise here, which is the earnest of their inheritance in the world to come.

I think now of something I mentioned this morning: We have a great many things in our literature which are highly regarded, some of them called masterpieces by men who were great writers. But have you noticed that they often present things contrary to Scriptural teaching? Perhaps you have enjoyed William Cullen Bryant's Thanatopsis as much as I have, but did you notice that he said, "So live, that when thy summons comes to join the innumerable caravan, which moves to that myterious realm . . . thou go not, like the quarry slave at night," etc. So live! that we might lie down in peace. He did not mention the grace of God. But I must mention grace as the one important thing, for it is by His grace alone that we are brought to the grave in peace.

Again, a few days ago I read in a lecture by a noted man, "We are even at this present time laying up for ourselves eternal glory or everlasting contempt." No one who is taught of the Lord can believe that sinners by their manner of living, can work themselves into heaven. Yet that is almost the universal teaching in the theology of men, but it is not found in the study of God's word and his relations with men. The very best in the nature of men nowhere approaches an atonement for sin. This is well learned by the Lord's people, but scoffed by others. When it is written, "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," it certainly does not implicate the works of men; but rather the grace of God alone providing Him who is "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

This is what the gospel is all about: the power of God unto the salvation of his own people. For anyone to rashly implicate the works of men as a substitute for, or even causitive of, grace, is to charge God with foolishness in sending his Son for the purpose of redeeming sinners. Such as do this assume that men are not dead in sin, but are able to lift themselves by their own bootstraps; that men are not incapable of righteousness, but can circumvent the Cherubims, and the flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way

of the tree of life. But, of course, such as this is entirely contrary to the teachings of Jesus and his Apostles; it is not known in Christian experience, as found in reading the accounts of those whose lives testified of the grace of God bringing them out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God; with which the Scriptures abound.

The ways of God cannot be acceded to in the minds of the unregenerated, for God's ways are as high above their ways as the heavens are above the earth. Let a man search all he may, if he has nothing but his own spirit of man in him, he will search but not find the ways of God to his liking. The result is that men attribute to God such ways and doings as seem to them God ought to have; and further results in the doctrines of men — another gospel; which is not the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In every age of the world, men not enlightened of the Spirit have devised many strange things, and their philosophies are far more popular throughout the world than the doctrine of God our Saviour.

If there are any here today who feel that they are able to bring themselves out of the natural kingdom of man into the kingdom of God, you are believing something other than the doctrine of God; and just as sure as you live and die with the belief that salvation depends on what you do — and you feel that you have done sufficiently and heaven is your reward, there will be weeping and wailing in that great day. One, many years ago and in my presence, who was conducting a so-called revival, asked those who had been "converted" during his meeting, to let it be known when they got to heaven that it was through him they had been saved. Many believe just such as this suggests. What has become of the old time religion that confesses that God has done it all? Where are the old time people who confess their unworthiness, but that they love the things of God, and have nothing to trust in but the grace and mercy of God? How many people go before churches today and say that they are not fit to join and be with the Lord's people? We hear them coming to the Old Baptist Church that way. But what if one comes as was mentioned in a sermon at the Virginia Corresponding Meeting last year: a lady came asking for membership, who said that if given an opportunity, she would show she was as good a Christian as any of them. They did not receive her! Would you have? No! she did not have the marks of a child of God.

And, lest we get too lengthy, let us think about the marks of the Lord's people. The love, mercy, and grace of God will remain almost a dream-like mystery to them; and each one will always ask, Why were these things given to me? Why was I included in His love; and the peace that passes understanding? In him that has a hope in the Lord, the Lord is set apart and held in reverence (sanctified), and he knows nothing in his conviction, deliverance and salvation save Jesus and him crucified. He claims none of his own works, confesses his insufficiency, and testifies of what the Lord has done for him, as he gives the reason of his hope. What people other than the Old School Baptists ever mention having a hope? I know of none except those who believe as they do. But I have heard them most of my life, as they met together in their homes and meeting-houses, talk about what their hope consisted of, what their evidences were that they should be saved with an everlasting salvation.

This hope does not imply a perilous defect or uncertainty, as some would have us believe. I had one to say concerning my speaking of our hope at a funeral, that, if I continued to trust in that "old hope stuff," I would come up short at the end. But, in spite of objections, let us see what the Apostle said about it. "We which have the first fruits of the Spirit groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why

doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." **This is the hope we talk about in giving our reasons of it.** Paul said again in Hebrews, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." **One without the other would have no real meaning.** And of those who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them, Paul again said, "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." **So the children are perfectly secure in their hope.**

Think of this for a moment, how many of us would be willing to come into the presence of God and claim what we have done while we lived, as a reason why we should be passed into heaven? Doubtless there are many who are willing to rest on their works; and they may flaunt them in this life, but it is to be remembered that God is not mocked, and his word will never become of none effect. In spite of the fact that, "There is a way that seemth right unto men," it will always remain that, "the end thereof are the ways of death." His word has gone out and will not return unto Him void. There are those who say that if one does the best he knows how, then God will count it in his favor. But I cannot preach such things, for I must contend that it is by grace we are saved through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; and not of works at all. I recently used as a text, "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." I believe you know my understanding of it.

Brethren, this is the doctrine of God our Saviour, that salvation is by His grace. It is unto all the elect of God — those chosen in Christ before the world began, and, as said before, not one can be added nor one taken away. Though many false doctrines are preached which disturb, and overthrow the faith of some, it will always be true that, ". . . the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his." Aren't we perfectly willing to stand upon this: The Lord knows them that are his; and upon the Saviour's words, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Aren't we willing, yea more, aren't we fervently desirous of nothing else?

There is so much more to be said, but we must conclude for this time. Each one who believes these things, knows that something has taken place within him that is mysterious; something with which he did not have the slightest thing to do, except to feel its effect; something which was so memorable that it is never forgotten. Were you ever in the horrible condition of felt sin and condemnation? Were you brought out of that condition after a while to joyful deliverance, and your goings established in the grace of God? Do you now sing a new song, even praise unto God? Then you have a reason of a hope to tell, for this is what it is — what the Lord has done for you. Having this, you have unmistakable evidence of being one of those who were chosen in Christ before the world began, and have right, by the leading of the Spirit, to baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and for membership in the visible church. And yet there is more: many of those who have such evidence may never be counted in the church in this life, yet they, together with those who have been rightly brought into the visible church, will be brought into their incorruptible inheritance, which is undefiled and fades not away, and reserved in heaven for them; for they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

We must mention the latter part of

the text, "Having a good conscience, that whereas they speak evil of you as evil doers, they may be ashamed who falsely accuse you of your conversation in Christ."

How hardly can one refrain from speaking of his hope in the Lord? though often through modesty he holds his peace. When one speaks of his hope — of his travels from nature to grace, he has absolutely nothing to be hesitant about before men. Paul said to Timothy, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner." He that has a hope, has a good conscience in the matter that will sustain him before any unbeliever. And though some may speak slightingly of one who talks of his hope, or speak evil of him because he does not conform to the common notion of religion; yet the daily walk and conversation of such an one in the Lord lifts him above the crowd, and he is noticed even of men; so that even men wish there were more like him in the world.

So, brethren, do not hesitate to give the reason of your hope when any require it of you.

(The above is the substance of discourse at Black Rock Church, Butler, Maryland, the first Sunday in January, 1965. It was taped, but is necessarily condensed and edited for publication, in lieu of attempting to write an editorial. — J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Dear Brethren Gold and Lester:

I returned from a short trip among the destitute brethren in Bedford County yesterday, (destitute in respect to the preached word,) and on reaching home found the Landmark for the 15 inst. which had come in my absence. I at once commenced reading it. And can say of a truth that I felt to rejoice for the consolation received from its pages. How brethren with the love of God in heart can write or speak lightly of our sound periodicals and valuable books now being published is a mystery to me. I feel to commend them and only wish I was able to take them all for the benefit not of myself only, but for the benefit of my Children who I wish could never see or read the light, trashy blasphemous publications of the present day so eagerly sought after by the hords of arminians in the land.

But I started out to write something upon the sure standing of the saints, or the final perseverance of all God's children which I conclude is taught in the Scriptures beyond a peradventure. Since I hope I experienced the new birth I have never doubted but that grace reigned unto eternal life by Jesus Christ to all that are born of the Spirit of God, or that ever will be born of that Spirit. I sometimes think that none but an infidel can believe that a subject of reigning grace should ever be lost, or that Christ only placed man back upon the same footing or standing with Adam before his transgression, that is, if they have ever read the scriptures to any profit. Reason, it seems to me, would teach men better. But alas, men love darkness rather than light. It is a lamentable fact that professed Christians will ignore the plain teachings of the Scriptures in order to try to support some favorite theory.

When the man trangressed he was driven from Eden's Garden never to return. Before his transgression he was only fit to dwell there. He was not a Spiritual man, but of the earth earthly. I have thought that **he was fit neither for Heaven or Hell, but for the very place where his Creator placed him,** (the garden of Eden.) The death of Christ never placed him back into the garden, nor any of his posterity. Hence he was not, neither was his posterity, placed where he was before the transgression. But as he and his wife were transgressors or fallen creatures, all their posterity were transgressors or

fallen creatures; and were doomed to death eternal, if a deliverer did not appear. For he and his wife were powerless, — had not one ray of hope left on account of their righteousness, for they had none to plead. So it appears that by this one man sin had entered into the world (see Rom. 5:12) and death by sin. And the man was driven out. How foolish to talk of his being placed back where he was before the fall with death yet in the world. But I hear it preached constantly, if I go out.

But how shall any of his race escape eternal death, or obtain eternal life, (not how shall he get back into the garden,) ? Let an apostle answer, "But God who is rich in mercy for his great love," &c (see Eph. 2:4, 5). How could this love exist without an object to center upon? Impossible. Here the wisdom of God appears, and shines in the following, "And I will put enmity between thee the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel;" (Gen. 3:15) Here is a deliverer promised according to God's foreknowledge, who says," "Remember the former things of Old: for I am God and there is none else: I am God and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning (from all eternity) and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." (Isa. 46:9-10)

Then his knowledge comprehends the end of all things from the beginning. Therefore all and every act of men, devils, and angels was present before him, and before man was created He saw his fall, and had wisely arranged to save by or through Christ all that ever will sing in glory. And by virtue of that counsel that he declares shall stand, it was his pleasure not to place Adam back where he stood before his transgression, but to save eternally all who were viewed in the counsel of peace as being members of Christ's body. He who was to bruise Satan's head appears as the deliverer to fulfill the counsel. "Behold the man whose name is the Branch: and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the Temple of the Lord. Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; (not if his bride helps him) and shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." (Zech. 6:12, 13) Is not this Christ who is to build the Temple? If so will he build, and suffer another to pull down? No. If so, how will he do all his pleasure. I think that in this counsel God, the almighty Lord, sat as sovereign umpire, and the number that should be eternally saved was agreed upon, and it embraces the bride, the Lamb's wife who had fallen by reason of her sin in her federal head, Adam, and was saved in her eternal head, Christ.

So I conclude that there will be no misgiving or failure in the matter. And that she should be fully assured of this fact the prophet, under the direction of the Holy Spirit of God, speaks thus to her, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she has received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Isa. 40:1. This sets the matter in a clear light, for if the church has received double for all her sins, she is not only forgiven all her sin in Adam but all her sins by commission or omission in all time, and in Christ has eternal life which doubles for all her sins. How foolish to think that he would accomplish her warfare, and pardon her iniquity, and yet leave her liable to fall away and be lost! He is mighty to save. "Who is this that cometh from Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." (Isa. 63:1)

Ah, says the objector, these things were spoken to the Jews. Not so fast, he, Christ, is the Saviour of Gentiles as well. The counsel, blessed be God, embraced the Gentiles also. That which

saves the Jews must save the Gentile. There is but one Saviour, and but one way of salvation, and that is Christ. The first promise under the gospel dispensation runs thus, "And she shall bring forth a son and thou shalt call his name **Jesus.** He shall save his people from their sins." (Matt. 1:21) That settles the matter if there was not an other scripture bearing upon the subject. She brought forth a son, and the son saved his people from their sins of every kind: did not propose to save, if they would aid him, or work for their salvation; but he found them dead in sins, and quickened them into life. It was by virtue of his life, death, resurrection, ascension, and effectual mediation, which was all arranged in the wonderful counsel or covenant ordered in all things and sure. "Shall save his people," not try and fail, not pardon and unpardon, not give life and take away, not marry and then divorce, not deliver and suffer to be taken captive; but save, absolutely, positively save. He Christ is their life, eternal life I mean. How can one who hath eternal life be lost? Not until their eternal life is overcome. "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father which give them me is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand, I and my Father are one." (John 10:28, 29, 30)

But poor mortal man will rise up in the face of the dear Saviour and declare that his children have been plucked out of his hand and dragged down to an eternal hell there to welter in pain world without end. When men assert that one who has been born of the Spirit can fall from grace, as they call it, and be lost, they simply give Christ the lie, that is all about it, and this a subject of grace will never do; so I am forced to the conclusion that all who hold and teach this doctrine of the apostasy of Christians unto death are unbelievers. The Saviour said to his people, because I live ye shall live also. (John 14:15) But this, says the objector, was spoken to the Apostles. Yes but Christ is the head of the church which is his body, and common sense teaches us that the head cannot live without the body, neither the body without the head; so the glorious promise embraces the whole body, the church. But ignorant worms of earth being blind and deaf, can neither see, nor hear, but foolishly teach a doctrine that, if true, would destroy both head and body. For it certainly must follow that if Christ is the head, and the church the body, that the death of one is the death of the other. Besides what sense or reason is there in, or comfort can come of, a doctrine that robs Christ of his inheritance? Certainly none. Christ said, "I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." (John 6:38, 39) Again, "I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." (John 17:4)

Now if he came to do the will of the Father, and that will was to save all which the Father has given him, and he did the will of his Father, and finished the work, how can it be possible that the satisfied will can be broken? How can the gift of God to the Son be lost, and Christ's honor be vindicated? Can grace fail to reign to the final victory of all his redeemed? Horrid to think; impossible in fact. Then if any teach otherwise it is blasphemy. The life of Christ was a life of perfect obedience. He came to the law and fulfilled it in every respect. Justice could demand nothing but what he paid. The atonement sealed forever every thing that the law of justice could demand. Therefore he as surety had the right to open the prison house to all the captives and lead them out, never to be imprisoned again. His resurrection justified them, for he was raised for our justification; his ascension assured their ascension, and his mediation saves them from sin.

Because says the apostle, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," (1st John 2:1.) Then how can they finally fall away and be lost? Christ said, "ye must be born again." (John 3:3) Without this birth none can see the kingdom of God.

Well, all Christians (not all professed Christians) are born again, or born of the Spirit. The natural birth is of the flesh, and is flesh. It can be nothing but flesh, it cannot be unborn. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit. It cannot be any thing but spirit and is compelled to remain born of the Spirit. Hence the impossibility of the Christian ever falling finally away. Men **fall from great profession, but never fall from grace,** for grace reigns unto eternal life by Jesus Christ. The Apostles understood the teaching of the Saviour, and Paul taught the Romans thus, "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor pow,-ers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 8:38, 39) O! but says the objector, I know that none of these things can accomplish the final apostacy of any of those born again, but they by sinning bring it about themselves. John meets you here with the following soul comforting words, speaking by inspiration and therefore speaking truth, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil." &c. (1st John 3:9, 10)

I conclude that whatsoever is born of the Spirit is of Christ and hence can not sin, therefore can never come into condemnation. The children of God endure unto the end. The children of the devil fall from their great pretension, and, to cover the cheat, claim that they were once Christians, but have fallen away or fallen from grace. Again, "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. And if children then heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." (Rom. 8:17) That will do. It is just as easy to nonsuit one joint-heir as another. If the Christian is not a legally born heir then there is no use of language. Then, it is just as easy to drag Christ down to hell as it is to drag the joint-heirs with him to hell. For the apostle affirms that, "Ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God, and when Christ who is our life shall appear then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Bless God for his care of his children. They do not want to run away from him, or displease, nor disgrace him. But the great desire of the Christian is to live near to him, knowing that he is their strength, and life of their delight. Though they are often crying, O! my leanness, my leanness, how oft is the cry extorted from them, "Oh, merciful God, how I do desire to glorify thee by an orderly walk and godly conversation. But I am so poor, weak and blind that I fear that I am not born again. But if I am deceived for Christ's sake undeceive me. I do not doubt thy power to save. But I often fear that thou hast not saved me." Christians are not uneasy about falling from grace, but often fear they have no grace. But they can't consent to leave Christ, for they are kept by the power of God, and grieve and often mourn because they cannot love him more and serve him better.

Brother Gold, this imperfect scribble is at your disposal. If you can find any thing in it that is fit for your paper publish, and if not consign it to the waste basket. May the Lord prosper you and give you yet many years to edify his saints for Christ's sake.

J. C. Hall

(The above by Elder John C. Hall, of Virginia, appeared in **Zion's Landmark** of May 1, 1890 which was then published by Elders P. D. Gold and P. G. Lester. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

GEORGE W. McDUFF

It pleased the Lord to take from us Brother George W. McDuff on September 9, 1964. He was born October 2, 1894.

Left to mourn his passing are his devoted companion, Sister Cara McDuff, Longview, Texas, and three children: Irene Zane and Maurice Stone, of Houston, Texas; and Raymond McDuff, of Fort Worth, Texas; and eight grandchildren.

Brother McDuff was a deacon of Fellowship Church, and Moderator of the Fellowship Association. By the grace of God he filled both offices aswellas any brother I ever knew. He was known among the Primitive Baptists throughout the United States and Canada, and was loved by all who knew him. He had a good report from without, aswellas from within. We feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

May the Lord bless Sister McDuff and children to weep not as those who have no hope, for Brother McDuff was blessed with a good hope beyond this vale of tears. May He comfort you in your sorrow.

There was a large congregation of brethren and friends at his funeral, which was conducted by the writer.

Elder Lloyd Wall

ELDER RANDOLPH PERDUE

Elder Randolph Perdue was born in Franklin County, Virginia, October 12, 1868, and died October 6, 1964, in the county of his nativity. He was buried on the 8th of October, 1964, and funeral services were conducted at his home. He was laid to rest in the Rocky Mount Cemetery by the side of his two wives.

He joined the Bethel Church in July, 1895, and was baptized by Elder J. C. Hall, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry in October, 1912. He organized the church at Rocky Mount, Virginia, in 1916, and was called as its pastor, and remained so until his death. He was chosen as Moderator of the Pigg River Association in 1916, and served 48 years in meekness: longer than any so far as I know. He served as pastor of the following churches in his day, Bethel, Rocky Mount, Martinsville, Chestnut, Little Creek, and perhaps others, but always in meekness, and never as a dictator, for he loved Peace. He was chosen as one of the board of directors of the Peoples National Bank of Rocky Mount, Virginia in 1908, and was President of the bank and later Chairman of the Board of Directors.

The Lord prospered him financially, yet this never made him forget who called him by His grace, and made him love his people. He finished his work, and was called away to something that was prepared for him; and the One that called him will care for all of his people here and in the hereafter. So, we all say, "Well done," and we hope to join in the song of redeeming Grace in the day to come.

Written by request.

J. P. Helms

TRIBUTE TO SISTER BUENA V. WRIGHT

"Like Clouds that rake the mountain summit
Or waves that own no curbing hand,
How fast does brother follow brother
From sunshine to that Sunless land."

How poignantly true these words were made manifest to us on October 4, 1964, when the shocking news reached us that our sister Buena Wright had been killed in a car wreck, we having just left her a few hours before. When we bade each other "good bye" at the Sulphur Fork Association, little did we think it would be the last time together; yet realizing we have no assurance of our lives from one hour to the next. Buena dreaded the trip home having been in a wreck just one week before, and received injuries which necessitated her canceling a trip to Alabama to other associations. She was a regular attendant at associations, and had traveled extensively to hear the doctrine she so earnestly contended for. She was a gifted writer, and well versed in the Scripture.

Buena joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Cana, October 5, 1940, and was baptized by the late Elder J. R. Hardy. She remained a faithful member there until the organization of Shepherd Fold church in Houston where she made her home. She was one of the few remaining charter members, and a faithful attendant and supporter; never letting anything hinder her from going to her meetings unless providentially hindered.

Her body was brought to Quitman funeral home, to await the arrival of her children, after which she was tenderly laid to rest by the side of her husband and young son, who preceded her in death several years. Services were conducted by her pastor Elder C. M. Haygood, and Elders R. W. Rhodes and Lloyd Wall, at Myrtle Springs Baptist church, with burial in the cemetery there. She is survived by one son R. C. Wright of Meredian, Mississippi; and two daughters, Mrs. Welta Scruggs, El Paso, Texas, and Mrs. Kelsay Swain, Houston Texas; and by one brother and three sisters.

God's mercy overshadowed her in death in that she was not conscious of any thing, as she lived only a few minutes until death relieved her.

"Dearest sister thou hast left us;
Here thy loss we deeply feel,
But 'tis God that hath bereft us
He can all our sorrows heal.

Peaceful be thy silent slumber
Peaceful in the grave so low
Thou no more our throng shall number
Thou no more our song shall know."

A Sister-in-law,
Buena White

ROSA MILLER OSBORNE

Rosa Miller Osborne, of Nottingham, Pa., passed from this low ground of sorrow, March 24, 1964, in her 81st year. She was a daughter of the late Fielding and Mary Walters Miller, of Ashe County, N. C., who were members of a church of the Primitive Baptist faith. She was born Nov. 22, 1883, and joined the River View Church, the church her parents belonged to, and was baptized by Elder William R. Craft over fifty year ago.

After removing to Pennsylvania, she had her membership at the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, for 34 years. Many of the brethren and friends were entertained in her home, both in North Carolina and in Pennsylvania, down through the years.

She was united in marriage to Isom V. Osborne, Aug. 12, 1900. To this union were born 10 children. Three preceded mother in death. Left to mourn her passing is her husband and these seven children: Charles B. Osborne, Quarryville, Pa.; Mary, wife of James N. Payne, and Mrs. Brucie Leftwich, both of Whiteford, Md.; Barbara, wife of Eugene Grace, and Vaughn W. Osborne, both of Nottingham, Pa.; Bliss E. Osborne, El Paso, Tex.; and Eugene F. Osborne, Catonsville, Md. Also surviving were 11 grandchildren, 15 great grandchildren and two brothers.

Funeral services were held March 26, 1964, at Cauffman Funeral Home, Oxford, Pa., conducted by her pastor Elder John D. Wood, and interment was in Oxford Cemetery.

Gone into that light that shines so fair;
Gone from the earth of sorrow and care,
Resting those hands that did their best,
Gone, dear mother, gone to rest.

Charles B. Osborne

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God in His infinite wisdom has called from us by death our beloved brother and pastor, Elder W. W. Roberts, who calmly fell asleep in Jesus on August 26, 1964 at the age of 88 years:

Brother Roberts united with the Primitive Baptist Church of Newport River on April 4, 1904, it being our regular meeting and was baptized the following day by the pastor, Elder W. W. Brinson. In a short while after this the church recognized his gift as he was impressed to comfort others with the comfort wherewith he was comforted. On March 4, 1911 he was licensed by the church to exercise his gift wherever his lot was cast. On December 7, 1913, he was ordained to the full work of the ministry and was a faithful minister until death relieved him, serving his home church as pastor more than thirty years. He was faithful to the cause he so much loved and had the utmost respect of those who opposed him.

He was married to Miss Josephine Prescott in early life, and to this union was born ten children. His wife and one daughter preceded him in death. We pray that the Good Lord will comfort the children and grandchildren in this hour of sorrow.

We miss his comforting words in the Church but desire to be reconciled to God's Holy Will, and feel to say "Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will Be Done." We do know that though we walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death we shall fear no evil for God will be with us, his Rod and Staff will comfort us, even there nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. No other one is worthy of our trust.

Funeral services were conducted in the Church of his membership by Elders M. M. Denning and M. L. Simmons, among a large congregation of brethren and friends, after which his body was laid to rest beside his devoted wife, to await the second coming of our Lord when these bodies that are sown in weakness will be raised in power and see the Great King in his glory, be like Him and be satisfied.

RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication, a copy to **Old Faith Contender,** a copy to the bereaved family and a copy entered in our Church record.

Done by order of conference Saturday before third Sunday in September, 1964.

M. L. Simmons, Moderator
G. C. Garner, Clerk

BERTHA L. FERREE

Sister Bertha L. Ferree was born March 10, 1893, and died in her sleep September 18, 1964, making her stay on earth about seventy-one years, and six months. She was united in marriage to E. L. Ferree in May, 1915; and is survived by her husband and eight children.

She became a member of Rock Hill Church in 1945, and was a true and faithful believer until death. The passing of Sister Ferree was sad indeed, and we at Rock Hill Church, along with her family, will miss her very much; but we believe that our loss is her eternal gain.

Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That, first, we at Rock Hill Church extend to the family of Sister Ferree our sincere sympathy; and, second, that three copies of this be made: one for the Church record, one for the family, and one for the *Signs of the Times* for Publication.

Done by order of the church in conference in October, 1964.

L. B. Lambert, Deacon
W. A. Carter, Clerk

SISTER CHARITY PARKER

Sister Charity Parker was born August 9, 1874, and died July 31, 1963, making her stay on earth 89 years. She and William E. Parker were married in 1897, and the Lord blessed them with a son, Rosker Parker. Her husband and her son preceded her to the grave by many years; however, she was left with a lovely daughter-in-law and six faithful grandchildren to love and take care of her in her last days.

Sister Parker united with Creech's Primitive Baptist Church about the year 1913, and was faithful to attend until poor health confined her to her home; still she remembered and loved her church. We thank God that we were blessed with the sweet fellowship of Sister Parker.

Her funeral was conducted by Elders D. B. Stokes and W. E. Turner, and her body was laid to rest in the Old Beulah Church Cemetery. May God bless us to live humbly and lovingly as dear Sister Parker did while she was with us.

Submitted for Creech's Church by
Margaret C. Johnson

REDMAN BURKHALTER

It was the will and purpose of the eternal God of heaven and earth to call Brother Redman Burkhalter from this earthly life in a car wreck near Texarkana, Texas, June 30, 1963, at the age of seventy-five. Funeral services were held at his home church Prospect, Simms, Texas, by his pastor, Elder Lloyd Wall.

He was very faithful to his church, and a regular attendant of the sister churches of the surrounding area. He believed that God holds all things in His hands without the help of man; and he always gave God all the praise, honor and glory for his hope. We are bound to give thanks to God for the precious memories of Brother Redman, as he was known.

Written at the request of his sister, Sister Ollie Burkhalter, by

G. C. Fowler

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

God in his infinite wisdom and mercy has called to his beloved embrace by death, Sister Faye (Phatama Mae) Hauk. She was born January 22, 1890, to George H. and Polly Tatum; and was married to R. H. Hauk June 12, 1912. She departed this life March 4, 1964, at Hobart, Oklahoma.

She was the widow of the late Deacon R. H. Hauk, who preceded her in death February 8, 1958. Together they joined Little Flock Church, at Altus, Oklahoma, were baptized by the later Elder J. C. Sikes, November 8, 1924. "Sister Faye", as she was lovingly known, had a severe stroke in July of 1953, and never walked or talked the remaining almost eleven years of her life. Though her afflictions were great, her faith in her blessed Redeemer never failed, as was manifested in her love for the church and the doctrine of salvation by grace.

In sorrow, and with a deep feeling of loss, we bow in humble submission to the divine will of our Heavenly Father. May the mercy and love of God sustain those who are left in sorrow.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be filed with Little Flock Church records; a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church June 28, 1964.

Elder C. M. Haygood, Pastor
Ana Stewart, Church Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

We, the members of Pleasant Grove Church, wish to bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, who doeth all things well, in removing our esteemed brother, Tom W. Walker, from our midst.

On June 12, 1964, some of the members from Pleasant Grove Church and our pastor Elder Harvey Smith, held a service at his bedside, and at the close Brother Walker told of his love for the church, and was received in the church. He was a devoted and humble member; but was never able to be baptized.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the church has lost a faithful member whom we will miss very much. And second, That a copy of this be spread on the church records; a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; and a copy sent to the family.

Done by order of Pleasant Grove Church at the regular session July meeting, 1964.

Elder Harvey Smith, Moderator
Robert F. Walker, Clerk
Reidsville, N. C.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133 DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1965 NO. 4

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4/65
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"THOU ART MINE"

Hark! Hark! the soft answer, the sweet, solemn voice!
'Tis the word of Jehovah that bids thee rejoice.
How blest the assurance, the promise divine,
Fear not, thou worm Jacob; Behold thou art mine!

Eternity saw thee enshrined in my love,
And the favor I bore thee no time can remove:
Thy sins shall not frustrate my gracious design;
Fear not, thou worm Jacob; Behold thou art mine!

Though fiery the trials that wait for thee here,
Yet bright through them all thou at last shall appear;
And when dark the storm gathers, this word shall be thine,
In all thy afflictions, Fear not, thou art mine!

When thy foes shall beset thee, and dangers assail,
Although they distress thee, they shall not prevail;
His claim to thy person shall Satan resign:
As a brand plucked from the burning, Behold, thou art mine!

When faint thy heart beats, and slow draws thy breath,
And thy soul is engaged in its struggle with death;
When thy friends gather round thee to catch the last sign:
In death's gloomy valley, Fear not, thou art mine!

When the grave closes over thee, in darkness and gloom,
All that thou claimest on earth in the tomb,
Though thy dust shall be scattered on mountain or main,
Yet still thou art mine! and I'll raise thee again.

When the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall arise,
And fruition of glory shall beam on thy eyes,
In song of salvation, the chorus divine,
Shall burst from thy lips, and proclaim, Thou art mine.

E. J. — Gospel Standard, 1855
Selected by Bro. Geo. W. Jackson

TIMOTHY 1:9

1029 Daniel Street
Jacksonville, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler,

I have for sometime thought of writing a few lines for the "Signs," but because of my weakness I have hesitated.

I desire by His grace to make a few comments on the second epistle of Paul's letter to Timothy 1:9, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,"

The apostle Paul clearly sets forth the doctrine of predestination, foreknowledge, election, calling, sanctification, justification and glorification in this one verse. When God blesses us with the spirit, it is sweet to meditate on the finished work of salvation. So it is upon this finished work our soul rejoices, giving us that longing to be in the presence of our heavenly King.

We find here that Paul began this verse with "Who hath saved us, . . .," giving reference to God, which ascribes all the glory to Him who bowed the heavens and came down: He who was

and is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. The beauty is that He is not going to save us but already hath. No wonder God's people can sing a song of "What Wonderous Love is This." Their future estate does not rely on what the creature has done or will do, but on Him who hath saved us. I'm glad the little word US is there, for we find in 2nd Peter 3:9, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." This scripture verifies to me the same US as Paul refers to. What a glorious harmony between the saints of God.

Now, by his grace we come to the calling. Paul states further, "and called us with an holy calling." I hope, my dear saints, I know something of this calling. Do you? I feel that to every child of God two phases of the call are embraced in this calling, yet they are knitted together as one. Why? Because they came from God and one depends on the other, which means that they accomplish one aim and purpose. Let us, if God is willing, examine this and try the spirit, that it might coincide with our experience.

God called us in and by the law, and as we struggle we find we cannot perform the duties or the demands it makes. We find ourselves totally depraved and in a pit of nature, struggling only to find we become weaker and weaker until we are brought into the lowest hell and to the ends of the earth. Jonah found himself in this same condition. The word of the Lord came the first time to Jonah and told him to go to Ninevah, and he paid the fare thereof. So did we, and it only brought misery to be cast into a sea of trouble and affliction. Yet when all seemed lost, God purposed a whale to be where he was tossed overboard. A safe place but not a comfortable place to the flesh. Just think, Jonah was cast from the presence of all human flesh and all human help. He, as well as you and I, was beyond the help of mortal man; and it was by reason of his affliction he cried unto God saying, "I will pay that that I have vowed, salvation is of the Lord." The Lord spake unto the fish and it vomited out Jonah upon dry land. The word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time saying, "Arise, go to Ninevah, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee." It was in the afflictions of life that Jonah was made to know God, not in a Sunday school room nor a school of theology. After this experience I find that Jonah went.

By the law we lose our life, and find of ourselves we can do nothing, but by His grace which strengthens us we can do all things. So the first phase of this call is by the law which brings us to naught, and to Christ, that we may be fit subjects of His grace. The second phase: how easy it is to go. I've been told and I feel I know by experience how hard it is to try to preach (impossible), but to be blessed to preach is so easy and most reviving to a poor soul. Dear readers, remember without the holy calling there would be no law or grace, for if no law, who would need grace? Yet the law and grace are knitted together in such a mysterious way even as the Father, Son and Holy Ghost and cannot be separated but must be fulfilled in Christ.

Now the last portion of this verse, "not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." I feel we know, even as Jonah, by now that our works and our righteousness are as filthy rags in His sight. The law teaches us this, and the reason it does is because the grace was ever before the law (or at least before the law was given), fulfilling all of our needs. So it was God's eternal purpose to bring us in a peculiar way that we might be a peculiar people, making us to have no confidence in the flesh but to look to Him as the author and finisher of our faith; that we should show forth the praise of Him,

who hath begotten us unto a lively hope, (not a dead one), by the resurrection of His Son from the deadness of the law that brought us to death, that we should live to Him; that the glory and honor and all praise should be to Christ, who is our head.

Just think, this was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. No wonder John could say, "Behold, what manner of Love the father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God:, therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." (I John 3:1) Yet we cannot understand what his purposes are nor what he hath prepared for his people. Paul says again, I Corinthians 2:9, "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Yea, we love Him. Why? He gave us the answer: It is because he first loved us. Why did he first love us? Because we were given to him by the Father before the world began. We belonged to him, therefore he came to redeem His people, to justify them by His blood, to present them to the Father without spot or wrinkle, which represents the glorified state that they some day will be in, in that city who's builder and maker is God, which is eternally in the heaven.

So may all of us by His Spirit be blessed to say as Jeremiah in 17:14 said, "Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise."

D. B. Stokes, Jr.

THE LORD HAS RICHLY BLESSED THEM

807 Pope Street,
Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Brother Spangler,

I am sending you a check to re-new my subscription to the **Signs** another year. It is filled with good reading, and I am sometimes blessed to enjoy it so well that I feel I would love to write each writer and try to tell them how much their words mean to me.

I am sending the experience of my nephew, and a dear brother in Christ; and I believe every heaven-born soul will witness the fact that it was the working of God's mighty power in turning him from his own way, causing him to seek his Saviour's face, and there find mercy and salvation. I am so glad that the Lord puts the desire in the hearts of many of his children to write these experiences, for, to me, it shows the power of God, and lifts us up as we are when we listen to a gospel discourse from a minister.

Richard Campbell is the son of my sister, Carrie, who lives here in Memphis, and Luther Campbell, our deacon who is now deceased. He joined the church several years ago, and was later ordained a deacon also. His gentle manner, his walk, his talk and steadfastness has endeared him to all.

The Lord has so richly blessed us here. We are few in number, but the fellowship is so sweet. May it be God's will to continue these blessings, and keep us humble and in peace, and fill our hearts with compassion toward each other and cause us to bear with one another in our weaknesses, and to overlook each other for good, and not to wound or hurt. Wouldn't it be heavenly indeed, if our God would fill all our hearts so full of his rich abounding love, that none could say he had ought against a brother. But Wisdom knows all things; and as one wrote:

> "He treasurs up his bright designs
> And works his sovereign will."

So He knows all about his creatures here below, and is causing all things to work together for good to those that love God: He loved them, is the reason they love him. "What wonderous love is this, Oh, my soul?"

I want to say a few words more. I have just read the "Voices of the Past" in my December **Signs** which came today. It is so wonderful to read words written by such an able man as Elder

Gilbert Beebe, and for them to tell exactly how you believe and understand texts, or verses of Scripture.

Mrs. James E. (Lucille) Young

EXPERIENCE OF BROTHER RICHARD H. CAMPBELL

2761 Cochese Ave.,
Memphis, Tennessee 38118

I would like, the Lord willing, to write regarding what I hope and trust has been the Lord's dealings with a poor sinner. I cannot say that I know that they are, but it seems from talking with others, that there have been many sign posts along the way that agree with their travels. These are some of the things that strengthen our hope, and enables us to press on to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God; if in truth we are on that highway.

In my younger life I had never thought seriously about religion. I always thought that someday, when I got older, I would join the church — and that church was always the Primitive Baptist Church. This was just a natural impression because my parents and grandparents were members. I never really knew anything about the church, but even then there was something that I could see there which was not found anywhere else. I never had any time for the other churches, because it seemed that even then I knew better than to believe that stuff. To me, God was not like they claimed him to be. But my thoughts were just of the flesh, and I did not worry about it one way or the other.

I was thirty years old, married and living in West Point, Mississippi, when I first began to question life, its meaning; and the future. I remember buying a Bible from a door to door salesman, just because I felt that every home should have one, I guess. Not that I wanted to read it or was concerned with its teachings. Sometime later I began to ask a blessing before meals in my home — again, just because I thought it was nice and should be done; not because of any reason that I can explain. I then began to have trouble with my nerves, and was convinced that it was heart trouble. I thought that I was in serious trouble, and even dispaired of living because I felt that death could come at any moment. I began to try to pray to God to have mercy on me, and show me the way that I should go. I did not know what the right way was but I knew I was not walking in it. This all happened over a period of a year or so; and it is only looking back that I hope I can see the hand of the Lord in the matter. At the time these were all separate and distinct occurances, and some even unnoticed. I was not attending church, and had no thought of it during this period. Looking back, I feel that if I have ever prayed it was at this time.

One Sunday in March, 1954, my wife and daughter left to go to their church and Sunday-school. As they left I picked up the Bible and laid down across the bed to read. As far as I was concerned, it was just a whim of nature, as I had tried to read before but would not read more than a chapter because I could not understand what I read. I could see only with the eyes of the flesh, and understand with the natural mind. These have no part in the things of God, because the natural mind cannot understand the things of God, for they are foolishness to him. This was not the case this time, if not deceived, because the more I read, the more I wanted to read. And I continued to read every spare moment for two or three years. If I had fifteen minutes, I would spend them reading the things that were now my meat and drink, and my whole life. It seemed that I understood the words, and did not question the fact that this should seem strange, because I had never been able to understand before.

This was not the only thing that was different, however. From the moment I began reading forward, my whole thought was of God and his word. It

was three or four weeks after I began reading before the second Sunday when they held their monthly meeting in Memphis, Tenn. I could hardly wait for the opportunity to go and hear the preaching, for I felt to know that I would understand; and yet, I never had before. I also knew, it seemed, that I understood what I had heard talked about all my life in my home before I was married. I could see that my parents and the brethren and sisters who visited us, had something that was very beautiful and precious to them; and I had never understood what it was. This has been a great consolation to me, the fact that all this happened when I was away from home, and not in contact with anyone who knew of these things. To me, it is evidence that it does not matter whether there is a preacher, a brother or a sister, or anyone, if the Lord calls, his children will answer; and with all understanding, for He is their understanding.

My thoughts previously were entirely on the things of the world earning a living, because this was all that I knew. Now my whole sense of values were changed: my walk and every waking thought were different. I no longer enjoyed the same things. It seems that it all happened in a twinkling of an eye, and yet it did not seem strange — it was as though I was another person. The things I had previously enjoyed were foolishness to me; and I was concerned whether I could carry on the affairs of everyday living and working. I remember one Sunday of reading in Revelation. I don't remember where, but suddenly a gread dread came over me, and I could not continue reading. As we sat down for lunch, I remember looking at my family, and thinking, Oh my! things can never be the same between us again. I was sad, because the family was the same and had every right to expect me to continue the same, but I knew I could not. I even worried about whether I could go back to work the next morning; but the next morning this was gone from me.

It was for two or three years that I read the Bible daily, and wanted to do nothing but read, or hear the brethren talk on these things. I was traveling at this time, and I would take my song book with me, and drive down the highways singing the songs, and rejoicing in this new found love that was so sweet and precious to me. I learned most of the songs because I sang them so many times. This was indeed the sweetest season that I have ever had; and while in this spirit, it seemed that I could say without question, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and all is well with my soul."

This season lasted a long time, and then it was gone. I was just as powerless to keep it from leaving, as I would have been to try to have kept it from coming in the first place. I have had many different travels and experiences since that time. Some of them agree with these earlier experiences, and this always strengthens my hope that they are of God, and are building line upon line, and precept upon precept, to the perfect work of Christ. I have thought that these early seasons of rejoicing, when the new heart of flesh is young and tender, are the most beautiful and precious to the child of God; if, indeed, I know anything about it. I have wondered if this is the well of water springing up within, as Christ said to the Samaritan woman at the well, because these continue on into and agree with the later experiences. We continue to draw from this well as long as we live. I say this because these are the things we look back to when we are in doubt, and fear that we are mistaken in it all.

It is a fearful thing to claim to have a hope in these things, seeing ourselves as we are; but this we feel to know, if God be for us, we shall stand. We cannot, and do not want to deny this precious truth, and only pray that in His infinite mercy He has looked on us through the precious blood of Christ; which makes His children perfect in His sight, which they could never be of themselves.

We cannot, nor do we desire to turn

back, but we can in remembering the way in which we have been brought; the way by which we were delivered from the former things we once loved and trusted in, press on by faith in Him who is able to do more for us that we could even think to ask. In this we realize that we are nothing and less than nothing, and altogether vanity; but, as it is written, "He that has begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ." Our prayer and hope is that He has begun this work; and, if He has, we are just as sure to inherit heaven and immortal glory as God is God, for He cannot deny himself. Praise His holy name.

I sometimes try to pray, and it seems as mockery to even attempt. At other times it seems that I do not try, but every breath is praising Him, and prayer is said whether words are uttered or not. Great is the mystery of godliness, and his ways are past finding out. We cannot find them: they find His children, and His ways are precious in their sight.

I have tried to write some of the things that I have experienced, and hope to believe. They are not of my doing. How can one perform that which he understands not? I hope and trust that this has been of the leading of the Holy Spirit, because it is upon these things that I base my hope to have been blessed to understand some of the things pertaining to God and godliness, and that they are the travels of a child of God, being led in a way that I knew not. His children are as the kine pulling the cart with the Ark of God: they go lowing, looking neither to the right nor the left. They realize that their natural home and loved ones are behind them, but know that their way is set, and their course determined.

My prayer to God is that he will lead me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake, and that he will give me the strength sufficient for the steps that are ahead of me. My constant desire is to live so that the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be accepted in His sight; and to the praise, honor and glory of His holy name. This can only be accomplished if He leads and directs the steps I take, and keeps me in the strait and narrow path that leads to eternal life.

The above was written after much consideration and a fearful realization of the weakness and imperfections of this poor sinner. It is just a feeble attempt to give the reason for this hope that I trust I have. It gives me much sorrow when I see myself as I am; but much joy when I am blessed to look away from self and see the perfection of God in all things; and feel the love that fills my heart when the brethren meet together — and love seems to reign in every heart.

May all who read this, receive it in the same spirit that it is written: not as a proud, boastful attempt to try to lay hold on something that I do not have, but rather as a prayerful plea: Come tell me is it thus with you. May God's richest blessings be with all who call on His name from a pure heart — a heart made pure by the precious blood of Jesus Christ, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

Rt. 1, Box 115,
Bivens, Texas

Dear Elder Wood:

I am sending you a letter I received from Sister Buena Wright's daughter after Sister Wright passed away. Would be glad for it to be published in the **Signs**, if you see fit. Hope you and the brethren in your section are doing fine. We are doing very well.

Your brother in hope,
(Elder) Lloyd Wall

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59 Neyland,
Houston, Texas 77022

Dear Elder Wall:

It is very hard for me to put my feel-

ings into words, but I want to try to tell you how much it meant to me to have you come and speak at mother's funeral. She believed that you spoke and preached the truth, and would defend it regardless of what others believed. She loved you and your wife very much. I believe that her funeral was all that she would have wanted, and a great tribute was paid to her, not only by three preachers, but by the presence of so many who loved her.

I hope that some day I might receive the gift and love that can only be given by God's mercy through his precious Son, Jesus. I hope to believe the same things she did, and if I do I know that this belief and understanding is given me only by the grace of God, but I have not laid down the old life, and cannot unless He gives me the will to do so.

Please tell the brethren at Fellowship Church that we thank them sincerely, and from our hearts for the artificial wreath. It was lovely, and will remain a sign of love long after her grave is cleared of the other flowers.

. . . Please give your wife and family my best wishes; we would like to hear from you sometime. If you come to Houston don't fail to call us.

Sincerely,
Kelsay Swain

LETTER FROM SISTER BUENA WRIGHT TO ELDER HAYGOOD

Houston, Texas
May 6, 1964

Dear Brother and Sister Haygood and family:

Kindred in our blessed Lord and Saviour, (if this poor worm is not deceived), made precious by His life's blood. It seems the sweet dew drippings that fell so sweetly into my soul on Sunday are still felt in some precious measure; and the meditations thereon are made a rejoicing in my soul to the extent that I would communicate to one and all, if it were in my power. These precious things proclaim the power and workings of the Holy Spirit in the benighted souls of poor lost sinners, that all might see, feel and praise Him. Alas, this I cannot do, but feel bound to speak in my feeble way, to those who have tasted these glorious things.

What a gracious God, what life giving power, what amazing things He causes his little ones to behold in righteousness. My poor heart breaks at His goodness and mercy to this poor, sinful creature; and while I am thus enamoured of his love, there is a twinge of fear, such a distrust of self, that I tremble for fear I shall do or say something that will cast reflection upon His holy name, and His precious cause. I desire so earnestly and fervently to do and say all to His honor and glory. Yet I fall short, Oh, so short.

He is so precious to my soul:
Oh, magnify His name with me;
Oh, come who will and behold
What mercy He has bestowed on me.

Oh, sing His praise, my soul sing praises,
I tremble in His love so free.
Oh, who can behold lovely Jesus
And not desire Him through eternity.

I do not pretend to be a poet, but His mercy felt, His love drunk in must flow forth, and therefore the feeble words above.

Do so hope you were cared for by this Lovely One, in much felt nearness on your way home: that He brought you safely to your destination, to find all well at home. That you might, as dear old Warburton, and millions of others so deeply wrought upon by His love and mercy, fall upon your knees and sing out His praises.

Yours in a blessed, sweet hope that this Jesus is mine. Pray for me as given grace.

Buena Wright
(see obituary)

LETTER FROM A CHURCH TO ASSOCIATION

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Church of Salisbury, Maryland, greets, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the churches composing the Salisbury Association, meeting with the Snow Hill Church on Wednesday and Thursday, October 21 and 22, 1964:

Beloved Brethren:

The passing of another year has brought us all together once more — another year in which the Lord has been our refuge and our strength. Again, the appointment by the Salisbury Church to write you the annual letter brought solemn questions to the mind of the writer and a seeking for the leading of the Lord. Once more, the answer seemed to be given in the words of Hebrews 9:22 "Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."

At the very threshold of the Scriptures, in the account of Adam and Eve, stands boldly and unmistakably, the sacrifice of blood as the only offering for sin acceptable to the Creator God. Adam and Eve made aprons of fig leaves to cover their shame, but God prepared coats of skins to clothe them, skins divinely provided by the shedding of blood. In the account of Cain and Abel — Cain offered unto the Lord the fruit of the ground, of the earth, earthy, the product of his own efforts — a bloodless offering. Abel, by faith, offered the firstling of his flock, requiring the shedding of blood. God had respect unto his offering but unto the offering of Cain He had not respect.

When the High Priest, on the day of Atonement, went within the vail, into the Holy of Holies to make an offering for his own sins and the sins of the people, he took for the offering, a lamb without blemish — remission by the shedding of blood. When the Lord passed over the land of Egypt, smiting the firstborn of all, both man and beast, from the firstborn of King Pharoah even down to the firstborn of the maidservants, only those families displaying blood on the door and sideposts, did the Lord pass over, setting forth deliverance by blood. When the City of Jericho fell, Rahab, the Harlot, was spared destruction by placing the scarlet line in her window, showing by its very color, safety through bloodshed. So, on and on, throughout the Scriptures, runs the scarlet line.

All of these point in type and figure to Jesus, the Lamb of God, who poured out His precious blood on Calvary's awful cross for the ACTUAL remission of sin. Now, let us consider for a moment, what the shedding of that blood did for, and means to us who humbly trust it was shed for the remission of OUR SINS. By virtue of that shed blood, we have been delivered from the penalty of the sin in which we were conceived and born; we are now being delivered from the dominion of the sins which do so easily beset us, and we shall be delivered from the stain of sin, so that our dear Redeemer may present us to the Father spotless, blameless and forever free from condemnation. By virtue of that shed blood, He who was dead and is alive forevermore, is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on High and by virtue of His presence there, the throne on which He sits is no longer a throne of judgment but a throne of grace. By virtue of that shed blood, sinners burdened with a load of guilt, realizing their helpless condition, tremble with fear to approach Him who has every right and every reason to condemn them; but as they fearfully look up, lo! they behold not the face of their judge, but the face of their Saviour, bidding them come. By virtue of that shed blood, we are now seated in heavenly places in our Saviour; and by virtue of that shed blood, death will be swallowed up in victory and we shall dwell forevermore with our dear Redeemer in that city of which He is the light, beholding and sharing His glory!

Oh, Brethren, as we are blest to behold our wonderful Saviour — to meditate upon the merits of His blood and by faith to believe it was shed for our salvation, we are made to cry out as did the Apostle Paul in amazement, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things the Father hath prepared for them that love Him." And all things the Father prepared for us, He gave us in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Our meetings remain unchanged. The Lord has continued to nourish our souls through the channel of our dear pastors, Elder D. V. Spangler and Elder W. D. Griffin, who preach nothing among us save Christ — crucified, arisen and glorified, and His people complete in Him. Our meetings are well attended and we hope and believe that brotherly love continues among us and for you, our dear Sister Churches.

Should the Lord tarry another year, we the Salisbury Church, hope for and invite you all to meet with us in October, 1965.

Submitted in love and fellowship.
Elder D. V. Spangler, Pastor
Elder W. D. Griffin, Assistant Pastor
Maude T. Laws, Clerk
Written by Mildred V. Dykes

THEY KNEW *THE SIGNS* CONTAINED "SOMETHING"

Box 481,
Island City, Oregon 97851

Dear Editors:

I notice, after reading my paper, that I have allowed my subscription to come to the end of the way. Enclosed find a check to cover two more years of the Old Paper, which I have slept on, and looked at and wondered what it contained since my earliest childhood. (It was so precious to my parents that "we must never destroy the *Signs* — that's Daddy's *Signs*"; and from the oldest to the youngest knew from birth that those papers contained "something"). Just the last few years I have been privileged to be able to read, enjoy and understand what was written therein.

I have been blessed in many ways, and though I have been exposed to much of our modern churches, I have never been able to see what they were trying to do. I have been led down the ways — many of them not the best — where the other denominations would say with horror in their voices, "Old Satan has surely been handling you." Yet when all was done, or I came to a quiet resting place, I could look back say, that the Lord was guiding me, (for what purpose I knew not; to what end I could not see.) Yet we are not to question Him, for his ways are so far above our ways that we cannot see why these things have been made to come to pass. But I am convinced that I could not have changed one step that I have taken, nor undo any of the things I have done. So I can see His handiwork, and believe that I can see why I have been led along those paths; and hope that I am not deceived when I think I can see what he has planned for me to do.

I especially enjoyed reading Elder Curry's article in the November issue on "I Saw No Temple Therein." I have known all of these things for a long time, and have known there was a reason why I could not enter into and partake of the services of the "temple," and be satisfied with its "being the house of the Lord," as it is supposed to be. After reading this article, I can see these things. I see that, in spite of the teachings of these worldly churches, that these temples are not the house of the Lord, but are where money and worldly works are traded for what is supposed to be our salvation.

How anyone can believe these things, is beyond me. Yet just a few short years ago I could not hear anything that was said in an Old Baptist meeting, and know what they were talking about. Our ears must be tuned to hear

these things; our eyes must be opened that we can see; and our hearts must be made to recognize the truth, and to know that there is nothing that we can do to obtain this salvation. It is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast; for we are his workmanship, etc. Instead of trying to argue with those whom I know do not know what I am trying to show them, I would ask God to open their eyes as he has opened mine, so that they can see and understand the "things that are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes."

I do not believe that this means that babes in years are the ones to whom it is revealed, but rather these babes are ones who are newly led into His power and light. To these it is most revealing, and it isn't given according to our learning in earthly schools.

If I have written anything that might prove interesting to others, you may publish this.

One of the flock who is watered and fed by the word of God as written in this Old Paper.

Charles W. Bond

DESIRES MORE KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

6510 N. Calispel,
Spokane, Washington 99208

Dear Editors:

Another year has passed and it is time to renew my subscription. I have just finished reading the January issue and did enjoy it so much, especially the editorials by Elders Wood and Lambert. Sometimes I can read something in the *Signs,* and its just as good as being at church: I feel as though it were written with me in mind.

I am an "un-baptized Hardshell Baptist" in faith — the first, I hope by God's will; the second, I hope by His grace. I would like someday to be baptized, but only if it can be the way I believe it should be: by the will and grace of God. I do so doubt my own assurances, hopes, etc., at times; but I hope and believe that I have faith in God and in his word: and if I do, I know that I have it by His grace alone. I feel sometimes that my soul sings praises to God for the doctrine of Salvation by Grace and the glory that is his; and I rejoice when I feel that way.

Often I wish that God would increase my knowledge and understanding, for it seems that I understand so very little. Sometimes it seems that all I ever get, are crumbs from the Master's table; yet He can make these crumbs seem like a feast, and my cup runs over.

"But unto everyone of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." (Ephesians 4:7) Sometimes I don't see how anyone could help but praise God for all things: at other times I wonder if I'm not deceived, and even wonder if there is a God; and what it is all about. But, thank the good Lord, these times do not stay with me long.

I have been upset for the last few months over the mess the world is in — worrying and stewing, thinking that maybe I should try and do something, but not knowing what; and wishing that God would help me make up my mind. Lo and behold! last night He did. I could remember "the powers that be are ordained of God," and I looked it up and read all of the thirteenth chapter of Romans. And felt so amazed and glad — it was what my heart and conscience kept trying to tell me all the time, and I wouldn't listen; or, at least, argued with it.

I hope I have not said anything amiss, and that if I have, God will forgive my trespasses; for his is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

We (the family and the church) lost a very dear one last July, when my aunt, Mrs. Mary Eckard, passed away. But I do believe she is with her Lord and Saviour; and I hope I can in my heart rejoice for her. May God bless

his people everywhere, is my earnest prayer, and give them strength, faith and hope according to their need. "But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth." (2 Cor. 17, 18)

Enclosed is money order for $6.00; please renew my subscription, and also that of my mother's, Mrs. Carl Janson, Route 1, Mead, Washington.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Caroline Martin

SOURCE OF COMFORT

334 E. Pine Street,
Lodi, Calif. 95242

Dear Editors:

As it is time to renew my subscription, I will say that I have enjoyed the *Signs* so much, and have for a great many years. At times, being so far away from church meetings, it has been a source of comfort to me. I received the January issue, and it was a joy to read the New Year Editorial, and the Editorial "Associations and Churches"; also the "Voices of the Past" by Elder Chick. In the November *Signs* the Editorial, "Jesus, The Chirst, Is King," and the "Voices of the Past" by Elder Beebe, are so inspiring. I also enjoyed the interesting accounts of Elder H. M. Curry's life, and the article by him, "The City Without a Temple."

I have a copy of an article by Elder Curry that was published in 1895, which I have read over and over. It is so clear to the mind and knowledge, and a treat to read. I hope you will publish more of his writings.

I hope to take the *Signs* as long as I am able to see to read, and hope that will be as long as I live. I will be seventy-five in April. Since January of 1961, I have been blessed to attend meetings, but before that it was hit and miss.

May you be blessed with a successful New Year in all your duties.

In much hope,
Mrs. Mabel Lindsey

(We expect to publish more of Elder Curry's articles from time to time, including the one mentioned above. — Editors)

REMEMBERING THE PAST

Rt. 1,
Nebo, Ky.

Dear Editors:

Find enclosed $5.00 to pay for subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. We enjoy reading it so much. I don't put it down until I have read every word. We attend old Lick Creek Church, and love to hear and talk with Elder Biggs and family, and all who are there.

I remember when I was a little child, my granfather, Gilbert Tyson Fox, would take us over there in a surrey and two big, gray horses. The hill would be covered with people, and there was singing and preaching and shouting. People would spread their dinners, (not just at associations), as many came from afar then by buggies, and would spend the day just for worship and fellowship with one another. Grandfather would take two or three loads of folks over home to eat, and spend the night in a little old log room, with another one attached; and the porch with boards so worn you would stub your toe, and even holes in places. There was a little old apron stove in the kitchen, upon which I thought my step-grandma cooked the best food I ever ate; and the table was bow-backed, literally from all the food.

The folks would eat, and talk about the Bible. My Dad never joined the church, and Mom was sick so much she never thought she could entertain, but he loved the old church and the folks there. Dad would take us by buggy to the association twenty or twenty-five miles. Four or five feather beds would be made down on the floor and they would be full. Every minute of the two

or three days' services would be enjoyed by everyone.

It is the same old church, with the same kind of worship — believing in grace, and that Christ finished what he came here to do — the same good brethren, but so few. Sometimes even I have a hope.

Mrs. P. D. Kirkwood

(I have a nostalgic interest in the above, since it brought back many memories of childhood when I visited the meetings and associations with my father and mother, riding in a hack about twenty miles, and usually staying with grandfather during the meetings in Summers and Raleigh Counties, W. Va. Grandmother was a member; Grandfather was not, but he was a strong believer who was not timid in talking about it. — J. D. W.)

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230 Marilee Row,
Grants Pass, Oregon 97526

Dear Brother Wood and
Readers of *The Signs of the Times:*

I have just received my *Signs* for January and have read it from cover to cover. I note with interest a piece written by Dora Greathouse and her mention of Elder Lefferts, who preached my father's funeral at Strausburg, Virginia, 30 years ago the 12th of January.

My father was Elder I. R. Greathouse who preached and wrote for the *Signs of the Times* for over 60 years. One of my six sisters was named Dora Greathouse. Guess I am kin to every Greathouse in the United States, as the first one came here from Heidelberg, Germany, 256 years ago who had many dealings with William Penn.

I also enjoyed very much reading Mrs. Fred A. Horton's letter, as she spoke of Elder H. M. Curry's most wonderful letter. I also enjoyed his letter very much as I had the pleasure of hearing him preach many times 60 years ago at the Lebanon Old School Baptist Church. I was also a student part of 1906 and 1907 at this Lebanon National Normal University which was established in 1852 by Alfred Holbrook. I heard him make one of his last speeches at the age of 94, I think he lived to be 97. He was a very small man with a great brain.

This school is where Elder Curry was a student and an instructor. My wife's father Joseph Steddom was also a student there and graduated in 1883. He and Elder Curry were great friends. I married Mr. Steddom's daughter, Sadie 57 years ago the 11th day of last September I will now be 82 years old the 17th of this coming March. My wife is now 75, and we both are rather active for people our age. Thank the good Lord, he has been so good to us all the days of our lives.

I also want to mention Elder Cornell who was pastor at the same time at the Lebanon Church as was Elder Curry. There is one thing that is still fresh in my mind that Elder Cornell told. He said when his mother passed away he prayed to God to show him a sign of some kind that his mother had gone to heaven, and a framed picture of her was hanging on the wall, and a star came and lit on the right upper corner and stayed there until everyone in the house came and looked at it. I doubt if I could have believed this had anyone but a Primitive Baptist told it.

Oh yes, one thing more I would like to tell, while I was a student at this university we young people use to meet in a room at 12:30, and one of the teachers or someone would come down and make us a talk. One day one of the teachers came down and in his talk he said when he got to heaven he didn't expect to associate with common ordinary people. The thought popped in my mind, Brother if you could be a janitor you would be happy.

I don't get to hear very many sermons as our nearest church is 250 miles from Grants Pass.

In bonds of Christian love,
C. H. Greathouse

P. S. Brother Wood, if you see fit and have space, I would like for you to publish this in the *Signs;* which is the best paper I know of. It is about all the preaching I get, and I certainly enjoy every letter in it, and especially your editorials and the others, and also the *Voices of the Past.* I am more than pleased to see that you are publishing the same doctrine that was published over a hundred years ago. May God bless you to continue in the same old paths for many more years to come. I know if we are saved, it will be by the grace of God our precious Saviour.

If any of my old class mates should read the above, I would love to hear from them.

C. H. G.

EXPERIENCE

"For thou hast delivered my soul from death: wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?" (Psalm 56:13)

Dear Children of God:

I have made at least two attempts previously to relate orally a little of what I hope the Lord has done for me, but in trying to suppress my emotions, the spirit of the matter was lost. I will attempt to write it, and if it is God's purpose to be glorified through what He has done for this wretched soul, then his Spirit will guide my hand.

As far back as I can remember I had thoughts about God. I thought that I believed He was controlling everything. My parents were Primitive Baptists, and hearing them, and others, talk, I never found it difficult to believe that God had predestinated all things; and I tried to argue for it with others sometimes. I believed that God had a chosen people; and my understanding of an experience of grace was that at God's appointed time he took these creatures and showed them in some strong way that they were definitely his. So, I can remember from time to time wishing for this experience.

I don't know exactly what I thought of Christ: I read some about him, and I heard the preachers talk a lot about him, but I couldn't fit him into the picture. I thought, if God predestinated all things, and chose his people and showed them in time, why Christ?

It was revealed to me, if not deceived, in 1949 that Christ is the *only way.* I was in the Navy aboard ship, and was having some trouble with my superiors because of my misconduct. It was night and I was lying in bed; and most of the men were somewhere watching a movie. I had a mind to read some in the Bible, to try to get some consolation. I thought I could pick out something here and there that would suit me, and I would feel justified in anything I had done. But this didn't work this time with me. The more I read in the gospel of John, the more discontent I grew.

After a while, suddenly I was made to sit right up in bed — I was in the presence of God, though I did not see him. I think if I had seen him, I would have been destroyed then. But I felt his presence, and his wrath. I was shown myself; and words can't describe what I saw. I was the most sinful mass of corruption I had ever viewed. My sins rose higher than the mountains. I was before God alone. I had no excuses. I was looking for a way out, and I thought, "What can I do to atone for all this. What can I pay with?" God was demanding justice.

I felt myself going down in endless hell and death: Then Jesus appeared to me. It seems he was high up on the cross and his blood was flowing to me, giving me life, and cleansing me. I was lifted up out of that hell; and then I saw Jesus as if he had risen from the grave in all white garments, going up to heaven. I was given there to view

Jesus who died and arose again for the elect of God; and who will come again to gather them to present them to the Father, and say, "I am their justification." Praise his holy name!

I realize most of the time that I am not worthy to be numbered among you dear people — a living people that have been made alive by the blood of Jesus. But, if my soul has been delivered from this death, may it please God that my feet will be delivered from falling, and that I may walk humbly before God in the light and love of His living.

A brother, I hope,
Paul Morton
High Point, N. C.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Harmony Primitive Baptist Church will be held, God willing, all day Saturday and Sunday, May 29 and 30, 1965.

Services to begin Saturday at 10:30 A. M. and Sunday at 10:00 A. M.

The Meeting House is located one mile east of Huntington, W. Va. city limits, on Cedarcrest Drive; and one-quarter mile off U. S. Route 60, at Eastern Heights Shopping Center. All who are interested are welcome to come visit us.

Elder J. R. Lane, Moderator
110 Harrison Court,
Huntington, W. Va. 25702

Mrs. Mildred Stanley, Clerk
1046 Cedarcrest Drive,
Huntington, W. Va. 25705

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Mary Hendricks, Okla.	1.00
Duncan Black, Can.	2.00
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EDITORIAL

MATTHEW 8:1-4; LEVITICUS 14:4-7

"The priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water. As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water: and shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose into the open field."

What a picture is before us! Yet, as we view it and meditate upon it, we are brought forcibly to the knowledge that what we see in the letter, that all of the colors of the artist, that all of the natural talent of tongues and pen are not enough to get at the root of this matter. As far as schools go, they are wonderful. If all of the Old School Baptists criticized scholastic learning, that will not change my attitude about literal learning. I do not know as much of letters as I would like to know; so much is this true, that I am still trying to gain more of the knowledge of what is called a literal education. As this desire began when I was about three years old, it has not ceased until the present time. About forty years ago, when I was just past twenty years of age, I sometimes hope that I was given a desire to know more about the heavenly Teacher. This desire, like the first desire, was given to me. *I did not desire to have the desire in either case* (I Cor. 4:7). In the receipt of that gift, (if I did receive it), from that day to this I have intended to set forth a crucified Saviour. It has been the desire of my heart to know nothing save Jesus Christ, first, between that and the last, and at the last, for all of our salvation.

In the picture before us in Matthew 8:1-4 there is the victim. Look carefully at the victim. Do you find in it anything that seems to be like you? Have you ever been in the condition that he is in? Has your health (standing) before God become impaired so that you feel to be an outcast, not only from him, but from his people? Have you seen and felt the ravages of your disease in all of yourself? After first having it discovered to you, did you do all that you could to rid yourself of the disease? failing in that, did you try to alleviate your sufferings by poultices and doses and the lo heres and lo theres? and did they all fail, as such efforts will always fail? (Luke 8:43) If these and like experiences have been yours, you certainly will find a resting place as you are given to explore the precious things before us.

God uses many things to teach his people. We sing:

"Soon will the toilsome strife be over,
Of sublunary care;
And life's dull vanities no more
This anxious breast ensnare.
Courage, my soul on God rely,
Deliv'rance soon will come;
A thousand ways has Providence
To bring believers home.

"Ere first I drew this vital breath,
From nature's prison free,
Crosses in number, measure, weight,
Were written, Lord, for me:
But thou, my shepherd, friend, and guide
Hast led me kindly on —
Taught me to rest my fainting head
On Christ, the corner stone."

And each way is one that gainsayers can not place human efforts, and the instrumentalities of conditions, among them. As hunger brought the prodigal son to acknowledging his sinfulness (Proverbs 3:6; Luke 15:16, 17); as being swallowed up by the whale (power) brought Jonah to pay all that he had for the truth (Proverbs 23:23; Jonah 2:9); as the look from the Saviour humbled Peter into bitter tears (Matthew 26:75), in the same manner the disease of leprosy will bring a man to the medical authority, and the malady of sin, when revealed to a man or woman, bring them to Christ.

Everything, everything from first to last comes from an outside source. The sinner does not get the disease; it is one that he has had all the time, but the knowledged of it comes by revelation. The cure, with all of the various applications of that cure, must come, and will come, from the priest in type, from Christ in anti-type. In the application of the cure the priest commands that two birds be used. One of them is to be killed. There is not any difference in the two birds as to their value in the cleansing. If we endeavor to leave the Man Christ Jesus the Lord out of our preaching it is useless and com-

fortless to the sinner under consideration; equally so, if we try to preach him less than God, we are not preaching Christ and him crucified.

The doctrine of God's predestination is a glorious doctrine. As taught in the Bible, and as applied in our experience, it is a lovely doctrine; as it is warped and twisted by carnal reasoning it becomes a monstrosity and hideous to one taught of God. In the lovely matter before us, the order of God is made manifest. There has been a strenuous effort made to make the word *order* mean something in the Bible that it does not mean. In no place does it mean good order or bad order, in order or out of order; it does mean to teach the ordination of God in all of our church affairs. The ordination of God is so clear in the crucifixion of Christ. That which we would call useless or remotely connected, is of the utmost importance. As there is not a little sin, any more than there is a mild case of leprosy, just so, in the same manner, to the same degree, there is not a little event in the crucifixion of Christ, or of the tribulations of God's people. And this order holds good in the cure and cleansing in type and anti-type.

As the command to kill came from the priest, just so did the command come to kill the Son of God. *The priest commanded that one of the birds be killed.* God Almighty, the Creator of all things, the builder and keeper of the church (Romans 11:36; Col. 1:16; Rev. 4:11; Psalms 127:1), awoke his sword and said to it, Smite the shepherd, etc. (Psalms 17:13; Isaiah 10:5; Zech. 13:7). As the minister of the gospel delights in feeding the sheep, in contending for the doctrine, in doing the commandments of his God, just so, did the priest delight in having the bird killed.

The order (ordination) of the priest was that the bird be killed in an earthen vessel. If there are brethren that subscribe to the idea that Christ was not any kin to his mother, I am willing for them to have all that they can get out of it, but I beg to be excused from having any part in it. If there was, and if there is, any way in which Jesus was different in looks to other babies I do not find it in the Bible. If he was born of a woman, he was born of one as much as I was; if he was made under the law, he was made under it as much as I was. Being born of one, and being made under the other, necessitated his dying. The Son of man was put to death in the flesh (I Peter 3:18), which clearly shows the humanity of Christ, the dying in an earthen vessel. Have I viewed the death of my Lord over running water? Do I know the beauty, the cleansing of the constant flow of running water? Have I felt the rising of the water to a stream in which one could swim? (Ezekiel 47:5) Have I had this cleansing water to arise as a well overflowing and springing up into everlasting life? (John 4:14) Have I stood in amazement on the bank of the river of God's love and seen it flowing in winter and in summer (Zech. 14:8), and have I beheld its crystal waters as I stood on the wide street (bank) and rested in the shade of the tree of life? (Rev. 22:1, 2)

It is not any wonder that our brother called godliness a great mystery (1 Timothy 3:16), for when we look at the pitcure and see the living bird being dipped in the blood of the dead one, it is awe inspiring. I desire to have the right perspective towards this inexplicable fact. At any time we quarrel about God, we show that we do not have God as our Father. That which was born of the virgin was God and man. If the Lord blesses me, I will not set him up as having more virtue as the Offering or the Offerer. Our inability to understand him as being set up with the Father from everlasting, to everlasting delight in the sons of men in the habitable part of his earth; to view him as being made in secret, and couriously wrought in the earth (Psalm 139:15); to look in worship

at him as being God in the beginning as the Word (John 1:1), as being one inseparable from the other, as the Word being made flesh (John 1:14), as God shedding his blood (Acts 20:28), as coming in a body prepared for him (Hebrews 10:5-10), does not lessen it being true.

Not only did He tell us that he was the door, but when he was born of a woman, made under the law, he came in at the door. (Gal. 4:4) He was the first born among many brethren. The bird killed prefiguring the death of Jesus Christ, the blood prefiguring the cleansing blood of the Saviour, it behooved the living bird to be dipped in the blood of the slain bird. The sins of God's people had to be imputed to the One that had been brought up, who had delighted and rejoiced in his brethren. (Proverbs 8) As the blood of the dying Redeemer ran down his side, so was the living bird dipped in the blood of the dead bird. In the house of the Lord clean vessels must be used. God's curse upon Adam extended to every living thing (Genesis 3:17), and the cedar wood, the scarlet, and the hyssop must all be dipped in the same blood.

The power that is in the shed blood was felt and enjoyed long before the coming of Jesus Christ, but the cleansing of the body of Christ was in promise, not in actuality. The spirit's power was measured before the day of Pentecost, but even since Chirst fulfilled the law, died in the place of sinners, went back to heaven, the Holy Ghost has been in its fulness so much so that it convinces of sin (Jude 15; John 16:8, 9); dwells in the Lord's people (John 14:17); guides them into all truth (John 16:13); shows them the things of Christ (John 16:15); and was poured out on all flesh, even to the filling of the house and of the saints where they sat (Acts 2:2, 4). Here we see the blood being sprinkled upon him that is to be cleansed. Here is that delightful theme, the predestination of all things that pertain to the salvation of God's elect, seven times being required for the cleansing. Six times would not be enough; eight times would be too many; seven times was absolutely necessary for the cleansing, for, while it may be ridiculed, the Bible is full of complete things found in the number seven.

In the case of leprosy, it was Christ that pronounced the leper as being cured, as being whole. In the type the priest must do all the work; only the priest has the authority to pronounce the leper cleansed.

Then the living bird is let loose in the open field. How precious it is to think that the God of the whole earth did not die, but that the Man Jesus did die, and that in his death the law of God was magnified, the covenant of redemption certified, the wrath of God vindicated, the promise of God verified, the righteousness of God made manifest, and the justice of God satisfied. All of this took place in the killing of the first bird, which, to me, was the dying of the Saviour of sinners, together with the dipping of the living bird, and all of the things that went with it, in the blood of the slain bird. This teaches the unity between him and His Father, between him and His people.

The living bird was not released until after the cleansing. The Son of God would not have arisen from the grave had he not finished the work his Father gave him to do. He ought to have suffered all, that he might enter into his glory (Luke 24:26). He bought the field that had the pearl in it (Matthew 13:46). He is today in the open field seeking such as do worship him in spirit and in truth. This field is the world of his people, and he is not bound by uncleanness among his sinful people; he is not beset by any difficulties in the field, he having overcome the world of opposition; he is not laboring under any man made rules and rituals in the salvation of sinners. W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

MATTHEW 7:6

"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you."

This text is found in the closing part of what is familiarly termed Christ's Sermon on the Mount, in which he taught them privately, and gave them lessons of instruction, which are of the greatest importance to the saints in all subsequent ages. These instructions should often be examined and re-examined by the children of God, as they are given for their special benefit and contain admonitions and precepts of the most vital importance. From the rich cluster of the golden maxims and rules laid down for the observance of the disciples of the Redeemed in this sermon, we are requested to give our views on the text written at the head of this article, to which we will call the especial attention of the readers.

"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs." The things which were holy under the ceremonial law were the things which were especially consecrated, sanctified or set apart for holy purposes, as were the tabernacle, the ark, the altar and the consecrated things of the inner temple of the Lord in Jerusalem. The tribes themselves, being solemnly set apart from all the families of mankind, were ceremonially holy, and forbidden to intermingle with the other nations of the earth, and as a consecrated and holy people they were to live on consecrated and holy food; they were forbidden to eat that which was common or unclean. Of all the beasts of the field none but those which divided the hoof and chewed the cud were set apart by the special enactment of the Lord as the consecrated or holy sustenance of the consecrated tribes of the Lord, and these consecrated things must not be polluted by contact with other things which were not set apart; no mixture with anything else was allowed.

All this was undoubtedly to signify to us that God's chosen and redeemed people, who are born of God, receive from him spiritual and immortal life, which must be fed and sustained on spiritual and immortal food. This lesson is taught us in all the types and shadows going before. For instance, when God had created man out of the dust of the ground, he provided that the food necessary for man's subsistance should grow out of the same dust of the ground. His nature and composition being of the earth earthy, his subsistance must, to be adapted to the support of his earthly nature, be also earthy; and when man had transgressed the law of God and fallen under the curse, the earth out of which he was to subsist was also cursed for his sake, that it might be still adapted to his nature, as a fallen, sinful, earthy man. So in the figure we are taught that in the spiritual creation in Christ Jesus, they who are born of the Spirit of God must be sustained on spiritual things; as their spiritual life is in God, so is all their spiritual food and sustenance. The productions of the earth cannot feed and sustain the inward man, nor can all the joys of the Spirit, which do feed and sustain the new man, prevent the old man, the earthy nature, from requiring its earthly nourishment. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that flesh is of the earth earthy, and cannot be sustained without that food which is produced from the earth; and he that is born of God, although he might possess all the produce of the earth, would starve if he were not fed on that bread which cometh down from heaven. Except we eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus we have no spiritual life in us, for spiritual life can live on nothing else.

Those who are thus born of God are

a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and holy nation, a peculiar people," etc., chosen, consecrated and set apart, "sanctified by God the Father," "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit," etc., cleansed and washed, purged and justified, and as a holy, consecrated people they are made partakers of the divine nature, and qualified to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, who is the true bread which came down from heaven. Then the things which are holy are appropriated exclusively to a holy people; a people which God has cleansed, and which we are forbidden to call common. This sanctified people are called sheep, lambs and doves, and by many other figurative names, but they are never called dogs or swine. A dog is a very different kind of an animal from a sheep or lamb; he neither divides the hoof, nor does he chew the cud, he is therefore unclean. His disposition is also very unlike that of the sheep or lamb: he is ferocious, quarrelsome, vicious, and, like the wolf, it is his nature to worry, scatter and kill the sheep. His food, or that on which the dog subsists, is not that which would feed the sheep and lambs, nor can the sheep and lambs subsist on what the dog can feed upon. The dog would starve in the richest pasture field, where the sheep would fatten, and the sheep would starve if fed only on what dogs delight to feed upon. Dogs are dangerous animals, and we are admonished to beware of them. Some of them are said to be dumb dogs what cannot bark; sleepy dogs, lying down, loving slumber, and greedy dogs that can never have enough. In Revelation 22:15 they are classified with sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers, idolaters, and whatsoever loveth and maketh a lie.

The admonition of the Lord in our text then clearly means that his disciples shall not give, or minister the gospel, or its provisions, its promises, its comforts, its ordinances, or any of its commands, to any who are thus designated dogs, or who are in nature, disposition, practice or appetite as unlike the regenerated and spiritual people of God as dogs are unlike and inimical to the sheep and lambs. The gospel is food to the saints, because it is Christ; the preaching of the gospel is preaching Christ, and it is food to the spiritual, and hence the ministers of the gospel are commissioned to feed the sheep and feed the lambs; to feed the flock of God which he has purchased with his own blood, but charged to give not that which is holy (and the gospel and all its ordinances are holy) to dogs. Dogs have no use for holy things, they can do them no good, for they are not adapted to their nature or suited to their appetites; besides it is a desecration of holy things to give them to dogs or to swine. It is true, the gospel is to be preached to every creature, to all nations, and in all the world, for a witness to all nations, but only those who have ears to hear can hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.

The ministers of Christ have nothing but the gospel to preach, and that they must preach wherever God is pleased to open a door for them to preach; and its effect will be to discriminate between the living and the dead. All who have been pricked in the heart by the life-giving power of the Spirit will gladly receive the word, as did the quickened on the day of Pentecost; while others will mock and reject the testimony. But what we understand as being intended by this admonition, is that we are forbidden to attempt to Christianize unregenerated men, by teaching them the letter of the word, and applying to them the ordinances of the gospel as a means of salvation; by catechisms, Bible classes, Sunday Schools, etc., as though we could so improve their carnal minds as to make them acceptable to God, without being born of the Spirit.

According to our understanding of the subject, every effort to apply the things of the Spirit of God to unre-

generated men, is to give that which is holy to dogs. Theological institutions for giving ministerial qualifications to graceless youths for preaching, and to unrenewed children and adults for church membership, and for evangelizing the world by humanly devised plans and schemes, is an attempt to give that which is holy to the dogs, and is clearly a transgression of the authority of our Lord, and an open violation of the words of our text: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine."

It is not in the nature of swine to appreciate the value or beauty of pearls any more than it is the nature of dogs to relish the rich pasture on which the sheep feed. The children of God are in possession of jewels of inestimable value, which none but the children of God can appreciate or enjoy. Their spiritual privileges, their Christian love and fellowship, their gifts and graces, their experimental joys and peculiar exercises, their knowledge of divine things, are all pearls of great value to them, but their excellence cannot be known or appreciated by those who know not God. There is a fitness and utility in exhibiting these pearls among those of like precious faith, but those who have never possessed them would rudely trample on them if cast before them, as swine would trample upon the most costly and precious jewels. Christians are greatly edified and comforted by speaking often to each other of all the way in which the Lord has led them; they can talk freely one to another of their joys and sorrows, their conflicts and victories, but should they make these things the theme of their conversation in the streets and market places, or in the synagogues of Satan, they would be treated roughly: infidels, Arminians, will-worshipers, like swine, would trample them under their feet, and turn and rend the child of grace.

The psalmist said, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." They who fear the Lord can understand the language, and they know too well the value of such precious pearls to despise or trample on them. But those who have only the religion of the world neither divide the hoof nor chew the cud, and, like swine, serve only their swinish appetites; their god is their belly and their glory is their shame. The swine seem to have but one desire, and that is the gratification of their ravenous appetites; cast before them the most costly and splendid gems, or pearls, and as they cannot eat them, they have no other use for them, and they would as soon trample on them as on the most common earth; and they will turn again and rend you, determined to obtain something that they can eat. So when the Christian attempts to display the glorious things of the kingdom of Christ to unbelievers, they will sometimes be surprised to find that those with whom they labor cannot appreciate those experimental things of which they speak. Expostulate with them, and demonstrate what you say by the most clear and positive Scripture authority, and they will disregard your testimony and your Scripture, and trample both under their feet and then assail you again with as much vigor and determined violence as though you had not exhibited to them your pearls.

Sheep, swine and dogs are not suitable companions for each other, they cannot live in good communion together, nor should unnatural amalgamation be attempted, but let the sheep be associated with sheep, and let them "beware of dogs," and avoid the society of swine, and they will be more pleasantly and comfortably situated. The great and good Shepherd has told his flock, "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." He has chosen them out of the world, and called them to be a separate people. Let us then heed the admonition of our Lord, and give not that which is holy unto dogs, neither cast our pearls before the swine, lest they trample them under their feet,

and turn again and rend us.

(The above was an editorial of Elder Gilbert Beebe, published November 1, 1862. We think that our readers will be in full accord with his exposition of the text. — J. D. W.)

ORDINATION OF DEACONS

Pursuant to the request of Thompson's Grove Church, on Saturday, October 3, 1964, the following Elders: B. O. Thompson, J. P. Helms, Wm. Holland and Julius Bocock were organized into a Presbytery by selecting Elder J. P. Helms, Moderator, and Elder Julius Bocock, Clerk. Elder Wm. Holland was selected to lead in examination, and Elder B. O. Thompson was chosen to offer the ordination prayer. Elder Bocock was appointed by the church to be church spokesman. The following deacons were also members of the Presbytery: P. D. Akers, Bobby Bernard, Gary Akers, Andrew Gibson, R. C. Gearhart, Brammer Nichols, Walter Burgess, Leonard Nichols and Denver Simpson.

Brethren Nelson Reed and George T. Rakes were delivered into the hands of the Presbytery to be examined as to their qualifications as deacons; and if found qualified, to be ordained as such of our faith and order.

Elder Holland questioned the church spokesman in reference to the scriptural qualifications of these brethren. His answers were satifactory. Elder Holland also questioned both brethren relative to doctrine, faith, and order, and their calling; and their answers being satisfactory, a motion was unanimously carried to proceed with the ordination by laying on of hands, and prayer by Elder Thompson. Then Elder Helms delivered the charge in a very impressive manner; and Deacons Nelson Reed and George T. Rakes were given back to the church, and the Presbytery was discharged.

To all the churches of our faith and order we recommend our beloved brethren as servants of God. It is our prayer and hope that they may prove a blessing to our people, and go wherever He directs, and that they may be kept by His power and thus hold out to the end as good and faithful servants of Almighty God.

J. P. Helms, Moderator
Julius Bocock, Clerk

OBITUARIES

SARAH ALICE NOLEN SMITH

We desire to express our love and fellowship for our dear sister in the Lord. She was born May 12, 1887, and passed from this world June 10, 1964, in a hospital in Christiansburg, Va. She was the daughter of Lucrecia and Richard Nolen, and lived all of her life in Virginia.

She is survived by her husband, Graves Cleveland Smith, of Christiansburg, and the following children: Mrs. E. Turman and Mrs. E. P. Nolan, Roanoke, Va.; Mrs. L. A. Gallimore, Floyd, Va.; Mrs. W. W. Dobyns, Blacksburg, Va.; H. L. Smith, Radford, Va.; G. M. Smith, Richmond, Va.; and R. R. Smith, Philadelphia. Surviving also are 19 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren; one sister, Drusiler Gillispie, Baltimore, and one brother, C. H. Nolen, Williamson, W. Va.

She had a great desire to unite with the church, but was afraid she did not have evidence sufficient to go to the church. I was away at that time and could not be with her, and she went to see her cousin, Sister Eliza Turner, and told her of her travels from nature to grace; then she sent for Elder J. G. L. Hash, who went to see her, and advised her to come to the church as soon as she was able; that he was satisfied with what she had told him. She had been in declining health for several years. She went to County Line Church, Floyd County, Virginia, and was received in love and fellowship, and was baptized by Elder J. G. L. Hash, the pastor.

She reared a large family, and they were all good to her and she was well taken care of to the end. She attended her church as long as her health permitted, and was a strong believer in salvation by grace. Dear children, we miss her; however, our loss is her eternal gain. Our Heavenly Father called her to eternal rest. Her darkened glass has been removed, and she has no more of the doubts and fears which befall the children of God while in this land of sin and sorrow.

Her request was to be buried at County Line Church, and for Elder J. G. L. Hash to conduct her funeral; but as he had passed on before her, his son Elder Amos Hash and Elder J. O. Conner conducted her funeral. Many true and kind words were spoken and all was beautifully taken care of. The floral offerings were lovely. She was laid away in the church cemetery to await the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall call her sleeping dust to come forth and be forever with the Lord. Written by her only sister,

Drusiler Gillispie, Glenarm, Md. and
Eliza Turner, Floyd, Va.

ELONA MURRAY GAY

Sister Gay was born March 23, 1892, in Nash County, North Carolina. She was the daughter of Hinesberry and Minnie Murray.

In 1908 she was united in marriage to Junious Howard Gay, who became a faithful member of Sandy Grove Primitive Baptist Church in Nash County in the year of 1923, and was ordained a deacon in 1956, passing away February 10, 1961. Sister Gay united with Sandy Grove Church in 1928 where she remained a faithful and loving member until her heavenly Father called her from our midst July 29, 1963.

She had a warm spot in everyone's heart who knew her; and evidence on her sick bed showed she was ready to depart from this sinful world and await the resurrection morning. Her walk and conversation proved the love she had for her church and its members. While her voice will not be heard anymore, her memory will never be forgotten. She made the statement several times that she felt as if she was walking on Holy Ground when attending church services. I feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted at the Sandy Grove Church by Elders D. B. Stokes, J. B. Murray, and others. She was laid to rest in the Bailey Cemetery. The huge mound of beautiful flowers and large attendance showed the love her many friends had for her. It was a blessing that we enjoyed attending services and singing the beautiful hymns together.

Written by her son who misses her so much.

Preston Gay

SISTER CORA MILLS

Sister Cora Mills passed away September 24, 1964, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Elaine Kinsey, in Midland, Texas. Aunt Cora fell July 11th and broke her hip, from which she did not recover enough for us to know how she fell. She suffered much, but when awake was always trying to quote scriptures. She was born February 28, 1874, the daughter of Elder J. R. and Polly Morton, she being the last of eleven children. She was married to E. D. Mills in 1899, and to this union three children were born: two girls and a boy, the boy being deceased; surviving are: Mrs. Elaine Kinsey and Mrs. Ovbery Foutz; four grandchildren and five great grandchildren, and a host of nieces and nephews.

She joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Cool Springs, in VanZandt County, Texas, the fourth Sunday in August, 1911, and was baptized by Elder W. W. Slaughter. She lived a devoted member and loved the doctrine of predestination and salvation by grace without wavering. She was blessed to get to come back to her church the past several years at the three-days' meeting time. Her daughters counted it a great pleasure to be with their mother on her visits to her church. Oh, how she did enjoy meeting her brethren and sisters, and to hear the preaching and singing the songs of Zion.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder D. D. Wallace, at Canton, Texas, September 26th. She was a loving mother, and will be missed not only by her children, but by a host of brethren and friends who will miss her pleasant smile and kind words; but I would say do not weep for her: she fought a good fight and kept the faith, and finished her course, and a crown of righteousness is laid up for her which the Lord will give when he comes to gather his children home. May God in his love, comfort and bless all that mourn her passing.

Written by her niece,

Mrs. Minnie Donohoe

SAMUEL KEMPER NOLEN

Samuel Kemper Nolen was born February 10, 1875, and passed away May 11, 1961. He was the son of the late Alexander and Judith Turner Nolen, of Patrick County, Virginia. He was united in marriage to the late Loula S. Nolen April 25, 1901, and to this union nine children were born; two preceding him in death. Surviving are: Mrs. Alvah Thomas, Floyd, Va.; Mrs. Bernice Greer, Roanoke, Va.; Mrs. Ava Marshall, Newport News, Va.; Jewel D., of Martinsville, Va.; L. Earl, Cecil R. and Marvin V. Nolen, of Floyd, Va. Also surviving are eight grandchildren, and six great granchildren. His mother, who lived to be 103 years old, preceded him in death by only eight months.

He united with County Line Church, Floyd County, in July, 1911, and was ordained deacon in August, 1914; and acted as assistant Clerk and Clerk for more than forty years. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace, desiring peace in the church, and always filled his seat until the last few months. The weather seldom got too cold or rough for him to go to the meeting house on meeting days, whether there was anyone else there, or not. He bore his suffering patiently, though he expressed a desire to pass on so as not to be a burden to any one; but he could not die until the Lord's time.

His funeral was conducted at County Line Church by Elders J. O. Conner and B. O. Thompson, and he was laid to rest in the church cemetery, in the presence of many relatives and friends, to await the resurrection morning. The floral contributions were large and beautiful.

Written by a daughter,
Mrs. Bernice Greer

ELIZABETH PETTIS

Sister Elizabeth Pettis, daughter of the late James Edward and Francis Ann Shelton, was born September 13, 1878, in Tyler County, Texas; and died March 24, 1964. She was united in marriage to Albert Pettis in 1898; and to this union one child was born. Her husband lived less than a year after their marriage, and her daughter preceded her in death in 1948. She leaves one sister to mourn her death, Mrs. C. G. Westerman, San Antonio, Texas; two brothers, A. L. and David Shelton, Gilmer, Texas; three grandchildren; eight great grandchildren; and four great great grandchildren.

Sister Pettis was very humble, and her greatest desire was to attend church and mix and mingle with God's people. We feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

May the riches of God's mercy be with those who mourn her death.

Lloyd Wall

JAMES SANLIN SNYDER

James Snyder was born on February 11, 1907, in Oklahoma, and died October 3, 1964, at the age of 57. He is survived by his wife, Una, and seven sisters: Watie Gill, Clara Clour, Jewell Garland, Bertha Wright, all of Bakersfield, California; Etta Walker, Altadena and Thelma Strickel, Huntington Park, California; and Elbie Hilton, Lubbock, Texas; also by one brother, Loran, Buena Park, California. The sisters living in Bakersfield are all members of Little Flock Church there.

Jimmie was not a member of the Old Baptist Church but he was a believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and made an outward manifestation of his love for the Primitive Baptists. He was sick about two years and I had the pleasure of visiting him many times, and each time, although his sufferings were great, he greeted me with a smile. He was loved so much by the Old Baptists that each church sent flowers for his funeral. Amidst a hugh floral offering he was laid to rest in Greenlawn Cemetery, Bakersfield, to await the coming of our Lord. The writer was called back from North Carolina to conduct his funeral service. The good Lord made the way possible for me to render this last service to a dear friend and his family, for which I am thankful.

May it please the dear Lord to comfort his dear family, and especially his wife who stood by him so fraithfully through all his sickness. Her home is still an open home for the Old Baptists. I shall never forget the kindness shown me by this family.

T. R. Jefferson

MRS. ANNIE APPLE OSBORNE

Sister Annie Apple Osborne was born in Caswell County, North Carolina, July 10, 1895, and departed this life September 17, 1964, at the age of 69 years. She had lived most of her life in Guilford County, North Carolina.

Sister Osborne united with Tate Street Primitive Baptist Church at Greensboro at her June meeting, 1913, and lived a faithful member for more than 50 years.

She is survived by her husband, Brother Charles L. Osborne, Sr.; three sons, C. L., Jr., Otis B., both of Greensboro, and W. A. Osborne of Asheville, N. C.; six daughters, Mrs. Sam Lewis, Mrs. H. I. Swink, Mrs. B. L. Pegram and Mrs. Joe C. Wrenn, all of Greensboro, Mrs. James Brignull and Mrs. Martin L. Harder, both of Valatie, N. Y.; three sisters, Mrs. J. L. Cole, Mrs. Minnie Madren and Mrs. Kate Morgan, all of Greensboro; one brother, J. A. Apple of Greensboro; 23 grandchildren, six great grandchildren, and a host of friends.

Sister Osborne was known for her meek and humble life, always thinking of the welfare of others before herself. In all of her sufferings she never complained, but often said that God had been so good to her that she couldn't complain. I think Solomon spoke some very fitting words that described her life (Proverbs 31:27-31). "She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates."

May God's blessing be upon each member of the family to guide, keep and sustain them in the death of this precious loved one.

A few days ago I received the following poem written by Sister Osborne's grandchild, Janet Brignull, age 13, of New York:

IN MEMORY

Who is that woman who loved her family,
Loved them with all her heart?
Who is she who counted her blessings,
Counted them one by one?

She is the one who loved nature,
And respected and loved God so
She who thought only of others
Has gone to heaven, in all her grace
She is my Grandmother.

Written at the request of the Church at Greensboro by her pastor,

W. C. King

SISTER CLETIE R. HOLLEY

Sister Holley was born May 21, 1887, and was married to her late husband, W. P. Holley, May 10, 1902. They were the parents of one daughter, Mrs. Lurlene Hudson, of Farmerville, La., who survives. She is survived also by one granddaughter, Vivian H. Gray, and three great grandchildren.

Sister Holley survived her husband about two years, and was ill and afflicted nearly all the time of her widowhood, but she was blessed with humble and great courage, and blessed to trust in the Lord, in whose hands we are. The writer was privileged to visit her many times, and was deeply impressed that she was most wonderfully kept by faith through the grace and mercy of God. May the bereaved ones therefore not weep as those who have no hope, for she is better off in the silent grave, with her spirit with God who gave it, where there is no more suffering, trouble or sorrow, awaiting the great day of the resurrection.

Sister Holley was a very staunch but humble member of Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, Wood County, Texas. She joined this church in September, 1915, and was baptized by the late highly loved and respected Elder H. B. Jones. She was loved by her brethren and highly regarded by them. She passed away December 9, 1964, at her home at Farmerville, La., and her funeral was conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder W. W. Hudson, Jr. and Mr. Corley, the Methodist minister, at the Methodist Church. There was a nice attentive congregation, and the flowers showed the high respect in which she was held.

May the Lord richly bless each one of her family who mourn, and the brethren and sisters who loved her, and visited her lovingly in her sickness and trouble.

Your unworthy brother,
R. W. Rhodes

IN MEMORY OF ONE WE LOVED

Our hearts have been saddened by the death of Mrs. Myrtle Everett, wife of Elder John T. Everett, our pastor. Mrs. Everett never united with the church, though she was a strong believer in salvation by grace. She was so faithful to see that Brother Everett had all the care that loving hands could give, and was always present at church when her health permitted. She was eager to entertain in their home, and aided Brother Everett in filling his appointments.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That we the church at Antioch bow our heads in humble submission to the will of God, who does all things well; and we thank him for the life of Mrs. Everett to live among us these years. Also be it

RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be sent to Elder Everett; a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; and a copy be recorded in the church records.

C. B. Britt, Moderator
J. M. Proffitt, Clerk

JAMES FREDERICK DEHART

Brother DeHart, son of William Lawson and and Fannie Dalton DeHart, was born in Patrick County, Virginia, June 9, 1887 and departed this life January 5, 1965.

He was a retired engineer of the Norfolk & Western Railway with more than 44 years service.

Brother DeHart united with the Primitive Baptist Church of Christ at Roanoke, Virginia, March 26, 1939 and was baptized that afternoon by Elder J. F. Stegall. Brother Jimmy, as he was called by his brethren and closest friends, was a faithful and loyal member of his church; always attending the meetings with a special interest in her conference meetings and the church's welfare as a whole, and was always concerned about his pastor's welfare and was ready to lend a helping hand to anyone in need.

He was married June 30, 1918 to Maude Elizabeth Thomas. He is survived by his wife; one daughter, Mrs. Annette Fralin, Roanoke, Va.; one brother, Elijah DeHart, Stuart, Va.; two sisters, Mrs. Charles Harris, Draper, N. C.; Mrs. George Hughes, Greensboro, N. C.; and two grandchildren.

A very comforting and consoling funeral was conducted for Brother DeHart by Elder Cecil E. Turner. His body was laid to rest in Fair View Cemetery, Roanoke, Va. to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who shall call the sleeping dust of His Saints to arise and be fashioned like His own glorious body and be presented to the Father, where sickness, sorrow and death can never come.

May each of us be given to say not our will but thine be done, knowing that God is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. May God's richest blessings attend each one who mourns the passing of this faithful, kind and loving husband and father.

Written by request of the family.

E. V. Poff

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133 DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1965 NO. 5

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS
5/65
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ENJOYED THEIR VISIT

Whitefield, Maine

Dear Brethren:

On this Sabbath day, January 17, 1965, my companion and I are alone, but comfortably situated and happy in our home; realizing how blessed we are that God, the giver of all good things, has provided abundantly the necessities and pleasures we have experienced through our fifty-eight years of married life. We trust that we are truly thankful for His every blessing, knowing full well our unworthiness. All praise to Him who doeth all things well; to Him who doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

My mind is directed to past experiences that have caused much meditation; and to the privilege we, and a dear friend to us and the church, Helen Bailey, had in attending the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, the Salisbury Association, and other meetings of our faith, last Fall. It was a blessed experience to attend the meetings and to hear the several preachers declare the word of God — all preaching the same truth. We each enjoyed our stay in the homes of several dear ones, and were glad to meet them again on the shores of time. We also enjoyed meeting several brethren whom we had not met before: The sweet manifestation of love and fellowship shown by each one, assured a welcome that is always among Old Baptists. This is a gift from on high, all according to God's plan. It was a wonderful and blessed season, and enjoyed more than can be expressed.

Two past experiences came to my mind as I was reading the Scriptures this day, and wondering if I had any part in these things God has prepared for his own.

> "'Tis a point I long to know,
> Oft it causes anxious thought:
> Do I love the Lord or no:
> Am I his or am I not?"

Years ago when I was a girl in my teens, one night just as I lay down on my bed, a vision, (I know not what else to call it), of Jesus, I hope my Saviour, appeared. He stood robed in white, in full figure, by the side of my bed, with one arm outstretched, looking down on me it seemed as much as a minute, then turned half around and disappeared. This wonderful sight I saw as plain as I ever saw anything in my life. It has caused meditation as to its meaning, and at times is comforting to think that in this strange way Jesus came to me. I have a hope it was an assurance to me of his love.

Another experience about three years ago, which I had forgotten until a few days ago when I came across what I had written at the time: I was sitting alone in my living room, distressed in mind and with tears in my eyes. Suddenly I was inwardly moved that God was directing my mind to some Scrip-

ture to comfort me in trouble that was weighing both my companion and me down. Almost instantly the 23rd Psalm come to mind. I repeated it; then a passage in Isaiah come, and I repeated it: "Fear thou not: for I am with thee: be not dismayed: for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." (Isaiah 41:10)

I then picked up my Bible, and it opened at the 116th Psalm. My hand slipped as I turned pages, and it opened again at the 116th Psalm. I stopped and my eyes fell upon these words: "I love the Lord because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he has inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live." Such comfort and peace was mine as I read these words. I read all the 116th, 117th and 118th Psalms, and never before had I read with such an assurance of God's presence, as I did at that time. I felt that it was for me, and I could in some strange way know how David must have been comforted as he conversed with his God, and was made to feel to give thanks unto the Lord. This was all so wonderful for one like me. My very soul and being was comforted, my tears dried, and I was lifted beyond the trials of this world.

Such seasons come and go: Much of the time I walk in a wilderness, still wondering, Am I his or am I not?

A sister in hope,
Elta Merigold

LIKE COMING HOME AFTER MUCH WANDERING

4702 Florist Road, N. W.,
Roanoke, Virginia

Dear Editors of the *Signs:*

I hope our Lord has made me worthy to address you thus, for of myself I feel unworthy of any of his mercies and blessings. If anything at all, I feel to be a wild olive branch grafted in contrary to nature — a sinner in deeds, as well as an inherent one: without hope in the world until God in his infinite mercy, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, lifted me out of that horrible pit, and gave me a precious little hope of salvation; to which I cling. I pray that our Lord will deliver me from seeming to boast of these things, and enable me to render Him all the praise, honor and glory. I am prostrate at the Saviour's feet much of the time.

No doubt a greater power than any on earth led me to you dear people, for until a few years ago, I had never heard of the Primitive Baptist Church. When my dear companion and I asked for a home among you dear brethren, and were received, it was like coming home to friends from much wandering in a wilderness. We found fellowship with people who had tasted that the Lord was abundantly merciful, as we had; and that God's love and mercy is wholly unmerited by us. We would praise the Lord for lifting us up many times through this fellowship, the preaching at the different churches, associations, funerals, and the little gatherings, and in reading the *Signs*. We love to read the *Signs* for the writings it contains squares with the truth as our Lord has revealed to us. I have pondered many questions that have been so sweetly answered by the Editorials, etc. Praise the Lord for it!

On behalf of my wife and myself, I wish all of you, and all of God's people wherever they may be, good health and much happiness in the Lord. May the love of God, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.

I am enclosing check for $5.00 to renew our subscription.

Remember us in your prayers when at the throne of grace of our Lord.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
D. C. and Sallie Randolph

LETTER TO ELDER BRAMMER

Route 1, Ruffin, N. C.

Elder Leonard Brammer
Route 3,
Martinsville, Virginia

There has been placed in me for some reason known to God, the desire to write you a few lines telling you how much the words you preached last Sunday evening in Monticello meeting house meant to me. I believe I shall never forget how humble your appearance there before us, the manner in which admonition was used, what a difference, and how when used in spirit will stir up one's mind that they think upon what has been said. The first part of which you expressed brought to my mind much consideration "I have never learned how to be obedient. I have learned many lessons in things and I have never learned how to be obedient in the nine years I have been preaching." How comforting to me were those words. I, who am so often out of the way, if indeed I have ever been in the way, my thoughts evil and I feel so low that I fear greatly what I have hoped was a hope in the mercy of God, seems hanging as a thread, so small and uncertain — weak and frail; and you, a preacher of the most High God telling how I feel.

Oh! how my very being longs at times to praise the God the most high, and desire to know and do His will, yet how to perform that which is good I find not; I cannot have a good thought and sin is mixed with all I do. In this condition my hopes are all crossed. You say, "I have never learned how to be obedient." "Though He were a Son yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered." Suffering brings one low, one said out of the belly of Hell I cried and He heard my cry — He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, and out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings — I so often fear of speaking the wrong things; and do, when left to self. I just can't help believing that we are never obedient unless that obedience is worked in us. Christ is the Head over the Church, His body. Then He is our obedience, our all things pertaining to life and Godliness.

If I know anything about the walk of a Child of God, it is not on flowery beds of ease that we are carried to Heaven, — the journey is mountainous; and have we ever experienced journeying to the mountain top? Don't we believe our lives contain a cross to bear? And a cross is surely something contrary in principles — the flesh against the spirit and vice versa, so that we cannot do the things we would. This old nature is so ugly, so all opposed to God and Godliness, it will only yield to submission when brought under subjection by His controlling power. When suffering brings us to the foot of Jesus' cross we are willing, for that is the day of God's Power, or the time He manifests to us He is ruling in the armies of Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou? Aren't we thankful that He will not allow one to stray beyond help of Him, but in mercy gathers us as tender lambs in His arms, caring for us as a Father that pities His children? Oh when we feel we have wandered far from Him and are so alone, how our eyes run down in tears to glimpse a sight of Him and joying over His return (old *self* separates us). He brings our help in time of need. Then in sincerity can we say, He is the Saviour of the whole world, and a special Saviour to His elect loved ones, praise His dear name. (Acts 12th Chapter.)

How much have I thought upon what you said about the locked doors swinging open, — the word of God is not bound and will open locked doors, and carry one in forbidden paths. Many have been killed for daring, or I should say showing forth the fear of God more than the fear of man. There are sweet

experiences of trial, hardship, etc. We have records of these truths. Much comfort I have received in reading some of Hassell's Church History. I would that every Old School Baptist home contained one of these, and they could be stirred to reading from its pages what our people have contended for, and how our people amidst severe trials set up the landmarks of the Church of Jesus Christ (Militant), and how they remained firm in doctrine and practice in the face of some who wanted some of the glory themselves. Leaving our people, they would not have the doctrine of the absolute (certain, sure) predestination of all things; some setting up mission work to help God save souls, which is erroneous. Why would one object to the word absolute, either God controls all things, or He controls nothing? God does nothing in half measures. If we can do one thing to save ourselves we could equally do all of the saving and not need the Saviour.

God has not so taught this poor needy one; I need Him every moment, hour and day. How I would fear to start out anywhere, if I did not believe He controls the powers of darkness and fixed all things; appointing our times and seasons, our down sittings and uprisings. All my times are in His hands, working all things together for good to them who love Him, to *the called* according to His purpose. He causes the evil often to work for our good, overruling it to that end; never makes one do evil, — don't have to; and too holy to be charged with folly. Just leave us to self and old nature takes over. "The wrath of man shall praise Him and the remainder of wrath He restrains." Oh, were it not for that restraining, checking force we surely would destroy ourselves, as I have often said. Thus He shows us how weak we are and dependent upon Him, who is at the helm, and is all powerful.

We are living in a day that apostacy has enlarged, and we're being brought under dominating forces in the land. It is a time when every God fearing creature should feel the solemnity and be concerned; and this may become more severe before the coming of our Lord. Then how sweetly do we feast, in the face of opposition, on the words "The word of God is not bound." This is edifying and causes our poor hearts to rejoice in the God of grace and mercy for the love bestowed on sinners such as I.

Fred joins me in regards to you and yours. May God enable you and all His called ministers to stand boldly declaring the Whole Counsel of God, never swerving to the right, nor to the left as men pleasers, but enduring hardness as a good soldier. May He cause one and all who fear Him to search diligently and inquiringly, "Am I in the way?" "Is this the old path our loved ones strived to point out to us?" Oh! that He would give us hearts to pray and keep His statutes still. We hope you will come our way again. Cast the mantle of charity over my imperfections; all truth praises God, error belongs to man.

Hoping in God's love and mercy, I am,

A little one, if one at all,
Mrs. Fred Cobb

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545 N. 6th Street,
Fairfax, Okla. 74637

Dear Editors of the *Signs:*

You will find enclosed one dollar to help send out the good news, saved by grace, not of works. How I wish that everyone could take it! I hold mine as something very precious, but do pass one on when I find anyone that will read it. I am going to see if they will let me put them in our library here, where some may read them.

I love all the writings, and when the paper gets here, I can hardly wait to get to reading the good news. I do wish I could say, Thank you, for sending it to an old lonely woman of seventy-eight, who lives alone and does not get to

church very often, as I live 139 miles away and have to depend on others to take me.

Please accept my poorly expressed thanks; and may the God of all grace and mercy bless you to continue to send the good news. I love the *Voices of the Past;* they bring back memories of seventy years ago.

Mary E. Hendricks

THE NEW BIRTH

(Elder H. M. Curry)

When Jesus said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," he gave a name to a hitherto nameless fact. The doctrine of the new birth as announced by Christ and developed in the New Testament Scriptures, was a novel doctrine at that age of the world, and remains a novelty yet. The fact of the new birth, as exemplified in the experience of God's people, is as old and as universal as man himself; but the doctrine had never been named before. The new birth is not stated in the Old Testament, although the effects of it are clearly manifest in the experience of partiarchs, prophets, priests and kings, and many in the humbler walks of life, among both Jews and Gentiles. It is not mentioned in any religious writings, either Jewish or Pagan, before the New Testament. The ancient epics of India, the ethical codes of China, the complicated systems of Egypt, the fanciful philosophy and poetry of Greece, the gorgeous ceremonials and mystic rituals of ancient Mexico and Peru, are all silent upon this doctrine. It came from the lips of Jesus a novelty, an original doctrine, a new name for a hitherto nameless truth, a golden key to unlock the rich mines of Christian experience so long closed by human ignorance, so completely covered by ceremonials, and so deeply buried in tradition, a lamp by which the wonderful works of God in the children of men was to be more clearly understood, the exceeding greatness of his power to usward more fully known, and the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints more fully beheld.

The novelty of the doctrine is one of the clearest proofs of the divinity of the great Teacher who was the first to announce it. The most gifted prophet, the most highly favored priest, the great law giver, Moses, nor even the favorite Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, had never been blessed to discover this truth or honored with the commission to announce it to men. Thus the novelty of the doctrine gives weight and prominence to its

IMPORT

"Ye must be born again" is the initial statement of the doctrine of Christ, and constitutes the fundamental difference between Christianity and all religions. Take away the necessity of the new birth and Christianity will take its place on the common plane of all other religions, and will be robbed of that which alone entitles it to the distinction of divinity, and will be degraded to a mere system of ethics, a naked code of morals, or to empty, meaningless and vain ceremonials. The fundamental idea in all other religions is man's ability to reform himself into newness of life, based upon the alike false idea of the universal fatherhood of God. The last of these, the universal fatherhood of God, gave birth to the World's Congress of Religions in Chicago; and the first, man's ability to save himself, formed the basis of every system presented, whether by Buddhist, or Brahmin, Mohammedan or Morman, Catholic or Protestant. Hence all of them are loud in their cry for reformation; and the only difference to be found among them is the name and manner in which the end is to be reached.

The superficial notion of religion is deeply fastened upon all men; but it seems that modern Protestantism has a double portion of it. The Jews, in the

time of Christ, were extremely zealous for vain traditions, empty formality and hypocritical appearance. They thought that drinking wine and eating with unwashed hands polluted and defiled a man. But the Saviour condemned their foolish traditions by the simple axiom, "It is not that that goeth into a man that defileth him, but that cometh out." It is from the heart that evil thoughts, thefts, murders, and all other wickedness, proceed. Evil thoughts are not in the wine a man drinks. Bad conduct does not come from the food taken with unwashed hands. A man steals because he is a thief; a man kills because he is a murderer, or lies because he is a liar. The theft is in the heart before the hand is put forth to steal; the murder is in the heart before the hand is stained with blood; the lie is in heart before it rises to the tongue or is coined by the lips. The tree bears fruit after its kind. Cultivating the tree can never change the kind of fruit; the only effects of cultivation are seen in the quality and quantity of the fruit. Can a thorn tree ever be made to produce grapes, or a thistle to bring forth figs?

Men are carried away with the notion that through religious instruction, training and favorable opportunities, children or men are made Christians; that men enter the kingdom of God through teaching and moral suasion. Agrippa had this idea when he said to Paul, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian," and Nicodemus betrayed the same weakness when he said to Christ, "We know that thou art a teacher come from God." But the answer of Jesus covered the whole ground, when he said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." This is as much as to say, "Why, Nicodemus, this is not a mere matter of teaching; there is something vastly deeper; a man must be born again." A man does not have to be born again in order to be religious; he may be infatuated with religion, and be a zealous devotee to creed and ritual; he may be taught to observe most rigidly forms and ceremonies, and to subject himself to the strictest discipline; to mutilate his body and deprive himself of all earthly comforts; to yield perpetual obedience to priestcraft; to pray three times a day and give tithes of all he possesses; take up the sword in defense of his religion, or lay down his life in testimony of his zeal; but except he be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. A man must be born again in order to receive Christ, or embrace his doctrine in truth and reality. The import of the doctrine leads us to consider its

NECESSITY

"Ye must be born again" is not a mere dogma of theology, but a necessity, arising from deep fundamental, basal principles of biology; hence we shall first consider the biological necessity. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." The term flesh, here, is generic, and is used in the Scriptures to designate man as a whole, and comprehends him with all his attributes, all his powers, parts and capacities, including body, soul and spirit in their mysterious combination in constituting human personality. It is equivalent to saying, That which is born of man is man.

Men by nature are dead in trespasses and sins. This death is not merely a moral or ethical condition, but a condition extending far beyond the moral or ethical sphere. It is a biological condition. Take this illustration: Science divides this world into two great kingdoms, the organic and inorganic, or in equivalent terms, the dead and the living. The stone belongs to the inorganic or dead kingdom, the plant to the organic or living kingdom. The difference between the stone and the plant is a biological difference. Again, the organic kingdom manifests different orders of life: animal and vegetable life.

The difference between the animal and the tree is a biological difference. They belong to different orders of life.

Now, just as the animal life is of a higher order than vegetable life, so Christ life is of a higher order than Adamic or natural life. And just as the tree, although alive in its own order, is dead to the presence and voice of the bird that sings among its branches, so is man, although alive to all within his environment, dead to the things of the Spirit of God. This truth, although most persistently disputed, most vehemently opposed and wickedly ridiculed, by professors of Christianity, is legibly and indelibly written in the stones and in the trees, in the earth and in the sky, and in the experience of millions of human hearts. Man, then, is cut off from the kingdom of God by the deep, mysterious, impassible gulf that separates the non-living from the living, the organic from the inorganic, the natural from the spiritual. As man enters this world by birth, just so he enters the kingdom of God by birth; and as his birth into the world was contingent upon things entirely outside of himself, so his birth into the kingdom of God is contingent upon things entirely outside of himself. This birth is "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God;" so says the Scripture. Except a man be born he cannot see the world, is a fact which none can deny, and which none would ever think of denying. But how few of all who have read it acquiesce so readily in the conclusive truth of its analogous expression, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

We turn now from the biological to the experimental necessity of this birth. Children may be most carefully trained from their youth in the name of Christ and in the precepts of the Scripture and religious observances, but except they be born again they have no more knowledge of Christ than if they had never heard his name.

This birth is the beginning of the Christian experience, and all that is ever seen, felt, heard and known of grace in this world, or glory in the world to come, is but the development of the life imparted in this birth. All knowledge of Christ is vital or experimental knowledge; this includes all knowledge of the need of Christ. I once thought that the time when the child of grace received his hope and experience deliverance, was when he was born again; but I have come to a different conclusion. Who can remember when he was born naturally? Let the mind run back to childhood, to our earliest recollections, even to the very borders of infancy; but our birth was prior to that. All things fade from our memory, and we are lost in a sea of oblivion, and still the time of our birth is not reached. We grew into the domain of memory, passing through a long stage of which we know nothing at all. Think back over your experience; you came to many Ebenezers, to many milestones and memorable places; you approach the time when hope came to you, a helpless sinner; but the birth was before this. You pass on to the time when you first realized that you were a sinner indeed; but the birth was before this, and this was only the result of it. How long before you felt the first movements of soul I cannot tell, but it was before. Those who place their birth upon conditions to be complied with by those receiving it, have never seen the necessity of it. If a man can repent of his sins and believe in Jesus before he is born again, then the Scriptures are not true. This notion of religion puts the cart before the horse, puts the fruit before the tree, the effect before the cause. Without this birth sin would never be hated and holiness would never be loved, poverty of spirit would never be felt, and the riches of Christ would never be prized; none would ever hunger and thirst after righteousness, and the bread which came down from heaven would never be desired; the fountain of living waters would never be sought, there would be none to love the truth, and faith would not be found

on the earth; the wilderness would never blossom as the rose, and the parched ground would never become a pool; the name of God would be but an empty sound, and his existence a mere matter of speculation, and all worship would be but dry formality and empty mockery.

EFFECTS

The person affected by the new birth is the Adamic sinner. This needs no argument, for there is no other personality on earth, and personalities in heaven do not need it. The immediate effects make up what is called Christian experience, and belong to time; the ultimate effect is to awake in the likeness of Christ, and is realized in the resurrection. The effects are evidences to us that we have been born again. Let us now examine ourselves, and prove ourselves, and see whether we are indeed what we profess to be, or only graceless hypocrites, carnal professors, who have never known the love of Christ or the power of his resurrection. The most momentous question ever propounded to an exercised heart is, Have I been born again? And when we begin to examine ourselves, the evidence that the carnal mind seeks is not found within us; but we are full of things that our traditional notions of religion record against us. The carnal mind is not eligible either to sit as judge or to testify as witness in the trial of a Christian, because it is enmity against God, and cannot be subject to his law.

One of the best evidences that any one has ever had that he is born again is that he is personally concerned about his own case. The man who thinks that salvation is by works is never concerned about the new birth; but the heart upon which the import and necessity of being born again have been impressed, is bound to be personally concerned in the matter; but the import and necessity of the birth are only communicated through the birth itself. Let us begin the examination with a question. Do you know that you are a Christian? Every exercised heart answers at once, I do not know that I am a Christian. Do you know that you are a sinner? O yes, I know that I am a sinner. Do you know that you are saved? O no, I do not know that I am saved. Do you know how a sinner is saved? O yes; a sinner must be saved by grace. How did you find that out? Everybody does not know that. If you know that salvation is by grace, rest assured that you are saved, for that knowledge comes only by experience. None of the princes of this world know that. Human wisdom has never made that discovery. Those who have this knowledge are in possion of that hidden wisdom which God before the world ordained to our glory.

The knowledge of sin is one of the brightest evidences that you will ever have that you have passed from death unto life. Permanent, incorrigible, inherent sinfulness has always been acknowledged by holy men. David said, "I am a worm, and no man," Isaiah confessed that he was a man of unclean lips, and Paul exclaimed, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" There was a time in the experience of many of us, perhaps, when we thought that we would never know sin nor sorrow again, but that we would live in the comfortable peace of that sweet deliverance all the rest of our days. But when we began to feel again the power of sin in our members, we sank into a sea of doubts and fears, and disappointment bordering on despair. We thought that one who is born again is free from the motions of sin; and when we found that sin still remained in us, we concluded that we were still in the gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity. But we have learned many lessons since that time, and are still learning. We have learned that in the flesh we are ignorant, sinful creatures, no better now than at the first dawn of our hope. I think these lines of Newton express the experience of us all:

"I asked the Lord that I might grow
In faith and love and every grace;
Might more of his salvation know,
And seek more earnestly his face.

"I hoped that in some favored hour
At once he'd answer my request,
And by his love's constraining power
Subdue my sins and give me rest.

"Instead of this he made me feel
The hidden evil of my heart,
And let the angry powers of hell
Assault my soul in every part.

"Yea, more, with his own hand he seemed
Intent to aggravate my woe,
Crossed all the fair designs I schemed,
Blasted my gourds and laid me low.

"Lord, why is this? I tremblingly cried;
Wilt thou pursue thy worm to death?
'Tis in the way, the Lord replied,
I answer prayer for grace and faith.

"These inward trials I employ,
From self and pride to set thee free,
And break thy schemes of earthly joy,
That thou may'st seek thine all in me."

— Newton

Men in nature have most strenuously assailed the doctrine of total, innate, inherent depravity, and have long devised and proclaimed their lying, deceptive and seductive argument against it; but God will make his people know the truthfulness of it by a daily experience of their own sinfulness. A vital knowledge of sin puts to flight every traditional theory of human ability or Adamic purity, and fastens upon the conscience a pungent conviction that man is a sinner, from the cradle to the grave, with no part or capacity reserved. It is not the Christian's burden that he only sins by word and deed, but his thoughts are unclean, and above all he discovers lurking like a serpent in the deep recesses of his heart the love of sinful things. This almost drives him to despair, and makes him hate his own life, and trust nothing but the blood and righteousness of the adorable Redeemer.

How prone we are to take comfort in the thoughts of our own hearts, or the state of our own feelings, and to look within ourselves for something good to build our hope upon. How often do we say, "O! if I could only see myself as I desire to see myself, I would have some hope that I am a Christian." If you could always see yourself just as you would like to be, would you ever deny yourself? And if you should never deny yourself could you ever be the disciple of Jesus? Did he not say, "If any man will be my disciple let him deny himself?" When Jesus said, "Let him deny himself," denial of self must follow. God said, "Let there be light," and light was. He also said, "Let the earth bring forth," and it was so. Have you not yet been able to translate those feelings of unworthiness that fill your soul, and stand like an impassable wall, an immovable mountain, between you and your ideal Christian character that your own imagination conjures up and places before you? They are translated into this sentence, "Let him deny himself." This is the first qualification to follow Christ.

The tempter comes with another plea that we are not the children of God. This plea is our weakness. How often do we consider this suggestion of the tempter and put it on file as evidence against ourselves? Christ put the tempter to flight by quoting what is written; so allow me to bring the same weapon to our defense; it is written, "Except ye be converted and become as a little child ye shall in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven." What did the Saviour mean by this expression? I heard preachers say, in my early exercise of mind, that little children are innocent, pure and sinless, and that we must get like them or we can never be saved. I thought this was true, and set about most diligently to attain unto this child-like purity of character, but failed, utterly failed, failed as completely as Hermes in his search for the philosopher's stone, or Ponce de Leon for the fountain of youth. The more I tried it the more hopeless it seemed to grow, and yet I thought it must be so. O what absurd things will men not undertake in the name of religion! If all the absurdities that have been taught and

practiced in the name of religion could be collected and placed before men's eyes, the exhibit would shock the world, and would doubtless surpass in quantity and quality all other follies, whims, caprices and wickedness that the world has ever known. Suppose for one moment that little children do receive the kingdom of heaven upon the grounds of their purity of character, and we must become as they, where is hope to be found for any who have grown out of infantile purity? How can a man ever be a child again? We might repeat here the question of Nicodemus, "How can a man be born when he is old. Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born? Suppose a man could be born when he is old, would he not come forth again in the likeness of his parents?

A man might be made a child again, ten thousand times, if such a thing were possible, and still he would never be raised above the nature and likeness of his parents. A corruptible seed can never bring forth an incorrupt object. So if a man should be born again of the same father and mother, would he not come forth the same natural man, and grow up the same blind, alienated, wicked sinner? It is not only necessary to have another birth, but a birth proceeding from an entirely different source, a birth from above, from an incorruptible seed, a birth of water and the Spirit, of that water which is above the firmament. The Saviour did not mean that the little child is sinless, and we must become such. Sinless persons have no need of Christ, and he has no blood for them. What is the characteristic of the little child that forms the basis of the Saviour's teaching here? It is the helplessness, the weakness of the child, its inability to provide for itself. The child is not only unable to provide for itself, but unable to minister to itself what others may provide for it. Food and drink and raiment might be abundantly provided and placed in the closest proximity to the child, and it left to itself, and it would be none the better off. It would perish as certainly and as speedily as it would if nothing had been provided. The man or woman who has experienced this helplessness in a spiritual sense has become as a little child, or, in other words, has been born again; and the very weakness which he so much deplores, and from which he would daily flee, is the sure and abiding evidence that God is his Father. Our blindness is often urged as an evidence against us, but God says he will bring the blind by a way they knew not, and in strange paths will he lead them. God leads his people as those who are blind, and cannot find their own way. If your travels have been in entirely different ways from what you yourself marked out, if you experience daily the opposite of your own planning, if you are led as one blind in unknown ways, then you are led of the Lord; and "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

Belief in Jesus is an effect of the new birth, and consequently an evidence of it. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." (1 John 5:1) What a comprehensive, decisive and conclusive statement! This birth raises men to a knowledge of Christ, and imparts to them the evidence that he is the Christ. The doctrine that men have the capacity to believe in him as a condition of salvation, is as fabulous, as illusive and as foreign to the gospel of the grace of God as the grotesque mythologies of the ancient Northmen, the fanciful poetry of the ancient Greeks, or the nonsensical nursery rhymes of Mother Goose. Belief is not a volition of the will. We do not have to revert to dusty libraries of philosophy to prove this statement, but to our own minds. Each man knows more about himself than the wisest philosopher knows about him. Belief is a condition of mind produced by evidence; it is an effect, and evidence is the cause. Every day we hear reports that we do

not want to believe, and seek in every direction a refuge from the conviction of the truth of the report. Every power of the mind is aroused against it; but facts come, evidence conquers, and we reluctantly, unwillingly sink into a belief on the very thing we tried so hard not to believe. Upon the other hand, how often have we exterted every power of will to believe a certain thing to be true; but notwithstanding our ardent desire and willing efforts we at last had to yield, to lack of evidence or to contrary evidence, and believe against our will to the contrary. Believing in Jesus is brought about by the new birth. It is only by the Holy Ghost that any man can say that Jesus is the Christ; and the man who believes in the only begotten Son may rest assured that he is born of God. "He that hath the Son hath life." It is he that hath the Son that believes on him.

Faith, which is the substance of the Christian's hope, is the evidence upon which we believe; and this faith is born of God, is the fruit of the Spirit, and is found alone in the man who has been born again. Believing in Jesus, repentance and faith, are new covenant blessings themselves, instead of being conditions of blessings, and are the fruit of the new birth instead of conditions upon which it is brought about.

The ultimate effect of the new birth is to awake in the likeness of Christ. This birth constitutes the man who receives it as a son of God, and conseqently an heir of God, and guarantees to him a resurrection in the likeness of Christ, and consequently an eternal and enduring satisfaction. The development of Christ's character is a process begun, carried on and consummated by the inherent, sovereign, unfailing working of Christ-life in the soul. It is an evolution, but a grander evolution than ever Darwin dreamed of; not the process that transforms a monkey into a man, but an evolution that conforms a wretched, wicked, hopeless, helpless sinner into the image of Jesus, the immaculate Son of God. This process is first the blade, then the stalk, and after that the full corn in the ear. The blade and the stalk may appear here, but the full corn in the ear must appear hereafter. Inasmuch as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

This birth originates from above, and is directed alone by sovereign, unconditional election. It comes by virtue of life given us in Christ before the foundation of the world, according as the saints were chosen in him in the ages eternal. We could never be born from above without a life above. This heavenly, eternal, incorruptible Christ-life is implanted in the subjects of God's electing grace, by the sovereign, irresistible, unconditional working of the Holy Spirit. It is imparted in God's own time, whether it be in the babe upon its mother's breast, as was the case with David, or from its very birth, as with John the Baptist, or in the declining days of old age and decrepitude, as may be the case with many; but whether in the babe upon its mother's breast, or in the man in the prime of life, or in old age upon the verge of the grave, the issues are all the same, and alike certain in results. All who receive it shall awake in the likeness of Christ.

(The above is copied from the March 20, 1895, issue of the *Signs*. We enjoyed reading it so much we felt the brethren and friends would too. It shows the only way that sinners are ever brought out of the darkness of nature into the kingdom of God. — J. D. W.)

GRATEFUL FOR LETTERS

1148 Sunset Drive,
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Dear Friends:

Tonight I am deep down in the valley of doubts, and indeed feel that without the guiding hand of the Great Master my life is but a shadow: useless, and, like the dry sands of the desert, without life, and not worth living.

Am grateful to each one of God's people that wrote me after my last un-

worthy letter in the *Signs*; especially to Sister J. P. Fallin for the book, "The Second Coming of Christ." I enjoy reading every word in these precious letters, and hope to hear from any who feel inclined to write; and will try to answer them all.

Surely goodness and mercy has followed me all my life, since I have not deserved to even know any of The Elect of the Lord's Kingdom. Yet wherever I go so many things happen to remind me that the cattle on a thousand hills are the Lord's: The mountains, the rivers, the sun, the moon, and all of the elements declare that man is only what the Master gives him grace and mercy to be.

My present position requires that I travel over the vast northern areas of Alaska, and during my last trip in the airplane on my way to Bettles, I saw one of the most impressive images of God's handiwork that man could ever conceive existed. About eight thousand feet over the snow covered mountains, the Northern Lights flashed across the star mingled sky. From the plane this appeared as if it was the colors of all the flowers and birds that existed, pushed across the vast space by the hand of a mighty painter, showing perfection as the colors bubbled out in space.

We have had a long, cold winter; 48 below now, and has been colder. From the air we see many animals, moose, caribou, bear and fox striving to get food in a fight for survival. Many would say that God is unjust to allow this to be, but, like many things we are trying to change, this could be no other way, for these animals could not survive in a warm climate — with their heavy fur they would die.

Why do we fight over trivial matters? Many times we think we are only standing firm on the Truth; but do not the heathen do this too? Today there are over fifteen hundred groups that claim to be the right church; they claim to be saving souls by the thousands. But what has caused crime to increase more than 10 percent during the past year? "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Oh! that we could see this during our quarrels and differences, and strive to worship and praise the great and gracious Master. Who can say, "I am my brother's keeper?" I know my path is crooked, and my steps weak, but my hope is in the mercy of the Lord: not for what this old worm of the flesh has done. Even in this distant cold land, my Master is ever mindful of my needs, and will watch over me and mine until the time of my departure from this world, into a world of peace, to live with my Master forever.

I enjoy reading the *Signs,* for it is to me a feast at the Master's table, to hear God's praises all over the land by those that trust in God's ever present love and mercy. When at the throne of mercy, remember this unworthy creature.

William O. Wammack

GREAT COMFORT TO HIM

Rt. 1, Box 45,
Bearden, Arkansas 71720

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

Enclosed is a check for $5.00, for which please send me the *Signs of the Times* for another year; use the balance as you wish. I took the *Signs* some years ago, then moved here and there, and lost out. I have read the old *Signs* lately, and they are of great comfort to me. The Lord has wonderfully blessed the writers to write the good letters and editorials, and experiences, which sum up to the same thing; and it is a great pleasure to read them. Until we have been taught to know how frail we are, and that we are standing as vile sinners justly condemned before the God of heaven, we don't care to read them.

Jesus does not ask us to accept him as our Saviour; or, as we hear many

say, "You can if you will — if you don't you will be lost." We find recorded in John 5:40-42, "And ye will not come to me that ye might have life. I receive not honor from men. But I know that ye have not the love of God in you." Sometime in life the little sheep will hear his voice; and they will all be taught of God. "My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me." (John 10:27)

When the light begins to shine in one's poor soul, then he cries to the Lord for mercy. He doesn't go telling what he has done for the Lord; no! but he does tell what great things the Lord has done for him. What a difference! When this takes place, we say with Isaiah, "Then said I, woe is me for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." (Isaiah 6:5) That's when the light from above has shined in their hearts, being born again; and they look afar off with an eye of faith, trusting in the Lord, and him alone from whence all blessing flow. Then these poor little strangers see themselves as they are, and acknowledge that their righteousness is as filthy rags.

I hope, if I am not deceived, that I have a part in this, to the extent that I can say with an honest heart, Woe is me, I can't take a good step, I can't have a good thought; nor control my tongue, for I know that in me, that is in my flesh dwelleth no good thing. (Romans 7:8) I just have to say that I am a sinner; and I don't say this just because someone else said so, for I was taught this in a few moments many years ago. We find recorded in 1 John 1:8; "If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

Just wanted to jot down a few thoughts — didn't aim to write so much. In your humble petitions remember a poor sinner. May the Lord bless the Editors to keep the good *Signs of the Times* going. In reading them, it seems that I have met you.

A brother in hope,
H. L. Gardner

P. O. Box 927,
Princeton, W. Va. 24740

Dear Elder Spangler:

I am due to send my remittance for the *Signs*; which I enjoy very much, and look forward each month for its coming.

The older I grow the more precious its contents are to me. You dear editors are blessed to set forth the truth the *Signs* has stood for all the past years it has been in existence. I hope I love that doctrine. There is so much opposition to the truth, that without the grace of God, we would all be swallowed up; but there will always be a remnant who will walk in the old paths, neither turning to the right nor to the left.

Would love to see you and Sister Spangler, and hope to hear you preach again.

In humble hope,
Mrs. S. J. Priddy

WE ARE MAILING SAMPLE COPIES

By request we are sending sample copies of the *Signs of the Times* to the former subscribers of *Grace and Truth Magazine* for their examination. We believe that many of them will find that the *Signs* contends for the doctrine they hold dear, and that they will find comfort and edification in its columns.

Those who find that the *Signs* is what they would desire to come into their homes each month, we invite them to send their subscriptions. The price is $3.00 per year, or $5.00 for two years. Our address is, Signs of the Times, Inc., Rt. 1, Box 539, Danville, Virginia.

— Editors

PLEASE NOTE

Will all who have notices of associations or other special meetings which they desire published, please send them to us as early as possible so that we may have them in the proper issue. We require at least five weeks to properly handle them. They should be mailed to

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Virginia, to save time and additional handling.

Also, we need more information on some of the churches which are included under CHURCH NOTICES, which are published each January. The Clerks or Pastors should give us this information if they want their notice continued. — J. D. W.

PLEASE NOTE

In the Circular Letter of the Salisbury Association of Maryland, published in the current March issue, we stated that it was written by Elder W. D. Griffin, which was in error. It was written by Elder Arthur R. Warren. We regret the error. Please note the change in your copy. — J. D. W.

DISTRICT MEETING

The **District Meeting of the Coneuch River Association** will meet at Valley Grove Church the 5th Sunday in May and Saturday before, 1965. The church is on U. S. 331 in Carrington County, Alabama, about 12 miles North of Opp, Alabama.

A. C. Carter

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the **Skewarkey Union** is appointed to be held with the Mt. Zion Church, Halifax County, N. C., the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in May, 1965. Elder W. E. Grimes was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder B. D. Handy, alternate.

The meeting house is located one mile from Hobgood, N. C. on the highway. We cordially invite brethren, sisters, and friends to meet with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Union Clerk,
Rt. 2, Williamson, N. C.

PLEASE NOTE REQUEST: Brother B. K. Smith is now stationed in Germany and desires to know if there are any other Old Baptist believers there, and would appreciate any of our readers letting him know of them. Also he would appreciate hearing from any of the brethren.

He writes, "It is always a heartwarming experience to hear from, and to meet any that believe and profess the sovereignty of the almighty Creator and Redeemer, who works all things after the counsel of his own will." His address is: Sgt. B. K. Smith, P. O. Box 96, APO New York 09757.

— Ed.

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing the **Staunton River Union** will convene with Cane Creek Church the 5th Saturday and Sunday in May, 1965.

Cane Creek Church is located near Ringgold, highway 726, in Virginia. Our brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

R. S. Payne

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To March 1, 1965)

Mrs. D. M. Radford, Va.	$ 1.00
Edd. W. Rhodes, Ark.	5.00
H. L. Gardner, Ark.	2.00
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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va.

EDITORIAL

ECCLESIASTES 9:13-15

"This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it seemed great unto me; there was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it; now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor wise man."

As our minds are illuminated by the Holy Spirit we will see many wonderful mysteries about this city. The text teaches things that the wisdom of the earth is not able to understand, much less is it able to love them. Anywhere that we turn in the Bible we will find the truth of our brother Paul's writing to the church at Corinth. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The subject matter seemed great unto Solomon, and it will seem that way to all those that are led into the truth. Imparting this knowledge to the men and women that are natural, is something that we can not do. In the first place, what could we say about this city that would make it attractive to a man in nature? It is too small, its defense is too small, and its delieverer is too infinitesimal to draw the attention of strong men. If we were looking for a place of safety would we seek a little city? If we desired a place for assurance and calmness of thought, would we enter a city that had but few men in it? If we desired to have a future of security, would we be willing to inhabit a city that did not have any deliverer save a poor wise man? If we remember well, we know that at one time in our life that we would not have been caught in a city like unto this.

The strangest things take place with men. I did for a long time seek and inhabit a city that was large, whose defenses were strong and able to all those in it, to deliver the city from all comers, to keep her borders inviolate from all that would scale the wall of protection. How foolish it would have been for anyone to talk to me that God favored a city like unto this little city. It would have been foolish in anyone to talk to me about it, for they would have been talking to a fool. While I am often besieged by suggestions by the wily one that I do not have a good hope, yet I do not feel that talk had one thing to do with my being blessed to see the Old Baptist Church. It had been weeks since I had heard the name of our Creator used, except to swear by; it had been ever so long since anybody had said anything to me about religion of any kind. And yet the first week in this month (December) was forty years ago, I am sure that I saw something that I had never seen before. The city that had been so well fortified fell to the power of the poor wise man. None was any more active than I in trying to prevent this great fall. I daubed mortar; I carried huge timbers (that I had helped to get ready) and put them in strategic spots; I gave much advice; I summoned up all of the old tricks of trade in order to outwit this poor man that I did not intend to have rule over me. (Luke 19:14) The city fell, and I fell with it.

What a glorious day it was when the children of God fled for refuge to the city of God. We had barely escaped in the falling of the walls of that old Jerusalem. To begin with our every hope died as those walls went down. We had been sheltered by them all of our life. This had been the only city that we had known, and as we fled it terrorized our soul to see the only home we had known fall down by the onslaughts of another. This left us homeless as well as helpless. I hope that my little message will reach you and you in retrospection; that you will be given to live once again that time when you had no

place to turn to, when you were a homeless vagabond in the earth. How strange it all was, for we did not know who had destroyed our once flourishing city. We realized His power, but not His mercy; we realized His destruction, but not His salvation.

Do you know what it is to be homeless? Do you know what it is to be run out of the only home and city that you have ever known? Another thing: Do you remember that there was a woe pronounced on those that were with young when that city fell? How did you make out? There has never been a calamity like unto her that is with young when the cry comes to leave the falling city. You had not long had a hope — in fact it was a young hope indeed, and yet you had to leave. Do you remember how it was with you? Did you wonder what would become of you? Did you think about your little hope, and that perhaps you had been mistaken about having one? As yet you know, you had not much to go on. You had met the law giver, but you did not know the law keeper. You had life all right, because it had sent you to Jerusalem (old), and you had tried to comply with every rule of the city, but it was not enough.

What were your expectations? Let us look back down the road. Didn't we expect destruction? Our city had fallen. We could not deliver it. God, the law giver, had waged a war that had ended in triumph and glory unto himself, but it had scattered the whole of the inhabitants of the city. This fleeing for refuge intrigues me. A refugee does not have time to get his household goods; he does not have anything to convey them to another location. He barely escapes with his life, and he despairs of retaining it. How anxiously he casts his eyes at the conflagration that he has just left, as he sees his city and his home and his possessions go up in ashes. It would seem that the tongues of the flames are lapping at his heels, and there is more hurrying although this poor tried soul is so weary. Surely there is not any hope for such an one.

And there is not any hope for mercy from God the law giver. There is not any hope or expectation that this poor harassed sinner that could not stem the tide of God's vengeance against the city, could turn and recover his former standing and build again the vanquished city. What desolation is his or hers. But hark, my soul, did I hear a voice? Bend down little children that you might hear it as it floats over the way. This voice does not come from your rear. You heard a voice back there, and it sickened your soul as it thundered, "The soul that sinneth shall die." There is not any help at Sinai; there is not any likelihood of the law giver relenting. But that voice, how soothing it sounds! Listen tired and weary sinner. Yes, even now I hear the words come so lowly, and yet so clearly and so comforting. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

But perhaps you think that I am not dealing with the work of the poor wise man. Perhaps you think that I am not writing along the line of election and predestination. *That is what I am doing.* God's everlasting covenant is a wonderful topic, and far be it from me to minimize the work of the Father in choosing his family. The work of Jesus Christ, as the poor wise man, is of paramount importance to the welfare of God's people. It is as important as the choice of the Father. Much has been said (much of it unwisely from every quarter) about time salvation. What would you know if it had not been revealed to you in time? If there is one person, from whatever corner of the globe they come, that will take the position that they have contributed anything to having a knowledge of God's choice and of the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, then I want it plainly understood that my text is not for them. The text that I am treating on has previously laid down certain characters

that did not do anything towards contributing to their welfare. They did not win the race, nor the battle, nor get their bread, nor come into riches, nor get their favors, — by what they could do. This certainly is treating of a class of people that are saved in time by the poor wise man. It is this saving, it is this experience that I desire to treat on. May I ask you again this important question, If the light had not shined around Saul and the voice from heaven had not spoken to him, do you have any evidence that he would have ever gone to Ananias? Please give chapter and verse.

If a like spiritual work had not been done for you and this sinner, what would our occupation be at this time? Would we be living in the old Jerusalem or in the new? Would we be in the city that the law giver would be bringing to destruction despite all our efforts, or would we be in the little city that the poor wise man would be delivering by his wisdom? Many are not too well acquainted with the doctrinal phase of this deliverance (including the writer), but many (including the writer) feel to have a good hope through grace that we have been in both cities; that we had to flee from the one in order to escape destruction; that we were found helpless and lost and hungry and thirsty by the Lord; that we were led forth by the right way to a city of habitation, even a city few in number (manifestly), and that he showed us his prevailing arm of Deliverance.

If I have ever known God, I found him as a strict God of justice. In his vindictive wrath against my law erected, law defended city, I found no mercy, no love, no hope. I stared death in the face without a voice of compassion, without a word of comfort, without a thought but that everlasting destruction was for the city and all of its inhabitants. I did not leave that falling city looking for Jesus, for I did not know Jesus. I left it with the full expectation of being apprehended by Him whose laws I had broken, and that at that apprehension death would be my lot. In this law city I fell among thieves, and they beat me and robbed me, and left me lying by the roadside helpless. Who found me? Draw near dear child of God, and let us reason together. Remember, if we can not reason together here, the time will shortly come when we shall come into the presence of God, with whom there is no slackening his justice in order to give mercy, with whom we can not reason. May our question resound into all the earth (that is, into all quickened earthen vessels), and may the reverberations thereof shake every idolatrous position we have taken to ourselves, may it cause us to take stock of what we are teaching as the doctrine of God our Saviour.

Now back to the question: Who found us? What did we do to call him to our side? On these questions hang the history of the church. The answer to these questions shows whether we are in the defended city or not. If we did anything to call him to us, then salvation is not of the Lord. If anyone helped him with the carrying of us to the inn (city), then salvation is not of the Lord. If any administrators or auxiliaries or other standby helps were involved in his care of us, then salvation is not altogether of the Lord, and the praise therefor is to be rendered according to the part played in salvation. If any of the brethren or friends paid any part of the two pence given for our keep, then the poor wise man did not pay the cost of redemption in full. If we must earn our keep while He is away, then salvation is not of the Lord; and since honest men do not collect the same debt twice, I feel sure that God will not do so either; and if we earned it while he was away and then he came back and paid everything there certainly would be dishonesty in the defense and deliverance of the city.

I believe in religious freedom, and if it suits men to preach any other name

than Jesus as the deliverer of the city, I am satisfied for them to do it. If it seems evil to preach Jesus, then any set of gods many or lords many will do; but what seems evil to men will be the meat and drink of Joshua's house.

When the Lord Jesus Christ found us and carried us to the inn (the city, the church) we were as free in spirit as we will ever be here. Did you hate anybody? Would you have hurt the feelings of the least of your brethren? Would you have made anybody an offender because of a word or the interpretation of it? Dear reader, pause for one moment with me. Did you see anything wrong with the city? Did you see anything wrong with the inhabitants of it? What was your attitude about sin? Did you think that you would be free of sin and trouble and sorrow? Answer me, reader, isn't it true that you were sailing on the balmy clouds of keen anticipation of a life among the saints unalloyed by the base things of time and nature? Not a sign of a great king coming, not a sign of an enemy, not a thing to be defended from. This period might be compared to the beauty of the Mount of Transfiguration. The Lord Jesus had led you up; he made known to you the beauties of that sacred mountain, but at the end of his revelation he led you down. Words become useless fancies to describe the feelings of a child of God when it is made apparent to him that he is still in the world of sin and sorrow, and that it lurks in every member.

What had been so wonderful to him now becomes a sorrowful hallucination. It looks like that this city is to fall; it looks like that their hope of a rest was being followed by the most harrowing experience at all. But the soul searching inquiries are followed by being told again that Jesus is now enthroned to defend the city, to give the inhabitants the victory in winning the race; to wage and win their battle against sin and the world and the devil; to give the simple bread, to give the riches of his grace to men whose understanding had been null and void; to give favors and benefits and blessings to those who did not have any skill in their hands. (Psalms 78:72)

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE VICARIOUS SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.

The question often arises in our mind and seems to be of great importance, how God can be just, and the justifier of sinners, since it is written, "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to God?" — Prov. xvii. 15. Yet in the sufferings of our Redeemer, we see one who is holy, harmless, separate from sinners, as the just and holy one of Israel, who in his own most sacred person knew no sin, who was immaculately pure, made sin for us, bearing the sins of many, numbered with the transgressors, condemned to die the just for the unjust, and the wicked freely justified through the redemption that is in him. Is not this a mystery that the angels desire to look into? This mystery is not obviated by the contemplation of the sovereign right of God to do all his pleasures; for justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne. He is a just God, and we are told that he "will by no means clear the guilty." Yet we see the vicarious sufferings of the spotless Lamb of God, when "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment [or as in the margin, He was taken away by distress and judgment, but] and who shall declare his generation?

for he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief." — Isa. 53:5-10.

In all that we have thus far noticed of the divine testimony the sufferings of our dear Redeemer seem to have been vicarious, or substitutional. One who is just and holy suffering for others who were guilty and righteously condemned by the holy, righteous and just law of God; but unless we can find something more than substitution in the sufferings of our Lord, we shall fail to discover the justice of the just suffering for the transgressions of the guilty.

Should a citizen of this world commit a crime against the laws of his country, no principle of common law or justice would allow an innocent person to bear the penalty in his room as a substitute. Such a substitution would be a gross violation of justice. Should a criminal convicted of murder, condemned to suffer the extreme penalty of the law, procure an innocent person to suffer death in his room and stead, it would not meet the demand of justice; and if such a substitute should be accepted and executed, it would be a clear case of murder, an outrage against law and justice, and would by no means make the transgressors any less guilty. Substitutions or vicarious suffering alone could never put away sin, meet the stern demands of the holy law of God, or answer the ends of justice. There must therefore be found a principle of relationship identifying the sin-bearing sufferer, before we can trace the justice of God in laying the iniquity of his chosen people on the sinless victim, who himself bare our sins in his own body on the cross. For this relationship let us search.

An owner or shepherd of a flock of sheep may in strictest justice be held for the trespass of his flock. He alone has the right to redeem them because they are his own sheep, and were his before they went astray and committed the trespass for which they are held by law. He is the shepherd whose own the sheep are, and the law justly holds him responsible for expiation. So Jesus says, "I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." — John x. 11. And the dread command is sounded from the throne of God, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the Shepherd," &c. — Zech. xiii. 7. Here is justice and equity. The sheep have trespassed, and the unoffending Shepherd suffers. But, in the absence of this relationship where would be the justice? Had it been the sheep of some other owner, could justice have laid on him their iniquity? But now as we have seen, "All we like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

Should a wife become indebted to the merchant, or to any other creditor, the relationship subsisting affords the only ground on which the husband is held responsible for the amount of the debt; but the law could not in justice substitute another woman's husband and make him responsible for the amount. In the absence of the relation of husband and wife neither law nor justice would allow the demand. Our Lord Jesus Christ claims his church as the bride, the Lamb's wife. He says he is married unto her, and in that relation holds himself responsible for her debts. And by his apostle he says, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." But apart from this relationship is a husband bound to love, by substitution, and give himself for some other husband's wife, as for any but his own wife? Christ loved and gave himself for his own wife, the church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the

washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. — Eph. v. 25-27.

Children may be involved in trouble, trespass, or debt, and the father is held responsible, because he is their father; not merely as a substitute for them, but by virtue of the relation which he bears to them he is held in law; if it were only by substitutions, he might be held as well for the debts or trespass of all other children, as for his own. All whom Christ has redeemed are his children. He is their everlasting Father, and was held responsible for them as such. A surety is also held in justice for the payment of the bankrupt debtors for whom he has endorsed. But for capital offenses, in which life is required, and for which death is the penalty, still nearer and more vital relation is required; neither the husband for the wife, the parent for the child, nor the surety for the debtor, can be accepted. Should a wife or son or daughter be convicted of murder, no innocent husband or parent can be accepted as a substitute for the offender. A vicarious sufferer would not meet the demand of law and justice. But while Jesus sustains all the relations to his church which we have named, and in them all his sufferings may be regarded as vicarious, there is a more vital connection in which he is identified and held to answer all the demands of the law and justice of God.

The church for which our Lord laid down his life, is his body, and he is her head, (Eph. i. 23) and as her head he was numbered with the transgressors, and bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. Isa. 53:12. The transgressors of the divine law for whom he was stricken were all the members of his body. The iniquity of them all was demanded at his hand. If the members of a body commit a crime involving life, it cannot be expiated by cutting off such members from the body. Suppose a man's hand has plunged a dagger into the heart of a person, that hand if it were cut off would not satisfy the demand of the law which requires the life of the murderer. The hand could not have committed the murder if it were not connected vitally with the body, nor could the body without a head commit the act; therefore the head is justly held for the whole body of which he is the head, the shepherd for the sheep, the husband for the wife, and the parent for the child.

And thus we see the Son of God, the brightness of his Father's glory, and express image of his person, in his mediatorial humiliation, made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, made flesh and dwelling among his members, demanding of his disciples who were slow to believe all that the prophets have written, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" And responsive to that important interrogative, positively declaring "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead on the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." — Luke xxiv. 26, 46, 47.

The point to which we desire to call special attention is the necessity of a vital relationship between Christ who makes the sacrifice, and the church for whom the sacrifice was made, to make the sacrifice available to them. If all the holy angels of heaven had been offered for the transgressions of man, such a vicarious or substitutional offering could not have been accepted by the law of God, and must have utterly failed to redeem the transgressors from their sins. Boaz could not have redeemed the inheritance of Elimelech, if he had not been vitally related, as a near kinsman who by vital relationship had in himself the right of redemption. —

Ruth ix. 1-9. If our neighbor's sheep have trespassed and are lawfully held for the damage which has been sustained, none but the owner of the sheep can, simply by paying the ransom demanded, make them his own sheep.

The spiritual, eternal life which was with the Father co-existent with his eternal being, was given to his children, in the Son, even that life which was, and is, and forever shall continue to be hid with Christ in God, and constitutes a vital relationship which secures to him the right to take on him the seed of Abraham, when that seed had in the flesh transgressed the law of God, and thus identify himself with them in their flesh, partake of the same flesh and blood of which they are partakers, assume a body made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, in which to suffer and bear their sins in his own body, be put to death in the flesh, that he might redeem them from the sins of their flesh, and bestow on them that eternal life which is the gift of God through him. In his begotten Sonship he is one with all who are begotten and born of God, even as in his supreme, unbegotten and self existent Deity he is One with the Father in the Godhead. In his begotten Sonship he is the Mediatorial Head of the church, and the "First born among many brethren." Of these brethren, it is written, "For it became him, for whom all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold, I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children [brethren of him that sanctifieth, and children which God hath given him, and whom he is not ashamed to call BRETHREN] are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise [or in like manner] took part of the same," &c.

Their partaking of flesh and blood no more made them the children of God whom he gave to Christ, than Christ's incarnation made him the Son of God. Christ in his Mediatorial Sonship existed with the Father from everlasting, but was made flesh and dwelt among his children in the flesh when the fullness of the time for his incarnation had come; then, as he himself has declared, "I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me." — John viii. 42. "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." — John xvi. 28. Also, John xvii. 6-8, "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee: for I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me."

This record of the Son of God, as proceeding from, and subject to the will and control of the Godhead, we understand to relate to his Mediatorial, or begotten Sonship, and by no means in disparagement of his unbegotten, independent, eternal Godhead; for he is not only the Word which in the beginning was WITH God, but he is also the Word which in the beginning WAS GOD, and that in the most unlimited sense of the words. In his begotten Sonship we understand that he is the Elder Brother of all who are born of God, and the First Born among many brethren. In his Godhead undivided and indivisible, there being but One God. The head of Christ is God, even as the head of the body or church is Christ. Therefore as the atoning sacrifice for

his people we regard him as being infinitely superior to a mere substitute. The atoning sacrifice was made by Christ for his own body, the church, therefore he, in treading the wine press, says, "And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation UNTO ME; and my fury, it upheld me." — Isa. lxiii. 5. Whatsoever is done to any, even to the least of his members is done unto him.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe July 1, 1881.)

OBITUARIES

J. J. WHITLEY

James J. Whitley was born in Johnston County, N. C. on December 26, 1879, the son of W. G. and Nancy Lane Whitley. He was called from this life October 6, 1964. His wife, the former Ruth Honeycutt, preceded him in death, and he is survived by three children, J. J. Whitley, Jr., of Durham; Mrs. Beatrice Hicks, of Durham; and Mrs. Margaret Peele, of Ogden, Utah; two sisters, three brothers, and three grandchildren. His funeral was conducted by Elder W. C. King, assisted by Warren Bishop, a Methodist minister, and he was buried in Maplewood Cemetery.

Brother Whitley joined the Durham Primitive Baptist Church by letter from Old Union Church in Johnston County, in November, 1909. In February, 1929, he was elected as Clerk and Treasurer. In May of 1929, he was ordained as Deacon and in June, 1929, was elected a Trustee of the church. He served actively and faithfully in these offices until October, 1955, when, because of old age and failing health, he relinquished his active service and served mostly in an advisory capacity until his death.

Brother Whitley was a man of unique personality and gifts. Straightforward and direct in his dealings with others, he had the courage to stand for what he believed. Always quick to defend the Primitive Baptists against unjust criticism, he was equally certain to rebuke them if he thought it necessary. For many years he represented our church at Associations and Union meetings far and near. As a deacon he had a special interest in the care and upkeep of the church property. Even in his latter years he manifested a keen interest in church matters and showed a warm appreciation for the fellowship of his brethren.

Having lived a long and useful life, Brother J. J. Whitley fell asleep in the Lord, one of those of whom it was written: "Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; . . ."

Submitted by order of the Durham Church in conference January 16, 1965.

Elder James R. Hollandsworth, Moderator
Catherine M. Copley, Clerk

CECIL R. MASSEY

Cecil Rhodes Massey, the son of Edgar Hardy and Bessie Craig Massey, was born in Durham, N. C. April 9, 1903, and was called from this life on September 20, 1964. He is survived by his wife, Mala Vickers Massey; one sister and five brothers. His funeral was conducted at the Durham Primitive Baptist Church by Elders D. V. Spangler, W. Curry King, and J. Harvey Smith. His body was interred at Woodlawn Memorial Park in Durham.

At the time of his death he was serving as Deacon, Church Clerk, Treasurer and Trustee of the Durham Church. He joined the church June 16, 1940, and was ordained a deacon in November, 1950. Walking softly before the Lord, he used this office well, performing the work of a deacon with diligence and humility. He contributed many hours of personal labor to the maintenance of our church property. Brother Massey was a man of lovely character, soft-spoken, unpretentious, and sensitive to the needs of the poor of the flock. The doctrine of salvation by grace was sweet to him, and he loved the Lord's people, visiting frequently among our sister churches. The principles by which he lived, the doctrine which he loved, and his quiet confidence in God are some of the precious reminders of him we shall store away in the treasureland of memory. These things will be, perhaps, a more lasting memorial to him than anything we might write or say.

While we, as a church, pause to mark time in memory of Brother Massey, we entreat the Lord to grant us a spirit of submission to His will, and give us the sweet assurance of His promise to His people of old: "Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off."

Submitted by order of Durham Church, sitting in conference, January 16, 1965.

Elder James R. Hollandsworth, Moderator
Catherine M. Copley, Clerk

SISTER BALMA CALLAHAN

Sister Balma Callahan was born in Pickens County, Alabama, in the year 1892, the daughter of Elder and Sister William Dorris. She was married to William Callahan in early life and they lived together in sacred matrimony for a long number of years. To this hap-

py union two children were born, to wit, a son, Oness, and a daughter, Lorena. Mr. Callahan died in 1957. She leaves, besides the two children, four grandchildren, and two sisters, Mrs. Ida Ray and Mrs. Ruth Blalock, both of Steens, Miss.

But few people can appreciate the life that she lived. In 1924 she lost her eyesight (her two children and perhaps one grandchild are afflicted with the same trouble), and in 1930 her eyes were removed. As bad as it is to be without natural eyesight, I long for the day when I might have her spiritual vision. The God of Israel does not close a door without opening another. Her father was an Old Baptist minister, but she did not get the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ from his teaching. In 1927 she joined the Free Will Baptists, but it did not take but about two weeks for her to see that she had made a mistake. In November, 1931, she was received into the church at Zion in the same county in which she was born, and was baptized a short time later by Elder R. P. Hendricks.

I do not want to say a word about her walk before the children of God as though she contributed to it in any degree. She would lay her hand on my mouth while she lived if I tried to talk like that. Yet, I do thank God for her at every moment of meditation about the past. I was in the constitution of the church which she was a member of for more than twenty-six years. I was her pastor for nearly twenty years of that time. I could lay my hand in hers among a thousand people and she would call my name. What wisdom she had, and yet she feared that she did not know Jesus; what humility she had, and yet she was afraid that she had deceived the church.

Many sore trials came her way, but in them all she said that God was to be blessed for his goodness to her. Her health was poor for a long number of years; her life was made up of crosses and losses. May God be praised for giving her to us; and for taking her by the place where she laid down her cross and took up her crown; to where she has gained the happy shore of unending rest forever.

I loved her dearly. I do not have any hesitancy in saying that she loved me from babyhood, for I was named after her father. We have all lost a precious sister but she has gained a blest abode. I do not have any tears to shed, but rather rejoicing that she has entered into the joys of the Lord, there to await the resurrection of the body, which was a sweet doctrine to her.

She died on the third Sunday in September, 1963, and was buried at Bethel Church. The funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder H. C. Moon. W. D. G.

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

We, the members composing the Skewarky Primitive Baptist Church, desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our merciful and kind heavenly Father who called from our midst our beloved brother, Brother John Albert White, on October 12, 1964; thus, making his stay upon this earth seventy years and eight months.

Brother White was born on February 12, 1894, and remained a resident of Martin County till death.

Although our dear brother was received into the fellowship of our little flock only about one and one-half years before his departure, it is with a deep feeling of gratitude that we were blessed with associations prior to this time, inasmuch as we were blessed to see the manifestation of God's love in his daily walk and conversation long before his request for a home. Yes, he was a faithful husband, a faithful father to his children; but most comforting to us was his faithfulness to his God, to his brothers and sisters, and his church before and after his confession, so far as we were blessed to see and understand from the fruits he bore.

It was the writer's privilege to have heard our beloved brother express his experience several times. Tears of joy were always a part in his expression of how he felt he had received a hope in his precious Saviour over forty years ago.

The church at Skewarky grieves over her loss, but we hope and feel our loss is our brother's eternal gain. We rejoice in this because he professed a hope in an all wise, all powerful, and merciful God. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace and was resting in the hope of being taken on the wings of God's love to that celestial city, eternal in the heavens, whose builder and maker is God. He had a desire to give God all the honor and praise for a finished and completed salvation wrought by the spilling of the blood of his glorious Son, Jesus Christ on the cross; a salvation complete in the mind and purpose of God before the foundation of the world.

He leaves to mourn his passing his widow, Sister Lucile White, to whom he was united in marriage on June 19, 1916; two sons, two daughters, eleven grandchildren, and one sister. To the family we extend our heartfelt sympathy in their distressing hours. May you be comforted by God's love and words of comfort is our prayer.

His funeral was conducted in the Skewarky Primitive Baptist Church by his pastor, Elder E. C. Harrison, assisted by Elder D. B. Stokes. Interment was in the Martin Memorial Gardens beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

RESOLVED, That a copy be placed on the church record, a copy be sent to *Zion's Landmark, Old Faith Contender, Signs of the Times,* and a copy be sent to the family.

Done by order of conference second Saturday in November, 1964.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Deacon Johnny Ray Gardner, Committee

SISTER SALLIE BRIDGES

Sister Sallie Bridges was born August 24, 1899, and died November 14, 1964. She was the daughter of the late Brother Jonas and Sister Elizabeth Reaves. She was united in marriage to the late Ennis B. Bridges. Surviving are: one daughter, Mrs. Pearl DeMartino, New Kinsington, Pa., and two sons, Howard, of Dunn, N. C., and Corbett, of Raleigh, N. C.; and by four grandchildren.

Sister Bridges joined Bethsaida Primitive Baptist Church when she was eighteen years old, and moved her membership to Liberty Church in August, 1955. She was always a faithful member and a true believer in the faith of grace.

We, the church at Liberty, bow in humble submission to the will of God, who is the author and the finisher of our faith. As one we loved, we miss her, but we understand God loved her best.

It was agreed that a copy of this be given to the family; one for the church record; and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of Liberty Church in conference December 5, 1964, by the following Committee:

Liddie Tart
Effie Allen
Lovie Young

SISTER KATHERINE GILLIES

In loving memory of our dear and precious sister Katherine Gillies, who passed away in her sleep October 22, 1964, in Toronto, Canada. She leaves one brother, Dr. J. D. Gillies of Toronto, and two nephews, Dr. J. D. M. Gillies of Toronto and Prof. Donald B. Gillies. Interment was at Gillies Cemetery, West Lorne, Ontario.

She united with the church in July, 1956, at Lobo; and four others joined the church the same day. Three were baptized the following day and the other two in September by our pastor, Elder Geo. Ruston. It seemed a day of rejoicing in the Lord. During the night before Katherine's baptism she said she had sweet words come to her. Among them was verse 17 from 103rd Psalm, "But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children." Also verse 4 from 34th Psalm, "I sought the Lord and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears."

Our pastor spoke from Philippians 3:20, "For our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ," at the funeral service.

Katherine had a lively disposition and loved to talk on the scriptures. She will be missed by many. "Blessed are those that die in the Lord."

This is written at the request of Elder George Ruston by one who loved her.

Verna Carscadden

MRS. CORRIE ROYSTER

Dearest Corrie, you have left us in this world of sin and sorrow, but we feel you are sweetly resting, though we are heart broken. We loved you very dearly, but Jesus loved you best, for he called you home to heaven, to that land of peaceful rest. There we hope to meet you, Corrie; there we never more will part, but with our Jesus sweetly rest. Won't that be a glorious morning when we meet to part no more on that bright and happy shore?

As I have heard her say, "We'll meet in that bright world where we will never say Good-by."

Written by her loving mother,
Mrs. C. C. Clayton,
Durham, N. C.

CYNTHIA OLIN WARREN ADKINS

Dear Editors, will you please publish these few lines in memory of a dear sister of mine in the flesh, and I hope also in Christ.

She was called to rest May 29, 1963; and was born September 30, 1902. She is survived by her husband, Lonnie Adkins; one son, Cecil, and one daughter, Joyce; and eight grandchildren. Sis Olin, as we called her, was a sweet and faithful one. She was devoted to her church and pastor. Her health wasn't very good, but if she could sit up, she was always ready to go to church. She was some older than I, and was like a mother to me, so words cannot express how much I miss her.

She was baptized in 1947 into Rocky Swamp Church, by Elder J. C. Moore, of Whitakers; who was a precious one too. We rest assured that she is with her precious Father in heaven, and out of this world of worry and trouble.

Written with much sadness and fear.

Mrs. J. L. Smith

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133 DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1965 NO. 6

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/65
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"IT IS OF HIM WHO WORKETH IN US"

4514 Third Street, N. W.,
Canton 8, Ohio.

Dear Brethren:

Sound doctrine that is delivered with unction and power of the Holy Spirit is getting scarce indeed . . .

Elder Roscoe Lane is a friend of mine, and he gave me the address to subscribe for the *Signs of the Times.* I have read a few copies and enjoy its contents. I believe in an all wise and sovereign God, in whom we live, move, and have our being; and that times and events are before appointed, and come to pass according to the divine will of God. Can the poor, puny creature change the things that God has foreordained to be?

I love God and rejoice in the fact that he has fixed all things: As he has fixed my eternal salvation, so has he fixed my time salvation. We have a time salvation to work out in this life, but it is of him who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

I enclose $5.00 for two years subscription. May God bless the paper and pour out His Spirit to give us good writers of sound doctrine.

Yours in hope,
Russell V. Angle

THERE WILL ALWAYS BE A FEW

733 7th Street,
Hollister, Calif. 95023

Signs of the Times:

I see that it is time to renew my subscription to the *Signs.* I enjoyed the article by Elder John C. Hall in the March issue very much. He was an able writer, as were many in his day.

I believe there will always be a few who believe in the only true and living God, who is the first cause of all causes, "Who declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." And, ". . . I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."

The world believes in a god who is willing to save if you will just let him. "As it is written, I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." I wonder where they would get the power, for it is written, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers, for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God."

I believe in a God who has all power, who says, "I will and you shall." "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws in their inward parts, and write them in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them

to the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jeremiah 31:33, 34)

According to the scriptures every child of grace was chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, for it is written, "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." (Psalm 139:15, 16) I believe that at God's appointed time every one of them will be brought into the fold.

A brother in hope,
Austin M. Tipton

Tennessee Ridge, Tenn. 37178

Dear Editors:

I feel that I have been wonderfully blessed with a countless number of blessings the past few years, for which I am thankful to the great Creator of all things.

I retired at the age of 65, and moved to as convenient a place as possible for the purpose of going to church somewhere every Sunday that it is the Lord's will; and have been blessed with health that enabled me to attend from one or two associations and union meetings each year in my own surrounding area, and several distant meetings and associations in Alabama, Kentucky and Illinois, and I feel that I have been fed with that spiritual manna from above. I hope to be able to continue as time goes on, however I am past seventy years of age and cannot expect to live forever.

We cannot understand why these blessings are extended to one who feels so unworthy as I — it is only through the mercies and His abounding grace to His children, if I be one at all. Sometimes I feel to have a hope to that effect.

I have also been blessed to read the wonderful letters and editorials in the *Signs of the Times,* for which I thank the Lord. Let us give praise to the one to whom praise is due. The writers are blessed by a higher power to write the doctrine of our primitive faith.

I am enclosing check for my renewal for two years.

Yours in hope,
Harvey Vick

SERMON BY ELDER JAMES POOLE AT THE VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING IN 1964

I will read a portion of Scripture that is familiar to most of you which is found in the 15th chapter of Luke. This is commonly called the parable of the prodigal son. Of all the portions of Scripture that is mis-applied and misused, probably the parables receive more apparent damage than any others. We might feel ourselves skilled interpreters of the word of God, but it is highly probable that many have but little insight of what the Lord conveyed in these.

I do not believe that a parable teaches any new truths. The Lord amplified or explained or enlarged upon something already brought forward, whether in the Old Testament or what he had previously taught. Further, I do not believe that any parable should be applied any further than its local application. The Lord had a specific design when he brought every parable before his hearers; and I think we assume something the Lord has not intended when we try to take a parable and apply it beyond that: it might fit, and it might not — we don't have this wisdom apart from God. Though I may differ with some here today, I feel that the application will be consistent with the remainder of the word of God. I

have heard ministers preach a discourse that I thought was good, but to me, (maybe I was wrong), they used the wrong text. What they preached was good, but they did not get the message from the part of the Bible I would have, if it had been left to me. Many times we get up and have a good text, and then not have such a good message. As I mentioned yesterday, let us trust our God for the disposal of all these things.

Before we attempt to look at the 15th chapter, I want to read several other verses in the book of Luke. "And the Lord said unto him, now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness." (Luke 11:39) "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them." (Luke 11:44) "In the meantime, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." (Luke 12:1) "And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him. And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." (Luke 16:14) "And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others." (Luke 18:9)

I think this will be sufficient at this time to indicate what much of the book of Luke contains. Nowhere else in the New Testament does it show more of the opposition and hatred and malice of the Pharisees toward our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, than it does in the gospel according to Luke. Continually from the very first to the very last of the book, we find warfare there. They devised every means that they could imagine to ridicule, condemn, and even destroy Jesus the Saviour. At every turn they watched him that they might trip him in his words; in every movement they sought something they could find that was contrary to the law of Moses. In everything that Jesus did they continually spied him out that he might be destroyed, and that his testimony among the multitudes might be gainsaid.

The book of Luke, as much as any other book in the Bible, condemns phariseeism. I think that we have every reason in the world today, that we also, under the leadership of God, should condemn phariseeism. It is a common malady that afflicts all the world — except that God is with us and leads us in humility and recognition of our sinful condition. Phariseeism is the finest line that can be drawn of legalism; and I think that we can safely say that any institution, organization, or religious society in the world today that takes up the law and expounds it as a rule of faith to their people, has a tinge of phariseeism. Any preacher, any so called preacher, any church, any body of people that uses any system other than the divine that God has delivered, which is sovereign grace, is afflicted and diseased with phariseeism.

We come now to the 15th chapter of Luke. The Lord expounded certain things to these people. It begins by saying, "Then drew near unto him all of the publicans and sinners for to hear him, and the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying this man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." They murmured and complained because Jesus was eating with sinners — eating with the vile and unclean of the day. He had said that he had come not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance; and he was as consistent as his word — he lived among them, walked among them, and dealt with them.

The wisdom of all ages had come down out of heaven unto them, and was delivered to them through the mouth

of the Son of God; and it was said, "Never man spake like this": we have never seen it on this wise before. When they heard these things they hungered and thirsted, and desired that they might be fed more of this manna which had come down out of heaven. They rejoiced and were greatly comforted, for they had heard the law of Moses; they had heard the scribes; they had heard the Pharisees; they had heard all the lawyers of the religion of the day speak unto them, and when they would go away, they would go away empty, because there was no food supplied them. There was no substance; there was nothing lasting; there was no comfort; there was no deliverance from the torment and grief of sin which they had endured in their mortal bodies; but as Jesus spoke, they drew near unto him.

Can you imagine the pride-filled Pharisees, those who had had the crowds follow them, as they saw Jesus carry away the crowds, and have the multitudes follow after him? They were jealous! They despised to see this minister of God from heaven come before the multitudes, and for them to desire to hear Jesus rather than themselves. They had a dead letter to deliver, but it made no difference to them, for they would ensnare the people of God at the expense of the glory of God; but it was impossible.

The Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." This I think, embraces the teaching which follows. It is sufficient to say that these are not three separate parables, though some say, This is the parable of the lost sheep; this is the parable of the lost coin; and this is the parable of the lost prodigal son. These are not three separate teachings, but one — to teach one plain truth to those who have been given eyes to see, ears to hear, and an understanding heart and rejoicing mind, that they may be comforted.

"He spoke this parable unto them, saying, What man of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?" So many have the idea that all hundred of these, because they were termed sheep, were the children of God everlastingly. In this particular parable, I think that Jesus is showing the inconsistency of the Pharisees, scribes and Sadducees, and all religious leaders who claim to be the sheep of God, for He left them in the wilderness to go after that one which was lost. This was the difference and distinction between all the multitude, and the sinners, the vile and the outcasts of religion who were hungering and thirsting after Jesus. The multitude of the Pharisees thought they were sheep; they thought they were religious; they thought they had the knowledge of God, having Moses' seat, yet they were full of dead men's bones and did not have any of the glory of God invested in them.

I think this is what Jesus is teaching here. He said, "What man of you having an hundred sheep." — they were all here, whether they were true sheep or false, "if he loose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness," — did not leave them in tabernacle, did not leave them in the kingdom of God, but left them in the wilderness, "and went after the one." "And when he found it, he laid it on his shoulder, and came home rejoicing."

Notice the appliction of this: "And when he cometh home, he called together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance." Let no one deceive you today, brothers and sisters, all of God's children need repentance, whether they be indoctrinated or whether they be in darkness, all of the children of God must have that repentance that God

sends down out of heaven to deliver their souls. Every one of them must be granted the faith of Jesus Christ from God as a gift; and so it is with repentance. We might not hear much about repentance today, because another crowd has taken the hue and cry of repentance and distorted it to a fashion that would suit themselves; yet repentance is still the doctrine of the Bible: It is still as much in vogue for the people of God today as it was two thousand years ago. When the Saviour came upon the scene, did he preach some other doctrine? He began by saying, "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," as did his fore-runner John the Baptist, and as did Peter on the day of Pentecost. Repentance was preached by the disciples in those days, and I believe the true church of God today has ministers who preach repentance: not in order to get people to repent; but they preach the truth repentance: the necessity of the divine power of God to grant men repentance, and deliver them from their sinful nature and vileness.

Did the one sheep have any idea of repenting as it went over the hill? Did it have any desire of getting disturbed about its condition? One out of an hundred — ninety-nine left in the wilderness. And he went for the lost one, and brought it home rejoicing, saying that there was joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance — those who were just in themselves and thought they needed no repentance; thought they were righteous of themselves, despising others. That was the condition of the Pharisees: they felt that they had no need of repentance; that they were perfect, sinless and lived above everything, keeping the law.

The teaching of Jesus here was to instruct the people of God by way of condemning the Pharisees, when they murmured when Jesus received and ate with sinners. Had they known that they were sinners, their sins also had been removed; but they were blind though they claimed they could see.

We come to the second parable. "Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle and sweep the house, and seek diligently until she find it; and when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I had lost." Notice that the first case was the lost sheep; the second is the lost coin. "Likewise I say unto you there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." We don't need an interpreter for these verses — the Saviour himself interpreted them as being how the sinner repents, that it was not left to him. The sheep did not have the wisdom nor the ability, nor the desire to come back from its lost estate; neither did the lost coin have any power, or wisdom, or intelligence within itself to discover its own lost condition. I think in the first case we find the means the Saviour used: Him coming as the Shepherd of the sheep to seek out the lost sheep and grant them repentance that they may rejoice everlastingly in the fold and flock of God. In the second case, we find the woman sweeping diligently in the house, and bringing forth to light; which I think gives application and instruction of how the Spirit of God comes within, and brings the light to bear upon the darkened soul that it might be seen to be lost; and then recovers that lost inanimate object; (which we are apart from God, just as inanimate as the lost coin, for we have just as much ability to recover ourselves from our lost state as the coin did.) We have just about as much intelligence and understanding of direction towards heaven as the sheep had to recover itself from its lost condition; which was none. I don't know much about sheep, but from what I have heard they don't have to get very far away to be lost, and can't find their way back.

How many people today think they can go out and recover some lost sheep and take them from the fold of this world, and redeem them unto the heavenly Father! What a lie some people tell, when they stand before the people and instruct them to save themselves. Brethren, if there is salvation in this world, it is by Jesus Christ. It is taught throughout the Scriptures that all salvation is of the Lord: before, and now, and in the future.

We now come to the third section; which, I think, deals with the general application of repentance. First, we see a lost sheep, then a lost coin, (that neither one of them recovered themselves,) and now we see a lost son. "And he said, a certain man had two sons." I think it might be well before we go further, to turn to Galatians and think something about two sons in the fourth chapter, ". . . tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond woman, and the other by a free woman." Where could we find a more fitting application to corroborate the truth of the parable here? Two sons — one by a bond maid, and one by a free woman. We find a fitting illustration of the difference between these two sons: one stayed at home, and the other went out into the grossest form of sin; and the distinction is manifest as it unfolds.

"A certain man had two sons, and the younger of them —" This is consistent with the rest of the word of God: the elder shall serve the younger. It was not the elder brother Esau, but the younger brother Jacob that was favored of God; it was not Cain but Abel that received the knowledge of God. And so on down through the word of God it is consistently said that the elder shall serve the younger; and we find it just as consistent when our Saviour is instructing by way of a parable. "And the younger of them said to his father, Father give me the portion of goods that falleth to me: and he divided unto them his living. And not many days afterward the younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living." I think this is a full application of the condition of a sinner in this world today — the depths of sin he gets into: he didn't just journey down the block somewhere and frolic around a little bit and have an amusing time, but he took his journey into a far country. So far away that there was no means whatsoever in our natural understanding of his returning unto his father's house. He wasted his substance with riotous living. Have you ever considered how riotous we live in this world today: how sinful, how vile and unclean; the depths of woe and degradation that a sinner steeps in until such time that God in his all merciful love stoops down and brings him up by his Son — redeems him to sit upon a mountain top shouting the very praises of God.

"And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine." I believe it happens every time that one of the Lord's people starts a riotous living and the Lord is pleased to bring him out from under it. At the same time they have spent all and go bankrupt, the famine comes. Oh, that we can praise His name that it is so, and rejoice to know that the greatest thing that has ever happened to the child of God in this life, is when he is come to the knowledge of the fact that he is bankrupt before God, and that he lives in a land full of famine, destitute of any food or substance that might keep his soul and body together.

No doubt this son had had a great time with his substance: he lived it up and spent freely, and went with the harlots and wicked wine bibbers, etc., of the world. Then the time came that he went broke. He might even have written a "hot check" or two. You know there are lots of folks in the world today who are writing religious "hot

checks" — they surely are: writing one on all their good works in heaven, and passing them out. But they come back insufficient funds every time. It will never be honored in heaven; it will never be looked upon in favor before God. Yet everyone of us taught only of ourselves and of the world, would try to pass phoney money religious wise, if it were not for the grace of God.

But He is pleased to send a famine! I am convinced from the word of God that every famine that ever hits us, is for a cause and purpose. Every incident in our lives, whether it be big or small, is designed by the allwise counsel of God, that he might bring us to the time we could see nothing in him except glory and exaltation; and see nothing in ourselves but sin and degradation.

"The famine came, and he began to be in want." He didn't want anything while he had his own substance; while he had his pockets full of his own filthy lucre, but when he was bankrupt and the famine came, he began to be in want. The child of God, when he is under the afflictions of God, teaching and directing him, and leading him unto repentance, begins to be in want, because all the substance of this world cannot satisfy him.

"He began to be in want, and went and joined himself to a citizen of that country." If we should ask some in this congregation, many would say the first thing they did when they began to be in want, was to join themselves to citizens of this country; to line up with institutions and organizations, feeling that they had the necessary things. But we find later that the land we have come from, is where our inheritance is and is the only land we can be joined with.

"And he sent him into the field to feed swine." That is about what happens when we join with citizens of this land: we wind up slopping hogs. "And he fain would have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him." No man gave unto him, because no man could. When one is happy and has all he needs, and is in a good state, he has lots of friends, lots of companions. But when one is stripped by the famine, by the mighty power of God and brought to be in want, there is no one in this world that can give unto him — neither brother nor sister, mother nor father, friends or neighbors, or your preacher, none of them can give unto you.

"And when he came unto himself, he said . . ." Some folks would try to tell us that by coming unto himself, he just sat back on a log somewhere and scratched his head and made a decision. But this is not true at all: I think the man was spiritually insane until the time God restored his mind and made him to know that he was in the wrong place. And I think that every one of the Lord's people before they are quickened, are deranged in mind, and until such time that God gives them peace through Jesus Christ they cannot come to themselves. This man would have been happy if he could have kept the substance he had; if he could have gone on in riotous living with his friends he would never have had any problems. If he could have been without famine, and not having to join with a citizen of that land and feeding swine, he would have had no problems. But not so with God. The best laid plans we have can come to nought, if our God has other designs.

This man came to be in want, and then came to himself by the power of God. He said, "How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: Make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto

him, Father I have sinned . . ." I have sinned! I think those are the sweetest words the Lord's people can ever hear another one say: I am a sinner. This brother here had the right testimony, "I have sinned."

Instead of going into details, let us just read now and find out about his elder brother. The father said to the servants, "Bring forth the best robe." We know what the best robe is: the righteousness of Christ. He put a ring on his hand: the seal of God. Put shoes on his feet: the gospel; and he brought the fatted calf, and killed it: the sacrificial supper that we commune with our heavenly Father. "Let us eat and be merry, for this my son was dead and is alive again; was lost and is found." What rejoicing there is when a sinner returns to the presence of his Father by His divine leadership, providence and direction.

"The elder son was in the field." He wasn't at the house communing with them: it is noteworthy to notice the wording, "In the field." Jesus himself explained what the field was in the 13th chapter of Matthew, when he said, "The field is the world." The elder brother stayed at home, but he was in the world all the while, even in the presence of his father. The Pharisees had the law of Moses, they had the temple, they had the sacrifices all the while they were in the field: They were in the world, and knew not the grace and glory of God. Here was the elder brother at home all the while, yet he was a stranger — he was in the field; and he came nigh unto the house and heard music and dancing; and he asked one of the servants what these things meant. He didn't have any spiritual light; he couldn't see for himself. The servant said, "Thy brother is come and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he has received him safe and sound.

"And he was angry." Doesn't this compare with the Pharisees and scribes who murmured, saying that this man receiveth sinners. This is the very complaint of the elder brother: he was angry because his father received his sinful brother. He thought his father ought to say, "Depart from me ye worker of iniquity." But no, the father received him joyfully, and gave him the best robe, and a ring for his hand, and shoes for his feet. "He was angry and would not go in." Doesn't this compare with what our Saviour said in John 5:40, "And ye will not come to me that ye might have life." "His father came out, and entreated him." And he answered, "Lo, these many years do I serve thee," (legalism — "do I serve thee,") "neither transgressed thy commandments at any time." This is typical Phariseeism wherever you find it; and but for the grace of God, brothers and sisters, we would be Pharisees too; or worse still, a Judas probably. "And yet thou never gave me a kid that I might make merry with my friends." He wasn't interested in communion with his father around the broken body of Jesus Christ: he wanted to make merry with his friends.

I think we have much to praise God for that we can make merry and rejoice in Jesus our Saviour; that we as the prodigal son, came home after we were restored to our senses by God, and say that we have sinned. The elder brother gave every evidence that he had never tasted grace. The last verse says, "It was meet that we make merry and be glad, for this thy brother was dead and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

The lost sheep, the lost coin, the lost sinner: it took the same grace to restore each one. The application of the lost sheep is, how His son saved his sheep; the application of the lost coin is, how the Spirit of God brings forth the light and sweeps the room clean — brings out all the filth; the application of the lost son is, the repentance, the returning home to the Father by divine providence, and the granting unto him the restored state. All of it was by

grace from beginning to end.

The Pharisees murmured against him because he had received sinners. The teaching and instruction here is that they were sinners, and had never seen themselves to be what they knew they were: they had never repented — and never would apart from grace. Friends, you and I would never repent were it not for grace; we would never give our idols up; we would never lay down our jewels of this world except God supplied us with that one jewel above all others — Christ in you the hope of glory. Let all else perish, let all the vain things of our imagination flee from us, if we can but claim that hope of everlasting happiness with the Saviour, who has abundantly pardoned the wickedest and vilest prodigal by his grace.

(The above is from a tape recording and is slightly condensed for publication. We believe our readers will find it most interesting. — J. D. W.)

2707 Idlewild Blvd.,
Roanoke, Virginia 42012

Dear Brethren in Christ:

It is time to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times,* and am sending $5.00 for two years.

I enjoy reading the experiences of the saints, and also the editorials. And am glad to read the good sermons of our preaching brethren which you have published . . . The Lord has blessed us with some very able ministers, for which I hope we are thankful.

May the Lord keep and bless you with all spiritual blessings, is my prayer I hope for Christ's sake. From one in hope of eternal life.

Mrs. D. A. Law

ENJOYED THE PUBLISHED SERMON

Route 1, Box 494
Granite City, Ill.

Dear Brother and Sister Spangler:

From time to time we are given a feeling of inner thankfulness for God's merciful enlightenment pertaining to portions of the Scriptures. In this particular instance they occur in the February issue of the *Signs*: Your editorial from one of your recorded sermons, and *The Voices of The Past.*

My wife and I eagerly read, and expressed our enjoyment after reading your piece. How we feasted on your wonderful descriptions as to how Jesus Christ our blessed Lord and Redeemer was praised, and not puny, helpless man; how Jesus Christ the Son of God came down from heaven and took the sins of all whom the Father gave him, and glorified, magnified and fulfilled the law in their behalf; thereby leaving nothing undone for the creature whom Christ died for. The Son of God gave all; what can we give? Exactly nothing! All we do, if we be a child of God, is receive Christ and all his wonderful blessings; if not of the elect, we receive only the fruits of the flesh (works), and will be judged by the law.

We hope to be thankful to the thrice holy God of heaven and earth, that your sermon was recorded, thereby giving the household of the readers of the *Signs* the privilege of feasting and sharing the crumbs which fall from the Master's table, with you and the brethren in Virginia.

I remain a brother, I hope,
John F. Simpson.

Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun. (Eccl. 7:11)

The wise man of the world, is guided by his conscience to live morally right, and to walk uprightly before his fellow man. The spiritually wise, who are called foolish by the world, are guided by the Holy Spirit to walk uprightly before God. This spiritual walk of those guided by spiritual wisdom, is what we hope to discuss, God being our strength.

The children of Grace once walked as

the foolish. Their eyes were blinded and they sought their joys in the decaying things of the world around them. They were very busy choosing whom they would serve among the little gods of the earth. They were wise in their own eyes, following the way that seemeth right to a man, and crooked paths of self-righteousness. The blind led the blind and walked after the counsel of the ungodly. Those who walk after the flesh, mind the things of the flesh and not of the Spirit. This is not a good inheritance, for the simple inherit folly, therefore they cannot inherit the kingdom of God, because they are flesh and blood. The things of the kingdom of God are spiritually discerned. Though they count themselves wise, in the light of spiritual wisdom and truth they are foolish and simple minded.

The question is, how can the blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, to find the good wisdom with an inheritance? "Where shall wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding?" "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil that is understanding."

Dear reader, do you ever try to remember when the fear of the Lord entered your heart? When the scary tales of the devil and his cohorts took flight, as the evil spirits entered the swine and were choked in the sea? Do you yearn and long and try to pray, with me, that you actually experience Godly fear, and that you are one of the foolish things of this world, that He chose to confound the wise? Did you turn from your former life of folly and begin to fear God of your own free will? Did you lift your feet from the miry clay and place them upon the rock, the sure foundation? I think not. You were told in your heart to "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord."

Though we see through a glass darkly, and walk by faith and not by sight, if we are what we hope to be, the foolish things of this world have passed away, for us, and the inheritance that comes with spiritual wisdom is our meat and drink. Christ's sermon on the mount gives in detail the good inheritance; and those who will receive it.

Let us reread the text, "Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun." By it, there is profit. If we are wise in the fear of the Lord, and receive an inheritance (an unearned legacy) that profits us, the profit is as much a gift as the inheritance. Christ with whom we are heirs and joint heirs we hope, died to satisfy the law in our place, and gave us redemption from the law and salvation to life eternal. He took away our stony heart and gave us a heart of flesh. With this gift, he gave light, truth, and wisdom to understand there is no other way to enter the climes of immortal glory except by himself. He is the only door.

The new heart of flesh is wise to the source of its profit. It knows the roads it followed in folly. It knows the miry clay, the desert land, and howling wilderness from which it was rescued. This heart that now is lowly, meek, humble, poor, and wise to its own short comings, looks to the Giver of its inheritance, for wisdom, strength and comfort. It dwells in the wisdom that, "Man's goings are of the Lord, how can a man then understand his own way."

How do those who are wise in the fear of the Lord profit by this inheritance? They are filled with the needs of the inner man as dictated by the Spirit. He knows and supplies our every need, but not the whims and fancies of the flesh. We are held down and made humble, lest we become puffed up, but then He promised Paul "my grace is sufficient for thee." No matter what the problem, or thorn in the flesh, the child of God is hemmed in, and hedged about, by his promises, which are yea and amen.

They that mourn shall be comforted, the meek shall inherit the earth, the pure in heart shall see God, the merciful shall obtain mercy, and they shall

sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. "With the lowly there is wisdom," says David, "and the wise shall inherit glory."

Every good and every perfect gift is from above. The wise man knows himself to be lost and without hope, unless a power outside himself intervenes. All of his efforts have been fruitless, and judgment seems his doom. When Christ enters his heart and makes a new man within him, then can the little child of God say, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Even though, to himself, he feels sinful, unworthy and unfruitful, his brethren can see his new way, and his good and perfect gifts, shining *through* the old man. Faith, hope and charity are gifts that wisdom bids him use wisely and are profits from his inheritance. How wonderful to watch a Christian on the new road, as he is guided by wisdom. He walks it by faith, also a part of the inherited gift. Even though it is strait and narrow and hard, and though he falter and fall along the way, he is never lost nor utterly cast down. Why? Because his way is in the light and he is one of them that sees the sun. His feet are planted and kept in the way of life by the wisdom of that sun shining in his heart; by the love and mercy of that one that neither sleeps nor slumbers. To a way worn sinner, who knows his own wickedness and vanity; who has been taught his own foolishness, and has been made to know it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, then to him, "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun."

As all scripture is written for a profit to the man of God, to the children of God instead of the whole world, so is the wording of this text written to a certain people: "To them that see the sun." Broken into segments it means: wisdom is good to them that see the sun, or an inheritance to them that see the sun, or profit to them that see the sun. So in reality, we have wisdom, which is the fear of God; inheritance, which is the promise of God; and profit, which is the comforting faith and hope in the fulfillment of those promises, all pertaining to this certain people that see the sun.

I believe "Them that see the sun," are his people, chosen in Christ Jesus from the foundation of the world, and that the sun in this instance is God. "For the Lord God is a sun and a shield." (Psalm 84:11) He chose them as heirs of promise and set their hope and faith before them, as the path they must walk, on which they will continue until they come into full possession of the profit of their inheritance, within the veil.

These are thoughts, poorly presented, on a deep and wonderful subject. I hope that I have not been allowed to do violence to its meaning, and would love to hear some gifted, inspired brother proclaim its deeper meaning.

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Spearsville, La.

Rt. 4, Box 14,
Roxboro, N. C.

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a money order for the good Baptist paper, the *Signs,* which I have been reading for the past two years. I think it is a wonderful paper; and I feel that I know you, though we have never met, but hope we may, if it be God's will.

I was reared near Chatham, Virginia, on a farm with my Uncle and Aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Tom Stowe, after my mother and father died. I feel that you knew my uncle, Elder Charlie Evans, who was my father's brother. I used to go with them to church a lot when I was growing up, and would look at the members as they were singing and shaking hands, often with tears running down their faces, and wished I could be as good as they were. I don't feel that I deserve a home with them, but

could not be satisfied anywhere else, and have been a member four years at Flat River Church. My husband passed away four years ago, and I wonder a lot why God is keeping me here; but I know that I shall not go before my appointed time. I know that I don't merit even one little blessing, but God has been so good to me. I have a hope of that bright home where there is no sorrow or tears.

May the Lord bless you to continue on to his glory, and the comfort of the elect according to his grace.

In love and hope,
Mrs. Charlie Allen

Box 427,
Winfield, Alabama

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a check for $16.00 — three for my renewal and three for renewal of J. L. Lucas, and the remainder to use to help send the *Signs* to those that can't pay for the paper. I feel that there are many who would enjoy reading the paper if they had the opportunity. I enjoy reading it so much I wish everyone that believes in salvation by grace, and the love of God that does all things well, could read it too.

In hope of eternal life,
Mrs. M. L. Lucas

HAS GOOD ACQUAINTANCE WITH THE *SIGNS*

210 Fernwood Place,
Wilmington 2, Delaware 9802

Signs of The Times:

Enclosed you will find check in the sum of $3.00 for renewal of my subscription to the *Signs of the Times* for another year.

May I inform you I have known the *Signs* when my grandfather was a subscriber and it was published in newspaper form. I have a few copies yet of that era. But few publications have survived the changes of the passing years, as has the *Signs*. I was 87 the 5th of last June, and I feel I have a good acquaintance with the *Signs* and its doctrine concerning the gospel of Jesus Christ and his Apostles.

While its editors since its beginning have been men, I do feel they have been led and prompted by the Holy Spirit to write and publish only such things as would honor and glorify His name among the churches of the elect. May the Holy Ghost continue to so lead and inspire both editors and writers that the columns of the *Signs* continue to stand firm upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, in truth and practice, is my prayer. Amen

Most humbly yours,
(Elder) C. E. Benson

"HE SPEAKS AND IT IS DONE"

Rt. 1,
Maineville, Ohio

Dear Brethren in Christ:

It causes me to tremble to use the word brethren to such a precious people, for I feel so unworthy; and you people look so good to me.

I am the only one of my father's family that has his name recorded among you good people. My membership is at Union Primitive Baptist Church at Sharp's Chapel, Tenn. I joined the church and was baptized the second Sunday in September, 1954. I don't see how they could receive and live with a sinner like me. I know they don't need me, but I don't feel that I could live without them.

I was born in Bell County, Ky., and was a coal miner here in Ohio from 1925 to 1951. I don't get to be with the church very often, not more than two or three times a year, but if it is the Lord's will I am moving to Tennessee where I can spend my last days with the people who are preaching a sovereign God. People preach around here that God wants to save Adam's family, and that they are helping Him all they can; and that He looks to them for

help.

The God I believe in made and created all things by himself, and for himself; and by him all things consist. This God does not try to do anything: he just speaks and it is done. He hung this earth upon nothing; he doesn't need poor puny man's help. When there was not anything here but dark emptiness of space, all things that have ever been, or ever will be, was present with him in wisdom; and he declared from ancient times things not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure.

I believe that Christ stood then in the eternal arrangement of the salvation of God's people, as if he had been slain. I believe that he came into this world on a mission, and that mission was to save his people. He came from heaven to seek and to save that which was lost. I believe he bore all the sins of all his people in his body, putting them away by the sacrifice of himself. If he came to save that which was lost, he either did, or didn't. I say he did. When he said "It is finished", I believe the whole debt was paid.

Brethren you will find $3.00 enclosed for a year's subscription to the *Signs*. Later I want to help get the paper to others. Brother John Wilder gave me a copy of the *Signs of the Times* when I was at Sharp's Chapel, Tennessee last Sunday at church. I want to start getting my copies as soon as I can. If you think what I have written is according to the doctrine of God, you may print this in the *Signs*.

Your unworthy writer,
Garrett Wilson

"ENJOYS THE *SIGNS* SO MUCH"

Rt. 2,
Christiansburg, Va.

Dear Brother Spangler:

Since I am now living with my daughter, Kathleen Martin, and we are getting two papers, please discontinue her's when her subscription expires, and continue mine.

We enjoy the *Signs* so much. Elder Curry's article in the last issue was one of the best I ever read. How well I remember hearing you preach at Payne's Creek last year. I was so comforted that when I laid down that night, I had no fear of dying — I felt that if I died that night it would be all right. I have always feared the sting of death.

John says that we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. I feel I have that assurance. With much love, I am

Yours in hope,
Wm. Graham

PLEASE NOTE

Will all who have notices of associations or other special meetings which they desire published, please send them to us as early as possible, so that we may have them in the proper issue. We require at least five weeks to properly handle them. They should be mailed to P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Virginia, to save time and additional handling.

Also, we need more information on some of the churches which are included under CHURCH NOTICES, which are published each January. The Clerks or Pastors should give us this information if they want their notices continued. — J. D. W.

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The **Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association** will convene, the Lord willing, with Strawberry Church July 9, 10, and 11, 1965. Services to begin at 11:00 A. M. daylight saving time.

Those coming from the North, East or South should enter Danville, Virginia, on U. S. 29, proceed to Highway 41, and follow this highway to Highway 750 at Brown's Store. The meeting house is located about one mile on the right from Brown's Store. Those coming from the West should take Highway 41 at Callands, Va., and continue to Highway 750.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Burnell B. Williams, Assn. Clerk

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** will be held with the church at Sandy Grove, Nash County, N. C., the fifth Saturday and Sunday in May, 1965.

The meeting house is located on highway 97, about two miles west of Stanhope, N. C. All having a mind to attend are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Sr., Clerk

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with Otter's Creek Church, Edgecombe County, N. C.

All who love the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 3, Tarboro, N. C.

Danville, Virginia **June, 1965**

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EDITORIAL

"THE LORD'S SUPPER."

(Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:17-20; I Corinthians 11:23-29)

We have been requested to write for publication upon the subject of "The Lord's Supper" and its observance by the Church of God IN REMEMBRANCE. "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show the Lord's death till he come." The passover which the disciples had observed that night, had been a feast observed by the children of Israel ever since their departure from Egypt, (read Exodus 1). Our Lord, yet to be slain, partook of the passover lamb, for he was under the law, yet we are told in Revealtion 13:8 that our Lord was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, for God saw such perfection in his Son that it was as if all of Christ's works were finished from the foundation of the world. (Hebrews 4:3) Israel partook of the passover before their deliverance, the disciples partook of the Lord's supper before our Lord suffered death on the cross. Being surety for his people he must meet every requirement of the law; in his life he, like the lamb, was free from any blemish or spot. The only bread in the house at that time was unleavened bread; and from what is this bread made? Wheat, bruised or crushed, mixed with holy oil, the wheat representing the Word of God, and the holy oil the Holy Spirit's evidence, testifying beforehand the suf-

ferings and the glory that should follow. Unleavened bread used before Christ suffered was a type of the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Our Lord was crucified, and before he expired he cried with a loud voice (the voice of a victor) and yielded up the ghost. On the third appointed day he arose from the dead, and for forty days he instructed his disciples in the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. (Acts 1:3) At his command they tarried in Jerusalem for ten days. "Until ye be endued with power from on high." (Luke 24:49) We believe that the Church was established on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit descended upon them as a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. Our Lord had, in the Gospel of Matthew, mentioned the church twice. In Matthew 16:18 he told Peter that on the Rock of his Divinity he would build his church and the gates of hell should not prevail against it. Again, in speaking on the order of his house, the church, which is the pillar and ground of the truth, he gives the disciples directions to be taken when a brother trespasses against a brother, in which he gives two steps to be taken first, and the third step, if the brother will not hear them, is to tell it to the church. (Matthew 18:15-17) Here then we believe that the descent of the Holy Ghost, when the day of Pentecost was fully come, is, as we have said before, the beginning of the Gospel Church. Christ, the firstfruits of God's harvest, had finished the work God had given him to do and had ascended into heaven with that body that arose from the dead and there he is enthroned in glory, EXPECTING, that is, WAITING FOR, all his enemies to be made his footstool.

We have said that during the time of the Passover there was no leaven in the house, but at Pentecost there were two loaves made of the firstfruits of the harvest. "Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave-loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baken with leaven; (a type of sin) they are the firstfruits unto the Lord." (Leviticus 23:17) Here we see TWO loaves, why? Were there not Gentiles as well as Jews who had been healed by our Lord in his earthly ministry? "He maketh his angels spirits; and his ministers a flaming fire." (Psalm 104:4) Here we see those gathered in an upper room, "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. The tongues were cloven to show that henceforth the ministry was to be to both Jew and Gentile. This was the beginning of the harvest as Acts 2 shows. There is another instance we would mention to confirm the correct use of leaven in bread used by the Gospel Church. It was not easy for believing Jews to give up the practices received from their forefathers, especially circumcision, as we see in Galatians 2:11, where Paul withstood Peter to his face, because he was to be blamed. There is no doubt in our mind that from the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost the church, Jew and Gentile, gave up the types and shadows of the legal dispensation, and that during the gospel dispensation, leaven has been used, because sin is still in the body.

The early church, both Jew and Gentile, found much opposition from unbelieving Jews, and when their passover came around again, their hatred was inflamed so much that Herod slew James, "And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread)" This implies that the Jews were further enraged because the followers of Christ were indifferent to the practices of the unbelieving Jews. Here we would say that nowhere do we see the apostles telling brethren to use unleavened bread at their communion, because they knew that while this

harvest lasts, that is, the gathering in of the Lord's people in the gospel dispensation, leaven would be in the bread because sin is in the body. The Jewish unbelievers looked upon the Gentiles as dogs, and none knew better than Gentile believers that they were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, but Christ brought those who were far off nigh by his precious blood. Paul saith, "For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace, etc." (Ephesians 2:12-22)

In the peace offering, Leviticus 7:13, there had to be an offering of LEAVENED bread, this is because, though Christ is our Peace, yet he who would give thanks has sin in him still. In the hymn, "Great God! from thee there's naught concealed," the third and fourth verses a poor sinner can sing: —

"But since my Saviour stands between,
In garments dyed in blood;
'Tis he, instead of me, is seen,
When I approach to God.

"Thus, though a sinner, I am safe,
He pleads, before the throne,
His LIFE and DEATH in my behalf,
And calls my sins his own."

When his blood has, by the Holy Spirit, been sprinkled, there comes a willing service, to those especially who are of the household of God. The apostle mentions this in Philippians 4:18, that the things willingly sent to him by the Philippians were "an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God," also in Hebrews 13:15-16. "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Our Lord was without sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, but we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Our Lord said in Matthew 13:33, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." Our first parent Eve put sin into the the three dispensations, Patriarchal, Legal and Gospel, till the whole was leavened. Death, which is the wages of sin, will be here until our Lord comes the SECOND time without sin unto salvation. Then the saying of Isaiah, "He will swallow up death in victory." (Isaiah 25:8) And of Paul, "Death is swallowed up in victory." (I Corinthians 15:54), will become a fact, then indeed, DEATH WILL BE SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY.

Leaven, a type of sin, puffs up, unless grace prevent. In I Corinthians 5, Paul shows the church puffed up and not ashamed of the evil doing of a disorderly member. In 2 Corinthians 7:9-10, his reproof had taken effect, for he said to them, "Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of." Peter said, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." True Israelites are those who have been quickened to a consciousness of their sinnership before a just and holy God, who were slaves to sin and Satan. To such Paul could say, "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Such have heard the voice of the Son of God and live. (John 5:25) They know how sinful and vile they feel to be, such walk not after the flesh but learn to mortify the deeds of the body, and their quickened souls, led by God's Spirit, find that this world is not their home. They are brought down so low that they fellowship their Lord, who, in his humiliation, said, "I am a worm, and no man: a reproach of men, and despised of the people."

How often has the writer, we hope through the Spirit, cried

"A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
On thy kind arms I fall;
Be thou my strength and righteousness,
My Jesus and my all."

Only Jesus can cleanse away their guilt and give them a good conscience toward God. In such, while they have a body of flesh which is dead because of sin, yet, through grace, they are not puffed up, but the reverse, and they are brought into the fellowship of God and see Christ as their all, and there is much sweetness in being brought down to loathe their own life, for in that, they live the life of Christ in this mortal flesh. We believe that there is an appointed time when God says, "Let my people go," and he, who is the Head of his household, shows them how he delivered up his well-beloved Son, the Lamb of God, for them all, that he sprinkles their consciences and spreads their table, PREPARED FOR THEM, with Christ their passover, slain for them, and his precious Word, which is food to their souls, this is truly the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. How wonderful that worms have learned to lisp his name. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." All such subjects of grace learn that the word of their Lord is a LIVING WORD, that heaven and earth will pass away, but his word will remain. While still in this life, his word will spring up in them, often checking them, sometimes encouraging them so that they can smile at Satan's rage and face a frowning world. Such belong to another world, and when Jesus' living word comes to them, "Follow me," they will desire, being dead to this world, to be buried in the watery grave and be raised to live with his dear people as one body, yes, the body of Christ, for he is the head over the body the church.

We once heard one of God's servants say, "I don't want to bury a live person," and we believe that all of God's sent servants, in their right mind, will agree. One of our hymns says, "A sinner is a sacred thing, the Holy Ghost has made him so." The Holy Ghost applies the word and that word washes their feet and they are clean as Jesus said to his disciples, "Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." (John 15:3) Paul tells his brethren, "Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." (Ephesians 5:25-26) Here let us say that God's word, by his Holy Spirit in a believer, turns that person from dumb idols, and from man's word in changing God's ordinances, such as sprinkling (a Pagan practice brought into professing Christian bodies by Rome) in place of God-established baptism, and many other doings contrary to Christ's teachings. These are all to be rebuked by God-sent servants, as Paul rebuked the Corinthian Church in I Corinthians 5. All such works of men are leavened out by God's grace being brought home to individuals who have before been led captive by the devil at his will. The devil has been a liar from the beginning and no lie is of the truth. It is this which Paul means when he says, "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast." What feast? not the Lord's supper but the passover, seeing Christ sacrificed for us, and as we do eat, not the doctrines of men or with what I have done to help the Lord, that would be the leaven of the self-righteous, and all that must be purged out of every one that eats of that feast, yes, neither sinful self nor righteous self can eat of the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

In speaking of the Lord's supper we are considering the memorial of our Lord's death, until he come. Those who are commanded "This do in remembrance of me" have been like the wheat,

crushed through tribulation and affliction to fine flour. They have been tossed about in the devil's sieve to sift out such chaff as we have already mentioned and we are assured by God himself that not the least grain shall fall to the ground. Crushed to the very dust they find great comfort at times that they have been brought down to where Christ was in the flesh, and, like Paul, they can say, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Such glorify God as Paul did when he said, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Elder Durand said once in our hearing, "When we break the bread, if there were one grain of wheat in the loaf not crushed, it would not belong there, it would fall out." Be thankful, my dear brethren, that you feel unworthy, it causes you to esteem others better than yourselves.

Our Lord Jesus is still the High Priest of our profession. He who girded himself with the towel of covenant love, and who still retains the bason of the gospel, filled with the water of eternal truth in his own hands, will be true to his promise, "From all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you." Ezekiel 36:25. You who have been brought to his footstool and to the feet of each other will need this washing as well as those whom our Beloved cleanses from their wrong-doing, who have in the past gone out from you through their flesh puffing them up. God's grace and mercy bring us as one body drinking from the one cup. We have shown that it is his work alone to bring us into this fellowship and keep us there. The leaven of sin in us will still be there even if we should leave out leaven in the loaf we make. We have shown that leaven was to be in the bread during the harvest gathering, then why walk in a vain show, seeing that we are still sinners? "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 5:20-21.

G. R.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Cambridgeport, Mass., Feb. 20, 1858.

PARABLE OF THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

(Luke 16:19-31)

Our Savior, in the first eighteen verses of this chapter, has been pointing out the distinction between the two dispensations. At the 16th verse he declares that the legal or Mosaic dispensation ended, and the gospel commenced in the days of John. At the 19th verse he begins a parable to illustrate his previous instructions, and to point out the relative position of the Jew and Gentile under the gospel dispensation. By many this portion is held to be historical, rather than a parable; hence they base upon it many assumptions respecting a future state. Such a view not only destroys the obvious connection with the context, but furnishes an anomoly in the scripture teachings, which are uniformly and designedly silent respecting the state of the dead.

The terms rich and poor are almost inviably used in scripture to denote character. Here the rich man seems evidently designed to bring to view the Jewish nation or those who are under the legal dispensation. These claimed all the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant, and excluded the Gentiles. Such, moreover, is the temper of all the legalists, who justify themselves and despise others. Of the Savior it had been said "this man receiveth sinners and eateth with them;" and he had declared, "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The poor man seems to bring to view those who were not Jews by nature, and who consequently were excluded from the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant, and it may be also a gracious soul —

one who is a beggar. Such is the relative position of these characters — the legalist rejoicing in his abundance, and the beggar desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from his table, as in the case of the Samaritan woman. See also the experience of David recorded in the 73d Psalm. But in the time of John, there came a change of circumstances. Let us consider it more particularly.

The beggar and the rich man both died. The one was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom; the other was *buried,* and in Hades, or in his grave, as the word signifies, he was in torment, and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. That this describes the end of the legal dispensation, seems most evident. The close of that dispensation was the grave of Judaism. It is said that when Moses died on the mount, the Lord buried him, and no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day. The Jew is in his political and national grave — the types, ceremonies and pompous rituals of his worship have ceased, never more to be revived.

This change of dispensation affects equally the Jew and the Gentile — the legalist and the gracious soul. The poor man is carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. By what singular straining of metaphor, this is made to represent Heaven as a paradise, it is difficult to understand. Our Savior had said they should come from the East and the West, and should sit down with Abraham in the kingdom of God, and he had further declared, "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth when ye shall see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out." — Luke xiii. 28. That this has reference to the enjoyment of gospel blessings by the Gentiles, is clearly evident. The despised beggar becomes a sharer in the promise made to Abraham; the exclusive privilege of the Jew exists no longer. The very existence of both Jew and Gentile as such has terminated, for under the gospel dispensation there is neither Jew nor Greek, and circumcision or uncircumcision availeth nothing; all that are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. The Gentile, therefore, as such, no longer exists, nor yet the Jew; while the one is, through grace, admitted to share in all rich new covenant blessings, and the other is buried without hope of relief or resurrection.

Perhaps it may not be out of place here to allude to the experience of Peter when he was sent for by Cornelius, and the manner in which he was taught that the Gentiles had been made partakers of the blessings of the gospel. The history of the attempt made to bring the Gentile converts under the Jewish yoke in the early period of the church, is too well known to need recital. The spirit of Judaism, though the system is in its grave, still remains, and more than one child of grace has had experience of its proselyting and ensnaring power.

We now come to a most remarkable part of this parable — the conversation between Abraham and Dives — especially remarkable according to the hypothesis of those who hold that the narrative is designed to teach us anything respecting the future state. To imagine such proximity of place between the abode of the blessed and the damned as this hypothesis presupposes, and upon which is based the whole system of means and appeals to the ungodly to flee from the wrath to come, is monstrous indeed. Nor does the idea of an intermediate state, or spirit land, relieve the subject of its difficulties. Nor have we on such hypothesis, any means of determining the true nature of the instruction here conveyed. But by supposing that the spirit of Judaism, or legality, is here endeavoring to infuse itself into the gospel system or upon gospel characters, we have a key for unlocking the whole. The legalist, finding himself deprived of the

exclusive benefits he had before claimed, now seeks aid from the gospel. All he wants is a little help. He is reminded of two things: first — he has had his good things. "He that doeth these things even he shall live by them." Second — there is a great gulf between him and the aid he seeks.

A question may arise whether a legalist ever comes to a state where he finds his resources fail him, and he reduced to that state of torment here expressed. It may be answered that the parable is designed to teach the fact that the legalist has no longer any hope from the law. Even Abraham, whom he was so proud to claim as his father, declares that his day has passed. Under the first covenant, natural blessings were promised and enjoyed; but whatever they might have been they have passed away, for that dispensation has come to an end.

But if it were not so — if there were still any hope from the provisions of the law — the gospel can do the legalist no good. There is a great gulf between law and grace, over which those on one side or the other cannot pass. You cannot take a sinner out from under the law, and place him under the gospel; nor can you bring a gracious soul under legal requirements. The attempt to introduce conditions into the gospel, or to amalgamate the two systems, is equally destructive of both, and utterly futile for the relief of the soul. The idea that if the sinner does all he can, Christ will do what he cannot do, is annihilated by the teachings of this parable.

The believers in an indefinite atonement and conditions of salvation, are welcome to all the comfort they can draw from the parable. Dives was evidently a believer in "missionism," and true to the promptings of his legal nature, and the spirit of his system, he asks that Lazarus may be sent to his brethren at his father's house. Whether any particular meaning is to be attached to the number five as indicating ten tribes of Israel, since by the supposition one is made to represent two tribes, the house of Judah and Benjamin, is perhaps immaterial to our present examination. It may give some strength to the idea that these six brethren were designed to represent nominal Israel, or all who are under the covenant of works. The spirit of his request is that the gospel may be preached, and its blessings presented to those under the law. Abraham refers him to the law and the prophets. "What things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law." Besides, these pointed to, and had their fulfilment in Christ. — John v. 46.

But the legalist questions the efficacy of these means, and would have something more powerful used. Let but one go to them with the gospel they will repent. Whether some reference is not had in the words "from the dead," to the resurrection of Christ, or to the children of God who have part in his resurrection, would be, perhaps, an interesting enquiry. It is a favorite idea with the legalist that some extraordinary means resorted to, would be sufficient to arouse the sinner and lead him to repentance. At any rate, that the preaching of the gospel, the presentation of offers of mercy, and earnest appeals to the unregenerate, are the means of grace, and God's appointed instrumentalities for the conversion of sinners. The answer of Abraham teaches another lesson. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

There are two or three lessons taught by this parable which are worthy of most attentive consideration. The difference between law and gospel is evidently pointed out, as well as the relative condition of those who are subjects of one or the other. Many contend that at the close of the legal dispensation, the entire race came under the gospel, as it was supposed to have been previously under the law; and that now,

although salvation is not attainable by the deeds of the law, yet it is attainable by and possible to all by faith in Christ. Then would the parable have shown us that Dives as well as Lazarus, was received into the bosom of Abraham. Instead of this the law still holds its subject, demands full satisfaction, and condemns the least violation. Therefore is he condemned already, and the wrath of God abides upon him. In this sense the legalist may be said to be in his grave. Dead in trespasses and sins, no offer or hope of life presented. Christ, however, has redeemed his chosen ones; they are delivered from the dominion and curse of the law; by virtue of the part they have in the resurrection of Christ, they are raised with him, an entrance is ministered to them abundantly into the everlasting kingdom, and their life is hid with Christ in God.

To cross the gulf thus formed between the two systems, is impossible. No power can divorce the sinner from the law; nor can a gracious soul be separated from Christ, his Head. That system which recognizes terms or conditions of salvation, to be performed by the sinner, is but an ineffectual attempt to cross the gulf. The mere enunciation of this gospel can never benefit one who is in his legal grave. Indeed, the gospel is a source of discouragement and torment to a legal soul, as it annihilates his hopes and destroys his life; as in like manner, legality is opposed to the hopes and comforts of a gracious one. 2 Cor. ii. 16. The one is the law of the spirit in Christ Jesus, the other is the law of sin and death.

But it would not be well to dismiss the parable without alluding to the idea that we are here taught something respecting a future state. Some suppose it brings to view an intermediate state between death and the resurrection; others, the final, fixed condition of the righteous and the wicked. But whatever are the views thus held, all who believe in the means system, insist that it teaches the conscious state of the dead, and thereupon base those earnest appeals which are supposed to be so effectual for the conversion of sinners. On the supposition that the parable refers to a future state, the rich man appears to have been a believer in spiritualism as well as conditions of salvation. The similarity of his language to that of many now, is singularly significant. "Nay, father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead they would repent." Little wonder is it that spiritualism secures so many converts, when what are denominated evangelical pulpits so continually resound with Tetzel-like appeals respecting the sufferings of the damned or the enjoyments of the blessed — appeals of which spiritualism is but the inevitable result.

Brother Beebe, thus imperfectly have I sketched some of my views touching the leading points of this much used, and as it appears to me, much abused parable. I send them to you with the sincere desire that, should you make use of them, they may be of some service to the members of our Father's family.

Yours for the truth,
Leonard Cox, Jr.

(The above is taken from the *Signs* of March 15, 1858. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. NORA ELIZABETH COX

Mrs. Nora Elizabeth Cox was born January 2, 1881, and passed away November 2, 1964, making her stay on earth 83 years and ten months. In 1896 she was united in marriage to James Manuel Cox, and to this union six children were born, three of which preceded her in death; surviving besides her husband are James Edward Cox, Mrs. Lula Mai Flannagan and Mrs. Ruby Lee Wells, all of Memphis, Tenn.

Our dear sister Cox (as we all called her, though she never united with the church) was loved by all, for she bore the fruits of a heaven born soul. She loved to be with the brethren and to go to church, and to have them come to her home. She was always ready to go far and near to the meetings: she and Brother

Cox traveled in many different states when they were able to go. The Lord blessed them with a long life together — about 68 years.

In her early days she joined a church, but her heart was with the Primitive Baptists for many years, and she will be greatly missed by them in many churches which she attended when she could. May God in his tender mercy and loving kindness be with Brother Cox in his lonely hours and days to come; and with the children who were so faithful. She was in the hospital about three weeks before she died, and some of the children were by her bedside continually until she quietly passed away.

It is such a blessing to be called from this world of suffering, for Jesus will bring them forth by the word of his power and they shall be fashioned like unto His glorified body, and be with Him forever. Those that remain at his coming shall not prevent them that sleep, but shall be changed in a moment and be caught up to meet Him in the air. How good, glorious, and marvelous it is to have this to look forward to. May we all be kept by God's grace ready to be revealed in the last time. Written by request.

Carrie Campbell
Lucille Young

MARY A. (YARD) ATCHLEY

Mary A. (Yard) Atchley, daughter of the late Anna Mary (Tyndall) and George R. Yard, fell asleep in Jesus September 2, 1964, at her residence in Pennington, New Jersey, at the age of 77 years. She was born December 19, 1887. She was united in marriage to Walter B. Atchley September 29, 1907, and to this union were born two sons, Kenneth Y. and George T. Atchley, who survive her.

Her mother, as well as others in the family were members of the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, New Jersey. While she never asked for a home in the church, the things of God and of revealed religion were solemn realities to her. She was grounded in the faith of God's word, and believed in bringing all things to the test of the WORD.

We, her cousins, Brother Charles and Sister Mary Hellings, always found her ready and waiting when we stopped by on our way to meeting.

On December 24, 1864, her grandfather, William C. Tyndall, was chosen one of the deacons of the Hopewell Church, and one hundred years later on July 5, 1964, her cousin, Charles, was chosen deacon of the same church.

She was a devoted and faithful friend, and was endeared to many, not only in Hopewell Church, but other Old School Baptist Churches where she visited. A good and gracious friend has departed, and left an empty place in our midst.

Her funeral service was largely attended, and conducted by Elder Arthur R. Warren, Pastor of the Hopewell Church, with very comforting words to family and friends alike. Interment was in the Harbourton Cemetery burial plot beside her husband.

The God of hope and peace was her comfort and her strength. May His blessings rest as sweetly upon her two sons and their families.

Written by request of the church.

Sister Mary L. Hellings

EMORY A. UPDIKE

Emory A. Updike was born in the vicinity of Hopewell December 25, 1873; and passed away August 21, 1963. The last sixteen years of his life he lived with a nephew and his family, and was with them in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, when he passed away.

Early in life he learned the electrician's trade and worked at it many years. After his retirement, he became custodian of the Old School Baptist Church in Hopewell, N. J., where he had always attended. He was very faithful in his attendance at the meetings, and would often take a car full of the church people with him to associations around the country.

His best and staunchest friends were those of the Hopewell Church. He would often bring his lunch and spend the day in the Meeting House and Cemetery; and he is now buried in the cemetery he cared for so much. His funeral was conducted at the Cromwell Memorial Home in Hopewell by Elder Arthur R. Warren, pastor of the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church.

Letha A. Blackwell

MRS. FRANCINA B. HILL

Mrs. Francina B. Hill passed away at her home in Hopewell, N. J. after an illness of ten days, at the age of 99 years and five months. She was the widow of the late Joseph B. Hill, and a lifelong resident of Hopewell. Her father, David L. Blackwell, was a member of the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell from 1875 until his death in 1936.

Surviving Mrs. Hill are her four sons: Dr. David B. Hill, Alladena, California; Hervey S. Hill, Knotts Island, N. C.; Wm. H. Hill, Trenton, N. J.; and Edward U. Hill, Hope-

well, N. J. One daughter, Mrs. Helen B. Wells, died in 1942.

Mrs. Hill was much interested in the Hopewell Museum, but her main interest was her family and friends, and always the Old School Baptist Church.

Her funeral was conducted March 15, 1963, by Elder John D. Wood, and interment was in the Hopewell Old School Baptist Cemetery.

Letha A. Blackwell

ANNIE (JONES) McLAWHORN

On May 4, 1964, death again visited our church and claimed our dear sister, Annie (Jones) McLawhorn, who had been a member of our body since August, 1928. Death came after only a few hours of illness.

Sister Annie was a gentle, lovable, hard-working woman, whose life was taken up with the care and welfare of others from the time she was a very young girl, until the day she died. She was a wonderful person who suffered many heartaches, but was always able to meet one with a lovely smile and a cheerful countenance. She was devoted to her family — their friend indeed; and she was an asset to her community. She will be greatly missed, but we trust that our loss is her eternal gain. We bow in humble submission to our God who doeth all things after the counsel of his own will. May he comfort and sustain the bereaved family.

Done by order of Hancocks Church while in conference November 17, 1964.

Elder A. P. Mewborn, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

IN MEMORY OF
ELDER J. HARVEY SMITH

WHEREAS, It pleased our Heavenly Father in His divine wisdom to remove from us by death our beloved pastor, Elder J. Harvey Smith, on January 24, 1965, who had served us so faithfully since September 7, 1958, and

WHEREAS, We of the J. H. Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church at Stem, North Carolina, bow in humble submission to a just God, knowing he makes no mistakes and doeth all things well.

Our hearts are saddened much by the loss of our pastor. He rejoiced in his hope and was patient in his tribulations. Truly his life was an inspiration to all who knew him. We feel he fought a good fight, finished his course, and kept the faith.

He leaves to mourn his departure his devoted and faithful wife, who has shared his joys and sorrows. Also surviving are three sons, two daughters, seven grandchildren, three brothers, one sister, and a host of brethren and friends.

His funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Church, January 26, 1965, by his pastor, Elder Curry King. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery under a beautiful mound of flowers to await the coming of our Lord. Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, First, that we extend our love and heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family. And,

Second, that a copy of this memorial be inscribed on our church record, a copy given to the bereaved family, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

This resolution adopted by the J. H. Gooch Memorial Church, assembled this thirteenth day of February, 1965.

Written by
Annie C. Gregory, Assistant Clerk

NANNIE GAMMON RICHMOND

God in His infinite widsom saw fit to remove from our midst another one of our beloved members, Sister Nannie Gammon Richmond, who after two years of declining health passed away in a Burlington hospital June 5, 1964, at the age of 80. She was a native of Rockingham County, N. C., but had made her home with one of her daughters at Graham, N. C. several years prior to her death.

She was married to George Lee Richmond December 28, 1902, who preceded her in death several years. To this union were born six children, all of whom survive, Mrs. Gladys Nize of Chapel Hill, Mrs. Gertrude Adams of Graham, Mrs. Clara Fletcher of Danville, Va., Mrs. Kate McKee and Mrs. Ola Rockley of Burlington; one son George Lee Richmond, of Danville, Va. Also surviving are two sisters, Mrs. Mamie Martin of Ruffin and Mrs. Gillie Stone of High Point; one brother Shepherd Gammon; sixteen grandchildren and twenty-four great grandchildren.

Sister Richmond united with Dan River Church soon after her marriage and was a faithful member and a firm believer in salvation by grace. She attended her meetings as long as her health would permit. She was a devoted companion, a loving mother and a meek and humble sister in Christ. We have lost a precious sister but feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted at Dan River Church by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, and her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the final resurrection.

Done by order of Dan River Church while

in conference.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to *Signs of the Times* for publication, a copy to the famliy, and a copy placed on our church record.

Submitted in love.

Mrs. J. M. Davis
Mrs. G. F. Pruitt

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

We, the members of Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church, bow in submission to the will of our God, in taking by death our Dear Sister, Sister Anna Pierce Braziel.

Sister Braziel was born August 7, 1874 and died February 24, 1965. Making her stay on earth 90 years.

For many years, she was blessed to be a member of our church. She was faithful in attending, as long as she was able to go. For sometime before she passed away, she was unable to attend church, but she was always glad to have her pastor and brethren visit her. We trust that she is now resting in peace with her Master and Saviour.

THERFORE, WE RESOLVE: First, that our loss is her eternal gain and we send our deepest sympathy to her family.

Second, that three copies of the Respect be made: One for the Church record, one to be sent to the family, and one to be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

This done in order of Conference at our March meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

ROSA JAMISON BURGESS

We, the Primitive Baptist Church at Camp Branch, Franklin County, Virginia, mourn the passing of our dearly beloved Rosa Jamison Burgess. She was the daughter of Joseph William and Octavia Josephene Hall Jamison, and was born July 3, 1885, in Franklin County, Virginia. She was married to Elder John E. Burgess October 11, 1930, who died April 15, 1963; and she died September 11, 1964, just two months after her beloved sister Miss Curtiss Jamison's passing.

Rosa was a patient in the Jefferson Hospital in Roanoke for several months, where she bore her sufferings well, never complaining. She did not have her name on our church book, but to us at Camp Branch she was one of us. She was faithful to attend, and was always willing to help in any way possible. We have missed her terribly for we love her dearly; and she is missed greatly by her many friends in the community and elsewhere.

She is survived by three sisters, Miss Irby Jamison, Mrs. Lola Philpott, and Mrs. Jennie Sigmon, of Roanoke; one brother, Cary T. Jamison, Calloway, Va.; one step-daughter, Mrs. Nina Koogler, Martinsville, Va.; and two aunts, (one aunt, Mrs. E. W. Brown, passed away December 13, 1964) Mrs. C. A. Hauley, of Texas, and Mrs. J. B. Flora, of Iowa.

Rosa's request was that Elder R. R. Brown and Elder O. K. Tench should preach her funeral, but Elder Tench could not come, so Elder J. O. Conner took part. It was held at her old home church, Little Creek, and her body was laid to rest in the family cemetery at Calloway beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

We feel that our loss is her eternal gain through Christ our Lord, and that she is awaiting His second coming, when the ransomed shall be with Him in their eternal home.

Done by order of the church at Camp Branch while in session.

Elder R. R. Brown, Moderator
Nancy Haynes, Clerk

SISTER PATTIE HARRIS

We, the church at Lower Town Creek, desire to write a few lines in regards to our dear sister, Pattie Harris.

She was born May 8, 1877, and departed this life April 8, 1964. She was the wife of Brother J. E. Harris, whom the Lord called to his rest June 22, 1954. She united with the church in July, 1926, and was baptized by Elder A. M. Crisp; and was a faithful member, always attending when her health permitted. Sister Harris was confined to her daughter's home in her last days, and was blessed to have her devoted daughter, sons and inlaws to care for her.

Not only was Sister Harris blessed with a wonderful hope, but she was blessed to comfort those in need of a kind word. Her favorite hymn was, "Let worldly minds the world pursue, it has no charms for me." etc. (No. 89 in Lloyd's Hymn Book)

She leaves to mourn her death, one daughter, two sons, three sisters, one brother, nine grandchildren, Lower Town Creek Church, and many friends. We miss you much, Sister Pat, but truly feel that you are in God's loving care. She was laid to rest in the family cemetery with her companion.

We desire that a copy of this writing be placed on the church record, a copy sent to the family, and a copy for publication.

Done by order of Lower Town Creek Church.

Elder C. L. Coker, Moderator
W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133 DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1965 NO. 7

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/65
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

God holds the future in His hand,
O heart of mine, be still!
His love will plan the best for thee.
The best — or light or dark it be:
Then rest ye in His will.

God holds the future in His hand,
Why should I shrink or fear?
Through every dark and cloudy day —
Yea, all along my pilgrim way —
His love will bless and cheer.

God holds the future in His hand,
And I can trust His love.
The past declares His faithfulness;
His eye will guide, His heart will bless
'Till I am safe above.

— Author unknown
(Submitted by Elder A. T. Benson)

Spearsville, La.

Dear Elder Wood:

I am sending an article Brother Rhodes wrote us in 1939, while he was the senator from our district. I ran across it while reading through some old papers, and I think it rich in truth, as well as comforting; and believe the household of faith will find it a source of comfort, and a song of praise to the Lord.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. Cisco Barron

THE SEVENTH DAY

Farmerville, Louisiana
April 11, 1939

Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Barron
Spearsville, La.

Dear Brother and Sister in hope,

I am in Baton Rouge, and for some reason I felt impressed to write on the following subject. I have no doubt in my own mind, but what it is scripturally and experimentally true, but I find myself so very imperfect, sinful and defiled, I want someone else to pass on it.

It needs many corrections in language and punctuation, but before I would have time to do all this, I might destroy it as I have other writings; which might be better in this case. I don't know why I've stayed up till after midnight to write it, as I needed rest very badly.

We seemed wonderfully blessed at Rehobeth Sunday, if I'm not deceived, and we tried to use this subject. I feel we were blessed to go into it more extensively than this writing.

I hope the Lord will see fit to bless us with true righteous Sunshine and Spiritual exercise in this dark, cloudy and evil day of deception and degradation; when the spirit of anti-Christ is ascending out of that dark, bottomless pit. We are entirely dependent on Him to give us light and to keep us in it. Oh, how I do hope we have been called out of darkness into his marvelous light and glorious liberties of the children of God. We know all things work together for good to them that love God (I hope I am one of them) through his goodness and mercy. If so, no weap-

on that is formed against me will prosper, and every tongue of accusation will be condemned; because that wonderful Counsellor, who bore my sins, represents me, having died in my stead.

I have had some desire in the last few hours, to write a few thoughts, that have been presented to my mind relative to the subject, as presented in Exodus 20:8, 9, 10, and 11. Please read these scriptures, before proceeding to read this writing.

The Sabbath Day, literally in this instance, no doubt, is the remaining day of rest, after all the work was finished. It would readily stand to reason, that if the Lord had finished all his work, there was nothing else for him to do but to rest or to cease from his labor, as is stated here and elsewhere in the scriptures.

Human minds, unless divinely enlightened, cannot begin to conceive of the greatness, glory and wonderfulness of all God's work in creation; of Heaven and earth and all the hosts thereof, to say nothing of the righteous, holy, divine and wise purpose for which they were created, and which they all fulfill to a jot and tittle, to his glory and praise, and to the good of his people.

God gave his people the seventh day, as a day of rest, but gave them six days, before the day of rest, and commanded them to do all their work in these six days and to do no work on the seventh, but to rest or keep it holy; even as He had finished all his work in six days and rested the seventh. They were commanded under strict penalty of death, if they were found doing any work on that day, even as much as gathering sticks to kindle a fire.

Now, dear reader, I am sure our finite minds are far too inferior, and our understanding is insufficient, to be able to express this wonderful, deep and solemn subject, but I desire to say, that I believe that every phase of each commandment and ordinance, was written aforetime, and was written for our learning, that we (even at the present) might have hope and consolation. Therefore, there is a sense in which all these scriptural laws and ordinances are applicable now, or at least, that is my humble opinion. For example, the Ten Commandments were spoken by the Lord, himself, in fact they are his word. The scriptures say the word of the Lord endureth forever, from generation to generation.

In another place it says, whatsoever he doeth it shall be forever. Then his words, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," is as much in effect today, in an anti-typical sense, as it was in a typical sense, when commanded by the Lord to Israel.

I want to be understood. I don't feel that we are under the literal commandment to abstain from all literal physical labor on the Sabbath day, as the Jews then were. We are not faced with that punishment of death in the literal sense as they were. There is a sense through Christ, after the inward man, that the children of God are still under command to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. It is always after they have done fully six days' work, after which they are always weary, faint or tired. In other words, it is after they have worked themselves out of tools and timber, and have fallen flat on the mercies of God, who through Jesus, has finished the work of redemption and salvation.

Now, it seems clear to me, that this great subject is amply verified in the old and new covenants as expressed in the 8th chapter of Hebrews; (read it). In the old covenant it is implied that they were taken by the hand to be led out of literal Egypt. They transgressed and were subject to the most serious punishment as a consequence. The new covenant was not according to the old. The Lord gives them a new and soft heart, and He makes a new covenant with them. He writes his law in their hearts and puts it in their minds in such a way, that they are safe from violation. They are kept by the power

of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

Also, in John's language it says, "He that is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." Then if it was sin for the children of Israel to work on the Sabbath day literally, so it also would be, for God's people to work in this Gospel Sabbath day. Wherein Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost (not lost now, but is saved), so Jesus finished the work which his Father gave him to do. It has been the Sabbath of rest, from that day till now and ever will be to his people, because the work is finished.

When the Light of God's blessed Spirit is revealed from Heaven, in our poor benighted souls, then we are brought to see our lost and ruined condition before him. After six days of hard work, we are brought to our wits end, or to the ends of the earth. Then the blessed Saviour says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." Mark the word rest in this text. The six days are over, when the blessed Lord gives us this sweet rest, in foretaste.

The opposite doctrine to this is that Jesus gives poor sinners a job; but not so. He gives them rest. At his command, they take his yoke upon them, not voluntarily, as all legalists believe, but through the constraining love of Christ which is shed abroad in their hearts. And Oh, dear reader, how easy is that blessed yoke that Jesus gives his poor, humble and bewildered ones, who are weary from a full week's work!

This yoke Jesus gives them, yokes them off from their own works and constrains them to cease from them and their burdens. They learn of Him, that He finished all the work of their salvation, and their entire six days' work is in vain, so far as saving them is concerned. How light is the burden of the precious Saviour to a poor, wayworn pilgrim. His thoughts and burden have been that he must do something. When he learns of Jesus that the work is finished, Oh, how light is this precious burden and how easy is this yoke. The customary way to fit an animal for work is to yoke him to it, but in this case they are yoked off from their works, and are given to rest. It is the Sabbath and they are yoked to keep it. That yoke is quite different from any yoke formed by earthly wisdom and skill, for they are yoked to rest. David described this when he said, "He leadeth me beside the still waters; he maketh me to lie down in green pastures." Many others also described this beautiful, easy yoke and light burden of Jesus, the blessed Saviour.

In the 4th Chapter of Hebrews it is said, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Just the opposite to what blind nature believes and advocates. They all believe and advocate works as essential to salvation. It is positively declared that it is rest that remaineth to the people of God. When you see people working in order to save themselves, or someone else, you may know they are not remembering the Sabbath day; and by this you may know, it is Monday, so to speak, with them. And to clearly show this same doctrine, it is almost universally believed that anyone can help in the salvation of sinners. It must be remembered in the anti-type, no man, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, his son nor his daughter, nor his ox nor his ass, is to do any work on this holy day. That is why we advocate that the sinner cannot do any work for himself, neither can all his closest relatives, nor his ox, which all have their antitypical place and meaning.

Now there is quite a difference in the old and new covenants. Under the old so far as Abraham and his seed were concerned, after the flesh, it was impossible for them to keep the law. The new covenant is exactly opposite. He that is born of God doth not commit sin. He remembers that Sabbath day

to keep it holy, not through the carnal or Adamic efforts of nature, but after the inward man or the new man. "For if any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature." He has the new covenant of Grace. He has the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus and is made free from the law of sin and death.

He believes in his heart, although when delivered to the fleshly mind, he will at least to some extent, practice works just like anyone else. But as Paul said, "It is no longer I that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in me." So then, the being, soul or spirit that is in the child of God, or that he posesses, sins not, and he always remembers the Sabbath day and keeps it holy, through the light and influence and yoke of the blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, who works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. "They are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God before ordained that they should walk in them." So it is a good work that is worked in them to remember the Holy Sabbath of rest, of the finished work of redemption and salvation.

Christ said, "I have finished the work." Then the six days are over, and when the light of the Saviour reveals this to us, we cease from our works. We enter into that rest the Saviour gives. How sweet it is to the poor, humble child of God, when this beautiful Sabbath begins to dawn from the darkness and toil to a full week's work, which has been all in vain. When the Sun is above all the timber, and shining above the brightness of the noonday; when the blessed Saviour gives us that rest and trust in him as the Lamb that taketh away our sins, we are overcome with joy and gladness; and this is truly the Sabbath of the Lord.

The work is over, sweet rest is ours to enjoy. But as long as we are in the flesh, there will come other days of the week and we will still find ourselves entangled, through our fleshly mind. The light of this beautiful Sabbath will often be obscured and we will, to some extent, become burdened in our experience. The blessed Saviour visits us again and again and restores the joys of our salvation, and gives us rest and peace and blessed satisfaction in him.

The eternal Sabbath is in existence, so to speak, even as all the host of Heaven and earth are finished, but we are only given the earnest of our inheritance here below, which means the interest on the whole. So if the little seasons of rest that are manifested or given to us, are so sweet and glorious and precious here in time, what will the principal or the fullness of this inheritance be in that rest beyond the shades of death and the shores of time, when we shall have laid down this vile, corrupt and sinful body, wherein we groan and weep and mourn?

When we come forth formed and fashioned like our blessed Saviour, without sin and corruption, then we will always live, body and soul, in that eternal Sabbath. No more of the toil, groans and afflictions, as we are subject to in the flesh, but eternal, glorious and peaceful rest, as is expressed in Revelation 14:13, "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, sayeth the Spirit, they shall rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." The works which follow them, are the works that God works in them, both to will and to do his own good pleasure.

Also in Revelation 7th chapter we find that John saw these same people (who are given to remember the Sabbath to keep it holy) stand before God in white raiment. So they have kept the Sabbath in the Spirit of Christ, and all the other commandments, and they have cried salvation be unto our God and unto him that sitteth on the throne. Notice what they cried; and look around and see who they are. They also have washed their robes, not in literal water nor human cleansing, nor in their own works, because they have

remembered the Sabbath day and kept it holy. Therefore, they have ceased from their own works as God did from his. (See Hebrews 4th chapter.)

The best of Revelation 7 is where He said, "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Oh, dear child of the heavenly kingdom, how I do humbly hope at times, if not deceived, that I am one of those that have been brought into that blessed Sabbath and have ceased from my own works, and have been made to feel the sweet yoke and burden and rest of Christ the Saviour. And that some day all tears of sorrow shall be wiped away and I may be given to praise and glorify the blessed Saviour forever and ever, with all those who have come out of tribulations.

Your brother in hope,
R. W. Rhodes

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606 S. Kansas,
Liberal, Kansas

Dear Elder Spangler:

It has been a long time since I heard from you, but I understand that you were at the South Ouachita association in the Fall of 1964.

About a week or so later I attended the Sulphur Fork association at Bivins, Texas. Had I known of your plans to visit in that part of the country, I would have tried to be there, as I have such a desire to meet you.

Elder Hand and Elder Moon have invited me to Birmingham, Alabama, and I want to come to your state, but don't know which place I will be sent to, if either one.

Enclosed find an obituary of Brother Oren Parsons which the church in Amarillo desired me to write for publication in the *Signs*.

I have written many letters to the *Signs*, but never mailed any of them, as they seemed to be of no interest to anyone. I sometimes think that God mixed a great amount of clay with the iron when he made me, and called me into the ministry, as the clay is so weak and the weary, rocky path I travel tries my strentgh, and the vain wanderings of my carnal mind seem at times to lead me to much fear and I doubt my worthiness to go among the brethren, much less try to preach to them. But, as my father used to say so often, "I wish and pray that I could be reconciled to His holy will."

There is no doubt but that all of God's precious saints long for a better life than they have here in this low ground of sorrow, but when He raises us up and makes us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, it is our joy and for a little season we can rejoice and sing praises unto His namesake, honor, and glory.

Brother Spangler, how can the natural man be anything but vile? I believe the natural bodies of the saints are just as vile as the bodies of the evil. If they were not the same, then the children of God (in the flesh) would be set part and no fruits be necessary — but, "by their fruits ye shall know them."

The writer speaks of "These vile bodies." The apostle says, "It is no more I but sin that dwelleth in me." Where but in the bodies (these vile bodies) could sin dwell? But our hope soars high when we feel that for a little season, maybe, that the scripture which says, "Christ in you the hope of Glory" pertains to us. We know that if Christ is in us, He and He alone can subdue the earth (the natural man) and can say, "Get thee hence Satan." He can cast aside all natural desires and open the seals of the Holy testimonies and make us feast upon the word of God, which is the meat and drink of regenerated sinners.

But He can open and none can shut, shut and none can open, so when we feel that when we read and cannot un-

derstand, and we feel that he is clean gone forever, it is because he has shut out our vision by closing the door to understanding. You know Christ can obstruct as well as reveal — one reason is that he is the door, and only He can open Himself unto His dear children who then can see through Him to the Father.

God the Father sent this Son who is the door, the way, the truth, and the light, but even with all of these it takes another portion — the word which was in the beginning and was God and was made flesh and dwelled among men.

The natural man contracted the debt because the creature was made subject to vanity and broke the commandment. The debt demanded death but the debt had to be paid with the same legal tender which the contract called for. The law had to be satisfied with the sacrifice of a body. "A body hast thou prepared me."

King Herod sent out and slew all the children two years and under — this was a figure of the law demanding payment. Have you ever wondered why the children three years old and under weren't killed, but only those of a certain age of two years and under were slain?

The gospel dispensation had not been revealed, just the law and prophets (thus the *two*). Had he taken the lives of those three years old, Herod would have been ahead of himself. Christ (by whom grace and truth came) must live until he had established the truth of salvation and fulfilled the demands of the Father and then give up the ghost so that His body could be buried and resurrected (and by the death of a body, pay the debt.)

When Christ said "It is finished" he still had to go through the grave. Some have said to me that that showed a misprint or misinterpretation by the translators. But Christ, who is God, cannot lie, but He was acting as a child (to us a child is born, to us a son is given — one born, the other given.) Now the work of the Son of God in the flesh was finished, so now He, you might say, turned the rest to the Father.

"The hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." These are the ones dead in trespasses and in sin; (it does not say grave.) Then we find that He says, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming (not now is) in the which all that are in the *graves* shall hear *His* voice." etc.

Christ resurrects from under the law but the Father resurrects from the grave. Now Christ paid the debt demanded; the supreme sacrifice which bulls and goats could not satisfy, and He paid it by dying on the cross. He had a body not sired by man; neither was Adam's body sired by man; so both the first and the last were alike as far as appearances were and if both men were seen walking together in the flesh, a stranger would not have been able to tell the man of sin from the righteous man until the revelation came (as to Paul).

Every man born into the world, until he is born again, persecutes Christ. Paul tells us why in a few explicit words. When Paul heard the voice from heaven saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecuteth thou Me?" Paul told Him, and us if we can understand, exactly why he did. *"Who Art Thou Lord?"* Here is his reason: he didn't know Him and therefore he persecuted Him.

A body houses the spirit of life, the body itself is dead; but the soul, the breath of life, and Christ in you the hope of glory, the spirit of life makes up the child of God enshrined in this temple of clay.

I am enclosing my check for $5.00 to pay for my renewal of the *Signs of the Times*.

May God bless you and bring us together some day is my prayer.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

Elder W. A. Winfrey

"THE NAME OF THE LORD IS A STRONG TOWER: THE RIGHTEOUS RUNNETH INTO IT, AND IS SAFE."
(Proverbs 18:10)

To the Household of Faith:

I hope and trust that the Lord will direct me in this attempt to write something about this deep Scripture that emanates from the great and wise Solomon who certainly was qualified to leave a record of what he knew about the Lord our God. The Lord's people know, I'm sure, that his wisdom is never to be questioned. Likewise, they know that the several other Old Prophets and later Apostles and inspired writers of God's Holy Word, as they were given inspiration, wrote like words about God and of His Holy Son; wrote the truth whether we understand what it all means or not.

Now I am placing the emphasis on the word "NAME" in this text and in the other scripture quotes used. Also since the word "IN" is being used along with it, we must reckon with it too. The general use of the word NAME is as a title or appelation by which a thing or person is known. In certain instances, it is a descriptive or qualifying appelation. When someone speaks the word or name, President, it immediately identifies our highest government official who represents great power financially, militarily, politically, etc., due to the act of those electing him to that office. He acts only according to legally established directives. Officially, he relies on the funds, manpower, mechanical devices and help of others. He owns none of them. So in his name, or title, there is no power of its self, while Solomon said, "The NAME of the Lord is a strong tower."

The word "IN" denotes being inside a border, or place, or building, or thing, as we are to thus use it here. The word *into* denotes the act of entering therein, as, "The righteous runneth into it."

In reading and re-reading the several Scriptural references to the name of the Lord, I find the different writers all were of one accord, tho they wrote many years apart. Also, I find instances where they praised God directly with no reference to His name, as in Genesis 14:20, where Melchizedek said, "Blessed be the most high God," etc. I was made to wonder why not all such utterances be directly to God? Then in Genesis 16:20, we find the name of the Lord and God used in the same breath (sentence) for Sarah "Called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, Thou God seest me." etc. After considerable meditation on all these Scriptures, I am convinced in my own mind that God, in his infinite wisdom and power designed that His very spiritual being would be also IN HIS NAME; and so it is. I see this to be identical with, "AND THE WORD was God" recorded in St. John 1:1. Could not the WORD also be His NAME? I believe so and shall try to show why, tho I feel so weak and incapable of delving into such deep things, and am mindful of what the writer of old said — "The ways of the Lord are past finding out."

Back to the text and what Solomon saw in the name of the Lord. He said it was a strong tower, and that the righteous used it. He said — "and is safe." I believe he meant that the tower was a safe place for the righteous to be in, tho we know, too, that they are safe when they are in the power of the Lord. It seems clear that *only* the righteous are to use it — never the unrighteous or ungodly ones of this sinful world. He does not say that a portion of the righteous only are to use it so it must be that *all* the righteous will use it, so it must be the Lord and His eternal home prepared for his elect. No mention is made of those running into it ever coming out, so they will be cared for and dwell therein throughout all time to come. "The righteous *runneth* into it"; and this would infer that this tower of protection exists throughout this time world, and

on into the endless world to come. It is only those who are in danger, or running from sin, trouble and persecution in this world that would run into it. They, the righteous, only have eyes to see this tower and know there is safety therein. They have been born again of the Holy Spirit and have been prepared and made fit to run into it. It seems certain that Solomon saw in the NAME of the Lord, our Almighty God, with all His attributes and His NAME and He Himself are one and the same.

Now to some other scriptures germane to the text. In Exodus 23rd Chapter, we see the Lord directing and informing Moses. He was to send an Angel to guide and keep him in the way. Verse 21 says — "The Lord said, For my *name* is in him." This strongly implies that the Angel had more than a mere name in him. He had the power, or, the Lord in him. In Chronicles II, 2nd Chapter, verse 11, we see Asa appealing to the Lord for help saying — "In thy *name* we go against this multitude." Could he not well have said — "In Thee or In Thy Power"? Notice the next verse — "The Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa," etc. Then did not Asa actually go against the multitude in the Lord and all his power? Was not the *name* of the Lord and the Lord our God one and the same?

In Psalms we find David writes in the same mind for he said in 21:1 "The *name* of God of Jacob defend thee," and verse 5, — "And in the *name* of our God, we will set up our banners." In Psalm 111, he exalts and glorifies the Lord for all his mercies, righteousness and redemption of His people and says, verse 9, "HOLY AND REVEREND IS HIS NAME." Did he not see the *name* of the Lord as being one and the same as the Lord our God? And did he not make it very plain that the name or title "REVEREND" was to be that of the Lord only, and never to apply to puny man? This word reverend is found but *once* in the Bible, as used by David. How greedily and universally the worldly churches have unrightfully taken it for their ministers. They have even enlarged it into "RIGHT REVEREND" AND "MOST REVEREND." Some few use the title minister or pastor but they are all of the same school, whether they use that name or others such as Priests, Prophets, Cardinals, Rabbis, Father and Holy Father, and so on. How they love to publicize these titles and exalt those bearing them. How they resort to actions that make a true Minister of God shudder to see. They have even taken the name (Reverend) into the front ranks of present day hordes marching in various places, where violence and strife are rampant and resort to praying in public with the masses so engaged. Their sermons and writings are without bounds, it seems, and are very easy to identify as false doctrine which is for the world and not for the Lord's elect. I am certain that we will never see the day when one of God's elected, prepared and called servants or Elders of our Old Baptist Church will be found in such actions. All such use of the word *reverend* must be an abomination unto the Lord, if I read David's word aright.

We can go on and on citing scriptures germane to the text and proving, I believe, that God himself is in His Holy NAME. We have it in Jeremiah 10:6 and 45:26; and Zechariah 14:9. Into the New Testament and to Matthew 10:22-18:5 and 20, where Jesus himself speaks in this same trend or mind and others write accordingly. Before concluding I will cite two scriptures that voice this very thing, and which the worldly churches wrongfully use in their false doctrines. In Joel 2:32, we find — "And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the *name* of the Lord, shall be delivered." Now who are those Joel referred to? Not the non-elect worldly people! In 2:22 he said "Ye children of Zion," and in 2:27, "Ye shall know I am in the midst of Israel." The Lord, thru Joel, identified

those who would be thus delivered, and it was not a delivery in the sense these people preach and teach it. In St. John 14:13 Jesus said — "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my *name,* that I will do." He repeated it again in verse 14. Who was He talking to? Who were to ask in His *name*? He was talking to his chosen Apostles and Disciples. In both these Scriptures, those qualified to *ask in His name* were already living in Him — in His Spiritual Household and were his heirs, and needed such as they petitioned for, which was in full accord with his Divine will that they should receive, or else they could not receive such. Neither could they utter an effectual prayer. James made this clear in saying (James 5:16) "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Asking in His name, seems to me to mean that they must be already living spiritually in Him and in His *name* or they could not rightfully or effectively ask of Him. Certainly they that shall so ask and receive in His name are those included in his Divine Will, and whose names are written in the Lamb's Book Of Life, for I find nothing in the Scriptures that says that the non-elect and workers of iniquity are to receive of the Lord's spiritual gifts and blessings; and their only benefits are while sojourning here in this time world and receiving natural worldly things so intended for them. So I say in Him — "IN HIS NAME" — which is one and the same, dwells all His Divine power; and we can never fathom fully the great mystery thereof. I must say too, that many imposters try to get into his name and work therein. Note the words of Jesus in Matthew 24:5, "For many shall come in my name, saying I am Christ; and shall deceive many." He clearly shows that they were not in His name in the sense spoken above quoted. They were deceivers, and certainly there were none then, or now, nor will there ever be deceivers and fakers in His Spiritual House. The Lord in Matthew 7:22 said, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful words?" In the next verse Jesus said, "And then I will profess (say) unto them, *I never knew you:* depart from me *ye that work iniquity.*" Notice that the Lord said *many* will say to me, etc. He certainly knew that in time to come such deceivers, fakers, false prophets, false workers, and so on, would increase. Look round about us this day at the multitude running back and forth over the entire world, doing God's work, they say, in too many ways to mention here. Look at the hordes running about us with literature, books, etc., begging for funds or trying to convert many. Radio and television time is used liberally by the worldly churches and newspapers, magazines and such media carry pages of their appeals, false doctrines and so on. When thinking on this, I am moved to say, Lord, forgive them for they know not what they do.

Now, after bringing this writing thus far, fear seemed to take hold. Maybe I'm out of line in my belief as to what is to be found IN THE NAME OF THE LORD. I was led to turn to past issues of the *Signs* and immediately came to the writing of Elder Beebe in "Voices Of The Past" titled "Prayer" in the June, 1962 issue. If not mistaken, he wrote in this same mind but with much greater inspiration and greater mind than this poor creature can ever hope to possess. He stressed that we should always pray in the NAME of Jesus Christ our Mediator, if our prayers are to be acceptable to God. I quote from page 139 of his article, — "The privilege of asking in His *name* belongs exclusively to those who are embraced in His *name*; as all the members of a man's body are included in His name, and as a wife is in the name of her husband, and as children are legally included in the

name of their paternal parent, so the Church of God, as the Lamb's wife, and all her members, are members of His body and covered by His name; and as His seed, or, children, His name is their inheritance, and their approach unto God in His name implies a vital relationship to Him; and His name is to them a strong tower, and perfect indemnity for all they need for time or eternity."

Concluding, will say that in later years the inspired writers of our good songs, saw so much in the NAME of the Lord, not unlike those of olden times quoted herein. I quote one verse of the song by Bartley titled — "There is a Name whose music thrills."

"Through all the ages it has been
A tower of strong defense,
A solid rock whereon to lean,
A sure relief from guilt and sin,
Our perfect righteousness."

One verse from Haskin's song: —

"In thy great name, O Lord, we come
To worship at thy feet.
O, pour thy Holy Spirit down
On all that shall meet."

I hope this will be of some interest to the scattered flock, and if I am one of this flock, prepared of the Lord to live in His name and to ask and receive in His name, such as His Divine will provides, then I am the very least one.

Yours in His name, I hope,
Wm. O. Hall,
P. O. Box 595,
Mount Vernon, Washington.

ANNUAL MEETING

The **Bethel Primitive Baptist Church** of Riffe, Washington, holds her annual meeting the third Sunday in August, and Friday and and Saturday before. Visitors are welcome to meet with us.

Elder Ernest Attebery, Pastor
Mrs. Vernie Schoonover, Clerk
Morton, Washington

PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The **Pleasant Valley Association** is appointed to be held the 4th Sunday in August, and Friday and Saturday before, with Mt. Olive Church, Stockdale, Texas. The meeting house is located at the intersection of Highways 123 and 87. All lovers of the truth will be welcomed.

Elder C. M. Haygood, Moderator
Elder E. B. Ault, Clerk

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1965 session of the **Pigg River District Association** is appointed to be held with the church at Rocky Mount, Virginia, July 30, 31, and August 1. All meetings will be held in the Franklin County High School building in East Rocky Mount.

Our correspondents and all interested brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

John D. Wood, Clerk

MAINE ASSOCIATION

The **Main Old School Baptist Association** will convene, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, August 21 and 22, 1965.

An invitation is extended to those of our faith and order, and interested friends.

Mrs. Sanford Bartlett, Clerk

FOR THE *SIGNS'* LIBRARY

We acknowledge with many thanks the receipt of the following bound volumes of the *Signs of the Times* from the family of Elder F. A. Chick: 1866 to 1870; 1880 to 1882; 1883 to 1885; 1895 to 1896; 1903; and 1904.

— Editors

CORRECTION

Please note that Brown's Store mentioned in the notice of the Staunton River Association in the June issue of the *Signs* should be Wood's Store. — J. D. W.

ENJOYS READING THE *SIGNS*

Rt. 2,
McKenzie, Alabama

Dear Editors:

I enclose $3.00 for the *Signs of the Times* for another year. I surely enjoy

reading it; and when I have read each one three or four times, I pass it on to someone else to read. I hope to be able to read as long as I live, for I don't get to go to meetings very often.

The good Lord is all in all to me, and I know that if he is for us, no one can be against us. I have to look to Him for everything in this world, and the one to come. If I could know that He died for me I would be a happy person. I have so many doubts and fears, but I do have a little hope that I would not take this whole world for. This world doesn't mean very much to me.

I wish I could meet with every one who writes for the *Signs* and tell them how I enjoy reading what they write. May God be with every one of them, and bless them to continue to write the good news.

Mrs. R. S. Bell

UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

The Upper Country Line Association is appointed to convene with the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, beginning on Saturday, July 17th, at ten o'clock A. M., Eastern Standard Time, and continue three days.

Our ministers, brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

Dan River Church is located in Rockingham County, N. C., between Reidsville, N. C. and Danville, Virginia. Those coming from the South turn left on State Road No. 914, about three miles North of Reidsville from U. S. 29, follow 914 to where it intersects with No. 700; turn right to the meeting house. Those coming from the East or North turn right off U. S. 29, about three miles South of Danville, Va. on State Road No. 700; follow this road about eight miles to the meeting house. The church is located on State Road No. 700, between Draper, N. C. and Danville, Virginia.

D. V. Spangler, Pastor

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To May 1, 1965)

Lloyd Spikes, Ore.	$ 5.00
Charles A. Taylor, Okla.	5.00
F. M. Morgan, Tenn.	2.00
Ralph Gordy, Md.	5.00
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EDITORIAL

THE HOUSE OF WORSHIP

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the House of the Lord."
Psalms 122:1

My soul leaped with joy from its fainted condition the other day when an Elder softly said to me, "Let us go into the house." I was within the city limits of one of the largest cities in our nation. Everyone on the streets and highways seemed to be in such a hurry. I was meditating upon the fact

that things are so swiftly coming to pass that it is very difficult to believe such drastic changes are taking place. I began to realize that I was so heavily involved in this great turmoil of swift and rapid events to such extent that my mind was in a whirl, my heart was troubled, and my soul was fainted; — all because I could not keep up. What great relief of mind to enter upon the grounds of this house of worship and to be warmly invited into the house for the purpose of pausing in our hurryings to worship God. How good it is when you feel so cast down, unworthy, and unfit to be noticed by anyone, to hear them say, "Let us go into the House of the Lord." Aren't you glad that they even remember to invite you into such sacred place as the Place of Praises. Aren't you glad, also, that others have a desire to go into the House of Prayer and Praise.

Get your Bible and turn to the 122nd Psalm and read with us as we meditate upon some of the glorious expressions of the Psalmist. The second verse reads: "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem." We recall that in Psalms 100:4 it says, "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise . . ." Jesus said, "ENTER ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

When I entered the door of this building and beheld such smiling peaceful expressions on the faces of those who so joyfully greeted me, I felt to be standing within the gates of the City of God with a number of its citizens. No one there needed to say to any other, "I love you." The love of God was so manifest in each and every face, word, handshake, and embrace that we all had a foretaste of Heaven. When we had settled down to singing hymns of thanksgiving to God even for the tribulations that had been ours to endure, I gazed at the open door through which we had entered. Then, I thought of the gates through which we had come to this place of joy and peace. I thought of the first gate that leadeth unto life, to wit: tribulations. Peace, joy, and happiness cannot be experienced while in confusion, sadness and misery; but after being exercised by these tribulations, we experience the peaceable fruits of righteousness which are patience, faith, hope, love, and joy of life. "Go through, go through the gates . . ." is an expression found in Isaiah 62:10. It must be through the gate of tribulations and persecutions that we learn to be submissive and to rely upon God for all things pertaining to God and godliness. This painful gate could be termed the gate of *regneration.* You cannot climb over the wall to avoid this gate. If one gets into the position of indulging in special favors peculiar to the afflicted and poor people of God, this one would be classed as a thief and a robber. The walls are too thick to be penetrated; too high to be climbed over; and too strong to be overthrown. You must enter through the gate of tribulations which is the gate of regeneration. This is the evidence that brethren look for in listening to the experience of candidates for church membership. This being "born again" is manifest when their testimony proves that they have suffered to the extent of being brought into the knowledge of being unable to do anything of themselves to merit any blessing from God.

I went back into my experience and was given to re-live for a moment the period in my life when it seemed the mountains of my many sins were crushing me to death. The gates of hell seemed to be opened unto me and that I was being swallowed into its clutches. Every straw to which I so greedily clung could not so much as slow down my descent into the depths of such horrible pit. I re-lived for a moment my cries out of the depth of hell. I re-

membered the groans, the fastings, and the awful miseries of hell itself with all the doors closed and locked fast. I could not open any door of faith or hope. How I did knock and seek and ask but I had no faith. I wept bitterly with no hope for mercy because my sins demanded that I should forever be in misery. While in this awful condition and after I had exhausted all of my strength and energy it pleased God in His gracious providence toward me to put it into the mind of one of my friends to invite me into a house of worship. He kept insisting against my wishes that I should accompany him to a place of worship to hear a certain minister preach. I had read the Bible: it had condemned. I had listened at preachers: they had condemned me. I talked to my close associates: they all thought I was crazy when I would tell them of my hopeless condition. I learned in the pit that God was sovereign and holy and that no man could come unto Him. I felt that I had blasphemed against God under the cloak of a gospel minister in declaring the power of man unto salvation to such extent that I could never have forgiveness here nor in the world to come. This man who said unto me, "Let us go to meeting," saw something in me that I could not see. This is why he kept insisting that I go. His care concerning my spiritual welfare astonished me. I shall forever be thankful to God for that man who kept insisting, "Let us go to meeting." I had thought that I knew how to read and interpret the Holy Scriptures.

God opened the second gate unto me when He opened the "door of faith" thru the preaching of the gospel of this minister that night. "And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how *he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.*" (Acts 14:27) "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching" to set before me an open door. God opened this minister's mouth to preach this precious faith. God opened my heart to understand it. As soon as it was opened unto me I gladly went through it to such extent as to receive and embrace it with all my heart. I did not have to go to Heaven after it. I did not have to go across the seas and oceans to get it. You cannot open the door of faith yourself. It must be opened to you. Paul says, "A great door and effectual is opened unto me." (1 Cor. 16:9) When the door of faith is opened how devotedly we cling to the Lord Jesus Christ. The gate of faith being opened I saw the maneuverings of my Saviour. I saw Him come through the gate of Heaven. I saw Him descend toward the pit. I saw Him descend low enough to reach me who was the vilest of the vile. I saw Him wash me whiter than snow with His blood. I saw Him pay my penalty by His dying in my stead. I saw Him merit a home in Heaven for me with His life. I heard Him plead in my behalf before the Father. All of this led me me to the door of Hope. In Hosea 2:15 we read of "A door of hope." On that memorable night for a fleeting time this gate of Hope was swung wide open and I was blessed to experience the entrance to that within the veil: "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, *we might have a strong consolation* who have fled for refuge to *lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.*" (Heb. 6:17-20)

The opening of the gate of hope gave me to see that within the veil. The opening of the gate of faith gave me to believe in Jesus, the perfect and powerful Saviour of His people. The opening of the gate of hope gave me to trust that I was one of His people and that all of the benefits He merited would be mine to experience in the

future. These gates lead into the inner palace of the King. The most innergate, or door, must be the gate of Love. In the Song of Songs we read, "My Beloved put in His hand by the hole of the door." (Solomon 5:4) We read in Revelations. *"After this I looked,* and, behold, *a door was opened in heaven . . ."* (Rev. 4:1) When this gate of love is opened in Heaven to us our hearts overflow with this Love of God. Perfect love casteth out fear. O what joy, peace, and happiness we do experience as result of the foretaste of Heaven itself. It is too wonderful to tell. It is too much for poor earthly creatures to experience but for short seasons. I am made to believe that God has ordained these wonderful banquets of the King to be participated in most gloriously here in His banqueting houses of worship. God's children will travel thousands of miles to one of these banquets. God meets His people with the gifts of His love within these Houses of praises. Sometimes we hear the voices of angels coming from the mouths of men as we worship God together.

While meditating in this meeting-house on the gates of tribulations, (or regeneration), faith, hope, and love, my question was, Are there any other gates? John gave me the answer in 1st John 4:16: "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him." There is no gate beyond the gate of love.

When I came to the reality of my surroundings I felt that God had cemented everyone present in that congregation together so firmly with a heavenly mixture of grace and love that nothing could break fellowship. I felt that everyone there including the many young people were lively stones, made to be lively by the love of God and washed clean in the blood of the Lamb. I saw the manifestation of their labor of love as I gazed upon the newly finished walls, furniture, and fixtures of this House of Worship. I knew that it had taken many hours and dollars to bring this into reality. I said in my heart, "Thank God for such evidences of a God-loving people who will gladly sacrifice their bodies and earthly treasures in providing a meeting place for the members and friends to worship God together." Recall that the 3rd and 4th verses of the 122nd Psalms says: "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is *compact together:* Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord unto the testimony of Israel, to *give thanks unto the name of the Lord."* A company of believers blessed to worship God in unison in prayer, praise, and preaching is a wonderful experience of being compacted together both in body and Spirit.

I saw the Heavens open unto me a book of remembrances of the testimony of God's love and mercy. I remembered the 1st Heaven which was a paradise when the Lord first remembered me as related in this treatise. I called to remembrance the 2nd Heaven when a door was opened to me to be baptized and to be married to the particular church in covenant-relationship which holds to the Gospel Faith and Practice. I had been given the wonderful relationship to trust that God would providentially care for me and finally save me in that eternal abode because of His love and through the merits of Jesus Christ. Yet, I thought that I had so blasphemed His power to such degree that none would receive me into their fellowship here on earth. How glad I was when they received me and welcomed me into their fellowship. My joys in participating in the special privileges and ordiances allowed only to members of the church are considered as precious and sacred. Being caught up in the third Heaven for moments is enough foretaste to make me yearn to live there eternally with the redeemed of the Lord.

It is wonderful in this church relationship to be compacted together to mourn with those who mourn; to re-

joice with those who rejoice: to be so united in affections one for the other that each one will be willing to make great sacrifices for the other ones' good. It is wonderful to be united in agreement upon religious beliefs. Being "Compact together" in love, belief, experience, and hope: all this causes a yearning to meet often together in worship of God for His benefits to us. All this causes the lovers of the truth to be glad when someone suggests, "Let us go into the House of the Lord."

We go to the House of God in unison to give thanks for His wonderful works. We listen prayerfully as the minister of the Gospel gives testimony of the will of God, the word of God, and the simple commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ. The minister comforts us as he is blessed to speak of the sovereign God who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will. We experience a feeling of security as the minister brings testimony after testimony from the Holy Scriptures to prove that God's will of purpose is solely, wholely, perfectly, and completely worked by Him, to the praise of His own glory and to the completion of salvation of each and every one of His children, without a hint of any jot or tittle of His will of purpose being disobeyed because He works it Himself; and, it embraces all times, events, words, thoughts, actions, and all creatures and things both visible and invisible. We are edified as the minister preaches the Word of God bringing a multiplicity of testimonies from the Book of books, proving that the will of God relative to the salvation of God's elect is because of God's great love for us through the merits of Jesus Christ, Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. We eagerly listen as the minister preaches to us God's will of precept as he rightly divides the word of truth in warning the Lord's people of dangers and exhorting them to keep the commandments of Jesus, and to be fervent in charity.

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."

I wanted to praise Him publicly for His divine providence, amazing grace, gifts of the Spirit, His great love, and gospel of Jesus Christ. I wanted to participate in the ordinances of Jesus Christ and His Church. There are two kinds of extremists relative to public praise. One is the child of God who is fearful of man to the extent that he will not participate in public praise. The hypocrite will engage in public praise to be commended by men. The proper Christian is not fearful of the frowns of the world, nor is he a public worshiper in order to be commended by those who profess to be Christians.

David said, "Give unto the Lord glory due unto his name: *bring an offering and come into his courts.*" You may ask, What shall we bring? Our strength will not help Him for He is all-powerful. Our wisdom will not direct Him for He is all-wise. Our God is so great that He does not require our wisdom to direct Him nor our power to assist Him. He owns all things; therefore, He does not require our wealth to enrich Him. He is so effectual in His works and so convincing relative to His greatness that He does not need our reputation to advance Him. What does He require of us? He requires us to fear Him because of His greatness, He requires us to love Him because of His goodness. "What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits towards me?" (Psalms 116:12) What offering shall I bring? The sacrifice that the Lord loves is a broken heart and contrite spirit. The word contrite means, bruised. Paul says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you *present your bodies as living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*" (Romans 12:1) God does not need our help in any way but we certainly need His strength and guidance in all of our affairs. It pleases Him that we are to help one another in word, deed, and

prayer. Bring an offering of your material possessions for the support of the ministry, maintenance of house of worship, and the poor of the flock. The Scriptural rule for this is called an order to the churches which is plainly and simply stated in 1st Corinthians 16:1-3. (Read, if interested in giving according to rule.)

"I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving." (Psalms 116:17) I will thank Him for His deliverance from death; for His deliverance of me from the clutches of law and death; for His setting before me the open doors of faith and hope; and, for His love that flooded my soul through the open door of Heaven. I will thank Him for Jesus Christ, my King, Saviour, Friend, Priest, Way, Truth, and Life.

When I come to the courts of the Lord and in the midst of His people, I pray that I will be given to remember my vows. May I be given to say as David when I am inside the place of worship: "I will pay my vows unto the Lord *now* in the presence of all His people." David said, "God is the Lord which hath shewed us light: *Bind the sacrifice with cords even unto the horns of the altar.*" (Psalm 118:27) Unless these instructions can be experienced, none of our sacrifices will be acceptable to God. All acceptable *sacrifice* is fervent constant confident *devotion.* That which *binds* is *faith. Streams of God's love* are the *cords.* The *altar* is *Christ. Christ's merit* and *power* are the *horns* of the altar. I find it to be more blessed to try and fail than not to try. I find that my conscience is more at ease when I go to the House of God and fail in my attempts at worship than when I fail to present my body. O that our people would more often say to their children, relatives, and friends, "Let us go into the House of the Lord."

It is very encouraging to see parents bring their children to church meetings. A greater percent of our church meeting congregations are young people now than when I first united with the Primitive Baptist Church. Let us bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Let us teach them to obey their parents, speak, the truth, read good literature, to behave themselves conformable to high morals, and to respect the elderly. We know that it is God's work to regenerate and save eternally each and every one of His people; yet, it is our obligation as Christian parents to discourage our children from becoming involved in religious organizations whose object is to work zealously to influence young minds to embrace their doctrines and practices: which you know to be false and erroneous. It is your duty to encourage them to consider the Bible as the Book of books worthy of their reading. It is your duty to encourage their attendance at the place where you go to worship. You consider your particular church of your membership as being more right in its doctrine and practices than any of the organizations whose main purposes are to convince the young and to convert them to their ideas and doings.

The minds of children are very easily impressed and they are prone to follow anyone who takes a great interest in them. Take care that your children be not as those referred to by David in his prayer: "Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood." May we do our duty and pray God: "That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as cornerstones, polished after the similitude of a palace: that our garners may be full, affording all manner of store: that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets: that our oxen may be strong to labour: that there be no breaking in, nor going out: that there be no complaining in our streets. HAPPY IS THAT PEOPLE THAT IS IN SUCH A CASE; yea, HAPPY IS THAT PEOPLE, WHOSE GOD IS THE

LORD." (Psalm 144:11-15) May we assemble ourselves together more often, and often say, "LET US GO INTO THE HOUSE OF THE LORD." MAY GOD BLESS YOU. AMEN.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

BROTHER W. L. BEEBE: — I wish to submit to you for your consideration a question or two. If you have any light on the subject, please reply through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We read in Matthew iii, 11 that John baptized with water unto repentance for the remission of sins. We also learn from reading the Scriptures that Jesus came without sin unto salvation — that he had no sins of his own to repent of; then why was he baptized of John in Jordan unto repentance for the remission of sins? Was it only for example or pattern for his people to follow? Was it not more than an example for them to follow?

Yours to serve,
C. MARRS
FAYETTEVILLE, W. VA., July 19, 1886.

REPLY

In the revelation of salvation in our Lord Jesus Christ there is nothing which can be understood by natural reason. The visible organization of the church is not the pure spiritual body of Christ, for corruption and dissensions were discovered even in the apostolic age in the very churches organized under the inspired direction of those who were guided by the Holy Ghost. The literal fact that John baptized by divine authority is accepted by those who are satisfied of the truth of the records written by the evangelists, even though they receive that testimony only as history. Yet even at that time the most learned and zealous class of religionists confessed that they could not tell whence that baptism came, whether it was from heaven or of men. — Matt. xxi. 23-27. Literally the work of John was declared by Gabriel to Zacharias when his birth was announced, with the promise, "And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." — Luke i. 14-17. This work was fulfilled by the preaching and baptism of John.

Neither the truth preached nor the ordinance administered by that favored servant of God could make ready any others except that people who were "prepared for the Lord." Hence, when many others came to his baptism he denounced them with their claim of merit on the ground of their natural relation to Abraham. If immersion had been all the preparation required, then John might have received them without requiring "fruits meet for repentance." On the contrary, being "filled with the Holy Ghost," John saw that they were not the prepared people whom it was his privilege to make ready. Their trust in their natural birth gave evidence that they were destitute of that preparation which was required before John's baptism could make them ready for the Lord. How clearly does this record expose the presumptuous folly of all those who profess to have ability to prepare sinners for the reception of the salvation of the Lord! The hope of divine favor by reason of pious natural parentage is also here cut off, since none can bring a higher claim on this ground than those who were Abraham's children naturally. As that plea was rejected, and the evidence of repentance was required of those who had trusted in it, clearly no other natural parentage can authorize a hope of acceptance in the sight of the holy God.

The repentance unto which John baptized the "people prepared for the Lord," was not that grief on account of conscious sin which is often mistaken for repentance by the religious world; that repentance which Jesus gives to his Israel is wrought by godly sorrow. — See 2 Cor. vii. 10. This scriptural repentance is a turning away from that in which the penitent has formerly lived. Hence, those Jews whose trust had been in the legal covenant were not manifest as subjects of this repentance while they yet boasted in their natural relation to Abraham. Evidently the natural mind could not discern the peculiar qualification of those who were prepared for the Lord, else those eminent Jews would have known that they were not the people whom John was sent from God to make ready. On the other hand, if their natural mind could see in themselves this repentance, the saints would have no further warfare in themselves.

While John was by inspiration enabled to discover and reprove the vain confidence of those legalists who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others, he was not yet able to understand the wonderful mystery to which brother Marrs calls attention. He could comprehend the necessity of his work in giving expression to the repentance of his natural brethren the Jews, whose hopeless condemnation under the law forbade their trust in that covenant of works; but he needed a deeper lesson to enable him to see the propriety of the Lord himself receiving baptism at his hands. Jesus explained only that "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." It was indeed a very impressive example, which has by the Spirit been brought home to the experience of many of his doubting and lingering disciples in all the ages since he made Jordan glorious by bowing beneath its waters; but it was more than an example. It was the expression of the whole gospel of divine grace, in which the great Captain of our salvation through death destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. — Heb. ii. 14, 15. Neither in this ordinance nor in any other action or word of our Lord would we dare to limit his purpose merely to a ceremonial example. Only the blessed Comforter, the Spirit who searches even the deep things of God, can know the fathomless depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, as contained in every word and deed of our Lord. As he was made under the law of Moses to redeem them that were under that law, so he was made a curse for us. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." — 2 Cor. v. 21. As being holy and sinless in himself, Chirst Jesus was and is above all law, and can neither sin nor suffer; but in his unity with the church of his redeemed people "he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." — Isa. lii. 12. As he was so identified with his people that their sins were justly laid on him, in that relation he must go down into death and be cut off in their transgressions. So he went down into the depth of all the condemnation which rested upon them for whom he died. This was expressed in the figure of baptism in Jordan; and it was then and there assigned by the Lord as his reason for requiring John to baptize him, that "Thus it becometh us."

In taking upon him the form of a servant, Jesus recognized the authority of Moses even as vested in the Scribes and Pharisees; and while denouncing their hypocrisy, he taught obedience to their commandments. — Mathew xxiii. 3. By fulfilling every jot and tittle of that law of a carnal commandment, which was given by Moses, Jesus blotted "out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was con-

trary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." — Col. ii. 14. To accomplish this work it was needful that he should be made under the law; and it is in this relation to his body, the church, that we understand there was propriety in his being baptized in declaration of his death under the law, and his resurrection by the glory of the Father to that eternal newness of life in which he leads captivity captive, and is glorified with the right hand of Omnipotence in all the glory which he had with the Father before the world was. There is no other being in whom that law is fulfilled in all its infinite perfection; therefore the name of Jesus is exalted above "every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." As he made himself of no reputation in coming under the law, it was needful that he should declare his death to that law by the divinely authorized ordinance of baptism before he began to preach the gospel of salvation by grace. The repentance unto which he was baptized was the turning away from the legal dispensation, with all its rites, to the gospel kingdom, in which he was about to bring to light that life and immortality which had been hid for ages under the darkness of the night of just condemnation, since sin had entered into the world. In this repentance the Lord Jesus had no sins to confess but the inconceivable burden of the iniquities of his people, which were laid on him by divine justice. In himself he was without sin;

> "For he who could for sin atone
> Must have no blemish of his own."

It is not said of Jesus that he was baptized "unto the remission of sins." His own explanation of it to John was that "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." It did indeed testify that he turned away from that legal bondage and left its weak and beggarly elements which could not give life. This was the most wonderful display of the superiority of the gospel dispensation; that he who alone was faultless in the sight of the law, yet resigned all claims to justification on that ground, that he might lead the way in the path of the just, "that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." The righteousness which shines in the Lord Jesus is infinitely superior to the best obedience which could be rendered to the law, since they who are justified in Jesus are forever secure from condemnation, being no longer under the law of sin and death.

The covenant of works which was given to Israel was binding upon all who were born under its provisions; and no Jew could deliver himself from its requirements by any service rendered. It demanded perfect and perpetual obedience; so that he who had fulfilled its every injunction through a lifetime, was doomed to death in his first failure to meet all its demands. Hence it is called the ministration of death and of condemnation. — 2 Cor. iii. 7, 9. In his baptism Jesus turned away from all that gloomy system to the light and liberty of the gospel as embodied in himself. It was by this ordinance that he was made ready to preach the gospel to the poor. Having rendered to the law that perfect honor which was its due, he was now ready to enter upon the work of establishing his own everlasting kingdom by taking out of the way that heavy yoke of legal bondage. In the act of baptism he thus proclaimed the end of the law for righteousness, and the revelation of perfect justification in himself as the fullness of gospel grace.

It is a very limited view of the subject which would see in any word or act of Jesus nothing deeper than the mere ceremony which is visible to the natural eye. The observance of this ordinance by our Lord was the first step in the manifestation of his kingdom. Nothing in the law of Moses required that he should be baptized; but as John was sent directly from God to administer this ordinance, so every

proper subject of it was by the Spirit prepared to receive it. In the case of the sinless Redeemer this was evident from the direct approval expressed on the occasion when the Spirit of God in bodily shape like a dove descended and lighted upon him, and a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The law of Moses derived all its authority from that God who gave it. By the same divine direction John was sent to mark the end of that legal dispensation. "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." — Luke xvi. 16. The higher glory of our Lord Jesus in his gospel kingdom exceeds the glory of Moses in the law as the day exceeds the night in the light of nature. "And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." — Heb. iii. 5, 6. All this was expressed in the baptism of our Lord by his servant John; for without divine power there was no provision for the abrogation of that Sinai covenant; and while it remained there was no room for the establishment of the kingdom of Christ. Even the perfect obedience of Jesus did not cancel the requirements of the holy law until he poured out his soul unto death, and in his precious blood the sword of infinite justice was "bathed in heaven." Then in this terrible baptism he fulfilled all that was expressed in the sacred ordinance, when he was baptized in Jordan. When the waters closed over him there was the symbol of his death and burial, not merely in the new tomb of Joseph, but in that more dreadful burial where all the waves and all the billows of almighty vengeance covered him in the awful depth of death. Then the sword of justice was satisfied, and the law could ask nothing more. But this significant ordinance tells of more than all this; for if this were all, then indeed would the gloom of despair rest upon all the earth and heaven. As the burial beneath the wave tells of death to the law, so the rising body of our dying Lord proclaims the resurrection of all the members of his redeemed body; not to that old life of legal bondage, in which they were dead with him when he died for all, but in him they are risen to newness of life. "Therefore we are buried with him into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." — Rom. vi. 4. Under the legal and prophetic dispensations there was only the *promise* of that life which in the gospel day is clearly revealed in the resurrection of our Lord by the glory of the Father. In his baptism that life is manifested in a figure which declares it to be everlasting life, in contrast with that mortality which was under sentence of death. "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." — Rom. vi. 9, 10. This is the glorious truth by which the subjects of his redemption are forever secured against falling under condemnation. They live in Christ Jesus by the power of that same endless life in which their Redeemer was raised by the glory of the Father; and as he has redeemed them from their bondage under the law, they can never again transgress its injunctions. Thus in Christ they are risen above all which could condemn them. This was testified in the baptism of our Lord Jesus in Jordan, when the waters of that river of judgment closed over his body, and gave way before his triumphant power as he rose from that liquid tomb. There in a figure divinely approved, our Deliverer asserted his power to lay down his life and to take it again. — John

x. 18. In the privilege of following his example, he has given to us the same approval in the answer of a good conscience toward God. So, in every step in which we follow him our Lord has fixed the great reward of his divine pleasure, which is unknown even to the subjects of his redeeming grace so long as they walk in disobedience to his commandment and fail to follow him.

In his baptism the Lord Jesus turned away from all the attractions and allurements of earth, and became obedient unto death; so he led the way for all who love him. In no other way can any man be his disciple; and in no other way does he accept the claim of any who profess to love him. The test as Jesus has declared it is, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." — John xiv. 21.

Editorial by Elder W. L. Beebe November 15, 1886.

OBITUARIES

GEORGE WASHINGTON PAGE

Brother George Page was born April 10, 1881 and passed away February 20, 1965. He was 84 years old at the time of his death. He was married November 4, 1914, to the former Cora Lee Moorefield who preceded him in death by about one year. His remaining survivors are three sons, Charles Clarence Page of 311 Virginia Hills Avenue, Alexandria, Virginia; William Lester Page of Route 1, Pelham, North Carolina; and George Bethel Page of Route 2, Ruffin, North Carolina.

Brother Page united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on August 25, 1940, and remained a faithful member until his passing, always attending his church meeting whenever his health permitted.

At the time of his death he was living with his son, Bethel, and his devoted family. May the Lord in grace and mercy reconcile his children and loved ones to His sovereign will. The Lord knows in infinite wisdom all the days of our sojourn here below. When He calls, each of us shall answer Him, but we must, each of us, await all the days of our appointed time until our change comes.

His funeral was held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church by Elder H. W. Wray and he was laid to rest in the Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this memorial be prepared for our church record, a copy sent to his family, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication. Done by order of the church at her conference meeting the fourth Saturday night in March, 1965.

Coley S. Strader

CORA LEE MOOREFIELD PAGE

Sister Cora Lee Moorefield Page was born May 31, 1888. She was married to George Washington Page November 14, 1914. This union was blessed with three sons, Charles, William and George, who with her husband survive. As far as the writer knows she lived most of her life in the Mayfield Community near Ruffin, N. C. Sister Page having finished the charted course that was set before her by an all wise God, departed this life December 19, 1964.

To the family, friends and relatives who are left to mourn her passing, we can truthfully say we are glad they mourn; it would be sad indeed if the passing of a loved one did not touch the hearts of loved ones left behind and cause them to mourn. The writer not having known her personally, has had to rely on friends and neighbors concerning her spiritual life, and her hope of glory in the world to come. From information gathered she was a firm believer in salvation by grace and a sovereign God who worketh His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay His hand or question His works.

Sister Page professed a hope in eternal glory and was received into fellowship and baptized as a member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church (date unknown). We, at Dan River Church, believe Sister Page was the possessor of a sweet hope given her by our dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This hope given by our dear Saviour is more precious than anything this world has to offer. We hope the Lord will reconcile the family and other loved ones that in her passing was the consummation of that glorious hope, the which she will need no more; for when a person receives those things hoped for, they have no more need of hope.

Her funeral was conducted by her dear pastor Elder D. V. Spangler. The beautiful floral offerings were evidence of the esteem in which she was held in the community. Her body was laid to rest in the Mt. Carmel Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is requested a copy of this be spread on the church records,

a copy to the family and a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Respectfully submitted,
James Carter

MRS. GRACE E. JONES

My beloved mother, Sister Grace E. Jordan Jones, was born April 15, 1886, and passed away Christmas eve, 1964, in Inglewood, California, of gangrene of the right foot. She was the daughter of Elder and Sister F. M. Jordan and the sister-in-law of Elders George J. and John Q. Jones, all of Iowa, now deceased. At the time of her death, she was a member of Liberty Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, in Los Angeles.

In her teens she had an experience of grace and was given a blessed hope that when she was taken from this strife-torn sick world she would be with her Lord in a timeless eternity. In 1905, she was married to Jesse R. Jones who preceded her in death, and who was also a member of an Old Baptist family. In 1907, to this union was born an only child, the sad writer of this obituary, on her mother's birthday. In 1910, mother and father united with the church they loved so much and served until ther deaths thirty-six years apart.

Besides myself, mother leaves to mourn her death, two brothers: Grover Jordan, Downey, California; Bro. Stacey Jordan of Grinnell, Iowa; one sister: Sister Velma F. Fugate of Palestine, Teaxs, whose letters some years ago appeared in the *Signs* signed "A little sister from Texas"; a sister-in-law, Sister Dorothy Jordan of Hollywood, California; her church brethren and a host of friends and acquaintances, for to know my dear mother was to love her.

Mother was a semi-invalid from 1958 until her death last December. She never complained of her suffering and was many times not really able to attend church, but wanted to go and I took her. The preaching of our beloved pastor, Elder O. F. Dearing, was her joy and consolation. Her staunch belief in predestination, election, etc., was always confirmed so ably in his preaching. Her fortitude and sweet spirit were an inspiration to all who knew her, most of all to me. Her love for, her devotion to, and her pride in me were exceptional. Her innate dignity and kindness were as much a part of her as her sweet smile. She was a woman of grace, aptly named, and a Child of Jehovah, a subject of grace. She loved her Saviour and her church beyond telling.

From the fall of 1930 until the fall of 1940, we were privileged and blessed to enjoy the fellowship and hospitality of the Baptists on the East Coast. We lived in Philadelphia and New York when I attended Library School at Drexel and Columbia. The preaching of Elders Lefferts, Vaughn, Topping, Bellows, Ker, and others fed our hungry souls.

My darling mother and I had a wonderful life together and I know that in that world to which her soul and spirit have gone, there are no crosses to bear, no burdens to share. Her passing has left a lonely void. God has been so good to us, guided and protected us all these years. Were it not for the grace of God, the blessing of His Holy Spirit and His everlasting arm beneath me during mother's illness and death, and my own illness at the same time, I could not have survived. For some reason known only to Him, He has brought me through deep waters. Praise His Holy Name! In Christian love,

Helen Jane Jones

MRS. BONNIE COLVETT

Mrs. Bonnie Colvett, wife of Deacon D. C. Colvett, was born August 16, 1889, and died October 5, 1964. She had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for twenty years.

Sister Colvett leaves her husband and three step-children: Shannon, James and Emma Colvett, to mourn their loss. The church at Bordeaux, Nashville, Tenn. misses her presence very much, but we feel that our loss is her gain.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor and Elder J. N. Darnell, who tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved, telling of the wonderful works of God's grace.

Written by her pastor,
Elder R. L. Biggs

OPHA C. ROBERSON

RESOLVED, That we, the Union Primitive Baptist Church pay this tribute of respect to Sister Opha C. Roberson, one of our long beloved members.

She departed this life April 14, 1965, at the home of her dear daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Norman Pace, near Haile, Louisiana. She was born July 27, 1880, and was united in marriage to Brother Sam Roberson, who died years ago. She is survived by one son, Bill Roberson, Monroe, La., and four daughters: Mrs. N. A. Pace, Haile, La.; Mrs. Mittie Walker, Monroe, La.; Mrs. Ruth Trantham, Monroe, La.; and Mrs. O. W. Parks, Refugio, Texas; three brothers: W. B. Haile, Sr., Haile, La.; Sam Haile, Monroe, La.; and Howard Haile, El Dorado, Ark. Surving also are one sister, Mrs. Emmett Maroney, Marion, La., and fourteen grandchildren, eighteen great grandchildren, and three great great grandchildren.

Sister Robertson was a devoted and humble sister in the faith, but she had many tribulations, having lost her dear husband and several of her children; and later became weak and afflicted, which continued several years; but she was given so much courage and patience to endure it, until it was marvelous to observe. She was a member of Union Church and was greatly loved by the brethren and sisters, having joined in October, 1911.

Sister Fannie Pace, her daughter, and her devoted husband, Norman Pace, devotedly cared for her for the several years of her great affliction, for which they are to be commended. We feel that Sister Opha is much better off, for she is free from suffering. She left fruitful evidence that she had been given the victory through Jesus Christ over death, sin, sickness, and all trouble. Her spirit has gone to God who gave it. May God richly bless all who mourn her passing.

The writer and Elder David E. Turner spoke at her funeral in the presence of a very large and devoted crowd, with many beautiful flowers. May the Lord ever be with us all. Your unworthy brother in hope.

R. W. Rhodes

MRS. MAGGIE ESTELLE (SMITH) McLAWHORN

Our Heavenly Father in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to remove from our midst our beloved sister, Mrs. Maggie Estelle McLawhorn (nee Smith) on July 15, 1964, at the age of 63. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder A. P. Mewborn, and Elder Joseph Sawyer.

Sister Maggie possessed the qualities of a noble woman. She was generous, gracious and kind, and eager to lend a helping hand to those in need. She had no children of her own, yet was a wonderful mother to her stepson, two foster daughters, and a foster son; each of whom esteemed her for this kindness. And her husband was blessed to have her as a devoted helpmate.

This dear sister united with Hancocks Church by experience and baptism about thirty-eight years ago, and was a true and faithful member as long as she lived. She was sure to greet her brethren with a warm smile and a hearty handshake, born of the love she had for them. She was a firm and steadfast believer in salvation by grace, and she loved to talk of Jesus and his wonderful love. She said that she felt so weak and unworthy in this sinful world, and could only trust that she would be made rich in His love and grace. We miss our dear sister, but feel that our loss is her eternal gain. May God comfort and sustain the bereaved family.

Done by order of Hancocks Church while in conference November 17, 1964.

Elder A. P. Mewborn, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

ISABEL (OAKLEY) COX

On September 3, 1963, Mrs. Isabel Cox (nee Oakley), our beloved and highly esteemed sister, was called from her earthly existence at the age of 73. She suffered a long, painful illness, which culminated in death. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder A. P. Mewborn and Elder Joseph Sawyer.

Sister Cox was the wife of the late Franklin L. Cox; and of this union four children survive: Mrs. Alice Manning, Mrs. Dorothy Barrow, Mrs. Myrtle Ruth Haddock, and a son, Berline Cox.

Sister Cox was a firm believer in salvation by grace. She united with Hancocks Church in August, 1938, and was a true and faithful member; one who loved her church. Her tender smile manifested the pleasure she felt when mingling with her brethren. She was a gentle, quiet, unassuming person, a devoted wife and mother, a true friend and a wonderful neighbor.

We miss this dear sister, but feel that our loss is her eternal gain. We bow in humble submission to an all wise and merciful Saviour. May He comfort the bereaved family, and may His blessings be theirs.

Done by order of Hancocks Church while in conference November 17, 1964.

Elder A. P. Mewborn, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

SIMEUL LOFTIN

On January 11, 1964, death claimed our dear brother, Simuel Loftin, who had been a member of our body since August, 1924. Brother Loftin was a gentle person who had been afflicted with a malady all his life. He was a familiar figure to the whole countryside, and all who knew him regarded him with compassion. His gentleness and humbleness created a kindred spirit in those with whom he came in contact. "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform."

Brother Loftin will be greatly missed, but the writer feels that he heard the summons, "Child, your Father calls, Come home."

Written by order of Hancocks Church while in conference November 17, 1964.

Elder A. P. Mewborn, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

It was the sovereign will of our merciful God to call from time our dear Sister in Christ, Mrs. Hattie (Burns) Wade, widow of the late Brother S. F. Wade. She was born September 16, 1890, and departed January 25, 1965. She was baptized into the fellowship of Providence Baptist Church, Putnam County, W. Va. many years ago, by Elder H. J. Bird. She loved the courts of the Lord's house, and her rejoicing was in the doctrine and songs of grace. Her hope was grounded in Jesus' blood and righteousness. Her life was adorned with the grace of humility, esteeming others better than self. She was a good wife, a gracious mother, and kind neighbor. She peacefully fell asleep January 25, 1965. Her health had not been good for some years, but final illness was of short duration from a coronary condition.

Funeral services were conducted at Hamlin, W. Va., by Elder Veldon B. Linn, who was blessed to preach Christ the way, the truth, the resurrection and the life. Her brethren and sisters joined in singing some of the hymns she loved so well. Burial was in the Wade Cemetery, near Yawkey, W. Va. She leaves to mourn, two daughters: Mrs. Doshia McClure, Garrets Bend, W. Va. and Mrs. Ruth Adkins, Winfield, W. Va. and a stepdaughter, Mrs. Beulah Chaney, Hurricane, W. Va.; three sons, Toney R., Luther E., and Minister Jesse F. Wade, Yawkey, W. Va.; three sisters, Mrs. Nettie Reynolds, Mrs. Rosie Salmon, and Mrs. Dollie Salmon, Hamlin, W. Va.; one brother, Walter Burns, Dayton, Ohio. Surviving also are fourteen grandchildren and ten great grandchildren.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Providence Church, deeply feel the great loss which we have sustained in the passing of our precious sister and mother in Israel. Her life among us was a great inspiration and strength to us. We desire abounding grace to enable us to bow in sumble submission to the holy will of our God, witnessing that He doeth his sovereign will in all things; and that what he doeth is ever right. We miss her so much, but we grieve not as those who have no hope, for we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. She died in the full triumph of a living faith in Christ, and the blessed hope of immortality. May God visit reconciling grace upon those who mourn. And

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be made a part of our church records; a copy be tendered the family; and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of Providence Church in conference.

H. J. Bird, Pastor
V. L. Byrnside, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Sister Millie Burnett Perkins died in Memorial Hospital after a long illness. She was the daughter of the late Jabes and Nancy Emerson Adams, and was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, April 6, 1886. She had made her home in Danville, Virginia for many years, and had been a member of the Bradley Road Primitive Baptist Church since 1908.

Her husband died July 23, 1937. Survivors include a son, Lee P. Burnett, by a former marriage, and a number of nieces and nephews.

The funeral was conducted from Barker Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder H. W. Wray, with interment in Mt. View Cemetery.

We miss Sister Perkins very much, but we feel that our loss is her gain. She was well read in the Scriptures, and manifested a strong hope in the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. She attended her meetings regularly, and visited other churches when she could. She was a strong believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone, giving the Lord all the praise. I knew her for a long time, and it hurt when she passed on to the reward prepared for her. Written by Mary L. Patterson.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
R. T. Holley, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to remove from us by death Brother Earnie G. Blackman, who was a faithful member of Oak Forest Church, and an humble brother who loved people; and who talked a lot about the love of God.

He was liberated to preach in the churches of the Seven Mile Association. We all loved Brother Blackman, and we, together with his family whom he loved very much, dreaded to give him up; but God, who does all things well, called him to rest until the resurrection morning, when He shall awake in the likeness of Jesus, and dwell in the city of God forever.

His family did all they could for him, and loved him; but God loved him and called him to himself. May we all bow in humble submission to God, and say, "Not our will, but God's be done." May God bless Brother Blackman's family.

Elder W. D. Godwin conducted his funeral at Hickory Grove Church.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family; one written in the Union Book; and one sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of the Black River Union in conference at Reedy Prong Church on Saturday before the fifth Sunday in March, 1964.

Elder Lester E. Lee, Moderator
Elder W. D. Godwin, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133 DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1965 NO. 8

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8/65
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"THE LAW OF THE LORD"
(Ps. 19:7)

I dreamed of saying to my Father
I would be willing to go
Where a certain Elder was going,
On leaving this world below.

On the following morning my heart
Went out to him in love
For I felt that his ultimate home
Would be in heaven above.

Then on another night I dreamed
He passed by my dwelling,
And of my felt love to him,
To him I was telling.

He inquired the cause of this,
Speaking with fluency,
And I replied I hoped it was
The love of God in me.

When I my answer had given
He in sweet accord,
Did utter these Scripture words:
"The law of the Lord."

This law of the Lord verily
Is the law of love,
On the wings of which we hope
To be carried home above.

I heard the beloved Elder preach
When I was just a boy,
And on the day I was baptized,
I heard him with joy.

His stammering tongue was loosed
To preach the precious Word;
Later he departed to be with Christ,
His ever blessed Lord.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, North Carolina

A PRECIOUS THING

807 Pope Street,
Memphis, Tenn. 38122

Dear Brother Wood:

The communication between believers of the truth is a precious thing, and is, I believe, the real purpose of the *Signs of the Times* being published, so I am sending you two letters for your approval . . .

I have not met Brother Stewart, but I enjoyed his letter. I have known Clover Wall ever since I joined the church in 1936. She is a strong believer and I have received many good letters from her, and I believe this one will be enjoyed by all who know her. I wish that she may be blessed to go to the church. There is such a oneness there in the fellowship; a union, or like a family. Clover's father was a minister, (Elder R. M. Brann) and her mother a saint.

Lucille Young

IMPRESSED TO WRITE
SISTER YOUNG

A225 Emerson Street,
Winona, Miss. 38967

Dear Sister Young:

I hope you will pardon my presumption in writing you, a stranger in the flesh, but I hope not in the Spirit.

I have read your letter in the *Signs of the Times,* and feel impressed to write you for some reason, and I hope it is of the Lord. I am a regular reader of the *Signs,* and through the medium of this good periodical my soul is both watered and fed. Each month it comes to me as good news from a far

country. May it be the Lord's will to continue to bless its gifted editors and able contributors to continue in this good work.

Through the mouth of the prophet the Lord has said, "I leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall (not maybe) trust in the name of the Lord." (Zeph. 3:12)

This is the experience of everyone that has been taught in the school of God's love and grace. Yes, God's little ones are both poor and rich. Poor in so far as saving themselves, but rich in faith toward our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In a spiritual sense, every one that will ever be saved is first made poor, in order that he might be made rich. And we are not to marvel at this, for our blessed Lord himself for our sake became poor that through his poverty we might be made rich. As the poet said:

"Poor and afflicted Lord are thine;
Unfit among the great to shine,
But though the world may think it strange
They would not with the world exchange."

Not only is this true but the Lord's people must be made blind before they can see; they must be made sick in order that they may be made well; must be unclothed before they are clothed with the righteousness of Christ; must both hunger and thirst before they can be filled; must mourn before they can be comforted; yea, they must die that they might live. The Psalmist David said, "Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound, they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thine countenance." Surely, surely the gospel is the best sound.

I hope I have not worried you with this imperfect scribble. I am, I hope, a servant for Christ's sake.

Louis Stewart

LETTER TO
BROTHER AND SISTER YOUNG

Rt. 3,
Martin, Tenn.

Dear Lucille and Ed.:

I have been trying to get a few lines off to you all week, to tell you that Elder Darnell is home from the hospital, and doing very well; and that Elder Perkins is doing as well as can be expected since his stroke. He can use his arm and leg a little. Elder Paul Poyner is preaching at Mayfield for Brother Perkins.

. . . Yes, dying is all around us, and our people are getting fewer, but somewhere as long as this old world stands there will be witnesses to preach the whole truth, and some to hear it. I am glad God has given your son peace that the world can never give, and has guided his footsteps to a home here in this sin cursed earth. I have wondered why so many believers never go home to their friends. Some people believe that water baptism saves them, others that one must go before people and confess Christ, and pay tithes to receive blessings. But to me it came without money and without price. I am so unworthy, yet my mind always goes back many years ago when the children were little.

I was going about my everyday's work as usual. I believed there was a God like I believed Washington was the first president, for I had heard about Him; and had heard singing and preaching all my life. As I look back now to that day, it seemed different to all other days: I seemed to be at a standstill. Anyhow, late in the evening the children were playing in the yard waiting for their Dad to come. I laid down on the foot of the bed, and must have fallen asleep: a great storm came up, the black clouds were rolling, and I seemed to be in them. I began falling down, down in a black pit of hell; and I was so powerless to do anything. I knew it was my doom, and I could not do one thing. As I was sinking, a voice seemed to whisper, "I am able to save."

No sooner than I heard that voice, I was caught up, and seemed to be in the bosom of Christ; and was so happy.

I got up praising Him that saved me from destruction. I went out on the back porch, perhaps to see the storm clouds, but none were there. The moon had come up, and it was the most beautiful night I ever saw. The trees seemed to be bowing down, praising God: everything seemed to be praising Him.

I went on in this state quite awhile, and I thought all my troubles were over. Scriptures that I had heard all my life came to me, and seemed so plain — the true church and everything, I had no doubt where it was, and who they were. I had no Bible so every chance I got I read mama's and papa's; I would only open it and there were the scriptures that confirmed my belief. The power of God and the true people of God were so plain to me. The association was to be held at Concord, and I thought I would get ready and go home to my friends, and tell them what Christ had done for me. I could hardly wait — I would be baptized. Oh, yes, I fixed it all up, and it would be so easy, so wonderful all the days of my life. But you see I have had many doubts and fears, and this is the first time I have ever told this. I guess I let mama and papa see many times in many ways that I believed, for when Christmas came they gave me a Bible. I wish I could have made them happy and joined the church; but it has not been my lot.

I try to be reconciled; and many times since I have rejoiced in my Saviour in the still of the night. Some days when I seemed bogged down in despair, when I least expect it, hope and love comes to me in this wilderness of woe. The time of despair is so long, and I ask myself, "Is it all gone? Is there anything to it, or is it all in my mind?"

I know one night not too long ago, I dreamed I was going up a high mountain — I could not see the top, and thought I would never make it. I kept going along; and saw a deep chasm, a place I knew I could not cross, but I went on, or was carried over it. Then I heard the most beautiful singing; I knew it was our people singing those beautiful songs, but it was more beautiful than I had ever heard. I was so happy, for I felt I would join them soon, since I was getting nearer and nearer. But I awoke and was happy, yet sad that I awoke; I wished so much to get to the top and join them in their singing.

Well, you see how I have poured out my heart to you. When I began this, I had no thought of doing so. Now I ask myself, if I should send it. Will it be of any interest or do any good? Have I given all the praise to God to whom it belongs? What am I to even speak of his Holy Name; or to ever doubt and worry over how everything seems to be going? . . . I know whatever comes to pass, God is still God of the whole earth; and his ways are not our ways. I guess the trouble is that we judge God by man's ways; and that won't do. I understand so little, and can only cry, "Oh God, help me and all your people."

How could we get along without Him? Many times we are struck down, half dead, and we fall by the wayside, then the good Saviour comes and picks us up and puts a new song in our mouth. Yes, the Lord has been so good to us all.

Your friends,
Raymond and Clover Wall

(Word from Sister Young on June 18th said that Elder Darnell is much improved, and that Elder Perkins is able to get around some with a walker after his stroke and coronary thrombosis. We will be glad to learn that they both are continuing to improve. — J. D. W.)

THE FULFILLMENT OF THE SCRIPTURES

By Elder H. M. Curry

I suppose that every one who professes to believe the Bible at all, looks for the fulfillment of the prophecies. To what quarter then are we to look for

this fulfillment? How can those who deny predestination, either in part or in whole, ever expect the exact, timely and certain fulfillment of any or all of the prophecies of the divine oracles? God has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. Part at least of this declaration he has made known unto us by the mouths of his prophets as recorded in the holy Scriptures. The events thus foretold must certainly have been foreordained or predestinated, and therefore must be fulfilled, each in its time and season. The Saviour said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass, until all be fulfilled."

When God says a thing shall come to pass, does he mean that he will bring it to pass? When he says a thing shall be done, does he not pledge his word for its performance? Were the prophecies of the Scriptures uttered upon any other authority than the authority of God's decree? Do they rest upon any vicissitude of time for their fulfillment that God's decrees do not embrace? Would mere foreknowledge, or bare permission warrant or even justify the expression, "It shall come to pass?" or the expression "Shall," in any sense of the word? In this part of the country people read and notice Hick's weather forecasts. When such changes come as have been prophesied, they will say, "Hicks hit it this time;" when the forecasts fail, they say, "Hicks missed it this time." Are we to look upon God's prohecies in this way? Are we to say, when we see the Scriptures fulfilled in this thing, God hit it this time? or when we fail to see them fulfilled in that thing, God missed it this time.

Are we to treat his prophecies as mere prognostications? One would say, O no, God knew all these things would come to pass, and so he was kind enough and thoughtful enough to tell us of them beforehand. This is a very puerile makeshift, a very fallacious and deceptive subterfuge, and involves the one accepting it in a difficulty far more serious and ungodly than he supposes the one to be which he is trying to evade, to wit, God's decree of predestination; for if God knew that an event would transpire, that event is inevitable, that is, it cannot fail to come to pass exactly as foreknown; if inevitable, then it has been determined, and if determined, who determined it? If God did not, who did? The difficulty that I meet here, is an absolutely determined future, and either no determining power or some determining power outside of God, and independent of him. This is fatalism, and the one accepting such a theory is a fatalist in the fullest sense of that word. So here he is plunged into the very thing which he flattered himself that he was avoiding. In endeavoring to shun an imaginary Scylla, he has fallen into a real Charybdis.

How often do we come upon the expression in the New Testament, "This was done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled." When Herod sent forth and killed the little children in Bethlehem and all the coasts thereof, it was said then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "In Ramah there was a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted because they are not." Suppose Herod had not sent forth and killed the little children, then the words of Jeremiah would not have been fulfilled; if his word should fail in one thing, what confidence would his prophecies be entitled to in anything? But it is not Jeremiah's word which is at stake here, it is God's word that must be fulfilled. Herod's persecution also caused the flight into Egypt, and this was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son." On the return from Egypt, notwithstanding Joseph had been warned of God to take the young child and his mother and go into the land of Israel, he through unbelief,

fearing Archelaus, turned aside and dwelt in Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene." Here not only the wicked persecution by Herod, but also the unbelief of Joseph alike fulfilled the Scriptures.

When the time arrived that Jesus should be betrayed into the hands of wicked men, the betrayer was at hand, not as one who accidently turned up in time of the emergency, but one who had been foretold by prophecy. David had given a pen picture of him hundreds of years before. It had also been said by the Christ that one of the twelve should betray him. Not only was the man marked out by prophecy who should do this, but it had also been foretold how much the traitor should receive for his work; and also what should be finally done with the money. The son of man truly went as it was written of him. He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and when Herod and Pilate and the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together against him, they were gathered to do whatsoever God's hand and God's counsel determined before to be done. (Acts 4:27, 28)

When the Saviour was crucified, he was put to death between two thieves. This was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled which said, He was numbered with the transgressors. Suppose there had been no thieves or transgressors, how then could the Scriptures have been fulfilled? It was the custom to break the legs of those who were put to death by crucifixion, but on this occasion they broke the legs of the thieves, but did not break the legs of Christ. This was done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled which said, "Not a bone of him shall be broken." This prophecy was fulfilled in its reference to the literal body of Christ, but it still remains in force in its relation to his spiritual body, and must be fulfilled to the utmost in this also. So this prophecy warrants the eternal security of all the redeemed family, for we are members of his body and of his flesh and of his bones; so not a bone of him shall indeed be broken. Instead of breaking his legs according to the custom and the request of the Jews, they pierced his side with a spear. This was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "They shall look upon him whom they pierced." When in his last agony he said, "I thirst," they in their fiendish cruelty, gave him vinegar to drink. This was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "They gave me vinegar to drink." And after all, when they came to dispose of his raiment, they gambled for that, in order to fulfill the Scripture, "They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture did they cast lots." In the most exact way, the Scriptures were fulfilled in the life and death of Christ, so that it may well be said, He died for our sins according to the Scriptures.

Men are saved to fulfill the Scriptures. "Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion," is a prophecy that must be fulfilled; but for it to be fulfilled, the redeemed of the Lord must return and come to Zion. This prophecy cannot be satisfied as long as one for whom Christ died, is away from Zion. "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me," saith the Son. The righteousness, wisdom, power and grace of God are all engaged to fulfill these words, therefore there is no power or contingency that can ever interfere with the timely and triumphant victory of all the election of grace over every enemy. On the day of Pentecost, when that great number of people cried out, "Men and brethren what shall we do?" was exemplified in the fulfillment of prophecy. A great number of these men were Jews, those who only a few days before had crucified the Son of God with wicked hands: they had spit upon him, had called him Beelzebub, the prince of devils; and to express their resolution never to re-

pent, they said, "Let his blood be upon us and our children." But their obduracy could not hold out — God's prophecy must be fulfilled. The redeemed of the Lord must return and come to Zion. When Abel offered unto the Lord a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, this prophecy lay at the root of the matter. In the days of Seth, when men began to call upon the name of the Lord, the words of the prophet, "Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion," was being fulfilled in them. One might say that this prophecy had not been written in the days of Seth. It had not been written upon parchment, but it had been written in the book of God's decrees, and experienced in the hearts and consciences of men. All the prophecies of Jehovah are from eternity, and are yea and amen in Christ. Every poor pilgrim, whose anxious heart and weary footsteps seek that city whose builder and maker is God, is upheld, forwarded and guided on his journey by the immutable decree that the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion; and through the certain fulfillment of God's word, he shall reach the holy city and rest forever in her sacred palaces.

Men are lost to fulfill the Scriptures. Is this a hard saying? Can you not hear it? I am not responsible for the saying, however hard it may appear to be. The Saviour said to the Father in speaking of the twelve, "All of them have I kept, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled." (John 16:12) Had Judas not been lost, the Scriptures would have been broken. The thoughtless and presumptuous man would say, If Judas had to do what he did, he would have been exempt from crime; he would have had no sin. Upon what ground would he have been without sin? What law would exempt him? According to whose judgment would he be innocent? State the law and name the judge, and if it be the law of God and God himself be the judge, then I will agree that the conclusion is the correct one. Jesus, who is himself the embodiment of all law, and the judge both of the living and dead, said with regard to this matter in reply to Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." Instead of the judgment of Christ in this matter concurring with the judgment of men, that under such circumstances a man would be without sin, he declared that for this very reason, he had the greater sin. Here is a question of responsibility for some of the champions of that cause to settle. And here is another one: Christ said to the Jews, "Behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city, that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of righteous Zacharias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar." (Matthew 23:34, 35) The Saviour here declares that these men should fill up the measures of their fathers. He also designates the crimes that they should commit in order to do this, not only generic crime but specific crimes; and the end to be answered thereby was that upon them might come all the righteous blood that had been shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel to the blood of their most recent victim.

Now upon what principle of justice and judgment could four thousand years of crime be required at the hand of one generation? Let some of the champions of free agency solve this problem from their favorite standpoint of accountability. I have been accused of denying human responsibility, but in this as in many other things, I have been willfully misrepresented. I have only denied that the atonement of Christ left any responsibility upon his people; and further, I have denied the

foolish, imaginary, sentimental and ungrounded conclusion that predestination relieves men of accountability and acquits them of crime upon principles of equity and justice, and that therefore in order to be accountable, a man must be what men are pleased to call a free agent. I have here referred to these things to show that in the fulfillment of God's decrees according to his word, a deeper principle of justice is involved, than human standards set forth, or human pleaders comprehended.

Again it is said of some in the divine record, that they were before of old ordained to this condemnation. Now if they were before of old ordained to condemnation, when the condemnation came, did it not come in fulfillment of a decree? Who made the decree? Some would say that God made it, but he made it upon conditions. This they think necessary in order that the character of God stand above reproach in the judgment of men. They admit that the decree of election unto life is unconditional, but that the ordination of condemnation is conditional, and that the subjects of this decree are endowed with a free agency whereby they are permitted to work out their condemnation. This notion involves a monstrous absurdity, and that absurdity is this, That God has denied to man the freedom and ability to righteousness whereby he may be saved, but that he has endowed man with that freedom and ability whereby he may and can work out a sure and foreknown condemnation. And this is resorted to in the vain imagination that the character of God is thus vindicated from the charge of unrighteousness, and he justified in his ways to man. Peter in speaking of certain ones, says they were appointed to disobedience and stumbling. (I Peter 2:8) Now if they were appointed to disobedience, must they not fulfill the appointment? This they must do, even though God send them strong delusions to accomplish it. (2 Thess. 2:11)

Many are ready to exclaim now, If this be true, who is to be blamed? This is an old question, and I will give an old and authoritative answer. I will first state the question in its ancient form: "Thou wilt say unto me then, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" Reader, do you recognize your question? If you have never seen it before, if you will read the ninth chapter of Romans, you will find it. I will now give the ancient, time honored answer: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" Do you recognize the answer? If not, read the ninth chapter of Romans and you will find it. This is not your question; this is not a question of this age only. This question was asked two thousand years ago. Neither is this my answer. This is God's answer, and I am satisfied with it. This question comprehends everything that the cavilers of all ages have urged against the doctrine of God's sovereign decrees. Is not the answer of inspiration plain and decisive? If the solution of this problem is to be found in exceptions to God's decrees, and in making excuses for him, would he not have put a very different answer in mouth of his inspired apostle? Is not this the place above all places for such an excuse to be given? Is not this question sprung here for the express purpose of giving a decisive and unequivocal answer? Is not such an answer given? Shall we receive it as final and decisive, as coming from God himself, or shall we seek another, which, although necessarily false, is more pleasing to our pride and presumption, and more acceptable to ignorance and unbelief?

The unbelief of the Jews fulfilled the Scriptures. It is recorded by John that, although he had done many miracles, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias, the prophet, might be fulfilled: "Lord, who hath believed our

report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, that I might heal them." (John 12:37-40) Here it is expressly stated that the reason they could not believe, was that Esaias had fortold their blindness and hardness, and further that this blindness and hardness of heart was given from God. The object of this blindness and hardening was to prevent them from being converted that he might heal them. This language seems to imply that there might have been a possibility of their believing and being converted, had not God's decree intercepted and cut them off.

Heaven and earth shall pass away, said Christ, but my word shall not pass away until all be fulfilled. Whatever the divine record says shall be, must be. The same authority that says, The redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion, has also said, The wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand. The same book that says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me," has also said, "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse worse and worse." The same God that opened Lydia's heart, that she attended to the things spoken by Paul, hardened Pharaoh's heart that he would not let the people go. The same God that works in his people both to will and to do of his good pleasure, has also put it in the hearts of wicked rulers to fulfill his will, and to agree and give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God be fulfilled. (Rev. 17:17)

When Paul was arraigned by the Jews for preaching what was to them an obnoxious and destructive doctrine, his defense was that he had preached nothing but what Moses and the prohets said should come. If I am censured for what I have herein written, I have but one defense to make, and that is, I have only written what Moses and the prophets and Christ and the apostles have said should be.

(The above is copied from the *Signs* of January 15, 1900. We feel that the subject is presented clearly and is worth the close attention of our readers. — J. D. W.)

TESTIMONY OF MRS. MINERVA MacLEAN

11 Talbot Road, North, Lambeth, Ontario
February 12, 1963

Many times we wonder, why! I have had plenty of time these last fifteen years to wonder about many things; and to wonder, why!

My dear companion and I were united in marriage on September 20th, 1916, in a ceremony conducted by Elder J. B. Slauson. We had a happy married life together, until February 1950 when my dear one had a heart attack and was confined to bed. In the same month he was afflicted by a stroke. During the five years of his illness of body and mental suffering many nights I was unable to sleep or rest, and again I wondered why! Why should such things happen to loved ones. I would rise from my bed to search for comfort from my Bible, and it always seemed such a closed book to me. And again I would wonder why! However I did wonder and did find, after searching, a good deal of comfort from the Psalms. I would pray that maybe some day I would be given an eye to see, and an ear to hear. I knew that at times I felt rebellious, and when extremely worried I had not patience I should have had, I would feel that if only I could take my sorrows and worries to the Lord in prayer, and leave them there, everything would be all right. But that was not the way it was to be. No matter what I did it seemed I still had my burden on my shoulders. I oft times wished "I had the wings of a dove, that I might fly away, and be at rest."

My dear companion never complained, and was very patient, poor dear.

It seemed I just lived for my dear one, and our Church Sunday, which was once a month. It seemed when I would reach the Church I would forget everything else, and my burden would be gone, and I would forget all my worries and my grief. My dear one wasn't able to speak, although our gracious God must have blessed him to know when meeting Sunday came. He could make me to understand, "not to be late." It was a blessed relief to be able to walk to meeting, and to sit quietly in the meeting house, where my worries and my sorrow seemed to be forgotten, and I could be comforted, and thoroughly enjoy our dear pastor's preaching of the gospel. Then it was given to me to feel that "my yoke is easy, and my burden light." I would return to my home feeling more reconciled to my dear companion's illness, and to the many worries I had at that time.

On May 22nd, 1955 we had meeting in the Ekfrid Meeting House, morning and afternoon with lunch in the basement of the Church. It was so wonderful to me to be permitted by a merciful God to attend the meetings at the several places of worship. There had been for years a fear in my heart that something might come up to prevent my attending meeting. The Saturday of the June meeting in 1954 I could hear the church people talking around the dinner table. Everyone was able to speak and quote scripture to suit the occasion and the trend of the conversation. I felt like an eavesdropper who had no business listening in, yet, I could not tear myself away. I wondered why it was not given to me to talk as they did. When they finished their chat I went into the kitchen, and something seemed to keep telling me that it was no place for me. I was very sad, and low in spirit, and told myself that I would help over the June meeting, but then I would try never to attend services again, as I felt it would be useless. Although I had been reading my Bible, off and on, ever since I could remember, it seemed such a closed book to me. Well, anyway, with a heavy heart, I went to hear the preaching on the Sunday. I so thoroughly enjoyed it, and got such a comfort, I felt, this is where I ever want to be. I prayed as the Psalmist wrote: "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving kindness; according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin."

I surely felt in a wilderness, and understood a bit of what some people come through who are filled with guilt, shame and confusion. I missed my dear companion as he was always so understanding. I loved him so, but I could not wish him back to a world of woe. I will never be finished thanking God for the health and strength given to me to carry on to see my darling through his last breath, and to his last resting place. My prayer before he died was: "God bless his soul, and may he dwell forever with the Lord beyond the reach of woe." I felt so much alone in this weary world. I was not grieving for my loved one. My real grief for my companion was during his long illness. He was so patient.

The things of the world I did not crave and long for. I went, I know, to a community gathering once in a long while, but got no comfort there. I found myself looking for an excuse to stay away. Please believe me when I say that the only true satisfying feeling I could have was when I was with God's people, and among those whose desires were as mine. It is still so. I have always a feeling of sadness and loneliness when the Quarterly Meetings, and the Regular Sunday Services are over. I have been greatly blessed to be able to attend so many meetings. I have such a feeling of guilt and shame, and feel so full of sin, that I wonder how you good people can ever trouble to greet such a creature as I felt to be. Why is it that I have this awful feeling of

guilt, when the people of the Church speak so kindly to me?

Something seemed to say to me: "Don't try to deceive these dear people." I tried not to do just that. Yet, all the time, I felt I was deceiving everyone, or trying to. May God keep me from such a thing. No doubt some will understand what I mean when I say: "I stand alone." I am not happy with worldly things, and still I feel to be also not of the Church. I must try to be content with God's goodness to me in being permitted to live, and a way opened up for me to get to the meeting as often as I do. It seems all down through my life I have never been able to do the things I wanted to do. Like Paul I feel: "The good that I would, I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do." I pray that: "From every snare and evil work His grace shall me defend; and to His Heavenly Kingdom safe, shall bring me in the end."

As far back as I can remember I always had a desire to go to Meeting. One of our neighbors used to call at our home to take my sister to the Sunday Meetings. I remember standing in our back yard watching them go over the hill, and out of sight. I would bear in mind the persons who attended the Meetings, and how in my heart I longed to be numbered among those dear people. I never can forget dear Sister Beckie McLachlin's mother. I used to sit a few seats back of her, and wonder how one felt sitting up toward the front, and if some day I could have a seat at the front of the church. That was years ago when I was a young girl in my early teens. The years went by, and the longing to go to meeting never diminished, and I remained in this state of longing to hear the gospel preached until early in October in the year 1955, when I felt ill with such a strong desire for ever so long to speak to the Church. But this was so different, it seemed such a sweet, but urgent desire that could not be resisted. God willing, I did hope to be given the opportunity, and I prayed the dear Lord to bless me. I prayed asking Him to fill the hearts of the dear people of God with an abundance of charity. I felt the need, and still feel the need of your charity and your love, if I was to be considered a fit creature to be taken into your midst. Please believe me when I say I feel most unworthy, and am filled with fear and trembling. My feelings are best expressed: "O Lord, how vile am I; unholy and unclean. How can I dare to venture nigh, with such a load of sin?"

Indeed I wondered very much at times if I dared to venture. I felt sure dear Elder Ruston must have been disappointed in me, so very many times. I could do nothing of myself to bring me to the place where I now am. But for the mercy of the Lord I would have been consumed long before this. Dear Elder Ruston seemed very happy about it, and I prayed the good Lord would put it into the hearts of you dear people to be happy and patient with such a worm as I. I am so fearful I keep repeating: "Shine, Lord, and my terror shall cease; the blood of atonement apply; Lead me to Jesus for peace, the Rock which is higher than I."

Even though I was filled with fear there was melody in my heart, and a peace like I have never experienced before. "The peace of God which passeth all understanding." I pray that I might never bring reproach on the Church should I be blessed with becoming a member of our beloved home. If I was rejected, as I deserved, all I could say would be: "Lord, help me and give me strength for my days."

I became ill, and had to undergo an operation. I had sent word to my children telling them of my desire to ask a home in the Church. They were very happy for me, but fearful lest I become ill again from going into the cold water of November 6th, 1955. I let our dear pastor know what my strong desire was, and he and his dear compan-

ion came to see me. Our dear pastor took me by the hand and said: "Sister Minerva." I can never forget how my heart leaped for joy.

Again I wondered if it could be really true that I might become a member of the Old School Baptist Church, which I loved so dearly. I was very, very happy, and very impatient for the day of my baptism to arrive. It was planned that dear Sister Flossie Hodgins and myself were to be baptized on Sunday, the sixth of November, 1955, at Lobo. My dear daughter Isabel came to be with me, she was very anxious about me, and if it to be too soon after an operation. She stayed with me, and in her sleep during the night I heard her say: "My anxiety has all been taken away." Sunday morning came, and the people gathered in the Church. Elder Ruston opened the service with a beautiful prayer. After which we sang the second part to the end of the seventh verse of Psalm 145. This was followed by the preaching of our pastor from Hebrews Chapter 12, verse 21. We sang from Paraphrase 58. Then we walked to the water's edge where the baptisms were to be conducted. We returned to the hall where a bountiful meal was prepared. We sat around a long table, and enjoyed a conversation of good things. I must say I felt most unworthy and unfit to mingle with God's dear children, and as we sat about the table I longed to pray, but felt how can a sinner like I felt to be come before a great and Holy God?

That was a wonderful never-to-be-forgotten day, everyone seemed filled with joy, and over-flowing with love and sweet fellowship. What a privilege it was to be able to worship our God in the manner we wish, and how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. How sweet and how lovely and heavenly is the sight when those who love the Lord in one another's peace delight. "When each can feel his brother's sigh, and with him bear a part. When sorrow flows from eye to eye, and joy from heart to heart."

Minerva McLean

PURGED OF FREEWILLISM

Box 126
Tuolumne, Calif.

Editors of the *Signs of the Times*:

It has often been my mind to write something for publication, well knowing my unworthiness for I have often been tempted to believe that I have fallen from grace. (All the Lord's people are perfected forever, and kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, so there is no possibility of this. J. D. W.) So it is with fear and trembling I attempt to write anything to such a wise and well informed people. Yet I know that without their faith and testimony of the doctrine set forth in the *Signs of the Times,* I would be of all men most miserable. But thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift that through their word I have received the good consolation of the gospel. For God, after so many years, through their word has purged me of the thorns and briers of free-willism, having prepared something better for us who through the comfort of the Holy Ghost in the doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ Jesus, look forward to His coming, with patience and joy.

I am reminded of the prayer of our Saviour: "Neither pray I for these alone but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." (John 17:20) He was here, of course, speaking of the apostles, but are not some of you apostles, some teachers, some evangelists, etc.? For the love of God has given such unto the Old Baptist Church for the edifying of the body of Christ, whose members are both visible and invisible. I am not a known member in a visible way, yet I am constrained by the hope in me to be such, if ever that Godly privilege is given me.

I was brought up in an Old Baptist home, but the doctrine was not taught me; or, if it was, I did not hear it. When I was about nineteen years of age I came under conviction and condemnation of sin. I was ignorant of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and was aware only of the wrath of God; and was not able to bear it, yet was made to bear it. Although I made an attempt to take my life, I was not let, nor was I relieved to any large degree. It was my lot to be cast among the armenians and conditionalists. I was vexed and frustrated beyond measure among them. Aside from the spiritual comfort of my mother, I had no known friends in that way. I was made to travel that rocky road alone; I felt I was an outcast to God and to his people. But somewhere along the road faith took hold, and, if I am not yet deceived, led me to the Rock of Ages, which is the Old Baptist Church which holds the true doctrine of grace. "Herein is that saying true: one soweth and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor: other men labored, and ye are entered into their labors." (John 4:37, 38)

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." (Romans 11:33) I am no stranger to trials and tribulations, doubts and fears even now; and in view of the gospel and doctrine, could I hope to have it otherwise?

I have written this well knowing my unworthiness, and have not had much thought beforehand as to what I should write, but am made willing in the day of His power, hoping that we might be edified by the witness in us all.

May all, both small and great, be blessed to stand fast and unmoveable in the faith once delivered unto the saints. Yours in hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Wm. P. Wheat

7942 Longridge
Houston, Texas 77055

Signs of the Times
Dear Brethren:

At the request of Shepherd Fold Church of Houston, Texas, I am submitting a copy of the minutes of the presbytery of the ordination of Shepherd Fold's three deacons.

If you feel that these minutes would be of interest to any of your readers, we would be happy that they be published in the pages of the dear old *Signs*.

I also wish to state that Shepherd Fold, 815 Little York Street, holds an open invitation to all Brethren and friends of the Old School Baptists who may be visiting in the Houston area. We meet each first Sunday and the Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

In brotherly love,
Jerry Evers, Clerk

2416 Rockland Drive,
Burlington, N. C. 27215

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is check for five dollars for another year's subscription to the *Signs*. Use the other two dollars as you see the need.

I am a poor writer, but I enjoy reading the *Signs* so much that I never want to be without it in my house as long as I live. It has brought comfort to me many times when I was low and depressed. The writings are rich and beyond anything heard in arminian churches; if indeed I know the truth. I remain a faithful subscriber.

Sincerely,
Mrs. James F. Thompson

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** will be held with the church at Wilson, the Lord willing. The church is located in the city of Wilson, N. C. on the corner of Greene and Jackson Streets.

All who have a mind to attend are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk
Rt. 1,
Fremont, N. C.

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association** convenes with the church at Meadow, Greene County, N. C., beginning Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1965, and continuing through Sunday.

E. M. Smith, Clerk

LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The **Lexington-Roxbury Association** is to be held, if God so wills, at Halcottville, N. Y. Wednesday and Thursday, September 15 and 16, 1965. Those coming on Tuesday take the Denver Road at Kelly Corners, then take the first left road to the third house, called Windy Acres, the residence of Mr. and Mrs. John Shultis. Those coming on Wednesday will go directly to the meeting house at Halcottville. Will those coming on Tuesday please notify Mr. and Mrs. John Shultis, Kelly Corners, N. Y. a few days ahead.

Lovers of the truth are invited.

A. J. Slauson, Moderator

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1965 session of the **Smith River Association** is appointed to be held with Salem Church, located on Highway 221, between Roanoke and Floyd, Virginia, to begin on Friday before the first Sunday in September and continuing through Sunday.

Our brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

Amos Hash, Clerk

SPECIAL REQUEST

Our correspondents are especially requested to give their Zip Code Number in all correspondence with the *Signs*. This will help the Post Office Department in delivering all mail. — Editors

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To June 1, 1965)

Mrs. J. C. Holly, Va.	$1.00
Victor D. Borst, Jr., N. Y.	5.00
Drusiler Gillispie, Md.	1.00
N. R. Roberson, N. C.	2.00
Mrs. Lois Kennedy, Fla.	5.00
Mary Willie Perdue, Ark.	2.00
Mrs. James F. Thompson, N. C.	2.00
Frances Wrinn, Can.	2.00
Mrs. D. C. Davis, Wash.	5.00

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EDITORIAL

JOEL 1:1, 4

The word of the Lord that came to Joel the son of Pethuel. Hear this, ye old men, and give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land. Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers? Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation. That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten.

With misgivings of mind I come before you to write upon this portion of the sacred word. I hope that I know in a saving way my limitations, and this anxiety produces in me a desire to beg your indulgence while I attempt to write, and to beg of you that you

remember me at a throne of grace that I might be given restraint in my writing so that I not run into tangencies and vain speculation.

In order to get at the kernel that is in this scripture, it is necessary to deal with dry technicalities. Of the history of Joel we know but little, if anything. Nor is it necessary for us to know, because we live by faith, not sight, whether hindsight or foresight. According to various theologians, it was the custom for Jewish writers to tell the name of their father when he was an honorable man. Joel thus had an honorable background in nature, and, the word of the Lord coming to him, is enough for us to accept him as one that the Lord had called to the office of a prophet.

At the very outset of this prophecy he brings before us a calamitous condition. Evidently it had not occurred before this for it had not been in their day nor in the day of those before them. Certainly, it is noteworthy, for it is a new thing. He takes them to task about it, to wit, Have you seen or heard anything like unto this? This is the history of mankind, whether it pertains to his natural travel or to his spiritual. We will never cease talking and writing about the deliverance of the children of Israel across the Red Sea. Why? Because that this is the first time that it had ever been done. We will never cease talking and writing about the conception and birth of our Lord and Master. Why? Because that this is the only time that such has ever been done. The past is searched, and these things are all new, something that had never been. Too, the news that is in these things are spread before *all* of Israel. All of the inhabitants of the land were to take notice, to search their memory and ascertain if they can recall a thing like unto this. Not only is it important to them of their day, but it is to be told down the ages.

In our examination of the Bible, we must keep in mind that the spiritual is not first. Each is established and set up for a purpose, and each will run its course. They can not be moved backwards nor forwards to suit the whims and fancies of the ones that the two were set up to serve. That which is natural was first, and it will stay first as far as the power of it is concerned. In no sense of the word, in no degree whatever, in no way at all, can that which is natural become spiritual. The first was established for a purpose worthy of him that did it. It would seem at times that God is apologized for because that man was not spiritual at first. The fact that he was not has led too many of us to ascribe the nature of our father, Adam, to be himself. This is not holding the truth in righteousness. Whatever Adam was, as he came from the plastic hand of God, he was that by creation. He was not spiritual, but he was a natural man. Being a natural man, and that by the creation of God, it must have been according to His divine will. If he had been a spiritual man, he would not have sinned.

Let me say right here, once and for all, that God is not the author of sin. Then let me turn right around and say that had it been God's will to have done so, that he could have kept it out of the world. I want to quote Elder Hassel right here. I feel that many of my own brethren (that is, those that I am, at least, in nominal fellowship with) will not agree with me. Many of those (Who, incidentally, I claim are as sound as I feel to hope that I am) that have made such an issue about predestination (and that have gone all out to claim that Elder Hassel was with them) will not agree with him either. He said, "The Almighty power, unsearchable wisdom and infinite goodness of God so far manifest themselves in his providence, that His determinate counsel (Rom. 11:32, 34; 2 Sam. 24:1; 1 Chron. 21:1) extendeth itself even to the first fall, and all other sinful actions both of angels and men (and that

not by a bare permission)." This does not at all cover all that he said about this matter, but this suffices to show that the nature given Adam was in God's plan for the universe and that the fall of our first parents was embraced in the predestination (proorizo) of God (See Hassel's History, Page 672).

The first was necessary. If not, then all of God's work in making man and the garden, was in vain. We have been accused of being necessitarians, and I plead guilty. If there can be proved one thing in all of God's creation and his rule over it, that was not absolutely necessary, then, by the same stroke of genius, we will find him a poor finite creature having done something vain and speculative. Reason how we may, call brethren vile names how we may, God is the first cause of all causes. He is the antecedent cause of all other causes. Nothing can be the cause of that, which in itself, is the cause of all causes or things. God's creation of Adam as he was, was first. It will not do to say with a shrug of the shoulder that God foreknew what would be. Certainly he did, but He did not foreknow an uncertainty. If that which was foreknown was certain, then there had to be a predestinator. If God was not the predestinator of that which He foreknew in his creature, we have, of necessity, got to look for the predestinator somewhere else. Will you look around, and when you have found, him, please tell who or what predestinated that which God foreknew?

I plead guilty to reading a lot of so-called Old Baptist literature, as well as things from other sources. I hope that I know and appreciate the truth wherever I find it, but for me to enjoy that truth, it must come from a consistent source. If a magazine spends the most of its time destroying that which it once tenaciously contended for; if a publication uses nine tenths of its space to ridicule the doctrine of God's electing love; if a brother introduces an idea that has never been accepted by the church from the apostle's day until the present, and then there is inserted either on the printed page or in a man's preaching an excerpt of truth, or one article among many from false sources, that makes his truth unpalatable. Let me urge again that the natural is first. This nature is not used in understanding the scriptures; it is set aside or removed out of the way. The first birth was a natural birth, but the second birth is a spiritual birth. That which is flesh will remain flesh. That which is spiritual will remain spiritual. The text that I am dealing with is from a book that belongs to the family of God, a spiritual family. From these sources of my reading matter I am often told that I spiritualize the scriptures too much; that I ought to let the Bible say what it says and let it be right there. This I will do with this text, the Lord willing.

It means what it says. It meant to the Israelites what it would mean to people in the United States when a great cloud of insects come upon a wheat field or cotton field. Also, when the children of Israel crossed the Red Sea, it meant what it said — they crossed the Red Sea. It meant what it said when Pharoah and his hosts went down into the sea and the water destoyed them. Daniel was cast into the den of lions and the Hebrew children were cast into the furnace. All of the incidents connected with the travel of Israel where natural or literal. In our text the chosen people of God had their crops invaded by a horde of insects. This is indeed a notable thing. Four kinds of insects in the same year, either one, if left unchecked, would destroy the crop, seems too much for a nation in one year. We must remember that this is not an ordinary thing that is taking place. This is something that never has been before. As we read this first chapter of Joel our mind is carried away into anxiety for this nation, but are we seeing ourselves in it? We

must remember that this sad event is to be told to us; it is to be declared to generations to come. I wonder why that it is needful for us to know of their calamity. As far as crops are concerned, this did not occur any more with Israel; this one time must have had a great lesson in it for Israel all the way.

As I have done research for this article, I have consulted four different commentaries on the Bible. No two of them agree in detail, although there is some kind of an understanding that it has reference to Chaldea as an invading force that destroyed all vegetation as they swept over the country. I am going to let them have that version of the matter, and anyone else that wants it. I do not want it; therefore, God willing, I will not deal with this insect army as being a literal army of men of more and lesser degrees of passionate destruction. It does not mean that to me, but if it means that to you, I am willing for you to enjoy it, and I will not think less of you.

This is the army of the Lord. This mass of insects were sent by the Lord (2:25). Are you advocating that God sent this army to destroy? O, yes, the God that I would worship, created the waster to destroy (Isa. 54:16). But wait a moment. You said that God was not the author of sin. If he sent this devouring army to destroy the crops, and this is a type of something in our day, and we know that it does not pertain to worms, that would make God the author of sin. May God have mercy on us. We can not make God *anything*. He is this way, and he is not that way, but we can not make him *to be*. God is not the author of sin, but He does rule over sin, and who am I, or who are you, that would say to him that if you do what you will with your own, then you are the author of sin? God raised up Pharoah to tantalize and torment and terrify Israel while they were in Egypt. God created and sent this army of worms to do the same for Israel here.

What would you do if this army of worms came into your cropland? How would you feel if one kind of worm came and ate the tops of your crop. You would walk the field with your hands behind you wondering if it was too bad for it to come out. But before that damaged crop could get started again, here comes a wave of a more devastating worms and eat still more of the crop. What would you do? *What could you do?* That is the question that you will hear more about. What could you do? Yet there is a stump of the crop; perhaps it will spring forth again. You look closely, ah, yes, there is a little greenery yet. This will be a bad crop but we will salvage something yet. But wait a moment. Yonder comes another wave of destroying worms and insects. This is more ravenous than anything yet. All of your work in vain. There goes the last vestige of something to live on. You watch what you have laid up go down under this gluttonous army. What an onslaught it is! How complete is the destruction. There is not anything to eat for him that is hungry. There is not anything to drink for him that is thirsty.

Why this destruction? Why has God sent this insect nation upon the fields of Israel? This is God's way. They were under the law, and they professed its virtues, and their ability to keep it. When the Saviour was here in the flesh, he found his people still talking about that "these things have I kept from my youth." From time to time, they erected idols; from time to time, they worshipped they knew not what. They carried god material for the kind of god that they wanted (Isa. 46). In short, they sought out anything and everything for worship save him that demanded worship of Himself without measure.

As it was then, so is it now; as it is now, so was it then. It was a nation of insects then that the Lord sent against his chosen people. Israel boasted about their pomp and splendor all

the while. Poor flighty people! How frail poor sinners are! They, and we, told Joshua that we would serve the Lord, but Joshua knew better. The time came when God demanded and got a reckoning with Israel. They had plenty of warning. God demanded that they get ready to meet the issue. We hear right much today about preparing to meet God. We Old Baptists have spent a lot of time ridiculing the world because that they talked about preparing to meet God. If we are guilty (and we are) of saying and doing not; if we are guilty (and we are) of cleaning the outside of the cup and the platter and leaving the inside full of extortion and excess; if we are guilty (and we are) of paying tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and leaving the weightier matters of the law, then we will reap our crop as the people of God did back in Joel's day. God is not going to give his glory to another; He is not going to have his people running after other gods. Just as sure as it is done, when God's people begin to seek salvation by the law, the penalty of the law is going to be exacted. Since salvation was by the law (so they thought), and they were not doing the things in the law, God was exacting from them; He was saying to them, "You have not returned unto me, therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel; and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel (Amos 4:11, 12).

God's army came upon them. It came as a thief. When Israel sinned by trusting other gods the evil comes upon them. This evil is pictured to them as an army of worms, but in the spiritual phase of the matter, this army comes as law scavengers. They feed on what they have been teaching. This is our history. Men have arisen among us teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. They were of and among Israel from a nominal standpoint, but they were not of us. They cared not for the flock, but were following their own lusts. We followed them when they first began to slip in a little of this and a little of that, calling it a well balanced diet for Christians. We knew them after the flesh. They were passing themselves off as being with us and of us, but they were the instigators of the thing that was false and they lived on it. They were wicked, yes; too, they were God's army to discipline, to correct, to chasten (Psa. 17:13; Isa. 10:5).

They were told what to do. They were told to return unto the Lord. A wonderful time was for them if they returned unto him. Let it be remembered that they were under a law covenant, and that the blessings of it were obtained by keeping it. They were not eternal blessings but only the good of the land. They were to have restored unto them all that the army of worms had eaten. This would satisfy a people under the law, but if they were objects of grace, it would not satisfy. Thus God promised them something better. Have you noticed how that God lets fall on purpose a handful all along? Look at Genesis 3:21 and you will see a typical promise; look at Deut. 18:18 and you will find a typical promise; in the book from whence our text comes, we have also one of the typical promises of God. The true Israelite found sweetness in the work of God for giving unto the hungry bread and the thirsty drink. However, they were given a better promise than just the restoration of the fat of the land.

And it shall come to pass *afterward* that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh. It is useless to point it out to the believer, but it is beneficial to the household of faith to have the mouth of gainsayers stopped, thus let me say that the "all flesh" applied only to God's children. How do you know? Why do you say so? Because on them the promise was fulfilled, on them it had the effect that Joel said it would. These that were the recipients of this blessing had long been under a system of law. It kept saying, Do this and live. Yearly they had to do over again. They

had seen and *felt* the weakness of the law through the flesh and when the pouring out upon them of the Spirit came, it brought them crying out, Men and brethren what shall we do? Today, and for all time to come, lawyers and doctors (Palmerworms, locusts, cankerworms, caterpillars) will eat up everything that a child of God thought that he had. Anybody that is under the law, has not got anything that will hold up when God turns his army loose on them, but that does not keep them from thinking so (Prov. 23:7). This army is turned loose on the children of God. It is often an army both secular and ecclesiastical, for law worshippers will always come under both heads. It will rob the true of what they thought was food and raiment under the law, and it will be food and raiment for them. They will sweep everything away. As it is the nature of goats to eat anything and everything, so these worms (lawyers and doctors) will leave the land clean. But it must be remembered that the children of God can not bring anything to the day of the Lord. As far as the record goes, the ones that received the outpouring of the Spirit did not bring anything with them. They did not say, How can we utilize what we were able to salvage when the law wreaked vengeance on our land? They did say, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

In conclusion, has the palmerworm and the locust and the cankerworm and the caterpillar eaten up all that you thought to have? If so, highly favored art thou, for in due season the harvest will come, even the harvest that Jesus brings. If you still have something to eat and to wear and to make a light with, and you remain in that condition, thy way is to lie down in sorrow (Isa. 50:11). W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

JOHN X. 12

If it would not be asking too much, I wish your views on John x. 12, particularly as to what it was the wolf caught. Your compliance will oblige one who desires to know the truth.

Your unworthy brother in tribulation,

H. Smith
Cerulean Springs, Ky., Jan. 2, 1882

REPLY

The query presented by our brother has been a question with many others, who have been perplexed by the peculiar expression in the preceding verse, in which the pronoun *them* precedes the noun *sheep,* which the *wolf* is said to scatter. In compliance with repeated requests, the late editor wrote on this subject. (See Editorials, volume i., page 679, and SIGNS xxi. 11, xxviii. 18, and xliv. 7.) As all who are interested in the subject may not have access to those articles, it may be well to state that the views therein presented do not conflict with those herein given in the application of the figurative language of the Lord.

The words of the text are a part of the illustration used by our Lord Jesus in admonishing such as could receive his gracious words to discriminate between the false teachings of such as would destroy their peace, and the instruction given by the Spirit of truth, which takes of the things of Jesus and shows it unto them. And although this discourse seems to have been spoken in the presence of many who could only recognize in it the mad ravings of one who had a devil, others saw the glorious manifestation of the power of God, attested by the works wrought by the word of Jesus, which could only be accomplished by divine power and authority. This diversity of opinion did not result from any difference in natural ability among those who saw the works and heard the words of our Lord, but was dependent alone upon his sovereign will in revealing the truth to whom he would. While his teachings were to the natural mind shrouded in unsearchable mystery, and to them that were without he spake not without a

parable, to the favored subjects of his grace it was given to know the mystery and to understand the deep meaning of those parables.

The subject of which this text is a part commences with the seventh and ends with the eighteenth verse of this chapter, in which, under the similitude of the good Shepherd, the Lord presents the contrast between his own care for his people, who are represented as his own sheep, and the indifference to their welfare of all other teachers, who are portrayed in the hireling, whose own the sheep are not. As the unfaithful hireling has no personal interest in the sheep, he is careless of their protection, and abandons them in the time of their greatest need, when the wolf appears for their injury. Not only does this apply in the case of false teachers, who seek only their own advantage in assuming the pastoral care of churches, but it will also aptly illustrate the failure of every refuge of self-dependence, suggested by the tempter to allure the saints from implicit trust in the present grace of God, which brings salvation in every time of trial, as it did in their first deliverance from sin and death.

By the *wolf,* in this connection, is represented any trial or circumstance which may disturb the peace or interrupt the fellowship of the saints. This wolf often scatters the sheep and catches them, so as to cause them much tribulation and distress by his cruel work in separating them by wars, fightings and jealousies among them, making them suspicious of each other, and puffing them up for one and against another. The spirit of love in the good Shepherd, manifested in laying down his life for his own sheep, always leads them to consider one another, to provoke to love and good works, according to the perfect example given by our Leader. Any spirit, therefore, which leads to discord, strife and evil surmisings among brethren, may well be regarded as represented by the hireling who flees at the approach of the wolf; having no care for nor interest in the sheep, the hireling will afford them no protection. So the carnal mind may suggest plausible reasons for the course of conduct which it proposes; but when trouble comes, it will be found that reason cannot command that peace and harmony which is found in obeying the word of the good Shepherd. Then the deception is exposed, and the distressed and helpless sheep, in the power of the wolf, and overwhelmed in trouble, can say, with the psalmist, "Refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul." Truly, in this extremity all conditional hopes prove as represented in the hireling; all flee away in the time of sorest need. Were it not that the good Shepherd knows his sheep, and cares for them too, their case would indeed be hopeless; but even though they wander from the footsteps of the flock, and lose themselves in the mazes of sin and unbelief, he will find them, and restore their soul, that is, give them their lost comfort and rest in himself.

In a more restricted application, the contrast is presented between those hirelings whose object is to secure their wages, (whether in money, or honors, or conformity to their own doctrines or creeds,) and those who are governed by love and care for the flock of God. The former class are by Paul denominated grievous wolves, not sparing the flock (Acts xx. 29), and this characteristic mark will always be found in them. Self-esteem will ever prompt these grievous wolves to seek to have the pre-eminence, regardless of the law of Christ, which is always for the good of the flock. That law is the holy love of God, and is the very opposite of selfishness. Therefore, just to the extent to which a minister, or shepherd, is governed by the law of Christ, he will seek the good of the flock in contending earnestly for the faith and order established by the authority of the Lord, regardless of the consequences to himself. And if the wolf of discord and

confusion threaten the peace of the sheep under his care, he will ever be found defending them, and bearing all their trials with them, even to the prison and to death, considering the example of the High Priest of our profession in enduring opposition and afflictions. In this devotion to the truth is manifested the real care for the sheep which springs from genuine love; not seeking personal advantage or gain of wealth and honor, but having in view alone the interest of the sheep, with the apostle the shepherd can say, "Neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." Incomparably beyond the brightest allurements of earth and time must be the joy of that shepherd who can at the close of his labors claim, with Paul, "That I am pure from the blood of all men; for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."

In this, as in all the parables spoken by the Lord Jesus, the primary design is to illustrate the great principle of gospel truth under consideration. Manifestly the principle here exemplified is that earnest regard for the good of the saints, which shines in perfect glory in the wonderful devotion of the good Shepherd who layeth down his life for the sheep. Here is the example for us. "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." — 1 John iii. 16. This deduction is drawn by the infallible pen of inspiration, so that there can be no mistake about the correctness of the conclusion. Are we prepared for this test? Carnal self-reliance may claim that we are ready to go with our Lord both into prison and to death; but if not strengthened by the power of God, we shall certainly be found denying him. In his kind providential government he has not called us to endure the fiery trial of bloody persecution; but we have still to endure the measure of tribulation which is given to each of us. Are we manifesting that meek and lowly spirit which shines so gloriously in the Captain of our salvation? If we are fretful and impatient under the light afflictions given us to endure, how could we patiently bear the loss of all things? And if we have not enough of love to our brethren to enable us to sacrifice our self-conceit in bearing with their views or infirmities, how can we claim to be ready to deny self in following our Lord? It is mockery to pray that the will of God be done, while cherishing the desire in our heart to have our own will accomplished.

Often, when we suppose our motive to be devotion to the cause and doctrine of our Lord, the light of his truth may reveal a principle governing us very different from that self-sacrificing spirit which would lay down our life for the brethren. In blinding our eyes to this great principle of the perfect law of liberty, the wolf of discord, strife and hatred often catches and rends the sheep. Whenever the effect of our conversation or conduct is to alienate the lovers of truth and scatter the flock, we may well apprehend that the spirit leading us is more wolfish than lamblike; and if we are inclined to submit to the introduction of things which gender strifes, it is well to consider whether the motive of the hireling does not prompt our conduct, rather than the spirit of the good Shepherd. In bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, our dear Lord has given the perfect pattern which is our example. In following him we shall be in no danger of encountering the wolf or the lion. These unclean beasts can never go up on this glorious highway. The word of the Lord secures safety to those who walk in this way. No hireling shall be able to betray them into the power of the wolf. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in

thee." — Isaiah xxvi. 3.

(Editorial by Elder Wm. L. Beebe February 1, 1882.)

MINUTES OF PRESBYTERY
May 1, 1965

Pursuant to a call by Shepherd Fold Church, Houston, Texas, for a presbytery to meet on above date for the purpose of ordaining Brothers Jerry Evers, Willie McCorkle, and Jimmy Lindsey as deacons, the following elders and deacons met and organized themselves into a presbytery: Elders R. W. Rhodes, W. W. Fleet, E. B. Ault, E. J. Lambert, C. M. Haygood, and Joe Hamrick; Deacons L. S. Hill and Barney Evers.

The Presbytery elected Elder R. W. Rhodes, Moderator, and Elder Joe Hamrick, Clerk. Brother Murphy presented the candidates to the Presbytery. After due examination of the candidates as to their qualifications, a motion was made and seconded that we continue the ordination.

The Presbytery selected Elder R. W. Rhodes to word the prayer, and Elder C. M. Haygood to deliver the charge. The ordination was conducted by the laying on of hands with prayer by Elder Rhodes; and the charge was delivered by Elder Haygood.

Deacons Jerry Evers, Willie McCorkle, and Jimmy Lindsey were then delivered back to the church by the Presbytery; and received by the church. The right hand of fellowship and God speed was given them by the Presbytery, by members of the Shepherd Fold Church, visiting brethren and friends.

Motion was made that the Moderator and Clerk prepare minutes of the Presbytery; which were read and approved, and the Presbytery dissolved in order, with prayer.

R. W. Rhodes, Moderator
Joe L. Hamrick, Clerk

OBITUARIES

IN MEMORY OF BROTHER LESTER DOSS

In sadness I attempt to write a few words in memory of our beloved Brother Lester Doss. He was born on March 31, 1894, and died March 25, 1965, making his stay on earth almost 71 years.

Brother Doss joined Springfield Church on September 13, 1924. He was faithful to the church and filled his place most every meeting as long as he lived. He was always ready with a helping hand for the upkeep of the church. He was a firm believer in the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace and Grace alone.

Springfield Church bows in humble submission to the Just and Holy will of our Lord, knowing he doeth all things well. Yet, our hearts are saddened and we shall miss him, though we feel our loss is his eternal gain.

He leaves to mourn their loss, his wife, Sister Maude Doss; one daughter, Mrs. Brice Cocke, Lynchburg, Va.; one foster son, Frank Doss, Gretna, Va.; one sister Mrs. Albert Bolling, Gretna, Va.; one brother, Goldie Doss; and two grandsons.

His funeral was held at Springfield Church by his pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and his body laid away beneath a mound of flowers in Fort Hill Memorial Park, Lynchburg, Va. to await the second coming of our Lord.

Done by order of Springfield Church.

L. R. Willis

LILLIE PEARMAN LUMPKIN

Sister Lillie Pearman Lumpkin was born in Rockingham County, N. C. October 22, 1896 and passed away in the John Umstead Hospital February 16, 1965, after an illness of two years. She spent her entire life in the Mayfield Community. She is survived by her husband, Charles A. Lumpkin; one daughter, Mrs. R. C. Holley, Jr., Danville, Va.; two sons, C. Herman, Route 2, Ruffin, N. C. and John D. Lumpkin, Draper, N. C.; and by seven grandchildren, and three great grandchildren.

Sister Lumpkin united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church August 24, 1958, and remained a faithful member until death.

In the absence of Elder D. V. Spangler, her pastor, her funeral was conducted by Elder Haywood Wray at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church and she was laid to rest in the church cemetery, there to await the second coming of our Lord. May the Lord comfort her family and loved ones and may we be blessed to say, "Thy will be done O Lord."

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the family, one put on our church record; and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church.

Lucy H. Davis

JOHN WILLIS TAYLOR

John Willis Taylor, son of William B. and Martha Page Taylor, was born near Pleasant Hill, Missouri, April 27, 1869, and passed away March 8, 1965, being nearly ninety-six years of age.

In his early life he learned and followed the carpentry trade and was considered to have a very special skill in all kinds of wood work, and found delight in adding things of comfort to their home, and also of his many friends.

On June 26, 1918 he and Miss Margaret Moore Startzman were united in marriage and lived at Blue Springs, Mo. on their farm until 1938, when he retired and moved to Pleasant Hill. Two children were born to this union: Elizabeth, who is living in Portland, Oregon; and William Bowen Taylor, who died at the age of one and one-half years. In December, 1959, they sold their home in Missouri and moved to Portland, Oregon, where their daughter could be near them. It was in this city where our beloved husband, father, brother and friend passed on after living a life that was very unusual. He was laid to rest in the burial plot at Pleasant Hill March 16, 1965.

I used the word unusual in this writing as I feel he was a great man, and a big man; though he was small of statue, he was a big man with a big heart and a great desire to help the needy. He and his wife spent several days in my home, which I shall never forget. He was an inspiration to me, and I admired him for what he was. We shall miss him, but we know that the day of one's death is better than the day of one's birth.

May it be the will of our God to reconcile the ones that are left to not mourn as one of no hope. Written by one who is thankful to the great God who works all things well, for the privilege of having known Brother J. W. Taylor.

(Elder) Ernest Attebery

ELDER JAMES HARVEY SMITH

We must bow in submission to the will of God, as it pleased him to remove from our midst our beloved and esteemed minister, husband, and father, Elder J. Harvey Smith.

He was born October 14, 1898, and departed this life January 24, 1965. He is survived by his wife, Alice Rudd Smith, and five children: Mrs. Virginia Scott and Mrs. Nellie Deiner, Elmer, Donald and Wallis Smith; also by one sister Mrs. Nannie Cobb, and three brothers: Edward, Coy and Roy L. Smith.

Being left at a very young age without a mother and father, he was poorly taught so far as the education of men is concerned, yet by the mercy and wisdom of God, he was taught by divine revelation the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and made willing to stand before the poor and afflicted children of God and declare the unsearchable riches of God.

He united with Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church November 11, 1945, and was baptized by his pastor, Elder W. C. King. He was ordained to the full work of the ministry January 30, 1950, and was later called to serve as pastor of Pleasant Grove, Big Meadow, Lick Fork and Gooch Memorial Churches; and at the time of his death was serving them. During his ministry he was blessed to baptize many candidates, and also assisted Elder King in the ordinance of baptism of his two sons, Wallis Smith and Donald Smith, and one daughter, Mrs. Nellie Deiner; and later participated in the ordination of his son Wallis Smith into the ministry.

He did not look down on the poor, nor up to the rich, but was blessed to live and walk softly and humbly before his brethren, and to live and die in the faith and order of the Primitive Baptist Church. He was one that didn't complain of the afflictions of life in this world, living in that blessed hope of that city, New Jerusalem, which has foundations, whose maker and builder is God. I have heard him sing many times the song, "Jerusalem My Happy Home." At the close of many meetings when he and I were together, his words of prayer would be, "O Lord, give us a peaceful moment in which to die," and I believe that we have this for a witness, because he was taken in his sleep: He had that peaceful moment.

The night he passed away I couldn't sleep; I was troubled and walked the floor. I went to a window, looked out, and saw a peace and quietness in such a way that I could just feel it. After this I felt somewhat relieved, and I laid down and went to sleep. When I was awakened to go to his bedside, I looked into his face and could not shed a tear at that time, because I saw in his face what great rest and peace awaits a soldier of the cross; it was the same peace and quietness I saw when I looked out of my window in the darkness of the night.

His funeral was conducted at his home church, Bush Arbor, by his pastor, Elder W. C. King, assisted by Elders P. E. Ingram, Frank Eggleston, Jimmy Hollandsworth, Kenneth Key and E. F. Oakley. There was evidence at the funeral that he was loved and respected by many; for which I hope we are grateful. His body was laid to rest in the Bush Arbor Church Cemetery under a mound of beautiful flowers. It had been rainy and cloudy, and I desired that I might see the sun shine when he was being buried, and as we left the cemetery the sunshine reflected on the beautiful colors of the flowers. We hope and believe that he is resting from all his toils and labors and is awaiting the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. May those that mourn his passing, and feel the loss of their loved one, be given to feel that it is his gain.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent the family; one to the *Signs of the*

Times for publication; and one kept for church records.

Written by request of the Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church.

Wallis A. Smith

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

God in His infinite wisdom saw fit to remove from us by death our highly respected and beloved Sister Minnie R. Wray on February 17, 1965 at the age of 77 years to her eternal and long awaited home, where sickness, sorrow or death will never come. She united with the church at Bush Arbor at her May meeting in 1938. She was a most faithful and devoted member, always attending as long as her health would permit. The last five months of her life were spent in hospitals and nursing homes, but she always desired the prayers of God's people and asked about the welfare of the church.

Sister Wray was the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Thomas H. Rudd of Caswell County, N. C. Her first marriage was to Mr. John A. McKinney who departed this life in 1937. From this union she is survived by three daughters, Mrs. James Smith and Mrs. Nathaniel Rudd of Yanceyville, N. C. and Mrs. Ernest Minor of Burlington, N. C.; five sons, Virgil A., Raleigh T., Malloy D., Luther O. and Hassel L. McKinney, all of Burlington, N. C.; one brother, George Rudd of Burlington, N. C.; two sisters, Mrs. D. F. Rudd of Burlington, N. C. and Mrs. Woody Moore of Yanceyville, N. C.; one half-brother, Clarence Rudd of Altamahaw, N. C.; 20 grandchildren, 14 stepchildren, and 10 great grandchildren.

Sister Wray was married three times. Her second husband, Mr. James Terrell, lived only a few years. She married Brother Judson O. Wray on August 24, 1957, who survives to mourn her departure. We know of no one who had better doctors' care and love and devotion of her dear husband and faithful children than Sister Wray had.

Her funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Church by her pastor, Elder W. C. King, Elder Wallace Smith and Elder E. F. Oakley. Burial was in the church cemetery. The floral offering and attendance has seldom been surpassed in this section, showing the high esteem and love for Sister Wray and her family.

May God's blessing be upon her dear husband and children and all who mourn her departure. The Lord has given and has taken away. Blessed be His name forever.

Done by order of Bush Arbor Church at her May meeting 1965.

W. C. King, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

AQUILA (BUNK) EVANS

Once more we bow in humble submission to the will of our eternal God in the taking from our midst our beloved brother Aquila (Bunk) Evans.

Brother Evans was born on August 21, 1901, and passed away January 4, 1965. His parents were the late J. Hamilton and Georgia Ann Evans. He was married March 15, 1924, to Alice Graham Evans; and to this union was born one daughter Norma Lee Evans Freeman. He is survived by his wife, daughter and two grandchildren. Also surviving is one brother, Dewey Evans, of Mardela Springs, Md., and three sisters, Minnie E. Gambrill, Emma E. Beach, both of Mardela Springs, and Ruby E. Parsons, of Salisbury, Md.

Brother Evans asked for a home in the Rewastico Church of the Salisbury Association and was baptized on October 17, 1964 by the writer.

He had undergone an operation and was a sick man when he was baptized but seemed to have a much more peaceful mind, having followed his Lord in baptism. He gradually grew worse and the Lord was pleased to take him out of his suffering.

The writer visited him many times and always found him rejoicing in his hope of eternal life beyond the grave, giving God all the praise.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Holloway Funeral Home in Salisbury, Md., and he was laid to rest in the Mardela Springs Cemetery. It is the prayer of the writer that his family and the many friends who knew him may be blessed to feel that their loss was his eternal gain.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

OREN PARSONS

Oren Parsons was born July 7, 1912, in Van Zant County, Texas, to Oscar and Ollie Parsons. He and the family moved to Hereford, Texas, from Claude, Texas, in 1936, and he resided here until he departed this life March 20, 1965, at the age of fifty-two years.

Oren joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Amarillo, Texas, the first Sunday in April, 1948. He was baptized by Elder Clarence Turner.

Brother Parsons was considered a pillar of the church and was faithful and loyal and dedicated to his belief, never tiring of visiting sister churches in the vicinity, and was a staunch defender of his faith.

He served as church clerk of the Sardis Church in Amarillo from the first Sunday in

September, 1950. The church, seeing his qualifications, ordained him Deacon in April, 1964. He fulfilled the duties of both offices faithfully.

He is survived by his mother, Mrs. E. O. Parsons, Hereford, Texas, two brothers, Grady and T. J. Parsons, both of Hereford; two sisters, Mrs. Maud Tally, Halfway, Texas, and Mrs. Pauline Johnson, Lubbock, Texas. He was preceded in death by his father, a brother, E. J. Parsons, and by a sister Mrs. Faye Reed.

Brother Parsons was stricken with polio when he was four years old, and in his later years spent much of his time reading the Bible. He lived with his mother, and worked as an electrician and refrigeration expert.

There is just nothing that can be said about a scholar of the Holy Testimonies that would not sound like praising the flesh, but none who knew Brother Parsons could say they could not feel the presence of a God-given gift of understanding which this man had. Christ and Him crucified was the theme of his conversation, and the brethren were his meat and drink.

He was permitted to attend several churches, and neither ill health nor distance ever seemed to hinder his traveling many miles to attend the meetings. He was a firm believer that God was the Supreme Ruler over all things, and delved into the Scriptures, through research and connecting verses and books of the New and Old Testaments, so deeply that many could not follow nor understand him. He was never quick to criticize, but was ready at all times, armed with scripture of "Thus saith the Lord" to defend the belief of the Primitive Baptist doctrine.

Brother Parsons ran a sure and steady race, never faltering nor with a shadow of turning from truth, and as the Apostle Paul said, "He fought a good fight." He was not only a great comfort and a loving son to his wonderful mother in the flesh, but she received a great light and understanding from his vast knowledge of the scriptures.

To know Brother Parsons was the feeling of having been graced by God a little more richly because his love for the brethren attracted the return of love. Be not discouraged if you do not possess the gift which Brother Parsons had, because he was sent by his Heavenly Father to help and strengthen, to teach and to learn, to love and be loved by all who loved the truth.

His funeral was conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder C. M. Haygood and Elder Durwood Bradley. If this poor worm of the dust had as much hope of entering that immortal heaven as he has of Brother Parsons having been reecived into that upper kingdom, his doubts and fears would be decreased one hundred fold. Brother Parsons has no use for his brace which he wore on his leg anymore because he is in that realm where pain and tears are no more.

Our prayer is that God in his infinite wisdom and love will be the strength of the loved ones left behind, especially his mother who will miss him more than anyone, but who believes in a God that is all wise and almighty and that all things that happen must needs be. A lily of the field has been plucked up by the planter, but a gardener, when the time comes, raises up other flowers to grow and to flourish in the sunshine of His great love, but the lily leaves a fragrance behind for many days to come.

The funeral was held at the Rose Chapel in Hereford, Texas, and Brother Parsons was laid to rest in West Park Cemetery.

Elder W. A. Winfrey

WILLIAM THOMAS RUDD

Brother Rudd was born on April 14, 1888, and departed this life in Yanceyville, N. C. on September 30, 1964, making his stay on earth 76 years, 5 month, and 16 days. He was the son of the late A. D. and Ella Wright Rudd.

Brother Rudd was married on December 25, 1915, to Miss Mary Boswell who is left to mourn his departure, together with three sons, Hurley Rudd, of the home; Eugene Rudd, of Yanceyville; and Hassell Rudd, of Dallas, Texas; one brother, L. D. Rudd, of Burlington, N. C. (who has since his death also departed); four sisters, Mrs. Alice May, Mrs. Myrtle Gross, Mrs. Lola Trollinger, and Mrs. Beulah Whitesell all of Burlington; and six grandchildren.

Brother Rudd united with the Church at Bush Arbor in July 1931, and was a loyal and faithful member. He was a good farmer and businessman. His sufferings were great, having spent many of his latter days in hospitals, but he bore his sufferings patiently. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord." We shall continue to miss him here but feel that his spirit is now resting in the presence of his God, whom he loved and served.

His funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Church by his pastor, Elder W. C. King, Mr. George Bishop and Mr. George Johnston. His body was laid in the church cemetery to await the coming of Christ.

Done by order of Bush Arbor Church April 10, 1965.

W. C. King, Moderator
Earl Rudd, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133 DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1965 NO. 9

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/65
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ELDER THOMPSON TO SISTER BARTLETT

Copper Hill, Va. 24079

Miss Ada Bartlett,
Newcastle, Maine
Dear Sister Ada,

By your request I will make an effort to pen some thoughts on the book of Ruth. In chapter 1:1, we note that there was a famine in the land of Bethlehem — Judah.

First we must consider that God was at the helm, bringing to pass a desired end, just as it was in God's purpose in Israel going down into Egypt that he might display his love and mercy to the Israelites, and his power the the Egyptians.

Next we would like to quote Jeremiah 48:11, "Moab has been at ease from his youth, and he has settled on his own lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity; therefore his taste remaineth in him, and his scent is not changed."

Now let us examine the scriptures and we will find that the people that God loved have been perplexed with infirmities such as recorded in Hebrews 11:36, 37, "And others had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted and were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted and tormented."

So according to Paul's experience and those of God's children that had gone on before, they have been emptied from vessel to vessel, and could not rest in their own strength, but are brought as David of old, Psalms 116:3, 4, "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me; I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul." We hope to get back to David later.

We must conclude that it was in the providence of God that Elimelech went to sojourn in the land of Moab. Let us consider that God has a people in every kindred and tongue and people and nation. So it seems that God had at least one of his children in the land of Moab.

O, but what a mysterious way to us it was in bringing Ruth out of the land of her nativity into the land Judah. As we remember that Naomi had two sons and they took them wives of the women of Moab, to wit Orpah and Ruth. So in a space of time they both lost their husbands. It seemed to Naomi that she had lost all she had, but at this point Naomi had heard that God had visited his people in giving them bread in the land of Judah, and she said unto her daughters-in-law return to your mothers. Then she kissed them and they lifted up their voices and wept. It seems that both wanted to go with Naomi to her people. And again they lifted up their voices and wept, and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth

clave unto her, and said to her, "Intreat me not to leave thee or return from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge: thy people shall be my people and thy God my God." But yet she did not know how dear Naomi's people would be to her. So they both journeyed to Bethlehem; and they said, "Is not this Naomi? And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty: why then call me Naomi, seeing the Lord has testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?" These people knew that Naomi had a husband and two sons. Now she was back with only a daughter-in-law.

But we can see in the providence of our God through Naomi being brought home empty and afflicted, the purpose of the Almighty was being manifested that Ruth, the Moabitess, was in Bethlehem, and she was so much loved by Boaz and was received so graciously by the rich and the laborers. Boaz said to her not to go into another field neither go from hence but abide here fast by my maidens. After he spoke so kindly to her she fell on her face and bowed herself to the ground and said unto him, "Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?" But Boaz had heard of her faithfulness toward her mother-in-law and had left her mother and the land of her nativity, and "come unto a people which thou knowest not heretofore. The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel under whose wings thou art come to trust."

Ruth said, "Thou hast comforted me and hast spoken friendly to thine handmaid." She was bidden at mealtime to partake of the bread and the food very kindly. Also, Boaz spoke to the young men to allow her to glean in the field, "and let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her."

So in the record we can see many types that I will not now take space to mention.

So she took what she had gleaned to her mother-in-law. She asked Ruth where she had gleaned, and she answered the man's name with whom I wrought today is Boaz.

You will please note in Ruth 2:20, Naomi said, "Blessed be he of the Lord and also the man is near kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen." So we can see in the 1st and 2nd chapters that there was a love existed between Boaz and Ruth. And Boaz took Ruth to be his wife and she bore him a son and they called his name Obed, and he was the father of Jesse, the father of David. So we see that Ruth was the great grandmother of David.

David became King and a very noted man, but the most outstanding experience in his life was that the spirit of the Lord came upon him. (I Samuel 16:13) God did so wonderfully bless David, but David had some sore trials along the way. We can know according to his testimony in 1st Samuel 27:1, "And David said in his heart I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul."

We may consider the life of David and will find that he went through much tribulation. I feel sure he could say with Job 13:15, "Though he slay me yet will I trust him." Also with Jonah 2:4, "Then I say, I am cast out of thy sight, yet will I look again toward thy holy temple." Also Isaiah 22:22, "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, he will save us."

We find in Zechariah 12:10; and 13:1, that he speaks of a day that there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness. Now let us go to Matthew 1:1, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." We may go also to Matthew 1:18 and

read the remainder of the chapter; and also the 2nd chapter. We will find just why he left the shining courts of heaven and came into this sin cursed earth to make an offering. This offering was not to man, but to God for man, for those that God had given grace in his Son before the world began.

The prophet Isaiah spoke in 53:5, of things to come as though they were. He said, "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed."

Paul speaking of the patriarchs of old in the 11th chapter of Hebrews 13, 14, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country." 2nd Peter 3:13, says "Nevertheless we according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

And we poor worms of the dust that have this hope, through grace can say with one of his servants, "What is man that thou art mindful of him?" We are as the poet in his expressions:

"Nothing in my hand I bring
Simply to the cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me Saviour, or I die!"

According to the history given, Abraham's day was around 1900 years before the birth of the child Jesus. Yet Jesus said in John 8:56, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and saw it and was glad." All of God's children before Christ came, were looking forward to that day that was mentioned so many times by the prophets. In Zechariah 14:8, it is said, "In that day living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea; and half of them toward the hinder sea; in summer and in winter shall it be."

So we can see plainly of those before him, that Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham, was their Saviour the same as ours, according to our hope.

Sister Ada, hope your mother's leg is entirely healed by now, and that you are both well and are given to rejoice in the love of our God, our Saviour, from time to time. I have desired to write your mother while she had to sit around taking care of her leg. My time is so full I find little time to write; I am sorry.

I hope you may find, at least, one sentence in this letter that may be of some comfort to you. I realize I am a very poor writer.

Will you share these few thoughts with your mother? Hope she, too, may find a little comfort somewhere in this letter.

The wife sends her best.

Yours in fellowship,
B. O. Thompson

Pollock, La.

Dear Brethren in Christ:

It is time to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times,* and I am sending $3.00 for another year.

I enjoy reading the experiences of the saints, the editorials and the good sermons of our preaching brethren which you have published. The Lord has blessed us with some very able ministers, for which I am very thankful; and I am grateful that the Holy Spirit led me to the Old Baptist people. I united with them at White Water Church and later came to old Good Hope Church where my dear mother and father are laid to rest.

I do not get to attend church as often as my heart wishes, for I am so far away from those of our faith; but my heart and mind are there always.

May the Lord bless and keep you with all spiritual blessings, is my prayer I hope for Christ's sake. From one in hope of eternal life.

Mrs. Viley Cogdill

1511 Oak Street,
Kenova, W. Va.

Dear Editors:

I am a new subscriber to the *Signs*, but in years gone by have borrowed many copies to read. I became so engrossed in the June issue that I hardly laid it down till finished.

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." I feel that the brethren can dwell together even if they are miles apart. We read in Isaiah 41:17: "When the poor and needy seek water and there is none, and their tongues faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them." No where on earth can man make and fulfill such a promise; nor can man provide water when there is none. Man is only man regardless of his title or station in life. We cannot look to man for spiritual help because only God can give the utterance that enables us to "open the mouth boldly", and unless we can open the mouth boldly in defense of God's salvation by grace, we do not speak the utterance of the Spirit, and it would be better if we kept quiet.

His promise endureth forever, and He will hear; He will supply; He will not forsake us, and the "river of God" will water us. "He shall feed his flock like a Shepherd." I fear that sometimes we ask or yearn for things out of season; and usually when we eat food out of season, it is dried or canned. Therefore we should wait upon the Lord; we should be still and know that He is God, who bringeth to pass all things in due season whatsoever he has purposed, according to his divine will.

May the *Signs of the Times* continue to send out the utterance of the Spirit, for by that we have our spiritual food.

Humbly submitted by,
J. M. Bailey, Sr.

AS I WATCH THE SNOW FLAKES FALL

I arose this morning to see the fields covered with snow, even the rough places looked so white and smooth. I think of the scripture, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they be as white as snow." It was so pretty, I stood wondering if I would ever see the great white throne that John saw.

As I watch the snow flakes fall, I think of precious Brother Elder Harvey Smith, from whom the Lord called his spirit home only a few days since. I can see him in my mind as he spoke from a text he loved so well (Isaiah 55:10), "For as the rain cometh down and the snow from Heaven." And if not deceived, I felt the Gospel raining down and the snow covered the earth; for everything was beautiful.

These thoughts may be mine alone; but seeing the grieved hearts at our union meeting this snowy fifth Sunday in January has caused me to realize the mutual love and fellowship we shared for our beloved Brother. I wish that I could tell you the thoughts and precious memories I have as I think of his humble walk, and watch the snow flakes so softly fall.

I feel I shall never forget our last afternoon together. It was a Heavenly place to me, not knowing our earthly ties would soon be broken. We parted in love and fellowship and a better understanding than we had before. When we can feel the love that flows from heart to heart and breast to breast, we are drawn together as one people. The snow flakes fall together, and I cannot tell one from the other.

My heart was grieved when I heard the Lord had called his spirit home

from his sleeping body, where there was no evidence that a muscle had moved in pain. I thought of his prayer I so often heard him say, "O Lord, give us a peaceful moment in which to die." Truly the sincere desire of his heart was answered.

As I watch the snow flakes cover the earth, my heart is filled with sympathy for his daughter in the flesh and sister in bonds of love, who awoke that sad morning upon the bed of affliction, singing praise to God and knowing in her heart that her beloved father had passed on to that peaceful sleep in Jesus, where it will be as but one night before the elect come into their inheritance of Heaven and immortal glory.

As I think of his lovely family who walk today with a heavy heart in humble submission to His righteous will, my prayer is that they be comforted beyond all the gracious deeds human hands have been blessed to do.

May all the honor and glory go to our Lord and Saviour; for I know if Elder Harvey Smith lived today, he would rebuke me if I attempted to give him any praise.

He preached the doctrine of election by divine grace with power that cometh down from heaven, as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven. This truth will stand when this poor mortal shall cease to watch the snow flakes fall.

Clifton C. Robertson
Route 1
Reidsville, North Carolina

AN EVERLASTING COVENANT

"Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." (2 Samuel 23:5)

This beautiful Scripture came before me in my sleep one night recently, and the word covenant stood out more convincingly than all the others, and it has lingered with me with much sweetness. My first thought was, What is a covenant? Well, it is an agreement or a bargain between two or more persons. This covenant here under consideration is the greatest that was ever made, it being one between the Father and the Son, who gave His life a ransom for many, a free and unmerited gift. He shed His precious blood for the remission of sins, not the sins of all that dwell upon the earth, but the sins of all chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, those given to Him in this everlasting covenant of grace ordered in all things and sure. All His purposes are embraced in this covenant according to the good pleasure of His will, not by the subservient will of man or reformation, but by an effective work of God, an effectual calling.

While we are still under the law we cannot please God, for He decreed that men by wisdom should not know Him. We are by nature the children of wrath, completely indisposed, in opposition to good works, and unless our good works are done in obedience to God's will they are as filthy rags. All good things were preserved in this covenant of grace for all believers unto salvaton, and our only evidence that we have a part in this is we work out what God works in, for our nature is enmity against God. Only those ordained to eternal life can believe, and the ordination is of God, not because He foresaw the end from the beginning, but for the manifestation of His glory.

Abraham's faith was imputed to him for righteousness. "For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God." There is only one God, one faith, and one baptism, so if we glory let us glory in the Lord, the Lord of lords and King of kings. I believe when David said, "This is all my salvation, and all

my desire" that he believed without a shadow of a doubt that Jesus was his only hope of salvation, and it was made complete in the covenant, and his desire was to walk in newness of life and sing a new song. (Ps. 18:2) "The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower."

David realized when he said, "although he make it not to grow" that his salvation was made complete, finished, nothing to take from nor add to, perfected in God's Son, Jesus. God's sovereignty is not deniable according to the teaching of the Bible, and our finite minds cannot in any way look upon God and godliness, so with Paul we say (I Cor. 1:31) "That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

Beadie Meads
609 W. Colonial Ave.
Elizabeth City, N. C.

LETTER FROM ELDER STOKES

1029 Daniel Street
Jacksonville, N. C.

Dear Brother and Sister Ruston,

It was such a pleasure to hear from you once again and I am so sorry to be so late in answering your letter. I thank our Heavenly Master for his goodness and mercy to both of you and the other saints in Canada.

Brother George, there is seldom a day that passes that my mind isn't carried back to you people, and I am made to give thanks to God for the opportunity to know you dear people who have been made to love the doctrine of Salvation by Grace; people who have a Godly conversation, and who love to talk about the great things our Heavenly Father has done for us. In such a frame of mind, I am carried to I John 3:1, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." Surely we must say with the apostle Paul that it came by revelation.

Brother George, the Lord has been so good to us. By His mercy I have traveled about 17,000 miles since my visit in Canada, going back and forth to the churches that I endeavor to serve, plus my appointments. We have had three to come home confessing how great things the Lord had done for them. Also, there seems to be more under the conviction of sin. We hope He may open an effectual door for them that they too might be given the liberty to come home.

I enjoyed your article in the *Signs* for March. The verse of scripture above the one you wrote on has arrested my mind. Micah 5:4, "And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God; . . ." Should the question be asked as to whom this prophet was talking about, the words preceding will furnish the answer: for they announce the birth of our Lord and Saviour in Bethlehem, and called him the ruler of Israel, "whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." The eternal God of mercy and peace. The eternal King of kings and Lord of lords. The one that was to be born of a virgin as Isaiah had already prophesied. Micah refers to him as the shepherd of his people and tells of the work he was performing for them. First He shall stand. Concerning this we find Isaiah saying (46:10) "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Jeremiah speaks (49:19) "Who is that shepherd that will stand before me?" None other than Christ, who shall plead the case of sinners before God as the wonderful counselor, prince of peace. Again (Rev. 3:20) this shepherd says, "Behold I stand at the door and knock." What door? The door of the law, wherein he was made under the

law, sent to redeem his people from the curse of it, and also to feed them. Next, not only shall He stand, but feed. This is the great pastor who is the bishop of our souls. As He stands and feeds, He causes us to rest in His work. He leads us; restores his people as they go astray. He heals them when they are sick; defends and secures them in their distresses. He does this diligently and attentively because He has lost none.

We hear and read of shepherds who lie down and love to slumber. Even the most dutiful and sedulous shepherd sometimes unbends because he must have moments and hours of relaxation during which his vigilance for the sheep is suspended. Not so with Christ, His eyes are ever upon the sheep.

David spoke of him in Psalm 121. "Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand . . . The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul." And he said in Psalm 49:8, "For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever." He is able and powerful, for he shall feed in the strength of the Lord. He has conquered all the foes of the church as John speaks in Revelation 1:18, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

As he was on earth he had power to forgive sin and to heal all manner of diseases, and to call by name whom he would *and they came* unto him. Even he called Zacchaeus saying, "make haste"; and to Matthew at the receipt of custom saying, "follow me", and they obeyed him. Is his power any less now? The world would say yes, but those who have heard his voice would say no.

God gave him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him. It is a happy and wonderful feeling to be able to feel the nearness of this shepherd: to know that He has power and is able to save to the uttermost those the Father gave him.

How often we are surrounded by enemies. Some visible; some invisible. If our eyes were open at all times we would be convinced that we are not for an instant safe, but we are kept by the power of this great shepherd who feeds his sheep with food that is convenient for them.

John spoke of this shepherd (John 10:11), "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." And in 10:27-30, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." We cannot always comprehend this. Our faith is small and we draw the conclusion we shall one day perish; at other times we are able, by his spirit, to realize it and feel secure. Then we can say with David as he spoke in the 23rd Psalm, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." David knew, as well as we know, that death and hell, and sorrows and trials can do no harm because of this great shepherd who cares for his people. Paul was taught this when he said, ". . . I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." (2 Timothy 1:12) He shall feed in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. It does not refer to temporal and worldly majesty, this he did not praise.

He was born in a stable and laid in a manger. Isaiah says he was a man of sorrow, he was crucified as a slave with a malefactor. He has no form

nor comeliness, nor any beauty that we should desire him. Yet, John says, "and the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." (John 1:14). There were eye witnesses to these things and to his majesty.

Paul speaks of the excellency of the power which is of God, and had not Jesus this very power? Yes! How mildly, how kindly he exerted himself. He came down like the rain upon mown grass, broke not the bruised reed, and quenched not the smoking flax. He heard the cry of a beggar by the wayside and commanded he be brought to him. He raised the widow's son and presented him to his mother. Grace poured forth from His lips to His sheep in that day; also in our day. The woman heard him say, "thy sins are forgiven thee."

This is the shepherd that says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 1:28) This is He to whom the spirit was given without measure. This is the great Shepherd, and His will was to perform the Father's will; this He did. He STILL feeds his sheep and carries them in his bosom, always close to his heart. How wonderful, how great is this Shepherd!

I feel I have taken up enough of your time. The subject is unlimited. Give my love to all, and may God bless you both and all the saints, and may this Shepherd continue to stand and feed His sheep.

In fellowship,
D. B. Stokes

THE SPIRIT AND SOUL AND BODY

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Thess. 5:23)

For some time, I have been giving consideration to writing my views on the above Scripture, and, the Lord willing, I will now offer my comments thereon, particularly with respect to what is meant by the word "spirit". It has been given different meanings; by it some understand one thing and some another. I know that the soul, that immaterial essence or entity common to all men, is called the spirit, but to me the spirit in this passage of Scripture is mentioned as distinct, but not separate, from the soul. Three entities are apparently indicated, and not just two. In Heb. 4:12, we read: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit . . ." In this passage, it certainly would appear that the soul and spirit are distinguishable, in that they are divisible by the essential Word of God or the Son of the Highest.

Now it is believed that the spirit mentioned in the text is the internal principle of grace, a holy principle, spiritual life, implanted in the soul by the Holy Spirit, thus quickening the soul into spiritual life. This is regeneration in the strictest sense of the word, signifying the new birth. Further, the spirit is a spiritual nature, a spiritual seed, the new creature, the new man born of the Spirit, and that cannot sin. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." (I John 3:9) But the old man, the flesh or corrupt nature, will continue to sin until this carnal nature is dissolved in death. The regenerate man does not live under the dominion of sin as in his unregeneracy, and he will never sin so as to be utterly lost, so as to perish eternally. "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish . . ." (John 10:28) This life will be preserved in the saints unto the coming of Christ in His glory with all the holy angels, and with the souls of the re-

deemed in glory, according to the Scriptures of truth. It is infused in time and the elect will enjoy the fullness of it in eternity.

Pertinent to the explanation of the subject, this Scripture is quoted: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (John 3:6) Flesh here refers to the carnal, corrupt, vile nature of man. In the born-again man, it is contrary to his spiritual nature: hence the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit. (Gal. 5:17) The spirit mentioned secondly denotes the principle of grace or new man that is seated in the soul.

"The spirit is the new man
That's formed in the soul;
He delights to serve the Lord,
And heaven is his goal."

Simply stated, the regenerate man consists of spirit, soul, and body while the unregenerate man lacks the spirit. However, both possess a carnal nature as indicated above. In his Epistle to the Romans, chapter 7, verse 14, Paul said: "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin." He also stated (verse 25): "So then with the mind (spirit) I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh (carnal self) the law of sin." So the carnal nature of man is not changed "by the washing of regeneration;" he is simply given a new nature, a new spirit and a new heart pursuant to election, by the Lord "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." (Eph. 1:6) This acceptance sounds much better to me than the trite Arminian invitation to "accept Christ as your personal Saviour," as if He is offered to be accepted or rejected at will any time, any place, by the alien sinner; as if universal redemption were true, which it is not, and everyone has the innate power or ability to accept Christ, which is not the case. The Bible does not say anything about "accepting" Christ. However, it does speak of His being received. (John 1:12 and Col. 2:6) He is received when He is revealed in and to those chosen in Him and given Him by the Father to be redeemed by His blood. And He is believed. (2 Tim. 1:12)

We are taught in Holy Writ that we shall be like Christ, but this, of course, does not mean that we shall be equal with Him, or possess Deity, the essential nature of the Triune Jehovah which cannot be communicated to men nor angels, which are all creatures. Christ must have the pre-eminence in all things. "For in him dwell all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. 2:9) He is Spirit, soul, and body, for He possessed a soul and was clothed with a body prepared for Him like our own, sin excepted. "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. 2:8) And I believe that there is something in a regenerate person that corresponds in a measure to Christ as God, as Spirit, for in 2 Peter 1:4 we find these words pertaining to those given like precious faith: ". . . partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." Christ was a Spirit before He became incarnate, before He assumed a human nature, for He was ever with the Father, who is a Spirit. O how sweetly He is spoken of in the 8th chapter of Proverbs: "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old . . . Then I was by Him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him . . ." These endearing words of a precious Saviour bring tears to my eyes and joy to my heart. He is the delight and the hope of those given to Him to redeem in the covenant of grace before time. He is formed in them the hope of glory, according to Scripture.

In Romans 8:10, we read: "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." The body here

apparently refers to the physical or material body, this mortal body which has the sentence of death in it, and at the appointed time will die by reason of sin. It is the vile body that will be changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ at the last day, and not the "body of this death," the body of sin or corrupt nature mentioned in the 6th and 7th chapters of Romans, which body will be destroyed as to its being in death. By the Spirit here it is believed that the soul is meant. It is life because of the imputed righteousness of Christ who is our life and our righteousness and liveth in us (Jer. 23:6 and Gal. 2:20), if we be His. And it is life because quickened into divine life by the Holy Spirit when the principle of grace is implanted therein as stated before. "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (Col. 3:3, 4) What sweet, savory words to those who love His appearing!

In treating of the text, this Scripture is adduced: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh (carnal nature), but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." (Rom. 8:1, 2) By the Spirit mentioned firstly is meant either the Holy Spirit by which the sons of God are led, or the principle of life formed in the heart in regeneration, which principle derives from the Spirit of life in Christ who is the source of all life. The term law has different meanings in the Scriptures. It is a broad term importing more than the precepts of the moral law given by Moses which is commonly understood by the law other than the law of the land. In the law dispensation, there was also the ceremonial law promulgated by Moses consisting of types and shadows, the rites or liturgy of the Jewish system of worship, and the middle wall of partition dividing the Jews and the Gentiles, which law was abrogated when the gospel dispensation was ushered in.

In Romans 3:27, reference is made to the law of faith. And in Psalm 19:7, we read: "The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple." This could not refer to the moral law or ten commandments, called the ministration of condemnation, for it condemns and binds, shutting up in prison as it were and showing no mercy; it rather refers to the perfect law of liberty (Jas. 1:25) or the Gospel in which Christ proclaims liberty to the captives to the law of Moses. Christ is the sum and substance of the Gospel which is called a doctrine. It is the doctrine of grace by which we are saved through faith, the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9), and the doctrine of faith to be believed by the election of grace down through the ages. In a word, the law of the Lord is the law of love, and we are told that faith worketh by love.

At last, the body, which is the temple of the Holy Spirit, will be quickened thereby, coming forth to the resurrection of life. (John 5:29) So shall the redeemed of the Lord, in spirit and soul and body, ever be with Him in glory.

In hope of a glorious resurrection,
C. W. Vass
409 New York Avenue
Elizabeth City, North Carolina

Rt. 4, Box 479
Rocky Mount, N. C.

Dear Brethren in Christ:

I have just finished reading my *Signs* and enjoyed it so much. I am giving you my new address so that I will not miss getting a copy. I live by myself, and it is so much company that it seems as if I see the ones who write those good letters. I will be seventy years old the 3rd of August, if the Lord sees

fit for me to see that day. I united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Nashville, N. C. the fourth Saturday in February, 1915; and in August, 1931, I moved my membership to Pleasant Hill as I was living near there.

I have been blessed for many years to get to church somewhere most every weekend. I hope that I am thankful to the Lord that my friends, the brethren and sisters, have been so good to me. I don't feel that I deserve these good things, but I do know that I love the brethren and sisters, and that meeting with them means so much to me. That is my greatest pleasure. With best wishes to all.

A little sister, if one,
Mrs. J. B. Price

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association, meeting with the Church at Dan River, Rockingham County, N. C. on July 17, 18, and 19, 1965, extends greetings and Christian fellowship to our correspondents, visiting ministers and brethren, sisters and friends.

We feel thankful to the Lord for the many blessings made manifest in our annual gatherings over the years past, and we humbly beg of Him a continuation of His love and mercy, not only in our association, but among His people everywhere. The worshipers of the Lord are enjoying the blessed privilege of meeting and worshiping at such times and places as they may choose, except in certain sections in foreign lands. In this country, there is no law nor decree regulating or forbidding such meetings. But in recent years, movements have been started to set up a system of religious unity, so-called, and to consolidate in one body all professing Christians.

But the true followers of the blessed Redeemer are given access, by the Holy Spirit, to that fountain of divine wisdom which enables them to distinguish between truth and error. Error is a mighty weapon in the hands of Satan. Presecution is a fruit of error. The Saviour knew, and the apostles knew, that persecutions would follow and torment God's chosen people while they sojourn here; and that the enemies of truth would follow the example set by Satan in his first act of deception, in the Garden of Eden.

Paul in his second epistle to Timothy said: "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived;" and in Matt. 24:24, Christ speaking to His disciples: "For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch that if possible they shall deceive the very elect." But that possibility is forever nullified, as will be shown by reference to many portions of Scripture, including the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, in which is set forth the lowly estate of the Saviour, yet to be born, and the reasons why He was rejected and despised of men and the evil manner of abuses inflicted upon Him preceding His crucifixion. But in the 11th verse Isaiah shows the fulfillment of His final and glorious victory: "He shall see the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied." There could be no satisfaction if only one of the chosen should be lost.

Now truth administers reproofs, corrections, and chastisements, seasoned

with divine love. In Revelation 3:19, Jesus, in His message to one of the seven churches of Asia: "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." These chastisements enter into and become a part of the cross which the Christians must bear, and the cross becomes easy to carry when its purpose and usefulness is understood. An old hymn opens with these lines:

"'Tis my happiness below
Not to live without the cross."

The many blessings we now enjoy in our coming together in our associations, our church meetings, and other informal gatherings are, as Peter expresses it: "According to His abundant mercy." And there is nothing I feel more deeply each day of my life than a desire to give the Saviour of sinners all the glory, honor and praise; for if I am a part of that remnant that shall be saved, He alone is due more than I will ever be able to render unto Him.

Now as this association closes, and we take the parting hand, may we have faith to believe that the Lord was in the place, to our comfort and to His glory.

M. T. Smith

SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

The **Salisbury Association** is appointed to convene with the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church, located on Church Street, Salisbury, Maryland, on October 20 and 21, 1965, at 10 o'clock E.S.T.

Our ministers, brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

Maude Truitt Laws, Church Clerk

KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The **Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association** is to be held with Kehukee Church, the first Sunday in October, Saturday before and Monday following, October 2, 3, 4, 1965.

Elder I. S. Conner was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, and Elder W. E. Grimes, his alternate.

The church is located on Highway 125, one mile south of Scotland Neck, Halifax County, North Carolina.

We hope our brethren and sisters will visit us.

Elder W. E. Grimes, Moderator
Elder E. C. Harrison, Clerk

VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING

The next session of the **Virginia Corresponding Meeting** is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the New Valley Church at the Mt. Zion Meeting House, Wednesday and Thursday, October 13 and 14, 1965; beginning at 10:30 E.S.T.

Mt. Zion Meeting House is located about one mile east of Gilbert's Corner on U. S. 50. A cordial invitation is extended to our brethren and friends to meet with us.

Leslie D. Duke, Clerk

STATEMENT OF NORFOLK CHURCH

Dear Brethren, Sisters and Friends,

In December 1964 the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church found themselves in need of assistance to erect a new church building, and let their need be known by letters, and other news media. Our brethren, sisters, and friends responded with contributions, which we will ever be grateful and thank God for, however, the contributions plus what we had fell far short of what was needed to accomplish the task. Therefore, we had no other alternative but to seek to remodel our present building. With the contributions, what we already had, and what we received from the sale of our lot we could remodel and be free of debt.

Since our request was made expressly for help to build a new church, it was felt that the donors were due an explanation concerning the use of their gift. If the donors feel that they do not wish to contribute to the rebuilding of our present meeting house, and will let it be known, by the grace of God we will refund the money.

Done by order of the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church in conference Saturday night before the third Sunday in June, 1965.

Elder C. N. Bunn, Moderator
Ruby E. Coward, Clerk

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The next session of **the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association convenes with the** church at Meadow, Greene County, N. C., beginning Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1965, and continuing through Sunday.

E. M. Smith, Clerk

LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The **Lexington-Roxbury Association** is to be held, if God so wills, at Halcottville, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, September 15 and 16, 1965. Those coming on Tuesday take the Denver Road at Kelly Corners, then take the first left road to the third house, called Windy Acres, the residence of Mr. and Mrs. John Shultis. Those coming on Wednesday will go directly to the meeting house at Halcottville. Will those coming on Tuesday please notify Mr. and Mrs. John Shultis, Kelly Corners, N. Y., a few days ahead.

Lovers of the truth are invited.

A. J. Slauson, Moderator

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The **Seven Mile Primitive Baptist Association** is appointed to be held with the church at Liberty, to begin Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1965, and continuing through Sunday. The church is located in Harnett County, N. C., five miles West (to some extent Southwest) of Benson, N. C. Inquire in or around Benson, and look for pointers.

An invitation is extended to our correspondents and other brethren and friends to meet with us.

W. D. Godwin, Clerk

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The eighty-ninth session of the **Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association** is appointed to be held with the church at Pittman's Grove beginning at eleven o'clock Friday morning before the fourth Sunday in October, and continue through Sunday.

The church is located about two miles east of Kenly, N. C. on highway 222 between Kenly and Fremont. All lovers of truth and especially our ministering brethren are cordially invited to meet with us.

W. E. Turner, Clerk

CONECUH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The **Conecuh River Association** will be held, the Lord willing, at Union Spring Church the 2nd Sunday in October and Friday and Saturday before this year. The church is on County Road 6 between Brundidge and Spring Hill, Pike County, Alabama.

A. C. Carter, Clerk

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with New Bay Church, Onslow County, N. C., the fifth Sunday in August and Saturday before. The church is three miles South of Jacksonville, just off Highway 17.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 3, Tarboro, N. C.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To July 1, 1965)

Mary Hellings, N. J.	$ 2.00
Miss Elizabeth Walker, Can.	4.00
Mrs. G. E. Rogers, Can.	51.00
Lelah R. Hill, Calif.	5.00
Fannie D. Wiles, Va.	3.00
Mrs. Bertha Chamberlain, N. C.	2.00
Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.	1.00
Mrs. C. T. Braswell, Va.	5.00

Danville, Virginia September, 1965

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SPECIAL NOTICE: In giving receipts to those renewing their subscriptions to the *Signs* at the Pigg River Association, I found that the carbon paper was turned up side down on two of the receipts, which left me without a copy of the receipts, and I am unable to give proper credit for these two renewals.

Will those who renewed at that association please notice their expiration date on the September issue to see if their expiration date has been properly extended. If not, please write me at Box 186, Manassas, Va., giving name and address, and whether the renewal was for one or two years, so that proper credit can be given them.

John D. Wood

EDITORIAL

JONAH THE PROPHET

We find ourself, at this time, when we should present our views to the readers of the *Signs* in the form of an editorial, thinking upon the prophet Jonah and his wonderful testimony to the truth of our God. From reading his testimony, we conclude that Jonah was a man of like passions as we are, changeable, and easily depressed. His name signifies a dove, a lover of quiet rural scenes rather than the clamorous resorts of the populous cities, but the command of God came even to him, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city." What consternation and distress such a command must have brought to quiet, peace-loving Jonah. His testimony among his *own people* was that God "was a gracious God, merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth thee of the evil." (Jonah iv. 2.) Thus Jonah had a sweet testimony of the love and mercy of a gracious God in his own country, when God gave him his commission to arise and go to Nineveh. Jonah shrank from such a commission, he was a Jew, and Nineveh was a Gentile city. It was the last place that he, a Jew, would want to go. He knew Nineveh was a very wicked city, yet the thought of God sending a prophet to the Gentiles was very distasteful to him a Jew, therefore he fled to Tarshish. It is written, "Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish, from the presence of the Lord." David in Psalms cxxxix. says, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" But Jonah here would flee from the presence of the Lord, which implies that Jonah's mind was opposed to God's command, yet such is God's purpose toward Jonah that though he would flee from God's command, God's kindness follows him, and his power overshadows him, and he could say, as David, "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there." Thus God's power was manifest, for "The Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken." This disturbed the ship's crew, and they cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea to lighten it of them, yet while they were filled with fear, Jonah lay in the sides of the ship fast asleep.

Thus far Jonah must have been self-satisfied, he had chosen an easier way. Before he took ship at Joppa he had perhaps spent sleepless nights fighting against God's command, but now he could sleep soundly while all the others were alarmed. At last, the shipmaster, in his extremity, seeing their prayers of no avail, finds Jonah, that strange man, fast asleep. As strange to himself as to others, he could sleep soundly while others trod the deck full of fear and consternation. "So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not." They cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah, and Jonah tells them who he is, and that he fears the God

of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land. "And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea: so shall the sea be calm unto you." The men dreaded to do this, for it seemed to them like murder, and so they rowed hard to bring the ship to land, but they could not; then instead of calling on their gods, they cried to the Lord for mercy, confessing that the Lord had done as it pleased him. So they cast Jonah into the deep, and the sea was calm unto them. God's sovereign power had not taken second place in anything that had transpired. It is true he had permitted Jonah to resist his command, proving to Jonah, and even to us, how longsuffering our God is. God's providence was all the time over Jonah, over him in the ship, and over him when cast overboard. "Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights," and Jonah was carried to the bottom of the mountains, with the weeds wrapped about his head. Here Jonah cried to the Lord and prayed out of the fish's belly, and here Jonah became a "sign." Had he not been brought there by God, then our Lord would never have referred to him as he did, on at least three occasions, in the gospels. This timid man was being taught in God's school, and was made willing in the day of God's power to go and preach the preaching that God had bidden him. What a blessed prayer this dear man uttered, a prayer full of deep experience. True, the men cast him overboard, but he, in God's school, knew God had done it, and he could cry with David, "All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." In his prayer he made confessions; he said also, "They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy." To our mind this does not refer to the world, or worldly religion, which is a religion of self-righteousness, they do not follow lying vanities, for at their best state they are altogether vanity, but it refers to God's children, who, like Jonah, turn away from the truth to vain things. Thus Samuel warned Israel, 1 Samuel xii. 21, "And turn ye not aside: for then should ye go after vain things, which cannot profit nor deliver: for they are vain." Israel of old often followed after lying vanities, as in another place it is recorded, "Notwithstanding, they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God. And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed vanity, and became vain." Today, as of old, many turn aside from a "thus saith the Lord" and lean to their own understanding, and, in doing, so, forsake, or turn from, their own mercy, mercy which stands not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Here let us say to the praise of our God, that while they forsake, or turn from, their own mercy, that mercy does not forsake them, which truth Jonah lived to prove.

Again the command came, "Arise, go unto Nineveh," with this remarkable injunction, "and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee," and Jonah went with a clear testimony, for it was God's word sent to that city, and the city believed from the greatest to the least. In this astounding result of his preaching, Jonah stands alone in the Old Testament, and in this he stands as a "Sign" of a greater than Jonah, all to whom he was sent, repented and obtained mercy from God. In the heart of all to whom he was *sent* there was a "who can tell," and in the heart of all to whom Jesus is *sent* there is a "who can tell," and God does spare them, from the least to the greatest, for Jesus' sake. Thus Jonah passed through trying scenes to bring him where he was "made willing" to walk alone through that great city, preaching its destruction, preaching that which God bid him. Some have

said Jonah preached destruction unless they repented, just as the self-styled Jonahs do now, but that is not so. Jonah was told to preach, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." This was not a conditional matter, there was no mention of repentance in his testimony. Jonah said it would be destroyed, and he felt its destruction would be good proof that he was a prophet of God. One can therefore imagine his consternation and anger when God saw fit to spare the city. He was angry, for his testimony was made to look like foolishness itself. Many of those whose lot it is to preach know how foolish they have at times felt, and how, to human reason, their testimony has been foolishness. This experience was very mortifying to poor Jonah, whose reputation would be gone if that great city were spared, and he would rather die than suffer such humiliation. Jonah could not understand why God had mercy upon Nineveh, neither could the Jews understand why Jesus had mercy on Gentiles, publicans and sinners, and as the Jews of Christ's day, Jonah felt he did well to be angry. What a wonderful example of God's mercy for the Jews to think of in Christ's day, he spoke to them of it, but to no avail, and they hated him for his kindness to poor sinners.

Again the Lord does not leave Jonah to himself, but says, "Doest thou well to be angry?" This time Jonah did not reply to the Lord, but sat down on the east side of the city, until he might see what would become of the city, and there he made him a booth. Jonah undoubtedly had a self-righteous spirit, and might have said to poor Nineveh, Stand by thyself, for I am holier than thou. While poor Nineveh was humbled in the dust, Jonah sat under a booth of his own making, finding shelter there from the heat of the sun. "And the Lord God prepared a gourd." God has before prepared a fish, now he also prepares a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad for the gourd. "But God prepared a worm when the morning rose next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered." And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon Jonah's head and he fainted, and again he wished to die. Again God said, "Doest thou well to be angry?" "And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death." Then the Lord brought home that lesson, that Jonah had been sorry for the gourd, which came in a night, and perished in a night, and said he, "Should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand, and their left hand; and also much cattle?"

Thus this strange man Jonah was taught in God's school, and found through all his anger and rebellion that God cannot be changed by the anger of man, and that he is more merciful than man knows how to be. We love to speak of God preparing a fish to swallow Jonah, but he also prepared a gourd, and he prepared a worm to smite it, and we are sure that there are no sent servants of God but have to be taught in the same school as Jonah. It is not pleasant to have the weeds wrapped about our head, to have the earth with her bars about us forever, but that is the way, if we must preach "Salvation is of the Lord." Whatever be the great fish that God has prepared, whether it be religious bodies, secret societies or modern society, it will vomit all such up when they have learned the truth from God, their only teacher, that salvation is of the Lord. Many will be the lessons afterwards that God will give them, and many will be the gourds that he will blast, sometimes as they separate themselves in a self-righteous zeal which comes in a night and will go in a night, when God prepares the worm

of mortification to strike their gourd. The number of gourds that God's children would shelter in is legion. Sometimes being very angry against brethren, forgetting that such anger is against God. Following after their lying vanities, they forsake their own mercy, yet we repeat again, their mercy does not forsake them, all through their course God's sovereign hand will maintain his work, so that from the greatest to the least they will be spared. The Jews who were angry, like the elder son, who was angry, and would not come in to partake of the feast which was given his younger brother, as recorded in the parable of the prodigal son, found shelter under a righteousness of the flesh given to them by Abraham, in the ordinance of circumcision, in which the Jews gloried and found comfort, rejoicing that they had Abraham to their father.

It came in a night, during the patriarchal dispensation, and it was smitten in a night when that worm, that dieth not, struck their gourd, destroying all in which they had gloried, leaving unto them their house desolate, for one had said, My God shall cast them off, and they shall be wanderers among the nations. When that came upon them, the legal ordinances, that sheltered them, were dissolved, and they were subjected to the vehement east wind of desolation and woe, exposed before all people to the judgments of an angry God. Many are the thoughts that present themselves as we meditate upon this wonderful subject, and we shall have attained what we desire if we stir up the minds of our readers to think on these things, but let us not lose sight of the place that Jonah ocupies, for the resurrection of our Lord was foreshadowed in the experience of the prophet. The fish could not assimilate the body of Jonah, neither could this earth hold Jesus, for he arose and became the first fruits of them that slept.

Thus in preaching Jesus and the resurrection they gave to that wicked generation of the Jews the "sign of the prophet Jonah," and they declared that he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Each time a believer was baptized he gave the "sign" to that generation wherever he was. He is buried in the water, so that he disappears from all who behold him and he rises again a miracle of the grace of God. Thus baptism is a sign of the church of God, "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace," and presents a sign before men of the burial and resurrection of our Lord and all those that are his. As Nineveh, that great city, repented and was spared, the Lord Jesus came to give repentance unto Israel and the remission of sins, and all the true Israel from the greatest to the least shall be saved.

G. R.

(Since Eld. Ruston did not feel to write an editorial for this month, we re-publish the above which was written by him and published in the November, 1936, *Signs*—J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

I CORINTHIANS 12:8-11

"For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another divers kinds of tongues; but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."

Sister Nancy Webb, of Kansas, requested our views on the above subject in her letter of November 9th, 1875; but, like many other similar requests, it has failed to receive a response for lack of time and ability on our part.

The apostle, in our understanding of this subject, is explaining to this Gentile church the oneness of the Spirit by which the true church of God is dis-

tinguished from all other religious organizations, as the one only spiritual body of which the Lord Jesus Christ is the Head. "There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." — Eph. iv. 4-7. All the gifts bestowed on the church of God are to identify her as the church of God; while all other religious bodies, claiming to be the church or churches of Christ, have to supply what they profanely call *gifts,* from other sources, and all such pretenders are under the lead of some other spirit or spirits.

As the true church of God is but one body, she is animated and vitalized by but one Spirit. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." — John vi. 63. The apostle is speaking of spiritual gifts in the church of God, of which he would not have the brethren ignorant. The Spirit that animates the whole church as the body of Christ never actuated any man to speak depreciatingly of Christ, or to call him accursed. Nor can any man say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost. That is, no man is competent to be a witness of Jesus by all that he can learn in the schools or literary institutions of this world. He must be born of the Spirit and taught by the Spirit before he can possess any one of the gifts which God has bestowed on the church of the First Born.

Now of the gifts of the Spirit, which Christ received for and gave to the members of his church when he ascended up on high and led captivity captive, there is an ample and rich variety and diversity. Among them were some apostles, prophets and evangelists, and pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, (not for making saints, or evangelizing the world, as false evangelists claim to do) for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, (not for edifying the body of anti-christ, or any other than the body of Christ) until all the chosen and redeemed members of that body are brought (experimentally) in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. — Eph. iv. 8-12. All these varied manifestations named in the text submitted are by the same Spirit, and their varied administrations are by the same, and recognize the same Lord; and their diversified operations are of the same God which worketh all in all. That is, the same God worketh all these diversified operations in all those to whom they are given. In all these there is a manifestation of the Spirit of God; and "the manifestation of the Spirit," in the bestowment of these gifts, and the causing their efficient operations in the church, "is given to every man" on whom they are manifested; not for his private or individual benefit alone, but "to profit with all." As the gift of sight to the eye, of hearing to the ear, of speech to the tongue, are not given for the exclusive benefit of these organs respectively, but for the benefit or profit of all the body to which these organs themselves belong.

Now for a clearer illustration we come to the text on which we were requested to write. "For to one is given by the same Spirit the word of wisdom." That is, to one member of the body of Christ — all the members in the church are not indued with the same amount of wisdom by the word; but the gift of wisdom in spiritual understanding is, like the light of the eye, for the benefit of the whole body or church, and it is a special gift to the church. Wisdom was given to Solomon to build the temple, and to administer the government of Israel, but the benefit of his wisdom was shared by the whole commonwealth. "To another

the word of knowledge." Knowledge and wisdom are not always found in the same individual. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in God the Father and Christ. — Col. ii. 2, 3. "And Christ Jesus is of God, made unto the church wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." — 1 Cor. 1. 30. But there is a wide difference between the wisdom of this world and that which is from above; the former is earthly, sensual and devilish: but the wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. — James iii. 15-18. The wisdom which is from above is the gift of God, and like all other good and perfect gifts, this gift of wisdom must come to us from above, from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. — James i. 17. And as both knowledge of spiritual things and heavenly wisdom are hidden in God, none can possess them unless they be taught of God; and when the word or gift of wisdom or knowledge is bestowed on any of the members of Christ, it is for the benefit of the whole body or church of Christ. "To another faith by the same Spirit." It is true that wisdom and knowledge and faith are given in measure to every member; but there are special gifts in the church, divinely adapted for the confirmation of those who, being weak in the faith, are perplexed with doubts and fears; hence the strong are commanded to bear the burdens of the weak, and so fulfill the law of Christ, by strengthening the weak hands and confirming the feeble knees. "To another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit." This endowment is in the *plural* number, and may relate to healing both in a temporal and a spiritual sense. To the apostles, at least, was given the gift of healing those who were literally sick, and many instances are named in the word of wonderful cures by them performed. And an apostle has said, "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up," &c. — James v. 14, 15. Whether that gift is now in the church or not, has been a question with many; but all will confess that it was in the church in what is called the apostolic age. But it is our firm belief that it is still in the church; but it being a special gift of God, by which the prayer of faith is uttered by the Spirit, it is not subject to the will of even those on whom the gift rests. There are very many instances in which the elders of the church and others of the saints have been led by the Spirit to pray in faith for the healing of the sick; and every prayer indited by the Spirit is offered in faith, and being inspired by the Spirit, must be according to the will of God, and will as certainly be granted, as it is certain that it is directed by the Spirit. If we ask in prayer for this, or for any other favor, and are denied, it only proves that we have asked amiss, and have not been led by the Spirit that maketh intercession according to the will of God. Our prayers have not the power to induce God to do anything which he did not before design to do, and it is a mercy to us that they have not; but his Spirit in the saints, which knoweth what is the will of God, maketh intercession for us and in us, according to the immutable and eternal will of God, and with groanings which we cannot utter.

In the spiritual application of the gift of healing, we think all the saints will admit there are gifts in the church peculiarly adapted to the healing of those who are of a heavy heart, to the faint, the weak, the languid, the bruised and the lame. But none possess the ability or skill to "give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine to those that be of heavy hearts." —

Prov. xxxi. 6. All will prove as valueless as Job's miserable comforters, if they are not qualified by the special gifts of healing by the same Spirit by whom all other gifts are bestowed and made efficient for the use and edifying of the body of Christ.

"To another the working of miracles." This, like all the other gifts by the same Spirit, is a divine qualification. It cannot be purchased with money. This was clearly demonstrated when Simon offered the apostles money, and thought the gift of God might be bought. — Acts viii. 18-23. To the apostles and others in the primitive days of the church the gift of miracles was given, and many miracles were by them performed; but that gift was not given to all the members of the church, for Simon, though he coveted the gift, had no part nor lot in *that* matter.

There are thousands who at this day condemn Simon for thinking that the gifts of God could be bought with money, while they themselves entertain the same thought in their hearts, and indulge in the same presumptuous sin.

"To another prophecy." this gift not only inspired holy men to predict coming events, but embraced spiritual instruction in general; but whether for predicting things to come, or to edify the saints by exhortation or expounding the scriptures, it was by the Spirit, and for the common edification of all the church.

"To another discerning of spirits." There are in the church many who seem slow to discern spirits, and who are too easily imposed upon by such as assume, by transformation, the appearance of angels of light; but there are others who seem peculiarly gifted in detecting those who come in sheep's clothing, while inwardly they are ravening wolves. We are commanded to try the spirits, whether they be of God, and a rule is given by which to test them, as we have shown in a recent article on the subject. Every spirit that confesseth Christ, is of God, while all other spirits are anti-christian. While some are too soon captivated by those who have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof, the Spirit has furnished the church with special gifts for detecting and exposing such spirits as deny the power of godliness, and readily recognize the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive. This gift is of great importance in the church, and we should praise God that he has supplied the same by his Spirit.

"To another divers kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues." It would extend this article to too great a length, were we to write elaborately on the gifts of tongues. When the Holy Ghost descended on the apostles, and those who were waiting with them on the day of pentecost, and filled the whole house where they were sitting, there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and sat upon each of them. "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance." — Acts ii. 1-4. There was something astonishingly wonderful in this gift of tongues. By this gift these uneducated Galileans, who until this gift came on them like a rushing, mighty wind from heaven, had never known but one language, now spake with other and flaming tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance so distinctly that the citizens of about fifteen different countries and languages heard them in their own mother tongue in which they were born. None can dispute that this gift of tongues was by the Spirit, and that it was for the general benefit of the whole church of God. But the ability to understand and interpret the words spoken with tongues of fire, or which were like as of fire, is equally a gift of the Spirit of God. None but the same Spirit which inspired prophets and apostles to speak and write, can enable us to understand or interpret what God has spoken by them.

"But all these" gifts, operations and

administrations, "worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally" (that is, to every man in the church) "as he will." The Spirit is not governed in the distribution of its gifts in the church by the will of men, but they are given according to God's own sovereign will; for we are told God has set the members in the body as it hath pleased him. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have all been made to drink into one Spirit."

This whole chapter (1 Cor. xii.) is a treatise on the spiritual gifts with which God has indued his church, and the wise distribution of the gifts to all the several members, to act in harmony and unison for the common benefit of the whole body. "For the body is not one member, but many." It is indeed but one body, having but one Spirit, one life, one hope, one head, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, one Father, and one complete set of members. The natural organization of the human body is used by the apostle in this chapter to illustrate the spiritual organization of the body or church of God. First of all, Christ is given to be the Head over all things to the church, which is his body. This body of Christ has but this one head. The dragon and the beast that rose up out of the sea had many heads, as popes, kings, priests and bishops; but the body of Christ is filled with the fullness of him that filleth all in all. A body having more than one head would be a frightful monster; and a head having more than one body would be frightful. Or a body with more members than belong to a perfectly organized body, would be as imperfect as though it were deficient in members. Imagine a body with more than two arms, hands, feet or eyes; how strange and out of proportion. But as God himself has set all the members in the body, the church, his work is perfect; in it there is no lack, no redundance.

To each member God has given its appropriate office, or gift. We cannot see with the ear, or hear with the eye or hands, or walk on the hands. "If," says Paul, "the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you." "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular, and God hath set some (members) in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues."

Having extended our remarks perhaps to too great a length, we will close with a few brief reflections. We learn from this subject that there is but one head to the church as the one body of Christ; that all who compose the one church or body of Christ are chosen of God, and baptized into this one body, and set in their respective places in the church, and indued by him with such gifts as he is pleased to bestow; and all by the one and self-same Spirit, and all for the self-same general purpose, which is for the edifying of the whole body of Christ. Not for the purpose of edifying the world or antichrist, nor for making and adding to the church members which God himself has not set in the body. As Christ is the head and the church is his body, there must be a vital union between the

head and the body — between Christ and the church. The life or vitality of both head and body depends on this sacred union; for should it be broken, the head separated from the body, both head and body would die: Christ would cease to be the head, and the church could no longer be the body or members of Christ. But because he lives, his body and members must live also, for the church is his body, his flesh and his bones. "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." — Rom. viii. 38, 39.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe May 1, 1876.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. BERTIE SIRMAN DRYDEN

Mrs. Bertie Sirman Dryden was born April 28, 1883, and departed this life January 28, 1965. She was the daughter of John William and Sarah Sturgis Sirman; and was united in marriage to Mr. Kinzer Dryden, who died many years ago.

Sister Bertie, as she was known among the church members and friends, was received into the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church, Salisbury, Maryland, and was baptized by the writer the 5th Sunday in June, 1946. She remained a faithful member until called away by death.

We have never known a more faithful and loyal member of the church than Sister Dryden. She adorned her profession by an orderly walk and a Godly conversation. She was faithful in attending the services, and active in all the duties of those who profess the name of Christ. When the writer was unable to attend the services, she usually kept him informed as to the welfare of the membership; and reported in detail the minister's sermon.

Those who are loyal and faithful to their church and pastor, are very much missed by all who knew them, and our beloved sister certainly was numbered among the faithful. We shall miss her, but she has left precious evidence that she has died in the Lord; from which none ever awake to weep.

She is survived by three sisters: Mrs. Ruth Twilley, Salisbury, Maryland; Mrs. Mary Shockley, Hebron, Maryland; and Mrs. Elnora S. Sistare, Hollywood, Florida.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer and Elder W. D. Grffiin at the John B. Parsons Home, Salisbury, Maryland.

Elder D. V. Spangler

ELDER HARVEY SMITH

In loving memory of our highly esteemed brother, Elder Harvey Smith. He was born October 14, 1898, and departed this life January 24, 1965, making his stay sixty-six years.

He was married to Alice Rudd December 26, 1920, and to this union were born five children, of which he had the pleasure of baptizing three. They are Elder Wallace Smith, Brother Donald Smith and Sister Mellie Smith Diner. He was a native of Caswell County, and moved to Burlington, N. C. February 24, 1924, where he lived until his death.

He joined Bush Arbor Church in November, 1945, and was ordained a minister in 1950. He served four churches at the time of his death: Big Meadow, Stem, Pleasant Grove, and Lickfork since 1956. We of Lickfork and our sister churches have suffered a great loss. Words will never tell how deeply we are hurt, but knowing our heavenly Father's will must be done, and knowing he can do no wrong, may the grace of Christ and the Father's boundless love rest upon us and make us submissive to his will. No one will ever know how much this dear brother meant to us: a kind and humble servant of God, he stood on the rock that cannot be moved, feeding God's little ones from the Master's table, and declaring the word of God until the end. His generous kindness and his personality was indeed a rare one. He was firmly established in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and believed in good works as evidence of faith. He endeared himself to all classes of people, young and old, rich or poor alike. He was never one to murmur or complain, and always seemed perfectly reconciled to whatever his lot might be; and many times in his prayers he would ask the dear Lord for a peaceful moment to die. I feel he was bountifully supplied.

This dear brother not only preached the gospel, but lived it in his daily walk and conversation. He is now released from all trials and sorrows of this life, to be forever with the dear Saviour he loved so much. How often have I heard him sing his favorite song, "Jerusalem, my Happy Home." The life this dear brother lived will be an inspiration to all that knew him, and to his dear family who loved him so. We shall miss his wise counseling and encouraging words.

Brother Smith's funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Church, where he had been a faithful member. His body was laid to rest in Bush Arbor Cemetery to await the resurrection morning, when it shall be fashioned like the dear Saviour's body. "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord." We trust that the One who doeth all things well, will give us grace and strength to carry on without him, having the assurance that our loss is his eternal gain.

WHEREAS, The church at Lickfork has lost a faithful and devoted pastor, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, First, that we bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Father's will; Second, that we extend to the family our heartfelt sympathy; Third, that a copy of these resolutions be sent for publication to the *Old Faith Contender* and the *Signs of the Times;* one mailed to the family and one be recorded in our church minutes.

Done by order of the church.

Willie W. Lee, Church Clerk

NOAH JACKSON PRESTWOOD

Noah Jackson Prestwood was born November 5, 1872, and died July 21, 1964, at the age of more than ninety-one years. He was born in Pike County, Alabama, but moved to Roeton, just across the line, in Coffee County, Alabama, and lived there the remainder of his life.

He was first married to Delia Johnson, and was blessed with fifty years of companionship and four children, all of whom survive and live at the family home at Roeton, Brundidge, Alabama. In addition to four children: Lewis, Garrett and George Prestwood and Mrs. Inez Prestwood Haisten, ten grandchildren, thirty-two great grandchildren, and five great great grandchildren survive.

After the death of his first wife, Brother Prestwood married Bessie Connor Johnston, who was a wonderful companion for twenty-one years, and who survives him. In his business life Brother Prestwood was a plantation owner, a merchant, a cotton ginner, a turpentine operator and a banker. He was a director of the First National Bank of Brundidge for fifteen years, and its vice-president for eight years.

Brother Prestwood joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Corinth in 1906. He was ordained a deacon in 1908. When Corinth Church disbanded, he moved his membership to Union Springs Primitive Baptist Church, where it was until his death. He was an outstanding Father in Israel. He was a liberal provider for his church and other churches in the association, for the Conecuh River Association, and for the local and visiting ministering brethren. He and his wife were blessed to be able to attend his own church or a sister church almost every Sunday until his passing. We know that the family, his friends and the Primitive Baptists have suffered a great loss, but we feel to know that our loss is his eternal gain.

Written by one who would love to, but feels unworthy to be counted as his brother in the faith.

A. C. Carter

MITTIE HODGES FLEMING

It is with a sad heart that we attempt to write the obituary of our dear mother, Mittie Hodges Fleming.

She was born June 3, 1876 and passed away September 6, 1964, making her stay on earth 88 years, 3 months and 3 days. She was the eldest daughter of Jesse Hodges and Mary Ann Robertson Hodges of Martin County. Her family moved to Washington, N. C. when she was a young girl and she lived there until her marriage to Marcellus Fleming of Greenville, N. C. on January 10, 1900.

She leaves to mourn her passing a son, Jesse Marcellus Fleming, Jr., two daughters, Miss Mary Ruth Fleming and Mrs. Hazel Fleming Jackson all of Greenville, N. C. and five grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Mother united with the Great Swamp Primitive Baptist Church with our father on the fourth Sunday in August, 1922. She was a true believer in the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace and not of works. She always attended her church meetings as long as she was able.

Mother had been in failing health for two years prior to her death but was confined to her bed only one week before she passed away. We feel our loss is her gain, for she fought a good fight, kept the faith, and there is laid up for her a crown of righteousness.

Her funeral was conducted in the Wilkerson Funeral Home Chapel by her pastor, Elder Marvin E. Garner assisted by Elder E. C. Harrison of Williamston, N. C. Her body was laid to rest beside our beloved father in Greenwood Cemetery under a beautiful mound of flowers and in the presence of relatives and friends, to await the Resurrection Morning when Jesus will call, "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Tho' you are away, your tender love lives
with us each day,
And your memory we shall cherish in our
hearts forever.
We know that God's wisdom and perfect
love is for the best,

So he has claimed you Dearest Mother to a home of rest.

Written by her devoted daughters,
Mary Ruth Fleming and
Hazel Fleming Jackson

JESSE NASH VIA

Jesse Nash Via was born in Patrick County, Virginia, February 21, 1898, the son of William A. Via and Adeline Via. He was called from this life July 23, 1964.

He is survived by his devoted wife, Nannie Lou Via; three sons, A. Neal Via, Grant Via and Jessie O. Via; six daughters, Mrs. Katy V. Johnson, Mrs. Clinton Spencer, Mrs. Glenn Pickeral, Mrs. Herbert Roberts, Mrs. H. D. Ingram, Mrs. Bobby Hancock; two brothers, Bob Via and John Via.

His funeral was conducted at Union Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Leonard J. Brammer assisted by Elder Amos I. Hash. His body was laid to rest in the Via Cemetery.

Brother Via joined the Church at Union the fourth Saturday in June, 1959 and was baptized the next day with his wife. He was elected treasurer and served as assistant clerk. Brother Via was interested in the welfare of the church and filled his seat when he could. He was honest and you could depend on what he said. He was straightforward in his personality. He believed in Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. We feel that he died in the faith that was once delivered to the Saints and feel that he had a sweet hope in his breast that the Lord would raise his sleeping dust when He shall come in the clouds of glory. We believe that Brother Via's last few years here were his best days. I, as his Pastor, miss him very much. We know that he, together with us, must heed the call.

May the Lord give us at Union strength to look to Him for all our help.

Written by his unworthy pastor,
Leonard J. Brammer

OBITUARY AND RESOLUTIONS

Our dear sister in Christ, Harriet (Bird) Thornton, was born August 2, 1886, in Putnam County, W. Va., and died March 3, 1965. She was a daughter of the late Deacon C. M. Bird and Sarah A. Bird. Sister Thornton had been in ill health for a number of years, but through God's mercy her last hours of suffering were of short duration. She died in a hospital in Ohio. She died in the blessed hope of immortality: she was given a sweet hope in the blood and imputed righteousness of Christ in early life. She united with Providence Primitive Baptist Church, Lincoln County, W. Va. in July, 1920, and was baptized in August by Elder W. I. Wade. She was a faithful member, always attending the services of her church when health permitted. Her life was adorned with many graces, being humble and unassuming. She was well established in the doctrine of grace. She was a good wife, a kind mother and a good neighbor; and she will long be missed by all who knew her.

She was first united in marriage to John P. Oxley, to which union four children were born, (one daughter Violet preceded her in death). Surviving are Jasper of Wheaton, Md.; Bernard and Raymond, Hurricane, W. Va. Several years after the death of her first husband she was married to T. Jeff Thornton, to which union five children were born: Leonard, Milton, W. Va.; Buford, Hurricane, W. Va.; and Howard, Middletown, Ohio; Mrs. Edith Johnson and Mrs. Catherine Coyner, Middletown, Ohio. Surviving also are the following step-children: Fleet Thornton, Beckley, W. Va.; Elwood Thornton, Quincy, W. Va.; Everett Thornton, Hurricane, W. Va.; Mrs. Elva Sloan and Mrs. Leva Byrnside, Quincy, W. Va.; one sister, Mrs. Lelia Edwards, Hurricane; two brothers, B. B. Bird, Huntington; and Elder H. J. Bird, Hurricane; 47 grandchildren; 44 great grandchildren and a number of near relatives.

Funeral services were conducted in Hurricane by Elder V. B. Linn, and with singing of hymns as she had requested. Burial was in the Bird Cemetery on the old home farm.

RESOLVED, That we the Old School Baptist Church called Providence, desire the grace of resignation to bow us in humble submission to the holy will of our God, witnessing that our grief is softened with the balm of conviction that for our sister all is well, believing that she is at rest. Be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be made a part of our church records; a copy be tendered the family, and a copy be sent the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference.

H. J. Bird, Moderator
V. L. Byrnside, Clerk

It was my blessed privilege to walk with Sister Thornton for a short time in this life in the communion of the spirit of love in Christ. Her hope was grounded in the finished work of our Redeemer God. To the family and her many friends that mourn her passing, may I say that we weep not as we would for those who have no hope. I feel that she has entered into that blessed rest, to await the call of her Master. Let us bow in humble submission to the will of our sovereign God, in whose providential hand are all events.

V. B. Linn

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133 DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1965 NO. 10

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10/65
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

Copper Hill, Va.

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing a copy of a letter from Sister Dunlap. I wrote her and asked permission to send it to you for your consideration of publishing it in the *Signs of the Times*. She gave her consent. I consider her experience very rich.

Sister Dunlap stated in her reply to my letter that she had re-read many of the old *Signs* since their association, and had rejoiced with those who told their experiences; and enjoyed so much many able writings by our ministers, and if someone should get a small part of the enjoyment from reading hers that she had in reading said experiences, she would be glad.

Yours in a precious hope,
B. O. Thompson

THE LETTER FROM SISTER DUNLAP

South Harpsell, Maine

Dear Elder Thompson:

First, let me thank you for coming so far to speak to our little group. Our hearts were made glad because of the testimony you gave of the great works our God can perform in bringing one out of darkness into the light of the gospel of grace. What a power it takes to separate one from the fascinations of this world, the natural desires for wealth, position, and friendships, and make him willing to spend time and energy for a cause often hated by his neighbors, acquaintances, and sometimes by his own relations.

Your preaching made my soul rejoice as I recognized the language of a child of our Father, a brother who spoke in words I understood, who worshiped at the same altar, and brought the offerings of humility, a broken and a contrite heart, reverence and gratitude to God for saving grace and mercies untold.

Thank God that preachers are still being raised up to bring the glad tidings that put a song in our hearts, and confirm our faith.

The evening meetings were so precious to me. I am glad some are given the talent to talk beautifully of their experiences. I envy those who can speak freely and I always feel sad and depressed when I reject the opportunity to give a reason for the hope that is within me. I feel that I am not given liberty because I am not worthy to speak his name; and that is true.

I have not fed or clothed, or taken in one of these my brethren on so many occasions, and if I have kept any of his commandments, it is because He has kept me from breaking them.

But I will try to keep my promise and write something of my experience, which I can never find words to tell. As a girl I often went to the Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church with my mother, who was a member. I knew

what they believed, and sometimes I rather enjoyed the preaching. One incident of my childhood showed perhaps that I felt even then a love for the people of God. At the time of our association when we had some members staying with us, I was asked to go on an errand which was not at all distasteful to me, but I couldn't bear to leave those people: I wanted to hear what they were saying, and I wept as if my heart was breaking.

By the time I went away to college, however, I had decided that the Old Baptists were old fashioned, and just accepted what had been passed down to them; and I began to regard the Bible as a collection of legends, and not necessarily true. I studied and argued for evolution, and went to different churches in the city trying to find something I liked. I wasn't successful. One thing I remember vividly, in chapel each morning the different professors would lead the service and I listened attentively to find out if any of them believed in the grace of God instead of works. I was always disappointed. I attended one of the weekly prayer-meetings, but no one sounded sincere and I did not like it, and I did not join any of the so-called religious organizations. After graduation, when I started teaching, I tried going to the Free-will Baptist Church and taught Sunday school for awhile; and responded to a call on one occasion to rise and accept Christ as my Saviour, but passed up the invitation to join the church as I told the minister I didn't want to join any but my home church.

My attempt to accept Christ brought me nothing but condemnation. I obtained no satisfaction from that experiment and had no feeling of fellowship for the church. Soon after this I began to think seriously that I should decide either to join one of the churches that were so busy trying to save souls, or to keep away and accept the Old Baptists' belief. I prayed that I might be shown the way, and I was much troubled because I was so undecided.

One Summer when we were holding our yearly association at the home church, my mother was preparing to go to the first meeting. I had no intention of going, and was working around the house when my sister came up to me and asked me if I didn't want to go. I decided that I might as well. Elder McConnell was to preach that morning, and as he walked up the aisle to the pulpit the thought came to me that if a man from a great city like New York could believe in the things the Old Baptists believed, there must be something to it. I listened intently as he began to speak. With great humility he told of his unworthiness to stand before the people of God and try to preach the unsearchable riches of His kingdom, and that he could do so only if enabled by the Holy Spirit. As he went on to tell of salvation by grace, not of works, I found that he was reiterating the same truths that Elder Beal had been preaching for so many years. I began to feel that he was speaking to me, telling of the searchings and prayer in the heart of a child of God — prayer put there and answered by the Holy Spirit. A wonderful glow filled the church and shown around the members. A love for the gospel he was preaching came into my soul; a love for those people gathered there. My prayer had been answered and I knew this was my home.

Can anyone ever tell adequately of that miracle of revelation, of that first love, the joy and peace, the thankfulness and the praise when the Spirit descends to write His law upon the heart? I felt I was a new person, raised from the dead. For a long time after this it seemed sinful even to read a newspaper, or touch the keys of a piano: all pleasure in worldly things was taken away.

At the next meeting I tried to tell the church of my experience, and was received. As Elder Beal was old and felt unable to perform the baptism, it

was decided to wait until Elder Keene could come up from North Berwick before the baptism. I had two wonderful experiences when walking home from an evening meeting one night: The western sky was glowing with colors alive with the power and the glory of God, and my feet seemed not to be touching the earth, and my heart was singing His praises. On another night as I was lying in bed awake, a great light shone from the roof of my chamber and descended to where I lay. No words can express the power in that light, the presence of an Infinite Being. I felt I should die if the light remained. Tears streamed from my eyes and I couldn't breathe. I felt His love toward me a sinner, and I was nothing and less than nothing. I felt then there is a God in heaven so powerful, so wise, to whom the wisdom of man is foolishness; and He has a people to whom He reveals himself. What an unspeakable gift!

After the baptism, during a visit with an aunt who had been a member for many years, I was lying in bed one night when spirits seemed to be floating around the bed. Then a great cloud settled over the bed, a cloud so filled with His power and glory, His love and mercy, that All I could think of was, "My God, and my God." The cloud lifted and I felt that I could never take one step again without offending. After awhile I got up and walked to the window. It was moonlight and the great trees on the lawn were pointing to heaven, a halo around their tops shining with praise to Him.

Another experience came as I was walking early one morning in front of my home. The air was thick with fog, and all of a sudden I knew He was there in the mist, and I wanted to fall on my face and worship Him. The things that come into the heart at times like these no one can know unless he has been there too. No longer any doubt of a God ever present, powerful beyond any imagination of man, ruling the universe and doing his will among the inhabitants of earth and heaven.

After returning to teaching, I was greatly blessed to be able to attend services in New York where Elder McConnell and Elder Dodson were preaching; and later in Hopewell, N. J. where Elder Vaughn was pastor. The meetings and associations there were sweet to me, as were our meetings here at home.

I have had seasons of darkness and gloom, and others of joy and rejoicing, but always there is a love that draws me to my church and my brethren; and I realize how good God has been to me, the very least and the most unworthy, if one at all.

So I have a hope that I may sign myself your sister in a precious fellowship.

Minerva F. Dunlap

CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR

"But, if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Tim. 3:15)

Christ has delivered us from the law of sin and death, therefore we owe complete allegiance to him — as "being under the law to Christ." (1 Cor. 9:21) "The people of God, who are purchased with such a cost and set free by such power, are constrained by a sense of deep love to live a Godly life."

The first lesson we learn in the school of Christ is self-denial. (Matt. 10:37-39, 16:24-28)

The heart of religion is living our profession. A dead profession is worth nothing. "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men." (Titus 3:8) "And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful." (Titus 3:14)

Notice the religion of the dead professors: "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." (Titus 1:16)

Working for life or blessings is a fruitless task and lost labor. But working from life is a glorious privilege and sets the seal upon the reality of our profession and evidences a living experience of the power and grace of God in his predestination and purposes. (see James 2:14-26)

Notice this command which is applicable to the Children of God: "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." (Mark 5:19) Beware of Satan's temptations to take the Sovereignty of God and present it in such a way that would discourage us even to the extent of being unconcerned about our duty in keeping his commandments and precepts, and to charge our negligence to the sovereignty of God by such expressions as this: "When the time comes I will join the church." This is true, for there is a time for all things in the secret purposes of God. Yet, who are we to attempt to follow the secret will of God as a rule of our life and conduct?

Let us be concerned with exhortations in the Scriptures: "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Romans 12:2) This is the *revealed* will of precept and commandment that we should be very careful to seek after and follow There are many exhortations that the Apostles were given to write. They were given for the welfare of the church. "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." (Gal. 5:15)

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." (1 Peter 1:22) "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins." (1 Peter 4:8) The church should "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel." (Phil. 1:27; also see 2 Cor. 13:11, Rom. 12:15)

The Brethren are exhorted to help the poor, and to contribute to the needs of the Pastors. (Rom 12:13, 1 Cor. 9:7-14) As to ministerial support, I would like it to be understood I am certainly against salaried and the hireling system so popular in the religious world. (John 10:10-15) A minister is a servant of his flock. (Matt. 23:11) He is under Christ and is set over the flock to lead and oversee them. (Acts 20:28, 1 Tim. 3:5, John 21:15-17)

The minister should not be greedy of filthy lucre. (1 Tim. 3:3) The ministry is not for lazy persons and any minister who will not work with his own hands to care for the necessities of his household is not worthy of the name of a minister.

Of course, it is the duty of the church to help the pastor so that he can direct his labors to the spiritual welfare of his flock, freely giving his time, strength, health, etc. We should watch over one another for good, and bear with one another our weakness. "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak." (Rom. 15:1) The Children of God should walk in newness of life, and should be faithful to attend church meetings. (Hebrews 10:25)

Dear ones, the life we manifest is of vital importance. It proves whether we have a profession or possession of true religion. One cannot hold to the world with one hand, and hold to the church with the other. The people of God in the Old Testament were a separate people from the other nations around them. Therefore, we are in the

world, but not of the world.

We request the reader to read the 9th chapter of Ezra, and we quote a portion of verse 2: ". . . so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands . . ."

It is the work of Satan to entangle the children of God into his net of the pleasures of this world. He tells them, "this is all right, there is not any harm in this, etc." Little by little our minds are taken away from God and godliness to the extent that we seldom open the Bible. Oh! how many hours do we spend with our minds taken up in the pleasures of this life. What profit has all this vain pleasure been to us? May we be given the spiritual mind and Grace to choose "that good part." (Luke 10:38-42) Pleasure seeking is a temptation of young followers of Christ. (see Luke 8:14, 12:19, 1 Tim. 5:6, 2 Tim. 3:4) Satan promises everything, as he tempted Christ, but gives nothing. (Matt. 4:11)

As we read the book of Ecclesiastes, we notice the general teaching of it is to expose the vanity of all worldly enjoyments. Furthermore, it shows that a person's happiness does not lie in natural wisdom and knowledge, nor in worldly wealth, nor in civil honour, power and authority, nor in the mere externals of religion; but in the fear of God and the worship of him. The fear of God encourages man to a free use of good things of life in a moderate way with thankfulness to God.

In his search for the true and best way to use this world for our good and profit was not found in worldly wisdom. (Eccl. 1:12-18) It is not to be found in carnal pleasure. (Eccl. 2:1-3, 7:6) It is not found in great possessions. (2:7-11) (Here is where Satan tempts us to put temporal interests before worship.)

May God keep us from coveting the vain things upon this world. (Read Acts 5:1-11, Luke 12:15, Eph. 5:3) May we follow this exhortation: "And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away." (I Cor. 7:31) It behooves God's people to live a life of Godliness. It is profitable unto all things. (see Tim. 4:8)

Dear reader, please look up the Scripture references. These are a few of the great precepts and commands laid down for our good for the directions of our lives while we live here in this world. "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." (2 Cor. 9:8)

"And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ." (Phil. 1:9-10)

(Elder) C. M. Haygood
Ballinger, Texas

RECEIVES COMFORT FROM OUR WRITERS

Rt. 1,
St. Charles, Kentucky

Dear Editors:

"And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability." (Matthew 25:15) After a long time the lord of these servants came and reckoned with them; and to the one that had five talents, and the one that had two, he said, "Well done thou good and faithful servant." Then the servant that had the one talent said that he was afraid, and went and hid the talent in the earth.

Sometimes I wonder if some of his little, trembling servants do not try to hide that one talent they have: They love His appearing, and long for more evidence; they love the word, but think maybe it does not mean them, and try to hide it from the church. The one talent was just as important as either of the other two's talents.

What great comfort we get from the *Signs of the Times*. Brothers and Sisters write for our good paper. We love to hear from those who have been given a talent to "feed my sheep."

I am sending a good letter from a dear one who is traveling along with us. All we have is just a little hope, which is sometimes so wonderful, and sometimes almost gone.

Our Christian love to each and every one of you.

W. B. and Mona McGregor

LETTER TO SISTER McGREGOR

1302 Walnut Street,
Benton, Ky. 42025

Dear Sister Mona (McGregor):

In your letter last week, some of it I just couldn't answer. When you spoke of this creature having a talent to write about things concerning the truth as it is in Jesus our Lord, the Christ, our Master, the King of Kings, the precious Redeemer of the Elect of God, who am I that I should even express myself in my ignorance concerning those marvelous truths, and to claim that I see, and that I hope and believe these Bible truths, and have a right by the workings of God's grace, to handle and express myself, as you know I continually do when among our friends.

. . . David was blessed to write in the Spirit of our God to the church of the living God, and he could sing the songs of grace. His experience, dear Mona, is our experience: when nature is under control and the Spirit of Truth is given us to see the beauty of Zion, and walk about Zion and go round about her, and tell the towers thereof; and mark well her bulwarks and consider her palaces, to tell it to the generation following. That generation is the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham, as Matthew expresses it in the first chapter of his Gospel.

What a privilege it is to write to His children, God's children, about these beauties; what a privilege it is to express our thoughts to one another; and how relieved we feel when we can talk with those we fellowship about these things — It's rest to us; its peace to us.

Saturday night, January 23rd, Elder Paul Poyner and wife visited in my home, and others came in to hear him talk. Sunday following we met at the Soldier Creek Church. It was not our regular meeting day, but the icy roads had kept us from meeting for a few Sundays; and we phoned around to the different churches in adjoining counties, and had several from the New Providence Church and the Mayfield Church to come and be with us. Elder Poyner spoke to the comfort of us who believe in God's Doctrine: made believers, as we hope, by the working of His mighty power. For it is of Him that we are in Christ Jesus; and it is the work of God that we believe in Jesus whom He hath sent.

That belief creates a zeal in us, an earnest desire to worship God, and give him not only the tenth, but all our praise, all our heart, mind and soul; and all glory.

In hope, Mona,
Effie Bowden

THE CRY AND THE ANSWER

1718 Chamagnolle Road
ElDorado, Arkansas

Dear Editors:

What am I? "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." "The way of man is not in himself." Why was I born into this world? for in my meditations I see myself so wicked and sinful, it seems I am good material for a sword of the Lord. Yet he uses and directs us after the counsel of his own will.

As we go along the carnal highway

of life, we go moaning, asking in our weak and depraved strength for mercy. At times it seems this asking does not get any further than our lips, but when the sweet presence of the Holy Spirit comes to us in our lonely hours of meditation, we sigh in our very souls, "Oh, Lord be merciful to us." We cry as it is written in Habakkuk 2:11, "For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it."

A poor alien sinner is lifeless and helpless until he is made to cry from his wall of sinfulness by the regenerating power of almighty God, then the answer comes from the beam out of the timber, the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. If not deceived we are given to enjoy this when given spiritual light and understanding. This may not be worth anything to anyone, but the sweet consolation we have from it, we do not have words to explain.

"The stone shall cry." What a positive declaration! "Out of the wall." How often do we cry for deliverance from the enclosed walls of our sinfulness. Who is it that shall answer?: the beam out of the timber — God. It is a sweet morsel of heavenly food to the sin burdened child of God, and can only be enjoyed from the fountain from which all blessings come.

You will find enclosed $5.00 for two years' renewal to the *Signs*. May the Lord's blessings be ours to enjoy in this low ground of sin and sorrow, and ours at last to be around the throne of the one and only God forever.

Yours, an unworthy creature,
J. J. Davis

PROPHECY

Prophecy tells of future events coming to pass before they come to pass. This is called prophesying. This is the work of prophets, chosen for this work. In the Old Testament there were sixteen of these prophets, beginning with Isaiah and ending with Malachi. These men all spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit within them.

In the days of Isaiah, Israel was in a deplorable condition. There are a few verses in Chapter One I want to briefly notice. In verses 2 and 3, we find these words: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his master, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider."

These are strong words against human beings. They are brought down equal with or below the animals. The animals knew their masters and they knew their masters fed them. But Israel did not know, they did not consider.

There is something in man that is a mystery. It is called "latent nature," or something hidden, or something that lies dormant until it is acted upon. So there was latent nature in Aaron and the other Israelites when Aaron made a molten calf out of the earrings of the people, and they said, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." It is hard to believe a human being can stoop so low. So they worshipped idols in those days.

In verse 6 of Chapter One of Isaiah, we find these words: "From the sole of the foot even to the head there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrifying sore. They have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment." But we must notice the Lord still called Israel His people. "My people doth not consider."

Now to verse 18: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." A question: How is this change to be accomplished? According to my

understanding, this change was accomplished by the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ at Calvary. The blood of animals or birds could not take away sin.

In verses 19 and 20, we read as follows: "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land. But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." The fact that the Lord spoke these words, we may rest assured they will come to pass as spoken.

These words are conditional. I believe there are some among the Primitive Baptists who base their authority for using the term "Conditional Time Salvation" on these words. They believe, if I understand correctly, that these words apply to those who have been born again or regenerated. But I think it is well for us to remember that the words in Isaiah 1:19 were spoken during the time of the old covenant which was done away with at the coming of Christ. "Behold the days come, Saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and the house of Judah." (Jeremiah 31:31)

Now verse 33: "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, Saith the Lord. I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts and will be their God, and they shall be my people."

We now turn to Hebrews, Chapter 8, for a continuance of the subject of the two covenants. "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also, he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. (Hebrews 8:6-7) Now verse 13: "In that he saith a new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."

In the Scriptures previously quoted, we have learned that the old covenant has become obsolete. He taketh away the first that "he may establish the second." (From memory)

We have been dwelling upon the prophecy of the Old Testament, and the old covenant, now we turn to the New Testament prophecy. But someone may say, "I thought all prophecy was fulfilled at the coming of Christ." All prophecy relating to the birth, the ministry and the death, burial and the resurrection of Christ, and His ascension to heaven were fulfilled. But there are New Testament prophecies also.

Your attention is invited to Second Timothy, Chapter 3: "This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come." Remember, these words were written very near two thousand years ago. Are we living in the last days? The events that are coming to pass, and have been for several years convince me we are.

Continuing on in this third chapter, the apostle gives a sordid account of what would come to pass during the last days. Men would be lovers of their ownselves; covetous, high-minded, loving pleasures more than lovers of God. Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof. Timothy is told to turn away from all such.

The aposlte has something to say about women. He calls them silly, laden with divers lusts. There would be some no doubt among both men and women to whom these words apply. Both men and women are carried away with a desire to have a good time in the world. What these people call a good time is hateful to Him whose eyes are too pure to look upon evil. These worldly minded people do as is written of them: "Choose darkness rather than light; because their deeds are evil." But these evil acts of men and women come under the head of prophecy because, as before mentioned, Paul wrote the words, "In the last days perilous times shal come," nearly two thousand years ago; therefore these things must come

to pass that the Scripture (prophecy) might be fulfilled.

Referring again to men and women choosing darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil, brings to mind what Christ said to Matthew, Chapter 24, and verses 37 to 39: "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away; So shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

The words "They were eating and drinking" in verse 38, to me are very significant. I have never been in what is called a night club, and I am glad and thankful I have not. But from what I have heard about them, it is a place of eating and drinking; and these places are kept open till late hours at night, to give these pleasure lovers more time to continue on in their sinful ways; not knowing that the pure eyes of the Lord see all this evil, and some time, we know not how soon, these evil people will be taken away as were the people in the days of Noah and the flood.

We now come to what seems to me to be the end of all prophecy. I will quote from Isaiah, Chapter 2, verses three and four: "And many people shall go and say, come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways; and we will walk in His paths; For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people, and they shall beat their swords into plow shares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neitheir shall they learn war any more."

Now let us pause for a moment to meditate. We can hardly picture in our minds what a time like this would be like. Yet we know a state of tranquility will exist. Compare this with the conditions under which we are living today and note the difference. Today we are in peril or danger. It looks as though wicked men have invented their last destructive weapon. A weapon which, if used, would destroy all life upon the earth. And it would be used were it not for the fact the Lord is going to cut short the work of these wicked and depraved creatures.

In Matthew 24, verses 21 and 22, we find these words: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to that time, no, nor ever shall be." These words verify what is written in Daniel 12. Read it.

Now verse 22: "And except those days be shortened, no flesh should be saved, but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

In Revelation, Chapter 21 and verses 5 and 6, we find these words: "And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, write: For these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, it is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." (First clause of verse 6. Notice the words "Behold I make *all things* new."

So there will be a new heaven and a new earth. What this will look like, I don't know, but it will be new. Who is going to make all things new? The answer is Christ. At His second coming the separation between the righteous and the wicked will take place, each being sent to the place prepared for them.

In Revelation, Chapter 22 and verse 16 we find these words: "I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." I understand it was the apostle John who was sent to testify of these things in the churches. He was the angel.

The book of Revelation completes the

Bible. Nothing is to be added to the words written therein, nor nothing taken from them.

A. T. Benson
Delmar, Del.

NATURE AND FAITH

We wept — 'twas *Nature* wept — but Faith
Can pierce beyond the gloom of death,
And in yon world so fair and bright
Behold thee in refulgent light!
We miss thee here, yet *Faith* would rather
Know thou art with thy Heavenly Father.
Nature sees the body dead,
Faith beholds the spirit fled;
Nature stops at Jordan's tide,
Faith beholds the other side;
That but hears farewell and sighs,
This, thy welcome in the skies.
Nature mourns a *cruel* blow;
Faith assures it is not so.
Nature never sees thee more;
Faith but sees thee gone before.
Nature tells a dismal story;
Faith has visions full of glory.
Nature views the change with sadness;
Faith contemplates it with gladness.
Nature sorrows, *Faith* gives meekness —
"Strength is perfected in weakness."
Nature weeps, and dreads the rod;
Faith looks up and blesses God.
Sense looks downwards; *Faith*, above;
That sees harshness, *this* sees love.
Oh! let *Faith* victorious be,
Let it reign triumphantly!
But thou art gone! — not lost, but flown;
Shall I then ask thee back, my own?
Back, and leave thy spirit's brightness?
Back, and leave the robes of whiteness?
Back, and leave the Lamb who feeds thee?
Back, from founts to which He leads thee?
Back, and leave thy Heavenly Father?
Back to earth and sin? Nay, rather
Would I live in solitude!
I *would* not ask thee, if I *could*;
But patient wait the high decree
That calls my spirit home with thee!

— *Elizabeth Webb*

(By permission of Loizeaux Brothers, Inc., Neptune, N. J., publishers.)

A DELIGHTFUL VISIT

Rt. 3, Box 431
Martinsville, Virginia

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

I long so much of the time to talk with some of the brethren, or write to them to ease my troubled breast.

I just had to write a short letter in regard to the wonderful time we had together in the home of Brother and Sister Rice Akers, Ferrum, Virginia, from the Pigg River Association held at Rocky Mount, Virginia; with much natural food, along with so much spiritual food.

The wonderful talks, and the experiences from Sister Wood and Brother Akers, seem a heaven here below for a poor sinner like me. So much of my time I am groping in darkness, just trying to hold on: it seems that all hope is clean gone at times. But that power of the most high God, as Sister Wood said, moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform: He always comes to a little child's rescue when worldly things confront us.

I am so thankful for his mercies and the manifestations of his love while we live in this world, because there is nothing we can do. In Philippians 2:13, Paul says, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." He makes his people a willing people in the day of his power. In Jeremiah 31:3, it is written, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." I am so glad that in Matthew 11:25 Jesus said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." etc.

We had such a wonderful association, with good singing; and God's gifted ministers spoke of the wonderful things of God, the Saviour. I surely was fed all three days. I ask the prayers of you and Sister Wood for my family and me.

A brother in hope of eternal life,
Raymond L. Brammer

(We heartily agree with what Brother Brammer has said above. Most of the evening was spent in Brother and Sister Akers' home talking of "good things"; and it is so pleasant and comforting to be together when we are blessed to spend the time this way. The things we talked about that evening would be distasteful to those who know nothing about the work of God in his people in bringing them out of darkness into the light of the knowledge of the truth of what He has done for them. Some are gifted to talk of these things more than others, but all listen with intense interest when others are speaking of them. It is especially good to be led to talk of these things when there are some present whose hearts are yearning for a word of comfort and confirmation that their exercises are of the Lord. This we found there that evening, and we will not soon forget our visit with Brother and Sister Akers.

— J. D. W)

UNION MEETING

The Lord willing, the **Union Meeting** of the churches of the **Predestinarian Old School Baptists of California** will be held with the Bakersfield Church, on Alpine Street, near Baker Street and California Avenue, in the Oddfellow's Hall, on October 29, 30, and 31 (Friday, Saturday and fifth Sunday in October).

For information call Sister Bertha Wright, 108 Circle Drive, Bakersfield, Calif. Phone EX 9-0429. Or phone 331-5210, West Covina, Calif.

Walter B. Wilson, Clerk

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Levie D. Goard, Va.	1.00
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Danville, Va.

EDITORIAL

SERMON BY
ELDER E. J. LAMBERT
LIBERTY HILL CHURCH
UNION PARISH, LA.

"BECAUSE HE LOVED YOU."
(Deut. 7:7, 8)

If not deceived, we are mindful that it is a blessing of God to be again in your midst; and we trust that we appreciate it from the depths of our heart. We are thankful to God that he has thus blessed us, and we trust he will further bless us to preach to you the unsearchable riches of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for your comfort and edification; and to the praise of the matchless name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

I have been so mindful of late of how precious time is: too precious to be wasted upon things that are natural; things which pass away with the using. Such a precious time it is as we are gathered together in attempting to worship God, with the desire to worship him in Spirit and in Truth. Time is so precious that we pray that God will grant us to be truly together in one mind and one Spirit, worshiping the one God; and that he will lift us up together — the speaker and the congregation — from the things of this life, to meditate upon things eternal; and that this may be a heavenly spot in our memory.

As Brother Turner was praying, my mind was taken up with a portion of Scripture I have never attempted to speak upon. It is found in the seventh chapter of Deuteronomy, verses 7 and 8: "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharoah King of Egypt."

This was the aftermath of the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage by the mighty and loving hand of God. This deliverance of Israel from Egypt, across the Red Sea out of the clutches of the enemy, is highly figurative, and a certain symbol of the experimental deliverance of the Lord's people from day to day, all through the many times that have gone by; and including the present.

We would like, the Lord willing, to take this Scripture, as the Lord will bless us, and speak to you the truthfulness of it; and its firmness. We want you to take cognizance of the fact that the writer here says that the Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because you were more in number than any people, for ye were the fewest of all nations, but because the Lord loved you. In this statement the Lord comes first. If you will notice, in the beginning of Genesis it says, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." It would not be doing violence to this Scripture to set it with the subject first, and say, "God created the heaven and the earth in the beginning." God did the creating.

In St. John we read, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." This tells of a different beginning, or of a different creation. The first was natural, the second spiritual; the first was timely, the second eternal; the first was earthly, the second heavenly; the first corruptible, the second incorruptible; the first was mortal, the second immortal. So God is the God of creation; he is the God of Providence, and the God of grace.

(I am glad to see that there are some young people here tonight. In our section of the country, at the last two or three meeting times at our home church, the majority of the congregation was young people. It makes me glad to see you boys and girls.)

We want to define GOD for you. May I bring forth this definition; and may God grant it in your hearts and minds, to know the meaning of GOD. He gives that meaning in one assertion in the Scriptures. We do not need to go to Webster for the meaning of the term God. He said through one of the prophets, "I am God, and there is none else; I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." That is God — it takes that to be God.

If a person tells you, (and he means what he says,) that he believes in God, he believes in one who is sovereign; in one who is immutable, never changing; in one who is the controller, super-

ruler, and performer of all things. To the extent that he does not believe this, to that extent he does not believe in God. There are lords many and gods many, but unto us there is but one true and living God. This true and living God is the one who set his love upon us, who chose us — and not that we chose him.

I recall an assertion in the Scriptures where one made this remark: "If it seems evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve." I want to ask you this, "Does the doctrine of your own individual choice enter into the matter of worshiping God? In that case you would have to bring yourself into this condition: You would have to affirm that it seems evil to you to serve God. If you can affirm that it seems evil to you to serve God, then you are at liberty to choose between gods — between false gods; between the lords many and the gods many.

But the one who said this also said, "But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Oh! how great God is. Have you ever been able to measure him? Have you ever been able to set a limit upon him? Have you ever been able to come to the high calling? Have you ever been able to comprehend him? No! a thousand times, No! You can never comprehend God; but I tell you one thing, God comprehends you. In the midst of this very fact, this is the God of the Bible: He is the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

The writer in Deuteronomy said, "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you because you were more in number than any people, for you were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you." As far as the choice of his people is concerned, that is God's business.

In the prayer of Jesus recorded in the 17th chapter of St. John, he said, speaking of himself in the third person, "As thou has given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hast given him." Jesus had power over all flesh: it was given him by the Father for the specific purpose that He, the Son, should give eternal life to — How many? as many as the Lord had given him. Yea! that choice was by God first. God chose his people.

God set his love upon his people. This is affirmed from the beginning of Genesis to the conclusion of Revelation. Any other doctrine is an un-scriptural doctrine. You know that John, in meditating upon that grand theme of love, said, "We love God because he first loved us." Do you know of any other reason? Was it, dear people, because you decided to love him? Oh no! not that. Your decision was to love yourself. That was your carnal nature — the nature of every one that is born of natural parents. Their seed comes from the natural, their family head, Adam. In Adam all died. Yea, they all serve self, and they all worship self; they all choose self, and have selfish aims and ambitions; and they do not choose God. But, thanks to almighty God, He did choose his people. You know, Jesus said to his disciples, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you."

I want to bring your attention to the fact that Jesus in choosing his disciples, went to where they were. Some were fishing; and he went to them and said, "Come, follow me." "Come and I will make you fishers of men." Jesus went exactly to where they were. He did not give it as a proposition to a multitude of people, and say that whosoever will might come and be my disciple. That was not the way Jesus did it — that was not the way God did it. I'll tell you how God did it: like his Son did it: Jesus went to where these people were, and though some of them were fishing, he told them, "I will make you fishers of men."

I dare say that those whom He called out, he called from their vocations of

life — not that they chose it as a vocation. Everyone who has run that has not been sent; everyone who has been called by money; everyone who has been called by man; everyone who has been called by any power other than God, preaches the power that sent him. Let me hear what he preaches, and I will tell you exactly who called him to preach. If he preaches the power of money, I will say that money called him; if he preaches the power of man, I will say that man called him; if he preaches the power of anything other than God, I will say that is what called him. But if he preaches God; if he proclaims that God is the creator of the heaven and the earth; if he preaches that God is the one who performs all things for his people; if he proclaims that God chose his people, that God set his love upon his people; if he proclaims that the reason he loves God is because God first loved him, then I believe that God called him to preach. Why? because he is preaching the power of God.

I tell you something else: when I hear them speaking of Jesus Christ; when I hear them calling upon Jesus Christ's name, I want them to go ahead and tell me how far Jesus goes — how far his power goes. Then I'll know whether or not he is talking about the Jesus Christ that is talked about in the Scriptures. If he tells me that Jesus is trying to save everybody, but that the Devil is coming along and getting the most of them, I tell you that is not the Jesus Christ we read about in the Bible.

The angel told the truth when he said to Joseph, "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost; and she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus for he *shall*" (give an opportunity for all to be saved? absolutely not!) "save his people from their sins." Then do not preach Jesus to be like that. I used to preach it, because that was exactly the kind of Jesus I then believed in. But when God made me to know that Jesus is powerful to save, from then until now, I preach a Jesus powerful to save. The language the angel spoke is true, "For he *shall save* his people from their sins." No half-way doing it, but He shall do it.

I want to tell you that the Lord has set his love upon you; not that you have set your love upon him. We love God because he first loved us. He told his disciples, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." After He set his love upon you, the Scriptures say that he draws you: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Who does the drawing? the answer is, God. Do you believe that any person whom God has ever drawn, failed to come to him? Absolutely not! I believe in the power of God to draw; I believe that he draws with a cord that is just as powerful as he is. And that cord with which he draws, is his everlasting love. That is characteristic of his love — it is everlasting. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love."

I want to tell you about this God: He never changes. If he has ever set his love upon you, it has always been upon you; and always will be. No one can ever take that love from off you, because his love is from everlasting to everlasting, and never changes. That people whom he set his love upon, and whom he chose, is Israel.

I have heard it affirmed that it says here, that God did not choose you because you were the greatest number, but because you were the fewest: It does not say that. It says that you are the fewest of all people; not that he chose you because of this.

(We were talking in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Everett this evening about some of the conditions that exist in some places, where it seems that so few believe this precious truth: the sovereignty of God, and the wonderful merits of Jesus Christ and his power

to save.) Being the fewest of all people is not why he chose you. He said, "Because I have loved thee." The love of God is the reason, and the only reason his love has been set upon us; the only reason he has chosen us; and the only reason Jesus Christ died for us.

Let us quote St. John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." What does this show? It shows that he loves a people. Now go with us to the ninth chapter of Romans, and we read a Scripture written hundreds of years before Jacob and Esau were born: "So it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." It was said that Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. This was written before they were born, in order to show that it was not because of the things that Jacob had done. It is not because of the things that He forsaw in you, or that you would do, but because he loved you.

"For God so loved the world," What world? What great and what manner of love is this! It is so high you cannot go to the height of it; it is so deep you cannot go to the depth of it; and it is so wide you cannot go to the breadth of this great love. In this love for the world, he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. You will notice in Acts 14:48, that of those Gentiles who believed the preaching of the ministers of Almighty God, it was said, "And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."

Jesus, speaking about himself being the good Shepherd (and an effectual Shepherd), said that he calls *his sheep* by name, and leads them out. "And they follow me; a stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers." To some he said, "Ye believe me not because you are not of my sheep. As I said unto you, My sheep hear my voice." I tell you that the person who does not hear the voice of Jesus, is the person who proves he is not one of His sheep; because where Jesus has spoken, there is the word of a King. And the Scriptures say that where the word of a king is, there is power.

You remember the word of King Jesus the time he called Lazarus forth from the grave. Lazarus was just as dead naturally as any who are dead in trespasses and sins, are dead spiritually. It would be just as sensible for us to go out into this cemetery and tell those dead folks to arise and walk, as it would be for us to try and preach to dead alien sinners. Those who are dead in trespasses and sins could not understand any more what we said, than if we should go out and talk to the graves, and ask those who are in them, to come forth. It would be just as meaningful for us to do it. But you know that Jesus went to Lazarus and said, "Lazarus, come forth." And the result was that Lazarus came forth.

I heard a man in the pulpit say a few years ago, "The trouble with the world today is that there are so many Lazaruses that Christ has called forth from the grave, that are still lying dormant in the grave." Do you believe it? Absolutely not! Why? because where the word of a king is, there is power. King Jesus had such power. Where was that word then? it was in Lazarus in the grave. What did it cause? it caused him to come forth. What was it that caused him to come forth? the power of the word of a King.

When that saint came forth from the grave, the mighty power of Jesus was made known to those around about them. Do you believe in the power of Christ to save? Did you ever hear a person preach that there is no person or thing under the sun (nor all persons, nor all things), that could do one thing toward your salvation — your eternal abode, but Jesus Christ? that he was a perfect and complete Saviour? Have you ever heard that preached? I

tell you, if you have, you heard the truth.

I believe that when Jesus came into this world, that his being here was for a purpose. That purpose was to do exactly what the angel told Joseph it was: To save his people from their sins. You know, he sojuroned here almost thirty-three years, not to do away with, nor abolish the law, but to fulfill it to a jot and tittle — every bit of it. Not only that, he took your sins and mine, if I be in that family, and bore them, and paid the penalty. He shed his blood on Calvary's tree for the remission of the sins of all the people of God. Everyone for whom he died shall live in eternal bliss forever; everyone for whom he lived, shall live eternally in heaven — without the loss of one. Do you believe this? If you do, you believe in Jesus Christ. That is what you must believe; that is life eternal. Jesus said, "This is life eternal."

People ask, What is life eternal? and they begin to imagine and to speculate as to what it is. Some think it begins beyond this life. I want to tell you that it does not wait until beyond this life to begin. It begins here in time: It is when you are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible. Jesus defines it — look for yourself — in the 17th chapter of St. John: "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

May I ask, Do you know Him as the only true God? Do you know Jesus Christ whom he has sent? I have a faint hope . . . Yea, I hope it has been rooted in my heart and soul for many years, to know God and Jesus Christ. What do I mean by this? I mean that when I learned God, that God revealed himself to me as being sovereign, as being holy, as being all wise, as being all powerful, as being everywhere present and nowhere absent, as being the ruler of the heavens and the earth; and at the same time he revealed to me that I was nothing and less than nothing, and vanity. There was set such a great gulf between God's power and my inability; God's wisdom and my foolishness; God's holiness and my sins, until, with all the efforts I made to establish my own righteousness, I could not establish one bit of it. Could you? I could not appease the wrath of an avenging God; and felt that Hell would be my doom, and that justly so: that I would be cut off, and that without remedy. I felt then that should my soul not be sent to Hell, God would not be just — because he would have to send me to Hell to be a just God. Have you been along there? if you have you have known God.

The first lesson that you have, the first experience in life eternal, is a terrible experience. It is a sad experience. When people come forth born of natural parents, they come forth crying, do they not? You mothers never heard a chuckle or a laugh to be the first sound of a new born babe, have you? Why, because it is not natural: it is natural for it to come forth crying. It is also natural for a child of God, that is born of the Spirit of God, when he first comes forth, to manifest he has life by crying. It is something over which you do not have control. You have come to the point and place you have given up hope: there is no hope for you in this world, or the world to come. Have you ever been there? Oh, Lord! that is terrible; but I tell you that is good for you. It is the cry coming from one what is born of the Spirit: God is revealing himself to you as being a God of vengeance, a God of wrath, and a God of justice.

I want to tell you of another experience I had, that was the sweetest that ever came upon me. I was led by the kind providence of Almighty God into a little village, where I came under the sound of a minister of the gospel. God blessed that man to preach to me as he did Ananias to Paul; as he did Peter to Cornelius; as he has his min-

isters all through the line of life. He preached a perfect Saviour that night. He preached to me that there is a Jesus who saves to the utmost; that he did not need our help. He preached a Jesus who was a complete Saviour in himself; and was so perfect that everyone for whom he lived and for whom he died, would have eternal life. He preached that kind of Jesus to me. I have often wished that I might be blessed as an artist, so that I could paint the picture I saw that night; that I could paint a picture of that character that spanned the gulf between the wisdom of God and my foolishness; the holiness of God and my sins.

I saw that character in my mind's eye as he reached down in the pitfalls of sin and perdition; I saw him take up Hell deserving creatures just as vile as I; I saw him wash them whiter than snow with his blood, without any effort on their part; I saw him land them on heaven's shore. From that day until this I have never doubted the power of Jesus Christ to save. I thought I had preached Jesus before; but I never had. I thought I had seen him; but I never had. I did not know anything about him. But I will tell you, from that time to this day, I have been preaching a Jesus who is mighty to save. I have been preaching one that when he reveals himself to you in that terrible far off condition when you are without hope in the world, the command comes to you: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest; take my yoke upon you, and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

That is what comes from King Jesus. For when we are in the pitfalls, and are suffering the horrible, agonizing pains of death, he comes to us in his love, and in his mercy. He beckons us to come to him, and says, "Come all ye." Not part of them, because of everyone who is in that category, he has never left one out: he never has excluded one; and never will.

Everyone whom he calls, hears the voice of the blessed Son of God; and when he calls, they come. They come forth because they have no where else to go. Many followed him because of the curiosity of his healing; and for the loaves and fishes. When Jesus began to speak this truth about eating his flesh and drinking his blood, many said this is a hard saying, and went away from him. Turning then to his disciples, he asked, "Will ye go away also?" What was the answer? I tell you dear child of God, it is the answer of every trembling sinner who has been wrought upon mightily by God's wonderful mercy: "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

"Come all ye." When these words are spoken in power in the depths of the soul of every trembling child of God, what an easy matter it is, and what a great burden is laid aside when we come to Jesus. We are yoked to him at his command, when he says, "Take *my* yoke upon you." He did not call it *our* yoke, but *my* yoke. Here was a yoke that Jesus must bear: he must bear it for his people, and for his people alone. When he bore that yoke, it was so rough that it nailed him to the cross; so painful, that in the garden it caused him to sweat as it were great drops of blood; it was so terrible, that while on the cross he said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" It was a yoke he must bear; it was a yoke he must wear.

Did you ever see an unwilling horse, or a balking horse hitched up with a horse that would pull the whole load? I used to on the farm. I remember having a team like that once. My daddy fixed the double tree so that one horse could pull the whole load: it was fixed so that the trusty horse pulled the whole load, and the other horse was hitched to him. Everywhere the horse that pulled the load went, the other

went. That is how we are yoked to Jesus: Jesus bears the blunt of the yoke. He pulls in the fiercest battle, but we are yoked to him: He is pulling the load. No wonder he said, "My yoke is easy, my burden is light," He is doing all the work for you.

He said, "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work." What a great work was upon him! what a great work he accomplished! Oh! what great love he had for us. He said, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Jesus said, "No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him; and he that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." Do you believe that the Father half-way draws a person? Absolutely not! He draws them all the way. If you come to Jesus, you have been drawn by the cords of his everlasting love; and the promise is that you shall not be cast out.

What a wonderful thing that the Lord has set his love upon you! The Psalmist said that He has set him on high; and, Oh! how high He has set the people of God. He has set you so high that the cares of this world will never take that love from you. He has set you so high that the son of perdition, the angels of Satan, those of whom the Saviour spoke, "Ye are of your father, the devil," — the devil and all his children — cannot rob you of one blessing that God set for you — because he has your name upon it.

Dear children of God, there is not a step in your walk; there is not a word in your tongue; there is not a thought in your mind, but what God knows it altogether. He understands it, and should you see it as God sees it, you would say, "Oh! how beautiful it is. How beautiful is the whole of it." Why is it that we do not consider it beautiful? because we can only see it fragmentarily. We can only see and grasp it with finite minds, and we cast finite judgment upon it — wrong judgment. There is one whose ways are as far above our ways as the heavens are above the earth: his judgment is right, and his judgment is true. Whatsoever he doeth is right: we are not to question him. We are to realize that the potter hath power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor; and that we are the clay and God is the potter.

I want to say this in conclusion: I thank God for having blessed me to live with a people who believe in Him as being sovereign; as being God of all things. Blessing me to dwell with the people whose mouths praise God from whom all blessings flow; and who are not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, realizing that it is the power of God unto salvation. I thank him for having blessed me to dwell with his people upon the earth.

"The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you because you were more in number than any people, but because He loved you." Thank you; and Amen.

(The above was taken from a tape by Brother and Sister C. C. Barron, Spearsville, La. and is edited for publication. — J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

WHAT ARE THE RELIABLE EVIDENCES THAT WE HAVE PASSED FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE?

Perhaps there is no subject in which the feeble, fearful, trembling, tempted and doubting children of God feel a greater interest than to know what are the scriptural evidences of being in a quickened and regenerated state; as there can be no subject in which they feel so much concerned. One brother writes that he would be in despair if it were not for one bright spot in his life,

alluding to the time when Christ was first revealed to him as his Savior, but recalling to mind his happy frame on that occasion, his hope is frequently revived. In reflecting on this remark we have felt inclined to enquire, Can it be possible that the brother has never had but one reliable evidence in his long life, that he is a subject of saving grace? We know that it is very natural for us to revert to our first experience when doubts and fears assail our faith and hope in God. We do not object to this calling to mind God's former loving-kindness unto us, as evidences of his saving grace. Jeremiah remembered the time of the wormwood and the gall; from which God had graciously delivered him, and his hope was thereby revived. But is it right to overlook all other evidences and rely only on the first displays of God's love and mercy to us? To such exclusive reliance we object, because it underrates and overlooks the daily experience of the saints, which although in many instances they may not be as vivid and satisfactory to us as the first, are equally important and reliable, and should therefore be as fully appreciated, not only for the comfort of the saints, but also for the praise of the glory of God.

Because it tends to a repudiation of all subsequent evidences as being less conclusive and reliable, or worthless. How many have hung down their heads despairingly, because their first experiences were not so distinctly marked as those of others of whom they have heard or read; and although they can keep even pace with others in every subsequent step of their religious travel, are all their lifetime in bondage, through fear that they have started wrong, and therefore all subsequent experience has been but a delusion.

It may be that the general practice of our churches in the examination of applicants for baptism and membership, has been faulty in making the first exercises of the candidate far more important than other exercises. While we love to hear related the more wonderful displays of God's power and grace in bringing sinners to a knowledge of the truth, we should also listen very attentively to "the still small voice," which has whispered peace and salvation to the trembling ones. According to our own observation for more than fifty years in the church of Christ, those who have been the most fearful and trembling, have proved the most watchful and prayerful among the followers of Christ. Some have made us doubt the genuiness of their evidences, by the extravagant marvelousness of what they have related, while others who could scarcely say they had a hope, have showed such evident marks of the spirit of humility, self-abasement, and fear of being a disparagement to the church, that they have taken every step with the greatest fear and trembling, have given us the more satisfactory evidence of the work of grace wrought in their hearts by the finger of God. But we need not advert to observation, nor to feelings of satisfaction, for we have a more sure word of prophecy or instruction, to which we do well to take heed.

The scriptures of truth do not leave us uninformed as to the heaven-stamped and sealed evidences of a quickened state. Let us examine some of them. The case of Philip and the Eunuch, (Acts viii. 26-39), is in point. Here is an application for the ordinance, and the great question, What doth hinder me to be baptized? is asked. The man of God who was full of the Holy Ghost, is amply qualified to decide this matter, which concerns all others as well as the Eunuch. How does Philip settle this question? Whatever impediment might be in the way to hinder the Eunuch, is still in the way of all others, and whatever qualifications entitled him to the privilege, are equally applicable to all others who possess them. Philip did not say, If you can distinctly call to mind your first religious exercises, if you saw the flaming gulf open

to receive you; and all your sins were distinctly presented to your terror-stricken soul; if you were held in that distressing state a certain length of time; and can distinctly tell how you felt, and what you thought during this time of bitter anguish of your soul, and if you know just when, and where, and how you were delivered, and how you felt at that time; and if you do not now feel too unworthy, to be numbered with the saints. These were not the questions proposed, nor the prerequisites demanded. If they had been it would have debarred thousands of the precious children of God from that holy ordinance, and perhaps the Eunuch himself would have been rejected. But observe, the only question was as to the then present state of the Eunuch, and not a question was asked in regard to his former exercises of mind. "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." Shall any one now dare impose any other requisite than that which the Holy Ghost through Philip then required? That which applied to one, equally applies to every subject of grace.

But let it be remembered that the question implied more than a formal profession of belief. It is not enough that the natural judgment or understanding should assent to the truth, for it is with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. This belief must come from the heart, not the head; for the law of Christ is written in the hearts of the children of God. A new heart is given them, for the old heart is destitute of the faith of the Son of God; and a new spirit is put within them, for their faith is the fruit of the spirit; if, therefore, the candidate believes with all his heart, it is an infallible testimony that he has received this new heart, and a new spirit is given him. Now, according to this example, we insist that the church and the administrator should be satisfied that the candidate has passed from death unto life — is born again, and has that full belief in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, which can only result from the faith of Jesus Christ dwelling in his heart.

There are many who without any change of heart, without any love to God, or knowledge of their own lost and helpless condition, with no saving knowledge of God, of Christ, of the way of salvation, may say I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and speaking after the manner of men, they do; that is, they have a traditional belief; knowing no reason why they should disbelieve what they have read or heard others say; but in the case of the Eunuch, there were strong circumstantial evidences that God had wrought this faith in his heart. His mind was directed to the scriptures; he is found reading the book of the prophet Isaiah; he is buried in deep thought; he is earnest to understand the scriptures. He has a thirst for a knowledge of him of whom the prophet wrote, and although a man of high standing, and in great authority, he had a childlike humility, and desired that some one of clearer understanding in divine things should guide him. The minister of Christ is gladly received into his chariot; he has a hearing ear, and an understanding heart, and as he hears of Jesus, as preached by Philip, in his heart receives the testimony, gladly receives the word, and most unwaveringly believes that this Jesus is the Son of God, of whom the prophet testified.

Another evidence of his heavenly birth is given in his desire to take on him the yoke of Jesus, to follow him in the ordinance of baptism. Absorbed in thought as he heard of Jesus, and transported with new light upon the subject and theme of prophecy, and attentively listening to the preaching of Jesus by Philip though he was at that time, he did not pass the baptismal waters unnoticed. "See here is water!" Never before had water presented such attrac-

tion to his eyes. Wonder, ye heavens! what heavenly beauty this faith discovers in that water; the footprints of his Savior; the bright example for all his children are seen. Did water ever before seem so lovely? The Savior's high command, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," is applied with power. O what a joyful privilege it would be, he may have thought, if I were worthy to follow Jesus in that delightful ordinance! Nay, I cannot be denied, unworthy though I am. Thou man of God, "See here is water! what doth hinder me to be baptized?"

Indeed, we know of no authority in the scriptures for attaching more importance to past than to present evidences of our having passed from death unto life.

The apostle John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Not because our first evidences were so clear, or strongly marked. Not because we have acted so well our part; not because our natures have become better than they were before, nor because we feel that we are now worthy of a place in the house of God, and communion with his saints; but simply because we love them, and desire to be with them.

And Paul says, "For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God." The test is not laid on what is past; but what is present. If we are led by the spirit of God, it will lead us to Jesus; to his work; to his laws, his ordinances, and to his people. It will make us feel that we are very, very unworthy of his favor, and to admire and gaze and wonder at the manner of love which God hath bestowed on us that we should be called the sons of God.

Another present and reliable evidence that we are the children of God, is that "God dealeth with us as with sons." "If ye endure chastening," then have ye the evidence. "But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons."

How many present evidences are found in the scriptures of our sonship, and heirship, as sons of God and heirs of glory; and who shall tell us that any one, or all of these are less reliable than the first that we ever received?

We would by no means depreciate or undervalue the first evidences which were given us in our new birth; for without that birth we should be forever destitute of all the other evidences. But if we cannot find in our first experience the extraordinary exercises that some others can, we are fully warranted in relying on those which our God has seen proper to give us. If because we cannot tell when, where, or under what circumstances we were born into the natural world, would we be reasonable in concluding that we never were born? The very fact that we are now alive, is sufficient evidence that there was a time when we began to live. If, to-day, we love God, it is because he first loved us. And if we ever have loved him, the evidence is the same, for we could not possibly love him from any other cause.

There is one other evidence we will name, and that is, If we are involved in the Christian warfare, then have we the same evidence of a heavenly birth that Paul had. Until we were born of God the whole current of our nature ran in one way; our element was sin; it was sweet to our taste, and we drank it as the ox drinketh water. There can be no war where there is but one party. In the Shulamite we see as it were the company of two armies. So in every Christian is seen two opposite determined hostile parties. The one is born of the flesh and is flesh; and he held his palace in peace, without opposition, until another party came to occupy the same house, or person. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. These are opposite one to the other; for the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and so

terribly does the battle sometimes rage, that we cannot do the things we would. All who are born of God, but no others, will, so long as they are here in the flesh, find a law in their fleshly members warring against the law of their mind, which will at times bring them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members. All the doubts and unbelief that ever assailed or troubled a Christian in regard to his interest in Christ arises from his fleshly nature. Doubts, fears and temptations, unbelief and desponding fears, are the artillery of the flesh and of Satan, planted against the law of their mind; but however the faith of God's people may be stormed, faith shall most assuredly triumph ultimately, for God giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Dead fish will float down with the current; only the living fish will stem the tide. Those who never have any conflict, can never know the joys of victory. Those who have no temptations cannot appreciate deliverance. And those who have no clouds must live in a very dry pasture.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe June 15, 1866.)

OBITUARIES

LEWIS JACKSON POTTER

Brother Lewis Jackson Potter was born in Franklin County, Virginia, May 20, 1876, and was called from this life February 13, 1965, making his stay on earth almost eighty-nine years.

He was married to Nannie Elizabeth Kirk July 10, 1904, and to this union ten children were born, two dying in infancy. He leaves to mourn his passing his wife and eight children: Willard Potter and Mrs. Clara Jones, Martinsville, Va.; Benjamin and Ralph Potter, Penhook, Va.; Mrs. Ruby Reynolds, Cliff, Gean and Hoover Potter, Rocky Mount, Va. Also one sister, twenty-three grandchildren and fifteen great grandchildren, and a great host of friends.

He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Chapel, Franklin County, Va., August 29, 1915, and was baptized September 12, 1915. He was ordained deacon August 19, 1933.

Brother Potter was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God, and was faithful to attend his church, never having to miss many meetings. His funeral was preached at Lynch's Funeral Home, Rocky Mount, by Elder J. P. Helms and his pastor, Elder O. K. Tench; and he was laid to rest in the family cemetery near Penhook. His spirit has gone to God who gave it.

May God richly bless and comfort all who mourn.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Mary Brown, Clerk

MRS. H. G. McLEOD

Mrs. H. G. McLeod passed away February 10, 1965. She was a resident of Atlanta, Texas, for ten years, but was a native and resident of Pine Island, Louisiana, for many years.

She is survived by her husband, H. G. McLeod, Atlanta, Texas; seven daughters: Mrs. Maudie Stephenson and Mrs. Mary Moore, of Shrevesport, La.; Mrs. Martha Nell Taylor, Bossier City, La.; Mrs. Ester Innis, Perryton, Texas; Mrs. Henrietta Braswell, of the Philippine Islands; Mrs. Vada Lois VanMoeckerque, Woonsocket, R. I.; and Mrs. Jane Ann Casas, Pala Alto, Calif.; two sons: Ernest McLeod, Port Arthur, Texas; and Paul McLeod, Oil City, La.; four sisters and one brother; and thirty-six grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

She was a wonderful wife and mother and raised a devoted family. She was a lover of the old Baptists, and her home was a lodging place for them; and many people throughout the South visited their home.

I would say to those that are left behind, to weep not as those who have no hope, for Mrs. Mary certainly had a hope beyond this vail of tears. We feel that our loss is her gain. Funeral services were conducted by the writer.

Elder Loyd Wall

SYLVANUS CARTER

Deacon Sylvanus Carter was born in Franklin County, Virginia, near Republican Church on February 21, 1894, the son of Thomas Carter and Elizabeth Greer Carter, both members of Republican Church.

He married Virgie F. Dodson on November 15, 1914.

He offered to the Church in May 1941, and was gladly received, as was his companion who also offered on the same day. They both were baptized in July, 1941, by Elder Emmett Bryant at Old Union Church in Smith River Association.

His church saw the gift of a deacon in him, and he was ordained deacon January 17, 1948, serving faithfully until his death. He

was chosen clerk of his church November 17, 1945, and filled that duty until taken from us by death.

He died on October 27, 1964, as a result of injuries received in an automobile accident on October 24, 1964. His funeral was conducted at his home church, Republican, on October 29, 1964, by Elder William Holland, Elder Amos Hash, and the writer, his pastor. He was interred in his home cemetery.

He is survived by his wife, Virgie Dodson Carter; two daughters, Mrs. Boneta Corley, Chesapeake, and Mrs. Elaine Nuckols, Rocky Mount; five sons, J. Lauren Carter, Rocky Mount; T. Donovan Carter, Ferrum; A. Otis Carter, Cockeysville, Maryland; Leon V. Carter, Reisterstown, Maryland; and Maury L. Carter, Orlando, Florida; and one brother, Thomas G. Carter, Bassett, Va.

Brother Carter is missed by all, family and church. His brethren and friends are left behind to mourn, but not without hope, for we verily believe God called him. He was faithful to both his family and his church, and we desire grace to say "Thy will be done", and to be made to know that God will care for us.

Submitted by,
J. P. Helms

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

We, the church at Pleasant Grove, wish to bow in humble submission to our merciful Heavenly Father, who doeth all things well, in removing our esteemed Sister Addie Smithey from our midst.

Sister Smithey was a faithful, devoted and humble member.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the church has lost a faithful member, whom we miss very much; that a copy of this resolution be spread upon our church records; a copy sent to the family, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of Pleasant Grove Church at her regular session November 14, 1964.

Elder Harvey Smith, Moderator
Mrs. R. F. Walker, Asst. Clerk

MEMORIAL TO ELDER J. HARVEY SMITH

Since our last meeting God has seen fit to remove from us by death our highly esteemed and beloved Brother and Pastor, Elder J. Harvey Smith. He passed away peacefully in his sleep January 24, 1965. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

Elder Smith was chosen pastor of Pleasant Grove Church at our regular conference meeting in March, 1952, and served ably and acceptably for more than twelve years. His greatest pleasure was in mingling with and seeing his brethren. He was known and loved from the mountains to the seacoast: he had traveled and preached in many states one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism; salvation by grace and grace alone, Christ being the way, the truth and the life; and that there is "No other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

The services of Elder Smith were in great demand, serving four churches and preaching funerals far and near. The weather was never too cold or too hot, or a family too poor in material things for him to offer his services — visiting the sick, the old and infirm who were deprived of going to church. He was an humble man, ready to spend and be spent.

May God's blessings be upon each of us to bow in humble submission to His holy will, together with his lovely and devoted wife, Sister Alice Rudd Smith, their sons and daughters, and all who were near and dear to this precious soldier of the cross who has finished his course; and whose spirit has returned to God who gave it, awaiting the glorious resurrection when his body shall come forth from the grave, to be made like His glorious body, and be gathered home where sickness, sorrow, or pain will be felt no more; and where Jesus is crowned Lord of Lords, the King of Glory forever and ever.

Written by,
Sister Robert F. Walker, Asst. Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It pleased our Heavenly Father to call Elder Frank F. Eggleston home, we desire to bow to His holy will. He was born May 1, 1887, and passed away July 11, 1965. He was united in marriage to Eva Pruitt, of Ruffin, N. C., April 8, 1917, by the late Elder J. F. Spangler; and to this union two daughters were born: Mrs. Lucille Humphries and Mrs. Ralph B. Jarrett, of Collinsville, Va.

Elder Eggleston was baptized into our fellowship fifty years ago by the late Elder A. B. Philpott, with his membership at Riverview Church. He was ordained to the ministry shortly afterwards. He loved his brethren and traveled far and near to visit his kindred in the Lord. His last sermon was on the day of his death at the Staunton River Association July 11, 1965, reading for his text Isaiah 2:4.

His funeral was conducted at Dan River Church by Elder D. V. Spangler and J. R. Hollandsworth, his pastor. A large congrega-

tion was present to show their respect; and there were many beautiful flowers.

Written at the request of the Pigg River Association while in session at Rocky Mount, Virginia, for publication in their minutes and the *Signs of the Times*, by his pastor.

Elder James R. Hollandsworth

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, Our God in his infinite wisdom has taken from us our beloved brother and Moderator, Elder Randloph Perdue, on October 6, 1964, at the age of ninety-four; and

WHEREAS, Brother Perdue was held in high esteem by the members of all the churches composing the Pigg River District Primitive Baptist Association, he having united with Bethel Church in July, 1895, and ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry in October, 1912. He served as pastor of several of our churches, including Bethel, Rocky Mount, Martinsville, Chestnut, and Little Creek, during his ministry. In 1916 he was chosen Moderator of the Pigg River District Association, and served most acceptably in meekness until past ninety years of age, when he was given assistance, but was Moderator as long as he lived; and

WHEREAS, Brother Perdue was highly esteemed in the business world, and held in great respect by all who knew him, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the will of our Father in taking him from our midst; and that we give thanks to Him for the gift of our brother's ministry amongst us for more than fifty years. And be it further

RESOLVED, That this token of our esteem be spread in our Minutes; and that a copy be given the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by the unanimous desire of the churches composing the Pigg River District Association during her session at Rocky Mount Church, Rocky Mount, Virginia, in 1965.

Elder C. E. Turner, Moderator
Elder John D. Wood, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

God in His infinite wisdom and mercy has called to His beloved embrace by death Sister Minnie Peebles Parrish. Sister Parrish was born November 10, 1893, and departed this life January 9, 1965.

She was married to W. Clark Parrish July 1, 1914, and to this union were born eight children. Her husband and seven children survive.

In October 1934, Brother and Sister Parrish united with the church at Bunker Hill and were baptized together. Sister Parrish served the church for several years as church clerk.

Sister Parrish was greatly afflicted in her late years but bore her afflictions with much patience. Her faith in the blessed Redeemer never failed as was manifested in her love for the church and the doctrine of salvation by grace.

In sorrow and with a deep feeling of loss, we, the church at Bunker Hill, bow in humble submission to the divine will of our heavenly Father. Our heart's desire is that the mercy and love of God will sustain us who are left in this world of sorrow.

Funeral services were conducted for her by her pastor, Elder Z. L. Rhue, and Elders D. R. Pyrtle, John R. Gatewood, J. T. Prescott and Jabez J. Rhue. Her body was laid to rest in the Bunker Hill Cemetery.

Done by order of Bunker Hill Primitive Baptist Church.

One copy to the church, one copy to the family, and one copy to the *Signs of the Times*.

Elder Z. L. Rhue, Moderator
G. B. Hawks, Clerk

TRIBUTE OF RESPECT

Brother Frank Amason, age 90, died in an El Dorado hospital, May 1, 1965. He was born in Calion, Arkansas, January 9, 1875, the son of Jesse Thomas and Rebecca Murphy Amason. Brother Amason was a lifelong resident of Union County, was a retired farmer and a member of Bethel Church, Union County, Arkansas.

He is survived by four sons: Curtis Amason, Minden, La.; Brother F. E. Amason, McNiel, Ark.; C. W. Amason, El Dorado, Ark.; Thomas W. Amason, Pine Bluff, Ark.; two daughters: Mrs. F. C. Davis and Mrs. Dick Himes, both of El Dorado, Ark.; four sisters: Mrs. Martha Smith and Mrs. Jesse Murphy, both of El Dorado, Ark.; Mrs. Alto Lee of Shreveport, La.; and Mrs. Winnie Davis, Little Rock, Ark.

May the Lord comfort his family and loved ones and may we be blessed to say, "Thy will be done, O Lord", for we wish to bow in humble submission to God's holy will, always looking to Him for mercy and guidance.

The funeral was conducted by Elder E. J. Lambert, May 2, 1965.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and one copy sent to the family, and one copy be put on our church records.

Done by order of conference.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Moderator
Mrs. Jean Burns, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133 DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1965 NO. 11

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/65
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

A BEAUTIFUL HYMN

I am weary of straying, Oh! fain would I rest,
In the far distant land of the pure and the blest,
Where sin can no longer her blandishments spread,
And tears and temptations forever are fled.

I am weary of hoping, where hope is untrue,
As fair but as fleeting as morning's bright dew,
I long for that land whose blest promise alone,
Is changeless and sure as eternity's throne.

I am weary of sighing o'er sorrows of earth;
O'er joys glowing visions that fade at their birth,
O'er the pangs of the loved that we cannot assuage,
O'er the blightings of youth and the weakness of age.

I am weary of loving what passes away,
The sweetest, the dearest, Alas! may not stay.
I long for that land where these partings are o'er,
And death and the tomb can divide hearts no more.

I am weary, my Savior, of grieving thy love,
Oh! when shall I rest in thy presence above!
I am weary — but oh! let me never repine,
While thy word and love and thy promises are mine.

— Author unknown to us.

"GIFT TO BELIEVE"

2303 Lee Field Road,
Dallas 29, Texas 75229

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

Perhaps you will not remember my being present at your home church at the association in 1960, on Highway 50 out of Washington, D. C.; also at Frying Pan Church prior to that. I was visiting my daughter and family who were stationed at The Pentagon at that time. We enjoyed both meetings very much; and saw and heard in person the Elders whose writings I had read, and hoped some day to see. Wonderful!

. . . I enjoy reading the *Signs* very much, and especially have we had good reading the last several months: Elders Curry, Hall, and many others; and always the Editorials. You are so blessed to select the most nourishing food, it seems to me, in publishing these articles. I am sure the responsibility of publication is very heavy on all concerned; but to me God never makes a mistake, and it is through His purpose you were just as Jonah and others were, brought up to this work, and by the grace of our God you are doing a wonderful job of it. It is wonderful to think of, and to believe that ones have been brought up to do the wonderful service of God, and then to see its effects, as is true of the *Signs*.

I am so selfish sometimes when I see such gifts of service by our brothers and sisters for the church's benefit, as to wish I could contribute a little bit; but not so of me. I am then humbled to be satisfied with the gift *to believe,* if indeed I do believe.

Hope to see you both again sometime along the path of life. I enclose check for another year's subscription.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Pearl Lee

SEARCHING FOR EVIDENCE

Eagle Lake, Florida 33839
Box 178,

Dear Editors:

It is time to renew my subscription and I am enclosing three dollars to renew another year.

I do so enjoy reading the news it contains from all parts of the globe on which we make our stay from birth to the grave. Do these letters contain any great thing the writer has performed? No! they usually speak of the unworthiness of the writer, complaining of the sins that dwell in the mortal body; and often speak of the hope that has been planted in them by the Holy Spirit of God.

Why do we read? and what do we look for? It is the evidence that dwells within: we long to search our own self to see if the things they speak of dwell in us: the evidence hoped for, not the things that are seen. If the witness and the evidence dwells in us, then it is news from a far country; and we feel to be made partakers of these wonderful things, knowing there is no good thing that belongs to this mortal man, only that which has been planted by the Holy Spirit — written in his mind and printed in his heart, which makes us know we are sinners and stand condemned by the holy and just law of God. We search for evidence that sin is condemned in our flesh. I feel that each one who reads the *Signs* and believes, and searches for this witness, does know that sin is condemned in the flesh.

Oh! my dear friends, instead of being puffed up and proud, you see what a miserable wretch you are. And, like Paul of old, we are made to cry, "Oh! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" We long for those things not seen, but hoped for; and when we feel this witness, we love those who also speak of these things — their hope that they have passed from death unto life, because they love the brethern.

I have written this only trying to search and find the witness, and see if I know whereof these precious friends write.

A sister, I hope,
Mrs. D. C. Turner

OTHERS HAVE SAME TRIALS

Rt. 3, Box 180
Crossett, Arkansas

Dear Editors:

Am sending renewal for the dear paper. I enjoy reading the *Signs* so very much. Sometimes when I am in the valley of despair, and it seems there is no hope for a sinner like me, the postman will leave the *Signs* in the mailbox, and I start reading it right away; then I can see that others pass through these valleys also. It seems that I stay in a valley of darkness most of my time. But sometimes my hope is bright, and I am on the mountain top, so to speak, but it doesn't last long.

I enjoy the Editorials and the "Voices of the Past", and also the letters from the writers who can so ably explain the wonderful words of life. It is a wonderful gift to be able to write such comforting words to those who are downcast, and feel their unworthiness as keenly as I do.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Mrs. Lela Mae Flemister

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting of Old School Baptists in session with New Valley Church at the Mt. Zion Meeting House, October 13 and 14, 1965, sends Christian greetings to the churches and associations with which we correspond:

Another year with all its joys and sorrows has passed and gone, and we

are one year nearer our eternal home than when we last met in an associational gathering. Some of our dear ones have been called away since our last association, and they will assemble with us no more here, but we hope through the grace and mercy of our covenant God, to meet them on the bright and sunny side of sweet deliverance in the happy, peaceful world of glory, where there will be no sad partings, no farewell tears, but all will be joy and peace and love. There all the ransomed of the Lord will be sweetly employed in praising and glorifying his holy and infinitely adorable name a whole eternity long.

"When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun."

As it is written in 1 Corinthians 2:9 and 10, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." No, our finite minds cannot comprehend the infinity of the great Jehovah: we can only say, as did the Apostle, "Oh! the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out." We cannot by searching find out God, as the worldly-wise in their human-effort system teach their children they can; and that they are learning the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, whereas God says, "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." And again, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." "So it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."

Then, dear brethren, let us praise God for his mercy, for it is everlasting. Whom he loves he never leaves: and Christ, "Having loved his own, he loved them to the end." "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness hath he drawn thee."

So it is alone through his grace, and mercy, and love that we poor, weak, helpless, sinful creatures of Adam's fallen posterity, are brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus; "And not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost."

In Isaiah 61:10, we read, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul will be joyful in my God, for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, and hath covered me with the robe of righteousness. This is the heritage of the Lord's people, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." So we, dear kindred in Christ, as a church, as a people, are the only people who do not claim something towards our salvation by our own works; but we give all the praise and glory for all of it to our God, where, and to whom it belongs.

Now, dear brethren, may God in his mercy keep us from falling, and feed our souls on the riches of his grace while we live here in the flesh, and eventually receive us to himself in glory for Jesus' sake. Amen.

H. F. Triplett

LETTER TO SISTER ETTA MERIGOLD OF WHITEFIELD, MAINE

Dear Sister Merigold:

After reading your letter in the May issue of the *Signs,* I felt drawn to you for the truth's sake. It is so good when one's mind is turned to their friends, (the household of faith), to tell them of the sweet blessings they have received at the Lord's hand: the privilege of assembling together with those far and near who trust alone in the mercies of God our Saviour. Yet each one is fearful that he is deceived and has

deceived the brethren; but we can only walk by faith, and not by sight. When love is stirred within us as we read another's experience, often we find our hand reaching for the pen to talk to them by letter. I hope you will understand the meaning of this attempt, being strangers in the flesh, yet, if not deceived, we are sisters in Christ.

We heard a sermon this morning by our pastor, Elder H. G. Brown, on the great mystery of godliness found in the 7th chapter of Hebrews. It is precious to our souls to listen when it pleases our Lord to open up our minds to understand the Scriptures. These great mysteries cannot be told, but with just a little understanding, we stand in awe as we are given to meditate, and view Jesus the Lord of Lords and King of Kings. We feel it is enough as our hope mounts, and we feel the whispers of His love, and know He is mine, and I am his: all our fears and cares and troubles seem to go away for the moment, and we are strengthened to travel on the way; and to beg for grace to enable us to run with patience the race that is set before us.

But, as you said, such seasons come and go, and much of the time we are in the wilderness, and are filled with cares and toils of this life. Some of the time we are reconciled to God's will; while at other times all feeling sense seems to be gone, which makes us fear that we are wrong.

> "Lord decide the doubtful case;
> Thou who art thy people's sun,
> Shine upon thy work of grace,
> If it be indeed begun."

John, while shut up in prison, sent to inquire, "Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" And Jesus said to go shew John again those things that you see and hear: the lame walk, the blind see, the deaf hear, and the poor have the gospel preached unto them. So John was not told plainly; but the things we feel, see and hear when we are given ears to hear, eyes to see, and hearts to understand, answer the inquiry. Then we feel and are sure that he is the Christ, and that these things are of the Lord. If so, we will never perish, and we are enabled to go on our way, trusting and looking to Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith.

Please forgive all amiss. Write again as the Lord directs you. We love our dear paper which brings us so much good reading.

Yours in a sweet hope,
Carrie Campbell

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the *Skewarkey Union* is appointed to be held with the Flat Swamp Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in October, 1965. Elder W. E. Grimes was appointed to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder E. C. Harrison, alternate.

The church is located about three miles west of Robertsonville, N. C. We cordially invite all interested persons to come and visit with us.

Elder D. Peele, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Williamston, N. C.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To September 1, 1965)

Mrs. Nola Day, N. C.	$ 1.00
Mr. and Mrs. H. M. Anthony, Tex.	100.00
Leroy Reed, Idaho	1.00
Mrs. David Farnie, Va.	1.00
Mrs. E. A. Bagwell, Ala.	7.00

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union*, the Lord willing, will be held with the church at Creeches, the fifth Saturday and Sunday in October, 1965.

The church is located on Highway 42, between the junction of 42 and 37, Johnston County, N. C. All who have a mind to come are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

Danville, Virginia November, 1965

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TO

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EDITORIAL

HEBREWS 13:20, 21

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Why is it that we always have a benediction at the end of our services? This is not a word that the translators gave us in our version of the Bible, but at the end of each letter (except James) there is a prayer or short benediction. At the end of all Bible prayers there is an amen. This word has a meaning that is not easily set aside. In fact, the theologian that would belittle the word, or berate those that use the word, does not have the religion of Jesus Christ. It is a word that He used to verify his veracity, and it is a word that was handed down from the ancient people of God to express a wish. This is why that the end of prayer has the "amen" at the end of it; it is for the purpose of expressing a wish, to wit, *So be it.* The promises of God are all yea, and all Amen, unto the glory of God by us. (2 Cor. 1:20) There is not a single promise that is nay. They are all yea and amen through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Since all scripture is given by inspiration of God (2 Tim. 3:16), it would be sacrilegious and blasphemous to say that the use of this word is not of the highest importance in our preaching and writing on sacred topics.

"Now the God of peace." O, dear child of God, what comfort is found in these words. To read that, to hear that, that he is the God of our peace is indeed rich. It abounds with much promise to him that has known the ravages of war. As far as God the lawgiver, there could never be any peace coming from him to us. If we could have kept all of God's laws, we would have made peace with him. If this had been true, then this text would not have appeared in the Bible. God has always disproved of sin. I may end up in the housetop alone for saying it, but I'd much rather end up there than live in a house with a brawling woman who would hide behind the purpose of God for their sins. (Prov. 21: 9; Rom. 6:1,2) As long as the sins of God's people remained unatoned for there could never be any peace. If this does not teach the warlike characteristic of God *against* sin I do not know what it would take. I have said this: If God is pleased with our sins, he perpetrated the greatest fraud in sending His Son into the world to die for sinners, and yet that He was pleased with their sins. For me, I know that this is not the truth. God, as our Lawgiver, was at war against all of his people. This war went on un-

abated until it was atoned for. At no time, from the moment of our disobedience in the morning of time, until atoned for, did the wrath of God abate in the least degree. In our efforts to expound the beauty in the text, it is my desire to not leave a stone unturned in bringing out that "God is our peace." He had been at war from all eternity against sin. I get lost when I get to exploring in the grandeur of the God-head, but it is lost in holy ecstacy, not in gloomy and dismal swamps.

As long as God has been, he has been the God of wrath, the God of war, the God against sin. If this had not been true, how could God have counselled to send His own Son to die to satisfy the wrath of God and the justice of God and to become the God of peace? Too, we must be just as emphatic that he is the God of peace as that he is the God of wrath or war.

For him to cease being a God of wrath, there had to be somebody to atone for the sins of those with whom God was wroth. This Atonement could not be found among the sons of Adam. If it could have been found there, our text would have said, "Now the peace which is by Adam, etc." When the law was given it was given to be kept, not to be defied, not to be despised, not to be nullified by man, not to have any mercy in it. Manifestly, from the time of its being broken, God has been at war against sin. There could not be any peace without a reconciliation. When man fell, he was depraved from the sole of the feet to the crown of the head. He could not keep from sinning; he could not bring reconciliation, seeing that he could not turn and do good. (Jer. 13:23) This rule has never been abrogated by him that made it. Many people, the majority of the human race, have changed it (so they think) to suit their fancy, but God has not changed it, therefore all of the religion in the world that has come by efforts that the sinner conceived and carried out is not the truth; all the peace that man has brought, whether in the natural realm of existence, in the so-called religious world, even in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is all vain, all useless, all perishable, if it came about by the action of this dead sinning creature.

God moved to bring peace, therefore it is a wonderful text that embraces Him as being the God of peace. What a blessing it is to be given this all prevailing peace in our experience; what a high and exalted calling it is to be called of God, to preach and to write about the peace that passes all understanding, which peace keeps our hearts and minds through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Phil. 4:7) It is not any small wonder that Paul was determined to know nothing among the Corinthians save Jesus Christ and him crucified. (I Cor. 2:2) God raised Him up and sent Him forth from His bosom to bring peace out of chaos. That was the beginning of the peace of God — the peace which God brought. It is presently the work of God's Holy Spirit to keep our hearts and our minds in this peace. If you understand this peace you will attribute it to men; if it passes all understanding, you will attribute it to God.

"That brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ." It is not a question of *not* bringing Him from the dead, but how could He fail to bring Him from the dead, seeing that He sent Him forth to redeem them that were under the law. Poor frail human beings will never be able to more than grasp the surface of the love of God in this bringing Him forth from the dead. But we must not get the last things first. Order is heaven's first law, and in no place is it out of place as much as it is in expounding the gospel. God sent Him forth to do His will. This will is that all given Christ must be brought into peace with God. God could not be at peace with his own Son had that Son failed in bringing many sons to

glory. (Heb. 2:10) I have said, I repeat it here, that if the common idea about the work of Christ was true (that is, that he failed in saving those given him) that he would not have been received into heaven — yea, he would not have been raised from the dead. Here is that delightful order of heaven: God sent His Son to redeem the chosen people of God, to reconcile them to God and Him to them; to come as the One and only peace-offering, being named the Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. (Isa. 9:6) While here, He brought peace to His people; and when He died, He brought peace to God and to all the heirs of promise. He did the work that His Father gave Him to do. How peaceful it was with Satan writhing in death, with all the enemies of God as dead men, with the holy and righteous and good law filled to a jot and a tittle. God can not deny himself (Num. 23:19; 2 Tim. 2:13), and, seeing that Christ was the mighty God and the Everlasting Father, *all* of God's power and glory and honor was pledged to raise and bring from the dead His Son and our Saviour.

"That great shepherd of the sheep." How lovely the scriptures set Him forth in this capacity. This shepherd, this Saviour, was set up from everlasting. (Prov. 8:23) The eyes of wisdom saw His substance from everlasting, and in his book all His members were written, yet they were unperfected, and not manifest, even as Jesus was not yet manifest. But he did not come to become a Saviour, not at all; He was born the Saviour. His delights were with the sheep before they were manifest sheep; he rejoiced among the sheepfold and its occupants before the world had an existence. (Prov. 8:31) Since it is the work of a shepherd to look after his flock, this Shepherd went about doing the work of his Father while it was day, while a Man could work. He did do His Father's work while here, and, at his departure, sent another Comforter who is continuing on the same line of work, taking the things of Christ and presenting them to the sheep. As the Shepherd, he found them all dead in sin. He gave unto them eternal life according as his Father had given him all power to redeem and to reveal unto them the redemption. (Matt. 11:27; John 10:28; 17:2)

This great Shepherd is often pictured in the saddest of terms. He is often set forth as a hand-wringing shepherd. He is shown(?) unto us as shepherd that would like to lead the sheep by still waters; that would like to have them lie down in green pastures; that would like to lead the sheep in paths of righteousness; that would like to comfort his people with the rod and the staff; that would like to prepare a table for them; that would like to anoint our head with oil; that would like for our cup to run over, but the sheep just will not let him do this. I do not know which is the most unreasonable and unscriptural doctrine, to not be able to make sheep manifestly, or to be able to make them without their help and then lose control over them after that He makes them sheep. It seems good to me to discard both.

"Through the blood of the everlasting covenant." The translators were not agreed about this word "covenant" some of them thinking that this was the better word, while others thought that the better word was testament. I do not know a word of Greek, but I am inclined to agree with the minority report in this case. The covenant is one thing, but the Testator of that covenant is another. It is true, however, that Moses referred to blood as being the covenant blood; but it would seem, from a careful reading, that this covenant was not the one that is in our text. Too, the writer of Hebrews tells us that sore punishment awaits him that treads under foot the son of God, and counts the blood of the covenant as an unholy thing. (Heb. 10:29) As it was with Moses, and as it seems cer-

tain the writer of Hebrews, they had in mind a figurative sense; so it would seem that way here, to wit, that it is through the blood of Jesus Christ.

We do remember that Jesus is the Testator of a better covenant. Even the first covenant was dedicated with blood. It was the blood of calves and goats used in type for the blood of Jesus. Moses said, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. (Heb. 9:18, 20) As the types had to die in order for the comers thereto to have blood, just so did Jesus, the Lamb of God, have to die that the comers thereto be made perfect. (Heb. 10:1) A man's testament (will) is not in force as long as he lives. Only after his death does his will come into force. Thus it behoved Christ to die that his testament benefit his people. When he administered the supper to the disciples he called the wine the blood of the new testament.

"Make you perfect in every good work to do his will." Whatever the true meaning of the blood of the everlasting covenant, whether understood in a figurative sense, or that Jesus in sum and substance is the covenant himself, it does not lessen the force of the doctrine that is being taught in the text. The perfection prayed for is not of the creature. Whoever heard of praying for that which the creature can do? You haven't heard that? That is the common ignorance of mankind. Every religion except the Absolute Predestinarian Baptists believe that God is dependent on the creature for the success of his venture and church and kingdom building, and yet they pray like Hercules to God for help in them doing it. This prayer is from the heart of a poor dependent creature. He knows that he must have grace to perform all the requirements of God; that his present salvation is based on God's saving grace. This prayer of the apostle comes to this: May the God of peace, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will. I do not intend to sell out my pen to anybody, and I will say to my brethren that it is not in evil works that God is to enable us to do his will. *We are not doing the will of God when we do evil works.* The writer did not pray for God to enable us to do his will in wickedness. *He did not do that.* Reason how we may, call our loved ones in the Lord what we may, the Lord does not forbid things in his written word and then influence us by his Spirit to disobey that command. God does his will in heaven and in earth, whether it is by the power of His Spirit in our hearts and minds, or by the wielding of His sword. Of one he is the direct and immediate cause, by the other he is simply taking that which is already wicked and using it as it seems good unto Him. Of one thing I am sure. We will never perfectly do his will until the perfect gift (James 1:17) is given to us. And I am sure that this perfect gift is given his people that they may perfectly do his will in every good work.

"Working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight." Let us go to another notable letter of Paul. "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Phil. 2:12, 13) How often have we heard it said that "God works the will and the do in you, but you must work it out." Only an ignorant one (letter ignorant as well as grace) would make an application like that of the work of God in his people. They either have forgotten, or they never did know, that God works effectually in his subjects. (Eph. 3:7; I Thes. 2:13) The prayer is seeking for God to make us perfect in *every good work.* How many good works? I did not say, dear critic. But the prayer of Paul begs for grace from the God of all peace that the children of God be perfected in

every good work *to do his will;* not just begging for grace that will work it in the children of God, not that at all, but begging for grace that they be made perfect in every good work to do his will. That is the prayer. That is the prayer of every dependent sinner; but, regardless of the niceties of speech-making to God in prayer, the prayer of others do not mean that they are helpless and dependent. Now link up this prayer with Paul's charge to the Philippians. His charge to them is to work out that which God has wrought in, and this prayer is to the God of peace that he would make them perfect in every good work to do his will, working in them that which is wellpleasing in his sight.

The text heretofore has set forth God as doing great wonders through the Lord Jesus Christ. However, have you noticed that it is God the Father that has done all this first for the Son? He sent forth his Son, He sent angels to administer to him; He raised Him from the tomb. This was as the manifest Son of God. This is in keeping with the expression: Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. (Psalm 2:7) Earlier in this article it has been noted that the Son was ever with the Father. This being true, He could not have been begotten, but in His relationship with His people it truly can be said that He was begotten of God. Then the writer prays that the wonderful blessings of obedience be given unto the Hebrew brethren. He prays for that which is wellpleasing in the sight of God. He does not ask God to make them perfect in every evil or sinful work, for this could never be wellpleasing in his sight; and that would apply to him working it in them as well as after it is wrought in and by them.

I sometimes hope that I have a calling from God to preach the gospel; to preach Jesus Christ and him crucified. I feel in my heart and mind that I have told you the whole truth in what I have said about this text. It is my hope that it was the God of peace that visited me more than forty years ago, breaking down my opposition to His rule over me, and reconciling God to me through my blessed Lord. The answer to this prayer was predicated upon the will of God being executed through the Saviour Jesus Christ. My will was not consulted in the outset, and thus I am not a sharer in glory with him there. Since that day, if this was the day of the Lord with me, I have been willing to follow him, to count it a joy in tribulations, to submit to all the indignities that are heaped upon me; to know that our God is still the God of all vengeance as well as the God of peace, and that whatever it is, He will carry all of his pleasure out; and that now, and forever and forever, all glory belongs to Him.

As the shadows lengthen out and the end of day approaches, I would to God that I die with a hearty Amen upon my dying lips to all that his providence and grace has brought to me; that he has ruled over (not overruled) all his creation to where not a shaft has hit me to ruin, but rather for good; that He has supplied my needs, both natural and spiritual, that He has enabled me to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him," and that, As I have received good at his hand, I expect to receive the same kind of evil that Job did, and that whatever comes, whether good or evil, whether in giving or in taking, that His name is blessed forever more.

W. D. G.

SERMON AT MT. ZION CHURCH LOUDOUN COUNTY, VA.

August, 1965

"Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.

Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." (Daniel 2:31)

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." (Daniel 2:44)

My mind is on a portion of these scriptures, but I do not know that the Lord will be pleased to open the matter up, and give a degree of liberty to speak concerning them. Wonderful things are uncovered in the Book of Daniel, and in considering the subject before us, it would be well to read the entire second chapter when you have time, for these were written by inspiration, and are preserved for our instruction.

The events and circumstances were such in the eternal will and purpose of God, that Daniel was a captive in Babylon; and Nebuchadnezzar the king was given a dream which bothered him greatly, but he could not remember what he had dreamed. Quite naturally he called in his magicians, astrologers, and Chaldeans, and demanded of them to tell what he had dreamed; and then interpret it. These protested that this was impossible; but the king insisted under pain of death — which sentence was about to be carried out against all the *wise men* of Babylon, including Daniel. But when Daniel heard of it, he asked for time, and he would show the king the interpretation. This brought Daniel, (and his three friends, Shadrach, Meshack, and Abednego), before God for his mercies: and the secret was revealed unto him in a night vision.

It is good to notice what Daniel said in the 28th and 30th verses, after telling the king that the wise men, magicians, etc. could not make known the secret, "But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets . . . , But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, . . ." This reminds us of the Lord's humble servants, who are never boastful of the great things God does for them; (and if sometimes the flesh gets the upper hand, there is a day of reckoning; and they are humbled.)

Daniel told the king what he had dreamed, as we have read; and then interpreted it as follows: "Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kindom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."

As historically proved, here is portrayed four great natural kingdoms, and ten smaller kingdoms which followed the last of the four; as well as

the kingdom set up in the coming of Jesus Christ into the world to do his Father's will.

The first, of course, was the Babylonian, whose chief city was Babylon, with Nebuchadnezzar as king; and Daniel said, "Thou art the head of gold." The second was an inferior kingdom to the Babylonian, the Medes and Persians, of which Cyrus was the king: this was the breast and arms of silver. The third was the Macedonian kingdom, of which Alexander the Great was king. Then we have the Roman Empire, the last of the four, which was strong as iron but mixed with clay, and was divided. We yet see the kingdoms or successors represented by the toes which did not cleave together.

But we are much more interested in the kingdom which was set up in the "days of these kings", which was separate from, and far more important than any other kingdom; and which should never be destroyed, nor left to other people. It was a kingdom whose power was in the Stone which was cut out of the mountain without hands, which grew and became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

It was in the days of the Roman Empire, — the days of the Caesars, you will recall, that Jesus came into the world; and it was a distressing time for the Jews in Palestine. They were under tribute, ruled by and crushed under the heel of the Romans. But the Jews believed, as was abundantly told in the Scriptures, that the Messiah was coming; yet they did not know the real purpose of his coming. Their only desire was that he should restore the kingdom of Israel, that it should be as it was in the days of David and Solomon; and this would require a great leader, a great warrior. But this they did not find in Jesus; and since he was not what they expected, they had no need of him.

Certain qualifications must be had before one could see in Jesus a beauty that they should desire him; and before he could be recognized as the Christ, the Son of God. It was true in that day; and equally as true ever since then. The Jews as a nation, did not have it. And it is noticed that even his own disciples, though they had the revelation that he was the Christ, the Son of the living God, and rejoiced in him, seeing what others did not see, yet there were many things they did not comprehend until Jesus opened their understanding, and until they received the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost.

"In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed." History records that many kingdoms have arisen, and had glory in their own day; and then fell. Perhaps China is the oldest existing, but there has never been a kingdom of this world which has not fallen and been left to others. And we may expect from prophecy that all natural kingdoms, whether secular or semi-religious in character, shall fall in their own time.

But we are considering a kingdom which God should set up, which shall never fall or be destroyed. It is a kingdom not of this world, as Jesus plainly said; and meaning, as is evident, that it is not dependent on the wisdom of men, on armies and artillery, or money. It is not dependent on anything that is natural and mortal, or it too would be destroyed.

Another thing which is exclusive with this kingdom, is that it, "shall not be left to other people." Other kingdoms have been absorbed when they fell: swallowed up by new kingdoms, new kings, presidents, etc. — and they are left to others. But this kingdom will not fail, will not be swallowed up by, or left to other people.

Of whom is this kingdom composed? To whom does this kingdom belong? Since it is not a natural kingdom, it is not dependent upon worldly things. It is a spiritual kingdom, and is composed solely of those who are born of the Spirit of God. The kingdom belongs

to Jesus Christ, who said, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." If it were a kingdom of this world, it would necessarily need the things of a worldly kingdom; but it has no need of these, for they have a King who does all his pleasure, who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. This is their King: the Rock hewn out of the mountain without hands, which shall break in pieces all other kingdoms.

From history we know that many kingdoms and governments have fallen; and many such things are in the making now. I don't know when, nor what the end is going to be; of course I don't. I am not given to see ahead one moment; but, by the grace of God, we are given faith sometimes to stand still, and to recognize as true, that when the Lord gave men the spirit of prophecy concerning these things, whether they come in our day or later, they shall surely come; and all at the Lord's time. Sometimes we feel afraid of the Soviet Union, or China, but do we not know that they are in the hands of God? that every kingdom, every king, every president, and everything else in authority in this world, is in the hands of God, who said he would set up a kingdom that would never be destroyed.

(Isn't it wonderful, brethren, for us to have a little hope, a little evidence, that we are brought into this spiritual kingdom, which is above and beyond the world? We know that something has taken place with us which is not known by outsiders; yet it is so assuring that we know God has been with us and has given us faith and hope, so that we know, whether we live or whether we die, we are in his hands. This is the God that set up this kingdom.)

What is this kingdom? I don't have to tell you that it is the church of God — the kingdom of God in this world. When was it set up? in the days of these kings — when the fulness of time was come. Then God sent his Son into the world, and the kingdom was set up. There were many things given as types and shadows under the law, or foretold by the prophets, which came into full bloom in their own day; when the "wheel" of God's predestination, his eternal purpose, had so revolved that the very moment came. Jesus came exactly as the Spirit of God in his people said he should come. We are glad that there was not a single promise, not a single prophecy concerning his coming, and the setting up of his kingdom, but actually came as was foretold.

We see the kingdom being set up in the preaching of John the Baptist, declaring that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. We see Jesus submitting to baptism, saying, "It becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." It was necessary for Jesus to "begin to be about his Father's business", and to fulfill everything that the law demanded of everyone of those who were made lively stones in the kingdom. This was the work of Jesus — to do what his Father sent him to do. This kingdom shall continue on and on until every member that was chosen by the Father to make up this kingdom, shall be brought in, from the first one in the world to the last one; and though all other kingdoms shall be destroyed, this one shall have all of her citizens brought together in the resurrection of the dead, when all shall be conformed to the image of Christ, as they were predestinated to be, and then enter into heaven and immortal glory: thus clearly indicating that it shall never be destroyed.

Though this kingdom has been assailed from the beginning: by Herod, by the king of Rome, by devotees of heathen gods, by devils of all stripes, yet it has not been consumed: for it cannot be destroyed. "And the kingdom shall not be left to other people." What

does this mean? Simply that there are specific people only that can ever belong to this kingdom: they were chosen by God the Father in his Son before the world began, and they shall come into this kingdom. Of these Peter said, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." He that understands this, understands the only way that the citizens of this kingdom are members of it. They are citizens by birth, for except they are born of the Spirit they cannot see this kingdom: except they are born of water and the Spirit, they cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Unless and until they have these things revealed to them, as did Peter and the other brethren, they cannot know that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God; nor know that the church is built upon a Rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

The church is built upon this rock, the Lord Jesus Christ; upon a sure and safe foundation — a foundation that God sent from heaven. It is not built upon men, nor by men; not upon Peter, which many talk so much about. This is the same Rock that followed the children of Israel in the wilderness; the same Stone that the builders rejected, which became the head of the corner; the same Stone that God prepared — cut out of the mountain without hands, to break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms. This Stone, Jesus Christ, is the head, and the church is his body — a beautiful figure of the kingdom: it shall not be destroyed, nor left to others.

(How wonderful it is to have assurance of these things; but, since we have these treasures in earthen vessels, we sometimes have doubts and fears in the earthen vessel part of us: our flesh. Yet often our flesh is subdued, and we know that our Redeemer lives: he lives to grant repentance to his people, and faith, and hope, and charity. When we can see Jesus at the right hand of his Father, we say, Glory, glory, unto him who has given us grace, and brought us out of great darkness and many tribulations, into the marvelous light of the Son of God; and has put us on the Rock, revealing that the church is in the world today, and is safe and sound and sure, regardless of how many false doctrines, how many false kingdoms, or how much heathenism is thrown against it, it will stand: It cannot but stand, for the church has the shielding of God — he is around about them as a great wall, — a wall of fire, carrying out his eternal decree for them.)

"The kingdom shall not be left to other people," for it is composed only of the chosen of the Father. This may sound pretentious, but if one will search the Scriptures, he will find that this is shown throughout the whole volume. When Jesus said, "All that the Father hath given me, shall come unto me," of whom was he speaking? Those that the Father gave him, of course. Who were they that the Father gave him? all that he chose in his Son before the world began, whose names were written in heaven. These were in the eternal will and purpose of God, although not developed until the time that each should be born into this world; and their spiritual parenthood was just as sure as if they already had actual existence before the world began for they were chosen by the Father in his Son before the world began. They had their standing in the eternal purpose and will of God who brings to pass all things: so that my father and mother came together, and your father and mother: our grandfathers and grandmothers, and on back; to the end that every child that was destined to be born, has been or shall be born in his own time. We may talk about birth control and restrictions: every one that God determined before the world shall come into the world. Likewise, every one that God chose in his Son, shall be

brought into this kingdom, for God knows them: he knows every one of his people.

Many think that it does not make too much difference about doctrine, or church, saying that we all believe in God and in Jesus the Saviour. "What difference does it make?" some ask, "we are all going to the same place: you go your way and I will go mine." This is false, my brethren. There is but one way; there is but one kingdom; and there is but one doctrine of God our Saviour. The ways of men cannot be substituted for the way of God; and it should be remembered that God is not mocked.

The kingdom of God has had all manner of opposition from the beginning, which seems to grow stronger day by day. But the astonishing thing is that it matters not how great and strong the so-called spiritual kingdoms are, or other kingdoms and organizations are; how much they may join house to house, or field to field, saying, we are many millions now, and coming together we will be more millions, so that the whole world may be proselytized; it matters not how much this may go on, they have yet to reckon with God who has power over them. "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he that now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way." (2 Thes. 2:7) God will preserve them until the time comes in his will for all these kingdoms to be destroyed; for Daniel said, "The great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter, and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

Here is a kingdom composed only of those born of the Spirit, who are in the world, but not of the world. These have something that the world cannot give; or cannot take from them. In 1 Peter we read, ". . . To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Any religious organization, calling themselves Christian or otherwise, that has to resort to human armaments, to fight what they call the fight of faith, are deceived, and are deceiving the world that follows them. This kingdom is a spiritual kingdom; and Jesus said that if his kingdom were of this world, then would his servants fight — they would take up swords and spears; but the church fights not this kind of battle. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." They fight this battle only as they have the whole armour of God given them. They are built up a spiritual house, or lively stones; not dead stones. They are lively because they have been born of the Spirit of God: they are taught something, and know how they ought to live and walk, for God is gracious to them, and works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Peter also wrote, "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner." How we love to read, "It is contained in the scriptures." The prophets wrote it; Peter quoted it; and John and James, and Jesus quoted the prophets. Sion is the church: a chief corner stone was laid in Sion — the stone rejected of the builders became the head of the corner; and it is declared that there is salvation in none other. Pilot said that he found no fault in him; but Jesus was crucified; and he arose from the dead, showing it was impossible to destroy the church. Political pressure was

brought to bear when the mob cried, "If you let this man go, you are not Caesar's friend." Which all shows the strength of this kingdom which cannot be destroyed.

"But he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." Experience shows that when we are given faith to believe on Him, we are not confounded by the doctrines of the world. The things we practiced when we believed we could do what we thought was required of us, no longer give us concern: we no longer mistake these things for the only way of salvation, for we are given grace and faith to believe in the finished work of Jesus, and He is precious to us. What an empty profession is often made when men say they believe in Jesus. My own experience tells me that what I am saying is true. The only way a person can know Jesus, is for Jesus to be revealed in him. One can never learn Him in the schools of men. True enough, men can teach the historical part, and the so called "story of the Bible," but they can't impart the truth that makes Jesus precious. This is done only when He reaches down to where one is dead in trespasses and sins, brings him up, and gives peace and joy. Then He is precious.

"And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence." Jesus is really this to unbelievers. Yet we hear Him much talked about. There is a vast difference between talking about Jesus, and preaching Jesus. When Jesus is preached, the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, is preached; when He is preached, his doctrine is preached: such as, "All that the Father hath given me shall come unto me." Or, "No man can come unto me except my Father which sent me draw him." Whenever the doctrine of Jesus and his Apostles is preached, Jesus is a stumbling stone, for his doctrine is not that way that seems right to men. It is a dreadful thing for professors to stumble at the word; yet this is what many do as they wrest the scriptures to their own destruction, as Peter wrote. When one comes to your door and wants to show you the way of salvation; to point out the kingdom of heaven and how to get there, they forget, (rather do not know) that Jesus has already redeemed all who shall ever enter heaven, and that he has his own way of revealing it to them, and all that they ever need to know. He is a stone of stumbling, and will always remain such to those who know not the Lord.

Now let us think of another scripture for a moment. "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." (Romans 9:22, 23) Will any charge God with being unjust? The kingdoms of this world will stand as long as it is God's will for them to stand — both the natural kingdoms, and the so-called spiritual kingdoms: the great organizations of which the scriptures speak; and concerning which Paul comforted the Thessalonian brethren, saying, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there be a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." And further, "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."

Were it not the Lord's work, it might be considered marvelous that the doctrine that Jesus and the Apostles taught, has been preserved in the midst of the flood of false doctrines; and that

this kingdom has not been destroyed ere this. How true it is, ". . . the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth." And though the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, she is still preserved; and her children have the promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." This little, humble kingdom — humble so far as the component members are concerned, fearful, trembling, but having a powerful God and Saviour fighting their battles for them, is far from being overthrown; and the promise is that it shall never be destroyed, nor left to other people.

Now a few more thoughts concerning this kingdom. Have you been concerned that the church has been troubled with some who have "crept in unawares" to "spy out our liberty"; or that many of the Lord's people have been caught up in divisions and false doctrines; or that the Lord has a people in every nation, kingdom, tribe and people — a multitude of whom are not made known to the brethren in the church? If so, you have the assurance of the Apostle that the ". . . foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." And the assurance of the Saviour, "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine." Peter preached the same doctrine on the day of Pentecost when he said, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." All of these were provided for in the ancient will of God; and those who are provided for, and what is provided, is manifested by the work of the Spirit in each of them, as He takes the things of Jesus and shows it unto them.

There is much, much more embraced in the subject, but we must forebear, except to say that it will be a glorious time for the citizens of this kingdom when the warfare is over, when their mortality shall be swallowed up of life, and they are conformed to the image of their Saviour, and brought into the fulness of those things that God has provided for them.

(The above is the substance of a discourse at Mt. Zion Church in Virginia. It was taped, but condensed and edited for publication instead of attempting to write an editorial. — J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

GIDEON'S ARMY

THREE COMPANIES — EMPTY PITCHERS — LAMPS, &C.

In reply to brother Isaac McCarty, of New London, Iowa, we will give such views as we have upon the figurative import of the text recorded in Judges vii. 16, which reads thus: "And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers."

The records of the Old Testament we are informed are given for our instruction, and contain a shadow of good things to come, things in which the saints of the present dispensation have an interest. The people of Israel whom God redeemed from Egypt, and with a strong hand and outstretched arm brought out of the house of bondage and through the sea, and through the wilderness into the promised land, were undisputably typical of the spiritual people which were chosen of God in Christ, and redeemed from the bondage of the law, the pollution and guilt of sin, and brought by his almighty arm into the gospel rest which was prefigured by the land of promise. The propensity of Israel to murmur, fret and rebel, and when not under the chastising hand of God to go into idolatry, clearly portrays the wandering and rebellious propensity of the spiritual tribes of the Lord to depart from his precepts, wax fat and kick, when

left to develop their carnal proclivities, for the trial of their faith. As Israel were often chastised for their rebellion and idolatry by being driven before their enemies until thoroughly made sensible of their own weakness and entire dependence on God for deliverance, so the children of God are frequently reduced to the greatest extremities, and with deep contrition to call on God to deliver them from their distress.

The connection of our text shows that Israel had done evil in the sight of the Lord, and had been delivered by the Lord into the hands of Midian for seven years; and when they were sorely oppressed by their enemies, the angel of the Lord appeared unto Gideon, the son of Jonah, and commanded him to demolish the altar of Baal, and cut down the grove; and this exasperated the Midianites and the Amalekites and the children of the east, and they raised a mighty army, and came down upon the people of Israel with a host that was like the sand for number, and encamped against Israel. Israel, now humbled under the chastening hand of God, in their distress called on God for deliverance; and God, by his angel, appeared again unto Gideon, and promised to deliver Israel by his hand; and having strengthened him for the work, gave him special instruction how to proceed. To all human appearance the whole combined forces of all the tribes of Israel could make but a very feeble and fruitless resistance to such a mighty army; but God had determined, instead of augmenting the army of Israel, to reduce the handful which were with Gideon, from thirty-two thousand men to the number of only three hundred, lest Israel should boast that by their power or valor they had achieved the victory. Truly God is jealous for his own glory, which he will not give to another, nor his praise unto graven images. God's method of strengthening the heart and hands of Gideon, and Gideon's misgivings and fearfulness, are well illustrated in his dealings with his children in every age. We all know something of the doubtings, fearings, trembling and slowness of heart to receive and rely upon the kind and gracious promises of our God. But when he strips us for the race, or harnesses us for the battle, then we can, through him, run through a troop or leap over a wall, and do valiantly.

We may trace this subject far, and compare God's dealings with Gideon and Israel with the experience of all the saints in their numerous conflicts with their enemies and their triumph over them; but there appears to us a still deeper and more striking application of the figurative import of the part of the subject presented in the text proposed for our more especial consideration.

From the allusion to this subject, Isa. ix. 4-7, we conclude that Gideon, in leading the little band of God's elect or chosen people to triumph over the Midianitish hosts, was a figure of Christ, as the Captain of our salvation. The removing the yoke and burden and staff and rod of oppression of Israel by Gideon, was attended with confused noise in the Midianitish camp, and garments rolled in blood; not by swords of steel or weapons of carnal slaughter used by Gideon and his men, but by confusion in the enemies' camp, which set every man's sword against his fellow; and this confusion and consternation was occasioned by what was to them the confused noise of three hundred trumpets breaking suddenly upon their astonished ears, and simultaneously with the noise, the fearful glare of light from three hundred lamps, which carried dismay and terror to their quaking hearts. So when our spiritual or anti-typical Gideon, the "child born, the Son given, the Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace," should vanquish all the enemies of his cause and people, it shall answer to the figure and be with burning and fuel of fires. When

"that wicked shall be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." — 2 Thess. ii. 8.

If we are right in taking Gideon in this figure to represent Christ, then the three hundred chosen men, elected by God himself, may represent the chosen people of God under the three dispensations, including patriarchs and prophets under the two former dispensations, and the apostles and saints of the gospel dispensation. This divides the Lord's host into three companies, as they are represented by a multitude of corresponding figures. When Jacob, on his journey, came to the land of the people of the east, he saw a well in the field, and lo, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it, for out of that well they watered the flocks. But it was a fountain sealed, a spring shut up, so that they could not be watered until the flocks were gathered, and the stone removed. The stone, or tables of the law, shut up from the flocks the waters of life, until Rachel (the figure of the gospel church) brought up her father's flock, and then the stone was removed and the flocks were watered. — Gen. xxix. The division of the Lord's chosen people is represented in the three companies, by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; by Noah, Daniel and Job; by Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, in the burning furnace, and the form of the fourth in their midst, whose form was like the Son of God; in the sign of the prophet Jonah, the three days and three nights he was in the whale's belly, and the three days in which Christ said he would build the temple, the three days he was in the heart of the earth; with many other parallel figures, all of which show that the great battle of the Lord, in which the mighty hosts of the worshipers of Baal or other idols shall be vanquished and go to confusion together, and the wicked shall be consumed by the spirit of the mouth of our great Captain, and destroyed by the brightness of his coming, as the Midianites were by the sound of the trumpets blown by the mouth of Gideon, and reiterated by those who were with him, who were "called and chosen and faithful," and whom Gideon commanded to look at him, and do as they saw him do, should agree with this figurative number.

"And he put a trumpet in every man's hand." Not in the hand of every man of Midian, or of Amalek, nor even every man of Israel; but every man of the three hundred whom God had chosen for that service. The proclamation of the gospel of the grace of God is often spoken of in the scriptures as the blowing of a trumpet. Two trumpets of silver, of a whole piece, were made at God's command by Moses, to be blown for the gathering of the people of Israel, and for the journeying of the camp. A jubilee trumpet was sounded to announce the year of release to the captives of Israel. "And it shall come to pass in that day that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in his holy mount at Jerusalem." — Isa. xxvii. 13. "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other." — Matt. xxiv. 31. The trumpets used by the three hundred chosen men of Gideon did not divide nor scatter Gideon's men when sounded by command of and in harmony with the sounding of the trumpt of their illustrious leader; but it scattered and confused their enemies. So the gospel of the Son of God, when sounded at his command, and precisely as the chosen trumpeters witness the sounding of it by their glorious leader and commander, will always gather those who have an ear to hear what the Spirit saith to the churches; but "if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare for

the battle?" The gospel is the sharp sword which proceedeth out of the mouth of him who in righteousness doth judge and make war. This is the "sword of the Lord and of Gideon," and it will surely carry confusion into the camp of the enemies, and ultimately set every man's hand against his fellow, as in the days of Midian. The sword of the Lord, as we have said, is not a carnal weapon made of steel, but it is quick (vital) and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword; it is mighty through God, for it divides asunder between joints and marrow, soul and spirit, and it is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Such a sword, a "Thus saith the Lord God," is put in the hand of every soldier of the cross; but it cannot be used with good effect only at the proper time.

The apostles, after receiving the commission, were commanded to tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. Had some of Gideon's men blown the trumpet before Gideon gave the signal, they might have done mischief; but, "Look on me, and do likewise. When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of the camp, and say, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." So says our spiritual Leader: Look on me, observe my example, do as ye see me do, obey my commandments, and follow in my footsteps.

Observe, the trumpets were furnished and put in every man's hand by Gideon, as were also the empty pitchers and the lamps. Trumpets have a variety of sounds: some are shrill and piercing, some are smooth and soft, others are harsh and grating in their sound: some are to announce an approaching conflict, calling the people to arms, and some are to proclaim a jubilee of release to prisoners and captives; but for every purpose the tumpet must give a certain sound. Should every man furnish his own trumpet, they would not be likely to harmonize in sound. Some of those that were used by Israel were made of rams' horns, others of silver, and all adapted to the purpose for which they were to be used. The trumpets put in the hands of Gideon's three hundred men fitly represented the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which our spiritual Gideon has bestowed on every one whom he has called and chosen to grapple with the powers of darkness, and stand in defense of the faith which was once delivered to the saints. And let it also be well observed that the trumpets in the hands of Gideon's men were only understood by the men of Gideon; but made a confused, unintelligible noise in the ears of the Midianitish camp. The same trumpets that cheered and strengthened the hands and hearts of the men of Gideon, carried consternation and death to their enemies. So the same apostolic gifts that are "a savor of life unto life to them that are saved, are a savor of death unto death to them that perish." "Blessed are they that know the joyful sound." The preaching of Christ is to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, (as were Gideon's men,) Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

The empty pitchers may represent the servants of God, who in themselves are but dust and ashes, moulded by the potter, and formed into vessels of honor or of dishonor, according to the pleasure of the potter; in themselves empty, and having no power to either cheer Israel or confound the enemy; but he who has formed the vessels to honor has committed to them a sacred treasure, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

The lamps, that were concealed from the view of the enemy by the empty pitchers, until the pitchers were broken to let the light shine forth, is clearly illustrated by the apostle, 2 Cor. iv. 5-7: "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves

your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure (of light) in earthen vessels, (as Gideon's men had their light in earthen vessels, and for the same purpose, too,) that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." And as the mighty hosts of Midian, of Amalek and the people of the east were overwhelmed and destroyed when Gideon caused the light to shine out of the darkness of the empty pitchers, even so will the Lord consume anti-christ or that wicked with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy them with the brightness of his coming. — 2 Thess. ii. 8. God's chosen ministers, who take forth the precious from the vile, are "as God's mouth." — Jer. xv. 19. Of the Spirit of the Lord, it is said unto the Zion of the Lord, whose light is come, and on whom the glory of the Lord has risen, "My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever." — Isa. lix. 21. The light in Gideon's pitchers, and the Spirit and words of the Lord, which are a light to our way and a lamp to our feet, God has put in the mouth of Zion's seed, as Gideon put the lamps into the empty pitchers of his men, and made them to be as his mouth, in declaring his words and in putting forth the precious from the vile.

Although we have extended our remarks to a great length, we cannot well forbear to add a few further reflections on the subject, especially in regard to the useful instruction it presents to the soldiers of the cross of Christ. Neither the pitchers, the lamps or the trumpets, or even the men, had any power to subdue the mighty hosts that were encamped against them. The blowing of the trumpets, the breaking of the pitchers, the shining of the lamps, and the crying, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," all would have been ineffectual, had not God himself directed the whole matter. It was at God's appointed time and in his own way that this great army was to be put to flight, pursued and destroyed. How often, when Zion appears to languish, and the enemy is spread out like grasshoppers, filling the whole land, that unbelief suggests, "The Lord has forgotten to be gracious," and scoffers say, "He is slack concerning his promises," and our trembling hearts inquire, "By whom shall Jacob rise, for he is small?" But we forget that the battle is the Lord's; and when we are made to triumph it will always be in such a way as shall constrain us to say, "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

See the well-drilled chosen handful of men, receiving from God their instructions through Gideon; how very important that they receive every word of the instruction, and obey to the very letter. "Look on me," said Gideon. Should they for a moment turn their eyes from Gideon, they would be terrified at the sight of their enemies, and if they looked at their own feeble numbers, or to their lamps in empty earthen vessels, the sight would be appalling; but as the eye of the servant is to his master, they were commanded to look alone to their leader, and away from everything else. So we find it enjoined on all the saints to be "Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith." "Behold, when I come to the outside of the camp it shall be that as I do, so shall ye do. When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets on every side of the camp, and say, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon."

To-day hosts of earth and hell are encamped against the little flock of our Immanuel; their number is like the

sand for multitude, their implements and munitions of war are cruel and deadly, embracing all that earth and hell can supply, and they defiantly challenge the armies of the living God, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him? And their mouth is open in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." — Rev. xiii. Like "the lily among thorns, and as the apple tree among the trees of the wood," the little flock, unto whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom, the church of God is seen. "And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Sion, and with him a hundred and forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written upon their forehead." "And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God, And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." — Rev. xiv. 1, and xv. 2, 3.

When Gideon required encouragement to allay his fears and inspire him with courage, God sent him to listen to a dream related by a Midianite, and interpreted by his fellow in the camp. But how simple the dream. The dreamer did not relate that he saw in his dream the bright artillery of heaven displayed, and the bolts of vengeance hurled in a storm of awful wrath, no fearful display of superior numbers, or of terrible death-dealing engines of warfare; but a simple, harmless cake of barley bread, which a hungry soldier might welcome with joy; but in the interpretation it was portentous of evil to their hosts: it tumbled into the camp, and came into a tent and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that it laid along. But the interpreter saw in the ominous cake the sword of Gideon and Midian's discomfiture. The little flock of Jesus are looked upon by their proud and scornful enemies now with as little dread as they would feel at the sight of a barley cake; but God has said, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

The wisdom of men would suppose the army of the Lord should be greatly augmented, so as to be able to vie with the numerous forces of the enemy; but God in his wisdom caused the number, small as it was, to be reduced from thirty-two thousand to three hundred men, lest they should say, "Mine one hand hath saved me," and thus rob him of the glory of their salvation. So men are now beating up for volunteers to make what they call the Lord's army strong enough to evangelize the heathen and convert the world; but all their volunteer recruits will be dismissed and sent home, like the surplus men of Gideon, before the final triumph shall be accomplished, and the naked arm of God, uncovered by human aid or instrumentalities, shall be made bare in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. — Isa. lii. 10.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, June 1, 1876.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. GRACIE PRICE NEWNAM

Sister Newnam, aged 65 years, passed away June 8, 1965. A native of Henry County, Virginia, she was married to Mr. Joe Price of Reidsville, North Carolina, on February 7, 1915. Two daughters to this union survive: Mrs. Carl Hurst and Mrs. Elwood King, both of Reidsville. Mr. Price died February 19, 1959.

She united with the Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church in November 1935, and was baptized by Elder O. J. Denny who was pastor at that time. On March 24, 1960, she united

in marriage with Brother J. Edgar Newnam of the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. Sister Newnam showed her faith by her works. She was interested in the welfare of the church of her membership, and was always present when meeting times came, and was a regular attendant at meetings among other churches of like faith.

The church at Reidsville, in deep sadness, mourns the passing of Sister Newnam, and extends sympathy to her family and many friends. But David, in the 116th Psalm, verse 15, comes to our relief in such cases: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Other survivors of Sister Newnam are a sister, Mrs. Allen Price; a brother, Walter Turner, both of Reidsville; two half sisters, Mrs. Nina Bivens, of Reidsville, and Mrs. Channing Post, Tampa, Florida; two half brothers, L. H. Turner, Gulf Breeze, Florida; and J. A. Turner, Greensboro, North Carolina; and her bereaved husband, Brother J. Edgar Newnam.

Her funeral was conducted at the Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, and Elder W. C. King. She was laid to rest in Greenview Cemetery to await the second coming of the Lord.

Written at the request of the church of her membership.

Approved at the August 1965, meeting of the Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church. A copy is for the family of Sister Newnam, a copy for publication in the *Signs of the Times*, and a copy for our church records.

M. T. Smith, Acting Church Clerk

JOSEPH W. DUNN

God in his infinite wisdom saw fit to remove from our midst another one of our beloved members, Brother Joe Dunn, who after several years of declining health passed away in the Calhoun County Hospital, Hampton, Arkansas, July 14, 1964, at the age of almost 78 years. He was a native of Calhoun County, Arkansas.

He was married to Ruth Ella Watson January 6, 1909, at the home of her father, the late T. J. Watson. Sister Dunn preceded him in death. To this union was born one daughter, Mrs. Avris Shook, and three sons: Claude Dunn, Cecil Dunn and Cornelius Dunn, all of Tinsman, Arkansas. Also, brother Dunn had seven grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Brother Dunn and Sister Dunn joined the Pilgrim's Rest Primitive Baptist Church, Fordyce, Arkansas, August 19, 1939, and were baptized the following day by Elder J. T. Everitt. A few years later the church at White Water was reorganized and they called for their letters and became charter members of said church. Elder W. W. Taylor was called as the first pastor.

Brother Dunn attended his meetings as long and as regular as his health would permit. He was a devoted companion, a loving father, and a meek and humble brother in Christ. We have lost a precious brother but feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted at White Water Church by his pastor, Elder W. A. Speer, and Elder J. T. Everitt, and his body was laid to rest in the Church Cemetery to await the final resurrection.

Written by, I hope, a brother in Christ.

Ross Watson

RUTH ELLA (WATSON) DUNN

Sister Dunn was born August 10, 1886, and passed away in her home from a heart attack July 16, 1962, making her stay here on earth almost 76 years. She was united in marriage to Joseph W. Dunn January 6, 1909, and to this union was born one daughter, Mrs. Avris Shook, and three sons: Claude Dunn, Cecil Dunn and Cornelius Dunn, all of Tinsman, Arkansas. Also, Sister Dunn had six grandchildren and three great grandchildren. Sister Dunn and her husband joined the Pilgrim's Rest Primitive Baptist Church, Fordyce, Arkansas, August 19, 1939, and later moving her membership to White Water Church near Tinsman, Arkansas, becoming a charter member of her home church after its reorganization. Elder W. W. Taylor was called as the pastor.

Sister Dunn was a wonderful person who suffered many heartaches, but was always able to meet anyone with a lovely smile and a cheerful countenance. She was devoted to her family and to her church. She will be greatly missed in her community, but we trust that our loss is her eternal gain. May we bow in humble submission to our God who doeth all things after the council of his own will. May he comfort and sustain the bereaved family.

Her funeral was conducted July 17, 1962, by Elder W. A. Speer, her pastor, and Elder J. T. Everitt, and interment was in the Watson Cemetery at her home Church, near Tinsman, Arkansas.

Written by her cousin, and I hope a brother in Christ.

Ross Watson

MRS. SARAH E. DeHART

Mrs. Sarah E. DeHart was born April 14, 1883, and departed this life July 18, 1965.

Sister DeHart was married to Darius I. DeHart who departed this life in 1915; and

to this union were born two sons and one daughter: Herman I. DeHart, Noel E. DeHart and Mildred F. DeHart who survive. There is one grandson who survives.

She united with the Charity Church of the Smith River Association of Virginia in 1920, and was baptized by the late Elder J. D. Cockram.

Sister DeHart had lived for the past 32 years in Philadelphia, Pa. with her son Noel and daughter Mildred who were so faithful to her in taking care of her during the years of her illness. They were also very good to her in taking her to the meetings of her faith and order, where she enjoyed so much meeting the brethren and friends she loved so dearly; and to listen to the doctrine preached that she believed. She attended the meetings as long as her health would permit. Her walk in life spoke for itself of her belief in the grace and mercy of her God.

The writer had visited her in her home and will remember for a long time that look of faith in her face, and her hope for a better land beyond the cares of this world.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Kirk and Nice Funeral Home in Philadelphia, Pa., on July 21, 1965, and she was laid to rest in the Forest Hills Memorial Park. May it please the Lord to reconcile the children, and all who knew and loved her so dearly, to her passing, and to feel that their loss is her eternal gain, is the prayer of the writer.

Elder Arthur R. Warren

SISTER ELIZABETH SLAUSON

Sister Elizabeth Slauson, beloved wife of Elder Amasa J. Slauson and daughter of the late Almira and Morrison Secor, both faithful members of Olive and Hurley Church, departed this life at their home in Kingston, New York, on June 20, 1965.

She was 86 years of age and had been a very faithful member of the Olive and Hurley Church for over 60 years, one that was deeply led and of good report within and without the church, a gracious sister who kept from being overcome by evil but who overcame evil with good.

In November, 1931 she became the second wife of Brother Amasa J. Slauson, who several years later was ordained to the ministry and she proved to be an excelelnt companion and helpmate, who treated his children and grandchildren with love and kindness as though they were her very own, and they, during her long sickness of over seven years, showed by their constant thoughtfulness and kindness that her love and esteem were fully reciprocated. She was step-mother to Mrs. Howard Green, Mrs. Edwin Kittle and Howard Slauson, also aunt to Mrs. Elvin Benson whom she raised from a child and loved. She is also survived by eight grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren of Elder Slauson's.

The funeral service was held on Wednesday, June 23, at the Olive and Hurley meetinghouse, where she had worshipped for so many years, and where her husband is pastor. Elder W. D. Griffin, of Welsh Tract, and the writer officiated. Elder Griffin spoke to the comfort and edification of those present from Acts 17:28 and Ephesians 2:1. The writer read two of her favorite hymns, "Death is no more a frightful foe," and "My dearest friends in bonds of love," and spoke from Philippians 1:21.

Her many years of sickness and suffering made her ardently long for that rest that remained to the people of God. Two days before she died she told her dear husband that the Lord had really made it known to her that she was going home. She asked to see the girls whom she so dearly loved and early the next morning she went to be forever with the Lord.

May God, who doeth all things well, bless her companion and the others she so dearly loved with strength for their day, and as they remember the love and sweet fellowship they enjoyed, cause them to know assuredly that it is an earnest of that which is to come, into which their loved one has entered. Her body was laid to rest in the Margaretville, New York Cemetery, to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

Elder George Ruston

SISTER ETHEL COVINGTON

Sister Ethel Covington was born July 12, 1809, and died August 13, 1965. She was the daughter of the late Joshua and Sister Annie Powell, and widow of Charles N. Covington. She is survived by one son C. Newton Covington, one daughter Mrs. Guy Banks, one brother Herman Powell and one sister Mrs. Louis Richardson, all of Salisbury, Md.

Sister Covington was a devoted wife and mother and very good friend, always putting the needs and comforts of others before hers, even to the impairment of her own health.

She asked for a home with the Nassango Church and was baptized by the Pastor Elder David Spangler.

We had many lovely talks together. She had for many years enjoyed attending the meetings and hearing the preaching but said after she came to the church she could not

find words to express how much the fellowship and the feeling of having a home with these dear ones meant to her. She was faithful to attend the meetings not only of Nassango but anywhere she had a way to go as long as she was able.

We shall miss her sweet smile and lovely conversation as we have these long months of her illness but feel our loss is her eternal gain.

In the absence of her pastor her funeral was conducted by Elder Arthur Warren in the Salisbury Old School Baptist Meeting House, and interment in Parson Cemetery, Salisbury, Md.

Written by one who loved her,
Ethel Holloway

MRS. R. W. RHODES

Mrs. R. W. Rhodes was born on February 2, 1895, and departed this life August 27, 1965.

Surviving are her husband, Elder R. W. Rhodes; three sons, Joe W. Rhodes of Alexandria, La., Edward L. Rhodes of Little Rock, Ark., and Virgil Rhodes of Spearsville, La.; six daughters, Mrs. Mable R. Welch of Houston, Texas, Mrs. Dee Holloway of Strong, Ark., and Mrs. Blanche Rockett, Mrs. Coy Bennett, Mrs. Ralph Bennett, and Mrs. Clyde Barron, all of Spearsville, La.; two brothers, two sisters, 26 grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

Elder and Mrs. Rhodes were married on December 10, 1910. She joined the Missionary Baptists in early life, but showed a change in belief around 1920-1923, because she stopped going to the church where her membership was. She mentioned to Elder Rhodes that she did not have any desire to go; and she has mentioned to the writer that her heart was with the Primitive Baptists.

She made the Old Baptists feel welcome in her home. This was a very valuable blessing to her husband, Elder R. W. Rhodes.

The brethren around here mourn with Elder Rhodes. We pray that God will enable Brother Rhodes to be reconciled to His will, and enable him to press on for the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer assisted by Mr. Roy Gardner, Elder W. W. Taylor and Elder D. E. Turner, at New Hope Primitive Baptist Church near Spearsville, La. Her body was laid to rest at the cemetery by the church.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.

MRS. DOVIE CRAWFORD

Mrs. Dovie Crawford was born August 18, 1896, and departed this life on September 3, 1965. Survivors include her husband, L. R. Crawford; seven sons, Alfred, Doyle, Sam and Glendon, Crawford, all of Abilene, Texas; Rufus Crawford of Hope, Arkansas, Lester Crawford of New Orleans, La.; and Dawson Crawford of Dallas, Texas; and two daughters, Mrs. Marshall Summers of Seminole, Texas, and Mrs. Ralph Faine of Memphis, Tenn. Surviving also are twenty-one grandchildren, and five great grandchildren.

She joined the "Limited" Primitive Baptists earlier in life, but she had been attending New Hope Primitive Baptist Church near Patmos, Arkansas, for the past several years. The writer has detected that Mrs. Crawford's countenance showed that she believed in an allwise God who has determined and purposed all things, and that man does not earn his blessings in this life by any of his own deeds, but that they rest upon the free grace of God, and that all of our blessings were determined beforehand by this Great God. Her expression also showed that she rejoiced in the wonderful subject of the Resurrection of the Body.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer at Shover Springs M. Baptist Church near Hope, Arkansas.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.

MRS. LEROR C. ALBRITTON

Mrs. Leror Albritton was born in Dateville, Alabama, on April 1, 1891, and departed this life on August 29, 1965. On October 1, 1911, she was united in marriage to Joseph W. Albritton. Brother Albritton departed on November 26, 1948.

Sister Albritton united with Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church (near Farmerville, La.) around 1920. (The church records were burned in 1945.) She was blessed to attend the Church regularly, and now will be missed by Liberty Hill brethren. The writer has reasons to believe that Sister Albritton was firm both in doctrine and order, and considered her "strong in the faith".

She is survived by her mother, Mrs. Mary L. Cartlidge of Rayville, La.; five sons, William A., of Downsville, La.; Henry, Cecil and Marvin, all of Farmerville, La.; and James of Amarillo, Texas; two daughters, Mrs. Lettie Fellows of Dryden, New York, and Mrs. Leror Iles of Kinder, La.; and by six brothers and three sisters, 18 grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer and assisted by Elder R. W. Rhodes, at Liberty Hill Church. Her body was laid to rest at the cemetery by the church to await the glorious resurrection.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133 DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1965 NO. 12

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12/65
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CHRIST THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

(Malachi 4:2)

When the Sun of righteousness arises
With healing in His wings,
How divinely soothing is the balm,
Which He with Him brings.

Happiness divine He doth graciously
Upon His saints bestow,
And at last they will surely be
Secure from every foe.

His felt presence they much desire,
In this vale of tears,
For in this world they are subject
To many doubts and fears.

But in the regions of sacred bliss,
Doubts and fears will be o'er,
And by the action of the Lord,
Tears will be no more.

For He will wipe away all tears,
As in the Scriptures told;
Supremely happy Christ's will be
While His glory they behold.

His beauty they will ever adore,
And never weary grow;
Their toiling will all be o'er,
Eternal rest to know.

Indeed, sweet will be the rest
That remaineth to the weary,
When freed from sin and sorrow,
And all that maketh dreary.

With the glorified saints above,
May we find that rest,
And by the Sun of righteousness,
Be for ever blest.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, North Carolina

SERMON BY ELDER J. P. HELMS AT THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION 1965

Again the Pigg River Association has met according to appointment. By rotation I stand before you for the purpose of trying to introduce by what is known as the Introductory Sermon. No man ever stood before you less qualified for this task than I. I realize to some measure that this is the last time I shall ever have the privilege of addressing you in this capacity. During the association here in Rocky Mount seventeen or eighteen years ago, my mother passed away on Friday. I have been blessed to attend all the associations that have been held with this church.

My desire is, above everything else, I have your prayers that God might bless me to proclaim the riches of His grace as I feel it was proclaimed when this association was organized at Little Creek Church in the year 1825.

I have been trying to think of something that I might read to you this morning. Recently I heard a man read a portion of the 4th chapter of Paul's letter to the church at Rome, and who began speaking by saying that he wanted to tell us what God would do, and what he would not do. That amazed me, because I have been made to believe, and I desire to earnestly contend for what *God has done;* and to affirm that what He has done, *is done forever.*

Last Sunday afternoon our present moderator, Elder Turner, was blessed to preach, and he spoke of one thing that has rested somewhat on my mind; and I will turn to the 5th chapter of Romans, and read one verse: "There-

fore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." If I could be blessed to affirm and to bear record of this eternal truth, I would be blessed of the Lord of heaven and earth, to proclaim the riches of what He has done for his people.

The world is crying what He will do, if we will let him. But I want to lift up my voice here at the opening session of the old Pigg River Association, concerning what He has done — not what He will do, but what he has done for poor, unworthy worms of the dust. Here stands a living witness of his amazing mercy, because if justice had been dealt out upon me, I would not be here on this occasion.

In my early days in the ministry I remember something in particular in reference to this scripture. I had found where it reads, "Being justified by his blood," and I thought the Lord blessed me in a little measure, to preach the atoning blood of Christ for his people. The following week something attracted my attention and I turned to this scripture I have read; and it didn't read to suit me. I wanted to punctuate it differently, for this wouldn't do; but I found out soon that I was the one that needed punctuating, and not the scripture.

I have read to you, "Therefore being justified by faith." We might pause, and ask, How far reaching is that? Farther than ever the tongue of an individual will be able to tell; farther than the mind of an individual sinner will ever be blessed to fathom. Justification is a doctrine that belongs only to God's humble poor. You know that the head of the government in the State of Virginia, or our national government, can pardon a criminal, and the criminal will come home free from the law; but, let him be a rogue or a murderer, the stain of that thing is in him, for he comes home a pardoned rogue or murderer. But here is something that makes one as clean as though nothing had ever stained him. In other words, something that has cleansed us entirely, and brings us into a wonderful condition. I confess that I can only say I hope that He was born for me; I can only say that I hope He lived for me; I can only say that I hope he died for me — and not only died for me, but arose for me. And from time to time over a long period, he has visited me, and assured me that he had finished the work he came to do; and that when he bowed his head upon the cross and said, "It is finished," salvation in its entirety for the here and hereafter, was wrought out for everyone of his children. This is so far reaching that it embraces all of his children whether infants or aged, whether in the Old School Baptist Church or some other denomination: all of his children are embraced in it.

What is under consideration when the word *Faith* is used? I know it is often spoken of as something we can cultivate, something we can add to, or lose, as though it were a commodity. But let me assure you that if you had all the wealth in the universe you couldn't buy enough faith to put out a chigger's eye: and you know how much that would be.

What is faith? The best definition I have ever found, is contained in this Scripture, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen;" and then tells the effect of faith when it is granted to an individual. I tell you that it will make him believe in God. By faith the first man that ever fell under the sentence of death at the hands of his brother, offered a more acceptable sacrifice than his brother. Why? it says, by faith. How did Abraham believe God? by faith. That faith that is once delivered to the saints, is not offered but given you: When the Babe was laid in the manger, there was the gift of God in its entirety. Paul said in the 4th chapter of Romans, "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." It is impossible to find hope

where there is no faith. If we have faith, the Lord has us; we haven't got him.

I want to talk to you about something we don't get ourselves. Long ago a colored man said, "If you can get something, you can also lose it." So I want to tell you that my hope is that the author and finisher of faith, the first and the last, the Alpha and Omega found me, (not that he did not know where I was), as he did one of old, in a waste howling wilderness, and brought me by his own hand; brought me to the place I was made to cry unto him, because all of my own works had failed. And I was made to know that faith is the gift of God in its entirety. No wonder the Apostle Paul, in bearing testimony here and there, always adds it to grace: By grace through faith. It is impossible to have one if the other isn't there, for every gift, every good gift, every perfect gift comes down from above in the person of the Lord of glory; and he takes up his abode in your heart. He illuminates in such a way that he gives you eyes to see, and a heart to understand. Don't tell me you have to believe to have faith, for belief is the effect of faith; and not the cause of it, by any means. Faith is the gift of God, it is not of works lest any man should boast. This certainly ought to set and seal all the work mongers in the universe.

I might say here that in my first going to the association as a messenger from old Republican Church, there were between twelve and thirteen hundred members of this association; now there are not quite eight hundred. What took place? Have the witnesses that God chose to stand and bear record failed? No! for there is no failure with Him. God's purpose is being carried out in this association, as it is everywhere. Sometimes I have been made to think, and to point my finger at myself, and say, You have failed. Yes, I admit I am a failure, but I am so thankful that I can tell you of one that never has, and can never fail; and that one is the author and finisher of every bit of faith that has been or ever will be here upon the earth.

The God that created the universe, who was made manifest and laid in a manger, when it was said to those on the hill that night, "This shall be a sign unto you, you will find him wrapped in swaddling clothes, laid in a manger," in him was all the gift that God had ever promised throughout all ages to his people. What more do we need today, than Him? He is the only one that ever said he would bring his children from the North, and say to the South keep not back; and that he would bring his sons and daughters from afar, even from the ends of the earth.

I know I have been among you for a long time. When I was ordained there were seventeen Elders above me on the list, and now I am at the head of the list — seventeen have gone on before; and soon according to nature I will be called to quit the walks of men. But the outstanding thing among our people has always been, and will always be contained in the language of Revelation, "The Lord omnipotent reigneth." Not only does he reign over this or that, he reigns and rules over all things that are. And sometimes I can bear record, because I am given an eye to behold it: that not a leaf has ever quivered, not one has ever fallen that isn't in keeping with and according to the eternal will of God. God has appointed the coming of every one of his children into the kingdom, for there is only one way to come, and that is by the new birth: not by being born naturally, for that which is of the flesh is flesh, and that which is of the Spirit is spirit.

"Being justified." This man that stands before you has a hope that he is justified fully from everything that ever has, or ever can come against him. In the 8th chapter of Romans it is written, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect; it is God that

justifieth." Who, therefore, can bring any charge before the court of heaven against you. God doesn't look at you as men: my hope is that he looks at me through the Lord Jesus Christ. All of my righteousness: every bit that I can lay claim to as mine, is as filthy rags. Unless our righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the hypocrites and Pharisees, we are gone. How then are we to escape? By faith: "Therefore being justified by faith." Justified before whom? before God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Doesn't he hold everything in his own hands? Is there anything you can think of that is not under his control? Has he ever been surprised? Has he ever come short one iota of his eternal will being done? I feel that if anything has been wrought in me, it is, That God has all the power there is in his own hands. Don't undertake to tell me to fear the Devil — I have long since learned that he doesn't hold the keys to his own kingdom: he can't do anything without the God of heaven and earth. If it is according to God's will, it is going to be done; and if it is not according to his will, it won't be done.

So Jesus came, born of a woman according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. It was according to God's will that he was crucified: he was crucified between two thieves, and gave up the ghost. He was laid in the tomb three days and nights, all according to the counsel of a covenant keeping God. Don't say that man had anything to do with it. We see a movement in Rome, trying to free those from the charge of crucifying the Lord of Glory, as though man was the author of it. But I want to tell you that, regardless of what you may think or say, all of it was according to the eternal will of God. Without his crucifixion, without his death and resurrection, where would you and I be? By him we live, and by faith stand justified before God.

It is more than I can understand; and I go with my head bowed down most of the time: if I could only know, — if I could have more evidence, has been my cry all these years. I realize that I soon must pass into the great beyond with a little hope which I received long ago in a cabin close to the Town of Rocky Mount. I am resting and abiding upon this one thing: that He came to me where I was. I had finished my work — all of it, for I had come to the place where there was no more praying, no more promises — I had failed in everything. I have tried again and again to tell about it; and I think of what my old grandfather, in his last hours, told me: "I must go into the great beyond with a little hope, which sometime I have been ashamed to tell." Here stands another one who must go and face his Maker, with the hope that the Lord of Glory suffered for me — fulfilled every law and all of its demands for me in such a wonderful way, that I stand today, (not will be tomorrow; but now,) justified by faith; so that in the sight of God I stand as pure and holy (not in the flesh, but) in the Spirit as the God of heaven is. Can you receive that? Oh, I know your groans, I know your fears: I know all about them; but nevertheless when we can see Jesus, we see him making an offering for all of our sins, not part of them: putting them away by his own death upon the cross; and being raised for our justification, assures us that our hope is not in vain. God has appointed so many hills for us to climb, so many ravines for us to go into the depths, but in the end the glory land is awaiting for you — already prepared.

So away with the idea of telling what God will do and what he won't do. I want to tell you that everything is made ready for you; and you with all of your vileness according to your own judgment, will find where Paul gloried in suffering persecutions: and doubts and fears were his portion. Yet in spite of all that, he was justified fully and

freely: so he stands justified before God. So, Old School Baptists, in spite of all that you are surrounded with, in spite of all that you may think or do, if God is for you, nothing can be against you.

Last Sunday Elder Turner was blessed to bring a message to me that lifted me clear up, and made me to realize in a measure, that in spite of all that I am, God loved me, and gave himself for me. He didn't send anybody else — he came himself in the person of his Son: by whom we stand justified — not tomorrow, not some day that is coming, but justified now freely from all sin and iniquity.

If we could only be given to realize this eternal truth, the nights wouldn't be so long sometimes: I wouldn't have to roll and tumble so much; nevertheless you many rest assured that your salvation and everything is prepared for you. Sometimes we can get a little comfort out of the scripture where He said, "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

So God has made everything ready for you; and in all you are doing here, he is making you ready for it. I often try to tell Old School Baptists what is expected of them. This grace, this faith given you does not make you a boastful character of what you have done; never makes you boast of anything you have ever done or thought of in your life. But when we are given to think aright, we cry, "Glory to God in the highest." Yes, we glory in God, and we are glorified in him; for whom he did predestinate, all them he called; and whom he called he justified; and whom he justified he glorified. "What shall we then say to these things, if God be for us who can be against us."

Let it be remembered by everyone of you, that I stand in your presence, the presence of deacons and elders, and plead my inability, but tell you that God is able, not to do something, but has done it: has finished it, and prepared heaven with all of its glory for you — and is preparing you for it day after day. Oh, if I could preach like I thought I had learned almost fifty years ago, I would be something; but instead of getting bigger, I am shrinking up; instead of knowing more, I tell you ministers I know less than I knew long ago. The growth in grace and knowledge of the truth, brethren, never has exalted one to know more than the least of you, but it brings us all down on one level. I stand before you trying to preach to you the riches of God's grace, when I feel deeply that you know more about it than I do.

I am going to give way here, but I would leave this thought with you: God is not going to do anything more for one of his children. When he yielded up the ghost upon the cross, and said, "It is finished," the atonement was made; and when he arose from the dead, he sealed it. Not only did he seal it, but he is attending to his own affairs today: There is not a home in the mountains of Franklin County that he is ashamed to come to, or ashamed to introduce himself to you and make you know what a vile wretch you are — and what a glorious Saviour he is. How well I know this! I could go now, though the cabin is gone, to the very spot — if I could only feel what I felt that day, and hear what I heard that day, there wouldn't be so much doubt with me: I heard a voice, and it affirmed that He created heaven and earth; and that He was my Saviour. There was life in that word — there was power in it; and for a little while there was no doubt in me.

But it wasn't long before something else came: doubts arose; and doubts have been my portion, it seems, all these years. But I affirm to you, children of the most high God, that the sacrifice was made long ago: you don't have to make it; you don't have to help. It is not by a little grace and a little works: it is either all grace, all grace by faith, or there is none.

Where is He now? He is seated at the right hand of God. What is He doing now? He is making intercession for us. Oh, how often I feel the need of his intercession: He still stands between us and the judgment, the righteous judgment of God; He stands between Him and us, and nothing is ever charged against us.

(The above was the Introductory Sermon by Elder J. P. Helms at the Pigg River Association, held with the church at Rocky Mount Virginia, in August, 1965. It was recorded, and is edited for publication.

"By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God," is what the brethren of the churches of this association have believed from the beginning; and it was good to hear the oldest Elder among them confirming that they still believed the same things now — after one hundred and forty years. Elder Helms relates some of his experiences in being brought into the knowledge and love of the truth. — J. D. W.)

(Since the above was prepared for publication, Elder Helms has been called home, at the age of eighty-five. An obituary will be prepared soon. — J. D. W.)

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association in session with the Olive and Hurley Church at Halcottsville, Delaware County, New York, Wednesday and Thursday, September 15 and 16, 1965, sends love, fellowship, and greetings to the several churches and associations with which we correspond.

Dear Brethren in the Lord;

We are faced with the duty of writing a Circular Letter to brethren who are vitally interested in a doctrine which is ageless and extends from eternity unto eternity. This doctrine serves as a guide in our journey through this wilderness world. As we attempt to write we feel our own shortcomings and inability to write of ourselves. We are an empty vessel, and sinful flesh cannot bring honor to God.

The third Chapter of Ecclesiastes first verse says "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven." If this isn't predestination, then what is it? God had a way of salvation laid out for His people before the foundation of the world; not a plan as one may plan something, but never get around to do it. God laid out the way for all things from the beginning of time until the end. This is clearly stated in Ephesians first chapter, verses 3 to 6.

According to Genesis first chapter God created the heaven and earth on the first day, and on the sixth day He created man in His own image, male and female. Adam was formed from the dust of the earth and God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and He took a rib from Adam's side to make woman, who should be the mother of all mankind.

There are two generations mentioned in the Bible. The first the generation of Adam. The second the generation of Jesus Christ. Jesus' side was pierced by the cruel spear of a Roman soldier and from it flowed blood and water. The blood and water is the spiritual life of His people, "But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." This is so clearly stated in Galatians 4th chapter, verses 26 to 31. Jesus said unto His disciples in St. Mark 14, verse 24, "This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many." In 1st John chapter 1, verse 7, we read: "But if we walk in the light as he is the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

"Black, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die!"

When we first come to the church, there is an awakening to God's word, after, in the fullness of time, we have had a new birth to the generation of Jesus Christ.

We (those of us preordained to be

His) have weak hands and feeble knees. The church of the Lord Jesus Christ shelters and nourishes us, while we grow stronger on the spiritual food provided by her husband the Lord Jesus Christ. We feed, as newborn babes, and desire the sincere milk of this word, that we may grow thereby; "If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." (1st Peter 2nd chapter, verses 2 and 3).

As we grow in spiritual strength we find that there is no peace with ourselves. True we have periods of joy. We are carried up to the mountain top in spiritual joy, and view some of the wonders of God's graciousness to His people; and are made to sing:

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see."

Then the page is turned and we see our vile sinful selves and we sing:

"O Lord! how vile am I;
Unholy and unclean!
How can I dare to venture nigh,
With such a load of sin!"

Our warfare with the man of this world, (for he had first abode in this earthly house,) continues, for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to pulling down of strongholds; (2nd Corinthians 10th chapter, 4th verse). We find we are fighting powers and pricipalities; not flesh and blood.

Then we find ourselves down in the valley beset by Satan. Satan never takes a vacation. He is ever out to tempt God's people. He follows right at our heels, dogging our footsteps, while in the valley of tribulation. God has set Satan's bounds and he can go only so far. We feel shut up spiritually and cannot bring forth, and go along crying to the Lord for mercy and sustaining grace. We pray to God to remove our stony heart and give us a heart of flesh to hear the gospel with a hearing ear and an understanding heart. God's word is a heart warming doctrine to His people. For if preaching doesn't warm the heart we get very little spiritual enjoyment from it.

We know not how long we have in our sojourn here. As we travel on our way we meet brethren of like precious faith. We are happy to have them with us on our journey. As we go along we share our spiritual thoughts and hopes, trials and tribulations, leaning with one another on the staff of His promises and sustaining love through Christ our Lord, for He it is that sustains us all. We each bear one another's burdens. The older fellow travelers are an encouragement, and examples for us. They are fathers and mothers in Israel to the younger ones that have just come into the fold. They point the way and warn of pitfalls, and admonish us when we err. We have these wonderful brethren and sisters in the faith for a time, then we reach the point in our travels where they must leave us and go to that place of rest and be with the Lord forevermore. They have reached their destination in this worldly travel. We must continue on, however, and mourn our loss of them. We feel they are much better off, having completed their sojourn in this veil of tears, but miss their companionship and heart-felt love we had for each other in Christ Jesus. We continue on our way meeting new brethren, but still remembering the ones who have gone on. God's chosen ones travel on beset on all sides by pitfalls and stony places, and the wiles of Satan, but God's people have been circumcised from vain and worldly things.

We pray for strength to be kept in the strait and narrow way, "Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matthew 7th chapter, 14th verse.)

As Adam had a garden provided for him in Eden so God has provided a garden of holiness for His people in the generation of Jesus Christ. In the Song

of Solomon Chapter 5, first verse, we read, "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved." The older the Lord's people get the more they begin to bear evidence of a spiritual fruit as recorded in the 4th chapter of Solomon's Song 16th verse, which reads, "Awake, O north wind; and come thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits." This chilly north wind makes God's people cling closer to the fold and have no interest in this sinful world.

When we arrive at our destination, and we have finished our travel in this world, we can truly feel that, "He hath made everything beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from beginning to the end." (Ecclesiastes chapter 3, verse 11.) God has put the world in the heart of the first generation of the first Adam. And none, but those who are called by grace have a desire to seek and find out the work that God maketh from beginning to end.

"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus."

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

(Written by Woodrow W. Bellinger.)

P. O. Box 313,
Bryson City, N. C.

Dear Editors of the *Signs:*

I enclose check to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times;* and a two year subscription as shown.

I enjoy reading the *Signs* very much, and the doctrine it stands for. I believe in the predestination of all things, and an all-wise and all-powerful God, who works all things after his own will.

I do not get to attend church very much, since I live too far from a church to attend very often. So the *Signs* is the most preaching I get, and I enjoy it very much.

May the Lord bless you in your work. I believe I know I love the brethren, and that I am one of the least, if one at all.

H. D. Jacks

PSALM 85:10

"Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

The prophets of old were blessed to write of events which would take place in the future. The language used is written as though the events were in the present time. Notice Isaiah 9:6: "For unto us a child *is* born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." The language in this text is as though it were both present and future.

In the mind and purpose of God, the Salvation of His people has always been sure and secure; and the building was complete even before the foundation was laid. In the mind and purpose of God, the Church has always been glorious, spotless, undefiled, etc. even before it was in existence. "and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." (Psalms 139:16) "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Tim. 1:9) We may say that before the world began God had a purpose to save His people. Therefore in the mind and purpose of God, His people were saved before they were in existence.

In due time this Salvation is made manifest to God's people. In due time they are born into this world and travel the path that is laid out for them. In other words, things are made manifest in due time which God has purposed even before the foundation of the world. God is not surprised at events which are presently taking place, because He has always known and purposed all things. "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be: and that which is done is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the sun." (Ecc. 1:9) "That which hath been is now and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past." (Ecc. 3:15) ". . . I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the *things that are not yet done,* saying My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." (Isaiah 46:9-11)

As we think of the meeting together of mercy and truth, we think of the meeting together of mercy and justice. God is an holy, righteous, and just God. He is the lawgiver. This law is holy, and it was broken. The penalty of this broken law is death. "Sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4) "The wages of sin is death." (Rom. 6:23)

"And the Lord God commanded the man, saying of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof *thou shalt surely die.*" (Genesis 2:16-17) Adam stood as the federal head of the human race. When this law was broken, the death sentence passed upon mankind. (see Rom. 5:12) In other words, we all sinned in Adam. We were not in existence, but our life was in Adam. As Adam died, the whole human race died. The justice of God demanded perfection. The law must be kept to a jot and tittle. When the law was broken, justice was offended, and the penalty was death. Justice demanded that the penalty be meted out. When the penalty is suffered (which is death), then justice is satisfied.

We know that Adam did not die a corporeal death at the time he broke the law or commandment that God gave him. He died to the innocent state which he was in before the fall. Now he is guilty. The death sentence is passed upon him. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," (Rom. 5:12) He died in trespasses and sins. (Eph. 2:1)

Not only is the corporeal death sentence passed upon mankind, but this eternal death sentence (which is hell) is passed upon mankind.

As we think of natural death, we think of a separation between the body and the spirit of man. As we think of hell or the second death (Rev. 20:14), we think of the eternal separation between man and God.

To be with God is to dwell in light, and to be separated from him is to dwell in darkness. "Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine." (Job 18:5) In Isaiah 50:11, we read about those that kindle a fire, compass themselves about with sparks, etc. This light, which is the self righteousness of man, shall be put out.

". . . to whom is reserved the blackness of *darkness* forever." (Jude 13) ". . . to whom the mist of *darkness* is reserved for ever." (2 Peter 2:17) "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, depart from me, ye cursed into *everlasting fire,* prepared for the devil and his angels." (Matt. 25:41)

The wrath of God causes this fire. "How long, Lord, wilt thou hide thy-

self for ever? Shall thy wrath burn like fire?" (Psalm 89:46)

This death sentence has passed upon mankind. The justice of God demands it. Now if God would change his mind and decide not to execute this sentence, then justice would be trampled upon, and he would not be a just God. He would not be an Holy God. Holiness demands perfection, and therefore it demands the satisfaction of justice.

Man cannot satisfy or appease justice by any of his works or deeds. "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God . . ." (Gal. 3:11) He is cursed and he cannot remove this curse. Therefore he must die.

Man is indebted to justice and does not have any means to pay the debt. In other words, man does not have any means, strength, or ability, etc., to free himself from this bondage.

"The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Psalm 14:2-3) The nature of man is to run after that which is evil. We read that man in his best state is all together vanity, and trust that we have been taught this truth by the Spirit of God. (Psalm 39:5) Therefore, the ways of man offends the holy law of God. "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: . . ." (Psalm 45:7) "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." (Isaiah 59:2) "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." (James 2:10)

Man is traveling the road to destruction, and he is dead. When the death sentence is passed upon one, he is considered a dead man in the eyes of the law. When the time comes, the sentence is executed. All died in Adam, or we may say that the whole human race died in Adam. There is none holy, in fact, all are unholy. There is none righteousness, not one.

"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:20) The righteousness of God's people is not produced by any deeds of the flesh. This is the righteousness of Jesus Christ which is imputed to His people. "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and *righteousness,* and sanctification, and redemption." (1 Cor. 1:30) (see Gal. 2:21; 3:6)

The law of God was offended by the transgression, therefore we may say that His wrath was kindled. "For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled." (Psalm 90:7) ". . . shall thy wrath burn like fire." (Psalm 89:46)

As we consider the death sentence and the condition of mankind, we can see that salvation is only possible through the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Jesus stood in the room and stead of his people. He paid the debt by his own blood. He satisfied justice by dying for his people. "He was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification." (Rom. 4:25)

"And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." (Colossians 2:13-14) A governor may pardon a criminal, but he cannot remove the guilt. A brother may forgive the trespasses of another, but he cannot remove the guilt. As we think of this point of doctrine that God forgives the sins of his people, we note that the guilt was removed through the blood of Jesus Christ.

God loved His people even when they were dead in sins. His holy law was

offended, yet he loved his people. As we think of mercy, we think of love. "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." (Rom. 9:15) It was the love of God which moved him to send Jesus to remove the guilt of his people. (John 3:16)

At the cross there was a meeting together of mercy and truth. God has always loved His people and is a merciful God. But His people had offended his holy law, and were not fit to enter into heaven. Sinners shall not enter into heaven. Why? Those whose sins have been atoned for by the blood of Jesus are not classified as sinners. They are considered an holy people. Therefore, God had mercy upon his people by sending Jesus to satisfy the just demands of the law. Then, justice was satisfied by the death of Jesus. He died that we might live. He has saved his people from the wrath to come. (Rom. 5:9; 1 Thes. 1:10)

Jesus not only died a natural death upon the cross, but he also suffered the pain, sorrow, and agony of hell which is justly due mankind. The wrath of God was poured out upon him. "His soul was made an offering for sin." (Isaiah 53:10) He drank this cup. He said that he must drink it. We think of this as the cup of suffering. (see John 18:11)

As God he could not die, but as man he could die. He said, "my soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death." He sweated as it were great drops of blood which fell unto the ground." He prayed, "if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." This shows the weakness of the flesh. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. Angels came and ministered unto him. (see Matt. 26:36-42; Luke 22:39-44)

Jesus is the only man that kept the law, and he kept it to a jot and tittle. He fulfilled the law. As the surety and representative of God's people, Jesus fulfilled the law in the stead of his people. His righteousness was imputed unto them. "He will magnify the law and make it honourable." (Isaiah 42:21)

I believe that the people of God who have been quickened and made alive are the only ones who have any true knowledge of this death that Jesus suffered. The Scripture states that darkness was upon the face of the earth from the sixth to the ninth hour. I believe that this is a type of the darkness that Jesus felt in his soul! It was neadful that he be forsaken by God. This caused him to cry out: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46) My brethren, have not you experienced this in a measure?

"Righteousness and peace have kissed each other." The blood of Jesus cleanses the sins of his people and satisfies justice. He made peace through the blood of his cross. (Col. 1:20) The righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed unto his people, and they experience peace with God. Jesus said, "My peace I leave with you." (John 14:27)

Jesus has completed the work of salvation, and has put all things under his feet. "But we see not yet all things put under him." (Heb. 2:8) He died for his people and he lives for them. "I am he which was dead, but behold I am alive for evermore." (Rev. 1:18)

"If he were on earth he would not be a priest." (Heb. 8:4) What a wonderful subject! We have an high priest who ever lives to make intercession for his people. "By one offering he has forever perfected them that are sanctified." (Heb. 10:14) The blood of Jesus "speaketh better things than that of the blood of Abel." (Heb. 12:24) The blood of Abel cried vengeance, but the blood of Jesus speaks peace to a poor sinner.

What a wonderful subject to think upon: the sacrifice of Jesus. He shed his blood for all his people — meaning for those who had already died, those living then, and for those who were yet to be born into this world. For those who had already passed on, we quote: "These all died in *faith*, not having received the promises, but having seen

them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." (Heb. 11:13) These went into heaven by promise. The promise was that a Redeemer would come and redeem Israel from her sins.

There are things that God's people must experience. One is led into these experiences by the Spirit of God. In other words, the Salvation of God must be made manifest to His people in due time. "But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." (2 Tim. 1:10) The purpose of God in saving His people through His grace is made manifest in an acceptable time. It was made manifest when Jesus died for His people. It is made manifest to an individual when Jesus is revealed to him as his Saviour.

One must experience the sufferings of Jesus. We must suffer with him in order to have "fellowship with his sufferings" (Phil. 3:10) "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal. 2:20) It is the Spirit of God which dwells in the hearts of His people. This Spirit teaches the Lord's people to sing the new song which only the redeemed can learn. The theme of this song is that Salvation is by the Grace of God.

In due time all of God's people must experience this death sentence and have it pronounced upon their conscience. "We had this sentence of death in ourselves . . ." (2 Cor. 1:9) "A time to kill, and a time to heal, . . ." (Ecc. 3:3) One who is dead in sins follows the course of worship that all natural people do. He runs after evil, and takes darkness for light, bitter for sweet, etc. He does not have any true knowledge of God, and does not even know himself. He does not know that he is a wretched sinner until something is done for him. He glories in his works, his ability, etc. In fact, he worships the works of his own hands. (Isaiah 2:8) He has not been brought to the judgment seat of Jesus Christ.

When the eyes of one are opened, he is given to see himself as he never had before. He realizes that he has broken the holy law of God, and finds that his righteousness is as filthy rags. He tries to do better, but finds that his state grows worse. His strength fails him, and he finds that he is in debt and does not have anything to pay. Darkness covers him and within this comes despair. He feels the sentence that pronounces death, and there is a cry that comes from the heart: "Guilty, guilty." He does not have any defence to justify himself. He realizes this death is what he justly deserves. "Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity, for brightness, but we walk in darkness. We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes; we stumble at noon day as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men. We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment, but there is none: for salvation, but it is far off from us. For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions are with us; and as for our iniquities, we know them." (Isaiah 59:9-12) Please read the rest of the chapter.

One who has experienced this realizes that he stands in need of mercy. Since he does not have any defence, his only plea is for mercy. If he should die in this state, hell would be his doom, and justly so. He knows that the sentence passed by justice is death. *In due time, he experiences the meeting together of "mercy and truth."* "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea the set time, is come." (Psalm 102:13) Notice

that he is in a state of darkness and is walking in the valley of the shadow of death. He is in the pit of sorrow, despair, etc., but he is delivered from this condition. Since he has experienced such a wonderful deliverance, there are songs and praises that come forth from the heart.

What causes one to be delivered from such a low state? It is the power of God. It is the Spirit of Jesus which applies the blood to the conscience, and this application speaks peace and pardon which brings joy to the poor sinner. The spirit says in effect: "Thy sins have been washed away in the blood of Jesus." "Your debt has been paid, etc."

"Righteousness and peace have kissed each other." When you were under deep conviction, you learned that your righteousness was as filthy rags in the sight of God. You learned that there was no "soundness in your flesh." In this condition, your soul was in deep trouble, and you could not find peace.

But, you experienced peace within your soul when the Spirit of Jesus applied the blood to your conscience. "Mercy and truth are met together." What a wonderful mercy; It seemed your case was hopeless, yet through the love and mercy of God, he delivered your soul from corruption. It is written, "Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell."

The Spirit spoke peace to your soul and clothed you with the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Therefore you do not go in your own strength, but walk in the strength of the Lord. "And be found in him, *not having mine own righteousness,* which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, *the righteousness which is of God* by faith." (Phil. 3:9)

God performs the work that is necessary for your salvation. He sent Jesus to redeem you from the curse of the law. He quickened you and made you alive to Spiritual things, and leaves the spirit of Jesus to dwell in your heart. He gives you faith to believe in him. This Spirit guides you into the way of truth. He gives you fresh courage to press on in spite of difficulties. The righteousness of Jesus is imputed to you. "I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." (Ezekiel 36:26)

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

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221 Boone Road,
Leaksville, N. C. 27288

Dear Editors:

My last issue of the *Signs* reminds me that my subscription has run out, so enclosed is a check for another year.

My wife and I enjoy the letters of the saints of God: they speak for me, I feel, much better than I ever could. For through them I relive so many of my experiences. So often I feel that it won't be too long before our blessed Lord will return to take "his own" to ever to be with him. I have a hope that I shall be in that number saved by his grace, and kept by his power.

May He bless and keep the Editors of this paper, and his children wherever they may be. My wife and sister in hope, joins me in expressing our love and fellowship to you brother editors, and the saints of the Lord everywhere.

Yours in hope,
Warford N. Tilley

"THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL"

"And I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

I believe that every chosen child of God at sometime, (an appointed time of God), will have this gospel preached to him. But before this comes he is going along at ease with himself, with no fear of God in his heart, but rather glorying in his own righteousness. But when this terrible appointed hour, which words cannot describe, this hour of judgment is come, he finds himself before this holy and righteous God with nothing to defend himself with, but must confess that he is completely undone, and a hell deserving sinner.

This loud voice, so loud that he can't shut it out, or get away from it, (not necessarily loud audibly, for sometimes it is a still small voice), but in the sense that it is not possible for it to go unheard or unnoticed) reaches unto every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people — to every chosen object of his love, with a distinct sound to them that have been given ears to hear. (1 Cor. 14:7) "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth, it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it." (Isaiah 55:11) This voice says, "Fear God for the hour of his judgment is come."

Now, seeing that He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy and whom he will he hardeneth, and that none can resist his will, can one reply to this God, or against him, saying, "Why hast thou made me thus?" or "Why doeth he yet find fault?" No, but this vessel of mercy afore prepared unto glory, this heir of promise, in the process of being born again, is having his eyes opened to see himself a sinner and justly condemned. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," and can only cry, "Have mercy on me a sinner." For, having God's law written in his heart and in his mind, he realizes he can do nothing within himself.

When he realizes that the hour of judgment is come upon him, he cries for mercy. And his eyes are opened to see Jesus, (Luke 24:31), "And to worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." For God, "Hath in these days spoken to us by his Son whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."

This is the everlasting gospel, dear child of God, for it delivers you from the power of darkness and translates you into the kingdom of his dear Son. (Col. 1:3) It is everlasting, for by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Jesus promised, "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you." And, "I will pray the Father and he shall give you another comforter that he may abide with you forever." (John 14:16)

Not only do we have this witness within, but we are given evidence here in the persons of our called ministers. These humble servants of God who are lifted up from time to time upon the mountains, and have their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel, are enabled to bring good tidings to the fainting soul, and publish peace. Then they cry unto Zion, "Thy God reigneth."

"For the spirit itself beareth witness within our spirit, that we are the children of God." When the child of God is feeling cast down, there is no sweeter news or better tidings than the assurance that his God is reigning and ruling, and that all things are being brought to pass according to His holy will.

May the Lord comfort his people by these words. I am persuaded that if one has heard this everlasting gospel, beginning with the fear of God, which is the beginning of the wisdom of God, this same Jesus that sent his angel, his ministering Spirit, into your heart, will not leave you comfortless. "Being confident of this very things, that he that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

Speaking of the Lord's angels, Paul

wrote, "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Hebrews 1:14)

Paul Morton,
2482 N. Main Street,
High Point, N. C.

WORD FROM
ELDER GEORGE L. WEAVER

Dear Pastor and Sister Wood:

Another Summer has come and gone, and I have been shut up in Cleveland, deprived of the enjoyment of meeting with my brethren; but I was with you in spirit, joying and beholding your order. And a feeling of comfort came over me that they were preaching the truth that "Jesus began to do and teach"; for I knew that is what all desired to hear. And I rejoiced, though I was a thousand miles away, over my "spiritual radio", which I hope Jesus has given me. I rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory, that the Elders had spoken to the people, not the wisdom of men, but what Jesus had sent, — not from a paper in their pocket, but by the Spirit of the Lord who has sent them. "Thou shalt go to all that I send you, and whatsoever I command you, thou shalt speak."

Brethren, did you hear me singing, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear?" One has to be born again in order to understand the things of the Spirit. Several of my brethren have written me, but I have not been able to answer them. Some days I cannot see to write. I have not been bed-fast, but shut up at home. I cannot go any place unless my dear daughter takes me; and for about two months this Summer she was having operations on both feet. We thank the good Lord that she walks again; and I have some hope of seeing you again, which is in the Lord's hands.

I was pained much when I heard of the death of Elder J. P. Helms. He was like a father to me, and we were very close for fifty years. Another prop has been taken from me, but I thank God for our relationship. I was glad to hear that my pastor, Elder Wood, was able to attend his funeral.

In hope,
George L. Weaver,
3415 Westbury Road,
Shaker Heights, Ohio 44120

(Elder Weaver is a member of Frying Pan Church in the Virginia Corresponding Meeting. We have missed his visits the last year or two, for he has been active in traveling among the brethren. We are glad to know of his spiritual exercises, and that his daughter has recovered from the trouble with her feet. His age is past ninety, but is young in his desire to be with his brethren again. He is always glad to hear from the brethren. — J. D. W.)

ENJOYED THEIR ASSOCIATION

1302 Walnut Street,
Benton, Ky. 42025

Dear Editors:

A few lines to thank you dear brethren for sending the paper to me when my time had expired. I am enclosing check for renewal of my own and that of my niece.

I would not want to be without the paper. I might not always agree with everything, but I still want to know what others believe on certain subjects, and get their views and compare them with what I see in the Scriptures.

Our Soldier Creek Association met Friday before the second Sunday in October for a three days' meeting, and we were privileged to enjoy all three days in peace and fellowship. Our preaching brethren were Elders W. Y. Chandler, J. N. Darnall, R. L. Biggs, H. G. Brown, and our own moderator, Elder Paul Poyner, and Elder O. W. Perkins, moderator of our Union Meeting. We were blessed to have preaching in Brother Basil Hutchen's home, and in Elder Poyner's home at night. These two homes were open for visitors who came to be with us. All material blessings were supplied, as well as the truth as it is in Jesus was preached. If the Lord has indeed has given us pure minds, surely the pure minds were

"stirred up", our hope renewed, and our drooping spirits revived.

We know we are flesh, and we look forward to our meetings with fear that they are only our own appointments, and not the Lord's, fearing that He, being the sovereign ruler over all things, will leave us to ourselves, to teach us we can't sing without him, can't pray or preach without him. But surely His presence was felt, and His mercy extended to us who were met in his name. We have learned that we can't meet in our own strength, nor in the name of ourselves, or our preachers.

We are bound to give thanks to Him who gathers his children together and spreads a table before them, and a banner of love over them. Then surely, as we have received Christ we will walk in him.

I am, I hope a sister in truth for Jesus' sake,

Effie Bowden

"NEVER LONELY"

1360 1st Street,
Chehalis, Washington 98532

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I take this means to notify my brethren that my blindness has reached the stage when I can no longer read a letter or a card, and ask them all to send me no more seasonal or greeting cards. I am of a nature that it aggravates me to have someone say, "See what a beautiful card", when I can see no more than a red blotch or a mucky background. I can walk without being led, and get about my home alone. For this I am thankful.

My God is very good to me and often sends me visitors from afar, who, like myself, believe in one God only. If anyone desires to send me a card of beauty, please reconsider and send me a letter speaking of God's mercy and goodness, which may be read to me: thus bringing both joy and comfort.

I once read six or seven religious magazines, and read them with pleasure and profit. I can no longer read, not even my Bible, which I miss greatly. I am furnished by the government a record player or book reading machine, and may obtain records free of charge from time to time from the library of records for the blind. This is pleasant, but most of the records are secular. I have been able to get part of the New Testament, and may be able to get more when it is available. My health is about as usual: I spend more time in the bed than I do up. I am often alone for short periods, but I am never lonely: for it is at these times mostly that He presents himself with a smiling face of grace and mercy. This is a great mystery to me, when I consider what he is, and all that I am not.

Yours in hope of His mercy,
Effie Parke

1639 Cowen Drive,
Scottsbluff, Nebraska 69361

Dear Editors:

It is time for me to send my renewal for the *Signs of the Times*; which I enjoy very much, and look forward to its coming, — which is prompt.

My eyesight is clearer now than several years ago; for which I am truly thankful, and praise God from whom all blessings flow. I attribute my long life, (will soon be eighty-three), to the goodness of God . . . My sins cause me much sorrow and anguish of soul. I sometimes repeat stanzas from old hymns:

"O for a glance of heavenly day
To take this stubborn stone away,
And thaw with beams of love divine
This heart, this frozen heart of mine."

May we seek God in time of trouble, with full assurance that he will hear and answer our earnest pleadings for his love and mercy.

In hope of a glorious resurrection,
Dora Greathouse

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(To October 1, 1965)

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EDITORIAL

ECCLESIASTES X. 19

"A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things."

It has been requested that we write upon the above Scripture, particularly the latter part, which we will do with whatever light the Lord may grant unto us. We shall not dwell upon worldly feasting, nor the laughter of fools, which is compared to the crackling of thorns under a pot. Neither is it our intention to dwell upon natural wine, nor money, the love of which is the root of all evil. Rather we shall try to present what is our understanding of the above text. Wherever God, the Holy Ghost, begins a work of grace in the heart of man there will be trouble and distress, a state very different from what to-day is called getting religion, which when one has, he feels happy, and often openly declares that he is all right with God. Such religion at best is a lie and is not of God. The work of the Spirit is to convince of sin, therefore there is sure to be a burden of sin, more or less, and a mourning over sin. Wherever there is a religion that began without a burden of sin, distress and sorrow, it is not the work of the Spirit, but proceeds from the flesh. To the one who is in soul-trouble it will seem as though God has found him out and has set a mark upon him. So full and complete will the teaching of the Spirit be, that the soul will confess through dire necessity that, "Salvation is of the Lord." Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, is the only one who can do them good, and the Spirit takes of the Word and they hear it. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Thus such an one is encouraged through the Holy Spirit taking the word of his grace, and they are made to look to the Lord and hope in him. This world will be a wilderness of woe from which the redeemed of the Lord would flee. By the Spirit's guidance they seek a city that hath foundations, which is Zion, the city of God, the mountain of his holiness.

It will be the discontented, the distressed and those who are in debt that the Spirit will lead, for he has said, "They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them." There the glorious Lord will turn their mourning into joy and will comfort them and make them rejoice. This comfort comes by the Spirit directing their hearts into love of God the Father, who, while they were yet sinners sent his beloved Son into the world to save sinners. He also shows them that though they fear hell and damnation God in his love has freely given them heaven and salvaiton. Therefore it is written, "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people [Jew and Gentile] a feast of fat things, a feast

of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." Then their mouth is filled with laughter and their tongue with singing. Thus the ransomed of the Lord are set in safety from him that puffeth at them. While feasting on God's love and mercy they can laugh the enemy of their souls to scorn and despise him, and in the confidence of faith they can laugh also at the folly of their doubts and fears. "A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry." This is a feast of fat things, a feast of wine. The word of God which holy men of old wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost was like water clear as crystal, very pure, but by the presence and power of Jesus this water is made wine to his people. Their doubts and fears subside and they are completely blessed. When the brethren of old feasted with Joseph they were merry with him, and how can saints to-day help but make merry when they taste of the love of their heavenly Joseph, which, like the blood of the ripened grape, is sweet to their taste. It maketh glad the heart of man. Thus those who hunger and thirst after righteousness are filled and they forget their poverty; but it has pleased the Lord in his divine plan that it will not be always a feast, laughter, wine and making merry. It would not do always to be feasting on heavenly bounties and enjoying the felt presence of the Savior, there must be a walking by faith and not by sight.

"Money answereth all things." After feasting if there is no money one would lapse back into the condition of poverty in which he was prior to the feast; in fact, money is necessary for feasting. Worldly men and women could do but little feasting and drinking of wine without money, it answereth all things. Just as there is a currency in all lands, so in the kingdom of heaven faith can truly be called the money of the kingdom; with that in hand the thing desired is obtained. There could have been no feasting on heavenly bounties or drinking of wine from the true Vine without faith; this precious money is absolutely necessary, and without it it is imposible to please God. Every man who went into the vineyard received his penny a day. By this currency the Elders obtained a good report. It enabled them to embrace the promises, walk in the fiery furnace, stop the mouths of lions, open prison gates, subdue kingdoms and receive their dead again to life. It "answereth all things." Now, just as in all lands there is the true coin and counterfeit, so there is true faith and faith (so-called) that is counterfeit. True faith must come from the heavenly mint, and is the gift of God. Each of the redeemed family receives from their heavenly Father just as much (and no more) as he has willed they shall have. Each in the vineyard received at the end of the day a penny, and whatever the day may have been they each will receive the amount the Master determines. If it be a day of sorrow, or of darkness, or sin-sickness and self-loathing, yet at the end faith is increased by the Master's good will. For unto him that hath shall be given. Just as money is needed for necessities of life, so where faith is, the trial will not harden the one under it, but soften and humble him, causing him to look to the Hand from whence it comes, and in all prayer, praise, sorrow (godly sorrow), repentance, believing, receiving, glorying and resting, faith, the currency of heaven, must be in constant use. It is the possession of this money that keeps every heir of heaven from legal bondage and death. Of Abraham it is written that being not weak in the faith he considered not his body now dead, neither the deadness of Sarah's womb; he staggered not at the promise through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, being persuaded that what he had promised he was able to perform. Thus faith answers all things. It is the only currency that will "buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, instruction,

and understanding." Sin-sick, laboring souls need food and healing. Jesus said, "Believe ye that I am able to do this?" The answer was, "Yea, Lord." He replied, "According to your faith be it unto you." They need the bread of life; faith procures it. When the brethren go to our spiritual Joseph for bread because the famine is sore in the land, they go with money in their hands, which is returned in their sacks' mouths, from which we see that faith is increased in the using thereof. Now the money of any country is known by the image and superscription it bears. Just as the Roman coin handed to Jesus bore the image and superscription of Cæsar, so this heavenly money bears the image of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the embodiment of love. Its superscription is "The faith of God's elect." It will not pass in the devil's domains. It will meet with persecution and rough usage there, but in the kingdom of God it will answer all things.

G. R.

(The above was an editorial by Elder Ruston published August 1, 1924. We republish it because we enjoyed reading it again, and because he was not disposed to write at this time. — J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

JESUS THE END OF PROPHECY

When the cry, "It is finished!" was uttered by the dying Lord of life and glory, that declaration included all that was written in the law and in the inspired testimony of the prophets, and proclaimed the fulfillment of the eternal counsel of God in which he was chosen to be the Savior of his people from their sins. There was no further need that he should be manifest in the flesh as the perfect Servant whom God upheld by his own omnipotence. He had honored every demand of the holy law, and infinite justice could ask no more.

It is important that the saints should ever remember that there is no revelation given in the Scriptures for any other purpose but to testify of Jesus. While there is incidental reference to the affairs of time, as the setting up of empires and their overthrow, it is only as such incidents are used in showing the glory of our Lord in his control of all events for the manifestation of his eternal purpose in the preservation of his elect, spiritual people unto that great salvation to which they were ordained in Christ before the worlds were made. To those carnal Jews who disputed his doctrine he said, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and THEY ARE THEY WHICH TESTIFY OF ME." — John v. 39. So, when John would have worshiped the angel by whom he was shown the things of Jesus, the angel said unto him, "See thou do it not; I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus; worship God; for THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS IS THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY." — Rev. xix. 10. While believers are settled in this truth there is little occasion for them to be troubled by the devices of the adversary, who is ever ready to rob them of their rest in the assurance of faith by ingeniously wresting the words of inspiration. The natural mind esteems the strife of nations as of far more importance than the mourning of a conscious sinner; but in the judgment of God there is not an unuttered groan but that is gathered in the golden vials wherein are preserved before his throne the prayers of all saints. — Rev. v. 8; viii. 3. He sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers. He brings princes to nothing, and makes the judges of the earth as vanity. He turns man to destruction, and says, Return, ye children of men. Thus, those things which are highly esteemed among men are accounted nought by our God; and those whom men consider the offscouring of all things are precious in the

sight of the Lord, even as his peculiar treasure, and as the jewels of a crown unto him. As he gave the wealth, honor and power of Egypt for the ransom of national Israel, so he has accounted all that is valued among men as vanity in comparison with that grace which he has bestowed upon his spiritual Israel.

Not even the natural reason of the saints can comprehend this divine mystery of electing love. Constantly they seek in themselves some attraction by which this choice of God was drawn to embrace them; and their wily adversary finds an easy way to annoy them by referring to their conscious destitution of merit as evidence of their delusion in hoping in the grace of God for deliverance from the bondage of corruption. They can never overcome this temptation by reason. In this contest, as in all their experience, they must always confess that it is alone by grace that they are saved. Boasting is excluded by the grace of God which is revealed only through that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit freely given to them by the same eternal love which chose them in Christ before the foundation of the world. By that divine choice it was determined that they should be holy and without blame before God in love. If they were in themselves blameless before the holy law of God there would be nothing more than simple justice in this appointment. They could ascribe no praise to the riches of grace for that which would thus be their just judgment. But the glorious mystery of this divine appointment consists in the fact that it pleased the Lord to choose guilty and condemned sinners in whom was no merit, that they by the blood of Jesus should be cleansed from all sin, and that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. It must not be forgotten that this complete justification of the justly condemned sinners thus chosen, is infinitely more than the pardon of their sins. By this inconceivable grace the demand of justice is not less fully satisfied than the mercy and love of God. Not only are the subjects of this election freed from the penalty of their sins, they are also fully delivered from the sins by which they were polluted. Now, no more guilt can be found in them than in their sinless Redeemer. In view of this great grace which is revealed in Christ Jesus it is not difficult to understand that he is the first cause and embodiment of all the revelation which God has given in the Scriptures, as well as the Beginning of the creation of God, and the center and object for which all things are and were created.

From the consideration of the infinite character of this salvation which is in Christ, it is not strange that in all the law and the prophets Jesus is the sum of what is recorded. Because it pleased God to hide these things from the wise and prudent, the efforts of men to find out God by searching have always proved vain. Many very learned and elaborate theories have been devised, in which human wisdom has sought to find the fulfillment of prophecy in events which men consider important among the nations of this world; but it is not for the instruction of men in natural things that God has given the guidance of his Spirit to prophets and apostles. Not only the written words of prophecy but all the history of the dealing of God with his people under the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, must be seen as the testimony of Jesus, or their essential significance is not understood. Hence, all those labored dissertations in which men have claimed to find by study the interpretation of Scripture prophecy, however consistent they may seem to reason, have only served to expose the folly of those who have devised them. It is a common result of these scientific devices to find the whole significance of the prophecies which they study fulfilled in the natural history of the children of Abraham. It is almost univers-

ally taught by them that there is yet to be a restoration of the Jews to the land of Palestine, and they are to be established there in the observance of those privileges and ordinances which were given them by Moses. Without attempting to discuss this conclusion, it is sufficient for those who look to Jesus for salvation to consider that this exposition directly controverts the declarations of the Lord himself and his inspired apostle. Jesus says, "For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John." — Matt. xi. 13. Peter says, "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." — Acts x. 43. Hence, if all that was witnessed by the legal and prophetic dispensations was in Jesus fulfilled, it is evident that the establishing of those prophetic observances again would signify that another Messiah must come in their fulfillment. This is certainly a denial that Jesus is the end of the law, and that the salvation which he wrought is perfected in his obedience and offering of himself once for all.

Certainly none who trust in the grace which was revealed in Jesus can look for another Mediator to come from God. Unless that righteousness of God which dwelt in Jesus is sufficient for the justification of those for whom he laid down his life, there can be no hope for any sinner. But the same failure by which his people were forbidden to hope, would also hold the Captain of our salvation under the condemnation of divine justice. Surely this blasphemous suggestion cannot for a moment deceive the tempted believer.

Since man became a transgressor of the holy commandment of his Creator, the enemy of righteousness has ever sought to pervert the truth which God declared in the law as given to man in his primitive innocence. To this end proud reason is directed to search the heights and depths of human wisdom for some understanding of the things which are made, which is different from that given by divine inspiration. Carnal enmity against God is ever ready to bow down to any idol in which it finds the sinner exalted as holding his destiny in his own power, and in which there is nothing of the humiliating doctrine of salvation exclusively by the grace of God. Man does not object to rendering adoration to such gods as are found in his own imagination; but he has never devised an idol superior to himself. The pride of his heart is flattered by the imagination that his god is altogether such a being as himself, and in worshiping that god he is only ascribing honor and glory to himself. Thus self is the ultimate object of all natural worship, whether it be called, Heathenism, or Catholic, or Protestant Christianity. Man is prone to worship some object, and his pride forbids that he should yield his own conception of that object so long as he is guided by his natural mind. Hence, every thought of God even in the imagination of an enlightened sinner, is entirely out of the way. None can know him but as he is revealed in the heart by his own holy Spirit. Certainly those from whom it has pleased God to hide this knowledge can never attain to it by their own researches.

Since rational men commonly accept the truth that they are practically sinners, and confess that they must be changed in order to be made holy, they are not disposed to reject any doctrine which represents them as having power to avail themselves of the chance to secure that change at their own will. Thus, in the recent gathering of teachers of all the religions of the world at Chicago, when they compared their doctrines, they found that there was no essential difference between Pagan idolatry and the popular christianity of America. All agreed that the good works of the creature were the essential price to be rendered in securing the favor of God. The professed teachers of christianity were as far as the avowed heathen from understanding that sin-

ners are saved by the blood of Jesus from all sin. Yet they could not perceive the folly of seeking to convert those from whose heathen religion they confessed their inability to discover that their own doctrines materially differed. Even sound natural reason should suffice to detect such absurdity.

In the light of the testimony of inspiration, all the teachings which are consistent with the perverted notions of the depraved mind of man are thereby manifested as utterly false. There could be no occasion for the gift of inspiration to teach that which is within the power of the mind of creatures to attain by study. Not even by the most diligent examination of the inspired Scriptures can man acquire the ability to know that there is salvation in the name of Jesus. Paul says, "Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led; wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." — 1 Cor. xii. 2, 3. In calling upon him for deliverance from sin every believer does say that Jesus is the Lord. In this confession the witness is given that the Spirit of truth dwells in the helpless suppliant. "For he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Thus, it is conclusive assurance that a sinner is led by the Spirit of God when he knows that there is salvation nowhere else but in the gracious name of Jesus. His very prayer ascribes omnipotent sovereignty to Jesus as the one Lord of life and glory.

When the pride of man prompts him to seek for knowledge of future events in the record which is given in the Scriptures, there is likely to be more anxiety for selfish honors and the praise of men than desire to see Jesus exalted as the glorious One to whom all the prophets give witness. There have doubtless been cases since John was on the isle that is called Patmos, when the saints have manifested a disposition to worship the messengers by whom they have received the testimony of Jesus. And when walking according to their natural minds the ministers of Christ are not offended by receiving such worship. Certainly their transgression will in every such case bring upon them the rod of sore chastening; yet the fleshly ambition of men constantly aspires to have the highest place in the estimation of their fellows. When the saints are governed by this carnal mind they cannot see that Jesus is the Sun in the gospel heaven, from whom the whole light of revelation shines in the illumination of prophets and apostles, and he is the great embodiment of all revealed truth, as he is "Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." There is no liability of the saints looking for any other fulfillment of any prophecy when they see Jesus. All earthly considerations are forgotten in his heavenly glory, as the light of a dim candle is lost in the full blaze of the noonday sunshine. Jesus is then revealed in his own divine radiance, and from his face the created earth and heaven are fled away; and there is found no place for them. As "He is before all things, and by him all things consist," so he is the one source of all assurance and comfort to his ransomed people. The saints can never be deprived of the spiritual blessings which are treasured in him so long as they can see Jesus in whom all fullness dwells.

(The above was an editorial by Elder Wm. L. Beebe July 18, 1894.)

OBITUARIES

JOHN DOAK SIMMONS

Brother Simmons was born in Caswell County, North Carolina, May 25, 1888, and departed this life on August 18, 1965, at the age of 77 years, 2 months, and 13 days. He was the son of the late William H. and Mrs. Emma Barker Simmons. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Mamie Miles Simmons; four daughters,

Mrs. Myrtle Allred and Mrs. Sue Brooks, Route 2, Elon College, N. C.; Mrs. Eva Coble, Route 1, Graham, N. C.; and Mrs. Doris Simpson, Route 1, Elon College, N. C.; four sons, Edgar, Doak, Claude, and Earl Simmons, all of Route 2, Elon College, N. C.; one sister, Mrs. Lucy Terrell, Route 2, Elon College, N. C.; three brothers, Berry and Roach Simmons, Route 2, Elon College, N. C.; and Philip Simmons of Durham, N. C.; 19 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren.

Brother Simmons united with the Church at Bush Arbor at her June meeting, 1917, and was a most faithful and useful member. He was appointed assistant clerk of the church in 1922, and was appointed clerk at May meeting, 1933. He served until February 1961, at which time he requested to be relieved of serving as clerk because of his age and infirmity.

Brother Simmons was a hard working industrious farmer. The Lord greatly prospered him in spiritual and material blessings. He suffered much in his last days, but was blessed with patience to wait upon the God he loved and served.

May God's blessing be upon his dear wife who so faithfully administered to him, and the children, grandchildren, and all who feel this great loss, yet we feel it is his gain. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." (Rev. 14:13)

His funeral was held at Bush Arbor Church by his pastor, Elder W. C. King, and the Mr. Bill Traylor. His body was laid to rest at Concord United Church Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who will call his sleeping body to arise together with all the redeemed family of God, to be made like Him and to see Him and be satisfied forever.

Done by order of Bush Arbor Church in conference October 9, 1965.

Elder W. C. King, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

LULU VAUGHN FRIESS

Sister Lulu V. Friess was born September 18, 1882, in Fairfax County, Virginia, and died March 4, 1965. She was the daughter of Louis H. and Charlotte Hunt Robey.

Her husband died many years ago, leaving her with one Son, Paul, who preceded her in death. She is survived by one brother, Louis Irving Robey, of Arlington, Va., and by seven nieces and nephews.

Sister Friess united with Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, in July, 1951, and was baptized the 4th Sunday in August, 1951, by the writer. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, and was outspoken in her convictions and opinions. She traveled considerably among the brethren, and had many friends among them. She is greatly missed by all who knew her.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Pumphrey Funeral Home, Silver Spring, Maryland, and she was laid to rest with her husband in Mt. Olivet Cemetery, Washington, D. C., to await the coming of the Lord and the resurrection of the dead.

John D. Wood

SISTER MILLIE A. HARRIS

As ordered by the Primitive Baptist Church at Norfolk, Virginia, I will endeavor to write in memory of our beloved Sister Millie A. Harris.

She was born to Joseph and Louisianna Turner, February 9, 1884, and was called from this life July 18, 1964. She was united in marriage to the late William Jesse Harris and from this union five children were born. Three preceded her in death, leaving two daughters to mourn her passing, Mrs. Mildred Parker and Mrs. Edna Harris, four grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

A funeral service was conducted by her pastor, Elder C. N. Bunn. She was laid to rest in Oak Grove Cemetery, Portsmouth, Virginia, under a large arrangement of beautiful flowers, to await the call, "Come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Sister Harris was a firm believer in salvation, a gift of God by the shed blood of Jesus. She was made willing to declare what great things God had done for her when she was received into membership by the Norfolk Church, December 17, 1939. Baptism was the following month by her pastor, Elder R. B. Denson. Sister Harris' walk, conversation and faithful attendance at meetings proved the love she had for her brethren and sisters. Singing the songs of Zion and hearing the truth proclaimed was her joy. Many times during services when "Jesus, the way, the truth and the life" was being declared, she would speak aloud saying, "that's the truth." Although we will not hear her voice here again, her memory will remain with us, for all those who knew her loved her.

This writer feels that Sister Harris had been taught long ago that it is far better to depart and be with Christ Jesus than to remain in this world with all its sin, trials and tribulations.

We desire to extend our deep felt sympathy to her family and all who mourn. May they

be made to feel their loss is our dear sister's eternal gain.

Ruby E. Coward, Clerk

ROBERT T. WRIGHT

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from the walks of this life, Mr. Robert T. Wright, age 64. He is survived by his wife, Sister Bertha Wright; one daughter, Bettie Dallam, Rolling Hills, California; four sisters, Myrtle Stokes, Esther Nicholson and Lottie Wright, all of Oklahoma; and Reda Broudrick of Paso Robles, Calif.; and by five brothers, Clint, Dewey, Vester, Jesse and Clyde Wright all of Oklahoma; and two grandchildren.

The last enemy, death, came to our beloved friend at his home, April 21, 1965. Mr. Wright, a native of Oklahoma, had resided in California 24 years. He was loved by his many friends at Bakersfield as an honest and respected citizen. We believe that God who doeth all things well blessed him with a love for the Old Baptists, although he was not a member. He showed a kind welcome in his home to the brethren. Our desire is that the Lord of all mercy will reconcile Sister Bertha Wright to his holy and righteous will.

Elder T. R. Jefferson conducted the funeral services at Green Lawn Memorial Park, Bakersfield, California. ". . . we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (1 Cor. 15:52) We extend to the loved ones and family our heartfelt sympathy.

Walter B. Wilson

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

We the church at Pleasant Grove wish to bow in humble submission to our gracious Heavenly Father in removing by death a beloved, dear sister, Lea Harrelson. She was a faithful and humble member, an example of Christian humility. Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That in the passing of our dear Sister Harrelson, we feel our loss very keenly; but bow in submission to one who doeth all things well. And

BE IT RESOLVED, That we extend to the family our heartfelt sympathy: May God's blessings be upon each of us who mourn her passing, together with the family and all to whom she was near and dear. And

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be spread on our church book; one sent to the family; and one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church at her regular conference meeting in June, 1965.

Elder Kenneth Key, Moderator
Robert Walker, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, The Lord in his infinite wisdom and mercy saw fit to remove from our midst August 23, 1965, our beloved sister, Minnie Boaze Myers, at the age of 83 years,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to God's holy will. Strawberry Church has lost a devoted and faithful member, who joined this church December 6, 1902, and was baptized by the late Elder G. W. Hundley. For over sixty-two years Sister Myers was faithful to her profession. She always looked forward to her meeting days. It was only divine providence that kept her from traveling forty miles each first Saturday and Sunday.

She will not only be missed in the home, church and neighborhood, but by all who knew her. She was a good wife, mother and neighbor. Always ready to help anyone in need. While we are deprived of her presence and godly conversation here, we feel it is her eternal gain; for she was removed from her bed of suffering which she bore patiently for over five months, to a land of rest. Pages could be written of her sterling qualities. If ever she knew an evil thought, she spoke no evil word. Her humble life of service should be an inspiration to us as we journey along in this evil world.

Sister Myers was tenderly cared for by husband, nurse, and twelve children. Special mention is made of the son and daughter at home who were there all the time and saw that every need was supplied for Mother.

Her funeral was conducted at Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Chapel, Danville, Va., by her pastor Elder R. S. Payne, among a large gathering of brethren and friends, after which her body was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park, under a mound of beautiful flowers; there to await the coming of her blessed Saviour.

RESOLVED, That the church extend their love and sympathy to the bereaved family; and may God's blessings be upon her dear husband, children and all who mourn her departure. The Lord has given and the Lord has taken, blessed be his holy name.

RESOLVED AGAIN, That a copy of these resolutions be recorded on our church records; a copy sent to the family, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by the order of Strawberry Church in conference September 4, 1965.

Elder R. S. Payne, Moderator
Josephine Dodd, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134 DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1966 NO. 1

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

LETTER FROM SISTER UNDERWOOD

5 Gregory Street
Brampton, Ontario, Canada

Dear Elder Spangler:

Am so sorry not to have sent this letter to you before this. You will remember I mentioned sending it for publication in the *Signs*, when you were in London, Canada, in September. Perhaps readers of the *Signs* will remember Sister Mattie Underwood's letter in November, 1963, *Signs*: "A Mother's Concern That Truth Be Taught." It meant a lot to me at the time, and I looked up all of her references; and wrote to her. The enclosed is a typewritten copy of her reply to me. I did appreciate the letter; though strangers in the flesh, I felt a kindred spiritual love for her . . .

Your sister in a precious hope,
Verna Carscadden

---

209 Taylor Rd.
Collinsville, Va.
Feb. 26, 1964

Dear Sister Carscadden,

Your letter was read and highly appreciated. I will take great pleasure in writing you in reply.

You say you have been reading the *Signs* for quite a while and the editorials have been most precious to you now, and that Elder Ruston is your pastor, and associate editor. You also said that the November *Signs* seemed especially good. When reading my letter you felt I expressed your feelings, and you also looked up all my scripture references. You intimated that the *Signs* in quoting scripture seemed to you to be the nearest thing to the Bible of any book or monthly paper. This is very encouraging.

You also say you have a daughter, who hopes to graduate this year as a nurse, and who is interested in music: plays the piano and sings in a church choir. She is also still interested in Bible reading and did belong to Interschool Christian Fellowship, and now to the Nurses' Christian Fellowship. She wants to go to Toronto Bible College, which claims to be interdenominational and you, like me have a mother's concern that truth be taught, and God be honoured. It is only through His Spirit that we can do anything good. You said you asked your daughter to read my letter, after which she said she would like to show it to her minister, feeling he would be interested.

You say you are quite concerned about her and wonder how to advise her, and that she feels the Lord will show her what to do. I am glad she is trusting in the Lord. We read in the scriptures: "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." (Psalms 127:1) We also read: "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (St. John 1:17)

In Hebrews 8:10-12 we see: "For this covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

In Hebrews 10:7-9, these words are written: "Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

I heard a precious Elder say on Sunday, "If it's not the will of God for His people to be saved, it would not mean anything to any of us, His people."

John 6:37-39 states: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." John 1:1-16 gives a beautiful picture of the will of God.

It is preached all over the world that God wants people to be saved, but they won't let Him; and resist God. Romans 9:20 and 13:2 speak of this. The latter says: "Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation."

In the Bible this is referred to as the "god of this world" and the doctrine of devils (see 2 Cor. 4). Note verse 4. "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." This light shone around Paul when he was persecuting the church. I don't think God would have made anything that He could not control, even the devil, or he would have gotten all of His children, i.e. Satan. Paul was a Pharisee, but God made it manifest that he was one of his sheep; and he then preached the glorious gospel of Christ, and the power of God in the demonstration of the Spirit of God.

Some do not like the doctrine of salvation before the foundation of the world. Evidently it would leave the gods of this world out, and their salary. Some are deceived and don't know the truth. Christ did not sell Himself to the world, but gave His life for the sheep. He told Peter to feed His sheep and lambs; and the food was wholesome. 1 Peter 1:18-21 states: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by Him do believe in God, that raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God."

In Acts 8:20, we read: "But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money." And further in verses 21-23: "Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter, for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if

perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity."

We are commanded to keep ourselves from idols. In 1 John 5:21, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols," is found. In 2 John 9-11, is written: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Chirst, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

We read in Ephesians 6:1-3: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." And in Ephesians 5:6: "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience."

A dear Elder spoke well Sunday at Riverview Church, saying that there are many denominations in the world, but only two classes of people — one like the Pharisees and the other like the publicans. St. Luke 18:10-17 describes these: "Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

"And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein."

Sister Carscadden, I too enjoy the editorials, written by Elders Lambert, Griffin, Wood, Spangler, and Ruston. Elder John Peter Helms is my pastor. He has been in Canada and you may have heard him preach. I am thankful for all the dear gifts of God that give Him the honor and glory. We read that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

Some seem to think it takes money for the preachers to save souls, but Christ is the bread, his blood the drink. I have been a relative to the publican, and it's by the grace of God I am what I am.

This is getting rather lengthy, so I will close.

Yours with love and fellowship,
Mattie Underwood

P. S. You many send this to the *Signs* for publication if you wish. It may add length to the chain.

M. U.

ENJOYS THE *SIGNS* MORE AND MORE

Titusville, New Jersey

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

It is time for another renewal of the good old *Signs*, which I enjoy more and more. It uplifts the troubled heart, for there is an unseen warfare in the human breast where two opposite forces meet — and where they seldom rest: the Spirit against the flesh. I pray that God will give me strength for each new

day, to guide my ways and guard my tongue, that I may not do an unkind thing, or say an unkind word to anyone.

Each month my strength is renewed when the *Signs* comes, for it is so edifying and uplifting to read, and see the beauty set forth by great writers and servants of God, who, having the gift that God has given them, can in turn give to uplift others less fortunate than themselves.

It is my sincere hope that each of you will always be blessed with new light and liberty, and that there may be days of enlightenment, days of comfort, and bright anticipations and rewarding visits among the brethren. May God be with you in your travels, and his divine blessings cheer you and strengthen you, and his love comfort you, that you may know that you are not laboring in vain, that each reader of the *Signs,* like myself, does find precious food to nourish a fainting hope, and comfort the troubled breast.

Brother Charles joins me in love and sweet fellowship,

Sister Mary Hellings

"YOU CANNOT GIVE HIM ANYTHING"

Meadows of Dan, Va.

Dear Brethern in Christ Jesus:

I would like to write a few of my thoughts this morning, if it is the Lord's will, while I am in some kind of a spirit, with my mind on things that I hope the Lord has wrought in me; and I hope I was praising the Lord from whom all blessings flow.

If I could do what I would love to do today, no servant of the Lord, or lovely sister or brother, would have it — they would all say render all praise to our Heavenly Father, to whom all praise is due; and rightly so. As I was watering my flowers this morning, I thought, How I would love to place them at my sisters' and brothers' feet, telling them of such a great love I have for them; and begging them to accept my feeble offering — from one that is imperfect, and asking them to overlook my shortcomings, which are many.

And then a thought came to me of the crown of thorns that was plaited and placed on our dear Saviour's head. Oh! the tears started falling; and this thought was presented to me: if I could only plait a crown of flowers for my dear Saviour's head, I would pick the most beautiful ones, the most perfect ones and place them in a crown for his head; and also at his feet. Then it came to me that this would not be enough — I would offer my body for a sacrifice. And suddenly it came: You cannot give him anything; and the first verse of the 24th Psalm was presented: "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof: the world, and they that dwell therein." Then how could we give Him anything? "The cattle on a thousand hills are his."

Then all my feeble offerings vanished away, and this hymn came to me:

"Not the labor of my hands
Can fulfill thy law's demands:
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone:
Thou must save, and thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling:
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly —
Wash me, Saviour, or I die."

All the praise belongs to him, but we cannot praise him of ourselves. My sister-in-law said that a man asked her if she had given her heart to the Lord; and she answered, "How can I, when it is already his?"

May the Lord keep me ever humble, to give him all praise in all things, even afflictions which have befallen me lately: a broken ankle, which has not quite healed. Our afflictions are appointed just as our blessings are. As our dear pastor, Elder Hash, has prayed

in my presence: "If it takes affliction to keep us humble, then do not hold them back, O, Lord." If it takes broken bones, or any other afflictions to keep me humble, then I can say, O Lord, do not hold them back.

May he ever keep me humble and at my brethren's feet.

An unworthy one,
Pauline Spencer

ENJOYED THE NOVEMBER ISSUE

303 S. Daniel Creek Road,
Collinsville, Va. 24078

Dear Editors:

I have just received the November issue of the *Signs of the Times*; and after reading it through, I was moved to write.

Just a few hours before it arrived, my neighbor and sister, (Edith Brooks) and I were discussing the Sovereignty of God, and after reading the *Signs* through, I saw that our discussion on the subject was the same as that of the recording of the sermon of Elder Wood's at Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia. I went to my neighbor's house, and found she was reading her copy — so we rejoiced together in tears of gratitude. I told her this one issue was worth the price for many years to come: together with Elder Griffin's and Elder Beebe's, and others.

The morning of September 6th, I awoke hearing a whisper in my breast, saying that I was sanctified. The 25th of the same month I awoke communing, I hope, with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I was saying, "I was naked and you clothed me; I was hungry and you fed me." I was made to rejoice again. Recently, in a dream or vision, I was traveling a road and it was getting late in the evening. I saw a colored man approaching me, and I was afraid he would bother me, since I was all alone. Suddenly I was down in a valley beside a spring, kneeling in prayer to God for protection. The man passed on, and I was back in the road again traveling, and came to the most beautiful place with a shining light; there was a man there dressed in the whitest white, and I loved him and he loved me. I was so happy when I awoke.

This could mean I am near my journey's end, and that it was an earnest of that which is to come. The beautiful place that I was carried to, was more beautiful than this world can afford.

Your little sister in a precious hope,
Mrs. D. M. Radford

Rt. 2,
Luverne, Ala.

Dear Brethren:

I see my subscription expires with the November issue, and I don't want to miss a copy of the good old *Signs*. Enclosed is a check for two more years.

I live alone, and look forward to every issue. Its so much comfort and enjoyment to me to read the editorials, the experiences of the gifted ministers and all the brethren and friends who contribute to the *Signs*.

Brother Lambert, we were so glad to have you visit us in August. You are a gifted minister, and were enjoyed by all who heard you. Visit us again soon.

May all both small and great be blessed to stand fast and unmoveable in the faith once delivered to the saints.

Yours in hope,
Audra Williamson

"THIS IS MEAT AND DRINK"

Mardella Springs, Md.

Dear Editors:

Find enclosed a check for $5.00 to renew my subscription to the *Signs* for two years.

I hope I am thankful for the writers who submit their writing from time to time, expressing my convictions and feelings far better than I can. This is

meat and drink to one groping, and hungering for a few words of truth, which they hope they have seen and felt, and had revealed to them.

When down in the low ground of deep sorrow and despair, which, I might add, comes to all of us, it brings much joy and comfort to read some dear brother or sister's writing when they tell their like experiences, and yet found that it was for his good; and who gives thanks, and praise to the all-wise God for it.

I hope to receive this wonderful paper, the *Signs of the Times,* as long as I live; and I feel to give thanks and best wishes to the editors and writers, and, most of all, to God who gives the inspiration of the gospel truth, as I hope I, a poor, helpless sinner, see it. With love,

A little sister, if one I am,
Minnie E. Gambrill

3514 Oscar Ave.
Ft. Worth, Texas 76106

Dear Editors:

Enclosed you will find money order for a year's subscription to the *Signs of the Times.* I have never subscribed before, but I got some copies from my uncle, Elder D. B. Wallace, and I really enjoyed reading them. If I am not deceived they contend for the things I believe; for I believe in salvation by grace, and that it is a gift of God, and not by any works I have done or might do.

I was received in the Holly Springs Church at Mantalla, Texas, August 22nd of this year. I don't know why they received a worm like me. I feel so inadequate, and they are the finest people in the world. I believe God has been merciful to me. If I am not deceived, I have a wonderful hope of eternal life.

Please accept my subscription, and count me as one of the very least, if one at all.

Your brother in hope,
U. V. Wallace

"For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand —" (Psalms 84-10).

"Lord from the closet in my heart
To-night I pray to Thee;
Forsake me not — do not depart,
But hear my feeble plea;
In darkness now I long have been,
By Satan cruelly mocked,
Tormented by indwelling sin
And doubts and fears have stalked.

Though blessed with earthly comforts, quite;
With food and raiment, too.
Yet, oft' I walk in darkest night —
My sins I can't subdue;
In Thee alone I put my trust,
Thou art my hope and stay;
And though I'm vanity and dust
Lord, turn me not away.

When I Thy fellowship can feel
I want naught else beside,
Then I can in my closet kneel —
To Thee my woes confide;
A brother's trespass, be it great,
I freely can forgive;
And though he in his heart me hate
I'll say unto him, *Live.*

My enemies I then can love —
Sincerely for them pray;
Can truly ask the Lord above
Their sins to take away;
Whatever else Thou me deny
Thy fellowship restore,
I all things else can then lay by —
I ask for nothing more!"

C. M. D.

Submitted by
C. B. Britt

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the CONTENTNEA UNION is to be held, the Lord willing, with Goose Creek Island Church, Pamlico County, N. C., the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1966. The church is located near Hobucken, just off Highway 33.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 3, Tarboro, N. C.

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the **SKEWARKEY UNION** is appointed to be held with the Great Swamp Church, Pitt County, N. C., the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1966. The church is located on the corner of Tenth and Forbs Streets in Greenville, N. C. Elder M. E. Garner was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder E. C. Harrison, alternate.

We wish to extend a cordial invitation to all brethren and friends to come and visit with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Williamston, N. C. 27892

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **BLACK CREEK UNION** will be held with the church at White Oak, in the town of Saratoga, Wilson County, N. C., the Lord willing, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1966.

All who have a mind to attend are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

UPPER COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The next session of the Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Union Meeting is appointed to be held with the church at Reidsville, N. C. on the 5th Sunday in January, 1966. Services to start at 10:30 A. M.

M. T. Smith, Acting Church Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To November 1, 1965)

A Friend, Ark.	$ 1.00
W. L. Crowley, Ala.	2.00
W. D. Godwin, La.	1.00
O. W. Parks, Tex.	2.00
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Mrs. Ruby E. Parsons, Md.	2.00
Mrs. Lela Culpepper, Tex.	1.00
Elmer Hastings, Md.	14.00

Danville, Virginia **January, 1966**

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TO
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R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

BEGINNING OF OUR 134TH YEAR

We are glad to be able to greet our brethren and friends at the beginning of another New Year; and another volume of the *Signs of the Times* — the 134th. We trust that we are each profoundly aware that it has been the goodness of our God that has spared us and kept us for some purpose in the land of the living; and that his grace has been sufficient for us under every trial and circumstance.

We have reason to believe that the love that God has for his people, and the love his people have for the doctrine of God our Saviour, has been the sustaining power which has kept the *Signs of the Times* in continuous circulation for the many years since its inception. It is pleasant to meditate upon His sus-

taining grace which, against many difficulties as far as humans could see, has preserved his own Name and Glory in the pages of the paper: Which is to say that the doctrine of God our Saviour, as revealed in his Word and in the hearts of his people, is the only subject matter worthy of space in the *Signs*. We believe it to be self-evident that the Lord called and qualified Elder Gilbert Beebe and others, to sustain his Word before the people at a time when heresy was rife among many who were at least nominal members of the church. "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," was used of the Lord to fight a battle in which His name and Doctrine were upheld among and by his people over a large portion of the country; and he has sustained it, we believe, for the same purpose these many years.

We thought it would be interesting to recall to our readers the names of those who have been closely associated in the publication of the Signs over the years:

Elder Gilbert Beebe was editor for fifty years — until his death in 1881; Elder William L. Beebe, his son, was editor from shortly after his father's death until August, 1894. Then Deacon Benton L. Beebe and Elder F. A. Chick were editors until Benton L. Beebe's death in 1904; when Elder H. C. Ker became editor with Elder Chick until Elder Chick died in 1914. Elder H. H. Lefferts then became editor with Elder Ker in 1914, and served until 1935. In 1923 Elders Dodson, Ruston and Vaughn became associated with the paper; and Elder Spangler in 1936; Elder Griffin in 1943; Elder Lambert in 1946; Elder Nash in 1950; and Elder Wood in 1951.

In 1949 Elder Dodson purchased the paper from Gilbert Beebe, grandson of the founder; and he soon afterwards formed a non-profit corporation with a seven member Board of Trustess: thus giving the paper to the brethren. Elder Dodson remained Managing Editor until his death in 1950, since when the present editors and associates have been responsible for its publication.

There were others not mentioned in the above list who gave valuable services to the paper over the years, some of whom were: Elder Benton Jenkins, who worked in the office of the *Signs* for many years; and Deacon and Sister Cyrus Risler, who did much of the work in getting the paper out while Elder Dodson was the editor.

The present members of the Board of Trustees are: Elder D. V. Spangler, President; Elder John D. Wood, Elder Arthur R. Warren, Brother Victor D. Borst, Sister Gertrude Secor, and Sister S. L. Midgett. There is one vacancy since the death of Sister Elsie Loeffel.

We re-publish the original Prospectus on which the *Signs of the Times* was begun, as evidence that we remain upon these principles:

"Proposals for publishing a semi-monthly paper, to be called the Signs of the Times, devoted exclusively to the Baptist cause, maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfections of the Great Jehovah — the Revelation which God has given of himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one."
2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.
3. Eternal, Unconditional Election.
4. The Total Depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.
5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the Elect Only.
6. The Sovereign, Irresistible, and in all cases Effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in Regenerating and Quickening the Elect of God.
7. The Final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God, by Grace.
8. The Resurrection of the dead, and Eternal Judgment.
9. That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized believers — that to her are given able ministers of

the New Testament; that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God.

10. That there is no connection between Church and State, and as touching the proposition for a marriage between them, the Hon. R. M. Johnson, in his report on the Sabbath Question, has expressed our faith.

The Signs of the Times will be decidely opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath Schools, etc., making war on the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of Institutions."

Each one connected with the publication of the *Signs* is very much concerned that the paper shall continue to advocate these principles; and especially since some of these are often curiously spoken against by many though they say they believe that the Bible is the written word of God. However we know that the battle is not ours, but God's, and that he will fully vindicate his people in their faith in his own time and way.

We are aware of the pressing concern which most religious orders have about converting the world to their persuasion — or to Christ, as they say. We are not concerned about this: We are perfectly content not to try to do that which is impossible for us to do, for we are assured that it is the work of God that one believes on Him whom He has sent; and that flesh and blood cannot reveal the things of the Spirit unto alien sinners.

Many say they are comforted and edified by the writings in the *Signs,* and we believe this is the purpose the Lord has for the paper among his people. We do not for a moment fancy that anyone outside of the election of grace — those not taught of the Lord, will find any satisfaction in reading the paper. Yet we do not know to what end the Lord may use it in dealing with individual cases, since everything is in his hands, and accomplishes his purposes:

Should any reader begin to be deeply engrossed in the things presented in our columns, and finds himself saying, "I believe that", though he may have many apprehensive feelings as to his standing before God, to such we would say that it is certain evidence that the Lord has at least begun a good work in you, and, having begun the work, he will perfrom it until the day of Jesus Christ. God has his own way and time of making known unto his people that they are *his people,* and bringing them into the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus.

We desire to express our appreciation to all of our Associates, and to all the brethren and friends who have contributed in any way in helping us keep the paper coming out regularly. We are dependent upon their continued support as enabled by grace; and are dependent upon the renewing of subscriptions, and obtaining new subscribers. (Quite a number give subscriptions to the *Signs* as presents to friends.) We desire the brethren and friends to write for publication, and let others know of their experiences, and the dealings of the Lord with them. We cannot promise to publish all that we receive because of the lack of space; but we will do all we can for the interest of the paper, and the edifying of our readers.

As we enter upon another epoch of time in which we shall see the unfolding of many "new and strange" things, may we all be given grace to realize and be glad that everything continues to be the unfolding of God's purpose; and while rationalism will continue to be the mainspring of men's actions and devotions, yet the faith of God's elect, (which is the fruit of His Spirit in them,) and God's purpose in all things, shall continue to hold all things together until the full manifestation of all things being subdued which are enemies of the church; and until God's glory is made manifest in all things. Then shall Christ come again to conform all his brethren to his own image, and they shall be like him; for death shall be swallowed up in victory when this mor-

tal shall have put on immortality.

In the meantime, we are assured that God's love for his people does not cease; and that his grace is sufficient for each of them.

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

A SPECIAL MESSAGE TO OUR READERS

At the beginning of the New Year there are several things we desire to call to the attention of our readers; and to request of them. These are important, and we feel that all will want to cooperate:

Should you move or change address, please notify us at once; and when possible notify us when a subscriber is deceased. It costs the Signs ten cents postage for each paper that is returned to us; which is more than ten times the amount it costs to mail a copy from our office.

Please do not order extra copies of the paper in advance of the publication of obituaries, etc., as we have no way set up to keep such records. Order them after the publication, and we will furnish them if possible.

Please do not ask us to cancel a subscription at a future date. We cannot properly care for these. If you desire to cancel, please notify us at the time of subscription expiration.

It has been our practice to mail a reminder to those who are behind with their subscriptions. These are usually considerably behind, so when we receive a reply paying for two years, the amount perhaps pays for the year behind and a year ahead. Hence the subscription expires earlier than the subscriber expects.

Notices of meetings should be mailed directly to Elder J. D. Wood, Box 186, Manassas, Va., so as to reach him at least six weeks before publication date. All remittances, articles for publication, etc., should be sent to the **Signs of the Times, Inc.,** Rt. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane, Danville, Virginia.

We are receiving many obituaries for publication, and we are glad to publish them; but most of them are of local interest, except ministers, so we make special request that obituaries be held to not over two hundred words, if possible.

We thank you for your cooperation.

This is my thirteenth year of association with the **Signs,** either as an Associate Editor, or joint Editor with Elder J. D. Wood. I wish to express my appreciation for the wonderful cooperation of our readers. It is my opinion that no religious paper has ever been appreciated more by its readers than the **Signs of the Times.** We appreciate very much your expressions of support and adherence to the doctrine advocated by the paper. We have very, very few cancellations except by death; and though many of our subscribers have died since we became editors in 1951, our subscription list is larger than it was then.

The cost of publication continues to rise, yet we have endeavored to hold the price to $3.00 per year, or $5.00 for two years. This has been possible only because of the donations sent in with the subscriptions; and because of the income from gifts made to the paper. We appreciate this help very much. It enables us to send the paper to those unable to pay, and helps to defray our expenses, since the subscription price does not cover the cost of publication. We recently were notified of an $19.00 per month increase in our costs.

Last, but not least, we hope God will put it into the minds of our readers to make bequests in their wills to the paper, for without the Endowment Fund income we could not meet our costs.

God has sustained this cause for one hundred thirty-three years, and we desire your prayers and support in every way, that the paper may continue to go forth as a medium of communication, notification, spiritual strength, and defense of the glorious Gospel of our Salvation.

D. V. S.

EDITORIAL

HEARING PAUL DECLARE THE UNKNOWN GOD

Sometime ago, while in the pulpit with the Bible opened to the 17th chapter of Acts, I began to read at the 16th verse. When I had read through the 26th verse I was carried by the Spirit to Mars Hill in Athens, Greece; and became a live listener as Paul preached this mighty sermon on the text, THE UNKNOWN GOD. I was one who had helped erect the inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. I had to stop reading as I began to experience extraordinary visions and wonderful meditations relative to the actual setting and circumstance of this memorable occasion. I was so astonished at the sight of Athens, Mars Hill, and the many altars and inscriptions and gods made of stone and wood; and the people who worshiped them; that I have done research since then to see if it was a true picture. G. Frederick Owens says, "Athens, one of the greatest cultural centers of Paul's day, grew up around a 520-foot-high rocky plateau called "the Acropolis". Here, on this elevated area, stood the many-columned Parthenon, far famed architectural wonder, *and so many other sacred edifices that the place was called, "the many templed Acropolis"*. May God grant that you relive with me as I relate this.

I came to Athens because I had learned that the most wise of the earth were there. I had such a craving for wisdom because of my convictions that I was so ignorant and unlearned. I had itching ears to hear something that would satisfy my hunger for wisdom. I had a worshipful heart and a strange feeling that I must come to Athens in order to hear these great wise men talk of wisdom. I had a feeling that I would find unity there and that the wise men would all be agreed. I was disappointed upon my arrival when I found wise men in the Market Place disagreeing and quarreling. I learned that the wise men spoke constantly on Mars Hill. I attended the lectures and found that they disagreed. I began to venture out and behold the many altars and the constant flow of people. Some went to one altar; others went to another; while others formed in companies to go to the various images. I followed one company to an altar and while the people were bowing before this image I read a long inscription about this god. They knew so much about their god; yet the inscription meant nothing to me. It was empty and meaningless. I thought of how foolish it was to fall down and worship something that couldn't see, feel, or even stretch forth his hands. I exclaimed in anguish, "Do all of you worship in reality this graven image whom you have to move and carry about?" Some raved against me, but a few walked to my side and one of them inquired, "Tell us about your god?" I answered, "I know nothing about a god, however, I feel there is but One — Who has more power than this god whom you worship." We agreed to investigate all of the other shrines and altars. We read each and every inscription printed on the banners at the many edifices and a few from each company joined us as we proceeded from one place to another.

After investigating all these long inscriptions of the many gods we concluded that we had not found any that suited the feelings and convictions of any of us. What could we do? We were all anxious to worship together THE GOD whom we could not define. We talked freely one with another and found a relationship with each other that we could not explain. We reasoned that there were so many altars that surely we could erect one and worship together. We found that we could not match the long inscriptions found on the other altars. We all confessed to one another that we wanted to worship the God whom we knew nothing about. We thought we must put up an inscrip-

tion as all of the others had. They wrote long inscriptions about their gods but we could write nothing because we all confessed our ignorance of Him. Finally we agreed on a short inscription of four little words: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. We did not know how to worship Him but we tried. How we wanted and wished that we could know more of Him.

One day a lone stranger passed our way and he paused long as he read the inscription. While he was standing there some men came hurriedly up and yanked him by the arm and said to him, "We are taking you before Areopagus that we may know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is." Something drew us to follow him as there was something magnetic in the expressions of his eyes and manner. It had such a drawing effect upon us that we began to wonder, IS HE A GOD? We kept as close to him as possible as arrangements were made for him to speak, and our company was clustered together as Paul stood in the midst of Mars Hill and began to speak. Other companies were there too in that throng of people. His words rang loud and clear in powerful tones as he began, "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with the inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." I thought of all the inscriptions that he read he called attention only to ours. It seemed he was speaking only to us. Is he ridiculing us for being wholly given to idolatry? was the question that came to my mind as he paused in this sermon. As I was thinking, Are we worse than they?, I really heard his words, "Whom ye ignorantly worship." As he spoke, "Him declare I unto you", I thought He is making known to us the God that we do not know. Our God sent him to us.

I reasoned further that this man is taking special notice of us who confess our ignorance. We know that we are ignorant of Him and that we do not know how to properly worship Him. This man is recognizing us as the ones who truly worship Him even though it is an ignorant worship. This God Whom Paul preached had properly tuned our ears to hear and our hearts to understand and our minds to receive as Paul thundered, "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of Heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands". Again the speaker paused as my thoughts raced on. I thought, there is not a plurality of Gods each one having his own little dominion — JUST ONE! He is THE GOD! What a Being! One Supreme God! He IS sovereignly ruling *NOW* in both heaven and earth. All things are under His almighty supervision to such extent that He is Lord of all creatures. All things are held in the hollow of His hand instead of Him dwelling in temples made with men's hands. I heard Paul's voice become clearer as he continued, "Neither is worshipped with men's hands as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth to *ALL* life, and breath, and all things."

As Paul paused I experienced a multitude of comforting thoughts. Our God owns all things, controls all things, and works all things and does not need our power to assist Him. He does not need our wealth to make Him richer. He does not need our wisdom to inform Him, neither our political ability to advance His cause. I began to fear and tremble as I was swallowed up in thoughts of God's majesty and greatness. I felt His great hand swallow me and all the earth and fullness into its hollow with room to spare. I thought I had felt little but I had never felt so insignificant as this. Paul continued: "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." No nation could boast of

being better than other nations because God made them all of *ONE* blood. The same blood that coursed through the arteries, heart, veins, and capillaries of Adam and Eve had come in a continual flow through the generations to follow uninterrupted to the present time. Even though seas of blood have been shed, this blood has been made to grow in volume until now. No person can estimate its volume now.

No one could say so much in so few words unless he had been sent of God: a time to be born, die, plant, harvest, mourn, dance, laugh, cry; — all times of persons, nations, days, nights, and events were before determined. Not only *when* but *where* of all events were before appointed and determined by THE GOD of the Heaven and of the earth. The time and the prescribed place of all beings from the smallest insect to the greatest creature that ever existed, or will exist, were all before appointed and determined by Him. If all the plants were pens; if all the seas were ink; if all outer space were paper; and every creature were a ready writer, I venture to say, that God's sovereignty could never be fully told in this short duration of thousands of years of time . . . The subject becomes so great in its magnitude that I am lost in amazement and awe; while a multitude of thoughts flood my mind.

The question of WHY takes hold upon me as I hear Paul continue, "That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, AND FIND HIM, though He be not far from EVERY one of US." *Seeking* the Lord, *feeling* after Him, and *finding* Him: all this is the constant labor and glorious victory of every one whom God has touched with His eternal Spirit. Every one who knows his own weakness and dependence seeks the Lord, for they have found through sad experience that the wisdom of the world, the might of men, and the riches of the earth can never progress us one inch toward God nor satisfy our fainting souls. I must seek His guidance in prayer without ceasing. I must *feel* after Him if I am so fortunate to be an object of His care and providence. *He* cares for me, is the sweetest feeling a poor worm of the dust ever felt. *He provides for me,* is a sublime feeling for poor beggars to feel. *He holds me in the hollow of His hand,* is the most protective feeling experienced when confronted with the powers that be, who would take us and kill us if they could. Finding that He helps us, undertakes for us, and fights our battles in our stead, all this gives ease of mind, comforts the heart, and restores the soul. A question enters my mind which startles me: Where can I go to find Him? Who can I send into the heavens or across the sea?

Paul continues, "For in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring." It is because of Him that we live. Any time He should withdraw Himself from us we would die naturally. Even the natural life within us is GOD. It is through Him that we move a finger, foot, tongue, or eye. We could not naturally see without Him. We can not write, think, nor speak without Him. We cannot retain things in our memory without Him. We owe Him our lives for creating us and numbering our days, as well as providing all things necessary for our natural existence. He owns us. We can never repay Him with praise for what He is to us as natural human beings. *If He be in us ALL,* as surely He is, then, to partially understand ourselves is a lesson toward understanding God. I cannot analyze my mind, neither can I understand my thoughts. Even the study of my own physical anatomy becomes so complex, or complicated, that I cannot understand the functionings of my natural body. What makes my heart beat? What induces the thoughts that enter my mind? How is the food digested that I put into my mouth? How are these

digestive juices distributed to the various parts of the body? Surely I am a complicated mechanism that only God can run! Paul interrupts my thoughts again as he says: "Forasmuch then we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device." Such foolishness, I reasoned, that man who is so wonderfully made should want to worship something far less than he himself is. What folly to try to help God when man can't, without God, help himself? I thought, vain is the help of man. I vowed, Never again will I worship a creature but the ONE Who created all things.

Paul had stood so dignified and spoke with such power and authority until now that I was startled at the emotions that softened the tone of his voice as he made a step forward with a gesture of his hands and proclaimed; "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; BUT NOW COMMANDETH ALL MEN EVERYWHERE TO REPENT". I thought, Paul is not commanding us to repent; he is telling us that *GOD* commands it. The fullness of the time of this ignorance had really come to its end. The time of this ignorance God winked at. This time of ignorance was included in the time before appointed. Of course He winked at it because it needs be that we go through this time of ignorance in order to teach us that we cannot be wise of our own volition; but that *ALL* wisdom comes down as a free gift from Him who made us. His command to repent from this ignorant worship is certainly effectual and will cause the least to turn from their own ignorant ways of worship and to praise Him rightly. This command which is NOW being proclaimed exercises the minds, hearts, and souls of each and every one of His people in every nation, kindred, and tongue under Heaven. I heard Paul proclaim it. I felt the power of it in my soul. I prayed, "Turn me, Lord, and I shall be turned." He was turning me then. How anxious I was to hear the next words that Paul spoke: "Because He has APPOINTED a Day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that MAN whom He HATH ORDAINED: whereof HE hath given assurance unto *all men* in that HE HATH RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD." Paul gave the proper gesture that he had finished speaking and paused for a moment before leaving the rostrum. As he paused I thought, I want to know more about that *man whom God hath Ordained*; I want to know more about that *Appointed Day* in which He would judge the world in righteousness; and, I want to know more of this *Assurance given unto all men.* In short, I want to read over and over again this mighty heart-stirring sermon on the GREATNESS OF GOD.

By this time Paul was leaving the rostrum, and all of our company as well as some from other companies met together at the exit that we might be closer to the man, and say a word to him. I heard some say, "We will hear thee again on this matter." Some from out in the audience mocked him. I was one of those who clave to him. I said to Paul, I want a copy of this. He answered, "There is a man with me who wrote my sermon out word by word while I was speaking. I not only paused in order that the words have time to grow in your own minds, but another purpose was that the one who is preparing a treatise for Theophilus could have time to write every word of it. You shall have a copy to read over and over again." I thanked God for having led me to this place to hear this mighty sermon. I am awakening from my trance and have a few observations to make before closing this article. I have read all of the sermons and letters delivered and written by Paul as published in the New Testament; but none holds me more spellbound than the one delivered on Mars Hill in Athens, Greece. If I ever become doubtful of

God's sovereignty and almighty ruling and working of all things I turn to that sermon again to remove the doubts. When I question His right and authority to take vengeance and render severe judgments; I read again this sermon.

Paul reached the climax of this sermon in his last words, "Whereof He hath given assurance unto all men that HE HATH RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD." Paul had disputed daily in the Market Place and had "Preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection". Dionysius, the Areopagite — a very wise man of literature was one who clave to Paul after hearing this sermon.

It would be a good idea when confronted with those who affirm the might of man and deny the sovereignty of God in all things, to just quote to them the full text of Paul on Mars Hill. If this will not shut the mouth of those who argue that God needs our help — nothing can be said that will close their mouths from speaking blasphemy. Dear reader: will you please turn again to the 17th chapter of ACTS and begin reading the 22nd verse, slowly read through the 31st verse as the conclusion of this article. Thanks.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Ramipo, N. Y., Feb. 17, 1859

Brother Beebe — Will you give your views on Rom. vi. 1 and 16? By so doing, you will oblige me. Yours, as ever,

WILLIAM SPRINGSTEEN

Reply. — The first verse proposed for consideration, reads thus: "What shall we then say? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" The apostle had been dwelling on the reign of sin and death, and the redemption of the church of God from the dominion of both by the reign of grace through righteousness by Jesus Christ our Lord. The entrance of sin into the world by Adam as the embodiment and representative of all his posterity, long before the law, or the Sinai Covenant was given to Israel, even as early as the transgression of Adam — and that the law is a detector of sin; moreover, the law entered that the offence might abound. That is, as we understand it, that sin might appear as it really is, exceedingly sinful. The law did not make us sinful, but showed that we were so — making our sins to abound, or exposing them to view in their true magnitude; and, so far as the church of God is concerned, the manifestation by the application of the law of the total depravity and just condemnation of those whom Christ came to redeem, shows the more vividly the superabounding of the grace of God. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. Sin, enthroned in our carnal nature, reigned unto death; but now, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, the principality of sin is spoiled; the strength of sin, which is the law, can no longer sustain the empire of sin; for, being dead to the law, by the body of Christ, they are no more under the law, but under grace, or under law to Christ. Grace now appears in regal majesty, erects her throne in the heart, and sways her sceptre with greater might, reigns, governs, and controls, unto the opposite issue, Life, Eternal Life. Sin's reign was unto death; but grace extends her reign unto Eternal Life, and never can possibly fall short of that result. As certainly as it is that sin is the sting of death, so certainly the gift, or grace of God, is Eternal Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. None can fail of Eternal Life who are subjects of reigning Grace; nor can any fail of the wages of sin who are subjects of its reigning power.

This being the prominent doctrine of the inspired apostles and of the primitive disciples of Christ, their workmongrel opposers slanderously reported that they held, and avowed as

their doctrine, that they would sin, that grace might abound. But it was a false charge, and as slanderously said of the primitive saints as it is now reiterated against the old order of disciples, and upon the same ground. But the apostle pronounces it a slanderous report, and he says of those who propagate it that their damnation is just.

Again, the enemies of God and truth have always contended that the doctrine of sovereign, eternal, reigning, and saving grace is exceedingly dangerous leading to licentiousness; for they have no knowledge of that faith which works by love and purifies the heart. Their religion depends on fear, animal excitement, terror, fire and brimstone, &c. But the operative principle of love, as an incentive to holy aspirations, is only found under the reign of grace, hence all will-worshipers are ignorant of it.

Paul could, and did confidently appeal to the subjects of grace in the language of our text, "What shall WE then say?" We know what our calumniators, and all arminians say on the subject; but, "What shall we say?" Can a subject of grace be found in heaven or in earth who will say, Let us sin that grace may abound? The very thought to them is abhorent and repulsive; God forbid, is their language; for, How shall we that are dead to sin — slain to its love, dead to its dominion, and emancipated from its reign — how shall we live any longer therein? Baptized into the death of Jesus Christ, being buried with him by baptism into death, crucified with him, dead to sin by his body, we are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God, and with him we are risen to newness of life; Christ now liveth in us, and the life which we now live in the flesh, we live by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved us and given himself for us. The body, or that which is born of the flesh, is dead because of sin, circumcised, or cut off, so that we are no longer known in the flesh, or after the flesh, but the Spirit; that which is born of the Spirit is life, because of righteousness. It is the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him," that is, with Christ who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. "God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with him, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

Now, therefore, our element is no longer sin, but holiness. "For he that is dead is freed from sin." Now, if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him." If we were crucified with him, baptized into his death, buried with him by baptism into death, and the body of sin destroyed; if with him God has raised us up together to a newness of life, then may we reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. And then the admonition of the subject applies to us. "Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. The old mortal body is still of the earth earthy. Sin is still there striving to maintain a dominion over our members. But being legally released from his cruel dominion, we have a right to renounce his yoke, and refuse obedience to his wicked mandates. Sin will strive to reign over our members and to control them by stirring up our passions and lusts, and to press our members into its service. But here is the true ground of our confidence, that sin shall not have dominion over us; for we are not under the law, but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid." We are frequently told by the votaries of free-will and human agency in salvation, that if they could be assured that they are not under the

law, or exposed to its penal wrath, they would not only sin, but give aloose to all their lusts, and take their fill of sin; thus proving that they still love sin as well as ever. They are not yet full; they want more, and are only restrained by a selfish fear of hell. Our case is quite different, if we are under the reign of grace; we have had our fill of sin long ago; we loath it now, we hate it, we detest it, and love holiness, for it is now our element.

We come now to the sixteenth verse of the chapter on which Brother Springsteen desired us to comment in connection with the first. "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are, to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" This the saints ought to know, and to thoroughly understand. Here are two opposite dominions — the one, sin; the other righteousness; — and if we are under the dominion of the first of these, we shall obey it; in its lusts, yielding our members instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. But if freed from the dominion of sin, and brought under the reign of grace, we shall obey the governing principles of grace, the law of grace, which teaches us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly righteously, and godly in this present world. This law of grace is not written on tables of stone, but written on the tables of our hearts, according to the provisions of the New Covenant, or Covenant of Grace. "I will put my law in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people," &c. While a discrimination is here made between the slaves of sin and the subjects of reigning grace, we are taught to regard a love of holiness, a spirit of obedience to God, and a relish for the word of truth, the doctrine and ordinances of Christ, as a reliable evidence that we have passed from death unto life — from the dominion of sin to the reigning power of grace; and in the fulness of our hearts, in the assurance of this evidence, we join the apostle in thanksgiving to God, that our service under the dominion of reigning sin, is among the things which were — that being now made free from sin, we became servants of righteousness.

The question may arise, Why, if I am thus made free from the reigning power of sin, am I so prone to wander, — so full of vain and wicked thoughts? Why do I the things which I ought not, and leave undone the things which I ought? The answer of this enquiry will be found in the words of our Redeemer, in connection with those of Paul. "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and that which is born of the flesh is flesh. And the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for in our flesh there dwelleth no good thing." All our disobedience and rebellion against the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, arises from the flesh, which is and always has been at war with grace. It is no more that I do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. With my mind I serve the law of God, but with my flesh the law of sin.

Here is the ground of the Christian warfare; two opposing laws, two opposite principles dwell in us, while we sojourn in the militant state. The flesh, or earthly depraved nature will never harmonize with the aspirations of the new man after holiness. The flesh is still a servant of sin, but the new man is the servant of Righteousness, and each zealous for its respective master. While the sin that dwelleth in us disputes and opposes every step of the reign of grace, so that we cannot do the things which we would; grace, on the other hand, or the immortal spirit of life, which is denominated the new man, cannot sin, because he is born of God, and his seed remaineth, and making war, uncompromising and determined, shall crucify the old man with his affections and lusts, and shall assuredly triumph over all opposition

with, "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The apostle continues to dwell on this subject throughout this and the succeeding chapter, and shows that the saints are debtors not unto the flesh, to live after the flesh; if governed by the flesh, or if we walk after the flesh we shall die. Death hath passed on the flesh, and the flesh is dead because of sin; sin has defiled it, reigns in it, and his reign is unto death. The carnal, or fleshly mind is enmity against God; and to be carnally minded is death. "But as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

Much more might be written on this subject, the importance of which is demonstrated in the experience of all the saints, but we trust that what we have written will afford Brother Springsteen some idea of what are our views on the subject.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe May 1, 1859.)

OBITUARIES

ELDER JOHN P. HELMS

Elder John Peter Helms was born in Franklin County, Virginia, September 30, 1880, and departed this life September 29, 1965, making his age a few hours less than eighty-five. He died in a hospital after a stroke and fall at his home in Vinton, Virginia. He was the son of the late James W. Helms and Betty J. (Corn) Helms, and grandson of Elder Peter Corn, a long time moderator of the Pigg River Association.

On June 18, 1903, he was united in marriage to Clara Clifford Austin; and to this union ten children were born. Mrs. Helms died November 20, 1954. The following children survive: six daughters, Mrs. Nancy Perdue, Mrs. Tiny Flippen, Mrs. Hazel Bryant, Mrs. Lottie McMahon, Mrs. Dottie Terrell, and Mrs. Pearl Pendleton, all of Roanoke, Virginia; four sons, Charlie and Rowe, Vinton, Virginia, and Rodney and Johnnie, of Roanoke. On May 8, 1956, Elder Helms was united in marriage to Sister Minnie Annie Dyer; who survives. Surviving also are two brothers: Charlie Helms, Red Wood, Virginia; and Silas Helms, Vinton, Virginia; and twenty grandchildren and seventeen great grandchildren.

In 1914 Brother Helms received a hope in the Lord's mercies, and united with Republican Church, Franklin County, Virginia. He was baptized by the late Elder George Dyer. In 1917 he was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, and served his brethren ably for almost fifty years. At the time of his death he was pastor of the following churches: Republican, Pigg River, Basham, Little Creek, and Thompson's Grove. All the brethren and friends of these churches, as well as those of a wide area among whom he traveled, will greatly miss him.

He was plain spoken in his ministry, and left no one in doubt as to his understanding and belief of the doctrine of God our Saviour. His characteristic plainess caused his hearers to listen attentively, and many to rejoice with him; but whether all agreed with him, they highly respected him for his sincerity, and the humble recounting of his experience in being brought from nature to grace, and his call to the ministry. The writer was closely associated with Brother Helms and family for many years: we spent many hours in conversation; and traveled many hundreds of miles together during those years. He was wise in counsel, and of much comfort and encouragement in my early ministry. No one will miss his presence more than I.

Funeral services were held at Basham Meeting House, where he was pastor, and where many sorrowing ones were gathered to pay their final tribute of respect. They came from far and near, making the largest gathering we have seen on such an occasion; and the profusion of flowers from his friends bespoke their love. Many of his ministering brethren were present, and the following had part in the service: Elders John Wood, C. E. Turner, William Holland, Amos Hash, and D. V. Spangler. After which the deacons of the churches he served so faithfully carried him to his resting place in the family plot in the church cemetery; there to await the coming of his Lord to fulfill the promise that his people should be conformed to His image, when this mortal shall put on immortality. ". . . when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of

death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law, but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." These things Brother Helms believed and preached.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to his family, and to the brethren and friends he served so long.

John D. Wood

SISTER MATTIE EDWARDS

It is with a heavy heart that I comply with the request of the church to write about Sister Mattie Edwards' death. She was born January 11, 1878, in Franklin County, Virginia; married December 25, 1900, to Daniel K. Edwards; joined the church in 1904, and baptized by Elder G. F. Dyer; and died February 9, 1965.

Sister Edwards preached her own funeral here in this life by her walk, talk, deeds and thoughts, and she'll live on with us in sweet memory.

Elder C. N. Bunn, her pastor, conducted a very beautiful service: he spoke so very comforting to our souls, and made us feel all is well in life and death. His words had power, weight and deep rich meaning. "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." He read Psalm 23; also her favorite hymn:

"Awake my soul, in joyful lays
And sing thy great Redeemer's praise:
He justly claims a song from me,
His loving kindness, O how free!"

Elder Bunn's heart had been made sad along with ours, because a precious one had been taken from our midst; but the spirit within made us all want to sing, "Loving kindness, O how sweet!" because she had been given a body just like Jesus. God crowned her with his loving kindness and tender mercy, which came down from heaven to her through the sufferings of God's blessed and only Son: His candle shined upon her head, and by his light one could see those Christian graces which would commend the faith which she possessed by the life which she led. When Elder Bunn would be blessed to preach the power, glory and love of God's everlasting and eternal truth so beautifully, and we would be blessed to hear him, we would say this is "Our little peace," which passeth all understanding. My husband and I have been taking her to church since the early twenties, along with four other dear widowed sisters; leaving one dear mother in Israel, namely Sister Shields.

My heart goes out to her dear family, brethren, neighbors and friends. She has just gone where the family circle will never be broken, and she will be robed in the robe of righteousness, because she was taught by the heavenly King, and heaven will be her home — the eternal city of God.

May God continue to shed his tender mercy and amazing love upon her dear family and especially to her son Edmond, and his wife Essie, with whom she lived. I don't feel that anyone could have been more kind and good to her than Essie, her faithful and loving daughter-in-law.

Some sweet day she will be brought into this glorious body by God's holy calling. God himself will come for her, and He himself will receive her unto himself in glory: the blessed Prince of Peace, blessed be his holy name; the same power that raised Jesus, will raise her. She will be like her Lord; she will see, know, and be satisfied, because He was a Saviour when He came. He suffered, bled, died, and rose a Saviour for her; and He is now sitting on the right hand of God making intercessions for us. (Oh, how I need intercessions!) The eternal God is our refuge and His everlasting arms are underneath, surely He bears our sorrows and carries our griefs. How can we sink with such a prop as our eternal God? May our hearts be tuned to one thing, "Thy will be done."

Written by one who loved her naturally and, I hope spiritually for Jesus' sake only.

Pearl Fickett

GROVER CLEVELAND SPINDLE

Brother Grover C. Spindle, a long time resident of Washington, D. C., was born in Centreville, Virginia, August 16, 1884, and died at his home March 3, 1965, after being confined to his home for several years. He was a son of Robert Leachman Spindle and Virginia (Rector) Spindle. On December 16, 1907, he was united in marriage to Miss Grace M. George; who survives. Surviving also is one nephew.

Brother Spindle united with Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, in 1912, and was baptized by Elder H. H. Lefferts. The brethren saw the gift of a deacon in him and he was set apart to this office, which he filled well as long as he was able to be active. Brother Spindle was of a very friendly and pleasant disposition, sound in the faith and a good conversationalist. These qualities endeared him to all with whom he came into contact. The brethren and friends were always glad when he would come out from Washington to spend the

night before meeting days. This he did for many years, never missing his meetings unless providentially hindered. He is greatly missed by the brethren and friends, and his memory will linger in their hearts.

His funeral was conducted at the Lee Funeral Home in Washington by the writer, and he was laid to rest in the Addison Chapel Cemetery, Seat Pleasant, Maryland, to await the fullness of the Lord's promise to come again; until the redemption of His purchased possession.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to Mrs. Spindle and all the brethren and friends who mourn his passing.

John D. Wood

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M.

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M.

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 11 A. M.

WRIGHTS' CREEK CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 11:00 A. M.

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., six miles SE. of Sulligent, Alabama.

MACEDONIA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located one and one-half miles Southwest of Sulligent, Alabama, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT R. PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
HURTON PITTS, Clerk
Sulligent, Ala.

OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each Saturday before the fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Alabama.

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles SW. of Fayette, Alabama.

ELAM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located two miles North of Goshen, Pike County, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 o'clock.

J. P. MORGAN, Pastor
A. C. CARTER, Clerk
1335 Avalon Lane,
Montgomery 6, Ala.

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before.

E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Pratt City, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. Meeting place at Alder Street at top of hill, first car going into Pratt City from Birmingham.

H. C. MOON, Pastor

LIBERTY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., eight miles South of Gordo, Alabama.

O. G. GARVER, Pastor

MT. CARMEL CHURCH, Coffee Springs, Alabama, meets each first Sunday 11 A. M.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

ZION ROCK OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, twenty-two miles South of Andalusia, Alabama, meets every first Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
NORA McLEOD, Acting Clerk

HARMONY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, ten miles South of Jay, Santa Rosa County, Florida, meets every second Sunday and Saturday before at 11:00 A. M.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
GRACE UTLEY, Clerk

NAOMI OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets every third Sunday at 11:00 A. M., six miles South of McKenzie, Alabama.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
E. C. WEAVER, Clerk
Rt. 5, Box 50-B,
Andalusia, Ala.

SHILOH OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, seven miles Northeast of Andalusia, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
NORA LEE McLEOD, Clerk
Rt. 3,
Red Level, Ala.

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

REHOBETH OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located five miles North of El Dorado, Arkansas and half-mile West of Highway No. 7, meets second Sunday in each month and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

R. W. RHODES, Pastor
W. A. SPEER, Clerk

WHITE WATER OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located about one mile Northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

W. A. SPEER, Pastor

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Stockton, California, meets second Sundays, 10:30 A. M., at 5620 E. Marsh Street. All lovers of the truth invited.

T. R. JEFFERSON, PASTOR
Myrtle Tipton, Clerk
733 7th St. Hallister, Calif. 95023

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Compton, California, meets each fourth Sunday at the home of L. W. Langwell, 12812 S. Williams Street.

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in the United States), meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is located one mile south of Newark, Delaware, just off of Highway 896.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK CHURCH, Miami, Florida, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before, SW. 29th Avenue and 6th Street. We extend an invitation to any interested to visit us.

MRS. J. M. FUTCH,
7005 SW. 21st Street,
Miami, Florida

NEW HARMONY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Hiram, Ga., meets every 1st Sunday at 11 o'clock.

O. J. CROKER, Pastor
J. F. JORDAN, Clerk

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located at 5th and East Park Street, Weiser, Idaho, meets each 4th Sunday at 11 o'clock. Address any communications to:

ERNEST J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
FLOSSIE ATTEBERY, Clerk
Rt. 1, Box 202,
Hermiston, Oregon 97838

PLEASANT VALLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas. Meets with Mrs. Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C, each second month — January, March, etc. on the second Sunday.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE LOST CREEK CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, meets first Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Kentucky, ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton, on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

NEW HOPE CHURCH (better known as Lick Creek) meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Kentucky.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE ZION CHURCH OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS, Mayfield, Kentucky, meets first Sunday each month at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M., on South 7th Street.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Baltimore, Maryland, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Street, near Calvert.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on Falls Road about twenty miles north of Baltimore.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

HOPEWELL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Hopewell, N. J., meets each first Sunday at 10:30, and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

ARTHUR R. WARREN, Pastor
LETHA A. BLACKWELL, Clerk

OLIVE AND HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Shokan, N. Y., meets each 2nd Sunday at 2:00 P. M. March through and including November.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
DEACON E. K. ADSIT, Clerk

The **WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,** Warwick, Orange County, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are held at A. R. Vail's home, 55 Maple Ave., Warwick at 11 A. M.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, New York City, meets every first and third Sundays at McBurney Branch Y. W. C. A. 215 W. 23rd Street, corner of 7th Ave. (Elevator to 2nd floor.) 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M. All visitors are welcome.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

THE WILSON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Wilson, N. C., meets each second Sunday at 3 P. M., and Saturday evening before at 7:30 P. M. The location is on the corner of Green and Jackson Streets.

D. B. STOKES, Pastor
MRS. BETTIE RICHARDSON, Clerk

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:00 P. M.

C. M. HAGGOOD, Pastor
NINA STALLINGS, Clerk
Rt. 2, Box 54
Altus, Okla.

BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin, Oregon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes. Address communications to Lloyd Spikes, Elgin, Oregon.

ERNEST ATTEBERY, Pastor
SPENCER BURCH, Clerk

ROCK SPRINGS OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, meets each first Sunday at 10:30. The meeting house is located on highway 222, about one-quarter mile of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line.

JOHN D. WOOD. Pastor
CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets each 5th Sunday from May through September, with all day meeting the 1st Sunday in May; and meets at Needmore, Pa., on 5th Sundays from October through April, with all day meeting the 2nd Sunday in October.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
ORIEN MELLOTT, Clerk
McConnellsburg, Pa.

THE PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Memphis, Tennessee, meet in the Primitive Baptist Church, on Andrews Road in Ellendale, about a block from Highway 70, each Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

H. G. BROWN, Pastor
791 Watson Street
H. R. PRINCE, Ass't. Pastor
HAROLD TONEY, Clerk

CANE CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and is located nine miles Southwest of Martin, Tennessee. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
J. B. JONES, Clerk
Rt. 1, Martin, Tenn.

BORDEAUX PREDESTINARIAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Nashville, Tenn., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. The church is located on the old Hydes Ferry Road in Bordeaux, in Nashville. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

The **WALNUT FORK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH,** near Cottage Grove, Tennessee, meets on the second Sunday of each month.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor
R. L. VEAZEY, SR., Clerk

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, Houston, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before 10:30 A. M. Church is located at 815 Little York Road between Highway 75 and East Texas Freeway 59.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
IRENE WISENBAKER, Clerk

MT. ZION CHURCH, Weslaco, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.; and each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday before at 2:00 P. M., at their new location: seven miles West of Weslaco, on highway 83.

JOE L. HAMRICK, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk

SARDIS CHURCH, Amarillo, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 10:30, in the home of E. J. Parsons, 1711 Lincoln Street.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, has moved their meeting place to 3629 8th Avenue. They meet each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Take College Ave. bus to Butler and Ryon; go one block West, then half block North to church.

C. U. LANDERS, Pastor

THE ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST CHURCH, Lawn, Texas, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
MRS. NOLA STEWART, Clerk

AN ARM OF PILGRIM REST CHURCH, meets each second Sunday and Saturday night before at Earth, Texas.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
A. A. CHAMBERS, Clerk

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets on the second and fourth Sundays of each month at 10 A. M., in the meeting house at intersection of Highways 123 and 87. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

GERALD D. SHIPMAN, Pastor
LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk

THE OLD SALEM CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS, four miles South of Teague, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before. MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

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SAINTS REST OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each first and third Sunday at 11 A. M., at 2710 Engle Street.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
D. G. CONNELL, Clerk

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30. And second Sundays at 11:00.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor

The churches of which Elder E. J. Lambert is pastor meet as follows:

PARON, meets first Sunday mornings and Saturday night before, F. M. Road 2659, N. E. Hawkins, Texas.

H. H. FAULK, CLERK
Rt. 1, Hawkins, Texas

HOPEWELL, meets second Sunday mornings and Saturday afternoon before, seven miles S. W. of Winnsboro, Texas.

J. J. MILLS, Clerk
Rt. 2, Winnsboro, Texas

BETHEL, meets third Sunday mornings and Saturday morning before, near U. S. 67, seven miles N. E. of El Dorado, Arkansas.

MRS. JEAN BURNS, Clerk
Rt. 3, Box 210B,
El Dorado, Ark.

GOOD HOPE, meets fourth Sunday mornings and Saturday afternoon before, seven miles N. E. of Winnsboro, Texas.

MRS. GERTRUDE JONES, Clerk
905 Y Drive,
Winnsboro, Texas

All lovers of Sovereign Grace Principles especially invited.

ELDER E. J. LAMBERT, Pastor
Phone, Code 214 Dickens 2-6742,
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located on Route 28, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia.

ARTHUR L. CARTER, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. each second month (February, April, etc.), and is near Lucketts, about eight miles north of Leesburg, Virginia.

and

BROAD RUN CHURCH, Poolesville, Maryland, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. each second month (January, March, etc.)

L. D. DUKE, Clerk
Charlestown, W. Va.

MT. ZION CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, Virginia, on Route 50, between Washington and Winchester, Virginia.

MRS. DAVID FARNIE, Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington,

D. C. We are always glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Manassas 368-4857.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 8:00 P. M., Fairmont Park, 2023 Tidewater Drive.

C. N. BUNN, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Qualla Road, Chesterfield County, Virginia, meets each first Sunday at 10 A. M. Following are directions to the meeting house: South from Richmond at McGuire Circle, take Rt. 360 nine miles to "Longest" Service Station; turn left and go one mile, and turn right on No. 363 one mile to church.

ELDER C. N. BUNN, Pastor
LILLIE WEIDER, Clerk
2560 Elliham Ave.,
Richmond 34, Va.

DAN RIVER CHURCH, between Danville, Va. and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville, Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday night before, on Bradley Road.

H. W. WRAY, Pastor
R. T. HOLLEY, Clerk

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each first Sunday at 11:00 o'clock. This church is located seven miles west of Gretna, Virginia on 605 one-half mile from Route 40. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
RUTH MATTOX, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Chatham, Va.

BELLVIEW PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each third Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday night before at 7:30. This church is located near Cave Springs about four miles from Roanoke, Virginia, one mile from 221. All visitors are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
J. A. SOWDER, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Salem, Va.

SANDY LEVEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each third Sunday afternoon at 2:30. This church is located on Route 635 about 5 miles south from Hardy, Va. 10 miles from Vinton, Va. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
PEARL DUDLEY, Clerk
Rt. 1, Box 282,
Hardy, Va.

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each fourth Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday morning before at 11:00 o'clock. This church is located on highway 623 about two miles from Fairystone Park. All visitors are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
G. M. MARTIN, Clerk
Rt. 1,
Bassett, Va.

GREEN HILL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each fourth Sunday afternoon at 2:30. This church is located five miles north of Stuart, Virginia, just off highway 58. All lovers of truth are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
MRS. S. L. WALKER, Clerk
Rt. 2, Box 207,
Stuart, Va.

BETHEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, of Predestinarian Faith, of Riffe, Washington, meets each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before at 11 o'clock. For information write the Clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. OPAL HUNTTING, Clerk
Silver Creek, Wash. 98585

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, Naches, Washington, meets at 11:00 A. M. each second **Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the clerk.**

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MARGUERITE SIMPSON, Clerk
1306 Fairview Ave.
Yakima, Wash. 98901

HARMONY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, about four miles East of Huntington, W. Va., near Route 60 at Russell Creek, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

J. R. LANE, Moderator
MILDRED STANLEY, Clerk
Rt. 2, Huntington, W. Va.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1966 NO. 2

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE GOSPEL PREACHER

How beauteous are their feet
Who stand on Zion's hill;
Who bring salvation on their tongues,
And words of peace reveal.

How charming is their voice,
How sweet the tidings are!
Zion, behold thy Saviour King:
He reigns and triumphs here.

How happy are our ears
That hear this joyful sound,
Which kings and prophets fear,
And sought but never found.

How blessed are our eyes
That see this heavenly light;
Prophets and kings desired it long,
But died without the sight.

The watchmen join their voice
And tuneful notes employ:
Jerusalem breaks forth in song
And deserts learn the joy.

The Lord makes bare his arm
Through all the earth abroad:
Let every nation now behold
Their Saviour and their God.

Ye little flock whom Jesus feeds,
Dismiss your anxious fears:
Look to the Shepherd of your souls
And smile away your fears.

Your Father will a kingdom give,
And give it with delight:
His feeblest child his love shall call,
To triumph in His sight.

— Watts

(Submitted in spiritual love, and pray that it might serve to lift a drooping mind, and to remind us to have a prayerful heart for our preaching brethren, who so ably bring fruit of the vine directly from the Throne.)

J. M. Bailey
Kenova, W. Va.

"IT OFTEN SEEMS TO ARRIVE AT THE RIGHT TIME"

3347 Tutwiler,
Memphis, Tenn. 38122

Dear Editors of the Signs:

It is again time to send payment for our much loved paper, the **Signs of the Times.** It is a welcomed package of letters, editorials, and sermons from far and near, which often seems to arrive just at the right time — feeding our hungry soul, strengthening our feeble knees, and renewing our hope; and we find fresh courage to press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God.

It is always my desire to send a few lines along with my remittance, hoping in some way to honor our God and to be of comfort to others. The experiences of our hearts and souls are too precious to be belittled. What a wonderful blessing it is **to believe.** Remember back when we didn't believe, but hoped someday we would; but with man it was impossible. And we then began to learn we could not believe, and became afraid it was not for us, for our sins had become exceedingly sinful. We suffered many strange experiences, and learning we could not keep our promise to God, but broke them all; and was falling into a more fearful condition. But, when it pleased the Lord to reveal his Son in our heart, that removed every sin and

fear, and caused us to rejoice and praise Him with all our being; and He enabled us to lay hold of the hope that was set before us. The effect of the heavenly breeze had been felt, the new birth had taken place; old things had vanished away and behold all things became new; and the comforting words came that no power, visible or invisible, should ever be able to separate us from His love. I felt for days I never would suffer again, but little did I know the wills and shalls of our God.

We heard a wonderful sermon today by Elder Paul Poyner of Murry, Kentucky, from the 19th Psalm. The entire chapter is so good; the twelfth verse begins a prayer that lives in the hearts of those who are exercised thereby according to the working of God's mighty power. If I know anything about it, it is of Him that we live, move and have our being; and from the depths of my heart I can feel the truth of these lines:

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly:
Wash me Saviour or I die."

We desire to walk godly in this world, proving our love for Him in letting our light shine, that others may see our good works and glorify our Father who is in heaven. But, Oh, my soul, how to walk godly we do not find. If our light ever shines, we don't see it, and how to perform that which is good, we find not. Thus all our righteousness falls to the ground as filthy rags; and we seek comfort in such as, "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong." "It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." So our hope rests in what Jesus has done for us in his love and mercy, and power to save.

Don't let this crowd out better writing, for the Lord has been pleased to keep the **Signs** filled with such things as are good for us to read. Elder Helms' sermon in the December **Signs** is so rich; together with the other writings. Some we have met, but love flows to them all, as they all tell of the same sweet doctrine of Salvation by Grace. . . Love to all the household of faith.

Carrie Campbell

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION 1965

God is love, and God is light. (1 John 4:16; 1:9)

That God is everything to his people is an established fact; and at this time it is, He is Love, and He is the Light that I feel to write to you about. Where there is love and light, there is a family dwelling together in union. It will not do to ascribe the love and the light to the children of God. There are many that are ascribing both unto the unregenerated children of God, and that they by an act of their own, can come into the love of God, and walk in the light of his Spirit. Those who have been made free by the appearing of Jesus Christ, who is the truth, will know that such is not the true doctrine of God our Saviour.

In the chronology of the world, we are shown light first. There is every indication that we had day and night before we had the sun. As the love of God cannot be explained, just so the light of God cannot be explained. For us to talk about light and day before the sun was made, is to bring ridicule on ourselves before men, (that is, unregenerated men). To those that desire to learn from His written word, it is clear to see that the light that came as a result of God's command, was not the light that the sun gave when it was made. May the Lord bless us to remember that God is light: that He is the source of all light.

The love of God was bestowed upon his people in eternity. It did not have a beginning: God loved Israel from everlasting; Christ delighted in the sons of men from all eternity, and this de-

light could only be in those that he loved. Let it be said time and again that God has not loved sin. It was not his love of sin that moved him to send his Son in flesh, but his eternal love for his chosen people. This love moved him to make manifest his love by not imputing their sins to them, but to another, even Jesus Christ the Saviour of sinners. The "manner" of God's love is made to shine forth unto perfection when we are called forth unto sonship. What a high title it is to be called the sons of God!

The manner in which this love of God is bestowed upon sinners, separates the Old School Baptists from all other people. Some would accuse us of taking too much honor here; of claiming too much among the denominations, even claiming that we do not have any right to a higher place than the children of God among others. That God has a people in every nation, (and denomination), is not denied, but to claim that the deluded children of God, those that are following sprinkling for baptism; men's forgiveness of sins instead of that which is in Jesus's name; men saving sinners instead of Christ; that they are not to be censored in anything; are to be invited to communion regardless to what they belong, this we can never affirm. The strongest tenet of faith of any of these nations and denominations is this: Sinners are brought into a knowledge of Christ and God *by first loving him.* The Old School Baptists teach and believe that each child of God is made to love Him because *God first loved them.* This writer, and the brethren that have authorized this Circular Letter, would not do violence to any man's religion; and, if our statement is wrong, we all, as one man, stand ready to retract it. But until it is proved by Holy Writ that we love God first, and then he loves us, we as a people must continue to rejoice in the grace of God, in the love of God which was bestowed upon us first.

As the love of God is eternal, and moved him to send forth his Son, so it moves us. How false is the thought that, God being love — his love being the moving and spanning of the universe to his overshadowing the virgin to cause her conception, we are not moved to obey him. The love of God, which is God, being shed abroad in our hearts, is the manner of love that moves to humble, grateful obedience. Any confession of Christ that is not accompanied by the walk of obedience that identifies the children of God, is a confession and profession according to godliness (2 Timothy 2:5), but not according to possession (1 John 5:12); and anything that we may do or say, if not according to the love of God, is condemnatory to us instead of presenting us as recipients of this love.

This love of God, when shed abroad in our hearts, will produce the walk, or the fruits of the Spirit. Loud talking, strong criticisms of other orders of people, bold assertions that we are sound in the faith, are not enough to show this love. This love of God is best shown in action, not in a mere form of words.

We are commanded to let brotherly love continue. It is the love of God that is to continue. If we ever love our brethren, that love will be as lasting as the love of God for his people, because it is his love in us: it is certain that if we love God, we will love those begotten of God. There is not any uncertain sound to this. We will not, and we do not, and we cannot love God and hate one another.

As I write to you, and if it is your mind to accept this as your Circular Letter, by the grace of God I write for you, I would beseech you, and would desire grace from God that we might obey in deed and in truth this lovely mandate from God as given us by the writer of Hebrews.

The children of God are commanded not to be indebted to anyone, nor in any way, save to love one another. It is scriptural and Christlike to owe our

brethren, to be deeply indebted to them in love, but the commandment does not cease with this glorious indebtedness. It must be paid, if we are to receive the approval of our Saviour. This indebtedness begins when we have been delivered from our sins and are given Christ; and it will not end while here. Likewise the paying of this to one another is for all time; and how delightful it is to pay what we owe another. Herein is the fulfilling of the law. (Romans 13:8, 10; Gal. 5:14)

If I am not mistaken in my calling, I love you all dearly.

W. D. Griffin

"THEN THERE IS WISDOM, KNOWLEDGE, AND DEPTH"

Box 267,
Lincolnton, Ga. 30817

Dear Brethren:

Enclosed is check for $5.00, for which please renew my subscription for one year; the balance to help send the *Signs* to someone else.

I enjoy reading this good, sound Old Baptist paper. I wish I could say something to show you just how much I enjoy reading the good articles that appear in it: I read them more than once. It never fails to astound me to see the wisdom, knowledge, and depth of the articles — man alone is not capable of writing such. I know, because I hear men, and read their articles, and they do not satisfy me: They are shallow and hollow, and void of understanding. But when men are the mouthpiece of the Lord, then there is knowledge, wisdom and depth. That is why I love to read the *Signs*.

May the Lord continue to bless you and all the editors, to continue to put out a good paper, as it is now.

Gordon H. McGee

"THE SWEETNESS REMAINS"

Chestertown, Maryland

Dear Brethren and Sisters in Christ:

The past few days and weeks, my mind has been upon so many of the wonderous ways of God and His many ways of speaking and dealing with His little children. Perhaps my thoughts will be disconnected and hard to follow, but I will try to put them down as they come to me. I cannot find words to speak what I want to say and how I feel, but I can put it in writing, if the Lord will direct my pen. Of late, so many things have happened to put His wonderful ways of dealing with His people in my mind.

It has been several weeks since I attended the Associations in Virginia and at Salisbury, but many of the messages we heard those precious days return to me, as I lie in bed at night and the sweetness remains. "Faith" was the central theme of the whole. If we have not faith to believe in God and His whole creation; faith to believe that He was born, bled and died to save sinners; faith to believe that He arose from the dead and ascended into heaven, promising to come again and gather all them that were His and carry them home to a place already prepared for them; if we have not this faith, what have we to live for? That is why it is so necessary for a child of God to have this God-given faith to live by, and to continue in it, from the beginning to the end. From the beginning believers lived by faith, and died faithful to their beliefs.

Even before Christ was born, the prophets were given the faith to look for His coming, and, being inspired of God, they lived, predicting the coming of One who would save them from their sins. The God of all creation had told them, and they believed. What great faith they had! They could not see God, but felt His power and heard His voice; so believed.

When the Babe was born, they knew He was the One sent of God. Just a tiny

Babe, born in a stable, in a little town; but they saw his star and came worshiping with gifts. But ordinary man could not see, nor understand, these things. Some, later, questioned why the Jews were the "chosen nation;"why Bethlehem was the place chosen of God for the birthplace of Jesus. God's ways are unpredictable and unexpected to the natural man. His plans and purposes are not revealed to everyone, just the chosen few; and if, at first, the Jews were the ones chosen to proclaim the truth, why should we question His ways? "To the Jew first, then unto the Gentile." The Jews cast Him out and would not recognize Him. The Lord of Life is full of surprises. In Isaiah, I believe, God says, "for as far as the heavens are above the earth, are my thoughts above your thoughts." In our natural condition, we tend to make two mistakes as we think of God. We are tempted to think that He thinks and acts as we do. Secondly, because we believe this, we imagine He is easily understood. Isaiah made no such error in his believing. All through the Bible, we read how people were amazed at the words and works of God. Stop and think for a moment just how unexpected He **does** work. Isaiah said, "He makes a way in the sea, and rivers in the desert." Or, think about the incarnation.

God reveals himself to man through a babe, born and laid in a manger in a small village. Yes, the Lord of Life is full of surprises. Instead of Christ overwhelming his enemies with a great army, He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey and died on a cross. Then, just when everyone thought Jesus was gone forever and all His work ended by the cruel action of the Romans, He arose, victorious over death and the grave! A few women and His disciples discovered an empty tomb. His ways, you see, are incredible to natural man. They shock and offend man, because they are not understood clearly. They jar our logic, stagger our commonsense and upset our assumptions concerning Him.

He, indeed, acts unexpectedly in unexpected places and at unexpected times; but, He acts! Remember that. Then, think how unexpectedly He speaks. Paul did not expect Him to appear and speak to him on the road to Damascus, but He did; and what a wonderful change took place! The apostle had this insight into His divine nature when he wrote, "O, the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are His judgements, and His ways past finding out. For who hath known the mind of the Lord."

The world teaches that the aggressive get ahead, but Jesus says "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." He says the humble-minded shall receive the kingdom of God. We think the only intelligent way to deal with our enemies is to get rid of them, but Jesus says, "Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." We are lead to think that things we see and touch are what count most, but He says, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God." The world says "Grow up and be a man or woman." But our Lord says, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

As one continues to hear God speak through prophets, priests and kings; through history and the Bible and through Jesus Christ himself, one is amazed at how wonderful are the values and purposes of life from God's viewpoint. How strange to the eye of natural man. He speaks so differently from the way we think He should speak. And, in fact, it is often difficult for man to comprehend, let alone believe. It is precisely because our Lord is not so obvious; not so easily understood; because He is so very different from ourselves, that it takes a spirit and mind in harmony with Him to hear Him speak, and to know His will. He says, "Be still and know that I am God", and "Stand still and see the salvation of

the Lord." With the mind all cluttered up with worldly thoughts and ideas, we seldom hear His voice. We are on the go, doing the things of the world, and do not have time to be still and "see" His great works. We must be made to pause with much soul searching and prayer, before we are in harmony with Him and hear His voice. It requires deep humility and a child-like faith, which reaches out to this Almighty God, whose arm is never too short to reach down and draw us up to Him from the lowest plane of life. To feel that, in spite of limited vision and understanding, means He loves us. Why do we love Him? Because He first loved us. Wonderful, isn't it? This Beautiful One, whose love has no beginning or ending, watches over and cares for us always, even though we are not aware of it.

Nowadays, there is pressure on all sides to deviate from the ways of God. The world says, "His ways are out of date, not worthy of concern." But this is not true. Only men change — God never does. "For I am God, and I change not." Man's laws change; God's never do. Right, like God, is eternal.

Oh, my precious brethren, we need to get down on our knees and beg God for mercy and forgiveness for neglecting to give Him all the praise, honor and glory; for keeping us in the way, as He most surely does, in this terribly mixed-up mass of humanity that is wandering around aimlessly today, looking for they know not what. We are so thankful He has given us a heart to believe and trust in Him, for if we had not this hope to keep us going, what would life be worth? Nothing at all! We do pray, but often we know not what to pray for, because our hearts are so full. We ask for what we think we want, in our natural condition, and hope we will receive it. But God knows our needs, even better than we do. He knows what is best for us. He answers our prayers in many ways, just as He speaks to us in divers manners. Sometimes, the answer is "no."

One thinks of the mother of Zebedee's children (Matthew 20:21) She came to Jesus, asking that a certain wish be granted. He asked her, "What wilt thou?" She said, "Grant that my two sons might sit, one on thy right and one on thy left, in thy kingdom." Jesus answered, in part, "Ye know not what ye ask. Ye shall drink, indeed, of my cup, be baptised with the baptism I am baptised with, but to sit on my right hand and on my left hand, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." Jesus promised His disciples they would get whatever they asked for **in His name.** That meant whatever is the will of God, whatever is in harmony with the love, wisdom and justice of God.

As some of the dear pastors pointed out during our Association, God sees it all as a whole, not just in part. It is all spread out before Him as a great blueprint before the architect: The beginning, clear up to the end, for each of us. Therefore, He knows just what is before us, and, not knowing this ourselves, we are not prepared for the answer God gives us. In John 16:12, He told His disciples, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." They were not ready yet to understand these things and He knew it. When the time came, they would be given the wisdom to see and understand. Then, as we do now, they saw as we do "through a glass darkly." Isn't it possibly the reason that, because we **do** see this way and pray with too much impatience for the end of poverty or for a peaceful world, that God must say to us, occasionally, "Not yet, my child, not yet." "Be still and know that I am God, I hold the whole world in my hand. I created and just so, I can destroy or I can save."

Then, God has still another way in which He answers us. He answers "yes", but not as we expect Him to. Remember the lame man lying at the gate of the temple called Beautiful? . .Asking alms of Peter and John (Acts 3:6). And what was Peter's reply? "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have,

give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." Did the lame man expect this answer? Of course not, but he received something far more precious than silver or gold. . . the ability to walk.

Then, once more, when Paul prayed to have the thorn removed from his flesh (2 Corinthians 12:8). Instead, God's promise to him was, "My Grace is sufficient to thee." Grace to supply all his needs. What a wonderful promise! And, with the needed grace, Paul was given faith to bear all his burdens and praise the Lord daily. We need to be mindful always that God answers prayers, but in His own way, not ours; which is for our best interest. What a joy it is to be given strength when we ask for it, be given renewed faith and hope when everything looks dark and hopeless. When we feel as though we have lost everything when a loved one passes on, and we pray for comfort, He always makes His presence felt. "For I will never forsake you." All our faith and hope comes from above, and our only strength is in Him. If we are truly God's children, and we hope we are, we need not be reminded that because He answers our prayers as we ask, it is not because we have persuaded God to do our will, or to change His mind. It is only because it is all in His purpose and will to deal with us as He does, for, all have been "purposed and written in His will".

We are told to pray without ceasing, not with many lip words, nor with public exhibitions or big words, but within the heart, wherever we are; and **from** the heart. I think the words "bowed down in prayer" do not simply mean to literally bow down, but to bow down in humility of spirit, as the publican. We can pray daily as we go about our work. We might suddenly have a desire to thank Him for some little kindness from someone, or perhaps feel a closeness with Him and want to thank Him for being near when needed. And, "Thanks, Father, for a lovely day" or "For keeping me in thy care through the dangers of travel." Oh, so many things to thank Him for.

My prayer always will be for patience to wait upon Him and know that whatever happens, it is all as He purposed it to be. I pray for faith to trust Him in all things; to know and to do His will, for it is for our well being at all times; just to keep His holy laws and abide by them as far as human nature is able to, with His help.

Yours, in bonds of love in Christ, I hope.

Humbly, your sister
Ruth Lucht

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41 Lovel Court, Apt. C,
Nutley, N. J. 07110

Dear Editors:

Enclosed find check to renew my *Signs* for another year; the balance to go to the Indigent Fund.

I look forward to receiving my paper from month to month, and would certainly be lost without it. I enjoy the splendid articles written by those who love and stand for this precious truth. As time passes, I feel the need more and more of spiritual food, and to be refreshed by the water of life from day to day.

Yesterday was our meeting day in New York, and although we are few in number, it is comforting and uplifting to meet with the brethren and hear the gospel word proclaimed.

A blessed holiday season to you and your dear ones.

Unworthily yours,
Myrtle Lefferts

IS THE DOOR LOCKED?

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." (Revelations 3:20)

I hope the Lord will lead me in this

undertaking. First, I will say, John was commanded to write to a certain people. Those that might believe the door was locked, and that Jesus was helpless to enter in, should read the entire chapter again: there may be some things overlooked that are very important.

We will find that John was commanded to write to the angels of the churches named, and not to the world; which means, not to dead sinners. Those dead in sin cannot hear spiritually any more than the corporal dead can hear naturally — unless it pleases our heavenly Father to quicken the dead sinner into divine life, he will remain dead. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the son quickeneth whom he will." (John 5:21)

Jesus holds not only the key of David, (Rev. 3:7), but the keys of hell and death, (Rev. 1:18), and certainly he is in possession of the key to his own kingdom; for He is the door of his sheep, and his sheep hear his voice, and they follow him: for they know his voice. "And a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." (John 10:5) The Lord's humble poor and afflicted know not the voice of the doctrine of men, who preach that the Lord Jesus is a beggar, and cannot enter in because *they*, the carnal nature of men, will not let him; and he has therefore utterly failed to accomplish the will of his Father who sent him.

In 1st Samuel 17:38, we find that Saul armed David that he should be prepared to meet the Philistine, and win the battle. But David could not go with such armour as a man could furnish. David know in whom he trusted: it was the same God that delivered him out of the paw of the lion, and the paw of the bear, and, "He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine." The world today is still using Saul's armour to convert and make so-called Christians. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14) But the poor and afflicted are trusting in the God who has all power in heaven and in earth, and none can stay his hand, for they are drawn by the Holy Spirit. I feel certain that the elect family of God, chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, are drawn to Him through the Son and Spirit, not according to the will of man, but according to the will of God our Saviour. "Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:13)

We read in the 3rd chapter of Matthew how that Jerusalem and all Judea were baptized of John; but seeing many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." Dearly beloved, I believe it is impossible even for God's very elect to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, except it be by the working of the Holy Spirit; it being the work of God that they believe in Christ Jesus.

When one is pricked in the heart and wounded, he will certainly seek the great physician, and come truly and humbly confessing his sins to his God, and be made to trust in the Lord Jesus, who is the only one that can bind up his wounds, and give him a final resting place. These are the ones that truly bring forth fruits meet for repentance. In Matthew 5:20, we read, "Except our righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Jesus comes to his bride, *the church,* because he loves her with an everlasting love; and through him the good news from a far country is brought: the Gospel. The bride looks for him: she loves him because he has loved her first, and has raised her up and paid the full redeeming price — his life, his

blood, that some day she shall rest from all her labor and dwell with him in that eternal kingdom forever. This is her precious hope.

Oh, how often He comes to her knocking at her very heart, and comforts her with that love that flows from heart to heart, and breast to breast; and the Spirit and the bride say come: so we can be sure that as often as Jesus visits his bride, the church, he prepares her to receive him. "The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." (Proverbs 16:1) "He opens and none can shut, and shuts and none can open." (Rev. 3:7)

How wonderful his love and power, that he comes and unfolds the beauty of his kingdom here on earth, to the precious ones who are the anointed, and called not according to their works, but according to his mercy and grace, and blesses them in sweet fellowship to meet together in that precious faith. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But he hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit . . ."

If we love the Lord, it is because he first loved us, and gave himself for us. Jesus said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." (John 15:16) How wonderful it is when we are lifted up, to feel that blessed assurance of the precious hope abiding in us! yet we realize that we, as poor, helpless creatures, are dependent upon the Heavenly Father; and cannot always feel to be lifted above our many troubles here in this world of sin and sorrow. For there are many valleys of trials and afflictions — and when we are down in those places, only the dear Lord of heaven can lift us up: He hears the cry of his humble, poor and afflicted ones; and these are they who are chosen in the furnace of affliction, and brought by the power of God to be united with the Heavenly Bride, the Lamb's Wife.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Dear kindred, have you not had a little feast along your journey, on just a few handsfull of purpose left for you, when you were blest to feel the very presence of a Saviour's love. Certainly this is when He is standing at the door and knocking within the heart of his beloved. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come . . . and whosoever will let him take the water of life freely." This is a well of water springing up in you unto eternal life; for it is God that worketh in you of his own good pleasure. "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." (Romans 9:16)

Dearly beloved in the Lord, if you are crossing many valleys, and the journey becomes so uneven, and the streams almost dry, press onward, for the sweet promise of our Lord and Master is that he will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys. How wonderful it is when we are given to rest in his sure promises, awaiting the coming of Jesus for his bride; with whom we hope to be united, to be with him in his likeness, and be forever satisfied.

In a precious hope,
(Elder) C. D. Turner,
Dunn, N. C.

Chowchilla, Calif.

Dear Brother Wood:

I have been thinking of writing you a few lines of what I believe to be the word of truth. May the Lord be my helper. If I were a preacher, I would use this as a text: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth," as Paul wrote Timothy. What is the word of truth? the Bible; for Paul said, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God,

and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Jesus always had the poor in mind; for he said we always had the poor with us, but me ye have not always. And he said that if we give to someone that could give us in return, we haven't done anything.

When Jesus asked his apostles whom that men said that he the Son of man was, they said that some said that he was John the Baptist: some Elias, or one of the prophets: some said one thing and some another. But when Jesus asked them whom they said that he was, Peter answered and said that He was the Christ, the Son of the living God. Then Jesus said unto Peter, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." He did not build the church upon Peter, but the revelation of that Rock which cannot be broken or prevailed against . . .

Jesus also said heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away. . .

Yours little brother in hope,
Wm. Echols

(Brother Echols mentioned that he was in his eighty-eighth year when he wrote. We regret the delay in publishing the above. — J. D. W.)

"PREACHED UNTO HIM JESUS"

"Then Phillip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus." (Acts 8:35)

Jesus and what He has done for his own people, (who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world,) is all there is to preach. We find that Jesus was prophesied of even in the garden of Eden, and that all the prophets spoke of him. Isaiah said, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

When the eunuch asked Phillip, " . . . of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or some other man," then Phillip preached unto him Jesus.

When Mary was found to be with child before she and Joseph came together, he was minded to put her away privately; but while he thought on these things the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." (Matthew 2: 20, 21)

Then we have the testimony of Simeon when Jesus was brought to Jerusalem, to be presented before the Lord. Simeon had understood by revelation of the Holy Ghost that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ; and Simeon came by the Spirit into the temple, and took the babe up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, "Lord, now lettest thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people: a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

And when it came time for Jesus to be baptized, John saw him coming, and said, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." After John baptized him, he came out of the water, and the heavens were opened, and the Spirit like a dove descended upon him, and there came a voice from heaven saying, "Thou art my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

Then Jesus chose his twelve disciples to bear record of the things he did and the things he said; and he performed many miracles, such as raising the dead, opening the eyes of the blind, causing the lame to walk and the deaf to hear, as well as healing all manner of diseases, and casting out devils. He associated with publicans and sinners, and began his work among the lower classes who were dispised by the proud hierarchy of the day. He made it plain that he came to seek and to save that which was lost; to give his life a ransom for those the Father gave him. After he had performed all that the Father had assigned him, even the fulfilling of the moral and legal law, (except laying down his life and giving the body his Father had prepared him — the one offering that would forever perfect them that are sanctified,) He lifted up his eyes unto heaven, and said, "Father the hour is come, glorify thy Son that thy Son also may glorify thee. . . I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. . .I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were and thou gavest them me."

Jesus was condemned by his own people: the Jews carried him before Pilate, who delivered him back to be crucified. He was crucified between two thieves; and when he had suffered all the pain and abuse that was His to suffer, the just for the unjust, he bowed his head, and said, "It is finished." The ransom price had been paid: the salvation of his people was then secured. He died for the offenses of his people, and arose for their justification. He was laid in Joseph's new tomb, and remained there three days and nights; then arose. Then, after being seen of his disciples forty days, he commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem until they be endued with power from on high. And after he had spoken these things, and while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight; but they were given definite assurance that the same Jesus would come again.

When the day of Pentecost was fully come, the disciples all being present, the Holy Ghost from heaven came suddenly as a rushing mighty wind, and filled the whole house, and they began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance: manifesting the assurance of the promise that Jesus had made to his disciples, saying, "It is needful that I go away, but I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter . . . he shall take the things of mine and shew them unto you." There were Jews dwelling at Jerusalem, devout men of every nation under heaven, who were amazed that they heard these Galileans speaking so that every man heard in his own tongue. But some mocked, saying that they were full of new wine. Then it was that Peter, in obedience to the command, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven," spoke, saying, "Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and harken to my words: for these are not drunken, as ye suppose . . . But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel." etc. And, having the keys of the kingdom, Peter began expounding unto them the sacred truths concerning Jesus: how that they according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, had taken and by wicked hands had crucified and slain, "Whom God hath raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear . . .Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Many were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said unto them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of

you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." And about three thousand gladly received his word and were baptized.

Later Peter, being commanded by the voice from heaven, went to the house of Cornelius a Gentile, and preached unto them the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ and him crucified; and that God raised him up the third day. And while Peter was speaking the Holy Ghost fell on all those which heard the word, and they were baptized in the name of the Lord.

Thus the infant church was established. And we find the Apostle Paul writing to the Ephesians, "Blessed by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." And in the second chapter, he says, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved,) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus . . ."

Before he went away. Jesus told his disciples, "I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am ye may be also." He is now seated at the right hand of the Father making intercessions for us; for in Him is our identification, our justification, and our hope. It gives us courage to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, looking for the coming of our Lord and Saviour: when we will enter into the full benefits of that inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith ready to be revealed in the last time.

"Then Phillip opened his mouth and began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus."

In the language of Paul, "And now, brethren, I commend you unto God, and the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified." Amen.

(Elder) J. A. Tew
Rt. 1, Box 268,
Dothan, Alabama

"AN APPOINTED TIME AND PLACE"

307 S. Daniel Creek Rd.,
Collinsville, Va. 24078

Dear Editors:

I feel to write this morning about the wonderful works of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: I believe he has an appointed time and place for everything. A year ago I would go to meetings, after I would feel so burdened during the week, and felt that I would surely offer to the church the next time I have opportunity; but that meeting time would come, and as usual, I would come back home just as before, with the same burden. I felt that I would certainly offer the fourth Sunday in May, 1965, at Riverview Church, Bassett, Virginia, but felt the same way, and couldn't go. But on the fifth Sunday in May, just one week later, I was blest to be at Bell Spur Church, a good way up in the mountains, and I was made to go — I couldn't have stayed back anymore than I could go before. I was lifted in the Spirit and didn't realize just how I got to Elder Jim Hollandsworth.

I was baptized the following Sunday with two other sisters in the faith. I was so high on the maintain top I hardly knew what I was doing. I feel a lot better at times; then at times I feel my Lord is completely gone. Oh, wouldn't it be awful if He were completely gone, and would never come

back? What would we poor, helpless creatures do?

Isn't it wonderful when we can feel His nearness and protection. I can't help speaking of my Lord as *mine:* He has given me this, just as he gave me the hope and trust in him that I have. He is so wonderful and good. I would rather be at meetings with his saints and the called elders than any place on this earth. I enjoy the preaching so much: yet, for some reason, when the services are over I feel good and nourished with spiritual food, but can't carry it back home with me to meditate upon, for the text and all just seem to go from me.

When I was twelve or thirteen, one of my great aunts died: her name was Fannie McCall; and a few days after she was buried, just after I had gone to bed and closed my eyes, she appeared beside my bed. I opened my eyes, thinking that I could see her plainer, but she disappeared. I can see her now as I did forty-five years ago, with her light gray dress, ankle length and long sleeves. I did not give it any thought then, but I now feel that the Lord was in the matter for some purpose.

Your little sister, I hope,
Edith Brooks

FROM BROTHER SMITH IN GERMANY

P. O. Box 96,
A. P. O. New York 09757

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

It has been all too long since I wrote you last, and I have been made to feel the terrible shame for my negligence toward you, whom I love so dearly . . .

In a recent letter I remarked to a loved one of my trials and tribulations these past many months: how I am left so desolate and alone in the wilderness, as it were. Though I receive letters and the *Signs,* I find but little comfort, and that so short lived. I wrote that I read the *Signs* and believe it to be the truth, yet joy did not come. Then this very day I received the December *Signs,* and was blessed with mixtures of joy and sorrow. What a marvelous God is our God! How wonderful is the revelation of Christ in a sinner's breast, when it appears that he is lifted out of the horrible pit! And how tasty a morsel is the new song placed in his mouth, even praise unto our God.

I felt much grief at the news of the passing of Sister Friess; and then my sorrow is turned to rejoicing, (even as it was also at the passing of my dear grandmother, Sister Sarah Jane Smith, sometime ago,) at the knowledge that it has pleased our Creator to deliver them out of bondage into the glorious liberty of Jesus Christ forever. I vividly remember the freshness of Sister Friess: of how she brought many moments of joy and great pleasure unto me. Though she suffered afflictions in the flesh, she was kept sound in the truth as it is in Jesus Christ; and was blessed to freely confess Him among men.

The articles and letters of the brethren in this December *Signs* were well received by this sinner, and, unless I am deceived, it appears there is a reviving, or newness found in my heart, which for so long has felt so dead. My thoughts after reading Brother Morton's dear letter, were the same as is found in the 133rd Psalm, "Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" When it has pleased God in his infinite power, presence, and wisdom, to call the brethren to sit down at the table prepared of Him, to sup together, it is a joyful and edifying experience.

I often think of how in the flesh we are so far removed from the presence of our brethren, that our labor is hard and our pain is great; yet, by His grace He calls us together in Spirit and in truth, to worship Him, and see Him as he is, if this lowly worm of the dust is not deceived. This wonderful

experience brings us to remember the words of the Apostle Paul in Romans 12:5, "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and everyone members one of another."

Dearly loved ones, I surely am brought to much shame, and must confess the ignorance and weakness of which I am possessed. If we are ever led to speak of Christ and his greatness, we are ashamed of our inability; but not ashamed of that hope which is in us. Those that are led of Christ Jesus, stand in the face of the adversary, and proclaim His truths, even unto the death of the mortal body. I often think of the afflictions of the Apostles, and would marvel at their continuance in the faith, were it not that I am made mindful that He promised his children this, "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth: go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (Matthew 28:19, 20)

Dear kindred, my desire is that you should remember me to the brethren, and remind them that, although I have been long absent from them in the flesh and have been driven into the land of Egypt, as it were into much darkness, pestilence and desolation, my hope is that in mind I am continually with them.

I realize that my words are many, and at best, confusing; my desire is to convey the heartfelt love as is experienced in me; praying, the Lord willing, for your peace and comfort for Christ's sake. May His will be done forever. He receives all glory to himself, giving us the fulness of joy in the knowledge of it. With love and affection,

Your most unworthy little brother in hope, if one at all.

B. K. Smith

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EDITORIAL

GOD'S ATTITUDE TOWARD SIN

I am not sure that this title expresses what I want it to do. Perhaps a critic might make it mean something that I do not intend. However, I am willing to write what it means to me. The results I am willing to leave in the hands of God. To those that my title, as well as my remarks concerning it, brings them to object to what is implied in both, I leave them to write their views, assuring them that I will not feel offended.

If I felt in my heart that the editors of the **Signs of the Times** did not distinguish between the work of grace in the Lord's people and the work of the devil, I would sever my relations with the paper at once. I will not be a party to the promulgation of such things if I know it. I am sure that none of the present editorial staff, nor of those of

by gone days feel that way about God's attitude toward sin.

Let us say in the beginning that my experience, and the Bible from beginning to end, teaches the Absolute sovereignty of God. Some that I see marks of grace in, and that I have sweet fellowship for, will tolerate, if they do not accept, the expression, the absolute sovereignty of God. I confess that I am not able to see the difference. Of one thing I am sure, to wit, If God has ever come off second best; if he has ever had to retreat before Satan; if He has ever desired a thing, but because of the greater ability (or lack of it) of the creature, he has had to yield and take a lesser desire, then I say to you, God is not a sovereign. My conception of sovereignty is **sovereignty.**

If the **letting** of God's sovereignty to be, was predicated on the wisdom and judgment of men, how many men would allow God to be sovereign in all things? My answer to that is, None. Not the first man (and that includes all Old Baptists of whatever faction they may hail from, as well as all others) would be agreeable to God doing as he pleased in heaven and in earth. Sad to relate, but nevertheless true, the most of us would hail it with delight until it touched us. The line would be drawn then and there. If and when blessed of God, I am glad to bow in humble submission to his will being done in heaven and in earth. Otherwise, if I were sovereign, I would order my cause before him, if I could find him.

The truth is worth repeating often, a falsehood one time is too many. I have said it hundreds of times, I repeat it once again. God does his will in heaven and in earth. While it was Nebuchadnezzar that said so, I subscribe to it wholeheartedly, to wit, that God does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? What the army of heaven implies, I am not sure. It may mean among the disembodied spirits of the saints; it may mean among the seraphims that wait and attend the Lord, or it may mean both. Unless Satan is there to hinder; unless the spirits of the saints carry some power of the flesh, I am sure that nothing prevents God doing his will there. Unless the devil is superior to God; unless some creature has more power than the Creator of the earth, I am sure that he does his will in the earth.

In my treatise on this subject, I want to inquire of the scriptures the extent of God's creation, the extent of what he has made. Did he create and make all things? I am not asking men, I am asking God, I am asking the scriptures. Does the Bible tell us the extent of God's creation? If it does, who is going to deny it? And if they do deny it, should we be concerned about whether they continue with us or not? "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Col. 1: 16, 17. What kind of Bible objection will be advanced to this? God did create all things. Moreover, he did create them all for himself. O yes, I sometimes object to the use he puts some of these things, but above everything else I would beg the Lord to reconcile me to his use of what he created in this text. Each object was created for him. God created each object for himself. In this determining act of God, there was not an objector. Why? because God is before all things. This being before all things, means all the created things. "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever." Rom. II:36. I ask, is anything left out of this scripture? All is of him, all is through him, and all is to him, and in the whole he is one to be gloried in. Explain away one thing and the explainer becomes the one to whom glory is due. Banish the thought. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy

pleasure they are and were created." (Rev. 4: 11) If any objection is raised to one thing of these all things, then the objector is taking glory and honor and power from the Lord. Banish the thought.

God did create all things. God has not done anything in time that he did not determine in eternity to do. His creation of all things was his determining of all things. At the time of this determination, as well as at the time of this creation, and at all subsequent times, even in time of the Saviour, God has been before all things. If this means anything, it certainly does do away with an eternal devil. Many have been the opposers of the two seed doctrine, and that justly so, because it is not true. But some of the strongest opposers of that false theory have hesitated to say that God made the devil. I had as soon have the eternal-devil-theory, as to have the idea that he sprang up about the time of the creation of the world and its fulness. When I am asked, Who made the devil? I have access to three answers. 1st. I can use Bible language and say that God created him. 2nd. I can say that he is an eternal self existant devil. 3rd. I can say that he generated himself apart from God in every sense of the word. I know, and all Bible loving people believe that God created him. God created him a devil, and that is what he is now. God created him for himself. God created him to play and act the devil.

Not for one moment do I believe that God created the devil to play and act the devil, and then God take his job away from him. I do not accept the idea that God is the influence that causes us to sin. For me, God created the devil to play the devil; he cut out or determined the work that the devil would do before the world began. We must remember that what God created that it was for himself. No god, no creature, nothing at all, was considered in the creation of all things. All of it was created for him. If this is true (who will take the position that it is not true?), then it follows without question or quibble that all of the devilish work that Satan will ever do was appointed him by his creator. If not, why? This being true, please do not tell me that God has to see to it that we sin; that He must coerce us into sinning. That is the devil's work. In the trial and crucifixion of our blessed Lord a devil was there. His being there was the direct result of his being chosen. His work was to betray the Saviour. He was a devil, chosen to do the work of one. The choice of the Saviour and the creation of Satan in the morning of time was for the same purpose — that the devil be played.

In the years gone by I have had to bear the insulting questions of those that would ask: How can God govern sin and not be the author of it? How can God predestinate sin, and not be the cause of his predestination? When these questions are hurled at the truth (for let it be remembered that they can never have any weight when hurled at the one who is declaring the truth), there is a smirking of the lips, a sarcastic grin, as though they had the speaker on the run. My God, it is not the speaker that is being run from the field, no, no, not that at all. If, when God declares a thing to be, He can be assailed, can be called in question, **can be answered,** then He, not men, is on the run from the creature. I do not have any apology to make for what God has said and done. If men cannot understand **how** that God has predestinated all things and yet is not the author of sin, let men raise the question with Him.

But has God predestinated sin? Across the vista of the last forty years among the Old School Baptist, I have read hundreds of times that God's predestination does not have anything to do with sin. When I first became interested in these things I did not know of the confusion that existed because of predestination. In those first years I read from the pen of humble, and, I believe, God-fearing men, who said that God predestinated all good things but never any evil thing, (and, let it be

remembered that this word evil applied only to sin). But not for long. That did not stand too long. Why? To declare that God predestinated all good things would be too much for the doctrine of conditional time salvation. So over the years there has been a shunning of even that much predestination. The affair has now reached the place to where God has not predestinated **events** at all. His predestination is now, in this the twentieth century, limited to the salvation of his people. AND I SAY THE SAME THING. **God's predestination is limited to the salvation of his people.** Did God have in mind an anterior purpose in the making of all things? In the order of time, in the unfolding of the mind of God, did it really **unfold,** or did he create without purpose? He made all things, and made them for himself. If God did not know why he made them, how could he make them for himself? If he did not have a mind towards what he was creating, it might be said that he created them for some other god, or for the devil. If God did have a mind towards **what** he was creating, if he **did** create them for himself, then he did have a mind about what he was about. And this mind was anterior to the work of creation. Thus God predestinated **what** would be done **by** the created object.

How did God harden Pharoah's heart? **I do not know.** If you do not know, I have fellowship for you. But how any man could expect to have fellowship, when he denies that God did harden the king's heart, is more than I can understand. Telling **why** or **how** that God does things is poor preaching. Telling that God has done things; that he has done them for his glory, is, to me, mighty sweet and comforting preaching. God did raise up Pharoah. What for? To worship God? No. To see if he could combine forces with the children of Israel? No. Then, Why? He raised him up, and he hardened his heart. Stop there. That is far enough. Let God tell **why** that it was done; let his ministers preach again and again that it is was that the name of God might be shown **in** (not by) the raising up of Pharoah, and (in addition to the power being shown) that my name may be declared throughout all the earth. That does not make God the author of sin. God raised up a wicked man; he hardened a wicked man's heart.

Did God have anything to do with sending Joseph into Egypt? How much part did he have in it? Did he send him according to purpose, or without purpose? Did he determine to save life **before** he sent Joseph? Did God determine to save much people alive **before** the lives of those same people were in jeopardy? "It was not you that sent me hither." They did not send Joseph into Egypt. Their predestination would not have saved anybody, including themselves. If they could have done godly, they would have perished. They could not have done godly, because they were not **godly;** their actions in the matter were the actions appointed unto the disobedient. (I Peter 2: 8) In my efforts to preach the unadulterated gospel of the Son of God, I have advocated that God sent Joseph down into Egypt; that each and every step in that journey was appointed to come to pass as it did, and by whom it did. I do not see any need for denying that at this late date. I have not found a new translation; I have not digged a new Bible; I do not have a new experience. The only experience that I have; the only Bible that I know, declares emphatically that the only object of the brethren was sin. They were sinners by nature, and their action in the matter showed us what sinners will do. The taking charge of the brethren, of Patiphar's wife, of each and every participant in the journey, did not make God the author of their sin. They were sinners before they contrived the evil work; God controlled them to send Joseph into Egypt. God's purpose was to preserve life; to save much people alive.

But did God predestinate sin? Is there one place in the Bible where God appointed or predestinated or purposed or fixed it so that sin would take place? In hundreds of places, from men among

all kinds of religious bodies, this has been denied. The finger of scorn has been pointed at our people because we said that God predestinated all things. It has been said time and again that the predestination of God does not cover anything except the salvation of His people. **I say the same thing.** The difference between my thoughts and those of the opponents of this blessed doctrine is this: In a most wonderful way everything between the beginning of what we call time and the ending of the same, there is a divine appointment to it all. If this is true, then God made all things; they were all made by him, and for him, and to him; they were and are created by him and for him. Now will someone that is wise above that which is written, rise up and tell me where **anything** else came from? And will **anyone** deny the tense in Revelation 4: 11? John, by the pen of a ready writer, to wit, the pen of inspiration, tells us: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power (why?): for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they **are** and **were** created." If language means anything (and it does), they **were** created in the beginning for the pleasure of God, and according to the chronology of Bible time (and all of the so-called scientific millions of years to the contrary notwithstanding, it is, to me, six thousand years since the morning of creation), better than four thousand years had transpired since all things were created for God's pleasure, and at that time John declared that they still were for his pleasure. I do not hesitate to say from the pulpit, over the radio, on the printed page, around the hearthstones of my brethren, that God created all things; that they **were** and **are** created for the pleasure of my God. What do you say?

For the last twenty years it has been said vehemently that the predestination of God pertained only to the salvation of God's people — that events were not predestinated. In order to prove this the eighth chapter of Romans and the first chapter of Ephesians have been much quoted. As far as the words used by our translators this is true. Only in connection with the **whom** and not the **what** are the words "predestinate" and "predestinated" used. I have not found in the original language of the Bible where King James has a God-given commandment to translate the Bible; that we were obligated to take what **he and his appointees** said about it. I acknowledge that the King James translation is a good one. I am not sure that I want to say that it is the best one, but I do want to say that I do not feel under any Bible command to take what words they used promiscuously. To settle any matter that comes before us, we must go to the original Hebrew and Greek. The Holy Ghost spoke in those languages — certainly, not in English. What is the original word from which "predestinate" and "predestinated" is derived? Let it be remembered that I do know a word of Greek. All that I can do is to take the word of Greek scholars. According to Young's Analytical Concordance these two words come from the Greek word **proorizo,** and the word means, to mark off first or beforehand. Now. If that was the only place that this word was used, it would be foolish to raise any difference about predestination having to do with men and not with events. But it is not. I have raised my voice for a long number of years to those brethren that would continue to apply predestination only to men (children of God). What has been the result? They have been silent as the cemetery. In the Acts of the Apostles (which is the only authentic church history as to practice and doctrine) we have Peter preaching to the church in the days when they were in full accord. Let us listen at some of that sermon. "They lifted up their voice with one accord (not two, not five, but one), and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up (that was an event

wasn't it?), and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ (that was an event, wasn't it?), For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined **(proorizo)** before to be done." (Acts 4: 25, 28) This is a chain of events beginning with His arrival in Jerusalem. (Luke 18: 31, 32) If anybody can prove by the scriptures that God did not by his hand and counsel predestinate all that was done in the crucifixion of the blessed Saviour, I will spend the balance of my days trying to undo the damage that I have done by contending that God has predestinated all things. But I will not have to leave the Predestinarian Baptists for such a reason as that. In Romans 8: 29 and 30, it is whom (not what) that was predestinated; in Acts 4: 28 it is whatsoever (not whom) that is determined. The translators used different words, **but the Holy Ghost used the same word.** In the first place it had to do with the salvation of God's people to glory; in the second place it also had to do with the salvation of God's people to glory, for without the death of the Lord Jesus Christ there could never be a sinner saved.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Remarks on the Letter of Brother John S. Cox. — We are well pleased with the general tenor and argument of our brother, and, indeed, if we correctly understand him, we have no exception to make. We do not discover any proposition that we do not cordially receive. But we do believe there is a want of agreement among some of our brethren in regard to the doctrine of the new and heavenly birth, which arises from a misapprehension of each other's views — each having his peculiar manner of expressing his views; for it cannot be that those who are the subjects of that spiritual birth, and have been led by the one Spirit, and in the same one hope of their calling, can very widely differ in the real sentiment of their hearts in regard to that subject.

Brother Cox, in the latter part of his able article, remarks, "So that I cannot avoid the conclusion that it was the same man that had been born of the flesh, that Jesus said must be born again, to enable him to see the kingdom of God. So that whilst his birth of the flesh elemented and adapted him to the enjoyment of earthly things, his heavenly birth elements and adapts him to the enjoyment of heavenly things," &c. Take this sentence in its connection with the other parts of the letter, and we know none of our brethren who would controvert his conclusion. It must be the same man who was or is first born of the flesh, that must be born again or he cannot see the kingdom of God. This declaration was made by our Lord to Nicodemus, who had been born of the flesh, and that too of Abraham's posterity, and had been religionized, and had graduated in the religious instructions taught by the Scribes and Pharisees, and stood pre-eminent among his brethren as a teacher in Israel and ruler of the Jews; and Jesus, in re-asserting the declaration, said to him, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." We have no intimation given us in the scriptures that any man had ever been born again of the Spirit, who had not antecedently been born of the flesh. The very term **man** or **a man,** in its most common and familiar application, signifies one who has been born. The seed of Adam, to be developed as men, must be born of the flesh; besides the term **again,** or **born again,** certainly implies a previous birth. This position, as it appears to us, will admit of no controversy. If, therefore, brother Cox, or any other brother, has understood us, or any of our correspondents, to controvert that conclusion, we think he has misapprehended our views; at

least we can speak confidently for ourself; for while we have objected to the idea of **a part** of a man being born again, we have insisted on the precise words of Christ, "Except a man be born again," &c.

But let us compare our notes a little farther. Brother Cox has expressed our views in regard to both births, so far as he has pursued the subject in his letter. The first birth has developed our earthly nature, and has resulted from a time union with the earthly Adam, and he has well remarked that not a son or daughter of Adam could possibly have been born of the flesh that was not created in Adam; for if we were not created in Adam, we do not belong to his posterity, cannot be involved in the sin and guilt of his transgression, nor from him inherit a corrupt nature, nor die a natural death by that decree which has passed upon all men as a consequence of Adam's transgression, for how can we be involved in the consequence if we are not Adam's children according to the flesh? And farther, our fleshly birth has developed us in the flesh as the children of men. A fleshly birth has not made us manifest as the children of God, or it would not require that we should be born again in order to see the kingdom of God. But as brother Cox has very fitly said, our fleshly birth has elemented and adapted us for natural or fleshly things. And as the Master has said, that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. As the fleshly birth cannot produce a spiritual life and immortality, so neither can a spiritual birth produce a fleshly man, a fleshly nature, a carnal, depraved, mortal existence; for, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed abideth in him; and he cannot sin because he is born of God." How wide the difference between the two **that's** which occur in the words of Christ to Nicodemus. **That** which is born of the flesh, and **that** which is born of the Spirit. The two **that's** differ in their paternity; the one is of the flesh, the other is of the Spirit; the one is of corruptible, the other is of incorruptible seed; the one is born of a woman, the other is born of God; the one is in the course of natural generation of blood of the will of the flesh and of the will of man, the other is born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man. The same difference is traced in the nature of the two **that's.** That which is born of the flesh is elemented and adapted to this world, and desires here to remain and enjoy the carnal pleasures of a sensual state. But that which is born of the Spirit desires spiritual, heavenly and divine things — to live by faith upon the Son of God, to eat that bread which cometh down from heaven; it desireth the sincere milk of the word and the hidden manna, which only the spiritual Israelites can feed upon. Well, what are the two **that's?** We think no Christian in his right mind would be willing to dispute the definition given by him who cannot err. One of these **that's**, Jesus says, is flesh. Well, what is the other **that?** Is it also flesh? Is it renovated, refined, spiritualized, born over again flesh? But stop — can we answer any one of these interrogatives affirmatively without rejecting the interpretation given by our Lord himself? If we may say that which is born of the flesh is Spirit, and that which is born of the Spirit is flesh, and these two **that's** are essentially the same, how can we reconcile such views with the express declaration, that the one is flesh and the other is Spirit? But if we mistake not there is still more difficulty to be encountered in the support of such an identity. It not only denies what Truth himself has said, but if the spiritual birth has reproduced the fleshly man, that man in his reproduction is no longer flesh but Spirit; for that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. It is no longer sinful and sinning, for whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin. It is no longer corruptible, for it is born of incorruptible seed. It cannot be mortal, for it liveth and abideth forever. It cannot be captivated by the world, for that which is born of God overcometh the world. But is it

so? Is there a subject of regeneration to be found who does not feel constrained to say with Paul, "In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing?" Is there one who does not find a law or governing principle in his flesh that wars against the law of his mind, bring him into captivity to the law of sin which reigns in his mortal body? If so we will only say he differs from us.

If any child of God feels perplexed upon this subject, we commend to his attention the text, Songs vi. 13: "Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee." And it will be well to take a good look and consider the lesson well. "What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies." The flesh lusting against the spirit. What flesh? That which is born of the flesh. This flesh in the same Shulamite can not war or lust against the spirit, if that spirit be not there. "And the spirit warreth against the flesh, and these two are — identically the same? by no means; the one is contrary to the other; and those who, like the Shulamite, find them both, like two belligerent armies struggling within them for the mastery are commanded to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts, and to follow after the other.

Opposite as these two parties are, a man cannot be a Christian who has not both. The Christian was first born of the flesh; this made him manifest as a member of the human family, involved in guilt and ruin, and standing in need of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. The other birth has made him manifest as a child of God, a member of Christ and an heir of glory.

But perhaps brother Cox has sufficiently identified the production of the two births, the one as the **new man** — the **inner man,** which is renewed day by day; the other as the old man, the outter man that perishes, that grows old — is subject to corruption, mortality — to death. But how cheering the prospect brought to view in the closing paragraph of brother Cox's letter. Although this flesh is not now spiritual, incorruptible nor immortal, it shall be when death shall be swallowed up of life. Though it goes down to the grave a mortal body, it is raised a spiritual, holy, immortal, imperishable body, changed, fashioned and made like unto the glorious body of our risen Redeemer. "For whom he did foreknow, them he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren." Even "now is Christ risen indeed, and become the first fruits of them that slept;" and as the heavens have received him, so he has given his poor tried saints the divine assurance that where he is there shall they be also, that they may behold him in the glory which he had with the Father before the world was.

Brother Cox, we feel persuaded, will not consider us as criticising or controverting his views, but rather as attempting to show that there is a harmony of sentiment on this subject, that the same heir of immortal glory is brought forth into manifestation by two distinct births, and these are both provided for him, and in each he is passive, in neither has he himself had any power to aid or prevent; all is of God, and with grateful hearts let us together sing —

"His decrees, who form'd the earth,
Has fix'd my first and second birth;
Parents, native place and time,
All appointed were by him."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe March 1, 1861. The importance of the subject of the New Birth, and the clearness of Elder Beebe's expressions on the subject, will make this article welcome to our readers. The reference to Brother Cox is self-explanatory. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

JAMES AUBREY SHELTON

James Aubrey Shelton was born July 12, 1889, and passed away April 15, 1965, making his stay here on earth 76 years, 9 months. He was the son of the late Rufus Shelton and Susan E. Stone Shelton.

He leaves to mourn his devoted wife Susie Clark Shelton of the home; two sons: Melvin D. Shelton and Alvis L. Shelton, both of Stuart, Va.; four daughters: Mrs. Toncie Stone, Bassett, Va.; Mrs. Gladys Martin, Collinsville, Va.; Mrs. Nick Martin, Stuart, Va.;

and Mrs. Glenford Sigmon, Stuart, Va.; and one sister: Mrs. Posey Whitlow, Bassett, Va.

Brother Shelton joined Union Primitive Baptist Church in October, 1954, on Saturday and was baptized the next day by the late Elder E. R. Bryant.

Brother Shelton was ordained as Deacon at Union Church the fourth Saturday in April, 1958, and held that office until his death. He was widely known and had many friends. We at Union will miss him very much. Our prayers and our sympathy go out to Sister Shelton and the family.

We bow in submission to our Heavenly Father who does all things well.

His funeral was conducted at Union Church by Elder Leonard Brammer and assisted by Elder R. A. May. A large crowd attended.

His body was laid to rest in the Church Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord.

Written by his Pastor.

Leonard J. Brammer

JAMES F. JORDAN

It becomes my sad duty to write a memorial of a departed brother in Christ: It is a burdensome duty, for I am so unworthy and fear that I cannot write worthy of the deceased.

He was born in Clayton County, near Rex, Georgia, August 26, 1875; and was married to Miss Lee Ola Wade on November 21, 1909. He joined Nancy Creek Church in 1917. Brother Jordan passed away March 13, 1965, in triumph of the faith in the Saviour whom he loved and served; and was faithful to his church, being clerk for some years. We miss him, but feel assured that he is at rest, and we would not want him back; for to come back would be to continue to suffer.

His survivors are, his wife, one daughter and two sons: Mrs. H. F. Hembree, Mr. James W. Jordan, Marietta, Ga., and Mr. Frank Jordan, Pine Lake, Ga. Surviving also are a sister, Mrs. J. P. Ball, Atlanta, Ga., and a brother Mr. E. M. Jordan, Dunwoody, Ga.

His funeral was held at Roswell Funeral Chapel, with his pastor, Elder O. J. Croker, officiating. Interment was at Dunwoody.

I would comfort the bereaved ones if it were in my power, but this must come from God; which he does in a variety of ways, — either directly by his presence, or through blessing a few words from a friend. We do not weep as those who have no hope; but there is a joy in our hope, even in the worst trials, that we will soon be gathered home to be together forever, singing his praise as we can never do as we desire in this vale of sorrow.

May God abundantly bless all his needy ones, for Christ's sake.

By one who knows your sorrows,
George W. Jackson

MATTIE OAKES PAYNE

God saw fit to call from our midst our beloved sister, Mattie Payne. She was born February 27, 1896, the daughter of Elder Nacy T. Oakes and Sister Nora Jones Oakes. She died April 3, 1965, in the Western State Hospital.

In June, 1909, she was married to Edward F. Payne, who died in 1964; and to this union one son was born: Edward Lee Payne, of Texas. Surviving also are two brothers and two sisters: Daniel Oakes, Washington State; Wyatt J. Oakes, Blairs, Virginia; Annie O. Lewis, Blairs; and Pansy O. Bishop, Roanoke, Virginia.

Sister Payne joined Danville Primitive Baptist Church in July, 1921. She loved her church, and was always ready to help in any way she could for the welfare of the church and the brethren and sisters. She went far and near to hear the doctrine of salvation by grace preached, for that was what she loved so much. We believe she is sleeping that peaceful sleep, waiting for the second coming of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to be carried home where there will be no more sickness or death; but where there will be peace and happiness forever.

Her funeral was conducted at Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Home by Elder Raymond Payne; and she was laid to rest in the family cemetery near Dry Fork, Virginia.

One copy of this is to be put in our church book; one to the family; and one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by Danville Church in conference August 8, 1965.

Elder Haywood Wray, Moderator
R. T. Holley, Clerk

GEORGE W. HILL

God, in his infinite wisdom, saw fit to remove from our midst our dearly beloved and highly esteemed Brother, George W. Hill. He was born April 17, 1882, and passed from this life December 8, 1964. He was preceded in death nineteen and one-half years by his wife, the former Daisy Anderson. Of this union one son survives; also four grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Brother George was ill for several months prior to his death. At the beginning of this illness he spent many days in the hospital, where he was so very ill that we thought sure-

ly death would be the result, despite all that loving hands or medicine could do; but God in his love and mercy raised him from his sick bed and enabled him once again to attend church for a few months. Brother Hill was a quiet man, as meek and humble as a little child — a true attribute of a Christian. He was a loving father and husband, a true friend and a wonderful neighbor: an honor to his church, to his family and his community.

He was a strong believer in the faith of salvation by grace. On August 17, 1958, he united with the church at Hancocks, and was baptized by his pastor, Elder A. P. Mewborn. It gave us great pleasure to behold the radiant face of Brother George, manifesting the deep love he held for his brethren, and to see the joy mirrored there at being in their presence. He was a true and faithful member as long as he lived, and always attended church when he was able.

We miss him, but bow in humble submission to the all wise God who doeth all things after the counsel of his own will. May He bless and sustain the bereaved family, is our prayer.

Done by order of conference.

Elder A. P. Mewborn, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

MEMORIAL

Sister Bettie Shelton Jones was born March 7, 1878, the daughter of Jackson F. Shelton and Harriett Hines Shelton. She departed this life December 31, 1964. In November, 1904, she was united in marriage to Charlie J. Jones, who died in August, 1929. Surviving are two sisters: Mrs. Havana Dalton and Mrs. Louisa Edwards, of Danville, Virginia. Sister Jones died in an Altavista, Va. nursing home, where she had been a patient for several years.

She united with Whitethorn Primitive Baptist Church in July, 1919, and was baptized in August; and later moved her membership to Danville Church, where she remained a faithful member until death. She was a lovely sister, and a strong believer in salvation by grace. We feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted at Townes Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder H. W. Wray; and she was laid to rest in Chatham Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be put on our church record; a copy be sent to the family; and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by Danville Church in conference August 8, 1965.

Elder Haywood Wray, Moderator
R. T. Holley, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT
FOR
DEACON GROVER C. SPINDLE

Since it was the will of our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our beloved brother and deacon, Grover C. Spindle, since we last met; and since he was a member and highly esteemed by each of us for many years, being loved for his amiable disposition and his soundness in the faith; and though unable to attend his meetings for many months, he is greatly missed from our assemblies. Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we give thanks to our Heavenly Father for the gift of our Brother Spindle amongst us, and for his qualification of a deacon, and for the many pleasant hours he spent in our homes conversing on the things with which the Lord has blessed his people. And be it further

RESOLVED, That we extend to Mrs. Spindle our deep sympathy in the loss of her companion; that a copy of these resolutions be spread on our Minutes; and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by the unanimous desire of the members of the churches of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting while in session October 13, 14, 1965.

Elder John D. Wood, Moderator
Deacon Leslie D. Duke, Clerk
Deacon Arthur L. Carter, Asst. Clerk
Sister Mildred Duke, Asst. Clerk

MRS. ANNIE SANDERS PATE

The Lord has been pleased to manifest His sovereign power by coming into the home of Brother W. E. Pate and claiming his devoted wife of many years. This visit of His has not produced a spirit of irreconcilliation, although the church and the family miss our dear one so much, but we all would bow in submission to the workings of Israel's God, knowing of a surety that, since He spared not His Son, but delivered Him up for all of the chosen vessels of mercy, He will in mercy give or take such things as will produce harmony and consistency and work for the ultimate good of the little ones and the glory of God.

Our sister was born March 30, 1895, and died April 26, 1965, making her slightly over seventy years of age. In early life she was married to Brother William Earnest Pate. Our sister was the mother of four children, to wit, two daughters, Mrs. James Dunnam of Birmingham, Alabama, Mrs. Virgil Kaufman of St. Louis, Missouri; two sons, Nathaniel of Nashville, Tennessee, and Jordan of Bessemer, Alabama. She is survived by one sister, Mrs. Mattie Pate of Tuscaloosa,

Alabama, and two brothers, C. L., and Lathum Jordan, together with our dear brother in Christ, Brother Pate.

Our dear sister, with Brother Pate, was baptized into the fellowship of the Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church in Pratt City, Alabama, on the 4th Sunday in August, 1951 by the writer. How delighted that she was to meet with the children of God. She did not believe in works for her salvation, but God wrought good things in her life, showing that her faith and her works were of God.

Our dear sister died in the full triumphs of a living faith. Her funeral was conducted by her pastors, Elders H. C. Moon and Claude Hand, burial following in the Elm Wood Cemetery.

W. D. G.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT
FOR
ELDER JOHN P. HELMS

Since it has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from this life, bringing to a close the labors of his servant Elder John P. Helms, we desire to record our high esteem for him, and our appreciation of his ministry among us and the brethren of our correspondence.

Brother Helms was sound in the faith, and was blessed to earnestly contend for the faith for almost fifty years. His manner was plain and simple, yet forceful. He was uncompromising in doctrine, but tender in presenting its experimental application to the brethren. Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the churches of The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, desire to thank our God for the gift of his servant among us, and for his visits with us in our Meetings and churches over the years; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we extend our sympathy to Sister Helms and the family; and that a copy of these resolutions be spread in our Minutes; and that a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by the unanimous desire of the Churches of The Virginia Corresponding Meeting while in session October 13 and 14, 1965.

Elder John D. Wood, Moderator
Deacon Leslie D. Duke, Clerk
Deacon Arthur L. Carter, Asst. Clerk
Sister Mildred Duke, Asst. Clerk

MEMORIAL
TO
ELDER J. P. HELMS

Since it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from the stage of the Christian ministry our beloved Elder J. P. Helms, who often visited the Salisbury Association, and

Since his visits have proven profitable and comforting to the saints in this vicinity, having endeared himself to one and all by his boldness in defending the doctrine of God our Saviour, as well as walking in humbleness in the presence of his God and his loved ones in the Lord, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That we extend our deep and heartfelt sympathy to our sister churches, and to his widow, our beloved Sister Helms, and to his family, in this time of loss and mourning. We would assure the churches that their loss is our loss, for in this day of faltering among many, it was our delight to hear him proclaim the riches of God's reigning grace. However, our note of his passing is not without hope; our God is too wise to err and too merciful to be unkind. We do not know what to say by way of comfort, except to say that the God of Israel will not leave us comfortless; He will come to us in our distress and comfort one and all with the comfort of His love. The evidence left behind is so fraught with glad tidings that, while all our loss is great indeed, his has been a wonderful exchange from this poor life to that which awaits all of the Lord's people. Further, be it

RESOLVED, That a copy of this memorial be sent to our sister in the Lord, his beloved wife and companion for many years; that a copy be published in the *Signs of the Times*, and that it be recorded in our minutes.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Maude Laws, Honorary Clerk
William Adkins, Clerk
William A. Davis, Ass't Clerk

November 17, 1965

MEMORIAL

Whereas it has pleased God to call to his eternal home our beloved Elder J. P. Helms, we, The Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, wish to publicly acknowledge God's right to remove him from the sphere of his services in many churches.

He visited us over many years, and his labours were much blessed and appreciated by both church and congregation, but we desire to bow in submission to God's will.

We authorize our church clerk to enter this memorial in our church book, to send a copy to the bereaved family, and a copy to *The Signs of the Times* for publication.

Written by direction of the Church, and adopted by the same.

Elder George Ruston, Moderator
Eldon Gilbert, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134 DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1966 NO. 3

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE MAINE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, meeting with the Whitefield Church August 21 and 22, 1965, sends greetings and brotherly love to our churches and associations.

Dear Brethren:

We are privileged to meet in our association at Whitefield, Maine, once more. We rejoice that, though our Heavenly Father has taken our older members one by one to their eternal home, and has not seen fit to bring new members to our two churches, we still are able to gather in love and fellowship.

We feel greatly blessed to have our beloved pastor, Elder Arthur Warren, from Berlin, Maryland, and another well loved elder, Elder Ira Connor, from Virginia, declare the truths written in the Bible, not as the world tells us, but in such manner that our hungry souls are fed precious food, which we are made to know is the truth as God reveals it to them and to us.

Sometimes our hope and faith falter, without reassurance from elders and brethren of like faith because of the distance between our members, and especially between our churches and our elders. But in the words of the poet:

"A friend there is — your voices join,
Ye saints, to praise his name;
Whose truth and kindness are divine,
Whose love's a constant flame.

When most we need his helping hand,
This Friend is always near;
With heaven and earth at his command,
He waits to answer prayer."

We hope that we might be likened unto the children of Israel, though we are unworthy, who were fed with manna from heaven, as told in Exodus, chapter 17. After long, lonely travels in the wilderness of spiritual darkness, we rest, and, like the children of Israel, see the miracle of the manna, which they knew could only come from heaven.

Thus we live the year through and hope that we are God's children, though many days are dark, and many months barren, we come once more to rejoice in the love of God, and the knowledge that our little churches and small association, are still alive and in good order, we hope. All praise to God who doeth all things well.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole,
And calms the troubled breast;
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary rest.

Jesus, my Shepherd, Husband, Friend,
My Prophet, Priest, and King,
My Lord, my Life, my way, my End,
Accept the praise I bring."

Written by Sister Ruth Clark
Elder Arthur Warren, Moderator
Mrs. Sanford Bartlett, Clerk

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Asso-

ciation in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, August 21 and 22, 1965:

Dear Brethren:

Through the love and mercy of God we have been able to meet in an association. Elder Arthur Warren and Elder Ira Connor came to us, giving testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ, and giving us renewed hope and joy in feeling the presence of the Holy Spirit in our midst: the love and the fellowship of the brethren.

In the man who is born again two natures appear. One is born of God and yields the fruits of the Spirit in Christ: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, temperance, brotherly kindness and charity; a love for holiness and hatred of sin, a love to the saints and a desire to be in company and communion with them: They glory in the Lord in that which God has done for them.

The other nature is born of the flesh, full of lust, warring against the Spirit, and in opposition to holiness. In our flesh dwells no good thing. I realize I am a sinner and vile, and can only pray for help.

"Jesus, before thy face I fall,
My Lord, my life, my hope, my all;
For I have no where else to flee:
No sanctuary, Lord, but thee."

The next meeting of the Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, the fourth Sunday in August, 1966, and Saturday preceeding. There will be a notice in the **Signs of the Times.**

Elder Arthur Warren, Moderator
Mrs. Sanford Bartlett, Clerk

BELIEVES GOD IS SOVEREIGN

243 Baker Street,
Warren, Arkansas

Dear Editors of the **Signs:**

Enclosed please find remittance for renewing my subscription.

I believe in a sovereign God who does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say What doest thou? If I did not believe this, it seems to me that I would be the most miserable creature on earth.

Jesus said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Just think, dear brethren and sisters, this is not the will of a man, but the will of God, that made the earth by his power; established the world by his wisdom; and stretched heaven by his understanding. That is the one whose will Jesus came to do, and all power in heaven and earth was given to him. What was there to hinder him from doing the will of his Father?

"These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come," (what hour? the hour that his Father appointed before the world was,) "glorify thy Son that thy Son also may glorify thee. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Will they all know him? Yes! because it is God's will: "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." Jesus said, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Why? because, "I am the way, the truth and the life, and no man cometh unto the Father but by me." How many are coming to Christ? all that the Father gave him; and no more. Jesus said, "No man can come unto me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." How many are coming? all that the Father hath given him shall come.

It would be ignorance to say He wanted them to come, and they would not. "He calleth his sheep by name and leadeth them out, and He goeth before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice." He leads them by his power and love. "I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them (the sheep) out of my hand. My Father which gave them to me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

I do not believe there will be one soul in heaven contrary to God's will; neither do I believe there will be one soul in hell contrary to God's will. No, no! Paul writes, "After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." (Hebrews 8:10,11) Just how many are going to know him? all those whose names were written in the will that God made before the world was, and sent Jesus his Son into the world to fulfill. When Jesus died on the cross, he cried, "It is finished," and there is where our redemption took place.

God, in his own good time and way — not too soon, nor too late — reveals himself to his sheep by opening their blind eyes, giving them ears to hear, and takes away the hard and stony heart, giving them a heart of flesh, love and understanding.

I do not doubt the doctrine the Old Baptists believe and preach, but my question is, Am I his, or am I not? I've never worried over accepting him: my worry is, will He accept me, one of the lowest worms on this earth? If I am one, I did nothing to become one; and if I am not one of his, I cannot do anything to become one now. Solomon said, "I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it."

May God continue to bless you in feeding the flock through the dear old **Signs.** I lost my beloved companion last April, and I live by myself. God has been most merciful unto me: he gives me grace and courage to carry on. I find great comfort and joy in the **Signs**, reading the writings and experiences of the dear brethren and sisters. I would love to see and hear you preach sometime.

Yours in bonds,
Mrs. Charlie Harrod

Rt. 4, Box 73
Lebanon, Mo.

To the Editors of Our Family Paper:

I write with fear that I might be wrong, but I live in a town where there is a lot of telling what man must do; but I know he is a helpless creature. I do not write thinking I am something, but what I want is truth.

The prophet Joel, is he not dealing with the future also? if so is it yet to come? (Joel 1:4) Taken in a natural sense, all of Israel's sustenance was gone. In the 14th chapter of Isaiah, 12th to 22nd verses, is not the weakened man boasting of his great power; and has not free moral agency spread to every nation under the sun? Is there not a time when the "worms" will almost swallow up the truth, as mentioned in Revelation 13:7?

Where is the truth today? it is only in a few: the "worms" have eaten up the truth with false doctrine. Is there anything worse in the church than false doctrine? When the sheep had strayed, in the parable, it took the good shepherd to bring him. Did the shepherd ask the sheep if he was ready to come? Did he drive the sheep? No, he was too precious — he carried the sheep to the fold.

This is not for publication, but if I have touched around the truth, please let me know through the family paper.

As ever, I hope a brother in Christ,
W. W. Kenoly

(Brother Kenoly has suggested several things which give much food for thought. — J. D. W.)

REQUEST FOR VIEWS

924 First St. S. W.
Roanoke, Va.

Dear Elder Wood:

In the Acts Chapter 19, verse 12, we read "So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them."

Could you please tell me the interpretation or meaning of the handkerchiefs or aprons, what did they have to do with the healing or the going out of the evil spirits?

If you have time I shall appreciate you writing me on the above subject.

In humble hope,
Myrtle Gillette

(See Editorial Reply)

"AS THERE ARE GODS MANY, AND LORDS MANY"

(I CORINTHIANS 8:5)

Dear Editors, and Household of Faith:

A writer of a recent article in the **Signs** touched briefly on the subject of the gods that the unregenerated see in their mind's eye, which seem as real to them as does the God worshipped by His own chosen disciples, appear to them. It set me to meditating, and the words of the Apostle Paul came to me in such a forceful manner that I was want to study and seek out some of the scriptural writings about the various gods. If the God that I hope and believe I know, by and through the revelations he has shown me, will direct my mind in writing on this subject, then I shall be able to set forth something of interest to those of like knowledge.

The Apostle begins the chapter with wise words about eating the offering of meats to idols, or things offered in sacrifice to idols. He further stated that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but **one.** Then in verse 5 he wrote, "For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, **(as there be gods many and lords many.)"** In verse 6, he reiterates that there is but **one God.** And we must note that in this verse he says there is but one God, the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ; which I believe identifies the many gods spoken of; and I believe that many other gods of various types have sprung up since his time, and that he was given to include all of them from the beginning to the end of this time world: by Pagans, Mohammedans, Moslems, and others.

Then we must note that the Apostle branded the idols as gods, in that men offered to them; and he immediately followed by saying that there is but **one God,** and none other. It is further shown that this was his mind when he wrote in Phillipians 3:18,19, that certain people were enemies to the cross of Christ, "Whose end is destruction and whose god is their belly." It seems clear that in those days anything of material or earthly nature, particularly riches which men worshipped, was in effect a type of god to them. Note the words of the Saviour in Matthew 6:24, "No man can serve two masters," and, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Did he not consider mammon (riches) as a substitute for him; or actually a god claiming the attention of those following thereafter?

Now in our present day, how many such people have we that worship their wealth; their great political power and prestige. And how many millions worship some society, secret order, or worldly institution? living solely for them, and glorying in them to their dying day. Are they not seeking after

strange gods or god's many, as the Apostle had in mind? Should we try to enumerate the various gods as worshipped by the world at large, particularly a type of **spiritual diety** or **divine being** as conjured up by hundreds of denominations, sects, creeds, and individuals, time and space would not permit it.

Since we have all the various and sundry gods being worshipped in this modern day, can we wonder that the primitive tribes of ages past, (and some yet existing,) had certain gods they feared, such as gods that lived in the Volcanic Mountain, who belched forth fire when they angered him; as well as many other types of gods.

In the Old Testament we find many references to gods of various types. In Joshua 24:15, there is a reference to, "The gods of the Amorites." In Deuteronomy 32:16, we see that the people provoked Moses to anger and jealousy "with strange gods." In 1st Kings 11: 23, several gods are named that were being worshipped. And in chapter 18: 24-28, Elijah asked those about him to "Call on the name of your gods," and they called on Baal without effect. Finally in 2 Corinthians, it is recorded that, "The god of this world (Satan) hath blinded the minds of them which believe not."

Yes, it is true that the Apostle wrote with an inspired mind, when he said, "As there are gods many and lords many;" which was for the guidance of all those to follow after him, who would be beset on all sides with various and sundry gods. We hear and read daily of those around us who have a god they can lay hold of, and take to others here and abroad. "Come with us, and let us share Christ with you," is a common statement today. They tell of a god without power to overcome ones he wants to save, who refuse to accept him. Surely such a god is "man-made", in that man's natural, unregenerated mind has created him, and fashioned him to suit their taste. They are keen in their mind in that they keep him subservient to them in many ways; and they are also keen in fashioning him after the true and holy eternal god, which the scriptures clearly record.

Then, how comforting it is for us to turn to the Scriptures and see the one and only God we worship. Isaiah 45:22, records, "I am God and there is none else." We can witness with David in the 111th Psalm which is devotedly praise and reverence to the God we know through the work of the Holy Spirit. How comforting it is to hear preaching by inspired Elders of our Church, and to read the sermons and writings in the **Signs of the Times,** setting forth truth and gospel as preached by the Apostles!

We are given strength that we need to carry on in this "wilderness of sin", and in a world that is so often shaken and disturbed by the power of God; and so engrossed in terrible conflict between nations. I am mindful of the verse of the old hymn my father sang:

"How long, how long, Oh, Lord, how long
Have we on earth to stay?
Roll on, roll on, ye wheels of time
And bring that joyful day."

Concluding, may I say that were it not for the undeserved grace and love of the **one and only God** before the world was, I would be out there among the multitudes, following after "gods many and lords many" that have captivated the millions and billions over the world. How precious and priceless are the experiences and evidences thus far received, that my name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

In hope of eternal life,

Wm. O. Hall,
P. O. Box 595,
Mount Vernon, Washington 98273

"A GLORIOUS CHANGE"

Rt. 4, Box 479
Bassett, Va. 24055

"Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that shall be, but bare

grain, it may chance of wheat, or some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." (1 Cor. 15:36, 37)

We read in verse 37, "And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that shall be . . ." This means to me that the body will not be raised with the same nature that it was sown in. Verse 43 reads, "It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power."

In Genesis 3:19, we read, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." And in Ecclesiastes 12:7, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

I believe that in as much as God made the first man Adam out of the dust of the earth, he will take the same dust in the resurrection, and make it to be a heavenly body; and this change will be more glorious than anyone could imagine — more glorious than anything that has ever been revealed to anyone. "For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as I am known." (1 Cor. 13:12) So I believe all earthly ties will be done away, and we will have no other mind but the mind of Christ; and there will be no confusion in heaven.

"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John 17:5) I believe we shall be glorified with him: Yes, with the Father before the world was.

Elder Wood, you asked that I write sometime, so here are some of my thoughts on the resurrection of the dead; which I believe to be true.

Hope you and Sister Wood are well.

In sweet fellowship,
(Elder) James R. Hollandsworth

GOOD NEWS

Rt. 2, Box 518,
Bassett, Va. 24055

Dear Editors of the *Signs:*

I have truly enjoyed reading the dear old *Signs of the Times.* The "Voices of the Past" are so good to read: it all comes to me laden with good news from a far country — from our blessed Lord, who gives his dear little ones the heart and mind to write of his goodness and mercy, from time to time.

I enjoyed so much dear Elder J. P. Helm's good and wonderful sermon published in the December, 1965, issue. I am so pleased that we poor needy ones are blessed with the sweet pleasure of reading the *Signs,* and to feast on the good letters of God's little ones: they tell my experiences much better than I can.

May God in his loving mercy bless the dear editors to continue to publish the truth, as he has all these years; and all to his praise and honor, is my desire.

With love and sweet fellowship in our blessed Lord, and in hope of his mercy.

Callie I. Clark

Princeton, W. Va.

Mrs. S. J. Priddy
Princeton, W. Va.

Dear Sister Priddy:

In hope of the life that now is, and that which is to come where there will be no more tears. Last night, for a little while, I felt that peace that surpasses all understanding; and I didn't care whether I went to sleep or not. My health has not been good, as you know.

I have been so rebellious in my suffering; but during this last affliction I have thought how sweet it would be to be with those spirits that have been

released from this body of corruption. But I hope the Lord will give me submission, to await my appointed time until my change comes. I know that in my flesh there dwells no good thing; and I don't want to follow on with those that believe that of the flesh we can live as we list.

If we give anything with the expectation of something in return, what thanks have we? I have felt for many years to be so vile. I was blessed I hope this morning to give something that I thought was necessary, and felt to be blessed in the giving. I've been made to hate the other doctrine.

The older I get the more vanities of this world I see; but, Oh, that the dear Lord will keep my heart and mind through Him, and give divine patience to still run the race that is before me, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher, I hope, of my faith; and give me strength to be more submissive to my lot here.

The dear Lord said that in this world his people should have tribulation: He is our only peace. We certainly can't reach out and get the crumbs, for I have laid in bed at night and tried to search for Him whom my soul loveth, but found him not. But sometimes I feel He has caused me to feed on that hidden manna with which he feeds his people.

Hoping the Lord will give you a groan for me when all natural streams are dried . . . I just thought I would write some of my poor thoughts.

Your sister in tribulation and patience,

Mrs. Tiney C. Pritchett

(The above was a letter of the late Sister Pritchett to Sister S. J. Priddy in 1961, and was recently sent to us by Mr. Pritchett. — J. D. W.)

PSALM 103:1,2

"Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

Brethren, as I undertake this writing, I trust that it is with you in mind. I have been shut in now for almost three weeks, with only one church service in that time; and, as it is snowing now, my thoughts have been on the above passage of scripture.

The Psalmist, I am sure, had an eye single to the glory of God when he wrote this. For one to glorify God as David was doing on this occasion, he must be moved by the power of God.

God, who rules in the hearts of his people, is not worshipped from the surface, but from the heart. It matters not how hard one may try to reach Him, he cannot; but when the time appointed of the Lord comes for his children to praise his name, Satan and all his hosts must stand aside. No wonder David could say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." No wonder he could say, "The Lord is my shepherd . . . "; and that Mary could cry, "My soul doth magnify the Lord." Yet, with all the wonderful things that have been said, it has only been hinted at; for, as I write this, my soul leaps for joy.

Throughout the world the Lord has taken care of his people, and He has made it known to them in his own way. Therefore David could declare in the last part of the text, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

What are some of these benefits? First, and the most outstanding one, is the coming of Christ into the world to deliver his people from their sins. You dear people know what a joy it is to be delivered from your sins; and, as it were, to be snatched from a devil's hell. How can we forget his benefits? Dear brethren, as I write this and think of the many, many things Christ did for his people, my heart seems to be floating in a sea of love. Now I can say with David, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name . . ., and forget not all his benefits."

Another of the wonderful benefits of the Lord through his Son, is to see those whom the Lord has delivered and

called, coming to the church; also the sweet fellowship that none but the redeemed of the Lord know. Another is, to realize how greatly we love our brethren: to know this love is to feel it flow from breast to breast. How good it is, children of the most high God, to meet together in this love, and talk of the benefits of our Saviour!

Referring again to those coming to the church, as one of the benefits of the Lord, on December 13, 1965, being the second Sunday, and our meeting time at Chestnut Church, in Franklin County, Virginia, at the conclusion of the preaching service, the writer published an open door for the reception of members, and as we began to sing, "Jesus grant us all a blessing," Sister Carolyn Plybon came forward asking for a home with the church; which was granted. Sister Carolyn is seventeen years old and a high school senior, the daughter of Mr. Calvin and Sister Juanita Plybon. At this meeting the house was almost filled to capacity. Seldom do we see a greater outpouring of the love of God than we saw that day. From that day until now the writer has never experienced more joy in the benefits of our Lord.

On the second Sunday in January, 1966, at ten o'clock, I led the dear young sister into the water and baptized her in the presence of a throng of people. There was some concern about us going into the water because it was so cold, but I had such blessed assurance that the Lord would take care of every detail regardless of how remote, that when I raised her from the water, she didn't shiver. Oh, such love! With such benefits as these, how can we forget the benefits of the Lord?

As we were going into the water, I saw a bright illumination that cannot be fully described. We have heard many that were there say that she looked like an angel. The reason the writer makes mention of this baptism, is because there were so many living witnesses to this, and many other wonderful benefits of the Lord we hope not to forget. On Tuesday evening following the baptism, my wife and I stopped at the Plybon home to see how Sister Carolyn was doing. We found her to be one of the happiest persons we have ever seen. She has done very little eating or sleeping. As David said, so say the people of God. These are some of the benefits we trust not to forget.

The climax of all these benefits will be when the whole church of God shall see Him in his full glory.

Finally brethren, may we all say with David, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." I realize that the depth of the subject has not been touched, but a hint to the wise is sufficient: I had a strong feeling to write my thoughts.

May the loving kindness and tender mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ be with the dear family of God, is our prayer for Christ sake.

Humbly submitted,
(Elder) Cecil E. Turner,
Rt. 3, Box 115,
Bassett, Virginia, 24055

3347 Tutwiler Ave.,
Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am sending a letter for your consideration of publishing it. Our travels in this world are for the trial of our faith; so often we feel that we are all alone, and that surely there are none like us; and then it is good to know that others have these trials, and we find renewed hope that they are the dealings of the Lord with us. We cannot see the hearts of our brethren, as God does; but He knows us altogether, and his mercy overshadows all our sins.

We are told that all things work together for those who love him, to those who are the called according to His purpose. We do not want to crowd out good letters or writings, so we leave it to your judgement.

In hope of eternal life,
Carrie Campbell

"I SURELY HAVE TO BE KEPT"

Rt. 1,
Martin, Tenn. 38237

Mrs. Carrie Campbell,
Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Sister Carrie:

I have just finished reading your most appreciated letter, and was sitting here wondering just why one I esteem so much above myself, should take time to write a rebel as I.

Oh, so much I have meditated upon lately, and become so confused with these thoughts, that I just lay everything aside, feeling that likely they are just imaginations of mine; and then have to go grieving with woe. I tell you, dear sister, that I am as the thief and the robber, trying with all that's in me to enter some other way than by the door. I go continually trying to seek a way to escape the trials and persecutions, and all that hurts this old flesh. His child is not promised anything in this life except tribulations, for Christ said he has chosen his people in a furnace of affliction.

Ah, when we are made to see by the working of God's mighty power, how helpless and undone we are; and indeed, if I am one that was chosen in the furnace, I am not fit to even look toward heaven and beg the great I Am, who knows all about me. Yet I am so glad that it is recorded that God is merciful to his children's unrighteousness; and that all that is in man is unrighteousness. As you said, the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit; neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned. It is indeed a sad affair to see so much vain teaching going on. I try sometimes to pluck the tares from the wheat; and in such a state, I am no more than the tares.

Isn't it a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God? I humbly hope that it is of Him that I am so fearful. I believe I learn by experiences that the God of heaven and earth, and all deep places, has never needed poor wretched man's hands to help him. I read that God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are. This old world is being shaken by the deceitfulness of mighty men, as far as man can see; and it is in every manner that the human mind can conceive of. I wonder if the wailing and gnashing of teeth is not yet to come, which we read about.

"Wherefore, seeing that we also are compassed with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." This verse tells us the only way such can be done, is looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. "Who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. How wise the Lord is! He knows what you need, and when you need Him, before he ever makes you a beggar. I wonder if I have ever become a little child. Unless I have, I can't even sit together with you in heavenly places.

I hope that while I have to stay here, it is God's will to keep me where I belong, for I surely have to be kept. Knowing my sinful nature, without that great protecting power there is no telling where I would run. I am as a cake unturned; but when it is pleasing to the Lord to turn me, then I am turned. There is no one who knows these things except the Lord, for he knows all things; and all things are working together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are called according to his purpose.

Is it often with you that you have an ear to hear what the Spirit says? Ah, it seems my soul goes groaning day and night for some evidence that my Redeemer lives. There is one thing sure, if he is my Redeemer, he is a living Redeemer. I have had experiences that I

have spoken to you about more than anyone; and I have had sweet meditations. As I grow older though, the way gets so dark that I have to go stumbling along; I have sought every way, and find the end of the ways that seem right to me, are the ways of death. I have no desire to go the way of man, but it seems that is the only way I go. There must be a rest somewhere for the weary. Wasn't Ananias told of the Lord that Paul was a chosen vessel, and that he would show him how great things he must suffer for His name's sake. Do you thing that Paul was ever beyond hope that his sufferings were for Christ's sake?

Ah, we are just worms of the dust, and His children are babes in Christ, living on that pure water that flows from the throne of God. He is all the little trembling sinner needs; and He does supply all their need. When He looks on you, no wonder you weep bitterly. Oh, do I know these things I humbly hope I am not deceived. I am so weak, unlearned and undone; but entreat me not from following after you; where you go, I want to go, and where you are buried, I want to be buried. Your God, I hope, is my God.

I was so glad to get another letter from you. Our correspondence has been close to forty years, and I still cherish getting your letters.

In hope,
Mrs. Earl (Asenith) Jones

How greatly varied are the experiences of the children of God! Hart wrote of them:

"How strange is the course that Christians must steer;
How perplexed is the path he must tread!
The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
And his life he receives from the dead.

His fairest pretensions must wholly be waived,
And his best resolutions be crossed;
Nor can he expect to be perfectly saved,
'Til he finds himself utterly lost.

When all this is done, and his heart is assured
Of the total remission of sins;
When his pardon is signed and his peace is procured,
From that moment his conflict begins."

And Paul wrote of them: "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." |2 Corinthians 4:7-10)

How greatly blessed are those who can testify of such things! — J. D. W.)

THE EXPERIENCE OF C. W. VASS

Elizabeth City, N. C.

My experience (of grace I do hope),
The Lord willing, I'll poetize,
And I hope it will be of interest
To those unto salvation wise.

In the days of my childhood,
About the age of ten,
It was then, as I remember,
My sorrows did begin.

I would go and tell my mother
That something bothered me,
But wasn't taught to say a prayer
At my dear mother's knee.

Now to begin to be a better boy,
Different times I did set,
But the more I tried to do so,
The worse I seemed to get.

I would dream of the end of time,
And view it with alarm;
I could see great storms arise,
That would my body harm.

These terrible dreams frightened me,
And did make me fear to die,
But again, in due time I planned to
Prepare for a home on high.

About the age of fourteen I dreamt
I saw myself lying dead;
And in later dreams I saw the One
I hope died in my stead.

Also about this age I remember I read
The New Testament nearly through,
And I resented the rejection of Jesus
By the unbelieving, hating Jew.

In my traveling at different times,
Calm feelings came over me;
It seemed that I was in the Spirit,
And was free from misery.

Then again, "I'm a misery to myself,"
In tears to my father, I said,
Long before sweetly drawn to Christ,
The church's blessed Head.

Papa said that I would find Him
At the end of the law,
"Our schoolmaster . . . unto Christ,"
Whose own He doth draw.

Now about the age of seventeen,
I found my sorrows doubled;
I had never dreamed that I
Would ever be thus troubled.

I recalled that when quite young,
About age seven or eight,
A luminous and celestial body,
I was left to imprecate.

And looking upward, I was tempted
By the devil to blaspheme.
But tightly closing my vile lips,
I resisted his foul scheme.

Now I frowned at the Son of man,
But He later smiled on me,
In my slumberings upon the bed,
Laying on of hands gently.

Saul of Tarsus, whilst a Pharisee,
Was an actual blasphemer,
But he obtained mercy at the hands
Of the precious Redeemer.

And reading the experience of Bunyan,
Who consented Christ to sell,
I found that he was given repentance,
And saved from eternal hell.

I desired "unbounded' repentance
Might be granted to me,
But I was such a wretched sinner
I doubted it would be.

"I dread the day that I must die,"
I remember that I said,
When burdened with a sense of guilt,
And not a tear could shed.

I mourned and groaned in my plight,
In my unhappy state;
I was annoyed by impious thoughts,
Which would not abate.

When I was twenty years of age,
I left home for the city,
But my troubles did not leave me,
And might the Lord show pity.

I wrote my father about my sorrows,
About my guilt and fears,
And when spoken of on visiting him,
I was melted down in tears.

Afterward I was sorry I wrote him
About my sorrowful case,
For I thought he would mention it,
On seeing him face to face.

(To be Continued)

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CORRECTION

Please note in Elder Spangler's "A Special Message To Our Readers" in the January issue, where it is stated that, "This is my thirteenth year of association with the *Signs*," it should read, "This is my thirtieth year of association with the *Signs*," he having become associated in 1936. — J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

I CORINTHIANS 15:29

"Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?"

The above Scripture has caused much discussion since the days of the apostles, and some very strange and fanciful ideas have been brought down to us by men who have given their own and other men's views, without duly considering the subject matter under consideration by the apostle. We have been requested to give our views of the above Scripture, and it is after much hesitation we have decided to do so.

In Paul's writings we find that he speaks more about the resurrection than the other writers of the New Testament, and because of this he is called by some the Apostle of the Resurrection; yet if we look into the Acts of the Apostles, we find that Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty) and in addressing them, he referred to the judgment that had fallen upon Judas, fulfilling the words found in Psalm 109, and suggesting to them that they set aside one to take Judas' place, one who had been with them from the baptism of John unto the day when Jesus was taken up to heaven — that one of them should be ordained to be a witness with them of his resurrection.

We see that after the descent of the Holy Ghost, they went out and boldly preached Jesus and the resurrection, their testimony being carried into the hearts of those who heard, so that "they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then we see the first apostolic miracle, the lame man healed, and again the glorious theme of Jesus and the resurrection brought grief to the rulers of the people, but joy and rejoicing to the saints of God. It is said in Acts 4:33, "And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all." One man who saw these things was so enraged by them that he was determined to destroy the cause of Christ, for he was sure that Jesus was an imposter. Of him we read in Acts 9, "And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the High Priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." These things are so recorded to show to us poor sinners today of a God who works at both ends, if there is a Saul there is also an Ananias, if there is a eunuch there is also a Philip, for there can be no uncertainty in the perfect work of God. Saul goes to Damascus to carry believers bound to Jerusalem, instead he found companions in the disciples, "And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God."

It was this same Jesus of Nazareth whom Saul tried to destroy, who, by his almighty power, turned him so completely around, that he began to preach Jesus and the resurrection; and when the brethren in Jerusalem heard of it,

they glorified God in him. (Galatians I: 24)

Coming now to the subject matter of our text, we find that the gospel of the resurrection was preached by the apostles and by Paul, who speaks of himself as the least of the apostles, yet he could assert that Jesus of Nazareth was seen of him, as one born out of due time. "Therefore," saith he, "whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed. Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God: because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." (I Corinthians 15:11-18)

From there on the apostle shows the order of the resurrection, culminating in Christ delivering up the kingdom of grace to the Father, "when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." When our Lord gives up the kingdom to the Father, then shall come to pass what Jesus taught his disciples to pray for, "THY KINGDOM COME." The apostle then returns to the subject under consideration from verses 12-19: In verse 29 comes our text, "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?" We have seen that the apostles all preached this gospel of the resurrection; and Paul had preached it and the Corinthians had believed it, but some had crept in unawares who did not believe it, and Paul showed their faith to be vain. The apostles and the Primitive Church all believed in believer's baptism, which meant in that day that they had died to any hope of salvation by the works of the law and had come, through the Spirit's teaching, to know that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. And what do they believe? They, through the Spirit's work in them, believe that God laid upon Jesus the iniquity of a number that no man can number, whom God chose in Christ Jesus before the world began. (Isaiah 53: 6) The apostle had preached the same gospel to the Corinthians as he did to the Romans. "That if thou shall confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." (Romans 10:9) All such, when they submit to believer's baptism, set forth death, burial and resurrection, believing that their Lord will come again as the angels told the apostles who saw Jesus ascend into heaven. "Ye men of Galilee why stand ye gazing up into heaven? THIS SAME JESUS which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts I:II) It has been said by those who are Greek scholars that the dead in our text is in the plural, we fully agree, for as Eve was in Adam in the creation, so Paul tells the Ephesians that God chose us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world.

Hymn 60 in Durand and Lester comes to our mind, the 5th verse reads: —

"One in the tomb, one when he rose,
One when triumph'd o'er his foes.
One when in heaven he took his seat,
While seraphs sang all hell's defeat."

Yes, they are baptized, BELIEVING WHAT HAS BEEN BEFORE STATED, that he died for their sins and rose again for their justification. Those who denied the resurrection of Jesus had no hope for a life to come. No wonder that Paul asserted, "If in this life only we have hope we are of all men most miserable." Years ago, when the writer was worried over the resurrection of the

body as taught by the apostles, we knew that Jesus' body being holy, was free from sin, except by imputation, he could and did die for our sins, but he saw no corruption. As we read Acts 13:30-37 we saw that he whom God raised up saw no corruption, and that David, who prophesied of this in Psalm 16:10, served his generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers and saw corruption. In Romans 8:21 we are told that the creature SHALL BE (yet to come) delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. "Ye have received the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." (Romans 8:15-16) Our Lord Jesus took on himself a body like ours, sin excepted, that one day our bodies shall be like his, free from sin. Paul also states, "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." (Romans 8:22-23) In our text therefore Paul is exposing the error of those, who were then among the Corinthian believers, who denied the resurrection of the body. If Christ's body did not rise, then why do we face a frowning world? or as Paul himself said in the verses following our text, "And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? . . . If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die." We do not allow for a moment that Paul, a servant of God, countenanced error in the least, while he asserted the truth. Was he not raised up for the defense of the Gospel? (Philippians I:17)

It has been suggested by some that those who were baptized for the dead, were those who saw Christians die, and by an unscriptural use of baptism were baptized to fill the ranks left vacant by those who had died. That is not true, for no one can take another's place, he or she takes the place prepared for them; and they, by the Holy Spirit, are prepared for the place they shall take in the Church of God. It is true that baptism, administered by a servant of God, walking in the truth and order of God's house, admits one into the fellowship of a gospel church, but as God's word says it should be an answer of a good conscience toward God. On one occasion the writer was listening to a man of this world. As he was about to dip a person under water he said, "I baptize thee INTO the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." Poor puny man cannot do that. Our beloved Paul in Romans 6:3, says, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized INTO Jesus Christ were baptized INTO his death?" He is speaking here of the Spirit's work in convincing us that we are poor lost sinners, dead without the power to do or will. All who belong to God must be taught of his Spirit, it is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." (I Corinthians 12:12-13) Jesus said in John 16:13-14, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: . . . He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." Thus it is the Spirit's work to bring us down where we feel and know that we are dead, that both sinful self and righteous self are so under condemnation that it makes a poor sinner loath his own life. Ask such an one to be baptized and join the church, when he feels unfit to live and unfit to die! To such the Holy Ghost will reveal Jesus who died for sinners and was raised again for their justification, and as the Spirit applies the word, faith springs up in their souls, strengthening their desires and hope in a risen Lord, con-

fessing him as their all, they are fit subjects for baptism by water, for they, by one Spirit, have been baptized into one body, and in their measure they will bear about in their body the marks of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. Had not Christ risen from the dead we would always be under condemnation, but Christ did rise again for our justification, so, through a God-given faith, we can say with Paul, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. . . . Therefore brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." The world will not know them, but those of like precious faith will see that they have been with Jesus and learnt of him. We hope that many who read this can say with the writer,

"That Christ is God I can avouch,
And for his people cares.
Since I have prayed to him as such,
And he has heard my prayers."

Such can say with Job, 'I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms de-' stroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself and MINE EYES (plural) shall behold and not another." True, Job, with his EYE, (of faith) saw God, for in chapter 42:5-6, he declares, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine EYE seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." When Job's faith and our faith is lost in sight then our EYES (plural) shall see Him as He is and be like Him.

G. R.

EDITORIAL

(Acts 19:11,12)

In complying with Sister Gillette's request that we write on the subject stated in her letter, we call attention to the fact that it is necessary to read and consider the preceeding verse in connection with the one quoted. Else, as is often done with scriptures, almost any fanciful legend may be built upon an isolated passage. The meaning of no other writings have been so distorted, by using portions out of their context, as have the scriptures. Almost any doctrine may be, and often has been, based upon such methods.

We quote both the eleventh and twelfth verses: "And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: so that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them."

Thus we are told that **God wrought special miracles** by the hands of Paul, and that by reason of the miracles wrought by God, the handkerchiefs or aprons when brought from the body of Paul, had the effect of causing the diseases to depart from the sick, and the evil spirits go out of them. This was not at all by Paul himself, as though he had some inherent power to do these things; but rather by the power of God working the miracles at Paul's hands. Again we read in the fifth chapter of Acts, "And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people."

It is not to be questioned but that these were accomplished by the special working of the power of God in the apostles, to show that they were His servants; to show that Jesus whom they preached, was the Christ; and that the kingdom of heaven was not only at hand, but was then manifest in the world as the church of God.

It is undeniable that anything that is done or accomplished which is above and beyond the realm of "the spirit of man", (1 Corinthians 2:11), must be done by a power greater than is native

to man. It seems right, therefore, to say that there are many wonderful and strange things done in nature, yet they are all done according to the "laws of nature", and that there are no real miracles done in nature by natural causes. There are many things hard to be understood, of course, but all according to natural laws.

It follows, therefore, that anything that is a true miracle, though wrought within the realm of nature, is not by the skill of that nature; but rather is alone by His power who established those laws, and who is able to set them aside to accomplish his will and pleasure. This is what God does in performing miracles, or caused his servants to perform them throughout the ages; and this is what was done in the case of the handkerchiefs or aprons from the body of Paul; or the shadow of Peter overshadowing some of them. (Acts 5: 15)

There is an account of Simon who desired to do what Philip did when he beheld the miracles and signs, who had before bewitched the people with sorcery, and who, it is said, believed and was baptized; yet he desired of Peter and John the same power, and offered money for it. "But Peter said unto him, thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God." etc. And notice the failure of those exorcists in the verses following the text, thought they called the name of the Lord Jesus. "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?"

So far as we remember there is no indication in the scriptures that this power should ever be given to anyone after the days of the apostles; and we are more than skeptical when we hear of any claiming to be faith healers, etc.; and especially when it is connected with requests for money to carry on "the work".

But the days of God's miracles are not finished, as many can testify, for everytime one is born of the spirit — brought out of darkness which he did not know he was in, and God shines in his heart — that is a miracle: it is not a product of nature, but the work of God. And we expect such miracles to continue to be performed until the last of the children are brought into the kingdom.

The science of healing in its many branches belongs in the realm of nature, and has its good and proper place; but so-called faith healing, carried on by men nowadays, who say that anyone can be healed if they just have faith, belongs with other contrary doctrines, being false. So-called holy places, relics, etc., serve to satisfy a natural religious desire of many people, but have no attractions for those who truly know the grace of God; for to these such things belong to superstitious customs.

No one who knows the power of God as has been manifested in himself in the miracle of being born of the Spirit, will for a moment deny that God does his will in all things today the same as he has ever done; and that He gives his people faith as the fruit of the Spirit, and the spirit of prayer, so that He works his will in and for them: and they pray His will to be done in all things.

"And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul."

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"And be sure your sin will find you out." (Numbers 32:23)

These are very solemn and awful words. The circumstances attending their utterance by Moses were these, Israel had now finished their journey in the wilderness. They were about to enter into their inheritance in the promised land, but the land was full of enemies who must be conquered and driven out before them. A sore warfare awaited them. Now, as they stand upon the

borders of the promised land, soon to cross over Jordan, the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, seeing that the land upon this side of Jordan was good for pasturage for their flocks and herds, came to Moses asking that they might have their inheritance here, and not on the other side of the river. Moses replied, Shall your brethren go to war, and shall ye sit here. This land was already conquered by the arms of all the tribes. Should they now sit down here, and leave the rest of their brethren to still fight for the possession which should be theirs on the other side of the river? He also reminds them that to do so would be to discourage those who should go over to the conflict. He reminds them that thus did their fathers when from Kadesh Barnea he sent them to see the land. They brought back such a report as discouraged the people, and the anger of the Lord was therefore kindled against them, and he swore that none of those who came out of Egypt should ever enter the land, who were from twenty years old and upward. He goes on to recount that the Lord made them wander forty years in the wilderness. And now, he says, Ye are risen up in your fathers' stead, an increase of sinful men to augment yet the fierce anger of the Lord toward Israel; for, if ye turn away from after him, he will yet again leave them in the wilderness; and ye shall destroy all this people. Then they came to him, and promised they would go over with the rest and help them until their enemies were conquered, and then they would return and dwell in this place. Moses gave them this permission, but said that if they did not fulfill this promise, they should have sinned against God, "and be sure your sin will find you out." This is the narrative in brief of the event which gave rise to these words.

The truth taught here is in no wise different from that which is taught all through the Scriptures. In Genesis iv. the Lord said to Cain, "If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." That is, your sin is ever ready to meet you. It shall, like a wild beast, leap upon you at any time. It is the same truth, that Paul taught in the following words, "What a man sows, that shall he reap. If ye sow to the flesh, ye shall of the flesh reap corruption." The sin of the brethren of Joseph met them when they were face to face with him in their distress in Egypt. Judah said, "God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants." There is no truth more clear than this. In some way, sin always finds out the sinner, and he reaps his reward. There are some things in the text, and in its connection, to which we wish to call attention.

First. Moses said that in doing as he had said, that is, in neglecting to aid their brethren, they should sin against God. It was not in the judgment of Moses, against their brethren that they should sin, but against God. All sin is against God. Thus David felt, when he had been brought to a conviction of his sin, in the case of Uriah and Bathsheba. In response to the searching words of the prophet of the Lord, "Thou art the man," he said, "I have sinned." And in that wonderful confession in the fifty-first Psalm he said, "Against thee, and thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in their sight." He did not, under the sense of the enormity of his guilt, say, I have sinned against Uriah and Bathsheba, or against my fellow-man, in any way, but against thee. The anguish of his soul was deeper in this view of the matter by far, than it could have been had he thought only of the harm done to his faithful captain and his wife. The vice in which he had engaged, and the crime of which he was guilty, was all swallowed up by the force of the far greater thing, sin against God. So Moses, in the text, and in the connection, does not lay stress upon the wrong which their brethren might suffer at their hands, but solely upon the sin against God. The wrong which we do to our fellow-man may be made good again, but we cannot make our sin good. Thanks be to God, there is one who has paid even that debt, the sin against God. But there are some reflections concerning this, which we

wish to present. The whole testimony of the Scripture, and of our own experience, is to this effect, the one who suffers the wrong is not to be pitied so much as the one who willfully does the wrong. Sin is a far more fearful thing than any other thing can be. He that observes lying vanities, forsakes his own mercies. The man who does his brother wrong, injures himself still more. Thus the Savior said, that it were better that one should be drowned in the midst of the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones which believed in him. His care was not so much for the little ones who believed in him, and who suffered the wrong, as for that disciple, who might be led under the dictates of the flesh, to do his brother wrong. Such an one should find that it is indeed a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Thus David felt when he made his confession. We may be sure that the wrong against his faithful captain seemed none the less, because the sin against God seemed so great. He who fears to sin against God, will fear to wrong his fellow-man. It is impossible that he should do the one without the other. The wrong against our fellow-man may endure but for a moment, but who shall limit the duration of the sin against God? The one may be measured by a little time, or by the bounds of its results against the man who is injured, or we may make reparation, but who shall atone for his sin against God? As love to God must always be accompanied by love to our fellow-men, so an abhorrence of sin will be accompanied by an abhorrence of wrong against our fellow-men. The one is not and cannot be without the other. There is also another side to this matter, which is most important. He who suffers the wrong, will be helped by remembering this fact that all sin is against God. It will serve to make him patient and submissive, and prevent him from revenging himself, since the wrong-doer must appear before the Judge of all, against whom he has sinned. The heavenly Father may, and will, make up to him who has suffered the wrong, in other ways, more than he has lost, yea, he may make the very wrong itself the medium of still greater blessings. Out of it he may cause to grow, more patience, and trust, and faith, and more of the spirit of forgiveness, but for him who has done the wrong, and so sinned against God, there remains the rod of his displeasure. There also is this in it, viz: the wrong rebounds to the hurt of his own soul. He reaps the very thing he has sown. He has sown the wind, and he shall reap the whirlwind. A child in a family stronger than his brother, may rob him of some gift which his father has bestowed upon him, but the child must not seek revenge; he must not take the case into his own hand. The father will settle all that. He who has robbed his brother, has sinned against the common father. He must settle the whole matter. He can make up to the weaker brother more than he has lost, but who shall make up to the wrong-doer the smiles of his father, which he has for a time lost? O! if we, when we feel we are wronged by another, could but remember that God sees it all, and that he will visit the transgression with the rod, while he will bind up the heart that is broken, should we not feel very different from what we sometimes do? Where, in view of these things, would be room for any spirit of revenge, or malice, or resentment? Would not all this be swallowed up by the greatness of our pity for the one who has done the wrong, seeing that he has fallen into the hands of the living God, on account of his sin?

Thus Moses would put the matter upon the high ground of sin against God. If this reflection will not avail to prevent a man from doing the wrong, surely nothing else will. In this view of the matter, both he who has done the wrong, and he who has suffered the wrong, must fall at the feet of the Lord of all, and leave themselves with him. How quickly would strife cease between brethren everywhere, could this be remembered. Thus Jesus, our Lord and life, and example, committed himself to

him who judgeth righteously. And he was heard in that he feared. The whole spirit of what we have been trying to say, is summed up in the prayer, "Father forgive them, they know not what they do." Also in the prayer of the first martyr, Stephen, "Lord Jesus lay not his sin to their charge." A second thing which seems to us to be taught in the text is this, no man can live to himself. The people of God cannot withdraw themselves to themselves, and think alone of their own interests, without committing sin against God. The tribes of Israel were taught that they must stand together in mutual love, and helpfulness. They were one people. It is true to-day, that if one member suffers, all suffer in their measure, with that member. So if one member be wrapped up in himself, so that he has ease and prosperity, and it matters little about how others fare, the harm will not only fall upon him, but upon all the body. Because of the false report of a few, who brought back discouraging news of the land to which the tribes were journeying, all Israel suffered in the wilderness. And so here, Moses tells them that if they do not go over to the battle with the rest, they all will be discouraged, and the anger of God will fall upon them. How close is the union which our God has established among his people. It is compared to the union between the members of the body. The church at Laodicea was in this condition. She said that she was rich, and increased in goods, and had need of nothing, and as she needed nothing, it is evident that she also cared little for the love and fellowship and help of her kindred in Christ; and that help which she needed not, in her estimation, she would not bestow upon her brethren in their need. And the Lord said that he would spue them out of his mouth. This is as true to-day as it has ever been. It is a sin against God, when we do not feel a readiness to bear each other's burdens. To bear each other's burdens, is to fulfill the law of Christ. This law is love, and love is the fulfilling of the law. If we do not as churches, and as individuals, find our hearts going out to our brethren in their need; if when we are well supplied for instance with the word of the gospel, we do not think of those who are destitute of such privileges, and stand ready to minister help to them, we are guilty of sin against God. Love for God, and for each other, will solve all this, and solve it upon the right side. If we love enough, the rest will follow. It would be no task for these two tribes to go over and help the rest in their warfare, if they loved God and the rest of the tribes, as well as they did themselves.

Moses accompanies the word of commandment, with a word of warning. If they should not do this, then they might be sure that their sin should find them out. Its results should be sure. All sin reacts upon the guilty one. We cannot hide from the consequences of our sins. That which is evil, indulged in and followed, will be found to eat into one's own soul, as does a canker. It will abide there, and lead to still more ungodliness. We may forget the sin, but it has not forgotten us, and will lie in wait for us, and meet us at our own door. We have often thought of the peculiarity of the language of the apostle: What a man sows, that very thing he shall reap. He may reap sorrow for his sins. It is sure to be so, and it is well when it is so, but he shall reap more than this, he shall reap just what he has sown. From sowing the wind; the reaping shall be the whirlwind. The evil that we do fastens itself upon our own hearts. The little foxes that seem so small, soon grow to be large foxes. If we are careless toward our brethren, in their need in any way, we shall grow poor in soul. Our sin will find us out, in poverty, and leanness and barrenness. Who has not found it so in his own experience? Ungodliness leads to more ungodliness. One begins to neglect his privileges in the house of God. How rapidly this grows, and how many companion evils come into that soul, and abide there. The sin has found them out. This comes in the way of that discipline which the Lord holds in his own hand, and which he

visits upon the disobedient. This is the rod, and these are the stripes, with which he visits them. It is their sin finding them out. Such discipline is good for the disobedient child, but he has this also for his strength, that he be not overborne with sorrow. His redemption is secure. Though he has the rod, yet it is the rod of love. The blood of Jesus Christ has put away all sin: therefore his loving-kindness he will not take away from him, nor from any in him. Their sin shall indeed find them out, but so shall redemption find them out, yea, it has already found them out, and none can perish who are embraced in this everlasting covenant. We will leave the subject. The field is very broad; we have but glanced at it.

(Editorial by Elder F. A. Chick May 15, 1898)

HEBREWS X. 26

We understand that this admonition, like that in Hebrews vi. 4-6, was addressed to the saints, which were recognized by the inspired writer of the epistle, as "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling." As he had told them in chapter six, that if they should fall away, it would be impossible to renew them again to repentance, according to the manner of the Levitical priesthood, seeing that such a renewal would require Christ to be again sacrificed, so he tells them again in this text, "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." When the priest under the law made atonement for the children of Israel, and the Israelites again sinned, there remained further sacrifices for their sins; the sacrifice was to be repeated continually; but Christ has made one offering for sin, and but one, and there remains no more. But to the professed disciple of Christ, who has sinned willfully, after that he has received a knowledge of the truth, there remains a certain looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour — what, the saints? No, the saints can never be devoured, for Christ has by one offering perfected them forever, and he has given his word for it, "They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." What then shall be devoured by the "judgment and fiery indignation," which the willful offender is fearfully looking for? "The adversaries." The adversaries of the cause of God and truth shall truly be devoured; but says the apostle, "We are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak." And again, in the close of this chapter, he says, "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." If a professed disciple of Christ, willfully transgresses the laws of the kingdom, is it strange that he should fear that he is only an adversary? and even if he is not, he feels afraid that he is, and looks for that judgment which awaits the adversaries.

This whole subject is an admonition to the saints. Moses' law could not be transgressed by an Israelite with impunity. The offender died without mercy, for the law of Moses knew no mercy for its transgressors. But as Moses was but a servant, and Christ is a Son over his own house, the offender who hath dishonored Christ, trodden underfoot the Son of God, by despising his law, counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace, he hath committed far greater offense, and is worthy of a sorer punishment, and if judged by the law of Moses, would be subjected to a sorer punishment. But he is, if a Christian under law to Christ, and a copy of that law is written in his heart, and it reads thus, notwithstanding the offender's deserts, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more." It is certain, however, that he will visit their transgression with a rod, and their iniquities with stripes, and they shall know that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

May we listen to the admonition of our subject, and may God grant us grace whereby we may serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe November 1, 1855.

The importance of the matters presented by Elders Chick and Beebe in the above editorials should not be overlooked by any of us. They are included in: "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," spoken by Jesus shortly before his ascension." — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

ELDER JAMES BERTIE MURRAY

Though I should write all day, I could never tell how much his life meant to me: He lived every day as I would like to. He was born June 30, 1881, and died May 25, 1965. He was united in marriage to Pennettie S. Everette January 6, 1904; and to this union four girls and two boys were born. His wife and one son preceded him in death.

Papa and Mama united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Lower Black Creek, and were baptized by Elder J. C. Hooks in October, 1912. For convenience they moved their membership by letter to Sandy Grove Church in May, 1920. He was ordained a deacon July 31, 1920, and served faithfully. He was liberated to preach November 1, 1933, and November 31, 1936, he was ordained to the full work of the ministry. He was a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God.

After the death of his first wife, he was later married to Kiva Powell, who was also a member of Sandy Grove Church; and to this union one girl was born. His doors were always open to the brethren and friends; and I feel that he was loved by all who knew him. His pleasures were in visiting among the churches and his friends, and was faithful as long as he was able to go. I feel that, though he could not speak for weeks before his death, he would have said with the hymn writer:

"I now depart, I leave you here,
I leave you with the Lord;
And may we all henceforth appear
To be of one accord.
And if we part to meet no more
While on earth we remain,
O may we meet on Canaan's shore
And never part again."

Written by his daughter, who loved him.

Rachel Murray Wiggs

SISTER EMMA COLLINS

Sister Emma Collins united with the Black River Primitive Baptist Church at Dunn, N. C., on Saturday before the 4th Sunday in December, 1931, and was baptized by the late Elder E. C. Jones, who was pastor at that time. Sister Collins was born October 27, 1884, in Columbus County, and passed from this life August 17, 1965. She was married to the late Joseph C. M. Collins, January 17, 1921; and to this union was born a son, Charles Collins, who resides in Dothan, Alabama, and a daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Abbott, who resides in Lumberton, N. C. Sister Collins made her home with her daughter after her husband's death in 1960. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder C. D. Turner, assisted by Dr. Hyuck of Lumberton, and her body was laid to rest in the Meadow Brooks Cemetery in Lumberton, N. C.

Sister Collins was a loving and faithful member, believing in the truth as it is in Christ, Salvation by Grace and Grace alone; one whose life was so sweetly devoted to her church. Though for the many years she was afflicted and deprived of the privilege of attending the services, yet she often made inquiry as to the welfare of the members; and as long as she lived was prompt to give for any cause that might arise for the upkeep of the church. She was faithful to every duty in life, rearing her children in a way that made them love her and do everything they could to comfort their mother.

We, the Black River Church at Dunn, feel a great loss of a mother in Israel. "There has not been found no greater faith, no not in Israel." We hope to bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, who was pleased to call her from our midst to that Heavenly Bliss, to await the morning of the Resurrection, when the dead in Christ shall rise and come forth from the graves, and will behold His face in righteousness and shall be satisfied when they awake in His likeness. Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be placed on our church record; a copy sent to the bereaved family; and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the Black River Church at Dunn, N. C. the fourth week end in August. Written by request by her pastor, Elder C. D. Turner.

Elder David Godwin, Moderator Pro Tem
Sister Nettie Turlington, Clerk

BROTHER BUNYAN LINVILLE SNYDER

The Primitive Baptist Church at Camp Branch, Henry County, Va., while in conference, asked that this weak one write the obituary of our departed Brother Bunyan Linville Snyder, who passed away February 26, 1965. Brother Snyder was born near Jackson Creek in Randolph County, N. C. May 12, 1884. He was the son of the late Elder and Mrs. Richard Wright Snyder.

Brother Snyder was married to Loula Florence Coltrane May 17, 1905, and to this union were born four children — two of which have passed away. He is survived by his companion, who is an invalid and bedfast, and two children: Geraldine Florence Beeson and Richard Gardner Snyder, both of Martinsville, Va.; also by five grandchildren.

Deep in our hearts we praise God for the orderly walk of our brother. Mere words cannot express what we feel: they appear empty in comparison with how we miss his presence, and the warm handclasp, and his singing among us, which was rich in spirit; his voice sounded full of grace and truth. We miss his smile which was an encouragement to press towards the mark of the prize of the high calling of our God. We feel deeply the loss of our brother who had been a member of Camp Branch for several years, but we know his toils and trials are now over, and that he has fallen asleep in Jesus, to await his second coming when he shall gather his jewels home to praise him forever in the world that has no end. Brother Snyder was in bad health for several years, and a patient in the hospital several weeks before his death; where he bore his sufferings well.

His funeral was held at McKee's Funeral Home, Martinsville, by his pastor Elder Rufus Brown, with burial in Roselawn Cemetery under a number of beautiful floral tributes.

We desire a copy of this writing be given to his companion; one to be placed on the pages of our church book; and one sent the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Written by one who loved him and felt to be in his fellowship though less than the least of all saints in hope of God's mercy.

Elder Rufus Brown, Moderator
Nancy Haynes, Clerk

MINNIE LEE WHITFIELD

"Well done thou good and faithful servant." St. Matthew 25:21.

The above quotation is a very fitting expression of the life of Sister Minnie Lee Whitfield, a devoted and faithful member of Nashville Primitive Baptist Church who fulfilled her humble and appointed mission on this earth and peacefully fell asleep in Jesus April 27, 1965.

Sister Whitfield was born January 2, 1892, her parents, Jessie and Rhoda Turner Robbins.

She was married September 25, 1910, to J. W. Whitfield, to which union were born three children, Mrs. Nannie Wiggins, Mrs. Lillie Mae Cobb, and Floyd Whitfield, all of Rocky Mount, N. C., and who survive, together with her husband, ten grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Sister Whitfield united with the church at Nashville, N. C., Saturday before the fourth Sunday in February, 1914, and was baptized the following Sunday by her pastor, Elder M. B. Williford.

Sister Whitfield's life was exemplified by an orderly walk and a godly conversation. Her tender love for the church, her family, and the community gives all of us who knew her every reason to believe her precious soul now rests in the Paradise of God waiting for the general resurrection when the dead in Christ shall be raised incorruptible and undefiled, fashioned like unto His glorious body and eternally satisfied.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder W. E. Turner, assisted by Elder D. B. Stokes. Burial was in Forest Hill Cemetery, Nashville, N. C.

Elder W. E. Turner

J. S. MOFFETT

Mr. J. S. Moffett, Sr., was born April 26, 1892, and passed away December 30, 1964. He was a resident of Shreveport, Louisiana.

Left to mourn his passing are his wife, Sister Moffett, and two sons and four daughters: J. S. Moffett, Jr., Monroe, La.; E. S. Moffett, Tyler, Texas; Mrs. Leesie Hines and Mrs. Led Smith, of Shreveport, La.; Mrs. Bill Rue, Oklahoma City, and Mrs. Joe Lynn Monday, Vivian, La.; and eight grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

I would say to those left behind, weep not as those who have no hope. The fruit that Mr. Moffett brought forth while here on this earth, gave great evidence of a child of God: surely he could not have brought forth fruit of himself. "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing." (John 15:5) He was a great lover of the truth and went far and near to hear it. He had a good report of those within the church, and of those without.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders W. W. Taylor and the writer, Loyd Wall. May the riches of God's mercy be upon his family.

Loyd Wall

MARY E. CARTLEDGE

Sister Cartledge was the widow of a lovely member of the Primitive Baptist Church; and though she was not actually a member, she leaves plenty of evidence that she loved the doctrine and the brethren very much. She entertained many of them in her home, and she associated with them regularly at the meetings as long as she was able. She loved the doctrine of God's sovereign and saving grace.

She was born November 16, 1871, near Rayville, La., and passed away November 7, 1965. Funeral services were conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder J. L. Smith, at Kilpatric Funeral Home in West Monroe, La. She was buried at Gwynn Cemetery, Mangrem, La. There was a good and attentive congregation, and many flowers, thus showing the tender respect in which she was held by those who knew her.

She is survived by six sons: Rube, of Point, La.; M. B., of Downsville, La.; J. D., of Start, La.; Joe of Delhigh, La.; Albert, of Eastland, Texas; and Jessie, of Rayville, La.; and by three daughters: Miss Pearl Cartledge, of Rayville, La.; Mrs. Ovada Rashal, of Rayville; and Mrs. Essie Smith, of Marion, La. Surviving also are twenty-three grandchildren; eight step-grandchildren; fifty great grandchildren, and nine great great grandchildren.

May the Lord bless and comfort her dear family, and all who mourn her passing. We feel that our loss is her eternal gain. Yours in very sincere and deep sympathy, and in hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

R. W. Rhodes

SISTER ALTA McLEOD

Sister McLeod was born December 22, 1882, and passed away October 31, 1965. She was a life long resident of Union County, Arkansas, living in ElDorado. She was first married to Brother Thomas Goodwin; and after his death she later married Brother Arthur McLeod, who was originally from Atlanta, Texas, and who died about two years ago at our association of a heart attack.

Sister McLeod was a beloved member of Rehoboth Primitive Baptist Church near ElDorado. She was a very friendly and likeable person and the brethren often visited in her home; and she was privileged to visit other churches and associations and was widely known and loved by our brethren.

Sister McLeod is survived by seven sons and one daughter: O. D. Goodwin, Clifford Goodwin, Isaac Goodwin, Thomas Goodwin, and Hilton Goodwin, all of ElDorado; Curtis Goodwin, Louis, Miss.; Elmer Goodwin, Warren, Arkansas; and Mrs. Cora Smith, ElDorado. Also surviving are, one sister, Mrs. John F. Burton, Sr., ElDorado; eight grandchildren and fourteen great grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted the 5th Sunday in October at Rehoboth in the presence of a large congregation. We are very sad at her passing, which is a great loss to us, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. May the Lord bless and comfort all the dear bereaved ones. The writer conducted the services, assisted by Elder W. A. Speer.

R. W. Rhodes

GENEVA GASKINS CORBITT

With a sad and heavy heart I attempt to write the passing of my beloved mother, Geneva Gaskins Corbitt, daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Tom Gaskins, Tarboro, N. C. She was born May 24, 1894, and died June 13, 1965.

She leaves to mourn her passing, her devoted husband, George T. Corbitt, two daughters, Mrs. Alton G. Bibb, Portsmouth, Va. and Mrs. Glenn Hardee, Greenville, N. C.; one son, Vernon B. Corbitt, Portsmouth, Va.; three sisters, seven grandchildren, and one great grandchild. Mother and Daddy were married March 3, 1912: living together fifty-three years.

Mother joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Red Banks in April, 1958, and was baptized by Elder A. L. McKenny and Elder A. P. Mewborn.

Her afflictions were great but she bore them with great patience. She was a good wife, mother and neighbor — always deeming others better than herself. Her left leg was amputated five years before her death, and she lost her speech about a year before her passing, but she was a patient sufferer, and would smile and wave when company came in. To know her was to love her.

Her funeral was held at Wilkerson Chapel June 15th, conducted by Elder Joe Sawyer and Mr. John Blue; and her body was laid to rest in Pinewood Memorial Park under a mound of flowers, to await the resurrection morning.

Mrs. Glenn Hardee, daughter

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

God in his infinite wisdom removed from our midst Sister Eva Garner who was born

June 9, 1879, and calmly fell asleep in Jesus, April 23, 1965. She left three noble sons: Alvin and Vernon "Ted" of Morehead City; Owen Kenneth of Bridgeton, and one daughter, Mrs. Thelma Thompson of Newport, N. C., and seven grandchildren besides many friends and relatives. She was devoted to her family and made every sacrifice possible for them and they and the inlaws tried in every way they could to administer to her every need. She had the best medical attention obtainable together with skillful nurses while at the hospital but let us remember that earthly wisdom and loving care cannot stay the hand of death.

We, the members of Newport Primitive Baptist Church, miss her very much as she was so faithful to attend her meetings, always greeting us with a pleasant smile. Sister Eva united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Newport, N. C., more than fifty years ago and was faithful to the Cause she so much loved until relieved by death.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to Him Who doeth all things well; and may we feel to say "Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will Be Done." We do know that "though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we shall fear no evil for God will be with us, His Rod and Staff will comfort us." There nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, no other one is worthy of our trust.

Funeral services were conducted in the church of her membership by her pastor, Elder M. L. Simmons and Mr. Cook, Methodist minister, after which her body was laid to rest beside her devoted husband who preceded her in death a few years, to await the second coming of our Lord when these bodies that are sown in weakness will be praised in power and see the Great King in his Glory, be like him and be satisfied.

Done by order of the Newport Primitive Baptist Church while in conference, June meeting, 1965.

Elder M. L. Simmons, Moderator
G. C. Garner, Clerk

MEMORIAL

WHEREAS, Since our last meeting of this Association it has pleased the Lord to take from our midst four of our members, and we trust to bow in humble submission to the will of our God. They are as follows: Sisters Bertie Dryden and Annie Fields of the Salisbury Church, Sister Ethel Covington of the Nassaongo Church and Brother Aquila (Bunk) Evans of the Rewastico Church.

Though we miss them very much we feel that they had spent their appointed time here and that God, who doeth all things well, was pleased to take them away from the toils and cares of this world to a better land.

BE IT RESOLVED, That this body express their deep sorrow to the members of the families of the departed ones; also that this memorial be printed in our minutes, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Written by order of the Salisbury Association being held with the Salisbury Church October 20, 21, 1965.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
William S. Adkins, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

It has been our Heavenly Father's will to remove from our midst by death within two months, another of our little flock, Sister Lettie Evans Haymore, Oct. 27, 1965, at the age of 84.

We, the church at Strawberry, greatly feel the loss of another humble, kind and faithful member, who joined this church in the early twenties and was baptized by the late Elder C. O. Boaze. Ill health prevented Sister Haymore from attending regular in her late years. Her daughter, Mrs. Cora Underwood, was faithful to bring her mother to her meetings whenever she was able to come; and did all she could for her pleasure and comfort. Sister Haymore was a good wife and mother. She was known to but few but was prized as far as known.

Her funeral was conducted at Swicegood Funeral Chapel, Danville, Va., by her pastor Elder R. S. Payne. Mr. Billy Hamlett, one of the daughter's pastor also was present. The remains were laid to rest in Schoolfield Cemetery beneath a beautiful array of flowers; there to await the coming of her Saviour.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the holy will of God who makes no mistake. We feel our loss is her eternal gain. And

RESOLVED, That the church extend her love and sympathy to the bereaved family. May God's blessings be upon all that mourn her passing.

RESOLVED AGAIN, That a copy of these resolutions be recorded on our church records; a copy sent to the family, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by the order of Strawberry Church in conference Nov. 6, 1965.

Elder R. S. Payne, Moderator
Josephine Dodd, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134 DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1966 NO. 4

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

THE POET'S PRAYER
(Common Meter)

True poetry by God is writ
Within the poet's mind;
The poet merely copies it,
Then gives it to mankind.

When thus inspired a spring of life
Flows through each word and line;
The poet — less, this inspired light
Writes nought but empty rhyme.

Dear Lord, if I a poet be;
If thou hast me impressed
In lines of verse to honor thee,
And comfort thy distressed,

Then let Thy Spirit through me flow —
Let it with me abide:
Forbid I anything shall know,
Save Jesus crucified.

Let me this precious truth defend;
And should I stray aside,
God grant I cannot find my pen;
Also my paper hide.

But when I to myself take heed —
From flesh and nature free,
Then let me, Lord, thy children feed
In verse — true poetry!

C. B. Britt,
Rt. 6, Box 282,
ElDorado, Ark. 71730

(Please note that the poetry on page 6 of the January issue, was composed by Brother Britt, and should not have been run as a quotation — J. D. W.)

ENJOYED
ELDER C. D. TURNER'S VISIT

15514 South Brentwood,
Channelview, Texas 77530

Dear Elder Spangler:

I awoke at four A. M. January the 3rd, 1966, with an impression to write to the household of faith through the medium of the **Signs of the Times.**

By the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, Elder C. D. Turner and wife, of Dunn, N. C., visited the Shepherd Fold Church, 815 Little York Road, Houston, Texas, January 1, 1966, after leaving their home to visit a son and family in Houston. Little did they know the purpose our God had in the matter. Elder Turner found the church through the **Signs.** He told his wife that he was not going to expose himself as an Elder, but planned to just listen and sing. But God had it otherwise: our minister, Elder Haygood, was impressed to inquire of this, and it was brought to light. The brethren tread fearfully when asked of their hope or position among God's humble poor. "Boasting is excluded;" and one of the fruits of the Spirit is meekness.

Elder Turner came to us laden with the fruits of the Spirit, preaching the gospel, the truth as it is in Christ Jesus: declaring the whole counsel of God; the name of the Lord was magnified, and we had all things in common. There were many tears of joy manifested as we sang, "Oh, when shall I see Jesus?" and gave the right hand of fellowship. Elder Turner's text was taken from Luke 13:11-16.

We were also blessed to have Elder Malcolm Burkhalter and Elder Jerald Shipman and wife from San Antonio, on

Sunday; two able ministers by the grace of God. We here at Shepherd Fold were made glad, and strengthened in hope, as evidence was given us that the same Lord Jesus Christ preached here in the South, is also preached in the Northeastern part of these United States.

Dearly beloved, if any of you should pass by this way at any time, we would be most glad to have you in our homes, and to attend our meetings on the first Sundays and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M. We are wonderfully blessed to have Elder C. M. Haygood to serve us in a pastorial capacity. He and his dear wife drive some four hundred miles one way, to serve us. He also serves his home church at Lawn, Texas; one at Justiceburg; one at Earth; and one at Altus, Oklahoma — driving some two thousand miles a month. He also holds down a public job. He has a nice family of four children: two boys and two girls. Dearly beloved, I do not mean to eulogize the man, or boast, but rather praise the Lord for this servant fellow yoke bearer.

I feel impressed now to quote the Apostle Paul's address to the elders at Ephesus, Acts 20:28, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

In bonds of love and hope,
Jimmy Lindsey

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343 E. Pine Street,
Lodi, California 95242

Dear Editors of the Signs:

The year has gone by, and it is time to renew for the **Signs** another year. I look forward to getting it each month. The three editorials in the January issue, also the **Voices of the Past,** are all so good. Also I will mention the sermon by Elder Helms in the December issue: it is wonderful. I met Elder Helms at an association in Virginia while on an extended trip. All other articles I love to read and meditate on. I read other articles in Old Baptist Papers which I enjoy.

I read the **Signs of the Times** a lot while in my teens, and am still reading it. In three months I will be seventy-six years old. The last four years I have been located where I have enjoyed good meetings. I hope I praise the dear Lord as I ought for the sweet benefits to this poor sinner, always craving more and more of the heavenly manna, which God alone can give through his true ambassadors. On May 12th I will have been a member in the church fifty-four years; and my love for the true church has never faltered. My thought is, "Am I his, or am I not?"

May you be blessed to press on in your work.

Unworthily,
Mrs. Mabel Lindsey

"IT IS THE WORK OF GOD"

P. O. Box 625,
Spearsville, La.
Feb. 25, 1964

Mrs. Ruby Brandon,
Rt. 4,
Murray, Ky.

Dear Sister in Christ:

I have just mailed the three New Testaments and Psalms, and hope you receive them in good shape.

I greatly appreciate your good letter, and it is very clear that the Lord has taught and revealed his precious truth to you by his Spirit. Jesus says in Matthew 11:25,26, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." We can readily see from this, that there is no power, teacher or instructor, that can show these sacred truths to any one from whom God has hid them. Jesus says in John 15:5, "For without me ye can do nothing."

Jesus also says, "This is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." So we can very easily tell who's work it is for anyone to believe on Jesus Christ, whom God has sent. It is the work of God, not the work of men, or the sinner. No, indeed, because the creature is the one to whom Jesus said, "For without me ye can do nothing."

On the subject of men teaching men to know the Lord, this is utterly contrary to the New Covenant, which we are under in this Gospel Day. Read Hebrews 8:10-12: "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

So, dear sister, God said that he is the one who is to write his laws in their hearts and mind; and he lovingly said, "I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people." And then said that every man should not teach his neighbor and brother to know the Lord. Here is the precious evidence for the understanding of those in whose hearts God has written his laws: They know that from this time they cannot teach anyone to know the Lord; as most religious sects say they can.

It is written in 2 Timothy 4:3,4: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap unto themselves teachers having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." Now who are heaping to themselves many teachers this day and time? why those who have not had God's laws written in their hearts and mind: they have a greater number of religious teachers now than they ever had before. They are teaching erronious things, turning ears away from the truth unto fables. Dear sister, would we not much rather hope and trust in God who writes his laws in our hearts, than to trust in human teachers of today?

The modern teaching that God gives all men a chance to accept him, so he can save them, is a humbug against God's sovereign grace and truth. We find some plain teaching in Luke 10:31-35. It shows that this poor man who fell among thieves, was robbed, beaten and stripped, and left half-dead; and that by chance a priest passed by on the other side, and did not help him at all. Then likewise a Levite passed on the other side: and neither of these so called chances did him any good. But then a certain Samaritan journeyed that way; and came to him and poured in the oil and wine, and put him on his own beast and carried him to the inn. This certain Samaritan was Jesus Christ. It was prophesied where he should be born — there was no chance about him. The angel said to Joseph, "Fear not Joseph to take unto thee Mary thy wife. for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." There is no chance here, for **"He shall** save his people from their sins."

Jesus also said in John 6:37, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." So, again, there is no chance about it. Truly their salvation was sure and certain: and we find that their names were written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. In Ephesians 1:4, it says, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." . . .

Dear sister, I feel I have said enough, and cited Bible teaching enough, to show the difference between the genuine salvation of God to his people, and that so-called salvation which people believe

and teach: that it comes by what the creature does with what they call their chance of salvation. I hope I have been taught these things by the same light from heaven which shined about Paul, when Jesus Christ spoke to him; and Paul fell to the ground and desired the Lord to tell him what he would have him to do. We find there is no chance about it, but that salvation is accomplished unto all of God's chosen and elect people, through saving grace and abundant mercy, and the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ.

I hope I have not worried you with this great and extensive subject; and I humbly hope and trust that God in his mercy and grace, has written his effective laws in our hearts and minds. If so, then all is well, because whatsoever God does is done forever, and nothing can be put to it, and nothing can be taken away from it. In Malachi 3:6 God says, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

Read Daniel 4:35, which shows that God deals with things in a certain manner, and none can stay his hand; and he does his pleasure in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth: So there is no chance about it. In another place we are told, ". . . for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." God is almighty, eternal, self existant, and changes not at all from the way he thought and purposed all things. Isaiah wrote, "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."

May God bless you and all yours, together with all the dear household of faith everywhere.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

SOMEONE SENDS HER THE SIGNS

Crab Orchard, W. Va.

Dear Editors:

This note is in regard to some one sending me the **Signs of the Times.** I don't know who it was, not the least idea, but I surely thank whoever it was, for I appreciate it. It was kind and thoughtful, and I have no words to express what is in my heart. It was someone who knows that I love the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone.

I have been a member of the Primitive Baptists for nearly fifty years, but am now more or less a shut-in, due to age and sickness, and seldom am able to attend church as I did when I was younger; so I find much good reading in the **Signs** by the many good writers and able ministers of the true gospel, as I understand it.

If not asking too much, I would like for you to print this note in the Signs. I enclose $1.00 for your fund.

A sister, I hope,
Mrs. Pearl Martin

"IN WHOM WE LIVE, MOVE, AND HAVE OUR BEING"

Rt. 2, Box 240
Snyder, Texas, 79549

Dear Editors:

It has come time to renew my subscription to the dear **Signs,** so I am enclosing check to pay for same. I always look forward to the coming of each issue, knowing it will be laden with good news about our blessed Lord; who is able to save to the uttermost. I desire to be so very thankful to Him for all the rich blessings that are mine to enjoy from day to day, but feel so unworthy to receive them. I wonder daily why the dear Lord is so mindful of such a sinner as I know myself to be.

The world seems to be in such a turmoil and state of confusion, with one big question on everyone's mind: "Will man ever land on the moon?" Some have asked my opinion, and I am quick to state that if God has a purpose in such an event, he will certainly land one there; and if not, that all of men's efforts will be in vain. I for one am willing to leave the matter in His power. We are taught by inspiration that He is an all wise, all powerful God, who works and none can hinder, and hinders and none can work. I am made happy when I am blessed to shut all vain and evil thoughts out of my mind, and can feel the sweet presence of such a powerful, loving heavenly Father.

May God richly bless you editors, together with all of the Lord's people everywhere, is my prayer. I hope to be able to read the **Signs** for many years to come. Praise the dear Lord in whom we live, move and have our being, and who holds my destiny in his hand.

A little sister in a sweet hope,
Mrs. J. P. Madding

"THEY DO NOT MAKE HIM FEEL SO GOOD EITHER"

P. O. Box 207,
Weatherford, Texas

Dear Editors:

Find enclosed $5.00 for extension of my subscription to the good old **Signs of the Times.**

I guess I don't make others feel so good when I discriminate between the faith of God's elect, and those that are not of the faith of God's elect. But they don't make me feel so good when they contend that Christ is the Saviour, if you will do your part; and your main part is to accept him. A lady told my wife a bit ago that Jesus was to be accepted just like something upon a platter: you could accept or reject him as you would a plate of food that was offered you. Another lady told me the other day that Jesus died for everybody, if they would accept him. I very much balked when she said that; and I said, "Mrs. H., Jesus said you have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." "I know, she said, "but we have to accept him."

I do not mention this just to speak of anyone as a liar, but in John 2:22, we read, "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son." We have no choice in the matter: we must acknowledge Jesus as being the Saviour entirely, completely, and altogether, or be classed as antichrist. I contend that we are in the Faith of God's elect, and cannot at the same time be antichrist.

The Scripture says that Paul was a pattern of all that should afterward believe on Jesus' name. When Paul went to Damascus, did he make the first move towards God? was he forward in accepting the Lord Jesus Christ? Bible readers know that Jesus began the work in purifying Paul's heart by faith: with one big stroke, he gave Paul a blow that let him know who was God. Paul asked, "Who art thou Lord?" Up until that time, he didn't know or care who he was.

I often introduce two parties; and the custom is to acknowledge each other, and they often say, "I am glad to know you." It's true they know each other by name, but do they have an experimental knowledge of each other? No, not at all. Paul knew something about this Lord experimentally, and afterwards he never got through telling about his experience in meeting the Lord. It was by the grace of God he was what he was. It could not have been by good works, because he had none. Again, let us note that Jesus told him, "Thou art a chosen vessel unto me" So, according to God's own purpose and grace, he chose Paul that he should bear his name among the Gentiles. Paul afterwards preached, "Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." But he didn't get anywhere with anybody except the ones that had faith toward the Lord Jesus

Christ. Therefore, it was revealed from faith to faith. Stephen was stoned to death in Paul's presence, preaching while he was dying; but Paul at that time had no faith, so nothing was revealed to him: It must be from faith to faith. I contend that it must be from the faith of God's elect, to the faith of God's elect. All the treasures of both knowledge and wisdom are hidden in Him. If they are hidden in him, how can we of ourselves get any of these treasures?

Brother Wood, or whoever reads this, I am a rambling writer. May God bless and keep you all.

A little brother, I hope,
W. C. Purdy

(Ramble on, Brother Purdy; we like this kind of rambling. — J. D. W.)

"REFRESHING TO FEED ON THE CRUMBS"

476 Williams Street,
Cumberland, Md. 21502

Elder and Sister Wood,
Precious Ones in Hope:

It was wonderful to hear from you, and so glad that Sister Wood is somewhat improved. I trust that this finds you both in fair health. I had hoped to be given something spiritual to write, but, alas, I feel so destitute; and unless given understanding from the three that bear record in heaven, my feeble effort will be as sounding brass and a tinkling symbol.

You and the others are blessed to write so many wonderful edifying truths, which cause the readers to praise God in their hearts for such gifts to mortal men. It surely refreshes the reader's hearts to feed on the crumbs that fall from the Master's table and drink from that fountain that never runs dry. How wonderful to know that the great Shepherd has enclosed his sheep within that luscious green pasture of his undying love. "He will cover them with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust;" and they shall be taught of him, from the least to the greatest, to know and to heed the commands of their Redeemer. I find some comfort in reading his promises, and considering his great salvation, hoping against hope that one like me could be of that number.

"On such love my soul still ponders,
Love so great, so rich, so free;
Say, while lost in holy wonder,
Why, O Lord, such love for me?"

I believe the eyes of the Lord are upon them that fear him, and hope in his mercy. Their souls wait for the Lord, and he is their help and shield. The little the righteous man has, is better than the riches of many wicked. "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." I would not exchange the little hope I have for all the glamour and wealth this world holds. He has promised to give his angels charge over the ones he redeemed.

We were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, or traditions received from our fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ. He is our rock and refuge: his children are his portion; and as the apple of his eye he waters the garden of his love every day with the refining dew of his great love. And when the tender plants are refreshed

"The Lord into his garden comes,
Well pleased to smell their poor perfume;
And leads them to a feast divine,
Sweeter than honey, milk or wine."

He has promised to be with them through six troubles, and not forsake them in the seventh. A mother may forsake her child, but God never forgets one of his for whom Christ died: They will all be drawn by his Spirit to come unto him; and he will in no wise cast them off. His grace will always be sufficient for all their needs; and they are all taught that:

"God is the refuge of his saints,
When storms of sharp distress invade:
Before we can offer our complaints,
Behold Him present with his aid."

"The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." The steps of the redeemed are ordered of the Lord, and though at times they are cast down, the Lord upholds them with his everlasting arms, and will supply all their needs in due season. He is their shield against all the fiery darts of Satan. O, may we be given strength to stagger not at his promises.

"Faith, 'tis a precious gift,
Where'er it is bestowed:
It boasts of a celestial birth,
And is the gift of God."

He chose his children away back in eternity; and also prepared a sacrifice to redeem them. Man had no choice or part in his own redemption, or purification, or sanctification, nor can he by any means redeem his brother, or give God a ransom for him. (Psalm 49:7) Only now that God has opened their eyes to spiritual understanding, are they enabled by him to lift up their feeble heads, and give all glory to him. Then

"Why should we a drop bemoan,
Who has a fountain near:
A fountain which will ever run
With waters sweet and clear."

"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." (Psalm 33:12) My hope is that we are among that number.

I too have been saddened at the passing of many gifted soldiers of the cross; yet we thank God for the shining footprints they left behind. And we are somewhat comforted in the knowledge that God will never leave himself without a witness. There are still a few who love the truth, and have not bowed to the image of Baal; and who are called according to His purpose.

May the angel of the Lord abundantly abide with you and yours.

From the very least, if one at all,
Hester B. Thompson

THE SIGNS IS VALUABLE TO HER

27124 Perkins Road,
Madera, Calif. 93637

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I see it is time to renew my subscription for the dear old paper I love so much. I get so much out of it: I can be very low in the valley, and when I read the writings of the dear sisters and brothers, I get such a lift it is worth its weight in gold to me; and I would rather have it than the gold, for gold would not help me any; but the wonderful words of encouragement that the dear Old Baptist folks give me do. I agree with them one hundred percent.

I think that the writings of Mrs. Mattie Underwood, Elder Lambert, Elder Hudson, Elder Wood, Elder Spangler, and many others are so wonderful: I am so grateful that I am blessed to have the **Signs** in my home, for it is a comfort to my poor grieved heart. I hope I am never without it, or unable to read it, for there is no meeting place near me. I went on a trip last fall and heard Elder W. W. Taylor and Elder Loyd Wall in Dallas. They both were wonderful — God blessed them both to speak the truth.

May God richly bless all you dear folks to keep up the good work. Please remember this worm of the dust when at the throne of grace, when led of the Holy Spirit to do so.

In hope of eternal life,
Mrs. R. E. McPherson

"OFTEN CANNOT BE EXPLAINED"

Rt. 1, Box 111,
Gustine, Texas 76455

Dear Editors of the Signs.

You will find enclosed a check for which please renew my subscription one year; the balance may be used as a contribution to the Indigent Fund; or in any way you think best.

I have been blessed to read the **Signs** for a number of years, and have many

times been cheered and comforted by the letters from the editors and the other writers. Often to me only one article would be worth more than a lifetime subscription to the paper. It contains that which we have experienced: that can neither be bought or sold; and often cannot be explained.

For the past two or more years I have been able to attend church but a few times because of my age and its many infirmities. So the articles I read in the pages of the **Signs** seem even of more comfort and more value than ever before. It has occurred to me that the writers are possessed of a more or deeper spiritual understanding, or a greater gift of the Holy Spirit in their writings; however, the re-prints of articles written long ago, are both enlightening, comforting, and encouraging. I enjoy reading them over many times.

May the dear Lord continue to bless the writers and editors in the years ahead, as he has in the past, to carry on for many years in like manner as they are now doing; and may I add, I believe He will. If I could but know I am one of the least, I would be satisfied.

To one and all I bid adieu for this time; and may the Holy Spirit ever abide with you as you continue on life's ofttimes rugged way.

Ida Bowers

5840-Court O, C. P.
Birmingham, Alabama

Elder W. D. Griffin,

Dearly Beloved in the Lord;

"A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps." (Prov. 16:9.)

In our pilgrimage in this life we find this statement brought forcibly to our mind; and it seems to me, since we must concede it's true, that there could never be any comfort in any form of doctrine that embraces the thought that we are master of our own destiny. We must occupy the place of secondary power, for there is no power but of God, even the powers that be are ordained of God. (Rom. 13:I); and we are indeed subject to the higher power. This world would say, when our hopes and desires are not fulfilled, that it is some satanic force has intervened against us; but I would rather believe that the hand of the Lord has established his purpose and voided any plans of man to alter in any degree his will.

We wanted so much to be with you over the week-end, and meet with all the brethren where meetings had been arranged, and we made many plans to that end. How fragile we are, and how feeble are our efforts to bring such things about. How many times we must bow to Him, even though disappointing to the flesh. We were blessed so wonderfully, I think, with the short visit we had in our home and in our church here. We learn in these things that man not only fails in devising his way in natural things, but it is also true regarding his abilities to accomplish his own salvation. In our best state we are altogether vanity; and the way that seems right unto man, we find it is the way unto death. O, how helpless we are! how dependent we are on the mercy and grace of God! How wonderful it is that poor sinners have an intercessor, one who feels the infirmities of his brethren, one who knows their shortcomings and lack of knowledge.

Not withstanding all of this frailness, He has loved his people with such a manner of love that he gave his own life for them, that they be fellow-heirs with him in that eternal inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled and fadeth not away. What a Surety God's people have in this, for they rest in the keeping power of God. This rest is in faith, — he that keeps them, gives them the faith. This God-given faith keeps them unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. What a wonderful thing it is to think upon this complete surety, for how forcibly we know that there is not anything as help-

less in this time world, as is the church of Jesus Christ. In her relationship with this world she stands vulnerable before it, for she does not have an earthly defense; she does not possess the food to feed her young. As we see her viewed by wisdom, she does not have any breast. (S. S. 8:8) The question is asked, "What shall we do for our sister when she is spoken for?" She is to be spoken for, we may rest assured. Let us speak of that wisdom that we might find out what is to be done for her. Not one thing will we do for her; for we find that she has breasts like unto towers, and in His eyes she is as one that found favor.

This wisdom is looked upon as prevailing, for it delivered Queen Esther. All foes are brought under subjection; and we hear the words of the king as he intervenes in her behalf, saying, "Write ye also for the Jews, as it liketh you, in the king's name and sealed with the king's ring; for the writing which is written in the king's name and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse." (Esther 8:8) Here are the people of God; here is their security; here is their salvation; these are the wonderful things that rejoice the hearts of God's people in all their tribulations here in this life. Thanks be unto God, sin only reigned until death came to us all, but grace will reign through righteousness unto eternal life.

The Lord willing, we will come your way in June when the children get out of school. Our hope is that God will bless us to that end.

Come our way again soon, and let us hear from you.

Our love to both of you,
Claude and Irene Hand

GOD'S LOVE BESTOWED UPON US

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure." (John 3:1-3)

This is the season of the year when everyone is talking of brotherly love, and peace on earth and good will to all men. The world says that God's love is to all men everywhere; and that the only thing that is required of them, is that they accept it. This is not the love of God that is set forth in the above scripture; and is not the kind of love that says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."

I believe that one of the things that all of God's children have in common, is a heartfelt love for such scriptures as the one above, because their experiences teach them these truths. They may have many and varied experiences as they travel in this life: the Lord leads them in the way that pleases him, in making himself known to them as their Saviour and King.

They may have been brought thru heavy trials, sorrows and heartaches; or He may have revealed himself to them in a sudden mysterious revelation of his love, mercy and grace, in a way they themselves can't explain. There is one thing sure, however, it will be in a way and manner that will cause them to realize that it was performed by the sovereign work of God; and not the result of any works performed by the creature. They will begin immediately to search the Scriptures; and they love to hear of the grace and mercy of an all wise, all powerful, omnipotent God, who works his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

They are made to acknowledge God in all their ways, and will no longer claim to be directing their own steps; or performing the works of God. They realize that they never would have chosen

Christ as their Lord and Saviour since they did not even know that he existed until he made himself known to them. They now feel to know what the writers are speaking of in the scriptures, because the scriptures agree with their own experiences.

This love is bestowed upon God's children sovereignly, and independent of any conditions met by them; in the same manner as the rain and snow falls upon all the earth according to God's own pleasure. They realize that something wonderful has been done for them, and they sing, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound." Or they read, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us;" and rejoice with joy unspeakable, because they now have a hope that they are included with this people. This also causes them to understand the scripture, "Except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." They feel to be, indeed, a new creature since this change occurred.

Their walk, their talk, and their whole life has been transformed within them. It is not visible to the world at large, but it is readily visible to those who have been along the same path. The individual may think that he is doing a pretty good job of hiding it, but this is the lamp that is not set under a bushel. It is seen by those who have been given an eye to see. The individual feels to be one alone at this time, for he desires to be accepted among the beloved; and yet he feels too unworthy to be counted among the children of God. These feel to be getting worse, instead of better. Their sincerest desire is to be kept from doing anything that would bring harm to the church, or to this precious truth, which is now their whole life. Oh, if they could only know the love and longing, reaching out to them from those who have seen the evidence manifested in their careful, fearful walk.

Their desire to be with the brethren, and hear them talk of these things, and sing the beautiful songs of praise; and to hear the gospel of God our Saviour proclaimed to their comfort and understanding. They love to hear of the power, predestination, foreordination, and purpose of God in saving his people from their sins, according to the good pleasure of His own will. How wonderful it is to believe a doctrine such as this, and then to have a hope that you see things in your travels that indicate God has so looked upon you!

As they continue to travel in this low ground of sin and sorrow, reading the experiences of others, hearing the gospel preached, reading the Scriptures, and, finally, after all attempts to be better (in their mind) as a child of God, they are made to acknowledge that it is not in man that walks, to direct his steps; and to acknowledge that it is only through the loving mercy of God that any will reach that heavenly home. All through this uneven journey they never lose sight of that hope that was set before them, when they were turned from their former ways. Though they will continue to have trials as long as they live in this world, in them all they will never lose that hope. "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither our forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." There is no foundation to which their hope could be anchored, to be more secure. It is as sure as God is God, and that Jesus Christ the Son was sent into the world to redeem that which was lost. This is the hope that purifieth the man in whom it dwells. (1 John 3:3)

This love that is bestowed upon the children of God, causes them to love one another with the same love wherewith they themselves are loved. It causes them to have all things in common, and each to prefer his brother above himself. It causes them to desire to be found at their brethren's feet in humble submission to that bond of love that unites their hearts and minds in prayer to God, for the manifold bles-

sings which they have received from His bountiful hand, and his loving kindness towards them.

Yes, what wondrous love is this, O, my soul! May it ever fill the hearts of God's children while they travel this wilderness of sin. This love is what lifts them up above the things of this life, and makes them sit together in heavenly places in Christ, and feast on the tender riches of God's grace. As it is written, "And now abideth faith, hope, and charity; but the greatest of these is charity (love)." The greatest gift is love. This is a beautiful gift, for nothing except good comes from any actions prompted by this love dwelling in the hearts of His children.

God is the giver of every good and perfect gift. The scriptures teach that "God is love," and, "We love him because he first loved us." Therefore, God in the riches of his mercy and grace, has given a little of himself to every one of his children; and this is sufficient for time and eternity, assuring all the heirs of promise an everlasting abode with him. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God."

"When love in one delightful stream
Through every bosom flows,
And union sweet and dear esteem
In every action glows.

Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above:
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

Herein lies their hope and prayer that this is the love that passeth all natural understanding, and that this is the seal wherewith their hope with Christ in God, is sealed.

May God bless the truth and seal it to his children to their joy and salvation for time and eternity.

Richard H. Campbell,
2761 Cochese Cove.,
Memphis, Tenn.

"I WAS JUDGED IN A FEW MOMENTS"

Rt. 1, Box 45
Bearden, Arkansas

Dear Editors and Readers of the Signs:

My mind has been carried back to the Summer of 1938, and I will try to relate some of the things that took place. I have been impressed to write for many years, but couldn't.

To my great surprise, late in the afternoon I was coming into the back yard of our home, and all at once a voice seemed to speak to me; and I was judged in a few moments. I felt that it came from the Lord of heaven, and with a great force. He did not tell me that my deeds were received; but declared to me that I was going to die and was going to Hell, for my sins had overtaken me. Never before had I realized what I was: my worldly pleasure had come to a close. Those who have experienced this, know that I didn't have one word to say; only to beg for mercy. Christ said unto Nicodemus, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again." (St. John 3:7)

All that I thought to do, was to go; and I took across the field and went into the woods. If I ever prayed, it took place then. Those who have been there, know what it is. I tell you I didn't help in saving a poor sinner: it was, "Have mercy, O Lord." What else could I have said, for I realized that I was in the hands of a sovereign God, who does according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. (Daniel 4:35)

I believe the Lord came and delivered me, for I was condemned. The only thing I could do was to beg the Lord to forgive my sins. "For I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died." (Romans 7:9) This is the way we find out what we are: If I am not deceived, I tasted death. Christ said, "But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste

death till they see the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:27)

I made many promises, and broke all except one: I would get busy, get married, and live right the best I could. The 15th of January that Winter, I was married to Miss Nuel Chambers. One Sunday afternoon my daddy and one of my brothers were talking on the Bible, and I stood off a few feet and listened. When the conversation was over, I went home; and after supper I got my Bible and began reading. I would read every night, sometimes until twelve or one o'clock. When I finished reading the Bible through, I was condemned; and I knew that all that could do me any good was the mercy of the Lord; and I continued trying to pray.

The third Sunday in August, 1942, Dorsie, one of my sisters, was baptized. After then we went to Pilgrims Rest Church. At the closing of the meeting, they offered an opportunity for members. There came something that filled my poor soul, and I am persuaded it was the Spirit of God; and I was taken into the church. My little hope gets so dim it is almost gone; but I am persuaded that what God does, it shall be forever. The promise I made that was kept, the Lord kept it for me, which gives me a hope that he answered my prayer. "And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." (Matthew 21:22)

The second Sunday in September, 1942, I was baptized by Elder W. W. Taylor; where later my dear father and mother were baptized by Elder J. T. Everett. Later doubts and fears seemed to overtake me. One night I dreamed or saw in a vision, that I was knelt by a pit; and my thought was, here is my doom. I was in such great distress, I don't believe I could have stood it very long. But before I could be dumped into the pit, there came a man I believe was my Saviour, who took hold of my arm and pulled me back. The pit vanished and the smoke disappeared. The next morning I awoke with great joy of relief. "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay . . ." (Psalms 40:1,2) This is most precious to me, for he takes care of his children night and day. "For he keepeth back his soul from the pit . . ." (Job 33:18) I cannot say that I have been born again: I only live in hope.

One day during the time I was trying to "live right," the dark clouds of woe and misery were all that I could see. I went across the field seeking rest, and laid down on the ground, and said, Lord here I am. I couldn't hear a sound, and could say no more. We find in the 107th Psalm, "They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in." I searched but could not find; yet I tried with all my might. I hear some say that they are on their way to heaven; but I know that I cannot go myself: I will have to be carried. I was on my way until I was taught differently. But, O, the time when the Lord reached down, as I hope, and carried me into that City I had longed to dwell in; it is precious to me. Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." (John 5:25) They will hear, for the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword. (Hebrews 4:12)

The mercies of the Lord are most precious when our cup begins to run over, as David said in the 23rd Psalm. The tears flow from my eyes sometimes, when that precious hope is revived; and my cup runneth over. I have a hope that Jesus the head of his Church, his body, died for my sins," . . . who was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification." (Romans 4:25) This is steadfast forever, for a bone of him shall not be broken. "He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken." (Psalm 24:20)

It makes no difference what any may say, think, or do against this little body: it will be for their good. I just have a

little hope that I am one of them. I feel bad to think of the past when I was trying to live right: when I thought things were well with me. I would get mad, beat my mule, run the chickens out of the yard; and my wife asked me to draw a bucket of water, throw a fit too bad to mention. Then I would try to do better, but went right back and did the same things again. I knew that Hell would be my doom. We read in Psalm 107:14, "He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands asunder." And we read in John 6:44, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Sometime in the elect's life they are taught that they are justly condemned; but then later, in a moment, they are taught that they are saved by grace, and not by works." . . . as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." (Acts 13:48) They will receive their inheritance — it is a free gift. "He shall choose our inheritance for us . . ." (Psalm 47:4)

When we have supped from the cup, or eaten the crumbs from the Master's table, we know it is a foretaste of heaven here below. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." (1 Cor. 2:9-10) The elect shall be taught, and great shall be their peace. They look to the Lord, and him only. We find it is written in John 6:45, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God." "A remnant shall be saved." (Romans 9:27) And Christ said in Matthew 24: 25, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." So then, the way is fixed, and the time is set, and the place secure.

On the 24th of October, 1963, I was paralyzed with a stroke in my left side. I feel that the Lord had a purpose in it; and he is able to reconcile me to rejoice and be contented. I hope to be thankful. I hope that the brother I read about in the **Signs** who suffered the stroke, is much better. I can walk a little without a cane.

" I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people." Dear little ones of the most high God, that is sufficient, for Jesus is coming back as a King. "Then shall he say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matthew 25:34) He will carry the blessed into the kingdom, where all heartaches, pains, troubles, sorrows and afflictions shall be no more; to rejoice forevermore.

H. L. Gardner

HYMNS SHOULD ALWAYS EXPRESS TRUTH

Rt. 2,
Pine Hill Nursing Home,
Quitman, La.

Dear Brethren:

That is, I hope to be a brother of the saints, and in the doctrine set forth in the *Signs of the Times*. It is the only doctrine that can save a sinner like me; but sometimes my hope gets so small that I am down in the valley almost without hope.

I love such hymns as, "Amazing Grace," and "How Firm a Foundation." Our prayers and sermons are based on the same principles. The preachers often express their weakness and inability, not feeling able to go forward and preach; but I sometimes feel that for the preachers to express such, is preaching too, for we all feel that way.

I lack less than two months of being eighty-two years of age, so I now write with a pencil. When I read the poetry in the January number, starting, "Lord from the closet in my heart," I felt that I had heard a good sermon. Also, the poetry in the November number, starting, "I am weary of straying," was excellent. A brother and I sang it to a tune in the Lloyd's book.

In 1913 or 1914, I wrote a short piece on the subject of "Deliverance Through Prayer," which was published in the *Signs*. I was traveling the road alone at the time of that prayer, and it seemed that I was praying before I had thought of doing so.

I enclose $3.00 to renew my subscription. In hope of a better home over there; if so, it will be by free grace alone.

W. A. Chandler

---

158 E. 17th Street,
Hialeah, Fla. 33010

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

Please accept this $3.00 for another year of the dear *Signs*. I do look forward for each copy, and read its pages with joy and much comfort.

I don't know you in the flesh, but I do feel to know you in the Spirit. We don't hear or read much in these times that comforts or feeds our souls, and how hungry we get sometimes for the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

May God see fit to keep the paper coming even to the day of our Saviour's return. Sometimes I find myself yearning for His return. Men's hearts are failing them for the things that are coming to pass. Surely the signs point to his return, and soon. Man seems to have come to his bounds. I would like for you editors to write something on this subject.

God bless you; and pray for me as God gives you utterance.

In hope,
Mrs. Chas. M. Hartman

EXPERIENCE OF C. W. VASS
(Continued from March)

I went on with a disturbed mind
Until I was twenty-two;
At sundry times I was so uneasy
I knew not what to do.

But on my way to work one day,
How changed was my condition!
A flood of tears did fill my eyes,
I hope in deep contrition.

About this time I dreamed a dream,
The import of which was sealed,
But joy and gladness filled my heart
When later it was revealed.

Thinking little about the dream then,
I sought after worldly pleasure,
Which lasted for a season, then
Came anguish in great measure.

Coupled with nervous disorder now,
While the War raged overseas,
My conflict within grew bitter
I went down on my knees.

The piercing thought of being lost,
Of course, overwhelmed me,
But a fit subject for destruction,
I did really feel to be.

Thoughts of self-destruction I had,
I do hesitate to say,
But then I find that even good men
Are tempted this way.

Now for a time I was not exercised;
No tears my eyes bedewed,
And in experience, mine iniquities
Had not yet been subdued.

At age thirty-three I had a dream,
Through which I was revived,
And when I heard the joyful sound,
In tears, I comfort derived

In this dream, I viewed a spring
Of water crystal clear,
And as I did drink of this water
How pure it did appear!

As I stood and did freely drink
At this rockbound spring,
From the depth of my heart I felt
Like praising Zion's King.

I hope the water was typical of
The blood of the Lamb,
A spiritual Rock of which drank
The seed of Abraham.

At age thirty-seven, these words
Came to me in a dream:
"To God and to the Lamb, I'll sing,"
And may I join the theme.

I was returning from the far West
On a fast western train,
And on the following morning,
From singing I could hardly refrain.

I did have such sweet meditations,
While the train sped along,
But owing to my manner of travel,
I could not sing a song.

Providentially, at the age of forty,
To a great city I did go,
Never dreaming that on this visit,
A sudden change I'd know.

I walked the streets of this city,
Seeking rest and recreation;
Tired and rebellious I wandered about
Without the joys of salvation.

I sat down near a thoroughfare,
With tall buildings surrounded,
And when I arose to continue on,
I confess I was astounded.

My departure seemed to be at hand;
I could not draw my breath,
Momentarily expecting to drop dead,
While unfit to meet death.

In the brightness of the noonday sun,
I proceeded toward Broadway,
But there was darkness in my soul,
And I began to pray.

I begged the Lord to let me live,
Even to be good to me,
And while death seemed imminent,
He heard my urgent plea.

(To be Concluded)

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Harmony Primitive Baptist Church will be held, God willing, all day Saturday and Sunday, May 28 and 29, 1966. Services to begin Saturday at 10:30 A. M. and Sunday at 10 A. M.

The meeting house is located one mile East of Huntington, W. Va. city limits, on Cedarcrest Drive; and one-quarter mile off U. S. Rt. 60, at Eastern Heights Shopping Center. All who are interested are welcome to come visit us.

Elder J. R. Lane, Moderator
110 Harrison Court
Huntington, W. Va. 25707
Mrs. Mildred Stanley, Clerk
1046 Cedarcrest Drive
Huntington, W. Va. 25705

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To February 1, 1966)

Mrs. W. J. Johnson, Tex.	$1.00
J. B. Blaylock, N. C.	3.00
Mrs. J. O. Morrow, Tex.	2.00
Drusiler Gillispie, Va.	1.00
Elder W. D. Griffin, Del.	2.00
Mrs. Ada Bond, Va.	9.00
Winfrey Parsons, Va.	2.00
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Mrs. J. O. Scott, N. C.	3.00
Mrs. Mary L. Messick, Ala.	1.00
Ida J. Bowers, Tex.	2.00
Miss Ethel Carter, Va.	2.00

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EDITORIAL

PLEASANT WORDS

"Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones." (Proverbs 16:24)

None but those who have experienced bitterness of soul can fully appreciate the sweetness of the doctrines of the Gospel. All of you who have been made to know your own weaknesses can truly rely upon the strength of God's love and power. If you have been sick unto death because of your many sins; then, words of grace and mercy are the only tonics to bring good health. If God has worked mightily in your soul in giving you eternal Life your taste has been so changed that words of worldly wisdom have lost their sweetness to you. Words gleaned from the Holy Scriptures which proclaim God's sovereignty, love, unchangeableness, promises, mercy, and grace;

all have a peculiar sweetness which the un-regenerated cannot taste. If you be so richly blessed that you possess a soul sweetened by the spirit of God's love; then, only pleasant words will flow from your mouth. Let us read the 23rd verse of the same chapter of Proverbs: "The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips."

According to Proverbs 16:21 — "The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the SWEETNESS OF THE LIPS increaseth learning." Both bitter and sweet does not flow from the same fountain. If the heart has been sweetened, sweet words will flow through the lips. If a sinner has been shown the greatness of his sins, and has tasted the sweetness of God's grace; he will speak words of mercy to other sinners instead of words of condemnation. Whatever is in the heart usually comes forth from the mouth. If the heart be bitter, the words flowing from the mouth will also be bitter. Jesus said, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things." (Matt. 12:34-35.) Words are like arrows from a bow, they never return. Jesus said "That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." If you have this wisdom in your hearts, you will be very careful and cautious in speaking that you do not offend anyone. If you be angry, sin not. It is better to refrain from speaking when angry than to speak grievous words which will stir up anger. It is better to be silent when you cannot think of pleasant words to say. Bad words have wrought more evil than plagues, pestilences, battles, and diseases all put together. You may mend any possessions you keep near you; you may heal outer wounds of the body; you may change your apparel; but, you cannot take away the sting that has dis-heartened some poor soul caused by a few careless words spoken by you. There are words spoken which have done more separating than the wielding of swords. We ought to be very careful in our speaking, writing, and conversing.

When Christ sent forth the seventy into every city and place where He would come, He instructed them specifically and exactly the first words to be said upon entering a house: "PEACE be to this house." Even though these words might not be received by the occupants; yet, they were to be said by His ministers. You cannot think of a more pleasant blessing to be invoked than PEACE. No other word is more satisfying and pleasant than the word, PEACE. His ministers were not to wait until they obtained evidence that everything was in order and that they would be wholly received before they said anything. They were instructed to say upon entering the house, "Peace be unto this house." Pleasant words were to be said which would be received into the souls of those who really desired peace. Yet there are those who do not seek after peace because they are satisfied with their own righteousness and their soul is full. This agrees with Proverbs 27:7, "The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the **hungry** soul every bitter thing is sweet."

Pleasant words are as an HONEYCOMB. As my mind is dwelling upon the labors of a gospel minister in his constant search for the sweet nuggets of precious truth so that he may be able to fitly speak words in season to the weary; my prayer now is — , Make me as one of Thy honeybees. As the bee goes from flower to flower in gathering honey; may I be enabled to gather sweet gospel truths from the sacred Scriptures. As the bee deposits this honey into the honeycomb set in the hive, may I be able to feed wisdom, words of knowledge and understanding into the empty souls which hunger for the truth in the church. As the bee is especially gifted in gathering, processing and depositing honey; may I be endowed with special gifts to gather,

properly speak, and store in the church special honey-drippings of God's spiritual sanctuary, the Word of Truth. The honey-drippings of the honeycomb is sweet to the taste of a natural man; so is the gospel truth sweet to the spiritual taste of believers. The sweetness of the gospel to the believer is the only thing we can think of that is said in the Scriptures to be sweeter than Honey. See Psalms 19:10. The tongue of the bee is peculiarly fitted to lap the nectar of the flowers, and the bee is considered to be the wisest of insects. The tongue of ministers is just as peculiarly gifted to speak the choicest of Scriptures and to lap from them fitting phrases to suit the need of hungry hearts in most-wisely dividing the word of truth. As bees abound in almost all parts of the natural world; even so ministering servants are found in almost all parts of God's spiritual kingdom. As bees cling to the queen-bee and make her dwelling place to be theirs; the fruitful children of God cling to the church, Christ's bride, and bring their treasures, spiritual gifts, into the church. When I speak of God's ministers I am including even those of least esteem of all laboring children of God.

God has ordained the growth and spread of the churches as He ordained the multiplication of the bees, and their habit of some leaving the home hive and establishing other dwelling places. Churches have flourished from a very small beginning and have so multiplied that new churches are continuing to be established. Some from one colony will leave their home place and establish a new colony. When members are constantly added to the church and new local churches are being constituted it shows a healthy state.

It is true of churches as is also true among bees. Sometimes poison is brought into the hive by bees, which will result in the death of that colony. Sometimes unscriptural doctrine and practice is initiated into a local church which will result in that local church dying. Sometimes ants or other insects will invade a colony of bees and kill them to such extent that they no longer exist. Sometimes enemies of the truth find their way into a local church and destroy it until it can no longer function. May God cause us to take inventory of our condition. God's work prospers. His Church grows. The Lord adds to His Church. Either the church of your membership is growing or becoming blighted or poisoned. Interest is either on the increase or decreasing. Faith of God's children is as a mustard seed. How is it like a mustard seed?? It grows!!! Movement is the sign of life. Good works are the evidence of faith. Is the honeycomb dry? Is there no honey or sweetness when you come together? Sweet doctrines and practices, as well as sweet experiences are brought to the center, which is the church, where all feast together. Sweetness in fellowship, communion, and worship enriches God's storehouse where the saints gather. Is this true where you attend? I had rather be with a few where there is growth than to be with thousands where there is a decline. I prefer leaving a full house and begin in a new place where there is room for honey to be stored. When a family has been completed and children have become grown; one by one they leave their former places of dwelling and take on the responsibility of beginning new homes. There is progress in every realm of God's work. The same law of growth and multiplication works both in the natural and spiritual realm. When the Lord raises up leaders in His churches; when they become of age, they go out into new places to assume their ordained place and position to plant other churches. If it be of the Lord these new churches will prosper and grow. God's supply of Honey will never be exhausted. Hungry and thirsty souls shall ever increase so that there will always be room for it to be deposited. As long as we go forth in the right way the work of the Lord's chosen ones whom He hath ordained to glorify Him shall prosper.

His gospel shall be preached. There will ever be ears blessed to hear and hearts to understand. The sweetness of God's rich providence and amazing grace shall be measured and dropped into hearts that have been prepared to receive it.

I suppose that there is no other natural sweetness besides honey that comes to man already refined. Other sweets have to be condensed to make it sweeter and richer. The doctrines of the Scriptures are like honey. The Holy Sacred Scriptures are already condensed and refined. Try condensing honey further by burning and you get an unpleasant odor. Try condensing the Scriptures of Truth by leaving some out and overemphasizing others and it becomes unpleasant even to a soul desiring truth in its purity. God does not use ministers to lessen the importance of any scriptural teachings, but rather to rightly divide the word of truth. None is left out if the whole is rightly divided. There is a curse pronounced upon those who attempt to take away. Some might want to weaken the true teaching of the scriptures by adding the puny work of sinful man to make it coincide with opinions naturally believed. When this is attempted it is not pure doctrine. The doctrine relative to the sovereignty of God is sweet when positively affirmed and proved by the Scriptures, that God works all things after the counsel of His own will; yet, when the duty of man to fear God and keep His commandments is made less obligatory in stressing the point, it is over-emphasized, thus losing its sweetness and purity. On the other hand — : preaching the duty of man to fear God and keep His commandments cannot be over emphasized unless God's sovereignty is limited to stress the point. It is **not** rightly dividing the word of truth when one undertakes to proclaim that man is in no way accountable, responsible, or obligated to keep God's law, in order to prove that God is sovereign. On the other hand — : it is **not** rightly dividing the word of truth when one proclaims that God does not work all things after the counsel of His own will, in order to emphasize the duty, obligation, and responsibility of man. May God's ministers continue to preach both: the sovereignty of God and the duty of man. I know full well that without HIM we can do NOTHING; yet, I know that we CAN DO all things through Him Who strengtheneth us. It is sweet to know that the prayers of His saints are not in vain. It is sweet to feel that He hears and answers prayers. It is sweet to believe not only that HE IS; but, He also is a REWARDER OF THEM THAT DILIGENTLY SEEK HIM.

Pleasant words are as an honeycomb; sweet to the soul, and HEALTH TO THE BONES. The wholesome words of our Lord are not only sweet to the soul in making it happy, but also heal the sick mind and bind up the broken heart; as well as, healing broken bones. These pleasant words give courage sufficient to go from faith to faith, and from strength to strength. They cause the inward man to be strengthened as honey causes the outward man to be built up. Written articles of faith and church covenants are made healthy by members who adhere to them and abide by them. The structure of church organization could not be healthy unless godly zealous gracious followers of Christ were the constituents. The structure may be well-founded but it will become unhealthy without the Spirit.

As God pours words of eternal life into our hearts and minds and makes us know the sweetness of His mercy and love, we should, also, pour words of comfort and encouragement into the ears of poor struggling sinners, making manifest mercy and grace to them. Jesus Christ died for sinners because He loved them; yet, He hated their sins. If we be Christ-like — and we are if He be born in us — we will even love those who persecute us; yet, hate their sins. If one goes into error we are to help save the erring brother; yet, help kill the error. We are to call no man unclean; yet, we are not to partake of his unclean deeds. We are commanded to speak softly, not angrily; pleasantly, not

harshly; reasonably, not contentiously; and, we are commanded to love one another but not to hate.

If I had to choose one word in defining God and could use no other, I would choose the word LOVE. John said **God is love.** If I had to choose three words in summing up God's commandments, I would choose THOU SHALT LOVE. Jesus quoted two commandments upon which all the law and prophets hang. The second was like unto the first in that they both began with: **Thou shalt love.** Love is a pleasant word. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor. Where there is love there is peace. Where there is peace there is ease of conscience. Where there is ease of conscience there is happiness. Where there is pure happiness there is Heaven. Where there is Heaven there God is. We taste it now and then. We experience such sweetness in these foretastes of Heaven that our desires are greatly encouraged with the hope that some sweet day after awhile, we shall be wafted into our eternal home above where we can feast forever upon those sweets which are SWEETER THAN HONEY. May God add His blessings. AMEN. E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

PREDESTINATION

"The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice." (Psalm 97:1)

There is much dissension in what is called the religious world, about the amount of government held in the hands of God over the beings and events of this world; and if these contentions were confined to the children of Ashod and Moab, we would have cause neither for astonishment nor regret; but it is sorrowful indeed to know that many who on other points seem to be sound and experimental, deny the universality of God's providential government.

War has been waged in a multitude of forms against the absolute predestination of all things. Some have virtually denied the government of God altogether in reference to the conduct and destiny of mankind, by asserting what they call the free agency of men. If men as agents are truly free to act as they please, they cannot be accountable for their actions. Accountability is restriction; and if either men or devils are free, they are subject to no restriction; and if restricted in their course, they are not free agents, but they are bound by the laws and penalties, and by the direct providence of God. God has said that they are restricted. "The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain." Do the advocates of free agency believe what God has said upon this subject? Or do they only mean that in the committing of sin they act voluntarily? If this be their meaning we will not dispute the point, for experience demonstrates the position; but this does not constitute man a free agent: it only makes him, in acting out the deep corruption of his depraved nature, a voluntary actor, so far as he goes in sin; but if unrestrained by the overruling government and providence of God, they would go much farther in crime and wickedness than they do, for they are frequently prevented from acting out their abominable designs by manifest interposition of the government of God: as when the patriarchs would have murdered Joseph, when Saul would have slain David, or when the high priests would have prevented the resurrection of Christ from the dead. If Jezebel had been a free agent, Elijah would not have been translated to heaven in a fiery chariot; and, indeed, no man's life would be one moment secure from the murderous hand of his fellow man.

A mere superficial view of the subject brings convincing evidence that God restrains the wicked actions of men, and that men are not therefore free agents, or actors.

But we have another view to present: we allude to what God has said on the subject. When the Son of God stood be-

fore the bar of Pilate, he was interrogated thus by the conceited Judge, "Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except if it were given thee from above." (John 19:10,11) Who is prepared to dispute the decision as to the amount of Pilate's free agency in this matter? Like the claims of all other pretending free willers and free agents, he could have no power at all in the matter, of which he claimed to have all power, except it had been given him; and that, too, from above. Neither Herod, Pilate, the men of Israel, nor the Gentiles, could do more or less in the case than what God's hand and counsel had before determined should be done. Will any man dare to dispute this position? If so, let him tell what more or what less they had power to do. And here let it not be overlooked or forgotten that He was by the foreknowledge and determinate counsel of God, delivered up to be crucified and slain by wicked hands. The death and sufferings of the blessed Saviour were not accidental; thus it behooved him to suffer, and to rise again the third day.

Another class of disputers of the divine government, as though quite willing to compromise the crown and sceptre of Jehovah's power with the Arminians, admit that all these things were foreknown of God; but they would make his foreknowledge depend on something short of his own determinate counsel. Of such we demand, what could be foreknown that was not determined? If God foreknew that Christ should suffer and die in the manner, at the time, and by the hands, that he suffered, was it, at the same time that God foreknew it, undetermined whether it should or should not be? If it was determined, and the certain knowledge of God was based on that settled determination, by whom was it determined? If by any other than God himself, then his independence is impaired, and he is dependent on another for his prescience, or foreknowledge.

Before God created the heavens and the earth, he either did certainly know, or he did not certainly know, all events of time, all the actions of wicked men and devils. If he did not certainly know all this, then he was deficient in knowledge. If he did know all beforehand, he either knew it independently, or was dependent on another for his knowledge. To foreknow that which was undetermined, and consequently unsettled, is absurd and ridiculous; and to know from information or from the determination of another, is no less wild and absurd; and a denial of his determinate counsel, or absolute decision, or predestination, is equivalent to a denial of his government; for the government of God is not embraced in his foreknowing simply, but in his determining whether things shall or shall not be. We, as creatures, foreknow that we must die; but in this matter we have no government; our mortality rests not on our decision, but on the decision of him who said, "Dust thou are, and unto dust shalt thou return."

The objections commonly urged against the predestinating government of God over all beings, all worlds, and all events, are seldom attempted to be drawn from the Scriptures. There is nothing in the testimony of the Bible to limit the power, sovereignty or government of God, but everything to sustain it. The opposers of the doctrine are compelled to look elsewhere for argument. "It is fatalism," one says. "It makes God the author of sin," says another. "It conflicts with the volition and free agency of man," says a third. While by far the greater portion put the matter to rest by saying, "I do not believe the doctrine." To meet all these objections, and make the doctrine clear and plain, and palatable and pleasant, to the natural sense and feelings of men, is not by any means our province; but to believe it, confide in it, and rejoice in it with joy unspeakable and full of glory, we trust God has graciously made our privilege.

The frightful images drawn by arch-

opposers of the truth have beyond all doubt alarmed many of the timid saints of God; and the apprehension that the doctrine reflects on the character or perfections of God, very naturally leads them to fear to investigate it; but they do not perceive that on the other hand those who deny it assail the independence and limit (if not deny) the government of God.

With us it is no easy matter to comprehend what they mean by "author of sin." If they mean to charge that the doctrine represents sin as originating in God, and eminating from him to corrupt the human family, or that the Spirit of God moves men to sin, the charge cannot be sustained in truth. If such inference could in truth be drawn from the fact that God has predestinated all things in general, then the positive declarations of God himself that he predestinated the sufferings and death, as well as the resurrection and glory of Christ, would involve the same consequences. If raising up Pharaoh and hardening his heart, to make his power known; his choosing the delusions on enemies, sending a lying spirit to persuade Ahab to go and fall at Ramoth Gilead; and creating the waster to destroy, makes God the author of sin, then his foreknowledge and determinate counsel, delivering Christ to be crucified by wicked hands, can involve nothing less. If the rule be a true and correct one, it will apply in all cases alike. But we deny the theory, and with our Bible in hand confront the whole Arminian world, and boldly assert that God has made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil.

Let cavilers paint all their frightful conceptions of the doctrine that ascribes to God the right of universal rule; that asserts that he works all things after the counsel of his own will; and that he causes all things to work together for good to them that love him and are called according to his purpose; and then let them show the beauties of the doctrine which hinges God's government on contingencies, that makes his foreknowledge (if indeed they admit that he foreknows all things) depend on something other than his own determinate counsel; let them feast upon the notion that God did not create the wicked for the day of evil, that his hand and counsel did not determine before hand what the wicked Jews and Romans should do in crucifying the Lord of life and glory; that an evil spirit was not sent from him to trouble Saul, nor to be a lying spirit in the mouths of Ahab's prophets; that he does not send strong delusions, that they may believe a lie that they all may be damned, who have pleasure in unrighteousness and believe not the truth; and that he has no absolute control over the events of the world; but be it ours to rejoice that the Lord reigns, and that

"Death and hell can do no more
Than what our Father please."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, November 15, 1847)

(We believe the above by Elder Beebe presents the subject faithfully according to the Scriptures; which we hold to be the only established principle for testing the truth or untruth of any point of doctrine. We are always glad to re-publish such for the confirmation of where we stand and what we believe. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. BERNICE CANADA SUMMERS

Bernice Canada Summers, a sister in hope of eternal life through the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ, fell asleep in Jesus early Sunday morning, January 2, 1966, at Murry Calloway Hospital, where she was taken several hours before.

Sister Bernice was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. David and Georgia Canada, born August 17, 1894, in Henry County, Tennessee. She was married to Mr. A. H. Summers July 24, 1910; and to this union were born two sons, Desmond and Gene Summers. Desmond preceded her in death a few years ago.

Sister Bernice and her husband were baptized into the New Providence Primitive Baptist Church, the third Sunday in June, 1937; where she was a faithful member, ready always to give a reason of her hope, and to aid the church and the Baptists as a whole in any way she could. The church will feel a great loss in her passing, as will the other

Primitive Baptists who visited the Union meetings and Associations of the churches which compose the Soldier Creek Association.

Sister Summers' funeral was preached by Elder R. L. Biggs, of the Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church, Nashville, Tenn., and her pastor, Elder Paul Poyner, of Murray. Many comforting words of truth were spoken regarding the fundamental principles of the doctrine of God, and the finished work of the Saviour Jesus Christ the Lord. These truths were the meat and drink of this dear sister. The funeral was held at the Churchill Funeral Parlor at Murray, and the body was laid to rest in the Murray Cemetery; there to await the day when the saints of God will arise in the likeness of their Saviour.

Survivors are her husband, A. H. Summers; her son, Gene; seven grandchildren; eight great grandchildren; and two sisters.

Written at the request of her husband.

Effie Bowden

FLOYD W. WILLIAMS

It is in sorrow, but in sweet hope and humble submission, that we as a church, feel to express our deep appreciation for the pleasant association and fellowship that we have enjoyed with our departed brother. Floyd was born December 16, 1919, the oldest son of Louis and Sister Mamie Williams. He died November 5, 1965.

Our brother joined Macedonia Church Saturday before the 1st Sunday in June, 1937, and was baptized the next morning by Elder W. D. Griffin, being the first person that Elder Griffin baptized. He loved the doctrine of salvation by grace, and ably defended his belief in the finished work of Christ our Saviour. This was much to the comfort and edification of his brethren. He was liberated to speak in public in 1962. He was so humble and so faithful to attend the church he loved dearly. How much he will be missed, only the Lord knows, as he was assistant moderator of his home church and the Buttahatchie association. His absence will be felt in the church and community, but most of all will it be felt by our sister, Mary, and the children, in the home.

In 1946 he was married to Miss Mary Peoples, who is left to mourn a devoted husband, together with eight children, five boys and three girls. He is also survived by his mother and father, Mr. Louis and Sister Mamie Williams, Rock Island, Ill.; three brothers, Purvey, Ira, and Arnold, of Rock Island, Ill., and two sisters there, Mrs. Ida Newton and Mrs. Nettie Ingvall, and a sister at Aberdeen, Miss., Mrs. Bettie Morris.

While we feel our loss deeply, it is in much rejoicing that we think upon his eternal gain, because Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am there ye may be also." May God in his goodness and mercy give us reconciliation to his will, knowing that he doeth all things according to his own will and purpose.

Funeral services were held at Pleasant Ridge Church by Elder H. C. Moon and H. R. Prince, the latter being his pastor. The many brethren, sisters and friends attending the services; the many beautiful flowers all attested the high esteem in which our brother was held by all who knew him.

Macedonia Church, now being in conference, does hereby

RESOLVE, That we bow in humble submission to the all abounding providence of God, desiring to say with one of old "that the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh, blessed be the name of the Lord." We desire that our clerk be authorized to make three copies of this resolution; one to be spread on our church book; one copy to his companion and children and one copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

This done by order of the church while in conference on the 1st Sunday in December, 1965.

Elder Eulie McCool, Moderator
Houston Pitts, Clerk

RUTH WATSON REDMAN

Ruth Watson Redman, of Route 4, Bessemer, Alabama, (formerly of Loganville, Georgia) was born March 19, 1921; and was united in marriage to Ercy Redman, October 19, 1940. To this union was born five children, viz., Russel, Michael, Kenneth, Debe Lynne, and Dale. Sister Redman joined Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, on the 4th Sunday in December, 1944, and, with her husband, was baptized by Elder W. D. Griffin.

Sister Redman was a very devoted member of the church until her death. She was always concerned about the welfare of her home brethren and sisters, as well as keeping an open house for those that came visiting from a distance. She was blessed with a wonderful knowledge of the Scriptures, having a deep understanding seldom known among us in this day. The spiritual atmosphere of their home made it a warm place in which the saints often met for spiritual enjoyment.

Sister Redman is survived by her husband, five children, two grandchildren, and her mother, our precious sister in Christ, Ela (Wilson) Watson; one brother, John Watson; four half brothers: W. D., Harris, Woodrow, and Claude Watson; and one half sister, Mrs.

Berry Lee Bentley. Her children surviving are the above named five.

Our sister left us for that blessed country wherein dwelleth righteousness, on June 27, 1964. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder H. C. Moon, assisted by Elder Claude Hand. Interment was in Highland Memorial Gardens, Bessemer, Alabama, there to await that glorious morning when the subjugation of death will have been made complete.

(Elder) Claude Hand

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

We, the members composing the Skewarky Primitive Baptist Church, desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our merciful and kind heavenly Father who called from our midst our beloved sister, Sister Ludie Corey Lilley, on June 8, 1965, making her stay upon this earth 89 years, 5 months, and 23 days. Sister Lilley was born December 15, 1875, the daughter of the late Harry and Cindy Griffin Corey.

Our dear sister held membership among the Primitive Baptists for approximately 65 years. She first united with the church at Smithwick Creek, moved her membership to the Jamesville Church in 1914, and was received by letter in our little flock in March, 1933, thus holding membership at Skewarky Church for a period of 32 years. Although due to afflictions our dear sister was unable to attend her meetings regularly in the last several years, it was indeed an inspiration to visit her in her home. She was blessed to bear her afflictions with as much patience as anyone I ever saw. Her conversation in expressing her physical feelings always ended with a manifestation of strong faith and hope, and she never failed to express her gratefulness to her Lord for his mercies and goodness to an unworthy sinner, rejoicing in the fact that life was as well as it was.

The church at Skewarky grieves over her loss, but we hope and feel our loss is our sister's eternal gain. We rejoice in this because she professed a hope in an all wise, all powerful, and merciful God. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and was abiding in the hope of being taken on the wings of God's love to that celestial city, eternal in the heavens whose builder and maker is God. She had a desire to give God all the honor and praise for a finished and complete salvation wrought by the spilling of the blood of his glorious son, Jesus Christ. A salvation complete in the mind and purpose of God before the foundations of the world.

Sister Lilley was the widow of the late Joseph M. Lilley who died in 1936. Surviving are one son, Elmer D. Lilley; a foster son, Wendell Peele; eight grandchildren, sixteen great-grandchildren; and two brothers, two half-brothers, and one half-sister. To the family we extend our heartfelt sympathy in their distressing hours. May you be comforted by God's love and words of comfort is our prayer.

Her funeral was conducted in the Chapel of Biggs' Funeral Home. Interment was in the Tice Community Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, a wonderful evidence of the esteem in which she was held by her many friends.

RESOLVED, That a copy be placed on the church record, a copy be sent to *Zion's Landmark, The Old Faith Contender, Signs of the Times*, and a copy be sent to the family.

Done by order of conference second Saturday in June, 1965.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Johnny Ray Gardner, Committee

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

The members composing the Spring Green Primitive Baptist Church desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our merciful and kind Heavenly Father, who called from our midst our beloved Sister, Nora Dean Taylor Knox Grimes, on May 27, 1965, making her stay upon this earth 79 years, 9 months, and 7 days. Sister Grimes was born on August 10, 1885, the daughter of the late Nancy Elizabeth Rawls Taylor and James Nathanial Taylor. She spent most of her life as a resident of Martin County.

Sister Grimes united with the church at Spring Green during her early twenties and held membership with the same until the time of her departure, a period of approximately 55 years. It was indeed a privilege to have known this dear sister and to have had the opportunity to observe the manifestation of God's love within her heart and soul as she was so ably blessed to express in her everyday walk, conversation, and daily activities.

We are grateful that we can say our departed sister was a faithful mother to her children, a faithful grandmother, and a kind, tender and loving friend to all who knew her. And what is most comforting to us, the church at Spring Green, is that she was faithful to her God, her brethren and sisters, and her church insofar as we could be blessed to see and understand from the fruits she bore.

The church at Spring Green grieves over her loss, but we hope and feel our loss is our sister's eternal gain. We rejoice in this because she professed a hope in an all wise, all powerful, and merciful God. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace and was rest-

ing in the hope of being taken on the wings of God's love to that celestial city, eternal in the heavens, whose builder and maker is God. She had a desire to give God all the honor and praise for a finished and complete salvation; salvation complete in the mind and purpose of God before the foundation of the world.

Sister Grimes was first married to Coy D. Knox. There were no children born to this union. Her second marriage was to George David Grimes. To this union were born six children. Surviving are three sons, two daughters, twelve grandchildren, four great grandchildren, three half brothers, and two half sisters. To the family, we extend our heartfelt sympathy in their distressing hours. May you be comforted by God's love and words of comfort is our prayer.

Her funeral was conducted in the Spring Green Primitive Baptist Church by Elders W. E. Grimes and E. C. Harrison. Interment was in the Spring Green Church cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, a token of the esteem in which she was held.

RESOLVED, That a copy be placed on the church record, a copy be sent to *Zion's Landmark, Old Faith Contender, Signs of the Times,* and a copy be sent to the family.

Done by orders of a conference fourth Saturday in June, 1965.

Elder W. E. Grimes, Moderator
Johnny Ray Gardner, Committee

IN MEMORY OF ELDER O. W. PERKINS

With heavy hearts a large host of Baptists, family and friends gathered at Byrn Funeral Home, to pay last respects to a dear Elder and Brother, O. W. Perkins; whom God saw fit to call home from this walk of life here on earth, so quickly and quietly December 26, 1965; which made his stay here 72 years, 1 month and 22 days.

Elder Perkins joined Zion Primitive Baptist Church, Mayfield, Kentucky, the first Saturday in April, 1917; and he was ordained to the full work of the ministry of the gospel, the first Saturday in February, 1919, at Zion Church. This cause he stood firmly for until the end: always preaching Salvation by Grace; and giving praises to the all wise God. He was still serving as pastor and moderator at Zion, and North Mt. Zion Churches, and moderator of the Soldier Creek Union, when death came.

He is survived by his devoted and faithful wife, Cordie L. McIntosh Perkins, whom he married October 27, 1918. To this union were born two sons: Forrest Perkins, Mayfield, Ky., and Clifton Perkins, Meas, Arizona, who survive; along with four grandchildren, and one great grandchild. One brother also survives, together with a large group of Christian brothers, sisters and friends.

Services were conducted by Elders Paul Poyner, R. L. Biggs, Hubert Prince, and J. N. Darnell. He was laid to rest in North Mt. Zion Cemetery, to await the coming of Jesus — the one he preached so beautifully. Then may he dwell with Him amid those beautiful hills of Galilee.

Zion Church resolved while in conference, that a copy of this be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; one sent to the family; and a copy recorded in the church book.

Dorothy Fryor, Zion Church Clerk

IN MEMORY OF ELDER E. D. GAFFORD

In the year of our Lord 1922, a young farm boy was called out from the world to be a shepherd, to lead the flock of God's children in the Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Association: he led them as God led him and gave him grace. The doctrine of Salvation by the grace of God, and God alone, is what he not only stood for, but is what he lived. He was a living sermon walking around while he was on this earth. The children of the church felt their burdens were lighter when they were in his presence. He, however, was always humble, and esteemed everyone above himself. He not only had the love and admiration of the church people, he was loved by everyone who knew him. The great things I could say about this Elder would fill many books; but he wrote his own biography in the way he lived.

I want to add a personal note about this our beloved Elder and Friend. I knew him all my life. He was the pastor of Sweetwater Church when I joined in 1955, and he baptized me. To know him was an inspiration to a poor sinner like me. He was so wise, and was never in too big a hurry to listen when I needed his advice. I heard him say many times when a child of God passed away, "Our loss is his eternal gain." I feel that that statement is true of him.

May we all join him some day in that Home where there are no more tears or death, but all is peace and love.

A sister, I hope,
Eleanor Dixon

(The above letter was read in conference at one of Brother Gafford's churches. I asked for a copy, and got it; with permission to send it to the *Signs* for publication. I thought it was good about a great man. — C. B. Carter, Troy, Alabama.)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134 DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1966 NO. 5

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

FROM SISTER DAVENPORT

809 Sycamore Street,
Mineola, Texas

Eld. C. B. Britt,
ElDorado, Ark.

Dear Brother and family:

Received your card, which was appreciated so much.

I miss my dear husband in so many ways. If I got confused in anything in the Scriptures, I would ask him, and he would take delight in explaining it to me.

I know that nothing short of the power of God could have wrought a wonderful change in me. There was a time in my life I hated the Primitive Baptist doctrine; and I made it hard on my husband. I can look back now and say, Oh, why was I so hard against such doctrine that is so comforting to me now? I want to tell you, dear brother, how weak I am. We lost a dear daughter by her own hand. We were not at home when it happened, and a neighbor met us in yard and told us what had happened. Before I had time to think, I could not control my mind, and I said, "God was unjust to allow that to happen." But after getting into the house I wanted to fall on my knees and beg forgiveness; which I did.

Dear brother, you asked me to write something of my past life. If you will turn to hymn 384 in Lloyd's Hymn Book, it will describe my life. In July of 1963, I lost the last brother I had; in October the last sister; and in December my husband. You can't realize what I went through with; but I know it was all God's will, and I was content to know that God never does anything wrong, for he is a perfect God.

I read in the Bible, "Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth." But I often wonder if He loves me. He never forgets his children, but I am so negligent of him. When I am in trouble, I call upon him for help. Dear brother, you know what a wonderful voice my husband had for singing; but he got to where he could not sing, and would sit and read and repeat the words of hymn 322 in Lloyd's.

. . . Whenever you feel in your heart to pray, remember me, a poor lonesome sinner.

Mrs. S. C. Davenport

DEDICATED TO
SISTER S. C. DAVENPORT
A "WIDOW INDEED" IN ISRAEL

To she who lonely is and sad,
I would to God I could make glad;
That I could give thee sweet relief,
And joys exchange for your great grief.

Thy loneliness I'd take away
And make thee trouble free and gay:
I would bind up thy broken heart,
And of thy burdens bear a part.

Thy youth again I would restore —
Grant your requests, and even more;
I would turn back the clock of time,
And in your wounds pour oil and wine.

I would restore thy head and stay,
Whom God, of late, did take away,
And let you live your lives again
All free from sorrow, toil and pain.

But He who all things did ordain,
Saw fit to send thee grief and pain;
So Sister rest in His decree,
Since all things worketh good for thee.

Since all your heartaches, toils and pains
Were felt by Him who them ordains,
He left a portion here for thee,
That thou his fellowship should see.

Thy past, o'er which thou dost complain,
Which gives thee sorrow, grief and pain,
In which thou didst the Lord condemn,
Eternally was known to Him.

And for this sin of thine He gave
His only Son thy soul to save:
E'er time began He did decree
That He should thy salvation be.

In weakness thou didst Him arraign,
And of His judgments didst complain;
But when He turned His eyes on thee,
Like Peter, thou wept bitterly.

'Tis thus we learn by sorrows great,
That we, by nature, God do hate;
And He in mercy, lets us see
The depths of our depravity.

Like Job's cruel wife, when evil comes
We God would curse — forget the sums
Of blessings past: how foolish we,
Save for the power of God, would be.

So Sister, o'er the past grieve not,
Since it will be thy happy lot
With Daniel, in the end of days,
Eternally thy God to praise.

(Composed at the request of Sister S. C. Davenport, 809 Sycamore Street, Mineolo, Texas, whose husband, Elder S. C. Davenport, passed away about three years ago. Sister Davenport is an excellent singer, and this is set to long meter, so she writes that she enjoys singing it. If any parts of it suit the case of any widow in Israel, she can sing it to any long meter tune.

Elder Davenport was a wonderful man, and a gifted minister for many years. He died December 3, 1963. May God comfort Sister Davenport, as well as all the "widows indeed" in Israel, is the prayer of this unworthy sinner, and "Country poet.")

C. B. Britt,
Rt. 6, Box 282,
El Dorado, Ark. 71730

DESIRES TO GO HOME TO HER FRIENDS

6510 N. Calispel,
Spokane, Wash.

Dear Editors:

It is past time for re-newing my subscription, and I am sending money for renewing my mother's subscription, as well as mine.

I received the March *Signs* today, and have already read nearly all of it. The *Signs* is always good, but it seems as though the last three or four issues have been exceptionally good. I especially enjoyed the article by Elder Helms in the December issue, and the poem by C. B. Britt, and the editorial by Elder Wood in the January issue. I have been again reading the New Testament, and have been uplifted by nearly all that I have read.

Whenever I am filled with concern about man and his professed works, as many teach today, then I am blessed to search the Scriptures, and am assured again that man is nothing, and that God is all powerful, and has control of all things.

Pity the poor people in the world who believe in a God who hasn't power enough to save man without man's help: that man has to accept him before He can do anything. I thank God I don't believe in him thus. I know full well that if I am not saved by grace, then I am lost; for, "how to perform that which is good, I find not," and have been made to pray, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we who have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." (Galatians 2:16)

I am made to glory in a God who predestinated all things; a God, who,

"Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isaiah 46:10)

I believe that God has an elect people — chosen in him before the foundation of the world. But there are many false teachers going around trying to save them that are lost, and claiming to be doing God's work; but in Romans 11:5-7, we read, "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant *according to the election of grace.* And if by grace, then it is no more works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the *election hath obtained it,* and *the rest were blinded.*"

My uncle, Jack Eckard, passed away on February 19th. He was preceded in death by his wife, Mary Eckard, about nineteen months. It doesn't seem possible they are both gone; and yet I know there are far happier now than they were in this life.

Elder Attebery came up from Hermiston, Oregon, and conducted the funeral services. We held meeting that same evening at the home of Sister Blanch Brown, of Chatteroy, Washington. The singing and talk were wonderful indeed.

. . . Well, this has been longer than I intended; but sometimes I desire to "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." And desiring this in Spirit, I seem to fall so short of glorifying God the way he so richly deserves, and the way I would like to be able to. I am made to feel it in my heart, (I hope and believe,) but am not able to express it on paper.

"Now unto him that is able to be exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." (Ephesians 3:20, 21)

With hope in God,
Unworthily,
Caroline Martin

"BUT TO THIS MAN WILL I LOOK"

Rt. 6,
Hopkinsville, Ky.

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

My subscription is past due so I enclose check for renewal of one year, the balance to be used as you see best.

I appreciate receiving the *Signs* for it is a great comfort to read the experiences of others, who sometimes seem to be able to give my experience better than I can myself. In the 66th chapter of Isaiah, 2nd verse, we find these words recorded, ". . . *but to this man will I look.*" After this man of God had written sixty-five chapters of instructions to the house of Israel, in regard to the trials of this life, he said in this chapter, in the conclusion of his instructions, "But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word."

Though He was poor so far as the possession of natural things were concerned, He was rich in that he was blessed with the fullness of the wisdom of the Father and of the Holy Ghost, so that he could administer a sufficiency of the Spirit to succor every little child that comes to him by the drawing power of the Father; who draws them with the love wherewith he loved them even when they were dead in sins. As I look at myself, as many times I do, as the chief of sinners, I wonder if I am deceived; yet I cannot doubt altogether the little hope I have. Although there is nothing good in me, yet *I look to this man,* and hope that in this fear might be the wisdom of God implanted in this stony heart of

mine. I desire above all things that precious gift that God promised by the mouth of this same prophet, when he declared in 9:6, "Unto us a son is given."

This is a blessed gift indeed, in love and in truth: given to bear the sins and iniquity of His people, the church; for, "the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called wonderful." It is good when we are made to look at self; and then given to think upon this wonderful gift, and see the wonderfulness of his power when he opened the eyes of one born blind, opened the deaf ears, caused the lame to walk, and healed all sickness: the one great physician who had power to do all these things according to the Father's will.

I know that in time past my eyes were blind, and my ears deaf to the things pertaining to godliness; for I had no fear, but felt that I was doing God's service. But when I was given to see the wonderfulness of His work who is our Counselor, I was made to fear that I might be left out. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

But I must say that I cannot believe that any other than the child of God knows anything of falling, or of fearing. He is brought before the mercy seat of God, and mourns his trespasses; and is given a desire to walk in the steps of the glorified Redeemer. We cannot walk in that perfection, but, if in truth we have been born of the Spirit, we have that desire. When we stray, he hedges up our way with thorns (tribulations) so that we cannot find our way; but in our trials of sorrow and suffering, he leads us in this wilderness of sin, and comforts us to the extent that we never fail to look to him for comfort. The Saviour said, "All that the Father hath given me, shall come unto me." He is the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace: nothing can ever pluck one of them out of his hand.

Please cast a mantle of charity over this.

In a sweet hope,
(Elder) W. Y. Chandler

GOD'S CONTROL OF ALL THINGS

"In whom we have obtained an inheritance being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." (Ephesians 1:11)

I understand that we obtained the inheritance through the blood of Christ, in as much as our natural inheritance comes through the natural blood, then it is definite that our spiritual inheritance came through spiritual blood, and this blood was not given according to obedience of the law, nor the act of the creature. It was according to the purpose of God, even in Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His will; and I understand He meant all things just as written.

We find this same apostle writing in the book of Romans, saying, and "we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." In as much as He worketh all things, He also predestinated all things. Paul writes "God made of one blood all nations of men to dwell upon the face of the earth, and determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." I believe that from eternity He determined and appointed their times and peculiar location, properly sifted, and planted them on the face of the earth by way of accomplishing His purpose in their creation. We don't understand that man is justified or innocent in his wicked acts, but in all they fulfill the very purpose of God. Shimei, in cursing David, and throwing stones at his mighty men, was not innocent though God had bidden him to do it. We cannot see how any part of the government of God can be absolute and secure if

God has not the undivided government of the whole in all things; and He has today the full control. Had He not the same control yesterday and for ever, and if He does not have control today, is there any certainty He will have tomorrow or at any time? If we admit that God absolutely governs all things according to the counsel of His will, then we must admit that He has determined what shall and what shall not transpire in time or in eternity; but to deny His universal control of all things, we would have to deny His eternal power and God-head.

We will submit these remarks to the consideration of our brethren and desire that what we have written may be carefully tested by the Scripture, and received only so far as they are sustained by the Word of God.

Yours in hope of eternal life.

Elder John Wilder
Sharps Chapel, Tenn.

(The above was written as a Circular Letter, and sent to us recently. It expresses what the Scriptures teach on the subject.—J. D. W.)

EXPERIENCE OF C. W. VASS

(Concluded)

I was now subdued and humbled,
And I sat down to rest;
The terrible ordeal was now over,
And I was not distressed.

But impressed to go to the church,
Trusting in Jesus' blood alone,
His precious blood for sinners shed,
Which for their sins did atone.

After my experience in the great city,
I read a sermon on justification,
And on the Sunday I read the same,
I had a righteous revelation.

I saw that the robe of righteousness,
Wrought by the Saviour dear,
Was the obedience of the Holy One,
Which He rendered here.

This robe was from eternity designed
All of the saints to cover,
And He who came to clothe His bride,
Did from everlasting love her.

Now a dream was brought to mind,
In which I was covered
With a typical robe by the Saviour,
As about Him I hovered.

He solemnly dipped the vesture,
Ere He round me it placed;
O blessed hope that graciously I
Was in His love embraced!

The meaning of my dream was confirmed
In reading church history;
Its significance now seemed so clear
As to leave no mystery.

For the coats of skins in Holy Writ,
Placed around Adam and Eve,
Figured the robe of righteousness,
The robe that Christ did weave.

That memorable Sunday, a day of rest,
This is how I really behaved:
I walked the floor with tearful eyes,
And happily said, "I'm saved!"

Many years before I wished that I
Could say these very words,
When I did feel condemned for sin,
Envying the innocent birds.

But now heavenly and divine things
Engaged my changed mind;
In hearing, reading, and meditating
Much comfort I did find.

I felt to know a Saviour's love,
And be with Him in union;
There's nothing sweeter here below
Than with Him communion.

He is the Beloved and my hope;
I love His very name;
How great to feel His presence
And joy a sweet frame!

At forty-one, I went to the church,
And my experience told,
But was not in the frame desired,
When added to the fold.

Now when I was buried in baptism,
I experienced sweet relief;
I could smile in good conscience,
And gone was mine unbelief.

I went on my way quietly rejoicing,
My doubts and fears removed,
And all of this gave me to believe
That my baptism was approved.

But I still have profane thoughts;
I can't control my mind;
Like in the experience of others,
A warfare within I find.

But according to the Scriptures,
Christ accomplished our warfare;
O may I appear with Him in glory,
And a crown of righteousness wear.

One night after I joined the church,
Sitting with my hymnal in hand,
I wondered if my sins were forgiven,
Whether forgiven I did stand.

I desired, if my sins were forgiven,
That I might open at a song
Relating to the forgiveness of sin,
For now I might be wrong.

Now the following verse of a song
Was first to greet my eyes,
When I immediately opened the book,
And this verse I did prize:

"Blessed with the pardon of her sin,
My soul beneath thy shade would lie,
And sing the love that took me in,
While others sank in sin to die."*

I felt this did not occur by chance,
And I retired with solid joy,
Trusting that it was a foretaste of
Unending bliss without alloy.

My sorrows, joys, and hope of heaven,
In verse, I will now review,
And may my hope ripen into fruition,
When I bid this world adieu.

(*No. 924 Gadsby's Hymns)

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with Mill Branch Church, which is located near Sharpsburg, Nash County, North Carolina, about three miles west of 301.

All who have a mind to attend are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk
Fremont, N. C.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To March 1, 1966)

Summers Family, Ky.	$ 2.00
Bernice P. Dailey, Va.	1.00
A Sister in Hope, Md.	10.00
Mrs. Verda Machesney, Kan.	5.00
Otto Brittain, Tex.	5.00
Mrs. V. C. Farley, Tex.	2.00
Miss Mary Hellings, N. J.	2.00
A. C. Carter, Ala.	1.00
Mrs. Ray Hawlings, Va.	5.00
W. H. Thomas, Calif.	3.00
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SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the **Skewarkey Union** is appointed to be held with Tarboro Church, Tarboro, N. C., the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in May, 1966. Elder W. E. Grimes was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder I. S. Connor, alternate.

We cordially invite the brethren and friends to come and worship with us.

Elden B. Peele, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Williamston, N. C.

EDITORIAL

AT OUR WIT'S END
(Psalms 107:27)

How often have you heard the expression, "He is living by his wits"? Have you heard of people that profess to be children of God, even Old School Baptists, that claim that they are living by their wits? If you hear of these, you may know that they have not made this trip down to sea. These people had their wits when they went down to sea. If they had been left alone they would have made a lovely voyage, and when they returned from it, they would have praised their skill as a pilot, and you would have never quit hearing about the prize ship that they were sailing.

Once upon a time there was a family of twelve brethren. They were not harmonious with one another. Ten of the brethren were jealous of their younger brother. They lived by their wits. At first they schemed together to slay their brother, and thus rid themselves of the dismal prospect of ever having to pay obeisance to him; but then it seemed profitable to sell him instead. However, they had to be witty about it because they knew that there had to be a falsehood told so as to have a plausible (witty) excuse for his disappearance. Their wits suggested a wild beast devouring the lad.

The fruits of their wit went along fine for a long time. There is not any doubt (when we read the history, as given by their father) about them gloating from time to time about how well their wits had payed off. As time has a way of doing, it brought about events that their wits were not a match for. As it is in every case, so it was in this case, that a lesson had to be taught these brethren that they could not live by their wits. If there are among my readers any that profess the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, and they think that they are living the life of a child of God by their wits, I desire to warn you, (Colossians 1:28), that the time will come when you will come to your wit's end. Seemingly, the growing of a corn (wheat) crop would have little to do with them losing their wits, or coming to their wit's end. How little, how insignificant, are some of the things that the Lord has used to bring us to the end of our strength. Crop failure after crop failure came their way. The bread coffers all got bare. The need for bread became greater. Their wits did not avail anything. The hunger cravings got more intense. They could not whet themselves to face the man in Egypt, but hunger forced them to go. If wits had served them, as they thought that they had served them in the beginning, they would not have gone. They were at their wit's end.

In the long ago the Lord had a servant. As to how faithful he had been previous to this experience, we do not know. We do know that he was a called prophet to prophesy to Israel; to go forth in the kingdom proclaiming to a nation that had set in darkness, that One drew near who would deliver them. No one takes this honor unto himself save he that was called of God, as was Aaron. (Hebrews 5:4) His wits came to the forefront, and he put them into use. The command of God to go to Nineveh fell on rebellious ears, and on a man that had money. He paid his fare for another city. His wits were taking right nice care of him. But, as it is with every called man of God, there were things that his wits could not

control. A storm came up. It did not come by chance. The Lord alone has the wind in his fists (Proverbs 30:4), and it is the Lord that brings and controls the wind. (Psalms 107:25; 147:18; 148:8) This was God's work in sending out this great wind, and it began a series of events that caused the prophet to come to his wit's end.

It is useless for anyone to tell us what ought to have been; also, it is useless to tell us what they would have done. I know what they would have done. When they came to their wit's end, as he came to his, and as all men will come when they set themselves in array against the Almighty and Holy One of Israel, they will do the best they can. Standing on the side lines and telling what a poor sinner ought to do; or telling, after a thing is over, what you would have done; or sitting in smug complacency and criticizing a sinner for what he did do, shows as little understanding of the nature of men as anything that could be done or said. Too, it shows as little mercy as a judge can show.

If my readers have ever one time come to the end of their wits, they will appreciate what happened to Jonah. I challenge any man to say that he could have done better under the same circumstances. O suppose someone would say, "Well, he got what was coming to him." Now let us turn that statement back. Have you always obeyed? Suppose that you get what is coming to you? At least this time, Jonah disobeyed. But God was with him. Do you mean to say that God was with him? O yes, I mean to say that again and again. Talk to me about saving ourselves; it is not logical, to say nothing about what is scriptural, to talk about a man saving himself when he is already lost as far as his wits are concerned. I would like to see the man's face that would say he could have saved himself out of this predicament. What is the result? God had gone before and prepared the great fish, and He either moved it to the right place, or it happened by chance to be at the right place. I pity the man that says it happened by chance to be right where the ship crew threw Jonah overboard. Down into the sea he went. Where were his wits? Could he have saved himself? Could he have escaped his sea prison? At the end of his wits, he attributed his present salvation to the Lord. At any time we do not do that, we are still in possession of our wits; and being thus rich, salvation is still in our hands.

I look yonder across the vista of the ages at a nation that has come to the end of their wits. Stop me if you have only heard this. If you have experienced it, it will be as new as it was in the beginning. People that have not seen this, and experienced this, do not know anything about coming to the end of their wits. If this is your condition, you will make sport of the people that all the time talk about the great deliverance at the Red Sea. To go on with this nation: They represent us today; that is, they do if we have come to the end of our wits. They are at the pass down to the sea. Behind them is the Pharaonic army. The mountain is on each side of them. What would you do? Do you think that you could have managed this set of circumstances and have gotten to the other side? Do you think, yea, would you dare say, that your wits would have pulled you through this predicament? And no sooner than you say it, you know better.

What did take place? Who did rescue them? What part, if any, did their wits play in the rescue? Isn't it the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, that they had come to the end of their wits? Who acted? Who made the first move? As far as the Israelites doing something, what could they do? What did they do? They came to the place that DEATH was staring them in the face. They came to the end of their strength, and they would have

all perished had it not been for the Lord.

In the long ago, there was a man that had plenty of wits about him. He had made history because he had not a problem that he had not been able to solve. This was an envious record. The fame of this man had spread among those that had lost their wits. On a certain occasion he was about to spread havoc among those that had lost their wits. His wits were so active that he was going to put on a great display this time. His success had spread far, but he was not yet satisfied about the name that he had built for himself. He went to the authorities and got their blessing on what he was doing. His wits were active and watching for new glory and new conquests. Let us travel with him. As he had been breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the church so long, it is not to be wondered that as he travelled, he was still doing that. He was still in command of all his wits, and was certainly going to Damascus to further his conquest of the church of Jesus Christ. If a thing happens suddenly, but few people have the ability to be prepared for it and to withstand the fury of that first attack. As he journeyed, he suddenly lost his wits; he suddenly came to the end of his knowledge and ability. What then did he do? Since the power that was in the voice and the lights brought him to earth, he did not do anything. He fell. His wits were gone; he had come to the end of doing that which he pleased.

From that moment forward he became a beggar, living on the bounties of Him that brought him to the earth. From that day until the day he died, he did not live by his wits. He lived by the grace of God. From that day forward he could not perform that which he desired. That which he desired to leave off, he found himself doing it. Before he lost his wits he led a happy, joyous life, going where he pleased, when he pleased, regardless of whose blood he shed, who he caused to blaspheme, what church he laid waste. After he lost his wits, he lived by the given faith of the Son of God; his laborings were not the work of one that lived by his wits, but they were by the grace of God. Before he came to the end of his wits, he caused much sorrow among the saints of God because he only had the mind to persecute, and did not have any hindering him in it. After he came to the end of his wits, he saw another law in his members warring against his mind and bringing him into captivity. After the losing of his wits, he was led captive, and the nature that had lived by its wits became in bondage and servitude to the stronger that had overpowered him. After losing his wits, there was a warfare set up within him, and he was not able to do as he had before — he could no longer live by his wits.

My father had to span a continent in order to meet my mother. I do not know of any other way that I could have been. Do you? If so, your telling me about it would make interesting reading, although I would not believe a word of what you said. I did not come into the natural world by my wits. Did you? At just past the age of twenty my world came to an end. Sometimes I fear to say what brought it to an end; at other times I am fearless in saying that it was the work of God. This I do say, In all of these past forty-one years, things have never been like they were before that spectacular time in December, 1923. I can say of a truth that I thought that I was master of all that I surveyed. My destiny was in my hands. I am sure that I thought that, and believed that as much as Saul of Tarsus did. (Romans 7:10) At the outset I did not think too much about religion, and yet I had not calculated outside its domain. I first intended getting a place in the world, and *after that* a place in religion. I think that I was a good example of those that go

down to sea to set sail in ships of our own design and workmanship. Nothing common or little would get any attention from me. (Acts 10:14) I was rocked in the proverbial Old Baptist cradle, but I am sure that there has never been one brought from the rankest Arminian cradle that knew as little about what Old Baptists believed, as I did. I could have built a world as easy as I could have told that.

This December, 1923, was the coldest and bleakest time that I have ever passed through. I lost all sense of direction; I lost all of the ambitions that I had put so much stock in; I lost all of the ability to think, much less do, those things that had been my life line, for I assure you that to live was to see these things realized. The things that had been so important to me that I thought I knew something about, were removed from me as the ruling passion of my life, but the power that I hope was ending my wits seemed to teach me that I knew less than nothing about it.

The only thing that I knew to do was cry and beg. This crying and begging was not a part of the life that I had formerly lived, for in that life I did not cry on anybody's shoulder. I had gone out and got what I wanted, or I had consigned what I could not get as being sour grapes and not worthy of my talents. The reason that I cried was because I was at my wit's end. I could not do anything; I could not reason out what to do. I had lost what I once had, and had not been given anything new. Do you know what I am saying? I came to my wit's end, but I did not gain new wits. The only thing that I had was lost, and I was lost with it. One wave would toss me fro; another wave would toss me to. This tossing wore me out.

It is my hope that I, too, was delivered across the Red Sea; that my wits came to an end, but that God delivered me in birth. I suppose that this is what people call eternal salvation. I have read about it and the more I read about eternal salvation being of God but time salvation being by works, the more disgusted I become. I travelled with the children from that great deliverance at the Red Sea. O the happiness we knew! O the joy and freedom from want and sin! We sang the song of Moses and the children of Israel. (Exodus 15) We expected to have flowery beds of ease to heaven's open door. How soon we latched hold on our crucified wits. The first thing that we knew there was Marah. Three days in the wilderness and then Marah. Will our resurrected wits overcome this? Will conditional time salvation suffice here? No, once more we come to the end of our wits. It was God that supplied the drink. Three days from the Red Sea, and conditional time salvation failed. They were well watered for a number of days by the God of all grace. Then they begin to travel again. This time it was food instead of water. This is somewhere about forty-five days from eternal salvation, but twice already their wits have failed them. Salvation by the acts (wits) of the creature did not give them water and it did not give them food. (Exodus 16)

I look back and I see Isaiah and Jeremiah prepared for the service of God, (not by their wits, but) by the grace and power and mercy of God; I see Samuel choosing David as king, (not because of his wits, but) because it was God's direct command; I see all of the deliverances of Peter, and I am amazed that any could ever say that he delivered himself by his wits; I see Paul and Silas delivered from the jail; from the Jews by a basket; from the shipwreck; from every conceivable enemy, and all of these deliverances, (not by his wits, but) by the providential power of God. Then as Paul goes forward in the kingdom he tells us that we walk, (not by our wits, but) by the faith given us. So much does the scriptures teach this, so much is my experience, (if I walk at all), that I feel

to say boldly that there is not a man living that can produce a conditional faith in the Bible. Then he further tells us that, "As you have received him, so walk ye in him." This would say, if you have received him by your wits, then walk according to your wits. Too, it would say, If you have received him by the grace of God, then walk in him by the grace of God. Now if it does not mean that, what does it mean? If those that live by their wits can tell us, I, for one, am all ears to hear it. Then as a capstone to his Christian experience he tells us, "By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace was not bestowed upon me in vain; but I labored more a bundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." (I Cor. 15:10) This kind of grace is sufficient; this kind of grace saves; this kind of grace will take care when we have all come to our wit's end.

W. D. G.

EDITORIAL

THE VISION OF THE VALLEY OF DRY BONES
(Ezekiel 37:1-14)

Sometime ago we received a request from Sister J. C. Boyd, of Texas, to write on the above subject; but feeling to know so little about it, we dismissed the thought of complying. Yet the subject kept presenting itself until we tried to speak concerning it; and it has continued with us, until we now try to write some of our impressions.

No doubt we have all read and talked about Ezekiel's visions and prophesies, but we have realized that we need the Spirit to open them up to us, and give us understanding; and withal to make a personal application of the subject before us in our experience, else it will not seem of much importance to us.

The text reads: "The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and cause me to pass them round about: and, behold there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest.

"Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: and I will lay sinews upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

"So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them.

"Then he said unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

"Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.

"And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken

it, and performed it, saith the Lord."

This is quite a lengthy quotation, but it is all contained in the vision which was given Ezekiel. There can be no question as to whom the vision pertained, since the Lord said, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts."

Under the guidance of the Spirit, we will find wonderful things portrayed here: First, the terrible condition Israel was in as a nation; and second, the mercy and long-suffering that the Lord had towards them, in reviving them and bringing them out of captivity back into their own land. And then, see at least some of the spiritual meaning as it applies to the Lord's people.

Ezekiel was a priest; and also a prophet, since he was commanded to prophesy upon the dry bones, and say unto them, "Hear ye the word of the Lord." If the Lord does not speak to us directly in our hearts, or through one of his prophets, to hear His word, the things we hear, believe, or practice will be vain and foolish. It is so evident that there are many ill-considered and unwarranted things practiced in the name of the Lord — things which have no sanction from the Lord, which neither he nor his Apostles taught; and yet which have high priority among multitudes of people: simply because they seem right to them.

Thus, it is important to, "Hear the word of the Lord." It matters not how much other things may be loved, or seem right, or how much they may satisfy those who practice them, if they have not a "Thus saith the Lord," they are wrong, and it is wrong to practice them in the attempt to worship God. They are wrong, because they come from a source other than the Lord. It is therefore obvious that they come from the same one that beguiled Eve, when he said, "Ye shall not surely die." She did not hear the word of the Lord, but rather what the serpent said; and we all know and feel the result in ourselves today.

We cannot but believe that all the contrary things practiced in the name of Christian worship, come from the same source. It cannot but be so — there is but one source of right, and one source of wrong. Is the Bible God's revelation to us of his will and purpose? was it given by inspiration, "And is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Then we too should cry, "Hear the word of the Lord."

It cannot be "just as well" for men to feel that their way is as good as any; or that the most important thing is to be sincere and faithful in what we do. God is not mocked: his doctrine is not subject to substitution. Those who think so will be brought to judgment as those who know not the true and living God. The history of God's own people, Israel, testifies that God will not be mocked.

How simple is the true worship of God. After Christ fulfilled all things that were written of him — all things that the types displayed of his office and work, the worship by his people is in spirit and in truth. We remember that the Apostle was concerned on an occasion lest the brethren be removed from the "simplicity that is in Christ;" that their minds should be corrupted from this simplicity by some means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtility. Surely multitudes of men are turned away; nay, I should not use the expression turned away, for multitudes have never known the truth as it is in Jesus; so they believe and practice things the Lord has not taught.

But, to the text. First, we must be aware of the condition of Israel, which led to the vision which God gave Ezekiel. God has always demanded obedience to his commandments; but Israel continually broke them. What the Lord said unto Solomon in 1st Kings 9:6-9, will establish the reason for Israel be-

ing captive in Babylon: "But if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments and my statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them: then I will cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people."

For disobeying the letter and the spirit of the above, Israel was now suffering the penalty, and were in such condition in their manifest relation to the Lord, they are described as a valley of dry bones; very dry, with bones separated and without life.

This was shown Ezekiel in this vision; and he was shown much more. He was among the captives in a strange land, yet was a priest and prophet of the Lord. He testified to the many things he was shown, and which are related in the book of Ezekiel. All will agree that there are many things "hard to be understood," for there are figures of speech used, and typical things presented, which require more than just natural imagination to understand. Ezekiel saw not only the dead and dry state of Israel, but he saw also their deliverance.

Ezekiel was shown first of all a grim sight, a valley full of bones. He had a good look at them in the open valley, since he was caused to pass by them round about; they were very dry, separated and scattered. Then the Lord said to him, "Son of man, can these bones live?" How unlikely would one say, Yes, these bones can live. The answer was, "O Lord God, thou knowest." (It seems that he was saying, Lord, thou canst, if thou wilt.) Then the Lord told him to prophesy upon the bones, and say unto them, "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord, . . . Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord."

What a sight it was when he prophesied! there was a noise, and a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone; and sinews and flesh came upon them; but there was no breath in them. Then Ezekiel was told to prophesy unto the wind . . . Thus saith the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live; . . . and the breath came unto them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceeding great army."

It is to be remembered that this is the whole house of Israel in captivity, banished from their homeland; but Ezekiel saw what the Lord was about to do for them. "Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live; and I will place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord."

When all the things which were shown Ezekiel were fully and actually accomplished, it was a quickening, and restoring of Israel to their rightful home again. The whole narration shows that it was purely the mercy of God alone which brought them from their figurative graves, and not for some redeeming features which they themselves possessed. It has been thus in all the dealings of the Lord with *his people*. It is a mercy that He does not deal with them as they often deal with each other. If he had dealt with Adam and Eve in the morning of time, as they deserved, would He not have just turned them loose, so to speak, and left them without promise or hope of redemption? But what he did was to

give them the promise of the seed of the woman; and what her seed should do.

The Lord has always been merciful and long-suffering to *his people,* yet chastising them for their disobedience. Have you thought what long-suffering means in this sense? that, though he executes his judgments upon his people, instead of renouncing them entirely, he grants them repentance, and shows mercy. While, on the other hand, his people have characteristically forgotten him and his mercies, and turned away from him. Is this not experimental with us? But does not the mercy and long-suffering of the Lord stand out as the most prominent feature in all his dealings with us. How greatly he loves his people! Yet it is not to be forgotten that in thus dealing with them, he does it in a way that *they are not to forget that he is the Lord:* "And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I will place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord."

We have touched upon the terrible condition that Israel was in, and upon the merciful dealing of the Lord with them, now let us think about the experimental fulfillment that is given the Lord's people. The things we have been considering, as wonderful as they are, will seem as long past and empty narrations, if all we perceive in them is the mere fact that the Lord did them for Israel centuries ago. But they have an application in every spiritual Israelite, and become a present mercy to each of them.

The Apostle Paul, in the second chapter of Ephesians, presents the case of each of them, when he wrote, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: . . . and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." etc.

Everyone who has experienced the beginning of a good work in himself, realizes that it began when he was dead in sins; and that he was first made aware of his condition when there was a quickening to the realization of it, by a mighty power that convicted him, and laid him low. It could not be otherwise, for there is nothing in the dead, either spiritual or naturally, that can ever bring them to life. So, it must be, *"You hath He quickened, who were dead."* This is the way all the children of God are brought, though they are by nature the children of wrath, as are all others. Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." (John 5:25) And Isaiah wrote of the Lord, "I will bring the blind by a way they know not; and I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."

Being dead in trespasses and sins, is comparable to the **very dry bones** which Ezekiel saw. No one is more able to bring himself to life than those bones were. Yet, as Ezekiel's vision pertained to the whole house of Israel, so does the quickening pertain to the full number of those of whom it is written, ". . . Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." For God has so arranged for

their being chosen by him, with his Son to redeem them, and his Spirit to call them, that, though dead and unworthy as far as they themselves are concerned, they have all the power of God arrayed for them; and, "If God be for us, who can be against us," wrote the Apostle to the Romans.

We close by making the following observations of what we believe to be some of the spiritual applications of the vision:

It is noted that the dry bones constituted the whole house of Israel, a great many of them; and there were no foreign bones among them. This sets forth the election of grace.

These slain and the very dry bones set forth the condition of all the children of God in their nature, they being dead and helpless in themselves.

To hear the word of the Lord, sets forth the power and authority of the Lord to do his will, and that nothing else has any authority.

The noise and shaking speaks of the effect of the Spirit of God in his people when he speaks in them, causing great and marvelous things to take place with them.

The breathing upon the slain, speaks of the Lord's people being born of the Spirit of God; a necessity in the established order of God's dealing with them.

The coming out of their graves speaks of the deliverance of all the Lord's people from the bondage of corruption; a deliverance from great darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God.

The being placed in their own land speaks of their receiving all those things that God has prepared for them, from being sealed with the holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of their inheritance, to their adoption, which is the redemption of their bodies.

All these things open up a tremendous view, even as seen through a glass darkly, of the wonderful things that God has prepared for them that love him. May he give us grace to run with patience the race that is set before us, and to ever look unto him who is the author and finisher of our faith.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

STATEMENT TO OUR READERS

In the January issue of the *Signs* we published the original Prospectus upon which the *Signs of the Times* was founded. This has been re-published several times through the years, and was included again that all may know that the *Signs* continues upon the same principles.

Following this statement we are republishing the last article written by Elder Gilbert Beebe, the founder of the *Signs,* on the subject of ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS. This was first published October 1, 1880 — eigthy-six years ago; and we stand today upon the same principles set forth in this article. The subject is fully covered and clearly presented; and we fully endorse the article.

Hassell's History was published by Elder G. Beebe's sons, and at their request this article was inserted in the History; beginning on page 943. Elder Sylvester Hassell, author and compiler of Hassell's History, had this to say about the article: "These views are, in general, substantially the same as those expressed in the Third Chapter of the Old Philadelphia and London Confessions of Faith." (See pages 670 and 671 of the History.)

EDITORS

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS

(The last article on the subject by Elder Gilbert Beebe, written not long before his passing — published in the *Signs* October 1, 1880.)

The Old School or Primitive Baptists in former years have been very definite-

ly identified and distinguished from all other religious or ecclesiastical organizations as PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, and as such have borne reproach and vituperation from those who hold more limited views of what we regard as the absolute and all-pervading government of God over all beings, all events, and all worlds. With deep solicitude and painful concern we have witnessed in the preachings and writings of some of our brethren a disposition to so yield or modify the doctrine as to limit its application to such things as the carnal mind of man can comprehend or the wisdom of this world can approve.

While some will concede that all things that they regard as pure and holy are ordained or predestinated of God, they deny that the absolute government of God does dictate by absolute decree the wicked works of wicked men and devils, for that, they say, would make God the *author of sin.* They therefore set up their judgment, and set bounds for Infinite Wisdom to be restricted to, and beyond which limitation he must not extend his government, without subjecting himself to their censure as an unjust God and the author of sin. But how lamentable is the infatuation of poor, blind mortals, when

> "The vain race of flesh and blood
> Contend with their Creator, God;
> When mortal man presumes to be
> More holy, wise or just than he."

There are undoubtedly many of the dear people of God who feel jealous for the glory of God, and who, without any aspiring ambition to be wise above what is written in the sacred scriptures, from inability to comprehend the two great parallel mysteries of *godliness* and of *iniquity,* have felt a commendable concern lest in our weakness we should impute to God aught that would reflect on his adorable perfections, or withhold from him that which he has ordained for the manifestation of his glory. It certainly becomes us, as finite beings, to speak of him and of his government with fear and trembling. He is the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, and his name is Holy. His attributes are veiled in that infinity which no finite being can by searching find out.

He keepeth back the face of his throne, the place and power of his government, and spreadeth his cloud upon it. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts higher than our thoughts. The standard of infinite purity and holiness is the will of God. There can be no higher law than the will of God, for only to the standard or counsel of his own will and pleasure does he himself conform. "He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." — Eph. i. 11. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." — Isa. xlvi. 10.

In this connection he says, "I am God, and there is none like me." And in the revelation of the Lamb, in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells. "The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat upon the throne, and worship him that liveth forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." — Rev. iv. 10, 11. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen." — Romans xi. 33-36.

When God created the heavens and the earth no other power than his own was employed, no wisdom but his own was consulted, nor was there any other than his own will to dictate what, how, or for what purpose anything should be

created. As a potter has power over the clay, it is his right to form his vessels as he pleases; and if he forms of the same lump vessels to honor and vessels to dishonor, who shall dispute his right to do so?

The prophet says God is the potter and we are the clay; then, "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." — Rom. ix. 21-23. Dare any of us poor, finite worms of the dust dispute the sovereign right of God to do all his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth? "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"

How appropriate and forcible are the words of Job, "Hell is naked before him (God), and destruction hath no covering. He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them. He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it. He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end. The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof. He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud. By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?" — Job xxvi. 6-14.

Can we contemplate the awful majesty, profound wisdom, deep and unsearchable counsel, infinite goodness, unerring workmanship in all that he has condescended to let us know of his great and marvelous works, from the spreading abroad and garnishing of the wide heavens, down to the formation of the crooked serpent, and still stand in doubt of his predestinating power and unrestricted government over all beings, all worlds, and all events?

Are death and hell and all things naked before him, and destruction uncovered to his all-seeing eye, and yet unlimited by his power and wisdom? Has he stretched out the north, and balanced the earth upon nothing, without any design, purpose or decree concerning their subsequent destiny? Has God bound up the waters in this thick cloud, and "given to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment," (Prov. viii. 29,) and yet left all to the vagary of chance? When he set his throne above the heavens, was it to be the place of no power in controlling the destiny of all things in heaven and earth and hell? For about six thousand years the sun, moon and stars have with exactness filled their respective orbits, and without the variation of a second of time from their creation made all their revolutions, in obedience to the decree of the Creator. Is it by chance that "The heavens (thus) declare the glory of God, and the firmament showing his handiwork?"

But, say some to whose minds the doctrine of the universal government is obscure: We admit that God has predestinated some things, but do not admit that he has predestinated all things which come to pass. Let us see how this partial or limited government would accord with the divine record. Suppose that in what we have been contemplating of the heavens, we should find the sun and moon, and all the stars but one, held firmly to their orbits by the irresistible will and decree of God, and that one solitary star, without any fixed orbit, is allowed to range the infinity of space, wandering with more than lightning velocity, guided only by chance; where would be the safety of all the other stars? what would become of the predestination of those heavenly bodies intended to be preserved from hazard by the decree of God?

To us it has been a comforting thought that God has set the bounds of our habitation on the earth, and the number of our months is with him, and our days are appointed to us as the days of an hireling, who cannot pass his bounds; but what assurance of safety would that afford, if he has left murderers and blood-thirsty men or devils unrestricted by his predestinating decree? To our mind, either everything or nothing must be held in subjection to the will and providence of God. Even the wickedness of ungodly men is restricted by predestination, so that "the wrath of man shall praise God, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain."

"Pains and deaths around us fly —
Till he bids us we cannot die;
Not a single shaft can hit
Unless the God of heaven sees fit."

For death and hell can do no more than his hand and counsel have determined shall be done. Does this make God the author of sin? or, in other words, does this make him a sinner, or charge on him an imputation of impurity? By no means. Against whom is it possible for God to sin? Is he amenable to any law above himself? If so, by what law can he be indicted, in what court can he be tried or convicted? How preposterous! It is his eternal right to do all his pleasure, "Nor give to mortals an account, or of his actions or decrees."

It savors of atheism to deny that he is the self-existent, independent God who has created all things for his own sovereign will and pleasure. And if it be admitted that he had a right to create the world, and all worlds, it must then be also admitted that he had a right to create them according to his own will and pleasure. Worms cannot charge him with error because he did not assign them a more exalted place in the creation, or for creating them worms instead of men. Men cannot justly charge him for not creating them angels, nor angels because he did not make them Gods. The world, with its infinite variety of living creatures, from the minutest insect to the most huge monster, as well as man, were all made for the pleasure of their Maker, and all must subserve the exact purpose for which they were made.

Even the crooked serpent, as well as the harmless dove, all were pronounced good in their respective places; not good in the sense in which God is good, but because they were precisely what he intended or predestinated them to be. Had the serpent been straight, or the dove crooked, or if the things made had been different from what the Creator intended, there would have been a defect in the workmanship. We cannot, with such exalted views as we entertain, think that God has ever failed to secure the perfect accomplishment of his own design or purpose in anything he has ever done. The entrance of sin into the world, and death by sin, which by the offense of one man has passed upon all mankind, was no unprovided-for event with him, to whose eyes sin, death and hell have no covering. The eternal purpose which God had purposed in himself before the world began was sufficiently perfect and comprehensive to include all that could or can possibly transpire, or he would not have declared the end of all things from the beginning. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." — Acts xv. 18.

But there are many who admit the foreknowledge of God, and yet deny his determinate counsel, on which the certainty of all the events of time depends. Men may have a limited foreknowledge of things which God has made certain by his determinate counsel and irrevocable decres, as it is said, The living know that they must die; but God's foreknowledge depends on nothing outside of himself, for he has challenged the universe to tell with whom he has taken counsel, or who has instructed him. To us it seems perfectly clear that nothing could be foreknown that was undetermined, and that the foreknowledge and determinate counsel of God

are inseparable.

It is also generally admitted that in the salvation of his people, "Whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son," (Romans viii 29); but that the well beloved Son of God was delivered into the wicked hands of men to be crucified by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, is not so readily admitted. The wicked works of those who crucified the Lord of glory were not foreknown by his murderers; but it was foreknown and determined of God. Peter said, to those whom he charged with the wickedness of killing the Prince of life, "I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." — Acts iii. 17, 18. "For of a truth against thy holy child of Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." — Acts iv. 27, 28.

The wickedness of men in betraying and crucifying our Lord had been positively predicted from the days of Abel, in what God spake to the fathers by the prophets, and by what was signified by all the offerings which were made under the former dispensation. The pieces of silver for which he was betrayed were counted and declared hundreds of years before Judas was born; and the dividing of his garments, and the lot cast for his seamless robe, was determined of God and declared by the prophets. The history of Joseph, and the wickedness of his brethren, was in fulfillment of his dreams, and in accordance with the purpose in which Joseph said, God meant it for good.

It has been said by some that these great events which God has overruled for good were ordered of the Lord, but that the smaller matters, and the wickedness of men, were not predestinated. Our Savior has informed us that the determinate counsel of God in his all-pervading providence numbers the hairs of our head, so that not a hair can fall to the ground without him; even the little sparrows are protected, and the ravens are provided with food by his determinate counsel. And Paul assures us that "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

It seems to us unreasonable, as well as unscriptural, to say that the government of God directs and controls some things, and that other things are left to the control of men or devils. If God's government extends only to the good deeds of men, then is his absolute government totally excluded; for "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one." — Rom. iii. 10-12. We would not limit the government of our God, nor, because we cannot comprehend his designs, dare to say he has no designs.

"He in the thickest darkness dwells,
Performs his works, the cause conceals;
But, though his methods are unknown,
Judgment and truth sustain his throne.

"In heaven, and earth, and air, and seas,
He executes his firm decrees;
And by his saints it stands confess'd
That what he does is always best."

Men act voluntarily when they commit sin; they have no more knowledge of or respect for the purpose of God, than Joseph's brethren or Potiphar's wife had in his case, for there is no fear of God before their eyes. It is even so with the princes of this world; if they had known Jesus, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But it was needful that Joseph should be cast into prison, and it was expedient that Christ should suffer; therefore that knowledge was withheld from the persecutors of Joseph and of Jesus, until they should

fill up the cup of their wickedness. And it is thus in the wisdom of God that the world by wisdom shall not know him. Yet such is the wisdom, power and righteous government of our God that he can and does set the exact bounds by which the wickedness of men and devils is limited, and beyond which they cannot go. Satan is bound a thousand years with a great chain, and after the thousand years he shall be loosed for a short time. With all his rage and malice he is restricted by the supreme power and decree of God, to do no more nor less than what God will overrule for the good of his people and for his own glory. And thus also, "God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," as in the case of Pharoah and the Egyptians, hardening the heart of Pharoah until all the plagues and judgments were accomplished, and his own almighty power and glory were then made known in delivering the Hebrews, and in overwhelming Pharoah and his host in the Red Sea. "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will be hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" — Romans ix. 17-22.

The apostle, fully aware of the disposition of the carnal mind to cavil and reply against the sovereignty of God in the execution of his pleasure, did not attempt to apologize for God, or so to modify the doctrine as to render it less objectionable to the carnal mind; but he called attention to the infinite disparity, between the infinitely wise, holy and omnipotent God, who holds our everlasting destiny, and by whose long-suffering we are permitted to live, and poor, finite, depraved, short-sighted man, and the daring presumption and extreme folly of questioning the justice or wisdom of God in working all things after the counsel of his own will. We regard it as a very serious matter to charge that God cannot govern the world, by his own determinate counsel, wisdom and power, according to the eternal and immutable design or purpose purposed in himself before the world began, without subjecting himself to the charge of being the author of sin. Sin is the transgressions of a law under which the transgressor was justly held amenable, and to the penalty of which he is subject. But we have endeavored to show that God is under no law but that of his own will and pleasure, and therefore he doeth his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. He could by no law be held under obligation to leave the affairs of this world or any part of them to be governed by chance, or by the will of men. As he is in one mind, and none can turn him, his purposes are eternal, like himself. His decrees being perfect from everlasting, admit of no improvement or change. If he had not the right to predestinate all things pertaining to the events of time before he created the world, we ask what right has he acquired subsequently to execute the orders of this throne? If it had been his pleasure to have prevented sin from entering into the world, can we doubt his power or wisdom or ability to have done so? If sin has entered this world in opposition to his will, or because he had not the wisdom and power to prevent its entrance, what assurance have we that it will not also enter the world to come? But it is to our mind far more consistent with what God has graciously made known to us of his being and attributes, to believe that God had a purpose worthy of himself, however inscrutable to us, in regard to the entrance of sin, as well as in regard to all things else. He bids us "Be still, and know that he is God." To our feeble mind the conclusion is unavoidable, that the predestination of God either controls all things or nothing.

We look at a vast complicated machine, with its ten thousand wheels. We cannot comprehend or understand its workings, but we are told that the machinist has a perfect knowledge of all its parts save one; there is a definite use for every wheel and spring, but one is held in the machine which has no certain motion or definite use. How long could that machine run in safety, with the unruly part liable at any moment to throw the whole into confusion? We cannot see how any part of the government of God can be absolute and secure, if God has not the undivided government of the whole in all its parts; and if he has today the full control, had he not the same control yesterday and forever? If he has not the full control today, is there any certainty that he will have tomorrow or at any future period? If we admit that God absolutely governs all things according to the counsel of his own will, and that he is immutable, then we must admit that he has determined what shall and what shall not transpire in time or in eternity. But to deny his universal control of all things, including all principalities and powers, thrones and dominions, things present or to come, whether they be visible or invisible, is to deny that he is the God of the whole earth, and virtually deny his eternal power and Godhead. If he has not the power and wisdom to determine all events, how can he cause all things to work together for good to them that love him?

But while we hold that he is supreme in power, and that he works all things after the counsel of his own will, we are certain that he reigns in righteousness, and that there is no unrighteousness with him. To admit the universal government of God, is to admit the predestination of all things, from the falling of a sparrow to the dissolution of a world. In the absence of predestination, with what certainty could the Holy Ghost inspire the holy prophets and apostles to foretell all that should ever come to pass? If it were undetermined in the purpose of God, how could the apostles tell us of perilous times that should come in the last days, of apostasy from the faith, and spiritual wickedness in high places?

But we will submit these remarks to the consideration of our readers, and desire that what we have written may be carefully tested by the infallible standard, the scriptures, and received only so far as they are sustained by the word and spirit of our God.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe — October 1, 1880.)

OBITUARIES

IN MEMORY OF BRUCE McINTOSH

"A devotee of the Old School Baptist faith, Mr. McIntosh seldom missed an opportunity to be in his church," reported a Leesburg, Virginia, paper in announcing the death of Mr. Bruce McIntosh. This correctly expressed his devotion to the cause he loved, and his conviction concerning the doctrine of God our Saviour.

The brethren and friends of the churches of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting were greatly saddened at the passing of Mr. McIntosh at his home in Leesburg, Virginia, for they had lost a friend and fellow-worshipper whom they had greeted and loved for many years. Nor were these the only ones who mourned his death, for he stood as high in the esteem of his fellow citizens as a man could be held.

Mr. McIntosh was born at Lovettsville, Loudoun County, Virginia, February 11, 1874; and died January 12, 1966: making his age almost ninety-two years. He was the son of James Logan and Mary Elizabeth Wenner McIntosh, of families deeprooted in Loudoun County. On October 20, 1897, he was united in marriage to Daisey Pleasant Titus; and to this union one son and one daughter were born: James Logan McIntosh and Mrs. Hannah Brown di Zeriga, both of Leesburg. His wife, Sister McIntosh, died in 1958. Surviving are his son and daughter, two grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

Mr. McIntosh was long identified with the business affairs of his community. He was actively associated with the Peoples National Bank of Leesburg for seventy years, and its president for thirty-seven years. He retired two years before his death, but was re-elected president emeritus the day before his passing.

There was not a more faithful member of

the congregations of the churches within his reach; and he was always ready to help in any manner he could in matters pertaining to the churches. He will long be remembered for his quiet, unassuming manner in which his presence was always felt at the meetings; and for his earnestness and depth in speaking of his convictions in the things pertaining to the gospel of Christ. It was a great pleasure to visit in his home, and to enjoy the gracious hospitality of his family; and to converse with them on subjects of mutual interest.

Funeral services were held at his home in Leesburg, conducted by the writer, where many friends were gathered to manifest their high regard for their neighbor and friend; to express their sympathy for those immediately bereaved; to pay their last tributes of respect and love; and to give the last tender attentions he could receive in this world. Their many beautiful flowers seemed to quietly whisper what their grieved hearts could not express. Interment was in the family plot in Union Cemetery in Leesburg: there to await the returning of his Saviour, and the fullness of his inheritance in the redemption of the purchased possession of Christ.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to each one who mourns the death of this loved one.

John D. Wood

ELDER JOHN W. SHIPMAN
SISTER MAY (FREEMAN) SHIPMAN

Sister Shipman was born in Arkansas April 20, 1891, and passed away June 27, 1965. She was survived by her husband for a few months, when the dear Lord in mercy called him from the toils and sorrows of this world. I shall make this a joint notice of Sister May and Elder John W. Shipman.

Their children who survive are: Mrs. Melvin Jeffcoat, Lamesa, Texas; Mrs. Oscar Jeffcoat, Cisco, Texas; Roy L. Shipman, Odessa, Teaxs; J. E. Shipman, Crystal City, Texas; David Shipman, Kermit, Texas; Oren L. Shipman and Elder Gerald Shipman, San Antonio, Texas; and Vestal Shipman, Waynesboro, Tenn. One son, Lawrence, passed away a few years ago; and two sons died in infancy. Surviving also are thirty-five grandchildren, and twenty-seven great grandchildren.

Brother Shipman was born near Dallas, Texas, November 8, 1884, and passed away December 23, 1965. He and his wife united with County Line Church, in Scurry County, Texas, Saturday before the second Sunday in April, 1911, and were baptized by Elder J. A. Bean at their May meeting. Elder Shipman was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry Saturday before the third Sunday in May, 1915. So it was not long before he was about his Father's business, going to all the churches he could, and declaring the whole counsel of God. Sister May was a helpmate indeed to him, helping in every was she could; and raised a big family under, what is to us now, pioneer conditions on the Texas Plains. Their delight was in the law of the Lord, loving the brethren and sisters; and laboring for their comfort and edification, and for peace and unity among the churches.

Written by one who loved them for the Lord's sake, I hope.

Lela Culpepper

MISS MINNIE HOPKINS

Miss Minnie Hopkins was born May 24, 1888, and departed this life February 8, 1965, making her stay on earth nearly seventy-seven years. She received a good hope in early life, and was received into the fellowship of Charity Primitive Baptist Church, Patrick County, Virginia, on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1947; and was baptized the following Sunday by her pastor, the late Elder J. G. L. Hash.

Sister Minnie was afflicted all of her life; but she bore her afflictions with patience. She loved the church with all her heart, and looked forward from one meeting to the next, hoping to be able to go. She filled her seat as often as her health would permit. She enjoyed the preaching and singing. One of her favorite hymns was, "When I can read my title clear," with the chorus, "I want to live a Christian here." Her life, through her afflictions, will be an outstanding monument to her memory.

She made her home, in her later years, with her sister, Bedie Craddock, who did everything she could for her comfort; and to make life as pleasant as possible for her. All was done that kind and skillful hands could do; and when the time came for her passing, she seemed to just fall asleep. "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep."

Written in behalf of the church.

Elder R. A. May, Moderator
Myrtle T. Wood, Clerk

JAMES JEFFERSON GRIFFITH

Deacon James J. Griffith was born in Raleigh County, W. Va., February 20, 1876, and departed this life November 15, 1965; making his stay on earth nearly ninety years.

The Lord blessed Brother Griffith with a sweet hope early in life, and he, together with

his wife, were received into the fellowship of the church at Charity, Patrick County, Va., in the Smith River Association, on April 9, 1921. He was soon thereafter ordained a deacon, and served in that capacity well and faithfully. He became unable to attend his meetings when he suffered a broken hip. He always had the welfare of the church first and foremost in his life, and bore a major part of its support. He was loved and respected by all who knew him, for his steadfast loyalty to the church, and his Christian life and character.

Brother Griffith was united in marriage to Miss Ella Bennett September 8, 1907, and to this union three children were born: Mrs. Orea Rakes, Woolwine, Va., and Thelma and Clifford Griffith, Rt. 2, Stuart, Virginia.

Brother Griffith is and will be sadly missed in the home, in the community and church. Still at his passing, we had to bow our heads and hearts in humble submission to the hand of Providence, and say, "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away, blessed is the name of the Lord."

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder R. A. May, assisted by Elders Amos Hash and Peter Turner, midst a host of relatives and friends; and his body was laid to rest to await the resurrection, to meet Jesus in the air, and, as it is written, "to be like him, and be satisfied."

Written in behalf of the church and his family.

Elder R. A. May, Moderator
Myrtle T. Wood, Clerk

EUGENIA ALTIZER AKERS

On Friday, November 20, 1964, it pleased our Heavenly Father to call our dear beloved Sister Genia from our midst. She had been in poor health for some years, having suffered a stroke, but her death was attributed to a coronary attack.

Dear Genia was born February 28, 1892, in Montgomery County, Va. She was one of eleven children born to the late James Merritt and Callie Cummings Altizer. She grew up in the community where she was born, attended the little country school known as "Laurel Fork" and later qualified for a teacher's certificate at the Willis Normal School. She taught several schools before her marriage to the late Luther D. Akers, a young man of a nearby community, September 28, 1911. He preceded her in death by some seventeen years. To this union four daughters were born. The first-born, named Virginia Evans, died in infancy, and the second-born, Ollie Mae (Mrs. Roscoe Chafin), died in childbirth. Two daughters, Ruth (Mrs. Eugene Chafin), and Edna (Mrs. J. Edwin Keith), survive. Sister Genia was "Mother" to Ollie Mae's daughter Shirley (Mrs. Frank Quesenberry), who also survives and whom she loved as her very own. She also leaves four other grandchildren, seven great grandchildren, six sisters and one brother.

Sister Genia united with the Primitive Baptist Church in June, 1914. She often testified to her rich, personal experience and love of her Saviour. She loved her church dearly and was a faithful member until the end. She loved the fellowship with the other brethren, and attended the services whenever she was able. In the community in which she lived she was affectionately known as "Mrs. Genia," and the night was never too dark or she was never too busy to offer a helping hand to her neighbors. The many wonderful expressions of love and sorrow at her passing gave evidence of the high esteem in which her relatives, friends and neighbors held her.

The funeral service was conducted by her pastor, Elder B. O. Thompson, assisted by Mr. A. W. Nichols, at the Richardson Funeral Home, Christiansburg, Va. Interment was in the Westview Cemetery, Radford.

We all miss Dear Genia so very, very much, but we feel assured our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by her sisters,
Glenna Yeatts and Mrs. Asa Wells

ANNIE STOCKS WILLIAMS

It is with a sad heart that I write of the death of our highly esteemed and dearly beloved sister, Mrs. Annie Stocks Williams, who passed from this life May 12, 1965, at the age of eighty. She had been in declining health for several months. She was preceded in death by her husband, the late Ernest Williams.

She was a loving and devoted mother, and a wonderful neighbor. Sister Annie was gracious, loving, and kind, and possessed a warm out-going personality which endeared her to all who knew her.

She was a devout person, and led an exemplary life, and a firm believer in salvation by grace. Great was her pleasure in hearing the gospel proclaimed. She united with the church at Hancocks in March, 1928, and was a true and faithful member until death. We miss this dear sister, but feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

May God bless and comfort her bereaved family, is our prayer.

Written by order of the church while in conference in regular session.

Elder A. O. Mewborn, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

IN MEMORY OF ELDER AND SISTER J. W. SHIPMAN

We, the Mt. Olive Church, Stockdale, Texas, wish to record a few lines in memory of our late brother and sister in Christ, Elder J. W. (John) Shipman and his wife Sister May Shipman. This lovely brother and sister came here looking for the church several years ago; and we fell in love with them at once for the truth's sake, and the many endearing graces with which we felt the dear Lord had blest them. They were a tower of strength to us from that time on as long as they lived. It was a real love feast to be with Brother and Sister Shipman.

Brother John was assistant pastor of Mt. Olive Church with Elder E. B. Ault, until he and Sister May moved to Cisco, Texas. Here they and others constituted Martha Grace Church at Justiceburg, Texas, where he served as pastor until the time of his death. Therefore be it

RESOLVED, That we have lost a precious brother and sister, whose place will be hard to fill; but be it further

RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Father's will: thanking him for all that is past, and trusting him for all that is to come; and

RESOLVED, That we extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family of Elder and Sister Shipman and give them a copy of these Resolutions; enter one on our church records; and send one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Approved by Mt. Olive Church while in conference the second Sunday in February, 1966.

Elder W. W. Fleet, Moderator pro tem
Lela Culpepper, Clerk

MEMORIAL

Brother Bradley McLamb, son of Mr. Isham McLamb, was born May 17, 1894, in Johnson County, N. C., and died November 10, 1965, in Johnson Memorial Hospital after an extended illness.

He was married to Mahala (Sissie) McLamb, who survives. Surviving also are one son, Tenyson Utley (Dick), and three grandsons.

For a long time Brother McLamb was a strong believer in the Primitive Baptist faith. He united with Liberty Primitive Baptist Church while in the hospital, but was not able to be baptized. We, the church, and a host of friends, sadly miss him. We loved him, but God loved him best, and called him home to be with him in his fold.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be put on our church record; one sent to the family; and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in December, 1965.

Brother James G. Young
Sister Liddie Tart
Sister Lovie Young
Committee

IN MEMORY OF ELDER JOHN P. HELMS

Our church is now in mourning
For a loved one God has taken;
But He will send another —
He'll not leave his own forsaken.

In his own time and purpose,
A servant of the Lord shall stand
In the place our brother stood,
When God shall give his command.

We recall what he told us
When yet with us he was still here:
He said to look to Jesus
For all things we surely hold dear.

He told us he soon would go:
Now he knew it would be our loss;
But I feel it was his gain,
For he the last river has crossed.

He is resting in Jesus —
For unto this end he was born.
We all hope to meet him there
On the last resurrection morn.

Now we've a faithful servant
Who has been taking up the reins;
Because he loves the brethren,
And not for personal gain.

He has always been faithful
To help his pastor, as he should;
I'm sure God has a purpose,
And all is working for our good.

God knows who the church shall call:
He has already fixed and sealed;
But there's nothing we can know
Until it is fully revealed.

Let us bow in submission
To his righteous and holy will,
Looking to the coming day
When He again our pulpit fills.

Ethel Myers

(Since the above was written Elder William Holland has been called as pastor of this church, which is Little Creek Church, Franklin County, Virginia. He is the one referred to by Sister Myers — J. D. W.)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134 DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1966 NO. 6

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

TRIBUTE TO A PASTOR'S WIFE

"In the shadow of the church
Stands a figure oft obscure:
Just behind the faithful pastor
Is his wife, devout and pure.

She is with him every moment,
Helping make his work progress;
And you can't discount her portion
In his measure of success.

Oft behind the scene of action,
Often never seen or heard,
Yet she stands forever ready
Just to give a helping hand.

With her home forever open,
And her work quite nicely done,
She is ever his faithful helper
In the battle fought and won.

It is not in active service
That her worth is really shown,
But in bearing heavy burdens
That to others are unknown.

With encouragement and vision,
She must urge God's servant on
When the shadows are the darkest,
And his courage almost gone.

Don't forget the pastor's partner
When you measure up his life:
All too often he is honoured,
And forgotten stands his wife.

So, while passing out the laurels,
And when giving honor due,
Give a share to one who helps him
Through his trials to be true."

Selected

(Submitted by Elder A. J. Slauson)

THE BRINK

Never once did I think
That I stood so near the brink,
Till God showed me where I stood,
And whispered to me that I could
Stand with Him on solid ground;
And it was then that I found
Peace on earth, reposing mind:
His arms around me entwined
I embraced His love divine,
His promise sure is ever mine.

I shall never seek again
The silly path of temporal sin,
Nor look to folly paths wherein
Lurk the luring worldly din.
If today God should decree
That I from worldly things go free,
And serenly flit away
To rest with Him eternally,
I am wholly sure that at His feet
I'll dwell with Him, His love replete.

J. M. Bailey, Sr.
1511 Oak Street
Kenova, W. Va. 25530

PRAYER

Hopewell, N. J.
May, 1898

Elder F. A. Chick
Dear Brother:

— My nephew, Kendrick Hill, while studying shorthand, took a stenographic copy of a prayer offered by Elder Purington. He afterwards wrote it out and sent it to me. This accounts for my having the reproduction of it, which I esteem as a relic. Thinking it too good to be kept under a bushel, and having the consent of Sister Purington, I send it to you for publication in the *Signs*.

Hannah M. Drake

A prayer offered by Elder Wm. J. Purington, Sunday morning, March 8, 1885, at Hopewell, New Jersey.

Thou prayer-hearing, prayer-answering, and sin pardoning God — May we be enabled to now approach thee in the all prevailing name of the once humiliated and crucified, and now risen, exalted and glorified, Redeemer. Grant unto us this morning, if it be thy holy pleasure, the true spirit of supplication and thanksgiving. Lord, we would acknowledge, not with a mere form of words only, but from feeling hearts, that thy loving kindness, and thy tender mercies, have continued to us all our pilgrimage until the present moment; and while the shafts of death have been taking our fellow mortals upon the right hand and the left, these frail lives of ours are still spared. We are still the objects of thy compassion here in that state of existence where thou canst give life and immortality to the vilest of the vile, if in harmony with thy will, and if such are embraced in the covenant of redemption. And while we would this morning breathe forth unto thee thanksgiving for past mercies and present favors, and openly implore a continuation of the same upon us, we would be filled with filial love, and reverential awe, to thee, that we have the hope of a blissful immortality beyond this time state; a hope that is to thy dear people at times, truly an anchor to the soul, while billow upon billow dashes upon them. While sin and confusion is abroad in the earth may they rest assured that the Lord God omnipotent reigns, and that every event is ordered by thy wisdom; that the wickedness of the present can only go as far as thy purpose is. We are informed in thy written word that the wrath of man shall praise thee, and the remainder of wrath, thou wilt restrain. O dear God, suffer us not to dwell upon what we have to say with indifference. And we feel to say in heart, all will be well, whether I am interested or not. O God! may our prayer be this morning like David of old! O Lord, revive us. O, revive thy work in the midst of these years. Grant unto us quickening grace, and may we feel to appreciate the great blessings of which we are the recipients, and may our church privileges be made brighter, more endearing, more strong; and enable us by thy grace to be more faithful in the discharge of duty bound upon us. Remember that thy goodness extends not to us alone, but unto the excellent in all the earth, wherein is thy delight. Nothing can be added to thy glory, and nothing taken from it. But thy purpose, thy glory, thy majesty, and thy power, are manifested in thy church here upon thy footstool.

O, that in our hearts this morning, the undying song of praise might ascend unto thee, that our hearts might be attuned to praise thee in deed, and in truth. We remember that all our springs are in thee, both temporal, and spiritual. And as thou art calling away thy true, tried and faithful servants, who have long been in thy militant church, may we who remain be filled with holy ardor to fill our places in the same, as the same may be made to appear unto us, fearless of the frowns of man, and regardless of his applause. And when we are criminated for the truth, and for strict adherence to thy written word, O heavenly lover, keep us from recrimination. May we remember that thou hast said, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. We would therefore bow in sweet submission to thy holy will, bearing the trials and toils of this life as becometh soldiers of the cross. May we remember that but a few more years at the most, shall have passed away, when we shall be dismissed from the warfare, and enter the glorious state of existence where the shafts of the enemy shall no more reach, where our vile, depraved natures can no more annoy, but where joys perpetual, and praise everlasting, await the ransomed church. O dear God, according to thy will remember

all the families of affliction, where the angel of sorrow has recently mantled them in gloom. Great God, be unto them a present help, enabling them to realize that thou hast done it, and to remember that thou art too wise to err, too good to be unkind. And we implore thee, according to thy will, to be with, uphold and sustain, thy true, tried, called and faithful servants in this day of idealism, in this hour of delusion.

May their bow abide in strength, and the arms of their hands be made strong by the hand of thee, the Mighty God of Jacob. And now enable us to commit our all into thy faithful care. Be our God and guide, not only through the literal day, but through life's appointed journey, and when done with the scenes of earth, and we are called to exchange worlds, in the moment of expiring nature enable us to say, Now unto the king eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, our Savior, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

(Those who were accustomed to hearing Elder Purington, will remember well with what solemn awe and earnestness he would address the God whom he held in reverence, and loved. All we believe will read the above with solemn reverence. Prayer, with him, was not a mere form of words put together to catch the attention of men, and please their ears, but a solemn presentation before the Lord of the true feeling and desires of the heart. He could not approach to God with flippancy of expression, but felt that he stood on holy ground. Only the most solemn and sublime words, seemed to him appropriate at such a time. This was also true of his preaching. No one ever heard from his lips that which could bring a blush of shame to the face of any one. **He believed that the profound and awful mysteries of the faith should be handled in a solemn manner.** Whether in prayer, or in preaching, he felt that he stood before the Lord, rather than man, and he spoke as one who realized the divine presence. — Ed.)

(We were greatly impressed both by the wording of the prayer and the comments of Elder Chick when we read the above in the August 1, 1898, *Signs*. We hope others may enjoy this as we did. — J. D. W.)

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843 Glendale Avenue,
South Charleston, W. Va. 25303

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing $3.00 for renewal of my subscription. I enjoy reading the editorials and the letters from the dear brethren so much.

I am amazed sometimes when I read their experiences which describe my feelings exactly. Then I am made to know that it is all through the power of our God, which draws us together with his love and wisdom.

I recall meeting a sister a few years ago whom I had never seen before. We looked at each other; and she began to push her way through the crowd: and we were embracing and weeping, with a love that only He could instill within our hearts. Later I was meditating about this, and this little poem came to my mind:

I looked across a crowded church,
And saw my sister's face:
In a moment God sealed our love,
That can never be erased.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. Lester Haning

THANKFUL TO BE AMONG THE POOR AND AFFLICTED

Rt. 2, Box 134,
Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120

Dear Brother Spangler:

I had a dream, or had a vision of myself preparing to go to church somewhere, or to some kind of a meeting. After getting ready, I was lifted with great wings of love, and carried to a mountain side. There were two groups

of people there; and I looked on one group, and saw they were dressed in the finest of fashion, and all were in perfect health, and they were singing a song I did not know.

I looked on the other group of people, and they were all a poor and much afflicted people. Some were dressed in patched and tattered clothing; some with only one arm, some on their knees and could not walk, and some with only one eye: and, O, praise the Lord, my dear brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus, I was placed with the poor and afflicted group, and handed a song book, and we all sang, "Ye pilgrims of Zion and chosen of God," all the way through. I looked to see if I could see the other group, but to my astonishment, they had vanished off of the face of the mountain; and the poor and afflicted people stood unmoved — as solid as a great rock, and were rejoicing in our Lord.

When I awoke, I was also praising my Lord for placing me in the poor and afflicted group. "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and a poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." (Zepaniah 3:12) And the 14th verse reads, "Sing, O daughter of Zion, shout O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem." And the remainder of this chapter is very precious to read and meditate upon.

This dream has been very precious to me in my afflictions along life's pathway, and was given me not many days after I was led in the crystal clear waters of the Blue Ridge Mountains, and baptized by a precious saint, Elder Sam Terry, who was like a father to me. This is so fresh in my memory today, until I was made to rejoice once more in a Saviour's love. Although this is but part of my experience, I hope it was presented to me, to help me bear my afflictions which were appointed me before the foundation of the world.

Somehow this was a burden to me to write it to you, Elder Spangler, along with my renewal of the *Signs of the Times*. May God bless you is my feeble prayer: I feel too unworthy to ask an interest in your prayers.

An unworthy one,
Pauline Spencer

P. S. The enclosure is for two year's renewal, with the rest to use as you see fit.

EXPERIENCE

Dallas County Hospital,
Fordyce, Arkansas 71742

At the request of my dear precious mother, and many others, I am making the attempt to write some of my travels through life, and call to the ministry, if indeed I have that call and experience.

It really began when I was a very small boy talking with my little sister in our old home. It began like this: She asked me, saying, "John do you know there is a God?" and something down in me said, "Yes." Let me say that there had been something of an inquiry as to, Who or what made this big world, and all the trees, and all the fullness of all things; so I said, Yes, to the question: "Did you know there is a God, and he hears all we say, and sees us all the time; and knows what we are doing, and why, all the time?"

"The strong man armed keepeth his palace, and his goods are in peace until the stronger than he cometh upon him." Now all this came upon me and spoiled all my goods, and tore all my palaces to shreds, and left me homeless. But there finally came a time with me which wrought a great change in my life. I had always thought that when a man gets ready to change his sinful life and live holy, all he had to do was to tell the Lord, "I'm ready"; and this I decided to do at a certain memorial day. I remember I was with my little brother in a wagon, and I sang and danced until I was exhausted. I went

along for a long while, forgetting all about it.

But there came a time when I was plowing in a field, and I was laying the corn by, and I got mad at my horse because he was biting the tops out of the corn. I did not want to muzzle him, so I began cursing and fighting him, and picked up a pine knot and threw it at him, and hit him on the head. He fell to the ground dead, I thought. He stretched his legs and quivered as if he were dying. I tried to lift his head, but could not; but as I stepped back, he raised his head and sprang to his feet. This relieved me, but I turned and looked at myself, and something said, "The horse is OK, but how about you?"

O, here came something hard to explain . . . anyway, after I had used so many shameful curse words, something took place inside me, asking, "Why are you so much interested in all this Jesus?" I saw a light like a funnel from where I stood between the plow handles; and I cried out, "Oh! Lord." My horse thought I said, "Whoa," and stopped. The plow handles braced me, and seemed to keep me from falling into eternal hell. Right here I was made to say, "Glory to God in the highest: Jesus is my Saviour."

I had always felt like I would have to preach when I became a man, and was ordained in 1925. These are some of the things I have experienced. To all who may read this, I ask an interest in your prayers. This is a poor description, but I have done the best I could.

Yours in a precious hope of life beyond the grave,

Elder J. T. Everitt

(Elder Everitt is now in the Dallas County Nursing Home, Fordyce, Arkansas, and we hope he is getting along well. — Editors)

"DEAR OLD FAMILY PAPER"

Whitefield, Maine 04362

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

Enclosed is a check for which please renew my subscription to the *Signs* for two more years; the balance is for the Indigent Fund, or for use any way you desire for the good of the household of faith.

We both, husband and I, do enjoy the good old paper very much. In each issue we find comfort in the experiences of the brethren, for they all relate the same travel in this time world. Many times we have read an experience of some brother or sister which tells our own travels in this life better than we could tell it ourselves.

The Editorials and articles of *The Voices of the Past,* we enjoy so much: all speaking the same truth; all declaring the same God, who doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

We remember well the dear old *Signs* that came into our home in the large folded paper — newspaper style. By the writings in the *Voices of the Past,* we find no wavering from the truth now preached by the Old School Baptists from that preached many years ago. The same gospel truth as it is in Christ preached by those servants of God years ago, is declared in our churches today. "I am the Lord, and there is none else; there is no God beside me."

How blessed we are to have a dear old family paper, telling of the love, mercy and goodness of our God, to such helpless and dependent people as we Old Baptists feel to be.

May it be God's will that the publishing of the *Signs* may continue for years to come, and the publishers be blessed to carry on the good work which brings comfort to our people through the length and breadth of this land.

Our love and fellowship to the household of faith.

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Merigold

"THE LAW OF THE LORD IS PERFECT, CONVERTING THE SOUL."
Psalms 19:7

Dear Followers of the Lamb:

This Scripture has held much interest for me in recent years, and lately it has been on my mind to the point where I am inclined to write something about it. I hope that the Lord of Hosts will enlighten me to bring forth something of interest to those who may read this.

It seems in order to examine this Scripture word by word, to get at the "meat" to be found therein. Thus we find first the *law* to deal with. Now in this instance we are not to treat on a ceremonial law, or what might come under the general meaning of the word law, but with the *will of God.* David's mind was definitely on God's glory, power, omnipotence and righteousness in this 19th Chapter. To all these, we can add His perfectness. Note that he wrote, — "The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." Then he says, "The statutes of the Lord are right," etc. He continues to set forth truths as to the Lord's judgments being true and righteous, — a most wonderful appraisal of God's *law* or *His Spirit as put into his own heart.* Note this reference throughout the Psalms as to his delight in the *law of the Lord.* Psalm 119:70 says, "The Law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver."

Who was this *law* of, or by? It was of the Lord; and it is so plain that man had nothing whatever to do with its origin; nor would man ever have anything to add to it in time to come. I speak of *God's Divine Commandment* or manner in which He decreed that the soul of man was to be changed, having in mind that puny man long ago did set out to do this changing. More will be said of that later on.

We come now to the word *perfect.* As used here, it means a complete and flawless work or *application of the power of God;* and since He was, before the advent of man or beginning of this time world, the very essence of perfectness (and has never changed,) could anything else come from Him but *perfect commandments and laws,* as we have in mind here? Matthew 5:48, says, "Be ye perfect as your Father." Many other references can be found that bear this out.

In the word *converting,* we have to accept it as definitely meaning *to change* something from its present form or shape or being. In this instance we have *a changing of the soul of man.* Again it is plainly seen that puny man is ruled out of this work for he cannot change anything the Lord God Almighty has decreed to be *his own divine law* or work. He cannot see or definitely determine just what his own soul actually is, nor where it is. He cannot reach another's inward unseen soul by any means at his command. Other than by talking or writing a man cannot get into the minds of his fellow man and bring from them their emotions and words that they have been converted; and so on.

Now to the word *soul,* or that which is a deep mystery indeed. In Genesis 2:7, we find where God brought into existance *the soul of man.* ". . . and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life: *and man became a living soul,"* as it is written. That same living soul has been transmitted on to each and every human born of Adam and all his posterity to this time; and until the end of this time world. It is within man's body, yet has any surgeon who has operated on man's body and gone into the brain and into the heart, and all areas thereabouts, ever found any *living soul* or substance that could be said to be such? Then let us consider that if man himself cannot find anything within our bodies that can be held to be a living soul, how can any man say that he can CONVERT OR CHANGE THE SOUL of his fellow

man? O, foolish man that says he does this. How they long to do the work the Lord of Heaven did before the world was.

David surely left good record that "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Never did he question its perfectness. He wrote in the 139th Psalm what he was given to see by Divine inspiration and revelation, saying (verse 6), "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high. I cannot attain unto it." In verse 14, he wrote, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and *that my soul knoweth right well.* Here he indicated that his soul was contained in, and a part of, his knowledge, or within his brain and mind. All his writings were after the changing or converting of his soul, and he said, "*Marvelous are thy works,*" which means only that the *Law of the Lord is perfect,* and his works are flawless.

The changing or converting of the soul of man, I believe, comes at the time of the new birth, and the soul is not removed from man and made over or altered, but the entrance of the HOLY GHOST or HOLY SPIRIT into the soul, does change it from a mortal, unregenerated man's soul into one wherein dwells the HOLY SPIRIT which can and does overpower it — and sets up the warfare that exists from then on, between the two occupants, the carnal nature and the Spiritual one. This converting or changing of the soul IS PERFECT. We have the praise of all the Old Prophets and of the later Apostles for the work God wrought upon them. And, too, do we not have our very own experience to verify that it was a PERFECT work? Did it not accomplish perfectly what God designed? As to man's efforts to take over and do this changing or converting of men's souls, we have only to look about us on every side and see the fallacy thereof. How thankful then are those whose conversion has been made PERFECT. No wonder we find so much pleasure in meeting with those of like mind and give much time to "telling what great things the Lord has done for us."

Concluding, I will mention a recent local event that fits into this writing. A church in our valley was featured in our local paper, with picture of several youths of "teenage," and considerable explanation of the work done in "bringing them up to know Christ and to walk in His love and footsteps," etc. The minister asked his own question, "Are we accomplishing this work fully?" He answered it by saying, "We are doing it IMPERFECTLY." I asked him by letter to qualify what he meant by imperfectly. He replied promptly, "Our exemplification of the Gospel is imperfect to our youth. Our knowledge is imperfect and our prophecy is imperfect. Their apprehension of the Gospel is less than perfect." There we have an example of what goes on the world over, though but few break down and admit that man's attempt to perform the Lord's work is a failure *and full of imperfection.* It is written, "If the blind lead the blind, they both shall surely fall in the ditch." What joy and bliss to know by and through the perfect conversion of our souls that we will not be found *imperfect* when this life ends; and that in time we stand before the *One* who decreed by His righteous and holy law that our conversion would be *perfect;* and this before the world was. I hope and pray so much of the time that I am included in this group.

A sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all.

Wm. O. Hall
P. O. Box 595
Mount Vernon, Wash. 98273

TWENTY-THIRD PSALM

My mind has been on the 23rd Psalm. I have used it as a text several times in my sixty-five years in the ministry:

but never with the weight that it seems today.

Now, where did Jesus find his people? We do not entertain the thought that any were lost to Jesus; but it is written that Jacob was found in a waste howling wilderness, and the Lord led him about and instructed him. Likewise Daniel, who would not fall on his knees and worship the idol of King Nebuchadnezzar, when he worshipped only the true God, he was thrown into the den of lions, but he was not alone, for the Lord was with him. Also, when the three Hebrew children were cast into the fiery furnace, which was so hot that it consumed those that cast them in, they were not alone: one watcher, the king, looked in and saw four people. "Did we not cast in three men . . . Lo, I see four men loose . . . the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

"Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me." When Jonah was ordered to go to Nineveh and to cry unto her that within forty days the city would be destroyed, he went the wrong way: he took passage on the wrong boat; and there came up a terrible storm. The sailors were sore afraid; then Jonah confessed that he was the cause: "Cast me into the sea;" and they did. But the Lord had prepared a great fish, and it swallowed Jonah. For three days and three nights Jonah prayed. He learned a great lesson: "Salvation is of the Lord." He learned this in the belly of Hell. Then the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah on dry land; and Jonah started at once to Nineveh, and preached that in forty days the city would be destroyed. Jonah learned something in the belly of the fish that he could not have learned in forty years in any college of men. He learned that salvation is purely the work of the Spirit; that it cannot be purchased of men; it cannot be bought with silver or gold. It is the work of grace through faith, not of ourselves, for it is the gift of God.

The Bible records these things, to show God's power in all things. I do not want to talk to those who have not a hearing ear, nor to those who are "sure of heaven," but to the many dear ones who come asking, "O God, be merciful to me a sinner." Not to those who are so self-righteous in their thoughts, but to those who have been in the fiery furnace with Jesus as a partner, and whose thoughts are about the Trinity, God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit. Remember, dear brethren, God the Father is the "powerhouse"; Jesus Christ the Son and the sacrifice; and the Holy Spirit the Comforter of those who are born of the Spirit. And remember that God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in Truth.

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me: a stranger they will not follow." Concerning the one led like a sheep to slaughter, was what the Ethiopian eunuch was muddled about; and Philip was sent to straighten him out: not to make a Christian, for he was already that. He was coming home from Jerusalem where he had been to worship. He was reading Isaiah, but did not understand what he was reading: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb dumb before his shearers, so opened he not his mouth." He asked Philip whom Isaiah was talking about, was it of himself or some other man. Philip did not answer him directly, but began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus — to the satisfaction of the Eunuch. And as they rode along, they came to water, and the Eunuch said, "Here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?" And Philip answered, "If thou believeth with all thine heart, thou mayest." And the Eunuch said, "I be-

lieve that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Then they both went into the water, and Philip baptized him, and they came up out of the water; and Philip was caught away of the Spirit, and the Eunuch went on his way rejoicing.

I have preached many funerals of non-members, and I had as good a hope for them as for anyone. My own dear father was never baptized by man, but gave a good evidence that he had been baptized of the Holy Ghost; and he was a great help to me when I began to preach. The old Elder who baptized me, when he led me out of the water said, "Here is a preacher for you." I hoped that nobody heard it; but it seemed they all felt the same way. Within a year I was licensed to preach. I was baptized on "ground-hog day," February 2, 1896; and ordained January 10, 1900, to the full work of the ministry. And here I am in my 93rd year, still proclaiming that "the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." I thought when I first started out, for I was rather timid, that after I preached a year or two, I would get over it, but in this I was sadly disappointed. After about 70 years, my knees shake and my heart throbs when it is announced that Elder Weaver will follow so and so on the stand. But I will say this, that of late, be there a dozen or five hundred, it is all the same to me; for I know none will hear me, except those who have been born again. The Lord has told me that his staff and his rod would comfort me. Many times the rod is used: I am yet a man, and when the Lord "looks at me," then I remember, and go out and weep.

The Lord has been good to me. His charity, which is love greater than faith and hope that abides in us, reminds me that I am still in the flesh. The Lord has showed us many things, and the prophet truly said, "There is nothing too hard for the Lord." The sun, moon and the stars that he placed in the heavens show his handiwork. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, and all things, and pronounced them good, and very good. He knows all things: to him all is an open book. One star that I used to watch when the sky was clear, was an exception to me: the Pole or North Star. No matter where I was day or night, it was always North. It is located by the two stars in the Big Dipper always pointing to it. The sailors of old used this star for guidance, until the compass pointing to the North took its place. Truly it is said, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge."

"The Lord is my shepherd," not a shepherd, but *my shepherd.* He is speaking to me; and I shall not want. He is speaking to all his chosen people. "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." He talks to his sheep, and they hear his voice, and follow him. They know not the voice of strangers. One thing I learned about sheep when I was a boy on the farm: I was their shepherd, and they were not afraid of me or my dog. We usually had twenty-five or thirty little lambs, and they all played together. At nightfall I would call them, and they would follow me into a big shed. Sometimes one would run away from the flock, and I would tell the dog to bring him in; and sometimes he would have quite a time. Here I learned that sheep would not drink running water, but go to the still water.

"He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou are with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." What

more do I want!

To my numerous brothers and sisters, may the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you. May he lift up his countenance upon thee, and give you peace.

Your unworthy brother,
Elder George L. Weaver,
3415 Westbury Road,
Shaker Heights 20, Ohio 44120

(The above is from a recording sent by Elder Weaver since his eyesight is bad for reading or writing. We were glad to receive it, and have edited it for publication. — J. D. W.)

THE HOLY TRINITY

"There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one." (1 John 5:8, 9)

"But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by who are all things, and we by him." (1 Cor. 8:6) "For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." (Eph. 2:18)

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (John 1:18) "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." (Matthew 11:27) "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ . . ." (Romans 5:1)

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten Father,) full of grace and truth." (John 1:1 and 14) Under the law of Moses there were burnt offerings made: "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified by these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these." "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (Hebrews 9:23 and 28) "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." (Romans 6:14)

There are many verses of Scripture the world accepts as invitations, but rather they are commands to a chosen people. In the gospel according to John we find, "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not ,neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you . . . the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name." (John 14:15-17; 26)

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." (2 Cor. 4) I feel I have been comforted many times by the kindness of my brethren, and I hope by the Holy Comforter; though I know I have failed to be a comfort to the people I hope I love.

I have spent many sleepless hours thinking of the little ones in toruble; and often I try to pray that the Lord comfort them in their afflictions; yet by our own experience we do believe that whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. "Furthermore, we have had fathers in our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence."

"Blessed by the God and Father of

our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead . . . who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him from the dead, and gave him glory: that your faith and hope might be in God, . . . being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." (1 Peter 1:3; 20; 23) "For through him we have access by one Spirit unto the Father." (Ephesians 2:18)

I know that my flesh profiteth nothing, yet by the way of remembrance my mind is stirred up, (I hope the pure mind,) for oftimes I feel that surely I have tasted that the Lord is gracious. Many times I am made content with such things as I have; for He hath said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee;" and he is the same yesterday, today and forever. And I believe he comforts those for whom he died, in dreams and visions.

I have had many dreams that are precious to me. Not long ago I spent some time in the hospital. My brethren, friends and loved ones put forth every effort for my welfare and comfort; for which I hope I am grateful, as unworthy as I am. My pastor uttered many comforting words in prayer, which continually linger with this poor mortal. Yet none of these things which I cherish so much, relieved the fear of an operation. While waiting for a surgeon to come from another city, I believe I sought the Great Physician diligently with tears, saying, Lord help me; and in my sleep I was given a most precious dream. I most surely believe that there is a living Spirit, and when the body returns to the dust, the Spirit returns to God from whence it came; and that the one and only Holy Spirit that comforted our fathers, comforts us in our tribulations.

I dreamed my father in the flesh, who passed from this time world more than fourteen years ago, came in the hospital: it was as plain as if I had seen him with my natural eyes; as he turned towards my room, I heard a nurse ask where he was going, and he said he was going to be with his son: he is in trouble. When I awoke, it seemed I could feel his presence with me, and I wet my pillow with tears. That day the stone passed from my kidney, and I believe I was made to joy in the God of my salvation, from which cometh my help; and the whole earth seemed to praise his glorious name.

I promised myself I would never try to write again, but for some reason I have tried to put together a few portions of scripture with what I feel has comforted me; that I might tell you that your Redeemer liveth; though you need not be told of man, for the Lord is his own interpreter, and he will make it plain.

We find recorded in the Book of Job, ". . . my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high; . . . when a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return." (Job 16:19; 22) "The flower of the grass falleth away; . . . but the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you;" (1 Peter 1:24, 25) of which you are not ashamed. The gospel comes, not in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost; through which we have access to the Father by the Word; the Holy Trinity that liveth and abideth forever.

May the gracious Heavenly Father direct our steps, that we may walk in fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

Clifton Robertson,
Rt. 1,
Reidsville, N. C.

CONSOLATIONS ALONG THE WAY

Rt. 3, Box 288,
Dunn, N. C.

Dear Brethren:

At about the age of thirteen I dreamed of being up among the stars, and it was such a pretty place: they were all the same size and the same brightness, not one bigger or brighter than another; and I wondered what it could mean.

I was reared in a Primitive Baptist home; my grandfather, being a member in the horse and buggy days, had right many of the brethren to spend the night with him; and I enjoyed hearing them talk of the dealings of the Lord with them. I was reared to go to the Primitive Baptist Church, but was not taught the doctrine in my home. In November, 1900, I was married; and while my children were small I did not get to go to meetings so much, since we had much sickness with them. I went when I could; and the more I went, the more I wanted to go, for I had a great love for the church. I can't tell as some can, when the change took place, if, indeed, a change did take place. But one thing I do know, the things I once loved, I don't care for now.

I dreamed of the church often, and wanted to be a member. I dreamed once of being baptized, and of helping preparing the communion basket. At another time I saw in a dream the prettiest tree, and it was full of beautiful fruit. Elder W. E. Turner, who was just a lad at that time, and I were trying to get the fruit with sticks, but could not. His father, Elder W. G. Turner, reached up, and it was no trouble for him to get it. Once, while in the hospital in Raleigh, seemingly at the point of death, I saw my whole body soaring upward until it went out of sight. I was not asleep when I saw this.

Once, while attending to a sick baby, and my husband and children were asleep, I was thinking, if my husband should be taken away, what would become of me and the children: at that moment across the room in front of me, appeared a man in a long white robe; then disappeared in seconds. This gave me some consolation.

On Saturday before the third Sunday in September, 1918, I asked a home with the church, and was received and baptized the next day by Elder J. T. Coats. It was a day to be remembered. It has not all been on flowery beds of ease since then, but has not been the same burden and trouble as before. I have feared that I am deceived, being reared in a Primitive Baptist home; but this did not make me one, for if I am one, it is by the grace of God, and for nothing good that I have done. After reading Elder Beebe's article of June 15, 1866, I felt encouraged, because I cannot tell of some great event that took place at a certain time, as some can.

Before I was received into the church, Elder Coats had pneumonia, and my husband said that Brother Coats was going to die; and I told him, "Not now, for he will baptize me before he dies." He did baptize me: it seems I was given faith to believe that he would. I have had many sore trials in my life. I lost by death three babies under two years of age; and in June, 1934, lost a son twenty-one years of age with blood poison; and in March, 1959, my husband was taken by death, but I was given strength to bear it. Then in December, 1959, I had a stroke, and can get around but little with a walker and help. If I live until February 2, 1966, I will be eighty-seven years old. I am kept here for some reason, but I know not what. I miss going to church so much, and being with the brethren and sisters. I need the prayers of God's people.

Mrs. G. M. Stewart

HAPPY IN HER BAPTISM

Rt. 1
Rocky Mt., Va. 24151

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In reference to what Elder Cecil E. Turner sent to the *Signs of the Times*,

I would like to say, I have never been happier in my life than the day of my baptism. The night before my baptism I had imagined many things to go wrong. But all this worry was really a blessing, because when I arrived at Jones' Lake, the second Sunday in January, a calmness came over me that never once faltered me from the time I stepped into the water to be baptized, until the time I stepped out. This reassured me that God was near. After my baptism my parents said that they sang, "O how happy are they, who their Savior obey . . . ," but I was rejoicing so that I didn't even hear it.

Now when I think back on this baptism, I can't help but cry. It was all so wonderful and it seemed like a dream. For years I had wanted to join the church and be baptized but I never thought I would. I was ashamed to cry in church and I felt so little and unworthy compared to the elders and members, and also I felt I was too young to even think of joining the church. Ever since November of 1961, I have realized that this world is no wonderful place to live in.

I have had two days that were outstanding to me. Those are, the day I joined the church, and the day I was baptized. Both days were a hope and dream come true. For the last few years it had broken me down every time the Elders had announced an "open door." I had wanted to go up so very badly, but yet I didn't feel like I deserved to be with them. For when I looked back over the life I had led, I couldn't see anything that would assure me a home in heaven. Oh, brethren, isn't *grace* wonderful? All of us would be eternally lost, if it wasn't for grace. For He surely doesn't need our help in anything. He has all power in both heaven and earth. And Oh, how small we are in his sight!

This past Christmas eve, I went to bed very restless. I had been very concerned over my grandfather, Elder Posey L. Plybon. About 3:30 A. M. I awoke, and still lying in my bed, I saw a vision of my grandfather. He was in a long white robe, and he was smiling.

The next day was Christmas. I couldn't get this out of my mind. We spent the day with my grandparents, and every time I looked at him I saw this image of him in my mind as it had been the previous night. I took this as a foreboding that my grandfather wouldn't be with us next Christmas. But after I talked with Elder Turner about it, I gained some relief. He informed me that my vision might just be relating to me that grandfather was a child of God. Oh dear brethren, I do hope with all my heart that he is a child of God, for I love him both spiritually and earthly.

But no one will ever know what joining the church has meant to me. You can't imagine before you join the church what it will be like, it's impossible. I would like to thank all of the brethren for being so wonderful and understanding of my problems.

An unworthy sister in hope,
Miss Carolyn Plybon

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To April 1, 1966)

Elder Louis Stewart, Miss	$ 1.00
Mrs. W. W. Lillard, N. C.	2.00
Elder and Mrs. Wade Chandler, Ky.	7.00
A Friend, Mich.	15.00
Mrs. Jay MacTavish, Can.	15.00
Mrs. Leroy C. Jones, Tex.	1.00
Mrs. L. B. Haneline, Ky.	2.00
Pauline Spencer, Va.	2.00
Elmer Lock, Mich.	1.00
Mrs. H. T. Hardee, N. C.	1.00
A Friend, Cumberland, Md.	10.00

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Elder R. W. Rhodes requests that we mention that his address is changed from Spearsville, Louisiana, to 334 South Alyette Street, Fayette, Alabama. Zip Code 35555, where he wishes his correspondents to address him.

Elder Rhodes also requests that orders for his book, *The Second Coming of Christ*, be sent to his new address. The price is $2.00 postpaid.

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with Lower Town Creek Church, Edgcombe County, just off Highway 43, between Pinetops and Rocky Mount, N. C., the fifth Sunday in May and Saturday before.

All who love the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 3, Tarboro, N. C.

Danville, Virginia **June, 1966**

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IMPORTANT REQUESTS

All correspondence with the Signs of the Times should contain your Zip Code number. Please do not forget this when sending renewals, etc.

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EDITORS

EDITORIAL
PROVERBS 14:4

"Where no oxen are, the crib is clean: but much increase is by the strength of the ox."

It is written that Solomon was given wisdom above all the wisdom of Egypt. (1 Kings 4:30) And we like the expression of Newton, who wrote

"If Solomon for wisdom prayed,
The Lord before had made him wise;
Else he another choice had made,
And ask for what the worldlings prize."

In this God given wisdom he gathered together in order sayings that apply to the earthly conditions of both wise and foolish among the sons of men. Many years ago, when the writer was a student away from home, his father wrote, "George, read the Scriptures, especially Proverbs, the Psalms, and the New Testament." Such advice is good for young and old today, for the world seems to be given over to folly, and how few there seem to be whom the Word of God is, "a lamp unto their feet and a light unto their path." (Psalm 119:-105)

How true Paul's statement is today, "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." (2 Timothy 3:13) Wherever one may see with their eyes or listen with their ears, the earth from pole to pole seems overrun with error of every kind. God, who created all things and upholdeth them all, whose word will stand, seems not to be in all their thoughts; yet there are a few now, as in every age, a number which no man can number, who believe that God has fixed the bounds of their habitation, "That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him." They, in humility and God given patience, are as Paul said, "Made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels and to men." (1 Corinthians 4:9)

From an early age oxen were used by men to plough the ground and turn

under any growth of no value, along with the thorns and thistles which the earth brought forth because of man's disobedience. The ox, when brought into the service of his master, had to wear a yoke that his master put on him, to which the plough was attached. We do not read of the ox having anything to hold him in but the word of his master. David in Psalm 32:8, 9, says, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee."

Coming to our subject, "Where no oxen are, the crib is clean." A crib was usually built with bars where the fodder was stored, which was the food of the oxen, therefore an empty crib is spoken of here as a clean crib; and where there was a clean crib, it was an evident sign that there were no oxen. Israel in Egypt were yoked together in bondage, and it was God alone that broke the bands of their yoke. (Leviticus 26:13) The world at large is yoked together by Satan so completely that only Almighty God is able to break the bands of his yoke. From the words of our Lord Jesus Christ as he spake to the two disciples who were on the Emmaus road, Luke 24:13-32, we see that he clearly shows us that God had yoked Moses and all the prophets as oxen in the work they did, and they testified in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. How cutting were the judgments they pronounced upon Israel and her enemies; yet, where they ploughed, seed was sown. God placed them in that land, and not all that they produced was for the Israelites; they were a wicked and rebellious people, and most of their princes were no better; in fact, they encouraged their people to err; and how shamefully they treated those upon whom God had placed his yoke!

Stephen, the first martyr, shows their children to be the same. In Acts 7:51, 52, he said, "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers." The Word of God which they testified by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, was the fodder or straw that was used to be the food of God's servants today, as it was theirs when they testified it; and until He came, upon whom the Spirit of the Lord should rest, Isaiah 11:2, there was to be as Ezekiel 21:27 says, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it to him."

True, there were a few when he came, who had been told they should not see death until they had seen the Lord's Christ. How wonderfully Simeon, who had been waiting for the consolation of Israel, led of the Spirit, could say, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people: *A light to lighten the Gentiles,* and the glory of thy people Israel." At this time the Jews still had a prophet, John the Baptist, who was slain by Herod; and soon our Lord was to say to them, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." As they had rejected and slain the prophets and messengers until John, they were now to reject the Lord himself, and cry, "Crucify him, Crucify him." The judgments of Moses, who had led their forefathers from Egypt to the promised land, were now to come upon them, and as Hosea 9:17 says, so it was done: "My God will cast them away, because they did not harken unto him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations." No more prophets sent with a "thus saith the Lord," *no oxen, the crib is clean;* "But much increase is by the strength of the

ox."

The prophets who had, like oxen, been yoked together, who were moved by the Holy Ghost, whose testimony was of Jesus, his sufferings, and the glory that should follow, could say, like Moses in his prayer, Psalm 90:17, "Establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it." Had not Jesus come, their testimony, like fingerposts pointing the way, would have had no meaning. How good that John could say, "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

In the four Gospels He is set forth by Matthew as having the face of a lion, their king; by Mark, as having the face of an ox; and by Luke as having the face of a man; by John, as having the face of an eagle. In this article we shall confine ourselves to the *Ox,* whose strength brought such an increase as to fill the crib. Our first parent, Eve, was tempted of the devil and fell, and the whole family of man has been yoked in that transgression; therefore it is right that our Lord, before he began his public ministry, should be subjected to temptation. "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." (Matthew 4:1) Luke tells us, "Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. Being forty days tempted of the devil." (Luke 4:1, 2) Mark, setting forth Jesus as an Ox who had come to do his Master's will, says, "And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness. And he was there in the wilderness, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him." (Mark 1:12, 13)

In Mark there is no genealogy: who would expect one of a servant? Jesus, doing his Father's will, brings into fulfilment all that was written of him: "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." (Mark 10:4, 5) David in Psalm 40:6-8, says, "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." O, how blest David was to tell of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. My subject would fill too many pages should I go on to tell of what Jesus did, and of what he is to his dear people. His strength has *filled the crib* from Genesis to Revelation, and though he humbled himself to be as lowly an an ox; yes, to be as a worm and no man, despised of the people, yet was it not he who said to John in Revelation 1:8, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."

Not only has He filled the crib, but he who became least in the kingdom of heaven, declared himself to be greater than Solomon. (Luke 11:31) He was prophesied of in all Scripture; and when he came he was alone, and of all the people there were none with him. He trod the wine press alone. Yet in Isaiah 52:7, it says, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of *Him* that bringeth good tidings." After he, our Lord and Saviour, had finished his work, Peter could write, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath *begotten us again unto a lively hope* by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." (1 Peter 1:3) So this blessed servant not only filled the crib, but one, Isaiah 60:22, "a little one, has become a thousand;" and Paul therefore was right in quoting from Isaiah 52:7, in Romans 10:15: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of *them* that preach the gospel

of peace." Thus our Lord, who humbled himself and was driven of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil, has not only filled the crib with "clean provender which has been winnowed with the shovel and the fan," (Isaiah 30:24), but has by his strength brought forth men to whom he hath given his word, "Lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world."

Left to themselves, who would desire to turn their backs on the world? How could they, when Satan has them under his sway? But there is an appointed time. He who humbled himself, him hath God highly exalted, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess him Lord of all, to the glory of the Father. John the Baptist said of him, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Matthew 3:11, 12) How true even today is Proverbs 13:7, "There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing; there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches." Yes, "A portion worth more than the Indies of gold, which cannot be wasted, nor mortgaged, nor sold." Our Lord is "the Rock, his work is perfect." and those he sends forth go at his word, like oxen, and find that it is so: it cannot be added to nor taken from. "Who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption; that according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." His apostles all put the crown on his head: they desired to be nothing that Christ might be "All in all."

The ministry is not something that one can take on himself. After Isaiah had seen the Lord high and lifted up, and was so humbled and unclean in his own feelings, the Lord sent a live coal from off the altar and touched his lips. He was then made willing, and said, "Send me." Yes, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." When our Lord Jesus says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest," we do not look on this as an invitation, but a command, for "where the word of a king is, there is power." We find Saul suddenly turned around from persecuting to preaching, and what he had been in the past made him feel so humble and unworthy, with the knowledge of what the Lord Jesus had done for him that he was a true yokefellow to the other apostles, and when they saw what the Lord had done, they glorified God in him. We find our Lord telling Ananias in a vision about Saul. Ananias thought he knew what Saul was, but the Lord knew better than he, and said to him, "Go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel. For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." (Acts 9:15, 16) No body of men sent Saul; God put the yoke on him. The Gentiles had been left in ignorance; as far as they were concerned the crib was empty, and God was sending this man Saul to tread out the corn; yes, if need be, to plough; for he it was who declared that the law, which was ministration of death, was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ. Now had come the day of the words of Isaiah 11, when David's Son, who was David's Lord, would with righteousness judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth, who was to smite the earth with the word of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips would slay the wicked. A day when, "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw as the ox." Straw sets forth the Word of God, which carries "the finest

of the wheat." (Psalm 147:14)

The example of our Lord is his humiliation should still be manifest in those who are his servants today. The disciples were taught by our Lord that "whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." How final that is! None of the apostles had the least desire to be looked up to, or to be put on a pedestal; but to be in service as lowly as oxen to do their master's bidding. From the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, God's sent servants have gone forward yoked together by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit in them, as humble and lowly as oxen, not taking credit for what they did. See Peter in Acts 3, when the lame man was healed: he boldly declared it was not their own power or holiness that had made that man to walk, but that it was the faith in Jesus' name that had made the man strong. Those who are yoked together in this ministry, down from the apostles to the present time, have gone forth — yes, often driven by the Spirit, and they can say as Paul did in 2 Corinthians 4:7-10, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." (Read the rest at your leisure.)

To approve of anything that has not a "thus saith the Lord" for it, would bring God's servants under his reproof; for our brother Paul said, "Be ye not unequally yoked togther with unbelievers, for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Corinthians 6:14) They have preached the Word down to this present day by the Holy Ghost sent down at Pentecost, which was the beginning of the gospel harvest; and they all desire still, as those who have gone before, to place the crown on the head of their Lord; and they would ever confess their nothingness, and that Christ Jesus is their All in All.

G. R.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

EPHESIANS 2:10

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

The epistle in which our text is found is addressed "to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus," and embraces all those of every name and locality, of every kindred, and throughout all time, which were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, predestinated to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, unto God, and made acceptable in the Beloved. With these the apostle includes and identifies himself in the pronoun we. "For we are his workmanship."

As well in the apostle's day, as at the present time, men were found contending for salvation by works; and those who expected to be justified by the deeds of the law, and accepted according to their own righteousness. In branding this heresy, and to settle this matter forever, the holy apostle, inspired by the Holy Ghost, has said in the preceding connection of our subject, most emphatically, "For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." And then follow the words from our text, "For we are his workmanship," &c. Being the workmanship of God, we cannot be our own workmanship, nor the workmanship of men or of angels. This workmanship embraces and includes all the work, from first to last, that has any bearing on our salvation, or the good works which he has before ordained that his people shall walk in. The creation, formation, man-

ifestation, as well as the inscription of the names of all the saints in the Lamb's book of life before the world began, must necessarily have been the work of God himself. Therefore he says, "Bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth: even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory." "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise. Thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name. But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; and thou art mine." The workmanship of God plainly appears in their creation and formation, and also in their redemption, "For I have redeemed thee." Their Redeemer is the holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth. The whole arrangement of the covenant of grace and salvation was the work of God alone. He loved them with an everlasting love. He elected them, as he has declared, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." It was his work alone to "Bless them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." "He hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works; but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

In all this the exclusive workmanship of God is indisputable. Nor is this all, their regeneration and heavenly birth are also the work of God. Of his own will begat he them; and they are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; not of a corruptible seed, but of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. Hence the men of God, inspired by the Holy Ghost, most devoutly acknowledged that God has wrought all our works in us, that it is God that worketh in us, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. No man can come unto God but by Christ, and no man can come unto Christ except the Father draws him. No man knoweth the Son, but he unto whom the Father shall reveal him. Simon Bar-jona was blessed in this, that flesh and blood had not revealed to him the Son of God, but the Father which is in heaven. And Paul also testifies the same. When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, to reveal his Son in me, straightway I conferred not with flesh and blood. Again, God, who commanded the light to shine out of the darkness, hath shined in your hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.

Each of these Scriptures, separately considered, prove beyond all successful controversy that the saints are exclusively the workmanship of God, and all of them collectively confirm the same important truth. Of this truth every one that is born of God and taught by his Spirit, has a witness in his own experience, and as soon as he is born of the Spirit, he begins to lisp it forth in language like this: "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul; he hath taken me up out of an horrible pit, and out of the miry clay, and he hath established my goings, and put a new song into my mouth," &c. The workmanship of God is inimitable. Neither men nor angels can create within us a clean heart, nor renew within us a right spirit. When men attempt to convert sinners, make ministers, direct the course of the gospel, or to protect the church, they make wretched work; their base imitations may be received by the world, but they are easily detected by those who are taught of God. "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord, God, Almighty." Truly he is a wonder-working God. "All

his works are perfect." But none of the works of men are perfect. And this is the work of God, saith Jesus, that ye believe on me, for faith is the fruit of the Spirit, and it is the gift of God.

"Created in Christ Jesus." As our natural creation was in Adam, so our spiritual creation is in Christ. What we understand by our creation in Adam is, that God gave us an existence in the person of Adam, which was to be developed in the proper time, by ordinary or natural generation; and so it is our understanding of the Scriptures on this subject, that God gave his people their original spiritual life in Jesus Christ, who is the second Adam and the Lord from heaven, and that all spiritual blessings were given to the church in him, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. And as the apostle John has said, And this is the record, (or divine testimony) that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. The Son of God is the life of his people, as it is written, When he who is our life shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory. The life given to the church is called eternal life, and that which is eternal is without beginning of time or end of duration; yet it is spoken of as a creation in our text. What then are we to understand by the term, in its application to the spiritual existence of the church of God in Christ Jesus the Lord? To help our infirmities, we being finite creatures, God has in his word pointed us to natural things, as figures of things which are spiritual. Thus the natural creation of the world is illustrative of the creation of the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. But while we trace the instruction given in the figure, we should be careful to observe that the figure is natural, but the things signified are spiritual. As, for instance, in the new birth, allusion is made to a natural birth, but not to signify that the new birth is a natural birth, but as in the natural, a new production or manifestation of natural life is developed, so in the second birth, a new and spiritual life is brought forth and made manifest. All we know of the natural creation of the world is, that God spake the word, and it stood fast; he commanded, and it was done. All things were spoken into existence, which did not previously exist, and this calling things into existence was called creation; formation is another thing. But in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and all that in them is, and all the years that fill up the space from the creation to the great burning day, are required for the development of what was in the beginning created.

The spiritual existence of the church is also attributed to the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. And it is thus set forth, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; the same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him." That is, by the word, which was with God, and which was God." "And without him was not anything made that was made." "In him" (that is, in the Word which was with God, and which was God) "was life, and the life was the light of men." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." John bore witness of him, and cried, saying, "This was he of whom I spake. He that cometh after me is preferred before me. And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." Thus as the existence of the natural world was embraced in the word of God's power, and sprung forth into development when that word of power was spoken, so the spiritual existence of the church, or the life of the church of God, was in the Word, which was with God, and the Word

which was God. This Word in which was life, and grace, and truth, is the same that was made flesh and dwelt among us, and whose glory was seen by the saints as that of the only begotten of the Father. The relative appellation of Son, applying to Christ in his mediatorial position, is based on his being the only begotten of the Father, and begotten full of grace and truth. His being the begotten Son of the Father, shows that his existence was in the Father, and one with him, and that his being set up as the mediatorial Head and life of his people, in eternity, is what we understand to be expressed by the terms begotten, set up, brought forth, sent, &c., together with every other term implying derivation or subordination, which is in the Scriptures applied to him, except such as apply to the flesh which he assumed, or was made, when made of a woman, and when he took part of the same flesh and blood which his children are partakers of. Thus, as in the creation of the natural world, God spake all things into existence by the word of his power; so, in the spiritual creation in Christ Jesus, he spake the word and it stood fast. He spake, and said of Christ, "A seed shall serve him, and it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this." Our hope of eternal life, therefore, rests upon the promise which God, who cannot lie, made before the world began. And hence it is affirmed that God hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

The third and last point to be considered is, Unto what end were we created in Christ Jesus? Our text informs us that they were created unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Many portions of the Scriptures express substantially the same thing. Peter says, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." And Paul says, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." The psalmist whose words we have quoted, says, "A seed shall serve him," &c. "They shall come and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this." The good works in which God has ordained that his people shall walk are also ordained of God. God has said, they shall shew forth his praise. They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness, and to this end were they created in Christ Jesus, and to secure this end he has not only taken them up out of the horrible pit, but he has established, or before ordained, their goings, and put a new song in their mouths. It is not in them that walk to direct their own steps, for God has before ordained that he will lead them in a way that they knew not, and in paths that they have not known, and put his fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from him, and he will not turn away from them to do them good. This people he has formed for himself, and they shall shew forth his praise, for he has before ordained it. No works are good in his sight, but such as he has before ordained for them to walk in, and of these the New Testament is replete with instruction, and the man of God is thoroughly furnished unto all good works. All works which he has not ordained are evil. In no other works than those which he has ordained can we glorify God in our body and in our spirit, which are his.

In our fleshly nature we are fallen and depraved, and the whole fountain of our carnal hearts and minds are pollutted and wicked, and "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" Not

one. From our creation in Adam we have a nature which is totally depraved, in which there dwelleth no good thing. In that nature, "There is none that seeketh after God; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." But in our spiritual creation in Christ, we are constituted members of him. His Spirit is put within us; his law is written within our inward parts, and we are redeemed from the law, and become dead to it by the body of Christ, that we should be married unto another, even to him that is risen from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. By vital union with Christ we have our fruits unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. But as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, neither can we bring forth fruit to the honor and glory of God, except we abide in Christ; for he is the true vine, and we are the branches.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe April 15, 1856.)

OBITUARIES

ROBERT VERNON DUDLEY

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write the obituary of my dear brother, Robert Vernon Dudley. He was born in Franklin County, Virginia, March 12, 1900, and departed this life October 5, 1965, at the age of sixty-five.

He was the son of the late Davis J. Dudley and Milia Holland Dudley. Brother Vernon was married March 4, 1927, to Goldie Marie Barnhardt, and is survived by his wife, four daughters and two sons: Mrs. Dorothy Shelar, Roanoke, Va.; Mrs. Jean McGuire, Vinton, Va.; Mrs. Lois McGuire and Mrs. Betty Booth, Hardy, Va.; Buford Dudley, Vinton, Va.; and James Dudley, Hardy, Va. Surviving also are twelve grandchildren; three sisters: Mrs. Blanche Brumfield, Reidsville, N. C.; Mrs. Eva Brumfield, and Mrs. Florence Maxey, Roanoke, Va.; and five brothers: Alphonso Dudley, Staunton, Va.; Henry Dudley, Salem, Va.; Rufus Dudley, Hardy, Va.; and DeWitt Dudley, Rocky Mount, Va.

The Lord gave him an experience of grace, and he was received into the church at Roanoke September 6, 1936, and baptized the same day by Elder J. F. Stegall. He was strong in the faith that eternal salvation comes to God's children by His abundant mercy alone. He was a devoted companion, a loving father; and a meek and humble brother in Christ.

His funeral was conducted at the Roanoke Church by Elders Cecil E. Turner and Leonard J. Brammer; and his body was laid to rest in Sherwood Cemetery, to await the glorious resurrection.

Written by his sister,
Florence Dudley Maxey

ANNIE E. (DOLLY) BEACHAM

Mrs. Annie E. (Dolly) Beacham, a daughter of the late Dempsy and Belinda Tillett Perry, was born May 28, 1874, and died August 23, 1965, at the age of 91 years. She was the widow of the late Decatur Beacham, Jr., who preceded her in death by 34 years. She was the mother of four sons, Shelton B., Eldridge E., Dexter A., and Grady A. Beacham, all of which survive her except Grady A., who died in December of 1948. She is also survived by two daughters, Mrs. Blanche Midgett and Mrs. Zola Tillett; 14 grandchildren (one of whom she took at the age of three days and reared as her own); and 30 great grandchildren.

A native and life-long resident of Kitty Hawk, N. C., Mrs. Beacham united with the Providence Primitive Baptist Church in July of 1898, being baptized by the pastor, the late Elder Avery J. Austin. She was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace, and Grace Alone, and was faithful to her church as long as she was physically able, and ever ready to entertain members and friends of her church throughout the many years of her stay on earth.

Inasmuch as God has seen fit to remove her from our midst, may we be blessed to bow in humble submission to His will, and to give thanks for the privilege of having witnessed the reflection of our Saviour in her daily walk and conversation.

The funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder George G. Trevathan, at the graveside on August 25, 1965, and her body laid to rest beside that of her husband in the Austin Cemetery at Kitty Hawk.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, a copy to the family, and a copy be put into the church records.

Done by order of conference, February 5, 1966.

Elder George G. Trevathan, Moderator
Eldridge E. Beacham, Clerk

COBB GORDON FISHER

Cobb Gordon Fisher, after a brief illness, departed this life August 4, 1965, to be with the one in whom he expressed hope to see and be like some day. Mr. Fisher, whose stay in this life was sixty-eight years, was the son of the late Joseph and Sara Fisher. He is survived by two sisters, Birdie and Annie, and a brother, Jim.

Mr. Fisher served in the United States Army in 1918 and 1919, and was given an honorable discharge with an excellent conduct award. He was a man who was loved and respected by those who knew him.

Though he was never blessed to join the Old Baptist Church, he was faithful to attend and was always ready and willing to defend the cause of truth. It was his pleasure to assist the church and brethren in any way he could. The Lord blessed him with a soft spoken voice and he was always finding good in all, never being quick to judge.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders W. T. Brown, Sam Jones, and D. B. Stokes, after which he was laid to rest, beside his parents, in the family cemetery near Verona, North Carolina, to await the morning of the resurrection when Christ shall come to call and gather His children home.

It is the writer's desire and prayer that God will reconcile his sisters and brother to their loss, making them to feel it's his eternal gain. May the God of all grace grant them peace and comfort in Him, through the Holy Spirit, which He has promised to His people, both now and forever. Amen.

D. B. Stokes, Jr.

IN MEMORY OF A FAITHFUL FRIEND CAPTAIN E. E. SMITH

God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform and we are often made to wonder at his handiwork; but surely God knows best in all things — yea, even on the afternoon of February 19, 1965, when he visited the quietness of the home of Captain E. E. Smith and called the beloved Captain away.

Captain Smith was born January 1, 1907, at Hope, Arkansas. On April 12, 1927, he was united in marriage with Miss Myrtle Inez Stunkard at Horton, Texas, and became a resident of Greenville, Texas, two years later, living there until his death.

Captain Smith served the City of Greenville as a Police Officer 27 years. Twenty of those years were served as a Captain, where he gained the love and respect of his fellow workers, the citizens of the Town, including those whom he had to arrest, and peace officers throughout the State.

As a peace officer he was unsurpassed, not one time was he known to fail in discharging his duties.

During World War II Captain Smith served a short time in the Armed Forces of his country. After his death his widow was given a Citation in his behalf for his unselfish service to his fellow man.

Captain Smith believed in salvation by grace, and trusted fully, in a sovereign God. He was a faithful friend to Mt. Zion Church, where he regularly attended services, and was always ready to assist with whatever needed to be done for the building, the grounds, and the people. He was truly a friend to man.

Captain Smith will long be remembered as a loyal and kind neighbor, a good and faithful husband, and as the standard bearer of the Greenville Police Department; also as a believer in Christ.

The beloved Captain is survived by his widow, Sister Myrtle Smith, and one niece whom they reared from a small child, together with a host of friends.

The funeral services were conducted at the Funeral Chapel in Greenville, Texas, by Elder E. J. Lambert and the writer, who also held a short graveside service at the Good Hope Cemetery in Franklin County, Texas, where the body was laid to rest beneath a mound of lovely flowers, to await the resurrection morning, when we hope to meet him again on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance, and forever be with the Lord in Glory. Amen.

W. W. Taylor

THOMAS JACKSON SMITH

Our father, the late Elder W. K. Smith, was married three times, and had a total of eleven children. The subject of this notice was the oldest by the second wife, Mahala Head. He was born in Union County, Arkansas, October 5, 1881; and passed away March 10, 1966, at the age of more than eighty-four years. At the age of fourteen he moved with his parents to near Spearsville, Louisiana, and the remainder of his seventy years were spent in this vicinity. He was married to Edna Breazeal November 27, 1906; and she preceded him in death about eight years. To this union five children were born: Ruby (Mrs. Cisco Barron), Spearsville; Clifton, Minden, La.; Frank, Monroe, La.; Graydon R., Minden; and Mrs. Glen Haynes, Junction City, Arkansas. All of these survive, together with twelve grandchildren and six great grandchildren. Surviving also are three brothers and three sisters: Harmon, Spearsville; Woody C., ElDorado, Ark.; Elder John Lee Smith, Spears-

ville; Mrs. Lizzie Williams, Dubach, La.; Mrs. Nannie Ogden, Spearsville; and Mrs. Irene Risinger, Spearsville.

He united with New Hope Church nearby May 4, 1918, and was baptized by his father. On May 1, 1921, he was ordained a deacon, which office he filled with fidelity for nearly forty-five years. His character in the church, as well as in the community was above reproach. Several years following Tom, his noble, lovely wife, Edna, came into the church. The Old Baptists always found a warm welcome in their home when they visited them; as did their relatives, friends and neighbors.

I would be cautious not to over-praise the man, but rather would I render all praise to the God of his salvation, who made him what he was: a true, faithful, meek, humble, and unassuming saint of God. He was always unswerving and uncompromising where he felt that truth and righteousness were at stake. He had an above average understanding of the Scriptures, and loved to converse upon eternal things. While he was unyielding in his belief, he was not dogmatic. Few, if any, times did he fail to attend his church's services, unless providentially hindered; and he found great delight in going far and near to be with the saints in their various meetings.

Elders R. W. Rhodes and W. W. Hudson, Jr., were blessed to conduct a lovely service at the home church, after which his mortal remains were placed in the Spearsville Cemetery by his wife.

Thus he is gone from us to his God, a subject of divine mercy, we have every reason to believe. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." (Job 1:21)

This is written at the request of his oldest daughter, Mrs. Cisco Barron, by his youngest brother,

Elder John Lee Smith
Spearsville, La.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Since it has pleased our God to remove from our midst our dear friend and fellow worshiper, Mr. Bruce McIntosh, on January 12, 1966, who was a constant attendant at our meetings, and always ready to assist the church in any way he possibly could;

And since he had served as Treasurer of the church for many years, handling this part of the business of the church in a most efficient manner;

And since we sorely miss him in our assemblings, be it

RESOLVED, That we give thanks to the God of all grace for giving us such a friend, and for sincerity in which he was blessed to maintain the doctrine of God our Saviour; and be it

RESOLVED, That we express our deepest sympathy to all the family, praying that the Lord may reconcile them in their bereavement; and that a copy of these Resolutions be given the family; one spread on our church records; and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the New Valley Church in conference March 20, 1966.

John D. Wood, Moderator
Leslie D. Duke, Clerk

MEMORIAL

Myrtle Keith Rhoades, born April 11, 1907, was called from this earth December 31, 1965, age 58. Her husband, Jimmie Rhoades, Mt. Vernon, Texas; one son, Derrell Rhoades, of Dallas; five sisters: Inez Hewett, Winnsboro; Mollie Walker and Florence Shofner, Mt. Pleasant; Katie Malton, Bogata; and Dora Shofner; three grandchildren, and a host of relatives and friends all mourn her passing. She became a member of Good Hope Church, Franklin County, Texas, at the age of 32 years and was baptized by the late Elder J. R. Hardy of Dallas, Texas.

Sister Myrtle Rhoades was blessed with a great degree of faith, humility, patience, meekness, and love. She passed through great tribulations which worked patience, experience, and submission to the will of God. She loved those of like precious faith, her family, Bible, and *Signs of the Times*. We thank God for her life.

Elder W. W. Taylor and I conducted her funeral services at Good Hope Church on January 1, 1966. Her body was buried in Good Hope Cemetery to await the resurrection of the body.

A letter which was written to Elder Hardy on the third day after her baptism was published in the *Signs* of February, 1940. I quote a few statements from this letter: "I am so happy, it seems my spirit soars to heights unknown, and I have been led in paths I have not known; there is a song in my heart I cannot sing." (page 33) "I feel so unworthy of all the good things I have received. I want to tell everyone about how wonderful the Saviour is, but I just keep quiet and rejoice within." Sister Myrtle thought she was keeping quiet; yet, she was then writing wonderful testimonies of this Saviour which would be read by thousands. She felt she could not sing this song; yet, God graced her to sing it in her conversation, walk, and writings.

Written by her Pastor,
Elder E. J. Lambert

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134 DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1966 NO. 7

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"FLOWERS WHILE LIVING"

This poem I will dedicate
Unto a widow, wise and great;
One that indeed has filled her place
Prescribed by Paul — an heir of grace.

The wife of one great man she was,
A helpmate true — obeyed his laws;
And where things worse or better were
She never failed to persevere.

She bore his sons, his daughters too,
And to her family was true.
She cooked their meals, and washed their clothes
And hardships suffered: no one knows.

She through them all did not despair,
But made her family her care;
Through cold and heat; through toil and pain,
She always worked, their good to gain.

In Proverbs thirty-one and ten —
And in this chapter to the end;
Her many virtues that excel
Wise Solomon does us them tell.

She often weary strangers lodged
And hardships never shunned nor dodged;
She also washed the feet of Saints
And ministered to their complaints.

She now for fourscore years and more
The good and bad of life has bore;
A good fight fought — has kept the Faith,
And shunned all save — "The Lord thus saith."

Since her departure now is nigh,
She for a better world doth sigh;
And in herself doth grieve and groan,
And long for Heav'n, her future home.

'Tis there within those pearly gates
Her crown of righteousness awaits;
No more a widow, there to be,
But Jesus' Bride, Eternally.

C. B. Britt

(Dedicated to Sister S. C. Davenport, and to all true widows indeed in Israel. Can be sung to long meter.)

"BACK TO ETERNITY"

"Now reader go along with me
Away back to eternity:
Go back beyond the days of youth
Where everything that was, was truth,

Beyond the sorrow and the tears;
Beyond the sufferings and the fears;
Beyond the anguish and the gloom;
Beyond the shadow of the tomb;

Beyond all trouble and all pain;
Beyond all losses and all gain;
Beyond all sobs and bitter sighs;
Beyond the limits of the skies:

Before there was a ray of light;
Before there was a day or night;
Before a prayer was ever prayed;
Before the world was ever made;

Before there was a moon or sun;
Before old time itself begun;
Before there was a now or then;
Before there was a where or when;

Before there was a here or there,
Or anything or any where:
Go back a hundred thousand years,
And farther still though filled with fears;

Go back until within the past
You fail to find the place at last,
Where the beginning you can see
At one end of eternity;

Go back until there's not a trace
Of anything but God and space;
Go all around, below, above,
Unlimited in power and love.

Away back there removed from sight,
Where everything that was, was right:
Away back there removed from sin,
Is where my Hope does begin."

— Selected

(Submitted by Elder J. N. Darnall.)

"RICHEST OF THEM ALL"

3347 Tutwiler,
Memphis, Tenn. 38122

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

. . . We all would be glad if you are given a mind to visit us here in Memphis again. We are few in number here in this great city of over half a million people, but we feel to be the richest of them all, for we feel to have the gift of God's love: and thereby receive all the benefits of His grace, as it pleases Him to bless us along life's way. We believe, though the road gets rough and thorny, and the darkness gets severe, it is all according to his good pleasure in leading us about and instructing us of his loving kindness, and power to save. In due season he causes us to look unto the hills from whence our strength comes. An elder once asked us, (who were gathered in my home to listen to him, as we did at Elder Brown's home when you and Sister Wood were in his home,) "What are the treasures of darkness?" It sank deep into my heart and soul as to the answer.

I am not able to explain my feelings and thoughts as some can; but the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him. Some of my neighbors don't like the expression of "fearing God," for they say He is a loving God, and is willing and waiting to save you, if you will let him. But when Jesus comes into our heart by the operation of the Holy Spirit, we find our heart full of love to the overflowing; and are in amazement at the beauties around us. And when we look for the burden that was within us, it is gone. Faith has come in and we feel the smiles of our Saviour in the forgiveness of our sins that we had never been able to feel before. When we would read Jesus' own words, "Ye must be born again," it was such a mysterious thing, we were afraid it would never come to us; and we knew of no way to be born again.

We tried the law to reform our ways, only to find we grew worse in the trying. So after so many efforts to bring ourselves in favor with the Lord, we felt our entire helplessness; and fully realized we knew not the way.

While I watched my friends join the various churches, and walk along in ease, I could not follow. I looked all around me, and there was no where for me to go. I went with my parents to the Old Baptist Church, and they were saying "Ye must be born again." It was all a dark mystery to me. But, by and by, suddenly my heart was filled to overflowing with sweet salvation. I had just found out, so to speak, that I was one of the redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus, and the time had come for him to make it known to me. How happy I was, no one can know except those of like precious faith, who have also been born again. I then felt all my troubles were gone, and life would be so sweet while I waited here for my time to leave this world. But, Oh, how little I knew of the ways of the Lord, who said that you are not only given to believe on his name, but also to suffer for his name's sake.

When in my weakness I went astray, He used the rod; and I learned to say with David, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Yes, we learn that it is in great tribulations and trials and sufferings that we learn obedience; and that we are still too weak to walk in obedience. Whom the Lord loveth he chastens, and scourges every son whom he receiveth; and to those who are exercised thereby, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruits of righteousness.

Now I must close; I had not intended to write so much, but hope it is in

line with the truth. Our minister says that he is not ashamed of the gospel, but is ashamed of himself; and that fits me. Give my love to Sister Wood; and come see us again sometime.

In a sweet hope,
Carrie Campbell

Delmar, Delaware 19940

Dear Editors:

I find that I have allowed by subscription to the paper to become overdue, and am enclosing a check for $5.00 to renew another two years.

I enjoy the *Signs* so much, and I don't want to miss a single copy. It is full of good, and what I believe to be the truth. If you editors have a mind to write on the following Scripture: Revelation 6:6, I would be glad to read either directly from you, or through the columns of the *Signs of the Times.*

I am eighty years old and my eyesight is not too good; but I hope to be blessed to receive and read the dear old paper as long as I live.

An unworthy one,
Mrs. George (Estella) Jones

"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid."

(Matthew 5:14)

The above scripture has been on my mind, I trust, in answer to prayer for the purpose of writing an article for the *Signs*. This, Elder Ruston requested me to do. I am persuaded that the Lord knoweth the hearts and needs of His people and rightly feel totally inadequate to choose a scripture or interpret its meaning or convey its beauty without divine guidance.

The above scripture was spoken by Jesus to His disciples on the mount. There is much weighty matter for consideration in Matthew 5, 6 and 7 where we find the "sermon on the mount." In our Lord's days there was a remarkable proverb, "Nothing is more useful than sun and salt." Sun dispelled darkness and salt prevented corruption. In the scripture under consideration (vs. 14) light is the key. I feel that it is advisable for me to dwell mainly on the latter part of the verse which reads "A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid."

In the beginning of the 5th chapter it is said that Jesus *taught* them (meaning his disciples). When it says that Jesus *taught* them we know that they *learned* because there really is no teaching until there is learning. Jesus used a sound basic principle of teaching, namely, "to proceed from the known to the unknown." Jesus used the plain simple statement, "A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." to convey a truth which is as far reaching as time and so deep that man (by nature) cannot comprehend it. It conveys a truth of such magnitude that a number that no man can number, a number taken from every kindred and tongue, and every people and nation is under consideration.

In the simple statement, "A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid," the indefinite article "a" gives the idea of any city. In the depth of the scripture we think of the definite article "the" referring to the city of God, eternal in the heavens, a particular city which is called "The Lord is there." (Ezekiel 48:35) When we consider a city being placed or built by man on a hill or high place we are reminded of the city of God which is not made with hands eternal in the heavens. When we think of the words "cannot be hid" which conveys the idea of "is not able to be hidden," we think of Zion the city of God which all that belong to Zion *must* behold. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we *must* be saved." (Acts 4:12)

We are reminded to think of the natural mind and the natural eye with

which we could behold the natural city. But please realize we could not see the natural city unless we had eyes which were open and there was light, either light to shine on the city or the city was giving off light. Light is really the key to this situation. When we consider the heavenly city we cannot behold it unless we have a spiritual mind and the spiritual eye (eye of faith). We cannot behold it unless we have spiritual eyes which are opened and there is spiritual light. Through experience I feel persuaded that with the natural mind I can comprehend the natural city, but I feel further persuaded that with the natural mind man cannot or ever will be able to comprehend the heavenly city. The key to the matter is the simple fact that there is no seeing without eyes to see and without light to manifest that which is to be seen. Further, there is natural light (the sun) and spiritual light (the Christ).

Jesus is spoken of as "A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." (Luke 2:32) "In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." (John 1:4-5) So it is that man walks in darkness until such time as his eyes are opened or the scales fall from his eyes as they did from Paul's eyes. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8:12) Paul spoke of Jesus as follows: "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting." (I Timothy 6:16) In John it reads "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." (John 6:29) We do well to consider these things, as one such as John was given to see into the depths of the truth.

When the scales fell from my eyes the first thing I saw was that I was a sinful (meaning full of sin) man, and that my heart was deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. I could see (in myself) no hope of anything here are hereafter. When light shines it makes manifest that which is already there, just as the light shows up that which is in the room. It was comforting to find that such as David, Paul and many others had similar experiences and were made to look to him for things natural and spiritual.

Another thing which the light from above shows, is that we do not have a continuing city here but we are made to look for that city which is above. We are caused to behold it by faith and you know faith is the gift of God.

As David says, "For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light." (Psalm 36:9) We are caused in this light to have a hope of dwelling in the eternal city through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. The same light that showed Paul that his righteousness was as filthy rags also showed Paul that he had a hope (hope that is seen is not hope) in the righteousness of Christ and he was further persuaded that nothing shall separate the people of God (read Romans 8:38-39) from the fulfillment of that hope, "which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." (Hebrews 6:19-20) The above quotation sweetly expresses the significance of the hope in Jesus.

You know in this Jesus, whom to know is life eternal, there is life and light and the one cannot be separated from the other. If ever we have tasted that the Lord is gracious, if ever He has shone upon us then are we children of God and will dwell forever with him.

"Did Jesus once upon me shine?
Then Jesus is forever mine."

Just as natural plantings are ever drawn toward the natural sun, so are the plantings of the Lord ever growing and being drawn toward the Son of righteousness.

> "Jesus draws the chosen race
> By his sweet, resistless grace;
> Causing them to hear his call,
> And before his power to fall."

The plantings of the Lord travelling on the way toward that light often give evidence of being children of God by crying unto him to show them the way and to keep them in the way. No words can express it better than the selection "Lead Kindly, Light."

In the same fifth chapter of Matthew, Jesus says, "Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel (a modius which contains nearly a peck), but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." So, I am persuaded that the light of the city of God gives light unto all that belong to Zion in all ages. Now when we are made to consider further, we believe (not with the natural mind) with the spiritual mind that the people which must dwell in the new Jerusalem were chosen in Christ Jesus (who is the light) before the foundation of the world. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will." (Ephesians 1:4-5) The plain and simple fact of the matter is this that Zion cannot be hid from the whole Church of God because Jesus finished the work that his father gave him to do and is at the right hand of his father expecting until all of his enemies be made his footstool. The light of the city which is called "The Lord is there" must be given to all that he died for or his name could not be Jesus, because it says in Matthew 1:21, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shall call his name Jesus: for he *shall* save his people from their sins." You see sometimes my friends I see it so clearly and so simply, and yet I realize that it is the greatest secret of all time as far as man is concerned; and in fact it is such a secret that man by all his searching will never find it out because these things are spiritually discerned.

What is the crux of the matter for you and for me, dear reader? Isn't it the simple question as to whether or not we have been enlightened with the true light? Have you ever thought of the result if the light that is in us be darkness? Oh how great that darkness! No wonder again and again we desire evidence that we are in the right way.

When we consider the city of God eternal in the heavens we are told in his holy word that it is a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God. This scripture alone should be sufficient to show that man has nothing to do with the building of this city. The new covenant as found in Jeremiah 31:31-34, further proves that it is all the work of God. You know my dear friends it is a covenant ordered in all things and sure, and make no mistake the Lord knoweth them that are his, and made sure by his death on the cross that they shall dwell in Zion. Through Christ salvation is come for his people. No one that Christ died for will be left out of Zion, and it is just as true that there will not be one in Zion whom he did not die for. Friends this is a solemn matter but I believe that the scriptures from Genesis to Revelation inclusive bear record that it is true.

When we consider our loved ones and are made to think of the end of their natural lives, we feel to commit their way unto the Lord in this life, and how much more for a life to come. How we long sometimes to see some evidence of our prayers being answered, that in them we might see some evidence that they have been with Jesus and have learned of him. Consider the beauty of

the words in the 53rd Paraphrase which we sing.

"Take comfort, Christians, when your friends
in Jesus fall asleep;
Their better being never ends;
why then dejected weep?
Why inconsolable, as those
to whom no hope is giv'n?
Death is the messenger of peace,
and calls the soul to heav'n."

One of the beauties of this truth is that his truth at all times firmly stood and shall from age to age endure. In this life we are given sweet foretastes of the king in his beauty. Too, we enjoy the sweet fellowship of those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

"Midst scenes of confusion and creature complaints,
How sweet to my soul is communion with saints."

Sometimes we are made to feel this love for those who are not members of the church. Sometimes we see it in the countenance, or in the tear-filled eye, or feel it in the grasp of the hand. How thankful we ought to be if we have reason to believe that the root of the matter be found in us. If it is we shall sing the song of the redeemed because the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

Oh friends there is so much in the scripture, "A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid," that surely it is true the half has never been told.

Pray for me and mine. Pray for me as a licentiate who needs the true light to rightly divide the word of truth.

D. A. McColl,
594 Cayley Drive,
London, Ontario,
Canada

(It was my privilege to be present when our dear Brother D. A. McCall was received into the fellowship of the church in Canada in 1963. And I was blessed to hear him speak last Fall while in Canada, to the honor of God and the comfort of his people.

It affords us much pleasure to publish this letter, and hope God will continue to bless him to both speak and write to the praise, honor and glory of God, and to the edification of His people. — D. V. S.)

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 1, Box 108
Copper Hill, Virginia 24079

Dear Elder Thompson,

For sometime I have had the desire to tell someone of some of my spiritual experience, but felt that I could not do it as I would like. I have an admiration for people who can express themselves so beautifully, for this I have never been able to do. I have wanted so much to try to write it that it has almost possessed me, as I think about it all during the day and wake up at night trying to write it in my mind.

I have decided that it must be to you, as you seem to want so much to hear someone else's experience. "Go home to thy friends and tell what great things the Lord hath done for thee," I seem to keep hearing you say. I think I know something of how the man felt when Jesus spoke these words to him.

Well, I told you when I asked for a home with you dear people, that I had been attending other churches in our community, but had not been satisfied. It had been my desire for many years to go home to my friends, but I couldn't find the way. It seemed that the sign in front of one of the churches bothered me terribly. "Get Right With God," it says. How, I wondered was this possible when I felt so helpless. It seemed that the other church said it was up to me to make "My decision." This I felt I could never do because again I felt so helpless. As I read my Bible I found one line that seemed to mean so much to me, "It is good to wait upon the Lord." This I knew was what I had to do for there was no other way for me.

During this waiting, one day while working, a sickness came over me and wanting so much to finish my day's work I begged the Lord to please give

me strength. Immediately the sickness went away and my heart filled with gladness and thanksgiving. Only this sickness kept coming back, and each day I would beg for strength to work. It seemed that I kept telling my friends how much I was enjoying my summer, not realizing at the time that to enjoy one's work was a gift of God. I have never enjoyed a summer before as much as I enjoyed this past one, even though I felt so tired and weary most of the time. To my amazement, my garden was harvested and I had all of my work done when I became too ill to work.

One night before becoming very ill I had a dream; and at this time I was visiting a doctor in Radford. In this vision, I was standing in the road at my childhood home talking to my mother and daddy who stood just beside of the road. Hearing something, I turned and there was my bother Bob in a car. I ran to greet him, hugging and kissing him and my heart was bursting with joy. But mother and daddy didn't come and it seemed to bother me for a second, but then I was so happy that I told him that I was coming to see him. His eyes were shining and he looked so sweet to me, but he told me that he didn't stay home any more because it cost him his ——. Then I woke up. Trying to finish this line I filled in "life," as he did lose his life. (I think that the joy exceeded this dream the morning of my baptizing and I saw so many sweet faces and shining eyes.)

This dream bothered me terribly and I seemed to feel it had a meaning. I then tried to interpret it. I decided that I was going to die, as that was the only way for me to go to see my brother. He was in a car, so I thought that I would have a wreck and die. Each time I went to visit my doctor I thought that this would be the day; but as I neared home, I'd say "Well not today." It seemed that I was completely satisfied and ready to die for I thought it would be wonderful to be as happy as I was in that dream. It seemed that I was so tired, weary, full of sin, a terrible mother and far from a good wife; and that perhaps this was God's way of giving my family someone better than me.

Then one night I had another vision, and this time I was very sick. I didn't want to be sick, but I was almost sure I was going to be before dying. Then I began to beg God to please help me.

Now this is the sweetest part of all! One day while sorting the fresh clean laundry, I reached for my stack of clothing to put into my drawer, and there on the very top piece was a long, narrow stain. I picked it up examining it to see what it was, and wondering why I hadn't seen it when I hung it on the clothes line to dry. The stain I decided was a blood stain but there was no way it could have gotten there! Suddenly the funniest feeling came over me, I cannot describe, and a question came to me, "What was God telling me?" I felt frightened and began to think of everything. Little did I know that I would visit another doctor in a few days and find that I needed surgery. The mark I would think, represented my surgery; but God had placed it on the left side and the surgery was to be on the right side.

After visiting my doctor a few days later, and arriving home, I laid down to rest. Suddenly I remembered, and thought, "This is what God was telling me," but he had put the stain on the opposite side of the surgery. Then realizing that maybe the garment was on the wrong side, this would place the stain on the right side. Immediately I arose and went to search for the garment, but "I did not find it at all." To me this showed God's almighty power here on this earth. I begged Him to please help me, and my heart filled with love, and I trembled to think that He had finally visited me in such a wonderful mysterious way. Then it seemed that I thought that I would feel so

much better if only I could get to the church just a few steps away. I planned to attend all three days of the association. I wanted to take in every minute of it, but things kept getting in my way and I would try to rearrange them so I could go. When the time came I was too sick to get there, so I begged God all the next week to please let me go to church on Saturday and Sunday. Saturday morning came and I got up feeling better, but so afraid a sick spell would hit me and I wouldn't get to go. As the time neared, I began to get ready, hoping I could go. Well Brother Thompson, as I sat there listening to you, it seemed that you wouldn't say a word that I could understand and my heart and soul began to cry. Suddenly it seemed that you couldn't speak the words fast enough. You said it wasn't what we got from our Bible every time, but it was how God led us from day to day; and I thought this meant so much to me that I could hardly keep my feet in place until you opened the door for anyone who wanted a home. I think that you know the rest, except that I'm not completely satisfied, but God has given me a wonderful hope, and what more could I ask for? He does everything so perfectly.

The fresh clean garment was old and full of holes. I feel that this represented me and my many sins. I think that the blood stain on the garment represented the blood of our dear Saviour when they pierced His side, while God only used the surgery to send me in search of the garment. Jesus came and with his precious blood, washed my sins clean away! Isn't that the sweetest and most perfect gift of God? Oh, how my heart does rejoice when I think upon such a wonderful gift given to such an unworthy me.

Signed and sealed with a sister's love, I hope.

Mary C. Poff

"LEST HE PUT FORTH HIS HAND"

"And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever."
(Genesis 3:22)

I hope and trust that I am given a desire to write a few lines about this for no other reason than to give glory and honor to our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ whom He has sent. I am mindful that if the writing of this is only the putting forth of my hand and natural mind, it will go no further than the flames and wrath of God that consumes all efforts and works of carnality. "For our God is a consuming fire." (Hebrews 12:29)

We read further, *"So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the Garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." (Genesis 3:24)*

To me, this flaming sword represents the wrath of God which was placed between God and all men after the fall of Adam. Man was driven out, and it was so fixed that he could never approach unto God on his own: for this flaming sword turns every way to keep the way. There is no way left open to find *the way* by searching or studying. Man cannot of himself put forth, or have any fruitful thoughts concerning this way. God's ways and thoughts are as high above man's as the heavens are above the earth. (Isaiah 55:9) "His ways are past finding out."

I believe that all men have at least a limited knowledge of good and evil, and sense in a measure that they are under the sentence of death as far as this natural life is concerned. With a fear for the unknown, they try to devise their own method or way of escape. John called such characters, "a generation of vipers," and asked who had warned them to flee from the wrath to come. These have not been drawn into the flaming sword, and killed to the things of this world. Therefore they know nothing of the fruits that are

meet for repentance: a godly repentance.

So man was driven out, and the way of the Tree of Life was closed in so that man could never put forth his hand — the works of his hands; or his heart: as is the popular saying, "Give your heart to God."

To me the tree of life is the knowledge of God — the true God, who is ruling over, and carrying out all things as He wills: A just and holy God, demanding complete obedience to his laws: and giving us Jesus to fulfill the demand of his laws. Jesus said, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only True God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3)

Before the foundation of the world God had a people, a people chosen in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 1:4) They all fell in Adam along with all mankind; and found themselves in a lost condition when they could not put forth their hand. But God put forth his arm, "Therefore his arm brought salvation to him." (Isaiah 59:16) He sent forth his only Son Jesus into this sin cursed world, to be crucified; to pass through the flaming sword: to bleed and die, and rise again, to make a way of escape: an highway that shall be called "The way of holiness." (Isaiah 35:8) Jesus came forth to do the will of the Father. (John 6:39) Power was given him over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him. (John 17:2) It was the Father's will also that none could come — put forth his hand — to Jesus, except He draw them. (John 6:44)

Now, one, when he begins to see himself as he really is, would not and could not go to God: He would not walk into this flaming sword, this wrath of God; but if, possible, would flee from it. But it was God's purpose from all eternity, to bring back, to redeem the lost sheep of the house of Israel. "Behold, I will gather them out of all countries whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath. And I will bring them unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely." (Jeremiah 32:37)

So, the child of God, as he is drawn, and his eyes are opened, becomes alarmed as he sees he is approaching the wrath of God; and he begins to try to protect himself, or to put forth something that will quench the flames; *but it is all consumed.* Just when he sinks down, expecting to be completely destroyed, Jesus appears: "When thou walkest through the fire, thou shall not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." (Isaiah 43:2) Yes, Jesus causes them to dwell safely.

Now the natural man, the earthen vessel, must stop here, dead to God's holy law because of sin; for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. But the new creature is lifted up in the arms of Jesus, and taken over on this highway where only the redeemed shall walk, and given a glimpse, a little foretaste of what God has prepared for them that love him: and this for only a short season now and then, as it pleases God as long as the man is in this world. Jesus said his sheep go in and out and find pasture; and Paul said that he died daily. So, as long as we are in this earthly tabernacle, we must die to the things of this world, each and every time we are given to feast on heavenly things.

I believe this flaming sword is still right there where God placed it in the beginning; and will remain until the end of time for this present evil world, when it shall move forward to destroy all things in its path, with a fervent heat. (2 Peter 3:7-10) But not before "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout; with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever

be with the Lord." (Thessalonians 4:16, 17)

So, Jesus is coming again to gather these bodies that must be changed before they can travel the highway of the redeemed; where they shall approach the pure river of water of life, (a pure river — no more through a glass darkly) where in the midst and on either side is the tree of life. Then they will be able to put forth their hand and eat of the tree of the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ their Redeemer, and live forever in a meeting that will never end. They shall see his face, and be satisfied.

"He which testifieth these things, saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." (Revelation 22:20)

Paul Morton,
2402 N. Main Street,
High Point, N. C.

FROM ELDER HAND

5840 Court O. C. P.
Birmingham 28, Ala.

Dear Brother Wood:

Your Editorial on Ezekiel 37:1-14, in May issue of the *Signs* was such a feast to me that I just wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed it. You seem to share my views on it exactly.

. . . I see in this scripture, as all others in the Old Testament, a natural representation of the experiences of the Child of Grace in a spiritual way. I believe I have seen myself as Ezekiel saw those dry bones; and I hope I have experienced the great shaking that took place, as I began to see my standing in nature begin to be shaken and torn apart. Isaiah said, "For the windows on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake." (Isaiah 24:18) And in the 23rd verse of the same chapter we see what this shaking accomplishes for Jerusalem. Paul in the 12th chapter of Hebrews, 26th verse, refers to the words of Haggai concerning this great shaking. (Haggai 2:6) And verse 27 of 12th chapter of Hebrews, shows what shall be accomplished, "And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain."

What a wonderful gift Christ is to God's people! What a stabilizing effect He has in their life! No wonder Paul said, "Nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." It is Him in us the hope of glory; and the scripture is fulfilled, "Death is swallowed up in victory."

May God bless you and all the others who so earnestly contend for the faith, which was once delivered unto the saints. My wife and I remember so well when you came to visit our little church here in Birmingham, and would so welcome another visit our way . . .

In love and fellowship,
Claude and Irene Hand

LOVES THE OLD TRUTHS

101 Venice Park,
Lexington, Ky. 40503

Dear Brother Spangler:

Greetings in Christ's dear name.

I celebrated my eighty-seventh birthday March 10th. I was very sick the month of February, and was in the hospital with an inflamed sciatica nerve. But the dear Lord restored me, and I am back in my lonely apartment; and am thankful to Him who is keeping me here: Jesus knows every step my feet must go.

I wish to thank you for the blessings the *Signs of the Times* have brought me. I love it because it teaches the dear old Primitive Truth. I do not believe the progressive movement that is flooding the South, but the old truths so dear to my heart. I would surely have enjoyed meeting you, but I am not able to make the trip. How I wish I could

hear the dear brethren of the *Signs* who are sending out the old story of Jesus and his love. Pray for me.

Your unworthy sister,
Emma H. White

Rt. 1,
Martin, Tenn.

The Signs of the Times has been in our family for almost a hundred years. My grandmother took it when I was a small boy, and I have some of them now; and I am past eighty-two years of age.

We enjoy reading the many experiences of the Lord's children. May He give you the grace and wisdom to carry on.

Your unworthy brother, I hope,
J. E. Jones

MEETING AT SLATE HILL

The Lord willing an all-day meeting will be held at the **Meeting House at Slate Hill, N. Y.** on Saturday before the first Sunday in August, 1966, (August 6th). Lunch will be served at noon.

All brethren and interested friends are invited to meet with us.

Elder A. J. Slauson

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Pigg River Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Bethel Church, Franklin County, Virginia, August 5, 6, and 7, 1966. To reach Bethel Meeting House from Rocky Mount, Virginia, take Rt. 40 to Glade Hill and turn left two miles. From Gretna take Rt. 40 to Glade Hill and turn right about two miles.

Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

John D. Wood, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Association is to be held with the Danville Church as host, but will be held at Malmaison Meeting House all three days: July 8, 9, and 10, 1966. Malmaison is located on State Road 726, between Highways 29 and 360. Visitors from any direction should follow Highway 29 to road 726, which is about five miles north of Danville, Virginia.

We greatly desire the presence of our brethren and friends.

Burnell B. Williams, Clerk

UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

The sixtieth session of the **Upper Country Line Association** will be held at Cobb Memorial High School, the Lord willing: Moon's Creek Church is the host church.

Cobb Memorial High School is located between State Highways 29 and 158, approximately 4 miles north of Casville, N. C., off Highway 158, and 4 miles south of Pelham, off Highway 29, in Caswell County, N. C.

The session will meet the 3rd week end July 16, 17, and 18, 1966. We extend a cordial invitation to our corresponding brethren and ministers to meet with us at that time.

Donald E. Smith, Clerk

MAINE ASSOCIATION

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, on August 20 and 21, 1966.

An invitation is extended to those of our faith and order, and interested friends.

Mrs. Sanford Bartlett, Clerk
Newcastle, Me. 04553

SOLDIER CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Union Meeting** of the churches of the **Soldier Creek Association** will be held with Zion Church, south Seventh Street, in Mayfield, Kentucky, beginning Friday morning before the fifth Sunday in July and continuing through Saturday and Sunday. Highways 80 and 45 come into the city.

Friends of the Old School Primitive Baptists are invited to come and be with us.

Effie Bowden, Clerk
Benton, Ky. 42025

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To May 1, 1966)

Mrs. William Johnson, Del.	$ 5.00
H. L. Gardner, Ark.	2.00
Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Folmar, Ala.	2.00
Mrs. Nanna M. Carney, W. Va.	5.00
Mrs. Harry Pruitt, N. C.	1.00
Arthur Merigold, Me.	5.00
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John H. Simpson, Wash.	1.00

Danville, Virginia July, 1966

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EDITORIAL

THE KISSES OF HIS MOUTH

"Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth." (Songs 1:2)

The first words of the Song of Songs which was Solomon's as he penned them has this day become MY song of songs. Never before have I been carried into the sweet ecstacy of His wondrous love as I experience this moment. I can now more fully understand why such highly allegorical and symbolic language is used in this dialogue between Christ and His bride, the church. Nothing but an ardent, passionate, and tender love affair could well describe the intimate relationship of the Lover and the beloved. No wonder Solomon said, "Thy love is better than wine." No wonder Solomon named it THE SONG OF SONGS. I term the experience THE LOVE OF LOVES.

Ben Jonson said, "Leave but a kiss in the cup, and I'll not look for wine." Wine only stimulates the power within and causes stored energy to be used up which leaves the body weaker: whereas, the kiss of the King of Kings graces with energy poured forth, which gives new strength that lasts. Wine exhilarates for but a moment then leaves you despondent; yet, His kisses give enduring joy which makes glad the heart, and you treasure their memory. Surely Solomon's cup had already been filled with the wine of the kingdom poured forth by the kisses of His mouth, in order to write of such passionate and tender love as is so wonderfully stated in the Song of Songs. His heart was overflowing with love as a result of his mind being kissed with the inspiration to pen poetical allegorical truths. Once you have been kissed with the kiss of Christ's love, you will ever realize that His kisses are better than wine. His kisses are like drops of honey; they linger long and leave a sweetness that does not soon disappear. His kisses of gifts and grace to poor trembling sinners are His words of love in action.

A kiss is an expression and the symbol of affection. It is the language of love that knows no barriers. It is the action of affection which is fully understood and needs no interpreter to make it plan to all people speaking the many different natural languages. Even brute beasts understand the kiss. The little baby in its mother's arms understands and responds to its mother's tender kisses. Even though birds have long beaks, they kiss each more than any other creatures. A kiss shows regard, respect, reverence, tenderness, and intimate relationship.

The kiss has been desired and practiced throughout all ages. We read in Genesis 27:26-27: "And his father, Isaac, said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son. And he came near and kissed him . . ." A real kiss has always resulted in the kiss being re-

sponded to by a kiss from the one who has been kissed. When Jacob met Rachel at the well of Haran who came with her father's sheep: "Jacob *kissed* Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept." (Gen. 29:11) Not long ago I heard a person exclaim after being greeted by a kiss from one whom she esteemed so highly: "He *kissed* me!" Her voice was trembling with surprise, high-regard, and humility. This must have been the case of Rachel. Jacob surely felt at ease and experienced contentment and peace of mind when Laban, ". . . Ran to meet him, and embraced him, and *kissed* him, and brought him to his house." (Gen. 29:13) When Joseph revealed himself to the brethren who had treated him so terribly, nothing but a *kiss* could seal complete reconciliation in the minds of these brethren and remove the guilty feeling so that they could freely talk with Joseph. Gen. 45:15: "Moreover he *kissed* all his brethren, and wept upon them; and after that his brethren talked with him." A kiss was used in the anointing of Saul by Samuel: "Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and *kissed* him, and said, Is it not because the Lord hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance." (1st Samuel 10:1)

A kiss sealed the oath knitting Jonathan and David together during the time Saul's envy was so enraged against David. We read in 1 Samuel 20:41-2, ". . . David arose out of a place toward the south, and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times: and they *kissed* one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded. And Jonathan said to David, Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord saying, The Lord be between thee and me, and between my seed and thy seed forever." What a contrast between Jonathan's love for David and Saul's envy. Elisha wanted only to kiss his father and mother before following Elijah.

Luke gives an account of the sinful woman who kissed the feet of Jesus and how the Lord had compassion upon her. We want you to note that she *was* a sinner: surely, now she is not. She would not be showering kisses on His feet if her kisses had been for lustful purposes as before. Her presence in the same house with the Saviour proved that it was for a different purpose that her kisses were given. Heretofore she had used her lips upon the lips of other men to cause them to yield to her lustful passion: but now, she uses these same lips lavishly upon the feet of this man, Jesus, to prove her adoration and reverence. The same eyes that had been flames of fire coming from lust is now become a fountain of tears to such degree that her tears provide sufficient water to wash the feet of Jesus. The same hair that she had before used as nets to catch foolish lovers, is now being used as a towel for her Saviour's feet. Even though she has been changed she still carries the scars. She is yet called and considered to be a sinner. The same costly ointment she used to put upon herself to attract men is now used to put upon the Saviour's feet. We do not find on record where this woman ever uttered a word, yet her actions spoke louder than a thousand tongues.

The Pharisee who used his tongue to invite Jesus into his house as a guest brought condemnation to himself from Jesus because he spake words of condemnation against the woman. Her eyes, hands, hair, and bowed body together with her lips showed greater affection than the Pharisee did with words. Jesus said: "Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet." (Luke 7:45) Jesus showed that where there was much forgiven there is much love. Jesus cared more for a true humiliation of sin than He did for a false pretense of respect and innocence. Smiles must have replaced the look of guilt upon the woman when

Jesus said: "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." (Luke 7:50) These words were kisses from the Saviour's mouth. They were much sweeter and more to be desired than the natural wines she had before drunk from the cups of her former lustful lovers. She had stood behind Him; now, He gives her the kiss of peace. No doubt she feels that she must do something for the One Who has done so much for her! Now, I pray, Lord, empower me to do something for Thee. Satisfy my conscience. I know that my glorious Head is such magnificent goodness that my goodness could never reach Thee. I could never help the Head. Lord, enable me to do as the woman. Let me wash Thy feet, Thy poor members here below. Empower me to know the sweetness of kissing Thee by administering to poor trembling penitent sinners here below. Let us bestow our tears of sympathy, upon the troubled. Let us do good with our hands to wayfaring pilgrims in need. Let us greet each other with the holy kiss of charity in doing unto others as we would have them do unto us. Lord, I know that without Thy kiss of power I could never do that which is pleasing to Thee. I know that I could never lift my bowed head without Thy kiss of mercy. I could never stand without Thy kiss of faith. I can never run the race without Thy kiss of patience. I could never preach, sing, nor serve Thee without Thy kiss of gifts.

Surely the precious words of Jesus are the kisses of His mouth. It seems that Psalms 45 is a condensed version of the Song of Songs which is Solomons. We read in Psalms 45:2: "Thou art fairer than the children of men: *grace is poured into thy lips:* therefore God hath blessed thee forever." If Jesus speaks to you, all other men's words go into the background. Jesus only can speak words of life. No other character has the authority or power to give life to words. His disciples recognized it because they said, "Thou hast the words of eternal life." There is no one to go to but to Jesus for living words. I have books by many authors, and if it were necessary for me to dispose of all books but one; I would keep the Bible. There are many persons' words quoted in the Bible; if it were necessary for me to dispose of all persons' words but one man: I would keep the words of Jesus. The reason I prefer the red-letter edition of the Bible is because Jesus' words are more easily found.

Have His words *kissed* you? Have they become more precious than the words of others? If they have, you are ready to listen to HIM. You will not subscribe wholeheartedly to the words of any other man. You are ready and anxious to search for the instructions Jesus gave rather than to follow the opinions of any other man as your rule of conduct. If I had to discard all sections of the Bible with exception of one, I would select the section of the Gospel as recorded by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; because they give the actual words of Jesus. I want to become more acquainted with His words. I want to base my conduct and doctrine upon what Jesus actually taught. I do not care to become involved over words and expressions that have caused strife and divisions among us, which have originated from some preacher or great gift, whose contentions have become an offense to some little lambs. Men often make expressions that are not easy to be understood. Jesus used very simple language in His instructions. Jesus' words of doctrine and practice are so simple that even a child born of the Spirit can understand.

Have you ever picked up the Bible and read only the words of Jesus as recorded by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John? May the Lord bless you to do it, realizing that each word becomes a kiss to His own people, yet a stumbling block and foolishness to those who know Him not. His words of warning, encouragement, promises, providences, and rule of conduct; all are

kisses of grace to God's little children. We cannot do more than just hint at the glory of Christ's kisses in this article.

The first quotation that Matthew gives of Jesus is found in Matthew 3:15: "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." This statement was made to John by Jesus to convince him that it was necessary for Jesus to be baptized by John in the river, Jordan. What a statement!! "IT BECOMETH US TO FULFIL ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS." Even though Jesus baptized with the Holy Ghost, John baptized with water only: yet, Jesus submitted to John's baptism. Jesus respected John by submitting to his baptism and proved thereby that He was not initiating something entirely new, separate, and apart from that which already existed. Instead of beginning a new sect Jesus was numbered with the many whom John had already baptized. Baptism was the ceremony, oath, or vow, or THE answer to a good conscience toward God, which brought even Jesus in unity with all whom John had baptized. What a *kiss* Jesus received from His Father in the climax of Jesus' baptims in water!! The heavens kissed the act of Jesus as they were opened to Him. The Holy Spirit kissed this noble act by descending like a dove and lighting upon Him. What a kiss came from the mouth of the Father as He audibly said, *"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."* (Matthew 3:16-17) What a sacrament is baptism! If Jesus practiced it as well as commanded it, do you not think that true believers in Jesus Christ will gladly be baptized and be numbred with those followers of Christ??

As you are baptized in water in partaking of this sacrament, — you, also, shall be kissed by Him with the kisses of approval, peace of mind, joy, and happiness for having participated in this righteous act. When you have been baptized upon profession of your faith in Jesus Christ, the way, the truth, the life, and light; you can look to Him with full confidence that He is not only your righteousness but also your sanctification.

The second quotation of Jesus that Matthew records is: "It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by *every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."* (Matthew 4:4) These words were spoken while He was being tempted of the devil. This statement proves that there are no idle or un-important words spoken by Him. Each and every one of His words swells in magnitude and lingers long and becomes as many kisses from the mouth of Him who spoke them. These first words spoken to the tempter gave the written Word as authoritative, and sufficient proof to stop the mouth of the gainsayer. You must be kissed with the importance of the Bible in order to be given to use it as your only rule of faith and practice. Those who lived two thousand years ago had only the word of the prophets: What greater circumstance now exists than then? We have the words of the only begotten Son of God as He spake them here upon earth: — greater still, we have them as kisses that reach the soul when applied there by the Holy Spirit.

We had rather stop this article short and point you to the words of Jesus as recorded in the Gospels than to weary you with further meditations here. "Let him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth: for Thy love is better than wine." May His kisses reach your inner-most soul and give spiritual strength sufficient for the day, is our sincere prayer.

E. J. L.

EDITORIAL

"Ye can discern the face of the sky; but ye cannot discern the signs of the times." (Matthew 16:3)

To discern the "signs of the times" means to be aware to what a succession of events point; and to which they

will enventually lead: this is the sum of accumulative evidences.

In this article we refer only to things which are commonly called spiritual: for under this heading many foreboding events are accumulating, which can only lead to further, and, if possible, wider departure from the primitive simplicity of the gospel.

As we begin to consider the subject, it is necessary to recognize that there are in fact just two kinds of churches abroad in the world: One follows the gospel doctrine and order, as declared in the beginning by the Lord and his Apostles, (and which still exists, since God said he would not leave himself without a witness); the other is after that which the apostle described as "another gospel": against which he solemnly warned and admonished the brethren. Under this heading we cannot but include all other religions, since they are likewise opposed to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

First. The Doctrine of the Gospel:

The gospel preached by the Apostles was, of course, identical with the teaching of Jesus. And of it Paul said he was not ashamed, "For it is the power of God unto salvation unto all who believe . . ." The Gospel has its clearly defined teaching, and is the declaration of the fulfillment by Jesus Christ of all things spoken by the prophets. So, when Jesus said to the Jews, "Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me," he sealed forever any other interpretation of them; or that there was any other reason for their preservation.

When Jesus clearly stated that his purpose in coming into the world was to save his people from their sins, it is evident that He himself was *the way* his Father had provided for the redemption and salvation of His people. And it is apparent that those whom he called brethren, *believed all things which He preached and taught* after they were brought into the full understanding of what he taught; and it should be evident that none can properly be called Christian who believe otherwise than what he taught.

His Apostles taught no other things than those Jesus delivered unto them; and the churches were set in order and established upon these things. In spite of all the intervening years, and all the attempts of unbelieving men to rid His doctrine from the face of the earth by declaring that parts of it are inconsistent with the nature and being of God, there are yet those who believe and hold the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, without admixing the commandments of men. They believe and hold to these things because God has not ceased to call men out of darkness into his marvelous light; nor ceased to shine in their hearts, to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; nor ceased to bring all his own to the spiritual birth, and seal them with the holy spirit of promise — the earnest of their inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.

God is in no way dependent upon the voluntary zeal and work of men for the promoting, or the continuing of his church in the world. As the Triune God: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, he does all the work: the choosing, the redeeming, and the calling: He does everything for the bringing of his beloved people unto glory. He has ordained all things to this end, and for his own glory: whether men, times, or events, so that all things are accomplishing his determined purpose. God has set up his Kingdom in the world, and it shall not be destroyed, or left to other people; but shall stand forever, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.

So, it is plainly taught in the Scriptures that God *loved His people, and chose them in His Son before the world began.* He sent His Son into the world to redeem all these from their sins: He died for their offences, and rose again

for their justification. All of these compose the Church of God: as individuals they are saved and called, not according to their works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ before the world began. God has his own way in bringing each one of them into the knowledge and comfort of his love and mercy, so that it is declared that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. God has, of course, given gifts unto men, qualifying them to preach his gospel, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for edifying the body of Chirst; but certainly not to go outside of the election of grace, and undertake to add to the redeemed family.

The above things make up the sum and substance of The Gospel; but there is

Second, Another Gospel:

Herein lies what we presently have in mind concerning the "signs of the times." Any other gospel — any other teaching, must be considered counterfeit; and, being so, has many similarities of the Gospel. It speaks of grace, of mercy, of being born again, of Christ the Redeemer, etc. But the emphasis is always upon the will of men being able to accept or reject what is called an *offered salvation* to everybody; which makes everything in the way of salvation dependent upon men, whether they will or will not accept and believe to the saving of their souls. This leaves the sacrifice of Jesus questionable both to its application and effectivenes. And, if true, would destroy the eternal choice or election of God; and, if true, would destroy the whole purpose of God in sending his Son into the world; and would prove that Jesus failed to do what his Father sent him to do.

Such teaching is well called another gospel, since it is contrary to what Jesus and the Apostles left on record in the Scriptures. If God is unable to do his will, he ceases to be God. *We thank Him that this can never be.* But, if he is, it would confirm the recent pronouncement that, "God is dead"; and we readily agree that the God which many have been preaching all these years, is dead. For many have preached and believed that he does not control all things, and that he has stiff competition in the Devil; and is even subject to men's wills as to whether he can save them, or not. It is true, there were those who would not come to him; but they were pronounced as being of their father the Devil, and not of those unto whom Jesus came as a Saviour.

Now, some more of the signs of the times: When I was a boy going to the schools of such teachers, it was freely asserted that if the churches could get enough money and men, (which they expected without question,) they would be able to Christianize the world, the whole world, save the heathen, etc.: Then wars would cease between men and nations, and there would be a sense of brotherhood among men. That was more than sixty years ago: The whole scheme is a failure. Men do not seem to learn that human nature cannot be purged of its nature by the urging of other things which are of the same nature; or that a profession of religion of sorts means there is a real change in heart. Even the quickened subjects of grace do not experience a change in their "old man," except as the Spirit subdues and controls him; and they are made to hate the things of their flesh, expecting someday to put on immortality. Paul knew what a wretched man he was in his flesh, and desired to be delivered "from the body of this death."

How many hundreds of years this work of men has been going on, I do not know; but it is certain that it has been based upon nothing more solid than mortal men. Paul wrote Timothy: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men

shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of these that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God: Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: From such turn away." Also he wrote, "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."

This is a serious indictment; but the signs of the times all along have proved how right he was; and more: "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition: Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thes. 2:3-12)

The signs of the times today show that men know their designs have failed; but, being nothing daunted, they now move to take a new start: to "back up," join forces, and use every available means — natural, that is. With individual church organizations giving up their long cherished freedom, joining with every conceivable and diversified doctrine, to form a mighty phalanx, reputedly to fight sin and the Devil, and save those within its clutches; to fight what must be a losing battle, since all the redeemed of the Lord have been taken care of by the eternal love of God, who deals with his people directly through his Spirit; and sends his servants to feed and comfort them, and perform those ordinances which he has established in his church, for as long as the church is in the world.

These are some of the signs of the times religiously. They seem good, we suppose, to everyone except those who do not name the name of Jesus, (and some of these are joining in,) and except those who have learned that the Lord made a new covenant, which he has applied in their hearts, in which it is said, "I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." And likewise those who believe with Peter, "For the promise is unto you, and unto your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

Those who are so taught will not join in such things to which the signs of the times point. Those who have felt the power and grace of God in bringing them into the knowledge and joy of salvation, know that an empty profession cannot bring salvation; and that the mere act of being baptized is not regeneration; and that none of the other so called sacraments as commonly administered and adjudged, bring about that which is solely the work of the Spirit of God, in revealing and applying what the election of grace has ac-

complished.

The signs of the times are not encouraging to us, but they do serve to make us glad that we know that all things are still under the control and disposition of our God, who said unto his Son Jesus Christ, "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

There is a great multitude of people who, ". . . cannot discern the signs of the times."

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE JUDGMENT

The Scriptures assure us that God will judge the world in righteousness at the last day, by that Man whom he hath appointed. Paul testifies that that judgment shall be according to his gospel.

By the term judgment, in a scriptural sense, and when used in reference to God's judgment, we are not to understand a court of investigation, for the purpose of ascertaining the guilt or innocence of those who are to be judged. A trial, according to law, examination of witnesses, and an investigation of circumstances, is indispensable before a finite court, in order to convict the guilty or justify the innocent. But God, the Judge of all, is infinite. All things are naked and open to his omnipotent eye, so that he needs not to be informed of the state and condition, prospect or destiny of any of his creatures. The ungodly are condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on them. Judgment has already come upon them to condemnation, and under that condemnation they are even now held, under chains of darkness, reserved unto the day of judgment, (not to be tried,) but to be punished for the guilt of which they are already convicted. This guilt has been found upon all the posterity of Adam; all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; and, as evidence of this, death has passed upon all men. Even the subjects of grace and salvation were by nature children of wrath, even as others. There is nothing in their nature or practice, as the children of the earthly Adam, to distinguish them from the rest of the fallen family of mankind. The judgment of the last day, as we have said, shall be according to Paul's gospel; and as we read the gospel preached by Paul, we understand that God, from the beginning, has chosen his people unto salvation, through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth. This choice, Paul says, was anterior to the foundation of the world. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." — Eph. i. 3, 4. The salvation to which God has chosen his people is from sin and wrath, and the accomplishment of it is by their full, free, perfect and eternal redemption, which is in Christ Jesus, in whom they are chosen. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. (Eph. i. 5-7.) By virtue of this election, wherein God hath chosen his people to salvation, a ransom was provided, and they are redeemed from sin and wrath, and made acceptable unto God in the Beloved, in whom they have redemption, and they are freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the

flesh, but after the Spirit." — Rom. viii. 1. This is as the waters of Noah unto the Lord: for as he has sworn that the waters of Noah shall no more go over the earth, so has he sworn that he will no more be wroth with his people, nor rebuke them; for the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but his kindness shall not depart from them, neither shall the covenant of his peace be removed, saith the Lord that has mercy on them. (Isaiah liv. 9, 10.)

The sins of God's people were open, going beforehand to judgment. They were carefully reckoned up, and in all their magnitude of number and turpitude, they were all laid upon him who was made sin for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. In laying upon him the iniquities of us all, (that is of all whose sins he bore in his own body on the cross,) their sins necessarily went beforehand to judgment. Also, in an experimental sense, when the sinner is quickened and made sensible of his lost and helpless condition, his sins are set in order before him, and he sees, feels and acknowledges his guilt, and the dreadful sentence of the law of God in his condemnation; not until the precious Savior is revealed to him, and an evidence that he has canceled the law's demands on his behalf, can he see how God's justice can be sustained in his damnation. But in the revelation of Christ, he is enabled to say, "Surely he hath born our griefs and carried our sorrows; he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." The saints of God are already judged, condemned and executed in their Head and legal representative. They are crucified with Christ. (Gal. ii. 2.) Baptized unto Jesus Christ, baptized into his death, buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. (Rom. vi. 3, 4.) They are redeemed, justified and cleansed by the washing of regeneration, and shall never again come into condemnation, for they are passed from death unto life. Their sins can never be brought in judgment against them again, neither in time nor in eternity, for God has promised to remember them no more. As a thick cloud he has blotted them out. They have therefore nothing to fear in regard to a judgment to come. This matter is forever settled from the following considerations:

First. Their judgment has already past, as we have shown by the foregoing arguments and testimony.

Second. Sin is a transgression of the law, and where there is no law there is no transgression; and the saints are no more under the law, but under grace. The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Third. The church is the mystical body of him who is the Judge, by whom the world is to be judged in righteousness at the last day; and in that body, the church, Christ will preside in the final judgment, and all his members will perfectly acquiesce.

Fourth. Their sins are covered by the expiatory sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, and God has made a solemn and everlasting covenant with them, that he will remember their sins and iniquities no more.

Fifth. Because as soon as Christ the Judge shall appear, they shall see him as he is, and shall be like him. He is himself their Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption. No examination will be required to demonstrate the perfection of their righteousness, for Christ as their righteousness cannot be impeached. Their maker is their Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name, and their Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall he be called. This is

the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.

The judgment of the last day, therefore, so far as the saints are concerned, is but the execution of what we are assured in Paul's gospel shall be accomplished. The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and the saints shall be caught up, shall meet their Savior in the air, and so shall they be forever with the Lord. The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, for the Lord knoweth them that are his. Here, then, let your faith rest upon the promise which God, that cannot lie, made before the world began. The judgment of the ungodly, so far as we understand the testimony, will not rest upon disclosures then and there made, but it will embrace the execution of the decision already made; for, as we have proved, they are already tried, found guilty, and they are condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on them.

We might greatly extend our remarks upon this subject, and shall, probably, at some future time, if spared, show how many portions of Scripture, which relate to the present organization and government of the church of God, have been misapplied, and used as though they had been spoken in reference to the final judgment of the last day. The Lord shall judge his people. He does now judge them. His judgment-seat is in Zion, and all his disciples are amenable to that judgment-seat for every idle word, and for every vain and foolish thought. But they are judged under the law of the kingdom of Christ, and not by that law which is the administration of death. If they forsake the law of Christ, under which they are brought, and keep not his commandments, he will visit their sins with a rod, and their transgressions with stripes; but his loving-kindness he will not take utterly away, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. The saints are dead to the law, by the body of Christ, and are quickened together with Christ, raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places; and they are married unto him that is risen from the dead, that they may bring forth fruit unto God.

One great, though somewhat common mistake, which has tended to involve the subject, much to the depression of the children of God, has been in supposing that Christ will not occupy his judgment-seat until he shall come in the last day to raise the dead and judge the world. But divine relation assures us that "The Lord is our Lawgiver; the Lord is our King; he will save us." — Isaiah xxxiii. 22. As Judge, his decisions are as final now as they shall be when he shall present his spotless bride before the throne of his Father, and turn the wicked into hell, with all the nations that forget God.

Carnal professors, and graceless legalists, may require the terrors and thunder of Mt. Sinai, and the fearful apprehension of a judgment to come, to whip them into an unwilling subjection to what they call holiness, piety and religion; their highest motives being selfish, the hope of heaven and the fear of hell; but those whom the Son has made free, have received not the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The mind and Spirit of Christ is in them, holiness is their element; they love God, love holiness, and hate sin.

> "Immortal principles forbid
> The sons of God to sin."

They are born of God, and his seed abides within them, and they cannot sin, because they are born of God; and the sin which is in their flesh, they loathe and hate; for it is at war with the Spirit of life which is within them, and it makes them groan, being burdened, and long and sigh for the day when mortality shall be swallowed up

of life, and they delivered from the body of this death.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe June 15, 1856. We are glad to re-publish it, for the truth it contains should put many at ease who have been concerned about the Judgment. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

DEACON ARTHUR A. CHAMBERS

Brother Arthur A. Chambers was born July 17, 1893, at Pearsonville, Texas; and departed this life January 4, 1966, in the West Texas Hospital, Lubbock, Texas.

He was united in marriage to Miss Myrtle Boen March 10, 1918, at Gorman, Texas; and to this union six children were born: two daughters died in infancy. He and his family lived in Texas until 1951, when he moved to Rogers, New Mexico; and have resided in that community since.

Brother Chambers joined Macedonia Primitive Baptist Church, Rising Star, Texas, in July, 1934; and was ordained deacon May, 1936. He was a lovely member and a faithful deacon. I trust I am thankful of having had the privilege and pleasure of having him one of my deacons for many years.

He leaves to mourn his passing, his dear companion, Sister Myrtle Chambers; two sons: Lohman P., of Dallas, Texas, and William J., of Del Rio, Texas; two daughters: Mrs. Dorothy Varnell, Rogers, N. Mexico, and Mrs. Betty Elliott, Portalis, N. Mexico. And one brother, Charlie Lee Chambers, Gorman, Texas; three sisters: Mrs. Clara Hansford, DeLon, Texas; Mrs. Annie Logan, Gatesville, Texas; and Mrs. Alice Gist, Sundown, Texas; and eleven grandchildren, and six great grandchildren.

His funeral service was conducted by Elder C. M. Haygood, assisted by Elder Durwood Bradley. He was laid to rest in Mt. Zion Cemetery, near Rogers, New Mexico, to await the second coming of the blessed Saviour.

Written and submitted for publication upon the request of his dear widow.

Elder C. M. Haygood

MRS. SUSAN EVER LANGWELL

Mrs. Susan Ever Langwell was born near Harrison, Arkansas, February 21, 1881; and passed away in a hospital in Henryetta, Oklahoma, November 27, 1965, at the age of more than eighty-four years. Her husband, Brother Roy Langwell, passed away in May, 1949.

She leaves to mourn her passing, five sons: Bryan, Seminole, Okla.; Walter, Holdenville, Okla.; Dennis, Fowler, Calif.; Solomon and Leonard, Henryetta, Okla. Also one brother, N. W. Patton, Morris, Okla.; one sister, Mrs. L. W. Langwell, Compton, Calif.; twenty grandchildren, and twenty-nine great grandchildren.

Sister Langwell united with the Primitive Baptist Church more than fifty years ago. She was patient, kind and considerate, and loved to talk of the mercy and power of the God she loved: having a hope that she was one of those chosen in Christ who would be raised with His likeness, see him and be satisfied.

She will be missed by the little flock at Dustin, Oklahoma. May the God of all grace, and the Father of mercy comfort the family and her brethren and sisters; and, if His will, reconcile us unto the truth that we too must pass through death before we can enter into something better, even that which He promised before the world began: life with Him.

Services were conducted by the writer in Buchanan Funeral Home, and she was laid to rest in Okemah Cemetery beside her husband.

Her pastor,
C. U. Landers

ROBERT M. JONES

With a sad, heavy heart I attempt to write Papa's obituary. I could never tell how much his life meant to me. He was born in Dickson County, Tennessee, January 7, 1885, and died October 28, 1964, making his stay on earth more than seventy-nine years. He died of a heart attack.

He was united in marriage to Alice Viola Coone on December 17, 1905; and to this union three boys and five girls were born, all of whom are living. He was a wonderful father and husband, and we all miss him so very much; but we feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

He joined the Primitive Baptist Church in 1908, at Bardon's Creek, Dickson County, Tennessee. He and mother moved to Texas in February, 1908. His pleasures were all in attending his meetings and meeting his brethren and friends, never missing except in case of sickness. We hope to bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, who called him from our midst to await the resurrection, when the dead in Christ shall rise and come forth from their graves, and behold His face in righteousnes, and be satisfied. May the Lord bless and comfort all who mourn his passing.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder Lloyd Wall, October 30, 1964, at East Mountain Church, in the presence of a large congregation. His body was laid to rest in East Mountain Cemetery beneath a beautiful array of flowers, to await the coming of his Saviour.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this writing be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication. Written by his son, who loved him.

Arthur B. Jones

LEVETTA (PUSSY) BEASLEY

Sister Levetta Beasley passed away November 27, 1965. She was born February 15, 1889, making her stay on earth seventy-six years. She was the mother of four daughters and one son.

She united with the Providence Primitive Baptist Church in June, 1906, and was a faithful member and firm believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone.

May God comfort and sustain the bereaved family. We believe our loss is her gain. Written by order of the church in conference.

also

SISTER LAURA PERRY

Sister Laura Perry was born September 8, 1891 and passed away December 26, 1965, at the age of seventy-four years. She united with Flatty Creek Church August 29, 1948, and was transferred by letter to Providence Church in October, 1959.

Sister Laura was faithful to her church, and a firm believer in salvation by grace and grace alone. She traveled considerably among the brethren, and had many friends among them. She was loved by all who knew her, and is greatly missed by them.

She is survived by her husband, two daughters, four grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

May God bless and comfort all who mourn. Written by order of the church in conference.

also

BROTHER MILTON PERRY

Brother Milton Perry passed away January 9, 1966; he was born August 25, 1914, making his stay on earth fifty-two years. He united with Providence Church in June, 1951.

He is survived by his wife, two sons and one daughter. We wiss our dear brother, but feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

May the Lord bless and comfort his family and loved ones.

Written by order of the church in conference.

Elder George G. Trevathan, Mod.
Eldridge D. Beacham, Clerk

LUCY A. HEDRICK MATTOX

Lucy A. Hedrick Mattox was born May 11, 1871. Died December 27, 1965, making her stay on earth ninety-four years, seven months and sixteen days. She was united in marriage to S. D. Mattox June 18, 1905. Her husband preceded her in death in 1933. She was the daughter of James Hedrick and Sarah Bobbitt Hedrick.

She leaves the following stepchildren: H. M. Mattox, W. L. Mattox, J. A. Mattox, A. E. Mattox, all of Chatham, Va.; and Mrs. Elva Dillon of Moneta; Mrs. J. H. Oakes of Chatham; and Miss Ruth Mattox of the home. Also one sister, Mrs. Kizzie Bowen of Danville, Va., and one brother, A. A. Hedrick of Chatham, Va.

Sister Mattox joined Union Primitive Baptist Church in 1903. A faithful one has passed into the great beyond. One whom I felt was a Mother in Israel. She was firm in the faith and doctrine of salvation by grace. I visited her bedside a good many times and she always greeted me with a smile and bid me goodbye with tears. We feel that her life, her walk, and her conduct, love and fellowship will be remembered by us as long as we live. I know we will miss her, but we must submit to the will of the Lord. May He give us grace to look to him.

Her funeral was conducted at Scott's funeral home in Chatham, Virginia, by her Pastor, Leonard J. Brammer, assisted by Elder O. K. Tench. Her body was laid to rest in the family cemetery, to await the coming of the Lord. A large crowd attended the funeral to show their love for Sister Mattox, and their sympathy to the family.

May the Lord in his mercy bless those that mourn and give them grace to be reconciled to his will.

"O where shall rest be found,
Rest for the weary soul?
'Twere vain the ocean's depths to sound,
Or pierce to either pole.

The world can never give
The bliss for which we sigh;
'Tis not the whole of life to live,
Nor all of death to die.

Beyond this vale of tears,
There is a life above,
Unmeasured by the flight of years,
And all that life is love."

Her pastor,
Leonard J. Brammer

SISTER NATALIAH M. BOCOCK

This is a brief but true account of one who knew what it is to be lost and saved. She was born January 30, 1894; and died April 30, 1962. She is survived by her husband John T. Bocock, their children, three sisters and one brother.

A revealed Christ, His sin atoning blood and justifying righteousness, was the firm foundation of her hope. Many years ago being impelled by need and drawn by love, she united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Roanoke, and was baptized by Elder Jim Stegall. Elder Stegall knew the gospel he preached.

At times mother was filled with joy and peace in believing, but frequently she was exercised and tried. Mother loved to have the Lord's children in our home. Graciously independent of creature verdicts, the smile of God was her one desire, and at the last time, I am persuaded, His smille will be her satisfaction.

For long years mother was a cancer victim, but amidst it all Jesus made His Name to her as ointment poured forth and blessed her in every trial.

The Lord sent able preachers and many saints to weep around her grave.

The small tribute this brief obituary pays to a worthy lamented saint now safely garnered, will be endorsed by all who knew her.

Written in sadness by one of her children.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

We, the members of Hopeland Primitive Baptist Church, bow in submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, in taking by death our dear brother, Andrew Jackson Moore, Sr.

Brother Moore was born January 29, 1872, and died December 27, 1965; making his stay on earth 93 years, eleven months. He united with the church at Hopeland in September, He was a faithful and humble member, an example of Christian humility. Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, First, that our loss is his eternal gain; and we send our deepest sympathy to his family. Second, That three copies of this Resolution be made: one to be sent to the family; one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; and one placed on the church records.

Written by request of Hopeland Church.

Elder W. B. Barnes, Moderator
Margaret Davenport, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

We, the members composing the Skewarky Primitive Baptist Church, desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our merciful and kind heavenly Father who called from our midst our beloved brother, Brother Levi Milbon Donaldson. Brother Donaldson was born on October 29, 1924, and died October 29, 1965, thus making his stay upon this earth 41 years to the day.

Although our dear brother was received into the fellowship of our little flock approximately 3 years before his departure, it is with a deep feeling of gratitude that we were blessed with associations prior to this time, inasmuch as we were blessed to see the manifestation of God's love in his daily walk and conversation long before his request for a home. Yes, he was a faithful husband, a faithful father to his children, but most comforting to us was his faithfulness to his God and the church before and after his confession in-so-far as we were blessed to see and understand from the fruits he bore. Although his afflictions were not light he remained faithful, and with much effort, continued to attend his meetings until the time of his departure.

The church at Skewarky grieves over her loss, but we hope and feel our loss is our brother's eternal gain. We rejoice in this because he professed a hope in an all wise, all powerful, and merciful God. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace and was abiding in the hope of being taken on the wings of God's love to that celestial city, eternal in the heaven's whose builder and maker is God.

He leaves to mourn his passing his widow, Sister Virginia Donaldson, to whom he was united in marriage on October 3, 1945; four sons and one daughter all of the home. Also surviving are his mother and stepfather, four brothers and two sisters. To the family we extend our heartfelt sympathy in their distressing hours. May you be comforted by God's love and words of comfort is our prayer.

His funeral was conducted in the Skewarky Primitive Baptist Church by his pastor, Elder E. C. Harrison, assisted by Elder W. E. Grimes. Interment was in the Skewarky Church Cemetery beneath a lovely arrangement of beautiful flowers, a token of the esteem in which he was held by his many friends.

RESOLVED: That a copy be sent to *Zion's Landmark, Old Faith Contender,* and *Signs of the Times,* and a copy be sent to the family.

Done by order of conference second Saturday in November, 1965.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Johnny Ray Gardner, Committee

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134 DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1966 NO. 8

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS
8/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

A VISION OF GLORY

(Rev. 21, 22)

"A vision I had of a scene most bright.
Language must fail to describe it aright;
Of a fair city bathed in unearthly light,
Through which a pure river ran.

Its mansions sparkled with glistening sheen,
Of amethyst, topaz, and emerald green;
Such dazzling rays never surely were seen
Since the world and time began.

There were trees with fruit and foliage rare
Full of healing balm for the nations. There,
On a radiant throne all bright and fair,
Sat One like the Son of man.

Its streets were of gold like a molten sea;
Its walls were of jewels most rare to see;
And its gates of pearls shone gloriously,
In light from the jasper throne.

In the quivering waves of the ambient air
Flew ethereal forms of angels fair,
Who encircled the steps of the throne; and there
Bright burning seraphim shone.

Now a countless multitude caught my sight,
Who walked in those realms of endless light,
In robes which were wash'd and perfectly white
In the blood of the Lamb once slain.

And now, in this paradise safe shut in,
They are free from pain, and sorrow, and sin;
And the terrible burden of guilt within
They never will feel again.

They are those who were chosen by sovereign grace
From the number of Adam's fallen race,
To behold in glory that Saviour's face
Who was crucified for them.

How I long to be there, in that land of the blest,
In the glorious robe of Christ's righteousness drest,
To spend an eternal Sabbath of rest
In the New Jerusalem!"

From The Gospel Standard of 1880. (Selected by C. W. Vass.)

"I stood in life's fair morning hours,
My hand upon the door,
And from the pathway outward looked,
And scanned the pathway o'er
A little way through pleasant fields;
Through meadows fair and sweet
Where one might walk with joyful heart,
And light and careless feet.

And then more narrow grew the path,
And rougher grew the way:
Beset by dangers, and overhung
With shadows cold and gray.
'Ah me,' I said, 'life is so long,
So full of hopes and fears,
With much to do and much to bear
For many days and years.'

With joys that I must have, or give,
And tears that I must weep,
And many foes to meet and fight
Before death giveth sleep:
And I must journey all alone
This rough and darksome way.
Alas, Alas! Before the end
My feet will go astray.

But while I trembled at the door,
And murmured in my fear,
A tender voice of wonderous power
Fell on my waiting ear:
'Fear not, my child, but take my hand
And journey by my side:
I know the way — I am your God,
Thy counsellor and guide.'

And so I stood on life's dark way
Close clinging to His hand;
And He has led me safe along —
My leader, great and grand.

And when dark clouds encompass me,
My heart is brave and strong;
And I can sing through life, in death,
Faith's glad triumphant song."

(Author unknown to us. Sent by the late Sister Fetter to Sister Topping.)

SOME CORRESPONDENCE IN 1902

Rt. 2,
Burlington, N. C. 27215

Dear Elder Wood:

I am enclosing some correspondence between Sister Lulu Allen Aldridge and the late Elder L. H. Hardy. Elder Hardy was pastor of Prospect Hill Church at that time, (1902). Sister Allen joined there just after this correspondence. Later she married Mr. John Aldridge at Haw River, and moved her membership to McCray Church, where she remained until her death April 29, 1966.

We never saw a more faithful and devoted Christian Mother in Israel than she was. She lived to the ripe age of ninety-five. I felt that many of the loved ones in Christ would appreciate reading these letters.

Yours in hope,
(Elder) W. C. King

LETTER FROM ELDER L. H. HARDY TO MRS. LULU ALLEN ALDRIDGE

Reidsville, N. C.
October 21, 1902

Miss Lulu Allen,

My Dear Friend:

Since Sunday there has been such a fellowship in my heart for you that I just want to tell you about it. Indeed, I have had fellowship for you much longer than that; but then it was strongly renewed.

The subject on which I spoke on Sunday, was not calculated to stir so deeply one who had never felt those things of which I spoke; but to those in whose hearts the grace of God reigns, it brings such sweet fellowship that those little ones are drawn sweetly together in the Spirit of our dear Lord.

Such has been the case in this instance. I am satisfied that the good Lord has been merciful to you, as I hope he has to me, and given you a good hope through His grace. Now, dear lady, I want to say to you, "Why tarriest thou, arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins." I know that sometimes the amusements which are enjoyed by the young, hold some of the little ones back from Christian duty, but if they would stop a moment and think that those joys are but for a moment, and often cause leanness of soul. Yes, they perish, like all natural things, with the using. The joys we have in the house of the Lord are sweet here; and then they do not stop here: what we have of them in this life, are but momentary, and but an earnest of the blessedness of the joys to come. Again, remember what the dear Lord has sacrificed for you and for all of his; and you will see how little you sacrifice when you turn away from the world, to follow Christ in the watery grave.

I would but cannot tell you the joys of obedience to His word, for none can know that, but those who learn in obedience.

Let me entreat you not to be among those who halt between two opinions, but come home to your brethren and tell what the Lord has done for you, and that he has had mercy on you. It will do you good.

Believe me to be your true friend; and excuse me for taking this privilege.

The Lord bless you,
L. H. Hardy

REPLY

Carr, N. C.
October 24, 1902

Mr. L. H. Hardy,
Reidsville, N. C.

My Respected Friend:

Your letter was quite a surprise to me, yet I must confess that it afforded me much consolation to have you express yourself so warmly toward me. If I could only feel worthy of your fellowship, it seems to me that all things would be well with me. But, Oh, when I examine myself, I find so much corruption and sin in this old body, that I am made to ask, if I were a child of God, would it be thus with me? Surely, those who have been brought from death unto life, are not as vile as I feel to be at times.

I often look at those whom I believe to be God's dear children, and wonder if they are as sinful as I am. I sometimes feel I would like to be one among that precious band, but, Oh, I am so doubtful, and fear so much that I may be deceived; and, if I am deceived, I do not want to deceive other people. And, Mr. Hardy, let me add right here, that since I have received your letter the tempter has come and said, "Why have you tried to deceive that man?" 'Tis true, I was deeply moved by your preaching last Sunday, and thought it was the best sermon that I had heard. You happened to strike a subject that my mind had been exercised on all the week previous, (more or less). And I could witness with so much that you said, that I could not help from thinking if that was the way the Little Ones had been drawn together, that I must be one too. But, Mr. Hardy, if one so unworthy as I am can claim a hope in Christ, it is so small, and I have such few evidences, that I have always been afraid to acknowledge it.

From my earliest recollections, I have always had serious thoughts of death and eternity; but I would think that I would be a good girl and would be blessed. But as I grew older, I found that if my righteousness depended upon my own good doings, I should be lost; for in my flesh no good thing dwelleth, and I felt sorely dependent upon the mercy of the Lord. I first realized my helpless condition on the night of the Charleston earthquake; and I commenced to call upon the Lord for his mercy toward me, and would pray for him to convict and convert me. But if I wasn't already convicted, I have never been. And right here is where I am puzzled, for in all of the experiences that I have ever heard told or ever read, they would always know just when they were delivered. But, if I have ever been, I can't tell just when or where. I know that there has been a change with me, but just when or in what way, I have never been able to tell. This causes me to doubt my case so much.

I know very well that the things I once enjoyed, have no further charm for me; and I can see more beauty in divine things than I once did. But let me add that I never did hate Christianity. I always had the greatest respect for those whom I believed to be Christians; and would think that they must be the happiest people in the world. There are many things I could say along this line, but time and space forbid.

And for fear that what I have already written will not meet with your approval, I will stop right here, hoping that you will please pardon all errors, and pray for me; for I feel to need your prayers.

I am, with all confidence,

Your true friend,
Lulu Allen

ANSWERING LETTER FROM ELDER HARDY

Reidsville, N. C.
October 31, 1902

Miss Lulu Allen,

My Dear Friend:

I got home last night and received your sweet letter. It made my poor,

drooping spirit revive, and I drank deeply in the precious cup of salvation, as I read your dear, sweet experience with much comfort.

I want to say that you have not deceived me. You had never said one word to me about those things, and it was by the spirit in my own heart that I saw the Spirit of Jesus in you. This gives me renewed evidence of my own experience in spiritual things, and shows me that we are kindred spirits, and, therefore, you are my dear sister in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus we have sweet fellowship one with the other.

As to your not being able to know any certain time of your deliverance, that has nothing to do with the fact that you are born again. Suppose you and I are going to walk from Carr to Prospect Hill. When we start we each have a burden of twenty-five pounds to carry. As we go, your burden gradually leaks out, so that when you get to the end of the journey your twenty-five pounds has all leaked out, and is gone. At the end I throw my twenty-five pounds down all at once: I am no more clear of my burden than you are, but I feel it more sensibly than you do, and can point to the moment when it left me and I got relief. But you cannot point to such a time; yet you have got relief — the same relief that I have. Your relief is just as sweet as mine, though you do not feel it so sensibly.

I hope you may be able to draw comfort from this, and that the tempter may not be able to take advantage of you on this ground.

You have seen the Church of Christ, and that is an unmistakable evidence that you are a child of God. For, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." The world knows not the church because it knows not Christ who is the head of the church; but you know the church, because you know Christ. You love the church because you love Christ; and "we know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren."

You know the joyful sound of the gospel; and you have that blessing. "Blessed is the people who know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." What a glorious promise to those who know the joyful sound!

You love the church and would be glad to be one of them, because you are one of them. They are your people, and their God is your God. This is why I have felt that you should not parley with the flesh, nor tarry with the world; "For without are dogs and sorcerers, . . . and all who love and make a lie." These things you hate. In the church is love and joy in the Holy Ghost. These things you love. Why not walk in that you love? Why not turn away from that you hate?

Like you, I never hated this way but have always loved it. I do not remember the time when I did not love the Old Baptists, and believed them to be *the church* of the living God; and the doctrine they preach to be the doctrine of God our Saviour.

This has given me some trouble, but has not destroyed my hope in Christ; and I am glad that I have always loved God's people and his truth. I hope the dear Lord will so open your heart and the way before you, my dear friend, sister, that you may no longer halt between two opinions, but arise and be baptized straightway.

May His grace attend you and His Spirit guide you, that you may walk in His love and hear His voice say, "Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joys of thy Lord."

Your friend and brother with much confidence and love in the Lord Jesus Christ.

L. H. Hardy

(There is much in the above correspondence that will be of comfort to those who are concerned in the same matters. We are glad to publish it, hoping that some will be encouraged who are under the same trying experi-

ences. We feel Elder Hardy was faithful when he encouraged one in whom he saw the evidences of God's grace, and for whom he already had fellowship. — J. D. W.)

1550 Portland
Abilene, Texas 79605

Dear Editors of the *Signs:*

My subscription is due by now, so I am enclosing the money for two years' renewal.

I surely appreciate the *Signs*. Everything in it is food for me most of the time. I think it is so wonderful that the doctrine of the dear old paper hasn't changed in these many years. I feel sure that God is in the matter, guiding and directing you Editors and good writers.

I received my June *Signs* just a few minutes ago, and I can hardly wait to get time to read it.

May God bless and direct all of you.

A sister in hope of a better home,
Mrs. Agnes Jones

LOVES THE OLD BAPTISTS

Rt. 4, Box 14,
Roxboro, N. C. 27573

Dear Editors of the *Signs:*

Enclosed is a money order for my subscription for another year for the paper I enjoy reading very much. I do not get to church as much as I would like to, since I have to depend upon others. I lost my oldest son and then my husband, and no one knows how one feels until they go through the loss of their loved ones: then is a time in life that one feels forsaken of everyone, and that God had hidden his face from them.

If it wasn't for the little hope which I hope I have, I don't think I could go on in life. I lost my mother and father when I was very young, and my uncle, Elder Charlie Evans, took me to my father's sister to live with her. She and her husband were Old Baptists, and I loved them from the first time I saw them. They made me mind; for which I am thankful. I have always loved the Old Baptists, but don't feel that I am worthy to be with them, but I love them so much, I would be lost should my name be taken from them.

I read the experiences of the brothers and sisters, and wish I could tell what I hope that God has done for this poor sinner. If I am one of God's loved ones, I am the least of them.

May it be God's will that the good old paper may continue as long as the world stands, for the comfort of God's people. Remember this poor one when you have a mind to pray.

Carrie T. Allen

LOVES THE DOCTRINE

Rt. 3, Box 44,
Sulligent, Alabama 34486

Dear Editors of the *Signs:*

I am enclosing money to renew my subscription to the *Signs* for two more years. I am also enclosing money for two dear ones for two years, as listed.

We hope we love the doctrine the *Signs* sets forth. The letters, the Editorials and the Voices of the Past are wonderful.

We were reared among Old Primitive Baptists: our grandfather was a Primitive Baptist minister; naturally we loved him very much. But we did not know what he loved and preached until several years after his death. We hope by the goodness and mercy of God we were made to love the truth and the doctrine he preached for many years — salvation by the grace of God, and grace alone.

We have had a name among the dear Old Baptists twenty-seven years, but feel so little and unworthy to have a name among them. We hope we are thankful for their sweet fellowship; for without a home with them, we have no

place to go. The world holds nothing for us.

May God richly bless all the household of faith. When at a throne of grace, remember this poor sinner.

(Miss) Tennie Egger

COULD STAY AWAY NO LONGER

Rt. 2, Box 220,
Elon College, N. C. 27244

Dear Brother Spangler:

I want to renew my subscription to the *Signs*. I enjoy reading it so much; and so does my husband. I enjoy reading the brother's and sister's experiences: I feel that mine is the least of all. It gets so small at times, I wonder if I have any. Yet it is more to me than the whole world. I think sometimes that I am mistaken, but it seems that I can't stop going to meetings and hear the gospel preached. The more I hear, the more I want to hear: it is joy and peace to my soul, I hope for Christ's sake it has followed me ever since I was young.

I thought for sure I would stay outside until I knew I was fit; but I have never seen that time yet. I have had some wonderful dreams, yet I would try to forget it all, but the more I tried the stronger it got. I would read the song, "I am a stranger here below, and what I am 'tis hard to know;" and that fit my case so well. I would go to church and think that I would offer — that I could wait no longer; but when the time came, I could not go, and that made me feel more unfit than ever — it was not my time to go.

I dreamed one night of being on high in the largest white mansion I ever saw; it was so large there was no end to be seen; and there was no human there but me. But I feel the unseen power carried me there, and brought me back to this sinful world. It was the whitest place and the posts were the largest I ever saw. The day I offered to the church, the earth was white with snow; and that dream came back to me. I had dreamed of being baptized twice before I was baptized. One time I had no extra clothes with me; and this made me feel more unfit than ever. After my husband joined I would go some on Saturday, and would see others join: so I quit going on Saturday, thinking that I could stay away longer. I thought I was staying away, but I found that it was not the time for me to go. The night before I went before the church, I dreamed that I went to a valley where the road ended; and a voice spoke to me, and said, "You have gone to the end now." On Sunday we went to the church at Bush Arbor, and I could hardly wait until Brother King, our dear pastor, finished preaching, to go up and tell him he preached my experience better than I could tell it. I felt that if they didn't receive me, I had no home. Then, before I got home, I felt that maybe I had done the wrong thing; but the more I tried to forget it, the stronger it got, and it lingered with me day and night. I feel that others may have greater experience than I do, but still, if they will just let me live at their feet, for I feel to be the least of all, if one at all.

I have regretted many things, but joining and being baptized has meant so much to me — more than words can ever tell. I was longing for the time of the baptism, and it seemed the longest month. This was six years ago the second Sunday in this past April.

I did not think to write so much. I cannot read the Bible very much since my eyes are not good, but I enjoy hearing the Scriptures preached. Whenever you feel to pray, remember me a poor sinner.

Mrs. Viola Page Apple

Rt. 3, Box 123
Axton, Virginia 24054

Signs of the Times:

Just a few lines as it is time to renew.

I love to read of a God that has all power — not one that has all power: but, or if. I don't feel that we have a right to charge God or his power with anything; and if we did, it would be charging him foolishly. But I think we rightly charge the weakness of man with things. Some say that predestination of all things implies, or makes God this or that. How could they make Him anything, except in their own minds? If sin entered the world by the disobedience of man, how could it have come any other way; and how could we charge it to any other than man? No man can justify sin; but I believe in the God that justifies his people, whether I be one or not.

Enclosed is a check for two year's renewal.

Howard T. Edwards

Rt. 4, Box 73,
Lebanon, Mo.

Dear Kindred in Christ:

While here on my bed of affliction, it has been in my mind to try to tell a little what I hope the Lord has done for me. When I was about the age of seventeen I dreamed of seeing the Saviour, and he said to me, "He that climbeth up some other the way the same is a thief and a robber." And when I awoke, it was a dream. I wonder if there was nothing to that dream, why does it still stay with me? I dreamed again that the Lord came to my bedside, and said, "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him."

All I have is a hope; and I know that sin is mixed with all I do. I am eighty-seven years of age, and according to nature I have about stayed here my allotted time. If I am blessed to see that Just One, it will be by the grace of God given in Christ, and not by my works.

I hope a brother in Christ,
W. W. Kenoly

FELT THEY WERE NOT ALONE

Rt. 2,
Littleton, N. C.

Dear Editors of the *Signs:*

I see that my subscription is due so I enclose check for two more years.

I have enjoyed every copy I have ever read, though sometimes I don't understand or remember what I have read very long; but I hope never to give up reading them. I remember my precious mother used to tell me when I was a child, to read the Bible, (she read it a lot,) but I would tell her that I didn't get anything out of it, or didn't understand it. She would say, "Read it, and pray for understanding." I have been trying all these years, and sometimes I get a little comfort here and there.

I can't help but feel that God has been with me all the way through life; but I feel that I have never thanked him as I ought. I would like to tell you of a dream I had last year. I dreamed of seeing just a few dead bodies lying on the ground in our church yard; and they were taken up in the air. I was trying to pray to be taken up with them. They were all just alike and of the same size. All at once, I was lifted up; and it was the sweetest ride I ever enjoyed. I told my husband that if dying was that easy, I wouldn't mind at all. I hope to be forgiven if this was just imagination.

Last Fall I had opportunity to go with my daughter and her husband to see his family in New Bedford, Mass., and since I had never been farther than Richmond, Va., I went with them. We had a nice trip; and I want to say I know God was with us there and back, as we drove through all the traffic. I felt that we were not alone.

I just felt that I wanted to write a few lines, and hope to write more sometime.

May God bless you all,
Mrs. J. L. Smith

EXPERIENCE

April 25, 1966

Dear Ones:

I was awakened so forcibly this morning at 4 A. M. with the word *Experience* on my mind. I have tried four years to put on paper the little pathway my God saw fit for me to travel. Now I feel not to know the beginning or the ending: How does one start when there are so many priceless and precious memories? An experience has always seemed to me as if it were a gift of remembrances from God to you; of which one feels so unworthy to receive. I only hope that all I say, shows praise for my God.

I lived in the Methodist Church for nineteen years. On December 31, 1950, I married into a wonderful Old Baptist family. They did not know this faith at that time, but as years unfolded the truth, they were drawn among the little flock of Primitive Baptists. My father-in-law, Mr. William Davis, began attending Snow Hill Church alone. He would come home from preaching full of the truth, and try to tell us of it. It was as bitter as gall to everyone of us. Then before long Mrs. Davis started going to church with him. The Lord had a wonderful experience awaiting her, which I hope she can write some day. In May, 1955, she was received as a member of Snow Hill Church. They would both try to tell me of this faith. I would leave their house sometimes so full of hate for this faith, I would vow I was not going to talk with them about this anymore. Mr. Davis especially upset me, since he was such a strong and plain defender of the truth. This was all so contrary to my belief; yet I would feel even worse when I read the Scriptures, because I could only find what he had just told me. The flesh part could not concede that I had seen any of this truth; but our paths were to become so entwined that my vocabulary is limited in describing the beauty of traveling a path of love, faith, and hope.

The world was weakening to me as the truth started to unfold. My worldly faith was shattered completely one night in Snow Hill Church: Elder W. D. Griffin expounded the text concerning the eagle stirring up her nest. Every straw he pulled out, was another prop from under me. I left the church that night in such a *non-existance:* I felt lost to everything for all time. I thought to be the only person in this world without a meaning — surely God had forgotten me. It was such a terrible feeling I will never forget. I felt doomed. My old faith was completely demolished; and the truth had not been made whole to me yet. Have you been there? Have you felt so alone, so full of sin, so lost? If so, then my loved ones, we have fellowship with each other, and I hope with the Almighty, who predestinated this bond in the flesh.

Baptism had not entered my mind until one Sunday morning at Salisbury Church. Brother Harry Ward went before the members and humbly asked for a home. I thought this to be the most beautiful sight I had ever witnessed. Yes, I say witnessed, because I felt his weakness unite with me. I became so weak that I could not stand to finish the last hymn. Such a closeness entered my heart for Brother Ward that day; and it has never left. I felt to say I love him, and I still do; yet, with all this, I had a fear. Right then I longed to do what he had done, knowing I just couldn't because I was so unfit. My life seemed disassembled: Why had I been broken, and not mended? Yet, bless His name, had I not been shattered, would I have known a little of his unsearchable riches of truth?

The treasured memories of my dreams will always be one of the greatest gifts of his blessings. They were so real and true to me that it was as if I knew for certain that were going to happen. I'll not live long enough to tell the beauty in them for me. From them, I was led to believe that Mr. Davis, not yet a member, and I would be baptized together. In my first dream I saw him crying on his mother's shoulder, telling her he was troubled. In the second one, he and I were in a car together, happy and talking as though going to meeting. In the third, (the most puzzling at the time), he was like unto a little child in a baby's stroller. I was pushing him around a narrow pathway on a mountain: he seemed to have plenty of room, but I was about to fall. He reached back and touched my leg, and said, "I'll not let you fall." This dream is priceless to me now, as I'll reveal later. In my last dream, I saw Elder Griffin, Mr. Davis, and one other person, and myself in the water of baptism. I firmly believe the Lord visited me at these special times. He never leaves us but that he sustains us, and assures us that in our trials we are not alone.

After the last dream, I wrote to Elder Griffin and expressed a desire that, if ever I was baptized, he would be there. During the next two weeks, I endured a suffering such as I had never known before. I could not bring myself to talk to anyone about my fear of going before the church at Saturday night meeting: I walked the floor, and cried alone. I couldn't even tell my husband, Billy. Then on Saturday I asked him twice if he was going to church with me that night. His reply was, No! no reason given, just plain No. My heart ached to tell him my fears, yet I was restrained, for I feared it would not be.

So I went with the Davis family, and upon entering the church that night, I saw Elder Griffin, who had not planned of himself to come, since it was Elder Spangler's appointed time. Later he said he felt he had to be there. The moment I sat down, I began to tremble with fear; and yet relief. My seize was now at its peak — I felt as though all would soon be over; and yet was about to begin. At the end of the service, as unworthy as I was, I asked for a home. The only desire in my heart, was to say, "I know I love you all." I knew I had nothing else because I was so full of sin. When leaving the meeting, I asked Elder Griffin to baptize me because of my dream. Elder Spangler, gracious as he is, said it would be fine with him. Mr. Davis told me later that he desired so much to go before the church that night, but couldn't. I still felt happy, because I knew he would be baptized with me Sunday morning. When arriving home that night, I asked Billy what he thought had happened. He said he knew I went before the church; and had been knowing the same two weeks before when I suffered so. He was laboring with me, yet couldn't say a word, just as I couldn't. Isn't God gracious?

Sunday morning, May 6, 1962, we met at Shumaker's Pond. At the water's edge, Mr. Davis gave the most beautiful plea for mercy I've ever heard. He was received by the members; and he asked Elder Spangler to baptize him, (the fourth person in my dream.) Such a perfect day for a crumb of his mercy! That watery grave appeared as a bright light unto my eyes. It was so bright that it seemed to overpower all worldly things. All I could see was a celestial beauty. I cannot describe it, so I will not try.

Just this year my third dream was revealed to me. In my first, there seemed to be a burden; in the second, a sweet fellowship; and the fourth, a birth — the baptism being a new life. When entering the water to be baptized, Mr. Davis reached me his hand, and said the exact words, "I'll not let you fall." This dream was my reassurance in God, knowing he was and is all

in all — a finished work. My cry still is, "My God, why hast thou bestowed such riches on this worm of the dust?"

The Lord blessed my life so with my husband, who stands firm in the truth, and with four wonderful children. Only three were a burden to me in my experience, since my baby is one year old: I felt it was wrong not to carry them to Sunday School, and they were not old enough to go alone. I was afraid they would not know enough about God without being taught. Then, one morning upon awakening, the world's last clutch was gone. It was as if a voice said to me, "What did nineteen years of Sunday School do for you? You did not know Me until I first knew you." Never again was there any doubt but that God would take care of all in his own way, and own time.

If this be of any comfort to a sufferer, I am glad. Be thankful that He sees fit for you to suffer. A sinner never receives a greater gift than His mercy. He has been so merciful to me this morning in letting me re-live these precious memories. All praise, honor, and glory are His.

I close with the constant plea in my heart, "O Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner."

Unworthily,
Audrey M. Davis
New Church, Virginia

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Smith River Association is to be held, the Lord willing, with Union Church, Patrick County, Virginia, September 2, 3, 4, 1966. The meeting house is located on Road 623, the Fairystone Road, about one mile west of Philpott Lake.

Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Amos Hash, Clerk

PLEASANT VALLEY
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Pleasant Valley Primitive Baptist Association will convene August 26, 27, and 28, 1966, with Shepherd Fold Church, of Houston, Texas, if it be our Maker's will.

The meeting house is at 815 Little York Road, in the NW corner of the Little York-McGallion intersection. This is approximately half-way between U. S. Highways 75 and 59, and two blocks west of the I. & G. N. Railroad. For further information call the Clerk at HO 5-0693.

We send a most cordial invitation to all brethren and friends to meet with us at this our twentieth annual session.

Jerry Evers, Clerk

LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will convene, the Lord willing, on Thursday and Friday, September 8 and 9, 1966, with the church at Holcottville, N. Y. Entertainment will be at the same place as last year, the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Shultis, Kelly Corners, N. Y. Those coming on Wednesday afternoon take the Denver Road at Kelly Corners, then take the first left hand road to the third house, called Windy Acres. If you are coming on Wednesday please notify Mr. Shultis, Kelly Corners, N. Y., a few days ahead. Brethren and friends are invited.

A. J. Slauson, Moderator

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with North River Church, Carteret County, N. C. July 30 and 31, 1966.

All who love the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 3, Tarboro, N. C.

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** will be held, the Lord willing, at the church at Scott's, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in July, 1966. The meeting house is located about three miles west of Lucama, Wilson County, N. C.

All who have a mind to attend, are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

Please note that the **Maine Association** is to be held August 27 and 28 instead of August 20 and 21 as stated in the July issue. The Clerk of the Association asked that the correction be made. — Editor.

Danville, Virginia **August, 1966**

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EDITORIAL

JOHN 3:7

"Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

There are many gospel truths presented in the Bible, but none of them is as important as this one. Unless we have experienced the New Birth we will never know anything about the Bible. We might have all the scholastic learning that men could teach us; we may have conferred upon us all the titles that seats of learning have at their disposal; we may attend any and all theological seminaries, and wear the initialed titles of that *kind* of learning, but none of this teaching and learning will enable us to be born again, nor will any or all of it teach us any other tenet of faith.

God's children have had vile epithets hurled in their face about illiteracy. However, I do not recall any of our brethren going on a preaching mission telling unborn people to be born again. I have a precious hope that I love the Old School Baptists, and as long as I have had that hope I have been under the impression to preach the gospel of peace and good tidings in Jesus' name. Yet, if there are conditions to be met in being born again, I have not been born again, therefore the following statement is not hurriedly nor unthoughtfully nor extravagantly made, to wit, If it can be proved by medical science and by the Bible that the unconceived embryo can be a contributing factor in its own conception and final birth, I will never enter the pulpit again. I am sure that this will never be done.

The word "again" is of primary importance. It could not have been used had there not been a first birth. If this "again" birth had not been a birth, I am sure that the Lord would have used something else to tell us about it. Instead, he used the word "again," which, to me, is conclusive that the man born the first time had to be born a second time. The manner in which the births came about did not differ. Had this not been true, it is evident that the word "again" would not have been used. The difference, then, was not in the manner, but in the begetter. In the first birth, it was begotten in the flesh. This birth, being of the flesh, will remain just that. What folly it is to think that the "again" birth is a renovation of the old, a making new of the old. That which is born of the flesh is flesh. In the new birth we are begotten of God. This is a spiritual birth. God is a Spirit, and he seeketh such to worship him. This word "seeketh" is not used to show aimless wanderings around hoping to find someone that *wills* to worship him. The correct meaning in the Greek is that he desires and requires this phenomenal work. Whatever God desires, that he

will do (Job 23:13); when God desires toward the work of his hand, he always brings to full fruition that work. (Job 14:15) These two births, one as much as the other, brought the desired end. They were effective according to the design in each. In the first, the child born had a desire or propensity towards the things of the earth. This was not partial, as many would have us believe. He is born of the flesh, therefore his need, and the filling of that need, could never rise above the source of the cause of conception. The receptive organs of that birth would be made ill by the introduction of anything foreign to its nature. It never, *never,* could thrive and grow on matter that was contrary to the source of its life. So it is in the new birth. That new life must have things according to its nature. Why is it this way with these two births? Because that one of them is earthy; it is from below, and must have only those things from the earth, from below, before that it will survive. The other, which is from above, and brought about by the Spirit, must have those things from above, those things which are of, and from, the Spirit.

What a bright display of the mystery of godliness in John writing about the new birth. I do hope that the readers that feel so helpless about being able to tell the certainty of the new birth will remember that so much of the time the richest and sweetest writings and preaching, and singing and praying will come from those that know the least about the certainty of the time of the new birth. The only evidence that is left us about it, is his leaping in his mother's womb at the mention of Jesus' name. He never did refer to this in later years. O dear heart, do not be disturbed because you do not remember being born of God. It was necessary to digress for a moment there to give you some comfort while we deal with the technicality of proving that this new birth is solely of God.

Times have not changed one whit about salvation. There is not any change in God. A change in dispensations, yes, but not in his dealing with Israel. How often that we are blinded by present conditions. This isn't always spiritual activity when we think that the church has gone to the dogs, when we think that we are so few, when we get discouraged because of the bewitched condition of people in seeking the things of the earth. Ah, how wicked the world was when Jesus came. The world does not have room for the Old Baptists now. What dismay it brings us, not realizing, or forgetting, that no room was found for him in the inn; that even those that came from the same linage of David that he came through, could not receive him. How prone our heart is to forget past necessities, both joyous and painful. How often we think it is hard for us to pass through privation, loneliness, isolation of our day. How prone that we are to think that the things with which we are surrounded are things which the early church did not have to bother them. But not so, brethren. They had them then, we have them now, and the people of God will have them in the future.

When the Master came into the world, he came among the Jews. The promise of God was to them; that he would raise them up a Prophet from among themselves. (Deut. 18:18) The writings of the Jews were preserved, and I feel sure that they knew this promise as far as its having been inscribed in the writings of the Jewish fathers, and having been handed down from father to son. Although the promise of this Prophet was made only to Israel; although *their* prophets prophesied time and again of His coming, telling in the most minute detail about it, yet they, as a nation, as a whole, did not receive him. "He came unto his own, and his own (as a nation, as a whole) did not receive him, but as many as received him, to them gave

he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:11, 13) This has puzzled many because they could not see how that the sinner could become the son of God. These things will always puzzle us unless the truth is opened up to us. How far away, how far removed, was John's leaping in his mother's womb, and yet he does not hesitate as he is moved by the Holy Ghost to write. May it be God's pleasure that the same power move us all to examine the beauty in this text. Above everything else, I would to God that he preserve us from shutting our eyes to the truth just because it does not say things according to our preconception. What caused them to receive him? Some among them did not receive him, and we are told why. They were not his sheep; had they been his chosen, and had they been born, they would have done so. They received him because they had been born again. If language means anything (who will say it does not?), there was a sense in which those that had been born were not the sons of God. It is necessary that we remember that it is essential that we be born again in order to see and enter the kingdom. If he gave them power to become the sons of God, in some way they were not the sons of God.

In what way? How shall I deal with this pertinent question? Ignore it? Say that it does not mean what it says? Give it a meaning to fit the tradition of the elders? No, that is wresting the scriptures, which will end in our destruction. (2 Pet. 3:16) No, that is striving about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. (2 Tim. 2:15) Then let us, as blessed of God, view the matter in another light. There is a wearing of the garments of salvation; there is a putting on of Christ; there is an adorning of the work of Christ. This wearing and putting on and adorning is not of the flesh. It is not to be in dressing up the fleshly birth. While it is not that, neither is the new birth made manifest by a continuing in the things of the flesh. That is why he gave them power to become the sons of God by manifestation. We might, with some degree of propriety, say that the translators did not give us the best word here. When a new born child comes before the church, we desire to know their authority or right to baptism. The eunuch would not have had any right or authority for baptism had he not been a believer. He was a child before Phillip preached Jesus to him, but he was not a believer in Christ. Thus these that received the Saviour had been given the right or the authority or the power to become outwardly what they already were inwardly.

It must be insisted upon that this reception, and the giving of this right, came *after* they were born, not *before,* as unborn men would teach. Again and again, it must be insisted that this birth did not originate and bear fruit in the natural or fleshly mind. It did not come about by royal blood in them, nor even blood at all; it did not come about by the will of the flesh, nor it did not come about by the will of man. Some of them were of royal blood, all of them had a will according to the first or fleshly birth; being men, they had wills of their own after the flesh, and being Israelites, as was Paul, they would have willed that all Israel be saved. But this birth did not come about in that way. They were born (before he gave them power to become the sons of God) by the will of God. At God's own time, and in God's own manner, and in God's own place, he sent forth his Spirit causing conception and birth.

But how am I to know about the new birth? Be patient, little one. Gainsayers must be stopped as well as believers comforted; Agrippa must be dumfounded as well as the poor of the

flock built up. The Master used the wind to illustrate the new birth. We do not know where the roar of the mighty hurricane comes from. We are brought in awe to stand still and behold the destruction of the fierce tornado. Our minds and spirit are lulled into tranquillity by the gentle breeze of the wind, but to tell where it arose, and where it will lay, we can not. We do know some things. I taught school long ago, and recently an old pupil told me that she had never been able to see beauty in history until I kept that little rural school. Is God a poorer teacher than I am? I refuse to be drawn into such treason as that. My God teaches his people to know him, whom to know is eternal life. We might not know, and if we do, not as we ought, whether it was the Lord or something else; we might not know whether in the body or out, but we will find plenty of fellow travellers when we begin to describe what has been taking place under the effectual working of the power that envelopes and moves us on.

As a usual thing the wind arises with tempestuous looking clouds. Has that arisen in your life? You desire evidence that you have been born into the family of God. As the sun shined in your life (which was the unfolding of the life which you received in the first birth), as you contemplated the things that you had conquered, and the worlds that challenged your imagination and skill, did a black cloud arise? Did the lightning flash? Did the thunder roar? Did you quake and tremble under the grave forebodings that loomed before you? Did you, dear child, look to the safety of your goods? Have you felt the great force of the power of the wind (spirit) as your goods were scattered? Did you try to salvage something that you might start anew? Were you swept from your moorings, reeling and rocking under the terrific onslaught unleashed against your citadel? Did you see the sandy foundation being swept from under the building? If you are seeking evidence of acceptance with God; if you desire to know whether you have been born again, let me ask you: Have you felt the fury and power in the operation of the Spirit? Have you felt the effects of the wind of the Spirit? Have you been bowed down under its sweeping power?

But yonder comes another little child. They seem to be at a loss. O, they say, your description of this work leaves me out. Why, wounded heart, do you think that it leaves you out? Because you have not felt the boisterous wind! Come dear heart, and listen while I describe the gentle breezes. All wind does not come from black and angry clouds, nor is all of it the kind that scatters everything before it. O, no, dear seeking child. Sometimes the breezes gently kiss the cheek and is felt as a very light touch. As with John, and as with so many, you do not remember being knocked to the ground as was Paul; some ministers will join with me that they have not had the challenging experiences of a Jeremiah or Isaiah, or of a Peter or a Paul, but that they love God and love the doctrine, that they love the church and love the people of God. Is it evidence, dear child of God that you desire; is it evidence, dear yoke-fellow that you desire? Here it is, dear one. Look no further, here is the place to rest. He that loves, is born of God. If you have felt in a small way this love for the Lord Jesus Christ, for the truth, for the church, for the people of God, you too, have felt the operation of the Spirit in being born again; you too, have felt the blowing of the wind as God blows upon his people, even though it has been gentle.

What a lovely picture is before us *after* having been born again. We have entered into the most restful kingdom; we are now looking upon Zion in her solemnities. Thanks be unto God, we are now blessed to both enter and see the King in his royal beauty, to behold the lovely fountain in the midst of the city, to come to Mount Zion and find in

the Lord a place of broad rivers and streams, and to have him as our Pilot with no fear of gallant vessels running to and fro molesting the fragile vessels, nor of being impeded in progressing towards our haven of rest by those galleys that are trying to use oars (works of the creature), but love is bringing us home to glory and rest.

This is the substance of a sermon preached at the Black Creek Association on Sunday morning, October 24, 1965, and is sent in by request of some of my listeners.

W. D. G.

SERMON AT BLACK ROCK ALL-DAY MEETING JUNE, 1966

I trust that we are thankful and glad that we are blessed to meet together one more time in this June All-day Meeting; and I hope that our coming together will be not only for the fellowship and being together socially, which we enjoy and which is proper upon occasions, but what is more important, that we are come together for the purpose of worshipping our God, to hear something of his goodness and mercy, and his loving-kindness as recorded in His Word, and revealed by His Spirit in the hearts of His people.

There is a verse of Scripture I want to read as a possible starting point of what I shall say, if the Lord is pleased to open it up to me and to you. If He is, it will be wonderful, because it is the language of the Saviour. You will find it in the first verse of the fourteenth chapter of John:

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me."

When this scripture came into my mind, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me," I began to ponder: Just what do I believe; and why do I believe what I believe? Did you ever sit down in a quiet, peaceful atmosphere where there was nothing to interrupt you, and wonder about what you believe religiously, and why you believe it?

Then this thought came: If we believe just merely because our parents believed, it must be a shallow belief. In other words, if your parents were Old School Baptists, and you follow in their sentiments just because they did, it is to be wondered how much you really do believe. This may be applied to any religious denomination: If you believe merely because you were brought up among such and such a people, and have not had any real exercise in mind and heart, no real conviction, no real conversion, you might well question yourself; and I hope that what I might say will stir you up — or rather, that the Spirit of God will stir you, and cause you to think about what you believe, and why you believe it; and what evidence you have that what you believe is the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. This is a momentous question, a very important question, because there are so many who believe just because some one else does; and who do not really believe what they think or say they do, since they are without conviction in the matters.

In our text, Jesus said, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." The dispute among the Jews of that day was whether Jesus was the Son of God, and the Messiah that was to come; and most of them are yet disputing. I do not suppose that those who profess to believe in Jesus, ever question it nowadays. But it is a serious and important matter, my friends, to profess to believe in Jesus, and claim to be a Christian, without having the necessary evidence in you to confirm it. **What evidence do you have** that you are a Child of God? What evidence do **you have** that Jesus Christ is your Saviour?

Now it is not just some abstract confession, not just a nominal profession: that won't do; for we must have a powerful conviction, a powerful quickening: We must have experienced with David, "Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will **declare what he has done for my soul.**" Or with Peter, to be ready

to give a **reason of the hope that lies within you.**

I think just now of the Gadarene, the man who was full of unclean spirits, and dwelt among the tombs: called by some the wild Gadarene **because no man could tame him.** He was typical, if we have any understanding of it, of what we are in our flesh. But when Jesus cast out the devils, the evil spirits, the man was clothed and in his right mind. Have you ever felt that there was a change wrought in you, whereby you feel you are now clothed and in your right mind? Has there been a change in your belief and faith from what it once was? Do you now heartily believe with the Scriptures, that salvation is not by works of righteousness which you can do? If so, the language of Jesus to the Gadarene applies, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."

But, if you feel you are able of yourself to believe by the exercising of your own will, to the saving of your soul; that you are able to bring yourself to the new birth; that you are able to "turn over a new leaf," and believe upon the Lord Jesus to the saving of your soul, then it is well to listen to what the Scriptures teach. All true Christians must believe what Christ taught, and what the Apostles taught, for they taught the same things: Christ gave them the keys of the kingdom and enabled them to set in order the doctrine and order of the church; and the church was established upon these principles. Yet multitudes of professors have not loved these things, and have cast away practically everything except the name. In the absence of the Spirit and grace of God, (and I would like for you to consider this,) vain philosophy has taken over in every age of the world, and men have formulated their own doctrines and systems; and have always taught contrary to the things of God. We are glad, therefore, that God has revealed and recorded the truth in the Scriptures, so that the false doctrines of men are disproved.

When the man Nicodemus came to Jesus by night and inquired of him, Jesus told him that except a man be born again he could not see the kingdom of God. That man did not know what Jesus was talking about: he had never been brought experimentally to know anything of his own condition; he knew not that there was the kingdom of God, as well as the kingdom of nature. To the necessity of being born again, he could only ask, "Can a man enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born again?" I am sure that most of us know that Jesus was not talking about a re-birth, but rather a new birth in being born of the Spirit of God. This is a mystery, because it was entirely out of the hands of Nicodemus: outside of yours and mine; for, "The wind bloweth where it listeth: thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit." Because of the necessity of it, yet beyond the skill of men, we necessarily must understand that it is the work of God alone.

"Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God believe also in me." Belief, brethren and friends, has its seat deep within us: belief is the consequence of faith; and faith is the gift of God. "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourself, it is the gift of God." Many believe that they can have faith, and say, "All I have to do, is to believe." But we read that faith is the fruit of the Spirit: so if one has not been born of the Spirit, he cannot have faith, which is the fruit of it. There must be something powerfully wrought in your heart, like in those upon the day of Pentecost, when about three thousand were pricked in their hearts, and said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" If there has been no such exercises in you, what evidence do you have that you believe

in Christ? what evidence do you have that you really believe in the true God? "Ye believe in God: believe also in me."

Most of us read not long ago that some are talking about God being dead. The first reaction I had when I read it, was, if I believed in the God some profess, I might well say that he is dead. Many profess to believe in God, yet deny his power. Many do not believe that he controls all things; that kings and nations are in his hands. Surely such a God would indeed be dead; but no one can so testify of the God of Israel, of him of whom Jesus spoke when he said, "My Father worketh hitherto; and I work;" or when he said, "I and my Father are one." Or when God said, "Sit thou at my right hand until **I make thine enemies thy footstool."**

Jesus said, "Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." You will not find the way to obtain eternal life by searching the Scriptures; as if they will tell you what you must do in order to obtain it. But he that hath an ear to hear and a heart to understand, when he searches the Scriptures will find the truth of what Jesus said, "They are they which testify of me." So, if you are blessed to see Jesus when you read the Old Testament; to see him in all the sacrifices and offerings unto God: if you see Jesus as the ultimate end to which these things pointed; see him as the great anti-type of these typical things, then Jesus has taken up his abode in you, and you have been born of the Spirit and know that he is your Saviour: then you can say, "My Lord and my God." And you will have realized that you have been brought out of the great darkness of the flesh and carnality, and that the light that shines out of darkness, has shined in your heart, and given you the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, his Son. Then, indeed, as you believe in God, you believe also in his Son. And you believe all things that He taught, for you need all that he did for your salvation, and are not ashamed of his gospel, knowing that it is the power of God unto salvation. Then you fall at his feet as the Gadarene did, desire to follow him in all things.

It is easy to see, therefore, who believe in God and in his Son. And it is further affirmed by Jesus in his reply to Peter and the brethren with him: Jesus had asked them, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" And the reply was, "Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some Elias; and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets." Then Jesus asked, "But whom say ye that I am?" Peter, answering, said, "Thou are the Christ, the Son of the living God." "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." This should be pondered over, and carefully considered by every professor, for this is the way God brings all of his people into the knowledge of the truth that Jesus is His Son, and the Saviour whom he has sent. Those who know this to be true, are truly taught of the Lord.

On the other hand, those who believe that they are able themselves to dig into the deep mysteries of God, which are reserved in his own will and disposing power, and appropriate them to themselves, they neither know the mysteries of God, nor that the disposing is of the Lord alone. It must be said of these that they know not themselves as to their real impoverished and immobile condition before God; that they have not learned that the "good work" **must be begun in them, and carried on in them,** else there is no quickening to the knowledge of the truth. Their ways seem right to them, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

Those who are taught of the Lord are particular as to what they hear preached: there is a clear answering of faith to faith. This is wonderfully

confirmed in the desire of the Centurion whose name was Cornelius, when he was given a vision and told to send for Simon Peter, who would tell him what he ought to do. Likewise Peter was given a vision from the same source, and made willing to go to the Gentile, as you will recall; and when he came to Cornelius, he was given the "reason" why he was sent for: "Immediately therefore I sent to thee: and thou hast done well that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, **to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.**" That is what Cornelius wanted to hear; and that was the only thing that Peter had to preach: what God had commanded him. He preached Jesus and all that he did, including his death and resurrection. And those who heard, giving evidence of the same grace that Peter and the brethren had, were baptized.

Again, when Saul was wrought upon by the same Spirit and power, and brought to the spiritual birth — out of darkness into the marvelous light, he, who so recently had denied Jesus as being the Messiah, and hated those who called upon his name, began to preach this Jesus as the Son of God, and the Saviour of the Lord's people. And this was all because of the power and evidence which was given him in the matter.

This is what I would ask, my friends, has something been wrought in you also? I do not necessarily mean some great and miraculous experience as in the case of Paul, (though all the dealings of the Lord with his people are outstanding and miraculous,) but I do mean that there must be some evidence that you have been born of the Spirit. Paul had been professing to believe in God all his life, and was a strict religionist, believing he was doing God's service in persecuting the disciples of Jesus, even consenting to the stoning of Stephen to death. But when the light shined about him and the voice spoke from heaven, he fell to the ground, saying, "Who art thou, Lord?" What a marvelous difference when the Spirit speaks in the heart!

Are you guilty of blasphemy by denying the doctrine of God our Saviour? If you deny his Word, you are blaspheming him. If you deny that salvation is only by the grace of God, you are denying him. If you believe that salvation is partly by grace and partly by works, then you are denying him.

It is to be seen that what we believe is an important thing; yet there are some who will receive and approve just about anything that has a semblance of religion about it. Did you ever notice a bird's nest with young birds in it? They hold their bills wide open, and make a terrific fuss when they are hungry; and will receive just about anything that is put into their mouths. Let us not be that way my friends: let us not "Be carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness;" but may God give us grace that we shall be staid upon the doctrine of God our Saviour; upon that foundation which is sure and certain — the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

There is another thing to which I would like to call your attention, as I think of it. What about the untold millions who have lived and died, and who, so far as we know, never heard a gospel sermon. If the doctrine of men is true, then there is no hope for any of them. But the doctrine of God our Saviour being true, which we preach and believe, the Lord knew those that were his among all those so called heathen; and they, in His own way, were given the assurance of eternal life by the same grace that any of us have. We are glad that Paul said, ". . . nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal: the Lord knoweth them that are his." We are glad to be numbered with these "strangers," and glad that salvation, both theirs and ours, was accomplished just as Peter

wrote it, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." This is the only doctrine that is world-wide: it teaches that the Spirit of God reaches into every nook and corner of the world, unto every one for whom Jesus died to redeem from his sins. This is truly the only doctrine that teaches the **only way** that salvation comes unto men.

There is another scripture in Paul's writings to the Ephesians, which seemed so wonderful to me a few days ago: "Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Ephesians 5:25-27) This is what He did for his people, who said, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." No wonder they believe in him, for it is the working of the mighty power of God; and after they believe, they are sealed with the holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest (assurance or foretaste) of their inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession. These are the ones who are, "According to his abundant mercy begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Peter 1:3-5) In these things they greatly rejoice in spite of manifold temptations during their pilgrimage.

No doubt there are some here this morning who have questions in their minds as to the truth of what I am saying; to such I hope that what you have heard has sufficiently stirred up your minds that you will search the Scriptures to see whether these things are so. You may remember that the Bereans searched the Scriptures daily to see whether they were so, when they heard the Apostles preach these things.

Jesus sometimes said, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." And, "Blessed are the eyes that see the things that ye see." What a blessing indeed when the full saying of Jesus upon the occasion of our text takes possession of us with power: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself: that where I am, there ye may be also."

(The above is from tape of sermon at Black Rock Meeting House in June, 1966, abridged and edited for publication instead of undertaking to write an Editorial; and was by J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

MATTHEW 18:7

"Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to the man by whom the offense cometh!"

These words were spoken by our Lord, to his disciples, at a time when they had evinced an undue ambition for preferment in his kingdom. A spirit which was common to the Gentiles, to lord it over one another, though common in the world, was unbecoming the followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God. And he set a little child in their midst, and said, "Verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." There is no aristocracy in the kingdom of our Redeemer; all the subjects of his government are brethren. All

are alike dear to God, chosen of him in Christ, redeemed from sin, death and hell, by the blood of the immaculate Lamb, quickened and born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, and all alike freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. They are not to be lords over God's heritage; but they are commanded to be kindly affectionate one to another, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven them. The artless, unassuming disposition of little children becomes them. Woe unto the world because of offenses. Although there is a must needs be for them, still the offenders of God's little ones are not held guiltless. The necessity for offenses may be considered.

1. From the very opposite character of the kingdom of Christ from that of the world. While in the world the church must needs have tribulation. Because God's little ones are not of the world, therefore the world hates them, because the world hates God, hates Christ, hates holiness; and therefore it is, that if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution.

2. It is needful for the saints. Their trials and afflictions are working together with everything else for their good. God has chosen them in the furnace of affliction; and he sits as a refiner's fire, and as fuller's soap, and he will thoroughly purge the sons of Levi. He presides over them in all their trials, and will not suffer the enemy to exact upon them, nor the son of wickedness to afflict them beyond the limits which he has set. The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath will God restrain. As God used the heathen nations as his sword to chastise Israel, so the powers of this world are suffered to afflict the people of God, so far as shall be for their good and his glory, but no farther.

3. Offenses must needs come; because so it is written; and the Scriptures must be fulfilled. In the last days shall come perilous times; many shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of the devil, &c. That wicked shall be revealed, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, in them that perish. There were false prophets among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, &c. How could the Scriptures be fulfilled, if the saints should have no conflicts with the world, or receive no offenses from the world?

4. These trials are needful for the trial of our faith. Hence the admonition to consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him, &c.

But notwithstanding the must needs be that offenses should come, notwithstanding the wisdom and power of God in overruling them for the good of his people, and for his own ultimate glory, it were better that a mill-stone were hanged to the neck, and the offender cast into the sea, than he should offend one of God's little ones. Men of the world when they belch forth their venom upon the people of God, do it from the most impure and wicked motives, as when the Jews and Romans stained their guilty hands in crucifying the Son of God, and they are equally as guilty as though their wickness were not so overruled. God has created the smith that bloweth the coals, and bringeth forth an instrument for his work, and he has created the waster to destroy. He will suffer no weapon that is formed against Zion to prosper, or any tongue that riseth against her to go uncondemned.

The admonition of our text is addressed to the disciples. They have great

occasion to deny themselves of worldly lusts, and to crucify those fleshly propensities within them, which war against the Spirit, lest they become the authors of offenses, by savoring the things which be of men, or of the world. And when of their ownselves men rise up to draw away disciples after them, when they cause divisions contrary to the doctrine which the saints have received, (by divine authority), they are not to be countenanced by the church of God. However high their standing, or important their station in the church, If thy hand, or thy foot offend thee, cut them off and cast them from thee; or if it be an eye, let it be plucked out, according to the discipline of the house of God; for whoever may be the agents in producing offenses, the spirit which leads to such offenses, is of the world, and the principle is condemned.

Whenever Christians grow up to be anything larger than little children, they may certainly conclude that they have increased with an increase which is not of God. Their flesh is inflated with a worldly spirit, which wars against the spirit of holiness, and from these fleshly lusts proceed wars and fightings, subjecting them to discipline, sorrow and woe. Let us who profess to be the followers of Jesus, put off the old man with his deeds; and may God grant unto us grace, that we may walk humbly before him in love.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, May 15, 1856.)

WHAT IS PRAYER?

In the preceding number of the *Signs*, Sister Gentry asked for our opinion and for the views, of others, on the subject of prayer. The subject of prayer has occasioned us much reflection at times, for the last forty-five years, and yet we have been so dull a scholar in the school of Christ, if indeed we are a pupil of his school, that after almost half a century's tuition on the subject, we have now to confess the humiliating truth, that we often ask and receive not, because we ask amiss; and to this day we know not how to pray as we ought. In the year 1811, when but young in our profession, we resolved to be much engaged in prayer, and, as we had read somewhere that,

> "Satan trembles when he sees
> The weakest saint upon his knees,"

we were fully resolved to make him tremble continually. We supposed then that prayer consisted in periodical forms, in which we were required to humble ourselves before God, and ask of him whatever we were in need of. To our inexperienced mind there was much virtue in prayer, that is, in the form and language of prayer, and it was our impression that the poet was right when he said,

> "Restraining prayer we cease to fight;
> Prayer makes the Christian's armor bright,"

And we verily thought, by our constant praying, we should avoid temptation, and live above doubts and fears. We should keep the old tempter so terrified with our devotions, that he would not dare assail us with any wicked suggestions. But we soon learned that our prayers were not the right kind to keep Satan at bay, for it was not long before it really appeared to us that we were much more annoyed with his company when performing our solemn devotions, than at any other time. Often, when the hour of prayer, which we had set, came, we were either inflated with pride that we were so devout, or crushed down with such a sense of our sinfulness that it seemed wicked and presumptuous to call upon the name of the Lord. Sometimes, when about to rush into the presence of the Lord like the unthinking horse into battle, we found our thoughts, like the fool's eyes, were wandering to the ends of the earth, and we have been unable sometimes to utter one word of supplication. Self-abased before the Lord, we have risen up from our knees, and left the place, concluding that we could not pray, and

perhaps in reality praying, or breathing forth the heart-felt and heaven-inspired desire of our inmost soul, that God would manifest himself as our God and portion, and give us grace whereby we might serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

These earnest desires breathed forth to God, we hardly dared to call them prayer, for we had imbibed the idea that prayer must have more formality about it, that we must go into some closet, or secret place, literally, and fall on our knees, or prostrate our body before the Lord, and then and there utter our prayers in an appropriate utterance of words. Often like Sister Gentry, we have been in great heaviness, because we could not pray, or rather because we were unable to satisfy ourself that we had prayed. But we are now led to believe that the most fervent prayers we have ever offered to God, were indited by groanings which we could not utter. There have been times when it has really seemed to us that the Spirit truly helped our infirmities, and made intercession for us in that way, and we were made more sensible of our entire dependence on God, than we could have been if we had believed that we had ability to pray when and as we pleased.

Volumes might be written in reply to the inquiry of our sister, "What is prayer?" without exhausting the subject. But in this short article, we can only touch briefly upon the subject. Secret prayer, or that prayer of the saint which is poured forth as a communion between God and the individual worshiper, we believe is often made when we may be in the open field, on the public highway, or when lying upon our bed, but it is always when none but God, who seeth in secret, knows the emotions of the suppliant's heart. And this is what we understand to be entering into our closet and shutting the door; here it becomes a matter between the God of heaven and that saint on whom God has graciously poured the spirit of prayer and of supplication.

Social prayer is that in which a number of Christians are led by the same spirit to call upon the name of the Lord, and in which one is mouth for them all; such praying must necessarily be audibly uttered, so that all who are present may understandingly unite in the prayer. This public or social devotion is as important in its place as the secret aspirations of the praying saint in the closet. But all vain show and ostentatious parade should be avoided. We are to remember that God is in heaven, and we are on his footstool, and it is becoming that our words should be few, for his people are not heard for their much speaking, nor for their loud speaking, nor for the sanctimonious tone in which the words of prayer are uttered. In the public assemblies of the saints, we do not find that every praying soul has been distinguished with the gift to be mouth for the church, but all the saints are blessed with the gift of prayer, whereby they may unite in the petitions offered, so far as they are indited by the Spirit of God.

In regard to the answers of prayer, we are not to expect that there is either power, merit or efficacy in our prayers, in themselves considered, to entitle us to the things which we pray for. God, who has all things needful for us, either for time or eternity, in store, gives the spirit of prayer to his children, and that spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God; it knoweth what is the will of God, and it indites within us the desire for what God designs to bestow in answer to prayer. So, instead of our bringing the Lord under obligation to bestow blessings on us for our prayers, here is an additional dependence on God, not only for the things that we need, but also for the spirit to ask him for them. And when we speak of our children and neighbors being quickened and born of God, in answer to our prayers, we mean to be understood that God has not only made

bare his holy arm, and revealed his salvation in the conversion of sinners, and in reviving his church, but that he has made his children desire, and by the spirit of supplication, has led them to pray for the accomplishment of all these things. There are many things connected with this subject, on which, at this time, we cannot dwell. Among others, faith is indispensable. Not a faith of human origin, that we can create or exercise, but that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit and the gift of God; that faith of which Christ is the author and the finisher, and which is called the faith of Jesus Christ, by which we live spiritually, and that faith which is of the operation of God. He that cometh unto God must believe that he is. How can we devoutly pray to a God, the existence of whom we doubt or disbelieve? And if we believe there is a God, how can we ask of him for blessings, unless we have faith to assure us that God has them in store for us, and that he will freely bestow them upon us through Jesus Christ our Lord? Without faith it is impossible to please God. Faith lays hold on his promise, and gives us confidence that they shall all be fulfilled. Faith looks to Jesus as the only medium through whom we may approach the Father; for he says, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." He is also the only medium through which spiritual blessings are sent down from heaven upon the saints. God has blessed his children with all spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world; so we have no reason to expect any spiritual blessing out of Christ, or in any other way than according as he hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, April 1, 1856.)

OBITUARIES

BROTHER JOHN W. JOHNSON

Brother Johnson was born September 5, 1879, and died April 9, 1966, age 86 years. Brother Johnson moved his membership to Springfield Church October 13, 1951. He was faithful to the Church and attended meetings regularly as long as he lived. It was my pleasure to visit in his home many times and hear him talk of the wonderful love and power of the Lord. He was a strong believer in salvation by grace and grace alone.

Springfield Church bows in humble submission to the just and holy will of our Lord, knowing that He doeth all things well. We know that we shall miss Him, yet we feel our loss is His eternal gain. Besides his wife, Sister Johnson, he is survived by three sons, four daughters, three brothers, three sisters, 21 grandchildren and 20 great grandchildren.

His funeral was held at Springfield Church by his pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and his body laid away beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Gretna Burial Park to await the second coming of our Lord.

Done by order of Springfield Church; and written by L. R. Willis.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. R. Willis, Clerk

ROBERT VERNON DUDLEY

Please note the omission of the name of Brother Harry Dudley, Vinton, Virginia, as one of the brothers surviving Brother Robert Vernon Dudley, whose obituary appeared in the June issue of the *Signs*. We regret this oversight. — J. D. W.

SISTER ANNIE WATT

In loving memory of our precious departed sister, Annie Watt, widow of Brother Robert Watt, who was taken to her eternal home December 5, 1965, in her 92nd year. She leaves three daughters and three sons: Mrs. Elizabeth Bartz, Detroit, Mich.; Alfred Watt, Alvinston, Ontario; Mrs. Leos (Jean) Brown, Archie Watt and Joe Watt, Detroit, Mich.; and Mrs. Jack (Flossie) Anning, London, Ontario. Gordon and Harold predeceased her.

Sister Watt was received into the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, and baptized by the late Elder Carnell, July 12, 1903. She enjoyed reading her Bible, and many gospel hymns were precious to her; and she loved to attend meetings when she could. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and delighted in having those of like precious faith visit her. Many comforting and encour-

aging visits were enjoyed in her home, both before and since her husband's death. While we are saddened at seeing her face no more, we desire to thank God for his loving kindness and tender mercy in removing her from her afflicted body, to be, as we hope, forever with the Lord.

Her funeral was conducted from Black's Funeral Home, Alvinston, Ontario, by her beloved pastor, Elder George Ruston, who spoke comfortingly from Psalm 1:1-3, and Revelation 22:1, 2. Her body was laid to rest in the family plot in Alvinston Cemetery, to await the resurrection day, when Jesus will come the second time to awake the sleeping dust of his children, to be clothed with immortality; when the Lamb's bride will be with her blessed Redeemer, be like Him and be satisfied, to praise, honor and magnify Him forever, world without end. Amen.

Written by request.

Sister Flossie Bishop

MEMORIAL FOR SISTER ROWLAND

Sister Nannie Rowland was born September 27, 1881, and departed this life April 6, 1966. She joined Springfield Primitive Baptist Church at Gretna, Va. October 8, 1938. She was the wife of Robert Rowland who died several years ago. She leaves five sons and four daughters; one sister, one half sister, one step brother; 42 grandchildren, 60 great grandchildren, seven great-great grandchildren.

Her funeral was held at Springfield Church, conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and burial in Gretna Cemetery.

Sister Rowland was a lovely person, loved her church and manifested it in her quiet, gentle and kind manner, filling her seat whenever possible. We are confident that He who called her by His grace will watch over her while she sleeps. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints."

We, the Church at Springfield, bow in humble submission to God's will, and may He comfort the family in their great loss.

Done by order of Springfield Church, and written by Annie Tosh.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. R. Willis, Clerk

MICHAEL ALEXANDER (M. A.) THOMAS

Born December 2, 1871, died September 18, 1965. Son of Johnathan Peter Thomas and Mary Jane Griffith Thomas. Surviving are Sister Thomas, two daughters, three sons, seven grandchildren, and five great grandchildren. He was united in marriage August 28, 1902, by Elder Wiley Via to Sister Annie Peters. Services were held at Salem Church September 20, 1965, by Elders J. O. Conner and B. O. Thompson, with interment in Rest Vale Cemetery.

From his own writing: "I was 13 years old had never heard anyone preach but realized I had a soul to be saved or lost, and in some measure had a little knowledge of what a Savior was. Then I began going to Charity Church on Sunday. Some of my older brothers would go with me. Then I began going every meeting Saturday and Sunday, there was a good turnout both days. When the brethren would meet there seemed so much love and fellowship we could see their faces light up as if the face of Jesus shown in their countenance, and when they dismissed on Sunday they would shake hands; called the parting hand. They preached salvation by grace, election, predestination, fore-knowledge of God, the resurrection of the body, eternal happiness for the righteous and eternal punishment for the wicked. I have always loved this doctrine from the first sermon I heard, so there must have been something in me that gave that knowledge, though I had no hope at that time. At about age of 16 or 17 I began to go to other churches, Long Branch and County Line, could see the same love and fellowship there as at Charity Church. At the age of 24 I hope the Lord had pardoned my sins one year before I joined the church at County Line, and I hope have been growing in grace and the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ every since, yet know but little of His ways, nothing of myself."

He was received into their fellowship the fourth Sunday in September, 1896. He was ordained Deacon in 1900. He missed only one association between 1895 and 1957 when he became ill with influenza and never regained his strength to get out among the brethren again. He bore his failing health with much patience and expressed a great interest in the welfare of the church and brethren to those that visited him. His experience was published shortly after he joined the church in *The Messenger of Truth.* Once while greatly tried about the resurrection, as he was on his way home from teaching school, he viewed in some manner the bodies coming forth, and those that were upon earth with him did not hinder the ones coming forth. He wrote the Smith River circular letter 1921. He truly had a deep sense of the love that binds the Lord's people together, and treasured their fellowship very highly. He was grave, holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience. He had a deep insight in doctrine and discipline. The church at County Line feels their great loss, and that their loss is his eternal gain.

N. F. Conner

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134 DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1966 NO. 9

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

NOT ASHAMED OF CHRIST

"Jesus! and shall it ever be,
A mortal man ashamed of thee!
Ashamed of thee, whom angels praise;
Whose glories shine through endless days!

Ashamed of Jesus! sooner far
Let evening blush to own a star;
He sheds the beams of light divine
O'er this benighted soul of mine.

Ashamed of Jesus! just as soon
Let midnight be ashamed of noon:
'Tis midnight with my soul, till he,
Bright Morning Star; bids darkness flee.

Ashamed of Jesus! that dear friend
On whom my hopes of heaven depend!
No; when I blush — be this my shame,
That I no more revere his name.

Ashamed of Jesus! who can say,
Who that has sins to wash away,
Or tears to wipe, or good to crave,
Or fears to quell, or soul to save?

O then, nor is my boasting vain,
O then, I boast a Saviour slain;
And O, may this my glory be,
That Christ is not ashamed of me."

— Gregg

"SOMETIMES WANTS TO HELP CARRY THE ARK"

Rt. 1, Box 310A,
Steem, Miss. 39766

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a money-order for $5.00 to renew my subscription to the Signs. The paper is full of food for the hungry, clothing for the naked, and comfort for the heavy laden. I enjoy reading the history of the church of the early years, and her travels.

I feel that I need to read, and to learn more of the ancient landmarks that Jesus taught the apostles and disciples, for I am so unlearned, and feel to be the greatest sinner on earth. I am so weak and feel so far from God. If I have any gift or talent, I feel sometimes I may have buried it like one of old, for I was afraid. But I will relate a few things.

I remember reading about Joseph when he was in prison in Egypt; and there was another man, (the chief baker) in prison with him, who was freed. Joseph asked him to remember him "when it is well with thee," but he forgot Joseph until later when Pharaoh dreamed a dream which none could interpret. Then he said, "I do remember my fault this day." And David said that his sin was ever before him.

If not deceived, I saw a vision like unto John in Revelation, who, when speaking of what he saw when he turned to see Him that spoke, saw seven golden candlesticks; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet as dead. Then he that spoke laid his right hand upon John, and said, "Fear not, I am the first and the last." In my vision, (I had not long gone to bed, and was not asleep. I had been reading, and had turned out the bed light,) I saw a large arm come down, and he placed his hand on my right side. I saw just the arm and hand below the elbow, and it looked like iron, and the largest I ever saw; and it came with power. I did not breathe or move - and could not if I had tried. The hand touched my right side and was held

there for a short time, and then disappeared, and was gone. I got up and went for a drink of water, wondering what it should mean.

This was in 1964. We had been having all kinds of troubles in the **world:** nations against each other, racial trouble, wars and rumors of war - crime everywhere; and I had been greatly concerned and worried over these things. So when I saw this powerful hand reach down and touch my side, and I was powerless to move, I thought at that time it meant that we would be overrun by the racial trouble, or some wicked power like King Herod. I pondered over this for a few weeks, and as I was writing Elder Rhodes a letter, I mentioned something about John in Revelation, and I came upon the above scripture; and I believe the great Creator of heaven and earth gave me the meaning of the vision. You recall that John said that when he saw Him, he fell at his feet as dead, and it was said unto him, "Fear not: I am the first and the last. I am he that liveth, and was dead: and behold,I am alive for evermore; and have the keys of hell and death."

The Lord showed me plainly that I was not to fret or fear, and that no one could touch me. The Saviour said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Here is the Hand again! I was made to repent, and made sorry and ashamed for fretting over these things. I realize that I am made of dust, and that the flesh is weak: "The Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." All my hope is in Christ the Lord, and his precious promises to his little ones the world over. So much of my time my prayer is, "Lord be merciful to me a poor sinner." I feel much of the time to be in the wilderness, and down in the valley; but when I first began to experience some of the things, as I hope, that were given to John on the Isle of Patmos, I sat down and wrote to the church, or the sisters of the church.

But sometimes I get to where I want to help carry the ark; or like Elijah, complain, and flee from Jezebel. But the angel fed him and gave him water for the journey of many days. Though my eating and drinking are many days apart, if not deceived, I would not exchange my hope and these seasons though far apart, for all things others say they know and do. In my Bible it is written, "The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord." If we ever walk a good step, or think a good thought, or do a righteous act, it is because we are led of the Spirit. As is recorded in the 25th chapter of Matthew, when the Lord shall separate the sheep from the goats, he shall say unto the sheep,"... Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." They did not know when they had done these good deeds unto him; but the goats told him, "Lord, when saw we an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto you."

I feel so much of the time that I leave undone that which I ought to do, and do that which I ought not; so I conclude that it is sin that dwells in me: that is, in my flesh. Jesus told Peter that Satan had desired to have him, that he may sift him as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not. It seems that Satan has always been at my elbow, telling me, as he did Mother Eve, that "Ye shall not surely die." For when I would do good evil is present with me; but, if Jesus has prayed to the Father for me, I know that his prayer shall be answered, for he said that he did always those things that pleased the Father; and that he came not to do his own will, but the will of the Father that sent him. We are not our own: we are bought with a price, and Jesus paid that price when he hung on Calvary's cross.

We love him because he first loved us: He chose us, we did not choose him, as he said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you..." "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." This love

passeth all understanding. I can never explain my feelings, and what I hope the Lord has done for this poor worm; and what great mercies he has bestowed on such an one as I. He has carried me through the deep waters and many storms. I remember that he said, "I am the first and the last, and have the keys of Hell and death." In the 91st Psalm we read, "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." So, dear ones, as long as his angels are guarding us, no evil shall befall us.

I must close; I had not intended to write when I began, only to mail the renewal. When it goes well with you remember this poor sinner at the throne of grace. If saved, saved by grace.

Minnie Seay

GLAD TO RECEIVE THE SIGNS

Rt. 3, Box 639C
Greenville, N. C. 27834

Dear Elder Spangler:

It gives me great pleasure to know that we still may receive the periodical, **The Signs of the Times;** which gives God all the praise, honor and glory. May we continue to be blest to hold fast to the truth as it is in Jesus Christ in these trying times, is my prayer for Christ's sake. And may the editors and associate editors continue to be blessed to contend for these things.

I have not been privileged to call you my brother: that is in God's hands, if and when He sees fit; but I am proud to call you and all the other servants of God, Elders of the church. Please remember me, a sinner unworthy even to be remembered, when you are blest to pray.

Mrs. M. E. Garner

(In the above was also stated that the Great Swamp Primitive Baptist Church of Greenville, N. C., has forty-five "Old School Hymnals" number 9, copyrighted 1942 by J. A. Monsees, which are almost new; and which they desire to dispose of. Should anyone care to buy them at a good price, information can be had by writing her at the address given above. - Ed.)

"CREATED BY HIM AND FOR HIM"

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28)

What did Paul mean by saying all things? My answer is all things. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and are in the earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him,and for him." (Colossians 1:16)

I believe that in as much as he created all things for himself, he created all things for his bride. "The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." (Revelation 4:10-11) I have noticed that these things were not to do his pleasure, but for his pleasure: all things are not working good, but for good. "In whom we also have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." (Ephesians 1:11)

"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." (Psalm 76:10) According to this scripture, God will restrain all of the wrath of man that does not praise God. We see how this works by studying the life of Joseph. Joseph's brethren were jealous because of his dreams: they did not want to bow to him. One day they lifted up their eyes and saw

Joseph coming to see how they were getting along. They plotted to kill him, and then they would see what would become of his dreams. But this part of their wrath must be restrained, because Joseph must go down into Egypt: then they thought to sell him to the merchants for a slave, which they thought would be just as well. This part of wrath was not restrained, because it was to God's praise - it was God's way of sending Joseph before his brethren, to save much people alive. (Joseph's brethren must bow before him: he was a type of Christ.)

"Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known to his brethren. And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near unto me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt. Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not." (Genesis 45:1-9) "Also regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours." (Genesis 45:20) (My brethren, I am looking forward to receive the call to come to Jesus, and leave all my stuff behind; for in that heavenly land we will not need any of our stuff: for the good of the land will be ours to possess forever.)

"And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto him: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived: and Israel said, It is enough: Joseph my son is still alive: I will go and see him before I die." (Genesis 45:27-28)

We can see that the very act which Joseph's brethren meant unto evil, God meant the same for good; and he overruled it for good. In this we can see that God works all things after his own will. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted, neither tempteth he any man." (James 1:13)

Brethren, let me say that if any have the thought that predestination excludes the need of admonition, or exhortation, he does not understand predestination of all things; because these things are a part of the things he did predestinate, and he makes admonition have its affect.

May God give us better understanding; and the unity of the Spirit.

(Elder) James R. Hollandsworth,
Rt. 4, Box 479,
Bassett, Va. 24055

"I WILL GIVE YOU REST"

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matthew (11:28)

The Jews were looking for a natural King who would restore the Kingdom to them, and they did not have any use for Jesus. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." (John 1:11) I believe that we are safe in saying that the majority of the "higher class" of Jews were the ones who despised him. "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." (Zepha-

niah 3:12) This was in the midst of Israel. There were a few who trusted in the name of the Lord. These were the afflicted and poor people--which were the class of people who followed Jesus and believed in him. "Thought the number of the Children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved." (Romans 9:27)

The majority of the Jews did not feel the weight nor the burden of the yoke of the law. They trusted and boasted in their own works and were righteous in their own estimation. "They worshiped the works of their own hands." (Isaiah 3:8)

Jesus spoke a parable unto those that trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others. (see Luke 18:9-14) As we observe the prayer of the Pharisee, we notice that he was not really praying to God, but he was praying thus with himself. He was actually bragging or boasting about the things he had done, and in his prayer he scorned the publican. He was actually worshiping the works of his own hands. He was not giving any praise to God. Instead, he was praising himself. This is a model prayer of those who have a form of religion, but who do not know anything about the Grace of God in their hearts.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The words of the text were directed to a certain people among the Jews during that time, and these same words are applicable in this day and time to a certain people. If these words apply to you, dear one, they are living words, and are far more reaching than the words of any other book. These are words that touch your heart, do they not?

I feel sure that these words meant something special to some people during that day. Certainly, it must have made them rejoice. It revived their spirits, and gave them fresh courage to look for something better than the condemnation of the law. This was glorious, but there is something else more glorious. "For if ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory." (2 Cor. 3:9)

Let us think of the people who were weary from being under the weight of the law. The burden was grievous to them. The demands of the law were too strict, and their strength failed them. The doctrine of the world which attempts to mix the Grace of God in with the works of the law brings remedies such as these: "You ought to get up and work for the Lord, you ought to have faith in the Lord, you ought not to have doubts and fears and if you do it shows unbelief, you ought to trust in the Lord, etc." But the poor one finds he is helpless, weak, poor, undone, and has learned that he does not have the strength nor the ability to do that which is acceptable in the sight of the Lord. He feels the condemnation of the law, and knows something about the truth of these Scriptures because he has experienced it: "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of the Lord." (Romans 3:23) And, "Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight." (Romans 3:20)

His prayer is something like this: "God be merciful unto me a sinner." The publician felt what he prayed, and I do not believe that he got this from a prayer book or from any other source but from his own heart. By nature, the publican's heart was not better than the pharisee. The difference was that God had touched the heart of the Publican. He felt the weight of the law. He realized he was a guilty sinner and knew that he could not atone for his sins. He knew that his works were as filthy rags in the sight of God. He knew that if justice was meted out without the mercy of God, that his doom would be everlasting destruction from the presence of God.

We can also see the work of faith in the Publican. Despair did not swallow him. He may have been on the banks of it, but he was delivered from it. There was something that caused him to pray to God. Before he could do this, the trust in God was put in his heart. He

was made to believe that God is a merciful God. He was given faith to look to the blood of Jesus which would take away his sins. The blood of Jesus speaks better things than the blood of Abel." (see Hebrews 12:24)

The Publican went to his house justified. One may wonder why. " - - -and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:37) How was there a coming to Jesus in the prayer of the Publican? Let us think of it this way: It is written: "Without shedding of blood there is no remission for sins." (see Hebrews 9:22) We read in one place that God will by no means clear the guilty." (see Numbers 14:18) I believe that this means that God does not clear the guilty without the satisfaction of justice. Jesus took care of this by giving his life for his people which did satisfy Divine Justice.

Therefore when one is given faith to pray to God for mercy, I certainly believe that he is given the same faith to look to the blood of Jesus. This blood shows forth the mercy of God in the face of Jesus Christ. We read in one place that the blood is the life. Jesus said, "I lay down my life for my sheep." (John 10:15) "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13)

The majority of the Children of Israel could not look beyond the types and shadows of the law. All the sacrifices and ceremonies under the old law, Levitical priesthood, etc. were all beautiful in its way. They were all pointing to Jesus who would make the acceptable offering which would take away sins. The blood of bulls, goats, etc. would never take away sins, but there was a continual remembrance of sins. (Hebrews 10:3) Let us think of the few who were given the faith to look beyond the type and given to view the substance. They knew they were guilty sinners, and were given faith to believe that God would prepare a sacrifice to redeem them from the curse of the law. They were looking forward to the coming of Jesus. Think of the shepherds who were led to see the new born babe. I am sure that their hearts leaped within them. When they went back to their country, they certainly had some wonderful news to tell to their friends.

Let us get back to the setting. Many followed Jesus because of the miracles. In other words, they went to satisfy their curiosity. Some went to spy on Jesus, and many tried to trick Jesus, but we note that he stopped their mouths by the beautiful truths that flowed out of his mouth.

There were a few who followed Jesus because they were drawn to him by this wonderful love. These were the afflicted and poor people, who followed Jesus because they loved Him. As we have tried to think of the feelings of these few people and the feelings of the publican, do you find something in common, dear reader? Do you feel to be poor and afflicted? Have you groaned under the weight of the law? Do you know anything about the curse of the law? Have you labored under the terrific weight of the law, and in doing so become weary and found that you were heavy laden? If so, do not the words of the text mean something special to you? ("Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.")

As we think of that rest, this Scripture comes to mind: "For he that is entered into his rest, he also has ceased from his own works, as God did from him." (Hebrews 4:10) This rest is Jesus. Jesus is telling you that Salvation does not rest upon your works. What a wonderful relief! As he speaks the word "come", then you come willingly. This is your only hope and salvation. Resting in Jesus is a wonderful rest, is it not?

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

Dear Brethren, Sisters and Friends in the Lord:

It is with a deep feeling of incompentency that I undertake to write to you, realizing that without divine inspiration my writings will be in vain.

"Though I speak with the tongue of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."

The apostle was letting it be known that if he had all faith and the gift of prophecy, and had not charity, he was nothing. Though he could move mountains, give his goods to feed the poor, or any other thing, and had not charity, it simply meant nothing. If one should do all the above named things, together with any others, without charity it would mean no more than attempting to approach the throne of God under the law. He compares this with sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal; which is an uncertain sound.

Though one may speak with the tongue of men and angels, and has not charity, he is nothing. So we see, there must be something else. That something is charity, or love. Until now, brethren, I have written but little about charity, except to show that our endeavors without charity, are null and void.

We might ask Paul, "What do you mean by charity?" The answer to that can be summed up in one word: Love. Charity is love in action to the end. It suffereth long, is kind, envieth not, doth not behave itself unseemly; together with all other righteous qualities. When an individual is exercised by charity, or love, he or she will do no vile to his brother or sister; but is kind and gentle in words and deeds to their brethren; or even to unbelievers.

Charity or love is the thing that brings the children of God together, bearing each others burdens. Charity is not unkind, and does not take advantage of the brethren. One who is moved by charity does not want to wound the feelings of his brother or sister. But, instead, it will cause him to love his brethren, and want to be with them, to sing, pray, preach, or to talk about the wonderful work of charity.

Long ago there were two women, each of which had a child. One mother while sleeping, overlaid her child, and it died. Being without charity, she claimed the other woman's child, until contention arose between the true mother and the other woman, to the degree that it was decided to divide the living child between them. When this was proposed, the true mother said, "No, give the child to her." Through this act the true mother not only demonstrated a mother's love for her child, but she was willing to sacrifice for it.

These are the marks of charity: kindness, meekness, and humbleness. This is Christ in us the hope of glory. I hope this give us a small glimpse of what charity is: May we abide in it.

Because of this love, we have an humble hope that at our passing from this life, we will have peace with God. Then we can look upon Him whom our souls love, to praise him forever in that world that shall have no end.

"Now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Much more could be said, but space will not permit.

Yours in hope,
(Elder) C. E. Turner

FROM ELDER H. M. CURRY IN 1901

Pleasant Plains, Illinois
January 1, 1901

Dear Brother Beebe:

I have just received and read the *Signs* for January 1, 1901. I believe I read it with more reverence for the truth, more thankfulness for the priv-

ilege, and more love, fellowship and sympathy for the editors, than ever before. For a number of years of my mortal pilgrimage, the *Signs* has filled a place in my life that no other paper could. If one should ask me why I love, patronize and uphold the *Signs,* I can give but one answer, and that is, because it suits me. It is in keeping with my experience, it agrees with the teaching of the Bible, and brings me into correspondence with the faithful in Christ throughout the land.

In looking back over the achievements of the century that has just closed, we see the progress that men have made in all the spheres of human thought and action. Progress in truth, and progress in error; progress in knowledge, and progress in ignorance; progress in virtue, and progress in vice. Above all, the nations have progressed in avarice, greed, and the spirit of conquest. The progress in religion has been signal but alarming. All creeds and professions have openly departed from their ancient steadfastness, they have all caught the delusive idea of progress. The Mohammedan of today is not the Mohammedan of one hundred years ago, but worst of all is, he is no improvement on his brethren in the past. He is a Mussulman in name only, and cares nothing at heart for the faith in God's decrees that once pervaded Arabia as the very soul and spirit of the religion of Arabia's prophet.

The Jew of today is entirely different in his faith from the Jew of one hundred years ago; his Sabbaths are a dead tradition, his sacrifices a conscious burden, his feasts are perpetuated through fear of reproach, if he should abandon them. The Catholic hierarchy, which has long been looked upon as the most impregnable font of conservatism, is giving away to the pressure, and is beginning to swerve from her ancient steadfastness. The Episcopalians have long since denied their thirty-nine articles of religion, especially the seventeenth, which treats of predestination. The Presbyterians have at last agreed to expunge from their confession of faith the doctrine of God's decrees, which has long since departed from their hearts and consciences, and disappeared from their pulpits and theological schools.

All the departures mentioned, and many that are not mentioned, are moved by the same cause, and are tending in the same direction. But what pains me most is that in the midst of all this, many Old Baptists show a disposition to go with all the rest. The first step in this direction is to find fault with God's decrees, to begin to oppose predestination, to find fault with salvation by grace, and to desire to substitute free agency, conditions and works, for the efficacious and soverign grace of God in his daily care of his people. Every moment God waters his vineyard, lest any touch or harm it. Where is there any time or any opportunity for any agency under heaven to get in between God's momentary waterings, to bring a blessing to one of God's poor that was not given in Christ according to God's choice before the world began? God is the sole dispenser of his grace, both for time and eternity. Christ is the servant of his people. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister; the elder shall serve the younger, is the keynote of the gospel of Christ; Christ is our elder Brother, and he serves us. When I look back over the way which I have come, I must confess that the Lord alone did lead me. When I first felt the movement of sin within me, it was Christ that moved in my heart. I knew no place to go but to my own works. I found no relief there; all was failure. I reached the end of my strength; I saw an end of perfection. I knew nothing more, and without God's almighty grace there I must have remained; but he brought salvation, unexpected salvation, unmerited salvation, a salvation unknown and incomprehensible to me: salvation by Christ.

When I afterwards in my ignorance

wondered in doubt and unbelief, and in false doctrine, he still kept me, guided me and preserved me; bless his holy name. When I, ignorantly, joined a false church, he still guided and blessed, and led and taught me, and when the time came for me to hear the proclamation of his truth, the way was open, the preacher there, and I was there; he preached and my heart received it, and rejoiced. God led me out of Babylon, against all opposition; he removed all obstacles; he united me in heart and soul with his people, and then gave me a place among them in church membership. And ever since, in all my troubles, in all my sorrows, in all my confusions, he has comforted me, he has borne me and carried me, and has dispelled my confusions, and established my goings. These things confirmed of the holy Scriptures, have established me in the doctrine advocated by the *Signs,* which is the doctrine of God our Saviour. I am glad that I have company in my pilgrimage in the doctrine of God. In the midst of all departures, God has always reserved to himself a remnant according to the election of grace. This was so in former times, and it is so now. My only hope that any shall continue steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine, is in God's election. Let the heathen rage, and the people continue to imagine vain things, the God of heaven rules, and his church is his peculiar care. The church is dead, and her life is hid with Christ in God. Even when we were dead in sins, our life was hid with Christ in God; before Adam was created, our life was there. The sin of the first man did not reach that life, and never can reach it. "Sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called."

Thus the record stands; thus the record stood when we were dead in sins; thus the record stood from the ages eternal, and thus it forever shall stand. We were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and this is God's purpose of election, and must stand. This purpose stood in the case of Abel, it stood in the case of Isaac, Jacob, the prophets, and millions in every nation, kindred, tongue and people. All things are ordered to this end; nothing has ever taken place in heaven or in earth but what was ordered, that this purpose of election might stand. The subtility of Satan, the transgression of Adam, the treachery of Judas, the blindness and hardness of pharisees, the inveterate malignity of Jewish priests and scribes, the opposition of Gentile rulers, were all embraced in this eternal purpose, and ordered, restricted and disposed so that nothing of them has been done but what God's hand and God's counsel determined before to be done. I know that men hate this truth; they also hate the author of it, and of course hate those that hold it. They do not want to grant the potter power over the clay to make of the same lump one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. They would rather have God make the vessel to honor, and then the vessel make itself to dishonor. But how can a vessel be any other than the potter makes it? To deny that God makes vessels both to honor and to dishonor, is to reply against him, and this seems to be the chief business of man. The world is full of men and women professing to be lovers and worshipers of God, whose every effort and entire lives are spent in replying against him.

In the midst of all the confusion, vain jangling and desperate opposition to the truth, there are some who still declare it; some who cannot turn away from it, because it abides in them; it is written in their hearts; it is imprinted in their minds; it is burned into their consciences; it is a fire in their bones; it is a voice upon their lips, and it finds a vent; it makes an utterance; its proclamation is perpetuated. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that proclaims it; how gracious are the lips of him who speaks it; how blessed are the ears of him

who hears it!

For my part I cannot go with nineteenth century religion, nor with twentieth century religion. Nothing will answer my case but Christ — Christ in doctrine, Christ in order, Christ in joy, Christ in sorrow, Christ in light, Christ in darkness, Christ at all times and under all circumstances. His obedience must be made my obedience, his righteousness must be my righteousness, he is my life; all my springs are in him, all my hope, all my comfort, all my salvation for time and for eternity, centers in him. If he is all this to me, how can I preach anything short of this to others? A repentance that is not wrought by him, is no more than a sorrow of the world that worketh death; a hope that he is not the substance of, is vain, and shall end in disappointment; a faith that he is not the author and finisher of, is a dead faith, and is destitute both of the substance of hope, and the evidence of things not seen; a righteousness that is not in him, is filthy rags; an obedience that he is not the soul and spirit of, is mockery and delusion; and works that he does not work in a man, are the works of unbelief, darkness and presumption; a wisdom that is not comprehended in him is the wisdom of the world, and is foolishness with God: it is carnal, sensual and devilish; any fruits that are not produced by his life in us, are not the fruits of the Spirit, but are artificial, vain and deceptive; a sermon that he is not the Alpha and Omega of, is false, delusive and destructive.

This is my New Year greeting to all those who know and love the truth, those who are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, to the pilgrims and strangers in this world who have here no abiding city. Go on in the name and love and strength of Israel's God; go on in the power of his might, in the strength of his Spirit, fearing not man whose breath is in his nostrils; go on in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace; put on the whole armour of God; go on in the fellowship which is with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ; go on in the faith and order of the gospel; go on, looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of your faith.

To those whose lot it is to preach the word, I would say, Stand upon the walls of Zion; stand in the gaps, and remember that "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain." "Study to shew yourselves approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." "Preach the word, . . . reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine." "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves." Your inheritance in this world is tribulation, but your heritage in Jesus is peace.

And now, Brother Beebe and Brother Chick, may the Lord bless you both. He has blessed you and sustained you in the work whereunto he has called you. He has made you a blessing to many; you have both been a blessing to me, and I desire here to confess it.

May God sustain the *Signs* and all his faithful servants.

H. M. Curry

UPPER COUNTRY LINE CIRCULAR LETTER 1966

The Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association, convening with Moon's Creek Church at Cobb Memorial School, Caswell County, N. C., July 16, 17 and 18, 1966, wishes to extend Christian greeting to our corresponding brethren, churches and associations. We believe that only our Heavenly Father has given us this mutual fellowship in this unfriendly and weary land below; for which we hope to be thankful.

Since the year 1790 it has been the practice of the Baptist association then, and the Primitive Baptist Association now, to write a Circular Letter to be in-

serted as a part of the association minutes, to be circulated to the people with whom we correspond.

May the Lord endow us with spiritual understanding and application of Joshua's farewell address to his people Israel in our lives while we walk in this percarious and troubled world below. After the Lord had given rest to his people Israel from all their enemies, Joshua was stricken in age and waxed old. Knowing that he must go the way of all the earth, he called the elders, head and judges, telling them how God had delivered them from all the nations, and from every hostile foe which they had met. Could the Elders passed and gone speak, this no doubt would be their address to us today. In the future, should it be the Lord's will and the world stand, His witnesses shall be declaring the same: that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established, removing not the ancient landmarks.

Joshua told them to be courageous and to turn not aside to the right hand or to the left; he told them not to go among the nations whom God had delivered them from, or to make mention of their god's: neither to serve them or bow themselves to them, but to cleave unto the Lord, for it is God who fighteth for you. Knowing therefore that his death was at hand, he said, Ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing has failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spoke concerning you. All these things are now come to pass unto you, and not one thing has failed. We feel that God has not failed this association, but has gone before, led and preserved it for over 160 years, when it was known as the Country Line Association: being its Great Moderator, to the mutual comfort of Zion, and to his own glory. May He continue to guide us in the way of all righteousness.

Not only did Joshua tell of the good things, but to take heed unto ourselves that we love the Lord our God or else we will cleave to the nations and make marriage with them. He said to know for a certainty that your God will no more drive out any of these nations, but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish all from the good land which he promised, and has given you.

I humbly submit the above to be amended, rejected, or approved by your body. Written by one who hopes God has made him a part of you in this good land.

Yours in sweet fellowship,
Donald E. Smith

LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The **Lexington-Roxbury Association** will convene, the Lord willing, on Thursday and Friday, September 8 and 9, 1966, with the church at Holcottville, N. Y. Entertainment will be at the same place as last year, the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Shultis, Kelly Corners, N. Y.

Those coming on Wednesday afternoon take the Denver Road at Kelly Corners, then take the first left hand road to the third house, called Windy Acres. If you are coming on Wednesday please notify Mr. Shultis, Kelly Corners, N. Y., a few days ahead. Brethren and friends are invited.

A. J. Slauson, Moderator

VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING

The **Virginia Corresponding Meeting** will be held, the Lord willing, at the Mt. Zion Meeting House on Wednesday and Thursday, October 12 and 13, 1966; to begin at 10:30 standard time.

The meeting house is located on Rt. 50 about one mile east of Gilbert's Corner. A cordial invitation is extended to our brethren and friends to meet with us.

Leslie D. Duke, Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The 1966 session of the **South Ouachita Association** will convene at Liberty Hill Church on the 4th Sunday in September and beginning on Friday before. The Church is located about six miles northeast of Farmerville, La. and one-fourth mile east of the Farmerville-

Marion Highway.

Lovers of the truth are welcome.

W. W. Hudson, Jr., Clerk
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

CONECUH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The **Conecuh River Primitive Baptist Association** will hold its 139th annual session at Elam Church, two miles north of Goshen, Pike County, Alabama, the second Sunday in October, and Friday and Saturday before. Pike County is in southeast Alabama, and the County Seat and the largest town is Troy.

Brethren and friends of our faith and order are welcome.

A. C. Carter, Clerk

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **Seven Mile Primitive Baptist Association** is to be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Reedy Prong Meeting House, Johnston County, N. C. September 16, 17, 18, 1966.

The meeting house is located about twelve miles east of Dunn, N. C., and about five miles west of Newton Grove, just off Highway 55.

We greatly desire that our brethren and friends meet with us.

W. D. Godwin, Clerk
Rt. 1, Box 98
Wade, N. C. 28395

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To July 1, 1966)

Mrs. S. E. Goard, Va.	$ 1.00
Paul Morton, N. C.	5.00
Mrs. J. M. Carmack, La.	2.00
Mrs. Lillian Holt, Va.	5.00
Andy D. Hall, Oreg.	10.00
Mrs. James F. Thompson, N. C.	2.00
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Danville, Virginia **September, 1966**

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EDITORIAL

ISAIAH 48: 10

"I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction."

In all of God's dealings with Israel he has manifested that he has a sovereign choice, which is not influenced by the thoughts or mind of man, but is definite according to a purpose fixed and settled before the foundation of the world. He is of one mind, so much so that none can turn him. Balak would have Israel cursed, and that if he could by a prophet of God; but to the confusion of Balak, Balaam blessed and said, How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed?" When God chose Abram it was not that he was good, and when Israel looked back to that choice she confessed, "A Syrian ready to perish was my father." When

he chose Moses to lead his people Israel, Moses said, "Who am I?" and confessed that he was slow of speech and of a slow tongue, yet God said, "Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or seeing, or the blind? Have not I the Lord?" When God would make David king he sent Samuel to anoint the one that he would name unto him. When Samuel looked on Eliab he said, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before him. But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." In the end David, the youngest, was brought from among the sheep, and was manifested by the word of the Lord as his chosen. God's people are called "a chosen generation," chosen before the foundation of the world, embraced in the promise made unto Abram when God told him that in him and in his seed, meaning Christ, shall all the families of the earth be blessed. When Abram would have more assurance of the promise God had given him we find an horror of great darkness fell upon him, and God said his seed should be a stranger in a strange land, and should be afflicted for a definite time. Thus Israel of old was to be an afflicted people. "I will also leave in the mist of thee an afflicted and poor people." Afflicted, yet beloved of God, so much so that "he reproved kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." God was to Israel a wall of fire round about her and the glory in the mist of her. There were certain characteristics seen in Israel of old. She was in Egypt, yet she could not learn their language. Egypt is spoken of as a people of a strange language, also an Israelite was an abomination to an Egyptian, nor would the Egyptians and Israelites eat together. Again, "Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations." Just as Israel of old had characteristics peculiar to her, so it is with Israel to-day, and it is our intention to write of some of the marks of the children of God, particularly of their trials during their pilgrimage through this wilderness world. The Lord has a purpose, or end, in all afflictions. James says, "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." From the moment that God the Holy Ghost begins the work of grace in the soul there is a bringing judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet, and a sweeping away of the refuges of lies. Perhaps the most deceptive refuge of lies is self-righteousness. Many of God's dear saints will cling to that and find refuge in it. Righteous self is as obnoxious unto God as sinful self, yet how many there are while professing a pronounced hatred to sinful self, view with pleasure what seems to be an inprovement in self. Being stripped of all fancied goodness is a very painful process, hard to be endured, for, like Job, one will cry, "My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go," but as Job, all of God's chosen will will come to the place where they confess, "Behold I am vile," and, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." There cannot be a true worship in the kingdom of heaven unless it be in a life from the dead, for "the body is dead because of sin," and it is in and from this very state that life, in a cry, a sigh or a groan, is manifest. "Fools, because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted: their soul abhorreth all manner of meat; and they draw near unto the gates of death." This death is that which fills a heavenborn soul with wretchedness and woe, and this is one of the marks, yes, and the most precious of marks, of God's dear saints. The worldly religionists have no bands in their death, their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men are, neither are they afflicted. They have more than heart can wish. Not so the children of God, for sin is mixed with all they do.

"A daily cross, a stubborn will,
A heart replete with every ill,
Afflictions prone from God to go

Are bounds that only Israel know."

Others can worship God when they please, but with God's children it is,

"Trials give new life to prayer,
Trials bring them to his feet."

Sometimes it is the thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, darkness of mind, temptations and evils too numerous to mention, that will bring them to the place of prayer. Generally the great besetting sin is unbelief. An evil heart of unbelief; oh, what a plaque this is to many of us! Though the Lord has smiled upon us and given us the joys of those that fear him, yet we will hearken to Satan's lies rather than to what the Lord has spoken. Yes, and the very goodness of God in bestowing upon us his unmerited grace will be lost sight of, and if he bless us with prosperity, so that for awhile everything runs smoothly, we manifest our ungodly inclinations, and would but for grace sink into perdition. In his grace meted out to us there are trials, crosses, losses, yea, in the words of our text, a "furnace of affliction," and the chosen of God are manifest in and by their afflictions. Not but what the world and worldlings have their trials and troubles, but afflictions of God's saints yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness in those who are exercised thereby. John Newton, writing to a friend, said, "If you should ask me what is the clearest proof of a person being a christian, I should have to say, the one who is saying, 'When I would do good, evil is present with me,' and 'How to perform that which is good I find not,'" and so we believe, for on our heavenly Joseph and all his offspring there is a cross-handed blessing. There is no comfort or help, experimentally to us, but what finds its beginning in tribulations. The word of God is like a fire, and when applied by the Spirit it will burn, and one's moisture is soon turned into the drought of summer. It will rebuke and condemn. "My son, dispise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." It has always been the lot of Israel to be an abomination to the worldling, professing and profane, neither can they eat together, for, "He would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him." What is life to the one, is death to the other . The furnace separates the dross from the gold, and under God's afflicting hand his children learn patience, which is manifest in their hoping for that which they see not. Thus tribulation works patience and patience experience. While passing through the trial it was hard, and the cross heavy, but our eyes having been opened to the wretchedness of our own heart, we could say, It is of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed. If the Lord seems to leave us to ourselves we seldom go far before we prove the heart to be deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and though we always dread affliction, yet at times we cry in bitterness of soul, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Thus there is not a flame of the furnace but has its work according to the wisdom of God, and works for good to his saints. The Lord has made no bargain with his people in this matter, and there is no way to escape the furnace or the chastisement. It is not conditional, for all are partakers. William Gadsby in a sermon preached at Manchester, England, November 1st., 1840, said, "Every principle that would make salvation conditional in man I hate as I do the devil, because God, in the riches of his grace, has brought me so solemnly to feel that it is all a rich precious teeming out of the love of God."

G. R.

(The above was an editorial by Elder Ruston of April 1, 1924. We re-publish it in the absence of a current writing, and feel that all will find it experimental, and therefore comforting and edifying. -J. D. W.)

EDITORIAL

We are quite aware that the faith or doctrine of the Lord's people is entirely unlike anything held and believed by other people. But we are not moved by this, for it is as it should be, else there would be nothing but human wisdom and ability advocated; and the truth as it is in Jesus would not be heard anywhere in the land.

By the Lord's people we mean, of course, those who are taught of the Lord in every nation, kindred, tongue, or denomination: the religious world, other than these, is holding to doctrines based upon human wisdom and philosophies of men. Against this the Apostle warned: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (Colossians 2 : 8,9.)

To make such a statement, and to hold to the truth, is not bigotry: it is not holding blindly and stubbornly to a conviction without abundant reason for doing so. Nor do these ever feel they should be against the right of anyone to have his personal views and opinions; but they do steadfastly hold to those things which are "spelled out" in the Scriptures, as given by inspiration, and therefore revelations from God himself. They firmly believe the Scriptures to be the record of God's way and manner of dealing with his human family; and that they are the complete and full record. The Apostle wrote to Timothy, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."

Further, these hold that for one to know and believe the truth of the Scriptures, (which are the constitution and by-laws of the church in the world,) he must be born of God - born of the water and of the Spirit: he must have the revelation of the Son of God in himself, or it is impossible for him to know that the Scriptures are of God. If he does not have this experience, he can have no firm assurance that they are. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." (1 John 5 : 10)

Those who believe these things do not attempt to prove them by appealing to the intellects, or the reasoning of men. They know from their own experience that these are things which men by searching cannot find out; that they are things which belong to the kingdom of God, rather than the kingdom of the world;and that they are things therefore above and beyond the comprehension and acceptance of those who have only the "spirit of man" in themselves.

So it is that, when they write or preach the things embodied in the Scriptures, they do not attempt to persuade men to believe what they well know men cannot believe of themselves; they do not endeavor to fill the churches with members, by compassing land and sea to make proselytes. They leave this where it rightly is: in the power and keeping of God, to apply it where he will apply it. They are content, by God's mercies, to feed and edify those who have had the necessary work of God wrought in them; in which it is apparent that they were chosen by the Father in his Son before the world began, and that they are citizens of the world by nature, yet citizens of the kingdom of God experimentally and manifestly.

These are not so unstable that they will admit additions to the scriptural text to be proper, as if the inspiration of God left it incomplete. Neither can they approve interpretations of scriptures which are not consistent with the scriptures themselves; nor the omission of anything to make them acceptable to men, for to do so, is degrading to the power, honor, and glory of God, which they will not be a part of. They know that the Scriptures are in full and complete accord with those things revealed in them when they were brought out of

darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God: when God shined in their hearts to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of his Son. And they know that things added by men either in doctrine or forms, are things not revealed by the Spirit: so they simply will not have anything to do with them.

In this brief article we only intend to show the fundamental differences in the two religions in the world. (There are in reality only two: the doctrine of God, and the doctrine of others; truth and error; right and wrong.) One relies alone upon the teaching of the Scriptures for all doctrine, and everything else necessary for the Church while in her time state; while the other confessedly relies upon the Scriptures, but finding some "things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest . . . unto their own destruction," they are happy and content to explain them according to what appears right to them; but, according to John in his second Epistle, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of God, hath not God." But, "He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."

We are aware, of course, that there are many people who have religious beliefs which are not based upon the Scriptures at all. Concerning these, and the ones mentioned above, we would not be critical, but must include them all together, and merely point out the fact that both are operating contrary to gospel teaching. We feel that we would not be faithful to our God and our calling, if we did not declare these things; that there is only one gospel of Christ, and that, "His is the only name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." And that salvation is not just a matter of holding to some religious belief, or preforming some rites, or living a life of the highest morality in the nature of men; but rather in being sealed with the holy spirit of promise, the earnest of one's inheritance, all, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

The doctrine of God our Saviour comprises the truth that salvation is by His grace alone, and not by works of the creature: grace from first to last, - from the beginning to the ending in glory. Those who know this, are confident "That he that has begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." All other doctrines, (including the wrong interpertations of the Scriptures,) we must say, are based upon what the creature does, rather than what is done for him. This is not condoned in the gospel, since men clearly do not have any ability to make the least atonement for their sins; and it is contrary to the express statements of Jesus, and the other writers.

Did we not know our own self, we would find it beyond our understanding how that multitudes confess the name and work of Jesus, yet do not believe and practice half of what he taught. Solomon certainly was right when he wrote, "Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honor." (Eccl. 10:1)

To have the eyes of his understanding opened to know what is the hope of his calling, and what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, is the greatest blessing a mortal man can receive in this life. (see Ephesians 1:18-20) The immutable things of God give strong consolation to those who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them: and they have this hope as the anchor of their souls, sure and steadfast; and

which enters into that within the veil where their forerunner has entered. (see Hebrews 6: 18-20) What a blessing it is to have this anchor!

When the grace of God appears and manifests salvation to a poor sinner, he is taught something: "That denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, he should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ: who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus 2:12-14)

As these things are manifested in the lives of men and woman, there is evidence of the grace of God in them; without which, all their professions will not make it so.

Paul also wrote Titus, "These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee."

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ROMANS 8 : 20

Brother Beebe:—Should you feel at liberty, I would like to have you preach me a sermon on Romans 8 : 20: "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope."

Affectionately,
S. G. SUPPLEE

Gustavus, Ohio, Jan. 21, 1879.

REPLY.

In this eighth chapter as well as in those preceding it, we understand the apostle to define the two opposing elements which are developed in every heaven-born subject of saving grace while here in the flesh, one of which he calls **flesh**, and the other **spirit.** Of these two elements, this same apostle writes to the Galatians, saying, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." —Gal. 5 : 16, 17. There are not only two distinct elements, but so distinct and hostile to each other as to disable the child of God to do the things that he would. "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law (or ruling power) in my members (members of the outward or fleshly man) warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."—Rom.7 : 19, 21-23.

Now Paul had been born again; but this law of sin, which would not allow him to do that which is good, and which he desired to do, was not born of God, for he possessed it before he was born of the Spirit. This law of sin in his members was with his members born of the flesh, and pertained to the flesh. If we walk after the Spirit, the new or inward man, we shall not fullfill the lust of the flesh. The fleshly nature of the children of God can no more bring forth good fruit, than the new man, which is born of incorruptible seed, can bring forth corrupt fruit. The flesh and the spirit of life in the saints differ as widely in their nature, parentage and vital relationship, as in their opposite, belligerent and contending propensities. The one is of the old, fleshly birth, the other is of the new and spiritual birth; the one is born of the flesh, the other is born of the Spirit: the one is human, the other is divine; the one of man, the other of God. The element in the christian which is of the flesh, can only produce the works of the flesh,which are summed up by our apostle thus: "Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like." But the fruit of the Spirit in them which are born of God is

"love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."—Galatians 5 : 19-23. "Whosoever (therefore) is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."—1 John 3 : 9. "Whosoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."—1 John 5 : 4. And this faith is one of the fruits of the Spirit, which cannot proceed from the flesh; and yet, in its absence, no man can please God. With these preliminary remarks, we proceed to consider the text proposed for investigation.

"For the creature was made subject to vanity." There has been much discussion in regard to the identity of the creature here spoken of. Some have supposed that the apostle was speaking of the natural or old man, and others that he intended the spiritual or new man; but by a careful attention to the connection, we think it will be seen that the apostle has drawn the line of distinction between creatureship, as pertaining to the flesh, and sonship, as pertaining to that which is born of God. The simple meaning of the word **creature,** no more expresses vital relationship to God in this case, than it does when applied to anything animate or inanimate which God has created. We are aware that this apostle has said, "If any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature; old things are passed away: behold all things are become new," see—2 Cor. 5 : 17. But this is said in connection with the declararation, that if one died for all, then are we all dead, crucified with Christ, buried with him by baptism into death, and risen with him in newness of life. It therefore is spoken of what they were as **creatures** in the flesh, who being dead with Christ, and risen with him, are to be known no more in the flesh; but being quickened together with Christ, we are raised up with him from our old, fleshly relations to the law, are now created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, (all his people, who had sinned in the flesh,) then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." Therefore on this account, and in this sense, as we know him no more in the flesh, so also we only know his redeemed members as risen with him from the dead, in the newness of the spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. But in the fifth of Galatians, and the seventh and eighth of Romans, he is speaking of the two natures or elements which are sensibly felt and experimentally realized in everyone who has been born of the flesh, and then born again, of the Spirit. Our Savior has himself settled the point beyond all controversy, that "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." We can hardly believe that any intelligent, careful reader of the word will fail to understand that all the fleshly nature of mankind was **created** in the Adam who was made of the dust of the ground; and all of the divine nature of which the saints are made partakers in Christ Jesus, the second Adam, who was not a creature or a created being, but the begotten Son of the eternal God, are decendants from him as their heavenly parent in that spirit which they receive by birth, and not by creation, in the common acceptation of the word. The creature then which was made subject to vanity is the creature that the apostle says in the immediate connection of our text is still held in the bondage of corruption, and shall hereafter be delivered, and changed from creatureship to sonship, at the redemption of our body. For this change the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth, even for the manifestation of the sons of God or for mortality to be swallowed up of life,

for deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. That which is born of incorruptible seed cannot be held in a bondage of corruption; but every saint while here in the flesh knows that the bondage of corruption is that which pertains to our carnal or fleshly nature, which is born of corruptible seed. They can all, like Job, say unto corruption, "Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister,"—Job 17: 14. But the spirit which is born of God cannot say its father is corruption, for its Father is God: or its mother is a worm, because it is born of incorruptible seed, by the Word Of God, which liveth and abideth forever, for it is born of him whose flesh saw no corruption.

The word vanity in our text we think is used synonymously and interchangeably with the words in the connection, corruption, mortality, the suffering of the present time, which we are made subject to, and which the creature or created element in us shall be delivered from when this mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and death is swallowed up of life.

According to the words of the wiseman, all terrestrial things are vanity. He says, "I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith. I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit."—Eccl. 1 : 13, 14. Until we can find an interpreter more wise and reliable than Solomon,we must accept this difinition of the word vanity. The creature man, when made of the dust of the ground, was made subject to vanity; for if he had not been made subject to it, he would have been proof against it, in which case he could never have been involved in it. This vanity, which the apostle is speaking of, is a vanity which involves the whole creation, and not the saints only. Paul speaks of it as "the bondage of corruption," from which the saints shall be delivered in the change that awaits them at their adoption, to wit, the redemption of their body. This vanity is common to all our race, whether saints or otherwise; for the apostle says, "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit." The first fruits of the Spirit which we have any knowledge of is the manifestation in us of that spiritual life which is born of the Spirit, as the development of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God. We who have received this first fruit by the birth, and in whom dwells the Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead, have the assurance of its ultimate fruit in quickening our mortal bodies in like manner; and until this quickening Spirit shall accomplish the resurrection of our mortal bodies, we also groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption. The spirit of adoption we have already received as the first fruits, and certain assurance of its further fruits in our finial resurrection, and the full adoption of our spiritual bodies,changed and made like Christ's glorious body.

The vanity entailed to us as creatures, is involuntary: it is not received willingly, or the whole creation would not groan under its ponderous weight. We are not willingly subject to it until the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bond of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. This change with the saints will be from creatureship, so far as our flesh is considered, to sonship, from bondage to liberty, from groaning to rejoicing, from vanity to that which is substantial, from burden to rest, from depravity to immaculate purity, from death to life. For, if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; and now, like Panl, you inquire, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But in the consummation of the adoption, these vile bodies shall be changed from vileness and vanity, and made like Christ's glorious body.

This vanity, which now makes even those who have the first fruits of the Spirit groan, is subjected in hope by him who has lead captivity captive, who has triumphed over death and the grave, and who has begotten us again to a lively hope by his resurrection from the dead, to an inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, because it is reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. The apostle continues, "For we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth; why doth he yet hope for?" "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." "But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."

And while here we wait and groan and long for deliverance from the vanity of earthly state, we are in fellowship with the sufferings which Jesus endured in the flesh to bring us to God, and to subject our vanity in hope.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, May 1, 1979.)

GENESIS 9 : 27

The will of God concerning the world and its people is revealed in the events that occur from day to day in its history. History is a record of past events. Prophecy, however, dares more than history, and looks into the unrevealed future, declaring what is yet to be brought forth from the womb of time. Noah's words quoted above are prophecy, and are an instance of God's method of communicating with the fathers of old by the prophets, and not by his Son, as now. (See Hebrews i. 1, 2.) This one bit of prophecy is fraught with deep significance; it contains the key to much of the world's history, but much more, it contains the secret to the history of the visibility of the church of Christ. I hope we may be able to obtain a glimpse of both meanings of the text.

Noah does not deserve any credit for unusual sagacity and foresight, for his saying is the fruit of faith. Noah did not understand what he was talking about any more than the people of the Lord in this day understand fully their own thoughts and emotions when under the exercise of this same faith. Noah was warned of God of things not seen as yet, and moved by fear built an ark to the saving of his house. How was Noah warned of God? By faith, that mighty principle which has moved the people of God aright in all ages of the world. Faith is the magnetic needle of the soul's compass which points always to the same star—the Star of Bethlehem, and will not let us go wrong. Noah could not warn others of the coming disaster, because none had this faith, and the things of God are revealed "from faith to faith," and not from faith to **no** faith, assertions to the contrary notwithstanding. The lessons taught in all these faithful sayings of old, instead of being wasted upon the world of that day, were reserved for us unto whom the better things of the gospel are come.

Certain circumstances surrounded the utterance of this prophecy quoted at the beginning. Noah was drunk with wine, and lay naked in his disgrace. His son Ham discovered him in this condition and exposed it to the two other sons, Shem and Japheth, who, instead of gloating over the incident, spread a garment over their father with their faces turned away. Upon awaking, Noah, aware of Ham's treachery and of the faithfulness of Shem and Japheth, cursed the offspring of the one but blessed the others. The blessings are promises unto us. So is God's will made known. He makes use of wicked things and base to further his purpose concerning his elect. Who dare question the predestination of God in these things, or who, acknowledging his predestination, dare lay the charge of guilt before his throne? These circumstances which accompanied the utterance of this truth by the lips of Noah furnished an unworthy setting for so precious a stone. Truth is a gem often found in the most unlikely

places, and in settings unworthy of it, yet devoid of its habitation its brilliancy would not appear so wonderful nor its rarity be appreciated.

Shem was the forefather of Terah, the father of Abram, whose name was afterward changed to Abraham, who was the father of Isaac, the father of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel, from whom sprang that nation of old so singularly favored of the Lord above all nations of the earth. Japheth had seven sons, whose posterity divided the "Isles of the Gentiles," every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations. From Noah sprang both Jew and Gentile. Japheth, the father of the Gentiles, was to be enlarged by the Lord, and should come to "dwell in the tents of Shem," meaning that his posterity should so increase in power and influence as to gain the ascendancy over the sons of Shem, and dwell in their dwelling-places. For many centuries the Jews were the ruling power in Jerusalam and the "land of Canaan," but finally passed under the government of Rome, and were gradually borne down under the yoke until their national identity became lost, about 70 A. D., when the temple at Jerusalam was destroyed by the Roman army and many of the Jews were put to the sword, resulting in the massacre and banishment of hundreds of thousands of the unhappy people who were scattered among their brethren in all parts of the world. Josephus estimates the total number slain to have been no less than 1,356,460. This is the **historical** fulfillment of Noah's prophecy concerning Japheth. This is also the "abomination that maketh desolate," spoken of in Daniel 12 : 11. It is also the fulfillment of the prophecy in Hosea 1 : 4: "I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel." Jezreel, meaning "God's seed," prefigures Christ the only begotten Son of God. Historically speaking, the widespread desolation that came upon the Jewish nation in the year 70 was the awful vengeance of God upon that people for the crucifixion of Christ.

Now with the help of God's Spirit to give us understanding let us turn from the external to the internal or spiritual meaning of the text. Note the language, "tents of Shem," not land of Shem. Quite a decided difference. Not only was the seed of Japheth to possess the land of Shem, but the home of the Israelite was to be the home of the Gentile; he was to have the same roof for a covering, and be protected by the same wall. Israel dwelt beneath the wings of the Almighty. God was his covering and his wall of salvation. He was eyes unto Israel and a strong arm. Who was it that for Israel's sake caused the Red Sea to become a way of escape from the bondage of Egypt? Who was it satisfied their thirst with water from the smitten rock, and who sent manna from heaven in time of great hunger? Even the Lord God Omnipotent did all this, and more, for his mercies unto that rebellious people are beyond recounting. This same God gave them by the mouth of his prophets many sweet and precious promises whose fulfillment was treasured in the Savior to be revealed. But the Israelites blundered, they based their right to the promises upon endless genealogies, establishing their lineal descent from Abraham. That they were altogether wrong in so doing is clear from the words of John the Baptist to them, as recorded in Matthew 3 : 9: "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our Father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." We have also the direct words of Christ concerning this matter in his address to the Jews, as recorded in John 10 : 26: "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." Now as to who are the heirs of the promise, ask the great apostle to the Gentiles and he will tell you: "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Since we are Gentiles, my brethren, we have great reason to thank God that our right to the promise does not depend upon our being able to trace our descent

from Abraham, for we could never do that, being descended from Japheth, and not from Shem. The whole thing depends upon the election of God in Christ before the foundation of the world. If we are included in that election, then are we heirs; if we are not so elected, then all the genealogies in the world will not make us heirs. Christ did not permit his desciples to bear this news unto the Gentiles until after his death, but sent them only unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Afer his resurrection, however, he sent them on the great apostolic mission: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." "All the world," meaning Gentiles as well as Jews. By the way, permit me to say that this mission was finished prior to 63 A. D., when Paul, while a prisoner in Rome, wrote his letter to the brethren of Colosse, in which he said that the word of the truth of the gospel had come unto them as it had "in all the world." So now it is clear that God no longer gives unto the Jew his peculiar care and providence, but has brought the Gentile to trust in him also. Thus Japheth dwells in the tents of Shem. The election of God in Christ includes both Jew and Gentile, all whom the Holy Ghost has circumcised in heart, for the circumcision of the flesh avails nothing.

"God shall enlarge Japheth." "Enlarge," according to the marginal reading, means to persuade or convince. This convincing is the work of the Spirit in the heart of the sinner, whether Jew or Gentile, and brings him to dwell beneath the love and mercy of an all-wise God, to know his gracious providence disposes each event, and to trust in that everlasting arm which is able to save unto the uttermost, thanking his heavenly Father through Jesus Christ our Lord that he has redeemed his soul from destruction and keeps his feet from falling.

HORACE H. LEFFERTS

(Written by Elder Lefferts August 10, 1904, while living in Philadelphia - J. D. W.)

ORDINATION OF BROTHER DONALD ALEXANDER McCOLL

THE COVENANTED BAPTIST CHURCH
Meeting at Ekfrid, Ontario, June 26, 1966

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to certify that DONALD ALEXANDER McCOLL, a member of this Church, was ordained to the full work of the Gospel Ministry on June 26, 1966. The proceedings of council ordaining him were as per copy of the minutes below.

THE COVENANTED BAPTIST CHURCH
Deacon Eldon Gilbert, Church Clerk
Elder George Ruston, Pastor

Minutes of council called by the Church at Ekfrid, Ontario, for the purpose of examining Brother D. Alex. McColl with a view to ordaining him to the full work of the Gospel Ministry.

The council convened at 10 A. M., June 26, 1966, in the Ekfrid Church. Order of service:

Prayer by Elder D. V. Spangler

Singing — Psalm 100

Preaching by Elder G. Ruston — Philippians 4:8

Elder Ruston was chosen Moderator and Brother Gilbert, Clerk.

Churches and ministers invited to meet and act with the Church responded as follows:

Elder D. V. Spangler and Sister Spangler, Danville, Virginia

Elder W. E. Turner, Scott's Church, North Carolina

The minutes of the Church meeting held May 8, 1966, at Dunwich Church, calling for the assembly of this council, was called for and read. It was then moved and seconded that the council proceed to examine the candidate. Before putting the question, the Moderator invited all members of sister churches of our faith and order to act with the council. Question put and carried unanimously. Brother McColl then related his experience as a subject of Grace and his exercises respecting the work of the ministry. The examination proving satisfactory, it was moved and seconded that the council proceed with the ordination. Carried unanimously. Ordination was then imposed by the laying on of hands by the ministers present, Elder Turner speaking in prayer. A solemn and impressive charge was delivered by Elder Spangler. The Moderator then, on behalf of the churches, gave the right hand of fellowship to Brother McColl.

The 121st Psalm was sung and the meeting closed with benediction by Elder D. Alex. McColl.

Elder George Ruston, Moderator
Deacon Eldon Gilbert, Council Clerk

OBITUARIES

SISTER IDA WARD

It has pleased our Heavenly Father in his infinite wisdom, love and mercy, to remove from our midst by death Sister Ida Ward — widow of William L. Ward, who died in 1958.

Sister Ward was a member of Gilliam's Primitive Baptist Church. Her survivors are: Mrs. Lexa Terrell and Mrs. John Younger, of Gibsonville, N. C.; Woodroe Ward, of Burlington; Frank C. and Albert L. Ward, of Gibsonville; and Boatsman 1stC Eddie Lee Ward, of the U. S. Coast Guard, Orlando, Fla. Surviving also are: one brother, Coley Cox, Rt. 3, Reidsville, N. C., and four half-brothers, George Cox, of Greensboro, Robert and Johnny Cox, of Ruffin, and Charley Cox, Rt. 1, Reidsville; and one half-sister, Nannie Gregory, of Greensboro; twenty-one grandchildren, and ten great grandchildren; and her step-mother, Mrs. Dora Dickerson.

Sister Ward was a good mother to her children, setting a good example before them; and she was loyal to her church, and attended meetings as long as she was able. We will miss Sister Ward very much, for she was a loving, humble person. The Lord gave and he has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord. Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we express our profound loss in her passing, and that we pray our Heavenly Father, who only can know our great loss, to reconcile us to his holy will. And

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we extend our sympathy to the family.

Done in church conference at the May meeting, 1966. Written by Brother L. J. Saunders.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Charles F. Somers, Clerk

MARTHA SUSAN SHELTON

Martha Susan Shelton was born March 21, 1897, called from this time world December 25, 1965, making her stay on earth 68 years and 9 months. She was the daughter of Robert Clark and Martha Turner Clark, and wife of the late James Aubrey Shelton. They were married 50 years and 8 months, and to this union were born 9 children.

She leaves to mourn: two sons: Melvin Shelton and Alvis Shelton, Route 2, Stuart, Va.; four daughters: Mrs. Toncie Stone, Bassett, Va.; Mrs. Gladys Martin, Collinsville, Va.; Mrs. Nick Martin and Mrs. Glenford Sigman, both of Route 2, Stuart, Va. Also, two brothers: Elder Flem Clark, Henry, Va.; and Grady Clark, Leaksville, N. C.; and two sisters: Mrs. Ralph Moss, Danville, Va.; Mrs. John Dollar, Lowell, N. C. Twenty grandchildren, three great grandchildren.

Sister Shelton joined Union Primitive Baptist Church, October 25, 1924, and was baptized the next day. She was afflicted before her husband died and it was necessary to remove one of her limbs. She was brought to his funeral in an ambulance. She bore her affliction with patience. I shall not forget her love and devotion to her family and church. Even in her last days she was brought to church in a wheel chair, but she wanted to fill her place in church; and most of the time she did. She was well cared for by her children and in-laws who made the necessary arrangements for her to go to church when she was able. One of the last words that she said, "I am ready," and her life and walk showed that she was. She believed in Salvation by Grace and Grace alone.

Her funeral was conducted at Union Church by her pastor, Elder Leonard Brammer, assisted by Elder R. A. May. Her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery, to await the coming of the Lord. May the Lord, who doeth all things well, reconcile the family and church to his will.

Written by her pastor,
Leonard J. Brammer

MRS. JANE JOHNSON WEST

In loving memory of our dear daughter, and niece, who passed away on November 25, 1965. We miss her but God saw fit to take her out of her suffering here on earth; as her health had been bad for several years.

She was born January 6, 1926, making her stay on earth 39 years, 10 months, 19 days. She was the daughter of Annie and H. Wesley Johnson. Her father passed away less than two weeks after her death. She leaves to mourn her passing, her husband, Wade West, her mother, four brothers, and five sisters. She leaves also many relatives and a host of friends.

She united with Hickory Grove Church on June 19, 1960, by experience and baptism.

She graduated from Four Oaks High School in 1944. She trained for a nurse in Washington for 2½ years; then went to Baltimore,

Md. for the last 6 months of training. She graduated from there in 1947. She came to the hospital in Smithfield, N. C., and she nursed there for 2 years. She then worked for Dr. E. H. Alderman for sometime. During this time she married Wade West, they made their home at 609 North General Lee Ave., Dunn, N. C. She worked at the Good Hope Hospital in Erwin, N. C. until her health would not permit. She was a true and faithful nurse always thinking of others and helping the sick. She did her suffering so patiently, never complaining.

Five sad months since you left us,
Whom we cherished and loved so dear,
Can we help from feeling lonely
When we know you are not here.

Surrounded by friends we are lonesome,
In the midst of pleasure we are blue,
A smile on our faces, still a heartache,
Aching and longing for you.

Home is so lonely for daughter's not here,
Death has taken her out of our care,
Dark is the room, empty her chair,
Home is not the same since you are not here.

There's a spot of ground
We cherish fond and true,
It's the grave dear daughter
That holds the blessed form of you.

In life we loved you dear daughter,
In death we do the same:
We will never cease to love you,
Until we meet again.

Sleep on dear one, your labor is over;
Your willing hands will toil no more,
A faithful daughter so loving and kind,
A more faithful one could never be found.

Sleep on dear one and take your rest,
We loved you dearly, but Jesus loved you best,
Upright and faithful in all her ways,
A beautiful character to the end of her days,
Always devoted good and kind,
What a wonderful memory left behind.

Done by order of Hickory Grove Church while in Conference.

Georgia Hill, Clerk
Written by Mother, Annie Johnson and
Aunt Leacy Beasley
Committee

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Resolution of Respect to Brother Cleveland Byrd, who was born July 29, 1887, and departed this life April 4, 1966. He was 78 years and 9 months of age. He gave his name to Liberty Church in 1955, to help organize the church, living a faithful and devoted member until his death. We feel our loss is his gain and we should not weep, as we would for those who have no hope. While the church misses Brother Byrd, his family misses him most.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, who makes no mistakes and doeth all things well. May God give grace to his family to say His will be done. May we extend our love and sympathy to each loved one, and that our prayers to God be that he will bless and comfort each one of you. A copy of this Resolution of Respect will be sent to the family, a copy put on our church records and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by the order of Liberty Church, Saturday before the first Sunday in May, 1966.

W. A. Tart
Liddie Tart
Eva S. Tadlock
Committee

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Brother Son Arthur Holmes was the son of the late Holland and Spicey Barefoot Holmes. He was born November 26, 1889, and died February 8, 1966; and was united in marriage to Lula Strickland in 1914, and to this union four children were born.

While in the hospital he united with Liberty Church in November, 1965, and was baptized in a bathtub. He said, "I've always been a Primitive Baptist — just born one, and couldn't help it." We say to the surviving wife and children, Ernest, Howard, Mrs. Clara Lee, and Mrs. Margaret McLamb, and also to all the loved ones, weep not as those who have no hope.

His funeral was at Banner's Chapel Church, conducted by his pastor, Elder Lester E. Lee, assisted by Mr. Atlas Blackman; and he was laid to rest in the church cemetery. May we be blessed to say, "Thy will be done, O Lord," for we hope to bow in humble submission to his holy will: always looking to him for mercy and guidance.

It was agreed that we send a copy of this Memorial to the family; one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; and one entered on our church records.

Done by order of the church in conference in March, 1966.

Sister Mollie Tart
Sister Lovie Young
Brother James G. Young
Committee

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134 DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1966 NO. 10

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"IT WAS INDEED SWEET TO MY TASTE"

(Song of Solomon 2:3)

Some time ago, I dreamed of traveling,
As I have often done;
In this sweet dream I was traveling
With my wife and son.

Before long, we came to deep waters
Outspread before our eyes;
This vast expanse was like an ocean
Beneath the azure skies.

It appeared that the waters arose,
And fairly covered the hills;
This was an awe-inspiring scene,
Much greater than the rills.

At the edge of this vast expanse,
I sat down to rest,
And from the things here related
I trust I was blest:

From the ground I took a substance,
Which was like unto bread;
It was indeed sweet to my taste,
And its hues white and red.

With delight, I partook of the same,
Like manna from above,
And on the following morning truly,
I felt the warmth of love.

It seemed to have a saving power,
And I felt that I was saved;
I hope it figured the Bread of life,
And that this Bread I've craved.

For periods since joining the church,
I've been down in the depths,
And spiritual dreams (I hope) since
Have been refreshing helps.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, N. C.

"COURAGE AND CHEER TO THE WEARY"

1511 Oak Street
Kenova, W.Va. 25530

Signs of the Times:

I am enclosing payment for a year's renewal to the **Signs.** So many good things contained therein, give courage and cheer to the weary. I find the same good doctrine being preached today as was preached one hundred years ago. For ages that cannot be told ten thousand thousands of His elect people have joined as one to stand on the banks of sweet rivers of redeeming love, to praise the Eternal Three.

Today as I travel through the country side, on every hand I can look to the hills and the mountains, and see mute evidence of the crucifixion of our Lord: Mountains of stone broken to pieces - the mountains shook and the hills trembled when they pierced his side. Go, if you will, up any road, or creek, or hollow, and gaze in wonderment at the very sight of the evidence. It is there to this day, and will remain so for a grim remembrance that Jesus gave his life that we might live.

One thing I feel sure of: I am in the way He designed for me, because He has promised me that he will never leave nor forsake me, nor will he let me fall. Were this the only promise he ever made me, I would be satisfied. I love the old Church of the First Born, and to love the church is to love you. I am unlearned in books, but God never has to learn, and he tells me all I can contain, for I am a small vessel; but he appointed my way, and knew my substance before the hills were, and he appointed my days before the first daybreak; and he whisper-

ed to me while in the womb of time, "Peace, be still." I would not worry any who may read this, so will stop here.

Faithfully Yours,

J. M. Bailey, Sr.

LOOKING FOR FAMILY RECORDS

Yanceyville, N. C.

Signs of the Times, Inc.
Danville, Virginia

Dear Elder Spangler,

Some people from Texas came to the Office here looking up the Henslee family records and had with them the experience of their great grandfather, written in 1857. I read it and thought you might like to publish it. These people gave their permission for you to print it in the *Signs*. Elder Henslee was from this area and preached in your churches in this Association.

It was nice seeing you at the Association. When in this area come by to see me.

Sincerely yours,
J. B. Blaylock

EXPERIENCE OF
ELDER RICHARD HENSLEE
(1775-1871)

Eatonton, Ga.
October 27, 1857

Dear Brother Beebe,

As many of my brethren and friends have often solicited me to give a sketch of my experience of Grace, and call to the Gospel Ministry, I have concluded to commit it to writing and send it to you for publication, if you think it worthy, hoping that it may be of benefit to some of the children of Zion, in their pilgrimage in this world of sorrow. "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

I was born the 9th of January, 1775, in sin, as are all Adam's race. In the year 1783 I learned to read, and from some cause it soon became a great pleasure to me to read the Scriptures; and while reading the Old and New Testaments, I became alarmed. In 1784, finding that the world had been destroyed by water, and that it should be destroyed once more by fire, I came to the conclusion that it would take place about day-break. I was so much alarmed that I was afraid to sleep for fear it would take place before I awoke again. About the end of the same year, my father seeing that I was distressed, called me to him and asked me if I was afraid that I was going to die. I told him yes; but that was not the case, I was afraid the world would be burned up, and that I, a poor sinner, would be forever lost. My distress continued off and on, until 1788. I went to meeting with the rest of the family, to hear Samuel Harris preach; and while he was preaching and telling what an awful situation the sinner was in, by reason of the fall, that they were in a state of condemnation, without hope and without God in the world — their hearts desperately wicked and deceitful above all things. Before he closed I began to examine myself, and from some cause, I was made to acknowledge the truth of what he said, and saw, for the first time in life, that I was a poor condemned sinner. I was so much alarmed that I could no longer hide it — I wept and trembled until he closed. My father seeing the condition I was in, came to me, and then asked the minister to come and pray for me. He then asked me something about my condition. I told him that I was a poor lost and ruined sinner, and if I died in that condition, I must be forever lost. He tried to pray for me; and when he closed his prayer he asked me some questions. I answered him in the best way I could. He then said to my father that the Lord was about to give him a preacher, but my thoughts were that the Lord was going to send

me to hell. I went home in great distress, making many promises to the Lord, and solemn vows. I thought that if my soul was sent to hell, his righteous law approved it well. But I did not want to ever commit another sin while I lived.

So I went on from day to day, seeking rest, and found none. I was made to try many ways in order to ease my troubled mind. I would often go among merry company to get rid of my troubles, and would do and say many things to prevent any one from knowing what my troubles were; I was compelled to leave the company that I was in, to weep and mourn.

Thus I went on until 1792, when I was called to witness the death of one of my uncles. I stood by his bed and saw him breathe his last; and when they closed his eyes an awful thought occured to my mind — if that had been my eyes closed in death, my soul would have now been in hell. My feeling at that time is more than tongue can express; but my life was still spared, and I roved still in darkness, and great dread continually on my mind, until June, 1794. While at my work one day there were thoughts occurred in my mind, as though someone had spoken to me: "Why are you thinking so much about the word of God? How come it the word of God? Did God come down to earth and give it to men? Or, did men go up to heaven and get it from God?" This being the devil's trick, the world and flesh united to persuade me that there was no reality in religion, nor truth in the Bible; and they planted me firmly on the doctrine of Deism. Some time after this I had a very hard spell of sickness — my friends thought my recovery doubtful — but in all this my faith in Deism was unshaken, and I still went on in open rebellion.

In 1795 I was engaged to marry, under promise to my intended wife that when I married I would reform my manner of life; but before the time came for us to marry she died. I then thought that all my hopes for happiness in this life were gone. I then thought I would spend the balance of my life traveling through the world. In 1799 I took a trip to Georgia, and while there I got in possession of Oatne's *Age of Reason,* which confirmed me more in Deism. In that year I had a hard spell of sickness, but all this did not shake my faith in Deism. I then went back to North Carolina, and when I got there they told me that there was a revival of religion going on not far off, and that one of my cousins was very much interested. I thought that when I saw her I could put a stop to all of that. And in January there was a meeting coming off where I thought I would go and convince her of her folly; but to my utmost astonishment, there was a power that was ahold of her out of my reach or control. When I saw her fall as if dead, before me and all the people, I went up to her and for awhile I thought she was dead. I then took a seat near, and laying her head on my arm I saw her lips move. I placed my ear near her mouth and heard one of the most pleasant prayers that I ever heard in my life. I remained with her that night without much impression. The next morning as I went on thinking, these words came to my mind, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?" My answer was, if the Scriptures are the truth, I am forever gone. My troubles began to increase. I could not tell what to do to find rest, nor could I tell whether the Scriptures were the truth or not. I verily thought if the world was all, I would give it all to know whether the Scriptures were the word of God or not? I thought if the Lord would perform some miracle before me, I would believe; and, while I was standing gazing as though I was waiting for him to perform the miracle, this passage of Scripture occurred in my mind, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of law, to do them." It seemed to remove every doubt from my mind,

the reference to the word of God being the truth. All the reason of Tom Payne and the devil could no longer keep me from believing the Scriptures were the truth, and that my condemnation was sealed.

My trouble here was inexpressible — my tongue cannot tell it, my pen cannot write it. All of my former promises rushed to my mind, and the advantages of past life seemed to crowd around me as witnesses to the justice of my condemnation; and I a miserable creature had to unite with them all, and in language of the poet and say:

"If my soul is sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well."

I then was made to grieve that I ever could read the Scriptures, or ever had a praying father and mother, for her prayers and tears seemed only to aggravate my woe. Thus I went on for weeks and months, thinking often that when I went to sleep I should wake in hell. Thus I went on in great distress, until some time in February I was walking among a flock of sheep, looking at the little lambs jumping and playing: my thoughts were, Oh, if I were as happy as these lambs! But their happiness seemed to increase my distress. I thought I would go to a certain place and try to pray, but when I got to the place I was afraid to bow myself in prayer for fear the Lord would destroy me if I attempted to bow before him. In this distressed condition I went on until the 5th Sunday in March. Then I ventured to try to pray once more before I died. I bowed myself, and while trying to pray I thought someone would see me, I jumped up and ran to the house; then this thought came into my mind, What has kept you out of hell until now? Nothing but the mercy of God, was the answer. At this my distress was so great, that I did not think I should live until morning; but life was still spared, and when at the breakfast table my mother helped my plate, and when I received it my thought was, This is the mercy of God, which has kept me out of torment all my days, and now shall only turn as curses on my head.

I left the table in great agony of soul. I could think of the happy state of father and mother, brother and sister, if called to die. All this seemed to distress my soul, and I could see no way how such a sinner could be saved. One Wednesday while plowing, my distress was so great I thought every hour would be the last. That very evening my father came out where I was plowing, and while I was facing him I looked at him and his eyes were flowing in tears. He then turned away from me, and I thought that he knew that I was dying, a ruined sinner, and was grieving about it. I could think of the conversion of my comrades, and think how they had found favor with God; but their case was not like mine, for I was the worst out of hell. "Lord save the soul condemned to die."

At this time another thought occurred to my mind, Are you not willing to live in all this distress and trouble, even to old age, if you could find eternal life through Jesus Christ who died, that poor lost sinners might live? I was made to view the Son of Christ on the cross in the most dreadful agony of death, but in the very midst of them he could say, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." At these words light and peace burst into my poor soul, and the burden of guilt that had so long pressed me down, now fled away, and a new song was put into my mouth, praising God with all my soul for the gift of such a Saviour. I felt at the moment as if my sins were all gone, and I had received a robe of righteousness, that was sufficient to appear before God in. I then had no doubts, no fears, but could sing, Grace, grace, free grace shall ever be my song. While I lived in this happy situation, my mind was drawn out after some of my young comrades that were still in

sin, and I thought if I could see them, I could tell them all about the Saviour, and the plan of salvation.

I had a desire to tell it, and was telling it in my mind as fast as I could, when at once this thought came to my mind. Now you are thinking about preaching, and that only because some of the old preachers have said you would have to preach. Now you know it is all of men and not of God; and in a moment doubts and fears covered my mind, and sure enough it was all a delusion of mind, and I was deceived. This left me in great distress of mind, and my conviction was gone, and I could not get it again, and I had no hope that would do to depend on.

Thus I went on in error and great anguish of soul for twelve or fifteen months, while the tempter was busily engaged in throwing every temptation before me that he could, though he could not keep me from loving the cause of God, and Christians. My mind was constantly exercised on preaching, and I thought, if I was in the church and was to attempt to preach in my weakness, that I should dishonor the cause; and this I could never do. And here the tempter took hold again, and said, "Now you know that you are no Christian for if you were, you would do what God bids you do; so you had as well curse God and die." This was continually in my mind for several days, and again the tempter would ask, "Do you not believe in the doctrine of election? Yes. Well if they are to be saved they will be saved anyhow." This put me to reading the Scriptures, and I found this doctrine well established, that God had chosen his people in Christ, and blessed them with all spiritual blessings in Christ. But my fears were that I was deceived, and had not been chosen nor blessed in Christ; for surely no one that loved Christ could have so many doubts and fears, and sore temptations as I had. For it did seem that temptations in every shape were presented to me. A number of hard questions would be put in different ways, such as this: What will you take for Christ? I would not take the world, no, nor ten thousand such worlds as this. The tempter would then tell me, Now you know you are no Christian, or you would not think about selling Christ, for he is the chiefest object with Christians. So I could not pass one day without sore temptations and fear.

I was afraid that I soon should lose all my hopes and fears, and go back into sin as others had before me; and I feared it might be so, and in order that I would never bring a reproach on the cause of religion, I would leave my native land and go to a far country: and when I got there, I would never say a word about religion. I got ready and bid farewell to father and mother, brothers and sisters, and to my native land. And after a short stay in foreign land for some cause, I could not tell why, I became uneasy and restless, and said, I can not stay here. I will arise and go to my father's house, and to my native land, and seek for pardon there. I reached my native land again in March, 1802, but could find no peace of mind there until June. I remained in darkness and distress of mind. The last Saturday of this month I went to visit one of my neighbors, and on my return home I went through a piece of woods. My distress was so great that I turned aside to try to pray again, that if I was deceived, to undeceive me; and if I were not deceived, to instruct me, and give me brighter evidences of my acceptance with him, and confirm my hope in Christ. While in this place I was made to pray aloud by his help, that I would try to preach or do anything else that was his will. On Friday night I went to hear Elder Sanders preach: his text was: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." And while he was speaking of the people of God and how they were comforted, I thought that I felt some gleam of comfort to my poor soul, and I went and shook hands with him and others,

and thought if they would ask me the reason for my hope I would tell them; but they did not ask me, and I thought it was because they knew that I was a hypocrite, and would not tell the truth.

Thus my distress returned, and the next night I went to hear Elder Dorris preach, and after preaching they began to sing; and when they sang these words, "And when to the bright world I rise," in a moment I forgot all my darkness of mind, and by faith was made to see the glories of that world above, and then began to tell it. On Sunday night I went to preaching, and while the meeting was going on my feelings were so much aroused, that I got up in the midst of the congregation and began to tell about the goodness of God and the plan of salvation in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. I spent the time in much comfort until the next Saturday. When I went forward to the church I told them the exercises of my mind, and was received into the fellowship of the church. The baptism was put off for two weeks. After I left the meeting, I began to think of what I had done, and thought I had deceived the church, and darkness soon covered my mind again. Doubts and fears filled my mind so much that I thought I would never be baptized. But before the time came, I was made willing to do anything the Lord wanted of me; so I was baptized on the fourth Sunday in July, 1802. I then found rest in that act that was nowhere else to be found. But to my astonishment my doubts and fears soon returned and it was continually in my mind that I ought to do something, and I knew not what. I therefore was crying out, Lord, what wilt thou have me do? Though it was continually in my mind to preach the gospel or "feed my sheep," I could not think it was the Lord's will for me to preach; but I could find no rest nor peace of mind day or night. After all the excuses I could give about my poverty and imperfections it was continually rushing in my mind, "feed the flock of God" or some such expressions. I will here mention that I came into the church about the close of a great revival, and it began to cool off; and there seemed to be some restless ones in the different churches, some soon making shipwreck of their professions which increased my trouble. My soul was drawn out after them, whilest at the same time it was continually sounding in my mind, to feed the sheep; and found all other things failed to give me peace of mind.

In September, 1803, I ventured to preach for the first time from Isaiah xxxiii:13, "Hear ye that are far off what I have done; and ye that are near acknowledge my might." This effort moved a burden off of my mind but brought on another which troubled me so I thought I would never try again; but I had to try it again and again. Thus I went on until about 1810, when a revival took place and I could preach day and night with pleasure. All seemed well for a while but after many bright days of sunshine the wintry season must again come, and many dear brothers and sisters turned back again to the world. Thus my fears increased that I would disgrace soon myself and bring a reproach on the cause of Christ; but Christ gave me grace to help my infirmities so that I retained a name and place among the people of God, as a poor feeble minister of the cross of Christ.

Thus I passed through mixtures of joys and sorrows for 15 or 20 years, when another revival took place throughout the country; this was one of the most delightful seasons I ever witnessed — this revival continued about two years and large numbers were added to the church — 142 members joined Willears Church at that time. But every sweet will have its bitter, for here was about the first introduction of Free Willism among the Baptists. A number of their preachers

got the "big head" and then they could no longer wait for the Lord's appointed time to do his pleasure but must lend him a helping hand, and thus brought into the church many strange women, calling themselves benevolent societies, and soon produced a number of strange children who could not understand the language of Canaan, and they began to mock and growl and fight, and soon caused division in the church and associations, spreading their poison from land to land and from sea to sea. But by the grace of God I was made to stand in the defence of the gospel of the Son of God. Down to old age, I was determined to know nothing among men save Jesus and him crucified.

Thus I have spent a life in service of my God, poor as I have been.

I have given you my hope in Christ, and a few hints of my poor progress in the ministry, for the last fifty-five years. I am now in Georgia where I shall spend my few remaining days before my departure which is near at hand. I am now 83 years old.

Dear brethren in the ministry, you and your cause is still dear to me. Brethren live in peace, contend earnestly for the faith, watch over yourselves, shun every appearance of evil; and what I say to one, I say to all — WATCH.

And now may the God of all grace be with his children in every land to help them all their journey through, is the prayer of one near home. I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give to all at that day, and not unto me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. (2 Tim. iv. 7, 8)

Now dear brethren and sisters, with whom I have taken sweet delight in days that are gone, we can never meet again on earth but I have a hope that I shall meet you and the blood washed throng in heaven: to see as we are seen, and know as we are known.

Yours in love, farewell,
Richard Henslee

(This is a footnote placed by the granddaughter of Richard, Martha Elizabeth Henslee Cochran: "Our grand-father, lived to be 96 years old.")

(We believe that the above was published in the *Signs* in 1857, since it was addressed to Elder Beebe, but not having any copies of that date, we are not certain. We are glad to publish it again, for we feel that those who know the travels of the Lord's people, will find they have much in common with Elder Henslee, and will find it good reading. — Editors)

"THE HEAVENLY PHYSICIAN"

1570 Golfside Avenue, N. W.
Roanoke, Virginia 24017

Elder and Mrs. W. C. King
Burlington, N. C.

Dear Elder and Sister King:

I realize how unworthy I am to try to address any of the dear saints of God, but I cannot rest until I try to express a few thoughts. It is hard for me to express myself, especially in talking, and I feel I did not explain in our conversation so that you could understand what I meant when I remarked about the healing both physical, as well as spiritual, that I hope I have experienced; and just why, Elder King, your sermon meant so much to me at Roanoke Church on Sunday.

These wonderful blessings that I hope have been mine from time to time, are so precious to me; and yet I wonder how the Heavenly Father could stoop so low as to reach my sinful and wretched state. Nevertheless, I feel I do know something of the healing of the natural body by His almighty hand — especially on two different occasions, and I hope I know something of the spiritual healing of a sin-sick soul, if not deceived.

Many years ago I was suffering from a throat condition, while at the same time I was under the sentence of death for my many, many sins. Due to my

physical condition, I was unable to lie down, and spent the days and nights in a sitting position. On that memorable night my life seemed to be slowly slipping away, as I gasped for each breath; and I knew if I died in that condition, everlasting punishment would be my doom. I felt that I must make at least one attempt to plead for mercy before I died. (I remember the occasion as if it were only yesterday.) The words did not seem to have left my lips when these words were spoken to me, "God will take care of you."

Then my breathing became easier — a calm came over me, and a peaceful rest flowed into my soul; and I could lie down the first time in twenty-eight days. How my soul leaped for joy that the precious Saviour of sinners would hear my last plea for mercy, and reach down to the low state of sin and death, and raise me up both physically and spiritually! I felt that I could shout from the house top, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

Later I was afflicted with the dreaded epilepsy, which grew worse each day. When my oldest little son was only six months old, I was having as many as six fainting spells a day sometimes. My physician had made arrangements for me to be hospitalized for an indefinite time. Having no one to care for my little infant and my companion, I was almost beside myself with grief as to what to do. My pleading to the Lord seemingly was not heard — they did not seem to reach higher than my head. I knew He was able, (of that I was sure,) to reconcile me to His will. According to nature the affliction could never be cured: only controlled in a measure by drugs. But now everything had failed; drugs would not control, and my Lord had turned a deaf ear. Yet there was no place else to go. I must continue to beg to be reconciled to His will.

One morning, (two days before I was to leave for the hospital,) as I was standing by the crib of my little son, my heart was burdened to breaking, it seemed, when these words were spoken to me in that still small voice that can be heard only in the heart and soul, "Be of good cheer; thou art healed."

Precious ones, I knew from that moment I would never have another fainting spell from epilepsy. I wanted to cry from the housetops, "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth." It will soon be nine years since I felt that glorious relief, and I never have a fear that it will return, because our Heavenly Physician does not make a promise, then break it, as we poor mortals are prone to do.

I do not know that I am one of the chosen little ones, but I do know that He has shown me how helpless, how lame I am; how blind and dependent I am on Him for all things, and that I cannot reach out and touch the hem of his garment: He must reach down and touch me with the finger of his love.

I did not have to have the throat operation that was required almost twenty-two years ago. Our blessed Lord healed the sick, opened the eyes of the blind, (I trust he opened my blind eyes to my sinful, helpless condition when I was almost seven years old.) He brought forth from the dead when he was here on earth, and he is yet as able to deliver in this day and age as he was in that day.

My life has been much of affliction — I cannot direct my steps, they falter by the way. I cannot walk, live, or think, as I feel a child of God should in praise to His high and holy name. It seems sometimes I must give up and will surely be numbered with the forgotten; yet, from time to time when it is the good pleasure of our Heavenly Physician, I hope I have been brought up for a little season to rest in the sunshine of His love. The healing balm is applied and we can rest for a little while, as I was given to do last Sunday. It is just a little foretaste of heaven on earth while under the sound of the word of God coming forth from

his dear servants whom he has called to preach his wonderful word: the heart thrills and leaps for joy; the cup is full and running over; and the tears of joy flow.

Though I feel so unworthy to mingle with the dear saints, I have no place else to go: nor do I want to go any place else. When I am blessed to hear the blessed word preached from time to time; to hear the dear servants so describe the feelings of my soul, (as you were blessed to do Sunday,) to enter into my exercises and bring forth such sweet evidences of grace — and that in spite of my wretched state, I am given to hope He remembered me when He hung on the cross. At such times of rejoicing, I am made anxious to go where "Congregations never break up, and sabbaths never end."

Dear ones, I realize this is becoming lengthy, but I was so burdened to let you know in a small way what I meant in our conversation. I visited with Brother and Sister Poff again Sunday night, and heard the recording of Sunday morning; and, you know, it meant as much the second time as it did the first. My cup was filled to running over again. It will be a day I hope long to remember.

May you both still enjoy the Lord's richest blessings; and remember me to the Heavenly Physician when you are brought to beg before his throne.

A little sister in that blessed hope,
Rlee Houchins
(Mrs. H. C. Houchins)

"STRANGERS PRESSING ONWARD"

3314 Debley
Memphis, Tenn. 38127

Dear Editors:

Such a negligent worm of the dust I feel for failing to renew my subscription before now; and how typical of the people who are my earthly treasures, (when I am blessed of God to see this,) to continue sending the *Signs*, believing that I would reimburse them. How different with worldly magazine subscriptions!

When blessed with the mind and a peaceful hour from God, it is much comfort and pleasure to read of those other "strangers": strange to their neighbors and friends, and even strangers to themselves at times, who press onward believing in God as the cause of all things; the upholder of all things, and the rewarder of those who diligently seek him. How different is He whom we seek and the one which is nearly everywhere depicted as a meek, beggarly creature, who wants to save people if they will only break down their stubborn will, and bid Him enter. How frightening, it would seem, to believe this! How comforting to believe that nothing, nay nothing, is too insignificant to work together for good to them that love God, and that He supplies and provides for everything both natural and spiritual that his children need! Each child is unique in some way, therefore his needs fit him perfectly, and even though these needs be grievous at times, we still must say by an eye of faith, Even so, for it seemeth good in Thy sight.

Reconcilliation sometimes looms the bigger of all the blessings we could ever humbly beg for, since this state causes us to run with patience the race that is set before us, hoping, believing and praying for continued guidance and protection.

How beautiful God is to those who love him, and believe that his arm is never too short to reach down into the very depths of hell even, and cradle and carry a child to safety. How I feel at times to cry out as David, that no matter where we make our beds or habitation, God is there.

The mystery that sometimes seems perplexing enough to "destroy" me, is the mountain and the valley: How quickly one who feels honor, praise, and glory to God in his heart, can be

thrown into the valley of dark, doubting despair! With me these transitory stages get no better, and I am progressively less able to store-in a goodly supply for the dark days. This says to me that God is a sovereign God, and when he opens none can close; and when he closes none can open. Surely then we can also say that the ways of God are filled with mystery, and can be seen in part by us only as it pleases Him to reveal it to us.

The sweetest peace is seeing God in everything, and feeling to rest securely in His promises. Were it not for these moments, could we possibly stand the dark, dreadful hours when we tremble with a fear that "imagination" is the culprit, and we were "taken in" by it? O how one's heart cries out for a sign, O Lord, that your love embraced poor, wretched me! Again, the sweet, comforting, swelling tide of praise and thanksgiving flow into our hearts, and we are shown the marvelous beauties of God's love and mercy, and are made to sing His praises. These seasonal experiences are symbolical to me of the year's seasonal changes: the Spring is the small stirring of hope that swells within one until Summer, and is then full blown; Autumn is when we feel the receding tide, and frantically try to stem its departure; and cold, bleak Winter is when we feel God has surely turned his back on us forever — if indeed He ever embraced us. But, lo, if indeed Winter be so cold and blustery, can Spring, beautiful Spring, be far behind? Such to me is the travel of God's little ones, whether I be included or not. Sometimes in the "Summer of my experience," I feel to know my Redeemer liveth, but then have to consider the short Summer and the Fall and Winter which follow.

Fear of wearying you prompts me to close. At the moment, I feel it is "Summer" in my heart, and it seems I could write a book of the beauties of God and his ways, but this would not be prudent.

Consider the carnal source of these poorly put phrases, and hastily cast them aside if unsound: they too will have served their purpose, if even be to show you what a pitiful worm I am. God is praised even if it be only the wrath of man which renders it; so my precious hope is that I am not deluded in my belief at times that miraculously I, though least of all, may be one of his flock.

A sister I hope,

Carrie Jo Williams

P. S.: My subscription was a gift from a dearly loved and treasured cousin in the flesh but brother in the Spirit; and his gift of it meant so much that I too desire to send enough that you may extend or give a subscription to a hungry, thirsty soul who may not feel able to take one himself. Enclosed is a check for both.

Rt. 4
Reidsville, N. C. 27320

Dear Brother Spangler:

I see that I am behind with my subscription for the paper, and am enclosing $5.00 for renewal, and $1.00 for the Indigent Fund.

I enjoy the paper very much, for it sets forth the doctrine I believe. I hope you and yours are well; we are as well as usual. If my hands did not shake so much, I would try to write you a long letter and tell you I still love you I hope for Jesus' sake. I think of you all lots of times; but I cannot go to preaching as I once did, but I still love that grand old doctrine of Electing Grace. I used to think that when I got old, I would be a good man, but I have missed it. But I still have something down inside that Satan has never reached.

Hope you can read this left hand scribbling.

John L. Paschal

"CAN BE CLEARLY IDENTIFIED"

1223 Rhue Road
Winston-Salem, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am enclosing check for $5.00 for our renewal to the *Signs of the Times.*

We feel thankful the dear Lord has continued to bless his people with a paper whose editors and writers still earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. My wife and I find great comfort in reading the experiences, editorials, and Voices of the Past.

It is wonderful indeed to realize the Lord still has a people who can be clearly identified, (by those who love the truth,) as the Old School or Predestinarian Baptists, contending for the doctrine of salvation by grace; which is good news to those who have been brought to the end of their own strength, and made to cry unto God for mercy. I trust I have heard his voice. Many times has he spoken to the wind and the sea, and said, Peace, be still, and know that I am God. Then and then alone can we rest, and wait patiently upon him who works his sovereign will.

We trust that you and Sister Spangler are well. May His grace ever be with you and all the household of faith.

Your unworthy brother in hope,
Z. L. Rhue

NOTICE OF CANCELLATION

Due to the illness of some of those who usually entertain during the session of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, it is necessary to announce that there will be no session of the Corresponding Meeting this year. We regret to have to make this decision, but found it necessary. We hope, the Lord willing, to resume the meeting in 1967.

John D. Wood

KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The **Kehukee Association** will be held, the Lord willing, at Skewarkey Church, Williamston, Martin County, N. C., on the first Sunday in October, Saturday before and Monday following: October 1, 2, 3, 1966.

The meeting house is located on Highway 17, south, at the intersection with Nos. 64, 13, and 125. Elder C. E. Harrison was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder W. E. Grimes, alternate.

We extend a cordial invitation to our ministers, brethren, and friends.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Clerk

THE SKEWARKEY UNION

The **Skewarkey Union** is appointed to be held with the Norfolk Church, Norfolk, Virginia, the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in October, 1966. Elder B. D. Handy was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder W. E. Grimes, alternate.

The meeting house is located at 3231 Tidewater Drive, Norfolk, Virginia. We cordially invite all interested to come and visit with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Williamston, N. C. 27892

UNION MEETING

The union meeting of the churches of the Predestinarian Old School Baptists of California, the Lord willing, will be held with the Little Flock Church, Bakersfield, California. It is located on Alpine Street near Baker and California Avenue in the Oddfellows Hall. Meeting will start on Friday before the 5th Sunday in October and continue three days. (October 28, 29, 30)

We desire to extend an invitation to all lovers of the truth. For information, call Brother Troy Smith — phone 322-1830. 2735 Monterey Street, Bakersfield, California.

Walter B. Wilson, Clerk

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association** convenes with the church at Red Banks in Pitt County, to begin Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1966, and continuing through Sunday.

The church is located 3 miles southeast of Greenville, N. C. All lovers of the truth are

invited to meet with us.

E. M. Smith, Clerk

THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

The **Salisbury Association** will convene, the Lord willing, with the Forest Grove Church, near Parsonsburg, Maryland, October 19 and 20, 1966, at 10 A. M., Daylight Saving Time.

Those coming Tuesday go to the home of Louis Holloway on Route 350 about six miles from Salisbury. Those coming Wednesday go to the meeting house. Take the new Route 50 from Salisbury about six and one-half miles to the Forest Grove Road, turn right, and the meeting house is about three-quarters of a mile.

All of our faith and order, and all lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

Ethel Holloway, Church Clerk
P. O. Box 243
Ocean City, Md. 21842

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The 1966 session of the **Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association** is appointed to be held at the White Oak Meeting House, Saratoga, Wilson County, N. C., to begin Friday before the fourth Sunday in October at eleven o'clock and continue through Sunday.

Saratoga is located on highway 264, ten miles east of Wilson, N. C. Go to stop lamp, turn north on highway 222 a short distance to meeting house.

All lovers of truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

W. E. Turner, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To August 1, 1966)

Mrs. A. R. Carter, Ark.	$2.00
Mrs. Lola Moon Howard, Ky.	2.00
Harold Weatherford, Va.	4.00
Mrs. P. O. Clowdus, Ala.	3.00
Miss Sarah Burt Welling, N. Y.	1.00
Mrs. C. C. Dodd, Va.	5.00
Elder Julius Bocock, Va.	2.00
A Friend	3.00
Mrs. Fannie Shelly, Md.	1.00
Elmer Lock, Mich.	1.00
Elder H. R. Prince, Tenn.	1.00
Mrs. G. C. Martin, N. C.	2.00

Danville, Virginia **October, 1966**

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EDITORIAL

Sister Blanche B. Brown, of Chattaroy, Washington, asks that we give our views through the *Signs* on blaspheming against the Holy Ghost. We had referred to blasphemy on page 186 of the August issue.

The question is, "Do you believe that a child of God can be guilty of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost?" And with the further consideration of the Scriptural statement that, ". . . the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men," and, "Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." (Matthew 12:31, 32)

We checked our files and found that we re-published an editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe under the heading of the *Voices of the Past,* on the subject of "The Unpardonable Sin." This was in the March, 1963, issue of the *Signs,* and

we believe that Sister Brown, and others, if they have this issue available, will find much in the article to set them at ease on the question, since Elder Beebe dealt in this writing with the subject of the forgiving of the sins of the Lord's people.

To us it is evident that no child of God can ever commit an unpardonable sin. We prefer, however, to refer those who are interested in the question, to the article by Elder Beebe, rather than take up the subject at length ourself.

We have heard some say that they feared they had committed the "Unpardonable Sin," and have sometimes heard it intimated that only the children of God can commit this sin of speaking against the Holy Ghost, yet it is contrary to the doctrine of God our Saviour to say that any of the redeemed of the Lord can ever commit any sin that was not atoned for by Him. Consequently they are not held guilty of any sin for which they are not forgiven, neither in this world, nor the world to come.

We could not endorse for a moment the advocating that one of the Lord's elect might possibly *be lost because of any kind of sin.* Where would be the certainty; where would be their peace of mind — the peace that passeth understanding, if it were possible that any of the elect "might be lost"? Where would be their being, "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time"?

It is commonly believed, of course, that a person may be saved today, but by neglect or sinning may be lost tomorrow. But this is by those whose idea of salvation is that it is based on the works of men — that salvation is conditioned on themselves, rather than upon the choice and finished work of Jesus, who, by the one offering of himself, has forever perfected them that are sanctified. So we may boldly say that which is commonly believed, is not of that faith which was once delivered to the saints.

Though the children of God are sorely tried, and afflicted and poor, and often question their part and lot in the matter when they are blessed to examine themselves whether they be in the faith, fearing that they have only "caught the shadow and missed the substance," yet God has shown unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, and confirmed it by an oath, so that they have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them. which they have as an anchor of their soul sure and steadfast, since it enters into that within the veil, where Jesus has entered for them. (See 6th chapter of Hebrews.)

The doctrine of the sureness of the salvation of the Lord's people is often objected to in some quarters, saying that such sureness would promote licentiousness. This is deceptive, for such speak without having experienced the work of God in their hearts, which teaches them, "that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly and righteously in this present world." Nor do they know the restraining power of the Spirit, or the terrible conflict as described by the Apostle Paul in the seventh chapter of Romans.

No, it is impossible for one of the redeemed of the Lord, to commit an unpardonable sin. Though they sin in their flesh, they have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. These have the laws of God written in their hearts and put in their minds, so that they hate sin and all connected with it; and desire above all things else while they live, to keep his commandments, and his word, and walk as He walked; and in so doing it is proved that they are born of God. (Read *Voices of the Past* by Elder Chick, on page 234.) Thus, being his children, they are kept by the power of God, through faith, (of which He is the author and finisher) unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

PSALMS 15:1,4

"Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not."

If I may be permitted to indulge in fancy, I feel that in this day we have many that are like unto the associates of the humble hen in one of our early readers in the literary school. A great chorus sounded when it came time to eat the pancake. The most of them were ready, and it would seem that the most of religious people are ready to abide in the tabernacle, to dwell in the holy hill.

A friend of the Old School Baptist people desires that I write about any change that is found in God. The paramount question is this: Does God change? My friend wanted me to say yes or no and to stop there. I cannot do that. There is a sense in which he does change, and there is a sense in which he does not. If I said an unqualified yes, I would be bombarded by Bible scholars and they would point me to time and again in which God did not change. If I gave an unqualified no, I would have an equal number on me with quotations to prove otherwise.

Administratively and dispensationally, I would declare without hesitation that God changes. But this cannot be said from the standpoint of a Covenantor. For instance, God promised eternal life before the world began. It is the nature of men to lie, and if it is for their best interest to change their mind about a promise they will do it. But God cannot lie. He has not just come into that kind of quality, but if anyone can tell me how long God **has been,** it will be a delight to tell them how long that it has been since He could not lie.

To write upon such a deep subject calls for more talent than I have, but I am willing to do the best that I can. I will not make any effort to please anyone, but I do hope that we have all learned of God from His own teaching. Whether we have learned it or not, does not change the inspiring fact that God is unchangeable in His existence. If he is unchangeable, he will not make a covenant and then break it. If we prove that he is not a covenant breaker, we have proved to all reasonable people that he does not change. Let us make high sounding eulogies of God and his grace and purpose; let us talk about his sovereignty and laud him to the sky as the One that performs his will in heaven and in earth, but if he is a covenant breaker, then, by all the logic that nature can summon, he is changeable.

Whatever the make up of God is now, it has always been that, no more, no less. If God is now alwise, he always has been that way. He knows as much now as he knew before the curtain of time was let down, and if this universe continues to stand and to be operated by its Builder, he will not know any more in the final windup of it than he knew in the eons of eternity. Any thought, expression, idea, opinion, doctrine, interpretation, that would tend to present God as learning something or forgetting something, is not the truth, even if it springs from the most learned divine in the midst of the church. Regardless of where it comes from, and regardless of whether he or she is Chloe or Phebe or Pope John or Elder John Doe, any expression that would set God up as having less or more power now than he had at, or during, or before time begin, is not the truth, for, reason how we may, he was not perfect to begin with, if there has been any increase in his power or enhancement in his glory.

As I have often said, I have not been called to preach this fundamental or the other; that I have not been called to ride hobby horses, regardless of who brings them into the riding field. My absorbing thought, my chief delight, my highest ambition, has been to present every man perfect in Jesus Christ; (Col. 1:28) to know nothing among the churches save Jesus Christ and him crucified. To me, this is most important, to wit, that both speaker and hearer be moved by the Holy Ghost to receive Him as our all

sufficient Saviour. (John 14:17) It doesn't matter who does it, but whoever does it, can not preach the gospel that preaches Christ as having his whole life predicated upon the things that come to pass around him. To preach the gospel, it must be preached that the whole course of his life was determined in saving sinners. To preach that the life and death of Jesus Christ was determined, but that the thing that caused his death was not determined, is, to me, begging the issue. Therefore, the eternal fixedness of all things is necessary in order to preach Jesus Christ as the Saviour of sinners.

There is not any change in God. He is in one mind. Whatever he desires, he has desired that from all eternity. He does not get new desires, nor does he forget or forego any that he used to have. The desires of God are carried out. What God desires, that God does. This mind of God is not changed by any created thing. If the covenant of God's everlasting love is worth anything, the Father and the Son must be in mutual agreement about it. God gives us to know that Jesus is his fellow (Zech. 13:7); the Saviour gave us to know that he and the Father were in unity. (John 17:22) There just is not any room in the kingdom of God's grace for one of the covenanters to be changeable. Since a chain is not any stronger than its weakest link, just so, a covenant is worth what all parties in it are worth.

Look around you! Behold all of the slack talk about the weakness of the Holy Ghost, the Third member in the Three-in-one God. Primitive or Old School Baptist would blush to speak of there being a change in the election. If you want trouble, if you want a dispute, begin to say that God the Father forgot one of those that he appointed to salvation. Most any kind of an Old School Baptist would be ready to go to bat for the Lord's defense. Where would you find an Old Baptist that would say that Christ laid down on the job; that he failed in redemption for those given him in covenant? The prospect looks exceeding good to say that all praise and honor and glory will be rendered to the unchangeableness of the God-head. Ah, let us wait a time; waiting long enough, we will find the same people that have rendered perfect praise to the Father and to the Saviour, now are alleging to the Holy Ghost failures. His failures in carrying out the desires of God's one-mindedness is caused by the objects upon whom he is to work. These subjects are **now** able to thwart the desires of God. He is having to change!

God is eternal. He is not subject to change. To be subjected to a force or a power so that the mind is changed, is preaching that the creature surpasses the Creator in both wisdom and power. I'd rather live in a corner of the house top alone than to live in a large room of people that presented God as having to surrender to any created thing. If I must preach a change in God, I must preach more power to the thing that caused the change than is in God.

The eternal God is the refuge of sinners. Any power or wisdom that creatures have is a delegated power. There is not any power save the power of God. Even a devilish minded man could not have any power save it was given to him from above. I hope that our friend, and that my dear kindred in Christ, will be blessed with a sweet meditation in thinking about this solemn truth. Even though the blasphemer thought that nothing was fixed; that he could do one of two things; (John 19: 10, 11) let the saints rejoice aloud that all of the hellish powers that be, are given what power they do have; that they **could not** have **any power,** save it is given them from above. Who is above? Who is the Head over all things? Would he that has all power in his hands make any change?

How lightly people talk about God. How degrading to his glorious name it is to have his puny creatures ascribe such desultory characteristics to the unchangeable God. Men think nothing of talking about God as they talk about human witnesses in earthly court rooms; they think nothing about charg-

ing God with the same thing that men are guilty of in government. How many men have raised their right hand and swore to tell the truth, to fend off every opponent to our Constitution and then broke it before the sun went down. And God is charged with being changable like unto that. I dread to think about it; I fear to say it, but there is a momentous question I must ask: Do men know God who have such a shallow conception of him? In the ordinary religious life of men, they do not believe one another on their oath. From every direction, from every quarter, men esteem their oath very lightly. They look upon God as one that is like unto themselves, therefore his oath means as much to them as does the oath of one man to another.

God swore with an oath to save his people. I do hope that my soul leaps forward at the heavenly prospect that lies before us. God did not swear by anything on the earth; he did not predicate the fulfilment of that oath on any creature. As there was not found any one, any one at all, that was worthy to open the book, (Rev. 5:1,4) just so, no more, and no less, there was not one by which God could sware. If He had sworn by you and me, changes would have been on every side; but he swore by himself, by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie. God could not sware by the earth; he could not sware by created things (where were they?), for God could not lie, therefore he swore by himself, by two immutable things. What was immutable at the time of taking this oath? What a foolish question. "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!" In the hidden (without measure, without regard to time) annals of eternity, God, for a purpose of his own glory, swore by His fellow, the Son of God, by His Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, that he would send His manifest or begotten Son, to his death, which death was to redeem those thus given him.

The truth is not debatable. If we have been taught the truth, we can not, as is often said, have an open mind about any tenet of faith. Have an open mind about God altering or breaking or changing his covenant? God forbid. We are not open for conviction about this matter. We have been converted and convinced that God is the Sovereign of the whole creation. Only two witness will be introduced. The first one is in the Bible. God did not change on that night when sweat, as it were great drops of blood fell to the ground from the countenance of that Man. You and I would have changed, had it been our son approaching death for a whoring bride. God swore in eternity, but it hurt in time. I do not want to put words into your mouth and mind, but this is God that is here as the man of sorrows. It wasn't God veiled in flesh. It was God the Word made flesh. It was God shedding his own blood. (Acts 20:28) This record-bearing God is bearing record that He swore to save his people, and the cry of the Word in flesh shows that it brought about hurt to him in the carrying out of the oath; and the leaving of the Son to suffer, to bear in his body the consequences of that oath, shows conclusively that there is not any change in God.

Remember, dear reader, no change in God. But lift up your head and look gloryward. God changes things. The creatures do not change God, but God changes the creatures. The creature is changed, not a spirit is changed, not the Holy Spirit changed, not something new come down from heaven and dwells in the creature without a resulting change in the creature; no, no, my God not that, but any MAN that is in Christ is a new creature. Here is a change, here is a glorious change. O dear children of God, may the Lord send forth his light and truth and bring us to the holy tabernacle where Jesus abides. Ah, yes, dear weeping, sighing saints He has come into your life, and great has been the change which he has wrought.

"When God revealed his gracious name,
And changed my mournful state,
My rapture seemed a pleasing dream,
The grace appeared so great
The world beheld the glorious change,
And did thy hand confess;

My tongue broke out in unknown strains,
And sung surprising grace."

And when this glorious change was first felt, what anxious thoughts prevailed. The eyes that had been looking for laurels to gain on earth were lifted on high. The Root out of dry ground became a plant of Renown. The hands that had reached for deadly things now laid hold on eternal things. (I Thes. 5:21; I Tim. 6:12, 19)

This Sovereign Spirit of this unchanging God brings liberty where there had been prison. (Isa. 61:1) Wherever this Spirit is dwelling there is liberty. (2 Cor. 3:17) His coming and dwelling in the child of God produces all the change. The life of God's people is an ever changing scene. This change is not in the kind or quality of scenes, but ascending glory. They watch in awe and fearfulness as the glory of the ministration of death and condemnation (2 Cor.3:7, 8) is swept aside **by death** even the dying of the Lord of Glory and the ushering in of the glory that is in the ministration of the Spirit. This is change unexcelled, and it all comes in the creature and is wrought by Him, and in us. It wrought in a changeable creature by the unchangeable creator. The scenes will be heavenly all the way, but the change will be from glory to glory. These changes of beauty and splender and glory will not be wrought by the creature, but will be wrought by Him who is changeable. (2 Cor. 3:18)

These changes from glory to glory will keep us looking up and leaning forward; they will change us from depending on ourselves to depending on the unchangeable God. They will enrich us (read carefully the first ten verses of the first chapter of I Corinthians) and confirm us to the end; they will teach us to know Him and to have fellowship for him and to be conformed (made like unto; to be changed) like unto the Lord Jesus Christ. (Phil. 3:9) But while the changes will cause surprising grace to be sung, glorying in the Lord to be carried on in our lives, yet there will still be the pangs of indwelling sin. He who changes not must reign until that too is changed.

"If a man die, shall he live again" was asked thousands of years ago. It was answered to the querist by the unchangeable God. (Job 14:14; 19:25,27) Many great and marvelous changes had come in Job's life. However, there was something else that he was looking for; there was a change that was more desired than anything yet made manifest in his life. He asked the question, "If a man die, shall he (the man) live again?" He tells us that he was waiting for the change. What change? A living man continue to live? O no, not that. If a man die, **die,** DIE, shall he live again? It is the dead that he is asking the question about. With all the troubles that he was having in the body, he knew that soon he would die. He was not talking about a continuity of himself, but he was asking (since he knew that death was certain), would he live after death. He did not ask if there would be a continuation of this life. He did ask if the dead lived again? It was not unfaithfulness that caused Job to ask the question, but faithfulness. Immediately after asking the question, he tells us that he is waiting for his change. The days that he waits, they are appointed; the change, it is also appointed.

If at the death of this body there is a living principle or life, or call it what we may, that goes to God, that does not die, then all of Paul's talking about the resurrection of the dead was the most useless chatter and waste of time that has ever been inflicted on a people. It is the dead that is the subject of the resurrection. If there is not any death, why talk about a resurrection? If there is in us (this fleshly body) a life, of which the body does not have any part or promise, and this life goes to God at the death of this body, then why did Paul write about the resurrection? The resurrection does not have to do with the living, but exclusively with the dead..

Are you looking for this change?

What change? The resurrection. As pertaining to the resurrection (of the body) it (what?) is sown in corruption. Now what is it that is raised in incorruption? What is the antecedent of the "it" in the second clause? If the "it" in the first clause is not the "it" in the second clause, what is the antecedent of the "it" in the second clause? This is a glorious change. Does it mean anything to you? Does it cause you to leap forward at the thought of the unchangeable One changing the dead from corruption to incorruption? Again, "It is sown a natural body (how could that ever apply to anything except the body of a sinner?); it (the same it) is raised a spiritual body. "O what a glorious change that will be. Again, "It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. "Ah, these bodies, how dead they are because of sin. (Romans 8:10) **This body of death, this body of death,** who shall deliver us from it? Who shall deliver (change) us from this dishonorable death, which death shows at every turn in our lives unless restraining grace is granted us. It (what) is sown in dishonor: it is raised in glory. This dishonor is a part of that death, and it is the dead that are raised or changed. Again, "It is sown in weakness." What is sown is weakness? Not the Spirit of God, perish the thought! It is not the spirit of man, for that goes back to God. (Eccl. 12:7) What is as much in weakness as the dead body? The word "weakness" in the Greek language means strengthlessness. Isn't it wonderful what language the Holy Ghost uses? It is sown in strengthlessness, it is raised in power. The glorious change that this unchangeable God is to bring about is the swallowing up of death in victory. What a glorious change. For such an unspeakable change as it is, I will, God giving me grace, wait alongside Job all of my appointed days until my change, (not yours, not somebody else's, not that at all).

Sin did not change Him; the privation and suffering and agony and prayers of His Son did not change Him; He does not change. If he did change, if he had listened to the cries of Jesus, his unchangeable justice would be poured out on the elect family of God, and they would have been consumed. (Malachi 3:6) He did not change, he does not, and cannot be changeable, therefore he brings about the change in his people that fits and prepares them for heaven. He that is not changeable, is ever changing the ways of his creation to His name's honor, glory and praise.

No, no, God is not changeable.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

I COR. 6:20; JOHN 21:19

Brother James Jones of Poplar Creek, Miss., requests that we write upon the Scriptures found in 1 Cor. 6:20, and the first clause of John 21:19.

The first text reads as follows: "For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." The second reads, "This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God."

The theme is the same in both Scriptures, and they may well be presented at one time in the subject set before us. The glory of God manifested in the life of believers, and in their sufferings and death, is that to which our attention is called. The design of the work of grace in the hearts of men is, that in the ages to come God might show forth the riches of his grace in us, through Christ Jesus. Jesus lives in us, that his life may be made manifest in our mortal flesh. All that is done in what we speak of as the work of grace is that God may be glorified and his name exalted in us. And what a wonderful, what an astonishing thing it is, that our God should see fit to manifest his mercy and loving-kindness in such vile creatures as fallen men. The apostle said, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be of God, and not of us." What a glorious treasure! what

a mean abiding place! The treasure golden, and the vessel earthen.

In the first text to which our attention is called, Paul reminds his brethren first, that they are bought with a price, and that therefore they are not their own, that they belong to God, and that therefore, as he says elsewhere, they are not to seek their own glory, but the glory of him who has bought them, and to whom they belong. Paul (verse 13) would urge upon them the truth that even their bodies are for the Lord. He has bought them, and this includes all the powers and faculties of their being. They could have no right to say therefore, We may subject our bodies to all manner of lusts, and desires, and evil deeds, because the body is evil, and only evil, and is not the Lord's and shall never be his. On the contrary, even their bodies are said to be the members of Christ. Shall they therefore make the members of Christ the members of an harlot? His whole soul revolted at the thought, and he said, "God forbid." And if any man be indeed redeemed unto God, there will be in him such a work wrought as that he will with abhorrence against all sin in word or deed, also say, "God forbid." "He that is joined to an harlot is one body, but he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." By so much as the spirit is higher and more excellent than the body, therefore is he, who is joined to the Lord, under higher obligations to render to him all praise and glory, and to live in the Spirit, and not fulfill the desires of the flesh and the mind. While the special sin of which Paul here speaks is that of fornication, and against this he urges the relation which they occupy to God especially, yet the same reasoning applies to all sin. He that is joined to the Lord is redeemed from all sin, and is to remember that he is no longer under its dominion. Once in time past they fulfilled these evil desires and lusts, but now they have been called to a holy relationship to God. His life dwells within them, and they are to manifest this better spiritual life in all their conduct. This true light has been kindled in their heart, that it should shine out. He would say to these brethren, "Remember who you are now, and to what you have been called." "Remember the profession which you have made before God, and that you have not been called unto uncleanness, but unto holiness."

"What," he says to them, "know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own." Your body, the very body in which you live and move, is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and his holy Spirit is within you, and ye have received it of God, and ye are his, not your own. Could there be stronger reasons urged upon them, and upon us also, for careful living, for keeping our body as unto the Lord? And now still further he urges upon them this last most solemn and glorious truth, "Ye are bought with a price." He reminds them and us that all these blessed and holy privileges of which he has spoken, and which he declares have been conferred upon us, are ours simply because first, we have been redeemed, or bought with a price. This of course implies the sinful and lost estate of those who have been redeemed. It carries with it a reminder of the great unworthiness and unfitness of each and all of us to receive such immortal blessings. The fallen condition of man, his justly condemned estate, his alienation from God by wicked works, his enmity to God in his whole nature and life, in short, all that makes man a sinner, is implied by the apostle in the expression, "Ye are bought with a price." From what they were bought, and to what they have been redeemed, is all involved here. Who are we, and who has bought us, and what blessings are ours through this purchase? Who shall ever measure it all? Only the Holy Spirit, which dwells within us, can take these things and show them to us so as to melt these hearts of stone, and humble us in deep

contrition, and arouse within us true praise and gratitude to God. The longer we live, and the more we meditate upon these things, and the more we come to know our own heart, the more we can see why the inspired apostle urges the things that he does as motives to stir us up to right living. If the mercy and goodness of God does not lead to repentance, to godly sorrow for sin, and to earnest strivings to overcome all that would oppose godliness, and to hatred of self and indwelling sin, then we know of nothing that will. Paul reminds his brethren of God's great mercies in these preceding verses, and these are the motives to which he appeals. Such appeals must have found in the hearts of all who knew and loved God, a chord attuned to what he was saying to them, and which must at once respond. In the hearts of his brethren would be aroused gratitude, love, and all that could stir them up to earnest desire to glorify God. "Ye are not your own." Ye are bought. What more could he say concerning the Lord's gracious work for them and in them?

Now who could remember these things which had been wrought in their own hearts, without an experience of longing to so live outwardly as would best testify to the gracious work of the Lord. It is a fact of experience that the more we are enabled to sit at the feet of the Lord, the more we are permitted to drink in of his life, of his grace, of his divine nature, the more shall we find it to be our meat and drink to do his will in all things. And it will result that the chief sorrow of our hearts will be that we in spite of our best endeavors, are still so far short of what we desire. "I count not myself to have apprehended," will be our solemn confession to the end of this life. If indeed the things of which the apostle was speaking, had a place in the hearts of his brethren, if they have a place in our hearts, we shall welcome such exhortations as being that which is calculated to stir us up to more zeal. Our experience in preaching, and in urging such admonitions as seemed scriptural and suitable, upon those who have heard us, has been this, that those who seemed to us already walking spiritually and carefully as the spiritual always will, have often responded and said, "We felt all that to be good and true, and we feel as though we desire to be more faithful than we have ever been," while those who were in the sight of the church walking far off have not so responded, and we have seen no result of all the preaching and admonitions in them. Before any exhortation will thus stir any one up to realize the importance and sweetness of this careful walking, the spirit of truth must first soften the hard heart, and make it ready for the seed. Our observation and our experience has been that those already spiritual among the Lord's people, have received the good seed in good and honest hearts, and have felt to respond to the word spoken with praise and gratitude to God for the word, while those who were not spiritual among them have not been made to feel their shortcomings and lack of true spirituality, by all the admonitions urged upon them, and urged with faithfulness and love. So that we say that if any to whom the apostle wrote in the text were alive to what the Lord had done for them, and to the relation which they occupied to him, these would feel how exceeding good were these words, and would rejoice and be glad to be reminded of their obligations to love and obey him.

Now Paul says to them, Glorify God, therefore, and glorify him in both body and spirit. Is not this lesson taught us here, that these two things cannot be disjoined? We cannot glorify God in spirit without this spiritual exercise also appearing in the body, and we certainly cannot really glorify him in body without this inward spiritual exercise of love joy, faith, hope, humility and fear within. One may in the body so behave as that to men they may seem to glorify God, but still to God it is not so. On the other hand, it is vain

for a man to say, I glorify God in my mind and heart and spirit, in my thoughts concerning him, and in my soul's affections toward him, while at the same time the body is found in the service of the world, sin and Satan. One may say, I rejoice in God, while he attends places of worldly amusement, while he engages in dancing, card playing or what not of those things which the world loves, and which worldly professors say there is no harm in, but when he say so he lies. He either willfully says what he knows is not true, or else he is deceived, and mistakes carnal joys for those which are heavenly and spiritual. How utterly opposed to both the letter and the spirit of the gospel of the grace of God, and how utterly contradictory of all Christian experience is it to say, "My body is, as it always was, and it never can be expected to do anything but sin, and therefore it may indulge itself in all worldliness and wickedness, while yet the Spirit within me seeks and loves the glory of God. This Spirit within to love God led this same apostle elsewhere to say, "I keep my body under." It led him to say here to these Corinthians, "Glorify God in your body," as well as in your spirit. Again we desire to say that these two things cannot be disjoined. Our experience has been that we have found those who walked most carefully before men, and who were exceeding jealous of the slightest thing in thier daily conduct that might be to the reproach of the name which they had named, to also be humble and spiritual, and in feeling and thought very near to him who was meek and lowly in heart, and who did not sin, and in whose mouth no guile was ever found, and we have not found any pleasure in conversation with those who walked carelessly and indifferently before men. They who most earnestly love God, and desire that in all their thoughts he shall be uppermost, have been those who most jealously guarded their every word and act. Yet these same brethren and sisters have been those who have most bitterly complained of themselves, that they could not do the good that they would. Such as these who possess such a mind and desire will welcome all admonitions and rebukes, and will feel as a dear brother once said to us after listening to preaching, which at that time was to him heart-searching and life searching, "I love that kind of preaching which tells me my faults."

To glorify God in the spirit, is to be possessed of those things in the soul which abase self and exalt the Lord, and to glorify God in the body is not to absent ourselves from the house of worship, it is not to prefer worldly gain or pleasure to the privileges of the sanctuary, it is not to have the mouth filled with careless, light conversation, or foolish talking and jesting, or tale bearing, or slandering, or fault finding, it is not to seek first of all the riches or gain of this world, but it is to "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," it is to be sober in life and conversation, it is to prefer the companionship of the friends of God before all other, and to esteem the pleasures at the right hand of God as being more than all the light pleasures of the world, it is loving God more than pleasure, and not pleasure more than God. It is impossible to cover all the ground; we can do no more than to glean a few thoughts in this wide field. May the Master commend some handfulls to be let fall on purpose for some needy soul.

In the second text it is shown that God will be glorified in the death of his saints, as well as in their life. Peter should glorify God by the manner of his death. It is said that he was in the end crucified, as was his Master before him. We do not know that this is any more than a tradition, but be this as it may, in his death the Master promised that God should be glorified, and we desire to but call attention to the fact that all that relates to the death of all the saints is fixed, and so fixed that they all shall in death glorify

God, even as did Peter. It matters not whether the believer himself knows that it is so, or whether any one else knows that it is so, God knows it, and to him all that pertains to their death is precious; it all shall glorify God; all sickness, pain, weakness in the flesh, if indeed the subject of these things be a child of God, shall glorify him. With this may we not be content? Like Peter we know not the day, nor the hour, nor the manner in which God shall call us to glorify him in death; we do not need to know; God knows, and that is enough.

How blessed to have this hope set before: as we desire that God may be glorified in all things, so we are assured that even in death we shall glorify him, and as he is glorified in us, so shall we be in him. "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness."

(Editorial by Elder Chick, November 15, 1901.)

OBITUARIES

SISTER ETTA HAAR

I am again called on to write concerning the passing of one of our dear sisters, Sister Etta Haar; and I feel that I cannot do justice to such a dear one.

Sister Haar was born June 8, 1884, and died May 1, 1966. She was married to George W. Haar in 1909. She leaves three daughters, two sons, and three sisters to mourn their loss; but we feel that their loss is her eternal gain.

She was a great sufferer in this life physically, but bore her sufferings with great patience and fortitude — one of her daughters said, "She won't hurt anymore." She joined Malmaison Church some thirty years ago, and was a faithful member as long as she was able to attend; and always hoped to be able to go again.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Elder D. V. Spangler, after which her body was laid to rest in Mt. View Cemetery, to await the second coming of our Lord.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be sent to the family; one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; and one put on our church records.

Done by order of our church at our June meeting, 1966.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Kate Dodd, Clerk

and

SISTER ANNIE BLAIR

Also another of our dear sisters has passed on: Sister Annie Blair. She was born December 23, 1885, and died May 2, 1966. She also had been a member of Malmaison Church thirty years or more. She was a faithful member, and attended as long as she was able; and wanted to come when she was not able. She enjoyed having the Baptists visit her.

She leaves one brother and one sister, who feel their loss greatly. May the Lord give them courage and strength to say, "Thy will be done, not ours."

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Elder D. V. Spangler; after which her body was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park, to await the resurrection morning.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be sent to the family; one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; and one put on our church records.

Done by order of the church at our June, 1966 meeting.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Kate Dodd, Clerk

SYLVANUS CARTER

Deacon Sylvanus Carter was born in Franklin County, Virginia, near Republican Church, on February 21, 1894, the son of Thomas Carter and Elizabeth Greer Carter, both members of Republican Church.

He married Virgie F. Dodson on November 15, 1914.

He offered to the Church in May, 1941, and was gladly received, as was his companion who also offered on the same day. They both were baptized in July, 1941, by Elder Emmit Bryant at Old Union Church in Smith River.

His church saw the gift of a deacon in him and he was ordained deacon January 17, 1948, serving faithfully until his death. He was chosen clerk of his church November 17, 1945, and filled that duty until taken from us by death.

He died on October 27, 1964, as a result of injuries received in an automobile accident on October 24, 1964. His funeral was conducted at his home church, Republican, on October 29, 1964, by Elder William Holland, Elder Amos Hash, and the writer, his pastor. He was interred at his home cemetery.

He is survived by his wife, Virgie Dodson

Carter; two daughters, Mrs. Boneta Corley, Chesapeake; and Mrs. Elaine Nuckols, Rocky Mount; five sons, J. Lauren Carter, Rocky Mount; T. Donovan Carter, Ferrum; A. Otis Carter, Cockeysville, Maryland; Leon V. Carter, Reisterstown, Maryland; and Maury L. Carter, Orlando, Florida; and one brother, Thomas G. Carter, Bassett, Va.

Brother Carter is missed by all, — family and church. His brethren and friends are left behind to mourn, but not without hope, for we verily believe God called him. He was faithful to both his family and his church, and we desire grace to say "Thy will be done," and to be made to know that God will care for us.

Written by the late
Elder J. P. Helms

DEACON JESSE JONES PRIDGEN

Deacon Jesse J. Pridgen was born March 8, 1895, in Nash County, N. C. Son of the late Bunyam and Pattie J. Pridgen, and passed from this life November 21, 1965. He had been a life long resident of the Rocky Mount area.

Surviving are his wife, Mrs. Mary Moore Pridgen; three sons, Jesse Clyde and Thomas Guy, of Rocky Mount, N. C.; and James Bunyam of Winterville; two sisters, Mrs. Nannie Pridgen of Wilson, and Mrs. Pattie Ruth Bridgers of Newport News, Va.; three brothers, Wiley of Rocky Mount, and George and Cooper both of Lucoma; seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Deacon Pridgen had been a member of The Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church for many years, and was ordained Deacon January, 1959, serving in this capacity faithfully. He will be missed by all who knew him. We who loved him bow in humble submission to the will of our merciful and kind Heavenly Father. To the family we extend our deepest sympathy and pray that God may comfort you in your hour of distress.

His funeral was conducted from Johnson Funeral Home by his Pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, assisted by Elder Leslie Coker, midst a host of relatives and friends. His body was laid to rest in Rocky Mount Memorial Park to await the second coming of our Lord.

Nina Pearson

IN MEMORY OF
U. BARTLEY PENNINGTON

He was born April 29, 1883, and died March 10, 1964. He married Bessie Johnson Pennington the 11th of September, 1911. To this union were born five boys and three girls, which deeply feel the loss of a dear father, who we feel was devoted to his family, and his dear companion, who stood by with a helping hand to minister to his needs in his last days of illness; and who we feel will miss him most of all. May God bless and comfort them is our prayers. His occupation was farming as long as he was able to work.

Brother Pennington united with the Wilson Primitive Baptist Church first Sunday in September, 1961, and was baptized the following weekend. He remained a faithful member as long as he lived and was able to attend.

We, the members of Wilson Church, mourn the loss along with his companion and children and loved ones. We hope our loss was his eternal gain, and that he is resting from his labors. In his suffering, we could not wish him back. He went to sleep to be with Jesus, and to enter into that heavenly home, which God prepared for His children.

His funeral was conducted at the church by his pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, assisted by Elder W. E. Turner before a large congregation of loved ones and friends.

He was laid to rest at Evergreen Memorial Gardens in Wilson, N. C. under a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the coming of our Lord.

Done by order of conference.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Preston Gay, Clerk

DEACON
ROBERT SOLOMON ARMSTRONG

Deacon Armstrong was fatally injured in an accident Friday, May 13, 1966, when he was hit by an automobile. He was born in Wilson County, N. C. December 26, 1878, son of the late W. H. and Lavenia Armstrong. Surviving are his wife: Mrs. Henrietta Batchelor Armstrong; four daughters: Mrs. Clyde A. Douglass and Mrs. Thomas C. Allen of Raleigh, N. C.; Mrs. Edwin Coffey of Rocky Mount, and Mrs. Virgil B. Jenkins of Maysville; three sons: L. Clinton Armstrong of Raleigh; R. Jack and Marcus of Rocky Mount; 14 grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren.

He united with The Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church in November 1919; and was ordained as Deacon in June 1956, serving in this capacity faithfully. He will be missed by all who knew him. We who loved him bow in humble submission to the will of our merciful and kind Heavenly Father. To the family, we extend our heartfelt sympathy in their hour of distress. May God comfort you with his Loving Kindness and Tender Mercies is our prayer.

His funeral was conducted from Johnson Funeral Home by his Pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, amidst a host of relatives and friends, and he was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery to await the second coming our our Lord.

Nina Pearson

IN MEMORY OF BROTHER ALLISON GEORGE

Brother George born May 31, 1878, died June 5, 1966, age 88 years old. He joined Springfield Church June 9, 1963. He was faithful to the Church and attended meetings as regularly as his health permitted. He was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace. Springfield Church bows in humble submission to the Holy will of our Lord who doeth all things well.

He is survived by one brother, Robert Robert George, Gretna, Va., and one sister, Mrs. Tiny Pulliam, Front Royal. His funeral was held at Colbert Funeral Home and conducted by his Pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Mr. Adame. His body was laid away in Gretna Burial Park to await the second coming of our Lord.

Written by L. R. Willis by order of Springfield Church.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. R. Willis, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Mrs. Nancy Jane Cobb of Route 1, Ruffin, N. C., died in Ann Penn Memorial Hospital following an illness of three weeks. She was born in Caswell County, and had lived in the Pleasant Grove Community all her life.

She is survived by her husband, James Floyd Cobb, and two daughters: Mrs. Donald Pegram, Yorktown, Va., and Mrs. Johnny Oakley, of Reidsville, N. C.; five grandchildren, and two sisters: Mrs. George Harrelson, Reidsville, and Mrs. Julius Cobb of Ruffin.

The church at Pleasant Grove wishes to bow in humble submission to our gracious Heavenly Father, in removing by death a beloved, dear Sister, Jennie Cobb. She was a faithful and humble member, and an example of Christian humility.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That in the passing of this dear sister, we feel our loss very keenly, but bow in submission to the one who does all things well. And

RESOLVED, That we extend to the family our heartfelt sympathy. May God's blessings be upon each of us who mourn her loss, together with her family, and all who were near and dear to her. And

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be spread on the church book; one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; and one sent to the family.

Done by order of Pleasant Grove Church in her regular conference meeting. Written by Sister Lena Walker.

Brother Donald Smith, Moderator
Robert Walker, Clerk

SISTER FANNIE SUE WALKER

God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to call our precious sister home from this world of suffering. Sister Fannie Sue Walker died in Annie Penn Hospital May 7, 1966, following a day of critical illness.

Funeral services were conducted at Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church by Brother Donald Smith and Elder Wallis Smith. Interment was in Camp Spring Methodist Church Cemetery. Sister Walker united with Pleasant Grove Church in May, 1959. Since that time she was an humble and loyal member. Her loving smile and handshake at the meetings gave evidence that she loved her church and her Maker.

She was the former Fannie Sue Summers, daughter of the late George and Nannie Summers. Her husband, Luther P. Walker, died in 1952.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the family; one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; and one kept for the church record.

Done by order of the church Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in May, 1966.

Written by Mrs. Nellie Hodges.

Brother Donald Smith, Moderator
Robert F. Walker, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It is at the request of Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church, that I attempt to write in memory of our dear Sister Maggie Tolston.

Sister Tolston was born on January 7, 1881 and died May 21, 1966, making her stay on earth 85 years. She was blessed to ask for a home in our church May 2, 1965, and was received and baptized in full fellowship. It was due to her affliction that she was not blessed to attend her church after being baptized, but we feel that she was present in Spirit, if not in body. We feel that Sister Tolston was already a member years before she joined, as she well believed in "Salvation by Grace."

We, the church at Tarboro, feel that our loss is Sister Tolston's eternal gain. We feel that she is resting in peace and her trial and tribulations are over. We feel that she is awaiting the Resurrection Morning, when her Spirit shall rise to an everlasting home and we all shall be as one and be satisfied.

Therefore, We resolve that four copies of this be made, one for the Church Record; one for the family; one for publication in *The Landmark*; one for publication in *The Signs*;

This done by order of our June conference.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134 DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1966 NO. 11

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CIRCULAR LETTER FOR 1966

(Written by Elder A. J. Slauson)

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the First and Second Churches of Roxbury at Halcottville, Delaware County, N. Y., Thursday and Friday, September 8 and 9, 1966, sends love, fellowship and greetings to the several churches with which we correspond;

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

The time has arrived again for us, with joy and love for those of like precious faith in the true and living God, to meet together to sing and preach, and to feed on the crumbs that fall from the Master's table, to give new courage that the hands that hang down might be lifted up, and the feeble knees confirmed; that we, as babes in Christ, might take on strength to press onward and upward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ; and run with patience the race set before us. And to be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, that our light might so shine before men that they shall behold our good works and glorify our Father in heaven.

As this letter is to be circulated among those who know what it is to need mercy, and know what it is to have been given mercy, our conviction is to mention that we are told in the Word of God that God is rich in mercy, and has great love for his children. (Ephesians 2:4) Is it not true that great love will produce rich mercy? We understand that all who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and to whom the Lord is their whole trust, have some knowledge in feeling with much sincerity the great and abundant mercy God has shared them of his rich mercy every second of their lives, from birth until the present time. The Apostle Paul says, "As we have received mercy, we faint not." Again he says, "But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved his children even when they were dead in sin, . . ."

God was so rich in mercy that he could love the poor, guilty, hell deserving sinner, who had gone astray and come short of the glory of God. Not one had done good, no not one; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others. This is not so distressing if we only know about it by the reading of the Word, but when the Holy Ghost, whom Jesus has sent to teach his people all things, takes the things of Jesus and shows them unto us, and our blind eyes are made to see, and our deaf ears unstopped — or the Holy Spirit or light has shown in this corrupt, filthy and dirty man Adam, then it is a different matter. We do not have to read to find out what we are: something has shown us the many things we have done, "Is not this the Christ?" Sad as it may seem, it is strange but true, that not one single thing good is shown us that we have ever done: even when we would do good evil is present with us.

Brethren, do we understand this kind

of language? Are our hearts running together as two drops of water in these things? Is it any wonder that Adam tried to hide himself from God! after his eyes were opened. The fruit had given him knowledge of good and evil, and he then knew he was naked, and was ashamed before God. Do we not know what it is to be naked before God, and to be ashamed before him of our many faults, and of our thoughts? Would we want our brethren to know as much about our faults as God does? We don't think so. But we are glad that God knows about our many prayers and cries to him, and our thanksgiving and praise to his Holy Name in our secret prayers, because all things are known unto God.

Yet God, because of his rich mercy toward his children who had gone astray, withheld not his only begotten Son, who was full of grace and truth, that through His death and suffering, and his shed blood on the cruel cross, rising the morning of the third day, became the ransom for all whom God the Father had chosen in his Son. Because of his rich mercy for them, terrible sinners became saints of the most High God — heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Jesus, being God manifest in the flesh, was rich in mercy: rich enough that he had mercy for Mary Magdalene; and to reveal himself to doubting Thomas, and comfort him. Rich enough that he prayed for poor Peter in his weakness; and to the poor thief on the cross at the door of death, he promised Paradise; and the poor publican, who could not as much as raise his eyes toward heaven, found rich mercy coming from him.

We could go on and on, but the half has never been told of his rich mercy. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isaiah 1:18) What a change through rich mercy and the great love of God. "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty: just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints," thou can cleanse the vilest sinner's guilt, and soften hearts of stone. What great mercies we have from God. We have been made to love God, and to put all our trust in him; and to observe his mercy on every hand, and to know how very greatly we are in need of his rich mercy as long as life remains in this mortal body. Then, when death comes, what "last rites" do we need, as they call it, or must have, if heaven is to be our eternal home? Is it not God's rich mercy only, which we are told is from everlasting to everlasting and which endureth forever, therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed? Is it not true that each one of God's little children feel that he is the poorest one, and that he needs more mercy than anyone else?

"A needy sinner led to seek
For mercy and for grace,
May always come to Christ, though weak,
And tell him all his case.

I'll never cast out those who come,
The gracious Saviour said:
All such he very dearly loves —
For them his blood he shed.

Though they may feel their lack of faith,
And scarce know how to seek;
Yet Jesus can preserve from death,
And hold them up when weak.

Then let true seekers all press on,
Not faint, but persevere
Until the Lord himself makes known
That they to him are dear.

When this he does, how blest they'll be;
What joy will fill their hearts:
Joy which transcends exceedingly
The best that earth imparts.

They then will bless and praise their God,
And wonder at his love:
With faith and hope pursue the road
That leads to joys above."

THOUGHTS ON THE RESURRECTION

Do you believe in the resurrection of the dead, a bodily resurrection both of

the just and unjust? Friends, I do, because in Acts 24:15, it says, "And have hope toward God which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."

If we take the opinion that some Baptists take that the resurrection is when we are "born" again of the Spirit, then what will we do with the unjust in this scripture? It says they will be resurrected also, and when will they be resurrected? Just as surely as we must be born again to see the kingdom of God, we must be quickened again at the last day to be resurrected.

A dead body can do nothing. We could not be born again of ourselves but God who quickens us in this second birth brings forth life (spiritual life) and gives us hope in Christ. The earthly or fleshly birth we have is also without our help. We can do nothing to be born either fleshly or spiritually. Have you ever thought just how glorious this is, and how merciful is God? Without Him, we would never have had a birth at all. But, what love he has towards us to quicken us in the new birth. To quicken means to impart life to.

When Christ is born in us the hope of glory, it is the work of God. When Christ is born in us or made manifest to us, then and only then do we hope for glory and glorification. Before we know anything of Christ in our hearts, we have no hope, and without hope, how could we hope for glory? But still, after Christ is born in us the hope of glory, if in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable. Yes, my dear friends in Christ, the hope of glory reaches into the vail where Jesus the forerunner has gone and is now sitting at the right hand of the Father making intercession for his children. Our hope shall not end until that last day when we shall hear the verdict, either guilty or not guilty proved by this saying, "Come yea blessed of my Father and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," or "Depart from me, I never knew you." Oh, how I hope to hear the former verdict, but if I hear the latter one, then God is just and I have gotten my just condemnation.

Do you believe the resurrection is yet to come? I do, because Jesus' own language confirms it in John 6: 39, 40: "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up **again at the last day.**" "And this is the will of Him that sent me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up **at the last day.**" What is life everlasting? Does it end when this body of ours is laid in the grave? Certainly, I do not think so! We are to be raised again immortal and that is what is everlasting.

Read John 6: 44 and 6: 54 - "No man can come to me, except the father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up **at the last day.**" "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up **at the last day.** The Spirit of God that dwells in his children maketh them eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ; and the Spirit within them also quickens their mortal bodies to life eternal and they shall be raised at the last day.

First Corinthians 15: 12, Paul is asking if Christ be preached risen from the dead, why say some there is no resurrection. There were some of those Corinthians in that church at Corinth that surely must have been saying there is no resurrection, and Paul tells them that if Christ is not risen from the dead, his preaching along with the others is in vain; as well as your faith is vain also. He further states that if we believe that Christ is not risen, we are false witnesses of God because we have testified that he raised up Christ. For if the dead rise not, then Christ is not risen, then we are still in our sins. He died for our transgressions, he arose for our justification - - such love! What? - Say some of you that these bodies rise not? Then, why was Christ's body raised? I can't help but believe that it is written for our understanding that if Christ died, was

buried, and rose again, these bodies of ours will do the same by the grace of God. Don't you remember Christ telling his disciples after he had arisen to touch him, for a spirit has not flesh and bones? Also, don't you remember how he ate with them? Ah, yes, Christ was certainly in the body.

This body of ours is to be buried or sown in corruption, for we are corrupt and mortal and we shall be raised incorruptible and immortal. 1st. Cor. 15: 53, "For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality." Verse 54: "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." Verse 55: "O death where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

Paul futhermore establishes the resurrection of the body by saying that Christ being raised from the dead became the first-fruits of them that slept. Every man shall be made alive in his own order: Christ the firstfruits and afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the **end** when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God.

If we believe that when Christ is born in us the hope of glory, is the time of the resurrection of the dead, then we must believe that it is then this body puts on immortality; and something immortal can never die, but I believe as did Paul "what advantageth me if the dead rise not?" For we suffer such afflictions that as with Paul "we die daily." Some have not the knowledge of God and this was spoken to their shame.

There are bodies terrestial and bodies celestial -- that is to say there are bodies earthly and bodies heavenly. When this terrestial body dies, it is sown (buried) a natural body and raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body. To me this means there are two bodies, the corrupt or natural body, and the spiritual or incorruptible and immortal body. I believe that the natural body is the one that you and I see, and this same body because of the spirit of God dwelling in it when the last day shall come, he shall quicken it and resurrect it, and it becomes incorruptible and immortal. Romans 8: 11; "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you."

Can we compare the quickening of the heart or regeneration to the resurrection? When Christ is born in us the hope of glory, and our stony heart becomes a heart of flesh, we do become dead to sin or the law and alive to hope in Christ. Colossians 2: 13; "And you, being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;". John 5:21; "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." John 5: 25; "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." Now consider this, John 5: 28; "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice."

Can't you derive a pleasure from this scripture when he says the hour is coming and now is, and then when he says the hour is coming when all in the graves shall hear his voice. Yes, I believe it's two different hours he's speaking of, because in one verse he says the hour is coming and **now is** (present tense), and he follows it up by saying the hour is coming (but he does not say **now is**) in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. That hour he mentions is in the future.

But, our flesh or natural body ever wars against the spirit that dwells in us and surely this war must be conquered. If the Spirit of God dwells in us, it is in

our hearts the hope of glory, and if the Spirit of God dwells in us, it is through the grace and mercy of God and nothing we have done to merit it, for in this flesh dwells no good thing; and what can the flesh profit us? And, if the Spirit of God dwells in us, we will surely be raised incorruptible and presented by Christ into the kingdom of God. Oh, my soul, I would that I may be one that the Spirit of God dwells in. Paul says, "I shew you a mystery." And it is a mystery as to what this body raised shall be, but it is no mystery that it will certainly be raised. It is sown corrupt and raised incorruptible at the last day. Else, how will we ever see Jesus and be like him and behold him in all his glory?

Why do I so emphatically believe that this is to take place at the last day? Because my Bible is simply full of scripture declaring this very thing. Why do you suppose Peter said that David's sepulchre is with us to this day? Because it is the truth, and David's sepulchre means his grave is with us -- his burying place. He has not risen in body. His spirit has returned to the Father who gave it, but when Christ shall descend with the sound of the trump and the voice of the archangel to gather his elect, if we are alive at that time, we shall not prevent David's rising or any of the others who have slept. It speaks of those left at his appearing as being changed. I cannot describe this change, but I sincerely believe that they will be changed and meet Him in the air. This must hold true to the fact that Enoch and Elijah were translated that they should not see death. This establishes the scripture that we shall not all sleep, but we all shall be changed. Surely this mystery was written for the edification of His people, from which they could, and do, derive comfort. And when all of this transpires at Christ's second coming, and all the graves have given up the dead and these bodies put on incorruption and immortality then shall be brought to pass this saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. The grave can no longer be victorious over these bodies it enclosed. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. How in the name of scriptural knowledge do you suppose death can be destroyed? By life, of course ! And to have life, these dead bodies must be quickened and made alive in the resurrection.

You know and believe that the psalmist David was a loved character -- loved by the heavenly Father -- he was born again, we'd say, but in Psalms 71: 20, he seems to have thoughts on the resurrection of his body for he believes that he shall be quickened **again** and be brought up **again** from the depths of the earth.

If, in the scripture, only one verse could be found that spoke of the resurrection of the body both of the just and unjust, it would be just as sure and just as comforting as if every chapter and every verse in the Bible spoke of it. I can recall that only once do I remember reading that "Jesus wept," and how I believe that he did, for he had great love for Lazarus and his sisters, Martha and Mary. Surely, Martha believed in the resurrection of the body at the last day, for Lazarus was dead and buried and she told Jesus she knew he would live again in the resurrection at the last day.

Romans 8: 18, 21: "For I reckon that the suffering of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the **bondage of corruption** into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

Isn't it glorious and overpoweringly joyful to hear that the things Christ's children suffer now is not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in them. What a consolation to believe that the creature shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. The glorious liberty of the chil- of God must surely mean the hope being ended when Christ presents them to the Father. A glorious liberty or freedom -- no more hoping but freedom in the knowledge that their hope has become a reality. Surely, if we knew already

(those of us who trust that God has born in us Christ the hope of glory) that the resurrection is past, we would not yet hope for anything, for we would have reached the end of our hope.

But consider the following: Colossians 2: 8; "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of man, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

It may matter not to some how or when the resurrection is, just so they believe in a resurrection, but ah, my friends, it matters to me, because the apostles and my Lord (I hope) taught there is a particular way this body is resurrected and also when it shall be. The truth must rightly be divided. There are still some today who frustrate the grace of God and overthrow the faith of some. It is by grace we are saved, and it is by His grace that we are raised immortal after death and presented by His Son into the Kingdom of God.

Why am I so bold as to say that there are some who frustrate the Grace of God and overthrow the faith of some? Because Paul said it, I believe it; but, also because in the past few years, I have seen and heard from some of my friends (who I believe God has touched their hearts and quickened them) say that they didn't know what to think of some of the things that the people who called themselves Old School Baptists were advocating, people whom they had had confidence in. It seems my friends are suffering because there are still those who frustrate the grace of God. I hasten to add that these friends of mine are not children of this visible church, but their manifestations are such to lead me to believe that God is in the matter.

Pray for me, and if I am wrong in all my belief, then I must say we are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God, and to me this is what the scripture given through inspiration has taught me through revelation, and I cannot accept the teaching of man in this world with all his pomp and learning.

In humble hope,
Lavonia Lee (Mrs. Gilbert Lee)

REPORT OF UNION MEETING

Benton, Ky.

To the Editors and Readers
of the *Signs:*

Our Union Meeting time "Came to pass": we gathered together, a few of us afflicted and poor people, trusting, as we hope, in the name of the Lord. Our Moderator, Elder O. W. Perkins, passed away December 26, 1965. He had been Moderator of our Union Meeting for many years; so "it came to pass" we had to select another to fill the vacancy, and the selection was Elder Paul Poyner, who is also Moderator of our association.

When our three day Union was over, and we were getting ready to leave for our homes, I wondered why this Scripture kept coming to my mind, "And it came to pass."

We were blessed to have as our visitors, Elder W. D. Griffin, Associate Editor of the *Signs*; Elder R. L. Biggs, of Nashville; Elder J. N. Darnell and Elder W. Y. Chandler of the Little River Association, Elders Herbert Prince and Grady Brown of the Memphis congregation, and Elder R. W. Rhodes and Elder Euley McCool of the Hopewell and Buttahatchee Associations.

"And it came to pass," that we spent each day at the Zion Church, in Mayfield, Kentucky; and had four and five sermons each day before retiring to places of rest for the night. We ask, "Why, oh why, Lord, was it so." Truly it was the good pleasure of the Most High to favor us with such riches of his grace, which was purposed for us even before there were any of us. Could we be among those people chosen in Christ Jesus before the world was? Chosen a peculiar people, singing, "From the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the

people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations." (Numbers 23:9)

Surely, in one sense we are alone, and not reckoned as a church: no room for us in the world — a people trusting only in the finished work of the Holy Child Jesus for our salvation in time, and in eternity.

"And it came to pass." All the sermons delivered by these God sent and God taught ministers, were comforting to us who were present. The texts they were inspired to use, exalted our Lord, giving him all praise, all honor and glory; and showing the depraved condition of fallen man, unable to redeem himself from his lost and undone condition. What a Union Meeting! A reunion of believers in Christ Jesus our Lord, knowing that sinners are saved by God's grace now, and forever.

In hope,
Effie Bowden

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23)

Dear Editors:

This Scripture has been on my mind so much of late, and, if it is of the Lord's direction, it could be that I can write something of interest to the dear readers of the *Signs*. The Apostle's mind was on *sin*, for he made mention of it several times in this chapter. He gave very strict admonition against us continuing in sin; and in closing the chapter, he told us what the wages of sin is. Please read the chapter carefully, following the mind of the Apostle.

Now, we note that the Apostle referred to *wages*, and to the *gift* in the same sentence. The first is something to be received for work done, and the latter is purely an unearned or gratis act. Did he not have in mind *works* and *grace*? He wrote on another occasion, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the *gift* of God: not of *works*, lest any man should boast."

Also, we find that he spoke of *death*, or of being in a dead state, in more than one way. "How shall we that are *dead to sin*, live any longer therein?" (2nd verse) "Now if we be *dead with Christ*, we believe we shall also live with him." (8th verse) He made another reference to death in verse 13, ". . . as those that are *alive from the dead*, . . ." Then the type of death which he said was the wages of sin in the last verse of the chapter, is what we want to bring out and examine. Just what kind of death is it? Since he referred to the *gift* being eternal, was not the *death* also eternal in, or as to its existence? God fore-ordained or determined before the world was, all who were to be the recipients of this *gift of eternal life;* and left record of what eternal life is, or is to be. Would not the same apply to this *death* that is the wages of sin?

As I am given to see it, the death that occurred to Adam was a type of identical death we have in mind. God drove Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden, it being a type of heaven, or place they could have remained had there been no transgression. After they transgressed, God drove them out, and made it impossible for them to enter therein again. What was this but that they received a type of death as wages for their sin? Continuing this line of reasoning on through the time world, we see those engaged in works of sin, enjoying all the worldly benefits, and living their lives in God's great sunshine, and the wonderful things that natural life affords. When this time world ends, and the resurrection comes to pass, and the multitudes, the countless millions upon millions that were not given that gift of eternal life, are separated from those that have received this gift, will they not be receiving the wages of sin? They are to be forever

afterwards in a state of darkness, entirely void of any of God's eternal love.

Referring again to chapter 6 of Romans, verse 16, the Apostle sees two groups of people in this time world. Again it is my mind that one is that which is of *works,* and the other one those recipients of *grace,* or *gift of life eternal.* He says, "Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness."

This, to me, means that all mankind is separated into these two groups by the will of God, and determined upon long before time began. We know not the reasons thereof, and will never know the mind of the almighty God. "Be still and know that I am God," is the written word.

Turning to Matthew 7:21-23, it is seen that Christ viewed that group doing works, and earning the wages of sin, for it is written, "Then will I profess (say) unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." On another occasion, when claims were being made by some that they were his followers, he said, "Ye are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." (John 8:44)

Many pages could be written on these Scriptures, and still they would not be fully covered. Suffice it to say, when we look about us at the works of this sin-stricken world, we must recognize we are in the last days. How dark and perilous are days now, and how fast are the world's conditions worsening? We are prone to view all this with great trembling. How soon will it be till the almighty God will be meting out those wages of sin spoken of by the Apostle? The world is filled to the near breaking point with iniquity, evil and vice, hatred and corruption, and troubles without end. I am mindful of the words of the writer whose mind viewed what we are now going through:

"When trouble like a gloomy cloud,
Has gathered thick and thundered loud."

We are surely hearing great thunderings, and seeing the shaking of the earth; and many, many signs that we are in the last days.

Then, how priceless and precious are our experiences, and all the evidences that we are recipients of that gift of eternal life? Many are the times, when meditating upon this very mysterious thing, I am made to ask, "How can it be possible such a vile and sinful being as I, should be given that gift. Should not my lot be to receive the wages of sin instead?"

If this writing is of any interest to the household of faith, give all praise to the all-wise and all-powerful God.

A sinner, saved by grace, that gift of God, if saved at all.

Wm. O. Hall,
P. O. Box 595,
Mount Vernon, Washington 98273

Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing a letter for your consideration, which I received from my niece. To me it sets forth the doctrine and the experiences of God's children. She has spoke many such words to me.

Yours in hope,
Carrie Campbell

"NOTHING TOO INSIGNIFICANT"

3314 Debby,
Memphis, Tenn.

Dearest Aunt:

Your letter, or sermon, gave me great pleasure to read yesterday, but seemingly this morning is the stimulent to a heart racing wildly with praises to God. Aren't you glad to believe that nothing is too insignificant to cause an outpouring of praise to God? Meaning not, by any means, that your letter was insignificant, but thinking that no great spectacular import was broadcast, when you very quietly wrote it, and as quietly

stamped it for mailing; but if you could hear the thunderous rolls of Hosannas within my heart to the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, it would cause you to feel humbly thankful for God's directing hand over your paper the day you took pen in hand to answer my letter, maybe hesitatingly, maybe anticipatingly, I know not, nor care not, for I know that in the doing, God's inspiration shown through.

I often rejoice in my observations of small, unnoticed things, and realize that, to me , those small unnoticed things are symbolic of the little lambs of God who are not recognized in this world, even to the point of derisive comments on their complete unimportance; but how sweet, how comforting, how glorious is the fact that God, not the lambs, chose particularly this way to hide and protect them from the world. Who in the world, knowing their richness and vast inheritance, would not seek to enter into that fold by "hook" or "crook"? What better way to hide His flock than to clothe them with the mysterious belief and faith in the true God, and not the world's conception of God? This belief and faith is hidden in temples which appear no different to that of all of Adam's creation, but sets them apart as surely as the severing of a sword.

I even sometimes feel to see and rejoice in the mystery of being made subject to vanity, even as others. Again, how perfectly hid are his children going about in the world, partaking of frivolities, lusting, yea, even lusting for prestige, admiration and respect of men. Only when it pleases God to remove these vain thoughts, and show his children a glimpse of prefection as it is in Jesus Christ, are they made repentant of these pursuits, and desirous to set their whole mind and heart toward God and godly things, and forsake all foolishness. Then what a glorious revival is staged in the heart; what praises, what songs rise unto that One who holds the world in his hands: who is longsuffering and patient to his childrens' infrimities, and leads them about and instructs them in righteousness; who suffers them to stray, to haltingly step into ways not desirable, all for their teaching; and who finally lifts them tenderly and confidently up to the place where they sing joyously, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

All of this must be borne in the secret confines of that temple which resembles outwardly, all of Adam's creation; but which differs as much as darkness to light, due to that marvelous operation all His children undergo: the establishment of a new heart by his skillful hands. Seeing as all of this wonderful work is done within, and none but the child feels this master surgeon's skillful work, it is not unusual to read that God's children must worship him in truth and Spirit, and go in a closet to pray and make supplications.

When given an insight from the Divine Creator, we feel bold to the point of saying that we see the mysteries of God unfolding everywhere; and we even feel to see and understand it is good that we spend so much time floundering without this insight. For at these times we feel to look everywhere, beholding this thing and that in nature, and say it is good, for God has divined it thusly, etc.

How soon, when left to ourselves, we begin to look at these same things in nature, and find nothing but paradoxies, and reasons to doubt everything about us - about even God; and must again wallow in the slime of despair until it pleases God to renew us again, and show us again his sustaining power and pleasure.

How at times when lifted up, I feel to mourn that all creation can't see and acknowledge the glory of God. Sometimes I feel a spirit of anger, combined with a missionary zeal, to see to it that God is praised-all in my mind, of course-but, Oh, how I must be taught anew that even the wrath of man praises Him: the remainder God restrains.

Could I but be given a thankful heart

and mind for the experiences I feel to have had. Sometimes I even dare to exclaim that surely my teacher has been God. Needless to say, I had no idea of writing so much, but if it be of God, it will profit that which He pleases; and if it only be of me, it too will serve the purpose of God. My prayer is that He lead me about and instruct me in His love.

Love,
Carrie Jo Williams

"OFTEN IN A DRY AND DESOLATE LAND"

Rt. 6, Box 1
Fayette, Alabama 35555

Signs of the Times:

Excuse me for letting my subscription be past due.

We certainly enjoy reading the **Signs**, and sometimes reap much comfort from its pages in reading of the travels of God's little children. Also the rich food that is set forth in the many good articles and editorials. Elder Gilbert Beebe's writings are especially satisfying to our hungry souls, when it pleases God in his tender love and mercy, to touch our hearts in removing from us the cares of the world, and opening up our understanding of spiritual things.

Most of the time we find ourselves in a dry and desolate land, so far as being able to reach out and grasp anything that is food for the hungry soul: then we can only hope against hope that we have a hope; but if indeed God has ever touched our hearts in tender love and mercy, and given us hope of a better life to come, when we will not be burdoned with this heavy load of sin, and our doubts and fears done away, and all will be joy and happiness: if indeed this be so with us, we cannot throw our hope aside. What God has done, is done forever. This is my staff of life: if I did not believe this I don't think I could continue on.

Right now a scripture comes to my mind, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." To me, He, Jesus, is all the rest we have; and it is only when we have labored with our heavy load of sin, and are made to look unto him for help, and are made to see, through an eye of faith, that he, and he only, is able to bear the heavy load. We are given hope through this same eye of faith, that when He bowed his head on the cruel cross of Calvary, and said, "It is finished," that we were included in that number that he loved with an everlasting love: a love so great that he took upon himself to suffer, bleed and die, to give himself a ransom for our sins, that we might go free.

It is here that we find rest that is sweet and enduring; that cannot be done away with. I don't mean that we will not be burdened again; but that each time there is peace and rest in our souls, he is present with us in a revealed sense. I believe that if we are one of his, he is ever present with us, and always watching over us; but not always in a revealed sense. We are left to ourselves at times, and so far as we can see or do, our soul becomes very lean, that we might know that we ourselves are nothing; and that we might look unto him for help, and rejoice in him and see him as our redeemer.

In the beginning, I meant this to be a very brief and business like note, but you see I have "spilled" a few of my puny thoughts, which I hope will not be offensive in any way. If not deceived, I remain a lover of the truth as set forth in the pages of the **Signs of the Times.**

Mrs. U. R. (Hallie) Taylor
Quitman, Texas

EXPERIENCE

Dear Editors, Brethren and Sisters —

I was a silent reader of the dear old **Signs** before I was made to ask for a home with them in the church, (this was about two years before my dear father was called away) for which I have always been thankful to the Lord. He was a strong believer and a member

of the Old Baptist church at Friendship before I was born. He read the Bible at night to us children, likewise the **Signs of the Times.** At the time of much of this reading it only made me feel that I was condemned to die and be sent to an everlasting punishment. I would go to bed and try to pray that I might do good and escape the awful punishment. I wanted to be as good a girl as I could, although I seemed to realize that I had to have a great change before becoming a fair subject for joining any church. I felt if I could receive an experience like those I read in the **signs,** or like my father's experience which I heard him relate many times, I would be glad and thankful.

As I look back now, I can see and sometimes feel, that everything was working as the Lord directed, yet it was a sorrowful road for me to believe as my father; but different to my mother, as she was a Missionary Baptist. We children attended both churches, and would go to the revivals. Others of my age would go up for prayer and get converted. But as wicked as I was, and as bad as I needed help, I felt that it was not for me. I just could not believe in that kind of Doctrine, although I did not at that time, see how that I could ever join either church, as I loved my parents the same; and now feel that I shall, through grace, meet them both. I went on like this for some time, being torn between parents. As time went on, I began to love the Old Baptist church more and more. During this time I believe that the Lord gave me a dream, for after it I did not worry about it anymore. In my dream mother and I were in a large church building with but a few people there. It seemed that the minister called for people of her faith to come to the stand. She went and I followed; she stopped and shook hands with the minister, but I left her there and walked away from the stand and did not see my mother anymore. When I was brought to wakefulness I felt relieved from joining her church, although she had never asked me to do so. As much as I loved her I felt that burden leave my mind. In the meantime my love for the Old Baptist increased and I knew that I believed what they preached. On a Saturday morning, my father came to my home and told me that I could go with them to Nashville to church. I met them at the highway and went with them. On that morning he talked with me and gave me an opportunity to tell him how I felt. I told him that I believed all that they preached; that I knew that it was the truth, and that I could never join another church, but that I had never felt an experience of any kind. When Elder Curry began talking he surely was inspired, he opened up my understanding, and the way was shown to me, and I was blessed to shed tears of rejoicing.

However, at this time I did not feel that the time had developed for me to ask for membership. We went out to one of my cousin's for lunch. I did not talk much, but they all talked of the wonderful sermon, though I did tell them that I felt relieved and had a great desire to join the church, which my father knew. From that time on I would go to church, but wasn't given the right feeling for about three years. It was at our association on Sunday, when I hope the Lord led me to ask for a home at Friendship. They gladly received me and I was baptized by Elder R. L. Biggs, my first cousin. Whether I am worthy or not, I have a great love for them, which is beyond description.

I was married in early life. My husband was not a member of any church, but he had never heard an Old Baptist preach. His people were all Missionary Baptist, but he did not believe their doctrine. We would go some and carry our children to both sides. He liked the Primitive Baptist, although he did not understand all that they preached. He would go with me to the meetings nearer home. He was not opposed to me joining the church. He helped to prepare for the last association, and died shortly afterwards with a heart attack.

I am a lonely widow and have lived with my daughter for twelve years. I am

twenty-four miles from my church, but go as often as I can.

I have tried to tell of my hope in my Saviour, although it is very weak at times. I do know that I love the brethren and all of his servants. May God continue to bless you who are Editors now, as he did the ones that served when the **Signs** was first started. They have been a great blessing to the readers; they are a great comfort to me. I have old copies of my father's papers, and even now they are still new when I read them.

Your little sister,
Mrs. Nellie Carver

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618 Cardinal Place
Apt. 2
Danville, Va.

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I received my August *Signs of the Times* last week, and appreciated it very much. It contains rich and beautiful writings each month, which I much enjoy.

I am enclosing copy of my experience which I wrote in 1942, soon after I united with the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church the 3rd Saturday in July. Elder R. B. Denson, now deceased, was our pastor then. It was a wonderful experience to me, and is still precious. We can never express the beauty of our experience in writing, or in relating it to any one; but we can never forget the time when the Lord was gracious and merciful to us when we were in deep trouble and affliction. He is the only one who gives any comfort and abiding peace. He never leaves us, nor forsakes us, but leads us and guides us in paths we have not known, in his own appointed time.

I have moved my membership to Springfield Church, Gretna, Va., since I moved from Norfolk. Please pray for me when at the throne of grace.

A little sister,
Thelma Reece Wilson

EXPERIENCE

I am going to try to write some of the good things I feel have been the dealings of the Lord with me. I hope I have been blessed with the love that God sheds abroad in our hearts at his appointed time; and he prepares our hearts to receive it.

I had often been concerned about my mean and sinful ways, and felt that I should change and do better, or I would be lost eternally. But I did not know what to do. I thought that if I would attend church somewhere regularly it would be all right, (thinking that there was something I had to do that would make me a better person.) So I would start attending church and Sunday school, and take my children with me when they were small, for I felt that they should be taught to go to church somewhere. I would go every Sunday for awhile, and then I would stop going — forgetting my sinful ways, and was content the way I was until I would think about it again. I did not have a desire to join any church at that time.

I was born and reared in Wilmington, N. C., and I often went to the Wilmington P. B. Church with my mother, who was a member there then but moved her membership to Norfolk after we moved to Virginia. My grandfather was a deacon in the Wilmington Church for many years. I enjoyed going there, for I had always gone there when I was a child; and always went to meeting there when I went home on visits. I did not understand the doctrine for I had not been enlightened, as I hope I am now. I did not have that love that I now have for the Primitive Baptist people, for I knew nothing about it.

I was in trouble all last summer and fall over my lost and ruined condition. (1941) One day in June while I was busy with my work at home, it seemed a voice spoke to me, and said, "You are

under conviction for your sins," and repeated it again. I felt that I was one of the meanest persons in the world; but I did not think so much about it until the last of June. I was taken sick, and was very ill for a week. I just felt like I was going to die, and I knew that if I died then there was no hope of eternal life for me. One morning about dawn, (I had slept but very little that night,) I prayed for the Lord to heal me, if it was His will. I know that he answered my prayer, for I was better all that day, and continued to improve. But I could not get away from the thought that I was lost; and that without help from God I would be lost forever. So in my weak way I tried to pray, but I felt that my prayers did not reach Him.

I felt as if I was one alone, without a friend in the world; and that even God had forsaken me. I could find no peace or rest anywhere. I would visit around, thinking that would get it off of my mind; but I was miserable until I would get back home — and when I got home, I was no better off. I could not eat or sleep, and would just stay awake and think about my lost condition, and that there was no hope for me.

One Sunday I stayed in bed most all day: I had no desire to get up. I got to the place where all of my strength left me, and I could barely lift my hand. I believe it was God showing me just how helpless I was. I was so distressed that I cried most of the time. I felt that everyone was against me; and my friends told me that they believed I was on the verge of a nervous breakdown; but I did not tell them of my trouble. I told no one except my mother, and wrote to my friend, Sister Annie Higgins of Newport, N. C., who wrote me some very comforting letters.

I could not get away from the heavy burden that was in my heart. I tried to pray this way, "Lord, save me from my sins, for there is nothing I can do." He has all the power, and we will call upon him to have mercy on us when we realize the ruined state we are in.

I continued on in this trouble for awhile, praying every night, and then through the day also; and I began to feel that God was hearing my prayers, for these words would come to me, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." That was very comforting; and the sermons were also. The last of November in 1941, I had a very beautiful dream or vision: I could see the Lord preaching his wonderful gospel to a crowd of people by the water. Which, I hope was revealed to me, was the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists. I now loved that doctrine, and could not hear enough preaching; and I loved all the Old Baptist people. Verse after verse of Scripture came into my mind, and I was rejoicing because I now felt the Lord had heard my prayers, and was answering them; but I still had the burden on my heart.

About the 18th of December, 1941, was when I felt the burden was lifted, and I received my hope of eternal life — which is very precious to me. It seemed that my whole being was filled with the Spirit, and I could not praise the Lord enough. I kept repeating, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, praise his name." I was so happy that my Saviour had sought me out when a stranger wandering from the fold. This was in the daytime, and that same night I had a beautiful vision — I was not asleep. I saw my blessed Saviour going to the cross, and in the distance I saw the cross of Calvary; and all the time I was viewing this, a voice was coming from heaven, saying, "God sent his only begotten Son down to earth, to die on the cross for the redemption of thy sins." And all that time, I seemed to be held by the power of God, and I could not move until it was over.

Then I was astonished and amazed that such a wonderful vision should come to me, as unworthy as I felt to be. The next night I had the very same vision right after I went to bed, and

the very same words were spoken; only at the end of these words were added, "Take up thy cross and follow me." It was wonderful — I cannot express the beauty of it.

I got along fine for awhile, and then I began to have doubts and fears as to whether my sins had been forgiven or not; and then one day a voice spoke the words to me within, "Thou hast found favor with God: thy sins have been forgiven thee." This made me very happy, that I should have this blessed hope: a gift of God to go with me always.

Then these words came to my mind while at work in my kitchen, "Go and tell thy friends what good things the Lord has done for you. Go to the church." But I did not think that I was good enough to join the church, so I could not go then.

This spring (1942) I went two or three times with the intention of offering to the church at Norfolk; but I didn't. I had to be made willing — we cannot go of our own accord, we have to wait the Lord's appointed time. But these words were in my mind: It is not complete (my experience) until I join the church and be baptized.

I feel that it was the Lord's will that I join the 3rd Saturday in July, 1942, and be with my people. After hearing the beautiful sermon that our pastor, Elder R. B. Denson, preached, I couldn't stay away any longer. I offered to the church, and they received me into their fellowship at Norfolk. I was very happy, although I felt too unworthy to belong with such good people. Sunday, when I started to the water, I seemed to lose my strength, feeling not good enough to be baptized; but I soon felt better, and was baptized. And then I could say, "It is complete — my experience of grace." When I came out of the water I felt better both naturally and spiritually.

Written by a little sister in a precious hope.

Thelma Reece Wilson

I wrote the above in July, 1942, after I united with the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church. After I moved from Norfolk, I moved my membership to Springfield Church, Gretna, Va.

"FIVE HUNDRED YARDS VS FIVE HUNDRED MILES"

Weatherford, Texas 76086

Dear Readers of the *Signs:*

I sometimes have a desire to write you and share a few thoughts with you, but when I think of my ignorance, it has a killing effect on my writing.

I'll give you some proof of how ignorant I am at times. A good while back I was on a trip on the bus, and having to wait a good while for another bus, and it being Sunday night about 8 o'clock, I heard someone preaching down the street, and it sounded like a woman's voice. I reasoned that, since there was no one that knew me, I would not be seen giving audience to false teaching, to the extent that some weak brother would be embolden to eat that which was offered unto idols: "If any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; and through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish," etc. I felt free from all this, but it is part of my faith not to give audience to such.

I found this an air-dome kind of revival. Soon the little woman got near the end of her harangue and began to call for anyone that desired to be prayed for, to raise his hand. My hand had no inclination to go up, although many others did — of course, I got a bit of attention. Just before she dismissed, she asked all who who wanted to go to heaven, to raise their hands — again my hand did not go up, although I think all others did. I did not go there with any intention of taking part with them; but, my, my, what a crowd

I had around me when they dismissed: they wanted to find out why I wanted to go to hell — why would ayone not want to go to heaven? Then is when I wished I was at home. They asked me about myself, who I was, what I believed, etc. When I confessed I only had a hope, one ridiculed me, and said he once only had a hope, but now *he knew* he was saved. He gave me a lecture on what all I must do to really know I was saved.

Once again, I was in Waco, Texas, and had to wait on a bus. It was about 2 P. M. on Sunday, and I saw a church house not far away. I thought I would "while the time away" hearing someone preach. I again thought of the Scripture that warns us against sitting at meat in the idol's temple; but again I knew that no one would know me, nor know that I had knowledge of the real truth. A man was preaching when I went in. I took a seat and listened a short while, then began to feel miserable. As I decided to leave, he began preaching against the "honky-tonks" up and down the highways, condemning the ones that went there. As I arose and went down the aisle toward the back door, he said, "Look at him! look at him! what do you think of a man who can't stand to hear one preach like I am preaching now?" I thought that it served me well: I knew better than to go there: If it is not right to go near your home to hear false teaching or preachers, it is not right to practice it away from home.

For thirty years I suppose I have given audience to false teachers not more than five times. Once, when my son graduated from high school, I went to the auditorium to hear a baccalaureate sermon: about half-way through the sermon all the lights went out, and, of course, the preacher stopped speaking. A missionary son-in-law was sitting beside me, and said, "Mr. Purdy, I don't believe in note preaching, do you? When they can't see their notes, they have to stop." I replied, "Yes, I believe in it." His reply was that he did not think our preachers practiced it. ""We don't," I said, "but I believe in it for that preacher: what could he do without his notes? God never called him to preach; then how could he preach if he did not know it by-heart to recite, or have notes to look at." He laughed a bit; and I am sure he got my point.

I know I am pretty hard on arminians: they have said that I was too hard on their ways, and much too selfish in my way of worship. I do not go to hear them when they are about five hundred yards away; while I will go as far as five hundred miles to hear what I believe to be the truth. Those who have the truth revealed unto them, know the reason; but I can never make others understand. When it is preached that God wants to save you, but some will not let him, that I call a blasphemous expression — putting the great God lower than we are: the God that made the world and all that is in it, and who upholds all things by the word of his power. Does this God "want" you to come and accept him, and be saved? does he "want" you to believe in him? "want" you to be his servant? etc. I am sorry for that kind of God. I am often in that kind of fix: wanting something, and can't get it; but I cannot conscientiously listen to anyone with that kind of blasphemy, so I just don't go hear them.

. . . I cannot in any way blame anyone for worshipping in a natural way, or according to nature; but I also cannot have a good conscience toward God, and encourage that form of worship. So, as I see it, whether they speak blasphemy against our God, or whether they worship idols and don't speak of our God, I have no business in their audience. Daniel 2:44, may have a twofold meaning, when the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and shall not be left to other people, but shall break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms; and it shall stand forever. I used to think

that every denomination in our town was worshipping God, and I would just as soon go to one as the other. But I trust that the God of heaven set up a kingdom in me, the powerful kingdom, and it broke into pieces all these other kingdoms and consumed them; but this kingdom shall stand forever.

Dear ones in the faith, you may get discouraged often, as I do, and desire to return to the fleshpots of Egypt; but you cannot. You are in the land of Canaan where there are hills and valleys; and you will get into the valleys against your will, and you will have drouths against your will also. But remember, when it rains in Canaan it is from the clouds of heaven: it is not as it is in Egypt, for there they turn on the water with their foot, and off with their foot, and their water comes from the ground, a cursed source. God once said, "Cursed is the ground for man's sake." When one can state what he will preach on before hand; begin at 11 A. M. and quit at 12, he surely can turn the water on with his foot, and off with his foot. But it is just an irrigation project and not the preached gospel at all. At least this is the way I see it. I will stop lest I crowd out better material.

Your unworthy brother in hope,
W. C. Purdy

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John Paschal, N. C.	$1.00
Mr. and Mrs. Albert Krewatch, Del.	5.00
Jack A. Davison, Ala.	5.00
Jno. E. Pace, Sr., Va.	2.00
Mrs. J. C. Brock, Va.	1.00
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Paul Morton, Md.	2.00
Irene Lilly, W. Va.	1.00
L. C. Hunt, Va.	2.00
Mrs. Nellie Carver, Tenn.	2.00

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with Upper Town Creek Church, Wilson County, N. C., the 5th Saturday and Sunday in October.

All who love the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Clerk
Rt. 3, Tarboro, N. C.

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** will be held, the Lord willing, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before, in October, 1966, with the church at Aycock's; which is located about four miles north of Fremont, N. C., Route 2.

All who have a mind to attend are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

Danville, Virginia **November, 1966**

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EDITORIAL
PSALMS 145: 14-21

"The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down. The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing. The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them. The Lord preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy. My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord: and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever."

There are many times when we need the Lord. There are many times when we need deliverance. There are many times when we need saving. How utterly foolish is that poor sinner that has imbibed the theory that we become needy by the whim or fancy or volition of our will. There is not at this time, and there has not in any past time, nor will there be in any future time, a sinner becoming needy at will, that is, by his or her will. As foolish as it is to think such a thought, how much more foolish it is to think that once needy, we can, by efforts of our own, supply that need.

If I am not mistaken, I have been needy many times. I have needed saving many times. I do not think that I would be far wrong in saying that there have been many salvations manifested to me along the way. Each time of need, each time that salvation was necessary, it has been supplied. As often as I have been brought to need, that often, no more, no less that need has been supplied. This supply, this salvation, all of these times, varied times, sundry times, have all been from the same divine source, from the God who stands alone, who does not have any at his side, who is the only Saviour of sinners.

In every instance when Israel had sinned, it was God that moved. In all the Bible there is not an instance wherein God waited for his creatures to act first. Futhermore, there is not the first instance wherein God got a welcoming hand, a co-operation, a meeting of Him on half way ground. Salvation is of the Lord. If we are saved a hundred times, each time whether the opening of our eyes to the truth, or the closing of our eyes in death to this world, it is all of God. It was the Prophet at the Mount of Sinai (Deut.18: 17, 18); it was the Son of God at the baptismal waters (Mat. 3: 17); it was the Son of God that was left on the Mount of Transfiguration (Luke 9: 35); it has been, it still is, and for all futurity it will continue to be, Jesus, the way, the truth, and the life. It was the Son of God in the eternal abode of God the Father (Prov. 8); it has been Jesus for all time (Heb. 13: 8), and it will be Him that the redeemed saints of God will praise for all eternity. Therefore, salvation is of the Lord from his eternal design to save, through every step of time, and to the final deliverance home to glory of every chosen vessel of mercy.

The text is setting forth the above doctrine in its fulness. All of it is setting forth the needs of God's children. As fully, it is setting forth the Saviour, the One that is to supply their need. All these characters have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Not one of them knows God until it has been revealed unto him. Then, but not before, do they become aware of their need. It is declaring the state of God's people, and equally declaring who will bring them out of that needy state to one of fulness and joy in the Lord. In short, it is declaring what God will do for them that are not able to do for themselves. When this declaration has been fulfilled, the recipients of this fulness will be filled also with praise.

"The Lord upholdeth all that fall." How beautiful is this language. How can it be said that the Lord will uphold these that fall? If so, then they could not fall, could they? Thus it is becoming

that we seek acceptable words (Eccl. 12: 10), that we consent to wholesome words, and that we show ourselves a pattern of good works by sound speach. (I Timothy 6:3; Titus 2:7, 8) There has not been a falling away from God by his chosen people. As far as the law covenant is concerned, they did fall, but the covenant that was ordered in all things and sure had the underlying support of the Son of God from all eternity. They fell in Adam, and they fall experimentally, but in this fall, they are upheld in His righteousness and thus they can not fall from it.

"And raiseth up all those that be bowed down." What is it that bows down a sinner? It is sin. Can a man get from under the guilt of sin? Indeed not. Why? Because he is a sinner. For him to be able to atone for one sin, he would have to quit sinning first. This he can not do. Rather hard doctrine, don't you think? Doctrine does not have anything to do with it. A man is a sinner by nature. It is his nature to sin. Who can change that nature? The man does not have a nature to do any righteousness. Sin and righteousness are opposites. One springs from a fallen nature; the other springs from the nature of Christ, a spiritual nature. Until born again, the man does not have a nature to do anything but sin. Can he do anything else? No, it can not be done. However, as important as the quitting of sin is, there is something else that must be done before a man can atone for sin. What is that? He must cleanse his polluted blood; he must change from flesh to spirituality. Why must he do so? Because he that is in the flesh can not please God, and to atone for sin, certainly one must please God. He that is bowed down must be straight, must be raised up. Only the blood of a pure blooded man could atone for sin, therefore only the Lord can raise up him that is bowed down by sin.

"The eyes of all wait upon thee." I will not suit some of my readers here. The eyes of the ungodly do not wait on the Lord. The eyes of the animal world does not wait (consciously) upon the Lord for their food. It is true that the Lord gives the food for ungodly men as well as for all creation, but they do not wait on the Lord. The ungodly are not waiting on him for anything. They are stealing and robbing and pilfering everywhere we look. The animal world is not waiting on the Lord. It is foraging, stalking, sneaking, looking for weaklings. But the text has all waiting on the Lord. I would embrace the text as being the truth. The eyes of all that wait on the Lord are waiting on him. These have seen the futility of stealing as well as stalking. They have seen what none others see. They have seen that their **works** will not feed them. They have been given to eat from vineyards that they did not plant, and to drink from wells that they did not dig. Necessity says for them to wait, and love makes them glad to wait.

"Thou givest them their meat in due season." The meat under consideration is what is eaten, food, and means many times simple bread. This meat is the delicacies found on the table of the Lord. It is eaten in the banqueting house of the Lord. It is an appointed table, and every item that it takes to cause growth is placed on that table. The food is seasonal. This dietitian is technical; he will measure exactly the required nutrients for the sick, the weak, the pale. (Jeremiah 30: 6) No cases of spiritual indigestion among these, for the food is just right, and the time of eating is in due season.

"Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." Again, I will not satisfy all of my readers. It is true that the hand of Providence feeds all men and all creation and all things. That is not denied, but that which the text is teaching is denied. Remember that the Bible is the Book about living things. Not the dead, not that which you would expect among a dead atmosphere, not at all. We are writing about the gospel, definitely not a science lesson. We are writing about the Hand that leads children, that embraces them, that opens fountains to them, that

heals with the soothing, healing touch of mercy; in short, the hand of grace. But the text says "things." Would you have us to think that the children of God are things? Why not? The precious Saviour of sinners was spoken of as a thing, even though it was a holy thing. (Luke 1: 35) There is such wonderful fulness at this point. He was a holy thing, and we are to partake of the holiness of God, therefore we are holy things. And it is the holy things that are fed and satisfied by the opening of the Lord's hands. It is the small things that shall rejoice in the hands of Zerubbabel laying the foundation and finishing the building; It is the small things that know the Lord of hosts sent Zechariah to prophesy; it is the small things that shall see the plummet in the hand of the king, and the seven eyes of the Lord. (Zechariah 4: 9, 10) These small things, these little children of God, are satisfied when the Lord opens his hands and feeds them on the riches of his grace. Others are never satisfied; if they get a little they want much. (Proverbs 30: 15)

"The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works." Faith embraces this without comment, and without a puny man's expounding; it leaps forward at the thought of his salvation being in the hand of one that is righteous in all that he does. God has a way about him at all times and under all circumstances, that is always called in question by gainsayers. None of the ways and works of God are compatible to the ways and works of men. Men used to think, and still think, that it is incredible for God to raise the dead; men used to think, and still think, that God was unjust in loving Jacob and hating Esau; but in all his ways and in all his works, he is both holy and righteous. Why is He righteous in his ways and holy in his works? Why did the writer say it that way? Things that take place are always right, but they are not always holy. It was right for Christ to suffer, but it was not holy in the ones that committed the deed. It was right for God to deliver his Son up for the heirs of promise, but it was not holy by whom the woe came. (Matthew 18: 7) The righteous ways of God will never be understood nor known, but the holy works of God will be known, for one is hid in the depth of the wisdom and knowledge of God, and the other is revealed in the hearts of his people. (Romans 11: 33; Cor. 2: 10)

"The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth." How perfectly has Inspiration sent this forth. One of the most remarkable things about the testimony of Jesus, (John 18: 37; I Timothy 1: 8, Rev. 19: 10), is how that all of his writers were blessed to look forward and see the false reasoning that would arise, and to give the Lord's people a sure report. Many call upon the Lord that never are heard in the sense of granting them their request. But it is not our task to bring the negative of this precious doctrine to you. We are talking about what belongs to the children of God and not what the other children of men do. The Lord is not nigh everybody that calls upon him. He is so far from many that call on him that a great gulf was fixed between him and them, and it has never been spanned. From the standpoint of God being everywhere at one and the same time, he is as near those that call upon him in falsity as he is them that call upon him in truth. He answers in love those that call in truth, and he will answer in wrath those who call upon him in falsity. What is it to call in truth? in untruth? The first is to call upon him in the work of Jesus; the second is to call upon him in creature obedience.

"He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them." In order for us to know whether this writing is a part of the gospel or not, let us ask this question. How many of my readers can be afraid of that which you are not afraid? So many deluded men and women would give anything in the world to be able to destroy the doctrine of free grace. I am willing for it to be destroyed if it is not the truth. If you can be afraid of that

which you are not afraid, then it is destroyed. If you can not (and you can not) then it is still the truth, and is enthroned in the lids of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation; and is so deeply embedded in the mind and heart and soul of every child of God,that all the fires that could be set by the occupants of the infernal regions could not eradicate it. I know from the letters in the Signs and from those that cross my desk, and from those that are under my ministry, that they are, like the poor frail writer, often tormented by doubts and fears. May God still these little ones with the sweet influence of his Spirit and his refulgent glory. Every child of God that is fearful (and they all are) has had the fear of God instilled in them. Our Father put it there. He put it there (not on an experimental basis but) to try us and to humble us.

This fear will follow us to death, and it will serve its purpose. But, thank his precious name, it will not exceed that purpose. A god that does things according to his purpose, but does not control things working in opposition to that purpose, to where more is done than he intended, is not any more dependable than one who works without purpose. The desire of those that fear him is not the desire of those that do not fear him. Those that fear him desire things from above; those that do not, desire things from beneath. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him. How many of their desires? How much of their desire? Ask him. He said their desire, and that is what I say.

Now will a child cry for his father who is not afraid? **Will they do so?** All nature says that they will not, and all the Bible says that they will not, and all Christian experience says that they will not. Now that is established for those that fear him. Let others shift for themselves. God hears them that cry unto him. How many of them does he hear? He said that he heard them that cried, and I would beg him for writing and preaching grace that I might say the same thing. But suppose that he heard their cry but could not reach them? Suppose that he heard their cry and **would not** reach them? Such a thought is sacriligious. Let us preach and write about better themes, for he will hear and save every one of them.

"The Lord preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy." How many poor deluded creatures have stood off, Ishmael like, and mocked the people of God because they believed in the everlasting preservation of the saints to glory. Not one of them know a thing about the God of Israel. Not one of them know anything about the love of God. I fain would send out the good news of the gospel from the pulpit, by the printed page, by the radio, and by personal contact, that the Lord does preserve all those that love him. Lest scoffers and spies and imposters would run in, to reap the benefits of such a glorious time church, I would inquire into the reason of our loving him. It had to originate in some one. That some one had to be God or man. The whole world (that includes unbelievers; perhaps some of them in the militant church, but, if so, still unbelievers) will tell you that it originates in the mind of the sinner. But John does not give us such a description of the origination of our love to God. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins (I John 4: 10), and we love him because he first loved us. (Verse 19) How delightful it is to write to you and you, and to tell you that the Lord preserves them that love him.

As sure as is the preservation of those that love him, just that sure is the destruction of the wicked. That destruction is not annihilation. The wicked shall see him, but they shall never be like him, nor shall they be with him. (Matt. 25: 41, 46; John 5: 25)

What is the effect of these truths? What is the result of the Lord doing these things? When seen and felt, it fills the mouth of God's humble poor. "My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord: and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever." Dear child of

God, have these promises been fulfilled in your life? Have you seen him high and lifted up? (Isaiah 6: 1) If so, your heart was enlarged in you towards the saints of God, and praise unto his great name burst forth from your lips, as it did with David. Blessed is the people that know these things (Psalms 89: 15), for they shall walk where the redeemed walk; they shall rejoice among those that joy in the Lord; they shall be exalted in his righteousness. The life that is lived in the flesh will be lived in lofty praise to the Son of God who loved us and gave himself for us. (Galatians 2: 20)

This is in answer to Brother Odom in South Alabama.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

JOHN 10:9

Dear Brother Beebe: — If it is not too much for me to ask, I would like to have your views through the *Signs* on John 10:9, especially on the last part of the verse, *and shall go in and out and find pasture.* Your compliance with this request will greatly oblige your brother, in hope of eternal life,

Wm. P. Robertson
French's Island, Indiana
Nov. 10, 1858

REPLY

The text proposed for consideration reads, "I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture." Among the numerous figures employed in the inspired volume to set forth the relations of our Lord Jesus Christ to his people, and the unspeakable benefits resulting to the saints from such relations, we have the very familiar figure of a shepherd and sheep, The prophet Isaiah says, "Behold the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom." And the psalmist says, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." In the connection of our text, our Lord Jesus Christ claims that he is this Shepherd, and consequently that he is the Lord God. Divine Justice recognized him in this character, in the words of Zechariah, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn my hand upon the little ones." This prediction was fulfilled in the person and offering of our divine Redeemer. He says in our context, "I am the good Shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." Again, "I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep." The prophets assert, and the apostle repeats the declaration, that "All we, like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all," who like sheep had gone astray; and as a consequence, "We are returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls."

But the Shepherd and Bishop has not only taken on him the iniquities of all his sheep, and borne them in his own body on the tree, laid down his life for his sheep, but his work which was before him, was also to gather them with his arm, and to carry them in his bosom; and as the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, he leads them to living fountains, and into green pastures where they shall feed and lie down.

When Jesus spake the parable recorded in the first five verses of this chapter, unto the Jews, they understood not what he said unto them. Then said Jesus unto them again, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me

are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door; by me if any man enter in he shall be saved."

Three important ideas are expressed. First, Christ is the door by which all his sheep enter the spiritual sheepfold. Second, all who enter the sheepfold by him shall be saved, and all who enter by any other way are thieves and robbers, and shall perish. Third, all who enter by him shall go in and out and find pasture.

1. Christ is the door of his sheep, and the only way by which his sheep could be lawfully delivered from the bondage of the law, cleansed from guilt and pollution, and brought into the liberty of the gospel. "All we like sheep had gone astray," had trespassed, and were lawful captives, held by a just and righteous law for the trespass committed. Divine Justice, as a porter at our prison door, refused to open the prison to us; but to him our Shepherd, the porter opened; he having laid down his life for the sheep with all their iniquities laid on him. As he had redeemed them, the porter opened the door to him, and with the door unbarred and legally opened, he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out, and having thus delivered them from bondage and wrath, he putteth forth his own sheep, and only his own, and having done this, he goeth before them, (namely, his own sheep.) And the sheep, his own sheep, follow him, and by him, as their door, they enter into his sheepfold. Led out of the Jewish sheepfold, in which they were held, by their Shepherd to whom the porter had opened, they are made experimentally familiar with their Shepherd's voice; it has strong and irresistible attractions, for hearing his voice, they follow him, and as his followers they enter by him in to the gospel fold, to which also *he must* bring all his other sheep, which were not of the Jewish fold, from the Gentile tribes and kindreds of the earth, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd. Through him, as the door of the sheep, they are led out of their prison, and into their liberty.

2. All who enter the sheepfold by him, shall be saved. This declaration is plain and positive, and securely embraces all the sheep and lambs of our Lord Jesus Christ. As he laid down his life for them, he has redeemed them from all iniquity, all their iniquities being by the Father laid on him, and he having put away their sins by the sacrifice of himself, he has risen from the dead for their justification. Has put them forth from condemnation and wrath, their life being in him, and calleth them as his own sheep by name, having a perfect knowledge of them; even as the Father knoweth me, so know I the Father, and I lay down my life for the sheep. The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." And he knoweth them as perfectly as his Father knoweth him, and as he knoweth the Father. By his knowledge, therefore shall he justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities, and "In him shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory." Not the children of the flesh, for they are not the children of God, but the children of the promise, are counted for the seed. "My sheep hear my voice, I know them and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." It follows, beyond a question, *they shall be saved.*

3. "And shall go in and out and find pasture." Brother Robertson desires us to dwell particularly on this part of the text, but we can perhaps convey the view we entertain as well in few words. As our brother resides in a pastoral country among the flocks of Indiana, he knows that a sheepfold is a place for the sheep to be folded for safety and comfort in the winter, or

when it is not safe or comfortable for them to feed in the open pasture. As their circumstances may require, the good Shepherd will lead them forth into the green pastures, by the still but living waters which John saw streaming from the throne of God and the Lamb, clear as crystal, and cause them even to lie down in green pastures in perfect safety, but when the chilling east wind beats, and the driving tempest howls, or the winter snow and ice cover the grass, and when the ravening wolves are prowling around for prey, the careful Shepherd causes them to pass under his rod or crook, that he may see distinctly that every sheep and lamb is cared for, he brings them into the fold or shelter, where they are not to fast or starve, for there also the Shepherd has wholesome food for them, well suited to their needs. Thus they go *in* to the fold or shelter, and *out* into the green fields, and find pasture. They do not go out of Christ, or out of the bounds of his soverign saving grace, for their life is hid with Christ in God, so that when Christ shall appear they shall appear with him in glory. But they are sometimes in the furnace of afflictions, and sometimes on the mount, sometimes in fiery trials, and sometimes in the banqueting-house, but in all their apparent vacillations they shall find pasture. The Lord is their Shepherd; they shall not want.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe November 15, 1858.)

OBITUARIES

LUKE ALLEN PERDUE

Our Brother Deacon Luke Allen Perdue was born November 25, 1892, at Redwood, Virginia and departed this life June 6, 1966. He was the son of the late "Babe" and Nanniebet Dudley Perdue.

He joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Charleston, West Virginia in February, 1915, was baptized in Elk River by Elder B. F. Robertson, moved his membership to Rocky Mount Church, Virginia by letter, in October, 1933, was ordained deacon in August, 1935, and appointed as clerk October, 1937.

He was a lovely member and faithful deacon. I trust I am thankful of having had the privilege and pleasure of visiting in his home many times, hearing him talk of the goodness and mercy of our God.

He was twice married, his first wife was the former Laura Edna Perdue who was killed in an automobile accident on March 16, 1948. Seven children were born to this union, three of whom preceded him in death. He then married Lila Hale Johnson January 27, 1955. He is survived by his devoted wife, Sister Lila, two daughters Mrs. Doris Hylton, Roanoke, Virginia; Mrs. Margie Hunter, West Palm Beach, Florida; two sons Paul Perdue, Spartanburg, South Carolina and Earl Perdue, Roanoke, Virginia; one sister Mrs. Sallie Randolph.

There are many things that could be said in regard to Brother Perdue's life, his hope, his firm belief in God and his great love for the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God. He was a man that was firm in his convictions and was not ashamed of the God that we so often heard him say had been so good to him. We feel that he will never be forgotten by those who loved him for Christ's sake.

The last few weeks of his life when he knew nothing of earthly surroundings, he was still firm in expressing himself of salvation by grace and God's love for His little children. His cry was "Peace, peace with my Maker."

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder Cecil Turner, and Elder Leonard Brammer at Oakey's Funeral Home, Roanoke, Virginia. His body was laid to rest in High Street Cemetery, Rocky Mount, Virginia, to await the glorious resurrection.

Written by ones who loved him,
Alice and Posey Lynch

HORACE BENJAMIN (JACK) ECKARD

The Lord in his wisdom and power drew our brother from this earth to his final resting place, on February 19, 1966, at his home in Spokane, Washintgon. He had been ailing for some time, but was called suddenly: proving that we leave this earth, as we came into it, at His pleasure, and regardless of any man's helps. We come here without any help of ourselves; we leave the same way.

Our brother was a member of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church at Riffe, Washington, and was baptized by Elder Coleman in August, 1950. He was married to Mary L. Withers March 1, 1934, and leaves one son, Lee Eckard, of Wilbur, Washington; and two sisters. Mrs. Grace Poling, of California, and Essie Gibson, Spokane, Washington.

He was laid to rest beside his wife, who preceded him in death in July, 1964, in Fairmont Memorial Cemetery on February 21, 1966; there to await his calling at the resurrection. The services were conducted by his pastor, Elder Ernest Attebery.

We join with his family in mourning his passing, but knowing that our loss is his gain, we are reconciled to the will of Him who knows and rules all things.

Written at the request of his family and his pastor.

Charles W. Bond

DEACON O. C. DUNCAN

Brother Oscar Clifford Duncan was born August 29, 1887, at Honoraville, Alabama, and departed this life December 6, 1965, making his stay on earth 78 years, 3 months and 7 days.

His family moved to the Mt. Zion Community when he was a small boy, where he lived the rest of his life. He married Laure Kirkpatrick November 30, 1911. To this union were born three boys and two girls, of which four survive. The Lord saw fit to call his wife, Laure, home on March 31, 1919. He then married Miss Mae Barrett on December 19, 1919. To this union were born three girls and two boys, all of which survive.

He united with the Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church in May of 1936. He was a firm believer in the faith once delivered by the saints. He was ordained as Deacon on July, 1948. He served in this office until death.

Funeral services were held at 2:00 p. m. on December 8, from Mt. Zion Church, with Elder Ed Gafford officiating. Burial was in the Church Cemetery.

Survivors include his widow, Mrs. Mae Barrett Duncan, Greenville; five sons, Robert S. Duncan, Baltimore, Md.; Aubrey C. Duncan, Fort Deposit; John B. Duncan, Dothan; James E. Duncan and Oscar Riley Duncan, both of Greenville; four daughters, Mrs. W. W. Hogg, Montgomery; Miss Ella Margaret Duncan, Mrs. Ralph Boutwell and Mrs. James A. Peavy, all of Greenville; one brother, John M. Duncan, Greenville; two sisters, Mrs. R. E. Lowery and Mrs. C. H. McCormick, both of Greenville; 25 grandchildren; four great grandchildren.

The pallbearers were Charlie J. McCormick, Stanley Owens, LaDon Cumbie, James Barrett, Oscar Andress, Hiram Heartsill, Joe Duncan and Roy Odom.

This was written at the request of the family and Church. Be it resolved, That a copy be put in the Minutes and Church Book, and a copy to the *Signs of the Times*.

Read, and adopted by the church.

Elder Sam H. Dean, Moderator
C. Z. Moseley, Church Clerk

MEMORIAL
DEACON GROVER CLEVELAND BURGIN
HAWKINS, TEXAS

We, the members of Paran Primitive Baptist Church, agree to file in our records the following tribute of respect in memory of our beloved brother and deacon, G. C. Burgin:

Grover Cleveland Burgin was born November 25, 1892, in Wood County, Texas. He was married to Miss Opal Harris June 15, 1917. He breathed his last natural breath May 5, 1966. His wife, Opal; three sons, Huell, James, and William; three daughters, Helen Pittman, Flora Stutts, and Patsy Willoughby; also, seven grandchildren, and two great grandchildren; all mourn his passing. Brother Burgin became a member of the church September 10, 1949, and was ordained deacon in February, 1951.

We thank God for having blessed us with the life and counsel of Deacon Burgin because: He was a faithful member and devoted deacon; he loved true Christians and hated hypocrisy with a godly hatred; he was peculiarly gifted to manifest love to the society outcasts; he was always helping those who were less fortunate than he; he fought against those who mistreated his brethren, — using the sword of the Spirit instead of carnal weapons; he was patient as long as patience was a virtue and used sharp rebuke when necessary; he was a good soldier: — fighting for the principle of love, and against hatred; he was blessed with a great degree of hospitality and knew how to make all who visited his home and church, feel welcomed; he counselled and advised wisely and freely showing that he was blessed with a great degree of godly wisdom and understanding; he left us a treasure of greater value than silver and gold.

God hath given and God hath taken away. Blessed be His name for having blessed us with Deacon Burgin's gifts of the Spirit. Our sympathy goes to the bereaved. However, his testimony while dying is ample proof that our loss is his eternal gain.

We order copies of this be sent to the family and *Signs of the Times*. Adopted August 6, 1966.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Moderator
H. H. Faulk, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134 DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1966 NO. 12

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS
12/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

'TIS A POINT I LONG TO KNOW

'Tis a point I long to know,
  Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord or no?
  Am I his, or am I not?

If I love, why am I thus?
  Why this dull, this lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse,
  Who have never heard his name.

Could my heart so hard remain,
  Prayer a task and burden prove,
Every trifle give me pain,
  If I knew a Savior's love?

When I turn my eyes within,
  All is dark, and vain, and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
  Can I deem myself a child?

If I pray, or hear, or read,
  Sin is mixed with all I do;
You that love the Lord indeed,
  Tell me, is it thus with you?

Yet I mourn my stubborn will,
  Find my sin and grief a thrall;
Should I grieve for what I feel,
  If I did not love at all?

Could I joy His saints to meet,
  Choose the ways I once abhorred,
Find at times the promise sweet,
  If I did not love the Lord?

Lord, decide the doubtful case,
  Thou who art thy people's sun;
Shine upon thy work of grace,
  If it be indeed begun.

Let me love thee more and more,
  If I love at all, I pray;
If I have not loved before,
  Help me to begin to-day.

John Newton

WHAT IS THE POINT YOU LONG TO KNOW?

What is this point you long to know?
  Methinks I hear you say, 'Tis this:
I want to know I'm born of God,
  An heir of everlasting bliss.

Is this the point you long to know?
  The point is settled in my view,
For if you want to love your God,
  It proves he first has loved you.

I want to know Christ died for me;
  I want to feel the seal within;
I want to know Christ's precious blood
  Was shed to wash away my sin.

I want to feel more love to Christ,
  I want more liberty in prayer,
But when I look within my heart,
  It almost drives me to despair.

I want a mind more firmly fixed
  On Christ, my everlasting head;
I want to feel my soul alive,
  And not so barren or so dead.

I want more faith, a stronger faith;
  I want to feel its power within;
I want to feel more love to God;
  I want to feel less love to sin.

I want to live above the world,
  And count it all but trash and toys;
I want more tokens of God's grace,
  Some foretaste of eternal joys.

I want — I know not what I want;
  I want that real, special good,
Yet all my wants are summed up here:
  I want to love; I want my God.

Is this the point you long to know?
  The dead can neither feel nor see;
It is the slave that's bound in chains,
  That knows the worth of liberty.

So where a want like this is found,
  I think I may be bold to say,
That God has fixed within my heart
  What hell can never take away.

However small thy grace appears,
  There's plenty in thy living Head;
These wants you feel, my Christian friend,
  Were never found among the dead.

Daniel Herbert

(Copied from the *Signs* of several years ago.)

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Elder D. V. Spangler)

To the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, and the several correspondents and visitors, assembled with the Forest Grove Old School Baptist Church,

Greetings in the Lord:

Attention is called to the 11, 12, 13, and 14th verses of the fourth chapter of the epistle of Paul to the church at Ephesus. Though this epistle was addressed to the Ephesians, it is applicable to all gospel churches.

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

In the eleventh verse, the various gifts to the church are described. There can be no question as to the Lord's purpose in giving these gifts to the churches: and each gift is profitable as he is blessed to fulfill the office.

In the order mentioned, Apostles are first. They were called and qualified by the Lord himself, to go forth preaching the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ. They were eye witnesses of the work of Jesus; and the same one who called them, gave them whatever power was manifested by them. There were Prophets among the apostles also, as we hear the apostles foretelling the churches things which would befall them in the latter days. All of the prophets were not among the apostles, for we learn of others describing future events.

Then follows Evangelists, who, we understand, were the first ministers to preach the gospel among the people: traveling among them, and constituting believers into churches — as the churches of this **Eastern Shore** were constituted under the ministry of Elijah Baker, and others, almost two hundred years ago.

It will be noticed that Pastors and Teachers are the same persons. In the pastorial care of churches, one must be apt to teach, to be qualified to take care of the church of God, as shown in the qualifications of a minister in Paul's letter to Timothy.

The purpose of God in giving these gifts to the churches, is for the perfecting of the saints. This does not mean that hearing the gospel makes believers perfect in their lives; but it does instruct them in the doctrine and order of the Church. The preaching of the various principles of the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ, is like linking together the links of a chain. No chain can be stronger than the weakest link in the chain. No principle of doctrine is stronger than another: it takes all to make a complete chain. The doctrine of Predestination is no stronger than the doctrine of election, Justification by Faith, the Preservation of the Elect, the Perseverance of the Saints, the Doctrine of the Resurrection of the dead, or the Second Coming of the Lord of Glory.

Wherever a full gospel is preached, these truths are proclaimed; and they are for the unifying of the Body of Christ. These glorious principles of truth direct our hearts and minds to the love of God, and the patient waiting for Christ. The proclaiming of these blessed truths, cause God's people to come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man: unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

All gospel preaching directs our minds to the perfect work of Jesus as the Son of God, and a perfect man: showing that he was verily God, and verily man; and is set forth in the Word as the Man Christ Jesus, the only Mediator between God and man.

These grand and glorious principles of truth direct us to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; and He is presented as our Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption — as the one in whom all fulness dwells; the one in whom we are complete. For God has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Him, according as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world.

In our preaching and writing, how blessed we are if we have admonitions, exhortations, reproofs, and reminders of His great love and mercy for us, that we be no more children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine.

When the great principles of fundamental doctrine are set forth, it unifies the Body of Christ. When these are not continually set forth, soon there will be a turning to the doctrines of the world.

May God, in whose name we hope we are assembled, bless us to continue to speak of His great love and mercy for us; to admonish one another in love; to exhort one another daily; to encourage those who love His great name, to take his cross and follow Him, as the blessings which flow from Him who has given us the glorious doctrine of divine grace.

SEASON OF REJOICING

Roanoke, Virginia

Elder and Mrs. C. E. Turner,
Rt. 3, BOX 115,
Bassett, Va.

Dear Brother and Sister Turner:

Surely, surely there is something to heart-felt religion. O, that all people could know the love, peace, and freedom that comes only from my Lord. I say, **my Lord,** and I feel that he is my Lord, my Father, my everything I need now, or ever will need in the future: be it joy or sorrow, be it on the mountain top resting in His love, or down with dear old Jonah in the deep with the sea weeds about my head, He is still all I need.

I cannot begin to describe this week. Never before have the tears of love and joy flowed so much. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, Who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." Oh, precious ones, that sermon I heard on Monday has almost wafted me home to heaven. I don't believe I've felt such freedom, such peace, so nearly perfect rest since the words were spoken, "Be of good cheer, thou are healed."

The sermon that the Lord blessed you to preach at the Upper County Line Association, has been my meat and drink, my breathing, and even sleeping since. I would awake from sleep with my soul bursting in love. (Sunday night was sweet, but perfect deliverance did not come until you spoke on Monday.) My Saviour has been close this week — I have talked with him, and he has talked with me as I have read again all of the 8th chapter of Romans. He talked with me, he gave me the promise, he explained the meanings: he was here by my side. As we talked, I tried to tell him how thankful I was to have you Elder Turner as our pastor, and you Sister Turner as his helpmate; and for the love and fellowship of all the dear saints of God. I begged him to keep me from straying from the narrow path, that I bring no reproach on the church, and His dear name. I cannot tell all of the conversation, but it was heavenly.

Sister Turner, oftimes I feel when I speak to you all, that perhaps it seems only to Brother Turner, but, dear ones, you both are as one in my feelings. Before anything was made, our heavenly Father decreed that you be as one. Yes, Brother Turner is our pastor: he comes to us and brings us good news from our Father's house, but you are there also, pleading the Lord to lead him, to bless him to feed the sheep and lambs. You are in the ministry too because the Father designed that you be Brother Turner's helpmate, and encourage and hold up his hands — his burden is your burden, and when he is delivered, you

are delivered also. So, you see, I think of you both as one; and when the Lord gives me a prayer, it is for both of you. You are as one in my heart, and in Jesus Christ.

As I re-read the two last verses of the 8th chapter of Romans this morning, it seemed I was picked up and almost soared away. I have tried not to worry you dear ones with my thoughts. I did not express myself to you on Monday, as I felt you are weary of my stammering, broken expressions, but I cannot hold my peace longer.

I believe I understand this week the true meaning of what our David said to Harding as we were driving along the highway in the Spring. Everything was so pretty, but David said, "I just want to go where everything we see is God's, and nothing that is man made — just be able to see the beauty that has not been touched by man. I do wish we could see Jesus: if we could see him, the clouds would roll away and the sunshine would be so bright — it might still be raining on the outside, but the sun would be shining in here. Do you know what I mean?" We hardly knew how to answer him.

There is a beautiful city that man has never beheld, whose maker and builder is God, that will house all the little children of God. There we will see beauty in the fullness, for Christ is there; and with him all will be perfect. Yes, the clouds will be rolled away, and the sunshine of his love will light the place. My desire is so great to run swiftly with outstretched arms, to embrace my Father in that glorious city. Yet it seems too much for one as wretched as I to hope for; but, if heaven is not my home, I have already received more blessings here below than one could ever hope for. What I have received has more than made up for the trials and troubles, (many of which no one but my Lord knows). Yes, then thousand times more!

I must stop this before you become too weary. I trust that you both can still bear with me in my shortcomings and failures. I trust the Lord has been around about both of you this week, and that He will be with you in the days to come.

Unworthy me, but in hope,
Rlee Houchins

ENJOYS THE SIGNS

Dear Elder Spangler:

It is time to renew my subscription for the **Signs**, so I enclose a check for two more years. We enjoy reading it so much, and believe it to be the truth. The August issue was so wonderful: we thought it was the best we had read in some time. The letters from Elder Hardy to Mrs. Lulu Allen, and her reply, was an experience that God's little ones feel. And the Editorial by Elder Wood was a feast to those that are given an understanding: the sermon at Black Rock was the truth, if I know anything about the truth.

May God's grace you all to keep the paper as it is, for we feel it to be the truth, and food to God's little ones.

A sinner saved by grace,
E. M. Reeves

MESSAGE TO HER CHILDREN

Leora Medona Hallard, was born October 22, 1882, in Nebester Co., Miss., at the age of thirteen joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. Was baptized by sprinkling and the laying on of hands.

In the fall of 1899, I left my place of birth, and the home of my grandparents, to join my father in Lampasas Co., Texas, near the little town of Kempher. During the summer of 1900, father and I joined the Methodist Church nearest us. He, by confession, and I by testimony. Father lost his wife in February of that year, (my stepmother). He with the smaller children and I moved to Taylor County, Texas.

In the year 1905, I met and married John Curtis (Bud) Ivy. He was not affiliated with any church, but was, and had been for many years a firm believer in the doctrine of Predestination and Sal-

vation by Grace, and lived an honest upright life, as becoming a Christian during the brief ten years of our happy life together. In the spring of 1914 he had an acute attack of appendicitis, was operated on and died three days later, June 13th.

Our beloved Brother and Pastor, Elder J. C. Sikes, was with him daily, doing for him as only a true messenger of Christ conld do, bringing to him spiritual comfort. He made a beautiful confession to Elder Sikes, and told him he had no fear of death, and that many times he had wanted to confess, and ask for a home with the old Primitive Baptist, of the faith and order he loved so well, but always felt to be unworthy. His only fear was for me and our little children's financial welfare. I had told him a year before his illness, that I felt I was in the wrong church. That I believed as he did, that salvation was by grace alone.

I do not know when, or how I was made to realize the God he professed to believe in, was my God; and I wanted to know more about a God that was able to save his people through all eternity: the people for whom he gave His son to suffer the shameful death on the cross; for Christ did not die until his work that the Father had sent him to do, was finished.

Jesus said, "Father I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." He came not unto the world to call the righteous, but to call sinners to repentance. That we through him, might believe in God's power to save.

In the spring of 1915, I took our children and went to his people in Tuscalosa, Alabama. Was blessed with the privilege of going to hear the Primitive Baptist preach.

After attending service a number of times with those good people, and seeing them worship God in such a devout and faithful manner, I realized their God, was my God. Their belief in a crucified Lord, and Salvation by Grace was my belief. I wanted a home with them, but felt to unworthy to ask so much with so little to offer. I could only feel to say, Lord take me, Just as I am.

During a meeting at the Nazareth Church, while Bro. Sammie Norris was preaching I was made to realize how much in need I was of the spiritual guidance such as the Primitive Baptist advocated. I asked for a home with them, though I had nothing to offer, but all praise to our Lord and Saviour, who has paid the cost, salvation is free, and I was accepted and baptized there, in the spring of 1916. I returned to Greenville, Texas, with my children. There through the influence of Bro. and Sister Sikes I met and married L. E. Willis July 3, 1916. I was reunited with the Baptist church known as the Seclusia, near Compton, California, having received my letter from the Altus, Oklahoma, Church in which my husband and I had joined by letter.

This was written by Sister Leora M. Willis, Sunday April 27, 1952. (see obituary in this issue)

CHURCH LETTER TO ASSOCIATION

The Snow Hill Old School or Primitive Baptist Church to the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association in session with the Forest Grove Church, sends greetings.

Dearly Beloved Brethren and Sisters:

By the grace and mercy of an all-wise God we have been permitted to meet again as an Association. We hope we will be able to worship the God we love in peace and fellowship, for he is an all powerful and all merciful God who loved us while we were yet dead in sin. His promises are sure; they are yea and amen to them that believe. He is unchangable: the same yesterday, today and forever. We believe in salvation by grace for it is written: "It is not by works lest any man should boast." We have nothing of which to boast. We are poor, needy creatures, ever needing that manna which comes down from Heaven to carry us through our journey here. How wonderful when the Lord touches

the heart of a poor sinner, and gives him life and light to see how helpless he is to save himself; and is made to cry out "Lord have mercy." How marvelous are his works in the lives of his people!

We know not who his people are, but we believe that everyone that His blessed Son shed a drop of blood for, will in his own time, not ours, be brought home, to give Him all the praise, and to marvel that He could be so gracious to such a vile sinner. We hear the song "How Great Thou Art." Unless we know something of His greatness we can't sing it, but if we have been brought to where we can say as Jonah, "I will pay that that I have vowed, salvation is of the Lord," then, though our voices be weak and tremble, and our mortal bodies infirm with age, we will all sing "How Great Thou Art" and praise his name forever more.

The Church at Snow Hill has been greatly blessed in the past year. We have had the gospel brought to us by Elder Wood of Manassas, Virginia; Elder Stokes of North Carolina and Elder Hand of Alabama; and our beloved former pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, and our pastor, Elder W. D. Griffin, who is very faithful to us, leaving his home in any kind of weather to come to us and feed us that food for which we hunger. May we be blessed to continue to hear the good news.

Written by order of the Church
by Sister Beatrice Fooks

Elder W. D. Griffin, Pastor

Maude P. Truitt, Clerk

Winfield, Alabama 35594

Dear Editors:

I desire to write a few lines to the **Signs**, since I have never been satisfied with the way I came to the church, for I couldn't say anything. I do not know why, for, if not deceived, I have been made many times to rejoice in the blessings the Lord has bestowed upon me from time to time.

I have often been made to weep while reading about the Lord dying on the cross for my sins. It seemed I could almost feel the agony myself. How he suffered, no one knows. If not deceived, I am longing to leave this world of sin and sorrow, but I desire to be reconciled until the Lord calls.

If I am one of the Lord's children, I feel to be the least: surely, I must be, for I can't see anything good in me. But, Oh, how could I stay here, if I could not be with the Old Baptists. They look so lovely to me, and are so humble.

I am enclosing three dollars for the Indigent Fund. In bonds of love with the household of faith.

A sister, I hope,

Mrs. A. T. Couch

Rt. 1,
Stuart, Oklahoma 74570

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am a poor unworthy creature, but I do believe I love the Old Baptists.

My subscription is past due, and I hope my delay in renewing will be pardoned. It seems that time is flying so fast, and people are so different to what they were fifty years ago. It is like we are living in a different world, with a different people. I just can't stand the new styles; and I am glad I am old fashioned.

There are many good articles and experiences in the **Signs** that I enjoy reading. And I try to read some in my Testament nearly every day or evening; and I enjoy reading it. I feel that lots of the writings in the Signs are worth the price of the paper. My mother used to take it when I was a girl.

I enclose $5.00 to renew my subscription. I close with best wishes to all the staff and all the readers of the **Signs.** Please pray for me and my loved ones: we need your prayers.

Mrs. J. T. Black

DESIRES TO BE RECONCILED

Lawrenceville, Ga.
Rt. 3,

Elder R. W. Rhodes,
Fayette, Alabama

Dear Brother in Christ:

I can't explain why, but there comes a great desire to write you another letter. I greatly appreciate every one I have received from you, and I appreciate your interest in writing me. I received your letter acknowledging receipt of payment for books.

We do so much hope that we can meet again, if it is the Lord's will and purpose, before our waning lives are ended here in this world. I have reached a point in my experience where my greatest prayer now seems to be that the Lord might be pleased to give me a reconciled mind in all his providential dealings with me - whatever my lot is, and wheresoever it be cast. This casting of every lot of every kind, has been eternally subject to God's disposal; and He will dispose, but often it does not please our flesh. It is one of the hardest things for a **natural** man to do, or even a **spiritual** man when exercised by his carnal mind, to just "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." This applies to any and all things, but I am thinking now of the scattered and separated condition of the visible church of God. In one quarter or sphere of the religious world, we witness a coming together, while, except in some areas, the church of the living God appears to be scattered and confused.

I read with much understanding and approval the book of the Rhodes-West debate, and could just amen your impregnable citation of our Lord's own words, "Without me ye can do nothing." So I take it for its face value, and can only hope for closer unity among the Lord's people: which will come only when the spirit of unity is applied with power by the Holy Ghost. However, I think there is no disunity of the elect of God, for they are all taught of the Lord, and taught the same things.

The hymn "God moves in a mysterious way" comforts me. For God does move in mysterious ways, his wonders to preform, etc. He is riding on every one of our storms. "Judge not the Lord by feeble sense, (Oh how often we do it,) nor scan his work in vain, (we do that too)." But, dear brother, this is my comfort, "The bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower." We have this given us in beautiful scriptures: All things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to his purpose.

Scriptural order is difficult to maintain, because of the possibility of finding Achans in the camp; and because we have not reached perfection. I am glad that heaven's roster is not a facsimile of the church in the world's roster, but is written already, and sealed in the Lamb's Book of Life. Here in the world we limp along, hope along, and pray along, even carrying with us our carnality: the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. Sometimes on the mountain top, sometimes in the valley. In our flesh dwells no good thing. Spiritually we are more helpless than any new-born babe, for it can move, and we can't, except the Spirit moves us. A spiritual man is spiritually activated, and can't move until the power reaches him. I know, for I have often tried it - and the scriptures declare it.

Back in the 1915 period the Baptist flourished here, with good church attendance, but we have devoured one another. In those days there were wagons and mules all over the place; the people were poor in this world's goods. I do not have to describe it to you, for you remember it. I suppose a man of our age has witnessed more changes in the space of seventy years, than any other men who ever lived on the globe.

I earnestly try to read and interpret the signs of the times, Elder Hewatt and I feel that the fulness of the Gentiles is at hand. We are looking for the glorious return of the Lord. None of us can draw an accurate blue-print of the future: the old prophets saw but dimly, but

there were those when Christ was born, who were in "great expectancy." Zacharias and Anna did not doubt. Let us who are blessed to be concerned over these things, count ourselves happy to be so exercised. We, I hope, look up, for our redemption draweth nigh. I believe we will see more and know more, and be given better light as time goes on.

If God should still my hand, this could be the last word I shall ever pen to you; and I want you to know my humble thanks for your remembrance of us; and though we may never meet again, we like to hope that we shall be enabled to dwell in the House of the Lord together, and forever. Hoping in God's mercy.

Your brother in this precious faith,
J. B. Dunagan

Collinsville, Va.

Dear Editors:

I am still enjoying the writings in the **Signs**, for they bring forth the truth so clearly, as it is in Jesus our Lord, and experienced by the children of God who now live, and was experienced by those that have passed on.

Elder Wood has made it very plain in the September issue, concerning the two religions in the world: one after the spirit of man that is in him; the other after the Spirit of God in those who are born of the Spirit.

I hear much said about bible schools. I remember when my oldest son went to school, the teacher wanted him to read a verse of scripture the next day. He asked me what verse to read; and I picked the 37th verse of the 6th chapter of John. After reading it at school, his teacher said to him, "You've had help." She did not ask him to read again. I hear much false doctrine preached over the radio. They often preach from the writings of Paul, but some of his writings to the churches they do not use, especially 2 Timothy 1: 8,9, ". . . be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." This is contrary to much that is being preached today.

In the 37th Psalm David speaks very comfortingly to the Lord's humble poor.

Yours in Christ,
Mattie Underwood

LETTER TO HIS MOTHER

Swansboro, N. C. 28584

Dear Editors:

If you ever have space available, and feel to do so, we would appreciate the inclosed letter and little poem be published and dedicated to our mother who is approaching her eighty-ninth birthday, and has been a faithful member of the Old Baptist Church since she was eighteen years of age. Also we would like to express our love and sympathy to all the old mothers in Israel who are afflicted and shutins in nursing homes, their own homes or the hospitals. May all the brethren be mindful of them and not neglect, but visit them often as possible.

Mother's name is Mrs. Noma A. Rhue. She still enjoys having the **Signs** read to her.

Yours in a precious hope,
Jabez J. Rhue.

Dear Mama;

Today, I have been thinking of you and all your children, your grandchildren and great grandchildren; and of course, my own. It has been somewhat dreary, having rained most all day. Have been wondering how Reginald would make out with his operation. I have had many thoughts to enter my mind and some of them make me sad, while others are reassuring. We fully realize that we are unable to take care of ourselves or our own. We do believe that the Lord is able, and has in the past kept and bless-

ed us until this good moment; and we are made to wonder what the future holds. We trust He will sustain us by his grace and keep us in the days to come. This is our hope.

Since you are approaching your fourscore and eighteen years, and knowing how merciful the Lord has been to you in preserving your life in such a wonderful way, and knowing that we are prone to put things aside that we should do now, I thought that I would try to tell you now what a wonderful mother you are now, and have been to each of your children, and especially to me. I have wished so many times since Papa left us that I could be given the words to express my feelings toward him as I felt them, and that I could have done so while he was still with us.

Even now I cannot find words that truly express my thankfulness and appreciation for being blessed with such honorable, loving and attentive parents. Certainly we children should all be proud as well as thankful for your many, many hours and painful efforts to teach us what was right. Yes, your demands and decipline were very rigid we thought at the time, but now we know why. You loved us. "Bring your children up in the way that you would have them to go, and when they grow old they will not depart from it." This has been a wonderful lesson to me. We love you the more for it. I know that my shortcomings have been many. Many things I did should not have been done. So many things I should have done I failed to do. So many times it seems to me that I could have spoken a kind or encouraging word or done a little deed to have shown my appreciation to you both. I have failed in so many. I shall never be able to make good, but I wanted you to know that I remember very well how hard you and Papa worked through sweat and tears to provide for us children, caring for our needs when we were awake, and watching over us when we were asleep. All these and many more things you both did for us, too numerous for us to mention or find words to express.

I would not be satisfied if I failed to mention our relationship in the Church with you and Papa, and what a great source of pleasure and comfort this has meant to me. This I will never be able to express. No one can realize the great joy and comfort received in being permitted and blessed to take the communion with one's earthly parents, though unworthy, as we have been blessed to do when meeting around the communion table to commemorate the Lord's last supper with his disciples. We miss you so much at our meetings and the numerous occasions when you with Vilma and myself, would take our trips to visit other churches and the brethren far and near; and even in our earlier days when we took you and Papa to the churches. These are memories that I will always cherish.

Mama, I recall very vividly next Saturday two years ago when you Vilma and I visited Sister Cagle's church and went with her after services to spend the night, and what happened as you were lying down or retiring for the night when you fell and broke your hip, which left you helpless from then until now. These are some of the things that make me sad when my mind goes back to that sad event, but if it had to happen, where else could have been treated with more kindness and loving hands than with those people that you love so much. They in every way administered to your comfort and needs until you were on your way to the hospital. What amazing love his people have shown for you in visiting, preaching and writing, expressing their concern over your condition.

We are also mindful of the kindness received by you while in the hospitals by both doctors and nurses. It seems they all did everything they possibly could for you. I will always be very grateful to Kit, Eunice, Mildred and Naomi for nursing and trying to keep you comfortable. The other children have done the best that they could considering the distance they have to travel to visit you.

Above all, the good Lord has upheld you by his strength; and we are told in his written word that if we suffer with him, we also shall reign with him in glory. We do not know why you have had to suffer so much pain, but we are told again that the sufferings of this life are not to be compared with the joy we will have with him in the world to come. We are all in the hands of a just and merciful God and he does all things right. Our prayer would be for him to reconcile each of us to his holy will.

I am inclosing some words that I have written that I want to dedicate to the most wonderful mother a child ever had.

Jabez.

Mourning soul approach your God:
Our comforts he does restore;
On Calvary's cross he hung:
For redemption our sins he bore.

All the promises he made to us,
Based on his firm decree,
Will surely come to pass for
Poor sinners like you and me.

That grace we hold so dear,
Is through his darling Son:
His death for mortals was
For eternal salvation won.

Look no more to fallen men,
But on grace we shall rely:
No more on our self works -
Our blessings he does supply.

Once more we try to pray,
If it could be his will,
That he might bless us now
To look to him, - peace be still.

Peace and love we long to feel
Among his saints on earth below:
Mortals do not ascend so high
That he cannot bring them low.

When we are in that low estate,
We can hear our brother's sigh;
And then we have an humble hope
We shall dwell with Him on high.

When we can greet our brother
And in love extend our hand;
We feel he is among that number
Bound to reach that promised land.

No more restless nights, Mama dear.
And we will need no doctor's care,
But all be in that eternal home:
Humbly hope that I will be there.

Around that celestial throne sing
Everlasting songs to his praise,
There will be no long nights there
Nothing but eternal, joyful days.

A MARTYR FOR PREDESTINATION

Many martyrs have been condemned as heretics on many charges of heretical doctrines by the Roman Catholic authorities, among which was a denial of free will in divine things, and predestination. Early Lutheran martyrs were so charged, and it is well known that the Huguonot martyrs held firmly to the doctrines of grace, election, predestination, and a denial of free will in matters of grace.

But there is one man in history who was a martyr on the grounds of holding and teaching predestination, and on that ground alone he endured solitary confinement in a prison cell simply because he refused to recant and sign a moderate creed. This was before the Roman Catholic Church had reached the point that heretics were put to death.

This man was the monk Gottschalk who in the ninth century, stated, "As immutable God from the creation of the world by his grace immutably predestined all the elect to eternal life, so he also equally immutably predestined all the wicked, upon whom, on the Day of Judgment the divine punishment will be visited for their evil ways, to their merited eternal death." Rather than substract one iota from this creed, he endured imprisonment the rest of his life.

Few of his writings have been preserved, as his enemies destroyed them. One of the few preserved poems he composed show his experience and loneliness:

"What command dost thou give me, O infant Boy,
What demand dost thou make, O infant Son,
That I am compelled to sing sweet songs,
That, exiled, I sail through a sea of wrongs?
O why should I sing to Thee?"

Gottschalk was born the son of a Saxon Count named Berno. The heathen Saxons had been conquered by the Franks, who demanded they submit to baptism, which the leaders resisted.

When Gottschalk was five years old his parents died and he was placed in the monastery of Fulda by his relatives, to receive his education. He was an heir to a fortune, so while a youth the head abbot forced him to become a monk so the monastery would get his entire inheritence.

When he became of age he left the monastery, stating he had received no divine call to be a monk, and that it was contrary to the laws of Charlemagne to force a man to be a monk against his will. He began a lone battle as a matter of principle to obtain his inheritance the monastery had robbed him of. A Council in Mainz in 828 ruled that he could not be forced to be a monk but that the monastery could keep his fortune. He appealed, and at the command of Louis the Pious the matter was ruled on by the synod of Worms, but the records about the matter from here on are lost.

The next record of Gottschalk finds him a monk in Obais. Here he proclaimed the doctrines of predestination and sovereign election. The monks rejected the truth, so Gottschalk left the monastery and went into northern Italy, where he preached to the people, and won many disciples who received the doctrines of entire grace; but the priests opposed him.

In 848 he appeared at the synod being held at Mainz where his doctrines were being discussed, and he confronted his opponents and defended predestination, but the synod rejected it, and he was declared a heretic. Next year he appeared at the synod a second time, prepared to defend his doctrines from the Bible, Augustine and the Fathers, but they refused to listen to him, beat him to the ground, and compelled him to cast his manuscripts into the flames. He was sentenced to prison.

At first he was permitted to write, so wrote in defence of his doctrine, and demanded justice, not mitigation of his sufferings out of pity. He offered to submit to trial by ordeal, being persuaded God would intervene to vindicate His truth. Then they forbade him to write any more, and he endured solitary confinement for twenty years.

When the archbishop learned that Gottschalk was dying, he had a moderate confession of faith drawn up for him to sign, that he might die at peace with the church, but in the face of death, he refused to compromise. "I would sooner die a thousand times for the truth than submit to a lie," declared the dying martyr. Thus he left this vale of suffering, in the year 869.

Walter B. Branning,
29 West 5th Street, S.E.,
Lansdale, Pa. 19446

THERE ARE MANY THINGS WE CANNOT UNDERSTAND

Rt. 1, Box 4,
Bivins, Texas 75555

Dear Elder Wood:

Enclosed is a check for subscription to the **Signs of the Times** for two years.

I hope the Lord will bring you and your wife our way again in the near future. We are wonderfully blessed to have good meetings at Pleasant Hope Church, with Elder Loyd Wall as our pastor; and also we are blessed to live near them, to visit and have wonderful discussions on the Scriptures. The Lord has blessed him with a deep understanding of those things.

I have some letters that I treasure that were written to us by Sister Buena Wright before she was killed almost two years ago. She was in the wreck, (about a week prior to the wreck in which she was killed,) in which I almost lost my life. Complications set up in which the doctors gave my husband no hope for about ten days; but the Lord was not ready for me to leave this world of suffering, trials and tribulations . . . I wish I could put on paper some of things that I experienced there, and also many things which have been revealed to me since I came home.

What I can't understand is why Sister Wright was taken and not me, when she

had so much to give, and I so little. Yet I know her blessed Saviour, whom she loved so very much, was ready for her to come home. I did not mean to get into all of this, but shall mail it anyway.

Give our love to your wife, and also to Elder and Sister Griffin.

An unworthy sister,
Annie Fowler

A NAMESAKE WRITES OF ELDER P. G. LESTER

Editors of the Signs:

My youngest daughter, who is a graduate student of North Western University of Michigan, writes of one whom I am his namesake. She found this information while doing research work connected with her studies, and wondered if I would not be interested.

I was interested, and wondered if the Household of Faith would be interested also. The Record is from the U. S. Congressional Directory and states:

"Posey Green Lester, a Representative from Virginia, was born near the Town of Floyd, Floyd County, Va. March 12, 1850; attended the common schools and the Jacksonville graded school at Floyd, Va. He was ordained a minister in the Primitive or Old School Baptist Church in 1886; resided in Floyd, Va. and traveled and preached in 21 states of the Union and in Ontario, Canada. He became an associate editor of Zion's Landmark, a church paper, published in Wilson, N. C., in 1883; and editor-in-chief in 1920.

He was elected as a Democrat to the 51st and 52nd Congress (March 4, 1899 - March 3, 1903.) He was not a candidate for renomination. Resuming his ministerial duties, he continued living at Floyd until 1921 when he moved to Roanoke, Va. and served as Pastor there until his death on February 9, 1929. Interment was in Evergreen Cemetery."

So ends the Congressional Record but much will be remembered by his many friends and associates. The Hymn and Tune book that bears his name, which was jointly compiled by Elder Durand, is a credit to the Primitive Cause and should be in Primitive Baptist Churches everywhere.

Elder Lester visited in our home when I was a small boy, and I remember him very distinctively for he gave me a quarter. This was the first money that I ever remember owning. He said that he gave 25¢ to all his namesakes. This must have cost him plenty for there are Posies and Lesters all over the country.

I spell my name differently from what his is recorded but the pronunciation is the same, and I am thankful to be named after such a faithful Soldier of the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. May it be God's will to raise up others, men of stature like Elder Lester, to carry on in the tradition of our fathers; ever contending for the Faith which was once delivered to the saints of old.

May this record of Elder Lester be both an inspiration and comfort to all that read it.

With very best wishes to you Editors and to the Household of Faith, I am,

Yours in christian fellowship,
Elder P. E. Ingram

LETTERS TO ELDER AND SISTER RUSTON

Okanagan Centre, B. C.
Canada
August 24, 1966

Dear Brother and Sister Ruston:

We much enjoyed your letter to us, and have often thought and spoken of our pleasant visit with you both when we were in Ontario. Even a short time together with those of like faith refreshes us, especially after being in desert places so long.

There are several pieces that have been of interest to me in the August Signs. Just to mention one or two: Elder Wood's Sermon, June, 1966. I have often thought of that question: Do I only believe Old School Baptist doctrine because my parents believed? Then, too, the article by Elder Gilbert Beebe,

"What is Prayer?" I have so many times been troubled by the fact that I do not follow any set pattern in this regard. Of late years, I have felt all prayer is comprised in these words, "Thy will be done," and if we are led in this, what need is there in a multiplication of words? His promises are sure. It is perhaps a lack of faith which makes one tell God what he thinks God should do - for ourselves or our loved ones.

Anyway, when I read this article, I was arrested by the thought, truly "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform," for here I am receiving comfort in 1966, from something written over one hundred years ago; and I felt to thank our heavenly Father, who sent this comfort to me: for every good gift comes from Him, I know.

Thank you for telling us of Alex McCall's ordination. It seems so good that he was given to the church just at this time, to be a comfort to you and to them.

We were very sorry to hear of Flossie Bishop's illness. Hope she is improving from her stroke. Also hope your troublesome cough is better, and that Sister Ruston is in usual health.

Now I will close with the first line of the hymn you introduced to me in one of your letters: "Blest be the dear uniting love." With love in Christian fellowship to you both, from Jim and me.

Your sister in hope,
Annie M. Black

Okanagan Centre, B. C.
Canada
September 26, 1966

Dear Brother and Sister Ruston:

Thank you both for your much appreciated letter to us. We were both interested in hearing of your trip to the Lexington-Roxbury Association. How sweet and pleasant it is, as we read in the Bible, to hear of brethren dwelling together in unity. We can rejoice with those who are able to attend such meetings and feast on the preaching they hear. I am reminded sometimes, in hearing so-called "sermons" on the radio, of the words, "The hungry sheep look up;" and they are not being fed.

It was good to hear of Brother Alex McCall's ordination. Someone asked me if we were related. I believe so; but the important thing to me is to know that we are related through our blessed Saviour, in ties that will never be broken, as all earthly ties must be. May God abundantly bless his ministry.

Now, in answer to your question regarding my last letter to you. Yes, you may certainly send on my letter to Elder and Sister Wood, if you see fit to do so; though I cannot think I wrote anything worthy of his honor. I remember thinking it was a poor attempt, but as it was the best I could do, I'd send it to you anyway.

Thank you for your dear message, Sister Esther, sharing your experience with us. You speak of the wonder that you were chosen to receive such mercy. This surely finds an echo in my heart. Sometimes I fear I must be mistaken - that I am taking promises meant for **His people** to myself; but I am sure that it is alone in Christ my Redeemer I can claim any knowledge of being one of his children. "The Lamb is all the glory, in my Immanuel's land."

With love in Christian bonds,

Yours sister in hope,
Annie Black

P. S. Tomorrow Jim will reach his 80th birthday. He seems so young it is hard to realize it. I am so thankful his health is good. I expect he will write before long, but I felt I'd like to send an answer to your letter this morning.

Rt. 1, Box 670,
Roanoke, Va.

Dear Friends in Christ:

I desire to write to the people I love, and love to be with, yet unable to be with them but little since I have no way to get to church very often.

I am writing of a few things I have seen; and I wish I knew what some of

them meant. I hope I understand some of them, but some of them I don't. Around fourteen years ago I saw a light at night rise up out of the east, and Jesus was in it. Then two or three years later, I saw a baby lying on my bed which I loved more than words could express. The baby was a few months old, and it sat up and started preaching like the Old Baptists preach when they are blessed to preach.

God gave me a son, David, who is nine years old. He loves to go to the Old Baptist Church, and will not go to sunday school with others around here. My husband belongs to the Brethren Church, and our three daughters, (who were grown, and one of them married, when David was born,) were brought up in that church and joined it. But David will only go with me, and says that when he is older, he will take me to church.

I know the Old Baptists are talked about, and called a peculiar people; but to me they are the light of the world, and will be with Jesus, who is our light, in the world to come. He is our light and life, and I have a hope in him.

A few years ago I saw a large eagle in the sky, which seemed as large as a house; and its claws were open as if it were going to pick something up. Then I saw a large bird like a dove, and all around it were placed small doves in perfect order. I believe that Christ's coming for the church, is close at hand. But we know that only our Father knows the hour; as well as all things.

I wish it were so that I could go to church more often. We have moved to the country, so my husband could enjoy life more. He has a heart condition, and has been operated on twice for cancer, and has not been able to work for over two years. There are no Old Baptists around where we live now, and people are more against them here, I believe, than where we lived in Roanoke. We lived close to one in Roanoke for awhile. I have found out just lately just how people feel about Old Baptists, and I expect as time goes on, they will be considered less and less. It would be good to live close to someone who believes like I do: that God is the same, yesterday, today and forever. In him we live, move and have our being.

The things I have seen and written of above, are things which have come to me at night in dreams.

A little one, I hope
Mrs. Margaret Gillispie

Danville, Virginia **December, 1966**

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EDITORIAL

With this issue we bring to close another year in the publication of the **Signs of the Times** - the 134th consecutive year in which the Lord has sustained it among his people. It has been ladened, as many of them write, with those things that cause them to rejoice as they are confirmed that their own exercises are similar to those of the brethren and sisters who write for its columns.

The consistent readers of the **Signs of the Times** are drawn towards those who

write, in a way no other method can do, short of personal contact while visiting with each other. When the Lord has taught one of his little ones, and brought him by birth into the spiritual family, that one finds that there is a bond with those of like precious faith, that is somewhat akin to children in a natural family, though far more wonderful and meaningful than anything that is in nature. He seeks the company of those of this faith whose speech is clear, and may be distinctly understood: those who can "frame to pronounce it (Shibboleth) right," (Judges 12:6) so there is no mistaking those who are brethren indeed.

Those of us who have the responsibility, under the blessings of God, of getting the paper together and sending it out each month, desire above all things else that the truth be maintained in its columns: so that the doctrine of the Lord our God shall shine forth from each page as clearly as we are enabled to present it. We know there is much we feel to have but little light on, but we are confident that what we have been taught, is in harmony with those things which remain unopened to our understanding; for these things can only explain and confirm other portions of the Scriptures.

No one should ever attempt to ignore or gloss over any part of the Word as it is written, as if any part may be set aside as unnecessary in presenting the whole truth. We cannot believe that there is such a thing as a half-truth," for such a thing would always be a "half-lie" at the same time. (Neither do we believe one is ever "almost persuaded," in spite of Herod's statement to Paul.) A little untruth, like a drop of kerosene in a barrel of flour, ruins the whole lot, and makes it unfit for human consumption. So, as far as we are concerned, unless all the doctrine is presented as all of grace, it is not fit to be set before the brethren in our columns.

Some years ago we began re-publishing articles each month under the heading of "Voices of the Past." We started to do this in order that all of us could remain in touch with our heritage; and to show that we yet believe and rejoice in the same doctrine which has distinguished the **Signs** from its beginning. We are delighted to be in such company, and have no reservations in believing, writing or speaking such things: only desiring the grace of God that we may continue as long as we live.

We re-publish the original Prospectus on which the **Signs of the Times** was founded, as evidence that we remain upon these principles:

"Proposals for publishing a semi-monthly paper, to be called the Signs of the Times, devoted exclusively to the Baptist cause, maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfections of the Great Jehovah — the Revelation which God has given of himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one."
2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.
3. Eternal, Unconditional Election.
4. The Total Depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.
5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the Elect Only.
6. The Sovereign, Irresistible, and in all cases Effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in Regenerating and Quickening the Elect of God.
7. The Final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God, by Grace.
8. The Resurrection of the dead, and Eternal Judgment.
9. That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized believers — that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God.
10. That there is no connection between Church and State, and as touching the proposition for a marriage between them, the Hon. R. M. Johnson, in his report on the Sabbath Question, has expressed our faith.

The Signs of the Times will be decidely opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath Sshools, etc., making war on the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of institutions."

We appreciate the continued support of the brethren and friends, for without your support and love of the cause, we could not continue. We wish that more of the brethren and friends would write for publication, and we urge those who hesitate to write, to send in their thoughts and experiences, so that we may have ample copy to fill our columns. We will publish what we can of them.

We would also appreciate it if the brethren, and especially the Elders, would mention the Signs to their congregations. Some do this and are helping to circulate the paper among those who desire to read it.

The year that is ending has brought many changes to all of us; but not outside of the will of God concerning each one of us. His grace has been sufficient; and whatever is in store for us in the year to come, we will not travel the road alone.

J.D.W.

EDITORIAL

"And the cup was found in Benjamin's sack." (Genesis 44:12)

The sons of Jacob had already been down to Egypt for corn, and had left Simeon there bound and in prison. When the corn was gone their father said unto them, "Go again, and buy us a little food." Judah assured his father that they could not possibly go unless Benjamin accompanied them. Jacob hesitated, for he had lost Joseph, and Benjamin, the only remaining child of his beloved wife Rachel, was very dear to him; but at last he bade them take of the fruit and carry it down to the man as a present. Also said he, Take double money in your hand, and the money that ye brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand, and take Benjamin; and Jacob concluded,"If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."

They returned to Egypt with Benjamin, and when Joseph saw them, he commanded the ruler of his house to slay and make ready, for these men shall dine with me at noon. The brethren were filled with fear because they were brought into Joseph's house, thinking that Joseph sought occasion against them. They communed with the steward of Joseph's house regarding the money that was returned in their sacks, but he said, "Peace be to you! fear not." When Joseph came home they bowed themselves to him to the earth, and he lifted up his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his own mother's son, and said, "Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son."

Joseph made haste, for his bowels did yearn upon his brother, he sought where to weep, and entered his chamber and wept there. After he had washed his face and refrained himself, he commanded his servants to set on bread. His brethren were then seated before him, the first-born according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth; and the men marvelled one at another, and Joseph sent messes unto them from before him, but Benjamin's mess was five times as much as any of theirs. Then Joseph commanded his steward to fill their sacks with food, as much as they could carry, and to put every man's money in his sack's mouth; and to put his silver cup in the sack's mouth of the youngest, as well as his corn money.

When they were gone out of the city, and not yet far off, Joseph commanded the steward, "Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good?" He overtook them, and

spake unto them these words. Then took they down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack. The search began at the eldest and left at the youngest, "and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack."

Here we shall cease to follow the narrative, as our intention is to write of the cup in its spiritual significance; also of the characters with whom this cup is found. Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, bear him two sons: Joseph first and then Benjamin. Jacob loved Joseph more than all his sons, and Benjamin, being the youngest, was also greatly beloved, for it is written, Jacob's life was bound up in the lad's life. Joseph was therefore Benjamin's elder brother, and Joseph being a lively type of Christ, Benjamin, to our understanding, is a wonderful type of the church in the gospel dispensation. The steward is the servant of Joseph, and represents the gospel ministers, who are stewards of the manifold grace of God.

It was the steward who ministered to the brethren when in distress over their returned money. He said, "Peace be to you! fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks." He it was also who searched the sacks; he stood in Joseph's stead and spoke the words given him by Joseph. He also declared that they had the divining cup, and they denied it, for the thing was impossible with them. So wherever there are those whose iniquities encompass them around, they stand before their Judge self-condemned, depending entirely upon the mercy of him with whom they have to do. Such, in their confession, deny that they have the cup.

The cup represents the sorrows, travail and separation which Joseph experienced while passing through the afflictions that were his lot according to God's purpose. The cup therefore was a type of the cup of our Lord Jesus Christ. He came down to the Egypt of this world where he was crucified, was sold by his brethren, and at Gethsemane he said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." He fell on his face and prayed, saying, "Oh my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! never-the-less, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

"How bitter that cup, no heart can conceive,
Which he drank quite up that sinners might live."

As Joseph partook of his cup, he divined the very things transpiring in his life to be according to the purpose of God revealed to him in the two dreams given him long ago. It was in a sense of loneliness he partook of that cup. It could not be shared with the Egyptians: he was alone. As our Lord partook of his cup, he divined, and could say, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." He had a full cup. "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." This blessed Person is none other than our Elder Brother, though we knew it not. We have seen him pierced, and we mourn for him; when brought into judgment, we expect chains and death, and say, "What shall we speak?" We know not what to say, nor how to clear ourselves.

The brethren on their second visit for corn, dined with Joseph; and it is written, "Joseph made haste, for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there." Whilst here on earth our dear Redeemer ate with publicans and sinners, and his bowels of love yearned over them. Often in the secret chamber of his solitary life, he offered supplication with strong cries and tears for them, and for all his brethren. It is said that Joseph took and sent messes unto all of them from before him, but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of their's.

The least notice or favor of our Lord to a poor sinner, is not according to good works, but according to his love, and love is the fulfilling of the law. While the brethren representing the Jews received the law, yet Benjamin (the gos-

pel church) received five times as much: which signifies a fulfilled law. With those who are born of the same mother (Jerusalem above) the cup is found. They say it is not in their sack of life, yet they are grieved for the afflictions of Joseph: they are vile, sinful. When they would do good, evil is present with them. This is my cup. Yet when it is shown to them, they tremble, for they fear it is stolen, that they are taking that which belongs to another. They feel God-forsaken, are fearful of death and offer supplications with strong cries and tears; they hate sin, but find it in their members, and are made to cry out, "Not my will, but thine be done."

As the steward, or preacher, by the Holy Spirit's guidance, searches, the cup is found: and it is in Benjamin's sack; that is, in his who is the smallest and least in the family. There is little Benjamin with their Ruler, partaking of the same cup. "And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders."

The rest of the brethren could return to their father, but Benjamin shall dwell in safety by him. Only in a realizing sense of our own weakness, is there safety, and then we know we have no righteousness; nevertheless our near kinsman Jesus the Lord shall cover us with his righteousness all the day long, and we shall dwell between his shoulders. What a safe place for poor weak sinners: between his shoulders. He carries the lambs in his bosom. It is also written, "The government shall be upon his shoulder." As partakers of his cup, though babes, they yet divine and see things that are hid from the wise and prudent. They clearly discern what holy men of old wrote as moved by the Holy Ghost. To the Jews under the legal covenant, it was not revealed, but it is revealed unto us. In these things we have fellowship with God, and are partakers of his cup. Not one shall come short of his glory, for if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him. The father's life was bound up in the life of the child. Jesus, our Elder Brother, is God-man, therefore in him God's life is bound up in our life.

As Joseph made himself known unto his brethren, so does our Lord Jesus make himself known with the glory of a risen Lord, who, like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. He showed to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus that his going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it. His blessed presence gives joy and gladness; and the five changes of raiment given Benjamin, are but a faint type of the blessed raiment with which, from time to time, his bride, the gospel church is adorned.

G. R.

(The above Editorial by Elder Ruston was published in the Signs August 1, 1923. It was his first after his announcement that he would consent to be an associate editor. In the absence of a current writing, we are glad to republish it, with the feeling that our brethren will enjoy reading it. — J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Bucks Co., Pa., March 15, 1858.

Dear Brother Beebe:

I recently received a letter from brother Christopher Serch, of Md., requesting my views through the **Signs** on the following passage of scripture. "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my veins be consumed within me."—Job 19: 25, 26, 27.

Brother Serch, I do not know that what I write upon this scripture will to you be worth the freight, although I find it much easier to communicate with

my tongue than with my pen. Yet such as I have, though it be but small, I freely give unto you. Perhaps some brethren have entertained the idea that Job was not brought into a knowledge of the true God and eternal life until the Lord spake to him out of the whirlwind, and they have probably come to this conclusion from what he says in the 42nd chap. and 5th vs. "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye seeth thee." But to me it is evident from the text, that at the time he uttered it, he was in possession of eternal life; for, says the Redeemer, "This is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."—John 17: 2. Of a truth, Christ the glorious sun of righteousness, was never seen as the Redeemer of his people only by and in his own light, and his children are only seen as the excellent of the earth, when he shines out of them, just as the natural sun only by its own light is seen, and the smaller planets by the sun's rays acting upon them. Job expresses his faith in strong language, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth." The Apostle John says, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." The question may arise, how does he have the witness in himself? Because of faith, for faith is a fruit of the Spirit. Consequently this fruit is not found where the Tree of Life is not.

This servant of God looked to Christ as a whole and perfect Saviour. The one who possessed the legal right to redeem, having a claim upon them before they were sold into bondage; for they were the members of his body, and in his coming to save them, it is said by the Prophet, "He is just, and having salvation;" or according to the marginal reading, "He is just and saving himself." He would not only save his people from the curse of the law, by being made a curse himself, but he would ransom them from the power of the grave, and in so doing he would descend from heaven, with the voice of the Arch-angel and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ should be raised.

Having briefly noticed the 25th verse, I shall now come to the 26th, which, from what you have written, I conceive has presented some difficulties to your mind from the saying, "And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my **flesh** shall I see God." It has undoubtedly presented its difficulties to many of the children of God. While on the other hand those whose religion is of the flesh, have seized upon it to support the idea that heaven is only a place of carnal enjoyments, where parents and children, husbands and wives; brothers and sisters, were to meet and enjoy all fleshly relationship the same as now. Indeed, there is much to allure in this kind of fleshly religion, for the individual whose heart is at enmity against God, may be wrought upon by stimulating his mind with the prospect of self-gratification to make a profession of religion, and to attend to some of its outward forms for the sake of attaining to that in another world. Hence all those Ishmaelitish preachers, who under the magic power of Satan, are transforming themselves into ministers of righteousness, and of which the world is now flooded, are grasping every opportunity to work upon the carnal passions of the ungodly, by telling them that if they will only unite with their so-called church, and be liberal in their donations to support a board of mendicant preachers in affluence, that they will be sure of such a prize. This is but one of the many delusions put forth by the man of sin, "to cause them to believe a lie that they might all be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness."

But let us turn from these sickening views, "For flesh and blood doth not inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption!" When the question was put to Christ to know whose wife the woman should be, that had seven husbands, he said, "Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God? For when they shall arise from the dead,

they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels which are in heaven."—Mark 12: 24-25. I think if you will examine the marginal reading of this text, you will find it divested of much of its difficulty, which reads thus, "And after I shall **awake,** though this body be destroyed, yet **out** of my flesh shall I see God." You will bear in mind that our translators, in many cases, when the original text would admit, have given us a two-fold rendering; and as they were, so far as any evidence that I know of, only fleshly men, yet being learned in the various languages, they very naturally would place that rendering which was most consistent with their fleshly views in the text, and that which was the most contrary to their feelings in the margin. Hence, I think, the margin is generally the most definite, which says, "After I shall awake." Jobs faith triumphed over death, notwithstanding his body should go down to the grave and become food for worms, and mingle with the earth from whence it was taken; yet his Redeemer being the God Almighty, who called the earth into existence, and made man from the dust thereof, would find no impediments in bringing up that body again from the grave, out of which he should see God.

This will lead to contemplation of the 27th verse, which also, in the marginal, is quite different, "Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold and not a stranger, though my veins be consumed within me." Job, like all the fleshly family of Adam, was of the earth. "The first man Adam was of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." 1 Cor. 15: 47-48. Thus you will discover two different headships are brought to view and clearly stated by the Apostle. The one is from the earth, and every way fitted for the earth upon which he was placed and out of which he receives his sustenance until he returns to the ground from whence he was taken. This earthly man is a stranger to God and godliness; the plan of salvation, as revealed in the scriptures, is only a stumbling-block and a system of foolishness unto him, notwithstanding he is only delighted with the earthly things, and would always remain here if he could, yet he knows he must die, and because of this he has been contriving a way to heaven; but he always begins to build upon the sand, such as resolving within himself to get religion, to hold on by a routine of duties. He supposes at the end or top of these duties is heaven, where he can enjoy himself in all his fleshly ties and emotions, consequently he expects to be rewarded for all his labor. This earthy man is called the old man; the other, the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, and is said to be Christ in you the hope of glory.

And as Job had this hope in him, he must have been born of God. This birth is brought to view under a variety of expressions, such as receiving eternal life, the spirit of adoption, the holy Spirit of God, whereby we are saved unto the day of redemption,&c. Yet we are not to understand then, from that the Adamic man, (that which is born of the flesh,) in his nature has undergone any change. The form of words used by the pen of inspiration, as well as our experience, will not admit of this idea. For instance, adoption does not change the nature or the relation of the adopted; but it is "the taking and treating of a stranger as one's own child." So also in regard to sealing. The nature of the wax is in nowise changed by the seal being placed upon it. Yet the appearance of the wax is changed by the seal; because it yields to the seal and receives an impression from it. Paul, after he had received this sealing of the spirit, complains bitterly of the body of sin and death, saying, "Oh wretched man that I am." Yet, like Job, his hope in Christ caused him to fully believe that he should be delivered. For, notwithstanding this earthly man was so wretched, yet he "bore in it the marks of the Lord Jesus." As soon as the life of Christ was

implanted in him, a visible change in his appearance was manifest to all — the same feet that had run swift to shed blood, now ran in the way of Christ's commandments — the same tongue that was employed in cursing the Church of Christ, was now employed in sounding the name of that Jesus whom he had persecuted, far away among Gentiles as being all in all unto him. The same hand that had been employed in dragging men and women before the Jewish Sanhedrim that they might be punished, was now found laboring to provide things honest for himself in the sight of all men, and also in guiding the pen to write epistles of instruction and consolation to the saints. But after all this he keeps up a line of demarkation between the old Adamic man, which is born of the flesh, and the new man which, after God is created in righteousness and true holiness — the one a heavenly child, the other a stranger to God.

But Job says in the text, according to the marginal reading, "Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not a stranger, though my reins be consumed within me." This will lead us on to contemplate more fully the doctrine of the resurrection. Paul says in the 15th chapter of his 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, "But some will say how are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come forth? Thou fool that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body which shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat or some other grain. But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every soul his own body."

From the foregoing testimony, and what follows in its connection, with other scriptures, I conceive the same identical body that is born of the flesh, born of Adam, and is a stranger by nature to all heavenly things, will be raised up from the dust of death. But in the resurrection it will be animated by that life which we have received in regeneration, or of the spirit of which saints are born of God. "For if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, he that raised up Jesus from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."—Rom. 8: 11. Consequently thou sowest not that which shall be. This body when sown in the earth is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption—it is sown in dishonor, and it is raised in glory—it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power— it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. It is destined to bear the likeness of Christ's glorious body. He in his incarnation, was the son of David, but in his resurrection from the dead was declared to be the son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness. Paul says, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know him no more." "We shall all be changed." When the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the Arch-angel, and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall be raised. This I understand to be "the latter day," or the closing up of time. This voice had quickened Job into life—it had opened his blind eyes, unstopped his deaf ears. He recognized it as being all powerful in the beginning, as the Word—all powerful when made flesh to put away sin and conquer death, hell and the grave. All powerful in his reign as the King of Saints, and he would be no less powerful in his descent, for then should his voice rend the tomb, and bid his sleeping dust "awake," no more to be annoyed by Satan's malicious darts, for then the prince of this world would find nothing that could receive a pang from him. May not all who **know**, and by a lively faith can say this is my Redeemer, look to the auspicious moment, and say with the poet:

"How long, dear Savior, oh! how long,
Shall that bright hour delay?
Fly swiftly round, ye wheels of time,
And bring the welcome day."

Thus, brother Serch, in commenting upon the text, I have endeavored to be governed by the scriptures, and as to our knowledge of each other in a future state, if we do know then, it will not be as we know here.

Brother Beebe, I submit the foregoing to you, and if you deem it proper you can give it a place in the **Signs**, according to brother Serch's request.

D. L. Harding

(Elder Harding was pastor of Southampton, Pa. church for a number of years. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

MEMORIAL
ELDER E. D. GAFFORD
MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL
HONORAVILLE, ALABAMA

The Ebenezer Baptist Association of the Primitive Faith and Order while in its 129th annual session feels so keenly the loss of its highly esteemed and beloved brother and moderator, Elder E. D. Gafford; that we, the messengers, authorize the following obituary and tribute of respect recorded in our minutes to wit:

Since our last session God has seen fit to remove from us by death, Elder E. D. Gafford, who was wonderfully blessed to serve us efficiently through 44 annual sessions of this association. He was born November 12, 1897, on a farm in Crenshaw County, Alabama where he lived most of his life. He was married to Camilla Head on February 29, 1920. He was the father of four children. His wife and three children, Guy Walton, Darvey H., and Opal Gafford Daniel, survive to mourn his passing. Also, five grandchildren and a host of other relatives and friends mourn his passing.

Brother Gafford united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Black Rock on his 24th birthday, November 12, 1921, and was baptized the next morning by Elder A. L. McVey in Cane Creek near Black Rock Church. The light of God's grace and love and the brilliance of God's great gift to Brother Gafford was made manifest immediately. He preached his first sermon in less than a month after he was baptized, December 10, 1921. It was in December at Black Rock that he preached his first sermon; it was in December at Black Rock that he preached his last sermon, 44 years later. He made a complete circle in his ministry.

He was ordained to the work of the ministry less than a year after his baptism, September 29, 1922. Elders B. J. Wilson, J. J. Richards, A. H. Williamson, and A. L. McVey formed the presbytery. His great gift of leadership was quickly recognized by his brethren electing him as moderator of Ebenezer Association just a few days after his ordination when it convened in October, 1922. Many churches called him as pastor. God blessed Elder Gafford to feed them with wisdom and understanding as well as to faithfully lead them in the old paths of truth and righteousness until God called him to depart this natural life. Elder Gafford preached his last sermon on the day of his death, December 12, 1965. His last text was the 23rd Psalm. One of his last quotations was: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28)

We recall that Elder Gafford used Hymn No. 364 in *Lloyd's Primitive Hymns* more often than any other in opening preaching service:

"Father, I stretch my hand to Thee,
No other help I know;
If Thou withdraw Thyself from me,
Ah! whither shall I go?

What did Thine only Son endure
Before I drew my breath!
What pain, what labor, to secure
My soul from endless death!

Author of faith, to Thee I lift
My weary longing eyes;
O let me now receive that gift,
My soul without it dies!

Surely Thou wilt not let me die;
O speak, and I shall live;
And here I will unwearied lie;
Till Thou Thy Spirit give."

Christ was first in his life. The business of Elder Gafford's life was PREACHING CHRIST. That which cheered Elder Gafford most was the PRESENCE OF CHRIST. The life of his life was the SPIRIT OF CHRIST. The power of his life was the LOVE OF CHRIST. The WILL OF CHRIST was the law of Elder Gafford's life. The GLORY OF CHRIST was the end of his life, because in his last statements, Elder Gafford focused the spotlight upon Christ being the Shepherd of His sheep.

His prayer, dependence, patience, faith, hope and humility was so prominent in his deportment that none questioned his sincerity. His love, gentlenes, brotherly kindness and unselfish service to others made manifest the fruits of the Spirit. No one could move him from firmly standing on his deep convictions of the Sovereignty of God and the power of Jesus Christ to eternally save everyone for whom Jesus lived and died. We have known no one who was more blessed with the gift of oratorical eloquence in using beautiful phrases so fluently that his audiences respond-

ed with strict attention as though God was saying to them: "Hear, O earth, the words of my mouth." "Be still and know that I am God." He so keenly felt the controlling, ruling, and directing power of God that he would often say, "I am not late, I am never late; I am on God's scheduled time."

The great number of funerals he conducted proved that God had given him a special gift to console the bereaved. He said on many occasions while comforting the bereaved at funerals of men who left evidence of being born of the Spirit: "Our loss is his eternal gain." Elders Sam H. Dean, J. P. Morgan, Warren King and Yancey McCormick, who conducted Elder Gafford's funeral, confidently gave the same comforting thought.

We thank God from the depths of our innermost souls for having blessed this part of His vineyard with such heavenly gifts as were so effectively demonstrated in the walk, conversation and preaching of Elder E. D. Gafford. We shall see his face no more here, but may God bless us to use well the legacy we inherited through his influence which is more precious than silver and gold. We thank God for this treasure. He was a good citizen, loving husband and father, excellent pastor, and surely a faithful soldier in God's kingdom robed with Christ's righteousness tinged with the blood of Jesus which cleanseth.

His body lies in Black Rock Cemetery of the dead; his spirit is engulfed in the White Rock of Endless Ages in the City of the Eternal Living in Heaven. Amen.

Written by:
Elder E. J. Lambert
306 Richardson Street
Winnsboro, Texas
Sister Eleanor Dixon
4070 Narrow Lane Road
Montgomery, Alabama

BROTHER WILLIAM ROBERT (BOB) McLAMB

Brother McLamb was born in Harnett County, N. C. July 24, 1891, and departed this life July 18, 1966, at the age of nearly seventy-five years. He was the son of the late Jesse and Sister Melia Jane McLamb; and was married to Ida Webb of Harnett County April 21, 1912, who died December 19, 1945. To this union three children were born. In the year of 1947, July 21, he married Miss Mabel Reel of Pamlico County, N. C. He is survived by wife and two children: William Ralph, and Miss Alto Pearl McLamb, of Benson, N. C.; and by two grandchildren, two great grandchildren. Also by two sisters, Mrs. Irene Steuart and Mrs. Lillie Neighbors, both of Dunn, N. C.

Brother McLamb united with Liberty Church while in the hospital on February 25, 1966, and later was baptized in a bathtub in his home. He always been a Primitive Baptist believer. He was a prosperous retired farmer and merchant.

May God's blessings be upon his wife, children and grandchildren, and all who feel their great loss; yet we feel it is his eternal gain. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." (Rev. 14:13)

His funeral was held at Liberty Church by his pastor, Elder Lester E. Lee, and his body was laid to rest in Bethsaida Church Cemetery, to await the coming of the Lord, who will call his sleeping body to arise, together with all the redeemed family of God, to be made like Him, and to see him and be satisfied forever.

Done by order of Liberty Church in conference August 6, 1966.

James G. Young
Lovie Young
Eva Tadlock

NANNIE LOU BRYANT VIA

Nannie Lou Bryant Via was born March 19, 1901, and died June 19, 1965, making her stay on earth sixty-four years, three months. She was the daughter of John W. and Sarah Akers Bryant; and the wife of the late Jessie N. Via, they being married forty-four years and eight months. To their union were born ten children. She leaves to mourn, three sons: A. Neal Via and Jesse A. Via, of Collinsville, Va.; and Grant K., of Fieldale, Va.; six daughters: Mrs. Katie Johnson Lane, Mrs. H. D. Ingram, Mrs. Clinton Spencer, of Ferrum, Va.; Mrs. Bobby Hancock and Mrs. Glen Pickeral, Bassett, Va.; and Mrs. Herbert Roberts, Martinsville, Va. Also three brothers: Elisha, Floyd, and Stanton Bryant, of Fieldale; three sisters: Mrs. D. A. Turner and Mrs. H. A. Byrd, of Fieldale; and Mrs. G. F. Thompson, Bassett, Va.; and twenty-three grandchildren.

Sister Via joined Union Primitive Baptist Church May 23, 1959, and was baptized the 4th Sunday in June with her husband who joined the day before. She died in the Franklin Memorial Hospital after a week's illness. She was a devoted and loving wife and mother. She loved the church and was a faithful member. The brethren and friends were always welcome in her home; and she was loved by all who knew her.

Her funeral was conducted at Union Church by her pastor, Elder Leonard Brammer, assisted by Elder Amos Hash. Her body was laid to rest beside her husband, (who preceded her in death about eleven months,) in the Via Cemetery beneath a mound of beau-

tiful flowers, to await the coming of the Lord.

May the Lord, who doeth all things well, reconcile the family and the church to His will. Written by one who loved her naturally, and I hope spiritually for Jesus' sake.

Rada L. Rakes

ALBERT COLEY COX

It has pleased our God to take from this life our beloved brother, Albert Coley Cox, on July 12, 1966, at the age of seventy-seven. He was born February 3, 1889; and was united in marriage to Sallie Bett Cox April 28, 1912, and to this union ten children were born. Two children and his beloved wife preceded him in death. He was again united in marriage to the former Maggie Minter February 14, 1964. Surviving are his wife of Reidsville, N. C. and six sons and two daughters: Lonnie, Alvis, Edgar and Malcolm, all of Reidsville, and Harold of Hopewell, and Bobby of Spray; Miss Beatrice Cox of Raleigh, and Mrs. Juanita Martin, of Greensboro. Surviving also are four half-brothers and one half-sister: George, of Greensboro; Robert and Johnny, of Ruffin, and Charlie of Reidsville; Mrs. Nannie Gregory, of Greensboro; eighteen grandchildren and ten great grandchildren.

Brother Cox was a native of Caswell County, N. C., and a retired famer of the Harrison Crossroads Community, where he lived for many years. He was a member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, having united with the church October 22, 1939. He was a faithful member, and a firm believer in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace, and grace alone.

We, the members of Dan River Church, would remind Sister Maggie and his children of the words spoken by the Apostle, "Sorrow not as those that have no hope," for Brother Cox died in the hope of eternal life; and we believe he is now asleep in Jesus, waiting for His second coming; when he, together with all the saints, shall come forth clothed in perfection, to see Him as he is, be like Him and be satisfied.

Funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Elder David Spangler, and interment was in the church cemetery. May the grace of our God be with Sister Maggie and his children, to comfort and console them, is our prayer.

Written by order of the church.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
W. C. Vipperman, Clerk
By: J. B. Minter, Asst. Clerk

LEORA M. WILLIS

It has pleased our heavenly father to call from the walks of this life, Sister Leora M. Willis. Our dear sister was born in Webster County, Mississippi, October 22, 1882, and was called from us in this life, June 18, 1966. She is survived by six children, twenty-four grandchildren and thirty-three great grandchildren. All of the children live in California. Son, J. C. Ivy, of Orland; daughters, Linda Vincent, Glendale; Nann Quinn, Fontana; Abbie Mitchell, Los Angeles; Earlene Hoan, Colton; and Lorene Wood, of Riverside.

Sister Willis asked for a home with the Seclusia Primitive Baptist Church at Compton, California, April 27, 1942, and was received by letter. She was always a faithful member and showed a love for her church. Her first membership was in Alabama in 1916. Sister Willis left on record an experience of Grace written by her in 1952. We hope it can be printed at a later date for the benefit of her brothers and sisters. Sister Willis was laid to rest in The Pomona Cemetery. Brother Austin Tipton spoke comforting words to the family and brethren in the absence of her pastor, Elder T. R. Jefferson. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings."

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to her family and bow in humble submission to the will of God.

Walter B. Wilson, Clerk

HOWARD MOSES LEE

Brother Howard Moses Lee was born January 18, 1910, and died May 7, 1966, making his stay on earth more than fifty-six years.

He joined Mingo Primitive Baptist Church December 18, 1934, and was faithful until death. Brother Lee and I were boys together, being reared not far apart. He was of good moral character from his youth up. He was a good friend and brother, and thoughtful of my welfare and that of the church. We will all miss him very much. Brother Lee is survived by his wife, one daughter, four brothers and three sisters.

His funeral was held at Hatcher, Skinner and Drew Funeral Home by Elder W. D. Godwin and Elder W. E. Thurner; and his body was laid to rest in the family cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the family; one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; and one put on our church records.

Done by order of Mingo Church in conference Saturday before the second Sunday in August, 1966.

Elder W. D. Godwin
Sister K. Belle Lee
Sister Hattie Bass
Committee

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 135 DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1967 NO. 1

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"MERCY AND TRUTH: RIGHTEOUSNESS AND PEACE"
(Psalms 85:10)

"Mercy and truth are met together;
(In the dear Prince of Peace)
Righteousness and peace kissed each other"
(By His great work of grace).

This quotation is from Holy Writ,
As the saints do well know,
And what comfort and joy it brings
To pilgrims here below.

How sweet the language of Scripture!
All by inspiration;
For sweetness, that of profane writ
Doesn't match Revelation.

Christ is the central One set forth
In the written word of God;
His are kept by His mighty power,
Justified by His blood.

"The greatest Personage ever lived,"
I said in a sweet dream,
And I hope I am one of those
Given Him to redeem.

I can't speak too highly of Him,
"The Saviour of the world,"
At Whom, in His great agony,
Blasphemous words were hurled.

I love to extol His virtues;
In Him no sin was found;
All that He accomplished on earth
Did to God's glory redound.

To praise Him for the salvation,
Which He wrought out in time,
Will be the joy of the redeemed,
In the celestial clime.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, N. C.

PRAISE AND HONOR

Dear Lord I know that thou art great:
Thy name I do adore.
With patience thy coming I wait,
To meet thee on that bright shore.

In praise and honor is my song:
And I often want to sing.
Sweet meditations all day long,
Sweet comfort and sweet peace bring.

Sometimes in praise I try to sing;
Then sometimes I am down cast.
But when I sing and praise His name,
It seems then my joy will last.

I rise above the clouds of life,
And hope I will stay up there;
But I come down — I fall in strife:
Then fall down, dear Lord, in prayer.

Hail ye! Hail ye! ye saints of God,
Look ye up and praise his name:
All glory to his holy Word,
This is all the song I sing.

At times I hope I've seen the light
Of the great all powerful God:
Then my days clearer, my ways bright,
Make easy the path I trod.

Lidie Brown
921 Yorkshire Street
Houston, Texas 77022

"MUST WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH"

"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:23, 24)

It seems that this scripture sets forth very clearly how the children of God shall worship him. Just prior to this, the Samaritan woman had said, "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain: and ye say that in Jerusalem is the

place where men ought to worship." Christ is telling her that it is not the place of worship that is important, but rather the attitude of worship. And this must be in spirit and in truth. For a person to worship God he must be in the Spirit; and to be in the Spirit he must be born again, as Christ told Nicodemus. (John 3: 3)

Man is born into the world a natural man of the flesh, and possesses only a natural mind, and natural desires and habits, and has no knowledge of God, or the Spirit of God, in a proper sense. He lives his life here at peace with the world, and is satisfied that he is just as good as anyone else; and thoroughly capable of taking care of himself, and of determining his own destiny by his own course of action. If questioned about his spiritual welfare, he will probably answer in much the same manner as Nicodemus answered Christ: "How can a man be born again when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born." There is nothing but a natural knowledge and understanding displayed here. In this state he is dead in trespasses and in sin; and does not even know it, because he has never known anything else.

Man in this state is walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, and will continue in this manner, if he is left to himself. He is carnal, and knows nothing about a spiritual realm — so how could he possibly attain unto it of himself: "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Therefore, he must be changed from this state. The change must be made for him, since he is completely unaware of his present condition. As it is written, "For he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." So, in this condition, if it depended on man, there would be none saved.

"But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ: (by grace are ye saved,) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." This scripture does not mention any action on the part of the man who is dead in trespasses and sin; nor does it mention any conditions that must be met by him. And yet he is translated from being dead in sin, to sitting in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. What a marvelous miracle this is to such a one as this! Is there any wonder that they never feel able to praise Him as they ought? Their sincerest efforts to praise His holy name, seem so weak and pitiful; and yet they spend the rest of their lives desiring to worship him in spirit and in truth. It takes the same power, however, to enable them to worship Him that it did for them to have their first view of the glory of His kingdom.

I believe that the quickening together with Christ, is being born of the Spirit of God; for the verse immediately following says, "And hath raised us up and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Christ told Nicodemus that except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Where would the heavenly places in Christ Jesus be, except that part of the kingdom of God that his children experience in this life? These experiences are the fortastes that they have of the heavenly things that are laid up for them that love his appearing: the things that are reserved in heaven for them that are joint heirs with Christ of the promise that is sure to the seed.This is the earnest of the inheritance which they have until the redemption of the purchased possession.

The earnest of an agreement is not the full payment of the contract, but is a small portion of that which is to be realized in its fullness at some future date. The earnest of the inheritance likewise is a small portion of that which will be realized in its fullness when Christ comes in all his glory, to gather his elect and take them home, to be forever with him. In a natural covenant, the debtor pays the earnest requirement; **but, this is not a natural cove-**

nant. In this covenant the price or debt has already been paid, and the earnest of the inheritance is to the heirs of the covenant, as evidence that the debt of the law has been paid for them; that their hope is in God, and that their salvation is complete. These evidences along the way renew their strength, and enable them to press on to the mark of the prize of the high calling of God. At which time they will realize the fullness of the inheritance in Christ.

The spirit quickens one when it takes up its abode within him, and leads him in ways he has not known. It shows him what he is by nature, and what he must be by grace. And he sees that God's ways are as high above his ways as the heavens are above the earth. He has been looking at the law, and it is indeed a fearsome sight. He sees what he must be to meet the requirements thereof, and knows that with man it is impossible. He realizes that he is a wretched sinner before a just and holy God, and that his only hope is for a mediator that can stand between him and God. He can then pray, "Lord have mercy on me a sinner." He would never pray this as long as there is a shred of evidence that he can fulfill the law himself; but, now his prayer is, "Lord undertake for me, or I perish."

The Spirit shows the way of salvation. It is written, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit is come, he will guide you into all truth." All these are shown, and made to feel, that it is only when led by this Spirit that man can do anything that is pleasing to God. They read in the Scriptures of the patriarchs and prophets of old times, being led of this same Spirit, and being blessed to subdue kingdoms, overcome great obstacles, and to stand in the face of grave peril, when sustained by the Spirit of God. The Apostles on the day of Pentecost were in one place, of one accord, and the Spirit sat upon them as cloven tongues like as of fire; and they began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. They read of Saul of Tarsus being struck to the ground: turned from his former ways, and made a preacher of the gospel,(which he once persecuted,) by the working of the Spirit of God.

These testimonies are now significant to the children of God, because they hope they understand them as they see in them a similarity to their own travels. What a blessed revelation to those who have reached the place that they realize that they cannot save themselves, to find God's blessings were showered upon others who testified that they felt to be the chiefest of sinners! What a comforting message to read of others who were turned about, and blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, simply because it was the Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom!

They now examine more closely the natural life and ways of the world, and feel to see that it is true that man in his best estate is vanity. They realize that there are within themselves, two separate entities, warring one against the other. There is still the natural man of the flesh with all his passions, thoughts, and deeds; and now there is the Spiritual man which is judging the man of the flesh, and gives him no peace when following the things of the world. It causes him to go mourning, feeling completely undone; and wondering, Was there ever such a one as I? They realize that they are not directing their own way, and can only pray that God, whom they now feel to know and fear, will lead them gently. They know that a display of his wrath, which they deserve, would utterly destroy them. This fear is the beginning of wisdom; and this wisdom is the knowledge that in God is all power, holiness, righteousness, grace, truth, mercy, peace, and love. They realize that in Him all their fullness dwells: He is their all in all, and their only hope of salvation.

This is my understanding of how a child of God is born again of the Spirit, and is made a fit subject to worship God in Spirit and in truth. This is why they will ever ascribe all glory, honor, and praise to God, for having mercy on one such as they feel themselves to be.

These are the ones that declare that Jesus Christ is the only name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. These are the ones that God seeketh to worship him, and this they most assuredly shall do. God seeketh them, not to see if he can find them, or how many he can find, for he shall find them every one, and they shall show forth his praise, as is pleasing unto Him. They shall worship him in spirit and in truth. "For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles; whether we are bond or free: and have all been made to drink into one spirit." Yes, they have all been made to drink into one Spirit. That Spirit is God, and he shall lead them into all truth. It shall enable them to stand in the face of anything that may confront them in this life, if it is the Lord's will.

This Spirit is the Comforter that Christ promised to send unto his children; and it is their constant companion, leading them in mercy and grace. At times they may feel alone and forsaken; but they are never alone in the sense that they were before they had a hope in things eternal. They may feel cold, and void of any spiritual characteristics; and fear that they are mistaken in it all. Yet, the very fact that they fear that they are mistaken, is evidence that there is still hope. At other times it causes them to rejoice with an inner joy they cannot explain to anyone, except those who have also experienced this same joy and peace: as it is written, "From faith to faith." Then they are singing praises to His holy name for this gift which God alone can bestow; and are, in fact, worshipping God in Spirit and in truth.

Yes, they are then praising His holy name, and are saying in their hearts, "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes." Or, "This is the day which the Lord hath made: we will rejoice and be glad in it." Words are poor vehicles to convey the feelings of one who has experienced these seasons. And yet a brother begins to smile, and agrees when one first begins to try to express himself regarding them. This is the witness within, which causes the brethren to love one another with the same love that they themselves are loved: if indeed, this is of the Spirit of God, as we hope and trust it is.

May the Spirit ever be our Comforter, and continue to lead us in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake: for these are the only times His children have any peace. When so blessed, they are truly clothed and in their right minds, and worship God in spirit and in truth — praising him from a pure heart for the many, many blessings they have received from the giver of every good and perfect gift.

In bonds of Love,

Richard H. Campbell
2761 Cochese Cove,
Memphis, Tenn.

GOES ALONG WITH THOSE WHO LIVE BY HOPE

1302 Walnut Street
Benton, Ky. 42025

To Editors of the *Signs:*

Enclosed is a check for two renewals for two years, as shown.

We, the Old School Baptist people of the Soldier Creek Association, have been so abundantly blessed this year, 1966, in so many ways — materially and we hope spiritually, that it amazes us, and makes us to wonder, Why?

Losing some of our stalwart members along with Elder O. W. Perkins, we yet go on, keeping our appointments; and so far we are able to say that these appointments surely, surely were made possible by the Father of lights, in whom there is no variableness or a shadow of a turn. The last appointment we made was for Elder R. L. Biggs, of Nashville, Tennessee, to be with us at Soldier's Creek Church Saturday before the second Sunday in November, to meet with Elder Poyner, the Moderator of the church. The old church

house was warm and pleasant, and we felt that we were made to sit together in a heavenly place, and the banner over us was love.

Elder Biggs spoke concerning the last part of the seventh chapter of Romans, beginning with the ninth verse, ". . . for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I," etc., showing man's dependence on God to strengthen him and lead him in the way he should go: delighting in the law of God after the inward man. In all of God's children there is the outward and the inward man: one warring against the other; and while we live in this time world there will be no discharge in this war. We hope we can say with Paul, after all our warrings, "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

Yes, we have been wonderfully blessed all our lifetime, as well as this year, to go along with those who live by hope, and trust God to choose their changes for them; and make the rough places smooth for them, if it is in accord with his holy will.

Farewell, in hope,
Effie Bowden

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with Malmason Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1967. The meeting house is located five miles north of Danville, Virginia on Highway 726, off Highway 29.

Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Burnell B. Williams, Clerk

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the **Skewarkey Union** is appointed to be held with the Falls of Tar River Church, Rocky Mount, N. C., the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1967. Elder G. G. Travathan was appointed to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder B. D. Handy, alternate.

We extend a cordial invitation to all to come and worship with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Williamston, N. C.

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Pittman's Grove, Johnston County, N. C., the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1967.

The church is located on Highway 222, between Fremont and Kenly, N. C. All who have a mind to attend are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

PLEASE NOTE:

We regret that we did not include the address of Sister Lavonia Lee when we published her article on the Resurrection in the November issue. It is P. O. Box 183, Huntland, Tenn. 37345. - J.D.W.

A WORD FROM ELDER WEAVER

In a letter from Elder George L. Weaver, 3415 Westbury Road, Shaker Heights 20, Ohio, Zip Code 44120, he asks that we express his continued love for the brethren, and that due to his age and condition of his health, he cannot expect to travel among them again.

Brother Weaver is ninety-three years old, and his birthday is early in January. We are sure that letters or cards from the brethren and friends would give him great pleasure, and bring many pleasant memories. — J. D. W.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To November 1, 1966)

E. G. Akers, Va.	$ 5.00
C. Z. Moseley, Ala.	2.00
Mrs. Claude Jackson, Ala.	5.00
Eliza Turner, Va.	1.00
Essie W. McGregor, Ky.	1.00
Mrs. W. G. Thompson, Can.	5.00
Mrs. Charles B. Gordy, Mich.	3.00
Elmer Hastings, Md.	10.00
Mrs. Leslie Davis, N. C.	.75
Mrs. F. F. Eggleston, Va.	1.00
Elder A. I. Hash, Va.	$ 1.00
Mrs. Underwood, Va.	3.00
James L. Howell, Ala.	15.00
Mrs. A. T. Couch, Ala.	3.00

Danville, Virginia **January, 1967**

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EDITORIAL

ANOTHER NEW YEAR

We feel glad that we are able to greet our brethren and friends at the beginning of another New Year; and the beginning of another year of the publication of the **Signs of the Times** — the 135th.

When we are given to be thankful for all our blessings of the past, we are aware that the Lord's people are so greatly blessed, that it is impossible for them to realize the half of them very often. To have been brought to fully believe without reservation, all that the Lord has revealed in his written Word, and to have this word confirmed by His light shining in their hearts, is indeed the greatest experience poor mortals can have in their life span. This, added to all that the Lord gives in his providential dealings with them, makes a full life in living; and assurance of a forthcoming living in dying.

The world is divided into a thousand kinds of religion and religious practices; but the Lord's people have only one. Their's is what the Lord himself reveals. And when He reveals all other ideas or thoughts of a seemingly religious nature, are vanished as surely as the fog vanishes before the rising sun. This the Lord's people know; but they are no more able to convince others who have not this experience, than Paul was able to explain to his former compatriots why he believed and preached what he once belittled.

These believe that God has revealed in his written Word **all his way and manner** of saving sinners; and that this is the only way that sinners are saved. And they believe that the Scriptures give a full account of those who are the recipients of salvation. This is not just merely a matter of **their belief,** for the mere belief of anything does not make the thing believed of any real value: the real value lies alone in the value of the matter believed. So, when these talk about salvation by grace, they express the sum total of it: it is wholly by grace, without any so-called works of the creature, either to obtain salvation, or to retain it.

Is this what you believe? If it is you do not need to be told that there are also many who answer **Yes** to the question, but then add some ifs or buts to qualify their reply.

Paul said in the 2nd chapter of Ephesians: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." This is a comprehensive statement of what the Lord's people believe. They realize that faith is a fruit of the Spirit, and that one must be born of the Spirit, else he has none of its fruits. ". . . looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith," said Paul to the Hebrews. That it is not of themselves, is shown plainly by John when he said, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to

become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

So the grace they love to talk about, is grace all the way. They do not attempt to qualify their understanding of it, for **grace means grace to them.**

Again, those who are the recipients of this grace is as well and definitely described as the grace itself: They are, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," and, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." (6th chapter of John) As to the "time" of their choice, or their being given to the Son, we read, ". . . who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love," (Ephesians 1: 3,4) and, "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (Timothy 1: 9)

When Peter wrote in his first epistle, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," he was in full accord with Paul in Romans, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son . . . Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified, them he also glorified."

These and all other revelent scriptures give account of God's election or choice of those for whom he sent his Son to redeem to himself. And all of these testify that their choice by the Father was certainly not because of any indwelling goodness in themselves, nor because of any of their works, (for all their works were evil,) but alone because it seemed good to the Father to manifest his love for them. When one is brought to know that he and all men, are dead in trespasses and sin, he cannot possibly claim that he has any goodness of his own that he can exercise, to promote his cause before God; or claim any birthright other than that of Adam. He knows that he comes short of the glory of God in his flesh, or in his Adam standing; and is amazed that, he being in this state without strength, and a sinner, Christ is revealed as having died for him.

Have you not asked, Why me? Why of all men did God include me in that number that he loved, and gave his Son to die for my redemption? And yet all the exercises in godly experience give you that hope and assurance.

These things the elect of God feel and believe, without claiming any extenuating circumstances to try to lessen their guilt before their offended God. Thus God's mercy is their whole desire: it being the only thing that can give relief from condemnation. When they fled to the deeds of the law for righteousness, it only condemned, and made their guilt blacker and more hideous. And this they learned was the very purpose of the law: it entered that the offense might abound — and it surely abounded when the commandment came in their experience. How true it is that sin then revives, and the subject dies. But thanks be to the Father, that where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

Now as to those who compose the household of faith, or the elect of God, it is evident that everyone in every age of the world, of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, (Revelation 5: 9), for whom the Lamb was slain, and were redeemed to God by his blood, make up the complete redeemed family; and each of these is particularly begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be

revealed in the last time. (1 Peter 1:3,4)

Surely no one has ever advocated that Primitive or Old School Baptists are exclusively the church of God; but it is advocated that everyone who has evidence of God's mercy towards him, and given a hope of eternal life as the anchor of his soul, must of necessaity believe what genuine Primitive Baptists believe. There is no other conclusion that can be drawn by any who claim to believe that the Scriptures alone are the inspired word of God, and present all that we can know of God's way and manner of saving sinners. A candid and unbiased examination of the doctrine of the Scriptures — examined to find what they really teach — without wresting them to conform to that which seems right to men, will show that the doctrine that Christ and his apostles taught, is yet taught and contended for today by those who hold to the Scriptures as the complete authority for Christian doctrine.

But how often it is that those who love the name Christian or Baptist, hold some things which are evidently true according to the Scriptures, and yet hold other things so contrary to the same Scriptures, that the "other things" cannot but be considered to deny what they have otherwise confessed; for one cannot be consistent while he holds two opposite doctrines. No doubt we have all heard men preach, or read their writings, in which they seemed to go to great length to prove the doctrine of election, predestination, etc. (and we were greatly interested in it,) then, in conclusion, virtually deny what they have preached or written by appealing to the people to accept the Lord while they can, and before it is too late; etc.

But what we intend to point out is the fact that the Lord's people when brought into the knowledge of the truth, believe what they believe from an inward teaching which cannot be other than called spiritual, from the fact that it is not unlike the Saviour's statement to Peter and the brethren, "Flesh and blood has not revealed it to thee, but my Father which is in heaven." The new birth of the Spirit opens up a view of the kingdom of God, and by all the attending power and grace of God they manifestly enter into the kingdom of God; and are taught things no others can know unless they too are led the same way. It is so evident that all of this is the work of God's grace, that Jesus said to Nicodemus, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." And it is also evident that this is God's way of revealing to each of his own, that he has loved them with an everlasting love, and with loving kindness drawn them; and of making known to them for the first time that they were chosen and belong to the elect family of God.

So, brethren, how great is the multitude of God's blessings to us; but, if you are like the writer, you are so prone to forget from whence they come, and are not thankful to the giver of all things as we feel we ought. Yet we know of a truth that all the praise, honor and glory is his.

We are republishing under "Voices of the Past" the **New Year's Greeting** of Elder Chick of January, 1902, which expresses many pertinent things, which we endorse fully; and which we hope will be found of great interest by all who read it.

We hope the brethren and friends will continue to support the paper, so that, the Lord willing, it will continue to go forth contending for the same truth it has for these many years. You can help your editors by submitting articles to be considered for publication, by sending in new subscriptions, by remembering the Indigent Fund, or by your comments in general.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with each of you.

J.D.W.

EDITORIAL

"DRAW ME, WE WILL RUN AFTER THEE"

This petition, or prayer, of the church is recorded in the 4th verse of the Song of Songs. This is the constant prayer of the church as a unit, because each and every individual who compose it, have learned that no power within themselves can enable them to take the next step. The magnetic power of the Spirit may be blessing you to take the step you are now taking: yet, the present blessing does not suffice for your next step. We are taught to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." The children of Israel were taught that they could not eat left over bread on the next day. (Exodus 16: 20) We are forever dependent upon Him to cause us to follow Him. Each day we pray: "draw me."

I shall never forget the first highly magnetized piece of metal that I ever saw in operation. It had such impression on me that I traded my most treasured possession for it. I marvelled at its power to draw small pieces of steel to it. It was interesting to observe that these small pieces of steel, such as shoe-tacks, would be so obedient in rushing to the loadstone when placed near them. It was difficult to pull them away. Constant contact with the loadstone would empower these small similar objects for a very short time to draw tiny pieces of steel to them. I wondered why that the loadstone would draw tacks to it, but would not draw toothpicks. I noticed that iron objects only were drawn to the loadstone. When God, the mighty magnet, infuses His own with some of His characteristics they are drawn to Him. This magnetism is of such quality that none can resist His power: therefore, His own are drawn to Him. It does not draw those who have the characteristics of the devil only. God infuses eternal life in them in regeneration. They become subjected to His irresistible drawing power. Lord, draw me.

Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." The Father must draw us out of the black and miry pit of corruption before we can be possessed of the will to go to Christ. The natural man has no foot to take one step toward Heaven. The natural person has no desire toward God. Man is passive in regeneration. He is passive in being born again: but, He is then conscious of the terrible dungeon that he is in. He, then, desires to be brought out after experiencing the vanity of his own efforts. The drawing by the Father pulls us up out of the miry clay of the horrible pit. The loving kindness of God is the cord that is used to pull the sinner upward. We must be pulled out of the horrible pit before we can take one step toward God, or Christ. God must draw us from corruption of soul before we can see the wickedness of the lusts of our flesh. According to the testimony of Jeremiah recorded in chapter 31; 3: the Lord said, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I **drawn** thee." When God draws our conscience it is troubled. Love draws the soul toward God. If we experience that **drawing** our souls must have eyes, hands, and feet. When we have only eyes, we feel the necessity of being brought to Him. We feel so far away, Lord, draw me.

Knowledge is the eye of the soul. Spiritual knowledge can only be realized by being blessed by the Father's revelation. We cannot truly say from the depth of our innermost soul that Jesus is the Son of God except it be revealed to us by the Father. We cannot say that we are sin polluted creatures except it be revealed. Faith is the hand of the soul. We cannot have this faith except it be **given** us by God. The soul cannot reach toward God except it has the hand of faith. Obedience is the foot of the soul. Our souls must have spiritual feet before we can **run** after Christ. Obedient Christians run on two feet. Augustine says, The foot is the affection, or appetite, that carries me whithersoever I go." I cannot run with one foot. I must not only have the desire but also the ability to preform. All this

must be by grace. **To will** is not enough for running; the **do** must also be worked in me. Lord give me eyes, hands, and feet that I may run after Christ.

"Draw me: we will **run** after Thee." When we are conscious of the drawing, we will experience the running. When our souls have eyes the race will be with joy as we run because revealed knowledge will show us **from what** we are running; also, **to Whom** we flee for refuge. If we have the proper **hand of faith** we will run the race with confidence realizing that Jesus holds our souls' hands in one hand while He grasps the Father's hand with the other. If we are given feet of **desiring** and **doing** — **affection** and **action** — we will run **swiftly** the race set before us. Without revelation we are blind, like Bartimeus. Without faith we are like the man with the withered hand. Without obedience we are lame like Mephibosheth. We are conscious so much of being like all three at once that we frevently cry; Lord, draw me and enable me to run after thee.

My soul is on its knees begging to be drawn out of the horrible pit of infirmities when it feels to be blind, handless, and without feet. These sad experiences of soul-searching come often enough to keep us reminded of our dependence upon His graceful power for strength at all times. Does the Lord horrify our conscience and then continue to leave our souls in these dungeons and prisons??? Does He cast off forever? Does He make us to know how helpless we are without lifting us from this condition?? NO!! Thousands of times we have been made to say, NO, to these questions. Draw me **again** from this dungeon.

"We will run after Thee." It is a wonderful thing to be drawn **to** Christ and feel His presence; yet, it is more wonderful to run **after** Him in experiencing the leadership of Christ. It gives us joy to be drawn to Him, and happiness when we are blessed to follow Him. Thrilling sensations of the soul cheer us as we are drawn to Him for refuge; and, in being enabled to do His commandments we are happier. The Father draws us to Christ, and Christ draws us after Him in enabling us to keep His commandments. Jesus, draw us with Thy power that we may run after Thee.

Jesus Christ is the fore-runner Who goes before us. When he leads us we follow Him. He said of His sheep, "They follow me." We follow Him in the race set before us. We have a record of His suffering, doings, and commandments in the Holy Scriptures. When Christ draws us after Him, we experience running the race which is set before us. Christ is the **mark** that we press after in order to experience gladness of heart and peace of mind. These heavenly gifts are the prizes of the race, the grand prize is a home in Heaven. Christ's commandments make up the race track in which we should run. We are so burdened with weights and so incapable of running properly the race that we "pray without ceasing," Lord draw us after Thee.

The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. The warfare is great and we cannot cope with it until we are blessed to take the yoke of Christ upon us. When this is true, the yoke is easy and the burden is light. When Christ goes before us and draws us with Him, we run swiftly. We are made to know that we cannot take one step apart from Him. Lord, draw us that we may run in thy commandments. Write the **law of love** in our hearts and our minds, and give us feet to obey this law.

The Scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation. The general rule of the race having been indelibly written in our hearts by the Spirit, enables us to learn the specific instructions found in the Holy Scriptures. The Lord has ordained that we have need for these specific instructions. If we want to run the race well, we will be most interested in acquainting ourselves with these specific rules. We may want to discard some of these rules as **non-essentials;** if we do; we cannot finish well the course. Such rules as "confession unto salvation," professing belief in Jesus Christ — the perfect Saviour — being baptised, and being yoked together with a company of

true believers in church capacity; all these things should not be considered as non-essentials. Meeting often with one another, praying with and for one another, working for peace and unity, as well as doing unto others as we would have them do unto us, should all be considered as essentials in running after Christ. Attending church regularly, caring for the sick and poor, bearing personal wrong, bringing up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord: all this should be attended to with diligence in constant prayer to God for proper guidance. Lord, draw me into a daily study of Thy specific rules found only in the Bible.

We will run after Thee. The local church consists of a company of baptized believers who have covenanted with one another to run the Christian race. The members of a local church choose a leader when they choose a pastor. The local church is careful to choose one whom they deem to be endowed with wisdom and understanding of the rules of the race to sufficiently lead them — looking to Jesus, the **great leader** of the flock. The church chooses deacons, minister-helpers, to assist. Each member of the Church cooperates with others in striving to run after Christ.

We shall run after Thee. We repeat a sentence from the 2nd. paragraph of this article: Constant contact with the loadstone would empower these small similar objects for a very short time to draw tiny pieces of steel to them. The Lord infuses an individual with eternal Life, faith, humility, repentance, hope, godly love, and other special gifts of the Spirit. This individual who is so highly favored of God is empowered to attract and draw others in whom God has begun the work of grace. A church which is blessed to continue in close communion with God exercises such drawing power that the poor in spirit rush to it for comfort. We who feel so little and insignificant are drawn to the company of believers in our sovereign God and our Lord, Jesus Christ. We so highly esteem the church that we consider her the bride of Christ whom He hath chosen. We so much desire to be a part of His bride that we are made willing to put off the old man with his deeds and cleave to the church. Our minds are flooded with a multitude of thoughts upon how we can please our Lord. We trust the Lord has placed the spirit of **Holy Fear** in the tower of our souls which seldom sleeps. We fear that we may not please Him. How anxious we are to be numbered with those whom the Lord has blessed! We are made willing to forsake all and follow Him with them. Our minds are where our pleasures are; our hearts are where our treasures are; our love is where our lives are; none but the Lord is the pleasure, treasure, and life of God's people. God shines the perfection of beauty out of Zion. The church is the fairest among women. She is altogether lovely. No other organization is given such glorious and wonderful name as the church. It pleases God to shine forth His majesty and mercy through Jesus Christ and the church. His majesty shines in His Son, Christ; His mercy shines through Christ's bride, the church. Draw **us** that we may run as a unit after Thee.

James said, "Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you . . . "James 4:8. This is a certain principle containing and affirming a rich promise of God. All who have known and experienced the infusion of God's love in their souls know that it is good to draw nigh unto God. These words of James comfort those who have this desire. The result of the magnetic power of the drawing of the Lord gives a vehement desire to draw nigh unto God. It is sure that if our desires be toward Him, His desires is toward us. We love God because He first loved us. We draw nigh unto Him because He first drew nigh unto us. What wonderous love is this! What a wonderful promise! Our lusts is the loadstone that draws all natural men because since the transgression of Adam we have had infused in us the spirit of evil. The attraction to evil has wielded such influence over us that we have all sinned.

We have been drawn away of our own lusts and enticed. We have so often agreed with our lusts and followed its powerful drawings that sin is mixed with all we do. If we see this to be true, it is evident, that something besides our lusts has been planted in us, which has more power than the evil we naturally possess. All human beings are given natural life. God gives His people Eternal Life. If Eternal Life be in you, you hate the carnality and vanity of your natural life. You are not at home in your own body. If God has given you some of His own qualities, then you do not feel at ease and fully enjoy the things of this world which are evil. Thanks be to God that the magnetic power of Him that has translated you out of darkness into His light, is more powerful than the power of evil. The treasure is greater. The pleasures are more certain. The life is more glorious. Even though these glorious experiences are but fleeting moments and we are so long in the valley of despondency, they are rather to be desired than the treasures, pleasures, and life experienced in carnality.

"Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (See Hebrews 12: 1-2) Jesus endured bitter words and bitter wounds without retaliation, which made manifest His humility, meekness, and patience. Pride is a terrible weight. Pride is the mother of contention and impatience. Let us lay aside the weight of pride that we may not be contentious with those who walk with us. Let us lay aside selfishness, carnal ambitions, and even our reputation in this world that we might be freed from the weights of carnality in running this race. May we come boldly to the throne of God's grace. Let us suffer patiently the persecutions realizing that the world persecuted Jesus Christ. Let us endure the wounds received even in the house of our friends as Jesus also suffered the rejection even of those for whom He died. What joy is set before us? We receive tastes of it now and then while we live in the world. This foretaste is soul-satisfying. It quenches our hunger and thirst for a passing moment. Much more glorious and lasting will be the reality in Heaven! The suffering in this present world is so insignificant when we think of the Glory which shall be realized in Heaven. Should we constantly suffer from now until death of our mortal bodies how little this suffering would be in contrast to the eternal joy, peace, and happiness which await patient pilgrims beyond the grave! May the joy that is set before us inspire us to be patient in tribulations. Let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Let us look unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. Let us pray constantly,**"Draw me, we will run after Thee."** May God bless you.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

VOICES OF THE PAST

A NEW YEAR'S GREETING

It is the desire of every spiritual mind at all times that all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, might be blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; and such earnest desires will seek to find expression from time to time. But it seems in a special manner appropriate that at the beginning of a new year, we should recall the mercies of the past, and also call to mind the hopes, fears, triumphs, temptations, victories and conflicts, which may be anticipated in the future. At least, as we pass the boundary line which marks the close of one period of time, and the beginning of another, we do find our minds especially impressed with these things. It seems but natural that it should be so. There comes to all the

people of God seasons when they, as it were, feel impelled to sit down and recall the way in which they have been led, and then look forward to what may be before them in the time yet to be given them. They remember the past, and from it gather some anticipations for the future. How often was Israel reminded of all the way in which the Lord their God had led them, and how often were they also reminded that he who had done so much for them was a faithful and unchangeable Friend, who in the future would not forsake them. So also the apostles in the New Testament often speak of the time past, and from it drew lessons for the time to come. All along the way of our travel have stones of memorial been set up which mark some special season of goodness and mercy from the Lord toward his chosen ones.

For our ownself, as we write these things, we would say there has arisen many solemn memories. We recall our own natural enmity to God, and then the grace which sought us out, and called us to a knowledge of the way of salvation, as we hope and believe. We are reminded that goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our life thus far. We have been unbelieving, doubtful, fearful, halting, unstable, full of worldly-mindedness, ungratful to the best of all friends, full of stumbling, fretful, peevish, guilty of denying the blessed Lord, coming short in all things, and in many things openly a transgressor against God, and all the time unworthy of the least of all the favor that has been bestowed upon us. But how great has been the goodness of the Lord to us in showing us such long forbearance; in continuing to us the hope of everlasting life; in giving us a name among the children of God for so many years; in suffering us to continue in the ministry of the word, and not cutting us down as a barren tree; in visiting us with some tokens of his blessings upon our ministry, and from time to time giving us renewed assurance of hope; and in keeping alive that faith and love that we trust has been given us, among the fruits of the Spirit.

It is a continual wonder to us that we are ever blessed with any comfort, with any time of assurance, with any visits from the blessed Lord, with any evidences of the love or fellowship of those who love God, with any joy in the Lord, with any opening up of the Scriptures to our understanding, and with any light at all, either in our preaching or writing. It is, we say, a continual wonder to us that so rich blessings should be bestowed upon such a great sinner. It was said under the law of ceremonies, "Ye must be clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord." And of ourself we must confess that we are not clean. This is our constant feeling. The best service that we have ever rendered has been marred by some secret selfishness. In and of ourself we could not be permitted to serve in the sanctuary, but we have hoped, and do still hope, that in the imputed righteousness of the Lord we do have a right to serve in the sanctuary. Surely it can be upon no other grounds.

One of the sweetest expressions in all the word of God to us is the sentence, "And his servants shall serve him." How much is involved in this. What a preparation through grace must be made ere any sinner can serve God. One must be cut off from the oldness of the letter, and come into the newness of the Spirit; must have the fear of the Lord, which is clean, in the heart, ere such service as will be acceptable to God can be rendered. And this cleanness in the fear of the Lord must include the cutting off of every fleshly, selfish motive. And this means the putting away of all legal service, of all thought of reward for the service, except such as is found in the service itself. How solemnly has it been borne in upon our mind, again and again in the past, that our service has been polluted many times, because afterward we could see that some self-seeking was in it, and that our eye had not been single to the glory of God. Our best work needs the cleansing of the blood of Christ to make it acceptable to God. It is recorded in Exodus 28: 38, that Aaron

should bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel should hallow in all their holy gifts. What great reason for rejoicing we have that our spiritual High Priest has made provision for the iniquity of our holy things which we hallow before the Lord. In this provision alone can the best offerings that we bring ever be accepted. Sin is mixed with all our service. Our hope is that Jesus, our great High Priest, has borne all that iniquity, as well as all the sins of our heart and life. But as we think of the word service, a solemn feeling is with us that we have never served him at all. It seems so little and so imperfect that we cannot speak of our service; and if any one should ask, When did we begin to serve the Lord? we should have to say that we never did begin to serve him, but it has been many years since he began to serve us. Yea, we have been cast upon his care and bounty from our birth. All these years the blessed Lord has been serving us, and of this we would make mention at all times. When what he has done for us is in our heart and mind, we can never feel to even mention the best work that we ever did and dignify it with the name of service. Before the glory of the sun the light of the moon fades away, and does not appear. So before the work of the Lord, our work cannot be seen. We cannot think of it when we are given to behold all that the Lord has done for us. Yet how sweet to remember that because he lives in us, and works through us, we do bear fruit to his glory, and to his glory alone. Our names are not magnified in all the obedience that we may render, but his name is magnified in it all.

Thus far we have been speaking of the feeling of our own heart,as we stand upon the threshold of a new year. We doubt not that to many who may read this similiar thoughts have come. Toward us all how great have been the mercies of the Lord all our life long. How manifold have been his favors to us during the past year. Are we not all under solemn obligations to render to God some faint measure of praise for all that he has done for us? What marvelous loving-kindness, what long-suffering, what kind forbearance, what infinite compassion and what unbounded love have been poured out upon us in all the year that is past. Are we not under continually increasing and renewed obligations to call upon our souls to praise and adore the riches of his grace? Grace has truly abounded toward the chief of sinners, each one of us must say. Not one of all the blessings of God have we deserved; for not one of them have we rendered the praise we ought. We are at the close of the old year and the beginning of this new year, still cast upon the bounty of God, and must still come to him without one plea, but that his blood was shed for us. Others may talk of obedience rendered, and of blessings secured to themselves as the result of their obedience, but we are sure that all the humble-hearted followers of the Lamb will be found simply saying, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory."

Through the mercy of God also we are permitted to still send out the **Signs** to those who love the truth which has been, and is still, dear to those who have the care and labor of publishing it. God has been merciful to the editors. We have labored in weakness, and with much fear and trembling, and have not been able to set forth the truth as we could have wished to do, and in that worthy manner that it deserves, but still we have had some evidences that the Lord has owned it, even during the year just past to the good of some of his chosen ones. Wherein it has proven a blessing to any of the people of God, we are sure that they will join in the praise of God with us that it has been so, and we trust that there might be a spirit of prayer in all our brethren that we may be substained during the coming year, and that we may be kept from all error, and every false way, and that we may have nothing in view but the glory of God and the good of his people. If God shall be glorified in this coming year

through the **Signs**, we are sure also that his people will find a blessing in it.

As regards the doctrine which we have maintained in the past we can say that we have no disposition to depart therefrom now. This we can say for both of us. And speaking for ourself personally, we desire to say that we feel great reason to think and praise God for our association with brother Benton Beebe in the conduct of the **Signs.** To him has come most of the burden and anxiety connected with the publication of the **Signs**, and we desire also to add, that from a most intimate acquaintance with him for the past ten years, we have learned that his chief desire has been to contend for the truth, although it might be to his great loss in a pecuniary sense. It is our testimony, which we bear with great pleasure, that he has in all our association together, shown that his chief anxiety has been to maintain the truth at all times. We are glad to say this, and trust that the spirit which has been manifest in him may also control ourself. We have both desired to strive for the things that make for peace, and for edification among the churches. But we do feel sure that nothing will tend to lasting peace but the truth as it is in Jesus. The wisdom which is from above is first pure, and only as it is pure, can it be peaceable afterwards. We have desired to present the truth also in love. Paul had not become the enemy of his brethren, because he had told them the truth, among which were some things which were not pleasant for them to hear. Yea, he loved them, and said these things to them because he loved them. Had he been their enemy, he would not said the things to them that he did. If one is in danger of stepping astray, and of destruction from it, he who warns him is his friend, while an enemy would rejoice to see him fall. We have no unkind words to use toward any one, and we have not been conscious of any hard feeling toward any one, even though we may have thought them mistaken in the course which they have pursued. We desire, during the coming year, that we may know nothing among the people, save Christ and him crucified. We desire that we may have an eye single to the glory of God. And we desire to keep on presenting the truth in the fear of God, and in love to the brethren.

And now, as we consider all the mercies of the past, and all the hope which is set before us in the gospel, it seems fitting that we should remember, as did the apostle, the manner of persons we ought to be in all holy conversation and godliness. We have heard it intimated that we did not any longer believe in exhortation to the people of God, in our ministry and in our writing. Concerning this, we only desire to say that we are sure that no one who has any knowledge of our ministry will assert such a thing. Much of our ministry in the pulpit has been in the way of exhortation, warning, reproof and abmonition in all the years of the past, and it still continues to be so. If we have anything to change in that respect, it would be to urge the things which belong to right living upon the people of God with still stronger and more forcible language, if it were possible for us to do so. We have not changed in that regard. We still believe firmly in the use of exhortation and admonition. We do desire that we ourself, and all our brethren may know how we ought to behave ourselves in the house of God. Like the apostle, we think it meet as long as we are in his tabernacle, that we should stir up the pure minds of the children of God to a remembrance of what becomes a believer, in faith, and in all godliness. But we do not believe that it is a requirement of the gospel, or that it is in harmony with the exhortations and admonitions of the word of God, to say to the children of God, "You may have as much religion as you live for," or "Be good and you will be happy," or "If you will be obedient to all the commandments of the Lord, you shall have peace and happiness."

It simply is not true that the obedient are always the happiest. Our observation is to the contrary. Some of the most careful and steadfast in all that belongs

to the obedience of a believer, in our knowledge, have at the same time walked nearly all the time in the dark, and have almost constantly complained of darkness of mind, and of little enjoyment in the things of the kingdom of God. Should we promise to some humble child of God, that if he or she would take the yoke upon them, in the ordinance of baptism for instance, then that one would have joy and peace; and that one, instead, be plunged into gross darkness and doubt and fear immediately afterward, what could such as one say, but that we had deceived them, or else that they were not the children of God indeed? We have known of some who have followed their Lord, and have had no comfort or rest for months afterward. Immediately after our own baptism, the same day in fact, we fell into complete darkness, and during the most of the following year we felt that we ought to say to the church, We have deceived our ownself, and have deceived you also.

But when the mind is stirred up to desire the ways of the Lord, there is comfort in it. To have the mind thus stirred up is a witness to the soul that the work of the Lord has been wrought there. Such desires do not grow in nature's barren soil. That man who thinks that by some work of his he has deserved the favor of God, or that by that work he has introduced himself into a happy frame of mind from the Lord, has a very unworthy idea of what the law of God does require. He who knows the true spirituality of the law of God will always feel that he has not obeyed it, only as the Lord has wrought a love to that law in his soul; and his complaint will be that he cannot do the things that he would. But what a favor from God it is to come to desire to do these things. to hunger and thirst after righteousness is the great token of the blessing of the Lord.

Brethren, is there in our hearts any earnest longing for obedience in heart and life? Then are we favored indeed, and where such longings are found, there will also be a great carefulness in speech, in conduct and in all that the hands find to do. Such as these will welcome all exhortation, and reproof, and admonition, and warning, because all these things will stir up their pure minds by way of remembering what they desire above all things to remember. If a man wants to steal, to urge upon him the sin and the results of stealing, will be to him an unwelcome effort; but if a man have an honest heart in him, and yet knows that temptation to steal will lie in his path, he will welcome all that will cause him to remember the sin of stealing, and the consequences of it. So with every other evil to which the people of God are subjected; they want to shun that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good.

It has been our experience often when speaking from the pulpit in the way of warning and admonition, that members who are already in the sight of their brethren walking blamelessly, and who do fill their place most carefully in the house of God, would come to us afterwards and say, "I was glad to hear that, and I feel as though I desire to walk more carefully, and to do still more than I have been doing; while those who were in the sight of their brethren very far in the background, would never, so far as we knew, give the slightest heed to what had been said. But when the mind was stirred up to love and desire all obedience, then the exhortation which pointed it out, was welcomed and rejoiced over, and the servants of God are to give attention to exhortation, and warning, and reproof as need may require, and as the Lord leads their minds into it.

Now in conclusion, we would say to all our readers that we desire of you, and for all who love the Lord, that you may be blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus. May the new year be fraught with tokens of the goodness of God to you all. In all the trials of this life may we all have the witness that the Lord is near, and that he sanctifies every distress to the good of his chosen. The sure and abiding hope is given that

we shall be satisfied when we awake with his likeness, and we shall be like him then, for we shall see him as he is.

(The above was an editorial by Elder Chick January 1, 1902. He expressed so many things that find lodging in our own feelings, we felt the brethren would be interested in it also. - J. D. W.)

MINUTES OF THE WORK OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church, Caswell County, N. C., a presbytery met June 12, 1966, at 2 o'clock P.M. for the examination of Brother Donald E. Smith, and if found fit and qualified in accordance with the written word of God, and to their satisfaction and discretion, ordain him to the full work of the gospel ministry.

The solemnity was begun by singing hymn number 534, and prayer by Elder O. K. Tench. All the Elders of our faith and order were requested to sit in the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders W. C. King, D. V. Spangler, Wallis Smith, Kenneth Key, Haygood Wray, L. J. Brammer, E. F. Oakley, O. K. Tench, P. L. Ingram, and James Hollandsworth.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder W. C. King as Moderator, and Elder P. E. Ingram as Clerk. Elder James Hollandsworth was chosen to perform the examination of the candidate for ordination.

Deacon A. C. Byrd, having been duly appointed to be spokesman for Bush Arbor Church, presented Donald E. Smith before the Presbytery for examination by Elder James Hollandsworth, using the Scripture references I Timothy 3: 1-7 The Presbytery, being satisfied with the examination and answers given by Brother Smith, requested him to kneel, and the Elders laid their hands on him, as the ordination prayer was delivered by Elder L. J. Brammer. Elder D. V. Spangler delivered the charge to Brother Smith. The Moderator asked Deacon Byrd if the church approved the work of the Presbytery; which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to Elder Donald E. Smith by the Moderator, and the right hand of fellowship was given by all the Elders present, as a token of brotherhood, and wishing him success in the field wherein God had placed him. Brother Smith was delivered back to the church at Bush Arbor by Deacon A. C. Byrd, as an ordained minister of the Old School Baptist Church.

The minutes consisting of the work of the Presbytery were read and adopted; then dismissed with prayer.

Elder W. C. King, Moderator
Elder P. E. Ingram, Clerk

OBITUARIES

MRS. BETTIE CLESTA ALDRIDGE

Sister Aldridge was born August 6, 1882, the daughter of the late James S. and Mary E. Rascoe and departed this life on May 11, 1966, making her stay on earth 83 years, 9 months, and 5 days. She was married to James L. Aldridge on December 18, 1901. To this union three daughters were born to mourn her departure, Mrs. Lacy Shaw, Miss Fannie Lee Aldridge, and Mrs. Roy Underwood, all of Route 3, Burlington, N. C.

Sister Aldridge united with the church at Bush Arbor at her December meeting 1913, and remained active and able to attend her meetings until just a few months before her death. She was blessed with a fruitful mind and often talked of how good God had been to her, blessing her with a long and active life. She realized the time of her departure was near, yet she seemed to have renewed strength to fight the last battle knowing that the victory was in the Lord Jesus Christ. "O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy Victory?"

Sister Aldridge's funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder W. C. King, assisted by Elder E. F. Oakley at Bush Arbor Church. A large number of members, neighbors, and friends came to pay respects to her and her family. Her body was laid beside that of her husband in the church cemetery to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who shall call the sleeping dead to arise and be made like unto His Own Body to be gathered home where sickness, sorrow and death shall never come.

May God's richest blessing be upon the children, grandchildren, and all who mourn her departure, feeling that our loss is her gain.

Done by order of Bush Arbor Church in conference, July 9, 1966.

W. C. King, Moderator
Earl Rudd, Clerk

ANNIE MARIA BRUMFIELD

Sister Annie Maria Brumfield passed away at the age of seventy-seven years. She united with Mt. Ararat Primitive Baptist Church May 27, 1950.

Sister Brumfield was a good and faithful member, and attended church as long as her health permitted. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone. She is greatly missed by the church, and all who knew her.

She is survived by one son, four daughters, twenty-seven grandchildren, and twenty-five great grandchildren.

May God comfort and bless her family and loved ones.

Written by order of the church in conference by S. A. Clark.

Elder Wallace Smith, Moderator
Raymond Payne, Clerk

BESSIE BROOKS GAY

On the night of July 28, 1965, my dear sister, Mrs. Bessie Brooks Gay, was summoned from the tumultuous cares of earth to the blissful realities of immortal glory. We have sufficient evidence and reason to believe that she is "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep."

She was born October 7, 1886, the daughter of John and Lizzie Fields Brooks. She was married January 20, 1926. Surviving are husband, Zeb R. Gay; three sisters, six brothers, and several nieces and nephews.

She joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Red Banks in 1904, and was baptized by Elder George Stokes. She served as Clerk there for many, many years.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder C. L. Coker and Elder Joe Sawyer, and she was laid to rest beside her mother in the family cemetery, to await the coming of the Lord and the resurrection of the dead.

She suffered for five years with a lingering illness, and bore it with much patience. She received every kindness and the best medical aid, but all the tender nursing availed nothing. Her course on earth was finished: she had fought a good fight and kept the faith, and now the dear Master called her home, to inherit the kingdom prepared for her. We loved her dearly, but God loved her best. It was so heart piercing to give her up. She was so good and kind. Her love was great for her people and husband, to whom she was so faithful. Her sweet smile manifested that Christlike spirt that dwelt within her heart. She enjoyed having her friends and brethren and sisters visit in her home, and converse of God's love and mercy.

Written by her sister.

Helen G. Brooks

VIRGINIA PAYNE JONES

Sister Virginia Payne Jones was born June 19, 1884, and passed away June 28, 1966, at the age of eighty-two years. She was married to Jacob Jones December 27, 1905, and to them four children were born: three of which survive: Bennie Lee Jones, Lorraine Jones, and Genevia Payne. Also surviving are three grandchildren, and five great grandchildren. Her husband passed away March 4, 1963.

Sister Virginia joined Bannister Springs Primitive Baptist Church, of the Staunton River Association, April 17, 1954; where she remained a faithful member until death. She was a lover of the truth and of her church. We feel our loss is her eternal gain: her suffering is over, and she is resting in the paradise of God, waiting the coming of her Saviour to resurrect her body, and fashion it like his own glorious body; to praise Him forever in that world which has no end.

Her funeral was held at Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Home by Elder Raymond Payne. She was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park.

Done by order of Bannister Springs Church in conference. Written by Mable Butcher.

Elder Raymond Payne, Moderator
W. J. Oakes, Clerk

QUINCY J. WALTON

We at Mt. Ararat Church bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, who in his divine wisdom and mercy removed from our mdist our dearly beloved and esteemed deacon and brother, Quincy J. Walton, who was taken August 6, 1966.

Brother Walton was married to Sarah Harward; unto this union were born six children: Albert, Florence, Nancy, Geary, Darlene and Elizabeth. I feel that the closeness of this family was noticed by those who knew them, and when you saw Brother Walton at church his children, (those that were at home,) were with him; and this was admired very much by our people.

Brother Walton received a hope, and was baptized into the fellowship of Mt. Ararat Church by Elder R. S. Payne August 24, 1957. The church recognized a gift, and called for the ordination of Brother Walton as deacon, May 27, 1961.

I feel that by the grace of God he was blessed to fill the office of a deacon in all humility, loving his church and having the desire to attend to such things that were necessary for the upkeep and well being of the church.

His funeral was attended by many brethren and friends and conducted by his pastor, Wallis Smith, assisted by Elders D. V. Spangler, R. S. Payne, and R. A. May at Mt. Ararat Church. His body was laid to rest in Danville Memorial Gardens, to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He will be missed by those who knew him. May his dear companion and children be given reconciliation to feel, "the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh, blessed be his holy name."

Done in church conference September 17, 1966.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to the family, a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times*, and a copy be put on the church record.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Elder R. S. Payne, Clerk

WILLIAM FRANKLIN CHEEK

God in His infinite wisdom saw fit to remove from the shores of time the spirit of our highly esteemed and respected brother, William Franklin Cheek, on July 24, 1966, at the age of 88 years. He was the son of the late John and Susan Rudd Cheek and had spent his entire life in Caswell County, North Carolina.

Brother Cheek united with the church at Bush Arbor at her November meeting 1926. A faithful soldier has laid down his armour and has gone on to be with his Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, which Paul says is far better. He leaves to mourn his departure: one son, Hughes Cheek; three grandchildren, three great grandchildren, and a host of other relatives and many friends.

May the Lord grant such grace as needed for the church and his family to say, "Not my will, but Thine be done."

His funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Church by his pastor, Elder W. C. King, and Mr. Martin L. Fogleman. His body was laid in the church cemetery to await the resurrection. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Done by Bush Arbor Church in conference November, 1966.

W. C. King, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

CARRIE MARTIN CARROLL

According to the providence of a merciful God, death has removed from our midst our dear Sister in the Lord, Carrie Martin Carroll. Sister Carroll was born April 22, 1894, and died August 24, 1966, at the age of seventy-two. She is survived by the following children: Mrs. Elbert C. Griffen, Mrs. Coley Strader, Charlie W. Carroll, Eugene P. Carroll, David H. Carroll, Robert A. Carroll, and Everette S. Carroll.

Sister Carroll was a faithful member of Dan River for over 40 years; attending meeting often when physically not well. We extend to the family and loved ones our sympathy and desire that God will strengthen them in their sorrow.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this obituary be placed in the Church record, a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and a copy to the family.

Done by the order of Dan River Church.

Humbly,
Harold D. Weatherford

MRS. ROBERT SEXTON

Sister Sexton, whose age was 70, departed this life on October 7, 1966. She is survived by her husband, five daughters, two sons, three sisters and two brothers. The Old Baptists in East Texas, North Louisiana, and Arkansas are well acquainted with one of her sisters — Sister Pearl Fuller.

Sister Sexton united with New Hope Church near Patmos, Arkansas, during August of 1931, and was baptized by the late Elder G. R. Hathcock.

Sister Sexton and her husband had lived in La Porte, Texas, for the past several years. Even though she was not able to attend church in Texas, the love of this doctrine stayed with her, and she really rejoiced during the few times she had the opportunity to come back to New Hope Church.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer, and her body was laid to rest at Union Grove Cemetery, which is about 15 miles north of Hope, Arkansas.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

By order of Providence Primitive Baptist Church in regular session September 24, 1966, it has fallen my lot to write a Resolution of Respect for our beloved brother, Deacon Benjamin Bernard Bird, whom God in his infinite wisdom, has seen fit to call from our midst in death.

A son of the late Deacon Creed M. Bird and Sarah A. Bird, he was born in Putnam County, W. Va., December 23, 1890; and departed this life August 29, 1966. His survivors include his widow, Mrs. Winnie Runyon Bird, of 4790 Spring Road, Huntington, W. Va.; eight children: four daughters, four sons, one step-daughter, two step-sons, and a host of grandchildren. Also by one brother, Elder Harvey J. Bird, and one sister, Lelia Edwards, both of Hurricane, W. Va.

Brother Ben united with Providence Church early in life, and was later ordained to the office of deacon. He served the church well and faithfully for many years. A firm believer in Salvation by Grace, he was always ready to proclaim the truths of Holy Writ, and that every good gift and every perfect gift is from

above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness neither the shadow of turning. He looked toward that eternal home prepared for the redeemed of the Lord.

His funeral was at the First Baptist Church of Hurricane, August 31st, by Elder J. S. Hunnicutt. A large congregation, and a large array of flowers bespoke his high standing. Interment was in Ridgelawn Cemetery.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the will of our God in the passing of our brother. We feel that God has but called his own. And

RESOLVED, That we extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family, and to all that mourn his passing. We would say, "Weep not, for our loss is his eternal gain." And that we extend our appreciation to the family for so faithfully caring for our brother in his last illness, until the Lord saw fit to call him home. Be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be given to the family; one to be spread on our church records; and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication. Written by Bernard G. Bird.

Elder H. J. Bird, Moderator
V. L. Burnside, Clerk

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M.

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M.

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 11 A. M.

WRIGHTS' CREEK CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 11:00 A. M.

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., six miles SE. of Sulligent, Alabama.

MACEDONIA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located one and one-half miles Southwest of Sulligent, Alabama, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT R. PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
HURTON PITTS, Clerk
Sulligent, Ala.

OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each Saturday before the fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Alabama.

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles SW. of Fayette, Alabama.

ELAM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located two miles North of Goshen, Pike County, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 o'clock.

J. P. MORGAN, Pastor
A. C. CARTER, Clerk
1335 Avalon Lane,
Montgomery 6, Ala.

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before.

E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Pratt City, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. Meeting place at Alder Street at top of hill, first car going into Pratt City from Birmingham.

H. C. MOON, Pastor

LIBERTY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., eight miles South of Gordo, Alabama.

O. G. GARVER, Pastor

MT. CARMEL CHURCH, Coffee Springs, Alabama, meets each first Sunday 11 A. M.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

ZION ROCK OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, twenty-two miles South of Andalusia, Alabama, meets every first Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
NORA McLEOD, Acting Clerk

HARMONY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, ten miles South of Jay, Santa Rosa County, Florida, meets every second Sunday

and Saturday before at 11:00 A. M.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
GRACE UTLEY, Clerk

NAOMI OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets every third Sunday at 11:00 A. M., six miles South of McKenzie, Alabama.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
E. C. WEAVER, Clerk
Rt. 5, Box 50-B,
Andalusia, Ala.

SHILOH OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, seven miles Northeast of Andalusia, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
NORA LEE McLEOD, Clerk
Rt. 3,
Red Level, Ala.

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

REHOBETH OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located five miles North of El Dorado, Arkansas and half-mile West of Highway No. 7, meets second Sunday in each month and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

R. W. RHODES, Pastor
W. A. SPEER, Clerk

WHITE WATER OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located about one mile Northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

W. A. SPEER, Pastor

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Stockton, California, meets second Sundays, 10:30 A. M., at 5620 E. Marsh Street. All lovers of the truth invited.

T. R. JEFFERSON, PASTOR
Myrtle Tipton, Clerk
733 7th St. Hallister, Calif. 95023

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Compton, California, meets each fourth Sunday at the home of L. W. Langwell, 12812 S. Williams Street.

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in the United States), meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is located one mile south of Newark, Delaware, just off of Highway 896.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK CHURCH, Miami, Florida, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before, SW. 29th Avenue and 6th Street. We extend an invitation to any interested to visit us.

MRS. J. M. FUTCH,
7005 SW. 21st Street,
Miami, Florida

NEW HARMONY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Hiram, Ga., meets every 1st Sunday at 11 o'clock.

O. J. CROKER, Pastor
J. F. JORDAN, Clerk

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located at 5th and East Park Street, Weiser, Idaho, meets each 4th Sunday at 11 o'clock. Address any communications to:

ERNEST J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
FLOSSIE ATTEBERY, Clerk
Rt. 1, Box 202,
Hermiston, Oregon 97838

PLEASANT VALLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas. Meets with Mrs. Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C, on each second Sunday.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE LOST CREEK CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, meets first Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Kentucky, ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton, on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

NEW HOPE CHURCH (better known as Lick Creek) meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Kentucky.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE ZION CHURCH OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS, Mayfield, Kentucky, meets first Sunday each month at 11 A. M., on South 7th Street.

J. N. DARNELL, Pastor

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Baltimore, Maryland, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Street, near Calvert.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first

Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on Falls Road about twenty miles north of Baltimore.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

HOPEWELL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Hopewell, N. J., meets each first Sunday at 10:30, and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

ARTHUR R. WARREN, Pastor
MARY L. HELLINGS, Clerk
4 Maple Lane
Pennington, N. J. 08534

OLIVE AND HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Shokan, N. Y., meets each 2nd Sunday at 2:00 P. M. March through and including November.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
DEACON E. K. ADSIT, Clerk

The **WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,** Warwick, Orange County, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are held at A. R. Vail's home, 55 Maple Ave., Warwick at 11 A. M.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, New York City, meets every first and third Sundays at McBurney Branch Y. W. C. A. 215 W. 23rd Street, corner of 7th Ave. (Elevator to 2nd floor.) 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M. All visitors are welcome.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

THE WILSON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Wilson, N. C., meets each second Sunday at 3 P. M., and Saturday evening before at 7:30 P. M. The location is on the corner of Green and Jackson Streets.

D. B. STOKES, Pastor
MRS. BETTIE RICHARDSON, Clerk

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:00 P. M.

C. M. HAGGOOD, Pastor
NINA STALLINGS, Clerk
Rt. 2, Box 54
Altus, Okla.

BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin, Oregon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes. Address communications to Lloyd Spikes, Elgin, Oregon.

ERNEST ATTEBERY, Pastor
SPENCER BURCH, Clerk

ROCK SPRINGS OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, meets each first Sunday at 10:30. The meeting house is located on highway 222, about one-quarter mile of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line.

JOHN D. WOOD. Pastor
CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets each 5th Sunday from May through September; and meets at Needmore, Pa., on 5th Sundays from October through April, with all day meeting the 2nd Sunday in October.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
ORIEN MELLOTT, Clerk
McConnellsburg, Pa.

THE FIRST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH of Memphis, Tenn., meets each Sunday morning at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday night before the second Sunday each month at 7:30 P. M. The church is located on Andrews Road one block north of Hiway 70 in the Ellandale Community, 7 miles east of Memphis.

H. G. BROWN, Pastor
791 Watson St., Memphis
H. R. PRINCE Asst. Pastor
RICHARD H. CAMPBELL, Clerk

CANE CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and is located nine miles Southwest of Martin, Tennessee. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
J. B. JONES, Clerk
Rt. 1, Martin, Tenn.

BORDEAUX PREDESTINARIAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Nashville, Tenn., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. The church is located on the old Hydes Ferry Road in Bordeaux, in Nashville. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

The **WALNUT FORK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH,** near Cottage Grove, Tennessee, meets on the second Sunday of each month.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor
R. L. VEAZEY, SR., Clerk

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, Houston, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before 10:30 A. M. Church is located at 815 Little York Road between Highway 75 and East Texas Freeway 59.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
IRENE WISENBAKER, Clerk

MT. ZION CHURCH, Weslaco, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.; and each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday before at 2:00 P. M., at their new location: seven miles West of Weslaco, on highway 83.

JOE L. HAMRICK, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk

SARDIS CHURCH, Amarillo, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 10:30, in the home of E. J. Parsons, 1711 Lincoln Street.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, has moved their meeting place to 3629 8th Avenue. They meet each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Take College Ave. bus to Butler and Ryon; go one block West, then half block North to church.

C. U. LANDERS, Pastor

THE ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST CHURCH, Lawn, Texas, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
MRS. NOLA STEWART, Clerk

AN ARM OF PILGRIM REST CHURCH, meets each second Sunday and Saturday night before at Earth, Texas.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
A. A. CHAMBERS, Clerk

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets on the second and fourth Sundays of each month at 10 A. M., in the meeting house at intersection of Highways 123 and 87. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

GERALD D. SHIPMAN, Pastor
LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk

THE OLD SALEM CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS, four miles South of Teague, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before. MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

SAINTS REST OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each first and third Sunday at 11 A. M., at 2710 Engle Street.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
D. G. CONNELL, Clerk

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30. And second Sundays at 11:00.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor

The churches of which Elder E. J. Lambert is pastor meet as follows:

PHARON, meets first Sunday morning and Saturday night before, 5 miles NE Hawkins, Texas.

H. H. FAULK, Clerk
Hawkins, Texas

REHOBETH, meets second Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles N ElDorado, Arkansas.

NEILA RYAN, Clerk
1601 N. Emmett
ElDorado. Arkansas

BETHEL, meets third Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles NE ElDorado, Arkansas.

JEAN H. BURNES, Clerk
804 W. Main
ElDorado, Arkansas

GOOD HOPE, meets fourth Sunday morning and Saturday morning before 7 miles NE Winnsboro, Texas.

GERTRUDE JONES, Clerk
905 Y Drive
Winnsboro, Texas

Everyone welcomed.

ELDER E. J. LAMBERT, Pastor
306 Richardson St.
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located on Route 28, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia.

ARTHUR L. CARTER, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is near Lucketts, about eight miles north of Leesburg, Va.

The brethren and friends will please note that the meetings at Broad Run Church, near Poolesville Mayland, have been discontinued; and that the meetings are now held each third Sunday at New Valley, as shown above.

L. L. DUKE, Clerk
Charlestown, W. Va.

MT. ZION CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, Virginia, on Route 50, between Washington and Winchester,

Virginia.

MRS. DAVID FARNIE, Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are always glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Manassas 368-4857.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 8:00 P. M., Fairmont Park, 2023 Tidewater Drive.

C. N. BUNN, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Qualla Road, Chesterfield County, Virginia, meets each first Sunday at 10 A. M. Following are directions to the meeting house: South from Richmond at McGuire Circle, take Rt. 360 nine miles to "Longest" Service Station; turn left and go one mile, and turn right on No. 363 one mile to church.

ELDER C. N. BUNN, Pastor
LILLIE WEIDER, Clerk
2560 Elliham Ave.,
Richmond 34, Va.

DAN RIVER CHURCH, between Danville, Va. and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville, Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday night before, on Bradley Road.

H. W. WRAY, Pastor
R. T. HOLLEY, Clerk

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each first Sunday at 11:00 o'clock. This church is located seven miles west of Gretna, Virginia on 605 one-half mile from Route 40. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
RUTH MATTOX, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Chatham, Va.

BELLVIEW PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each third Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday night before at 7:30. This church is located near Cave Springs about four miles from Roanoke, Virginia, one mile from 221. All visitors are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
J. A. SOWDER, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Salem, Va.

SANDY LEVEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each third Sunday afternoon at 2:30. This church is located on Route 635 about 5 miles south from Hardy, Va. 10 miles from Vinton, Va. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
PEARL DUDLEY, Clerk
Rt. 1, Box 282,
Hardy, Va.

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each fourth Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday morning before at 11:00 o'clock. This church is located on highway 623 about two miles from Fairystone Park. All visitors are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
G. M. MARTIN, Clerk
Rt. 1,
Bassett, Va.

GREEN HILL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each fourth Sunday afternoon at 2:30. This church is located five miles north of Stuart, Virginia, just off highway 58. All lovers of truth are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
MRS. S. L. WALKER, Clerk
Rt. 2, Box 207,
Stuart, Va.

BETHEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, of Predestinarian Faith, of Riffe, Washington, meets each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before at 11 o'clock. For information write the Clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. OPAL HUNTTING, Clerk
Silver Creek, Wash. 98585

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, Naches, Washington, meets at 11:00 A. M. each second Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MARGUERITE SIMPSON, Clerk
1306 Fairview Ave.
Yakima, Wash. 98901

HARMONY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, about four miles East of Huntington, W. Va., near Route 60 at Russell Creek, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

J. R. LANE, Moderator
MILDRED STANLEY, Clerk
Rt. 2, Huntington, W. Va.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 135 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1967 NO. 2

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

FLOWERS WHILE LIVING

A few more months, a few more days
Are left for me my God to praise:
O, may I loud hosannas raise
  To Him who rules on high
Yea, to the Father and the Son
And Holy Spirit — three in one,
Who merely spake and it was done,
Let me no praise deny.

To Him who sent his only Son
To die for crimes that I had done,
Who conquered death: and life He won
  For those condemmed to die;
Who laid aside his riches great,
And left his exalted state
To die for them who him did hate;
  Let nothing with him vie.

O, may his praise be always sung
In every land, by every tongue;
And through eternal ages rung
  Throughout the earth and sky.
And may these feeble lips of mine
Join in the song — the theme divine,
And in eternity and time
  His praise shall never die.

O, that my thoughts I could control,
And that I always could be bold:
That Satan could not cajole;
  That I could him resist.
Then from me he would swiftly flee:
From doubts and fears I would be free
That have so often pestered me;
  What fellowship I've missed.

But gracious God thou didst ordain
That I should suffer grief and pain,
To honor Him who once was slain:
  Who died upon the tree.
Then let it be my awful shame,
Should I, to bear his cross complain,
And seek in life for ease or fame:
  Let me a soldier be.

Let me endure the scorn of man,
And for Him always take my stand:
Whether it be on sea or land
  Lord let me face the foe.
And when the smoke of battle clears,
O may His plaudit reach my ears,
"Come home, I'll wipe away thy tears;
  Hang up thy shield and bow."

Then, O what rapture, what delight
To dwell forever in His sight:
No more with sin and lusts to fight;
  No more to doubt and fear.
But with the blessed of every age
Eternal praise to him engage,
Who saves us from the Devil's rage.
  O, when will He appear?

No more with brethren false contend;
No more with foe disguised as friend,
Who for my welfare did pretend:
  No more on sorrows fed;
But always to behold his face
Whe saved me by redeeming grace:
His blood alone could reach My case;
  And this He freely shed.

For seven now, and fourscore years
I've traveled in this vale of tears;
Have preached for more than forty years
  Christ's wondrous power to save.
Four precious helpmeets I have had:
All taken from me; O how sad;
But I, with Job, confessed He had
  Took only what He gave.

I am now nearing Jordan's shore —
I clearly hear the billows roar;
But, friends, they frighten me no more,
  Since I by faith can see
My loved ones on the other side,
Beyond swift Jordan's chilling tide,
Where there with them I shall abide
  Throughout Eternity.

So haste, my swiftly setting sun,
My fight is fought, my course is run:
I kept the faith: I did not shun
  God's counsel to declare.
Henceforth within those pearly gates
My crown of righteousness awaits;
And there my warfare terminates:
  With Christ I'm owned an heir.

I wish to dedicate this to Elder J. T. Everett, an able minister and a father

in Israel; one who has proved his faith by his works, and has let his light so shine that others seeing his good works, have glorified his Father in heaven. One once said of him, "I just despise the doctrine that John Everett preaches, but he is one of the best men I ever knew in my life." May it please God that more of us may earn this reputation. Brother Everett has had many trials and afflictions, having lost four very sweet wives, and some children, I believe, but has taken it all very patiently. He is now spending his last days in the Dallas County Nursing Home, Fordyce, Arkansas, awaiting the call of Jesus to depart this life of trials and sorrows, and hear the welcome plaudit, "Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of the Lord."

While the above is dedicated to Brother Everett, whom we delight to honor, our main theme, we hope, is, was, and ever shall be the glory of Jesus our Saviour; and to comfort His little ones in their travels here in this vale of tears. I feel that the first eight stanzas of the above will apply to many of the saints also. It can be sung to the tune Kingwood, or, "A few more days on earth to spend."

Since, if I live until January 2, next, I will have reached my three score and ten years, which, though lacking in many respects, I hope have been to the honor and praise of our Lord; and hope, if He sees fit to give me more days, that they will all be spent in His service, and that by and through grace and grace alone, I may enter into the rest that is eternal. Although, to save a rebel like me will be one of God's greatest miracles; for which I hope to praise him forever. Amen. Will appreciate the prayers of everyone.

In hope,
C. B. Britt
Rt. 6, Box 282,
ElDorado, Arkansas 71730

"AND GOD MADE A WIND TO PASS OVER THE EARTH"
(GENESIS 8:1)

Dear Editors of the *Signs:*

In these years that are passing so swiftly for those of us who are termed "Senior Citizens" by our Government, and who are taught by the Lord to constantly watch for His second coming, much of our time is given to reading of the Scriptures and to thinking and studying on the great mysteries of God, especially of his wondrous works. Going back to the record of the creation of all things, we find in Genesis 8:1 that He made a wind to pass over the earth. It was non-existant up to that time. We find that there was no reference as to what use He was to put the wind to, but like all the mysterious things He created, it was to be used wherever and whenever He so purposed to use it. As we find by further searching the Scriptures, He did use it — the wind — in many ways.

Examining this subject carefully, it seems certain that the air and the wind are one, for there is no record of the creation of the air. Too, we see that the wind was to pass over the earth, which could only mean that it would entirely envelop it. Also, we see that it is singular and all of one kind and has many uses, primarily for containing the oxygen necessary for man's life. We see that God has used the wind, which is termed a current of air, to perform wonderous miracles, in addition to it's use in bearing the clouds. And He has used it for man's destruction; and for the good of His chosen ones. I firmly believe that the wind is synonymous with the Holy Spirit. Both are invisible to the eyes of man, as witnessed by our seeing things up to some 100 miles distant on clear days, for there is no liquid, solids or organic substance in the air; and it is only when it is given force to pick up foreign particles, that we see being carried about; and not the wind. The Holy Spirit

moves man inwardly, entirely unseen but felt by man. The wind moves man outwardly, even to picking man up and carrying him a distance, yet he cannot see the wind of itself, nor can he grasp it in his hands. Man cannot commercialize on the wind as to use it for barter. Neither can he do so with the Holy Spirit, in truth and in fact; but we daily see about us the thousands who blindly do just that, claiming great results.

Since I started writing this writing, our local paper's weekly page devoted to Churches, carried the special one Church's argument for "tithing" which, they state, is God's plan taught in the Bible. Now the crux — "Tithing one's income makes him a partner with God the Father, which in turn makes the Heavenly Father responsible to take care of his children." Imagine for a moment just what kind of a God is theirs; then read Isaiah 55:1, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat: yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Then verse 2: "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread," etc. Are not these thousands buying something that is not bread?

Continuing with comparisons, we know that man cannot impede or destroy the effects of the wind, generally speaking. He may construct a windbreak, veering off the wind slightly, but the prevailing storm will continue on unabated. Neither can man thwart the will or commands of God. Jonah tried it, and came out the loser, and much wiser. The wind can rage at great heights and also can reach down into, and below, the surface of the water, driving great areas of it with great force into what the Scriptures term "Tempestious Storms," as recorded in Jonah 1:11 and Acts 27:14. The power of the Holy Spirit cannot be restricted by either height or depth, for He shakes the depths of the earth mightily and causes the falling of the stars at His will and pleasure. Many more comparisons could be written about, but would be repetitious. It can be added, however, that the wind comes at times in great and terrible force; and again in the most gentle and comforting way to ease the discomfort of man in terrific heat or sweltering under the sun's rays. So does God work his wondrous designs thru the Holy Spirit. His voice can thunder, and His power is demonstrated most beyond description; and then again, "That small still voice."

Now to a few of the miracles God performed with the wind. In Exodus 14:21 thru 27, we find the Israelites closed in against the Sea and the Egyptian forces hard behind them. It is written, "Then the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night and made the sea dry land and the waters were divided." The Egyptian forces were, in due time, all destroyed after the Israelites went safely across on dry land in the bottom of the sea. Then read Numbers 11:31, where it is written, "And there went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought quails from the sea and let them fall by the camp." The hungry Israelites gathered up the quails some two days and a night, many, many tons of them. God performed these wondrous acts, with the wind being used to convey His power. Some might wonder how quails, a land bird, could be brought from the sea. It would seem more likely to have been some kind of water fowl, but be it as it was, they were for food; and his miraculous power is shown therein.

One of the first recorded uses of the wind, that of carrying the rain clouds, is found in I Kings 18:45, in the days of Elijah. It is written, "The heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain." Again, another use of the wind is found in I Kings 19:11, to wreak havoc with the mountains. It is written, "And be-

hold, the Lord passed by and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord." Then followed the earthquake, and then a fire and after the fire, (verse 12) "A STILL SMALL VOICE." Tho it is not so recorded, it would seem that Elijah was the one that heard that voice, coming after such a demonstration of the power of the Lord. Does not our Lord still speak to us in a similiar voice, when it is His will to do so; and is that voice not heard after some great inward feeling of his power? If not mistaken, it has been thus with me.

I have referred to the wind as being singular in it's creation and form, but we do find reference to "winds," or plural, in both the Old and New Testaments. I hold to the original reference, "And God made a wind to pass over the earth," regardless of the plural references.

A still different use of the wind by the Lord is shown in the several references to the "Whirlwind" and "Whirlwinds" found in the Old Testament. In 2 Kings 2:1, we find that "The Lord would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind." By man's learning, this would be impossible, for the wind, or air, would change and lose its effect and state of existence, so-to-speak, after rising into upper space. The whirlwind, I believe, was a form of God's Spiritual power which neither depth nor height can impede or resist. One other interesting reference is found in Job 40:6, "Then answered the Lord unto Job out of the whirlwind . . ." Many more are of record, but space prevents further mention of them.

In the New Testament we find, what I believe to be the strongest evidence that the wind and the Holy Spirit are synonymous, or one and the same. Christ's words as recorded in St. John 3:8, likens the birth by the Holy Ghost to the wind. It is written — "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and wither it goeth." Then in Acts 2:2, it is written — "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting, (and the next verse), and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost."

In this present day when we see the great increase in the devastating wind storms or tornadoes, etc., and recorded velocities of wind higher than ever before known, the worldly people give it no particular thought. I believe God's disciples, his chosen ones, pay great heed thereto, and see in these occurrences signs that the end of this time world is near. Those of us who believe in the ONE AND ONLY TRUE AND LIVING GOD, must heed the admonition of God: "BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD," as found in Psalm 46:10. Even tho we may be buffeted at times by great blowing of the wind, we must not be carried about WITH EVERY WIND OF DOCTRINE, as the Apostle warned in Ephesians 4:14. Oh how these "ILL WINDS OF DOCTRINE" are blowing today, carrying millions upon millions about with such force that they become totally oblivious to the TRUTH AND DIVINE TEACHING OF THE BIBLE which they lay aside in favor of the more palatable teachings and doctrines of men.

Concluding, I am mindful of the old hymn in which the writer referred to God's love coming in the form of wind, quote:

"Like a ship, see the Church, thru the ocean she rolls;
Her ballast is grace and she's manned with life's souls.
She's rapidly sailing with the strong gales of love,
And soon will strike shore on the fair coast above.
"She's hated by the world, despised by fools,
Who'll sail the black seas until their ship wrecks their souls."

May the "Strong Gales of God's Love" ever be the source of all His lit-

tle ones' movements in these frightening times, is the prayer of this poor sinner, saved by Grace, and not by the payment of tithes, if saved at all.

Wm. O. Hall
P. O. Box 595,
Mt. Vernon, Wash. 98273

"DOUBTING THE LORD'S WORD"

46 Cedar Street,
Kingston, N. Y. 12401

Dear Brother and Sister Ruston,

Beloved in the Lord:

The other day, while walking on the street, the thought forcibly came into my mind, and something seemed to say to me, that in my feeling so doubtful and fearful of my salvation before God, I was doubting the Lord's word: for He has said that whosoever believed and was baptized should be saved; and again, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." Phillip told the man that if he believed with all his heart, he could be baptized. In other words, he had passed from death unto life: a fit subject to be a follower of Jesus, the meek and lowly Lamb of God. And John said that we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ."

Something said to me, "You are doubting the Lord's word," the same as Peter did. How quickly the Lord put him in the class with the evil, fleshly, or wicked spirit, for not believing the Lord. So something told me that I was doing the same thing; for He has told us that if we believed we would be saved: and God knows that I do believe with all my heart, and have prayed to him times without number with a broken heart and contrite spirit — and such ones God has said he will not despise.

I believe the Lord showed me in those few minutes what a terrible sin it is not to believe the Lord's word, which he has spoken: and I just had a good cry. Poor Peter has to be shown so many times that he was wrong, but the Lord loved him and put him in his place. The Lord surely was good to him, giving him to understand that the words of Jesus were "law and gospel," and not what Peter or any puny man might set up. Peter had to learn on the Mount that Jesus was the one now to be heard: the day of the law and the day of prophecy was past, and Jesus was the one to be heard. Peter also had to learn that Jews and Gentiles were to be fellowshipped alike, no matter who they are, nor how unclean they have been, if they have been with Jesus and learned of him. What God has cleansed we are not to call common or unclean.

God surely has been good to poor me; instead of casting me off, I feel he is showing me the truth, and at the same time showing me the error of my ways, as he did Peter; which was good for Peter, and I feel good for me.

With much love,
Amasa J. Slauson

THE REST OF THE WAY

Oh, fathomless mercy; Oh, infinite grace:
With humble thanksgiving the road we retrace,
Thou never hast failed us, our strength and our stay,
To whom shall we turn for the rest of the way?

Thru dangers, thru darkness, by day and by night,
Thou ever has guided, and guided us right;
In thee we have trusted, and prayerfully say,
Lead us by thy hand the rest of the way.

Thy cross all our refuge; thy blood all our plea:
None other we want, Lord Jesus, but thee.
We fear not the shadows at the close of life's day,
For thou wilt be with us the rest of the way:

WE HUMBLY TRUST AND PRAY

— Selected by A. J. S.

"GOD THUNDERED MARVELLOUSLY WITH HIS VOICE"

1718 Champagnolle Road,
ElDorado, Ark. 71730

Dear Editors of the *Signs:*

If the Lord is pleased to bless me, I would like to express a few of my thoughts I have enjoyed on the writings concerning Job, where he says, "God thundered marvelously with his voice; great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend." (Job 37:5)

The thought that presented itself to me a few days after reading the above, was, Who is it that is made to think upon the spiritual meaning of God thundering marvellously with his voice? It is not the sinful, carnal mind. It is the Holy Spirit giving a hearing ear and understanding heart to the children of God, who hear and rejoice when the Lord thundered marvellously with his voice. The scientists of this world do not comprehend the great things that He doeth. They give themselves credit for the things they are doing, or will do. In the accomplishments they achieve, their minds do not comprehend the marvellous voice of God.

But not so with the childern of God: his sheep hear his voice and follow him. Jesus Christ the Son of God thundered marvellously with his voice when he rose from the dead; when he made the blind to see; the deaf to hear, and the lame to walk. Instead of hearing the marvellous voice, many sought to destroy him: and would have many times, but the appointed time had not come for him to depart this world; to die, and to be raised from the dead: another great thing he did.

The world in all of its glory of sinfulness could not comprehend it. I don't believe Job could hear the marvellous voice of his God in his fleshly mind, for in the next chapter the Lord told Job, "Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundation of the earth? declare, if thou has understanding." (Job 38:3, 4) In the 42nd chapter Job acknowledged that he comprehended not, for he said, "Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not." (Job 42:3)

In his fleshly mind Job could not answer; but when the Lord gave him spiritual understanding, then he comprehended the great things that He doeth. "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee." (42:2) The carnal mind cannot comprehend the things of the Spirit; neither can it worship the Lord: for God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in truth. (John 4:24) His people do not worship Him with worldly goods and the treasures of this world, such as silver and gold: they do not put these things first and foremost, but rather strive to mortify worldly lust and desire.

The inward man is fed spiritual food to the extent of hearing the thundering marvellous voice of God. It is fed in a measure daily to worship him in spirit and in truth. His love and relationship he manifests in the heart, and upholds and directs according to His will. God is honored and glorified in all that he does. When He is pleased to open the deaf ears and strengthen their poor hearts with spiritual understanding, they comprehend the great things that he doeth.

Oh, may the Lord give us an understanding heart, that we may say with David, "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandeth my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me

behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me." (Psalm 139:1-5)

Enclosed you will find $5.00 to extend my subscription for two more years. May His loving kindness and tender mercy be and remain with us. May this unworthy one be included in your prayers.

J. J. Davis

Rt. 6, Box 282
ElDorado, Arkansas

ENCOURAGEMENT

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Since I have a couple of subscriptions to the **Signs** to enclose, I will write a few lines of encouragement: as I feel you possibly need some while contending for the true faith once delivered to the saints; which seemingly is so scarce in these days of apostasy, in which men not only will not contend for, but will not endure sound doctrine.

As far as I am able to determine, you are still contending for this wonderful faith, and have not departed from the original points of doctrine set forth by Elder Gilbert Beebe when he founded the paper. No doubt he prayed often that the paper should endure long after his decease, and contend for the wonderful truths which he so ably expounded and contended for. And I feel that God is using the Signs, its editors and contributors, as well as all who help in any way its welfare, in answering Brother Beebe's prayers; and the prayers of all of us who pray and work for its welfare. May He continue to bless and direct you, and sanctify your efforts to the edification of his little children, and comfort them while traveling through the thorny maze in this troublesome world, is my prayer.

Six years ago this morning, I suffered a stroke which rendered me unable to do gainful work — could not walk for quite a while, and poorly yet, and since I was a bonded circulation newspaper representative, and could not resign for three months, my future looked black indeed; but God came to my rescue and sent me help to where I not only did not loose, but came out with a little profit. I have now recovered to where I can work a big garden, drive the car and attend meetings, Where I try to preach Jesus in my very limited way. But where there is little given, there is little required: even the little finger is important so long as it does not try to be the whole arm, which I hope God has and will continue to forbid me to do.

(Elder) C. B. Britt

(Thanks, Brother Britt, for the subscriptions and your encouragement — Editors.)

Henry, Virginia 24102

EXPERIENCE

To the Strangers:

Sometime ago I had a dream in which someone handed me a folded paper to read; and when I unfolded it, I saw no words thereon. Knowing I was expected to read; I began to speak: I know not what I said, but I awoke saying, "All things rest in the mighty power of our God."

I pondered over this dream, and sometimes have desired to write something of the mighty power of God as experienced in my life; and especially after reading so many comforting writings from the household of faith. It makes me want to comfort others with the same comfort wherewith I have been comforted; but, knowing my inability to express myself as I would, and my ignorance, I have hesitated. So it is with many misgivings I have penned the following to be used by the editors as they see fit.

I think I have always had some fear of God: and sometimes it seems to me that I have always known I was a sinner — even when a child. But, whereas I was a little sinner then, I have grown to a disproportionate size. Many times I have to bow my head in sorrow, and say with

dear old Paul, "I am the chief of sinners."

I grew up as most do, thoughtless, careless, and unconcerned over my condition, until, after about five years of marriage, my husband was suddenly taken sick, and after a short illness, died, leaving me with three little girls, one yet unborn. No one except those who have gone through this trial, knows the sorrows and anxieties I passed through at that time.

But during this time of trouble I had a dream. I dreamed I was lying beside my husband's grave; and I looked toward the west, and saw a great number of people going in that direction. I got up and started to follow after those people; but, after going a short distance, I met the Lord, and he smiled at me. Instead of going on, I turned around to follow after the Lord. After going a short distance, he disappeared from my sight. I looked, and saw a great storm approaching: the clouds were very black and ominous looking. I became fearful and looked around for a shelter to get out of the storm. A short distance away, I saw a very old, weatherbeaten building, and I went into this building. There were a number of people in this house, and they were wondering what the terrible storm meant. And I said, I can tell you what it means — it means that the end of the world has come.

This dream never left me, and I meditated much on it; but didn't know what it meant. It was years later that I came to believe that the Lord was leading me to the church. I was tied down with my little family; and went very little, but if possible, I would always go to Knob Church when meeting day rolled around. I had a desire to go, but felt that I would never be fit to join; nor any urgent need to do so.

Around ten years later there came a great stirring up: the storm was upon me, and it beat fiercely on my head. I wanted to flee, but I knew not where to go. I became greatly troubled over my condition: I had suddenly become a terrible sinner; and I went mourning and crying for mercy. Also there came a great feeling of necessity to unite with the church. But, how could I go! I was such a sinner. But the words, "Take up your cross and follow me," seemed to be pushing from every side and urging me faster on. So, it was with much misgiving and with felt necessity that I offered to the church; and was received and baptized. I didn't feel the joy that I had read of others having when baptized; but I did feel to be at peace with all mankind, or as a calm after a great storm.

But this calm lasted only a short while. There came another storm upon me, which seemingly beat harder than the one before: I was a deceiver, and had deceived the church. For several days I went so burdened and troubled, I could find no rest. I was such a miserable, stupid, sinful wretch — I went with bowed down head, crying for mercy, but felt there could be no mercy for such a wretch as I. Where could I go? What must I do? What have I done? such terrible, perplexing thoughts! Surely there had never been such a wretch as I.

I gave up all hope, and lay down one night it seemed to die: I turned my face to the wall and said in my heart, Lord, I've got nothing: everything is gone. Then, all at once, a small, still voice spoke and said, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord."

And, brethren, I was still: such a peace and calmness came over me that I can't describe; and all my troubles rolled away. I slept the sleep of the just that night.

I have often gone back to examine that place, and am fully persuaded that the Lord delivered me there just as he did the children of Israel when crossing the Red Sea. For, like them, I could neither go forward nor backward, but was ready to perish. But after such a great deliverance, I could sing the Song of Moses and the children of Israel.

While many times since I have had to mourn because of my sinfulness, yet I have never felt that awful condemnation of being a deceiver. The church has been such a resting place for me

through the years; and I have gone in and out finding pasture.

Although I sorrowfully feel to be a sinner of enormous size, yet sin has become exceedingly sinful to me; and many times I am made to hate myself. But seeing myself so vile, so corrupt, and so indebted — having a great hope that the Lord has paid my debt and set me free, I hope has made me to be more compassionate towards my fellow-men. I want to crush this old stubborn nature of mine; I want to be more understanding; I want to be more kind; I want to be more humble; I want to have an eye of pity; I want to be more forgiving; and I want to be more merciful, for

"Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song,
The joy of my heart, and the boast of my tongue."
"Without thy sweet mercy I could not live here,
Sin soon would reduce me to utter dispair."

I humbly hope I have grown some in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour; and while growing in the knowledge of the greatness, and the goodness, and the everlasting longsuffering of our Lord and Saviour, I have grown smaller and smaller in my estimation, until now I have to say again with the Apostle Paul that I am less than the least of all saints. Many and varied have been the trials that the Lord has led me through: and many times I have bowed under the rod. Many times I have felt to be walking right along with the children of Israel: and as I have gone grumbling and stumbling along, sometimes rebellious and chafing at the bit, I have seemed to hear Him say, "Ye are a rebellious and stiff-necked people," and I have felt his correcting rod upon me. But, just as He fought their battles when the enemy raged thick about them, I feel he is still fighting mine, as I have come to the end of my strength, and can no longer fight.

God has not changed, but the children have waxed fat, and are serving the many gods around about us. We hear His words, "I am God, I change not." And, just as he has always known what it takes to turn the hearts of his children to repentance, he still knows. He says, "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction;" and it is in afflictions they will come.

Sometimes my days are spent in sighing because of the sins in the land; and I mourn for the sinfulness of our youth. Our only rest lies in the assurance that all things rest in God's mighty power; and He makes no mistakes. I am, I hope,

A little sister who fears God,
Martha C. Crawford

(After reading the above, and hoping that I know something of that way, I remembered one of Hart's hymns; which I quote:

"How strange is the course that a Christian must steer;
How perplexed is the path he must tread!
The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
And his life he receives from the dead.

"His fairest pretensions must wholly be waived,
And his best resolutions crossed;
Nor can he expect to be perfectly saved,
Till he finds himself utterly lost.

"When all this is done, and his heart is assured
Of the total remission of sins,
When his pardon is signed and his peace is procured,
From that moment his conflict begins."

J.D.W.)

"ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM"

Rt. 1, Box 36
Berlin, Md.

Dear Household of Faith:

As I attempt to write this letter there is a fear within this heart of mine but hoping that the Lord may be pleased to direct my mind that I may be enabled to write to your comfort, and if so then it will be a comfort to this poor worm of the dust, that we may be comforted together with that mutual faith that was once delivered to the saints.

The Bible says "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." (Ephesians 4:5) I have believed for a long time and cannot go back to the time when I believed any

different, that the Eternal God that spoke all things in existence did foreknow all things and knew his chosen people before the beginning of time, He (God) not only knew all things that have come to pass and will come to pass, but decreed it that way and had a purpose in such for the good of his chosen people, and to his own honor and glory. As we journey in this life, we are confronted with many trials and tribulations, that we would not have if we could have our own way; but, dear child of God, they are necessary to keep us humble, and to realize from day to day that we are not our own keepers but dependant on the grace and mercy of our eternal God, who doeth all things well.

Yes, as I mentioned above, one Lord who was with the father in the beginning for the Bible says, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." (Genesis 1: 26) Therefore our blessed Saviour was with the Father in the beginning and is with him now, having come in this world at the appointed time to bear in his body the sins of his elect, being made a curse for us: for it is written, "Cursed is every one hangeth on a tree." (Galatians 3: 13) It is a wonderful blessing when the Lord is pleased to give unto us poor sinful creatures, as this writer feels to be, a mind to behold a little now and a little then of his love toward a people who are undeserving of the least of his mercies. Are you not glad, dear reader, that you feel to know that you are a sinner, for Jesus said that the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. (Matthew 9: 12)

Jesus is the great Shepherd of his sheep; and I like the word "his," for it denotes in my mind a possession. I do not know that I am one of that number, but am hoping that I am. I have never been able to get any further than hope, for we are told that hope that is seen is not hope.

Now just a few remarks about the second part of the scripture as quoted above, the word **faith.** The Bible says, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 10:17) There is a natural hearing and a spiritual hearing. I do not believe that one can tell another to have faith and it will cause that person to have faith, I believe to have faith in God is a work of God in the heart of the person, and not something that one can pass to one another. There is a mutual faith wherein each have been taught the same thing and can see eye to eye; but that, too, is the work of God in their hearts.

I would like now to mention the latter part of the scripture as quoted in the beginning of this letter, and that is **baptism.** I do not believe that Baptism by water has ever saved one, it is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God. (1 Peter 3:21) I believe that there are many of God's chosen people that have never heard with their natural ear the audible voice of man speak of the grace and mercies of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, but have heard the still small voice of the Lord speaking in their heart, revealing what they are by nature, and causing them to cry out for mercy like the poor publican of old, when he said, "Lord be merciful to me a sinner." Thus when one has been brought to see his need of the grace and mercy of the Lord, I feel he, though perhaps not a member of the visible Church, knows something about the Baptism with the Holy Ghost and with fire. I am thinking of you today of like faith, though I may never see many of you in the flesh, I am hoping that we may meet in that land of rest beyond the trials of this world. I feel to say however, that without free grace I know I'm lost.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

EXPERIENCE

77016 Hartley Road,
Houston, Texas

Dear Brother Spangler
and Brother Wood:

I enclose $5.00 to renew my subscription to the **Signs.** I read so many good letters in the Signs that I wish at times

that God would give me the wisdom and knowledge to write also. I only wish to write a little of my experience — what the Lord has done for me. The Lord took me in hand, and showed me what he could do with me.

I have thought a great deal about the wonderful scripture, "The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live."

On August 26, 1966, the Pleasant Valley Primitive Baptist Association was held here at Houston with the Shepherd Fold Church. Little did I think that I was soon to be a member of this dear church. I knew that all the people of the church were good people, and I liked them all. Some of them I had known for a great many years. As I thought of the coming association here, and my desire to help all I could, I knew I was always wanting to go there to hear the preaching and singing, so I felt to do all I could. The association came to a close on Sunday August 28th, with the singing of **How Firm a Foundation;** and all told each other goodby. But everything was not over as I had thought. It seemed to me like a dark cloud had come over me, which I could not explain; or I might have felt I was in a different world.

When we lose our loved ones here on earth, we gather around that body, and sometimes grieve and shed many tears. But little is ever thought about this old worldly body that dies in us, while yet the flesh and bones are still alive, except by the dear brother or sister who looses it: and I believe I shed many tears when I lost mine.

When Saul went to Damascus, and was struck down, we have no record in the Bible that Paul ever again persecuted the people of God. In Acts 9:6, we note that Paul does not say what he is going to do, but he called upon the Lord. How I did cry, "Oh, Lord, where will I go now; Oh, Lord, what will become of me? The old home I had will never be home again, and there is no place I can ever be satisfied." And it did not look like there would ever be any more sleep or rest for me. I did consider offering to the church, but I felt I was not fit for the church; neither did I think the church would have me. But the next meeting day, I had made up my mind to give in to the church. I thought surely to goodness I can't be hurt any worse, if the church tells me, No.

In I Corinthians 15:9, Paul says it was not meet that he should be called an apostle, for he had persecuted the church of God. And this is the way I felt when I went before the church; for it seemed to me that I had tried hard for so long a time, to stay away from them all. After several questions, the church took me in, and on Sunday September 4th, Brother Haygood baptized me. It was a joyful occasion for me. As we walked down, I thought how blessed it is that I can be put under the water as Jesus was. All my life I have been in a hurry to get something done, but this was one thing I was in no hurry about, nor did I care how long it lasted. As we came on to the house from the water I remembered that on September 10th I would be sixty-eight years old. I had often forgotten birthdays, but not this one, for I thought this was the best birthday present I ever received.

When we returned to the church house, they sang a song and gave me the hand of fellowship. When all this was finished, none but the Lord and I will ever know what a burden had been taken off of me. We have no knowledge of our first birth, and we do not have any say-so concerning our spiritual birth, or when it is coming. I believe when the Lord's time comes to send us before the church, we have no choice then, anymore than we have when His time comes to call us out of this world. It may seem strange to the world to see an old man sixty-eight years of age join the church and be baptized; but all Primitive Baptists understand it. His enemies sought many times to destroy Jesus Christ, but could not take him

until the right hour came — and Jesus told them that his hour had come. I believe this was my appointed hour to go before the church.

There were seven states represented at the association by messengers and minutes. It was a wonderful gathering for God's people, and I know I enjoyed all the sermons. Dear old Elder Rhodes preached from Luke 18: 10-13, concerning the two who went into the temple to pray; and this was the scripture that I had longed to hear some minister preach on. I have long believed they represented two classes of people that we have on earth: one, a people who feel very low and sinful, hoping that the Lord will have mercy on them, and living in hope of eternal life; the other, people who have done all these good things, and expect to go to heaven for all the good deeds they have done.

I had a sister, Mrs. J. F. Gaines, who died the same day I went before the church. She was buried at Lawn, Texas, near Pilgrim's Rest Church. I had been with her several days, and had come to the association, expecting to go back to see her soon. I was much grieved, but have been reconciled to it all by God's tender mercy. I feel sure she is in safe keeping, to await the second coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

There have been a number of things that seemed strange to me from my childhood about Primitive Baptists: such as going a long way in covered wagons to associations, and going to a lot of expense. I wondered why they could not hold their meetings closer home. These things were strange to me, for the reason had not been revealed to me. I saw Brother Kilgore come a long way to our house in Coleman County, in a buggy, for a great number of years; and I saw Brother Greathouse come down from New Mexico by train for a good many years; and Brother Bowden come a long ways in a covered wagon to our house, for many years.

I said all these things were strange to me, but now all has been made so plain to me that it seems a child could see it. There is but one answer, the Primitive Baptist Church is not going to be destroyed: it was put here on earth to stay. "And I say also unto thee, thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matthew 16:18) The church is in God's hands till the end of time.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

C. L. Berry

Rt. 1, Box 111
Gustene, Texas

To the Editors
and Readers of the Signs:

Oh, why should I feel so sad and alone? My needs are well supplied; my children and friends are good and kind. Still, as that dear old hymn says, "Oh, is there anyone like me?" As one dear sister once remarked, "I hope there isn't."

I have had many heartaches, griefs and afflictions. I have felt assured at times that I was sustained by a higher power, else this frail body could not have endured.

"Where is the blessedness I felt, when first I knew the Lord?" It seems definitely absent, gone forever. I wonder, Did I know Him indeed and in truth? Did I really know that He died for me? Have I ever felt His blessed nearness; did He ever appear with healing in his wings for me? Were my pleasant meditations; my, to me, wonderful dreams; and the times I have felt to praise His holy name even in the darkest hours of the night, the result of an over-burdened mind.

All these, and so many questions arise in my mind, causing doubts and fears: though not for an instant do I doubt that God is able to do, and will do everything he has purposed to do. For he is of one mind, and none can change him. He doeth his will in the heavens and among the inhabitants of the earth, and

none can stay his hand; and he needs not the help of any.

One occasion I can never foregt when bowed down with grief and the burden of guilt and unworthiness before God, when it seemed I would sink to rise no more, the words dropped sweetly into my mind, "I will never leave nor forsake thee." I arose and felt comforted, though not elated as some express themselves to be. I was at this time deeply grieved over the loss of our darling little girl as well, but there was a change I had never experienced: the love for earthly things was gone. I cared not for socials or other worldly pleasures as I once had. Although that has been more than fifty years, my mind often goes back in retrospect to this occasion, which always affords at least a degree of comfort.

Not many years later my husband and I united with the church at Lawn, Texas, where my membership still remains; but he passed on in 1951. My fondest memories are of our visits to this dear little church, and the sweet fellowship, love and unity we enjoyed among them. And now, as my evening sun is sinking low, I pray that I will be given grace to endure with patience whatsoever afflictions the dear Lord has destined for me; and to say, "Thy will, blessed Lord, not mine, be done."

Enclosed you will find a check for my renewal to the **Signs**, which has been coming as a welcome visitor, and a cherished one, for more than seventy years. Please renew for one year; the balance is for the Indigent Fund. . .

May the dear Lord grant the readers and everyone who love the dear paper for the doctrine it advocates, many years to come, for the comfort, encouragement, and edification of the dear saints of God. We know from reading the reprints of articles written more than a century ago, that the **Signs** is still contending for the same truth once delivered to the saints.

With the deepest love and fellowship my poor heart is capable of giving, I bid you farewell.

Ida Bowers

Pheba, Miss. 39755

Dear Editors:

I see that my subscription is up, and I don't feel that I can do without the Signs. I usually sit up and read it through the first night I receive it. Nothing is spiritual food to me except this doctrine. Every piece in it was grand this month.

I did not get to go to our Hopewell Association this year, as my husband was taken to a sanatorium in August, and will be there sometime yet. He missed getting to go too. We both are members, and are past seventy-five years old.

Enclosed is check for $3.00 to renew our subscription.

Mrs. Sam Moore

SONG OF SOLOMON 1:4

Draw me, Lord, I humbly pray,
By the tender cords of love;
Draw me by thy cords of mercy
To thy mercy seat above.

Draw me out of all my weakness,
Give me strength to come to thee;
Draw me by thy loving kindness
Nearer to thyself to be.

Draw me far from human boasting,
From the busy courts of pride;
Draw me by thy gentle teaching
To my Saviour's loving side.

Draw me off from self-deception,
From my sinful self and ways;
Draw me into close communion
With thy heavenly mysteries.

Draw me into closer feeling
With thy sorrowing members here;
May there not for them be wanting
Once the sympathizing tear.

Draw me to the path of suffering,
Jesus crucified to see;
Draw me, Lord, is wisdom's pleading,
Wheresoever it please thee.

(Selected by Elder Slauson from the *Signs* of 1889.)

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with Pleasant Hill Church, Edgecombe County, N. C., just off Highway 43, between Pinetops and Rocky Mount, N. C., the fifth Sunday in January, 1967.

All who love the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Tarboro, N. C.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To December 1, 1966)

Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.	$1.00
B. G. Bird, W. Va.	2.00
Wm. O. Hall, Wash.	1.00
Mrs. S. L. Midgett, N. C.	4.00
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Danville, Virginia **February, 1967**

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EDITORIAL

One of our readers has requested our views on the third verse of the only chapter of the book of Jude. It reads as follows:

"Beloved when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints."

It appears from the inquiry of our reader, that he is concerned with the expression, "the common salvation." There are various meanings of the word common, and by referring to the Scriptures, we find some of the meaning brought to view.

In the text the common salvation that Jude gave all diligence to write about, refers to salvation that flows to all the children of God, who have been, "Sanctified by God the Father (chosen and set apart), and preserved in Christ Jesus, and called." In this first verse of the chapter, Jude gives the reason for this salvation being referred to as the *common salvation:* because all receive it from the same source. In Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, the same thought is presented in reference to the things of God belonging to all alike, because all receive them through electing love, surety in Christ, redeeming grace, and effectual calling.

In Acts 2:43-47, we read, "And fear came upon every soul; and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Here Peter, in his wonderful sermon preached with

the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, shows that this salvation when received, causes God's humble poor to feel a heavenly tie with all the redeemed of the Lord. None can call their possessions their own, because this relationship brings to light their union with Christ their Lord.

It is no wonder that Jude was constrained by the effect of this common salvation, to exhort the brethren to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. The contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, also embraced warnings that certain men had crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Throughout the Book of Jude, the line is drawn between *professors* and *possessors* of godliness. The same is true today: as in that day, "By their fruit ye shall know them."

The common salvation of the text does not refer to a separate salvation for the people of God, apart from salvation given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. I have failed to find the word *salvations* mentioned in the Word of God. The word is in the singular, showing that the same grace that saves the sinner in time, saves him eternally.

How comforting it is to read the summation of the whole matter in the closing of this chapter: "Now unto him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." If Jesus is able to keep his people from falling, can they ever fall? If they cannot fall, it is because they, "Are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

Before Peter had been sifted as wheat, wherein all his self-confidence was removed, he was probably one who believed that part of his salvation was of God: the eternal part; but when left to self and turned over to Satan for the destruction of this self-confidence, he could testify that he was kept by the power of God.

Is it not a mark of grace in the lives of His people, when they realize how weak they are; and are made daily to look to Him who is able to keep them from falling? These precious ones often cry, "Lord help me," and realize that there is salvation in no other.

D. V. S.

EDITORIAL

"Also the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke; yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shalt thy tears run down. Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind the tire of thine head upon thee, and put on thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not thy lips, and eat not the bread of men. So I spake unto the people in the morning: and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded." (Ezekiel 24:15, 18)

Many things crowd into my mind as I contemplate the wisdom of the eternal God as he sends forth the truth to the nations. What parables and allegories and mysterious workings are brought forward in bringing to our attention the things that He has in store for us. It will be well for us to note that God's words to the impenitent are more concise and straightforward than are His words to believers. This may come as an astonishment to my readers, but, nevertheless, it is true. It will be heard at times that the Lord's people know more than unbe-

lievers. This is true. They know the legal dispensation; they know what it is to believe in salvation by works, but that is not all that they know. They know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven by reason of gift. There is not any intimation of the Saviour talking to the unbelieving world in parables *so that the believer would not find out what He was talking about.* They already know what it means for the Lord to deal with unbelievers. No reason for Him to speak in parables and allegories, for they learned all about what is in store for the impenitent. But He does speak in deep mysteries when talking to those *that know* the things of the kingdom, lest the impenitent find out things that are hid from them.

Perhaps I had read this Scripture in days past and gone, but I am sure that it did not make any impression on my mind. When it was brought to my attention by a brother, I was amazed at the language. I have delayed attempting to comply with his request that I write on it, because I have not felt to have any light on it. Again and again my mind has been brought back to it, and as often I have tired to shy away from it. This has been going on for weeks, and now I am brought to the place that I feel an inclination of mind to inquire of the Lord wisdom that we might explore the deep mine of gospel truth that is hid here from prying eyes, but spoken in the allegorical style for enlightened eyes. As I venture forth, I am not blind the the fact that eyes can not be gotten nor given by earthly men, be they priests or ministers or any other ecclesiastical talent; nor am I blind to think that the recipient of opened eyes *can* keep them open. Thus, I am in steady need of His divine work in giving and anointing my eyes that I might be blessed to see.

There have not been more than a half dozen times when I have called off an appointment for the sake of my wife and children, but whatever the number, it has been that many times too many. I may have many readers that will not agree with me, but I am going to say that there is not one excuse that will justify us in doing wrong. The least excusable excuse that can be rendered, is that the wrong was in the purpose of God. How pitiful the case that loves sin in such a manner as to hide behind God's purposes to cover it up. If the Lord ever told a transgressor that "I know I left you in a questionable surounding and that you are not altogether to blame," I have failed to find it after forty years reading. Sometimes it would appear that the Lord's people have such a weak conception of Him, that sweeping things under the carpet works as well in dealing with God as it does one another.

In nature and in serving God, it is indisputable that two masters can not be served at the same time. To think that two people can be loved equally, is to court disaster; and it is even more so to think that we can love the world and the Lord, and serve each of them. We have a number of cases in the Bible of those that served God alone, even though it was disastrous to them in gaining the favor of the world. Among these faithful people will be found Joseph, Moses, Daniel, the Hebrew brethren, Job, Paul, John and many others. The life of each character proves conclusively that it is not true that our welfare comes to us by our obedience. Then we have a number that tried to divide the glory; that tried to be a follower of the Lord and to carry a torch for the world, and in each case it ended in disaster. To assert that salvation in time from trouble and sorrow came to Joseph and Daniel and the others by their obedience, is to dispute Bible history. It was *not* disobedience that sent Joseph to prison; it was not disobedience that sent the Hebrews into the fiery furnace. To assert that salvation in time was removed from Jacob by his disobedience, (who is the inheritance of the Lord), is to

show a lamentable ignorance of the Scriptures. To assert that disobedience brings peace and satisfaction to God's children is to subvert the Scriptures. To assert that God winks at the disobedience of his servants, is to flout God and his written testimony.

We will never be able to take the things of Chirst as our own until the Spirit or Guide or Comforter takes them and shows them unto us. Perhaps they do not mean to suggest such a thing, but it does seem sometimes that it is thought that the children of God could have gotten along very well without the third Person in the Trinity. It is blasphemy to charge weakness or failure in the effectual workings of God's Spirit. His work is to call, to qualify, to teach, to lead, and none of these wonderful works are followed by "at," for the Comforter was not left with the people of God to *expose* them to the things of Christ, but to teach them; to guide them into all truth; to take the things of Christ and show them to the people of God; to bring to their remembrance all things. Christ filled His mission while here in the flesh, and as far as the office work of our Saviour, it is the most harmonious doctrine set forth in the Bible, but it will not do us any good until the Holy Spirit (which is the Comforter) brings it to us. It is His work to bring those things of the risen Christ to us. We will neglect what the Saviour said while He was here in the flesh. We may be an avid reader of the Scriptures and yet pass by very lightly what He said; but when the Holy Ghost takes of the things of Christ and presents them to us, *we will always obey*. Remember, dear reader, I am not making three Gods, but I am declaring unto you the three-in-one God, and that the third Person, which is the Spirit of God, even the Spirit of Christ, is effectual in His work among the children of God.

Let us remind ourselves once again of the office work of God the Father in election, God the Son in redemption, and God the Spirit in saving and preserving that which the Son left in His care. As God did not make a mistake, or surrender to some unknown god, or fail in giving a single vessel of electing grace to the Son, just so did Christ not fail in the work that He came to do; and just so, no more, no less, does the Holy Spirit effectually work in the children redeemed. His commandments are obeyed. As the sheep hear the voice of the Saviour and follow him, just so, no less, no more, does the children of the kingdom learn, and hear, and remember, and *do* the things that the Comforter brings to them.

We are accused of preaching a hard doctrine. The hardest thing about it is to get around the truthfulness of it. How nature would charge God with harshness in dealing with Ezekiel. The approach is not marked by preliminaries in preparation for what is to come. Nature would say that the Lord bluntly told him that he was going to take his wife away suddenly. It is not clear whether the Lord meant that she would die by a stroke, or that her passing suddenly would be a stroke to the prophet. Be that as it may, it would be a stroke indeed to Ezekiel to suddenly lose his desirable wife. Did the prophet have a time of mourning? Did he have permission to call off his prophetic announcements for a season? Did he have permission to indulge in the things that usually accompanied mourners? How many of my readers have stayed away from their services because your son was home from the service? O dear child of God, please do not deal harshly with me, for I tell you that acording to the examples given us, we are not permitted to serve self for any reason, if it means foregoing the service of the Lord. People in general were permitted this and that indulgence at the time of mourning, and even the priests were permitted to join in mourning at some times, but this is a time that all of these privileges must be left off. Ezekiel was not to

show by word or act that his wife was going to die.

We think that we can not bear this or that, or the other. Often we worry about whether we could continue faithful at the fiery stake. We do not, at this time, need that kind of grace. I do not feel any inclination, yea, I do not feel any need, to pray for grace to enable me to face death by the burning fagots of a frenzied religious world. I do feel the need, and I do hope that I pray for enabling grace for whatever comes my way. As I contemplate the exercises of my mind under strain, I do not seem to be able to think that I could preach if I was facing the loss of my companion. Ezekiel was blessed to do just that. He spake to the people in the morning, and in the evening his wife died. Again, let me ask, was he permitted any grief? No, and I desire that you notice the effectiveness of God's command. The next morning he also spoke to the people. If I could be blessed with such overcoming power of the Spirit I would do as he did.

But is the faithfulness of Ezekiel the only matter under consideration? I do not desire to pass over that, for that is important to remember, but often God leads his servants in a particular direction in order to bring forward something still greater, something that this deed here will throw light on some future deed.

What would be the reaction of the Old School Baptist family to a minister that went to his appointment while his wife's body was in the morgue? The same consternation that would come to them, also came to Ezekiel's people. They said unto him, "Wilt thou not tell us what these things are to us." While we are left in conjecture about this, it would seem that had they known what their inquiry would have brought, that they, too, would have said, "Prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things." Ezekiel had been chosen to endure this affliction to set before Israel a pattern of what was coming to them. God said, "Behold, I will profane my sanctuary, the excellency of your strength, *the desire of your eyes,* and that which your soul pitieth; and your sons and daughters whom ye have left shall fall by the sword." What are they to do? They shall follow the sign; they shall do as Ezekiel did in his sorrow. Ah, it is not any idle tale to talk about the ravages of sin. What inroads it has made in the midst of Israel. They shall not show any weeping for that which they lose, but they shall pine away for their iniquities, and they shall mourn one towards another. What a difference is here; they shall not mourn for what they have lost, but they shall mourn *for* one another.

All that Ezekiel had to do, they had to do, and when they were brought through it, they were to learn a good lesson. They shall come to know the Lord, to know that he is the God that demands obedience of his people. They were to find this lesson in the day when their strength was removed from them; in the day when the desire of their eyes was gone; in the day when the joy of their glory was vanished. They learned, as Jeremiah and Jonah and Peter, and you and I, that God's command is not given loosely, that it is given with all power in heaven and earth in His hands, to bring obedience. It is well for us to note that not a few thought to do differently than what God said, that picked out a route of evasion to the commandment. What was the outcome of it? It ended with them, as it has ended, *or will end,* with you and me, in being brought to do that which we did not intend to do.

In all of the scattering of the children of Israel there was always a remnant left. A few have been preserved against destruction in all of Israel's calamities. This few has not been limited to what we ordinarily call it. There was a remnant in Elijah's day, and yet it was seven thousand; there was a remnant in Paul's day that was preserved in the

same way, and there is a remnant today (and they are more than our fears would suggest or our enemies would allow) that God is keeping as a special monument to his saving power. In the ninth chapter of this same book there is a vivid description of the one that is left. According to the word that came to Ezekiel, there would be escapees in the bringing to pass of this momentous event.

These that escaped were exercised in such a divine way that they came to Ezekiel. At this time, the order for non-weeping was abrogated. The talking and acting as one that was not grief stricken would be over. His mouth would be opened to commune with his brethren, to seek their mutual sympathy in the sudden death of his wife. Thus, he was in this, as in all the other part of this miracle, a sign to Israel.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Roxboro, N. C.
Sept. 6, 1897

Dear Brother Chick:

When on my way home from the Warwick Association, Sister Shepherd, of Trenton, N. J., requested me to write my views upon the resurrection, and send them to the *Signs* for publication. Brother I. H. Harris, of Tar River, N. C., has also made the same request. You remember that this was my subject on the last day of the Warwick Association, and many seemed much stirred up, and yourself among the rest. This has been the cause that I have not written up to this time, but I now feel to pen a few thoughts upon this subject, and give them to the *Signs,* hoping that our God will give the hearing ear, and understanding heart.

This subject seems to me to be embraced in the sentence, "I am the resurrection and the life." (John 11:25) Lazarus and his two sisters were friends to our Lord, He makes special mention of this in the eleventh verse. This man was sick, and Jesus was sent for, but he did not go to heal him, and neither did he manifest his power in healing him, as he did the servant of the centurian, as recorded in Matthew 8. He had another purpose in view. His power over death, as well as over diseases, must be made manifest. The power of God which was in our Lord, was not made manifest in saying only, but doing as well. He said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." This power must be made known in deed also. Therefore he said, "And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intend that you may believe."

The sisters of the dead were yet weeping, and as soon as Martha had heard that Jesus was coming, she went forth to meet him; and then said unto him, "Lord, if thou hadst been here my brother had not died." Jesus said unto her, "Thy brother shall rise again." Here is the turning point. Martha believed in the resurrection, but she viewed it as being so far away that she knew not the great comfort there was in it. She had felt nothing of that to which she was looking forward. She was looking in expectation to some far off day or time unspecified, when her brother should rise from the dead. She calls this the last day. Little did she think that the joy which she hoped to embrace in that far off day, was so very near her, looking upon her as the beautiful morning sun looks in at the window upon the unconscious sleeper, and awakes him to see that it is now beautiful daylight.

The word comes immediately back to her, "I am the resurrection and the life." That for which thou art looking in the great distance is here now; this

is the day of joy. This was more than she could realize, until her brother was raised from the dead, and she had seen him alive and loosed from his grave clothes. How many of the little ones of our Lord's brethren are today looking so far away from this present time, to a day that they have never experienced, and know nothing of, only as a hope. How good when one can feel that Jesus is our resurrection, and that he is now present with us. Jesus died for us, was buried for us, and rose again for us. When he died for us, all the body died; when he arose, all the body arose with him, every member of it. They are victors over death and the grave, in his victory. As we journey on in our pilgrimage here, the Holy Spirit reveals this wonderful resurrection in us. We have trouble and sorrow often, finding ourselves down deep in the horrible pit, crying to God for deliverance. The Lord inclines his ear and hears our cry. His everlasting arm is revealed underneath us, and he shows that he has brought us up. At once our hearts are filled with praise, and we find ourselves standing firmly upon the Rock, and singing the song of deliverance.

Now what is this? Is it not a revelation of the resurrection (of Jesus, who is the resurrection) in our hearts? This was what caused the burning in the hearts of two of his followers, as they journeyed from Jerusalem to Emmaus. They were in trouble, and were conversing together of their sadness, and the things that caused it. A man who appeared to them as a stranger, walked with them. He soon entered into their conversation, and soon became chief speaker. And more than this, his wisdom began to so fill them that there was a heart-burning within them. But they knew not the cause. When they had gotten to the end of their journey, as they sat at meat, this man broke bread, and immediately the resurrection was before them. They now see him who was dead, sitting before them. Certain women had told them of this, but now they are witnesses for themselves.

As soon as they knew him, he was gone, but his peace remains, and their conversation changes. He is no longer a dead leader, but their living Lord. His power over death is seen. They realize that it was his presence and conversation with them that caused their hearts to burn within them, as he talked with them by the way. It was when Abraham viewed Isaac released from death that he said, Jehova Jireh. It was in waving the first sheaf that the evidence came to Israel that the harvest should be good, for as was the sheaf, so should all the harvest be. As the Lord accepted that sheaf, so should he pour out all his blessings upon Israel. Thus the resurrection of Christ, the first sheaf is revealed in us; taking away our sins, removing our troubles, showing us that he has borne them all, and that he, our life, is the end of our troubles, even in death. God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has already shined in our hearts, in the light of his power over death, and has given us this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. (2 Cor. 4:6, 7)

This treasure shall not go down in death, for it is the subject of the resurrection which is already revealed in us, and in which we look forward to the hope of the eternal glory of God. Thus this blessed grace of our God is continually revealed in us, and it is that which will continually deliver us from every sorrow and pain, as long as we have an earthly existence. With the Christian there is here two men, the old and the new, the inner and the outer man. These are joined in battle. The old man is carnal, and is changed in the new birth only as he is bound, or made a bond servant. He is just as carnal as he was before. Baptism does not put away his filth, either in the burial, or the resurrection. This every baptized child of God knows, for he is

a sinner still. Both the old and the new man must dwell together in the same house (this earthen vessel) until death shall prey upon this mortal body. Then the old man, this carnality, this troubler of our Christian life, shall be no more forever. But what of this body, this earthen vessel? Water was put in the waterpots, but it was drawn out wine: the best wine. There had never been any like before. All that is of Adam shall go down in death, and we shall not live any more in Adam. But this body shall live again, not in Adam, not like Adam, but in Christ, and like Christ. When this shall be we do not know, and what the image shall be we do not know, but we do receive the earnest of these things, as we go on here, and this is a blessed assurance that we shall receive the whole of the inheritance.

I suppose that all Old School Baptists are established in the fact that the same body that was nailed to the cross, pierced with the spear, and laid in the grave, was that body that arose from the dead, and was seen of the disciples, and received up into glory. This was the first sheaf of the harvest, and as that was, so shall all the harvest be. That body which endured the contradiction of sinners, which suffered for our sins, and made an end of them, is the same body that is heir of eternal glory. While here it was an earthly body, just like the body of any other Jew, for he was a Jew naturally. Now it is a heavenly body, a spiritual body, just as all the saints shall be when in glory. We all die in Adam, but we live in Christ. The same body, but not the same nature. It (the body) is sown in corruption; it (the same body) is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. (1 Cor. 15:42-44) It is not raised and then changed, but it comes forth in the resurrection a changed body. A beautiful difference between that which is, and that which shall be, is seen in the body of our Lord as he appeared among men as a man, and then as he appeared upon the mount of transfiguration before his disciples. Here he showed himself as a man, but there his face did outshine the sun, and his raiment was whiter than the light. So shall all the children of God be in the resurrection. One said, "When I awake in thy likeness then shall I be satisfied."

So will all the family of God be satisfied then, but not one of them will ever be satisfied short of that glory. Thus the end of every sorrow is joy, and the end of every trouble is peace, and the end of the death of the body will be life from the dead, and the end of our mortality will be the glory of our God fully revealed in us. I shall not try to designate the time when we shall be raised up, for God has reserved that knowledge to himself alone, and will reveal it unto us as he does all the blessings of his grace, in the manifestation of it to us in him.

I have written hastily, but hope that lovers of the truth will be able to gather my meaning.

Your brother in this blessed hope.

L. H. Hardy

[It was our privilege to hear the sermon which our brother makes mention, at the Warwick Association last June, and we desire to say here, as we did then to him, that we greatly delighted in it, and, as we trust, were edified by it. It seems to us that the whole matter, as Brother Hardy has presented it and as he presented it in the sermon alluded to, is summed up in the words of our Lord, recorded in John 5:25, 28, 29. Verse twenty-five reads, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." Verses twenty-eight and twenty-nine read, "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth. they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

The words in verse twenty-five, present the first resurrection work, which we commonly

speak of as the new birth, and the Saviour says of it, that it is not only coming, but now is; while in verse twenty-eight, he says simply that the hour is coming, and does not say that it now is. Thus these three verses contain the full subject of our brother's letter and sermon. Verse twenty-five presents the quickening of a dead sinner into life, while verse twenty-nine presents the resurrection of the body. When that shall be, we are not told, as Brother Hardy well says, except that it is future, and shall be at the end of all that is earthly. When the body is raised up, then will the consumation of redemption be experienced by all the saints; and our redemption is not experimentally completed without the resurrection of the bodies of the saints.

We have said these things not to add to what Brother Hardy has said, but to express our approval of the burden of his letter. — Editor (Elder Chick)]

OBITUARIES

CORA HALES POWELL

The subject of this sketch was born April 24, 1891, the daughter of William F. Hales and Lucinda Townsend Hales, of Wicomico, Maryland. She was married to Harold W. Powell October 6, 1909, by Elder Thomas Polson.

She was received into the fellowship of Nassaonga Old School Baptist Church, Wicomico County, Maryland, April 28, 1918.

After an illness of several years, she passed away October 28, 1966, in the Peninsular General Hospital, Salisbury, Maryland. She is survived by two daughters: Mrs. Evelyn Washburn and Dorothy P. Twilley, of Salisbury; and by several grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, who read and commented on the 19th chapter, 8th verse of Revelation, "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

It was my pleasure to be Sister Powell's pastor for almost twenty-five years. She adorned her profession with an orderly walk and a godly conversation, being blessed with faithfulness in the things of the Lord. She had a pleasant disposition, and often composed poetry that beautifully expressed the things of God, and his work in nature. She left evidence that she died in the triumph of that faith which works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world. Our grief should not be as for those who have no hope, for, "If we believe that Jesus bled and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Her spirit is now in the paradise of God, waiting that blessed day when He shall come again without sin unto salvation, and to raise the bodies of all who sleep in him, and fashion them like unto his glorious body.

Our sympathy is extended to the family, and all who feel their loss.

D. V. Spangler

LINDA M. JUDGE

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst Sister Linda Judge, a beloved and highly esteemed member of the church at Kehukee.

She was born in Nash County, N. C., June 3, 1886, and died August 7, 1966, at the age of eighty. She was married to Samuel D. Judge in June, 1905, who passed away October 17, 1960. They were parents of ten children: nine of whom survive.

Sister Judge united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Hopeland the first Sunday in September, 1933. Having moved to near Hobgood, N. C. to live, she moved her membership to the church at Kehukee in July, 1936, and was a loving and faithful member until death.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor Elder S. R. Boykin, and interment was in the cemetery near Scotland Neck.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family, and bow in humble submission to the will of God.

Kate Bradley, Clerk

ROY B. WILLIAMS

God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to remove from our midst our beloved and highly esteemed brother, Roy B. Williams. He was the son of Mrs. Sarah Stocks Williams and the late Walter D. Williams, Sr.

Brother Roy had been in failing health for years, and critically so for the last few months that he lived. He passed from this life December 3, 1965, at the age of sixty-three. He is survived by his wife, the former Annie Mae Hill; and their daughter Mrs. Edna Lee Wingate and her two children. All was done for Brother Roy that loving hands could do.

Brother Williams was a gentle, quiet person: a man of honor and integrity. He was an asset to his family, to his church and to his community. He was a strong believer in salvation by grace — a faith manifested by his walk in life. He united with the church at Hancocks in March, 1949, and was a true and faithful member, always filling his seat unless providentially hindered. He was ordained a deacon of the church in August,

1956, and he faithfully discharged the duties of this office as long as he lived.

We miss this dear brother, but feel that our loss is his eternal gain. We extend our deepest sympathy to the beveaved family, and pray that God's richest blessings will be theirs.

Written by order of conference while in regular session.

Elder A. P. Mewborn, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

BROTHER CLARENCE DELOUS GREEN

Clarence Delous Green was born May 14, 1897, to the late Elder W. N. Green and Mary (Tate) Green, as Moran, Texas; and passed from this life at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, July 24, 1966, making his stay over sixty-nine years. He was united in marriage to Miss Mayme Leona Robinson September 17, 1916, at Lawton, Oklahoma. To this union were born two daughters.

Brother Clarence came asking for a home with Little Flock Primitive Baptist Church, Altus, Okla., in October, 1950, and was received a candidate for baptism; and in May, 1951, he, together with his dear companion, was baptized by Elder E. J. Lambert.

Since I came to be pastor of the church of his membership, I found him to be a very lovely, faithful and devoted member. Surely I, together with the others of the church, have suffered a great loss in Brother Clarence being taken from us. But we surely believe that our loss is his great eternal gain. We shall never forget the last day of his life, ing services were finished, singing, "How how he raised from his seat as soon as preach- sweet the name of Jesus sounds;" and as he came to the last verse, his voice faltered, and tears dimmed his eyes — not knowing it would be only a matter of about seven hours before he would close his eyes in death.

He is survived by his wife; two daughters: Mrs. Delores Alexander and Mrs. Margaret Newell, both of Oklahoma City; one sister, Mrs. Willie Foster, of California; and three grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Services were conducted by the writer, and he was laid to rest in the Memorial Park Cemetery, Oklahoma City, to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Written by request of the family.

Elder C. M. Haygood

JAMES BETHEL ALUMBAUGH

James Bethel Alumbaugh, of Wellington, Mo., was born February 27, 1887, and passed from this life October 27, 1966, at the North Plaza Hotel, at the age of seventy-nine years and eight months. On May 13, 1909, he was married to Eve Dade Adams, of Odessa, Mo., and they made their home near Independence, Mo., until they retired; from then on their home was at Oak Grove, Mo. To this union five children were born: Joy, Mrs. Elliott Smith, Independence, Mo.; Garnett, Mrs. J. C. Jury, Granada Hills, California; Margaret, Mrs. Robert Winkle, Truman Road, near Independence, Mo.; Lois Jean, Mrs. John Ruksnaitis, Northridge, California; and one son, Frank, who with his wife were constant in their help and care during his father's illness, which was internal cancer. He also leaves one brother, Forest Alumbaugh, Houston, Texas.

On June 21, 1921, he united with the Old School Baptist Church called Big Sin-a-bar, near Wellington, Mo., and was baptized by the late Elder W. C. Hall. They soon recognized the qualities of a deacon in him, and he was so ordained; and faithfully filled that office as long as he was able.

His dear wife died in June, 1957, and on November 19, 1961, he married Mrs. Bessie Egan, of Marshall, Mo., who was a faithful and loving companion; and who, with his children and brother, survives.

His funeral was preached by Elder Paul Brown in the Baptist Church at Oak Grove, on October 29, 1966, and he was laid to rest in the cemetery at Odessa, Mo. We can truly say, "Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord; Yea, sayeth the Spirit, that they may rest from their labor, and their works do follow them." Written by request.

Mrs. J. W. Taylor

BROTHER ROBERT GEORGE

Brother George was born in 1888, and died September 27, 1966. He joined Springfield Church September 11, 1966. He attended Church regularly for a number of years, which causes us to feel He had a hope in Christ for some time before joining the Church. He was a firm believer in salvation by Grace.

We, the Church at Springfield, bow in humble submission to the Lord, who doeth all things well.

Brother George is survived by one sister, Mrs. Tiny Pulliam, Culpeper, Virginia. His funeral was held at Springfield Church by his Pastor Elder O. K. Tench and Mr. Adams. His body was carried to Culpepper for burial to await the second coming of our Lord.

Written by L. R. Willis, by order of the Church.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. R. Willis, Clerk

HARVEY FOREST CATE

Harvey Forest Cate was born near Moravia, Iowa, August 26, 1889, and departed this world July 4, 1966, at Wichita, Kansas. He was a school teacher in the Mullinville, Kansas, area for over thirty years; and principal for the past several years. He was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church in Kingman, Kansas, and served as deacon for many years.

He is survived by his widow, Mercedes; two daughters: Mrs. Margaret Coder, Lakin, Kansas; and Mrs. Marketa Price, Wichita, Kansas; one son, James, of Kansas City, Missouri; and ten grandchildhren. Also surviving are a sister, Mrs. Lola Fisher, Blakesburg, Iowa; and two brothers; S. R., of Winfield, Kansas, and W. E. Cate, Whittier, California.

Brother Cate, by the grace of God, was a believer of true doctrine, and frowned heavily on any part of praise of man by man. So we desire to give God the glory for the presence of this dear brother with us for a little while. The little church at Kingman, feels that God blessed us by sending Brother Cate our way, that we could worship in truth, and in communion one with another in complete harmony. He was one of our "leaning posts." He never grew tired of talking on the Scriptures, and praising God, in whom was all his trust; but he tired quickly of unsound doctrine, and made it known in a sure, but kind manner. God gave him a kind and forbearing nature.

Two services were conducted by the writer: one in the chapel in Wichita, for his friends and brethren; and one in Mullinville, Kansas, for his friends and former neighbors in that vicinity. He was laid to rest in the cemetery in Mullinville, to await the glorious resurrection.

May God bless the sad ones left behind, with the same spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus that he bestowed upon Brother Cate, and all sound believers in the faith.

Elder W. A. Winfrey

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Sister Louvenia Wynn, the daughter of the late John Henry Dawson Peel, and Nellie Clark Peel, was born April 5, 1883, and departed this life August 3, 1966. She was married to Henry Wynn, who died in 1960.

Sister Wynn united with the church at Bear Grass Saturday before the third Sunday in December 1952, and was baptized on Sunday by her pastor, Elder A. B. Ayers. She was a faithful and devoted member, very humble in spirit, strong in faith, and a believer in salvation by the Grace of God.

While we mourn her passing, we realize there is a time to be born, and a time to die. "The Lord giveth, the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

"He that liveth, and believeth in me though he be dead, he shall live again. There is therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh who walk after the spirit." "As many as are led by the Spirit are the sons of God." We have evidence this dear Sister was taught and led by the Spirit of God.

Sister Wynn leaves to mourn her passing, two daughters, Mrs. Stephen Ketchum and Mrs. Howard Newberry, of Norfolk, Va.; one sister, Mrs. Beaulah Mobley, of Williamston, N. C.; and one brother, Henry Peel, of Stokes, N. C.

Her funeral was conducted in the Primitive Baptist Church at Bear Grass, by her pastor, Elder E. C. Harrison, and Elder W. E. Grimes. Interment was in Martin Memorial Gardens on Highway #64.

Done by order of conference Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in August 1966.

Beulah Mobley,
E. C. Harrison,
Committee

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write of our dear brother, Charlie B. Stancil. It was God's will to remove him from this world September 13, 1966; making his stay here seventy-four years.

Brother Stancil came to Tarboro Church December 6, 1952, by letter, and was received in full fellowship. He was a faithful deacon also, and we felt free to ask him for advice at any time. He was faithful in attending until afflictions kept him away. He was a full believer in Salvation by Grace, and loved to talk about the blessings God had bestowed upon him.

THEREFORE, WE RESOLVE, First, that four copies of this Resolution be made: one for the church record, one for the family, and one be published in the *Landmark* and the *Signs of the Times*. Second, that we, the church at Tarboro, extend our sympathy to the family. We feel our loss is his eternal gain.

This done by order of Confeernce at our November, 1966, meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 135 DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1967 NO. 3

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

O when the darkness fills the soul,
Bring all my doubts in thy control;
And when the storm is raging wild,
O hear, O hear thy pleading child.

I need thy presence every hour,
Be thou my strength and living power;
For thee I live, for thee I die,
O hear, O hear my mournful cry.

Keep me, dear Lord, while life shall last,
And grant thy grace as in the past,
That I may live in thy blest ways,
And give thee all the glorious praise.

I am so weak, so prone to stray,
Lead me thru all the trying day;
And in the darkness of the night
Be thou my never failing light.

So shall thy praise we'll ever sing,
And all the glory to thee bring,
For thou dost guide us every hour:
Leave not, but be our living power.

Elder D. L. Topping — 1944

ENJOYS THE SIGNS A BROTHER SENDS THEM

Doctor's Nursing Center,
9009 White Rock Trail,
Dallas, Texas

Dear Editors of the Signs:

We want to express our thanks through the **Signs** to a good friend of ours, Brother Howell, of Tuscaloosa, Alabama, our home town, for sending us the **Signs of the Times.** Our health got bad and we came to our son's in Dallas. We do not get to hear any Primitive Baptist preaching now. I joined Zion Church, Gordo, Alabama, in July, 1923.

We were on a vacation last September and attended church in Alabama, when one joined at Bethlehem Church. It was so wonderful to be where we could hear some good Primitive Baptist preaching, and good singing, and to see so many of the good Old Baptist brethren. We know Elder Griffin, and have heard him preach many times, and enjoyed it.

We are enjoying the **Signs of the Times** Brother Howell sends us. We used to read his when we lived in the same town with him. There is nothing we enjoy more than to meet the Old Baptist folks.

When all is well with you, pray for a lonely brother and sister in Christian fellowship, we hope.

Mr. and Mrs. L. C. Hill

HAS DECLARED SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD FIFTY-THREE YEARS

I see it is time for me to renew for another year, so am enclosing check for $3.00.

I have been a reader of the **Signs** for some forty years. One reason I like the **Signs** is that it agrees with the doctrine of salvation by grace the way I have been made to see it. It once seemed silly to me for one to say that all things were forordained of God. I see that some are now in just the same shape I was. I have to say that God leads his children by a way they know not. It wasn't my fault that I couldn't see the things I see now: those things were kept back until the proper time, or the appointed time.

I see that the church, or the elect, or the chosen generation, was given to or in Christ before the foundation of the world. That being the case, it is the Father's will that things are just the way they are now, and he is performing all his will. Some say to me, you must be an old absoluter. I myself like the word. As for me and my house, we believe only in one God. He says that he has conquered death, hell, and the grave; and has all power in heaven and in earth. The powers that be are ordained of God. The reason so many of the children don't see God in his strength, is that God has not manifested it to them. I say that the child that doesn't believe in absolute predestination, can't help it. That was my experience: it has to be shown him from the Lord. He is the storehouse of wisdom, and I am sure that God knows just what is best for his children. Remember this church belongs to Christ — to him and him alone; he bought it, and has a clear title to it.

I spoke concerning the **Signs,** I have found the Signs giving God all the praise; only a few times have I seen some weakness in some writers. I hope I won't be looked upon as a crank: I only try to be just what I am. Paul said that by the grace of God I am what I am. I trust that I am honest. I have been fought all my life over the doctrine of salvation by grace, and that God is soverign over everything there is on earth and in heaven. He made all things for his own glory.

I have been trying to declare this sovereign God for about fifty-three years. I like to stand on the wall when I am blessed, and tell Israel that her warfare is accomplished, and it is a finished work. I say if there hasn't been a work wrought in man, more than he received from his natural birth, he is still in the world, and has no experience of a spiritual birth. We can only know and judge by their fruits, for by their fruits they are known.

Please overlook my weakness, for I am unlearned, but I feel God has shaped me just as he wanted me to be. I am on my journey: I am going back to where I came from, but the hope that God gives all his elect, is an anchor to their souls, and is a manifestation to them that they were his children before the world was. They are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible which lives and abides forever. I sometimes say that I know my Redeemer liveth. Christ said that he would pray the Father, and He would send us another Comforter who would guide us in the way of all truth, and testify of him. So God is our keeper. I know I will die naturally, but Christ has conquered death, hell, and the grave, and we shall be comformed to his image, and the just shall go to the place prepared for them before the word was; but the wicked shall be cast into outer darkness, to everlasting punishment, as the Bible says.

May God bless all of his elect; and the good writers and editors, may God bless you to keep up the good work. May you have a prosperous New Year.

Your unworthy brother, in hope,
C. S. Parsons
Box 253,
Wheelersburg, Ohio

IS JESUS CHRIST THE SAME YESTERDAY, AND TODAY, AND FOREVER AND EVER?

Is Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever? As an inquirer to whom shall I go? Does intelligence have the answer?

When inquiry is made of the learned by the unlearned, and the answer (if any) does not harmonize Jesus Christ today with Jesus Christ yesterday, of what effectiveness will Jesus Christ forever and ever be?

Obviously, to the inquirer there are isms and schisms in the body, or there would not be so many groups saying, "Lo here, or Lo there," (forbidden by Jesus Christ yesterday.)

Does it not behoove us to analyze the

Jesus Christ yesterday, that we might use the essence of that analysis as a light to our feet, that we might see clearly how to walk in His trodden path?

Yesterday indicates the past — today indicates the present — tomorrow (forever and ever) the future: thus we know that Jesus Christ came yesterday, and established his church here on earth. Is it recorded anywhere that he required any help to maintain order, or discipline his disciples? Did he not reprove John for forbidding one to cast out devils in His name? Did he not reprove his disciples James and John for wanting to call down fire from heaven and consume those that received Him not in Samaria, where he had sent messengers to make ready when he was going to Jerusalem? Did he not reprove Peter (after Judas had betrayed Him) when Peter inquired, "Lord, what shall this man do?" His words were, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee: follow thou me." Did he not reprove Peter again when Peter drew his sword and cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest;

Seeing the displeasure of "the other ten" with the sons of Zebedee, when he was asked that one sit on His right hand and the other on His left, did he not call them over to Him and, speaking to them as a group, forbade the exercise of lordship and authority,

Did he not specifically single out the individual, when He said, "Thou art Peter," and gave him specific instructions in discipline? Did he at any time or place request help of the people in case of discipline?

There was an occasion where He left them to themselves, and went down into the ship, and went to sleep; and disaster (trouble) struck, and the people could do nothing about it — they were totally and wholly dependent on Him. Did they not wake him, and say, "Lord save or we perish"? Are not his words, "Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?" as significant today as they were yesterday? If not, what makes the difference? If not, has He, or we, changed?

Do we not negate the Jesus Christ yesterday, when we attach the traditions and customs of men to Jesus Christ today? Can we avoid the above questions as being foolish and unlearned, because intelligence does not have the answer?

Please answer in the next issue of the "Signs of the Times".

A Concerned Inquirer

(see Editorial reply)

ONE IS NO STRONGER THAN THE OTHER

209 Taylor Road,
Collinsville, Va. 24078

Dear Elder Spangler:

Since reading your Circular Letter of the Salisbury Association, my mind is carried back to some scriptures on predestination and election: as you say one is no stronger than the other, including the foreknowledge of God.

In Hebrews 8:10-12, we read, "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds and write them in their hearts: and I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people; and they shall not teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest: for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." This to me is the predestination of God.

In John 6:37, we read, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." This is the doctrine of election which is a link in the chain. In Isaiah 42:8, we read, "I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory I will not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." And in his 46th chapter, 9th verse, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there

is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." This is absolute predestination.

In I Peter 1:2, we read, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: grace unto you, and peace be multiplied." This is another link in the chain. God speaks to his children through his apostles, prophets, his ministers, and through his Spirit. I have heard it preached over the radio that the doctrine of predestination is a doctrine of the Devil; which is the same as saying that God and his Son, the apostles, prophets and ministering servants are of the Devil — which would mean God is a devil.

But we read differently from this. In John 8:44, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." And we also read in Matthew 7:22, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

As Elder Wood said in his editorial, "We are delighted to be in the company of those who know and love the truth." Old School or Primitive Baptists, and all who have been taught of God, are convicted of sin, and see and feel their vileness and nothingness; and being brought to the end of their strength, are made to cry to God for mercy — not for justice. And hearing him speak, Thy sins are forgiven thee, they rejoice in God their Saviour, and give him all honor, glory and praise for his great love and mercy to sinners.

Those who deny the doctrine of truth, are not disciples of Christ, and cannot baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. They are not in communion with His disciples, and are not eating his flesh and drinking his blood.

Lord be merciful to thy people everywhere, and deliver them from evil for thy name's sake.

Yours in Him,
Mattie Underwood

STILL ABLE TO ATTEND HIS MEETINGS

46 Cedar Street,
Kingston, N. Y. 12401

Dear Brother and Sister Merigold:

It was very kind and thoughtful of you dear ones to write this poor one such a nice letter. Though received a month ago, I have just re-read it. It made my heart to rejoice to learn that you received some crumbs or enjoyment from my Circular Letter. It is one of my greatest joys to learn that some of my labors in the Gospel have fed or given some comfort and courage to the brethren and friends.

I see so little in myself that I need my hands to be lifted up, and my knees confirmed much of the time. I have a church called the Middleburg Church of which I am pastor, and we often hold meetings on fifth Sundays at Deacon Bellinger's home, he being the only member. It is seventy-six miles from here. We usually have about eight to attend. I had such a rejoicing season the fifth Sunday in July, when two ladies came forward and asked for a name with the church. They were received, and were baptized during the August meeting of the Olive and Hurley Church in Temple's Pond a short distance from the church. It was the first time that two have come at the same time since I have been a pastor.

So far, at my age of eighty-three last May, God has given me strength to at-

tend my appointments . . . I gave up driving a year ago last February, as I have poor eyesight, and have to use flashlight to read hymns and texts at church. I go by bus 90 miles one way to the New York meetings on 1st and 3rd Sundays; and for the Middleburg meeting, I go by bus to Albany, where Brother Bellinger meets me; and Sister DuBois takes me to Shokan and to Warwick for those meetings.

. . . You are greatly blessed to have each other for company. I lived with my first companion not quite thirty years, and with my second a little over thirty years. I have some very lonely hours, so you may know that it is a good lift when I get letters from my dear brethren. I have very sweet memories of being entertained in your Christian and sweet fellowship home. God has blessed me more than words can convey: both of my dear companions were members of the Old School Baptist Church. I know God had a perfect right to take them home, but no one knows how hard it is to give them up, until it comes home to us; but I have been made to say as Job did, "The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

The word of God tells that in days gone by, "Those that feared the Lord spoke often one to another: and the Lord harkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name; and they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." (Malachi 3:16, 17) We must notice that it was those that feared the Lord who are mentioned here. We doubt if there is any other people that speak rightly to one another of the Lord, except those that fear him; and we doubt if there is any people who think rightly upon the name of the Lord, except those that fear him, for we are told that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and that the fear of the Lord is to hate evil. We are also told that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. And we are told not to fear what man can do unto us, but to fear him who can cast both soul and body into Hell. Do we not feel fearful that the Lord will be displeased with us who desire to be followers of Christ, but feel we come so far short if it? We know we cannot live as Christ-like as we desire, and it causes us to feel as one of old, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death." But the Lord told this one that his grace was sufficient for him.

Dear ones, this is what we have for our comfort: Christ's imputed righteousness; so that Paul could say, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect." Yet our concern is that we cannot live as godly as we desire; we fear that our life and walk will not be pleasing in His sight; fear that we cannot love him enough; fear that we cannot fully trust him as we should, nor pray, think or speak as we should as being followers of Christ. Many times like Peter, we feel we are sinking, and cannot walk alone; and we cry, "Lord, save or I perish." And the Lord stretches forth his hand of love and mercy, and holds us up. And though we are lame and halt with weakness and unworthiness, yet in Jesus the lame walk; and sing, Praise God from whom all blessings flow. "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear."

Again, I enjoyed your letter, and am very glad to hear from you at any time. Much love.

A. J. Slauson

HIS PEOPLE KNOW SOME WONDERFUL THINGS

Patrick Springs, Virginia

Dear Brother Spangler:

I would like to write some of my thoughts on two or three verses of the Sermon on the Mount. I get down as low as any one can, and the Devil tries to make me an unbeliever, as if there were

no God.

"And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." I get much comfort from this scripture. I feel so poor within myself that I know that if the Lord leaves me for a moment, I go astray: I must look to the Lord for all my help.

"Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." I hope this is applied to me, for much of my time is spent mourning, even groans which cannot be uttered, but sometimes I feel the Lord is talking to me.

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." Dear child of God, did you ever feel so humble that you felt a dumb brute better than you? "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Surely this is to me. I hunger for the gospel, and want to know more about the one who died for me. The gospel is good news from a far country, a country to which I have longed to go: the world has no charms for me, except a few moments at a time.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." But for mercy I would have been gone long ago. I once saw myself so vile — my sins came up before me as a mountain. I had heard this expression before, but did not know its meaning. I went to read the ten commandments; but they only condemned me. I saw death staring me in the face, and I was lost and ruined. O, what agony of soul! I felt forsaken — no friends on earth or in heaven. I fell on my face to die, bidding all farewell. I truly thought I was dying, and I believe I did: to the world. I lost all my strength, and I could not move as much as one finger to help myself. But, bless the Lord, he gave me strength to ask for mercy. I saw that justice could not help, for I rightly deserved Hell: I had broken His holy law.

Then I heard the voice of my Saviour, though some might say I was beyond hope. In John 10:4 we read, "And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice." The voice said to me, "Arise and take your Bible, for you shall find relief today." I was given my strength, and I arose and took my Bible and let it open: my eyes fell on where Daniel had been thrown into the den of lions; and how the Lord kept him safe. Then the same voice said, "If I can go through the den of lions with Daniel, surely I can help you in your little troubles." Then I felt a great springing up in my soul, such as I had never felt before. I went about praising God for the first time in my life. I had always given honor to man for living a good life; and at one time I thought I was a mite better than most folks. No wonder the prophet Jeremiah said that the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. A change like this, to love the things you once hated, makes you know you have a Spirit you once did not have.

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Is not this a great comfort to Primitive Baptists? I shall never foget that once one of another denomination moved next door, and she noticed I did not send my children to Sunday School, and asked me, Why? I told her I was a Primitive Baptist. She threw up her hands, and said that can't be true: you are too good a woman; and said they were the meanest people in the world. I truly hope that she has learned the truth. I can only say, "Lord forgive them for they know not what they do."

"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake." Is it not for the sake of Jesus that we forsake our friends to follow him, because he commanded it so? "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." The church has been persecuted all down through time, and will be until the end of time.

Now let us see a little of what we

know while we journey in this life. Paul said, "For I know whom I have believed." "We know in part, and understand in part." We read, "We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." Do we not love the brethren? When we see one of the little ones coming with tears streaming down his face, telling what good things the Lord has done for them, do we not know we love them in the Spirit? In I John 5:13, we read, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God: that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true. This is the true God, and eternal life." (verses 19 and 20) Did not Job say, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eye shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me." Job knew some wonderful things in his day, and God said that he changes not. And truly his people know some wonderful things while they journey in this life.

I asked the Lord one time to show me the true church in a dream. Afterwards I dreamed of seeing all the people in the world together, and a large arm and hand came into view. It took people and put them into a ring, and called them Primitive Baptists. I was put in this ring; and when the work was finished, we all looked toward heaven, and saw Jesus coming in the clouds, and felt a power drawing us up in the air. When we were half way to heaven I awoke. I believe my prayer was answered.

From one who is earnestly looking for the return of Jesus.

Minnie Foley

EXPERIENCE

144 Oaklawn Street,
Malvern, Arkansas 72104

"But if you suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." (I Peter 3:1b,15)

I have been requested, and often impressed, to try to write of the times and ways of the Lord, I hope, has dealt with me from time to time, beginning when I was about eight years old. At that age something took place with me then that shows me I didn't know, or hadn't learned what it was to tell a story, or slip something and lie about it. Further, I remember soon after that age I did learn what it was to fib and even steal things that my mother forbid me to have: and she whipped me very hard for it; but her punishment didn't stop me, or put any fear in me of the result of my meaness. But something else got after me that did.

I got to where when I lay down at night and closed my eyes to sleep, I would see great mountains of pure gold it seemed, coming out of the heavens and rolling right over my bed to crush my life out of me. That put some kind of fear in me; and later for this fear I got to be called a pretty good, truthful boy. Then later at about sixteen years of age, I took up the habit of swearing, using the Lord's name in vain. My mother heard me, and thrashed me for it several times; but, as before, her punishment did not stop me. But again some other power got after me.

I got to where everytime I cursed, I would be made to feel I was about to be smitten off the face of the earth — and several times I was made to look around to see if there wasn't someone there to do just that. I felt that it was the Lord, and that he was able to do it, and that I certainly deserved it. About one year later I had the only dream I

have to tell. I dreamed I was in the woods close to a large oak tree about ten o'clock in the morning, bright and sunny; but there was another light brighter than the sunlight that shined around me.

This dream left a burden or dread on my mind that never entirely left me for ten years. Lots took place with me that I felt if the Lord had dealt justly with me, He would have, as I said before, smitten me and cast me off. But only for the reason of his purposed mercy for me, I feel I was allowed to go on. In 1909 that burden on my mind, with other circumstances beyond my control, caused me to move to a place I had vowed I would never move to — and close to an Old Baptist Church. I was then twenty-six years old.

In May that spring I was plowing, and all at once it seemed every sin I had ever committed, was presented before my eyes. Though it was a bright sunny morning everything went dark before me; and I was made to feel that I would surely be taken out of the world, and to Hell at that. I could plow no longer: I took my horse out and left work that needed doing, and went home and to bed. It seemed I must die, and go to a devil's hell. I was in the bed three days and nights without food or sleep, until the last eighteen hours I slept; and during that time all of the burden of sin and guilt was taken away. I awoke ready to eat and go to work, I was so happy: except I wanted to join the church so greatly I didn't feel I could wait until meeting day in June came, and felt sure I would offer my case to the church; but just couldn't or didn't. July meeting came and the burden to join was so heavy I just knew I couldn't put it off any longer; but couldn't or didn't again. Before meeting in August the burden to join the church left me, and I thanked the Lord, for I was not fit to belong to the good old church anyway. At that meeting on Saturday I had no impression to join; but when the opportunity was offered, I went, not realizing what I was doing. One thing I told the church was, that when I wanted to join, I couldn't; and when I didn't want to, I couldn't help it.

If I have any experience, this is it: and above all, the fact that the Lord has let me, a sinful creature like I am live to be eighty-three years old, is evidence that He has been, and is still being merciful to me: and I feel to hope for continued mercy.

J. B. Wetherington

Rt. 7, Box 200,
Carthage, Miss. 39051

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Dear friends, I must tell you that I enjoy the **Signs** every month more than words can express. I hope and trust that you will be blessed of the Lord to keep the good news coming my way.

Many of the good writings are worth more than the price of the paper: some are so uplifting. I trust this will be another year filled with such good reading as has been in the years gone by.

I am renewing my subscription for another year.

Your truly,
Mrs. Lillian Faulkner

EXPRESSION OF THANKS

Mrs. Olive Hall, daughter of Elder George L. Weaver, desires that we express through the *Signs of the Times*, their deep appreciation of the many cards and letters, etc. which the brethren and friends sent on the occassion of Elder Weaver's 94th birthday. Mrs. Hall read them to her father, and he appreciated them more than many can know. He is now getting weaker day by day, and sleeps much of the time. — J. D. W.

(Since the above was written Elder Weaver finished his course in this world. An obituary will appear shortly.)

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EDITORIAL

REPLY TO 'A CONCERNED INQUIRER'

If we understand the request of our "Inquirer", whose letter appears elsewhere in this issue under the heading, "Is Jesus Christ the Same Yesterday, and Today, and Forever and Ever?" he is concerned as to whether Jesus, that is his doctrine, is subject to change; or whether all that he and his disciples taught, remain the truth in all ages, and must be maintained in order to identify the church of God.

Or, to put it another way, he is asking whether the teaching of Jesus is rightly subject to the changes or modifications which are taught when "intelligence" gives the answers. His inquiry evidences a stirring up, and a "good work" is at least begun in him, and he is earnestly seeking the answers.

As to whether Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever, our reply can only be, Yes: emphatically, Yes. And our reason is, that nothing, including men, is able to change the eternal purposes of God. The preaching of His doctrine, since it is what he has revealed of himself and his decrees, must be the same in all time, where Truth is maintained. When anything else is preached in his name, it is a fabrication, and not truth. Jesus in all he did and taught, was fulfilling this purpose. So, should other things be attributed to him which are contrary to his doctrine, though his name be used, it is not preaching his gospel.

When Jesus gave them the "keys" of the kingdom, they were to "unlock" the things of the kingdom which they had received — not to formulate new things, and teach them. The Apostles were taught the things they preached in their calling. The things they preached, and the things Jesus preached were all of the same piece. Note that just before he had finished his work here, Jesus, in announcing that he would send the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, was specific in saying, "He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All the things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, he shall take of mine, and shew it unto you." (John 16:14, 15) This Spirit of Truth, which without question is God himself, has not changed, and is yet showing the things of Jesus to all the elect of God, until Jesus comes again.

We are correct, therefore, in saying that any doctrines or practices which men may maintain in the name of Jesus, that are contrary to the plain import of His teachings, are not things which the Spirit of Truth shows unto them; but those who hold such contrary doctrines must rightly be considered to be of the same company with those who, "Give heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth."

No, Inquirer, your questions are not foolish or unlearned; but, rather, they show at least the beginning of wisdom: for, "The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom:" This fear, in the sense in which it is used here, is manifested by an inquiring mind; for other wise you would never have noticed the difference.

Our Inquirer has found that the answers of the "learned" do not harmonize the Jesus Christ of today with Jesus Christ of yesterday; that is, the Jesus Christ they preach today. Here he puts his finger on a great imposture: he takes the finger of John and points it straight — "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Many false prophets are found in sheep's clothing, being of those who, ". . . turn the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and deny the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ;" that is, deny his doctrine. For this reason Jude exhorted, " . . . that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

"Intelligence" of which our Inquirer speaks, limited as it is to the "spirit of man", is but another name for rationlism, or philosophy: it deals with things within the realm of natural things. As such, it cannot rightfully concern itself with things beyond nature: for **all other things are matters of revelation.** In meddling with those things beyond their sphere, Intelligence always comes up with natural answers to "spiritual things", which are not true; and therfore not accepted by the church.

Using reason as their guide, (for they had nothing else,) many did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah, when he was here on earth. Using their reasoning, great multitudes are unable to present Jesus in the same light as he was presented "yesterday". The Jesus of "yesterday" is known only in the same revelation which was given Peter and the brethren. He and his doctrine are known only in this manner — with an ear given to hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

One will not find the Jesus Christ which is on the lips of most "christians" today, to harmonize in doctrine with the Jesus Christ who walked the country about Jerusalem, speaking as never man spoke. This Jesus has not changed; nor is his doctrine changed. The changes which are apparent, are of men, and are the result of the best that men can produce in doctrine acceptable to themselves. And, having done so, are drowned in heresies so far removed, that the name Christian is a misnomer.

The way of salvation cannot change: it was ordained of God. But men have sought out many inventions. Jesus is the very embodiment of truth; and truth has the attribute of being unchangeable under any and all circumstances. But what is accepted as truth today (which men ascribe to Jesus) outrivals a chameleon in changing colors to suit particular notions. Like the Pharisees of old, more reverence is attached to traditions and customs, than to the things of God.

No one can read the things Jesus taught as recorded in the Bible, with any degree of attention, and compare them with the teachings of various churches today, and pronounce them the same. The understanding of what they think the gospel ought to be, is different from the gospel of Jesus. We think it is evident that even one change in doctrine by anyone claiming to be a follower of Jesus, is sufficient to discredit him as being His follower. Such a change would indicate his belief that

Jesus was wrong; and other changes necessarily follow.

There are many points of difference in the two. The advocates of the Jesus of today are mostly of the camp of Arminius, advocates of free-willism; while others have been described as of Calvin's camp, or predestinarians. These, of course, are names in history, and do not give the real significance of the differences.

Briefly, these differences revolve around the following:

Who are the ones Jesus saved by his death? Were they the whole of mankind with a proposition offered for their salvation? Or were they a chosen people out of mankind, with a sure salvation provided?

Were they a people who had a choice of accepting a proffered salvation (free-will)? Or a people dead in sins, and unable to move spiritually until moved upon by the powerful Spirit of God?

To many these differences seem insignificant. But what was the faith once delivered unto the saints? What was it that Jesus Christ "of yesterday" preached?

Our Inquirer has indicated that he has not found the answers to his satisfaction, as he has inquired of the "learned". Nor will he find the answers except with those who have been experimentally brought out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God: those whose strength is not in themselves, but in their Lord; whose faith is that fruit of the Spirit of which they are born, which makes them jealous of the doctrine of God their Saviour.

There is one more question that is indicated in the inquiry, which we will answer by saying that everything in the doctrine of Jesus Christ that is necessary for the full worshiping of God by the church (or individuals), is laid out in the New Testament of Jesus Christ. This includes all teaching pertaining to any subject relative to church or individual: admonition, discipline, etc. So that any other thing picked up by anyone along the way, is not to be tolerated in the church. The Spirit which caused these things to be recorded and preserved, is the same which reveals them in the hearts of the Lord's people, and makes them precious to them.

We believe that our inquirer will find the whole answer when those things, which are perhaps now but faintly arising in his experience, are brought to his full view; and it is proved to him that, "He which has begun a good work in him will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

Yes, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

ISAIAH 65:9, 10

"And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there. And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place to lie down in, for my people that have sought me."

It has been requested that we write on the above Scripture, especially upon the valley of Achor, which is also mentioned by the prophet Hosea. It is always well to remember that much of the Old Testament is made up of types and shadows of better things to come; that is, of New Testament realities; in fact, the whole of the seed of Israel was a type of spiritual Israel, which is spoken of as the seed of the Lord. Not only are they the seed of the Lord, but they are also the seed of Jacob. This seed was to be blessed far above anything that literal Israel enjoyed. They were to serve the Lord with one consent, and the prophet in this chapter declares that they shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble, and before they call God will answer, and while they are yet speaking he will hear. Such a wonderful and peculiar people none could bring forth out of Jacob but God himself, for Jacob him-

self is spoken of as a worm and but small. But God speaks and says, "I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob," and to accomplish this God must be manifest in the flesh, "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but took on him the seed of Abraham." It behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, and he must be made under the law to bring forth his children, or seed, condemned by the law. The Lord of hosts knew exactly what this meant, that the demands of justice must be fully met, that he must be made sin who knew no sin, and that he must be spit upon and crowned with thorns, and suffer shameful crucifixion to bring them forth. This seed of the blessed of the Lord could not be brought forth unless Jesus, the grain of wheat, fall unto the ground and die. Jesus died, was buried and rose again. He arose as conqueror over death, and hell and the grave. The prophet Isaiah in another place declares, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." Thus this seed is brought forth out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains. The Jews said, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours." Jesus the Son of God, who is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, inherits by the will of his Father, the mountains of God. These mountains are where spiritual Israel dwells securely, and from whence much help and comfort comes. It was on a mountain that the ark rested. "But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains." The covenant of grace, God's purpose in that covenant, his foreknowledge, predestisation, election and the final preseverance of his chosen, determine the security of these "delectable mountains" from whence the saints obtain help and comfort and view their incorruptible inheritance. Literal Israel dwelt much in the hills and mountains, in fact Jerusalem was built upon and surrounded by mountains, and before the mountains of spiritual Israel were manifest literal Israel must be torn up; as Job says, "He overturneth the mountains by the roots." These roots were chiefly the Levitical priesthood which must be before ever the High Priest of our profession, Jesus the true inheritor, is manifest.

"And mine elect shall inherit it." This elect is the election of grace who inherits it through the head Christ Jesus. The promise was given to Abraham that in him and in his seed, meaning Christ, should all the families of the earth be blessed. "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed."

"And my servants shall dwell there." The prophets were servants of the Most High, so also were the apostles. It was to the apostles that Jesus said, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitation." They were to dwell and reign in the gospel church, sitting on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

"And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks." The meaning of the word "Sharon" is "a plain." It was where cattle found abundance of pasture, and where the royal herds of David grazed and the lovely rose of Sharon was found. Here also the Lord showed marked signs of his displeasure by taking away its fertility, and Sharon became like a wilderness. The district which was called Sharon is not exactly known today, but as the desolation of Sharon was a marked disfavor from the Lord to Israel of old, so Sharon becoming a fold of flocks, is a marked favor of God unto his children. Literal Sharon, like literal Israel, has disappeared; in fact, had been lost from sight and was not known to the Jews in the time of Christ, but he came, the true "Rose of Sharon," to gather the flocks into one fold, for he said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." Thus Jesus gathers the flocks, feeds them and folds

them. So Sharon again becomes a place where pasture is in abundance and where the flocks feed and fold.

"And the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in." As it was upon this portion we were particularly requested to write we shall first consider what the valley of the Achor signifies. Achan, the son of Carmi, took of the spoil of Jericho which was accursed, and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and when she went out against the men of Ai she fled before the men of Ai and thirty-six men of Israel were slain. Wherefore the hearts of the people became as water, and Joshua rent his clothes. Achan had taken a wedge of gold, two hundred shekels of silver and a Babylonish garment, and hid them in the earth in the midst of his tent. Achan was taken, his sons and his daughters, and all he possessed to the valley of Achor and Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones, and they raised over them a heap of stones unto this day. The above is the literal account of Achan and the valley of Achor, and while the valley of Achor with its heap of stones has vanished as completely as Sharon, yet it also has its anti-type in the gospel dispensation.

There are also those of whom Achan and his brood are a type, who, professing to be in the Spirit and at war with the flesh, which flesh is under the curse, having hidden in the earth in the midst of their tents, which signifies their hearts, the wedge of gold, the silver and the Babylonish garment. As a consequence the church of God is troubled, their hearts are melted and become as water; that is, they are not strong in the faith, they flee before their enemies and their elders rend their clothes, they go in mourning and lie in the dust of self-abasement. It is impossible for Israel to proceed while Achan is at large. Israel is troubled, Achan is at ease, but judgment must begin at the house of the Lord, and if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?

Let us here notice the course taken by Joshua and the elders of Israel. They did not begin to suspect this or that one, rather they felt in some way that the Lord was wroth with them, therefore they fell with their face towards the earth before the ark of the Lord, the elders putting dust upon their heads. It was unto the Lord they looked, for only in his judgments is there life. It seemed as though he had forsaken his people, or that they were cut off from his favor. Only in the valley of Achor was there a door of hope. Today he that loves silver or gold will beget his kind, and he whose eyes covet the Babylonish garment will ever have those around him who will love the garments of Babylon. The valley of Achor, which means "trouble," is the place where all such are stoned.

But we will come more closely to what the gold, silver and garments signify. Jericho with all its substance was cursed. The Israelites had surrounded it, Achan among them, they had seen its walls fall at the blast of the trumpet, and poor Rahab, with all that she had in the house, saved. Yet Achan took of the accursed thing. The children of God have seen the building of hay, wood and stubble destroyed; yea, all their good works, on which they have felt their house secure, overthrown, and they saved by the grace of God. They have seen this, yet some would turn to the weak and beggarly elements. They have begun in the Spirit, have shouted the shout of victory at the voice of their heavenly Joshua, yet they have taken the wedge of gold and two hundred shekels of silver, which represents "duty faith," with its false security, and a Babylonish garment, which signifies the righteousness of the flesh.

From the commencement of the gospel dispensation the church has had times of trouble, when in that very trouble, as in a valley, she has stood and purged herself of Achan and his brood. Even before the destruction of literal Jerusalem, when the sentence of God, as it were, hung over that wicked

generation, the beloved James wrote, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire." This judgment and fire came, and Jerusalem then became a heap and Achan and all his brood perished there. This was a door of hope to the troubled brethren, they were freed from the accursed thing and from those who would draw them under the frown of God. The Judaising Achans would have the Gentiles practice circumcision, and some others followed their own pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth was evil spoken of. While they promised liberty they themselves were the servants of corruption, for of whom a man is overcome, of the same he is brought into bondage. Paul wrote to the Galatians, "Ye did run well; who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. . . . I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be. . . . I would they were even cut off which trouble you."

Truly it is an awful thing to be a troubler of Israel. Simon Magus believed and was baptized, yet hid the gold and silver in his heart and desired to buy the power and gift of the Holy Ghost. But Peter said, "Thy money perish with thee. . . . Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God." They that would be under the law must as a consequence be under its curse. The law and its enforcement was a ministration of death, and whenever a person seeks to be justified by works he is fallen from grace. The true Israelites are enabled by God's Spirit to take these troublers of Israel and stone them with the word of God, for the power of the Spirit from the mouth of his saints, like a rock, is as solid as God himself; and it is written, "His place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks." They cast the stones of the law against those who are under its curse. It is death to be under such condemnation, and the law and all its ordinances are heaped upon all such. For he that offendeth in one point is guilty in all.

Then Israel sings as in the days of her youth, and the herd, which represents a body of clean beasts, made clean by the perfect work of a crucified Redeemer, can then lie down; yes, what is more, they can chew the cud and look over all the way the Lord as led them, tracing all their blessings to the root of the true vine, Jesus Christ, who is the stone of Israel.

In the time of Elder Gilbert Beebe there were those who were not satisfied with the word of God. They had surrounded the Arminian walls and blown the trumpet of the gospel, had seen the walls thrown down on the seventh day, the day when the Lord rested from his labor, yes, they had seen lost sinners like Rahab saved with an everlasting salvation, and knew the apostle by the Holy Ghost had written, "For we which have believed do enter into rest;" that is, like the herd we lie down, but that was not enough for them. Achan takes of the accursed thing, duty faith, which is a false faith, carrying with it certain conditions dependent upon the creature: a righteousness, that is, a right-waysness of the creature which can be seen and gloried in before men. These were in the hearts of those Achans, and the brethren stoned them and their missionary zeal under the heap of the law in that day. Then the saints could rest under their own vine and fig-tree, none daring to make them afraid. There have been those who have wanted to be more charitable than God's word requires, who have been inclined to spare Achan as Saul spared Agag, but doing so has always meant destruction and fleeing before the enemy. Others, for the sake of peace, and perhaps under the false idea of loving them all, have visited and preached to such people and have boasted that they have fellowshiped them all. The result of this compromise

in the churches of these men today is that the Achans do not hide their stolen spoil under their own tents, but are with their wedge of duty faith and conditionalism dividing the churches of those who in the past compromised. To these we would say the valley of Achor only is a door of hope. Cut off by the law those who carry legalism into the promised land. When that is done the herd shall lie down in the valley of Achor.

(The above was an editorial by Elder Ruston of October, 1924. We republish it in the absence of a current writing. It deserves a careful reading by everyone. — J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

(Since Elder Beebe has included in his reply the questions asked by Brother Walker, of Alabama, we feel that the following is sufficiently clear, and will not necessitate the republishing of Brother Walker's letter—J.D.W.)

REPLY TO BROTHER B. A. WALKER

If we had ability to expound all mysteries in regard to the kingdom of Christ and the salvation of sinners, and could with unerring exactness draw the line between truth and error, between mortality and immortality, between flesh and spirit, joints and marrow, thoughts and intents, and if we could analyze the soul and spirit of man we are inclined to believe that all our powers would be called into requisition to meet and solve all the questions submitted to us by our numerous correspondents; but our finite powers are very limited, and all we can say or write on spiritual things can only tend to edification so far as we are led by the Spirit of God, whose work it is to take of the things of Jesus and reveal them unto us. Our views can only be of value to our brethren so far as they are sustained by and are in harmony with the scriptures of truth and the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

It is humiliating, after exhausting our very limited ability in trying to make ourself intelligible to our readers, to find our views misapprehended, and to fear that instead of edifying, we have darkened counsel by the uttering of words without knowledge. Still we would not shrink from any amount of labor, if to any extent our labor may be blessed of God to the comfort, edification or instruction of the feeblest of the flock of our Redeemer.

Brother Walker seems to comprehend and to agree with us on the most important positions we have taken in the articles to which he refers, and in a very brotherly and candid manner asks us to explain some things which to his mind seem to be involved as inferences or consequences deduced from the premises admitted.

Admitting the truth of our position, that all that is born of the flesh in man, including soul, body, an spirit, is born of corruptible seed, as is fully demonstrated by their having become corrupt, defiled and sinful, and to the extent that they require to be redeemed, washed, cleansed, and purified, in order to be saved, and to be born again of incorruptible seed by the word of God, before they can possibly see the kingdom of God or inherit immortality, the questions are suggested to his mind:

What was man in his created state in the first Adam? Was he a mortal or an immortal being? If mortal, how did he become immortal? Was immortality transmitted to him when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul? And if so, was not that immortality holy and incorruptible, as coming from God?

The solution of this whole cluster of interrogatives may be found in a clearer understanding of the scriptural meaning of the two words, **immortality** and **incorruptible.** The word **immortality** signifies a state of eternal life, in which mortality or death is impossible. And that which, by any possibility, is liable to corruption, though it may be incorrupt, cannot be incorruptible; for incorruptibility absolutely precludes the possibility of becoming corrupt. Hence it is positively declared that he who is the Blessed and only Potentate, our risen and exalted Prince and Savior, "Only

hath immortality, dwelling in the light, which no man can approach unto, which no man hath seen or can see, to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen." —1 Tim. vi. 1, 16. This text alone, we think, effectually settles this matter: for if Adam in his first estate had been immortal, by a transmission of the immortality of God to him, then there would have been at least one man that had it, or that had approached unto it. This word, immortality, in a scriptural sense, means something more than a perpetual and interminable state of existance, for it is equivalent to and synonymous with the words ETERNAL LIFE, which are not applicable to a mere conscious state of vital existance, even though that state should be perpetuated forever and ever; but it is restricted in its application, to that eternal life which was with the Father, and was given to all the election of grace in Christ Jesus, and which is so inseparably identified with Christ that "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." "This is the true God and eternal life."

That man, in his first and last estate, has an existance that is endless, that can never cease to be, that cannot be annihilated, we fully believe, and to our mind it is fully taught in the scriptures; but that state of interminable existance, continued after death, forever and ever, is nowhere in the bible called immortality nor eternal life. It is a conscious state of never ceasing existance after the dissolution of our mortal bodies, but it is expressed by a term of opposite signification, the **second death,** to all whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life.—Rev. xx. 14, 15. But this state of interminable death is not annihiliation, nor is it what the scriptures call immortality, or eternal life. Nor do we understand that the interminable existance of man is the life or breath of God. Where it is said that God breathed into the nostrils of Adam the breath of life, and man became a living soul, it does not seem to us to mean that God from his mouth exhaled into the nostrils of man his own vitality, or immortality. The scriptures assure us that the breath of man and the breath of beasts are all the same—Eccl. iii. 19 And in this respect the man has no pre-eminence above the beasts. They all breathe the same atmospheric air, and when their corporeal bodies die, they all alike stop breathing. But the spirit of the man goeth upward, and the spirit of the beasts go downward. The breath of the Lord is spoken of in a figurative manner; for God is a Spirit, not revealed to us in a corporeal body of heaving lungs, like his creatures. His breath is figuratively spoken of as giving both life and death. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the hosts of them by the breath of is mouth."Psa. xxxiii. 6. "Then said he unto me, Prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God, Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon the slain, that they may live."—Ezek. xxxvii. .9. "And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked."—Isa. xi. 4. "For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared: he hath made it deep and large; the pile thereof is fire and much wood: the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it."—Isa. xxx. 33.

We call attention to these scriptures, to show that the breath of the Lord is used in a figurative way, as the **rod** or power of the words which go forth to give life or to inflict death, or to execute whatever he designs. It was by the word of his power, or the breath of the Lord, the heavens and the earth were created; yet they shall be dissolved and pass away; they are not incorruptible nor immortal; and by the same power that man was animated with vitality, and became a living soul, an animated creature, but not an immortal or incorruptible being. That which is immortal cannot possibly become mortal, for the very word signifies insusceptibility of death or mortality. In the very day of man's creation, his death was foretold. "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou

shalt surely die." That which is immortal cannot possibly die. But it was not said, In the day thou eatest thereof, or on any other day, thou shalt cease to exist, or be annihiliated. It is true that man in his original state, as long as he continued in innocence, was secure from death, for it was by his offence that sin entered into the world, and death by sin: but if he had been an incorruptible being, he could not have sinned. He was incorrupt when he came from the hand of his Creator, and so was everything else that was created, but not incorruptible; for he soon proved his susceptibility to the corrupting power of sin. And his liability to corruption and death was fully implied in the declaration, "For in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die."—Gen. ii. 17.

Whatever speculative ideas may be cherished as to what Adam was before he sinned, or what he might have been if he had not sinned, all must concede that he did sin, and that death has entered, and passed upon all men, for all have sinned. "And God looked upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth."—Gen. vi. 12. Now, as all flesh had become corrupt, it seems plain that nothing of an incorruptible or immortal nature could be born of the flesh; consequently all that is born of the flesh is born of corruptible seed. And if Adam possessed a soul, body and spirit, in all of which he was distinguished from the brute creation, and his sons and posterity born of his flesh are begotten and brought forth in his image and in his likeness, then they are in soul, body and spirit contaminated with the same corruption and immortality that rested on him, as a fallen sinner.

Man in all his elementary parts, soul, body and spirit, is a depraved, guilty sinner against God, and if there is anything incorruptible about him it is not in him, for "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint; from the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores."—Isa. i. 5, 6.

Our Savior has said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh."—John iii. 6. We understand him to mean all that is born of the flesh, including all the elementary parts essential to constitute a man. If he were born without a soul, would he be a man? Certainly not. If without a spirit, it would be but dead matter; and if with a spirit, and without a soul, it would be a beast. All men were included by Job when he said, "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble."—Job xvi. 1. God commanded his prophet to cry, "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever."—Isa. xl. 6, 8. But why does the grass wither, and its loveliest flowers fade? Is it not because it is the production of corruptible seed? If it were produced of incorruptible seed, could it wither, and fade and die? An inspired apostle of the Lamb has explained this text. He says, that those who are born again are not born of corruptible seed, (like grass, and like all the glory of man) but they are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."—1 Peter i. 23, 24. Will grass seed produce anything that is imperishable? If not, why? Because the seed of grass is itself perishable. Then, if flesh is grass, its seed can only propagate that which, like itsself, is destined to fade away and perish. But the life which is born of the Spirit is spiritual and eternal, because it is of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which Isaiah says, "shall stand forever;" and Peter says, "The word of God (by which the children of God are born) endureth forever." Hence they who are begotten of God are born to an inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and (unlike the grass) fadeth not away, (because) it is "reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

Brother Walker will perceive that we

do not understand that there was any transmission of immortality, or of the life of God, made to man at his creation. Adam was created in the image and likeness of God, only so far as he is the image or type of our Lord Jesus Christ; for there is nothing in all the universe unto which we are permitted to liken God. God is self-existent, independent, immutable and eternal; but of all his creatures there are none like him in any of these respects, by creation. To partake of his immortality or his righteousness, we must be born of him. Jesus, to partake of our fleshly nature, and come under the law that we were under, was born of a virgin, made of a woman; and we, to be partakers of the divine nature, must be born of the Spirit. There is no other way of transmission of either human or divine nature but by birth.

Brother Walker asks, "If man was immortal in his creature state, and that immortality of divinity, and by transgression perverted and corrupted himself, in soul, body and spirit, was not his immortality corrupted, and consequently a corruption of divinity?" We cannot admit the supposition. Immortality cannot become mortal, neither can that which is incorruptible become corrupt, nor can divinity become defiled. If that were admissible, then might we conceive the idea of a child of God, born of his Spirit, falling from grace, and failing of eternal life.

We trust that Brother Walker will perceive from what we have said, in defining our understanding of the words immortality and incorruptible, that our assertion that all that is born of the flesh in man, is corrupt and mortal, and all that is born of God is incorruptible, pure, holy and immortal: and that nothing in us that is born of the flesh is immortal, pure and holy, and nothing in us that is born of God is corrupt, sinful or mortal, does not involve the conclusion that man, only in intellect, differs from the brute. We hold no such sentiment; but as we have said, man has an interminable existence, and must after leaving this time state, suffer the vengeance of eternal fire, if not redeemed and born again; yet that interminable state is not what the bible calls immortality. It is called **the second death.** "The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord; but the wages of sin is death. That death to which the ungodly are consigned, though forever enduring, is called death, but it never in the scriptures is called life, or immortality. If devils and ungodly men, to suffer the wrath of God in endless perdition, must be immortal, how could it be said of our glorious potentate, the Son of God, that he only hath immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light? We apprehend that the difficulty with Brother Walker in failing to understand us, arises from his applying the word immortality to an unending state of existence, and a denial of immortality to mean annihilation.

Of course, and in perfect harmony with the foregoing, we do most undoubtedly believe there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust, but only the righteous, who are born of God, shall be raised to life everlasting, and the ungodly to a resurrection of damnation, which is called the second death.

The perplexity of our brother in regard to the resurrection of the ungodly, by a transmission of that immortality which only God hath, arises from the supposition that the ungodly are raised from the dead by the same spirit of life and immortality by which the saints shall be raised up. God has given life in nature to all the animal creation. Without bestowing on them his own Spirit, life or immortality. So by his power shall he raise the ungodly at the last day, but not by a transmission of his eternal life or Spirit to them, but by a display of his infinite power and justice, when they shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.

Although the incorruptible seed of Immortality is implanted in all who are born of the Spirit, that implantation has not changed our earthly nature from mortal to immortal, but it is a

sealing assurance that in the resurrection of the saints from the dead, God will change our vile body, and fashion it like the glorious body of our risen and exalted Redeemer. Then shall these mortals, in whom now dwells the first fruits of the Spirit, put on immortality, and these corruptibles put on incorruption, and death, which now reigns in our mortal bodies, shall be swallowed up of life. When our Savior took on him our nature, it was that in our flesh he might die, the just for the unjust; but when he was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, he destroyed death, and brought immortality to light through the gospel. Hence we are assured that he dieth no more; death hath no more dominion or power over his resurrected body. And as in his resurrection from the dead he is the first fruits of them that slept, we have the assurance that as he in rising from the dead put on immortality, as the first begotten from the dead, and the first born among many brethren, so shall the whole harvest of all his saints be when raised from the dead in his likeness. The resurrection of Christ is called a birth; and in his resurrection, all his saints are begotten to a lively hope, of an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. But the ungodly have no part nor lot in the hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie promised before the world began. They shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth, not to life everlasting, but in a resurrection of damnation, to endure the vengenance of eternal fire, with the devil and his angels, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

No doubt the questions of Brother Walker, and our replies, might be greatly condensed, but we have labored to meet his numerous inquiries, in hope that a full ventilation of the subject may afford to others, as well as to him, some light at least on what we hold to be the truth.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe March 15, 1877. These are profound matters and deserve the prayerful consideration of all of us. Elder Beebe was wonderfully blessed with deep insight and ability to present what he saw for the edification of his brethren in his day, and to ours as we re-publish them. — J.D.W)

TOTAL DEPRAVITY

While this particular expression does not occur in the Bible, yet it conveys a Bible doctrine. By various expressions the church has always presented the truth contained in these two words as her faith. What do they mean, and by what Scriptures are they supported? They mean that in the fall man became wholly alienated from God, and from good. They mean that not only in outward life and deed, but in the heart, the affections, purposes and desires, man has become altogether a stranger to all that is excellent, and an enemy to God by wicked works, They mean that if man be left to himself, with no restraining influences, either of God's providence or grace, he will always choose self instead of God, vice instead of virtue, wrath instead of love, and evil deeds instead of good works. They mean that man, left wholly to himself, will always exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped. In this let it be remembered that man is regarded as being unrestrained by any consideration, save to carry out his own desires which are of the flesh. Total depravity means that there is nothing good in man by nature, or as considered in himself.

This doctrine has always been denied by nine-tenths of the professing world; it is denied by all save believers in sovereign grace. Conditionalists of every stripe contend as they are bound to do in consistency with conditionalism, that man has not become totally depraved in the fall, that some remnants of his pristine righteousness remain with him, that he is still sufficiently godlike to discern between good and evil in his very nature, and that if man will, he can still cultivate the good, and so at last rise from the ruins of the fall, into his former state of excellency. According to their view, the only difference

between a believer and an unbeliever, between one who serves God and one who does not, between a regenerate and an unregenerate man, is one of cultivation. These claim that man is only in a state of alienation from God, and that he is at enmity against God, and not enmity itself. But while denied by carnal professors, it is yet a doctrine firmly held by all who have come to know the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the plague of their own heart. Now the question is, Are they justified in holding this doctrine? Is it a doctrine found in the word of God? We do not now appeal to the conviction of this doctrine, wrought in all believers by the facts of experience, or by the revelation which the light of the Spirit of God dwelling in the heart gives of it, but will appeal to the Scriptures, by which all experience, and every sentiment is to be finally judged. Experience confirms the testimony of the word, but after all, the church of God has always required a "Thus saith the Lord" from the Scriptures, for every principle of doctrine to which she has held.

We will refer to several portions of the word as teaching this truth.

First. Paul seems to have been firmly convinced of total depravity in our fallen nature when he said, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) there dwells no good thing." If no good thing dwelt in his flesh, certainly all that was there must have been evil. This is surely then, total depravity in the flesh, and as there was nothing but flesh in the apostle before the Spirit of truth came to him, he must have had no good thing in him previous to his call by grace. The flesh as used by Paul here, does not mean our bodies, or the members of our body, such as our hands and feet, or tongues, which shall return to dust again, but he means the whole natural man, including all the thoughts, passions, desires and purposes, which dwelt within him. He means just what a believer means now, when he says, By nature there is no good in me.

Second. Paul says to the brethren at Ephesus, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." If death means anything, it means entire separation from the thing to which we are dead. To be dead in trespasses and sins, is to be wholly united to them, and wholly separated from righteousness and God, and that which is separated from the source of all good, must be depraved. "Death in sin" is the exact opposite of the language "dead to sin," by which the state of the redeemed is described in the word. Paul says that the people of God were by nature the children of wrath even as others, but now they have been quickened, or made alive, from the dead; they now have become alive unto God. If death in sin means anything, it means wholly swallowed up by sin, and entire separation from righteousness, or total depravity.

Third. The description given of man in the first three chapters of the letter to the Romans, settles the matter so far as this doctrine is concerned. We cannot of course quote all there written, on account of taking up too much space. We will refer to a few expressions. "There is none righteous, no not one." Chapter third, verse ten, then read on to verse eighteen: "There is none that understandeth." "They are all gone out of the way." "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." "Their throat is an open sepulchre." "Their feet are swift to shed blood." "The way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes." In this same chapter Paul says expressly, that there is no difference, that all have come short. It might be asked very pertinently, If the first three chapters of Romans do not teach the doctrine of total depravity, how would language be so put together as to teach it? Much of all this language is quoted by Paul from the Old Testament, and thus it is shown that every age is the same. One generation is no better nor worse by nature than another.

Fourth. We read in Genesis vi.5, that "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of the heart was only evil continually." This

was in the days before the flood. This language does not relate simply to what men do, but to the source of all that they do. It is in the very nature of man to do evil, and so in the first clause of this same verse, it is said that the wickedness of man was great on the earth. It is taught here that men do wickedly because they are wicked. The Bible has to do with what men are, rather than with what they do. The doing is often restrained, but the heart is evil, and out of it proceed all evil things, such as murders, adulteries, thefts, drunkenness, blasphemies, and all other evil things. If every imagination of the thoughts of the heart are evil, and only evil, and that continually, it surely is not doing violence to the text to say that it teaches the doctrine of total depravity.

Fifth. The language in Ephesians ii. 12, teaches the same thing; of all the Gentiles Paul here says, they "were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." This is certainly in full harmony with what he has said in verse five, concerning the death in sin, dwelt upon above. Could a darker picture of the condition of fallen and unregenerate man be drawn than this verse contains? The conclusion of this indictment, with its five counts against man, is that he is without God in the world, and that is only another way of saying man is without good in the world, seeing the Savior expressly says, "There is none good but God." Let it be remembered that these, and other Scriptures, relate to man as he is all over the world, and in every time, and under all conditions. They relate to man in the very essence of his being, when left to himself, and showing out his nature unrestrained either by providence or grace. What a soul-humbling picture is this. Paul had come to know this truth and so he said, as quoted before, "In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing." Paul had not only come to know what the Scriptures say about it, but the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ, had shown him not only the mystery of godliness, but also the equally deep mystery of iniquity. As grace abounded in him, it revealed still more and more clearly the abounding of sin. There is but one thing, in the view of Paul, that can exceed the vastness of the world of iniquity in man, and that is the superabounding grace of God. And every child of God in daily experience goes on to know the same things, and at last comes to know that the whole matter of salvation is summed up in this, "A sinner saved by grace."

Many other Scriptures teach the same sad doctrine of total depravity, beside these which we have quoted, but we will forbear any more direct quotations. Beside these direct quotations it may be said that every other principle of doctrine is in full harmony with this doctrine, and, when understood, necessarily imply total depravity. The atonement implies it; the doctrine of the new birth implies it; the doctrine of quickening, implies it: the need of daily grace to keep us, implies it; and so do all Bible principles of truth, when rightly understood. If there be any good in man by nature, then the atonement is not the needful thing which the Scriptures claim it to be, the new birth is not a birth at all, but only a reformation, and the keeping of man by grace, is but the adding of a little help to him, who can do most of the work for himself, Nothing can magnify the grace of God in salvation, as does this doctrine, when understood rightly. How great the grace that can and does save from the lowest pit. David calls it "a horrible pit of miry clay." The depths of iniquity is called elsewhere in the word, a bottomless pit. Since man is such by nature, how infinite the grace that can save him.

Questions arise concerning this doctrine in the minds of the people of God. These are not the cavilings of self-righteous men, but the sincere and honest inquiries of those who desire first of all to know the truth. These questions arise in hearts which confess this doctrine

to be true with themselves, and who sadly say for themselves, as did Paul, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing." While confessing this with all their heart, yet questions come up which they do not feel able to solve. Perhaps the chief question which perplexes the mind often is this, If this doctrine be true, (and that it is true, such ones do not doubt,) how is it that there is so much good in the earth, even among those who do not profess godliness? How is it that men are such good citizens, neighbors, husbands and fathers? How is it that men respond so readily to calls for help by their needy fellows? How is it that so many men who do not believe in any future life even, are yet honest, and honorable, and kindly to all? How can all these facts consist with the teachings of the Scripture, concerning the absolutely lost and ungodly conditions of man? How can a man who has been honest in all his relations with others, who has always been kind to the needy, who has always been faithful in all the relations of life which he has been called to fill, when the light of the grace of God shines in his heart, confess himself the chief of sinners, and the vilest of the vile, and acknowledge that in him is to be found no good thing? How is it that not only the thief on the cross, but also the righteous Paul, confesses himself the worst of men? How is it that in our churches all who come and find fellowship there, claim that they are the most unworthy of all, no matter how vile or how upright their former life may have been? These are the facts of Scripture testimony, and these are the facts of christian testimony as well. How then do all these things consist, with the immense amount of love, truth, honesty and kindness there is undeniably in the world?

In reply, we would say that these good things do not at all affect the doctrine of total depravity, in the nature of man, but they do magnify the kind providence and grace of God, which can and does restrain the wickedness of man from outward expression. In the case of believers, this needs no further exposition. All can see how that grace can and does restrain and constrain its subjects, so that sin is overcome, and righteousness is wrought out in the heart and lives of the subjects of grace. We will say no more about this.

Why do not unregenerate men all of them run to the same excess of evil? Why are not all men on a level in their feelings, passions and outward life, with the most debased savage? That in this there is a difference, does not, as said before, prove that some are not totally depraved in nature but does magnify the mercy and power of God toward men. The very presence in the world of grace and righteousness, dwelling in the hearts and lives of some men, has a leavening effect among the inhabitants of earth. Beside unknown to themselves, God restrains the hearts of men, as well as their actions. Besides this there are also the restraints of shame, and law, and custom, which are in the appointment of God, and all of which must be taken into the account. Take away from men these things, as in time of war, or in the presence of some great crime, and see how soon men become as demons in rage and malice, and how the most civilized of men will manifest all the hellish passions of the most ferocious savage. These moments when God seems for a time to leave men to themselves show what man would be and do at all times if left to himself. It is said of one servant of God that when he saw a man being led to his execution for some ferocious crime, he said, "That would be me, were it not for the grace of God." And all men, even the unregenerate, might well say, "Such would I be, were it not for the restraining providence of God." All this is fully taught in the language, "The wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."

We leave these thoughts for the consideration of our readers. Of one thing we feel fully persuaded, viz: all who know the Lord indeed, will subscribe to the charge of total depravity, so far as they themselves are concerned, and that

if not allowed to run to the same excess of rioting as others, it is because God has shown them special mercy, and they will feel that they desire to magnify the grace which has saved, and daily kept them. Such ones will say in their moments of devotion, "O, how great has thy mercy been to me, who am in no wise better than my fellows." Such ones feel that greater mercy has been shown to them than could possibly be shown to any one else. The blessed part of this doctrine is it exalts the grace that saves.

(Editorial by Elder Chick October 15, 1900.)

OBITUARIES

ROBERT SPOTSWOOD INGRAM

Robert Spotswood Ingram born in Franklin County, Virginia July 23, 1891, passed from this life May 4, 1965.

He was married to Mae Peters, October 10, 1912; who died February 28, 1939. To this union were born eight children: Mrs. Jewell Hagood and Mrs. Marie Hazelwood, Fieldale, Va.; Mrs. Elva Turner, Martinsville, Va.; Mrs. Iva Moran and Guy Ingram, Bassett, Va.; Mrs. Ruby West and Poff Ingram, Ridgeway, Va.; and Lynza Ingram, deceased.

He was married the second time to Doris Ingram Young, December 3, 1942. She passed away November 12, 1946. He married the third time to Victoria Ross, October 18, 1949. Brother and Sister Ingram joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Union, April 23, 1960. He was faithful to his church.

Funeral services were held May 6, 1965, at Union Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Leonard Brammer, assisted by Elder Posey Ingram. He was laid to rest in the Ingram Cemetery.

He lived his entire life in the Cross Road neighborhood as a farmer. There was never a time when he wasn't ready to help his neighbors and friends through kindness and honesty. At the time of his passing he was helping a neighbor get to the doctor. He was loved by all of his neighbors and friends. In return he had love and respect for his community.

We miss Brother Ingram very much, but feel our loss is his gain, and we must bow and be submissive to the will of the Lord. We feel that we shall never forget his love and devotion for the church at Union, and his wife and children, and pastor. May the Lord bless the dear lonely wife and children and us at Union to be reconciled to His will and to our lot and portion in this life.

His pastor,
Leonard J. Brammer

ELDER JOHN ROSCOE LANE

He was born February 12, 1899, and departed this life November 15, 1966, at the age of sixty-seven years, in a Hinton, W. Va. hospital. His residence was at 110 Harrison Court, Huntington, W. Va. He was a native of Summers County, W. Va. and a retired C & O Railroad blacksmith. He was pastor of Harmony Primitive Baptist Church, Huntington, W. Va.

Surviving are his widow, Ada Pearl, two sons: Denzil, of Huntington, and John, of South Point, Ohio; one daughter: Geraldine, at home. Surviving also are the following brothers and sisters: K. N., Frank, and James, of Hinton; Estel and Virgil, of Huntington; Robert, of Crickmer; Mrs. Myrtle Meadow and Mrs. Macel Bond, of Hinton; Mrs. Josie Farley, of Pipestem, W. Va.; and Mrs. Belle Martin, of Greenup, Ky.

Funeral services were held at Chapman Funeral Home by Mr. T. R. Sisk. He was laid to rest in Ridgelawn Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord.

It pleased our heavenly Father to take from our midst our dearly beloved Brother and Pastor. We hope to be most thankful to have been so wonderfully blessed to meet with him in services, we hope, in sweet fellowship with God. How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace in Christ Jesus. Brother Lane was sound in doctrine and faithful to the church, and though we will miss him, we feel to say that, our loss is his eternal gain. All the pains, trials, tribulations and sufferings of this time world are over for him. All things, excluding nothing, are to the glory of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He is our strength and our salvation, and his mercies endure forever. May we all be blessed to say, Thy will be done, O Lord, for all things come to pass for good to them that love God.

We desire to express our heartfelt sympathy to the family and friends.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the family, one to the *Signs of the Times*, and one put on our church record.

Done by order of Harmony Primitive Baptist Church in conference January 7, 1967. Written by

Nancy J. Clay, Clerk

ANNA HUDSON PEACOCK

"God moves in mysterious ways, His wonders to perform," and we are made to wonder

at His hands' work. He does all things well even when He called our beloved. Sister Peacock united with Hickory Grove Primitive Baptist Church in July, 1941. She was a devoted and faithful member as long as she was able to attend.

She was an invalid for several years in Nursing homes. She was survived by one son, one daughter and several grandchildren.

Death came to Sister Peacock October 14, 1966, she lived to be 97 years old. Funeral service was conducted by her Pastor Elder Lester E. Lee at her home church, Hickory Grove Primitive Baptist Church near Benson, N. C. Her body was laid to rest to await the resurrection morn in the family cemetery, also near Benson.

Inasmuch as God saw fit to remove her from our midst, may we be blessed to bow in humble submission to His will, and to give thanks for the privilege of having witnessed the reflection of our Saviour in her daily walk and conversation.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, a copy to the family and a copy to be put into the church records.

Done by order of Conference, November 19, 1966.

Committee Sisters
Georgia Hill
Gertrude Royal
Azalee Lee

CORA POWELL JOHNSON

In loving memory of my darling mother Cora Powell Johnson, whom God in his infinite wisdom called away January 22, 1966. She was born in Franklin County, Virginia, June 10, 1884, and united with the church at Bethel March 31, 1917, and baptized by Elder Randoph Perdue.

She loved her church, and was strong in her belief, and was faithful to attend as long as her health permitted: even then she loved to talk of her Saviour, and to hear the beautiful old songs sung. Just a few days before her departure she spoke of being so happy, and it being such a wonderful time.

She is survived by her husband, Irving Johnson, and seven sons and two daughters: Claude, Paul, Hughes, Harry, Troy, Tom, Clyde, Mrs. Harold Boone and Mrs. Posey Poindexter.

Her funeral was held at Lynch's Chapel, Rocky Mount, Virginia, conducted by her beloved pastor Elder Jimmy Hollandsworth and Elder Cecil Turner; with burial in Franklin Memorial Park, to await the glorious resurrection.

Written by her daughter, who sadly misses her.

Mrs. Posey Poindexter

DEACON JAMES WILLIAM HOUSTON

Deacon James William Houston was born June 5, 1900, in Franklin County, Virginia, the son of the late George Henry Houston and Eliza Jane Houston. He passed from this world May 18, 1966; and is survived by his widow, and four daughters, Mrs. Letha Houston Holland, Mrs. Ruby Houston Wray, Mrs. Christeen Houston Altice, and Mrs. Joyce Houston Law.

Brother Houston was united in marriage to Cordie Bell Allman April 1, 1923. He joined the church at Bethel July 5, 1944, and he was ordained to the office of a deacon November 3, 1956.

Brother Houston was a faithful servant until his death, and was loved by his people wherever he was known. He has been greatly missed by the church and his family. He passed away in the Franklin Memorial Hospital, and I have been told that his last words were, "I am too sick to live and I am ready to go." May the blessings of the Heavenly Father be upon the family and reconcile them to his holy will. Written by his pastor.

James R. Hollandsworth

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

The members of Pilgrim Rest Church, Lawn, Texas, desire to bow in humble submission to our heavenly Father's will, who saw fit on the 25th day of October, 1966, to call our dear brother Charles Kelley from our midst, at the age of forty-eight years, eight months and twenty-four days. He was the son of the late Willie and Lillie Kelley, and grandson of Sister M. N. Griffin. He spent most of his life in and around Taylor County, Texas.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we give thanks unto our heavenly Father for having given us a friend as Brother Kelley, who was a true believer of Salvation by Grace. And

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we express our deepest sympathy to his dear widow, Sister Linda; also that a copy of these resolutions be given her; a copy be spread on our chruch record; and a copy be sent to the *Signs* for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in November, 1966.

A. M. Haygood, Moderator
Nola Steward, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 135 DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1967 NO. 4

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ON THE DOCTRINE
OF PREDESTINATION
(Rom. 8:29; Isa. 14:27; Acts 14:16)

It is noted that much has been written
Concerning predestination,
Which, in Romans also in Ephesians,
Extends solely to salvation.

Yet, I understand from other Scriptures
That God's purpose embraced all things,
But that all were not predestined alike
By the eternal King of kings;

That He purposed to bring about salvation,
While He decreed to suffer sin;
Hence, He's not the author of the latter,
Which by Adam did enter in.

The Bible says God suffered all nations
To walk in their own (sinful) ways;
So the efficient cause of their own sins
Surely wasn't the Ancient of days.

According to the late Elder Beebe,
Who constantly hewed to the line,
Without the permission of Almighty God,
The devil could not drown a swine.

A sparrow falls not without the Father;
All things are under His control,
And His sovereignty will diminish not
While the ages of eternity roll.

Although contrary to His divine nature,
Sin into the world has entered,
But it's taken away by the Lamb of God,
In Whom our salvation centered.

Predestination, a doctrine of grace,
In which a remnant delight,
Is much disliked by a great multitude
That repudiate it outright.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, N. C.

EASTER

A sister wants to know about Easter: is it the day Christ rose from the grave? Why is it not the same day of the month, and the same month of the year, like Christmas?

Easter is mentioned but once in the Bible, in Acts 12:4. Herod Agrippa the First, father of the Agrippa before whom Paul later made his stirring defense, as told in Acts 24, stretched forth his hands to vex the church of God, killed James, the brother of John, seized Peter and cast him into prison. It being the time of the feast of unleavened bread when Peter was arrested, Herod, though not a Jew himself, was politician enough to know that the Jews would not care to enter into judgment with Peter during their festive season, so kept him in confinement, intending to bring him forth after Easter, or after the passover week of unleavened bread. The word here translated Easter is, in the original Greek, **Pascha,** and literally means the passover, not having any reference whatever to the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

The Jewish passover was eaten on the fourteenth day of the first month of the Jewish year, and, for seven days therefrom, was the feast of unleavened bread. Roughly speaking, this corresponds to the month of April. When Christ ate of the passover with his disciples on the evening of the day before his crucifixion, that day must have been the fourteenth day of the first Jewish month, therefore the date of his ressurection would be the first day of the week next following. In other words, Christ rose from the dead on the 17th of **Abib,** or **Nisan,** as it was renamed after the captivity. This is most certainly a fixed date, the same as was the

date of his birth, and not a movable date, as the date of Easter is now observed by the so-called christian sects of the world.

This observance of Easter by the religions of the world as at present engaged in under the pretense of celebrating the resurrection of Christ, is but one of the many glaring inconsistencies of error. The Council of Nice, a Catholic body of over 1500 delegates, called together by the Roman emperor Constantine in the year 325, decreed that Easter should always be observed on the first Sunday following the full moon happening upon or next after the 21st of March. Thus Easter must fall not earlier than March 22nd and not later than April 25th. The Catholics instituted this glaring error, and the Protestant daughters have helped her to perpetuate it. How can any one be so deluded as to believe that a day which moves about from year to year, as does Easter, can be the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead? This latter event is as fixed and immovable in the history of the church just as certainly as his birth is fixed and immovable. The date of Jesus' birth is said to have been the 25th of December, but no human being has ever been able to prove that even this date is correct.

The word "Easter" itself is derived from the Anglo-Saxon, and is taken from the name of the old Saxon goddess Ostara, or Eastre, who represented the morning, or east, and the opening year, or spring. This pagan diety flourished in the imaginations of men about the same time that the Council of Nice bound its dictum upon their intellects. Thus, summing up the whole matter, what do we find? That Easter, as currently observed, is a mass of Judaism, Catholicism, paganism, of falsehood and superstition, with not a vestige of real true gospel virtue in it anywhere. For the gospel church of our Lord Jesus Christ to set apart days or weeks, or months, or years, to commemorate anything which the Head of the church has not definitely enjoined, is to follow after men and their traditions; it is to become entangled again with the yoke of bondage, which never could justify the ungodly. The truth of God as in Christ Jesus is in its very nature eternal and spiritual, and cannot be limited to this or that duration of time. Read Paul's letter to the Galatians, "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you."

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This miracle of the new birth wrought in the experience of the children of God, and not the 25th of December, is the living memorial of the birth of Christ, written by the finger of God. In Ephesians, first chapter, we read, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know . . . what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead." Belief in Christ is effected by the experimental operation of the same mighty power that brought again the Lord Jesus from the dead. This miracle, and not Easter, is the Spirit's commemoration of the great Shepherd of the sheep, and of his victory over death, hell and the grave. "Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? But the thunder of his power who can understand?" Amen.

H. H. Lefferts

(The above editorial by Elder Lefferts appeared in the Signs August 15, 1914 — J.D.W.)

A REQUEST
9 Circle Drive
Iron Hill Trailer Park
Newark, Delaware 19711

Dear Brethren and
Editors of the "Signs,"

I see that my subscription to the grand old paper, "Signs Of The Times"

has expired; and since I do not want to miss a single copy am renewing for two years. I usually read my copy through without putting it down, because the good articles found therein are food to a hungry soul. I am often made to rejoice as I read the experiences of others, because I find that they are those of my own: and in that I am edified and built up. I have often thought of writing for publication, but then I feel that such an unworthy worm as I could never pen anything that would be of comfort to God's hungry poor.

I am often reminded of what the Apostle said of himself, as recorded in first Timothy, 1-15. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I AM chief." You will notice that Paul did not say, I used to be chief, he said, "am chief." But when Brother Paul made that statement, I had not yet been born. I am often made to loathe myself, when I am made to see what a vile character I am. But I find hope even in this, because a dead man knows nothing of his condition even though he be decaying. So I have hope that I have been made alive in Christ, and that I shall be one among that number which John was permitted to view while on the Isle of Patmos; a throng which no man could number.

I wish to make a small request, if not asking too much. I would like for you to publish in your paper a request, that if anyone has a recorded sermon by the late Elder Louis L. Thomas, of Tennessee, or knows of one, that they please inform me. I doubt very much if one of his sermons was ever recorded, as he passed away in September, 1936. Should any one know of such, please notify me at this address; he was my brother: Roy S. Thomas, Iron Hill Trailer Park, Newark, Delaware 19711 — #9 Circle Drive. This would indeed seem a God sent miracle from Heaven, should I find one of my brother's sermons recorded.

May God see fit to continue to bless the Editors of the "SIGNS" as He has for the past 134 years, that they continue to contend earnestly for The Faith which was ONCE delivered to the Saints. I desire the prayers of all who have been regenerated and born of the Spirit of God; they are the only ones who CAN pray. We often hear the expression, Just pray the sinner's prayer. Well, sinners are the only ones who pray, but it takes a live sinner to pray and a dead one never did and never will pray in order to live. God bless you all.

A sinner, redeemed by the precious blood of Christ if redeemed at all.

Roy S. Thomas

ADMONITION

4 Maple Lane,
Pennington, N. J. 08534

Dear Elder Wood:

These words have been on my mind, "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." (Romans 12: 4,5)

In these days of strife, confusion, and unbecoming actions, how do we appear? Do we each day so convey to the world around us in our every action, and every word, that we live by the Word of God?

We assemble at meeting time eager to hear the glad tidings our pastor is blessed to speak. Then each member goes his way in the work-a-day world. What impressions do our actions and words convey to other people? In this world of confusion, and for many often fear, it is so necessary that our church body, though few or many in number, should in its functions compose one body, as we hope to be one body in Christ; and all members one of another. Every member cannot expound the scriptures as the pastor is gifted to do, but each member should pray to be enabled to so walk and talk that wherever he may be among the people of the world, he would stand out like a sermon from on high. Are we a testimony of God's Word, from whom all the fulness of life precedes?

No church body should glory in wealth or numbers, but rather glory in the hope

that Christ is in their midst, and are given an able ministry to feed the flock with the edifying word and peace that is the light of God's honor and glory. True, not everyone who says, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he that does the will of the Father. So everyone who made a confession of faith when he was born into the spiritual realm of the Lord Jesus Christ, should be mindful of his walk, and thereby feel indeed happily blessed that the Spirit of Jesus Christ has sought him out, and graciously wrought His miraculous work of regeneration in him, by which he has been made a participant in the divine nature. This divine favor involves him and all others of us who have this engrafted word, under sacred obligation to walk worthy of the high vocation whereunto we have been called.

I pray these crucial days may be an Ebenezer in our life, (a stone of remembrance,) a place of memorial to commemorate the goodness and mercy of the Lord. May it please God to fill all our thoughts with all that is true and fine and gracious, that our presence be an inspiration and strength to those about us, and those who are in confusion and doubt and fear.

May God bless you abundantly in your efforts in publishing the **Signs**, that we have words of comfort to turn to every month.

Sister Mary Hellings

REALIZES GOD'S POWER

609 W. Colonial Ave.,
Elizabeth City, N. C. 27909

Dear Elder and Sister Spangler:

As I look out this morning and saw the portrayal of God's hand in our first snow of the season. I could not describe the beauty but I felt the warmth so sweetly of God's power which was manifested in one little snow flake. I looked up, and wondered what the reality of heaven and its beauty would be like. I saw it in my dream once, but words can't describe it, not even in part: it is so much better felt than told. Man speaks of his glory and power, but he can't make even one little snow flake.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." We realize we can do nothing except through God who strengtheneth us. We have to be brought by the restraining hand of God: killed and made alive, given eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand — which comes only through the revelation of Jesus Christ: for in our flesh dwells no good thing, "That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Jesus Christ, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." (1 Cor 1: 29, 30)

As I see the dear ones who truly manifest by orderly walk and godly conversation, that God has smiled upon them, and saved them by his grace, I am made to rejoice, and say of a truth, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." I enclose an obituary of Sister Johnson. Please publish and send a copy to her family.

May God bless you with health and strength. Hope you will visit us after weather conditions become more certain.

In hope I trust
Mrs. C. C. Meads

"MIXTURES OF JOYS AND SORROWS"

218 Shad Point Road,
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

You have been on my mind much lately, and it seemed that about the New Year I was much impressed to write you, but at that time I was very depressed, and when I sought for comfort all I found was condemnation.

One day Sister Maude Truitt and I went out making calls, and we visited six sisters, all over the age of threescore and ten. Each home, nursing home or hospital we visited they were so glad to see us, and wanted to hear about the meetings and the welfare of the brethren and sisters. I came home feeling better than I had for some time. John

tells us that we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. As I felt the love of these dear sisters to me, and mine for them, I could again say, Praise the Lord for all his goodness to poor sinners.

I have read and thought much about Hope; and especially in Romans 8: 24, where it says, "For we are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" To me, this is speaking of our hope of heaven and the resurrection of our bodies. We know the Lord has been gracious to us, and has given us strength for each trial that has befallen us until this time: and most of the time this causes us to have faith that He will continue with us until the end. I know that at times He leaves us to ourselves that we may know from whom our strength comes; and when he does, our faith is very weak. I would like to hear your thoughts on this scripture sometime.

I want to tell you how much I enjoyed the February Signs. It seemed Elder Slauson's letter expressed so well what I had just been feeling. It is so comforting when others can express our travails. I was also very glad to read the article by Elder L. H. Hardy. He told just what I believe, but so much better than I could ever do.

I did feel this Fall that I had a foretaste of heaven. First at the Lesington-Roxbury Association, then the trip to Alabama attending the association in Birmingham, then the Kehukee Association, and then our own Salisbury Association; and being able to have so many dear ones in our home. But no matter how much we enjoy these times, our bodies get tired and we do and say stupid things that we wish we had not. How wonderful to look forward to this body, which is sown in weakness, being raised in power: only then can we praise Him as we ought.

Laurence sends his regards to you both, and we are hoping you can visit us again this Spring.

Yours with love,
Ethel Holloway

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, August 27 and 28, 1966, sends greetings to the associations and meetings with which we correspond:

Dear Brethren:

Through the mercy of God we have been blessed to meet again in an association. Your correspondence and messengers have been gladly received.

Elder Warren and Elder I. S. Conner preached the gospel as they were directed by the Holy Spirit, giving all honor and praise to His holy name. It is good for brethren to meet together in the worship of God. Jesus said, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:20) It is also written, "Forsake not the assembling together . . ."

The members of our association are separated by long distance, and owing to transportation, are unable to meet very often. But we do love these meetings when there is love and fellowship, and all proclaiming the same doctrine, Salvation by grace: which is the gift of God.

The Lord willing, our next association will be held August 26 and 27, 1967 (the fourth Sunday in August and Saturday preceeding).

Elder Arthur Warren, Moderator
Mrs. Sanford S. Bartlett, Clerk

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, August 27 and 28, 1966, sends greetings to the various churches with whom we correspond.

It is once more our privilege to address you in our Circular Letter. Though time passes and all earthly things change, the love of God stands

sure, and we still see the evidences of his grace and mercy to us poor, unworthy sinners: as in 1 John 3:1, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." We have had this wondrous gift given to us without any of our own works, like Saul of Tarsus, who was chosen of God even while he was persecuting the Christians. So it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, but in our wise, loving God who showeth mercy.

The people of the world know not what on earth we are doing, because it has not been revealed to them: like poor Saul, though high in worldly talents, knew nothing of God until brought to a stand still by God himself. It is said that when his eyes were opened, he saw no man, but was turned completely around in a moment; and God from that time on laid out his course as one of his loved Apostles. Thus it is that those who love his name, are led; and our lives are guided by his purposes, and destiny of the church is in his hands. Though we are sad with small membership, and hardships on all sides, and our hearts fail us as to our future comfort spiritually, we have the assurance that "his purposes are ripening fast, unfolding every hour."

In verse eleven of 1 John, chapter 3, we are told to love one another, but this we cannot do with a pure heart, unless God gives us the strength to cast out evil fears and hurts toward one another. The grace of God controls our hearts as it does everything else on earth. It is truly spoken in Hymn 293 of the Dur-and-Lester Hymn book:

"Jesus, the glorious Head of grace
Knows every saint's peculiar case;
What sorrows by their souls are borne,
And how for sin they daily mourn.

He knows how deep their groanings are,
And what their secret sighs declare;
And, for their comfort, has expressed
That all such mourning souls are blessed.

They're blessed on earth; for 'tis by grace
They see and know their mournful case;
Blessed mourners! they shall shortly rise
To endless comfort in the skies.

There all their mourning days shall cease,
And they be filled with joy and peace:
Comfort eternal they shall prove,
And dwell forever in his love."

Though our minds cannot quite grasp what some of the prophesies truly mean, it is comforting to read Isaiah, Chapter 10, verses 20 to 22: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God. For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the, yet a remnant of them shall return: the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness." This poor creature knows not exactly what this promise really means only that it was reassurance to Isaiah, the prophet of God, in the days long before our Saviour was born, to prove the salvation of the people of God without any question. And it shall reassure those who truly believe upon His name, and look forward only by God given faith; and though it be only the size of a grain of mustard seed, it sustains those who have felt the joy of free grace given by their Heavenly Father and our Saviour Jesus Christ. We are promised that a remnant will always remain, and that God will always have a witness.

Therefore we pray to be kept by the love of God looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus unto eternal life.

Written by
Ruth Clark, of the Whitefield Church

PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS

I believe in Predestination of All Things. If we hold to the foreknowledge of all things, and deny the predestina-

tion of all things, we become lost in the fog of Arminianism.

We can't see how the foreknowledge of a thing can exist when it has not been determined that the thing foreknown shall ever exist. Neither can we see how that a thing that will take place, can be foreknown, unless the time for its occurrence be fixed or determined by someone. To fix, establish, determine all events is what I believe to be called predestination, and to me it is the only certain basis of foreknowledge. All things must be determined in order to establish their certainty and to establish the certain foreknowledge of them.

We do not believe that predestination means to cause, force or influence. If predestination is the cause which brings about events, then there was no need for the death of Christ. His people were predestinated to the adoption of children. and to be conformed to the image of Christ. If predestination is the cause which produces the end predestined, then the death of Christ to redeem, and the operation of God's Spirit to change us to the image of Christ, was not necessary at all — predestination would have done the work. Now, if we will find what those wicked men were gathered together to do, then we will know what God's hand and God's counsel had determined before to be done. We do not believe that predestination caused those wicked men to do what they did, and do not believe that predestination would be the cause of any other crime. We also know from reading the Scripture that God did predetermine or predestinate what those men did, and we do confess that they did wickedly. We do acknowledge that God can predestinate a thing and God not be the author of sin, nor his predestination the cause. We know that these men were gathered together to kill the blessed Son of God, and were gathered to do whatsoever God's hand and his counsel had determined before to be done. Then we feel sure that God let or allowed sin to enter into the world when he could just as easily have prevented or not allowed it to occur. He either allowed it by purpose or allowed it without purpose. If by purpose, then the predestination of it is established. If without purpose, then He (God) was surely ignorant of its coming or was powerless to prevent it. We know that God is ALL WISE!

The Bible says, "Every man at his best state is vanity," and also that the creature was made subject to vanity. Job says, "Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth?" We know that when sin is finished it bringeth forth death, for the wages of sin is death. It seems to me that it would be more comforting to God's people to believe He has established the certainty of all things in his determinate counsel. For the Lord God reigneth in Heaven, in earth, in seas, and in all deep places and doth according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can say unto Him, What doest thou?

As we stated in the beginning of this article, we believe that God **foreknew** all things and also that God **predestinated** all things Some who say they are Primitive Baptists, say that God predestinated the good things but not the bad things. They will say that they believe that God foreknew all things. We believe that if God's predestination is limited, then His foreknowledge is also limited. Surely, if we limit one, we must limit the other.

We believe that it is true that all men were not foreknown as His covenant people, nor were all men predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. But, we believe that they were foreknown as his creatures and surely God must have had a purpose in creating them. We believe that every man and every other creature will fulfill the purpose which God has purposed they should, and God has determined the disposition of them all, even before he made them. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son." Those that God foreknew as his covenant people, his elect children, those he also did predestinate (or decree, determine) to be conformed to the image of his son. Those

that God has foreknown as his elect people, he has also predestinated to be made like his dear son. When Christ shall come to gather his Bride at the end, He has kept all that the Father has given him.

We believe that God's attitude toward sin is quite different from his attitude toward righteousness. For an example, God was pleased with Solomon's request for an understanding heart to judge his people, who were a chosen and great people. And Solomon felt to be but a little child and knew not how to go out or come in. (1 Kings 3:10) "And the speech pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing and hast not asked for thyself long life, neither hast asked riches for thyself nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment, behold, I have done according to thy words: lo I have given thee a wise and understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honor: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days. And if thou wilt walk in my ways to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days."

Solomon's understanding and wise heart, also his riches and honour were sure and certain, but the lengthening of his days was based upon Solomon keeping God's statutes and his commandments and walking in his ways. We feel sure that God had foreknown just what Solomon's speech would be and had also predestinated, determined, and fixed every word and the desire of Solomon's heart. We also find in the eleventh chapter of First Kings where Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and went not fully after the Lord. King Solomon loved many strange women and of the nations which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, "Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods." Solomon clave unto these in love, for it came to pass when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God.

We see that God was angry with Solomon because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, and he kept not that which the Lord commanded. Wherefore the Lord said unto Solomon, "Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee." We are sure that God had foreknowledge that Solomon would love many strange women and not keep his covenant nor his statutes and commandments and that his heart would be turned away after other gods. And just as surely as God foreknew all these events, he just as surely predestinated them. We can't see how the foreknowledge of these things could have occured except it had been determined that the thing should exist. We believe that every event foreknown has a fixed time for its occurrence and also must be determined by someone. We say emphatically that we do **not** believe that God's predestination caused Solomon's heart to be turned away after other gods, neither did it cause Solomon not to walk in God's ways, nor did it cause him to not keep the statutes and commandments, but the many strange women Solomon loved, his wives, turned away Solomon's heart after other gods. James says, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man, but every man is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lust and enticed by his wives.

Did not David say unto God, "I have sinned greatly because I have done this thing?" Was it not David that commanded the people of Israel to be numbered after Satan had provoked him? We are sure that God foreknew that David would command Joab, the cap-

tain of the hosts, to number the people. God had also predestinated that David would do this evil deed. For David said, "Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered, even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed." We believe that God had foreknown and also determined the very number of the people that Joab gave unto David. We are sure that neither God's foreknowledge nor his predestination caused David to sin and do evil indeed in numbering the children of Israel. For it was **Satan** who stood up against Israel and provoked David to do this thing. Then we can see and must say that it was Satan who caused David to sin and do evil. Sin is an act of the creature. God does not cause us to sin, but neither is he blind to our sins, nor does he approve; yet he knows us for what vain creatures we are, and has known us since before the foundation of the world. When we sin, we are not surprising God, for He has already foreknown or predestinated what we'd do in lust. He knows our every thought before we've thought it.

Primitive Baptists are sometimes called "Can't help its," but I hope no person professing to be a Primitive Baptist would apply this to excuse his sins by saying, "God predestinated it, and I couldn't help it!" Yes, it's true God predestinated or knew we would sin, but the predestination did not **cause** one to, for Satan stands up and provokes one to sin, and the character provoked is drawn away by his own lusts.

Brethren, there are many, many more examples we could recall concerning God's predestination and foreknowledge, but I feel surely that the things we've mentioned here express clearly our views on this great subject and establishes that although God **predestinates** (to ordain or appoint beforehand) and **foreknows** (knowledge of an event to take place beforehand) **all things**, He does not cause men to sin.

May God bless us in the Truth.

Elder R. O. Simmons
Route One
Elora, Tennessee

Rt. 1
Banks, Arkansas 71631

Dear Editors:

Enclosed find $5.00 for the **Signs** for two years. We (my husband and I) surely enjoy the dear paper each month. The good letters give us so much comfort when our feelings get so low. The experiences of grace of the children of God seem to express my feelings better than I could tell them myself. I go along most of the time doubting, but I believe His guiding hand leads and directs our steps; and I have a blessed hope in Christ Jesus which sustains me when I get so low.

My prayer is that I might be given wisdom to understand the truth taught in the Scriptures. What a blessing to be led into the mysteries of our God. If I am one at all, surely I am the least. If I could be just half as good as my brothers and sisters of this precious faith are, maybe I wouldn't have so many doubts and fears. With love.

A brother and sister in Christ, we hope,

Evan and Helen Landers

Box 693,
Quitman, Texas 75783

Dear Brother Wood:

I am sending a little write-up of the life of my mother-in-law, Mrs, Sallie White, for publication in the Signs of the Times. She was a long time subscriber to the paper, and earnestly contended for what it published; and was blessed to have it read to her after her eye sight failed and she could not see to read it herself. We feel she is now enjoying that heavenly rest that awaits the children of God.

May God in his infinite love and mercy enable you to carry on the publication of the Signs of the Times for all time to come.

Humbly submitted in love,
Buena White

ELDER RUSTON TO THE LATE SISTER GOOCH

Dear Sister Gooch:

In looking over my letter I feel I ought not to have finished it without dwelling upon the most important subject that I hope is our mutual concern. The Scripture in Romans 8:17 is on my mind: "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Verse 15 says, "for ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear."

As Gentiles, before the knowledge of the truth was revealed to them, the brethren at Rome were without God and without hope in the world. They did not have the law as did the Jews; yet when God wrote the work of the law in their hearts, they found condemnation in the flesh, and being children of Abraham according to the promise, they were experimentally made to know that Jesus Christ had brought them nigh, from afar, through the blood of the everlasting covenant: the Spirit taking the things of Jesus and revealing them unto them.

Well do I remember as a lad in day school, repeating the prayer, "Our Father which art in heaven . . .", and one seemed to say within me, "Ye are of your father the Devil." Oh, how vile and black I saw myself! and for many years I could not say, "Our Father which art in heaven." But when years after, I was so weak and helpless and undone, God said to me, "Thy sins which are many, are all forgiven thee," Oh, the sweet peace and joy that I had; and the whole earth was full of his praise. Then I could say, "My Father." I was in London, England, at the time, and how full of joy and praise I was. This was not the adoption, but the "spirit of adoption", the full adoption will come when our bodies are redeemed from the grave. (Romans 8:23)

Thus, by the spirit of adoption, we are enabled to say, "Abba, Father. The Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, and if children, then heirs." We are told that Abraham received the promise that he would be the father of many nations while he was yet uncircumcised, and he believed God; so that he received the promise not through the law, which was given four hundred andforty years later, but through the righteousness of faith." "For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect." God gave his only begotten Son, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, it being the will of God that we be new creatures in Christ Jesus. The apostle in Ephesians 2, tells us "by grace are ye saved . . . not of works lest any man should boast," for, saith he, "For we are his workmanship, **created** in Christ Jesus unto good works." These good works are what Christ Jesus of God is made unto us, wisdom righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

Those under the law (legalists) are ever learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. The five foolish virgins did not have vessels with their lamps: without this work of Christ they were vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; but the wise had vessels with their lamps. They were vessels of mercy which He had afore prepared unto glory: thus in this world "under the sun." We are told in Ecclesiastes, "The labor of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city." The wise men came by the light of the star to the city where the young child was. Jesus is the light from above illuminating His people. He is wisdom unto them. He is their righteousness. That faith which cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, is counted unto the promised seed for righteousness; and only such a righteousness exalts poor sinners. He is our sanctification, for He as our High priest, washes our feet, and we are clean every whit; so He said to his disciples, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." He is our re

demption. He has paid the full price; so that through His obedience and blood we come into fellowship with God in a two-fold sense. We have received at the Lord's hand double for all our sins. We, through our blessed Redeemer, are joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him.

The whole of this blessed creation has groaned and travailed in pain together. There are two togethers in this chapter, Romans 8: those who **groan and travail together,** will also be **glorified together.** We feel therefore that our cross as well as our crown, are both willed by our God. Our Lord suffered in the flesh; and we are told by our beloved Peter to arm ourselves with the same mind. (1 Peter: 4,1) The flesh is not changed in this life: if it gets in control, it is death; if on the other hand, we **through** the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the flesh, it is life. Jesus suffered in the flesh. We who would be led by the Spirit, will also suffer as He suffered; and we will find nothing to rest upon in the flesh. Every Jacob must have his nest stirred up. (Deuteronomy 32:9-12) while foxes have their holes in which to hide, all who are in fellowship with Christ here, must find at times that they have not where to lay their heads.

This creature, created in Christ Jesus, still must wait, for though we have received the Spirit of adoption, spoken of as the firstfruits of the Spirit, "even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to-wit, the redemption of our body." "As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." Many have gone before to heaven, but being joint-heirs, they cannot enter into the fulness of that inheritance until we, together with them, are made perfect: when this creature, body, soul and spirit, shall then completely be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Together with Him here we learn of Him, as his yoke is upon us; there we shall be like him, glorified.

May the Lord preserve us unto His glorious Kingdom, is the prayer of your humble brother,

George Ruston

Benton, Kentucky 42025

Signs of the Times:

I enclose a new subscription for two years, and a change of address, as shown.

Our people get much comfort from the Signs: some of them are shut in because of age during the winter season, and it is good news for them.

At the old church (Soldier Creek) the 2nd Sunday in January, we were greatly surprised at the number of our congregation. We had visitors from Bethel Association, sixty and seventy miles away, and from adjoining counties. Elder Paul Poyner, the Moderator, spoke from the text, 2 Corinthinans 5:19, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself . . ."

We had good news from Elder R. L. Biggs, of Nashville, a few days ago. He is recovering nicely from an operation he underwent this winter. Elder W. Y. Chandler is filling his appointments for him. Some of our churches in the Soldier Creek Association have cancelled meetings for the winter. We hope to be able, God willing, to meet at Soldier Creek, New Providence, and Zion Churches, however.

May it be God's will to be our shield and hiding place, and gather us together when it seems good to him, for his glory and our comfort; and when we can't meet together in church capacity, be near to comfort us with the truth as Jesus is truth. Let us not be ashamed to own our Lord, or to defend his cause in this world of chaos and destruction, and the different creeds and views religiously speaking.

In hope,
Effie Bowden

Rt. 4, Box 73
Lebanon, Mo.

Dear Brethren:

I would like to put some thoughts on paper, but I know if it is of the flesh it will be of no value to the true child of God.

In the 6th chapter of Ephesians we read, "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." When lawmakers get it in their power to make people act by force, is that not spiritual wickedness in high places? The 12th chapter of Daniel shows some wickedness in high places. Where the word of a king is there is power; but the children of God have a King who is supreme. He was King in the days of Daniel, and he still is King today. In the 8th chapter of Daniel it says that the man of sin will work wonderfully, and will destroy the mighty and holy people; but that man of sin can only go so far, and no farther. God is the same God today as he was when he spoke to the wind and the sea. When He commands they obey his voice.

Jesus declared in John 17:4, that he had finished the work his Father gave him to do. Then, is there anything yet to be done by men, to save souls? If they go into all the world, and preach the gospel, they can only preach the power of God sent down. It is not to tell men what they must do. As God wrote the ten commandments on tables of stone, so He writes his laws in his children's hearts. He takes from them the stony heart, and gives them a heart of flesh. He did not give the apostles power to do this, so these men who are going about preaching salvation by the works of men, are condemned already. Read Jeremiah 23:32. Paul asked the Galatians, "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"

I am not able to get all the spiritual light that is in the text, so I will send it to you to see if I have written the truth.

I hope a brother in Christ,

W. W. Kenoly

A GREAT MESSENGER OF COMFORT

Box 53
Okanagan Centre,
British Columbia, Canada

The Signs of the Times, Inc.
Danville, Va.

Dear Elder Spangler:

It has come around to the time of renewal of my subscription to the good old **Signs**, so have enclosed money order for $10.00 in U. S. funds: five dollars for our subscription, and five dollars to help in your efforts to send the **Signs** to loved ones who are unable to pay for it. I recently looked up the word Indigent in two dictionaries, one gave the meaning as, "needy, poor," and the other as, "destitute, needy," and I thought how much of my time is spent in this condition. In my flesh I am destitute of any good thought or action, and am always in need of the loving care of our dear Saviour; for without Him we can do nothing. "For in him we live, and move, and have our being."

My oldest brother, Duncan, of Vancouver, whom you met at the meetings in the state of Washington in 1963, was taken from us suddenly by a stroke on December 6th. He would have been eighty-two this month.

And now may the Lord bless and comfort you all who help in publishing the **Signs**, which is a great messenger of comfort, especially to those of us who live so far from where the preached word is to be heard.

From the least of those who love you,

and all who are made to love the Truth as it is in our Lord Jesus.

James W. Black

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the **Skewarkey Union** was appointed to be held with Rosemary Church, Roanoke Rapids, N. C., the 5th Sunday in April and Saturday before. The church is located on 14th Street, between Carolina Avenue and Virginia Avenue. Elder B. D. Handy was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder E. C. Harrison, alternate.

We cordially invite everyone to come and worship with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Clerk
Rt. 2
Williamston, N. C. 27892

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To February 1, 1967)

James R. Holly, Va.	$1.00
J. W. Black, Can.	6.00
Miss Minerva Dunlap, Me.	5.00
W. J. Collier, N. C.	7.00
Drusiler Gillispie, Md.	1.00
Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.	1.00

Danville, Virginia **April, 1967**

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CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with Tyson's Church, Pitt County, N. C., the fifth Sunday in April, and Saturday before.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 3, Tarboro, N. C.

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The **Staunton River Union Meeting** will convene with Union Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in April, 1967. The meeting house is located on State Road 605 in the northern part of Pittsylvania County, Virginia, near Climax School.

All of our correspondents and friends are urged to attend.

Burnell B. Williams, Clerk

EDITORIAL

'REJOICE EVERMORE'
(1 Thessalonians 5:16)

Heavenly joy on earth can never be understood nor appreciated by anyone other than a child of God. Those who have experienced the sweetness of God's rich and amazing grace can never in this world sing the wonders of it sufficiently to fully express their joy. Great has been the grief and sorrow; much greater, the joy. Our sins have abounded; much more has grace abounded. We have been convinced of our weakness and vanity but His strength has been more wonderfully manifested in us. What a contrast we experience when the sorrows of our minds are banished and heavenly joy floods our souls. Watts wrote, "Religion never was designed to make our pleasures less" (Beebe's Hymn Book — Hymn 676). We read in Proverbs 29:6, "In the transgression of an evil man there is a snare: but the righteous doth **sing** and **rejoice.**" The wonderful works of God experienced in the souls and lives of the Lord's people cause them to rejoice with exceeding great joy. This great rejoicing is included in the varied experiences of each and every one of his children. The climax of your greatest sorrow because of sin is greater rejoicing in the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Godly strength is the climax of your greatest weakness. We do not rejoice in the horrible pit; we rejoice in being brought out of it. We cry out of the depths of hell; we rejoice in the deliverance from it. When we remember from whence we have been lifted, we rejoice evermore.

The first exhortation given the disciples of Christ on the mountain in His great teaching was: "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." (Matthew 5:12) This quotation immediately follows the eight declarations of blessedness made by Christ in His sermon on the mountain. The elements of spiritual life is so perfectly and simply given in these eight beatitudes found in Matthew 5:2-10, that any attempt to improve upon it or more simplify it, would do nothing more than confound the reader. In these beatitudes you will find an analysis of perfect spiritual well being. All carnal conceptions of real happiness are left out of these expressions. There is not a single mention of any ordinance in these eight elements of a spiritual life, but they consist of a summary of God-given characteristics which result in a happy life. You will note that all these elements are internal charac teristics which beget happiness. The poor in spirit are rich in that they possess the kingdom of Heaven. One who really mourns will certainly be comforted. The earth shall surely be inherited by the meek. Those who really hunger and thirst after righteousness shall surely be filled. The obtaining of mercy is promised to the merciful. The pure in heart shall see God. Peacemakers shall be called the children of God. The kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are persecuted for righteousness sake. You will notice that the first element and the eighth element both agree in the conclusion: **"Theirs IS the kingdom of Heaven."**

Let us ask Paul to define the Kingdom of God. We find his answer in Romans 14:17: "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Paul adds: "For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore follow the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." Righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost belongs to those who have been given these eight sublime charcteristics. This surely gives us a reason to **rejoice evermore.**

The Apostle Paul beseeches us in Philippians 4:4, "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice." He was not satisfied by just saying it one time so he repeated it again. It was not vain repetition but he said it again to emphasize. He had just finished speaking of some whose names are in the book of life. How good it is to rejoice that your names are written in the Book of Life. Jesus said as recorded in Luke 10:20, "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice that your names are **written in heaven."** Even though they were given power to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy so that nothing could by any means hurt them, they were rather to rejoice that their names were written in Heaven. This is made clear in Revelaions 20:15, "And whosoever was not found written in the **book of life** was cast into the lake of fire." It is further written relative to those who shall enter into the new heaven: "And there shall no wise enter into anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the **Lamb's book of life."** (Rev. 21:27). Rejoice, brethren, because none of your enemies on earth will ever have access to this heaven; none can ever erase your name. They cannot enter this city, neither can they cause your name to be erased. Jesus only has the authority to blot out a name. He has promised: "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and **I will not blot out his name out of the book of life,** but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." (Rev. 3:5) When power is giv-

en you to overcome, it is an evidence that your name will not be blotted out. Rejoice not that your name is on a church book, but rather rejoice that your name is written in heaven. No doubt that there were many members of Sardis Church, but only a few names which had not defiled their garments. A majority of the members of a church may not be worthy to walk with Jesus, but this will not keep the few which are worthy from being properly recognized by Him. Many churches have a name that they live but they have left their first love, and have so departed from true doctrine and right practice to such extent that they are dead. Notwithstanding this, a small minority of members are yet owned and blessed by the Lord Jesus. Jesus may spue a church out of His mouth to such extent that it will lose its identity and cease to exist as a church; yet, the few names who are worthy will not be blotted out. Rejoice in the reality that true religion is a personal matter. Rejoice that the defiled garments of others in your church-home will not rub off on you. Rejoice because your dependence of being properly clothed is in Jesus. Rejoice in the white raiment of Jesus' righteousness which cannot be tainted with the unrighteousness of others. Rejoice evermore.

Rejoice in the Lord. "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:6-7) Rejoice that the Lord is at hand on every occasion and can be relied upon for everything. There is nothing too insignificant nor unimportant to be below God's care. Rejoice that God hears and answers all whose trust is in Him for everything. Rejoice that He has promised that the peace of God shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. We are not to be bowed down with anxiety and torn asunder about anything to the extent of great grief, looking to ourselves for all the answers, but we are to realize the Lord cares for us. We are to rejoice in that when we fail we have the assurance of the Lord taking care of the situation. Grieving because of loss of wealth, health, friends does us harm instead of good. Grief cannot bring back our loved ones from the dead. Grieving because of poverty cannot bring us riches. It does not help us to grieve over anything but our sins. Grief over our sins prompts supplications to God for strength to overcome and turn away. He promises to hear our cries and give us the peace of God which passeth all understanding. When this is true the result is repentance and strength to overcome temptations. God forbid that we wrongly stress the meaning of, **be careful for nothing.** It certainly does not mean that we are to abandon all thoughts of the future but rather to the contrary; the future is so important to us that we pray to God for guidance in everything. We are not to be anxiously burdened to the extent that we forget God in providing things honest in the sight of all men. Even this is important enough to make our request known to God that we need His guidance and strength. We are to rejoice that we can pour out our hearts in everything to Him for He is at hand. We are to rejoice that in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving we are to make our requests known to Him and He will keep our hearts and minds and give us this peace that even we cannot understand. When the Peace of God keeps our hearts and minds we have great reason to rejoice. Gnawing, biting, burning, and grieving cares are smokes that darkens the mind and shrouds the heart with clouds of doubts and fears of many of the children of God. Such souls are mourning because of unbelief. The faith that pleases God is not only believing that He is, but also believing that **He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.** See Hebrews 11:6. Dear child of God, rejoice that you have the faith to believe that whatsoever you ask in His name you will receive. Rejoice in knowing that when you ask it is given

you; when you seek you will find; and when you knock it is opened to you. Rejoice in the promises of God for they are yea and amen. Rejoice that He has promised to be with you always even unto the end of the world. Peace flows like a river into the souls of the elect which causes them to rejoice evermore.

Righteous thinking is the result of the peace of God keeping the minds of those who make their requests known unto God. Meditating on truth gives more joy than thinking upon untruths. There are enough honest and just things to occupy our thoughts instead of poisoning our minds with dishonest and unjust things. It is better to think on the pure and lovely rather than cluttering our minds with thoughts of the impure and hateful. There are many good reports that deserve our attention; why waste time on bad reports? I am persuaded there is yet virtue and praise. Even amidst the great confusion that exists, there are people whose minds and hearts are kept by the peace of God. Zion may be troubled by the author of confusion but a few within her borders are kept by the Author of peace. Rejoice, brethren, because our God yet liveth and doth reign in the hearts of men.

"For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and **rejoice in Christ Jesus,** and have no confidence in the flesh." (Phil. 3:3) Here are the characteristics of a true worshipper. We are not to worship anything or anyone other than God. We are to worship Him from the heart. We are to do it in Spirit, not just formally. We must adore, praise, and magnify His name. We must have no confidence in the flesh meriting any favor of God. We rejoice in the riches of Christ's gifts to us. We rejoice in Christ who cleanseth from all sin. We rejoice in Christ because He not only justified us but also sanctified us. We rejoice in His wisdom, rightousness, redemption, and sanctification. We rejoice in His riches, strength, person and grace. Our rejoicing and boasting is in Him, not in ourselves. We know that it is impossible to do anything righteous apart from Him. We rejoice not that we can perform righteousness; we rejoice that Jesus Christ performs righteouness through us. We rejoice that He is born in us the hope of glory. We rejoice in that He supplies sufficient strength in the same hour in which it is needed. Rejoice, brethren, for He has never failed you. Rejoice evermore.

The psalmist said, "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." (Psalms 118:24) Every natural day is the product of the Lord and many of His creatures rejoice in beautiful days; yet this rejoicing is not to be compared with the rejoicing of a poor sinner when the Sun of Righteousness shines in a darkened soul. What gladness! What rapture! What Joy! What a wonderful relief when gross darkness rolls away from the fainted soul! Such brightness of heart and mind will result in tears of joy. This is **the** day of all days when a sinner experiences the great mercy of God in feeling that his sins are forgiven. This spiritual day may come at midnight in the coldest of winter; yet the glow and warmth of it will cause the recipient to forget natural things. It is a sign of good spiritual health when the soul is made to rejoice. "Glory ye in his holy name; let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord." (Psalms 105:3) Many are the days of rejoicing after this first wonderful experience of mercy and grace. Night time, or darkness, will often come in your experience, and everytime you are enlightened a new day will be enjoyed. The wicked makes the evil day for it is written, "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea even the wicked for the **day of evil."** (Prov. 16:4) It needs be that offences come; yet there is a woe pronounced upon those who bring them about. We can rejoice in the fact that the Lord created the wicked for that purpose. None of the Lord's people have any desire to offend, yet this is the life of the wicked. The wicked are so constituted that their joy is in offending, persecuting, and

warring against godly things and people. We can rejoice because we are not to wield the sword that afflicts, but we are objects of these afflictions. David prayed as recorded in Psalms 17:13, "Arise, O Lord, disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the **wicked, which is thy sword.**" The wicked were created by Him and for Him according to the Scriptures. We can rejoice that our prayers relative to the deeds against us, are to be directed to God who created them and uses them as His sword. We rejoice that we are not to beg Satan and his followers to be easy on us, but we are to beg God. We are to rejoice that in a mysterious manner all things work together for our good to such a degree that all of our persecutions are not in vain. Rejoice, brethren, that it is not within our authority to destroy or fight a carnal warfare against the wicked. What a comfort and joy to know that the wicked can do no more against us than that which our Father allows. We are so glad to believe that when the Lord uses His sword sufficiently for our good and His praise, it shall be stilled. We rejoice to believe that God made man for His own glory. He did not make man in order to save him or damn him; but God is glorified in either. Rejoice that God glorifies the elect with eternal salvation in such manner that Jesus is to be praised for all its blessings.

Paul thanked God upon every remembrance of the saints always in every prayer **making requests with joy.** See Phil. 1:2-3. We make requests for the saints with joy because we see the marks of the Lord Jesus in their faces, speech, deeds, and walk. We rejoice in the Lord for their fellowship, Christ-like characteristics, faith, hope, and love. We rejoice that when we remember them our souls are filled with joy. How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. God hath ordained that we should pray with and for one another, making our requests with joy. We rejoice that we have the confidence that the good work that has been begun by God will be performed until the day of Jesus Christ. Paul's purpose in visiting the Philippians again, and continuing with them was for their "Furtherance and joy of faith." that their rejoicing might be more abundant in Jesus Christ. (See Phil. 1:25-26).

The great love of eternal life dispels the fear of death. I have known some who seemed to be continuously in bondage in fear of death up to the hour of death. When this hour came the sweet words spoken and the look upon their countenance seemed to indicate that this fear was illfounded.

The last words of our loved ones often are remembered longer and make more lasting impressions upon us than any other words during their lives. Living words of dying christians would fill many books. More joyful statements have been made in the hour of death than at any other time. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." God has proven this many times by inspiring testimonies of rejoicing in the hour of death. We read of one who whispered, "I wish I had the power of writing or speaking, for then I would describe to you how pleasant a thing it is to die." Death will give us complete liberty. Death can cure ills that physicians cannot cure. It is the comforter of those whom time cannot console. Death is the entrance into the celestial eternal city where death can never more come. I am persuaded that brethren rejoice while dying. Brethren, do not look upon death as your enemy, but rather rejoice that Jesus bore its pain and penalty that we might experience complete liberation and joy in death. Rejoice even in death. **Rejoice evermore.**

E. J. L.

EDITORIAL

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record

that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

(Romans 10:1-4)

The Roman brethren were Gentiles. Their fellowship with the Jewish brethren was brought about when Jesus said, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I can bring, and they shall hear my voice: and there shall be one fold and one shepherd," making it known that God had a people among both the Jews and the Gentiles. In bringing this to light which had been hidden before, Peter was given the wonderful experience of learning not to call "common or unclean that which God had cleansed." It will be remembered that this was done by Peter being sent to the Gentile Centurian to preach the gospel which he had been preaching to the Jews. It is noted, of course, that it was God that prepared both Peter and the Jewish brethren, and the Centurian and his company, for the disclosure that God's mercy was without respect of persons (Jew or Gentile). Peter preached, in the presence of the brethren with him, Jesus and him crucified to the Centurian and those with him: and the "Holy Ghost fell upon all of them," so that the wonderful experience removed all the prejudice the Jews once had, and caused them to say, "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." (Acts chapters 10 and 11)

In the epistle to the Roman brethren, Paul assured them, "I am debtor both to the Greeks and Barbarians; both to the wise and the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." (1st chapter Romans)

The Apostle was greatly concerned for his kinsmen according to the flesh, because most of them "Stumbled at that stumblingstone; as it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." And he made it plain that, though they were Israelites, "to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever," it did not indicate that all Israelites were of the family of God. For he continued, "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."

Thus, though all Israelites could claim Abraham as their father, it did not constitute them children of God: for the children of God are distinctly called the children of promise, which distinguishes them from commonplace natural children, represented by Ishmael, to the effectual working of God's promise, as represented by Isaac; thus making them children of Abraham and Sarah both naturally and in its spiritual significance. Paul shows also that these children of promise were among the Gentiles as well as the Jews, by saying, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." (Romans 9th chapter) So all the children of promise, the called

both of the Jews and the Gentiles, are counted for the seed, and compose the whole election of grace; and are all saved by the grace of God.

In our text the Apostle tells the Roman brethren of his concern for his Israelite kinsmen, saying that they being ignorant of God's righteousness, were attempting to establish their own righteousness, and were manifesting a zeal of God, which was not according to knowledge. Paul knew all about his brethren in the flesh: his former life exemplified them: for he once had the same ardent zeal they had. He could describe them, and his own former self, for he knew both of the states which a person quickened by the Spirit experiences. This was because the eyes of his understanding had been opened.

Paul bore record that, "They have a zeal of God." It cannot be understood that he was saying their zeal was from God — his own experience taught him better than that; for their zeal was not according to knowledge. Surely, if their zeal were from God it would be according to knowledge, and would be manifested in a godly manner. The meaning is that they had a zeal **for** God, as the literal translation has it: or a zeal concerning God. They had a zeal alright; but were ignorant, (not having been taught the Spirit of God,) that righteousness or salvation was alone by grace: and not by works of (for) righteousness; so their zeal took a contrary course. To them Jesus was an impostor; and in denying him they felt they were doing God's service: the same that Paul once did.

Paul would describe their condition as being alive without the law, for they were just like he once was. With them, however, the commandment (condemnation) had not come, sin had not "revived", and they had not died. Consequently their ignorance in these things prompted a hatred for the truth, for right and peaceful things, leading to further moral decline and crimes against their fellow men. All that they did, as they thought, was because of their zeal for God. Many instances of this zeal are recorded against them in the Scriptures, and against those of like zeal in the pages of history.

We mentioned that Paul was familiar with their ignorance, but they were not. Paul's understanding had been enlightened (Ephesians 1:18), and he knew that Christ was the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believed; and that it was not within the ability of any mortal, "to bring Christ down from heaven, or up again from the dead." But rather, when one was enlightened, it is manifested by those things which are, "In thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach." (Romans 10:6-8)

We are not to suppose that this sort of ignorance disappeared with Paul's generation, for the evidence is to the contrary in recorded history: which shows that there has always been an amazing amount of zeal, often amounting to frenzy, which has resisted and denounced almost every instance where the true followers of Christ maintained the doctrine that salvation is solely by the grace of God, and unto his chosen people only. This is not to say that the exponents of free-willism and the establishing of righteousness by works, decry the name of Jesus, (except the Jews,) for the name of Christian is used by them; but it is to say that they have denied Jesus by ascribing to his gospel many things which were never a tenet of his gospel. And they, we are persuaded, deserve the same censure as those who denied that Jesus was the Christ, and looked to their own works for righteousness. There is no difference in those of today who go about to establish their own righteousness before God by their works, and those who did the same thing in Paul's day. Neither were blessed to have what it takes to "submit themselves to the righteousness of God."

There is no question but that righteousness or salvation will ever remain positive both as to its manner of accomplishment, and to its personal mani-

festation, as it was taught by Jesus and his disciples. Any breach of their gospel in any way, such as it being conditioned on the exercise of personal free-will to accept or reject, or to the deserving of it by the works of the recipient, is contrary to the faith of God's elect; and is truly "another gospel", (and all such Paul denounced,) and rightly belongs to that which opposed "the gospel of the grace of God," which Paul preached. (Acts 2:24)

It is good to have a zeal for God, for such does not go beyond the things of God; but much of the zeal we see or read about goes beyond into things entirely contrary to God. This often takes the form of expressions such as, "God is pleased with our good intentions," or, "If we do the best we know how," (with all else these expressions imply,) as if such could be substituted for the perfect obedience God requires to his laws. It should be known that it is not permissible to substitute decisions of men for the announced decrees of God. When God sent his Son into the world to be the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believed, through the working of his mighty power, He provided the only way that righteousness could ever come to them. Though many do not like to admit it, it is true that **all men** are concluded in sin, and are guilty and under condemnation, and therefore totally unrighteous, and none can possibly redeem themselves.

This is Bible doctrine, believed and rejoiced in by each heir of promise, as he is brought out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God, when he sees his own alleged righteousness as nothing but filthy rags. But it is necessary to say that before this he knew nothing of his need of grace, and was either not concerned, or was actively seeking his own righteousness. It is his blessing, however, that though he was dead, the voice of the Son of God penetrated his condition and he heard and lived, being begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Thereafter he has a righteousness not of himself, but the imputed righteousness of Jesus to sustain him forever.

Now as to those who are not heirs of promise, they shall continue to work at their own righteousness, and expect to stand before God in peace by their works: never knowing the only righteousness that can bring any man before God in peace. We are not given to know just who the children of promise are — except the few we come in contact with, seeing the fruits of the Spirit in them; but we are glad that God knows, and to all that are His, though in their natures they may be the vilest among men, he will give assurance of their redemption by the blood of Jesus.

No wonder the redeemed of the Lord sing

> "Amazing grace how sweet the sound
> That saved a wretch like me:
> I once was lost, but now am found,
> Was blind but now I see."

As they exclaim with John, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

HEBREWS 12: 16, 17

"Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."

The birthright of Esau, as the first-born of the patriarch Isaac, was only that which entitled him to a temporal inheritance, which consisted in earthly dominion, and worldly possessions; and in its figurative import, set forth the spiritual privileges of the saints, in the

house of God, under the gospel dispensation, these privileges and rights which belong to them in the gospel organization of the church, by virtue of their spiritual birthright, such as church membership, and the fellowship, and communion of the saints, as belonging to the household of faith. Esau, as we are informed, despised his birthright, and sold it to Jacob for a mess of pottage. Of course we are not to understand that the eternal inheritance of the saints in glory can be by them either bought or sold; for that inheritance is incorruptible, undefiled, and cannot fade away, because it is reserved for them in heaven, and they are kept for the possession and enjoyment of it, by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. (1 Peter 1: 4, 5.) The apostle's admonition in our text, implies that there are, or may be, among the saints in the Christian church, while here on earth, some, who, like Esau, will barter away their spiritual privileges in the church, for carnal gratifications. This they can do to a limited extent. Those who are born of God are commanded to take Christ's yoke, and learn of him, to deny themselves of all ungodliness, and worldly lusts, to live soberly, righteously and godly; and they are assured that in this course, they shall find rest to their souls. This is their peculiar birthright, so far as concerns their privileges in the Zion of God, here on earth. But if to gratify the lusts of the flesh, they will walk disorderly, in rioting, drunkenness, or in any other manner of disorder, they sell at a cheap rate, the social, substantial and spiritual privileges of their birthright, for the momentary gratification of the flesh. So also when the children of God forsake the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is, they sell a precious birthright privilege, for the accommodation of some worldly lust. It may be their desire to accumulate worldly gain, or to gratify a lazy inclination; but in all cases it is only for pottage. If our carnal natures were, as some have contended, born again, or made spiritual, there would be in us no such wicked propensities to please; but we find by experience, that in us, that is, in our flesh, dwelleth no good; while with the mind we serve the law of God, with our flesh we serve the law of sin. There is in our depraved nature, a strong craving something for a certain kind of red pottage, as near as we can describe it, like this: to build up a sort of reputation by magnifying the faults of our brethren, in the gratification of which, we are inclined to make a brother an offender for a word; to thrust with side and shoulder, by disparaging the reputation of our fellows, so that we may be ourselves considered the largest fish in the pond; but the privileges of birthright dictates the better way, to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. We have not time or space now to show in how many ways christians may exchange their most valuable birthright enjoyments for carnal gratifications.

We are requested to dwell more particularly on the seventeenth verse, wherein we are told that Esau could find no place for repentance, though he sought it with tears. The blessing in which Jacob supplanted Esau was pronounced in these words, "God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: let people serve thee: and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee." — Gen. 27: 28, 29. How diligently Esau sought to rescind the transaction of his foolish bargain will appear by the account given in the same chapter. But his sorrow and tears were unavailing, he could find no place for them, or for repentance; he was held strictly to his bargain; though very much against his will. Isaac said, I have blessed him (Jacob), yea, and he shall be blessed. "And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceedingly bitter cry." But

alas, all was unavailing. His appetite had been gratified with the coveted red pottage, and his birthright was irrecoverably gone.

Is it not even so in the application of the figure to the saints? If they live after the flesh, shall they not die? When christians have been drawn away from the high and holy vocation wherewith they are called of God, by their carnal lusts, do they not lose the fellowship of their brethren? That fellowship and confidence is their birthright; but when sold for pottage, how hard it is to be regained. When the adversary has hailed thee to the judge, and the judge has delivered thee to the officer, and thou art cast into prison, thou shalt in no case come out thence until thou hast paid the utmost farthing. The minister, who in preaching, yields to the morbid craving for the red pottage of popular applause, and for a little taste of popularity, keeps back part of his message, or countenances that which is contrary to the word, will sink in the esteem of his faithful brethren, and finally lose the fellowship of the church of God. He may be employed as a preacher for antichrist; but his birthright has gone for red pottage. Paul does not say that the saints shall never find place for repentance, or by repentance, restoration to birthright privileges; for some wicked prodigals have been reinstated in the family; but there have been others, not a few, who have had to mourn with "exceeding bitter crying," that they for the gratification of their carnal propensities, have irrecoverably lost the confidence of their brethren, and birthright privileges in the church of Christ.

May God grant us grace, to keep our bodies under, to walk circumspectly, and to enjoy the blessed privileges of the house of God, until we shall be delivered from the corruptions of the flesh, and awake with the likeness of our glorious and glorified Redeemer.

(The above was an editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe August 15, 1855)

OBITUARIES

DAISY MEADS JOHNSON

Sister Johnson died November 27, 1965, at the age of ninety years. She was a daughter of John S. and Mary Delon Meads; and the widow of Walter Latham Johnson.

She was a life long resident of Salem Township, Pasquolauk County, N. C., and a member of Flatty Creek Primitive Baptist Church. She leaves to mourn her departure, four daughters and four sons, who lovingly cared for her, making her as comfortable as possible until the summons came from on high. It is indeed saddening to realize she will not meet with us again here, but we hope to meet in a land that knows no sorrow; where we will be fashioned like unto His glorious body, be like Him and be satisfied: never to part again.

Funeral services were held by her pastor, Elder I. S. Conner; and interment was in Highland Park Cemetery, where many friends were gathered with beautiful floral offerings.

Beadie L. Meads

DEACON DAVID HYATT

In memory of David Hyatt, son of Francis Marion Hyatt and Frances Malinda Briscoe Hyatt. Born August 7, 1898, in Marshall County, Alabama; and was married February 22, 1925, to Fannie Randolph, of Walker County, Alabama.

He joined the Missionary Baptist church at about 15 years of age; later he became dissatisfied and united with Primitive Baptists at Old Zion Church June 10, 1945, and was baptized, together with his wife, the following Sunday by Elder H. M. Brock. He was ordained a deacon on December 8, 1946.

After living in Walker County 32 years, he moved back to Marshall County in 1952, and established a grocery business. Because of convenience, moved his membership to Dorsey Creek Church in Cullman County, May 25, 1963. In October, 1963, he was appointed Chairman of the Marshall County Board of Registrars, and served in that capacity until his death, May 19, 1966.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder H. C. Moon, his pastor, at Gilliam Springs Church, May 20, and he was laid to rest in the adjoining cemetery. He left to mourn his passing, his wife, four sisters and two brothers.

Brother Hyatt is missed among the Old Baptists here, for he went far and near to church meetings. He was gifted in singing and in Scripture understanding, and was a joy to talk with. Always humble and loving peace

and fellowship. We feel our loss is his gain.

Written by the request of his wife.

Ercelle Hand

ROBERT EDWIN (BOB) CARTER

Deacon Robert Edwin Carter was born May 2, 1880, and was called from this life August 13, 1966, making his stay on earth more than eighty-six years. He was the son of the late William and Serena Hale Carter, of Franklin County, Virginia. He was married to Lucy Betty Mullins April 6, 1904; and to their union were born ten children, of which seven are living. He leaves to mourn his passing, his wife; two sons: Grover, of Henry, Va., and Lindsey, of Danville, Va.; five daughters: Mrs. Elsie Gilliams, Martinsville; Mrs. Roxie Carter, Ferrum; Mrs. Lessie Via, Henry; Mrs. Mamie Prillaman, Bassett; and Mrs. Martha Johnson, Fieldale. Also, one brother, Henry Carter, Virginia Beach; thirty-five grandchildren, seventy-seven great grandchildren, and three great, great grandchildren.

Brother Carter joined Union Primitive Baptist Church, Henry County, Va., the fourth Sunday in November, 1940, and was baptized the fourth Sunday in December by his pastor, the late Elder Emmitt R. Bryant; and was ordained a deacon October 23, 1943. He faithfully filled that office as long as he was able. He died in Martinsville General Hospital after a long illness.

Brother Carter was a firm believer in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. Union Church has suffered a great loss, for he was a faithful and devoted member; but we feel our loss is his great eternal gain.

His funeral was conducted at Republican Primitive Baptist Church, Franklin County, Va., by his pastor, Elder Leonard Brammer, and Elder Amos Hash, in the presence of a great audience of people to pay their respect to one they loved. His body was laid to rest in the Carter family cemetery to await the coming of the Lord.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family, and bow in humble submission to the will of God. Written by a sister in hope,

Rada L. Rakes

SISTER SALLIE E. WHITE

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from this earthly life of toils and sufferings, Sister Sallie E. White on December 7, 1966, at the age of 96 years, 2 months and 20 days. She was born October 17, 1870, in Harris County, Georgia, and moved to Alabama with her parents in 1885. She was married to Samuel H. White April 4, 1890. To this union seven children were born, four of whom, together with her husband, preceded her in death a number of years.

She united with Cana Primitive Baptist Church, Wood County, Texas, in October 29, 1915 and was baptized by the late Elder R. E. White. She was one of the two remaining charter members of that church. She was tenderly laid to rest beside her husband in Myrtle Springs Cemetery December 9, 1966. Services were conducted by Elder Loyd Wall, who spoke very beautifully and comfortingly to the bereaved. She was loyal to her church and always attended regularly until she became a victim of arthritis and was an invalid for 3 years. She always bore her sufferings with great fortitude, never complaining more than was possible for a mortal to do. She had a great desire to depart and be with her Savior whom she tried to serve and worship.

Mother White was indeed a true mother and never tired of lending a helping hand to those in need, always giving of her substance to those less fortunate than she. She is survived by three daughters: Mrs. Belle Perritt, Mrs. Clara Perritt and Mrs. Avis Browning. She made her home with her oldest daughter, Belle, the last three years of her life, and was tenderly cared for by her three surviving children. She is also survived by 21 grandchildren, 37 great grandchildren, 17 great, great grandchildren.

The floral offering was beautiful and profuse, a large crowd was in attendance to pay tribute to one they knew and loved so well.

Her daughter-in-law,
Buena White

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God in his infinite wisdom and power has seen fit to call from our midst our beloved, Larry Wood, the son of the late Brother and Sister Melia Wood, who was born August 31, 1918, and died January 18, 1966, making his stay on earth forty-eight years, four months and eighteen days.

He is survived by his wife, one son, two daughters, four sisters, one brother, and a host of other relatives and friends. He united with Hickory Grove Church January 9, 1965, at a called meeting at his home, and was baptized in a bath tub by Elder Lester E. Lee. He had a strong faith and was a faithful member until death, though he was afflicted.

Brother Wood loved his family and was a faithful husband, father and brother. His family loved him, and did all for him that loving hands could do; but God loved him and

has called his spirit to rest with Christ until He comes back and raises his body from the grave, and gives him a perfect body with everlasting life with Him forever. Brother Wood was a veteran of World War II.

Elder Lester E. Lee and Mr. Eason served at his funeral, with a large crowd of relatives and friends present. Let us not sorrow as those who have no hope, but thank God that we believe Brother Wood will live beyond the grave.

BE IT RESOLVED, That the church extends its love and sympathy to Brother Wood's family, and pray that Jesus will comfort and bless each one of them; and that a copy of this resolution be sent to the family, one recorded on the Church Book, and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Read and approved by the Church in conference Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in March, 1966.

Brother Eldridge McLamb
Sister Vara Johnson
Elder Lester E. Lee and Wife
Committee

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT
SISTER DORA TURNER

We the Church of Robersonville have been made very sad at the death of our dear Sister Turner, who passed away after a prolonged illness on July 26, 1966, at the age of 73 years.

Surviving her are her husband Mr. Ruel Turner; four sons, Norman, Ruel Johnson, Ray and Robert all of Oak City; and one daughter, Mrs. Lance Johnson of Williamston. Her funeral was conducted at home by Elder W. E. Grimes and Mr. William Denson. Interment was in the cemetery at Oak City.

She united with this church several years ago and attended regularly until afflictions caused her absence for sometime prior to her death. We have evidence to believe that afflictions worked for her a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory and we feel that "she has entered into that rest which remains to the people of God." God's people are "made perfect through suffering" and when sin is finished it brings forth death.

We the Church of Robersonville hope that God's richest blessings may rest upon all who are near and dear to her, giving them a spirit of reconciliation, for we know that God does all things well and at the right time and none can stay his hand.

Done by order of Conference on Saturday before the first Sunday in August.

Elder I. S. Conner, Moderator
J. R. Gardner, Clerk
Sue Moore, Committee

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT
BROTHER JOSEPH J. WILLIAMS

Brother Williams passed away Wednesday, August 3, 1966.

He had been in declining health for sometime with a heart condition, but was apparently as well as usual that morning at six o'clock, but died suddenly of a heart attack, which was a shock to his family and neighbors and to all who knew him. He was born in Gold Point September 9, 1894, 71 years ago. Most of his life was spent on his farm, but in 1947 he located in Robersonville, N. C. and was a prominent citizen in his community, giving most of his life to the service of others, and to worthy causes.

He was married to Carrie Everette and they observed their 50th wedding anniversary last January 12. Surviving are Mrs. Williams, three sons — Russell and J. L. Williams of Robersonville, and William Williams of Greenville.

We the Church of Robersonville have sustained a great loss at the passing of our dear Brother, and tongue nor pen can ever be able to express the sorrow we feel at the loss of such an useful and faithful member.

He was our clerk, treasurer, and one of our deacons all of which he served humbly and efficiently when he was physically able to serve. One of the many evidences he manifested that he had passed from death unto life was his sincere love for his Brethren esteeming others better than himself.

He visited churches far and near. All everywhere were held in high esteem and brotherly love. He and his companion were given to hospitality and their house was always open to the Primitive Baptists far and near who chose to visit them.

Brother Williams united with the Primitive Baptist Church of Robersonville in October, 1953, and held out faithfully until the end. God in His infinite wisdom removed him from our midst, and we feel sure that his afflictions worked for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

His funeral was conducted by Elder I. S. Conner of Portsmouth, Va., Elder W. E. Grimes and Elder E. C. Harrison in our church, and interment was in Robersonville Cemetery.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to *Zion's Landmark*, one to the family, and one recorded in the church minutes.

Done by order of Conference, first Saturday in August, 1966.

Elder I. S. Conner, Moderator
J. R. Gardner, Clerk
Sue Moore, Committee

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 135 DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1967 NO. 5

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

LETTER OF A NIECE TO SISTER RUSTON

Dear Aunt:

I feel I should love to write to you and tell you a little of my feelings, and how good the Lord is to such an unworthy creature.

In the service a week ago the Lord came over all my fears, and such was his love to me, I lifted up my heart to Him, and could say, "Saved to the utmost now, who can speak my heart-felt joy?" And last night. "His goodness was more than a match for my heart." I felt during the second hymn that if my Saviour had called me home, I should have been as sure of heaven as I was standing there; and I can say, although I feel the chiefest sinner, "For love of me the Son of God drained every drop of vital blood; long time I after idols ran, but now my God's a martyred man." Oh, how I love Him; He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely to my soul. "Withered and barren should I be, if severed from the vine."

I want to be able to cast all my care upon Him, for he careth for me, although I feel such a vile sinner in and of myself. I loathe and abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes, but, "If dust and ashes might presume, great God, to talk to thee." He lets me talk to Him sometimes as one talks to his friend. I love to feel nothing in myself, so that Christ is my all in all.

"My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life and breath remains;
There my best friends, my kindred dwell,
There God my Saviour reigns."

I hope you won't mind me writing these few lines, but I felt I must tell you how much I love Him. I can say with Peter, "Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." And Oh, to whom else can we go? I love to wash his feet and wipe them with the hairs of my head, in my feelings. I do desire to sit at His feet, clothed in my right mind.

Your loving niece,

(The above was written in 1937 to Sister Ruston by a niece in England.)

DOUBTS AND FEARS; BUT A PRECIOUS HOPE

Tennessee Ridge, Tenn. 37178

Dear Editors:

We are receiving our **Signs** regularly and it is read with much interest and consolation, and would be at a loss without it. I want to thank the editors and associate editors for their contributions, and thank the Lord for making it possible through His sustaining power.

If the Lord has given me any understanding of the Scriptures, (as I feel at times He has,) I completely and heartily indorse the principles which the **Signs** advocate. It is food for such an unworthy creature as I feel to be.

I have made many mistakes down through life, although if the dear Lord died on the cross to save sinners and raised for their justification, I humbly hope I am in that number.

John 1: 11, 12, 13, "He came unto His own and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God,

even to them that believed on His name: Which were born, not of blood, nor the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, but of God."

That power of God given them (spoken of above) is all power both in heaven and earth and is the love and mercy of the Spirit of God. Paul speaks, in 2 Timothy, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

We cannot go to Jesus on our own power but must be drawn to Him by His power. He makes us know how helpless we are in our present condition. I like the word "make" because unless we are made we do not even want to do the works of the Lord. If I am not deceived that is my experience. We do not even have the desire without His Spirit in us.

Oh! that mighty power that is above all power, that is able to save and destroy. In Matthew 10: 28, "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Oh! that the Lord will give me power and strength and enable me to put my trust in Him, to guide my weary footsteps and make me submissive to His will. Psalms 32:23 "The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord" David said also, "For thou hast delivered my soul from death: Wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?"

Although I have doubts and fears, at times I feel that I have a precious hope that the world cannot take from me. I pray that the Lord will keep me from all evil and save this poor sinner from my sins.

My wife and I, both seemingly cannot wait for the time to come for us to go to our meetings in order to hear and to receive that precious food prepared for His sheep. We go to church in Nashville, Tenn. Elder R. L. Biggs is pastor there. He has been in poor health and has recently had surgery, but is now at home. We pray that he will have a speedy recovery and will soon be able to preach again.

My subscription for the **Signs** is due in April, so in order not to neglect it, I am sending a check for you to extend my subscription for another two years.

From a sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

Harvey Vick

DEATH IN ADAM — LIFE IN CHRIST

Dear Brother Beebe:

A brother Parker, in Indiana, wrote me some time ago for my views upon the text, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. 15: 22) I neglected replying with his request until now. I send a discourse delivered upon that subject in the Old School Baptist chapel in Lebanon, Ohio, on the second Sunday in May, 1894, which you may publish if you think proper.

My mind seems to rest upon this portion of the inspired word: and I shall endeavor, as God may give me ability, to speak words of comfort to the brokenhearted, a word in season to him that is weary, and point out springs of water to them that are thirsty, and rivers of milk and honey to them that are hungry. May the children all have ears this morning to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

This passage of the written word has been relied upon by false teachers to prove their vain imaginings and unholy speculations concerning the salvation of men. The Arminian ignorantly resorts to this quotation to hide the grossness of his schemes and give some face to his free-will absurdities; but when his Universalist brother puts in his claim for it, to bolster up his plan. The Arminian is forced to yield the ground to his more

logical claimant, who, as the strong man armed, keeps his goods in peace until a stronger than he comes. This occurs when one who is skilled in the word of righteousness, whose understanding has been opened to understand the Scriptures, takes it in the light of the testimony of the Spirit, and presents it in its true relation to all other Scripture, to the faith, experience and knowledge of those who have been taught of God. It is then clearly seen that it is stolen goods in the hands of all those teaching a conditional system of salvation, and will not fit their scheme.

"As in Adam all die." I shall first briefly discuss the word "all", for upon this word mainly rests the perversion of this text, as well as that of many other portions of the Scriptures. This little word has been made to shoulder very weighty responsibilities. Many an elaborate discourse, many a zealous sermon, many a stirring exhortation, has been delivered solely at its expence. We have often heard men who have more zeal than knowledge, whose fanaticism outweighs their thoughts, and with whom logic is at a discount, and airy conclusions at a premium, in their bursts of enthusiasm and blind rage against the truth, assert in the most self conceited triumph that, a-l-l never spells part. They consider this a knock-down argument against unconditional, personal election, that fundamental principle of all Bible truth. They deem this foolish, meaningless assertion sufficient proof against the doctrine of particular redemption, special calling and final preservation, and hold it as an elenchus of the doctrine of offered mercy, offered love and offered salvation; but such puerile, empty, sweeping assertions can never be taken as argument by a mind that is accustomed in the least to think on these things. A-l-l does frequently and almost without exception spell part. All men in Ohio are but a part of the men in the United States; all the men in the United States are but a part of the population of the American continent; all christians are only a part of the people of the world. It is clearly seen that while this word always means all of something, it invariably means at the same time, a part of something. I have thus briefly spoken of the word "all" in a general way; let us now make the application to it in this test.

"As in Adam all die." In regard to the all that die in Adam, there are but two positions possible: first, that all the human family die in Him; and second, that all the saints of God die in Him. So far as the fact of dying in Adam is concerned, the first proposition is true — all the human family die in Him; and if the first be true, then the second is necessarily true, for the Saints are a part of the family of Adam, and what is true of the whole, is true of every part of the whole. Now, to arrive at the truth of what is taught here, it remains only to determine which of these positions is embraced in the text. The Apostle has under consideration here, the resurrection of the just, and their final deliverance from this bondage of death. He is treating of the resurrection of the Saints in their order. He modifies the expression, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," in the next sentence by saying, "Every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." Here he stops short: not a word said about any one except Christ and them that are his. This clearly sets a limit to the word "all'. As all that are Christ's die in Adam, so all that are Christ's shall be made alive in Him. But suppose that all does mean all the human family, which is true as a fact, but not necessarily true from this text, this argues nothing for the Arminian or Universalist, as there is none made alive in Christ but them that are His. As in Adam, all that are in Adam die, even so in Christ, shall all who are in Him be made alive. Even then if the first "all" does mean the whole human family, there is nothing in the wording of the text which teaches that the same "all" who die in Adam, are made alive in Christ. This must be proved, if it can be, from some other source.

The death of the saints in Adam, is their inheritance from him. By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death hath passed upon all men, for all have sinned. The dissolution of this mortality is only the consumation of that death which hath already passed upon us. We are not simply under the sentence of death, waiting the execution, but death itself hath already passed upon us in reality. There is no power of will, no moral reform, no religious conjuring, no medical skill, that can deliver us from this death. Death reigns absolute, so far as his subjects are concerned; and his dominion is a broad one. The whole human family, the lower animals and vegetable kingdom, are territories where none disputes his sway or disturb his reign. There is no one so noble as to escape the common lot, none so ignoble as to be slighted, none so rich as to buy a reprieve, none so poor as not to be worth the taking; but all are swept away struggling, shuddering, resisting, pleading, by the merciless hand of death.

"The glories of our mortal state
Are shadows, not substantial things.
There is no armor against Death;
He lays his icy hand on kings.
Sceptre and crown
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

"Some men with swords may reap the field,
And plant fresh laurels where they kill;
But their strong nerves at length must yield—
They tame one anothed still.
Early or late
They stoop to fate,
And must give up their murmuring breath
When they, pale captives, creep to death

"The garlands wither on your brow;
Then boast no more your mighty deeds,
Upon Death's purple altar now
See how the victor-victim bleeds!
All heads must come
To the cold tomb:
Only the actions of Christ the just
Smell sweet and blossom from the dust."

Death seems to be a necessity both in nature and in grace. Not that God was under necessity to so arrange, but that it seemed good in His sight to have it so. Its all prevading, irrestable, irrepressible reign throughout all countries, all ages and all departments of nature is enough to start the question in the thoughtful mind. Does not death serve some great economy in God's universe? Is it a mere interloper that God would not have here? Is it not a provision of His own wisdom for carrying out His own design in creation?

Death is a necessity in the vegetable kingdom; for "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (John 12:24) This is a specific statement, setting forth the principle of reproduction in the vegetable world. Everything that lives is an evidence that something died. The giant oak, adorning the majectic forest, is a living monument that marks an acorn's grave; and the inscription read in every leaf and written in every bough is, "An acorn died." Every speck of grass that gems the lawn, every flower that brightens and perfumes the garden, every crimson laden tree of the orchard, proclaims that something died.

The holy Apostle, in treating upon the resurrection of the dead, brought to his argument this universal fact of nature. "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." The Saviour, in speaking of the necessity of His own death, and the glory that should follow, used the same fact as an illustration in the words, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." Death precedes quickening in the vegetable kingdom, and is essential to it. This same mysterious principle in a deeper and more hidden manner extends into the animal kingdom, and even reaches the kingdom of grace. The Saviour opened the door and gave us a glimpse of this mysterious chamber when He said, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." (John 12:24) He applied the universal principle of reproduction in the vegetable kingdom to himself. He here gives us to understand that the process of reproduction exemplified in plant life was in some way wrapped up in him; and the principles of His death

and our redemption by His blood are in some way illustrated by the death and quickening of a grain of wheat. Now this same saying may with propriety and truthfulness be transferred to Adam, for he is the figure of Christ. Except Adam had died, he would have abided alone, and the world would never have been peopled through him. Adam begat no children until death passed upon him in the sentence, "Dying thou shalt die." This is strange indeed; but what is not strange when properly thought upon? Its being strange is no evidence against its truthfulness. Truth is always stranger than fiction sure enough. The process cannot be explained, the reason cannot be given, yet it is true. We are warranted in carrying this fact into the animal kingdom by a strictly scientific basis. The principle of reproduction, growth and repair, is found alone in vegetable life; it does not belong to the order of animal life. The difference between the tree and the animal is not that the animal does not possess vegetable life, but that the tree does not possess animal life.

The order of vegetable life endows the animal with the power of reproduction. When a bone is broken, it is the power of vegetable life that causes it to knit together again; and the same principle heals the wound that is made in the flesh or muscles of the body, and cauces the hair to grow again when cut or plucked out, and the finger nails to grow again when trimmed. Animal life endows its possessor with the power of locomotion and instinct; but without vegetable life, there would be no reproduction growth and repair. Then, so far as the reproduction of his kind is concerned, it is fonud alone in the order of vegetable life, which is mysteriously combined with animal life, to make up an animal organism, or a human personality. Hence the same principle of death and quickening which is essential to plant reproduction lies deeply hidden in the fact and process of all animal procreation; hence it was necessary that Adam should die. It should be noticed again that death is not simply the dissolution of this mortality, but that this dissolution is but the consumation of that death which has been at work in our members from the time of our birth.

Now, the saints of God in their mortal state, in their natural personality, were created in the earthly Adam; and when death passed upon him, it passed upon them. They are the production of a body of death; consequently they must die. This death, with all its attendant circumstances, its prodigious economy in all nature, cannot possibly be the accident of a day, the result of the mistake of free-will, or anything of that kind. This would be the blindest fatalism, the sternest doctrine of chance. Death plays too stupendous a part in all the affairs of this world, both in the physical and moral spheres, and shines too bright in the everlasting covenant, to be a mere interloper in God's universe. Faith looks upon it as a provision of infinite wisdom, a gracious providence, ordained by the Creator to fulfill His own eternal purpose, both in providence and in grace. The whole process of Christian experience is a struggle between life and death, sin and holiness, corruption and incorruption: and the whole summing up of christian hope is that we shall one day be delivered from this bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

"Even so in Christ shall all be made alive." The "all" referred to here, are clearly they that are Christ's, the whole election of grace. The resurrection of the saints as here brought to view, is in Christ. This resurrection is but the triumphant consummation of something long gone before. It is the harvest of grace, sown in Christ before the foundation of the world. It is "the divine far-off event to which the whole creation moves." Death in Adam and life in Christ is the fundamental idea of the New Testament Scriptures, the golden text of the gospel of grace, the master-key to christian experience. In treating upon the same theme, the same inspired writer has recorded, "As by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall

many be made righteous." Men are made righteous by the obedience of Christ, upon exactly the same conditions upon which they were made sinners by the disobedience of Adam.

Adam's sin and disobedience reached us by virtue of our vital relationship to him. Upon no other condition could we possibly have been made sinners by his disobedience. If we had not been in him, virtually in him, of the same life with him, then this disoedience would not, could not, have reached us at all. Upon exactly the same condition the obedience of Jesus reaches His people and makes them righteousness. When the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, He took upon Himself the seed of Abraham, the election of grace. They were made members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones in His incarnation, by virtue of the grace and life that were given them in Him, according as they were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before God in love. He was the ark of God's covenant; and when he struggled with temptations; when he suffered for sins; when he died upon the cross. when He descended into Hell, they were safely housed in him, and brought safely through it all. They paid tithes in Him, became dead to the law by His body, reconciled to God by Him. By virtue of this oneness of life, this vital relation to Him, His perfect obedience, His suffering and triumphant resurrection, are all accounted unto them, and reaches them most effectually, and shall make them all righteous.

As to the certainty of the Saints all being made alive, is just as certain as their death in Adam. Who can question the certainty of death? Is it not this certainty that strikes terror to the heart of all living? Are there any conditions between us and death upon which death can be brought or stayed? There is no way of escape. According to the inspired record of eternal truth, there is no reason to doubt the certainty of life in Christ. Inasmuch as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. The one is just as certain as the other. Jesus himself said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me. And this is the father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

It is not the will of our heavenly Father that any of these little ones who fall asleep in Christ shall perish. All our sins have been put away by Him, and He has redeemed us unto God by his blood. By the one offering He hath perfected us forever. We are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God; and when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall appear with Him in glory. He hath loved us with an everlasting love; He hath chosen us to salvation; He hath appointed us to glory; He hath ordained us to eternal life; He hath predestinated us to be conformed to the image of His Son; He hath laid down His life for us; we are reconciled to God by His blood; we are washed, sanctified, justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. Our destiny is indissolubly linked with the destiny of Jesus. How can this incomprehensible work of grace fail? Faith embraces it all, and rests in this finished work of our Redeemer, and looks forward with joy and gladness to the final consumation of it all. The resurrection of the dead is the crowning result of the work of Christ and God's purpose of salvation. Then shall be brought to pass the saying, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?" "I will redeem them from death, I will ransom them from the power of the grave." Death will be swallowd up in victory.

May God give us grace to trust Him, and to walk humbly before Him, and in patience and hope await the great day of our final, eternal deliverance.

H. M. Curry

(The above by Elder Curry was published in the *Signs* June 20, 1894. In reading it re-

cently, we were so delighted with the way he presented the wonderful subject, we wanted to share it with those who have not read it. — J. D. W.)

"WHAT SEEK YE?"

Rt. 3, Box 42,
Chestertown, Md. 21620

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

This letter may not be worth reading, much less worth printing, but I will leave that to you to judge. If the Lord is in it, I am going to try to put some of my thoughts into writing.

In our daily lives, many times our minds are filled to overflowing with thoughts upon portions of Scripture and the meaning of them. The other evening while listening to a program on the radio I was very much interested in the answers given by some young college students concerning their ideas on various phases of life today. There were four students — three girls and one boy. When asked what part religion had in their daily life, I was thoroughly amazed to hear three of them say they thought "religion was definitely on the way out!" Can you imagine that?!! The other one said he thought religion "should have a place in our lives but that more stress and importance should be put upon other things". What other things? Why are the people today so restless and unsettled? The girls who felt religion was on the way out gave as their reason, "Young people of today want to see what they believe in. How can we be expected to believe in something we cannot see?" And much more on the same line of thought. Hearing these young folks and what they call the modern way of thinking aroused many thoughts in my mind. There were "Doubting Thomases" in the days of our Lord and there will always be. Show me and I'll believe it!

The worldly go around today seeking they know not what. Looking, ever looking, for something to satisfy them, and not knowing what they want. The young folks often come from homes even more confused than they are. The scripture verse in John 1: 38 came to my mind. "Then Jesus turned and saw them following and saith unto them, "What seek ye " What a powerful question. So full of meaning each time the Savior asked it.

Before proceeding further, I want to go back a little and speak of John. This man came up from the wilderness, preaching a strange, different sort of message, from that which anyone had heard before. His personality and appearance attracted many followers who were interested in the news he brought. They were looking for a King — one whom the prophets had said would come and free them from their wicked rulers. When John came, they wondered if he were the expected one, the Christ. When questioned, he denied that he was the Christ. They then asked, "Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us." (John 1: 22) He said, "I am the Voice of one crying in the Wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaiah"; and then went on to say, "But there standeth One among you that ye know not; He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose."

When John saw Jesus coming, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is He of whom I said After me cometh a man which is preferred before me; for He was before me." He told them of Jesus and how "He must increase but I must decrease." They asked many questions and John answered according to the scriptures and prophets from the Old Testament. After John was cast into prison (I must decrease) and Jesus began to preach (He must increase), the multitudes follow Him to hear the strange, wonderful things he spoke. Then we see how Jesus received these followers. All through the Gospel record of the New Testament we find Jesus ever searching the hearts and probing the minds of men. He knew their thoughts and the reasons for their behavior, but he must ask them and re-

ceive their answers. Knowing the frailty of our nature, Jesus often put them to the test by asking the fundamental question, "What are ye seeking?" "Then Jesus saith unto them, "What seek ye?" Not always did they have a good answer. For some had been following from curiosity; some to see what He was doing; and some thinking He was the King, long awaited, watched for some great happening that would free them from their bondage. Many left following Him when they saw nothing unusual. Many followed for the free food they received and as long as they received that, they did not look for spiritual food.

Jesus, knowing what is in our hearts, knew what their answers would be. That's why, as we turn to Him and He asks, "What seek ye?", unless we can say "The Savior, Lord.", we see him for less than He is. Man in his carnal state is always seeking something. Wandering from place to place; false pleasure to false pleasure. In this restless unsettled condition, if one were to question, Why?, it is very doubtful if one would get a satisfactory answer. We are so overwhelmed with the problems of everyday life that we fail to stand back and look at life as a whole. We need to put our eye to the telescope and look past the fragments that confuse us daily, to the great, wide wonderful world as a whole, and see things in the true proportion as they are. We are just tiny specks in a great big world. We retreat at times from the world to refresh and recreate a new spirit and enlarge the scope of our life, when the flood tide of the Spirit washes away the absorbing, hurrying pursuit of life.

The average person is aware that something is lacking and knows not what it is, nor does he know how to go about obtaining it if he *could*. If the Lord is in the matter, stirring up the mind and heart, there will be no end to it until the work is finished and he is brought face to face with himself, to know how wretched and undone he is. How useless his life has been! Phil. 1:6. "Being confident on this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Then, and not until then, can he give a good answer when asked, "What seek ye?" "Seeking first the Kingdom of Heaven, all things then shall be added." Then we realize we did not come this way of our own accord, we know that it is all of the Lord, for "*all* things are possible with God." (Mark 10:27) Stop just a minute and think of what that means! *All* things are possible! Not just part, but *all*. That covers a vast area and unless our minds are expanded to grasp the greatness of it, the conception is too large to enter into our minds at all. But once we are blest to realize how great that meaning is, it will revolutionize all our points of view and raise us up to a higher plane of thought and feeling: Our spirits would take wings and fly up with the angels on high.

Again, think of the moment Christ uttered these words, "What seek ye?" and know the reason for them. The rich man wanted to inherit eternal life, seeking heaven the easy way. When Jesus told him to "Go sell whatsoever thou hast and give it to the poor and follow me," it was too great a price to pay. So he did not truly seek God. Christ said, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God." (Luke 18:25) This is often misinterpreted by the worldly to mean to get through the eye of a needle only after a struggle, so they use other words than "camel," making it appear that if they struggle hard enough, they will finally make it to heaven. But God said, "camel," and as this is utterly impossible, it truly means it is impossible for one rich in their own self-works and self-righteousness to enter into heaven. Our Lord asserted an unconditioned impossibility. The disciples were astonished and asked, "Who then can be saved?" What was the Lord's answer? "With men it is impossible, but *all* things are possible with God."

Once again we see that *ALL*. The "impossible" constitutes the whole sphere of divine operation. It is human to make mistakes, but God never makes errors. Men can slay, but we see the finger of God when dead men rise again. If water will not cleanse the soul, then it must be God who cleanses it with Blood. When those who are dead in trespasses and sin walk in newness of life, we see displayed the power of God.

The great lesson the Savior was teaching His disciples was not that of human ability, but that of Divine ability. That man *cannot* save himself. He had not made that supreme sacrifice on the cross yet and the redeeming blood had not been shed, but He preached "Believe in God and thou shalt be saved." And the meaning remains the same throughout eternity. For He and His Father are one. "Ye believe in God, believe also in Me." Therefore, everything is so ordered as to fix our attention first on our helpless, undone condition, and then to rejoice in the Almighty Salvation of God. Here is the only sure place our hope is anchored and our feet safely established. None knows better than we how hard it was to get away from self trust: reaching for God with one hand and holding tight to the world with the other. How often we thought, by some action of our own, we could gain a title to happiness. But none knows better than we the sadness and disappointment we felt when we found our efforts were of no use. It may be that, like the rich young man, "we have kept the commandments from youth up," it had not satisfied our heart. We still went on seeking and seeking. We still asked, "What lack I yet?" "What good thing shall I do?" Our needs are never satisfied in this manner. The ends of the earth may know our voice and we may have bestowed our goods to feed the poor: we may have even given our body to be burned, but it profits us nothing. The soul still cries out, "What lack I yet?"

If I were to look deep into my heart and the struggles of my storm tossed soul passed before my mind's eye, all its past despairs, fears, hopes, and doubts, would be a long history of discouragement and ineffectual efforts of my own to please God and gain eternal life the easy way. We knew we couldn't save ourselves; our best hopes always ended in failure. Then, wonder of wonders, like balm to a bruised and broken heart, our Lord's gracious assurance: It is impossible with man, but not with God, for *All* things are possible with God.

What an assurance! He places us upon the Rock of the Salvation of God. And resting in the shadow of this Rock, our storm tossed craft of life finds peace and rest at last.

"What seek ye?" Ah, yes, what blessed peace we have when we can say, "The Savior, Lord."

I haven't meant to write so much, but it just seemed that I was full to overflowing with this thought and couldn't seem to find a stopping place.

When one says, "Religion is definitely going out," I wonder just what they mean. I think it applies to people who say "God is dead." They never had God to begin with or He wouldn't be dead to them, and if one truly had a good religious life (true religion, that is) it would never "go out." You cannot lose faith in God; if you do, you never had it to start with and you cannot lose something you never had.

I desire to give all the praise to God, for it was He that enabled me to put my thoughts in writing.

Your little Sister in Hope,
Ruth Lucht

P. S. Since writing the above I received my February *Signs*. What a wonderful uplift I received from the various articles and letters, especially Sister Crawford's and Brother Berry's experiences; to say nothing of all the others. Truly I feasted as I always do, but somehow I was made to rejoice that the Lord had seen fit to lead me

to a people like the Old Baptists, and to have a home with them; and I am made to desire to help make it possible for others to get such a wonderful paper, filled with nourishment for the soul. Please use the enclosed check wherever you see fit.

May the Lord bless and keep all you editors, so the *Signs* may continue to go out to the poor and needy in Christ.

Love,
Sister Ruth

NEW VERNON MEETING

The Lord willing, there will be an all-day meeting at the New Vernon Meeting House, New Vernon N. Y. on Saturday June 3, 1967.

Brethren and friends are cordially invited to attend.

Elder A. J. Slauson

PLEASE MAKE THE FOLLOWING CORRECTION

In the April issue on page 90, and in the first paragraph of editorial, it should read, "them also I **must** bring," instead of "them also I **can** bring." The "can bring" certainly does not express the truth here. We are at a loss to know how this was overlooked in reading the proof. — J. D. W.

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Healthy Plains, Wilson County, N. C. the 5th Sunday in April. The church is located about two miles west of Rock Ridge, N. C. which is on N. C. 42.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

ANNUAL MEETING

The White Water Primitive Baptist Church, Tinsman, Arkansas, holds her Annual Meeting the first Sunday in July, and Saturday before. The church is located two miles northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, at the Watson Cemetery. Every other month of the year we meet on the fourth Sunday afternoons at 2 p. m. Visitors are welcome to meet with us. Refreshments will be served at noon both days.

Elder David Turner, Pastor
Ross Watson, Clerk

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Mrs. M. L. Lucas, Ala.	10.00
Mrs. L. A. Calvert, Ark.	5.00
Ruth Lucht, Md.	5.00
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PLEASE NOTE: We hope the brethren will send notices of associations and other meetings which they desire published, at least six weeks before the publication date of the *Signs;* otherwise we may not be able to include them in the issue desired. Send such notices to P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

— Editors

EDITORIAL

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever." (Hebrews 13:8)

Sometime ago we received a request to write on the above scripture. I realize my inability to write to His glory, and the comfort and consolation of people, unless guided by our dear Lord.

Our correspondent seemed to have certain questions in mind relative to discipline in the gospel church, by the teaching of Jesus and his Apostles. We would do well to read the preceding verse that we may have a clear view of what the apostle had reference to: "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." (7th verse) And then, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever."

The expression, "Yesterday, and today, and for ever," refers to the past, the present, and the future. How important it is to be blessed to see Him in every dispensation: whether it be the Law, the Prophets, or the Gospel; or the hope of his second coming in glory, to raise the dead. In every generation Jesus has been seen in his own light: even as a man sees the natural sun in its own light. A God given faith centers every Hope, Anticipation, Joy, and Consolation in the same Person, regardless of in which generation. In the first chapter of Hebrews, Jesus is brought wonderfully to view as the one by whom God has spoken to us; as the one that was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

This presentation of Jesus in person, was not contradictory to the prophet's presentation of him under the Old Dispensation: It was bringing fully to view Him who had been prophesied of in types and shadows under the law: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."

The apostle throughout the epistle to the Hebrews, shows the pre-eminence of Christ, our great High Priest, over Aaron, the priest under the law, (who was a type of Jesus,) by His entering heaven once by his own blood, with eternal redemption; whereas the high priest under the law went year by year into the tabernacle made with hands, offering the blood of the various sacrifices — which was a remembrance of sin from year to year. Jesus our law keeper, who offered himself without spot to God, purges the conscience of his people from dead works, to serve the living God, by the application of His atoning blood to the sinner; but the ceremonial and sacrificial law made nothing perfect.

Jesus the mediator of the New Covenant, which was established upon better promises than the Old Covenant, obtained a more excellent ministry than all the ministers under the law, and brought in everlasting salvation for his chosen people, by honoring the law in his life, keeping it perfectly for his people; and dying under its just demands in our room and stead. Thus the New Covenant is manifested, and His laws are written in their hearts and put in their minds; and he says, "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and

every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."

My dear readers, the question may arise whether Christ appeared under the law dispensation less glorious and beautiful to his people, than he did to his disciples while he was upon the earth. My answer would be, No! A God given faith has always viewed Him as the only hope of hell deserving sinners. This lovely hymn expresses this sentiment; and the faith of God's humble poor acknowledges it:

"Faith is the brightest evidence
Of things beyond our sight;
Breaks through the clouds of flesh and sense,
And dwells in heavenly light.

It sets time past in present view,
Brings distant prospects home,
Of things a thousand years ago,
Or thousand years to come.

By faith we know the worlds were made
By God's almighty word:
Abra'm to unknown countries led,
By faith obeyed the Lord.

He sought a city fair and high,
Built by th'eternal hands;
And faith assures us, though we die,
That heavenly building stands."

Abraham saw the day of Jesus: he saw the day of Jesus and was glad. How wonderful it was that God's servant Abraham could behold all the beauty of Jesus by faith! He saw the gospel day, and beheld the Lamb of God: he viewed all the merit of Jesus as his salvation. This view caused him to seek a different kind of city — different from any he had ever known: a city which had foundation whose builder and maker was God. Throughout the ages all the people of God, being called out of the world and by faith given a precious view of Jesus, have manifested that they seek a heavenly country: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God.

The only way there can be a people in heaven of whom God is not ashamed, is by He himself providing the way: bringing salvation to them by their redemption in Jesus Christ, and revealing this salvation by the Holy Spirit, keeping them by his own power, and preparing them for heaven and immortal glory.

How wonderful and effectual was the work that caused Moses to forsake Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: He endured, as seeing Him who is invisible. Moses did not see Jesus as others saw him while he walked upon the earth, but he saw him by faith. Jesus was the fourth one with the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace. That is why the hair of their heads was not singed, and there was no smell of fire upon their clothing.

The Lord's servant Job saw him as his redeemer who would stand upon the earth at the latter day. This glorious view of him by faith caused him to say, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." We follow our dear Saviour to that passage in the last book of the Old Testament, Malachi, and hear the assurance of God as it related to the perfect salvation through Jesus; and hear him saying to his people, "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

The anti-type cannot be less than the type. When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. In full accord with the covenant promises of God given under the law, a virgin conceived and brought forth a son. The message that Joseph received of the angel, was that Mary would bring forth a son, and his name would be called Jesus: for he should save his people from their sins. He took not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham. He was described by the Apostle Paul as the only Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. He took part of the flesh and blood of his people; and being born of a woman, he came under the law with his people to redeem them

from its curse.

Though Christ's glory was veiled in human flesh when he made his advent into the world, his glory and power was seen and felt by those who were called to follow him. It was not necessary for him to die and go to heaven, to have his glory and power manifested to his own people. When he entered into Jerusalem, those whose eyes had been opened to see the King in his beauty, spread their garments in his pathway, "crying, blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord." His mission was aptly described in the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah, where he speaks of his work: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God: to comfort all that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness: that they might be called the trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified."

As we follow him here, we follow one who was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief; yet we behold one whom the wind and the sea obeyed; one who said, "All power is given unto me, both in heaven and in earth." And, "Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." In giving them eternal life, Jesus manifested his wondrous power. No poor sinner that was called to him, ever questioned his power. The devils obeyed him; they had no power beyond that allotted them.

Jesus called men to preach his everlasting gospel. The same power that called them also qualified them. He said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." It was never necessary for anyone who was called to preach the gospel, to attend schools of men. The things they were to preach, were revealed to them by the power that called them. Thus Paul determined to know nothing among those to whom he preached, save Jesus Christ and him crucified. He counted all things but loss because of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.

We hear Jesus crying out on the cross, "It is finished." When he hung on the cross, forsaken of God and men, in his precious body prepared by the Father, to pay our dept, we hear him cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

"Twas then the Father gave the stroke,
That justice did decree:
All nature felt the dreadful stroke,
When Jesus died for me."

In a few moments the Father appears again: His sufferings are over, and heaven is in view; and he said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."

I cannot leave my dear Saviour here — he has only paid the debt: He was delivered for our offences, but he must be raised for our justification. We must be freed from the power of the grave by his resurrection. Though all the powers of men were arrayed to thwart the resurrection of Jesus — the king's seal was placed upon the tomb, a great stone rolled there, and soldiers placed to watch the scene — when the appointed hour of his resurrection arrived, the soldiers became as dead men, and the body of Jesus arose from the tomb. The soldiers were instructed to report that his disciples had stolen his body by night: those who would deny his resurrection in the same body could be classed with the Roman soldiers. Jesus arose from the dead in the same body in which he died; and his body saw no corruption. He talked with his disciples after he arose, was with them forty days, and ate with them; and said to them, ". . . handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." He appeared to them on different occasions after his resurrection, and was seen also of above five hundred brethren at once.

Now we arrive to where we await the adoption, to-wit the redemption of our bodies. That will be when He comes

again, without sin unto salvation. The last record we have of his presence among his disciples, was when he was taken up into heaven, as recorded in the first chapter of Acts: "And while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

This is the same Jesus — yesterday, and today and forever; the same one mentioned in Thessalonians, where his second coming is described as, " . . . the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God . . . " "To them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." To lay aside the personal coming of Jesus for his people, would destroy every vestige of hope a believer has. In Revelation we read, "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."

Whether we receive the doctrine, the order, or discipline from God's word, it is the same Jesus. Paul could tell the church that he laid the foundation as a wise master builder; but in the same breath he says that other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. All the doctrine and order of the church of God was given by Jesus, delivered by his chosen vessels. Jesus could tell Peter that he was giving him the keys of the kingdom; but he also showed him that he himself must be kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

So, we are exhorted when listening to men delivering the word of God, to consider the end of their conversation, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever. Paul wrote, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Such as preach any other gospel, we are commanded not to receive them neither bid them God speed.

When we follow the faith of those who have spoken unto us the word of God, the gospel of the Son of God, we find that Jesus is the same yesterday, and today, and for ever — the same in every dispensation unto his people.

D. V. S.

EDITORIAL

DEACONS

I have an urgent request from the Baptist people in Kentucky to write an article on the duties of deacons. I feel that many are qualified far better than I am for the task, but I will do the best that I can. I ask your kind watchcare over me as I write, and your supplications at a throne of grace in my behalf. If these are granted, I shall not have written in vain.

First, let me say that I do not have any thought that conflict has prompted this desire of these people. However, if there is an apprehension in anyone's mind concerning that phase of the matter, I suggest that you consult our dear brother and Elder, J. N. Darnall of Cadiz, Kentucky. I will say this: If I thought that his request was prompted by any thing other than the welfare of the saints and the glory of God, I would deny it. In days past and gone, I have thought right much in regard to the matter. I have met up with a lot of situations in the last thirty years in the ministry. Some of them have been trying; some have been puerile; some of them have been so contrary to the scriptures that the promulgater should have been called to a reckoning before the church. But by far the greater part of the deacons in the churches under my servitude have been godly and well meaning in their efforts to serve the church and the Master.

Many duties that the churches have laid on the deacons, and that they, in too many cases, have assumed, do not have a thus saith the Lord for. I will try to point these matters out as I write. These pointed statements will probably antagonize some; of that I leave in the hands of the Master. First, and probably the most dangerous and sacrilegious of all the assigned or assumed duties of deacons, is that they are the boss in the church. Second, and not a whit behind the other, is that they are to guard the pulpit, watch and control the minister. If these two assigned or assumed duties can be found in the New Testament I stand corrected and reprimanded.

"And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." Will you please read these two last verses of the 5th chapter of The Acts of the Apostles? Who was Luke writing about? Ponder my question well, dear brethren. Undoubtedly, he was writing about the apostles, and no less so the ministers of the gospel today. What were they doing? How busily engaged in it were they? If language means anything, they were carrying out a heavy schedule in the ministry. What did this bring about? "And in these days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows (the Grecians) were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." Please read the 6th chapter of these Acts.

At this particular time I want to call attention to Isaiah 32: 1st verse. A king is to reign in righteousness, but no less so are princes to rule in judgment. There is one sense in which all the heirs of the kingdom are now reigning in judgment. they are made princes and given to judge. However, this must be understood as belonging exclusively to the Apostles. Under Zion's King their judgment is final. Bringing this judgment down to the time and matters of which we are treating, we find it was the apostles that thought to do something about the difficult situation that had come up. Unless we are prepared to reject and cast away all of the New Testament, this work must be accepted without reservation, as the ruling in judgment. Unless we do accept it as here laid down, anybody's opinion about deacons is as good as what we find in the Bible. I wonder if this rejection of their judgment is not the reason for all the confusion about their work.

Now what do we have? 1st. We have a murmur or complaint in Israel (in the church); a complaint that is disturbing to the welfare of the organization. Some of the famous commentators have made an effort to make this a common, uncalled for quarrel among contending parties. Do you believe that? Is your perception of God such that He would move Luke to write this history about some ungodly quarrel among his people? If you have that kind of perception, it widely differs with mine. To me, this was a matter that was worthy of being corrected. The murmur was justified; it called for decency and order, without which no organization, be it secular or sacred, will long continue. What could be done? Who had authority to do anything? Where could the overburdened apostles get relief? 2nd. We have the twelve calling a special meeting. There has not been precept nor example of doing anything like unto this. The reason for this is because that the need had not arisen. In this called meeting, the apostles felt it unreasonable to leave the preaching of the word to wait on the tables. The original word means that it is not pleasing to do this. In the correction of this complaint, the correction is the only one that will ever be needed in the history

of the church. The administering of the daily alms to the poor, the serving at tables of all kinds, were placed in the hands of those seven men, the gathering of this common stock for this purpose, all, was brought into consideration at this time, and placed in the categorical work of the deacons. 3rd. The apostles did not take the right of the church away from them. The church was ordered to look out and select the seven men. However, we must follow that up by saying that they retained the right to judge their selection. That is still followed today in the Old Baptist church. The church makes the selection, but the ones selected must meet the approval of the presbytery . As in all matters pertaining to the welfare of the church, they were to be careful in their choice. They must be careful in their selection because the work to which they were being appointed required careful attention. These men were to gather the alms, they were to wait on the tables; that is, they were to distribute all of the money in the church. There is not any decency nor any order in slipping money in the minister's hand. The church is entitled to know about all of the money that is used in the church in any way, and the way for her to know, which way is given us in this 6th chapter of Acts, is by everything passing through the hands of the deacons. Brother Darnell requested specifically to know the duties of the deacon. This duty can never be performed by him as designated by the Holy Ghost until the church also does her duty first. If I were permitted to make one change among our people today it would be that all money pass through the hands of the deacons. This is not to tell any church how much she is to give her minister; it is not to tell any church how much she should spend on the poor of the flock; it is not to tell any church how much she should spend in a new house of worship; it is not to tell any church as to whether she should have electric lights, water works, baptistry, or other things like unto that, but it is to say that the scriptural way (and thus the only right way) is for the money to pass through the hands of those that were designated to handle such matters. This is not what I say, but it is what the apostles said.

By this work of the apostles they did not surrender and give up their right, should the occasion arise, of the ministration of alms, the waiting on the widows and orphans and poor in general, of ministering at the communion table. This was not to take away the former duties of the ministers; it was not to make them have less to do, but it was done that they might have more time for preaching; it was not done to take away their concern for the poor, but it was done that they might have more time for preaching to the poor. What a lovely picture is this: The minister continually, without ceasing, in prayer and in the ministry of the word. Finances in the hands of the deacons; administering of these finances in their hands; the looking out **for** the finances in the hands of these appointed servants; the judgment of who and how much that any recipient of church welfare is to get, in the hands of their servants, the deacons; the looking out for the welfare of the minister in the hands of the deacons.

There is a double honor that the Holy Ghost has bestowed upon the minister. (I Tim. 5: 17, 19; 2nd Pet. 2: 11) How unscriptural it is for one that the church has thought to be of good report and full of the Holy Ghost for him to assume authority over the pulpit or the minister. In no sense whatever can the Bible be construed to teach any such. He is not in authority over the minister but he is a subordinate servant of the church. He is not to dictate what the minister preaches, how he preaches, how long he preaches, where he goes in his ministry of the word. The Bible is as silent as the cemetery in regard to such things. However, it must be insisted that there is a special honor accorded to the deacons. (see Phil. 1: 1) And, too, it must be remembered that the deacon does have every right that any other member of the church has to call in question what the pastor or any other member of the church does. This calling in question of any member must be be-

fore the whole body, whereas, his waiting on tables in all of the various forms is carried out by previous authority given, subject only to the final word of the church in the reception of their reports to the body.

In the first letter to Timothy we have some sweeping and blanketing rules about the qualifications of deacons. While Paul was not a member of the apostles when the matter of deacons was first brought before the church, there is not any variance in what he personally declares to be their qualification and what the twelve in unison said about those qualifications. These qualifications are not **duties,** but they are prerequisite to any duty being performed in a scriptural way. These several qualifications are laid down together . (I Tim. 3: 8, 13)

How prone we are to jesting and fool's talk. Jesting about alms for the poor; jesting about waiting on the communion table; jesting about the finances of the church; jesting about "paying the preacher"; these things do not belong to the deacons office. As there is not any jesting mentioned in Christ nor his apostles, there is not any place for it in the duties of the deacons. He should not be chosen unless he is grave to begin with. These deacons were to be already in possession of a good name; they were to be filled with the Holy Ghost. Nothing is said about making him good, but he is to have a good name before he is assigned a place among the deacons. A jewel of gold in a swine's snout is out of place (Pro. 11: 22), and a deacon ministering in the kingdom of heaven with levity on his lips **is not doing the duties of a deacon.**

The appointment of a man to the deacon's office should not be upheld if there is proof that he is doubletongued. As certain as a man has this about him, he is not a fit subject for dealing with the unfortunate ones of the flock. He cannot do his duty and have this trouble. Let us all understand here. We are not, as the apostle was not, dealing with perfection in the flesh. We are dealing with a habit of life; we are not dealing with an absence of sin, but we are dealing with a reign of sin. Where doubletongue talking is the habitual way of life in a man, he is not a fit subject for a deacon.

Our brother wanted to know the duty of a deacon. Let me point out that a man under the influence of wine (strong drink) is not capable of handling any kind of business in a natural way. How much more so is it in regard to this business in the church. The church may do it, but it would be **the height of rebellion** to select such a man to this high office. The church would not be doing her duty, and the appointee could not do the duties of his office. If a man takes this wine as a beverage, he is given to too much wine; if he takes it as a medicine, either as a preventive or remedial, he is qualified, but here, as in all cases of Christian obedience, he is to avoid the appearance of evil in this matter.

If a man is slack about small things, he will be slack about greater things. It is not wise to place a burden of dispensing to the poor when that man has a love for filthy lucre. A greedy man will act greedy. A good man, out of the goodness of his heart(not his fleshly heart), will do good (as a habit) unto all men. One that has the love of God in his heart will have a love for the brethren there. (I John 5:1) His action toward the widow, the orphan, the feeble, the poor in general, the pastor, will be handled exactly as the handler would desire to be rendered unto himself, should reverses in life come to where it was needful.

There are two distinct and outstanding items in the New Testament in which we have flagrantly discarded and tread them under foot. The first of these is doing what our Saviour commanded in regard to offences between saints. The second is like unto it, to wit, declaring openly and above board (and boasting of it when need be arose) that we did not believe nor practice anything save that which was in the Scriptures. (see the various Articles of Faith of the many associations in America) These deacons were to hold the mystery of the faith (practice, doctrine) in a pure conscience. If their brethren chose them from among the people of God to serve tables,

it was indeed a great honor and blessing. To look at the travel of Stephen and Phillip (and I am equally sure in the others, would show much and high regard towards this mystery. The scriptures would teach us from beginning to end of how little they knew, **but would never authorize them to say that they did not know.** It would cause them, when selected for this momentous work, to question their ability, but it would not cause them, to question the decision of the body of Christ, the apostles in judgment, the work of the presbytery that set them a part to the work. This pure conscience in not related to the conscience that we are told "to let your conscience be your guide." That is a false promise, and regardless of how we reason from it, we will always arrive at a false conclusion. The pure conscience of the deacons is coupled with the pure mind of the saints. (Titus 1: 15; 2 Peter 3: 1; I John 3: 3) This pure conscience will not permit going beyond this faith (practice, doctrine) in the doing of the work of a deacon. There can not be a glossing over, a covering up, an adding to nor subtracting from of these duties. A pure conscience will not say that: We the board of deacons are to rule the church, to boss the minister, to watch the pulpit. An impure conscience will add to the written word, and it will take from it at the pleasure of its impurity.

These deacons must first be proved. This is a matter for deep concern to us all. The presbytery must never lay hands suddenly on any man, whether bishop or deacon. Novices and upstarts and unlearned men are to be held in abeyance by the church until they (both the church and presbytery) are satisfied about their qualifications. This being proved is not as a deacon but as a disciple or Christian. There is a sort or kind that creeps in for nefarious purposes (2 Tim. 3: 6), and these are to be waited on that the church may find out what sort of mind that they have. (I Cor. 3: 13) They are not to be put in the harness to make them a deacon. The greatest monstrosity ever palmed off on the church has been the harnessing of the burden of office on brethren who were otherwise useful and lovely. After proof of qualification has been given, **then** is he to use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. This "being found blameless" is not a finding of the would-be-deacon, but a finding of the church, a finding that he has proven his qualification, that he is blameless in seeking the office. I will in the future, as blessed of God, look further into the qualifications and duties of this important official in the church.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

I PETER 3: 8

"Finally, be ye all of one mind."

This eminent apostle of our Lord Jesus Christ, in common with all the other apostles of the Lamb, was invested with divine authority to establish in the church of God every principle of faith and order which can ever be lawfully entertained in his kingdom. No religious organization can ever be recognized as a church of Christ, or a branch of the church of Christ, unless standing in the apostles' doctrine, conforming to their decisions, listening to their instructions and accepting all their decisions in judgement on all parts of the law of Christ. The apostle John lays down this rule of judgment, this infallible and everlasting test of fellowship, and criterion by which the saints of God shall know, without the least shade of uncertainty, who of all the professing world are of God, and who are of the world, and not of God. He says, "We (that is, the apostles, and the apostolic church, which holds the apostles' doctrine and order,) are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." "They (that is, they whose spirit and doctrine are not of God,) are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them."—

I John 4: 5, 6.

To hear the apostles, in a scriptural sense, is to receive their instructions, accept and abide by their decisions in all they have said, and to obey their injunctions and heed all their admonitions. He that is of God will do all this, and if any who profess godliness do not in this sense hear the apostles, it is because they are not of God, but are of the world. This decision is infallible, whether applied to individuals or to churches. By this rule the church is commanded to "try the spirits," and by it they are to discriminate between truth and error; between the Spirit of God and the spirit of the world, or of antichrist.

In conformity with this unerring rule let us examine the admonition of Peter, which we have placed at the head of this article. It is given as a finality, admitting of no amendment, of no abridgment, of no alteration. "Finally." This word is used not only to express in this place irrevocable decision, but also legitimate deduction from the instructions contained in the context, in which the duties of all the saints to God and to men are distinctly and authoritatively laid down; as citizens of the world, to kings and governors, magistrates and rulers, of wives to husbands, children to parents, and of servants to masters. These are the instructions immediately preceding, and the "finally" of our text is expressive of the general summing up of what they amount to, or the unanimity of consent with which they must be accepted by all who are of God; all who are to be held in fellowship as "elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience," &c.

"Finally, be ye all of one mind." Unanimity of sentiment is indispensable to church fellowship. Of the church, in her original organization at Pentecost, we are informed that her constituents gladly received, or heard, the doctrine of the apostles, that their union was so perfect that they were of one heart and one soul. They on whom God had poured out his Spirit were pricked in their hearts, gladly received the word of the apostles, were baptized in that faith and order, continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. They could not possibly be in the latter, if not in the former, for if they were of God they would hear the apostles, according to the infallible rule copied from the apostle John, and if any one of them stood not in the apostles' doctrine, his spirit was of the world, and not of God. No one was allowed to dissent from the apostles' decisions on any one of those positions taken by them, on the plea that he had a right to his opinion independent of the apostles, or of the church of God in which apostolic rule and order are maintained. The apostles have not so decided, that if any man teach otherwise from their instructions that it is only a matter of opinion, and he has a right to such opinion, and his brethren and the church should tolerate such independency. No one is to be recognized as being of God who does not yield every opposite opinion, and bow to the decision of the holy apostles. Paul says, If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, &c., he is proud, knowing nothing; that is, knowing nothing of the things of the Spirit of God. How can he, if his spirit is of this world, and not of God? No man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man that is in him; even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. They are spiritually discerned, therefore the natural man cannot know them, and consequently he knows nothing, and in his blindness and ignorance he dotes about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, &c. From all such the command of God through the apostles is, "Withdraw thyself," and all who are of God will hear this last, as well as all other of the apostles' commands and decisions, admonitions and exhortations.

As all the fraternity of the household of God are required to be of one mind, as our apostle has decided, then it follows, of course, that no member of the brotherhood has a right, or can be tolerated by the church, in holding sentiments or opinions discordant with the

mind of the church, which is based upon the decisions of the apostles. How can the church of God be distinguished from the world, or from antichrist, if there be no unity of faith, no unanimity of sentiment, no agreement in doctrine and practice? It is indispensable to the existence of an orderly gospel church that all her members should be of one mind, and to be of but one mind; it is equally indispensable that all should be of one spirit. If all are born of the Spirit, and led by the Spirit of God, then all will have the mind of Christ, and in that mind there is unity. That mind is always in perfect harmony with all the teachings of the apostles, and will recognize their high authority, as inspired judges of the spiritual tribes, to establish forever the order of the church of Christ.

But, one demands of us, Have I not a right to my own opinion? Must I pin my faith on the sleeve of another? While we believe that all intelligent beings must have settled convictions and opinions of their own, and as members of the human family no man or set of men has a right to domineer over the conscience or judgment of his or their fellowmen; and while as citizens of states and nations freedom of thought and independence of opinion is the inalienable right of every man, so far as relates to the authority of his fellowmen to control his thoughts, provided, however, that he, in his freedom of thought, does not infringe upon the equal rights of others, by entertaining unwarrantable thoughts or malicious feelings against his neighbors. Yet, while admitting all this independence of thought to men of the world, we at the same time hold and contend that, as a member of the body of Christ, no one has a right to entertain thoughts or opinions independently of the faith of the church to which he belongs. This point the apostle has settled in our text: "Be ye all of one mind." When called out of the world we were commanded to renounce the world and its doctrine, spirit and opinions, and on the profession of faith of Christ we professed to gladly receive the doctrine of the apostles, to take on us the yoke of Christ, to learn of him, and to take his word as the man of our counsel, the standard of our faith and the rule of our practice. In short, we relinquished all claim to an independent position, we gave ourselves to the Lord, and by his will, to one another, were baptized into one body, surrendered our individuality, became all one in Christ, a perfect unit; no more our own, for we were bought with a price; members of Christ, and members of one another. No reservation of rights which we did not hold in common with the church of the living God. As to the right of thought, take for example the case of Peter with Simon Magus. How terribly sharp was his rebuke: I perceive that the thought of thy heart is not right. Repent of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.

Upon the plea of independence and right to think differently from the doctrine of the church, how is heresy to be detected and disposed of? The divine rule enjoins on the church to reject an heretic after the first and second admonition. Heresy is understood to be thoughts and words which are opposite to, or not in harmony with, the doctrine of Christ, as laid down by the apostles and held by the church . They were heretics who resisted Paul, as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, and Paul describes them as being of the sort which creep into houses, who lead captive silly women. He says they are heady, high minded, and lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power (or authority over them) thereof, and he adds, From such turn away. Timothy is commanded to "shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness; and their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some." There are many such examples of heresy recorded, and the peremptory command in every case is, "From such withdraw thyself."

Now it must be seen that the church

of God has no right to tolerate a diversity of sentiments or opinions on any matter of faith or practice which has been established by the authority of Christ, through his holy apostles. While on every matter only involving personal interests or rights we are admonished to be lenient, kind, forbearing, longsuffering and gentle, we are not allowed to trifle with the order of the church as positively established by divine authority. Those who are unwilling to yield their own independence, or who claim the right to dissent from the rules and authority of Christ in his church, should never be admitted to membership. Except they become as little children they cannot truly enter the kingdom of God; this is an indispensable prerequisite to membership in the church of God. No church can be all of one mind where the rule is not strictly adhered to.

It has been thought by some that there are exceptions to these divinely established rules; that the church has no authority over our worldly matters, such as belong to our domestic or political relations with mankind. If that be so, why did our Lord require that we render to Caesar the things that belong to Caesar, and to God the things that belong to God? The apostles have laid down rules which are binding on all christians, to regulate all their social, civil, political and domestic relations in the church and in the world. This fact is overlooked by many, and quite repudiated by others, but it is nevertheless true. **They have given no rules for the world to be governed by; the world is not responsible to the church, nor the church to the world; the kingdom of Christ is not of the world, nor are the governments of the world of the church; they are quite seperate and distinct.** The apostles only sit on their twelve thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. " Them that are without God judgeth." All within the precincts of the kingdom of Christ are in their social relations to associate only as the apostles have directed. This department embraces the social relations of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, people and magistrates, rulers and ruled, and we hold that the apostles have clearly laid down and explained to the church of God the laws of Christ, commanding christians to be governed by them. By this law the christian can have but one wife; the parent must provide for those of his household, or he denies the faith. Children must honor and obey their parents; servants must honor and faithfully serve their masters, and every christian, by the law of Christ, is to submit to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king, as supreme, or to the governor, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers and for the praise of them that do well, and every soul is to be in subjection to the higher powers. They are commanded to pay tribute, and, as good law-abiding citizens, render honor to whom honor, and tribute to whom tribute is due.

Therefore if any man seeks to evade the laws of the house of God by denying the right of the church, or of his brethren, to meddle with his politics, or his secret lieges, or oath-bound covenants, it is an evident mark of disloyalty to the King of Zion, and a virtual repudiation of the authority of Christ in his church over his members. Can the admonition of our text be duly regarded if conflicting views be entertained by her members? Is it possible they can all be of one mind if a portion of the members are allowed to deny responsibility to the church, and regard any part of their walk and deportment as being beyond the jurisdiction of the church to which dissenters profess to belong? Can two or more walk together except they are agreed? To be all of one mind in the church, as the divine law requires, can only be practicable where all the members are required to receive and continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, withdrawing from all who depart from the faith.

We cannot repudiate the apostles' instructions, decisions, admonitions and exhortations and still be a church of Christ, nor can we tolerate in our churches such as the apostles command

us to withdraw ourselves from, without repudiating them and their doctrine; nor can we repudiate the apostles, as enthroned in judgment over the church of Christ, and still retain Christ as our King; for when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, then shall his apostles also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. **If the apostles do not sit over us in judgment, then neither does Christ preside over us as members of his spiritual kingdom.**

The church of God is the body of Christ. The necessity of unity in the body, harmony in all the members, is strikingly set forth in the figure of a perfect body. A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways, and if the members of Christ be not all of one mind, where is our stability? If in the body one hand claims to be independent of the body, not moved by the same volition, but by some spasmodic or rebellious impulse, it cannot work in harmony with the other. If one foot resolves to journey southward and the other northward, the rebellion of both against the government of the body would prevent the travel of the whole body. Or, if to compromise the matter, the feet be each in turn to have its way, the unstable body alternately swayed by its refractory members would, like the pendulum of a clock, vibrate back and forth, and make no progress. But the rule to be applied in case of such disorder and schism is, If thy foot offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee; or if it be thy hand, or the eye, or any other member, and let all be of one mind.

Let those who are refractory, if they cannot by gospel rule be reclaimed, go to their own company, where they can enjoy their independence of the body among their kindred spirits. Of the church it is said, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye (all her members) are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe November 1, 1865. May the Spirit apply these things powerfully in our hearts. They are unchangeable throughout all time. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

JAMES LESTER BUTCHER

Brother James Lester Butcher was born December 10, 1889, and passed from this life November 3, 1966, at his home in Danville, Virginia, at the age of seventy-six years. He was the son of Benjamin Thomas and Lucy J. (Hodnett) Butcher.

He leaves to mourn his departure, his wife, Mabel Parcell Butcher; one daughter, Virginia Minson; two grandchildren and two great grandchildren, of Alexandria, Virginia. Also a brother, Andrew Butcher, and five sisters: Ida Reilly, Nannie Varnier, Lillie Sears, Lena Butterworth, and Annie Spahr, of Richmond, Virginia.

He joined Richmond Primitive Baptist Church in 1920, and was made a deacon in 1921; which office he filled until the time of his death. He was a kind and gentle husband, a good father, and a lovely brother. He loved his church and his brethren, and was a faithful member; and a firm believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone. We feel our loss is his eternal gain; and that he is asleep in Jesus: blessed sleep, waiting the glorious resurrection, when he will be raised by his Saviour, be like him and be satisfied, in that world that has no end.

His funeral was held at Barker Funeral Home by Elder Raymond Payne, and he was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

Written by his wife,
Mabel P. Butcher

FLEM WATT PRILLMAN

Flem Watt Prillman, was born October 29, 1873. He was called from this world December 22, 1966, making his stay on earth 93 years. He was the son of Isaac and Bettie Via Prillman.

He was married to Miss Ruth Abigail Smith, December 27, 1900. To their union were born two daughters: Mrs. Dora Lewis of Martinsville, Virginia; Miss Neppie Prillman of Henry, Virginia; three sons: Blandford I. Prillman of Rocky Mount, Virginia; Amos Prillman of Henry, Virginia; and David Prillman of Henry, Virginia; one sister, Mrs. Emma Hagwood, Richmond, Virginia. Six grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Union on September 22, 1900. He was or-

dained Deacon in 1904, and was interested in the welfare of the church, and his seat was filled as long as he was able to get there. He was straightforward in his personality. He believed in salvation by grace and grace alone. We feel that he died in the faith that was once delivered to the saints; and feel he had a sweet hope that the Lord would raise his sleeping dust when He shall come in the clouds of glory.

His funeral was held at Knob Church, December 24, 1966, by Elders Leonard Brammer and Rufus Brown. He was laid to rest by his companion in the family cemetery.

On his last birthday attended by Elder Leonard Brammer and others, among the songs they sang, and he hummed afterwards, was: When I can read my title clear, to mansion in the sky, I'll bid farewell to every fear and wipe my weeping eyes.

May the Lord give us at Union strength to look to him for all our help.

Written by one who loved him,

A sister in hope,
Pearle Shelton

SPARREL CLAYTON RAKES

Brother Sparrel Clayton Rakes was born January 2, 1895, and departed this life October 31, 1966, at the age of 71 years, 9 months, and 28 days.

He was the son of the late William and Lillie Nolan Rakes of Patrick County, Virginia, and was married to Rada Lou Martin on December 29, 1920. To their union six children were born. He leaves to mourn his passing his devoted wife, three sons, Chester E. Rakes, Fieldale, Virginia; Willis C. Rakes, Stuart, Virginia; Ralph Rakes, Richmond, Virginia; and three daughters, Mrs. Ethel Via, Collinsville, Virginia; Mrs. Vera Bryant, Fieldale, Virginia; and Mrs. Mary Lois Simmons, Vienna, Virginia. Also thirteen grandchildren; two brothers, G. T. Rakes, Floyd, Virginia; Walter Rakes, Ferrum, Virginia; and five sisters, Mrs. Lelia Koger, Fieldale, Virginia; Mrs. Minnie Wood, Franklin, North Carolina; Mrs. Eugene Culler, Collinsville, Virginia; Mrs. C. L. Turner, Collinsville, Virginia; and Mrs. Roy Bennett, Glade Hill, Virginia.

He joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Union July 27, 1963, and was baptized August 24, 1963, by his pastor, Elder Leonard Brammer. He died in Veterans Hospital, Salem, Virginia, after a long illneses. His funeral was conducted at Union Church by his pastor, Elder Leonard Brammer, and Elder R. A. May. Burial was in the church cemetery. Brother Rakes was a faithful member of the Church and attended the meetings as much as his health would permit. May the Lord richly bless and comfort all that mourn and cause the Church to be submissive to his will.

Written by a sister in hope,
Clora S. Akers

BERTHA E. HANLEY

As it has pleased the Lord to take from our midst our beloved friend, Bertha E. Hanley, we humbly trust that we may be given minds to say with Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Mrs. Hanley was born October 7, 1880, and departed this life on January 24, 1967, making her stay here a little more than 86 years. She was the daughter of the late William Edward and Mary Isabelle Baker. She was married to Clarence W. Hanley who departed this life many years ago. To this union was born one son, who also is deceased. Surviving are one grandson, John H. Acton, and one great grandson who reside in New Jersey. Also she is survived by two nephews.

Mrs. Hanley, though never a member of the visible church, attended the meetings as long as her health would permit; and the writer, having visited her many times, always found her anxious to hear about the meetings. On one occasion, shortly before her death, she said that though she could not be with us in person, her mind was with us. We feel that she knew the truth which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, and her hope was in his mercies.

Funeral services were held at the Burbage Funeral Home in Berlin, Md., by the writer, and she was laid to rest in the Evergreen Cemetery of the same town.

May it please the Lord to reconcile her many friends who knew and loved her so dearly, to feel that their loss is her eternal gain.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

LULA ELLIS THOMAS

At the age of eighty-one, on the night of January 24, 1967, God's mercy overshadowed my precious mother, and relieved her in death. She suffered for four years with a lingering illness, bearing it with much patience — never complaining, but many times would say how good the Lord had been to her. We loved her dearly, but God loved her best. Her sweet smile manifested that Christlike spirit that dwelt within her. It was hard to give her up, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. Though her weak voice will be heard no more,

she will long be remembered.

She was born March 9, 1885, and was married to Eason Coburn Thomas in 1905; who preceded her in death by four years. To this union were born seven children: four died in infancy. Surviving are three daughters, one brother, and eight grandchildren.

Mother united with Contentnea Church in North Carolina some forty years ago, and was baptized by Elder George Boswell. She remained a faithful and loving member until her Heavenly Father called her home.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Paul Lamm, Elder S. R. Boykin, and Elder D. B. Stokes, and she was laid to rest in the church cemetery, awaiting the resurrection morning.

Written by her daughter who loved her, and misses her very much.

Mrs. Vivian Hardee

IN MEMORY OF MR. GEORGE DAVID RUDD

"Mr. Dave," as he was known from the mountains to the seashore by the Old School Baptists, never united with the church though he proved his abundant love for her, not in word alone, but in deed. His donations to the church at Bush Arbor were not in money alone, but a great many days of his seventy-six years upon this earth were spent on the construction and preservation of the building and grounds.

He was born in the Bush Arbor community and attended regularly from his youth up, being a useful man, for the Lord so graciously blessed him with a talent unsurpassed among his people. He was not only song leader at Bush Arbor for forty-five years, but wherever he went among the people of this faith he freely shared his talent. The number of times he left his family and farm to assemble in funerals and comfort the sick with the songs of Zion, is known only to the Lord of Glory.

Few people have been more closely associated with their pastor and shown each other more love and respect than "Mr. Dave" and Elder W. C. King, who stood so closely by in his last hours. "Mr. Dave" loved the song "When I Can Read My Title Clear," and we feel that when he reached his hand toward Heaven and spoke of the beauty he saw, he was "reading his title clear."

He leaves to mourn a devoted wife, Mrs. Nettie Simmons Rudd, and a lovely family of six children, Isaac and Earl Rudd of Burlington; and Willard Rudd of Route 1, Yanceyville, N. C.; Mrs. Edna Aldridge and Mrs. Eva Walker of Route 1, Yanceyville, N. C.; and Mrs. Mae Skeens of Burlington, N. C.; and one sister, Mrs. R. E. Miles of Burlington.

His funeral was conducted December 9, 1966 at Bush Arbor by Elder W. C. King, assisted by Elders Ernest Oakley, Wallis Smith, and Donald Smith. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a huge mound of beautiful flowers to rest from his labor and await the coming of the Lord.

Read and approved by the Church at Bush Arbor in her regular conference on February 11, 1967. A copy was ordered for our church records, a copy sent to the family and a copy sent to the *Signs* for publication. Written and presented to the Church by one who loved him dearly, Brother Clifton Robertson.

W. C. King, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Church Clerk

ELDER JOSEPH OTIE CONNER

Elder Conner was born September 29, 1899, and died December 26, 1966. He was married to Miss Mary Sowers April 3, 1921; and to this union were born six children. Surviving are his wife, Mrs. Mary Sowers Conner, Salem, Virginia; four daughters: Mrs. S. L. Semones, Roanoke, Virginia; Mrs. R. E. Craighead, Mrs. H. N. Hundley and Mrs. D. J. Conner, Salem, Virginia; two sons: W. T. and Junior Conner, Salem, Virginia. Surviving also are two sisters, Mrs. J. C. Woods and Mrs. E. G. Martin, Roanoke, Virginia; and two brothers: Jesse Conner, Elliston, Virginia and I. E. Conner, in Florida.

Elder Conner united with Little Hope Church, Roanoke County, Virginia, and was baptized into the fellowship of the church the 4th Sunday in November, 1936. He was ordained to the ministry on Saturday before the 2nd Sunday in October, 1943. At the time of his passing he was serving Little Hope, Mt. View and County Line Churches; which he served well. No sacrifice was too great to hinder him from filling his appointments.

Funeral service was held at Salem Church, Floyd County, Virginia, December 28, 1966, by Elders C. E. Turner, J. L. Agee and B. O. Thompson. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery, with his spirit returning to God who gave it, to await the coming of his Lord.

It can truly be said of Elder Conner that he fought a good fight, he kept the faith. Written by request of his wife.

(Elder) C. E. Turner

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 135 DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1967 NO. 6

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

MEDITATIONS ON THE 23rd PSALM

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want."

What beautiful words! what a sweet thought! The Lord is our Shepherd. He watches over his little ones at all times. If we go astray, he rebukes us and shows us the error of our way. "We shall not want," for he wonderfully provides for us, both naturally and spiritually. He knows what we have need of; and he makes the way for us, when there seems to be no way out, and everything seems dark before us. He provides spiritual food for us when we are blessed with a hearing ear and an understanding heart; and when we hear the good sermons that are preached by our able ministers, we are fed spiritually, and rejoice in the gospel of His love.

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." When we can meditate on the goodness of God, we realize how He has cared for us all the days of our lives, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins; and how he cares for us at all times, in sickness and in health. When we can feed on His word, how sweet to feel the refreshing; and when we can read his word with an understanding heart, having a revealing of those things to us, then we lie down in green pastures, tasting his goodness and mercy towards us. Then sometimes when we are in a great turmoil and know not what to do, the Lord comes and calms our troubled hearts, and makes everything right, and we are calm, serene and peaceful: it is then we are led beside the still waters.

"He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." Sometime we feel we are far from the Lord, and void of the Spirit. Our minds are not on spiritual things, and we are low in our feelings, feeling forsaken and alone. We are prone to stray from his way, for we are poor, weak beings: all of our strength is in him. But the Lord comes to our aid: He puts a new song in our mouth, praise in our hearts, and we are uplifted and made to know that we are not forsaken by him; and we follow in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. We are not interested in the pleasures and vanity the world has to offer, and we seek to follow after, and to hear more of the goodness and mercy of our Lord. How rich it is to feel the righteousness of our Lord when we are in the Spirit to rejoice in it. All of our righteousness is in him: we are all sinners, saved by his grace.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." We have our troubles, trials and sorrows here in the world; and sometimes we seem so burdened with them that we know not which way to turn, but we are made to feel that no evil will befall us, for everything is in his hands; and he has promised never to leave nor forsake us. He will be with us in all our troubles until the end of this life, giving us courage and strength. The rod and staff the shepherd holds, comforts us: for it is his marvelous love and grace that abounds in our hearts, and sustains us at all times.

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil: my cup runneth over." When we attend our meetings and hear the gospel, and are blessed to partake of the spiritual food that He prepares for us, the table is set before us to enjoy the contents thereof, we forget our enemies and worldly affairs. We partake of the good things sent us from above; and what a feast! He annoints our heads with oil of gladness and thanksgiving, and we partake of his blessings, and enjoy the sermons we hear, or the sweet meditations we have at times; and our cup runs over with joy and gladness in His love for us.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." His goodness follows us all our days, if we are his chosen vessels. When we were dead in trespasses and sins, it was only his goodness and mercy that kept us, and showed us the ruined state we were in; and then revealed his Son as our Saviour. He raised us up, and placed our feet upon a solid rock, and put a new song in our mouth, giving us a precious hope of heaven. We feel unworthy and undeserving of this great love he has for us in leading us to the house of the Lord (the church). We can never praise him enough for his goodness and mercy.

What comfort and peace to follow our Lord in baptism! It is very sweet to us, and we are more reconciled in our feelings, and have a more completeness in spiritual things. When we go into the watery grave and rise up again to a newness of life, following our shepherd through green pastures, resting in his love by the still waters (his grace), there is no greater joy for us here below. Then, after this life, when we are called to our heavenly home, where all of the redeemed of the Lord are, we shall see our Shepherd face to face, and be forever with him, there will be no more sorrow, pain or death. What wonderful words for those who have a precious hope in the Lord!

Written in love,

Mrs. Thelma Reece Wilson,
618 Cardinal Place, Apt. 2,
Danville, Va. 24541

A PREDESTINARIAN

Rt. 1,
Maineville, Ohio
1741 Davis RD.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

I have a desire this sabbath morning to write some of the thoughts which are on my mind. I am at home alone since my family went visiting: they wanted me to go along, but I had a feeling I wanted to be alone. I wanted to meditate upon the goodness of God, of how merciful he has been to me in sparing my unprofitable life. It was our meeting time at Union Church, at Sharps Chapel, Tennessee, today, the second Saturday and Sunday in April. I wanted to be with them so badly, but I can't drive on long trips, and it is about three hundred miles from where I live in Ohio to the church where my membership is. The job I have requires me to be at work six and seven days a week. It seems I would give my right arm if I could be with my brothers and sisters often; and my desire is to travel and visit the churches in different parts of the country.

I read the **Signs of the Times,** which is so dear to my heart. I did not know of this paper until about three years ago. I read articles in it by people I have never seen, and I sometimes wonder how they tell what I believe better than I can myself. It gives me hope that their schoolmaster is mine. I joined a church which called themselves Primitive Baptists, who believe in a limited predestination; and I lived with them from 1930 until 1939. In 1954 I saw a minute of the Predestinarian Baptists, and I visited them the 2nd Sunday in September, 1954, and I heard them preach what I believed. I loved the people that called themselves Primitive Baptists, and I have nothing hard to say against them, except they preach a conditional God,

which He knows I do not believe. I was ordained to the ministry in July, 1966.

If God will bless me I want to write a few things I believe, and if you deem it according to the doctrine, would appreciate it if you will print it in the **Signs of the Times.** The God I believe in was before all things: all things were created by him, and they were created for a purpose — if they do not fulfill His purpose then He is not perfect in his work. Should we say that he created something he had no purpose in, we would charge him with folly. Before time began, even before the dust of the highest hills was laid, all things were present with him. He declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. At another place it is declared that he does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and that none can stay his hand.

My precious brethren, if God does his will, is there anything going on against his will? A thousand times no!

I want to say a few things concerning the salvation of His people. I believe everything was one eternal now with Him in eternity; and that all events will take place at the place and time appointed by his sovereign power — to the honor and glory of his precious name. I believe the Lamb of God stood in the eternal arrangement of the salvation of the elect lady, which is His church; and that her name was written in the Lamb's book of life before the world was. That Lamb came into this world at the appointed time of God his Father, for the specific purpose of saving his people. Everything that was done to him by wicked hands, was according to the detemined council of God in eternity. He hung on the cross suffering for the sins of his people, and his blood was shed for your sins and I hope for mine. When he cried out "It is finished," the elect lady his bride was saved there and then.

I believe everyone he died for will be called according to the eternal arrangement to the knowledge that Christ is their Saviour, and that heaven is their home. It makes no difference where they are, when He calls them they will answer. "The hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." He was speaking here of the dead sinner. God's shalls are just as sure as he is. He turns them about, and puts a new song in their mouths, even praise to his name.

Precious brethren, sometimes I am in the valley, fearing and doubting whether I am one for whom He died: Sometimes I can say I know my Redeemer lives, for I can feel his smiles and precious love. Do you have fears and doubts?

In conclusion, I want to say that it seems the time is close when He who died and rose again, will come again for the elect lady, his church.

To the fathers and mothers with sons in Vietnam on the battlefields, God bless you and comfort you is my prayer. Your son's lives are in the hands of the God I have been trying to tell you about. Not even a sparrow falls to the ground without your heavenly Father. God's all-seeing eye knows right where they are.

May God bless all of you, is my prayer. I would be glad to hear from any who may feel to write me.

Garrett Wilson, Sr.

"O THE DEPTH OF THE RICHES"

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Romans 11:33)

Solomon said in Proverbs, "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table."

Webster says that knowledge denotes acquaintance with, or a clear preception of facts; Widsom is the capacity of judging soundly of facts, or dealing broadly with facts. God's knowledge was sufficient to comprehend all things:

there was nothing that he did not see and know, even before time was spoken into existance. That being the case, his wisdom was great enough to formulate his will for the execution of his purposes and designs. In fact, He is all widsom. The house that Solomon says wisdom built, embraces his kingdom here, and hereafter.

We, as finite creatures, cannot comprehend His purposes only as it pleases him to reveal them to us. We agree with Paul that the wisdom and knowledge of God is so great: or, Paul says, the depth of it is unsearchable. God had already chosen a porton of Adam's race to be the beneficiaries of eternal life, when as yet the earth had not been created. Paul says we are blessed according as he has chosen us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. And since it is of God that we are in Christ Jesus, he is of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

God's knowledge being great enough to perceive all events before time, He knew that Adam and also Eve, would eat of that forbidden fruit, even before there was an Adam, or an earth, or a garden of Eden. Knowing that the whole of Adam's race would fall under the bondage of sin, and knowing they could not redeem themselves, he decreed that his only begotten Son should be the ransom price for his people.

After having put it in the minds of the prophets to prophesy concerning His coming, and that he would be born in Bethlehem, Micah wrote, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel: whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." When the time came for him to make his appearance, the eternal God put it in the mind of the Roman authority, Caesar Augustus, to have all the world taxed, and that everyone should go to his own city, he did not know God was using him to fulfill prophesy.

When the time came for the babe Jesus to be born, Mary, "Brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for him in the inn." Wise men from the east were led to him by a star: they were wise because God made them wise. Their wisdom was in Christ, just as ours is, if indeed we were among those who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. The angel of the Lord came upon the shepherds who were keeping watch over their flocks by night, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. The angel said unto them, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

God made known to the wise men by the star, and to Herod by the wise men, and to the shepherds by the angel, that the promised Messiah had arrived. His name was called Jesus, which was the name given him before he was conceived. According to the law he was brought to Jerusalem to be presented to the Lord. There was a man there named Simeon, to whom the Holy Ghost had revealed that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. "And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law. Then took him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation. Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people: a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

When the time came for Jesus to begin his earthly ministry, he went to where John was baptizing in Jordan. Men had mused in their hearts whether John was the Christ; but he told them, "I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he

shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." When John saw him coming, the Spirit made known to him that he was the Christ; and he exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." After Jesus was baptized he began to preach of the Kingdom of Heaven, and to open the blind eyes and heal the sick, which no man had done before.

The Jews rejected him because they were looking for someone to change the social and political life for them. But that was not what Jesus came for. Paul said to the Corinthians, "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." James speaks of a people who are preserved in Jesus Christ and called, and sanctified by God the Father. Paul said to the Romans: "For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." And Peter told them on the day of Pentecost, that the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Jesus ransomed all that the Father gave him in eternity — He reveals himself to them by his Spirit, and gives them hope of eternal life. God, being rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved them, even when they were dead in trespasses and sins, spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, said Paul. And he also said, "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us for the love of God, which is in Jesus Christ our Lord."

It is a great consolation to know that He will never leave nor forsake us, and that his love and mercy will be our constant guide and shield.

(Elder) J. A. Tew,
Rt. 1, Box 268,
Dothan, Ala. 36301

ARE OUR BLESSINGS CONDITIONAL?

As the Lord blesses us, let us talk about an error that Satan has introduced in some churches, and by carefully examining the matter, see that the motive is to rob God of the honor, praise, and glory due unto His Holy Name.

"Conditional Time Salvation": According to this theory, man has the ability through his own merits to perform good works, and by doing so, he will enjoy a peace of mind and obtain blessings which God has promised to them who take advantage of the opportunity offered. In other words, the advocates of this theory teach that God has laid out the blessings before the children of God, and that they may enjoy the benefits of them (here in time) if they take advantage of the opportunity offered them. If they do not perform certain conditions, then they will **miss** the blessings offered.

Such a doctrine as this is erroneous. It does not give God the praise for the blessings we enjoy. It exalts man, because man is responsible for obtaining the blessing, since he took advantage of the opportunity to perform the conditions. According to that doctrine, man is the author of Time Salvation! This is similar to the condition of the Galatians. Notice the expression of Paul: "Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" (Galatians 3:3) And, "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" (Galations 4:9)

This error is to puff man up. It is to give man the credit for the blessings he receives. In other words, man deserves the praise because he took advantage of the blessings offered, and by performing certain conditions, God was obligated to bless him. Or, since man did perform these conditions, God became indebted to man; and was obligated to bless him. Therefore, man controls his Spiritual seasons, according to this theory. By man's own ability,

he could always enjoy seasons of basking in the sunshine of God's mercy.

But this is error, my friends. All praise, honor, and glory belong unto the Lord. We cannot control the natural seasons, and we cannot control our Spiritual seasons. If it is midnight with our souls, we cannot drive the darkness away, and we cannot hasten the coming of morning.

Let us remember that God takes care of his people. Satan uses error such as the **Conditional Time Salvation** doctrine to attempt to rob God of his glory, and to puff man up; but God brings them down. "Though thou shalt exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord." (Obadiah 1,4)

Though we do not believe this theory, we believe that Satan still tempts us in our experiences with the **principles** of this doctrine. And, Oh how cunning Satan is! In Genesis 3:1, we read, "The serpent was more subtile than any beast of the field..."

For example: Let us assume that we perform good deeds or works, such as visiting the sick and shut-ins, and helping our needy brethren, etc. Now, this is good on the surface. "Pure religion and undefiled before the father is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (James 1:27) In the epistles of John, we notice that he admonishes the ones who have this world's goods to help the ones in need.

On the surface, these deeds are good, but what about the motive involved? "Men looketh upon the outward appearance, but God looketh upon the heart." (1 Samuel 16:7) "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms. do not sound a trumpet before thee as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have the glory of men, Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth; That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly." (Matthew 6:1-4)

Now, are we doing these deeds because we feel impressed to do so? If so, then the motive is good. On the other hand, are we doing these deeds in order to be seen of men, and to receive the praise of men? Are we doing these deeds for the purpose of gaining the favor of God, and to receive a blessing fom Him? If so, then a selfish motive prompts us to perform them.

But, Satan does not give up. Let us assume that we are impressed by God to perform certain deeds. After it is performed, Satan may slip thoughts as this is our mind: "My, you sure are **a** good person to do this. There are not many people like you. You should be proud of yourself, etc." Thoughts as this tend to puff one up.

Let us remember that Satan does not have a set pattern. He may set thoughts as this is your mind to attempt to drive you to despair: "You really think you are somebody, don't you? Those people you visited think you are a little saint. But they just do not know you. The reason you visited them was for selfish reasons. You wanted their praise, and admiration and wanted them to think you are a good person, etc." Accusations as these tend to drive us to dispair, except the Lord intervenes and speaks sweet peace to our poor souls.

Let us briefly state another selfish motive in performing good deeds. Doing a good deed for the motive of expecting a favor in return is wrong. The motive of helping our brethren with the expectation of receiving a favor in return is not prompted by love. It is just a selfish motive.

In closing out our thoughts concerning the error of "Conditional Time Salvation," we quote from J. C. Philpot:

"But the Lord has attached — I will not call it a condition, (it is a word I

abhor), but a declaration; which declaration is linked on with the promise. The Lord has appointed a certain path, wherein the soul is to walk. The walking in that path is a necessary step, to obtain the blessing that lies at the end of the path. It is **no condition to be performed by the creature;** it is nothing that springs out of, or depends upon, human will or human merit; but it hangs upon the Lord's appointment. God has connected certain promises with certain appointments; He has connected certain deliverances with certain trials; He has connected certain blessings with certain states and positions of soul. The text states that the Lord has declared a certain path; He has made a positive declaration: and to this positive appointment He has graciously annexed a certain promise. "He shall call upon me, and I will answer him." Thus it is no matter of free will, it is no matter of man's righteousness or man's wisdom, whether he shall "call upon God;" it is appointed he should call upon Him. God has said in positive terms — (and His "I will," and His "he shall," never can be broken) —"He shall call upon me." It therefore does not rest with the creature, whether he will call upon Him or not; its not a matter poised in the balances of the creature, whether he shall pray or not; God has not left it to man, whether he shall take up prayer or lay aside prayer; but He has made it a part of His own sovereign appointments, of His own eternal decrees, which can no more be frustrated, than salvation itself. Therefore this soul, that "dwells in the secret place of the Most High " —"he shall call upon God." It is not left to him, whether he will call or not; but it stands in a way of eternal decree, in a way of sovereign good pleasure. He must call upon God, because God says he shall." (**Selected Sermons**, by J. C. Philpot, pg. 105, 106)

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

1610 Normandy Way,
Leesburg, Fla. 32748

Dear Editors:

I see my subscription is due. Please enter for another year with the enclosed check; giving the balance to the Indigent Fund.

I look forward each month to the **Signs.** I receive such comfort from the good articles published. I feel surely that the spiritual food I receive from the articles, and the sweet gospel truths I am sometimes blessed to hear preached, is the only reason I have strength and courage to face the problems I have in this world today. It is such a comforting thought to know that all things are in His good and gracious hands.

May his grace be with us all.

In fellowship,
Mrs. Lois Kennedy

P. O. Box 357
Elgin, Oregon 97827

REALIZING THE WAY WE HAVE BEEN LED

Dear Editors:

"And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.

And the Lord said, Behold there is a place by me, and thou shall stand upon a rock:

And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by:

And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen." (Exodus 33:20-23)

In reading the above scripture, my mind was led to Genesis 32: 24, wherein an account is given of the wrestling of Jacob with a man (Holy Spirit) from whom a blessing was received only after the **breaking of day** (the passing from darkness into light). Jacob being crippled in this self same hour, could no

longer trust in the arm of flesh but was made to lean forevermore upon a staff. (Jesus Christ his Lord and Saviour).

In the third chapter of St. John, a man named Nicodemus came by **night** (darkness) to inquire of Jesus, and was told that a man must be born again. He, being a man of the Pharisees, knew not how this transition was possible. He did not understand that before birth there was life; and failed to see that natural birth was only the passing from darkness into light of this world. He therefore understood not that this natural body is also the abode of the spiritual body which must pass from darkness into light before it is made manifest in a child of hope.

In the mind and purpose of God, all his children were created in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. Yet, considering the conception of spiritual life within the natural body, this spiritual conception surely took place in that self same moment in which it was declared, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the **day of Jesus Christ** (light). (Phil. 1: 6) For in him we live and move and have our being.

In reading the account of Saul's conversion in the 9th chapter of Acts, we are shown the dealings God has with one of his chosen vessels before his eyes are opened to understanding, and by what power and manner this is brought about. Here we see that Saul was born of the Holy Spirit before the scales fell from his eyes that he might see, thereby enabling him to declare Jesus the Lord of Lords and King of Kings.

"And the Lord said, Behold there is a place **by me** (prepared of his hands), and thou shall **stand** (nothing required of the sinner) upon a **rock.** (Jesus) And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of **rock** (Jesus) and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away my hand, . . . and thou shall see my **back parts.** (our journey to hope.)"

Oh! what a glorious picture is this, Dear Ones. When we are enabled to see all the way in which we have been led through, and from works to Grace. Many times it seems that our very souls would faint within our breasts. Because of sin we are made to feel our just condemnation.

Oh! what joy is this; when, by his everlasting love and grace he removes his hand and we can view for a moment **his back parts,** wherein by his love and grace toward hell deserving sinners he has commanded the storm that rages within us, saying, "Peace be still." And all is calm.

"O Praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great towards us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever." (Psalms 117)

In hope,

Lloyd C. Spikes

IN MEMORY OF
THE LATE ELDER W. K. SMITH

His old chair is vacant beside the fire,
No smile greets us when we come in;
Our hearts almost burst at the very thought,
We have lost our most precious friend.

His daily council kept our erring feet,
From striking many a rough snag;
The word of his God was his drink and his meat,
He counted his own righteousness as rags.

Such a beautiful gift as ever was placed
On a poor mortal here below;
'Twas given to him by Sovereign Grace,
'Twas a blessing from Heaven we know.

At home and abroad, at church or with friends,
He was blessed with wonderful power
To remove anger: restore sweet peace;
He was father to us at all hours.

He served several churches: one for forty years,
When duty called he obeyed:
Tho' he said he was snatched from blaspheme and shame,
When the burden upon him laid.

He was given love, and love for the Cause,
By his Maker who reigneth above,
He was called to the labor of "carrying the word,"
And his was a labor of love.

This world held no beauties apart from his God,
For he saw Him in each event of time:
In the beautiful flowers, the songs of the birds,
Some trace of his God he would find.

In his late years of life as his body declined,
He had little desire here to roam:
And often when retiring at night to his bed,
He would say, "One day nearer home!"

He is gone and alas! His absence we mourn:
For his presence and comfort we sigh:
Yet we know that our loss is his eternal gain,
He has gone to his Savior on high.

Instead of murmuring at the will of our God,
We must be reconciled that it be so;
And thank the Giver of all good gifts
That he was spared so long here below.

May God thus use us to the praise of His name,
Make us obedient as we journey along;
And pray when our purpose in this world is served
We shall meet him in that long-sought home.

(In memory of my husband's father.)

Mrs. John Lee Smith
Spearsville, La.

EARLY MEMORIES

Rt. 2, Box 70,
Star City, Arkansas 71667

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am enclosing three dollars for a year's subscription to the **Signs**; and am also enclosing the obituaries of our dear parents for publication.

I have spent my entire life among Primitive Baptists. My earliest memory is of going to the District Meetings and associations, traveling by wagon over dirt and gravel roads for thirty to forty-five miles; and of people of the Old Baptist faith coming to visit in our home. It was not unusual to have fifteen or twenty to spend the night, and sometimes more. There was always plenty of food, and all seemed to really enjoy being together.

I found the following poem among old church letters and minutes in my great aunt's trunk, which was written by the late Elder C. M. Weaver in February, 1924:

"Day by day it is my cry:
God my Saviour, grace supply;
More of faith and strength impart,
To console my fearful heart.

Let thine arms my refuge be:
Shield, protect and shelter me.
When my troubles grow severe,
Let me find thee always near.

None but thee such grace can lend;
None can be such faithful friend.
All my needs thy canst supply
When for help to thee I cry.

Keep, direct and feed me, Lord,
Let me feast upon thy word;
'Neath thy table let me crawl,
To receive the crumbs that fall."

This seems to fit me, if anything does. Elder Weaver had visited in the association here around 1918-1919, and in the home of my parents.

Sincere wishes to all,
Mrs. Havis Donaldson

HAS READ THE SIGNS SINCE A SMALL BOY

P. O. Box 63,
Exeter, California 93221

Dear Editors:

On receiving my issue of the **Signs** today I noted that my subscription is due for renewal, so enclose money order for another year's subscription to this good old paper.

After glancing through this month's issue and reading a few articles, I especially enjoyed the one headed, "Has Declared Sovereignty of God Fifty-three Years." I have to agree that I like the word "Absolute" also, just as my grandparents before me did.

I have truly enjoyed receiving the past twelve issues, and hope I can continue to receive them in years to come. This starts my second year. I have been a reader of the **Signs** since a small boy, for it has been in the family for a long, long time.

May the Lord bless you to continue in your good work. I look forward to each month's publication.

Sincerely yours,
Bill G. Clinton

IT IS WHAT HE BELIEVES

801 E. 9th Street
Coleman, Texas 76834

Dear Editors:

Just a line to tell you I have enjoyed the last three Issues of the **Signs.** Brother Wood's "New Years Greeting" was good; and I agree. Other editorials were good; and also in the February number.

All the editorials in the March **Signs** were good, and I especially enjoyed Elder Gilbert Beebe's letter to Brother Walker. God possesses every attribute of divine perfection, and Brother Beebe set forth the perfect work of a perfect God; and gave scripture for all he said.

These are profound matters indeed, and before any one denies this, he should go read Brother Beebe's letter again; and also read the scriptures he referred to. There is no such thing as "time" with God. It is "one eternal now" with Him. Time is what God has given to man. But at the consummation of all things, when the angel shall stand with one foot on land and one foot on sea and declare that time shall be no longer, it will be the end of this time world.

Brother Beebe has explained and ably defended the finished work of our Lord. He could write it a lot better than I can, but I feel that I believe it as strongly as he did. That is what I have believed for a number of years; and it does me a lot of good to know that is what he and those brethren in his day believed. Thank you for reprinting that letter. Give us more like that. The least, if one at all

In hope of life with Him,
C. U. Landers

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EDITORIAL

PSALMS 7: 9

"For the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins."

The heart here referred to is not the muscular organ of the body, but rather

the seat of affection and passion, the secret purpose, the disposition of mind. It is this heart that the Scripture means when it says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Again, "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." Also, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Believing in Jesus is a heart work. Phillip said to the eunuch, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." It is also written, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." One must know the folly of his own heart (and that by divine teaching) or he will trust in it. God searcheth the heart; that is, he turns his searchlight of truth upon the heart; when he does, who can stand? Poor mortal man, then is like Hazael, whose name signifies sight of, or seen by God. When Elisha looked steadfastly in his face "he was ashamed." Why ashamed? Because the prophet saw his inward secret purpose ; he could read him. What man is there living who could stand a close inspection of his life and doings, who could stand with his soul naked of its fancied coverings? Would he not quail before it? Who of us would be willing for our closest friend to examine in detail our hearts and lives with the measuring rod of truth? Who would have our thoughts for one day, or one hour, exposed? How much more to have our whole life open before our closest friend for him to see the unholy thoughts and godless deeds, the lies, deceit, backbitings, envyings, pride, lust, and a legion of other things that God hates.

If, we say, we were examined by our closest friend, our cheek would be covered with shame, and he would cease to be our friend from then. We resent calumny, hypocrisy and treachery often more because they harm us than because they are untrue. We loathe others for the things we too frequently allow in ourselves. In spite of all the wickedness of the human heart, what man is there who does not pride himself in his fancied goodness, which to his friends, if they knew his heart, would be obnoxious? How much more unto Him who knows the thoughts and the intents of the heart? "No man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it," and the love of self is inherent in us; self-esteem, self-justification and self-seeking are natural propensities of the heart of man. While it is true man would for shame hide himself if his closest friend saw him just as he is, yet it is the awful truth that he blushes not before Him whose eye is in every place, beholding the evil and the good. Such is the hardened, callous heart of man. He takes more thought and pains to hide his faults and failings from his friends than from his God, and winks at the very thing in himself that he is forward to condemn in others. O Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him? Why should there be so much thought for the good will of man, who at his best state is altogether vanity, when there is so little concern about Him whose glory filleth the heavens?

> "The rocks can rend, the earth can quake,
> The sea can roar, the mountain shake;
> Of feeling, all things show some sign,
> But this unfeeling heart of mine."

It is natural, but not God-honoring to belittle our own failings, and ever to be ready to judge others rather than judge ourselves, and we often carry ourselves before others, as though we were perfect in thought, word and deed. Surely this is walking in a vain show. How different it was in the beginning: man walked with God and delighted to be in his presence without the sense of shame, for he was innocent, but after his transgression he hid himself from God,for he knew he was naked and could not endure the eye of him who is too pure to behold iniquity. From then until now none can endure his presence and live, yet it is he that trieth the hearts and reins of men. If man, even our closest friend, were to judge us, after he had seen the vileness of our hearts and reins, yet his judgment would be unrighteous, because his heart and reins disqualify him as a judge. His heart and reins are foul like

ours, but God is righteous. Paul calls him the righteous Judge, and it is he that trieth the hearts and reins. Have we known anything of this trial taking place in ourselves?

Dear brethren and friends, this is a solemn question, yet all who have had such a trial take place in their lives know something about it. This trial in Paul's life made him to say, In me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing. Job, who was another of those whose heart was tried, said, Behold, I am vile. The Lord has his way to make the sinner testify against himself, and when he has clearly brought the case out into the open court of conscience the sinner is self-condemned. The Lord does the searching and trying; in wisdom he has seen fit not to give his glory to another. He shall convince of sin, righteousness and judgment. Man may judge you, but what does man or his judgment amount to? If put in the balance with God's judgment they are lighter than vanity. When God has brought the sinner into the place where sentence shall be passed, the sinner knows he has no hope only in the mercy of him who is the Judge of all. There, to his amazement, Jesus is revealed as the end of the law for righteousness. It softens his heart of stone; in fact it breaks his heart. Now he knows what the Scripture means, where it is written that the love of Christ surpasseth knowledge. He is deeply grieved when he sees that his sins crucified his lovely Jesus, and though while being tried his face was filled with shame, yet now his face is no more ashamed. Jesus, his best friend, who knew his inmost soul with all its ills, loved him and gave himself for him. Once more, to the wonder of heaven and the astonishment of earth, God and man are reconciled. The Judge and the sinner are everlasting friends, and through his precious Lord the poor sinner is clothed and in his right mind. "A broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." His trying and searching of their hearts has been a blessing to them, so that often now their hearts' desire is that he will continue to search and try them. While in such a heavenly mind they love the Lord, his ways, his people, and their cup runs over. They believe with all their hearts.

Why does not this joy and gladness last? Why does such an one who has been sick of self sink back into self? It is because there are many lessons to be learned. Jesus was led up of the Spirit in the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. We thought we knew what vile and sinful hearts we had, but it is God's purpose to hide pride from man, which is accomplished as God tries the heart. "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart."

(Editorial by Elder Ruston October 1, 1923. The subject is ever new and present with the Lord's people — J.D.W.)

EDITORIAL

"OUGHT NOT CHRIST TO HAVE SUFFERED THESE THINGS?"

"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."

(Luke 24:25-27)

How impossible for anyone to really understand and believe what the prophets spoke unless his understanding is opened, though he may be well aquainted with their words. (see Luke 24: 45)

When Jesus said unto the Jews, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me," he was showing them how wrong they were in their understanding of the scriptures; for, instead of their finding in them eternal life by external forms, ceremonies, and works, which they thought was the value of those writings, the prophets were in truth testifying of the coming and the work of Him who was then in

their midst, and then speaking unto them. He sharply rebuked them, "Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?"

The two brethren, in the connection of our text, were not yet brought to know the purpose and magnitude of the mission of Christ in his coming into the world; and they were greatly saddened that the chief priests and the rulers had delivered him, (whom they thought would be the deliverer of Israel from their Roman bondage,) to be condemned to death, and had crucified him. Their great anticipation was blasted, and it was quite enough to make them of sad countenance as they walked and talked of the things which had just come to pass. Early that morning certain women of their company had gone to the sepulchre and reported that they did not find the body of Jesus, but saw a vision of angels who said that he is alive. And others had given the same report.

It was because of these things, they told the stranger who had joined them in the way, that they were sad. These two did not recognize the stranger, for "their eyes were holden;" yet their hearts "burned within them" as he talked with them; and as he rebuked them, saying, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." It was a little later that day that their eyes were opened as he blessed and broke bread while they were eating, and they knew whom it was that had spoken to them in the way.

"Ought not" indicates an obligation, or the necessity of Christ coming into the world, and suffering, and entering into his glory. "He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." Ought not presents the necessity not merely of his fulfilling all the prophesies concerning himself, but more specifically to fulfill his Father's will in preparing a body for his incarnation and sending him into the world, that, after accomplishing the suffering for the redemption of those chosen by the Father (the church), he should enter into the same glory he had with his Father before the world began. (And the amazing part is that he takes all the redeemed with him, having fully reconciled them unto his Father.)

"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour." (John 12: 27) As we remember the sinner's lost condition, and know that he does not deserve even the notice of his offended God, we understand full well that the necessity of his coming "unto this hour," arose not from any obligation to the sinner, not because of the sinner's coaction, but rather alone from the love of God so freely shown in his mercy. Truly the subject matter of the whole Bible is the portrayal of what God has done for his chosen people; and is expressed by Jesus, "Ye have not chosen me but I have chosen you," and by John, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propituation for our sins."

In order for us to understand the "first-cause" of Christ's coming to suffer, faith takes us to look at things before the world began, as related in the word of God. If one is blessed with faith, which is the fruit of the Spirit of which he is born again, he comprehends all the works of God from their decree in eternity to their completion. To him

"Faith is the brightest evidence
Of things beyond our sight;
Breaks through the clouds of flesh and sense,
And dwells in heavenly light.

It sets time past in present view,
Brings distant prospects home,
Of things a thousand years ago,
Or thousand years to come.

By faith we know the worlds were made
By God's almighty hand:
Abra'm, to unknown countries led,
By faith obeyed the Lord.

He sought a city fair and high,
Built by the eternal hands;
And faith assures us, though we die,
That heavenly building stands."

— Watts

From the pronouncement of God unto the serpent just after the fall, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel," to the coming of Christ, his ascension and promise of his second coming, we have a perfect unveiling of all things of which God is pleased to give an account concerning his Son and what he should accomplish in the world — sometimes in types and shadows, and sometimes plainly in him who was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," as he came to "this hour". These things all manifest the love of God and his mercy and grace from the beginning; and at the same time show that the redemption of God's people is not of themselves, but is certain because of the atonement made by his Son. The work of God and the work of his Son is in perfect accord in all things.

All who concede that the Scriptures are the revealed word of God, but are skeptical of the doctrine, should read his word; for this is where this truth is found. There can be no other interpretation than this when the plainly correlative Scriptures are brought together, presenting a complete narration of Jesus Christ and his work on earth. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."

We must look, however, to the things preceding the actual accomplishment of what Christ did, in order to find the reason why he ought to have suffered. The conception of any action is always older than the action itself — there cannot be one without the other. Should we look only at the life and work of Christ after he came into the world, we would overlook so much that is inseparable from all that was necessary in the salvation of the Lord's people: for the coming of Christ for the salvation of his people was not just an after- provision to meet unforseen conditions. His coming was in the decree of God, who had the entire matter incorporated in an eternal purpose.

Prerequisite to the sending of his Son into the world there was, first of all, the **love of God towards his people,** and the **choice of them in his Son** "when as yet there was none of them;" then the **creation of the world** and **forming man of the dust** of the earth; then the **transgression** of His command **which brought condemnation and death** to all men: thus manifesting the need of **redemption of those previously chosen in his Son;** then the giving of the law which made **sin exceedingly sinful;** then the **preview of the coming mercy of God** in the institution of sacrificial worship; and the **many promises of God** unto his people made "at sundry times and in divers manners;" then the **incarnation of his Son** in a body prepared of the Father **for the suffering of death** — the only way **God provided for the redemption** of his chosen ones.

This is a brief outline of the foundation on which the coming of Christ and his work of redemption rested. It is easy to recognize then the importance of viewing the whole matter from the beginning to the ending, in order to understand why Christ ought to have suffered, and to enter into his glory. These things all evidence the love of God and his mercy and grace from the very beginning, and at the same time show that redemption is not of the people themselves, but is made sure and certain unto the beloved of God by the atonement of Christ; and that the work of God and the work of his Son is in perfect accord in all things.

It is right therefore for us to feel that Christ ought to have suffered and then to have entered into his glory; yet it involves the most solemn thoughts and feelings we may ever have — that God should give his only begotten Son to suffer for such sinners as we are.

The subject involves much more than

Christ being just a substitute for sinners in his death; as is so often expressed. A substitute for a guilty person could never clear him of guilt. We know of no time or circumstance in law in which a substitute could pay the supreme penalty for another; yet it is true that Christ died the just for the unjust: so we must understand the relationship of the Saviour and those he saved.

We are informed in the Scriptures that God's people were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world — they therefore had their spiritual existance in Him then, their life being hid with Christ in God. "This is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." Jesus said, "Thine they were and thou gavest them me." God's people (the church) being in Christ before the world began, had a close, vital relationship with him and with the Father: so close that God has been their dwelling place in all generations: from everlasting to everlasting; (Psalm 90: 1, 2) so close that the church had eternal life in Christ before the world was brought into existance. It was this close, vital and **continual** standing of the church in Christ that brought about his subsequent coming into the world for the purpose of redeeming his people who were fallen — it being his sole right to redeem them since they were his own.

This actual existance of the spiritual life of the church in Christ is not to be forgotten, while we are noticing that the earthly nature of the individual members had no existance until they were created in Adam with a natural life which was mortal: that is, subject to sin against God. Sin they did, and fell under the curse of the law which God gave them. Thus the children of God (chosen before in Christ) are born of the flesh and nature of Adam, and know nothing of their spiritual, eternal life which was hid with Christ in God, until it is manfested in them when they are called of God, quickened and born of the Spirit: it is then that the whole matter of their choice (election) in Christ, their fall, and their redemption, is so wonderfully made known to them.

When we read, "For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression," (I Timothy 2:13, 14) and, "The rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh . . . ," we have presented the oneness of Adam and his wife, Eve; and when we are informed by the Apostle in his epistle to the Ephesians that we, "Are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church," we have presented the oneness of Christ and his church. It is plainly stated that Adam was not deceived, but the woman was; yet Adam went into the transgression with her; and there was no separation there. Was it not because she was bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh?

Again, since we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones; and since our life is hid with Christ in God, it was for the same reason, in the purpose of God, that Christ was made sin for us who knew no sin, dying the just for the unjust; and so there is no separation there. In Adam the chosen in Christ fell with all others, but the Father sent his Son to partake of their flesh and blood, in order that he should suffer for them in their flesh, bearing their sins in his own body on the Cross. It was this vital oneness, not only in his partaking of their flesh and blood, but in their lives being hid with Christ in God, that gives answer to his asking, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"

All that Christ did when he came into the world was for the benefit of his people: to clearly manifest that there were a people of the genealogy of Adam who were nevertheless beloved of God before the world began — before they

had their natural existance — and for whose redemption his Father sent him into the world, (they being alienated from God by reason of their transgressions against Him,) in order that, as a part of the whole continuing will of God, they in their persons should receive the spirit of their adoption as children of God, the hope and assurance of eternal life, being sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

The New Testament which Christ gave, which was but dimly seen before his coming to give the perfect light of the doctrine of God our Saviour, manifested that those before loved of the Father should be adopted from their earthly family, purified and made fit to be the sons of God: their death swallowed up in victory, their bodies redeemed from corruption to bear the image of the heavenly; and when their mortality shall have put on immortality, they shall be in actual possession of the eternal life given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. Then will be the fulfillment of the redemption of the purchased possession.

Yes, Christ ought to have suffered and enter into his glory, because He came to do his Father's will.

We have just hinted at some of the wonderful things contained in this subject, but we hope sufficiently to stir up the pure minds of those who read it.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

VOICES OF THE PAST

JOHN 4: 14

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

This text presents a part of what our Lord said to the woman of Samaria, and like all the words that proceeded from his mouth, is full of interest and instuction to those who are divinely prepared to understand and appreciate the doctrine which he taught. The circumstances attending this interview are calculated to impress the mind with a sense of the perfection of the divine arrangement in the counsel of God, and the connection of his providence with the purpose of his grace. In the execution of the great work assigned our Redeemer when here in the flesh, he had occasion to go from place to place, and many circumstances which to the natural mind might seem trifling or accidental, are shown to be of vital importance, and highly essential to the accomplishment of the work which as the Mediator was given him to do. Such was the case in this instance; he had departed from Judea to go into Galilee, and he **must needs** go through Samaria. We are not informed of any other reason for this necessity or **needs-be,** but what appears in the circumstance of his meeting the woman at Jacob's well, the interview and conversation which took place, the effect produced on the woman, and also on the citizens of Samaria, who came out to see him, and who professed faith in him as the true Messiah. As he must needs go through Samaria, this woman must needs come out of the city at the very time to draw water, and every other incident recorded was equally important. And thus we believe in every instance of the calling, quickening and conversion of the children of the kingdom, the special providence of God may be clearly traced. God has appointed the bounds of our habitation, so that we cannot pass them.

"His decree who form'd the earth,
Fixed our first and second birth;
Parents, native place and time,
All appointed were by him."

By a well directed train of providential events, we find the Redeemer in conversation with the woman of Samaria. He asks of her drink from her pitcher; she expresses her surprise that he, being a Jew, should ask drink of a woman of Samaria, as the Jews and Samaritans

had no dealings together." Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who is it that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." The woman, like all the Arminian world, entertained the false impression that God is as dependent on means and instrumentalities for the accomplishment of his purposes, as we are, for she knew not the gift of God, nor the Son of God, whom to know is eternal life, therefore she betrayed her ignorance of both by saying to him, "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep." This is a prevalent delusion among all will-worshipers and work mongrel religionists, that God is dependent on his creatures to furnish him with means and instruments with which to supply the waters of life. Sinners are now represented as sinking by thousands into hell, not because they are sinners, but for the want of means, men, money, tracts, schools, or something to draw with, and it is published far and wide that if men would be more active and liberal in supplying the Lord with something to draw with, multitudes would be converted, and the earth would soon be all evangelized. Whence, thought this ignorant woman, can he supply the water of life of which he speaks, unless he draw it from the well, and as the well is deep, how can he draw it thence without **means?** "Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever shall drink of this water shall thirst again." And it is even so with all who drink, religiously, of the religious systems, doctrines, works and inventions of men, which result from their popular means-using machinery, who for the time being feel their natural passions of fear, remorse and terror somewhat allayed, but surely as there is a God in heaven, they shall thirst again. Their hopes which are predicated on their works and instrumentalities will fail them, when God shall execute the words recorded in Isaiah 28:17, 18. Like the waters of earthly fountains, which may satisfy our natural thirst for a time, but the draught must be repeated as often as the thirst recurs; so with false religious impressions, they only satisfy a carnal, depraved propensity which will recur from time to time as their fleshly passions are excited, and their natural fears disturbed; but in all such cases a revival, through the agency of a protracted meeting, exciting preaching, or some other instrumentality to **draw with,** is required at short intervals, to prevent their falling from what they call grace, and losing their religion; for they shall thirst again.

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." On this part of the subject our views are called for; and while we cheerfully give them, we will remark that our views, or the views of any other person, are of little worth except so far as they are sustained by the word of the Lord. Whatever views may be entertained on the Scriptures, cannot change the truth which they express. From what we have written, the reader will perceive that we understand our Lord to draw a striking contrast between the earthly fountains, which are relied upon for salvation, and which are only available by the use of humanly devised means and instrumentalities to **draw with,** and his own method of salvation by grace, which is altogether superior to and independant of the agencies, means and instrumentalities of either good or bad men.

Three propositions are suggested. First, the figurative import of the water, which Jesus gives. Second, his purpose to give it to some, but not to all of the human family. And third, the lasting and blessed effects of the water of life resulting to those unto whom Christ shall give it.

First. **The water,** and what is figuratively signified by it. It is here called, in distinction from that drawn by instrumentalities from earthly fountains, **living water;** and it is elsewhere called the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb; and, as defined on the last

day of the feast of tabernacles, it signifies that Spirit which they that believe on him shall receive, (John 7:37-39.) Having reference to that Spirit which he promised to send after his resurrection, Even the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not neither knoweth him; but ye know him, because he dwelleth with you and shall be in you. (John 14: 17.) Hence, when preaching the doctrine of the new and spiritual birth, he said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (John 3: 5.) Our natural birth, by which we are made manifest as the members of the old Adam, is of the flesh, and the life developed in that fleshly birth is not abiding, it is mortal and transitory, like the waters drawn from Jacob's well. But that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and it is life, and unlike our natural life, it is spiritual, immortal and eternal. Those who are born of it, receive it, are sealed by it, as the Holy Spirit of promise, and they are sealed unto the day of redemption, that is the day of the redemption of our body. (Eph. 1: 13, 14, Romans 8: 23.) This Spirit of life and immortality which is called the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, (Romans 8: 2,) and which is not the spirit of bondage, again to fear, like the the spirit of will-worship, instrumentalities, bondage and fear; but it is the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, and which shall in due time also quicken the mortal bodies of all who possess it, by the spirit that dwelleth in them. (Romans 8: 11). This Spirit of life and immortality is the Spirit of Christ, and if any man have it not, he is none of his; and it is Christ, as the apostle declares, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness." (Romans 8: 8-10)

From these, with numerous other Scriptures, it is clearly demonstrated that the living water which Christ giveth, is the Spirit of life and immortality, the Spirit of holiness, the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba Father. Water is an appropriate and instructive figure of this Spirit of life, and the fitness of the emblem may be contemplated in the following particulars:

1. Water is an indispensable element; natural life cannot be substained without it. So in the absence of this spiritual life, we were represented as being in a pit wherein is no water. (Zech. 9: 11). And the fruitless inventions of the carnal Israelites, in looking for life and salvation by their own carnal works and instrumentalities, are charged with having committed two horrible things, for says God, They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water. (Jer. 2: 12, 13). Likewise the presumptuous wretches who are offering salvation to sinners, and pretending to be commissioned to aid in the conversion of sinners, are by the apostle Jude denominated, "Clouds without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots." — Jude 12. Being twice dead, they cannot contain any of the water of life which they pretend to offer to their deluded hearers. Peter says of them, "These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever." (II Peter 2: 17).

When the children of Israel were in the wilderness and without water, they were in a dying condition, until God commanded, and Moses smote the rock which was in Horab; thence from the rock the water flowed in streams of salvation. In this figure, Paul says, "And that Rock was Christ." God, according to what we have quoted from Jeremiah, is the Fountain of living water, and God was manifest in the flesh of Christ, when he was smitten by the rod of Moses, and the waters of salvation broke forth, to follow all his redeemed family to their journey's end. Isaiah says of

Zion, the city of our solemnities, "But there, (in Zion) the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, (or instruments to draw with,) neither shall gallant ship pass thereby." (Isaiah 33: 21). This is that river of which David sung, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High (Psalm 46: 4). It was seen by Ezekiel, proceeding from the threshold of the sanctuary of God, of which God said to the prophet, "And it shall come to pass that everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live." (Ezek. 47: 1-9). John also had a pleasing view of it: "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." (Rev. 22: 1). Of these waters God has said, "The beasts of the field shall honor me; the dragons and the owls; because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert; to give drink to my people, my chosen." (Isaiah 43: 20). "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the mist of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." (Isaiah 41: 17, 18). "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be." (Zech. 14: 8).

2. We may also speak of the cleansing quality of water as applicable to the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Although the carnal, depraved nature of man remains in his flesh, and keeps up a perpetual warfare in the children of grace, between the flesh and Spirit, the old man and the new man; yet it is certain that the grace of God, developed in his children, will produce a reformation. They cease to fight against the truth, and they no longer feel opposed to God's people, to his method of grace and salvation, but the things which they once hated they are made to love, and the society in which they had no pleasure or interest, now becomes the society of their choice.

3. The harmonizing, mingling, or unity of waters, is well calculated to set forth the unity of the Spirit as it is manifested in the saints of God. Let two who are born of the water and of the Spirit, come together, the one from Hindustan or Africa, and the other from a more refined part of the world, however hostile to each other in all their natural prejudices, as soon as they pronounce the **Shibboleth,** or manifest that they have both drunk of that living water which is in them as wells of water springing up into everlasting life, all their prejudices melt away, and they come together as two drops of water, and are of one heart and one mind.

Second. We proposed to notice the purposes of God, as implied in our text, to give this water to some, but not to all the sons of men. The words, He that drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, fully imply that there are those unto whom he will give it. But we do not depend upon any logical deductions, or mere inferences however clearly deduced, but on the most positive and emphatic declarations of the word of God. First we will present the testimony of the Redeemer himself, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." (John 5: 25). This passage most positively declares not only a fixed and irrevocable purpose, but also a pledge in which the veracity of Christ is involved, that some who are dead shall hear his voice and live; but whether all the dead or only some of the dead are included, must be ascertained from other portions of the word. To determine this matter, turn to the tenth chapter, twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth verses, and there we are informed who of the dead shall so hear and live. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I

give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." But perhaps a more direct declaration could not be expressed in our language, than that found in the appeal made by our Lord, to the Father, when he "lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy son, that thy son may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:1-3). But to settle the matter forever beyond all cavil, turn to his words in John 6: 37, 44, 45, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." As the water which Christ shall give, is the water of life, or living water, we see that those only are partakers of it, who are drawn by the Father, taught of God, quickened by the voice of the Son of God, and these being quickened, are qualified to appreciate the waters of life, because they, and only they, are capable of thirsting for living water. And the thirsty only are called to the waters. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," cries the inspired Isaiah. (55: 1.) To which Christ himself responds, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." As none but quickened sinners are thirsty, none but the thirsty are called, and as none but such as are drawn by the Father can come to the place of these "broad rivers and streams," so all who are so drawn shall come, shall live, shall in no wise be cast out, but shall be raised up at the last day. All therefore who know the gift of God, and who the Saviour is, will ask of him, for they being taught of God, have learned that God alone is in Christ, and that all the waters of life are in him, therefore it is that they shall come to him, and that they shall ask for him, and he shall give, not offer, to them the waters of life freely, not conditionally, and the water which he shall give them shall be in them. We now come to our last general proposition, which is,

Thirdly. To speak of the lasting and blessed effects of this living water to all those to whom Christ shall give it. He shall never thirst, but it shall be in him a well of living water springing up unto everlasting life. That he shall never thirst, does not mean that christians do not thirst after God, holiness, happiness, &c., in the sense in which the psalmist expressed in Psalm 42: 12, "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God," also Psalm 143: "I stretch forth my hands unto thee, my soul thirsteth after thee as a thirsty land." But the peculiar sense in which the figure is employed in our text, is that they who receive from Christ the water of life which he shall give them, shall never be deprived of it, for it shall be in them a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Christ, who is the fountain, is himself in them, and from that living fountain the waters of life shall be ever springing up. Of this life which is called water, it is said, "God hath given us eternal life and the life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." (John 5: 12) Hence Paul, in describing the difference between this living water and that which has to be DRAWN with human instrumentalities, says, "But righteousness which is of faith, speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend up into heaven, that is to bring Christ down from above, or who shall descend into the deep, that is to bring up Christ again from the dead. But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart, that is the word of faith which we preach." (Romans 10: 6-8).This well being in them, and the waters of life springing up in their hearts, moves their lips to proclaim his goodness, and to

talk of his power. Water may be conducted by pipes to any depth and then elevated to a level with its fountain head; but, without some other power or agency, it can never rise above its own level or fountain, Hence the water, or life, which may be obtained by workmongers who fancy that they have something to draw with, will never elevate them above themselves, as the fountain from whence they draw the life of their religion, is in the passions, will, resolutions and determinations of their own carnal nature, it will rise no higher than themselves. But the water of life which Jesus gives, is clear as crystal, and proceeds forth from the throne of God and the Lamb, it therefore is springing up into everlasting life. However dark and disconsolate the children of God may feel, all their trials are wisely appointed for the trial of their faith, and in every other respect, for their good and the glory of God, and the more they are exercised by the springing up of these living waters within them, the more they may expect to see and feel, and mourn their own carnal, depraved nature, and the more they may expect to be tempted by the adversary. But this rather proves the existence in them of the well of water, than otherwise. But it is consoling to be assured by our Lord Jesus Christ himself, that all unto whom this water is given, are secured forever, and shall never be deprived of that life which he gives to them, and which he is in them. They shall in that sense never thirst, because he has given them eternal life and they shall never perish.

What we have written we cheerfully submit to the criticism of all who wish to criticise, as we have no motive other than the advancement of the truth; if anything shall be found in our views which is not fully sustained by the Scriptures, let it be rejected. Prove all things, and hold fast only to that which is good.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe March 1, 1858)

OBITUARIES

ROGER LEE DADE

Many brethren and friends were grieved when they learned of the illness and death of Roger Lee Dade on February 14, 1967. Brother Dade was born near Jefferson, Frederick County, Maryland, October 9, 1882, the son of Maurice J. and Rachel C. Dade. He resided on the farm where he was born, and where for many years he was a leading milk producer.

He was united in marriage to Susie Eleanor Ball on November 18, 1903; and to this union five sons were born; all of whom survive: Maurice L., John B., Robert T., Walter C., and Roger L. Dade, Jr. Sister Dade passed away May 23, 1957. Surviving also are two sisters: Miss Ruth Dade and Mrs. John Ball, of Jefferson; and a number of grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Brother Dade was of an old and well known family in Frederick County; and he was widely known among the Old School Baptists, among whom he traveled extensively the last decade of his life. He looked forward each year to the attending of several associations; and the brethren were always glad to see him come. He had many friends, for he fulfilled the proverb, "A man that hath friends must show himself friendly." (Proverbs 18:24)

Sister Dade was a member of New Valley Church, Loundon County, Virginia; and it was while attending the meeting there with her that Brother Dade heard and rejoiced in the truth for the first time, under the preaching of Elder B. F. Coulter, who was supplying after the death of Elder E. V. White. Soon he was received into the fellowship of the church, and was baptized by Elder Coulter March 15, 1908.

The writer was acquainted with Brother Dade for more than twenty-five years, and never knew one who loved the church and brethren more than he; or one who was more ready to do anything he could for their welfare. He would often provide for those who had no way of attending meetings. There was a closeness between him and his pastor all the years; and his passing leaves an emptiness which only the Lord can fill. For several years there was seldom a week-end that he did not accompany us to the meetings wherever they were.

Funeral services were held at the Etchison Funeral Home, Frederick, Maryland, February 16, 1967, by the writer; and he was laid to rest in Mt. Olivet Cemetery by the side of his wife, to await the coming of his Lord; when he, together with all the redeemed, shall be changed in the resurrection, and fashioned like unto his Saviour, to receive the fulness of those blessed things whereunto he was

sealed until the redemption of the purchased possession of Christ.

The large and attentive gathering testified of the esteem in which Brother Dade was held; and their flowers gave a silent tribute of their love.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to all of his family; and unto the brethren who miss him in their homes and in their meetings.

John D. Wood

TRIBUTE TO A VERY DEAR FRIEND
MR. ROGER LEE DADE, SR.
FEBRUARY 14, 1967

Our dear Heavenly Father called a dear one home to rest until that blessed day when He shall come again without sin unto salvation, to raise the bodies of all who sleep in him, and fashion them like his glorious body.

While we mourn his passing, we realize there is a time to be born and a time to die. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

Mr. Dade never let anything stand in his way in attending his church meetings. He traveled far and near, and, when he could, he would travel for miles to take a friend or relative who had no transportation. He loved to entertain his brethren and friends in his home.

The last few months of his life were spent in considerable pain, but he bore his cross with a smile. There is a great vacancy in his church that can never be filled, but his memory will linger on.

We feel our loss is his eternal gain; and we pray that God's richest blessings will be with all of us who mourn for him.

Mrs. Ray Hawling

IN MEMORY OF MR. DADE

He would greet each one with thoughtfulness,
And share with those he met
His faith, his hopes, his happiness,
That we cannot forget.

We recall these things with happiness,
Rejoicing in the thought
Of a friend well met — deeds well done,
That we will not forget.

James and Alberta Craven
(Caretakers New Valley Church)

ELDER GEORGE L. WEAVER

Elder George L. Weaver was born in Galion, Ohio, January 11, 1873, the son of John W. and Emily S. Reed Weaver. He died January 31, 1967, at the age of 94. In September, 1892, he was married to Minerva L. Dean, who died in 1946. To this union one daughter was born, Mrs. Olive Hall, who survives. On September 9, 1949, he was married to Victoria Workman Meadows, who survives. Surviving also are a granddaughter, Mrs. Mary Jane Hall Carrin, and two great grandchildren; a sister, Mrs. H. A. Sherer, Galion, Ohio; and five nieces and nephews.

Brother Weaver united with Bethel Church, Galion, Ohio, in February, 1896, and was ordained to the ministry in 1898. During his active ministry he was pastor of several churches, among them Bethel, Pleasant Hill and Beulah, in Ohio; Sulphur Fork and Cane Run, in Kentucky; and others. In 1953 he moved his membership to Frying Pan Church, of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, where it remained until his death.

For some months Brother Weaver had not been able to travel among his brethren, but his thoughts were with them and he loved to hear from them, and corresponded with them as he was able. Upon hearing of the death of Elder Helms he wrote, "I would be glad when it comes my time, that it could be said of me: 'He loved his brethren, and kept the faith'." We feel that this can rightly be said of him. He was sound in the doctrine of God, our Saviour, and loved to see order and discipline maintained in the churches. After he became quite feeble he was lovingly cared for by his daughter, Mrs. Hall, Shaker Heights, Ohio, until he passed away.

His funeral was conducted at Galion, Ohio, and he was buried beside his first wife. Due to the weather and distance the writer did not attempt to go for the service, and it was conducted by the pastor of one of his niece's church there. Brother Weaver is now at rest, awaiting the redemption of his purchased possession, the assurance of which he rejoiced in while he lived.

May the Lord be pleased to give Sister Weaver, and all others of his family, grace to reconcile them in their loss, and assure them that He does all things well.

John D. Wood

LILLIE COKER FOWLKES

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst Sister Lillie Coker Fowlkes, a beloved and highly esteemed member of Hopeland Primitive Baptist Church, Whitakers, N. C. She was born August 20,

1888, and passed from this life August 7, 1966, making her stay on earth seventy-eight years.

She was married February 18, 1922, to William Henry Fowlkes. To this union two daughters were born: Mrs. Naomi Fowlkes Willis, Rocky Mount, N. C., and Mrs. Eloise O. Waddell, of Saxeville, Wisconsin; who survive. Surviving also are twelve grandchildren, and one great grandchild.

Sister Fowlkes united with Hopeland Primitive Baptist Church, Whitakers, N. C., in September, 1906, and lived a faithful and devoted member until death. She was a firm believer in God as supreme and having all power in heaven and in earth, and none is able to stay his hand; who was and is able to save to the utmost every one of his saints.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to Him who doeth all things well; and who is too wise to err. And

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this Notice be spread on the church records, and a copy be sent to the family; and that we extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family. Written at the request of Hopeland Church by

Elder W. B. Barnes, Pastor

MARTHA D. (PATTIE) ARMSTRONG

God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to remove from our midst our beloved and highly esteemed Sister Martha D. (Pattie) Armstrong. She was born September 20, 1883, and departed this life September 14, 1966. She was married to the late Brother Walter Lee Armstrong February 22, 1902, who preceded her in death about ten years. To this union were born three children: Mrs. Maggie Lee Dozier, Whitakers, N. C., with whom Sister Armstrong made her home after the passing of her husband; Johnnie P. Armstrong, Port Richie, Florida; and George C. Armstrong, residing in Pennsylvania, all of whom survive; and also fourteen grandchildren, eighteen great grandchildren, and one great great grandchild.

Sister Armstrong united with Hopeland Primitive Baptist Church in Whitakers, N. C., in November, 1905. She was a faithful and devoted member; and to know her was to love her. She enjoyed so much to have the brethren and sisters visit in her home, and did everything she could for their comfort, always giving them a hearty welcome.

BE IT RESOLVED THEREFORE, That the church and all lovers of the truth bow in humble submission to the will of the great God and Creator of all things, who doeth his will in heaven and earth. And

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this Notice be recorded on the church records, a copy sent to the family.

This done by order of the church in conference. Written at the request of the church by

Elder W. B. Barnes, Moderator

JOHN ANGUS GUEST

John Angus Guest was born October 22, 1884, in Texas, and departed this life November 6, 1966, in Welletka, Oklahoma Hospital, at the age of eighty-two years. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Clara E. Guest, of the home; three sons: Stanley, of Dustin; Estel, of the Philippine Islands; and Joe Guest of Dustin; five daughters: Mrs. Lenys Cavett, Newcastle, Okla.; Mrs. Lois Eldridge, Tulsa; Mrs. Trudie Henry, Cedar Rapids; Mrs. Beraldine Voyles, of Okemah; and Mrs. Jolene Bond, of Newcastle; also by two brothers, Condie and Finis Guest, of California, seventeen grandchildren and ten great grandchildren.

Brother Guest never offered to the church, but he told me a number of times, "I hope I am one of those chosen in Christ before the world was." The meetings have been held in his and Sister Guest's home for several years: alternating the meetings in Brother and Sister Dodson's home. He was kind and considerate, and would do anything he could for the comfort of the brethren and sisters.

Services were conducted by the writer in Spiller Funeral Home in Dustin, Oklahoma, and his body was laid to rest in Dustin Cemetery, to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour, who shall raise these vile bodies with His likeness; and we shall see him and be like him.

Written at the request of Sister Guest.

C. U. Landers

VERNIE ALLEN DODSON

Vernie Allen Dodson was born June 28, 1890, in Indian Territory, and departed this life December 20, 1966, in Wetumka, Oklahoma, at the age of more than seventy-six years. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Ada Dodson, of Dustin, Oklahoma; one son, P. A. Dodson, Jenks, Oklahoma; two daughters, Mrs. Christine Yeats, of Albequerque, New Mexico, and Mrs. Joan Gray, Seminole, Oklahoma; and by one brother, Floyd Dodson, Great Bend, Kansas; sixteen grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

Brother Dodson's first wife, Sister Stella, and two sons preceded him in death several years. Later he married Sister Ada. He and Sister Stella united with the Primitive Baptists in the early twenties. A few years later he was ordained deacon, and for almost forty

years he filled that office well; and also he was church clerk for a number of years. He loved his church and the doctrine of our God, and looked after the needs of the church as he should. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

May the God of all grace reconcile the family, and each of us, to His will; and cause us to remember that we too must pass on at our appointed time.

Services were held in Spiller Funeral Home by the writer; and his body was laid to rest by the side of Sister Stella in Dustin Cemetery, to await the second coming of our Lord. Written at the request of Sister Ada.

C. U. Landers

MARSHALL STOCKTON

Marshall Stockton was born to William and Abbigale Mathews Stockton, in Albany, Clinton County, Kentucky, June 6, 1886; and passed away at the V. A. Hospital, Marion, Illinois, November 29, 1966, making his stay here more than eighty years.

Brother Stockton was a pipe fitter and farmer by trade, but was forced because of ill health to give it up in 1939. The first Sunday in September, 1962, at the close of the service he came forward and asked to be numbered with the Old School Baptists at Old Rock Springs Church of Simpson, Illinois, and was gladly received: his wife having joined in August, they were baptized that afternoon together. He loved the church and had been a regular attendant for some years. His first words after being raised from the watery grave, were, "Thank God, I have desired this for forty years, and God has shown me mercy."

He is survived by his wife, Sister Zetta Stockton; one son, Eldon, and seven grandchildren. Also by one sister and a host of nephews and nieces, to mourn the passing of this gentle, soft spoken man. His church and the brethren who knew him will miss him, and feel their loss; but it was his desire to go. A few minutes before his passing, he told his companion: "Just a little while, just one more pain and I will be at rest with Him whom I love."

His funeral was held at Rock Springs Church, near Simpson, Illinois, by the writer, and his remains were laid to rest in Kerley Cemetery, near Simpson, to await the call of the Saviour, "Children come home." May God bless and comfort all who mourn the passing of this gentle brother, who trusted in grace alone for his salvation. Written by request.

W. Y. Chandler

MRS. FANNIE JORDAN SHELLEY

Sister Fannie Shelley was born July 2, 1887, the daughter of the late I. W. and Elizabeth Spivey Jordan, and departed this life December 23, 1966. She was married to the late Mr. Hope Shelley.

Final rites were held at Inman Funeral Home Chapel by her pastor, Elder Gardner Mishoe, assisted by Elder Grady Cox, with burial in Myrtle Green Cemetery.

Survivors include two sons: Fred Shelley, Wilmington, N. C.; Hoyt Shelley, Clarendon, N. C.; four daughters: Miss Estelle Shelley and Mrs. Frank Floyd, both of Hyattsville, Md.; Mrs. Helen Martin of Silver Spring, Md. and Mrs. Carl Ryman of Arlington, Va.; one brother: I. C. Jordan, Crescent Beach, S. C.; three sisters: Mrs. Ellen Sherrill of Whiteville, N. C.; Mrs. M. E. Riley of Charlotte, N. C. and Mrs. Ruth Coney of Jacksonville, Fla. and fourteen grandchildren.

For the past several years, Sister Shelley had made her home with her daughter, Mrs. Helen Martin of Silver Spring, Md.

She was a devoted mother and a faithful member of the Primitive Baptist Church. She joined Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church in the early Twenties, and on August 23, 1941, by letter, joined Tabor Primitive Baptist Church at Tabor City, N. C.

A manifestation of her love for the doctrine of salvation by grace was shown by her presence at her home church meetings, also sister churches, when she had an opportunity to attend.

We bow in humble submission to our Lord, who does all things well, express our heartfelt sympathy to the family and resolve that a copy of this obituary be sent to the family, one placed in our church records and one sent to *Zion's Landmark* for publication.

B. Floyd Wright, Clerk
Tabor Primitive Baptist Church
Tabor City, N. C.

(All the years Sister Shelley lived in the vicinity of Washington she was faithful in attending the meetings of the churches in the Virginia Corresponding Meeting at every opportunity. She was sound in the faith and a good conversationalist, and was always welcome in our homes. She is greatly missed by all of us; but we know that the Lord does all things right, and we desire to be reconciled to his will. — J. D. W.)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 135 DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1967 NO. 7

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

LOOKING FOR THE SAVIOUR IN A DREAM

(Isa. 61:3; Heb. 6:19 and 9:28)

On one night, I dreamed of walking
Amongst some lofty trees,
Whilst heavenward I was gazing
Beyond the tops of these.

In my dream, I was holding fast
One end of a strong cord,
Which reached upward above the skies,
Even unto Christ the Lord.

The Lord was at the other end,
For I could feel Him there,
But could not see, within the veil,
The One exceeding fair.

I did look for Him to appear,
But He was never seen;
Still I'm hoping my Lord to see
Without a veil between.

I hope that the cord in my dream
Typed the cable of faith;
And hope we have as an anchor
Of the soul, the Lord saith.

Now in my dream, the lengthy cord
Was folded and laid aside,
And this caused me to wonder if
I did in the faith abide.

But faith is not all of the time
Drawn out in exercise;
Nay, often in this vale of tears,
Saints find it otherwise.

Among the trees of righteousness,
They walk, but not by sight,
And as the poet hath well said,
They travel much by night.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, N. C.

THE WILL OF MAN ITS SUPPOSED FREEDOM IN OBTAINING SALVATION

Brother Shipman, of Arkansas, has asked me to give my views on the above mentioned theme. In compliance with his request I submit to him and all the readers of the **Signs of the Times** a brief and hurried discussion of the subject. Volumes have been written upon the nature, tendencies and capacities of the human will by the different schools of philosophy and theology, beginning in the early history of christianity. That the will is free, and is the decisive power in morality, salvation and damnation, seems to be the favorite system of all nominal christian moralists, philosophers, and all work-mongrel, Arminian, will-worshiping churches. Free will forms today the chief god of nineteenth century thought and theology, and still sits as of old, in the temple exalted above all that is called God, and showing itself that it is God.

The discussion of the will belongs properly to the domain of psychology, but I shall know nothing in this article but the Bible and christian experience. My motto is that where fact contradicts philosophy, to take fact and let philosophy go. Where Christ contradicts Theology, take Christ and let theology go. If the will were such an important factor in man's salvation, Christ certainly would have emphasized that fact, the apostles would have dwelt more pointedly upon it, and the whole volume of inspired truth would have been given upon entirely different principles, for entirely different purposes, and would necessarily be made up of entirely different contents.

The first condition found in the human will that disqualifies it for the important functions claimed for it that I

shall notice, is its weakness, its uncertainty, its utter fallibility. The Saviour said there was a man who had two sons; and he said to them, Go work in my vineyard. One said he would go, but did not; the other said he would not go, but afterward repented and went. Why do you suppose this incident is recorded in the Scriptures? To fill up space, to finish out a page? It is written for our instruction, and serves not to teach us which of the two boys did the will of the father, but gives us a practical example of the uncertainty of the will. One said he would not, but he did; the other said he would, but did not. How constantly do we find this uncertainty of will exemplified in ourselves and those around us. We say today, I will do a certain thing tomorrow; but when tomorrow comes we are out of the notion entirely, and perhaps doing the very opposite. We say we will not do a thing; but perhaps before an hour has elasped we are fully in the will to do the very thing which we had but a short time ago averred that we would not do. Is it not true then that the will cannot be depended upon for the most trivial things of everyday life? Then how much less can it be depended upon for the incomparably weighter issues of eternity? The world is full of failures in everyday life, resulting from this feebleness of will. How many men and women fail of success in providing comfortable homes in this world from this uncertainty of the will. Then how infinitely farther short must they fall of laying up treasure in heaven through will power. How unreasonable to suppose that God has left the issues of eternity upon the feeble, fickle, uncertain, incompetent will of man. This uncertainty and incompetency of the will is not only a matter of worldly experience, but it is most constantly, powerfully and painfully present in the everyday life of the saints themselves. Has not Paul recorded concerning himself that the good which he would he did not, and the evil which he would not that he did? Is this the language of a man endowed with free will, and preaching the doctrine of free will? This is the common experience of all saints. If the christian cannot depend upon the strength, certainly and freedom of his will for his daily conduct, is it reasonable that the sinner who is dead, can bring himself from that state into life and light by his will power?

"The carnal mind is enmity against God." (Romans 8: 7) The will is an attribute of the mind. They stand in the logical relation to each other of container and thing contained. Then, if the mind is enmity against God, the will is necessarily enmity against God. Is it reasonable to suppose that God has placed himself, his Christ, his grace and salvation, at the disposal of that which is enmity to him? If this were so, would not all they who know the sinfulness of sin and the weakness of the flesh cry out in hopeless despair, Who then can be saved? Christ called attention to the practical working out of this enmity when he said to the Jews, "Ye will not come unto me." Arminians, in their ignorance of the Scripture and the power of God, frequently quote these very words to prove that coming to Christ is left with the will of the creature, when in fact the words prove the very opposite. It is the will that keeps them away, because it is enmity against him. This enmity shows a practical demonstration of itself in the choice of the people when Pilate offered to release a prisoner, in compliance with Jewish custom at the feast of the passover. He put before them two celebrated personages, Christ and Barabbas: the one the meek and lowly Lamb of God, the Saviour of sinners; the other a notorious thief, robber and murderer. When Pilate said, "Which of these men shall I release unto you?" with one accord they chose a thief and a robber, and condemned the holy and just One. They were well acquainted with the character of both these persons as men. They knew the innocence of the one and the guilt of the other; but enmity against God made the choice. Such is always the choice of the carnal mind. It seems to me that this incident, properly presented, would be enough to stop the mouth of any one proclaiming that salvation depends upon the freedom of the will in choosing

Christ. Here was a fair test, a demonstrative trial, and a convincing result. When the Arminian's favorite theory is brought to the test it will invariably result in this way — a thief chosen, Christ rejected.

Again, ignorance of God, and of right and wrong, of good and evil, is most conclusive evidence against the doctrine of free will and salvation through its choice. A man cannot choose that of which he has no knowledge. Before a man can choose God he must know God; before he can choose Christ he must know him as Christ; because intelligence is essential to the validity of a choice. But men in nature do not know God; they are totally ignorant of Christ. A fundamental principle of Bible doctrine is that the world by wisdom knows not God. Not only is this fact asserted by the Scriptures, but it is strikingly exemplified in the history of our race. Did men know Christ when he was in the world? When he asked his disciples, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? what was the answer? "Some say John the Baptist; some Elias; some Jeremias, or some of the old prophets risen from the dead." All of them wrong. Their highest conception of him was no more than that of a risen prophet, a man who had come up out of the grave, instead of one who had come down from heaven. Every incident in his life, from the cradle to the skies, is concurring testimony that men did not know him. Even his own disciples, they of his own choice, knew him only as he would reveal himself unto them, both before and after his resurrection. He declared himself that "no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; and no man knoweth the Father, but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." God and Christ are known only by and to each other. They dwell mutually in the secrecy of their own glorious, eternal and invisible personality; and no man (there is no exception to this no man) knows either except through their mutual revelation.

Then it is of the utmost folly to talk of men having power to choose, and their destiny depending upon the exercise of that power. But the boast of this ignorant, idolatrous, blasphemous age is that men are wiser now than ever before; and although they might have been somewhat ignorant two thousand years ago, that matters are quite different now. The man who would take this subterfuge from plain declarations of Bible truth, and the universal exemplification of the same in the conduct of men, is to be pitied for his ignorance, and his cause is to suffer in the estimation of all sensible men for lack of argument. Did not the Jews have an acknowledged advantage over all other men in respect to these things? To them the law was given, to them were committed the oracles of God, and through them as concerning the flesh Christ came. They searched the Scriptures continually, and studied them most diligently. They received the most rigid and thorough religious instruction and training; and when Christ came they in ignorance rejected, persecuted and killed him. If the Jews, who were his own kindred, and among whom he did his wonderful works, in whose streets he taught, and who had been instructed out of the law and the prophets concerning him, did not know him, how much less shall all other nations be expected to know him. If men knew him not when he was here in the flesh, and all nature witnessing and acknowledging his power, how much less shall they know him now when he has ascended into the heavens. Man's ignorance of God, and his conduct towards the man Christ Jesus, prove that salvation is not through the choice of the human will.

The doctrine of free moral agency, as it is called, is universally based upon the idea of man's knowledge of right and wrong, of his qualification to choose between good and evil. This doctrine necessarily gave origin to the old cunningly devised fable of the line of accountability which is founded in ignorance and superstition, and requires very little investigation of the proper kind to explode it. If our future destiny depends upon the choice of the will, it necessarily depends upon our knowledge of right and

wrong; and if our destiny depends upon our knowledge of right and wrong, this knowledge must be so infallible that there can be no possibility of making a mistake. But does man possess this absolute knowledge of good and evil? If it can be shown that he does, then the doctrine of free will may stand, so far as this argument is concerned; but if it can be shown that he does not, then the doctrine of free will must fall with it. The first field for investigation in this matter is ourselves. Have we that knowledge? Have you that knowledge? As for myself I must frankly confess that I have never yet arrived at that place where I always know right from wrong. Perhaps in many things, in the traditional sense, I know right from wrong; but where is my absolute knowledge of good from evil? Where is yours? How often do we perplex ourselves every day over matters continually coming before us in which we are at a loss to know the right things to do? Frequently, not being able to decide by our own deliberations, we seek counsel of friends and advisors, and after all find that we have done the wrong thing at last. This is an indisputable fact in the everyday experience of every man. Every christian has found in his own experience that the commandment which he thought was unto life was unto death. Is not the whole religious world, who are engaged in teaching the way to heaven, divided among themselves as to what is the way? Did not the builders in ancient times disallow the stone that became the head of the corner? I will give one example before leaving this part of the discussion. The Apostle Paul, or more properly Saul of Tarsus, who had all possible advantages in ethical culture and religious training, after his call declared that when he was persecuting the saints, compelling them to blaspheme, delivering them to death, wasting the church of God, he went not against his own conscience, and that he truthfully thought that he was doing God's service. Many others have lived and labored and died under the same delusive ignorance. What need we further witness that men in nature do not know good from evil? The saints themselves only knew as led by the Spirit of God. With the false idea of man's knowledge of right and wrong must fall the favorite air-castle of free moral agency.

The whole process of salvation is directly opposed to the doctrine of free will. The doctrine of election, which lies at the foundation of all salvation, is in direct antagonism to free will; so much so that in order to establish the latter the former must be emphatically denied. That the purpose of God according to election might stand, it was said of Jacob and Esau, "The elder shall serve the younger." Is not this opposed to the will of the creature? Would free will lead the elder to serve the younger? But this is so in order that the purpose of God according to election might stand. Then it is true that free will and God's purpose according to election cannot stand together. Which must fall? Furthermore, if salvation were through the will of the creature, where is the necessity of the election of grace? All believers in the doctrine of free moral agency are led necessarily into a flat denial of election, and, in fact, every other principle of the doctrine of God our Saviour.

What had the will of man to do in bringing Christ into the world? Did men make a contract with God that if he would send Christ to die they would accept the sacrifice? Did Christ come into the world to do men's wills? But he says that he came not even to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him; "and this is the will of him that sent me," continued Christ, "that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day." Christ himself was not a free moral agent; he did not come upon that principle. He came not to do his own will; he came as one sent of the Father, bound by the everlasting covenant to execute the will of the eternal Jehovah.

The Saviour said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Is there any harmony between

this expression and the doctrine of free will? Does not the one essentially down the other? Does not the fact that this birth is a necessity prove most conclusively that all the powers and capacity of the natural man are wholly inadequate to bring him to God? Does it not absolutely cut off every shadow of possibility of salvation through the combined powers of men, angels and devils? A christian is a child of promise; just as much a child of promise as Isaac was. "We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." (Galatians 4:28) A child of promise is a child that was to be; a child especially promised, which could not come into existance upon natural principles. Isaac was by promise. He was not born after the flesh; his birth was absolutely impossible from that source. So then the christian comes by promise, by the promise of the Father, and is born of the Spirit, because the flesh cannot produce him. If a man should preach that Isaac was born after his own will, or even through the procreative powers of his parents, men would at once reject it as false. A man would be at once apprehended as insane if he were to preach that any man is born after his own will. It is just as unreasonable to preach that men are born again after their own will, or even through means of any kind. That man who has not been born again has no more existance as a christian than the generations who are yet unborn have as citizens of this world. It is just as impossible and unreasonable for a man to come into the kingdom of God through the power of his own will, as for a man who shall be born a hundred or a thousand years hence to determine where, when and under what circumstances he will be born, or whether he will be born at all or not.

The doctrine of free will is contradicated by every principle of salvation as taught in the Bible and exemplified in the experience of them that are saved. It is contradicted by many direct quotations of Scripture. "It is not of him that willeth." (Romans 9:16) "Not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man." (John 1:13) Salvation is always ascribed to the will of God. There is a willingness that accompanies the experience of the Saints, but it is given them of God, the fruit of his Spirit, God himself working in them both to will and to do his own good pleasure.

H. M. Curry

(The above by Elder Curry was copied from the **Signs** of February 28, 1894, and will commend itself to all those who know the joyful sound of the truth. — J. D. W.)

EXPERIENCE

1218 Oakview Road
Decatur, Ga. 30030

Dear Elder Wood:

A number of weeks ago, in reply to my letter you invited me, saying in part, "We would be glad, should you ever feel to write, to have you send it for publication in the **Signs**."

What I am submitting below may not be of any interest or comfort to the readers of the **Signs**. If you find it is not in accord with the scriptures and the doctrine contended for by the **Signs**, you will discard it, thereby doing me and others a favor.

I have heard and read of ministers and others tell of their experiences, how they felt that the Lord was revealed to them at certain times and places, showing them their condition in nature and causing them to believe the Old School or Primitive Baptist doctrine, which they did not believe or care for before. I cannot say that I can point to any certain time that the Lord revealed himself to me, causing me to believe the Primitive Baptist doctrine — Salvation by Grace. This adds to my doubts at times that I have been born again.

When a boy I went to the Primitive Baptist Church with my mother, of which she was a member, and to other Primitive Baptist Churches. When I observed the ministers preaching I was impressed with the thought that they

would not be able to say what they said without it being given them by some greater or higher power. And observing the deacons and members near the pulpit giving their undivided attention to the preacher, that place at times seemed to me so divine and sacred that it was no place for me to approach. When some older, a younger sister and I began to go out with young people and go to the churches of other denominations, the minister gave invitations and sometime persuading non-members to surrender, give their hearts to the Lord, come and give their hands to the preacher and be saved. Somehow this did not appeal to me. If God had all power and wanted the person saved and said come or go, I thought how could he resist.

During World War I, I was on the Muse Argonne Front with the 47th Infantry, 4th Division from September 26 to October 18, 1918. After a few days the Division had advanced a few miles, we stopped, "dug in" and was holding the line. In the early part of October, late one afternoon the Germans were shelling more than usual and some of the shrapnel hit some of the soldiers in the shallow dugouts, and they were calling for stretcher-bearers. A shell hit near the head of our small dugout and knocked rocks and dirt on me and my buddy, Burger from Penn. I said to him, "It looks like our time is next." He replied, "trust in Jesus." Somehow, I felt that my mother was offering a prayer for me. I said, not out in words, "Oh Lord if thou will return me home, I will ever do thy will." A soft, bright, thin light came and hovered momentarily over the dugout. I felt a relief and peace I had never felt before. No, I never told this to my buddy. After the Armistice November 11, the 4th was one of the Divisions that went to Germany in the Army of Occupation. We were there from December 15, 1918, to July 10, 1919. We entrained July 10th, at Coblenz on the Rhine for Brest, France. On the ship returning to the U. S.., I began to think about what I would do after I got home. I had taught two years in country schools and had a crop on my father's farm in Gwinnett County, Georgia, before entering military service. I decided that I would go to the University of Georgia at Athens and take a one-year special course in Education and Agriculture. I was discharged August 5, 1919, near Atlanta, and returned home that day. I felt that part of the prayer on the battlefield of France, "that I be returned home," was then answered.

In September 1919, I went to Athens, about thirty miles from home, with the intention of taking a one-year course in Education and Agriculture. I met up with some young men I knew, one or two were to enter the three-year Law Course. After reconsidering my Course, I entered the law school. I mention this for the thought or truth proclaimed by the Prophet Jeremiah, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jer. 10-23)

After graduating, some of my work was in Atlanta where I attended a Primitive Baptist Church a number of years before joining. In November 1947, Sister Florence Gibson and I were received into the Church on profession of faith, and were baptized in December. About a year and a half later I was ordained a deacon. I am now a deacon of the New Harmony Primitive Baptist Church, Hiram, Georgia. Most of my work has been in education, Government service under Civil Service, and the practice of law, all of which I am retired, except a little legal work and some hobbies.

I have had conflicts without and within. I have promised and promised the Lord I would try never to transgress his laws again and try to do his will, but found myself breaking the promises and unable to do the things promised. Here the 7th chapter of Romans by the Apostle Paul is consoling. When I read of the certainty and surety of God's promises to his people, I am made to wonder if I am included in his promises. The Lord speaking through the Prophet Isaiah says; "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O

Jacob and he that formed thee O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." "When thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shall not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." (Isaiah 43: 1-2)

And the Apostle Peter: "Beloved think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." "But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's suffering; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." (1st Peter 4: 12-13) It is such with you readers, that you have been made to feel that you have passed through the waters and fiery trials, and are made to doubt that you are one of his; even so, you have a hope that you are included in the promises to his elect, for whom Christ came to redeem? If so, I have an experience in common with you.

To me, one of the sweetest things that I have ever read is the account of Peter and Christ just before his crucifixion, recorded in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. And he said. "I tell thee Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me." (Luke 22:31-34) After Peter denied three times that he knew Christ, the cock crew. "And Peter went out and wept bitterly. (Luke 22:62)

Here, as in all of the scriptures, the Word of the Lord must be fulfilled; Peter must deny Christ three times, and the cock must crow. There is no doubt that Peter was a chosen vessel of the Lord, but he is taught that he must be stripped of every vestige of fleshly power and volition, and wholly a dependent creature on the power and the will of the Lord. Not only is this to be shown to Peter, but the other apostles, disciples, and to all succeeding generations of his people. The Lord did not forsake Peter because Peter denied that he knew Christ. Being a chosen vessel for the purpose, Peter was highly endowed of the Lord to preach the gospel of Christ.

The Lord has been good to me. I have been blessed with good health, a good and kind hearted companion, a daughter, who is married and has three young, healthy children. A son with the U. S. Army Security Agency in Germany, and to be home soon.

No, I am not sure, but I hope that I have been born again. Not to prolong this writing, I would like to close with two stanzas, each in a different hymn:

"Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

"In this fair book of life and grace,
O may I find my name
Recorded in some humble place,
Beneath my Lord the Lamb."

Reuben A. Braswell

2245 Macon Avenue,
Camden, Arkansas 71701

Dear Brothers Spangler and Wood:

Enclosed is check for $3.00 for renewal of my subscription to the dear **Signs of the Times.** I enjoy the **Signs** so much, and as I do not get to go to church as I would like to, it is such a comfort to read the sweet letters and editorials.

I hear a sermon on my radio each Sunday morning from ElDorado, Arkansas. Brother Elbert Lambert was on April 10th. His wife, Dessie Mae, is my baby sister: they are both so very dear and sweet to me. I am the oldest child of seven, and all are gone except Dessie and me, and I have lived my three score and ten. I hope and pray that when I cross the waters of death I will have a home with the dear Lord and Saviour.

Please remember me a poor sinner: if saved it will be by grace, and surely not by my works. May God bless and keep you. Elder Lambert of Winnsboro, Texas is my pastor.

A sister in hope of eternal life,
Mrs. Florence Boggs

APPRECIATES THE SOUND DOCTRINE

Rt. 1, Box 90,
Glade Hill, Virginia 24092

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

It seems to me that the **Signs** is being blest — I wish our people would take up the May issue and read and re-read Elder Griffin's article concerning the office of a Deacon.

Also, Elder Curry's article, which to my mind is one of the ablest expositions of what we believe. And in a recent issue the **Signs** carried a very rich letter from Elder Ruston to the late Sister Gooch. I hope our people everywhere will give these wonderful articles their most careful consideration.

Brother Wood, I can't find words to express how much I appreciate the sound doctrine on the pages of this respected paper, the **Signs of the Times.**

In bonds,
(Elder) Julius Bocock

"THE BLESSINGS OF THE ETERNAL COVENANT"

"And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" (2 Samuel 9:1)

As we just sang:

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus name.

His oath, His Covenant, and His blood
Support me in the whelming flood;
When all around my soul gives way,
He then is all my hope and stay.

When He shall come with trumpet sound,
Oh, may I then in Him be found;
Dressed in His righteousness alone,
Faultless to stand before his throne!"

A sure foundation for the Hope of God's elect is that eternal Covenant made between the Father and Son before the world began. Before going into our text, for the benefit of those who may not understand our covenant theology and faith, let me briefly explain that Old Baptists believe in a Covenant-keeping God.

God has made three different covenants, or agreements, or testaments, which involves His relationship with His creatures. First, in the very beginning, God made a covenant with Adam in the Garden whereby Adam was to receive the blessings of life and all the fruits of the Garden. However, God gave him one commandment, one mark of God's sovereignty over man. "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17).

Beloved, God made a covenant with the race of man, in Adam. You know the sad story. Adam had but one possible sin he could commit, for sin is the transgression of the law, and Adam had only this one law. He transgressed, he died spiritually, and plunged all that were in his loins into a state of sin and death. God made a covenant with fallible man, and man broke it, and thus made it null and void as a grounds for any hope of salvation.

Second, God made a covenant with Abraham, and in its national aspects, reaffirmed it with Israel when they left Egypt as a nation of run away slaves. This covenant in short, is embodied in the Ten Commandments and issues forth in a "do this and thou shalt live." Moses summarized it when he said: "And the Lord commanded us to do all these statues, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as at this day. And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, (Deut. 6: 24-25). James tells us

"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all," and Jesus replied against Israel that they had substituted the commandments of men for the commandments of God. God made a covenant with Israel, that if they kept the law, it would have been imputed to them for their righteousness. In reality, it was given to show that man CAN NOT keep a law, for righteousness. Man invaribly wants to make a law to keep so as to earn salvation. Of all the systems of works that God is expected to accept, surely that Law which He gave which is just and holy and good, is the only one He would accept, and He clearly does not accept the works of the law as a way of salvation and life! God made a covenant with Israel, a nation of men, and again MAN BROKE THE COVENANT! Man does not have the ability to do anything good in the sight of God. Man is totally depraved!

But, the Eternal Covenant we speak upon this morning was **not made with feeble, fickled, failing man!** This Covenant, called the New Covenant, or Testament because of its dispensation in the history of man, is the old and Eternal Covenant. No, the All-knowing, All Wise God certainly knew what He had decreed to be! Long before these weak covenants were made, God had made a covenant that was a Rock under them, that even though these were to fail, to teach God's elect precious Truth regarding their own nature, yet this covenant was a rock which held their hope fast in spite of their failure in the other covenants!

This covenant is sweetly set forth in the context of our text. Is there any left of the house of Saul that I might show the kindness of Jonathan to? David refers to an early incident in his youth.

You recall how the young lad went out to slay Goliath and then was taken into King Saul's palace and not allowed to go home to his father's house? There as a young country lad he was very much alone in a house-hold whose head was often given over to an evil spirit by the Lord. Can you imagine how a child of God would feel confined against his will in the midst of ungodly people? That is how we expect David felt. But there was one ray of sweet sunlight in that dark palace. The King's son was a child of grace, and David's heart was knit together with the young Prince's as one. "And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul . . . . Then Jonathan and David MADE A COVENANT, because he loved him as his own soul." (I Sam. 18: 1-4).

Now this covenant was reaffirmed later as shown by I Samuel 20: 12-17. It was twofold in its nature. Jonathan agreed that whenever King Saul was angry with David and meant to do him harm, that Jonathan would warn David; or when King Saul was in good spirit, he would let David know of it; and in return, David was to show kindness to Jonathan when David received the kingdom. However, the covenant had a very important clause inserted in it: "And thou shalt not only while yet I live shew me the kindness of the Lord, that I die not: but also thou shalt not cut off thy KINDNESS FROM MY HOUSE FOR EVER: no, not when the Lord hath cut off the enemies of David everyone from the face of the earth. So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying: Let the Lord even require it at the hand of David's enemies. And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him: for he loved him as he loved his own soul."

Can't you see the picture? How exceedingly beautiful it is. Jonathan, the Prince, the Heir to the throne, rather than being jealous because God had ordained David King in his stead, makes a covenant with him IN BEHALF OF HIS SEED, HIS FAMILY! Beloved that is a type of that Eternal Covenant between God the Father and God the Son with the Holy Spirit as testator or witness to it. God the Ruler, made a covenant with His Elect Beloved in behalf of His people, and this covenant was to be everlasting! God made covenants with man,

and man always broke them, but this covenant, the covenant whose blessings thereof reach unto the elect children of God for their salvation was not made with the children, but with their Lord. God the Father enters into agreement with Christ that even after His death on the Cross, yet indeed, God will show mercy and not justice, toward the election of grace. No wonder David can so sweetly prophesy of the blessings of this covenant relationship when he wrote: "My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If His children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless **my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him,** nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. **My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.** Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me." (Psalm 89: 28-36).

That dear saints, is eternal security. God does indeed send His rod upon His people when they sin, and they all sin, yet they can all testify many times that God is faithful. He has not utterly withdrawn Himself from them but always sooner or later visits them again with comfort of His Spirit and the assurance of salvation. When they sin, He withdraws Himself, chastens them, and their faith all but fails, and at such a time all they have left is a hope, which serves as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast. But when Christ restores His Blessed Presence to them, faith is increased, hope takes its place as a secondary grace, and one is made to rejoice in the assurance of salvation for a season. Then, down they go again into almost utter dispair, only to see His covenant blessings restored later! Yes, we know by experience that our God is a covenant-keeping God, or else we would have been cut off in His wrath from this vale of sin and sorrows. Ah, how great is our God, to love us so, for Christ's sake! "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, (that house that is cursed), that I may show him kindness for Christ's sake?"

And Ziba said unto the King, Jonathan hath yet a son, which is LAME ON HIS FEET." (Verse 3) Ah, listen dear child of grace. There you are! Lame on your feet. You can't come to Christ, you are crippled! I wonder how this son was crippled? We read in 2 Sam. 4: 4, "And Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son that was lame of his feet. He was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan out of Jezreel, and his nurse took him up, and fled: and it came to pass, as she made haste to flee, that he fell, and became lame . . ."

That is how it happen. He FELL. Brethren, the great difference is Predestinarian Baptists and Arminians lie right here. What happened in the Garden? Did man FALL, or did he just STUMP HIS TOE? Is he DEAD in trespasses and sins, or just SICK? Is he WITHOUT FAITH, or has faith to exercise? Is he rotten from head to toe, or does he still have a "spark of Divinity" in Him? Is God seeking the elect, or is man seeking God? Is it Christ that makes one accepted, or is it man that accepts Christ? Which? Can man come to Christ, or must CHRIST NEEDS GO THROUGH SAMARIA? Jesus said "No man can come to me, except the Father which has sent me draw him." (John 6: 44 and 65) Paul says of reprobates "For all men hath not faith. ." (2 Thess. 3: 2) And also states that man is dead of trespasses and sins, and that it then is Christ who makes one accepted in the beloved. (Ephesians 1. 2-6 and 2: 1, 2) Brethren, this son of the covenant is lame! He can't come to the King, he has to be brought! Now, "his name was Mephibosheth."

The word "Mephibosheth" means: "A destroying shame." Talk about man's dignity! God describes even the elect as "a worm, and the son of a worm." He calls them "grasshoppers" and " less

than nothing." Man thinks he really is somebody, but God speaks otherwise. The only reason King David shows mercy on this crippled son of an accursed household, this destroying shame, is for "Jonathan's Sake." And beloved, the only reason God shows mercy on any of the elect sons of cursed Adam, these ungodly rebels against His kingdom, is for Christ's sake with whom he made that covenant that Christ might be the firstborn among many brethren! It was not for anything IN you, but for THOSE IN Christ, God shows mercy. There is nothing in man to turn God's heart toward him; just enough to turn His stomach. Man, yes, even elect men, are destroying shame, yet when we were without strength, Christ died FOR THE UNGODLY. Christ died for SINNERS, not righteous hyprocrites. "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance," says our Lord.

Where did David find Mephibosheth? "Behold he is in the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, in Lodebar." (verse 4) Ah, listen how sovereign God is! He in His providence uses men with names that carry precious truths to the believers' heart. That is absolute predestination dear child of God! Where is he? He is in the "house of Machir" which means "Sold." There we were too! Paul said "When the commandment came, sin revived and I died," and stated, "I was sold under sin." (Romans 7: 14) If one is sold into slavery, then he must be redeemed, or brought back and the Scriptures clearly teach that Christ came to REDEEM those that were under the law, under the curse of that broken covenant! We are taught that we are **"Justified freely** by **His Grace** through the **Redemption that is in Christ."** (Romans 3: 24)

Not only was he in the house of Machir, but he was the son of Ammiel, which word means: "People of God." Anywhere in the Scriptures we find the suffix "el" it means "of God" and the Hebrew word "Ammi" means "people." Beloved, the only ones in that covenant with David must be the children of Jonathan! And the only ones in that covenant of grace must be the children of God. Christ died for none other. He prayed only for "those whom thou hast given me" in John 17. It is only the "people of God" who share in the election of grace, and in this Eternal Covenant. All of salvation, or deliverance, are blessings that flow from this covenant, and they flow only to those who are people of God. They are people of God before they are ever born in this world. The angel proclaimed the purpose of Christ's birth saying: "Thou shalt bear a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for He shall save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1: 23) Their names were written in the Lamb's book of life, not when they believe, but "before the foundation of the world." (Rev. 17: 8) Yes, the "people of God" are "sold under sin" and in need of eternal redemption! Not only so, but they are in "Lodebar."

"Lodebar" literally means "without pasture" so we can easily phrase this for men instead of animals by interpreting it "without bread." Mephibosheth is in the house of no bread! Have you ever hungered and thirsted after righteousness? Have you ever wondered if "God could prepare a table in the wilderness?" If God has ever visited your poor bankrupt soul, you know He can. Ah, children of the covenant, aren't we completely bankrupted in Adam, insolvent, poor, hungry, and naked. Are we not in the "house of no bread?" Yet has it not pleased the Lord from time to time to break the word of life to us, to feed us manna from his table. We are like the Syrophenician woman who came to Christ to have Him cast a devil out of her daughter, to whom Jesus said unto her, "Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it unto the dogs." (Mark 7: 27) We have been taught, if God is our teacher, that we have no complaint when called a dog, that we deserve nothing from the master's table, yet we have been made to feel as she, "yes, Lord, yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs."

As I visit among the Predestinarian Baptists, I find the crumbs to be a ban-

quet of sweet tokens of grace given to me. And when we are thus taught of God, we like Mephibosheth, will fall down at the feet of the King in holy adoration. And, beloved, all those in that covenant will one day inherit all its blessings. "And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan's thy father's sake, and I will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat at my table continually." Did you not know that the saints shall inherit the earth, the domain of Adam? Yea, did you not know that we are "predestinated unto an inheritance?" (Ephesians 1: 11) All that are in that covenant shall inherit that kingdom with Christ and this for Christ's sake alone. Aren't you glad Christ could not deny himself and break that Covenant. Are you of hope, that when He entered into that agreement with the Father, He viewed you as one of His seed? Has the Spirit of God caused you to bow before Christ the King Eternal and in praise and wonder exclaim: "What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I?" (Verse 8)

"Come Thou Fount of every blessing
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise

Teach me some melodious sonnet,
Sung by flaming tongues above;
Praise the Mount, I'm fixed upon it!
Mount of Thy redeeming love."

(Sermon by Elder Stanley C. Phillips April 2, 1967, Indianapolis, Ind.)

"DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE"

2768 Clifton Ave. N. W.
Roanoke, Virginia 24017

Signs of the Times:

Dear Brethren:

Nearly always, when I take the **Signs** in hand to read, my eyes fall on this line of expression, "Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause." And most of the time a warm glow of love flows through my mind as I am made to consider that Devotion; as well as The Cause. I have at times wanted to let it be known there is appreciation for the Devotion.

I often consider and am deeply concerned as I read the travel of those in times past, and of those of today. Why do we love the testimony of the ones that "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness?" Why do we want to go to meeting? What seek we to hear? to see? Why do we bother to read?

This Kingdom has a King, and he is Jesus, for he is that Righteousness, and reigns as such. Our affection seems to be set on things above — not on things on the earth. I realize that to say, "I want to hear this Jesus as being uppermost in everything," is to bring persecution toward me. And yet in the past thirty-four years that I have been a member of the Old Baptist Church, I have not known any better thing to seek after. Even when I was a little girl, the word **Jesus** gave me comfort, for he did not forbid a little child; and I feel that littleness to this day. I hope I never forget that I am so little that I am nothing.

There is suffering in knowing Jesus; but our suffering is nothing compared to His. He being the **Way,** we must know it is rugged. He being the **Truth,** we must know it puts all falseness behind and in the back ground. He being the **Life,** we must behold Him to live. For this cause there is a devotion that cannot cease.

Seeing this devotion as I attended meetings when blessed with conveyance, and a desire so strong to go even if it meant miles of rough road, and to walk part of the way at times; and seeing that shining love and faith in the members present, both old and young, was a cord not to be treated lightly. Indeed I could not resist; and I did not, and do not to this day deserve such a blessing. God is Love. There is nothing greater than love, because it is God. It overcomes all else — gives life.

Recently in a song being sung, my eyes fell on, "Jesus my blest abode." It filled all space, and was so consoling as I felt embraced in that glorious truth;

and as the preaching that followed was a continued theme of Jesus, "Ark of the covenant," it was uplifting and comforting.

There have been several times when certain words of Scripture dropped so sweetly and so stirringly into my poor begging mind, which so filled my heart that I could not keep tears from streaming down my face, even while on my job in my daily effort to "earn my living." The scriptures were, "The Lord our Righteousness," and the "Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings." There is fear here — the love that overcometh.

"Be of good cheer for I have overcome the world," is something that gives me much thought. Do I believe it? At his manifest presence, Yes. Without Him I can do nothing: it leads me to seek after Him. His name being, Wonderful, and the government being upon his shoulder, and being the Prince of Peace, the Everlasting Father, and I hope, my Counsellor, the feeling that so great a Being embraced me in that government and will keep me, overwhelms me, for I am so needy and so poor in spirit, and as a little child unable to cry. Yet a sigh is known unto Him.

He told Peter, "Feed my sheep." What food do they need? He is the Bread of Life. What did Peter see in these sheep? We know that God is Love, and that love begets love; so we hear the confession, "Thou knowest all things: thou knowest I love thee."

Humbly,
Catherine A. Houchins

'I WONDER IF THEY CAN LOVE ME'

P. O. Box 39,
Chunchula, Alabama 36521

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed is $3.00 for the **Signs** another year. I do not want to miss one copy for we really do enjoy reading the good writings of every one. I want to say to Elder E. J. Lambert that my husband and I have just finished reading his book, "Tried in the Furnace," and you will never know how much we enjoyed it. Your experience was wonderful.

I think so many times that if I had an experience like others, how I would like to write it; but mine is so little, it seems it would not be worth the time it took to read it. But one thing I know: I do have a little hope that I would not take anything for. "Sometimes my hope is little — I almost lay it by; sometimes it is sufficient if I were called to die." I often ask, "Am I his, or am I not?" but one thing I know, I do love the Lord's children wherever they are. Often I wonder if they can love me, for I am so imperfect and cannot do good.

I enjoyed reading, "Total Depravity," and the good experiences. One of them is worth more to me than the cost of the paper a year. Those things that are so comforting to us, we don't have to buy: they are gifts of God, from whom every good and perfect gift comes.

I hope the good Lord will bless every one of the editors and those who write, to keep the good paper coming to the poor people who enjoy it so much.

From one who has hope of mercy; love

Mrs. P. S. Bell

LOVES THE OLD BAPTISTS

252 Newport Ave.,
Detroit 15, Mich. 48215

Dear Editors:

I received my **Signs of the Times.** I enjoy reading it so much: it is all the preaching I get. I will be 89 years old if I live until the 19th of August, and have been a widow thirty years, and live with my children.

O, dear brothers and sisters, if I could just write sweet letters as I read in the good old Signs. I love the old Baptists, and I believe they are the only ones that preach the truth, giving all the praise to the Lord. If my time is past due for the paper, I will send the money.

I ask the prayers of you dear brethren. If I am a child of God, I feel to be

the least. If I am saved, it will be His grace and mercy, and not for anything good that I have done.

May the Lord bless you editors.

Mrs. I. W. Cox

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To May 1, 1967)

Miss Reidy Pickeral, Va.	$17.00
Lavenia Biggs, Tenn.	5.00
Homer Bailey, Del.	2.00
Mrs. Herbert Shanahan, Fla.	1.00
H. L. Gardner, Ark.	2.00
N. R. Roberson, N. C.	2.00
Wm. O. Hall, Wash.	1.00
M. D. Merrill's, Tex.	1.00
Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.	1.00

UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

The **Upper Country Line Association** is appointed to be held at Monticello Church beginning on Saturday July 15, 1967, and continuing through Monday.

Monticello Church is located in the villiage of Monticello, about twelve miles south of Reidsville, N. C.; and twelve miles north of Greensboro, N. C. Follow U. S. 29 from either direction, and the meeting house is located just off of U.S. 29, on the old Route 29.

For further information contact W. J. Lambeth, Brown Summitt, N. C., or D. V. Spangler, Rt. 1, Danville, Va. Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

D. V. Spangler, Pastor

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1967 session of the **Pigg River District Association** will be held, the Lord willing, with Reed Creek Church, Henry County, Virginia, beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in August, and continuing through Sunday. The meeting on Friday will be held in the meeting house, and on Saturday and Sunday at the Fieldale-Collinsville School.

To get to the meeting house, which is a short distance off U. S. 220, turn at the association sign one mile north of Bassett Forks. To get to the school house, turn west in Collinsville off U. S. 220, on South Daniel Creek Road at the association sign, and go one mile to the school building.

Our correspondents and other brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

John D. Wood, Clerk

THREE DAYS MEETING

The **Riffe Primitive Baptist Church** expect to hold their annual three-days meeting the third Sunday in August, and Friday and Saturday before, 1967, at Mossy Rock, Washington. For information contact Mrs. Opal Huntting, Silver Creek, Washington.

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The **Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association** convenes, the Lord willing, with Union Church July 7, 8, and 9, 1967.

Union Church is located off State Road 605 in the Climax Community. Those coming from the North or West should watch for the Climax sign off Route 40 near Gretna, Virginia. Those from the South or East should turn on Route 57 inside of the Town of Chatham, Virginia, and turn at the Climax sign off Route 57.

All of our correspondents and friends are urged to attend.

Burnell B. Williams, Assn. Clerk

MEETING AT SLATE HILL

If God so wills, there will be an all-day meeting at the **Slate Hill Meeting House**, Slate Hill, N. Y., Saturday, August 5, 1967.

Brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

A. J. Slauson

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the Skewarkey Union is appointed to be held with the Bear Grass Church, Bear Grass, Martin County, N. C., the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in July, 1967. Elder E. C. Harrison was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder W. E. Grimes, alternate.

We cordially invite everyone to come and worship with us.

Elmer B. Rule, Clerk
Rt. 2, Williamston, N. C. 27892

Danville, Virginia **July, 1967**

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EDITORIAL

LITTLE BITS OF HEAVEN FOR THE POOR

"A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked." (Psalms 37:16)

I recall often an incident which occurred several years ago. I arrived at Paren Meetinghouse one Sunday morning after laboring all night, though so exhausted and despondent that I could not hold up my head. I felt that all my laboring had been in vain. I had never felt more wretched, cold, miserable, poor, and unprofitable in my entire life. As I walked upon the ground a little boy's hand slid into my hand, and I heard an anxious voice say, "Brother Lambert, go home with us tonight and talk about Jesus." The plea in his voice made me forget about my exhaustion. I then looked into the face of this little boy and what I saw in his countenance has never been erased from my mind. I beheld humility, earnestness, purity, and love together with pleading in this boys countenance to such a degree that I was unaware of anything else around me. My response was; "Phil, I will not wait until I can go home with you to talk about Jesus. The Lord willing, I shall talk to you about Jesus today." This was better than a good night of sleep. This was a little bit of Heaven for the poor. Phil Pittman was then about six years of age. He is the son of Deacon T. J. & Sister Helen Pittman, Box 1917, Hawkins, Texas.

I experienced another little bit of Heaven that morning as the Lord blessed me to use very simple language to preach Jesus to Phil and the many others composing the congregation. When services were ended Phil came to me and told me that he enjoyed the sermon. He concluded by saying, "I dreamed about Jesus last night. I saw him come out of the grave and— and— He went through a hole in the fence." Then I understood why he wanted to hear more about Jesus. His mother was so amazed at Phil's attention to the sermon that morning that she said to me, "Phil understood your sermon. Ask him about any part of it. I believe he can tell you what you said."

A few months ago at the age of thirteen Phil excused himself from the living room where his parents were entertaining an Old School Baptist Elder. His teacher asked the members of his class to write a brief theme on the subject of their choice from forty six suggested titles. Several minutes later he returned from his room with the following composition:

"PHIL PITTMAN

"MY CHURCH"

"My church is a simple wood structure which is resting in the country far away from the hustle and bustle of the cities and towns. It is a place where my family and other people go to get peace of mind and worship the Lord in spirit and in truth. When I am down and out in the

pitfalls of sin, I can go there and hear God's Holy Word spoken and how I rejoice!

"My church helps me realize more and more that these earthly items will gradually fade away, and this helps me to want to go to that Heavenly Kingdom and get away from this sinful world. If a man on this old earth had more money than he knew what to do with and had every luxury known to man, but did not believe in our wonderful Lord, he would not have much to live for.

"A man that was a poor sinner in this old world might have to go around from house to house begging for food every day, but as poor as he might be, if he had the Word of God in his heart, he would be rich as a king.

"Yes, our church is wonderful for people to go to, to hear the Word of God preached, and to sing His praises."

God willing, we desire to glean a few "Little Bits of Heaven For the Poor" from the above quoted short simple theme. Better is a little simple wood structure where people worship the Lord, than a great stone edifice where people idolize the building. Better that a few meet in a quiet place searching for peace of mind than for multitudes to meet in a great building seeking the praise of men. I had rather read a short theme written by a 'teen age boy expressing simple truths and experiences than to read volumns composed by theologians who try to prove by their writings that they are wiser than other people. It gives me more joy to hear a boy express himself as being, "down and out in the pitfalls of sin," than to hear many men tell how righteous they are. When a person feels the weight of his sins and is aware of the terrible condition he is in by nature, he is in good condition to rejoice when he hears the gospel preached. An evidence of conviction of sin as well as a declaration of rejoicing in the Gospel of Jesus Christ is sufficient testimony that one has been given Life Eternal. (See John 17: 2-3) The result of knowing God's greatness, when He reveals Himself to you, is to know your own sinfulness and weakness. The result of knowing Jesus Christ, when He takes up His abode in your soul, is to know His power to completely and perfectly save you from your sins; and to finally deliver you into Heaven's Wonderland. "To get peace of mind and worship the Lord in spirit and truth," may not mean much to the rich. It may sound very simple and unimportant to those who have never experienced that warfare within when the "Flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh . . . so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." (Gal. 5: 17) Suffice it to say that these two simple things are precious gems from Heaven to the poor and needy. A simple mode of worship consisting of singing praises to the Lord, hearing the Word of God preached, and worshiping Him in spirit and in truth, as well as seeking for peace of mind is more profitable than engaging in a long list of formal activities.

The vast majority of God's people are poor in worldly goods. James says in Chapter two, verse five, "Hath not God chosen the **poor of this world**. . ." Gideon was a poor man: " . . . Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? Behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." The widow of Zarepphath said, " . . . As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in the cruse." (I Kings 17: 12). The prophet's widow told Elisha, " . . . Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord; and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons as bondsmen." "Thine handmaid hath not a thing in the house, save a pot of oil." (See 2 Kings 4:1-2). We read of the widow who only had two mites and of Jesus who became poor for our sake to such extent that He said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath no where to lay his head" Matthew 8: 20. Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none." (Acts 3: 6). Jesus said to the man that had great possessions, If thou wilt be perfect go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and

come and follow me." Jesus further explained to His disciples, ". . . That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of God." Evidently Jesus was talking of earthly possessions. Only God can change a man's heart so that he will think more of heavenly treasures than his possessions in this world. Poor people cannot finance the building of great structures in which to meet and worship God. They willingly give of their small means to erect simple houses of worship. The wealthy generally contribute only to the cost of great imposing buildings for personal gain of a high reputation in order to gain more wealth. They do this in such manner that it doesn't cost them anything, as it is subtracted from their income taxes. There is more joy in really giving from the heart than there is in diverting some taxes due to "charitable institutions."

The poor Child of God is more content with the necessities of food, clothing, and shelter, which they have, than the wealthy is with much. The poor thank God for what they have. The wealthy is too busily engaged in pursuit of greater wealth to enjoy the wealth they have already accumulated. A very small gift is more appreciated by one who has little than a large gift by one who has much wealth. Even much wealth cannot be satisfactory to the rich. We read in Ecclesiastes 5: 10, "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase." Read the 12th verse, "The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep." The preacher spoke of a sore evil, "Namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt, Those riches perish by evil travail . . . " (See v. 13-14). The preacher further states: "As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labor, which he may carry away in his hand. And this also is a sore evil, that in all points as he came, so shall he go: and what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind? All his days also he eateth in darkness, and he hath much sorrow and wrath with his sickness." (Ecclesiastes 5: 15-17) If this be the lot of the rich while here in the world, experiencing much restlessness, sorrow, wrath, and sickness, they are to be pitied rather than envied. It is no wonder that the Psalmist said, "A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked." We conclude this paragraph by stating that the poor child of God is more fortunate to enjoy the little that he has here in the world than the rich with their many possessions: "Better is an handful with quietness, than both hands full with travail and vexation of spirit." (Ecclesiastes 4: 6)

"Better is a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished." (Ecclesiastes 4: 13). Phil Pittman shows to have greater wisdom in the short theme quoted herein than many grown men who know nothing of the Grace of our God. He says, "My church helps me realize more and more that these earthly items shall gradually fade away." It is a little bit of Heaven to think that a taste of the grace of God in a child's experience will so soon cause earthly riches to lose its glamour. Phil suggests two extreme cases to prove his high regard for a little bit of Heaven and his low regard for worldly possessions. He speaks first of the worldly rich man and then the very poor sinner. Belief in our wonderful Lord is so much greater than lots of money and every known luxury that one having the latter without the former would not have much to live for. On the other hand, one having no natural bread, a beggar for the necessities of natural life, the Word of God in his heart would make that person rich as a king. Belief in God and the Word of God in one's heart makes life worth living. It makes rich. All the money and luxuries known to man without God could not make life worth living. "If a man on this old earth had more money than he knew what to do with and had every luxury known to man, but did not believe in our wonderful Lord, He would not have much to live for. A man that is a poor sinner in this

old world might have to go around from house to house begging for food every day, but as poor as he might be, if he had the Word of God in his heart, he would be rich as a king."

Little bits from Heaven for the poor makes rich. It is a heavenly gift to be made poor for I am persuaded that all whom God makes poor shall be made rich. We read in the first chapter of 1st Samuel, verses 7 & 8, "The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich . . . He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory . . . " Have you ever been stripped of all your great faith in self, and have been clothed with a little faith in the Lord? The Lord disrobes you of your own self-righteousness and gives you a little hope in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. You are poor in spirit, yet there is a very little. Is it true in your experience that this very little is more precious than the much you once thought you had? There is much promised to the "Faithful in a very little." (St. Luke 19: 17). A very little moment in communion with our Saviour from time to time in this life is certainly a gracious blessing which overrides the days of conflict, doubts, and fears, which occur between these glorious experiences. Your love for God and the brethren may be so very little that you think you have no love at all. If you are greatly concerned about it, it shows you have a little bit of love. If you love, even a very little, you are born of God. (See 1st John 4: 7). Your talent may appear so very little to you that you conclude that you cannot be of service to anyone. You hesitate to use it: yet, when you do put it to use, there is a sweet feeling of relief. Many have complained of not being able to sing. I have heard these same people when they had forgottn everything but praising the Lord, sing like angels. I have felt many times when I went into the pulpit that I could not preach, there was no use trying, but the result was the best liberty in preaching. I conclude much of the time that I have no talent for writing. I go so far as to tell people that I cannot write, I cannot write as well as I desire. Sometimes it is my experience that when I feel the least qualified, my writing is better. I feel so destitute of godliness and know so well the sinfulness of my flesh that I go mourning most of the time. Would I mourn because of my sins if I did not possess a **desire** for godliness?? Would not a **desire for godliness** be a little bit of godliness?? I must reason that I have a little bit of godliness because I desire it!! Precious thought! Christ says to the church in Philadelphia, "I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast **a little strength,** and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. (Revelation 3: 8). A very little time for communion with Christ is a little bit of Heaven for the poor. A very little faith, a very little hope, a very little love, a very little godliness, a very little gift, and a very little strength: all these are LITTLE BITS OF HEAVEN FOR THE POOR.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y.
March 19, 1867

Brother Beebe:-

For nine weeks I have been confined to the house; but, through the mercy of our Covenant God, I hope soon to be around again. My health has improved a good deal and is still improving.

While I have been confined to the house my mind has been dwelling on many things, some of which I will write for the "Signs" if you approve of them. I have been comtemplating the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Jesus Christ, who ever liveth to make intercession for us. To intercede is to plead for another, or others. This in an important part of the work of Christ for

His people; as saith the prophet, "And he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." The being to whom intercession is made, is none other than God the Father. As it is written, "Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Christ has said to the Father, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am that they may behold my glory." The persons for whom the intercession is made, do not include all the human family; for says our glorious Intercessor, "I pray not for the world." If His intercession be not limited to them that the Father has given him, then it cannot be in all cases effectual, according to his saying, "Thou always hearest me." But it is limited to that people for whom he ever liveth to make intercession. By reference to the priesthood under the law, their intercession was founded in the satisfaction made by the sacrifice which has been offered for the sins of the people. The sacrifice must be made without blemish, and so in itself considered, not deserving death. A transfer was made of the sins of the people for whom the sacrifice was offered to the victim which was then to be considered as the transgressor, and as such, deserving the punishment, and so put to death; then for the persons for whom the offering was made, the blood was carried within the veil by the high priest and there presented with his intercession as having a righteous claim for the acquittal of the offender.

Thus Christ as a sacrifice was holy, compared to a lamb without spot, and the sins of all the people were laid on him, as it is written. "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin." He then suffered as the offender, for "It pleased the Lord to bruise him." Again, the Father said, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd." Now when we consider the infinite value of the sacrifice, not only on the ground of its purity, but also on account of its union with the divine nature, which in the great transaction stood as the altar on which the offering was made and so sanctifying the gift. Hence the Apostle says that he, through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God. Here then we have a sacrifice which not only shows the heinous nature of sin, but also shows the tremendous curse of the law against sin. It also shows an atonement equivalent to the full demands of divine justice. "In due time Christ died for the ungodly." "Now, being freely justified by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." He having now obtained for us eternal redemption: which opened the way for him to rise from the dead. Sin, being now put away by the sacrifice of himself, death could no longer hold him; and rising from the dead, he ascended into heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God for us. The apostle says, "This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God." We now see him a priest upon his throne, having an unchangable priesthood; wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost who come unto God by him, seeing that he ever lives to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us who needeth not daily, as those high priests under the law to offer up sacrifice; for this he did once when he offered himself.

Now we see the way opened from earth to heaven, and here is a people saved by the Lord; not by any means or efforts of their own, for it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. This atonement is definite and personal, embracing those to whom the promise was given. These were all by nature children of wrath even as others; yet they had the promise of eternal life, and this in Christ, and the promise that Christ would be manifested in the fullness of time. So at the appointed time, God sends forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, and by that Spirit they are quickened, and delivers them from death, and from the power of Satan unto God. When convinced of our lost and ruined condition as transgressors of the holy law of God, he manifests himself

to us according to his promise. "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness and their sins will I remember no more." Here we receive the evidence of pardon through him, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, and here we are made to joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

All this comes to us in consequence of his intercession. "The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." To them the assurance is given. "O Israel thou shalt not be forgotten of me." "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins. Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee. Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it." Here is a people who have the promises in the covenant which was made in Christ, and came to us in a way of grace, without money and without price. Our great Intercessor says, "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the waters of life freely." His intercession before the throne shall not cease until all the vessels of his mercy are brought in, for it is written, he ever liveth to make intercession for them, and his intercession is always effectual, although the child of God sometimes greatly fears that the Lord has forsaken him or that he is deceived and his doubts prevail because of the darkness of his mind, and the world and Satan together with his own corrupt nature beset him on every side, and he begins to sink under the weight of sorrow and grief; and he concludes, as the disciples once did, that he must perish. But the Saviour is always near at hand in every time of their distress, as when he said to them, "Why are ye fearful? O ye of little faith!" Here he shows the power of intercession, for he rebuked the winds and there was a great calm. Just before they were so much cast down, but not destroyed, because their Saviour still liveth to make intercession for them. Sometimes we look on things according to their outward appearance, and want to find Christ in our flesh, and because we find so much of the workings of Satan there, we say, Surely we cannot be what we have professed to be, forgetting that it is said, "No temptation has taken you but such as are common to man; but God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able." Here again his intercession prevails, as in the case of Peter, when the Saviour said, "Satan has desired to have thee," but the kind Intercessor says, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."

Now dear brethren, in conclusion, seeing therefore we have such an high priest, who is touched with the feelings of our infirmities, he having been tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin, let us at all times come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may ask for mercy and obtain grace to help in time of need. May we realize that our all-prevailing intercessor gives assurance not only that all his covenant people shall be with him, but also whatsoever they ask in his name, even while here in this world, shall be granted them. Having the witness within us that we are his children, may we consider it our greatest privilege to trust in him, and wait patiently and live holy, for he says "Be ye holy, for I am holy." Fight the good fight valiantly, rejoice constantly and repose eventually in the bosom of eternal love, whence the rage of earth and hell shall be felt no more. He will intercede until he has presented the entire family to himself without spot or blemish in immortal glory, dressed in white robes, clean and white, which is the righteousness of Christ; and with palms of victory in our hands, we shall join with all the glorified church in crying, "Salvation to our God, and to the Lamb for ever, Amen."

Your friend and brother,
Jacob Winchell

(From the Signs of April 15, 1867, Elder Winchell was the great grandfather of Sister Elnora Sickler, of Woodstock, N. Y., and Sister Verna Ellis, of California.

J. D. W.

OBITUARIES

MARY PAGE NETHERY

Sister Nethery, 88 years old, died at her home February 14, 1967. Her husband, Joseph E. Nethery, died February 14, 1959. She is survived by one son, Marion A. Nethery, Madison, N. C.; two daughters, Mrs. Annie Nethery Chambers, Pelham, N. C. and Mrs. E. Frank Johnson, Greensboro, N. C.; and two sisters, Mrs. Gertrude Dix and Mrs. Hattie Vaughn, Danville, Virginia.

Sistery Nethery was a member of Monticello Primitive Baptist Church, having joined there in 1921: she remained a faithful member to the end. She loved the church and attended as long as her health permitted. She said when she could not be at the services that she would meditate during the hour, and imagine she could hear the beautiful singing and the good preaching.

She was a lovely woman to know, and lived as nearly a saint as anyone could in this troubled world. She always loved to talk of her Saviour, and rejoiced when her pastor and friends came to visit her. We feel sure she is sleeping peacefully with her Redeemer.

Her funeral was held at the Wilkerson Funeral Home in Reidsville, N. C., conducted by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler. Burial was in the Pleasant Grove Cemetery.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; a copy sent to the family; and a copy be put into the church records.

Done by order of the church at Monticello March 8, 1967.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Vallie Chrisman, Clerk

MABEL ANNA WEEKS

As we believe that our eternal God has an appointed time for all things, we believe that our dear and beloved sister, Mabel Anna Weeks, who passed away January 17, 1967, had spent her alloted time here on these mortal shores.

Sister Weeks was born January 20, 1874, her parents were the late Lewis D. and Anna Peacock Gowell. She was married on March 31, 1894 to the late Walter L. Weeks; and to this union were born two sons and six daughters. Surviving are two sons, five daughters, twenty grandchildren, forty-two great grandchildren, and six great great grandchildren.

Sister Weeks was baptized on November 1, 1898 by the late Elder Z. M. Beal, her membership being with the South Gardiner Old School Baptist Church, which in later years merged with the Whitefield Church in Whitefield, Maine.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer on January 20, 1967, and her body was to be laid to rest on a later date in the Libby Hill Cemetery in Gardiner, Maine.

Sister Weeks was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and attended the meetings as long as her health would permit. May all who knew and loved her be reconciled to her passing away from these mortal shores; and may they be also blessed to feel that their loss was her eternal gain, is the prayer of the writer.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

MABEL THOMAS FARNIE

Sister Mabel Thomas Farnie was born near Leesburg, Virginia, March 28, 1886, and died at her home in Leesburg December 25, 1966, at the age of eighty years. She was a daughter of the late William P. and Sallie Riticor Thomas; and was first married to Christopher A. Shryock, who died in 1931. On September 1, 1935, she was married to David J. Farnie, who survives. Surviving also are, one brother, Henry P. Thomas, Alexandria, Va., and one sister, Mrs. Margaret Ellington, Waynesboro, Va. and several nieces and nephews.

Sister Farnie was a retired registered nurse, and for several years was assistant superintendent of nurses at the Loudoun Hospital; and for many years President of the Loudoun Nurses Alumnae Association. A few years ago her hip was broken in a fall, and this with other ailments greatly restricted her activities.

She united with Mt. Zion Old School Church in Loudoun County, Virginia, and was baptized by the late Elder H. H. Lefferts on August 22, 1943. She served efficiently as church clerk from 1945 until her death. Sister Farnie was a faithful member, and a strong believer that salvation is by grace alone. On the fly-leaf of a book which she had purchased, she wrote, "Bought by Mabel T. Farnie, who believes this Old School Baptist doctrine." Though we all greatly miss her, we would not wish her to have continued longer in her suffering, from which she is now free.

Funeral services were held at the funeral home in Leesburg by the writer, and she was laid to rest in the family plot in Union Cemetery in Leesburg, to await the coming of the Lord in his glory, when the redeemed shall be conformed to the image of the Son of God in the resurrection, and thus prepared for heaven and immortal glory.

The many friends and beautiful flowers at the services evidenced the great love and esteem in which Sister Farnie was held by the brethren and friends.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to Mr. Farnie and all the surviving family.

John D. Wood

BESSIE MABEL BAILEY

As it pleased the Lord to take from our midst our beloved sister Bessie Mabel Bailey on January 4, 1966, we bow in humble submission to the will of our eternal God.

Sister Bailey was born August 29, 1895, her parents were the late Walter L. and Mabel Gowell Weeks. She was married to George W. Bailey and to this union were born five sons, four of which survive. She is also survived by eighteen grandchildren.

Sister Bailey was baptized on September 22, 1919, by the late Elder F. W. Keene, her membership being with the South Gardiner Old School Baptist Church, (which later merged with the Whitefield Church) and she remained a faithful member until death.

Funeral services were conducted by Paul F. Keirstead, pastor of the Winter St. Baptist Church in Gardiner, Maine, and she was laid to rest in the Libby Hill Cemetery, Gardiner, Maine.

The writer desires to say that she was a lovely sister and always attended the meetings when health permitted. May all who knew and loved her so dearly be reconciled to her departure from this life, is the prayer of the writer.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

WILLIAM MAHONE GRAHAM

Born February 26, 1884, the son of Jack and Addie Graham and grandson of Elder Amos Dickerson. He was married to Maude Ethel Akers, who preceded him in death in 1961. To this union were born five children: Kathleen Martin, Ruth Heavener and William C. Graham. Two daughters, Helen and Dorothy died at an early age.

He united with Valley View Church in Montgomery County, Virginia, November 20, 1915; on July 19, 1930, was ordained deacon. Dad was a faithful member, loving the church and serving well until the time of his death. He departed this life August 29, 1966, at the age of eighty-two.

He was a good kind husband and father and will be greatly missed by the family and friends.

We believe he is now at rest, and our loss is his eternal gain.

Written by his daughter,
Kathleen Martin

A FEW REMARKS BY BROTHER WILLIAM GRAHAM'S BROTHER

William M. Graham was very widely known among people of the Primitive Baptist faith who truly believe in God's sovereign grace. He was affectionately called by his many church friends at Brother Willie. We attended many services together for over a period of years. If for some reason we did not attend together, the other would always call to ask about the service. I never knew anyone who enjoyed going to church more than he. In every case his remark would always be: "It was a wonderful service and you should have heard it." He was deeply devoted to his home church and pastor, and was a pillar to the church. He will be greatly missed by the church.

Peace to his memory.

J. Thurman Graham

JAMES DANIEL BOWEN

Deacon James Daniel Bowen, son of Malotha and Fannie Peel Bowen, was born January 19, 1877, and passed from this life, December 20, 1966, at the age of 89 years and 11 months. He was first married to Naomia Peel in 1897, who passed away in 1945. His second marriage was to Carrie Peaks, who passed away in 1954.

Brother Bowen was baptized into the fellowship of Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church, third Sunday in June, 1926, by Elder B. S. Cowan.

Brother Bowen was a successful business man and farmer. He was faithful in attendance and service to his church, kind, gentle, patient, unselfish, and wise in council, served on the finance committee of the Kehukee Association for many years, and was very liberal in support of Bear Grass and Skewarky churches. His home was a haven of rest to the brethren, sisters, friends and needy.

We, the Church at Bear Grass, bow in humble submission to the will of Almighty God, who does all things well. We feel our loss is His eternal gain.

Brother Bowen leaves one grandson, Daniel M. Bowen, his wife, and three great grandsons. Two stepsons, Arthur and Jodie Peaks, seven stepdaughters, Mrs. Vernon Phelps, Mrs. Bruce Leggette, Mrs. Simon Lilley, Mrs. Ollie Facon, Mrs. Ruby Bonds, Mrs. Haywood Price, and Mrs. Henry Roberson.

His funeral was conducted in Bear Grass Church by Elder E. C. Harrison, Elder W. E. Grimes, and Mr. Thurman Griffin. Burial was in Bowen Cemetery.

A copy of this obituary be sent to *Zion's Landmark*, one to *Signs of the Times*, and one to the family.

Done by order of conference Saturday before the third Sunday in January, 1967.

E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Elmer Peel, Church Clerk
E. C. Harrison, Committee

SISTER BELLE SELLERS

Our Heavenly Father in his infinite Wisdom, Love and Mercy, called home our beloved Sister Belle Sellers, on November 15, 1966. Sister Sellers united with the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church in October, 1919, and had been a faithful member until the past few years due to declining health. Even then her children saw that she attended her Church as often as her health would permit. She loved the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace and not works, and had complete faith and trust in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Sister Sellers enjoyed the fellowship of the Church, and listening to a godly conversation.

She had been living in and around Rocky Mount, N. C. all of her life — 83 years, and was the daughter of Ruben Diehl and Millie Hancock Diehl. She leaves to mourn seven children: Henry and William Sellers of Rocky Mount, N. C.; Lessie Sellers, Virginia Ethridge, Mildred Harper of Rocky Mount, N. C.; Dorothy Wood of Spring Hope, N. C.; and Wallace Sellers of Aulander, Florida.

Her funeral was conducted from Johnson Funeral Home, by her Pastor Elder D. B. Stokes, assisted by Mr. Woodson Booth. She was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord. May God in his infinite wisdom and mercy comfort the family and reconcile us all to His will.

Nina Pearson

SISTER MILLIE OAKLEY

It pleased our Heavenly Father to call home our beloved Sister Millie Oakley on November 29, 1966, at the age of 90. Sister Oakley united with the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church in June, 1914, and attended her Church faithfully until her last few years. Her health did not permit her to attend regularly, but the children would take her to Church whenever she was able to attend. She loved to meet with the members in fellowship and love. Enjoying the service and meditating with the members.

Sister Oakley is survived by besides her husband, three daughters and one son: Mrs. W. R. Turner, Mrs. W. E. Mooring of Rocky Mount, N. C.; Mrs. Beulah Dowdy of Portsmouth, Va.; and Mr. Vernon Oakley of Rocky Mount, N. C.

Her funeral was conducted from Johnson Funeral Home by her Pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, assisted by Mr. Lowder. She was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery to await the coming of the Lord. May God in his infinite wisdom and mercy comfort her family and reconcile us all to His will.

Nina Pearson

MAUDE T. WARD

It has pleased our Heavenly Master to call from this life of toil, suffering, and affliction Sister Maude T. Ward on December 25, 1966, at the age of 79.

Sister Ward was a member of the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church. She is survived by four daughters, Mrs. Ora Lee W. Joyner, Mrs. Frances W. Miller, Mrs. Nina W. Pearson, and Mrs. Lois W. Hughes; one sister, Mrs. Arrah T. Knight; three brothers, Jessie Trevathan, R. R. Trevathan, and P. E. Trevathan; two grandsons, R. R. Miller, Jr. and Charles D. Hughes, and one granddaughter, Patricia Lynn Joyner.

Sister Ward was an inspiration to others, especially in her last days as she laid on the bed of affliction. She was always able to smile in her sickness and talk about the greatness of her Heavenly Father, who had promised good to all His people, even the afflictions of life. She felt even as Paul, as he said, "We glory in tribulation also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

I, as her unworthy servant, feel that Sister Ward was looking forward with great anticipation to her day of death, knowing that there was something better for her than this life had to offer.

Her funeral was conducted by Mr. Fred Scott and Elder D. B. Stokes at Gay-Yost Funeral Home, amidst a host of brethren and friends. She was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord of Lords, and King of Kings.

We extend to the family our deepest sympathy and hope they may, by God's grace, bow in humble submission to the will of our Father. For it is him that giveth, and him that taketh. Amen.

Written by request of the family.

Elder D. B. Stokes

LEONARD CLYDE KING

We at Gilliams Church must bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father and realize he made no mistake in the calling of our dear brother in Christ, Leonard Clyde (L. C.) King, at the age of 39. For we know all things work together for good to them who are the called according to his purpose. Brother King is survived by his wife, Ruth Fogleman King, six children; four boys Gerald, Kenny, Roy. L. C. Jr., and two girls, Jean, and Dianne King.

I had known brother King for several years. It was a precious and sweet privilege to have seen such a wonderful change wrought in him by the effectual working of Almighty God. As we saw him being stripped of every earthly tie, brought to his wit's end, and made willing to suffer the afflictions of God's children, and come home to his friends telling what great things the Lord had done for him; and confessing he was a pilgrim and a stranger here below, desiring to live in peace with his brethren. It also was my privilege to have led him into the liquid grave, though unworthy as I felt to be. As he came up out of the water his words were, "I hope God will bless me to live in peace with my brethren." As his pastor I can say that he was granted that blessing. I feel that he witnessed with the eunuch, who went on his way rejoicing.

Brother King was one who showed his love openly that those who knew him loved him. I truly feel that God sent him to Gilliams Church. He was a shining light in the church, never engrossed in his own affairs to the extent that he didn't have the time to attend to the affairs of his church; counted it not as a burden but rather a blessing. We shall miss his kindness, his sweet smile and fellowship; but his kind memory shall not be forgotten.

He was not blessed to be in the fellowship of the militant church very long; being baptised on a 4th Sunday morning November, 1964; passed from this life March 2, 1967, but I believe his soul is still in fellowship with the ransomed church of God, the redeemed of the Lord.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, assisted by Elders E. F. Oakley, W. C. King, Donald Smith. There were many friends and brethren present showing evidence of his love and esteem. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

May his precious family be comforted by the blessings of God and be given to witness with Job, "blessed be the Lord that giveth, blessed be the Lord that taketh."

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to the Signs of Times, a copy put on church record and a copy be sent to the family. Done in conference by Gilliams Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder Wallis A. Smith, Moderator
C. F. Summers, Clerk

DEACON TRAVIS VERNON LUTZ

We, the members of Mt. Olive Primitive Baptist Church, agree to file in our records the following tribute of respect in memory of our beloved brother and deacon, Travis V. Lutz.

He was born January 22, 1905, in Wilson County, Texas, and his parents were Mr. and Mrs. Adam J. Lutz. His wife, Bertha, and eleven sons and three daughters mourn his passing: Tilden, San Antonio; Troy, Sacramento, Calif.; John, Tacoma, Wash.; Alvin, Derial, Milton, Eddie and Arnold, of Seguin; Douglas and R. V. of New Braunfels; Vincent in the Navy; Mrs. Virgie Stevens, New Braunfels; Mary and Kathy, of Seguin. Also twelve grandchildren, three brothers and one sister.

Brother Lutz passed from this life of sin and sorrow on September 13, 1966. He became a member of the church the fourth Sunday in November, 1963; and was ordained a deacon the second Sunday in December, 1965. He was a blessing and a comfort to our little church. He believed in a God who had all power in heaven and in earth, and that none can stay his hand. Brother Lutz's life and hope was in the doctrine of salvation by grace: a God who had chosen his children before the foundation of the world; and sent his darling Son for a sacrifice for their sins. This Son of God arose from the grave for their justification; and he shall present them to the Father without spot or blemish when time is no more. This is what Brother Lutz believed; and it is true, for, "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and Jesus said, "For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." We shall miss him, but our loss is his eternal gain. Our sympathy goes to the bereaved.

Funeral services were held September 19, 1966, at Goetz Memorial Chapel, with Elders Malcolmn Burkhalter and Gerald Shipman officiating. Burial was in Gaudalupe Valley Memorial Park.

We order copies of this to be sent to the family and the *Signs of the Times.*

Adopted December 11, 1966, while the church was in conference.

Elder Gerald Shipman, Moderator
Sister Lela Culpepper, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 135 DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1967 NO. 8

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

REMEMBERING OUR CREATOR

One scripture that has impressed me from the days of my youth is: *"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou will say, I have no pleasure in them."*

The whole book of Ecclesiastes is really a book of law. The law is our schoolmaster to bring us to a knowledge of our shortcomings and condemnation, as we feel the judgment of God under it in being unable to keep it. However, there is hidden meaning in the word Creator, for it implies God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, for these three make the one true God; the Father who created all things and predestinated all things; the Son who redeemed, and the Holy Ghost who quickens dead sinners into spiritual life. Salvation is then the work of the three of the Godhead.

When we take this scripture under consideration over into the gospel to which it points, we find we are to be mindful of Him who created us unto good works in Jesus Christ, who chose us in the person of His Son, and provided redemption for us through the work of the Son. Also mindful of the need of the Holy Spirit to guide and instruct us, and to show us the things of Jesus, and to execute the will of God of which all of God's little ones are heirs with Jesus Christ. We are to remember how the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters when darkness covered the deep and God said: "Let there be light." Now in a gospel sense we are to remember God in bringing light into our hearts and showing us the face of Jesus Christ in a good hope through grace. We are to remember the great deliverance that is ours from the curse and penalty of sin.

As a believer we have two birthdays; one every year of our natural life, the other in grace is one birthday continually, for we are born but once into the kingdom of God, and never grow old in that life, or kingdom. So in the youth of our gospel experience we are not to forget God, nor are we to despise the mercy and the grace of Jesus Christ; the second person of this Creator, whom we are to remember. We are enjoined daily to think upon spiritual things and to have our conversation upon spiritual things, and to desire the felt presence of the third person of the Trinity, the Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. The scripture has a natural application under the law and a spiritual import under grace.

To remember our Creator is to examine ourselves, to pray for the needful things of life, to invoke the blessings of God upon that which we do, and to desire to do it for the glory of Christ. As we are created in Christ Jesus, we are to remember our brethren, and to strive for peace among them, to keep ourselves from reproach among men, and to desire the Lord to keep us, for we cannot of ourselves do this. In remembering our Creator we are to be mindful of what He has saved us from, and what he has saved us to, and to

consider the wonderful provisions of that grace by which we are saved. We must remember the work of Jesus who was a Surety for all the election of Grace and whose work stands forever accomplished as far as redemption is concerned. We must remember our Lord as our great Melchisedec who abideth continually as our High Priest in Heaven. We should remember with thankful hearts the gracious favors of God unto us and to love Him devotedly, and to worship Him with reverence.

If we have known Him in an experimental way in this grace dispensation we should remember the Creator in the days when He first sought us out and loved us with an everlasting love.

May the Lord bless this people abundantly, in all things both naturally and spiritually.

Sister Mary Hellings
4 Maple Lane
Pennington, N. J. 08534

WRITERS WITNESS WITH HER

Box 183,
Stockdale, Texas 78160

Dear Editors and Readers
of the *Signs:*

Please extend my subscription two more years.

I am now past my four-score years and the *Signs of the Times* has been a great thing in my life — a light to shine upon the road that leads me, I hope, to the Lamb. It is an instructor, guide, and a rock as it were to shelter under, a staff to lean on when I am weak and weary. I mean it helps point out the way, and the writers witness with my experience that I am not alone in my travels and trials. Then there is news of old soldiers — a few I have met, and others I just have a "reading acquaintance" with, some of whom I meet later.

We here at Mt. Olive Church, Stockdale, Texas, welcome all Old Baptists and friends to meet with us, and visit in our homes. Our meeting times are on the Second and Fourth Sundays. Our beloved pastor is Elder Gerald Shipman; with Elders W. W. Fleet and H. L. Ballard preaching also.

Lela Culpepper

Rt. 3, Box 100,
Crockett, Texas 75835

Signs of the Times:

How we love to read the *Signs,* and comment on the many good letters which give our Lord and Master all the praise. It is good to know there are a few who believe in giving God all the praise.

I feel to be humble. We are in need of rain, and I know that when it pleases God to send it, then we will get it. We are taught to be patient in all things, always looking to Him, for we know our nothingness. I seem sometimes to be one of the weakest of mortals. Oh that we had the faith of Daniel! I feel sometimes that my prayers are answered, and then praise the Lord for his mercies.

My husband is not a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, but defends the doctrine better than I can; for which I thank the Lord. There are a few who believe like we do: even our children do not. But if it is the Lord's will, I hope they will some day know why we believe as we do, forsaking all on earth for the Lord's sake.

We love our brothers and sisters and makes us happy to meet and embrace, and to hear the dear ones sing, and the preaching. We cannot go much of the time, but can read the *Signs.* We are eighty-eight and eighty-five years old and our health is not good. We read and re-read the *Signs,* and thank God that we love the good writings; and wish that we could write and tell more of what we hope He has done for us. We are enclosing $5.00. May God bless all of you.

Yours in hope,
Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Rich

New Vernon, N. Y.,
September 1, 1841

OUR MOTTO

When the hosts of the alien were encamped around about the little trembling band of Israel like grasshoppers for multitude, and all human prospect of escape from captivity had fled, the despairing tribes were reduced to the necessity of looking alone to God for deliverance. The manner in which it pleased the Lord to give deliverance and victory to Israel, was the very opposite to what human wisdom would have suggested.

The Lord would neither suffer Gideon to go with his thirty-two thousand, nor with his ten thousand men: "Lest Israel should vaunt themselves against the Lord, saying mine own hand hath saved me." The first work of preparation for the onset was the reduction of the strength of their numbers, and to convince them that the work would be accomplished by the mighty arm of the Lord. How effectually did the Lord stain the pride of men in removing from them all on which they would be inclined to rely! And when they were brought down sufficiently, Gideon was instructed to advance with his three hundred men, divided into three companies, with directions to take their positions round about the enemy, without a single implement of war, excepting a trumpet in every man's right hand — with no weapons, offensive or defensive, no sword, nor shield, nor bow; but relying on the Lord as their Shield and Buckler, their High Tower and their defence.

Every man was to carry his empty pitcher covering a lighted lamp in his left hand, and to await the signal from their leader, at which every pitcher was broken, the united light of three hundred lamps at once flashed forth upon the surprised enemy, attended with the simultaneous shout of three hundred voices, crying as in one breath, **"The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!"**

How dreadful was the consternation of the Midianites at this display of the arm of the Lord! More dreadful to their ears was the sound of the name of the Lord than all the thunder of the battle clash; and more terrific to their eyes the radiant flame than the glitter of a million spears! The dreadful majesty of the God of Israel shining around them, and the terror of his name echoing from the trumpets on every side, filled their hearts with dismay and their ranks with confusion.

We are inclined to believe there is something in this figure analogous to the manner in which the Lord is conducting the conflict of his people at this day, with the host of their opposers. The numerical strength of those who contend for the primitive order of the house of God, is greatly reduced; and they are taught by very many important admonitions, that they are not to rely upon human wisdom nor human might; their pitchers (mere earthen vessels) are empty of themselves, and only to be broken in the contest, while the light of that treasure which our God has committed to earthen vessels, is to shine forth with the united declaration of our sole reliance upon the sword of the Lord and of our glorious leader Jesus Christ, from every one whom God has honored with a place and rank among the very few by himself designated to follow their illustrious Leader into the field.

Not the sword of human power, of human wisdom, literature, science or fame; but the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. While the **motto** of our enemies is, "Attempt great things, expect great things," which motto truly expresses their confidence in their own skill and perseverance; the confidence of the people whom God has chosen shall be expressed by the **shout** of Gideon's little army whose reliance was restricted to "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." And although the sword of the Lord and of our Leader is at this day invisible to the enemies of Zion, as was the sword in the days of Midian, yet its glittering blade shall flash upon them in as unexpected a moment as is the case of their prototype, and shall be as effectual as on that memorable occasion.

A few words, then, of admonition to

those who can lap water like dogs, may be seasonable. Brethren, remember the charge that was given to the three hundred men: "And he (their leader, who, in this particular at least, was a figure of the Captain of our salvation,) said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise; and behold when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be, that as I do, so shall ye do; when I blow with the trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of the camp, and say, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!"

It is of the utmost inportance that the little company whom God has preserved from bowing to Baal, should keep their eye fixed upon the Author of their faith, and imitate his divine example. We are to cry, **The sword of the Lord!** and rest assured that God will use it effectually in defence of his Israel and the discomfort of his enemies.

(The above was written by Elder Gilbert Beebe in 1841; and since we carry his Motto as he did from the beginning of the 3rd volume in 1835, and agree with what he has written concerning it, we feel that it will be of much interest to those who have not read it before. — J. D. W.)

SPIRITUAL THINGS ARE FOOLISHNESS UNTO THE NATURAL MAN

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14)

This natural man is the old man or the adamic man. The question may arise: Can the natural man become spiritual by performing certain conditions? In answer to that question, we ask this: Can an apple tree bring forth pears? The same principle works in both cases. A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit.

This natural man is corrupt, and he is dead in trespasses and sin. "Because the carnal mind is enemity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." (Romans 8: 7) The natural man cannot understand anything pertaining to the things of God. He may be well refined, well educated, and even have a head knowledge of the doctrines of Grace, but all of this will not change his nature, nor will it effect his heart.

Since the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, it is impossible for him to worship God. "God is a Spirit and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in truth." (John 4:24)

All men are dead in trespasses and sins. This death has passed upon mankind. Man is destitute of the Spirit of God. "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Romans 3: 10-12) I believe this Scripture is enough to show that the doctrine of works mixed with the Grace of God will not reach a poor sinner; nor will it save a soul.

Man is traveling the road to destruction and he does not know it. His god is actually the things of this world. He may be seeking after riches, the praises and esteem of men, the pleasures of this world, or any other desire which would satisfy his lust such as murder, power, adultery, theft, etc.

What will prompt man to profess a form of religion? Maybe society demands it. Therefore man professes to be a religious person in order to promote his business, to be popular in this world, or because of custom, etc.

This is a broad subject and we trust that the Spirit of the living God will enable us to rightly divide the word of truth. The Scripture states that the natural man does not receive anything that is Spiritual, then may we conclude that he cannot feed upon anything that is Spiritual. If he cannot feed upon it, just what is his reaction to a gospel sermon? It is foolishness to him. "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which

are saved, it is the power of God." (1 Cor. 1: 18)

If the natural man professes a religion, what doctrine can he feed upon? The doctrine of works. Why? Because this gives man credit for performing conditions that he thinks are necessary for his salvation, and this boosts man up. As we think of natural man feeding upon the works system, we think of this Scripture: "Israel being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness — (Romans 10: 3)

We do not wish to be misunderstood, because we believe that God has a people who live and die in those Churches that profess the works system. But we are inclined to believe that the people of God do **not** feed upon the works system. We believe that they are really in bondage, and that they know something about the "plague of their own heart," and that within their heart, they know that salvation must be by the Grace of God, and not by any work or righteousness they have done.

In connection with this, please note that the Children of Israel were in bondage to the Egyptians for 400 years, and many of them lived and died in bondage before the appointed time that Israel was delivered from this bondage.

On the other hand, let us consider this point: Satan tempts the Children of God to worship the works system. Why? Because the motive is to rob God of the praise and honor and glory that is due him. Back in the days of Paul, some of the brethren wanted to go back to the works of the law. Paul rebuked the Galation brethren: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" (Galatians 3: 1-3)

If Salvation were conditional, the reward would not be of grace, but it would be of debt. Why? God would be indebted to man because man performed certain conditions. Therefore man would have reason enough to be proud of himself, and to boast of the things that he had done. "To him that worketh, the reward is not reckoned of grace, but of debt." (Romans 4: 4) Following this line of reasoning, man would be his own savior.

In short, consider this: The doctrine of works builds man up and belittles God; and the doctrine of Grace shows an Almighty, powerful God, and a weak, puny man. The natural man will not have any use for the doctrines of Grace because it is strange and very foolish to him. The world did not have any use for Jesus and his teachings.

Since the Scripture plainly states that the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God, then how does one know anything about the Spirit of God? We read, "God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." (1 Cor. 2: 10)

Now, the old man is not made over in the new birth. Also, there is nothing that the old man does that can promote his Spiritual birth. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." (Ephesians 2: 1) If the old man is changed in the new birth, one could not have nor know anything about the warfare mentioned in Galatians 5: 17: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Yet, a change is wrought in one after the new birth. Strange, isn't it? One mourns over his sins, and desires to do that which is right in the sight of God.

This is the work of the Holy Ghost, and this work is effectual. Before a poor sinner can learn the song that Salvation is by the Grace of God, he must first know something about his lost condition.

The Spirit of God cuts deeply, and takes away the armour that one once trusted in. It is hurtful to the flesh for one to be brought down as a poor beggar, and for one to know something about the plague of his heart, and to know that his own righteousness is as

filthy rags in the sight of God. One sees that he is weighed in the balances and found wanting. One sees what a wretched, ruined, polluted sinner he is. The doctrine of works is not what he wants. Why? Because he has come to the end of his own strength, and knows that he is not able to perform any deeds which would merit the favor of God. He knows how Paul felt when he said, "For to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not." (Romans 7:18) Dear one, have you traveled this path? If so, you have been brought by a way that you knew not. "I will bring the blind by a way they knew not, I will lead them in paths that they have not known — (Isaiah 42: 16)

The law is brought to a sinner to show him what he is. The law is righteous and holy; but something is wrong. The flesh is weak, and is not able to meet the just demands of the law. When one sees that he has sinned and come short of the glory of God, and knows something about the weakness of the flesh, he does not cry for justice because he knows that he does not have any good works to stand upon. There is a cry and a plea from his heart. He is not pleading his own merits, but he is pleading for mercy. You know that one cannot really cry for mercy until he feels the need of mercy. When the burden is laid upon the heart of one, he feels the need of mercy. He knows what the publican felt when he cried out: "God be merciful to me a sinner." (Luke 18: 13)

In due time one experiences a sweet deliverance from this sad state. Is not this a wonderful deliverance? Think of the song that Moses sang after God had delivered them from the bondage of the Egyptians. (see Exodus 15) David speaks of this new song that was put in his mouth, after he was delivered from the horrible pit. (Psalm 40: 1-3) As we think of this sweet song of deliverance, we know the theme is singing praises unto this God for this wonderful salvation. We read, "Bring my soul out of prison that I may praise thy name." (Psalm 142: 7)

May we think on these sweet and precious things, and render all praise and honor and glory unto this wonderful God. May the Lord give us strength and fresh courage to press on, and may this thought rest upon our mind: The world does not have any use for the doctrines of Grace. It is very foolish to them.

No preaching will be wasted. His word will not return unto him void. Let us think: Where is the beauty of the Church of God? It is not attractive to the natural eye, but the beauty is within. There is food there, and it is something that a poor sinner is earnestly seeking, and this is what will satisfy him. This is what causes many to travel far and near to meet with those of like precious faith, to worship God in spirit and in truth, and to hear the preaching of the cross which is to them the power and wisdom of God. Dear one, is not this preaching a joy and comfort to you?

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"GREAT MEN ARE NOT ALWAYS WISE"

"But there is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth it understanding. Great men are not always wise, neither do the aged understand judgement." (Job 32:8-9)

This scripture is the first of many wonderful testimonies given by Elihu unto Job and his two friends, setting forth the power, wisdom and majesty of God. He always ascribed all the praise and glory unto the Creator, who made all things for himself; and whom no man can call in question, or say unto him, What doest thou? Elihu spoke after the others had ceased speaking unto Job, because Job was righteous in his own eyes, and refused to be comforted by them. They had tried to console Job in his afflictions, but he told them that they were miserable comforters to him. They could not comfort Job because the whole of their advice to him could be

summed up in this one statement: "If thou wert pure and upright, surely now he would awake for thee and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous."

The reason that this message was of no comfort to Job, was because his defense to them had been to maintain his own integrity. He said, "I will say unto God, Do not condemn; shew me wherefore thou contendest with me. Is it good unto thee, that thou shouldest oppress, that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?" Also, "Not for any injustice in mine hand; also my prayer is pure."

This is not the testimony of one that sees himself a justly condemned sinner. Job was righteous in his own eyes; and as concerning the righteousness that is in the law, he was blameless. God's statement to Satan was, "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, and one that feareth God and escheweth evil." Evidently there was something else that Job needed to have taught to him regarding God and his dealings with the sons of men. This is the lesson that all must learn, if they are children of God. And God alone is the one that teaches them. Saul of Tarsus said that he was a Hebrew and as, "touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless," prior to his conversion. Elsewhere he testifies that the things that he did before Christ was revealed unto him, he did ignorantly in unbelief. Neither of them had had their understanding enlightened by the inspiration of the Almighty; and after they did, they both spoke the pure language of the children of God that the Lord promised in Zephaniah. They were each shown that it is not by the works of the creature that man gains favor with God.

This is true of every one of the children of God before they are given an understanding of things eternal. They are walking in ignorance and unbelief, regardless of how intelligent they may be in worldly wisdom. In each instance the understanding is given unto them in a display of the sovereign grace, mercy and love of God for them while they are dead in trespasses and sins. How much more evidence could be given to one that it is of God that sheweth mercy, and not the works of sinful men. This understanding is placed lovingly, but firmly in the heart of the individual, and not just suggested to the natural mind. This is the law that is written upon the fleshly tables of the heart, and cannot be erased or changed. It cannot be erased because he who has placed it there, is God who changes not: therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed. The preparation of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord. It is everlasting, and will lead them in all the paths that are their's to tread. It will cause them to persevere in the face of all opposition, according to the will of him "Who hath sealed us, and given the earnest of the spirit in our hearts." (2 Cor. 1: 22) If it has been sealed by God the Father, it is everlasting and sure.

Elihu had refrained from speaking sooner because he was younger than the others. He said, "Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom." He found that this was not necessarily true, because these men were older, and should have been wiser. And yet they did not show evidence of the understanding of the Almighty in their conversation. He therefore spoke even though he was younger: and in so doing, testified with David, "What have I done? Is there not a cause?" David was younger than the warriors, yet he was one that the Lord had raised up for that hour, to stand in the defense of Israel. The Lord uses the things that please him to accomplish his purposes regardless of whether it seems right to man. Elihu had many other things to say that gave evidence that this understanding had been given him, such as, "When He giveth quietness who can cause trouble? And when He hideth his face who can behold him? Whether it be done against a nation or against a man only." And, "Harken unto this, O Job, stand

still and consider the wonderous works of God." The conversation of Job and his friends had been about what Job had, or had not done to bring this great trouble upon him. What a difference in that and the testimony of Elihu!

With the understanding comes faith in that which is understood. You cannot understand a thing to be true, and yet have no faith in it. The understanding and the faith are the gifts of God by his Holy Spirit, which quickens one into spiritual life when given him. This has ever been true: as it was in the case of Cain and Abel. Abel's sacrifice was made with an understanding of the true meaning and purpose of the offering. It was offered from the heart, which was prepared of God, in praise and adoration to his heavenly Father. We have the testimony that by faith Abel offered a more excellant sacrifice than Cain. The understanding and faith came from the Almighty since he had no example to follow.

Abraham left his home and went into a strange land because he had faith that he who had promised a land of milk and honey, was able to fulfill that which he had promised. By faith he offered his his only son Isaac upon the altar, understanding that God was able to restore his son to him, even though he slay him. This is a beautiful demonstration of how the understanding of the power and majesty of God, and faith in his mercy and grace work together for good to those in whose heart it is implanted.

Joseph was given an understanding above his brothers in the flesh, and it caused him much trouble and sorrow in his life. He was hated by them because he told them things that they did not understand. He was shown in a dream that he would have pre-eminence over them, and it caused them to be jealous of him and desire to kill him. There is a similarity in this with the experience of every child of grace. They are given to see things that the world does not understand. They are looked upon as ignorant, dreamers, old-fashioned, and anything else that is hurtful or unpleasant that can be said about or to them: and all because they are blessed to see the truth. All of this is done unto them because they have been given the inspiration of the Almighty implanted in their hearts; and it is manifested in their conversation and walk, and causes the world to hate them because they do not understand it.

These experiences are repeated many times in the scriptures in the lives of those whom we have the testimony that they are the children of God. In each instance it causes a separation from things, people, and paths with which they have been closely associated in the past. It would seem evident, therefore, that this understanding which is given unto man, is not of the world: because it turns his mind away from the things of the world, and he no longer runs after those things in which he once delighted. He is indeed a new creature: old things have passed away, behold all things have become new.

"The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceful, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits; without partiality and without hypocrisy." These are the things which now fill the hearts of those who have been blessed with this understanding. Their desire is to live peacefully with their brethren in love and sweet fellowship, and to be delivered from the evil and strife that is this earthly life, as they now see it. They realize that they cannot accomplish these things of themselves, and each time they feel the evidence that they are blessed, their praise and adoration goes up to their Heavenly Father for his mercy and loving kindness on such as they see themselves to be.

"And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, even his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life." This again is is but another testimony of the love and mercy of God for his children while they sojourn in this low ground of sin and sorrow. They feel to have been given an understanding of things they had not known before; and then this scripture

states that this understanding is given that we may know him; and that this is the true God and eternal life. These build line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, but all pointing toward one and the same truth. Everytime that understanding is expressed it is given from the Father of lights in whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning. Therefore if one has ever been given an understanding of these things from the Almighty, he will just as surely receive all of the other blessings that are promised; and in the end eternal life. They will then experience the fullness of the peace, love, and glory of that home the Saviour has gone to prepare for them.

"All scripture is given by the inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect throughly furnished unto all good work." If we know our heart, our desire is to be given an understanding of the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make one wise unto salvation through faith which is in Jesus Christ. We hope that we have been given to see and experience some of these things as we are led in ways that we know not. May the inspiration of the Almighty ever be a light unto our pathway and a lamp unto our feet. When so blessed, we are being led in paths of righteousness for his name's sake, according to the great and precious promises of God who cannot lie.

Job's testimony after God spoke to him out of the whirlwind, is a far different language from what he was saying before. His total testimony then was, "Behold I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken, but I will not answer; yea twice, but I will proceed no further." And again, "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? Therefore have I uttered that I understood not: things to wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." Compare these few statements with the chapters of testimony that he had given before this time. It seems that he had a completely different understanding of God and his ways versus man and his accomplishments. He saw that in the sight of God, "All flesh is grass, and the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass." Man's life is but a vapor that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away, and the deeds of the flesh vanish with the life, but the things of the Spirit endureth forever: and this is Job's acknowledgement.

May the God of all grace bless all his children with this understanding, (and he will at his own appointed time,) to comfort them therewith as they travel along in this veil of tears. This understanding leads them in all of their joys and sorrows, seasons of doubt and seasons of confidence, times of peace and times of trouble, periods of weakness and periods of strength, and into all of the things that contribute to the total experience of every child of God. They are all the things that work together for their good; and all are brought about by the understanding being given, or withheld, according to the divine will and purpose of Almighty God, to teach them their utter dependence on him for all things.

As Peter says, "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertaineth unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." Yes, this knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord is given unto each of his children, and is all that they need; and includes all things that pertain unto life and godliness. The realization of the magnitude of this precious gift being bestowed on one,

keeps him humble before Him in love. What grace and peace is theirs when blessed to stand still and behold the wonderous works of their Creator God! What joy when blessed with faith in, and understanding of, the triumph of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ over the sins of his children! And then to have evidence that they are included in that number. This Jesus Christ, "whom having not seen ye love; in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."

This is the whole desire of his children: to be given the understanding and strength to press on by faith to the time when they will receive the end of their faith, and realize the fulness of the salvation of their souls: the salvation which is treasured alone in Christ Jesus their High Priest, who has entered the holiest of holies for them, that they too may enter in because of him, when their earthly pilgrimage is ended.

What a precious legacy for those to whom the inspiration of the Lord has given understanding by measure to strengthen them along the pathway of their earthly journey — strength sufficient for the day.

In bonds of love,

Richard H. Campbell,
2761 Cochese Cove,
Memphis, Tenn. 38118

FIFTY YEARS

(The following is a portion of the tribute which we read on the occasion of a supper given by Bush Arbor Church, North Carolina, and her sister churches, on the **seventieth birthday** and the **fiftieth year in the ministry** of their pastor, Elder W. Curry King, on the first Saturday in May, 1967. — J. D. W.)

"And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding," said the Lord of all grace. (Jeremiah 3: 15)

We feel the church at Bush Arbor has freely received this blessing, and we desire to give all honor, glory, and praise to His holy name this memorable year 1967 in the life of our pastor, as we pay tribute to our brother in hope, Elder W. Curry King, whom the Lord has blessed to serve a half century in the ministry.

Elder King was born within the shadows of the church at Bush Arbor on May 6, 1897. His father was called home while our brother was just a boy; and the way was hard. Yet, if God be for one, who can be against him, for in his youth he was given to look to God in his holy habitation, a father of the fatherless. At an early age he brought forth fruits meet for repentance, and was received by this church on the second Saturday in May, 1917; and was baptized the following morning by Elder B. F. McKinney. He was given permission to speak in a public way at the July, 1917, meeting; and was ordained to the full functions of a gospel minister the fifth Sunday in July, 1921, by the laying on of hands by the presbytery. Those who served in this ordination, and who now rest from their labors, were Elders J. W. Gilliam, T. A. Stanfield, M. B. Martin, and brother J. E. Simmons.

Elder King accepted the care of Bush Arbor Church in April, 1929, and he has labored long and hard as watchman and overseer of this flock. His stability is through a God-given wisdom and knowledge; and the fear of the Lord is his treasure by which peace at home has been his first concern. For fifty years he has humbly gone in and out before a people whom we hope were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world — this fifty years is more than many of us have lived. We think of how one generation passes away and another takes its place; and of the precious memories he must have of baptizing the forefathers of this generation. No doubt many times he has gone into the liquid grave with the trembling ones, feeling as John felt as he baptized the Saviour. Of these there were five ministers, Elders Ernest Oakley, Harvey Smith, Kenneth Key, Wallis Smith, and

Donald Smith; with Brother Leonard Key liberated to speak. Elder Harvey Smith has been called from our midst.

As we think of the ensample and ready mind of our pastor, we wonder how many times through him the poor have had the gospel preached to them; and how many times he has gone in and out before the flock in illness of body, or with bowed head and heavy heart; and how many times he has asked the Lord for guidance and wisdom in the oversight of the churches. Many of us have felt him God-sent when he prayed for mercy over our beds of affliction — for which we are most grateful.

After the death of Elder T. A. Stanfield, Elder King was chosen Moderator of the Upper Country Line Association. This was in 1942, and he has served each session since.

The brethren at Bush Arbor feel at liberty to say on behalf of our sister churches which are served by Elder King — Greensboro, McCray and Prospect Hills, along with this association, that by God's grace he has been a faithful servant of the Lord. We are thankful for his fellowship in the gospel, and for the willingness to share his abundant blessings from the giver of every good and perfect gift. May grace be unto him, and peace from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

We would also pay tribute to our precious sister, whom we feel is an inspiration to the brethren. Her's is a God fearing walk and an humble spirit, and her love for the churches is manifested. She has been a faithful companion to our brother for more than 45 years, as well as a sister in hope. Sister Brona King exemplifies Proverbs 14: 4, "A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband."

Our prayer for Brother and Sister King is for a peaceful moment at God's appointed time to call them home. May they be given to say in a meek and quiet spirit, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness at the appearing of the Lord.

Submitted by Brother Clifton Robertson

1160 Halifax Road,
Danville, Virginia 24541

Dear Editors and Associate Editors:

My subscription expires this May so I enclose $5.00 to renew two years.

Brother Ruston I would love to read some more of your writings again. I think of you and your wife often. I do hope you are well.

Brother Spangler, your editorial in the May issue, "Jesus Christ the Same Yesterday, Today and Forever," is so strengthening to me, knowing it is the truth written by one I have heard preach many times; it was such a comfort and consolation to me.

I haven't been well this year, and was in the hospital several days with arthritis in my limbs. I have not yet fully recovered, but am better. I give the Lord Jesus Christ the praise: he is the great physician. He is the same yesterday, and today, and I know forever, for he showed me many wonderful things with his outstretched arm, which are indescribable. "He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called The Word of God. (Revelation 19: 13) "The word was made flesh and dwelt among us." (John 1: 14) I am with a sweet hope looking for him when he shall appear the second time. Won't it be glorious to see him as he is, and be like him?

The world is filled with so much false teaching, and so many believing it. It is said God is dead. Yes, he is dead to the ones dead in sin, and have not been made alive in Christ Jesus; who have not been born of the water and the Spirit.

I love the following hymn:

"The day is past and gone,
The evening shades appear;
O may we all remember well
The night of death is near.

We lay our garments by,
Upon our beds to rest;
So death will soon disrobe us all
Of what we here possess.

Lord, keep us safe this night,
Secure from all our fears;

Thy angel guard us while we sleep,
Till morning light appears.

And when we early rise,
And view th' unwearied sun,
May we press on to reach the prize,
And after glory run.

And when our days are past,
And we from time remove,
O may we in thy bosom rest,
The bosom of thy love."

Leland

This hymn was sung at Malmaison Church April 2nd. I love that dear place. I have had a home there fifty years the past August, 1966; and many precious memories lie there for me. Now I remain with a hope in Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Trusting that God will bless each and every one of you, and bless you to continue to stand for the truth you now set forth in the **Signs of the Times.**

Mrs. Nettie A. Evans

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807 Pope Street,
Memphis, Tenn. 38112

Dear Editors:

I am thankful to God for the *Signs of the Times*. I do enjoy the articles you select for "Voices of the Past," Elder Wood; they have been so wonderful and edifying. Also Elder Griffin's article on "Deacons." All the writings were good.

In sending in my renewal, I want to express my love and appreciation for the work in getting the paper to us. And I would praise God for giving me faith to believe in him — for making me know him as he is: one who is above all, and does his will in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. He knows no failure; and Christ's shed blood accomplished his purpose. I am often unable to find words to express these things — truly we learn that of ourself we can do nothing.

May God richly bless all who contribute in any way to the *Signs*. Am renewing for one year: use the balance as you wish.

Mrs. James E. (Lucille) Young

ELDER BUNN EXPRESSES
HIS APPRECIATION

Dear Elder Wood:

During my recent confinement in the hospital I received such a large number of beautiful cards and letters of condolence from brethren and friends, that I wish to express thanks to God, and to all those who remembered us with such sweet expressions, which meant so much to my dear wife and me; and their prayers also.

I feel it would be almost impossible to write each one, so if you would put this in the *Signs of the Times*, my or rather our thanks would reach more of the brethren and friends who read the paper.

I trust you are both well.

Yours in hope,
C. N. Bunn
8307 St. Charles Road
Richmond, Va. 23227

(We are glad that Brother Bunn is improved and able to be home now. We trust he will soon be able to be active again.—J. D. W.)

SMITH RIVER
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The **Smith River Association** is to be held, the Lord willing, with County Line Church, beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1967, and continuing until noon on Sunday. The meeting house is located in Floyd County, Virginia, just off the Parkway on road number 635.

Those who believe and love the truth are invited to meet with us.

Amos I. Hash, Clerk

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The **Seven Mile Association** is appointed to be held with the church at Mingo Meeting House, Sampson County, N. C., beginning Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1967, and continuing through Sunday.

The Meeting House is located just off Highway 421 south of Dunn. We plan to have pointers in the nearby area, or visitors may inquire near Dunn.

We cordially invite our brethren and friends

to meet with us.

W. D. Godwin, Clerk

CONTENTNEA UNION MEETING

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with Moore's Church, Wilson County, N. C., the 5th Sunday in July and Saturday before. The church is located between Pinetops and Wilson, N. C., on Highway 42.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 3, Tarboro, N. C.

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** will be held with the church at Old Beulah, Johnston County, N. C., the fifth Saturday and Sunday in July, 1967.

The meeting house is located about two miles west of Bagley, N. C., which is on old 301 highway. Those who have a mind to attend, are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

SOUTH ARKANSAS ASSOCIATION

The **Original South Arkansas Association** will convene, the Lord willing, with Bethel Church the third Sunday in September, and Friday and Saturday before. The church is located about two miles north of Bearden, Arkansas. Those coming from the east or west will come to Bearden on Highway 79. Bearden is a small town and most anyone can direct you to the church.

All interested brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Elder J. T. Everett, Moderator
Ross Watson, Clerk

LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

If the Lord so wills the **Lexington-Roxbury Association** will be held at Halcottville, N. Y. on Wednesday and Thursday, September 13 and 14, 1967. Those coming on Tuesay will take the Denver Road out of Kellys Corner, N. Y., then take the first left hand road to **Windy Acres.** Those coming on Wednesday will go directly to Halcottville. It is requested that those coming on Tuesday write Mr. and Mrs. John Shultis, Kellys Corner, N. Y., where they will be entertained.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Elder A. J. Slauson

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To June 1, 1967)

Mrs. S. V. Bolton, Va.	$50.00
Mrs. N. A. Pace, La.	2.00
R. L. Biggs, Tenn.	2.00
M. B. Bailiff, Tex.	5.00
Emma Brake, N. C.	2.00
Neoma Hughes, Okla.	20.00
G. G. Turner, Tex.	1.00
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Mrs. D. C. Turner, Calif.	1.00
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Mary and Charles Hellings, N. J.	10.00
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F. J. Cain, La.	2.00
Mrs. Letcher Smith, Fla.	5.00

Danville, Virginia **August, 1967**

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EDITORIAL

DEACONS

It is lovely when we desire to obey the Lord. However, obeying the Lord when we must disobey him in order to do it is not lovely at all. Appointing and ordaining brethren as deacons just because that the church does not have a deacon is not obeying the Lord. As far as I remember, He has not told us the first time to ordain or appoint makeshift deacons. I have known of it being done "because we did not have anybody to pass the bread and wine." We have brethren, whose interest and integrity and truthfulness I would never question, yet they think that it is a breach of good order for a minister to serve the bread and wine, They did serve it for sometime, and never were they commanded not to serve it anymore. They had waited on tables, administered to the poor, collected the alms, and similiar duties, and they were not told to quit it. They were told to arrange for deacons to do it so that they would be released from so many things that kept them from preaching. It was still orderly practice for them to do it, but it was not expedient for them to do it.

How much better it is for the pastor of a church to pass the bread and wine, and otherwise do these things, than it is for the church to put somebody in the office that is not fit. Let us remember, dear brethren, that the apostles were not told to select seven brethren, but seven brethren of honest report, filled with the Holy Ghost and wisdom. If language means anything (and it does to those that desire to follow the Lord) the Lord knew that some in the church were not qualified for the office. He did not tell them to take what you had, but to take **only** those qualified for the work.

There is a scripture that has a world of meaning in it to me. "Let all things be done decently and in order." (I Cor. 14: 40) I do not believe that the Saviour filled in all things that were to be done. I seriously doubt that the apostle would tell us all that we were to do, and then do double talk by telling us to do all things in decency and in order. The scriptures does not tell us that a deacon must have one wife, but that he be the husband of one wife, that is, not two wives. This is important that he not have two wives at the same time, and it seems better for him to have one wife. I have helped ordain deacons that had not married or were widowers, but I felt that he was handicapped in his labors. I would ordain them again under these circumstances, but if a church had other brethren who were married to one wife, and were capable I would always suggest that this brother be preferred over the other.

What kind of a wife should a deacon have? Now I was not asked to use a modern encyclopedia in getting my data on this subject. I want, if I know what I want, to have a thus saith the Lord for the selection of deacons. If it did not matter as to her virtue, truthfulness, faithfulness, gravity, I feel sure that Paul would not have thrown a list of restrictions at the church in this serious step. If we are following the Lord, we must find men for deacons that have qualified wives. A man whose wife does not fit the requirements, is not qualified for a deacon. She must be a grave woman if she is to be a help-meet in this work. This does not mean to wear a long face; it does not mean to have a sanctimonious look on the face all the time, O no, that would hinder him more than a lot of foolish jesting.

She is not to be a slanderer. Regardless of how a brother's qualifications stand out, a wife that talks too much about those being served will hinder him, and spoil a good deacon. Being double tongued by the deacon and a slanderer by the wife, is a combination that would cause more gospel labor than all of the deacons, together with the pastor, could ever settle.

It certainly would seem that the early church would not be bothered by inebriety, but at that time, and now, women and men undoubtedly did look upon the wine while it was red. As the deacon could not do his work while

under the influence of strong drink, if his wife indulged in it, she could not help him and could undo all of his work.

Her faithfulness would make all of the difference between success and failure. She should also be honest and filled with the Holy Ghost, with some knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Were the deacons given the right to baptize? If Philip had the blessings of the apostles to baptize, then all deacons now should be baptizing at every turn when somebody meets them as the eunuch did Philip. Much writing has been carried on by our people trying to explain away this baptizing. It has been suggested that there was not anything wrong with Philip baptizing, but I have heard brethren say that they would not receive them into the church. I am sure that we could not be consistent with the other teachings of the New Testament and grant deacons this right. And yet, if we do not have something better, we must admit that they have a thus saith the Lord for the act.

Unless we can find some other reason that gave Philip the right to baptize, the right thing to do would be for us to admit that we have been wrong for two thousand years. I feel sure that I am not going to be agreed with in what I am going to present. I feel that I have as much scripture in favor of my views as we have for the way that we have been doing. I am sure that there are not any instructions to the deacons giving them the right to baptize. If they have that right, all members do also, for they were not delegated to baptize. If we say that they do not have the right to baptize, we are denying the scriptures as being inspired by the Holy Ghost. I do not feel that I can say that Philip, as a deacon, had any right to baptize; equally so, and I hope, as fearfully and prayerfully, I can not deny that he did baptize.

Let me introduce another side to baptism. It is only indirectly applicable and related to the subject of deacons, and yet that relationship is such that I feel to bring it forward. Is baptism only for an entrance into the church? The answer to this is important, for if not, then by all means Philip had the right to baptize, and everybody else that is placed in like circumstances also has the right, regardless of whether they are deacons or layman of the ordinary type.

Manifestly, the church is the body of Christ. If we want to take the absurd position that there is not any organic body of Christ, then the giving of the ministry for the edification of the body of Christ is as much under obligation to preach and baptize anywhere without any regard to church order or apostolic practice. In the sending of the disciples into all the world, they were to teach, make disciples, baptize. Nothing was said about them joining the church. Does that mean that they were not in the church?

In each gospel there is much delightful matter concerning the baptism of Jesus Christ. Nothing was said about him becoming a member of the church. Does that mean that he was not in the church? Does that mean that he was not a regular baptized member of his own body? Does that mean that he was not an example for the believing children of God to follow?

Saul of Tarsus was on a journey to persecute the church of God. (Acts 9; I Cor. 15: 9) The Lord arrested him and sent him down to Ananias' house, and there he was baptized. Was he in the church? Was he a member with Christ in the organic body of Christ? Or did the Saviour operate without a system? Did he carry on his work without an organization? Not a thing was said about him joining the church; not one word was said about him being added to the people that he had formerly persecuted.

Peter had a vision which ended in him being sent for by Cornelius. The apostle preached a wonderful sermon and the Holy Ghost fell on them which heard the word. They were commanded to be baptized, and they were. Were they baptized into the organic body of Christ? Remember, not a word has been said

about them joining the church. If they were not baptized into the organic body of Christ, there is not any such thing as being baptized as a prerequisite for church membership. If this is true, then some long practiced mistakes need to be changed.

On several occasions the apostle preached and baptized. (Acts 16: 14, 15, 33; 18: 8; 19: 5) Were these people baptized into the church in its organic state? Nothing was said about them joining the church; nothing was told them that by the way of baptism in water was the way into the manifest or organic body of Christ. Have we been practicing something that we do not have a thus saith the Lord for? Has all of our ministerial work been vain and useless and in disobedience to our Lord?

There is not a sure way of knowing how long before Christ that Joel prophesied. It was undoubtedly several hundred years. He told what would be done as well as who it would be accomplished upon. It came to pass. The house of Israel gathered at the day of Pentecost. It all came to pass as prophesied. In every detail, the prophesy of Joel was carried out on Israel. This work brought them to ask, Men and brethren, what shall we do? It was told them what to do. It ended in them being baptized. Were they baptized into the organic body of Christ? Did they join the church? Or did Peter and the other apostles and disciples just baptize them and turn them loose? Did anything come of this act, or do we have any record one way or another?

The Old School Baptists in our generation have been castigated and malignantly abused and ridiculed because of our allegiance to our body being THE organic body of Christ. These three thousand people that were baptized, what became of them? What was their status after the coming of Pentecost? Were they loose amidst and among the ones that called the apostles drunk? Were they united to anything? Were they joined to anything?

In Ananias' baptism, in Peter's baptism, in Paul's baptism, nothing was said about anybody becoming a member of the church until on the day of Pentecost. I may seem to have tantalized you, dear brethren, about this serious matter. I may have been leading you to think that I did not believe in people being baptized into the church; I may have led you to think that I did not believe in people joining the church. I was not after you, dear brother, but I was laying down an irrefutable account of just such an event as people being added to the organic body of Christ, of people obeying the gospel, or of people joining the church. On the occasion of which I treat, three thousand joined the church. I am well aware that they were added, and I am well aware that they acted as they were acted upon by the pouring out of the Holy Ghost upon them.

I have heard it said that this is the only account of receiving members in the church. There is only one pentecostal day. In the Acts of the apostles is found the history of the church of Jesus Christ. The day of Pentecost was not the beginning of the church, but it was the first manifestation of it in action after the ascension of the Saviour. ON THAT DAY MEMBERS WERE RECEIVED INTO THE ORGANIC BODY OF CHRIST, AND BAPTISM WAS THE DOOR INTO THAT CHURCH. This church left there in unity. Those that were in when the day came were satisfied about those that joined, or, if you prefer, that were added, and those that were added were satisfied about their baptism. They continued in the apostle's doctrine, and new members were added daily.

Unless this can be torn up, (it can not be), baptism is to be administered by ordained ministers of the gospel. This case and this example like the communion, is to be practiced until the return of the Redeemer. If it has been changed, or if a change is likely, I insist that we have scripture to support it.

Now it has been necessary for me to bring this before you, because I was asked specifically if the ordination of

Philip gave him the right to baptize, that is, his ordination as a deacon. I answer, if it does, I repeat what I have already said, the Old Baptist church has been off the beam for a long time, even many hundred of years. We have been holding our deacons back; we have not followed our Saviour at all, for, mark my words well, if we have a thus saith the Lord for deacons baptizing, it must come from the direct instruction of the King or his princes whose rule extends until the coming back of the King. Thus I am forced to say that I do not think that Philip, the deacon, had any right to baptize.

Please go back with me to this scripture: Let all things be done decently and in order. Is it thought that the Lord would manifestly bring his church to Pentecost without a decent way for baptism to be administered? Is it thought that he would ordain ministers for the welfare of the church, and then also authorize deacons to baptize? If so, where do we get it? Is it thought that the New Testament is a complete account of every ordination? If so, please give us an account of the ordination of the seventy. Where would we find an account of the ordination of Barnabas? Silas? Apollos? We do not know when nor where nor by whom that these many were ordained. Would we desire to say that they were not ordained?

Now I have known of several that had been ordained a deacon that later were ordained as a minister. I do not see any scriptural reason for one who had been ordained as a minister not to be ordained as a deacon. If not, the same *not* that would keep it from being thus would also be applicable in ordaining deacons as ministers. Philip was an evangelist. This gift was one given to the churches; it was a work enjoined upon Timothy. All of these elders (some of them being teachers, pastors, apostles, prophets, evangelists) were ordained according to the instructions given, even though the time and manner was not given. If this is not granted, then Paul's charge to do all things decently and in order is worthless.

Now, since it must be granted that all ordinations are not recorded, and that the usual custom in the scriptures (and since, for that matter) is to ordain before performing a certain work, and that the deacons were not authorized to perform baptismal services, it must either: 1st. Be admitted that Philip had been ordained sometime before being chosen as a deacon; or, 2nd. It must be admitted, if the above is not true, that we have left off something that the deacons were given the right to do. If it is not granted that many things were done which are not recorded, and that we have not failed and neglected one of the basic works of a deacon, then please let us have an article to explain just where we are at in church practice.

Now once again, I have consulted with a well read brother, and he objects to my surmising about Philip being ordained to preach. We are on the best of terms, and I often lay my problems before him. Therefore, when he pointed out to me that I did not have any scripture to back up Philip having been ordained as a minister, I pointed out to him that we did not have any scripture to give authority to Philip to baptize. In conclusion, the only scripture that I have to cause me to take the position that I have is based on the following: All things are to be done in decency and in order. It is order and it is decent to think that Philip was ordained to minister to the saints because he baptized, and every other case of baptism was performed by one who is credited with being ordained. Having to present an account of man's ordination before it could be valid, will, if we will examine the scriptures, make much of the work done in the New Testament as invalid. And if it is necessary in one case, it does seem decent and orderly to think that it would be in all cases.

If Jesus, who is the center of every article and sermon; who is the Founder and Keeper of His church, did not

have all of his words and deeds recorded in the New Testament, why would it seem necessary that every word and deed of his followers be recorded? Therefore, I say unto you in what I trust is humbleness before my superiors that a deacon is not qualified to baptize from a scriptural standpoint; that since Philip did baptize, that he was sometime before being appointed as a deacon, ordained as an elder.

To my precious brethren in Kentucky and in Memphis, Tennessee, as well as the household of faith everywhere, I submit these articles on a deacon's duties in its different aspects. If they are contrary to the principles of the doctrine of God our Saviour, reject them, and please bear with your weak brother.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

EXODUS 13:17,18

"And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt: but God led the people about through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. And the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt."

When God delivered the Hebrews from the house of bondage and broke the Egyptian yoke of their captivity, his wisdom as well as power was most strikingly displayed. Such is the unlimited power of God that he could have released his people from bondage by the waving of his hand, or the utterance of a word; he could have instantly crushed the power of Egypt, and stripped the imperial throne of Pharaoh of all its regal strength, or he could have softened the heart of Pharaoh as easily as he could harden it: but his wisdom, as well as his omnipotence was to be demonstrated before the world. And having humbled Pharaoh and effected the release of the Israelites, he was able to conduct them in what way he pleased to their final destiny in the promised land. Having all power and all wisdom he was abundantly able to execute his design in any way that seemed good in his eyes.

But in the redemption of Israel from the house of bondage, and their conduct through the wilderness, and their ultimate possession of the promised inheritance God evidently designed to show forth the redemption of his chosen people from the bondage of the law and their ultimate entrance into the glorious liberty of the gospel. He therefore chose to lead them about. Instead of selecting the shortest route, or that in which the least impediments to their journeyings would require to be encountered, it was his pleasure, for a purpose worthy of himself, to lead them about in a circuitous and meandering course, which would constantly require the display of his power and wisdom, his cloud by day and his fire by night, to guide and protect them, and to show their entire dependence on him in every step of the way. Thus setting forth in the figure, first, that the salvation of his chosen people was in a way by him ordained, and their redemption from the curse, the bondage and dominion of the law, from the guilt, pollution and consequences of sin, and from the powers of death and hell, was together above the wisdom and power of men, and in a way in all respects baffling the wisdom and humbling the pride of the sons of men; showing that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

Second, agreeing with the experience of all the saints, every saint can witness with the inspired psalmist that when God broke their yoke of bondage and released them in a spiritual sense, from the grasp of Pharaoh, and set them free from their bondage; when he took them up out of the horribe pit and miry clay, and put a new song in their mouth, and set their feet upon a rock, that he also

established their goings. Had he allowed us to choose our own way, perhaps we would have desired to be conveyed by the nearest way, and on flowery beds of ease, immediately to the mansion of glory. Perhaps all the saints have struggled more or less against the way the Lord has been pleased to lead us about, especially when he has led us by the hand of Moses by the way of the Red Sea, hemmed in on every side, the sea before us, the enemy in hot pursuit behind and towering mountains at the right and left. We, too, have murmured when led to the bitter waters of Meribah, and we were terribly afraid when he led us near to the mountain that might be touched only on pain of being thrust through with a dart, or destroyed. Like the Hebrews, we have feared that we were brought thus far to be destroyed, but still God has led us in a way which we knew not, and in paths we had not known. Truly he has found us in a waste howling wilderness, like Jacob, and he has led us about and instructed us, and yet he has kept us as the apple of his eye.

"God led them (the Hebrews) not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although it was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war and they return to Egypt." The Philistines were a people with whom Israel was never on good terms of friendship, they were enemies, and always on the alert to draw them into difficulty and bore about the same relation to Israel that the Arminians do to the church and people of God; and although, according to the natural geography of that country, a straight line from Egypt to Canaan would cross the land or territory of the Philistines, it was not the pleasure of the Lord to lead them that way, as it was a way of temptation too strong for the resistance and fidelity of the Hebrews, therefore to avoid the influence of the Philistines on the Israelites which God foresaw would have a tendency to ensnare them, and to bring them again into bondage, he led them by another way. How happy for the children of God is the lesson here taught that God has established the goings of his redeemed people, and that he knows exactly what amount of temptations his grace shall enable us to bear, and orders our course accordingly. So it is said of the saints, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."— 1 Cor. x. 13.

God provides against all **peradventures**, chances or uncertainties, in all the provisions which he has made for the deliverance and salvation of his people. This form of expression cannot imply that there are peradventures or uncertainties with God, but that he has provided infallibly against them. He knew, as he only could know, what would have been the consequences if he had led them through the land of the Philistines: they must have seen war, and they would probably have been tempted to repent that they had left Egypt, and inclined to return thither. So in the way of life and salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, God has ordained that none can come to him but by Christ, who is the way; there is salvation in no other way. Men cannot be justified in God's sight by any works of righteousness which they have performed, by any obedience to the law which they have or can render. When they are delivered from bondage and the yoke of their captivity is broken, the saints frequently show an inclination to lay their course through the land of the Philistines, that is, they have in them a natural inclination, after having received the Spirit, to be made perfect by the works of the flesh. The Arminian conditional system presents to their inexperienced eyes a smoother path, a shorter distance, and there are many allurements to draw them into the popular thoroughfares of the legal system, but God by his Spirit never leads his people in that way. Paul said to the Galatians, "This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you." If for any purpose God suffers his children to be-

come entangled with the yoke of bondage, and to sojourn in the land of the Philistines, they always see war; for as certainly as the Spirit of truth is in them, they will find a principle of opposition to the corrupt principles and works of the flesh, and all the hosts of the Philistines will oppose the law of the Spirit of life which they possess, and all the powers of their flesh will adhere to the legal tendencies of the Philistine or Arminian doctrines, and, as the poet has very justly remarked, they

> "Strive with a Do this and live,
> To drive them to Egypt again."

"But God led the people about." He leads them, it is not his method to drive them. When he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and they hear his voice, and they follow him, but a stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers. As God led the Israelites from Egypt, and through the wilderness, going before them in the cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, so he goes before his spiritual Israel, by day and by night. Instead of scaring or lashing them along, after the Philistine or Arminian fashion, uncapping hell, and showing them the horrors of the dammed, to urge them on, he goeth before, and causes them to behold in him such irresistible attraction that they feel sweetly constrained to follow where he leads. He gives them such confidence in his wisdom to lead them, that they desire no other leader, and their experience enables them to say, He leadeth me into green pastures, beside the still waters. But he leads them by the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea, not because that way is the nearest, or smoothest, or most flowery, but because in that way he will be glorified, and his people shall be taught many important lessons which they could not so well learn in any other way. What important lessons did he give them in the wilderness and at the Red Sea? How was his mighty power and discriminating grace displayed, when he made a path for them through the Red Sea, on dry ground, and when the same miracle by which their deliverance was accomplished, destroyed all their ememies? As he led the Hebrews, so he leads his spiritual people, often into wilderness trials, where the beasts of the forest prowl, and where their howlings sometimes alarm them, and to the sea where their way seems, to all human sight, cut off, the enemy advances, and they are hemmed in, and they think there is but a step between them and death, but how seasonably his help comes; his rod is extended, the sea divides, the way of escape is opened, and a song of deliverance breaks forth from their joyful tongues.

"The children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt." Not in the panoply of military warfare, for God himself fought their battles, and gave them victory. The manner of their harness is described in chapter xii. 11, "And thus shall ye eat it (the passover); with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste; it is the Lord's passover." In this manner of harness they ate the passover, and immediately left the land of Egypt, and their harness did not become old, or require to be repaired or replaced during the forty years of their pilgrimage in the wilderness. Here again we have a vivid figure of the way in which the Lord strips his people for the race, and in which he harnesses them for the christian warfare. They are not clad in the armor of men, in coats of mail, nor armed with implements of carnal warfare, for they are not to fight against flesh and blood; the warfare is a spiritual warfare, and their weapons are spiritual, and mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strongholds. They are well harnessed at the outset, for they have on the whole armor of God, having their loins girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness, and their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, and, above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith they shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked; and the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is

the word of God. (Eph. 6: 13 17.)

As the Israelites went up out of Egypt harnessed, and wore the same harness all the way in which the Lord their God did lead them until they had accomplished their whole journey and entered the the promised land, so the redeemed family of God whom he has redeemed from sin death and hell are called to be marshalled under the banner of the great Captain of their salvation, and all their armor is of God, their weapons are spiritual and mighty through grace, and they cannot decay or wax old, nor will they ever require to be superseded by any newly invented armor. As the Hebrews went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt, we may rest assured that not one of all the sons of Adam shall ever go up out of the land of Egypt, or be delivered from the house of bondage, in any other harness, nor without this harness. True, men may make profession of religion, they may display much zeal and courage, they may impose on the saints, but until God breaks their yoke, and puts on them the harness, they have no discharge from bondage, and can never know experimentally the glorious liberty of the sons of God; they are all Ishmaelites, and under the covenant that gendereth unto bondage.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe March 1, 1862)

OBITUARIES

SISTER IZORA RAINEY

Sister Izora was born March 27, 1879, and departed this life February 26, 1967. She is survived by six daughters and one son: Mr. Buford Toy, Bradenton, Fla.; Mrs. Lillie Main Russell and Mrs. Lester B. Davis, Lyles, Tenn.; Miss Homa Rainey, Nashville, Tenn.; Mrs. Laurance McFarland, Centerville, Tenn.; Mrs. Dan Mayberry, Prima, Tenn.; and Mrs. John M. Lee, California. Her husband passed away many years ago.

Sister Rainey joined Willow Spring Church October 11, 1924, and in December was chosen church clerk and remained clerk until that church was disbanded about twelve years ago. She moved her membership to Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church, Nashville, Tenn., and remained a faithful member until death. The writer was her pastor about thirty years, having served Willow Spring Church until it disbanded.

Sister Rainey was very strong in the doctrine of the sovereignty of God. Her faith was in God who works all things after the council of his own will. While her passing is our earthly loss, it is her eternal gain.

The writer conducted the funeral service at the Taylor Funeral Home, in Dickson, Tenn. May the Lord bless all who mourn.

Elder R. L. Biggs

DEACON A. E. SORRELLS

Deacon A. E. Sorrells, better known as "H," died in a Dothan, Alabama, hospital March 28, 1967, after a short illness. He was born December 15, 1886, and married Miss Mattie Braxton December 31, 1905, who survives him, after 61 years of devotion to each other; and 53 years active life in the church. He was received, along with the writer, into Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church on September 19, 1913, and was soon ordained a deacon. He visited many Primitive Baptist associations in this section, and was active in the Western Primitive Baptist Association for many years.

He is survived by six sons: Johnie, Willis, Buford, Fonzy, Oneal, and Joseph; five daughters: Edith, Blondell, Voncie, Lilliah, and and Lorie. Surviving also are four brothers: Frank, Elder Ed. R., Robert L., and J. S. Sorrells; 28 grandchildren, 37 great grandchildren, and two great great grandchildren. He was the son of Deacon and Mrs. R. S. Sorrells, who were prominent in their day.

In late life Brother "H" with his wife, became members of Ephesus Church, Slocumb, Alabama; and their home was open to all Primitive Baptists. He was active in school and community affairs, and will be sadly missed in Alabama, Florida, and Georgia where he attended many meetings. An unusual feature of this family was that up to last June, five brothers lived with their wives more than 50 years; but was broken first by the death of Mrs. R. L. Sorrells, a member of Mt. Gilead Church; and a short time later Mrs. Alice Sorrells, wife of Elder Sorrells, a member of Ephesus Church, died; and now the third couple is broken after 61 years of marriage. Almost at the moment of Brother "H's" death the writer, who was almost like a twin brother, saw in a vision the saints marching in, and a mighty panorama of the church in all its glory. Jesus said, "In my Father's house are many mansions," and "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." We have suffered a

great loss, but it is his gain.

Funeral services were conducted at Garden Chapel Funeral Home by Elders J. Y. McCormick, and V. C. Hartzog of Florida, with interment in Hartford City Cemetery.

J. J. Collins

GEORGE ELMER MURPHY

Brother Murphy was born in Lisbon, Arkansas, January 28, 1896, and departed this life July 24, 1966, at the age of seventy years. He was the son of the late Thomas Edgar and Martha Ballard Murphy, both members of Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church, and was married to Miss Lois Yocum November 27, 1921. To this union three children were born, Major George E. Murphy of Ft. Levenworth, Kansas, Mrs. Marie Nowlin of Bryant, Arkansas and Mrs. Relda Burton of Smackover. Also surviving are three sisters and three brothers and ten grandchildren.

Brother Murphy was a native of Union County, Arkansas, and a retired dairyman of the Smackover community where he spent his entire life. He was a veteran of World War 1 and was a member of Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church, having united with the church in 1948. He was a faithful member, and a firm believer in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace, and Grace alone.

May God's blessings be upon his wife, children and grandchildren and all who feel their great loss; yet we feel it is his eternal gain, for Brother Murphy died in the hope of eternal life; and we believe he is now asleep in Jesus, waiting for his second coming; when he, together with all the saints, shall come forth clothed in perfection, to see Him as he is, be like Him and be satisfied.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder W. W. Taylor at Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church with interment in Salem Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the family; one to the **Signs of the Times** for publication; and one put on our church records.

Done by order of Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church in regular conference, Saturday April 8, 1967.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Moderator
Neila Ryan, Clerk

ROBERT A. GAMBRILL

Robert A. Gambrill was born October 1, 1896, and departed this life on February 3, 1967, making his stay here a little over seventy years. He was the son of the late James E. and Martha Ellen Gambrill. He was married December 15, 1917, to Minnie Estelle Evans and to this union was born one son Robert Allen Gambrill, Jr., who survives and lives in Fort Worth, Texas.

He is also survived by his widow and one brother, William Gambrill of Mardela, Md., and two sisters, Mattie Bull of Baltimore, Md. and Cora Phillips, of Hebron, Md. There are also two grandchildren who survive, Patricia Ann and Robert Allen the 3rd who reside with their parents in Fort Worth, Texas.

Mr. Gambrill was a veteran of World War I and for many years served as a trustee of the Rewastico Old School Baptist Church.

He was not a member of the visible Church but when he attended meetings, he attended the Old School Baptist, and many times the meetings were held in his home. He always seemed to enjoy them and would say come back again. The writer has heard him say things, and heard of things that he has said to others, that showed that he believed that salvation was by grace and grace alone.

Funeral services were conducted at the Holloway Funeral Home by the writer in Salisbury, Md. February 6, 1967, and his body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Mardela, Md. May it please the Lord to reconcile all who mourn the loss of this dear friend to feel that their loss was his eternal gain, is the prayer of the writer.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

KATIE MAE MORTON

Sister Katie Mae Morton was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Minnie Morton, and was born November 23, 1909, in Onslow County, N. C., and lived there all her life. She died January 31, 1967.

Sister Morton was twice married, and blessed both times with a faithful husband. Her first husband died June 10, 1957; and to this union was born a very sweet daughter. Her second marriage was to Victor Morton, but the Lord saw fit to call her home after only a short time. He was a kind and loving husband who stood by her and did what the Lord blessed him to do.

The Lord brought her before the church July 6, 1953, and she was a faithful, kind and loving member, and always filled her place in church when her health permitted. She was a member of North East Church. She was ill just a short time and was blessed to endure it with patience. She was always glad for brethren and friends to visit her, and talk about the goodness and mercy of our Saviour. She often said that if she were saved, it was by the grace of God. We feel that her absence from her kindred and loved ones, is her eter-

nal gain; for we believe that God called her home where there is no sickness, sorrow, pain, or death — where all will be love, joy and peace forever.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder L. L. Yopp.

May the Lord enable her family to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling. We know there is a vacant place in your home and in your hearts. May the good Lord reconcile all of you in your great loss.

Done by order of North East Church in conference the 3rd Saturday in February, 1967. Written by an unprofitable sinner, living in hope of eternal rest in our Lord and Saviour,

J. H. Morton
Jacksonville, N. C.

WILLIAM ARNOLD CREECH

Brother William Arnold Creech was born in Johnston County, North Carolina, on Dec. 22, 1908, and departed this life October 10, 1964, at the age of fifty-five.

He was the son of the late Reuben D. Creech and Lou Delia Stancil Creech. Left to mourn his passing are his wife, Sister Mary Creech, four daughters, four sons, six grandchildren and one brother and all his many friends.

A native of Johnston County and life-long resident, Brother Creech united with the Creech's Primitive Baptist Church in August, 1959. He was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace and Grace alone and this doctrine was a comfort to him as long as he lived. He was faithful to attend the church as long as he was able.

Brother Creech's funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, and his body was laid to rest in the church cemetery, to await the morning of the resurrection when Christ shall come to call and gather His children home to reign forever with Him.

Sister Nellie Hocutt

SISTER JANE MOORE

Sister Jane Moore, 94 years old, was born January 17, 1872 and was taken from us by death June 25, 1966. Elder D. B. Stokes assisted by Mr. Jim Parker conducted her funeral at Creech's Primitive Baptist Church, and her body was laid to rest to await the coming of the Lord at the family cemetery on Route 2, Selma, N. C.

Sister Moore's husband, Billy Moore, preceded her to the grave by many years, but she was blessed with children who loved her and were faithful to take care of her in her old age through her afflictions. To this union in marriage, there were five children, Senie Bailey Woodard, Everitt Moore, Lizzie Corbett, and Lawrence and Carmon Moore. Lawrence and Lizzie also preceded their mother in death. Sister Moore had twelve grandchildren, twelve great grandchildren, and three great, great grandchildren.

The life of our dear Sister was a wonderful testimony to God. She always seemed happy in the Lord, always thankful to Him for the many blessings He had bestowed on her. In her trials and afflictions she remained cheerful; happy in the faith that Christ had died for her. A visit with her would lift the most depressed person as she rejoiced in the goodness of God. We miss her, but we are thankful that God sent her this way for 94 years.

By Margaret C. Johnson
Creech's Church

JOHN W. CREECH

Brother John W. Creech, 78 years of age, died January 23, 1966. We feel that he showed a love for the Church long before he was able to be baptized. Brother Creech united with Creech's Primitive Baptist Church in June, 1965.

We feel that God has called him home to be with Him, and has taken him out of his illness which he suffered with great patience.

He left behind to grieve for him Sister Cora Creech, his wife, and two daughters, six sons, and many grandchildren who loved him dearly and miss him. The Church misses him, but we realize that our loss is his eternal gain.

The funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, and his body was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

Submitted by Nellie Hocutt
For Creech's Church

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

We, the church at Pleasant Grove, wish to bow in humble submission to our gracious Heavenly Father in removing by death a beloved sister, Evelyn Walker. Sister Walker passed away at Cone Memorial Hospital January 12, 1967.

She was a faithful member as long as her health permitted: she was so afflicted that she spent several years in bed. She wrote poetry, and one, "A Rose," was read at her funeral. She was an example of Christian humility.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That in the passing of this dear sister we feel our

loss very keenly, but bow in submission to One who doeth all things well; and

RESOLVED, That we extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family. May God's blessings be upon each one who mourns her passing — upon her sons and daughters and all who were near and dear to her; and

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be spread on the church book; one sent to the family; and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference February meeting, 1967.

Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
Robert Walker, Clerk
(Written by Sister Lena Walker)

A ROSE

Do not buy a costly casket,
Nor a dress of blue.
Put some flowers in a basket,
Just a rose will do.

Please don't shed tears of sorrow
I was passing through.
While you wait for God's tomorrow,
Just a rose will do.

Lay me in the old church yard,
There I'll wait for you.
And upon the earthy clod,
Put a rose or two.

Ah! In life I loved the roses,
They mean "I love you,"
O'er a form that decomposes,
Just a rose will do.

May the wild rose ever blossom,
In the sparkling dew.
There I soon will be forgotten,
So a rose will do.

How I long to see a garden,
When my work is through.
Where no earthly beast has trodden,
Just a rose will do.

Evelyn Walker
April 1, 1953

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Upon request of the Skewarky Primitive Baptist Church, it is indeed with tear dimmed eyes and a heavy heart from a standpoint of nature that I attempt to pen a few words in memory of one whom I loved so dearly; my precious grandmother and our beloved sister, Sister Nancy Daniels. Yet, I trust I am grateful to our blessed heavenly father for the divine crumbs of reconciliation that I feel have been fed to me from the Master's table. The merciful acts of God that I was blessed to experience throughout our lives together, and the mercies shown in those last few hours of her illness and departure far out number the tears of sorrow and of grief, a recipient of man's nature. I do have a desire to give all praise and honor to God for the crumbs of comfort and reconciliation for me, for all who were near and dear by the ties of nature, and for all who loved her in Christ's name; that love that binds the happy souls above.

Grandmother entered this life on December 25, 1894, and was called home on February 2, 1966, thus making her stay upon this earth 71 years. She was the daughter of the late Jim and Nancy Groves Roberson, and spent most of her life as a resident of Martin County.

Grandmother united with the church at Skewarky the second Sunday in May, 1933, at the water's edge. At this time she along with my grandfather, the late John Luther Daniels, was baptized by Elder B. S. Cowin; Thus she held membership for approximately 33 years.

Grandmother was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and professed a precious hope in an all wise, powerful, and merciful God. Although she bore afflictions the last ten years of her life, she was most faithful in attending her home church, in visiting the sister churches, and enjoyed until the end the sweet privilege of entertaining the brethren in our little home.

Grandmother was a widow for approximately 30 years. Surviving are two daughters, one son, eight grandchildren and one great grandchild. Also surviving are one sister, one brother, and one half-sister.

Her funeral was conducted in the Skewarky Primitive Baptist Church by Elders E. C. Harrison, D. B. Stokes, and W. E. Grimes. Interment was in the Skewarky Church Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, a token of the esteem in which she was held.

May I express my appreciation for the many expressions of sympathy that were shared during, and have been shared since, the passing of my precious loved one. Many of you have observed down through the years and were aware of our devotion toward each other. May you be given a mind to remember a poor unworthy sinner in your prayers.

RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to *Zion's Landmark, Old Faith Contender,* and *Signs of the Times,* and that a copy be sent to the family, and a copy be placed on the church record.

Done by order of conference second Saturday in February, 1966.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Written by one who loved her, a grandson,
Johnny Ray Gardner, Committee

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 135 DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1967 NO. 9

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

BEHOLD THE LAMB

To us is given a chosen Lamb,
Salvation is his name,
Slain ere the day-star ever was,
But yet remains the same.

There is but one God-given Son,
Nor ever will there be
Another sacred Lamb of God
To set our spirit free.

The cross, the blood, the dying Lamb
Came from His sacred sphere,
Lay in the tomb, his second womb,
Where all His chosen were.

He loosed his shroud, he thundered loud,
"Salvation full and free,"
What a great love, sent from above,
To save a wretch like me.

He could not stay another day,
Grave clothes aside he laid,
I heard him say to me that day,
" 'Tis I, be not afraid."

Some glad day we'll fly away,
Like birds from captive free,
And on that mount, drink from the fount,
O! glory, glory be.

J. M. Bailey, Sr.
1511 Oak Street
Kenova, W. Va.

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789 E. Paxton Street,
Danville, Virginia 24541

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a check for the **Signs** for two more years. I don't want to miss a copy, for I enjoy reading the truth the Signs advocates, and I fully believe.

I am now eighty-four and a half years old, and if I should miss the paper I would feel lost. My health has not been good since September in 1966, and I can't get to church as regularly as I have been, and the paper is so much comfort to me. Sometime I feel that I am at church hearing the preaching of the brethren of the Signs: Elder George Ruston, Elder Wood, Elder Lambert, and others, for all the writing is sweet to my soul, and is sound, if I know the truth.

A sister in hope,
Sallie B. Hall

Pine Bluff, Arkansas
October 7, 1888

Dear Brethren and Sisters,

The elect of the earth, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus before the world began; and called in time.

It has been on my mind to write for the **Signs of the Times** for a long time. Being at home today, I concluded to write you a few lines on the Doctrine of God our Saviour.

I believe He declared the end from the beginning: and will it not be as He said it will be? Surely it will. Is not this then absolute predestination? If not, I do not know what predestination is. God declared the end from the beginning, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." This means all time things; and God has said just how they shall go. Oh yes, he said that all nations shall be gathered together before him, and he will separate them as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats. He has said that he will say to those on the right, "Come, ye blessed of the Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the founda-

tion of the world." But to them on the left he will say, "Depart from me into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Will this be so or not? I say, God is not slack concerning his promises, but all will come to pass just as God has said.

Well, dear brethren, does this mean only the church? I say, No. It means all things; for God works all things after the counsel of his own will: and all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, and are the called according to his eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began. I say that our God declared the end from the beginning. He determined it to be just like he declared it would be. If this is not absolute predestination, I wish you would tell me what it is.

Does not God command to preach the truth? Others will say, If what you say is so, you make God the author of sin. But not so: that is what you say. I say, Not so. I will give you another text, which you can find if you read your Bible. "He is before all things, and by him all things consist," "All things were made by him, and for him." Dear brethren, did God make all things, and have no eternal purpose in view? Will you come to the text that says he declared the end from the beginning, and say with me that it will come to pass just as he said it would? Well, dear brethren, if God made all things, where did sin come from? Sin is an act of a thing. The Bible tells us that by the disobedience of one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned. So you see that Adam is the author of sin, and not God. If you make sin a thing, then you make God the author of sin. It was the act of Adam in transgressing the law. Some will ask, Did God know that before he made man? Surely he did, or he could not have declared the end from the beginning; for we learned from the Scriptures that God made all things before he made man. He then formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul. He placed him in the garden of Eden, and gave unto him the law, saying unto him, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Did God know he would eat of the fruit of the tree? He surely did, or how could he have declared the end from the beginning?

We learn that Jesus Christ was a "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." And again, "Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?" Of a truth they were gathered together against the holy child Jesus, to do whatsoever God's hand and counsel determined before hand to be done. Jesus was delivered by the determined counsel of God into wicked hands, and was killed and buried; but God raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand. "Let all the house of Israel know this." That which God has said by all the prophets and the apostles, and his Son, will come to pass; yea, everything. As he declared the end from the beginning, so shall all things come to pass. Let all the house of Israel know this, that he has declared the end of all things, even when time shall be no longer, saying, "Surely as I have thought, so shall it stand; and as I have purposed, so shall it come to pass." "I am God, and beside me there is no Saviour." "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

So fear not, dear brethren. It is your Father's pleasure to give you the kingdom, which he has prepared for his dear children. Stand fast in the faith, and endure hardships as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. When the chief Shepherd of the sheep comes, he will carry you home to rest forevermore.

D. Westall

(Copied from the Signs of May 8, 1889, and sent to us by Sister Donaldson, of Star City, Arkansas, who said, "I have heard my parents speak of Elder D. Westall. He had very little formal education, but was richly blessed when he stood up to preach." — J. D. W.)

CONFIDENCE IN FLESH COULD NOT STAND

907 North Rusk,
P. O. Box 207,
Weatherford, Texas 76086

Dear Editors of the Signs,

And the brethren and sisters in hope of eternal life, who believe that all of the blessings of God are in every way, entirely and completely, by the grace of God. You who can say, "Amen" to this, I desire to call you my full brothers and sisters; for we can be together and enjoy the fullness of the gospel of God. Those known as limited Primitive Baptists, without any desire to cast a reflection upon them, I beg to call them "half brothers."

In Genesis 35:22, we read that the sons of Jacob were twelve, but they were half-brothers to Joseph, except Benjamin, who were full brothers, having the same father and mother. So Joseph was especially favorable to Benjamin; but when put to a test of his love for his brethren, he favored all of them greatly. This was by grace — an unmerited favor, after they had sold him to the Ishmaelites for a small sum of money. Jesus was sold for a small sum of money, of which Joseph was a type. His coat of many colors was stained with blood, yet the ones who had stained it went free, and were not punished for their great transgression; but in life were preserved. Joseph told them, "Ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, o save much people alive." And he comforted them, saying, "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither."

As I began to say, Benjamin was especially favored; and in giving the food to his brethren, Joseph ordered Benjamin's mess five times as much as any of the others, and to each of them he gave changes of raiment, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of raiment. The only reason I can give for him being especially favored, is that he had the same father and mother that Joseph had: Was that not by grace and grace alone? Did Benjamin do anything in choosing who his father and mother would be?

Dear Brethren, you that are the very salt of the earth, don't you realize that when you are with your full brothers and sisters, you get five messes instead of one, and five changes of garments; but you have nothing to glory of except in the Lord: it is entirely by the grace of God, since it is a fact you could not choose who would be your parents. I usually say, and I have to say purposely of God, I was with my half-brothers for about ten years, the limited Primitive Baptists. They have the same Father I trust I have, but not the same mother in the sense of church affilliation.

Nearly one and one-half centuries ago the Baptists were all one people, but many were swallowed up by the earth and became an earthly institution. If it had not been so, look what we would have on the inside of the church. "And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." (Rev. 12:15-17)

As I see it, the earth will always swallow up these institutions. God has always taken care of the Church of Jesus Christ; and we can't do it, nor tell him how. He will build his church: he is the legal owner of the church "Which he hath purchased with his own blood."

A little while ago I went to hear the Old Predestinarian Primitive Baptists preach. I was so surprised to hear them preach the complete sovereignty of God and his completeness in power, saying that all power was of God, and what so ever his soul desired that he did. It

gave me much consolation and restful comfort, as I was taught to trust Him in all things; yet it made a big tearing down of my "big ideas" which I had in the flesh. Their testimony, with my experience, showed me plainly that I could not make the confidence I had in the flesh stand. Peter was told by Jesus, "When thou art converted strengthen thy brethren." He had to learn that he could not stand of himself, no matter how much he had avowed he would be with Jesus unto death. He couldn't do it, and it was proved to him by the cock crowing. That cock crowed a sermon that brought Peter to bitter tears of repentance.

In conclusion let me say, Take courage, though the flesh indeed is weak, the Spirit is as strong as ever. May we be enabled to ever preach and teach repentance toward God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; but never, never, faith in ourselves. We have worn our old flesh garments threadbare, trusting in them: if, and or, but. Yet, evil will be present with us so that we cannot do the things that we would. Jesus said unto them, ". . . have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou has prefected praise?"

A weak and imperfect brother,
if one at all,
W. C. Purdy

FELLOWSHIP

How sweet it is to have fellowship with God! And that we have that hope within us that God has given his children: the gift of his grace that they are walking in the light as he is in the light.

How sweet is the hymn that says,

"What is there beneath the skies,
In all the paths thou'st trod;
Can suit thy wishes or thy joys,
Like fellowship with God."

We understand that all must first have fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, before they can have fellowship one with another. And, this fellowship must come as a gift from God, as does grace, and one's faith.

We believe that one must have fellowship one with another to have a mutual sharing of an experience: something that is to be felt toward each other. We understand that God's children have fellowship one **with** another and not just merely **for** one another. This fellowship would surely have to be **with** one another or they could not be a member of, or added to the family of God.

If we say we just have fellowship **for** someone, this doesn't go very deep with me. The word, "for" does not have that much of a meaning to me. The only application of the word that I can think of in connection with fellowship would be "Assigned to," and God hasn't made his children only "assigned to" (the meaning of for) but has made them "among," "associate or member of," "counted with others" (the meanings of with). If we don't have fellowship **with** God's children, then I certainly don't see how we can have it **for** them. If He has graced us to be counted with others, then our fellowship is with them, not for them, and not something we can present them if we wish, or withhold if we wish.

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; . . . That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye may also have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you , that your joy may be full." (I John 1: 1, 3, 4.)

In the first chapter of First John, Christian fellowship is expressed fully. He tells how it is possible for believers to have fellowship one with another by saying "that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you."

For what purpose did the apostle declare this unto you? "That ye also may have fellowship with us." Then he makes known of a truth by saying, "And truly our fellowship is with the

Father and with his Son Jesus Christ."

The apostle had seen and heard that which was from the beginning with their own eyes. Their hands had handled of the Word of life. The apostle had been given the eyes and ear of understanding by the Holy Ghost, and he speaks to those of like mind.

You will find the word "fellowship" in only thirteen scriptures in the Bible. The apostle shows how that fellowship is to be had with all believers: those that have seen and heard and handled the same thing that the apostles did by the Holy Ghost — how that they tasted and handled of the Word of life.

This is the message which the apostles of Christ have heard of Him (Christ) and declare unto you. You that have tasted of the goodness of Christ, you that have ears to hear and eyes to see, that God is light and in Him (God) is no darkness at all.

Fellowship is not just a gathering of friends, but fellowship with the Great Head of the Church, whose fellowship is truly with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.

The Bible teaches plainly what true fellowship is and to whom we can fellowship. The one and only requirement is "if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

In everyone that is made able to know that Power wherein they are made to walk in the light, true fellowship abides without any mention of Church, Creed, or Class. Fellowship is to all who walk in the light as he is in the light. It is then we have fellowship one with another for the blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed us from all sin.

Fellowship is not something that can be put on or off at man's own will. It is like faith. First, fellowship must be **with** God, and this fellowship must flow through fellowship **with** Christ before one can have fellowship with God's people. We are either in fellowship with God and with his people or we are not.

Fellowship is worked in God's children by his grace, and is felt only as He works in them. For it became him (Christ) in bringing many sons unto Glory. This was the work of Christ, and he who has become our fellowship is not ashamed to call them brethren. All that has been done was done in Christ — in him all fullness dwells and exists. He (Christ) is the first in all, the first born among many brethren, that the family of God be conformed to the image of him; to be made like him.

Fellowship is wrought in the family of God according to the power of God in them. Then, this is felt, handled, and seen according to the gift of his grace.

Elder R. O. Simmons,
Rt. 1,
Elora, Tennessee

Rt. 7, Box 118
Christiansburg, Va. 24073

Dear Brother Spangler:

I desire to write you a few lines, and hope you and Sister Spangler are well. We think of you often and of the wonderful gift the Lord has given you. I well remember the first time I heard you preach, it was about 1925. You were a young man and I was just a lad, but it stayed with me, though I do not remember your text. I remember you spoke of the coming of the Lord. This I believe, and look for his coming the second time without sin unto salvation.

All that I knew then was that I was a sinner, and that if I died I would be sent to hell. I knew I was the guilty one, and that was what I deserved. I was not able to quit one bad habit. As I grew older, the Lord showed me a little here and a little there. I mourned and groaned until I was twenty-four years old, when the Lord spoke in me and around me, and said, "If God be for you who can be against you?" I felt that he would be with me for ever. I saw things there that I have never been able to tell; but I was made willing to be anything God would have me to be.

I tell the people that there are two

kinds of people in the world today, and they are both sinners: One is dead in trespasses and sins and do not know it; the other has been quickened and know they are sinners.

The Lord has been good to me, and so have the brethren. What more could one wish for in this world? I hope you will have a mind to come our way this summer, for the brethren speak of you often.

Your little brother,
James Leroy Agee

DESIRES TO BE KEPT HUMBLE

Nags Head, N. C.
Box 295,

Elder E. M. Smith,
Rt. 1, Box 303
Elm City, N. C. 27822

Dear Elder Smith:

I am attempting to write what is on my mind, and if it is in accordance with God's will, it shall be finished and reach you regardless of all opposing powers on earth. That is what I hope I believe, but so much of the time I am asking myself, Do I really have a hope? or is it that in my sinful ways, I am just imagining things: Am I in my poor, weak, and peculiar self, trying to convince myself, and at the same time attempting to deceive those people I hope I love, into believing false things concerning me. I have desired, hoped, and tried to beg that I never be allowed to deceive the Old Baptists concerning myself, and what I hope to believe. For, if I know anything at all, I believe those of you who come declaring the greatness of God and the helplessness of man, compose that church under consideration when God said, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." And, if I know my desire, it is never to do anything to cause hurt to any member or part of that church; for Jesus said that whatsoever thou doest to the least of them (my children) thou doest it unto me. If not deceived, I believe, sometimes with all my heart, that those of you I have reference to are declaring and professing the very same doctrine Jesus Christ proclaimed while walking upon the earth; and in so believing, I desire to be just some small part of it, and if it could be His will that I be made to pray, I feel right now that I would beg to be placed and kept at the feet of His children, and be prevented from causing disturbance among those I hope I love in the name of and for the sake of Jesus Christ, the one and only begotten Son of Almighty God, the Maker of many, the Father of a few as compared to the number of vessels made by Him.

Please try to overlook my rambling method of writing my thoughts: I am only a poor worm of the dust in confusion and sin most of the time, trying to search for food: not for my body, for God has for fifty-four years abundantly blessed me with that, but food for my soul — one more little crumb, so that I might have more strength upon which to feel that my hope is in truth a hope for a better place after this life.

Following this are written some of my thoughts as they entered my mind; do with them as you wish. When you are made to pray, if it is in your mind, ask that I be placed and kept at the feet of those of you whom I desire to love with an everlasting love.

Troy G. Shepard

If I am wrong in what I believe is the doctrine which the Old Baptists proclaim, I stand to be corrected. I understand their whole concept of all things as they be and do, are based solely upon first of all, and through unto the end, and through eternity, that there was, is, and will remain to be an absolute Sovereign God over all things that were, is and ever will be, in that He did in the beginning make and totally complete all his purposes for every thought or act ever to be throughout each and every instant of time. As I said

this is my understanding of their belief, and I hope my understanding is right, for if I know what I believe, that is it.

God was never, nor will ever be surprised or disappointed, or confused concerning anything. He saw and knew from the very start all time and events to take place, even what this sinner is doing right now; and furthermore did plan for it to be, and declared that it shall be. If it be, (even the falling of a sparrow is mentioned,) then he must have considered every event, no matter how small or unimportant it might seem to men, important in carrying out the overall operation as he determined it to be, with absolutely no alteration or sidetracking from it. The confusion, uncertainty, disappointments, etc. are completely confined within the minds of men only; and this also is exactly as he planned it should be.

In believing these things I hope they are in accord not only with what Primitive Baptist profess, but most important the teaching of Jesus while he was in the world. If I know my feelings I have a love for this doctrine, and those people who believe it. I am not ashamed to confess, when I feel as I do now, that I love those "hardshell" Baptists with a love so deep that it reaches to the very center of my soul; but much of the time in the consciousness of my own nature, these things seem distant and dimly lighted, so much so that I fear the light will completely disappear from me. Sometimes it seems that my love for these people and those things which God gives them the strength to proclaim, is so strong that I would gladly (if I could) give what remains of my life here on earth, for just a few moments of time in which I could truly mix and mingle with them as their brother. But I feel so unfit that I fear that I am deceived in it all, and in turn if they should receive me as such, deceive them. Each time I consider this possibility, my mind centers upon what God has said: What thou doest unto the least of mine, you also do it unto me. I hope it is that love I have for them which gives me a deep desire not to hurt them in any way; for I believe they are those for whom Jesus said that he was going away to prepare a place for them. The only hope I have is that I might be their brother in Jesus Christ; and if this could be so, that God would give me a short time in this life to mix with them as their brother.

Knowing myself as I do, I know of myself I am undeserving of it; but if it could be the will and purpose of my Creator that I have this great privilege, I desire to be placed and kept at no greater height than at their feet: then maybe I could never be a hurt to them. But how unfit I am to speak of these things, for I feel so full of sin and the things of this world. Yet sometimes I feel to know that surely He must have dealt with me in some way, for if he had not, I would still be relying upon my own strength — a strength I now know is non-existant. At times I feel my total helplessness, and that I am solely dependent upon Him for all strength; and if I am not to spend an eternity in hell, it is brought about only through and by mercy allotted me before he laid the foundation of this world. This is my only hope for a place in that city on high when my life on earth is finished.

There is one thing that I feel to know for sure, that my sins are so unsurmountable that if it should be that a man is judged by the sins committed, and the good things he does himself, I would have no hope at all; but my home after this life would be an eternal hell. I feel sure that I have never on my own done any good thing, but have in truth and in fact, every moment of my life when not guided by His merciful hand in the other direction, always taken the left fork of the road which is wide and well traveled: that road of the world which gives the false impression that it leads upward, when in truth it leads ever downward to the pit — the place where there is no help except the grace and mercy of Almighty God takes one out. Sometimes I believe I am a witness to the horrors of that pit; and if not deceived, can witness to the sweet de-

liverance from it — which is an experience too great to describe.

Oh, that it might be His will to raise me to that height so great as to just reach up and touch the feet of his little children; and, if his will, to just let me ever stay there, without a desire for a greater height. Right now I want to be there, stay there, and die there; for I feel if that were so, I would not mind leaving this world. I feel that the light shining upon my hope, would be bright enough to overcome the darkness of doubt which abides with me so much of the time. Oh that I might be kept in a complete state of humbleness all the remaining days of my life, for it is only when in that condition can I be sure of not being a hurt to others as well as myself. When this is not the case I am filled with foolishness and ready to lash out with my tongue filled with things of this world.

If it is God's will, please beg for me. From one who desires to hope that he has a hope of that city where all are brethren forever in peace and love, and praise to the ever merciful King.

Troy G. Shepard

THE WIND AND THE SPIRIT

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." (John 3:8)

How true and wonderful is the comparison. The wind we cannot see, neither can we see the Spirit. The wind has a great power that no man can control; so does the Spirit, for men cannot control the Spirit. He cannot see where the wind comes from, neither can the natural eye see where the Spirit comes from; or where it goes. But one can see where the wind has been, or see its work, or what it has done, and the effect of it. There is nothing that man can do to hinder the wind: How true it is with the Spirit! One can see where the Spirit has been, and the effect of it; but there is nothing one can do to hinder the work of the Spirit. Man cannot promote the wind or cause it to blow; neither can man promote the work of the Spirit, to cause it to move or carry on its work at his will.

So, as the wind goes at its will and where it will, (at God's will), the Spirit goes where it will, and at its will, (as God wills). We understand that both the wind and the Spirit are under the eternal God's control: the wind travels on both land and sea, east, west, north, and south. It is the same with the Spirit in all directions, in every nation, kindred, and tongue under heaven.

The strong wind moves whatever it takes hold of, and takes it in the direction it is traveling. It is the same with the Spirit: when it lays hold of a person, that person is going to go the way the Spirit is traveling. Dear ones, we have not always been traveling the same direction we are now, (and have been for a number of years.) Have you found this to be true; I feel that I have. If the Spirit crushes me down at the feet of Jesus, then I cry, "Lord help." If the Spirit fills my heart with thankfulness and praise to His great and holy name, then I groan in Spirit; and am filled with praise to God for all his great goodness and mercy to me; and the eye of faith beholds Him as the Father of all my blessings: for the Spirit is traveling in this direction.

The apostle Paul found that he had to preach Jesus, for the Spirit was moving in that direction, and he could not resist it. Paul was as helpless as he would have been in a strong wind: he had to obey, and become a part of that great building not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. There was a great change: He was **not now giving orders; but was taking orders,** saying, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

How true with us! We humbly pray the Lord to instruct us to do that which is pleasing in his sight. When Jesus writes his law in the heart and puts it in the mind, and one is being drawn by the cords of His great love, then the Spirit is traveling that way, and the

little child of God goes that way. Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. David said that He made him to lie down in green pastures, and led him beside the still waters. The Spirit with its power was traveling that way with David. The new man, or Spirit, was stronger than the old man, hence the old man was bound: and David could say many times over, "Praise ye the Lord."

The Spirit was moving David in the way nothing else could. No tree, the huge oak or the sturdy maple, is so strong or so deeply rooted but the powerful wind can uproot it or break it down. It is the same with man: none is so strongly rooted in fleshly pride and worldly lusts, but that the powerful Spirit can break him down and uproot him from fleshly self and his own good works and pride, and make him as a little child, to walk humbly and softly, fearing and trembling before God the remainder of his days.

(Elder) A. J. Slauson,
46 Cedar Street
Kingston, N. Y. 12401

CIRCULAR LETTER OF
STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION
1967

To the Messengers, ministers and friends that compose the Staunton River Association.

Dear Brethren:

You appointed me to write the letter addressing and welcoming you to meet with us at Union Church on the 7, 8, and 9th of July, 1967.

We hope the God of all Grace will meet and manifest his love and mercy to all that meet with us at this association, and trust that the ministers who come will be laden with the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. We know that God rules in heaven and in earth and has all power. Man is just a worm in the dust and has no power, except what God gives him.

What I am going to write may not belong in this letter; it is a part of the Lord's dealing with me. When I was in my twenties I had a dream that has been very precious to me over the years. Jesus and I were flying, and I said I didn't know that I could fly; and I fell into the swamp and mire and Jesus came to me, lifted me up and said to me, "If I don't hold you up you will be sure to fall."

I believe I have been taught and shown these things. So brethren, press on; the same Jesus that was seen going up will in like manner come again to carry you home to Glory. I know that I will not be with you much longer but I want to be at your feet as long as I am here with you.

I hope that God will give me faith and strength to praise his name as long as I live on earth.

In Hope of Eternal Life,
Your Brother I Hope,
S. A. Slaughter

---

307 E Pine Street
Winsboro, Texas 75494

Dear Brother Spangler:

It is time for me to renew my subscription, and I am sending $5.00 for two years. I enjoy reading the **Signs of the Times** so well, containing all the good letters from the brothers and sisters. I hope I am among them.

I pray that God will guide me through this life, for that is all I have to look to: I know that without Him we can do nothing, and we are dependent upon him alone. We are weak and do change, but He never changes. Isn't it good to trust in a Saviour who never changes? He knows every step we take, and knows all about us.

I belong to the Good Hope Church, and was looking forward to your preaching for us. Hope you can some day.

In Christian fellowship,
Mrs. Morris Hewitt

NOT AFRAID TO PREACH SOUND DOCTRINE

Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120
Rt. 2, Box 134,

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I would like to let you know that I enjoyed the sermon by Elder Stanley Phillips in the last issue (July) of this beloved paper; and also Elder Lambert's Editorial, and I have written him telling him so. Oh, praise God for such men who are not afraid to stand and proclaim sound doctrine: If God has called them to preach his glorious truth, they will stand unafraid in Him, and Him alone.

I heard it said in my own living room, that you could go and hear all, and spit out what you don't believe. I want to state what I believe about it: If God has called a man to preach his gospel, and has opened a people's ear to hear his gospel, I do not believe you will have to spit any of it out. I hope this is not too old "hardshelly" for any one.

I hope, brethren, that I have been blessed to believe in an absolute God; one who has absolutely fixed all men's walk on the face of this earth, and we don't have one ounce of strength to fix ourselves in anything. I believe that God rules the old devil, and that the devil does not hold the keys to the kingdom. God rules over every thing, every animal and every creeping thing — every human being on the face of this earth.

Man does not have any power of his own; and never will have. Thank God for showing me these wonderful truths, not for my sake but for his precious Son, who has given me a little hope to anchor my soul here in this troublesome land of sorrow and grief.

An humble one, begging for a crumb from the Master's table,

Mrs. Lewis (Pauline) Spencer

OFTEN HAS DOUBTS AND FEARS

Rt. 2,
Elon College, N. C. 27244

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am enclosing three dollars to renew my subscription. I look forward to its coming each month, and enjoy it so much. I enjoy reading the experiences of the writers, and am disappointed when I do not find them. No doubt many are like me: I feel so weak and unfit to write to such a people as they are. I wish I could feel fit to be at their feet, but I am so full of doubts and fears that I can hardly go on sometimes. Yet the Lord has all power, and gives us strength to keep going as he sees fit; and without Him we can do nothing.

I often wonder if I know anything at all. My hope gets so small and I long to know more and more, and to hear the gospel preached. I think so much of the closet, when I wished I could be in it behind the pulpit and hear the preaching and rejoice where no one could see me. I wanted to keep it hid, but couldn't. The Lord blessed me wonderfully when I knew it not.

When I was about nine years old was the first time I remember calling on the Lord for help, when I was frightened by a big light, which was the Northern Lights, I suppose. Then again when my mother was very ill a few years later, and I was afraid she would die, and I didn't see how we could live without her, I just had to leave the house and go to the feed barn in the mule stable, (where my father died later from a bolt of lightening,) and tried to pray for her to get better and live; but the doctor and medicine had to be blessed from above.

After we were married and had a small family we would often go up home; and I once dreamed of being there with all the family sitting in the yard in a circle, and I had a song book marching around them singing "Jesus Lover of my Soul," and that song has meant so much to me. I say again that He blesses us when we know it not. Once while in the hospital I prayed for strength to go through with the operation, if it was he Lord's will; and if not, I hoped I was ready to go. Elder Donald

Smith came the night before and offered prayer; and I feel that it and all others were answered.

Remember me in your prayers,
Mrs. W. Robert Apple

REPORT OF UNION MEETING

Benton, Ky. 42025

Dear Editors and Readers of the Signs:

I feel impressed to send for publication a few lines about our Union Meeting of the churches of the Soldier Creek Association while in session at the New Providence Church, west of Murray, Calloway County, Kentucky, June 16, 17, and 18.

We were blessed to meet a few members of the churches of this association, and friends of the principles of the doctrine which the Old School Baptists contend for: this same doctrine being God's doctrine. Our visiting ministers were Elders J. N. Darnell and W. Y. Chandler from the Little River Association; Elder Herbert Prince from the Memphis Church; and Elder R. L. Biggs from the Bordeaux Church, Nashville, Tenn.

To be gathered together and permitted to sit in heavenly places where our Saviour is proclaimed to be the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, surely is a mercy extended from the Heavenly Father to poor beggers. While listening to three or four sermons each day, and at night meetings at Brother and Sister Paul Poyner's home, we felt to be in another world from the one where we go about hearing the news of the world, the complaints of this one and that one, and seeing and hearing about material things concerning natural living. Yes, it was another world, a peaceful place to rest and hear good news; to see and know that fellowship abounded in our midst — faith to faith, friend to friend, knowing nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Elder Prince took for a text one time, declaring that the lot was cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof was of the Lord. Elder Biggs used for a text one day, "Laying aside all malice and all guile, and hypocrisies and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes desiring the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby." Surely in this meeting malice and envy, hypocrisies and evil speakings were forgotten. Peace abounded and fellowship felt. Elder Poyner used in the Introductory Sermon, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not because it knew him not."

How well we know that the religious world does not know us, who are called, "the can't help it" Baptists, the despised "Absoluters". . Yet the world hated our Lord before it hated us. We are persuaded that He is able to keep that which we have committed unto him against that day, as Paul the Apostle declared.

Paul knew whom he had believed; and this people meeting in our Union knew too whom they had believed, and were still believing — trusting not in their own righteousness, but the imputed righteousness of Jesus their Saviour, their Wonderful Counselor, their Everlasting Father, the Prince of their Peace.

Effie Bowden

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 5,
Reidsville, N. C. 27320

Dear Lovers of the Truth:

I will try in the best way I can for a poor sinner like me to write some of my experience of grace and hope, if I have any and am not deceived.

When I was a small child and growing up, I would worry so much about the end of time, and would dream about the end of the world coming. I would always dream that the fire would burn on over me, but did not burn me at all. After I was married, and before my second little

girl was born, I dreamed of seeing a big book open in the east with a hand shaped under it; and after she was born I got into so much trouble. There were many clouds and thunder storms in April and May of 1936, and I felt that the lightening was going to strike me, and I would sure go to hell. I believe I went to the bottomless pit. I went to Pleasant Grove meetings regularly on Saturday and Sunday then. On the third Saturday in April or May, Elder Stanfield preached from Isaiah, which was the first sermon I had ever heard in my life. I had such a desire to join the church, but haven't until this time. God only knows why. I was still in trouble, and felt like when I went to sleep at night I would never see my husband and babies again. One night I dreamed that my husband was down at the barn close to the house, and inside the hog lot there was the prettiest woman and little children sitting on the pretty green grass: she had a large book in her lap, and was writing my husband's name in gold letters in the book; and when I walked up she wrote my name also. After that I went for years not fearing death; then about eighteen years ago, I had what was suppose to be a serious operation. My sister-in-law told the doctor that I wasn't afraid to have the operation; and he said that I got along better than anyone he had ever performed that operation on. But I did get so afraid the night before the operation that I started to get up and slip out of the hospital. I was in my room all alone, and I heard the Lord's voice (I really believe it was the Lord's voice), and it sounded from one end of the hall to the other, and said, "Fear not, I am with you always, even until the end of the earth." Then I did not fear the operation the least bit.

How many times I have had my feelings hurt from others than Primitive Baptists, about not joining the church! How I would like to be a member; but am sure there is a set time for me to join ; but if I am never a member, I feel I was made afraid to die, and then not afraid to die. I go to Wolf Island Church and love it there, and I go to Pleasant Grove Church and love it there. I pray to live long enough to see the associations and churches in peace, love and fellowship; and I feel that all the children of God would like to see it. This has worried me much, I hope I am one of His little ones, and am like Elder Stanfield, he loved peace more than anything on this earth.

As great a sinner as I feel to be, I will close by asking the prayers of everyone.

Your unworthy one,
Mrs. Rena (Cobb) Smith

THE KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

The **Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association** is to be held with Concord Church, Creswell, Washington County, North Carolina, first Sunday in October, 1967, Saturday before and Monday following.

Elder B. D. Handy was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, and Elder I. S. Conner, his alternate.

The Church is located on the road to Cherry, about 2 miles South of Creswell.

The Association is to be held in Creswell School building on Saturday and Sunday. Those coming from West 64 Highway, turn right upon entering town, follow black top road one block, turn left, go one block, and turn right.

We extend a cordial invitation to our Ministering Brethren, Brethren, Sisters, and friends.

E. C. Harrison, Clerk

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The 1967 session of the **Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association** is appointed, the Lord willing, to be held with the church at Healthy Plains, Wilson County, N. C., beginning at 11 o'clock on Friday before the 4th Sunday in October, and continuing through Sunday.

The church is located at the intersection of Highway 581 and rural paved road 1129, between Bailey, N. C. and Buckhorn. If Buckhorn is not shown on the map, it is the intersection of 581 and 42 highways. Those coming by way of Wilson take 42 highway west out of Wilson for approximately 7 miles, turn on rural paved road 1142 at Rockridge Sign, follow for 2 miles and turn right on 1129 three miles to the church.

All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

W. E. Turner, Clerk

SALISBURY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The **Salisbury Association** is appointed to be held with Nassaonga Church, Wicomico County, Maryland, October 18 and 19, 1967.

The meeting will be held in the **Old School Baptist Meeting House** in **Salisbury, Maryland.** Those arriving on Tuesday will contact Sister Mildred Dykes, Mt. Herman Road, Salisbury; or Brother William Adkins, Mardella, Md.

Brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

D. V. Spangler

CORRECTION

On page 178 of the August issue, the second line under the heading "FIFTY YEARS" should read, "which was read on the occassion of a supper," etc. The word "we" should have been "was". — J. D. W.

PLEASE NOTE

Any corrections in the CHURCH NOTICES must be in our hands by November 25th, and should be sent to P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va. 22110. — J. D. W.

CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **Contentnea Association** convenes with the church at Damascus, in Pitt County, N. C., beginning Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1967, and continuing through Sunday. The church is located in the city of Farmville, N. C.

All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

E. M. Smith, Clerk
Rt. 1, Box 303,
Elm City, N. C.

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The 1967 session of the **South Ouachita Association** will convene with Bethel Church, commencing Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1967, and continue three days. Bethel Church is located about seven miles north of El Dorado, Arkansas, on Highway 167. Turn left at Kozy Kitchen Cafe and go about one fourth mile.

Lovers of the Truth are welcome.

Elder W. W. Hudson, Jr., Moderator
Eugene Patterson, Clerk

VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING

The **Virginia Corresponding Meeting** is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, at the Mt. Zion Meeting House, which is located on U. S. 50, about one and one-half miles east of Aldie, Virginia, on October 11 and 12 (Wednesday and Thursday).

A cordial invitation is given to our brethren and friends to meet with us. Those coming on Tuesday will come to Manassas to Elder Wood's home.

Leslie D. Duke, Clerk

Danville, Virginia **September, 1967**

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ANOTHER EDITION OF THE HYMN AND TUNE BOOK

Another edition of the Durand and Lester Hymn and Tune Books in the shaped notes has been ordered, and should be received about the first of September.

Prices, including 2% tax, delivered will be: Single Book, $3.52; one dozen, $38.25.

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EDITORIAL

ISAIAH 60: 13.

"And I will make the place of my feet glorious."

Some time ago, having spoken upon the above text, we were asked to write the substance of our discourse as an article for the Signs of the Times, but owing to our pressing duties we were not able to do so at that time, and now feel we have very little of the sweetness left that we then felt, to stimulate us in our endeavor. While we shall fail to present the same matter, yet we hope to present some views of the glorious travel of Immanuel, which being interpreted, means God with us.

The work of the eternal Son of God, and the glory of his kingdom, has been testified to by the writers of the Old Testament, and was set forth in types and shadows in the legal covenant. Moses in blessing the children of Israel, gave glory unto the Son of God, for he saith, "Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words." It was in David's heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and for the footstool of our God, and we find in several of the Psalms reference to the place where the ark rested, as the footstool of God. It was there at set times that the people were gathered, and their sacrifices were offered and the atonement made, and there they learned God was Judge himself. It was there judgment began. Within the temple the woodwork was from the finest trees of Lebanon. These had grown on the mountain of Lebanon for generations, but when converted into timber for the temple their life was gone, and they, like all types and shadows, were doomed, sooner or later, to perish and vanish away, but Isaiah in prophesying of the true temple of God that shall never perish, and true to type, the glory of Lebanon shall come unto it, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary. The trees of Lebanon were of God's planting, man had no hand in placing them there, they dated beyond the memory of living man, and towered above the high places of the earth, and were ever fresh and green. One meaning of the name Lebanon is "incense," and what is more wonderful than trees that have weathered the wind and storms of centuries, towering majestically towards heaven with the roots deeply entwined in the earth and rocks beneath them? Israel was to grow as the lily, and strike forth his roots as Lebanon, and with Lebanon's fresh mountain air filled with fragrance of the budding vine and rich odors from trees and shrubs it wonderfully agrees with the words of Solomon: "The smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon." The glory of Lebanon was to be given unto her, and as the days of a tree so are the days of my people, saith the Lord. The trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, glorify him in the church of our God, the temple of his holiness, their everlasting testimony to the life of God in their souls and the motions of supplication and praise under the moving influences of the Holy Spirit, rise as sweet incense to perfume the place of God's sanctuary.

This sanctuary to which we refer is the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man, and here it is well for us to consider the person of Christ, who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch

as he who had builded the house hath more honor than the house, and he that buildeth all things is God. Jesus of Nazareth was Lord of all, and was before David; while he was David's son, David in spirit said, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." In the fullness of time the eternal Son of God came, took upon him a body, became the Son of man, made an atonement for the sins of his people, died the Just for the unjust, was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification. It is this blessed person who declared, "I will make the place of my feet glorious." Malachi declares, "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple. * * * But who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth?"

His coming meant sweeping away of the types and shadows, the fulfillment of the law and the bringing in of an everlasting righteousness. As the Sun of righteousness his brightness was to eclipse the glory of Moses and the prophets, and, contrary to our natural sun, he, the Sun of Righteousness, would not withdraw his light. He came as a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, he trod the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with him. He gave his back to the smiter and his face to them that plucked off the beard. He prayed his Father and decared that he was glorified in his church, prayed: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world (Jew and Gentile) may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." John tells us, "We beheld his glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." "This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool." None knew him but those to whom he was revealed by the Spirit of God. That which the apostles testified and wrote of him, was all by revelation. It was a revelation of Jesus Christ and his glory, which glory was to fill the temple, and they testify unto us that the church of God is his husbandry, his building. To-day this truth must be revealed to us, it is not a matter of speculation, but of revelation. The Spirit of truth, which proceeds from the Father, testifies of Jesus, and that same Spirit which also convinceth of sin, stops men, women and children in their mad career as he did Saul of Tarsus. It is the Spirit that makes one, even though he be a Pharisee by nature, to pray the publican's prayer, and before ever we aspire to the name of christian we do well to examine ourselves by the Word of God, and not by the standard of morals that other men have set, even though they be called good by the world. Are we convinced of sin? Hath sin become unto us exceeding sinful? Do we still cling to the law of Moses, or have we learned that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified in God's sight? Thousands cling to the law, but if ever the Lord lays judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet, they will, like the king of old, find that they are weighed in the balances and found wanting. Wanting of him who is the Alpha and Omega of true religion, Jesus Christ.

Not long ago, one who called himself a minister, invited a child of God to hear him preach; after his talk he asked how she liked his sermon. She replied, "You built quite a fine house, but you left out the foundation." How many are leaving out this blessed foundation today? They are innumerable, yet every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up, but those that he planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.

To return, it is a wonderful mercy if we can say that the law has brought us to the footstool of the Judge of all. We believe that all flesh will be brought before him, either now or hereafter. Looking back, some of us remember the

distress of soul we were suffering when awakened by Sinai's awful sound, when the commandment came with conviction from the Almighty. "We felt the arrow of distress, and found we had no hiding-place." It was Sinai's awful sound that made the earth to tremble and made sin exceeding sinful. The way many act, even those who talk of sin, show by their fruits that sin to them is not exceeding sinful, for they roll sin under their tongues as a sweet morsel. Dear brethren and friends, if we cannot do that the reason is plain, we have learned the bitterness of sin, and have seen Jesus die. The world cannot come in here, the Egyptians all went out when Joseph made himself known to his brethren. We can never weep for the afflictions of Joseph if we do not learn by his Spirit that we have sold and slain him. This is the place of his feet, at his cross, and they shall look on him whom they have pierced and mourn for him. The wounds of Jesus are very tender to the living in Zion, and we are certain of this: we cannot have sweet fellowship with Mary in washing her Savior's feet with her tears, if we think lightly of sin. Dear Joseph Hart sings:

"Behold that pale, that languid face,
That drooping head, those cold, dead eyes!
Behold in sorrow and disgrace,
Our conquering Hero hangs and dies!
Ye that assume his sacred name,
Now tell me, what can all this mean?
What was it bruised God's harmless Lamb?
What was it pierced his soul, but sin?
Blush, christian, blush, let shame abound;
If sin affects thee not with woe;
Whatever spirit be in thee found,
The Spirit of Christ thou dost not know."

All under the condemnation of sin are bound as in prison, and blind to any way of salvation for them, and it is the Spirit that reveals to them Jesus journeying that way. Mary washed his feet, because she had seen her own vileness, and by that could realize in her measure what his sufferings were and the rough road his feet had traveled to come to where she was. What an awful place for the feet of God's darling Son, yet he traveled in the greatness of his strength glorious in his apparel, "clothed in a body like our own." Think of it, he was marred more than any man, it was there he had to come, the almighty God, in the likeness of sinful flesh. This is where the greatness of redeeming love comes in, and it is here the Father by his eternal Spirit must bring us, the promised seed (just as Abraham brought Isaac up the mount to the place of sacrifice that God showed unto him), before ever we see the cruelty of sin, and the depth of the sufferings of Christ. It is there, and there only, we learn rightly, that it is through Jesus we have access by faith into the grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Although the halt, the maimed, the lame, the blind and the Gentile outcast, had no way of access to the altar in the temple of old, yet these are the very ones Jesus came to seek and to save. They are enabled by his Spirit to come boldly unto a throne of grace, and through the flesh of our glorious High Priest have entrance into the Holy of holies, which is heaven itself. There is not a place where his people go but he is with them, and the place of his feet is glorious. His presence, a fourth like unto the Son of God, was that which turned the furnace into a glorious place. We find Peter on the sea, sinking; but Jesus walked on the sea, and it was Jesus' hand alone that enabled Peter to walk with him there. He stands in the covenant of grace as our Surety, our Prophet, our Priest and our King. As our Priest, by one offering, even of himself, he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, forever doing away with Jewish offerings, and now there remains no more sacrifice for sin; so this man, because he continueth for ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. As a Prophet, his testimony swallows up all the testimony of the legal covenant, as Aaron's rod swallowed up the rods of Pharaoh's servants, and so wonderful is he that his word is forever settled in the heavens. As a King, he is firmly seated on the right hand of God, and shall reign till all his enemies be made his footstool. Now it is his presence in his people that makes the place

of his feet (the church) glorious. Paul says, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Again, he saith, "Christ in us the hope of glory." All his elect are glorified by his presence in them.

In the ordinances which he hath commanded them to observe, when they come telling their hopes and fears, what do the brethren look for? They desire to see if Jesus, the Shepherd of Israel, has brought his lambs to the fold. If he has, then the place of his feet will be glorious, the testimony will be of Jesus and his love. Jacob of old and Jacob today will both say, The Lord found me in a waste howling wilderness, and they will both bless the Lord because he journeyed that way. His sheep cannot be deceived by the crooked tracks of man, they know not the voice of a stranger, neither is there any track like His track, it is marked with blood, not like that of Abel's which cried from the ground for vengeance, but his blood speaketh peace with God to all those for whom he died. Are his children thinking of baptism? Why are they troubled about that? Is it not a despised ordinance? Has not the devil introduced a more accommodating substitute? It is because he has walked that way, and many times his saints have felt that place, for it was where his feet went, glorious. In his church there are those who by nature are like wolves, bears, lions or leopards, yet his presence walking their way makes them to be easily managed, so that a little child shall lead them. Yes, it is his presence that makes brethren tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven them. As he trod the wine press alone, so it is when we are alone that he comes, and what a blessed place that is. If we never go through the deep waters how can we possibly know of his glorious feet coming that way? Mountains are wonderful to behold, but the feet of man may stumble on the dark mountains, but not so with Jesus, for it is written, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings." Doctrine is good, but how beautiful to see the feet of the Lord there and to feel that he trod that way for us. No wonder at times one can sing,

> "If on my face, for thy dear name,
> Shame and reproaches be;
> All hail reproach, and welcome shame,
> If thou'lt remember me."

Every time he appears prisons will palaces prove, and poor perishing sinners are lifted up and set among princes. In the den of lions, he stops their mouths, and such a place is glorious.

In conclusion, the church, because of what the Lord Jesus has done, sends forth a sweeter fragrance than Lebanon ever did, in the humility, meekness, gentleness, forbearance, brotherly love, faith, hope and charity, which proclaims, even in this dark day, that Jesus has made the place of his feet glorious.

(Editorial by Elder George Ruston March, 1931.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Dearly Beloved Brethren: — In the second epistle addressed by the apostle Peter to those who had obtained like precious faith with himself, and all the apostles of the blessed Lord through the righteousness of God and the Saviour Jesus Christ, he said in the beginning of the third chapter that one subject which he had in view in writing both of his epistles to them was to stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance, that they might be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandments of the apostles of the Lord and Saviour. Three times in the first chapter of this epistle he uses the word "remembrance," declaring first, that he will not be negligent to put them in remembrance of these things; second, that he thought it meet to so do as long as he was in this tabernacle; and third, that he thus endeavored to do that they might have these things in mind after his departure.

Paul in both of his epistles to Timothy also exhorts him to be careful to put the brethren in remembrance of the things of which he is speaking, and Jude likewise declared that he desired that his brethren might have the things of which he wrote in remembrance; and it is manifest that to this end the apostles both wrote and preached the word again and again to the churches and brethren.

From all these scriptural examples and testimonies it appears to us that we have full warrant for the writing of such letters as this for all personal correspondence with regard to the things of God among brethren, and for spreading abroad the teachings of the word of God through the press, or in any other way by which we may communicate one with another, which things we have learned by the teaching of the Spirit, and have seen recorded in the Bible, which is the revealed word of God to us. It surely is important that we all give heed to the word of the Lord by the prophet, saying, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." It has been the glory of the church of God in all ages that they have demanded a "Thus saith the Lord," written in plain terms in the Bible for all that they believe and practice.

For the past few centuries this has been one particular thing which has distinguished the people known as Baptists, and now, in the past seventy-five years, this has been specially insisted upon by all those known as Old School Baptists, or as Primitive Baptists, in this land. But as the people of God are still in the flesh, that flesh which lusts against the Spirit, so that they cannot do the things that they would, they are often prone to forget the word of the Lord, and that they have been purged from their old sins and that they are now the Lord's, being bought with a price, and therefore ought to always glorify God in their body and spirit, which are the Lord's; and for this reason, in infinite pity and love to them, the blessed Lord has ordained pastors, teachers, evangelists and other gifts for their instruction and to put them in remembrance of these things, together with the ordinances of his house, such as prayer, singing, baptism and the supper. In all these things the blessed Lord has remembered his chosen in mercy, and in these things he has designed to come to them in blessing. We all know that again and again has the preaching of the word, praying in the spirit and singing with the spirit, together with the administration of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper, been blessedly applied to our souls, so that we have thereby grown in knowledge and understanding of the word, and have felt our hearts and thoughts lifted above the things of time and sense and fixed upon things above; there can not be a greater blessing than this.

All these things are but putting us in remembrance of the things which are first written in the Bible, and then, as we trust, written in our minds and hearts; and because the people of God realize with sorrow their proneness to forget the truths revealed in them they count it a blessed thing to be put in remembrance again and again of them. The Lord's people, one and all, can say of a truth, I love to hear preaching that tells me of my faults. Seeing and hearing their faults they come to rejoice in that preaching which sets forth Jesus as the sum of the gospel and the only name whereby any are saved. Of all these things the apostle desired to remind his brethren, and of all these things the brethren desire to be reminded. There is welcome in all such hearts for the blessed word of salvation and deliverance and also for the word of exhortation that they walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called.

But the special things of which the apostle was here writing embraced, beside that which pertains to a personal experience of salvation, references to wicked men and wicked deeds of men. The apostle here describes the condition of the ungodly, who know not God, as

well as the hope set before the saved in Christ. He speaks of false professors and false teachers who speak great swelling words of vanity. Of these teachers he would have his brethren beware, lest they be led away and forsake their steadfastness in the faith and order of the house of God. It was needful that the pure minds of the brethren should be stirred up by way of warning against that which was evil, as well as with regard to the faith and order of the house of God. Not only would he seek to guide their feet in the way of peace, but also to point out the ways of error; not only would he point out those who truly worship God in spirit and in truth, but also those who professed to know God and did not. It seemed needful in his view to declare that which was contrary to God and to Christ as well as that which is approved of God. We say that it seemed needful in his view to do this, and this means that it was needful in the sight of God also, by whose inspiration the apostle wrote all these words.

Nothing is unimportant in the Bible, which, we must not forget, is God's book. There is not one word in the Bible which God would not have there, and that which he places there cannot be of little or no importance. The world, that is, the religious world to-day, counts the teaching of the Bible as of little force unless it agrees with their boasted reasonings. We all, for many years, have been accustomed to hearing such expressions as this concerning some portions of the word: That is impossible to understand; Why dwell upon deep things when there is so much in the Bible that is plain? But when we come to examine this apparent solicitude for the simple, plain things, we always find that it arises out of hatred of the strong statements of doctrine in the word. It is nearly always the very plainest statements of truth in the word which are by these false teachers declared to be hard to be understood. As Old School Baptists our people have always protested against such teaching as this. The people of God claim and assert that not one word of God is in vain. It has been and is their faith that when the Holy Spirit takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto any one, that one will see that all the Scriptures say is real and vital, and there will be begotten in that soul a great reverence for every word that is in the Bible. All that our God has given his inspired servants to write is and must be true. It must be true that Satan said just what he is recorded in the book of Job as having said. It must be true that Job's friends said just what they are recorded to have said. The historical statements in the Old Testament concerning Israel and concerning the heathen nations round about them, must be just as narrated there. The words of Satan and of the friends of Job were not true, they were not God's words, but they were said just as is recorded. The writer was inspired, so that the words which he wrote should declare the exact facts.

Now while we insist that it will not do for men to treat any portion of the word as being trivial, and not to be regarded or preached, let as also beware lest we fall into the same error. There is absolutely nothing in the Bible that is not important to be considered and that ought not to be preached faithfully by faithful men. It is as important, for instance, that the first three chapters of Romans should be presented as that the rest of the epistle should be insisted upon in our preaching. It is as important to preach the total depravity of all men as it is to preach the perfect righteousness of Christ. It is as important to preach the fact that sin is in the world, and that death comes as the penalty of sin, as it is to preach that there is righteousness in our Lord Jesus Christ, and life through that righteousness. It is as important to proclaim the penalty of sin as it is to proclaim that there is salvation in the Lord. It is as important to declare that election means nonelection as it is to preach election. If it be important to preach salvation from death and hell, from final destruction and everlasting punishment, secured to the elect through the finished work of

Christ, it is also important to declare that all others are left to this destruction and this punishment; it is as much the word of God that the wicked go away into everlasting punishment as that the righteousness are received into everlasting life. The only way in which we can come to know either of these truths is because it is in the testimony. If it be in the testimony of God, then it is important, and if the revealed word of God has declared either of these things then we are to receive them with reverence, and to talk about them, to teach them and to preach them, that the pure minds of the brethren be stirred up to remember them.

The servants of God are to preach the gospel; but to preach the gospel is to preach salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ; this is the gospel. But what are men saved from, and what are they saved to? It is a truth beyond all controversy that no man can preach the gospel without also pointing out the law. No man can proclaim a finished righteousness without pointing out why there must be such a righteousness. If it be declared that the gospel reveals such a righteousness, it must also be pointed out that the law of God demanded it. Our failure under the law must be pointed out, if the gospel of the finished and perfect work of Jesus is to have any meaning to us; and when it is preached that men are saved, it must also be declared that they are saved from sin, death and hell. The full glory of salvation cannot be understood, only as we come to see the things and the state from which we are saved. As sin becomes magnified in our view, so will salvation from that sin become magnified. If the penalty for our sins is presented to our view, then our salvation from that penalty will be magnified; and how wonderful will that salvation appear when we come to remember that it is not only from present condemnation and sorrow, but also from everlasting punishment.

The preaching of the gospel will take in all these things, and all that the Bible teaches. It cannot be reiterated too often, "To the law and to the testimony;" and when we remind the brethren of the testimony of the word of God, with regard to anything that is presented there, we are calling their attention to the things which concern them. The fallen and lost state of mankind concerns them, for they were by nature children of wrath even as others are. When we preach that they are redeemed from sin, death and hell, this also concerns them, for without election and redemption in Christ they would have abided in sin, death and hell forever; and when we declare that the unredeemed portion of mankind do still abide in sin and death, and that they shall be everlastingly punished, we are simply pointing out that from which saints are saved. By all these reminders the pure minds of believers are stirred up to greater thankfulness and wonder; and seeing their own lack of merit over others who perish they will say again and again,

"What was there in you that could merit esteem,
Or give the Creator delight?
'Twas even so, Father, you ever must say,
Because it seemed good in thy sight."

But after all, surely it is not needful to reason upon these things; it is sufficient for every good minister that he finds any truth declared in the Bible. He knows that the truth cannot be of little importance, and that if God declared it, and inspired prophets and apostles preached and wrote it, he must not say it is unimportant.

That natural religionists make use of any truth and abuse it, is a still greater reason why believers in the Lord should hold to that truth and not abuse it. If men hold the truth in unrighteousness, this furnishes all the greater reason why believers should steadfastly hold to and contend for the truth in righteousness. Some men pervert the doctrine of predestination and seek to take shelter behind it when they sin, saying it was predestinated and they could not help it, and therefore are not to be blamed. Shall we therefore fail to preach this glorious doctrine? Some men have per-

verted the doctrine of election, seeking to justify themselves in their careless life by it. Shall we therefore fail to proclaim it and to show that in it is all the hope of right living that any sinner can have? Some men pervert the doctrine of the everlasting punishment of the wicked, especially those who are called revivalists, seeking to frighten men into a profession of religion that they may thus escape and be saved. Because men thus pervert the truth embraced in the teaching of the Bible regarding this doctrine shall we fail to insist upon it, that the people of God may be stirred up to still more gratitude, love and praise for sovereign mercy? Rather, concerning all these principles of truth, the fact that men pervert them furnishes all the greater reason why men of God should proclaim them, setting them forth in their true light as reasons for praise, love and obedience to that God who has done such great things for us and has had such compassion upon us.

Following the words quoted at the beginning of this letter, the apostle also said to his brethren that one reason why he thus wrote them was that in the last days scoffers should come, walking after their own lusts, and denying the simple teachings of the word. Lest his brethren should be ensnared by such falsehoods, it was needful that these principles of truth should be firmly impressed upon their minds, and so in both epistles he wrote of them. In like manner did Paul in all his epistles and in all his ministry. So did the Master teach his disciples by parables, and in all other ways. To this end the people of God are enjoined not to forsake the assembling of themselves together, and not to fail to speak one to another and stir each other up by exhortation. That we may thus do is the chief object of these meetings which we call associations, and they are profitable to us just so far as we are reminded in them of the words of God, spoken by the prophets and apostles as recorded in the word.

Now, dear brethren, in all your gatherings from day to day, and from week to week, for the worship of God publicly and in your homes socially, may this blessing abide with you, that the name of the Lord may be magnified among you.

D. M. Vail, Moderator
Cyrus Risler, Clerk
Wm. Hobensack, Assistant Clerk

(The above was written by Elder Chick and was the Circular Letter of the Delaware River Association of 1908)

OBITUARIES

AZARIAH HUTCHINS MASSEY

On March 15, 1967 God saw fit to remove from us our highly esteemed brother, Azariah Hutchins Massey, at the age of 70 years, 11 months, and 11 days.

He united with the church at Bush Arbor at her June meeting, 1916. At the time of his departure he was the oldest male member of the church. Brother Massey was highly respected not only by the church, but held many highly respected positions, having served as chief of police at Mebane, N. C. and Gibsonville, N. C. He also served as deputy sheriff of Alamance County for some years. Brother Massey was a veteran of World War I. All these positions of trust he served faithfully.

His suffering was of long duration, but without complaining. He spent much of his time in singing the old hymns of Zion and talking of the goodness and mercy of God. We feel that our loss is his gain. May each of us say "The Lord has given, the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

Brother Massey leaves to mourn his departure his wife, Mrs. Nannie Byrd Massey; one daughter, Mrs. Willard Walker, Route 3, Mebane, N. C.; three sons, Empson T. Massey, Roanoke, Va., Monroe H. Massey, Route 1, Yanceyville, N. C. and Willie F. Massey, Route 3, Burlington, N. C.; 11 grandchildren, 2 great-grandchildren, five sisters, 4 brothers, and a host of other relatives and friends.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder W. C. King, assisted by Elder E. F. Oakley at Bush Arbor Church where a large crowd of his friends had gathered with the family to pay their respects to one they loved. His body was laid to await the coming of Christ in the church cemetery beneath a floral offering seldom excelled.

May God's richest blessing be upon Sister Massey and all the family, and a copy of this memorial be sent to the family, a copy sent to the Signs and a copy be filed on our church record book.

Done by order of Bush Arbor Church at her

July meeting, 1967.

W. C. King, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

JAMES MONROE BAKER

The spirit of Brother Baker was called home to be with God on April 19, 1967, at the age of 63 years.

He united with the church at Bush Arbor on September 7, 1963, and attended the meetings regularly as long as his health would permit. His body was laid to rest at Mt. Zion Church to await the coming of Christ who shall change this mortal body to that of immortality.

Brother Baker leaves a wife, Margaret Tingen Baker; four daughters, 4 sons, his mother, Mrs. Nannie Warren Baker; one sister, six brothers, and a host of other relatives and friends.

Brother Baker's funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder W. C. King, assisted by Mr. John Wiley and Mr. James White.

May God's grace be upon all that mourn his departure. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." Be it resolved by this church that we bow in humble submission to God's will and that a copy of this memorial be sent to the family, a copy sent to the **Signs** for publication, and a copy be spread on our church record book.

Done by order of Bush Arbor Church at her regular conference meeting in July, 1967.

W. C. King, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

JAMES HENRY NORRIS

The Lord of Heaven and of earth, at His own time and good pleasure has removed from our midst a very dear and faithful brother, James Henry Norris, who was born in Harnett County, N. C. June 29, 1877, and passed from this life February 14, 1967, making his stay here almost ninety years.

Brother Norris bore with much patience his severe afflictions in his last several years of life, and until the very last set his affections and love upon the church and God's mercies and love, as he steadfastly continued to stand for the sound doctrine, Salvation by the grace of God, and for that faith once delivered to the saints. He was baptized in the Primitive belief at Black River Church, Dunn, N. C. the third Sunday in June, 1922, by the late Elder W. G. Turner, and with the many doctrines preached in this world, yet he was unmoveable from that faith he was baptized in and was faithful to the church, always hoping for peace among the brethren, attending services until physical health failed him, and then at his bedside desired the word of God with prayer. And now we feel as the Apostle Paul described that assured and precious hope that brother Norris possessed, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved we have a building of God, an house, not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens." (2 Cor. 5:1) So we can feel assured that our loss is his eternal gain.

Brother Norris was married to Sarah Elizabeth Bass on April 12, 1903, who survives, and to this union were born seven children, five sons and two daughters, as follows, Carnice, Flonnie, Paul, Murphy, Alene, Belmon and Lathan. All of whom survive, together with twenty-two grandchildren. These are a wonderful family of children. It can be truthfully said they neglected not their father and kept in close touch with him, in his many years of severe afflictions and rendered every needed service that would be to his comfort and also to help their mother, who is much afflicted. She too is a wonderful mother in Israel, believing in a supreme God and has been faithful to every duty in life and still desires the word of God and prayer is well cared for by all her children. Much more could be said concerning this wonderful and God fearing family if space would allow.

Now to the bereaved family, you can rest assured that the once head of the family, is now resting from all his labors and his works do follow him.

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Church and all lovers of the truth bow in humble submission to the will of the great God and Creator of all things, who doeth his will in heaven and earth, And

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this memorial be recorded on the Church records, a copy sent to the family.

This done by order of the Black River Church in conference.

Elder C. D. Turner, Moderator
Sister Nettie Turlington, Clerk

WILLIAM R. CRATT

William R. (Billy) Cratt born in Martin County, North Carolina, February 29, 1887, passed from this life January 24, 1967.

He was married to Lella Bailey July 7, 1915. To this union were born eight children: Mrs. Lennie Burnette, Mrs. Verner Harrison and Seth W. Cratt, Bear Grass, N. C.; William D. and James W. Cratt, Robersonville, N. C.; Joseph D. Cratt, Williamston, N. C.; Luther M. Cratt, Cary, N. C.; and Mrs. Harvey Mathias, Albany, Georgia.

Brother Cratt joined the Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church on the third Sunday in

August, 1960, and was baptized the following Thursday, August 23, 1960, by Elder A. B. Ayers. Brother Cratt loved his church and manifested it in his quiet, gentle and humble manner, filling his seat whenever possible.

Funeral services were held January 26, 1967, at Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church by his pastor, Elder E. C. Harrison, assisted by Mr. Charlie Hamilton. He was laid to rest in the Cratt family cemetery.

We, the church at Bear Grass, bow in humble submission to God's will; and may He comfort the family in their great loss.

Done by order of conference on Saturday before the third Sunday in February, 1967.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Elmer B. Peel, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Now that it has been God's will to take from us our dear brother, Jimmy Harris, we desire to write this Respect.

Brother Harris was born November 2, 1893, and was 73 when he died. He joined the church August 1, 1963, along with his wife, and they were baptized together. He was faithful to the church, and attended as long as he was able. He enjoyed having the brethren visit him while he was sick. We believe it was a blessing when God's will was done in taking him out of his suffering. Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we send a copy of this Resolution to the family, place one on our church record, send one to the *Signs of the Times* and one to the *Landmark* for publication. May God reconcile his family in their loss, which we feel is his eternal gain.

Done by order of Conference at our May meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT
ELDER J. O. CONNER

We, the church at Mountain View, Floyd County, Virginia, bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, who called from our midst our dearly beloved pastor, Elder J. O. Conner, December 26, 1966. He had served this church twenty-one years.

With sadness we try to write a tribute to his memory, which will always linger in our hearts. We recall the last sermon he preached in the Mountain View pulpit: he said that his humble desire was that some of the younger brethren would be drawn in his footsteps; and this is our humble prayer also. He often quoted the following scripture, "Desiring to walk worthy of the vocation wherein ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness of heart."

He told us while in the hospital the first time that his love for the church was so great. He was so faithful to us. His passing was so painful to us, but God knew best. Our loss is his eternal gain.

"No more to sigh or shed tear,
No more to suffer pain or fear,
But God and Christ and heaven appear
Unto the raptured eye."

We mention the following in Elder Conner's call to the ministry: "Go preach the word I bid you preach." He humbly begged the Lord to take this burden from him, for he felt unqualified for the task to stand in that most sacred place. We feel that he was wonderfully blessed with power from on high.

May God bless and comfort his bereaved family, is our prayer.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be given to the family; one placed on our church records; and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference the 4th day of June, 1967.

Mrs. Ora Conner, Clerk

IN MEMORY OF THEIR PARENTS
WILLIAM A. AND LUTIE E. WOMACK

William Albert Womack was the oldest son of the late Newton R. and Ruth E. (Owen) Womack, and was born June 30, 1885, near Star City, Arkansas, and departed this life July 5, 1965, making his stay here eighty years.

Lillie E. (Wilkes) Womack was the daughter of the late James C. and Martha A. (Matthews) Wilkes, and was born May 1, 1886, near Star City, and passed away June 23, 1964, making her stay here more than seventy-eight years.

Our parents were married January 11, 1906, in the Wilkes' home. They spent their entire lives in Lincoln County, where father engaged in farming, and later as rural mail carrier. To this union six children were born, all surviving: W. C., Ellis, and Orville Womack, of Miami, Fla.; Mrs. Max Carter, DeSoto, Mo.; Mrs. Ferd LaRue, St. Louis; and Mrs. Havis Donaldson, Star City. Father was survived by three brothers and four sisters; mother by one brother. Surviving also are seventeen grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

Father united with the Predestinarian Baptists at Providence, in Lincoln County, in August, 1915, and was baptized by their es-

teemed pastor, Elder J. H. Blythe. In September, 1915, he was appointed church clerk, and served for about forty years. In September, 1922, he was ordained a deacon of the church. He was a strong believer in the true doctrine of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, upholding the church against deceivers. His trials were many, and at times the way seemed lonely, but his hope was in Jesus. He attended meetings of the true Old Baptists far and near as long as his health permitted. He gave the land where the church now stands on highway 81 at the edge of Star City. He loved to read the *Signs of the Times*, and to talk with people of the Old Baptist faith. When his eyes failed he was not able to read much, but his thoughts were on the church. His favorite song was,

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought:
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

He passed away suddenly at our home, and was laid to rest beside mother, in Holly Springs Cemetery July 7, 1965, with Elder David Turner, of Bastrop, La. conducting the service.

Mother was raised among the Old School Primitive Baptists. Her grandfather Matthews and great grandfather Cook were Old Baptist preachers. Elder Cook was one of the founders of Providence Church. Though mother did not unite with the church, she had a great love for the Old Baptists, and enjoyed having them visit in their home, and loved to attend the meetings. She was a strong believer in the truth of Salvation by Grace, and the sovereign mercy of God. She loved people, and helped care for several elderly people, including her mother and sister, who were helpless for several years.

Several strokes left mother helpless, and her suffering was great, but she never complained. She had confidence in her "Dr. Petty," whom she believed was given power to do all that could be done for her on earth; but her hope was in Him whom God raised from the dead. She quietly slipped away with her husband, doctor, children and others at her bedside. She was laid to rest in the Holy Springs Cemetery June 25, 1964, with Elder R. L. Miles conducting the service.

We are never ready to give up our loved ones, but we hope our loss is their eternal gain. We would not want them to suffer as they did in their last days.

A daughter,
Mrs. Havis Donaldson

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Joseph Addison Bird, of Hurricane, West Virginia, a faithful friend of the cause of Christ, and a true friend of Providence Primitive Baptist Church, was born April 3, 1881, a son of the late Joseph Bird and Elizabeth (Wiley) Bird, and fell asleep in Jesus March 7, 1967 — lacking one month of being 86 years old.

He was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone. Experimentally he had long since been weaned from trusting in the cursed arm of the flesh; and of a truth it can be said of him that his trust was implicitly settled in the mercy of a covenant keeping and Holy God; and the Lord Jesus Christ was his hope. He never felt worthy of asking for a home in the church, yet his faithfulness in attending meetings, and his concern and interest in the welfare of the cause, was and is a shining example for us who are reckoned as members, to desire to emulate.

On August 19, 1905, he was united in marriage to Malinda Mae Spears. Sister Bird died January 31, 1951. Left to mourn are three sons and seven daughters, a great number of grandchildren and several great grandchildren; and two brothers and two sisters. We at Providence Church shall be conscious of his empty seat, yet we feel that our loss is his eternal gain. Mr. Bird was a farmer during his active life, industrious, and lived an honorable life before men. There was a bond of closeness which cemented us together, and by the many sweet conversations with him I feel I know what he believed, and what was the ground of his hope.

We of Providence Church desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our great God in calling one we loved so well from our midst. At his request funeral services were conducted by the unworthy writer at the Providence Church house, near where he had spent his life, and where I humbly hope I was blessed to preach the doctrine he surely believed. Burial was in the Bird Cemetery beneath a mound of flowers, in hope of the resurrection of the dead.

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be tendered to the family, a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and a copy be filed in our Record book.

Done by order of Providence Church while in conference March 25, 1967.

May God visit the grace of reconciliation upon the bereaved family, and all who mourn.

In hope of that blessed immortality,
H. J. Bird

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 135 DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1967 NO. 10

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE ROBE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS
(Isaiah 61:10)

This is the robe the Saviour wrought
To cover all the elect;
He came to save them from their sins,
The sanctified to perfect.

By his obedience unto death,
He did weave "the best robe,"
The justifying righteousness
Of the saints on this globe.

It is their right and title to
Eternal life on high,
Where the Lamb in all his glory
They will for ever eye.

Jesus is the heavenly Lamb
The Lord Jehovah sent,
And in weaving the royal robe
His holy life was spent.

This robe is the wedding garment
That all the saints shall wear,
When rising from the tomb to meet
Their Saviour in the air.

O to see the King in his beauty,
And be for ever blest,
To behold the glittering bride,
And enjoy the promised rest!

"Give me the wings of faith to rise
Within the veil, and see
The saints above, how great their joys,
How bright their glories be."

The preceding verse of a song
Was once so sweet to me,
While en route to a certain city,
That tears of joy flowed free.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, North Carolina

"HE HATH SO FULFILLED"

Rt. 1, 1741 Davis Rd.
Maineville, Ohio

Dear Editors of the *Signs:*

I want to give some of my views on the scripture recorded in Acts 3:18, "But these things, which God had showed by the mouth of all his prophets that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled."

There are many references that may be brought in connection with this subject, but I will be brief so as not to take too much space. I believe Christ came into this world for a specific purpose, and it was written by the prophets what that purpose was. The sovereignty of God is not a popular doctrine, and is fought by arminians and free-willers; but those who hold to God's sovereignty are called a little flock, and it was the Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom, which is the church; and I believe, the Old Baptist Church. There are a few Old Baptists who have refused to join with the modern way of worship, and who have inquired for the old paths. They still sing the old songs of Zion, and preach the sovereignty of the all wise God.

To declare that God is sovereign, is to declare that he is almighty, the possessor of all power in heaven and in earth, so that none can defeat his counsel, prevent his purposes, or resist his will.

Peter said, "For a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy

counsel determined before to be done." (Acts 4:27, 28) This counsel was for a purpose, and the specific purpose was to save his people. This brings us to consider the fall of man: which I believe was included in the counsel. Some say that the law was given to be kept, and some say that Adam was able to stand but liable to fall, but I don't believe either is true. The law entered that sin might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. God's people, his elect, fell in Adam, and are totally depraved of will or power to recover themselves from their fallen state. Christ was set for that fall, and for someone to say that Adam could have stood, is denying the foreknowledge and counsel of God. The determined counsel of God was revealed to the prophets, and they wrote of the death and suffering of our Lord; and what his death, burial and resurrection would accomplish. And Christ fulfilled their prophecies to a jot and tittle.

In the 53rd chapter of Isaiah the prophet spoke as if the prophecies had already been fulfilled; and in the mind of God and according to his eternal decree, it had already been fulfilled. The prophet said, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows . . . He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." And this was before our Lord died upon the cross.

The angel of God was sent to Joseph in a dream, and spoke in harmony with the prophets, saying that Mary should bring forth a Son, and that his name shall be called Jesus, for he should save his people from their sins. Christ declared that he came down from heaven to seek and to save that which was lost. Primitive Baptists preach that Christ finished the work he came to do: he fulfilled the prophecies that were written of him.

No man has ever suffered as our Lord did. No man hath greater love than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. All of these things were spoken of by the prophets, even to the price of his betrayal.The poet wrote, "At his bitter groans all nature shook." The sun refused to shine on this faultless Lamb of God and see him die. These things were not by chance, but according to the determinate counsel of God; and were spoken of by the prophets beforehand. Christ said, "To this end was I born, and for this cause he came into the world." The cause was the everlasting love he had for his children: he was bearing their sins, paying the debt his children owed, making a complete atonement for them.

Brethren, he arose a conquering King over death, hell and the grave, having obtained eternal redemption for his people, and went back to the right hand of the Father, and is there making intercession for his people. My Father's children, I know you get down in the valley sometimes and feel so far from God, and feel that you haven't a friend on earth; but your eternal security is just as sure as God is. It makes me think of dark winter days: when the icy winds are so cold, and the sun was hidden by the dark clouds; but the sun was there, though you could not see it. When the season rolled around, the sun returned in his strength, and the dark clouds and icy winds were gone. Then we can witness with the prophet: the winter is gone for we have heard the voice of the turtle doves in our land. The dove represents the return of the Holy Spirit which drives the dark clouds from our skies; and it is then we can say with Job, "I know that my Redeemer lives."

I do not get to be with the church very often, since I have so far to go. This bothers me sometimes, and I think that if God has called me, surely I could get to go to see his people more often, and hear them praise his name. But I have a hope that in the near future I will be with the whole family, where there will be peace, with no more

sad separations, no more death; but eternal joy.

I believe God showed me in a dream, how it would be at his second coming. I dreamed I saw the sky divide, and He was sitting on something with his lift side to the world. I saw people everywhere I looked; and I knew in the dream that heaven was my home, and a voice spoke to me and said, You have had a hope; but now you know. I have heard men say that they had never been homesick enough to want to leave this world; but when I awoke I was homesick: I wanted to go on and be with the One I loved so much. Brethren and Sisters, how we ought to love one another. We are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. I love to see God's people live in peace. The Truth has never divided God's people, but it has always been false doctrine that causes them trouble. But the Lord said it would be that way.

Since my mind got on the troubles, fears and doubts we have while pilgrims here below, I got away from the subject; but Christ fulfilled all the prophecies concerning him, and what his mission here would accomplish. His work was decreed of God, and was carried out to the letter.

I read the *Signs of the Times* and read able men's writings, and while I can't write and use precious words with so much meaning as they can, I am glad I believe like they do. Some sweet day we will be taken home, to sing praise to the One we are now trying to serve. I love to hear from God's people; it lifts me up so much.

May God bless the Editors of the *Signs of the Times,* the readers of it, and all who believe this doctrine.

Your unworthy writer,
Garrett Wilson

"IT IS A FEARFUL THING TO FALL INTO THE HANDS OF THE LIVING GOD"
(Hebrews 10:31)

Dear Editors of the *Signs:*

When first of the mind to "Search the Scriptures," and these words of the Apostle confronted me, I was somewhat "stunned" mentally as it were, feeling to know that God was the very essence of love and mercy, and had purposed to do so much for his chosen ones. How could it be said that "It is a fearful thing to fall into his hands"? When thinking on it at times, I could never come to a fair understanding of it; but if not mistaken, some enlightenment has been given me, and I feel to write something on the Apostle's words, which we must note were written to the Hebrews, those followers of Christ who "had received the knowledge of the truth," which is to me, proof that the unregenerate, worldly people are not to be included in this group that will fall into God's hands. It is a Spiritual change. Naturally speaking, all earthly men are in God's hands as creatures he brought into existence, but in the sense of the Apostle's words, only the elect are to fall into God's hands. At the time of the Resurrection, the non-elect will be taken over by God, placed on his left hand to enter their eternal state of darkness. This is a separate and distinct kind of fall we have in mind here. As I am given to see it, the Apostle's mind was on this time world only, and not beyond it's ending at the second coming of Christ.

Treating on the salient words, FEAR, FEARFUL, AND FALL, let us notice that the Apostle said it was a FEARFUL thing, and not a horrible, or terrible catastrophic occurrence, but rather an anxious concern, or dread of being in the hands and power of an invisible Being. The FALL the Apostle had in mind, surely was that of passing somewhat suddenly, and passively, into a new state of body or mind by being acted upon and affected by an outside force or agency. Being born again, is to put it briefly. Does not the child of God, upon being born again, see his

awful sinful state and become fearful of what God may mete out to him, and he begs for mercy? This writer's experience witnesses to such. More later as to the continuing of fear in the life of God's chosen ones.

Turning to Genesis, we find the first FALL of man right at the beginning of his existence. Adam was created by God and in his power, but his — Adam's FALL — caused him to come into God's hands, in the sense of the Apostle's words. Adam and Eve saw their sinful and naked state only after their fall into his hands, and God clothed them in garments of skins, a symbol of righteousness. Now then, we see the FEARFUL thing come to pass, — they were driven out of the Garden of Eden, barring their entrance to it forever thereafter. They went out onto a ground cursed by God for their sake and were to eat of it in sorrow all the days of their lives, — Genesis 3:17. There is no doubt but that Adam had great and constant fear of God thereafter.

Now those coming soon after Adam, to fall into God's hands in the Spiritual sense, were possessed with fear, for we note in Genesis 20:11, Abraham said, "Surely the fear of God is not in this place." Verse 12, — "The Angel of the Lord said to Abraham, — "For now I know that thou fearest God." On throughout the Old Testament, there are many references to God's chosen ones being fearful, so it is evident that those of olden times feared the Lord. David said in Proverbs 1:7 — "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." Can any of the Lord's little ones say now that David's words are not true? Did any of us (if I am one) have any of that knowledge hidden from the wise and prudent, but revealed to babes, until and after we had fallen into the hands of the Lord and made fearful of his power, and what should be our lot IF justice were meted out to us? Have we not diligently and fearfully sought after more understanding and knowledge and assurance that we are His, being made to doubt and fear we are not many, many times?

Surely the Apostle's experience of falling into God's hands, caused him to know of what he spoke, or wrote. Being blinded for a time, and not knowing if his eyesight would ever return, was a most fearful occurrence to him. On thru his life and ministry, the stripes, months of imprisonment, sufferings and discomfort, was truly a fearful thing. Any of us today would dread and fear to go thru that which he did. Note that in I Cor. 2:3 he wrote, — "And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." We see that the word TREMBLING had been added to the word FEAR. In Ephesians 6:5, he wrote, — ". . . With fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ."

Back to this fear and trembling continuing with his elect, throughout this lifetime. It was God's will and design that they should be poor and afflicted people:

"Poor and afflicted, Lord are thine,
Among the great, unfit to shine,"

and subject to be left alone, as it were, for a spell, causing them mental anguish and fear. Witness the words and pleadings of David when in this state of helplessness. Psalm 6 sets forth his awful plight. "Return, O Lord, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake," recorded in 4th verse. Many other similar sayings are among his writings. Fear was experienced by the hymnist who wrote :

"I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

There is another type of fear, or state of anxiety and fearfulness among the elect, if I am one of them, and given to see aright. When we view the multitude of worldly people going along content with the pleasures and treasures of the world and "There is no fear of God before their eyes." (Romans 3:18) And among them are our dear loved and close ones, showing no

evidence the Lord has begun a good work in them, we are of a fearful and anxious mind about them. We greatly fear they may never "Fall into the hands of the Living God." We must go on, hoping and praying that their names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life, to be revealed to them in due time. Lastly, those who have fallen in the hands of the Living God, when meditating upon the Scriptures depicting the second coming of Christ after the terrible days — the very last days and hours of this time world, and we see, in our mind's eye, all this taking place, do we not become exceedingly filled with "fear and trembling" and asking ourselves, "Am I His or am I not?"

Even in this present day, are we not filled with fear and trembling over the present state of the world that is so near to an Atomic and Hydrogen bombing war, which, if it happens, could be the "beginning of the end" of this world?" It has been the mind of those knowing the capabilities of the destructive power ready to be released, that such a war would almost decimate mankind from this world, or leave the world in such a state as to be uninhabitable by mankind.

Then are not the elect truly thankful that they fell into the hands of the Living God, and that all the fear, anxiety, trembling, afflictions, sorrow and travail of this worldly life, are but trivial and of no moment as compared to the priceless treasures and glory of his love and mercies to usward. How happy and thankful are those who have, by and thru the will and mercy of a God of Love, fallen into his Holy and Powerful Hands. I hope and pray that I am one of them.

Wm. O. Hall
P. O. Box 595
Mt. Vernon, Wash. 98273

THE LIGHTS OF HOME

(Dedicated to Mrs. Elizabeth Holloway, Snow Hill, Maryland)

Many years ago, soon after I finished school, I went to visit my brother in a strange city fifteen hundred miles from my home. I had very little money and it was decided that I should stay for a right long while, get a job and save enough money to pay my way home; which I did. It was a very pleasant city and the inhabitants were very friendly, although only a few spoke my language. But as time went on, I made many fine friends, got a fairly good job, took some interesting trips; and altogether, I was happy there and would have liked to stay, except for one thing: frequently I would feel a tugging at my heartstrings and a longing for home. I received messages from my parents which made me long to see them face to face. Time passed, and finally, a message came from my parents, telling me I had stayed long enough and that I must prepare to come home. The day came to leave and many of my friends assembled at the station to bid me farewell. A few of them wept because they expected we should see each other no more. The train moved and I was on the way to my home.

Sometimes along the way, there would be delays and I would become impatient, but in each case the train conductor, who for some unexplainable reason seemed to have a liking for me, assured me that, although the hours seemed long and tedious to me, I would arrive home at the appointed time. Finally, the timetable and my watch informed me that I was approaching the end of my journey. It was night and very, very dark, but suddenly in the distance, I began to see lights — oh, such beautiful lights. In the cities through which I had passed, I had seen lights, many lights, but never any like these, so soft, so inviting, but so steady and so very bright. No lights I had ever seen compared with these, for these were "the lights of home." As the train slowed down, I could see through the window the dear faces I had wanted so long to see, the faces of my dear parents with arms wide open to welcome me home — and I was satisfied.

A long time ago now, unless the wicked one has been permitted to deceive me utterly, an Unseen Person led me to, and placed me upon a road — a road which will take me to my eternal home, where, unless deceived, I shall see my blessed heavenly Parent face to face. I am now a pilgrim on that road, often weary; the end of which may be only a few steps ahead. The timetable and my watch inform me that I am approaching the end of my journey. Sometimes, I receive messages from my heavenly Parent which make me long to see him as He is, face to face. One of these days, I shall receive a message telling me I have stayed long enough in this strange land; and I shall bid my friends farewell and fly away home. When I approach the homeland, the light will be very bright because my Blessed Redeemer is the light of that city. My eyes, undimmed by tears or clouds, will see Him face to face, and I, who am now so stained by sin, shall be spotless like Him, and I shall be satisfied.

Sometimes, I become impatient, but my heavenly Conductor, whose great and unexplainable love for me has guided me all the way, assures me I shall arrive home at the appointed time. I am persuaded that on the other side of the great river which separates this strange land and me from my eternal home, I shall behold my Heavenly Parent there to welcome me home.

This strange land I now inhabit becomes increasingly strange. Fewer and fewer there be who speak my language. But just one thing enables me to press forward: in the distance, sometimes very bright, sometimes very, very dim, sometimes near and sometimes far, far away, I believe I discern through the darkness of the night *The Lights of Home.*

Mildred V. Dykes
1114 Mount Hermon Road
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

THINGS HID FROM THE WISE AND PRUDENT

3514 Oscar Avenue
Ft. Worth, Texas 76106

Dear Editors of the *Signs:*

I know my subscription is past due, and I appreciate your sending it on to me. I enjoy reading it very much. I haven't been doing so well lately, but through the mercy and grace of an all wise God I am back on my feet again.

I have a few things on my mind this morning that I would like to write, if the Lord is willing. The scriptures I have in mind are:

"As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that which ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Galatians 1:9-12)

As I read this scripture this morning, I thought of the many smart men in this world with high standards of education, and classed as Doctors of Divinity, who know so little about the Bible and the teaching of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is a wonderful thing to know that these things are hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. They do not believe in the God that I hope I believe in. Their God has to be let before he can do anything. The God that I hope to believe in has all power in heaven and on earth, and no man can stay his hand. He is a God of wisdom, power, truth and love. He declared the end from the beginning, from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying his counsel should stand, and he would do all my pleasure.

The Apostle Paul in writing the above scriptures, was made to believe

that all wisdom comes from above; and all the teaching he had received of men, availed him nothing. He was a chosen vessel of God, and was not one of those forgers of lies, or physicians of no value that Job sopke of. It gives me much comfort when I read of Paul's trials, and of his trying to reach perfection — which he could not do. When he prayed to God to remove the thorn from his flesh, the messenger of Satan, God answered him and said, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

May the God of all grace have mercy upon all of you, if it be his will. The writings of you editors have been wonderful. Ford Wall of the Sulphur Fork Association lives here in Fort Worth: we have been having some very nice visits.

We have a scripture we would like for some of you to write on, if you have a mind to: Revelation eleventh chapter, concerning the two witnesses. We would appreciate anything you might have on this scripture.

Enclosed you will find my remittance.

Your brother I hope,
U. V. Wallace

Check, Virginia
January 1, 1959

"Confess your faults one to another."

Dear Brethren in the Lord:

As this scripture has been on my mind for some time, I desire to write a few lines concerning it, hoping that it may find witness in your hearts.

I call your attention that it does not say confess someone else's faults. When I am conscious of my own faults, they are so many that I cannot see another's faults; but one of my biggest faults is that I can't see my own at all times. With the carnal mind I serve the law of sin; and when I am in this state of mind, I find myself trying to find faults in someone else.

I believe the Apostle Paul was a witness to these things, and made confession of them in the 7th chapter of Romans. If I am not deceived, I am a true witness of them — not because the Apostle said so, or someone preached it that way, but by the Lord making it manifest, or revealing it unto me. With the Apostle, "I was not taught it of man, neither received it of man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Now I refer to the 14th verse of the 7th chapter of Romans. I am not using this scripture to try to justify myself, or use it as a blind to hide behind, for we have no cloak for our sins: "For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin." What did he mean when he said he was carnal, sold unto sin? He was speaking of the "old man." The carnal mind of the flesh, is the same.

Elder J. O. Conner

(Elder Conner, now deceased, wrote the above January 1, 1959.)

SOURCE OF COMFORT

109 W. Vine Street
Salisbury, Md. 21801

Dear Editors:

Again I am writing to renew my subscription for two years. Enclosed you will find a check for eight dollars; please use the three dollars as you see fit.

The *Signs of the Times* are a great source of comfort at our house. When we have finished with them, I pass them on to a dear sister in the church who does not get them. She lives alone, a widow, and seems to appreciate them so much. Then when she is through with them, I pass them on to a friend who attends our church. He returns them back to me: I do like to keep them.

I have most of my father's copies. As far back as I can remember they have been in my family. I do not want to think of being without them.

Hoping the Lord will continue to bless

you editors to write the comforting truth.

In bonds of love I beg to remain.

Mrs. Ruby E. Parsons

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 2, Box 134,
Meadows of Dan, Virginia 24120

Dearly Beloved:

For some time I have been thinking of writing some of my experiences, and if you think suitable, to publish in the **Signs of the Times.** I hope I am not deceived, or will deceive anyone in this matter, for I have learned it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. These things are very precious to me.

I would like first to mention some things in my early life: When around ten years of age I went to a baptizing, and as these two people were led in the water, I saw so much beauty around, and it seemed I was being lifted on high; and I became afraid and held my mother's hand tightly — afraid I would be raised off the ground, and never come back. This feeling stayed with me until they came out of the water; and I didn't know what all this meant.

After growing into womanhood and marrying, we would take our two children and go to the movies. Upon returning home one night I suddenly became very ill, and after getting out of the car, I told my husband I was dying, and I sank to the ground. He broke off some wet leaves and was washing my face with them. I said in my heart, Lord if you will let me live, I will never go back to that place again; and I soon regained strength to ride home.

I had never attended a "holiness" meeting or a tent meeting where they rolled on the ground. One came to our vicinity, and my husband telling me how they acted, I decided to go and see for I could not believe him. Before the meeting was half over, I arose and said, "Let's get out of here." Everybody was staring at me, but I did not care. I got out of there; and my husband told me I acted awfully bad. I thought if God would let me get out of that place alive, I would never go again.

These are a few of my actions while a child and a young woman. The first time I saw myself a sinner, was when Elder Garland Allen was preaching, when he said, "If the love of God has been planted in your heart, you won't be found in the worldly places." O! dear ones, here is the place where the pain began in my heart. It seemed a knife was thrust through it, and left its cutting mark that I was a sinner. I had quit attending the worldly places, and thought I had become better all the time; but his words were like a sharp knife cutting in my heart. I began to mourn over my condition; and as would hear the turtle dove call, I would cry because I was a sinner, and couldn't help myself. I thought she was calling for her mate to come to her, and I was mourning for someone to erase the sins from my heart. But where could I go? My husband was no help; there was no help, for my sins were many. Now we had lost two little baby girls, one at six months and the other at birth. Both of them were afflicted . . . I began to think these two were sent to us and were afflicted for something sinful I had done. I finally asked my dear father-in-law, Elder Lee Spencer, if I had done anything wrong for these two little babies to be sent this way. He read the verses in the Bible (John 9: 2-3) where Jesus was asked, "Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither . . . but that the works of God should be made manifest in him."

This relieved me for a while. At times I went still grieving because I was a sinner, and couldn't help myself. I finally decided to get a job and work away from home. While at work I would try to pray for myself and all the family. Sometimes I tried to be jolly and gay, but my grieving would return; and I would think I had done more sinning in trying to be gay. I was taken suddenly

ill in the night, and was taken to the hospital, where I learned I had gallstones and would have to undergo surgery. By next morning I was better, and told my nurse I wasn't going to have the operation, and was going home. I felt it would be my appointed time to die on the operating table. But the doctor said I needed the operation badly; and I finally said alright. I thought it was appointed once to die, and after death the judgement. I didn't fear death, but the judgement; for I knew Hell would be my doom. But I felt to know that if my soul were sent to Hell, it would be His just and holy will to do with me as He pleased, for I was such a sinner.

But the night before the operation a calmness came in the room and surrounded my bed, and was with me all night. I didn't fear the operation; and to my amazement, I found myself back in bed, and my husband by the bed weeping, for I had written him my last letter before going to surgery. I had surely thought I would see him no more, and wrote telling him some of my feelings and of my love for him. He was reading my letter and weeping when I awoke. I improved fast and went back to work; but my mourning returned, and I would walk out among the trees, refusing to have lunch with any of the friends I worked with. I had heard a rumor that I was losing my mind, and my girl friend became upset over my condition, and couldn't understand why I would not eat with her at lunch. But I couldn't tell her why, for I was such a sinner I did not want to make her sinful for being with me. Sometimes I would have to stop when driving home from work, because tears dimmed my eyes. I had the worst of all diseases — I was a sinner and could get no help from a doctor, or anyone else.

One night I had laid down to die; I felt that when morning came, my husband would find me dead beside him. But in the middle of the night a great pain engulfed my body, and I knew it was the death angel, and I must die. Something seemed to say to me, Arise and prepare to meet thy God. So I got up; and my husband asked me what was wrong. I told him I had to go out and meet the Lord; and asked him to help me get ready. I wanted to look as good as I could, thinking maybe the Lord would have mercy on me. I had made a new black dress, which had never been worn. I told my husband it just suited my black sinful soul; and combing my hair and putting on the black dress, I went out through a roadway and came to some rough old boards stacked about two feet high. I fell across them, and cried with a loud voice, Oh! Lord have mercy on me; a vile sinner is pleading for mercy.

I do not know how long I laid there, but it seemed a great power came down, and a beautiful light fell around me, and I found myself back near my home, walking among the flowers and holding the blooms in my hands. They all looked pure as gold, and I was praising my God. My burden of being a sinner was gone; and I thought gone forever. I had no burden now, for a powerful operation had been performed, and no man had done anything to help me. I knew God had done it all.

I felt better for a few days, but on lying down one night, something said, You have been deceived: you are yet a sinner. I began to feel troubled, and a cross appeared before me, and I could see people placing a man on it, which I thought was Jesus; and I felt myself being lifted and placed there with him, and nails were driven through our hands and feet. But I did not feel any pain; and I was amazed, because Jesus was bearing all the pain for me, and I was not suffering any; but I knew he was. We were raised up and the cross stood up with us on it. I thought this surely showed me that He died for me and suffered for me; and gave me a blessed hope that I would be raised with him when he comes for his precious jewels.

Now the command soon came, to go home to thy friends and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you. No, I would never do this, for I would bring a reproach on the people I loved.

I dearly loved the Old Baptist preachers, and thought the members were verily saints; and I surely wouldn't bring a reproach on them by offering. I was not worthy to have a home with them. But the command would come back, to go to the church . . . I became so troubled that I drove to Elder Sam Terry's home, and told Sister Terry I was afraid I was going to die, and afraid I would not live to be a mother to my children, but that I was trying to pray to live, but couldn't join the church for I was a sinner yet. She told me they felt to be sinners also; and I said that I did not think they took sinners in. She said that's exactly the way the true children join the church.

I came home, and went to my praying place in the woods, and tried to pray for the Lord to take my life so I wouldn't join the church. But to my surprise, I lived on, and tried to offer, but couldn't: until one Saturday meeting I went and had no thought of offering that day, but when the doors of the church were opened for the reception of members, I fell on the back of the seat in front of me weeping, and asking for a home in the church, telling them some of my experiences; and they received me into the church. I had dreamed there was a congregation assembled at the water where I was baptized, and I was on the bank looking down in this pure water, and that no one was worthy to go in that beautiful water and pollute it. It was exactly as I had dreamed when I got to the stream to be baptized. I stood with tears in my eyes, for I knew I was still unworthy, and I felt weak and hardly able to stand, wanting a sign to show me that I wasn't deceiving these people. As I was led in the water by our feeble pastor, the weakness left me . . . On coming out of the water, all the people looked like their faces had bright lights shining in them.

I would like to refer you to the dream that is printed in the June, 1966, issue of the **Signs**, which was given me a little while after being baptized, which is very precious to me. Many times I have gone to the church thinking I would ask them to take my name off the church book; but so far my mouth has been closed. . . . Here is one that mourns over her sinful ways yet, and from day to day I am made mindful that I cannot direct my own way. I have heard it said that certain persons won't do this and that. Pray tell me dear ones, does anyone know the appointed way a person will take or go? I tell you over and over that no one knows what a person will do but our Almighty and Holy God. He knows every step we will take, and has always led his little children in a way they know not. I hope I shall be blessed to believe this wonderful truth as long as I remain here; and hope to hear it preached over and over by the Lord's servants.

When it comes the appointed time for me to leave this world, I just hope that God has prepared a little place for me, and if it is not in His presence, it will have to be just as God forsaw it and and fixed it before I was born.

Only a lump of clay,
Mrs. Lewis (Pauline) Spencer

2059-A Oakridge Drive,
Charleston, W. Va. 25311

Dear Editors:

I see my subscription expires with the May issue, so am sending check for two years' renewal.

I enjoy reading the paper, and look forward to receiving each issue. May God bless each one of you, and always enable you to set forth the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. He that climbeth up some other way is a thief and a robber. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Our salvation is of the Lord and not of ourselves, lest any man should boast. In him, through him, and by him is our hope. I feel to be the very least of all His saints, if one at all; and am very unworthy to even speak his name. All things are to his glory forever.

My thanks, I hope, is to the Almighty, Living God for enabling you to print the paper, and also enabling me to receive it.

A little sister in hope,
Nancy Clay

ENJOYS THE SIGNS

Rt. 3, Box 180
Crossett, Arkansas, 71635

Dear Editors:

I see my subscription is due, and I don't want to miss any of the **Signs.** I enjoy reading the experiences of those whom the Spirit has visited; and I enjoy the Editorials and the **Voices of the Past.** Just wish I could express my feelings as well as others can; but God does not give us the same talents.

It is wonderful to know that One who is all powerful and rules over us to keep us in his will. Man devises his ways but God directs his steps. We are in no way our own keeper. I am glad that I have a hope in God who is all powerful and able to keep those who are predestinated to eternal life before the beginning of time. I am glad to know that I am a sinner, because Jesus came to save sinners, (not the righteous,) from their sins. I can say with Paul that I am the chiefest of sinners; and without a hope in Jesus Christ, I would be of all people most miserable. Sometimes I feel that I can't go on under my burden; then again I feel to possess a hope of eternal life: then my spirits are light and I want to sing praises to the most High God, who has blessed me so greatly.

May the Lord enable you to keep up the good work.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Lela Mae Flemister

EXPERIENCE

Route 1, Box 52
Wirtz, Va. 24184

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

If the Lord will bless me and guide me to do so, I will try to write some of my travels and experience in my life. First, I seemingly have lived in fear, even when I was growing up I had a fear of having some type of disease or dying; and what would happen to me if I did. I don't feel to be the worst sinner in the world as some confess to be though I know that I and all are sinners in the sight of God. It seems that the grace and mercy of God has kept me from enjoying all the sinful things of the world all through life, as some do. I believe I was shown I was a sinner in a dream several years past. I dreamed the world was coming to an end, the Heavens were all lit up and I was down on my knees praying and begging God for mercy. I also had other dreams about that time that left me in fear. But in November, 1961, I saw what they call the Northern Lights in the sky. That night I dreamed I saw the face of Jesus and there were angels all around him. My fears were taken away and I was so happy. It seemed I was swept off my feet and I began to fly, and I awoke at that time. I was happy over that dream and I began to love the Old Baptist people more and more, and started going to church every time I could. But it seemed that I just couldn't talk with anyone about my dream. I believe I have had to bear my burden alone as the Bible says every man shall bear his own burden.

Then I dreamed of seeing someone carrying a heavy pole and I was trying to help. As I was awaking, "Take up thy cross and follow me," came to me. My burden got heavier and heavier to ask for a home in the Church, but it seemed I just couldn't go. I prayed and begged the Lord if it was His will to just give me a little more evidence, and I believe He did. About two weeks before I went asking for a home in the Church, my Father-in-law passed away. On the morning he was to be buried, I saw the prettiest, brightest star I have ever seen as I looked out my window to the East. It appeared to me as the star that shined over Jesus. Then I felt surely I can't stay away any longer. And on the next meeting day, I went before the Church, but I couldn't tell them anything except that I loved the old Church and couldn't stay away any longer. I was accepted and baptized which were two wonderful days for me. I feel that I

was lifted so high in the spirit that I hardly knew what I was doing. Elder Cecil Turner was visiting the Church the day I joined, and wonderfully preached from St. John 17-1 through 11 verse, followed by our Pastor, Elder Leonard J. Brammer, preaching from the same text. I shall never forget it. After I joined, this vision of the star stayed with me and I thought so much about it. One day not long after that I picked up my Bible to read a little, and it opened to Revelation 22:16 where it says "Jesus is the bright and morning star." That was very comforting to me.

I would like to mention the old Church Sandy Level, Hardy, Va. which I feel I have been made to love so much. I understand that there hadn't been any Old Baptist preaching held there for about forty years prior to a little more than two years ago. I believe that the Lord sent our wonderful pastor Elder Leonard Brammer there to preach to us. I believe that it was the appointed time and place for me to join the church. When I joined there was only one other member, and he isn't able to be there. So no one knows how lonely I have felt being the only member there for almost a year. But I feel the Lord has been with us there and I can feel His presence that's all I need and all I want. At our last meeting, a precious wonderful sister came asking for a home with the church, which made me so happy and my loneliness is gone. I feel that I can't thank the Lord enough for all the wonderful blessings He has given me. But I know I can't give him anything.

An unworthy one,
Lois Meador

EXPERIENCE

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

I feel so little and unworthy to be writing to you, but it seems I'm not satisfied until I do. Isn't it wonderful to know we have such a wonderful Lord and Saviour to lean on when we are burdened with troubles. Before I joined at Sandy Level Church, I was so burdened I couldn't half eat or sleep, and I did not want to be around any one; I felt that I would just as soon been dead as living. There just wasn't anything for me, it seemed. I thought everyone was against me.

One night I was ironing, and something said to me in a voice so low and sweet, "What are you afraid of, don't you know I'm with you and no one can harm a hair on your head?" From then on I wasn't afraid. I knew I had someone with me, and it seemed He put a protective shield all over me down to my ankles; and underneath that shield it was so warm and nice: warmth I had never felt before.

Then on February 19th when I joined the church, from then on it seemed He had His hand on my back, and it was so warm and guided me in everything I did. My work went off easier and I just got along so much better. I want to add I didn't know a love existed between people like this love you have for the brethren, and they have for you. It's such a deep and wonderful love we can't express it.

I feel this is too much to be writing, but it is so wonderful to me I want to tell you about it. I was over to my father-in-laws home, Elder Rufus Brown. It had rained the day before, and this day there were those pretty white clouds in the sky. I saw the prettiest picture I have ever seen. My wonderful Lord Jesus (I hope) and a band of angels seemed to be coming straight to me. It was for just a quick second, but Oh Lord, don't we wish we could see those pictures for ever and ever. I felt so much better after that, but I still felt like I wasn't worthy of all of this appearing before me. But I thank my Lord for being so good to me, and taking a poor old sinner such as I as one of his children, as I hope.

I know all of this is so little to what the others have, but it was so wonderful to me.

May I add, Elder Brammer, that I and

all the members of Sandy Level would appreciate your prayers.

A sister I hope,
Odessa Brown
Wirtz, Va. 24184

PLEASE NOTE

Brother Wood:

Please insert the following two notices for me in the *Signs:*

To any college, library or individual, that desires to file the *Signs of the Times,* I would like to say that I have many duplicate volumes nicely hand bound that I would be willing to dispose of at $2.00 each.

W. D. Griffin
39 Welsh Tract Road
Newark, Delaware 19711

Also,

After long, and I trust prayerful consideration of the matter, I have come to the conclusion that it will be a violation of the Scriptures and my conscience, to say nothing of inconsistency with our practice, for me to continue to take part with the worldly ministers in funerals. I will continue, as the Lord blesses me, to labor with any of the Old Baptists in this vital work, but beg our people in all places not to call me for mixed funerals. I do not feel that it is right, therefore I will not be able to serve.

Your servant for Jesus' sake,
W. D. Griffin

ANOTHER EDITION OF
THE HYMN AND TUNE BOOK

Another edition of the Durand and Lester Hymn and Tune Books in the shaped notes has been ordered, and should be received about the first of September.

Prices, including 2% tax, delivered will be: Single Book, $3.52; one dozen, $38.25.

Send orders to:

P. G. Lester, Jr.
2246 Memorial Ave., S. W.
Roanoke, Virginia 24015

or

Masten H. Lester
814 30th Street, N. W.
Roanoke, Virginia 24017

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the **Skewarkey Union** is appointed to be held with the Smithwick Creek Church, Martin County, N. C., the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in October. Elder Leon Harrison was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder E. C. Harrison, alternate.

The Church is located eight miles south of Williamson, N. C. We cordially invite all who desire to come and worship with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Clerk

APPOINTMENTS FOR
ELDER E. J. LAMBERT

Virginia Corresponding Meeting, October 11 and 12

Baltimore Church, October 15 (third Sunday)

Salisbury Association, October 18 and 19

Dan River Church, October 21 and 22, (Sat. night and Sunday)

Bush Arbor Church, October 22, at 7:30 PM (Sunday night)

Greensboro Church, October 23, at 7:30 PM (Monday night)

Reidsville Church, October 24, at 7:30 PM (Tuesday night)

Malmaison Church, October 25, at 7:30 (Wednesday night)

Gretna Church, October 26, at 7:30 (Thursday night)

Chestnut Church, October 27, (Friday night)

Roanoke Church, October 28 and 29, (Sat. night and 5th Sunday)

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** is to be held with Otters Creek Church, the Lord willing, Edgecombe County, N. C., on Highway 258 between Tarboro and Farmville, N. C., the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in October.

All who love the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr. Clerk
Tarboro, N. C.

PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The **Pleasant Valley Primitive Baptist Association** convenes with Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, beginning on Friday before the fourth Sunday in November, 1967. We will be glad to have any that can come and be with us.

Elder E. B. Ault, Church Clerk
Rt. 2, Box 23
Weslaco, Texas 78596

A REQUEST

I find that I often need minutes of the various Primitive Baptist Associations for reference, and would be glad if the clerk or other member of the various associations would mail me a copy of their 1967 Minutes. These will be greatly appreciated.

John D. Wood, Editor
P. O. Box 186
Manassas, Va. 22110

Danville, Virginia **October, 1967**

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Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.	1.00
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Mrs. Rachel Green, W. Va.	1.00

EDITORIAL

"THE VOICE OF MY BELOVED!"

"The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills."
(Song of Solomon, 2:8)

Many have been the hours that I have cried to the Lord with my voice. Many have been my days of trouble when my soul refused to be comforted. I am so troubled that all I can do is to complain. I have been exiled for hours trying to write but the brightest thoughts have been clothed in darkness. I have considered the days past and gone and have communed with my own heart to no profit. I call to faint remembrance some experiences that I once relied upon. They have lost their sweetness and richness to me. I am making diligent search for something — just anything, Lord, to prove to me that you have not cast me off forever. It seems that I can faintly hear the echo of the Voice I once heard. Somewhere in the deep recesses of my sub-conscience there is a voice. Is it the voice of my beloved? I am convinced that it is out of reach of my feeble mind. It has such an uncertain sound that I must patiently wait. ***

The paragraph you have just read was composed several hours ago. I am now ready to title this treatise and quote a scripture for a basis of my remarks. This voice that I wondered about was NOT the Voice of my beloved. The echo of the voice I heard had an uncertain sound. As long as there are questions relative to the origin of voices, you may know it is not His Voice. Sometimes it is necessary that our beloved leave us a while, exiled on a lonely rough island,

in order to teach us how lonely we can be without Him. Sometimes it is necessary that we stay awhile in Babylon, the city of confusion, and hear voices of confusion; in order that we appreciate the Voice of Peace. These past experiences are now real, lovely and precious. I feel to know what John meant when he said, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a **great voice, as of a trumpet.**" Yesterday was my day to seek Him, but it was not the Lord's day to speak to me. Yesterday was the day I mused with my own spirit. Today, I trust, I am in the Spirit.

Yesterday was the day I cried because of grief; today I cry because of joy. The Voice I now hear is GREAT. I can now contrast it, and compare it, with voices I have heard heretofore. The voice of carnality deceived me. It spoke sweet nothings to me. It caused me to have great confidence in myself. It made me believe that I was superior enough to take on the greatest responsibility and persevere in it. This **voice of carnality** caused me to be pleased with my own righteousness. Another voice that acquainted itself with me was that of the law. The **voice of the law** was harsh, demanding, and judicial. It was a holy voice but it killed me. That voice sounded like thunder. It made me to know that the best of my righteousness was as filthy rags. The voice of the law brought me into the knowledge of my sinful condition. My attention was then turned to the **voices of the false prophets.** They taught for doctrine the commandments of men. One would say, "We all are sinners, yet God requires of us a few righteous acts on our part before He will pardon our sins." Another would say, "I know you need saving. If you will take the first step toward God, He will take a step toward you." Others said to me, "You are not a sinner. You just think you are." I heard one say to an earnest enquirer at a meeting one night, "You say that you still feel to be lost. If you will get up and shout to this congregation three times, "The Lord has saved me!" He will save you." This poor soul believed what the preacher said to the extent that he began shouting, "The Lord has saved me." I was then so interested in the salvation of my soul that I asked him afterward if he felt better. He only shook his head and turned away. I heard the **voice of duty.** I thought if I would join a church I would feel better. I joined one. It didn't work. I thought if I could teach a Sunday School Class it probably would solve the problem. I tried it. It did not do any good. I resolved to speak publicly as often as I could in order to get relief. I was yet in trouble. I was ordained to preach. I preached as vehemently as I could but the greatest sermon I ever preached on duty condemned me. Yes, I am acquainted with all manner of voices but the **greatest Voice** I ever heard puts all the remainder of voices in the background. Have you heard this "Great voice as of a trumpet??

The voices we have heard of carnality, the law, false prophets, and of duty; are so disturbing that only the Voice of Jesus can calm us. These other voices are confusing noises but the voice of Jesus is peaceful music. The voice of carnality brings false peace but the voice of Jesus brings true peace. The voice of the law demands more than you can ever pay, but the voice of Jesus assures you that He keeps the law for you, — and gives you eternal life. The voice of false prophets confuses you but the voice of Jesus drives confusion away. The voice of duty puts you under a heavy burden, yet the voice of Jesus lightens the burden and makes easy the yoke. This trumpet gives a pleasing clear sound. No uneasiness nor uncertainty are qualities of these tones. These tones have virtue and efficacy in them. Purity goes with the sound of this trumpet. The tones of this trumpet can unstop deaf ears, purify impure minds, quicken dead sinners, and comfort living saints. These tones are powerful, yet welcomed; loud and clear, yet soft and charming; commanding with authority, yet pleasing to poor hell-deserving sinners. This voice is so effectual that it never has sent its tones into a heart in vain. It always accomplishes that which

He pleases and prospers in the heart into which these tones are sent. When He says, "Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away;" there is action.

The church speaks in the dialog contained in the Song of Songs exclaiming excellence in the voice of the beloved. She then continues by saying, "Behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills." She heard His Voice, and then saw Him coming toward her. How different this is than the theory that we must start toward Him before He will take a step towards us. This voice not only calls but does the coming. He comes quickly. His call so attracts that we immediately respond by looking in the direction from which this clear, resonant, soft, gentle, and charming voice comes. I know that Jesus came almost two thousand years ago by making a great leap from Heaven to earth. I did not live here then. Those who were precious to Him then must have greatly rejoiced at His coming. That which has meant so much to me has been, and now is, His spiritual coming to me in my experience. If we cannot find our own experience in a text we have not properly tasted that text. I know from experience what it means for my Saviour to withdraw himself from me and be absent for awhile. As soon as He leaves, clouds of doubts and fears so enshroud me that He seems so far away. I am left with a sweet memory of communion with Him, but this gradually begins to fade. Hills and mountains come between us to separate us from the joy of His presence. What leaping Jesus did for our sake! He not only made a great leap from Heaven to earth but God became man! The Creator became a creature! The Word was made flesh! No one has ever been able to measure these leaps. As I think upon them these mysteries become more mysterious! These mountains and hills of our unblief, ungrateful hearts, carelessness, worldliness, sinfulness, and selfishness as well as too many other things we could mention does not prevent His coming. How beautiful are the feet of Christ when every mountain and hill is flattened by His coming! Strengthened faith takes the place where unbelief stood. Love fills the heart where hatred dwelt. Clouds of doubts and fears are removed and the Sun of Righteousness permeates our souls with its brilliance. There is now a shining light where there was was gross darkness. Forgiveness, forbearance, and brotherly love as well as other fruits of the Spirit are in great abundance in the hearts of all who hear this voice.

What a great leap Jesus made when He came low enough to pick me up out of the miry clay of the horrible pit of sin and corruption. He never comes without bringing us gifts of the Spirit to lavish upon us. This sweet communion with Him always lifts up our drooping spirits and strengthens our feeble knees. There are many things He does for us and to us before He shows Himself. He does this in order to prepare us for communion with Him. We read in the next verse following our quoted text: "... Behold He standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, shewing himself through the lattice."

What is "our wall?" It must be that which protects us. Cities were walled for protection and security. The Church is walled with the shalls and wills of Jehovah. The Church is secured with God's will of promise or the new covenant. Jesus stands behind it. Should some one state that he is venturing upon a tremendous task and another noted person says, "I'll stand behind it;" you would feel assured that you had his backing, or help, in this project. Jesus must first strengthen in showing to you the certainty of the shalls and wills of God's promise. You must be re-assured that His promises are yea and amen. He brings back to your remembrance the sacredness of the marriage vow. He lets you know that you are securely walled in before He shows Himself. While He stands behind your wall you cannot see Him but you can see the protective shield which envelopes you. It is certainly contrary to carnal reasoning that you do not have the power or opportunity to see Him, even though He

is near, at your own will. "He looketh forth at the windows." When He hides His face no one can see Him.

There are windows in our walls through which the church is lightened and can be seen only when they are opened. I wonder if a true minister of the Word when blessed to powerfully preach the Gospel and give light to all that are in God's House, demonstrates that one of the windows have been opened? I wonder if another window has been opened when the Lord's people are blessed to sing songs of Zion with the Spirit and the understanding? I felt that when I was baptized that Jesus was looking forth at the window. When this window was opened floods of light filled my soul with joy. I have felt Him peering through another opened window when the church is blessed to eat the bread and drink the cup in commemoration of His death and suffering for us. Another window is opened when the Lord's little ones are blessed to follow the example of the Lord Jesus, in washing one another's feet. I have witnessed more tears of joy and sweet fellowship among brethren while being engaged in this humbling example of feet-washing than in any other practice among our people. Church windows let light into the souls of its constituents. Some of the Lord's churches may have more windows opened unto them than others. Some may be opened more often. If there be a window that is not opened to you, do not try to close it to others. You could not if you tried. You would not desire to if Jesus is near you.

Another expression we shall take up is, "Shewing himself through the lattice." Now, she is prepared to really commune with Him. When He shows Himself, all other persons and things move to the background. When this occurs, you have no knowledge of anything else. Jesus is your shepherd, husband, priest, resurrection, and life. He is your all in all. He determines the time and place that He shall show Himself to you. You do not determine it. His appearance is often enough for your welfare. When He appears, we are ready to submit all to Him. We have been made ready to listen to Him. We are anxious and ready to do what He says. The person who thinks Jesus has shown Himself to him, yet feels that he has turned Him away, does not know JESUS, the King of saints. The true church welcomes His appearance and heeds His instructions every time. He appears more clearly, yet not as clear as He shall appear when time is over for us. We see Him at best here as through a dark glass. This is too glorious and wonderful for us to explain. We get as much rapture from this veiled showing of Himself as finite creatures can bear. If His appearance to us here in its most glorious manner is veiled, What will it be beyond this time? Sometimes we yearn for our departure from this sphere in order that we be with Him, be like Him, see Him as He is, and be perfectly satisfied!

We are anxious to hear His first words when He shows Himself through the lattice. What are these first words? We read them in the 10th verse of the 2nd chapter of Song of Solomon: "My beloved spake and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." Yes we have been humbled so much so that we are down when He comes. This is a personal message that is said to each and every one of His dear ones who constitute His bride. This Word is just as effectual as the words of Jesus was to Lazarus while he was dead and had been dead four days. Jesus told Lazarus to come forth and he did. Why? Power went into the body of Lazarus as the word came forth from His mouth. It is not our JESUS who calls if the one called fails to respond, for where the word of a king is, there is power. We have been humbled, now He appears and exalts us. We have been sad because of His absence, now we rejoice at His presence. We have been drowsily sitting, now it is time for action. He says, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." Sometimes whole churches become slothful, backsliding, thus leaving their first love. Enemies invade them and cause confusion, trouble, and grief.

Sometimes churches go into heresy in both doctrine and practice. Ministers try in vain to bring them back to the old paths. Zealous members try in vain to get inactive members to participate in their activities. Great efforts are made to warn, rebuke, and even censor churches who turn deaf ears to their pleas. Yet, when Jesus speaks He gets the desired results. I have been concerned much of late over the decline in general of our churches. I have written and talked much about it. You know I have gotten nowhere. I have been laughed at, ridiculed, and scorned. Now, I am convinced that was exactly what I needed! I pouted because my pride had been hurt. I have just about decided that if Jesus wants a revival in the churches, He will do it by a personal visitation in the hearts of the constituents of these churches. Another thing I now know is that I have not known the ways of God in dealing with His churches. Jesus says to me, "Come away." I am to come away from my prison house of unbelief in what He can do. I am to come away from the state of confusion and self-judgment. I am to come away from my idea that the churches of Christ have no winter-seasons. I must come away from the thought that we can make one move toward right without Him. I must come away from association with those who tend toward trouble-making. I must come to Him for peace, sweet communion, and right leadership. I must preach Christ, the Way, Life, and Truth. I must come away from stressing some minor point of doctrine over which churches of Christ have divided themselves. I must realize that Christ is the only one who can receive a church or spue it out. I should not question His sovereign dealing with His people. Now, I am content to follow Him. I cannot walk in His steps because He took too long strides while He was here for me to imitate. I am like the little boy who saw his dad making tracks after a rain on his way toward the barn. The little boy rolled off the porch and put both feet in his fathers first foot-print. He looked over to the next track. The boy tried to span it but he could not step that far. The boy made some tracks of his own before he reached the next step. The boy followed the steps of his father, however all of his foot-prints were not IN his steps. I must be content to make short steps. I want to follow Him, Jesus. I feel to have had both feet in some of Jesus' tracks at the same time. What a joy to follow Jesus.

What did He call me when He said, "Rise up, *** come away." He called me His love, His fair one! How can He call me fair when I am so black? He brings me the robe of His own righteousness. He washes me white with His blood so that I am cleansed from sin. He furnishes me with my wedding gown! He has not only washed me and clothed me but He has also sanctified me with His name and Spirit. He has set me apart for a specific service and qualifies me to perform this service. He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake. He will see to it that I honor His name and worship Him.

His words have just begun flowing from His mouth. He says in the next verse, "For, Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone." Sometimes we are mistaken as to when the winter is past. A warm day or two will cause us to begin planting seed, ridding the house of necessary heaters, remove bed blankets, and do many other things that we find to be in vain. Winter is renewed, heaters have to be re-installed, and plants die because of another wintery blast. Jesus only can give the true statement that the winter is past. When Jesus makes His appearance everything seems gay, pleasant, and delightful. We have gone through a long spell of darkness, coldness, barreness, and storms of devilish destruction. Some have seemed to slip away and hibernate from the society of the church. Storms of temptations have swayed the most stalwart and faithful. There has been no ingathering into the church-fold. Churches barely have a name that they live. The zeal of the ministers have subsided. No real listening to the doctrine of God's rich and amazing grace. Love has waxed

so cold that brethren are barely courteous to one another. A spirit of Jealously seems to have separated ministers of the gospel. What a **winter!!** Fires which we have tried to kindle flickered out without stirring up any warmth!! Is it not wonderful to hear that the winter is past! When Jesus speaks it He means it. The church prospers. Many are then added to the church. There is real rejoicing. Hearts that have seemed to be hard has been melted with divine love. What a lovely season for an individual, or a church, to experience.

We have just gotten into the real speech of Jesus to the Church. It is as difficult now to stop writing as it was to begin. Words fail me when I try to use them as vehicles to convey such wonderful and precious experiences. May the Lord wing them with power into your souls for a period of sweet and glorious meditations. I trust to be enabled soon to meditate more upon this wonderful revelation of Jesus to the church and to each and every individual composing the complete family of saints. At this time I will quote the remainder of what He said which is so wonderful to me: "The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away." Song of Solomon 2: 12-13.

May the Lord of Glory bring the springtime into your souls is the sincere prayer of the writer.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

SELF-EXAMINATION

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (2 Cor. 8:5)

The direction here given demands the especial attention of every one to whom it is directed, and can by no means be distorted to make it applicable to one who is not specified by the inspired writer of the epistle. It is manifestly absurd to suppose that the apostle was moved by the Holy Ghost to admonish unbelievers to make such an examination of themselves. By reference to the opening expression of this epistle it will be seen that both the authority of the writer and the characters addressed are clearly defined. "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia." This limitation of the application of what is contained in this letter must ever be observed by all who would properly understand the things which are written for the learning of the saints. Throughout the letter the same peculiar people are described, and every word of comfort must be confined in its application to them. So also the severe reproofs and denunciations of carnality, by which the conduct of some is condemned, can be given to none but the saints to whom the letter is written. It is very congenial with the pride and self-confidence of the natural mind to regard these expressions of condemnation as belonging to the unbeliving world, and often the saints may be blinded by this delusive perversion of the truth. The best and only safe criterion by which to try the suggestions which appear plausible to reason is found in the effect produced upon the saint by them. Nothing in the testimony of Jesus is correctly understood if it fails to produce abhorrence of sin in the subject of divine instruction. Whatever truth may be expressed in the letter of any theory, it is not the faith of Jesus Christ unless it shows his infinite holiness in contrast with the exceeding sinfulness of the natural mind in the sinner in whose heart the light of that truth is revealed. This is an important fact to be remembered by the believer, not only as a test of sound doctrine, but for his own comfort. It is

a matter of personal interest to each one of the saints.

"Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith." Blind reason perverts this admonition so as to make it require the follower of Jesus to seek some evidences of righteousness in himself. Failing to find any good thing in his flesh, the tired believer would sink in dispair but for the abiding witness of that living faith which is the fruit of the Spirit of Christ, and which never can be destroyed. Hence it is of vital importance to every saint that he should evermore abide in the assurance of that unerring testimony which is given for the support of everyone whose hope is in Jesus. Very often the result of this self-examination will show the troubled saint that instead of abiding in the faith of the Son of God, he has become entangled with legal bondage, so that he is endeavoring to attain to justification by righteousness of his own. When thus captivated by the delusive snare of the adversary, the bewildered pilgrim has unconsciously forsaken the strong defense of that faith which is inseparable from his hope in Christ; and in seeking for righteousness by the works of the law, he has denied the Lord Jesus as his only and sufficient refuge. While thus entangled again with the yoke of legal bondage, he is not resting in the faith. It may be that he has professed the belief of the truth, and that he would contend for the letter of the doctrine of salvation alone by the grace of God in Christ Jesus; but it is evident that he is not in that faith when he is looking for evidences of righteousness in himself, and cast down with despondency because he finds nothing in himself to justify his claim to acceptance in the sight of God. When the light of truth is applied to the experience of the saint he finds that his hope does not rest in his own righteousness; for it was when he was conscious of his just condemnation that Jesus Christ was revealed in him as the end of the law for righteousness to him. Only as he abides in the faith of Jesus can he rest in the confidence of that comfortable hope by which he is saved from despair under the consciousness of the law of sin still working in his members. Therefore it is for the confirmation of their souls in the confidence of hope that they are to closely examine themselves as admonished in the text. When the saints are listening to the cruel suggestions of the adversary, and trying to find themselves some merit to authorize their claim to be the followers of Christ, there is nothing in their action to support the claim that they are in the faith. Their works deny the profession of their trust in the finished work of Jesus as the complete satisfaction of all the demands of infinite justice. So effectually bewildered are those thus captivated by their carnal reasoning, that it is only by the Spirit of truth shining in their hearts they discover that they are not in the faith. In every such departure from the faith the wandering saint suffers the loss of the strong consolation found in the sure mercies of David as ministered to those who trust in the everlasting strength of the Lord.

In the faith which was once delivered unto the saints there is a sure defense against every assault of the enemies of their peace. When the truth is assailed by enemies, either in the form of wicked men or evil spirits, there is no confidence to be reposed in the strength of reason for repelling such attacks. Only by the living faith of the Son of God shall the adversaries be turned to confusion. The doctrine is not dependent upon the ability of men for its defense; the Spirit of truth will take care of his own holy teaching. The very weakness and insufficiency of the little ones which believe in Jesus shall cause the glory of God to appear the more clearly in giving the victory to his truth in every conflict. There is never occasion for trembling lest the enemy should prevail against the truth. All the omnipotence of the eternal God protects his own doctrine. That protection also secures the preservation of all who hope in the salvation which God has revealed in Jesus Christ.

Then it is of serious importance to the saints to be firmly established in the faith. This is their strong tower of safety, in which they need fear no evil. Dwelling in this secret place of the Most High, every believer abides under the shadow of the Almighty. Secure in that holy habitation, it is written, "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." Surely no saint can afford to think lightly of this solemn admonition.

"Prove your own selves." The word prove in this expression has the meaning of test, or try. This is evident from the context, as well as from the letter of the text. It is a specification of how the saints are admonished to examine themselves. There is precious assurance to the believer in the fact that the Spirit works in the heart of each of them the most sincere obedience to this exhortation. While it is all the desire of the carnal religionist to get to heaven at last, the subject of divine teaching longs to be free from the pollution of sin, and to be perfectly conformed to the likeness of his holy Redeemer. He can never be satisfied until this earnest aspiration is fulfilled. The law of holiness is implanted in him; and it is his delight to work righteousness. He does not have to read the requirements of the law in tables of stone; the Lord has put his law in his heart, and thus works in him both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. Since this is the work of God, there is no uncertainty about its fulfillment. Hence it is the infallible test in every case. The chosen people of God are a willing people. They are not able to deliver themselves from the bondage of sin; but they feel to cry for deliverance. No others bear this peculiar mark. In proving your own selves all who bear this mark are in fellowship with Paul and all the inspired servants of God.

Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? It is the very basis of the hope of every saint that he is so identified with the only Savior of sinners that the life of Jesus abides in him. That vital principle of holiness produces hunger and thirst after the perfect righteousness revealed in Christ Jesus as the complete fulfillment of the law of God. Without assurance of this essential truth no conscious sinner could hope in the grace of God for salvation. However he may feel the need of deliverance from the curse of the law, no one who knows and loves the holiness of God can desire that the truth and immutability of divine perfection should be sacrificed for the sake of such a justly condemned wretch as he sees himself. The only source from which the love of holiness can arise in the heart must be the Spirit of Christ. "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." This is the decisive test in the case of every one who claims to be interested in the salvation which is in the Lord Jesus. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." —Rom. viii. 9, 14. By this testimony of inspiration the Holy Ghost has defined the exact number of those sinners who are saved in the everlasting covenant of electing love. They are not ordained unto life because they are so submissive as to follow the direction of the Spirit of God; but it is because they are embraced in the eternal love of God that they were chosen of him in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. There is no revelation by which the cause of this abounding grace can be traced further than the eternal counsel of the will of God. In vain may reason strive to comprehend why God was thus pleased to reveal the inconceivable riches of his grace. He has given no account of this mystery to the comprehension of created intelligence beyond that which was declared by our dear Redeemer. "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." The most bitter enemy against God is not more opposed than the carnal mind of the subject of electing love to the sovereignty of God in the display of his great grace in the salvation of his

people from their sins. While the saint is made constantly to feel the conflict between that law of sin in his members, and the desire and love of righteousness, it is only when the Spirit of truth manifests in him the light of life that he can see the abiding presence of Jesus Christ in himself. This witness is given only through that faith of the Son of God which reason cannot receive; nor can the natural mind discern the assurance of this spiritual testimony. Hence there is an unceasing conflict between the flesh and the Spirit in the case of every believer in Jesus. By faith he knows that he has passed from death unto life, having the witness of the love of the brethren. With the natural mind he can see no evidence to support his hope, since he still knows that sin works in him its awful development of abomination. When severely tried in this terrible strife the adversary often suggests the charge that he is mistaken in all his hope, and that he is a reprobate. This text is an effectual shield against this cruel charge. None can be reprobates who have the desire to be delivered from the power of sin. Only by the living Spirit of Christ dwelling in them can there be such a holy aspiration in the heart of any sinner. This is not merely a great truth to be learned by reference to the inspired testimony. It is clearly revealed in the individual experience of every one who is led by the Spirit. This knowledge cannot be attained in any other way but by the revelation of Christ in you the hope of glory. When the truth is presented as included in the doctrine of the gospel, without reference to his own personal case, the believer will not question the evidence of the indwelling of Jesus Christ in every one who loves holiness and feels sin to be a cruel burden. This knowledge cannot exist in any one who is not in possession of that faith which can only be the fruit of the Spirit. Therefore Jesus Christ is in every one who has the hatred of sin in his heart. No such character can by any possibility be a reprobate. The more deeply the consciousness of this bondage under sin is felt as a burden, the more manifest is the testimony that Jesus Christ dwells in that heavy laden one. His deepest groaning attests his hunger and thirst after righteousness. He is thereby sealed as an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ to the heritage of infinite holiness unto which all the saints are appointed.

Instead of this exhortation being designed to set the saints to the hopeless task of finding in themselves such good works as should encourage them to hope in their own worthiness, it expressly directs the perplexed one to the only ground of his confidence, in the revelation of Jesus Christ as ever dwelling in each of his helpless and severely tried little ones. When they are by grace enabled to rightly prove themselves, they will always find the only ground of their confidence to be that they are justified freely by the grace of God in Christ Jesus. "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and having no confidence in the flesh."

(Editorial by Elder William Beebe June 7, 1893.)

SISTER HETTIE WEST

It has been well said that order is heaven's first law. While not in the Bible, it is a scriptural expression. To a man in nature, the order of heaven is *out* of order; to the man of God, the covenant of God's mercy is ordered in all things and sure. To poor finite creatures, the death of the saints is a horrible matter, but to God their death is precious. To us that know, it was a precious thing when the Lord called our sister to come home. She spent many lonesome years in solitude, and these years were spent in suffering.

Our sister was born in Worcester County, Maryland, on September 7, 1880, and died May 2, 1967, in Berlin, Maryland. She was married to Earnest C. West on February 1, 1905. She was the daughter of Burton and Hettie West, and has one sister, our dear feeble sister, Stella Parsons. Our sister left three daughters to mourn her passing, to-wit, Mrs. Margie Myers of Westminster, Maryland, Mrs. Mattie Apple, of Berkeley Springs, West Virginia, and Mrs. Mildred Davis, of Berlin, Maryland, and seven grandchildren and nine

great grandchildren; together with many friends and other relatives, and last her brethren and sisters in Snow Hill, Maryland.

Her devotion to the church at Snow Hill; her delight at the mention of the Lord's saving grace; her trust in his tender mercies will all be remembered fondly by the people of God. She joined the church at Snow Hill in 1924, and attended regularly as long as her state of health permitted.

Her funeral was held on Friday, May 5, in the Old School Baptist church in Snow Hill, Maryland, and was conducted by Elder David V. Spangler and Elder W. D. Griffin, after which her mortal body was laid to rest in the local cemetery there to await the glorious coming of the Lord in the resurrection.

W. D. G.

MARY ELLEN WILLIAMSON FULLER

On the night of October 23, 1966, my dear sister, Mrs. Mary Ellen W. Fuller, was summoned from the cares of this earth to the blissful realities of immortal glory; and we have sufficient evidence and reason to believe that she is asleep in Jesus from which none ever awake to weep.

She was born August 12, 1918, the daughter of Luther and Naoma Williamson. Her stay here was 48 years, 2 months and 11 days. She was the granddaughter of the late Elder A. H. Williamson who served many Primitive Baptist churches in Alabama.

At an early age in life she united with the Vernledge Methodist Church, but in later years as she grew older, she demonstrated a great love for the Primitive Baptist faith, and would go to their churches whenever she could. She often spoke of the hope she had of eternal life beyond the grave and that all things rest in God's power, and he makes no mistakes. He is the author and finisher of our faith.

She was married January 30, 1937 to Aaron Fuller. Surviving are her husband, Aaron Fuller, one daughter, five grandchildren, two brothers, three sisters, a stepmother, Mrs. Audra Williamson, and several nephews and nieces.

Funeral services were conducted October 25 by Elder J. P. Morgan and the Mr. Clifford DeLee, and she was laid to rest beside her infant son in the family cemetery, to await the coming of the Lord and the resurrection of the dead. A large congregation and a large array of beautiful flowers was an evidence of the love she had for her many friends and her family.

She suffered only a short time and bore it with patience; and when her course on earth was finished the dear Master called her home to inherit the kingdom prepared for her.

We loved her dearly but God loved her best. It was so heart breaking to give her up because she was so good and kind to her husband and family and she was so faithful.

Her sweet smile we shall see no more but we hope our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by her sister,
Ruby W. Briggs

MRS. ETTA OSBORNE RAYNOR

Mrs. Etta Osborne Raynor was born to the late Mr. and Mrs. William T. Osborne in Rockingham County, North Carolina, on November 16, 1881, and departed this life February 28, 1966 in Cone Hospital, Greensboro, North Carolina, at the age of 84 years, 9 months and 12 days.

She was married to the late James Riley Raynor on September 22, 1912, and to this union were born three daughters, Mrs. T. Oscar Ward, Jr., Mrs. Mary Sue Lashley, and Mrs. Walter W. Parrish. She also had seven grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, and one sister, Mrs. S. L. Rudd, all of Greensboro, to mourn her departure.

Sister Raynor united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Greensboro on the first Sunday in January, 1947, together with her husband and one daughter, Mrs. Ward. Sister Raynor was a faithful member and is greatly missed by her church.

Her funeral was conducted at Lambeth-Troxler Funeral Chapel by Elders Kenneth Key and W. C. King. Her body was laid to rest in Lakeview Memorial Park to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

May God's blessing be upon all who mourn her departure feeling she had fought a good fight and had finished her course, and now sweetly rests awaiting to be made like unto her Precious Saviour, and to be gathered home, where she can see her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and be like Him, where sickness, sorrow and death can never come.

W. C. King

GEORGE W. JACKSON

Brother George W. Jackson was born June 14, 1881, and departed this life March 4, 1967, age 85 years.

He was a native of Fayette County, Georgia, and had made his home in East Point, Fulton County, Georgia, for a number of years. He joined Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, near Fayetteville, Georgia, August 10, 1912, and served as deacon for more than fifty years. At the time of his passing he was a member

of New Harmony Primitive Baptist Church near Hiram, Georgia.

He was married to Cora E. Hartley, November 25, 1916. She preceded him in death, April 18, 1964. He is survived by two sons, Reece Jackson, Rome, Georgia; Russell Jackson, Riverdale, Georgia; two daughters, Mrs. Helen Allen, LaFayette, Georgia; and Mrs. Estelle Olson, New Orleans, Louisiana; three sisters, two brothers and nine grandchildren.

Brother Jackson was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace, ready to defend the Cause of Christ and to suffer for the truth's sake. He enjoyed a wide correspondence among God's people, and will be missed very much. We believe he has entered into that rest he was waiting and hoping for and that our loss is his Eternal gain.

The Funeral was conducted at Carmichael's Chapel in East Point, Georgia, by Elder Joe F. Hildreth, who was blessed to bring a very comforting message. Burial followed in Hillcrest Cemetery, near his home.

Written by request of New Harmony Church.

Glenn E. Ragsdale, Clerk

JOSEPH R. SORRELLS AND WIFE

J. R. and Judith Scott Sorrells, of Hartford, Alabama, were killed in an automobile accident near Ebro, Florida, May 29, 1967; less than two months after their marriage by Elder J. J. Collins at the home of the grandmother, Mrs. A. E. Sorrells.

Brother Sorrells is survived by his parents, Deacon and Mrs. Joseph Sorrells, of Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church, and three sisters: Mrs. Joyce Gilley, and Misses Linda and Kathy Sorrells; and his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. L. E. Hatfield, and Mrs. A. E. Sorrells.

Mrs. Sorrells is survived by her foster-father, W. D. Calhoun, and four foster-brothers, Glenn, Billy, and Sergeants Therman and Elton K. Calhoun. They were most devoted to each other.

An immense host attended the double funeral services at Garden Chapel Funeral Home, conducted by Elders J. J. Collins and V. C. Hartzog. Interment was in the Hartford City Cemetery. It was a most sorrowful funeral for the young married couple.

J. J. Collins

MARY F. McLANEY

Mrs. Mary F. McLaney of Hartford, Alabama, died April 8, 1967 after an extended illness, at the age of eighty-seven.

She is survived by one sister, Mrs. Ella Sellers, of Columbus, Georgia, and many other relatives. She was the daughter of Deacon and Mrs. A. T. Byrd of Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church, and the widow of Dool McLaney.

Funeral services were conducted April 10th, by Elders F. A. and J. J. Collins at Mt. Gilead Church.

J. J. Collins

ORDINATION

Pursuant to the request of Bethel Church, on Saturday, October 1, 1966, the following Elders, J. R. Hollandsworth, J. L. Bocock, O. K. Tench, Posie Plybon, P. R. Ingram, Leonard Brammer, and Rufus Brown, were organized into a Presbytery by selecting Elder Hollandsworth, Moderator, and Elder P. E. Ingram, Clerk; with Elder O. K. Tench to lead in examination, and Elder Brammer to offer the ordination prayer, and Elder Bocock to deliver the charge. Deacon Albert Brooks was appointed by the church to be the church spokesman. The following deacons were with the Presbytery: Posie Lynch, Albert Hudson, Albert Brooks, R. L. Wright, Clifford Prillaman, and Seth Hollandsworth.

Brethren Posey Poindexter and Claude Johnson were delivered into the hands of the Presbytery, to be examined as to their qualifications as deacons; and if found qualified, to be ordained as such of our faith and order. Elder Tench questioned the church spokesman in reference to the scriptural qualifications of these brethren. His answers were satisfactory. Elder Tench also questioned both brethren relative to doctrine, faith, and order; and their calling. A motion was made and carried unanimously to proceed with the ordination with the laying on of hands and prayer by Elder Brammer. Then Elder Bocock delivered the charge in an impressive manner.

Then Deacons Posie Poindexter and Claude Johnson were delivered to the church, and the Presbytery was dismissed. To all churches of our faith and order, we recommend our beloved brethren. It is our prayer and hope that they may prove a blessing to our people, and be kept by His power, and thus hold out to the end as good and faithful servants of Almighty God. It is incumbent upon all the chosen of Christ to put themselves under His care and government in His churches; and it is the duty of those already in fellowship to obey those that have the rule over them, and to "submit themselves," and, God enabling, this we will do for Christ's sake, for the church's sake, and for our own sake.

J. R. Hollandsworth, Moderator
P. E. Ingram, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 135 DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1967 NO. 11

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE UPPER COUNTY LINE ASSOCIATION 1967

To the Upper County Line Primitive Baptist Association, convened with the Church at Monticello, and the various associations and churches with whom we correspond, greetings in the Lord:

It is through the mercies of a covenant keeping God that we are blessed to meet, face to face, with each other again.

As we review the past year, we are reminded that the Scriptures are being fulfilled before our eyes. We read of wars, and hear rumors of war, distress of nations, confusion of men in every walk of life. The signs of the times indicate that the day looked forward to by the saints in all ages is rapidly approaching. God's word tells us to lift up our head, for our redemption is drawing nigh. Time and space prevent entering into this subject, but every indication is that the day is rapidly approaching when the Lord of glory will come to take His people home.

While looking at the Minutes of our last association, (this is Friday before our meeting convenes) I noticed that I was appointed last year to write this Circular Letter. Suddenly I felt very helpless, and the scripture recorded in Matthew 15:25 came to mind. "Lord help me."

The help needed was not to write something that might interest the carnal mind, or dwell upon some historical subject, but help to write something to the glory of God, and the comfort and consolation of His dear people.

The scripture quoted refers to a poor woman approaching Jesus, with the problem of a daughter grievously vexed with a devil. This woman was a Gentile from Canaan, a place where the apostles had been forbidden to preach the gospel, as Jesus had forbidden them to go among the Gentiles, or any city of the Samaritans, but rather to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

This poor woman had no legal ground of approach to Jesus, as she was an outcast, as far as the covenant of promise was concerned. She was without God, and without hope in the world, and could not plead that she was a daughter of Abraham. Yet God provides a way for every one who approaches Him, and their coming unto Him is because a God-given faith has provided that she come. He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

Though Jesus did not immediately answer the woman, she continued to plead for help by approaching Jesus, through pleading her cause to the disciples, showing that a needy sinner continues to plead to God for help, though he sees no avenue of hope. Jacob wrestles with a man all night, and refuses to turn him loose until he receives a blessing; and though the sinner may be repulsed by the Lord, he continues to plead for help, knowing within himself, he has no ground to plead for help. It appears that the disciples were wearied with the woman's pleading for help, but Jesus is never wearied by the cries for help from a needy sinner.

Jesus repulses the pleader by telling her it was not meet to take the children's

bread, and give it to dogs, (having reference to the Gentiles who were not esteemed in any sense by the Jews), but she continues to cry. The withholding of an answer to her is only the trial of her faith, and the testing of her sincerity, but she continues to ask for help.

She now ceases to call Him the Son of David. Her faith brings Him clearer to view, not only as the Son of David, but as her Lord and Master. She now worships Him as her Lord, and we hear the cry, "Lord help me." She does not resent being repulsed, and acknowledges she has no right to expect a blessing, but shows that even a crumb, falling from the Master's table, finds a place in her heart.

The crying to God for help has been the mark of grace given to sinners in every generation. It is the manifestation of life, but acknowledge, that they are unable of themselves to accomplish that which they need, and even among the taught of God we hear the cry, "Lord, I believe, help Thou my unbelief."

Paul cries out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death;" and again testifying that the will is present, but how to perform that which he would, he found not. This cry for help signifies that one needs the strength that only God can give.

Peter as he begins to sink beneath the waves, cries, "Lord, save me." Here he learns how weak he is, but he also learns something of the love and power that would not let him sink. The dear children of God have learned many, many times while sinking down, who the Deliverer is, and when they are weak, then are they strong. After such evidences of His all abounding grace, they can exclaim, "My help cometh from the Lord, who made Heaven and earth."

While we sojourn here we will hear from the ministry the cry, Lord, help me, (give me a blessing) to feed the flock of God, over which the Holy Ghost has made me an overseer, to be an ensample to the flock, to walk humbly before God and my brethren, and also to be bold as a lion in defense of God's precious truth, to be wise as a serpent, and harmless as a dove; and no greater blessing can come to one than to join with Paul in saying, "Having obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come."

The deacon will say, Lord, help me to live as an honor to the office, and to fill the office of a deacon well, and to purchase a good degree and great boldness in the faith.

The clerk, and brethren in general will cry for help, that they may be blest to adorn their profession with orderly walk and a godly conversation. Help me to live as becometh those who profess the name of Christ.

And all will join with the poet in saying, "Help of the helpless, O abide with me."

— Written by Elder D. V. Spangler

COMFORT DURING ILLNESS

This morning, while lying in Lewis-Gale Hospital in Roanoke, Virginia, this beautiful hymn came to me:

> "I'm glad that I am born to die,
> And from this world I soon shall fly:
> Sweet angels beckon from on high;
> Then, Oh, how sweet to die."

After thinking over my past and wondering what the future could hold, I began thinking on the line, "Oh, how sweet to die." This could mean two deaths, to me. How sweet to die to the worldly pleasures, and how sweet to die and be forever in the presence of my blessed Redeemer.

Remembering the death of all worldly things, how sweet to behold that all things had in some wonderful way become new to me. God was in every thing, and all praise was to him. Here was a death and a life that was so wonderful to behold. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Could this mean this new birth that God bestows on his precious ones at the ap-

pointed time and place — death to the world, but life everlasting in all its splendor. Then why this beautiful hymn was written, is no mystery. When pain becomes so severe and there is no ease for you, then I'm sure it will be sweet to die and go to the grave and rest in peace; but the spirit goes back to God who gave it. Oh, blessed thought, God gives and God takes away. My doctor said, We will have you well in no time; and I thought, If it is not the will of my Heavenly Father, you can do nothing to help me.

So weak from an infection, I cannot write more. But these thoughts keep pouring into my heart and mind, and it is the oil I need now; and I know all will be well whichever way the Lord has fixed for me.

Resting in His promises,
Pauline Spencer
Rt. 2, Box 134,
Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120

Grants Pass, Oregon

Dear Elder Wood:

I see it is time to renew my subscription, and I am also sending a renewal and a new subscription . . .

I have just returned from the Salida Association, where I heard some glorious preaching during the four days . . . I went down on the bus to Elder Smart's, and he took me to the meeting, and then brought me back to his home, and I returned here on the bus.

I am now past eighty-four, and it was a little hard for a man that old; and I doubt if I get to go to many more associations. There is no church closer than 250 miles of Grants Pass. I do not know what I would do without the **Signs.** Elder H. M. Curry's article "The Will of Man" was worth more than the cost of the paper for two years. I had the great pleasure of hearing him preach several times at Lebanon, Ohio, over sixty years ago.

I love all the writings of the **Signs,** especially the "Voices of the Past." May the good Lord continue to bless you all to keep the best paper on earth coming our way for many more years. Love and best wishes — saved by grace if saved at all.

C. H. Greathouse

AND HE WAS A SAMARITAN

In Luke 17, we read of ten men that were lepers, who met Jesus as He entered into a certain village. Knowing they were lepers, they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." Jesus told them to go show themselves to the priests and it came to pass as they went, they were cleansed. All ten of them were cleansed, we read, but only one, when he saw he was healed, turned back, fell on his face at Jesus's feet and with a loud voice, glorified God. AND HE WAS A SAMARITAN.

Recently, the question was asked the writer "What about the nine?" In the past, I had given a little thought to this Scripture and had been pretty well satisfied with the interpretation most commonly set forth, that since leprosy is a type of sin and all ten were cleansed, all were the Lord's people, but only one gave God the praise for it, and this I answered. Sometime later, the question came back to my mind and I went to the Scriptures to see if, maybe, this interpretation might have missed the real import of the account, and I saw something I had not noticed before; and I wonder if the key to the whole thing might be in the words "And he was a Samaritan." I doubt very much that I shall be able to express what I hope I see in it.

At the time of this incident, Jesus was dealing with the Jews and had very little contact with the Gentiles, whom the Jews considered as heathens, and even as dogs. He said on one occasion that he was not sent but to the lost sheep of the House of Israel. I firmly believe He was referring to national Israel, whom God chose as an earthly people, to represent Him, for Him to dwell

among and to bring forth His Son, the Redeemer; but I do not intend to go into that. He fought their battles, fed them with manna and provided their clothing, and it was to Moses, an Israelite, that He gave the commandment to have the people build the sanctuary according to the pattern shown him in the Mount, THAT HE MIGHT DWELL AMONG THEM; and promised that there He would meet with them, and there He would commune with them. Every minute detail of that tabernacle was a type and a pledge of the Messiah-Redeemer who was to come. In the fulness of time, God sent forth His Son, the Redeemer, born of a Jewish virgin. The Jews, expecting Him to come as a king in power and great glory, rejected and crucified Him. But in the wonderful purposes of God, through that rejection by the Jews, the Gentiles were brought into the covenant of grace. The natural branches of the olive tree were broken off and the wild olive tree grafted in among them, and thus partook of the root and fatness of the olive tree. And so, the time of the Gentiles was ushered in. Jesus said He was not sent but to the lost sheep of the House of Israel, but He also said "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold: THEM I MUST ALSO BRING," etc.

This is where the leper who was a Samaritan came in. Samaria was a Gentile nation and the disciples, prior to Jesus death, resurrection and ascension, were instructed not to go to preach in any city of the Samaritans, but to the lost sheep in Israel. Their mission was to preach the gospel to the Jews. But even then, Jesus, on occasions turned to the Gentiles, as in the case of the Syrophenician woman recorded in Mark 7: 24 to 30. This Gentile woman fell at Jesus's feet and beseeched Him to cast forth the devil out of her daughter. Jesus reminded her that it was not meet to take the children's (Jews) bread and give it to dogs (Gentiles). But then, faith spoke and said, "Yes, Lord (I note she called Him Lord), yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs;" and He granted her request.

I do not read of any instance where Jesus cast away anyone who sought Him in faith. I am not talking about the faith that men tell us we ought to have. I am talking about the faith which is the gift of God. I am talking about the faith of the Son of God transmitted to His people through their vital union with Him. I am talking about the faith which sees the promises of God as fulfilled, though not yet seen. The leper who was a Samaritan, was possessed of a faith which saw beyond the cleansing, and his worship was not merely thanks for the work performed, but adoration of his Lord. "The bride eyes not her garment, but her dear Bridegroom's face." The other nine saw only the cleansing. True, they had faith to ask mercy of Him, but only for cleansing. All the Israelites had faith to sprinkle their doorposts with blood and to come out of Egypt, but only two of all that number had faith to enter Caanan. This is a great mystery, but "Great is the mystery of Godliness." The nine were embraced in the Abrahamic covenant and in that sense were cleansed. They saw Jesus as a great man who could perform miracles such as healing, but did not see Him as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, therefore, they could not truly worship Him.

I believe that God has not cast off His people Israel; and by that, I do not mean the Church. The Jews were His earthly people and his promises to them were earthly. The Church, formed of Jew and Gentile, is an heavenly body and His promises to her are first, heavenly and second, earthly. I do not believe God is done with His people, Israel. I believe they, the Jews will yet look upon Him whom they have pierced, and there will be great mourning and a remnant will repent. He has chastened them, scourged them, and scattered them among the nations over the entire face of the earth; but there has always been and always will be among them a remnant according to the election of grace. Accordingly, in the days when Jesus was on this earth, there were, among the despised Gentiles, one here

and one there, who was given faith to behold the Redeemer-King in the man, who, born among the cattle in the manger, lived his life among the poor and lowly of the earth. Faith is the key that unlocks the mysteries of the kingdom — faith born in the vine and springing forth in the branches. That faith is by grace. By grace, through faith, the one leper worshiped his Lord. The other nine, trusting in the ceremonial law, saw no farther than the cleansing, which, to me, represents earthly blessings. Earthly blessings are not to be despised — they flow from the bountiful hand of Him who loves to give good gifts to His children; and when we are blest to see beyond the gift to the Great Giver, it is wonderful indeed. Otherwise, they fade away and die as do all things of this world.

May we ever be blest to worship not the gift but the Giver, as I believe the one leper did and the nine did not, could not.

Mildred V. Dykes
1114 Mt. Hermon Road
Salisbury, Maryland

WHOLE TRUTH

When you view the scripture it is like looking at a house with four sides. Each side presents a different view, yet it is the same house. So it is with TRUTH as found in the Scriptures. Jesus Christ may be viewed as the Son of God bringing salvation down to men; and also He may be viewed as the Son of man giving in His holy humanity perfect obedience to God, and so becoming our righteousness. We may also view Jesus as a servant, as in Mark's gospel, serving under the law, and dying a sacrifice for sin. We may view in Matthew's gospel the Kingship of Jesus; His rejection by His people after the flesh (the Jews), yet a king nevertheless. But, while rejected by the flesh, He is accepted by His people spiritually, the Church of God, and is therefore King of Kings. It takes all four gospels to portray all these things.

We see doctrine in the Bible as well as experience, also exhortation and prophecy, history and literature. So the Bible is a many sided book that cannot be viewed from one way and really get the whole TRUTH.

In this TRUTH we see no two people having the same experience in respect to the dealing of the Lord with them, yet the hidden truth is there which make up the pattern of the righteous. You of like faith know it is there when you hear one speak of their unworthiness, of their sinfulness, their fearfulness and questioning, for they come right where the Apostles were: where all of God's children are. To desire the words of eternal life and to hunger for righteousness are signs of living, and a hope in the eternal mercy and grace of Jesus.

May this eternal love draw the questioning child into the House of God, and while each case is viewed differently, the whole TRUTH as in Jesus Christ should make us one in the Kingdom of God, and cause Brethren to say, "Let us dwell together in Unity."

Sister Mary Hellings
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"YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN"

"The man to whom the Saviour addressed this language was a ruler among the Jews, who were very strict in their religion; and he, being a ruler among the Jews, was, doubtless, taught in all their religion. His religious training and character had not prepared him for the kingdom of God, hence Jesus said unto him. "Ye must be born again." Our children are gifts to us from the Lord, and it is our duty to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and to train them up in the way they should go. It is doubtless true that parents can do much in forming the moral character of their children, and I fear that there is often a criminal neglect on their part in rearing and educating them. The most lasting impressions written upon our minds, and those that

have the most influence over us through life, are those received in childhood and youth. In a large majority of cases the character that follows us through life is formed around the hearth-stone of the parental house. The example and teaching of the father and mother, and the associations they select for their children, have much to do in moulding the character of the child, which will follow it through life. I often hear parents say, 'I cannot talk to my children,' and I wonder why it is so. If they live before them as they ought, and set that religious and moral example that is worthy of imitation, why should it be a task to them to talk to their children, and give them parental advice and instruction?

"Visit the man whose head is frosted by time, and who is just ready to fall into the grave, whose character is unstained by dissipation and crime, and ask him to whom of all earthly beings he is more indebted for the moral principles which have governed him through life, and saved him from disgrace and shame, and in a large majority of cases the answer will be, 'My mother.' . . .

"I verily believe that mothers can do more to mould the morals and form the character of the child than the father can. It is on her lap we receive our first ideas, and she breathes into us her own nature and character. There is a responsibility resting upon a mother that I fear is not always realized by mothers. Fathers have their responsibilities, for they are every day of their lives in their deportment and conversation, writing on the minds of their children moral sentiments that are to follow them through life . . .

"I would, today and at all times, use all the arguments I am master of to encourage parents to be untiring in their efforts to bring their children up in the way they should go when old, and they will feel themselves abundantly paid for all their labor, when in age they are surrounded with a family respected by all the good, and in their moral life and standing in society, reflecting honor on the parents who reared them. . . How important that we should educate our children right, and as far as possible keep their minds free from all errors either in religion or politics. Religious sentiments imbibed in youth, and received from the lips of parents, are hard to throw off; and are apt to stick by us as long as we live.

"But when we have given our children all the religious and moral culture in our power, and have done all we can to form their religious and moral character, to prepare them for usefulness in society, we must not forget to impress upon their minds that this will not make Christians of them; that human culture and human instrumentality can never prepare them to see or enter into the kingdom of God. To be made a citizen of that kingdom, and enter into its enjoyments, a man must be born again. He must be quickened from his death in sin, and be made a new creature in Christ Jesus. When Jesus announced this doctrine to Nicodemus, notwithstanding his religous education, being learned in the law and prophets, he was astonished and made to marvel and wonder at the teaching of the Saviour. It looked to him unreasonable and contrary to the laws of nature: an impossibility; and when the religious Pharisee expressed his wonder at the unreasonable doctrine, Jesus simply repeated the declaration by saying, 'Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.' "

(The above is taken from Elder Gregg M. Thompson's The Primitive Preacher, in his sermon on "The Second Birth," which was published in 1888. We were especially impressed when we read his appraisal of the value of parential care and training, for it has long been felt that much of the decline in morals, with the attendant evils, comes from the gradual increase of indifference on the part of many parents in the training of their children.

But with however much moral training, we will still have much to remind us of the carnal nature in all of us. Those quickened to be aware of their natures, will realize that it is grace that restrains them, and keeps them from the many things to which the flesh is prone.

The very best in human nature cannot ad-

vance anyone into the kingdom of God. This is a matter of being born again — of being born of the Spirit. —J. D. W.)

LEXINGTON - ROXBURY ASSOCIATION CIRCULAR LETTER 1967

(Written by Woodrow W. Bellinger)

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church of Shokan, New York, being held at Halcottsville, Delaware County, New York, Wednesday and Thursday, September 13, 14, 1967, sends love, fellowship and greetings to the several churches with which we correspond.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord;

The sun has come up in the east and set in the west many times, and now we find we must greet you with a Circular Letter. We write prayerfully that the Lord will give a few crumbs from His rich storehouse of gospel food, that we may write comforting remarks to the household of faith.

We write to a pecular people. A people circumcised in the heart to the pleasure and sin of this world. They have no desire to please the world and Satan's sinful lusts.

God in the vast expanse of eternity before time began elected Himself a people. He also laid out the way they should go. He set the bounds so that not one should be lost. God, being eternal, could see the end from the beginning and therefore see the journey of each of His elect.

God knew they would fall in Adam, so He made a way of salvation. He provided a Holy sacrifice to satisfy a Holy God. There is no time with God for He is the same yesterday today and forever. He is the Alpha and Omega.

God in His good pleasure provides for His elect people. David writes in the 37th Psalm, 25th verse. "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken or his seed begging bread." God chooses his people, not that the people choose God. God chose Jacob and hated Esau. Esau was the elder son of Isaac and therefore had the birthright, but God chose Jacob. God does not work according to man's way, but according to His own good pleasure. There were two nations born in Jacob and Esau. (Genesis 25: 21-26)

After the Israelites had sojourned in Egypt the appointed time, God raised up Moses to lead his people out into the promised land. Moses was born at a time of great tribulation for the Israelites. At a time when there was a decree out to kill all the male children of the Israelites. (The same thing was done when Jesus was born). Moses according to man's will, (the Egyptians,) was to have been killed, but it was according to God's will that he was raised, nourished and educated in Pharoah's own household. God's decrees stand; man's do not. In Daniel 4th chapter we read where Nebuchadnezzar had thoughts of making all worship his image, but God soon made manifest His will. God governs human history to bring about His predetermined purpose for the welfare of His people. (Genesis 3rd chapter, 15th verse and chapter 12, verse 3). This developes through the wilderness promises of prosperity and protection in Cannan and the prophetic picture of the messianic glory, which would succeed God's work of judgment.

In Romans 8th chapter 29th and 30th verses we read, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. More over whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." All the saving grace given to God's people flows from the divine election in eternity.

The Jews were not the only ones to whom this divine election was given, for Romans 1st chapter 16th verse reads, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." In Acts 13th chapter, 47th verse

we read, "For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." The 48th verse of this same chapter goes on to verify this election and free grace, and to nullify any works of man, for it reads. "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord: **And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."**

Brethren, where does any so called preacher find ground to get up and say, "Accept Christ as your personal saviour before it is to late?" If we were not one of God's elect before the world was, we were too late right at the start.

Man of himself does not merit this wonderful favor, for in man there is no good thing. It is only through Jesus the second Adam, who was the begotten Son of God, that we are become joint heirs with Him, and unto the glory and honor prepared for his saints. We only see as through a glass darkly now, but then face to face. It is not of works of man, but of God to whom all the praise and honor belongs.

Brethren, isn't it the love of Christ dwelling in us, that makes us travel many hundreds of miles to meet together? For Jesus says where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them.

It will be a wonderful joy to be together with Christ in the New Jerusalem, which is above and is free, which is the mother of us all. (Galatians 4: 26)

When our sojourn in this world is over may we hear his gentle voice saying "Peace be still, it is I."

"In union with the Lamb,
From condemnation free,
The saints from everlasting were,
And shall forever be."

CHURCH LETTER 1967

To the Sister Churches of the Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, the Middleburg Church sends greetings.

The Bible is a wonderful book. It is the source of spiritual food for God's elect people. We find, when given an understanding mind, that one part explains another.

The Bible says that before the beginning of time God elected Himself a people. He did it in His own good pleasure. God is eternal and therefore could see the end from the beginning and know the travels of His people.

God's people, when awakened from sin and have a new birth, know and hear God's voice. Being awakened, they accept His word as truth and something to live by. They cannot do this of themselves, as sinful man can do nothing to please God.

It is by faith that we believe God and His word. In Romans 4:3, we read, "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Therefore we find we must accept God's word for certain things. God is the highest authority and His word stands for fact. In the first chapter of Genesis we read that God created the Heavens and the earth. God has spoken and it is not for man to pry into the mysteries of God. Hebrews chapter 11 verse 3 reads. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." This 3rd. verse rules out all the scientific approach; and we have no patience with science when they try to tell us how old the world is.

Through Satan's cunning ways Eve was persuaded to take of the forbidden fruit, which brought about the first sinful act of the human race. How this evil influence or Satan came about I do not know. I do feel that God cannot be the author of sin, because God is Holy and cannot commit sin. We are here reminded of the 38th chapter of Job, where God spoke to him out of the whirlwind.

It says in the Bible that God created man. After man was created God placed him in the Garden of Eden. Thus God

has spoken, and we dare not question His word.

In Hassell's Church History page 50 we read, "It was the prerogative and pleasure of God to give law for government of all things created by Him, whether in relation to the motion of the planets or the creeping of an insect, and therefore man could not be exempt from that universal rule."

Adam, when placed in the garden. was given the task to dress and keep the garden. I do not feel this constitutes works because we are told to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Philippians 2nd chapter verses 12 and 13.)

God gave Adam a law. Eve being in Adam at the time was made subject to the law also. Adam being the head of his wife and the whole human race, represented both her and them. Since Adam represented the whole human race, all fell and came under the law.

Satan has always been hostile to God and loses no time in leading weak fallen man on the downward path to destruction. God knew in the annals of eternity that this would take place. So God prepared a way of salvation for His elect people. This is foretold in the Old Testament by Isaac being brought to the altar for sacrifice, but a ram was caught by his horns in the thicket and was sacrificed in Isaac's stead.

In the first chapter of John we read, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." In the 14th verse of this chapter it reads, "And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." It is necessary to read the whole chapter because it all fits together. Therefore we see in this that God's word is power. He speaks and it is done.

God sent His Son, the second Adam, into the world as a sacrifice for the sins of His people to satisfy the law. Since God's people were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world the law is made of none effect. (Ephesians 1: 4)

Eve being in Adam was made subject to the law. God's elect in Christ are made free by His death and resurrection.

Our Pastor Elder Amasa J. Slauson, of Kingston, New York, meets with us on fifth Sundays, Lord willing.

Done on behalf of The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church by Sister Beatric E. Hocking, Clerk.

Written by Woodrow W. Bellinger

RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION

The brethren and friends at the Lexington-Roxbury Association held at Halcottville, N. Y. September 13, 14, 1967, regret that Elder and Sister Ruston's health prevented them from attending this meeting. Elder Ruston was pastor of these churches in years gone by, having moved to Canada nearly forty years ago, but seldom failed to attend this association — being faithful to come among us at these meetings. We want them to know that they are greatly missed, and that they yet have our strong love and fellowship in our hearts, and our best wishes.

Sincerely done by order and behalf of the brethren and friends of this meeting.

Elder A. J. Slauson, Moderator
Deacon Woodrow Bellinger, Clerk

Glade Hill, Virginia

"And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, the water and the blood: and these three agree in one."
(1 John 5:8)

Dear Brethren:

"It is appointed unto men once to die . . .," and the death of God's saints is precious in his sight.

On behalf of all whose names were written in the Lamb's book of Life, the

Lord has placed three witnesses in the earth. Because of this mysterious fact, "the sleep of a laboring man is sweet." (Eccl. 5:12)

God holds the key of death, and when he turns the key we die. By turning that key, God thus wipes tears from all faces. Death for the righteous is an end of sin and sorrow. So, it is in this manner they come out of tribulations. "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb," who were all their lives "born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward," because of Adam's fall — but now rest; and owning the riches that cannot be left behind, they do at death come "out of great tribulation." Hence, to die is gain. And there in the grave they do wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb, who is the Way in which the "blessed" dead "in the Lord" are "therefore before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in His temple:" which is their bodies that shall sleep until grace shall triumph, and mortality shall put on immortality; and until "such an hour as ye think not." Then Jesus shall come to claim what is due him, which is: the joy that was set before him when he endured the cross, despising the shame.

May the Lord teach us more and more to number our days, and apply our hearts to wisdom — which is Jesus Christ. May we "abide in him, that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming."

On the day of Pentecost Peter said, "My flesh shall rest in hope." Few indeed know that hope is a Spirit and a Saviour.

Many claim they are going to run out of their bodies, and beat the church to heaven. The Devil's ancient lie: "Ye shall not surely die," is sweet indeed to the wicked. But faith replies, "I would not live alway." And again, "There let me be buried." and again, "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil."

God hath spoken, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Has He altered the thing that has gone out of his blessed lips? Ten thousand times, No! "Let God be true and every man a liar." David has not ascended into heaven, but is both dead and buried, according to the New Testament. No doubt Jesus will raise up David "at the last time."

These plain Bible truths are much neglected, while manufactured doctrines such as re-united souls and bodies, etc. have been preached until some think it is Bible truth. A few have been born again, and have the sentence of death in themselves, and they do not trust in themselves, but in God that raiseth the dead. Their conversation is in heaven: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Phil. 3: 30, 21) Satan's lie, "Ye shall not surely die," will be preached by the multitudes, because: "out of the abundence of the heart the mouth speaketh." They cannot know (or declare) that, "the day of death is better than the day of birth."

I truly wish that all who are Primitive Baptists were wise enough to know that we are all mortals and sinners, (inside and outside,) and must die. If we do not sleep we certainly will not "awake with his likeness . . ."

I have been careful to write only such things as scripture will support. It is a very great thing to have our eyes opened to know that we are sinners. It is good to believe the fact that we must die: this makes the resurrection desirable and our Lord precious; and the "hollow-log doctrine" a stench.

In bonds,
Julius Bocock

EXPERIENCE

I am going to try to write some of the good things I feel have been the dealings of the Lord with me. I hope I have been blessed with the love that God sheds abroad in our hearts at his appointed time; and He prepares our hearts to receive it.

I was much concerned about my mean and sinful ways around two years ago; and felt that I should change and do better, or I would be lost eternally. But I did not know what to do, I thought that if I would attend church all I could, that would be all right, so I went to church every time I could, having no desire to join any church at that time. I did not understand the doctrine for I had not been enlightened, as I hope I am now.

One day I was at work and it seemed a voice spoke to me, saying, You are under conviction for your sins, and it repeated again, again, and again, and I felt that I was one of the biggest sinners in the world, but I did not think much more about it until in June when I had a bad car wreck, and felt I could have gotten killed right then, and if I had died then there was no hope of eternal life for me. One morning about dawn, (I had slept but a very little that night) a voice spoke to me saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" and repeated again, and I looked out the window and I saw the almighty hand reach out and a robe sleeve hanging from the hand. I could not get away from the thought that I was lost, and without the help of God I would be lost forever and ever. So in my weak way I tried to pray not knowing how or what to say, and I felt that my prayers did not reach Him. I felt I was all alone without a friend in the world, and even God had forsaken me. I could find no peace or rest anywhere, I would go places and do things to try and get it off my mind. I got to where I hardly had strength to lift my hand; yes, I believe it was God showing me how helpless I was. I could not get away from the heavy burden that was in my heart. Yes He has all the power, and we will call upon him to have mercy on us when we realize the ruined state we are in. I continued praying every night for a while, and also through the day, and I began to feel that God was hearing my prayers, for these words would come to me, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." That was very comforting to me, and the sermons were also.

I had a vision or a dream on December 30th, I saw a crowd of people standing by the water, and out in this water I saw two people, one was a woman and the other was a man, and they were dressed in white, and the water was just as clear as crystal. I still continued to pray and I began to feel that my burden was lifted, and I received my hope of eternal life which is so very precious to me. It seemed like my whole being was filled with the Spirit, and I could not praise the Lord enough. I repeated these words over and over, Bless the Lord, O my soul praise His name. I was so happy that my Saviour sought me out when a stranger who went astray from the fold. I was astonished and amazed that such wonderful dreams or visions should come to me as unworthy as I felt to be. And then another night I had the very same dream, but this one right after I went to bed, and this time these words were spoke to me, "Take up thy cross and follow me." It was wonderful; and I got up Sunday morning and the morning was just beautiful. I went on to church, (Sandy Level, Elder Brammer, Pastor) and after hearing you preach such a wonderful sermon I couldn't stay away any longer. I offered to the church and they received me into fellowship with them. I was very happy although I felt too unworthy to belong with such good people.

Sunday when I started to the water, I felt so unworthy and not good enough to be baptized, and when I came up out of the water I was so happy; and I love my brothers and sisters. When I came

up out of the water I felt better both naturally and spiritually.

Written by a little sister in a precious hope.

Ruth Alice Dudley
Rt. 1, Box 382
Hardy, Va.

HAS MUCH TO BE THANKFUL FOR

Rt. 2,
Stuart, Va.

Dear Editors of the Good Paper:

I will try to tell you something of my travels, yet I know that the half cannot be told. I have tried for so long to tell what a wonderful Saviour we have; and that I have so much to be thankful for. I have lately been operated on for a tumor which I had for a long time. I knew I had it, but I had a feeble sister to care for, and I felt I could not leave her. I tried to pray that I might live to take care of her until she passed away; and He blessed me to do that.

I dreaded the operation, but the good Lord said that He would go with me all the way, and I did not dread it any more. I felt that He overshadowed the hospital; and I hope I praised him from a pure heart. I received many sweet get-well cards and letters and gifts, and many prayers. The doctors and nurses were so good to me: these things I shall not forget as long as I live.

I would like to tell of a dream I had before going to the hospital. Many knew Elder J. G. L. Hash, and I loved him like a father, and his memory will linger with me. I dreamed of being in his field just below where he was buried, and it was so steep, and I was so weak I wondered how he climbed up and down so much, as I know he did. And I saw the prettiest sheep I had ever seen, and he came so close to me that I felt of his wool, which was as soft as feathers. I took hold of his wool, and he would pull me along, then wait until I got in a hard place; and he would always be there when I needed him. Something would say that is what led Brother Hash along; and I thought of how many times he had been to the hospital, and that sweet lamb led him.

What a wonderful Saviour we have! I hope I am in that number. If I feel like I do now, I won't dread dying, which I wanted to do when my loved ones have been taken from me; but I know that God knows all things, and I am left here for some purpose. I want to praise him for what he has done for unworthy me, for it is not for any good that I have done. I know I cannot do anything for myself or anyone else. How we fear sometimes, and then sometimes rejoice in Him, and fear is done away. "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform."

I wish you dear editors could come to Charity Church; I do enjoy hearing you all preach. I enjoyed the February Signs so much as I had to stay at home a week or two, but am getting along fine now, and getting to the meetings again.

May God bless you to continue in your good work: it is such a blessing and comfort to us all.

Your unworthy sister,
Bedie Craddock

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To September 1, 1967)

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EDITORIAL

"O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God. Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those with young. Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance."

(Isaiah 40:9-12)

The things that are required for the conception, birth, growth, and welfare of God's children are given us by the Giver. (2 Peter 1:3) If there are those who preach anything else, let them be unto you accursed. (Gal. 1: 8, 9) Every good and perfect gift comes down to us by the Father (James I:17), and if there is a gospel (which is not the gospel) being promulgated among God's people today which has not been preached by the apostles and received by their hearers, then let them be avoided, rejected, rebuked, reduced to heathendom. (Rom. 16:17; Titus 1:13; 3:10; Matt. 18:17; 2 Thes. 3: 6)

Contrary to all divine rule, there is a strong tendency among the human race for wives to manage family affairs. This, together with all other departures from the law of nature, will end in sorrow. There has been numerous introductions in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ as to how the family affairs might be bettered by them. These have always carried away silly women and unstable members (2 Tim. 3: 6; 2 Pet. 3: 16), but there has always been a remnant that has been saved (timely), and it will always be this way. In the inner courts of the City of our God, the Husband, the King, the Law-giver, sits enthroned. He is the One that received his bride as a gift from his Father. This covenant is an everlasting one, conceived in the eternal mind of God, executed in giving and receiving. In the morning of creation God begin to show His bride what had been designed in eternity, giving her tokens and signs and tastes of what was to come. In the fulness of time God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law. (Gal. 4: 4) His coming was to minister unto her; his dying was to redeem her; his life was to save her; his resurrection was to justify her; his appearing in glory was to intercede her. She has been eternally betrothed unto Jesus (Hos. 2: 16, 20), and she is now the bride of the Lord, the Saviour of sinners. If she has furnished her table; if she has supplied her name; if she has made the fine needlework of her robe, she is entitled to the running of the family, the kingdom of her husband. If not, He is now,

always has been, and always will be entitled to give all commandments to her, individually and collectively.

God will not leave himself without witnesses, that is, He will not if he is God. She, the bride of Jesus Christ, individually and collectively, are witnesses to his saving grace. They have a message to impart. It is not a message of what they have done, but it is a message of what Jesus has done for sinners. "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain," and, "O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength." These are the commandments of the Saviour to the saved. They are reconciled unto him by his death, as that death is made manifest in them. (Rom. 5: 10; 2 Cor. 5: 18, 20; Psa. 110: 3) The commandments that he gives are not grievous (I John 5: 3); rather they are compatible with being a new creature in Christ. (2 Cor. 5: 17; Gal. 6: 15)

I have serious doubts that a man, when called of God to bear witness, that he quits bearing witness. I do read that one tried to quit; that one said he couldn't go, and couldn't preach if he did go; that one tried to select the place that he would go; that one tried to get by with not knowing the one that called him; that one tried to go to one place, but the Spirit suffered him not to go; but God's people do not turn back. (Heb. 10: 39) Too, I have serious doubts about the religion of any man that will say that he loves sin as well as he ever did. His desire is to follow Jesus, and how glad he is when the Spirit calls him forth to go up to the higher ground (Psalm 122: 1): calls him from the weak and beggarly things of the earth to go up into the top of the mountains where the Lord's house is built. (Isa. 2:2) Here is the commandment that is needed to one like Jeremiah, to wit, "Thou shalt go to all that I send thee." When the commandment comes to get up into the high mountain he will get up and go. When the command is given to the church to raise her voice, to lift it up, to say to Jeremiah, "Whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak," there will be a bringing forth of the glad tidings. Let it be remembered that Peter and James and John never would have gone up into the mountain had it not been for the Lord; that Jeremiah never would have preached (and continued preaching) had it not been for the Lord.

How precious it is when the blessed Saviour says, "Fear not." O how I need the soul cherishing presence of one that has overcome all of my opponents and opposition. It is the most wonderful tidings in all this vale of sorrow, "Be not afraid." These words come from the One that came down into the wilderness, rescued his bride from Satan and sin and herself, and brought her out leaning on his arm. His command to her is to lift up thy voice, be not afraid, tell what great things has been done for you. This is to be told unto the cities of Judah. Anywhere else? Isaiah did not say so, and I do not say so. What I do say, what I desire to say, is to say to Judah, "Behold your God." I am not afraid (at times) to speak on the housetop; sometimes I do not fear any consequences that may befall me. I desire to know him, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and the power of his resurrection, being made conformable unto his death, that I might present him as the only hope of poor sinners. I would say to the cities (churches) of Judah, "Behold your God." How is this to be? What does it entail? Ah, I would say, How gracious it is that the word was made flesh. When we see Jesus, we will see God; when we believe God, we will believe Jesus. The earth fails to produce anything worthy of comparison to the Word taking flesh; to His passing by the nature of angels and stooping to the taking of the nature of Abraham's seed. That is enough any time, anywhere, to say to believers, to the cities of Judah; that is indeed good tidings.

The gospel declared to Abraham before (Gal. 3: 8), and it testifies to us now, that the Lord will come with strong hand and that his arm shall rule for him. I do not subscribe to any eternal-children-theory, therefore I am not able to

say that his reward, which was with him, was his church and bride. I do not see the consistency in saying that he came after her and brought her with him. Let it be remembered that it was his reward that came with him. It does not say that he brought a reward for us, but his reward was with him. What is it that causes us to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ? It is the joy and the peace and the satisfaction that is in (not for) following Jesus. The meat of Jesus Christ is to do his Father's will. What is our meat? What is our desire? As sure as God is, our desire will be to follow the lusts of the flesh (first birth), or the things of God's Spirit. The things of his Spirit will be the things of Christ. His reward was with him. It was in doing the will of God. It was in coming to redeem them, in bringing them to know him, in association and fellowship with them. He had the reward with him and the work before him. What was his work? What is it now?

His work is to feed his flock like a shepherd. Not just any flock, but his flock; not like just any kind of shepherd, but like a good shepherd. (John 10: 11) He being the Shepherd, he having the food, it is his work to feed his flock. We sing,

"Soon will the toilsome strife be o'er,
Of sublunary care;
And life's dull vanities no more
This anxious breast ensnare,
Courage, my soul, on God rely,
Deliverance soon will come;
A thousand ways has Providence
To bring believers home.

"Ere first I drew this vital breath,
From nature's prison free,
Crosses in number, measure, weight,
Were written, Lord, for me;
But thou, my shepherd, friend and guide
Hast led me kindly on —
Taught me to rest my fainting head
On Christ, the corner stone."

And we will find in our experience him teaching and feeding his flock in various ways. It may be by the testimonies of the heavens (Psa. 19: 1, 4); it may be in the wilderness and the solitary place (Deut. 32; Psa. 107); it may be by the sending of ministers (John 21), but however and whenever they are fed, it is the work of the shepherd that does the feeding. His work is to gather the lambs in his arm. I have not had any experience with lambs but I have been sent to gather calves. Sometimes I **gathered at them**, but their agility enabled them to escape. Jesus, our Saviour did not gather at them, but he gathered the lambs in his arm. His work is to carry them (the lambs) in his bosom. Now the uppermost question in my mind is this: Does he need my help to carry them? If so, then when I fail through age or neglect or limitation, the sheep are not carried, the lambs are not gathered. That is what I call hardshell doctrine; and it, with all other doctrine in kind, I do not subscribe to it. The doctrine of God our Saviour may be, and no doubt it is hard to the natural mind of men, including, God's children, but it is not hard for God to do his will (Gen. 18: 14; Jer. 32: 17), and when God is in power (manifestly) his people are willing for his will to be done. (Psalm 110: 3)

When great things are promised me, I desire the fleece to be wet and the ground dry; if the promise is of great importance, if the outcome holds my destiny and welfare in it, I will desire the ground to be wet and the fleece dry. (Judges 6: 37, 40) In our natural lives, it gives us a pleasant feeling when men back up their promises by a list of things already performed. How assuring it is to have all of these precious promises delivered and received to us and by us. (2 Pet. 1: 3, 4) And how comforting it is to have the Promiser listing some of the things that He has accomplished. In our nature we will ask, What do you have to draw with? (John 4: 11) When his power is made manifest in giving unto us, we will hasten into the city (church) and request others to come and see (John 4: 29); when his promise is verified in our life, we will say, "My Lord and my God" (John 20: 28); and today when the Lord is preached as the shepherd that feeds his flock, that gathers the lambs, that carries them in his bosom, that gently leads those that

are with young, we are shown by the Holy Ghost (John 14: 26; 16: 13, 14) that God will do all of that, and we are given a list of his accomplishments. Let us remember that it is Christ Jesus the Lord of whom we speak. It is Him that does all of the wonderful things that the shepherd does. He has a wonderful record of accomplishments.

Would it be worth anything to a poor struggling sinner to know that God had measured the waters of the five oceans? Is it the hand of God the Father that has measured the water? Does He deal in geography lessons to his children? Does God teach oceanography to his children? This I doubt. If this is true, what percentage of them would know the least thing about such matters? To me, I am writing to the spiritually taught of God; to those that have been born of the Spirit of God. The hand that has measured the waters in the hollow of it, is none other than the hand of Christ. He has measured the waters, and they are bitter and they are overwhelming, and they would drown the little ones that belong to the Shepherd if he had not measured them; if he had not become acquainted with all of the flood of afflictions that would forever separate us from him. There is not a flood that awaits us (and many do) but that he has aleady gone through it. It is the **waters** (not water) that he has measured. He has measured them all of all his children. Not one flooding wave but that he has endured it in bearing our sorrows and in carrying our griefs. If it is to be without a home he has measured that bitter water; if it is to feel forsaken by brethren and God, he has measured that in the most intense suffering; if it is in being persecuted for righteousness sake, he has measured that with all of its sorrow. The Bible abundantly teaches us that our troubles are spoken of as waters. Let us rejoice that Jesus Christ has measured them.

Would it be comforting to a poor sinner that was suffering the pangs of hell, to know that God had meted out the heavenly bodies and the universe with a wave of his hand? All God-fearing characters know that God has, indeed, measured the unlimited (to us) space around and beyond us; but I seriously question the Bible as being a book of science or other branches of learning that can be grasped and retained by the faculties of the mind; that if, and when, it speaks of such things it has a spiritual meaning instead of a natural, even though there has been much said about spiritualizing the scriptures. I will quit doing that when the faculties of the natural mind understand and know the things of the spirit.

It is true that there are a number of heavens mentioned in the Bible, and that each one of them means **heaven.** There is a law or legal heaven, and there isn't any body as contented and happy as he or she that thinks their destiny is in their hands. There is a heaven that I would not associate with law or grace; that has to do only with the stores and beauties of the earth. There is a heaven which the Bible speaks of as being the space or region beyond us and above us. All of these heavens are meted out by the measurement of God's span. The dictionary tells us that a span is a wave of the hand of the builder. He has a measurement for the occasion — if an emergency comes up he has more than one measurement, or more than one span; that he can lay out different measurements as the need arises — and that the need arises because of his limited foresight. This Shepherd, this Builder, this Measurer, this Architect, has **the** measurement. He has measured or meted out heaven with **the** (not a) span. He has raised his hand in the face of all enemies and said, Thus far shalt thou come. How could we have a heaven **if hell had not been halted this side of it?** Had hell not been halted at the "thus far" boundary line, heaven could not have been meted with **the** span. My poor heart is made to rejoice as I write; just to look in upon the sacred scenes that come fleeting across my line of vision as I view my times of heaven as being measured to me. I cannot span the

law; I can not span the space; I can not span (mete, measure) my blessings (heavenly places) while I am traveling through this life. My heart and soul and mind is enraptured as I sit in astonishment and look back over the pathway that I have come. My God has supplied my need. Heaven has been meted out to me according to the measurement that is in Christ. The measurement (span) was in his hand as the wise masterbuilder of His church. This flock, this church, this bride of Christ has had all of her heavenly places and enjoyments meted out to her. If she does not receive them, the Shepherd is not any better at measuring than is the carpenter that builds the house.

It is not my intention to dispute God as knowing and comprehending every atom of dust of this earth, this terrestrial globe. But I am not making that application here. It is a comforting thought (it would be torment any other way) that the bodies (yes, dust bodies) of God's children shall be brought from the graves — if it is not comforting, it follows that we are not comforted in the angelic message that he shall save his people. But I want **something** here. I believe in time salvation as much as any man that ever lived — I need salvation **now.** If I am one for whom Christ died, I believe that the time will come in my life when I can say, By the grace of God I am what I am; and I do not expect, and I do not believe that any man, regardless of his laboring, will ever be able to change that assertion.

God's people have at the present time, at this the time of need, a high priest that can be touched by the feeling of our infirmities. O Lord, how I need that! How I daily need the assurance that I have a Friend, an Intercessor, that has come to know all of my infirmities! He came to know them by **feeling**, by experience. His being acquainted with all of our ways (Psa. 139: 3) came about in a concrete manner. It was much more than visionary and imaginary. Thus, from all eternity, He comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure. That was in his body, wherein the cost of salvation, the feeling of it, the acquaintance with his people in every particular, was brought about, and all of it according to his foreknowledge of man.

This is God at work in this weighing and balancing of the mountains and hills. He weighed them before they were problems to his people. He balanced our hills, as he did our clouds (Job 36: 4), before they became tasks that we could not perform or troubles that we could not solve. There has never been anything in the lives of God's people that it has not already been weighed in eternity and experienced by Jesus in his life. If any word of prophecy concerning Jesus had failed, it certainly would have shown a short weight by the One that weighed it. We will never fail. Our failing to fail is not to be reckoned as being in us, but in Him that won the victory and bestowed it upon us. We can not fail, because the Head did not fail. If the devil had done the weighing of the hills and mountains; if the sinners that he came to save had done the weighing, or, if they had been left to chance about how and when and where they were met, then we would have failed.

We will have our mountains, we will meet up with many hills that our crippled feet will not be able to climb; we will have experiences that we think are unbearable, but they have all been weighed. For patience he gives us afflictions, for the destruction of fleshly ambitions he gives us the furnace, for sorrows and anxieties he gives us grace.

Our Shepherd is able to feed his flock, to gather and to carry them, to lead them to the mountains and to home, because "HE HATH MEASURED THE WATERS IN THE HOLLOW OF HIS HAND, AND METED OUT HEAVEN WITH THE SPAN, AND COMPREHENDED THE DUST OF THE EARTH IN A MEASURE, AND WEIGHED THE MOUNTAINS IN SCALES, AND THE HILLS IN A BALANCE."

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE MYSTERY OF PARABLES

"He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come."

— *Luke xix, 12, 13*

I have not felt to be wise enough to call myself skilled in the mysteries of God, but this subject is on my mind, and I shall only aim to try in my weakness to give a train of thought in my mind that seems to see some harmony in these parables. First, in order to come at once to the point, I will say, if I have any understanding about this parable and its meaning, it is that this nobleman was God, and the ten servants were the Jews when he had got them settled in Canaan.

And now for the proof. The fourteenth verse reads: "But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to rule over us." But this nobleman had said to those he had given the ten pounds, "Occupy till I come." They were to occupy Jerusalem and keep the ordinances until he came, and when he returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called. The first came and said, "Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds;" the second had gained five pounds, the third had gained nothing, and felt that the lord was an austere man, taking up that which he had not strowed. The result was they took from him what he had and gave it to him that had. This last clause agrees with what Christ said to the Jews: "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof," and also it agrees with that Scripture which saith, "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." This also agrees with Christ's interpretation of the parable in the next chapter (Luke xx.) where he said, "A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time. [This long time is from Moses until Christ.] And at the season, he sent a servant to the husbandmen [the servant was a prophet, such as Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel] that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard; but the husbandmen beat him, and sent him away empty. And again he sent another servant [prophet]: and they beat him also, and entreated him shamefully, and sent him away empty." And again he sent the third servant, or prophet, and he fared as the others. Last of all he said, "What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence him, when they see him." The son was Christ, and they killed him. Christ himself in this parable, or figure, says, And what shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them? He answered it by saying, "He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others." The vineyard was the first covenant, or the church under the first covenant; the kingdom the nobleman went to receive seems to be the kingdom of Jesus Christ, or the new covenant. As I said before, the pounds the nobleman left with his ten servants were the first covenant; the servants, the Jews (the citizens) hated him. These were the Jews, and the nobleman said of them, Bring hither those enemies and slay them before me. This was done by the Roman army, for in this nineteenth chapter of Luke, as Jesus came riding into Jerusalem, when he beheld the city he "wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a

trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."

It has seemed plain to me in reading these parables that most of them were spoken of and against the Jews. The trusting them with God's goods, the pounds, the talents, the vineyard, I have felt for a long time had reference to putting the first covenant and its ordinances in their hands to use, or occupy, until he should come, and the time for him to come and reckon with all these servants was when he came in the flesh. I would understand that he spoke these parables because they were nigh unto Jerusalem, and because they thought the kingdom of heaven should immediately appear. I am aware that I am treading upon controverted ground in handling these parables, but I feel inclined to not contend against any one who may see them differently, for what have we that we have not received? and if we have received it why should we act as though we had not? I feel certain that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

These parables have long been a stumblingblock to me, but they are figures, and we should always while meditating upon them keep before us what Jesus was teaching and whom he was speaking those parables against. The Jews would become angry at them, because they perceived he had spoken them against the Jews. Many have lost the figure Christ was showing, by running after what the ten pounds meant, and the five pounds, and the one who had gained nothing. First, whenever anything is taken from one and given to another in these parables, it has seemed plain to me to mean taken from the people of the first covenant and given to the people of the second covenant. This I feel is a safe basis to start from, and when we keep the figure right before us we need not run off to know what the different pounds mean, or what the different talents mean, or what the vineyard means, or the husbandmen, or the servants. We know that the Lord made a covenant with the Jews, and that he took it away from them and gave it to others, and, as Christ said, he will miserably destroy these wicked husbandmen and burn up their city. The Jews themselves understood these parables were spoken against them, and owned it, and why not we own the same in Matthew xxiv., where Christ is so clearly making known the destruction of Jerusalem with its awful consequences, and warning his disciples to flee to the mountains and escape the wrath of God upon the Jews? He starts out in the next chapter in continuance of the same subject, and says, "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins." I have understood the ten virgins to mean no more and no less than the ten servants he gave his ten pounds unto, also I understand it to mean the same as the parable of the talents, also in this twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew. The foolish virgins are no more than the slothful servant who had laid his master's pound up in a napkin, or the unprofitable servant who had hid his talent; the five foolish virgins, the slothful servant, the unprofitable servant, all mean one and the same thing, I think. The foolish virgins had only the lamp of Moses, and it went out when the true Light came. I think if we would always keep the figures or parables before us, and not run off after what some word in the parables means, we would get better understanding of these things.

All these things spoken of in these figures were given to the Jews, and they made a complete failure in keeping them. They had two thousand years trial, and always failed, so these things were taken from them and given unto another people bringing forth the fruits thereof; it was impossible to get grapes from thorns or figs from thistles, for the Father seeketh such to worship him

in spirit and in truth, for God is a Spirit. It has ever been true that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them. The parable of the wedding supper has seemed to me to fit along with the other parables. The one who had not the wedding garment on was cast into outer darkness, where the unprofitable servant was who had only one talent, and so were the foolish virgins. I have felt the one without the wedding garment, the slothful servant, the unprofitable servant and the five foolish virgins all have reference to the unbelieving Jews; the servant who had gained the ten pounds, or the five talents, and the five wise virgins and those who had the wedding garment on I feel all mean one and the selfsame thing; but spoken in the different figures they refer to the people of God, the believers in Jesus Christ, as all these parables were spoken when Christ was here, and spoken against his enemies and in behalf of his believers.

Some have thought these parables set forth different things; that the parable of the vineyard in Luke xx. was of different meaning than the one in Luke xix., of which our text speaks, but a close observation I believe will show they are only different figures, alluding to one and the same thing in the main. It is true we get some lessons out of one that do not appear so plain in another, but to me, in the main, I see the same thing. One brother sees it best through the parable of our text, another sees it best through the parable of the vineyard, another sees it best through the parable of the talents, and so on. There seems to be something in one parable that is plainer to one brother than another, so I would not wish to force my views upon any one who differs with me, neither would I contend with any brother as to the true meaning of any of these parables.

(Written by Elder Newton Peters and published in the Signs September 15, 1909)

"IS THERE NO BALM IN GILEAD?"

Jeremiah viii, 22

From infancy we have been in the habit of hearing this passage referred to as implying a full provision in the gospel to meet the necessities of the Lord's people, and the Gileaditish physician has been supposed to mean the Lord Jesus Christ. That there are healing virtues in the gospel for all the complaints of God's people, there can be no doubt, and that Christ is a great, good and infallible Physician, is equally certain, but that the passage refers to the gospel as the balm of Gilead, and to Christ, as the Physician there, is to our mind by no means so clear.

The striking language of our text is used in a connection which seems rather to forbid that application of it. By the mouth of the prophet the Lord charged Israel with gross idolatry, and threatened to visit upon them the severest judgments, to break them up and scatter them as a nation, and surely to consume them. Under these circumstances the prophet Jeremiah takes up a lamentation over them, saying, "For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me." And then he demands, "Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" Balm was one of the productions of Gilead, and an article of commerce, from the time that Jacob sent balm to Egypt in exchange for corn; it possesses a medicinal property for soothing and healing diseases which are common to the children of men, and skillful physicians were in the habit of prescribing it successfully to their patients, for physical diseases. But those medicines which human science can understand, prepare and apply successfully in natural diseases, fail entirely to effect a cure for the depravity of the human heart, and are equally abortive in averting the judgments of God. The children of Israel, in their wicked departure from the

Lord, like all Arminians, had relied on their own resources for comfort and deliverance from afflictions, and now in the time of their calamity, the prophet demands of them the reason why the hurt of the daughter of his people is not healed? Why they have not applied their balm, or why their physician had failed? How natural it is for us, when left to our own wisdom, to conclude that we have within our reach some power by which to secure the favor of God, some balm to cure us of the leprosy of our depraved nature, some medical skill to direct us in the application of our medicines, to make them effectual. But when taught by the Spirit to feel that we are condemned already, and the wrath of God abides upon us, we soon lose all confidence in our own balm, and in the skill of all human physicians. Miserable comforters are they all, and they are all physicians of no value. Then the text, Jer. xlvi. 11, seems more applicable to us: "Go up to Gilead and take balm, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt, in vain shalt thou use many medicines; for thou shalt not be cured." Thus are we taught to discard all our own plans, and schemes, balms and physicians, and being completely cut off from all our own reliances, to fall down before the Lord, exclaiming, "Lord, save, or I perish." There certainly is no balm short of the Saviour's precious blood, nor any physician that can apply the healing medicine effectually to us, but Jesus Christ.

"There is but one Physician
That can cure a sinsick soul."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe November 1, 1855)

OBITUARIES

MAJOR THOMAS SMITH

Major Thomas Smith was born May 6, 1882, in Rockingham County, N. C. He passed from this life February 2, 1967, at the age of 84. He was the son of the late Coleman G. and Rebecca Shreve Smith. Surviving are his wife, the former Nettie Nixon, of Greensboro; a son, Thomas D. Smith, Maitland, Fla.; a daughter, Mrs. Linwood Eure, Summerville, S. C.; one brother, John R. Smith, Reidsville; and five grandchildren.

Brother Smith joined the Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church about the year 1953, and was a devoted member, serving as Treasurer and Clerk efficiently for several years. Our dear brother loved his church and brethren very much, and though he was only in the church militant for a few years, his devotion to the cause was for many years.

He was a graduate of the University of North Carolina School of Law. He served as Clerk of the City of Reidsville for five years before he was elected to the Superior Court of Rockingham County, where he served for twenty years. In the passing of our dear brother, his family, church and community have suffered a great loss; but we believe our loss is his eternal gain, as we believe he has gone home to be forever with his Lord.

Funeral services were conducted from the Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church by Elder W. C. King.

D. V. S.

BROTHER A. W. LEWIS

We, the church at Lower Town Creek, write in regards to our dear brother Albert W. Lewis.

Brother Albert was born March 15, 1898, and departed this life July 5, 1965. He spent his last days in failing health, but he bore his afflictions so humbly and patiently, always praising his God. He united with Lower Town Creek Church in June, 1950, and was baptized by Elder J. C. Smith.

Brother Lewis leaves to mourn his death, his wife, Sister Nannie Lee Lewis, which we are very thankful to still have with us. Also three children, Lower Town Creek Church, and a host of friends. Brother Lewis was greatly concerned of his Soul and Salvation, also concerned of those on beds of afflictions, the poor and needy, the fatherless, and the the widows.

We read in the writings of James 1:27, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Brother Lewis was a Deacon at Lower Town Creek from the second Sunday in February, 1954 until his death, always concerned of the welfare of the members and the care for the church and grounds.

He was laid to rest in the Greenwood Cemetery to await the coming of the King of Kings. We miss Brother Lewis very much.

We desire that a copy of this writing be placed on our church records, a copy be sent to the family and a copy for publication.

Done by order of Lower Town Creek Church.

Elder C. L. Coker, Moderator
W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

SISTER PEARL PROCTOR

We, the church at Lower Town Creek, write a few lines in regards to our dear Sister Pearl Proctor.

Sister Proctor was born on July 28, 1888, in Edgecombe County and departed this life on August 24, 1965. She was the wife of Dock Proctor, and to this union were born five children.

Sister Proctor's last years of stay were with her son and daughter-in-law. She was confined to the home in her last days, but was blessed to have devoted loved ones to care for her. She united with Lower Town Creek Church, September, 1932, and was baptized by Elder J. C. Smith.

Sister Pearl leaves to mourn her death, one son, two daughters, one brother, two sisters, a host of grandchildren, and friends. If words could describe Sister Pearl, we would say, "Soft spoken, kind, humble and ever looking to her Maker who is the author and finisher of her faith."

Her remains were laid to rest in the Proctor Cemetery. We miss Sister Pearl, but feel that she has an eternal gain.

We desire that a copy of this writing be placed on our church records, a copy sent to the family, and a copy for publication.

Done by order of Lower Town Creek Church.

Elder C. L. Coker, Moderator
W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

We, the church at Lower Town Creek, write a few lines in regards to our dear Sister Effie Edwards.

Sister Edwards was born on July 7, 1887, and departed this life on April 22, 1965. She was the wife of C. W. Edwards, and to this union were born six children.

Sister Edwards' last years of stay were with one of her sons and daughter-in-law. Although confined to her bed in her last days, she was blessed to have devoted hands to care for her.

Sister Edwards united with Lower Town Creek Church in July, 1954, and was baptized by Elder C. L. Coker. She leaves to mourn her death, her children, grandchildren, Lower Town Creek Church, and friends. She was admired by all who knew her for her meekness. We read in Psalm 37:11, "But, the meek shall inherit the earth."

Her remains were laid to rest in the Pinetops Cemetery.

We miss this loved one, but our loss is her eternal gain.

We desire that a copy of this writing be placed on our church record, a copy be given the family, and a copy for publication.

Done by order of Lower Town Creek Church.

Elder C. L. Coker, Moderator
W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

IDA DELANO BARTLETT

Ida Delano Bartlett was born on February 1, 1893, and departed this life on May 22, 1967. We bow in humble submission to the will of God, believing that she had spent her appointed time here, and it pleased the Lord to take her from the trials of this life.

She was the daughter of the late Forest and Etta Silsby Delano. Sister Bartlett was married on June 19, 1912 to Sanford S. Bartlett and to this union were born twelve children, nine surviving; five daughters and four sons. There are also surviving a brother Howard Delano, nineteen grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Sister Bartlett was baptized in the year of 1947 by Elder John D. Wood, her membership being with the Whitefield Old School Baptist Church, and she remained a faithful member until death, always attending the meetings. The writer visited in her home many times and always found her solid in her belief that salvation came not by her own works, for she well knew that her own works were all vanity, but by the grace and mercy of her eternal God. She enjoyed very much entertaining in her home and many times the meetings were held there.

Funeral services were held in the meeting house of the Bunker Baptist Church, Jefferson, Maine, by the writer on May 26, 1967, where she attended in her younger life; and she was laid to rest in the family cemetery. May it please the Lord to reconcile all who knew and loved her so dearly, to feel that their loss is her eternail gain, is the prayer of the writer.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

MRS. ELIZABETH LEWIS HARDY

Sister Elizabeth L. Hardy, truly a Mother in Israel, was called home June 10, 1967. She was ill one month, spending the last two weeks of her life in Liberty House Nursing Home in Lynchburg, Va.

She was born at Ringgold, Va., Pittsylvania County, August 11, 1866, being 100 years and 10 months old. She was the daughter of Benjamin H. and Mary Ingram Lewis, and the widow of Chesley W. Hardy, who preceded her in death 1901. Two of their 4 children survive: Sister Maude Doss and Sister Mary Doss, who so tenderly cared for their mother. She made her home with Sister Maude. There were 15 grandchildren, 35 great grandchildren and 6 great great grandchildren, a number of nieces and nephews.

We desire to praise God for the orderly walk and lovely character of our dear sister. We miss her presence at church, which she loved so much, and filled her seat as long as she was able, being present a few times since

her 100th birthday. Though we miss her, we could not wish her back. We heard her say many times, "I want to go on. I have been here long enough, but can't die till my time comes."

We feel to say she was one of God's humble saints, and was loved by the brethren, sisters and friends. She joined Springfield Primitive Baptist Church October 6, 1909. Her funeral was held at Springfield Church in Gretna, Va. in the presence of a large congregation, with many beautiful floral offerings. Services were conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and burial in Gretna Cemetery.

We extend our sympathy to her family.

By one who loved her,
Annie Tosh

NETTIE FARNSWORTH CROZIER

Upon request of the Richmond Primitive Baptist Church, it is with a sad heart even now that I attempt to write a few words in memory of our dear sister, Nettie Farnsworth Crozier. She was very faithful to her church in many ways, and was always there when services were held, unless sickness kept her home. She is missed so very much, but we are made to feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Sister Crozier entered this life July 17, 1898, and was called home October 11, 1966; thus making hre stay here sixty-eight years. She was received by experience into the Richmond Primitive Baptist Church May 24, 1949, and was baptized by Elder R. B. Denson.

She is survived by her husband, two daughters, three sons, and six grandchildren. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder C. N. Bunn, in Lynchburg, Virginia; and her body was laid to rest beneath a mound of beautiful flowers in Fair Hill Memorial Park, to await the resurrection morning.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Father, who doeth all things well. And

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; a copy be sent to the family; and a copy be placed on the church records.

Done by order of conference June 4, 1967.

Elder C. N. Bunn, Moderator
Sisters
Nannie Varnier
Lillie Weider
Azelie Lee
Committee

JAMES LESTER BUTCHER

It pleased our Lord to call from this life Brother J. L. Butcher on November 3, 1966. He was born December 10, 1889, thus making his stay on earth seventy-six years.

Brother Butcher was received by experience in the Richmond Primitive Baptist Church in 1920. He acted as Clerk pro tem. in 1920, and was ordained deacon in 1921. This office he filled until the time of his death. Brother Butcher lived in Danville, Va., but was faithful to his church as long as his health permitted. In July 1921, he was chosen a trustee, and was also Treasurer for several years.

He is survived by his wife, Mabel Parcell Butcher; one daughter, two grandchildren, and two great grandchildren. Also a brother and five sisters.

The funeral was held at Barker Funeral Home by Elder Raymond Payne, and he was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park; there to await resurrection morning, when the chosen of God shall see Him and sing praise unto his name forever.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission unto our God, who worketh the counsel of his own will. And

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; a copy be sent to the family; and a copy be placed on the church records.

Done by order of church in conference June 4, 1967.

Elder C. N. Bunn, Moderator
Sisters
Nannie Varnier
Lillie Weider
Azelie Lee
Committee

MARY ELEANOR WILSON

The Durham Primitive Baptist Church, Durham, N. C., records the passing of Mary Eleanor Wilson at the age of ninety-seven years. She was the widow of Patrick H. Wilson, who died in 1922.

Surviving are two daughters: Mrs. Esther Whitefield, of Durham, and Eula W. Midgette, of Morrisville, N. C.; two sons, Jasper C. Wilson and Hubert L. Wilson, of Durham; also nineteen grandchildren and more than fifty great grandchildren.

Sister Wilson was a member of the Durham Church for seventy years, and I have never known a more loyal member to her church. In her declining years, even when she could not walk, she would attend the services in a rolling chair; and in many ways manifested her faith by her works.

In her passing, we believe she died in the triumph of faith which God gave her many, many years ago.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor at the Hall-Wynne Funeral Home. Written by her pastor.

D. V. Spangler

CHANLEY NEWTON PARCELL

Chanley Newton Parcell was born October 7, 1886, and died December 31, 1966. Surviving are his wife, Odelle Wright Parcell, Rocky Mount, Va.; a daughter, Mrs. John C. Fannish, Scottsville, Va.; a son, C. Noell Parcell, Rocky Mount; a sister, Mrs. T. J. Dudley, Santa Pass, Texas; a brother, W. H. Parcell, Rocky Mount; and eight grandchildren.

He united with Chestnut Primitive Baptist Church, Franklin County, Va., and was baptized the second Sunday in October, 1957. He was a kind and gentle husband, a good father and grandfather. His home was a place of welcome to all those that loved the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus. He loved his church and brethren, and was a firm believer in salvation by grace.

Funeral service was held at Annington and Bussey Chapel, Rocky Mount, by his pastor, Elder Cecil E. Turner, and his body was laid to rest in the family cemetery; there to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour.

We feel that our loss is his eternal gain, and when he awakes in His likeness, he shall be satisfied. May our God reconcile us all to his holy and sovereign will.

Written by his wife.

Odelle W. Parcell

ELDER LLOYD SEARS

Elder Lloyd Sears was born September 24, 1899, and departed this life January 24, 1967, at the age of 67 years; being the son of the late French and Elizabeth Sears. He was married to Ada Tanner, who survives. To this union were born four sons: Darriel, who lost his life in an automobile wreck several years ago; Alpha, Kent, Ohio; Roscoe, Akron; and Earnie, Monroe Falls, Ohio; four daughters: Mrs. Dessie Tanner, Nebo, W. Va.; Mrs. Evelyn Santy, Mrs. Glendoria Primo, and Mrs. Larene Keene, of Akron; two sisters: Mrs. Doanie McCumbers, Hallburg, W. Va., and Mrs. Flonie Murphy, Chloe, W. Va.; two brothers: Thurman, Nebo, W. Va., and Virgil, Akron, Ohio. Also 28 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren.

Elder Lloyd joined the West Fork Primitive Baptist Church in 1938, and was later ordained to the ministry of the gospel, and later chosen assistant pastor. He continued in this capacity until stricken with hardened arteries, which he bore patiently for more than two years.

He was a staunch believer and defender of the doctrine of predestination of all things, and a sincere lover of the church. During illness he continually mentioned his hope of getting well and going to the church. His family and doctors did everything they knew to comfort him.

The writer by request conducted his funeral at Clay, W. Va., assisted by Elder J. C. Hammond. He was laid to rest in the Sears family cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, to await the return of Jesus, and be claimed as one of that holy family of an eternal God.

Elder Gilbert Sears, Sr.

MRS. KATE COTTRELL

With sadness in my heart I wish to write my mother's obituary, Mrs. Kate Cottrell. Her life meant so much to me, and still does. She was born March 10, 1876, at Alma, Arkansas, and died June 10, 1967, making her stay on earth more than ninety-one years. She was the daughter of Isaac and Nancy Jane Pound.

She was united in marriage to David Crocket Cottrell February 20, 1898, who died in January, 1941. To this union six boys and five girls were born. There are ten living. We miss our mother, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. Survivors are: William L., of Downey, Calif.; George M. and Clay, of Dyer, Arkansas; Earl, of Monterey, Calif, and John K. Cottrell, of Lawndale, Calif.; Mrs. Nancy Pennington, of Los Angeles; Mrs. Dalene Bolton, Ludlow, Vermont; Mrs. Ruby Norwood, El Monte, Calif.; Mrs. Nona Blevins and Miss Verna Cottrell, of Dyer, Arkansas; also seventeen grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

She joined the Primitive Baptist Church during early youth. We hope to bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father who called her from our midst to await the resurrection, when the dead in Christ shall rise and come forth from their graves, and behold His face in righteousnes. A faithful one has passed into the great beyond. She was firm in the faith and doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone.

Her funeral was conducted June 13, 1967, at Dyer Baptist Church. Her body was laid to rest in the family Pound Cemetery beneath a beautiful array of flowers, to await the coming of her Saviour. Mother loved the following hymn: "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound! that saved a wretch like me; I once was lost but now am found; was blind, but now I see." etc.

Written by a daughter who loved her.

Miss Verna Cottrell

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Sandy Grove, Nash County, N. C.

The church is located about two miles east of Stand Hope, N. C., on Highway 97. All who have a mind to attend are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 135 DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1967 NO. 12

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE ARM OF THE LORD

(S. of S. 8:6; Isa. 59:16)

I once more, in a pleasant dream,
  Did the dear Saviour see;
Adorably, I laid hold on his arm,
  As he journeyed by me.
He caused lights to go on and off
  In the far northern sky,
An instance of his mighty power,
  As he was drawing nigh.

I said that he could do those things
  "Because (that) he is God;"
Many miracles were done by him,
  Who alone the winepress trod.
The Lord causes the light to shine
  In the hearts of the elect,
Whose names are written in heaven,
  Whose steps he doth direct.

Now the Lord's arm is his power,
  By which they are upheld;
"His arm brought salvation to him,"
  While on the earth he dwelled.
According to the word of God,
  The Lord his arm made bare;
His holy arm's revealed to them,
  Who're his peculiar care.

The Bible says he's the wisdom
  And the power of God;
He has power to save his bride
  By shedding his own blood.
The efficacious blood of Christ
  Canceled her debt of sin,
And his fulfilling of the law
  Brought a righteousness in.

Kept by the arm of God's power,
  She can't at last be lost,
Saved from everlasting torment,
  At such tremendous cost.

"Set me as a seal upon thine arm,"
  Is her sincere desire,
While sojourning in this time world,
  And the end draweth nigher.

It seems fitting to add a verse
  Of a beautiful hymn
That pertains to a happy home —
  The new Jerusalem:
"Reach down, reach down thine arm
    of grace
  And cause me to ascend
Where congregations ne'er break up,
  And sabbaths never end."

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, N. C.

NOT MEMBERS, BUT BELIEVERS

Rt. 1
Tinsman, Ark. 71767

Dear Editors:

I notice my subscription has expired, so am sending $5.00 for two years' renewal. Wife and I neither one are members of any church, but if we know ourselves, our belief is the Primitive Baptist advocated by the *Signs*. We get more out of reading the *Signs* than we can tell you.

Our hope is that the able editors will be blessed to continue to set forth salvation by grace, as in the past. We desire the prayers of all God's elect.

I want to mention that we attended the South Arkansas Association near Bearden, Arkansas, and heard four of the most wonderful sermons by Elder John Lee Smith, Elder Ballard, Elder E. J. Lambert and Elder Loyd Wall. We hope we are thankful for such ministers.

Ray Watson

SERMON AT THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION 1967

It has been my privilege to attend and to speak in this association forty-six years. A lot of changes take place in forty-six years. I am glad of the privilege to stand before you this morning; and I desire an interest in your prayers.

I am going to do something unusual, but I am not doing it to appear odd or spectacular, but I am doing it because it has been upon my mind. Sometime during this meeting I was reading the Articles of Faith of the Pigg River Association; and I noticed that this is the 142nd annual session of this body. My mind fell upon a paragraph in these Articles of Faith, and if God would bless me, I would like to speak to you concerning it. The paragraph is number 5.

I realize very well that we cannot substitute articles of faith for the Word of God. Our articles of faith have been more or less an exposition of what we believe touching certain principles of doctrine which we have not been ashamed of. The first ones were drawn up over three hundred years ago. Today we might not understand some expressions of the old English writers, but in substance the same doctrine we are preaching today was embodied: election, predestination, the new birth, effectual calling, and preservation of the people of God unto eternal glory.

I have admired our brother who spoke just before me. (Elder W. B. Barnes — Ed.) I have admired him for two reasons: for his stability and for his humility. One is worth very little in the church of God without the other. His preaching has been clear and plain. The gospel of Christ, the truth of God, is like clear water: you can see a long ways through it. Some times what is called deep preaching is just muddy water, because you cannot see very far into it; and it could be very shallow.

The 5th paragraph reads:

"The regeneration, sanctification, justification and salvation are by virtue of birth, life, death, resurrection and mediation of Jesus Christ, and in no other way; and that all these graces of the Spirit are referrable to the Church of God, which he purchased with his own blood."

The first thing mentioned by our forefathers is **Regeneration.** Jesus taught while he was here, that except man be born again he could not see or enter the Kingdom of God. Regeneration is more or less what we call a new birth. Jesus taught Nicodemus that, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so in every one that is born of the Spirit." There is no exception to this rule. Our Saviour also taught that that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. He clearly says that a man must be born again. No substitute has ever been found by men for the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing people to the knowledge of the truth, or the imparting of eternal life: and none ever will be found. Anybody is foolish to believe, (who professes to believe the Bible,) that a person can have eternal life, and then lose it. Religion is something that if **you** seek it, you can't find it; if you find it, you can't lose it; if you lose it, it is evidence you never had it.

Regeneration comes to men and women by the work of the Holy Spirit that Jesus sent after he left the world, who should take the things of Jesus and show them to his people, guiding them in the way of all truth. All the excitement of men, all loud preaching and praying — "Hell fire and damnation preaching", has never regenerated a man. That work is the work of the Holy Spirit, and, if I know anything about it, has the same power that Jesus had. I know that men are preaching over the land that the Spirit is wooing and beseeching sinners, trying to get them to accept the Lord. If this could be true, then the sinner is stronger than the Holy Spirit. That theory would put the Devil on one side of a man, and the Spirit on the other, both trying to

take him in the opposite direction. This would leave the man with more power than either one, wouldn't it? I read in the Psalms, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Every day is the day of God's power; but there is a day that the Holy Spirit overwhelms a person, and he is brought into subjection to the will of Almighty God. I like the way the Psalmist put it, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."

Wherever the Spirit of God has wrought his work in bringing a person into the knowledge of the glorious truth of God, it is like being brought from darkness to light, or from night to day: as in a new world, he is brought to see and to understand something of the power and virtue of Jesus Christ. In my years of endeavoring to speak to God's dear people, I've never asked God more than just to give me an enlarged view of my blessed Saviour — I want to see a little more of him; and especially I want to feel his presence when I shall come to cross that river that men call death.

The Regeneration then is because of the electing love of God. It reaches those who are called vessels of mercy — chosen in Jesus Christ before the world began. "Given grace," Paul says, "in Christ Jesus before the world began." They are saved according to the eternal purpose of a sovereign God. So, where there is regeneration, there is evidence of the electing love of God. It is the revealing in the hearts of men and women that Jesus Christ is the way of life and salvation. Once you know this blessed truth, every other doctrine will become as dung to you.

Sanctification. Every one of these glorious principles work like the link in a chain — one can be no weaker than another. We may have a chain that would support a ton, but one weak link would make it of no strength. There are no weak links in God Almighty's work in bringing men and women to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. Sanctification: the word means to set apart for a specific use; to be made holy. Sanctification is associated with the word regeneration. The people of God, according to the Apostle Jude, were sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus. He means their life from all eternity has been in Jesus Christ. Paul used the expression, "Created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." And, "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." Just as certain as there was a sanctification, or setting apart, or being chosen in Jesus Christ before the world, the principle of that sanctification will be brought into the life of the individual.

The Scripture says that both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one. Meaning that God Almighty has determined this matter unalterably. "He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified," meaning that Jesus and his people are all of one — for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. Why? because they are bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh: they have verily been a part of him from all eternity — before he took a body of flesh and came into the world.

"Sanctified and preserved." Anything that is preserved cannot be lost. Their lives were preserved. Whose lives? the elect of God; the chosen people of God. Preserved in Jesus Christ, and called accordingly. Sanctification is received, and that which is in the child of grace is as pure as heaven itself. I like to think, my hearers, there is a work that brings you and me close enough to God, that our Saviour was not ashamed to call us his brethren. I like to think that some day, when this world is over, there will be a people in heaven that God will not be ashamed of. This is the only way there can be a people in heaven that God will not be ashamed of: He himself must prepare them for heaven. God accepts only his own work, whether it be in prayer, or in praise. Whether it be prayer or praise, he prepares what He accepts.

Justification. There must be a way which God has provided to justify his

people. No sinner has ever been justified by the works of the law. The apostle said that if there had been a law given which could have given life, righteousness would be by the law. But by the works of the law no flesh can be justified. If we offend in one point of God's law, we are guilty of the whole. But the Lord's people must be justified. There are two branches of this justification that I want to talk a little about. The word justify means to free from condemnation. We are justified by the blood of Christ; and that alone. We are freed from hell and condemnation by the blood of Christ from all things which we could not be by the law of Moses. Thank God he has a way of applying that justification to the hearts of sinners. I can't believe that God would have something for you, and not have a way of giving it to you. Can you? No, because the apostle says that we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And it is of faith that it might be by grace, to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed. God has a way of bringing his promise definitely to all the seed of Christ; and that way is called, "by grace through faith." It is of faith; that it might be by grace.

I would rather preach these things to you, than to tell you about a lot of frames and feelings; to tell you of the glorious doctrine of God: to tell you of a doctrine that will stand when the world is on fire; to tell you of a doctrine that honors and glorifies the God of heaven. Paul said that we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus, sake.

Now the other branch of justification. Paul said, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God." That is, when justification, which was brought about by the shedding of the blood of Christ, is applied to a sinner's heart. "Justified by faith." No other justification can do a sinner any good. We have peace with God — not a half-peace. No! but peace. Jesus said before he left the world, "My peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth."

In justification by faith, people receive something. What do they receive? They receive the atonement of Christ. And by receiving the atonement of Christ, they joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, "by whom we have now received the atonement."

And Salvation. We call it all salvation; and it is all by virtue of the **Birth** of Christ. What! was the birth of Christ involved in this? Yes, it was. Why is the birth of Christ involved in all these glorious things I have talked to you about this morning, Because when Jesus came into the world, he must come under the law where you and I were bound; and be bound by that law too, to deliver us from its curse. His birth must be by conception of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary. (This truth men are trying to overthrow: if they could overthrow this one principle of the virgin birth of Christ, they would overthrow them all.) The virgin birth of Christ, — whereas the eternal Son of God was with his Father from all eternity. But I cannot dwell upon this at this time.

In the fulness of time God sent forth his Son. He was his son before he sent him; and he was his Son when he came —made of a woman, made under the law. For what reason? to redeem his people who had fallen under the righteous law of God. To redeem them from what? from all iniquity, from all vain conversation — and that eternally. By virtue of the birth he must take in union with himself our flesh and blood. He was made like unto his brethren, with the exception of sin. As the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he himself likewise took part of the same, that he might destroy the works of the Devil.

Yes, the birth has as important part in this glorious doctrine as any other part. Verily God, and verily man! As he came into the world he was the Son of God and the Son of Man. And in this glorious work there is a **Mediation.** Paul said there is one mediator between God and man. We hear priests telling that they are mediators between God and

man; but What a lie! They tell you that the virgin Mary is a mediator between God and man, when Jesus himself did not recognize his mother above any other woman. Someone came to him and said that his mother desired to speak to him. But he answered and said, "Who is my mother? . . . Whosoever shall do the will of my Father, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

But there is a mediation of Jesus Christ. He was bound in a covenant of grace to save his people from before the world, so that he must come on our behalf in his mediation. And he is the only one between God and man.

By virtue of the Life. The life of Christ is embodied. What kind of a life? It is a life whereby while he lived here in the world, he must honor the law — not for himself, but for you and me. He must make it an honorable law in fulfilling it to a jot and a tittle. Not only literally before men, but he could say, "I delight to do thy will, O God. I am glad he said that, aren't you? I am glad that everything the Saviour has ever performed for us, he delighted to do it. And I believe that his greatest delight will be when his people shall some day be gathered home. And I tell you, my friends, everyone for whom he shed his blood, will be there. If they were not there, it wouldn't be heaven for Jesus himself. The prophet Isaiah said, "He shall see the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied; and by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities."

Life. The poet says, "He lived in my room, and he died in my stead." Have you ever felt that in your soul? Has it been brought to you by a living faith? Someway have you felt that you could just reach out and take hold of these blessed promises, and say they are suited to a poor sinner like me.

By virtue of his Death. Yes, death. What did Paul say about the death of Christ? "He that spared not his own Son." I can't believe that God who would not spare the dying of the only innocent person that ever lived: would not spare him the agonies of Hell itself, and all the consequences of a broken law, would fail in any sense to save his people. "Spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all: how shall he not with him also freely give us all things. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

Resurrection. We do not find in the Bible about the Lord coming to raise the people from the dead; but we find that he talked about; raising the dead. The resurrection of the dead is what he talked about; and in that resurrection Christ was the first fruits of them that slept. There is established in the 15th chapter of Corinthians, that the very body of Christ that was buried and laid in the grave, arose as they had put it in the grave. It saw no corruption. God would not leave his soul in hell. He came out; and was seen of the apostles, and of about five hundred at one time; and last of all was seen of me, said Paul, as one born out of due time — who am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But he said, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

Is that in your soul this morning? Do you know it? Not like I look at you, but know it inside, that what you are. or ever expect to be, is solely by the sovereign rich and reigning grace of God.

Christ arose and conquered death. He delivered us; and in that deliverance took the penalty of the law — he must receive all the penalty of a violated law, and satisfy its every demand. He went into heaven, and God crowned him with glory. The greatest crown one has ever worn was the crown of glory of our Saviour. "Crowned with honor and glory." Would he have had any honor, if he had gone to the Father, and said, "I have done all I can to save the people, but some of them I died for might be lost." If such were so, what glory would Christ have in heaven? He was crowned with honor and glory, and is seated at the right hand of the majesty on high.

There he is today, my hearers; and he appears in the presence of God. He is not an intangible spirit in heaven. The one whose hands were nailed to the cross; the one whose side was torn, is in heaven. His very appearance there is all the mediation a sinner needs, because Jesus said to his disciples, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

(The above was a sermon by Elder Spangler at the Pigg River Association in August, 1967, taken from a tape. — J. D. W.)

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING — 1967

(Written by C. Walter Norman)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session at the Mount Zion Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday and Thursday, October, 11th and 12th, 1967, to the Churches composing the same, and to the Associations with which we correspond, sends Christian Greetings.

Dear Brethren:

We desire to thank the Lord of all grace that it is our privilege to once more meet in associated capacity and hear the goodness and mercy of God's Grace; and it is our custom to write something in the way of a Circular Letter. I find that my mind is a blank, at this time, on Spiritual matters, and I know not where to begin.

In Hebrews, 13th chapter, 1st verse, we find: "Let brotherly love continue"; and in Romans, 12th chapter, 9th verse: "Let love be without dissimulation, abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good." The meaning of the word LET is to permit, to allow, to suffer, to give leave or power by a positive act; not to hinder, etc. God, in the creation of the world, used, for the first time in creation, the word LET. He said, "Let there be light; and there was light," showing, by this, that His word is Power, for He speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. Hence, then, the word LET is more a command than a permit. In natural creation, God commanded light to come forth out of darkness; also, in spiritual creation, He did the same. Paul, in writing to the Corinthian brethren, said, "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." In the first creation: "The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light and there was light." (Genesis 1st chapter, verses two and three.)

Dear brethren, we were all darkness and had no light until God commanded the Light to shine into the dark recesses of our hearts, and gave us the knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ; who is our All in All. For this cause, "Let brotherly love continue."

In the 133 Psalm, David says, "Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Unity is oneness; two in one, Christ and his bride (the Church) made one; I in you and you in me; Christ in you, the hope of Glory. "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." We believe in the Vital Unity of Christ and the Church. May we, therefore, endeavor to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Let us not get too highminded, and become puffed up with worldly pride, and feel to exalt self like the Pharisees did of old, for our Saviour has said: "And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and, he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted." (Matthew 23rd chapter, 12th verse.)

May peace, love, and fellowship abound in our hearts; and we pray that we may be kept by the Almighty Power of God, through Faith, unto Salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Our Saviour hath said, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is our Fa-

ther glorified, that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love." (John 15th chapter, 7 to 9th verses)

Now brethren, we conclude by giving all praise to the King, eternal, immortal, invisible; the only wise God, to whom be Honor and Glory for ever and ever. Amen.

CHURCH LETTER TO ASSOCIATION

In the name of her Lord Jesus Christ, the Salisbury Church greets her sister churches of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session at the church house in Salisbury, Maryland, on Wednesday and Thursday, October 18 and 19, 1967:

Beloved Brethren:

It is joyous to meet once more with you, our visitors and our ministering brethren, to hear the gospel proclaimed and to speak among ourselves the unsearchable riches of Christ. May His Spirit pervade the atmosphere of this meeting, to the end that we be drawn closer to Him and thereby to one another.

The mind of the writer was captivated recently by a part of the third verse of Hebrews One, which states: "When He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high ," The subject is, of course, the Man, Christ Jesus, who had gone to Calvary's cross, bearing in His own holy body every sin of every object of God's sovereign electing grace through all the ages of time. By His perfect obedience, He had paid the penalty for our disobedience; He had died, the just for the unjust; He had arisen, triumphant over death and the power of hell; He had gone back to heaven, there to take His seat at the Father's right hand. And He sat down! Not because He was discouraged by fruitless effort; not because He was wearied by the mighty works He had performed or exhausted by the terrible agony He had endured. but because He had finished the work He had covenanted with His Father to do. Moreover, He sat down because He was completely and forever satisfied with the results of His great work and agony. Though we might give our very bodies to be burned for the cause of Christ, we could never be satisfied with what we had done. But this Man was satisfied — He was satisfied with the bride whom He had redeemed. Solomon, speaking for the elect of all ages, said, "I am black, but comely." As we look within ourselves, we see only the blackness of sin, but our Blessed Redeemer, beholding us cleansed in His own blood and clothed in His own righteousness, tells us tenderly "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." And she is satisfied with Him! Drawn to Him by His great love for her, their desire is mutual, and although she inhabits a strange land and dwells among a strange people, her eyes are fixed upon Zion, expectantly and longingly awaiting the return of Him on whose vesture and on whose thigh a name is written: King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

This Beloved is that Blessed Hope which we not yet see, but wait for. It is our only hope, as all around us we see the crumbling walls of a rapidly dying dispensation, yet without surprise or alarm, for the promise is sure that "He tarry." Surely, surely, the answering who shall come, will come and not prayer of every world-weary, footsore pilgrim must be, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Let us comfort one another with the assurance of this Blessed Hope until He comes.

Our meetings on the first and fifth Sundays each month are reasonably well attended. We feel greatly blest to have our beloved pastor and his assistant, Elders D. V. Spangler and Elder W. D. Griffin, respectively, who, faithful and true to their calling, walk softly before their God and humbly before their brethren, preaching boldly but with godly fear, Jesus Christ, crucified, buried, arisen, ascended and seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

We of Salisbury are few in number,

but hope we are living together in harmony and in fellowship and love with you, our dear Sister Churches.

Submitted in love and fellowship.
Elder D. V. Spangler, Pastor
Elder W. D. Griffin, Assistant Pastor
Maude T. Laws, Clerk
Written by Sister Mildred Dykes

THE FATALIST POINT OF VIEW

We believe and rejoice in the doctrine of the Predestination of all things. Yet, our mind has been led to mention an error that Satan has brought into the minds of a few; and may we be given to take heed to ourselves.

"The Fatalist Point of View": Satan uses truth in bringing forth this error. Predestination is advocated in such a way that the growing idea is that man is justified in hiding his wickedness or blaming his sins on the sovereignty of God.

The "Fatalist Point of View" is an error of *Satan* to lull the Children of God to sleep. It is to dull or harden the conscience, and to charge God with our sins. The scheme is to give excuses as these: "I couldn't help it. I had to do this because God purposed it." These thoughts derive from Satan, and the motive is to justify one for his wrongdoings, instead of grieving and repenting over them.

The effects of this is to lull the church to sleep, and thereby causing a coldness, indifference, etc. This is to discourage prayers and supplications, and soul exercises. It is to discourage the yearnings for a closer walk with God, the longing for His presence, and for His sweet visitations. This error is to discourage the reading of the scriptures, and seeking the Lord in prayer. It is to discourage ones to come into the Church. The error is to lull them to sleep (meaning the ones who have a work of Grace in their hearts) and make them satisfied with being on the outside, and not desire a home with the Brethren. In other words, it is to discourage them in: "Go home to your friends and tell them how great things the Lord has done for you."

This error is to encourage the — "being at ease in Zion." Here is the prevailing attitude: "If God meant for me to do this or that, then I'll do it." This is the same principle as a farmer sitting down and saying: "If God meant for me to have a good crop, then I'll have it. Therefore I am not going to work it."

We quote from Philpot: "Now Satan can make use of truth in the Church of God to induce his own errors, and often makes use of one truth to subvert another truth. Satan is a cunning artificier; he uses no rotten levers when he wants to overthrow a building, but he will select the strongest and largest and most powerful he can possibly wield. And I have been astonished sometimes, to see how Satan, that crafty magician, that wonderful mechanic, can make use of one lever of one truth to overthrow another truth, how he can *bring forward doctrine to upset experience,* how he can bring *forward doctrine to upset practice,* and how he can employ one part of God's word to upset another part of God's word." (*Selected Sermons,* by J. C. Philpot, pg. 99)

Satan uses truth. The truth is that God has purposed all things, and that God has predestinated all things that come to pass. Let us assume that one is overtaken in a fault, or one has committed a grievous sin.

Suppose Satan creeps in and drops thoughts like this in his mind: "What is the use of you grieving? It had to happen anyway. Doesn't the scripture say, 'And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.' (Rom. 8:28) You had to do this because God has purposed it. Now, if God had not purposed it, then you would not have done it. Now, if God had purpose it, and you had not done it, then the decree, predestination, and counsel of God would be upset. Therefore, it had to happen

and it couldn't be any other way."

Dear one, do you not see in the thoughts mentioned above that Satan uses truth to inject error? What do thoughts as this tend to do? They tend to dull and harden the conscience, and cause one to use predestination as a cloak for his sins.

Let us examine Peter's case in his denial of Jesus. An important lesson is taught in the scriptures concerning this situation. Peter had to be taught that he was not his own keeper, and that he could not stand and fight the battle on his own strength. "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; *my God, my strentgh,* in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower. He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for *they were too strong for me.*" (Psalm 18:2, 17)

"Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples." (Matt. 26:33-35) Peter meant well, but he was quite boastful, especially in this expression: *"yet will I never be offended."* He did not say, the Lord being my strength, I will not deny thee. He had to be brought down and humbly say as David: "I will lift up mine eyes to the hills, from *whence cometh my help.*" (Psalms 121:1) ". . . wilt not thou *deliver my feet from falling,* that I may walk before God in the light of the living?" (Psalm 56:13) Therefore, Peter had to be shown that unless we are kept by the power of God, we will all fall by the wayside.

After the third denial of Jesus, the cock crew, and the Lord looked upon Peter, and Peter wept bitterly. (see Luke 22:61-62) He did the very thing which he said he wouldn't do, and this grieved him at his heart.

Let us assume that Satan had dropped thoughts like this in Peter's mind: "What is the use of grieving? You did exactly what Jesus told you that you would do. If you had not denied Jesus, then you would make him a liar. You could not help from denying Jesus, because God had purposed it." Maybe Peter was tempted with thoughts as this. If so, then God delivered him from them, because he wept bitterly and repented. "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." (Luke 22:32)

If Peter had not repented, and was overcome by Satan's temptation, he probably would have excused his denial of Jesus by justifying himself, and charging his sin to the predestination of God. But, this was not the case.

If one is guilty of absenting himself from the meetings, and not taking heed to this exhortation: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching," (Hebrews 10:25) he may excuse himself by saying such as this: "God predestinated me to miss the meetings, because I wasn't there. If God had purposed me to be at the meeting, then I would have been there." Dear friends, do you not see that such expressions as this are dishonor to this Holy God? It is erroneous to attempt to hide one's sins behind the predestination of God. God is an allwise, holy God, He does not force one to sin. (Read James 1:13-15 and 1 Cor. 14:33)

Suppose a farmer plants his seed, does not work the crop, sits down and says this: "There is not any use of me getting out the weeds, grass, etc., because if God meant for me to have a good crop, then I will have it." Now, what do you call this? Is this fatalism?

Let us consider this expression: "Peter could have kept from denying Christ." An expression as this leaves the thought that Peter had the ability and strength to travel on his own, and

that he could keep himself if he so desired to. This does not coincide with Paul's experience: ". . . for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not." (Romans 7:18) In another place we read, "Who are kept by the power of God . . ." (1 Peter 1:5)

But, we must be careful of our answer. In fact, we hear this expression: "If it be true that Peter could have kept from denying Christ, this would make Chrst a liar." We must admit there is truth in this remark, but look where it leads us. It leads us to the doctrine of charging our sins to God. We also hear this: "Peter had to deny Christ. He couldn't help it, and God decreed that he would deny Christ and it couldn't be any other way." There is truth in all expressions, but they all give the idea that Peter had every reason to charge his denial of Jesus to the predestination of God.

We hear expressions as these: "Man cannot control his thoughts; therefore he cannot help what he is thinking about." This scripture is quoted in reference to such says: "Thou understandest my thought afar off. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." (Psalm 139:2, 4) That is true, but look at the trap Satan is setting. Satan quotes this: "The thoughts of foolishness is sin." (Prov. 24:9) One's alibi is (through the influence of Satan) : "I do not feel bad about having this foolish thought. I could not help it. In fact, God put it in my mind. If God so desired, he could have kept that thought from entering into my mind."

My friends, do you see how Satan brings forth truth to slip in his errors? It is man that sins, and who is man to attempt to charge his sins to the decree of God? "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." (1 Cor. 14:33) "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." (James 1:13-14)

Remember, predestination is not caustive. One Elder made this beautiful picture: "The blueprint does not build the house, neither does predestination save a soul."

We hear expressions as this: "Adam sinned because he had to. He sinned because he could not help it. Man sins because God purposed it, and it cannot be any other way. If man could keep from sinning, this would make the decree of God null and void." As we mentioned before, Satan uses truth to inject his errors. The truth is that God has purposed all things, and decreed all things before the foundation of the world, and all things must come to pass as God has purposed it, and they cannot fail to come to pass. "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be: and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun." (Ecclesiastes 1:9)

The expressions mentioned above are all true, and no logical argument can be given except: Satan uses these truths to induce the error of hiding one's sins behind the predestination of God, and thereby hardened one's conscience. In fact, the thought is that one is just in blaming his shortcomings to the decree of God. Such expressions as these leave the sentiment that Adam had every reason to blame his fall to the foreknowledge of God. In short, the motive of Satan is to bring forth doctrine in a careless way in order to upset practice.

As the Lord blesses us, let us consider David's prayer in the 51st chapter of Psalms: "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is over before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou

speakest, and be clear when thou judgest." (Psalm 51:1-4) Notice that David acknowledged he had sinned. He was under conviction, and he was grieving over his sins. He could not have prayed a prayer as this if he was trying to blame his grievous sin to the counsel of God.

He uses the expression: "my sin is ever before me." It is "I" that have sinned. He acknowledges that God is just, and that he is unjust.

Consider your own experience, dear friends. Have you been brought to the place to realize that you have sinned and come short of the glory of God? You know that it is your sins which have grieved you, and that you do not dare to attempt to hide your sins behind the predestination of God, because you know that God is just and holy and good.

If you have the fear of God, then you hate the sins that cause you to mourn. "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride and arrogancy, and the froward mouth, do I hate." Proverbs 8:13)

God is a just and holy God, and who is man to charge God with injustice? "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?" (Rom. 9:20)

God has a purpose in all things, and it behooves us to consider the revealed will of God, and not attempt to probe into the secret things of God. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." (Deut. 29:29) "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, *intruding into those things which he hath not seen,* vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind." (Colossians 2:18) It is one of Satan's means to tempt the Servant of God to speculate upon things which have not been revealed unto him.

Oh! may we be given to pray as David: "Lord make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; *that I may know how frail I am.*" (Psalm 39:4)

May we be given to cry as Solomon did: "Draw me, we will run after thee." And, as Ephraim: ". . . turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God." (Jer. 31:18)

May we be given to yearn for a closer walk with God. "Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I." (Psalm 61:1-2) "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" (Psalm 42:1-2)

Oh! may we pray that the Lord will bring us with prayers and supplications. (see Jer. 31:9) May we be given to seek those things which are above, and to follow this exhortation: ". . . let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:1-2)

May the Lord enable us to advocate the truth in the spirit of love, and keep us from falling into the error of seeking to please man. We realize that when the truth is proclaimed in its purity, opposition will arise.

May the Lord enable us to be careful in handling predestination. "The preacher sought to find out acceptable words; and that which was written was upright, even words of truth." (Ecclesiastes 12:10)

We trust that God has directed our thoughts, and that He will bless what is written for the edification of the readers.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
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EXPERIENCE

2059-A Oak Ridge Dr.,
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Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

I feel to know you well, though have not met you in the flesh. My brother, B. K. Smith, has expressed his much love for you in my presence many times. I am often made to consider the love that flows from breast to breast. What a mystery! a wonderful mystery that only our God is able to bring about. Bud and family are in California now with our family. Our parents, brother and two sisters are there. He is very near and dear to my heart, I hope in spirit as well as flesh.

I have often had much desire to write some of my experience to the Signs, yet am unworthy of anyone's time and thoughts, and have many doubts and fears. But, you know, when one tastes a little grace they want to shout to the world, and their doubts and fears are set aside for a little while. We often complain, but God knows best for each of us, and has everything fixed and prepared from the beginning.

Others have often expressed my feelings much better than I could; but the desire to write has been with me about three years and more. Sometime in 1952 I dreamed the world was coming to an end, and everything was on fire. I was frightened, but looked and behold a narrow path was opened up for me — a way to escape the flames. This is as clear to me now as it was at the time I dreamed it. I believe that all my life I have had a fear of God ever with me. When I was in the 7th grade, the girls in class with me and I would take our Testaments to school, and during lunch time would go to the hill to hold church. We would try to sing and pray, and one would try to preach; which I never could. I was scared, for I felt it was a mockery, and God was watching us.

In 1963 I was carrying my fourth child not yet born, and I thought I was going to die. It was so strong on me that I thought it would be in childbirth. When the baby was born, I thought, not yet but it is yet to come. I would see myself to be the worst of all mankind. I tried to get better, for I felt no good to anyone. The more I tried the worse condition I found myself to be in. This all stayed with me and I was most miserable. One of my sons got sick with a kidney infection, and I prayed God to make him well and cure his condition, and I would go to church. That seemed to come as an order, and I answered, "I will." I was struck dumb, for I hadn't even thought of church — I never wanted to be associated with any religion. I had been to a lot of Old Baptist meetings with Mom and Dad when I was a child, and always felt that the Old Baptists were God's people; but not me, Oh, not me: no one is vile and unworthy as I.

To go on, I had a picture on the wall entitled, The Lords Last Supper, supposed to be a painting of Jesus and his disciples. I had had the picture for several years, and it had never bothered me one way or another. Now I could not bear to look at it, for when I did, my thoughts would be, That's not Jesus, that is a painted image: ears that hear not, eyes that see not, and a mouth that cannot speak. I was fearful for having it in my house, and told my husband that it had to go; and go it did.

I sat up all hours of the night reading my Bible, and could hardly lay it down. When I did, everytime I walked by, it seemed to say, Come and read. My eyes would draw to it, and I tried to keep from picking it up; but that didn't work.

The doctor said my son had a remarkable recovery. He said it was wonderful that we had kept him quiet long enough, and the medication had been just right. All I could think of was, "Thank God," for I believe his hand was in the matter. Then I got scared, I had to go to church somewhere: and I knew I had to go,

even if just once. Where will I go? O Lord, if it is only the desire of the flesh, I can go anywhere and be satisfied. O where shall I go? For several nights I had a vision: a group of people singing. I didn't see their faces, but still I knew them; and I wanted to sing with them.

O, I was so alone! I felt as a worm of the dust, but wanted to be with those people. I prayed God to have mercy on this vile sinner. It hit me like a blow, and I couldn't be satisfied just anywhere. But where, I did not know. I was covered with a veil: I felt it on me and could not get out: and I was smothering. Then a presence came into the room, like a spirit; and I knew it was the Lord. The veil was lifted from me, and I saw this people again; but this time there was one face, which I recognized as our dear departed Elder Lane.

I knew from that moment where I had to go. My whole being was rejoicing, and I sang songs I never knew before. I wanted to tell the world, and shout with rejoicing. I saw myself before these people bowed down and ashamed to lift my head, but telling them how I felt and knowing I was unworthy to be with them; and praying God for mercy. During the February meeting I had told Mom how I felt, and where I had to go. On Saturday evening mother called, but I said, No Mom, I don't think I will go. At 3 AM Sunday morning, I was up getting ready to go to church, as I thought. I tried to call Dad from that time until late in the morning — when I would reach for the phone, my hand wouldn't pick it up. I went on this way until March 8th, when they took me in the Church, and I was baptized April 12, 1964. Sweet, sweet peace was with me for awhile.

God has called our pastor from our midst, as many know. I loved him greatly in the bonds of Christian love, and feel he was a called servant of God, and filled his place among the inhabitants of the earth. I feel that the love and grace of God is all we need. The Apostle Paul was told, "My grace is sufficient for thee." My desire is to meet with the brethren, for the Lord said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." What more could we ask for? What more do we need? He knows our very thoughts and needs. I hope I love all that God has given me to love, for charity is the greatest of the three: Faith, Hope and Charity.

In bonds of love,
Nancy Clay

Danville, Virginia **December, 1967**

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EDITORIAL

ZECHARIAH 4:11-14

"The two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth."

The prophet Zechariah is usually called one of the minor prophets, as though his testimony is of less importance than some others, but that is not so. In this chapter we see a prince, Zerubbabel, a type of Jesus Christ who was also a Prince of the House of David, one who laid the foundation of the temple, and also brought forth "the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it." Zechariah 4:7. The prophet, when wakened out of his sleep, saw a candlestick all of gold and seven lamps thereon, and two olive trees by it, one upon the right side and the other on the left side. The angel that talked with the prophet asked him if he understood what these things were, and he answered, "No, my Lord." Verse eleven begins with the prophet asking, "What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof?" He also asked, "What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves?" Again the angel questions him, saying, "Knowest thou not what these be?" and he said, "No, my Lord."

Turning to the New Testament, we find in Mark 9, "After six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them. — And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus." How did these three disciples know Moses and Elias but by revelation? John the Baptist, the last of the prophets, said, "And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." John 1:33. We believe that by the same Holy Spirit those three Apostles saw Moses and Elias, THE TWO WITNESSES, standing by the Lord of the whole earth. Our view thereof is that the first is Moses, who personifies the Law, of whom Paul in Hebrews tells "was faithful in all his house as a servant for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after." Everything he did was according to the pattern that he saw in the mount. Moses died before Israel entered into the land of Canaan. The Lord buried him, but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day. When he died, his eyes were not dim, nor his natural force abated, which suggests to us that the Law, no matter how old it is, is still as strong as when it was first given by the hand of Moses.

Elias is the Greek for Elijah, and we are told that Elijah did not die but was taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire. Elijah personifies the prophets, who all spake of Jesus, his sufferings and the glory that should follow, and who, like Daniel, were to stand in their lot to the end of their days. The golden candlestick was the light of the old dispensation, and standing on the right and on the left were the Law and the Prophets. They had their place in a worldly sanctuary, which was a shadow of a better and more enduring substance.

The olive tree was an evergreen tree

to which the people of the Eastern lands looked for its fruit, which, when ripe, was used to produce the olive oil which was so needful for them in their every day life; and when the olive failed, it was a calamity, as suggested in Habakkuk 3:17. Gold, in the Old Testament, was used to set forth the Godhead. The ark, with its mercy-seat, the table of shewbread and the golden altar, were made of wood, a type of the manhood of Jesus, and were overlaid with gold, a type of the Godhead. The golden pipes therefore carry the thought that it was a God-ordained way that their testimony should come, the oil a type of the Holy Ghost, the pipes setting forth a perfect channel, that not a drop could be wasted, i.e. not a word of their testimony could fall to the ground. How wonderfully their testimony came to pass: Isaiah, speaking of the perfection of those golden pipes, said, "For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." These two witnesses, as ministering spirits, testified in types and shadows to the fathers. Some were given to feel and know the preciousness of that oil, for our Lord told the Jews, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." The Son of God and the Holy Ghost were the only two GOLDEN channels through which the oil of joy for mourning could then, as now, be known and left in their souls.

These two witnesses stood by our Lord, who is the Lord of the whole earth, as we have said. We see this in the Mount of Transfiguration, where stood Moses and Elias as witnesses, yet the glory of Jesus our Lord eclipsed their glory, and the three disciples, when they came to themselves, saw none but Jesus. In the account given in Luke 9:28-36, we are told that Moses and Elias appeared in glory and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. Peter was for building three tabernacles, one for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elias, not knowing what he said. "While he thus spake, there came a cloud and overshadowed them and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him."

From his advent into the world to his death of Calvary's cross, those two witnesses stood by, proving that their testimony was true, through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, which was the golden oil that proceeded from them and moved them to testify of Jesus, his sufferings and the glory that should follow. From the time that Israel became a nation, these two witnesses prophesied in sackcloth, and when Jesus came, they had foretold that a virgin should conceive and bear a Son, and that he would be a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of his people Israel.

During the three and a half years of his ministry, in which he showed by his wonderful miracles that he was the one of whom these two witnesses had testified, yet so debased were the Priests and the Levites, that they would have none of his counsel and despised his reproof. Moses and the prophets were read, sacrifices were made, but their worship was a dead formalism. They replaced Moses with the traditions of the elders. Jesus said unto them, "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." He then shows how full the prophet Isaiah stood by him. "Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias proph-

esy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matthew 15:3-9.

It is the mind of the writer of this article that these two witnesses are those spoken of in the eleventh chapter of Revelation. In the parable of the talents, Matthew 25:15, Judas was given the talent of carrying the bag, but he buried it in the earth, he was a thief. His talent was given to Paul, who faithfully carried what the brethren could give, up to the afflicted brethren in Jerusalem. 1 Corinthians 16:2-3. The Jewish nation buried their talent in the earth, they saw nothing more than a ritual that was pleasing to the eye. It can be said that their talent was given to John, who saw, when in the Spirit on the Lord's day, "seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man." Thus in what the Jews buried in the earth, John, in the Spirit, saw the perfect number of the churches which are the ground and pillar of the truth.

In Revelation 10:8-11, John received from the angel a little book. The angel told him, "Take it and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey." John must come into the fellowship of those two witnesses as they also came through great tribulation. Ezekiel was given a roll of a book to eat, and there was written therein lamentations and mourning and woe. "So I opened my mouth and he caused me to eat that roll. And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it: and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness." Ezekiel 3:2-3. The witnesses certainly prophesied in sackcloth amongst a wicked and rebellious Israel. John describes the witnesses and what they could do, and gives the same honour and placing as the angel did in the vision of Zechariah, which is the subject of this article, for we believe that they are the same two witnesses. Read of Moses in Numbers 16:28-35, and see what happened to Korah, Dathan and Abiram and their followers. Did not Moses in Egypt turn water into blood and smite the earth with plagues? Read of Elijah the Tishbite, who appeared before King Ahab, a wicked king, and said, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." 1 Kings 17:1. Did not Elijah, in 2 Kings 1:9-10, command fire to come down from heaven and consume those sent by the king to arrest him?

"These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will." Revelation 11:4-6. These two witnesses stood firm in their testimony, as Daniel did, who was told by the angel, "Go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." Daniel 12:13.

The wickedness of Israel increased, and when our Lord appeared, Satan had so blinded their minds that the wonderful testimony of both these witnesses was ignored. During the three and a half years of our Lord's public ministry, he, being the substance, the types and shadows ceased, and the two witnesses lay dead in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. Revelation 11:8. The people saw their bodies, which, to our mind, means that they, in their love of tradition, read their words but believed them not, as now the Bible is in every pulpit, but who believes what it says?

After three and a half years our Lord

was crucified, and on the first day of the week he appeared to the two brethren on their Emmaus journey, chiding them for their unbelief, saying, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at MOSES and all the PROPHETS, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." Luke 24:25-27. Thus these two witnesses were caught up into the gospel heaven. Our Lord put life and meaning into their testimony so that from then on they were as lights from afar to the Church of the living God. When they ascended from under the Law to the Gospel Heaven they ascended in a cloud, a cloud of witnesses. Paul, in Hebrews 11, tells who were in that cloud, and in chapter 12 he begins, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us (the sin of unbelief) and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Our Lord, as our High Priest, is in the Holy place of Heaven itself, and the Gentiles are given the outer court. To the Jew, Moses and the Prophets are still prophesying in sackcloth. The outer court John was not to measure with his reed for it is given to the Gentiles for a set time. "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." Romans 11:25. To this day they read Moses and the prophets but see not that they testified of Jesus the Son of David. The judgments that Moses pronounced upon their disobedience have been meted out to the full, the mercies that are promised them in Ezekiel from chapter 37 are yet to come.

So completely to John the Apostle was the sight of Jerusalem above given, that in Revelation 12 he describes her as clothed with the sun, and the twelve apostles as stars in her crown and the moon (the Law) under her feet. She was ready to bring forth a man child (Jesus) who should rule the nations with a rod of iron. The dragon (Herod) stood ready to slay the man child as soon as it was born. Matthew 2:16. The child was caught up to God and to his throne. The Church, spoken of as the woman, fled into the wilderness, that is, among the Gentiles, "Where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days." Revelation 12:6. Our Lord's ministry was three and a half years or forty-two months, a limited time, which is also set forth by the twelve hundred and forty days. How soon the church will cease among the Gentiles is in the hands of the Lord.

G. R.

(Having a request for someone to write concerning the two witnesses mentioned in the eleventh chapter of Revelation, we republish the above editorial by Elder Ruston. We feel that all of our readers will be much interested in the subject. — J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ORDER

"Let all things be done decently and in order." — 1 Cor. 14:40

In the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth, the law of Christ amply provides for everything requisite to the maintenance of that perfect harmony which drew from the psalmist the admiring expression, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" When this law is observed, and the spirit of it prevails among the saints, there can be no schism in the body. No carnality can find a place, no jealousy can work its insidious way, nor can wrath or bitterness engender strifes and divisions among brethren when this law is recognized as the rule of

supreme authority among the saints; nor will it be felt by them as a galling yoke of bondage, but rather as it rules in them its sweet power is felt as the perfect law of liberty. Led by it, they experience unspeakable peace causing them to exclaim in spirit, "O how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day."

The joy of those whose conduct and conversation are ordered in conformity to this divine commandment, is such as can never be experienced by any who are not led by the spirit of God to deny every selfish emotion, and walk in newness of life. No other rule or principle can yield such comfort and rest as is found by the saints who take the yoke of Jesus; in keeping his statutes their heart is rejoiced, and they receive the great reward of which David sings in the nineteenth Psalm. Every saint desires this joyful rest, and feels the want of it as a grievous burden, causing that groaning spoken of by Paul, "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."— (2 Cor. 5:4)

In the inspired record is given the perfect law which bears the seal of our loving Lord, by which the man of God is thoroughly furnished unto good works. Here is every needful instruction for every case which can ever arise. When anything is apparently needed which is not herein given, the defect is not in the rule, but in our darkened understanding; and even for this condition it is directed, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." (James 1:5) Hence it is evident that the direction in regard to the order to be observed in the church is to be understood in the light of revelation, and not as finite reason might interpret it.

Pre-eminent in importance, as well as in the divinely ordained order of the organized church of our Lord Jesus, is his royal authority as our Judge, our Lawgiver, and our King, who alone will save us. No law is to be received from any authority but his; no other judgment binds us; to no other power do we owe allegiance. Whenever this is forgotten, there is a departure from that decent order which he has enjoined. Nor is his contempt of his authority atoned for when we substitute "a voluntary humility and worshiping of angels;" that is, when we render a ready obedience to the teaching or practices of esteemed ministers or fathers. This is additional departure from the order established by the law of our King, when such teachings or practices are without the divine authority. With that authority, they demand obedience by all our allegiance to our Lord, and it is to him that such obedience is rendered. It is enjoined upon all the saints to hear him in all things, and to render reverent and implicit obedience to him in all things. (Luke 9:35; Acts 3:22) Observance of this rule will insure that all things be done decently and in order.

The order of the typical dispensation, as given by Moses, consisted in the faithful compliance of the natural Israelites with external forms and ceremonies required of them by that law which God gave to them. The Israelite who obeyed in the letter all those requirements was justified by that law, though he might be ignorant of the typical significance of the rites performed, as was Saul of Tarsus. But in the gospel church the saints are justified freely by grace from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses. (Romans 3:24; Acts 8:39) By the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus the subjects of the grace of God are made free from the law of sin and death; yet they are not without law to God, but under law to Christ. This law in their heart produces that love for holiness and hatred to sin, which causes them to long for deliverance from the bondage of sin, and conformity to the righteousness of God as revealed in their great Redeemer. Under the guidance of this principle they can deny self, and honest-

ly pray that the will of God be done in all things. Now their desire is to know their duty, and they feel that it would indeed be their highest privilege to obey every command of their precious Savior. His word is addressed to such as are in this state, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." His example is full of heavenly beauty to them, and they desire to follow in the ordinance of baptism. The beauty of the Lord, as manifested in his house, enraptures them, and their one desire is ever to dwell in the enjoyment of the delights of the sanctuary. This desire can be gratified only in the observance of the order which the Lord has established. In obedience to his law rest is found which can be found in no other way. The tempter and carnal reason may suggest some other way as preferable to the order of the narrow way which he has marked out; but all such departures from his authorized order will invariably end in the ways of death to all comfort and peace. Strict obedience is the order of the kingdom of Jesus, and therein alone is safety.

In the visible organization of the church the law of perfect order is established by the divine rule, and in conformity to it alone can the beauty of the Lord be manifested. When human inventions and the traditions of men are allowed to usurp the place of the order which our King has given, the consequence will always be found in strife, jealousies, variance, and perhaps even enmity among those who should love one another with a pure heart fervently. These hateful developments never can result from the peaceful order of the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. When such things exist it is safe to conclude that the rebuke is applicable as recorded by inspiration. (James 4) Severe as is the language of the apostle in this rebuke, let it not be forgotten that it is written alone "to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad," whom the apostle addresses as his brethren, having the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. Yet by their violation of the order enjoined in the house of the Lord they brought upon themselves this just rebuke. How important, therefore, that we heed the admonition, and examine ourselves. "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." (Heb. 4:1) Surely, when a church professing to hold the simplicity of the doctrine of salvation by grace, is divided and torn by dissension among its own members, there is some carnal and selfish cause which produces the discord. Then well may we pray with David, "Cleanse thou me from secret faults; keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins." (Psa. 14: 12, 13)

The order of the church consists not in any mere external forms or ceremonial rites, but in the spirit of love to the Lord and to one another. "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Then the order of this spiritual house must consist in something more than a mere formal observance of duties which may be laid down in rules written on paper. The law of Christ must be in the heart, and the spirit of Christ must direct every act of obedience in those who follow him in the order he has appointed. So Paul exhorts the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons, to "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do his good pleasure." Nothing is to be done in this work but what the word of the Lord enjoins. Anything else would fail to declare his praise, and could not therefore be his works, since it is written, "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord." (Psalm 145:10) The love of God in the hearts of his children will be manifested in causing them to love one another with a pure heart fervently; and therein God is glorified, because that love is shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." (Rom. 8:10) "Love is of God." (John 4:7) This is the spirit in which every action must

be performed to be in the order which the Lord has commanded. In this spirit every action is in order; without love, all is out of order. Even though the letter of the law of Christ, as recorded in the New Testament, may have been followed in every particular in a case, instead of being in order, it is at best but mockery, if the motive for action was anything but that love which seeks only the glory of God and the good of the saints. How inexpressibly beautiful do the courts of Zion appear when the saints walk in this heavenly order, and have the same care one for another! Then indeed it is manifest that we are members one of another. "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now (in this perfect order) ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." (I Cor. 12: 26, 27)

For the practical development of this perfect order which the Lord has ordained in his church, it is the duty and privilege of all who are led by the spirit of God to embrace every opportunity for assembling themselves to commune together in spirit, to speak, teach and admonish one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs; and whatsoever they do, all should be done in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. For this purpose,as many as are so located as to render it practicable should be united in churches, as is in the pattern given in the apostolic age. Each of these churches should meet as often as practicable for social worship in prayer and singing to the praise of their Lord, as the example is given in the New Testament; and in such meetings such public gifts as the Lord has bestowed should be brought into service for the mutual benefit of the whole body of the church.

The order of this service is prescribed by the inspired rule, as recorded in this chapter, I Cor. 14. But as these gifts are not all for preaching, though of the same Spirit, each should be used in its own place and order. Gifts for the ministry, as well as all other gifts, are for the benefit of the church, and should ever be subject to the judgment and disposal of the church as directed by the spirit of Christ. But the responsibility of this judgment rests upon the church; and it is incumbent on her to judge righteously in this important matter, by the direction of the Holy Ghost, without reference to any carnal feelings or prejudice. Nor should any mistaken tenderness of natural sympathy bias their judgment to decide in any case against the light given them by the indwelling witness of the spirit of Chirst. Disregard for the honesty in this particular has involved some churches in much perplexity; and in some cases other churches have suffered from the unfaithfulness of such as have acted hastily or from a wrong spirit. Such action certainly was not in order, nor did it evince a decent reverence for the solemn responsibility involved. Neither was it just to those brethren with whom the church acted thus unfaithfully.

So also is the reception of members into the fellowship of the church, order requires perfect honesty. This is due not less to the candidate applying for the judgment of the church, than to the peace and prosperity of the church; and any departure from the order of the law of Christ will result in confusion and trouble. In walking together as professed followers of Jesus, the order of conformity to his example excludes selfishness and carnality, and enjoins that the members should have the same care one for another. When this is the case the spirit of love appears, and the Lord is glorified in the body and spirit of such as walk according to the rule of the King of saints. This is the order of his kingdom. Contentions, wars and fightings among the saints are all in violation of this order; and James has told us that these come of our lusts, which war in our members. All these must be put off as belonging to the old man. "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your

mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. (Col. 3: 8 10) "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." (Galatians 5:16) Nothing which is prompted by carnal selfishness is consistent with gospel order.

In the practical development of this order in the walk of the associated saints in the church, some system is required in the transaction of such business as is incident to their organization. While no special formality is enjoined in this particular, convenience and a decent regard for accuracy require that the actions of the church should be recorded for future reference. Of course such records should be correct and authentic, and in order to secure this authenticity it has been customary, when practicable, to have a clerk to record the acts of the church; and to assure that accuracy which is desirable, as well as to relieve the clerk of liability to mistakes or omissions, it is a prudent course to submit the record to the approval of the church at each meeting, when those present will be competent to judge and correct the record of their own actions. A little attention to this system in their business proceedings would save much annoying uncertainty in subsequent actions of the church. Cases have occurred wherein the memory of those who were present when the church acted in some matter has become confused, and brethren have differed as to particulars. Then an authentic record would settle the difference to the satisfaction of all concerned, and perhaps thereby much trouble might be avoided, and the minds of all be relieved of what would otherwise have excited mutual recriminations, heart-burnings and distrust. Thus even in these, which might be considered matters of minor importance in the church, it is profitable to observe the apostolic injunction to "Let all things be done decently and in order."

This law of perfect order applies to the individual conduct of every subject of our King. In the inspired rule the order of every state and circumstance which ever can arise is given, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. However it may have the appearance of good works or be approved by natural reason nothing can be profitable for the man of God which is not in order according to the test of this rule. Many things in the world may seem by the rule of carnal reason to be desirable, and to promise profit and happiness; but all aside from that which is here written will prove but vain and delusive. As pilgrims and strangers here, the saints are directed, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God; set your affections on things above not on things on the earth." (Col. 3:12)

In neglecting to follow this order many dear children of God have experienced bitter disappointment and deep sorrow; for it is the established order of the Lord in dealing with his children, that "He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." (Gal. 4:8) "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (Rom. 8: 13) This order can apply to none but those who are led by the spirit of God. No others can through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, or sow to the Spirit, since none can know the things of God but by the revelation of the Spirit. This revelation teaches us that the world with all its alluring vanities, and all that pertains to its fashion or order, is to perish with the using, and passeth away. "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." (2 Peter 3: 14) "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and

built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving." (Col. 2: 6, 7)

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe November 1, 1881.)

OBITUARIES

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst by death, our brother, Willie Coleman Holley, June 1, 1967, in Memorial Hospital, Danville, Va.

Brother Holley was the son of the late John and Virginia (Jennie) Holley, born Nov. 6, 1889. He was united in marriage to Miss Lessie Rigney, Dec. 26, 1916, who survives with the following children: Mrs. Elizabeth H. Patterson, Mrs. Ruth H. Parrish, H. C., and Harry W. Holley, all of Danville, Va., Herbert K. Holley, Chatham, Va., Rt. 6. One son, Julian S. Holley, was killed in service February 29, 1944. Also surviving are 7 grandchildren, 6 great grandchildren, three sisters and two brothers.

Brother Holley joined Strawberry Primitive Baptist Church Sept. 2, 1956, and was baptized by the late Elder W. R. Dodd, whom he loved dearly. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and had a sweet hope that Christ had redeemed him from all sin. The writer well remembers the times he visited Elder Dodd and they would converse on Divine Things. He was faithful to his profession and the church's welfare as long as he lived, coming to church often times when he was not physically able. After he lost his eyesight his daughter Elizabeth would bring him to church. He had a smile and kind word for everyone. His honesty and neighborly traits were among his many virtues.

His funeral was conducted by Elders R. S. Payne and H. W. Wray, at Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Chapel, June 3, 1967, with interment in Highland Burial Park, beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, there to await the coming of his precious Saviour.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the will of God who doeth all things well. We, the church at Strawberry, greatly feel our loss, which is his eternal gain. We extend our love and sympathy to the family and may God's grace be upon all that mourn his departure. And again

BE IT RESOLVED, That this resolution be recorded in our Church Record, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, of which a copy is to be sent to each member of the family.

Done by the order of Strawberry Church in conference Saturday, July 1, 1967.

Elder R. S. Payne, Moderator
Josephine Dodd, Clerk

J. FRANK HUDSON

It pleased the Lord to take from our midst on July 7, 1967, our good friend J. Frank Hudson at the age of 66 years, and we would desire to say with one of old, "The Lord hath given and the Lord hath taken away, Blessed be the name of the Lord."

He was born on April 28, 1901, and was raised by his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. John Henry Hudson. On Dec. 22, 1934, he was married to Myrtle Holloway who survives. He is also survived by one son and three grandchildren by a former marriage.

Frank, a very dear friend of all who knew him, was not a member of the visible church but seemed to enjoy going to the meetings very much; and the writer remembers well the day before he passed away, a few of us were gathered together in a home, and he seemed to enjoy it as much as anyone else. The writer would desire to say that church records have never revealed the number of God's chosen people; and we would also desire that the Lord would be pleased to reconcile all who knew and loved our departed friend, to feel that he had spent his appointed time here, and to leave these mortal shores was his eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Holloway Funeral Home, Salisbury, Md., on July 10, 1967, and his body was laid to rest in the Forest Grove Cemetery near Parsonsburg, Md.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

MRS. MARTHA TINDELL GRIFFIN

Mrs. Martha Tindell Griffin died at her home in Dothan, Alabama, August 22, 1967 at the age of seventy-eight. She was the widow of Brother Griffin, and the following are survivors: one daughter, Katrina G. Hinson; five brothers, two sisters and seven grandchildren.

Her funeral was held at the Ward-Wilson Funeral Home, with interment in Goodwater Cemetery, with Elder J. J. Collins, officiating.

and

J. L. HOOVER

J. Lem Hoover died at his home in Cypress, Florida, after a short illness on September 17, 1967. He is survived by three daughters in South Florida, and many other relatives.

Funeral arrangements were in charge of Marianna Funeral Home, with interment in Goodwater Cemetery, with Elder J. J. Collins, officiating.

Elder J. J. Collins

MRS. MAUDE YEATTS PICKERAL

Sister Maude Yeatts Pickeral, widow of the late John Thomas Pickeral, was called to her heavenly home August 17, 1967. Sister Pickeral, formerly of Gretna, had lived in Richmond, Va. several years, where she died. Born in Pittsylvania County May 10, 1890, she was the daughter of the late James and Lou Dodd Yeatts. She joined Springfield Primitive Baptist Church October 8, 1938.

She leaves two daughters, Mrs. Virginia Berger and Miss Agnes Reid Pickeral, both of Richmond; and two sisters, Mrs. L. H. Motley of Richmond, and Mrs. F. L. Oakes of Clifton Forge, Va.

She was a faithful member of her church, which she attended as long as she was able, before she was stricken with a stroke a year ago. She was very humble and patient during her illness. Her two daughters so devoted to their mother, did tenderly and faithfully do all they could for her. Sister Pickeral will be greatly missed in the church, and by relatives and friends.

Funeral services were conducted at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, Gretna, Va., by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench; and her body was laid to rest in Gretna Burial Park, to await the glorious resurrection. May the Lord comfort her loved ones and all who mourn her passing.

Annie Tosh

ETHEL BULLOCK GOSS

It has pleased our Heavenly Father in His infinite wisdom, love and mercy to remove from our misdt our dear sister, Ethel Bullock Goss on July 29, 1967. She was born August 25, 1887, the daughter of T. Giddeon Bullock and Eliza Stem Bullock. On December 21, 1910, she was married to L. Otha Goss. She leaves to mourn her passing her husband, who was so faithful to her; and a host of brethren and friends.

She united with Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church August 8, 1937, and proved a faithful member always filling her seat, as long as she was able. She was confined to her home for several years, but was patient in her afflictions and enjoyed so much the ministers and brethren visiting in her home, talking of the goodness and mercy of our God. She was a great inspiration to the writer.

Her funeral was conducted Sunday afternoon, July 30, 1967, at Gooch Memorial Church by Elder Donald Smith, Elder Wallis Smith and Elder Curry King. Her body was laid to rest in the Church Cemetery under a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the coming of the Lord.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That we express our loss in her passing, and that we pray our Heavenly Father, who only can know our loss, to reconcile us to his Holy will; and be it further Resolved, That we extend our love and sympathy to Brother Goss; and Resolved thirdly, that a copy of this Obituary be spread on our church records, a copy to Brother Goss and a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the Church in Conference, August 12, 1967.

Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
Brother O. Y. Clayton, Church Clerk
Written by Annie C. Gregory,
Assistant Clerk

SISTER NOMA A. PRESCOTT RHUE

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from us our dear sister in Christ, Noma Prescott Rhue, the daughter of Josiah and Mary Prescott. This sister was born March 7, 1878. She was called to her eternal home August 19, 1967, making her stay on earth eighty-nine years and five months.

In the year 1897 she was married to Thomas D. Rhue, who preceded her in death August 9, 1955. They spent their entire married lives at Stella, North Carolina. Soon after her marriage she was received into the fellowship of Hadnot Primitive Baptist Church where her husband, mother and father were members. She was baptized by the late Elder E. C. Smith, having received a lively hope in Christ at an early age. She was blessed to remain a faithful member for seventy years.

The Church has lost a faithful and loving member, the children a precious and devoted mother, her neighbors a very kind friend. Her brethren were always extended a warm welcome when visiting in her home. It seemed that it was her whole life and joy to be associated with old Baptists. She dearly loved to sing the songs of Zion and hear the glorious gospel preached.

We cannot wish her back into this world to suffer, nor can we question the will of God. We read in Job 14:1, 2; "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth as a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and con-

tinueth not." We think of Sister Rhue as a beautiful flower which He planted in His Church, His mortal vineyard here. When each flower reaches maturity and blossoms forth in its beauty, adorned by His spirit that shines forth in His love, then at His appointed time, He plucks it from the garden, it is cut down, and withers away. It fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. The blessed thought is, that He transplants each one that He died for to that eternal city of love and peace, never more to know the troubles and sorrows that His people know and endure in this life, but will be with Him and forever be satisfied. May the Church, her dear children and her many friends be reconciled to the Lord's will, and each one be upheld by the same power that sustained her to the end.

Sister Rhue was given strength and patience to endure her many afflictions without complaining or murmuring. She always had a smile when greeting her friends. Nothing did her more good than when her brethren would gather around her bedside and sing, pray, and preach for her. Even when her physical condition had weakened to the point that she lost interest in all material things, she asked for and tried to help sing the old hymns she loved so dearly. Just a day or so before she departed this life, she asked for, and in a whisper helped sing: "The day is past and gone," etc.

When the end came, it was as falling asleep. She passed so gently and easily from this world of troubles and sorrows, we believe, to her eternal home of rest and peace, to await the second coming of her Lord and Master, to be called from the sleeping dust, to that city whose builder and maker is God, to ever be with Jesus.

In the midst of her brethren, a host of relatives and many dear friends, her funeral was conducted at Hadnot Creek Church by the Elders D. B. Stokes, J. T. Prescott and M. L. Simmons. Her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery with a large display of beautiful flowers.

She leaves to mourn her passing the following children: Jesse R. Rhue, Fayetteville, N. C.; Elder Zennie L. Rhue, Winston-Salem; Mrs. C. C. Norris, Newport, N. C.; Elder Jabez J. Rhue, Swansboro, N. C.; Mrs. John A. Weeks, Swansboro; Walter Redford Rhue, Fort Lawn, S. C.; Roy T. Rhue, Winston-Salem; and Mrs. W. P. Vinson, Swansboro. (One son, Joseph R. Rhue, died in August, 1946.) Also 22 grandchildren, 21 great grandchildren and one great great grandchild. And one sister Mrs. Lena B. Key, Swansboro, N. C.

By order of the church a copy of this notice is to be entered on the church record, a copy sent to the children, to *The Signs of the Times*, *The Old Faith Contender* and *Zions Landmark* for publication.

Elder J. T. Prescott, Moderator
Vilma G. Rhue, Church Clerk

MARY ALICE KERLEY

Mary Alice Kerley, the daughter of Walter and Ellen Mizell, was born near Simpson, Illinois, on July 18, 1908, and departed this life on August 3, 1967, at the age of 59 years.

She joined the Simpson Baptist Church at an early age, and remained a faithful member throughout her life.

She was united in holy martimony to Paul Kerley on August 4, 1929. They were happy during their life in their home in the Flatwoods community.

Her father preceded her in death, but she leaves to mourn her passing her devoted husband and beloved mother. Also surviving are seven brothers: Orlan of East Alton, Ill.; Orval and Wayne of Simpson; Clyde of Cedarville, Ill.; Herschel of Lexington, Ky.; Robert of Springfield, Ill.; and Rillis of Joliet. Two sisters also survive: Mrs. Lora Sickling of Dongola, Ill., and Mrs. Monterey Lierley of Fall City, Wash. Several nieces and nephews as well as many relatives and friends also sadly mourn the passing of their aunt and friend.

Alice was a true and faithful companion. She was devoted to her home and its duties. Her Creator endowed her with a special talent for artistic designs and the beauty of color. She used this talent to beautify not only her home, but the homes of many of her relatives and friends with countless pieces of needlework and construction. These words written by her husband are truly expressive of her life and work: "A precious one from me is gone, A vacant place is made, Her name shall forever be on the wall, And in my heart linger on."

The following lines by a poet whose name is unknown are also expressive of the life and philosophy of this departed one.

"Afraid to die? Ah, No! Not she,
Who calmly faced this life's adversity,
And who through life, as the setting sun,
Could lift her eyes and say,
'Thy will be done.'

For her death held no terrors, had no fears;
Abiding faith sustained her through the years,

And when at last she came to cross the bar,
Then faith in God was her guiding star."

Funeral service were conducted by Elder John H. Simpson.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 136 DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1968 NO. 1

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1/68
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION 1967

Dear Brethren:

As it has come the time for us to be gathered together in this another association, and as it has been the custom in the past to write what is called the Circular Letter, we attempt it with a desire that God will be pleased to direct our minds in such a way that this letter may be fitting to the needs, the comfort and the edification of this another association.

We, the Old School Baptists, have believed through the years of time that our Eternal God doeth the gathering, for we are told in God's holy word "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (St. Matthew 18:20) We believe, therefore, that if this gathering is not in his name that we would not be comforted with that comfort that comes from above: for every good gift and every perfect gift is from above. (James 1:17) We therefore pray that God may be pleased to look down upon us at this time with pity and mercy, for, if not deceived, we have been shown our weakness in the flesh, and thus have been made to cry out from our heart and say with the Publican of old, "Lord be merciful to me a sinner." It has been good in the past and is good now that we have been made to know that we are sinners, for our blessed Lord said that the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

We believe that we, the Old School or Primitive Baptists are a people, if we are what we hope to be, that have been set aside from all other people to believe that we can do nothing of ourselves, to bring about our salvation; but are wholly dependent upon the grace and mercy of our eternal God. The Apostle Paul said, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2:8, 9)

We do not believe that when one has been led by the Spirit of God to see himself as he is by nature, he would desire to boast of his own strength, for he has been shown just how weak he is and that only by the grace of God will he ever reach that eternal rest that awaits God's chosen people. The pilgrimage here in this life is a mysterious one, for as the poet has said, "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." God's ways are past finding out, but what a blessing it is when we are given a mind to think upon our eternal God and his mercies toward a sinful people as we are, a people who daily find themselves sinning in so many ways; but also feeling the judgment of God and the condemnation of sin. The Prophet Ezekiel prophesied saying, "I will feed them with judgment." Therefore can we not say with the Apostle Paul that we die daily? The death that he was talking about was not the corporal when we shall no longer be here in this vain world, but a death that every subject of grace has been made acquainted

with. It is good for us to be made to see our weakness, and to see so clearly that we cannot direct our steps; for it is then that we seek the Lord as a place of refuge.

We do not believe that man has ever, or will ever be able to make himself thirsty for the things of God; but we do believe that God by his loving kindness toward his chosen people, as it pleases him, creates in their hearts a thirst for righteousness; and do believe that he (God) is supplying his saints here on this earth just enough of that heavenly manna to sustain them with the precious hope that they are a part of his chosen people.

Now in this another association, we feel that many have come here desiring to be fed with words of comfort, words that are fitting to that which we humbly trust we have experienced. We do not believe that man has ever learned to preach the gospel in schools of theology but have been taught by the power of God to preach Christ and him Crucified; and that is what we believe many of you have come here at this time to hear. It is the prayer of this association that it may please the Lord to be with our visiting Elders in such a way that they may be enabled to speak to our comfort and edification. We do hope that all of us may feel deep in our hearts that it is good to have been gathered again; and from our hearts praise God who has made it possible. Amen.

(Written by Elder Arthur R. Warren)

MY STRANGER AND I IN THE GARDEN

As I awoke from sleep this morning at daybreak, I was walking in a most beautiful garden laden with all kinds of wonderful vegetables; and the old paling fence was lined with the most beautiful roses and all kinds of sweet smelling flowers. And while I was walking there, I met the kindest and loveliest Stranger; who was clothed in white linen. His hair was as white as the finest lamb's wool; and well groomed. His eyes were gleaming as diamonds, yet so kind and sympathetic; and his feet were shod with golden sandals that seemed to fit so beautifully to his feet. Thus I viewed and admired my lovely Stranger, — that I found later was to be my keeper.

As we walked among the rows of the sweet smelling corn, beans, peas, and all the other vegetables and flowers, he talked with me. We walked and talked until we came to the back garden gate through the old paling fence. Then he reached down and took me by the hand, for I was a small barefooted boy, and led me into the woods behind the garden. Sometimes the going was rough, and then as we walked through the pines the pine needles were soft and soothing to my poor, aching feet; and the odor of the pines seemed to apply a healing to my fast tiring soul and body. As we came to many rough places my frail body could not cross or surmount, my Stranger would take me in his arms and carry me over and put me down; for I must know and feel the hardships; and the shady, restful places along the journey. And as we walked, we talked — my Stranger and I.

Finally we came to a little path that led down to a stream of crystal clear water. There was a narrow foot-log that spanned the stream. I was afraid, and my Stranger took me by the hand, to lead me across; and as we got to the middle of the stream, I looked down into the chilly water. I was again afraid, and my Stranger looked down at me with a beautiful smile, and said, "Fear not, little one." and taking me in his arms, he carried me across to the other side. Then we came to a beautiful meadow of new mown hay, and as the evening was drawing near and the shadows falling fast, the new mown hay gave off an inspiring odor.

So we traveled on, my Stranger and I, (by this time he had become my Stay, my Rock, and my All and All,) through the meadow and up the hill

beyond. At the top of the hill we could see a beautiful valley beyond that spread like a beautiful colored carpet; and in the middle was a little white church, and the people were gathering for meeting. Presently they began singing, "Nearer, my God, to Thee," and as they finished the last stanza, we watched the setting sun go down beyond the far away horizon. Then my Stranger turned to me and said, "Little one, it is time to go home." The journey did not seem so long as my Stranger carried me in his arms through the back garden gate into the garden, and all the beautiful corn, vegetables and flowers seemingly had bowed their heads and closed their eyes for the night time. So he took me into the house and placed me on my bed, and bending over me, spoke these words, "Sleep little one, and rest till the bright morning cometh."

I witnessed the above while very much awake. I do not know what it means, but I do know that I have a sweet hope in my breast that I love Zion, and will some sweet day meet her in that Eternal Home beyond the starry skies.

Most unworthily,
E. V. Poff

(The above was written by Brother E. V. Poff of Roanoke, Virginia, July 18, 1965. The time for him to go home came early in September, 1967; so he is fulfilling the words of his Stranger, "Sleep little one, and rest till the bright morning cometh." How wonderful and varied are the evidences of God's mercies unto his people! — J. D. W.)

ELDER H. M. CURRY'S "THE HAND OF GOD IN HISTORY"

The Lord rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

To the greater number of readers history presents nothing more than a series of disjointed events, having no connection with each other, no dependence upon each other and no relation to each other. But to the truly thoughtful mind the history of this world presents itself as a unit, as one grand whole, as a series of events mutually dependent and interdependent upon each other. The mind which views history in this its true nature, is driven to one of two ways of accounting for it: either come by an inexorable chain of inevitability, or they come as directed by the hand of God of the whole earth.

The athiest who cannot see the hand of God will ascribe all to an inevitable necessity, but he whose eyes are enlightened by faith can see the hand of God ruling not only in heaven, but in earth as well; he can see the answer to the prayer taught by the Son of God: "Thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven." He who has not seen predestination in history, has not seen the philosophy of history; he who has not seen predestination in his own life, has not seen the secret springs of his being. Predestination is the soul of history. God is in history. All history is but the exponent of Providence.

John saw in the hand of him that sat upon the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals. He was permitted to witness the opening of these seals, and has left upon record the things that he saw. When the first seal was opened, a white horse appeared, and he that sat on him had a bow, and a crown was given unto him; and he went forth conquering and to conquer. This was undoubtedly a view of Christ in his risen power and eternal authority, Christ going forth in the execution of the divine will both in heaven and in earth.

But when the second seal was opened, a similar yet very different symbol appeared. And when he had opened the second seal there went out another horse that was red; and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another; and there was given unto him a great sword. A horse, in the Scriptures, is the emblem of power and of battle; red is a symbol of war, carnage and bloodshed. The

history of this world in the history of wars. Horrible as war is, it is the most potent factor of civilization and progress; reformations have never accomplished much in the world; they are good as far as they go, but they have never hurried the race onward; it takes revolutions to do this. As the terrible earthquakes, prodigious upheavals, the great subsidences, the alternate sway of scorching heat and frigid cold, all contituted God's process of fitting this earth for the habitation of man, so wars are ordained the great process of regulating human society and of forwarding civilization. Every event that has put the world forward by a great stride, has been an event of war.

But where did the red horse and his ominous rider come from? They came out of the book that was held in the right hand of him that sat upon the throne; they came from the same place from which the white horse and his rider came: from the book of God's decrees. And power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another. Who gave him this power? Who else but the God of the whole earth? Did not the Son say, "All power is given unto me both in heaven and in earth?" Does not God's word declare that there is no power but of God? Is not God the God of battles?

Let us now turn to history, let us go into the great decisive contests and find God there. Begin with Marathon; in the year 490, B.C., a handful of Greek patriots met hords of Persian invaders upon the plain of Marathon; a determined struggle ensued; the Persians were repulsed, the Greeks were victorious. By this Greek victory the long spell of invincibility was forever broken, and the intellectual treasures of Athens, the growth of free principles, and the enlightenment of what was then the western world, were saved. If the influence exerted on the world by Greece can be estimated, then the results of the battle of Marathon may be measured. Where the destinies of nations are at stake, can any who believe in God say he is not there? The influence of this victory of the Greeks, over two thousand years ago, is inseparably connected with the condition of our nation today.

The defeat of Athens before Syracuse was a decisive blow; this was a contest between Athens and the western colonies. Athens was defeated: had Syracuse been defeated, the energy of Athens would have been found a field in the west for the next century, and Rome would not have conquered Carthage; and Greek, not Latin, would have been the essential element in the language of Spain, Italy and France; and the laws of Athens, and not of Rome, would now have been the foundation of the laws of the civilized world. Is it not clearly evident here that the Lord rules in the kingdoms of men, and gives to whom he will?

Now go to the battle of Arbela, which occurred in 331, B.C. This decisive encounter so far reaching in its results, was between the Greeks under Alexander the Great, and the Persians under Darius. By Alexander's victory at Arbela, Greek customs, the Greek language and Greek civilization were established in all western and southwestern Asia, and northern Africa, to exist nearly a thousand years, and to endure in their effects forever. This planted the Greek language in Judea and Palestine, and thus it became the language of the New Testament. So the results of this battle are far reaching, not only in political affairs, but in the affairs of the church of Christ, and are as real and present as if the battle occurred but half a century ago. Alexander was the hammer in the hand of God to break in pieces the great Persian Empire.

The battle of Metaurus was conspicuous in directing the course of empires, and deciding the destinies of nations. Two hundred and seven years before Christ, the Romans and Carthaginians engaged in this decisive contest. This battle decided the great question whether the Semitic family of nations, which includes the Arabs, Jews, Phoenicians and Carthaginians, should rule the world, or whether the Germanic

family, which includes the Greeks, Romans, Germans, and those from whom the English speaking people have descended, should continue their course. The results of the Roman victory stand in the present condition of nations, and shall continue to enlarge and exist while the world shall stand.

The battle of Chalons deserves mention here. This encounter came to pass in 451, A.D., between the Romans and their allies, and the dreaded Huns under Attila, their king, who was called the scourge of God. Romans arms were victorious, and Attila was defeated in his plans to establish a dynasty upon the ruins of the Roman Empire. All Europe was thus freed from the devastating ravages of the destructive Huns. The mind that can see the first letter of the alphabet of God's providence can see the finger of God in this, as he rules in the kingdom of men.

The battle of Tours has left its imprint upon the world's history for all time to come. Here in 732, A.D., a small body of troops under Charles Martell, encountered and put to rout a great body of invading Mohammedans. The mussulmans were beaten back in this their last attempt to conquer Europe, thus rendering it possible for the development and progress of European civilization to go on, not uninterruptedly, but in its ultimate career.

By the great battle of Glenheim, in 1704, the almost universal dominion of France and Spain was broken by the armies of England and Austria. If this had not occurred, the destinies of nations would have been altogether different. Europe, instead of being a variety of independent states, where mutual hostilities keep courage alive, and national rivalry stimulates talent, would have been sunk into the slumber attendant upon universal dominion. The Roman Catholic power would have been re-established in England, the Anglo-Saxon race would have been arrested in its career, and the condition of the United States would be much like that of Mexico and the rest of Spanish America. But God ordered that the power of France and Spain should be broken, and the battle of Blenheim fulfilled the decree. At the battle of Pultowa, in 1709, the power of Sweden, which at that time was very great, was forever broken, and the ascendancy of Russia established until she now stands a giant among the nations. This battle is no less important for what it broke down than for what it established. Many more examples might be cited, but these are sufficient.

What more is needed to show those who believe in God how his predestination is exemplified in the history of nations; to show that in the great battles and revolutions in this world that God's purpose is accomplished; that the red horse and his rider came from the book of God's decrees; and that the power possessed by these, is the power which God has given for the accomplishment of his own purposes.

"See the mystic weaver sitting
High in heaven, his loom below;
Up and down the treadles go;
Takes for web the world's dark ages,
Takes for woof the kings and sages,
Takes the nobles and their pages,
Takes all stations and all stages.
Thrones are bobbins in his shuttle,
Armies make them scud and scuttle,
Web into the woof must flow;
Up and down the nations go,
At the weaver's will they go."

We should not look at the battles cited above as isolated events, but each has its place in the great war, and is inseparably connected with other great conflicts.

The opening of the second seal, revealing the red horse and his rider, is a prophecy in symbol of what the Saviour prophesied in word as recorded in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, when he said, "For nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom." When the Son of God uttered this prophecy he was not predicting something that might come to pass, or something likely to come; he was not even foretelling what he saw coming into the world, but on the contrary he was declaring the immutable decree of the Father. When God says a thing shall be,

his word has gone forth as a pledge that he will bring it to pass. The word "shall" in the text, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me," no more expresses a decree than the word "shall" expresses a decree in the text, "For nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom."

Although every land and every age have been invaded by the red horse and his rider, and war has been the chief business of men, there are other fields of activity in which the providence of God is clearly traceable. Then the third seal was opened a black horse appeared, and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. This was a symbol of famine; great scarcity is signified by the balances. The seven years' famine in Egypt was done by God. (Gen. 41: 28-32) These are the words of Scripture, "What God is about to do, he showeth unto Pharaoh, and for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice, it is because the thing is established with God, and God will shortly bring it to pass." One would say famines are the result of physical causes; so they are; this fact only broadens the field of providence. What controls physical causes? Natural laws. Who established natural laws? God. Who executes natural laws? God. Of what force would natural laws be without the perpetual execution of them? Who ever knew a law of any kind to enforce itself?

At the opening of the fourth seal, the pale horse and his rider came forth. The name of the rider was Death, and Hell followed with him. Power was given unto them to kill with the sword, and with hunger and with death, and with the beasts of the earth. This is a symbol of pestilence, which usually follows in the wake of famine. Pestilence has done its part in human history, and dark and woeful are its footsteps. The pale horse and his ominous rider must run their course, because they proceed from the book held in the right hand of him who sits upon the throne. The Saviour himself said in the wonderful prophecy recorded in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, There shall be pestilences. So the Scriptures undoubtedly teach that pestilences are controled, directed and administered by God.

In his history of epidemics in Britain, Dr. Creighton designates as the two greastest pestilences in all history, the great plague in the reign of Justinian in 543, and the Black death in 1347. Both of these had a worldwide sweep, from country to country, and from generation to generation, changing the face of the world through the vast destruction of population which they effected. The first of these brought to an end the old civilization, and the second terminated the dark ages of Europe, and opened the way for modern civilization and progress. Who can tell how many evils were swept away by these prodigious marches of death, and how many obstacles to human progress were removed, and in how many ways they answered God's purposes?

When the fifth seal was opened there was revealed the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus.

This presents to us the awful picture of Christian martyrdom. The Saviour told his disciples, They shall deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you.

In this company of souls under the altar, was righteous Abel, prophets of God slain in every age, the little children slain by the decree of Herod, Stephen, and countless others. This company received daily additions; Peter was crucified, Paul was beheaded, and all the other apostles with one exception, died at the hand of wicked persecuters. But did they thus perish without God's decree? No, in no wise.

Listen to the answer given to those under the altar, when they in their impatience cried for vengeance. It was said unto them that they should rest yet for a little season until their fellow servants and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled. From this record we see that they had brethren that should be killed as they were, and that this had to be fulfilled. As Christ was delivered to death by the determinated counsel and foreknow-

ledge of God, so all of his brethren that have been put to death by wicked hands have been delivered by the same determinate counsel. Christ said to Pilate "Thou couldst have no power at all against me if it were not given thee from above." It may be said as truthfully of his brethren, that wicked men can have no power all against them except it were given them from above.

Wonderful, awful and appalling were the scenes presented at the successive opening of the remaining seals. Whatever these awe-inspiring imageries are intended to symbolize, they are undoubtedly events which were to transpire in this world. They constitute an amazing vitascope of universal history. The rise and fall of nations, religious and political revolutions, civil and international wars, terrific convulsions of nature, events of every genus and every species are here presented in the boldest, most impressive and most convincing imagery and symbols.

The one thing that I would impress upon the mind of the reader is, that these things all proceeded from the book held in God's right hand, and which was opened by Jesus himself. One would say, that would make God the author of sin. With such an one I will not stop to argue, for one who would seek to evade the doctrine of God's predestination by resorting to such subterfuge as that old threadbare fallacy, is joined to some idol, and for my part I shall let him alone, at least for the present.

"Glorious wonder, what a weaving
To the dull beyond believing;
Such no fabled ages know.
Only faith can see the mystery,
How long the aisles of history,
Where the feet of sages go,
Loveliest to the fairest eyes,
Grand the mystic tapet lies.
'Tis believed by all believing,
That the great God himself is weaving,
Bringing out the world's dark mystery;
In the light of faith and history;
And as web and woof diminish,
Comes the grand and glorious finish,
When begin the golden ages,
Long foretold by seers and sages."

"Oh the depth both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."

H. M. Curry

(The above was taken from the December 1, 1899, issue of the Signs, and we believe will be most interesting to all of our readers. Elder Curry was living at Pleasant Plains, Ill. when he wrote the above. We greatly admire his understanding of the doctrine and his gift of presenting it. — J. D. W.)

P. O. Box 117
Black Creek, N. C.

SOME HISTORY OF WILSON, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler;

In our local newspaper (The Wilson Daily Times) they have a section called **Whiz Quiz** for the purpose of anyone who wishes to write or call in any questions they desire to be answered.

On July 29, 1967, someone had asked the following two questions and I will quote them as they appeared in that issue.

Q— In what year was Wilson founded and who was the first mayor of Wilson?

A— Wilson was founded and incorporated on January 29, 1849, but Wilson County was not formed until 1855. Wilson's first mayor was Gen. Joshua Barnes who was influential in the formation of Wilson County. He was a member of the state militia and also was an Elder of the Primitive Baptist Church.

Q— When was the first church built in Wilson? Who was the pastor and what was the name of the church?

A— The first churches in the area of Wilson (before it was named Wilson) were Primitive Baptist. The earliest was Toisnot Baptist Church, founded in 1750. It was situated on the road leading to Tarboro about three miles from the courthouse site. Elder John Thomas was the first pastor.

Brother Spangler I hope this information will answer some people's questions as to how old our church is. I hope I'm proud that these good people allow me to mingle with them. If this is of any interest to you, you might pass it along

to others in the Signs Of The Times. Come to see us when you can. Hope to see you at our association in October.

Sincerely yours,
Preston Gay
Clerk of Wilson Church

---

508 Bethlehem Rd.,
Rocky Mount, N. C. 27801

Dear Editors:

My husband and I have been reading and rejoicing in the **Signs of the Times** for several years. It has been a source of comfort and help to us. Please keep the blessed truth in each issue, and may God continue to bless you.

Some day I pray God will give me the words and wisdom to express my feelings and tell some of my experiences, if any at all.

May the Lord be with you now and always.

A little sister in Christ, I hope,
Nina Pearson

THE WAY

46 Cedar Street
Kingston, N. Y.

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

Just a few lines letting you know that though you are out of sight, you are not out of mind. The time has gone quickly and the time for our annual gathering called an association is close at hand, where we preach, and sing aloud, (and in the secret closets of our poor hearts), some of the wonderful works of God to poor sinners the children of the Heavenly King by the New Birth — Jesus the way from death unto life; the way from sin unto salvation; from a deaf ear unto a hearing ear; the way from being blind to seeing clearly; the way from weakness in the flesh to being strong in the Lord; the way from dead works to serving and trusting the living God; the way from darkness to light; the way from telling what man has done to telling what God has done, and what He is able to do; the way from foolishness unto wisdom; the way from hell's dark door to heavenly peace; the way for the troubled sin-sick soul from this sin cursed world to the rest that remains for the people of God . . .

With much love to all the brethren.

Sincerely,
Brother A. J. Slauson

READER FOR MANY YEARS

1371 Huntington Street
Crescent City, Calif. 95531

Dear Brother Spangler:

Enclosed is $3.00 for this year's subscription. I am nearly 82 years old, and have a bad right hand and arm, and it is just once in awhile that I can write. I am sorry that I am late.

I have been a reader of the **Signs** for many years, as was my father and are my three brothers. There is no Old Baptist Church near here, and it has been six years since my brother John preached at my home. My father also was a Baptist minister.

My dear wife passed away in May, 1965; and I have maintained our home. I live alone, and work in the woods making split material from Redwood logs. It is hard work, but I seem to stand up under it: I ask the Lord to give me strength and endurance, and I thank Him that he has done it.

I do a lot of reading, especially the New Testament; and do not feel like going to bed until I read at least one chapter. I get along quite well with my neighbors, though they want me to go to their sunday schools and churches. In the woods many times a day I give praise and honor and glory to Almighty God and our Saviour. I desire to live according to the precepts of the Bible, and feel thankful for my good health. I am somewhat like my dear father said when he was about eighty-seven, "I had rather be sleeping in Jesus, than be living in this troublesome world."

May God bless you and your associates, and all the brothers and sisters in

Christ Jesus. From an unworthy sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all.

Very truly yours,
Evan Hall

CONSIDERING A HOME FOR THE AGED

For some time it has been the mind of a number of our people that a *Home for the Aged* should be established by the Old School Baptists, either in Virginia or North Carolina.

A number of our people are living in homes which are operated by individuals, or some organization.

It would be a blessing to these to be in a Home where they could associate with those of their faith, and to have the gospel preached to them regularly by our ministers.

At an informal meeting of fourteen brethren, including six ministers from the Upper Country Line, the Staunton River, and the Pigg River Associations, it was unanimously agreed to make a diligent inquiry among Old School Baptists, as to the number who are interested in entering a Home of this kind. These brethren also agreed to serve as a Committee to explore the possibilities of such a Home; the laws pertaining to it; the cost of purchase and operation, etc., and to meet again in early 1968, to give a report, and to present definite proposals to our people as to cost, operation, and ways to finance it.

It appeared to be the opinion of those present, that a corporation should be formed, and stock sold to those who would like to purchase it.

Please let us hear from you by addressing all communications to Elder D. V. Spangler, c/o Signs of the Times, Rt. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane, Danville, Va. 24541.

DESIRES CORRESPONDENCE ON DOCTRINE

Box 253
Wheelersburg, Ohio 45694

The *Signs of the Times:*

I am a reader of the *Signs,* and have in mind to ask that you publish this writing. The reason is, I hear many of our Old Baptists preach Foreordination, Predestination, Election, and Purpose of God, but when Absolute Predestination is mentioned, they say that it won't do. I believe in an absolute or sovereign God, and I am told by some that I should use Allwise God, or something like that. Some seem to think we ought to "whittle down" God to about half-size, and let man have a little something to say about it, as though men have something a little better than God had in the beginning; and would put it as though man is his own keeper.

I do not want to leave the impression that I am a critic or trouble maker, so would like for some to write me concerning this absolute doctrine, and set me right if it isn't the truth, and according to God's Word. I suppose that most of the old regular Baptists know what this absolute doctrine is: with me God set his decrees and bounds, and counted the cost before he ever formed anything, and nothing has gone wrong or contrary. I have to believe this because I experienced that God sent his Spirit to this poor one, and awoke me out of a dead state which I had been in for twenty-three years, and gave me another spirit and mind, which I have until this day. I am seventy-seven years old, and He said he would be with me to the end.

I know of only one God, and he says that he has all power in heaven and in earth, and that the powers that be are ordained of him. He said that he made all things for his own purpose and glory. This is the God I desire the brethren write about concerning this much disputed question. I have only a few friends of this doctrine in this part of the country.

I am sending a little gift to help send the *Signs* to others.

C. S. Parsons

PLEASE NOTE
AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

We have had three increases in the cost of printing the *Signs of the Times* during the last few years. The last one in November of 1967 amounts to about fifty dollars per month. This, with the increase in postal rates to go into effect in January, 1968, will increase our cost about sixty dollars per month.

We have been able to absorb the increases in the past by using the income from the fund raised several years ago. Without this income we would have had a debt of about two thousand dollars during the past three years, since the subscription price does not cover the cost of publication.

The gifts to the Indigent Fund have been of much help, since we have many on the free list.

We face one of three decisions: We must increase the subscription price, reduce the size of the paper, or receive more donations to our Fund. We do not want to use any of the funds given several years ago, since the money is well invested, and the income has enabled us to continue until now.

We have in mind to increase the subscription price to $3.50 for one year, or $6.00 for two years.

We contract the printing, and the cost is now approximately $500.00 per month; while the mailing, addressing, making stencils, etc., is done in the home of D. V. Spangler; with the preparation of copy for the printer, editing, etc., being done in the home of John D. Wood.

We would like suggestions from our readers, since the Primitive Baptists own the paper: it being a non-profit corporation, operated by and for our people.

The Editors

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next **Black Creek Union** will be held, the Lord willing, at the church in Wilson, N. C., the fifth Saturday and Sunday in December.

The church is located in the city of Wilson, on the corner of Green and Jackson Streets. All are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with Hancock's Church, Pitt County, N. C., the fifth Saturday and Sunday in December.

All lovers of the Truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the **Skewarkey Union** was appointed to be held with the Flat Swamp Church, Martin County, N. C., the 5th Sunday in December and Saturday before. Elder W. E. Grimes was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder M. E. Garner, alternate.

The church is located 3 miles southwest of Robersonville, N. C. We invite all to come and worship with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Clerk

Danville, Virginia **January, 1968**

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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(To November 1, 1967)

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Elder S. C. Phillips, Ind.	1.00
Mrs. H. S. Howell, Ala.	5.00
Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.	1.00
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Mrs. Ruth Lucht, Md.	10.00

EDITORIAL

Again we enter into a New Year, and into the 136th volume of the **Signs of the Times**; and we are glad to be able to greet our brethren and friends again.

There are so many distressing secular things in which we are directly involved, that unless we are blessed to stand still and see what end God will make of them, we would be in great fear.

And it is so religiously, for much of the religious world is in such a perturbed condition as independent bodies, they are clamoring to form a great confederation for the stated purpose of curing the evils of the world, and to save the people from their sins. When, as a matter of fact, the man of sin is being further revealed, and the mystery of iniquity is working; and will continue until "the Lord shall consume it with the spirit of his mouth; and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." (see Thessalonians, second chapter)

Without his hope, the anchor of his soul, what terrible fear one would have, since his eyes have been opened to understand the things which are about us. But the Lord provides all things needful to sustain him through his journey.

As we enter into a new volume, we feel that everyone who finds that the principles maintained by the **Signs** are reflections of the Scriptures, and are those things which have been implanted in him by the work of the Spirit, is bound to give thanks to the Giver of these wonderful things: Not only for giving and maintaining them in his personal experience, but also has provided that he shall have correspondence by the printed, silent word of his brethren, which speaks louder than all the exciting things of the world's events. Truly, none know the joy of these things except those who experience that, "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man."

The purpose of the **Signs** has been, and yet continues to be, to feed the spiritual sheep and lambs, as the Spirit directs both the writers and the readers. With the Apostle Paul, we would, "Commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Like one preaching to a congregation, a writer does not himself know to whom the Spirit shall direct his thoughts: whether it shall be a beginning of a gracious experience in the heart of someone, or to comfort and to confirm the work of the Spirit already begun. When the gospel is proclaimed with power and in demonstration of the Spirit, either in speaking or in writing, it is never in vain.

So it is with the **Signs of the Times:** the whole manner of its beginning; its being sustained for 135 years; and its bringing comfort and joy to thousands over the years, has been, and still is under the immediate direction of the Spirit. Surely, otherwise it would have ceased long ago. We have no notion that these things are in our own hands: it would be absurd to think so even for a moment. The things of the Spirit of God are entirely different and separate from the things of the world. They are of a different kingdom. The language of one is foreign to the language of the other. The language of the Spirit is a "private language": one must be "native born" or he can never learn it; others "cannot frame to pronounce it right." (see Judges 12: 6) By language we mean, of course, the entire scope of revelation pertaining to the spiritual kingdom.

The apostle wrote of the manner and the accomplishment of the resurrection as a mystery; as he did also of godliness. We are now concerned with the mystery of the kingdom. The Saviour said, "My kingdom is not of this world." The members of his kingdom are in the

world, but are not of the world. The children of Israel were in Egypt, but they were not of Egypt; and at the proper time they were removed therefrom.

So it is with the church: the true worshippers of God are traveling home. They were chosen of God before the world began, to pass through their earthly pilgrimage on their journey to their eternal home. As with everything else, this was fixed of God as to purpose and end: Consider this, without an earthly body, and that fallen into sin and condemnation, there could be no need of a Saviour; without a body to die there would be no possibility of a resurrection; and without the adoption or redemption of the body, there could be no final manifestation of the children as heirs of God and joint-heirs with the Lord. As unfolded in the Scriptures, the whole matter was of purpose according to the declared will of God.

These things we rejoice in. The recounting of individual experiences of being brought from darkness to light, from death to life, is a joy not known outside of the family of God. We read in Malachi that they who feared the Lord spoke often one to another. Who among those who believe these things, does not love to hear the truth as it is in Jesus preached in their meetings, and to visit with their brethren and friends, and converse concerning their hopes and fears; and who among them does not love to read what their brethren write concerning the same things?

A matter which seems strange to others, is that no attempt is made to persuade any one to believe as Old School Baptists do, and to join the church. (This is quite different from admonishing and encouraging those who are found in the way.) But the reason for this is made plain if one is ever brought to know that believing the truth is solely by the teaching of the Spirit, and a matter of revelation. It was so with the brethren in the Scriptures, and it has been so with the brethren in every age. A person may be persuaded in natural things, but he cannot be persuaded to believe anything so contrary to natural reasoning, as that salvation is solely by the grace of God, and unto God's own people. The Lord's people are continually examining themselves whether they be in the faith or not, for their's is a pathway of many experiences — they are sometimes up, and sometimes down; but in it all, they learn that God's grace is sufficient for them.

We know from the Scriptures that the Lord adds to the church daily such as shall be saved, and that is the work of God that any believe on him whom He hath sent; and that the promise is unto all that the Lord shall call. We know that no man can come unto Jesus except the Father draws him, and that he is one who was chosen in Christ before the world began: he being brought through exercises in which his sonship is revealed. We know these things in our own experiences, and are confirmed in them as the Spirit continues to take the things of Jesus and shows them to us.

How great are His mercies towards us and his blessings without number! As we look back over the years which have passed in our lives, we find that we have always been provided for both naturally and spiritually; and since his promises are faithful, we look to the years ahead, whether we live or die, with the feeling of joy that all will be well.

We feel that the Lord will cause the brethren and friends to continue to support the **Signs**, so that, as He wills, it will continue to go forth regularly, bearing the same testimony it has in the past. You can help your editors by continuing to submit your letters and articles which can be published; by sending your renewals and new subscriptions; and by remembering the Indigent Fund.

May God's grace be with each one of you.

J. D. W.

(We would mention that we find it impossible to acknowledge receipt of all

the letters, etc. which we receive; but they are carefully noted and appreciated, and handled to the best of our ability.

We would also again call attention that we must have all notices for publication in our hands by the 25th of the month previous to publication date. There are some notices in this January issue which would have been in December had we received them earlier; and they may be too late to be of benefit to anyone.

Many obituaries we receive for publication are much longer than we can afford space to publish. Please save us the work of editing them by limiting them to about 300 words. This will be a half-column or more, which is sufficient to give all necessary information. Many obituaries are of local interest — we are glad to publish them, but please limit their length. —J. D. W.)

EDITORIAL

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

We deem it appropriate to begin the editorial section of the first issue of the 136th volumn of SIGNS OF THE TIMES with the scriptural quotation: **"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon."** This quotation has been the motto of the SIGNS these many decades. It appears on the front cover in bold letters. It has repeatedly appeared on the front cover of every issue since 1835. Why was this quotation chosen in preference to others as the motto of this periodical, is the question that now concerns us.

We must go to the book of Judges in the Bible and read especially the 6th and 7th chapters in order to glean some of the reasons why this expression is so important to lovers of the truth. The book of Judges is a history of Israel during the period spoken of by Paul, "And after that he gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet." (Acts 13: 20) Israel suffered many calamities as a result of their forsaking the Lord, and idol-worship. The anger of the Lord was hot against Israel so that God delivered them into the hands of spoilers many times, "Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them." (See Judges 2: 13-17) The weakness and idolatry of Israel within and of themselves were so manifest many times during the time of the Judges' rule that each and every deliverance by the Lord made manifest His great mercy to a weak and rebellious people. Their whoring after other gods deserved the severe punishment of being cut off without remedy; however, God would only deliver them into the hands of the enemy for the purpose of humbling them until they cried to Him for deliverance. Sometimes the sword of the Lord would be against Israel, sometimes against the enemy. The enemy always thought it was by their own hand that they subdued Israel, yet Israel was made to know that it was the gracious act of God that saved them from oblivion.

Continued circles of sins, judgments, repentances, and deliverances compose the book of Judges. These same circles make up the history of spiritual Israel, the Church. Church people mix with idolaters and become contaminated with Idolatry. The gross sin of idolatry of Israelites begets judgment upon them from God. This chastisement becomes so heavy that it begets repentance. This repentance is followed by speedy deliverance. Peace is only for a moment because the church forgets her deliverer in time of peace, and begins anew to mix and mingle with the world. She has sinned again and must go around the circle again. How prone we are to forget **The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon!** Immediately after the death of each of the judges, Israel corrupted themselves again. (See Judges 2: 19) When Israel did not have a special watchman, prophet, or judge, supplied and ordained by the Lord, she always went astray. We feel that it is a good sign of the Lord's watchful care over the church when He provides good pastors to watch over the

flock.

It seems that Israel was in her worst plight during the time of the seven years plunder of the Midianites, Amalekites, and other nomad tribes. It had become so terrible that the Israelites were forced to dwell in caves, dens, and strongholds. The enemy came as grasshoppers for multitude; they trampled down the fields; they plundered vineyards and gardens; and they seized the cattle, and plundered man and house. No sustenance for Israel was left. The riots were terrible. God had delivered Israel into the hands of the wicked in order to humble them. These afflictions were so severe that finally, ". . . the children of Israel **cried** unto the Lord." (Judges 6: 6) No doubt they pitied themselves a long time and complained to one another of their plight before they really cried to God for deliverance. Maybe, as the church, they tried many times to negotiate with the enemy. It is peculiar that the same nations that led them into idolatry were the same nations that would persecute them. Even though Israel's sins were great, God's mercy was greater. He heard their **cry.** How did God answer the cry?

God sent first a prophet to reprove with a message before He sent an angel with a message of deliverance. This message of reproof contained a list of great deliverances Israel had experienced by God's hand, as well as reminding them of His promises. God reminded Israel of the fact that He had said, ". . . I am the Lord your God; fear not the gods of the Amorites in whose land ye dwell: but ye have not obeyed my voice." (Judges 6: 10) The Israelites had been afflicted enough by the hand of God through the enemy; now, He gives them a sharp rebuke through His prophet. It is a good sign when God scolds us through His ministers because His rebukes often are forerunners of His mercy. These rebukes make us so ashamed and disgusted with ourselves. We could not be satisfied without a few stripes when we feel to rightly deserve so many. The prophet must come before the angel; the angel must come before the deliverance. We find a parallel case in the New Testament. The prophet, John, was sent before the angel to prepare the way of the Lord. The angel was sent to both Mary and her espoused husband before the Deliverer, Jesus, came. We find another parallel in our own experience. We sin. We are turned over to Satan and his host for a siege of persecutions. After severe afflictions God sends a prophet, or minister, to us. We are chided into deep humiliation as a result of this minister's message. All this properly prepares us to realize that deliverance must come "By grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the **gift of God.**"

We read in Psalms 17: 13, ". . . Deliver my soul from the wicked which is thy sword." We read in the writings of Isaiah, "O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is my indignation." (Isaiah 10: 5) We read from the pen of David, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." (Psalms 76: 10) We read in our own experience that even the wrath of enemies upon us is a blessing in disguise. We read in our own experience that pleas to enemies to be easy on us, is all in vain; yet prayer to God will get results. Negotiations with our enemies are in vain because they are in the hands of God. God raised them up. He only can put them down. We read in our experience that cries to God only will be any help to us. Should we be successful in negotiating with our enemies it would be our willingness to reject the truth and accept error. This always bring us into deeper trouble because we are caught in their net. We read in our experience that God has so ruled the actions of the wicked that we have never suffered in vain a stroke from their hand. We read in our experience that **All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.** How good it is to know that whether it be the persecution of the enemy, or the persecution by the hand of brethren, our problems are to be solved by God. No use pleading to

others, God holds the reins! The sword of the Lord is effective when he uses the wicked as His sword in both humbling the Lord's people and making proud the enemy. The Lord's sword is used for both delivering His people in a unit, and confusing and scattering the enemy.

An angel appeared with a message of deliverance after the fore-runner, the prophet, had accomplished his bidding. This angel did not appear to all Israel but only to Gideon, the son of Joash of the tribe of Manasseh. When the angel appeared, Gideon was threshing "Wheat by the winepress to hide it from the Midianites." Yes, in spite of the malice of the enemies, the Lord makes secret provisions for His own people. Even though they had gone though the terrible siege of the enemy, Israel yet had a little wheat and a little wine. This was being hidden from the enemy. Even in the midst of the greatest turmoil in the church there is someone threshing wheat by the winepress. Some bread and some drink is provided for the Lord's people even when they are greatly distressed. It is provided in secret places, hidden from the enemy. This angel must have been the Lord of angels. The first words spoken to Gideon by the angel was, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour." (See Judges 6: 12) The Lord's presence brings joy finally to the afflicted. Who else but Jesus, the mighty Saviour, could be mighty, bold, and courageous? The presence of the Lord makes all the difference! God chose the weak to confound the mighty. Gideon said, "If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? . . . but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites." The Lord appeared to Gideon only. The Lord did not appear to the people but to the leader of the people whom God had chosen. The Lord had before appeared to Moses, not Israel. Gideon could not suppose himself to be above his brethren, or exempt. Gideon speaks for the whole of Israel, as Jesus speaks in behalf of His brethren. Gideon could not feel to enjoy the praise of his own state as long as his brethren suffered.

God's ways are not man's ways. His choice is of the little and poor, whereas man's choice would be of the great and rich. Gideon said, "Behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." None have ever been raised by the Lord but those who have been cast down in their estimation of themselves. If one does not feel little before the Lord appears, he certainly will feel little after the appearance. The Lord manifests His greatness in mercy through men who are weak in themselves. Gideon asked for a sign. He must be sure that this unreasonable message came from God. His faith must be strengthened by greater evidences than mere words. How strange these words seemed to him! How could these things be true? He seeks to have surer ground for an abiding faith. Gideon is minded that such a messenger certainly deserves a present. Such wonderful and marvelous words deserved tribute to the speaker. Gideon asks the angel to tarry until he could bring a present and set it before the angel. The angel promised. Yes, Gideon must be by himself for awhile to meditate alone as he prepares a kid and unleavened bread for this wonderful guest. The record is silent upon the thoughts of Gideon while preparing the feast. The strange words the angel had said must have kept Gideon's mind employed. Such questions as: How could I, who am so little and poor, be called a man of valour? How can it be that I am to deliver Israel by smiting the Midianites "As one man," must have flooded his mind. Gideon was poor but he could give meat and bread to one who brought such wonderful message!

It was Gideon's intention to prepare a dinner, yet God had ordained that it should be a sacrifice. Gideon brought cakes, flesh, and broth to eat; yet God had ordained that the broth be poured out and the remainder to be used as a sacrifice. The angel gave specific and peculiar orders, yet Gideon followed these specific instructions without hesitation or questioning. The cakes and

flesh were laid upon the rock as ordered. The angel touched the flesh, not the rock, with his staff. Fire immediately came out of the rock and consumed both flesh and cakes. **What a sign!** Moses had before touched a rock that brought forth water; now an angel brings fire out of a rock with a touch of his staff. The angel's words were strangely wonderful, but not so wonderful as this! The faith of Gideon must have been increased greatly as this rock became an altar before his eyes. The same power that brought fire out of a stone could raise courage and power out of the doubting heart of Gideon. He that consumed flesh and cake with fire could consume Midian with Gideon's little faith. It is so wonderful what God can do to strengthen the faith of those who pray, "Help thou mine unbelief." The angel's commission had been completed and he disappeared. When Gideon's doubts had subsided, his fear increased. He who was said to be mighty in valour, now quaked and trembled at the sight and miraculous workings of an angel. God comforted him by saying, "Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die." (Judges 6: 23)

The Lord further instructed Gideon to destroy the altar of Baal and erect an altar to God on the same rock that emitted fire. Gideon must first destroy the god of idolatry before destroying the idolaters. Baal's altar must be ruined before the erection of an altar to God. They cannot stand together. The true God is not satisfied with just a change of consecrating Baal's altar to use in worshiping God. The altar must be destroyed. A new altar must be erected. It is not enough for a false church to be consecrated to the worship of God, but the false must be destroyed and a new church erected. All of the traditions and superstitions of man which are not according to "Thus saith the Lord," must be put down and abandoned before the Lord will deliver from the enemy. All alliances with the enemy must come down. There is no agreement between the temple of idols and the temple of God.

God proved to Gideon that He was the God of fire, earth, water, and all. He would have Israel to know that it was not their might that saved them. Gideon only had 32,000 men yet God said that was too many. Those who were fearful and afraid were to be excused. This surely does not mean to convey fearful and afraid of **God,** but fearful and afraid of their enemies. 22, 000 men were in that group. Many would be in the army as long as they are not confronted with the prospects of war; but let a war come and the majority would be afraid and would leave. There were only 10,000 courageous men left. God said that is "Too many." Many are called but few are chosen. God tested them. What a peculiar test! "Every one that lapped water with his tongue as a dog lappeth" should be chosen. Every one that bowed down to drink were dismissed. Those who stood lapping water from their hands must have displayed their devotion to their leader. Those who bowed to drink showed their concern for their own gratification. They were more interested in their drink than performing their duty as a good soldier. No doubt they were accustomed to bowing down. They may have been some of those Israelites who had bowed to the image of Baal that were sent home. Only 300 of the 10,000 were left in the army. Read the 7th chapter of Judges, beginning with verse 9, to see how that God works even in the hearts, minds, and tongues of the enemies to cause a name to be feared. God prepared a dream in the mind of one Midianite, and the interpretation of that dream in the mouth of another, so that the name, Gideon, would be feared. You will find how that Gideon had been stripped of all his army with exception of 300 men, but was encouraged when it was made known to him that his name was so greatly feared by the enemy. Even though this encouragement came from the enemy Gideon worshiped God. To hear of himself as a barley cake did not disturb him when he learned that it would break the tents of Midian. It matters not how small we be just so

victory is gained. Gideon knew the victory was already won when he was convinced that God dealt with both the Midianites and Israelites. The victory was certain even though it had not been manifest to Israel, but to its leader.

Gideon was no longer in doubt but boldly kept on in accord with God's directions. Even though he had been told that Midian was already delivered, he must persevere in order that the manifestation of this deliverance be complete.

We might have expected Gideon to charge these 300 men to whet their swords, sharpen their spears, and fit their armour. Did he so charge them? NO! He gives orders for pitchers, lights, and trumpets. There is no need for anything other than noise and light to confound this host. Of course the name Gideon would scare them. Gideon divided them into three companies and gave them charge, "Look on me and do likewise." What a good charge! The leader would set the pattern and others would do as he did. He did not give them the charge before he supplied them properly. First, Gideon," Put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers." (Judges 7:16) Undoubtedly this trumpet had a certain sound. Trumpets were used to call soldiers together and was an alarm of war. Paul said, "For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" (1 Cor. 14:8) Since priests were accustomed to use trumpets in their day for the battles of the Lord, I am convinced, that these trumpets represent the gift of the ministry placed in the hands of the ministers by their leader, Jesus Christ. See Joshua 6th chapter for proof of this use of trumpets. The Gospel has a certain sound. It sounds of love, grace, and mercy to sensible sinners. When the trumpet is rightly blown it breaks the pitcher which is of clay. It blasts the goodliness of man as it magnifies the grace of God. It will put the enemy to flight. Man is made of clay just as the pitcher. The man must be broken before the light of truth will shine. The lamp is not the light, neither will it give light until lighted by the Spirit. The lamp is a figure of profession. There is no real light in the profession until our leader comes from within the camp. Jesus must make a fresh appearance to us before our sermons will do any good. When Jesus appears we can blow the trumpet, break the pitcher, let the light shine, and shout, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." We are not to look to man for life, righteousness, or salvation. This must be experienced as a gracious favor of God bestowed upon hell deserving sinners.

David said to the Philistines, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defiled." (1 Sam. 17: 45) David had the better sword. He could have properly said, **The sword of the Lord and of David.** Spiritual swords will be victorious over all else. The name of the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, is the weapon of weapons. That is all we need. In Exodus 16: 3, we read: "The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace." No use for us to engage in a hot war with our enemies, for our God is the God of battles. We do not have to conduct ourselves in order that the enemy may fear or dread us, because God does this in his own way. We quote Deuteronomy 11: 25, "There shall no man be able to stand before you: for the Lord your God shall lay **the fear of you** and **the dread of you** upon all the land that ye shall tread upon . . ." We call your attention to Exodus 23: 27, "I will send my fear before thee, and will destroy all the people to whom thou shalt come; and **I will make all thine enemies turn their backs unto thee."** It was just as true this day as it was before, that our God shall fight for us: "In what place therefore ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye thither unto us: for our God shall fight for us." (Nehemiah 4: 20) The trumpet is placed into hands as Gideon placed trumpets into hands that had

been dipped in water. Yes, undoubtedly these were clean hands into which Gideon placed the trumpets. These hands of the 300 were clean enough to hold water for drinking. Water is a symbol of cleansing. This cleansing must be the work of God. What God hath cleansed we are not to call common or unclean.

When we cry, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," it gives a certain sound. It sounds only for the work of **God.** It is a **certain sound.** If there be any declaration which tends to give credit to the works of the creature to merit salvation either in time or beyond time, it gives an uncertain sound, and cannot be the cry, certain sound, and cannot be the cry, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." May God bless us to blow the trumpet that has been placed in our hands, break the pitchers of clay, and shine forth that radiant light; all of which will gather true Israelites and put the enemy to flight.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

SOUL AND SPIRIT

An esteemed friend and constant reader of the *Signs,* in Indiana, has understood us to hold that the *spirit* of the man is the part of the man that is, or must be, born again, and requests us to define or explain the difference between the soul and the spirit of man.

From a sense of utter inability to analyze, the nature of man, we are compelled to decline the task of making clear to the understanding of others what we do not ourself understand. But we wish to correct his wrong impression, that we hold that any part of what constitutes us men or women is born of the spirit of God. We do not understand our Lord to say that *some part or parts* of man must be born again. But he said to Nicodemus, "Except a *man,*" (not a part of a man, a soul, or spirit, or flesh, or bone, or blood, or head, or foot of a man, but except a man, one who has already been born of the flesh, and is flesh,) "be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." All the elementary parts essential to our earthy nature are born of the flesh, and are flesh, so called by our Lord, and all alike in all mankind.

It requires but one birth to produce them all; hence Jesus says, and his words ought to settle the matter, and forever silence all speculation on the subject, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." It is not possible that any birth can bring forth a nature different from that of the parents of which it is born; so nothing that is godly, incorruptible, or in that sense spiritual, can possibly be born of the flesh. Those to whom power is given to become the sons of God, "are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God." — John i. 13. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." — 1 Peter i. 23. Neither is there anything carnal, earthly or corruptible born of the spirit of God. An incorruptible seed cannot produce or generate a corruptible production; and in the new birth, by which the children of God, as such, are brought into manifestation, we are expressly told they are not born of flesh or blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, nor of corruptible seed, but that they are born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. Is it not presumptuous then to say, in direct contradiction of what our God has said, that any part or element of our flesh, which Christ says is born of the flesh, and is flesh, is, notwithstanding what he has so expressly said, born of the Spirit, and is spirit?

As natural men, we have all the elements of an earthly nature, including soul, body and spirit; and these are all born of the flesh, and are flesh, in the sense in which Christ and his apostles have so declared them to be.

Our earthly spirit is the spirit of the flesh and of the world; but the spirit which is begotten in us of God is pure and holy, and is called spirit in distinction from all that is born of the flesh, or that is flesh. Adam is the Father of our earthly spirit, but God is the Father of our heaven-born spirit. This distinction is clearly made in Hebrews xii. 9: "We have had fathers of our flesh, which have corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits?" Our life which is born of the flesh is Adam, with all his corruption and mortality; but that life in us which is born of God is Christ in us the hope of glory, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light. Every manifest child of God is the subject of two distinct births: first his fleshly birth, which is after or according to the flesh, or the earthy Adam; but the production of the second birth is after God, created in righteousness and true holineses. The one is called the spirit of the world, of the flesh, of bondage, of error, &c; but the other is called the spirit of God, of Christ, of truth, of adoption, of life and immortality. As many as are led by this spirit of God, they are the sons of God; but if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. If we are born of the Spirit, we have in the spiritual birth received the spirit of God, which spirit raised up Jesus from the dead; and as the production of this new birth liveth and abideth forever, so it abides in us; and we are assured, this being the case, that he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in us. — Rom. viii. 11. We are not told that it has quickened our mortal body, either in its whole or in its parts; but just as surely as we have this spirit in us, shall the creature which is now held in bondage and mortality be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

By this spirit, which we receive in the new birth, our persons, redeemed from the earth, are sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redempion of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his (God's) glory. — Eph. i. 13, 14. Our body, soul and spirit, which are born of the flesh, were involved in sin and death, and required to be redeemed and washed in the precious blood of Christ; but that spiritual, eternal life, which was with the Father, and hid in God, being pure and holy, did not need to be redeemed, washed nor cleansed; and this life is that which is manifested in us by the new birth, being born, not of flesh, but of the Spirit — not of man, but of God — not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. By this spiritual life, which is born of God, the sons of Adam, redeemed by the blood of Christ, are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption (or final deliverance) of the purchased (or redeemed) possession, to the praise of the glory of God. This earnest, therefore, to all who have in their new birth received that Holy Spirit of promise, is a sure and certain pledge of the final resurrection and change of our vile body from natural to spiritual, from mortal to immortal, and from corruptible to incorruptible; because the creature itself, which was made subject to vanity, and whose earnest expectation (subsequently to the new birth) waiteth for the manifestation of the children of God. They who are counted worthy of that world of which Christ spake to the Sadducees, (Luke xx. 33,) and of this resurrection from the dead, are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. Begotten unto this resurrection by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; for as he was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, and quickened by the Spirit, so "If the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mor-

tal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you." If this spirit now dwells in us, it so dwells in us by implantation, that is, by the new birth; for his spirit can only be born of God, it cannot be born of the flesh; and this spirit is the earnest given, that as it quickened and brought from the dead the crucified body of our Lord, it shall also quicken and raise up from the dead all those in whom it now dwells.

In conclusion, permit the inquiry, Is it not better for the saints to examine whether this quickening Spirit indeed dwells in us, than to indulge in vain speculations and uncalled for disputations, which gended strife and bitterness? If it dwells in us, will not its blessed indwelling be manifest by its fruits, which are these: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, and things against which there is no law?

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe October 1, 1879.)

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M.

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 11 A. M.

WRIGHTS' CREEK CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 11:00 A. M.

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., six miles SE. of Sulligent, Alabama.

C. C. HAND, Pastor
5840 Court O C P
Birmingham, Ala.

MACEDONIA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located one and one-half miles Southwest of Sulligent, Alabama, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT R. PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
HURTON PITTS, Clerk
Sulligent, Ala.

OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each Saturday before the fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Alabama.

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles SW. of Fayette, Alabama.

ELAM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located two miles North of Goshen, Pike County, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 o'clock.

J. P. MORGAN, Pastor
A. C. CARTER, Clerk
1335 Avalon Lane,
Montgomery 6, Ala.

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before.

E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Pratt City, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. Meeting place at Alder Street at top of hill, first car going into Pratt City from Birmingham.

H. C. MOON, Pastor

MT. CARMEL CHURCH, Coffee Springs, Alabama, meets each first Sunday 11 A. M.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

ZION ROCK OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, twenty-two miles South of Andalusia, Alabama, meets every first Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
NORA McLEOD, Acting Clerk

HARMONY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, ten miles South of Jay, Santa Rosa County, Florida, meets every second Sunday and Saturday before at 11:00 A. M.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
GRACE UTLEY, Clerk

NAOMI OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets every third Sunday at 11:00 A. M., six miles South of McKenzie, Alabama.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
E. C. WEAVER, Clerk
Rt. 5, Box 50-B,
Andalusia, Ala.

SHILOH OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, seven miles Northeast of Andalusia, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
NORA LEE McLEOD, Clerk
Rt. 3,
Red Level, Ala.

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

WHITE WATER OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located about one mile Northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

DAVID TURNER, Pastor

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Stockton, California, meets second Sundays, 10:30 A. M., at 5620 E. Marsh Street. All lovers of the truth invited.

T. R. JEFFERSON, Pastor
MYRTLE TIPTON, Clerk
733 7th St.
Hallister, Calif. 95023

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Compton, California, meets each fourth Sunday at the home of L. W. Langwell, 12812 S. Williams Street.

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in the United States), meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is located one mile south of Newark, Delaware, just off of Highway 896.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK CHURCH, Miami, Florida, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before, SW. 29th Avenue and 6th Street. We extend an invitation to any interested to visit us.

MRS. J. M. FUTCH,
7005 SW. 21st Street,
Miami, Florida

NEW HARMONY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Hiram, Ga., meets every first Sunday at 11 o'clock.

O. J. CROKER, Pastor
J. F. JORDAN, Clerk

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located at 5th and East Park Street, Weiser, Idaho, meets each 4th Sunday at 11 o'clock. Address any communications to:

ERNEST J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
FLOSSIE ATTEBERY, Clerk
Rt. 1, Box 202,
Hermiston, Oregon 97838

PLEASANT VALLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas. Meets with Mrs. Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C. on each second Sunday.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE LOST CREEK CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, meets first Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Kentucky, ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton, on Grayson Highway. Leave U. S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

NEW HOPE CHURCH (better known as Lick Creek) meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Kentucky.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE ZION CHURCH OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS, Mayfield, Kentucky, meets first Sunday each month at 11 A. M., on South 7th Street.

J. N. DARNELL, Pastor

NEW HOPE CHURCH, Spearsville, La. meets first Sundays and Saturday afternoons before at 3:30.

J. L. SMITH, Pastor
C. C. BARRON, Clerk

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Baltimore, Maryland, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Street, near Calvert.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on Falls Road about twenty miles north of Baltimore.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

HOPEWELL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Hopewell, N. J., meets each first

Sunday at 10:30, and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

ARTHUR R. WARREN, Pastor
MARY L. HELLINGS, Clerk
4 Maple Lane
Pennington, N. J. 08534

OLIVE AND HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Shokan, N. Y., meets each 2nd Sunday at 2:00 P. M. March through and including November.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
DEACON E. K. ADSIT, Clerk

THE WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Warwick, Orange County, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are held at A. R. Vail's home, 55 Maple Ave., Warwick at 11 A. M.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

THE MIDDLEBURG OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH meets at the home of Deacon Woodrow W. Bellinger, Duanesburg, N. Y. on fifth Sundays when the Lord so wills.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
BEATRICE E. HOCKING, Clerk
419 Toll St., Scotia, N. Y.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, New York City, meets every first and third Sundays at McBurney Branch Y. W. C. A. 215 W. 23rd Street, corner of 7th Ave. (Elevator to 2nd floor.) 11 A. M. — 1:30 P. M. All visitors are welcome.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

THE WILSON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Wilson, N. C., meets each second Sunday at 3 P. M., and Saturday evening before at 7:30 P. M. The location is on the corner of Green and Jackson Streets.

D. B. STOKES, Pastor
MRS. BETTIE RICHARDSON, Clerk

FALLS OF TAR RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Rocky Mount, N. C., meets each second Sunday and Saturday before. Quarterly meetings March, June, September and December.

D. B. STOKES, Pastor
NINA PEARSON, Clerk

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:00 P. M.

C. M. HAGGOOD, Pastor
NINA STALLINGS, Clerk
Rt. 2, Box 54
Altus, Okla.

BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin, Oregon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes. Address communications to Lloyd Spikes, Elgin, Oregon.

ERNEST ATTEBERY, Pastor
SPENCER BURCH, Clerk

ROCK SPRINGS OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, meets each first Sunday at 10:30. The meeting house is located on highway 222, about one-quarter mile of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets each 5th Sunday from May through September; and meets at Needmore, Pa., on 5th Sundays from October through April, with all day meeting the 2nd Sunday in October.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
ORIEN MELLOTT, Clerk
McConnellsburg, Pa.

THE FIRST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH of Memphis, Tenn., meets each Sunday morning at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday night before the second Sunday each month at 7:30 P. M. The church is located on Andrews Road one block north of Hiway 70 in the Ellandale Community, 7 miles east of Memphis.

H. G. BROWN, Pastor
791 Watson St., Memphis
H. R. PRINCE, Asst. Pastor
RICHARD H. CAMPBELL, Clerk

CANE CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and is located nine miles Southwest of Martin, Tennessee. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
J. B. JONES, Clerk
Rt. 1, Martin, Tenn.

BORDEAUX PREDESTINARIAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Nashville, Tenn., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. The church is located on the old Hydes Ferry Road in Bordeaux, in Nashville. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE WALNUT FORK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Cottage Grove, Tennessee, meets on the second Sunday of each month.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor
R. L. VEAZEY, SR., Clerk

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, Houston, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before 10:30 A. M. Church is located at 815 Little York Road between Highway 75 and East Texas Freeway 59.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
IRENE WISENBAKER, Clerk

MT. ZION CHURCH, Weslaco, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.; and each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday before at 2:00 P. M., at their new location: seven miles West of Weslaco, on highway 83.

JOE L. HAMRICK, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk

SARDIS CHURCH, Amarillo, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 10:30, in the home of E. J. Parsons, 1711 Lincoln Street.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, has moved their meeting place to 3629 8th Avenue. They meet each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Take College Ave. bus to Butler and Ryon; go one block West, then half block North to church.

C. U. LANDERS, Pastor

THE ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST CHURCH, Lawn, Texas, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
MRS. NOLA STEWART, Clerk

AN ARM OF PILGRIM REST CHURCH, meets each second Sunday and Saturday night before at Earth, Texas.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
A. A. CHAMBERS, Clerk

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets on the second and fourth Sundays of each month at 10 A. M., in the meeting house at intersection of Highways 123 and 87. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

GERALD D. SHIPMAN, Pastor
LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk

THE OLD SALEM CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS, four miles South of Teague, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

SAINTS REST OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each first and third Sunday at 11 A. M., at 2710 Engle Street.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
D. G. CONNELL, Clerk

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30. And second Sundays at 11:00.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor

The churches of which Elder E. J. Lambert is pastor meet as follows:

PHARON, meets first Sunday morning and Saturday night before, 5 miles NE Hawkins, Texas.

REHOBETH, meets second Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles N ElDorado, Arkansas.

NEILA RYAN, Clerk
1601 N. Emmett
ElDorado, Arkansas

BETHEL, meets third Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles NE ElDorado, Arkansas.

JEAN H. BURNES, Clerk
606 N. Parkway,
ElDorado, Arkansas

GOOD HOPE, meets fourth Sunday morning and Saturday morning before 7 miles NE Winnsboro, Texas.

GERTRUDE JONES, Clerk
905 Y Drive
Winnsboro, Texas

Everyone welcomed.

ELDER E. J. LAMBERT, Pastor
306 Richardson St.
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located on Route 28, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia.

ARTHUR L. CARTER, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is near Lucketts, about eight miles north of Leesburg, Va.

The brethren and friends will please note that the meetings at Broad Run Church, near Poolesville, Maryland, have been discontinued; and that the meetings are now held each third Sunday at New Valley, as shown above.

L. D. DUKE, Clerk
Charlestown, W. Va.

MT. ZION CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, Virginia. on Route 50, between Washington and Winchester, Virginia.

C. W. NORMAN, Clerk
Herndon, Va.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are aways glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Manassas 368-4857.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 8:00 P. M., Fairmont Park, 2023 Tidewater Drive.

C. N. BUNN, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Qualla Road, Chesterfield County, Virginia, meets each first Sunday at 10 A. M. Following are directions to the meeting house: South from Richmond at McGuire Circle, take Rt. 360 nine miles to "Longest" Service Station; turn left and go one mile, and turn right on No. 363 one mile to church.

ELDER C. N. BUNN, Pastor
LILLIE WEIDER, Clerk
2560 Elliham Ave.,
Richmond 34, Va.

DAN RIVER CHURCH, between Danville, Va. and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville, Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday night before, on Bradley Road.

H. W. WRAY, Pastor
R. T. HOLLEY, Clerk

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each first Sunday at 11:00 o'clock. This church is located seven miles west of Gretna, Virginia on 605 one-half mile from Route 40. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
RUTH MATTOX, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Chatham, Va.

BELLVIEW PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday night before at 7:30. This church is located near Cave Springs about four miles from Roanoke, Virginia, one mile from 221. All visitors are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
J. A. SOWDER, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Salem, Va.

SANDY LEVEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each third Sunday afternoon at 2:30. This church is located on Route 635 about 5 miles south from Hardy, Va. 10 miles from Vinton, Va. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
PEARL DUDLEY, Clerk
Rt. 1, Box 282,
Hardy, Va.

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each fourth Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday morning before at 11:00 o'clock. This church is located on highway 623 about two miles from Fairystone Park. All visitors are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
G. M. MARTIN, Clerk
Rt. 1,
Bassett, Va.

GREEN HILL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each fourth Sunday afternoon at 2:30. This church is located five miles north of Stuart, Virginia, just off highway 58. All lovers of truth are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
MRS. S. L. WALKER, Clerk
Rt. 2, Box 207
Stuart, Va.

BETHEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, of Predestinarian Faith, of Riffe, Washington, meets each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before at 11 o'clock. For information write the Clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. OPAL HUNTTING, Clerk
Silver Creek, Wash. 98585

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, Naches, Washington, meets at 11:00 A. M. each second Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MARGUERITE SIMPSON, Clerk
1306 Fairview Ave.
Yakima, Wash. 98901

HARMONY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, about four miles East of Huntington, W. Va., near Route 60 at Russell Creek, meets each second Sunday at 11:00 A. M. and Saturday before at 2:00 P. M.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 136 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1968 NO. 2

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/68
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE HEAVENLY MANSIONS

(John 14:2; Rom. 11:5)

ONE said, "In my Father's house are
Many mansions," and "I go
To prepare a place for you," for
The scripture tells us so.

Dwelling places, and not persons,
Are by these mansions meant,
In that kingdom early prepared
For a chosen remnant.

"There is a remnant according to
The election of grace;"
They were chosen in Christ above,
And shall behold his face.

His very presence further prepares
A place for the very elect,
And while they sojourn here below,
They have same in prospect.

There would not be consummate joy
Without his presence there,
Where they shall behold his glory,
And his dear image bear.

He is the light of those mansions,
In his glorified state,
And he in his beauty adorns them,
Where joys never abate.

They indicate abundance of room
For all the saints on high,
In the Father's house up yonder,
Where they shall never sigh.

"When I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies,
I'll bid farewell to every fear,
And wipe my weeping eyes."

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, North Carolina

READING THE *SIGNS* A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE

Box 295
Nags Head, N. C. 27959

Dear Editors:

Enclosed find check in the amount of $5.00 for the *Signs of the Times* for two years. Until recently I had never had the great pleasure of reading the *Signs,* but through the kindness of a dear member of the Old Baptists at Kitty Hawk, N. C., I was loaned several back issues; and they were a wonderful experience to me. Each article declared the unsearchable riches of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and gave all praise to the one and only source deserving it — Almighty God and his son Jesus Christ.

I do not get to the Old Baptist meeting houses very often, so those copies of the *Signs* have given me much comfort, and, if not deceived, have helped brighten my little hope. I love to hear them proclaim that one is saved by grace and grace alone; and that it is given freely. I feel to know for sure that if I received it, it must be free, for I know that this poor one has nothing of himself with which to buy, even if it were for sale (God forbid). But it is by grace (grace must come first) through faith, (faith furnished by grace) that one is saved; and that not of one's self, for it is a gift from God. I believe that gift was his Son Jesus Christ for the redemption of those sinners which were chosen before the foundation of the world.

O how I hope I am one of those little children! I feel so unworthy to even hope, but somethow I still am hoping, though at times it seems so far distant

as to be almost completely gone. But then when it seems I will lose it entirely, something takes place, (like my receiving those copies of the *Signs of the Times*,) that brightens up my hope. When I read those dear ones' experiences, and they are right in line with what I hope are mine, it is then I feel a deep desire to be placed at the feet of those dear ones, and be kept there. Yet I know I am not worthy to be there; but from the depth of my soul I desire it.

I hope I have written nothing contrary to the truth; if so, please overlook the floundering of a poor worm of the dust, and a sinner of great magnitude.

Hoping that I do have a hope,
Troy G. Shepard

RE-LIVED HER CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCE

1302 Walnut Street
Benton, Ky. 42025

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

. . . Our association, The Soldier Creek Association, was held at the North Mt. Zion Church, in Graves County, Kentucky, October 6, 7, 8, 1967. Elder Paul Poyner, the Moderator. Our visiting ministers were, Elders J. N. Darnell, W. Y. Chandler, from Little River Association; Elder Herbert Prince, from the Memphis Church; and Elder R. L. Biggs from the Nashville Church.

A very strange thing took place on Sunday: Seventy-four years ago when I was a child, at this same North Mt. Zion Church, Elder W. I. Carnell preached from John 6:44, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." All these years I have remembered that text, and parts of his sermon; and I have told it to many people. When I returned home with my parents, I related to my grandparents this text, and who it was that had preached from this text. One of them said to the other, "Wonder why she remembered this text, and where it was found in the Bible?"

Elder Biggs on Sunday morning started his sermon by quoting, "Who hath believed our report and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed." He talked awhile, then took as a text John 6:44. I lived over again when as a small child at this same place, hearing Elder Carnell preaching from the text. Now I am in my "second childhood" — will soon be eighty years old.

Our association with our friends was a lovely coming together, with preaching services before noon and after noon, and at the home of Elder O. W. Perkins' widow, Sister Cordie Perkins, each night. The truth as it is in Jesus was told by each of the ministers: using texts proving He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the Everlasting Father. Our friends served dinner at the church each day.

Old Baptist believers are still much alive: there are more on the outside of the church than those with their names on the church books; but, if it is God's will, at His own good time they too will come in. Perhaps if we had many numbered with us, we would say, See what we have accomplished with our sound preaching and exhorting. Our God so works that he keeps us knowing he will add to the church at his will, and none can hinder; for known unto God are all his works from the beginning. He is Alpha and Omega.

May we be enabled by his grace to praise him all the days of our lives, knowing that He will do all things well.

In hope,
Effie Bowden

EVIDENCE OF GOD'S MERCIES

Rt. 1, Box 59A
Darlington, Md. 21034

Dear Elder Wood:

You will find enclosed a new subscrip-

tion to be sent as shown . . .

With much fear and trembling I would like to write a part of what I hope is my experience. I know so little. I want so much to be humble, and say and do the right things both spiritually and naturally.

My parents and grandparents were Old Baptists. As a child I heard sound doctrine discussed at home, and preached at the church; but it didn't mean very much to me then.

In my late thirties I was placed under the greatest burden, which lasted for days. I felt I was a lost sinner; and was made to see how small I was, and how little I knew. I would attend all the churches in reach, searching for comfort. There were no Old School Baptists near us, and we didn't have transportation to go any distance. I couldn't find any peace of mind anywhere; and it seemed I just couldn't go on in this miserable condition.

In a vision, I suppose it was, I saw a most beautiful river, so clear and sparkling. Something told me this is the River Jordan. I was lifted up, and everything seem brighter for some time. Again, the heavy burden was upon me, and I was again so troubled for many days.

Later, in a vision, I saw Christ coming toward me in the air, in all his beauty and radiance, saying, "Peace be unto you." It seemed I could feel His love, and I loved him more than any thing I had ever seen. So many times when I was troubled, I could feel his presence and his tender love and mercies.

I feel less than the least, and unworthy to even speak His holy name. When I try to pray, I ask myself, Why should he answer the prayer of one so wicked? But I often feel that he does answer my prayers. I pray that His will be done. He is the Way, the Truth and the Life: and there is no other.

Sometimes I wonder if this is an experience of grace — maybe I am mistaken. But when I am among God's people, and feel the love and sweet fellowship, and hear the true and sound doctrine preached, I feel so comfortable there; and wish that I could be as good as they are.

Very humbly in hope,
Esther Miller

ELDER H. M. CURRY'S COMPARISON OF CHRISTIAN AND HEATHEN CIVILIZATIONS

(The following lecture was delivered March 10th, 1893, in University Hall, Lebanon, Ohio, before the assembled students and faculty of all the departments of the University, by Elder H. M. Curry, and is published by request of some of our readers who were present.)

(The above was a note by the editor of the Signs in 1893.)

In casting about for a subject for this occasion I hit upon the one announced to you from the Chair. I have chosen this theme for two or three reasons. In the first place it embodies many facts that are useful to mention; and in the second place, I have an idea in my mind which I can best get out along this line of discussion.

Do not be scared at the word Heathen; that is not such a bad word; it does not mean cannibal; it simply means in this connection those great nations of antiquity that reached the zenith of glory before the advent of Christ, or before it became fashionable to call everything Christian. Neither would I have you to attach undue importance to the word Christian; that does not mean anything now. In this connection it simply means those great warlike nations that have sprung up within the christian era, and profess the Christian religion.

The only medium of comparison between the civilizations of different periods or nations is what the people have thought, said and done. This is exemplified in their language, literature and works of art. There is no higher criterion by which to try the universal greatness of a people than their language. The facilities for the expression of thought

are an unerring index to the character of the thought itself. Language was undoubtedly brought to the greatest perfection by the Greeks, several centuries before Christ. No people ever had so beautiful or refined a language, or spoke it with so much purity and grace. The Greek sentence was agitated throughout its length and depth by the stress of expression. The whole paragraph trembled from end to end when the thrill of life awoke in any of its parts. This language with its multitudinous endings all in harmonious accord lay like a beautiful meadow of stately grass swaying and waving in the breezes of thought. The thrill of joy, the message of defiance, the moan of the disconsolate, the palm of battle, the shout of victory, every emotion, every mood that the mind of man in his most vigorous estate is capable of experiencing, swept in rolling billows over the pulsating bosom of this beautiful speech. The Roman or Latin language was less beautiful, perhaps, than the Greek, but in many respects it was one of the most precise, expressive and artistic languages that ever graced the lips or stirred the heart of man. Where language was brought to such matchless perfection, there the very highest type of civilization must have existed.

The literature of a people forms a highway into the very heart of their mental and moral culture, their aesthetic tastes and religious notions, and is an exponent of every element and fact of their civilization. The literature of the Greeks and Romans, as to originality, literary merit, and influence on the world, surpasses that of all the so-called Christian nations; and as to moral elements, it is equal to that of any modern people. When we read the exquisite wit and keen satire of Horace, the stately and highly finished hexameters of Virgil, or the fiery, impetuous effusions of Homer, we are not conscious of the vast flood of years that rolls between us and our author. He identifies himself so closely with our own times that we forget we are reading what a Heathen wrote two thousand years ago. On comparing the Iliad of Homer, and the Æneid of Virgil, the two great Heathen epics, with Dante's Inferno, and Milton's Paradise Lost, the two great Christian epics, is found that the Heathen writers excelled the Christian authors in everything but **heathenism itself.** Dante's Inferno, as everyone knows, embodies all the so-called Christian learning up to the thirteenth century, and is more essentially Heathen in every respect than the works of Virgil from which it is largely borrowed . Milton's Paradise Lost, which has been esteemed by the Protestants nearly as sacred as the Bible itself, bears the stamp of Heathenism upon his forehead. It opens with the customary invocation to the Heavenly Muse, the Heathen goddess of poetry, and then proceeds to turn the angels into soldiers, to make heaven a battlefield and the hatching place and nursery of devils, to put Christ in uniform, and make God a militia general.

Some of the most wonderful literary productions are of the greatest antiquity. While Isaiah was a little lad, roaming the olive-crowned hills of old Judea, receiving instruction in the Jewish Law from Israel's Rabbis, Homer was playing in boyish glee under the sunny skies of Greece, finding tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and beauty in everything; and as Isaiah the prophet proclaimed to the inhabitants of Jerusalem his heaven-born warnings, denunciations and gospel promises, in all the grandeur, imagery and vigor of Hebrew poetry, Homer was delighting the ear, swelling the heart and moulding the character of aesthetic Greeks by the recital of this impetuous Iliad. Although this poem is of so ancient date, it has never been equaled in the history of literature. It has wielded a broader, more varied and perpetual influence over the human race than all other books ever written. It inspired the heart of the Greek to all that was beautiful in thought, noble in character and patriotic in deed. It incited the ambition of Alexander to conquer the world. It has shaped the literature and refined the tastes of all liter-

ary nations, and it rules England today through the statesmanship of Gladstone, and through English rule influences the whole civilized world.

The literature of the ancients was generally of a high order, and their refined and cultured tastes did not furnish a highway for such foolish, trashy, worthless productions as flood the Christian nations. The current modern literature is entitled to any other name than that of Christian. It is a flood of infidelity, a deluge of skepticism, a gulf stream of rubbish, with here and there a volume of truth drifted aside in some out of way eddy. From the standpoint of literature the Heathen nations surpassed the Christian civilization.

In oratory, the noblest, most exalted and sublime accomplishment that ever adorned an individual or blessed a nation, the Heathen Greeks and Romans stand unrivaled. At the head of that magnetic company who have swayed the world by eloquence stands Demosthenes, a Heathen master of diction, fountain of eloquence, king of orators. His oration on the crown is universally and justly acknowledged the most brilliant contest of oratory that the world has ever known. Cicero's orations are still studied as matchless models in diction, logic, eloquence and power. For simplicity, dignity, grandeur, intellectual and moral force, the great Heathen orators of Athens and Rome are altogether without a parallel in the history of eloquence.

In statesmanship the Greeks and Romans have never been surpassed. From their wisdom and experience all Christian nations have drawn instruction. Many of these Heathen statesmen were men of the purest motives, the broadest experience and the profoundest wisdom. The English Constitution and English Law were derived from the Roman codes and Constitution. Blackstone was not a lawgiver, but a commentator on law which had come down from the remotest antiquity. Solon and Lycurgus, so far as is known, were lawmakers, and to them the nations are more indebted for common and civil law than to Moses, Israel's lawgiver.

The ancient philosophers still hold sway in the world of thought. Aristotle, Socrates and Plato, will never die. In the most eminent seats of modern learning the principles of philosophy laid down by them have never been displaced.

Architecture, the most necessary and useful of all arts, was brought to the greatest perfection by the remote Heathen nations. Before Moses wrote the Penteteuch, or the smoke ascended from Jewish altars, the pyramids, the sphynx, the wonderful temples of Thebes, the walls and palaces of Nineveh, had been built, exemplifying taste and skill in architecture, and a knowledge of mechanics far in advance of anything known at the present day. The marble wilderness of Athens eclipses the world in examples of architectural beauty, symmetery and grace. The Parthenon is universally acknowledged to have been the most perfect specimen of architecture that has ever adorned this earth. It has long been the wonder, admiration and delight of poets, travelers and artists of all nations.

If the history of Greece had never been written, the Parthenon alone would testify to the superior greatness of that people. What a civilization that must have been that found a man to decree, an architect to design, a sculptor to adorn, statuaries to execute, workmen to carve, and a people to pay for and maintain such an edifice.

In sculpture and painting the Greeks stand unrivaled. Their models have fixed the standard of taste for all nations. The statues of Palos Athena and Olympian Zeus, executed in ivory and gold by Phidias, for massiveness, expensiveness, majestic expression and every element of grace and beauty, are unsurpassed in the history of art. Painting, in all that is essential or beautiful, was brought to the greatest perfection several centuries before Christ, by Polygustus, Appollodorus, Zeuxis and Parrhasius.

In domestic life the Romans displayed every indication of a superior civilization. Their extravagance in ornaments,

dress, sumptuous living and magnificent furniture excelled all modern nations. The palaces of Nero glittered with gold and jewels; perfumes and flowers showered from ivory ceilings. The halls of the nobles were hung with cloth of gold enriched with precious stones. They rode in gilded chariots. They bathed in marble baths. They slept on beds of down upon bedsteads of silver. They dined from gold plate upon tables of Delian bronze and pure gold. They drank from crystal cups. They wore embroidered robes adorned with jewels and precious stones. They decorated their houses with carpets from Babylon, onyx cups from Bithynia, bronzes from Corinth, and statues from Athens. Although this incredible luxury was an evil to society, yet it is an evidence of their matchless civilization.

A tree is known by its fruit. Such beautiful, expressive and adequate language, such acute, refined and sensitive wit, such noble, endearing and marvelous achievements in literature, such pure, true and self-sacrificing patriotism, such unwavering, invincible and incontestible courage, such ardent, devoted and exquisite love of the beautiful, such masterly, skillful and unequaled genius in sculpture, such massive, beautiful and sublime works of architecture, such keen, subtle and exhaustive philosophy, such wise, unselfish and profound statemanship, such dignified, brilliant and overwhelming oratory, as has been exemplified in the ancient Heathen nations, is the most conclusive evidence of a civilization, in many respects superior to anything known at the present time or that we can ever hope to see again.

This civilization was evolved without a Bible, without a church, or any of the religious machinery at work in the world to day. This is conclusive evidence against that foolish, traditional, superstitous notion extant that the Bible is the only civilizer, and the only way from barbarism to civilized life is through the medium of the Christian church.

It may be objected that the Christian civilization surpasses that of the Heathen in morals, virtue and forbearance. The objection is more easily made than sustained. England is a fair example of so-called Christian civilization. She is, perhaps, the greatest commerical and political power in the world at the present time, the greatest literary light of modern nations. Is she a model of Christian virtue? She has extended her dominion over the isles of the sea, in the name of Christianity. She has forced opium upon China and rum upon Africa in the name of **gospel missions.** She has planted her flag and standing armies in India in the name of the **gospel** of **peace.** She has starved Catholic Ireland for centuries in the spirit of Protestantism. England received her laws and Constitution from the Roman empire, her principles of freedom and independence, what little she has, from the ancient German barbarians, her indefatigable tact and perseverence from Anglo-Saxon ancestors, and her bigotry, intolerence and avarice from her religion. England taxes beggary to support royalty, and grinds the face of the poor to support a religious aristocracy. She has wielded the sword in the name of the cross, and lighted the fagots with the tapers from her altars. I do not thus mention England because she is a sinner above all nations, but because she is a fair example of so-called Christian civilization.

The Christian nations have excelled the Heathen nations in the **arts** of war. They have invented the revolver, the rifle and the bomb-shell. They have expended millions in constructing the most terrible and deadly engines of destruction. They are to-day educating, training and drilling five million men in the arts of wholesale slaughter. The world is covered with forts to protect Christians from other Christians and the seas are covered with iron monsters, built and engineered by Christians, to blow Christian brains out. Every Christian nation is groaning under a vast debt incurred in waging war with other Christian nations, or in evangelizing Heathens with sword and ball.

The religion of the Heathen was milder, more humane and tolerant than that of the Christian nations. It is true the Heathens sometimes offered human sacrifice; but that was mild indeed when compared with the Inquisition of Catholicism and the persecutions of Protestantism.

The victims for Heathen sacrifice were generally selected from the prisoners of war, while the martyrs of the Christian nations were the most earnest, devoted, liberty-loving characters among them. The Heathen nations have sacrificed their thousands, but the Christian nations have martyred their tens of thousands.

The greatest enemy that modern civilization has had to contend with is nominal Christianity. From the time it was taken out of the slums and placed upon the throne by the wickedest emperor Rome ever had, until the present time, it has tried by every contrivance to rule the world. It has proved to be the most grievous tax a nation has ever been burdened with; a tax not only upon the purse, but upon every energy of a nation; a tax too often levied upon the conscience and exacted in blood.When the spirit of freedom and progress refuses to acknowledge its authority, it cunningly adapts itself to every whim and caprice of society, and is ready to write its name upon every enterprise.

The accepted religion of the Christian nations is **eclectic.** Its philosophy is the old Greek anthropology, which was introduced into the catechetical school of Alexandria in the third century, and which has formed the basis of all theological seminary instruction ever since. The two principal church festivals of both Catholic and Protestant communions (I speak of Christmas and Easter Sunday), were both derived directly from the ancient Heathen nations of northern Europe; and the modern **Santaklaus** imposed upon the credulity of the Sunday School infants is a hobgoblin from the same source. A specially educated and salaried priesthood is an institution of the ancient Egyptians, older than Moses himself, and has been perpetuated through the intervening Heathen nations, and finally incorporated into the eclectic system of nominal Christianity. I would not have you think for one moment that I would deride in the least true Christianity. This I **could not do;** but I desire to state most emphatically that true Christinity **is not national. It was never intended to be so.** Christianity is not a former of states. That religion that seeks to ally itself with every species of worldly power, to monopolize all our educational institutions, and to manufacture all public opinion, is not the religion of Christ.

The careful analysis of the two civilizations, called Christian and Heathen, shows that the **same elements** enter into both, and the **same facts** are attendant upon both, and so far as their nature is concerned they are **essentially the same.** There does not exist that fundamental, basal distinction that would warrant upon a scientific basis the classification that the qualifying words Christian and Heathen would imply. Civilization is in no way dependent upon Christianity or the Bible. It is through the perversion of these institutions to that end that the name of Christianity and the Bible have been prostituted, and modern morals corrupted, and civilization cursed. In this is exemplified the truth of the proverb that, **"The perversion of the best things often leads to the worst."** The present civilization bears more of the marks of Athens than Jerusalem, of the Greek Academic than the church, of Plato than of Christ.

(In the above Elder Curry lays bare many things which are either not known, or are being flagrantly neglected when "Christian Religion" is discussed.

When we read it recently, (it was published in the Signs of March 29, 1893,) we felt that it contained pertinent information which lies historically buried, unless brought to light as Elder Curry has done. It belongs to the present as much as it did seventy-five years ago, when it was delivered at the University in Lebanon, Ohio.

We trust all will give it a good reading and consideration. It is evidence that facts of history as pertaining to the church of God, will arise and confirm the faith of the Lord's people. — J.D.W.)

PREDESTINATION

Just because we realize the danger of the "Fatalistic Point of View," is no cause for us to shun predestination. This doctrine should not be frowned upon. It is true that it should be handled carefully, but we should not shun to declare this wonderful and glorious doctrine. If we shun to declare this doctrine because we are aware of the danger of the "Fatalistic Point of View," we are going too far in the other direction, which leads to the error of refraining to declare a portion of the truth.

Are we afraid to declare this doctrine because we fear the scorn of men? On the other hand, are we afraid to give exhortations in our sermons because we fear that the Brethren will brand us "Conditionalists"?

According to *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*, the word predestinate occurs only twice in the Bible. (Rom. 8:29, 30) The word predestinated also occurs twice. (Eph. 1:5, 11) The word predestination is not in the Bible, yet the Scriptures point out this doctrine. Therefore, it is a Bible doctrine.* We call your attention to Isaiah 46:9-11. Since this is a very familiar Scripture, we will only mention the substance: God declared the end from the beginning. This covers it all and there is no getting around it. If God declared the end from the beginning, he certainly predestinated it, and if he predestinated it, we certainly believe that he foreknew it, decreed it, purposed it, etc. We do not believe that God can foreknow anything without predestinating it.

Webster gives a good definition of predestination: "The purpose or decree of God from eternity respecting all events."

*(The word predestination is the noun (name) which denotes that which is predestinated, therefore is properly used in this reference. — Ed.)

Since God declared the end from the beginning, this covers all events, and there is no event that has taken place nor will take place in the future that God did not know from the beginning. "Known unto God are all the works from the beginning of the world." (Acts 15:18)

"My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." "I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." This shows the fact that God is able to execute his counsel, and God does not have to tell man how he executes his purposes, decrees, counsel, etc. This is the Lord's business. "The secret things belong unto the Lord, and the revealed things belong to his children." (Deut. 29:29) The Scriptures point out that God is a holy God, and he is able to bring a clean thing out of an unclean thing. The ultimate result, or the climax, is for the glory that is due his holy name, and this results in the Salvation of His people; and they in turn will render honor, praise, and glory unto his name for ever and ever. We think of this as the end of the matter. All events are necessary in order to bring this end result. In other words, all details are necessary. Let us not look at the small events within themselves, but let us look at the end result.

There are many parts that make up a watch. Yet each part is necessary in order for the watch to run. If something is wrong with one part, the watch will not work.

In making a cake, it is necessary that all the proper ingredients and the correct amount are put in. If just one ingredient is left out, or either the incorrect quantity is put in; this will make the end result (the cake) a failure. Of course, we understand there are other factors to consider in baking a cake. The point we want to bring out is that even the smallest details are necessary in baking.

We know that a whole chain is just as strong as its weakest link. We have mentioned this to point out that God has a purpose in all events that transpired in the past, and in all events that that shall take place in the future.

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." (Eccl. 3:1) This is in connection with Isaiah 46:9-11. It would be foolish to purpose a thing without having a set time for it. Jesus died at the appointed time, and they could not kill him before that time. "In that day there shall be a fountain opened unto the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." (Zech. 13:1)

We do not believe that predestination is causative. We think of it as the plan or purpose. "For whom he did foreknow, he also *did predestinate* to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." (Romans 8:29) Now, predestination did not save the elect. It is the plan, purpose, or decree of God. The sufferings of Jesus is what delivered the elect from the curse of the law. We do not attempt to separate predestination and foreknowledge. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." (Acts 2:23) The death of Jesus was decreed before the beginning. That was a cruel death, but let us not stop at this event of just thinking about the horrible death of Jesus. What is the end result? He satisfied the just demands of the law and died in the room and stead of his people. His body was offered spotless unto God. "A body hast thou prepared me." (Heb. 10:5) Therefore it was necessary that Jesus should die this death. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24:26) It was necessary that Christ should die. He said, "to this end was I born, and for this cause came I unto the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." (John 18:37) He came to save his people from their sins, and how wonderful it is to know that he did it! As it is written, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us . . ." (Gal. 3:13)

As the Lord enables us, let us go back to the beginning of time, and we may view the handywork of God. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handywork." (Psalm 19:1) There was not a scientist nor engineer there to advise God as to how the stars, moon and sun would look, nor how far apart they would hang in space. There was none to tell him how the rivers would flow, nor how high the mountains would be, nor question God as to why he created the deserts and other waste lands. There was not a man to tell God that it was not necessary to create all these insects that destroy our crops. (It is remarkable to note that God created the substances and gave man the knowledge to put them together and compose a solution that would kill the insects. In an economic sense, we can see that those insects provide jobs for the people working in the factories that make the insect killing solutions. We certainly believe that God saw all this from the beginning.) There was no one there to tell or advise God as to how the human body would work. Wouldn't things be in a mess if man had helped God create things? With his wisdom He created all things, and there was nothing made that was not made by him.

We believe that God had a purpose in everything that he created; and it is remarkable to note that God fixed it in such a way that he provided for even the smallest insect to find its food, and he created the thing that is necessary for its food. "Are not there two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father." (Matt. 10:29) "Even the very hairs of your head are numbered." (Luke 12:7) How infinite is the wisdom of this great God!

We believe that God had a purpose when he created Satan. We will not attempt to speculate as to what that purpose was, but we believe that God knows, and we will let the matter rest there. We believe that God is able to take care of his business and he does

not need any help from weak, puny man! "By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent." (Job 26:13) We read, "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee, for the world is mine and the fulness thereof." (Psalm 50:12) God is not worshipped with man's hands, as though he needed anything. Also, he determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitation. (see Acts 17:24-26)

"And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shall not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Genesis 2:15-17) There is a point that must be brought out and we trust that God will enable us to handle it carefully. Did God know that man would break this commandment when he gave it to him? If He did not, then the future would wait upon what man would do. If the wisdom of God was this limited, he would have a lot of planning to do after the fall of man. If God did not know what man would do, then why did he create the earth to be inhabited? "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited; I am the Lord, and there is none else." (Isaiah 45:18) If God did not know what man would do, why was it necessary to choose a people unto himself before the foundation of the world? (Eph. 1:4) If God did not know, why did Paul rejoice when he said: "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." (2 Thess. 2:13)

We certainly believe that God had purposed the remedy before that law was broken, and that God decreed the salvation of his people even before the fall. May we say in a nutshell that we believe that God purposed all things even before there was a world, and that all events shall take place just as God has purposed it, and they shall not fail to come to pass; and that all events shall take place at the exact time that God purposed it. We will not attempt to intrude any further, as we see this wonderful subject is beyond our understanding. May the Lord keep us from using carnal reasoning.

We do not believe there was any force that compelled man to eat of that fruit. For the benefit of those that desire to be technical about the matter, we will say that woman came from man. God took a rib from Adam's side and made a woman. "And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man." (Genesis 2:23) Therefore, when the Scripture uses the word man, it simply means mankind. As David said, "I said in my haste, all men are liars." (Psalm 116:11) "Yea let God be true and every man a liar . . ." (Rom. 3:4) These Scriptures mean that men and women are liars. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. 5:12) We certainly believe that this death has passed upon mankind, or the human race, or simply men and women. As we think of the expression, "As by one man sin entered into the world," we think of Adam.

As we break the matter down, we note that Eve was in the transgression. (see 1 Timothy 2:14) Isn't it true that she was of Adam? Isn't it true that men and women today are of Adam? If we miss the type, we miss the beauty that causes so much comfort. Eve was a type of the Church, and Adam was a type of Christ. Eve was deceived, and she ate thinking that she would be as gods. There was no force to compel Eve to eat of that fruit. It is true that the

serpent tempted Eve and lied to her, but he did not force her to eat thereof. He simply deceived her. She told the serpent about the commandment, — and it is man's duty to follow the revealed things of God.

We believe the hidden purpose of God was that man would fall. This hidden purpose or secret will of God was made manifest after the fall of man. Let us be careful in handling this subject, as we do not believe that God forces man to do things in order to bring about events that was purposed beforehand.

We trust we have established the fact that there was not any force that compelled Eve to eat of that fruit. "The creature was made subject to vanity..." (Rom. 8:20) It is true that if God so desired that he could have created man with a different nature. We are getting on dangerous ground if we attempt to question God as to why he created us with the nature we have. My best answer is that this is God's business, and the simple fact is that it pleased him to make man with the nature that we have. "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it. Why hast thou made me thus?" (Rom. 9:20)

One is getting on dangerous ground if he accuses God of being a cruel God who loves sin. We read and believe that God is love, and that he hates sin. "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness." (Psalm 45:7) May we say that He is a sin hating God. Someone may say, if it is true that God has predestinated all things, then why does He have a purpose in all the wickedness that goes on in this world? Again, this is questioning God, and our best answer is to say that this is God's business and not man's! "The secret things belong unto God." (Deut. 29:29)

We may wonder, why did Eve eat of that fruit? All we can do is to attempt to "put ourselves into her shoes" and try to find out her feelings. She must have believed the serpent and disbelieved God. She must have thought that she could outsmart God, and by eating thereof, this would enable her to be equal unto God. Maybe she even thought that she would overthrow God. In short, Eve was deceived in the transgression.

Eve gave the fruit to Adam and he did eat. ". . . she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." (Genesis 3:6) Her husband was not deceived, and he knew what he was doing. Since Adam knew the consequences of eating of that fruit, then why did he eat thereof? It was for the love that he had for his bride! She had fallen, and he fell with her. She had died and he died with her. What a wonderful love! We trust that in this type we see Jesus who died for his bride. As Adam went down to Eve, we see Jesus who left the Father of Glory, and made his advent unto this sin cursed earth. We see Jesus who died upon the cross in the room and stead of his bride. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (Heb. 2:9)

As the Lord enables us, let us briefly consider the events concerning the life of Joseph. "And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, *ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good,* to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." (Genesis 50:19-20) By this event, we can see how that God brought a clean thing out of an unclean thing. Now this did not excuse the wicked acts of his brethren, yet we believe the evidence shows they repented of it.

By this, we can see the hidden purpose of God was that he would overrule this evil for good, or that a good thing would arise from the wicked acts.

Joseph's brethren were jealous of him because Jacob loved him more than the rest of them. (Genesis 37:4) Their hatred was so strong that all but Reuben wanted to kill Joseph. This is a good

example that God restrains the wicked acts of men. One may ask, what kept Reuben from wanting to kill Joseph? The Scripture states that Reuben's motive was to deliver Joseph out from the hands of his brethren. (see Gen. 37:22) Reuben may have been just as jealous as the rest of his brethren, yet there was something that gave him the desire to deliver Joseph out from the hands of his brethren. We certainly believe that God gave this desire to Reuben. "O, Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jer. 10:23)

Joseph's brethren sold him unto some Ishmeelites. What a cruel thing to do! Think of how much grief this caused Jacob! Yet, we trust we can see the hidden purpose of God was to save much people alive. In short, the ultimate end of all events concerning Joseph's life was to save much people alive, and that all his brethren would go to Egypt where there was plenty of corn, and that they would not starve in the famine. This leads to another point in that the Children of Israel were evilly intreated by the Egyptians for 400 years, and then God led them out by the hand of Moses. (see Acts 7:6, and Gen. 15:13) In order for all this to be brought to pass, it was necessary for all events to transpire just as God had purposed it. If Joseph's brethren had not sold him as a slave, what would have happened? We may guess at it and say that probably all the Children of Israel would have died in the famine. If they could have lived, they probably would not have gone to Egypt. It was necessary that they should live in Egypt in order for the prophesy to be fulfilled that they would be evilly intreated for 400 years, and all this was necessary in order that they be delivered from this bondage, and cross over the Red Sea and travel in the wilderness for the 40 years. If they were not in bondage, they could not observe the Feast of the Passover, because they would not have experienced the incidence of the death angel passing over their houses. Just think of the many comforting sermons that have been preached concerning the blood of the lamb. "And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever." (Exodus 12:13-14)

If all we know about predestination is theory, I am afraid that we do not know anything about the real sweetness of this doctrine, nor anything about the grace of God. This doctrine is very comforting to a poor, weak, broken hearted sinner who rejoices to know that his case rests in the hands of this God who is mighty to save. It causes one to rejoice to know that this King of Glory keeps him by his mighty power. It doesn't make any difference as to how dark the path may lie ahead, nor how many trials you must pass through, because you know that you are able to bear any affliction, trouble, etc. as long as this King of Glory gives you the Grace to bear it.

May the Lord enable us to press on for the mark of the prize of the high calling of Jesus Christ, and may we be given to earnestly contend for the faith that was once delivered to the saints.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

YET LOVES THEM AND WHAT THEY TALKED ABOUT

243 Baker Street
Warren, Ark. 71671

Dear Editors:

Find enclosed $5.00 for subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. I enjoy read-

ing it so much, I can hardly lay it down when it comes, until I have read it through. I was raised by Primitive Baptist parents, and can remember them taking us to the church in a fringed surry, driving two bay horses. The ground would be covered with people, and there was singing and preaching. People would spread their dinners, as many came long distances in buggies, and would spend the day just for worship and fellowship with one another.

After services my parents would take two or three loads over home to eat, and spend the night in an old log room with another one attached. There was an old Home Comfort Range in the kitchen on which I thought the colored woman, Elsie, who always helped my mother at meeting time, could cook the best food I ever ate.

My parents and the company would eat, and talk about the Bible. I was too small to know what it was all about, but I always sat around and listened. I loved those people, and what they talked about then, and have ever since.

The finite mind of mortal man cannot comprehend the infinite mind, wisdom and working of the Lord of Hosts. Oh the depths of the riches and of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out. The wisdom of this world is foolishness to God, and we are unable with the carnal mind to view the things of God, or even to think of things of a spiritual nature. This must come from the mighty Jehovah. He has hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes. Why? "Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." No questions as to why God does anything. It is done according to his will and purpose, and none can stay his hand, or say, What doest thou? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? He does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. He is not weak, but is able to carry out every purpose that he purposed in himself before the world was.

I love to think of God's salvation to his chosen people as a complete salvation. Man is not able to accomplish anything that would be pleasing in His sight. The best we have of the flesh, is as filthy rags in His sight. Unless the Lord prepares the offering, it is in vain, and will not be accepted. God looked upon Abel's offering as acceptable, for it was the firstling of the flock, something that Abel had not labored for. But to Cain, who offered the labors of his own hands, he had no respect, and was not acceptable.

It is so today. The world is making offerings they have prepared themselves, and God will not accept them. The preparations of the heart, together with the answer of the tongue, is alone of the Lord. The man that is truly born of God feels himself so small, and less than nothing; and realizes all the worthiness he has, is the righteousness of Jesus Christ which has been imputed to him; and his sins have been imputed to Christ. All the sins of God's people, that chosen generation, royal priesthood, were atoned for and forgiven when Christ was crucified on the cross: when he said, "It is finished."

This, dear brethren and sisters, is my meat and drink. The only resting place I can find, or am made able to rejoice in, is the doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. That sweet hope that was given me when I was in my teens, has never left me entirely; and it is by that sweet hope that I live, and am made able to view through a glass darkly, the great beyond, and have a glimpse and get a foretaste of that great city where Christ the fore-runner has gone.

I feel as Paul said, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are

of all men most miserable." I believe the God of all grace teaches his people the way of righteousness and holiness, and shows to them the depravity of man in all things.

I hope, when at the throne of grace, you will remember this poor unworthy creature.

Mrs. Charlie Harrod

ENJOYED THE ASSOCIATION

Rt. 1
Dozier, Alabama 36028

Dear Editors:

I have put off renewing for the *Signs of the Times,* so enclosed you will find check for $10.00; for which please renew my subscription for two more years, and use the balance as you see fit.

We had a wonderful association near here the second Sunday in October, Friday and Saturday before. I wish I could tell just how we felt after feeding on the food that the Heavenly Father blessed the beloved Elders to deliver to a weak and unworthy sinner like me; or at least I hope it was for me.

I enjoy the *Signs* so much. The wonderful letters and messages which so many write, are much like I feel. Sometimes it looks as if the Old Baptists will soon fade away; but I know there is just the right number that were predestinated and foreordained to be at the present time.

May God bless everyone and enable them to keep the truth coming through the *Signs of the Times,* and also through all the visitors who travel from place to place. Amen.

J. Fred Clark

Danville, Virginia **February, 1968**

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HYMN AND TUNE BOOKS

Our last edition of the *Durand and Lester Hymn and Tune Books* has been sold out.

We know however that there are those who yet want some of the books. If you or your churches need them and will let us know how many, we will have some idea of how many to order.

Thank you.

P. G. Lester, Jr.
2246 Memorial Ave., S. W.
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EDITORIAL

I Peter 4:17, 19

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator."

In the outset let me say that I am always willing to give my views on any portion of Holy Writ, provided that I have satisfactory views of the matter called to my attention. I had much rather tell you in frankness that I do not know or that I do not have any satisfactory view, than to enter into aggrandizement in regard to the mysteries recorded in the Bible. Speculation, whether in regard to monetary matters or Bible is not good — the former will ruin men, the latter will mislead Christians.

Too, it is well to remember that my views are often asked for, and they may satisfy me, but do not expect my views to settle disputes nor to satisfy your mind. I would not, God being my help, wound the feeling of any, much less would I mislead one of you. In such sacred things as these are, I often fear that my brethren have given me credit for a greater gift than I have. I am willing to spend and to be spent in the service of my Lord and my brethren, but I feel that it is the service of a poor servant.

I do not think that all the writing and comments that I can do, or other men do, will make better what Peter has said. For myself, he means exactly what he has said, that is, that the time has come that judgment *must* begin at the house of God. It may be dry and it may be technical, but I feel as did the late Elder W. J. Purington about the correct usage of language. For a servant of God to treat lightly the meaning of the words that Inspiration gave us, is as near being sacrilegious as one can get. I would not dare to claim to be a linguist, but I had as soon claim something that I do not have as to belittle what God gave us by inspiration. Just because I do not have any higher learning, does not give me the right to toss my head and wag my head at good language. *Now.* If language means anything, there has been a time when judgment did not begin at the house of God in the sense that it must now begin there. For the time to come when a thing must be done, shows clearly that there was a time when it did not begin there.

Is this house of God the same as the church? If not, what is it? If not, do we have the house of God and the church of Christ functioning at the same time? If so, how and when and where? Let me take the position that the house of God and the church of Christ is one and the same thing. This judgment *had* to be here; it *had* to begin here. Previous to this, judgment was in the house of the law. This judgment in the house of the law was rigid; the standard set could not be deviated from in the least degree; no exemptions were to be had. This judgment, with all of the other stipulations of the law covenant, had to pass away. The only passage that it had was in fulfilment, not in abrogation. None of it could pass away, even a jot or tittle, until it was fulfilled. Whatever the law said, it said it to those that were under the law. Not the first poor sinner could appeal to his fellow travellers: they could do nothing; their judgment would not have any weight.

The passing of this law judgment could never be, save by the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ; by his being sent forth from God, made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law — redeem them from the judgment rendered by law. How gracious and how precious is the appearing of this Man, who, by the suffering of death, ended

the judgment of the law, and brought his house, the house of saints, of blood bought children, to passing judgment on all those that enter her corridors.

I think that I have observed a spirit among us that would say that there is no such a thing as suffering for wrong doing. Perhaps in some cases I have misunderstood what the speakers and writers meant to say, but I am sure that in too many cases that the keynote thought of the speaker and writer has been that to contend for any form of chastening or punishing or the infliction of suffering on a child of God was conditionalism. I want to say just here that running off from the right way on either side will land us in mire. If one man gets off on one side, somebody will be sure to get off on the other side. Or do we always stay in the center? Have we never got into the mire? It is true that much has been said from the pulpit and from the press in regard to punishment, but what does it mean to chastise a child? If the work of God in what the Apostle calls chastening, is not for our good, in enabling us to see that the way of the transgressor is hard; if there is not any correction in it; if there is not a tender regard for us from the Father in administration of the rod (Ps. 89:30, 32), then why did He promise it, and why did both Paul and Peter talk about it?

It has always appeared to me a great mystery that inspired writers would make such an effort to warn us about our transgressions, and the resultant consequences, when there was not any danger of us being in the wrong. In the text before us there surely are two kinds of suffering under consideration; one of them is praiseworthy, the other is condemned and warned against. Bluntness may not get me many friends, but I hope to know a Man that was blunt in His preaching, and I see little, if any, need for me to avoid it, therefore I say unreservedly and unequivocally that for uninspired men to put meanings and explanations and interpretations on the inspired written word does always exemplary, why in the name of the truth did the Holy Spirit of God not appeal to me. If our suffering was warn the elect family of God to avoid suffering of an unexemplary kind? If there were not two kinds of conduct carried out at various times by the children of God there would not be any need for this judgment in the house of God. That is what judgment is; that is what it is for, to approve of that which is commendatory and to disapprove of that which is not.

This bar of judgment is the only one that a Christian has the right to appear before, and it is the only house that has a right to summon the inhabitants of the house before it. Before this judgment seat we not only have the right to appear, but we are under the jurisdiction of these judges in such a way that this house has the authority to order us to appear there, if we have fallen into a state of rebellion to its rules. This house or this bar of judgment is the **only** place that a Christian has the right to bring a charge against one of his or her fellow travellers. For he or she to fail to bring a claim for redress, they themselves are subjects of being called before it and of being judged by the whole house for breaking the rules of the Head of that house. It is useless for me to mention it, because scarcely a reader (together with the writer) but will find his heart telling him that this rule has been promiscuously broken at every turn of our history. Not only have we failed to bring our grievances here as the rule is laid down for us to do, but we have broken the rule of this house by taking them before councils, associations, groups of ministers, and more especially before the judgment seat of **them.**

This judgment is for the purpose of determining whether we are suffering for righteousness sake or for wrong doing; to determine whether we are suffering for following and doing the will of God, or for following our own will and pernicious ways. Perhaps you ask me, How do you arrive at your conclusions? I wanted you to ask me that. I wanted to be given a ground for fur-

ther examining that aspect of the matter. Let us go back. Let us read, "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf." Here are the two ways that must be judged between, the right way and the wrong way; here are the two kinds of suffering that are to be judged between, that which is for righteousness (Christ's) sake and that which is for wrongdoing. After telling us about the two kinds of suffering, after encouraging us about suffering for Christ's sake and warning us about suffering for evildoing, then he comes to the first verse of the text and introduces it with the word "for", which all linguists and grammarians know, refers to what ever was previously discussed, which, to me is to say, that the wiles of Satanic influence will sometimes confuse to where we will not be able to know whether we are hearing about the dying of the Lord Jesus Christ, or that we have the swell head and are priming and abetting and **petting** the natural mind in her nefarious schemes of having her own will.

Since judgment begins at the house of God, and is for the benefit of that house, it necessarily follows that this judgment is not of any save the members of this house, and that it does not effect any save this house. The question, If this judgment begins at the house of God, is not meant to cover the world, where will the sinner and the ungodly appear? The gospel is not sent to any of those classes; it is not sent to the dead; it is not sent to those who are not effected by this judgment. It is sent to the children of God, but it is not obeyed by them all. If the preaching of Christ was always obeyed, judgment would not be needed, but since some are disobedient to the preaching of the gospel; since some run heedlessly into error, some even committing sin unto death, it follows that there is an end to them; that is, an end that comes in not obeying the preaching of the gospel. What is the end of this disobedience? What is the result of the judgment that is rendered by the house of God? It must be remembered that there is not any sacrifice for their sin. They cannot atone for their disobedience. But do not be misled into thinking that there is not any judgment that will be rendered against you. There will be a looking. Looking to whom? Looking for what? Can the disobedient be at ease? If so, it is because they have not known sin; it is because that they have not experienced the way of the transgressor. I do hope that I write out of the abundance of my heart just here. I, too, have sinned. I have promised to do better, but the cares of life have entered in, not sparing me. I do not feel to be an obedient son. I do feel to be a disobedient son, if a son at all. If you do not feel this way, you will be excused from reading further. My sin, my daily sin,gives me trouble, as my daily bread, as my daily rate and portion (II Kings 25: 28, 30), gives me joy. If your daily sin does not give you trouble, do not waste my time and yours in telling me about the daily joy that you can get from the Lord. When my life is a daily life of infractions, it is also a daily life of a dread foreboding of the judgment and fiery indignation that is sure to come. It is sure to come. The sins of God's people find them out (Num. 32: 23); others are exempted and excused from reading further. What a pathetic picture it is when we think that we have swept our sins under the carpet. God knows, and He reveals things. This revelation is made known to the house of God about the same time that it is to us; and made known by the same source and power. What is the end of this disobeying the gospel? What is the end of them that obey not the gospel, that is, the proclaimed gospel? O what sorrow is mine. My brethren have judged me; I have not measured up to their expectations; my brethren have looked at me with the look of Christ upon Peter, and there is weeping on my part. This is the end of those that obey not the gospel. It cannot be the end of the ungodly, the im-

penitent, the unregenerate, the unborn, the non-elect. It has never, and will never, be preached to them.

"And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" What about your judgment in regard to your salvation? What about the judgment of the whole house of God? How has your travel in the house of God been? Has it been an easy travel? If so, do not pursue the subject. This is not for you. Has your experience of salvation been sufficient to satisfy the longing desire of your heart? If so, we must part company. The word that we are dealing with does not signify failure, but it does mean what it says. That is, the righteous are scarcely saved, they are barely saved, they are saved through straitness, difficulty, hardness, suffering, death. It does not have one scintilla of thought that the work of Christ was short or slack or that the strengthening of Christ by the Father was less than almighty. The writer is treating on the things and experiences and deliverances of the present house of God. If I know what conditional time salvation is, I do not believe it. However, I do not feel free to be allured away from the gospel rule by the entanglements of men's conception of that salvation which is in Christ. It is well and good to remember the conditional covenant; to remember that the blessings of it were hinged on their obedience to it. It is equally important, yea, it is vital to our well being, to remember that we are under grace, yet being under grace only exempts us from being under law to God but does not exempt us from being under law to Christ. The transition from the law of God to the grace and law of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, is as beautiful as any narrative in the Bible. Having ceased to serve the law of Moses, we are now serving Christ, whom serving, we do indeed love, thus fulfilling the law through love. Being moved out from the dispensation of conditional law, we are now brought into the house of God where righteous judgments are rendered. But do you ever wonder how they put up with you? Isn't it a source of wonder that they, at first, judged you worthy of membership? And isn't it a continued wonder that they have judged you worthy of continued fellowship? This is the being scarcely saved; it is not from God's standpoint; it is not from the lack in the blood of Christ; it is not in the justification that His ascension brought about, but it is in us. **If a child, the least of all the children.**

But who does this embrace? Who is embraced in this judgment? How many of the righteous are embraced in this salvation? O dear brethren, all the righteous are embraced in it. And all of them are righteous. They are all righteous in Christ, but none of them righteous in themselves. There isn't one but that the judgment of the law would condemn to everlasting ruin, but this judgment which begins in the house of God is a saving judgment. If they are children, then this judgment is sure to bring them through the fire; the fire will consume their ill works, but they themselves will be saved, yet as by fire. If in rebellion, this judgment rendered under the auspices of the Holy Spirit will cure rebellion, for what child can long survive when he or she is banished from fellowship? If walking in the flesh, who is going to be satisfied when this judgment delivers them to Satan for the destruction of the flesh? This judgment will cure and save the righteous.

This judgment is not of the Adamic creature; it is not a by-product of academic learning; it is not a mixture of the flesh and the Spirit working in co-ordination, but it is that judgment which comes from the judgment seat of Christ. He sits in the seat of judgment and the judgment is his, and out of his fulness is imparted to each member that judgment which is sure to correct, instruct, chasten, punish, purify, and justify the sons before the people of God. The question as to the appearance of the sinners and the ungodly is nothing more than that; it answers itself. Since all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5: 10), it

follows that the righteous (in Christ) will be judged here, but the self-righteous (sinners and ungodly men) will not have anywhere to appear. They are left out here as they are in every other aspect of the kingdom of heaven.

"Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator." Dearly beloved in the Lord, this speaks for itself. If any can improve on it, I am sure your articles will be given a careful examination.

W.D.G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

COVETOUSNESS

"For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." — 1 Timothy 6:10

Without recognizing the vanity of the carnal mind, to which the new creature in Christ Jesus is subjected while sojourning in this world of sin, it is impossible to discern the application of the admonitions and exhortations in the Scriptures addressed to the saints. To the natural mind it is only in being completely conformed to the perfection of righteousness which is in Christ that any sinner has the right to claim to be his disciple. Taking advantage of this plausible error in the understanding of the saints, the wily tempter finds an easy victory over their judgment in his assaults upon their confidence in the hope which they have received. The pattern given in the inspired record, in which the saints are shown to be still beset with the corruptions and infirmities of the flesh, is the strong defense of the tried ones under such temptations; yet even this would be unavailing were it not that the Spirit of Christ which is in them perpetually attests that they are born of God. This divine witness is recorded in the earnest desire for release from sin, which causes them to confess before God their utter vileness, and to hate their own every day life, because of the sin which is manifest in it.

The admonition and instruction of which our text is a part, like all the directions given to the saints in the New Testament, are only the written expression of the law of Christ which is put in the inward parts, and written in the hearts of all the children of Israel under the new covenant of gospel liberty. This marks the distinction between the dispensation of life in Christ Jesus and that bondage which was revealed in the law of sin and death. Nothing is enjoined in the perfect law of Christ but what is most earnestly desired by every one who is led by the Spirit of God. And that Spirit prompts the saint to desire nothing but the complete fulfillment of all that is enjoined in the law and example of the Lord Jesus. They who are thus led to love righteousness are the only people who are troubled on account of their own sinfulness. To no others is the principle of divine holiness revealed.

In the two epistles to Timothy, Paul was moved by the Holy Spirit to present the complete rule for his conduct as a minister of Jesus Christ: in which he was shown the very same principle of love to God which is wrought in every one who has the life of God shed abroad in his heart. That love is the fulfilling of the law of Christ. It is never found in any others but those in whom it is wrought by the power of God. The written word bears witness to the same truth which God has put in the heart of every subject of his enlightenment; therefore it is indisputable evidence that every one is born of God when he is governed by the love of that truth which is written in the revealed Scriptures.

It is not by ability to challenge comparison with others in rendering obedience to the law of Moses that the saints are identified. They are the peculiar people who cannot do the good which they earnestly desire to do, and

who have constantly to mourn that they do the thing which they would not do. Certainly such helpless characters can have no occasion for glorying in their own works, nor can they exult in their own righteous emotions and desires. They can never attain to being anything more than sinners saved by the infinite grace of God. This is true not only in reference to the manifestation of their eternal salvation in ultimate glory; but also in their preservation in this present evil world.

It is still proved in the experience of every disciple of Jesus, as he said to his immediate followers, "Without me ye can do nothing." — John 15: 5. Every subject of divine grace must be taught this lesson by personal experience. However much they may have learned by reading the Scriptures, or by hearing other saints tell of their dependence upon the present support of divine grace, the lesson is entirely new to each of them when the light of divine revelation is displayed shining in his own heart. The awful discovery of the pollution therein hidden would drive the conscious sinner to despair, were it not that the present help of the Captain of his salvation sustains his hope by the testimony of that abiding witness of living faith which is itself the evidence of things not seen. To those who are taught of God the exceeding sinfulness of their own hearts, no mere outward action can satisfy the desire for righteousness which is wrought in them by the Spirit of Christ abiding in them. They continually feel the need of wisdom from above to guide them in the way everlasting. For their exclusive benefit the whole inspired record is given. This should never be forgotten by the saints when reading the Scriptures.

"For the love of money is the root of all evil." However manifestly true may be this declaration as applied to the natural children of Adam, it is not in that unrestricted sense that the apostle was moved by the Holy Spirit to write it in this instruction to Timothy. He was not merely presenting a general treatise of moral philosophy for the reformation of the depraved nature of men. The inspiration of God was directing him in establishing the immutable decisions of the supreme court of the gospel heaven. The law of Christ commands the obedience of every one who loves him; beyond that boundary our Lord has given no commandment to any of the fallen sinners of the family of Adam. When he was here in the likeness of sinful flesh he refused to interpose his authority to enforce the just claim of one who appealed to him for such aid.—Luke 12: 13, 14.

It is in our text then not designed that the principle stated should have a general application to the natural world, even though it may doubtless be true of all the race of mankind. In the church of Christ this fearful power of iniquity manifests itself working in the carnal mind of those who are called to be followers of God. Covetousness is idolatry in the subjects of redeeming grace.—Col. 3: 5. It is not to be confined literally to the avarice which is directed to the accumulation of current coin. Deep down in the darkness of the corrupt heart is discovered the spring of covetousness, from whence arise all the abominations which are found distressing the saints while they sojourn in the enemy's hand. The love of money may be considered the most easily detected form in which this sinful lust is developed; and hence it is appropriately used as including all the forms in which covetousness is manifested. It was by this principle of iniquity that the desire was prompted when the request was made that the two disciples might have the places of special honor in the kingdom of Christ. It is the same hateful motive which causes the saints to love the preeminence in the estimation of the church. Whether it be in the aspiration for prominence in the public assemblies of the saints, or in the wish to command the highest place in the estimation of the brethren, or in the desire to shine as wonderful lights among the churches, every form of selfishness is covered by the expression as used in our text. In

a scriptural sense it is declared that "A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry; but money answereth all."—Eccl. 10: 19. In this definition every form of covetousness is included in "the love of money."

Evidently those who are captivated by this desire for selfish advantage are not led by the Spirit of Christ, for he not only suffered the loss of all things for the deliverance of his people from just condemnation, but even gave himself for their sins, that he might deliver them from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father. —Gal. 1: 4. This self-sacrificing and unselfish love is the product of the life of Christ dwelling in those in whom it is developed. No such fellowship of the Spirit can arise from the natural heart of man. As the Captain of our salvation laid down his life for us, so when his Spirit leads us we shall be made to lay down our lives for the brethren.—I John 3: 16. This holy power of divine life in the saints cannot be reconciled to that carnality which is ever seeking selfish perferment. Whenever the saint is overcome by this covetousness he sows to the flesh, and of the flesh he must reap the miserable crop of corruption. No matter in what form it comes, selfishness is identical with "the love of money" as expressed in our text, and from its poisonous root is developed evil of every form by which the saints are called to suffer while sojourning in the earthly house of this tabernacle. All the works of the flesh grow from this root of desperate iniquity. Only when governed by the pure Spirit of Christ can the saints be free from this vile "love of money."

"Which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith." It is not necessary to look far in order to find those terrible examples among the saints of God. Such as have never seen the bottomless pit of their own carnal depravity will not be prepared to sympathize with us in confessing that it is not once or twice, but times past numbering, that we have fallen under this bitter condemnation. This deadly error invaribly shows that those captivated by it have erred from the faith, not only in loving this world and its false attractions, but in forgetting that "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." —James 1: 17. While looking unto Jesus, the humble believer can rest in the assurance of his unfailing mercy and truth; then there is no occasion for coveting after the vanities which are estimated by money, or by the treasures which are prized in the transitory world which passeth away. When charmed by these deceitful attractions they deny their trust in the Lord, and thus seek to place their hope in the alluring things of time. For their conversion from such errors they often have to go down to the bottoms of the mountains, and cry out of the belly of hell. But when their soul (self-confidence) has fainted in them they remember the Lord, and their prayer comes in unto him, even into his holy temple. Then they learn, "They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy." —Jonah 2: 8.

For the consolation of such as have been brought low under the conviction that they have thus erred from the faith, let it be remembered that none can err from the faith unless they have received the faith. Jonah was a prophet of the Lord before he paid his fare to go to Tarshish. His rebellion was the experience of a subject of salvation not less than his final confession of his dependence upon the mercy of that God from whom he had sought to flee. His covetousness embraced a regard for his own honor as a truthful prophet, and he sought to avoid the loss of reputation which would result from the mercy of the Lord toward the city whose destruction he was commanded to predict. In the sense of our text his motive was "the love of money."

"And pierced themselves through with many sorrows." There certainly can be none but the subjects of redeeming grace who know this result of covet-

ing after worldly treasures. The ungodly are they whose prosperity in the world excited the envy of the psalmist. They are not plagued like other men. Their eyes stand out with fatness, and they have more than heart can wish. But to the afflicted and poor people of God all the allurements which this world can present are but the accumulation of sorrows. Riches make to themselves wings; increasing knowledge increases sorrows; friendship betrays; and even the most reliable brother can only be trusted so far as he is kept by the power of God. Thus, in its most comprehensive sense, the worldly treasure of which money is the embodiment can only prove a piercing thorn to the deceived saint who sets his heart upon its attainment. Often do those thorns of sorrow come home with bitter anguish to the saints who have vainly sought for satisfaction in the pursuit of the things which are attractive as money to the natural mind. May the grace of God so rule in the hearts of his saints that they may be kept from this sore piercing with many sorrows!

(The above was an editorial by Elder William Beebe March 29, 1893.)

OBITUARIES

GENTRY CHILTON TOWNSLEY

Brother Gentry Townsley was born August 23, 1891, and died October 13, 1967. He was married to the former Mary Easley May 9, 1936.

He joined the Primitive Baptist Church Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in October, 1938, at the Obion Association at Beaverdam Church, as a member of Hephzibah Church. He was baptized the Sunday following by Elder O. W. Perkins. He was faithful in his belief until death.

He leaves to mourn his death, his wife, Mary; two sons, George, of New Albany, Miss., and Donald, Paris, Tenn.; one daughter, Sue Hill Robinson, Buchanan, Tenn.; and a host of relatives and friends. He was sick several years, and was in a hospital most of the last year of his life. All was done that skilled doctors and loving hands could do; but in vain.

His funeral was conducted at the Paris Funeral Home by the writer, his pastor. Interment was in the family cemetery at Buchanan, Tenn., to await the resurrection morning.

(Elder) Paul Poyner

VIRGINIA HARRISON COWAN

Almighty God, in His infinite wisdom, and mercies, removed our beloved Sister, Virginia (Jennie) Harrison Cowan, from this life on the 21st day of June, 1967. We, the church, bow in humble submission to Almighty God, who does all things according to the council of His own will.

Sister Cowan was the daughter of Slade and Dosiah Harrison, and was born in Bear Grass Township, 82 years ago. She was married to Mack Gilbert Cowan; after his death, she made her home with her children, in Virginia, continuing to visit and attend her church when possible.

Third Sunday in December 1956, Sister Cowan was received a candidate for baptism into the Church, however, due to afflictions, baptism was postponed. Then the third Sunday in March 1957, she was baptized by Elder A. B. Ayers, her pastor.

She was a good mother, and had a great interest in the church, was greatly afflicted, suffering much pain. She bore her affliction with much patience, manifesting strong faith and sweet hope in a Blessed Savior. We miss her, but we are sure our loss is her eternal gain.

Sister Cowan is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Louise Courtney and Mrs. B. L. Hardison, Jr. of Portsmouth, Va.; three sons, Gussie N. Cowan, Simon G. Cowan, of Suffolk, and Slade D. Cowan, of Aulander, N. C.; four sisters, Mrs. Fannie Mizzelle of Suffolk, Mrs. Bertha Bailey of Greenville, N. C., Mrs. Laura Edwards of Mount Gilead, N. C. and Mrs. J. L. Gurganus of Grimesland, N. C.; three brothers, Earl Harrison of Washington, N. C., F. B. Harrison and J. V. Harrison, of Suffolk, Va.

The funeral was conducted in Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder E. C. Harrison. Her body was laid to rest beside her husband in Mizelle family cemetery in Bear Grass Township, to await the resurrection, when our Savior will come, and the saints shall be raised to dwell with Him forever.

E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Elmer B. Peele, Church Clerk
Committee

MRS. ELLA SAUNDERS PRYOR

Sister Ella Pryor, daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Alex Saunders, was born December 15, 1890, in Rockingham County, North Carolina, and departed this life June 30, 1967, making her stay on earth 76 years, 6 months and 15 days. She was married to A. Z. Pryor on October 20, 1910. To this union were born

nine children, two of whom and their father preceded her in death, leaving the following seven children to mourn her departure: Mrs. Estelle Austin, Mrs. Gaynelle Walker and J. D. Pryor, R. F. D. 2, Ruffin, N. C.; Mrs. Lucille Muransky, Baltimore, Md.; Mrs. Jacqueline New, Durham, N. C.; Hugh Pryor, Pelham, N. C.; and Arthur Pryor, Chatham, Va.; also 18 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren; one sister, Mrs. Will Allen, Schoolfield, Va.; two brothers, I. L. Saunders, Ruffin, N. C., and John Saunders, Draper, N. C.

Sister Pryor united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on the 4th Sunday in January, 1946, and was baptized by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, who also conducted her funeral, after which her body was laid to rest, beneath a profusion of lovely flowers, in the church cemetery.

Our dear Sister's love and devotion to her family, her friends and her brethren and sisters was truly manifest in her meek and humble life of service to them, and to those of the Mayfield community where she spent most of her life, never seeming too tired or busy to minister to the needs of others in sickness or otherwise. Due to ill health, Sister Pryor was deprived of normal activity for several years before God, in His infinite wisdom and love for truly a subject of His grace, saw fit to call her to His breast ,where her spirit is enjoying the fulness of that blessed hope she cherished many years. We, who are left, mourn not as those without hope, but joyfully await the resurrection of her body and ours, which are sown in weakness, but will be raised in power.

To her children and loved ones, I feel to say, as our blessed Saviour said at the grave of Lazarus, "She sleepeth." May the God of grace be near each of you with His comforting Spirit, and may it be your happy lot to awake with her in His likeness and carried to that blessed home, free from sickness, sorrow, pain and death, is the humble prayer of one who knew and loved her as truly a mother in Israel, and a loving mother in nature to each of you.

Unworthily submitted as a sister in hope of a glorious resurrection,

Eva Eggleton

By order of Dan River Church while in conference, September 23, 1967.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator Pro Tem
W. C. Vipperman, Church Clerk

EFFIE GREEN ROGERS

This is written in loving memory of my dearest mother Effie Green Rogers, whom God in his infinite wisdom called away June 3, 1967. She was born in Martin County, North Carolina, December 23, 1889; her parents were William Marion and Ida Peel Green.

She loved her church and was a member at heart long before she asked for a home there on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1964. We who loved her bow in humble submission to the will of our merciful and kind Heavenly Father.

Her husband Javan Rogers preceded her in death thirty-five years ago. She is survived by four sons and four daughters; C. Urbin, J. Leon, Javan H., R. Eugene and Mrs. Helen Leggett, Mrs. Vara Green Harrison, Mrs. Theresa Ayers and Mrs. Doris Woodall.

Her funeral was conducted by her beloved pastor Elder E. C. Harrison and Elder W. E. Grimes at Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church, Williamston, North Carolina. Burial was in Woodlawn Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

Written by her daughter, who sadly misses her.

Theresa Rogers Ayers

ALLIE T. BAILEY

Our Heavenly Father in his infinite wisdom, love and mercy called away our beloved Sister Allie T. Bailey on July 11, 1967. She was born in Martin County, North Carolina, November 20, 1886; her parents were William A. and Jane Peel.

Sister Bailey was baptized into the fellowship of Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church, third Sunday in June, 1922, by Elder B. S. Cowin. She had been a faithful and loyal member for forty-five years. Many things can be said of the devoted and genuine life she lived and she will be missed in her home and in her church.

Her husband, Warner A. Bailey and three sons, Clayton, Clarence and W. A. preceded her in death. She is survived by two sons and three daughters: Robert, Buie and Mrs. Irene Whitaker, Mrs. Lois Mae Revels and Mrs. Elizabeth Roberson.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder E. C. Harrison, Elder W. E. Grimes, Mr. Thermon Griffin and Mr. W. H. Jackson at Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church. Burial was in Woodlawn Cemetery.

Done by order of conference Saturday before the third Sunday in July, 1967.

E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Elmer Peel, Church Clerk
Theresa R. Ayres, Committee

MEMORIAL OF THE
VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING
1967

Since it has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our congregations the follow-

ing members since our last session, Elder George L. Weaver, Brother Roger L. Dade and Sister Mabel Farnie; and our close friend, Mr. Bruce McIntosh, we desire to express and record our love and esteem for them.

We held them as being greatly blessed, as they showed their love of the things of God and godliness in their walk and conversation; and they are sorely missed in our meetings.

We feel to thank our God that he gave them to us as fellow worshippers having the same faith and hope, and rejoicing in the assurance that our salvation is entirely in the Lord.

We know that the Lord gave and he has taken away; and we would bless his name, and say, "Thy will be done."

Written by John D. Wood

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT BY THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

Inasmuch as it has pleased Almighty God to remove by death two of our members: Cora Powell, of the Nassaonga Church, and Hettie West, of the Snow Hill Church; and also three of our dear friends, Elizabeth Holloway, Frank Hudson and Johnnie Truitt, we desire to record our love and esteem for them.

In their lives they manifested their love to God, and to His people, by their orderly walks and godly conversations.

Although they have been called away, they have left upon the tables of our hearts marks that will ever remind us that we should thank God for having brought us into fellowship with such lovely ones.

We desire to bow in humble submission to God's will; and to say, "Thy will be done."

Written by D. V. Spangler

MEMORIAL FOR ELDER GEORGE L. WEAVER

WHEREAS, It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst by death our beloved brother, Elder George L. Weaver, of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, we, the Salisbury Association, bow in humble submission to God's will.

We will miss him visiting our associations, but feel that our loss is his eternal gain. Elder Weaver was a man of great tenderness in his ministry.

RESOLVED, That this Memorial be published with our Minutes, and in the *Signs of the Times.*

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Maude T. Laws, Hon. Clerk
Wm. S. Adkins, Clerk
Willie A. Davis, Sr., Asst. Clerk

"JUST 'PAPA' ON THE LITTLE FLOWERS"

I went to pay my respect to the family of a dear friend whose life on earth was brought to an end.

I saw a little wreath of flowers almost hid by the others: it just said "Papa" on the card, for his son had gone with his mother. I lifted my eyes filled with tears; beside me stood this bereaved Papa, his head bowed low. God bless him, he was eighty-four.

His eyes were kind, his voice weak, his hands trembled: he was one of the meek. He took my hand and held it tight; in his face I could see that heavenly light. He said his son came to see him each day; and how he was blessed in such a wonderful way.

I believe his son will come forth in the last hour, with the precious one that put "Papa" on the card of the little flower. He stood by the body of his boy, his head bowed in sorrow: you could see he felt no promise of tomorrow.

There were other members of the family whose hearts were just as sad: a devoted wife and lovely children who had lost their Dad. They were all submissive to the great and Holy Power; yet I was attracted by "Papa" on the card of the little flower. I felt a prayer in my heart for this dear old Papa, whom I esteemed so high, that he might feel his Lord was nigh.

He had other children just as near and dear, whom the Lord had blessed to walk in love and fear. With all his many blessings it was just as hard to put "Papa" on the card of the little flower so pretty and neat, that seemed to say so kind and sweet, "Goodby, Son, till in heaven we meet."

Written in love and sympathy with the family of Ben. F. McKinney, and his dear old Dad, who followed him in death within ten days, on October 18, 1967. Brother Jessie D. McKinney was a very precious brother to the writer, being established in the faith, and through a God given wisdom, was not deceived by the cunning devices of Satan.

I visited him many times, and found his thoughts to be upon the Lord of Heaven: of whom he was given to speak so sweetly. I believe he was homesick, for he put forth no effort to remain in this world of sin and sorrow.

I feel the memories of Brother McKinney will live on in my heart, as a witness of the love and mercy of our Lord, by whom we are given strength to endure.

One who loved him,
Clifton Robertson
Rt. 1, Reidsville, N. C.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 136 DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1968 NO. 3

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3/68
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

FAITH

We walk by faith, and not by sight,
Faith keeps us by day and night;
By faith we see Him on the cross,
Without that faith, then we are lost.

By faith in Christ, we are made whole,
To travel on that Peaceful Road;
Without this faith, we cannot please God;
Nor travel the road which Jesus trod.

But, if we sing a song of praise,
Each note shall echo, "Grace, Free Grace."

Ho! ye that are thirsty, come and drink,
And do not for one moment think,
It's of yourself you're in this place,
For God invites His Chosen Race —

To the Fountain of Living Water, freely take,
T'was His Son who bled and died for your sake.

To the fountain, whose streams freely flow,
Come each hungry and thirsty soul;
You need not bring money, nor any price —
To fill his children, is the delight of Christ.

For He who is that Living Stream,
Has chosen His children, and them redeemed.
Christ brought them all, how dear they cost,
He hath finished the work, and none is lost.

Come every one of every age,
All of ye poor, and all ye brave,
Come, view the things God hath done,
B'twixt the Counsel, Three in One.

Before the earth, before the hills,
God set the foundation in His will;
Before there ever was a man,
All things were settled in God's Holy Plan.

Elder R. O. Simmons
R#1
Elora, Tennessee

YET CONTENDING FOR
THE DOCTRINE

4 Maple Lane,
Pennington, N. J. 08534

Dear Editors:

To me it is a matter of much thankfulness that the Editors of the **Signs** have not receded from the doctrine as believed by former editors and elders, who really believed the word of God, and wrote from the heart.

There is infinite value in being in our hearts genuine believers in the truth of God as it is in Christ. I feel thankful that I have been blessed to believe the word of God in its entirety. Indeed, much of it I do not understand, but I believe it whether I have any light on it or not. I feel one does not have to understand the truth in all its principles in order to savingly believe it. What I feel blessed to have, is a child like faith given me of the Father, to stand on His word, awaiting his own pleasure to reveal it to me.

Am enclosing amount for one year's subscription, and the remainder towards helping publish the **Signs of the Times,** which both Brother Charles and I especially love, and wish to see it continue.

May God bless one and all.

Sister Mary Hellings

MATTHEW 7: 13-14

Dear Editors and Travelers of the "Narrow Way."

As time goes on and we see so many evidences that the great gulf between the strait and narrow way and the wide way is becoming greater almost daily, then these words of Christ, spoken near the end of His Sermon on the

Mount, come more forcefully to our minds. Though He was directly speaking to his disciples then before him, He was telling the generations of disciples to come the very same thing, and His words today are as timely as then. In God's all-wise providence, it was designed that those spoken words would be written into the Book of Truth. What wonderful ways had the Lord God in those days; and He has never changed.

Though the wide way Christ spoke of, has been very wide and attractive, and easy, indeed, to enter, we see the frenzied efforts today to make it even wider and wider, and the wide gate made ready to admit more millions. Witness the activities of late in Rome where great changes are made, modifying and easing their former papal procedure, to entice the Protestant world to join them. Witness the efforts of worldly churches to widen the way, by revamping their articles of faith to suit those of modern day ideas; and others are working along similiar lines. The movement to widen the way is very general. One denomination now plans to establish, at great cost, many places of worship for the traveling public, locating them at points adjacent to main thoroughfares so people can swing off in their autos and worship. "We are bringing the glory of God right down to the traveling public," so said their California spokesman on TV last week. The ease afforded those traveling that wide way is something to behold. Pages could be written, depicting what goes on with those multitudes traveling that broad way that leads to destruction.

Going back to the words of Christ, we see that He pointed out the opposites, namely: THE STRAIT (not straight) GATE and the WIDE GATE; the FEW and the MANY that enter them; THE NARROW WAY and the WIDE WAY, and the destination of each: one unto Life and the other unto Destruction. Possibly some have not noticed the use of the word STRAIT instead of STRAIGHT. The word STRAIT is found but few times in the Bible and refers to a state of being restricted, distressed, perplexed, etc. Restricted seems to be appropriate here, for Christ is that Spiritual Gate; and He said there would be but few to enter it. So the gate is greatly restricted. It seems that this gate is identical with the door that we find in John 10: 7 — "Then said Jesus to them again, verily, verily I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep." Further mention is found of Him being the only entrance through which the chosen ones could enter, etc. Then are not the Lord's children in a state of distress, and greatly perplexed as they near that strait gate? They have been made to know their sins are many and that their state is helpless indeed. Knowing that they are powerless of themselves to better their condition, are they not tempted to turn to keepers of the wide gate who come forth with many smooth and pleasing promises to take them to the Lord? They have not yet received that eyesight (spiritually) to behold the Strait Gate and they are very much in a perplexed and distressed state, or STRAIT, as-it-were. Then Christ reveals that Strait Gate to them, saying, as He did to those desciples, "Enter ye in," etc. I see this Strait also as referred to, in or about bodies of water. It means a narrow and restricted passage between two large bodies of water. Spiritually, when Christ brings his little ones to that strait gate and enters them on that narrow way, they pass from the natural world into the spiritual world, or from death unto life; etc.

We have referred to those multitudes traveling on the wide way and now let us look back to those of olden times who traveled on the narrow way, who followed a Straight course, being restricted or prevented from deviating one iota. Did not they come to places they could not get through of themselves? David prayed the Lord to, "direct my steps and lift them (his feet) up out of the miry clay." As he traveled, he said, "I sink in deep mire where there is no standing." From Solomon, "Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness because of mine enemies, make thy way Straight

before thy face." Other writers of old expressed the same thing, and we can see the great contrast between their travel and that of present day travelers on that wide way. The experiences of God's little ones, in the past and in the present day, proves they cannot, and will not, change over from that narrow way, though it leads them through miry swamps of despair, deserts; thru brambles of thorns, and trials and tribulations, etc. We hear those multitudes saying they are saved and on their way to God's heaven, without a doubt or worry; quite opposite or contrary to hearing (and our own inward feeling) those crying, "Lord save, or I perish." They travel on with "fear and trembling," begging the Lord to give them help daily. Much could be written about the great gulf between their smooth travel on that wide way, and the hazardous, rough travel of those shown the strait gate and narrow way that leads to Life, but it would be repititous.

Since we know that the Lord God designed and brought into existance that Strait Gate by the sending of his Holy Son to this sinful earth, to shed His blood and cleanse all those, and make them ready to enter it: —all those chosen in Him before the world was. And since He is the keeper of that gate, then is not the designer of that Wide Gate old Satan himself, who operates it by and through the countless members of his worldly kingdom? They surely are the wide gate keepers today, boasting of their so called God-given power to usher more and more millions of people (or their souls) through that wide gate and lead them on to God. Solomon viewed their works when he said in Proverbs 25: 14, — "Who so boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain." We hear their boasts daily over T.V. and radio, and read them in the press. There has been no "Rain" or Spiritual results these hundreds of years, or we would not be living in a world beset by humans possessed of the devil in so many ways. Again, Christ told of them in verses 15 and 16, when He said' "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."

This old sinner, very much isolated from Old Baptist groups, turns a "deaf ear" to those seeking to entice the Lord's people off that narrow way. The **Signs** contains letters from others in similiar state, due to distance or physical infirmities. Their experiences are a source of great consolation, and the written sermons provide spiritual food, and strengthen me sufficiently to "Be still and know that I am God." I keep hoping that it will be possible later to be near Churches where the Gospel Truth is preached; and to be daily amongst those traveling on that Narrow Way that leads to Life Eternal, even though so much of the time I am in doubt if I have entered that Strait Gate. If I am "Traveling on to God in the way our Fathers trod," then may I ask that you fellow-travelers remember me in your prayers when at the throne of Grace.

In "fear and trembling",
Wm. O. Hall,
P. O. Box 595,
Mount Vernon, Washington 98273

TITHES OF LOVE

Pocomoke, Md.

Dearly Beloved Brethren:

We hear so much today about paying tithes; and this seems to be on my mind. I do not believe in paying tithes the way the world sees it; but I do believe in paying tithes of love to the brethren, if we are brought to love them the way we should.

"And blessed by the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all." (Genesis 14:20) In the Old Testament we find types and shadows of things to come in the New Testament. Melchizedek was a type of Christ. Abram saw greatness in him, and paid tithes to him. It seems this is a fore-

runner of something found in the New Testament.

"And as he went they spread their clothes in the way. And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen." (Luke 19:36, 37) These people were paying tithes of love to Jesus: they saw greatness in him. Today, when we meet the brethren, we want to do little things for them. When they visit in our homes, we offer them the best of everything. This is because we love them, and see the marks of grace in them. We see something in them we can't see in ourselves. When we are doing this, we are paying tithes of love to the brethren, or paying tithes to Jesus. Why do I say this? look at Matthew 25:40, "And the king shall answer, and say unto them, Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

The question arises, How does one go about learning to love another. Love is something we have no control over: we either love someone, or we don't. If we don't, we can't make ourselves love him, no matter how hard we try.

The answer is in 1 John 4:19, "We love him because he first loved us." If Jesus has first loved us, we will love him, and we will love the brethren: it is a gift of God. When we are drawn to him by his love, we are glad to pay tithes of love to the brethren, for it is the Spirit of God working in us. If I am not misled, I love all of you.

Your little brother in hope,
Frank A. Holland

Newark, Deleware

STANDING ON GOSPEL GROUND

Dear Brother Hudson:

May the Lord be praised.

Several years ago the abuse of our ministers by the ones that had called them to the service of their respective Churches, became so apparent to me that I felt compelled to answer a challenge to write on that particular subject. This I did to the best of my ability. As soon as the *Signs* came out for that month I begin to get the reactions of various ones. I would say that it was a three-fold response. Many openly approved, a few did not approve, either by word or silence, and some fearful ones approved but were sad that I had voiced my feelings. What do you suppose were their reasons for me being quiet? You are absolutely right! They said, Brother Griffin, you will be persecuted for saying these things, although we know that they are the truth and that they ought to be said. Imagine that! They ought to be said, because they were the truth, but you ought to leave off such preaching and writing because you will suffer persecution for it. To me, that was equal to saying, if Elder John Doe (of any other address) had said it, he would have received the persecution instead of you.

During the last forty years of writing for various publications I have met that feeling among our people. Do in a way that you will not receive persecution. Do write smooth things (see Isa. 30: 10, 11), do this, do that, leave off this, leave off that, and your road will be easier. **Speaking after the manner of men,** the Saviour could leave off this, and escape that; he could have gone this way, and have escaped the sorrows of that way.

I know, dear brother, that I am only a country rustic; I know that the words that fall from my lips and the words that come from this typewriter will scarcely cause a ripple among our people, but I seek not the applause or approval or monetary support of any man or set of men, save those things that are sound doctrine meet the approval and support of men. I would desire to please Him that I trust has called me. Feeling in my heart that the stand that you have set forth in your recent article is the solid Gospel truth, I com-

mend you for it, knowing first, that the Grace of God has built you up to the writing of it. (Acts 20: 32) If I were not sure that you are right, I would have a feeling that you would enjoy right much commendation for your stand, but feeling that you have stood on Gospel ground in what you have presented, I am sure that you will receive some unkind treatment. This treatment may not come in spoken or written words; it may come in silence, **deathly silence. Silence from hearers and readers often tend to the breaking of the heart of ministers.**

I subscribe wholeheartedly to the thoughts that you have expressed so well. You are at liberty to quote me to that end.

Your little brother, if a brother, in the merits of Jesus Christ.

W. D. Griffin

LETTER FROM ELDER SLAUSON TO BROTHER AND SISTER VASS

46 Cedar Street
Kingston, N. Y.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

God bless you. It was so kind and thoughtful of you dear ones to write this poor lonely pilgrim. I was much pleased to hear from you by the writing from your hand and heart. You mentioned being in our home on your wedding trip. It sure was a pleasure for us to entertain you, and converse with you. I have enjoyed your poem, and feel it is in line with my mind and understanding of the word and work of God; that there is nothing that transpires but what God knew or knows what it will be, and its purpose; that everything is for a purpose and that purpose is only known of God and by God, as we are told that God does His will in the army of Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and the fulness thereof are his.

God being under no law, who can say, What doest thou? The clay surely is helpless before and in the hands of the great potter (God). We are told there are vessels of honor and vessels of dishonor, and pray tell us what the poor helpless clay is going to do about it. He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth, says the word of God. Can the thing formed say to his creator, Why hast thou formed me thus? Dear ones, we are nothing, know so little, and spend our life in such a wicked, wretched, and sinful world, yet we feel and trust we are not of the world. God help us, God help us! We are same as Peter; we need our feet washed to live and walk a Godly walk; our hands washed to be a laborer with clean hands in the vineyard of our God; our head washed to be of a clean mind and clean thoughts, to be unspotted from the world, and to be of a Godly conversation, that our light should shine before men.

So when we think seriously about and of the One we desire so much to follow, that guile was not found in His mouth; that he could not return good for evil; loved those that hated him and had no use for him, could love His neighbor as himself and gave his life for same; could love God the Father with all His heart, mind, soul, and strength, yet was tempted in all points like His children yet without sin; and he that knew no sin became sin that such poor sinners as we are, children of wrath by nature even as others, might become the righteousness of God in him. Yes, the righteousness of God. Think of it: only **one way,** by the imputed righteousness of the risen Son of God, — it makes me feel so humble. Oh, can it be for me? That is all the trust that I have; it is all the trust that I need, but I do need, that and that alone, if Heaven is ever to be my home, for I have tried to live away from self and out of self and I have **failed.** I have tried to love God more and serve him better, but **I** have **failed.** I have tried to be of clean mind and thoughts, but **I** have **failed.**

From time to time in my daily life, I have been burdened with such a desire to praise God that it has caused me to groan aloud, and wondered if God would incline His ear. I have tried to be con-

tent therewith, but I have **failed.** With all the praise that I can ever render to God for His abundant great goodness to this poor of the poorest, it will never be as much as it should be, this finite mind is so frail and so weak. Let us praise God from whom all blessings flow. . .

Much love to you dear saints. Write again.

Bro. A. J. Slauson

BEARS TESTIMONY

Arkansas City, Arkansas 71630

Dear Household of Faith:

Paul a preacher and called, ordained servant of the Most High God, said, being a witness, "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; unto the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." (Romans 1: 16, 17) Neither am I ashamed of the blessed gospel of Christ, for I know that the same great God reveals to each one of his regenerated, calls and qualifies them as sons and daughters: heirs of God.

We know that we must be born of the Holy Spirit before we can believe. We know that it is the same great God who called Paul, who calls the children of men today.

I love the association of God's witnesses, and I go among them as often as possible; but am now getting old. I enjoy the **Signs of the Times;** its many good articles witness for the truth, bearing testimony of the gospel's evidence. Without evidence, testimony is nothing; and testimony without evidence is nothing. Great sermons can come from these statements; but, as stated, I am now old and can't write much.

My subscription has expired so I am sending my renewal.

Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Ben Parrish

SHE READ IT AS SOON AS IT CAME

Black Creek, N. C. 27813

Dear Brother Spangler:

I have already received your wonderful paper, the **Signs,** and will say that I was indeed glad to get it. I can't remember a time that I haven't seen the **Signs.** My mother took it as long as she lived. Oh, I can see her now! as soon as it came, she sat down and read it; and said, Each paper gets better. It was, indeed, sweet to her; and it is to me.

I pray that I may be able to take it as long as I live. To me, there is none to compare with the **Signs.** Enclosed is a money-order for three dollars. I will be glad to see my next paper.

A Sister in Christ,
Mary C. Boswell

MEDITATIONS ON
THE TWENTY-THIRD PSALM;
AND MY HOPE

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want."

His elect never want because: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." (Isa. 40: 11)

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4: 19)

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters."

The Lord says: "I will feed them in a good pasture and upon the high mountain of Israel shall their fold be; there shall they lie in a good fold and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God." (Ezek. 34: 14, 15)

"He restoreth my soul: he leadeth

me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

The children's hope of the resurrection and eternal life is that the Scripture says: "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from your eyes." (Rev. 7: 17)

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

In perilous times I will flee to the inspired words of a man after God's own heart, who says: "I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that have set themselves against me round about." (Ps. 3: 6) "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" (Ps. 27:1)

And most of all God's own assurance: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour." (Isa. 43: 2, 3)

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over."

To one who gives me substaining strength even in the presence of those who persecute me, I will cry: "O Lord how great are thy works! And thy thoughts are very deep. When the wicked spring up as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish, it is that they shall be destroyed for ever. For, lo, thine enemies, O Lord, for lo, thine enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered. But my horn shall thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil. Mine eyes shall see my desire on mine enemies, and mine ears shall hear my desire of the wicked that rise up against me." (Psalms 92: 5, 7, 9, 10, 11)

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

MY HOPE:

If God is mine, then I shall never want. (I hope that He is my Shepherd.)

If He is mine, I shall be fed. There are times when I have felt that I have been fed with manna from heaven. (How delightful is the taste of a small crumb from the Master's table.)

If He is mine, He **makes** me (not if I'll accept) to lie down in green pastures and leads me beside the still waters. I could not surpass the troubled waters of this life except for the Grace and Mercy of God. (I hope I have experienced a small portion of His wonderul love.)

If God is mine, He will wipe all tears from my eyes and restore my soul. No more sorrow — my hope will be realized as complete. (Lord, strengthen my understanding.)

If He is mine, then evil will not frighten me. (I hope His angel ministers unto me when I am tempted.)

If God is my shepherd, then I shall not be afraid when He graces me to partake of His table in the presence of my enemies. I shall not be ashamed of my tears at such glad tidings. (I hope I am anointed with His Oil, for there have been times when I felt that surely my cup runneth over. Oh, may I not be deceived!)

And, last, as the poet expressed it, "Tell me Lord that thou art mine" — I know then that goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in

the house of the Lord for ever. (Lord, I believe — help my unbelief with mercy.)

(Mrs.) Lavonia Lee
Box 183
Huntland, Tenn.

"LET A MAN EXAMINE HIMSELF"

Leesburg, Va.
August 16, 1924

Mr. John F. Davis,
Boyce, La.

My Dear Mr. Davis:

Your letter of the 12th came this morning and I expect to be away all next week, so unless I answer your inquiry immediately I may overlook it altogether, and I don't want to do that.

The scripture about which you ask reads as follows: "But let a man examine himself and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup ." 1 Cor. 11: 28.

This as you know, refers to partaking of the church ordinance called by us the "Lord's Supper", and the apostle is designating the proper characters to partake of it, and the proper spirit in which it should be partaken of.

For instance, he says in this connection that those who eat and drink of this supper not discerning the Lord's body, eat and drink unworthily, and thus eat and drink damnation (condemnation) to themselves. This means that those who fail to discern the Lord's body in this ordinance are still in a condemned state, or still in a state of nature, and therefore not worthy to take part in the supper, have not the proper qualifications.

The Lord's body is the church of the living God. Not to see his body is not to see the church. To see the church means not simply to see the men and women composing the church, but it means to see them not as they are in the flesh but to see them perfect in Christ Jesus, not having their own righteousness which is as filthy rags, but being clothed upon with the righteousness of Christ. When you view the church, do you see them as sinful creatures of Adam's fallen race, or do you see them as saints of God in the beauties of the holiness of Christ Jesus? If you see them the latter way, then that proves that you are discerning the Lord's body, and therefore you would not be eating and drinking unworthily in the matter of the Lord's Supper.

This is the reason why Paul says let a man examine himself and so let him eat; that is, let him eat in that way or in that manner. And the proper way or manner in which to eat and drink of this supper is in the spirit of self-examination, not sitting in judgment or criticism upon one's brethren, but examining one's own self to see whether we are seeing the Lord's body or are we simply seeing an earthly body; are we viewing every man perfect in Christ or are we viewing them in all the imperfections of fallen nature and charging their faults up against them?

When one realizes that the brethren are all better than he is; and when one feels to be the chief of sinners and the least of saints, and he wants to be at the feet of the brethren and not at their head as leader, then that one is seeing the church or the Lord's body and is qualified through that spirit of self-examination to partake of the ordinance. Though feeling keenly his unworthiness to eat and drink of it, he would not be eating and drinking unworthily.

This Spirit that searches the hearts and tries the reins of men is no earthly candle lighted by earthly wisdom, but is the Holy Spirit of God. When this Spirit is at work in us, we will examine ourselves, we cannot help it,— we shall be bound to do it. And the more this Spirit examines us through and through, the more we shall feel our unfitness to be in the church, and the more we shall feel the brethren to be above us and better than ourselves. It is in this way, a poor sinner is made to see the church of God, that is, to see the Lord's body. In this way, the Spirit cleanses the vessel from self-confidence and fleshly idols and makes it fit for the service of

the sanctuary. We cannot handle the holy things of God's house unless we be clean and that is by having the power of the Living Word speaking in our soul. When that power does speak in one, every hidden thing is brought to the light and one's confidence in the flesh is utterly destroyed. This light not only destroys self-confidence but it shines from the face of Jesus revealing him to the downcast sinner as the Way, the Truth and the Life. Thus the sinner finds nothing in self in which to glory but Christ becomes All in All.

Isaiah said that he was a man of unclean lips because his eyes had seen the King the Lord of hosts, and all his train filling the temple. Was not Isaiah looking at Christ and the church by faith here? I think so. And in comparison, he saw himself filthy. The fact that he saw his filthiness was evidence he had seen the body of Christ. This made him a worthy follower of the Lamb. Therefore, let us examine ourselves to see whether we have any evidence that we have seen the body of Christ. If so, we have one sign to encourage us to eat and drink of his holy ordinance.

Yours to serve in the gospel,
H. H. Lefferts

(The above was sent to us by Sister Mary Davis of Shreveport, La., daughter of the late Brother Davis to whom Elder Lefferts wrote it in 1924. We are glad to publish it for it will find a ready response in the feelings of each brother or sister who reads it, who has often been made to examine himself. — J. D. W.

SERMON BY ELDER JAMES F. POOLE

To begin my subject today I want to read verse 44 of the 18th Psalm: "As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me: the strangers shall submit themselves unto me." These are the words of David, but I think they have a greater meaning which is found in Jesus Christ, the Son of David, speaking of those who would some day hear of Him. They may not necessarily hear with the ear of flesh, but with the spiritual ear, hearing inwardly.

The scripture says that as soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me. The matter I wish to discuss this morning involves many scriptures, all of which are found in the New Testament with the exception of the one we have just read. The general subjects under consideration will be "Obedience and Disobedience", and "Who are the Obedient and Who are the Disobedient?"

It is generally taught today that one may just obey and be saved. Then there are those who believe to some degree or another that salvation is by grace and teach a doctrine of obedience for some kinds of salvation after the new birth. I feel that both of these positions are completely foreign to the subject of obedience as taught in the Bible. I hope to show you from the word of God that obedience and disobedience have nothing to do with the external forms of religion. I mean by this that **doing something** or **not doing something** is not the question when it comes to obedience and disobedience. We often hear the expression, "Oh, he is just a disobedient child of God. He is one of God's children, but he has strayed off into the world and has become disobedient." I don't think there is a word of truth to that, at least not in the sense of the term "Disobedience". I don't believe the question is whether God's children are serving Him explicitly, half heartedly, or not at all. This is what I want to show you in connection with the subject of obeying and not obeying. I want to show you that the dividing line is **not** between God's obedient and disobedient children, but the dividing line is between those who are God's children and those who are not God's children.

Looking at our scripture again, we read: "As soon as they hear of me, they **shall** obey me."

Now I want to read a very familiar verse to you from the book of II Thessalonians and then read several other passages of a similar nature, attempting to tie them all together. Beginning in II Thessalonians, chapter 1, verse 7, we read: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall

be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." Now it would take a whole lot of "doing", in my estimation, for one to interpret these words other than one way. It says "In flaming fire taking vengeance. . ." That sounds pretty strong. It sounds like God has a determinate purpose in this. And who are the ones that He is going to take vengeance on in flaming fire? They are those who know not God and **obey not** the gospel. Someone may ask if we mean that by not obeying the gospel, by not joining the church, or by not doing this thing or that, one may become the subject of such vengeance? No, I don't think these matters have anything to do with it at all. I feel that obeying not the gospel is a signification of those who have no readiness of mind to receive any form of the gospel. It says they shall be punished — not with a timely destruction, but with an everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power. Who was this going to fall upon? It will come upon one catagory of people: those who knew not God and obeyed not the gospel. Someone may say that doesn't satisfy him, so let us look at some other scriptures and see if we can become satisfied.

We find basically the same truth proclaimed in I Peter, chapter 4, reading in verse 17: "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" (Do you see the dividing line there? Notice the **us** and **them.**) "If it first begin at **us**, what shall the end be of **them** that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Here is the division again between the righteous and the ungodly and the sinner. Here is the dividing line between the obedient and the disobedient. The dividing line between those who obey the gospel and those who obey not the gospel, is the same as the line between the sinner and the saint, according to what Peter says here.

Now let us pursue this thought further in the book of Romans and see what Paul had to say to these people in writing about the subject of obedience to the truth, or obedience to the gospel. Beginning in verse 5 of the 2nd chapter of Romans, we read: "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life." (That is their ultimate reward, by grace.) "But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile." We see the division again in this passage. Those whom God has blessed with patience and has blessed to obey the truth, are separated from those who obey not the truth; and upon these disobedient ones comes the wrath of God, the tribulation and anguish spoken of here. So we notice again that the dividing line between the obedient and the disobedient is not **among** God's children, but it is a division between God's children and the children of the world. I think this will be very vividly illustrated as we proceed further with this subject.

Now let us turn to the 5th chapter of the book of Galatians. The apostle Paul here is writing to these brethren who had been handicapped by false teaching. In the 7th verse he says: "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?" Note very carefully that he did not say they had ceased to obey, but asked who had hindered them that they should not obey the truth. Who is trying to stop

you from obeying the truth? He says, "**Ye did** run well." Not that they had stopped, but they did at one time run well and now they were not running so well. "Who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you." In other words, the One who called you called you unto obedience. That ought to be very plain to God's people who love the truth. (And only God's people can so love it.)

I want us to go back now to the 1st chapter of Romans and see how the apostle treated the matter of obedience and its imperativeness. We begin reading in verse 4: "And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name." Brethren and sisters, can you see this? The apostle Paul says he had to receive, by grace, an apostleship in order to be obedient to the faith. In other words, then, obedience, according to what Paul has said thus far, is not a matter of external religion, not a matter of doing or not doing, but a matter of ability and of persuasion from God. Obedience is a matter of the drawing power of God to put one in an obedient condition, to place one where he is, by grace, rendered unto God, to place one in a position of being willing and able to co-operate with God because of the power of God, and not because of anything that lies within himself either before or after regeneration. Yet today we hear it proclaimed that obedience is something that you can either turn off or on at your own disposal. Whenever you decide to be obedient you can do so, and then whenever you decide not to be obedient you may not. But as we go further into this matter and look at the subject of obedience versus disobedience, or the children of God as contrasted with the children of wrath, I want to sum up some thoughts that I think might be a little hazy to you right now. Someone might be questioning in their mind right now what we are trying to get at. I hope to show you, the Lord permitting, that there is a very important lesson in this matter of obedience and disobedience.

Let us look at the 16th chapter of the book of Romans. In the closing chapter of this book the apostle is still talking about the same subject he opened with, and that is obedience. In verse 26, we read: "But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith." For the obedience of what? For the obedience of **faith!** It is not an obedience of the flesh, not an obedience of the mind; it's not an obedience that we can turn on and off. But it is an obedience that comes by faith, and faith is the gift of God and that seed of God implanted within you. So here we see that God gives one faith, and in that faith we find obedience as one of the fruits of faith.

Now let us look back in the 1st verse of the 1st chapter of the book of I Peter and see what Peter has to say on this subject. "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Do you see that? Their election was unto obedience. God, not in hope that they might be obedient, **elected them unto obedience.** In other words, in their election was the determinate purpose of God that these individuals be obedient. Let me tell you something now, and in a few minutes we will come to the scriptures that prove it. A man who claims to be a child of God and lives in disobedience has no right to that claim, contrary to what men might tell you. You hear so much of this talk about, "he's God's child but just disobedient." Well, I'll tell you what he is likely to be: he is likely to be an heir of wrath, doomed and damned to enternal punishment for his sins unless the grace of God arrests him, for

we know from the scriptures that disobedience merits only one thing, and that is condemnation. And there are no exceptions!

Now turn to Hebrews, chapter 5. Let us turn the light of the scriptures on a theory which is being proclaimed today, and, as far as I am concerned, cannot be substantiated by the Bible. The theory is that salvation is sliced up into little segments: that we have salvation in eternity and we have salvation here in time. That we do have salvation in time cannot be denied. The majority of our salvation occurs right here in time — now. We were born again in time. But when you tack that one word "conditional" onto **any** salvation, then, in my opinion, it is a heresy coming from somewhere in the back alleys of hell. As far as I am concerned, according to my searching of the Word of God, there is absolutely no such thing as a conditional salvation for God's people. All of their salvation is by grace —unmerited grace, and there is nothing they can do to obtain it either in time or in eternity. I will grant you that God has commanded us many times unto His service, and we have failed. But as far as saving ourselves, I believe no part of it in any fashion apart from the grace of God, to enable and to sustain and lift one up and make him willing and obedient in the day of God's power, that he might be blessed to be saved in time. The way we hear it often is that eternal salvation is all by grace, plus nothing and minus nothing, and we all must agree to that. And then we hear that time salvation is conditioned upon our obedience. If that be true, (and we know it isn't) then pay close attention to verse 9 of this 5th chapter of the book of Hebrews. "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." What kind of salvation did He become the author of to all that obey Him? Was it conditional time salvation? Not so! It says that He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that **obey** Him. Plainly, He is not the author of eternal salvation unto those who disobey Him. He is not the author of a conditional time salvation. I have never even found that in the Bible. I don't know of anywhere that conditionalism is taught to God's people. The entire Old Testament proves that God's people are not able to bear up under the yoke of conditionalism. Israel failed from beginning to end with conditional covenants. Peter said, "Brethren, why put a yoke about our necks that neither we nor our fathers were able to bear?" (Acts 15: 10) The yoke is the yoke of conditionalism, or legalism, or the law, or putting God's children under the duty of obedience. Jesus Christ puts them there. He became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him; not just part, and not to those who disobey, but he became the author of eternal salvation to those who are obedient. And that obedience is given us in a covenant relationship.

Now I am sure someone already had the scripture in mind, so we'll just turn there right now and evaluate it. In Philippians, the 2nd chapter, we find ". . . work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." I tell you the do-gooders and workmongers love that verse of scripture; but they couldn't have it for what it teaches in its context, because it teaches too much salvation by grace for them. Now, instead of merely reading this portion isolated, let us read the whole verse 12 of chapter 2. I think we will discover and uncover one of the glorious nuggets which God has preserved in His word for us. We read: "Wherefore, my beloved, **as ye have always obeyed** . . ." (What does **always** mean? It is pretty hard to interpret that any way other than **all the time,** meaning, of course, after regeneration.) "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." He says you have always been obedient; there has never been a time that you were not obedient. (Again refering to their beginning in Christ.) Yet today we hear that these "Disobedient children of God must work

out their own salvation. Let me tell you there is no such thing in the world. He said they had always been obedient, both in his presence and in his absence, now "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." He is not telling them to work out a new salvation, but to work out the one they had — your own salvation, the one that you presently possess. Then he says in verse 13; "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." In other words, that salvation which you are working out, God works in you the "to will" and He works in you the "to do", also. And remember that He said, "Ye have always obeyed . . ." Now the point I wanted to note from this passage was that there was never a time that they were disobedient, (after being born again) in the sense of the term "disobedient." That term will not fit the children of God. Had they failed? Yes. Had they ever sinned? Yes. Had they ever come short of the glory of God? Yes. Were they ever disobedient? No, because disobedient is not a Bible term for God's children. As I have been promising, we will see that in a moment.

Let us turn to the book of II Corinthians, chapter 10, and attempt to analyze several verses there, beginning in verse 1: "Now I, Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh. For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh." Notice this important statement. He says that we walk in the flesh, but our warfare is not after the flesh. ("For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.") How were they mighty? They were mighty through God. Brother, I tell you that anytime you ever pull down a strong hold, it is going to be through God, not you, or any strength of your own. Then he goes on in verse 5: "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the **obedience of Christ.**" Here we see something of what God said through Paul in the 8th chapter of Romans, that we were predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. **The predestination of God is what makes us obedient,** and nothing else. The only way anyone can ever be obedient is through the eternal predestinating power of God to conform us to the image of His Son and bring every thought into the obedience (not of ourselves) of Christ. When Christ suffered and died on the cross, He died in our stead. And that virtue of Christ — His obedience unto God and to the law— was imparted unto us. It is the obedience, by which we now cry out unto God. Brethren, our obedience is not worth two cents. God would not look on it with any favor whatsoever. Our obedience is as filthy rags before Him. But He will look upon the obedience of Christ.

I want us to look again in the book of Romans in the 6th chapter. If someone would be in doubt, I don't see how they could avoid the truth of this scripture. Paul says in verse 16: "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness " Do you see the dividing line? There is an obeying unto death and an obedience unto righteousness. "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you." They are not **now** the servants of sin, but they **were** (in times past) the servants of sin. How does one obey? In the flesh, in the mind, in the will? No, he says in the heart. Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which Jesus Christ instilled within your soul, that life and truth and vitality that God has given you through His mighty power in subduing you and bringing you out of the miry pits of sin and caused you to be obedient unto God. It is not just that you decide you

want to obey. I'll admit that many times God's people hear the gospel of Jesus Christ and they don't hurdle eight or ten benches to get up front to be baptized right away. That is the plan of God, too. He will add to the church daily such as should be saved, when it pleases Him. Here again, though, we cannot use the term "disobedience," for this term is reserved exclusively for the reprobate.

Now listen as we read in the 5th chapter of Romans, verse 19: "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." How many people had to sin or be disobedient for us to be sinners? Only one, our federal representative, Adam. By one man's disobedience, many were made sinners. Disobedience brings what? Sin. Sin brings what? Death. He says by one man's disobedience, and then by the obedience of one . . . . Is one any more the truth than the other? "So by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Can we not see that our obedience is not our own? It is not something we conjure up. Disobedience is connected with the family of Adam, and obedience is connected with the family of Jesus Christ. It says that by His obedience many shall be made righteous. They will not become righteous on their own or by performing righteous deeds, but by the obedience of Jesus Christ you and I, and all the family and household of hope, are righteous before God. That is obedience. The only obedience I know of in the word of God that will please Him, is the obedience of Jesus Christ given to us.

(Concluded in April issue.)

Rt. 2,
Madison, N. C. 27025

Dear Elder Spangler:

I enclose $3.00 check for renewal of the **Signs of the Times.** I get so much comfort from the good writings: words cannot tell the joy that comes in my heart when I am blessed to read it.

I have not been in good health for the last year, and have been in the hospital so much; but I am thankful that the Lord has given me strength so that I can get around some again. I am glad a few of us are still blest to meet in sweet fellowship at Pleasantville Church. Elder W. H. Wray is our pastor. We love and appreciate him so much. Our meeting times are every first Saturday afternoon and Sunday. We invite all members and friends to visit with us.

May the good Lord bless and keep all of us, is my prayer.

Lillie Mae McCollum

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with Hadnot Creek Church, Carteret County, N. C., the fifth Saturday and Sunday in March. The church is located off No. 24 highway, near Swansboro, N. C.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 3, Tarboro, N. C.

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the **Skewarkey Union** is appointed to be held with the Rocky Swamp Church, Halifax County, N. C. Elder M. E. Garner was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder B. D. Handy, alternate.

The church is located two miles from Heathville Crossroads, just off Highway 561. We extend an invitation to all to come and worship with us.

Rt. 2, Williamston, N. C.
Elmer B. Peele, Clerk

UNION NOTICE

The next session of the Original White Oak Union is appointed to be held with the Church at Southwest, Onslow County, the Fifth Saturday and Sunday in March 1968. The Church is located about 3 miles West of Jacksonville, N. C. on highway 53.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

L. H. Southerland
Chinquapin, N. C.
Union Clerk

Danville, Virginia March, 1968

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CHANGE IN CHURCH NOTICE

The Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, Cash, Texas, meets each first Sunday at 11 AM, and Saturday before at 3:30 PM.

Lloyd Wall, Pastor
Guy Sisk, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To January 1, 1968)

Charles & Mary Hellings, N. J.	$ 7.00
Mrs. Bessie Alumbaugh, Mo.	2.00
Mrs. Esther Cole, N. C.	1.00
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Elder & Mrs. George Ruston, Can.	20.00

PLEASE NOTE
IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Beginning with the publication of this notice, we find it necessary to increase the subscription price of the *Signs of the Times* to $4.00 for one year, or $7.00 for two years; and applies to renewals and new subscriptions.

Since our inquiry in the January issue concerning an increase in subscription rate, we have received many replies in favor of an increase. After considering the matter fully, we find it necessary, in order to maintain the quality and appearance of the paper and the size and number of pages, to increase the price as announced above.

It was in January, 1949, that Elder Dodson found it necessary to increase the price; and this price has been maintained until this time in spite of greatly increased costs. We were able to do this by having the income from the investment of funds given by the brethren and friends in 1956 and 1957; and by their contributions to the Indigent Fund.

The correspondence of the brethren and friends concerning the *Signs*, encourages us to desire, as the Lord gives us enabling grace, to continue to labor to maintain the principles of the doctrine of God our Saviour, as in the past. We dearly love this doctrine, finding nothing incompatable with the teaching of the Spirit in bringing the Lord's people out of darkness into His marvelous light, establishing them in the Truth.

We believe all will realize the necessity for the increase, and that each one will be mindful that the continued appearing of the *Signs of the Times* in their mail boxes as in the past, depends on their support by their renewals, new subscriptions, and letters and articles for publication.

The Editors

EDITORIAL

GENESIS 7: 16

"And the Lord shut him in."

We have been requested to write upon the above Scripture, and we commence in much fear and weakness, knowing that unless the Lord enables us to write to his honor and glory our effort will be vain. Noah was a servant of God, a preacher of righteousness, and that which he built was built according to the word of God. The size of the ark, the length, breadth and height were given to him, also he was told to make it of gopher wood and pitch it within and without with pitch. The door of the ark was to set in its side, and it was to have but one window, and when completed the Lord did not say, Go into the ark, as if the Lord was not there, but "Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." He then told him what beasts and birds, clean and unclean, he should take into the ark. And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth, and the same day that they entered the ark the fountains of the great deep were broken up and the windows of heaven were opened. And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh as God had commanded him, and the Lord shut him in.

As we have stated briefly the connection of Scripture leading up to our subject, we shall now come to the words, "And the Lord shut him in." This Scripture first presents to our minds the absolute sovereignty of God over all creation. It clearly shows that he can create and can destroy, and as God, all creatures obey his command. Noah was not told to stand and call on those without, and by threats of destruction, or soft, persuasive words, get them to come into the ark. The Lord said to Noah, Come into the ark, thee and all thy house. Again our subject sets forth very clearly the doctrine of election, as is the instance of Jacob and Esau, God said, Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated, and that before the children were born, or either had done good or evil. It is true that the Lord declared to Noah, "For thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation," but the righteousness of Noah was the righteousness of faith, which faith is the gift of God. Noah himself, with those of his household, were descended from Adam and were of the same lump by nature as those who perished in the flood. Noah would have been in the same condemnation but for the mercy of God, for it was God who warned him, and Paul tells us, "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."

We have often heard those who ought to know better, misquote that Scripture, and say, Noah was moved by fear, instead of as it is written, moved with fear, and such misquotation is very misleading and gives an entirely different meaning to it. He was not moved by fear, but rather by a living faith which enabled him to move with fear. In other words, fear was not the motive that moved him, but faith, and fear, the fear of God, which is a filial fear, manifested in Noah, loving regard to the word of God. Noah's faith came by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, and as the fear above mentioned is the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom, it can be rightly said he moved with heavenly wisdom. How different some men would have it, when they say that Noah was moved by fear, as though fear of a common destruction was the moving cause of Noah building the ark. God had thoughts of good to Noah and his household, and he warned him of things not yet seen. The people in Noah's time were not warned as he was warned, for Jesus tells us they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and he declares they knew

not, until the flood came and took them all away. No doubt they said Noah had a devil and was mad, and laughed him to scorn. They were destroyed, but Noah could not be destroyed in the deluge, any more than Lot could be left to perish in Sodom, or Abram remain with his father, Terah. The Lord had a purpose according to election, and he said to Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house.

There are volumes in the words of our text. God's purpose to save, and determination to destroy, are both presented to our minds when we consider the election of God. The very water that by God's power stood on heaps to let Israel pass over, came in deluge upon the Egyptians when they would follow. Man may quibble at the word, and say God is an unjust God, but; "O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."

"And the Lord shut him in." Man could not open that door when God shut it. He shuts and none can open, he opens and none can shut. Let us first consider what it meant to be shut out, then we will go more fully into the security and happiness of those who were shut in. Those who were shut out were, by a sovereign act, the election of God, left out forever to perish in their own wickedness. A righteous God made short work of them by sending rain from above, and by breaking up the fountains of the great deep. "And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died." Noah alone remained alive and they that were with him in the ark. The gracious were saved, the graceless destroyed, it was a gracious act of God to shut them in and the storm and flood could not reach them when shut in by God. No lock of man's invention can give the security that those had who were shut in by God. "Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." Those who were shut in were certainly monuments of his mercy, for while other buildings were destroyed by the flood, the ark rose with the waters, and went upon the face of the waters, no wonder that when the waters were dried up and the ark had rested upon Mount Ararat, Noah, looking upon the ark that had weathered the storm and flood for him, could offer a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savor unto the Lord his God. The ark was a type of Jesus Christ, the ark of grace, and those creatures that went into the ark were typical of the election of grace, who by a sovereign act or purpose of God are shut in Jesus Christ. It was from the side of Adam that the Lord took a rib, "and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man made he a woman." He took it from his side because it was nearest to his heart, she was nearest to his heart before she partook of the forbidden fruit. The election of grace were in the heart of Jesus Christ, and the door of the ark was in the side, and the Lord shut them in. The electing love of God shut them in the Son of God. Jesus said, "All that the Father hath given me shall come unto me, and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." Thus they are secure by electing love. There were three floors in the ark and only one window above. The top floor with its light from above typified the gospel dispensation with its direct light from heaven. Jesus, who is a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of his people Israel. The second floor, whose light was not so clear, represents

the legal dispensation, with its shadows of better things to come, and the third floor represents the patriarchal dispensation which had but a glimmering light from above. In all three dispensations, or floors, there are those shut in preserved in Jesus.

What saved the three Hebrews in the furnace? Was it not Jesus? And David, Daniel and Paul all had to declare that the Lord was their light and salvation. They were kept by God's power, and not for their goodness, but because of his electing love. To-day there are a people shut in by God, who would be as destructive as the wolf or lion or leopard, who have been gathered into the ark of our God, and are made to dwell with the lamb and lie down with the kid, and a littte child leads them. The unclean Gentile and the Jew that was ceremonially clean are made to feed together and the middle wall of partition is removed, and they know that there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, shut in by God, and they need not the light of the sun nor moon nor stars, for the Lord is their light, and their God their glory. Those thus shut in know that their safety is not in themselves, but in Christ. It is true trouble will come upon them as the storms beat upon the ark, but the ark sustained them above all the storm and brought them safe to the top of the mount at last. Whatever the trial or trouble may be, they are sustained, as the deluge of old came, the ark mounted and rode upon the face of the waters, and, bless the Lord, he has said, The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms. Paul tells us, "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." The sorrow of the world worketh death, trouble often has run its victim to despair and death. Reproaches have often sunk the worldling into misery and sometimes self-destruction, but with the elect of God there hath no temptation taken them but what is common unto man, and he will with the temptation make a way of escape that they may be able to bear it. The way of escape is God's electing love, for no matter how bitter the cup, hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

"When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow;
For I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress."

Abraham said, "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen," and in the Mount Ararat, which means holy ground, Noah saw the ark that had stood the tempest for him, and it is there also we see Jesus, smitten and bruised for us, when he carried us in his heart, and our sins in his body on the cruel tree. As we look with wonder on him whom we have pierced, it is then we can sing, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me." Yes, it is then that the theme of electing love excites our admiration and we can say,

"E'er since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die."

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

(Editorial by Elder Ruston December, 1930.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"GOD IS A SOVEREIGN"

"Mine hand also hath laid the foun-

dation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together." (Isaiah 48:13)

The attribute of God's sovereignty, the center point of the christian faith, is, to my mind, sometimes too lightly treated, or considered, by many who appear to be expounders of the deep things of God. However, this vast ocean of mystery, the sovereignty of God, should not be entered into by any without due consideration, and a divine compass. It is an easy matter to casually admit the doctrine of God's sovereignty, but to own the point in doctrine and practice is entirely another thing, for nothing short of the divine leading and teaching of the Holy Spirit will make us truly confess the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty. If, with our easy admitting of the point, we wage war against other parts based thereupon, such a course would testify that our faith is not genuine and that our hearts are deceitful.

The many sore complaints against the doctrine of God's absolute predestination and election are all the consequence of our inability to spiritually comprehend the things of God. However, such weakness on our part to understand them does not do away with the truth of them. It is evident from the Scriptures that the great God of the whole earth possesses an absolute power and right of dominion over all things, to dispose of all of his creatures as seemeth good to him; and, as all but Jehovah are creatures, it follows that none have the right to say, Jehovah, what doest thou? "Hath not my hand made all these things?" (Acts 7: 50) "He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion." (Jer. 10: 12) "The portion of Jacob is not like them; for he is the former of all things; and Israel is the rod of his inheritance. The Lord of hosts is his name." (Jer. 51: 19) To this name every knee shall bow; of things in earth, and things in heaven, shall confess seeing. "God that made the world, and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."—(Acts 17: 24-26)

God decreed to make a world like this, this is first on record, which also testifies of his sovereign right and power. It was with him to make the world or not to make it, as it seemed good in his sight, and to love Jacob and to hate Esau; and if he had the power to create the world, with all things in it, then doubtless he had the power to direct and overrule all that should ever be in the world, to the accomplishment of his own purpose and glory, which he had purposed in himself before the world began. All the present state of unrest that now exists, furnishes no one any argument against this view. If it had seemed good in his sight the Lord could have preserved man in the garden, as he has angels. There was no necessity upon him, only his sovereign will to give Adam a law, and that Adam might be made thereby to see upon what his destiny was hinged, for where no law is, there is no transgression. (Rom. 4: 15) Therefore, if men must be meddling and complaining, why may they not as well complain of the entrance of the law? Why may they not complain or allege that it was unjust in God to give man a law, knowing, as we do, that God knew as well before Adam sinned as he did after, what the result would be? Then, if we find ourselves inclined to complain, why not go back and ask why God made man at first; or why he made him at all? "For lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought, that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the

earth, The Lord, The God of hosts, is his name." —(Amos 4: 13)

God had a sovereign right to make the man as he did, notwithstanding he knew perfectly well what man would do. What he did in eternity to save the man was not based on any before-seen good in the man, but it all rested on His sovereign love, and in his sovereign right to do as he pleased, not only with the man, but with all his creatures. "Will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea, by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it." (Jer. 5: 22) All this he did, and it stands good until now. I well remember the first time I stood on the sands of the seashore. I was constrained to say, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." "I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power, and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me." (Jer. 27: 5) "Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is his name."—(Jer. 31: 35) Therefore we preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein." (Acts 14: 15) Read Acts 17: 24.

Now, according to natural sense of men, if it was just in God to destroy the world by a flood because of the wickedness thereof, then it would be unjust for him to preserve it afterwards when there was the same or greater cause for judgment. Such dispensations speak strongly of the sovereign greatness of God and of his sovereign right to control his own matters. He would, and did once, destroy all flesh but Noah and his family from the face of the earth for their wickedness, and he would and has preserved the world thousands of years after, not withstanding their wickedness. All this God has reserved unto himself a sovereign right to do. He being Sovereign over all things, both animate and inanimate, visible and invisible, all things are subject to his rule and disposal. He divided the waters of the Red Sea to make a way for his people's escape (Exodus 14: 21), and then he supplied their every need in the wilderness with bread, meat and water; the sun and moon were commanded and stood still until Israel was avenged upon her enemies. (Josh. 10: 12, 13) The stars in their courses fought Sisera. (Judges 5: 20) The sun went back ten degrees in the sundial of Ahaz. (2 Kings 20: 11) He also delivered the Hebrew children from the fiery furnace without the smell of fire on their garments. (Dan. 3: 22-27) His sovereign power has so far superintended, restrained and inverted the course of nature at his will, and if God has always wielded such an absolute and complete sovereignty over things with or without life and reason, then he needs not the sanction or reason of poor puny man to help him regulate his will as to whom or what he will do, or as to whom he will save or whom he will damn.

Hence we conclude that when the will of man tends to good it is regulated by the will of God to that end, and that Sovereign who is the author of all good. Satan sways the will of the wicked, who willingly follow his evil devices, yet all is in the wise decree of our God. "The rich and poor meet together: the Lord is the maker of them all." (Prov. 27: 2) "The great God that formed all things, both rewardeth the fool, and rewardeth transgressors." (Prov. 24: 10) My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth." (Psalms 121: 2) So in all things the Lord has the preeminence, and how highly favored we must be when we can see that all things are in the hands of him with whom we have to do, knowing that he who has made the world has the power to uphold it and all things else. "In his hand are the deep places of the earth; the strength of the hills is his also. The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land."—

(Psalms 95: 4, 5) To him that by wisdom made the heavens, to him that stretched out the earth above the waters, to him that made the great lights, the sun to rule by day, the moon and stars to rule by night (Psalms 136: 5-9), to him we would give all the praise, and rest for all our sorrows in his blessed embrace, for in him who builded the world, and upholds it by the word of his power, made the sea and gave it its bounds, and governs the stars, moon and sun, and holds the wind in his fist, and fills the immensity of space, and is Lord of lords and King of kings, the Sovereign over all worlds, this is he that we hope to adore and praise while we live in this world, and also in the world to come. "At that day shall a man look to his Maker, and his eyes shall have respect to the Holy One of Israel." (Isaiah 17: 7) If God has done all the things above mentioned, without any one to help or hinder, to will or to nil, then why not crown him Lord of all?

I have written hurriedly, as things came to my mind. Dear brother Lefferts, look it over and then do as you think best, and all will be right with me. All my desire is to ascribe greatness to the God of the whole earth, therefore I cannot see how he could build all things and uphold all things by the word of his power, and bring an end to all things, and not controll all things while they exist in this time state. He has the power and knows how, and does his will in earth, and in heaven also. Then let me believe that he is God over all, and blest for evermore.

Submitted in love to all the household of faith.

I beg to remain your brother in hope of eternal life.

J. W. Wyatt

(The above was written by Elder J. W. Wyatt and published in the **Signs** of August, 1930. Those who knew him remember his resounding voice as he faithfully contended for the faith; and how large congregations became hushed as he held their attention. Few men ever traveled more or preached more often than he. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

SISTER MINNIE CATHERS

Minnie Jane Maddock was born June 8, 1885. She was married to William H. Cathers, who died several years ago. She is survived by one son, W. Royden Cathers, Port Burwell, Ontario; one daughter, Winnifred Upfold, Glanworth, Ontario; five grandchildren and three great grandchildren; also by two brothers, Russell Maddock and Brother Ernest Maddock.

She was tenderly cared for by her daughter for a long time, whose husband and two young daughters were also very kind and attentive to her. After she became so ill that she needed day and night nursing, she was removed to Parkwood Hospital, London, Ontario, where she died September 10, 1967. Her funeral services were conducted by her beloved pastor, Elder George Ruston; and her remains were laid to rest by those of her husband in Aylmer Cemetery.

She was baptized by Elder George Ruston September 16, 1956, and was a most worthy and beloved member of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, showing by her walk and conversation that she had been with Jesus, and learned of Him. We miss her very much, as we do many other dear ones the Lord has taken to their Heavenly Home; but we know that they are better off than we are.

Written by one who dearly loved her,

Ester Ruston

EUTAW VERNON POFF

Brother Eutaw Vernon Poff was born in Floyd County, Virginia, January 3, 1896; and departed this life September 4, 1967. He was the son of Flem and Mary Poff.

He was married to Miss Mary Epperly, June 30, 1915, and to this union were born three lovely children. One son E. Vernon Poff is deceased. Surviving are his wife, Sister Mary E. Poff; two daughters, Mrs. Rethia McKinney and Mrs. Velma Gravett, of Roanoke, Va.; five grandchildren and four great grandchildren; one sister, Mrs. Omega Conner, Glenvar, Va.; and one brother, Carl Poff, Roanoke, Va.

He united with the church in 1935, and was baptized by Elder J. F. Stegall. The church saw in him the gift of a deacon that God had given, and a presbytery ordained him a deacon of Roanoke Church on January 3, 1942; in which capacity he served humbly and wisely. He being a man of God, when matters became too great for him, he was found searching his Bible, and calling upon the Lord for divine guidance.

His funeral was conducted September 6, 1967, by his pastor, Elder Cecil E. Turner; to whom his passing is a great loss; but we

trust is his gain.

Brother Poff was highly respected and loved by his brethren everywhere; which was proven by the beautiful floral tributes, and the large congregation of brethren and friends attending his funeral.

His body was laid to rest in Evergreen Cemetery to await the resurrection in the glorious likeness of his Lord and Master, whom he believed so strongly.

To his family and his brethren. we hope to meet him in that Eternal Home. Written by request of Sister Poff.

(Elder) Cecil E. Turner

ANDREW LOYD FRENCH

Deacon Loyd French was born March 13, 1895, and departed this life February 13, 1967, in Rockingham County, N. C. He was united in marriage to Addie Cobb March 25, 1914; who died several years ago. Surviving are three children: Elmer and Glenn, of Ruffin, N. C., and Mrs. Ruby Strader, Hurt, Va.

Brother French was received into the fellowship of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church over thirty years ago. Soon after being received he was ordained a deacon on October 27, 1934. He filled this office well, always active in attending to the duties of a deacon. He was a quiet person of few words, and dependable in every way. He manifested the marks of our Lord Jesus Christ in his humility and stability in his church life.

Brother French had many afflictions in his family. His wife was an invalid for many years; and he also suffered a stroke and was confined to bed several years. He was given great patience in all his days of sorrow and affliction; and we believe he died in the triumph of that blessed faith from which none ever wake to weep.

Funeral services were conducted in Dan River Meeting House, a place he loved so well, and he was buried in the church cemetery.

Written by his pastor,
D. V. Spangler

MARY ANN HATCHETT

Sister Mary Ann Palina Hatchett was born the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. L. F. Buckner, March 23, 1890, in Madison County, Alabama; and passed this life September 12, 1967. She was married to Francis H. Hatchett November 12, 1905, in Limestone County, Alabama. To this union four children were born. In 1912 they moved from Alabama to Reed, Okla., and in 1949 to Mangum, where they have since resided.

Sister Hatchett united with the Primitive Baptist Church in October, 1939, and was presently a member with Little Flock Church, Altus, Okla. She was surely one of those dear and wonderful mothers in Israel. All who knew her loved her. She had a gentle, and always cheerful disposition. She possessed a great gift to entertain the Old Baptists, children and friends. I have heard her say that she loved the Old Baptists from her earliest childhood, and was always willing to do anything she could to help them.

Her and Brother Hatchett's home has always been open to Zion's children. Surely she was made a willing servant of God and his dear people; and so self-denying. She altogether relied on and trusted in the merits of free and sovereign grace. Surely she had the fear of God in her heart, and "A woman that feareth the Lord shall be praised." (Prov. 31: 33) O how we will miss her at Little Flock Church, but do humbly believe our loss is her eternal gain. Be it resolved, That we bow in humble submission to the will of Him that doeth all things well.

She leaves to mourn her passing her dear husband; one son, C. L. Hatchett, Mangum, Okla.; two daughters, Mrs. Frank Venable, Mangum, Okla. and Mrs. Doc Bull, Reed, Okla.; one brother, Clint Buckner; one sister, Mrs. Rena Ferguson, of Alabama; nine grandchildren, thirteen great grandchildren, and many other relatives and friends.

Services were conducted by the writer and interment was in Reed Cemetery, Reed, Okla.

Elder C. M. Haygood

MACK H. KELLY

Mack H. Kelly was born January 8, 1894, in Coleman County, Texas, and passed this life April 30, 1967, at the age of 73.

He was united in marriage to Miss Rhoda Griffin November 8, 1914, in Lawn, Texas. To this union one daughter was born. He lived in Taylor and Coleman Counties, Texas until 1943 when he moved to Houston, where he resided until 1965. After suffering a stroke, he was moved to the Lawn Dale Nursing Home, Lawn, Texas.

Although Mack never joined the Church, he was surely a dear friend to us, and rendered many hours of service to our little church here at Pilgrim's Rest and at Sheppard Fold at Houston. He was very faithful to take his precious wife, Sister Rhoda Kelly to church every meeting time, until his stroke. After the stroke, when he was able he attended services in a wheelchair. This makes us believe he surely loved our people.

Survivors include his wife; one daughter, Mrs. Marie Huey; two grandsons and two great grandchildren, all of Houston. Also one sister, Mrs. Annie Matthews, Van Nuys, California; and other relatives and a host of friends.

He was laid to rest in the Dewey Cemetery, near Lawn, to await the second coming of Christ.

Elder C. M. Haygood

ADA MAY McALPINE

Sister Ada May McAlpine was born in Parkhill, Ontario, March 28, 1877. She was the youngest of three children named Clark, who were orphaned when she was eighteen months old, and was raised by a Mr. and Mrs. Ford; who were so kind to her that she named her only son Ford after them.

In 1901 she was married to Gustin McAlpine. In 1914 they moved to a farm at R. R. 3, Petrolia, where her husband died in 1933; and she continued to live with her son until her death June 19, 1967. She died instantly of a heart attack while sitting talking with her son.

Besides her son Ford, she leaves a foster daughter, Beatrice Wilson Fraser, who has always been tenderly treated as one of the family. Her only other surviving near relative is a first cousin.

Sister McAlpine's remains were laid to rest beside her husband's. Her pastor, Elder George Ruston, conducted her funeral services. She had married into an Old School Baptist family, and went with her husband to meeting, but she was not interested in what she heard. Later, in the Lord's time, she was blessed with a gracious experience; and in 1947 she told it to the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, and was baptized by her pastor Elder Ruston at Lobo. Her son drove her regularly forty miles to our nearest meeting. At the last meeting before she died, she told us how happily she and her son lived together. There was never a cross word between them: What a lovely example to others. She was a very faithful and beloved member, and is much missed.

Written by one who loved her,
Esther Ruston

JOHN THOMAS DABBS

John Thomas Dabbs, 85, of Ruffin, N. C., passed away August 29, 1967. He was a retired farmer of the Mayfield Community where he had lived most of his life. He is survived by his wife, Minnie Howell Dabbs; one son, J. L. Dabbs, Danville, Va., and one daughter, Mrs. Myrtle Manley, of Ruffin.

Brother Dabbs united with the Dan River Church April 25, 1931. During my acquaintance with Brother Dabbs, I visited him and his wife quite often. He seemed to experience great joy in talking of the wonderous works the Lord had done for him. He never tired of confessing what a great sinner he was; and that his only hope rested in the free and unmerited grace of a merciful Saviour. He always wanted to tell me of his love for the brethren and the church. He did not attend meetings very often, explaining that he had a physical ailment which prevented him.

His funeral was conducted by his beloved pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, and his body was laid to rest in the church cemetery, to await the calling of the blessed Redeemer. He said he had been given a hope that at the joyful sound of, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," he would be made to hear, and come forth to be like Him and be satisfied forever.

Written by order of Dan River Church in conference November 25, 1967.

James Carter

JOHN K. TRUITT

John K. Truitt was born on March 30, 1880, and departed this life on Jan. 22, 1967 making his stay here eighty-six years. We who have known him so well would desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our eternal God, believing that He has an appointed time for all things; and doeth all things well.

He was the son of the late Elijah James and Mary Ann Wimbrow Truitt. He was married on May 23, 1906, to Janie Freeny daughter of the late E. L. and Sarah Ann Freeny, who survives. There were no children born to this union, but several nieces and nephews who survive.

We feel that Mr. Truitt, though not a member of the visible Church knew the truth which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, for he always attended the meetings as long as his health would permit. The writer visited him many times, and on one occasion called him, Brother, to this remark his answer was, "I wish I was." We feel to have lost a dear friend and would desire, if it be the will of God, that all who knew him and loved him so dearly, especially his widow, be reconciled to his passing from these mortal shores; and to feel that their loss is his eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Hill Funeral Home in Salisbury, Md., and his remains were laid to rest in the Parsons Cemetery Salisbury, Md.

Elder Arthur R. Warren

MARY ELLEN FAULKNER EARL

Sister Mary Ellen Faulkner Earl, of Margaretsville, N. Y., passed away December 27, 1966, at the Margaretsville Hospital. She was born May 9, 1886, near Kelly Corners, N. Y.,

the daughter of James and Ellen McCann Faulkner. She was united in marriage October 3, 1909, to David Earl, by Elder John Clark. To this union were born one daughter and one son: Mrs. Carson Bouton, of Halcott Center, N. Y., and Vinicent D. Earl, of Florida.

Sister Earl leaves to mourn her passing, her husband, and son and daughter; six grandchildren and three great grandchildren; and the brethren of the Old School Baptist Church, who loved her because of her meek, quiet and humble spirit: which is the fruit of the Spirit.

Sister Earl united with the Second Roxbury Church in August, 1948; of which church Elder A. H. Bellows was pastor. Sister Earl was one you could not help but love, because of the love, kindness and upright walk she manifested. She was a lover of Gospel truth, which was food to her soul. She was always at the feet of her brethren, esteeming each one better than herself; which causes one to desire to be as good as she was. In a letter received lately, her daughter, Mrs. Bouton, stated that her greatest wish was, that as she grew older she might grow to be more like her mother. It was surely a good wish, and made us feel that she saw her mother's light shine before men — Jesus the light.

Elder A. J. Slauson

PRUDENCE O'CONNOR HINKLEY

Sister Prudence O'Connor Hinkley, of Holcottsville, N. Y., departed this life July 3, 1966, at Margaretsville Hospital. She was born October 29, 1871, in Arena, Delaware County, N. Y., making her life here on earth a few months less than 95 years. She was the daughter of Frances and Sebra Bookhout O'Connor.

She leaves to mourn her passing, one nephew, Earnest O'Connor; three nieces: Julia Huggins, Emma Dummond, and Ruth Gleendenning; together with her brethren and church friends. Sister Hinkley united with the Old School Baptist Church when young, and was steadfast, unmoveable and strong in her God given faith until the end. In late life she was united in marriage to John B. Hinkley as his second wife. He passed away several years ago.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder W. D. Griffin and the writer.

Elder A. J. Slauson

SISTER EFFIE MAY PARKE

By request of Sister Effie Parke, in a note written in March, 1958, to be opened at her death, I shall try to write her obituary.

Sister Effie May Parke was born December 5, 1884, at Touchet (near Walla Walla), Washington Territory. She was the second of her mother, Martha Waggoner Attebery's thirteen children and the second of her father, Elder Thomas Edward Attebery's nineteen children.

Sister Parke was baptized into the Primitive Baptist Church in her eighteenth year, being a believer then, and to her death, in the grace, mercy and saving power of Jesus Christ; and in election, predestination and the total depravity of man.

Sister Parke was married to Alvy J. Parke on November 14, 1906. To them were born four children, two dying in infancy the summer of 1909: Alvy Charles (age sixteen months) and Adina Fay (age twelve days). Her husband died in 1946.

Sister Parke leaves to cherish her memory a son, Capt. Eldon J. Parke of the Washington State Patrol, and wife, in Olympia; a daughter, Martha Angelin Parke in Tacoma; a granddaughter, Mrs. Evelyn R. Wohlmacher and husband in Mt. Vernon; a grandson, Arthur J. Parke (also of the Washington Patrol) and wife in Sunnyside; a great grandson, Kevin Parke in Sunnyside; five sisters; two brothers and a host of friends. Special appreciation must be given for two who cared for her: Miss Beulah Haney (nine and one half years until her own health failed) and Mrs. Hattie Norquist, a patient and competent housekeeper for the last few months of Sister Parke's illness and until her death, Nov. 5, 1967.

Sister Parke joined the Chehalis Primitive Baptist Church by letter, January 28, 1939. The church was organized in May, 1885, with Elder A. Wilson pastor until his death in December, 1925. In 1952, because of the illness and death of the pastor, Elder C. M. Fisher (who had opened his home for the church meetings for sixteen years) the church records were moved to the home of Sister Parke and meetings were held there once each month except when she was in the hospital. The last meeting was October 1st with three members present: Effie Parke and Myrtia Bright of Chehalis and Mary Alice Cameron of Seattle. Sister Parke fell asleep in the Centralia Hospital on Sunday at 10:30 a. m. on our November meeting day.

Sister Parke was a prolific writer of letters and articles until her blindness impaired her handwriting. She still composed poems, usually at night when she could not sleep, memorizing them so she could have someone write them for her the next day.

Two of Sister Park's poems were read by Richard E. Barada, Chaplain of the Centralia Hospital, when he conducted services in Castle Rock at the Hubbard Funeral Home Nov. 8 and at the burial in the Castle Rock Cemetery.

Twenty State Patrol Lieutenants attended the service and stood at attention as the procession formed; and again at the graveside where Sister Parke was laid to rest beside her beloved husband. Asleep in Jesus.

Written by Myrtia Bright

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4/68
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

WRITINGS ARE FOOD AND DRINK WHEN WEARY

2761 Cochese Cove,
Memphis, Tenn. 38118

Dear Elder Wood:

Please find enclosed check for renewal of my subscription for the **Signs of the Times** for two years, the balance to be used as is needed. I am so glad to be able to receive the Signs, because if I know my heart, it contends for the truth as I understand it. The experience of others who have been brought the same way I hope I have been led, and the other writings and editorials it contains, are the food and drink my soul and spirit desires. It is as the manna, and the water from the rock, must have been to the children of Israel in the wilderness. They were traveling about, not knowing their way, and the food and drink strengthened them to press on when they were weary and downcast.

This is the way the articles in the **Signs** are to one who is weary of the things of the world, and feel to be alone in the things they believe to be the truth. Then an experience or letter written by someone you don't even know naturally, tells your feelings so well, you are refreshed, and sing praises in your heart for the grace of God which you feel was the sender of the message to your soul.

I hope that I will be able to continue to receive it as long as I live in this world. More than that though, I hope and pray that I will be blessed to continue to believe the truths it contains. I know that if left to my own strength, I would be as a leaf tossed in the wind. It will be only by the grace and mercy of God that I remain firm in the faith; which is my earnest prayer, to the glory of His holy name.

May God bless all of those who help in the publication of this dear paper, and may it ever be found contending for the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

DOES NOT WANT SIGNS DISCONTINUED

Rt. 1,
Benton, Ky. 42025

Dear Editors:

I know my subscription has expired. I thought that I had made up my mind to have my name dropped from the list, as I am so near blind that I can read but a few minutes at a time, and that through a magnifying glass.

When I received the January number, and read "My Stranger and I in the Garden", Elder Curry's and other writings, all speaking of the greatness of our God, I felt that I did not want the **Signs** discontinued; so am enclosing a check for another year, though I may not be able to read it much longer. If not, I hope through the grace and mercy of an allwise and sovereign God, there is a light within to give me courage and patience to face whatever

there is to come. I am well past eighty-six years old.

In hope of a better life to come,
Mrs. C. H. (Lena) Lock

SIGNS TEACHES WHAT HE BELIEVES

610 E 6th Street,
Roswell, New Mexico 88201

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed you will find check for another year's subscription to the dear old **Signs of the Times.** My parents and grandparents were readers of the dear old paper. After I married in 1918 and left home, I did not see it for several years; but while visiting my younger brother, I found one; and have been reading it ever since. It teaches the Bible just like I believe it, but we don't have a church out here at Roswell that preaches it like the old preachers did when I was a boy fifty years ago. We go to a church out here called Banner of Love Baptists. We have some good preaching, but they do not preach like I believe on several things. I am not a member . . .

I am like the old hymn my mother used to sing years ago:

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am is hard to know . . ."

But one thing that is sure, I am what I am by the grace of God.

J. R. Kee

ELDER H. M. CURRY'S "SCIENCE AND PREDESTINATION"

It is the prevailing opinion that the doctrine of predestination is held only by the ignorant class of men, and that the mere elements of an education are sufficient to free one from the influence of such a baleful, absurd and unreasonable doctrine. If there is any just ground for this opinion, it can be shown that scientific truth is incompatible with the doctrine of decree, and also that no well educated person has ever believed the doctrine of predestination.

It is a well known axiom of logic that all truth harmonizes; now if it can be shown that scientific truth harmonizes with the doctrine of decree, then it must be conceded from the standpoint of science, that the doctrine of decree is true. It can not only be shown that science and decree are in perfect harmony, but it can be shown that decree is at the foundation of science, and that without decree, science could not exist.

If two times five were ten today, but might have been eight yesterday, might be twelve tomorrow, how could there be any possibility of the science of arithmetic? But two times five are ten today, two times five were ten yesterday, and two times five will be ten forever. It is this very fixedness of the relation of numbers that renders the science of arithmetic a possibility. This fixedness argues decree. So then it appears that arithmetic, the most common and elementary of all the sciences, is based upon decree, and that without decree it could not exist.

The elementary theorems of algebra, such as, The square of the sum of two quantities is equal to the square of the first plus twice the product of the first by the second, plus the square of the second; and "The difference of the same powers of two quantities is always divisible by the difference of the quantities." The Binominal theorem, with its wonderful possibilities and applications, together with all the other data which form the science of algebra, are fixed and unchangeable. These things were also true before the science of algebra was evolved, they were true before there was a human mind to discover and state them.

"The sum of all angles of a triangle is equal to two right angles," is an elementary proposition of geometry. How long has this proposition been true? When has it ever undergone a change? When will it ever change? It was true before Euclid, before Pythagoras, before Greece, Rome, Egypt or Babylon, before Adam, before the world. The six ratios of trigonometrical functionsm which lie

at the bottom of the science of trigonomety, are forever and unchangeably true. All the principles that go to make up the sciences of analytics and calculus, are no exception to the rule. So then in the realm of mathematics, from the most fundamental operation of arithmetic, to the most abstruse problem in the differential calculus, all depends upon the permanent fixedness of principles, and this fixedness in the result of decree.

Leaving the abstract domain of mathematics, and coming into the more concrete natural sciences, the same fixedness of principles confronts us. What seems to be more at random than a falling body? Yet a falling body is so completely under the control of law, that although its velocity changes with every instant of time, if its time of falling be known, its velocity for any second may be computed. If the distance fallen be known, the time of falling may be readily found. The laws of falling bodies might be stated here, but space does not justify it. The swinging of the pendulum, that lazily swings to and from in the old clock on the wall, is most accurately regulated by law. If this were not so, how could it be utilized to regulate the motion of the clock? The laws of the pendulum are such, that if the length of the pendulum is known, the time of the vibration may be found, and **vice versa.**

The freezing and boiling points are marked on the thermometer; if water should freeze at one temperature today and another tomorrow, this could not be done. If water should boil at one degree of heat today and at another tomorrow, how completely would the common industries of life be thrown into utter confusion. Experiment has revealed the laws of freezing and boiling of liquids, also the fusing and solidifying points of metals. Each liquid has its respective boiling and freezing points, and these points remain constant under the same pressure.

The production, velocity, reflection, loudness and pitch of sound, are all controlled by law. If this were not so, there could be no science of music, either vocal or instrumental. The pitch of a tone of the violin or piano depends upon the length, diameter, tension, and the density of the material of the string. The pitch varies inversely as the length of the string; it varies inversely as the diameter; it varies directly as the square root of the tension, and inversely as the density of the material composing the string. These are the laws governing sound produced by the vibration of a string. The tones of an organ are produced by a vibrating current of air, and are controlled by laws similar to those governing sound produced by the vibrating string. Many more laws dominating in the realm of sound might be given, but these are sufficient to show that in every sound, from the murmur of the summer breeze to the roar of the terrific hurricane; from the pattering of a rain drop to the booming of the ocean billows; fom the scream of the hawk to the song of the nightingale; from the solo voice to the full chorus or the great orchestra, law transmits, modulates and governs all.

Recent discoveries have ascertained that electricity, that most subtle, mysterious and wonderful of all nature's forces, is controlled by law in all its operations. A number of these laws have been started, and may be found in any recent treatise on electricity.

Nowhere in the operations of nature is God's power and presence so strikingly exemplified in little things as in chemical action. The law of definite weight, which lies at the foundation of the science of chemistry, is one of the most wonderful of all the laws of nature. The law stated is as follows: "When two elements unite with each other they always unite in a fixed definite ratio by weight." As an illustration of this law, iron and sulphur unite to form iron-sulfide in this reaction twenty-one ounces of iron will always unite with just twelve ounces of sulphur. If we should try to make twenty-two ounces of iron unite with twelve ounces of sulphur, we would have one ounce of iron left; and if we were to

try to make thirteen ounces of sulphur unite with twenty-one ounces of iron, we would have one ounce of sulphur left free. In the union of hydrogen and oxygen to form water, one atom of oxygen always invariably selects two atoms of hydrogen; this is not only true in the union of hydrogen and oxygen, but the same law holds true in all chemical combinations; each element has its displacing power, that is, one of its atoms always selects a certain number of atoms of the element with which it unites. Here we see law controlling the very atoms of matter and regulating with unerring accuracy chemical affinity and all chemical reaction. The law of conservation of matter exemplifies the truth of the scriptures which says that, "What the Lord does shall be forever, nothing can be put to it, and nothing can be taken from it." This law stated is as follows: "The sum of the weights of the substances before the change is exactly equal to the sum of the weights of the new substances after the change." This proves that in chemical changes, although new substances are formed, no matter has been created, and none has been destroyd. Is it not true indeed that God hath set his ordinances in the earth, that his decrees do not only govern the planets in their orbits, but places the atoms in a chemical compound? Where could there be a science of botany, or of zoology, if everything did not bring forth after its kind? The fundamental principle of both these sciences is found in the law that everything brings forth after its kind; this law was established from the beginning, and continues universally true. Even if the Darwinian theory of the origin of species should be true, this law would neither be contradicted nor violated thereby. All those lines of demarkation which divide the animal and vegetable kingdoms into sub-kingdoms, orders, genera and species, remain permanent, and these could not remain so without law. The data for these sciences depend upon law, and law depends upon decree.

When David said, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork," he spoke the very glory and embodiment of the science of astronomy. The chief glory of this science is the law of universal gravitation: "Every particle of matter in the universe attracts every other particle with a force that varies directly as the product of the mass, and inversely as he square of the distance between them." This great law not only lies at the bottom of the science of astronomy, but it upholds, balances and sustains the universe. It is by this law that God hung the earth upon nothing; this law is the word of God's power by which he upholds all his universe; this law is "the bands of Orion that cannot be loosed, and the sweet influence of the Pleiades that cannot be stayed." (Job 38: 31) This law first broke up the chaotic mass of nebula that once filled the space now occupied by the solar system, and moulded it into sun, moons and planets. This law gathered fragments into worlds, worlds into systems, and systems into a universe. It guides the huge planet that sweeps through the regions of space, and balances the mote that floats in the sunbeam; it suspends the water dust that composes the clouds in mid air, and chains the mighty ocean to his destined bed. Then what is this permanent, powerful, instantaneous, universal law, but the presence, power and decree of the Almighty God, the Creator, upholder and disposer of this universe?

Kepler's laws of planetary motion might be mentioned in connection with the science of astronomy, as further exemplifying God's decrees in the heavens, but it appears entirely unnecessary to do so; enough has been cited to convince the pious that science is in harmony with decree, that it depends upon decree, and that without decree science could not exist. Now where is the disputer of this world? Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? The man who has not seen predestination in science, has not seen the soul of science. The man who would charge the belief of predestination to ignorance, is himself ignorant both of the knowledge

of God and in those things of nature wherein he professes to be learned.

Someone may say that it is true that law reigns in those things which have been referred to, but man is an intelligence, and is not subject to such mechanical laws. To this objection I answer, first, that logic and psychology are recognized sciences, not natural sciences, but called mental sciences; sciences of mind, and not of matter. Since fixed and uniform operations as established by natural law, must furnish data for natural science, fixed operations established by law, must furnish data for mental sciences. Second, that the Scripture ascribes the operations of the mind to law. Does not the inspired writer say, "I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind"? (Romans 7: 23) Here he speaks of the law of the mind and the law in his members; so that to deny that the mind and emotions of the human constitution are operated by law, is to deny the written word of God; also to ignore those conscious mental phenomena which every man is subject to.

To the above objections I would answer in the third place, that the wickedness and depravity of the human constitution are as universal, permanent and perpetual, as any of the laws or operations of nature. Where is there a single exception? Where was there ever a single exception in the development of the human family? Induction is one of the chief methods of scientific investigation and reasoning: it is the process of reasoning from particular examples to general laws. Most of the theorems of mathematics have been discovered and proved by the method of induction. The principle of reasoning is, that if a certain thing is found to hold good in a number of cases, it is assumed that it will hold good for the next case, and then that it will hold good for any case. Thus a general truth is discovered and proved from particular examples. Try the method of induction in the case of the depravity of the human family: it can be shown by example that this man is a sinner, and that man is a sinner, and that the third man, and the fourth man, and the fifth man each is a sinner, and then it is a truth exemplified among all people in all places and at all times, that all men are and have been sinners. There can be found no exception; then the general truth may be announced upon the authority of logical induction, that universal depravity is true; and no theorem in mathematics, and no recognized law in natural science has ever been discovered and proved by a more valid process of reasoning. The scientist would not hesitate to announce a law upon the result of such an investigation as this. Then, from a scientific standpoint, there must be a law governing, not only the physical reproduction, but the moral nature of man.

The man who attributes the natural depravity of the human family to the transgression of the first man, aside from decree, is a fatalist, and holds a position that science condemns. Men who hold that God created the first man holy, and that he fell either apart from the purpose of God, or contrary to that purpose, and that as a result of that haphazard fall, his posterity is necessarily sinners, have not seen very far either into the biblical or the scientific side of the subject. Is not the hand of God as directly employed in the formation of the child from the embryo to the birth as it was in the formation of the first man from the dust of the earth? Does he not form the child today as strictly according to his will as he formed the first man? Does he not form every germ of life that comes into existance today, whether it be a plant, animal or man? Does he not develop into an individual every germ that reaches that state, no matter what kind of life it be? Is not his hand as actively and as particularly engaged in the formation of the chick in the shell as in the formation of men or angels? How else could he be the Creator, upholder and disposer of all things?

Although science bears witness to the doctrine of predestination, yet it can never reveal God: it honors God and

proclaims his glory, but it is the man who hath an ear to hear that receives its testimony. Science proclaims the reign of law throughout the universe, and law proclaims decree. The voice of science joins the voice of inspiration in the sublime proclamation that "All his works praise him."

Only a few of the laws of the different sciences have been cited; time would fail me to tell of all of them. Nowhere are we encompassed with a greater cloud of witnesses to the reign of law, than in the sciences. I do not know whether there is any spiritual comfort in what I have written or not, but I do confess that I like to see the doctrine that is dear to my heart established even by natural evidences.

H. M. Curry

(The above by Elder Curry was published in the Signs April 15, 1901. It contains many things in the natural sciences which many of us are not familiar with in detail, but, with him, we "like to see the doctrine that is dear to our hearts established even by natural evidences." — J. D. W.)

SERMON BY ELDER POOLE

(Concluded from April)

Having introduced the subject of disobedience, let us see the division between the disobedient and the obedient. We read in Ephesians, chapter 2, verse 1: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;". (they were not sick, not feeble, not laid up temporarily, but **dead**). "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." Do you see the division? He said that you all at one time walked there in the same place that the children of disobedience are now walking. The division is between God's children and the children of disobedience. Do you see how it is improper to put upon God's people the description "Disobedient children of God." There is no such thing. Disobedience is for the Devil's family. ". . .the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." We also were at one time the children of disobedience when we lived in sin and in lusts fulfilling the desires of our own mind. Yet we read in the next verse, "But God, who is rich in mercy . . ." Brethren, that is the difference between the disobedient and the obedient. God's mercy makes the dividing line. It is when He calls us as poor wretched sinners out of a state of disobedience and makes us obedient in Jesus Christ the Lord of glory. How blessed that a thought like that should be to us. How we should bow our heads in humble submission to a God who would even think to teach us such a grand and deep mystery as this: that the children of disobedience are the family of the Devil, the children of wrath; and the children of obedience are those unto whom God hath imputed obedience through Jesus Christ the Lord.

In the 5th chapter of the book of Ephesians I believe we can see the same thought and distinguish clearly the same dividing line we are discussing. In verse 5 of the 5th chapter, Paul says: "For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." Someone might say he is talking about the church. No, he is speaking about an **inheritance** (not a reward for doing) in the kingdom of Christ and of God. "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." The wrath of God has never come upon the children of God. To my knowledge, I find no place in the Bible where it ever said God's wrath was upon His children. He punishes them; He chastens them, and many things may come upon them. But I have never read where God's wrath fell upon one of His children at

any time. These here are termed the children of disobedience, of whom Paul goes on to say, "Be not ye therefore partakers with them." Leave them alone. Then to confirm that he is speaking of a division, he says, "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: Walk as children of light." Do you see the difference between the children of disobedience and the children of God? Between the children of darkness, over whom Satan is the king, and the children of light, over whom Jesus is the King and Master? Between the kingdom of darkness, from which we were translated, and the kingdom of light? The children of disobedience are the children of the Devil, and they have no part nor lot with God's people. He says for us to be not partakers with them, because we have no part with them.

To further establish this thought and confirm basically what we have found in the other scriptures we have read, let us read in the 3rd chapter of Colossians, verse 5: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience." What does "mortify" mean? Do you know anything about mortification? Mortality? To mortify means to kill, to destroy, or bury. In effect, he is saying to crucify the old man daily. Someone might say that he is speaking here of God's disobedient children, and in this they are almost teaching a doctrine of universalism. To hear them tell it, nearly everybody is one of God's children, but he is just living out in the world in sin and in disobedience. He can throw stones at the preacher, despise the gospel, trample under foot the blood of Jesus Christ, disbelieve and despise everything about the righteousness of God, and still wake up in heaven some day. There may be no evidence of Jesus, His power, or any demonstration of God, and still he is a child of God. That is the most preposterous doctrine ever concocted among God's people. There is not a word of truth in the supposition that His people can continue in a state of disobedience, for we read here that they are children of disobedience upon whom the wrath of God is come. And then to prove that he was not talking about God's regenerated children, he says in verse 7: "In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye . . ." Notice the difference **now.** There has been a change. **You are not children of disobedience any longer,** for they belong in the world. God's children are the children of obedience. "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds." If time permitted. we could go into a lengthy discussion about the sins of God's people after they have been born again, (and they are many). But don't call them disobedient, because their obedience is in Jesus Christ. To say that God's children are disobedient is to say, in effect, that the obedience of Jesus Christ doesn't satisfy God. But He is our obedience. He has brought into captivity even our thoughts to the obedience of Christ. We are made righteous by the obedience of One, Jesus Christ the Lord of glory; and God's wrath now abides upon the children of disobedience, but it certainly does not abide upon God's people.

Let us look further in the book of Titus, chapter 1, and the 15th verse. "Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny Him, being abominable, **and disobedient,** and unto every good work reprobate." I tell you that if he is a reprobate, he surely is not one of God's children. There are only two categories: the election and the reprobation. God's children are the children of election. Esau's family, the Devil's family, consists of the children of reprobation. Here they are described as "unto

every good work reprobate." In other words, there are no good works in the reprobates and the disobedient. I find not one place in the entire New Testament when we discover the covenant of grace where God's children are called disobedient. Not one place have we ever seen where one can be obedient except in Jesus Christ. If you can find any different method of teaching in the New Testament, I pray and encourage you to bring it forward that we might all learn about it. In my study of the scriptures, which I trust has been to some degree an extensive one, I have not discovered such a doctrine as is being taught among God's people.

Let us read one further portion of scripture, and I will conclude with this. If time permitted, we could prove this one with great clarity throughout the New Testament. We read in verse 6 of I Peter, chapter 2: "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious," (now notice the division): "but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner." These are taken from prophecies of the Old Testament, showing the disobedience of the Pharisees in rejecting Jesus Christ. These who rejected Christ are called disobedient. "And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed." God appointed them unto this disobedience. God appointed them unto their reprobation just as He appointed us to election. From Romans 9: 11 we hear; "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Those children being disobedient were appointed unto that disobedience. Whether we rejoice or sorrow at that, whether we believe it or not, it remains steadfastly the word of God that the children of disobedience were appointed thereunto. The children of disobedience divided from the children of God. How could we lay claim to being a disobedient child of God? We may be a sinful, faltering child of God, but not a disobedient one. Our obedience is Christ's obedience.

Then to finally and conclusively prove what he is saying here, Peter goes on to say in verse 9: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into the marvelous light." Note how he has used the terms **them** and **ye**. He said they are the reprobates, the ones God has not purposed to redeem. They are appointed unto disobedience. But ye are a chosen generation: chosen to bring forth the marvelous praises of the Son of Light, being called out of the kingdom of darkness. Ye are not among the disobedient. Ye are among a peculiar people, the family of God, the royal nation, the seed of God, those elected in Jesus Christ. Notice how he says it: ". . .That ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness." He has called you out of the kingdom of darkness, out of the kingdom of disobedience, into His marvelous light: "Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: Which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."

Brethren, that is the difference between the obedient and the disobedient: the mercy of God. That is such a well-established teaching in the New Testament, I see not how anyone, being led of the Spirit of God, could believe otherwise. God's children are not disobedient. As I said, they fail and falter and they sin; but they are not disobedient. Their obedience is in Jesus Christ. All of their righteousness is in Him. All of their glory shall be in Him. Nothing in their hands can they offer to God as the sacrifice of obedience that God would say, "I am well-pleased with that, so I

believe I am going to give you a little nicer reward than the other fellow is going to get." Neither can the children of disobedience produce anything that would find favor with God. To obey means to be Christ-like. To be obedient means to be born again, to be quickened to be transformed, to persevere, to continue in the grasp of God. To be disobedient means to continue in the kingdom of darkness, unknown by God, unloved by Him, and uncared for, as far as eternal matters are concerned. Brethren, we have much reason to praise God that we have been called unto the obedience of Jesus Christ and blessed with His nature, and given a mind to think upon heavenly things. I would beseech each of you as strangers and pilgrims to abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." (Col. 2: 6) How did you receive Him? By grace, and grace alone. So then we have only one way to walk (or be obedient) in Him, and that is by that same superabounding, free, glorious grace. Praise God from whom all blessings flow, including obedience.

(For other proofs on disobedience being a term fitted for the reprobate see Titus 3: 3-5, and I Tim. 1: 9-10.)

(Prepared from a tape recording)

(NOTE TO THE JUDICIOUS READERS OF THIS ARTICLE:

After having prepared this for printed matter I felt it wise to compare my opinions of the scriptures herein given with the opinion of our forefathers on the same subject. For reference I used the "London Confession of Faith", and found that it in no wise conflicted with these views. This is not an attempt to set myself on the high level of orthodoxy with these esteemed brethren, but only to show that there is no disagreement. (See articles VIII and XVI — J. F. P.)

GOD HAS HIS WAY OF TEACHING HIS PEOPLE

Coleman, Texas 76834
801 E 9th Street,

Editors **Signs of the Times.**

Dear Brethren:

Just a few lines to tell you that I have enjoyed reading the **Signs** this year, and especially the re-prints. Elder Lambert's editorial in the October, 1967, issue did me a lot of good: also "Self Examination" by Elder Beebe in the same issue.

The two articles seemed to go together. I agree with Elder Lambert, "If we cannot find our experience in a text, we have not properly tasted that text." That is certainly true. When we have "properly tasted" we acknowledge, "By the grace of God I am what I am." "I once was blind; but now I see" that I cannot even defend the doctrine of God — But He is my defence.

"Fires which we have tried to kindle, flickered out without stirring up any warmth." Many, many years ago I experienced the same thing. That was years ago when I was with other people who call thmselves "Old Baptist". But I feel that I have been taught that, as Elder Beebe said, "The doctrine is not dependant upon the ability of men for its defence." And that, "All the omnipotence of the eternal God protects his own doctrine." What a glorious thought!

We read, "They shall all be taught of the Lord." That is their schooling in this life. I believe the good Lord turns his children over to their own vain imagination (the devil) to teach them what he wants them to know: as he did the Apostle Peter. And while in that state, they think they can walk on water: they declare they will never deny Him. They think they can defend the doctrine. They think they can revive the church. God does not make men do these things — he does not make men sin. Except for God's grace, mercy and love, that is all even his children would do. But God's children are taught something in this life, and that is that they are "kept by the power of God. " Inasmuch as God purposed that David and Peter should do as they did, He also purposed their repentence and faith, and their acknowledging of the truth — which was, confessing their faults unto Israel's God before their brethren.

I suppose we all at times get discouraged because of our vile, corruptible, sinful self; but we read of those gone on before, and there was not a single one who did not feel that way at times. That should strengthen us that we are sons and not bastards. Not a single bastard will ever be taught anything about the Living God; but all of His children, all of those chosen in Christ, all of those for whom Christ died — all of His people will be "taught of the Lord." And they will be brought to the acknowledging of the truth in this life, that "The will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not," as said the Apostle Paul, who was "a pattern for those that should follow after."

"Many are called but few are chosen." All of those "chosen in Christ" are called and predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. "For God hath from the beginning chosen you unto salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." A few of those called are chosen to "earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints." They are led through the "fire", "through deep waters," and from time to time to confess their faults unto Israel's God before the brethren. He does not feel that he is a straight-edge for brethren to go by, but is made to examine himself: " 'Tis a point I long to know, Am I His or am I not." And each will pray, Lord increase my faith, help thou mine unbelief. And each is watching his own vile self, and looking over his brother for good and not for evil. When one is brought to the acknowledging of his faults he is also made to see that God is his strength; and you can tell he is a sheep. You can track him; you can tell which way he is going, for he will declare that of himself he can do nothing. You can track a sheep, but you cannot track a goat. Christ called them sheep and goats: the sheep are brought out of the wilderness of sin, the goats are left in the wilderness.

I believe that after one has "tasted of the power of the world to come," it is God's purpose to teach him something else, as with Peter. How is he to learn except by experience? The Apostle Paul, "a pattern," was one of those "chosen in Christ before the world was," and he put out a lot of goat food before he was struck down. Peter, one of the twelve, was turned over to the devil — and who is it that can stand up and say, I have never advocated anything except the whole truth? That man would have to be perfect. Christ only did that. He is the only one that ever did or ever will do so. But God being perfect, it seems we can see the perfect work of God manifest in mortal beings even our brethren, if I be one. And it makes us rejoice with "joy unspeakable" for one to stand up and acknowledge the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord and Saviour. To me, that one is a sheep, a son: "Because ye are sons, God sends forth his Spirit into your hearts, crying Abba Father."

I hope you can receive this in charity, and lay all errors to my charge; and I hope I can receive all corrections in charity; for "Charity never faileth."

In hope of eternal life with Him,
C. U. Landers

(The following article entitled "Primitive Baptists" was a Term Paper prepared by Rebecca Byrd, the sixteen years old daughter of Deacon A. C. Byrd of Burlington, N. C. The students of her class had the choice of subjects, and she chose this one. She gives the source of all her quotations, (which sources we are not publishing due to lack of space;) and it is evident that she spent considerable time in researching her subject. —Ed.)

PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS

The doctrine of the Primitive Baptists today goes back to the days of the Apostles. Since that time the people believing that doctrine have gone under several different names. Until the nineteenth century the name "Primitive", "Old School", "Missionary", or "New School" was not used. Before that the term Baptists or Anabaptists was used to apply to all Baptists.

"As Primitive Baptists, going back

and tracing the truth in history, and its advocates in the church, We are neither Catholic nor Protestant, and never have been in alliance with either." The Church of Rome did not exist in the third century, and people with similar beliefs of the Primitive Baptists did. The Protestants were not formed until after the Church of Rome. There is proof that the Primitive Baptists are connected with the Dutch Baptists of Holland and in the Lower Countries, and the Welsh Baptists in England.

The Primitive Baptists can truthfully claim connection with the ancient Waldenses. They were vaudois of the Alps and "Christians or descendants and representatives of the Primitive Church." Their only standard of faith and practices were the scriptures from the Old and New Testaments. They believed there were only two christian ordinances: The Lord's Supper and Baptism. If a person came to them from another religion they "re-baptized" them. They protested the Church of Rome. For these two reasons the Catholics called their beliefs "Anti-Christ." The Waldenses hid in the Piedmont Valley of France, but soon they were found and persecuted.

The Baptists were known as anabaptists because they did not sprinkle or pour, but baptized by immerson. Also, the work of other religions was not accepted. The Baptists renounced the teachers of the Catholic faith, for which they were put to death by the thousands. Still, they remained strict in their faith and belief. During the Dark Ages their literature and books were burned with the people. This left a missing link in the history of the Baptists.

The first Particular or Predestinarian Baptist Church in England was founded in 1633. By 1644 there were seven of these churches, and they published their "Confessions of Faith" and the most complete one in 1689.

People were buried alive and burned in England for their Baptist belief. The last man buried alive was on April 11, 1612. During the reign of Charles II and James II (1660-1688) was the main time of persecution, but "over seventy thousand of them" were persecuted in the time of King Henry. The main punishments were severe fines, long imprisonment, and burning. The ministers remained in prison over long periods of time. People fled to Holland and America.

In South Wales, England, during the spring of 1701, a group of Baptists (Old School) were organized, and left Milford-haven, England, in June for America. They arrived in Pennsylvania September 8, 1701, and settled in Pennepek, north of Philadelphia. They remained there one and a half years, then founded the Welsh Tract Old Baptist Church, which is the oldest church of its kind in America.

"In New England, outside of Rhode Island, the Baptists, like other dissenters, were compelled to pay taxes for the support of the Congregational clergy." They refused, therefore, their land and personal property were confiscated. Men and women were put in prison. The Baptist preachers were "arrested and put in stocks for preaching the gospel contrary to law."

The four oldest associations formed were the "Philadelphia in 1707; Charleston, 1751; Sandy Creek, 1758; and Kehukee, 1756." The Kehukee, which is in North Carolina, is the oldest which goes by the Primitive Baptist name today.

During the Civil War in the United States, the Primitive Baptists were not divided. The Southern Primitive Baptists joined the Confederate Army in self-defence, but met no Northern Primitive Baptists in the Federal troops. The ones in the North kept out of the army whenever possible to avoid fighting fellow believers.

In the early history of Caswell County the Primitive Baptists were strong; since that time their numbers have decreased. County Line Church is the "Mother Baptist Church" in Caswell County, and was founded prior to 1800. Lynches Creek was founded in 1799, and Bush Arbor before 1806.

In the South the Kehukee Association

was the first to separate from those who advocated new doctrines. They withdrew in 1827, and within ten years other churches and associations did the same. County Line Association withdrew in 1832. Bush Arbor Church was the scene of the "mightest theological debate of the community." At nightfall Elder John Kerr asked everyone who believed as he did to come to one side of the church. After everyone had separated Elder Kerr left and soon founded Kerr's Chapel Missionary Baptist Church.

In the Southern States everyone who did not go with the weakening beliefs of the Baptists were known as "Kehukeeites". They did not take Masons into church fellowship for they did not believe in secret organizations; and ministers were not allowed to establish societies for the collection of money. The use of education to prepare a man for the ministry through seminaries instead of being called of God, was opposed.

The Black Rock Address is a statement of the reasons for the separation. The old-fashioned Baptists in the north were known as "Blackrockers". On September 27, 1932, a group of men met in Baltimore County, Maryland, to write the Address. Elder Gilbert Beebe drafted the main things of the address. Those gathered at this meeting opposed adding things which were not in agreement with the Bible, as many Baptists were doing, such as, Tract Societies, Sunday Schools, Bible Societies, Mission Boards and Societies, salaried ministers, and theological schools or colleges.

. . . "Christ said, Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. we do feel an earnest desire to be found acting in obedience thereto, as the providence of God directs our way and opens a door or utterance for us: but we have no right to depart from the order which the Master himself has seen fit to lay down relative to the ministration of the word." Primitive Baptists are not against education; but against the establishment of denominational schools, and also that ministers should not substitute an education for being called of God.

Primitive Baptists always baptize by immersion. Sprinkling or pouring does not agree with the Bible. "Baptism is a Greek word meaning to dip." To be baptized one must be wholly dipped, and presently brought out again."

Primitive Baptists do not use the title Reverend for their ministers, they being only mortal. The word is used in the Bible only once, and in reference to God and not to man.

"Feet Washing" is an open question among Primitive Baptists; some churches practice it; others do not. There is nothing in the Acts of the Apostles of it being observed.

Primitive Baptists hold that God is absolute in his sovereignty; that salvation from sin is by grace, and not by works; that God's people have been chosen, and that before time began. They are professedly Calvinistic in their doctrinal sentiments, yet do not like the name 'Calvanist' because they do not hold to all the doctrines of that reformer."

The five points of Calvanism are: 1) The fall of man. 2) Unconditional election. 3) Particular redemption and effectual calling. 4) Justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ. 5) The final preservation of the saints.

The things mentioned in this paper under the separation, beliefs, and Calvanism, are a few of the basic beliefs of the Primitive Baptists.

The "Missionary" and the "Primitive", Baptists both claim to be the original Baptists, though the Primitive Baptists still have the same beliefs of the original Baptists. "Elder Potter, in a debate with Elder Throgmortan, page 18, said, 'I claim that if an organization of any kind be rent by the introduction of new rules, regulations or doctrines, the innovators and not the party that adheres to the old rules, regulations, and doctrines, are the seceding parties'." Therefore the Primitive Baptists remain the true Baptists.

In summary, "The Baptists may be considered as the only Christian community which has stood since the days of the Apostles, and as a Christian so-

ciety which has preserved pure doctrine of the gospel through all ages."

Rebecca Byrd
Burlington, N. C.

'HAVEN OF REST'

Lodi, Calif. 95240

Dear Elder Spangler:

My subscription expires this date, and I desire to renew for another year. Use the balance as you see fit . . .

It is a haven of rest to me, when I receive the *Signs,* to sit down and read all the articles and editorials: they are inspiring to me. The *Signs* never grows old. I read it in my teenage days, and I am now seventy-seven.

"Oh may I ever walk in Him
And nothing know beside,
Nothing desire or ought esteem
But Jesus crucified."

His blood is sufficient to atone.

May you continue to be blessed in all your duties.

In Him I hope,
Mrs. Mabel Lindsey

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To February 1, 1968)

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Mrs. Chas. B. Gordy, Mich.	10.00
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Joseph A. MacKenzie, Canada	7.00

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** will be held with the church at Creeches, the Lord willing, the fifth Saturday and Sunday in March, 1968.

The church is located in Johnson County, N. C., about one mile south of Stancil's Chapel Church. There will be a pointer just off Highway 42.

All who have a mind to attend, are invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

Danville, Virginia **April, 1968**

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EXPRESSING OUR APPRECIATION

We are greatly encouraged by the many comments we have received concerning the increase in the subscription price of the *Signs.*

There was not a single objection expressed to the increase, and some suggested that it be increased more, if necessary, than we have announced. No one wanted the number of pages decreased or made smaller; but all wanted

the paper to continue to advocate the same doctrine, and to be a medium of correspondence and information among the brethren and churches as in the past.

All the brethren and friends may be assured that this is the purpose of your editors, as the Lord may enable us, together with our writers. We could not contend for any other doctrine and remain faithful to the teaching of Jesus and his Apostles. We know of no deviation in the principles we advocate today, from those advocated by the founder and first Editor of the *Signs of the Times,* Elder Gilbert Beebe; and we are persuaded these are consistent with the Word of God. To ascribe all the praise, honor and glory to their God for his goodness and mercy to them, is the great desire of every one who has been born of the Spirit.

We greatly appreciate the many contributions we have received, as are shown in the list under the heading *INDIGENT FUND* each month. And we appreciate the interest our Elders and others take in sending new subscriptions and renewals, and we desire that others also take an interest in the matter.

We are glad to say that the brethren and friends have supplied us with articles and letters of late so that we have had sufficient copy, with some yet to be published as we have space. These are greatly appreciated; so keep writing brethren and friends.

The Editors

EDITORIAL

"BAPTISM DOTH NOW SAVE US"
1st Peter 3:21

Baptists are distinguished from other churches because of the emphasis put upon baptism. John the Baptist came "preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. 3:1-2 The result of his preaching was: "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were *baptized* of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." Jesus recognized John's baptism to such extent that it was necessary that He be baptized of John in water "to fulfill all righteousness." God, the Father, recognized this act to such degree: "The heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and lo a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am *well pleased.*" Matt. 3:16-17

John baptized with water; Jesus baptized with the Holy Ghost: yet, it was necessary that Jesus be baptized with water by John to fulfill ALL righteousness. The Father is well pleased when all righteousness is fulfilled. All of God's children were baptized by the Holy Ghost into the body of Christ when they were chosen in Him; children of God were baptized by Jesus when He comes into their hearts to dwell: yet, they answer by being baptized with water. This pleases the Father and the result is that the gifts of joy, peace, happiness, and a satisfied conscience climax the act. The "good conscience" is the inspired gift of God to the person; and baptism is the answer of this "good conscience" toward God.

Baptism in water is coupled with belief of the gospel. You must believe before you can *see* the kingdom of Heaven; and also, be baptized with water before you can *enter* into its joys. Jesus said as recorded in Mark 16:16: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Jesus ordered, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matt. 28:19-20

Peter, an apostle, commanded those

who were pricked in heart by the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost to be baptized. See Acts 2:38. The Holy Ghost pricked their hearts and caused them to be so uncomfortable as well as convinced them that they MUST DO something. Peter did not only command them to repent and be baptized, but also comforted them by telling them what to expect as a result of their compliance to his command. There is a vast difference in being pricked by the Holy Ghost and receiving its gift. The pricking causes disturbance. It turns the heart. After the heart is turned, the person must turn accordingly before he receives the gift. As soon as he turns and complies with the commandment, immediately he experiences ease of conscience, peace of mind, and calmness: all of which is the gift of the Holy Ghost. Many of the Lord's people tarry long after this turning of the heart. Great disturbances and perplexities is their experience as long as they tarry. However, they did not tarry long on the day of Pentecost: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the *same day* there were added unto them about three thousand souls." Acts 2:41

Ananias, a minister of the Lord, (who was not numbered as one of the apostles), commanded Saul, Paul, to be baptized according to Paul's testimony as recorded in Acts 22:16. Paul quotes Ananias, "And *now why tarriest thou?* arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Even though Paul had an impression to tarry, he immediately complied as proved in Acts 9:18 "* * * And he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized." The record shows that some did not tarry even though it was night. We read in Acts 16:33, "And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway." The theory has been advocated even among Baptists that baptism in water is unnecessary because the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. To be cleansed from all sin is one thing: yet for an individual to experience the joy of it is something else. Even tho Jesus saved us from the penalty of sin when He shed His blood, it was unknown to us who are now living until we experienced it. The blood of Jesus was shed many hundreds of years ago which was for the remission of sins of all His people; yet its merit or the knowledge of it is applied to our hearts here in time. This blood is freshly applied to us individually as we experience it. Our salvation was secured long ago; yet the knowledge of it is revealed little by little.

Let us quote our text beginning with 20th verse of 3rd chapter of 1st Peter: "Which sometimes were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but *the* answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Christ Jesus." No doubt many who perished in the flood had eternal life awaiting them in Heaven; yet, only eight enjoyed the deliverance and salvation here in this time. There is salvation to be experienced *now* for all who do not tarry but obey.

Sometime ago I had the privilege to administer the ordinance of baptism to five ranging in age from over fifty (50) to almost eighty (80) years of age. All of them had attended Primitive Baptist Churches from childhood. Their walk and conversation had testified to their respect for the church, its doctrine, and members for many decades. Their love for the truth and the people embracing it had been unquestionable for so long that I had become hopeless of their submission. I was shocked when they presented themselves for baptism and church membership. It seems people tarry longer now than ever before. The question that Ananias asked Paul, Why tarry? is the question that has

given me much thought lately. Is the tarrying due to the fact that the ministers of the gospel have not properly taught the importance of water baptism? Have ministers taught there is no salvation in water baptism? Have they taught that baptism is only a shadow? Have we been slothful in this great matter? Have we failed to command believers to be baptized? Have we failed to point out the joy, happiness, and contentment which accompany such obedience? I know that I have failed to give baptism its proper emphasis until recently. About two years ago I spoke upon the subject of baptism. The next day one who had attended that church regularly for years came to my home. He said to me, "Your remarks yesterday relative to baptism disturbs me. If I understood you, you preached baptism in such a manner that I must ask you, Do you believe baptism to be essential unto salvation?" My answer was, "I will not tell you it is unnecessary." He asked, "What about the thief on the cross to whom Jesus said, 'Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise.'?" I replied by asking, "Do you believe that should the thief have been given his freedom for a week that he would have been baptized?" His response was, "I do not know." I replied, "Neither do I, but one thing I do know. If we use the thief as an example to prove that it is all right not to be baptized because he was not baptized; then, we can take the same example and prove that it is all right to steal." Why do true believers tarry to give THE answer to a good conscience toward God? which Peter says is baptism. We firmly believe that many have sincere reasons for tarrying.

One reason for tarrying is the felt sense of unworthiness. I inquired for the reason of a precious friend who had attended church meetings for decades; "It is an unsolved mystery to me why so many of you who love this doctrine and people for so many years do not ask for membership in the church and be baptized. What is your reason?" He emotionally replied, "I am unworthy." My reply was, "Suppose you continue to wait until you feel worthy. When that day comes, you tell the church of your feeling of worthiness to be a member with them. How do you suppose the members of that church would react to such testimony?" He said, "I had never thought of it that way before." The next meeting day he told his experience to the church, was baptized, and received into membership. A few years ago an elderly couple presented themselves to a church in their community. I had officiated for this church for many years as their moderator. This couple had not attended the church before. They came with the testimony that they were getting old and decided to join this church, had been worthy and fit for membership for many years. They stated that they would be a help to the church, and the church might be a help to them. After their testimony I inquired of the members of the church if their feelings were in harmony with this couple. Each one answered, "No." Then I asked the same questions to the applicants for membership. Their answer was, "Yes," to the questions to which the members answered, "No." The result was that the matter was deferred for further investigation. The next week the couple joined another religious order where their members felt fit and worthy.

Another reason for tarrying is waiting to be miraculously forced to be baptized and to become a member of the church. Not long ago I received a request through the mail from a person who had attended regularly a certain Primitive Baptist Church. He stated his love for the doctrine and the church. He stated the pastor of the church had told him that he ought to be baptized and become a member of the church. He asks me, "What do you think? I do not think I should unless the Holy Ghost should be sitting right there in the church beside me in person, and tell me in plain words that I must join *that* church. Do NOT fail to answer either to me or through the *Signs*." This

treatise is my answer. I believe the pastor is right in encouraging believers to be baptized and become members of the church. I have searched the Scriptures and have failed to find any case where the Holy Ghost in person ever told anyone to be baptized and join the church in which he sat. I find many cases where people believed the word spoken by God-called men, and they responded by being baptized. Read the Acts 18:8, "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized." Philip preached to the eunuch explaining to him certain Scriptures which resulted in the eunuch believing and requesting baptism. The testimony of the eunuch which satisfied Philip was, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." "And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." Acts 8:37-38

Another reason given for tarrying is, "I can't tell an experience like the minister tells." There is no doubt that ministers have deeper experiences than laymen. No two are wrought upon exactly alike. If you believe the truth and love the companionship of those who believe it, I urge you to relate your convictions to the minister, or church. Some of you may not be able to tell of any change in your belief. The apostle, John, could not tell of a change like Paul.

Some say, "Our parents were much better than we. They never became members." Suppose you are right in assuming that your parents were righteous. Christ came to save sinners. The church is composed of sensible sinners who trust in Christ's righteousness, not their own, to merit salvation. One says, "I do not think I should be baptized, and become a member of the church as long as I can put it off. If God predestinated that I become a member of the church He will work it." My answer is that as long as you blame God for your disobedience, you will not be convinced of any wrong-doing sufficiently to cause you to confess your sins, repent, and be baptized. Those who feel that they do all the time what God predestinates, cannot at the same time feel condemned for anything they might do or say. The Bible advocates that God's people desire to do the will of God which is to keep His commandments. Jesus commanded his disciples to baptize believers. God's ministers command believers to be baptized. True believers are baptized by God's ministers.

Some say that the church is for the elderly. Some wait until they retire before being baptized. I ask you, "Would you like to *live* in the church? or, Do you want to go home to the church to die?" I have been alarmed in adding the total ages of church members, dividing this number by the number of members to determine average age. I find that the average age in many cases to be retirement age. Some say, "There are many more of us on the outside of the church than there are members. Why should we become members? We reap the benefits of the church without shouldering any of its responsibilities"

My answer to such statements is: 1st. You have the wrong opinion of baptism. You consider it only as a requirement for church membership. People who receive the joy in baptism are baptized because it is the answer to a good conscience toward God, because it is figurative of burying the old man and being raised to a new life. It is as though you are washing away your old sins and beginning a new life trusting in Christ Jesus, and in the power of God to enable you to walk in newness of life. A church may rescind the act of receiving you into membership but it cannot take your baptism, nor the joy of it away from you, if you were in the proper attitude in baptism. 2nd. It is so different to be on the outside of a church looking in, and being on the inside of a church looking out, that it is inexplainable. The warmth

of fellowship, the sublimity of union, the oil of gladness, and being knit together in bonds of love and communion: all being experienced in the church, is so amazing that you have to be one of its members to know what it means. Instead of shouldering a responsibility, you will realize a rare freedom which unshackles you from the chains of the law. Some express it, "I did not know what a great burden I was under, until I was baptized and left it in the water." Others say, "The great weight that left me while being baptized makes me now feel light as a feather." Only obedient children of God know what it means to be yoked with Jesus Christ and the brethren. The disobedient are still yoked with the world and being born again, will be burdened and weighted down until they save themselves from this untoward generation. See Acts 2:40-41.

Once a young man was being led into the water for baptism. Before he was baptized he asked permission to speak to many of his comrades who stood on the bank. He said to them, "My fellow comrades, we have enjoyed our companionship together for some time. We have come to the time of parting. Henceforth I shall follow Jesus with His brethren, the Lord enabling me. I now bid you farewell with a prayer in my heart that some day you shall come this way." Then he was baptized and counted with those whose goal it is higher than carnal things. As I write this treatise I hear the radio announcer say, "The Thought for Today: 'No one ever *scored* unless he had a GOAL.'" Let us press toward the *mark* for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Read 3rd chapter of Philippians.

Baptism is important to Baptists. They are very particular relative to its mode, the one baptized, and the one who performs the ordinance. Baptists believe that immersion in water of a believer by one called of God is essential to baptism. This is what we term regular baptism. We hope to write upon BAPTISTIC BAPTISM soon. May the Lord bless this treatise to your good and His praise. Amen.

E. J. L.

EDITORIAL

We are requested to give an explaination of Hebrews 13: 10, which reads as follows: "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle."

The apostle is here speaking of two classes of worshippers: "We" and "They".

When we read the Apostle's epistle to the Hebrews, we find him affirming the suitability of all things given under the first covenant; but that their value as a manner of worshipping God, was brought to a full and complete end, since all the types and shadows of which that covenant consisted, were fulfilled by the appearing and work of Jesus Christ, who brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Jesus himself said that the account written of them in the scriptures, testified of him.

When Jesus said to the Samaritan woman at the well, ". . . the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him," he made it plain that the worship of God should no longer consist of times and places, forms and ceremonies, but in the spirit and truth of those things which are so delicately and precisely portrayed. True worship of God should no longer consist in "meats and drinks, and divers washings and carnal ordinances, imposed until the time of reformation." (Hebrews 9: 10)

The time of reformation was at hand. Those things served for the times theretofore, but "in these last days" He of whom these things were spoken, was come, the substance and fulfillment of them. The time was past when those things were "ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary, which served unto the example and shadow of

heavenly things;" but now true worship should be "in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."

The Apostle wrote in the 7th and 8th verses of the 13th chapter, "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever." He admonished the brethren concerning those things they had been taught, and which had been set in order by those who had been called and qualified for this purpose in the kingdom of God. They did this in preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and saying that they should not "Be carried about with divers and strange doctrines."

The end of the conversation of those who "had the rule" over them, was, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever." And it ever remains thus with the true servants of God, for their conversation has to its purpose and substance the fulness of Jesus Christ in all things and at all times.

The center of the worship of the Jews was around the altar in the temple; but they saw no altar used by the disciples of Jesus, and this they could not understand. But the Apostle said, **"We have an altar."** Not indeed an altar of stone, a natural, material one; but a real one which the former altars represented. A personal one, which was Christ, who was indeed both altar and sacrifice, as prefigured by the brazen altar of the sin offering, and the golden altar of incense: his intercession.

It seems that the altar and the sacrifice as pertaining to the church express the same idea, for the altar had no meaning without the sacrifice; and since Christ is all things to the church, being sacrificed upon the altar of God's eternal love for his people, that they may eat, that is, receive all the benefits his sacrifice secured to them.

True believers have by Christ's atonement the substance of all which was shadowed forth by the sacrifices of the law. The flesh of many of the sacrifices was shared by the priests and the altars; but we find as pertaining to the **sin offering** that the blood of the bullock was put upon the horns of the altar by a finger, and the remainder was poured beside the altar at the bottom; the fat and the kidneys, etc, was burned upon the altar; but the flesh and skin, etc. was burned with fire without the camp. The priests could eat none of it since it was a sin offering. In the same manner Jesus suffered without the city upon Mt. Calvary, showing that he was cast out and suffered as the true sin offering — all others being but types.

True believers renounce all dependence on legal sacrifices and services of all kinds, and trust in the sacrifice of Christ only. And in doing so, going to him without the camp, (Heb. 13: 12) they suffer the reproaches of those who trust in the works of their flesh, in rituals and ceremonies, and such things.

It is evident that those who saw no farther than the sacrifices on the Jewish altars, and in no way related them to Jesus in the fulfillment of them, had no right to the things of the kingdom of Heaven. Indeed they had no desire for them, but ridiculed everything Jesus and his disciples did and said. As long as they were legalists, and the service of the tabernacle served them well, though to no real profit, they knew nothing of grace and had no need for it, therefore, they could not partake or eat of those things which meant everything to the household of faith, who remembered, "For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come." as the Apostle wrote in Heb. 13: 14, 15, "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." These things are far different than attempting to offer sacrifices of good works to obtain salvation.

Works for righteousness and the services of the letter of the law, are directly contrary to faith and hope, and the spiritual import of sacrifices. The quick-

ened sinner knows this, and that those who are saved are entirely dependent upon the imputed righteousness of Him who is his redeemer.

The destruction of Jerusalem and the temple made it impossible to continue to serve the tabernacle; which in itself should serve to show the end of such things, as being completely fulfilled. Yet other things were added by men to keep up the show of free will and works of the creature. And much more so by those who liked the name christian but not the simplicity of the faith of the Lord's people. The Saviour said in his Sermon on the Mount, "If the light that is in you be darkness, how great is the darkness." It is for this reason men do not know that Jesus fulfilled all the law, and attempt to combind both law and some things of the gospel, and call the result the doctrine of the Christian Church. But these things will not bear the searchings of the Spirit in the Redeemed of the Lord, though many others are in bondage under their teachings.

The Lord's Supper is in no sense a sacrifice, but it is done in remembrance of Jesus who is our sacrifice; who said, ". . . this do in remembrance of me." It is for this reason we cannot speak of either the Supper or Baptism as a sacrament; but rather as ordinances of the church. The term sacrament carries with it the idea that the act of receiving or partaking of sacraments, imparts grace; as witness the following quotation of those who use the term: ". . . but the sacraments of the new law contain grace, and confer it on those who worthily receive them." They would make these things a channel of grace, which has no part in the doctrine of God our Saviour.

We submit the above as some of the things we feel are included in the text. "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle."

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Cove, Union Co., Oregon

Dear Brethren Beebe:—By special request of our beloved pastor, Elder G. E. Mayfield, I send the enclosed excellent letter received from Elder W. Grafton, a man greatly beloved, hoping it will be comforting to our Father's children, as it was to me.

M. E. Carter

Forest Hill, Md., May 26, 1881.

Dear Sister Carter:—Your favor of May 7th was received in due time and as ever, I was glad to have something from your pen, which always brings the evidence that you have the law written in the heart and printed in the mind. The fruit borne by the Spirit and the exercises of the mind of those born of God are not confined to the first experience, but is a life of faith throughout the entire pilgrimage from earth to heaven. "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." But the life we formerly lived in the flesh was after the flesh, and consequently we did mind the things of the flesh, and there was no fruit developed from that life or nature but what was strictly in harmony with itself, which is deceitful, with the lusts thereof. But when a new life is imparted, new fruits are developed, new desires are felt, and the contemplations are heavenly and divine. We love, instead of hate, and walk by faith, instead of walking after the flesh. There is that imparted to them and wrought in them which is calculated of itself to work experience in them, not gathered from others. Flesh does not originate it, but it grows on good ground, and brings forth fruit unto God.

When first the commandment comes, sin revives and we die. This is manifest to the sinner by the great contrast between the holy law of God and the unholiness and vileness of the creature, which we never could see, did not God send home to us the law and its just demands upon us. Sin then appears sinful; but the law is holy. All the gifts

and graces bestowed upon the children of God are the opposite of sin. How can they who are dead to sin, live any longer therein? They have now turned over a new leaf in their history. They find another law in their members, and discover that their old nature still remains, and is likely to cause them trouble, because it wars against the law of their mind. These new discoveries and new causes of trouble which arise in the life and travel of the christian, are occasioned by the light which shines in darkness, and which shines in the heart. The more the saints see of the holiness of God shining forth in the gospel of his Son, and feel his dying love in their hearts, the more thy complain of self and of indwelling sin.

This has always been the case in all ages. Whenever God has been pleased to give special revelations of himself to any of his saints, they have invariably abhorred themselves. "Woe is me," said one, because of this. "For I am a man of unclean lips," &c. These two natures, this warfare, this inward strife, is caused by their relation to two distinct heads—the Adam of earth and the Lord from heaven. All that the saints derive from their earthly head is carnal and sinful, and subject to decay. Death has passed upon it, for all have sinned. In Adam all die. Death only has to do with that which is mortal and corruptible. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

We find, and that by sad experience, that the flesh does mind the things of the flesh, and it is impossible to rise above it. But God has provided for the saints, in the gospel of his Son, provision by the way, food suited to their unsettled condition as pilgrims and strangers in the world, on this side of the narrow stream of death. In all things they are instructed both to be full and to suffer want, on the mount or in the valley, at home or abroad. There seems to be something that cannot be told by those who experience these ups and downs in the journey of life. In adversity they are apt to think there are none who sink so low in darkness and gloom, and experience such hardness of heart and unbelief.

> "For I can read each moving line,
> And nothing moves this heart of mine."

The comforts of the gospel are fled. I hear but the sound, can read but the letter, which brings no comfort to me. I hear in vain, and am as insensible as steel. And when we have told all that we can, we feel that there is much that is untold. It lies too deep for words to express. But there is consciousness that remains with the child of grace in the darkest hour. When the sun withdraws its shining, they still manifest that life within. God has wisely arranged for such souls as these, and sends his messages of love and encouragement, ever to minister to them who are heirs of salvation. These messages sent to them by the Master always find and reach them, be they sunk ever so low, and they realize that they still know the sound and can feed in the ways. And when it is their privilege to lie down in a good pasture, the bow is still in the cloud, the covenant still standeth sure; then they feel like singing, as they move along in the divine life, "Thy statutes have been my song in the house of my pilgrimage." They are now prepared to understand how it is that man is not to live by bread alone, but upon every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

At times they can see the necessity of having tribulation in the world, and that it all tends in one direction, even to give hope. Without these things they would lack important evidence of being the children of God. All the provisions of the gospel are adapted only to such souls as these, even such as are at the ends of the earth, and are heavy laden, fearful, weak, and blind. Consequently the children's bread never fed any but the children, and the secret of the Lord is known only by those who fear him.

But I will pursue the subject no further at present. I have gone on to a considerable length with thoughts as they have occurred to my mind. I do not know that what I have written will be worth

reading, but such as I have give I thee. This leaves us in about our usual state of health. I would be glad to hear again from you.

I remain your unworthy brother in hope,

Wm. Grafton

(The above private letter of Elder William Grafton was published in May, 1880. We feel that those who read it will find their own experience plainly stated; and that their own cases are not just peculiar to themselves.

Elder Grafton served for many years as Moderator of The Baltimore Association, and was pastor of Hartford Church in Maryland, and Rock Springs Church in Pennsylvania, and others until his death April 6, 1909. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

REES STATON JARMON

Brother Rees Staton Jarmon was born December 24, 1894, and passed away, after a lingering illness, on September 27, 1967, at the Delaware Hospital, at the age of 72 years. He was the son of the late Charles H. and Elizabeth Jarmon.

He was married to Clara A. Sterling on August 30, 1916. Surviving, besides his wife, are two daughters, Mrs. Edward C. Pierson of Newark, Delaware, and Mrs. Wm. H. Dawson of Waldwick, N. J., four grandchildren, and two sisters, Mrs. Ralph Hawthorne and Mrs. Edwin Shakespere, both of Newark. Preceding him in death, by one day, was another sister, Mrs. Wm. Holloway of Snow Hill, Md.

Brother Jarmon was a lifelong resident of Newark, Del. and nearby vicinity. He was a retired agent for Nationwide Insurance Company and lived at 14 Kells Avenue, Newark, Del., where he had his office.

He joined Welsh Tract Primitive Baptist Church and was made a Deacon in 1960, which office he filled faithfully, until the time of his death. He was also a Trustee of the Church and always had its interest and welfare at heart. After his retirement, due to ill health, his days were spent on and about the church grounds, always busy, in some worthwhile manner. He loved his church and was a faithful member as long as his health permitted.

A private funeral was held, with only members of the family and close friends present. Elder W. D. Griffin spoke words of comfort and peace to those who were present, for we felt it was our loss, but his eternal gain; and that Brother Rees is now at rest, after so much pain here in this world. He was laid to rest in the Welsh Tract Church Cemetery.

Written by a Sister in hope,
Ruth Lucht

LEE B. MORGAN

Brother Lee B. Morgan departed this life at Ingalls, Arkansas, on December 30, 1967, at the age of 69 years. He was born June 19, 1898.

Brother Morgan is survived by his wife, Sister Josie M. Morgan, three sons, one daughter, three brothers, five sisters, and thirteen grandchildren.

Brother Morgan was a faithful member of Antioch Church near Ingalls, Arkansas. His countenance manifested the fact that he dearly loved the Primitive Baptist doctrine. He is really missed by the Church, and all the brethren deeply mourned the loss of this precious brother.

Brother Morgan had a "peaceable hour" in which to die. He stated that he was feeling sleepy, so he took a heart tablet and lay down to take a nap. He departed this life in his sleep.

The funeral service was conducted by Elder David E. Turner, assisted by Elders John Lee Smith and the writer, and the body was laid to rest at Union Hill Cemetery near Ingalls, Arkansas.

(Elder) W. W. Hudson, Jr.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

We, the church at Pleasant Grove, wish to bow in humble submission to our gracious Heavenly Father in removing by death a beloved Sister, Lila Baker. Sister Baker was a faithful member, and an example of Christian humility.

THEREFORE, Be it resolved that in the passing of this dear sister we feel our loss very keenly, but bow in submission to One who doeth all things well; and

RESOLVED, That we extend to the family our heartfelt sympathy. May God's blessings be upon her husband and son, and each of us who mourn her passing; and that a copy of these Resolutions be spread on the church book, one sent to the family, and one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference in November, 1967.

Brother Leonard Key, Moderator
Robert Walker, Clerk
By Sister Lena Walker

ANNIE CATHERINE (REID) ODELL

Annie Catherine Reid, was born August 16,

1891, to Joseph and Lucy (Murphy) Reid; and passed from this natural life Oct. 2nd, 1967. She was married to William Cephas Odell Oct. 4th, 1908. To this union were born twelve children, nine of which survive: Mrs. Myrtle Tipton, of Hollister, Calif.; Travis Odell, of Big Spring, Texas; Clifton Odell, of Homestead, Florida; Alvin Odell, of Athens, Greece; W. C. Odell of Roy, New Mexico; James Odell of Corpus Christi, Tex.; Paul Odell, of Topeka, Kansas; and Mrs. Betty Fuller of Pecos, Texas. Also surviving are two brothers and four sisters, twenty three grandchildren and thirty great grandchildren.

Sister Odell joined the Primitive Baptist Church, and was baptized by Elder Hamp Richards near Albany, Texas, in 1912. Although her name was not on an Old School Primitive Baptist Church book at her passing, as there was no church near her, she was one of the soundest Old Baptist I, the writer, have ever met. She visited us in July and August before her passing. She was really a mother in Israel. I had many long talks with her while she was here. She believed in an all wise God, who foreknew all things. As it is written, Isa. 14-24, "The Lord of hosts has sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Therefore, if we could separate one thought, we could separate foreknowledge and predestination. She told me she was not afraid to die, and that if it was the LORD'S WILL she would like to go as she did. She passed away with a sudden heart attack.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder W. R. Dale and by our dearly beloved Elder C. U. Landers of Coleman, Texas. Written by her son-in-law.

Austin M. Tipton

SISTER ZEBRA BAAS

In memory of Mrs. Zebra Sawyer Baas, who was born June 23, 1869, and died Aug. 9, 1967. When 29 years of age, Sister Baas joined the Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by her father, Elder Burney Sawyer. The church, located one mile west of Frisco City, was constituted in May, 1884. Elder Burney Sawyer helped to constitute the church.

Sister Baas was married to the late Edger Baas on Feb. 5, 1890. To this union, twelve children were born, five of whom died when young. The late Edger Baas died in 1934.

Sister Baas lived a life of tender and faithful devotion to her church, family, and friends. She was loved by all who knew her. She never faltered in her faith in the doctrine of grace and grace alone, but was faithful to the end. Her favorite verse of scripture was Saint John 14: 1-2.

We would say to the dear bereaved family; weep not, Mother is resting on that beautiful shore where we hope to meet her again, where sad partings will be no more and all sufferings are over. The Lord is good, let us be reconciled to his will. Yea, blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.

Sister Baas is survived by four daughters, Sula, Ola, Issie, and Clarice, and two sons, Arthur and Carl.

Sister Baas had been bedridden since Feb. 14, 1963. Her funeral was conducted by Elder R. M. Griffin of Tuscaloosa, Alabama. The service was held in Shiloh Church, after which her body was laid to rest in the Community Cemetery.

In sorrow, yet in humble hope in Him, by her pastor,

Robert P. Hendrix

ARMINTA EVERETT

It has pleased God to remove from our midst one of our dear sisters, Arminta Everett. She passed away suddenly while visiting her sister in Ayden on February 19, 1967. She was born May 9, 1881, daughter of Benjamin and Chloe Roberson. She was married to Lester Everett in 1904. She joined the church at Spring Green, in March, 1920. She was faithful to her church, and enjoyed the love and fellowship of other churches. She lost her dear companion March 31, 1947.

She was blessed with a long and usual life, quiet and loving, with a smile for everyone. To know her was to love her. She was a wonderful neighbor, always having time to do for others when in need. We will surely miss her but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was held by Elder W. E. Grimes and John Browing, and her body was laid to rest in the Robersonville Cemetery.

Written by a neighbor that loved her.

Elder W. E. Grimes, Moderator
Sister Annie Edmondson, Committee

MRS. MARGARET McCOLL

"O let us now restrain our grief,
Grim death has brought to her relief;
She's free from sorrow, toil and pain,
Our loss is her eternal gain."

The above quotation of a verse appearing in The Signs of the Times, 1846, was quoted to me recently by dear Mother's Pastor and is, we feel, very comforting to us, her family, and all those who loved her for the Truth's sake and as a friend. Since many years ago she often sighed: "O, for the wings of a dove, that I might fly away and be at rest."

We have a good hope that her prayer has been granted and she is, we believe: "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, From which none ever wake to weep."

Mrs. Margaret McColl, formerly Margaret MacIntyre, daughter of John and Katherine MacIntyre of Wallacetown, Ontario, was born January 18, 1876.

On December 30, 1903, she was united in marriage to Malcolm D. McColl, son of Deacon Duncan McColl and grandson of Elder Thomas McColl. The young couple resided on the family farm near Wallacetown. Five children were born to them, named here according to age, as follows: Hugh Fergus, Mrs. Edna M. Turner, Arnold, (who predeceased his Mother in October, 1966), Mrs. Margaret I. Wilton and Mrs. Marion Campbell.

Sister Margaret McColl united with the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada and was baptized by the Pastor, Elder George Ruston, at Poplar Hill, Ontario, on July 2, 1949. She was a faithful member and evidenced much comfort in the association of her brethren. During illnesses, extending over many years, our dear mother was much comforted by the Scripture: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

On Thursday, July 13, 1967, Sister Margaret departed this life at Victoria Hospital, London, Ontario. Her husband had predeceased her on June 21, 1921; and she exemplified great bravery, dignity and courage in bringing up her young family alone, with the feeling that the dear Lord had strengthened her. Beside her four children, Sister McColl is survived by sixteen grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held July 15th at the Cyril J. Beill Funeral Home, Dutton, Ontario, conducted by her dear Pastor, Elder George Ruston of Dutton, ably assisted by Elded Alex McColl of London. Internment was at the McColl Cemetery at Eagle, Ontario.

Mrs. Edna M. Turner

SALLIE PASCHAL HANEY

God saw fit to take from us our dearly beloved mother. She always had a smile and was kind to everyone. It was hard to give her up, but I feel she is in a better place, with no more sadness and suffering. The Lord blessed her and us, to let us keep her for ninety-two years.

She was born October 3, 1875, to Deacon and Elizabeth Cannon Paschal; and married Alben Haney in 1893, who died in 1923. She leaves four sons, Alvis, Robertson, Ambrose and Robert; six daughters, Mrs. Nettie Paschal, Mrs. Jessie Paschal, Mrs. Ollie Brande, Mrs. Arthur Chilton, Mrs. Edna Moore, and Mrs. Clarence Moore, with whom she had made her home since 1935; also thirty-two grandchildren, seventy-one great grandchildren, and twenty-two great great grandchildren; two sisters and one brother.

She was the oldest member of Lindsey Street Primitive Baptist Church, having united in 1932 when Elder O. J. Denny was pastor. She loved her church, pastor and brothers and sisters, and was a faithful member until illness prevented her. As long as she could see, she read her Bible, having read it through three times. Even after she did not know us, she would sing her favorite hymn, "Amazing Grace."

She fell asleep in Jesus October 4, 1967, at the age of 92 years and one day. She requested that her funeral be held at New Hope Church, which was her father's home church. Her pastor, Elder David Spangler, was away, and Elders Haywood Wray and David O'Bryant officiated. Burial was in New Hope Church cemetery. The beautiful florial offerings and the large congregation were evidence of the love for her.

She is "Gone but not forgotten."

Written by a daughter,
Mrs. Clarence Moore

NANCY ELIZABETH SCOTT

Nancy Elizabeth Scott (better known as Betty) was born in Onslow County, N. C., to Jacob Windfield and Indiana Scott on March 5, 1885. She married Henry William Gurganus May 23, 1917, and unto this marriage were born four children, two boys and two girls, who lived to be grown. Their younger son, Jacob William, was drowned July 4, 1960. Her husband joined the Primitive Baptist Church in September, 1963. He died July 4, 1965.

Bettie Scott Gurganus joined the church at North East in August, 1922, and was a faithful and loving member. Many were the days she could not be present on her meeting days, but the church and its members were on her mind and in her heart. She read her Bible and prayed for all. She was an invalid for most of the last three years of her life. While she could not walk and get around, she was an inspiration and a living example of God's love and devotion to everyone who visited her, which were many both young and old. Her walk in this life should be an example to all of us.

She fell asleep in Jesus early the morning of July 12, 1967. O how we do miss her, but we feel our loss is her eternal gain, and pray that the Lord may bless and prepare us to meet her in Heaven where parting will be no more.

She was a life long native of Onslow County. She is survived by two daughters, Mrs. India M. Cook and Mrs. Lena C. Jarman; one son, Henry W. Jr.; eleven grandchildren, two great grandchildren, and one brother, Johnie Bryant Scott.

Lovingly submitted by her daughter.

India M. Cook

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 136 DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1968 NO. 5

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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PLEASE NOTE:

Because the covers for two issues of the Signs had been previously printed, the change in the subscription rate was not noted there. This will be changed in due course. The price is $4.00 one year or two years $7.00 — Editors

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WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST

"What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?" (Matthew 22:42)

This question, although seemingly simple in its composition, is undoubtedly the most inclusive question that is to be found in holy writ. The complete answer to this question would include all of the experiences, revelations and teachings of God's children in all ages. This question was asked by Christ of the Sadducees and Pharisees who were questioning him and trying to entangle him in his talk. The only answer they could give him was that Christ was the son of David. Christ then asked them, if he was the son of David, "How then doth David in spirit call him Lord." And it says that after this they were unable to answer him, nor did they ask him any more questions. The answer they gave was from the letter of the law, and this was all that they knew anything about. They had not been given the spirit of revelation, which is the only way that any will ever know him — or whose son he is.

The people to whom this question was addressed were Jews, the chosen people of God according to the flesh; and to whom were committed the law, the oracles, the temple made with hands, and the service of the tabernacle. These were all to the nation of Israel, and were to separate them from the nations around them by their worshipping God according to His commandments. His commandments were types and shadows of that which should thereafter be revealed; but not the very image of that which was to come. They had the testimonies of the prophets concerning the coming of the Messiah, and were looking for him to come and restore the glory of Israel as in the former day. They, as all natural men, were aware only of the natural, physical realm, and understood nothing of the spiritual kingdom of God. None of those who saw Christ only with the natural eyes and mind, knew him as the only begotten Son of God. These men were interested in the coming of the Messiah and the restoration of the glory of Israel, because they as the rulers of the nation would enjoy more power and prestige. They were interested in it only for a personal, selfish, natural point of view.

In another place in their rebellion against the doctrine that Paul was preaching, they said, "If we let him alone, all men will believe on Him, and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation." They were not concerned with whether the doctrine which Paul preached was true or not, but rather with what the spreading of that doctrine would do to their natural prestige and pride. This has always been true with the man of the flesh: he hates anything that is contrary to his worldly customs, and desires, because he is vain and haughty in his petty imaginations of self-esteem.

The question however is one that all mankind must answer from the very

depths of their hearts, and their answer will be but a manifestation of the spirit that dwells therein. "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." And it is prepared for the time and the place of manifestation, as is pleasing unto Him who prepared it. The people to whom this question was directed said that Christ was the son of David; but Peter, when asked a similar question, replied, "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God." Christ did not tell Peter that he had answered in this manner because of his superior intelligence, but rather, "Blessed art thou Simon Barjona for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." This is the only way that any of His children have ever known him, then or now; and the only way that they are ever enabled to answer this question. Their answer will vary only in accordance with the way in which they have been made to know Him as their saviour, priest and king.

They will be remembering all of the way in which they have been brought — the way in which they have been led into the knowledge of the truth, confessing their sinfullness, guilt, unworthiness and their inability to perform any works of righteousness of themselves. They will acknowledge that they were first made to see their great need of a saviour and high priest, by being made to see themselves lost and helpless sinners: by being made to see themselves as the impotent man by the pool, or the blind man whom Jesus healed, in desperate need of healing, but completely unable to help themthemselves. They had no where to go, and nothing that they could do to improve their miserable condition. Then, as in the instances of these afflicted men, Jesus appeared, and made himself known to them after healing them of their infirmities. Jesus knew them and their need; and when the two were healed they could testify from an experimental standpoint that they knew Jesus.

In like manner His children can testify that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God because he has healed them of their helpless, lost and undone state of despair; and blessed them with the hope and comfort of his Spirit and presence within their very being. Their malady of sin was just as real, and their healing was just as miraculous as the instances where the afflictions of the body were healed. They can now testify of him, and praise him from whom all their blessings flow.

The scriptures state, "But unto you that fear my name shall the Son of righteousness arise with healing in his wings: and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall." This is prophesy concerning Christ and what he would do for his people. They feel that surely this is the healing they have experienced; and feel, when blessed of the Spirit, that they are as the calves of the stall: that they have all the provisions they will ever need, and that nothing could ever cause them to worry or be concerned again with uncertainty. They soon learn however that this is not to be their continual path, and that this precious experience is but the beginning of their teaching; for they will learn again and again that "it is not in man that walks to direct his steps," and that it is only when blessed with the leadership of the Spirit that they believe the truth of the lessons they have been taught. The beauty of it is, however, that the cure has been applied, and that it is everlasting. The symptoms will persist to the distress of the patient, but when healed, hope is applied that all the blessings treasured in Christ are theirs; that their sins and the penalty for them were laid on the Son of righteousness who bore them to the cross.

Each time you hear a brother or sister telling what they believe the Scriptures teach, they are in truth, giving their answer to the question which Jesus asked on this occasion. The Old Testament tells the travels of God's people under the law, and the sacrifices and ordinances were but types and patterns pointing to the coming of the Lord and Saviour: they are point-

ing to the sacrifice he would make for the sins of his people. They were but, "A figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices that could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience: which stood in meats and drinks and divers washings, and carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation." These were but for the flesh, the natural man, and could never make the comers thereunto perfect; and yet these were all that the Sadducees and Pharisees knew. Their knowledge was only of the letter of the law, which contained only a shadow of that which was to be revealed by the Spirit in the gospel dispensation, through the birth, death, and resurrection of the Lord and Saviour.

Peter said, "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." By this we see that the prophets were moved to prophesy by the same spirit (the Spirit of Christ) that works in the hearts of his children today; but we read, "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." The fact that all do not receive the same things does not indicate any inconsistency in the purposes of God, because the Spirit reveals that which each should know. There are many gifts, but the same spirit; and each of God's little ones in all ages, receive only that which Wisdom hath ordained that they should receive: they receive what is good and profitable for them to understand, according to the eternal purposes of Him with whom we have to do. None of God's children can boast of anything they have received, and neither should they condemn another because they do not understand everything exactly the same. It is all according to the measure of the Spirit given them that they have any understanding at all of these things. It is only when blessed of the Spirit that any can say whose Son he is; or give an acceptable answer to, "What think ye of Christ."

If one has to go to historical facts of the Scriptures to learn who Christ is, he cannot give an acceptable answer. If one cannot relate a personal experience of being brought to know Christ, then he is in the same position of the Sadducess and Pharisees, who knew him not. Christ said, "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." And again, "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine." If indeed they are the children of God, they will know him from an experimental knowledge; from the deep personal and vital union they have with him. It is recorded in John 1: 12, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even them that believe on his name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, but of God." This should eliminate all the claims of men that they are accountable for becoming sons of God. In the case of earthly parents, one must be born of them to be their son; and this scripture uses this simple and basic illustration of how his children become sons of God.

The hope of every heaven born soul is that he can testify with John from an experimental standpoint as he recorded in I John 4th chapter. These scriptures contain the truth that is known and understood spiritually by all of His children before they are able to give an acceptable answer, to the question, "What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?" The prayer of God's little ones is that they will be blessed to witness a good confession when called on to give a reason for the hope that is in them: that hope which was set before them, and which is an anchor of

the soul both sure and steadfast, and entereth into that within the veil.

John wrote, "Herein is love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgement: because as he is, so are we in the world." If the love of God, and this hope, dwells in the heart of an individual his salvation is just as certain as though it were already realized in its fullness. As it says, "As he is, so are we in the world." it seems to follow that, As He is, so will we be in heaven. This implies that one is just as sure as the other. Again we read, "As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." Aren't these things comforting to those who feel they can testify from the heart to the truthfulness of these things?

May the God of all grace bless the truth to the comfort and understanding of his little ones as they are led in the ways they know not. May His children ever be found humbly and patiently waiting for that day when they shall see Him as he is, and be satisfied: that day when they shall know as they are known, and will have the complete answer in its fullness, to the question, "What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?"

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell,
2761 Cochee Cove,
Memphis, Tenn. 38118

1814 N. Lesley Avenue
Indianapolis, Indiana 46218

Dear Bro. Spangler,

I trust that the new year will find God's abounding grace sufficient for you and the other editors of the SIGNS, and that God's people will find it in their hearts to hold your hands up in this gracious work. The SIGNS brings tidings of great joy to its readers from all over the nation, and is the best publication still in print maintaining the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

I am enclosing an article on **Unconditional Election and Predestination,** written by Sister Linda Proffitt, a sixteen year old high school girl who came to us from another denomination about three years ago. I believe it is profitable to our young people who often need encouragement in the midst of an atheistic generation.

May God continue to bless you in this work,

I am yours in hope,
Stanley C. Phillips

P. S.: . . . she wrote it as a high school theme, over objections and criticism of her English teacher.

PREDESTINARIANISM

Predestinarianism and Freewillism (Arminianism) are two opposing religious views which can only be dealt with through an individual's heart. People have many different types of religious beliefs. Predestinarianism is the belief of the Primitive Baptists, the Old School Baptists, some Old Regular Baptists, a large precentage of the United Baptists, the Reformed Presbyterians, the Protestant Reformed, and some Christian Reformed, Dutch Reformed, and Netherlands Congregations of the United States, and some independent Sovereign Grace Baptist churches.

Predestinarianasm consists of five major points:

1) Total Depravity
2) Unconditional election and Predestination
3) Limited Atonement, or Particular Redemption.
4) Irresistable Grace or Effectual Calling
5) Perseverance and Preservation of the Saints

These five points lead to the ONE MAIN POINT, that God is SOVEREIGN. God is the center of the universe. "For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are **all things**" (Rom. 11: 36). **All things** are subject to His CONTROL.

God's mercy is bestowed upon WHOMSOEVER HE PLEASES. We can read in Romans 9: 15, "For He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on

whom I WILL have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I WILL have compassion." Likewise, His love is given to those He chooses to give His love to. God doesn't love everybody. "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" (Rom. 9: 13) Since none is deserving of His love He can choose to give His love to whomsoever He pleases, and we have no right to question His choice.

Those whom God loves are His elect and have been predestinated unto salvation. All of the Trinity has a part in this salvation. The Father Elects; the Son died for those the Father elected; and the Holy Spirit regenerates these elect. None of them then can possibly be lost!

TOTAL DEPRAVITY

It may be said and that without any exaggeration, that the doctrine of sin is the key to every other doctrine enshrined in the Bible, and yet it would seem to be the one which is the least examined or taken into account. Men try to ignore the fact that man is corrupted by sin. Every part of man has been totally affected by sin. Knowing this, how could any man feel that he has a part in his salvation?

It is impossible for a man in this condition to do anything spiritually good especially pertaining to his salvation! Man is **wholly** gone from righteousness. "There is **none** righteous; no, **not one**" (Rom. 3:10). How did man come into this condition? Adam, through the fall, made himself and all his posterity DEAD IN SIN. Now that man is dead in sin, how could he possibly have anything to do with any of his salvation? The London Confession says: "Man, by his fall into a state of sin hath wholly lost **all ability of will** to any spiritual good accompanying salvation, so as a natural man, being altogether averse from good, and dead in sin, is not able by his own strength to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto."

To become God's child experimentally, man must be born again of the Spirit. An unregenerated man cannot and will not believe. "Ye believe not" (John 5: 38), "how can ye believe" (John 5:44), "They could not believe" (John 12: 37-39). These verses are speaking of the unregenerate man. But then, how do we believe? We "believe through grace" (Acts 18: 27). Before regeneration man is under the control of the Devil and is blind and deaf to spiritual truth. "Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." (John 8:44)

God's choice to save some men and not others was purely of His own good pleasure. It had nothing to do with how depraved their nature is. God doesn't say "Well, this man hasn't been quite as bad and sinful as this one over here, so I'll save this one and leave the other." The Apostle said: "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." (I Tim. 1: 15) If He can save the "chief" of sinners, then surely His choice had nothing to do with how depraved their nature is!

However, man does have a moral responsibility. But, this moral ability has **nothing** to do with grace and salvation. Man is a moral creature, standing under the moral government of God, is responsible for his moral actions. However, moral rectitude **is not spiritual life**, and a mere acquaintance with, or subscription to, the principle of upright moral conduct **is not the grace of God,** nor can it evidence, nor can it procure, salvation!

Arminians are typical of the type which try to ignore the total depravity of man. Arminians believe that, although human nature was affected by the fall, man has not been left in a state of total spiritual helplessness. According to them, God enables every sinner to repent and believe, but he does so in such a way as not to interfere with man's "freedom". They believe they need the Spirit's "help" in being regenerated, but they do not have to be regenerated before they can believe, for faith is (they say) man's act and precedes the new birth. In other words, faith is the sinner's gift to God, rather

than God's gift to man! They feel that "man is only 'very far gone from original righteousness', not really nor utterly dead in sin, nor destitute of all powers to spiritual good; but is wounded, badly corrupted, and left half dead." But, briefly expressed, the fall of man resulted in the **enslaving of his will;** this was reduced to an **impotency of action** in all that pretained to spiritual realities. It is thus **impossible to accord man a free will!**

UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION AND PREDESTINATION

An eternal covenant was made between the members of the Godhead before the foundation of the world, by which there were chosen certain ones out of the world by the Father and given to the Son, who died for them. (John 6: 35-40; 17: 2). These Elect were predestinated unto salvation and eternal life, not because of acts performed or forseen to be performed, because faith and good works are the **result, not the cause** of God's choice. The choice of those to have eternal life is not our own, but God's (Eph. 1: 4, 5) "I speak not of you all: I know **whom I have chosen"** (John 13: 18), for **"Ye did not choose me,** but I **choose you** and ordained you" (John 15: 16).

Election is **unto** salvation. These elect are not experimentally saved until they are **regenerated** by the **Spirit** and justified by the faith of Christ. "God, in eternity, chose or picked out of mankind whom He would save (by means of Christ's death and the work of the Holy Spirit), for no other reason than **his own wise, just and gracious purpose."** This points, also, to what we have stated before: that God's choice was of **His own good pleasure.**

Those who are not chosen unto salvation are left to their own evil devices and choices, and fitted unto destruction. The creature's jurisdiction is not as far as to question the Creator. In the tenth chapter of John, Christ said: "I lay down My life for My sheep." He also said to the Pharisees: "Ye are **not of my sheep."** If He died for His sheep and the Pharisees were not His sheep, then he didn't die for all men. There are some men who "die in their sins" (John 8: 21), and their "sin remaineth" (John 9: 41).

This the Arminians disagree with. They believe that Christ's death was for all mankind. Their election is based upon what man would do. The whole Arminian world says the sinner must do something, must turn from sin, must believe, must love God, and many other things, **then** God will put away or forgive their sins. Arminians believe that faith was not given to them by God, but was solely upon man's will. The ultimate cause of salvation, according to them, was not God's choice of man, but man's choice of God. "God simply predestinated and elected those whom he foresaw would be holy and believe the Gospel, but did not predestinate either the holiness or the belief, these being contingent upon the will of the creature" according to Arminians.

This we see **cannot** be true for we have read before: **"Ye did not choose me, but I chose you"** (John 15: 16; Eph. 1: 4, 5). The doctrine of predestination did not shut the gates of heaven, it opened them; neither does it or has it shut one soul out from eternal glory who **longed** to enter therein by the way of God's own appointing.

LIMITED ATONEMENT

Adam and Jesus (last Adam) both stood in a covenant relationship to their people. Adam as the head of the race brought spiritual death. Christ as the Head of the elect came to redeem them. Those that were chosen by the Father and given to the Son by the covenant made before the foundation of the world, had to be redeemed in order to be saved.

To secure this redemption Christ came and took human nature on Himself to identify Himself with His people and to act as their legal representative. Christ's redeeming work did indeed render full satisfaction for certain sinners (those predestinated unto salvation) and thus secured salvation for these

individuals, and for none else. This includes bringing them to a right relationship with God, including the gifts of faith and repentance. Christ kept God's law and worked out a perfect righteousness which is imputed to them the moment they are brought to faith in Him by the Holy Spirit. Then they are freed from all guilt and condemnation experimentally and are constituted righteous before God. This is justification. Justification makes the condemned as though they had never offended. (Rom. 8: 33, and Gal. 2: 16)

Arminians believe that Christ's redeeming work was to save all sinners, but did not secure salvation for anyone. Christ's redemption only becomes effective when man chooses to accept it. They defend their error with John 3: 16; John 1: 29, and I John 2: 2.

But, where it speaks of "all" or "world" it does not mean that He died for all men without exception. It simply means that He died for all manner of men, for Jews and Gentiles alike. (All is an **indefinite** pronoun). He didn't die for one certain type of people (pertaining to race, color, or creed). Whether a man be a Jew, or Gentile, or what ever, if God chose him before the foundation of the world unto salvation, he is saved by virtue of Christ's death on the cross.

IRRESISTABLE GRACE

Before the preached word can enter the darkened human heart, it must be worked upon by the Spirit. It is the same as a blind man who cannot see unless his eyes are opened. The Holy Spirit brings a renewing work by which the benefits of Christ's death and obedience are applied to the elect. He **never** fails to bring to salvation those whom He personally calls to Christ. The Holy Spirit gives an inward call. He performs a work of grace in a sinner. He brings him to faith in Christ and creates a **new heart** and gives repentance. Then the sinner willingly comes to Christ. Through this special inward **revelation** given by the Spirit, God makes known to His chosen ones the secrets of His kingdom. (Matt. 11: 25-27, Luke 10: 21; Luke 8:10) The Holy Spirit is in no way dependent upon man for His success! He is the "author" of the second birth and His Instrument is the Eternal Word of God, Jesus Christ.

Faith and repentance are divine gifts. They are wrought in the soul through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. This is all of grace and is accomplished solely through the **almighty power of God.** "Faith endures the disappointments, the hardships and the heartaches of life, by recognizing that **all comes** from the hand of Him who is too wise to err and too loving to be unkind." Without God Himself there will be no rest for the heart or peace of mind. Grace precedes man's seeking after salvation, for faith and repentance are brought through the grace of God.

Arminians believe that the Spirit does all he can to bring every sinner to salvation, but since man is "free" he can resist the Spirit's call. According to them, He can only draw those who allow Him to have His way with them. But, the Holy Spirit renews the will with fresh thoughts and desires and makes him "willing in the day of His power." (Psa. 110: 5) He does not need man's help in preparing God's elect for salvation!

PERSEVERANCE AND PRESERVATION OF THE SAINTS

The doctrine of perseverance of the saints does not maintain that all who "profess" the Christian faith are certain of heaven. They are "saints" — those who are set apart by the Spirit — who "persevere" to the end. They are "believers" — those who are given true living faith in Christ — who are secure and safe in Him. Men can profess to the Christian faith but that does not mean that they are saved. God's elect are given eternal life and are secured by His power through faith and nothing can separate them from Him. His people are IN Christ. To be in Christ, which is the portion of all who are saved, is to partake of all that Christ has done, all that He

is, and all that He will ever be. It is to have died in His death, to have been buried in His burial, to have been raised in His resurrection, to have ascended in His ascension, and to be seated now with Him (because he is IN Him) in glory. Such is the believer's position in Christ Jesus.

If He has begun a good work in a sinners heart, **He will perform it until the day of Christ Jesus.** (Phil. 1: 6) He has given his elect eternal life and they SHALL NEVER perish. Christ spoke: "And I give unto them eternal life; and **they shall never perish,** neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." (John 10: 28)

Most Arminians believe that those who believe are saved, but they can lose their salvation by failing to keep up their faith. Those that fall can be eternally lost. But, if a man falls he was not "saved" to begin with. That man was only professing the Christian faith. Men fall from great profession, but never fall from grace, for grace REIGNS unto eternal life by Jesus Christ. Once a man is "saved" (truly saved) he can never fall from that grace. Man is positively safe and secure IN Christ if he is one of God's elect. How can anything bring more contentment to a sinner than this?

CONCLUSION

Predestinarians believe in an all powerful **sovereign God.** He is the center of the universe. He has elected a people of His own sovereign will; sent His Son to die for them; and the Holy Spirit lives within them **performing every good work in them.** Salvation is secure for these and these only.

Freewillers (Arminians) profess a weak God. If a man can choose God, as they say, then the man is more powerful than God, and that is impossible! What security does a sinner have if he does not have a God who can secure his salvation? If man must depend on himself for his salvation he would be destined for Hell, because man is corrupted by sin and can do no spiritual good!

Predestinarianism gives a wretched sinner a hope of salvation. Man has security in knowing that once he is saved he can never fall. A good work which is begun in him will be performed until the day of Christ. We do not have to depend on man to do his own "good works", for we know there would be no good works if it were not for the grace of God.

But, what a man believes, whether it be predestinarianism or Arminianism, must be worked into a man's heart either by nature or by grace. That is the reason no one can tell someone what to believe. What a man believes is sunk deep into his heart, and no one can tear it out. If it is not in his heart it really isn't worth anything anyway. That is the way it is in Christ. Christ is either in the sinner's heart, or He is not. He must be in the sinner's heart for him to have eternal life.

Linda Proffitt
3540 N Grant Ave,
Indianapolis, Ind. 46218

NEW VALLEY OLD SCHOOL
BAPTIST CHURCH
LOUDOUN COUNTY, VA.

According to Semple's and other Histories, New Valley Church had its beginning when Elder John Thomas and several emigrants from Great Valley Baptist Church, in Bucks County, Pa., came to Loudoun County in July, 1767, and with some local residents founded the church. Elder Thomas was their pastor for a number of years, then went back to Bucks County, where he died in 1791. The church was represented in the Ketoctin Association during those years.

Their meetings were held in the open until they erected a temporary building in 1771 on land given and bequeathed by William Jones: "I give and bequeath a piece of land containing one and one-half acres whereon the Baptist Meeting House is built, joining this plantation, to Joseph (evidently same as John) Thomas, Minister, and William

Lewis and Thomas George, Elders of said meeting, to them and their successors or ministers and Elders of said congregation forever."

The present stone meeting house was erected about ten years before the Civil War.

Formal organization of the church was on July 21, 1792, with the following signing the Articles: Thomas George, Mary Steers, Elenor Steers, Enoch Thomas, Bethany Sanders, Tobias Sanders, John Oxley, Catrin Sheperd, John Lewis, James Hixson, Jane Warner and Peter Davis; at which time Elder William Thrift was called as pastor, and served until 1806.

The following have been the pastors since Elder Thrift: Elder Wm. Gilmore, 1806 to 1833; Elder Wm. Marvin, 1833 to 1854; Elder Joseph Furr, 1854 to 1888; Elder E. V. White, 1888 to 1907; Elder H. H. Lefferts, 1910 to 1949; Elder J. D. Wood, 1950 to (at present).

In the organization in 1792 the church stated that the Philadelphia Confession of Faith of 1742 expressed what they believed; and after listing several particulars of the Articles and adopting Rules of Discipline, they concluded as follows:

"It is unanimously agreed upon by the church that if any member or members shall be found erroneous or disorderly in any of these particulars, they or any of them shall be liable to censure, and in case of obstinate continuance, entirely excluded from our communion. It is also agreed that none are to be admitted into the church hereafter but such as are willing and do sign this Covenant, that all disputes may as far as possible be prevented, and peace, concord and unity maintained."

That they adhered to their Covenant is shown by accounts of disciplinary actions which were sometimes necessary. The church maintains the same doctrines and rules today.

New Valley Church is often referred to as "Beebe Baptists" because they stood firm on the old tenets at the separation among the Baptists which occurred at Black Rock Church, Baltimore County, Maryland, (and in other localities during the same period,) in which Elder Gilbert Beebe had an active part in preparing the "Black Rock Address." New Valley Church is "Old School" as distinguished from "New School or Missionary Baptists." New Valley Church is also referred to as Beebe Baptists, distinguishing them from the followers of Elder Clark in a division of 1853.

In October, 1836, several churches which had "withdrawn from the Columbia Association on account of their connection with the New School party, and to do away with the assumed authority sometimes exercised over the churches of their membership by constituted associations," were organized as The Virginia Corresponding Meeting at a meeting held at the Occoquan Meeting House, Prince William County, Va. The churches yet remaining in the Corresponding Meeting are, New Valley, Mt. Zion (on Rte. 50 near Gilbert's Corner), and Frying Pan (in Fairfax County between Herndon and Chantilly). They convene each year in October at the Mt. Zion Meeting House for a two-day meeting.

The present trustees of New Valley are Leslie D. Duke, Silas D. Phillips, and Ray Hawling; and Leslie D. Duke is their deacon.

Meetings are held at New Valley Church the third Sunday in each month.

John D. Wood — February, 1968

(The above was prepared at the request of a local newspaper. We thought that it would be interesting to our readers. — J. D. W.)

PRECIOUS TRUTH TO HIM

A225 Emerson St.,
Winona, Miss. 38967

Dear Brethren:

Enclosed is my little mite to be used as you see fit. I receive the good paper each month, and it truly is good news from a far country. Often one article is

worth more than a year's subscription.

In my humble judgment both the Editorial Staff and the able contributors are upheld by the blessed sovereignty of God. God's humble poor are taught in the school of His love and grace, and they worship God in spirit and have no confidence in the flesh. I have been made to love the divine principles of truth since my earliest days, and as I am now traveling towards the sunset of this life, salvation by grace is still a precious truth to me. I hope to write my experience or call from the darkness of nature, to the light of God's love and grace sometime in the future.

God speed to you and all of like precious faith. Pray for me when at a throne of grace.

Yours in gospel bonds,
Louis Stewart

AN ALL WISE GOD

Island City, Oregon 97851

C. S Parsons
Wheelersburg, Ohio

Dear Brother;

Like you I believe in an All Wise, All Powerful God who knew the end from the beginning; and in whom all things move and have their being. And by this I mean all things; Every word that is spoken; every action that is done, by man or beast is ordained, by Him, and for His purpose. Otherwise, how could anything come to pass. If we were just wandering around, speaking, writing, acting, with just an overall plan set up, (which God hoped that we would follow) to bring things to the end that He had destined them to go, just how many of us would be at the time and place, to bring those things to pass?

Christ was prophesied of thousands of years before he was ever born. He came here in that manner; He fulfilled the work that was given Him to do, at the time and place it had been told He would do it. Judas did the job that he was created to do. Christ knew when he would do it just as he knew that Peter would deny him, three times, before the cock crowed. Just as He knew when "The Son of Man" would be offered up. He moved about, fearlessly, dodging the things that seemed so positive to the others with Him, until the time came, and then submitted Himself to the officials to finish the prophecies. The soldiers were doing God's work when they did not break any of His bones. He was placed in the tomb, every security that man could contrive, was made to see that He did not arise. Yet all man's precautions were for naught. God's will was done, just as Christ and the Prophets had said it would be.

A few days ago while talking to a young man, with several years of "seminary" training and several years of preaching experience, the part of Judas came up. I asked what he thought of that. His answer was; "It was prophesied that someone would do that thing. If Judas had not done it, then someone else would have." Suppose that Judas had refused, and that "someone" this man spoke of, had also failed to show up, it would have changed the entire world. God would have had to replan all of it over just because these men failed to do the job, "For which they were created."

I can't believe that "some things are predestinated" and some are in the power of man. You hear men over the radio and television every day begging sinners to come and accept Christ, as their personal Saviour. These men "have a zeal of God but not according to knowledge. They go about to establish their own righteousness, by the works of the Law." This young man mentioned above, tried to prove that there had never been "a man converted who had not had the Gospel preached to him by another man." He took Paul's conversion and said; "That Paul had heard Stephen preach, and was converted by that hearing, but that it did not take effect until on the way to Damascus."

I do not expect to convert anyone. I do not expect anyone to believe what I tell, except those who are God's people. The others won't hear;(and if they did

hear, would not know what I was speaking of). No person could convince that young man that all of his words were "sounding brass and tinkling cymbals, nor that he was trying to encompass sea and land, to make one proselyte, and when he is made, he will be twofold more the child of hell than yourselves." He is a man trained in the ways of man's thoughts. He may be "called" (and I know that he is doing the work that he was sent here to do). The Word tells of those false teachers. They are put here, and have a work to do. But it is not God's work (even tho it is to bring about the things, that are God's work).

Pharoah was a wicked man. And his heart was hardened so that he would do the things, that were necessary to make God's people a willing people, in the day of his power. The Israelites went down to Egypt because of God's famine in their own country. Joseph had been sent down there, ahead of that time to prepare a place for them. (Even by the works of his brothers who wished to get rid of him). It was foretold that they would be there 430 years, and Joseph asked that they bring his bones out with them when they left. Suppose that the ones who were to bring those bones had forgotten them. The Bible tells us that they brought them. If it had been left to men how many of us could make provisions for our bones years from now, and know that it would be carried out?

You will notice that I have used very little scripture in proving my points. I write and speak, with the light that is given to me. I was not trained of men to do this. If I do any good thing, I do not take the credit. It is God working me, both the Will and the Do. My work shall stand or fall as my light is given, or withheld. I was sent here for a purpose; I will do that purpose; my life has been one endless wandering, just as the Israelites wandered in the desert for 40 years before they were shown the promised land. When my light is given I speak, and believe that my words are for the glory of God according to His purpose. If they are so received by His people, I have fulfilled my mission.

Charles W. Bond

BUT NO DOUBT THE LORD HAS MANY OF HIS REDEEMED THERE

Biloxi, Miss. 39532
Rt. 3, Box 235C,

Dear Editors:

How wonderful it is to be able to receive the **Signs of the Times.** I am a S/sgt in the U. S. Air Force, and have only been stationed one place during my almost fifteen years in the service, where I was able to attend an Old School Baptist church.

While home on leave in Southern Arkansas, I would read some of the **Signs of the Times** a good neighbor had let my parents have. Last November I decided to subscribe, and words cannot express the joy I've gotten from the two issues I have received so far. I enjoyed the February issue most I guess because one article was written by a dear friend, Mrs. Charlie Harrod. And one article was written by my Dad's dear friend, Elder W. W. Hudson, Jr., and I feel he is my dear friend also. Dad mentioned him very often during our conversations. He helped conduct Dad's funeral, who was Lee Morgan of Ingalls, Ark., and died December 30, 1967. Mrs. Charlie Harrod has been a close friend of my family since my mother and dad's early days.

I would like to make a suggestion you might want to pass on to other readers of the **Signs of the Times.** When you finish reading your copy, pass it on to your neighbor, or to anyone you think might like to read it. Please, if you know of a boy in uniform who would like to have it, send him your copy when you have finished with it: especially if he is over seas.

I have been in the Far East, and in Europe, and found no Old School Baptist Churches. I'm sure there are none in Vietnam.

Jerry Morgan

(The above suggestion reminds us of the following excerpt from a communication of Sister Gilbert Lee, of Huntland, Tenn.:

"I only wish that in every family of Baptists who love the truth and desire to receive the paper, there would be perhaps one child who would keep the paper coming for his aged parents. Most children give their parents a little gift at Christmas, and what would be more appropriate than the **Signs of the Times** they would so appreciate. I no longer have my parents, but I speak from the heart."

We think both are excellent suggestions. Have you thought about it? — J. D. W.)

OFTEN FEEL ALONE

Glenwood, Ark. 71943

Dear Brethren Editors:

As our subscription to the dear old Signs of the Times will soon expire, we enclose money to renew for two more years. We do not want to miss a single copy. It has been such a help and comfort to us all these years; and now that we are old and disabled, we feel to need it more than ever. We are unable to travel long distances to hear and be with those we love of like precious faith; and we have no one near who "speaks our language" with pure accent.

We feel sometimes that "we alone are left and they seek our lives." However, our dear Lord has seen fit to sustain our little hope, causing us to rejoice in the truth of Jesus Christ: taking the things of mine and show them unto you, as He promised the Comforter or Holy Ghost should do, when he left this low ground and went back to the Father on high, saying, "Father, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." Yes, finished it — not leaving an important part for us to do; for, "Him only will I accept."

May the God of grace and mercy be with the editors of the **Signs**, and with the writers and all those who know the joyful sound.

In hope of eternal life,
Y. C. and Ethel Norris

Danville, Virginia **May, 1968**

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EDITORIAL

We have a request, *"For some information on foreign missionaries. I don't think your doctrine approves of it, but I would like to learn why. Also whether you think Christians are scattered among other churches."*

We are glad to give our views on the above requests. In the first place, we are, of course, in full accord with the gospel being preached by the Lord's servants whenever the Spirit directs them. This means that they will preach the unadulterated gospel of the grace of God, and contend only for what Jesus taught and commanded his people to observe; which things were set in order by his Apostles. Jesus did not authorize them, or anyone else, to draw up new and additional doctrines, and teach them in His name. So those who are called and qualified of the Spirit of God, will contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints; and those who know the truth will present the same things in their conversations.

We hold that the doctrine of God our Saviour as taught by him, is the only doctrine that is authorized to be preached in the name of Jesus; and that it alone is Christian doctrine. And we ask, What else could possibly be the doctrine of God our Saviour? Wherever a man preaches this doctrine, we bid him godspeed.

Our inquirer has been hearing that Primitive or Old School Baptists are against missionarism. She has heard rightly — as it is commonly practiced. We have no objection to a man on a mission, if the Lord has sent him, for then we know he will present the truth. But we cannot but oppose one who says he is on such a mission, when he presents contrary doctrines. We are concerned and insist that the truth as it is in Jesus must be maintained if it is to be called Christian doctrine.

It is the doctrine usually presented by missionaries that we oppose.

You will never hear a genuine Primitive or Old School Baptist pervert the gospel by saying that any man can be saved by the mere assent of his mind to accept Jesus as his Saviour. You will never hear this, because he knows that the Scriptures teach otherwise. He knows that New Testament writers everyone teach that there must first be a work wrought in the sinner by the quickening of the Spirit and the bringing to the New Birth, or spiritual birth, in being born of God. Otherwise there is no evidence that the person is a subject of grace. This is the beginning of the good work which will be performed until the day of Jesus Christ.

We hold that the truth should be preached on every occassion, and that the Spirit that enables the truth to be preached, makes the application of it to the one who receives it. To stir up the animal fear in the natural man, is not conducive to a new birth. No one has ever been "converted" by hearing "hellfire and damnation" preached; neither is insisting that one ought to believe and accept the Lord as his Saviour, able to unfold to him his need of grace: which is requisite in the order of God's dealings with his own people.

We hold with the Scriptures, that it is the work of God that one believes the truth; that God chose each of his children in his Son before the foundation of the world, (and that, of course, not according to their works;) that he sent his Son into the world to redeem them; that he sends his Spirit unto them to reveal that they are dead in trespasses and sins, and to bring them to a spiritual birth, wherein they see the Kingdom of God, and rejoice in their redemption.

This is God's way according to the Scriptures; and there should be no attempt to teach it differently, and continue to call it the doctrine of God our Saviour.

All the so-called revivals and evangelistic campaigns, whether domestic or foreign, that we know anything about, teach the freedom of the will of men to **involve themselves** in the spirituality of the kingdom of God. This is a travesty on the important and serious truth which Jesus taught of the will and purpose of God. It is pitiful as well as pitiless because it is contrary to the doctrine of the kingdom they profess to promote, and because it lulls men into a false feeling of security in which they are led to believe themselves members of the church of Jesus Christ, — and all of it by nothing more than the exercising of their natural faculties.

These things being common, we cannot but oppose such practices. The source of such enterprises and such teachings we consider to be of men and not of God. We are sure that God does not require such at the hands of men, for they cannot expand his kingdom. The Lord knows them that are his, and makes sufficient and proper provision for bringing each and every one of his own into the knowledge of the truth, and consequently into his church, according as he chose them in his Son before the world began. Whatever his will and way is, he uses it effectively, — it being all under the divine power of the Spirit. So, all that the Father gave the Son shall come unto him, and not one can come except the Father draws him, as Jesus said.

When Jesus commanded his disciples to go into all the world and teach all nations, for all power was given unto him in heaven and earth, there is every evidence that they went; and when He has need of one today to preach the truth in any part of the world, he raises up a disciple there, or sends one. And most wonderful of all is that He does not have to depend upon men or their preaching, to bring one of his into the knowledge of the truth and seal him with the holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of the inheritance until the redemption of the possession which Jesus has purchased, because it was the Father's covenant which provided that he would put his laws in their minds and write them in their hearts; and would be unto them a God and they should be unto him a people; and that men should not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying know the Lord: for all should know him, from the least to the greatest. For he would be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities he would remember no more.

With all these things it must be remembered that "when Jesus ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men . . . And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some evangelists and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." And there is no indication that he has ever failed to give gifts unto his church as needed.

We hold therefore that none of his people are lost because of the lack of the "zealous activities" of men; or any gained by such activities.

Briefly the above are some of the reasons that missions as such are not approved by "our doctrine."

Now, as to whether we believe there are Christians scattered among other churches. There is every evidence that there are many, for God often brings them out by opening the eyes of their understanding so that they know and love the truth. We have never heard it intimated among our people that Old Baptists only are the children of God. They know that God has a people in every nation, kindred, tongue, and people; and they know that all of his people are taught the same thing by the Spirit wherever they are: that salvation is by the grace of God only. No doubt

there are multitudes in other organizations who know the truth, who live there all their lives, usually not satisfied, but for some reason in the providence of God are never brought out. We are glad that God knows them that are his.

And again, we doubt not but there are many who are never in any organization, yet are subjects of God's grace. Any person who has the witness within that Jesus is the Christ, is a child of God: for it is evident that the grace of God does not appear to anyone except in a saving sense. Whether they be old men or young men, old women or young women, or servants, they are taught that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. (2nd chapt. Titus)

None of these ever know the peace, joy and comfort there is, unless he is blessed to follow the desire of his heart, and go home to his friends and tell how great things the Lord has done for him; and follow his Saviour and brethren in baptism. These know what great pleasure there is in talking with each other about the love and grace that saved sinners like themselves.

It should be the concern of every professing Christian to follow the admonition of the Apostle John, to "believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." (I John 4:1)

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you. Greet one another with an holy kiss. All the saints salute you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." (2 Cor. 13:11, 14)

The hour of my departure draws nigh. I dare not court the delusion that my sun of life is as high in the heavens as it one time was. I am reasonably certain that I never address a congregation that I will address again in its entirety. This does not mean that I have a premonition of soon passing away, but it does mean that I know that any time is now my time for leaving this stage of action that I have been blessed to occupy so long.

I have fought a good fight. I have not fought well, but the fight has been, and still is, a good fight. I have fought according to the grace given me; I have been in battle, as I have been in peace, blessed to say with Job, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord," and I am in harmony and unity with the apostle Paul in saying, That I am what I am by the grace of God. I have praised God in the victory given along the way; I have endeavored to place my hand over my mouth lest I murmur in the day of adversity.

I do not claim to have always preached the gospel. I have misapplied and misinterpreted scriptures, and I doubt any man's being led of the Spirit when he lays such to that Spirit. I do not claim that all I say in the pulpit is of the Lord. I go mourning a lot of the time over my foolish and unwise remarks while addressing God's children. As I take a retrospective review of my ministry, there is much to be regretted, I have said things from the pulpit and on the printed page that was not edifying to the saints nor becoming in me a minister of the gospel. However, I want it understood that the general principles that I have contended for from the pulpit and the religious periodicals over the world are not being recanted in this (either to me the writer or you the reader) my last message to you. I do not have any desire nor intention to change a single doctrine that I have contended for over these many years. No one realizes as I do, my hateful disposition, but some of the things that I have been hated for, have been

the steadfastness of Israel's God; my contention for those things have not been associated with His steadfastness but with my stubbornness and contentiousness. For all that run and read, let it be noted in passing that soon my voice will be heard no more, and my pen will have been laid away, but he that was praised and worshipped in a small way by that feeble voice and was communicated to the saints as being wisdom and power personified, will continue to rule in heaven and in earth.

"Finally, brethren, farewell." While this is Paul's farewell letter to the church at Corinth, and while this could well be my last effort in writing to you and you, to me this is not the primary reason for the use of these words. I am well aware that we must all bid each other adieu sometime; it is desirable that our love for each other be mutual as it was with Paul and his brethren (Acts 20), but the whole context shows that this able minister is preaching the gospel of God's grace right up to and including the end. It will not change the tenor of all his writing to say, Brethren, fare ye well.

The apostle often admonished his brethren about continuing in the things of God. I remember many years ago of an able minister lovingly admonishing his brethren to a godly walk and other things such as are in this text. Another minister that was wise above what is written, made fun of the brother and called him a conditionalist. Such as this I do not have any patience with. Oftttimes it is also better for me to write, lest I also use sharpness (see verse 10). He had previously warned them of what was to come, and is now giving them directions as to what and how to continue in these things. There is not any fare that could be better than to be perfect, to be of good comfort, to be of one mind, to live in peace, and to have the God of this love and peace to dwell in our midst. What a rich legacy is being enjoined upon them. How precious is the fellowship between pastor and congregation. Heaven has not granted us yet to look beyond this life and see the heavenly courts of glory as they radiate the happy relationship that exists between the Shepherd and the sheep, but God has given us to see a precious picture of it in the union between the undershepherd and the little lambs. I doubt that a man who knows that there is nothing good in his flesh, would ever take credit for walking in the light; that he would ever say that he had done good or that he could ever do good, and yet I know that Paul would have died for his brethren. It is not what I believe; that is valueless; what does matter is, what do the scriptures teach? They teach that Paul (and all the God-called ministers today) would gladly sacrifice their life for their brethren. (I suggest that you read his farewell to the brethren at Ephesus, and if it does not arouse in you fond memories of your faithful pastors, it would seem that the love of the brethren does not dwell in your heart).

But listen at that voice out yonder. It is arguing; it is finding fault; it is saying, Paul knew better than to write like that. No man can be perfect, no man can be of good comfort, no man can live in peace, no church can all live in unity. Paul has not said that either. You are arguing with a will-o'-the-wisp, looking for something to cast your shortcomings on. We are living in a state of the church when it is dangerous to stress that God's children can do things through the strengthening of Christ, but it is popular to preach that they can not do anything without Christ. Too many times this is not in meekness nor in graceful reconciliation to Him, but a direct and intended effort to saddle off on Him our lack.

There is not a faring well where we are left in a former legal state to procure our blessings by works of legalism. That is a legal system pure and simple, and is as dishonoring to God as it is to lay the blame on him for our failure. To all voices, past, present and to come; to all far and near, whether in the Old Baptist church or out of it, that give heed to such a fare as being to the Corinthians, let it be said, This is a dan-

gerous doctrine and will ultimately end in drinking a **ground calf.** There is not any comfort to be had outside the comforting influence of the Holy Ghost; there is not any unity save that which is between the Father and the Son and the church (bride), and she does not produce it, but it is an in-wrought work of the Spirit; there is not any peace save that which Christ made and bestowed on his people. Ah, yes, let us preach Him, dear brethren, as the way, the truth and the life; let us, as moved by the movement that is in Christ, be determined to preach him crucified. But let us not be distracted by these that keep back part of the price, as did Ananias and Sapphira. There are four things that a son must buy (Pro. 23: 23), and he must never sell them. Money answereth all things (Eccl. 10: 19), and the kingdom of heaven has a medium of exchange as does all kingdoms. Paul could not count off part of his legal gifts and qualities; Jonah could not short pay the Lord while in the belly of hell;Ananias and Sapphira could not keep back part of the price, nor can we unless the Lord changes his way of dealing with those that would attempt to rob him. In buying the truth we get the truth. We may buy in nature and be tricked; and we might claim to be spiritual and try to trick the Lord, but no, not that, my God not that. We pay, we buy, and we continue in the thing bought, which is a fabric of truth that does not have any frayed selvages, mispricks, dropped stitches, mismatched woof or warp. It is the whole truth without a mixture of lies. There was not any unsoundness in what Job and Jeremiah and Jonah and Peter preached **after** they bought the truth, but there was not any soundness in what they intended to palm off on the saints **before** they bought the truth.

"Greet one another with an holy kiss." If this means what I am told that it means, then each time that it is obeyed another charge of Paul is disobeyed. If it means that we are to kiss each other every time that we come together, it also means that we have the liberty to indulge in doing things that appear to be evil. If I kiss every one that I meet, I can hear the cries that would arise because of my indiscretion and the appearance of evil in my actions. A kiss can be holy; but kisses that discriminate between the saints is not holy. I am arraigned before a tribunal of elders because that I do not beat around the bush about this inflammatory practice, while they practice widespread indiscrimination in greeting the saints — some are greeted that way, some are given a handshake.

There is not a scene on earth that compares favorably with God's people coming together and greeting one another. That many use different ways of expressing their love, is granted, and that it is not intended to throw reflections on any individual when I call in question this view of the matter. But there must be harmony in any view that we take; it can not conflict with another commandment. To kiss every one that comes in our midst, is to make an appearance of evil. Until some scriptural way is found to remove this difficulty, God willing, I will not adopt this view nor practice it.

Now **who** do we greet the brethren in? If I am not mistaken, dear brethren, we greet one another in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now is that true? If so, this is indeed a holy kiss greeting. "Righteousness and peace have kissed each other" and there is not a theme on earth like unto this. If there is any other theme, or any other name, or any other greeting for the people of God I do not know it. My hope for this life, my only hope in the hour and ordeal of death, my only hope in bringing poor sinners home to glory, is in Jesus and his righteousness and in peace that he gives us here and hereafter.

"All the saints salute you." Not like military men salute one another, for their salute is predicated upon what each of them are, but the saints salute one another for what they are in Christ. We salute or bless each other in the merits of Christ.

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,

and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." This is enough to bid one farewell in, and this is enough fare for one and all to fare well in. God is Triune and these three terms could well be said to be attributes of God. We can not have one without having the others. If grace was given us in Christ to the salvation of us in time, and we had not had the eternal love of God bestowed upon us in eternity, in no manner of reasoning could we find consistency and harmony in the two. It has been said that God is equal in all his ways. (Ezek. 18:29) If he is, then where the love of God is, the grace of Jesus Christ is there; if these two are there, then the communion of the Holy Ghost is there.

As we go back in retrospect for a place to prop our hand while holding the other hand as a shield from the glaring and deceitful light of Satan, let us, by the grace of God, light upon the promise, embrace it as ours, confess that without it we would be forever lost. As we buy this truth without money and without price (that is, acceptable money and an acceptable price), giving up all earthly possessions, and natural talents, all family ties and training, we will, as did our writer, in each letter, salute the brethren in that grace and love and and peace that comes from God; and then commends them to the grace of God, and prays for them over and over that they be blessed with that grace. God called the apostle by grace. The gift of calling was as certain as was the treasuring of that grace in Christ. When men talk about works (of the creature) they evidently are not acquainted with the grace of Jesus Christ. It is saving grace. I have asked kindly for one scripture that talks about a grace that fails or that does not save. I have had gainsayers come with their miserable comforting (Job 16: 2), and I have replied in common by challenging them for one instance wherein God gave us a conditional grace. I have had my name castigated, and, but for this saving grace, thrown out of Israel's camp, because I have challenged such ungodly doctrines, but none of it has moved me; and as of now, I will continue to kindly ask the living and challenge the dead (in sin) for one instance of conditional grace.

If there is one blessing that Paul received by his works then why ask these people at Corinth, "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" If there was one thing in Paul's relationship with the life of Christ that was not by grace, why did he say, What I am it is by the grace of God. Why did he not elucidate on his statement? Why did he not remove the superfluity from his language, or, if not any, why did he not add an exception to his reason for being what he was in the kingdom of heaven. I am certain that there is not a conditional grace in the Lord Jesus Christ. If there was, then grace is not the bestowal of blessings on an unmerited creature. We must have a rerun about the definition of grace. We must rewrite our dictionaries, we must change the meaning of many scriptural words, we must change our preaching about saving grace and preach about saving works. This we will never do.

I always desire to bid each congregation adieu with this prayer of Paul. I always desire to commend my readers to the grace of God that builds up (Acts 20: 32). Whatever Paul said about the grace of Jesus Christ I desire to say it. Whatever was said about this saving grace was equally said about the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost. There is not a condition in the work of either. The love of God is stronger than all the motions and emotions of Satan and all his cohorts; the communion of the Holy Ghost is not a conditional communion. It does not wait for the co-operation of the communion of Satan. If this could be proved, then at that time, I would have nothing to bid you and you farewell in this life as we are separated from each other here, nor would I have anything to preach to you about your fare here — your faring well.

As I close this editorial, I close it without fear that such will ever be

the case. It was grace that brought my roving feet to tread this high and heavenly road; my brethren have been along this way. It was by grace that Noah tread this; read Gen. 6:8; it was by grace that Moses and the children of Israel saw and felt and enjoyed the favors of God (Ex. 33); it was by grace that Ruth enjoyed the field and the harvest of Boaz (Ruth); it was by grace that Esther found favor in the eyes of the king (Es. 2: 17); it was by grace that the apostle was called, qualified, sent forth, kept and saved in heaven, and it is in the pleasant surroundings of grace that I write to you and you, and I go backwards to the communion between these, to wit, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost in the making of man (Gen. 1: 26), and I declare to you without equivocation that the grace and love and communion were all there and that their presense was equal; and I refer briefly to the baptism being in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, and that this grace and love and communion is efficaciously displayed in every gospel baptism; and I add this final thought, to wit, This grace and love and communion will bring every child of God home to glory.

Written by request of North Carolina hearers.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Warwick Church, June 10th, 11th and 12th, 1908, to the churches of which this meeting is composed, sends greeting with love in the Lord.

Dear Brethren:—We now follow our usual custom of addressing you in a Circular Letter, which procedure is of no value to the church of Jesus if adhered to simply because it is customary. Some spiritual motive must exercise us in bearing and fulfilling every church relation if our service to one another is to be profitable alike to servant and served. Following custom for custom's sake, form for form's sake and such like is an abomination in the sight of God, who because thereof caused the first heaven and the first earth (legal covenant) to pass away, and established through the mediatorial work of Jesus a new heaven and a new earth (gospel church). In this new heaven and new earth dwells righteousness, and here are they who worship God in spirit and in truth, not in forms, ceremonies, rituals, bloody altars or holy days. With this service God is well pleased, and accepts it, for he is a Spirit. (See Heb. 10: 5-9; Rev. 21: 1; Isaiah 65: 17; John 4: 23, 24.)

In addressing you in this letter, should our desire be simply to follow a custom and adhere to a form, we may as well desist. Unless there is spirit and truth in it there is no gospel service, and if our service be legality, barrenness is its reward. Because of their love for and interest in the churches the apostles frequently wrote them letters of encouragement, instruction, reproof and exhortation, so we hope and trust that our motive in now writing you may spring from the same love and fellowship as theirs, and that we may, by the grace of God, impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end we all may be established, and that we may be comforted together by the mutual faith which we have in our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 1: 11, 12.)

The true church to-day, as always, is set up a monument of God's mercy in the midst of an ungodly world drunken with the wine of the fornications of the mother or harlots. Respect for godliness and sobriety is on the wane; love of wealth and sensuality is increasing. One who wills to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world will reap from the world ridicule and opposition, and the discomfort of the church in this particular is not likely to abate, for "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—2 Tim. 3: 12. Corruption in the family life of the country

is attested by the never ceasing activity of the divorce courts; corruption in government, by the predominance of wealth over principle; corruption in business by the mad rush to get rich regardless of means used to that end; and corruption in religion is fast revealing all man-made creeds in their true light, which is infidelity. We live in an age of "higher criticism of the Bible," which scouts divine inspiration, calls miracles fairy tales, denies revelation, and declares the Christ to have been but a high type of morality with no divinely conceived being. Evil men and seducers are waxing worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. It is a shame even to speak of many things uttered by professed preachers of Christ under the guise of gospel truth. They have a form of godliness, (and what a form) yet deny the power thereof. (2 Tim. 3:5.)

Much of this false teaching is so easily distinguished from truth that even the simplest child taught of God can detect it. Such teaching being self-evidently false, is not so dangerous to us as that which so closely counterfeits the truth as to lead excellent brethren astray and damage their standing ere they are scarcely aware of its delusion. This evil usually arises from among our ownselves, for of our ownselves do men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. (Acts 20: 30.) Those who desire to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace should jealously seek to guard the churches from this subtle danger, being quick to detect and swift to warn the sheep against error, without fear of or favor to the enemy. This danger usually puts itself forward under the semblance of friendship and brotherly love, professing to desire the welfare and comfort of the church. Personal attraction and seeming sincerity enable its advocate to gain a following among those who either pity, sympathize or believe.

What a blessing it is to have a God-fearing ministry, not afraid of men nor currying their favor, who will instruct in sound doctrine, exhort to sound practice and warn of error and its accompanying evils. Knowing full well that what God has ordained shall surely come to pass whether man will let or hinder, does not prevent a faithful ministry from warning the flock of their care of any errors in doctrine or in practice that threaten them. The Babylonian captivity was a preordained event on the part of God, yet he raised up prophets whose burden it was to warn Israel of the approaching danger and to plead with them to repent lest God smite them. That they did not heed the prophets is a fact, but nevertheless the messenger had delivered what God had commanded him, whether men heeded it or not. Every true minister knows that his preaching will effect nothing unless God spiritualizes it to the hearts of his people, yet he cannot cease from preaching simply because his words are unheeded. Jeremiah made an attempt to stop, but the effort nearly ruined him. (Jer. 20: 9.)

Probably never before were our ranks so serried with isms contrary to Bible teaching. The apostles foretold that this very condition should come to pass, and our being witnesses to the fulfillment of their words should encourage us (who abide steadfast) to believe that we are walking in their doctrine and fellowship. (Matt. 24: 11, 12.) Could we but have at all times an eye single to the glory of God, and to the welfare of the church, we would bring every utterance of every man that comes in the name of the Lord to the test of the Scriptures and the heart-experience of God's people, and our bidding them Godspeed would depend upon their having a "Thus saith the Lord" for all their views. (Isaiah 8: 20; Acts 17: 11.) It is not agreeable to have one's feelings hurt, nor to hurt those of anyone else, but when we must decide between offending one person and offending the whole church, there is but one right course to pursue. Should a brother in the ministry be holding and promulgating views contrary to Scripture without himself being aware of his error, they who are spiritual should in

brotherly love and kindness meekly labor to show him his wrong, and should he acknowledge it no necessity will exist for displaying his weakness to the whole church. (Gal. 6: 1.) But if after such faithfulness on the part of brethren he persists in preaching what is contrary to Bible truth, he is dangerous, not only to himself, but to others as well, and our duty lies in faithfully warning the church or churches of such an one. This should not be done in ridicule, sarcasm, irony, anger nor personalities, but in an honest, God-fearing, simple exposition of the Scriptures, proving the falsity of such an one's position. Thus do we study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (II Tim. 2: 15.)

Exhortation and warning are not only justifiable in opposing false doctrine, but as well in reproving false practice. It would be wonderful indeed, since we are all partakers of flesh and blood, if some of the corruption which fills every walk of life in the world should not invade our own ranks and allure into captivity. The love of ease and pleasure, the selfishness of greed which is so visible in worldlings, does indeed have its effect upon us. We are admonished not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, but to exhort one another. (Heb. 10: 12.) And again, to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service. (Romans 12: 1.) Fifty years ago it took some unsurmountable obstacle to keep our people away from their church privileges, but to-day some stay away for trivialities, such as bad weather, bad roads, slight indispositions, entertaining friends or visiting them. Such practice is evil, and contrary to Bible teaching. So also is indulgence in worldly amusements, which infatuates and leads to more ungodliness. The visible church of Jesus Christ is distinguished from the world not only in doctrine and in order, but in practice and deportment as well. (Philippians 4: 8; 2 Cor. 6: 17; Titus 2: 11, 12; I Tim. 3: 15.)

Surely we need to be kept alive to the preciousness of our church relations, and through the indwelling of godly charity bear one another's burdens in love, and so fulfill the law of Christ, upholding the weak hands and confirming the feeble knees. Certainly we all, both pastors and flocks, need guidance and sustaining grace, not every hour, but every moment. The need always is, Lord, save, I perish. The danger is in not realizing our need, but in thinking we are rich and needing nothing, when in reality we are poor and naked. If our God will by the indwelling of his Spirit constantly make us sensible of our need and infirmities, we shall not go wrong, for in sensibly realizing our need there is prayer and asking in faith, which God always hears, yea, and answers before we call. (Isaiah 65: 24.) And if, by the grace of God, we are all in this life that we ought to be, as regards doctrine and practice, what shall we say? That we are deserving of the highest seats in heaven and a starry crown? No, but we are unprofitable servants, for we have done but our duty, (Luke 17: 10,) and that only by reason of the Word made flesh. Unto us, at no time, is any glory due. If we have aught of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus we possess it in an earthen vessel, so that the excellency of the power is of God, and not of us. Every good gift and every perfect gift cometh from the Father of lights. Faithful pastors, able preachers, wise teachers, hearing ears, seeing eyes and understanding hearts are all gifts of God. May he be pleased for his mercy's sake to quicken us according to his word and to enlarge our heart, then shall we run the way of his commandments. (Psalms 119: 25, 32; 2 Cor.4: 6, 7; James 1: 17.)

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and

majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."—Jude 24, 25.

H. C. Ker, Moderator
John McConnell, Clerk

(Written by Elder H. H. Lefferts.)

OBITUARIES

BROTHER JACK L. AWTRY

Brother Awtry was the son of Brother and Sister J. A. Awtry (Sanders). He was born Sept. 22, 1888, in Tuscaloosa County Alabama, and departed this life November 14, 1967. He married Miss Nanette Brundige, of Searcy, Arkansas. She died some years ago.

Brother Awtry joined Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church on the 4th Sunday in December, 1964, and was very faithful and a devoted member until his death. He loved the doctrine of salvation by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was all his hope. Although he was a member for only about two years, yet he was known far and wide over the south, and will be missed by all his brethren. He is survived by three brothers, Herbert A., of Birmingham, Alabama; George N., of Salt Lake City, Utah; and Henry B., of Cleveland, Alabama; four sisters, Mrs. Florence Pate, Mrs. Effie Cowart, Mrs. Ella Shoemaker, all of Birmingham, and Mrs. Myrtle Foster, of Hattiesburg, Miss.; and many other relatives and a host of friends.

His funeral was conducted by the writer and his pastor, Elder H. C. Moon, at the Primitive Baptist church near Birmingham, graveside services by Elder W. D. Griffin and Elder R. W. Rhodes, at the Zion church, near Gordo, Alabama.

Written by the request of the family.

(Elder) Claude Hand

JOHN ARTHUR TURNER

John Arthur Turner was born November 5, 1891, at Gainesville, Texas, the son of Mr. and Mrs. S. S. Turner. He departed this life May 4, 1967. He was married to Ruth Anna Schmidt December 31, 1924. To this union were born four children. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Ruth A. Turner; three sons; John A., Jr., and Richard L. of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma; and Charles S. of Dallas, Texas; and one daughter, Mrs. Maradell Richardson of Mulvane, Kansas; twelve grandchildren; and one brother, G. G. Turner of Amarillo, Texas.

He united with the Little Flock Primitive Baptist Church of Altus, Oklahoma in 1936. His occupation during his working years was as a farmer and an electrician. He lived in the community of Mulvane, Kansas, the last seven years of his life.

Brother Turner was faithful in the Doctrine and attended every meeting unless sickness prevented. Once, while in the act of closing a gate, he was afflicted with a stroke, and this scripture came to him: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Jer. 11:23. He quoted this scripture many times and seemed resigned to the will of the Almighty God in all things. He was not in any way limited in his belief of predestination of all things.

Brother Turner left behind many loved ones who were not left without hope, so their sorrow is not as those who have no hope that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye shall also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

May God bless the bereaved and be their shield and comforter in this vale of tears, that they might always trust in the only wise God our Savior. The service was conducted by the writer, and the love for Brother Turner was manifested by the many friends and flowers present at his funeral.

May all of you who have lost loved ones have the faith that God has instilled in Sister Turner who awaits the world to come in loneliness but with the blessed assurance that her Maker directs and guides all things after the council of His own will and is the same God at death that He is during life.

Elder W. A. Winfrey
Pleasant Valley Church
Kingman, Kansas

J. F. BRADSHAW

The subject of this sketch was born in Coffee County, Alabama, and died in Samson at 81 years of age. He was a noted Sacred Harp singer, and attendant of Primitive Baptist meetings.

His funeral was conducted at Tabernacle Church October 19, 1967, by Mr. J. P. Davis and Elder J. J. Collins, with interment in the local cemetery beside his wife, who preceded him many years.

He is survived by two sisters, Mrs. Maggie Beasley and Serenia Holley, and five brothers: A. B., D. D., C. A., J. J. and C. C. Bradshaw.

He was an outstanding citizen of Geneva County, Alabama.

and

HENRY C. KELLY

Mr. Kelly died in the hospital at Geneva, Ala. after an illness of several months. He was 80 years of age, and a native of Hartfort, Ala. but had lived in Coffee Springs for many years.

Funeral services were conducted by J. J. Collins at Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church October 31, 1967, with interment beside his mother. The writer used, "The spirit returns unto God who gave it," from Ecclesiastes, as a text. He was a Primitive Baptist in belief.

He is survived by a daughter, Wilma; a son, James V. Kelly, of Texas; a sister, Mrs. Leona Cumbie, of Coffee Springs; and three half-brothers, Alfred, Tillis and Robert McLaney.

J. J. Collins

DELLA S. SUMNER

Mrs. Della S. Sumner departed this life January 16, 1968. She was born June 18, 1877, making her age over ninety years. She united with Pigg River Church, Franklin County, Virginia, in March, 1899. She was married to Elder David Sumner May 14, 1916, who died August 21, 1934.

Surviving is one sister, Mrs. Bertha Troup; one step-son, Marion C. Sumner; one step-daughter, Laura Sumner; and a number of nieces and nephews, and a host of friends.

Her funeral was conducted at Oakey's Chapel, Salem, Va., by Elder Julius Bocock; and her body laid to rest in Sherwood Burial Park, Salem, Va.

Submitted by one who loved her,

Jessie Minnix

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

SISTER MARTHA AMANDA WHITE

In submission to the request of the members composing the Spring Green Primitive Baptist Church, I will, with I trust the manifestation of the guiding spirit of our Lord, endeavor to pen a few lines in memory of Sister Martha Amanda Roebuck White. Sister White entered this life on July 4, 1885, and was called from our midst on October 13, 1967, thus making her stay on this earth 82 years, 3 months, and 9 days. She was the daughter of the late Roderick and Martha Roebuck.

Sister White united with the church at Spring Green in the year, 1922, thus was a member 45 years. It was the writer's privilege to hear our beloved sister express several times her hope in the surety of the precious and sweet promises of God to his unworthy children — a true manifestation of the strong faith that was anchored in her heart and soul; a gift that comes only from God. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and was abiding in the hope of being taken on the wings of God's love to that celestial city, eternal in the heavens, whose builder and maker is God. She was blessed to stand fast in this faith until the end, although due to afflictions, she was unable to attend her meetings regularly in the last few years.

Sister White was the widow of the late James Edward White who died in 1954. Surviving are 4 sons, 3 daughters, 13 grandchildren, 9 great grandchildren, 1 brother, and 1 sister. To the family we extend our heart felt sympathy in their bereaved moments. May you be comforted by God's love, and words of comfort is our prayer.

Her funeral was conducted in the Spring Green Primitive Baptist Church. Interment was in the Spring Green Church Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers; truly an evidence of the esteem in which she was held by her many friends.

RESOLVED: That a copy be placed on the church record, a copy be sent to the family, and a copy be sent to *Zion's Landmark*, the *Old Faith Contender*, and *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of conference the fourth Saturday in December, 1967.

Elder W. E. Grimes, Moderator
Johnny Ray Gardner, Committee

SISTER BEATRICE HARRELL

On October 15, 1967, our Heavenly Father called from our midst one of our most true, loyal and devoted members.

Sister Harrell was born in Wilson County, N. C., March 1, 1895, making her stay on earth seventy-two years and seven months. Her beloved husband Men Greely Harrell preceded her in death in the year of 1937.

The Lord brought her before the Town Creek Primitive Baptist Church asking for a home, and she remained a faithful member until 1933, when she moved her membership to the Wilson church at Wilson, North Carolina.

The life our dear Sister lived was a wonderful testimony of God. She was always thankful for the many blessings he had bestowed upon her. In her trials and afflictions she remained cheerful and was always glad for the brethren and friends to visit her and talk about the goodness and mercy of our Saviour. The love she had for her church

and friends will never be forgotten. Usually she would mention her church in a conversation, and her light shone so others could see it.

May God's blessing be upon all who mourn her departure. She fought a good fight and had finished her course and is now sweetly at rest, awaiting to be made like unto her precious Saviour and to be gathered home, where she will see her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and be like him; where sickness, sorrow and death will be no more.

The large congregation and beautiful flowers were evidence enough to show the love her many friends had for her. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor Elder D. B. Stokes at the Wilson Primitive Baptist Church and laid to rest in the Town Creek Cemetery.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the *Signs of the Times*, a copy to the family, and one kept for the church records.

Done by order of the church in conference November 11, 1967.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Preston Gay, Clerk
Written by Sister Betty Richardson, Treasurer

MEMORIAL

ALLIE DANIELS DAVIS

WHEREAS, Bethel Church feels deeply the loss of Allie Davis, wife of Brother Tom B. Davis, who labored behind the scenes for the good welfare of Bethel Church and cemetery. Allie worked quietly, unselfishly, and devotedly, performing without informing others of what she had done, and —

WHEREAS, Bethel members are convinced more since her death of the noble characteristics which she possessed than they were before —

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: 1st. We thank God for the sweet companionship and inspiration that has been ours to enjoy through the kindness and humility that God's Spirit alone could give us through Allie Davis. 2nd. We express our sincere sympathy and our prayerful concern to and for Thomas B. Davis because of the loss of his devoted and loving wife. Our hearts also embrace her surviving brother, D. A. Daniels of Smackover, and especially her nine nieces and three nephews upon whom she lavished motherly affections proven by her deeds and counsel in their behalf. 3rd. BE it recorded that she was the daughter of William Nathan and Zelia Murphy Daniels. Allie was born Sept. 11, 1893. She died at the age of 72, Feb. 28, 1966, having lived all of her full life N. E. of El-Dorado, Arkansas, Rte. 3, Box 185F.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, — a copy of this MEMORIAL be filed with our minutes, a copy be given Bro. Tom Davis, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

This by order of Bethel Church, Union Co., Arkansas in regular conference.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Moderator
Jean Burns, Church Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Brother William J. (Jake) Reese was born April 15, 1899, and was called from this time world December 25, 1967, making his stay on earth 68 years. He leaves to mourn: his wife Armanda Childress; two stepsons: Albert and W. L. Stobaugh of San Antonio, Texas; four sisters: Mrs. Ella Culpepper and Mrs. Maude Frick of San Antonio, Mrs. Bess Wood, Albany, Texas, and Mrs. Cora Keeling, Bellville, Texas; four grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Brother Reese joined the Mt. Olive Primitive Baptist Church in June, 1956, and was baptized in August by Elder H. L. Ballard. He was a faithful member in attending his church and looked after the church building and yard. He always looked out for the needs of other members who lived in Stockdale. Brother Reese had many trials, tribulations, and afflictions during his life, which he bore with patience, as he knew that God would not put more on him than he was able to bear. The Apostle Paul was told, and Brother Reese knew that God's grace was sufficient for him. He was indeed a very humble man. He believed in an allwise God that took counsel with no one, but does His own will and pleasure. A God who chose His people before the foundation of the world, who sent His only Son to pay the price for their sins, and to redeem them out of this time world. His hope was in salvation by grace and grace alone.

His funeral was conducted at the Myers Funeral Chapel at Stockdale by his pastor, Elder Gerald D. Shipman. His body was laid to rest in the City Cemetery, to await the coming of the Lord.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father; and may God give grace to his family to say His will be done. May we extend our love and sympathy to each loved one, and may God bless and comfort each one of you. A copy of this will be sent to the family, a copy put on our church records, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by the church while in conference.

Elder Gerald D. Shipman, Moderator
Sister Lela Culpepper, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 136 DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1968 NO. 6

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/68
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

A JOY TO HEAR FROM BRETHREN

Duanesburg, New York 12056

Dear Elder Slauson;

Your most appreciated letter at hand, I will attempt to write you a few lines. It is a joy to hear from you and the other brethren. It strengthens our hope and renews our faith. It is like the gentle rain upon the new grass. It strengthens our spiritual life.

God is a wonderful, all powerful, gracious and merciful God. We must be very thankful that it was His good pleasure to bestow His unmerited (on our part) grace on such poor sinners as we. We can do nothing ourselves or think a good thought. Have you ever tried to wipe all unclean thoughts from your mind and even while you are thinking thus some evil thought will flash through your mind? We are not our own keeper.

When I think of the days past, I feel I must walk softly before God as it is only by the grace of God that I have come this far. If God had not been with me I should have perished. I pray that He will strengthen me to endure to the end. ". . . but he that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved." (Mark 13: 13)

I feel we would do well to ponder the "Signs of the Times". God provided the Bible as a guide book and comfort for us in this journey. In the beginning God spoke to his people thru the prophets, but in the latter days thru his Son. All these things were witnessed by the law and the prophets. In Thessalonians we read that these things shall not be, except there first come a falling away. But God has a remnant. God told Abraham that, though thy seed shall be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved.

Satan was at work in the garden of Eden. He told Eve, that if she ate of the forbidden fruit "thou shall not surely die." (Genesis 3-4) Satan is saying the same thing today when you hear some one say all roads lead up, that there is no difference and all churches are the same. (I tend to agree that all worldly churches are the same, but not the true church, the Bride of our Lord and Saviour.) With God there is no change or variableness or shadow of turning. Right is still right, wrong is still wrong, truth is still truth, and error still error.

We must trust in God, praying that He will give us wisdom and strengthen our weak hands and feeble knees.

"O That the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still!
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will!"

Hope it is the Lord's will that we may have meeting 5th Sunday in March. Hope you are well.

In hope and trust in God,
Woodrow W. Bellinger

ONLY SOURCE OF COMMUNICATION

Rt. 1, Box 118,
Globe, Ariz. 85001

Dear Editors:

I am late in sending my renewal, which I regret. I have been out of work

for months because of the copper strike in Arizona.

The **Signs of the Times** have been my only source of communication with the people who believe in a covenant keeping God, and salvation by grace and grace alone. Our God still rules in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the world.

I enclose $1.00 for the Indigent Fund. I am anxious for the conclusion of Elder Poole's sermon. It was full of good things and enlightening to a poor sinner like me.

Yours in hope of better things to come.

Jack Lindsey

"HE WAS A SAMARITAN"

Sometime ago I read an article in the Signs on this same subject, and I thought it was a good piece; and I don't want to cast any reflections or criticise it in anyway. But with Elihu in Job 32:10, "I also will shew my opinion."

First, let us recall some history: according to sacred and other history, Solomon's kingdom was divided after his death. The scriptures says that the Israelites moved to Samaria, and the Jews remained at Jerusalem. There they lived as two distinct kingdoms and under several kings. The tribes under Jeroboam were known as Samaritans. Later they were captured by the Assyrians and carried away, and are known today as the ten lost tribes of Israel.

After they were taken away, this country was filled with Gentile people, and were known as Samaritans. These were the people who were living there at the time of Christ.

Now to the subject, "And it came to pass as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off. (Luke 17: 11)

Dear reader, can you imagine a more deplorable condition than these men were in? They were afflicted with this loathsome disease, for which there was no cure; and worst of all, every one was afraid of them to the extent that they were driven out to suffer and die in the open country without any aid or sympathy from men.

Now verses 13 to 18, "And they lifted up their voices and said, Master have mercy on us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger."

We know that the priest had no power to cleanse the leprosy. His duty was to pronounce one clean or unclean. (Leviticus 13: 46) All the days wherein the plague shall be in him, he shall be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be."

Now we come to the question that Jesus asked: why only one returned to give glory to God. The nine that did not return, did exactly what Jesus told them to do: Go show yourselves to the priest. These nine were Jews. The other one was a stranger — he was a Samaritan. The Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans, as Jesus was told by the woman at the well. (John 4:9) These nine Jews could go to the priest and be pronounced clean, and return to their families and friends to live a normal life. The poor Samaritan had no priest to go to: he was a stranger — he only had Jesus to whom he could go.

I believe that as long as we have father, mother, or anything else we can go to, we will never go to God to give him praise as we should. This explains to me the scripture, Luke 14: 26, "If any man comes to me and hateth not his father or mother, . . . he cannot be my disciple." We know that He did not teach us to hate our natural parents,

for we are commanded to honor our father and mother. But you must not put your trust in them for salvation. Also, the man that said, First let me bury my father, and Jesus said, "Let the dead bury the dead." To me this man's father was not sick at the time, nor dead. He was old, and his son wanted to fulfill his obligation to his father before he followed Jesus. Also, He that puts his hand to the plow and looks back to worldly affairs, cannot serve the Master.

But when we are stripped from every earthly thing that separates us from God, we return to give him praise. Then we can say, as the apostle did when Jesus asked would they turn back also, "Lord, to whom shall we go; thou hast the words of eternal life."

Dear Editors, the **Signs** have been coming to our home for more than fifty years. I am now seventy-eight years old, and this is the first time I have written a piece. Look it over, and if you think it is worthy of space, use it as you see fit. I have penned this with fear in my heart. Elder Lambert is our pastor.

In hope of eternal life,
J. M. Proffitt,
Rt. 4, Box 219,
Camden, Arkansas 71701

SUBSCRIBES FOR HIS SONS

Rt. 6, Box 282,
ElDorado, Ark. 71730

Dear Brethren:

Enclosed find check for ten dollars for which send two of my sons the **Signs** for one year, and use the balance as you wish. I have another son and a daughter who live with us who can read mine if they wish.

I think the **Signs** still contends for the faith once delivered to the saints, — a faith which seems very scarce these days, — and I enjoy the letters of all the writers. They give me much comfort for I feel sweet fellowship for these who have traveled the same path that I have, and can say with the poet, "Its a mighty rocky road."

I am convinced however that my travails in this life are about over, and I am so glad that I have a little hope which I trust is sure and steadfast, and is an anchor to the soul. If I am not deceived, I have this hope, and would not exchange it for all the world's riches.

I feel that my church life has been unprofitable, but feel in some degree that I have fought a good fight, and have kept the faith, and am longing for the crown of righteousness that I hope is laid up for me in heaven.

I know that my course is almost finished since I am in my seventy-second year and my walking is poor, but I have no desire to stay here longer than the good Lord wills.

Yours in hope,
C. B. Britt

FEELS THE SIGNS A BLESSING

Rt. 3, 14778 Springdale,
Middlefield, Ohio 44062

Dear Editors:

I would like to say that I have received manifold spiritual blessings from the good paper. There are so many good articles in it we can't begin to mention them all. Elder Stanley Phillip's sermon was wonderful to me, and Elder Ruston's article on, "I will make the place of my feet glorious." How true! and what a wonderful place. Our feet are also glorious if so be they have been placed upon the Rock Christ Jesus by Jehovah, for men cannot put them there. Then Elder Ruston on "The Anointed Ones." Any one of these is worth the price for a year, and much more.

Also there are many more I have read and re-read from Elders Spangler, Wood, Lambert, and many others. May the God of all grace enable them to write on. I would love so much to listen to all of you preach the Word by the power of God.

Here is $5.00 to help a little in carrying on the wonderful work. God bless each one of you and your families.

Pray for my wife and me, and for all our children, and especially for our two oldest sons, Bernard, 46, and Claude, Jr., 44, both have had heart attacks, but are better now. We are both seventy now and can't be like young folks. But praise God from whom **all** blessings flow we really love the gospel of salvation by grace, and thank God for his Sovereign Grace, — for that is this poor unworthy sinner's only hope.

I have belonged to the Primitive Baptists for sixty years, or will be this coming November. God bless you.

Yours in Christ,
Mr. and Mrs. Claude Thomas

WE ARE NEVER ALONE

Rt. 2, Box 134,
Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120

Dear Kindred in Christ Jesus:

Tonight while at home alone this beautiful hymn came to me:

"Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song,
The joy of my heart, and the boast of my tongue;
Thy free grace alone, from the first to the last,
Hath won my affections, and bound my soul fast." etc.

(See your hymn book for the other verses — Ed.)

No one will be able to sing this with understanding without the spirit of God.

Without thy sweet mercy, Oh! I could not live here, and he that first made me still keeps me alive; so dissolved by thy goodness, I fall to the ground, and weep and weep and weep. How true it is that no sinner shall ever be sent back empty! For the cry of the sinner is, Be merciful to me for I am helpless. Oh, will Jesus own a sinner like me. I have a little hope that when he died upon the tree he opened the channel of mercy for me. The Covenant that was made before man was placed on the earth shall stand forever. The Covenant was that Jesus should die to save his people from their sins. I have no doubt it was sealed with Jesus' blood, and shall extend to every subject of grace.

Men may class you with the heathen or unbelievers, but remember that if God has chosen you in Christ Jesus before man was made, their classification will not stand. There are pulpits that do not allow predestination of all things to be preached. I have read it in a church record book, but I do not care to go hear such, for I desire to hear the whole counsel of God declared. Elder Curry, Poole, Hudson, Wood, and several more writers in the Signs declare the whole counsel of God; and I love to read it.

I mentioned being alone tonight, but God is everywhere present and no where absent, and I hope he has visited me once again with his grace and mercy and lifted my drooping heart. My companion is in a hospital at Roanoke, Va., tonight, and has gone through an eye operation to remove a cataract, and God has blessed him with some vision as of now. We desire your prayers when at the throne of grace.

I would like to speak a few words concerning the passing of my father-in-law, Elder Lee Spencer. Many pages could not tell you how we miss him. He and I spent many lovely hours together. He was blind for a long time, and I read the Bible and the Signs to him when he visited in our home. He was gifted in prayer as well as speaking. I loved him for Christ's sake. We miss his wise counsel, for he had deep understanding of the Scriptures and was greatly taught of the Lord. God gives and God takes away, blessed be his Holy Name forever. I have received an encouraging note from Sister Mattie Underwood, stating to me, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

Love to you dear ones through the **Signs**, your sweet letters have encouraged me in the sore trials which I have endured lately. The brethren who pass this way are welcome to visit our home. We feel to be less than the least, and with Paul can say that we are yet sinners by nature, but hope not to trust in the flesh but to be enabled to endure all

afflictions for Christ's sake.

Please renew our Signs for two years, as our subscription expires with this issue. Trusting in the free mercy and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, I remain

Mrs. Lewis C. (Pauline) Spencer

SEEKING THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE ABOVE

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." (Col. 3:1-3)

We read: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." (2 Tim. 3: 16) Now, the writer was inspired to write the above text for a purpose. God had a purpose in this text, He has a purpose in all Scripture. No Scripture is written to fill up space.

If the Brethren at Colosse (as well as brethren at other places) were always seeking those things above, then there would not be any need for this Scripture. Therefore we believe this text was given as a form of reproof, as well as other points mentioned later. It is given to inspire God's people to set their affection on things above, and not upon things of this earth. Now, God may do this directly by His Spirit to a person or to a church as a whole; or He may use a minister as an instrument to accomplish this purpose. This is God's business and it behoves us to follow the impression of the Lord. Oh! what a temptation it is to only speak "smooth things," (Isaiah 30: 10) and withhold part of God's word, such as exhortations, reproofs or rebukes, etc. Those only with a head knowledge may feed upon doctrine in the head but not in the heart, and cannot feed upon the love of God, and cannot bear it when their "toes are stepped upon."

In the text, we believe that God inspired the Apostle Paul to reprove the Brethren, and may the Lord enable us to take heed and consider our own case. Remember, none of us live above sin. We know that the Canaanites who were left in the land, were thorns in the sides of the children of Israel. (Numbers 33: 35) In the same situation, we know that we still have this old Adam nature. A change was wrought in Canaan, in that the Children of Israel destroyed the people, except a few who were made "drawers of water and hewers of wood." (Joshua 9: 21-27) These few Canaanites were thorns in the sides of the Children of Israel.

A change is wrought in regeneration. "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." (Luke 11: 21-22)

When one has been quickened by the Spirit of God, he has a new principle within him. The old principle is to run after that which is evil, or run after darkness. The new principle is to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, or run after the light. The old man is subdued by the new man.

If the old nature were changed, one would not have this warfare that Paul mentioned. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that you would." (Gal. 5: 17) Dear one, you find this warfare grievous, do you not?

One who has been taught by God desires to do that which is right, yet he finds that sin dwells with him as long as he is in this body. "And sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." (James 1: 15)

One of the commandments that God gave Moses was: "Thou shall have no other gods before me." (Exodus 20: 3) God is a jealous God, and He will not divide his glory with another. When Moses was up in the mountain, the Children of Israel made a molten calf and worshipped it. They forgot their God

who led them out of Egypt. When they forgot God, they worshipped an idol. Think of this type. Remember, we do **not** live above the natural Children of Israel.

When we forget about God, we worship an idol, and it does not have to be a little image that we fall down and worship as the Children of Israel did worship the molten calf, and other images they made later on. Some worshipped the type and could not see the antitype. Some worshipped the altars, temples, etc. and could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished. (see 2 Cor. 3: 13-15) The vail is still upon the heart of Israel when Moses is read.

"The dearest idol I have known,
Whatever that idol be,
Help me to tear it from thy throne,
And worship only thee."

In connection with this, think of the text: "Seek those things which are above, not on things on the earth." Whatever idol we worship is earthly, and when one is worshipping an idol, he is not setting his affection on things above.

What is the idol? It may be a number of things; and whatever it is, it is a weight that troubles you. If we worship the gift, and not the giver of the gift, we make an idol of the gift. We may make idols of our natural vocations, the pleasures of this world, different seasons — such as Christmas time, the material things of this life, those dear to us in the flesh, and even our own selves. Jesus said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 6:33) May this be our main theme: "Seek those things which are above."

". . . let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb. 12: 1-2)

Jesus said, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me." (Matt. 10:37) Also, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." (Luke 14: 26) Now, we have the natural affection for those dear to us in the flesh, but take heed lest we worship them. Would we throw down our belief for those dear to us in the flesh? **Do we let those dear to us in the flesh hinder us from going to meetings?** "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together." (Heb. 10:25)

We have known cases where some would not take up the cross, or would not bear witness to Jesus's name because of conflicting doctrines in their family. This reminds me of this Scripture: ". . . among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." (John 12: 42-43)

If we let those dear to us in the flesh hinder us from assembling together and worshipping God, then we are making idols of them, and putting them ahead of God. In this case, our children, wife, or parents come first, and God comes second. Yet, the Scriptures teaches that God comes first. Again, we quote, "He that loveth father or mother, son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."

We make idols of our feelings or giving away to our feelings. If we fail to assemble together just because we do not have a mind, then we make an idol of "giving away to our feelings;" and that being true, we should beware lest we start worshipping ourselves, not considering the feelings of others. "He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." (Matt. 10: 39)

"While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which

are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal: but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2 Cor. 4: 18) This Scripture is in sweet connection with the text, and here we find that the text is not only profitable for reproof, but that it is also profitable for doctrine and for correction, and for instruction in righteousness. "Seek those things which are above." The things that we see with these natural eyes shall fade away, and the things we see not are eternal.

Time is passing on, and our life here is but a fleeting moment. While we are here upon this earth, we are traveling as though we are traveling through a wilderness, and we are journeying through this wilderness of sin. So often we find that the wiles of Satan harrass us, and we find these thorns are hurtful to us. These doubts and fears trouble us, yet bring us down to the feet of Jesus and cause us to pray for these things to be shown to us again. We need reassurance, do we not?

We also see another obstacle and that is the "sleeply state." "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion . . ." (Amos 6: 1) In this sleepy state, there is a spirit of unconcern. Oh! May the Lord awaken us and cause us to hunger and thrist after righteousness.

The situation is really pitiful if the watchman is asleep along with those in the city. Yet, even though the watchman is awake, he learns his sorrow that he cannot awaken those that are asleep. The meaning is that the watchman cannot keep the city by his own strength. "Except the Lord build the house they labour in vain that build it: **except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.**" (Psalm 127: 1)

We also find comfort in the text, "Seek those things which are above." Even though you may be experiencing a heavy trial, enduring tribulations, traveling through much affliction, and finding the path very dark, it is comforting to know it is but for a moment compared to that everlasting glory. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." (2 Cor. 4: 17) As we are blessed to mediate upon this wonderful glory, we find our burden becomes light. These meditations give us fresh strength to press on for that wonderful prize. We want to love him more and more. We want to know more about Jesus and His wonderful works. When we are in this spirit, we see how foolish we were to worship those idols which are earthly and shall fade away.

That glory is something we are looking for, is it not? Are you waiting for something that you do not see now? "But now we see not yet all things put under him." (Heb. 2: 8) "We are waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of this body." (see Rom. 8:23)

We find to our sorrow that we cannot praise him as we would like. We cannot see our title clear. So often there are clouds of unbelief, darkness, carnalness, etc. that come in our way, and we wonder if we are traveling the path that leads to life. We have a vail that darkens our view. We only see through a glass darkly. All our sweetest meditations are but in part. This knowledge which we treasure very highly is but in part. (see 1 Cor. 13:9) The light that we see in Zion is but in part. "Out of Zion the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." (Psalm 50: 2)

We cannot bear to look at him in his glory now. Therefore we have a vail and we can only see this glory in part, and this vail is the flesh. "When I saw him, I fell to his feet as dead." (Rev. 1: 17) We are looking for that wonderful change, and that is the redemption of this body. "As we have born the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." (1 Cor. 15: 49) The Spirit of Christ shall quicken these mortal bodies. This body shall die and shall see corruption. The sowing takes place at death. This body is sown in weakness and it is raised in power. It is sown in corruption, and it is raised in incorruption. (see 1 Cor. 15: 42-44)

When that wonderful change takes place, we shall be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus. (see Phil. 3:

21) Then, the bodies of the Saints shall be glorified. Oh! how we do yearn for this, and at times our hearts leap within us. It is though we are strangers here traveling through a desert land and a wilderness way, and seeking the way to Zion. "In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten." (Jer. 50: 4-5)

At times we can see the city of God and meditate upon the beauty, and at other times there are things that get in our way. Those clouds dim the view of that beautiful light. How we do love the fellowship of the brethren, and we trust this is the love of God that flows from heart to heart. At times we meet together and have a sweet taste of heaven, and how our hearts do ache within us when we are brought down back to the earth. My friends, we all see this in part here, and this is but a "sample" of that wonderful glory which shall be revealed in us.

In feasting upon Jesus here, we find that in a sense we feast upon him with bitter herbs. Many times we experience our sweetest meditations during dark hours of sorrow. The Children of Israel feasted upon the paschal lamb with bitter herbs. (see Exodus 12: 8) This is a type of feasting upon Jesus with bitter herbs. These bitter herbs may be trials, tribulations, sorrows, afflictions, etc. Yet, we do see the necessity of the bitter herbs. ". . . **we glory in tribulations** also: knowing that **tribulation worketh patience**; and patience, experience; and experience, hope, and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." (Romans 5: 3-5) James mentioned that the trying of your faith worketh patience. (James 1: 3) The overall answer is mentioned in Romans 8:28.

Oh! may the Lord give us fresh strength to press on in this wilderness way. May we pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalms 122: 6) May the Lord bless us to consider these things, and set our affection upon things above and not upon things on this earth. May the Lord enable us to walk in love and manifest an humble spirit, and watch over one another for good and not for evil, and to esteem others higher than ourselves.

May the Lord bless these thoughts for the edification of the readers.

(Elder) W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH LOUDOUN COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, became a separate organization in order to escape the innovations in doctrines and practices which entered the Baptist ranks before the beginning of the nineteenth century, and onward.

Because they were dissatisfied with conditions pretaining to doctrine and order in the Little River Baptist Church, the following fourteen persons withdrew from them and met with Elder Robert Leachman and Elder Samuel Trott in September, 1850, for the purpose of constituting an organization upon the original principles held by Baptists: Matthew P. Lee, Robert A. Ish, Wm. B. Marshall, Robert P. Hutchison, George Gulick, Elizabeth Hutchison, Elizabeth Rogers, Sarah Horsman, Abigale Foley, Ann Matthew, Jerucia Nattose, Pamelia Lynn, Sarah Gulick, and Ann Gulick.

Their Minutes state that Elder Trott was their Moderator and Elder Leachman, their Clerk. They adopted Articles of Faith and Rules of Discipline in line with the original Articles held by Baptists, and constituted themselves upon these principles. Some of those mentioned are, "The just condemnation and total depravity of all mankind by the fall of

our first parents; eternal and unconditional election; the proper divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ; justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ alone; the effectual calling and preservation of the saints; believers baptism by immersion only; the divine inspiration of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as the complete and infallible rule of faith and practice."

They required of a person desirous of becoming a member, "to give a satisfactory declaration of his experience, and to be baptized." And, "Should any member depart from the Articles of Faith expressed in this Constitution, he shall be excommunicated after the first and second admonition." In addition, they declared themselves in full fellowship with the Old School Baptists in their non-fellowshipping all humanly devised institutions which had developed among the churches.

The first officers of the church were, Elder Leachman, Pastor; Robert Ish, Clerk; William Marshall, Treasurer; with George Gulick and Matthew P. Lee, Deacons. The Committee to erect a house of worship, was composed of W. S. Hutchison, George Gulick, Robert Ish, and Matthew Lee. The first Trustees were, Matthew Lee, William Marshall, Robert Hutchison, and Robert Ish.

The deed to the property was executed in December, 1850, by Charles Riticor, Malinda Riticor, Zelphy Riticor, and Margaret Riticor; and provided in part, ". . . that the said trustees shall hold land and the improvements which may be made thereon, for the sole and separate use of that denomination of Christians calling themselves and known as Old School Predestinarian Baptists, as a place of worship."

The present brick building was erected in 1851, and has been used continuously except for a period during the Civil War, when it was used sometimes by the Confederate and sometimes by the Federal Armies as a hospital. Considerable damage was done by the soldiers, and the Federal Government compensated for it in 1910. The stone wall enclosing the cemetery was built in 1853.

Mt. Zion was for a year a member of the Ketoctin Association, but soon became a member of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, agreeing with its doctrine and order.

The following have been pastors of Mt. Zion Church: Elder Robert Leachman, 1850 to 1869; Elder J. L. Purrington, 1869 to 1874; Elder J. N. Badger, 1876 to 1915; Elder H. H. Lefferts, 1917 to 1949; Elder J. D. Wood, 1950 to (at present).

The following are the present Trustees, C. W. Norman, Frank Riticor, and H. F. Triplett; and C. W. Norman is their Deacon.

Mt. Zion Church continues in the same principles on which she was founded in 1850, holding her meetings the 4th Sunday in each month. The Virginia Corresponding Meeting convenes for two days in October each year, in the Mt. Zion Meeting House.

John D. Wood — March, 1968

Please Note: In our account of the New Valley Baptist Church we inadvertantly omitted the names of the present Trustees of that church. They are, Leslie D. Duke, Silas D. Phillips, and Ray Hawling; and Leslie D. Duke is their Deacon. — J. D. W.

(The above was prepared at the request of a local newspaper, and we think will be interesting to the readers of the Signs — J. D. W.)

GLAD THAT THE DOCTRINE IS BELIEVED AND PREACHED

Newark, Del.

Dear Brother Wood:

I received the tape I requested, and enjoyed the sermons a lot. Thanks so much.

Brother Wood, I rejoice in the fact that God has given us men like you, men who proclaim the truth as it is in Christ Jesus without fear of men, or the hope of being rewarded of God. As you stated the brother said, "If you believe this

doctrine, thank God that you do," I thank God daily that I believe this doctrine, and I thank him that you and others believe and preach it.

It seems so plain to us, that we find ourselves wondering why all men do not believe it — and yet we know why. I have a neighbor who is eighty, and about half blind. He once said to me. Doesn't the Bible say that the way is so plain that a wayfaring man, though a fool shall not err therein? I said, "Yes, it does." And he asked why is it, then, that these highly educated men can't understand it? My reply was, because they are in neither category.

He said that he did not understand what I meant. I then sang a stanza of, "I am a poor, wayfaring stranger, while journeying through this world below." And I then said that they were not fools, they are intelligent, educated men; neither are they wayfaring men. And he replied, "Oh, I see what you mean." I once played a taped sermon for him. He listened intently, and when it was finished, he said, "I guess I have been a Primitive Baptist all my life, and didn't know it."

When I began writing I had no thought of publication, but if you think it might cheer some poor, wayfaring stranger along the way, you are at liberty to publish it.

In hope,
Roy S. Thomas

IS CHEERED ON HER WAY

Dear Elder and Sister Spangler:

I am sending a little gift for the Fund. I aimed to send it earlier, but did not get to, as I am in a wheel chair. I would not have much to do if I did not have the good **Signs of the Times** to read. They cheer me on my way and are food and drink to my poor sin sick soul.

Thanks to you and the other dear Elders for sending me the good old **Signs.** I do not feel worthy of such a heavenly gift, as I have never done anything to help with the good work, (she forgets her contributions to the Fund and notes of encouragement — Ed.) but they are such blessings to a poor needy one like me.

I rejoice in reading the pretty experiences of others, and feel I have been brought in the same way. May the good Lord bless and keep all the household of faith. I am a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

A sister in Christ I hope,
Eliza Turner

HONORS OUR GOD
AND HIS SON JESUS CHRIST"

Collinsville, Va.

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is $5.00 to help on extra cost of printing the **Signs.** It was given to me, and I don't know of any greater pleasure than sending it to you to help in publishing such a dear paper, which honors our God and his Son Jesus Christ.

His words are, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John 6: 37) We hear it preached in the world that God wants people to be saved, and they won't let him — which denies his word and power, and is dishonoring to God and his Son. We read in John 5: 22, 23, "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent him."

In Hebrews 8: 10, we read, "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people: and

they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their inquities will I remember no more." The Apostle honored God after he was brought to the knowledge of the truth. In I Corinthians he said, ". . . the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men." And he said, in Corinthians also, "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

"And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; and God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be to me a people. Therefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters saith the Lord Almighty." wrote the Apostle in the 6th chapter of 2nd Corinthians.

Yours in Christian fellowship,
Mattie Underwood

UNION NOTICE

The next session of the **Original White Oak Union** is appointed to be held with Cypress Creek Church, Duplin County, N. C. The church is located about 9 miles southeast of Chinquapin, N. C. on rural paved road number 1828.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

L. H. Southerland, Clerk
Chinquapin, N. C.

Danville, Virginia **June, 1968**

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EDITORIAL

ELDER H. M. CURRY'S MEMORY AND INFLUENCE REMAINS

When re-publishing articles by the late Elder H. M. Curry, we have sometimes stated our singular interest in his writings. This was not only because of his adeptness in expressing his thoughts, and his extensive knowledge of secular things, but more especially for his gift to understand, believe and contend for the truth as it is in our Lord Jesus Christ.

We speak of the latter as a gift, recognizing it as such with the Apostle Paul: "Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power." (Ephesians 3: 7) The gift of the Apostle was such as is recorded of him in establishing the churches upon the principles of the doctrine of God our Saviour. Nothing will enable one to stand squarely upon these things other than this gift. Observation shows that without it men invariably follow those things which seem right to unregenerate thinking.

Few men indeed have had extensive learning in the things of the "spirit of man" and also in the things of the Spirit of God. The uncommon ability to excite the feelings and hold the attention of his readers which Elder Curry displayed in his writings, as he unfolded the design and power of God in all his creation, coupled with his bringing to view the object for which all these things exist, — God's glory and the salvation of His people, — undoubtedly shows that Elder Curry was taught of the Spirit to understand the realness of things which are often thought of as mythical and of little importance.

His articles on scriptural subjects show him an humble servant in the mysteries of godliness, and we value them as bold and explicit expositions of those things. We expect to re-publish more of his writings as they come to our attention.

The accounts we have of his singular qualifications also as a teacher, and the abiding influence he imparted to his students, prompts us to feel that our readers will be greatly interested in the following:

A few weeks ago we were favored with a copy of a manuscript prepared for the *Pike County Historical Society*, of Alabama. The subject was *Elder H. M. Curry At Rodgers School* by Eric Rodgers, Ph. D. and *Mr. Curry as Remembered* by Sara Marie Davis, Ph. D., of the University of Alabama.

We found this article so interesting and descriptive of Elder Curry's singularity as a teacher, that it is difficult to quote portions of it without loosing much in the delightful sequence of their accounts. They wrote from personal acquaintance with Elder Curry and in gratitude of having a teacher of his wisdom and inspiring ability.

We quote first from Dr. Rodgers:

"When word got out that Elder H. M. Curry, a Primitive Baptist preacher, was coming to Rodgers School as principal in the fall of 1923, the students had considerable misgivings. They expected a solemn, dull, uninteresting individual. When school opened, they quickly saw how wrong they had been. Mr. Curry turned out to be a person with radiant personality, with the great-

est enthusiasm for learning, and with the politest manner they had ever seen in a teacher. He treated every student with the utmost respect and addressed them as "Mr." or "Miss." They were immediately impressed with his tremendous knowledge and soon found themselves interested in learning as never before. For the first time they found themselves studying hard just for the sake of learning. The enthusiasm of the students everflowed to the community and beyond, with the result that the school had lots of visitors who came just to observe. One topic that he never mentioned was his religion, and students from homes of all denominations felt equally close to him.

"Mr Curry's coming to Rodgers to teach was considered to be a deep mystery by many people, but the reasons for it were simple. He had been a college professor for years in Ohio. He was for many years on the faculty of National Normal University at Lebanon, Ohio, where he had studied as an undergraduate under Alfred Holbrook. Later he was president of a small college, also in Ohio. He made a number of trips to Alabama while still a young man and was well known among his church people as a very able minister. He liked the winter climate in Alabama, and especially preferred it to the cold winters in Ohio. He therefore retired from the college position and chose to spend winters in Alabama. With his large amount of energy, he would have never been satisfied with a life of idleness. He therefore took an Alabama State Teacher's examination and got a teacher's certificate. He held four college degrees but did not have a teacher's certificate. He taught for a time in Montgomery County and one year in Covington County. He was then persuaded to come to Rodgers.

"Mr. Curry went to the home of my parents to board, which he was to do each fall for an eleven-year period. I spent weekends at home and was greatly impressed with Mr. Curry. I was so impressed that I went back to Rodgers School in the fall of 1924 and studied under him until March of 1925, when Mary L. Carter and I entered Troy Normal School by examination.

"During the years I was teaching, I was at home almost every week-end and spent hundreds of hours with Mr. Curry. I probably got to know him better than anyone in Alabama. I was always amazed at the breadth and depth of his knowledge of so many things. I found that he could talk understandingly about practically everything that I had studied in college all the way to my master's degree. I went home once with a German book that I was using in fourth-semester German at the University. This book had many short poems in it written in German. I found that he was not only fluent with the German language, but that he could recite practically all the poems in the book from memory. On another occasion I found him to be almost as fluent in French . . .

"On another occasion I had my college literature book at home and was studying some poems of Robert Burns. I again was astonished to find that he could recite from memory most of the poems in their entirety, including *Tam O'Shanter* which was of considerable length. Mr. Curry was undoubtedly a great Bible scholar. On one occasion he was in the congregation when a well-known preacher quoted a passage of scripture. Both of them went to the same home for lunch. As they gathered in the living room after lunch, Mr. Curry asked the other preacher the location in the Bible of the scripture that he had quoted. The preacher spent most of the afternoon trying to find it, while, in his words, 'Mr.Curry sat quietly and smoked his pipe.' He finally concluded what he says Mr. Curry already knew: he had made up some scripture that was not in the Bible.

"Mr. Curry was very much interested in flowers and seemed to know the names of all that could be found growing in the surrounding country. He played the piano well and seemed to be quite talented in music. He certainly was a most unusual man, whose influence on my life during my years in

school was greater than that of any other person."

The following is quoted from Dr. Davis:

"It was during the latter years of his tenure as a teacher at Rodgers School that I was privileged to have Mr. Curry as a teacher. That first day I walked with awe, apprehension, and anticipation into what I, as a very young student, had come to look upon as a sort of magical land of "Mr. Curry's Room" — awe not from fear but from high respect produced by the dignity, wisdom, and superiority of the man; apprehension as to my own ability to do some of the fascinating and "mysterious" things that happened in that room; an anticipation that, if I could "measure up," I too could participate in that wonderful world of learning. These feelings had been gradually building up for a long time, for I had been hearing about the man and his teaching before my entry into first grade.

"It was soon evident that there was no need for fear of Mr. Curry or of my own inadequacies, for he was an understanding person who soon conveyed to each young person that there was something in that wonderful world of learning for everyone, and that he did not expect all to get the same from it. As I look back over the years in "Mr. Curry's Room." I first recall certain episodes and experiences which seem almost as real today as then. . . In reading classics in literature, 'We were never asked to tear this beauty of expression apart and analyze it before we learned to appreciate it. Rather, Mr. Curry presented the total setting in such a way that the true history of the times came alive and we, in turn, "lived" the literature.'

"I remember also the informal talks we had when we discussed everyday happenings, current events in the world, the weather, crops, the economy, diets, and, quite often, the values of education to man's fulfillment. I can still visulize clearly Mr. Curry on more than one occasion as he said, 'An educated man is the best man in the world, but a schooled fool can be the biggest fool in the world. It is education and not mere schooling that counts.'

"The only disciplinary measure I remember Mr. Curry ever taking — and this was rare indeed — was the pulling of his glasses down on the end of his nose and looking out over them at the culprit who seemed to be forgetting about his own responsibility for conduct befitting the respect which had been accorded him. Invariably the lapse of memory was short lived.

"I remember the times we stood around the piano and sang while Mr. Curry played and led the singing; the baseball and basketball games we had at "recess time;" the spring walks into the nearby woods to gather wild flowers; the jump ropes we made from grape vines and used so effectively; the lunch periods on rainy days when my sisters and I were allowed to eat box lunches at school instead of going home for lunch. School was fun! Learning was fascinating!

"He helped students make their education a way of life rather than mere preparation for life. Education for them became more important for the enrichment it brought to their lives than for the material advantages it might afford them. He was able to guide and motivate students so that learning "made sense" to them.

"I am also able to look back on the priceless experience of having been one of Mr. Curry's students from the vantage point of one trained in professional education, and the appreciation I feel for his contribution to my life and the lives of many others is multiplied. He was putting into practice at that time many techniques and principles which many contemporary "researchers" in education are finding to have value in improving the quality of education.

"Mr. Curry was a truly great teacher whose influence on the lives of many people was profound and far-reaching during the years he taught at this rural school.

"It can be said that he truly kindled a quest for knowledge in those privi-

leged to have had him as a teacher."

One more quotation from Dr. Davis: "I can still see Mr. Curry on a few occasions when he wrote Bible verses on the Writing Board and asked us to read the verses because state law required daily Bible reading without interpretation, and he could not read it without interpreting it."

Our thanks to Dr. Rodgers and Dr. Davis for a most interesting account of Elder Curry as a teacher whose influence yet remains.

We have heard from others who were also students of Elder Curry, or heard him preach in Ohio and Alabama, and we feel that these will have nostalgic interest in the above, and with others appreciate his gift in spiritual as well as natural things.

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

How wonderful are the words of prophecy, wonderful because they are the words of God, God before whom past, present and the future are one eternal now. Isaiah rejoiced to see Christ's day, he saw it and was glad, so could say, "For unto us a child is born." This child was the holy child Jesus, born of the virgin Mary, for this same prophet declared, Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanual, which being interpreted is God with us, and wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east and are come to worship him. He was born not only a child, but a king.

"Unto us a son is given." And here we have to note a distinction which is of great value. The child is born, but the son is GIVEN. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth **in him** should not perish, but have everlasting life. This Son is the eternal Son who comes from the bosom of the Father, of whom the poet sings,

> "Without beginning or decline,
> Object of faith, and not of sense;
> Eternal ages saw him shine,
> He shines eternal ages hence."

This Son is coequal and coeternal with the Father. In the creation of the worlds, this Son was there, and the worlds were made by him, and he was also appointed heir of all things. He was there when God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," and though the child had no preexistence before the virgin's womb, the Son was with the Father down through the ages and his delights were with the sons of men. Often in holy writ he is referred to as the Lord of Hosts, and we believe it was he who appeared to Joshua and announced himself as captain of the host of the Lord, and Joshua worshipped him, calling him Lord. It was he who also appeared to Moses in the burning bush, and he is spoken of as the Angel of the Lord. It was he who walked in the furnace, "a fourth like unto the Son of God." It was he who bore Israel, and carried her all the days of old. He brought Israel up out of Egypt. He had, as it were, the strength of an unicorn, concerning which Balaam declares, "The Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them." David spoke of him when he said in Psalms cx. 1, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." This Son was given, and he abhorred not the Virgin's womb, but came in the likeness of sinful flesh, yet even then he was worshipped by angels, for Paul saith, Hebrews 1: 6, "When he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." Thus our Lord in the nativity is very God and very man, as man to suffer, as the Son of God to save. As man he must suffer on the cross, as

the Son of God he is our great Melchisedec, without beginning of days or end of life.

At the birth of this child, Herod, the chief priests and scribes were troubled, and searching the Scriptures they found in Micah 5: 2, "But thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler of Israel; **whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.**" "And the government shall be upon his shoulder." We have said he bore Israel and carried her all the days of old. They could therefore sing, Psalms 89: 18, 19, "For the Lord is our defence; and the **Holy One of Israel** is our King. Then thou spakest in vision to thy Holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty," and that mighty One always upheld all things by the word of his power. "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice." Thus it is our Lord Jesus Christ who holds up and sustains all things. Not only has he given the word of the gospel, even as it is written, "The Lord gave the word," but it is also his power that sustains it, as the great company publishes it. The satisfaction of divine justice and the complete redemption of the body, the church, rested upon him, upon his shoulder. Of the people there was none with him, and to destroy him would mean the destruction forever of those that were his.

It seems to us, in this subject we have undertaken to write upon, that we have a consideration of the tabernacle that God pitched, and not man, and it shall be our endeavor to set Jesus Christ forth as he is revealed in the word. The tabernacle of old (Exodus 27) had an entrance to those things which are spoken of as shadows of better things to come, and Jesus said of himself, I am the way, the truth and the life. It was through this gate the offerer and the offering must go. The offerer, or priest, must be thirty years of age. At thirty Jesus began his ministry. He must be perfect, having no blemish, so Jesus was; and if it be a lamb to be offered, it must be the firstling of the flock, without spot or blemish. Jesus also was the Lamb, and without spot or blemish. He had clean hands and a pure heart, and had not lifted up his soul unto vanity. In this gate of the outer court we find four posts, upon which the priests hung a curtain, or vail, made of four materials: blue, purple, scarlet and fine twined linen. Thus he who is our High Priest has made himself known in the testimony of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, as it were, four posts set there to display himself. First, we will mention the blue as setting forth heaven, unveiling itself in this who is almighty God. The scarlet of dignity was manifest in him, who, though equal with God, made himself of no reputation; he became a worm, so humble and lowly, yet with what grace and meekness he walked as he stooped so low. Then there is the purple of the King, who is also the King of grace and glory, of whom it is written, "His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise." Wise men said, "Where is he that was born king of the Jews?" "King of the Jews" was fastened over his cross, and, as he gave his commission to his disciples (Matt. 28.), he declared, "All power is given unto me in heaven and earth."

Fine twined linen sets forth Christ's righteousness, woven by him to cover his body, the church. Those four materials were in the vail, and these glorious things which they set forth shone in Christ; and those four writers, like the four posts, declared what they had witnessed of him. not only did the four posts support the vail, but the four posts were set in brass sockets, brass which sets forth the power to endure the suffering of God's wrath because of sin, manifest by Christ in his life and death. Thus the posts stood upon the merit of his suffering as they proclaim Christ, the gate.

"And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of

Peace." We have above spoken of the outer court having a gate with four posts. The preaching of Jesus went out through all the world, as in parables of the sower and the tares and wheat. The son of man sowing the seed, did not make the ground stony or good, but it made manifest in the results what the ground was. The ground did not change itself, but it was proven to be, after the seed was sown, just what it was before it was sown, and the good ground brought forth fruit. The field was the world, the wheat was the children of the kingdom, and the tares the children of the the evil one. In the **world** these were to grow together until the harvest. Jesus did not look for grace in any one, but where he had placed it and where his Holy Spirit had prepared the heart, there would be found results. The Spirit must take of the things of Jesus and reveal them Into us. Thus through the Gate not only the priest and the various offerings, but the people, came. It was within they witnessed the slaying of the victim, the priest washing himself and parts of the victim in the laver. It was before the people that Jesus lived, and he died in their sight. So that, whether it be the gate, or the altar, or the laver in the outer court, Jesus is set forth in his sufferings. The outer court had a gate which signified judgment, and Jesus said, "For judgment am I come into the world," etc. Jesus in Mark had said, "Go ye into all the world," and Paul tells us in Colossians, the gospel was preached to every creature which is under heaven. Now while all the people had access to the outer court, but few understood, only those who had faith given them; so it is to-day.

Let us consider the inner court, or tabernacle. This had a door, but it had five posts, and through this door, only the priest could enter. Within was the table of shewbread, the golden candlestick and the golden altar of incense, and these set forth those things that we, who are made kings and priests of God, see in the church of God. Now just as there were five posts to this door, so there were five writers of the epistles to the church of God: James, Jude, John, Paul and Peter, and their testimony is a testimony of separation; it is not to the world, but to the church, the household of faith. They preached not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and while the four gospels tell most of what Jesus did while on earth, these five writers, while upholding that testimony, present Jesus risen and enthroned, not only in grace, but glory. In their testimony of him we have five unshakable pillars of truth, clearly outlined in Romans 8. Foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification and glorification, all in and through our Lord Jesus Christ. While we mention the five writers of the epistles and the five pillars of truth they declare, yet we do not feel to present any of these writers as posts of the inner door. In the outer gate the four writers of the gospels stand with their living testimony; in this inner door, Jesus, our great High Priest, must be considered. This tabernacle had a covering of rams' skins, the one constantly seen by those in the tabernacle representing Christ's sorrow and suffering unto death, and the other representing the concealment and denial of his divine glory while he suffered the offense of the cross. Thus was need of a center post to support the ridge of that covering. The center post we will therefore mention as the third name of our Lord given in our text: "The Mighty God." Our Savior is truly Almighty God, which truth gives strength to the church of God. Again it is socketed in brass, setting forth the endurance of suffering in Jesus, so that Paul could say to the elders of the church, "Feed the flock of God which he hath purchased with his own blood."

After his sufferings were over, it is spoken of him, in another place, that his feet were as polished brass. Jesus Christ, as the Saviour of sinners, was not just a creature. The work of a creature can never save a soul from hell. "It is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." We find the five names, or posts, in this one door, and if we truly believe in Jesus

his name to us is Wonderful, because he endured the cross and despised the shame, and this for traitors and foes. His name is wonderful, for it takes away our reproach, and has ever filled with wonder those who have seen what he has done. In the next, Counsellor, again is displayed what Jesus alone is to his people. He is God, the only wise, who, knowing our case, puts words into our mouths that stop Satan's assaults and forever silences the enemies of our souls. To the seven churches in Revelation, it is he, whose eyes are as a flame of fire, that reproves and counsels them aright, and he, to all who enter heaven, is the counsellor. We have mentioned the third post, but we must linger here a little longer, for it makes the heart burn to even think of him, who loved us and gave himself for us, being none other than the mighty God, who, made perfect through suffering, carries the whole structure, sustaining the church against every blast and every wind of doctrine. It is he who folds them in his arms and carries them in his bosom.

The fourth, "The everlasting Father." Here we have a relation that is not natural, yet it must exist between Christ and those that are his. By nature we are sons and daughters of Adam's fallen race, none good, no, not one, and just as the Spirit reveals him as Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, so it must witness with our spirits that we are the sons of God, who has predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself. The life of a child of God is not from Adam, but Christ, in a union as between father and children. Adam had us all in his loins in the transgression, and in Adam we died, for we were all transgressors in Adam. The life of all of God's chosen is in Christ, their eternal Head, and they are perfected forever in and through him, and they shall live forever.

The fifth post is the Prince of Peace. The peace of God's children is as strong and lasting as the glorious One who sustains it, and under his sway nations learn war no more. It is he who is our peace that makes the lion to lie down with the kid. When he says peace, none can make trouble, and his peace is not for a day, or a year, but for ever and ever. All this is set forth concerning him in the epistles as in the gospels. In the outer gate we find the vail was twenty cubits wide by five cubits high, showing that the requirements of the five books of the law were met by Jesus. As God he was above all law, and over all things, yet he humbled himself, stooped low as a servant, met the requirements of the law in every part, so that IT IS FINISHED could be written in all four of the gospels, or posts, thus covering the twenty cubits. Thus we find an hundred square cubits in the outer vail, the same as there were in the inner vail, for that was ten wide and ten high; so it is the same Jesus set forth in the gospels as in the epistles, not, as some say, Paul pressed down on predestination, and James on works. It is not Paul or James, it is Jesus only. Thus the outer gate shows Jesus, the vail humbled under the law with a width of redemption that embraces every one that is his to the four quarters of the globe, while in the vail of the tabernacle we see the same Jesus made perfect through suffering, exalted as a Prince and a Savior, no more pressed down under the law, but one who is almighty. Within this vail of of the tabernacle, there was the golden candlestick, and John saw one like the son of man in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. There was also the golden altar of incense that sweetens the service of the church before heaven's high throne. There was also the table, and the bread is there prepared for the Israel of God. Then there was the vail that separated between the holy place and holy of holies. It is the same Jesus set forth, but now to the church. We find cherubims upon it, setting forth the angels of God ascending and descending on the son of man. It is this vail that was rent in twain when Jesus died upon the cross, for it set forth his body rent from head to foot for us, that we through the rent vail might enter heaven itself, "By a new and living way, consecrated unto us through the vail,

that is to say, his flesh." It was within that vail the ark was kept, and in heaven itself Jesus is, and because he lives we live also. We at times hear the bells of his gospel and smell the fragrance of the pomegranate. It is the same Jesus, whom the four gospels declare, that has entered heaven for us, and there he stands made of God unto us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, four posts again, socketed this time in silver, meaning complete redemption, that if any man glory, let him glory in the Lord.

These things that we have presented have set forth but a part of what there is hidden away in that wonderful tabernacle. The half has never been told.

(Editorial by Elder Ruston February, 1938.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

Falcon, Ark., April 28, 1877

Elder G. Beebe: — Will you be so kind as to give me your views through the Signs of the Times on 2 Cor. v. 10? and oblige yours,

W. D.

REPLY.

Such views as we have we do not feel at liberty to withhold from any who are seriously inquiring after the truth; for we have no secrets in religious matters. Our views on this text, however, may conflict with the cherished views of some learned and popular commentators, and possibly fail to accord with those of some of our brethren, with whom we would be sorry to differ.

The text proposed for elucidation reads thus: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ: that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

Three important points are presented for our consideration. First, the judgment seat of Christ — what and where is it? Second, who must appear before it? Third, for what purpose must they so appear? By the judgment seat of Christ we understand the throne on which he as the sovereign and righteous Judge is seated. This is not spoken of as a seat or place of judgment in a far distant world, or in some other state of being than the present. God has already seated his King upon his holy hill of Zion.—Psa. 2: 6. And unto his Son God has said, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever." — Psa. 45: 6, 7; Heb. 8. Firmly established upon his Mediatorial throne in Zion, all judgment is committed to his hands as the Son of God. "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father."—John 5: 22, 23. When in the days of his flesh, as the Son of man, he humbled himself; and "Though he were a Son," and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." — Heb. 5: 8, and Phil. 2: 6-11. "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father," in the triumphant resurrection of Christ from the dead. "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."—Acts 2: 36.

It was for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross. He has risen from under the power and dominion of the law, and is now exalted to that glory which he had with the Father before the world began, and has now sat down

on the right hand of God. He has ascended his Mediatorial throne, the place of his power and dominion, where he sits in judgment. "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with JUDGMENT and with justice from henceforth, even forever." —Isa. 9: 7. In the regeneration of his church which was buried with him into death, when he in their flesh died for them all, and being buried with him by baptism into death, were reproduced from the dead in his resurrection, when he by the exceeding greatness of God's mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand, in the heavenly (spiritual, in distinction from the legal) places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.—Ephesians 1: 20-23. From these, with many other scriptures, we think it not difficult to perceive that the judgment seat of Christ is his church—his holy hill Zion, where he has forever sat down, until all enemies are or shall be put under his feet, and then the kingdom shall be delivered up to the Father, and the Son shall also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.—1 Cor. 15: 24-28.

That the throne of God in Zion is the judgment seat of Christ is clearly established by the words and works of Christ, as declared by himself in his reply to Peter, Matt. 19: 28, compared with the parable Matt. 25: 31-46. "In the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye (the apostles who had forsaken all and followed him) also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." And, "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels (or ministers, apostles, princes, &c.) with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." And then should he proceed to judge the world in righteousness; "And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." We are aware that many suppose that this judgment has not yet began, and that it will never take place in this world. But could the Son of Man impower the apostles to sit with him to rule in judgment, before he himself exercised that power? Did he not enter into his glory, and the joy that was set before him, immediately after he had endured the cross, and when he was made both Lord and Christ? Did he not in breaking down the middle wall of partition which had excluded the Gentile nations from the Jews, assemble before him all the nations of mankind? Was he not invested then with power over all flesh, to give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him? And has he not been separating his sheep from the goats, from his ascension to his throne till now? Is he not now setting his sheep on his right hand, and calling them by his Spirit, and saying to them, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world? And is he not now saying to those on his left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed?

Many of the dear children of God have been greatly worried by the traditional impressions made by those who teach that Christ now occupies only his mercy-seat, and that he will vacate that seat and ascend his seat of judgment after the resurrection of the last day, and then, but not till then, it shall be finally decided who are and who are not his people. They have been taught to believe that all mankind are in this life in a state of probation, and they look for a judgment day, when the great Judge shall hold a court of investigation, when every one of Adam's race shall be accepted or rejected, as their merits or demerits shall be found. In support of this heart-sickening theory no scripture can be found. All the judg-

ments that will ever be executed on saints or sinners are already adjudicated and pronounced by the eternal Judge, and every sentence which he has pronounced is irrevokable. The foundation of God already stands fast, and has this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." Enoch, Elijah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are now in heaven, and all the saints who have finished their course on earth. Nor are they prematurely there, with a liability to be cast out. The sins of all the sons of God have already been weighed in a righteous balance, and the crushing weight has been exacted at the hands of our precious Savior; and God has solemnly said, covenanted and sworn, that their sins and iniquities he will remember no more. How then can they be called up again for investigation or for judgment, when like a thick cloud God himself has blotted them out?

There is indeed a day that God has appointed in which he will judge the world, by that man whom he hath appointed; but that will be the execution of all the judgments already entered and recorded in the books of Moses and the prophets, when all whose names are not in the book of life of the Lamb shall be consigned to that condemnation which already rests upon them.

Finally we give, as our understanding, that the judgment day began with the coronation of our risen Savior, that it is now progressing, and that our exalted Savior now sits upon the seat and throne of judgment. He is now dividing the nations, and bringing the heirs of God into the inheritance of that kingdom which was prepared for them from the foundation of the world. He is himself the monarch of that kingdom, and the glory of it.

Secondly, Who are they that must appear before this judgment seat? While all the power of heaven and earth is given into his hands, and he has a name written upon his vesture and upon his thigh, King of kings and Lord of lords, with authority to judge among the heathen, and to rebuke strong nations for the sake of his saints, his seat of judgment in Zion we understand to be especially devoted to the judgment of the spiritual subjects of his power and grace. While in his universal providential government he is the Prince over all the kings of the earth, for he is exalted far above all principality and power, over all thrones and dominions, and above every name that is named in this world or in the world to come, there is a peculiar sense in which it is said, "he shall judge his people," which applies to them exclusively, and not to the world at large.

In our text the words, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ," are applicable alone to those whom the apostle identifies with himself, who know that they have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. A people who in the earthly house of their tabernacle do groan, and earnestly desire to be clothed upon with their house which is from heaven, and who have an assurance that God has wrought them for this selfsame thing, and who are always confident, knowing that whilst they are at home in the body, they are absent from the Lord. They are a people who walk by faith, not by sight, and who are willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord. These are in a special, peculiar and exclusive sense under the discipline of their blessed Lord and Master. As their Lawgiver and their Judge, their Shepherd and their Bishop, their Prophet, Priest and King, they are under his Mediatorial charge, and they must all, every one of them, appear before his judgment seat. To the people of God who are led and taught by the Spirit, a consciousness that the Lord is their Judge, and that all the things which are done in the body, the church, over which he is in all things the Head, is manifest to him, as expressed in the next verse, and subject to his judgment and decision, will lead them to invoke the scrutiny of his all-seeing eye, "Search me, O God, and know my heart, try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."—Psalm 139: 23, 24.

Aliens may flatter themselves that they may do what seems good in their own eyes, and that their sincerity of purpose will be as acceptable to God as an exact conformity to his word; but those who know the terror of the Lord, that "Our God is a consuming fire," will desire to "have grace whereby they may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear." They know that for every idle word they are held to a strict account at the judgment seat of their Lord and Master. And they love his judgments; for his **rod** as well as his **staff** is a comfort to them.

The reason why **every one** of the members of **the body must** appear before the judgment seat of Christ, is that all that is done in the body by the several members, whether good or bad, may be submitted to him who is alone competent to judge righteously, and that each may receive at the hand of the righteous Judge according to that he hath done, (as a member of the body, in the body,) whether good or bad. All that is done in the body, the church, is approved or condemned by him: whether in doctrine or practice, in words, thoughts or deeds. He is the Judge, the church is his judgment seat, and to his laws and ordinances all his members must submit. They who have transgressed his laws will be reproved, rebuked, and chastised according to the nature and magnitude of their offenses. He that knoweth his Master's will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he who has erred through ignorance, without any design to disobey, shall be more tenderly dealt with. But all shall from the righteous Judge receive according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. None but Christ is competent to judge the things done in the body, the church, or in the bodies of the individual members, who are included in his body. He alone is able to discriminate between what God has wrought in the body, and what has been wrought by the church or her members. All that is good, and approved by the Judge, is what God has wrought; for "it is God that worketh in us, both to will and to do of his good pleasure." But all in us that God has not wrought will be detected, and all the saints shall, at his judgment seat, receive the things wrought in the body, according to that they have done. For what God has wrought in them shall be made to appear by their godly walk and conversation; while all their own imperfect works shall be removed.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe July 15, 1877.)

OBITUARIES

SISTER LOU PARNELL

We, the members of Liberty Primitive Baptist Church, bow in humble submission to the will of our holy God in taking by death our dear Sister Lou Parnell. She was the daughter of the late Brother and Sister William A. Jones and Sarah Parnell Jones. She was born in Harnett County, N. C. March 2, 1889, and died September 20, 1967, making her stay on earth more than seventy-eight years.

She and her husband joined Bethesady Primitive Baptist Church in the early thirties. She moved her membership to Liberty August 9, 1967. She married Eddy (Edd) Parnell December 9, 1905, and to this union eight children were born. One died a little over one year old. Surviving are: Loyd, Ernest and Aulcy, Dunn, N. C.; Leslie, Benson, N. C.; Atlas, Raleigh, N. C.; Mrs. Sarah Jernigan, Benson; Mrs. Adna Stanley, Dunn, N. C. Also surviving are eighteen grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

We would say to these children and a host of friends, weep not as those who have no hope. She in excellency filled her place in the family, the church and the community. She was a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God.

Her funeral was held at Bethesady Church by her pastor Elder Lester E. Lee, assisted by Elder Nowles and Scott Lee Mears; and she was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the resurrection to be with God's saints around his throne.

WE RESOLVE, That copies of this be made for the church record; one for the family; and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of conference at our October meeting.

James B. Young
Mollie Tart
Lovie Young
Committee

MARY LEE HOPPER GAMMON

Sister Mary Lee Hopper Gammon was born in Rockingham County, N. C. May 11, 1890, and departed this life December 27, 1967.

She was united in marriage to Silas Lester Gammon who died October 26, 1960. To this union were born twelve children. Six survive: four daughters, Myrtle Myers and Elnora Harris of Route #2, Ruffin, N. C.; Ellen McBride of Danville, Va. and Ruth Howell of Reidsville, N. C.; two sons, Claude Gammon, Route #2, Ruffin, N. C. and Leon Gammon, Reidsville, N. C. Also surviving are twenty-eight grandchildren and fifteen great grandchildren.

Sister Gammon was received into the fellowship of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church over forty years ago, and was faithful to attend as long as her health permitted. We who knew her well, desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our eternal God, knowing He doeth all things well.

In the absence of her pastor, funeral services were conducted by Elder Haywood W. Wray, in Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, and her remains were laid to rest in the Gammon family cemetery.

Written by request of the church while in conference.

Lucy H. Davis

IN MEMORY OF BETTY BRYANT

Sister Betty Moran Bryant was born February 1, 1868, and was called from this life November 23, 1967, making her stay on earth almost one hundred years. She was the daughter of John Jefferson and Xonie Ann Thompson Moran of Patrick County. She was married to William P. Bryant on November 25, 1885, by Elder William R. Radford, Patrick County, Va. To their union were born 13 children.

She leaves to mourn her passing, four daughters: Mrs. W. J. Ross of Roanoke, Virginia; Dr. Lillian B. Ingram of Martinsville, Virginia; Mrs. Albert B. Stone of Bassett, Virginia; Mrs. J. W. Dollyhigh of Fieldale, Virginia; forty-two grandchildren; ninety-five great grandchildren and twenty great great grandchildren. Her husband died in 1915.

Sister Bryant died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Albert Stone, where she made her home for twenty-six years. She faithfully attended her church as long as she was able. She was surely one of those dear and wonderful Mothers in Israel. She had a great understanding of the scriptures. All who knew her, loved her. She had a gentle and very pleasant disposition. She possessed a great gift to entertain the old Baptist children and friends. She united with Union Church, Patrick County, Va. October 21, 1911, and was baptized by Elder P. A. Cahill.

Her funeral was conducted at Union Primitive Baptist Church, Patrick County, by her pastor Elder Leonard Brammer in the presence of a great audience of people to pay their respect to one they loved. Her body was laid to rest in the Church cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, to await the coming of the Lord in the glorious resurrection. We extend our heart-felt sympathy to the family and bow in humble submission to the will of God.

Written by a sister in hope,
Rada Rakes

BROTHER OLLIE DALTON

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst by death our beloved brother Ollie D. Dalton on February 1, 1968. Brother Dalton was born September 10, 1891, making his stay on earth 76 years. He joined Springfield Church August 12, 1962. He was faithful to the church and filled his place as long as he was able, he was a firm believer in salvation by Grace. Springfield Church bows in humble submission to the just and holy will of our Lord knowing that He doeth all things well. We feel our loss is his eternal gain.

Brother Dalton is survived by his wife, Sister Rosa Dalton; three daughters: Mrs. Walter Gatewood of Danville, Va.; Mrs. A. D. Woodson of Lynchburg and Miss Jerelene Dalton of Gretna, Va. Four sons: Roy, Clifton and Melvin all of Gretna, and Lester Dalton of Hurt, Virginia. Two brothers: Cleveland Dalton of Motley, Virginia, and Petros Dalton of Chatham; three sisters: Mrs. Sallie Pickrel of Motley; Mrs. Walden of Altavista and Mrs. Laura Farmer of Blairs, 16 grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

His funeral was held at Springfield Church by his pastor Elder O. K. Tench and Mr. Lilly, and his body was laid away in Gretna Burial Park to await the second coming of our Lord.

Written by L. R. Willis

MAUDIE H. NICHOLS

Sister Maudie H. Nichols was born January 19, 1890, in Patrick County, Virginia, and was called from this world November 10, 1967, at the age of 77 years. She was the daughter of Gus Hopkins and Martha Via Hopkins, and was married to S. Adie Nichols.

To this union thirteen children were born:

Mrs. Lillie Cox, Mrs. Daisy Mitchell, Mrs. Minnie Wright, Mrs. Addie Stroop, Mrs. Grace Wright, Mrs. Ora Griffith, Mrs. Maggie Harris, Mrs. Bertha Langford, Mrs. Viola Smith, and Ewell and Cody Nichols. Two died in infancy. Surviving also are three sisters, Mrs. Thenie Hall, Bedford, Va.; Mrs. Bedie Craddock, Stuart, Va.; and Mrs. P. J. Rakes, Martinsville, Va.; and one brother, James Hopkins, Lynchburg, Va.; forty-two grandchildren and twenty-six great grandchildren.

Sister Nichols was received into the fellowship of Union Primitive Baptist Church September 4, 1918, and was baptized by Elder Zander Cahill. She filled her seat as long as she was able. She had a sweet hope in the resurrection when the Lord shall come in clouds of glory.

Her funeral was held at Goodwill Baptist Church November 12, 1967, by Elders Leonard Brammer and Albert Doss; and she was laid to rest in the Nichol's family cemetery. In her passing we believe she died in the triumph of faith which God gave her many years ago.

Written by a sister in hope,

Elsie Nolen Jamison

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT FOR SISTER LARCIE WYNNE

We, the members composing the Skewarky Primitive Baptist meeting house and we hope the church of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our eternal heavenly father who has called from our midst our beloved sister, Larcie Gertrude Waters Ambrose Wynne. Wynne.

Sister Wynne was born on September 11, 1887, the daughter of the late Franklin and Mary Radcliff Waters. She departed this life October 26, 1967, making her journey upon this earth more than 80 years.

Sister Wynne united with the church at Concord in 1913, and for convenience transferred by letter to White Plains Church in 1917. Locating in Martin County, Sister Wynne again for convenience transferred by letter to Skewarky Church in 1932; thus she held membership among the Primitive Baptists for a period of 54 years.

It was indeed a privilege to have known this dear sister and an inspiration to have observed the manifestations of God's love within her heart and soul as she was so ably blessed to express in her conversation and everyday walk in life. We are grateful that we can say with much confidence that our sister was a faithful mother to her children, a faithful grandmother, and a kind, tender, and loving friend to all who knew her. Most comforting to us is that she was bestowed with a gift of devoted faithfulness to her God, her brethren and sisters, and church. She was firm believer in salvation by grace and professed a hope in the all wise, powerful, and merciful God to whom she desired to ascribe all honor and praise. We trust our loss is our sister's eternal gain.

Surviving are 2 sons, 3 daughters, 27 grandchildren, and 33 great grandchildren. Also surviving are 3 sisters. To the family we extend our heartfelt sympathy in your distressful moments. May you be comforted by God's love and words of comfort is our prayer.

Her funeral was conducted in the Skewarky meeting house by her pastor, Elder E. C. Harrison and Elder D. B. Stokes. Interment was in the Skewarky Church Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, a token of the esteem in which she was held.

RESOLVED, That a copy be placed on the church record, a copy be sent to the family, and a copy be sent to *Zion's Landmark*, *Old Faith Contender*, and *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of conference on November 11, 1967.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Johnny Ray Gardner, Committee

SUDIE J. BRINSON

Sister Sudie J. Brinson was born June 28, 1877, and died September 30, 1967, making her stay on earth more than 90 years.

In May, 1916, she asked for a home with the Primitive Baptist Church at Muddy Creek, and she was baptized by Elder Gardner Bryan. In December, 1931, she and her husband came to Sand Hill Church by letter and she lived a devoted member as long as she was able to go. She often attended when it seemed she was not able. She loved the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God.

We feel that the passing of Sister Brinson is our loss but is her gain. She is now awaiting the time when the dead in Christ shall be raised in his likeness, to praise him forever.

She leaves three sons and one daughter, and a host of relatives and friends to mourn her passing.

Done by order of the Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church in conference the 9th day of March, 1968.

L. L. Yopp, Moderator
Brantley Kennedy, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 136 DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1968 NO. 7

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/68
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

HAS READ SIGNS FOR FIFTY YEARS

Newton, Ala.

Dear Elder Wood:

. . . We are most anxious to have the **Signs** continue, and may the Lord most gloriously bless each of you in the Master's vineyard.

We were so glad to hear both you and Elder Spangler preach the unsearchable riches of Christ at the Pigg River Association last August. It was a pleasure indeed to see you all again, and to hear Elders Brammer, Ingram, Hollingsworth, Brown, Godwin, and others preach. We were so courteously treated in the home of Elder and Sister Brammer.

It has been our privilege to read the dear old **Signs** for some fifty years; and we have heard in person nearly all the Editors during the present century. May all be endowed with the Holy Spirit to continue this wondrous work.

We were blessed to attend eight different associations in 1967, and to hear some able preaching by Elders C. C. Hand, Jas. W. Johnson, Loyd Wall, J. L. Smith, Sam Dean, Warren King, W. S. Barefoot, Paul Stott, and others. It was so good to be back with the brethren.

May the **Signs** continue on for many years to uphold the principles preached by Peter at Pentecost, and Paul in his own hired house in Rome.

(Elder) J. J. Collins

THOUGHT WOULD FIND REST HERE

612 South Avenue,
Tarboro, N. C.

Dear Cousin Martha:

I have your letter and clipping of comfort. I ask your indulgence at my not writing sooner, what with all the associations and trying to get settled in moving.

My mind has had for sometime many thoughts concerning experiences of what we hope to be. After all the preaching, and much of it the best I think I ever heard, I was able to carry very little of it home with me. Brother Taylor in his concluding sermon after dinner, preached on the work of Jesus; and you know it was the work of Christ upon poor sinners. It took me away from now, and where I was, but in the end I could not find myself anything but a sinner begging for mercy. Grace changes us, but we must have our daily portion from Him to live. I had thought we would get to the place of rest here, but we must "push on for the prize of the high calling as it is in Christ Jesus."

If I have an experience of grace, it has been a continuous work of our Lord upon a poor sinner. I have been chased from the time of about eight years by the evil one because of my sins, and my first recollection was of going to my mother, hoping for relief from my sins; but a greater one had to come and fix the bounds of the devil so he could come just so far and no farther. I followed this course for nearly sixty years, ever conscious of the walls that bound me in and the devil out.

If not deceived, I had seen the church on the opposite side of the stream but was never able to cross over without help. The arm of Jesus finally came, and

it was neither too short nor too weak. While I felt, if not deceived, that the church was fixed, I had other matters in the final and last day to harass and worry me.

I missed "Cin" in the end for we both fought against baptism, and this had to be cleared before I could go to church. So far I feel I have made a failure, as I am still doubtful that this is an experience. I have felt and do feel the hand of the Lord has been with me in many causes, and kept me from falling in many instances in the fight for things I needed to do but did not. Since I am sure of making a mess of this, I might try later to relate the objects in the way every time I saw the water.

I want to continue to have your prayers and also your fellowship, because I feel you know the truth and the trials that beset us in our journey here. Every travel, while it may be on the same road and lead to the same destination, is not the same to each traveler. We all weaken on the way and need the arm of Jesus to help over rough places; and we also need each other's prayers, fellowship, and love to finish the course we run.

In answer to your questions concerning "Cins" folks, Yes, Martha is still living, but in poor health. She is deprived of most preaching by being unable to go. Ella is really better off than she was a year ago. . .

One thing is outstanding and will be a beacon when the world is on fire, God knows best for them that are his; and his sheep know his voice. I enjoyed the poem for it fits nicely in one's everyday trials. Wish you could come and stay with us some . . .

J. K. Turner

(The above was sent in by Sister Martha Womble of Raleigh, N. C. It shows Brother Turner's many trials before coming to the church, and his continual need of God's grace. — J. D. W.)

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

The resurrection of the body is a fundamental doctrine of Holy Writ that has been strongly defended by able ministers of the New Testament as well as by others since the days of the Apostles. However, it was flatly denied by the Sadducees, "which say that there is no resurrection. . ." (Matt. 22: 23) So opposition to the plain teachings of the Scriptures concerning a cardinal principle of the Christian religion is nothing new in this day. In Tim. 2: 18, we read of Hy-me--nae-us and Phi-le-tus; "Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some." Of course, the faith of God's elect cannot be overthrown. In verse 19 of the same chapter, we also read: "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." And he will raise their very dust at the last day. "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." (John 6: 39) There were some among the Church at Corinth that denied the resurrection of the dead, just as there are some among the churches today that likewise deny it. In I Cor. 15: 12, it is asked: "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" In reasoning with those holding erroneous views concerning the resurrection, the Apostle Paul said: "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" (verse 35) It is conceivable that such questions might be asked by a vain philosopher in derision or by way of ridiculing or making light of the resurrection of the body, as if it were something contrary to all sense and reason. But to the carnal objector the answer is: "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die: And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat or some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." (Verses 36-38) No, there

is a different body as to form, but it is essentially the same body. The seed sown germinates in the soil under proper conditions and springs forth with new beauties. The same seed sown develops into a higher form after its own kind, and is, therefore, given its own body and not another.

The Apostle in making use of the sowing of seeds, their dying, being quickened, and springing up again, very aptly illustrates the resurrection of the body, showing clearly and conclusively that it is the same body that comes forth that is laid in the grave or buried in the sea. That is, it is the same as to substance but with different qualities. If it were not the same body the term resurrection could not properly be used, for there would be a creation instead. The very word resurrection imports the rising again of the same thing. The Scriptures are silent on the creation of new bodies for the souls of the saints when Christ comes the second time without sin unto salvation. They do not support the Pythegorean idea of the transmigration of souls into other bodies, or anything like it. So let us adhere to Divine revelation, setting aside the doctrines and notions of those who would wrest the Scriptures from their true meaning because they are not in accord with carnal reason. In verses 42, 43, and 44, the resurrection of the body is declared in unmistakable terms: "So also (after the manner of the springing up of seeds sown) is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it (the very same body) is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

So it is seen that the IT that is sown with certain qualities is the self-same IT that is raised with different qualities. "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." (Verse 49) This indicates a change in the body from natural to spiritual, and this is absolutely necessary for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption." (Verse 50) The human body as now constituted with its frailties and corruptions could not bear the exceeding weight of eternal glory reserved in heaven for the righteous. It must be fitted for the inheritance incorruptible that fadeth not away but endureth forever, for the heavenly glory that awaits the redeemed in the realms of ineffable light. "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." It is imperative that the bodies of the saints at the last day, whether dead or alive, undergo a glorious change, as mentioned in verses 51 and 52, that they be clothed with heavenly glory and the shining robes of immortality. From my own personal experience in a vision of the night, I delight to think of the saints being clothed, body and soul, with the robe of Christ's righteousness at the marriage supper of the Lamb. "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." (Psalm 17: 15) With the redemption of the body the saints will enter into consummate bliss. Nothing then will be lacking.

As further proof of the resurrection of the identical body interred in the earth, I quote this Scripture: "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body . . . ." (Phil. 3: 21) And all that are in the graves shall come forth according to the word of God. Surely this refers to the same bodies deposited in the graves. It could not refer to aerial, celestial bodies for such are not buried. "And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of their graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." (Matt. 27: 52, 53) They slept in Jesus and literally arose with Him. His resurrection assured their resurrection, as well as that of the saints that shall rise in the general resurrection, for He became the firstfruits of them that slept. (Verse 20) "Thy dead men shall live, together

with my dead body shall they arise." (Isa. 26: 19) From the scriptural account of the translation of Enoch and Elijah they must be in heaven in their own bodies as changed, and I am bound to believe that all the rest of the saints will finally be housed in heaven in their own glorified bodies. It can hardly be assumed that after time shall be no more only a part of the ransomed will have spiritual bodies while the rest are bodiless. All will be like Christ, hence all will be found in their own incorruptible, perfect, and holy bodies, which will shine as the sun in the firmament. They are His mystical body, "the fulness of him that filleth all in all. (Eph. 1: 23)

Now I come to the testimony of Job concerning the resurrection. And it has been said by an ancient writer that no one since Christ speaks so plainly of the resurrection as this man did before Christ. "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another. . . ." (Job 19: 25-27) This is the very strongest proof of the resurrection of the body. How can Job see his dear Redeemer with his own bodily eyes in his own (spiritualized) flesh unless his own natural body is resurrected a spiritual body? I do not doubt that he, in his risen, glorified body, will behold his Redeemer. I do not consider it incredible that God should raise his sleeping dust, for with Him all things are possible. He formed man out of the dust of the earth and He can just as easily raise the same and fashion it like unto His own glorious body. Just as sure as one is given to Christ to be redeemed, just that sure will that one come forth from the grave "unto the resurrection of life." Not one will be overlooked. All of the elect belong to Christ by choice, by gift, and by purchase, and it is His will that they be with Him where He is in spirit, soul and body.

King Agrippa thought it incredible that God should raise the dead, but this did not move Paul, who consistently defended the raising of same against bold gainsayers. Going back to the Old Testament, we read in Daniel 12: 2 these words: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." If this does not have reference to the mortal remains of those of the Adamic race to what does it refer? The soul does not sleep in the dust of the earth, so it evidently refers to what remains when the soul is separated from the body, which separation is death. This is the only reasonable conclusion to be arrived at. "Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he called the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him." (Luke 20: 37, 38) These are the words of our Lord, adducing the language of Moses by way of proof of the resurrection of the body, and not the soul. Some take the position that the only resurrection of the redeemed is that from death in trespasses and sins, but I can't see that.

"As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Of course, this means that all that Christ is the covenant Head and Representative of will be made alive in the resurrection of the body, for the Apostle is treating of that resurrection, and not the resurrection of the soul from death in trespasses and sins. This is a sweet passage of Scripture to me. It is the sweet hope of many. Take this from them and you take everything and leave them "most miserable." They cherish a good hope through grace that the bodies of them which sleep in Jesus will be raised by virtue of union with the Lamb and reunited with their souls, which He will bring with Him when he descends from heaven in His glorified body at the last day to judge the quick and the dead and take the ransomed home, to those mansions of glory He went to heaven to prepare for them by His presence and intercession there, as one has well said.

"When I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies,
I'll bid farewell to every fear
And wipe my weeping eyes."

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." (1 Thess. 4:13,14) A number of other passages of Scripture could be cited as proof texts in the premises, but I will conclude with those found in verses 16 to 18 of the chapter just mentioned: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Submitted in hope of
a glorious resurrection,

C. W. Vass
409 New York Avenue
Elizabeth City, N. C. 27909

(We rejoice in believing the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, for without the resurrection and our mortality putting on immortality all our experiences and our hope of eternal life are valueless. The subject is profound, and the Apostle said concerning it, "Behold I shew you a mystery," so it must be very carefully considered in light of scriptural expressions. We have been inquiring concerning "the body", "the soul", and "the spirit, for many years, and confess that we need to know more about each before we can be at ease on their proper application. — J. D. W.)

Rt. 1, Box 86A
Smackover, Ark. 71762

Dear Editors:

Our subscription has expired . . . my husband meant to renew when we were blessed to have Elder Spangler with us at Bethel Church. Thanks for not stopping the wonderful and marvelous good news. I have had to spend lots of time lately in bed, and I cannot express how comforting the **Signs** with all the able ministers and writers who are thoroughly furnished of God to write comforting and strengthening food for the ones like I feel to be: so weak and unlearned. May God in his tender love and mercy watch over us in Christ.

I awoke this morning at four o'clock with the power of God on my mind; and I wanted to try and read, hoping that I have been made to know a little about this great power of God; and desiring to be submissive to his will. In this day when things of this earth seem so politically minded, miserable and misleading, isn't it sweet to meditate on the wonderful power of God? How consoling this power is to the trembling child of God. We read, Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers; for there is no power but of God. In the Psalm referred to the writer says, "Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth. He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." I believe that we must see desolation before we can stand still.

I did not mean to write like this, but it seems good to try to tell how I feel this morning. How I would love to hear some of our ministers talk on this wonderful subject.

I wish I knew how to thank God for most able editors and ministers. I desire your prayers.

Mrs. Helen Murphy

MUCH DECEPTION IN THE WORLD

Rt. 1, Box 305,
Magnolia, Texas 77355

Dear Elder Spangler:

. . . If not deceived the **Signs** means a great deal to me. I know the Lord can keep us without magazines, meetings, etc., but what a wonderful God who

condescends to our weakness. We long for physical touches and evidences, and a place to rest amid the troubles and deceptions of this old world; and He so graciously provides us with writers and preachers whereby we are filled, nourished and relieved.

Satan is waging, I believe, the greatest campaign of deception in history. The world tells us that we must embrace every religion, that Mohammed, Buddha and Christ mean the same. The atheistic evolution theory tells us that the Bible is a cleverly written fairy tale. The Houston council of churches sponsors a woman on television who says she can reconcile the Bible and reincarnation after death of the soul into another's body, where it tries to make up for the life it led in its first body.

What cannot be explained by science is credited to E. S. P., the "fourth dimension" or spiritualism. How badly we need the **Signs** and other writings to tell the truth in these perilous times.

May God enable you to continue.

With much love, I hope, in the Lord,
Mrs. Kelsay Swain

GRATEFUL FOR THE PLAIN PRINT

2247 Tutwiler Ave.,
Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I enclose $7.00 to bring my subscription up to date. It is so good to receive such writings each month. We are also grateful for the plain print as our eyes are growing dim, and we find it still easy to read.

We pass through many experiences as we travel down life's rugged way, and often feel weary, and wonder about many things. But how consoling it is to still feel the sweet hope within our hearts, for we realize if that should fail, there is no other way. I have passed through many dark seasons which made me feel I was mistaken in it all; but at last relief would come filled with sweetness which was sufficient if I were called to die. Through the many years I find the confidence in my Lord is still in my heart; but still I am weak and fearful.

The condition of the world today is a sad and trying thing, but our God has promised never to leave nor forsake us. We are few in numbers here in this great city, but we hope to be kept by God's grace ready to be revealed in the last time.

Hope the Lord will put it in your minds to visit us sometime. We all love so much to have visitors come our way.

Yours in a precious hope,
Carrie M. Campbell

HAS READ THE SIGNS SIXTY-SEVEN YEARS

Rt. 2, Box 23,
Weslaco, Texas

Dear Brethren:

Enclosed is a check for the extension of my subscription. I have been reading the Signs for 67 years. Sixty-six years ago my mother was sick in bed, and I brought the mail in and she said "Well, son, take care of them, maybe some day some of you will want to read them."

I did not tell her that I was slipping them in my shirt and taking them out into the woods and reading them. What a lost sinner I felt to be in those days.

I often think of the experience a minister had back in the horse and buggy days near Stockdale, Texas. He got so discouraged that he put his family into the wagon and left the country, and traveled three days. Late in the evening on the third day he found a nice place to camp over night; so he went up to a house and asked if they could camp over night in the pasture. The man agreed, and then said that they were going to have a meeting there tonight and would be glad for them to come up. He came back and told his family about it, and said that we are strangers and do not know what kind of religion they have, but let's go up.

The crowd gathered but their preacher did not show up, and they were so

disappointed. Finally the man of the house said to this party, "Won't you lead us in prayer?" The man fell down on his knees and offered prayer. It was so good and uplifting that he was asked to talk for them; and the Lord blessed him to preach a wonderful sermon, and all rejoiced in what the Lord had done for them.

The next morning he told his family that there was no use trying to run away from the Lord, "Let's go back home." The Lord had him to travel three days to get there to preach to some Old Baptists. The Lord works in a mysterious way to bring about His way.

I will be 80 April 29th this year, but am thankful that the Lord has blessed us to take care of three of his little ones without coming under state regulations. Some have come here on a mattress and in about three weeks be up and about. It is a great pleasure to see what the Lord can do for his little ones who are sick.

Remember a poor sinner in your prayers.

(Elder) E. B. Ault

THE LORD'S PEOPLE RECEIVE GIFTS

ElDorado, Ark. 71730

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I would like, the Lord willing, to write a few lines concerning the writing of David, "For thou art my lamp, O Lord: and the Lord will lighten my darkness." (2 Samuel 22:29) When he spoke these words David's heart was enlightened by the power of his Lord in a way he had not been blessed before. It seems that he had gone about fulfilling his adulterous and murderous ways, and the enjoyment he had in these sinful things caused him to despise the commandments of his God; but now he said unto Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord."

We find that David grieved for the child that the wife of Uriah bore him, and he fasted and wept for the child while he was yet alive; but after the child died he said, "Wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

The Lord had dwelt marvelously with David, and he realized that the Lord had lightened his darkness. The great light had shined in his heart the day he was delivered out of the hands of his enemies; and he said that the Lord was his Rock and his Fortress and Deliverer. "The God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence." (2 Samuel 22:23)

That is the way it is with the poor, trembling child of God. A broken and contrite heart the Lord will not despise. They seek and pray unto him to be merciful, and cry unto him for deliverance from their burdens of ungodliness and sinful lusts; and trust that he will be their lamp and lighten their darkness. They hope it is his will that the light will shine in their hearts that they may be made mindful day by day of his never dying love and tender mercy. We read in Jeremiah 31:3, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."

In spite of all the sins he had committed, the Lord loved David and drew him to himself by his loving kindness. The Lord's people are recipients of gifts from their God: he not only loves them but gives them everything they possess in this world, and in the world to come. If it required a pat of the foot or a flip of the finger, it would not be a gift.

The arminianism of this world would have us to believe that something has to be done by the individual in order to receive the gifts. But David was made to wait for his God to deliver him. The light was so intense in his heart that he exclaimed, "God is my strength and power: and he maketh my way perfect." (2 Samuel 22:33) The Lord delivered him from the power of his enemies, and put the light in his heart.

May we close with this hope, that the Lord will see fit to bless us to share with David the glorious understanding of the power of our God; and say with him, "Have mercy upon me, O Lord: for I am weak: O Lord, heal me; for my bones are vexed. My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O Lord, how long?" (Psalm 6:2,3) And, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer." (Psalm 19:14)

Yours in hope,
J. J. Davis

IMPRESSED TO WRITE HIS BELIEF

1741 Davis Road,
Rt. 1,
Mainville, Ohio 45039

Dear Brethren:

When I awoke this morning I had a desire to write some of the things I believe. There were many thoughts which passed through my mind concerning the doctrine which is preached from modern pulpits: I heard a man say in his sermon that when he got to heaven he would meet boys and girls on the street, and they would say, "Lord if it had not been for Brother S. I would not have been here: he preached to me and got me saved." If such doctrine is true, then I am an infidel; for such dishonors God from start to finish.

I am a finite being and a weak worm of the dust, and am not able to describe God as I see him and as my heart feels him. But I will try to tell you about the God of all things, a sovereign God who does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand. There are precious brethren who can write and say things which mean so much to me.

The doctrine of Election, Foreknowledge, Predestination and Salvation by Grace, is what I believe; and Christ the Lord of the Universe is the foundation of this doctrine. Men and devils would put it out of existance if they could; but it is here to stay until God says time shall be no more. The events of time are the fruits of Wisdom. Our God sware saying, As I have thought so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed so shall it stand. This is just as sure as God is — it cannot be changed.

Some people will say to me, What about these wars and wicked powers that are ruling. My answer is that there is no power but of God: "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." (1 Col. 1:16,17) I most surely believe that his work will fulfill his purpose.

The eternal destiny of man is sealed by the sovereign God: "Having this seal, the Lord knows them that are his." This seal is by the blood of Christ your Saviour when he was on the cross. He came down from heaven to do a will, and that will was written in the counsel of God before the world was. In Christ's preaching he said, "I came down from heaven, not to do my will but the will of him that sent me; and this is the Father's will which hath sent me; that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." (John 6: 38,39)

I cannot see any conditions in these scriptures. The Angel of God declared that "He shall save his people from their sins." No condition there. Christ said I came down from heaven to seek and to save that which was lost. No condition. I am glad I am with the people who are preaching that Christ fulfilled his Father's will. Brethren, when Christ was on the cross, and the face of the sun was darkened, and at his bitter groans all nature shook; and he cried out, "It is finished," your eternal salvation was finished. He paid the entire debt and obtained eternal redemption for you, and entered into the holy

of holies and is there making intercession for you.

The sun will never cease to shine, brethren, until every one He died for will be brought to the knowledge that Christ is their Saviour and heaven is their home; and they won't be called by some preacher, but will hear the sweet voice of the one who died for them. God pity a man that claims he is the cause of some poor sinner finding the Lord. The Lord finds them all in the wilderness wandering from the fold of God. He said He laid down his life for the sheep, and not one of them will be lost.

We understand that the calling of God's people was just as much predestinated as their eternal salvation was. I love to think about the God who was before all things. He had no man to help him in his creation — no one to instruct him; and I verily believe He made everything just like he wanted it. He was not ignorant of the events of time.

I have heard men preach about the fall of man, that God made him able to stand but liable to fall. The Bible says that the law entered that the offence might abound, but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. Christ was set for the fall. I don't believe He was set for the fall just in case there should be a fall. It was all known of God beforehand; and Christ stood in the eternal counsel as a Lamb that had already been slain — and the Son of God fulfilled his Father's will before he went back to his Father.

People tell me that if they believed the doctrine I believe, they would not care how they lived. I want to say that I do not believe that a changed person will try to hide behind the precious doctrine of Predestination, to cover up his wrongs. I know that I desire to live right, and I believe that desire was planted in my heart by the sovereign God. I believe He set my bounds, and at his appointed time he called me, and made me to hate the sins that caused my mourning. He gave me a love for his people: he works the will and do in his people, else I would still be in the wilderness.

I want to speak and write that which is honoring to God's name. When a man preaches the works of man in the salvation of God's people, and I mean time or eternal salvation, he is preaching a God dishonoring doctrine.

I love Zion the old church. I want to live at the feet of my brethren and sisters. Some sweet day we are going home — will hear that sweet voice say, Come home. Without God's people I would not have anything to live for.

May God bless you all, is my prayer; and I ask that when at the throne of grace you remember me in your prayers.

In hope of eternal life,
Garrett Wilson

A LETTER FROM ELDER SLAUSON

46 Cedar Street,
Kingston, N. Y. 12401

Very Dear Brother and Sister Ruston,

Beloved in the Lord:

You are often in my mind though our bodies are far apart; still we are joined in heart we humbly trust, with the love with which Christ unites his little children. What a wonderful gift the love of God is! yes a gift, for we are told if we love God it is because he first loved us: the same as a parent always loves the natural child first. John said he knew he had passed from death unto life because he loved the brethren. We cannot think of anything stronger, or as strong, as love: love has both life and power in it. We cannot handle love, but love handles us.

The love of God, as we understand it, has brought us exactly where we are. We cannot promote the love of God, neither can we hinder it. Is it not true that the more we feel a love for God, the more we want to praise him? and the more we want to put the world and the flesh under our feet? The more we feel the presence of God's love, the more we are able to do this. Is it not true that the love of God causes us to enter into

our closet (our heart) and meditate in thought and spirit, and try to converse with the blessed Lord?

From time to time I just feel to try to breathe out to God and turn away from the things that perish, and live in that love for him. How wonderful it is when we have the Love of God, and God given faith! When we have the two, what an unspeakable gift! Can we have the love of God and not the faith of God also? We don't think so: we feel the two always go together. While riding on the bus recently, (I think I was asleep) something said to me, "Christ lives in his people." It refreshed my mind. We do not understand that there is any religion except where Christ lives; and where he lives you may be sure there will be love, for the Father sent him to be an husband with love for his bride. We are told by Paul that His people are married to another, even to Christ.

"Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price." (Isaiah 55: 1) Isaiah said it long before Christ came, but we understand or feel that this statement is pointing toward the gospel day, telling God's people what to do and where to go when they are thirsty, just as He told them in the gospel day what to do and where to go when they were laboring and heavy laden. We notice it mentions here for every one to come, but it is only to those who thirst, so we feel it is speaking only to the living; for the dead neither hunger nor thirst.

God has always furnished his children with something for their thirst and hunger, even in the wilderness; so now says to this servant of God, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat." Not only is there something for thirst, but it also says, "buy and eat," so, is it not true that the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ contains plenty for the thrist and the hunger? In Matthew 5:6, it says, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." So when we come to the gospel waters, we find both milk and wine of the New Testament freely given to us; yes, dear ones, no money needed, nothing needed from the little helpless child. The arrangements are already made for His little children. It is for everyone that is in this condition. None are left out who have become hungry and thirsty; who have weak hands and feeble knees, and have nothing to offer for what they need in their helpless condition.

O, thanks to God of rich mercy, you do not need to give anything. It is free; it is an unspeakable gift from God. Yes, the gift of his Son to be one with His people and for His people. Jesus says, "I will **give** unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life **freely.**" (Revelation 21:6)

Love,
Brother A. J. Slauson (Elder)

LOVES TO READ THE WRITINGS

Fairfax, Oklahoma 74637

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood:

I have just received my **Signs of the Times** and have read all of it, and did enjoy it so much.

I love to read the good news God's children write. I do not get to go to church often. I live 139 miles from my church, and am 81 years old. I live alone and am under a doctor's care all the time. I would love to write some about the 17th chapter of Revelation, and the 18th chapter of Leviticus. I often wonder why God's ministers don't preach from them. I was brought up by a father who was raised and taught to be a priest, and believe me, he told me about those things. And I thank God I had a father who did teach me about them. My father died a Primitive Baptist minister. I remember when he joined the church; I was about eight years old.

Please forgive me, I should not be trying to write. But I do hope I love my

God and his dear children. May God bless all and enable the **Signs of the Times** to continue with the good news.

Mary E. Hendricks

OFTEN MADE TO EXAMINE HERSELF

Rt. 2, Box 518,
Bassett, Va. 23055

Dear Editors:

I want to tell you and the dear ones who are blessed so wonderfully to write to the **Signs,** that I have read the wonderful letter over and over again that Elder Lefferts wrote to Mr. Davis, and which was republished lately, and it has been sweet to my troubled soul. The subject was, "Let a man Examine Himself."

I have often been made to examine myself while seated with the dear and precious saints of God, and also at other times, and they look so humble and good to me that I often wonder if such a vile sinner as I am should take the Lord's Supper with them. On one of the many times I have been with them on communion day, I did not feel worthy to even walk into the meeting house. O how good they all looked to me. It seemed I could see a light shining from the Lord on them, and my very breathing was, "O Lord, don't let me a vile sinner commune with these thy dear children unless it is thy divine will. Keep me from it, O Lord, if I am not one of thy chosen little ones."

Elder C. E. Turner prayed the sweetest prayer; and Elder L. J. Brammer preached the blessed truth as it is in Jesus. It seemed I could see that the prayer and the gospel these two elders spoke, was coming from God's storehouse of love; and my poor hungry soul was fed to running over. How I longed to sincerely thank my great Redeemer Lord for his soul cheering love to me, who am not worthy of his notice. Our worthiness is all in Jesus and not in our vile selves.

My daughter to whom I am sending the Signs, said she is so pleased to get it. She loves the dear Old Baptists, and enjoys hearing them sing, pray and preach so much. I am enclosing a moneyorder for another two year's subscription as shown.

May the Lord continue to bless you with enabling grace to continue sending out this dear truth in the **Signs,** as he has in the past. Please pray for me that the blessed Lord may keep me at the feet of his little ones in tender love and mercy. I know that unless I am kept I am gone.

Your least sister, if one,
Callie Clark

ASSOCIATION AT MOSSYROCK, WASHINGTON

The **Bethel Primitive Baptist Church** at Mossyrock, Washington, holds its association meeting the third Sunday, and Friday and Saturday before in August; and extend an invitation to those of our faith, and to our many friends.

Elder Ernest Attebury, Pastor
Mrs. Opal Huntting, Clerk
Silver Spring, Washington

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** will convene with the church at Scott's, the Lord willing, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in June, 1968.

The church is located about three miles west of Lucama, N. C., Wilson County. All who have a mind to attend are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with Bethel Church, Pamlico County, N. C., the 29th and 30th of June. The church is located just out of Grantsboro, N. C.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 3, Tarboro, N. C.

Danville, Virginia **July, 1968**

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MEETING AT SLATE HILL

The plans are for the usual all-day meeting at Slate Hill the first Saturday in August, August 3, 1968. Lunch will be served.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Elder A. J. Slauson

EDITORIAL

BELIEVERS BAPTISM

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:16)

Article 9 of **Signs of the Times'** "PROSPECTUS" says: "That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers — that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God."

The purpose of this Article 9 is to briefly state the position of the SIGNS relative to the members, ministers, and rule of the Church of Christ. We pray God to enable us to more fully define the term, BAPTIZED BELIEVERS, in this treatise. We are deeply impressed of the necessity of this endeavor because of so many varied and conflicting opinions confusing our people this day on the subject of VALID BAPTISM. Lack of information often causes misunderstanding. Misunderstanding begets confusion. Confusion leads to errors. Errors often result in strife. Strife breeds hatred. Hatred breeds malicious actions. Malicious actions cause divisions. Divisions in churches result in each faction declaring null and void all actions of others. For this cause the Lord removes **candlesticks** and **spues** churches and ministers **out of His mouth.** We desire to carefully examine this vital subject and consider prevalent questions.

Primitive Baptists are careful relative to the mode or manner of baptism; that is, the method in which the act is performed. Proper qualifications of the person receiving baptism is important. The administrator of the ordinance of bap-

tism must be properly authorized before the baptism could be considered valid. Proper ceremony connected with this act is worthy of consideration. Different elements are mentioned in the Scriptures in connection with baptism; so, we must ascertain when **water** is the **element** under consideration. We want to reconcile the expressions: "One baptism", in Ephesians 4:5, and "The doctrine of baptisms", in Hebrews 6:2. We shall define the word, **baptism.**

The shortest and most comprehensive definition of the word from which baptism is derived is: **To dip.** This **dipping** includes casting down, submerging, and raising up. When this process is followed it is rightly called **baptism.** The administrator puts his subject into the element, causes this element to completely engross, and then raise the subject up. There is always a change in status by the subjects being baptized with the baptisms spoken of in the Scriptures. We shall now take up the baptisms which are administered by the Holy Ghost in face of this definition.

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" To sum this up, it means that we were baptized into the **death** of Jesus Christ, being chosen in Him. It means that we who were chosen in Him, were in Him, while He was dying, engrossed in death, and raised up in Him from death. The changed status was that Jesus having been cast down and engulfed in suffering and death arose to die no more. The changed status of His people who were in Him was; — the dying, the death, and the raising of Jesus from death, made certain eternal life for all who were in Him. No man can perform this baptism of which Paul speaks. Yet, Paul uses this baptism to show what water baptism protrays. Paul speaks of the baptism in Jesus' **death,** which was two thousand years ago, to preface a baptism of the present day. Paul further reasons: "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from death by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Water baptism is the "Likeness" of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul emphasizes that this baptism is but ONCE. Then he adds: "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (v. 11) When you obey from the heart that **form** of doctrine you become free from sin to become the servants of righteousness. The carnal man is a servant of lust. This man has no knowledge of the law, and is alive without it. God causes His holy law to be written in the mind and heart of this carnal man. This servant of carnality has been thus brought under the dominion of the law, consequently he tries to be a **servant of the law.** His failure in every attempt to serve the law makes him to know that he is in every case a **servant of sin** because he has disobeyed the holy law. This **servant of sin** despairs of life to such extent that his soul faints. (What a terrible death!) Sin has reigned unto death. The spirit of grace and truth raises this servant of sin from death to become a **servant of our Lord Jesus Christ** who accomplished the law for us, and died for us! The killing and making alive is a baptism God administers.

God administers the **baptism of repentance of heart.** Repentance means turning. If we were immersed in repentance and left there, we would forever be turning in a circle. The godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto salvation need not to be repented of according to 2 Cor. 7:10. There is a turning from error to truth, from darkness to light, from law to Gospel; from which there is no need of further turning.

John **preached** the baptism of repentance, and baptized in water all who gave evidence that they had been given repentance by the Lord. He would not baptize those who came to him for baptism unless they brought forth the evidence that they had repented. See Luke 3:7-8. John was a qualified judge of the ones worthy of water baptism. The administrator is the Spirit — not man — in the expression: "For by one Spirit

are we all baptized into one body. . ." (1 Cor. 12:13) These baptisms that God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost performs are essential unto eternal Life. Water baptism is the only baptism that is to be performed by man as the administrator. This baptism is essential unto obedience as it is **the** answer to a **good** conscience toward God. Scriptural water baptism changes the classification of the one baptized. Before baptism one is classed with those who "walked according to this world". After baptism one is classed with "fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God." (Eph. 2) Paul was told to, "Purify thyself with them." (Acts 21:24) This was necessary because of so many mis-representations concerning Paul which had caused the Jews to be very angry with him. The actions and explanations of Paul in response to this request did not make him more pure to himself or God; but it did make him more pure in the sight of the Jews. The sins they had against him were washed away. While in the process of telling his experience in order to abate the anger of the Jews, Paul quoted Ananias: "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." The water baptism **purified** Paul in the sight of the brethren whom he had before persecuted. Before baptism he persecuted Jesus Christ. It took baptism to wash away the accusation of persecution of Jesus Christ and bring him into a new status as a proclaimer of Jesus Christ.

John, the Baptist, and Jesus, the Saviour, were both named by the angel Gabriel. Both had miraculous births in that one was born of a virgin; the other was born to a barren woman well stricken in years. John was filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb. John was termed by Jesus as "More than a prophet." John had the authority from Heaven to baptize with water. Jesus was sent to baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. John instituted water baptism and had no authority to baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Jesus did not baptize with water but submitted to baptism of John in water, making manifest that John had this special authority. John was the first preacher in the gospel dispensation.

Facing the fact that a great majority of professed Christians of this age consider that a little water sprinkled or poured upon a person constitute baptism, it becomes necessary to point out a few expressions of Scripture that prove otherwise. One who has never heard of baptism can take the New Testament, begin reading, soon simple language will convince the reader of proper mode. The first chapter in which baptism is mentioned is 3rd. chapter of Matthew. Verse 16 says: "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water." This statement would simply prove that Jesus himself was **in the water** when He was baptized. The reader will find in the second book of the New Testament, Mark 1:5, ". . . and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins." The simple expression, **In the river of Jordan,** convinces the reader that the baptism was performed in the river, not by a little water taken from the river. Mark says, "And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him." This shows simply that the baptism was **in Jordan,** the river, and that He came up out of the water. John 3:23 says, "And John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salem, because there was much water there, and they came and were baptized." Why the necessity of **much water?** The unprejudiced reader would by now know that the ones John baptized were in the river at a place in the river where there was more water than at other places of the same river. According to these expressions much water is necessary to perform baptism. As Philip and the eunuch were riding along in the chariot, "they came unto a certain water." This must have been a place where there was **much water.** Enough water for both of them, Philip and the eunuch, to go down into

the water, Philip to baptize the eunuch, and both of them to come up out of the water."

Let us quote Acts 8:38-39: "And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. We have already quoted Romans 6:4 elsewhere in this treatise which shows baptism to include **burial.** The person uninformed of the meaning of the word **baptize,** would gather the meaning of it by the time he read the New Testament to include the 6th chapter of Romans. We now understand that baptism in water means that the one doing the baptizing takes the one to be baptized down into much water, buries him in water, raises him up out of the watery grave, and brings him completely out of it by bringing him to the shore. Sprinkling or pouring a little water upon a subject is not Scriptural Baptism. The administrator really baptizes part of his finger, or hand, by dipping it into the water. He does not baptize the subject upon whom the water is sprinkled or poured. Burying one in water is not baptism until the one buried is raised up. Baptism pictures the death, buriel, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We shall next consider the question, Who is qualified to be baptized?

Scriptures plainly show that John baptized persons who confessed their sins, brought forth evidence worthy of repentance, and professed belief in Jesus Christ the Saviour. The same qualifications are necessary now. Last Sunday afternoon I led a brother down into the water and baptized him. My ceremony was something like this: "Upon confession of your sins and your admission that you cannot save yourself from this condition in any sense by your own merit; and, upon confession of your faith in Jesus Christ being the complete and perfect Saviour of His people; and upon the evidence of your trust in Jesus Christ, your perfect Saviour; and, upon expression of your desire to follow the commandments of Jesus Christ, — depending upon Him for imputed strength and, in obedience to the command of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ: — I baptize you, Brother P———, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." As I raised him up I concluded the ceremony with, "Amen". This is the longest baptismal ceremony I have ever spoken. This is not a model ceremony but it does give in essence the requirements of one qualified for baptism.

We next refer to Acts, 2nd. chapter, 37th verse, to show that those who were qualified to be baptized were first, "Pricked in their heart." They were undoubtedly terribly upset by these pricking sensations caused by the working of the Holy Ghost. Peter's sermon had brought condemnation to their hearts. The last words of Peter's sermon must have pierced them sharply. "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." (Acts 2:36) I have wondered if their thoughts were: I crucified Him! I crucified Him!!" What guilt! No wonder they said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" They had undergone such remorse in their hearts toward themselves for having part in such terrible crime! It did not take an altar call to entice them to respond. The Holy Ghost pricking their hearts with condemnation and guilt of the crucifixion of Jesus was enough to make them ask the question: What shall we **do?** "Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Scholarly men fed by pride have argued over the term, **for the remission of sins,** used in this expression which **greatly** confuses the readers and hearers. Let us look to Matthew 27:24: "When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am

innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it." He washed his hands in the presence of the people there to prove his abhorence of the crucifixion of Jesus. This act of washing his hands in water in the presence of this people with the expression, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person," cleared Pilate in the sight of the people. The people. responded, ". . . His blood be on us, and on our children." (v. 25) These people who were pricked in heart on the day of Pentecost, as well as all of us who feel that our sins crucified this Jesus, are, and were, willing to **do anything** to prove our sorrow for such crime. They, as well as we, respond to that command: Repent, be baptized, save yourselves from this untoward generation: calling upon the Lord.

First, these were pricked in heart by the Holy Ghost. Next, their cases were presented before men and brethren. Thirdly, they wished to know what to do. Next, they received special instructions consisting of definite commands, promises of gracious gifts of God, the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost; testimonies, exhortations of many words: all added up to:— "Save yourselves from this untoward generation." Fifthly: "They that gladly received his word were baptized." Sixthly, they were added to the Church. This is the order of procedure which is given in the 2nd. chapter of Acts. This proves that one must be a **Baptized Believer** before becoming a member of the Church. We have no Scriptural evidence that this order has ever been changed. We next consider: **Who is a Believer?**

"And when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." (Acts 8: 12) We ask, What was Philip's subject on this occasion? We read Acts 8:5: "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached CHRIST unto them. We read again in the same chapter of Philip preaching to the eunuch: "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him **Jesus**" (v. 35) When the eunuch asked, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." the eunuch answered, **I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God"** This testimony was sufficient to satisfy Philip that the eunuch was a **believer.** It was enough to prove that he was a proper subject for baptism. The case of the eunuch's baptism gives proof that the baptism may be administered before taking the matter up with the church. Of course the church must be consuled before one could become a member of a certain church. He must be baptized before a church could consider him as a member. According to the scriptures we have no precept given which necessitates one subscribing to a list of doctrinal theological ideas before one could be baptized. A true believer in Jesus Christ the Saviour, plus a desire to be baptized is sufficient. A proper administrator who is properly ordained and set apart by a presbytery, is qualified to preach the gospel and baptize believers. If one is not qualified to properly judge who the true believers in Jesus Christ the Saviour are he should not be **set apart** by a presbytery to preach the gospel and baptize believers. We shall quote a portion of **Church Covenant** as recorded in Hassell's History of the Church of God, page 695: "Forasmuch as Almighty God by His grace, has been pleased to call us (whose names are underneath subscribed) out of darkness into His marvelous light, and all of us have been regularly baptized upon profession of our faith in Christ Jesus, and have given up ourselves to the Lord, and to one another. . ." This quotation shows that in the 18th century that **the baptism was based upon profession of their faith in Christ Jesus.** It shows that they were baptized before constituting themselves into a church by covenant. These were already baptized when they composed this covenant. The specifics in this covenant was by the mutual consent of the members. Mutual agreement is necessary on many things in order that brethren may agreeably walk together

in church capacity. Because of the many and varied opinions expressed by professed Christians relative to **faith in Christ Jesus;** it need be that we clarify our position upon this.

A mere assent to the fact that they believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God is not sufficient proof that they believe in him. I must first be convinced that an inquirer does not have faith in himself to save himself from his sins confessed. My reasoning is that the person who thinks he can merit salvation does not actually feel the need of salvation. Next, I must be convinced of his vehement desire for salvation. Then, I want to know whether or not he has been made to trust in Jesus Christ only for salvation from his sins. I want to be further persuaded that his desire is to keep the commandments of Jesus Christ. I want to be convinced that he looks only to Jesus Christ to strengthen him to perform works of righteousness. Lastly, I want evidence that he has the God-given, God pleasing faith without which it is impossible to please God, to wit: "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. 11:6) Upon satisfactory evidence of these facts, I gladly baptize anyone in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and leave it to the judgment of the church concerning their membership. We shall conclude this installment on Believer's Baptism by quoting the last paragraph of the last **editorial** prepared by Elder Gilbert Beebe as recorded on page 941 of Hassell's Church History.

"In more than three score years of our labors in the gospel ministry we have never demanded or required of any candidate for baptism that they should sign any pledge to adhere to any other standard of faith or practice than that which is given in the Scriptures. We have said to them, 'If thou believest in the Lord Jesus Christ with all thy heart, thou mayest.' After hearing from them a satisfactory relation of what we believe to be a genuine experience of the new birth, we have usually asked them if they believe the doctrine and order held and preached by the Old or Primitive Baptists, so far as they understand it, and if their experience is in harmony with it. Upon receiving an affirmative reply, we bid them welcome to the ordinance, and hold ourselves ready, if need be in the same hour of the night or of the day, to administer that sacred ordinance. We know of no divine authority for delaying the administration for a more convenient season, or to first bury a father, or take leave of those we are to leave behind us. As every one who is born from above, and who loves the precious Saviour, is commanded to take his yoke, bear his cross and follow Him, and as baptism is the first act of obedience of the Heaven-born child, no other duty or religious privilege can be in order until this is performed. But upon this subject of baptism we may hereafter write, If the Lord shall so permit."

Eld. Beebe's sons added, "As this is the last editorial left by our father, and written but a few days before he was called home, the one contemplated in the last sentence was not written. May not this fact imply a reproof to those who love and hope for salvation through our Lord Jesus, yet wait for something more than His plain command to urge them to obey Him in following His great example?" (See Hassell's Church History, Page 941)

We believe that what we have written is in accord with Elder Beebe's last paragraph of his last editorial written. However, we had not read this until we had finished our writing in this treatise. It is in such accord with our convictions that we have added it. We expect, God willing to write an editorial soon on **Problems of Valid Baptism.** We shall consider questions and attempt a scriptural solution to each question. May the Lord bless this attempt to your edification. Amen.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us his Spirit."

How sweetly this beloved disciple and apostle dwells upon the delightful theme of the love of God, and the indwelling of the love of God in his children. He gives repeated assurance to the saints that the possession and power of this love in the hearts of his saints is an incontestable evidence, not only that they are born of God, but also that we dwell in God, and that God also dwells in us.

We know of no evidence on which we may so implicitly rely as unmistakably demonstrative that we have passed from death unto life, as the possession and experience of the love of God. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Herein is love; not that we loved God," (it did not originate from us, for our carnal mind is enmity to God; not subject to the law of God; neither indeed can be,) "but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Well does the inspired apostle very justly infer that, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. "No man hath seen God at any time." By searching, no man can find him out; for eye hath not seen, nor human minds, however brilliant, have been able to comprehend him, or to know any of the things of his blessed Spirit, only so far as it has been his gracious pleasure to reveal them by his Spirit. But we can and do see our brethren. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for if he loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" And if no man hath seen God at any time, the manifestation and demonstration of its existence in us is more sensibly realized by its outflowing to those who give us evidence that they, being also born of God, are our brethren and our kindred in Christ Jesus. For if we sincerely love him that begat, will we not also love them who are begotten of him, and who therefore bear his image?

An appreciating sense of this important truth must surely lead the saints to love one another with a pure heart fervently. For if we love God supremely, we shall certainly love the things which are approved of him. If it be truly the love of God bestowed upon us and shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, it will center on the same objects as it rested on before it was felt in us. Heaven itself can afford no comfort or joy to those who do not love him, we must also love his people, his truth, and all his infinite perfections. Then, "If we have love one to another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." How inconceivably glorious is the thought that the eternal God whose glory covers the heavens, and whose greatness the heaven of heavens cannot contain, has chosen his abode in our poor hearts, and dwells in us! And it is equally stupendiously great and glorious that we, who have been made to feel so sensibly that we were unworthy to dwell upon this polluted earth, which is his footstool, should be permitted to dwell in God!

Can we conceive of the amazing greatness of this astonishing display of the boundless goodness and grace of God? Is this not a mystery that angels may well desire to look into — that the tabernacle of God should be with men, that God, by his Spirit, should dwell in Zion, and even dwell with the rebellious? Wonder, ye heavens! be astonished, O earth! was ever love, mercy and grace like this? But while we so utterly fail in finding language in which to express the height and depth of the sacred mystery, let us, to the utmost extent of our limited capacity, contemplate the evidence and assurance given by the apostle whereby we know that we dwell in God, and he in us. This we know, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

It is only by his Spirit that we can know or be taught the things of the Spirit. This Spirit is called the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. It is also called the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, and is the Spirit which Jesus promised to send them, who should lead them into all truth. If any man have not this Spirit, whatever else he may have, he is none of his. But as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God, and God dwelleth in them; for the life and nature of the parent always dwells in his children.

Should any inquire, How long has God been the dwelling place of his children? the psalmist replies, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations; before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." —Psa. xc. 1, 2.

It is truly wonderful to contemplate that before the mountains were brought forth, the earth formed, or the foundation of the world — before sin was born, or Adam's dust was fashioned to a man, even from everlasting, the church of God had her actual existence in God, and dwelt in the secret place of the Almighty, and abode under the shadow of the Most High, (Psa. 91: 1,) and her life was hid with Christ in God. This was not a mere prospective matter, a thing only anticipated, as some have supposed; for this life, in and by which every member of the body of Christ is and was fully identified, was recognized and written in the book of God, and his eyes did see the entire substance of that body, and in his book all the members of Christ were written, and in continuance perfectly fashioned before any of them were brought forth into manifestation in the order of time. (Psalm 139: 15, 16) Hence the beloved John testifies, saying, "For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." —1 John 1:2. And in chapter five he declares to the saints the record of the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, borne in heaven, and witnessed by the Spirit, the water and the blood, agreeing in the One. "And this is the record," or testimony, namely, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son, and so perfectly identified with his Sonship, that "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the son of God hath not life." Hence we are assured that the spiritual, eternal life of all the children of God is in the Sonship of Christ, as the only begotten Son of God, and that he is our life. Our spiritual life is therefore eternal; not **created,** but begotten of the Father in the Sonship of Christ, as the only begotten Son of God, and as such the Mediatorial Head and Life of the church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

This is what we understand to be the eternal, vital union of Christ and his church. It is **eternal,** because it was with the Father, and was manifested or emanated from him as the Father of lights, by which the saints were all begotten of the Father in Christ. It is **vital,** because life is vitality; and is a **union,** because Christ, who is our life, is One, and only one. "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." (1 Tim. 2:5) And, "There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all," (all the members of that one body of which Christ is the Head.) — (Eph. 4: 4-6) "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ." (1 Cor. 12:12) "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." (Romans 12:4,5.) "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." (Col. 3:15) "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him, the Head over all to the church, which

is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." — (Eph. 1:22,23.)

Now, if these scriptures do not prove beyond all successful contradiction the perfect unity or oneness of Christ and his church, as a Head and body, animated by one Spirit and unity of life, we must confess our utter incapacity to comprehend the meaning of words. If these plain, positive declarations do not prove an actual existence in and vital union of life begotten of God the Father, and given to all the members of Christ, as established by the eternal record of the Father, Word and Holy Ghost in heaven, and by the witness of the Spirit, the water and the blood in earth, then must we conclude that there was no action or act of God in begetting or giving to his people that eternal life which is in his Son, or in making them the members of his body, or of his existence actually, as the Head and Life of his church, before the mountains were brought forth, the earth formed, or the world was made.

If all this was only prospective with God, a mere prospect that it might at some subsequent period be so, then we have been mistaken in believing that God has actually been the dwelling place of his people even from everlasting to everlasting, or that the life which he has given them in his Son is, in the full sense of the word, eternal life; if it was not truly that life which was with the Father, coeval with the being of God, then it must have had a subsequent beginning. And if it be admitted, as the holy apostles have affirmed, and as Christ himself has declared, that Christ is the life of his people, to deny the eternity of this life is to deny the eternity of Christ himself.

We have too much confidence in those brethren who have denied the eternal union of life in the Head and body of the church of God, to believe they would cavil with or dispute the plain import of the scriptures upon this most important of all subjects; but they seem to confuse and confound the **actual** existence of the spiritual life of the saints, as dwelling in God, in Christ, as in the secret place of the Most High, with its subsequent development in the personal individual members of Christ, as manifested when they are, while here in the flesh, called of God, quickened and born of the Spirit. We do not contend, nor do we believe, that our earthly nature ever existed until it was created and given to us in that Adam who is of the earth, earthy. The life which was given us in Adam was mortal, or subject to sin against God, and fell under the curse of the law. Of this earthly nature the children of God partook, being born of the flesh; but of their spiritual, eternal life, which was hid with Christ in God, they were ignorant, and destitute of spiritual life until Christ, who is their life, took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Now, if our earthly nature had been in Christ before he came in the flesh, he would not have had need to take part of the same flesh and blood of which his children had partaken before his incarnation. But it was needful, as his people were partakers of the flesh and blood, and in their earthly, fleshly nature had sinned, and required to be redeemed, for him to take part of the same, in order that he might suffer for them in the flesh, and bear their sins in his own body on the tree. By being made of a woman, he took on him our nature, was found in fashion as a man; and in taking our flesh, he was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death. For thus it became him by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. It was expedient for Christ to partake of our nature in which we had sinned, and stand in our law place, in order to meet the demands of the law, and so redeem us from its curse and from its dominion, that we as the redeemed sons of men might receive the adoption of sons, and receive the spirit of adoption, by which we are in our redeemed persons sealed unto the day of

redemption, when our vile bodies, which are now mortal, shall be changed from natural to spiritual bodies, from mortal to immortal, and from corruptible to incorruptible; until this death to which our mortal body is subject shall be conformed to and swallowed up of that eternal life which was with the Father, and was given up in Christ Jesus before the world began. Then shall the redeemed creature, which was created and sinned and died in Adam, be raised in incorruption, and put on immortality. "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." (Rom. 8:21)

Only creation is required to constitute creatures; but to be related as children of God, we must be the development of that life which was with the Father, and which was given us in his Son. As sons of God we have a pure and holy nature, which is born of God, and which cannot sin, because it is born of God. But as creatures in the earthly nature, we are born of the flesh, as children of the earthly Adam, and as such, our earthly nature, the earthly house of this tabernacle, is held in the strong bondage of mortality, and it must be dissolved by death; but when it shall go down in death we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal and in the heavens, and we shall not, if we are the children of God, be found naked, but be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven; and our vile body also, washed in the immaculate fountain of the blood of Christ, shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, and enjoy the same liberty. Our bodies, when in the resurrection they shall be quickened by the Spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead, shall then be fashioned like his glorious and now glorified body, and we shall then know that we dwell in God and he in us, and that "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe June 1, 1878)

OBITUARIES

LESTER W. MELLOTT

Lester W. Mellott of Needmore, Pa. was born June 1, 1898, and departed this life suddenly April 1, 1968. He was the son of Michael W. Mellott and Sarah E. Hess. On July 15, 1920, he was united in marriage to Lola R. DeShong, and to this union a son and a daughter were born: Kermit of Needmore and Mrs. Margaret G. Mellott of Warfordsburg, Pa., who survive. Surviving also are two brothers: Reed C. Mellott of Needmore and Russell D. Mellott of St. Thomas, Pa.; one sister, Mrs. Mollie I. Garland, McConnellsburg, Pa.; two grandsons, six granddaughters and one great grandson.

Though he did not unite with the church, he was a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace; and was a constant attender of the meetings of Old School Baptists for many years. He was always ready to do whatever he could for the benefit of the church and brethren. His death was sudden and unexpected, and was a great shock to his many neighbors and friends. We had spent the night with him and Sister Mellott on Saturday before he died on Monday morning. It was a most pleasant visit and our conversation was greatly enjoyed.

Funeral services were conducted at the Sideling Hill Primitive Baptist Church, Fulton County, Pa., by the writer, and his body was laid to rest in the church cemetery, to await the coming of the Lord and the resurrection, when all the Lord's people shall be raised in the likeness of their Saviour, their mortality being swallowed up of life to ever be with Him in glory.

The many sorrowing friends who called at the funeral home and the many at the funeral services, together with the many flowers from them, testified of their love and respect for one who had gone a little before them.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to Sister Mellott and her family, that they may realize that He does all things well.

John D. Wood

ELDER HARVEY JENNINGS BIRD

In the providence of our God and in sadness, I will attempt to fulfill my duty by request of Sister Bird and her children in sketching a brief account of the passing of our beloved brother and father in Israel, Elder Harvey Jennings Bird. His death occurred while working in his garden at home at Hurricane, West Virginia on March 8, 1968.

Elder Harvey J. Bird was born August 22, 1899, in Putman County, West Virginia. He

was the son of (Deacon) Creed M. Bird and Sarah Bird. On October 8, 1918, he was united in marriage to Bessie Wade Bird who survives. To this union were born six children: Ruby Plymale of Kenova, W. Va.; Gertrude Hoffman of Madison, Ohio; Lois Cottrell, Hurricane, W. Va.; Horace Bird, Hurricane, W. Va.; Ferrell Bird of Painesville, Ohio; and Isaac Bird of Huntington, W. Va.; who are left to mourn the loss of a good and faithful father. One sister, Lela Edwards of Hurricane, also survives.

Elder Bird received a sweet hope in the mercy of God early in life. His preaching reflected his deep convictions in the sovereignty of our God. He related his experience and was received by the Providence Primitive Baptist Church on June 20, 1920, and was baptized into the full fellowship of the church the following month on July 24, 1920, by Elder W. I. Wade. The church recognized his gift and gave him license to exercise it within the bounds of the church, October 26, 1929. He was ordained to full work of the gospel ministry on the 6th day of September 1930, which work he faithfully followed until the summons came that called him home.

On July 25, 1931, he was called to the pastoral care of the Providence Church, which church he served faithfully until his death. Surely his labors there were labors of love as he traveled over the rough road through heat and cold, storm or sunshine, not for hire or man's reward, but for the love of God and his people, thus fulfilling the command, "Feed My Sheep" and "Feed My Lambs." He also served other churches.

He was a notable man for his godly walk and his humble manner before his fellowmen; firm in his convictions and true to his ideals. To know him was to love him. His kind embrace in fellowship toward his many brethren was one that could dispel our doubts and fears.

Elder Bird served as the clerk of the Pocatalico Association for 36 years. He will be long remembered by those of us that were blessed to walk with him. Much could be said of his firm, steadfast adherence to the doctrine of God our Savior and to the precepts, examples, and admonitions as set forth in the Bible, and few were more familiar with the scriptures than he.

The funeral service was held at the Providence Church on Turkey Creek on Sunday, March 10, 1968, by Elders J. S. Hunnicutt, Roy Smith and V. B. Linn. A large crowd of people assembled to pay their last tribute of respect and love. Burial was in the Bird Cemetery on a hill a few miles from the church, there to await the resurrection, to which his faith looked.

We beleive for him to die is a great gain, but he will be missed; not only by his family, but by his many brethren far and near, his friends and neighbors, yet most of all by his dear wife and companion, Sister Bird. May the Lord comfort her and all the loved ones that mourn the passing of our precious brother.

V. B. Linn

IN MEMORY OF
ELDER HARVEY JENNINGS BIRD

The death Angel came, his precious life to claim,
Heartache and sorrow to all did reign;
Friends and loved ones, both far and near
Were sorely grieved for the one they loved so dear.

Oh, the emptiness within my lonely heart
I can only express in a little part;
At first such shock was in my breast,
Night or day I could not rest.

Though the ravages of time had taken its toll,
He murmured not at his timely role;
His body was stooped and filled with pain,
Yet he faltered not and didn't complain.

He met his fellows with out-stretched hand
And gave them the best at his command;
Earnestly living by the faith of God
Proclaiming his Master as his staff and rod.

When blessed with the spirit, he talked so sweet
About love and grace to those he would meet;
Praising His Master in word and deed,
Looking to Jesus for his every need.

He claimed no goodness of his own,
Yet grace and goodness in him hath shone;
He scattered flowers in the path he trod,
Humbly praising his Lord and God.

A humble servant at his brothers' feet,
Always pleasant to those he would meet;
He claimed no title, he sought no praise
As he worshipped his Lord day after day.

He put no trust in the flesh of man,
Begging for wisdom from his Father's hand;
In him, a good work was wrought from God above,
Humbly seeking for Christ in everlasting love.

He had a God-given love for the church of his choice
In gospel address he was humbly made to rejoice;
The words that he spoke were from his Master above
Seasoned with grace and spoken in love.

An unworthy nephew,
Bernard Oxley

LOLLIE MAY BUCKNER

Sister Lollie May Buckner was born January 9, 1888, to Mr. and Mrs. B. F. J. Davis,

in Salado, Texas, and passed this life February 7, 1968; making her stay on earth a little more than 80 years.

She came with her parents to Reed, Okla., in 1898, and there she married R. L. Buckner June 23, 1912. To this union were born four children, twin sons and two daughters. Brother and Sister Buckner moved to Mangum in 1934; and he preceded her in death on November 27, 1963.

Sister Buckner united with the church February 21, 1937, and was presently a member with the Little Flock Church, Altus, Oklahoma. She was a great gift to our little church. Oh what patience was manifested in her during her long illness! She was confined to her bed over two and one half years with a stroke. My faith was strengthened each time I visited her month after month. She often said, "I do not know why the Lord continue to keep me here, but he surely has a purpose in it." We believe she has gained the victory over death, and died in the triumph of a living faith. We at Little Flock Church will surely miss her, yet realizing that our loss is her gain.

She leaves to mourn her passing, two sons and two daughters: Sherman, Oklahoma City; Hermon, Sacramento, Calif.; Sister Modora Hager, Mangum; and Mrs. Ed Whisler, Chelsea, Okla. Also eight grandchildren, five great grandchildren; three sisters, one brother and a host of relatives and friends.

The funeral service was conducted by her pastor, and her body was laid to rest by her husband in the Riverside Cemetery, Mangum, Oklahoma, to await the call of her Master on resurrection morning.

(Elder) C. M. Haygood

MRS. THELMA J. SHOCKLEY

Sister Thelma J. Shockley was born October 13, 1913, in Henry County, Virginia. She was the daughter of A. Gabe Fulcher and Mendie Jane Jefferson. She was married three times. Her first husband, Curtis J. Johnson, deceased. To their union were born three children: Glen Johnson, Mrs. Barbara Watson and Mrs. Irene Draper.

Later she was married to Dr. E. N. Shockley, deceased. Then to H. M. Shockley, and he is her surviving husband. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church while in the Community Hospital in Roanoke, Virginia, and wanted her membership at Union Church. She united with the church, January 21, 1968.

She passed away February 10, 1968. In her passing we believe she died in triumph of the faith which God gave her.

Written by a sister in hope.

Mrs. Pearle Shelton, Clerk

KATIE HATCHER RAGAN

My mother, Mrs. Charlotte Louise Katherine Hatcher Ragan, was born November 4, 1878, in Humphreys County, Tennessee, near McEwen, the oldest daughter of Elder James R. and Mary Halbrook Hatcher. She departed this life on August 3, 1967, at the age of 88. She is survived by four sons, Floyd and Carl Ragan of Dickson, Tennessee; James R. of Pembroke, Ky., and Nathan E. of Houston, Texas; three daughters, Mrs. Valeria Greenwell and Mrs. Georgia Spradlin of McEwen, and Mrs. Elthia R. Johnson of Nashville, Tenn.; also a brother, Ernest R. Hatcher; two sisters, Mrs. Frances Hurt and Mrs. Maudie Greenwell; thirty grandchildren, forty-three great grandchildren and one great, great grandchild.

She was educated in the schools of Humphreys County and attended Edgewood College. She started teaching school in Dickson County, and soon thereafter married Nathan Ragan on February 9, 1898, who died on June 26, 1962.

She made her profession of Faith on September 30, 1911 and was baptized by Elder L. D. Seals on October 1, 1911 as a member of the Old Yellow Creek Primitive Baptist Church in Dickson County, Tennessee, finally moving her membership to the Bordeaux Church in 1965. She served as church clerk from about 1925 until 1965 and also clerk of the original West Tennessee Association until 1951.

Although she never received a degree as a Registered Nurse, she was truly a "Florence Nightingale" in the community where she lived, and elsewhere, attending the sick and comforting the bereaved at any hour of the day or night when she was summoned. She experienced much illness in her own immediate family and faced bravely the tragedy when her youngest daughter was severely burned at the age of four. She never complained at any trial and her hands were always busy.

She was strong in her convictions and never faltered in her Faith. She was faithful to the church, a staunch believer and defender in the doctrine of predestination of all things. She was happy about her work, singing the old hymns she loved so much, "Amazing Grace," "How Firm a Foundation," and others.

She was a devoted wife, a kind and loving mother, and we shall always miss her. We humbly bow to the Will of God who called her to her eternal home and who has promised to strengthen and uphold us by the right hand of his power.

Her funeral was conducted at the Dickson Funeral Home on August 5, 1967 by her pastor, Elder Ramer L. Biggs, assisted by Elder

Paul Poyner. Interment was in the VanLeer cemetery.

It is requested by her children that a copy of this be spread on the minutes of the Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Submitted by a daughter,
Mrs. Elthia R. Johnson

BEULAH JAMERSON BRYANT

Sister Beulah Jamerson Bryant was born December 23, 1895, in Franklin County, Va., the daughter of James F. and Nancy J. Brammer Jamerson. She departed this life December 29, 1967.

She leaves her husband, Elisha F. Bryant of Fieldale; two sons, J. Nelson of Bassett and Roy Randolf Bryant, of Fieldale. Also four grandchildren; three sisters, Mrs. Lizzie Lackey, Bassett, Mrs. Emmett Turner, Martinsville, Mrs. Karleston Halverton, Baltimore, Md.; and three brothers, Posie Jamerson, Stuart, Va.; George and Gold Jamerson of Collinsville, Va.

She joined Riverside Primitive Baptist Church the first Sunday in July, 1946. She loved the church, and enjoyed going very much, and having the brothers and sisters visit in their home. During the time she was a member she and her husband visited twenty-one sessions of the Smith River Association. Though her health had been bad for some time, she attended church regularly until a short time before she died.

Her funeral was held at Collins Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder Leonard Brammer, assisted by Elder R. A. May, with a large crowd in attendance. She was laid to rest in Roselawn Burial Park, Martinsville, Va., beneath a mound covered with many flowers. May God bless and comfort her bereaved family is our prayer.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be given the family; one placed on our church records; and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of Union Church while in conference Saturday before the 4th Sunday in February, 1968.

Fannie Thomas

N. A. DIXON

Brother N. A. Dixon was born June 4, 1881, and departed this life October 17, 1967, making his stay in this life 86 years. Brother Dixon was married three times: to Viola Hackney, Elizabeth Linebaugh, and to Ollie Patterson who survives him, along with one son Brother Bernard Dixon and one daughter Mrs. Ida Fobbs.

Brother Dixon professed a Hope and was baptized by Elder Gold more than fifty years ago. He came to Moons Creek Church by letter many years ago and remained a faithful and loving member until his passing. He was sound in the doctrine and was well versed in the Scriptures. He loved the God of his faith and trusted in him in all things, believing that He who had begun a good work would perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

Now as we bow in humble submission to God's will, we desire to thank Him for this meek and humble life and pray that God's grace might abound with his dear family and make real His promise to be a husband to the widow and a father to the fatherless.

Brother Dixon's funeral was conducted by his pastor Elder Kenneth R. Key and former pastor Elder Raymond Payne. His body was laid to rest in Moons Creek Church Cemetery, to await the Glorious Resurrection.

Written by Sister Emma Sartin and
Brother Henry Sartin

CLARA SCARBOROUGH DANIELS

Sister Clara Scarborough Daniels of Elizabeth City, North Carolina, widow of the late William Judd Daniels and a member of Flatty Creek Primitive Baptist Church in Pasquotank County, North Carolina, passed away on November 13, 1967 at the age of 85. Her funeral was conducted by Elder I. S. Conner, and her mortal remains were interred in Gallop Cemetery in Currituck County, North Carolina, to await the second coming of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Sister Daniels first joined Elam Church, in Currituck County, and subsequently transferred her membership to Flatty Creek Church. She is survived by one nephew, Alton G. Scarborough of Virginia Beach, Virginia, and two nieces, Mrs. James Owens of Elizabeth City and Mrs. W. E. Fulton of Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Our departed sister was a steadfast believer in the glorious doctrine of predestination and election, and attended her meetings regularly when not providentially hindered from doing so. We believe that her spirit has entered into that rest that remaineth to the people of God, and that at the last day her mortal body will put on immortality, that it will be raised a spiritual body and reunited with her spirit which God will bring with him (I Thess. 4:14). We love to think of the last day, the great day of the Lord, when all them that love His appearing shall meet Him in the air; receive a crown of righteousness laid up for them (2 Tim. 4:8); and reign with Him forevermore in the mansions of glory, the title to which is the imputed righteousness of the dear Redeemer.

C. W. Vass

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 136 DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1968 NO. 8

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES
(2 Tim. 3:1)

We're living in perilous times —
Of strife among the races,
"Of wars and rumors of wars" and
"Earthquakes in divers places."

There are more storms than usual,
On land and on the seas,
And numerous homes are laid waste,
While folks are ill at ease.

There's much Sabbath desecration,
In this licentious day,
And throughout this sinful nation,
There's a falling away.

It's believed that we are living
In the last days of time;
The scriptures are being fulfilled
With an orgy of crime.

A worldwide union of churches,
Urged by the church of Rome,
Portends persecution of saints
On their pilgrimage home.

Christ the righteous judge is coming,
The high and lofty One,
And the rightness of his coming
Will destroy Babylon.

He'll separate the sheep from goats,
And take the former home
To reign with him in realms of bliss,
Where the latter cannot come.

To praise him will be their employ,
In that bright world above,
While beholding his glory there,
Where all is peace and love.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, N. C.

THE SIGNS THE SOURCE OF HER NEWS OF THE BRETHREN

27124 Perkins Road
Madera, Calif. 93637

Dear Elder Spangler:

I see it is time to renew my subscription to that wonderful paper, the **Signs of the Times.** I have had the pleasure of having the **Signs** in my home for many years.

So many of the dear people's writings explain my experiences so perfectly. I was blessed to attend three associations, and one three days meeting in Dallas, Texas; and was blessed to hear you and Elders Lambert, Loyd Wall, W. W. Taylor, J. L. Smith, Prescott, Haygood and many others preach God's unsearchable riches, and the divine truth as I see it. It was indeed a blessing, for only God could bless the dear elders to deliver such wonderful messages as they did.

There is no church near here, so the **Signs** is the only news I get from the dear folks of the faith. I am very shakey and can't write what is on my mind. The Lord has often richly blessed me, and this sinner does not deserve to be so wonderfully blessed. In my sorrows He has always been near to rescue me from falling, and to place me on what I feel is the solid rock of his grace.

May God richly bless you dear ones in your work, and also your dear wife whom I love very dearly. Yours in hope of eternal life: saved by grace, if saved at all, for there is no good thing in me—of myself I can do nothing; but with God all things are possible. This gives me a little hope and faith to press on in this world of sin and sorrow, as God leads me.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. R. E. McPherson

ALL ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE SAME THING

Rt. 2,
Kenly, N. C. 27542

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is my check for $10.00 for two year's renewal, with the balance for the Indigent Fund.

The **Signs** are very comforting to me, and I believe they contend for the truth and the whole truth as declared from the foundation of the world. The thing that concerns me most, is whether the arrangement includes a poor sinner such as I am.

May the all wise God continue to direct the editors and writers to have the mind to send out such good articles as were in the May issue.

Yours in hope,
Mrs. John Edd Pope

HE SUPPLIES THEIR NEEDS, WHETHER GROANINGS OR REJOICINGS

807 Pope Street,
Memphis, Tenn. 38112

Dear Editors:

This may not be suitable for the **Signs**, but my subscription is due, and I have a strong impression to write, even if it goes to the waste basket.

I have been in such a dark, cold, empty state of mind for a few weeks; and in spite of the fact that I thought I knew how corrupt and sinful I am, I was shocked and horrified to see just what I am when the Holy Spirit is not working in me. Jesus said that without the Father he could do nothing. "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." Paul said that without Him we can do nothing, but that with him we can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us.

How sweet and easy to do when the Spirit of love is working in us! Truly his yoke is easy and his burden light: peace flows like a river and you feel, "It is well with my soul." But the trial I have just been through made me feel that surely I was one that would faint and fall by the wayside, and my brethren and sisters, my loved ones, would pass by and look sadly upon me. I so clearly saw what I was by nature, and what I desired to be by grace in the sight of God and man, and I was wretched. I felt to be torn, bleeding as though seven devils had been cast out of me.

I wondered, after thirty-eight years of hoping and trusting in the complete salvation by the grace and mercy of God alone, do I yet have confidence in this flesh? The only thing I can say is, if I was deceived into having any confidence in my flesh, I hope and pray the operation I have been through will heal, and never occur again.

I must confess that I have had a strong desire to walk worthy of the calling and quickening from which springs my hope — the hope which is now and has been so precious. I have had such a zeal, and hoped I would always be found ready to spend and be spent in the cause of Christ — ready to do whatever came to hand with all that was in me. My heart burns with love when I read Paul's words, "Beseeching them by the mercies of God that they present their bodies a living sacrifice . . ."

Yes, I long to keep the law written in my heart, I hope. I delight in the law of God when the Spirit is there: I meditate upon them in the late hours of night. But I find another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind. It brings me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. Have you ever been so void of any good spirit that it even made going to meetings or associations with your brethren and sisters seem a chore — so void of love that it makes one's duty so unclean? And finally fail miserably and shirk a responsibility that would have been a joy and privilege at another time. This is when you really see just what you are. O the shame of it! you feel as water poured out on the ground: nothing and less than nothing.

Then along comes the *Signs*. I enjoyed it so much. "Covetousness" under *Voices of the Past* was an eye opener. It made me wonder if it has been that I coveted vain glory among the people of God, and this was the cause of my desire to be faithful and true in all things. Do I want to appear a shining light before them, or before God?

The true answer to this is, Yes, I want to walk before them in such a way that they think kindly of me — I would hate for them to see and know the deceitfulness of my heart and the evil thoughts that come from indwelling sin. But the real fear, shame and grief is in knowing that God knows it all. My soul stands trembling at times before a holy and righteous God.

The glorious thing about the true Gospel is that Christ is made all things to his children — righteousness, wisdom, sanctification and redemption, which will house every one of them in heaven and immortal glory with him. I believe He is supplying their needs here, whether groaning and suffering over their sins, or rejoicing with joy unspeakable. There is a need and a cause for all these things being just as they are.

Brother Spangler, your two sermons were so rich in the spirit of love and power at the Ouichita Association. Elder Smith's sermon on the resurrection was, I believe the best I ever heard. He was to preach a funeral that afternoon, but I think he preached it there.

If there is an uncertain sound in this writing toss it aside.

Yours in hope,
Mrs. J. E. Young

FRYING PAN OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

The unusual name of "Frying Pan" for a church has prompted many inquiries as to its origin. In the early 1700's a frying pan was found at a spring on the present church property, and this gave the name to the spring and the creek nearby, as well as to the community. (Sometime in 1880 the name of the community was changed to Floris.) It is said that the pan was left at the spring either by Indians or by copper prospectors employed by "King" Carter, who were working across the road from the present church property. While the miners were eating lunch at the spring their workings caved in, and the project was abandoned.

"King" Carter was a large landowner in Colonial Virginia by a land grant from the King of England. It was by his permission that the plot of land began to be used for Baptist meetings. This was about 1740. A house was erected and used for many years, until partially destroyed during the Revolutionary War. We are told that when the building was not in use for meetings for a time, it was used for the storage of tobacco, probably by the British as a toll house. The deed to the property was made some years later by descendants of "King" Carter.

In May, 1791, Frying Pan Spring Baptist Church was formally organized, and the building was re-built and enlarged; during which time meetings were held in the home of Elder Richard Major nearby.

The members of the church were in full accord with the Philadelphia Confession of Faith of 1742, and patterned their Covenant, Articles of Faith, and Rules of Discipline accordingly. Following are some of the points specifically noted:

The Old and New Testaments are the Word of God, and our only certain and infallible rule of faith and obedience containing everything needful for us to know, believe, or do; there is only one living and true God, the Almighty Creator, Preserver and Disposer of all things visible and invisible, in whom we live, move and have our being; there are three persons in the Godhead: the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the same in substance, power and eternity, therefore one God not to be divided in es-

sence, though distinguished by several peculiar properties and personal relations; that our Lord Jesus Christ, the second person in the Trinity, who was begotten by the Father, did in time take upon him a real human nature in which he fulfilled the law, and died to make atonement for the sins of his people; that such as are redeemed by Christ shall at last be saved by his grace, and justified by the application of his blood, and such shall obtain eternal happiness and enter into the kingdom of glory as are thus wrought upon, converted and changed in time; that Christ shall return from heaven, and by his power raise the dead both just and unjust, and will receive the righteous and reject the wicked forever.

Their Rules of Discipline were plainly spelled out, and included: Not to forsake the assembling of themselves together; to bear each one his part according to ability in defraying expenses absolutely necessary for maintaining the worship of God; not to divulge the infirmities of each other; not to remove their residence without informing the church; and not willingly live in the neglect of any known duty to God, our country, our neighbors, our brethren, or ourselves, but to endeavor to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

In conclusion they stated that any member found disorderly in these things, was liable to censure, and in case of continuance, to be excluded from communion. These Articles and Rules they maintained, as shown in accounts of disciplinary actions taken against offenders in numerous cases.

Elder Richard Major was first pastor, serving from 1791 until 1797, and was succeeded by Elder Jeremiah Moore, 1797 to 1815; Elder Dagg, from 1815 to 1818; Elder John Johnson, during the year 1828; Elder Baker, during the year 1829; Elder William Gilmore, 1830 to 1833; Elder Samuel Trott, 1833 to 1866; Elder A. B. Francis, 1868 to 1870; Elder E. V. White, 1878 to 1907; Elder H. H. Lefferts, 1909 to 1949; Elder J. D. Wood, 1950 to (present). During the times when there were no stated pastors the following Elders were among those who preached for them: William Thrift, R. C. Leachman, Joseph Furr, William Smoot, and others.

During the last decades of the 18th century many ministers who could not conscientiously conform to the religious establishment then in power by law, were severely persecuted by fines, imprisonment, etc. The incidents of Patrick Henry defending them before the courts, is on record. The efforts of James Madison, Elder John Leland, and many others, led to the adoption of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which provides that, "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishing of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof . . . " Elder Richard Major and Elder Jeremiah Moore were among those who were arrested for preaching the gospel "contrary to law."

The "Spring" in the name of the church was dropped for brevity. When the division among the Baptists occurred in 1832, the church remained upon her old principles, and with many other churches became known as Old School Baptists; to which she remains faithful. She was a member of the Ketockton Association for some years, but came into the Virginia Corresponding Meeting soon after it was organized in 1836.

Frying Pan Church is located at Floris, Va., between Herndon and Chantilly, and meetings are held each second Sunday. The Trustees are: Earl Thompson, Arthur L. Carter, and Carrol Murphy; and Arthur L. Carter is their deacon.

John D. Wood — April, 1968

(The above was prepared for a local newspaper at their request. — J. D. W.)

SIGNS A MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION

2768 Clifton Ave., N. W.
Roanoke, Va. 24017

Dear Editors:

I again feel I want to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times.* When the issues arrive, I feel like Elder H. V. Cole once said, "Old Baptists used to meet and enjoy telling and hearing how one another have been getting along — how the Lord has been dealing with them."

I do believe the Lord deals with each one of his people in the heart, so much so that they love his name above all, for there is no other name given whereby we must be saved. Reading the *Signs* conveys to my mind the confession of the gracious work of the Lord's hand in the heart; which causes me to remember the second chapter of Luke, especially verses 9 to 15, and especially the last part of the 15th, "which the Lord hath made known unto us." The 19th verse, "But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart," is worthy of notice.

Even as Jesus was in, and is the beginning and the end, the ones who spoke of him before his birth and at his birth, to his death and resurrection: and looking to his coming again, is that which the Lord hath made known unto us. He is the consolation of Israel, and to us today. I rejoice to hear and see it declared today — an earnest contending for the faith once delivered. Contending for something so worthwhile, so precious, so gracious and wholesome. Not contentiously I hope, but as Paul said in Philippians 1:18, "What then? notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." To rejoice that Christ is testified of seems so good to me.

Please renew my subscription for two years, and place balance in the Indigent Fund, or wherever you can use it.

Unworthily,
Catherine A. Houchins

HAS MUCH IN COMMON

Sharp's Chapel, Tenn. 37866

Elder John D. Wood,
Dear Elder and Editor:

Enclosed find check for two years' subscription to the *Signs of the Times* . . . I find that I have much in common with many of the writers on the doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and the absolute purposes of God. I am sure we have one *absoluter,* that is, God; no doubt but that he fixed all things, — and it was completely done.

The sweet singer in Zion gave us this consolation, saying, "Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded, and they were created. He hath also established them for ever and ever: *he hath made a decree which shall not pass.*" (Psalm 148:4, 6)

Another witness tells us that the heavens and the earth were finished and all the host of them. How few today are able to go with Gideon and blow the trumpet in Zion! only those that have been tried by God himself. He told Gideon there were yet too many: to bring them down to the water and he would try them there, and those whom He said should go with Gideon should go. We don't find a free moral agent in this work; in fact we don't find any free agents in the work of God.

I guess our mind runs on this small number because we are so few in number here where we are located. We have only four small churches in the Powell Valley Association, and our ministers are few; but we do have a wonderful elder to visit us once a year. Elder R. L. Biggs from Nashville, Tenn. He is a wonderfully gifted minister.

May the Lord bless you in this work you are doing. I know you comfort the hearts of many poor sinners.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
(Elder) John Wilder

ELDER ATTEBERY TO ELDER AND SISTER D. C. DAVIS IN 1958

Hermiston, Oregon
July 9, 1958

Dear Brother & Sister Davis:

We received your letter yesterday, so will answer it while it is on my mind. We are both well as usual. I have had two bad days since you were here. I am sure now that it is a nerve condition. So do not be surprised if I do not get over there on the third Sunday. We missed the Elgin meeting on the first Sunday. The first one we have missed in the last year. But I think the rest did me some good physically.

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20)

Now for me to try to write on this scripture you mentioned, is quite a responsibility. And I hesitate to do so, for I know that I differ with some of our brethren in regard to the flesh and Spirit; so I can only write as I see it. And I pray that God will direct my mind and my pen to write in sincerity and truth, and that He may enable me to rightly divide His word.

My mind has been so disturbed lately in regard to the relation and association of the flesh or body and the Spirit, also the word obedience, that I could not refrain from speaking on the subject. So many things have come to my mind that I had never seen before. And as I have condemned these old bodies, and have overlooked their purpose and use, some very comforting thoughts have been given me concerning them. And I have spoken of them to the comfort of others.

Now, let us turn to the 5th chapter of 1st. Cor. Read the whole chapter. Then let us read Gal 2:20. "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

I believe this is the natural body, this body of flesh in this present "natural" world. The same one that is spoken of as the Temple of the Holy Ghost. Also spoken of in Rom. 8:20. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who has subjected the same in hope, 21: Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

And this is the same body (natural body of Flesh) which is the Temple of the Holy Ghost which is God's and will be finally adopted and redeemed from the grave.

I have thought there existed a great gulf between the body of flesh and the Spirit. But I believe now that they are very closely related. If our body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which was placed in our body by the will of God and are purchased by the blood of the Son of God (Jesus), then why try to destroy or separate them.

Even though we know that natural lusts of the flesh are with us and which we hate, for to love God is to hate sin, Paul says let not sin reign in your mortal bodies that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield your selves servants to obey; whether of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness, his servants ye are. I know just how weak man is, and that it is not in man to direct his steps, and without God, or to be severed from Him, we can do nothing. But Paul says, "I can do all things through Christ which strengthenth me."

So we are made submissive by the working of the Spirit, for if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. We can only walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, when we are led by the Spirit of love and humbleness. I am taught obedience by the sufferings that are placed upon me. Therefore I must glorify God or give God all the glory and praise for that great love and the many

blessings that he has so graciously bestowed upon me when he gave me burning desire to be obedient to his commands. Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel, and therefore I can say that my constant prayer is "Lord be merciful to me a sinner, lead, guide, guard and direct my mind and my walk in this life; for I know that without thee I can do nothing." I do feel that to be called as Pastor of a church is the most sacred trust that can be placed upon man. If I am a God called minister (and I have reason to feel that I am) then I am faced constantly with the qualifications of a Bishop. Then, if I am called Pastor of a church, what manner of life should I live?

Acts 20:28 "Take heed therefore unto **yourselves** and unto all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood." Again in James 1:27, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." In 2nd. Tim. 2: 21-22, "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and be prepared unto every good work. Flee also youthful lusts; but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

There must be a people that are to dishonor and we are to purge ourself from these; so, as there is no dishonor or sinfulness in the spiritual man (for it is born of God and cannot sin), then it must have reference to our natural body.

I believe that all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

I take the good works here mentioned to being enabled by the Spirit of God to rightly divide the word of truth and to preach the Gospel in truth and sincerity. I believe we ministers should be careful in our every day walk, as we are mentioned as an example to the flock. I feel that we should avoid the very appearance of evil. If we believe in efficacious grace, then we should continually pray God to give us a desire and strength to walk so there is no doubt as to whether or not we have had an experience of Grace that is an outward show of the inward work of God's Grace in our heart, for from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

I do not want you to understand me to mean that we have to or need to do these things to earn or gain our salvation, but because we have already received it if we are of that number whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life from before the foundation of the world, "For by Grace are ye saved through faith, and not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast." So therefore, dearly beloved, let us thank God for all those things, glorifying God in our body and in our spirit which are God's. And by God's power be made to have a great desire to keep this body unspotted from the world.

Now I have written this as I have felt the weakness of myself in trying to explain the close relation of the mortal body and the spiritual life that dwells in this tabernacle of clay.

I can say truthfully that my natural body has been brought down into a submissive state that it goes to the very limit of its physical strength to serve the spiritual desires. So I am made to say that the warfare has been very great and has covered quite a number of years, but the inner-man has won a victory over the rebellious natural man. So I am still wondering in amazement and continually asking why hast thou chosen this poor weak mortal for thy servant and why hast thou bestowed the many wonderful blessings on one so unworthy and rebellious. I feel that I can never repay the debt of gratitude that I owe our heavenly Father.

Matt. 16:28: "Verily I say unto you, there shall be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they

see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." Matt. 24:34: "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." Mark 9:1: "And he (Jesus) said unto them, verily I say unto you that there be some of them which stand here, which shall not taste of death till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power."

But even with this proof of this kingdom being set up near two thousand years ago, some of our people are looking for it some time in the future.

Rom 11:12: "Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fullness? Luke 21:24: "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Luke 21:32: "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled." Then if all that was mentioned in this 21st chapter of Luke was filled before that generation passed, would it not be the fulness of the Gentiles?

And was it not explained to Peter in Acts 10:44, "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all of them which heard the word." Acts 10:45: "And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished as on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 11:15: "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them as on us at the beginning." Acts 11:17: "Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did us who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I that I could withstand God?" Acts 11:18: "When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." Also in Ephesians 2:11, "Wherefore remember that ye being in times past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by that which is called circumcision in the flesh made by hands." Ephesians 2:12: "That at that time ye were without Christ being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." Ephesians 2:13: "But in Christ Jesus ye who were sometimes far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." And it stands as a finished work.

I have written this as I see it. And I hope I have done no violence to the Scriptures.

I am as ever just a fellow laborer.

(Elder) E. J. Attebery

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 4 Box 129,
Rocky Mount, Va. 24151

Dear Brother and Sister Spangler:

I don't know whether you remember me: I am the daughter of Monroe Hill who passed away 31 years ago. He and my uncle Taylor Hill would go to the Primitive Baptist churches when they had a way to go, and they often said that they enjoyed your preaching.

When I was young I felt that I wanted to belong to some church, and would pray to the Lord to show me the right way. After I was married and my children were small, I had such a burden. After some time I dreamed of traveling on a dirt road, and came to a large field where they were preaching on the left. I went through the crowd and sat down on a new bench, and when I raised my head on the right I saw there were the old Primitive Baptist singing and preaching. I could hear my dear old uncle, Peter Hill, preaching. They were in an old building, and all were singing the beautiful Baptist hymns. I got up from my seat and went to them. I felt there and then that they were God's chosen people. My father united with the Primitive Baptist Church when he was a young man.

As time passed by I did not have any way to go to the meetings for some time. I dreamed one night of the end of time. I was in the yard and saw such a black cloud in the west, and I said,

Lord have mercy, this is the judgment day." A voice spoke and said, "Fear not I am with thee." Then I looked towards the east and there Jesus was with outstretched arms, and on his head was a crown. In the cloud God's people went to him like leaves that fly from trees; and I felt so happy.

Thirty-three years ago I went to Basham Church to the Pigg River Association; and that night there was preaching at the Roanoke Church, and I went before the church and told my experience. They received me and I was baptized by Elder Stegall. I am thankful to say that the Lord has blessed me and guided my steps. May God be with us all and keep us in love and fellowship, I ask in Jesus' name. My membership is at Little Creek Church, Franklin County, Va.

A sister saved by grace if at all,
Mrs. Lula Wright

THEY ENJOY THE SIGNS

Copper Hill, Va. 24079

Dear Editors;

Since it is time to renew my subscription, I would like to take this opportunity to tell you how much my husband and I enjoy the **Signs of the Times,** and to beg in our behalf not to reduce the size of our paper. You ask for suggestions from the readers so here is ours. We feel the subscription rate should be raised in order to cover your expenses. Enclosed is $10.00 for our renewal and the remaining for the indigent Fund to help with the free list.

Also, I am enclosing a copy of my aunt's experience which was found among some of her papers after her death, May, 1967. It was written by Okey Mae Conner in August 1920. She was a member of the Salem Primitive Baptist Church. This experience is for your consideration for the **Signs of the Times.**

May God continue to bless you dear editors in publishing our wonderful paper. There is always a little spring of joy within when I see that our new paper has arrived.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Wade Poff

ACCOUNT OF EARLY EXPERIENCE

When I was very small I dreamed that my aunt and two older sisters and myself went out to hunt grapes one day. There was a large white bird came to me and followed me every where I went. It had wings as white as snow and it continued to follow me home. It flew in the house and looked at us all. I thought it had come to judge us. It looked at one of my sisters and said she was good but didn't say anything about the rest of us. My heart began to ache for I knew I must be lost. I then went to a place they called torment. It was a furnace dug deep into the ground and there were people down in there burning. It was popping out and burning all those standing around except myself. I watched this burning for awhile and then I walked away.

The next morning I told Mama my dream and she told me I must be a good girl or I would go there. Then later I told one of my sisters and she told me that I was going there when I died or I wouldn't have had that dream. Then my troubles began! I thought I would have to be lost but after some time this went away; and I went on with my little playmates having a good time up until I was about sixteen. Then the pleasures of this world were taken from me. I felt so forsaken here on earth and in heaven. I felt as if I didn't have any earthly parents or home and the good Lord didn't love me enough to take me out of this condition. I felt to be a cast down orphan. O, then was when I cried for mercy! I begged the good Lord to send anything on me that was his will. I would be glad to suffer in the flesh if only it would give me a home with him after death.

My health was then taken from me and I thought surely that He had sent this sickness on me to take me from

this world. I knew I wasn't prepared to die but felt that I had prayed so many unworthy prayers that it was a sin for me to pray anymore and I went mourning from morning until night. One night after retiring I felt so hungry for my Saviour's love and righteousness that I ask him again if only he would look down upon my weary soul. I felt sure my prayers never reached his ear, so I thought I would try to get some sleep. I fell asleep but was soon awakened with these words, "Oh how I love Jesus because he first loved me." I was made to wonder why those words awoke me, for at that time I didn't know they were in the Bible in substance. I didn't think anything about it then but as time went by I found it in the Bible and then began to think maybe it was the Lord speaking to me. I still felt so cast down and thought if I was a christian surely I would have more evidence. I then ask-the Lord, if my body was dead and my life hid in Jesus Christ, would he give me more evidence.

After I had retired one night these words came to me, "He has loved me." I cried, "He has suffered and died to redeem such a rebel as I!" It started in my heart and went all over me. I was rejoicing so that I could not keep from singing, and I sang those beautiful words over and over. If singing was ever sweet, it was sweet to me that night. I felt like my Lord had died for me though my Mama asked me if I wasn't crazy singing in the bed. If I was, it was a mighty happy feeling. I went for sometime and I hope it pleased the good Lord to show me in a dream one night not to be afraid for He was watching over me. He showed me the dark road I had been traveling and the many trails I had endured. It seemed He showed me how I had been trying to partake of worldly things again, but He showed me his great love and power; how He had held to my hand and would until my trials were over.

One night later I was studying over my condition and worldly things. I wondered why I couldn't have pleasure like my friends. There wasn't any pleasure here on earth for me; and how my heart did ache until I hope I received a little message from heaven. These words came to me, "Suffer little children to come unto me for of such is the kingdom of heaven." I felt so calm and peaceful after He showed me that the things of this world were nothing for my soul. Sometimes I give them up in peace and then sometimes I feel so doubtful, though the sweet words that pierced my soul have never been doubted, for I felt such a great power go all over me from my head to my foot. It filled my very soul and I felt like it was so pure and holy that it couldn't have come from this world. If this one little part was taken from me I believe that everything would be gone, because it is with me every day and is as sweet to me today as it was when I first received it.

One day I was standing in the door thinking over a bitter trial in the flesh that I would soon have to meet and felt as if it was more than I could face, when these words were spoken to me as plain as if they had been spoken by the natural voice. "I'll be with thee, thy troubles to bless." I was made willing to meet my bitter trial. I felt my Lord was so near that I could have gone through anything. One of my sisters said to me that she didn't see how I could endure so much but I told her that it took all of these trials to keep me down at my loving Savior's feet where I wanted to be.

I professed a hope in Christ when I was eighteen years old, but have had many doubts since, yet have tried to live the best that I could.

Okey Mae Conner

(Above was written in 1920. She later united with the Salem church, Floyd County, Va. She died in May, 1967 — Ed.)

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church sends greetings to the other churches of our faith and order now meeting at Bowdoinham, Maine, August 26 and 27, 1967.

We are so glad to have our church opened again for our Association. We miss so sadly our departed members who in years past loved to meet here to worship, to hear and speak the same truths that our ministers are still proclaiming.

Our number is still three. We have met during the past year only with members of the other churches. We believe that our heavenly Father still reigns, and although we cannot understand his designs, yet his love and compassion are always enfolding his chosen people.

May this be a season of the renewal of our hope and faith.

Ninerv F. Dunlap, Clerk
Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church

APPRECIATE THEIR PASTOR

Fernbank, Ala. 35558
Rt. 1,

Dear Elder Spangler:

Enclosed is $4.00 for renewal of the **Signs of the Times.** I get so much comfort from the good writings, and words cannot tell the joy that comes to my heart when I am blessed to read it.

I have not been in good health for the past few years, and have been in the hospital at different times; but am thankful that the Lord has given me strength so that I am able to get around some again.

I am glad that a few of us are still blessed to meet in sweet fellowship at Popular Springs Church. Elder H. C. Moon is our pastor, and we love and appreciate him so much. Our meeting time is every third Sunday, and we invite all members and friends to visit with us.

May the Lord bless and keep all of us, is my prayer.

H. F. Waldon

LIKE RECEIVING GOOD NEWS

4702 Florist Road, N. W.
Roanoke, Va. 24012

Dear Elder Wood:

I regret that I have let my subscription to the *Signs* become overdue. I love the dear old paper and look forward to getting it each month. It is like getting good news from a far country, and I have been lifted up many times in reading the wonderful experiences of the dear saints.

Since the Lord called my dear companion home to be with him, so much of me went with him that it is hard for me to carry on. But it is such a comfort to believe our loved one rests in eternal peace. In our flesh we often wonder why these things have to be, but we know He works and no man can hinder; and that He works in mysterious ways his wonders to perform. It is a glorious thought that some day we will be like Him.

I am made to feel my weakness more each day, and know that in my own strength I can do nothing: I feel prostrate at his feet most of the time. I enclose check sufficient to advance my subscription two more years.

I ask to be remembered when at the throne of grace.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Mrs. Sallie Randolph

'REPROVE, REBUKE, EXHORT WITH ALL LONGSUFFERING AND DOCTRINE'

Rt. 4, Box 479
Bassett, Va. 24055

To the Readers of the *Signs:*

We are accustomed to hearing the ministers preach concerning the doctrine of the predestination of all things, which I believe; but in no sense are we excusable for our wrong doing. I remember hearing the late Elder George Dyer say that the relation-

ship that God had with sin, was permissive and to restrain; with which I agreed. "Surely the wrath of men shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." (Psalm 76:10) The remainder of wrath means all that is left that does not praise God.

I understand that the word ordained is used instead of the word predestinated: "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." (see Jude 1-4)

Salvation is by the grace of God; and that grace is a free and unmerited favor bestowed upon the undeserving. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name (Jesus) under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Jesus is all the salvation we have, and all that we need for time or eternity.

The preached word, or the gospel that we preach, has nothing to do with our final destination. We read, "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." (John 6:37, 38) "I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." This means to me what the Father gave him to do before his going to the grave; and after his resurrection his Spirit works in his people in regenerating them and leading them; and sends laborers or ministers to preach the Word to his people; and at the last day to raise them from the dead and present them to the Father with his own likeness. The preached word is to comfort His people, and to teach and instruct the born of God; and to admonish them how they ought to live and behave themselves in this present world.

Does not our heavenly Father have the right to use his ministers as mouthpieces to warn, admonish and instruct his people. I know that some will say that this is conditional doctrine, but it is a part of the ministry; and God has predestinated that it should have its effect.

If the covenant of God was a contract with men then we would be saved by works instead of grace; but the truth is, if it were conditional none could ever be saved, because the dead can do nothing.

What I am about to say next cannot make Christians, but I believe with all my heart that it is becoming for all to instruct their natural children to watch the company they keep, and to obey the laws of the land. I know that children who have been disciplined are more pleasant than the ones who have not been instructed.

My prayer is that God may cause Zion's children to be drawn closer to Him, and to love one another with the same love wherewith He hath loved them. The time is short: all the time we have is while we are here this side of death. Time is not reckoned after we draw our last breath: so it can't be long until we shall see Jesus.

(Elder) James R. Hollandsworth

WORSHIPS ONE WHO IS ABLE TO SAVE

Rt. 2, Box 240
Snyder, Texas 79549

Dear Editors:

Enclosed you will find check to renew my subscription to the dear **Signs** for two years. . . If you editors were as negligent as the readers, or part of us, I fear we would not receive the dear **Signs** very regularly.

I have been almost a constant reader of the **Signs** for nearly fifty years, and am thankful to know that the policies have not changed. It thrills me to read the experiences, trials and troubles of others, and they cause me to feel that we are related in the Lord. Our richest blessing is the sweet hope that Christ

died for our sins, which the Holy Spirit revealed to us early in life; and has been a great source of comfort through the years.

Some profess to worship a God that is trying to save his people; but I try to worship One who is able to save, and will save to the uttermost: without the loss of one.

We are living in perilous times, and I fear the future, but am thankful we have an almighty, all powerful God who viewed the end from the beginning, saying, "My council shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." He being all wise takes care of every situation that confronts us. We have to wait to see the salvation of the Lord.

I trust the Lord will see fit to let the **Signs** continue to be published as at present, as long as time lasts, to comfort His little ones while they journey here below. May God richly bless the Editors and readers spiritually, and keep peace among the churches, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Mrs. J. P. Madding

FINDS THE TRUTH SET FORTH

Whitefield, Maine 04362

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is check to cover renewal of my subscription; balance is for Indigent Fund. I enjoy the *Signs* very much and look forward for the coming of each issue. I find the same gospel truth set forth by the editors and brethren as was once delivered to the saints.

It is hard for me to express my feelings, and I often read articles from the brethren that express my feelings better than I can. I know I am a sinner saved by grace if at all.

I realize my time in this world is short for I am over ninety-one years of age. God has been merciful to me and mine, for which I hope I am truly thankful.

May God bless and strengthen each one to carry on the good work.

Yours in love and fellowship,
Arthur Merigold

LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The Lexington-Roxbury Association is appointed to be held at the Old School Baptist Meeting House at Halcottville, Delaware County, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, September 11 and 12, 1968. Those coming on Tuesday take the Denver Road at Kelly's Corner to Crystal Spring Farm, the second house north of Denver Post Office and store. Those coming Wednesday go directly to the meeting house.

Brethren and friends and lovers of the truth are urged to meet with us as we are few in number.

(Elder) A. J. Slauson, Mod.

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the **Pigg River Association** will convene at Bellview Church, Roanoke County, Va., near Cave Spring, on Friday, August 2, 1968. Coming on 221 to S. H. Peters Grocery, turn on 689 Roselawn Road about 1 mile to the church.

On Saturday and Sunday, August 3 and 4, the meeting will be held at the new Cave Spring High School. Coming from 221 at Cave Spring turn on 720 to 687 to 800 takes you to the school.

Coming from 220 take 419 to S & M Food Market. Take 687 to 800 about 2½ miles to school from 220. There will be signs on the roads.

Our correspondents and other brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

J. A. Sowder, Church Clerk
John D. Wood, Assn. Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To June 1, 1968)

Catherine Houchins, Va.	$ 3.00
Elder D. A. O'Bryant, N. C.	3.00
Mr. and Mrs. Alpha Sears, Ohio	5.00
Mrs. J. E. Jones, Colo.	1.00
Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.	1.00
Joe Sanders, Tex.	3.00
Mr. and Mrs. A. D. Bouland, Ind.	3.00
Victor D. Borst, Jr., N. Y.	10.00
H. C. Adams, Ky.	3.00
L. F. May, Texas	2.00
Mr. and Mrs. Andy D. Hall, Ore.	8.00
Mrs. John Edd. Pope, N. C.	3.00

Danville, Virginia August, 1968

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EDITORIAL

THE WRATH OF GOD

"What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." (Romans 9:22, 23)

It has not been my intention to preach and write so much about the wrath of God, but about his mercy to sinners. However, since His people were elected in Christ, it follows that some of the same kind of people were left out of Christ. On one the love of God was bestowed; on the other the wrath of God was bestowed.

Whatever I present of God, it is not my intention to present Him as anything save being in one mind. I have to do with men only in the sense that I am, as I hope, a minister of good things from God to them: I am not called and qualified by men, nor am I amenable to them as to what I preach and where I go to preach. I am dependent on the Lord for all that I am, and what I hope shortly to come into, therefore I submit my care to Him; I stand or fall according to His testimony. It is not my intention to present any of his purposes as an afterthought. God is, and there is not a time — indeed, it is utterly impossible for Him to be any other way than He is, that is, in one mind.

I desire to blend experience and doctrine together in my presentation of the gospel, and yet I have not wanted the kind of experimental preaching that would tell graveyard stories, emotional upsets, sob-sister narratives. That is experimental preaching, but it is not preaching the gospel. I have experiences that I would like to share with you, if you do not have them, that is alright, for I am not out to see how many converts that I can make to my way of thinking. I know full well that if I can make you over to my way of thinking, that some other man can convert you from my way to his.

It is the custom in places to sing a song called the **Potter.** In that song are the words, "Have thy own way Lord, have thy own way. Thou art the Potter. We are the clay. Have thy own way Lord." But so much of the time I want to have a hand in the modeling of the clay; I desire that the clay have something to do with what is made out of the clay. I am a poor vile sinner, and I daily find myself straining in unbelief and rebellion at the way I am being molded or modeled or patterned. I do hope that my precious readers do not have this kind of an evil nature to wrestle with, and yet, if they do not have, I do not see that my presenting Jesus to them will be worth anything. O, how hateful it is to be in rebellion to God.

Among earthly nations those that do not have are fighting against those that do have. One is trying to get something

that does not belong to them, the other is trying to keep what they have. In theology, God alone is sovereign; He alone is Creator. I blush and shudder to examine my heart and find such blasphemy in it as to try to take upon myself that which belongs to God.

I think that I am in water too deep for a stripling, but I will proceed into the subject, hoping that I may be blessed with a kind spirit toward one and all, and with grace to extol the name of God. It may fall on deaf or unresponsive ears, but I am going to say that the love of God would not have been known and felt and enjoyed had He not revealed Himself as likewise the God of wrath. The wrath of God is upon all ungodliness as well as upon all of the ungodly. The love of God approves all righteousness as well as all of the righteous. If I was going to say briefly and pointedly the why of His presenting himself to us as being both a God of wrath and a God of love, I would meekly say, To His honor and glory, or, "Even so Father, it seemeth good in thy sight." If He needed my defence, I would not be equal to defending Him; if He needs a restoration of His virtues, or an enhancement of his glory before His creatures, I am one of them and do not feel equal to the task; if He had found out that His purposes were unfair to his creatures, and it would help Him if he was apologized for, I am still before Him, knowing that my apology would besmirch His integrity still much more. No man has the right, (and as I write, my mind has been caught away in rapture,) and I do not have any desire to call Him in question about anything that He has done, is now doing, or that He will do in the future, even if that lands me in and under the longsuffering of God in waiting his pleasure in my consignment to endless woe and misery.

It is not my understanding that God gets into dilemmas. I do. From day to day, I am brought face to face with problems that I do not know what to do about them. Much of the time I am confronted with things wherein both (or all) are not what I would want to do, but I must do one of them. This is being placed in a dilemma. Many times, I have decided this way, and everything turn out to where it seemed that the other way would have been preferable. I have tender compassion upon those that know not God: who are limited to knowing a god that gets into problems like that I do, that does this wrong and then has to do something else to extricate Himself from the dilemma that his lack of knowledge and power got Him into.

God does not have a beginning. We point out that He is eternal and everlasting in the future, forgetting, or never knowing, that He reaches back into eternity as He reaches forward into eternity. If someone is capable of telling me how old our God is, I will be just as apt in telling how long God has hated sin; in telling how long his wrath has been in duration. While I confess that I do not know anything as I ought, yet I boldly say without quibbling, without reservation, without wavering, that God hated Esau from all eternity. It will never do to say that God merely passed by Esau, nor will it do to say that He merely loved him less than He did Jacob. I know men preach about Him in that way, but if I had ever preached Him that way (and let me say that the reason that I have not, is to the praise of His grace), I feel that I would desire to fall prostrate at a throne of grace and beg Him to have mercy upon me. "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it." This hatred of God toward Esau was an act of God. If anybody believes that it came after the man fell, let them believe it, but I serve notice on them that they are believing a delusion to their own damnation. In His eternal mind (not in a flexible or changeable mind, but in the only mind that our God could be in) He hated Esau and coextensive with that hatred, His wrath was upon sin and non-elect sinners.

I have spent more than thirty four

years in going among the Lord's people, but I do not believe that I have ever taught one of them to believe in the love of God, nor to realize and experience that God is the God of wrath. His people do experience both; there is not any joy that equals the feeling that He loves them, and the complacency and holy ecstasy that swells their bosom as they love Him and join in that holy communion that is not in the realm of dull mortality. There is likewise deeply embedded in the heart and mind and soul of every child of grace the knowledge of the wrath of God. This is the only way that it is experienced and realized; to wit, by the revelation of God to His chosen vessels of mercy.

I am not before you to specialize in this name nor that name, in this group nor that group, in this faction nor that faction, but I am before you, as I trust in the name of my God, to assert, without favor and without enmity, that all men by nature are in rebellion to God. It is a false promise for any man to lay more blame on one than another for our behavior toward God in this way. As sin, each and every sin, is universal among men, so also, is the sin of rebellion to God prevalent in us all. I heard a Methodist minister tell about being at their conference one time. He said that a fine fellow was in the midst of a group discussing jealousy among ministers. This fine fellow raised himself up to his full height and said, "Well, sir, I am not jealous." An old bishop laid his hand on his shoulder and said, "Young brother, all men are jealous by nature, and unless kept by divine power it will make itself manifest." On another occasion, in which I was present, the sin of rebellion was being discussed among brethren. One fellow that had not yet been converted, said, I am not rebellious to my Lord, nor is there any need for anyone else to be, Whereupon an old elder called his hand by saying, "Brother Peter, when thou art converted strengthen thy brethren." I tell these things to show the universal rebellion aganist God, for, mark my words well, even mark them as the dying testimony toward dying readers, that jealousy and rebellion are akin in opposing God's choice of His people.

If my readers will remember the hatred (sin) of men against election, they will find that the objectors to this doctrine are not so fraught with objection to those saved as to God leaving out some. That is where men rise up against God. They object to God making his wrath known and executing that wrath upon men and women that he purposely left out of Christ. Let me say once again, that Old School Baptists are just as much guilty of objecting to God having his way as anybody else. O, we all say that we believe in election and that we are in agreement about Him having the right to have mercy and compassion on one man and leaving another out, but you let something take place in his government over His own and you will find the animosity of His own children (professed at least) to be equal and bitter as anything that unbelievers will show.

Many think that it is lovely for God to love people, but He must love them all. It is not compatible with the nature of men for God to love a part of the human race. These men have God arrainged before a bar of their justice. His wrath poured out upon these vessels of wrath is not compatible with their nature. In the first place, it is unfair and unjust and unbecoming in a God to consign a portion of the human race to eternal damnation. To think (say they) that a God of love would take His wrath out upon a human being in an everlasting way. Nothing but a ruthless dictator, a freedom crushing tyrant would display His spleen in such a fashion. This discrimination of God has always been the topic of conversation among those that have set themselves up as the counsellor of Jehovah-God. Men (that is, unregenerated men) think nothing of arraigning God before the counsellors like unto themselves; men (that is, born-again men) would never think about arraigning the God of their salvation before any created thing. If you

could get a true member of every order of religious people on earth together and bring up the subject of God pouring out His wrath upon one that He had not chosen to salvation, how many would you expect to have standing with the Primitive Baptist?

In our frailness of nature, everything that God has done is wrong unless it meets our approval. He just can not show any partiality toward His creatures. For Him to show wrath towards one and not towards another is cause enough to crucify God; it is cause enough for Cain to put Abel to death. Under the time of national Israel, all of the nations fought the right of God to set His choice upon them. Under the gospel dispensation every one that is a follower of Christ has been railed upon, ostracized, and crucified unto death. Why? Because both the love and the wrath of God has been displayed. We who are of the day are commanded to be sober, having on the breastplate of faith and love, etc., for we are not appointed to wrath. God's children are not appointed to wrath. There are children (in nature) that are appointed to wrath. The use of this word **nature** needs to be handled carefully. We all by nature are the children of God's wrath. By nature we all act the same way. But even while we all are walking in the course of this world, some are appointed to wrath, and some are not. As long as a man or woman walks in this course (as a habit or way of life) that long does the evidence show an appointment to wrath. The quickening or the imparting eternal life to one shows that they are not appointed to wrath. If language means anything; if any credence is to be given to the words that the Holy Ghost moved men to write, then by all means, some are appointed to wrath, even the wrath of God. The fruits in a man or woman's life is the evidence of whether they have been appointed unto life by Jesus Christ, or appointed to wrath by the discriminating purpose of Him that purposed all things. When the purpose or appointment of God is made manifest by His election and calling of a sinner to eternal life, or when such purposes are preached, what hatred arises in the bosom of those appointed (manifestly) to eternal and everlasting wrath.

How could a holy and loving God pour out His wrath by appointment on one of His creatures? How could God pour His wrath out upon somebody that He did not give a chance to be saved? How could God be just and yet pour out his wrath on some and his love on others, seeing that all alike are worthy of death? How could God have mercy upon one that deserved to die, and yet pour out his wrath on another that had no choice? How could God pour out His wrath eternally on a vessel of dishonor; His love eternally on a vessel of honor, seeing that neither vessel had anything to do with their status before Him?

The wrath (anger) of God against ungodliness is carried out against it all, against all those that do it. The sin of God's children is appointed to this wrath as much as is the sin of others. It was all done on Calvary by wicked hands (and that likewise according to His wrath) but it was the wrath of God being poured out on all ungodliness. This eternal covenant ordered in all things and sure, embraced all things that were necessary to the salvation of the members of that covenant (and all were necessary). It embraced a scapegoat, and the sin of Israel was laid on Him and the wrath of God against the sin that had been imputed to Him was executed on the Holy Jesus. He was sent to hell for the sins of His people. The full measure of God's wrath was visited on our Elder Brother, and that same measure of wrath will be executed against these that were not embraced in God's eternal covenant.

Now re-read the questions before the last paragraph. They are the questions that unbelievers asked Paul. They were the ravings of the natural mind against the wrath of God being poured out on vessels of dishonor. How pitiful it is to read the purported railings of men against God doing what he wills. The Saviour asked this question: Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my

own? Ask the men of reason and they reason that it is not lawful for him to do so, although they practice it in all aspects of life. God raised up Pharoah, and all the railings of mortal men will not bring to light anything other than that He would destroy him. He did raise Him up to show His power in him. He did destroy him. This being true, then it follows that God has mercy on whom he wills to have mercy, and whom He will he hardeneth. Listen at the objector to God raising up a man and then pouring out His wrath on him. Listen to the railing of us all save those that are kept from it: "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? "Look at the picture. Take into consideration what manner of men that we all are, save those that are preserved in Christ.

Look again at the question. Now look at the answer. Think who the question comes from. The question puts God in the hands of puny men, but reduces the God to their stature. The answer brings the querist before the bar of God's justice and disposes of him as a vessel of dishonor. God said to Adam, "Where art thou?" God here says to the reprobate (by manifestation) "Who art thou?" The same wrath is poured out on the object of the querist. "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"

"Hath not the potter power over the clay; of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another to dishonor? What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory?" Now will anybody question His right to bestow or display or make known His wrath on these fitted vessels of dishonour? If so, be courteous to your fellow man. He did not have anything to do with it. This is God's work. Charge upon Him. Call Him in question. If, peradventure you do not get a response, call a little louder; perhaps he is napping, or is on a journey.

For you dear reader, for you dear Sister Garner, may God give you to rejoice that He has not appointed you to wrath (as He has others) but has appointed you to obtain salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Written by request of Sister Mark Garner of North Carolina.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Burdett, N. Y., Jan. 20, 1858

Brother Beebe: — Circumstances have been such with me for a few months past, that I have been closely scrutinized concerning the doctrine of election, free-agency, and the use of the gospel ministry, and I have concluded to write you an article on these points, for publication; if you think proper to publish it. And as I wish to include the three, in one article, I will be as brief as I can on each of them.

The doctrine of *eternal and unconditional election* is so plainly taught in the Bible that we should think no one could dispute it, if we did not hear them do so; and sometimes we read their arguments against it. Election is eternal, because it was before the world began, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." (Eph. 1:4) Again, "Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Tim. 1:9) It is unconditional, because it was not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace given us, &c. Not of works, lest any man should boast. (Eph. 2:9) "The children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election,

might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." (Rom. 9:11) There is one class of arminians who acknowledge the doctrine of election; but say *the means of grace* must be used; but I have never found anything said in the Bible about *means of grace*. We read that the death of Christ is the means of redemption. (Heb. 9:15) but the means of grace I have not found. Some contend that a condition is implied in the words, "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." But we learn that none believe until they are born again, and that faith is the gift of God. (Eph. 2:8; 1 Cor. 12:9) None received (or believed in) Christ until they were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man; but of God." (John 1:12,13 and John 5:1)

The people of God were not only chosen in Christ, and grace given them in him before the world began, but they were given to him, as he says, "Thine they were and thou gavest them me." (John 17: 6-29) And he also says his Father has given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. (John 18:2) Should all the arminians, from the rising to the setting of the sun, forever abandon all their *means* of grace, with all their modern institutions, not one of all those to whom the Father has given grace in Christ before the world began, would or could fail of the heavenly glory; for Christ says, "All that the Father giveth me, *shall* come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:37) Or should they all continue in them until time shall end, not one soul can be added; for the flesh profiteth nothing; and, "No man can come unto Christ except the Father draw him;" and Christ prayed not for the world, but for them whom the Father had given him out of the world. (John 6:44-63, and 17:9)

Free Agency. — I have never been able to see how a man that God has made, and to whom he has given all the powers and faculties that he possesses, and requires that they shall all be exercised according to his direction, can be a free-agent. He is accountable not only for every deed; but also for every thought. If all that is meant by free-agency is that men act voluntarily in what they do, there would not be much controversy on the subject; but even then it would need to be qualified; for Paul says, "That which I do I allow not; and the evil which I would not, that I do." (Rom. 7:15-19) "O Lord; I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh, to direct his steps." (Jer. 10:23) Where then is the free-agency? "The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord." (Prov. 16:1) "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God that sheweth mercy." (Rom. 9:16) Again, "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price." (1 Cor. 5:20) A free-agent, a servant, or slave, must be something alike; both are bought with a price, and belong wholly to their master. And an unbeliever is as wholly God's by creation and preservation, as the believer who is bought with a price. Not long since, I said in my haste, That there was not a free-agent short of the throne. Even the Son of God said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will; but the will of him that sent me." (John 6:38) But there is One, who freely does all his pleasure; and who shall call him to account?

The arminians say, If these things are so; if God has elected an unalterable number of the human family, and given them grace in Jesus Christ before the world began, and ordained that they shall, in time, be redeemed, called, justified and finally everlastingly glorified in heaven; what is the use of preaching? I heard one of their preachers say, not long since, that if he could not be the means of saving souls, he would not preach; and it is common to hear them talk about saving souls. They hold, and, perhaps, think that the

doctrine is in the Bible, for they often so quote it, that, "God has given a measure of his spirit to every man; (meaning every human being) to profit with all." But there is no such scripture. The arminians and the universalists necessarily take the same course to sustain their position; that is, they take such scriptures as are spoken to and concerning the people of God exclusively, and misapply them to the world; and not content even with that, they are much in the practice of quoting them very differently from what they read. But, to the subject, — *The use of preaching.* The first gospel preacher was sent to *make ready a people, prepared for the Lord.* (Luke 1:17) Those who think that he was not a gospel preacher, ought to be convinced of the fact, when they read that "The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached." (Luke 16:19) And Mark says, that John's ministry was the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. (Mark 1:1) The preparation of that people whom John was sent to make ready, commenced in Jesus Christ before the world began; and in God's own time, they are called by his grace. The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14) Every man is a natural man, until he is born again; he cannot therefore believe the gospel until he is born again. Hence Paul has said, "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them that **are called,** both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God." (1 Cor. 1:23,24) Thus we see they have to be **called** before they can be benefitted by preaching. The Lord opened Lydia's heart that she attended to the things that were spoken of Paul. (Acts 17:14) The design of the gospel ministry is not to convert swine into sheep; but to feed the sheep; hence Christ said to Peter, "Feed my sheep and feed my lambs." John 21:15) And Paul said to his brethren in the ministry, "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves and all the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers, **to feed the church of God** which he hath purchased with his own blood." (Acts 20:28)

Christ has taught us by the parable of the sower, how much the preacher does towards saving the souls of men. I believe in that parable, the Savior, according to his own explanation of it, had reference to the ministration of the word, but the preaching did not effect the ground at all; that which fell by the way side and among thorns, effected nothing, and that on stony ground proved fruitless; but that which fell in good ground brought forth fruit. But, will any one say that the seed falling there made the ground good? It fell into good ground, and none of it was lost. The good ground is figurative of a people prepared for the Lord, like those whom John the Baptist was sent to make ready, and of those whose hearts the Lord has opened, as he did the heart of Lydia, to attend to the things which were spoken by Paul. The husbandman does not expect that he can prepare his ground for a crop, by sowing the seed on it.

Many more scriptures might be quoted which are direct to the point, but those who are not satisfied with the above, probably would not be with more; so I will close, by wishing you grace, mercy and peace, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

(The above was written by Elder Reed Burritt and published in the Signs March 15, 1858. Since contrary doctrine is heard everywhere, it is good to know what the Bible teaches, and Old School Baptists contend for. — J. D. W.)

(The following is taken from the Messenger of Truth of August, 1912, and is re-published by request.)

AN ADDRESS TO YOUNG MINISTERS

Remembering what we experienced as a young minister, and how much we appreciated the fatherly care and advice

of experienced ministers, we want to speak to the young minister, from the depth of a heart full of the sweetest milk of lovingkindness, some things that might be helpful and encouraging to him.

If you are truly in the ministry, God has placed you there. None but God can call and qualify one for the ministry. It is an honor, but you cannot take it to yourself. Christ said, "Without me ye can do nothing." You know this is true. And Paul said, "I can do all things thru Christ which strengthens me." This is also true. You are therefore not your own, but the servant of Christ, and should seek diligently to know and do his will.

Your impressions to preach do not prove that you have been called to the ministry, for you must have more than that. You must have qualifications mentioned in 1 Tim. 3:1-11; Tit. 1:6-9. Read this description carefully and prayerfully. What it says you must be, that is what you are; and what it says you must not be, you are not. These scriptures point out about sixteen qualifications that you must have, and eight disqualifictaions that you must not have. Here is what he must be: He must be 1) blameless. 2) the husband of one wife. 3) vigilant. 4) sober. 5) of good behavior. 6) given to hospitality. 7) apt to teach. 8) patient. 9) one that rules his own house well. 10) a lover of good men. 11) just. 12) holy. 13) temperate. 14) hold fast to the faithful word. 15) have faithful children. 16) have a good report of them that are without.

What he must not be: He must not be 1) given to wine. 2) a striker. 3) greedy of filthy lucre. 4) a brawler. 5) covetous. 6) a novice. 7) self-willed. 8) soon angry.

You will do well to learn what all these words mean. To know them will help you as long as you live. While Timothy was yet a young minister, Paul wrote to him, saying, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. — 2 Tim. 2:15. You should do this very thing. If you are not disposed to do this, it is that much evidence that God has not called you. Some young ministers have boasted that they do not study the Bible and read it but little. Such ought to be ashamed and the Church should not suffer them to preach. Again the same apostle said to Timothy, "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine." "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." (1 Tim. 4:13-16) Why not do this very thing?

The young minister should be very thoughtful of all his conduct in this life, whether in or out of the pulpit. He should take care of his reputation: for it is impossible for a preacher whose reputation is bad, or even impaired, to honor God in the pulpit. Character and reputation are not the same. Character is what you really are. But reputation is what others think and say you are. One may have a good character, but a bad reputation; or he may have a bad character but a good reputation. But the preacher's character and reputation should both be good. For this reason he should shun every appearance of evil and live as much in the light as possible. "Provide things honest in the sight of all men." Secret societies are not recommended by the quotation just made. All such societies are of men and belong to the world and to darkness. Our Savior condemned them and you should honor Him. Do you see the importance of these suggestions?

You should seek the good of others and live to honor Christ by walking in Him as you have received Him. He was, in His incarnate life, the meekest and lowliest of all. He is your pattern while you preach His doctrine.

You should not be ignorant of any important truth. Do not boast of ignorance, but get all the useful information you can, from any honorable source whatever. But judge all things by the written word of God. "Prove all things

and hold fast that which is good." Let the Bible be to you a constant companion, and use it as a lamp to your feet, and as a light on your way. Measure all your thoughts, notions, and impressions by it, for it is a thorough furnisher to the man of God. Pray and labor for the understanding of what it teaches. **Speak that which you do know and testify to that which you have seen. The pulpit is not the place where we may hazard expressions or merely guess at any matter. Where the word of God is not clear to your understanding, be silent. Exercise just such a gift as you have, but strive for an increase of knowledge. Ask God continually for wisdom for right handling of what you do know. You are wholly dependent upon the Lord for ability to preach the gospel; but, not withstanding this, the sluggard is not fit for the pulpit.**

We wish to suggest that you, as a young and inexperienced minister, would do well to observe the manner and teaching of older and more experienced ministers, who are and have been faithful and fruitful in the ministry, and pattern after their good examples. You will find that these are men of strong moral worth and honorable in every sphere of life; that they are sober-minded and discreet; that they have walked humbly before the Lord, and were self-denying. If you have been called of God to preach, you will honor them and esteem them highly for their work's sake; and you will feel no disposition to discredit them, nor to hinder others from loving them. Such are worthy of double honor, and you will desire that they shall enjoy all that is due to them. "He," the preacher, "must be a lover of good men."

Young preachers should make appointments of their own, at church-houses, school-houses, and other places in the community of their home church. They should seek to preach where they are most needed, and not impose on the congregation of others. It is good for young preachers to visit the churches occasionally, and hear the pastor preach and observe the manner of his worship; and, when the pastor has preached, if there is time for more preaching, preach to his congregation. But it is wrong for a number of young preachers to visit a church and all preach to a congregation that has gathered to hear others. The pastor shows them his courtesy, by inviting them to take a part; and, when they consume the pastor's time, the congregation will rather blame the pastor for not preaching. We have known young preachers to preach for years to other men's congregations, and but seldom have an appointment of their own. This is not right. They should make appointments of their own in the community near home, being careful not to have their appointments too near other's appointments. By doing this many would have the opportunity of hearing preaching that otherwise would not. The young preacher would feel more of the responsibility that rests upon him, and learn who wishes to hear him. The brethren should attend these appointments and encourage the young minister. **The gift of the young minister will develop much sooner at his own appointments.**

The Savior sent out his disciples two by two, so it would be well to have these appointments for two. Each seems to have his yoke fellow, and these should labor together. One is a strength to the other. Their troubles are alike, their joys are the same, and a mutual faith and comfort is found.

Our sympathies for young preachers are drawn out farther than we have expressed or can express: for we know how little room there is in the heart of the world for them. The world will always love its own, but will not love them. They are crucified to the world and the world to them. **But their love for their brethren, however few they may be, is worth more to them than the love of the world.** We want to say to them, "Be of good cheer," for Christ has overcome the world for them; and he that is in them is greater than he that is in the world.

It is easy for the young preacher to form unbecoming habits in his preach-

ing, and but few of the brethren and and sisters will call his attention to them, so he should rely on himself. **Grunting, swaggering and howling in the pulpit is neither edifying nor becoming.** Christ never did such a thing. Why should preachers grunt at the end of their sentences? It is neither musical nor useful. If it is your habit, please put it away. Leave off what is called **"the minister's tone,** for there is nothing spiritual in it. **Why not speak naturally, in an easy graceful manner? You should seek to make yourself understood, and speak loud enough for all to hear. Always face your congregation and keep your eyes open.** By watching your congregation you will know whether they understand you or not, if you have their attention: and, if you have not their attention, wait until you can have it. **Simplify your speech until the most humble and unlearned can understand you. If they feed upon your preaching you will know it and the countenances of the brethren and sisters will bear you up and make you feel strong in the Lord.** You will be happy while preaching to the hungry and thirsty, if you see them eating and drinking with joy. **It is not good to feed them until they want no more.** When you quit preaching in the midst of the feast, they will want to hear you again. But if you weary the people and preach on till they want you to quit, they will feel that they have heard all you know, and will not feel so anxious to hear you again. **Let the complaint be, "You quit too soon."**

Seek the companionship of the spiritual minded, the lowly in mind and heart, and those who are being tried in the furnace of affliction, and encourage and comfort them. They will help you to be thankful for blessings, and you will feel more inclined to prayer and thanksgiving.

Let your public prayers be short, fervent, sincere, and without vain repetitions. Don't try to please the Lord by an affected manner of speaking.

Now, dear brethren we have written to you because we love you, and because we love the cause of our Master. But these are feeble expressions of a feeble old man. In a few years our ministers, of our age and older, will walk no more with you upon the earth, and our voices shall cease and our pens shall rest forever. Then the responsibilities and trials of the ministry will all be yours. Perilous times are here await you. These are the last days.

Elder F. P. Branscombe

OBITUARIES

SALLIE BRYANT HALL

It has pleased our heavenly Father to take from us by death our dear Sister, Sallie Bryant Hall, who was born August 21, 1882, the daughter of the late James R. and Mary Jackson Bryant. She died February 3, 1968. On June 26, 1902 she was married to Walter Green Hall, who died November 13, 1935.

She leaves to mourn their loss, four daughters, one son, two sisters, one brother, seven grandchildren, and one great grandchild.

Sister Hall joined Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church in the summer of 1935, and was a faithful member, attending church as long as she was able.

Her funeral was held at Malmaison Church by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, after which she was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park to await the resurrection, when our Lord shall come to call his chosen ones.

May we all be reconciled to God's will. One copy of this is to be sent the *Signs of the Times* for publication; one to the family; and one put on our church book.

Done by order of the church at our March, 1968, meeting.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Kate Dodd, Clerk

MONANDA BROOKS MADDOX

Sister Monanda Brooks Maddox was born May 18, 1879, and passed away January 10, 1968. She was the daughter of John Brooks and Betty Martin Brooks. She was united in marriage to Abraham G. Maddox April 11, 1901; and to this union seven children were born: Eugene and Clifton Maddox, Ercell Houston, Joseph Maddox (deceased); Lera Hepenstall, Morris Maddox (deceased), and Lottie Shelton.

She united with Bethel Primitive Baptist Church November 3, 1906; and was a faithful member, attending meetings as regularly as her health would permit. Sister Maddox was

a sister of the late Elder Joe Brooks.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder J. R. Hollandsworth and Elder O. K. Tench. We feel she has fallen asleep in Jesus, from which none ever awake to weep.

J. R. Hollandsworth

BROTHER BEN PARRISH

Brother Ben Parrish died February 11, 1968, at the age of 83. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Stella Richmond Parrish; three sisters, Mrs. Claude Jolly, Mrs. Claude Garrison, and Mrs. Vista B. Hodges.

Brother Ben united with Antioch Old School Baptist Church, Warren, Arkansas, in March, 1907. I feel that not only the brethren around his home church miss him, but that all who knew him miss him so much. To me he was a very precious brother, and I have reasons to believe he was one of God's chosen ones. He loved the truth.

His funeral was conducted by the writer.

David E. Turner

JESSICA GULICK RITICOR

Jessica Gulick Riticor was born November 22, 1889, at her parents' Home, Mt. Bulah, Loudoun County, Virginia, the daughter of the late John Frank and Flora Gulick, where she lived until her marriage November 27, 1913, to C. Frank Riticor, by Elder H. H. Lefferts.

She is survived by her husband and two sisters, Mrs. Hazel Mills and Mrs. Pauline Feagan; and several nieces and nephews.

Mrs. Riticor was a regular attender of Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church for more than fifty years, and until her health failed.

Funeral services were held at Muse and Reid Funeral Home, Leesburg, Virginia, by the writer, and interment was in the Leesburg Cemetery, to await the coming of our Lord and the resurrection of the dead, when the saints shall be conformed to the image of their Saviour, and ever be with him.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to all her survivors.

John D. Wood

DEACON CHARLEY I. DELANCY

It has pleased God to remove one of our dear and faithful members, Brother Charley I. Delancy. He was born in Rockingham County, N. C. December 20, 1889, and died January 16, 1968. He was the son of the late Elder John W. and Martha Talley Delancy.

Surviving are his widow, the former Alma Lasley; one son, Charley Edward Delancy; three brothers, John W., Joe O. of Reidsville, and Zeb B. Delancy of Salemburg; and five sisters, Mrs. George Grogan, Mrs. Alice Joyce, Mrs. Royal Delapp, of Reidsville; Mrs. C. B. Williams, of Newton; and Mrs. Laura Wingfield, of Martinsville, Va.

Brother Dulancy united with the church at Reidsville in April, 1919, and was baptized by Elder O. J. Denny. He was ordained a deacon in 1925, and was faithful as long as he was able to attend. We bow in humble submission to our heavenly Father who does all things well.

His funeral was conducted at City Funeral Home by Elder Haywood Wray and Mr. Duck Jones; and his body was laid to rest at Read Lawn Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord.

James W. Moore

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call Sister Nora Turner Sykes. She was born in October, 1886, and died in April, 1968, making her stay on earth 81 years. She was a faithful member of our Church, and to know her was to love her. She was a great believer in Salvation by Grace, and she praised her God as long as she lived. She was among the oldest members of our Church, and was proud to know her name was about the first to be called at roll call.

We, the Church at Tarboro, N. C.:

Resolve: First, That our loss is her eternal gain and we will miss her in body, but feel that she is at rest with God. Second; We send our sincere sympathy to her family and trust they too will remember what their Mother's faith stands for. Third; We resolve that four copies be made — (1) to be sent to the *Land-Mark* and one to be sent to the *Signs of Times* for publication, (2) that one be sent to her family, (3) that one be made for the Church record.

This done by order of Conference at our May meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 136 DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1968 NO. 9

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/68
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

A GOOD LETTER FROM SISTER DAVIS

Mardella Springs, Md.
March, 1968

Dear Editors:

In looking over some papers this morning I found the enclosed letter from Evelyn Davis in August, 1965. It was so sweet to me that I would like to share it with others, if you feel to publish it.

Virginia E. Bennett

New Church, Va. 23415
August, 1965

Dear Precious One:

They say words are cheap and that anyone can utter them, but most sincerly you are precious to us. I feel so ashamed that I have not written you sooner, knowing that you have been in so long. We have missed you at meetings, and have inquired of you at every opportunity, but that is still not enough.

I feel so miserable in not doing the things that should come first, always thinking of doing it tomorrow. I trust you will please lay it to my weakness in the flesh, for I am so weak and sinful; and feel so much of the time that I have no right to call my brethren, Brothers and Sisters. But even more, I know the great God above knows and sees me as I am. And I wonder how He could ever do any other than frown on this weak vessel of clay, much less shed his grace and mercy on me. Yet I can say from my heart this morning, if not deceived, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in him." For I know in him is eternal life, and without him we would be nothing.

The Apostle Paul wrote the Colossian brethren in part, "In whom we have redemption **through his blood,** even the forgiveness of sins." And further in the next chapter, he is so greatly concerned over the churches that he tells them, "For though I be absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ."

So what I am trying to say, dear one, even though I have been unable to get to see you, or write, I have been in spirit, if not deceived. It seems hard to write letters any more, and it really concerns me as to why it is. I used to write so many letters and enjoyed doing so, I hope not in vain glory but in praise and adoration to Christ, I hope my King of Glory in whom I trust. I know not that I have any right to call him my Saviour, but I do know that I have no confidence in any other doctrine except the precious truth that says, We are saved by grace, and grace alone; not by works of self-righteousness. This is the staff on which I lean to rest, as a safe harbor in which to dwell amid the storms of life.

How sweet it is to God's little one's, to be blessed to see His all-wise providence in everything, for in every event that comes to pass there is a purpose. He knows our down-sittings and our uprisings, and understands our thoughts afar off. He is aquainted with all our ways. Isn't this a blessing to know and believe, — it surely is a gift from God. The Psalmist David said, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me: it is high, I cannot attain unto it."

How I hope to be numbered with the

precious saints of God's elect: A hope is all I have — how precious it is! May God be praised for this hope, which Paul describes as an anchor to the soul. My prayer is, if I pray, "Search me, Oh God, and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." "Keep me, Oh Lord, and I shall be kept."

I have seemingly lost track of time since I started this letter, but as I began to write my heart seemed to be filled to overflowing with love and adoration and praise to God for his tender mercy to this poor and afflicted one, who feels to be so unworthy of such love, and who feels almost afraid to handle his precious name, or the sacred word.

Surely hope you will soon be feeling much better, and may God who is rich in mercy, look down on you, dear one, and touch you with his finger of divine healing and mercy, and make you submissive to his precious will in every condition in life.

In love and sweet fellowship,
Evelyn Davis

P. O. Box 39,
Chunchula, Ala. 36521

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is $4.00 for the **Signs** another year. We really enjoy reading it, and hope we never have to give up reading the good paper. It is such a comfort to read the good writings of each and every one.

If I know what I believe, I do believe just what the **Signs** stands for. Where we live most everyone believes you can accept Christ and be saved, or reject him and be lost. We believe that if one is saved it is by grace and grace alone, for the Bible teaches that it is by grace that one is saved and not by works.

I hope the good Lord will bless you editors to keep the good paper coming to the poor people who get such comfort in reading it. Pray for us.

Your sister in hope of mercy,
Mrs. R. S. Bell

'OLD BAPTISTS' WERE A STURDY LOT

My forebears on both sides were Old Baptists, more often called Primitive Baptists. A great grandfather, one grandfather and an uncle were Elders, — that is, preachers. As a youth I attended their Communion and Association meetings, the first usually of two days duration, the latter a three-day assembly. In those days such gatherings were well attended and people came from far and near. The Association, in addition to worship services, attended to whatever business was of mutual interest. Communion meetings, as the name implies, included observance of the Last Supper. On either occasion the meeting ended with "dinner on the grounds," always on a Sunday.

Old Baptists were (and still are) an unbending lot in the matter of doctrine, or belief, and woe was the Elder or congregation that stepped out of line with some new or different interpretation of a passage of Scripture. Deviates were barred from fellowship within their Association, and in other Associations in fellowship with it, and denied communion until such time as they made amends for their heresy. The Old Baptist doctrine is Calvinist in nature and teaches predestination, the irresisibility of grace (salvation by election), and limited atonement. Harsh as this may seem to more liberal minds, no religious group was ever held in higher esteem or nor did one ever command more respect for good character and honesty than do these good people.

These meetings were often attended by one or more Elders from without the Association, occasionally from another state. Some of these were spellbinders, gifted with a peculiar style of pulpit oratory of a crescendo type, and as they warmed to the text a transfixed congregation would hang onto every phrase. They were mostly uneducated, with no referance book except a Bible, and the only preparation they ever made for a sermon was a few minutes "meditation" on a bench in the back of the pulpit, or

stand, as they preferred to call it. They believed the Almighty would put such words in their mouths as he had foreordained that they speak, and that if it was not in Divine plan for them to preach at that time they would have no message. Occasionally one would fail.

An old Elder once told me of such an experience he had had while yet a young preacher. He had received an invitation to preach at an Association meeting and prepared what he thought would be a rousing sermon. Soon after taking the stand his mind went blank and he withdrew in humiliation and bewilderment. It was the only time, he said, he ever suffered such an experience. And, he added, he never prepared another sermon.

Communion services were open only to those in fellowship with the host church and were often packed with emotion. Participants segregated themselves according to sex and after the "bread and wine" was served they removed their shoes and stockings and paired off, each member of every pair bathing, in turn, the other's feet. It was a fascinating spectacle and everybody would go inside to watch. I know of no other religious group who still "wash feet" but as stated above Old Baptists are unchangable in their belief.

Their number has dwindled over the years, possibly because they refuse to proselytize, or because they do not believe in evangelism. They hold to the belief that if you are one of the elect, that is, if salvation is intended for you, it will reach out and get you and there is nothing you can do about it. Whether this is true, or not, I don't know. But of one thing I am positive. There are no better people anywhere than the Old Baptists.

(We publish the above from a clipping from the **Montogomery Journal** sent in by Mrs. Milton C. Carter, Troy, Alabama. It was written by Sid Jackson.

There are many interesting things mentioned by Mr. Jackson with which Old Baptists continue to be pleased. The washing of feet is practiced by many churches, while there are many others which have never practiced it, though some of them were among those first called Old Baptists in the separation. It is not generally considered an ordinance of the church, but an example of humility; and it is unusual for a test of fellowship to be made over its practice.

Old Baptists do not believe in evangelism as is popularly practiced. They know that a man must be born again before he can see the kingdom of God; and since this is entirely the work of the Spirit, they are perfectly satisfied that all the Father gave his Son will be brought to this spiritual birth, and thus shall come unto Jesus by the drawing power of God. Preaching the gospel has its proper place according to God's purpose: for the feeding of the sheep, for edifying the body of Christ, for reproving, rebuking, exhorting, etc.

We are glad that Mr. Jackson remembers the Old Baptists as a people of good character and honesty, and considers that there are no better people anywhere. By God's grace real Old Baptists are still a "sturdy lot", and witness to the power, glory and mercy of God. — J. D. W.)

GOD'S BLESSINGS ABOVE NUMBERING

307 E. Pine,
Winnsboro, Texas

Dear Bro. Spangler:

I enjoy reading the **Signs of the Times**, for it means a lot to me. It is good reading and preaching. Many times the experiences of others tell some of the experiences I have had; and many of our experiences would be hard to understand — and cannot be except by those who have been led along the same way.

I know God's blessings to us are above numbering; yet so much of the time I am low down and have to question whether I know anything of the love of God: Am I his or am I not. I desire to do the best I can, but I know this is not good enough, and I pray that God will lead me in the right way. If he leads me it will be right. "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name," etc. is a sweet prayer: there are no foolish words spoken in it. If we pray foolish prayers, God does not hear.

I am enclosing $7.00 to renew my subscription for two years.

M. S. Hewitt

GOD CALLS AND SENDS HIS SERVANTS

967 Maxey Street,
Memphis, Tenn. 38111

Dear Brethren:

"The gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

When Jesus called to himself his twelve disciples, who were called Apostles, he gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. (Matt. 10:1) They were commanded where to go to preach, which was to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. God's servants today are called and sent as they were then, to preach the gospel, bearing good news to them that are called to hear the gospel: which is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also the Greek; for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith."

We understand that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. There are many gifts but all of the same Spirit; and as many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God, and just as many as are ordained unto eternal life believe in God. To believe in God is the work of God by Him whom He hath sent. Christ was sent to them that were lost. "He came to his own and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1: 11-13)

I do believe that the ones Christ comes to are the very elect of God, which were chosen in Christ before the world began. The Apostle Paul told Timothy that God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and a sound mind, and we should not therefore be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of Paul his prisoner; but partakers of the afflictions of the (2 Tim. 1: 7-9) gospel according to the power of God. "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

Today the ones who have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, and have the sound mind given them, are humble creatures and desire to be at the feet of their brethren, and abound in love towards their brethren as much as is in them is. They look not at the things of this life, but unto Him who is the author of their faith by which they walk. We study to show ourselves approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. We think much of our time that we are unprofitable servants, and cannot think of anything good we have ever done. I believe that when I would do good evil is always present, and can say with the Apostle, That which I would do, I do not, — knowing that in me dwells no good thing.

Sometimes, brethren, I try to rest in the thought of being one of God's elect; and if I am one it is because everything has been done for me, and not by me. Grace is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, and not in our heads. I believe in heart-felt religion, and it is the work of God that we believe this. Jesus said, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." Now he that believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God; and he that is born of God is made a new creature in Christ Jesus. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

We have asked ourselves, have we been born again, and wonder how this is and how it comes: we know that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and this I wonder about; but I know that I love my brethren, if I know anything at all. We know that God loved his children before they loved him. He is all in all, upholding all things by his power; and every soul is subject to God. There is no

power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Now we understand that the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly but by reason of him who subjected the same in hope. Doesn't this show the power of God, that we creatures go as God directs, as his disciples and apostles had to go. God will never leave himself without a witness. Those that are called will go where he leads them. He goes before his sheep; He feeds his flock: they find rest at noontime, and the kids are fed by the shepherd's tents.

God speaking by one of the prophets, said, "I leave in your midst an afflicted and poor people." These are the people God raised up for himself who shall show forth his praise. They are poor in spirit, but rich in faith. James says of these people, "Harken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" So the promise is to them that love him, and it is eternal life that is promised them. "God is not slack concerning his promise as some count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Brethren I believe the same doctrine is being preached and taught today among His people that Christ taught his disciples to preach to the edification of the brethren in that day; and which we enjoy as good news from a far country. This good news strengthens our hope, which we have as the anchor of our souls sure and steadfast. If our hope did not go beyond this world we would be of all men most miserable. We hear some say that their hope is so little, and we don't like to hear this, for our hope is in Christ Jesus the Lord of glory, and this hope cannot be measured. Aren't you glad that your hope is felt so plainly sometimes that you have to say, I know I have a hope in my God, and he will give me everything I need.

Brethren, we are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. (Romans 8:24,25)

In hope of eternal life,
Elder Herbert R. Prince

GIVES A CERTAIN SOUND

Rt. 87, Box 126,
Shady Spring, W. Va. 25918

Dear Editors of the Signs:

You will find enclosed $5.00 for one years subscription.

Now a brief note about the doctrine advocated by your good paper, which gives a certain sound. As you well know, certain instruments were used in bygone days to warn the people to gather to battle. It is giving God the praise, honor and glory, for the wonderful works of mercy, love and truth he visits on the elect vessels of his mercy afore prepared unto glory; yes, even before time flapped its naked wings in the cradle of infancy, God forsaw, predestinated, decreed, and ascertained what would transpire when the event of time would come into a reckoning state. Then it is no small wonder to me that God had a purpose worthy of himself, which cannot be destroyed; for God is Sovereign, having all power in heaven and earth, and he made everything for the glory of his name — it is fulfilling its functionary part, or what it was created for; and it is all to His glory, even to the falling of a sparrow.

Death and hell are naked before Him, and destruction hath no covering. Lo these are parts of his way, but how little a portion do we hear of them. This is in harmony with your good paper, and it will stand when the world is on fire.

So write on in the **Signs**, and may the Lord of heaven bless each of you good editors. I especially like the doctrine advocated by Elders Beebe, Curry, Phillips, Wood, Griffin, Ruston, and Spangler.

An unprofitable servant,
Elder Wallace Harvey

DESIRES A CRUMB FROM GOD'S TABLE

Box 295,
Nags Head, N. C. 27959

Dear and Beloved Children In Hope:

I desire to write to you concerning my feelings, though I feel unworthy to speak, or even think, of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; or you, dear children of His grace. I feel bold to even attempt writing you, but hope it is with an humble boldness.

I desire to speak of some of the great and glorious mysteries of one God and Lord and King above all else. I feel he is able to guide my hand if it should be his will, but if it is not his will to guide and keep me within his circle of truth, then whatever I write will be in such stumbling manner as to be of no edification to his people.

I feel so very small indeed this morning, but yet filled with a desire to sing praises unto the mighty and merciful God:

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost."

Is there another for a poor helpless sinner to praise? Is there another deserving of that praise? This morning I say, No! ten thousand times, No! for what other is there to keep hope in our breast. Should we ask if He be the one, or should we look for another? There is no other: He is the one, the only one. You did not find him, but He just made you aware that he had been with you all along: even before you were born into this time world. Yes, He loved you with his everlasting love even before the world was.

I believe I know that you dear children feel to be so very small and insignificant, (and that is good,) but yet you are the very creation of God's desire, to give praise unto his holy and blessed name. You are the ones he went and prepared a wonderful place for; you are members of the church which is the body of Christ: you are many members, as Christ's body was made up of many members, yet you are all of one body. Your's was the debt He came to pay: He paid it all in full; ye are the washed of his blood; your's were the pains He endured, yet He endured it with love and unmeasurable kindness toward you, for his love is everlasting.

He did not forsake you, nor will he ever forsake you. He will surely bring you down into low places, but with that same loving strength He will surely lift you up again. He knows you and loves you, and will never forsake you. What knowledge could one have of the heights, without also having the knowledge of the depths? What knowledge could one have of God's greatness, without also having knowledge of one's own weakness and helplessness? Is it not so with all things, even of this time world? For one to gain knowledge of what it of value, he must also have knowledge of that which is of less value: If you had never sinned, do you believe you could have ever realized the greatness of God's grace and mercy? I do not believe so.

. . . How little does the carnal man know concerning the true and living God. Yet were it not for his carnality, and having received knowledge of its filthy wickedness, how much would or could he know concerning its opposite: God's holiness? I believe none.

I would if I could, beg that I might be kept in such a way as to ever desire a place at your feet, for somehow I feel that is the only place where I might ever be blessed to receive a crumb from His holy table. I do not feel to deserve even one small crumb from His table of grace, but, O, how I do desire and long for it. When you are at the throne of grace, please beg for this poor sinner.

In precious hope,
Troy G. Shepard

"A REAL FEAST"

828 Belmont Ave.,
Wilson, N. C. 27893

Dear Brethren:

Enclosed find check to renew my **Signs of the Times** for two years; the balance to use as you see fit.

My wife and I enjoy the **Signs** so much. To me its the best paper I have ever read — so sound and comforting to our poor souls.

I am getting old: will be 83 years come August 22nd, if I live to see it. My health is not good, and I don't go to church like I used to. My pastor takes me on first Saturdays most of the time, but I hate to be so much trouble to anyone. We were blessed to go to church today, and it was a real feast: two dear souls united with the church, and it seemed everyone was rejoicing.

I hope if it is God's will that I can read the **Signs** as long as I live. It is really food to my poor soul. May the God of heaven bless you all in the years to come, and with others to take your places when God calls you home to be with him out of the sad world.

God bless and keep you all is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Your little brother in Christ,
J. B. Barron

NOT ASHAMED OF HER HOPE

Palmersville, Tenn. 38241

Dear Editors:

It is often very difficult to write our experiences, because we are unable to explain what we feel in our hearts. Some say that God can't save you against your will; but the glorious truth of the gospel is that when the Lord visits the poor ruined sinner he gives him a new will. The hope we have is an anchor of the soul, not downward but upward to that which is above.

I feel sorry and am ashamed of the many blunders I have made in my life but am not ashamed of the sweet hope the Lord has given me. This is what God spoke to me when he came into my life, making himself known to me. I was so burdened I fell to the floor, and Jesus spoke to me and said, "Come unto me all that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." That was when it happened to me: I was so happy I was lifted up, and I saw a great light shining from heaven, and Jesus was at the end of that light. It was just for a moment, and then went away. I felt I would never have any more trouble, and was happy two or three days; then I began to have doubts and fears. I wondered if I was deceived. God's people have to go through trials and troubles in this life.

There are so many good letters and experiences in the **Signs** and I read and reread them over and over. I am just an old woman eighty-three years old, and living all alone: though the Lord is with me, and that is all I want. I have very good health, and I thank the Lord for that. I am a member of the Old Primitive Baptist Church called Boaz Chapel, in Grove County, Kentucky.

Nettie Stanley

"A HOLY NATION"

Apartment 7, Glenmary,
Salem, Virginia 23153

Dear Brethren:

The first Sunday in April I was blessed to go to Church. The ministers stood in the stand, but whether they preached I do not know, for I did not hear a word. The communion table was spread, and as I sat there I saw what I felt was the Holy Nation over the table: They were marching on, going higher. It was a beautiful sight, and they seemed to be covered with a mist so soft and white — such a mighty throng ever marching.

I can see them now, as I have so many times these last weeks. I thought of the Scripture, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous

light." (1 Peter 2:10) He gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify us unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. (Titus 2:14) Not good works as the world sees it, for it is God who worketh in us both the will and the do of his good pleasure.

No man by searching can find Him, the Almighty God, who sent his Son into the world to die for this Holy Nation; and not one of them will be left behind. Jesus came and saved his people out of every nation, tongue, and tribe; and I, being the least of any one of them, am made to wonder if I am one. I have been a member for fifty-three years. My mother was one of six members who started the Roanoke, Virginia church, but it didn't mean a thing to me. My grandmother being a member of Weatherford Church made no difference. If I am one of the chosen ones, the Lord through his grace and mercy made me one. I didn't want to be a Baptist, but I was compelled to be one. And I find no goodness in me yet; but failures I have so many. But I love my brethren and want to be with them, for I am happier with them than anything I can find in the world.

Jesus didn't pray for the world but for the ones his Father gave him. He stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world; and not one will be left to fight alone, for He is with them always even to the end of this world. He finished the work. What kind of people should we be! I am so helpless I can't pray, can't even think about His goodness to me unless He stirs up my pure mind by way of remembrance. So I stumble along hoping He will keep me from falling, and not be taken away with vain thoughts, but be renewed day by day. My hope is in Him — I claim nothing.

Your sister in hope,
Mrs. W. E. Thurman

SOME OF MY THOUGHTS

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

In this day the anti-christs are trying to scare people to death. But Christ says to his children, "Stand still." He also said in the 24th chapter of Matthew, "And woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days." These to me represent false prophets. The child of hope is not in them. However, they are on every corner trying to feed any one they can. "Woe to them." Their food is poison to a little child of Grace.

"But pray ye that your flight be not in winter, neither on the Sabbath day." Now winter is a desolate, dark time and desolation. But Christ is the end when he comes. And if any man says, Lo here is Christ, or there, believe him not. Only the Great I am has power to save.

Think not that Christ came to destroy the law, but to fulfill it: Christ is the end of the law to everyone who believes in him. We are not justified by the deeds of the law, but our faith is in the Son of God, who loved us and shed his blood as a ransom for all his people. We are nothing: All our goodness is in Him. Mine is there if there is any in me. I get cast down, and he alone can lift me up. If blessed to do so, pray for me. I am seventy-five years old and can't see well, but go to church when I am drawn to go.

Sister Thurman

REPORT OF MEETING

Benton, Ky.

Editors of the Signs:

Friends of the truth have been asking me if I sent in a report of the Union Meeting of the Soldier Creek Association; and I answered, "No". It became a habit of mine to send the **Signs** a report of this meeting each year.

Time rolled around for this three day meeting as announced last year; and as the time drew nearer and nearer, conditions kept looking so unfavorable: Elder Biggs was to enter a Nashville hospital the day our Union was to commence — and he was one minister we were used to having with us. Elder J. N. Darnell is not a well man, and had notified me he was not able to come, though a very dear brother called him and told him he would come for him on Friday morning and then take him home; but Elder Darnell felt that he had better not come since he was so weak.

But the Lord had so ordained that Elder Darnell would be with us, and he did preach the Introductory Sermon, using as his text Hebrews 1:3, concerning the Son of God being the brightness of His glory and the express image of his person, etc. The congregation was well pleased with his discourse: Jesus' name, the Son in whose name we hope we met, had been exalted and praised.

Other ministers with us were Elder W. Y. Chandler of the Little River Association spent three days with us much to our comfort. Brother Swayne Young and Elder Prince from Memphis were with us Saturday and Sunday. Sound speech was their theme, speaking from such texts as, "God has his way in the storm and the clouds are the dust of his feet;" and, "He, the Lord, hath made the earth by his power, hath established the world by his wisdom, and stretched out the heaven by his understanding."

Our Moderator Elder Paul Poyner, closed the meeting with thankfulness to the God of all Grace for the peace and fellowship that had been given us while we were gathered together; and thanked the friends for providing all the necessities for our visitors.

Sickness and age among our church folk does not hinder our God from gathering together his children when it so pleases Him, and from comforting those who are not able to be present, and this at his appointed time and way. May we ever praise the three-one God.

In hope,
Effie Bowden

---

208 Frederick, St.
Bastrop, La. 71220
July 9, 1968

Dear Elder Wood:

Enclosed is an article titled "An Effectual Remedy for Zion's Malady," which is a extract from J. C. Philpot's New Year's Address in the January, 1853 issue of the GOSPEL STANDARD. The title was given by Mr. E. J. Knight, and this article was published in the June, 1968, issue of his MONTHLY MESSAGE.

We were deeply impressed by that article, and felt that it is both timely and needful to the Old Baptists, and that it would be beneficial to the readers of the **Signs.**

We trust this finds things well with you all.

Yours in hope,
W. W. Hudson, Jr.

AN EFFECTUAL REMEDY FOR ZION'S MALADY

Let not Jesus be overlooked; His precious blood be tacitly set aside; His justifying obedience be put out of sight; His Grace forgotten; and His dying love neglected. We may see so much evil in ourselves and others as to see nothing else; have our eyes so fixed and riveted on the malady as to lose all view of the remedy; dwell so much and so long on Zion's sickness as to forget there is balm still in Gilead and a mighty Physician there. There is much hazard of falling into a legal spirit in the endeavor to avoid an Antinomian one. Zion is sick and languishing. How is she to be healed and restored? By the law or the gospel? Does balm flow from Mount Sinai or Mount Zion? The sheep are sickly. To cure them, shall the under-shepherds beat them on the

head with the crook and throw them over the hurdles, or shall they take them to the green pastures and the still waters? Shall they overdrive them with Esau, or lead them on softly with Jacob? Shall they rule them with force and cruelty, or feed them upon the mountains of Israel in a good fold and in a fat pasture (Ezek. 34:4,14). Strife exists in churches. How are these strifts to be healed and peace restored? By the ministers taking the whip into the pulpit, like a vixen mother who flogs the children all round more as a vent for her own passion than for their good? A slap here and a box on the ear there will no more restore peace to a church than to a household. **Families and churches are to be ruled by love, not by the rod.** Let there be a rod, and, when necessary, let it be brought out, **for discipline is as needful in the church as in the house;** but let not the rod be the MAIN INSTRUMENT, and not be used till all gentler means have been tried and fail. **And if the rod be necessary, let it be steeped in the pastor's tears,** and be laid on, not as a schoolmaster flogs a truant, but as a parent chastises a child.

We are bound by the tenderest ties and the most blessed obligations, to show forebearance and forgiveness to erring brethren. We are not to justify their evil deeds or wink at sin, but to consider ourselves, lest we also be tempted. We are not to be harsh and unforgiving, ever prone to censure and condemn, taking our brethren by the throat for a hundred pence with a "pay me what thou owest," forgetting our own debt of ten thousand talents. We are not to be ever weighing and tithing mint, anise, and cummin, and neglecting the weightier matters of judgment and love. We are not to sit as judges, but to stand at the bar as criminals; not to elevate ourselves by depressing others; not to increase our own comparative goodness by throwing into the opposite scale the deficiencies of professors. This did not the prophets. They identified themselves with the Lord's people in all their confessions. Who more blameless than Daniel? Yet read his confession (Dan. 9) "We have sinned, and have committed iniquity," etc. Not, "I, Daniel, am free." Who more faithful than Jeremiah? Yet how he identifies himself with sinning Israel! "We have trangressed and rebelled." "Turn thou us unto Thee, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old." (Lam. 3:42; 5:21) Who more obedient than Moses? Yet he does not separate himself from transgressing Israel: "Pardon our iniquity and our sin." (Exod. 34:9) When he departed from this putting his mouth in the dust, and taking the rod in his hand, smote with it not only the face of the rock but the backs of Israel with a "Hear now ye rebels," as if he too were not one, he shut himself out of the land of promise. He stood then as a god, and not as a man, and therefore did not "sanctify the Lord in the eyes of the children of Israel." (Numb. 20:11, 12).

When Paul sent a rod to the church at Corinth, it was not in a self-exulting, self-righteous spirit, but, "out of much affliction and anguish of heart, with many tears;" and when his reproofs were blessed to their repentance, he was "filled with comfort, and was exceeding joyful in all his tribulation." (2 Cor. 2:4; 7:4). What an example of the highest faithfulness blended with the tenderest of affection! He is slow to wound and swift to heal; last with the rod and first with the kiss; angry with the sin, but tender over the sinner; jealous of the Lord's glory, but mindful of His grace; careful for the purity and profit of the flock, but yearning to bring back the wandering sheep. Were pastors Pauls and churches epistles of Christ, there would be fewer divisions, and those sooner healed. But when an unyielding, unforgiving spirit is manifested on either side, when churches cannot bear with the infirmities of their minister, and ministers will not give way where they are evidently in fault, a smouldering volcano lies under pulpit and pew which will one day burst forth into, in this life, unquenchable flame. "If ye bite and devour one another, take

heed that ye be not consumed one of another."

There is no truer sign nor more alarming symptom of the decline of vital godliness, than the want of love and union amongst those who profess the truth. **If love to the brethren mark the dawn of spiritual life, the decay of that love most certainly denotes its decline.** A house divided against itself cannot stand. **A besieged city, if torn with internal faction, must fall before the enemy.** Peace in the church is the next blessing to peace in the soul, and is most intimately connected with it. It is as absurd as it is hypocritical to talk of having peace with God when the heart is at war with the brethren. To peace, then, must we sacrifice everything but truth and conscience. Our strife should be, not to gain our own selfish ends, nor stiffly carry out our own opinions, nor rule and domineer over the minds of others, as if our own views were necessarily infallible, but to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. **The prosperity of a church** does not consist in the number of its members, nor in the praying gifts of its deacons, nor in its liberal collections, nor in the gifts and abilities of the minister, nor in the clear doctrinal views of the people, but in the love which knits the whole body together. The real increase of a church is not so much from without as from within, "the increase of the body unto the edifying itself in love." Without this internal increase members may be added to a church by scores, and yet the whole body be a discordant mass of shapeless limbs, without union either to the Head or to each other.

We may be certain that the precepts of the New Testament for mutual love and forgiveness cannot be slighted and neglected with impunity. Our stubborn temper and unforgiving spirit may refuse to listen to the word of God, but we cannot, except to our own cost, set aside Scripture precepts and Scripture practice because our corrupt nature withstands them. God's ways may not please our carnal mind, but He will not alter them for that reason. When we are disobedient we shall certainly reap its bitter fruits. If sin be at one end of the chain, sorrow will surely be at the other end. If we sow to the flesh, we shall most certainly of the flesh reap corruption; but if we sow to the Spirit, we shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

But what we chiefly need, and that to which our prayers and desires should be directed, is the pouring out of the Spirit upon pastors and churches, and the whole church of God. No other means will avail. For want of this we are continually in extremes. We see this in the ministry of the present day, for the ministry is but a reflection of the times. Some are all for doctrine. Doctrine, doctrine, doctrine, and all in the hardest, driest form, is their unvaried staple. Most sweet and precious are the doctrines of the gospel when distilled into the soul by the Holy Spirit; but delivered in a cold systematic way as a mere creed, they are made a substitute for vital godliness, and thus become a curse instead of a blessing. Others, seeing the neglect in our day of practical religion, urge the precept continually, but in a spirit so legal, and with a temper so warm, that grace seems almost thrust out of sight, and the poor hearers are even filled with bondage and slavish fear. And others, who preach experience, dwell so much on the workings of sin as almost to omit the workings of grace, and, pointing out the malady, almost forget to dwell on the remedy.

But all these, and innumerable other evils under which Zion now labors, can only be remedied by the pouring out of the Spirit from on high. From Him alone comes a true sight of sin, repentance for it, confession of it, and turning from it. Then will Zion repent and abhor herself in dust and ashes; then will confession flow forth to God and the brethren; then will love and union be rivived between ministers and churches; and then will the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep their hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. **Till that happy time arrives, our wisdom and mercy will be to avoid strife and contention.** A sight and sense of the evils in

ourselves and others should teach us mutual forbearance. **We are all in the hospital, and shall we quarrel with our fellow-patients?** Should we not rather sympathize with each other's complaints, and be looking out for the arrival of the Physician who alone can cure each and all? On this common ground, even in the present dark and gloomy day all the living family may meet. But if we cannot keep out of contention, and desire a matter of strife with the brethren, let this be our ground of dispute; who is the greater sinner; who owes most to the Savior; who shall live most of His glory.

J. C. Philpot

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE UPPER COUNTRY LINE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

JULY 1968

Dearly Beloved in the Lord,

It is inspiring to witness our brethren and friends of like precious faith brought together in one accord, one Lord, one faith, one baptism. If we know our hearts, we desire to welcome you in the spirit of love to the sixty-second session of the Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association convening with our sister church at Prospect Hill, N. C. the year of Nineteen Hundred Sixty Eight.

I write to you, whom I feel bear witness with the First Epistle of Peter 2-9, "Ye are a chosen generation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light," and by his grace are gathered in love for none other purpose than to praise his Holy name.

Let us meditate upon these precious things and give ourselves wholly to them in love. For our Lord left his throne in Heaven to endure all things for the elect's sake, and thus opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. This faith which was once delivered to the saints is the substance of our hope.

There are many members and friends of this association who are now sleeping in the silence of the tomb awaiting that Glorious Resurrection. We remember their full assurance of hope unto the end of their endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in bonds of peace, forbearing one another in love.

May God give us, who remain of this generation, grace whereby we may serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear. Even at this present time, there is a remnant according to the election of Grace who are predestinated to be conformed to the image of his son. They are buried with him by baptism into death with the Holy Ghost.

We may encounter many grievous occasions and groan in the spirit though we have that blessed promise, "I will never leave nor forsake thee." As we shall leave one another at the close of this meeting, how sad it will be to say goodby. For many faces will be seen at this place no more forever.

Let us continue to be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love. For know you this, we have but a few more days, a few more sorrows, a few more tears, and we shall go the way of no return. One by one we shall sleep the sleep of death that is swallowed up in victory. Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Written by request by
Clifton Robertson
Elder W. Curry King, Moderator
Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

JOY FILLED THEIR HEARTS

Rt. 3, 14778 Springdale Ave.
Middlefield, Ohio 44062

Signs of the Times:

Dear faithful in Christ Jesus of the Signs, who work, study, and pray, and who are led by God's Spirit to write such wonderful messages that feed the poor, naked, hungry children of the living

God, — we who thirst after his righteousness that we may be filled. Greetings in the name of the Lord:

We visited my brother and family in Indiana last Friday through Sunday, and went to church Saturday and Sunday all-day, and heard four wonderful sermons by one of God's humble servants, Elder Elias Sarber, whom I have heard several times in the past thirty years. It is indeed a God given privilege to be able to sit in God's house and drink from the Fountain that never runs dry. I took several copies of the **Signs of the Times** along, and read some of the beautiful sermons that our dear brethren had written, and joy filled our hearts, and tears of joy unspeakable and full of glory filled our eyes and hearts in praise of God's wonderful works of grace.

I left six or eight of the **Signs** with my brother. I enclose $5.00 for subscription to Carl E. Thomas, Brookfield, Indiana, for one year; use the $1.00 for Indigent Fund.

Write on — carry on ye faithful servants of the most high God, for in Him do we live, move and have our being. The blessings of God are the only ones we get: the world knows nothing about the sweet fellowship of his saints. Let us thank him every day, hour, and moment for these blessings.

May the God of all grace bless all of his beloved children every where. I salute you all with a smile of His love, and may we as His chosen, His royal priesthood, who were chosen in Christ before the world was, praise his holy name. Oh, yes, the Bride the Lamb's wife is washed pure and white in His precious blood, which was shed for many; and that not in vain, for "By the offering of one, many were made righteous."

May God's richest blessings be yours to enjoy, dear saints of God. Pray for us when at a throne of grace. Peace be unto all the family of God.

Yours in Christ,
Claude Thomas

A GLORIOUS THOUGHT

Eden, N. C.

Dear Editors:

It is time to renew my subscription again. We enjoy the **Signs** very much as we read of the travels of the children of God on this earth. Sometimes I can feel His presence in my soul; and I just wish I could tell the whole world of Him and the love wherewith he has loved us when we were dead in sins; and his love is an everlasting love.

What a glorious thought that one day we will be with Him in glory, where our desires will be fulfilled, and we will be like him and be satisfied. There is no end to this love.

W. N. Tilly

"HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH IT"

Rt. 5,
Reidsville, N. C. 27320

Dear Brother Spangler:

Will try and write a few words concerning my hope in the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I am all alone at home as I didn't get to go to church today.

I was baptized the 3rd Sunday in May of this year at Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church by Brother Donald Smith, who is a wonderfully God blessed pastor. He preaches that he doesn't have a home on this earth: he says he is searching for something he has never found here. That's me. I have never found that place here that I felt at home. I am so lonesome in this world. I have four wonderful children: two of them belong to the Missionary Baptists, but that is the Lord's will too. My husband does not belong to any church, but I am sure he would tell you that he loved the Primitive Baptists. I hope I love all Primitive Baptists wherever they are. I was wonderfully blessed to hear preaching at the association at Wolf Island Church. I have been going to that church and to Pleasant Grove all my life, and had made the remark

that if I ever joined the church it would be Wolf Island; but I didn't have a thing to do with it. The 3rd Sunday morning in April my niece and sister-in-law were baptized at Pleasant Grove; and I thought that Brother Donald Smith would never announce an open door of the church; and I joined at the water. I thought I had loved those people and that church all my life, but I have never loved them with a greater love — I almost ran to my pastor to join. I do hope I will always love them and never cause any trouble.

I hope and pray that when I meet my God and depart from this world, I can say I love all Primitive Baptists.

In hope of eternal life;
Your sister in Christ, I hope,
Rena (Cobb) Smith

LOVES TO READ EXPERIENCES

Chattaroy, Wash. 99003

Dear Editors:

It is time to renew my subscription for two years; use the balance as is needed.

I received my **Signs** today. I love to read the letters giving the experiences of others, and often feel like writing to them to tell them how it cheered and uplifted me in spirit: we seem to be of one mind. I enjoy Elder Lamberts's articles, and also the others. I can understand some better than others, but it is myself and not the writers.

I am glad to see the raise in subscription price, for I feel it will help to continue the printing of the **Signs of the Times**; and we know that prices are going up. I first began reading the **Signs** over fifty years ago when my dear father, Davis Burch, took them. I do not remember when they were not in our home; but I drifted away from them for a few years, and tried to believe the doctrine of the Free Methodists, but was shown they were not for me, and I could not get comfort from them. You could say that I was being deceived, but I feel I was only being shown by my blessed Redeemer that what I thought was right, was not right by the Scriptures, as I see them now. There was too much work in their teachings — works of our own doing; and the scriptures say, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works lest any man should boast." (Eph. 3:8,9)

I thought at one time that I could not believe the Old School Baptist doctrine, but when the time came and I could not find the comfort I was looking for in any other church, my eyes were opened and I was made willing to ask for a home among the Old Baptists —and was baptized June 1, 1924. I have had many ups and downs and found it hard to keep in the strait and narrow way. I remember a dream I had: all was black and dark around me, but I was walking in a path above the ground — a bright, white path. I have had many dreams that were a comfort to me in my evil ways, and when I would do good evil was present with me; and I can still say with Paul, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord; so that with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." (Romans 7:25) And I am still struggling. "If God be for us who can be against us?" This is my faith and belief, "and nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

"Lord give us such a faith as this,
And then whate'r may come,
We'll taste, e'en here the hallowed bliss
Of an eternal home."

And if not free grace then I am lost.
In bonds of love,

A little sister in hope,
Mrs. Blanche B. Brown

VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING WILL NOT BE HELD

Due to illness of several who usually entertain our visiting brethren, we regret to announce we will not be able to hold the Virginia Corresponding Meeting this year; but, the Lord willing, will resume again later.

Mildred I. Duke, Clerk

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the **Skewarkey Union** was appointed to be held with the Robertsonville Church, Robertsonville, N. C. The Introductory Sermon is to be preached by Elder I. S. Connor, with Elder W. E. Grimes, alternate.

The Meeting House is located on 64 Highway in Robertsonville. We extend a cordial invitation to everyone to come and worship with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Union Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The **Staunton River Union Meeting**, the Lord willing will be held at Mt. Ararat (or Old Mountain) Church, September 28 and 29, 1968. The meeting house is located on Rt. 750 about nine miles northwest of Danville, Va.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

Raymond S. Payne, Clerk

ALL DAY MEETING AT NEW VERNON

An All-day Meeting is appointed to be held at the New Vernon Meeting House the first Saturday in October (October 5th). Lunch will be served. Friends and brethren are invited to meet with us.

(Elder) A. J. Slauson

UPPER COUNTRY LINE UNION

The **Upper Country Line Union** will be held with Pleasantville Church, the Lord willing, the fifth Sunday in September. The meeting house is located on No. 704 between Reidsville and Madison, N. C. We welcome all brethren and friends.

Rachel Wray, Asst. Clerk

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** will convene with the church at Wilson, N. C., the Lord willing, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in September, 1968.

The church is located at the corner of Green and Jackson Streets in the city of Wilson. All who have a mind to attend are cordially invited to do so.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The 1968 session of the **South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association** will convene with Union Church, located about three miles northwest of Haile, Louisiana, and about five miles southeast of Marion, Louisiana, commencing on Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1968. Lovers of the truth are welcome.

Elder W. W. Hudson, Jr., Moderator
Elder David E. Turner, Ass't Moderator
Brother Eugene Patterson, Clerk

LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The Lexington-Roxbury Association is appointed to be held at the Old School Baptist Meeting House at Halcottville, Delaware County, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, September 11 and 12, 1968. Those coming on Tuesday take the Denver Road at Kelly's Corner to Crystal Spring Farm, the second house north of Denver Postoffice and store. Those coming Wednesday go directly to the meeting house.

Brethren and friends and lovers of tde

truth are urged to meet with us as we are few in number.

(Elder) A. J. Slauson, Mod.

BLACK CREEK
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The 1968 session of the **Black Creek Association** is appointed to be held with the church at Aycock's, Wayne County, N. C., beginning Friday before the fourth Sunday in October and continue through Sunday. Saturday and Sunday services will be held in the school building in the town of Black Creek. Those coming for the Friday service at the church, from the east take rural road 1520 at Eureka to junction of 1505, turn left and go one mile and turn right on 508 to the meeting house. Those coming from the north or west take 301 south out of Wilson to No. 17, turn left on 17 and go four miles, and turn left on rural road 1634, go to the junction and turn right on 1613 to the meeting house.

For the Saturday and Sunday service at the school building in Black Creek, follow highway 17, turn off at Lower Black Creek Church from the north, left; from the south, right. Consult road map for the location of the town of Black Creek.

Our brethren and friends are cordially invited to attend.

W. E. Turner, Clerk

SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

The **Salisbury Old School Baptist Association** is to be held, the Lord willing, with the Indiantown Church at Powellville, Maryland, on Route 354, Wednesday and Thursday October 23rd and 24th, beginning at 10 A. M.

All those of our faith and order are invited to be with us. Those coming on Tuesday will contact Elder Arthur Warren, phone (82) 641-1826, or William S. Adkins, phone 742-2198. Those coming on Wednesday go directly to meeting house.

William S. Adkins, Clerk

UNION NOTICE

The **Original White Oak Union** is appointed to be held with the Church at White Oak, Jones County, the fifth Saturday and Sunday in September, 1968. The church is located about 3 miles west of Maysville, N. C. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and worship with us.

L. H. Southerland, Clerk
Chinquapin, N. C.

SMITH RIVER
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The **Smith River Association** is to be held with Laurel Creek Church the Lord willing, the first Sunday in September, and Friday and Saturday before. We invite those who love the truth and one another to meet with us.

Those traveling either from Roanoke or Floyd on Highway 221 turn at Jamey's Esso Station on Road 610 and follow signs to the church.

Amos Hash, Clerk

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **Seven Mile Association** is appointed to be held with the church at Black River Meeting House, Harnett County, N. C., Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 13, 14, 15, 1968.

The meeting House is in the town of Dunn, N. C.

W. D. Godwin, Clerk

KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **Kehukee Association** is appointed to be held at North Creek Church in Beaufort County, N. C., the first Sunday in October, 1968, Saturday before and Monday following. Elder W. E. Grimes was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon and Elder A. L. McKinney his alternate.

The church is located on highway 92, east of Bath, N. C., about twenty-five miles from Washington, N. C. We invite our ministering brethren and brethren and friends who may have a mind to meet with us.

E. C. Harrison, Assn. Clerk

Danville, Virginia September, 1968

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EDITORIAL

JOHN 18: 10

"I am glorified in them."

There is much that passes for religion in the present times that has nothing in it but the glorification of man; it finds its beginning in man and ends with man. It is not the work of God and therefore does not glorify him. Man may be sincere in what he does, but that does not make what he does right. Saul thought he should do many things against this name, which things he did, but it was when a work of grace was begun in his heart that he found that the things he thought were unto life were unto death.

The words leading up to our text in the tenth verse declare that "All mine are thine." That is, all that belong to Christ, for whom at the time he uttered the prayer recorded in John 17, when he was about to be crucified, were the Father's, they belonged to him and were given to the Son by the Father. God the Father and God the Son were united in purpose and choice, so they were chosen by God the Father and preserved in Christ Jesus. All that the Father gave to the Son, the Son redeems, and he is glorified in them. Not one of them but was lost and ruined, without hope and without God in the world. Nor did any of them by nature have the ability to come to him. He came to them. He concluded them all in unbelief, for there was none good, no, not one. This is Bible truth, but God's children are made to know it in a living way by the operation in them of God's Spirit, who convinces of the truth of those things that are written in the word. The Spirit does this, not because they have prayed for it, but because they belong to God and Christ, and they are not their own, nor can they do the things that they would. They are a number that no man can number, belonging unto God and Christ, to be called out from the race of mankind for God's own purpose, and for each of them there is an appointed time. One wrote, in hymn number 240,

"The appointed time rolls on apace,
Not to propose, but call by grace;
To change the heart, renew the will,
And turn their feet to Zion's hill."

We believe that all creatures and worlds were created for the glory of God. David saith, "The heavens declare the glory of God," etc. —Psalm 19. Prophets and seers declare his glory, but to see it we find that even Moses must be placed in the clift of the rock by God himself (Exodus 33: 22), and God told him, "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy." Saul was a persecutor, but it was God who called him by his grace and revealed his Son in him, and so great was the change, that when men who loved the truth, saw and heard. "THEY GLORIFIED GOD IN HIM." "Consider the lilies, how they grow," said Jesus, yet "Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, for one star differeth from another in glory, so we find the moon, or law, had a reflected glory. It set forth Christ, the Sun, and the prophets, or stars, varied in quantity of light or glory, but it was Christ, the Sun, when he arose with healing in his wings, who eclipsed the stars and moon by a glory that excelleth. He is ever in the midst of his people. The tabernacle was an evidence of his glory, and as the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud, so we find the innumberable cloud of witnesses all spake of him, of his suffering and the glory that should follow. Take Jesus away, and the glory is departed, just as when the ark of God was taken by the Philistines, the mother called her son Ichabod, saying, The glory of God has departed from Israel. (1 Sam. 6:21) No wonder then that Paul said, "We preach not ourselves (as though we were anybody), but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."

When Martha had said unto him, "Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" It is his glory to raise the dead, for as the first Adam was a living soul, so is the second Adam a quickening spirit, and just as the natural man reflects Adam's shame and dishonor, so the new creature in Christ Jesus reflects Jesus Christ, for Jesus Christ is glorified in him. When the saints were to appear before princes and governors they were not to take thought what they should say. He would give them a tongue, the tongue of the learned. What a glory there is in the tongue giving utterance to the things of God. How unfit one is of himself to utter such glorious truth, as unfit by nature as Balaam's ass was to speak with the voice of a man. (Num. 22:28). To the glory of Christ and the power of his truth, the truth of God, his saints face an ungodly frowning world. How boldly these humble men faced their enemies, those who had crucified their Lord, and preached the love and power of a Christ that saves unto the uttermost. The power of love and its constraining and restraining influence is clearly manifest in the union and fellowship of the saints of God, who, led by the Spirit, and walking in the Spirit, do not fulfill the desires of the flesh, but rather esteem others better than themselves, and bear one another's burdens, and by an humble submission to the will of God encourage each other to bear their own burdens. In such who walk in love we see the image of Jesus, and we love them for Christ's sake and glorify God for the grace given to them. The presence of Jesus in such has an humbling effect upon the soul, and sin becomes exceeding sinful, so that there is a self-loathing, and often there will be a laying of one's mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope, and we know that it is of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed because his compassions fail not.

"They are new every morning, great is thy faithfulness." The faithfulness of Christ is such that he never leaves nor forsakes us. The presence of the glory

of God in the cloud, his glory as set forth in the tabernacle, the priest, and the offerings, and above all in the ark itself, was to Israel an evidence not manifest to any other people, of God's goodness and mercy unto them, and when those evidences were taken from them, and the house left unto them desolate, the glory of God departed from them. But there is a house of God, a building not made with hands, in which the people of God are living as lively stones, and are built together a spiritual house, and it is in this house that Jesus is glorified. He of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, that if any man glory, let him glory in the Lord. Paul tells us that the head of every man is Christ, and that every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoreth his head. Every man, or servant of God, praying or prophesying in the spirit, is ever zealous not to cover up the head, Christ Jesus, but is ever forward to declare his work with rejoicing, while the church, as a woman, is ever covering herself, never telling what she has done for the Lord, but confessing in herself as having nothing to glory in but the cross of Christ, so that she, like Paul, glories in her infirmities, that the power of God might rest upon her. Thus as the woman covered is a sign that she is under the power of her husband, so the church, walking conscious of her own infirmities, and glorying therein, realizes the power of God resting upon her, enabling her to glory in her Lord.

The first man Adam is the figure of him that was to come, but through disobedience and death that likeness was debased, and Adam had children debased, conceived in sin, but these children could not possibly know how debased they were except through the second Adam, who is a quickening Spirit. All that belonged to God and Christ groaned and travailed in pain until now, and Paul also says, "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Thus gracious men and women have received the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father, but they, like Paul, are still waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. Here they bear in their body the marks of the dying of the Lord Jesus. They have the Spirit of Christ, but they groan in the likeness of Adam, yet faith, the result of God's word shining in their heart, gives them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It is in these earthen vessels that he is glorified here, for being common clay of the same lump, and being insufficient to even think a good thought, they show forth his power and his glory. They, as a people, are the house of his glory, and he has declared that he will glorify the house of his glory. What more can he do for his people than he has already done? Will he not change our vile body and fashion it according to his glorious body? Christ's body was more marred than any man's through sin. He died and rose again and ascended into heaven, the same body, now glorified, "decked with resplendent wounds." Once subjected to death, now the first begotten from the dead, possessing immortality, which immortality he has brought to light through the gospel.

Thus we have a hope of eternal life, and we would remember here that hope that is seen is not hope, but under the humiliation of this body which is dead because of sin, we patiently wait for our Lord, who shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and when we see him as he is, we shall be like him, GLORIFIED. In this body of flesh they are declared to be children that will not lie; that is, they show forth the praise of Christ, who has called them out of darkness into his most marvelous light. How much more so when he, who is a quickening Spirit, shall quicken our mortal bodies, and all we have to possess and enjoy to all eternity will redound to the praise and glory of him who loved us and gave himself

for us. If the mind of a man was put in a dog he would not be satisfied to live with dogs, he would want to rise to the level of the mind he possessed. When at that level he would be humbled because he had the likeness of a dog. The mind of Christ is put into a subject of grace, which causes him to no more be content with those things that please his fellowmen, but to rise above them, for he is an object of God's mercy, but he carries about a body of this death, a body that is dead because of sin, just like his neighbors, but having the mind of Christ, he loathes that which is of the flesh and wants the likeness of his Lord. It was this experience that made David say, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness," and it is the like experience that makes us long for the day when we shall behold his face in righteousness, and awake with his likeness.

(The above was an editorial by Elder Ruston of October, 1938. In the absence of a present writing from him, we feel that this one of thirty years ago will be most interesting and edifying to all. — J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ACTS 3:1-11

Of all the signs and wonders that the apostles did through the power of God, only those are recorded in the Scriptures that are needful for the instruction of the children of God in righteousness and the confirmation of their faith. The first eleven verses of the third chapter of Acts relate an incident in the apostolic ministry of Peter and John that occurred soon after the descent of the Holy Ghost and the establishment of the visible church on the day of Pentecost. Peter and John visited the temple at Jerusalem at the ninth hour of the day, a special time of prayer, and saw a lame man that had been carried daily and laid at the gate of the temple, that is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that came to the temple for worship, and who was about to ask alms of the two apostles . . . Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." Peter then took the cripple by the right hand and lifted him up, and the bones of his ankles and feet received strength. The cured man leaping, stood and walked and entered with them into the temple, praising God. Those who witnessed the miracle were filled with wonder and astonishment at that which had happened to the lame man, who held Peter and John, as they ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

Peter and John were witnesses of this demonstration of the mighty power of God. Out of the mouths of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. These two apostles were thought to be the oldest and the youngest of the apostles respectively. It seems appropriate that they should participate in this miracle, for it is by a miracle of grace that every child of God enters savingly into a knowledge of the truth, from the time that the first one of the family of the redeemed tasted that the Lord is gracious, until the last one finds a place in that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Peter and John went together into the temple, denoting that blessed fellowship that the children of God have together in spiritual companionship when they sit down in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Peter and John were together at the trial of Christ, they ran together to his sepulcher, and they came to the temple together, not to offer up the sacrifice of lamb or bullock on a Jewish altar, but to attend to prayer and to offer spiritual sacrifices, also to preach to the Jews who assembled in numbers at the ninth hour, which was three o'clock in the afternoon.

This was one of the hours observed for prayer and sacrifice by the Jews. It was the ninth hour when Jesus Christ on the cross commended his spirit to God as he gave up his life, saying, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Prayer is the christian's vital breath, his means of communication

with God. A sigh, a cry for mercy, a groan because of sin from a burdened soul is prayer, is indited in the heart by the spirit of God and is heard and registered in heaven. When the high priest under the law dispensation made intercession for Israel, he took a live coal of fire from the brazen altar of sacrifice and placed it upon the incense on the golden altar. As the fragrant incense vapor ascended, perfuming the place of worship, the high priest offered prayer. When a child of God, one of the priesthood of believers, prays, there is a work of the Holy Spirit in his heart, convicting him of sin and teaching him the justice of his condemnation and the righteousness of that fiery law that went forth from the hand of the Lord at Sinai. It shows him his ruin in nature, and in its application consumes all the combustible material of creature effort and legal works.The law burning in the bosom of the convicted sinner as holy fire shows him the vileness of his heart and causes him to groan within himself and to cry for mercy. The creature was born in sin, and to live unto God, must die to sin and realize his need of Christ.

As the ninth hour was observed as an hour of prayer in Jewish worship, there is in this a spiritual signification. It denotes judgment in the sense that when a sinner prays for mercy, he acknowledges the righteous judgment of God for his sins. It was not far from the ninth hour when the first passover lamb was offered up at the time of the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt for the promised land. This lamb died typically in the place of and for the Israelites, and by the sprinkling of the blood of this passover lamb on the lintels of the door posts of the houses of the children of Israel, they escaped the wrath of God and became a nation. Jesus met the judgment of God for his bride, the church, at the ninth hour of the day. He suffered for her and in her stead all the penalty that she would have had to endure if he had not been a propitiation for her sins. By his death and resurrection the church became a holy nation and a peculiar people of the Lord. At the very hour Jesus died, the high priest in the temple was about to slay the passover lamb when suddenly the earth shook, rocks were rent, many graves were opened, and the veil of the temple was rent asunder from top to the bottom, showing that the way into the holiest was now made open, that the type had ceased, as Christ the true passover lamb fulfilled the requirements of the law and made the observance of ceremonial rites no longer necessary. At the ninth hour Jesus died with a prayer upon his lips as he commended his spirit to the Father. When we enter the church, which is the true temple of God, it is through prayer and supplication; it is because of the merit of the sacrifice of Christ; it is through a sense of guilt having lain heavy on our conscience and our inability to lighten the burden. We can not stand or walk in our own strength before God. The man who was healed in the miracle under consideration could neither stand nor walk. He was lame from his mother's womb. All mankind is conceived in sin, born under its curse, unable to meet its just requirements and under its condemnation. This man had been carried daily to the temple that he might receive alms. This shows he could not stand or walk or live of himself, and that no man could relieve his infirmity. Vain is the help of man to relieve the sinner.

The word certain is used by the Holy Spirit to designate this man from all other individuals and shows him to be a representative character. A subject of grace is distinguished from all other individuals not receiving God's favor. This man represents a sinner who is convicted of sin and is slain by it. Such a character is separate from the world. This man had no strength or means by which he could relieve himself and was fully aware of his physical infirmity. He had to be brought to the gate of the temple to which reference has been made. It is the law that brings a subject of God's redeeming love to a realization of his need, for the law is the schoolmaster of believers unto Christ that

they might be justified by faith. The decalogue manifests the wound of sin and the ceremonial law points to the remedy, but is powerless to apply it. The law therefore is a ministration of death. Sacrifices under the law dispensation were offered daily, but could not take away sin. The repetition of these sacrifices day after day and year after year emphasized their impotency to purge the conscience or cleanse forever the foul stain of sin. The daily presence of this invalid at the temple to beg alms proved the gravity of his condition. He was incurable by any aid of man.

Peter and John bade this man to look upon them, not that they could of themselves effect a cure, but that through their ministration he might look to Jesus who is the fullness of grace and truth. Peter bade the afflicted one in the name of Jesus of Nazareth to rise up and walk, stating that he had neither silver nor gold to give him, gifts that perish with the using. Jesus had resided a considerable time as the word made flesh in his holy humanity in Nazareth. So the lame man was bidden to rise and walk in the name of Jesus Christ, the God-man, the holy one who had left the shining courts of heaven's effulgent glory to assume holy human flesh, that he might bring many sons to glory. When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his son, made of a woman and made under the law to redeem his church, which was under the law. The children of God being partakers of flesh and blood, Jesus likewise partook of the same that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, and deliver them that all their lifetime are subject to bondage. The law of God required obedience in the flesh, therefore Jesus was manifest in the flesh. In Christ dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily. In the matchless name of Jesus the lame man was bidden to rise up and walk. Peter then took the afflicted one by the right hand, which denotes acceptance, fellowship. Those that enter into fellowship with the son of God are placed at the right hand of Christ when the Lord shall come with his angels and sit upon the throne of his glory. Immediately the lame man was lifted up, his feet and ankle bones received strength and he was able to leap and walk and to praise God.

The poor child of God who has felt the plague of his own heart, and to be without hope in the world, leaps in a spiritual sense when his burden is removed, when peace is spoken to his soul, when he discerns Jesus as his great salvation, when he is lifted up from law into grace, when he enters into manifest life in Christ, and his soul magnifies the Lord and rejoices in his Savior. It is then that he walks, not after the flesh, but after the spirit. It is stated that the healed man entered into the temple. When the child of God is lifted up above the condemnation of the law, he enters into that rest prepared for the people of God and has his place in that antitypical temple of lively stones built up for a habitation of God through the spirit. The lame man, fully restored, resorted to Solomon's porch, one of the precincts of the temple that then was. Solomon typifies wisdom as well as peace. In the spiritual temple the subject of God's grace learns that wisdom that is from above, and which is pure and peaceable. Jesus Christ is made unto his people wisdom, righteosness, santification, and redemption. By nature we learn wisdom from man, which is foolishness with God, but through the healing power of the Great Physician of our souls, we are taught the wisdom of God. The lame man did not enter the temple until he was healed, and the little ones in Zion do not learn the wisdom that is from above until they are made alive spiritually. It was in the temple that the healed man praised God. It is in the true church that God's redeemed family praise him. Of such it is written: "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." The lame man was cured without the use of silver or gold, which emphasizes the truth that all the gold, that all the natural wealth of men poured into societies and organizations of men, whether at home or abroad, can not suffice to save a single

soul from bondage to sin and death. Only from Jesus comes the priceless blessing of eternal life.

(The above was written by the late Elder Arnold H. Bellows and appeared in the Signs of March, 1943.

We were greatly impressed when we read it again recently and felt to include it under Voices of the Past. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

SISTER BETTIE GLASS

Sister Bettie Calk Glass was born in Downsville, Louisiana, June 19, 1887, and died in Farmersville, Louisiana, April 20, 1968. Survivors are her husband, Brother Wilmer Glass of Farmersville, Louisiana; four daughters, Mrs. Mozel Tull of Minden, Louisiana; Mrs. Vera Owens of Haile, Louisiana, Mrs. Christene Bowman of New Britain, Connecticut; Mrs. Madeline Gardner of Videlia, Louisiana; two brothers, J. H. Calk of Monroe, Louisiana, J. D. Calk of Fort Worth, Texas; three sisters, Mrs. Beulah Anderson and Mrs. Erie Thurston of Downsville, Louisiana, Mrs. Arminda Beauchamp of Houston, Texas; ten grandchildren and one great grandchild.

I do feel like from the very depth of my heart that sister Bettie Glass was one of the little ones that our great God gave his son to redeem. I find so far as my understanding is, that the Lord died only for his sheep. He arose for the sheep and went back to the right hand of the Father where He is now making intercessions for the saints according to the will of God. She was a very lovely person, and I suppose there was no one that enjoyed doing for the Old Baptist anymore than sister Bettie Glass did. This hope that she had did not stop at the grave for it will finally carry her on to the full completion to ever be with God around his glorius throne for ever and ever, amen.

The writer conducted the funeral.

David E. Turner
410 West Madison
Bastrop, Louisiana

MERRILL BEAUCHAMP

Our precious brother fell asleep in Christ on Thursday, February 1, 1968. There has been equals but none to surpass him as a living witness in bearing testimony to God's saving grace. It could be well said that this grace was as clearly made manifest in the day of death as it had been in life.

He was born December 2, 1888, the son of Willard and Virginia Beauchamp. His birthplace was on a humble farm home near Snow Hill, Maryland. His early life was spent in the vicinity except for the time that he spent in military service during world war number one.

The providence and grace of God shines alike in his life. He was a quiet boy and man, not having indulged in the usual vices of mankind, yet ever ready to credit it all to God's goodness. He married Miss Elsie Cottingham after the war and they were blessed to live together in happy union and felicity for many years and to be blessed with four kind and well reared children, to wit, Mrs. Grace Dryden, Berlin, Maryland, Mrs. Iva Hynson, Wilmington, Delaware, Willard, of Baltimore, Maryland, and Ralph, of Mt. Airy, Maryland, who, together with their mother, are left to continue their allotted time here.

He was blessed to have the love and confidence of the Old Baptist people all his life, he having been made a trustee of the Snow Hill Church on December 26, 1925. He and Sister Elsie came before the church at Snow Hill on the first Sunday night in August, 1959, and were baptized by Elder David V. Spangler on August 30th. He was chosen deacon of the church in April, 1963, and served with honor and glory to the saving grace of God.

His funeral services were held at Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church by the writer on Sunday, February 4, 1968, after which we laid him to rest in the Salisbury, Maryland cemetery, there to come forth in the resurrection by the same power that brought Jesus from the dead, and, as Jesus came in the same body in which He was buried, it was the faith of our brother, and of the church and pastor, that he will be brought in the same body in which he was buried, only it will be spiritual and not natural. The text on this occasion was found in I Cor. 6: 14,15.

W. D. G.

OCTAVIE EMERSON

Sister Octavie Martin Emerson was born September 25, 1889, and passed from this life April 10, 1968, making her stay on earth more than seventy-eight years. She was the daughter of the late Sparrel and Falley Bryant Martin of Patrick County, Va. She was twice married. Her first husband was Thomas S. Sigmon. They were married November 14, 1918. He died January 26, 1947. To their union were born two daughters. She married Pleasant Wade Emerson December 16, 1948. He died August, 1953. She leaves to mourn two daughters, Mrs. Mattie Snead and Mrs. Rethie Dence of Virginia Beach and six grandchildren.

She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Union on October 21, 1911, and was baptized by Elder P. A. Cahill. She faithfully attended her church as long as her health permitted. She walked many miles many times

to fill her seat at church on her meeting days. She professed a hope in Christ at the age of twelve years. She was always glad for brethren and friends to visit her. We feel that God has called her home to be with Him where there is no sickness, sorrow, pain and death, where all will be peace, love and joy forever.

Her funeral was conducted at Union Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor Elder Leonard Brammer. Her body was laid to rest beside her first husband in the Sigmon Cemetery. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family and bow in humble submission to the will of God.

Submitted by one who loved her,

Rada L. Rakes

IN MEMORY OF BROTHER HAMLETT

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst by death Brother Daniel Lee Hamlett, on May 9, 1968. He joined Springfield Church May 10, 1924. He was a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God. He enjoyed talking on the Scripture and the goodness and power of our God.

Brother Hamlett is survived by his wife, Pearl Hamlett, five sons, ten daughters, 35 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren. Funeral services were held in Oak View Presbyterian Church by his pastor Elder O. K. Tench and Mr. Locks. Burial was in the Church Cemetery.

L. R. Willis

SARAH LOU EMERSON

Sister Sarah Lou Emerson was born May, 1892, and departed this life March 18, 1968, at the age of 75 years.

She was the daughter of the late Solomon A. Setliff and Sarah J. Via Setliff of Patrick County, Virginia, and was married to Henry H. Emerson on October 3, 1907. To their union four children were born. She leaves to mourn her passing her devoted husband, two sons Jasper A. Emerson of Ridgeway, and Eugene A. Emerson of Martinsville; and two daughters, Mrs. Lillie Pickerel of Ridgeway, and Mrs. Murray A. Martin of Bassett; two sisters, Mrs. Tom Nicholes of Eden, North Carolina, and Mrs. Virginia Rakes of Endicott, Virginia; two brothers, John R. and James J. Setliff of Stuart, Virginia; 13 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren.

She had been a member of Union Primitive Baptist Church for about fifty-one years. Her funeral was conducted at Union Church by her Pastor, Elder Leonard Brammer, with burial in the Church cemetery. Sister Emerson was a faithful member of the church and attended the meetings when her health would permit.

May the Lord richly bless and comfort all that mourn and cause the Church to be submissive to his will.

Written by a sister in hope,
Clora S. Akers

MINNIE APPLE SAUNDERS

On January 4, 1966, the Lord of Heaven and earth called her spirit home, and Sister Saunders was relieved of her suffering. She had been in declining health for several years and critically ill for one month. Romans 8-17: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

She was a member of Lindsey Street Primitive Baptist Church and attended her meetings regularly as long as her health would permit. She manifested much love and concern with the welfare of the church. As we bow in humble submission to the righteous will of our Lord, we feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Sister Saunders talked with the writer much about a precious home which she greatly longed to see. The last time I stood by her bed of affliction, I felt death would be a sweet relief. There was a prayer in my heart that if it could be his righteous will, she be given to sleep that peaceful sleep in Jesus, while awaiting his coming to take her to that precious home where she longed so much to be. Where there will be no more suffering to bear.

She left to mourn her departure one son, T. W. Saunders, Jr. of Reidsville, N. C.; a daughter, Mrs. George W. King, of Ayden, North Carolina; and four grandchildren; along with five step-daughters; Miss Blanche Saunders and Mrs. C. C. Webb of Reidsville; Mrs. J. A. Moore of Greensboro; and Mrs. C. C. Robertson and Mrs. Audrey Minor of Route 1, Reidsville; four step-sons, L. R., J. A., and M. F. Saunders of Reidsville and G. N. Saunders of Route 1, Reidsville.

In the absence of her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, the funeral was conducted by Elder Wallace Smith and Elder A. P. Mewborn, pastor of the Church she attended while making her home with her daughter in Ayden, North Carolina. After the death of her husband, Brother T. W. Saunders in 1961, she spoke often of the love and fellowship she found with these precious brethren.

Her body was laid to rest beneath a mound of beautiful flowers in the Apple family cemetery, surrounded by the rolling hills of Caswell County where she was born on May 10, 1885, and lived her 81 years closely associated with this place.

May the Gracious Heavenly Father continue his blessing upon those near and dear to her.

(The above was received some months ago, and held because we did not know who wrote it. We now learn that it was written by Brother Clifton Robertson — J. D. W.)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 136 DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1968 NO. 10

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10/68
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE RIVER OF THE WATER OF LIFE

(Psalm 46:4; Rev. 22:1)

This "is a river, the streams whereof
Make glad the city of God,"
The church the dear Redeemer loved,
And purchased with his blood.
How beautiful does this scripture
To this sinner appear!
Somehow it has been sweet to me,
Serving my heart to cheer.
This clear river never runs dry,
Proceeding from heav'n above,
From the throne of God and the Lamb,
This pure river of love.
Its gladdening streams ever flow
To the elect in this land,
Who for sovereign electing grace
Have taken a firm stand.
Election is a delighting stream
To the church militant,
Which in everlasting days will be
The same church triumphant.
The quickened sinner is made glad,
When by faith it is known,
And blest indeed are the people
To whom this doctrine's shown.
They are those whose names are written
In the Lamb's book of life,
And they'll be taken home on high
As "the bride, the Lamb's wife."
At the head of the crystal river,
With a delightful thrill,
They shall view the fountain of love,
And freely drink their fill.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, North Carolina

THE SONG OF SOLOMON

"The song of songs, which is Solomon's." (Chapt. 1:1)

Solomon spoke three thousand proverbs, and his songs were a thousand and five. (I Kings 4:32) He spoke many things to the comfort of God's chosen people. We hope it is our song today: to sing praises unto our God. Solomon's words were spoken by the wisdom of God and are precious to our souls. When he draws us we run after Him, being blessed to receive the manna that comes down from heaven. Like the rain and snow that falls from the Master's hand and waters the earth, it gives every blessing to the ones it is prepared for in its season.

When a child of grace looks back in his experience and can say that the winter is past and the rain is over and gone, that day becomes a day of light unto him: we know the sun shines very little in the winter season, but when spring comes the flowers appear and they are delightful. We hear the singing of the birds and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. Are all people included in "our"? Or is it not the ones given an ear to hear and a heart to understand, having His love in their hearts: being immersed in His love according to the will and purpose of God.

Brethren, I believe God is just in all his work: he is a just and merciful Lord, having mercy on whom he will have mercy, and compassion on whom he will have compassion. He works all things according to his purposed will in this earth, as he does in heaven. I see this in all the things which God ordained — all events that have been, are now, and will come to pass for the good of his chosen in his Son before the world began.

This is not a hard doctrine: this is

the true doctrine; and who can believe it? Only those who are blessed to know it in the Spirit, and not by works of the flesh. God is a Spirit and the many that are spoken of are the ones who believe in Him: As many as were ordained to eternal life believe in God. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." The world that is under consideration is the world that he loved to the extent that there will not be one lost that He loved before the world began.

I do not say that I understand all of this, but Wisdom knows. It is not for puny man to understand all things, but he that lacks wisdom let him ask of God who is able to supply his children with all their need. Brethren, if I know anything this is my song both day and night. It is good when we are made to realize with Jeremiah that "He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding." (Jer. 51:15) What God has done is done forever. Here is Wisdom that built her house: this is the house of the Lord which belongs to the heirs of promise. The Son that came into the world is the eternal life of the heirs of promise. They are begotten again unto an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fades not away, but is reserved in heaven for them.

When we meet together in the meetings, in the homes or elsewhere, this is our song. Aren't you glad that where two or three are gathered together in his name, Jesus is in the midst of them. In our meditations day and night, we trust that we are being led by the Spirit of God. We know that as many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God. God has never led one the wrong way, for He is the way, the truth, and the life. This is all his children need — that He guide and direct their steps.

I know that the flesh tries to direct, and to hold things it calls its own; but the flesh is weak, too weak to walk of itself. A man's goings are of the Lord, and how can he understand his ways. He is drawn by the Spirit, "No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him," said Jesus; and He will raise him up at the last day.

We think of the disciples that John sent to Christ, asking if he were the Christ, or should they look for another. Christ said, "Go shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them." The Gospel "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek, for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith," said Paul. So we travel along by faith, in love and fellowship one with another. This is the way our Song is sung in the name of our Lord, who is all wisdom.

May the Lord bless our editors in their meditations in putting in print the many letters that go in the **Signs of the Times.** We desire to know nothing but the truth.

In hope of eternal life,

Elder Herbert R. Prince
967 Maxey Street,
Memphis, Tenn. 38111

BROUGHT LOW THEN RAISED UP

Box 295,
Nags Head, N. C. 27959

Dear Editors:

Dear children were you ever caused to rejoice in the thought of having been down in the low ground of sorrow: down in that valley below all other creatures, it seemed, and feeling so depressed and so helpless, seemingly without a friend in the world? And yet surrounded by your family, and knowing that they loved you deeply and would do anything for you that they could, as shown by their willing efforts in the past. But you felt they could not understand your case, even if you could tell it to them. For you felt that your present state or condition

was such to be so beyond their understanding that they could not utter a word of sympathy or consolation to you.

Well, I had that feeling yesterday morning for awhile after getting out of bed; but, dear child of grace, I tell you I was understanding the power and mysteries of the God of mercy. How unsearchable are his mysteries and his ways past man's finding out! I had not spoken one word to my dear companion concerning my depressed condition, for, as I have already said, I felt she could not understand if I did. But, when it seemed I was in the lowest part of my depressed feeling, my companion spoke just two or three words to me. I cannot recall just what they were, but it seemed they were filled with so great a love for me, that they reached into my very heart and soul, and brought me out of that dreadful feeling of loneliness. I do not know if she felt the power of those words which she spoke to me, since I have not mentioned it to her, but don't tell me that it was not a power greater than man speaking through her to me . . . for there is no power that could convince me that it was not the power over both heaven and earth speaking through my companion into the depth of this poor sinner's soul. I feel this is so, and it has strengthened my love for her, yet I desire not to be allowed to give praise unto her for it having come to pass, for I feel to know that it all came from the blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the only source of goodness, grace and mercy.

So, if not deceived, I now am enabled to rejoice in and for having been brought down far below the reach of help from man of himself; and am caused to feel thankful that God's ways are his own, and are mysterious in how they are to reach and affect a poor and helpless worm of the dust.

I just felt impressed to tell this to someone, so am sending it to you to do with as it might be in your mind to do.

From one who hopes that his hope is real.

Troy G. Shepard

LETTER TO MY CHILDREN

I would like to tell a little of my experience if the Lord will direct my mind. He first showed me I was a sinner poor and wretched without hope in my God. I was made to cry unto the Lord for mercy for I could do nothing of myself. I could only say, "Save me or I perish." And for a long time I went crying unto the Lord to save me or to give me some relief, for I was sick and no man could help me.

One night the Lord came to my rescue and showed me he was the Lord who saves his people from their sins. Then I got relief for awhile and my burden was gone. Oh! how I rejoiced, hoping it was gone forever. But in a short time I was crying again, and soon was directed to unite with the Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church near Farmerville, La., where my father and mother were both members for a long time. Elder Woody Smith (father of Elder J. L. Smith) baptized my husband and me. (He joined with me.)

As I came up out of the water a light shone so bright around us. I was relieved of my burden for awhile. Soon I was crying unto the Lord for forgiveness of all my sins. I felt like I was going down to condemnation and was praying to the Lord to have mercy on me. The thought came to me, "If I could just touch the hem of the Savior's garment and sit at his feet, I would be so happy."

So one night I had just gone to bed and a star appeared at the foot of my bed. It was so bright that it seemed to light the whole room. With that star was an angel who smiled and said, "Arise and go with me." I drifted through the air to a place most beautiful. The door was open and I sat at the Saviour's feet. He reached down by my right side. His right hand picked up the garment and gave it to me in my right hand. The hem was about an inch wide. While sitting there the star was over my head, and danced around for an instant. Then it went directly in front of me to two chairs with one arm between. The Lord took his hand and showed me the chairs and told me that this was

my seat and my husband's seat. When I arose to my feet all in the house arose and beckoned me to come. There were people sitting in that beautiful place, and the Lord smiled and said, "Not yet, come again," and laid His hand on my head while the angel waited at my right side.

When I arose from my bed we passed over a multitude of people. They waved and said, "There she goes." We passed back that way and the people were singing. They all rose to their feet and said, "There she goes back."

If not deceived this is what I saw of where I hope to go when I leave this world. What a beautiful home! The star and angel have appeared to me several times since. When I was in trouble or in sickness it has been my comforter, and would appear and give me relief. So I do not know if this will be of any comfort to you. But I hope you may have an experience that will give you comfort as it has given me. I hope it was given me through the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I hope I was born of that Spiritual birth and was washed in the blood of the lamb. If so I am one of His children, and it is by the grace of God. If I am saved it is through the goodness and mercy of our dear Savior Jesus Christ. I know I am a begger unworthy to be among God's little Children. Whom could we go to if we could not go to Jesus Christ? Who could hear our cry except the Lord Jesus Christ? I hope I love the children of God.

An unworthy Sister in hope of mercy,
Mrs. Bettie Glass

COMFORT IN TIME OF TROUBLE

Let me mention a little of the Lord's wonderful comforting words. Word came to us in 1945 that one of my daughters was giving birth to her first child. They lived in New Orleans. They called me the morning of April 12, and said we have a big boy and he is fine. "The mother has not come from under the anesthetic yet, and we will call you later." They did not call, so I told my family that she needs me. They would say no news is good news, but I could not think so. For 24 hours I was in deep sorrow. I could not get any comfort, so I went to a secret place and tried to humble myself down in the most humble way I knew. I cried unto the Lord to have mercy upon her and to give me some comfort if it could be His will.

Then I layed down and closed my eyes and heard a noise as if a bird had flown over. I looked and at the foot of my bed there was a star that lighted the whole room. By the star was an angel standing, who had my daughter in His arms and in big gold letters just above her head: "She liveth." He smiled and said, "She liveth" and went away. Oh! You will never know how much comfort I did get unless you had been there.

In October of the same year she was at my home and she began hemorrhaging. We called the doctor but he could not stop the blood. An ambulance carried her to the hospital. While she was in the operating room I waited in the bedroom, and was so grieved because it seemed nothing could be done. I sat in a big chair and laid my head on the arm, and was pleading to the Lord to have mercy. I felt a touch on my arm and looked up and the angel was standing on the foot of the bed by my chair. The star lighted the room. The angel laid his hand on my head and smiled and said, "All things are well." He said it twice, laid his hand on my head, and went away.

This is so much comfort to me. I can never express how I felt, but hope I am not deceived in all of this. The Lord was with us. My daughter recovered and is the mother of five fine children and is doing all right. I hope I am thankful to God of Heaven for His goodness and mercy to us. This may sound foolish to some people, but to me it is true. I saw the angel and the star. He had my daughter is his arms.

Mrs. Bettie Glass

(The above were written by the late Sister Bettie Glass, of Farmersville, La. See obituary in the September issue. Elder W. W. Hudson prepared the above for publication — J. D. W.)

REACHING THE TOP OF THE HILL

11458 Hartley Rd.,
Houston, Texas 77016

Dear Brother Wood:

. . . I have seen the **Signs of the Times** since I was a barefooted child, for my father and mother took it. . .

I have some scripture I would like to quote, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! (Psalm 133:1) I would not know of a better way for the brethren to dwell together than through the **Signs**, when they can't meet and be together. My own experience is that there are different kinds of medicine, and also different kinds of rest.

I feel that I have had a hard time all my life, and especially through the depression from 1930 to 1939, but I know I have suffered nothing in comparison with what some people have gone through in this world. About 1937 I was working in the cedar brakes, cutting cedar posts to make my living, having a wife and one boy, and was having a pretty hard time of it. Sometimes I did not make enough to get all the groceries we needed. One night while in the cedar brakes camped in a tent, I dreamed that I was trying to climb a high hill; and would often sit down and rub my legs while looking towards the top of the hill; and it would seem impossible for me to ever reach the top. But every time I stopped to rest there would be something telling me to climb on and not give up: that on top of this hill was a sweet and blessed resting place for me that I knew nothing of.

I did not reach the top of the hill in my dream, and at the time I had no interpretation of it. But now I believe this is the meaning of it, that I reached the top of the hill when the Lord called me into the church in my old age.

May God send his tender mercy and comfort to all of you, as he has sent to me.

C. L. Berry

MUCH SEARCHING OF HEART

Rt. 1, Box 1,
Fernbank, Ala. 35558

Dear Editors:

It is past time to renew my subscription to this good paper . . .

I am very weak, and see more and more of my weakness as the days go by, and am made to realize what Jesus told the people while he was here on earth, "Without me ye can do nothing." and I know that without him I am nothing and less than nothing, and altogether vanity. He is our strength and our life, — our all. He is our refuge and hiding place, and our shelter from the storms that are raging in the four corners of the earth — He is in the clouds that blackens the sky from our view; but he knows our need.

There is a lot of comfort to me in the 91st Psalm. I may not be in the number, but I have received much comfort from reading it many, many times. "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling, for he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." Read the entire Psalm: it is so full and rich our cup runs over.

When we read in Judges, chapter five, the thanksgiving song of Deborah and Barak, it makes our hearts sing praise to the Lord as they did. In the sixteenth verse of that chapter, we read, "Why abodest thou among the sheepfolds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks? For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart." Have we not many times laid awake in the dead of the night and done much searching of heart? And have we not heard the Good Shepherd's voice? Jesus said that his sheep hear his voice and a stranger they will not follow, for he gives unto them eternal life and they shall never perish; and that his Father is greater than all, and no man can pluck them out of his hand.

If saved it is by grace,
Minnie Seay

THE GLORY OF GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

In a beautiful and edifying sermon on, "Christians a Chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood; a Holy Nation, a Peculiar People," (I Peter 2:9) Jonathan Edwards, the noted 18th century New England minister, has the following reflection on the glory of God's sovereignty in election:

"God's thus electing a certain definite number from among fallen men from all eternity, is a manifestation of His glory. It shows the glory of the divine sovereignty. God hereby declares Himself the absolute disposer of the creature; He shows us how far His sovereignty and dominion extend in eternally choosing some, and passing by others, leaving them to perish. God here appears in a majesty that is unparalleled. Those who can see no glory of dominion in this act, have not been made sensible to His glorious greatness. And here is especially shown the glory of divine grace, in God's having chosen His people to blessedness and glory long before they were born; in His choosing them out of the mass of mankind, from whom they are not distinguished, and in His love to them being prior to all that they have or do, being uninfluenced by any excellency of theirs, by the light of any labors or endeavors of theirs, or any respect of theirs toward Him."

"Make God the peculiar object of your praises. The doctrine shows what great reason you have so to do. If God so values you, sets so much by you, has bestowed greater mercies upon you than on all the ungodly in the world; is it too little a requital for you to make God the peculiar object of your praise and thankfulness? If God so distinguishes you with His mercy, you ought to distinguish yourself in His praises; you should make it your great care and study how to glorify that God who has been so peculiarly merciful to you. And the rather because there was nothing peculiar in you, distinguishing you from any other person, that moved God to deal thus peculiarly by you. You were as unworthy to be set by as thousands of others that are not regarded of God, and are cast away by Him for ever."

(Submitted by **Walter B. Brunning Hatfield, Pa.**)

Ocean City, Md.

Dear Elder Wood:

I received the enclosed letter from Sister Mary Davis of Shreveport, La., and enjoyed it so much that I wrote her for permission to send it to you, feeling that others would enjoy it in the **Signs.** Also, I am sending part of her answer, as it was very comforting to me.

Ethel Holloway

Dear Sister Ethel:

My dear one, I hardly know how to answer your request to send my last letter to Elder Wood except to grant you permission, because I certainly do not want to act contrary to your wish. I just ask myself, and wonder how any dear saint of God could get anything from my poor and feeble attempts to pen thoughts concerning the unsearchable riches of our Lord, because I always feel to be so void of words to express what I feel.

Many of you have been blessed with a wonderful gift to write, and could so much better occupy the pages of our dear **Signs.** Yet it gives me much comfort to know that one of his annointed ones has received so much from what I trust I was given to write. Whatever joy and comfort is found therein, give God all the honor, praise, and glory. I am reminded of Paul's writings to the Romans and Corinthians concerning diversities of gifts, and although one's gift may seem so very small and insignificant, it takes all the members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we being many, are one body in Christ . . ."

I believe that in Matthew 5, in his Sermon on the Mount, Christ did not leave one to guess concerning the gifts of Almighty God, and instructed his

people not to hide their gift, but, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and **glorify your Father** which is in heaven." Therefore, if I am given to write anything of any value spiritually, I desire to share it with others. The wonderful writings the Lord has blessed his saints to write have been so comforting and encouraging to me many times.

Although I have been richly blessed to attend church often, and given to feast upon the messages brought forth to the flock, and enjoy the sweet fellowship of those so near and dear, I still look forward to the **Signs of the Times** each month. I agree that Elder Lambert is richly blessed, and I enjoyed his article on Baptism. Sister Young's letter really touched me, and meant so much to me. I enjoy them all but at times one seems to mean more than others . . . I look forward to seeing more from Elder Hudson's pen for he is wonderfully blessed.

. . . I must close this: I had only intended to write a short note, but guess I forgot. Wish you could be with us for our association. Am really looking forward to it.

In bonds of love,
Mary Davis

ACCOUNT OF VISIT

308 N. Wyandotte
Shreveport, La. 71101

Dear Sister Ethel:

I'll begin this by apologizing for such a delay in answering. I received your very good letter the day I left on my vacation trip. I was gone for three weeks, two of which was spent among the dear Old Baptists in North Carolina and Virginia. If you have seen Sister Maude and others lately I'm sure you have learned that Brother and Sister Barron and I were in that section. It was so good to see them, and I wish there had been sufficient time for us to come visit with all of you dear ones on the Eastern Shore.

We had talked of this trip years ago, even before I made the trip in '65, but plans never became a reality until this year. We were blessed with a wonderful trip, and attended the first two days of the Staunton River Association. We left there to attend the regular monthly services at Bush Arbor Church Saturday night and Sunday. We were blessed to spend time with Elder and Sister King, and had a joyous and precious visit with them. They are dear to me and are a loveable couple. We also spent time with Brother and Sister Rudd, and Elder Elder Wallace and Sister Marie Smith; and had a good visit with Elder Donald while we were at Elder Wallis'. All are very sweet and precious to me, and made us feel so welcome everywhere we went.

After leaving Bush Arbor we went to Elder and Sister Spangler's and spent a couple of nights, and had a most wonderful visit with them. They took us on the Parkway for a sightseeing tour one day, which was very enjoyable. The scenery was so beautiful — and at the same time we enjoyed Elder Spangler's preaching while traveling.

We left their home and drove to Elder and Sister Wood's I had never had the privilege of meeting them before, but was made to feel at home only moments after we arrived. They are two wonderful people, and our visit with them shall be treasured also. We left them to attend the Upper Country Line Association.

If not deceived, I was brought up out of the dark and cold valley and placed upon the mountain top, and was given to feast on the glad tidings brought forth so beautifully by the enabled ministers of our Lord. I had felt so cold and hard, but my heart seemingly melted as

I was blessed to hear Elder King relate my experience when he was blessed to declare the unsearchable riches of our Lord while preaching from 2 Corinthians 4:5-9. It was indeed food and drink to my hungry and thirsty soul, and gave me much strength and comfort. I rejoiced while hearing many of the sermons, but this one by Elder King at the Staunton River Association stands so vividly in my mind. That same afternoon Elder Wallis Smith preached concerning, "For here we have no continuing city . . .," which was also so very beautiful and comforting to me.

I always wish I could retain what I am given to hear, but have been made to realize that what we feast upon today will not suffice for tomorrow. We also must hunger and thirst before food and drink are needed.

We were blessed with a safe trip home, and arrived in time to attend our annual District Meeting. We had Elder Taylor, and also Elder Hamrick from the Valley in Texas with us. I believe both were wonderfully blessed to feed the flock: It was a continuation of what we had heard and rejoiced in while in Virginia and North Carolina. The past week end was our regular meeting at my home church, and Elder John Lee Smith was surely given wonderful liberty both Saturday and Sunday. They also were in North Carolina and Virginia. They had planned to drive up with Brother and Sister Jones, but Sister Jones was unable to go, so the Smiths rode the bus. . .

I thought of Brother Lambert as I read what you wrote about Elder Spangler saying that to get comfort from any part of the Bible, one must see Jesus in it. Many times I have heard Elder Lambert express that unless one sees Jesus in a text, he does not understand the fullness of it.

It seems I could go on and on, and yet not have much of a message, but I wish I could express my thoughts and feelings, and what I was given to view and feast upon while on our trip. I hope I am truly thankful for all these great blessings.

Give everyone my love. I will try to answer sooner next time.

Love and sweet fellowship,
Mary Davis

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with New Bay Church, Onslow County, N. C., the fifth Sunday in September and Saturday before.

The church is three miles south of Jacksonville, N. C. just off Highway 17. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr. Clerk
Rt. 3, Tarbora, N. C.

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **Contentnea Association** is to be held, the Lord willing, with Shiloh Church, Pamlico County, N. C., the 11, 12, and 13th of October, 1968, at Lowlands.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk pro tem.

ORIGINAL WHITE OAK ASSOCIATION

The **Original White Oak Association** will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at South West, Onslow County, North Carolina, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1968, and will continue through Monday. The church is located about 5 miles west of Jacksonville, North Carolina, on Highway 53. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to be with us.

L. H. Southerland, Clerk
Chinquapin, North Carolina

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EDITORIAL

PROBLEMS OF VALID BAPTISM

"Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" (1 Cor. 1:12-13)

Paul besought the brethren composing the church of God by the authority of Jesus Christ to be perfectly joined together in the same mind and judgment. These reports that there were contentions, envying, strife and divisions among them concerning ministers made necessary Paul's explanation relative to the relationship of God's ministers to the church. "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?" Paul further explains the relationship by stating: "For **we** are labourers together with God: **ye** are God's husbandry, **ye** are God's building." (1 Cor. 3:9) Even though Paul planted and Apollos watered it was yet God's husbandry because God prospered it. Even though Paul laid the foundation and another built upon it, it was yet God's building because God gave the grace to Paul as a wise master-builder. Paul sums up the reason why no man should glory in men by adding: "Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are **yours**; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are **yours**; And **ye** are Christ's; and Christ is God's" (1 Cor. 3: 21-23) This reasoning proves that any work that a minister performs which is successful, is of God. If it fails, it proves that God is not in the matter. Paul laid the foundation but he did not make it.

The foundation was Jesus Christ. Paul planted but he did not make the plants. Apollos watered but he did not manufacture the water. There is no doubt that these members of the church had a tendency to worship these ministers by whom they believed. Ministers must often explain that they themselves are nothing but men. These ministerings are ordained of God. The **ministering** is something that is necessary but God is to be praised.

The first question Paul asks implies that all to whom he was writing had been baptized. He was writing to members of the church. They had signified in their baptism that they had given themselves up to the Lord. We believe baptism of an individual to be the outward ceremony which unites the believer to the Lord Jesus Christ as marriage unites two lovers outwardly. The Lord then adds them to **the church** of all whom He has called out of the world and has signified it in the ordinance of baptism by His ministers qualified to perform the ordinance. The desire given them by the Lord to give themselves to one another is the result of this addition. This prompts them with the desire to make a covenant with local brethren that they may walk together agreeably in unity in church capacity. One person with whom I had talked hours upon the Scriptures, Jesus Christ, and experiences of the Lord's people, had convinced me that she was a believer in Jesus Christ. She depended only upon Him and God's grace for salvation. Finally after several visits she asked, "Would you baptize me? I want you to know before you answer that I do not desire to be a member of the Primitive Baptist Church." My answer was, "I was convinced that you were ready for baptism. If you had stopped with the question my answer probably would have been different. You said too much for my answer to be in the affirmative. I cannot feature one ready for baptism who does not have a desire to unite with the local church." My answer so disturbed her that she was admitted to the hospital for treatment of nervous disorder. I have prayed since then that the Lord enable me with grace that I might be enabled to deal very tenderly and softly with earnest inquirers. Sometimes laymembers of the churches go beyond their authority and so severely wound the feelings of little lambs on the outside of the vales of the local church that great harm is the result. Ministers are guilty of speaking too quickly and abruptly before thoroughly understanding the circumstances of earnest inquirers.

Through much reading of the Scriptures, meditation, and prayer, I have been convinced that God-called, qualified, and properly ordained ministers are the only ones authorized to give proper advice and pass proper judgment upon individual cases relative to baptism. This also applies to ordination of elders and constitution of churches. One of the precepts for proper ordination of ministers is found in Acts, 13th chapter. It may be thought by some that the whole church at Antioch was consulted in the ordination of Saul and Barnabas. We find, however, that the Holy Ghost spoke to the certain prophets and teachers who were in the church at Antioch. The Holy Ghost spoke concerning Saul and Barnabas who were numbered with the teachers and prophets. It did not take ordination by other prophets and teachers to enable them to prophecy and teach. This gift, or gifts, comes directly from God and they exercise in these gifts without coming under the hands of a presbytery. The Holy Ghost said to these teachers and prophets, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." What does this mean? It means that the Holy Ghost only is to be their director. It means separation from church authority, even from other duties in the church at Antioch. Of course these ministers did the bidding of the Holy Ghost. They fasted, prayed, laid their hands on them, and sent them away. Why were the two sent together? God's missionaries were sent in twos. We find in Acts 14:23, "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed

with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed." It takes at least two ordained ministers to constitute a church, and to ordain elders. One may preach, baptize a believer, and pastor a church. The Holy Ghost empowers elders as overseers of churches. See Acts 20:28. We call attention to a query presented to the ministers at the setting of the Kehukee Association in 1784 to prove that this was the position held by our brethren: "Query 21 (1784) Is it thought that a Bishop or Pastor of a church stands upon the same footing in the church as any other member with respect to his having the right to a dismission at his request? Answer: It is our opinion that as a member he is accountable to the church, and as a minister he is accountable to God." See Hassell's History of the Church of God, page 831.

These thoughts are presented in this treatise on the Problems of Valid Baptism as a basis for consideration of the following queries:

QUERY 1. My son is 12 years old. He is very interested in the church. Should I advise him to join the church and be baptized? Answer: As a member you will have the right to cast your vote to receive him into church fellowship when he is eligible. It would not be proper for him to be baptized merely because it is required for church membership. Should he be interested in baptism, I suggest, he talk to your pastor who is authorized.

QUERY 2. A person wants to join the church that you serve as pastor. He has been baptized by a Primitive Baptist Minister. A sister who is one of our members told him that we would be glad to have him as a member but he would have to be re-baptized. This has upset him very much. What do you think. Answer: I think that this person who has been attending church here for several years would have taken this matter up with us should he be vitally interested in becoming a member of this church. If he were baptized by a Primitive Baptist minister many years ago surely he knows that a woman does not have the authority to judge his baptism either valid or invalid. Each case is an individual case of its own. It does not become our problem until it is presented. Let us not pre-judge this matter.

QUERY 3. I have two children. One is twelve years old and the other is fourteen. They are good obedient children and very agreeable. My wife and I did not become a member of the church until we were nearly forty years of age. I feel we missed many blessings. Should I encourage them to become members of the church? You re-call that Jesus said when He was twelve, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Answer: You must have forgotten some of your experiences along the way. Did you not serve the law many years after you were convicted of your sins? Did you not try many things in order to satisfy the law before you were convinced that righteousness was not by the law? Were you almost forty years old before you gave up hopes of accomplishing salvation by the works of the law? Is it not true that you sought a home with this people soon after that you really believed Jesus Christ to be the only basis for your hope of salvation? Yes, Jesus said when He was twelve years old that He must be about His Father's business. The Scriptures say that Jesus grew in stature, and in wisdom, and in the favor of God, and in the favor of men. Even though He was about His Father's business, He was not baptized until He was thirty years of age. He must have been full grown then. Even though John was blessed from his mother's womb with the Holy Ghost, he did not begin preaching and baptizing until he was about thirty. Paul was a servant of the law many years before being baptized and entering upon his career as a gospel minister. The record affirms the baptism of men and not children.

QUERY 4. I believe I was baptized by a God-called minister. I feel that I received so much relief. I then believed that Jesus Christ was my only hope for salvation. I cannot disregard my baptism even though the pastor of the Church says I have to be re-baptized

before they will receive me into their church affiliation. I believe in one baptism. I think the church here should recognize my baptism. What do you think? Answer: I think the pastor of this church here knows more concerning the circumstances of your case than I would. Let us grant that your former baptism was really, "the answer to a good conscience toward God." This was **your** one baptism that was for **your** sake. You do not have to denounce it. I do not think the pastor would require you to denounce it as null and void. Are you not willing to do something for **their** sake in order that you may commune with them? Sometimes pastors require things of an individual not for conscience sake but to avoid an uproar and confusion which might affect many churches. You surely would rather be re-baptized than to cause confusion. If you really desire affiliation with that church you will be willing to come to their terms.

QUERY 5. The Lord blessed me to hear the Gospel through the mouth of one of His ministers, the pastor of the church where I attended. I became a member of the church and he baptized me. Sometime later he acted in such a manner that the church excluded him. This baptism was precious to me. Since his exclusion I have wondered if I ought to be re-baptized? Answer: All God-called ministers preach that they are nothing, less than nothing, and vanity. They preach that they will surely fall if God does not prevent it. They preach not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. They baptize not in their own name but in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Even though the minister is nothing, his ministration is something. The man may fall by the wayside, yet his ministering as a God-called, gifted, and graced minister is approved. Since he did not baptize in his own name you should not be held accountable for his demeanor.

QUERY 6. I became a member of the church and was baptized when it was sound in doctrine and order. Since that time it has re-written its articles of Faith, Church Covenant, and changed its rules so that they have departed from the doctrine and practice. I want to become a member of the church you serve as pastor. Is it necessary that I be re-baptized because of their departure? Answer: Paul told the churches at Galatia: ". . .Whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." (Gal. 5:4) The Galatian epistle is peculiar in that it is addressed to **churches.** Many churches have fallen from their original principles of salvation by grace and have substituted law doctrine, and requirements. Even though they were so soon removed unto another gospel, Paul did not disqualify their former baptism or faith. Even though these churches had departed from the former doctrine he said; "for ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Gal. 3:26-27) They had been brought from under the law; yet, they were acting foolish in seeking again to be yoked to the law. Your baptism was a sign of your putting on Christ. This is the garment that dressed you properly to become a member of the church. It was the proper attire for you to come before the brethren to ask a home with them. The departure of the church did not make vile this garment. That church did not give you the garment. Even though Sardis Church in Asia had become dormant and was dead in a manifest sense, Christ said, thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments, and they shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy." (Rev. 3:4) Your case is a personal case. Vileness of other members will not mar your garment. Beside this, you were not baptized in the name of the church.

QUERY 7. Why is it that in all of the public sermons recorded in the New Testament that there is not one mention of baptism that I recall, yet Jesus commanded His disciples to preach the gospel and baptize believers? Even Jesus Christ did not mention baptism in teaching His disciples on the mountain. An-

swer: All God-called ministers preach the Gospel which is the power of God unto salvation. They are not to preach **water** baptism as the gospel. They are not to preach the acts of men as the gospel. The gospel is certainly good news to a sensible sinner. Jesus ordered that believers be baptized by these ministers who preached the gospel. They, the hearers, must first believe the gospel. Those who believe it will certainly give evidence of that belief. Baptism is to be ministered only to believers. There are some to whom the gospel is preached that will not believe. Jesus says, ". . .He that believeth not shall be dammed." (see Mark 16:15-16) Baptism is a personal matter which is commanded only to true believers who believe the gospel by the minister. Jesus' disciples surely had already been baptized when they heard Him on the mountain. He taught them the simple commandments which need to be taught to baptized believers.

QUERY 8. Why is it that the letters to the churches recorded in the New Testament do not contain an explicit command for them to be baptized? Answer: Those to whom the epistles were addressed had already been baptized as proven in the epistles. Since baptism is to be administered but once, there was no necessity to command it.

QUERY 9. Is it right to re-baptize one who has already given satisfactory account of being savingly converted to the Lord Jesus Christ, and publicly declared the same by being regularly baptized by immersion by a God-called minister who has come under the hands of a presbytery and set apart to the Holy Ghost? Answer: My opinion is that it is not right because we have no scriptural precedent for such. The early church respected the ministrations of God-called ministers. We have no record where laymembers, or ordinary members, ever attempted to make void the ministers work. The greatest reason why that temporary withdrawals from the fellowship of other churches become permanent is because of the tendency to consider the baptisms performed by their ministers as null and void. We can find no Scripture to sustain this position.

QUERY 10. I have been preaching regularly at a certain church for two years by their request. I am convinced that it is a church that our Lord has greatly favored. We have not openly affiliated with this church for many years. It is a victim of circumstances because our association dropped them because of trouble between ministers many years ago. I have heard their pastor preach the true doctrine. He is in a church that was dropped by the association of his home state with whom we correspond. Could we consider the baptism of the members of that church valid? Answer: Jesus Christ is the King, Lawgiver, and Judge of His churches. He only can spue them out of His mouth. God alone can enable His ministers to preach the Truth. If this pastor has been separated unto the Holy Ghost and properly ordained by a presbytery giving him the right to baptize believers, it is my opinion, that all true ministers and true churches will recognize his preaching and baptism to be valid, even though associations may not.

QUERY 11. Many churches believe as we do that Jesus Christ is the perfect and complete Saviour of His people. We have been divided in affiliation over such issues as adultery, feet-washing, masonry, labor unions, associations, contentions among ministers, individual communion cups, hymn books, instrumental music, prayer meetings, Scriptural discussions in the church, ministers going in the stand with ministers with whom we do not affiliate, taking up public collections, ministers preaching at other places than in their own churches, other ministers preaching in our churchhouses, and many other things too numerous to mention. Can any of these things make void proper baptism of true believers? Answer: I am persuaded that since none of these things affect the belief in Jesus Christ as the perfect and complete Saviour of poor sensible sinners, they cannot make void the believers baptism. Most of these things are within the scope of internal affairs into which other churches should not

intrude.

Space forbids me to continue this subject. We shall conclude with my own experience: We trust the reader will not harshly judge us.

I was baptized by immersion in my 'teens as a requirement for membership with the church of which my parents were members. I do not remember that baptism. I often recall to remembrance a very important epoch in my life when at the age of twenty-three I was led down into the beautiful clear stream of the Caddo River which flows through a a bed of small stones, gravel, and sand made smooth by continual rolling over and over as the stream swiftly flows through the foot-hills of the Ozarks. Elder Wall led me into the stream and no water has ever appeared so clear and beautiful as it did that day. I was burdened as I walked into the stream. While the ceremony was being said I was shaking with the realization that I was about to be buried and raised from a watery grave. I was denouncing my former life with the hope to be raised to walk in newness of life. I was putting off the old man with his deeds with the hope of putting on the garment of Jesus Christ, the robe of righteousness. I was being crucified with Christ awaiting burial and resurrection. I was making an end to my life in the world, giving myself up to the Lord to walk in newness of life depending only upon Him for power to persevere in the paths of righteousness. The ceremony became a marriage ceremony outwardly denoting the inward work of Jesus Christ proving that He loved me so much that He took my sins and died to atone for them, and met the requirements of the law in my behalf. I was lowered into the water and raised up. As I heard Elder Wall say, "Amen", I experienced the gift of the Holy Ghost. My sins were rolled away. My burden was gone. Happiness flooded my soul. I then experienced such sweet relationship with the redeemed of the Lord that natural kinship sunk into unimportance and irrelevance. I was led to the bank and embraced my new family, feeling for the first time that I was one of them. I had obeyed from the heart that FORM of doctrine which was delivered to me. The doctrine of Jesus Christ and Him crucified, buried and arose again for me. It had been symbolized in my baptism. Was I baptized because it was required of me as mere duty? NO! I submitted to baptism gladly prompted by love, if not deceived, to manifest my love to Him who first loved me. I wanted to be a follower of the Lord and be baptized in water as He was baptized. I wanted to be dressed with the same robe that the members of my newly found family wore. Joy and gladness filled our souls as we embraced one another and enjoyed such sweet communion together on the banks of the Caddo River. Should I be baptized again? NO! I feel as though that I would be crucifying Him afresh and putting Him to an open shame. He was baptized into death but once. I feel that I would be casting a reflection upon a God-called minister who preached to me so sweetly whom God blessed to show me the Way, the Truth, and the Life. I feel that it would be casting a dark reflection upon the Family of my first love. I feel that it would be denouncing the sweetest experience I ever had. I feel that it would be denouncing the act of the presbytery which ordained me and separated me unto the Holy Ghost who has been my director in ministrations as a minister. I feel that it would be denouncing each and every baptism that I have administered. I feel that it would be denouncing every act in presbyteries of which I have been a member. Let us be careful not to cast a dark reflection upon the baptism of those to whom it has meant so much.

Do not charge the errors of this treatise against the editors, Elder Wood and Elder Spangler. My writing is in agreement with the policy that associate editors be given freedom of expression.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

JOHN 4: 16-18

"Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly."

Brother S. L. Robertson, of Haile, Louisiana, has asked that we present our views through the **Signs of the Times** on the above portion of Scripture. This incident of our Lord and the woman at the well should undoubtedly be considered as being intimately associated with the miracles at the marriage at Cana of Galilee, the healing of the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, and others, all of which have a material bearing upon the dispensations of **law** and **grace.** The numbers five and six are both legal numbers. The law which God gave to Moses consisted of five books. The legal or work period of time is six, for we are told in Genesis that God created the heavens and the earth and all that in them is in six days, and that "he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made."

There are some things to which we wish to call attention in the record which John gives us of the Saviour and the miracle he performed in converting the water into wine. First, we are told that this took place on the third day, which is significant of the last or gospel day, and, second, that there was a need for more wine at the marriage feast. John says there were set there six waterpots of stone, and when Jesus' hour was come, or the hour for him to manifest his power, he commanded the servants to, "Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim." Then he said unto them, "Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast." And "When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, and saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now." (John 2:9-10)

The six waterpots were used under the law in connection with the purification of the Jews, and as there could be no justification or cleansing of a sinner in the sight of a just and holy God except the law be perfectly fulfilled, the six waterpots were of necessity filled to the brim, thus denoting in type that all the demands of the law were absolutely met in full when Jesus shed his blood for his people. When the servants drew off from the pots the wine was pronounced to be the best wine. All of the blood that was shed on Jewish altars could not atone for the sin of a single sinner, but the blood which Jesus shed on Calvary's cross could and did make full and complete at-one-ment for all of his people throughout all ages of the world—those who dwelt upon the earth before he came into the world as well as those who were to follow after him. This wine was therefore the best wine and signified the blood of the gospel dispensation, without which there could be no remission of sin. This miracle then set forth the fulfilling of the law and the bringing in of righteousness by Jesus Christ.

In the fifth chapter of John we are told that "There is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches," and that "In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water." This was legal in Jerusalem, and to be sure a great multitude of sheep, or the Lord's people, lay there in these five porches, being held for a ransom until the law's demands could be met. How pitiful was their condition! Some were impotent, or absolutely helpless and unable to do anything

for themselves; some were blind, and some were halt, and some were withered. It would be difficult to picture a more pathetic scene. But in providence of God there was the pool called Bethesda, which means, "House of Mercy." Wonder of wonders it is to the dear child of God that "Justice and Mercy" have met together and kissed each other in the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, he could say to the impotent man, "Rise, take up thy bed and walk." It is said that, "**immediately** the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the Sabbath." Truly, never man spake like Jesus, and when he speaks it is done, and when he commands, it stands fast. When he heals, or delivers, it is invariably the Sabbath, or the day of rest with the sin burdened soul.

In connection with the text under consideration, it is said, "He (Jesus) must needs go through Samaria." There was a necessity for all that Jesus did, and nothing that he did was in vain. Jesus did not go through Samaria by chance, but according to the providence of God, who orders all things after the counsel of his own will. In the purpose of Almighty God this poor Samaritan woman was to come to Jacob's well and there find one whom she would be astonished to have take any notice of her. Neither was it by chance that his disciples were not to be present at the time, for Jesus must needs converse with her alone. He who discerneth the thought and intent of the heart of man, who knoweth all the secrets thereof, and from whom naught can be concealed or nothing hid, he communes with the sinner in the solitary places and, independent of all human aid, when he speaks his words carry force and conviction.

This Samaritan woman was accustomed to drawing water from Jacob's well, where she had come again and again for it was only a shadow or type of that living water which Jesus had to give. When he said unto her, "Give me to drink," she was surprised that he should condescend to look upon her since, as she said, "the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." Jesus then told her if she had known the gift of God and who it was that spake unto her, she would have asked of him and he would have given her **living water.** Seeing that he had nothing visible to draw with, and the well being deep, according to her natural powers she could not perceive how he could give her living water. She was soon to learn that she stood in the very presence of him who was indeed far greater than Jacob, who gave the well from which she had come to draw water. Jesus first told her of natural things, that "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again." which she well knew to be the case, and then he said unto her, "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thrist; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Here was something different from anything she had ever heard of before. She would not have to draw water from this well day after day, and year after year, for the lack of which she would thirst again, but this water would indeed be living water, and it would constantly be springing up into everlasting life. She, therefore, thirsted for this water, and said unto Jesus, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." She was thus made to experience that salvation was not by works of righteousness which the creature can perform, but that it is "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Having learned this and having ceased from her labors and entered into the gospel rest, Jesus sald unto her, "Go, call thy husband, and come hither." Surely, no one will doubt that Jesus knew the innermost desires of her soul, and needed not to be told by her that she had no husband, even though she had had five husbands, but it was for her sake and our sakes that he said this to her. She typifies the Church of the first born who has come to the end of the law and must confess before men the wonderful works of our God. When she said she had no

husband, Jesus commanded her by saying, "Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly."

Our understanding is that she had done all she could to comply with the demands of the law, but had utterly failed in every point and had become guilty before God. The law condemned her, and she was miserable and wretched and poor and could receive no comfort or consolation from it. Being brought to the end of the law, she realized it was her schoolmaster unto Christ, and there he was revealed and she perceived of a truth that he was some wonderful one. After Jesus had instructed her more perfectly regarding the true worship of God, he said unto her, "God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Thereupon came his disciples, and the woman left her waterpot and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, "Come, see a man which told me all things, that ever I did; is not this the Christ?"

It is after this manner that God brings his children from nature's darkness into the marvelous light of his glorious gospel, teaching them that his blessed son is the end of the law for righteousness. Then it is they know the difference between law and grace, and once they have been truly taught it, it is all of grace forever afterwards, for they can never believe anything else, and they should not live in adultery by pretending to be married to another by partaking of the works of the law. Let them come out from among Babylon and be separate and not partake of her sin, returning to give glory and honor unto him who hath loved them and gave himself for them.

We trust our thoughts will prove satisfying to our brother and all who may read them, and if so may everlasting praise be rendered to him to whom everlasting praise is due.

(Editorial by the late Elder R. Lester Dodson.)

"Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men." — 1 Thess. 5:14

Our gracious Lord has amply provided for every want which shall come upon his chosen people in all their sojourn here in time. The fullness of that provision is witnessed in the inspired Scriptures, and also in the daily experience of every one who is led by the Spirit of God. Well does Job say, "How forcible are right words!" In the full sense of the expression there are no "right words" but those which proceed out of the mouth of God. These are living food to his saints, who find no satisfying bread in anything else. As our Lord said, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."—Matt. 4:4. "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart; for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts."—Jer. 15:16. In those precious words are expressed assurances of the immutable purpose of God, by which the saints were before the foundation of the world chosen in Christ, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love; and in addition to this gracious gospel comfort their glorious Lord gives to them the experience of that longing for the words of truth which is peculiarly characteristic of them who are led by the Spirit of God; of whom Jude testifies that they are first "sanctified by God the Father," then "preserved in Jesus Christ," and afterward "called" to be saints, and to know the fellowship of the sufferings of their Redeemer, by which is assured their joint heirship with him in eternal glory.

It is exclusively to these chosen ones that the language of our text is addressed, and only such are the brethren embraced in the exhortation or included in the instruction here recorded. When any of these are "unruly," or, as in the marginal reading, **disorderly,** they who are spiritual are admonished in love to warn such. This warning is not to be under-

stood in the sense of threatening, for this was forbidden even to be used by masters toward servants. —See Eph. 6: 9. The word **warn** is here used to express that reminding which is prompted by solicitous love, and is in harmony with the direction, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."—Gal. 6:1. By this loving warning one may convert an unruly or erring brother from the error of his way, and so save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins.—James 5:19,20. This warning is like the smiting of the righteous invoked by David in Psalm 141:5; and instead of giving offence or provoking resentment on the part of the erring one, if the mind of Christ be in him it will endear the faithful brother by reason of the devoted love of Christ exhibited in the gentle admonition. It is a very clear proof that the carnal mind controls one when a loving warning elicits angry words and unkind feelings. If anger is felt, the one in whose heart it is found should know that it is of the flesh; and if in the spirit of meekness he is enabled to suppress that anger, he has attained a triumph over self which witnesses that he is a follower of Jesus, "who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously."—1 Peter 2:23. The manifestation of the Spirit of Christ in our daily walk and conversation is the most effective warning of the unruly and reproof of those who walk contrary to the order of "the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

"Comfort the feeble minded." Those who are strong in their own faithfulness and ability are not proper subjects to be comforted. To Peter, when he felt willing to die with his Lord, there was no need of comforting suggestions by which to encourage him. In that condition he needed to be sifted as wheat, that the chaff of trust in his own heart might be blown away, and then in his bitter weeping he was in a fit condition to be comforted. And so the loving Lord after his resurrection by his angel specially sends the glad tidings to comfort him, saying, "Tell his disciples AND PETER that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you." — Mark 6:7. It is evident that this special mention of Peter was to comfort him in that deep distress which had caused him to weep bitterly when the Lord looked on him in his cowardly denial of his Master. Without a personal message from Jesus he could not be satisfied that he was still dear to him as a disciple after failure to show his devotion in the hour of trial. Then the valiant Peter had become feeble minded, (or, as the original reads literally, **"of a little soul, or fainthearted,"**) and was converted effectually from trust in his own heart, which is ever characteristic of a fool.—Prov. 28:26. It is just as needful now for every saint, as it was then for Peter, that the comfort of the gospel should be personally applied to them; and as the faint-hearted and feeble minded only are in a condition to be comforted, the Lord has ordained that they "must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."—Acts 14:22.

It is important to notice that those whom Paul exhorted with these words were disciples who were already in the faith. Yet they were so feeble minded that it was needful that he should confirm their souls with this exhortation. As no comfort can be received by such as are resting in perfect ease and quietness, so all the consolations of the gospel belong to those who are afflicted and in tribulation. No word of comfort is given by inspiration to any but the Lord's people; they are peculiarly prepared to receive the glorious gospel, because they are brought so low that they cannot render any equivalent for divine mercy, nor plead any merit on their part as the ground of their receiving favor from God. When thus reduced they are truly feeble minded and in need of comfort. This is peculiar to those who are made alive by the work of the Spirit of

God. Only they know the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and feel its dreadful power working in themselves. To all such the comfort of the gospel belongs; and while the burden of sin in themselves renders them so feeble minded that they can have no confidence in their flesh, yet the precious comfort is recorded for them by their Lord, that "He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer."—Psa. 102:17. Then just in proportion as they see their destitution, they have the evidence that this comfort is for them. None can claim it so long as they have any reliance in anything else besides the infinite grace of God. This is the conclusive witness of his being the true Messiah, to which our Lord referred John the Baptist; being more wonderful than any of the miracles cited, this evidence is the last mentioned, even after the raising up of the dead. "The poor have the gospel preached to them." —Matt. 11:5.

It is important then in the examination of ourselves to see whether we have been reduced sufficiently to enter the kingdom by this strait gate. Are we "the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no **confidence** in the flesh?" If we are so poor as this, then the blessing rests upon us as "poor in spirit."—Matt. 5:3. In this condition we are prepared to comfort the feeble minded by "the same comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."—2 Cor. 1:4. In no other way can we be qualified to comfort them but by the experience of the same weakness and trial through which they are passing. One who has never felt a special pain may pity him who is suffering that pain, but none can sympathize except such as have endured the same. So it is needful that we be partakers "of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God," in order that we may be prepared to minister to the comfort of those who suffer such afflictions. So Paul says, "To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."—1 Cor. 9:22.

Thus in fellowship of suffering the perfect love of Christ is developed in his followers; for it is by their utter weakness that the saints comfort the feeble minded. It affords no comfort to them when Jehu says, "Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord!" They are too weak to be interested in the bravery and zeal of an earthly warrior. They are comforted only by the consideration of what the Lord has done and said, "For the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." —Num. 10:29. It is God "who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." — 2 Tim. 1:9,10. There is strength to the weak in this God; therefore his name is the treasury of comfort to the feeble minded.

"Support the weak." This is not a mere repetition of the preceding injunction. There is distinct fitness in both expressions. It is not enough merely to speak words of comfort to the feeble minded; the weak have a peculiar claim upon the support of the strong. Of course these words are applied relatively, and not in their absolute fullness; for in that sense all are weak alike. But Paul discriminates among the saints, saying, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."—Rom. 15:1. In this sense there are among the saints those who are weak and those who are strong. Instead of the strong oppressing the weak, or despising their weakness, the law of the gospel kingdom, which is love, makes it the duty and privilege of the strong to bear the infirmities of the weak. It is not implied in this injunction, however, that one may insist upon propagating error upon the plea of being weak. The inspired rule must be held over the church, and whatever is not in accordance with that rule must be rejected. When it is required that revealed

truth shall be sacrificed to the demands of falsehood, submission is not bearing the infirmities of the weak, but it is joining in the departure from the truth. Failure to contend earnestly for the doctrine of Christ is a denial of the Lord, yet that earnestness does not include impatient anger; for "the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth."—2 Tim. 2:24,25. Indeed, there is no clearer display of weakness in the saints than that which prompts one to claim to be wise above what is revealed in the Scriptures.

To support the weak is not to encourage them in error, but in love to speak the things which become sound doctrine, and expound unto them the way of God more perfectly. No amount of support will make a false doctrine true; so that it is not enjoined upon the saints to assist the weak in maintaining error. The only real support to present to them is the solid doctrine of the gospel as the truth is in Jesus. In this truth is all the strength of the most favored apostle, and that same strength abundantly sustains the weakest saint. This doctrine does truly support the weak, while it effectually resists the proud, and turns to confusion all who trust in their own strength. The safest condition in which the saints can be, so far as pertains to the experience of present comfort, is to be satisfied that he has no strength in himself, for then of necessity he must trust alone in the Lord. This refuge can never fail; for "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever."—Psa. 125:1.

"Be patient toward all men." This injunction is in perfect accord with the directions in the connection. It is not so much with reference to the world of mankind naturally that patience is here commanded. The injunction is applicable to the subjects of the kingdom of Christ Jesus, although the word **men,** which has been added by the translators, seems to change the application. While it is certainly right for us to endure patiently the unkindness and malice of enemies of the truth, that is not the subject of the instruction here recorded. This exhortation extends no further than the others in the connection; and they are evidently limited in their application to the church and kingdom of our Lord Jesus. It is very essential to our peace and comfort here that we heed this instruction, not only that we may enjoy peace and sweet fellowship with the saints, whose natural infirmities call for patient forbearance, but we must ourselves feel the effect of our own action in the matter. With the very same measure that we accord to our brethren it shall be measured to us again.—Matthew 7:2. It is not that at another time we shall receive that judgment; the very comdemnation which we pronounce in our judgment of our brethren judges us then and there out of our own mouths. The exacting spirit which can have no patience with the weakness and even the folly and sin of our brother, marks us as being disciples of Moses, and requiring "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." Then, when we pray to be forgiven "as we forgive," we ask for that same exacting justice to be meted out to us. This is legal justice; but the grace of our Lord is manifest in his long-suffering patience toward us. As followers of Jesus, this is our pattern. The grace of God is needful to enable us to hold in subjection the evil which we daily feel working in ourselves, and "it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not;" then how inconsistent must it be for us to be impatient and intolerant toward our fellow-pilgrims, who have to mourn the same infirmities under which we groan!

This exhortation does not authorize any one to claim especial favor and exemption from responsibility to the law of Christ on the ground of being "weak" or "feeble minded," any more than it would justify the unruly in their contempt of the order of the house of God. It is a very strong indication of the pre-

valence of the carnal mind when one can plead these provisions of the divinely appointed order of the church in extenuation of his sinful actions. It savors strongly of blasphemous mockery when one can urge his belief in divine sovereignty as an excuse for his own wickedness. The seal which God has set upon his foundation is "The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."—2 Tim. 2:19. If the belief of election and predestination does not produce the hatred of sin, it is not the effect of the faith of God's elect, for that always bears the unbroken seal here given. And wherever this seal is set, causing the hatred of sin, there is the foundation of God which shall be completed, for he will certainly perform it until the revelation of the perfect day of Jesus Christ.

They to whom this exhortation comes with sweetness as the joyful sound of the gospel of Christ, are all included in the address as brethren of the apostles. They may be so weak and faint-hearted that they dare not claim to be the characters specified; but if they feel the desire for its precious comfort they are the very ones for whose encouragement it is written. All its sweet comfort and assurance belongs to every one who loves and longs for the consolation therein provided. No unruly one is forbidden the benefit of this warning; no feeble minded one is denied this comfort; no weak one is excluded from this support; and it is essential to the peace of every one that he should be patient toward all.

(Editorial by Elder Wm. L. Beebe, August 1, 1885. It is worthy of a careful reading by all of us. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

WALTER G. BURGESS

Walter G. Burgess was born in Franklin County, Virginia, March 25, 1899, and died September 17, 1967. He was the son of the late William and Daisy Burgess.

He was married to Miss Mabel Showalter, November 1919, who survives with three children: two daughters, Mrs. Velena Bennett, and Mrs. Arlene Via, one son, Dalton Burgess, all of Roanoke, Virginia. Surviving also are four grandchildren, three sisters and eight brothers.

He united with Little Creek Church, Franklin County, Va. the fourth Sunday in July, 1936, and was baptized by the late Elder John P. Helms. He was ordained a deacon of the church December 1, 1944.

His funeral was held at Lynch Funeral Home in Rocky Mount, with internment in Franklin Memorial Park, with Elder William Holland and Elder Leonard Brammer officiating.

He was truly a devoted husband and father and his family and friends miss him very much. Yet, we would not want him to linger and suffer as he did in his last days.

He bore his afflictions with patience and we cherish the memory of Brother Burgess because he served his church faithfully and was a lovely Brother. He desired the welfare of every one and especially those who desired to be found walking in righteousness. He was highly esteemed both by his home church and the Sister Churches. We feel we have suffered a great loss but believe it is his eternal gain, for it is given to those who die in the Lord.

He was laid to rest in Franklin Memorial Park under a mound of beautiful flowers, to rest until the trumpet of God shall sound and time shall be no more. When King Jesus shall come in great glory to summon his people away beyond the shores of time to where the monster, that enemy called death, will not be feared any more. Now may we bow in reverence unto him who giveth and taketh away and still say thy will be done.

(Elder) William Holland

MEMORIAL

CLARENCE L. WILSON, 1887-1968

Paran Primitive Baptist Church of Hawkins, Texas, desires to express her sadness caused by the death of one of her members, to wit: Clarence L. Wilson, who was born Dec. 28, 1887; died May 25, 1968. She wishes to thank God for the Christian principles made manifest in his life. His submission to the will of God in all things; his abiding faith in Jesus, the perfect and complete Saviour of sensible sinners; his sacred devotion and love for the Chunch; his inspiration to others by his smiles and patience even in the midst of trouble; his words and deeds of kindness to the despondent and unfortunate: **all these traits** shall forever be treasured by those who knew him. She prays God's smiling providence to be upon his wife, Ethel, of Laird Hill; upon his children: C. L., Jr. of Kilgore, Don, of Hobbs, N. M.; Mrs. Erwin Smith of Dallas, and Mrs. Boyd Weeks of Pasadena.

Brother Clarence Wilson became a member of Hopewell P. B. Church, Winnsboro, Texas,

in July, 1937. He moved from Winnsboro to Laird Hill and became a member of Paran Church in 1953.

His pastor, assisted by Bro. Kenneth Flowers, conducted his funeral at Winnsboro. His body was buried in Hopewell Cemetery to await the resurrection.
the resurrection.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Pastor

MITTIE ADA HOPKINS MURPHY

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst, by death our beloved Sister Mittie Hopkins Murphy. She was born November 28, 1880, and passed away from this life March 2, 1968.

Sister Murphy united with the Reidsville, N. C., Primitive Baptist Church in the year of 1912. She was baptized by the late Elder L. H. Hardy. She was the oldest member of the Church.

Sister Murphy was the daughter of the late Thomas Walker and Amanda Doggett Hopkins. She leaves to morn one brother, Thomas D. Hopkins of Reidsville.

Sister Murphy was faithful to her church as long as she was able to attend. She loved the Doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God.

Her funeral was held at Citty Funeral Home by her beloved pastor Elder David V. Spangler. Her body was laid to rest at the Fairview Baptist Church Cemetery, to await the resurrection to be with God's Saints around his Throne.

James W. Moore

MEMORIAL

LELA BRADLEY McCANN

Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church of ElDorado, Arkansas, files this in memory of a very precious sister, to wit: Sister Lela Bradley McCann. She was born August 24, 1880, died Jan. 22, 1958, at ElDorado, Arkansas, at the age of 87 years. Sister McCann was a devoted member of Rehobeth Church for many years. She was the sister of Elder Durwood Bradley of Lubbock, Texas, who meant so much to her in her last years of life. Also surviving her are two grand daughters; Mrs. Harry Shelton of Farmerville, La. and Mrs. Dick Young of Jena, La. Six great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild are among the other relatives surviving.

Sister Lela McCann will be remembered as one having special traits of being very conscientious, deeply devoted to her family and church, and of rendering a life of lovely service. The 71st Psalm best describes her experience, prayer, faith, and hope. She could say with the Psalmist, "Thou, which hath shewed me great and sore troubles, shall quicken me again, and shall bring me up again from the depths of the earth." (Psalm 71:20) She walked in the Valley of Despondency and rejoiced upon the mountain of joy, gladness, and peace. She rejoiced in God's works, but men's works and doings caused her great suffering.

Rehobeth thanks God for her companionship and the love manifested in her. Her pastor conducted her funeral at Young's Chapel, ElDorado, and burial was in Banks Cemetery, Banks, Arkansas. May the Lord make us submissive to His will in this matter.

Copies of this MEMORIAL to be filed with Church records, sent to family, and mailed to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Written by her pastor,
Elder E. J. Lambert

THOMAS BLEVIN DAVIS

Bethel Church of Union County, Arkansas, has lost another precious member in the death of Thomas B. Davis. He was born August 13, 1898 to Calvin and Lulu Davis in Union County. He was a lifelong resident of that County. He died at St. Joseph Hospital in Hot Springs May 17, 1968, at the age of 69 yrs., 9 months, and 4 days. Survivors include his brother, J. J. Davis, 2 sisters: Mrs. Mary Cameron and Mrs. Maggie Robertson, all of ElDorado. Survivors especially include his nephews and neices upon whom he lavished parental love, — having no children of his own. He was a carpenter.

Brother Tom Davis became a member of Bethel Church many years ago and was baptized by Elder W. W. Taylor. He served the church as clerk several years. His devotion to the upkeep of the building, grounds and cemetery shall be cherished long by all who knew him. He talked much of the sovereignty and holiness of God and the inability and sinfulness of man. He was constantly confessing his sins and praying for the mercy of God.

His wife, Allie Daniels Davis, preceded him in death by over two years. The vacancy left in this life by the passing of his companion caused him to pray more diligently and unceasingly. We soon noticed a change in his countenance, conversation, actions, and life which convinced us that he was enjoying a more abundant life of peace, joy, and contentment than ever before. His special hymn in the last months of his life was, "How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds". The sweetness of experiencing salvation became more important than sad thoughts upon his sinful state. We believe he was made willing to go Home and leave this world of suffering.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder E. J. Lambert. His body was laid beside his wife in Bethel Cemetery.

This ordered written by Bethel Church while

in conference to be published.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Pastor
Mrs. Jean Burns, Clerk

DEACON HOSEA T. COLLINS

Brother Collins died Sunday July 14, 1968, after an illness of three years. He was senior deacon of the Western Primitive Association, a former Clerk, and also a Clerk of Bethlehem Church, while the writer served as his pastor for about twenty years. He was a dear lover of the **Signs of the Times**, and of the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, with other fundamentals of the doctrine. Several of his children are Primitive Baptists and readers of the **Signs.**

His first wife died some twenty-five years ago having ten fine children, as follows: James T., Raymond and Hosea Paul, of Slocomb, Ala.; Buren O.; Columbus, Ga.; Hilton, of Tallahassie, Fla.; Mrs. Ruth Tew, Mrs. Frances Martin and Mrs. Mildred Adkinson of Solcomb; Mrs. Bonnie Brewlon, Pensacola, Fla.; and Mrs. Uvonne Holland, of Geneva, Ala.: all of these survive their father; together with his dear companion, Mrs. Maudie Burns Collins, who was so devoted to her husband and a wonderful nurse during his long illness. Brother Collins is also survived by the following: two brothers, Frank of Slocomb, and Cyrus, of Jessup, Ga.; one sister, Grabrella Bell, Panama City, Fla.; twenty-six grandchildren and nine great grandchildren. His family was one of the largest Primitive Baptist families in the world, and true believers in Christ.

His funeral was conducted July 16th at his dear Bethlehem Church, Malvern, Ala., by his pastor, Elder J. J. Collins, assisted by Elders C. C. Hornsby, A. B. Chummey and V. C. Hartzog: with Brother P. J. Hartzog leading the singing. Interment was in the adjoining cemetery. It was said that one of the largest concourse of people attended the services ever seen in Geneva County. The theme of the ministers was, "The Resurrection." The remains were tenderly laid to rest beneath many flowers.

J. J. Collins

ESTER CLARK RIGDON

Mrs. Rigdon, of Slocomb, Ala., died January 3, 1968. She was the daughter of Primitive Baptists, and her grandfather was a minister and Clerk of the Association.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. J. Collins and Mr. George Scarborough at Pleasant Hill Church, with interment in the adjoining cemetery.

She is survived by her husband, six brothers and one sister.

J. J. Collins

WILLIAM VESTAL PYRTLE

By order of Bunker Hill Primitive Baptist Church in North Carolina, we record the passing of our dear brother. He was born May 3, 1884, and departed this life October 20, 1967. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Rock House in 1916, and several years later joined Bunker Hill on confession of faith.

He was married to Sister Ada Slawter in 1904, who passed away April 24, 1962. To this union were born ten children: surviving also are ten grandchildren.

Brother Pyrtle was faithful to the cause, attending his meetings regularly, and visited our sister churches. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace; and we can't recall a time in our meetings together but what he would speak of the goodness of God towards him — confessing his sins: willing to forgive and be forgiven.

We at Bunker Hill Church miss him very much, but we feel our loss is his eternal gain. We desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father who rules supremely. We realize that the "Lord giveth and he taketh away, blessed be his name."

His funeral service was conducted by his pastor, who spoke comfortingly from the 23rd Psalm.

Submitted in love by the church at Bunker Hill, who requests that a copy of this obituary be placed on the church book, a copy sent to the family, and one sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Elder Z. L. Rhue, Moderator
Glenn Holt, Clerk

RUTH S. TWILLEY

Our beloved sister, Ruth Sirman Twilley, took leave of her earthly house and went to her eternal home November 15, 1967. She was born near Salisbury, Maryland, April 16, 1979, the daughter of John William and Sarah Elizabeth Sirman.

On March 4, 1902, she was married to Carl Twilley, and of that union three children, Margaret, Wallace, and Elizabeth, were born.

On the third Sunday in June, 1946, our dear sister was baptized by our beloved pastor Elder David Spangler, and received into the fellowship of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church. She loved her church, and she loved Him who was the author and finisher of her faith. She was a very modest, self-effacing person, not given to much speaking, but the light in her face, the warm glow in her eyes as she heard the gospel proclaimed and her

dear Redeemer's name magnified, spoke much louder than a multitude of words. The writer recalls with sweetness and sadness the many hours of spiritual conversation in her home — a home whose doors opened wide at all times to the Lord's people and her many friends; yet we who loved her most could not desire to call her back from the joy she now has won.

She is survived by two lovely, faithful daughters, Mrs. Margaret Jordan and Mrs. Elizabeth Betts, whose devotion and untiring efforts to make their mother happy and comfortable never ceased. She is also survived by two sisters, her husband having predeceased her in September, 1952, and her son in November, 1955.

Her final memorial service was held in the house of the church she loved, and of which she was such a faithful member, on November 17, 1967, conducted by our dear pastor, Elder David Spangler, whom she loved so devotedly. Her mortal body was laid to rest beside her husband's to await the second coming in glory of her Lord and Saviour, and the resurrection of the dead in Christ. Let us "sorrow not even as others who have no hope."

Written by a cousin in the flesh and a sister, I hope, in the Lord.

Mildred V. Dykes

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

We the Church of Hickory Grove wish to bow in humble submission to our gracious Heavenly Father in removing by death a beloved sister, Mrs. Vara Lee Johnson at Smithfield Memorial Hospital May 4, 1968.

She was married to J. Mansey Johnson on March 3, 1909. To this union were born ten children, six boys and four girls; twenty-six grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

She was received by experience and baptism in July of 1911 at Hickory Grove Primitive Baptist Church in Johnston County, N. C. She lived a faithful member for fifty-seven years. Her family has lost a precious mother; the church a very dear sister.

Funeral services were conducted in the Rose Funeral Chapel in Benson, N. C. She was laid to rest in Rose Lawn Cemetery among lots of beautiful flowers.

Therefore, we, the church wish to express our heartfelt sympathy to the family. May God's riches blessing abide with each one of them.

Resolved, that a copy be sent to the family, one to the **Signs of the Times**, and one put on our church records.

Committee:

Sister Georgia E. Hill
Sister Leacey Beasley
Sister Gertrude Royal

MRS. DELIA McCAIN TAYLOR

On May 24, 1968, Mrs. Delia McCain Taylor crossed the river into everlasting life, and eternal company with those who love the Lord.

She was born April 18, 1896, in Henderson County, Texas, near Athens. She is survived by her beloved husband, Charles Aaron Taylor; three sons, Herbert, Coy and T. D. Taylor, and one daughter, Lenice Shoemake.

Early in life she attended rural Old Baptist Churches in Navarro County, served by her grandfather, Elder Pryor Cardwell. She and her husband have been believers and faithful readers of **The Signs** for over forty years. They lived much of the time in rural areas where they were unable to regularly attend a congregation of fellow believers.

She came into this life to give and grow. Her unbounded love the family and friends came to know: she carefully tended each child as though it were a flowering tree, carefully guiding each one into the sure confidence and knowledge of Thee.

She gave so much yet required so little from others: we held her among the great in the ranks of mothers. Her life's work complete, yet it was sad to let her go; however there is rejoicing in her return to Thy eternal presence we know.

Written by T. D. Taylor.

Charles A. Taylor
Bennington, Oklahoma

HOSEA PAUL COLLINS

Mr. Collins, aged 37, died accidently according to a coroners jury, July 24, 1968. He is survived by his wife, Teresa, one daughter, Susan, and two sons, Tony and Lamar; four brothers: J. T. and Raymond, Slocomb, Ala.; Burey of Columbus, Ga., and Hilton, of Tallahassee, Fla.; five sisters: Mrs. Ruth Tew, Mrs. Frances Martin and Mrs. Mildred Adkinson, of Slocomb; Mrs. Yvonne Holland, Geneva, and Mrs. Bonnie Brewton, Pensacola, Fla.; and his step-mother, Mrs. Maudie Burns Collins, of Slocomb; and numerous other relatives.

He was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and is greatly mourned. The passing of his father, the senior deacon in the Western Primitive Baptist Association, H. T. Collins, was a few days before the death of his son. He will be sadly missed by his family and a host of friends.

Funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Mr. George Johnson, and Elder J. J. Collins at Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church on July 26th. The remains were buried beneath many flowers in the adjoining cemetery, but the spirit returned to the God who gave it.

J. J. Collins

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 136 DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1968 NO. 11

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/68
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

MEMORIES REFRESHED

Rt. 4, Box 213,
Rocky Mount, Va. 24151

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

I desire to write you, hoping that you are well. I did not get to speak to you at the association. (Pigg River) The Lord blessed me to go all three days, which I enjoyed very much.

Brother Wood, you preached my husband's funeral twenty-nine years ago. He was Matt Wright. My membership is at Little Creek Church in Franklin County, Virginia. I do not have a way to go to meetings as regularly as I would love to go. I love to be with the Primitive Baptist people: they are the people I love, and hope to live with and die with. I often wonder, "Do I love the Lord, or so; am I his or am I not?"

My father's membership was at Little Hope Church. He was Monroe Hill and passed away thirty-one years ago at the age of eighty-one. My children all married, so I live by myself. When my children were young, I was so troubled, and felt like I would like to join some church. I did not know, or feel like being with the Primitive Baptist people. I tried to pray for the Lord to direct my steps and show me the right way; and I dreamed one night of going to Little Hope Church, and in my dream I went over on the hill to the little grave yard, and Jesus met me at the gate and he pointed his staff to a row of camels. I went on in this way for some time, still praying for the Lord to have mercy on my poor soul. Then I dreamed of being on a hill, and saw the new Jerusalem descending from heaven. It was so pretty and was lit up so pretty and bright.

I united with the Primitive Baptist Church in Roanoke, Virginia, and was baptized by Elder Stegall. May God be merciful to us all and keep us in love and fellowship, I ask in Jesus' name. From a sister saved by grace, if saved at all.

Mrs. Lula Wright

(We appreciate the above from Sister Wright. It brought back many memories of Little Hope Church in our younger days. Elder B. V. Jesse was the pastor of that church for about twenty-five years, and it was under him that the church was organized. We loved to go there and be with him and the brethren, and did so for about ten years. After his death we became pastor and served about six years, or until we removed to Baltimore in 1943. Elder Otie Conner was ordained there and served the church until his death the last part of December, 1966. Shortly after that Elder Julius Bocock was called as pastor and is serving at the present time. The church is in the western part of Roanoke County near Elliston.

Many were the seasons of rejoicing there which are fresh in our memory. —

— J. D. W.)

QUOTATIONS FROM J. J. PHILPOT

208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

Dear Elder Wood:

Attached are letters from Sister Mary Davis to Remona. It is so rich in Spirit-

ual matter that we thought that the readers of the **Signs** would also enjoy them.

These letters are a very good example of a hearer who is "Spiritually exercised."

In connection with this, let us quote some good thoughts from Philpot: "Take, for instance, an unexercised minister; what is he fit for? To eat, drink and sleep; to build hypocrites, in deception; to crush the poor, needy, exercised people of God; and to shoot the arrows of contempt and scorn against those servants of the Lord that feed the flock of slaughter. That is all he is fit for."

"Take an unexercised hearer, what is he fit for? Half the time asleep, and the other half looking at the clock: or dreaming away the time about something he did on the Saturday, or occupying his thoughts with something to be done on the Monday. That is all he does, except to make a minister an offender for a word, or pick up something from the pulpit that he may go and make a tale about. That is all he is fit for. What is an unexercised member of the church fit for? To breed strife, and make others as dead as himself."

"But, take the other side of the case. What is an exercised Christian fit for? He is fit for God and glory; fit for heaven and eternal bliss, where the billows of trial and sorrow shall no more beat over his troubled soul; fit for conversation with the exercised people of God; fit to hear the truth as it is in Jesus; fit to live a life becoming the gospel he professes; fit to shine as a light in the world. What is an exercised hearer fit for? He is fit for crying and sighing as he comes to church, that the Lord would bless the Word to his soul; he is fit to hear an experimental ministry; fit to sit under an exercised servant of God; fit for the promises, mercies, and blessings of the gospel; fit for the sweet manifestations of blood, grace, and love to his soul; fit for every good word and work. And, what is an exercised minister fit for? To strengthen the brethren, that is what he is fit for. Nobody else is fit to strengthen the brethren but he that has been in the sieve of Satan." (From a sermon by Philpot upon Luke 22: 31,32)

May the Lord continue to bless you in your labors. We enjoy the "Voices of the Past", and also hear the same report from the Brethren.

Yours in hope,
W. W. Hudson, Jr.

LETTER TO SISTER W. W. HUDSON

308 Wyandotte
Shreveport, Louisiana 71101
February 19, 1968

Dear Remona,

Correspondence from you and all the rest of like precious faith always means so much to me. With all the things we see and face in everyday life, especially working with the public, it is so wonderful to go to church on weekends and visit in the homes of those of like precious faith who are so dear to us. I spent the weekend with the Barron's this past weekend and we went up to Bethel and heard Bro. Lambert yesterday.

Bro. Lambert preached on the meaning of the Lamb. Again I wished I had a tape of it. Such a beautiful picture was he blessed to depict using or I should say reading from the 19th chapter of Revelation and from the 3rd chapter of Hosea, 19 and 20th verses. He also went back to Genesis in the garden when Eve was deceived and ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and gave unto Adam and he ate. He used this as being figurative of Christ and His Bride, the church. It was Eve who was actually deceived, but Adam, out of his love for his bride also ate, so it is with Christ. His bride is the sinner, but out of His wonderful and gracious love for His Bride, He came down and took upon Him the sins of all His people — His Bride. It was so beautiful the way he was blessed to bring forth the explanation concerning the 7th and 8th verse of Rev. 19. "For the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready," She is made ready

by shedding all her old clothing — all of our own self-righteousness and depending on God Almighty alone to clothe us in "fine linen, clean and white" and he expressed and stressed that the wedding garment was of fine linen, not mixed with wool, but pure. Oh, that I could even attempt to write the beauty which I was given to view, if not deceived. I can only write a few scattering thoughts which are probably confusing but to be blessed to hear the wonderful sermons and feed from the Master's table for a few moments of time is indeed so much more than I deserve and I trust I've been given a thankful heart for such wonderful blessings.

You spoke of not being able to enjoy preaching as much as you once did, especially since your children are still small and need so much attention. Seems like lately, I've felt so lifted up and have been blessed to return home and continue the sweet meditations, although I never retain as much as I desire. I guess, if I retained it all I would never hunger and would have no desire to feed from the Master's table. And as we read in Matthew, "For your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before you ask Him."

This has not always been so with me though, for it seemed so long I went listening to our dear ministers and would maybe receive a crumb here and there and at times be lifted up during the entire sermon but the minute I stepped out of the church, I could not even remember the text used. I know that I've even thought that something is wrong because I don't enjoy preaching as much as it seems I did when I was in school and college, but one day as I thought along this line, the thought came to me that I'm older and have responsibilities now and then I had none. Many times worldly things seem to overcome my thoughts to the extent that I cannot read the **Signs, Bible,** or hear the preached word. But thanks be unto God, this is not forever, for if not deceived, on a few occasions, I trust that I've been lifted up and given a few moments of feasting and praising our God. Oh, if it were not for the valleys we would never reach these mountain tops to enjoy the feasts.

There was a period of time that it seemed that I tried so hard to read the Bible and meditate upon the wonderful writings but had to be shown again these things and made to know that within and of myself I can do nothing yet "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Lately, if not deceived, I've been wonderfully blessed and the Bible, **Signs,** etc, have not seemed to be an entirely closed book to me. . .

With love,
Mary Davis

Rt. 2, Box 252,
Moneta, Va. 24121

Dear Brother Spangler:

My subscription ran out with the July issue of the **Signs of the Times,** and I am enclosing a check to pay for two more years.

I enjoyed reading the **Signs** when a very young girl; and I hope God blesses me to read it as long as I live. Its articles and letters are indeed food for the spiritually hungry. If God will bless me, I will write a few of my thoughts, although I am not worthy to speak his gracious name. I have been made to call on him for mercy, and I feel that He has heard my feeble petitions and had pity on me a poor lost sinner, saved by His wonderous grace; and through experience made to know that He is God, and besides him there is no other.

I am burdened with tribulations and trials so much of the time. I have tried to help the situation every way I could, to no avail, for I know I am a failure. I know there is a time and place for all things under the sun — that God has a purpose for everything. For all things work together for the good of those who love God, who are the called according to his purpose.

O for a little more evidence that I am one of that blessed number He has reserved for himself. I love the dear brethren and could not live without the

fellowship of God's people. I try to pray His will be done, for He has ever, and shall always do his will; and whatever his righteous judgement has writ for me, I know is just; even if its Hell. He has given me a precious hope that I live by, and without it I would surely die.

May we always be found in humbleness at one another's feet, bound by the bonds of His love, and then we will ever be in peace.

Please cast a mantle of charity over all mistakes, as I am a very feeble creature. God bless and keep you and all of His little ones, who feel to call on Him. Remember a little sister who needs yours prayers when you are blessed to kneel at the throne of grace.

Written in love, for Jesus' sake I hope.

In hope of eternal life,
Ethel Myers

NOW IN REST HOME

P. O. Box 202,
Salida, Calif. 95368

Dear Elder Spangler:

Please note my change of address. I became ill and had to give up my home, and am now in a Rest Home; and it is hard to adjust to this way of living.

The Lord's will is done, and not my will: His ways are just and his counsel wise. I am near my church home and several of the members, and it is a great comfort to me to be near them. We meet twice a month on Saturday evening and Sunday. I enjoy the singing and scriptural conversation.

I am 78 years old, and have been a baptized member since May 12, 1912. I still feel to be a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all. I hope and trust in Him, for He alone can soothe my weary soul and body.

While in my late teens I was ill, and also troubled over my condition, feeling to be such a sinner, and it seemed there was no hope for me. I was in a room alone, and everything in the room became blank, and I saw in front of me three identical persons in white robes. A hand was held up in front of my face and blood was poured on the hand, and it became white as snow, and then was gone; and I could see all things in the room again. I just sat and wondered about the vision. I wanted to tell my mother but feared to tell her, as maybe it was all imagination. I did finally tell her, since it just would not leave me; and hasn't yet. Her eyes filled with tears; and then I felt it must mean something.

I enjoy reading the **Signs**, the Editorials and the Voices of the Past, and all other writings. I did enjoy Elder Attebery's article. His father was at one time pastor of my old home church in Missouri, and I loved to hear him preach. As he walked up into the stand, he was preaching. He was deeply gifted to preach the word of God.

May the Lord continue to bless you and the others in all your duties.

I am, I hope, in Him,
Mrs. Mabel Lindsey

"I BELIEVE: HELP THOU MY UNBELIEF"

There is a song that is popular now, called, "I Believe." While listening to it, I often ask myself: What do I believe, what do I really believe? The answer, I think, differs as I experience the path of daily life. Sometimes, when I am sad and depressed and lonely, my faith falters, my spirit plunges down with the eaglet, and I try to cry, "I believe; help thou my unbelief."

Then at times, I am caught up in the beliefs and faith of my forebears, and it seems my belief may be historically, and the result of my upbringing.

As I listen to our ministers, or read articles and books on the Scriptures, in my mind I separate my belief from theirs, or agree with them, if they are in accord with my feelings. Even in the lowest depths of despair, I have been blessed to "listen" as his gifts preach the spoken word. Lately, while my own mind and heart have been closed to the

sweet meditations that I once enjoyed, I believe He still opened my ears, so that I might hear and enjoy the dew drippings from his fountains; otherwise I feel I would have perished.

I truly hope, that through faith I believe all the Scriptures and their teachings, for they are they that testify of my Lord, that my faith is both sure and steadfast, and that by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, I will not be tossed about by every wind of doctrine; but be made to stand fast and hold the traditions, which I hope to have been taught.

I am not custom bound enough to reject inventions, and material things for our physical well being, but the faith that John preached in the wilderness of Judea, that Paul and Silas carried to the churches in Asia, is good enough for me. I want nothing added to and nothing taken from the doctrine they stood for. It's the clear crystal water of life, untainted by the doctrines of men, that makes it so dear to me.

I believe that everything, and all things were ordained and purposed by God, from the fall of the sparrow, to the flight of the mighty man made missile into space. The record of God's purposes and decrees plays unceasingly on and on, so that nothing is missed or left out, as it revolves through the ceasless ages. He is God and changes not. He spoke into existance all things for time and eternity.

Even though all the nations he created are in his sight as the small dust of the balance, and as a drop of the bucket, He saw fit to reserve out of those nations a portion of people to save for himself through love and mercy. His love for this elect out of mankind was so great, He sent his only Son to suffer, bleed and die, to bring that portion again unto himself. This Being did all these things, according to his own divine will and purpose, without the help of any other power. He did it for his own glory, instead of trying to please man. The people who make up this portion are the elect of God. They are guided by his love, and by his rod and staff, in the path he set before them. They were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began, and had nothing to do with putting themselves there.

I believe that nothing can take that heritage from them; that it is as surely theirs as God is on his throne. He appoints their goings and comings and none can stay his hand. His promises are yea and amen. We are taught by experience to wait upon the Lord, to stand still and see his salvation. How often we cry out for help, after we have tried everything in our power to get relief. We sink deper into the mire of despair, in our search for him. When it seems He is gone forever, He makes his presence known, without our help or knowledge, as He speaks to our tortured soul saying, "Peace be still."

I believe, that except for his intervening love and mercy, by sending a Saviour, all men would have been lost. Justice would have been meted out to the whole human race.

Christ went before the multitudes, while in the flesh, preaching two paths that man would follow: one of them right, the narrow way that leads to life; the other one wrong, the broad way that leads to destruction. There is no middle way, nor in between. There is a way that seems right to men, but the end thereof, are the ways of death. He is the only right way, the only door. "I am the way, the truth and the life." The other ways are filled with idolators, whoremongers, thieves, robbers and all other foul and evil doers. From such we are to turn away. Man, in his zeal to do his own righteous works, would like to cure the evils of the world. Even the children of God become over zealous, and would like to help him, when left to the Adamic flesh and the pitfalls of Satan. But we are told to "Wait upon the Lord," and to "Stand still and see the Salvation of the Lord."

We groan in sack cloth and ashes at such presumption, when we are made to know that our righteousness is as filthy rags, and we are nothing and less than nothing.

He leads us in the old way, the way that is from everlasting to everlasting. "Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." (Jer. 6:16)

I do not want a new way. If my hope is not in vain, when I am in the dark, undone and overshadowed by the world, I try to pray again for the green pastures and still waters where I once waited for my Beloved. Oh, for a refreshing view of the old path, at the end of which is rest for my weary soul.

Why do we look for flaws, for leaks, for forks in the road? Why be dissatisfied with perfection? Why is there a scripture that reads, "That there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another?" Are there those who would lead us in new paths? Would we like to shun the "hard doctrine" that has been so precious to us? God forbid!

I love the thought of an unchangeable God, who is at the helm of this troubled and sin cursed world. I believe He holds the reins in his hand, and is unswayed by the wiles of wicked rulers and powers.

I hope to be numbered with those who, "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel." How dear to me are the old saints, who by the grace of God, have been enabled to walk in this zealous world, in the keeping of God, without turning to the right, or the left, and through him, removed their feet from evil. I believe their feet are in the old way.

"Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." (Phil. 3:16) Once I searched the scriptures, hoping to find promises that would free my sinsick soul, to find remedies for my condemnation, and in search of things I knew not. Though I found them not, in the written word, I felt a hope spring up within my soul, that gave me a new life and set my feet in a new path. This path that was so new and beautiful to me, is the one that is new, but ever old, to his children through the ages. We hear it's proclamation and feel the witness within, as his ministers are inspired to tell it. Now, having obtained the promise in hope, I look for the same rules, the same things, from Him who spoke joy and peace to my soul before. I long to be kept in the old path, to stand fast and hold to the traditions I have been taught, without wavering or being tossed about.

I love the words election, predestination, perserverance, unchangeable, absolute, and phrases like the soverignty of God, the total depravity of man, and the fixedness of things. These are the wonderful attributes God gave his people, to set them apart from the world. Are you not glad to be a stranger, one set apart, in a world that He told his people to come out of?

There is such a big difference in feeling pity and charity toward those with whom we differ, than trying to compromise our beliefs to conform with theirs. I can only pray the Father's will be done in the matter, and hope those in error will be taught of the Lord. We are told to receive them not into our house, neither bid them God speed, for he that biddeth them God speed is partaker of their evil deeds. They are followers of the anti-christ; and if I am not deceived, I have had my fill and hope to be kept from such.

For "What communion hath light with darkness?" The darkness of the religions of this world will not mix with the gospel of our Lord, any more than oil and water. How we pray to be kept in that calling, wherein we were called, holding fast to the profession of our faith.

We cannot serve two masters, God and mammon. Dear ones, as we look about, can we not see the mammons of this world, so busy about their religious life, they forget to praise the Lord, who gave them their being? Are we halted between them, so that we become lukewarm and wonder if we cannot serve

both? "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways."

How wonderful to be able to sit and listen to our dear elders point out the old paths, as they are inspired by the Spirit. How wonderful to hear of his sovereign purposes and decrees, his foreknowledge, his election, that was closed before time began. How utterly impossible for puny man to attain unto this high and mighty One, but as the rain cometh down and the dew from heaven, so he refreshes and comforts the plants that his right hand set out.

I believe that of myself I can do nothing, but I have been taught the hard and bitter way, that I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me. My lips and pen have been stilled, so that I could neither tell nor write of the beauties of my Lord. I had the longing and burning desire to tell, but the door was closed, my lips were shut up, and when I picked up my pen to write as I used to, no words came to my mind. I was as a well run dry, and the clouds without water.

I tried to cry and pray unto the Lord, with groanings I could not utter. His face seemed turned away forever. O little ones of our Father above, I hope you are never brought so low. My son would ask, "Mother, when will you want me to type another piece for the *Signs*?" Elder Wood wrote for some more of my thoughts as I had written before. I had felt, that anytime I wanted to write my thoughts on a scriptural subject, I had only to sit down and write. To those who wrote or asked for my continued writing, I can only hope you understand and know that I had to wait upon the Lord for deliverance, and have suffered so very long.

I was led on a long trip recently, a trip that I seemed impelled to take. It seems foolish to think you would drive thousands of miles to hear the same doctrine proclaimed you have heard all your life. We sang hymns and talked scripture on the long journey, and I wondered if my companions were as empty, and were searching for something elusive, like I. I was like the traveler who fell among thieves and was left naked, wounded and half dead.

I believe that a certain Samaritan was sent my way, who bound up my wounds and poured oil and wine into my aching heart. The flood gates of my soul were opened, and the tears flowed freely from my eyes, which for so long had been too dry to cry. I wanted to go about among those strangers (in the flesh) shouting the praises of my Lord. My heart is filled with thankfulness for this soldier of the cross, who through relating his own suffering, broke my bonds and set me free. He was the vessel through which the Spirit sent relief to my aching soul. "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things."

These are some of the things I believe.

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Spearsville, La.

(Sister Barron has had much the same experience as David expressed in the 30th Psalm: ". . . weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." (5th verse) "Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sack-cloth, and girded me with gladness; to the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to thee forever." (11 and 12th verses) — J. D. W.)

CIRCULAR LETTER
By Elder A. J. Slauson

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association now in session with the First Roxbury Church at Halcottville, N. Y., September 11 and 12, 1968, to the churches and associations with which we correspond; Greetings:

We extend love and fellowship in the Lord in this our annual Circular Letter to those of like precious faith through Christ and the Holy Spirit, that has enabled us to see eye to eye, and our hearts run together as two drops of water, in this glorious doctrine of Jesus Christ of salvation to poor lost sinners. The Apostle wrote, "But ye are a chosen

generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." (I Peter 2:9)

Peter in the beginning of the first chapter, tells us to whom he is writing: a certain people called Strangers scattered throughout the different parts of the country, (as they are now) and tells what kind of people they are — that they are an Elect People; and this elect people are according to the foreknowledge of God. How true with all the children of grace! They are elect according to the foreknowledge of God, and are scattered. God's foreknowledge embraces all the children of grace, as they were chosen in Christ the Son before the world was: in other words, they were God's choice: and Peter said they were a chosen generation.

We understand the New Testament to be a testimony of the generation of Jesus Christ; and that Peter is saying that those of whom he is writing are a chosen generation in Jesus Christ. We humbly trust we have some knowledge of the grace of God, and know what it is to be lost, and to be found in a waste howling wilderness and led about and instructed, and made to love Jesus' great name and confess him before men; and buried in the liquid grave in the name of the Father and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, being made willing in the day of His power. We feel with the poet: "The steps that I tread and the station I fill, my Father determined and wrote in His will."

Such ones will say that God choose me; and this way for me, for Jesus said that you have not chosen me, but I have chosen you. We are called with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace. Jesus told Peter that flesh and blood had not revealed to him that He (Jesus) was the Christ, but that it was God the Father in heaven. The word says that it is the work of God that we believe on him whom He hath sent.

Peter, in the first and second chapters, gives much instruction concerning the deportment of the life and walk which should be found in these strangers, these Elect of God. Is it not true that whatsoever was written which was needful for the elect in that day, is just as needful today? O Lord is it possible that we can lay claim to this high standing in all this world. If we are not of this chosen generation, we are lost: it makes us examine ourselves. Jesus said to come out from among them; be ye separate; touch not the unclean thing. Peter said to lay aside all malice and all guile, envyings and evil speaking. Well do we know, when we are clothed and in our right mind, that we have much in and of this flesh of ours that we need to lay aside.

Peter calls this chosen generation a holy nation: not in the flesh but in Christ. And Paul says perfect in Christ. Peter calls them a peculiar people, and the Word of God tells us they are a peculiar treasure above all people. Well do we know that this people are taught differently than all other people. They know they are peculiar to other people because of this; and sometimes they are peculiar to themselves. Peter said that because of this this chosen generation should shew forth the praise of him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvelous light.

We humbly trust that this is the sole purpose of this meeting, for otherwise it would only be a social gathering. Dear brethren and friends, is not this an important and sacred matter with each believer, causing us to examine our experience, as to what we have and how we came by it; and does it have a thus saith the Lord for it. Dear ones, what a glorious blessing it is to be called out of darkness. We who have natural eyesight know what natural darkness is. When neither sun, moon, or stars are giving us any light to see where we are, or where we are going, we surely do everything wrong in nature; so how true in the Spirit that without the light of God in the intense darkness of soul as we are born into this world, we cannot see how full of sin we are, or how unclean we are, or that all we say or do

is ungodly; we cannot see that we are rolling sin under our tongue continually or that our own righteousness is as filthy rags. Being blind in nature's night, the natural man and carnal mind is not subject to God's law. This great darkness is known and understood by those who have been called out of darkness; and they desire to shew forth unto Him who called them out of such darkness into His marvelous light. Yet they feel much of the time they cannot praise Him as they ought. It is often said by His little children that it is by the grace of God that I am what I am. It takes a marvelous light to show one his great need of Christ. In Paul's case it was called brighter than the noonday sun: which we understand is Christ, which was the light to lighten the Gentiles and all His people. It takes a marvelous light to show one that he needs to be washed. Peter quickly saw that he needed not only to have his feet washed to have a clean walk, but his hands and head also, to make him fit to labor in the vinyard, or preach the gospel of Christ.

When one is called out of darkness into this marvelous light, or born again of the Spirit, he sees Jesus as the way, the truth, and the light — sees Jesus as the end of the law for righteousness, and the head over all things to the church. And he rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory to God. Where once he was blind, he now sees, and he gladly shews forth the praises of Him who has called him out of such darkness. He sees Jesus as the one and only sacrifice for his many sins, in full payment for his great debt of sins past, present, and future. By this marvelous light he sees Jesus as the one who is rich in mercy and great love; otherwise he would be a castaway. By this marvelous light he walks by faith and not by sight. And he marvels that God should have in his will and purpose called him out of this dense darkness, and bring him in to service to God, producing a divine nature in him, and revealing the love of God. With this love present, it is not a burden to serve God, but a joy, — Christ being in him, which is the light; and he rejoices in that light, and has a sincere desire to always live a life before God and men in praise to God. He would always have his speech with grace seasoned with salt, and his tongue never to speak as though he did not have the grace of God. Otherwise it is degrading to his profession and an open shame to our Lord.

We pray for this marvelous light all the way to our journey's end, in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen.

A. J. Slauson, Moderator
Woodrow W. Bellinger, Clerk

Rt. 2,
Ruffin, N. C.

INTERESTING LETTER TO ELDER HAND

Dear Brother Hand:

I hope that I am thankful that I was one of the congregation Saturday night August 24th. It brought joy to my hungry soul to hear the true gospel from a far country; though we were strangers in the flesh. When you read your text from Zechariah, I felt you were no stranger to the house of God.

Saturday night was my second visit among the dear brethren and sisters since the 4th Sunday in April. I suffered a severe heart attack May 10th; and seemingly am doing extra well. Doctor would not allow me to attend our association, and warns me not to expose myself to the sun, or drive a car.

I enjoyed Saturday night so much, and desired to be in your presence on Sunday. I know a doctor does not have power to save lives except it be given from above; I also believe doctors are given knowledge to help the sick during their appointed days here on this earth. When my wife came home Sunday, I asked what your text was. It was in the 8th chapter of Hebrews; and she said you brought out in your discourse concerning, You cannot sing songs of Zion in a strange land. I began to wish I had disobeyed my doctor and gone to the

meeting.

This poor sinner had been trying to offer himself to those lovely people at Dan River for two years. One of the most beautiful and revealing days of my life came on a Sunday morning. There were two candidates to be baptized: after singing and prayer, Brother Spangler opened the doors of the church, and it was so easy to go forward. The church received me, and although I had no change of clothes, I was buried under the water by my beloved pastor, Elder Spangler. I knew the church didn't need me, but I felt a great need for the church. One of the dear brethren brought me home to change clothes. My wife for some reason did not go to the baptism that morning. Her first words were, "Why didn't you wait until next meeting?" I would have been so glad for her to have been there, but the only answer I had was, "God works in a mysterious way his wonders to perform."

Now to get back to those words that we cannot sing our songs in a strange land. It wasn't long before I was really enjoying what the older brethren had said about our **first love.** I would listen to their conversations, and enjoy them so much; still I couldn't understand about the first love. I do now! Since then I have been in the dry desert many, many times. I also rode the crest of the mountain tops for two years in succession. I was armed with the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. It was so plain to me, and I just knew it could not be denied. Not having yet realized the weakness of this poor sinner, I hit the missionary trail: All I had to do was to tell my brothers, sisters and friends the truth as I saw it, and they just would have to believe it.

Instead of converting anyone, I created an enmity between my own people and dear friends — some of whom still seem cool towards me. I hope the Lord has taught me a lesson in many ways, that I never will forget. The devices of man are many, but the counsel of the Lord shall stand. Man is not able to direct his steps. Converting dead sinners into a lively hope is the work of God directed by the Holy Spirit.

Now back to what my wife said you brought out in your sermon. I cannot name the times I had read these scriptures, but they had no effect on me. Elder Lambert, in filling an appointment at the Reidsville Church, in his discourse said that as they were being led by their captors by the river in Babylon, they hung their harps upon the willows; and they were taunted by their captors to sing songs of Zion. And their reply was, How can we sing the songs of Zion in a strange land?" It hit me like a bombshell; and from that day to this I have never tried to discuss the scriptures except among those of like precious faith. It can't be done: for the preparation of the heart and the answer of the tongue is of the Lord. Wish I could have been in your company more while you were on your journey. I hope you are led to visit Elder Wood on your way.

I was privileged or blessed to be present when Brother, now Elder, McCall offered to the church. I thought it one of the sweetest offerings I ever witnessed. I accompanied Elder Spangler in 1965 to Elder Attebury's three days meeting. We came back by Canada to attend Elder Ruston's three day meeting, and Brother McCall spoke some then. He has since been ordained to the full ministry. I hope to be able to attend Elder Ruston's meeting this fall. The Lord knows whether I will be there. I know I have enjoyed visits in my home from several brothers and sisters from Oregon and Washington. I hope the Lord leads us to meet again under more favorable circumstances, so I can be in your company more.

Hope I am closing these rambling thoughts in the fondest of Christian

love. . . Please extend our love to Elder and Sister Ruston, also Elder McCall and all the brethren and sisters.

James Carter

(The above was written by Brother James Carter to Elder Hand while Elder Hand was in Canada for their meeting. — J. D. W.)

CORRECTION

The last sentence under QUERY 3, page 227 of the October, 1968, Signs should read: The record affirms the baptism of men and women, — not children. (see Acts 8:12)

Please make the correction in your copy. — Editor

REQUEST

Hurricane, W. Va.

Dear Editors:

My husband, Elder Harvey J. Bird, passed away March 8, 1968, and I am having his song book and also a book of poetry published. He had just gotten them ready for publication a few days before his death.

I would like for you to publish a request in the *Signs of the Times*, that if any of the readers would like to donate towards the publication of these books, to send it to Primitive Publications, Rt. 2, Elon College, N. C.

Mrs. H. J. Bird
2490 Montana Ave.
Hurricane, W. Va. 25526

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(To September 1, 1968)

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Danville, Virginia November, 1968

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EDITORIAL

"And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." (1 Cor. 32, 33)

In the translation of the Bible out of the Hebrew and Greek languages, it is my understanding that the translators were not allowed to add one word of their own, unless the word was in italics; which was to show that it was their own word used to bridge an expression or connect the thought.

In the 33rd verse the words **the author** were added by the translators. Hence the reading without the added words,

would be, "God is not of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." Sometimes the word or words added changed the true meaning of the Scripture; sometimes it did not. There is no evidence that the translators were inspired men.

To properly understand the Scriptures, we must take into consideration who the writer is, and the writing surrounding the text, else we will put the wrong interpretation on it. To take a scripture out of context, would be giving it a private interpretation — and no scripture can be of private interpretation.

In this chapter the Apostle Paul calls our attention to the various gifts in the church, and their manner of expression. The gift of prophecy, giving of thanks, and speaking in an unknown tongue are mentioned, and the Apostle exhorts to an orderly expression of these gifts; and points out what would not be an orderly expression of the various gifts. In the expression, "And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets," he has reference to the orderly work of God in the manifestation of himself in the lives and walks of his chosen people.

The prophesy of Isaiah could not be in conflict with another prophesy; neither could the gospel of Peter be in conflict with the gospel preached by Paul. If so, God would be confused himself, since the gospel is preached in demonstration of God's own spirit; and is the power of God unto salvation unto all that believe. Therefore I must conclude that where there is a confusion of tongues, or other confusion, even among God's chosen people, God is not part of it, for He is not of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. God's work is perfect in every way, and every manifestation of his grace in the lives of his own people, is but a manifestation of himself. "All his works shall praise him, and his saints shall bless him."

To make the expression that God is not the author of confusion in any sense of the word, would certainly be contradictory to the word of God. Webster gives the meaning of the word **author** as the originator or producer of anything; and the word **confound** to mean to throw into confusion or disorder.

We read in the eleventh chapter of Genesis where the people decided to build a tower to reach heaven, to make themselves a name. In the seventh verse, we read where God said, "Go to, let us go down, and confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." God was certainly the author of their confusion.

In the seventh chapter of Second Kings, we read of four lepers at the gate of Samaria, starving; and they decided to go to the camp of the Syrians for help as a last resort, believing that if they stayed at the gate of the city they would starve, and if they went to the camp of the enemy they could only perish. "And they rose up in the twilight to go to the camp of the Syrians: and when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria, behold, no man there. For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us."

God was the author of their confusion, and he has been the author of confusion many times to the enemies of his people. God even sends strong delusions, that they may believe a lie. Throughout the Scriptures there is abundant proof that unbelievers have been confused by the God of heaven. Therefore He is the author of their confusion.

I hope I have made myself clear in these matters. All the attributes of God present him as the God of the whole earth, who doeth his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. In the realm of his grace, he is presented as the elector of his people in Christ before the world began: the one who calls, regenerates, justifies and glorifies these chosen ones in his Son; and he will some day bring them off more than conquerors through Him that loved them, and gave himself for them,

There is no confusion in this work, for, "Out of Zion the perfection of beauty, God hath shined."

God is not the author of confusion in the saving of his people and in the marks of grace in them, for such work is a part of God.

D. V. S.

EDITORIAL

I Timothy 3: 14, 15

"These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

In the **Signs** for December, 1948, our senior editor, (an associate at that time,) said the following: "We have had much published in the last few years on the doctrine of the church, and as a general rule our people seem to be agreed that all our salvation, both for time and eternity, is of the Lord. Would it not be alright for us to write some about the order of the house? Only true peace and fellowship can abound where churches are zealous of their order and discipline."

When I first visited among the Baptists of what is known as the Eastern Shore (that body of land in a peninsula, embracing parts of Virginia, Maryland and Delaware), I was there for a week. The first night, after supper, the Bible was brought and laid down at my elbow. As soon as the dishes were washed, everybody gathered in the living room. The purpose of that gathering was to talk about the better things. For at least two hours we engaged in a godly conversation pertaining to what Christ meant to a sinner. The next night it was the same thing. The crowd followed from house to house. Now, after nine years, they are doing the same thing. If there ever was an outward manifestation of breaking bread from house to house, it has been among these people.

For the most part, it has been delightful and refreshing. There has not been, as far as I know, a single time when there has been any unpleasantness about anything advanced. I do not recall any time when we spent the evening in talking about the absent members of the congregation. Too, the most of the discussions have had to do with what we are pleased to term doctrinal matters.

In these parts the churches are a unit in regard to the predestination of all things. Some of them have the belief of that doctrine as one tenet of their faith. I feel sure that all of the churches have subscribed to it as long as they have been a church, which for the most of them, has been more than a hundred years and even much longer in some cases. As far as history reveals, there has not been a single minister in any of these associations that held to a limited predestination.

Not too many weeks ago, after services we had gathered in a home. Our conversation was not on the earth. We had picked up the fragments from the sermon and we were enjoying them. Our theme was Jesus Christ and him crucified, and the planting of the churches, the feeding and watering of them, the delightful fragrance, and beautiful setting of this garden of the Lord, gave the whole room of people a glimpse of better things. A very dear member of the body said, "I have been confronted with a problem that has given me some deep concern. I have not known how to handle it, and I do not hear our people discuss things like that. Why is it that we do not do so?" Every eye turned to me. What could I say.

For many months I have been shaken by the question. Why is it that we do not talk about things that concern the people of God? We all do come face to face with things that we do not know what to make of them. We do not know what to do. It will often come up in our lives: What is the Bible way of doing this? What has been the policy of the Old School Baptists about a matter of this kind? Often we are confronted with a problem as to what is the right thing

to do. But I will have to say that things like unto that are not discussed much among us. These matters that grieve many of our people. I must confess that I am in amazement at the utter disregard of so many matters in behaviour in our ranks. I am not speaking so much about too much strong drink and other vices of the human race, but I am not excluding them from my examination. For the most part, I am speaking of those things that are a part of our existance as the church of Jesus Christ.

At the expense of being repetitious, let me once more call attention to something that we have nailed to our masthead. Have we forgotten it? Has it grown obsolete? Or have we changed toward it? If we have changed, we should ask why we have changed. If we have changed because we were wrong in the beginning, we should make a move at our next meeing to remove it from our masthead. If we have changed because of rebellion to the soundness of our early brethren, if we do not have the mind to do what they scripturally said for us to do, we should, to say the least of it, quit our boasting about how **sound** we are. The matter under consideration is this: At one time or another, practically all churches and associations, when constituted as such, adopted this article of faith, viz, "We believe that the Scriptures are the inspired word of God and the only rule of faith and practice." What does this statement mean? If our fathers meant for it to apply only to doctrine, why is it is an accepted fact that faith has to do with doctrine; likewise, practice has to do with the things that one is doing or practicing. Over the years I have heard the following statement, to wit, We do not care so much about what one is doing as we do about what they preach. This is a direct slap in the face of our predecessors. This is a direct slap in the face of our gracious Redeemer. Our brethren said when our church and association was constituted that they believed the scriptures were our only rule of faith and practice. If a man's faith (doctrine) has become more important than his practice (walk), then it follows that we do not subscribe to the belief of our founders. If a man's faith (doctrine) identifies him to his brethren, then it follows that the Saviour was wrong when he said that they were known by their fruits (practice).

In regard to our practice, I feel sure that some things that we do will not be found narrated in the Bible. There is a rule that will cover each one of these things. This rule will eliminate (as far as the scriptures go) some of the things that we do. Other things it will give us the right to continue doing them. The apostle tells us, "Let all things be **done decently and in** ord This command is in regard to the speaking in tongues. This practice is not forbidden, but it is permitted only as far as decency goes. There are other things that are not forbidden, but they are permitted only as far as decency goes. Do we have any examples of this? I think that we do. We keep a record of our business or conference meetings. We read about recorders under the law, but we do not find them in the church in the New Testament. We find a town clerk in the New Testament, but we do not find where the church had one. The general tenor of the laws of the New Testament church leads us to believe that those early churches looked after their members. Only by the keeping of records by someone appointed to that end could this be done. This is one place where decency comes in, and yet we do not have any other scriptural reason for having church clerks.

We do not have the word **pulpit** in the Bible. At times I have heard criticism because that some of us called the **stand** a pulpit. We have as much scriptural authority for saying **pulpit** as we do for saying the **stand.** There is not any reference to pulpit or rostrum or platform or **stand,** but decency tells us that it is better to have **something** higher than the surrounding congregation. This is what I call decency, and it is what I call order, and I think that such things are what the apostle had in mind.

Based upon this practice, I venture forth that the people of God have the right (God-given) to some things that are not specifically mentioned in the Bible. If not, we have several things which we practice, but which are not scripturally permitted, and these things we should quit.

We, as a people, have loved the old things. This is good and worthy of being practiced and emulated, **if they are old enough.** A thing being old is not enough. A thing that is wrong, even though it is greyheaded, does not make it right. Our practice should be, Not is it an old practice, but is it handed down from the right source. Have we, as did the ancient Jews (and even now), held to our traditions even though it has meant the breaking of the commandments of God (Mark 7:9)? These people denied a man the right to do something for his parents because it would transgress against their traditions, even though what he would do for his parents would be in keeping with God's commandment. Have we, as the professed followers of our Lord and Master done any of that? It takes grace to examine our position here; it takes more grace, when we have found ourselves guilty, to abandon our practice. In no sense of the word are we permitted to hold to traditions unless they are the things that have been taught by the apostle. (2 Thes. 2:15;-3:6) Let me further illustrate. We have many people near here who will not use a tractor in their field; that will not use a combine in harvesting their grain; that will not wear anything except the simple garments of yesteryear. But they do not go far enough. What they do use, what they eat and wear, **is not old enough.** Their tools, their utensils, their power, their dress is not apostolic. They all fall far short of what was used on the farm and other phases of natural life. Have we become so sold on the traditions that we are that way? Are many of the things which we are practicing, old enough to be practiced? Is our practice like the practice of the early church?

In the outset of this article I spoke of one that was troubled in mind about church matters. She had recently moved from one part of the country to another. She did not know what to do about moving her membership, as she had never heard too much about getting letter of dismission. What is the correct procedure in moving membership? In this, as in other things, we do not have anything from the apostles about church letters of dismission. Here is another example of doing things in decency and order.

Generally speaking, our people have frowned on granting letters for any reason except changing locations to where they could not reasonably be expected to attend the place of worship where they belonged. This is a good rule to follow. When a letter is granted, it has been the general custom for it to be used in a reasonable time, and it is granted only for admission into another church of the same faith and order. The church granting a letter has jurisdiction over it until it is placed in another church body. If it is not used in a reasonable time, it can be recalled. Authority over a letter ceases when it is placed in an orderly body. Regardless of what ill conduct the member may become guilty of, the former church does not have any authority over them. They may carry a grievance to the new church and present it, with their evidence, but any discipline remains in the hands of the church that has received the letter. They may, if it seems the right thing to do, rescind having received the letter, which would put it back in the hands of the first church.

Our people have had much confusion about ordaining elders. We do not have uniformity about the ordination services. Each section has its own pattern to follow, and in many places brethren do not know how to proceed. These matters have been published from time to time, and it does seem that we should try to do it correctly. Sometimes a mistake is made in the ordination because of the aged condition of the moderator. Other brethren, who are young and active, will go right on through the ordi-

nation service because (of all things!) the moderator is old and sensitive and they do not want to hurt his fellings. How much better it would be for one to be hurt, momentarily, than for the new elder to be hurt all of his ministerial life. None of us are fully and completely faithful (and only when blessed from above), but there isn't any practice or gift or work like unto it. For many years when unfaithfulness was found in a brother, it has been passed by with the light expression, "It was ordained of God for it to be that way". Will some qualified reader rise and tell me where that I will find any apostle excusing his unfaithfulness with an expression like that? For many years I have heard our boast that we do not believe in hiding behind predestination to cover our meanness. Is there **anything** that is equal to denying the faith, either in doctrine or practice? If it is condemnatory to deny the faith, why hide behind predestination when we are caught up with denying the faith? In connection with this, I have heard from many quarters that good deacons have been ruined by ordaining them to preach. Now that is the truth, but the most of the time when it has been said, there has been an addition to the written word (which, by the way, is our rule of faith and **practice**; or is it?) which was about like this; But there is nothing we can do about it because every one that is predestinated to be ordained will be ordained. Did you ever read where Paul said: Brethren, beware of false teachers, who will bring in damnable heresies. However, do not worry about it, because their coming is predestinated of God? For us to say things like unto that; for us to excuse our own conduct by laying it to predestination; for us to be lenient with false teaching, conduct, or for us to be slack in discipline because the trangressors sin was predestinated, is, to me, a denial of the faith instead of being sound in predestination.

There is seldom a year in the northeast that a church door is not closed never to be opened again. This closing of church houses; this languishing condition of Zion in general, is nearly always met with this argument: This is the purpose of God and nothing can be done about it. *Is there ever a time when we become guilty of wrong doing?* IS ANY ACT OF OURS EVER WRONG? If it was becoming in David; if his confession of his sin was Christ-like, would it not be better for us, as the professed people of God, to confess our wrongs? Since the prodigal son came home confessing his sin, is it wrong now to come confessing our sin? OR DO WE NOT HAVE ANY? Was the charge to the churches of Asia only for them? If so, perhaps we should also leave the balance of the book to them. Have none of us been guilty as they were? Has the need of repentance never been in our lives? If the command to repent or have the candlestick removed, was a true condition in that day, is it not likely that we are as much to be blamed as they were? If not, why? Wouldn't it be better to confess our sins, repent of our wrongs, than it would to say, There is nothing lost in disobedience; this removal of candlesticks is because of the purpose of God. Or do we have any sins? And if we do, is it more salving to our seared conscience to lay it all on predestination than it is to confess that we have sinned?

If I have departed from the scriptures in this treatise; if I have departed from the writings of the editors of the Signs in days past and gone; if I have departed for the admonitions of what has been regarded as the ablest Absolute predestinarians, I will willingly and gladly and unreservedly acknowledge my mistake and confess my sin. I have intended to handle the scriptures that Paul gave us about Christian conduct, as I intend from month to month at my

appointments, to handle his doctrinal letters — for the glory of God and the comfort of saints.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

(The following, which was copied from the Signs of February 15, 1858, is self explanitory. It is a clear presentation of conditions which had necessitated the division in 1832. We republish it so that the present generation may be acquainted with the faithfulness of our brethren of the 19th century — J. D. W.)

Warwick, N. Y., Feb. 4, 1858

To Mrs. H. M.— Dear Sister in Christ. Your letter of the 4th of January, addressed to the church of which you are a member, and with which you have been so long connected, requesting a letter of dismission and commendation from us, that you may join a church in the city where you dwell, was received, and I laid it before the church at our last regular church meeting. The church took the matter into consideration, and directed me to write you as to their decision, and to the reasons which governed it.

You are aware that for more than twenty years past, the churches composing the Warwick Association, with some others, North, South, East and West, have not been connected with, or had fellowship with the majority of the Baptist churches in the United States. But as your attention may not have been particularly directed to the reasons which induced them to dissolve their connection with those with whom they were formerly in fellowship, you will pardon me if I allude at some length, though briefly as I can, to the subject.

It is well known to you that the Baptist church from the days of the Apostles, has endeavored, amid much opposition and persecution, to maintain the doctrine and order of the gospel instituted by the divine oracles. Their determined adherence to these, and their open and decided opposition to the errors and innovations which had grown to an alarming height in other denominations, caused them to be persecuted for righteousness' sake, and as a consequence, mere worldly professors and nominal christians, were seldom found among them.

Of course the churches were generally small, and their doctrine and order unpopular, both with the professedly and unprofessedly religious world. But they enjoyed in an eminent degree the smiles of their Heavenly Master, and brotherly love and christian fellowship prevailed amongst them. But the time came when one, even of their own number, arose, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after him; and who so far succeeded, as to rend asunder many churches in England, and soon his sentiments found their way across the Atlantic. I allude to Andrew Fuller.

It would swell this letter beyond all proper limits to give at length the doctrines, which, alas! he was too successful in introducing among the Baptists. But, perhaps the most important principle was that which related to the atonement of Christ, and which Mr. Fuller represented as general, or indefinite, and that there was "such a fulness in the satisfaction of Christ, as is sufficient for the salvation of the whole world, if the whole world would believe in him." This sentiment was in direct opposition to the doctrine of particular redemption which had been maintained by the Baptist churches; and the bold and startling dogma that the atonement was sufficient for the salvation of all the human family, if they all would repent and believe the gospel, alarmed many of the brethren and filled their hearts with grief.

I remember hearing the late venerable Deacon James Burt relate the sensation produced when these sentiments were first proclaimed in the Warwick Association. The Association was held with the church at Pleasant Valley, in Dutchess Co., N. Y., and the Moderator was Elder Lebbeus Lathrop, whose memory you and I have been taught from our earliest years to revere. The last sermon was preached by a man from the city of New

York, who I believe came from England, and who was fully indoctrinated in the principles of Fuller's gospel. He spoke with all the eloquence and ability of which he was master, presenting the doctrines which he advocated in the most glowing colors, and drew a very fascinating picture of the happy result which would follow the reception of these principles and doctrines by the Baptist churches in America; that it would raise them from being "mere dunghills in society," and place them in the front rank of the popular religious denominations, and closed his discourse by earnestly exhorting his audience to activity and zeal, in promulgating these sentiments.

It was the custom then for the Moderator to give a closing address. The venerable man arose, and while the tears ran down his furrowed cheeks, he raised his hands and eyes towards heaven, and the first words he uttered were: "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." And then, said my aged informant, followed such an address as he had never heard from human lips. He exposed in a most masterly convincing manner the fallacy of the sentiments which had been presented before them. He showed how contrary and repugnant they were to the doctrine of the gospel; how dishonoring to God, and derogatory to the character of the Redeemer. In the most impressive manner he warned the churches against their reception, and as if gifted with the spirit of prophecy, predicted the evils which would inevitably arise from the introduction of these doctrines into the Baptist churches; that the churches would be divided—dissensions prevail among them—fellowship would be destroyed—affection alienated—brotherly love turned into hatred, and the union, harmony, and prosperity of the churches changed into disorder, divisions and anarchy.

Alas! his predictions have been but too fully verified. But God raised up some noble champions for the truth, who resisted for years the introduction of these false doctrines, and endeavored to stem the torrent of error, by unfolding the glorious standard of divine truth, until, finding that the churches could never enjoy peace, while the disciples of Fuller were suffered to come amongst them, they withdrew from them, and openly proclaimed their determination no longer to extend fellowship to any church or minister, who held or preached such sentiments. Their enemies as openly expressed their contempt for this movement, and held them up to derision by charging them with being behind the spirit of the age, and as being opposed to the spread of the gospel, and to all those charitable and benevolent institutions which they asserted were soon to dispel the mists of darkness—relieve humanity from its evils—christianize the world, and introduce the millenium. Those who determined to maintain the doctrine and order of the gospel, were stigmatized as belonging to the Old School, whose doctrine had become obsolete, and who would themselves, at no distant day, become extinct.

Hence the name Old School Baptists, given as a term of reproach, was assumed by them, and having obtained help from God they continue to this present time. It may be urged by some, and perhaps you may think, my dear sister, that these things happened a long time ago, and that they were engendered mainly, or much magnified, by personal feelings and jealousies, and that it is time the mantle of charity was thrown over them, and we should once more live and walk together as brethren. But we should remember that "charity rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;" and an inspired apostle solemnly said, that if "we or any other man, or even an angel from heaven preach any other gospel, let him be accursed." I will give you an extract from a sermon preached by Aaron Perkens, once a minister of this association, and who was, at the time it was preached, pastor of the 1st Baptist church at Hamilton, N. Y., and I believe President of Hamilton College, where they trained pious young men for the ministry, to preach Fuller's gospel amongst the Bap-

tist churches. He was preaching against the doctrine of universal salvation, and said, "Here, however, the advocates of universal salvation have stepped a little too far, because admitting their premises to be correct, which we are willing to grant, suppose the provisions sufficiently ample to save the whole human family, the conclusion does not necessarily follow that all will be saved. There are terms or conditions proposed, a compliance with which is an essential to our salvation, as were the sufferings of him who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot unto God. Hence, notwithstanding he has died, we must kiss the Son or perish, his death on the cross not being sufficient to save us, if we will not comply to the terms proposed." How does the language in the above extract agree with the following, from Paul's Epistle to Titus? "But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we had done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Savior."

Permit me here to include an extract from the Articles of Faith adopted by the Warwick Association, at its organization in 1791, and re-printed in the minutes of the Association held at Brookfield, June 13, 1818, when Elder Lebbens Lathrop was moderator and Aaron Perkins, Clerk: "God from all eternity did decree, for the manifestation of his own glory, some men, not all, to everlasting life; gave a people to be the seed of Christ, and to be by him in time redeemed, called, justified, and finally glorified; their number so certain and definite, that it cannot be increased or diminished, wherefore, they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called by his spirit, working in due season, are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by his power through faith, unto salvation. Neither are any others redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, santified and saved, but the elect only."

"To all those for whom Christ hath obtained redemption by his blood, he doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same; effectually persuading them by his Spirit, governing their hearts, and overcoming all their enemies by his Almighty power. God justifies not by infusing righteousness—not for anything wrought in them; but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ to them. Christ, by his obedience and death, fully discharges the debt of all men who are justified, and did by the sacrifice of himself, undergoing in their stead the penalty due unto them—make proper, real and full satisfaction to God's justice in their behalf."

Now, my dear sister, if Aaron Perkins believed the great and glorious truths contained in this extract from the Articles of Faith adopted by our fathers, when the churches entered into an Association in 1791, to which his name is subscribed when re-printed in 1818, must he not have utterly changed his views at the time he preached his sermon at Hamilton, in 1837, and can you not by this, determine who have left the ancient landmarks, the New or Old School Baptists? And if you have ever believed the glorious truths of the everlasting gospel (as I hope you have), that gospel which presents Christ to the believer, as his Mediator, effectually interceding for his people;—their Advocate, thoroughly and always successfully pleading their cause;—their Great High Priest, who is ever touched with the feeling of their infirmities; their Redeemer who has redeemed their souls from all iniquity, and them, unto God by his own blood; their Savior, who has saved them with an everlasting salvation; can you now leave the fellowship of those who endeavor to maintain the standard of truth, and become connected with those, who would rend the crown from the head of our blessed Jesus, and place it upon their own unworthy brows, and ascribe their salvation to the performance of certain conditions, without which, the sufferings and death of the

Prince of Glory would have been altogether ineffectual. I cannot for one moment harbor the thought, but must conclude, that the adversary, taking advantage of your lonely and isolated condition, has presented this temptation to you.

There are one or two points in your letter, to which I wish briefly to allude. You say: "I think if I should unite with a church here, I would enjoy myself better." I have tried to show the difference in doctrine, and order which exists between the church of which you are now a member, and that which you must become connected with in the city where you reside; for I know that none exist there who maintain the same faith with us. Believing as I do that you are a child of God, I would ask you how you can reasonably expect to enjoy yourself in the mystical Babylon, You are aware that the term Babel signifies confusion.

Now the church of Christ has **"one Lord, one** faith, **one** baptism," and but **one** Savior. But Babylon has many of each, a few of which I will particularize. But first a few thoughts respecting the Church of God, "the Bride, the Lamb's Wife." The Psalmist in describing her, uses this language, "The King's daughter is all glorious within, her raiment is of wrought gold." And in the "Song," it is said, "My dove, my undefiled is but **one;** she is the **choice one** of her that bore her," &c. The church is described as a woman, but always in the singular number; always as but **one.** But John, in describing Mystical Babylon, in the 17th of Revelations says, "And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON, THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." This is the mother of every false church, which ever has, or ever will exist on earth. She is the mother of all the abominations which have ever been practised in the name of religion; and she is described as sitting upon waters, which are "peoples and mulitudes, and nations and tongues; and these have many methods of salvation, or in other words, many saviors." One will attribute his salvation to a Sunday School, and will say, "That had it not been for his early religious training in such a school, he would never have had his attention turned to the subject, and consequently never would have 'got religion,' and must have been eternally miserable." Another will say, "That a bible given him by the Bible Society, was the **means** of first turning his attention to religion, and he **'got'** it, and he ascribes his salvation to the Bible Society." Another says, "That he had become intemperate, and was fast going down to everlasting woe, but the agents of a Temperance Society picked him up in the streets, and reformed him, and persuaded him to 'get religion,' which he did, and his salvation is owing to the Temperance Society." Another says, "He was brought up a heathen, and a worshipper of idols, but a Missionary sent by the Missionary Society warned him to flee from the wrath to come; and he embraced religion, and the Society is entitled to the credit of his salvation."

Now, my sister, do not charge that this picture is over-drawn. Every religious newspaper belongs to this system of religion, and almost every secular paper also, with a large majority of the books, used in our schools, and all that treat upon the subject of religion, are filled with such methods of salvation, and every minister connected with that church, will tell you, that the object of his preaching is to convert and save souls. As to feeding the sheep and lambs of the redeemer's flock, it is a business which they know nothing about; and a believer can no more feed upon his preaching, than the poor prodigal could fill his belly with the husks which the swine did eat.

There is one more reason why you could not enjoy yourself in a church belonging to Mystical Babylon; and I must again quote the Revelator, who is calling upon heaven and the holy apostles and prophets, to rejoice in her destruction, declares, "And the light of a candle shall **shine** no more in thee at all, and the voice of the **bridegroom,** and of the **bride,** shall be heard no more at all

in thee." No, none of those candles, which the Lord lighteth and place upon a candlestick, that they may give light to all which are **in the house,** shall shine there, nor is the voice of the Heavenly Bridegroom heard in her midst, addressing words of love and affection, to his lovely bride; nor is her accents, in response to his terms of endearment, ever heard there; but if any of the members of his body are ever seduced from their allegiance to their King, and find their way there, their harps are soon hung upon the willow, for how can they sing the songs of Zion in a strange land; and to them is the language of their Lord addressed, saying, "Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

You say further, that you like the preaching of Mr. H. I do not know but that he may be a man whose virtues and moral principles may be worthy of the highest admiration, and also that he may be a learned and eloquent man, and full of zeal in the cause in which he is engaged. But does he preach, or testify, the gospel of the grace of God? Does he present Jesus, as the Savior of his people? As the head over all things, to the church, which is his body, and the fulness of him that fills all in all? If he does not, then he is not a minister of Christ. If he knows anything among men, save Jesus Christ and him crucified, as the **means** or **instrumentalities** of **saving souls,** then in the language of the great Apostles to the Gentiles, "Let him be accused." And though he may prophecy or preach, in the name of Christ, and though in his name may cast out devils, or convert men, and make them believe he saves them, and in the name of Christ, does many wonderful works, yet hear what our Lord says of such, "Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you." He never knows such as his redeemed, as those whom he represented, when by one offering he forever perfected all them who are sanctified.

You will already have anticipated, that this church cannot give you a letter to join a professed Baptist Church, whose faith and order is so different from ours. We could with just the same consistency and propriety, give you a letter of recommendation to join the Roman Catholic church, for we have as much fellowship with the one as the other. But I must draw my long, and it may be unprofitable, letter to a close. I would not have dwelt so long upon the subject, but I thought you might think that we had acted in a harsh and unfeeling manner, in not complying with your request; and I know that others would charge us as bigoted, and uncharitable. But I can assure you, that we feel deeply for you, and other dear brethren and sisters, who are separated far from their brethren, and from the churches of which they are members. While I know that I have presented the subject for your consideration, in a feeble and imperfect light—and the arguments I have used may not appear convincing to your mind, let me earnestly entreat you, to examine carefully the instructions given by our Lord and his Apostles, as applicable to your case, They are plain, and easily understood by the believer and while we cannot give you a letter of recommendation as you have requested, we can, and do, "commend you to God, and the word of grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

That our covenant God will ever keep, and sustain you, is the prayer of your brethren and sisters, of the Warwick Baptist Church. By

W. L. Benedict, Church Clerk

OBITUARIES

WYATT J. OAKES

At the request of Banister Springs Church I will try to write an obituary notice of Brother W. J. Oakes' passing. He was one of the faithful members of our order — a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace.

A native of Pittsylvania County, Virginia, he was born December 9, 1897, the son of Elder Nacy Thomas Oakes and Nora Jones Oakes. On February 20, 1918, he was married to Miss Cecil Evans. He was a member of Banister Springs Church, having joined September 24, 1921. He was a deacon and clerk of the church; and was Clerk of the Staunton River Association and Union Meetings for many years. He was engaged in farming before retiring ten years ago.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by two sons and two daughters: Wyatt (Jimmie) and Aubrey A. Oakes, of Danville, Va.; Mrs. Bernice Oakes Motley, Blairs, Va.; and Mrs. Juanita Oakes Dawson, of Morehead, Ky.; and by one sister, Mrs. Pansy Oakes Bishop, Roanoke, Va., and eleven grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

The funeral services were conducted from Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Home by Elder Raymond Payne and Elder David Spangler, with interment in Highland Burial Park.

May the Lord reconcile the family to His will, and enable all to say, Thy will be done.

Raymond S. Payne

DOW WINDSOR BAILEY

Brother Bailey was born February 3, 1894. He had been in poor health for some time having suffered a broken hip, and departed this life on May 6, 1968. He was the son of the late Marcillus and Annie Jones Bailey. Brother Bailey was a veteran of World War I and served in the army in France.

Brother Bailey was married on June 28, 1919, to Mamie Majors, who survives. To this union were born three children, two of which survive, Mrs. Elizabeth Glasgow of Mardela, Md., and Major Bailey of Hebron, Md. There are also three grandchildren who survive and one brother Herman Bailey of Salisbury, Md.

Brother Bailey was a member of the Rewastico Old School Baptist Church and was baptized on May 15, 1955, by the late Elder Harold M. Bennett. He was appointed deacon and attended the meetings as long as his health would permit. We feel, even though we miss our beloved brother very much, that he had spent his appointed time here on these mortal shores and God was pleased to take him away from the many trials of this life. May it please the Lord to reconcile the family and all who knew him so well to his passing, and to feel that their loss is his eternal gain, is the prayer of the writer.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer on May 9, 1968, in the Holloway Funeral Home in Salisbury, Md. and his body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Mardela, Md.

Arthur R. Warren

EDGAR HAMILTON

Edgar Hamilton, age 48, was found dead in bed at his home in Benton, Ky., Sunday morning June 30, 1968.

His father was the late G. L. Hamilton, a deacon of the Soldier Creek Old School Baptist Church near Benton, Ky., and his mother is a member of said church. Edgar never united with the church he loved so well, but often confessed his desire to do so, while feeling very deeply his unworthiness. He was a great defender of the truth as it is in Jesus: salvation by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, but the gift of God: and that God chose his people in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and that they were and are made accepted in the Beloved according to God's own will and predestination.

His funeral was preached by Elders J. N. Darnell and Paul Poyner, both speaking of the hope of sinners, and why sinners believe in Jesus the Son.

Besides his mother he leaves his wife, a small son, and two daughters to mourn his sudden departure. Also a brother and his brother's family. Many church friends will miss him greatly. He helped us in many ways no one knew about.

Written by request of his wife and his mother, by his friend and a sister I hope,

Effie Bowden

SISTER PATTIE NORVILLE

Sister Pattie Mae Fulford Norville, was born in Pitt County, North Carolina, January 12, 1895. She was married to Robert C. Norville January 10, 1910, and from this union she is survived by three daughters: Mrs. Verie Mae Pike, of Stanstonburg, N. C.; Mrs. Edith G. Jernigan, Stanstonburg, N. C.; and Mrs. Gladys Owens, Snow Hill, N. C.; and one son, Mr. Robert L. Norville, a Free Will Baptist minister of Greenville, N. C. She also leaves to mourn her passing, 8 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren.

She came before Tyson's Primitive Baptist Church and asked for a spiritual home in March 1933, and lived with them a faithful

member until called by her Heavenly Father out of this time world. Sister Pattie was a quiet, industrious, and God fearing sister, who loved her family, her neighbors, and her brethren, and was often heard expressing her thanksgiving to her Wonderful Master for her well being, and especially for Brother and Sister Joab Tyson, her deacon, and his wonderful wife who were so attentive to her in so many ways, and provided her the means to attend her church meetings when she felt well enough to come. Her family, her brethren, and her friends, were good to her, and she did not lack for anything that humanity could give her, but all together could not hold her when God's time for her arrived.

Sister Pattie emphatically believed the doctrine of Electing Grace, and was delighted to discuss her Wonderful Saviour with her brethren and friends in the church. She was a good mother, a good neighbor, a precious wife, and a faithful member of Tyson's church, and was always present at her meetings, unless providentially hindered. We at Tyson's Church will greatly miss our sister, but we would not ask for her return to the sufferings of this world, for we, by grace are given a living hope, and sweet assurance that our loss is her eternal gain.

Sister Pattie was laid to rest beside her husband in the cemetery in Stanstonburg, N. C., to await the wonderful day of the resurrection of the dead, the arrival of her blessed Saviour. We hear by faith Isaiah as he writes the language of the Lord, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body, shall they arise," there to meet the Saviour of sinners, as He exercises His eternal victory over death, hell and the grave, and carries his precious children home: there to be united with the precious children of God, where there will be no suffering, sorrow, disappointments, or pain, but all but love is done away. In that wonderful kingdom, we believe in precious hope that Sister Pattie will be enjoined unto "That number that no man can number," that shall forever praise the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in that world that shall never end.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, A. P. Mewborn, assisted by Mr. Max Patterson.

Written by order of Tyson's Primitive Baptist Church, and at the request of her family, by two who loved her,

J. B. Tyson
A. P. Mewborn

BROTHER WILLIE TOSH

By request, I attempt in sadness to write in memory of our beloved Brother Willie B. Tosh, born September 8, 1895, and died June 10, 1968. Brother Tosh joined Springfield Church, Gretna, Va., August 12, 1962. He was faithful to the church and filled his place as long as he was able. He enjoyed the brethren coming in his home and talking of the goodness of our Lord. Brother Willie was a firm believer in Salvation by the Grace of God. We know we shall miss him though we feel our loss is his eternal gain. Springfield Church bows in humble submission to the Just and Holy will of our Lord, knowing that He doeth all things well.

Brother Tosh is survived by his wife, Sister Annie Tosh; one foster daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Jones of Cleveland, Ohio; two sisters, Mrs. Ruby Yeatts of Gretna, Va. and Mrs. Annie Owen of Chatham, Va.

His funeral was held at Springfield Church by his pastor Elder O. K. Tench and his body laid away beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Highland Burial Park, Danville, Va., to await the second coming of our Lord.

L. R. Willis

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Inasmuch as it has pleased our almighty God to remove by death our dear Sister Lillian Walters, we desire to write this respect.

Sister Walters was born February 4, 1881, and died June 6, 1968, making her stay on earth 87 years. She was blessed to live among the Primitive Baptists for many years. To know her was to love her. She brought her name to our Church from Conetoe Church in 1962. Due to her affliction she was not able to attend our Church often, but she came whenever she was able.

We, the Church at Tarboro, N. C., Resolve therefore, That our loss is her eternal gain. Also, we send our sympathy to her family and trust they will be led in the paths of righteousness.

We also desire to have 4 copies of this respect made: for the Church Record; for the *Landmark*; for the *Signs of the Times*; and for the family of Sister Walters.

This done in order at our July meeting 1968.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

We, the members of Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church, bow in submission to the will of God, in the passing of our dear Sister Nora Roberson.

In our hearts we feel sad, at her passing, but in our minds we feel that her suffering is over, and she is at rest with our Saviour.

Sister Roberson came to our Church by letter from Conetoe Church in April, 1962, and she was blessed to be loved by all. She attended our church as often as she could. To know Sister Roberson was to love her, and she too seemed to love everyone. She was a great believer in "Salvation by Grace." She loved to talk about the great things the Lord had blessed her with. She was blessed with a family who was very devoted to her, and she was so thankful to have them.

We Resolve, That three copies of this respect be made: to be put in the Church record; to be sent to the family; and to be published in the *Signs of the Times*.

We send our sympathy to her family and trust that our loss is her eternal gain. We trust that they too will follow her path of life as we feel it was a good one.

This done by order at our August meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT
BROTHER BERNICE TART

We, the Liberty Church, bow in humble submission to the Holy calling of our Heavenly Father from our midst, Brother William Bernice Tart, who stood firm for the doctrine and faith of salvation by grace.

Brother Tart was born in Harnett County, N. C., March 22, 1896, and departed this life April 30, 1968 at the age of 72 years, 1 month, and 8 days. He was the son of the late Thomas Tart and Sister Phoebe McLamb Tart. Brother Tart was married to Mallie Hodges Tart December 3, 1916. To this union were born fifteen children. Three died in infancy. His survivors are: his wife, five daughters: Alice Mae Barefoot, Callie Gertrude Lee, Mallie Irene Penny, Phoebe Ellen Haney of Rt. 2, Dunn, N. C. and Spicey Hortense Barefoot, Rt. 2, Benson, N. C.; seven sons: Jasper B., James E., William Ernest, Junius Monroe, David Duncan, Richard Thomas Tart of Rt. 2, Dunn, N. C., and Marvin D. Tart of Benson, N. C.; seventeen grandchildren, and one great grandchild.

Brother Tart was united with Liberty Primitive Baptist Church in January, 1958, while he was in the Veterans' Hospital, Fayetteville, N. C. and was baptized there in a bath tub by his Pastor, Elder Lester E. Lee. He was a faithful member of the church and attended the meetings regularly until a short time before his death. Brother Tart was a retired farmer and a good neighbor, always ready to lend a helping hand.

His funeral was held at Liberty Church by his Pastor, Elder Lester E. Lee and his grandson, Leon Tart. His body was laid to rest in Isham McLamb Cemetery, Johnston County, N. C., to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who will call his sleeping body to arise together with all the redeemed family of God, to be made like Him and to see Him and be satisfied forever.

We say to the family and the host of friends, weep not as those who have no hope.

A Committee was appointed in conference June 1, 1968, by Liberty Church.

RESOLVED, That we send the family a copy of these resolutions. Also, that we enter a copy on our Church records, and send a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Committee:
Brother James G. Young
Sister Katie Barefoot
Sister Lovie Young

MEMORIAL
ELLEN VIOLA BUSH

Bethel Primitive Baptist Church of Union County, Arkansas, orders the recording of the following:

Ellen Viola Bush was born September 22, 1888 and died February 18, 1968. She was the daughter of John and Lida Davis Murphy of Norphlet, Ark. and the widow of the late Bill Bush. She left to mourn her passing, one daughter, Lida Mae Dungan; three sisters: Mary Byrd, Blanch Freemen, and Barbara Cezeaux; three brothers: Lynn, Johnny, and Jimmy Murphy; six grandchildren and nine great grandchildren. She was a life-long resident of Norphlet, Arkansas, and a member of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church for many decades.

The Lord blessed Sister Ellen with a great degree of physical vitality, deep convictions, and an abiding faith. Hannah's Song of Thanksgiving as recorded in 1st Samuel, 2nd chapter, describes her belief in the sovereign God better than any of us could do.

Her pastor read and commented upon the first nine verses of this chapter in defining her faith at the funeral. Her body was buried in Bethel Cemetery in the presence of many relatives, brethren, and friends.

Bethel Church expresses thanks to God for her long life of nearly 80 years. Bethel thanks God for her fellowship. We express sympathy to the bereaved and pray that we may be submissive to the will of God. Copies of this Memorial shall be given the family and *Signs* for publication.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Pastor

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 136 DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1968 NO. 12

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12/68
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"THE FIERY DARTS OF THE WICKED"
(Jno. 8:44; Eph. 6:16; Jude 6)

In a dream of the night, I saw,
Perched on a huge machine,
A number of fiends incarnate
Armed with arrows so keen.

They began casting them at me,
But it was all in vain,
For not a single one hit me
To cause my body pain.

The arrows were darting by me,
But somehow I didn't fear;
I told my foes they couldn't touch me,
Although they came so near.

They figured the fiery darts of Satan,
Who is called the evil one;
They are temptations of the devil,
The tempter of God's Son.

His angels are reserved in chains,
"Which kept not their first estate,"
To be cast into hell with him,
Who's also an apostate.

After judgment, they'll not annoy
The children of the King,
Who will judge the quick and the dead,
And his own to heav'n bring.

There the saints will dwell for ever
With the Ancient of days;
They will be gathered from all nations
To ever sing his praise.

'Tis the utmost they could desire,
As pilgrims here on earth;
All glory to the King of Kings,
Who gave them a new birth.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, North Carolina

BLESSED TO FEED
UPON THE CRUMBS

308 Wyandotte
Shreveport, Louisiana
September 4, 1968

Dear Remona,
(Sister W. W. Hudson)

Since I've returned from vacation, it seems that I've had a desire to write many of the dear ones of like precious faith, describing the wonderful trip we were blessed to take, desiring to "praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men." Even though I've had the desire to write, I find that words fail me and I cannot pen my thoughts and express my feelings as I desire to do.

I have tried several times to express to different ones just what our visit among our precious people in North Carolina and Virginia meant to me. I had felt so cold and had indeed been traveling in a dark valley. If not deceived, I was brought up out of the valley and was blessed to bask in the sunshine of God's love and was given to feast upon the crumbs from the Master's table as Eld. King was blessed to bring forth such a sweet message to my poor soul. He preached from II Cor. 4: 5 9, and it was as though he knew my experience and was preaching directly to me. I felt there was a melting of my hard heart and indeed a feeling of warmth instead of the coldness.

As I've stated so many times when I trust I've been given to feed upon the crumbs that our precious Elders are blessed to bring forth to the flock, I wished I could retain what I was given to hear. I trust that I realize that what we consume today, naturally speaking, will not suffice for tomorrow; likewise, what we consume spiritually will not

suffice for tomorrow either. If one were always filled there would be no hungering, and without hunger, could there be any feasting? So it is with the night and day of one's experience. If one never experienced darkness, would there be any knowledge of light? The mountain tops exist but must be reached solely by way of the valleys. How could there be any knowledge of the mountain tops if one had never been in the valley? These are indeed comforting thoughts to me at times.

Were there not ups and downs in David's experience? In one instance we hear him, "How long wilt Thou forget me, O Lord? For ever? how long wilt thou hide Thy face from me?" Another place we read "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?" Then we read of another of his experiences. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me;" And again, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"

If I wrote a book I still would be unable to completely express the joy and comfort I received from the many discourses that I was given to hear from the many elders at the two Associations. Also the love and fellowship shown us by all the dear ones. So unworthy I am of any of these wonderful blessings, but I trust I'm truly thankful for without these life would be so empty.

In my experience, the more I go to church the greater is the desire to go. I have a desire to get away from this everyday life and worldly affairs and go to church, I trust to worship my God, praising Him from whom all blessings flow. As I tried to tell Bro. John Lee Smith Sunday that it was so wonderful to be granted to forget the cares of this world for a few moments of time and to hear the declaration of that One who is mighty to save. He was wonderfully blessed both Saturday and Sunday preaching Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life showing forth the dual character of Jesus Christ, verily God and verily man. How that he was made flesh, and although sinless, the flesh was weak and must needs be in order to be the sacrifice for the sins of the chosen ones. He quoted several scriptures, but the one that I recall at the moment which showed the fleshly weakness if "O my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me:" Yet, in the next statement, the Godhead is manifested "nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." This was a beautiful sermon to me but, of course, I cannot attempt to even come close to expressing what Bro. John Lee was blessed to bring to us but trust I'm truly thankful to be given a hearing ear and understanding heart. I also heard Bro. Lambert 3rd Sunday, and if not deceived he was greatly blessed to preach the resurrection, and it was so sweet to me. I've heard many good sermons concerning the resurrection and one of the best to me was Bro. John Lee Smith's at our Association last year. But each time I seem to get more and more from the sermons as I trust I did from Bro. Lambert's.

Brother Woodrow, I surely enjoyed the article by J. C. Philpot that you sent to the **Signs.** In fact, I have read it several times and if I know my heart, I desire to live in peace with my Brethren and Sisters, showing forbearance and forgiveness for I indeed desire their forbearance to me and forgiveness of my many faults. The love and fellowship means so much. May we all be given to look unto that great, wonderful and mighty physican who never loses a patient.

With love,
Mary Davis

ENJOYED PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

Princeton, W. Va.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I am so thankful I was able to atteud the Pigg River Association. It is, and was, a Bethel spot to me. It was the

first time I had had an opportunity to attend since Elder Priddy's passing.

Your sermon on Sunday touched me deeply. It was edifying, and especially when you said that some times you are happy that you can weep for joy: that it is a great blessing to be able to weep for joy.

I love the **Signs of the Times.** The older I grow the more precious its truths are to me. I especially love the editorials Elder Beebe and all those old soldiers wrote. And you dear present editors are standing for and setting forth the same doctrine. May the Lord continue to enable you to persevere. I want to be recognized with those who love and believe the doctrine the Signs sets forth.

Hope you can sometimes in your petitions be given to think of unworthy me. Give my love to Sister Spangler. A way-worn traveler

In hope of continued mercy,
Mrs. S. J. Priddy

"HE GOETH BEFORE"

This morning I was down, — this morning I was in the depths, walled in on every side, with not even a ray of light from above: a most miserable state!

Desperately I tried to seek the Lord, but felt no response. I longed for relief, even death; but in the same moment I realized that death without the felt presence of the Lord would be a most horrible experience.

Satan taunted me — asked me where was the Saviour I professed to love; did I really love him; did He or had He ever loved me; was my knowledge of Him of the heart, or was it simply of the head, derived from my study of the Scriptures? Very, very stinging questions!

Suddenly, while in this deplorable state, the words, "He goeth before," were presented to me with great impression, fastening themselves on my mind and, yes, on my heart also, for in that hour I was blest with sweet meditation as I feasted upon my "honey out of the rock" — Christ the Rock, the honey the sweet assurance that He was mine, and I was his. In that hour I drank deeply of Marah's waters sweetened by the tree cast in, the cross on which my dear Redeemer drank the bitter cup — the cup of salvation —FOR ME!

At length, believing the words, "He goeth before," to be Scripture, but not knowing where to find them, I started to search for them. I did not find them exactly, but did find in Deuteronomy 1: 30 where Moses said to Israel as they journeyed, "The Lord your God, which goeth before you, he shall fight for you . . ." This verse brought to my mind a series of Biblical events as I meditated; and to my great delight I was blest to see that whatever the state, condition or experience of each of the Lord's little flock "He goeth before," for He is our shepherd. In all the wanderings of Israel, the ark of the covenant of their God, typifying Christ, went before them, sometimes by fire, sometimes by cloud. When they went to battle with the giant Goliath, the Lord went before them in the person of young David, who, refusing the protection of the king's armour, took his staff and five smooth stones and faced the monster in the name of the Lord of Hosts. He slew the giant with ease, not in his own might, but because the battle was the Lord's: The Lord has never lost a battle!

Again, Israel, fleeing from Egyptian bondage, confronted by the Red Sea ahead, walled in on both sides by towering mountains, the Egyptians pursuing them, saw no way of escape. But, behold! the Lord went before, parting the waters so that Israel crossed dryshod.

Abraham, bidden by God to sacrifice his darling son, his only son Isaac, faltered not, knowing that "God goeth before," and when they arrived at the place of sacrifice there was the sacrifice already provided.

Ananias, when bidden to seek out Paul who had started out to bind the saints, was afraid; but the Lord had gone before and assured Ananias that Paul was a chosen vessel unto Him, to bear His name before the Gentiles; and

Ananias greeted him as "Brother Saul."

These are only a few of the many, many instances in the Scriptures where the Lord went before his people: and we are made to rejoice as we are blest to lay hold on these wonderful providences of our God, and to see that in every experience of life, every trial, each moment of every day "He goeth before".

This morning I was tempted by Satan. Our blessed Lord was tempted too! He endured every temptation to which even the least of His people will ever be subjected. On the cross he was taunted and mocked, and challenged that if He were the Son of God, to come down from that cross. Dear brethren, do we often feel alone, forsaken by our God and those we love? **He goeth before!**

Yes, Christ was of necessity forsaken by His Father as in agony he bore our sins on the awful and glorious cross. Are we often unable to draw comfort from the Scriptures? **He goeth before,** delivering to our ministers exactly the very words we need. Are we sorrowing because we have lately seen the grave close over the form we once loved? **He goeth before!** He was troubled, groaned in spirit, and wept at the grave of Lazarus. Have we been deeply wounded in our heart by the neglect, unconcerned or unkind words of our family or brethren? **He goeth before!**

Peter, his disciple, denied Him, cursing and declaring he did not know him. All his disciples slept on peacefully while He who loved them agonized in Gethsemane. Are we poor, deprived of many comforts and conveniences of this life? Our blessed Lord walked that road, — He had not where to lay his dear head. Are we sick, afflicted, facing the infirmities of old age, afraid of what the future may hold for us? Let us not fear, — **He goeth before,** for He holds the future! Do we shrink at the thought of death and the grave? **He went before!** He partook of death and lay in the grave; and in His strength and in the power of his resurrection, we can exclaim victoriously with our brother, the Apostle Paul, "Oh death, where is thy sting? Oh grave, where is thy victory?"

I have written just a few of my meditations through which I was lifted from the depths to the heights this morning; and I know of no better way to close than with these comforting lines:

"Fear not, little flock, He goeth ahead,
Your Shepherd selecteth the path you must tread:
The waters of Marah, He'll sweeten for thee;
He drank all the bitter in Gethsemane."

Mildred V. Dykes,
1114 Mt. Hermon Road
Salisbury, Maryland

ELDER H. M. CURRY'S PERSONALITY OF MAN

The question, "What is man?" is the stumbling-stone in all systems of human philosophy, and is no nearer answered to-day than in the days of the psalmist, who recorded it upon the pages of inspiration. Notwithstanding the many volumes that have been written by all the different schools of philosophy, man still remains

"Chaos of thought, and passion all confused,
Still by himself abused or disabused;
Sole judge of earth in endless ruin hurled,
The glory, jest and riddle of the world."

The origin of man, his nature and destiny, are problems which have engaged the human mind for centuries, and which still remain as unsettled, so far as philosophy is concerned, as in the beginning. Two leading schools of philosophy have been and are still engaged in the discussion, one denying man's personality and the other affirming it. Many profound thinkers have written extensively upon both sides of the question, each working out his own preconceived notions along his favorite line of thought, and finally arriving at that conclusion which best satisfies his own position upon religious and scientific questions. It is astonishing to what extent prejudice, tradition and legend shape men's politics, religion and philosophy.

"We are the same that our fathers have been,
We see the same things that our fathers have seen,
We drink the same stream and view the same sun,
And run the same race that our fathers have run."

The personality of man is the battle-ground between skepticism and modern christianity. The philosopher whose religious tastes, temperament and predilections lead him to deny nominal christianity and embrace materialism, deism or atheism, shapes his philosophy accordingly, and endeavors to prove that man is not a personality, because if this one point be established his victory is gained, so far as philosophy is concerned; while upon the other hand, he who is led either by tradition, persuasion or legend to embrace nominal christianity, engages to prove that man **is** a personality, because the nature and capabilities of man form the foundation of all modern religious theories. In order that the prevalent theory of conditional destiny may have some face to it, some foundation for reasonableness or plausibility, certain qualifications must be ascribed to man to constitute him a personality, capable of accepting, applying and carrying into effect the provisions which men assume that God has made for their salvation.

The materialistic school of philosophy, reasoning from the preconceived falsehood that there is no God, has labored to prove that man himself is not a personality; and upon the other hand, the so-called christian philosopher, in love with the idol tradition of conditional salvation, based upon man's free agency, invents a philosophy which makes man a kind of demi-god, by ascribing to him a mind, spirit or soul that is spiritual in the same sense that God is spiritual —a principle of immortality, a spark of divinity, as they often call it. They assume that in order for man to be a personality he must be endowed with the ability to know God, and to choose between right and wrong, and to exercise all the functions of an essential free moral agent; and that without this dual nature and these qualifications he cannot be a personality.

Now, that man is endowed with reason, and possesses a knowledge of himself and his environment that the brute creation does not possess, every one must admit. It does not require a philosophy to establish this fact. **But that to constitute him a personality requires that he possess a spark of divinity, a principle of immortality, a spiritual mind, of the essence as God himself, every one who has the slightest respect for the New Testament psychology must emphatically deny.** The great mistake that philosophers have all fallen into is this, that in order for man to be a rational, ethical personality, distinct from the brute creation and pre-eminent over it, God must impart to him in his natural creation the spiritual, immortal nature of God himself, and that without this God-element there can be no distinction between man and beast. The qualifications of man that distinguish him from the irrational animal creation, and constitute him a personality, are products of creative power; and all products of creative power, or all created existences, are essentially different in essence or substance from the essence or substance of the creator.

"Of God above or man below
What can we reason but from what we know?
Of man what see we but his station here
From which to reason or to which refer?"

In man's creation he was of the earth, earthy. In this creation he is capacitated to live on the substance of the earth, to love, understand and enjoy the things of this world, but separated in all his nature, in all his powers of body and mind, from the spiritual world. The law of continuity furnishes an **a priori** argument for the position we are attempting to establish of the most convincing kind, of such a kind indeed as seems to be final. If nature be a harmony, man in all his relations, physical, mental and moral, necessarily falls within its circle. It is altogether unlikely that man should have a spiritual nature violently separated in all its conditions of growth, in its essence and substance, from his

earthly nature. It is difficult to conceive that the natural man should be guided by one set of principles, and these at a certain point give place to another set of principles altogether new and unrelated. Nature has never taught us to expect such a contradiction. Man cannot in the nature of thought, in the nature of language, be separated into two such incoherent halves.

The Bible account of man's creation is, "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the earth, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." The unity of man as a living organism, as a natural personality, is most forcibly set forth here. The prevalent philosophical idea of man's personality is that God breathed into man an immortal soul, something **ab extra** to the man physical, and that this soul is the embodiment of the man's reasoning, knowing, intelligence, and is in substance of the same divine essence of God himself; and that without this germ of divinity man could not be a personality. Nothing can be farther from the true nature of man's personality as revealed in the history of nations, in the history of men, and in the everyday life of each individual. When facts contradict philosophy we must give credence to facts. Besides, the one brief statement of the Bible condemns the idea conclusively: "God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." He did not breathe a living soul into the man, but man became a living soul. Man and soul mean the same thing in this place.

It is true that the Bible was not written for a text book on psychology, yet no more beautiful system of philosophy can anywhere be found than that recorded by inspiration. It is consistent with itself, and is nowhere contradicted by existing facts. That fundamental principle of the christian religion laid down by Christ himself, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," is the embodiment of principles of philosophy which locate man in nature, and fix, define and bound his personality. The explanatory clause, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," shows conclusively that man is the product of a fleshly birth; and all his powers, both mental and physical, are derived from the same source, and all belong to the same environment. The term "flesh" does not mean the literal flesh of the human body, but means man as a whole, as an individual, a personality; and if this personality ever sees the kingdom of God, is ever made a partaker of the divine nature, of immortality, it must be born again.

The present christian (?) philosophy of man's personality sets up the most serious enemy that christianity has to deal with at the present day. Of the multitudes who profess the christian religion at the present time, how many have clear in their minds the cardinal distinction made by Christ between born of the flesh and born of the Spirit? By how many nominal christian philosophers is not this fundamental postulate persistently ignored? A thousand modern pulpits are preaching every seventh day a philosophy of personality that not only contradicts this cardinal principle of the teaching of Christ, but renders the necessity of the new birth entirely useless.

The principle of psychology laid down by Paul is, "The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." The carnal mind here means that mind which constitutes man a person; and this mind is so far from being a spiritual essence, a spark of divinity, that it is enmity against God, not even subject to his law, neither indeed can be. The same apostle, in pursuing the same line of thought, says, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." By natural man here is meant that personality which is born of the flesh, and is flesh, and which has no capacity for the things of the Spirit. He cannot know them. This is not a dogma of theology, but a necessity of science; and science accepts the situation. If philosophers would or could ac-

quaint themselves with the meaning of the scriptural terms flesh and Spirit, they would free themselves from many blunders, and enter a new field of philosophic thought. The terms flesh and Spirit are no less scientific terms; they are strictly physiological in their import, and lie at the bottom of a biology which the scientists have hitherto entirely overlooked. The most complete, definite, real antithesis known to human thought is expressed by these terms. They are used to express two orders of life so completely separated from each other that nothing but the word "death" can express the nonrelation of the lower to the higher. Man, with all his powers of soul, body and spirit, lies within the order denominated flesh. His personality belongs here **in toto.** As the bird in its attempts to quit the earth and soar into the sky is beaten back by the unseen wires that fix its bounds, so the powers of man cannot extend beyond their environment, but in their endeavors to enter the spiritual world, even through the subtle medium of thought, are held back by an unseen but fixed boundary which they cannot pass. The agnostic's assertion that he knows nothing of the spiritual world is true, however much the nominal christian may dispute it. He really does not know. The statement that the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, is final, as a statement of scientific truth.

Can the philosophy that makes the mind or soul or spirit of man homogeneous with God be true without destroying **in toto** the statements of Paul and Christ? It may be urged that Paul was not inspired, that Christ was not the Son of God. Should we admit this to be true, yet who among men is entitled to more respect as authority in philosophy, and where is the system of philosophy that is more rigorously demonstrated in men, as exhibited in their everyday life? The personality of man is not denied in the New Testament philosophy, but established. It contradicts other systems, that is all; and it does not contradict them by mere dogmatical assertions, but upon the most tangible scientific basis.

Man as a created intelligence stands above the creatures within his environment, He thinks, reasons, wills, loves, hates, mourns, rejoices, and is conscious of himself as distinct and separate from the things around him; he is conscious of his own individuality. These conditions and objects of consciousness are essential elements of personality, and prove that man is a person, but in every particular finite, in every particular natural as opposed to spiritual, mortal as opposed to immortality. There is nothing in man's personality that is immortal, in the Bible sense of that term. I do not mean that man shall not live again or that there is no future existence for him. Endless existence is not immortality. The Bible declares that God alone has immortality, and I am unwilling to ascribe to man what God alone is said to possess. Man thinks, but his thoughts are vain, unfruitful, and always fallible; This proves that his mind is vain and fallible, and hence cannot be of the essence of God. He reasons, but his reasoning is uncertain, and often reaches wrong conclusions. He wills, but his willing is mutable, feeble, and upon all hands subject to defeat. He loves, but his love is often misplaced, embraces evil and wicked things; men love darkness. He hates, but he hates the good, even hates God himself. These facts, as exhibited throughout all history, are insurmountable barriers to our accepted philosophy of personality.

Man is a child of earth, throughly identified with the earth in all his manifestations; and whether his correspondence with earth can be broken and his personality preserved, is a question which philosophy can never solve. The fact that man is a personality cannot help us here. The heart, ignorant of what lies beyond, wraps itself in the vainest imaginations, the basest traditions, and the most ridiculous legends, and struggles to light his own darkness and penetrate the darkness beyond by the feeble lamp of philosophy. Around the mysterious region of the Hereafter,

Supersition has cast her sable mantle.

Philosophers endeavor to prove by the personality of man that there is a personal God. Their argument is that a finite personality must necessarily be the product of an infinite personality, or a personal God; but the comprehension of God as a person, as the true God, as the I Am, as Jehovah, is not the product of a philosophy, but must come through the revelation of faith. This revelation lifts us out of the miry clay of an uncertain philosophy, and places our feet upon a rock. It gives us a mind, a heart, an understanding, that cannot be accounted for upon any principles of human science. It lifts the veil of fear and superstition from the heart, and answers in the affirmative the question, "If a man die shall he live again?" The revelation of faith also solves the problem of the preservation of man's personality in the dissolution of his correspondence with this earth.

The duration of man's personality is determined by the author of it. It is not necessarily endless within its own attributes. Not only is the duration of man's personality fixed by the will of God, but the condition or state of its existence is determined by the same eternal will. God's personality, from the very nature of it, is essentially self-existent, eternal, immutable, immortal; but man's personality is not so essentially. A created personality can be limited as to duration, can have any given nature or condition that may be determined by its creator. From our own instinctive fears and longings we may infer that our personality may exist in a future state, but the only ground for assurance of this is the revelation given by God through Jesus Christ; and this revelation is not given to all men, for many of the wisest philosophers endeavor to reason away man's personality here and his existence hereafter. In the midst of an uncertain philosophy upon the one hand, and unbelief upon the other, it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when Christ shall appear we shall be like him.

H. M. CURRY

(The above is taken from the Signs of May 17, 1893. The subject is most profound, and we hope our readers will read it carefully.

— J. D. W.)

THE PILGRIM'S WALK

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness, and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love." (Eph. 4:1-2) Paul is admonishing God's people concerning their walk. ". . . reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." (2 Tim. 4:2)

Exhortations are used to stir up the minds of God's people. They are directed to a certain class of people. They are not directed to the world in general. "Ho, every one that thirsteth". (Isaiah 55:1.) This is directed to a people who thirst after righteousness.

As Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, take my yoke upon you and learn of me." (Matt. 11:28-29) This is directed to a people who labor and are heavy laden. In other words, this exhortation is directed to a weary people. But the point is that His people do not come by their own strength. David said, "Thou art my strength." (Psalm 18:2)

Your coming to God may work this way: The exhortation is given for you to come. This gives you encouragement to come. You have desired to go to God, and find there is something within you that gives you the strength to go.

"No man can come unto me, except the Father which sent me draw him." (John 6:44) Now, you come to Jesus when he draws you. "Draw me, we will run after thee." (S. of Solomon 1:4) ". . . Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." (Jer. 31:3) They run after him. As David said in Psalm 42:1, "As the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O, God."

"Faith without works is dead, being alone." (James 2:17) We prove what

we are by our works. We prove our profession by our walk. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

God's people walk in the footsteps of Jesus. In Ephesians 5:1, Paul admonishes the Brethren to "be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children." If you are a follower of God, then you walk in the footsteps of Jesus.

Now, I believe it is our duty to be careful of our walk. If the love of God is in our heart, then we will yearn to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God **might be careful to maintain good works. . .**" (Titus 3:8)

The most important part or the main theme of the walk of God's people is mentioned in Ephesians 5:2. "And walk in love. . ." God is love. We cannot hate our brother and love God. If we have love in our hearts, then this is certain evidence that God is dwelling in our hearts. Of course, the thought comes to us so often: Do I love my brethren, or just think I do?

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men especially those of the household of faith." (Gal. 6:10) "If thy enemy thirst, give him to drink, for in doing so, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head." (Rom. 12:20) It is not becoming to render evil for evil. Jesus did not do so. Remember that, "Vengeance is the Lord's, he will repay." (see Rom.12:19)

Yes, it is true that doctrine is important, but practice is also. Belief is important, but the walk is also important. Faith is important, but works are also. (Now, I am not trying to mix works of the law in with the Grace of God.)

If one claims to be a believer, and talks about doctrine, and walks a different path, then something is wrong. We read in Ezekiel 33:31: "And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and **they hear thy words, but they will not do them:** for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness." It is written, "In works they deny him." Notice the expression, they hear thy words, but they will not do them. "For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." (Rom. 2:13) Therefore, belief is not enough. A **head** religion will not stand. "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble." (James 2:19)

If your religion is in the heart, then you believe from the heart and you have the desire to walk the right way that leadeth to life. (see Rom. 10:10) Isn't it your desire to walk in the footsteps of Jesus?

If we love God, then the love of the world should not be in us. "Love not the world, neither the things of this world." (1 John 2:15) Notice the sentence of this verse: "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." This world shall pass away, but the kingdom of God shall stand for ever. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above. . ." (Col. 3:1) "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2 Cor. 4:18) The things we see with our natural eyes shall perish. We shall perish. "Dust thou art and dust shalt thou return." (Genesis 3:19) Time here is so short, and it is swiftly moving on. James said, "—For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. (James 4:14) It is true that we use the world to an extent that it is our duty to earn our living, by the sweat of our faces. (see Genesis 3:19) Christ said, "Render to Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's." (Matt. 22: 21) We love to talk and hear our Brethren talk about Spiritual things. In other words, we love a "Scriptural conversation." This is good as it edifies and strengthens us. But, when work time comes, we believe it is our duty to work. "Render to Caesar the things which are Caesar's." It is our duty to do

a good days' work. Now, if we sit around and talk, we will not do a good day's work, will we? So, there is a time for all things. (Ecc. 3:1) There is a time to work and there is a time to rest. "And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away." (1 Cor. 7:31) "Seek you first the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 6:33) Let us ask ourselves this question: Exactly what comes first with us? Is it the Kingdom of Heaven or is it the things of this world? Do the pleasures of this life mean more to us than the Kingdom of God? Of course, we need money for the necessities of this life. I pray that God will keep us from coveting after money. There are some that love money and make the "almighty dollar" their God. May God keep us from coveting after the perishable things of this world.

If our ambition is worldly gain, what will it profit us? For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." (1 Tim. 6:7) May God enable us to set our affections upon things above.

If the Love of God is in us, we desire to help our Brethren who are in need. "But whoso hath this world's goods and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue: but in deed and in truth." (1 John 3:17-18) If one shuts up his compassion from his brother that is in need, it is evident that he does not love his brother; and in turn, he does not love God. Notice that John uses the expression, "let us". Meaning, by the Grace of God, let us love in deed and in truth. Let us prove our faith by our works. Let us prove our profession by our walk. Let us not be those that talk about love, talk about doctrine, etc. and not walk in it. "And walk in love . . ." (Eph. 5:2) Paul also uses the expression, let us. ". . . **let us** lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and **let us** run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith . . ." (Hebrews 12:1-2)

It is the duty of God's people to walk honestly. "Providing for honest things not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men." (2 Cor. 8:21, see Rom. 12:17) Now, Judas was a thief. It is our duty to be honest with one another, and also honest in our dealings with the world. "Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." (1 Peter 2:12) Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5:16)

It is our duty to be honest in our business dealings. Now we feel that taxes are too high, and grumble about paying them, but it would be very unbecoming if we would attempt to cheat the Government. That would be dishonest. It would not be providing for honest things. "Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear: honour to whom honour." (Romans 13:7) (See Mark 12:14-17, Luke 20: 24-25, Matt. 22:17-21, Matt. 17:24-27)

Do we live up to our promises? As much as it lies in us, it is our duty to fulfill our promises.

As much as it lies in us, it is our duty to provide for our own household. "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is **worse than an infidel.**" (1 Tim. 5:8)

Abstain from all appearance of evil." (1 Thess. 5:22) "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." (Eph. 5:11) Let us notice the 8th verse: "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light." (see also 2 Cor. 6:14) Before you were quickened and made alive, you were traveling the broad path that leads to hell, but we trust that God has turned you, and is directing you in the strait path that leads to life.

It is unbecoming to have your con-

versation upon evil or filthy things. (see 1 Peter 2:12) It is unbecoming for one that is called a Brother or Sister to engage in telling "filthy" jokes. Flee temptation. We read in Genesis that Joseph fled temptation. (see Genesis 39:7-12) "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." (1 Peter 2:11) Have no company with evil workers.

It is our duty to go to church, and not let the things of this life, such as worldly pleasures, etc. hinder us from this obligation. "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." (Hebrews 10:25)

It is unbecoming for one that is called a brother or sister to always be speaking evil of others. "Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins." (Proverbs 10:12) I pray that God will keep us from speaking evil of others, and finding fault with one another. May we be given to esteem others better than self, and to watch over one another for good and not for evil. And, may we well remember this saying of Jesus: "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and behold a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." (Matt. 7:3-5) The theme of this is to clean up our own house before we attempt to clean around someone else's house. Also, it is wise to mind our own business. (Now, if a Brother or Sister does something that brings a reproach upon the Church, then this is the business of all the Members.) May we be given to follow this old saying: "If we must talk about others, then let it be something good, and not evil." We all have faults, and no one is perfect. Remember that we do not all have the same type of faults. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23)

It is unbecoming for a brother in the Church, whether he be a minister, deacon, or lay member, to attempt to rule the Church. "Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." (1 Peter 5:3)

It is our duty to visit the sick and shut-ins. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the Fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (James 1:27) It is our duty to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. Meaning, to walk upright, and not bring a reproach on the cause.

If not deceived in our poor heart, we trust this has been written in the spirit of love. May our hearts be stirred up to pray for the unity and peace of Zion.

(Elder) W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

P. S. Dear Readers, I am sure most of you are familiar with the rule of discipline as mentioned in Matt. 18:15-17. Please refresh your memory by reading it.

ALL BECAUSE OF LOVE

46 Cedar Street
Kingston, N. Y.

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

It was a great pleasure to have your dear people with us at the Association, and so good to meet the lovely brother and sister in Christ that came with you.

. . . Sometimes my strong love for the brethren gives me courage as an evidence of the New Birth. Love is an outstanding word with me: The reason Jesus had to give his life was because of love; the reason he had to suffer for guilty sinners was because of love; the reason God gave his Son was because of love; the reason Jesus came into the world was because of love; the reason that you and I hate sin is because of love; the reason there is a heaven for saved sinners is because of love; the reason that saved sinners come before

God the Father without blame is because of love.

I feel the reason I mourn over my sins is my love for better things. I feel that my high esteem of those of precious faith is because of Christ's love in them. They are in the world but not of the world because of Christ's love. He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love. Christ was raised from the dead because of love, he went to heaven because of love, Jesus is coming again because of love. I feel that you dear ones came all those miles because of love for the cause of Christ. I feel that you ministers were blessed with His love and power to feed the sheep and lambs of God. No such love was ever known that a man lay down his life for his friends.

I enclose a map of the vicinity of New Vernon Church. With much love and hoping to see you at the New Vernon meeting.

I hope your brother in Christ's
love and saving grace,
A. J. Slauson

ELDER AND SISTER HAND ENJOYED THEIR VISIT

5840 Court O. C.P.
Birmingham, Ala.

Dear Brother and Sister Spangler:

We completed our trip without any mishaps, arriving here yesterday afternoon tired but with so many wonderful memories of our trip. The brethren were all so warm and friendly. I wish you would convey to the brethren at Dan River how much we enjoyed being with them, and so deeply appreciate their many kind remarks, and the fellowship we were shown.

I had the enclosed letter from Brother James Carter when I got up to Elder Ruston's, and it was very comforting to me. I appreciated it so much that I let Elder Ruston read it. He suggested that I send it for possible publication in the Signs. (see the November issue — Ed.)

We hope you can come our way again before long. We are always glad to hear from you.

Yours in that blessed hope,
Claude and Irene Hand

DESIRES TO BE THANKFUL

Rt. 2,
Littleton, N. C. 27850

Dear Editors:

Please excuse me for letting my subscription run over. I had hoped to write a few lines, but the longer I waited the less I feel I have to say. God has been so good to us, and I don't know how to thank Him. We had a long hot, dry spell, and it looked as if our crop would suffer, but thanks unto Him he sent us some showers, and everything seems refreshed. Even the birds are singing louder than usual. Sometime I feel so ungrateful, so guilty and helpless, but I desire to thank God for every blessing.

I want to mention about a precious one who joined our church in December. She is the daughter of Bro. and Sister A. N. Dickens. Betty Ann came before the church, (Rocky Swamp Church,) and was gladly received. She is fifteen years old, and a precious jewel of God's mercy I sincerely believe. All were happy for her and her family. She was baptized the second Sunday in February, 1968. It was almost freezing weather, and people of the neighborhood wondered why her parents would let her go into the cold water, fearing it would give her pneumonia. But Betty Ann was not worried about it making her sick: and it did not harm her at all. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" I had a feeling that my precious husband would join and be baptized at the same time, but it was not to be that way. I

feel he is better to be called an Old Baptist than I will ever be.

I am enclosing a check to renew my subscription. God only knows how long I will be here to read them. I have boxes full, and I hope some day my precious daughters will be interested in reading them. I used to read to them when they were small, but I got to the place I could not read for crying, so I stopped. God moves in a mysterious way — He will make it plain some day.

I want also to mention about our August meeting. We had three ministers with us: Elders Johnnie Joyner, Mack Garner, and Elder Jones. We were all glad to have them.

With love to all.

Mrs. J. L. Smith

SISTER ELIZABETH HALL EXPRESSES HER LOVE

Sister Elizabeth Hall, now in Spring Hill Nursing Home, Salisbury, Maryland, desires to express her love and appreciation to all the brethren and friends who have called to see her, and who have sent cards and letters. She wrote asking if we could "spare a little space to express her love to the dear ones who thought of one like me in the nursing home in my illness." We are glad to spare the space.

She also wrote: "The dear old **Signs of the Times** has brought so many gospel sermons with crumbs that fell from the Master's table. I have read them many times over, and I hope someone will get them who will read and enjoy them after I am gone. Salvation by grace is beautiful. I hope you editors will continue to publish it with the dear Lord and Saviour's blessings.

One who loves the truth,
Elizabeth E. Hall

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the **Skewarkey Union** is appointed to be held with the Great Swamp Church, Greenville, N. C., the 5th Sunday in December and Saturday before. Elder M. E. Garner was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder W. E. Grimes, alternate.

The Church is located on the corner of 10th and Forbs Streets, Greenville, N. C. We extend a cordial invitation to all to come and worship with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Williamston, N. C. 27892

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** will be held, the Lord willing, at the Healthy Plains Church, Wilson County, N. C. The meeting will be on the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in December. The church is located about three miles west of Rock Ridge, N. C.

All who have a mind to attend are cordially invited to do so.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

ORIGINAL WHITE OAK UNION

The Original White Oak Union is appointed to be held with the Northeast Church, Onslow County, fifth Saturday and Sunday in December 1968. The church is located about 5 miles east of Jacksonville, North Carolina, on paved road no. 1406. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and worship with us.

L. H. Southerland, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To October 1, 1968)

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D. M. Radford, Va.	1.00
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Danville, Virginia December, 1968

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

PSALM XX.

1 JEHOVAH hear thee in the day when trouble he doth send:
And let the name of Jacob's God thee from all ill defend.

2 O let him help send from above, out of his sanctuary:
From Sion, his own holy hill, let him give strength to thee.

3 Let him remember all thy gifts, accept thy sacrifice:
4 Grant thee thine heart's wish, and fulfill thy thoughts and counsel wise.

5 In thy salvation we will joy; in our God's name we will
Display our banners: and the Lord thy prayers all fulfill.

6 Now know I God his king doth save: he from his holy heaven
Will hear him, with the saving strength by his own right hand giv'n.

7 In chariots some put confidence, some horses trust upon:
But we remember will the name of our Lord God alone.

We rise, and upright stand, when they are bowed down, and fall.
9 Deliver, Lord; and let the King us hear, when we do call.

The Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada sings selections from the Scottish Metrical Version of the Psalms of David and the Paraphrases; and, after the above had been sung at the beginning of the morning service at Ekfrid on Sunday, February 25, 1968, Elder George Ruston made the following comment:

We often sing the Psalms, and I feel when we are singing them that I would like to explain some of them. In the one that we have just sung, the desire of the person that is singing is for the Lord Jesus Christ who is the King in Sion; and "let him remember all thy gifts, accept thy sacrifice". Our Lord has made a sacrifice which makes the comers thereunto perfect, so that we do not have a sacrifice to make. Thus, even then they were singing of Him who was yet to come and who was to be King in Sion; and they were telling then that their banners, as it were, the things that they could lift up above mankind to show, were not what they were doing, but what the Lord did for them and would do in the person of His Son, and, when you have those thoughts in your mind, that this work has been done, you cannot help but feel that through this we shall "rise and upright stand when they are bowed down and fall." Who? —those that trust in horses and in chariots.

It is rather wonderful that in all the substance that Abraham had, we do not see that he had a horse. It was rather wonderful that they had thousands of camels, but horses seemed to be used by the world at large, principally, in early history, to fight with, to face the foe, and to draw the chariots that they were

in battle with. But some trust in horses, some in chariots, that is, in something of human invention, human power; but we, (and he says):

"We rise, and upright stand, when they are bowed down, and fall.
Deliver, Lord; and let the King us hear, when we do call.

More than King David there, dear ones; it's the Lord Jesus Christ.

(The above was taken from a recording by our good friend Duncan W. McCall. —J. D. W.)

EDITORIAL

In our May issue of this year we answered some questions of a correspondent in California. She now writes as follows: "One scripture that you quoted was Hebrews 8:1-12. I have been told that this scripture alludes to the Millennium. I would like your views on this."

Hebrews 8: 1-12 reads as follows:

"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and will be unto them a God, and they shall be my people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

We also quote the 13th verse:

"In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."

We are glad to give briefly some of our thoughts on the subjects included in the inquiry. The Scriptures are quite plain in setting forth the purpose of both the Old and New Covenants; but we know, of course, that without the revelation of these things as to their intent and purpose as God inspired his servants to record them, we all interpret them after the way that seems right to men; that is to say, the way we desire them to be.

We note first that the law or Old Covenant was given to those who were already transgressors of God's commandments. We must not consider that this law was given to enable these transgressors to recover themselves from their fallen state. No law can ever do that. When God gave this law through his servant Moses, he had already delivered the Israelites out of Egypt. The general tenor of the law promised natural blessings upon them should they be a willing and obedient people. It did not promise either forgiveness of past transgressions, or eternal life for their obedience. So it is evident that the application of this law was concerned with men in their natural pilgrimage of life in the world.

In taking a retrospective view of God's dealings with men from the first giving of his law, until the teaching of his servants in the gospel day, ("after those days,") we find everything comprehended in the interpretation as given by them, viz: That the law entered that the offence might abound. Paul knew this, for he wrote, ". . . until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed where there is no law." (Romans 5:13) Paul knew this experimentally, saying, "I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died.

As with the Apostle, so is it with all others: "alive" in creature ability to feel that righteousness comes by keeping God's law. It is evident that this is the common feeling of all, unless there is a change wrought in each individual: Until the commandment comes and the sin that is in them, though unfelt, is revived. The result is death to all works for righteousness. We said above that no law can ever enable transgressors to restore themselves. So it is evident that the coming or application of the law to an individual has the effect of causing his sin "to be exceedingly sinful," and brings death experimentally deathly fears.

To this extremity God brings each and every one of his loved ones — each and every one of those chosen by him

in His Son before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. This is an unmistakeable evidence to each one of them that he is included in God's love and choice, for no others are quickened to this true knowledge of condemnation.

Thus whatever other application of this law may be had, its real purpose and end is to bring condemnation, and not life.

But we hasten to say that God leaves his people in this state of feeling their lost condition only just so long as any creature ability and strength remain; until he is left entirely helpless, begging Him for mercy against whom he has sinned.

This mercy God has also provided, and his people further experience its application when they are brought to the New Birth without which Jesus said no man should see the kingdom of God. The quickened sinner is helpless as we have pointed out, but Jesus assures us that this experience is his nevertheless, for he must be born again, by saying, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit." (John 3:8) We are sure that no one who has been really born of the Spirit, will ever claim any activity of his own in bringing it about.

It is in being brought to this new birth and all the experiences of it, that God's New Covenant is unfolded and applied in his people. David, after acknowledging his own lack, said, "Although my house is not so with God: yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he maketh it not to grow." (2 Samuel 23:5)

All those who have been brought to this wonderful experience, know the truth of, "I will put my laws into their minds and write them in their hearts: and I will be unto them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." We say that they all know these things of a truth, for every provision of God's mercy in these things is applied to each one by the working mightly of God's Spirit in them.

It is readily noted that there is not a condition mentioned in the whole account. First, because the helpless sinner could not perform anything of himself; and second, because God's mercy and love alone provides everything for his people.

First, he provides, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." The law of Moses was written upon tables of stone, and they were know only externally; but these laws are **put in their inward parts.** Paul testified that God **revealed himself in me.** They are in the quickened and born again sinner, and have their effect, and are uppermost in his life and walk ever afterwards.

Then, "And I will be unto them a God, and they shall be my people." Here is felt the closeness of God and His love: that He is their God, and that they are His people — in spite of their sins and transgressions against him.

Then, "And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me from the least to the greatest." As they know that no man taught them to know the Lord, even so they know it is **impossible for one man to teach another and impart spiritual knowledge to him.** "It is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent," said the Lord. And they know that there is a lot of wasted effort among men in trying to do an impossible thing.

Then, "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and

their iniquities will I remember no more." What a glorious announcement to each individual of Spiritual Israel! Glorious in contrast to the law which said, "The soul that sins shall die." Glorious to those whose sins have condemned them, but to whom God says, "I will remember them no more."

Then in the 13th verse, "In that he saith, A New Covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." The first, or Old Covenant, having served its purpose, "and not able to make anything perfect," was a schoolmaster unto Christ (Hebrews 7:19 and Galatians 3:24) and was made old in that it was fulfilled by the Saviour for his people. "He taketh away the first that he might establish the second." (Hebrews 10:9) The Old was neither destroyed nor abrogated, but was fulfilled in all of its demands upon the Lord's people. God's mercy provided all the obedience in Christ, and, while the law imputed sin, the righteousness of Christ secured the imputation of righteousness to all his people.

We know of no sense in which these things of the New Covenant are reserved for the future in a Millennium state. The grace of God is manifested in his people **now**; the church is manifested in the world **now**; the Christian's sabbath is **now**. The future holds for the redeemed the complete and perfect enjoyment of all things which God's grace provides for them. They have a little glimpse of them during their earthly journey; and they are sealed with the holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of their inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession.

So let no man undertake to deprive the Lord's people of their evidences that heaven begins below them; and let no man try to deceive them with vain philosophy, for they are kept by the power of God unto salvation through faith, ready to be revealed in the last time.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

I JOHN 3:9

"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

By request of several patrons of the Signs of the Times, we submit the following thoughts in connection with this portion of inspired record, which is often suggested by the tempter as forbidding the hope of the trembling little children of God. The letter of this text, detached from its connection, seems indeed to cut off every conscious sinner from claiming to be born of God, while it would not suggest a doubt to the self-confident Pharisee, whose expectation of acceptance before God rests upon his own fancied merit. But this cannot be the true meaning of the expression under consideration, since it would include the apostle John himself in the same condemnation; for he says, "If WE say that WE have no sin, WE deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." It is important to notice that he does not refer to what was our condition before we knew the truth, but declares the present state of himself and those to whom he writes. This shows conclusively the error of such as imagine themselves to have attained unto sinless perfection in their own actions and words; for John agrees with Paul in the confession that "In me, that is, my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." And with him also he had to complain that "when I would do good, evil is present with me." "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." — Rom. 8

Like all the inspired Scriptures, this text is given for the benefit and instruction of them who are born of the Spirit of God; and to such it is exclusively addressed. To them its precious truth is revealed by the same Spirit which moved the apostle to record it; and how-

ever simple and ignorant they may be in nature, to them it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; while no amount of study can enable the most intelligent natural man to grasp one principle of the hidden wisdom of God which is written for the saints. The little children to whom John wrote knew the need of a reliable test to determine the question of which this text present the correct answer.

"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." Jesus preached this new birth to Nicodemus; and it is so indispensable to the manifestation of the sons of God that no one can see the kingdom of God until he is born again. This is so clearly declared in the words of our Lord that there is no room for argument in regard to its truth; but the serious question with each tried saint is, Am I born of God? Looking at the things which are seen in his actions, his words and his thoughts, he is forced to admit that they all testify against him. If he must be judged by these things, which constitute all the testimony that is tangible to the natural mind, the decision is that there is not one mark in them indicating that he is born of God. In these things, therefore, there is no evidence wherein he might rest. But in all the gloom and darkness of his conscious sinfulness, whence comes the longing desire for righteousness? Can that desire arise from the sinful enmity of the carnal mind? Such a holy desire must spring from a holy source; and as certainly as that desire exists, just so surely he in whom it is found is already blessed with the indwelling Spirit of Christ, which marks him as being born of God. To him who bears this seal of the Spirit there is no condemnation; for while he feels the law of sin still dwelling in his flesh, and warring against the law of his mind, this hunger and thirst after righteousness proves that he is led by the Spirit of God, and all such are the sons of God. — Romans 8:4.

There are two opposite principles in every one who is born of God, and these continue "as the company of two armies," while the subject of them remains in the flesh. Neither principle can ever be conformed to the other. In their war sometimes one power prevails and controls the man in whom they strive, and sometimes the other is in the ascendency; but the victory in the end is secure to the Holy Spirit of which the saint is born. Indeed, it is one of the glorious mysteries of this relentless warfare that the saints never gain a victory until they are so completely overcome that they are utterly without strength; and they are never so completely overcome as when they feel strong enough to trust in themselves. Yet even in this extremity of their helplessness, they have never sunk so low but that the everlasting arms of divine love and power were still underneath to take them up and set their feet upon the everlasting rock of immutable faithfulness and mercy. While the same Peter who was naturally a sinful man, impetuous, willful and headstrong, is born of God and has the Spirit of Christ, his earthly nature is still marked by its old characteristics, bringing him to weep bitterly at times; yet he is not the less beloved of the Lord, who specially ordered that Peter should be told of his resurrection. — Mark 16:7. Weak and sinful as he was in himself, the prayer of Jesus was his protection, and sin could not, therefore, pollute him. It is only by the purifying virtue of that all-prevailing prayer that all the recipients of his grace are kept from the evil of sin. — John 17:15.

"Whosoever is born of God" has the Spirit of Christ, and that Spirit is just as holy in the members of his body as in him their Head; for their perfection is "in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that, as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." — 1 Cor. 1:30, 31. Every one who is born of God is identified in Christ, and as he is to them the end of the law for righteousness, they are no more under that law; and consequently they cannot sin by violating its commandments, from which they are

delivered by their Redeemer. "For, brethren, ye are called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law." — Gal. 5:13-18.

"For his seed remaineth in him." Every one that is born of God is "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." — 1 Peter 1:23. This fact forbids the possibility of those in whom this holy seed remains ever being again corrupted by sin. While they must still find sin in their flesh, and groan within themselves, anxiously waiting for the redemption of their body, that very groaning proves that sin is contrary to the Spirit by which they are led. Hence they can say with Paul, "That which I do I allow not; for that I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." — Rom. 7:15-17. With the natural mind the saints can only judge their outward actions, but the judgement of God discerns the secret thoughts of the heart; for "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." — Heb. 4:13. In this solemn truth they who are oppressed by sin find consolation; and they who love sin feel that they would rather be buried beneath rocks and mountains than endure that piercing scrutiny. "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." Yes, he knows the secret groaning which is not heard by created ears. He knows the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus Christ which has washed them from all pollution, and made them free from sin. He knows that their sins were borne by their Redeemer, "who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." — 1 Peter 2:24. Every member of his body whose sins he bore, was not only ransomed from the curse of the law, but being dead to the law with their Head, with Christ they are raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, that they should walk in newness of life. The life of Christ is that by which they are risen with him; for in his resurrection they were all raised above all condemnation, being justified by his grace without their own works. This is that eternal life which Jesus gives to his sheep, and they who have this precious seed remaining in them are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. This is that remnant according to the election of grace of whom it is written, "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." Without the preserving power of that seed by which they are born and kept, the saints are not able to keep themselves one moment; but that vital power of which they are born is Christ in them the hope of glory. While all power remains in the hands of Jesus sin can never overcome this heavenly seed.

"And he cannot sin, because he is born of God." By this closing declaration of the text, the sole reason assigned for the impossibility of this one ever sinning is his birth. Language cannot express more definitely the absolute certainty of this immunity from sin, resting alone upon the sovereign will of God. If the will or works of man had any control over it, then it could not be in any degree because of his birth, since that birth must have preceded the power to will or work. The whole ground of creature opposition to the system of salvation by grace is met and destroyed by this positive statement of divine truth. There is no other cause for the freedom of the saints from sin but their being

born of God. That this birth was wholly by the will of God would seem to be too evident to need confirmation. By the express testimony of inspiration, however, all cavil on that point is forever silenced; for it is written, "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures." James 1:-8.

Then the birth of the saints cannot be dependent upon anything short of that eternal will. The result of their being born again is not less certain than the accomplishment of the purpose of God in their birth. Every one who is thus born is free from sin, because he is not under the law of sin and death. "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." He who is born of God is not subject to sin nor to the curse of the law, for that law is fulfilled in Christ. There is no curse in the law of the spirit of life by which every subject of this new birth is made free from that law whose sentence was death. They may be disobedient to the law of their King, and thus they may bring upon themselves the rod and stripes which are provided in the new covenant; but that fearful visitation is an assurance of the love of God to the chastened one. Hence "the exhortation which speaketh unto you as children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth."—Heb. 12: 5,6. If there were no possibilty of the saints disobeying this admonition, it would have been needless to record it in the Scriptures, but the tempted and weak child of God has frequent occasion to thank God for his faithful love even in severe chastening. So far is this experience from indicating that its subject is under condemnation, it is one infallible mark that God in love deals with the chastened ones as he deals only with his children.

It is a common device of the tempter to suggest to the troubled saints that they are cast off from hope by this text and many similar expressions in the Scriptures; and often they are ready to faint under the cruel assault. But when their great Deliverer is pleased to rebuke their tormentor, and to show them the true meaning of the text, it is always a source of joy to them that such expressions were left in the inspired Scriptures for their assurance. There is no more clear mark of a true child of God than the feeling of deep and bitter grief on account of indwelling corruption and evil thoughts and deeds. This manifests that he is indeed born of God, and longs for that perfection which is only found in the Lord. On the other hand, it is impossible for the carnal mind to produce even a counterfeit of this grief. This is practically confessed by all the adversaries of the truth; for they rely upon vivid pictures of future rewards and punishments to induce sinners to make a hypocritical profession of religion, and urge the terrors of hell as their most effective method of exciting them to what they call good works. This is as different from the experience of the saints as is darkness from the light.

The love of holiness causes those who are governed by it to hunger and thirst after righteousness, neither for the profits to be gained by it in future happiness, nor with the object of escaping torment: but they are led by the Spirit of God to love righteousness for its own sake, and this causes them to abhor themselves because of the sin which dwells in their natural mind. It would not satisfy their longing desire if they could be assured that they should go to heaven at last, while subject to the bondage of corruption in the body of this death. They can never be satisfied until, freed from corruption, sin and pollution, they shall awake with the perfect likeness of their righteous Lord. Until that full fruition of joy shall be experienced, they will continue to groan, being burdened. This burdened condition is the evidence that its subject is born of God, and that he cannot sin. There would be no conflict if the holy principle were not dwelling in the groaning one; and the grief felt because of the sin in them-

selves is the abiding witness that they are born of God, and therefore cannot sin. This text is but the record of the truth which is experienced by every subject of grace; and its testimony abides with them while they remain in the body of this death.

(Editorial by Elder Wm. L. Beebe September 1, 1886.)

OBITUARIES

S. F. FAUCETTE

Samuel Fred Faucette, a Deacon in the Durham Primitive Baptist Church, was born January 22, 1883, in Alamance County, North Carolina, and was called away from this life June, 18, 1968. He received his education in Alamance County where he later taught school for several years.

He was married to the former Vera Forsythe, who survives him along with four sons and three daughters. Several years after their marriage they moved to Durham, N. C. where they reared their family. He served for many years as Health Officer for Durham County. His personal standard of conduct commanded the respect of his community and his manifestation of a hope in the Lord accorded him the love and devotion of his brethren.

On September 20, 1924 he joined the Durham Primitive Baptist church, where on November 18, 1934, he was ordained as Deacon. He also had served as Assistant Clerk and later as Church Clerk. On May 20, 1944, he was elected as Trustee and served continuously in the offices of Deacon and Trustee until his death.

Brother Faucette loved the Lord and His dear people. This was manifested among his friends and brethren far and near. He was especially favored with a desire to visit the sick and afflicted and to maintain contact with those who love Zion. God had given him a lovely wife and dutiful children and for many years the Faucette home has been known for its warm hospitality to their friends and especially to their brethren. Brother Faucette loved the Lord's house and delighted in performing the duties of his office there. In his latter years his mind dwelled constantly on spiritual matters. He loved the doctrine of sovereign grace and it gave him great consolation as he approached his journey's end. The prospect of heaven and immortal glory prompted him to say to this writer a few days before his death, "My race is nearly run and I am glad."

May the Lord give this church a spirit of gratitude for the excellence of this gift and reconciliation to his removal from us.

Adopted in Durham Church conference September 14, 1968.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Catherine M. Copley, Clerk

DORA PACE DICKERSON

Sister Dickerson was born January 2, 1891, and was called from this life May 5, 1968, making her stay on earth 77 years. She was married to Brother Louis Dickerson December 19, 1956.

She leaves to mourn her passing, her husband, Brother Louis Dickerson, three boys and one girl by a previous marriage and six step children, five boys and one girl.

Sister Dickerson was received into the fellowship of the church March 23, 1957, and was baptized by her pastor. We feel that our loss is her eternal gain. She filled her seat in the church most every meeting and we do miss seeing her. It wasn't often too cold or too rough for them to go. She was a faithful believer in God and His salvation by grace.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor at Dan River Church and she was laid to rest in the cemetary there to await the glorious coming of our Lord and Savior where there'll be no sickness, no pain, no sorrow, or weeping, no death; where there'll all be peace and joy forever and ever.

Resolved, that a copy be sent to the family, one to the Signs and one for the Church records.

Done by order of the Church at the Conference meeting August 24, 1968.

Mildred Strader

CORA GRANT HOLLEY

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst our beloved sister, Cora Grant Holley, on June 2, 1968, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Jeff Stowe, Whitmell, Va.

She was born Jan. 20, 1882, a daughter of the late John P. and Anna Yeatts Grant. On Jan. 8, 1908, she was married to James C. Holley, who died in December 1962. She leaves to mourn her departure three sons, three daughters, 14 grandchildren, 7 great grandchildren and other relatives.

Sister Holley joined Strawberry Church March 6, 1915, and was a faithful member, always interested in the welfare of the church. She was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. Her sweet smile and kind words will never be forgotten. All who knew her knew her many virtues too numerous to mention.

Her funeral was conducted at Wrenn-Yeatts Chapel by her pastor Elder R. S. Payne and Mr. D. L. Truitt. Burial was in Danville Me-

morial Gardens, amidst a beautiful mound of flowers, there to await the Resurrection morning when her Saviour returns to call his jewels home.

We, the Church at Strawberry, greatly feel our loss which is her eternal gain.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the will of God who does all things right. That we extend our love and sympathy to the family, and

RESOLVED, that this Resolution be recorded on our church record, one sent tt the family and one sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of Strawberry Church in conference July 6, 1968.

Elder R. S. Payne, Moderator
Josephine Dodd, Clerk

DEACON GRADY SINGLETARY

It is with deep regret that we write this sketch of one of our dearest deacons and member of Pilgrim's Rest Church, near Graveville, Fla. He was born near his beloved church 65 years ago, and was a regular attendant; and of late years a member and deacon where his father and brother had also been deacons. He was greatly admired by all.

He married a close neighbor, Kate Bardey, and they had the following children: Mrs. Kathleen Blount, Miss Lorene and Hosey Singletary, of Graceville, and TSgt Billy Jean Singletary, of the Air Force in Alaska. Surviving also are two sisters: Mrs. Ozie Mae Kirkland and Mrs. Nellie Johns, Panama City, Fla.; and two brothers, Jim and Bud, members of our association. There were also eight grandchildren and three great grandchildren. He was at his home church, and at the close of the meeting went to turn off the current and died almost instantly of an heart attack on August 25, 1968.

Funeral services were conducted at his beloved church by Mr. Walter Collins, Mr. Morea Taylor, Elder V. C. Hartzog and Elder J. J. Collins. A large host of relatives and friends attended the services for this noted brother.

J. J. Collins

RUBY E. PARSONS

Our dear and beloved Sister Ruby E. Parsons was born on March 13, 1908, and departed this life on July 26, 1968. We trust to bow in humble submission to the will of our eternal God who doeth all things well.

She was the daughter of the late J. Hamilton and Georgeanna Evans.

Sister Ruby was married on June 26, 1929, to Milton J. Parsons who survives; there were no children born to this union. She is survived by one brother and two sisters, Dewey Evans and Minnie Gambrill both of Mardela, Md. Her other sister Emma Beach lives in Salisbury, Md. There are also four nephews and three nieces that survive. She was baptized on July 11, 1948, by the late Elder Harold M. Bennett, her membership being with the Rewastico Church near Mardela, Md. where she remained a faithful member always attending when health would permit.

Sister Ruby was a very dear sister, one who many times expressed her belief to the writer that her only hope of a rest beyond the grave was by the grace and mercy of her God. The writer well remembers on one occasion while visiting her in the Hospital that she made mention of her eternal God and said what ever his will was would be right and just, therefore we feel that in her last days here she was reconciled to her lot. There was a large attendance at her funeral, thus showing that she had many friends other than those of her own faith and order.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer on July 29, 1968, at the Holloway Funeral Home in Salisbury, Md., and her body was laid to rest in the Springhill Memory Gardens between Salisbury and Mardela, Md.

May it please God to reconcile all that mourn the loss of this dear one to feel that their loss was her eternal gain, is the prayer of the writer.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

JAMES M. COX

It has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst our dearly beloved brother, James M. Cox. He was born December 29, 1871, and died August 6, 1968. He was married to Miss Nora Elizabeth Duncan February 19, 1896; and to this union six children were born — three of whom survive him: Mrs. M. E. Flanagan, James E. Cox, and Mrs. W. B. Wells, all of Memphis. Surviving also are nine grandchildren and twenty-two great grandchildren.

It was desired that he might live to reach his one hundredth year, since he lacked only about three years and five months, but this was selfish we know, and it was better that he go on now. He did not suffer any, was old and weak, but had a perfect mind to the end. We, the church at Memphis, Tenn., bow to the sovereign will of God, who does all things well.

Brother Cox was a strong believer in the principles of doctrine, and never believed anything else. He attended church last in January, 1968, and had not missed many meetings since he was a member. I like to think that he is not dead, yet is naturally, but spiritually he ever lives, for Jesus said, "He that liveth and be-

lieveth in me shall never die." He lived a long and useful life and will be remembered by many. It was my pleasure to go with him to many places, associations and church meetings; and he came by my home to take me many times. I loved him.

He was laid to rest in Memorial Park by the side of his beloved wife, with whom he lived for sixty-eight years. She was a believer also. There was a large display of flowers. There they wait the coming of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, who will call his own from the grave, and they will have an incorruptible body fashioned like unto His own glorious body, and will be with Him forever, together with all the redeemed of all ages.

May the Lord comfort the remaining ones. Written by his pastor, who tried to speak to a large and attentive audience at the funeral service.

H. G. Brown

BROTHER WILL KETCHUM

Brother Will Ketchum was born June 2, 1875, in Onslow County, N. C., the son of Allen E. Ketchum and wife, Hester. In 1906 he was married to Mary Walton, also of Onslow County. She passed away in 1925 in Wilmington, N. C., where they made their home. March 4, 1968, Brother Ketchum quietly fell asleep. He will be missed, but we feel that our loss is his eternal gain. He is survived by several nieces and nephews.

The first Sunday in August, 1958, he united with the Primitive Baptist Church at South West, and on August 16th he moved his membership to the Wilmington Church, and was a faithful member.

March 7, 1968 at 10 A. M. his funeral was held in the Chapel of Andrews Mortuary, Wilmington, N. C. Elders Louis Williams and L. L. Yopp officiating, internment in South West Cemetery.

Resolved, That a Copy of this be sent to the **Signs of the Times**, a copy to the family, and one copy kept for the Church records.

Done by order of the Church in Conference.

Elder Louis Williams, Moderator
Lester Brown, Clerk
Written by Sister Fannie Padrick

CLAUDIA TATE MURPHY

With sadness we write something about the life and death of our dear sister, Claudia Tate Murphy. She bore many years of affliction and pain before God in mercy called her from among us. She leaves many relatives and friends, together with the church to mourn her passing.

She was a member of New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Rockingham County, N. C., and was faithful, though in latter years unable to attend because of illness. A few months before her passing she requested her pastor Elder O'Bryant and Elder Manley to hold services at her home, and she was so lifted up during the services that her countenance shined, and we felt the glory and love of God shown in her face. We all felt a joy in being gathered in her home to sing praises to our God.

After her death her husband Bro. Edward Murphy was brought home to the church and baptized. She is survived also by two daughters: Susianne Morgan and Marie Adams, of near Reidsville, and by the following brothers and sisters: Alma Tuttle, Eva Chapman, Birdie Huskey, B. R. Tate, Percy G. and Joe Tate; and the following half-brothers and sisters: Raymond Tate, Viola and Nellie Tate, Mary Somers and Irene Paynter; and one grandchild.

She received a hope in Jesus in 1918 . . . and asked for a home with the church in October, 1941, and was baptized by the late Elder T. A. Stanfield. She died May 10, 1968, at the age of 73, and her funeral was held at her church by Elders O'Bryan and Manley, and she was laid to rest in the church cemetery amid a host of lovely flowers, to await the coming of her Saviour to take her home to be forever with Him. What a day of rejoicing!

RESOLVED, That we at New Hope bow in submission to the will of our Heavenly Father; that a copy of this be spread on our church book, a copy given the family; and a copy sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of the Church in conference first Saturday in July, 1968. Written by Mrs. Fred Cobb and her sister Alma Tuttle. We loved our sister.

Elder D. A. O'Bryant, Moderator
Sister Minnie Loftis, Clerk

PFC WILLIAM ROYAL LINDSEY

I am submitting the following obituary for your consideration of publishing same in the pages of your periodical. It concerns the death of the son of Brother Jimmy Lindsey a deacon at Shepherd Fold Church in Houston, Texas.

PFC William Royal Lindsey born January 7, 1950, in Baytown, Texas, was the youngest child of Brother James T. Lindsey and wife Erma. Before enlisting in the Marine Corps in July, 1967, Pvt. Lindsey resided with his parents at 15514 South Brentwood, Channelview, Texas.

Willie, as he was known to his friends, was killed by enemy rifle fire while on a combat patrol May 25, 1968, in Vietnam. He died at the young age of 18 just two months after reaching this foreign battlefield. He left be-

hind his parents; one sister, Mrs. Joan Yvonne Weldon; one brother, Marine PFC James D. Lindsey; grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Royal H. Fincher; great-grandmother, Mrs. Noma Fincher; and a host of relatives and friends who will deeply cherish their memories of this young man's kind and gentlemanly ways.

Willie's funeral was conducted by Elder C. M. Haygood and Brother Jerry Evers. His body was laid to rest in the San Jacinto Memorial Cemetery.

The members at Sherperd Fold Church learned to love Willie for his humble and obedient manners which were so evident when he attended our little church. In his last letters he spoke of his great fears and doubts and of his daily prayers and of the comforts received from church attendance. May our merciful God show kindness to this dear soul. And may those that question the infallible wisdom of our God in these matters that are so sorrowful to we poor mortals be given the wisdom and understanding of the unknown poet who penned the following;

"My life is but a weaving
Between my Lord and me,
I cannot choose the colors
He worketh steadily.

Oftimes He weaveth sorrow,
And I in foolish pride
Forget he sees the upper
And I the underside.

Not till the loom is silent
And the shuttles cease to fly
Shall God unroll the canvas
And explain the reason why.

The dark threads are as needful
In the weaver's skillful hand
As the threads of gold and silver
In the pattern He has planned."

Submitted by Jerry Evers
7942 Longridge,
Houston, Tex. 77055

DEACON ROY T. SIMMONS

Brother Simmons patiently endured long-suffering and, in the midst of his affliction, it was sweet to hear him praise his Lord. He was not ashamed of the Gospel, nor to confess his Lord before men. He knew from whence cometh his help, and he found rest in his Savior's love.

In his last hours he smiled and asked, "How long will I have to wait?" We believe that he felt his labor in the Lord had not been in vain, and he could say, "O, death, where is thy sting," for the Lord so graciously gave him a peaceful moment in which to die on August 16, 1968.

He was born November 10, 1901, and his sixty-seven years were spent within the shadows of the Church at Bush Arbor, where he united June, 1929. He was first to be baptized by Elder W. C. King after he accepted the care of the church, more than twenty-nine years ago, this love never faded. It was mutually manifested until the chain was broken.

Brother Simmons was an active man in church affairs. He loved to sing the songs of Zion, and was often called upon to render this service at funerals and other occasions. He was ordained the second Sunday in May, 1942, and faithfully served the office of Deacon for twenty-six years, being kind and considerate with inspiring words of comfort for those he loved. It was plain to see his Brother Deacons deeply felt their loss, as well as the church, and community in which he lived.

He was first married to Mrs. Bertha Rudd Simmons, who departed this life in 1962. To this union was born two lovely children, Mrs. G. W. Cox, Route 1, Gibsonville, N. C., and Mr. Aaron Simmons, Route 1, Yanceyville, N. C., also six grandchildren.

Later, he was married to Sister Fannie Robertson Simmons, who survives to mourn his passing, along with one stepson, Clifton Robertson of Route 1, Reidsville, N. C., and, being the writer, I feel to say I believe this union was also of the Lord, for they had many precious things in common. Brother Simmons was the eldest of sixteen children. Often, he accepted a fatherly responsibility for their welfare. He had six sisters: Mrs. C. C. Roberts, Mrs. Henry Tate, Mrs. Van Bowman, Mrs. Alfred Shambley, Mrs. R. L. Gilliam, and Mrs. Alton Page; nine brothers: Otis, Luther, Felix, Porter, Ben, Robert, Clyde, Leonard, and Augrum.

The funeral was conducted at his beloved Bush Arbor, by Elders W. C. King, Ernest Oakley, Donald Smith, and Wallace Smith. His body was laid to rest that peaceful rest in the Church cemetery to await that glorious resurrection.

The beautiful flowers were not to be compared with the flowers of love and kindness shown while he lived, and the enormous crowd who came to pay their respects to one deserving in the Lord, was but a reflection of the life Brother Roy Simmons was so blessed to live.

Written by Clifton Robertson.

Done by order of Bush Arbor Church while in conference on September 7, 1968.

W. C. King, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 137 DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1969 NO. 1

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1/69
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

EXPERIENCE

1741 Davis, R. D. Rt. 1,
Maineville, Ohio 45039

Dear Editors of the Signs:

For some reason I have a mind to write some of the things I have experienced; and these things are the reason of my hope in God. As far back as I can remember, I believed there was a God; but it was from a natural standpoint I believed it.

When I was a small boy I was sore afraid of stormy winds. We lived between two mountains in a little valley. When the cold March winds started blowing, and the mountains to roar, it seemed like the end of the world to me. The old log house would tremble, and I would lay on my face and try to beg God to stop the wind from blowing. I had a childish belief that He controlled the winds. Years later I believe He revealed to me that he not only controlled the winds, but that He controlled all things.

When I grew up, I was very wicked, and bad to curse and use bad language. My father would rebuke me, and say, "Son, if you die in that condition you will go to hell." It would make me feel a little afraid, but soon I would forget what he said. I thought that because I was young, I would put off being saved until I got old. I thought that when I got ready I would just ask God to save me, and He would do it. I believe this is what all unregenerated people believe.

But one night I dreamed I was in a strange land, and one of my buddies and I were traveling together; and I heard a singing in the sky which had the tone of an organ. I looked up and there was a host of angels over me. The first thought I had was that the end of time was at hand; and the second thought I had was, there has nothing been done for me, and I am in my sins. In my dream I fell on my knees and began to try to beg God to forgive me and save me. When I awoke my pleading continued. I began to feel my weakness and helplessness. I was a coal miner and had to walk about four miles to my work: and I would wait until all the miners were past my home before I would start, so I could beg God along the way to be merciful and save me from my sins. But it seemed my condition got worse, and this continued almost two years. My father said to my wife, "What has come over Garrett, he has quit swearing." And one day in the mines, one of the men said to me. "Garrett, what church do you belong to?" I remember well how it made me feel, and the answer I gave: "Lord have mercy, I don't belong to any church, for I am not worthy." And he replied that he thought I did because I did not curse and carry on like I once did.

That day something happened to me, and I have wondered what it was ever since. I did not hear a voice, but I felt something in my inward parts: the feeling was, You are regenerated and born again. If this was not an experience of of God's saving grace, I will have to wait for one, or die and depart this life without one. In 1954 I found a people at Union Primitive Baptist Church who preached the doctrine I believed. I offered myself, and they received me. I

have wondered many times, How could such a wonderful people at Sharps Chapel, Tenn., receive an unworthy sinner like me.

This is part of my experience. I hope it was the work of God. I feel that no man can tell all of his experience. The things I have experiences of are the reason of my hope; and this hope is the reason I am a Primitive Baptist. I wrote an article which was in the **Signs of the Times,** in which I said that no preacher was the cause of people being saved. I did not say this to offend anyone, and do not apologize for it; but I received a letter disagreeing with what I said about the preacher. If the experience I have written in this letter is of God, I want to affirm that it was not through the preached word of gospel, but it was the direct work of the Spirit of God in my heart, and not through a preacher. But my correspondent wrote that it is by the preached gospel that men are saved. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. I want to note that it did not say, To every one that will believe it. It is to the believer always. In John's writing it is said, ". . . He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." (John 5: 24)

Dear reader, I want you to note the above quotation: that the believer has already passed from death unto life — he did not believe in order to pass from death unto life. He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God: it does not say that he will be born of God after he believes. It says again that he that believeth that Jesus is the Christ has the witness in himself. I want to affirm again that the gospel is to the child of God who has been made alive in Christ. The gospel is to the believer—not to the unbeliever. If the gospel is used as a means to save people, I would like for someone to tell me how the deaf and dumb, or idiots are saved. The Bible tells us of but one way that God saves his people, and that is by his saving grace.

My brethren, in my experience I tried to save a poor helpless sinner, a worm of the dust; and I utterly failed. But God looked down in the time of need, when there was none else to help; and he said that his own arm, (notice he said it was his arm) brought salvation to me. Precious friends, the doctrine that the Old Baptists preach stands as firm as heaven itself, because it is from heaven. Their doctrine is hated and denied from modern pulpits. Many claim they are doing a job that my blessed Saviour did when he was dying and bleeding on the cross; and that job was to save his people. When he said "It is finished," they were saved, and all the ordained powers of this world cannot change it. God ordained it before the world was for it is to be this way — and that is the way it stands.

In closing I will say that I was injured in July, 1967, and had two discs removed from my back, and I have been to my home church at Sharps Chapel, Tenn., only one time this year, for I am able to travel but little. Elder John Wilder is our pastor, and is an able man in the doctrine; we have also Elder Adra Davis, who is also able. I want to see all the brethren and the neighbors who come out to hear the preaching. I feel that there are many of God's people who have not joined the church, who come to hear the preaching. We know that God adds to the church daily such as shall be saved.

Since I have been housed in for more than a year, I would appreciate hearing from any who believe this doctrine. Dear Editors, if you feel this is suitable for publication, you may use it. If it is not of God, it is worth nothing. Remember me in your prayers. May God bless Zion, is my humble prayer.

Your brother in hope,
Garrett Wilson

"NO MAN HAS SEEN GOD
AT ANY TIME."
(JOHN 1: 18)

Dear Elder Spangler: —

In conversation with you recently at Mossy Rock, you indicated that I should send further writings for the Signs. Of my poor weak self, nothing can be offered of interest to those seeking enlightenment on the Scriptures. It will be only thru the enlightenment given by the Lord, if these thoughts on the above scriptures are found to be worthy of publication.

Upon meditation, after noting these words of St. John, who I believe was the deepest spiritual writer of those four gospel writers, his reason for so stating or writing these words, seemed to stem from the fact that he had just set forth certain things that strongly indicated he had seen God with natural eyes. In verse 6 of Chapter I, "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John," which would generally be accepted as showing that he had actually been in the presence of God, or could not have started traveling away from Him. In verse 7, he says — "The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light," etc. This also would indicate he possibly had seen that LIGHT with natural eyes. Also, since he had written "In the beginning was the WORD, and the WORD was with God, AND THE WORD WAS GOD" which was soon followed by his words in verse 14, showing how the WORD had been made flesh and dwelt among them, and "We beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father," etc, would cause many to believe that he actually had seen God the Father, thru and by seeing the WORD, which he before had said was God. Therefore, in order to definitely establish the fact he had not seen God with natural eyes, he so wrote that "NO MAN HAS SEEN GOD AT ANY TIME." He thus made it clear that God is seen only in a Spiritual sense thru eyes that have been opened by and thru the new birth, like those, "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, BUT OF GOD." (Verse 13)

Now we find that a little later — when Jesus was confronting those Jews that sought to kill him as recorded in the late part of Chapter 5, He told them "And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape." (Verse 37)

While treating on this subject, let us examine Exodus 33, the last part thereof, where Moses heard the Lord speaking, and in verse 18, Moses begged the Lord, "Shew me thy glory." The Lord gave answer in verse 20, "Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me and live." He told Moses he should see his back parts, but not his face. (Verse 23)

Now we have the testimony of St. John, Jesus and the Lord God, that His face — God's countenance, could never be seen with natural eyes. The Lord made it clear to Moses that should mortal man behold his face, it would cause his death. After considerable meditation and study of this mysterious fact, I believe I can see why God Almighty has so designed that His face cannot be seen by mortal eyes. It would first seem to be definitely to show the lowly, weak and helpless state of man as compared to the majesty and glory and power of God. David seemed to have this very thing in mind in Psalms 22:6, when he wrote, "But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of man and despised of the people." A worm is invaribly looked upon as a contemptible thing, and there is a great gulf, indeed, between the worms we see daily upon this earth, and mankind. Just as the worms about mankind cannot look upon his face or being, so mankind that was created from the dust of the earth, cannot look upon the countenance of Almighty God. Also we must consider the fact that God is a great LIGHT, such as to be beyond the comprehension of poor mankind. We have the best of evidence in the experience of the Apostle Paul who was struck down and blinded by the countenance or LIGHT of God when it shown around about him, as recorded in Acts 9:3. It is not said that Paul was looking upward

into that LIGHT, but that it shone around about him. We do not have to guess what would have happened to Paul's eyes had he been staring intently up into that great LIGHT. It was not God's purpose to take away his eyesight permanently.

I am inclined to view the Sun and God Almighty as the two great LIGHTS, the one to give light for the world as purposed and directed by God, and the greater SPIRITUAL LIGHT, that gives off that needed light to His chosen ones, from the beginning to the ending of time on this earth. Now God, in his creation of the Sun and all things created, certainly would not create anything, with greater power or brilliance than He has, and He made the Sun to be lesser in brilliance and power than that of Himself. Yet man cannot gaze into the Sun without great damage to his natural eyes. If man cannot gaze into or behold directly the lesser light, the Sun, then we can see why God told Moses — "There shall no man see me and live."

Let us remember too, that God's countenance and great LIGHT will suffice to brilliantly light the Heaven of Heavens and it will be the most glorious and wonderful LIGHT to behold. I go along hoping and praying that I will be one of the countless number to be in that glory world of eternity.

Concluding, will state that those few of us scattered about in this Northwestern area, were greatly blessed in having you among us recently. I could only be present for the three day meeting in Mossy Rock where you and Elder Attebery preached most enlightening sermons. It was most wonderful of you to make the long trip out to this West Coast area.

I hope it is the Lord's will that I shall be privileged to hear you preach during January when the wife and I will be back in that area, visiting in Northeastern Tennessee, North Carolina and on down to Miami, Florida and New Orleans. I have hopes of being with Elder R. W. Rhodes while in the New Orleans area. Remember this poor sinner when at the throne of grace.

Wm. O. Hall
P. O. Box 595,
Mount Vernon, Wash. 98273

CHURCH LETTER TO ASSOCIATION

(By Sister Audrey Davis)

The Snow Hill Church of the Old School Baptist faith extends greetings to the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association when in session with the Indian Town Church.

Dearly Beloved Brethren:

Blest be the dear uniting love that brings us together once again in this swiftly passing life on earth. Praise God, and unto Him all honor and glory.

In the attempt to write this letter, I beg for help from the only source from whence it comes, our Redeemer. When thinking of our church and association, the one thing foremost in my mind is the love shown by the brethren one to another. What a precious thing is this love! Its true meaning began long ago when the only Son of God, Jesus, hung on the cross, bled and died for His children. What a price to pay for such worms of the dust! What a gift to give vile sinners! When we think of the love our great God had when he made this world and all in it, including man; and to know that He knew from the very beginning that He would send forth a Saviour, his Son, to be born of a woman, and to prepare the pathway of salvation for his elect.

From the beginning He knew that his Son would suffer, pray alone, be denied, and finally hang on the cross with nail pierced hands and feet and side, so that through his blood would flow our redemption. There should be a bond of love among brethren, when the Greatest did love us so. The love Christ had for his bride is the only love from which there can be no severance. May it be the will of God that this love is always evident in our churches and Association.

Our pastor, Elder W. D. Griffin, is with us each first Sunday night and fourth Sunday morning. Our Elder and wife are precious to us. He speaks boldly concerning God's eternal power and glory. Surely God loved us when he sent him among us.

Elder D. V. Spangler was with us for our Yearly Meeting. He has a wonderful gift, and preaches Jesus in the fulness of His love. We always feel it a privilege when Elder Spangler is in our midst. Praise God for him.

During the past year our hearts were grieved in the passing of our dear brother, Merrill Beauchamp. He loved this church and its members, and his walk was always in accordance with his faith, and there was a look of appreciation for his Saviour whenever he was able to be among us. Though death has taken our brother, his memory lingers on. Several dear friends attend regularly, and we feel the truth is instilled in their hearts, and our doors are always open to them.

We send as messengers our pastor and all members who attend. Our membership is eighteen.

In humility but with devoted love,
Audrey Davis

"I KNOW THIS IS TRUE"

2701-B Waiomao Rd.,
Honolulu, Hawaii 96816

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a check for $10.00 for two years renewal, with the remainder to go to the Indigent Fund.

I read articles from others who speak of how dear and wonderful the messages in the **Signs of the Times** are to them. I know this is true. But to one like me, completely separated from God's good people and the churches, it is surely a wonderful thing. Here in Hawaii there are no churches that proclaim the riches of God, and the salvation by grace that is so dear to me.

A few taped sermons from my father and the **Signs** are the only connection I have with the chosen people of God. The **Signs** contributes to the feeding of God's flock. May he continue to bless you in this work.

An unworthy one in hope,
John W. Smith

CIRCULAR LETTER
STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION
1968

To the Elders, Messengers, Correspondents, and friends who may compose the one hundred twenty-seventh session of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association:

Dear Brethren:

I begin this address to you only because of appointment and not because I feel any qualifications for so sacred an assignment.

Since hearing an able sermon by a dear Elder recently, my mind has continued to dwell on the essence of his remarks — Charity. We find in 1st Corinthians 13:13 these words — "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." The world's definition of charity may be distribution of worldly goods to the needy or an act of kindness to a neighbor or friend, but the child of God would inquire of his heart if charity doesn't go much deeper than this, as Paul placed it greater than faith and hope.

We believe, as the Elder explained, that charity is the love of God in our hearts. This love of God in our hearts begets a love for the brethren, for the cause of truth, for the needs of our church, for the needs of our unfortunate members, and lastly, will make us a better parent, neighbor, or citizen.

"Love is the golden chain that binds," as the poet has written, and what more do we need, brethren, than to have our bosom glow with love, glow in Christian fellowship because of the love of God that we can feel and see in our brethren. None of us can fellewship our carnal nature, and surely we must realize that

each of us has more of this carnality than we desire. In nature we will have disagreements and conflicts of dangerous proportions, and if we continue in fellowship for the future years as have our past brethren for over a century, we must recognize the weakness of the flesh and have patience, forbearance, and kindness toward each other, even if we feel he is not in agreement with us on certain issues.

Paul states that "charity suffereth long and is kind, charity envieth not, charity is not puffed up, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in truth." May we all be granted to have prayerful hearts for a manifestation of more charity toward each fellow member, churches toward churches and associations toward associations. The love of God in our hearts will overcome all crosses of carnal nature and will cause a continuance of our precious fellowship, will consume the sword of conflict, and will cause us to realize that Christ has fought our battles, has and will triumph victoriously over all opposing powers.

May it be His holy will that His preaching servants will be laden with the manna from Heaven and that this session will be long remembered as a place where charity was manifest.

Submitted, I hope, in the love of God, and of my brethren,

Burnell B. Williams

LOOKS FORWARD TO THE MEETINGS

Reidsville, N. C.

Dear Children of God:

I would like to write a few lines concerning my love and feeling to you all at Pleasant Grove Church, and all Primitive Baptists everywhere. If I know my heart I love them all. It is my meat and drink. I leave the meetings looking forward to a place to go next Sunday for more spiritual food. I hope and pray that I am one of His. I feel I know but little, but when I am blessed to have my cup run over, it is wonderful to my soul.

I never saw a more wonderful and humble meeting and communion than we had at Pleasant Grove the third Sunday in September. Our pastor, Elder Donald Smith, preached so wonderfully on Forgiveness. One of God's little sheep came back to the church asking for a home with us. My son and daughter-in-law were blessed to be at the meeting with me, and also my sister-in-law. It did me much good for them to be there. I hope to see more of God's little ones come home to the church and tell what great things the Lord as done for them. I didn't know what a wonderful experience it was until I was blessed to come home.

If I know my heart, I love the Lord and his church and members better than anything on earth, I am looking forward to and hope we will have many more good meetings. When I leave this world I hope that I will be blessed to be in that number to be with our Lord and Saviour in that heavenly home, to have no more heartaches, pains or sickness.

Yours in hope,
Rena C. Smith

NO STRANGER TO THE DOCTRINE

Rt. 1, Clairmont Ave.,
Wheelersburg, Ohio 45694

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is $7.00 to renew my subscription. I think this is twenty-seven years I have been taking the **Signs of the Times,** so I am no stranger to the Old Primitive Baptist people. The **Signs** is strong in doctrine according to my understanding and belief in the Bible. I am thankful our Editors won't bow their knees to Balaam's doctrine, and are still standing on the wall crying aloud and sparing not.

You can judge me by this writing, and see that I can't say what I wanted to.

One of your old subscribers,
William Sparks

GOOD NEWS TO THEM

Box 756
Quitman, Texas 75783

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing check to renew my subscription for two years. We enjoy reading the **Signs** so much, for it is good news from a far country. It contends for the doctrine which we have been made to believe. We always look forward to getting it each month. We enjoy the writings so much that we never lay it aside until we have read it through.

We really enjoyed your and Sister Spangler's visit in our part of the country last year at our association. We enjoyed your preaching, and hope you can come our way again soon.

We enjoyed the last **Signs** so much — it was wonderful. All the writers were blessed to write the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

May the God of heaven bless you editors to keep the good paper coming. And may He keep you and sustain you with his loving grace, is our prayer.

A sinner saved by grace,
E. M. Reeves

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The **Staunton River Union** will convene (D. V.) with Strawberry Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in December.

The church is located on State Road 750, one mile from Wood's Store on highway 41, fifteen miles north of Danville, Va. All of our correspondents and friends are invited to attend.

Josephine Dodd, Clerk

CORRECTIONS

In our editorial in the December issue there was an omission at the end of the third paragraph, second column, page 279. It should read, ". . . and brings death experimentally — leaving him without ability of his own, and with nothing else to calm his deadly fears."

And in the last paragraph of the same on page 281, the third sentence should read, "heaven begins below for them: and let no." The word "for" was omitted.

Please make the corrections in your copy. J. D. W.

Danville, Virginia **January, 1969**

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EDITORIAL

BEGINNING OF ANOTHER VOLUME

We are glad to be able to greet our brethren and friends at the beginning of another New Year, and another volumn of the **Signs of the Times,** — the 137th.

It is evident that the Lord has sustained the publication of the **Signs,** and it is evident that many readers continue to be comforted and edified by its contents, since many have expressed themselves during the year. We think of those who are either too feeble or have no transportation to their meetings; and we think of those who are blessed to be situated so they can regularly attend, and it is our desire to present the truth as it is in Christ Jesus to them in such a way, as the Spirit directs, that they may be confirmed in their hope, and comforted in their trials. If not mistaken, we know something of being sometimes up, and then sometimes down, — sometimes rejoicing, and sometimes sorrowing.

During the 136 years of the **Signs** the doctrine, order, and experiences of the Lord's people have been published. This is as we feel it should be in each issue, so that in whatever state one may be when he receives the paper, as the Spirit directs, he may find something suitable for his present need.

We are conscious that the Lord alone has purposed the publication of the **Signs** all these years. When the time came that others were needed to carry on, He prepared them for the place. It is but natural that we should be concerned for the future since we are zealous that the doctrine be maintained always, and the assurance we have is that, as the Lord has sustained it thus far, he is able to sustain it in the future. If He has decreed that it shall continue to go forth to the saints scattered, it will be amply supported.

There is much involved in presenting the **Signs of the Times** in a readable form and manner, and getting it into the mail, which perhaps but few are aware. It is quite different than getting out a secular paper or magazine. One is dependent on wisdom and training to present general news and information; while the other is dependent upon the work of the Spirit, since we deal with spiritual matters, to give the editors and writers that mysterious leading which fits exactly what he also prepares his people to need. Without this in the writers and the readers, no publication could be beneficial to them. This is true with such a paper as the **Signs,** and such a people for whom it is published.

In this we mean to say that the Lord knows what his people need — not only knows what they need, but prepares them to need it and then enables the writers to present that which comforts and builds them up in the most holy faith: they are confirmed anew in what has already been put in their experience. Dear reader, have you not found this to be true many times? We are convinced of this both in the writing and preaching the truth, and in the powerful manner in which God speaks in the heart. Whatever is the Lord's way, he uses it effectively, as shown in God's Word and in our daily experience.

The Lord's people have so much to be thankful for — much more than others. They have natural blessings in common with others which come from the Lord; but much more than this, they are given the witness within that Jesus is the Son of God, and that He is their Saviour. This, we cannot but feel, is the greatest blessing of all. Each one of them has experienced, (or will experience while he lives,) the birth of the Spirit of God, and is sealed with the holy spirit of promise, (the evidence of his inheritance,) so that he knows that living he must die, but in dying he shall live again, because he is redeemed and justified according as God chose him for heaven and immortal glory.

There is no greater experience than this; there is no greater possession than this hope of eternal life. All other blessings are temporal and soon come to an end; but this hope is anchored in heaven and cannot fail. Each has the answer within himself to the question, "If God

be for us, who can be against us?" and is assured that nothing shall separate him from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

Again the children of God are thankful that they have been given faith which assures them that everything, yes everything, is under the immediate control and purpose of God; and having this, a part of "so great a cloud of witnesses", they have a calmness which enables them to run the race set before them with patience (bearing all things with endurance), ever looking unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of their faith. And this gives them to know that Jesus will bring his church more than conquerors over all things which seem to be against them.

Now, as pertaining to the **Signs**, we are thankful for the support of each one, — for their subscriptions and for their writings; and we solicit your continued support in this direction. We would mention also that we find it impossible to individually answer all of our correspondents, as we would like to. In any publication there is always an accumulation of letters and articles which we do not have space to publish. Many of them are excellent articles, while some are too lengthy for our limited space. We always have to type and edit each handwritten article, and having no help in this, we find it impossible to have time to do them all. So, it is often the case that we must use those which are easiest to prepare for the printer. As we have said, we like a variety for each issue of the paper, and we do our best to this end. Continue to write, brethren, and we will publish what we can; and always enjoy reading those we do not have space to publish. We felt that we owed this explanation to our brethren, and believe all will understand the problems we sometimes have in getting out the **Signs.**

The Lord willing, we expect to continue to publish the articles under **"Voices of the Past,"** and other interesting articles which our readers report they enjoy reading. Our purpose is that in general they support our own views on their subjects, so that all may know that the **Signs** is still steady on its course.

Our Associate Editors have done much of the editorial writing the past year, and we are grateful for their continued efforts in presenting their views on many subjects, thus helping to keep the **Signs** coming to you regularly.

Your Editors pray that the Lord will be pleased to continue his blessings to each one of you, that you shall find that indeed his grace is sufficient for all your need. J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

WINGS OF SALVATION

"And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then I would fly away, and be at rest." (Psalms 55:6)

Fearfulness and trembling had come upon David. Horror and the terrors of death had overwhelmed him. His heart was sore pained within so that he could only mourn, complain and pray. Even though David was King he was made to fully realize that nothing he could do would save him from this awful condition of being the victim of wrath of his haters, oppression of the wicked, and the judgment of God. His cry for mercy seemed to be but a noise. David's most brilliant thought in the midst of severe afflictions was, "Oh that I had wings like a dove." David was mourning like a dove, yet the dove was more fortunate than he because the dove had wings. According to Isaiah 38:14, 59:11 and Nahum 2:7, the mourning of doves is a figure of lamentations in the most bitter and desperate manner.

It takes two wings for a bird to fly. David did not even have one. He mourned like a dove but he could not fly like one. It is said that a dove mourns throughout its life after the death of its mate. It will not mate with another. David had once tasted the mating with the Holy One, therefore he would continue to mourn persistently in His absence. He was like a dove in that he was weak, perplexed, dis-spirited, and would

not fight against those who would ruin him. No doubt he felt to be a "silly dove without heart." (Hosea 7:11). He needed the two wings of Faith and Hope or else his prayers could be but a noise. His faith was withered and his hopes blighted. He could not fly without the two wings of the Spirit, Light and Truth, to enliven his spirit. He needed the two wings of Jehovah, Love and Power to swoop down to him in order that he might be covered with God's wings of Grace and Providence, under which he would trust. His heart was so frigid and dark that he needed the Sun of righteousness to arise with healing in His wings, rays and beams to give heat and light to his soul.

We, like David, yearn for the wings of salvation. We know that God's power without His love would destroy us, not save us. We know that His judgment without His mercy, would banish us from His presence. We know that His providence without His grace, would never raise us up above earthly things. We know that the natural birth without the spiritual birth, could never mean eternally living. We know the law of Moses would kill our souls, and we would forever be dead without the law of Jesus Christ. We know that truth is truth but we could never believe it without the heavenly light shining upon it. We know that we may be regenerated but unless God works both the will and do in us, we can never walk Godly. We may have been numbered with the many whom Jesus redeemed with His blood, but unless God reveals it to us here, we can not realize it.

God's wings of power and love can swiftly snatch us from the bottomless pit and toward Mount Zion, causing us to fly toward higher goals. Had we wings like angels we would always be **ready** and **willing** to obey God in ministering and serving God and His creatures. Had we "Wings of the wind", we would be **swift** and **secret**, yet effective in our soaring. Had we the "Wings of the Morning", we would disperse darkness and impart **heat** by lighting and inspiring those fellow pilgrims with whom we come in contact. Had we the "Two wings of a great eagle", we could fly as the church into the wilderness and be separate from Satan for awhile. See Revelation 12:14. These wings denote **strength** and **support** received from God in delivering His church from satanic control and influence.

We cry for wings like a dove; we cry not for dove's wings. We want **dovish** wings. We do not want the wings of a raven. The raven, when he was sent out by Noah from the ark, failed to return with any tidings. The raven is ravenous, selfish, and was considered unclean for it thrives upon dead carcases. The dove brought back to the ark the message that the waters had abated. The dove was the first heralder of good tidings to Noah after the flood. The dove was the especial symbol of the Holy Spirit as it descended upon Jesus at His baptism. The dove is recognized for its beauty by Christ in the dialogue between Christ and His church as recorded in Solomon's Song. He calls for His fair one, His love, and His dove. Christ says to His spouse, "Thou hast dove's eyes within thy locks," as He describes her. The church praises her Saviour with such beautiful words: "His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of water, washed with milk, and fitly set". (Sol. Song 5: 12)

The dove was used by Christ as a symbol of fear of danger and timidity; as is manifested in His instructions to the twelve as He sent them forth, "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves." (Matt. 10:16) The dove, as has already been noted, has but one mate. The dove is forever faithful to this one mate unto death. The dove knows not the pollution of an adulterous bed. The dove is happy with its mate but miserable when they can be together no more. When we are once married to the church, we can never be satisfied apart from her. If we be married to Christ, we are miserable in His absence. We have no desire to be joined to another. We are so fearful without Him. We are so weak without Him. When we see danger we desire to run to Him for love

and protection.

Constant fruitfulness is a characteristic of doves. This applies to the faithful. Most months in the year their young are brought forth. The tree of life yieldeth her fruit every month. The fruit of the Spirit is the works of righteousness that the faithful yield constantly. Faith is fruitful in that it is ever pregnant of good works, travails in anguish in bringing forth, and rejoice when they are brought to view. The church sympathizes with those on the outside who are travailing in birth, but greatly rejoice when they are manifest as born into the kingdom.

The true church is like a dove because it is different from all other birds. Other birds have talons and beaks with which they defend themselves and devour others. The dove is not so equipped. Some have written that the dove has no gall, signifying that they are free from the bitterness of anger. It is said that the mocking bird can mock the sounds of every other bird with exception of the dove. It cannot mimic the dove. We hear of such doves but we have yet to hear of such a person; yet the true church yearns for this characteristic. Other birds fight among themselves while doves dwell together in unity and peace. Many birds fly separately, but doves fly in companies. Other birds eat separately; doves feast together. Doves eat the cleanest of food, fly in companies of few, make the most peculiar sounds; and do not mingle with other birds. The church eats heavenly manna; her members are few in number; her doctrine is peculiar to other doctrines; and she does not mingle with false churches.

The mourning sound of a dove is significant of the prayers of the saints. Sincere prayers of saints prove their fervent desire to be lifted above their present condition. Sanctified ones who compose the church "Pray without ceasing" that they might be raised higher. Zion mourns! There is a woe pronounced upon them who are "At ease in Zion". Am I at ease in Zion? I mourn because of my ignorance; I pray to God to give me understanding. I mourn because of my disobedience; I pray God to impart power to me that I may obey more perfectly. I mourn because I have a man-pleasing spirit within me; I pray God to enable me to please Him. I mourn because of my selfishness; I pray God to so flood my soul with His love that selfishness would be driven out. Yes, there are many other things that cause me to mourn. I mourn because the number of churches are decreasing, ministers are fewer in number, and prejudices prevail!

It takes TWO wings for a child of God to fly upward and onward. I might be given the wing of **faith** but without the wing of **love** I cannot soar above carnality. Faith without charity would profit me nothing. The wing of **will** has been given me, yet without the imputed **power to perform** I could never do a good deed. "To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not." I may know the **doctrine** of faith, but if I know nothing of the **grace** of faith; my knowledge is vain. My belief that God supremely rules is insufficient unless I have experienced that He rules **me.** I may be acquainted with the **law of Moses** which kills, yet I must be acquainted with the **grace of Jesus Christ** in order to live and to realize the joys of eternal life. "The letter killeth, but the spirit maketh alive". I may deny myself but if I follow not Christ, I cannot be His disciple. I may possess **gifts of the Spirit** but void of the **grace of the Spirit;** they would be unprofitable. I need wings! God grant me wings!!

It takes two wings for the churches to soar above other organizations. The **two wings of a great eagle,** given to the true church for flying with into the wilderness most surely denotes God's special assistance. "And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place; where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." (Rev. 12: 14) God said to Israel, "I bare you on eagles' wings." (Ex. 19:4) The church was established upon two wings during the dispensation of the Old Testament time. She flew on the wings of the **law**

and the **prophets** which upheld her from the snares of Satan. The law without the prophets could not raise up. God used the law and the prophets to establish His people. Almost two thousand years ago the church was given two new wings to reinforce. These two wings were above the two former wings. These wings must be the **Gospel** and the **Epistles** upon which the church functions at the present time. **Doctrine** and **practice** both are specifically and minutely given in the "Gospels" and "Epistles" of the New Testament. If a church be negligent of either one she cannot properly function. A church may be sound in doctrine, yet wrong in practice. On the other hand, she may solely emphasize Scriptural practice but disregard the principles of faith. In either case, the church would be sick without being right in both. She cannot soar above the organizations of the world unless she be given wings in pairs.

Jesus established His church upon the two-winged doctrine of **truth** and **revelation.** The truth is the truth anywhere anytime but we cannot see it, realize it, or appreciate it unless it be revealed. The central core of true doctrine is: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." This is the **TRUTH.** Only those to whom it is revealed by the Father can say it from the heart.

Jesus established His church upon the two-winged commandment of love. One wing is toward God. The other wing is to the brethren. This same two-winged commandment was able to hold up the law and the prophets. The answer Jesus gave to those who inquired concerning the greatest commandment: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment, and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself., upon these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." (See Matt. 22:35-40) The law and the prophets were based upon the principle of love. **Grace** and **truth** is based upon the principle of love. Those who obey this two-winged commandment now, as in the past, must love God and the brethren from the heart. If our desires are in harmony with God's will, pure godly love both to God and the brethren will determine what is right.

"But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." (Malachi 4:2) God had ruled His people, Israel, by use of judges and kings. Prophets had accompanied these in instructing, warning, and rebuking Israel. The sovereignty of God is certainly proclaimed throughout the Old Testament. Anytime and everytime judges, kings, and prophets forgot His sovereignty, He would bring them to know that He ruled. God delivered them into the hands of the enemy to teach them that He sovereignly ruled. As long as a judge, king, or prophet was pleading to the Lord for strength and guidance, he and his people were upheld by Jehovah. Righteous judges and kings were favored as well as the people over whom they presided. The judges and kings greatly influenced the people as though they were joined together. The same was true of the prophets. Judges failed and kings were instituted. Kings failed and Israel was delivered into Babylon. Prophets failed and God's people were in a very bad condition. It surely was at the Lord's appointed time that Malachi should state the true condition and status of Israel. It was certainly comforting to those who feared God to give them hope of the rising of the Sun of righteousness. They were in such bad state that they needed the, "Healing in His wings."

What a dark and cold time that Israel was experiencing. They needed heat to warm their cold hearts, and light to show them a better way. God had proved His love, yet they questioned it. (Mal. 1:2) They had despised His name. (V.6) They had presented blemished offerings and the priests had become stumbling-blocks instead of leaders. They selfishly withheld tithes and thought it vain to serve God. They questioned the importance of keeping the ordinances and dealt

treacherously with their brethren. They inter-married with heathen and divorced wives. READ MALACHI.

Even though it was about four hundred years before John the Baptist and Jesus Christ made their appearance upon earth, it is apparent that those who feared the Lord were given hope through the prophet Malachi. How terrible it must have been when John and Jesus came upon the scene. Surely Israel had suffered so much and long that they, the people of God, were convinced that it would take the mighty wings of love and mercy to save them. They did not want any more political kings; they wanted the King whose kingdom would never be destroyed. They had been confused by normal men as prophets; they desired one who was greater than a prophet to usher in this everlasting kingdom. John prepared the way and the people to receive this kingdom by preaching Jesus and repentance, and baptizing those who repented. Jesus came with healing in His wings. Jesus was a two-winged creature: the Son of God and the Son of man in one. The everlasting King was Jesus; and John prepared the way. The King and His messenger came from Heaven. Both had miraculous births and were named by a special angel. Jesus Christ healed with His wings. His name denotes His wings. Jesus saves from woe and Christ anoints us with His righteousness. The man part of Him paid the penalty for our sins: the God part of Him inputed His righteousness. King Jesus established the doctrine and order of His Church through His apostles. This is minutely given in the New Testament.

The Bible and a God-devoted ministry are necessary wings that King Jesus uses in leading and delivering His people out of Babylon. The people so led are given rest from the confusion of Babylon. King Jesus joins wing to wing with the ministry which is joined wing to wing with the church. The two-winged officeship composed of elders and deacons is necessary for the good and welfare of the churches. When the officers and members of churches have their eyes toward the King in prayer and righteous living, the churches soar above the political confusion of Babylon.

The two wings of **almsgiving** and **prayer** winged the memorial before God from Cornelius, a God-fearing Gentile. (See Acts 10:4) These two wings are the mark of devoted and God-fearing men. Jesus gave special instructions to His disciples in His great sermon on the mountain concerning giving of alms and prayer. He did not say, "If" in either case but, "When." The two wings of **praise** and **prayer** constitute the simple worship services of churches. The two ordinances of Jesus Christ for believers are **baptism** and **communion.** The two commandments given His ministers as recorded in the gospels are to **preach** the gospel and **teach** baptized believers. Pastors are to **plant** and **water** churches. They are to **gather** the flock and **feed** them. Pastors are to **constitute** churches and **Instruct** them. They are careful to **commend** the orderly and to **rebuke** the disorderly. True pastors **watch** for evidences of the intrusion of satanic principles, and **warn** the churches of their pastorate of these departures. A pastor's career is measured not only by **what he says,** but **how he does.** His **words** must be adorned by his **life.** The devoted pastor and church will "Pray without ceasing," because they learn the lesson well that they can do nothing righteously without Him.

God alone can give us the wings of salvation. "Oh that I had wings", is our cry daily. We are pilgrims looking and longing for a better country.

Some day after awhile the wings of God shall fly us into that Heaven of heavens. We shall then fly as the angels. No mortal body will so imprison us as to keep us from the joys of Heaven. Now we see through a glass darkly; but then we shall see God in all His glory face to face. We will be given the wings as angels and together with them sing praises to Him forever and ever. Then, our prayers will not be, "Oh that we had wings like a dove." We shall forever be borne on the everlasting wings of God's promises. Won't that be a wonderful

flight??!! May the Lord give you the wings of salvation is our sincere prayer.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

MELCHISEDEC.

Inasmuch as we have been asked to write on this subject, we shall hope to give such views as we have. There is not in the whole of the Old Testament, probably, a more mysterious personage than this Melchisedec. The record of him fills very little space in the whole Bible, occupying but three verses in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis, one verse in the one hundred and tenth Psalm, and some half dozen verses in the letter to the Hebrews, but the spiritual import of this man is tremendous since he is declared to be "made like unto the Son of God." His name means "king by right," therefore, rightfully king by royal or divine right.

We have sometimes been asked if we believe Melchisedec to have been really an actual person, or was he simply an apparition which appeared to Abraham, or was he a vision of Christ which appeared to Abraham. From the record of this man as it reads in both Genesis and Hebrews, there is nothing to warrant us in saying Melchisedec was not an actual, real person. If he was no actual being and if he was simply a vision of Christ which appeared to Abraham, then we might just as well say that Adam or Noah or Moses or any other of the characters of the Old Testament were not real men, but simply figurative representations of spiritual things. Of course, Melchisedec was very pronouncedly a wonderful type of the priesthood of Christ, and therein lies the spiritual value of Melchisedec so far as the children of God are concerned, but that is not to say that he was not an actual being.

The record of this man says he was without father or mother, without beginning or end of days. We suppose that it is this description of him which has given rise to the denial of his having been an actual person, since humanly we cannot conceive of his having had no parents, nor having had no beginning or end to his days. The process of human generation began with Adam, and all mankind has been descended from that first man, so that no man is without parentage or without the limitation of life. One learned man of the present day, who professes to be conversant with the Scriptures, gets around this mystery of Melchisedec by saying that the genealogy of Melchisedec was not known, that no man knew who his father and mother were, and that it is in this sense that Melchisedec was without parents. Also, that the age of this man was an unknown quantity, and that it is in this sense he was without beginning or end of days. No such explanation as this suits us, no matter how learned the man who puts it forth. Such an interpretation requires too much twisting of the Scripture in order to make it fit. We believe the mystery surrounding this Melchisedec is not intended to be known, therefore we cannot and shall not try to make it clear as to how this man could come into being without having had a father and a mother and without any bounds being set to his days. We do know that all things are possible with God, and that is enough for us. If God's inspired word tells us that such things were true of Melchisedec, far be it from us to contradict it. Let God be true even though it makes every man a liar. We cannot understand how Enoch was translated that he should not see death, we cannot understand how Elijah was taken up to heaven in a chariot, we cannot understand these and hundreds of other things in the Scriptures, but if God tells us through inspired men that such things did occur we have no desire to question them, but want to believe them with all our hearts.

Let us turn now from these debates as to the actuality of the person of Melchisedec, to what the Scriptures say is the spiritual significance of this man. As his name signifies "king by right," so Christ, the spiritual Melchisedec, is King

in Zion the city of God, by divine right or appointment. Melchisedec was both king and priest, both offices vested in the one person, so Christ the Anointed of God is not only King, but is the High Priest of his people. This Melchisedec met Abraham returning victoriously from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him. Abraham had spoiled his enemies and had taken of the prey for himself. One-tenth of this he rendered to Melchisedec. Somehow, Abraham recognized this mysterious personage as one to whom he should be subservient and showed by his actions that he owed tribute to this priest of the Most High God. This Melchisedec must have been a stranger to Abraham, for we have no reason to believe that they ever met before. It must have been by faith that Abraham knew him. Abraham must have had within himself the evidence of this priest-king's true character. This evidence within Abraham could have been based on nothing less than faith, since faith is the evidence of things not seen.

At the time that Abraham met Melchisedec the Levitical priesthood, which was the priesthood of the old or Mosaic covenant, was in the loins of Abraham. It was the business of the tribe of Levi to produce priests for Israel during the time of the legal dispensation. These Levites were to offer the sacrifices and attend to all the priestly duties and offices of that legal covenant. However, when Jesus should come in the end of that legal age to offer himself a sacrifice for sin, and when Christ should arise from the dead and ascend unto God as the eternal High Priest of the church, then this Levitical priesthood was to pass away and be of no more use. The type was to disappear when the substance or reality came into evidence. This is all signified in Abraham's paying tithes to Melchisedec. It was not so much that Abraham paid the tithes himself, as it was the Levitical priesthood in the loins of Abraham mutely signifying its subserviency to the eternal priesthood of Jesus Christ. This Melchisedec brought forth bread and wine unto Abraham. Bread and wine were set before the disciples of Jesus by the Saviour himself as the memorial of his body and blood. This body that was broken for them and this blood which was shed for them signify the death of the Lord. Melchisedec's act, therefore, is setting forth bread and wine unto Abraham shows Melchisedec's spiritual connection with the death of Jesus, therefore that he is the type especially of the risen Christ at the right hand of God, there to make eternal intercession for the sins of his people.

One cannot be a priest unless he has something to offer. Those Levites under the old law offered the blood of beasts and birds. Jesus came into the world to offer his own body for the sins of his people. As the High Priest of his people, Christ was not compelled against his will to make this offering, but willingly and out of infinite love, he took his own body and offered it upon the altar of the cross a sacrifice without a single imperfection, a perfect atonement unto God for all the transgressions of all his children who thereby were through this one offering forever perfected.

As Melchisedec was called king of Salem, which means king of peace, so Christ through his priesthood established the covenant of eternal peace between his people, who were once enemies to God by wicked works, and God the Father Almighty. **Jesus came into the world not, as some think, to make peace between the nations of this world, but to bring everlasting peace for all the children of God, for that eternal kingdom which is not of this world.** There is no beginning or end to the days of Jesus Christ.

As a man here on earth among men, he had a birthday and a deathday, but as the spiritual Melchisedec, the great High Priest of the church, he is eternal. He was in the beginning with the Father, and the Father and the Son were One, and ever have been One. This oneness in the Godhead was not disturbed by Jesus coming to earth in the form of man. His nativity in Bethlehem was not his beginning in any other sense only

that it was the beginning of his humiliation, as Melchisedec he had no beginning or end. Christ was without father or mother. Joseph, the husband of Mary, nor any other man was the father of Jesus. He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, so that, among men, he had no father. While Mary was the mother of his flesh, Jesus had no mother in heaven. His Godhead was mothered by no woman. Thus it is that he was without father or mother. This man Melchisedec was not of the lineage of Abraham, was not a Jew or Israelite, but instead no earthly relation to Abraham whatever. So the Christ of God, the eternal Priest of all true believers in God, cannot be claimed by Jews as theirs any more than by Gentiles as theirs. Flesh and blood connection with Christ Jesus there is none, and all who are connected with Christ, or who are related to him, are so because they have been born again, not of the flesh, but of the will of God, so that no flesh and blood can have any claim upon the spiritual Melchisedec, nor can any fancied merit of flesh and blood claim his attention. This Christ of God was just as much a Priest of God's elect before the foundation of the world as he is now or ever will be. Just as much, we say, because with God there is naught that is new or old, and all things, past, present and to come, are in the presence of God as one eternal now. With God there never has been any development of anything. All things were known to him perfectly from eternity. Therefore, Christ in the eternal mind and purpose of God was the High Priest selected and ordained of God long before there was any revelation of that matter to the faith of the children of God.

When we say that this spiritual Melchisedec, the Lord Jesus Christ, is our High Priest at the righthand of God, we are so apt to let our fancy wander to some imaginary place in space where we may think this Christ is located, but it appears to us that this intercession of the High Priest is not mere theory or doctrine, but is a reality in the experience of the children of God. How do any of the children of God know that this Melchisedec is living and making intercession for them if they never experience this intercession in their lives? It seems to us that if these things are to be really believed by us, there must be a living testimony of it in the lives of the children of God here in the world. Now, Paul tells us that prayer is something we cannot do ourselves, that we do not know what to pray for, nor how to pray for it. He tells us that the way out of this infirmity of ours is through the fact that God has ordained his Spirit to make intercession for us. Now, is not this intercession of the Spirit in the hearts of the children of God the work of Melchisedec at the right hand of God? It does seem so to us. And every true prayer that is ever prayed by any or all of the children of God is indited or inspired in them by this great High Priest, their advocate in the court of heaven. We have an example of this intercession in the twelfth chapter of the Acts. Herod had put Peter in prison under guard, intending to bring him forth to the people after Easter, but the angel of the Lord came and liberated Peter. At the same time prayer was going on in the hearts of the church for Peter's deliverance. This prayer in the church was not any whimsical thought or wish of their own, but was inspired in them by the Spirit of God. This prayer did not change God's mind concerning the imprisonment of the apostle and cause God to release him. No, not at all. But the Spirit in the hearts of the church caused them to pray in harmony with the will of God, and made them to ask for that which God had already planned or predestinated to grant them. Thus, all true prayer is the fruit of the Spirit's intercession in the hearts of the children of God, and this is the living evidence within them that Christ is their eternal Priest King after the order of Melchisedec, at the right hand of God.

If religion does not abound in realities such as these, then it is nothing but a body of doctrine and dogmas and differs not from the religions of the world. But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first-fruits of them that

slept, and this spirit and power of his resurrection in our mortal bodies makes his religion a living reality within his people.

(Editorial by Elder H. H. Lefferts June, 1925.)

OBITUARIES

ELIZABETH JARMON HOLLOWAY
(Died September 25, 1967)

The subject of this sketch was born July 17, 1901, near Newark, Delaware. She was the daughter of Charles H. and Bessie Staton Jarmon, and a granddaughter of Elder Joseph L. Staton. She was married to William H. Holloway on December 21, 1920, by Elder J. G. Eubanks.

She is survived by her husband; two daughters: Helen H. Scheer, Minneapolis, Minn., and Margaret H. Thorn, Alexandria, Va.; two sisters: Helen L. Hawthorn and Annabelle Shakespeare, Newark, Delaware; two grandsons: William E. and Henry H. Scheer, Minneapolis, Minn. Her only son, Corp. Archer Clay Holloway, USAF, was killed in the war on November 23, 1943.

It was my privilege and pleasure to know our departed friend for over twenty years, while serving the Salisbury and Snow Hill Old School Baptist Churches, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

Words fail to express my esteem of her as one of God's dear people. We have known no one who manifested more love for the cause of truth, and welfare of the church than she did. She was eager to hear the gospel and spiritual conversation, and manifested in many ways the identifying marks of those who love His great name. Her home was open to the Old School Baptists: her hands were always ready to lend a helping hand in caring for them, and her heart was open to hear the gospel of Jesus proclaimed. What more can we say, than to you she hath said!

In her passing, her husband, daughters, and grandchildren have lost a precious one, who will continue to live in their memory. The Old School Baptists have lost a devoted one to the Church, which was manifested by her walk and conduct; her friends one who was blessed with that mark, "A good name is rather to be chosen, than great riches."

To the writer her memory will remain precious while we remain on the shores of time. We believe she has departed to be with the Lord, where God will wipe away all tears. Our sympathy reaches to her dear husband, whom we love very much, and to her entire family.

Her funeral was conducted by Elders W. D. Griffin and Arthur Warren September 28, 1967. Interment was in the Old School Baptist Cemetery, Snow Hill, Md.

(Elder) D. V. Spangler

MATTIE STOKES EANES

By request of the Primitive Baptist Church at Camp Branch, I write the obituary of our beloved sister who recently passed from this life into the great beyond, Sister Mattie Stokes Eanes. She was born in Henry County, Virginia, October 13, 1886, the daughter of Bartly and Annie Lyle Stokes; and was married to George W. Eanes December 27, 1910, at the home of her parents by Elder A. L. Moore.

To this union were born three sons and three daughters. One of the sons, George Cabell Eanes was killed by a wood saw November 26, 1935, at the age of twenty-one. Her husband, passed away May 9, 1945, following a heart attack. Sister Eanes joined Camp Branch Church the 1st Sunday in April, 1949, and was baptized by Elder J. E. Burgess.

The church at Camp Branch is deeply saddened by the loss of our dear sister. We loved Sister Eanes very deeply, and miss her presence greatly. She was an humble person, always kind and always willing to do for her church, which she attended faithfully. We feel that Sister Eanes' sufferings, toils and trials are over, and that she has fallen asleep in Jesus, to await his second coming: when he shall gather his jewels home to forever be with him.

Sister Eanes became ill on Saturday morning, and died Monday morning at the Martinsville General Hospital, January 22, 1968. Her funeral was held at McKee Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder Rufus Brown and by Elder Cecil Turner. Her body was laid to rest by her husband and son at Camp Branch Church among a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the coming of our Lord.

The following children survive: Mrs. Jessie Kerley, Chicago, Ill.; Mrs. Virgie Lovell, Mrs. Dorothy Lester, Andrew C. and Stafford C. Eanes, of Martinsville.

Elder Rufus Brown, Moderator
Nancy Haynes, Clerk

WILLIAM BUNYAN McGREGOR

It is with a sad heart that I try to write this obituary.

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove our brother from our midst. The last few months were a nightmare to all of us; but we realize he is now at rest. He went to

sleep to know no more trouble or suffering.

He was born in Hopkins County, Kentucky, and lived his life out there. He was loved and respected by all of his many friends. He was born April 19, 1876, and passed away August 26, 1968. He leaves to mourn, his wife Mona McGregor, and three children: Nell Teague, Paul Clark McGregor and Nana Lou Powell.

He joined the Lick Creek Primitive Baptist Church in June, 1946, and was baptized by our pastor, Elder R. L. Biggs.

Written by his wife

Mona McGregor

IN MEMORY OF SISTER NINA STALLINGS

On November 7, 1887, God graced the home of the late Elder Hughes and wife with a darling little daughter who was named Nina. Their home was near Sherman, Texas. In 1890 Elder Hughes moved with his family to Jackson County, Oklahoma, where sister Nina spent the rest of her life.

In early life sister Nina became a school teacher and on December 19, 1914, she became the wife of brother Morgan Stallings. In the following years sister Stallings showed herself a faithful wife, mother, and homemaker as well as a good neighbor, active in community affairs, always working for the betterment of her community.

On September 13, 1947, sister Stallings came before "Little Flock" Church relating her experience of the Lord's dealings with her and her faith in him as she asked for a home in the church, after which she was baptized by the late Elder W. N. Green, pastor of Little Flock Church, where her father had been pastor for many years.

Four years later the writer became pastor of Little Flock Church and served for almost ten years. During part of that time sister Stallings served the church as clerk and was always found at her post of duty showing great love for God and His people, remaining strong in the faith until her death which came at 5:01 a. m. October 27, 1967.

Our dear sister in Christ and kind friend leaves behind to mourn her passing: her beloved husband, brother Morgan Stallings; two sons, John D. Stallings and Joe L. Stallings; one brother, Lannie Hughes; and one sister, Mrs. Nelson Colyar; together with all of Little Flock Church and a host of other relatives and friends.

Sister Stallings' death brought Little Flock Church to not have a Hughes in its membership for the first time since its constitution, but not for long. On the 4th Sunday in May, 1968, the unworthy writer baptised her brother and his wife, and they became members of Little Flock Church. And may I also add that several years ago I baptized her husband, brother Morgan Stallings. Later I lived in their home as well as visiting with them numerous times, always finding both of them kind and hospitable, showing christian love in their walk and conversation.

The writer conducted sister Stallings' funeral service, assisted by her pastor, Elder C. M. Haygood, after which her body was laid to rest in the Altus Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers to await the resurrection morning when we all hope to meet again and praise God together, eternally.

May God's grace, love, and mercy be with brother Stallings, the two sons and the grandchildren, the little church and all who mourn her passing. Amen.

W. W. Taylor

JAMES FRANKLIN MASSEY

Brother Massey was born April 21, 1894, and departed this life April 25, 1968, at the age of 74 years. He had been in declining health for several years.. He was in Memorial Hospital at the time of his death which was so peaceable that even his daughter who was at his bedside didn't realize what had happened until he was gone. It was the writer's privilege to visit with him not more than one hour before his death and he seemed to be getting along about as usual. His heart had given him trouble for years.

Brother Massey was born and reared in Caswell County, North Carolina, the son of the late Thomas Jefferson and Martha Frances Aldridge Massey. He is survived by his wife, Sister Jennie Walker Massey, and three daughters, Mrs. W. M. Stewart of Charlotte, N. C., Mrs. Earl Rudd and Mrs. Wallis Smith of Burlington, N. C.; one son, James T. Massey, Mebane, N. C.; two sisters, Mrs. Nannie Hardin and Mrs. Ossie Rice of Burlington, N. C.; one brother, R. J. Massey of Yanceyville, N. C.; three half sisters, Mrs. Ollie Massey and Mrs. Rudy Allision of Burlington, N. C.; Mrs. Curry Walker of Route 3, Burlington, N. C., two half brothers, Calvin Massey of Burlington, N. C. and Amon Massey of Graham, N. C.; and eight grandchildren.

Brother Massey united with Bush Arbor Church August 10, 1958, and was a most faithful and lovely member. His life was one of meekness and humility. Even from childhood he was a good Bible student, and enjoyed talking of his joys and sorrows, ever looking to God for all His Blessing for time and eternity.

We feel that the Church at Bush Arbor has lost a precious brother, his wife a faithful and true husband, the children a wise and lovely father. May God's richest blessing be upon each of us who mourn his passing, believing that our loss is his gain.

His funeral was conducted by the writer who loved him dearly, at Bush Arbor Church,

and his body was laid to await the coming of Christ in the church cemetery.

Done by request of the church by his pastor.

W. C. King

ANNIE OAKES LEWIS

Sister Lewis was born March 5, 1894, and passed away November 15, 1967. She was the daughter of the late Elder Thomas and Nora Oakes, and a faithful member of Bannister Springs Primitive Baptist Church, Pittsylvania County, Virginia.

She leaves to mourn their loss, two sons, five step-sons, one step-daughter; and one sister.

Her funeral was held at Scott Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder Raymond Payne, and Elder O. K. Tench; and she was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park, there to await the coming of the Lord. Written by

Mabel Butcher

MRS. MATILDA BOWMAN

The subject of this sketch died September 22, 1968, after having been a most active member of Hopeful Church, Ozark, Alabama, seventy years. She was the widow of the late John T. Bowman who served that church as a deacon for fifty years; and the mother of Deacon Frank Bowman, well known among Primitive Baptists. She was eighty-nine years of age, and had been in ill health for several years.

She is survived by two sons, Wade and Frank. Her daughter, Mrs. Early Dillard, is deceased. Surviving also are three grandchildren, ten great grandchildren, and nine great great grandchildren, of Ozark, Alabama; a brother, Tom Chapman, Samson, Alabama; and a sister, Mrs. Detsy Anderson, Coffee Spring, Alabama.

Funeral services were held September 24th at her beloved Hopeful Church, and she was placed beside the remains of her dear husband in the adjoining cemetery, with Elders J. J. Watson and J. J. Collins officiating. The later served as her pastor eighteen years. He used as a theme, "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all." (Proverbs)

Truly a wonderful mother in Israel has gone home to be with the Lord.

J. J. Collins

GEORGE A. PAUL

With sadness we pen a few words in memory of our much loved brother, George A. Paul. He was born March 12, 1879, to Milton and Edna Dean Paul, near Troy, Ala. who were of Primitive Baptist faith. At an early age Brother George was given a hope in our Lord and Saviour. He said it took only once for God to make him know he was a helpless creature and could do nothing. God gave him great faith and spiritual understanding. He united with Mt. Zion church in Birmingham, Ala. fifty-three years ago. He came to Birmingham at an early age, and made a name for himself in the construction business.

As time passed his faith seemed stronger and his spiritual understanding greater. He firmly believed that God had done all things necessary for the saving and preservation of His people.

He quietly slipped away April 13, 1968; and was laid to rest in Elmwood Cemetery to await the resurrection of this body, which he so strongly believed in. He leaves to mourn, his precious wife, Mrs. Pearl Ward Paul, and one son and six daughters. We would say to the family: Sorrow not even as others who have no hope, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so those also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him . . . Then we that are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord. "Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Elder H. C. Moon and Mr. Edward Kimbrough spoke words of comfort to the family and many friends who had gathered to pay a final tribute to one who had answered the call. I would commend you unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. To the only wise God our Saviour be glory, majesty, dominion and power now and forever.

Submitted in brotherly love and precious hope,

A little sister,
Mrs. R. A. Hocutt

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M.

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 11 A. M.

WRIGHTS' CREEK CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 11:00 A. M.

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., six miles SE. of Sulligent, Alabama.

C. C. HAND, Pastor
5840 Court O C P
Birmingham, Ala.

MACEDONIA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located one and one-half miles Southwest of Sulligent, Alabama, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT R. PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
HURTON PITTS, Clerk
Sulligent, Ala.

MT. ZION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each 4th Sunday at 11 A. M. about 10 miles N. W. of Birmingham just off of 78 Highway in Westwood, 2601 Forrestdale Blvd.

H. C. MOON
C. C. HAND, Pastors

OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., 6 miles S. W. of Winfield, Ala.

C. C. HAND, Pastor

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each second Sunday afternoon at 2 P. M., ten miles SW. of Fayette, Alabama.

C. C. HAND
R. W. RHODES, Pastors

ELAM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located two miles North of Goshen, Pike County, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 o'clock.

J. P. MORGAN, Pastor
A. C. CARTER, Clerk
1335 Avalon Lane,
Montgomery 6, Ala.

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.

C. C. HAND
R. W. RHODES, Pastors

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before.

E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Pratt City, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. Meeting place at Alder Street at top of hill, first car going into Pratt City from Birmingham.

H. C. MOON, Pastor

MT. CARMEL CHURCH, Coffee Springs, Alabama, meets each first Sunday 11 A. M.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

ZION ROCK OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, twenty-two miles South of Andalusia, Alabama, meets every first Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
NORA McLEOD, Acting Clerk

PILGRIM REST CHURCH, located five miles north of Fordyce, Arkansas (about ¾ mile off Hy. 167, and located near Barnes Lumber Co.) meets each third Sunday at 10:30.

W. W. HUDSON, JR. Pastor

HARMONY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, ten miles South of Jay, Santa Rosa County, Florida, meets every second Sunday and Saturday before at 11:00 A. M.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
GRACE UTLEY, Clerk

NAOMI OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets every third Sunday at 11:00 A. M., six miles South of McKenzie, Alabama.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
E. C. WEAVER, Clerk
Rt. 5, Box 50-B,
Andalusia, Ala.

SHILOH OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, seven miles Northeast of Andalusia, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
NORA LEE McLEOD, Clerk
Rt. 3,
Red Level, Ala.

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

WHITE WATER OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located about one mile northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, meets each fourth Sunday afternoon at 2:30 P. M. The annual Homecoming is still held the first Sunday in July and Saturday before, with ser-

vices beginning at 10:30.

DAVID E. TURNER, Pastor

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Stockton, California, meets second Sundays, 10:30 A. M., at 5620 E. Marsh Street. All lovers of the truth invited.

T. R. JEFFERSON, Pastor
MYRTLE TIPTON, Clerk
733 7th St.
Hallister, Calif. 95023

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Compton, California, meets each fourth Sunday at the home of L. W. Langwell, 12812 S. Williams Street.

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in the United States), meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is located one mile south of Newark, Delaware, just off of Highway 896.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK CHURCH, Miami, Florida, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before, SW. 29th Avenue and 6th Street. We extend an invitation to any interested to visit us.

MRS. J. M. FUTCH,
7005 SW. 21st Street,
Miami, Florida

NEW HARMONY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Hiram, Ga., meets every first Sunday at 11 o'clock.

O. J. CROKER, Pastor
J. F. JORDAN, Clerk

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located at 5th and East Park Street, Weiser, Idaho, meets each 4th Sunday at 11 o'clock. Address any communications to:

ERNEST J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
FLOSSIE ATTEBERY, Clerk
Rt. 1, Box 202,
Hermiston, Oregon 97838

PLEASANT VALLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas. Meets with Mrs. Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C. on each second Sunday.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE LOST CREEK CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, meets first Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Kentucky, ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton, on Grayson Highway. Leave U. S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

NEW HOPE CHURCH (better known as Lick Creek) meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Kentucky.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE ZION CHURCH OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS, Mayfield, Kentucky, meets first Sunday each month at 11 A. M., on South 7th Street.

J. N. DARNELL, Pastor

NEW HOPE CHURCH, Spearsville, La. meets first Sundays and Saturday afternoons before at 3:30.

J. L. SMITH, Pastor
C. C. BARRON, Clerk

LIBERTY HILL CHURCH, located six miles northeast of Farmerville,La., ¼ mile east of Farmerville-Marion Highway, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30. Services are also held on each second Sunday at 10:30.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

UNION CHURCH, located near Linville, La., meets each third Sunday at 10:30 and on Saturday afternoon before at 2:30 P. M.

DAVID E. TURNER, Pastor

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Baltimore, Maryland, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Street, near Calvert.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on Falls Road about twenty miles north of Baltimore.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

HOPEWELL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Hopewell, N. J., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. All visitors are welcome.

ARTHUR R. WARREN, Pastor
MARY L. HELLINGS, Clerk
4 Maple Lane
Pennington, N. J. 08534

OLIVE AND HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Shokan, N. Y., meets each 2nd Sunday at 2:00 P. M. March through and including November.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
DEACON E. K. ADSIT, Clerk

THE WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Warwick, Orange County, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are held at A. R. Vail's home, 55 Maple Ave., Warwick at 11 A. M.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

THE MIDDLEBURG OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH meets at the home of Deacon Woodrow W. Bellinger, Duanesburg, N. Y. on fifth Sundays when the Lord so wills.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
BEATRICE E. HOCKING, Clerk
419 Toll St., Scotia, N. Y.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, New York City, meets every first and third Sundays at McBurney Branch Y. W. C. A. 215 W. 23rd Street, corner of 7th Ave. (Elevator to 2nd floor.) 11 A. M. — 1:30 P. M. All visitors are welcome.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

THE WILSON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Wilson, N. C., meets each second Sunday at 3 P. M., and Saturday evening before at 7:30 P. M. The location is on the corner of Green and Jackson Streets.

D. B. STOKES, Pastor
MRS. BETTIE RICHARDSON, Clerk

FALLS OF TAR RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Rocky Mount, N. C., meets each second Sunday and Saturday before. Quarterly meetings March, June, September and December.

D. B. STOKES, Pastor
NINA PEARSON, Clerk

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:00 P. M.

C. M. HAGGOOD, Pastor
ANA STEWART, Clerk
Granite, Okla. 73547

BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin, Oregon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes. Address communications to Lloyd Spikes, Elgin, Oregon.

ERNEST ATTEBERY, Pastor
SPENCER BURCH, Clerk

ROCK SPRINGS OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, meets each first Sunday at 10:30. The meeting house is located on highway 222, about one-quarter mile of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets each 5th Sunday from May through September; and meets at Needmore, Pa., on 5th Sundays from October through April, with all day meeting the 2nd Sunday in October.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
ORIEN MELLOTT, Clerk
McConnellsburg, Pa.

THE FIRST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH of Memphis, Tenn., meets each Sunday morning at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday night before the second Sunday each month at 7:30 P. M. The church is located on Andrews Road one block north of Hiway 70 in the Ellandale Community, 7 miles east of Memphis.

H. G. BROWN, Pastor
791 Watson St., Memphis
H. R. PRINCE, Asst. Pastor
RICHARD H. CAMPBELL, Clerk

CANE CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and is located nine miles Southwest of Martin, Tennessee. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
J. B. JONES, Clerk
Rt. 1, Martin, Tenn.

BORDEAUX PREDESTINARIAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Nashville, Tenn., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. The church is located on the old Hydes Ferry Road in Bordeaux, in Nashville. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE WALNUT FORK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Cottage Grove, Tennessee, meets on the second Sunday of each month.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor
R. L. VEAZEY, SR., Clerk

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Sharps Chapel, Tenn., meets at 11 A. M. each second Sunday. We are located about fifteen miles north of Maynardville, Tenn., on Big Valley Road. There is a sign on the main highway showing where to turn.

JOHN WILDER, Moderator
N. E. LAY, Clerk

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, Houston, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before 10:30 A. M. Church is located at 815 Little York Road between Highway 75 and East Texas Freeway 59.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
IRENE WISENBAKER, Clerk

MT. ZION CHURCH, Rt. 2, Box 23, Weslaco, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.; and each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. seven miles West of Weslaco, on highway 83.

JOE L. HAMRICK, Pastor
E. B. AULT, Clerk

SARDIS CHURCH, Amarillo, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 10:30, in the home of E. J. Parsons, 1711 Lincoln Street.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, has moved their meeting place to 3629 8th Avenue. They meet each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Take College Ave. bus to Butler and Ryon; go one block West, then half block North to church.

C. U. LANDERS, Pastor

THE ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST CHURCH, Lawn, Texas, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
MRS. NOLA STEWART, Clerk

AN ARM OF PILGRIM REST CHURCH, meets each second Sunday and Saturday night before at Earth, Texas.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
A. A. CHAMBERS, Clerk

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets on the second and fourth Sundays of each month at 10 A. M., in the meeting house at intersection of Highways 123 and 87. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

GERALD D. SHIPMAN, Pastor
LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk

THE OLD SALEM CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS, four miles South of Teague, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

SAINTS REST OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each first and third Sunday at 11 A. M., at 2710 Engle Street.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
D. G. CONNELL, Clerk

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30.

LLOYD WALL, Pastor
GUY SISK, Clerk

The churches of which Elder E. J. Lambert is pastor meet as follows:

PHARON, meets first Sunday morning and Saturday night before, 5 miles NE Hawkins, Texas.

REHOBETH, meets second Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles N ElDorado, Arkansas.

NEILA RYAN, Clerk
1601 N. Emmett
ElDorado, Arkansas

BETHEL, meets third Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles NE ElDorado, Arkansas.

JEAN H. BURNES, Clerk
606 N. Parkway,
ElDorado, Arkansas

GOOD HOPE, meets fourth Sunday morning and Saturday morning before 7 miles NE Winnsboro, Texas.

GERTRUDE JONES, Clerk
905 Y Drive
Winnsboro, Texas

Everyone welcomed.

ELDER E. J. LAMBERT, Pastor
306 Richardson St.
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located on Route 28, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia.

ARTHUR L. CARTER, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is near Lucketts, about eight miles north of Leesburg, Va.

The brethren and friends will please note that the meetings at Broad Run Church, near Poolesville, Maryland, have been discontinued; and that the meetings are now held each third

Sunday at New Valley, as shown above.

L. D. DUKE, Clerk
Charlestown, W. Va.

MT. ZION CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, Virginia. on Route 50, between Washington and Winchester, Virginia.

C. W. NORMAN, Clerk
Herndon, Va.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are aways glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Manassas 368-4857.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 8:00 P. M., Fairmont Park, 2023 Tidewater Drive.

C. N. BUNN, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Qualla Road, Chesterfield County, Virginia, meets each first Sunday at 10 A. M. Following are directions to the meeting house: South from Richmond at McGuire Circle, take Rt. 360 nine miles to "Longest" Service Station; turn left and go one mile, and turn right on No. 363 one mile to church.

ELDER C. N. BUNN, Pastor
LILLIE WEIDER, Clerk
2560 Elliham Ave.,
Richmond 34, Va.

DAN RIVER CHURCH, between Danville, Va. and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville, Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday night before, on Bradley Road.

H. W. WRAY, Pastor
R. T. HOLLEY, Clerk

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each first Sunday at 11:00 o'clock. This church is located seven miles west of Gretna, Virginia on 605 one-half mile from Route 40. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
RUTH MATTOX, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Chatham, Va.

BELLVIEW PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday night before at 7:30. This church is located near Cave Springs about four miles from Roanoke, Virginia, one mile from 221. All visitors are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
J. A. SOWDER, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Salem, Va.

SANDY LEVEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each third Sunday afternoon at 2:30. This church is located on Route 635 about 5 miles south from Hardy, Va. 10 miles from Vinton, Va. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
PEARL DUDLEY, Clerk
Rt. 1, Box 282,
Hardy, Va.

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each fourth Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday morning before at 11:00 o'clock. This church is located on highway 623 about two miles from Fairystone Park. All visitors are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
G. M. MARTIN, Clerk
Rt. 1,
Bassett, Va.

GREEN HILL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each fourth Sunday afternoon at 2:30. This church is located five miles north of Stuart, Virginia, just off highway 58. All lovers of truth are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
MRS. S. L. WALKER, Clerk
Rt. 2, Box 207
Stuart, Va.

BETHEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, of Predestinarian Faith, of Riffe, Washington, meets each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before at 11 o'clock. For information write the Clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. OPAL HUNTTING, Clerk
Silver Creek, Wash. 98585

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, Naches, Washington, meets at 11:00 A. M. each second Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MARGUERITE SIMPSON, Clerk
1306 Fairview Ave.
Yakima, Wash. 98901

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 137 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1969 NO. 2

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/69
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THOUGHTS FROM "WHERE"

'Twas the dismal hour past midnight,
In a dream that is still just a blur,
A troubled mind was made to fear
Strange thoughts that came from "where."

The beginning of the Creation of God
Was in these thoughts that ran
In a mind that could only think
The vain things that be of man.

There was Eve, a type of the True Church,
The Bride of Christ the Lamb,
And Adam, a shadow or figure
Of Him that was to come.

There in the first transgression
I thought, how could it be,
That Adam should give His precious life
For the fruit of an ordinary tree.

A thousand times, NO! I was rebuked
For Adam the Son of God,
Only for the Love of His glorious Bride
Would He give this affirmative nod.

As the Lamb of God for His Elect Bride
Came down from the courts above,
And required the fruits only She could give
Joy, Peace, Faith, Meekness, and Love.

He died for His own and redeemed them,
And from the world set them apart,
With a wonderful change wrought deep within
A broken and contrite heart.

We see the Arminian churches
Bring fruits of the works of man,
But the fruit Eve gave was Her very own
As only God's children can.

And in the Songs of Solomon
Wisdom's record has sealed
The sweetest fruits in all the world
In a Garden of Gardens revealed.

A Garden enclosed is My Sister, My Spouse,
A spring shut up, a fountain sealed;
Let my Beloved come into His Garden
And eat His pleasant fruits.

Roger B. White
Van, Texas

"US" EMBRACES ALL
GOD'S PEOPLE

1741 Davis R.D.
Rt. 1,
Maineville, Ohio, 45039

Dear Elder Spangler:

Reading the **Signs of the Times** has been so much comfort to me, and especially for the past fifteen months — since I got a back injury in July, 1967, with an operation in October, and have been confined at home most of the time since.

I was blessed to be at our association at Union Church, Sharps Chapel. Tenn. September 6, 7 and 8, 1968. Elder R. L. Biggs from Nashville and Elder Prince from Memphis were blessed to be with us. I thought that Elder Biggs, Elder Prince, Elder John Wilder and Elder Adra Davis were so wonderfully blessed to preach for us. I believe the joy and peace of God was with us. When the time came for us to be separated, it caused my heart to ache; but I had the sweet consolation that there is an association in the future where we will meet, and the song "Dear Friends Farewell," will be sung no more. If in this life only we had hope in Christ we would be of all men most miserable.

But our hope is in Christ, and we are in Christ. That hope is an anchor of the soul, and is both sure and steadfast. God fixed it that way, and it cannot be changed. God's people are one family, and they were God's people in wisdom before one of them existed. The Bible

tells us that God forknew his people. I believe there never was a time but that God had a people. His love for them is just as eternal as he is.

I have thought many times of the word "US". We see U.S. over postoffice doors, and many other places, and we know it embraces all the American people. But we find the word "us" many times in the Bible and I want to tell you who the word us in the Bible embraces. The Apostle says there was grace given **us** in Christ before the world began; and the word embraced the whole family of God, and their names were written upon the pages of the Lamb's Book of Life before one of them existed. The Bible tells us that God foreknew his people. I believe there never was a time but that God had a people. His love for them is just as eternal as he is.

We find in Romans 8:32, "He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for **us** all, how shall he not also freely give **us** all things. **Us** is mentioned twice in this verse, meaning the whole family of God. When the angel declared that He shall save his people from their sins, it embraced **us** — the family of God.

In Revelation 1:5, we read. ". . . Unto him that loved **us**, and washed **us** from our sins in his own blood." When he was bleeding, groaning, and dying on the cross, saying, "It is finished," he saved **us**. Let us see how many the word embraces, by turning to Revelation 5:11: "And I beheld, and heard the voice of many angels around about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand, and thousands of thousands." In the 9th and 10th verses of the same chapter we read, ". . . For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed **us** to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made **us** unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."

The number that the word **us** embraces cannot be reckoned.

Christ saved his people before he left the world, and will call every one he saved. All preachers got here too late to help, and they, too, were dead in sins. Paul was dead in trespasses and sins until the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus made him free. God does not have a dozen ways to save sinners. Paul made it very plain that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom Paul said he was chief. I feel sure that if Christ saved the chief of sinners, he will surely save all the rest of his people. They were saved before they were ever called out of darkness. The Bible says, "Who hast saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us before the world began." The calling is just as sure as the saving. Christ said that all that the Father gave him should come to him. We hear it said by so-called preachers, come and be saved before it is too late. Don't turn the spirit away. The Lord can't save you unless you will let him. Such as this charges God with folly. Primitive Baptists deny all of this. I feel that it dishonors God from start to finish, for we are told that God does whatever his soul desires. God predestinated that his people should be conformed to the image of his Son. He predestinated to call them. I am declaring that God is able, and will carry out all his decrees according to his eternal counsel. God has never consulted poor, puny man to let Him do anything. He has never changed the way of salvation, for all are saved by the blood of Christ. Abel was saved by the blood of Christ just as all the rest of God's family are saved. The fountain that opened on Calvary's cross ran toward the hinder sea and toward the former sea; and it was for the cleansing of "US", which embraces so many people: the whole family of God which were embraced in the covenant of grace, ordered in all things and sure.

So, all you humble people of God, rest assured that if you were embraced in the word US, heaven is your home.

When at the throne of grace, remember me. I am a cripple and can't go as often as I would love to go, so I love to hear from God's people — those who believe this doctrine. When I read letters

from them I am comforted so much.

In hope of eternal life,
Garrett Wilson

HE WILL NOT REMEMBER OUR SINS

Rt. 6, Box 408,
Hopkinsville, Ky. 42240

Elders Spangler and Wood,
Dear Editors:

I have a subscription to send in, and also to renew my own, so just thought I would mention the Soldier Creek Association which was held with the Soldier Creek Church the 11, 12 and 13th of October. All was reported in peace, and there was much fellowship manifested; for which I am sure all felt thankful. Elders Biggs, Prince and the writer were present, together with the Moderator, Elder Paul Poyner.

Truly the doctrine of God our Saviour was set forth to His praise and our comfort. May it please our God to ever keep us under the shadow of his countenance for Christ's sake. In Isaiah 43:25, we read where the Saviour declared by the mouth of his prophet, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." This was not for anything we have or have not done, but for his own sake, that he might fulfill the will of Him that sent him. "And will not remember your sins," is a precious promise indeed; for my sins are many. Sometimes they seem higher than the highest mountains, and I cannot surmount them; but when it please the great Jehovah, as I am made to hope, to raise me by His Spirit and waft me as a gentle breeze above those walls, then I can praise Him as I ought.

Will close by saying, May He uphold you in your work, and ever be with and keep us all.

(Elder) W. Y. Chandler

"These sought their register among those that were reckoned by genealogy, but they were not found: therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood. And the Tirshatha said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things, till there stood up a priest with Urim and Thummim."

(Ezra 2:62, 63)

It is with fear and trembling that I undertake to write my thoughts on so deep and mysterious scripture as the above. My mind has seldom been led to dwell on Old Testament writings, either in prophesy, or types and shadows. The fear is ever before me that I write my own thoughts, without divine guidance. I take comfort, however, in the thought, if this should be so, God will protect his people from them, and I will be left to wallow in my own folly. I hope and pray that He will guide my pen and I will be enabled to feast with you on the revelation as it is presented.

I was looking up references on "Belief" in regard to Abraham and Isaac, and had started to read about the return of the Israelites from captivity, when this scripture in Ezra seemed to "jump" at me. My mind was swallowed up so that I forgot about the subject Belief.

The reader will better acquaint himself with the thoughts I hope to bring out, by reading all of chapter 2 of Ezra, especially the verse preceding our subject, before continuing with the reading here.

During the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Jerusalem was overthrown and the children of Israel carried to Babylon in captivity. They dwelt there seventy years before God put it into the heart of King Cyrus to build a house of God in Jerusalem. He called for the return of the Isralites to accomplish this task.

Now the number of Israelites who returned were recorded by genealogy, or their regular descent from their ancestors, the twelve tribes of Israel. These tribes were the children of promise, their lineage tying them to God through his promise to Abraham.

All went well with most of them on their return. They were like the obedient son who stayed home and never strayed,

but who missed the feasting and rejoicing of the prodigal son when he returned. They were counted, and gave of their ability to work and of their resources to build the house of God, and settled in the city.

They receive this city by inheritance, by promise and fulfilling the law of Moses. Everyone of them could check the record, and prove, "I am the son of Elam," etc. They all had an ancestor to lay claim to their inheritance. They were called by the name of some ancestor on this side of Jordan.

This people had a circle around them that protected and kept them in, as it kept their enemies out. This fence or enclosure or fold was the promise of God to their father Abraham. They knew Abraham was their father through recorded genealogy. I believe this is the fold the Lord had in mind when he said, "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold." These represent the ninety-nine safely in the Shepherd's fold. However the Shepherd is concerned about the one, the stray, who is not encircled. He said, "Them also I must bring."

Matthew 18: 13,14, tells us, ". . . he rejoiceth more of that sheep than of the ninety and nine, which went not astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father that one of these little ones should perish." So the one on the outside is as safe as the ninety and nine, for in that final day there will be one fold and one Shepherd.

This brings us to those whose names were not found on the register of genealogy, and their names were not proven to be Israelites. Verse 61 tells us that their ancestors took wives of the daughters of Barzillai, the Gileadite, and were called by their name. You will find by reading references on the Gileadites, that they were the tribes of Gad and Reuben, who stayed beyond Jordan when Israel was led out of Egypt. They were separated from their brethren, the other tribes of Israel, when they begged of Moses to let them stay on that side of Jordan, when the others crossed over into the promised land. The Israelites that crossed the river lost track of them and failed to record their genealogy. Thus they were still children of promise, but without legal claim to their property. They were Gileadites instead of Israelites, and had lost their identity as heirs of promise.

Because they were thought not to be of the priesthood according to Jewish heritage, they were called polluted, and were refused entrance into the city.

Can you not imagine in our own time of birth certificates, registration, etc., what this lost, travel weary people must have felt when refused the home they had traveled so far to obtain? They had the same faith and customs of those who threw them out. Really and truly children of Israel, they felt the need of the ordinances of Moses' law. The rulers not only had them thrown out, but refused to let them partake of these ordinances and offerings. They were not to, "Eat of the most holy things 'till there stood up a priest with Urim and Thummim."

The Gileadites had followed the command of a man, had fulfilled all conditions of the law like the others, as they traveled the long journey from captivity to Jerusalem. How bitter must have been their sorrow to find that it availed them nothing because their names were not written there. The governor, in rejecting them, did not give them a condition to perform, or a work to do. He did not tell them to get busy and prove they were heirs. Dear reader, have you not felt the experience of these who had come to the end of their own efforts, when your own hopes and plans had vanished into nothing?

The world calls this place the crossroad of decision, and we can either enter or refuse to; but this was not the answer given to these weary travellers. Even after they had failed to bring their identity themselves, and after they found out their own works were in vain, and after they were called polluted, hope was given them. They were in the same condition their forefathers had experienced at the Red Sea, when they were told to, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." All the travels, hardships

and sacrifices were in vain, because they had come to an impossible barrier. So it is always thus with the lost sheep — the one outside the fold: it always has to, "Wait upon the Lord."

God in his love and mercy, set apart the elect in his own mind and purpose before the world began. But they have to travel this weary road to Jerusalem to know their unworthiness; to feel so poluted and cast down, and to know that there is nothing they can do to make themselves heirs of promise, before they can have the desire and patience to, "wait upon the Lord." They were not allowed to eat of the most holy things until their heirship was established, so they thristed and hungered.

I believe this people, this Gilead, whose genealogy was lost, typifies the, "other sheep", and that the most holy things they were barred from, represent faith, hope and love of God's people. They are the things Christ promised the disciples that the Spirit of Truth would show them following his ascension. ". . . He shall take of the things of mine and show it unto you." (John 16:15) Peter said, ". . . his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness." We can only partake of those most holy things that pertain to life and godliness, as they are fed to us by the Spirit of Truth. We feel so unworthy and polluted, but the Spotless Priest, who stood up as a shining brightness, cleansed the vilest sinners, and made them worthy to eat: — the pollution of his own people vanished in his life, death and resurrection. Ah! to have such an high priest to stand in his shining armor and cleanse my sin-sick soul; to prove my heirship with those in the fold.

While we are in the journey of our own righteousness, these holy things mean nothing to us. But when we are shown the futility of these works by the governor (law), and are given a desire for holy food, we are made to beg for the promised land denied us because of our lost genealogy. Hope springs within us when the Tirshatha says, "Till there stood up a priest with Urim and Thummin." What kind of a priest could this be, who would restore their identity and relationship to the house of Israel? And who could make them worthy to eat of the most holy things.

When translated, Urim and Thummin means lights and perfections, or the shining and the perfect. There must stand up for them a priest who is Light and Shining Perfection. Is there such an one? Hebrews 5:9,10, tells us, "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; called of God and high priest after the order of Melchisedec." So this priest with perfection stood for them, and made their record straight.

We read in John 8:12, "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." So he led the Gileadites into the promised city, where they could feast with their brethren on the most holy things. Their priest with Lights and Perfections made their lineage sure. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

These people of the tribes of Gad and Reuben typify those to whom the Lord referred when he told his disciples to, "Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." And again, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." They were returned to the fold without performing one duty. The one lost sheep was united with the ninety and nine. Their pollution was erased from the sight of God, and they were made perfect by the Author of their salvation.

I would beg you to read these thoughts with charity for the writer. I am weak and in need of your prayers and the mercy of God, but for a time I was comforted in my meditations.

Mrs. Cisco Barron,
Rt. 2
Spearsville, La. 71277

A GOODLY HERITAGE

"The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places: yea, I have a goodly heritage." (Psalm 16:6)

This scripture is found in one of three psalms that are referred to as, "Michtam of David," or, "A golden psalm of David." There are golden experiences, or lessons, that all of God's children learn in His dealings with them, that they will always remember above all others; and will treasure them all their days. They will all seem connected in some way or manner, to the others, and are from the same source.

David's experiences were many and varied in his pilgrimage through this low ground of sin and sorrow. He learned many things in his travels, which he refers to in the above scripture as the lines that are fallen unto him. These are the lines of truth that God, in his infinite wisdom and mercy, had made known unto David to teach him the frailty of man. David wrote many psalms in his travel through life, and in them he tells of times of sorrow and distress, and also seasons of deliverance, peace, joy and love. He acknowledged the weakness and sinfulness of the creature, and ascribed all glory, honor and majesty unto his Heavenly Father for the mercy and grace that led him in all of his way.

David was called of God from following after his father's sheep in the fields, and was annointed by the prophet Samuel to be king over Israel. He delivered the armies of Israel from Goliath and the Phillistine host; experienced a love that surpasses the natural affections of man; fled for his life before Saul; was crowned King of Israel; had Uriah killed for his wife Bathsheba; was dethroned by his son Absalom; regained his throne and ruled over Israel for forty years. In all of his uneven journey, which typifies the travels of all of the Lord's children, David trusted in the Lord his God with all his heart. We have the testimony that he was a man after God's own heart. In all of his way the Lord was leading him and teaching him the glorious truths that are the rich treasure of all the Lord's people in all ages.

Every heaven born soul can see in the life of David, the same trials, conflicts and tribulations that they feel they have experienced since they hope they were called of God from running after the lusts of the flesh and cares of the world; and were made to see the beauty of another world. Their prayer is that this is the same annointing that is typified by David when he says, "Then Samuel took the horn of oil and annointed him in the midst of his brethren; and the spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward."

They can say that their way has been different from that day; but oh, it has not been an easy way. It seems that their walk has not been changed from bad to good, but rather from bad to worse; and it causes them to go mourning their undone condition most of their days. David spent many of his days mourning his plight, and wondering if the Lord was clean gone forever. It takes a very hot fire to refine gold and burn out the dross, to reveal the pure metal; even so, it takes severe trials to strip the pride of the flesh, physical strength, and love for the pleasures of this world, to reveal the vessels of mercy which were afore prepared unto glory. The processing will be very distressing to the individual, but the work of grace shall be accomplished, and all to the honor and glory of God's holy name.

After all of David's experiences, when he was old he was blessed to know and to say, "Although my house be not so with God, yet He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure." In this he acknowledges that it was not his way before the Lord that had entitled him to anything: nevertheless God had made an everlasting covenant with him, that was unchangeable. This covenant was all of his salvation and all of his desire. He did not say that it would grow into his salvation in the process of time, but that God made it not to grow. This was because it was made full and complete, and

ordered in all things and sure.

David said, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places." Surely this is the feeling of every trembling child of grace when they are blessed to look back over all the way in which they have been brought. They are made to rejoice in the knowledge that these lines of truth are sent forth from their Heavenly Father into their hearts, and that they come down sovereignly as the rain and snow falls upon all the earth. They are blessed to feast upon the goodness and greatness of God's love and mercy as they learn these beautiful truths. It is indeed a pleasant place when they are blessed to feel to see the truth of the scripture, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handywork." Then they can see the wisdom and perfection of the creation, and the power in the sustaining of it down to the present day, according to His promises. These things are ever around them but they cannot behold the beauty and the glory of them with the natural eye alone.

God is unchangeable, and therefore what was the truth at one time ever remains the truth. These lines of truth originate with God, and have ever been the same. They have been made known to the Lord's people in all ages, as it pleased Him. They appear continually in the scriptures of the Old and New Testament, and they are being learned and experienced by his redeemed as they live in the present time. This causes that fellowship His children have for others whom they may never have met in the flesh, and for those who lived in other ages, when it is known that they believed the same truths. This is because they know the way these lessons are taught; and that they have the same teacher. These are the unbroken lines of truth that are from everlasting to everlasting because they are of God. In one place we read, "Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." Only the mighty power of God could sustain them unchanged down through the ages.

These lines of truth are many as understood and experienced by the Lord's people; and yet they are all one. They are all included in the one truth. "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." The making known of this great and awsome truth to the sons of men, is done in many phases, or lines, The natural mind cannot comprehend the magnitude of this one glorious truth: as the children of Israel could not look upon the face of God and live, even so the finite mind of man cannot contain the fulness of this great truth. It is therefore revealed to them as they walk the path that is laid before them, and is interwoven into all their experiences of grace in this life. For now we see through a glass darkly, here a little and there a little, but all are evidences of this one basic truth. This is not to infer that God's creatures are not capable of comprehending something that God would have them to know, but rather this fullness of knowledge is reserved unto the heirs of promise until that day when Christ shall appear in all His glory, and receive them unto himself, to dwell with him forever. As the law was the schoolmaster unto Christ, even so these lines of truth proceed from and lead to the source, which is God. They teach this one great truth, line upon line, and precept upon precept, to their acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness.

These lines of truth are the hope of the Children of God as they wander in this wilderness of sin, and enter into that which is within the veil. These lines reach down to them in their darkest hours and lighten their pathway. They comfort them in their deepest distress, and enable them to render praise unto His matchless name, and say, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." These are some of the reasons why it is such a pleasant place when the lines of truth are let down unto His little ones, and they are lifted above the cares and trials of this life for a short season of refreshing.

It is recorded in Isaiah 25:6, "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined." This is the Lord God's blessing upon all that are in this mountain; and He has prepared it for them alone to enjoy. This is Mount Sion the City of the Living God, and surely these lines of truth that fall unto his children in pleasant places, are some of the things that they feast on at the Lord's hand. They are then blessed for a little season to behold the glory of their Heavenly Father, and to worship him in spirit and in truth.

These are all evidences along the way for those who declare that this world is not their home, and that they look for a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. They are as the highway markers that tell them they are on the right road. This city for which they are looking, will contain the fulfillment of all their hopes and dreams, and all those things that are precious to them that love God. This is the Holy City, new Jerusalem, which John saw coming down from God out of heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. This is when the bride, (the whole household of faith, elect and chosen,) shall be complete in all her beauty; and the husband (Christ) can say "Thou art all fair my love: there is no spot in thee." Then all shall be love, peace, and joy, and this most pleasant of all places shall be their blessed abode through the endless ages.

Yea, they have a goodly heritage!

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

EVERLASTING SALVATION

There is but one Saviour. His name is Jesus Christ. He is the only One that saints desire either on earth or in heaven. He has loved his people with an everlasting love, and has saved his people with an everlasting salvation.

Jesus is Lord, King, High Priest, Saviour, Father, Friend, Husband, Head, Leader, and All Things to all of his people. He is not two saviours: He is One Saviour. In Christ saints have a Just God and Saviour, and it is altogether true that He came into the world to save sinners.

The salvation of one Church by one Jesus is the only salvation worth the name; and the only salvation the Scriptures teach is the salvation of His people from their sins. All salvation is from sin; and by one offering Jesus wrought the only salvation there ever was, or ever shall be for His unworthy but highly favored people.

God is unchangeable in his nature. He is Jehovah, I Am, always, yesterday, today and forever. There is but one God. He calls — we answer. He draws — we follow. He justifies — and saints are made righteous. Will he save once, and then do the same again? If so there will be two salvations. Will He forgive us today, and damn us next week or next month, or on the last day? No! The same infinite God who justified also glorified, because his love is infinite. While Jesus holds us God holds us. He is The Rock.

This one God all his sheep bless. His mighty arm is revealed as the only source of Hope or Help either here or hereafter — the only Physician in the hospital that can reach our case, either here or hereafter. Our sins need his blood; our poverty, his riches; our death, His Resurrection power.

Saints pray — their prayers are heard. There is a secret peace and joy in the breast of all who are led by His Spirit given them, which says, "Abba, Father". I declare it is better to have God's Spirit than to have the spirit that crys, "lords many and gods many." The same spirit that crys "lords many" crys "salvations many".

There is one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, hence one salvation; and as certain as Jesus begins a good work in a poor sinner's heart, He will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

Creature deeds have never influenced God. Nothing can influence God outside

of Himself, — otherwise he would cease to be God. Salvation being God's work, is unconditional and sure. If any part of salvation was conditional upon my keeping it, I would fall a thousand times a day. Genuine saints cannot deny their desire to be enabled to praise God, for He is the Way they know. To be truly humbled, and strengthened by a sight of Almighty God in Christ, and to have a felt love in Him who is an Eternal Refuge, belongs to the saints in light. Saints know the labors of their hands can never fulfill the law's demands, either here or hereafter. Therefore they have a hunger and thirst for a thousand tongues to sing the praise of Zion's King Jesus, who saves by grace through faith, and never through anything else. By faith they get the victory over the world: which victory is never conditional. Through faith a great cloud of witnesses did glorious things during the time God had set for them to live. At the end of their God given time on earth, these all died in faith. These bore the fruits of the Spirit.

Vessels of mercy realize that none of us can ever be anything except what God makes of us. If we who were dead have been made alive, what remains for us to do to be made alive? If we who were once captive under sin have been delivered from wrath, what else, what other salvation is needed or wanted, or desirable? None! What further work is needed to bring deliverance? Hasn't Zion's King made the delivery, and set her free — forever free? People who would add another salvation to the finished work of Christ, are uncalled. To be justified freely by the grace of God does not beget conditions, but peace. Peace does not come until Jesus comes.

Jesus comes to his people. If ever this One is to save us at all, he must come to us and take us from darkness and death, and make us alive, and dwell in us, and walk in us, and be our Guard and Guide; and lead us forth by his Spirit, and keep us day and night and never leave us. Now there are no "ifs", "ands", or "buts" about it. The Eternal God is their Refuge. He will abundantly bless her provisions. She is complete in Him. Where are the conditions then except on the lips of the unregenerate? What can be added to a thing that is "complete in Him"? What can be added to a finished work? When Jesus arose from the dead, it was for our justification. He suffered once the just for the unjust, (not that we should remain unjust,) but that he might bring us to God. Have we another salvation that will add to the finished work of Him that said, "I the Lord am thy saviour and thy redeemer, the mighty one of Jacob"? No! Ten thousand times, NO!

Saints walk the various paths of righteousness, (such as praying, singing, attending meetings, etc.,) because grace leads their feet. Look at Exodus, chapter 15, verse 17, there you will find an exact description of how saints arrive at Church: "Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of their inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in; in the sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established." So we see there is no condition there.

God has a message for both the sheep and the goats: "Say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat of their doings. Woe to the wicked! It shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him." (Isaiah 3: 10,11) These promises are unconditional. The doings of the righteous are their prayers to their God, and the fruit of their doings is the answer to their prayers in the finished work of their Great Mediator. The reward of the hands of the wicked is the sin which will be punished by "wrath to come." No God sent servant will deny this.

God's saints after new birth still must rely upon Jesus for all their help and strength: "Hold thou me up and I shall be safe," is their cry. For although they are a people who worship God, who pray, preach, hear preaching, etc., the power to use this power, called the "excellency of the power," God has kept; and without me you can do nothing," is the plain Bible truth. No truth can be conditional, —it changes not.

Here in this low ground of sin and sorrow there are a few people who have been separated from the world by sovereign irresistable grace. They perform good works which spring from the inward operation of God's free grace. God's children in the Bible are likened unto trees. By making these trees good, God makes the fruit good. In Philippians 2:13, we read that God works both "to will and to do of his good pleasure." Therefore under the operation of His grace saints are transformed by the renewing of their mind, to prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God. (see Romans 12:2) To even as much as think this (the will of God) is a chance or conditional thing, is the worst kind of sin.

All the acts of the saints, whether of love and affection or of self-denial, etc., all works that can truly or properly be called "good works", are really produced from within by Christ the hope of glory. To advocate that this is conditional is not the truth nor the work of God's servants.

I know that this article is neither great nor brilliant, but it is better to be honest than it is to be great; and better to be genuine than it is to be brilliant, and better to trust in God who will direct his children's steps, than to be found trusting in conditional riches. No genuine servant of God would dare to suggest that even a sparrow's welfare is conditional.

Mercifully there are a few — a remnant according to the election of grace — who hope in the Lord, a Covenant keeping God. This covenant which contains "all my salvation," is so far from being conditional that it is "ordered in all things, and sure . . ." (2 Samuel 23:5) People who deny that, and who do not even know that the Lord's sheep hear His voice, and follow him, are apt to learn at last that instead of having two salvations, they don't have any at all.

I am glad to lay it down here not with enticing words of men's wisdom but with great plainess, that whether this poor sinner is saved or not, I must declare that salvation is all of grace, and that His grace is sufficient both for time and for eternity.

In bonds,
(Elder) J. L. Bocock
Rt. 2, Box 463
Boones Mill, Va. 24065

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT OF THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

We bow in humble submission to the holy will of God, and say, "Thy will be done."

Inasmuch as God has seen fit to remove from our midst six of our dearly beloved brethren and sisters: Deacon Merrill Beauchamp of the Snow Hill Church; Deacon Homer Bailey, and Sisters Ruth Twilley and Mamie Calloway of the Salisbury Church; Deacon Dow Bailey and Sister Ruby Parsons of the Rewastico Church, we desire to thank God for our association with such lovely people.

It was evident by their walk and godly conversation that they loved their God, and their brethren. Our loss is their eternal gain.

Elder Arthur Warren, Moderator
William S. Adkins, Clerk
Written by Bro. Frank Holland

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

Dear Brethren:

As it has been our custom to write a Circular Letter, and as I have been appointed to that work, I come before you for that purpose. To me this is not different than writing or preaching at any other time. As the children of God, we are not to worship days. We do not have the authority to appoint one day as superior to another, but our worship, our writing, our preaching is to be a work wrought spontaneously in us without setting aside a day or a time, or an occassion or a prearranged or prepared subject, but at all times in the simplicity of the Gospel: knowing no other day and

no other subject save the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

As followers of Him, we meet in His Name; as worshippers of Him, we worship Him; as His children, we do what we do, we say what we say; and we delight in His law day and night, for our theme is Grace all the way. (see 1 Cor. 1:1-9)

It is our desire and our aim to praise and adore God our Father, as having been chosen in Christ, our needed supplies treasured in Him, and having the riches of His grace made known unto us, and having the Grace wrought ability given us to do all things that manifest us as His children, and glorify Him as our God and Saviour.

This grace given us, and the accompaning love of God animating and stirring up our pure minds, causes love to flow from heart to heart. It quickens our steps, strengthens our hands, and alerts our minds to the things of God, to serve Him and His children with gladness of hearts.

Dear Brethren, having found this God as our sufficiency and having tasted of the good things of His Kingdom, let us forget those things that are behind, and let us go on to perfection. Better things are in store — a brighter day is at hand. For this day and all of tomorrow, may God direct us into the love of God.

Elder Arthur Warren, Moderator
William S. Adkins, Clerk
Written by Eld. W. D. Griffin

ENJOYED THEIR ASSOCIATION

Benton, Ky.

Dear Editors:

It is time to renew my subscription to our family paper, so I enclose check for two year's renewal.

The churches in our Soldier Creek Association have many members on the sick list, some in hospitals at this time, some unable to go to the meeting places because of infirmities.

We had good attendance at our three days meeting of annual Association in October, which was held with the Soldier Creek Church here in Marshall County, Ky., near Benton. Our visiting Elders were Herbert Prince, of the Memphis, Tenn. congregation; R. L. Biggs, of the Bordeaux Church in Nashville; and W. Y. Chandler of the Little River Association in Kentucky. These Elders arrived for the Friday morning services and continued with us each day, also holding services in our homes at night, where we arranged to take care of our visitors.

We were blessed to meet in peace and fellowship, and to feed on the sermons of the Elders on such texts as "God's Doctrine": "You have not chosen me but I have chosen you and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and your fruit should remain." Elder Biggs on one occasion spoke from the 139th Psalm — how the Lord knoweth my downsittings and uprisings, and understandeth my thoughts from afar off: the Lord being acquainted with all our ways.

Each sermon linked with the one going before, because each preached Jesus the way, the truth, life, light, and the resurrection; and that all our help must come from Him, for He is the fulness, "And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." Our Moderator, Elder Paul Poyner, spoke in introducing the elders, also in thanks to the brethren and friends for their thoughtfulness and kindness in caring for our friends who came to be with us.

What a blessing it is to be gathered together to sing God's praises, and to hear each other express their fellowship for the truth, and for their friends who believe the truth. Elder Prince expressed it this way at the close of our meeting: He had not been in any meeting where there was more fellowship, love and peace made manifest. The conversations were not on worldly things, but their chief concern was Zion in her beauty and righteousness which was wrought out for her by the Bridegroom, Jesus Christ the Lord.

We thank our brethren and friends for coming to be with us.

A sister in hope,
Effie Bowden

ENJOYED THE ASSOCIATIONS

609 W Colonial Ave.,
Elizabeth City, N. C.

Dear Ones in Hope:

While attending our association and the Contentnea, then being with you dear people at the Salisbury Association, I heard all the Elders declare the same and only true doctrine, Salvation by the grace of God. The truth was rightly divided by those taught deeply in the School of Grace — not in some Seminary, as is common today. I seemed to be carried away, and blessed to look beyond for a period, seeing Jesus as a Beacon Light guiding us into the Safe Harbor; and forgetting the great horrors we are arrayed with, and the earthly trials which so easily beset us. And I seemed to feel the presence of Jesus in the forgiveness of my sins, and could visualize Him on the cross bleeding and dying for the remission of sins.

But very shortly darkness appeared, and weighed so heavily upon me; and, as David said, "My sin is ever before me." It seemed that was all I could see; and why should I expect to be remembered by such a wonderful God. — I, only a debtor to God's grace. I felt too unworthy to be in the midst of His saints assembled in such a heavenly place in Christ Jesus. May it be His will to never let us be overpowered by earthly powers and have this grand and glorious privilige taken away from us.

We by nature are children of wrath and not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. We, being under the law of sin, sin according to our nature. The act of sin is of the creature and not of God, who is most holy, pure, undefiled and righteous, and is not nor can be the author of sin. The saints are justified freely by God's grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Blessed be God for his infinite mercy for calling and qualifying servants unto himself with different gifts: ministers, deacons, etc. "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office. . ." We often hear the question, why do some have so much better gifts? I think Paul made this clear in Romans 5:6, "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proporation of faith." I believe that our gifts and talents, whether they be one or more, are properly given, because God knows, and supplies our every need all the way to eternal salvation.

The saints are justified freely by God's grace. There is nothing more untrue than to say that we can accept or reject Christ according to our will, for God said, "I will be unto you a God, and ye shall be unto me a people." Thanks be to him that there is no power that can stay his hand. I am so glad that it is not by any act of the creature we are saved, but only by Jesus the Lord, the Saviour of sinners chosen to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and conformed to the image of His Son. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that He might be the first born among many brethren." (Romans 8:29)

It is widely taught that it is easy to accept Christ and be saved; but my Bible says, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Hebrews 10:31) If I have any experience, it truly has been through fear and trembling; and I continue to feel fearful before God, and a sinner in my nature. I believe that it is of Him that we "live, move and have our being."

I am thankful that there was a covenant made between Him and the Father, that He would be the Mediator between

God and man; and that He sits at the right hand of the Father making intercession for his people, — those in him before the foundation of the world. He washed them in His blood, and saved then eternally; and sealed it with his promise to remember their sins against them no more.

Sister Spangler, it was such a pleasure to be with you all for a little while, and as I was sending in Sister Berry's obituary, I felt a desire to write you all, but now I realize my remarks are so scattering that I am reluctant to send them. Remember me when you are burdened to pray.

Yours unworthily,
Beadie Meads

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EDITORIAL

SALVATION

"I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no saviour. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God."

(Isa. 43:11, 12)

In the last forty-five years I have been writing to various publications. During the last thirty-five years I have been speaking from the pulpit to the children of God. My course during this time has been strange indeed. Much of the time I labored in much fear of not been called, and yet had a sentence or woe upon me that I felt the terrors of

death if I did not speak. (1 Cor. 9:16) I have had my share of fault finding with what I have written and preached. Too many times, I did not accept that criticism in the right spirit. Of late years, I have quit defending myself against those that objected to my opinions. I would much rather have the good will of one and all, but it would be my ruin if I did have (Luke 6:26), therefore I desire to leave everything in the hands of the Lord. I am sure that it will give a man itching ears when every class of people are acclaiming him as a great preacher.

I do not think that I have a desire to reach everybody, but I hope that I have a desire to reach all that my text applies to from time to time. I hope that I am not ashamed of the truth, of the gospel; and I hope that I am ready to preach among those that have a hearing ear. I do not know, by looking into faces, or by looking over the list of subscribers to any periodical, who has ears to hear. I am sure that I cannot give them hearing ears, and I hope that there is not a desire about me to try.

My subject, and the text on which I hope to lay a good foundation, are pertinent matters for our consideration. However, the recipients of this gospel, are limited. None but the children of God can enjoy and witness to what God has said, and only they are witnesses to it. Not all of God's children are witnesses to this singular salvation.

"I am the Lord." If, from the moment of the creation until every trophy of God's grace is housed in heaven and immortal glory, things take such a turn that God can not say what He said to Israel in the present tense, then the "I AM" has not been in control. If there was ever any likelihood of salvation failing, then God knew it from all eternity, and He has not been our "I am" at any time. It is "I AM" that sent Moses; He is today the Lord our "I am that I am" and as He sends minister to hearers, it is as effective today as it was several thousand years ago when it looked so uncertain to Moses. The one of whom I write **IS** the Lord; I do not write (If I am called of God) about a dead or "has been" gospel; it is the power of God to believers, to witnesses of it. Unbelievers do not necessarily mean that hearers and readers are not children of God. The man that got the hands of Jesus applied to his eyes the first time saw men as trees, walking. Thomas was certainly a child of God, but he could not believe until he had evidence. I do not write about a "has been" Lord; nor do I write to people that think thus of the Lord. He is alive forevermore, and will always be "the I am that I am."

"And beside me there is no saviour." Not all of the Israelites were witnesses to this declaration, nor are all of God's children witnesses now to it. Whatever their name in the world might be, the ones that were witnesses of these things believed what the Lord said relative to salvation. Come, dear reader, and let us take a little journey down into the garden where the "I AM" is the only gardener. In this garden He is the only Saviour. In fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy, the Spirit of the Lord came upon the Saviour and He alone performed all of the work to make every plant a tree of righteousness. (Isa. 61:3)

Mary did not have twins. Only one Saviour was born; no other maiden, even though virgins romp the landscape ever, have given birth to another Saviour. Yet, even though an angel heralded the coming of the Saviour, the masses were not witnesses to it. I say that had Herod and Pilate seen in Jesus what the centurion did (Luke 23:47) they certainly would have witnessed as did he, but not having known Him nor His Father, they could not witness to what they had not witnessed. Following the same line of reasoning, one who has not been a witness to the Lord's testimony concerning salvation, he or she will be found trying to lend a hand in salvation.

Those that have witnessed this "only salvation" will lie down in the green pastures of salvation; those that have not, will always find another salvation besides that one that Jesus saves always to deliverance home to glory. These witnesses have a right to sing,

"Amazing grace how sweet the sound,"

and as they have it declared to them, and they are saved, and they have salvation shown unto them, they continue to sing,

"Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

For centuries the saints have sung this high and lofty theme of salvation by grace with out another salvation standing in the offing, waiting for them to work out. This is what I endeavor to preach and write, to wit, Salvation, from God's eternal design to save, to the triumphant bringing home to glory every chosen vessel of mercy, and all of it being given to us, and we witnessed to it, if we have indeed been saved by this One and only Saviour.

Regardless of the cavelling of men, this salvation is known only in time. What heaven is, none of the witnesses to this salvation know at the time of it being presented to them. They know (as taught of the Lord) that He is the only Saviour, that without His salvation, we do not have salvation. I hope that I am writing to many witnesses of this "only" salvation, but I do not believe that with the church in her time state a single witness will be found that has witnessed that salvation is further than a time state.

The Lord is the only Saviour. The attributes of God are all engaged in this salvation; the seven spirits are all sublimely and gloriously working in the children of God to save them. This is a present salvation. He was the Saviour before the Red Sea; He was the Saviour at the Red Sea; He was the Saviour in the wilderness road, and in our journeying on that road in our experience, He is our Saviour. At the time of the prophet, there was not any Saviour save the Lord. I call for an answer to this statement: Did Isaiah know the truth? Did he tell all the truth? Did the Inspiration of God mislead the prophet? Did He withhold something that is vital to the welfare of the chosen Israel of God? I hope that I desire to be right. I think I know the certainty of death, and if I am hanging precariously on a high cliff with impending doom below me, and Israel was mistaken — all these witnesses misunderstanding God, and there is a Saviour beside the Lord, I certainly need to know it.

I do not want to be extreme. I do not want to go beyond the scriptures in comparing truth with error. I do not want to say hurtful things toward those that bring some other saviour other than the Lord. But my brethren and sisters, my dear perishing readers, I am as I hope, being undressed of what I thought I had. I hope that I am being made ready for a lovely and much desired transition. I do not want to be unfaithful to Him that has called me out of nature's darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son. If His brethren bring something among us that is not in keeping with His testimony, it behoves me to point out the fallacy of that thing. Someone is going to be wounded whenever error is preached among us. I had much rather wound my brethren than to wound my Saviour; I had much rather (since error demands that somebody be arraigned) rebuke my brethren sharply than to let my silence rebuke my Saviour. This does not mean that I am to declare non-fellowship for them; it does not mean that I am to step on their toes purposely, but it does mean that I must not step on the toes of my only Saviour.

At the expense of being trite, I desire to point out that this Saviour was the only Saviour of Israel all the way through from Eden to the end of the legal dispensation; that this salvation was all timely; that it was saving at the flood; it was time saving at the Red sea; that it was time saving at the water of Marah, that it was time saving in giving manna, that it was time saving the whole wilderness through, that it was time saving in giving bread in Egypt, in causing fire to be reversed in its nature to burn away bonds but not to consume the bound. If this is not the picture of Israel and the Saviour, the only Saviour, then I freely confess that I do not know what I am writing.

This God, this Saviour, stands alone to His people Israel. Israel witnessed to this doctrine that I would, were it not for a dreadful fall that I got, declare to one and all. God declared this truth to them, but His care for them did not cease in a mere declaration. Oh, no, for men declare, and do not, and God is not likened unto men. God made manifest the singularity of this "only Saviour" **by saving them.** That is not all, Oh no, dear saint, there is always something more that is in reserve yet to be served to Israel; it always has been, it always will be. He showed this salvation to them. **He showed it to them.** Oh yes, tried soul, He shows unto you the tenderness of His saving power. The Holy Ghost, the Comforter and teacher and keeper of God's people, is sent unto you (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7). He also shows His people the things of Christ, the only Saviour of sinners.

This showing to the children of God Christ as their Saviour is under peculiar and trying and singular circumstances. When this is done, **there is not any strange god present.** This strange god, whom men in ignorance would present, is not found in the experience of these witnesses. He is the work of our deluded minds; he is the god of whom our souls would dare rely **until the show begins.** The children of God made them one out of a calf, but the calf-god was vanquished from sight, from show; Peter would have made a man as another saviour, but God, the only Saviour, vanquished him from sight, and He showed them in the most dazzling show that has ever been brought to sight of poor sinners that no name, no god, no man could ever share in the honor and glory of the Holy One of Israel. I love these scenes of divine saving; my soul is enraptured, my pace is quickened, my attention is called heavenward, as I am shown the care of God for His people. If I am not mistaken, the text has grown; its beauties have been enhanced, my spiritual faculities have been weaned from every false God, every false saviour, and I am standing at the giving up and turning the kingdom over to another Joshua. At this time, I know what those people knew, to wit, that God my Saviour has not failed to keep every promise that he has made, and that **as the show** was put on, there was not a strange god to assist in making the screen of my soul straight, nor to adjust my sight and vision that I might see better than I see by the work of this only God, this only Saviour. (See Joshua 23)

I do not mean to separate Christ and grace. Paul's letter to the Corinthians was based on what Christ did for them, and he thanked God (through Christ) for the grace that He had given them by Christ. In substance, Paul did write Amazing Grace. It was his theme in the beginning of his experience; it was his theme in all of his preaching and in every letter that he sent to the churches. It was in time that all these gracious deliverances took place; it was the experience of Paul that the grace of God was sufficient. That which is sufficient, will not allow a strange god or a different saviour. When he wrote that heavenly experience to the Ephesians (Eph. 2:1,10), there was not a part works and part grace system lingering to be heard. It was not with doubt and reluctance that he told them how that they were saved; it was not that grace was present and a strange system, a strange god, in the offing ready to bolster the failure of the grace of God.

This grace is as much in the present tense, as God, the only Saviour was to Israel. In the presense of two or three witnesses shall every word be established; One of those witnesses is God, and He witnesses to His people Israel when no strange god was present, when no Egyptian was there. (Gen. 45:1) God witnessed **to them,** and He **made them** His witnesses. God witnessed to Saul, in that witnessing the law was not present; Gamaliel had lost all his ability and charm; all of the things that had kept him until that time were gone. God made him His witness to the Gentiles, and his witnessing was that salvation is by grace.

There are different aspects of this salvation, but there is only one salvation.

To bring up any other way, is another way; to say that there is a salvation other than the grace salvation, is, to say the least of it, a strange saying, a strange doctrine, instigated by a strange god. This grace salvation will not permit me to deny nor ignore scriptures that the strange gods would have us to believe set forth some other salvation, some other saviour. God has not witnessed to us, nor has He sent witnesses to us, extending to us one way to be saved and another way to stay saved. I have enjoyed the testimony of God's people in their minutes (not that I can trace their history back to the setting up of the kingdom) showing forth that God had witnessed to them. I am sorry to have to report, that some of those that accepted the doctrine of the imputed righteousness to us; that have accepted the doctrine of God's preservation of the saints to glory, are, like the Galatians, finishing as they think, in the flesh what grace started in them at the outset.

God's children are presently working out their own salvation. This is their salvation. The salvation is in the work, but by no means **for** the work. This salvation is in the work of God working in them. It is an effectual work of God. It is a perfect work of God. Moses is not on hand to give a helping hand; Elijah is not on hand to reach a helping hand when the grace of God fails; no strange god, no strange saviour is present, but a perfect work, is being done (Heb. 13: 21), and this perfection enables us, the witnesses of God, to walk well pleasing in His sight, and let us remember, dear children of God, that He has a desire toward the work of His own hand. (Job 14:15) And let us remember that God does not work **at** something; let us remember that He does not talk **at** His people to get them to be witnesses, but that He talks to them by the effectual, the mighty workings of His Spirit in them. (Eph. 1:19, 20; 3:7; 4: 16; I Th. 2:13)

This Saviour, Jesus Christ the Lord, through His grace, enables the witnesses to this saving grace to save themselves from every evil and false way, from every strange god and doctrine. This effectual saving grace enables Paul to write about taking heed to oneself and to the doctrine, and it (the same effectual grace) enables the recipient to take heed to both, to continue in them, to save themselves and those that have a hearing ear.

Where this grace is preached, where this Saviour is showing us how it is, there is health in the body. When it is not preached, it is a strange fire that has come into the camp of Israel, a strange god is present that the witnesses did not know in the time of which Isaiah was speaking; that was not present when Jacob had that singular experience in the wilderness and in the desert (Deut. 32:9,12); that was not present when Jesus was transfigured before His disciples; that was not present when Saul had no man (no strange god) to stand with him. (2 Tim. 4:16)

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Lexington, Ky., Nov. 12, 1859

Brother Beebe: In the 18th No., present Vol., of the **Signs,** I find a request from Bro. R. M. Thomas, of Mo., for my views, in the **Signs of the Times,** on 1st Cor. 1:21; which text reads as follows:

"For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

To arrive at the object of the Apostle in giving this instruction to his brethren, we must give some attention to the connection in which it stands.

The subjects to whom the communication is made, and their preparation for the appreciation of it, together with the situation in which the Apostle then found his brethren to be, will require a passing notice.

And 1st, The subjects were those who constituted the Church of God which

was at Corinth, to them that are sanctified (or set apart) in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that is every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ; and 2nd, Grace was given them by Jesus Christ to enrich them in utterance and knowledge, and thereby the testimony of Christ was confirmed in them, so that they came behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, who should confirm them unto the end, that they might be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ; 3rd, He then refers them to the faithfulness of God, by whom they were called to the fellowship of his Son, and beseeches them to speak the same thing — that there be no divisions among them, but that they be perfectly joined together, in the same mind, and in the same judgment; 4th, For he had already learned that there were divisions among them, which had caused **contention.**

This **contention** seems to have originated in the preference that **they had expressed for their respective preachers,** a fruitful source from which contentions have arisen in all ages, and from which the preaching of Christ is well- calculated to save believers.

I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Here was the ground-work of the contention.

It appears likely to me that the **means** doctrine had obtained to some extent among the brethren, and that, we know by experience, always causes contention, as the advocates of it are more disposed to look to the means or instruments, (as the preachers are called and as some claim to be), than to Christ.

It is a bad state of things when our preachers get between us and Christ, and are so large in our estimation as to conceal Him from us. Hence the necessity of constantly and faithfully holding up Christ to view, and hence the great object and prime mission of the Apostle to preach Christ, not with wisdom of words, lest the Cross of Christ be made of none effect. We, therefore, are not to garnish with fine words — not to smooth over and palliate the preaching of the Gospel, so as to adapt it to the carnel mind, and thereby divert it from its legitimate use, the salvation of believers from error; "for the preaching of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." "For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."

Then, where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? Only the subjects of God's grace, in whom He has destroyed the wisdom and prudence of this world, and convinced them that neither their wisdom or prudence can avail them anything relating to their great salvation, can see where they are, nor can all the lore of human wisdom teach them their whereabouts, or save them from their errors.

Men, untaught by the Spirit of God, suppose that by their wisdom and prudence they can know God, and teach others to know the Lord also; but while thus deluded God hides the things of his kingdom from them, and reveals them unto babes. But when it pleases him to destroy the wisdom of the wise and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent, and thereby make foolish the wisdom of this world to his people, he prepares them to appreciate that preaching which is to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks (those who seek after the wisdom of this world) foolishness. Let us remember, however, that it is not until **after that** that the preaching of Christ can have any salutary effect upon them; and so the text reads "After that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

There is not only a salvation or deliverance of believers brought to view in the text, but a final and irrevocable veto is stamped upon the proceedings of all those will-worshipers who are arrogating to themselves capacities to know God and teach a knowledge of him to others. If the graceless professors of religion could believe that text, and then

would act with a commendable degree of candor and honesty, what a smash-up there would be in the Missionary Boards, Bible Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sunday School Unions, and the various other worldly and unscriptural combinations connected with them! They would not be endeavoring to "teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord," if they believed "the world by wisdom knew not God," and would act consistently.

A knowledge of God is only attainable by those who have received the gift of eternal life, and then only by a direct revelation from the Lord. "No man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Power was' given to Jesus over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him, and this eternal life was given that they might know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.

Peter was convinced that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God; and said Christ, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjonah, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

How benighted — how miserably blinded by the god of this world must those be, who are engaged, as they say, in "christainizing the world." To christianize is to make christians, and the gift of eternal life is indispensible in that case.

In that work, "the flesh profiteth nothing," said Jesus: "The words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life." A christian, then, possessing eternal life, is the highest order of being that inhabits this earth. How presumptuous, then, in poor, frail man, to arrogate to himself that noblest work of God! It would be as easy for them to change the spots of the Leopard and make a sheep of it, or the Ethiopian's skin and make a white man of him, as to make christians of themselves, or of those whom they profess to be christianizing. But our God will not share his glory with such impudent aspirants — will not give it to another nor his praise to graven images. He alone can raise us up from the depths of sin and the domain of death; and the glory of his majesty is portrayed in the sublimity of the work. It crowns him with a regal diadem, such as earthly princes never wore — a crown of glory, rich, lucid and eternal — its brilliancy forever eclipsing all the glory of mortals who are professing to do his work and would rob him of his diadem, when if all their worldly wisdom was concentrated in one focus and all exhausted upon one subject, they could not make the meanest reptile that crawls upon the earth, and yet they boast of making christians, the highest order of God's beings that dwell upon the earth. "O! the folly of man!"

Then "Crown him Lord of all," and let us unite with the Poet and sing:

> "HE raised me from the depths of sin,
> The gates of gaping hell,
> And fixed my standing more secure
> Than 'twas before I fell."

But after God makes foolish the wisdom of this world in the estimation of his people, and enables them to "believe according to the working of his mighty power," it pleases him to save them in a certain sense by the foolishness of preaching, or that preaching which is to them that perish foolishness. "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness." Thus we are taught that it is to them that perish, and to them that seek after the wisdom of this world, and not after Christ, who is the wisdom of God and the power of God, that the preaching of Christ crucified is foolishness to, and no wonder. What use have they for Christ crucified? What do they want Him for? Not to get up their worldly institutions; they neither have his commandment or example for all that. Not to prepare them for their ministry, they can do that themselves. Not to furnish their outfit, the Missionary Board can do that sufficiently to enable them to compass land and sea to make prose-

lytes. Not to teach them doctrine to promulgate, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men.

Now, if they can do all this, I repeat, no marvel that the preaching of the Cross is to them foolishness. "But, unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God," and that preaching is calculated to save the believer from trusting in the wisdom of this world, or the power that it confers upon mortality.

The salvation here alluded to, is not that salvation which Christ completed when he laid down his life for the sheep. That salvation was exclusively "of the Lord." Said he, "I looked and there was none to help, I wondered that there was none to uphold, therefore mine own arm brought salvation."

But in addition to the salvation from sin and from its condemning power, we often need salvation from such divisions as were amongst the brethren at Corinth at that time, and other errors that the wisdom of this world invent, and upon which a worldly religion is based. Many such errors throng the pathway of the christian while here. A sound ministry, therefore, is a most important gift that the Lord has conferred upon his people to save them from division and false doctrine.

I have long observed that preachers who confine themselves to the doctrine of the Bible are not the most successful in multiplying members in the churches they preach for; but those churches who are blessed with such a ministry are less subject to contentions and divisions, as a general thing. On the other hand, when the preachers are in the habit of exhibiting a system partly of grace, and intermingled with conditions to be performed by men to aid in the saving of sinners, so as to ensnare some of the children of God, who are taught by the Lord in their experience that salvation is by grace, and also to induce others to unite with the church who depend upon their own wisdom and prudence to qualify them for church membership, we see at once the foundation laid for divisions: and many of us have witnessed, within the last thirty years, the blighting consequences of this "linsey woolsey" garb, or sowing of "divers seeds" system, in the many divisions that have rent the churches within that period. The history of the church in all ages proves that it has not been the case that the greatest in-gatherings have been attended with the greatest blessings to the Church; but, as a general consequence, contentions and divisions have been the result.

But again: When she has presented to view an afflicted and poor people, trusting in the name of the Lord — when there was nothing in her external appearance to court the fancy of worldly religionists — when she has had to suffer reproach and persecution for the name of Jesus — when she has been content with receiving such only as "the Lord added to the church" — when her watchmen have lifted up the voice together, determined to know nothing among them save Jesus Christ, and him crucified, they have been saved from these unhappy contentions, divisions and false doctrines, and peace has flowed among them like a river. This should encourage us not to be cast down and troubled from the fact that we present a strait gate, a narrow way, and that there are but few that find it.

Then, as we profess to have nothing to do with making christians, let us be satisfied with such as the Lord will have to be saved. And, as every true minister of the gospel knows that "salvation (from sin) is of the Lord" altogether, and that he is fully able to accomplish all that pertains to that glorious work, and will no doubt certainly and eventually raise **every one** of his believing children up at the last day; and further, as it has pleased him to give them eternal life, and thereby to qualify them to know the truth that makes them free, or liberates them from error and delusion—to bless them with capacities to receive and appreciate the doctrine of God our Savior, with all its wholesome lessons of instruction; and as it has further pleased him to prepare his servants for the work of the ministry, to feed the Church of God, he hath purchased with

his own blood — to teach them to observe all things whatsoever he has commanded and thus to **"save them that believe"** from the errors and inroads that their enemies are ever endeavoring to propagate and make among them, let us make full proof of our ministry in faithfully watching over the flock for their good.

Brethren, do we really love the children of God? Surely, if we love him that begat, we love those also that are begotten of him. Let us, then, manifest our loyalty to our King, and our love to our brethren, his children, by faithfully laboring for their present salvation. It is reasonable to suppose that men will bestow the greatest amount of labor upon what they esteem most highly. We may mark this as a general rule; and I think it is a good one, by which to discriminate between faithful and false ministers.

When a servant is circumcised in heart to love the Lord, (and of course his people,) he will be found toiling among them, laboring for their good, and to save them from delusion. But where the love of the world predominates among the preachers, they will be heard whining for money to save the world, and endeavoring, by every available stratagem, to secure the friendship of the world, which is "enmity to God." We are then reminded of the expression of the Apostle, "The friend of the world is the enemy of God," and, measuring them by the Scriptures, we set them down as such; and when we weigh them in those balances, and find them wanting, we should judge and deal accordingly. The faithful shepherd, then, will be found doing the commandments of his Master, which are, "Feed my sheep," "Feed my lambs," "Feed the Church of God," "Feed the flock of God," "Seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church." In short, his labors will be confined **within** the church, among the children of God who are most dear to him, and be calculated **"to save them that believe."** The false shepherd, or hireling, will be found laboring "without (the church where there) are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie," and we must therefore judge them by the company they keep.

I submit the foregoing remarks first, to the consideration of Brother Beebe, and, if he thinks best to publish them, then to my much esteemed young brother Thomas, and to all my dear brethren and sisters who may think them worth their perusal; and still remain, as I trust, their humble servant, bound to them in the love and fellowship of the Gospel, though unworthy in myself, as the most unworthy amongst them.

(The above was written by Elder J. F. Johnson of Kentucky, and published in the Signs of November 15, 1859.)

OBITUARIES

HAMP A. FLEMING

Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, Cash, Texas, in regular conference authorized me to report the passing of Bro. Hamp Fleming, a member of our church. Bro. Fleming, 83 years, was a firm believer in the doctrine of grace and grace alone. He was not ashamed of his Jesus. He was baptized and became a member June 25, 1960.

It had been his intention many years before to follow his Lord in baptism and in the communion service which he observed and respected. He was faithful to the church until his hearing became impaired and his health in general.

Bro. Fleming passed this life October 19, 1968, Cosby-Germany, Grand Saline, Texas. His wife had passed about two years earlier, and a daughter in 1915.

His survivors are four sons, Leland, and Buster, Emory, Texas, J. C. of Dallas, and Joe Ben, of Paris, Texas; a daughter, Mrs. Ryon Wright, Emory, Texas. His brothers are Jeff, of Emory; Marion, Blue Ridge, Texas, Pink of Temple, Texas; and one sister, Miss Becley Fleming, also of Temple; 11 grandchildren, 9 great grandchildren.

The funeral service was at Smyra Community church with Mr. Otis Barrett and Mr. Byron Jarrett officiating. Both paid high tribute to Bro. Fleming as a man of honesty and sincerty. A retired farmer, he weathered many hardships — lean years, lean prices; cold and hot; wet and dry, yet through it all with the Lord's help, he reared a well respected family. Then in old age, he could sing that good old primitive song.

"Ashamed of Jesus! that dear friend,
On whom my hopes of heaven depend,
No! when I blush, be this my shame
That I no more revere his name."

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy be placed in the church record, a copy for the *Signs*, and a copy for each of his children.

Guy Sisk, Church Clerk

BROTHER PETE DIVERS

Brother Pete Divers was born January 23, 1886, and died August 19, 1968. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church September 17, 1922.

Surviving are, his wife, Lillya M. Divers; ten children, four step-children, three brothers and one sister. I knew Brother Divers for thirty odd years, and he was one of the closest friends and brethren I ever had. When I joined the Roanoke Church in 1931, he was there, and I learned to love him as a tender hearted, dedicated man. Through the years, though we belonged to different churches, he was a close and affectionated brother. For several years, as my birthday was also on January 23, we gathered at his home with close friends, and had fellowship which none who are not exercised in such fellowship, could understand; and once a year, together with the same friends, we gathered in my yard, had lunch, attempted to sing to God's praise, and talked of precious things.

Brother Divers was a man not easily moved — he held fast his profession. We who loved him will have a place in our memories for him as long as we have our minds. Our affection for him as a sinner saved by grace, is a precious thing. We know that we are not born to live always, and that there must be an exit from this life. The precious thought is that there is something better for the faithful: It is as sure as God himself, and is reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God. We believe that Brother Divers is at rest — that he is safe in the arms of Jesus, not because of what he had done, but because of what the Lord through Jesus Christ had done for him.

We join with his friends in expressing our sympathy to his dear widow and his family. We pray that they will have faith to look toward the day when they shall be joined together with all the saints who have gone on before.

His funeral was held at Oakey's Chapel by his pastor, Elder Cecil Turner, assisted by Elder O. K. Tench; and his body was laid to rest in Blue Ridge Memorial Gardens. We do not believe that this is the end: this is just committing his body back to the dust, to await a day when from the eternal heaven shall go out a proclamation, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." We believe that he, together with all the saints of God, shall rise to meet the Lord Jesus in the air, changed and fashioned like unto His glorious body, to ever be with God. Written by one who loved him,

O. K. Tench

ELLA LOWRY BERRY

Mrs. Ella Lowry Berry was born June 27, 1889, and died April 23, 1967. She was the daughter of Robert C. Lowry and Ella Eves Lowry, and the widow of Edward Berry. She was born and lived in Pasquatauk County, N. C. all her life.

She attended the Flatty Creek Primitive Baptist Church which she joined in early youth. She proved faithful to the cause. She was baptized by her pastor, Elder Charles Meads.

Funeral services were held at the Berry Funeral Home, Elizabeth City, N. C. by her present pastor, Elder I. S. Connor, and burial was in the family plot in the Old Hollywood Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

May we all be submissive to God's will, and when he comes to gather his jewels, may we be in that number and be fashioned like unto his glorious body, be like him and be satisfied. "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord." Done by order of Conference.

Beadie Meads

REGINALD GORDON BROWN

It is with a sad heart that I try to write of the death of my dear husband — Reginald Gordon Brown, born Dec. 17, 1893, at Forest Hall, Northumberland County, England, son of Thomas and Mary Brown. He passed away July 24, 1968, at his home in Chattaroy, Wash., with a heart attack.

He was married Jan. 18, 1933, to Mrs. Blanche B. Bliss, who survives him; also three step sons, Clifford D. Bliss of Chattaroy, Wash., and Clayton G. Bliss of Renton, Wash., and Gordon F. Bliss, D. C., of Newport, Wash.; and one step daughter, Irene B. Johnson of Everett, Wash.; and 15 step grandchildren and 8 step great grandchildren. Also a brother and sister and nephew and neice in England.

He was not a member of any church, but enjoyed going many miles to the Primitive Baptist Church meetings, and talking and visiting with them, and he loved to have them in our home where we often held meetings.

He never made much of an outward profession, but now and then would make a remark of his weakness and worthless self that encouraged us to feel he had a hope of a life in a better world. He told Elder Spangler one time that if he ever joined a church, it would be the Old School Baptist, or in his words, "My wife's church."

His funeral was held at the Riplinger Funeral Home in Spokane, Wash., where Elder Atteberry preached a very comforting sermon from Eccl. 7:1, St. John 3:3-5, 7; also 14:2 and Eph. 1-5. Then we laid him to rest beneath a mound of flowers in our little cemetery near our home.

Oh, it was hard to give him up, but may we all be reconciled to God's will until we meet again in that home where there are no more tears or parting.

Written by his lonely wife,

Blanche B. Brown

LUBY BATTEN

Brother Luby Batten, 79 years of age, passed from this life to a better state on November 11, 1967. Brother Luby had been a believer in Christ most of his life, however he did not unite with the church until March, 1960, at which time he joined Creech's Primitive Baptist Church in Johnston County, N. C. His life seemed to revolve around the Church, and he was most concerned with her welfare. Creech's Church recognized the gift of a deacon in Brother Luby, and he was ordained by the church to this position, which he served faithfully until his death. He served the church in so many ways for many years before he asked for a home with us, which makes us say that Brother Luby was a believer most of his life.

Luby Batten and Bettie Creech were married in 1912, and they were blessed to celebrate their golden wedding anniversary in good health. Sister Bettie passed away on June 19, 1963. They had one daughter, Nellie Hocutt, and one grandson, Luby Cecil, who was only 3 weeks old when Brother Luby died. Our hearts go out to his family who is left behind; but we, like they, are deeply grateful to Jehovah God, who blessed us to know and love him all these years.

Brother Luby's body was laid to rest at Creech's Church cemetery, and his funeral was conducted by his dear pastor, D. B. Stokes, Jr.

Margaret Johnson and Mavis Pope
For Creech's Church

WALTER A. PARRISH

Walter A. Parrish died January 7, 1968, making his stay here on earth 74 years. Brother Parrish was severely afflicted, and we know that he is better off now that he has passed on to a state where no pains or frustrations can beset him.

Brother Parrish and his faithful wife Naomi Corbett were blessed with 12 children, all of whom survive him, except 2 sons who died in infancy. Naomi Parrish died in 1945, leaving Brother Parrish alone for many years. In 1954 the Lord gave him another companion, Linda Price, who proved to be a wonderful blessing to him.

Brother Parrish was a member at Creech's Primitive Baptist Church, and always enjoyed the fellowship of Christians, and he especially enjoyed the worship services. Before he was disabled, his occupation of a tobacco auctioneer strengthened his voice, and he was talented to sing. Music always seemed to be a great comfort to him. We miss him at Creech's, but we are reconciled in the Lord's will.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Jr., pastor at Creech's, conducted the funeral, and his body was laid to rest in the family cemetery in the Corbett Hatcher community.

Margaret Johnson and Mavis Pope
For Creech's Church

LUCINDA BATTS BISSETTE

Sister Lucinda Bissette was born September 4, 1868. She departed this life January 15, 1968. The following children survive: Tom, Lawrence, and Herbert Bissette, and Gladys B. Eason, also six grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

Sister Bissette's husband Charles Harris Bissette, preceded her to the grave by many years. But she was blessed with love and faithfulness of her children, who took care of her in her old age and afflictions. The life of our dear sister was a wonderful testimony to God. She always seemed happy in the Lord and thankful to Him for the many blessings He had bestowed upon her.

We believe that God called her home where there is no sickness, sorrow, or pain.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder D. B. Stokes.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the family, one put on the Church records, and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the Wilson Primitive Baptist Church.

MINNIE HOUSTON WHALEY

In loving remembrance of our dear sister in Christ, Mrs. Minnie Houston Whaley, who was born September 4, 1886.

She came before the church July 10, 1910, was received and baptized by the pastor, Elder Gardner Bryan. She lived a quiet and devoted life, for she took everything quietly and patiently. She was at peace with God and all mankind when the God of heaven called her home August 9, 1968, to await the great resurrection morning.

We, the church at Sand Hill, cannot wish her back, for we feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Sister Whaley leaves to mourn her passing, three girls and two boys, and a host of relatives and friends. She was laid to rest under a mound of beautiful flowers. At the time of her death her pastor was unable to attend, so Elder D. B. Stokes was called from Jacksonville, and he was richly blessed to preach.

This is done by order of conference of Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church September 7, 1968.

Written in love for all by a poor unworthy brother in Christ, Oscar Howard.

L. L. Yopp, Moderator
Brantly Kennedy, Clerk

M. E. PATE

Uncle Ed, a great grandson of Captain Jeremiah Pate who fought with Jackson at New Orleans, and helped drive the Creek Indians from Alabama, died November 8, 1968, at his home near the writer's.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. J. Collins at Mt. Gilead Church, assisted by his grandnephew, John Wayne Hicks, a Baptist minister. Interment was in the adjoining cemetery.

He was eighty-six years of age; and was an excellent citizen of Houston County, Alabama. He is survived by a brother, Albert S. Pate, and many nephews and nieces of Newton, Alabama.

J. J. Collins

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

The church at Hickory Grove was saddened to hear of the death of our beloved sister Hettie Lee Smith. Her health was bad for many years but she attended church when she was able to go. She was in Johnston Memorial Hospital for eight weeks prior to her death.

She was born August 19, 1885 and died on Saturday, June 21, 1968. She was married to J. Lonnie Smith on December 12, 1906. To this union were born eight children, five boys and three girls. There were 16 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Sister Smith united with Hickory Grove Primitive Baptist Church in September, 1923 by experience and baptism. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace and she always stood firm in her belief.

Sister Smith was a good wife and mother and was a friend to all. To know her was to love her. She visited the sick and always did what she could for them.

Be resolved that we bow in humble submission to the will of God and send our heartfelt sympathy to the family.

Sister Smith's funeral was conducted Monday, June 23, 1968, by Mr. Niles E. Compton and Mr. Alva Cawley in the Rose Funeral Chapel in Benson. She was laid to rest in the family cemetery near her home. There were mounds of beautiful flowers.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be sent to the family, one to the *Signs of the Times*, and one put on our church record.

Committee Sisters,
Georgia E. Hill
Leecy Beasley
Gertrude Royal

ADA M. SHIVEY

Sister Shivey died October 1, 1968, after a long illness. She joined Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church seventy-four years ago; and was a member of the Mitchell Family, prominent in Primitive Baptist circles in Alabama. The writer was her pastor some twenty years — and what a faithful member she was.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor Elder J. J. Collins, at Ward-Wilson Funeral Home in Dothan, assisted by a great grandson, Don Dean, a Methodist minister. Interment was in Bethlehem Cemetery, Malvern, Alabama.

She is survived by three sons, Lennie, Roy, and Wyatt Shivey; four daughters, Mrs. Lena Smith, Dothan; Mrs. Pearl Dean, Hartford; Mrs. Mary Farmer, Slocomb; and Mrs. Jewell Avery, Columbus, Ga. Surviving also are one brother, Albert Mitchell, Slocomb; one sister, Mrs. Nellie Smith, Dothan; forty-one grandchildren; eighty-four great grandchildren, and many great great grandchildren and other relatives. She was nearly ninety-six years of age.

J. J. Collins

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 137 DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1969 NO. 3

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3/69
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE COVENANT OF GRACE
(Psa. 25:14; Heb. 12:24)

"The secret of the Lord's with them
That fear him; and he'll shew
Them his covenant," which is of grace,
A covenant called The New.

This covenant, "ordered in all things,
And sure," made before time,
Between the Father and the Son,
Is indeed most sublime.

In this most solemn agreement,
A few were giv'n to Christ;
They were giv'n to him to redeem,
Who for them was sacrificed.

He willingly shed his own blood,
A sure remedy for sin,
And by his keeping the law, he
Brought a righteousness in.

Having finished his work on earth,
He ascended on high
As the head of the ransomed church,
By his shed blood made nigh.

He, who once suffered here below,
Now occupies a throne,
He, whom the Lord laid in Zion,
"A precious corner stone."

There he intercedes for his own
Objects of tender care,
And some day he will take them home,
No more sorrow to bear.

They're looking for him to appear,
When with joy they shall see
The glory of their covenant Head;
May he appear for me.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, North Carolina

WELCOME NOTE
FROM SISTER HALL

Spring Hill Nursing Home
Salisbury, Maryland

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

I have many back numbers of the *Signs* that I read and enjoy, and find much comfort in them. I wish I could tell how much it means to me when the people come and talk of the blessings we have received. It is good to be able to say, "Thy will be done, not mine." I know that all our strength and blessings come from above. I have been shown this many times during my 90 years. All the trials are blessings in disguise.

I am still in the Nursing Home — they say I am not strong enough to go home. They are all good to me and we get along nicely. I love for the Baptists to come and tell me more of salvation by grace. They have been faithful to me. The dear Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.

Wishing that you may have many more years to have the blessings given you.

In love and fellowship,
Elizabeth E. Hall

NOW AMONG THE OLDER ONES

Rt. 3, Box 174
ElDorado, Ark. 71730

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

It is time to renew our subscription to the *Signs*. We get so much food from the many writings of the brethren, you Editors and other ministers. When blessed to read, I reread the old *Signs*, and they are new again.

There are times I read but it is just the letter and not in the Spirit. There are times when we are made to rejoice like Sister Cisco Barron's piece in the November *Signs*. The Lord blessed her to write such good food for the Lord's humble poor. She is a lovely sister, and her husband and son attend our home church, Bethel, whenever they can; and we are always glad to have them, as well as all others who meet with us.

We have lost so many members since we have been members of Bethel Church. There are three who have been members longer than we; and it makes us shudder to think how weak and unlearned we are with the older heads passing on, — and now we are among the older heads. We pray the Lord will uphold us to forever contend for the doctrine of the true church, and not be carried away by every wind of doctrine. May it be His will to keep Bethel Church as his own righthand's planting, and make us to love and esteem others more than ourselves. May He add daily such as shall be saved, for if he does not, it would be of no profit.

May He bless you Editors and Associate Editors to write according to his divine will. We have enjoyed all of your and Elder Wood's writings and most of the others. Some we don't understand too well.

We enclose a check for two year's renewal. My husband joins me in wishing for you many more years of writing to the comfort of His little ones.

Your unworthy sister and brother,
Annie Lee and Johnie Davis

DID THE FATHER'S WILL

Dear Brethren:

May we consider the saying found in Luke 2:52, "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." I know that this subject is too deep for me, but I have had some serious thoughts concerning it. I quote also the following scriptures:

"Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead." (Romans 1:3, 4).

"For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." (John 3:34).

"The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day." (Luke 9:22).

"For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." (Hebrews 2:16, 17).

I believe that Jesus as a man did grow in wisdom and in stature, and in favour with God and man, — only in a manifest sense to his people. "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. 2:9). Jesus was man in the flesh without sin, yet the fulness of the Godhead was in him: in this sense Peter could say, "Lord thou knowest all things." This was him declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isaiah 46:10).

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me." (John 37, 38). I do not believe that it was the fleshly will of Jesus to die on the cross, but the divine will of the Father, yet the will of the flesh was made submissive to the divine will of the Father. "And he saith, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou

wilt. And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepeth thou? couldst not thou watch one hour? Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak."

If he had not been human as well as divine, it would not have been a cross: he could not have been tempted in all points like unto his brethren — not even one point, yet he was tempted in all points, and sinned not. (See Hebrews 4:15.) If Jesus had failed in one thing, even in his flesh, then he would not have been an offering without spot or blemish. His fleshly will was completely submissive to the will of the Father. He learned obedience by the things he suffered. He denied himself of all natural wealth, and was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

Jesus did his Father's will in all things, and finished the work he was given to do; and God raised him on the third day. And He revealed himself to his disciples before he ascended into heaven. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." (Hebrews 9:24). "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

My brethren there is but one God. When we enter heaven we will not see the Father in one place and the Son in another, as two, but only one God. "Fear not neither be afraid: have not I told thee from time to time, and have declared it? ye are even my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any." (Isaiah 44:8). "As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one." (I Cor. 8:4).

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:1-3, 14). All things were made by Him, not by them. And if he had not taken on himself a body of flesh, there could be no death of the testator. "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." (Hebrews 9:16, 17).

Let me say that in trying to write on this subject, I know I have come far short of expressing what I think I can faintly see: seemingly there is something that I cannot quite reach; but almost. I hope the readers will pardon all errors; and if there is any comfort, give God the praise.

(Elder) James R. Hollandsworth

Birmingham, Ala.
October 31, 1968

Dear Elder Spangler:

Enclosed is a letter from Elder Griffin to me and my family. After reading it several times, we decided it was too good to keep to ourselves, and we think it should be published in the Signs so others could read it. Of course we want you to do as you think best.

I hope this finds you and yours enjoying the best of health. We are all fairly well, praise the Lord from whom all blessings flow.

An unworthy one, if one at all,
Florence Pate

A GOOD LETTER FROM ELDER GRIFFIN

39 Welsh Tract Road,
Newark, Delaware,
August 13, 1967

The Awtney Family,
Birmingham, Alabama

Dearly Beloved People of God;

As God has a book of remembrance concerning his people (Mal. 3:16), I would not be amiss to say that we have a remembrance of you and the sweet moments of love and fellowship that has been ours to enjoy in your presence.

How fraught with remembrances is the past. As Israel remembered all the way through the wilderness, just so will we remember our travel in this wilderness road that we are on. Everything connected with the salvation of a sinner was purposed in Jesus Christ. God made all things by Jesus Christ, and we have obtained an inheritance through him, being predestinated (to receive that inheritance) according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. The assurance comes from the fact that he has wrought effectually in all things. If there was one thing left out of the effectual work of God, it would make but little difference how well God wrought in the plenitude of his works, this one thing outside of the realm wherein he worked would not only dethrone Him, but it would disinherit all of his children. If Satan could have had one way to Job's life he would have got that. The complete hedge around his life prevented Satan getting to his life.

God called for the sword to awake and for it to smite the Shepherd (Zech. 13: 7) But this sword (see Psa. 17:13) was not permitted to cut off and cause death to the third part. At this time two parts were cut off and did die. God used his sword in his own hand and wielded it at his time and way. Prophecy ended when Christ died (see Luke 18:31). They said he would come; we say he has come. Prophecy died at that time. Whatever the law said, it said to them under the law. (Rom. 3:19) Those under that law became guilty by disobedience. That guilt demanded death. Nothing short of it would do; something just as good (as our local druggist would say, and as every Arminian would say) would not suffice. The guilty must die. Christ was made a curse for us, and the answer to this demand of the law was made in the Person of Christ.

We well know, if we do know, what would have been, and what still would be, if answering that demand had been exacted at our hand. That is the reason that you will not find a free-willer among those taught of God. They know better. They know that the law would have condemned us all to death; and they know, if they have been taught of God, that we are made free from the ravages of this death by the body of Christ. (see Rom. 7:4) Thus the prophets were at an end; prophecy died when it was fulfilled in the death of Christ. Christ having been sent forth from the Father, having been made under the law and of a woman, for the express purpose of redeeming his people (Gal. 4:4), that law died as it effects the destiny of those under the law. It exacted death for disobedience, which always satisfies law. Thus, when the sword awoke and smote the Shepherd, two parts were cut off and died. To the Jews, prophecy is not dead, for we hear them prophesying that Christ has not come, but that he will come. To the Jews (or unbelievers — all unbelievers are Jews in that sense) we are still under the law — it is not dead. How precious it is to have been delivered from such a fallacy, and to have been, as we humbly hope, delivered from the power of darkness into the light of his countenance.

This third part is to be brought through the fire. It is to be brought through the fire, and it was brought through the fire. Christ is the third part. As Moses (law) and Elijah (Prophecy) was removed from the mount of transfiguration (Luke 9), so were they ended at the crucifixion of the Saviour. He was brought through the fire of suffering. Notice that it was the third part (in the singular) brought through the fire; but notice that it is "them" that are refined and tried as gold is tried.

This refining and this trying causes things. Without the sufferings of

Christ, He would not have heard them; without this refining and trying of the little ones, they would not call on his name. I love the way in which Paul says, "Husbands, love your wives as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it." I love that. I love to talk and write about a Saviour that loved his people and gave himself for them. Herein is love, Not that we loved God, but that He loved us and gave himself for us. (I John 4:10) We will not love God first, regardless of who tells sinners that, but we love him because he first loved us. He loved us and shunned not the walk through the fiery furnace of the wrath of God. It was love that caused those precious hands and feet to pass under the rod of affliction for his bride. When these are tried, and they must be tried (I Pet. 4: 12), they will call on his name. They must be tried first. Do not forget that. No child will volunteer for a fiery furnace, or a rugged cross. God will try them. Then (but not before) will they call on his name. He will answer? Not a command to do something in order to qualify for sonship. O no, not that, a thousand times not that! But his answer will be, "Thou art my people." They are his by gift of God; they are his by right of purchase; they are his by right of workmanship (read the whole 13th chapter of Zechariah).

Now where have we been? Who has brought us to where we are? What have we been delivered from? Who was it that brought us up out of the miry clay? Who was it that carried us to the Rock? Who was it that has established our goings? Who put a new song in our mouth? (see Psa. 40). These things we will remember along the way. O yes, we will remember when we were in the pit and no water. We will remember when we were faced with bitter waters, and the tree was cut down to sweeten them. We will remember when food fell from heaven to minister to our hunger. O yes, the journey has had its sorrows; we have journeyed through many perils, but we have been brought out more than conquerers through him that loved us unto death. As long as we are blessed to look back in retrospection and remembrance of the perils that we have been delivered from, we will not find any desire to lord over the little ones; we will not find any desire to have our way. O no, not that. And as long as we are satisfied with the goodness of God's house for tomorrow, the church will not have any terror of our causing trouble. It is when the golden calf enters the camp (see Ex. 32); it is when we do not need the Bread sent from heaven (see Isa. 4:I); it is when we will not have the Gallilean rule over us (Luke 19:14), that the church had better watch us. We will not then be remembering what manner of man that we are; we will be out looking for places to display our goods.

Hazel, we had a man at Mt. Carmel that followed the Old Baptists all his life, but he did not unite with them. On his death bed he said, "I have but one regret. I am sorry that I did not honor my Saviour when I was young." This is a solemn regret. But when his son was given a hope he immediately came before the church. All things are in God's hands. My telling you is worthless unless God has directed me to tell you. If he has, he will direct you to follow in baptism. God has given you another token (see Psa. 86:17); he has helped you when there was not any to help. He has comforted you when you had no comfort. Take up your cross and follow your Lord.

To all of you, may God be with all of you. Cecil, when Hazel goes before the church, go along with her.

We wanted to see you in October, but we cannot. Write when you can.

Yours in precious hope,
W. D. and Lois

EXPERIENCE

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

I have a desire to write some of what the Lord has done for me a poor sinner, if the Lord will enable me.

I am getting old and not able to go to church as I would love to. That is where my joy and pleasure is: to be able to hear the Word of God preached; and the older I get the better I love to go. I get so hungry for the food that comes down from God. It never gets old, and is sweet every time I am blessed to receive it.

I have asked Brother W. E. Turner home with me lots of times, desiring to tell him these wonderful things, but they were sealed within me and my mouth was shut so that I could not tell it. After he would leave I would feel so low that I feared I was deceived, and had deceived you good people. I hope I have been made to know that in this flesh of mine dwells no good thing. I was made to cry, O God, look down on me a sinner and have mercy, forgive and lead me by thy holy Spirit.

I have loved the Old Baptists since I was a young girl of about fifteen. I still do, and want to live with them as long as I live. I cannot praise His holy name enough. I know I cannot do any thing of my own self, for I have no strength only as He gives it to me. I wish I could write the things I feel in my soul sometimes, but I cannot put it into words. I am the least of God's little ones, if it be that I am one of them, — I have many doubts and fears and feel so unworthy; but He says he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy. Who can stay his hand? O Lord, help me to follow after thee and to praise thee more. Thou hast all power, and we are such weak worms of the dust.

I am poor and afflicted and getting weaker all the time. I am seventy-four years old, and have had lots of trials and troubles. I was married to Garry Howell in 1911, and there were born to us ten children, seven boys and three girls. I loved them very much and worked very hard. At the same time I was troubled over my sins, and my burden was so heavy at times that I did not want to be with any one. I felt to be one by my self and that everybody had forsaken me, and all I could do was to beg the Lord to have mercy on a poor sinner who was too unworthy to call upon him. Sometimes I felt so low and in so much trouble I could not stay in the house with my husband and children: I had to cry and did not want them to see my tears. I would go outdoors and sit and cry, and beg the Lord to have mercy and forgive me of my great sins, and guide me in the right way. I got a little better for awhile, and had a desire to join the church, but felt too little and sinful to be with them, feeling that they would not have me.

The first Saturday in September, 1941, I was ironing, and when I had finished all except a dress, something spoke to me and said, You will be baptized in that dress. I had loved the Old Baptists for a long time, but did not feel fit to offer. When I finished ironing I was trembling with fear, and was is such trouble I got my Bible and tried to read it; but my eyes were too full of tears. So I went out at the back door where the children were, and they wanted to go with me, but I told them to stay there and I would be back; but I thought I was going to die and I did not want them to see me. I went down beside the garden for a little way and farther on to a peach tree, where I fell on my face to cry out, "Lord, what wilt thou have me do?" And a voice came as thunder and said, "Take up thy cross and follow me." I promised to offer to the church next meeting at Pittman's Grove. The next day was the first Sunday in September, 1941, and I went to church at Scotts and enjoyed Brother George Boswell's preaching; and when they were singing the last song, I felt that I had to go up but something was telling me that they would not have me. So I went out doors. I was in so much trouble I could not eat anything when I got home. I put dinner on the table, and went out doors crying and begging God to help me and show me what to do. I had a desire to go talk with someone and see if there was anyone like me. My husband did not want to go with me, so I took my next to the oldest child and my baby, and started out walking, not knowing where I was going. One of the

neighbors came along and I rode with them to my sister's where my father stayed. I thought I would talk with him, but he was not at home. My brother's wife was the only Old Baptist there and we went out to the grape vines where I talked and told her what I was going through. She told me that I would never get any better until I went to the church. So I told her that if it be the Lord's will, I would go to Pittman's Grove the second Saturday in September. So I went, and she was there too. They started to sing the last song, but I could not go up: after I went out a calm feeling came over me, and I said that if I could stay out of the church and always love them as I did, I would never join.

I went home with that feeling; and went back the next day with the same feeling, and had no idea of going before the church. But I hope I was brought by the Spirit when they were singing, "Children of the heavenly king." I helped sing some of it; and then I don't know what happened, but it seemed I was just lifted up and put down in front of Brother Barnes. I had my baby in my arms, and I don't know who took it; and the next thing I knew they were giving me the right hand of fellowship. I don't know whether I told them anything or not. Then Brother Barnes asked me when I wanted to be baptized, and we met at the water that afternoon and Brother Jesse Barnes baptized me. That was forty-seven years ago the second Sunday in last September. It has been a sweet home to me. I hope I love each and every one of God's little ones wherever they be.

If God be for me who can be against me? I hope it is by the grace of God that I am what I am; and I hope you dear people will let me live with you the rest of my days. May the Lord give you a mind to pray for me. I hope we shall meet in heaven.

A little sister in Christ,

Mrs. Nancy Tedder
Rt. 1,
Lucama, N. C. 27851

THE SON OF MAN LIFTED UP
(By Elder H. M. Curry)

"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." — (John 3:14, 15)

DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST:—Ever since my acquaintance with the **Signs** I have felt a desire to write some word of comfort or encouragement to the dear saints that are scattered abroad. The above Scripture is one that gives me great comfort when my sins press heavily upon me; when the serpent (the seed of sin in my flesh) inflicts his painful and would be fatal wounds. Bitten and dying, Jesus my Savior is lifted up to me, and I look and live. I have been especially impressed to write something from this Scripture, since hearing it so often quoted and misapplied by the Arminians.

We read that as Israel journeyed from Mount Hor, to compass the land of Edom, the Lord sent fiery serpents among them, and they bit the people, and much people of Israel died. To meet this emergency, the Lord commanded Moses to make a serpent and put it upon a pole. And it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass he was healed. This serpent was a type of Christ, for he is the reality of all the types, the substance of all the shadows, the fulfillment of all prophecy, and the way, the truth and the life. But does it not appear strange that a serpent, the very essence of iniquity, the ideal of all uncleanness, should be taken as a type of our dear Redeemer, the immaculate Son of God, who was always holy and separate from sinners? **Adored be his precious name, he was made sin for us.** God predestinated him to be sin for his chosen, before sin was permitted to enter the world He goes before his church in all things. Inasmuch as he was predestinated to be sin for us, we must fall in Adam. Joseph, a type of Christ, was sent into Egypt before Israel, the type of the church; and as Joseph was sent before, Israel

must follow. There is no frustrating the purpose and grace of our God. So we see this type is very suggestive of the great humiliation of the Redeemer in becoming sin for us, in being made in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemning sin in the flesh.

"Even so must the Son of man be lifted up." The serpent was lifted up in the camp of Israel, after they left Egypt. It was not lifted up in Egypt, and a general proclamation made to all who would to look and come out. Nor is Christ lifted up in the world, as the Arminians do vainly preach, that every one who will may look to him and come out of Egypt, or bondage in sin; but he is lifted up in the camp of Israel, (the church,) that whosoever believeth in him should not perish. Remember that **Israel was not bitten by the serpents until they came out of Egypt.** So we are never troubled nor feel our sins until we are born again. We feel no need of Christ until our omnipotent God, with a high hand and outstretched arm, brings us out of Egypt. Then we realize our condition; we find ourselves in the midst of a wilderness, bitten by the fiery serpents, and having no skill or remedy in our selves to heal the deadly venom of the sting. This flying fiery serpent is the seed of sin in the flesh; for the Scripture says, "Out of the serpent's root shall come a cockatrice, and his fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent." This root and its fruit is in us by nature, but **we never taste its bitterness until born again, and the Spirit or seed of eternal life is manifested in us,** and through this perfect life we realize the exceeding sinfulness of sin.

When grieved and tormented with the burden of our sins, with no power to deliver ourselves, how often do we desire, as Israel did, to go back into Egypt, where we received none of these plagues. As it is written, "But we will go into the land of Egypt, where we shall see no war, nor hear the sound of the trumpet, nor have hunger of bread." —Jer. xlii. 14. Thus it is with the poor, wretched sinner when called by grace. How often would we go back to our condition of carnal security. But strive as we may, we never can get back. God has commenced the work, and he will perform it. Whither shall we fly from his presence? If we take the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost parts of the earth, he is there. If we make our bed in hell, behold, he is there. There is no possible way of escape from the call of our God. This I know by experience; for if ever I was made a christian, it was directly against the will of the flesh; and if I could have driven the Spirit from me, I would have done so, for it was indeed mortifying to my carnality. But thanks be to his adorable name, what he does is perfect, and must stand forever. When he by his own finger writes his law in the heart, neither the will of the flesh nor the combined powers of hell can ever erase it.

It is when in this condition that Jesus is lifted up to us. "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." He is our life, our hope, our way, our all in all. In all our troubles, in all our sorrows, he is lifted up to us, and we look to him by the faith of the Son of God, as our Mediator, our Prophet, Priest and King. He is making intercession for us at the right hand of God. O may we trust our all to him. He undertook our redemption, and he accomplished it. All the blood-bought seed, who were loved of God before the foundation of the world, shall be gathered and saved by Christ, notwithstanding all our troubles, all our conflicts, and all our adversaries; for Jesus Christ is lifted up to save them, and what can hinder it?

Yours in hope of eternal life,

H. M. CURRY.

Newfoundland, Ky., April 3, 1883

(The above was, we believe, the first article written by Elder Curry for the *Signs*. It appeared in the June 15, 1883, issue. How beautiful are these things as we realize they are a part of our experience!

We are indebted to Elder Ruston for calling our attention to this and the next two articles by Elder Curry which we purpose to republish this year, the Lord willing. — J. D. W.)

FEELS THANKFUL AND HUMBLE

218 Shad Point Road
Salisbury, Md. 21801

Dear Editors:

The hymn, "O that the Lord would guide my ways," has been on my mind most of the year. It is such a beautiful prayer, and the desire of every poor sinner who has been made to know he cannot think a good thought without His guidance. But what a delightful road when we are made to walk in His commands, when He fills our every thought with praise to His holy name, and our hearts with love for Him and our brethren, and every duty of our hands such a pleasure.

As the year ends and I receive sweet messages of love and fellowship from those far and near, I feel so thankful and so humble it seems to me that my heart overflows, I wanted to try and write a few lines of praise to the giver of every good and perfect gift.

Much of the time I stumble along not able to think of my blessings — fretting over the condition of the world, and worrying when so many seem to be getting older and passing away, and so few coming to the church; and then for a little season it seems I am made to know God is ruling, and none can stay his hand or say what doest thou?

What a wonderful blessing to be given a hope we have a Saviour who paid all the debt for us, and that someday we shall leave all the fretting and worrying behind, and praise His holy name forevermore.

"O may He make me walk in his command,
It is a delightful road,
Nor let my head, or heart, or hands,
Offend against my God."

Yours in hope,
Ethel Holloway

NEWS FROM CANADA

5 Gregory Street
Brampton, Ontario
Canada

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

Enclosed is money order to renew my subscription for two years, with the balance to the Indigent Fund. I do not like to miss a single copy, and hope no one who loves the *Signs* as I do, is without a copy. Due to the mail strike in Canada our copies were delayed, and what a feast I had reading them when received. May our dear Lord bless our editors to continue publishing the *Signs*.

As a young girl I enjoyed reading the experiences, but felt the editorials were too deep for me; but for many years now I have enjoyed the editorials, Voices of the Past, and the many letters expressing my own experiences much better than I could. Elder Lambert said, "It wouldn't be our own experience if exactly like another's." How true!

As you know, in Canada we have four Quarterly Meetings, and one or more ministers generally come from the U. S. What a blessing it has been to have those of our precious faith visit us; may it continue in the future. We have always been pleased to have you editors come to preach here. I was very disappointed to miss your preaching, Elder Wood, when you were here last; and yours also, Elder Spangler, last October.

What a blessing and privilege it was to me to attend three of our Quarterly Meetings. God is good to give us kind friends to entertain us. I try to take texts down and look them up at home. I think of the letter written by Sister Ruth Lucht in the February, 1966, *Signs*: "The Sweetness Remains."

In May of this year (1968) we had Elder Stokes from North Carolina, and the power of God was manifested. Elder McColl spoke from Hebrews 7:16; "But after the power of an endless life." — even had power to come out of the grave. We sang the 147th Psalm, and Elder Ruston commented on it: the sweetness, wonder and joy of the Lord's people. "He healeth the broken in heart

and bindeth up their wounds." He closed with the words, "Look to him to guide you and direct you; and God be merciful to us and give us peace. Watch the hand of the Lord."

In June we were blessed to have Elder P. E. Ingram for Saturday's services, and Elder W. E. Turner from North Carolina. Again the power of God was preached, and that vain is the help of man; only those who believe in Him can be comforted by Him. Elder McColl spoke from John 1:29, "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." — by one offering blotting out our transgressions. The next day he spoke from John, fifteenth chapter, stressing the power of God — without Him ye can do nothing; and spoke of the fruits of the Spirit — love, joy, peace and gentleness; and the unsearchable riches of God. Elder Ruston then said, "You have just heard the truth in its purity," and spoke from Hebrews 12:1, 2. On Sunday Elder Turner spoke sweetly from 1 Peter 2:7, etc. Elder McColl then spoke from Philippians 2:4. And on Monday our pastor, Elder Ruston, read the 7th through the 13th verses of Psalm 34, and then spoke from the 4th chapter of Revelation. He spoke wonderfully, but I cannot enter into it as he did.

In September our meeting was at Lobo near London. I felt as our dear sister wrote, "It was good to be there." We had Elder Hand, his wife and two boys with us. He preached from Proverbs 2:10, "When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul . . ." When we hear the truth as we believe it, right away we have a kindred spirit, and feel almost as if we are related. Elder Hand said that we are helpless, feel our sinfulness, and sinking down would be left there if not given wisdom from above, — he can make the cup of salvation sure; he has been our dwelling place at all times. In our weakness we are made strong and are kept by his power; we are proud of our hope which is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast . . . In the afternoon Elder McColl used the words of Hezekiah, "Lord I am oppressed, undertake for me." How often our people feel like this. Many precious words of comfort were spoken, . . . And our pastor followed with the same truth which blends so well, "The lines have falled in pleasant places."

We have been blessed with a good pastor; and also have a younger minister ordained here in Canada. We are few in number, and this grieves me at times. Our ministers seem to have so much spiritual food, we would like more to be present to partake of it. I live twenty-five miles from Toronto; and Toronto is a large city. Surely there are people there who believe as we do. If so, we would like to hear from them as we have had services there on 5th Sundays. The other four Sundays our ministers speak at four different churches near London. As far as I know there are no other Old Baptist meetings in Canada.

My intentions were to write earlier in the year. I felt I wanted to thank all who have written for the *Signs*. One seems to be drawn to the writers in love and fellowship, and, if I had the ability, I would like to write and thank them for their writings. "I believe, help thou my unbelief," in the November *Signs* expressed our faith. I feel so unstable at times. Sister Barron's article

was like a cup of cold water to my thirsty soul. I have always enjoyed her writings. I feel she would say as I have heard Elder McColl say, "Give God all the glory." Many other articles that I enjoyed I could mention, but this is too lengthy already.

With love and sweet fellowship, from

A little sister in Canada,
Verna Carscadden

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** will convene on the fifth Saturday and Sunday in March, 1969, with the church at Elm City, Nash County, N. C. The church is located in the town of Elm City, on 301 between Wilson and Rocky Mount.

All who have a mind to attend are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the **Skewarkey Union** is appointed to be held with Bear Grass Church, Martin County, N. C., the 5th Sunday in March and Saturday before. The church is located in Bear Grass, N. C. Elder E. C. Harrison was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder M. E. Garner, alternate.

We wish to extend a cordial invitation for all to come and worship with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Clerk
Rt. 2, Williamston, N. C.

ORIGINAL WHITE OAK UNION

The next session of the **Original White Oak Union** is appointed to be held with the church at Muddy Creek, Duplin County, the fifth Saturday and Sunday in March, 1969. The church is located about 5 miles Southeast of Beulaville, North Carolina.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

L. H. Southerland
Union Clerk

Danville, Virginia **March, 1969**

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EDITORIAL

(Substance of a sermon preached by Elder George Ruston Sunday, December 24, 1967, at Ekfrid, Ontario.)

"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." (Isaiah 7:14) Also, "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." (Matthew 1:23)

One who is now present wrote of the beauty she saw in the name Emmanuel, God with us. and I would like to talk about that word, "Emmanuel." It is one of those wonderful things that causes us to rise above the traditions of men, and see in that child that was born in Bethlehem, the Lord God Almighty. We are told by tradition that there were three wise men who came to worship Him, but we are not told how many by the Word of God; neither have we any evidence that they were kings or astrologers. We would rather believe that they were led by a Heavenly Light, for Jesus Christ is the bright and morning star spoken of in Revelation 22:16; and is the one who must illuminate each one of us. We must be guided from Heaven if we ever get there at last; and thus the guiding of those men was wonderful.

How far they came, we do not know, but we do know that when they came near Jerusalem, they thought he'd surely be there, and be born in a palace. So they inquired, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" Herod did not know, but the Word of God had already told. Herod demanded of the chief priests and scribes where Christ should be born, and they told him, "In Bethlehem, — for thus it is written by the prophet." Micah 5:2 says, "Out of thee shall come forth one that is to be ruler in Israel," but they did not add, "Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

Thus we have, dear ones, the wonderful person who is from everlasting to everlasting, taking on a body like our own in the virgin's womb. It says, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." In the same way, we must be born again of the Holy Ghost. "The wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit."

I do not need to go back into the Old Testament, but in Matthew 1:22,23, it says, "Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpretated is, God with us." My dear friends, this blessed person who was born of the Virgin Mary, was God over all, blessed forevermore; and the wise men did well that they worshipped him. They did not worship the Virgin, nor Joseph, but they brought just the necessary things that Joseph needed. They brought gold; and the angel told Joseph to flee into Egypt with the young child and his mother. How could they have gone without gold for their expenses? Our God is the same today! He watches over us; He cares for us; He hears our cry. It is a wonderful thing to have a God to go to — a God that is Almighty; a God that declared the end from the beginning; a God whose very presence in your soul means a blissful eternity for you. Just think of it! Whether we are old or young, how wonderful it is if we have a desire for the things of God.

One of the first things I should mention in the beginning of a work of grace, is a convincing of sin. You may try to do better, but the remembrance of your past will still come up before you; and the more you try, the more you will feel

to fail. If God has begun a good work in your heart, He will show the beauty there is in, "Emmanuel, God with us." Jesus had to come and know your troubles when he was a little babe. Some think that Jesus did not cry as a babe, but it says that "Jesus wept" when Lazarus died. I think he must have felt many things that his dear children would feel at some time in their lives. What a mercy, if while we are young we feel to have a God to call upon: to say, "Lord, help me." Sometimes it is only a looking up to Him, a desire, a longing. Sometimes we are brought to see how little we are, and have "nothing to merit esteem or give the Creator delight." "They shall call His name Emmanual." They, not only one, but a number that no one can number. Yes, and in some way, this blessed person before ever he was born into this world, must have been a comfort to those who were looking for his day, for He said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad."

I think it a lovely account of Samuel. His mother was barren, and her husband had another wife who had a number of children; but he loved Hannah — and Hannah was barren, and it vexed her so because the other wife was unkind to her because her husband showed such kindness to the woman who was barren. When she went to Shiloh to worship, she was so upset, and in such a condition that Eli, the priest, thought she was drunk. He rebuked her; and she said, "No my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord." She was praying, and the Lord heard and answered her prayer; and she had a son whom she named Samuel, which means "heard of God, or asked of God." It was lovely that she felt she wanted to devote that child to the Lord. How many women have had that feeling when there has been a kind Providence? They just felt they wanted that child to manifest in some way that the Lord was with them both: "Emmanuel, God with us."

She took Samuel to Shiloh where she had gone in her trouble, and left him with Eli. One night the Lord called Samuel and told him to tell Eli that He would judge his house because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. It was strange that this child had to bring reproof to Eli for allowing his sons to be so unruly and ungodly in their ways.. What a wonderful thing it is when parents have a love and care for their children — showing their religion by their actions day by day. That was my plague. I asked my pastor's wife in New York City how to bring up children. She said, "Teach them to love and respect you," and I thought she just put it up to me: my behaviour. Eli must have slipped to allow his children to do as they did.

If we have a need shown to us, it seems almost in a negative sense that God is with us, when He shows us our weakness and shortcomings. How undone we are: without grace or any evidence of His saving mercy. How poor and needy we are when left to ourselves; yet here is the evidence of that Holy Spirit's work. Jesus declared, "He shall receive of mine," also "He will reprove the world of sin and of righteousness, and of judgment. "He shall," it is His work. I have been thinking much of a text from which I had spoken at a funeral. I had read Psalm 90, and had tried to speak on verse 17: "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it." After the service a man said, "I would have liked you to dwell upon those works." Moses said, "Let thy works appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children." Why did Jesus come into the world? He came to seek and to save, — not to offer salvation. It is really distressing to think how men have twisted the truth of God. They do not preach a "God with us." They preach that if you will do your part, if you will take a stand for Him, He will be your God. If he has given you to feel you are poor and needy, I can pray for such people: it does not matter whether I am in a pulpit or not,

I pray that God will further His work in their hearts — that instead of the fathers shall be the children. It is His work, and his alone. The Scripture reads, "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I am an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye visited me; I was in prision, and ye came unto me." The King shall say, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

My dear friends, when the Lord takes hold of a person, that one is found to be in prison, held captive by the devil at his will. Sin, that enemy, came in the beginning, and if our first parent could not stand against Satan's temptation, can you or I? Therefore it is a wonderful work, if in our ministry we are blest to minister to those who are bound. It is the same Emmanuel who hung upon the cross to whom the dying thief cried, "Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." It is the same Emmanuel who came to George Ruston and changed his heart, renewed his will and turned his feet to Zion's Hill. I tell you it is the work of God that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent; and how wonderful it is that this is still going on.

Could God allow his Son to lay down his life for them, and not arrest them in due time, call them by his grace, and show them that He has loved them with an everlasting love, "Therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." One of the sweetest evidences of "God with us" is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. "God is love." If you have ever come into the fellowship of brethren, and have walked and talked with them, and heard them tell of the goodness and mercy of God, and your heart went out in love to them, and you feel that you always want to show them that you love them; and if they are taken home, you will think of them, — Where?

"Forever with the Lord,
Amen, so let it be;
Life from the dead is in that word,
'Tis immortality."

The work of God is a positive work — it does not rely upon an individual, or upon men. See what men have done. The Apostles were still alive when they began to bring in false ideas, not only Corinthians, but Galatians; and later men mixed Paganism with popular Christianity. The Church of the living God worshipped at times in dens and caves of the earth. It is not of this world. For centuries the religious world tried to destroy it. Yet even in that, God was with his people in life and in death. In every age the children have shown that they have been with Jesus and learnt of him; and it is through much tribulation they follow their Lord.

Our Lord can take a beggar from the dunghill, to set him among princes of God's people. He embraces such in His love and mercy; and his promises are yea and amen, unto the glory of God. It is He who says, "Thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee: and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned: neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." Don't stop at anything else. Your want your Lord; you want Him in his fulness of grace and truth as positively as the dying thief on the cross. What changed him? Don't say that he did it himself. No! the Lord changed him; and Jesus our dying Lord said, "Today thou shalt be with me in paradise." See how men have changed that in what they call the Apostles Creed: "He descended into hell." No, He never descended into hell: He endured the hell for his people while he lived, while in Gethsemane, when "His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." He suffered, bled and died that they might enjoy Heaven.

If you have ever come to the place where the pains of hell have gotten hold of you and you've found trouble and sorrow, it's a blessed thing because the

Lord is there, and He will bring you to the very place where he will kiss you with divine compassion, and enable you to feel as David did in Psalm 116, "I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications, because he hath inclined his ear unto me; therefore will I call upon him as long as I live." "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell got hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow, then called I upon the name of the Lord."

Is this your heart's desire? is this your longing? "It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." "They shall call his name Emmanuel, God with us." I don't think Mary fully comprehended what it meant, but she pondered these things in her heart.

During his ministry "he made himself of no reputation, but took upon him the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, — and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

(From a recording taken by our friend Duncan McColl.)

EDITORIAL

Our thoughts have been somewhat on the differences in the doctrine that the Apostle Paul preached, and the doctrines held by many of those who heard him preach, — which difference caused the Apostle much controversy and persecution. Since the two kinds of religion yet exist and are just as contrary to each other as they ever were, we desire to consider some aspects of their differences; and the cause of it.

In doing so we quote a portion of the 24th chapter of Acts, *"But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets: and have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. And herein do I exercise myself, to have a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward men."*

My thoughts were somewhat stirred up at seeing a placard on a car of one who was zealous, in his way of being zealous, which read, "Ye must be born again."

I fully concur with this because it is a portion of the language our Saviour used when he was speaking to Nicodemus: "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." etc. But the implication was considerably less than the full declaration of Jesus. We often see signs along the highways containing portions of scripture out of context, and sometimes even expressions which are far from scriptural, by which it is evidently believed that such advertising will lead some to the Lord Jesus Christ.

We desire that our moderation shall be made known to all men, with grace to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. When religion is mentioned in almost any group of people, there will be various opinions expressed; and we should be glad that we are so greatly blessed as to be able to do so without molestation from secular powers, — for it was not always so.

Should one mention that religious advertising cannot lead anyone to know the truth as it is in Jesus, he will be challenged. So the greatest of all religious questions are, What is truth? and what is the source of one's knowledge of it?

These questions are basic, for there is but one Truth; and one source of the knowledge of it. Pharisees professed to believe Moses and the prophets, yet accused the Apostles of heresy for believing what they wrote. The Pharisees knew the letter of the law and the prophets (to which they added their own ideas and traditions,) while the Apostles and other followers of Jesus knew not

only the letter but were taught the spirit and truth of all those things. Their faith was based upon the work of God in their hearts called revelation, by which they preached that those things written by Moses and the prophets were now fulfilled in the coming and work of that One of whom they all wrote, — Jesus Christ. To believe and contend as the disciples of Jesus did, was heresy to all others. Yet these disciples have in subsequent years been blessed with grace to continue to contend earnestly for the faith delivered to them, sometimes reproving and rebuking the open opposition to the truth, but humbly bearing the reproaches of those who knew not God; while these who knew Him not used all the artifices of human depravity to intimidate and crush the truth to earth; which they failed to do because God has always been with his little ones.

The brethren know that it is the desire of every God-called and qualified servant, that he might by the Spirit declare that the church of God believes and worships according the revelation of Jesus Christ, regardless of the charges of heresy, being behind the times, etc. It would seem that the statement made by Jesus to those who did not believe him to be the Christ, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me," together with all the evidences that he fulfilled them, was enough to stop controversy; but it was not to be so, as evidenced by the apathy of many to this day.

However, we are concerned not so much with those who deny that Jesus was the Son of God, as we are with those who profess the name of Jesus yet deny him by not believing and practicing what He taught, — not believing the complete fulfillment of his mission here on earth. The name Christian is quite popular, but the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles is not popular. When discussing the doctrine with many, it is as thought they read from different Bibles; and the reason for this is the lack of revelation of God in their hearts; and this revelation, we know, is the only thing that brings one from nature to grace. It made the difference between the Pharisee and the publican; and it is the difference today between Christians and nominal christians.

But our thoughts go back to the placards and signs which seem to be a good part of modern christianity, whose religion is one of the great business enterprises in the world. It has become a great advertising enterprise. It is to be supposed that more money is passed, talked about, and urged to be given for religious causes, than is utilized by many of the large commercial enterprises combined. But be it known, my brethren and friends, that the Lord is **not found** by these things, and that in reality He is **not in these things** — though they seem so good and right to multitudes of people. The religion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the only true religious worship, consists of the belief and practice of those things given us by the Lord himself in his Word, and confirmed in the hearts of each worshipper; for it must be remembered it is written that, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself."

It is true therefore that, while there are many religions, the knowledge of the true God comes to one only by Him that begins a good work in his people; and then performs that work until the day of Jesus Christ. Here is a point of truth that should be apparent to everyone: All worship of God is laid down by God in the "doctrine of God our Saviour," and all other doctrines, forms, etc, have no sanction or approval either scripturally or experimentally. If this is not true then the Bible is a useless book, or it is totally incomplete; and we might as well say there is no sovereign God. Every man could then be free to follow his own inclinations; and each would be as right as the other; for there would then be no revelation.

But this is not the way it is! God has delivered **his doctrine to his church** in unmistakeable terms, and his servants have declared it through the ages; and his people have worshipped him in spirit

and in truth: and that often in the face of being charged with heresy as Paul was.

It is a fact that all religions except of the Lord Jesus Christ, are in doctrines and practices eclectic; for they are made up of selections from various philosophies, often heathen in origin, that is, not of scriptural origin. Often the name of Jesus is named profusely along with **vain philosophies**, which are unrelated. We are not suggesting that men should not have their own brand of religion, but are saying that the religion of our Lord and Saviour must be as he delivered it unto his church, without any change; and that those who have changed it, have no right to His name.

Heresy is not that which is contrary to the established doctrines of men, but is that which is contrary to the given doctrine of God our Saviour. So the heresy which Paul was accused of, was not in the accused, but in the accusers.

Paul made it very plain that he preached nothing but what Moses and the prophets said should come to pass. And this was the cause of contention: he said it had already come to pass in the person of Jesus Christ; that Jesus was the Son of God, the fulfiller of all things written of him by Moses and the prophets.

Paul's doctrine, (and Peter's and all the other disciples,) was strictly that which was revealed when the fullness of time was come and Jesus came into the world. It was not their doctrine as men, but God's doctrine by revelation that Jesus was the Christ that should come. They were zealous for this doctrine, more so than the Pharisees ever were for theirs, which they claimed was of Moses and the prophets. But the truth is that they added much which was not of Moses and the prophets. The Pharisee's doctrine in their interpretation of Moses, together with additions of their own, was of men; and they did not like it because Paul's preaching "turned the world upside down" as far as they were concerned. Paul and all the other disciples remained aloof from anything outside of what they were commanded when Jesus said, ". . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." It was for this reason that Paul wrote the Galatians who were being troubled with "another gospel", "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." And Peter, established in the same doctrine as Paul, declared, ". . . there shall be false teachers among you, who shall privily bring in **damnable heresies**, even denying the Lord that bought them, . . ."

The church therefore has always practiced a "touch not, taste not, handle not" attitude with regard to anything contrary to the pure doctrine of God our Saviour. They cannot join with those who say "A confederacy." (Isaiah 8:12) Others may join house to house, and field to field, but the church of the true and living God shall be kept disinterested in the impossible enterprises of men.

The Apostle said in our text, ". . . and have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." The resurrection of the dead, both the just and the unjust, was Paul's hope toward God, and has been the crowning point of the doctrine of His church since the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

And Paul also wrote, "And herein do I exercise myself, to have a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward men." At one time Paul wrote, ". . . my conscience also bearing me witness." So powerful was the revelation of the truth to him, that all the former rational religion he had, was now hateful, for he now had the witness within himself that Jesus was the Christ, and that he was His servant. Thus his conscience was clear that what he believed and preached was clearly approved of God; and he felt no hesitancy in contending for it boldly, though it was called heresy among men in general.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

I CORINTHIANS VI. 19, 20.

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

At the special request of sister Permelia Cameron, of Texas, we will give such views as we have on the text written above. There were many points on which the faithful apostle had occasion to admonish the church of God which was at Corinth, who, though recognized by him as the church of God, were located among pagan idolaters and other enemies of the truth. In the enforcement of his admonitions he was inspired to use the most potent arguments and incentives to impress on them the importance of their solemn consecration to Christ as their Redeemer, who had bought them in a redemption purchase with his most precious blood. Whether the apostle, in speaking of their body in the singular number, applies the term to them as a church, or to each individual member severally, in either application his argument is appropriate; but as his address is to the whole church, we think he is speaking of the church as an organized body, and whatever would defile the body of an individual member of the church, would desecrate the church in her organic capacity. The plural form of the pronoun, **ye**, makes the admonition applicable to all the church. **Ye** are not your own; **ye** are bought with a price. A temple is a consecrated place, solemnly set apart from a common to a sacred use, and as such it was applied to the body in which God our Savior in his incarnation appeared, and of which he said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," when he spake of the temple of his body. The sacredness of the body in which Christ was put to death and arose from the dead most vividly appears from the testimony, that in it all the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily, and all his members were and are complete in him.

The temple in Jerusalem was a consecrated house of prayer, the sacred place where the children of Israel were to assemble to worship God, and through their high priest to make their offerings to God; and in all their devotions they were to turn their faces towards it when they called on the name of the Lord, thus signifying that the new and living way, and the only way of access to the throne of grace, is through the vail, that is, through the flesh of our Immanuel, for no man can come unto the Father but by him. This is the consecrated way, in which God's chosen people can find grace to help them in time of need.

"Is he a temple? I adore
Th' indwelling majesty and power;
And still to this most holy place
Whene'er I pray I'll turn my face."

The church also, as the body of Christ, is of lively stones built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. — 1 Peter ii,5. "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the spirit." — Eph. ii, 20-22. In the third chapter of this same epistle to the Corinthians, Paul makes this appeal, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy (consecrated), which temple are ye."

As our Lord Jesus Christ, in his Mediatorial relation to and identity with the eternal Father, and also with the church, which is his body and fullness, is the only consecrated place in which redeemed and quickened sinners can approach unto God, so is he the sacred temple in which alone they can worship

God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. God has made his chosen people accepted **in** the Beloved. God is in Christ in all the refulgent fullness of his glory, and all the fullness of the members of the body of Christ are in him, according as God has chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, so they in their vital union, or union of life, are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and called; saved and called with a holy calling, not according to their works, but according to God's own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. As the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines in the face of Christ, who is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person, the image of the invisible God, so the Shekinah of his presence covers and fills the church as the temple and dwelling place of the Most High God. God is in the midst of her: she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early. "For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread. I will also clothe her priests with salvation: and her saints shall shout aloud for joy. There will I make the horn of David to bud: I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed. His enemies will I clothe with shame: but upon himself shall his crown flourish." — Psa. Cxxxii, 13-18.

As the place where God has graciously recorded his name, and where he dwells, is his temple, so the saints also in whom he by his spirit dwells in this sense we understand the apostle to speak of the body or bodies of the saints, as temples chosen, redeemed, called, consecrated, sealed and prepared for the indwelling of his spirit. So that in him who is born of God is a spiritual offspring of God, a child of God, a son or daughter of the Lord Almighty, begotten of the Father, born of the Spirit, and is manifestly an heir of God, and joint heir with Christ; for it is born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, nor of a corruptible or perishable seed, but of incorruptible seed, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, and therefore is a new-born child of God, a spiritual and heavenly treasure committed to an earthen vessel. "For God, who commanded the light (or life, for the life that was in Christ was and is the light of men, John i. 4) to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the **knowledge of the glory of God** (which is life, John xvii. 3) in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."—2 Cor. iv. 6, 7.

These earthen vessels are our mortal bodies, descended from the earthy Adam, formed of the dust of the ground, which sinned and fell in Adam, were redeemed by Christ, before prepared unto glory, washed and sealed with the holy spirit of promise, which dwells in us as a divine treasure, and is an earnest of our spiritual inheritance, which is reserved in heaven for us who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. These bodies we cannot call our own: they were sold under sin; but they are bought with a price, and are called a purchased possession, to be hereafter delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of children of God. Though now they are mortal, corruptible and vile, they are sealed to the day of deliverance, when they shall be changed from mortal to immortal, from corruptible to incorruptible, from natural to spiritual, and from vile to glorious, and be fashioned like the glorious body of our risen Redeemer. And we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for God has predestinated all whom he foreknew to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. It is strange that any of the children of God should fail to perceive a difference between the vessel and the treasure which it contains: the casket and the precious jewel committed to it. The vessel is the outer man, the

treasure is the inner or new man; and these are contrary one to the other, causing a continual conflict as long as we continue in our militant state.

As the tabernacle in the wilderness and the temples in Jerusalem were the consecrated dwellings of the Shekinah or the presence of the Lord, sanctified as his abode, so the indwelling Godhead of Christ's own supreme deity was manifest in the body of his flesh, as the temple of the living God, and the consecrated sanctuary of his people. And as the vital union of Christ, in his Mediatorial Sonship, with his mystical body the church, identifies them with him, even as he is identified with the Father, so he by his spirit dwells in the church as his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. The head of the church is Christ, and the head of Christ is God. Christ is in the Father, and the Father is in Christ, and Christ and the Father are one; even so also the church is in Christ, and Christ is in the church, and Christ and the church are one. As therefore Christ dwells in his church, and all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ, therefore the church is his consecrated temple. And as Christ by his spirit dwells experimentally in each quickened member of his body, and has redeemed their persons with his own precious blood, their bodies are sealed, as we have already shown, with the holy spirit of promise, which makes their bodies consecrated temples, in which his spirit dwells; for they are sanctified by God the Father, and chosen to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. To sanctify is to set apart by solemn consecration to a sacred purpose or calling; so by the redemption in which Christ gave himself for them they are individually and personally, as well as collectively, bought with a price, and are by sacred right the property of him who purchased them with his own blood; and are therefore not their own, nor have they a right to withhold their service from him whose they are, and whom they are commanded to glorify in their body and in their spirit, which are God's.

How solemn the obligation by which the children of God are bound to honor, obey and glorify God, devoting all the ability he has given them in that direction. To them it is said, All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." Our bodies are members of Christ, for he took on him the seed of Abraham; and if we be Christ's, then are we the seed of Abraham, and heirs according to promise. The children being partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same. His taking part of the flesh and blood of which his children are partakers, did not make him the Son of God, for his relation and identity with the Father were from everlasting; neither did his children partaking of flesh and blood make them the children of God, but only developed them as children of the flesh, even as the incarnation of the Son of God manifested him as the Son of man. Hence, in the body of his flesh he claims his disciples as the bone of his bones and the flesh of his flesh. The bodies of his redeemed people are the members of his body, of which he saith by the mouth of the inspired psalmist, "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned (or as in the margin, what days they should be fashioned), when as yet there was none of them." — Psa. cxxxix. 15, 16. The bodies of the saints were all comprehended in the body of the flesh in which Christ came to do the will of the Father, when he took on him the seed of Abraham, and was manifested in our flesh under the law, to redeem us from under the

law, that we might receive the adoption for which we are now waiting, and must wait, to wit, the redemption of the body. —Heb. ii. 14, 16; Gal iii. 29; Rom. viii. 23.

By all these considerations the solemn admonitions of the apostle come home to us as the redeemed members of the body of Christ, showing the enormity of sinfulness justly chargeable on those who desecrate the body of which they are members, by asserting an independence or free agency, or by any unhallowed association religiously with idols, or with any other religious body than that of the Lord Jesus. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bound or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many." — 1 Cor. xii. 12-14. May we be divinely preserved from sinning against the body of which the grace of God has made us members, or of defiling the temple which God has consecrated, and in which he dwells by his spirit. "If any man defile (or destroy, as in the margin) the temple of God, him shall God destroy; which temple are ye." How fearful the judgment! and how vigilantly and constantly should we watch and pray, lest we be tempted to bring reproach or dishonor upon the consecrated temple in which the Holy Ghost dwells.

The destruction of which the apostle warns us to beware is not the interminable perdition of the ungodly, but that destruction which is parabolically compared to salt that has lost its savor, and is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men. Paul says, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." It is in this sense christians may be destroyed as to their usefulness in the church, their communion and sweet fellowship with the saints, and enjoyment of the approving smiles of their God. This is indeed a much sorer punishment than Moses ever inflicted on those who despised his precepts, though they died or were put to death without mercy, under two or three witnesses. None but the chastened sons of God can know how sore a plague is sin, and how terrible the strokes of God's chastising rod.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe March 15, 1880.)

OBITUARIES

ELDER LESTER E. LEE

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst by death our dearly beloved brother and pastor, Elder Lester E. Lee. He was born February 28, 1908, and died June 25, 1968.

He was received into the fellowship of Mingo Primitive Baptist Church in August, 1931, and remained a faithful member until death. He began speaking in conference in 1941, and was ordained in April, 1942. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace. He loved the church and people in general. He spent much time visiting the sick and dying in homes and hospitals. I never heard him say it was too cold or too hot to answer the call of the sick, or to bury one in the watery grave, to arise in newness of life.

Brother Lee and I were boys together, being reared not very far apart. He was of good moral character from his youth; and had a good report from both within and without the church. We miss him very much, but we feel his sorrows and troubles have ended, and that our loss is his eternal gain.

He is survived by his faithful companion, Sister Kay Belle Dunn Lee; one son, Lester E., Jr.; one daughter, Mrs. Virginia Lee Watson; and one grandchild. Also by three brothers, Almond, Henry, and Oliver; and by three sisters, Mrs. Elma Smith, Mrs. Roland Jermigan and Mrs. Bruce Jermigan.

His funeral was conducted by Elder W. D. Godwin and Elder C. D. Turner, and his body was laid to rest in the family cemetery, in the presence of a great throng of witnesses, beneath a mound of flowers.

Done by order of Mingo Church in conference on Saturday before the second Sunday in October, 1968. It is requested that a copy be recorded on our church book, one sent to the family, and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Committee:
Elder W. D. Godwin
Sister Hattie Bass

ALFONZA W. DUDLEY

Brother Alfonza W. Dudley was born in Franklin County, near Rocky Mount, Virginia, August 17, 1890, and later moved to Hardy, Virginia.

He united with old Linville Primitive Baptist Church July 8, 1908, and was baptized by Elder S. O. Plybon. In June, 1921, he was received by letter in Sandy Level Church, near Hardy, of which he was a member until death. He died April 12, 1968, making his stay on earth almost seventy-eight years.

He was never married. Survivors are two sisters of Roanoke, Virginia, Mrs. Florence Maxey and Mrs. Eva Brumfield, and Mrs. Blanche Brumfield, Reidsville, N. C.; four brothers: Harry Dudley, Vinton, Va.; Henry Dudley, Salem, Va.; Dewitt Dudley, Rocky Mount, Va.; and Rufus Dudley, Hardy, Va.

He died in a hospital, and was always glad for brethren and friends to visit him. We feel that God has called him home to be with Him, where there is no sickness, sorrow, pain or death: where all will be peace, love and joy forever.

His funeral was conducted by his Pastor, Elder Leonard Brammer and Elder Posie Plybon; and his body was laid to rest in the family cemetery near Hardy.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family; and bow in humble submission to the will of God. Written by a sister in hope,

Pearl Dudley

ELDER D. C. DAVIS

Elder D. C. Davis was born in Johnson City, Tennessee, February 11, 1874.

He taught school in Kentucky for some time before coming west in 1898.

He was married in 1902 to Fannie Cox. From this union were born four daughters: Mrs. Claud Garrison, Moclips; Mrs. Charles Feldtman, Swofford; Mrs. Wayne Huntting, Silver Creek; and Mrs. Henry Rollins, Centralia. Three sons: Ray Davis, Centralia; and Leonard and Lowell Davis, both of Swofford.

Elder Davis joined the Cowlitz River Church in 1907, was ordained a Deacon and served faithfully until the year of 1956. He was then ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry. He had a great love and understanding of the true gospel and loved to speak of his Saviour. He enjoyed going among the other churches and was richly blessed to meet the people who had an experience of God's grace.

He appeared to be anxious for the call to his Eternal Home, which came April 24, 1967, at the age of 93 years.

He was laid to rest in the Doss Cemetery, Mossyrock, Washington, to await the resurrection call of his Saviour.

Written by
Ernest Attebery

ANNIE BEN ROBERSON

In accordance to the request of the Robersonville Primitive Baptist Church, I will attempt to pen a few lines in memory of Sister Annie Ben Roberson. Sister Roberson entered this life on October 7, 1882, and was called from our midst on October 20, 1968, thus making her stay upon this earth 86 years, and 13 days. She was the daughter of the late John A. and Julia Frances Purvis.

Sister Roberson united with the Robersonville Primitive Baptist Church many years ago and enjoyed attending her meetings until her health would not permit her to do so. She professed a hope in an all wise, all powerful, and merciful God. She was a believer in salvation by grace and trusted and abided in the hope of being taken on the wings of God's love to that celestial city, whose builder and maker is God. We hope our loss is our sister's eternal gain.

Surviving are her husband, Jesse Ben Roberson, three sons and four daughters, seven grandchildren, and four great grandchildren. Also surviving are one brother and one sister.

To the family the church extends her heartfelt sympathy. May you be comforted by God's love and divine words of comfort is our prayer.

Her funeral was conducted in the Robersonville Primitive Baptist Church by Elder W. E. Grimes and Mr. John Browning. Interment was in the Robersonville Cemetery.

RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to *Zion's Landmark, Signs of the Times,* and *Old Faith Contender* for publication, a copy be sent to the family and a copy be placed on the church record.

Done by order of conference the first Saturday in November, 1968.

Elder I. S. Conner, Moderator
Johnny Ray Gardner, Committee

SISTER MELLIE BYRD

We, the Church at Liberty, wish to bow in humble submission to our gracious Heavenly Father in removing from our midst a beloved Sister, Mellie Byrd. She had been in declining health for a long time. Sister Byrd manifested her Christianity in her home, among her neighbors, and was faithful to her church, filling her place as long as her health permitted.

Sister Byrd died at home September 6, 1968, in Johnston County, N. C. She was born November 19, 1892, in Harnett County, N. C., having lived nearly 76 years. She was the daughter of the late John R. Stewart and Mary McLamb Stewart.

She united in marriage to Cleveland L. Byrd November 26, 1910. To this union two sons and a daughter were born. Her husband and children preceded her in death. Her survivors are a brother, Daniel Stewart; a sister, Mrs. Betty McLamb, and several nieces and nephews.

On Saturday before the first Sunday in November, 1932, she united with Bethsady Primitive Baptist Church, Harnett County, N. C. She moved her membership to Liberty Primitive Baptist Church January, 1956, and was a charter member.

Her funeral was preached by her Pastor, Elder C. D. Turner and Elder W. D. Godwin at Liberty Church, then was laid to rest in Bethsady Church Cemetery to await the calling of the Saviour to take her around the Throne of God to live with the Saints where there will be no disappointments, sorrows, griefs, or pains.

This was done in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in October, 1968.

It was resolved that a copy to be sent to the family, one to be recorded on the church book, and one to be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Committee:
Sister Eva Tadlock
Sister Lovie Young
Brother James G. Young

SISTER LULA HOBSON

Sister Lula Hobson departed this life while in the Betsy Johnson Memorial Hospital, Dunn, N. C. on September 14, 1968. She was born to her parents, Nathan Tart and Mary Ann Stewart Tart, February 15, 1894, making her stay on earth a little more than 74½ years. She was married to the late Evander Hobson on November 6, 1910. To this union four children were born, two sons and two daughters: Clifford Martin Hobson, Rt. 3, Dunn, N. C.; Vernon Monroe Hobson of Spring Lake, N. C.; Mrs. Vira Turlington, Rt. 2, Dunn, N. C.; and Mrs. Hilda Wood, Rt. 1, Benson, N. C.; also five grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted at Liberty Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder C. D. Turner, Mr. Frank Turnage, and Mr. John William Smith. Then her body was laid to rest in the Devotional Gardens, Harnett County, N. C.

She joined Bethsady Primitive Baptist Church the Saturday before the first Sunday in November, 1932. She moved her membership to Liberty Primitive Baptist Church in January, 1956, making her a charter member. Sister Hobson was faithful in all her duties, as a wife, mother, neighbor, and her church. Her attendance was regular as long as health permitted. She was a firm believer in Salvation by the Grace of God.

She was bedridden for quite some time. Now, we can say to the dear family, weep not. Mother is resting on the beautiful shore where we hope to meet her again, where sad parting will be no more and all suffering is over. The Lord is good, let us be reconciled to his Holy Will. Yea, blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.

This was done in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in October, 1968. It was resolved that a copy be sent to the family, one to be recorded in the church book, and one to be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Committee:
Sister Eva Tadlock
Sister Lovie Young
Brother James G. Young

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT BROTHER BERNICE TART

We, the Liberty Church, bow in humble submission to the Holy calling of our Heavenly Father from our midst, Brother William Bernice Tart, who stood firm for the doctrine and faith of salvation by grace.

Brother Tart was born in Harnett Co., N. C., March 22, 1896, and departed this life April 30, 1968, in Harnett Co., N. C. at the age of 72 years, 1 mo., and 8 days. He was the son of the late Thomas Tart and Sister Phoebe McLamb Tart. Brother Tart was married to Mallie Hodges Tart December 3, 1916. To this union were born fifteen children. Three died in infancy. His survivors are: His wife, five daughters, Alice Mae Barefoot, Callie Gertrude Lee, Mallie Irene Penny, Phoebe Ellen Haney, of Rt. 2, Dunn, N. C. and Spicey Hortense Barefoot, Rt. 2, Benson, N. C.; seven sons, Jasper B., James E., William Ernest, Junius Monroe, David Duncan, Richard Thomas Tart, of Rt. 2, Dunn, N. C., and Marvin D. Tart of Benson, N. C.; seventeen grandchildren, and one great grandchild.

Brother Tart united with Liberty Primitive Baptist Church January, 1958 while he was in the Veterans' Hospital, Fayetteville, N. C. and was baptized there in a bathtub by his Pastor, Elder Lester E. Lee. He was a faithful member of the church and attended the meetings regularly until a short time before

his death. Brother Tart was a retired farmer and a good neighbor, always ready to lend a helping hand.

His funeral was held at Liberty Church by his Pastor, Elder Lester E. Lee and his grandson, Leon Tart. His body was laid to rest in Isham McLamb Cemetery, Johnston Co., N. C. to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who will call his sleeping body to arise together with all the redeemed family of God, to be made like Him and to see Him and be satisfied forever.

We say to the family and the host of friends, weep not as those who have no hope.

A committee was appointed in conference June 1, 1968, by Liberty Church.

RESOLVED, That we send the family a copy of these resolutions. Also, that we enter a copy on our Church records, and send a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Committee:
Brother James G. Young
Sister Katie Barefoot
Sister Lovie Young

ELDER R. P. HENDRIX

Elder R. P. Hendrix was born March 11, 1889, and departed this life February 22, 1968. He leaves to mourn their loss a loving and faithful wife, five daughters, five sons, several grandchildren, great grandchildren, and great great grandchildren.

He united with the Primitive Baptist Church June 4, 1921, at Frisco City, Alabama; and was liberated to preach September 1, 1923, and was ordained to the ministry July 5, 1924. The presbytery was Elders B. Sawyer and T. L. Harris. He was the pastor of Shiloh Church from 1938 until God called him home; and he was also pastor of Mt. Zion Church fifteen miles west of Mobile, Ala.

He had many trials and persecutions during his ministry, but continued to wear the breastplate of faith, love, etc. He stood firm in the doctrine of the Old School Baptists to the end. He was faithful to his churches, always contending for peace and love among the children of God. He had many travels among the churches, always willing and submissive to God's calling.

We mourn not for him as they that have no hope, for he was strong in faith, and always contended for the old landmarks that the forefathers stood for in the Old School Primitive Baptist faith and order. To know him was to love him. We bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Father who does all things well.

His funeral was conducted by Elders R. M. Griffin and Max Walker. His spirit has gone to God who gave it, and his body is awaiting the glorious resurrection.

Written by his oldest granddaughter, who loved him very dearly, and misses his sweet smiles and kind words so much.

Valerie Mason

CORNIE EVANS

Brother Cornie Evans was born March 30, 1882, and died March 24, 1968, at the age of 86. He was married to the former Maggie French, who survives with the following children, Edgar Evans, Lynwood Evans, Mrs. Louise Rainer and Mrs. Inez Lewis, all of La Crosse and Robert Lee Evans of California. One brother Eugene Evans of Raleigh, N. C. and two half sisters, Mrs. Joe Thomasson and Lucy Mae Evans of Florida. He was preceded in death by three children. Brother Evans was received into Dan River Church on Sept. 21, 1940, and although living many miles from his church, he attended meetings very regularly.

His funeral was conducted at the funeral home chapel in South Hill, Va. by his pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler. Burial was in the La Crosse Cemetery to await the Resurrection.

Harold D. Weatherford

SISTER SALLIE JANE LUTHER

Once again the Lord has been pleased to remove from our midst one of our members, Sister Sallie Jane Luther. Sister Luther joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in June, 1946, and was a faithful member, attending the meetings as long as she was able. She was born June 21, 1895, was united in marriage to Brack L. Luther Jan. 1, 1922, to this union were born one son, Carl Luther, and one daughter, Mamie Geraldine Luther. Sister Luther died at Danville Memorial Hospital after an extended illness on July 6, 1968. She is survived by one daughter Mamie Geraldine Luther, Route 3, Eden, N. C.; one brother, Charlie Roach and one sister, Mrs. Lucy Hyler of Eden, N. C.

Her funeral was held at Dan River Church by her pastor Elder D. V. Spangler and she was laid to rest in the church cemetery. We feel our beloved sister has spent her appointed time here, and it is our humble prayer that it may please our God to reconcile those left to mourn the loss of this dear one, and to feel their loss is her eternal gain.

Boyd and Daisy Minter

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 137 DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1969 NO. 4

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4/69
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ENJOYED THE ASSOCIATIONS

Duanesburg, New York 12056

Dear Elders Wood and Spangler;

I have had the thought to write you many times, but I felt there was nothing on my mind that would interest the brethren. I have many pleasant thoughts of the associations and meetings we were privileged to attend last Summer and Fall. Wherever I went to meeting I always felt at home with my people.

When the **Signs of the Times** arrives it is like a letter from home. In it we read of the joys and sorrows, fears and hopes of the brethren, and it makes me feel warm inside.

I enjoyed Brother James Carter's letter, and in it where he spoke of "you cannot sing songs of Zion in a strange land." I thought, How true. The inhabitants of the strange land do not understand our language. In this same issue, November, 1968, another brother said the same thing in a letter written over a hundred and ten years ago. He wrote to a sister "How can they sing the songs of Zion in a strange land?" The ways of the Lord are wonderful to behold.

The Lord takes care and watches over his people. Psalm 105, verse 17 reads. "He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant." I feel that this was all laid out in the way of salvation, and I feel Joseph was a type of Christ. When the time came He sent his son Jesus to save his people from their sins. Jesus went before his people as the Captian of their salvation. (Hebrews 2: 9,10) Our carnal nature is at enmity against this; and man, when left to himself, immediately wants to do something. In Psalm 20: 7, we read, "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God."

The Lord's people have many temptations and trials. Sometimes they do things that they would not, and cannot do the things they would; but they have a hope that in the last, they, through the atoning blood of Jesus, will be found clothed and in their right mind.

Again I want to thank the brethren of the Upper Country Line and the Salisbury Associations for the fine hospitality given us while we were there.

Please forgive any error for I feel to be the least of all. Thanks, Elder Wood, for the recording tapes of the Salisbury association.

With hope and Trust in God,
Woodrow W. Bellinger

MORE FROM SISTER TEDDER

My second marriage was to William Sidney Boswell September 11, 1941. Before we were married I told him that I was a member of the Old Baptist Church at Pittman's Grove, which I loved so well that I did not want anything to come between me and the ones I loved with all my heart. He said he would go with me when he could. For two or three years he would go with me, and then he got to where he would not go, but wanted to go to picture shows. I did not like the shows, but went one night because he wanted me to, all the while praying

that God would show him it was not right. Later I went again with him, and a voice said, "you don't belong in here, you can't serve God and the devil." I got up and told him that he could stay there if he wished, but I am going; so I went, and have not been since.

He still would not go with me to church, but would mock their singing. I did not say anything to him, but would say within my heart, "Lord forgive him for he knoweth not what he doeth." I am not writing this because I did not love him, for I prayed for him day and night, desiring that the Lord would show him better.

In 1953 I started having blood clots and suffered with one in the back of my neck. When it got well I had one in my thyroid gland, and suffered greatly, asking the Lord to take me out of my suffering. This song kept singing inside of me for I could not sing:

"Father, I stretch my hands to thee,
No other help I know.
If thou withdraw thyself from me,
Ah, whither shall I go."

They took me to the hospital, where I was for two weeks. After a long time I got better, not well. In June, 1954, I had another one in the artery in my heart. O how sick I was. I went to the Quarterly Meeting the second Saturday and Sunday, but did not tell my husband about it, for he would not have let me gone. I asked the Lord to take care of me. I spent the night with my sister, and she did not know I was so sick. I went back to the meeting on Sunday, and took the bread and wine with them I thought for the last time. (That was fifteen years ago) I went to my son's for dinner on Sunday; and when we got home we told my husband and step-son how sick I was.

On Monday I tried to work in the garden, but could not. On Thursday my daughter and I were cooking dinner, and I had an attack, which my heart tablets kept from hurting so bad. On Sunday after that I was taken to the hospital, but I did not know anything about it. I had six more attacks after I got there, and at the last one they thought I was dead. As for what was going on in this world, I knew nothing about it. I hope God took me out of this world to show me something: I saw the handwriting on the wall, which told me I was crucified with Christ; I died with him, and was buried with him; I arose with him, and was waiting for his coming again.

When I came back I was so weak I could not raise my hand to my head, but this scripture came to me, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people saith your God; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that the iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received at the Lord's hands double for all her sin."

I got better fast. Oh how I thank God for his wonderful blessings. "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." I am glad it is all in His hands and not man's. When I was able to go home I was soon able to sit on the porch. My husband was plowing in front of the house, and I was praying to God to open his eyes that he could see, unstop his ears so that he could hear, and take away his hard and stony heart and give him a heart of flesh that he could understand; and show him what he is by nature. He came out at the end of the row and drove the mule into the yard; and came and sat down beside me. I asked him if he was tired; and he said, No, but that something had happened to him. He said, "I have hated the Old Baptists Church, and all of them, but something has made me love what I have hated, and hate what I did love." I said, "Praise God. I thank God, he has answered a sinner's prayers. I have been praying for you a long time."

I tell you I never had to ask him to go to church any more. I was so happy for him. He loved the church and wanted to join, but had a stroke in March, 1960, and died in June. He told Brother W. E. Turner and Brother C. D. Turner that if he ever got able, he wanted to be baptized; but it was not the Lord's will. Both of the brothers came and preached and sang for him. We both loved this song:

"I love my Saviour God
Because he first loved me;
Because he shed his precious blood
To set my spirit free."

I loved him but God loved him best. "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

I married the third time to a member of the Old Baptist Church. We are old, but we enjoy living together. His name is Eric Tedder. We are not able to go to church like we want to, and we get very hungry for the food that comes from the Master's table; and when we are blessed to receive it, our cup runs over, and we rejoice in a Saviour's love.

I love to read the **Signs of the Times.** All of it is good. I can't see to read the fine print in the Bible, but I can read the **Signs.** I know that it is by God's grace and mercy that I am still here. I am made to sing, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." I can't praise his holy name enough. I go in fear and trembling most of the time, feeling to be a sinner saved by grace if at all, I humbly beg you all to pray for me.

A little sister in Christ, I hope

Mrs. Nancy Tedder
Rt. 1,
Lucama, N. C.

EXPERIENCE

Dear Brethren and Friends in the Lord:

I have had a mind for some time to write some for the Signs. My weakness and imperfections have given me much fear; however, I believe the Lord is able to give me strength to do so, if it be his will. I hope and pray He will direct my mind in the right way.

I was born in Patrick County, Virginia, August 11, 1920, in a little log cabin about five miles from Fairystone Park. My mother had been married before, and had been left with some small children. When I was about eight months old my natural father died, leaving my mother again with more small children.

I do not remember much about my life until I was about eight years old. We did not own a home and found ourselves moving from one place to another. At about the age of eight I had scarlet fever, and the doctor told the neighbors that he did not think I would live. I was out for some time, I do not know how many days, and did not know anything. My grandfather lived with us about this time, and he was taken sick and died.

My mother did not have the money to buy clothes for me to go to school, so I had to wear my grandfather's clothes. I went to school but very little, and what time I did go I was nicknamed Grandpa, because my clothes were too large for me. Sometime in early life I had serious thoughts about death and what would become of me after death; but as I thought on these things, I also thought I had plenty of time; and before I got old I would think more about it. But time went on, and sometimes it did not bear on my mind so heavy; but other times it would get so heavy that it seemed I could not bear it.

I felt to be so young, and such a vile sinner, but I thought I was too young to even think about joining the Church because most of them were up in age. I thought I was too young even to think of such things, and would try to put them out of mind. I would go with my mother to church, and would see them and my mother crying, and I could not understand why. Why would they cry if they were happy? I did not know that their tears were of joy. I have always felt to be a misfit with my schoolmates, and with the Church people today. I well remember that one time my teacher came to me on the school ground and said to me, "Leonard, why don't you play with the other children?" I don't remember what I told her, but I felt so unwanted by my schoolmates.

There was an Elder who was to preach at a church close to the schoolhouse, and the teacher told us children that we would all go down to hear him. Most of the children as well as myself were glad to get away from school awhile; and this was the church I had been going to with my mother. We all went in and sat down, and the Elder began to preach.

At the close of his sermon he turned to us children and began to admonish us how we should mind our parents, and how we should not worry them; for this was good in the sight of God. Before I knew what had taken place, I began to choke up in my throat. I have said, and still say, that I believe that was the first sermon I ever heard. Sometime after that my mother came back from church and told me that the church wanted me to be their housekeeper. I was twelve or more years old at this time, and I felt that to be a great honor: I would sweep the dust that came from the Saint's feet; and to be a doorkeeper in the House of the Lord was more than I felt worthy to be.

Time went on and I got worse instead of better, it seemed to me. I had heard people say that after you pass twelve years of age, that you would come to the age of accountability; and now I have passed that and have not felt the deliverance at the hand of the Lord. Time went on, and we moved to the little Town of Bassett, Va., and I went to work in the plant there. My burden of sin became so heavy it seemed I could not live. I became very ill and could not hold down my job. This gave me much concern, and I began to lose weight; and it seemed the doctors were doing me no good. What to do I could not find. I would try to pray but it seemed the Lord would not hear. I would go to bed at night and lay there trying to beg the Lord for mercy; and when I arose in the morning, my very breathing was, "O Lord have mercy on me. O Lord deliver me according to thy grace. Bless me, O Lord, that this mountain of sin might be removed from me. I confess before thee, O Lord of heaven and earth, that I am vile, I am undone; but I believe thou art able to set me free, thou art able to give me life."

I remember one night going to bed as usual; and sometime in the night I dreamed I saw a large body of clear water. As I looked at this water a voice seemed to say, In it dwelleth righteousness. As I thought on this it seemed that in it dwelled righteousness for me, and I felt this was to show me I should be baptized. But I wanted more evidence. One of my half-brothers was boarding with us at this time. I thought him to be a good man and I asked him to pray for me — it seemed the Lord would not hear me, and my prayers seemed to go no higher than my head. My half-brother went to his bedroom that night, and I could hear his voice but could not understand his words. That night I dreamed I saw a man standing in the pulpit of my home church; and this man was my Lord, and he beckoned for me to come. I awoke the next morning and told my brother the dream. He was and still is a member of another order, but he said to me, "That is the church for you."

I had been sick all of that winter, as I stated before. Sometime in March I had gone to bed as before, begging the Lord for mercy. The next morning I awoke, got up and walked to the window and looked out. My tongue will never be able to describe what I saw, and how I felt. I had never felt this way before: as I stood before that window I saw a new world. I believe I saw my Lord in the pardon of my sins; that His blood had made me clean, and I was as free from sin as if I had never sinned. O the peace and joy that flooded my soul! I wanted to talk about my Saviour to every one I met. I wanted to tell them what He had done for me — how he had come and taken my feet out of the pit, and put a new song in my mouth, even praise to His name. My thought and desire was to tell the church my feelings; but I wanted more evidence. It came to me that if I didn't go with what I had, I would not receive any more. I felt that I would die if I did not go.

I was now only seventeen years of age. I went before the church at Riverview, Bassett, Virginia, the fourth Sunday in March, 1938, and was received. I was baptized the fourth Sunday morning in May, 1938. I felt I left something there that has not been with me since: the heavy load I carried was gone, and I felt I had been enabled of the Lord to do His will for the first time in my life.

I went on rejoicing I don't know how long; but soon Satan came along and began to tempt me, and these thoughts would arise in my mind: You have gone to these good people and told them that you have a hope of heaven; and they believed you. You should be ashamed of yourself. Over this I began to beg the Lord again, O Lord, what must I do? I want to be submissive to thy will. It would be hard for me to go back and tell them I was mistaken in the whole thing; but, Lord, if I have done wrong, I will go back and ask them to take my name off of the Church Book.

About this time I laid down on the bed in mother's room, not knowing what to do. I cannot tell whether I was asleep or not, but a man's hand appeared before me. I could see the robe as it swung from his wrist; and as I beheld this strange sight, I saw his arm — and then I saw a body, but did not see his face. And, behold, it was the body of my Lord: I could see the blood and water flowing from His side. As I write this my eyes are dim with tears. As I beheld this glorious sight, the words seemed to say within me, This blood was shed for me.

I went on for some time, — a stranger to myself and to others, I thought. I became burdened again, and what was wrong I did not know. I did try again to beg the Lord to show me what he would have me do. I even asked the Lord if I was wrong about the whole thing, and if I should go back and repent again; or if I had left my first love. My cry was, O Lord, help me. O Lord, lead me in the right way. Keep me by the right hand of thy righteousness.

I well remember at church one time, a brother Deacon called me aside and said, Brother Brammer, I have been watching you, and I see your interest in the Church, and seemingly you are carrying a burden for a deacon; and I wanted to ask you about it. I did not deny it, and told him I felt to be burdened for something, but did not know what for. My home church called a presbytery to look into my qualifications as a deacon. This was in June, 1949, the fourth Saturday. After this I went for a short time thinking that this would ease my burden; but in a few months the burden came back worse than ever. Again I did not know what to do. My dear reader if you have not traveled this road you may not know what I am talking about; but if you have, then you know.

I began to feel that I would have to speak in public; but my thoughts were, I cannot do this for I am slow of speech and of a stammering tongue; and I would try to put it away from me. Time went on and I thought I could cast it aside; but it was greater than I. I would make many excuses, but none of them did any good. My burden grew worse.

About this time I had a small peach orchard, and I spent much of my time there. A great deal of my work was in a bowed position; and I worked and tried to pray and beg the Lord to show me what he would have me do. Sometimes the burden got so heavy I would leave my work and go to the woods and fall down on the ground, and cry to the Lord for mercy. Many scriptures would come to my mind. One time while in the field at work, I thought I had found a good excuse, because if I should be called to preach, I could not serve churches as Pastor. Just at that time my mind turned to a church that had a pastor; and I was ashamed I had such thoughts. (I will try to explain this later.)

My burden was still heavy upon me, and I still did not know what to do, but would continue to beg the Lord over and over, O Lord, what would you have me to do. At one time it came to me, Why don't you put your case before the church and let them decide what to do. To this I could not answer, because I felt they would do what was right. About this time I felt I could not stay away any longer; and I still pleaded with the Lord. I heard a voice as if it spoke to me, "Wait, I say, upon the Lord," and this would go ever and over in my mind: "Wait, I say, upon the Lord." And I was made willing to wait upon Him. Now I felt that if it were his will for me to preach, he would show me more; if not,

I would become reconciled. I had tried to keep my feelings to myself as much as I could, but I would talk to my wife some about it. I well remember once when I was so burdened that it seemed I could not live, I was doing some work in the house, and I quit my work and told my wife that I could not live with the burden I had; that something would have to be done. Her reply was, "I would not mind you preaching, if I knew you could preach; but I would not want you to worry the people."

This was one of the things that worried me; so I did not get much comfort from this. My pastor and I went to Bush Arbor Church together; and I had come to the place I must talk to someone. I told him some of the things I have written here, and asked him not to tell anyone; and he said he would not. Sometime after this I was going to my work one Monday morning, and a voice seemed to speak to me, "Now is the time, this is the day, this is the accepted year of the Lord." And I said, "Lord, if you will give me strength, I will go this coming meeting." The fourth Saturday soon came. I did not tell anyone my feelings until I got to the church that day. My prayer was, Lord you fix it the way you would have it to be. When I got on the church ground, my pastor, Elder J. R. Hollandsworth was already there. I went to his car where he was reading his Bible, and said, "Brother Hollandsworth, I cannot live in the condition I am in." It seemed death if I went, and death if I did not go. This was the fourth Saturday in February, 1955. We went on in the house and the pastor asked me, after he told the people what I had told him, to open service with song and prayer, and to speak as I felt to.

I opened to the fourth chapter of Ecclesiastes, the 8th to the 12th verses, and talked for fifteen or twenty minutes. In a short time the church I spoke of above heard that I had begun to speak in public, and their pastor had told them to start looking for another pastor, (which I did not know at the time I first thought of this church,) and when the deacon heard that I had begun speaking, he said, "There is our Pastor!" I am now trying to serve those brethren, and three other churches.

I have had many ups and downs in life, but the Lord has been so good to me. I would like to tell another dream that I had: I dreamed that I saw a strange looking sight — it seemed that I saw bubbles floating on the earth. As I looked at this, I saw a bright spot in the sky, I saw the face of a man in the sky; and this was my Lord. It was not like you and me: it was solid gold as if it burned in a furnace. My wife was with me and we were sitting at a table, she on one side and I on the other. We were talking about how glad we were that we had seen the Lord coming in the clouds of glory. As we talked it began to rain; and I thought it was the rain of fire and brimstone; but I was not afraid because we had seen the Lord. I awoke my wife and told her in tears about my dream. I was crying so loud that it awoke my children up stairs; and they began to cry: the whole family was happy. I have a hope that some day I will see my Lord for myself and not another.

Early in this article I stated that I had scarlet fever, the doctor gave me up to die. My mother told me after I started to speak in public, that while I was sick, she went to the kitchen and knelt down on the hearth rock, and asked the Lord to spare my life: if He would just spare my life she would be willing for the Lord to take me and use me anyway he saw fit. She said while she was praying, she saw a small light in the crevice of the hearth rock, and felt I would get better. That was about forty years ago.

I feel that the Lord has been so good to me, that he has been my strength, my shield, and the horn of my salvation. May His high and holy Name have the praise, the honor, and the glory, both now and forever. Amen.

(Elder) Leonard J. Brammer
Rt. 3, Box 269
Martinsville, Va. 24112

HE TURNS NIGHT INTO DAY

Signs of the Times,

Dear Brethren:

Another year is fast nearing its end and we are fast nearing the end of time. We are often made to stop and take stock of where we stand. Just what are our hopes of Eternity? Are we ready for His coming? Aren't we living in an age where people like to gloss over sin and make all sorts of excuses for their behavior? No one, seemingly, remembers that "Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. " (Gal. 6:7) These thoughts were brought to my mind recently upon two occasions. Each time it was by someone speaking of the wickedness and sin rampant in the world today and why God "allowed" it go on unpunished. **Why** sinners were allowed to go on, boldly, free from all punishment, murdering, robbing, attacking helpless women and rioting. **Why** the highways were filled with drunken drivers, harmful to innocent motorists. **And why** it was always the innocent, helpless ones that bore the burdens. Why? Why? Why???

The Lord has said, "Vengence is mine." and the Lord also warns of a coming day when those whose names are not written in the Book of Life will be "cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. 20: 15) "Therefore be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh." We expect sinners to be punished here, but each time the law is being enforced, we hear cries of police brutality; when a criminal is arrested, leniency is demanded; and if the crime is murder or rape, the offender is put away for a short time, only to be released later to start all over again . . . many times, worse than before. Man has always been a rebellious creature, desiring his own way and resisting authority. In the Bible times, the Lord gave them over to their reprobate minds for a season, but when He was ready, He brought an end to their rebellion quickly and with no argument. Today, He is letting man 'enjoy the freedom' that he is crying for, allowing him to have his own way, as he thinks he wants to do. But he isn't satisfied. He gains material riches and wants more. Has fine homes and cars, expensive clothes, vast properties and is not happy; Always looking for more. Looking for everything except the One who could make everything else look dim beside His glory. No, they say they do not need Him. But they forget that one of these days, and that time is fast arriving, there will be a day of reckoning.

There will be no hiding from Him in that day for He knows where each one is. There will always be unrest and trouble as long as man rejects the God who created him and the beautiful world he lives in. As long as he rejects God, he will continue to go about causing destruction and ruin, sowing tares among the wheat. But did not the husbandman say to leave the tares until the harvest is ready and when the wheat is ripe, the tares shall be separated from the wheat, cast into the fire and burned. That is a very clear answer for the one who thinks a life of sin goes unpunished. "Judgement is Mine, saith the Lord!"

There has been another question often asked me by various ones in our day to day conversation at work. Sometimes by an elderly, afflicted person; sometimes by one who has an elderly relative who is ill. yet another time by someone with an afflicted child, but the question is always the same. Why does a God, who is a just and merciful God, afflict people with incurable diseases, crippling arthritis, or any other painful affliction. The question often comes from some precious old soul who knows the answer but wants to be reassured in their belief. They want to know why seemingly 'good' people suffer and the others go on their 'merry' way, seemingly without an ache or pain. I am always reminded of the last sermon I ever heard Elder Lefferts preach at Welsh Tract, one month before he died. He had spent the night with a precious old sister who was faithful in attending meetings until age and infirmity prevented. She knew the answer to her question, but,

as we all do at times, she wished to be reassured and comforted, and asked Elder Lefferts "Why so many of the older people had to linger on and suffer afflictions when they longed to be taken Home?" That morning Elder Lefferts seemed so sad and he was blest to preach one of the most moving sermons I ever heard him preach. His text was Psalms 119:75, "I know, O Lord, that thy judgements are right, and that Thou in faithfulness hath afflicted me." That sermon has remained with me over the years and it always explains the travels of the Lord's afflicted people, wherever they may be. For they are all a poor and afflicted people.

When I hear someone say the devil is the cause of their being sick or in trouble, I wonder who they think of oftenest and who their traveling companion is, the Lord or Satan. I told one lady, who seemed to be a chronic complainer, that the Lord sent our trials and tribulations to test us. If we came through singing His praises instead of cursing our fate, it was to the praise and glory of a just and merciful God. We praise Him for showing He cared enough to use the rod of affliction when we needed it. There is another scripture I enjoy thinking upon (Nahum 1:12) "Though I have afflicted thee, I will afflict thee no more." He sends our afflictions and He removes them. He takes away the rod when His design in using it is fully completed. If it is sent for testing us, that we may glorify God, it will end when the Lord has made us to bear witness to His praises. It is not hard for the Lord to turn night into day. He that sent the clouds can just as quickly clear the sky. The very fact that we are tried, proves there is something in us very precious to our Lord, or He would not be so patient with us.

There was once a lady very bent and crippled with rheumatoid arthritis and constantly in pain, but she always seemed so happy and cheerful that one day a visiting friend questioned her as to why she was always so cheerful when in constant pain. Her reply was "The arthritis didn't touch my heart." She had the healing Christ there.

As we grow older, we see less and less to be desired here in this world, and we long to see the day when He will gather us together to go home with Him, resting in the shelter of His arms. Have you ever noticed the many comforting ways He is referred to in the Scriptures? He is the Word, The Truth, The Life, the Great I Am, a Spirit That is All, Sees All and is Everywhere, a Prophet, Priest and King, Husband, Father and Friend. Some think of Him in the form of a person, yet we read in Isaiah of His "feathers" and we speak of being "under His wing". He is the father of all creation, a Master Mechanic, Great Physician, a Wise and Perfect Builder. He knows our every part, our purpose here, and He knows just when our work here will be accomplished and already has a home prepared for us with Him. He is the Rock upon which we stand, the Rock of our Salvation, the Rock in which cleft He hides us from the dangers of the world. He is the Pilot of our ship on the sea of life and He guides us safely into the quiet, peaceful Haven of Rest. He is Everything and All Things. Our Hope if we have one, is grounded in Him and His promises are to His children, whoever and wherever they are.

This has been a very busy day for me and, as usual, when I am tired, sleep seems far from me. Then, I find myself meditating upon the lovely times I have had with the dear ones at our meetings; and in the homes. The meeting of the Salisbury Association with Indiantown Church this year seemed to me to be extra special. We had just enough preachers to feed us as we needed to be fed, with the enriched Bread of Life spread before us upon the Master's banquet table. I felt to be lame in both feet, but feasted so richly on His bounty.

I had the wonderful experience of seeming to see the beauties of Heaven open as the speakers were bringing the messages to us. It seemed I stood with John on the Isle of Patmos and beheld the Beautiful City, the New Jerusalem descending from Heaven and the lovely

Christ, coming to meet His children in the air.

Elder W. E. Turner used 2 Timothy 2:15 for the opening sermon "Study to shew thyself approved unto God." And it was clear and beautiful, too. Elder Wood followed with the same text, using the next line "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." And it was a continuation of the same beautiful language we had heard. Elder Spangler topped the day off perfectly by using the next line of the same verse, rightly dividing the word of truth."

It was truly a series of messeges from another world, by God's blessed saints here on earth. We enjoyed Brother Leonard Key, we were glad Elder Warren was able to speak sweetly for the benefit of all who heard, of Love and Grace. Elder Griffin preached a Powerful sermon from Gal. 5:18-26, "But if ye be led of the spirit, ye are not under the law."

Elder Spangler spoke from Isaiah 32: 1-2 on Thursday and the heavens seemed to open for me. "Behold a king shall reign in righteousness and princes shall rule in judgement, and a **man** shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest. . ." As he spoke, I could see our dear Saviour as the one who has been a shield and hiding place for me in all my troubled life, and the One who has kept me from all harm along the winding way I have traveled. It has not been a straight way, nor a narrow way, but a broad, winding one, filled with many pitfalls and stumbling blocks to hinder me. But all along the way, He was leading and guiding me, even thou I knew it not. He hid me in the cleft of that Rock, shielding me with His hand. It was only after His passing that I beheld the beauty of His hinderparts and knew that the Lord had been there. He is the Solid Rock upon which I hope my feet are standing, for I've found that all other ground is as sinking sand and miry clay.

Ah, my precious ones, is there anything more lovely than to think of how wonderful He is, how the very sound of His name fills one with sweetness and joy. Isaiah tells us "In the shadow of His hand hath He hid me, and made me a polished shaft: in His quiver hath He hid me." (49:2) There is a service in the shadows that is not in the sunshine. Many plants and flowers grow better in the shade than in the sun. He keeps us close beside Him, in His quiver, safe, until He is ready to send us on further, where His name will be glorified, and our lives will be brighter, richer, with our having been so close to Him. When we keep company with Him, we also learn to be patient and not to fret and worry when we wish to accomplish a thing. David tells us in the 37th Psalm "Fret not thyself", not to get all hot and bothered. When we get all steamed up, it's like I heard a young man once say, "Your bearings get hot and trouble starts." How true, and that is sure an indication that there is an absence of the anointing oil of the grace of God. Then, a little bit of grit gets in — some slight annoyance, disappointment, an ingratitude, a discourtesy — and when that happens, it spoils the smoothness of our life and trouble is apt to start.

I had not intended to write so much, but it seemed as though I had to empty my mind so I could go to sleep. I had the thought of so many of our loved ones on beds of pain and even though they know why, they, like John in prison, want to be reassured time and again in their belief, and to ease their doubts and fears, which is only human. God knows and understands and forgives us, for He knows if we never got down into the depths we would never feel need to call upon Him to reach down and raise us up and put our feet on higher ground, and cause us to sing His praises. Oh, it is so wonderful to have that Blessed Assurance that Jesus is mine! Oh, what a foretaste of Glory Divine!

I pray I have said nothing out of order and that it meets your approval. If not, put it in the waste basket.

Yours in a precious hope, a sister,

Ruth Lucht

ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD

243 Baker Street
Warren, Ark. 71671

Dear Elder Spangler:

I am enclosing check to renew my subscription.

I read the *Signs* over and over, and find so many rich articles that I feel are well seasoned with grace — which is of that faith that was once delivered to the saints of God, who are God's heritage chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began. Yes, chosen in the everlasting covenant of God's grace. All things work together for their good, even their chastisements, persecutions, griefs and sorrows, (which are many with this poor mortal), as well as their uprisings of love, joy, peace, and praising the Lord for his goodness and mercy. I believe all my joys and sorrows are my meat and drink.

"If God be for us, who can be against us." He is our all in all, and we are nothing, less than nothing in the sight of God, but are called according to God's purpose. He is our surety in all things. Oh, the grandeur and glorious magnificance there is in our God when he soothes our sorrows, heals our wounds, and drives away our fears. When we are made in humbliness and tenderness to shrink as babes, it is then that we hope we know something about the great riches, love and tender mercies of our dear Lord. How dependent we are upon him for all things which he has promised. The powers that be are ordained of God, and he is a positive surety for all his people. He is God and changes not.

I believe that all Christ died to redeem are just as secure as God is sure. Christ is the Way, and his little ones, his bride, are in the way: they in Christ and Christ in them; Christ in the Father, and the Father in him. Beloved, this is the most perfect union in relationship: it cannot be broken for it is securely bound together by the strong cords of God's love. This glorious union has no equal: there is nothing to compare with it, and it will last through all eternity.

What a sweet consolation for the little, doubting child of God, to be the recipient and beneficiary of God's glorious kingdom that is prepared for His people, for those that love Him. It is by the imputed righteousness of Christ that his people are brought into the regenerated knowledge of Him, which is an operation in the heart which only God can perform. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his."

He says, "I will put my laws in their hearts, and in their minds will I write them." He establishes their goings, and puts a new song in their mouths, even praise unto God. It is then that they are subjects of his grace and redeeming love. Those who have been taught, kept and led by the Lord, are worthy subjects to be God's humble poor. If I know anything about such, they feel so little and unworthy to be so greatly blessed.

I believe that everything and all things were ordained and purposed by God, from the falling of a sparrow to the man-made missile into space. The record of God's purposes and decrees plays on and on, and nothing is missed or left out as it revolves through the ceaseless ages. He is God and changes not. He spoke all things unto existence for time and eternity.

I love the words election, predestination, perseverance, unchangeable, absolute; and phrases like, the sovereignty of God, the total depravity of man, and the fixedness of things. These are the wonderful things God gave his people, to set them apart from the world. Are you not glad to be a stranger — one set apart, in a world that the Lord told his people to come out of?

These are some of the things I hope I believe. May the dear Lord bless all the editors in their labors in publishing the paper.

A little one in faith, I hope,
Mrs. Charlie Harrod

GRACE

"For the grace of God hath appeared to all men." (Titus 2:11)

First I would like to give my views on the word "Grace." It is God's way of saving his people from sin; grace is unmerited favor from God: that is, we do not work for grace — it is given alone by God's power. Grace saves the bad, the lost. The law justifies the good; but Paul says that there is none good. Therefore the law justifies no one. Grace justifies and sets apart from sin, and enables the person to love God. No one can love God without the grace of God is first in his heart.

When God calls a person from death in sin to life in Christ, he is a new creature. This is done by the grace of God. Paul said, "By the grace of God I am what I am." What are you, Paul? A child of God. How? by works or by grace? "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by the grace of God." "And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

We see by this word of God, that truth and grace go together. Some will say, "Yes, I know that we are saved in heaven by the grace of God; but what about in time?" My answer is, By the grace of God. I can't see to save my life why we can't understand that. If grace is so powerful as to save us in heaven, why it will not save us in time. Paul said, "I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I but the grace of God which was with me." (1 Cor. 15: 10) Again in Acts 20: 22, "I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." By this we see that the grace of God is able to save in time as well as in heaven.

"By grace are ye saved." When? Now! not after we die. By this great work of God in the heart of man, he is an humble man; he is a God fearing man: He loves the gospel of Christ, because the gospel tells him that Christ died for poor sinners. While the words of men will tell him, "If you will be good, God will save you." The gospel of Christ affirms that He has already saved his people. Christ was full of grace and truth: the truth makes you free, and you are free indeed. Why? because grace is a free thing, a free work, worked alone by the God of heaven; and all He died for will be saved in heaven without the loss of one. Grace never fails; but we are all failures in everything we do. God is perfect in all his works, and we can't add or take from them.

"But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus." (1 Peter 5: 10) Not one word in the Bible will contradict this verse. So we see that the grace of God is the only thing that will save us in time or in heaven. We preach by the grace of God; we hear by grace; and we believe by grace. Some say that we must have faith in order to be saved by grace; and they use Ephesians 2:8, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." We see that faith is the gift of God, as is grace. What part does faith play in the text? That every thing God has given us to see and walk by, we see by faith that we are saved by grace.

Now faith is not a part of the works of man. We are justified by grace — faith is the thing that causes us to see that we are saved by grace. Now this works in us — it moves us, and causes us to look up to whence cometh our blessings. Some say that we have too much grace preached in this day. Let me say once and for all, that grace is the only doctrine that feeds the Lord's children. They will not feed on the works of men. So preach grace; live grace, and walk in grace, because grace teaches me these things, — and grace is the greatest teacher that has ever been, or will ever be.

Your servant in the Lord,
W. T. Cook,
302 Lousiana Drive,
Pensacola, Fla. 32505

IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD

"For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God." (Ephesians 2:8)

What a wonderful gift from God! The Apostle Paul is telling the brethren who have been quickened and born of the Spirit, where their religion came from; and how they came by it. Yes, by grace, a favour of God, — an unmerited favour from God. With this grace or favour from God comes faith, and love, and a new creature whose eyes are opened and his ears unstopped. With this grace the lame are able to walk, the dead sinner is made alive, and his sins are cast into the land of forgetfulness, to be remembered no more; and the saved sinner is before God the Father without blame in love.

Just think of it: what a wonderful arrangement God has made for his little children! It is all a work of his own for his own. Our weapons are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, — the flesh and the carnal mind. We are told that his children are made willing in the day of His power. Paul said that sin revived and he died — he became dead to sin and could live no longer therein: he became alive to God.

What we are trying to show is that everything in the way of salvation for the saved sinner is the gift of God; hence when one's ways have been established, and the gift of God's love through faith has been imputed to him, he can then say, "The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want." "The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?" (Psalm 27:1) And he will also say that the Lord is my refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. And by this grace the little child of God can say that he is "begotten again unto a lively hope, (a living hope, or a hope I live by), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith, unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." Through this saving grace the little child can say, as one of old, "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings, and hath put a new song in my mouth even praise unto our God."

What a wonderful arrangement to have our goings established by the God of heaven, by his gift to be sure, and our feet placed upon Christ the Great Rock, which none can move or destroy; and to be brought out of the horrible pit of sin, and the love of it, and by His power to have a new song placed in our mouth: a song of praise to God for all of our many blessings. How many times do we sing with the poet

"The steps that I tread and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will."

"My cross and my crown are both willed by my God."

from the hymn, "A Child of Jehovah." The songs of the New Man are the teachings of the Holy Ghost and are not of ourselves. This gift of God lifts up the hands that hang down, and confirms the feeble knees, and enables the child of God to go leaping and praising God. Though one may not move a hand or foot, his mind and thoughts are heavenward, praising and leaping with joy. "Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to usward: they cannot be reckoned up in order to thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered." (Psalm 40:5) Is it not true that whoever has an eternal home in heaven with Jesus, it will be a gift of God. "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6: 23)

"For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God."

(Elder) A. J, Slauson

ONCE AGAIN OUR HEARTS ARE SAD

We pray Thee, O Lord, as humble as we know how, for mercy, if it be Thy will, for one precious to us is very ill.

Our pastor, who so sweetly preaches Jesus, and the Crucifixion, is now on the bed of affliction.

In his suffering, gracious Lord, wilt Thou be near, for Thou hast caused us to love him so dear.

Grief has overshadowed us, as the darkness of the night. We can only look to Thee in whom there is light.

We know Thou has not forgotten to be gracious to those whom Thou has made precious.

Our Sister, and his companion so dear, whose heart is filled with love and fear, we know the way seems hard. Have mercy and strengthen her, O God.

Upon the Lord with patience we wait, for His grace and mercy has never come too late.

Our Father we look to Thee, for a time like this, it is plain to see, how helpless we poor mortals be.

In His great and Holy name, we are not ashamed to cry for help, for we find our blessed Jesus wept.

O Lord, our arm is too short to reach Thee, but in love and humbleness we beseech Thee, that once again Thou will bless us to hear that tender voice, with praises ring, of our pastor Elder Curry King.

As we thank Thee Father for the gift, we can only say, in a kind and humble way, not my will but thine be done.

Lord Thou knowest that some service we desire to render, but keep us Lord that we might not hinder.

Written in Love and Sympathy
Clifton Robertson
Rt. 1, Reidsville, N. C.

(Elder King writes that he is much improved now, and is able to fill his regular appointments. He was quite ill for several weeks, and we are thankful that he is restored in health and to the brethren, who esteem him highly as their pastor and servant of the most high God. — J. D. W.)

NEWS FROM BRITISH COLUMBIA

P. O. Box 53,
Okanagan Centre,
British Columbia, Canada

Dear Elder Spangler:

It was my intention some time ago to let you know I was in favor of any advance in price of subscription for our good old paper . . . I believe the advance in price is quite modest compared to prices paid for other things we do not prize nearly so much as we do the **Signs of the Times . . .**

I've had a great desire for many years to visit the churches down in your country, but opportunity has not appeared for me to do so. In my younger days I visited with Elder John McConnell and Sister McConnell in New York, and in 1958 my wife and I visited her aunt and uncle, Sister Florence and Elder Arnold Bellows, at whose home we also met Elder A. J. Slauson. That same year we also heard Elder Lambert in Dunwich, Canada. It was way back about 1935 that we had the privilege of hearing you preach to us at the June Meeting in Canada. I have not forgotten that time, though I have not seen you since. It was a great privilege in recent years to hear Elder John D. Wood at two different big meetings in Canada; the last one in June, 1967, when he was accompanied by Sister Wood. That was a grand meeting for me, and how I wished my wife could have been with me at that time. She is a granddaughter of Elder William L. Beebe.

We have never heard Elder Griffin, but the fifth name on your Editorial Staff we call our beloved pastor, since our little church was established in Winnipeg in 1914 by Elder S. H. Durand, though now extinct. Elder Ruston is pastor of the only Old School Baptist churches we know of in Canada. We love Elder George Ruston and his lovely wife, Sister Esther, for their own sakes, as well as for the marvellous truths of God that the Elder is given to preach to the Lord's people. We receive lovely letters from them, and it is a great privilege to travel the long distance of over 2000

miles, and hear the wonderful preaching at one of the big meetings, which we did in 1966, and I alone in 1967, but we were unable to go last year.

I would like to say that it is my prayer that you Editors be kept and sustained by the power of God, to continue to publish the truth in the Signs as you do today; and to say that you do not know how much real comfort and enjoyment each issue brings to ones like us who are so far from sources of the preached word. **Voices of the Past** are very much enjoyed: it shows that the same truths are being preached and contended for now as then. I have enjoyed the re-prints of Elder H. M. Curry's articles. He was a very fine, scholarly gentleman, and was a frequent visitor at my father and mother's home in St. Thomas, Ontario, around the turn of the century, when I was a teenager; and he was a good preacher.

I've taken up too much of your time, I just wanted to tell you that I love the dear old Signs and those who publish it, and those who write for it and tell their own thoughts and experiences better than I could tell my own.

With love in the Truth, I hope,
James W. Black

RADIO PROGRAM

Through the courtesy of Brother Randolph Wells, a radio program has been established over Station WKBY, Chatham, Va., 1080 on your dial. The program will be on at 9:30 A. M. on second Sunday mornings.

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EDITORIAL

PEARLS

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman, seeking goodly pearls: Who when he had found one of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it."

(Matt. 13:45-46)

I suppose that pearl is the only jewel of great value that is formed in living creatures. A pearl is a large white shining body, usually roundish, found in a shell fish resembling an oyster, but is three or four times the size of a common oyster; and which ordinarily yields ten or twelve pearls, and sometimes more. Many pearls have been valued at hundreds of thousands of dollars. One Bible

encyclopedia confirms that pearls have at all times been esteemed one of the most valuable commodities of the East. Their modest splendor and simple beauty appear to have captivated the Orientals, even more than the dazzling brilliancy of the diamonds. A string of pearls of the largest size is an indispensable part of the decoration of an Eastern Monarch. It is interesting to note that pearls are formed around a grain of sand, or some other parasite, that in some way has entered into the oyster — causing a reaction to combat this irritation by enveloping the foreign object. Even though the pearl becomes great in size and value, there is yet a grain of sand within. Sometimes we feel so little, so worthless, and so foreign to that which is good that we consider ourselves as only "A grain of sand."

Yesterday, a brother was lamenting the fact that so many of our members were being taken by death who were worthy; yet, he the unworthy and insignificant one was left. He questioned the wisdom of it. Why take the good and leave the evil? He felt himself no more than a grain of sand. Foreign objects such as hell-deserving sinful creatures unworthy of any thing but damnation, caused the suffering of THE RIGHTEOUS ONE. Even though we be clothed with the pearl of His righteousness, we yet feel to be a grain of sand. Our sinfulness brought about this suffering just as a grain of sand irritated the flesh of the oyster which resulted in the formation of the pearl around it. When the pearl is formed it stops the irritation. The righteousness of Jesus Christ is the pearl that stops the angry wrath of God and judgment upon the ones so enshrouded with His righteousness. Yet we are grains of sand. We can see our brethren as pearls because we can observe the characteristics of Jesus Christ in their conduct and speech. The sign is in the forehead. We cannot see our own forehead. We can see our brethren as pearls of great price; yet we see ourselves as grains of sand. This is the reason we esteem brethren.

The Kingdom of Heaven in the text must be King Jesus and His subjects. It must consist of the Redeemer and the redeemed. It is a figure of the Church which is ruled by King Jesus. It requires both the King and His beloved to compose the kingdom. A kingdom minus the people ruled, equals the king. A kingdom minus the king, equals the people only. Thus we find that it requires both the king and his subjects to constitute a kingdom.

The Kingdom of Heaven is above and separate from the kingdom of this world. We at first are so engrossed in the things of this world that we are unwilling to part with them. We are not willing to sell all our possessions and follow Jesus with our brethren. Jesus said, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that **loseth his life for my sake** shall find it. He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." (Matt. 10:37-40) This shows there must be a parting from the old way in order to enter the new. This shows the triune circle of Father, Son, and Elect. This shows the brother receiving you, receiving Christ, and receiving Him who sent Christ. This shows a tie much stronger than natural ties which unites into ONE those who are redeemed. Thank God there is a band that is bonded together in such a wonderful way that nothing can sever their fellowship. This band of brethren is a **pearl of great price.** This is the True Church worthy of entering. Many strive to enter who are not able because they are not willing to sell all. They are not willing to forsake worldly ties. The merchantman desired the pearl enough to sell all he had and purchase it.

I know what it means to lose a life for Christ's sake. I was made willing to sever my religious connections with my father and mother in order to follow Christ with those who loved Him. I was made willing to lay aside my political

ambitions to pursue another course with an afflicted and poor people. I was made willing to sacrifice worldly reputations and ambitions in order to be numbered with the faithful few. I was made willing to quit a worldly professional career in order to use my God-given talent to preach the gospel, baptize believers, and instruct them as the Lord enables me. I seek **first** the Kingdom of God and His righteousness with an abiding faith that He will amply supply my every need. Pearls of truth, peace, joy, contentment, ease of conscience, fellowship, faith, hope and charity have **all** been mine to value highly. I am willing to sacrifice personal opinions, petty peculiar ideas, and self-made rules and regulations, in order that I might have fellowship with all of the Household of Faith.

The Lord has taught me the great value of forbearance, tolerance, patience and forgiveness. I have learned that the more you use the gifts of God they become stronger and greater and more valuable. God gave you the muscles in your arm. More use of your muscles make them stronger. If you do not use them they dwindle away. God-given gifts are pearls of great price that become brighter with constant use. Hidden pearls are as hidden talents, — without value to others. If you can sing, God has given you a great talent. Use this talent in singing praises to God in the midst of the congregation. You will feel better and others will enjoy it.

The Bible is a pearl of great price. It is able to make you wise unto salvation. Read it, begging God to give you understanding. Prayer is a pearl of great price. Pray in secret and the Lord will reward you openly. "Pray without ceasing." The Lord's dealing with you is your experience of grace which is a pearl of great price. Be ready to give those an answer who ask of you your reason for hope of Heaven. A portion of your experience of Grace is an appropriate answer. There are so many pearls of great price to the follower of Jesus Christ that it would be impossible to do any more than hint at a few in this article. There are so many that the things of this world lose their beauty. Of course, the ONE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE IS JESUS CHRIST. Jesus is the **one** thing needful. Give me Jesus! He is all I need. In Him are **all** the **treasures.** Yes, every one of these many pearls are in Him. If Jesus is yours, you have His graces. We are constantly seeking by prayer and study to know more of the officeship, person, grace and righteousness of Jesus Christ. We desire next to notice Matthew 7: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you."

When Jesus sent forth seventy He gave them specific instructions. They would go into every city where He would come. They were to enter into one house in each city and pray, "Peace be to this house". See Luke 10:5. If they were received they were to continue there feasting with them. If they were not received, they were instructed to go to the streets of the city and say, "Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God has come nigh unto you." (Luke 10:11) These instructions indicated that they were to enter in good faith that those who were gathered together in the house of the city would receive them; yet, they were to understand that if they were not received they should tarry no longer. It would be casting pearls before swine to undertake to preach the Gospel to those who would not readily receive the ministers of the Gospel. How can we apply these instructions to ourselves? If a band of people refuse an offer of peace, we should not try to force the issue. If the members of a church are lovers of Jesus Christ they will welcome a move for peace. If they be self-righteous and self-conceited they will rend those who continue in further negotiations. Jesus is the author of peace as in all churches. All who possess this pearl of great price value it so highly that they want to share it with all peace-loving people. Peace lovers are

peacemakers and welcome opportunity to take one step toward uniting divided brethren. Those who try to force unity usually get themselves disbanded. It is, "Casting pearls before swine," to constantly and dilligently try to convert unbelievers to believe the truth. The modern missionary move to make converts of each and every person is casting pearls before swine. Why? Because in doing this one tries to appropriate the promises and gifts of God even to malicious persecutors. We cannot try to apply the gift of Eternal life to anyone other than God's elect without being guilty of casting pearls before swine. The wicked trample the gospel under their feet, and turn **again** and rend the gospel ministers. It is well to tell the gospel once to one, but if he rends you; do not undertake to "cast" it before him, else he will turn **again** and rend you. The Gospel is only for the sanctified ones. We do not know who they are but we do know when we are abused and insulted by a person that we should turn away from him. Our continued defense of our position would only further aggravate the matter. Even if a brother should trespass against us only **two** times should we approach him concerning it. After the second time it should be told to the church. The heretic is to be that which we consider one who does not hear the first and second admonition. It would be casting pearls before swine should we continue.

We read in Proverbs 9:7 "He that reproveth a scorner getteth to himself shame: and he that rebuketh a wicked man getteth himself a blot." It is asking for shame and blots upon your own self to use precious time and effort upon the known scorner and wicked persons. We read in Proverbs 16:22, "Understanding is a well-spring of life to him that hath it: but the **instruction of fools is folly."** Those who have understanding desire much more understanding. They greatly desire to be instructed and will yearn after it. The fool does not have understanding: yet, he thinks he understands it all. Those who have understanding appreciate admonition, exhortation, instruction, reproof and rebuke; and he will profit by it. The fool will poke fun at you and laugh at you, even shame you, should you undertake to inform him, instruct him, or teach him in any way. The fool will quickly tell you of his ability to teach you instead of being taught. We read again, "Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words." (Prov. 23:9) We are told, "For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it." (Prov. 8:11). Wisdom is the pearl of great price. Those who taste it realize it to be so. Anyone having a little bit of this wisdom can never get enough of it to be satisfied. If you have it, you constantly and diligently search for more and more. You are eager to listen to anyone with the hope that you might glean a little wisdom from what they say. Even when we read the Scriptures our minds are open, and our hearts are yearning, that we may better understand. Some have been alarmed and questioned my expression: "I pray that I may read the Bible as though it were fresh from the press of Heaven: As the Lord answers my prayers, I am astonished at the result." Only the foolish would claim a complete understanding of it. Only the foolish would claim to believe each and every thing they believe today, that they believed every bit of it twenty years ago. The taster of heavenly wisdom **grows** in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. The wise will weigh the words of the person who claims to know all that is necessary to know about the Scriptures. I daily study the Scriptures and try to weigh without prejudice everything I hear, that I may glean a little more wisdom. If understanding be your well-spring of life, you are not really **living** unless you get a little more understanding each and every day of your life.

The subject of **pearls** calls our attention to the last book in the Bible, especially to Rev 21:21, "And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were trans-

parent glass." It seems that the twelve gates were of ONE pearl. Since Jesus Christ is the only gate, the only way, and the only door of entrance into the City; Jesus Christ, the Lord, must be the one the pearl symbolizes. The brightness, the glory, the intrinsic worth, the preciousness, and the purity of Jesus Christ, is all symbolized by the ONE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE. The last two chapters is a record of the last vision that John records. Sometimes it pleases God to bring His children up to the brink of death and give them a view of the City and its beauties; then bring them back to live years before they cross over.

Everyone who experiences such glorious vision feels that his suffering and physical weakness experienced before and after such a glorious view is of very little price. Many have told me of this experience. They all testify of so near the same view that I am persuaded that they have really viewed the Heaven of heavens. One precious brother expresses it in these words, "I was on a long river, and I knew then, and I still know, that it was death. I went down it far enough to see the lights of the city and to hear the music and singing. I was in His hands; He was my Pilot; the city was heaven. I talked to Him. I asked Him to conduct me into that haven of rest. But He looked upon me, He spoke to me, and He said, Not yet, and my Pilot turned us into an eddy in which I was brought back to realize things." How wonderful must that sight have been! Every one who has had like experiences have manifested a change in their conduct, speech and attitudes. Such experiences always mellow their dispositions; makes them more humble, submissive, and resigned to the will of God. How beautiful Heaven must be! John saw many precious stones, jewels galore, adorning the City. All who enter the Heaven of heavens through our Lord, Jesus Christ, will then realize **the pearl of great price.** There will be no caution about casting pearls before swine because nothing unclean shall enter there. **All things** are for our good here that we be properly prepared to enter that celestial City and to enjoy it forever more. As we mediate upon these things we are willing to sever our connections with worldly ties; forsake all trivial things and follow Him. May He strengthen us to do it! Amen

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE ONE TALENT

(Matt. 15:24,25)

Brother E. McKinney, of Missouri, desires our views on Matt. 25:24,25, "Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I know thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed: and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine." These words are part of a parable which was spoken in connection with the several parables of servants left in charge of their Lord's household, to give them their meat in due season, the parable also of the ten virgins, and of the sheep and the goats; all of which, we think, were spoken in admonition to the disciples and especially to the servants of the household of our Lord, who were about to be left by our Lord to rule, and feed the members of his house in due season until he should return from his journey. A special application is probably had to the time of his being delivered up to be crucified, and extending to the period when he should, by his spirit, return to them, as he did by his spirit on the day of Pentecost. This was a time of peculiar trials, in which they did not know at what hour their Lord would return to them. These servants, according to chapter 14: 42-51, were his, Christ's own servants, on whom he had bestowed gifts qualifying them to feed and watch over the houehold; and those of them who should at his coming be found in the faithful discharge of the duties enjoined on them were pronounced blessed; but if any of them

should say in their hearts, My Lord delayeth his coming, and should begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken, the lord of that servant would come in a day when they looked not for him, and cut them asunder, and appoint them their portion with the hypocrites; and there should be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

We do not understand this to mean that these unfaithful servants should be sent down to hell; but that in the wholesome discipline of the church and kingdom which was to be set up, they should be cast out from the fellowship of the saints, and mingle with hypocrites; for within the walls of the holy city is the tree of life, and they are blessed and happy who do the commandments of Jesus, that they may have right to the tree of life — to the privileges of the church of God; for without are dogs, sorcerers, hypocrites, etc. — Rev. 12: 14,13.

Then, at that time, when the king should return and sit in the throne of his Mediatorial glory, shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins; for the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods, and to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability, and straightway took his journey. Observe these recipients of the talents were not only servants, but they were **his own** servants. They were of different capacity or ability, but all alike as his own servants, and the gifts were distributed according to their several ability. Even so has God set the gifts in the church which is the body of Christ, as it hath pleased him. He knows the several ability of all his members, and has wisely varied the gifts which are for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ, so as to accomplish his design; and he that has but one talent, has as much according to his capacity as he that has five, and is under no less obligation to be actively engaged in the use of it as he would be if he had five. It may be thought an easy matter to say that this slothful and wicked servant was an alien. But has our Lord ever bestowed any gift for the feeding and edifying of his church on any but his own servants? And may we not press home to ourselves a still more soul-stirring inquiry, Have **we** not ourselves complained almost in the very words of this wicked and slothful servant? Have we always been free from murmuring when paddling our little canoe so near the shore, while we have witnessed the superior gifts bestowed upon those of greater capacity bounding over the raging billows of the broad ocean with safety and ease? Nay, have we not concluded, and said in our heart, Our gift, if it be indeed a gift, is too small to be of any use, we will hide it in the earth; for if the Lord requires us to occupy a gift, he is a hard master, reaping where he has not sown? If our Lord would give us five talents, and make us equal in point of gifts and ability to the most gifted, then we would be satisfied that he had sown, and had a just right to reap; but as he has not, we are afraid, and think it more prudent to hide or conceal what little we have, and return it to him at the day of reckoning.

This wicked slothfulness is not peculiar to those who are called to the work of the gospel ministry. Some of the new-born children have said in their heart, My hope, which I cannot quite throw away, is so small that I am afraid, and will keep it hid, in the earth, in the secret chambers of my earthly heart, and wait until the Lord shall give me as clear an evidence as I think he has given to others, then I shall not be afraid, and will no longer hide it. I will then go and tell the church what the Lord has done for me. Our Lord is entitled to a revenue of praise for every gift however small it may appear to us, and if we cannot use it to any great profit and edification of others, we should at least put it in the bank, or church, where it would be appreciated by the saints and through the saints produce **usury,** of praise to God.

At the time of reckoning, the slothful servant of the one talent is severely reproved, and chastened. The enjoyment even of his little hope or talent is taken from him, and given to him who has ten talents, and the slothful servant is cast out from the light and liberty of the faithful, into darkness, and in company with hypocrites where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." If we understand correctly; it is the chastened child of God who for his disobedience is cast into outer darkness who weeps, for none but God's own dear children weep when cast into that darkness which is the element of the ungodly. They truly weep when they remember Zion, and the privileges which they once enjoyed. But it is the company into which they are cast who gnash upon them with their teeth. Derisively their enemies require of them to sing the songs of Zion in the strange land; for without are dogs, sorcerers, hypocrites and scoffers.

May we all be admonished by the application of these parables, especially those who are called to feed the church of God, when allured by the delusive vanities of the world to drink in the intoxicating doctrines of men, and to smite their fellow servators — or to neglect the gift that is for them, however small it may be, for, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Nor would we have the little trembling ones who feel afraid because they have not as great an evidence as others, fail to ponder well the application of the admonition of this parable. Small as their talents may seem, it is the Lord's, and in the improvement of it they shall be enlarged; and shall enter in through the gates into the Holy City, and have right to the tree of Life. But with their Lord's money hidden, they must have for their associates the scoffing enemies of the cause of God. "Joy is sown for the righteous," and "The willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land;" but the disobedient shall be beaten with many stripes.

HEBREWS 6: 1-3

Brother David Richey, of Milford, Louisiana, desires to have our views on the above named text. We have given such views as we have on the subject in volume 15., No. 15, volume 11, No. 3, volume 13, No. 6, volume 25, No. 20, volume 31, No. 10, and volumn 35, No.18. But as those papers may not be accessible to brother Richey, we will briefly say that the **principles of the doctrine** which the saints are instructed to leave, we understand are the **types** on which the apostle had been dwelling in the preceding chapters; for the law had a shadow of good things to come and pointed to the doctrine of Christ, as the priesthood of Aaron and his sons, and the offerings made by them, all pointed to the one offering of Christ, by the which he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, so that his one offering is never to be repeated; for since it was made, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin. Therefore we can no longer lay a foundation for repentance, etc., by any of the offerings which were made for that purpose under the law or Levitical priesthood. "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope." "If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?" — See chapter 7: 11. Now the saints are no more under the law of a carnal (fleshly) commandment; but in their High Priest, who is after the order of Melchisedec, they are made partakers of the power of his endless life.

Under the former law and priesthood, which could make nothing perfect, the offending Israelite could bring his offering to Aaron from year to year, and by it lay a foundation for legal repentance; but under the gospel dispensation and priesthood of Christ, if his one offering could fail, it would be impossible to renew us again to repentance, as to do that would require that Christ should again offer himself in sacrifice, and be

crucified anew, and thus be put to an open shame; and that is not possible. The imperfection and inefficiency of the law and Jewish priesthood to purge us from dead works, requires that we should leave all the ritual of Judaism, and pass on to perfection, which is found in nothing short of the gospel, and in the priesthood of him who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, to purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God.

(Editorials by Elder Gilbert Beebe January 15, 1881.)

OBITUARIES

BERTHA E. TOMLINSON

As it pleased the Lord to take from our midst our dear and beloved sister in Christ, Bertha E. Tomlinson, on December 27, 1968, we bow in humble submission to the will of our eternal God, believing that she had spent her alloted time here on these mortal shores. She was born on November 4, 1871, making her stay here a little more than ninety-seven years. Her parents were the late John Henry and Mary Lavenia Ellis.

Sister Bertha was married in 1891 to Charles C. Tomlinson who departed this life in 1934, and to this union were born two children who survive, John T. Tomlinson of Delmar, Del., and Mrs. Nettie E. Kenney who resides near Delmar. There are also two grandchildren and two great grandchildren who survive.

It is not know the exact year when she was baptized but it is thought that over fifty years ago she was baptized by the late Elder A. B. Francis; her membership being with the Little Creek Church where it remained until death.

Sister Bertha was a strong believer in salvation by grace and attended the meetings almost up to her death, and always seemed to enjoy so much meeting the brethren and hearing the Gospel preached. The writer having visited her many times and greatly enjoyed conversing with her about the doctrine we believe and the precious hope of a life beyond the grave. We will all miss her very much, but also believe, as she did, that God's will is being done and that his ways are right and just.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Marvel Funeral Home in Delmar, Del., and she was laid to rest in the Little Creek Cemetery near Delmar. May it please the Lord to reconcile the son and daughter and all who knew and loved her to her passing away, and to feel that their loss is her eternal gain, is the prayer of the writer.

Arthur R. Warren

ROSTON DOLAND HATCHETT

It is with a sad heart that I try to write in memory of Brother Roston Doland Hatchett. He was born August 30, 1882, to the late J. D. and Lura Hatchett in Limestone County, Alabama, and passed from this life November 28, 1968, in a Lubbock, Texas hospital at the age of 86 years, 2 months, 28 days.

He was united in marriage to Miss Mollie G. Gattlin, December 10, 1905, in Limestone County, Alabama. To this union were born one son and two daughters. Mrs. Hatchett preceded him in death June, 1959.

He, together with his family, moved to Oklahoma in 1921 and to Texas in 1937 where they have since resided.

Brother Hatchett united with Kellys' Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Limestone County, Alabama, when a very young man and his membership was with Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church, Lawn, Texas at the time of his death. Brother Hatchett was blessed to possess a most humble and contrite spirit. Being so very tender hearted and overflowing with love and kindness toward the Brethren and Sisters. I have had a close connection with him for a number of years and feel to know the past fifteen years have been so trying to his faith and patiences. He so willingly and graciously took care of his wife who was ill several years before her death and for the last several years of his life he's had very much sickness and tribulations along the way, but the mercies of a covenant keeping God have been most precious to his dear soul. Oh, how we'll miss his dear sweet face, but would not wish him back, as surely we feel he is now sweetly resting in the arms of his blessed redeemer.

He leaves to mourn his passing two daughters, Mrs. R. K. Fennell, Earth, Texas; Mrs. A. J. Dutton, Lubbock, Texas; one son, William Reid Hatchett, San Francisco, California; three brothers, Emmitt of Tennessee; Owen of Alabama and Brother F. H. Hatchett of Mangum, Oklahoma; a sister, Mrs. Nina Dunivan of Tennessee; four grandchildren and five great grandchildren besides a host of believers in the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Services were conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder Durwood Bradley and Elder W. A. Winfrey. The body was laid to rest in the Earth, Texas cemetery.

Submitted by the request of his dear daughter, Sister Fennell.

Elder C. M. Haygood

INEZ LONG NORMAN

Sister Inez Long Norman was born October 6, 1893, and died at her home in Herndon, Virginia, November 10, 1968. She was the daughter of the late Isaac T. and Ada White Long; and granddaughter of Elder Elijah White, former pastor of churches in the Corresponding Meeting, and during the Civil War, a Colonel in the Southern Army. Sister Norman was born near Floris, Virginia, and later taught in the Floris school.

She was united in marriage to C. Walter Norman July 28, 1915, and to this union the following children were born, who, together with Brother Norman, survive: E. Lynn Norman, Winchester, Va.; Walter White Norman, Warrenton, Va.; Col. Isaac Gregory Norman, Ft. Walton Beach, Fla.; Mrs. Margaret N. Pope, Front Royal, Va.; William L. Norman and Garland Robert Norman, Herndon, Va.; and Mrs. Ada Rebecca Case, Front Royal, Va. Surviving also are one brother, Isaac A. Long, St. Louis, Mo., and Mrs. Ada Piggott, Purcellville, Va. There are seventeen grandchildren and one great grandson.

Sister Norman was received into the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church along with her husband, and they were baptized October 22, 1939, by Elder H. H. Lefferts. She was a faithful member, and was known far and wide among the brethren and friends. For many years she entertained her brethren and friends, and loved to have them during the sessions of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting. She was not well for some years, being in the hospital several times. She will be greatly missed by all of us, but we are glad of the evidences of God's grace and mercy which were manifested in her walk and conversation, and feel that she is now at rest awaiting the glorious resurrection.

Her funeral was conducted at the funeral home in Herndon by her pastor, Elder John D. Wood, and her body was laid to rest in the Union Cemetery, Leesburg, Va.

May the Lord give us all grace to be reconciled to his will, and to know that He does all things well.

John D. Wood

CHARLES WALTER NORMAN

Charles Walter Norman was born June 19, 1889, near Aldie, Virginia, the son of the late Eppa and Rebecca Williams Norman. He died at his home in Herndon, Virginia, January 9, 1969, after several months' illness. On July 28, 1915, he was united in marriage to the late Sister Inez Norman, who died November 10, 1968, two months before he did. To this union were born the following children: E. Lynn Norman, Walter White Norman, Col. Isaac Gregory Norman, William L. Norman, Garland Robert Norman, Mrs. Margaret N. Pope, and Mrs. Ada Rebecca Case, who survive. Surviving also are seventeen grandchildren and two great grandsons; and one sister, Mrs. Elizabeth Topping.

On October 22, 1939, he, together with Sister Norman, was baptized by the late Elder H. H. Lefferts into the fellowship of the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun County, Virginia. The brethren saw the gift of a deacon in him and he served faithfully both as deacon and treasurer from May 13, 1944, until his death. He was always ready to do anything he could for the benefit of the church, and spent many hours in the service of the brethren and friends. He was sound in the faith and attended the meetings of all the churches of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting until the last few weeks of his life. We have not known anyone more faithful in these things than he. His and Sister Norman's special delight was to entertain the brethren and friends in their home, and many were entertained by them during the sessions of the Corresponding Meetings. Their hospitality was enjoyed by many brethren and friends of a large area. All shall miss him greatly, and none perhaps more than the writer.

Funeral services were conducted at the Green Funeral Home, Herndon, Virginia, by his pastor, Elder John D. Wood, and his body was laid to rest beside his beloved wife in the Union Cemetery, Leesburg, Virginia. The large and attentive congregation at the services testified of the high esteem in which he was held; and their flowers spoke silently of their love for a friend who had passed on before.

May the Lord give grace that we may be reconciled to our loss, and thankful hearts for the gift of such a faithful brother and friend.

John D. Wood

ADELAIDE H. FERTNEY

Sister Adelaide H. Fertney was born near Oakton, Fairfax County, Virginia, April 12, 1882, and died November 28, 1968, at the age of eighty-six. She was the daughter of Nelson and Olive Thompson Hornbeck.

She leaves to mourn her passing one son and one daughter, Nelson Russell Fertney, and Florence V. Fertney, her husband having died several years ago.

Sister Fertney united with the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church, Floris, Virginia, and was baptized July 26, 1953. She was a faithful member, attending her meetings regularly until ill health often prevented her. She was sound in the doctrine of God our

Saviour and enjoyed conversing with her brethren on spiritual things.

Her funeral was conducted at Money and King Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder John D. Wood, and interment was in the Flint Hill Cemetery, Oakton, Virginia, to await the glorious resurrection of the fullness of her inheritance in heaven.

John D. Wood

IVY A. COLE

Ivy A. Cole, daughter of Larry D. and Isophene (Corder) Woodford, was born November 9, 1878, and died November 10, 1968, in her 91st year. She is survived by two sons, Truman J. Cole, Dallas, Texas, and D. E. Cole, Amarillo, Texas; two sisters, Mrs. Myrtle E. Hall and Mrs. B. W. O'Neil; and one brother, Arby D. Woodford, all of Philippi, W. Va. or vicinity.

She was a native of Barbour County, W. Va., and lived there until 1951. Since that time she made her home with her eldest son, D. E. Cole, in Cheyenne, Wyoming, and Amarillo, Texas. Throughout these later years she remained a nearly helpless cripple, a victim of arthritis and rheumatism.

At about fifteen years old she was baptized by her great uncle, Elder Joshua S. Corder, in the river at the old covered bridge at Philippi. She remained a member of the old Mt. Olive Primitive Baptist Church, as long as that church survived. She was a faithful and devoted mother, both to her family and to her church. She never ceased to bear her afflictions with utmost patience, often remarking, "The Lord knows what is best for us." Hers was truly a life of personal sacrifice and service, as well as pain.

Her death came as a surprise to all, including her doctor. She apparently was sleeping, and faded quietly away. Then she was free at last from her old crippled body, and is gone, we hope, to dwell with her Saviour in eternal rest. Surely our loss is her gain, but our grief and sorrow are so hard to bear. Farewell sweet smile and kindly face! "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

Her remains were laid to rest November 16th, beside her husband and children in Old Mt. Olive Primitive Baptist Cemetery, near Philippi, W. Va. to await the glorious resurrection day. In loving memory by her oldest son.

D. E. Cole

MRS. ANNIE DONIE BOWMAN

Sister Bowman died November 26, 1968, in a hospital at Ozark, Alabama, at the age of sixty years. She was baptized fourteen years ago with her husband, Deacon Frank Bowman, and Elder John F. Tisdale and wife, by Elder J. J. Collins into Hopeful Primitive Baptist Church, one of the oldest churches in southeast Alabama.

She was most faithful to her husband, church and community, and will be sadly missed by all. She is survived by her husband; three brothers: Leavy, Chester and Lonnie Pitts of Panama City, Florida; and one sister, Mrs. Lula Daniels, of Kinard, Florida; and other relatives.

Funeral services were conducted at her dear Hopeful Church November 28, 1968, by Elders J. J. Watson and J. J. Collins.

J. J. Collins

MRS. W. C. RHODES

Mrs. W. C. Rhodes, the beloved companion of Brother Willie Rhodes, died November 21, 1968, after a short illness. She was a faithful member and Clerk of New Providence Church, Kingston, Alabama, for many years; and labored so well with her husband who had been a minister for many years in their church. They were baptized some fifty years ago at Sarepta Church in Coffee County, Alabama, by Elder H. O. Rhodes, an able early Primitive Baptist Elder, and the father of Brother Willie Rhodes. They lived a devoted life to their church, and sad is the loss to Brother Willie and their two daughters.

Elder J. J. Collins was called to conduct the funeral, but was unable to attend, so Elder Ivey Watson, their pastor, preached an able sermon in her memory at New Providence November 23, 1968. Interment was in the adjoining cemetery.

J. J. Collins

CYRUS P. COLLINS

Brother Collins died at his home in Jessup, Georgia, after a long illness. He had been a member of Bethlehem Church, Malvern, Alabama, for around fifty years, and was a true believer in salvation by grace. He died December 1, 1968, and funeral services were conducted at his beloved Bethlehem December 2nd, by his pastor of more than twenty years, Elder J. J. Collins.

He is survived by four daughters: Mrs. Sybil Watson, Mrs. Mattie Griffin, Mrs. Edna Blount, and Mrs. Ann Watford; a brother, Frank Collins, and a sister, Mrs. Gabrella Bell, of Panama City; and thirteen grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

He was seventy-eight years of age. Two brothers, Jesse, and Deacon Hosea T. Collins died recently. All were members of Bethle-

hem Primitive Baptist Church and lovers of the *Signs of the Times.*

J. J. Collins

THOMAS RUFUS WATSON

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst my brother in the flesh and I hope a brother in the spirit, Brother Rufus Watson. He was born December 21, 1893, and died December 2, 1968. He was married to Miss Daisy Grisham August 6, 1916; and to this union one child was born Herman B. Watson, Tinsman, Arkansas. Surviving also are two grandchildren.

He told me a few days before he died that he would like to live longer, but he realized that he had a time to die and that he was ready when the Lord called. He died with a cancer and suffered very much. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace and grace alone. He had lots of friends to visit him while he was in the hospital, and he was glad to see each one. He made the remark that he could tell a Primitive by his handclasp.

The funeral was conducted by our pastor Elder D. E. Turner at Whitewater Church. His body was laid to rest in the Watson Cemetery at the church, to await that glorious resurrection. There was a large attendance at his funeral, thus showing that he had many friends other than his own family. There were many beautiful flowers.

May it please God to reconcile all that mourn the loss of this dear one to feel that their loss is his eternal gain, is the prayer of the writer.

A brother in the flesh,
Ross Watson

HULDAH E. WARREN

It is with a sad heart that we attempt to write the obituary of our dearly beloved Sister in Christ. Sister Huldah E. Warren was born July 16, 1891, and died November 5, 1968.

In February, 1911, she was married to J. Frank Warren who passed away a few years ago. To this union were born seven children. One died in infancy. Surviving are three sons and three daughters; several grandchildren and great grandchildren; one brother, one sister and one half-sister, and lots of friends to mourn her loss; but we believe our loss is her eterntal gain.

Sister Warren united with the church at Briar Swamp in September, 1927, and was baptized by her pastor, Elder J. L. Ross.

Her funeral services were held at the church at Briar Swamp by her pastor, Elder S. R. Boykin, assisted by Mr. Turner, Christian minister of Oak Grove Church in Pitt County, N. C.

She was laid to rest in Robersonville Cemetery beside her husband, there to await the second coming of Christ. We believe she will be raised and fashioned like Him and will be satisfied.

Done by order of Conference, Saturday before the second Sunday in November, 1968.

Ada M. Leggett
Uriah Leggett
Gutha Crandell

SALLIE LEE SMITH

I attempt in sadness to write in memory of our beloved mother Sallie Lee Smith. She was born November 9, 1880, and passed away September 20, 1968. She was married to Joseph Robert Smith March 16, 1903. To this union four children were born. The oldest daughter preceded her in death five years ago. She reared one foster daughter. I was her niece.

She joined Bethel Church, Franklin County, Virginia, in 1897 — which made her a member seventy-one years. She attended her church as long as her health permitted, and was a firm believer in salvation by grace alone. She enjoyed meeting her brethren and sisters of like precious faith. We miss her very much, and we believe our loss is her eternal gain. As sick as she was in the hospital, when I visited her she would ask if I had been to church.

She loved the dear songs of Zion, especially these three: "Sister thou was't mild and lovely," "Amazing Grace," and "Beautiful Hills of Galilee."

There was a beautiful funeral at the Lynch Funeral Home, Rocky Mount, Va., by Elders Posey Plybon and O. K. Tench, whom she enjoyed hearing preach very much. Her body was laid to rest under a mound of beautiful flowers by her husband, in the family cemetery, to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

May our Lord reconcile us to His holy will, and enable us to say, Thy will be done. Written by one who loved and respected her very much: a foster daughter or niece.

Mrs. Artemas Franklin

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 137 DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1969 NO. 5

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5/69
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

BIBLICAL ADMONITION AND EXHORTATION

(1 Tim. 4:13; 2 Tim. 4:2; 1 Cor. 10:11)

Admonition and exhortation,
As well as grace doctrine,
Are to be preached from the pulpit
By called and ordained men.

Such are not inconsistent with
The decrees of the Lord;
Otherwise they wouldn't be contained
In his own inspired word.

Paul shunned not to declare all the
Counsel of God, he saith,
And was much blessed to contend for
The pure doctrine of faith.

Exhortation stirs up the pure mind
"By way of remembrance,"
Of the truths set forth in God's word,
Which mockers look at askance.

Without Christ we can do nothing,
As declared by him above;
"We command and exhort by" him,
Who commandeth to love.

Paul said, "I can do all things through
Christ which strengtheneth me,"
And we are strictly admonished
From idolatry to flee.

To heed scripture admonition,
Should be the saints' delight,
Looking for the Lord's appearing —
O that glorious sight!

To see the King in his beauty —
O what joy that will be
For all the redeemed of the Lord,
From sin and sorrow free!

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, North Carolina

GIVES THE SIGNS TO OTHERS

Rt. 1, Box 868
Christiansburg, Va. 24073

Dear Brother Spangler:

Enclosed is a check for the *Signs* which I enjoy so much. I give mine to others and they enjoy them so much also. Also am sending a few to West Virginia to my dear cousin, who is a believer in our dear Lord — saved by grace through faith.

I do love saving grace, or else I would be lost, for I have nothing good to offer. I feel so low and I pray for Him to guide me lest I fall by the wayside: "Teach me to pray." We don't know what to pray for, but we know that the Spirit makes intercession for us. We also know that nothing can separate us from the love of God. How can I praise thee, O Lord, as I am so vile and full of vanity? Thou art so wonderful. "His name shall be Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace."

I have heard our dear pastor say that when we are down in the valley, we find that the lilies grow there. The sparrows fall to the ground, but God knows all about it. The hairs of our head are numbered, and they are all there. How infinite is our God, and so merciful to us. May we forgive as our Heavenly Father forgives us; and never look at the errors in others. But we must first be given to see our own faults, and may we be blessed to acknowledge them. "Confess your faults one to another."

I have been in the hospital but am feeling better now. I do feel more thankful, and things look more beautiful. Oh, how I love to see His beauty in the sunrise, sunset, the moon and

the stars; the robin in the spring and the roses. His love is everywhere. Yet at times he seems so far away — then we really call upon him and have no confidence in ourselves. There is a time for all things. I have said that I wished there were not so many worldly things that we have to endure; but if it keeps me at His feet, let me have afflictions.

Brother Spangler, my husband and I enjoyed your preaching so much at the association at Laurel Creek. We wish you and your dear wife could visit us at Valley View. Hope you both are well. Please remember us in your petitions. May God bless the Elders to deliver the very words we need.

Yours in that blessed hope,
Asa and Beulah Wells
By Sister Wells

FINDS COMFORT IN GOING OVER EXPERIENCES

Dear Elder and Sister Ruston:

I am so often in my mind telling you, and going over my experiences. My baptism seems to be so wonderful to me. When I got up that morning, these words were in my mind: "The clouds ye so much dread, are big with mercy, and shall break in blessings on your head." Everything seemed to be so satisfying and so wonderful; but when I was standing in the water, I felt I had to have a good hold of your hands; and you said something to me, and I just felt there was a cloud came over me: I was seemingly standing there in my own strength. I was about to hear you say, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," and how I felt it was all my own doings.

How that troubled me until Friday before the Lobo meetings. I prayed that the Lord would give me some token that it was His time for me to have been baptized; and these lovely words came to me:

"In every pang that rends the heart,
The man of sorrows had a part:
He sympathizes with our grief,
And to the sufferer sends relief."

I saw Him on the cross, and God turned away from Him. He was left alone then, when he cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He had to suffer awful pangs to comfort His people; and I believe He comforted me, — which gives me a hope that I am one of his. I can so often see how true these lovely words are: "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform."

It seems to me I had to be left to myself then, to be given that wonderful precious hope that He suffered those pangs for a creature like me.

Dear Elder, we heard the truth preached on Sunday. How good the Lord is to us; and I know what a comfort it is to you. When you felt we needed one to help you, God was preparing one for us: Brother Alec McColl. I enjoyed your short talk too, Elder. I have felt so often that I just wanted to tell you that I find such comfort in going over and over my experiences when I can't sleep.

God bless you both.

Your sister, I hope,
Flossie Hodgins

THEY READ AND RE-READ

Rt. 3, Box 100,
Crockett, Texas 75835

Dear Brethren of the **Signs:**

Have just read the fine writing of Elder W. W. Hudson, **The Pilgrim's Walk,** and it was balm to this poor old sinner. "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling." Dear God our Saviour is all we have to look to.

My mind runs on Forgiveness; and I wish the Lord would direct someone to write on the subject of forgiveness as Jesus taught his disciples to pray, as in Luke 11: 2, and Matthew 6: 9. We pray God to lead us in the way.

We are two old folks, 90 and 87; and the **Signs** are mostly all the preaching we have. Thank God for that blessing. It is not like going to meetings and sing-

ing, and having the fellowship of the brethren; but it gives a peace of mind.

We read and re-read the good letters in the **Signs**, also the Editorials and the Voices of the Past, which suits our hearts so much. We enclose check to renew our subscription.

Mrs. J. F. Rich

THE WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN

(By Elder H. M. Curry)

"These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also."
— Acts xvii. 6

These words were spoken of Paul and Silas after having preached three sabbath days in the synagogue at Thessalonica. Paul's preaching was exceeding troublesome. — Acts xvi. 20. The doctrine of Christ when proclaimed by his chosen ministers is always offensive to the world and its different sects of carnal worshipers. It turns Arminianism upside down. As long as a man's preaching leaves the world right side up, we know that he has not preached the gospel of Christ. A gospel without a stumbling-block is a gospel without Christ. Those whose preaching does not turn the world upside down, have never been turned upside down themselves; and those who have not been turned upside down, have never been called by grace; for a call by grace always turns a man upside down. It had this effect on Paul. The religion of Jesus Christ is contrary to nature. Christ was put to death on a cross. Arminianism teaches that God is the Father of all mankind, and as such deals with all men as his children. They even came face to face with the Lord Jesus with this pernicious doctrine, saying, "We be not born of fornication: we have one Father, even God." — John viii. 41. But the Savior silenced their presumptuous blasphemy with the cutting rebuke, "If God were your father, ye would love me." "Ye are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." — John viii. 44. This same generation of Satan are in the world today, under a cloak of carnal religion, denying that they are born of fornication, and claiming one father, even God. And nothing is more tormenting to them than to point to their true parentage, as did the Savior. These same teachers of the world hold forth a Savior who has left the shining courts of his Father's glory, and came to this low ground of sin and sorrow, suffered and died the ignominious death of the cross, to do men's wills; for they say he will save them if they will. But the word of eternal truth turns this upside down, and hurls it back into the bottomless pit of human lies, and declares that he came down from heaven, not even to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him. — John vi. 38. Our Savior was no Arminian; for he came not to do his own will. Neither are his brethren Arminians. For in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren.

These same soothsayers teach that Christ, as an offering for sin, is made to man, and man is moved and coaxed by the Spirit and bride to accept him. They call themselves the bride, and exhort their hearers not to resist the Spirit, for fear it may take its everlasting flight. But the inspired record turns this upside down, and discovers Satan under it, the father of lies, and lets us know that Jesus through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, and by that one offering hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. *Offerings for sin are made to God, and to God alone.* Christ as an offering for sin is not made to us. They also teach that Christ is held forth in what they call "the general tender of the gospel," and that we must believe in him in order to be saved, and that we believe according to our own free will. But the inspired Scripture, that fatal touchstone of the world's religion, meets this doctrine of infidelity, and turns it upside down; declaring that we "believe according to the working of

his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead." — Ephesians i. 19, 20.

When men came to Christ wanting to work the works of God, he told them, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." — John vi. 28, 29. They say, We believe according to our own free will. Christ says, We believe according to the workings of the mighty power of God. They say, It is man's work to believe. Christ says, It is the work of God. Which is right? These same "tower-builders" teach that all men can come to Christ; but the Savior said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." — John vii. 44. Here they give the Savior the lie, and yet pretend to love and obey him. They further teach that it is God's will to have all men come to Christ and be saved, and that it is God's purpose and pleasure to save them if they will but come; "If they will only fall in with the overtures of mercy, and be saved upon the easy and equitable terms of the gospel, before it is finally and everlastingly too late." But the Savior turns this upside down, and reveals their refuge of lies, and tells us that all that the Father giveth him shall come to him. Never can one that God has given to Christ stay away. God will make them come. Christ says, "Ye will not come unto me;" and, "No man can come." Men will not come, cannot come. And "will not" and "cannot" is a double not, which nothing but the finger of God can untie. With men these things are impossible; but with God all things are possible.

These same "waymakers" teach a broad and easy way which all men can find, because they claim to clearly point it out; and that all men can and may walk therein. They would like to prove that our Savior lied when he said, "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leads to life, and *few* there be that find it." I do not dispute their claim to the "broad way," but only deny that it leads to life. For "Broad is the way that leads to death, and many there be that go in thereat." These same "encompassers" of sea and land must have a universal religion. Their prayer is that the world may be converted to Christ. They are of the world, and pray for the world. But the Savior was not of the world, and declared that he prayed not for the world. — John xvii. 9. Their prayers are not modeled after Christ's, but after "vain repetitions of the heathen," which Christ commands his disciples not to use. How long have their joint petitions gone up for "every house to become a house of prayer, and every heart a fit temple for the indwelling of the holy Spirit?" Has this prayer ever been answered? If it should be, could the Scriptures be fulfilled? The fact that this is not answered is evidence that it was never promised, and the asking is proved to be amiss.

Again, these learned Rabbis of modern theology teach that "men are not the sheep of Christ because they believe not." But Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, whose own the sheep are, turns this upside down, and exposes their learned ignorance of the true God and his grace, and says, "Ye believe not because ye are not my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." — John x. 26. Men believe *because they are the sheep of Christ*; not to make them sheep. In the same way which they call "proclaiming life and salvation," they teach that as many as believe, are ordained to eternal life. But the eternal record destroys this refuge of lies, and reveals the glorious truth of God's predestinating grace, and says, "As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed." — Acts xiii. 48. *If you wish to arrive at the truth, always reverse Arminianism.* Again, these will-worshiping idolaters claim that by their teaching, accompanied by the persuasive influence of the Spirit, men are brought to a knowledge of the truth, and then can be saved by laying hold of offered mercy. But the Scriptures turn this upside down, and tell us that God will have men to be

saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. — 1 Tim. ii. 4.

The Scriptures teach, first, saved, and then a knowledge of the truth. Men teach, first, a knowledge of the truth, and then a probable salvation. They have Sunday Schools, Tract Societies, money systems, and a hundred other inventions unauthorized by the word of God, to forward this work of teaching what they call the religion of Jesus Christ. But the Scriptures turn this upside down, and show it to be the commandments and traditions of men. "They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest." — Heb. viii. 11. "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me." — John vi. This is the teaching that brings men to Christ. It brings all who are taught. Christ says, "Every one that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me." There is no failure here. When a poor sinner is taught of the Lord; when Christ, the true light, is revealed in him, he denies himself, and learns to touch not, taste not, handle not, the commandments and traditions of men, because with him they all perish with the using.

Again, these "Doctors of Divinity" teach that all men are called by the gospel and the Spirit, and can be saved if they will only yield to the influence of the Spirit, and obey what they call the gospel, and keep the commandments. But our Savior has stopped their mouths again; for he declares that the world cannot receive the Spirit, which he sends to comfort his children. — John xiv. 17. The apostle says, "Who hath saved us, and called us." — 2 Tim. i. 9. Hence we are saved before we are called. If not, why does the word say so? "Sanctified by God the Father, preserved [or saved] in Jesus Christ, and called." — Jude 1. But the salvation that men preach is after the call. Then it is plain that their call and salvation are not the call and salvation of our God. Their call is not only before their salvation, but it is immensely broader; for they say that all men are called, and but few saved. But the call of our God is not so. The promise is to all that are called. "For the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off; even as many as the Lord our God shall call." — Acts ii. 39. This promise is to "as many," not to all. Again, "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." — 1 Cor. i. 26. Somebody is left out of this call. But why do we reason? for hath not the apostle said, "Whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate;" "and whom he did predestinate, them he also called?" — Rom. vii. 29, 30. Here we see that the call of our God is limited by his predestination, coupled with his eternal foreknowledge.

Thus we see that their doctrine of infidelity is turned upside down by God's own words, and the foundation thereof discovered to be human ingenuity and craftiness, speculation being the chief corner-stone. These same atheistic teachers preach that God begins the work in all men, but carries it on in but few, and that thousands who are awakened and moved by the Spirit, die in their sins, and sink into the torment of an ever burning hell. This is mighty poor grace, and a very unsuccessful and sadly disappointed spirit; but we feel sure that it is neither the grace nor the Spirit of our God; for we are assured in his word that his grace "reigns through righteousness unto everlasting life." — Rom. v. 21. It *reigns* through righteousness; does not fail through weakness. And when our God begins a good work in a creature, he "performs it until the day of Jesus Christ." — Phil. i. 6. And what our God doeth shall stand forever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it. — Eccl. iii. 14.

Thus through the inspired Scriptures

every phase of the doctrines of men is turned upside down, and their falsehoods brought to light. These same master builders of the high places of Molech preach a faith that is the fruit of the creature, and man must exercise it. But Paul preached a faith that God is the author and finisher of; a faith that exercises the creature; that works by love and purifies the heart; a faith that is the gift of God; a faith that moved Noah to prepare an ark; a faith that threw down the walls of Jericho; a faith which translated Enoch; a faith which subdued kingdoms, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, works righteousness, and overcomes the world. This is not a faith that is the fruit of the creature, and exercised by man; but it is that faith by which we understand the world was framed; the faith of the Son of God.

These same evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, (2 Tim. iii. 13), and preach a birth of a spirit which can be produced or prevented by man; a birth without a begetting, without a travail, and brings forth something that can be annihilated, or cease to exist, by the disobedience of the creature, and regain the condition occupied before birth. They call this "being born of God." Now, this is not only contradicted by the word of truth, but *there is not a syllable of common sense or reason in it.* There are laws of birth, and without these a birth is impossible. First, the existence of life or seed in the parent; second, a begetting; and third, travail, or bringing to light and manifestation the being whose life had its existence in the parent. And this being can never pass back into that state again. The Scriptures inform us that we are born of God. How can this be, except our life was in God, and of the same nature as God? Before this birth of the Spirit, there must be a begetting; and James informs us that God of his own will begat us. — James i. 18. And if begotten of the Spirit, we are bound to be born. For God says, Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? — Isa. lxvi. 9.

These same gainsayers of Korah preach that in infancy we are all the children of God; but when we cross the line of accountability, if we do good God will still love us; and if we disobey, he will hate us, and we will cease to be his children, and become the children of the wicked one. This line of accountability, of which they preach so much, I can never understand, as there is no such thing intimated in the Scriptures of divine truth. But the word of God turns this upside down, and discloses ignorance, superstition and human imagination, as its foundation. These words of eternal truth forever settle the question with all lovers of the truth. "The children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger: as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." — Rom. ix. 11-13. If this Scripture read in this way, The children being both born, and having crossed the line of accountability, one did good and another evil, that salvation by works might stand, it was said unto her, Jacob I love, but Esau I hate; then the Scriptures would not have to be revised to meet the demands of the present age; neither would the Arminian clergy have to dodge the word, as they do. But our God does not have to wait for the birth of the creature, to fix his choice; but his sovereign, electing love fixes on the object before its birth, before it does good or evil, even before it is in a capacity for doing good or evil. The eternal choice of our God was made not only before the birth of the objects embraced therein, but was made in Christ before the foundation of the world, and sealed by his immutable decree of predestination; and the foundation thereof standeth sure, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his."

Dear kindred in Christ, it is in much weakness that I have tried to notice a

few of the most prominent points in which the doctrine of our Savior turns the world upside down. If all the points of difference were noticed and compared, I suppose the world itself would not contain the books that should be written. I am young and ignorant, but I hope that the grace which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto me, and through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus my Savior, I hope to stand accepted in the Beloved, with all the redeemed family.

Yours in hope,
H. M. Curry
Newfoundland, Ky.

(The above by Elder Curry was published in the *Signs* of January 15, 1884. It is a bold and able defense of the gospel, in which he contended earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. We believe the brethren will be given to rejoice in reading it; while others will feel as those did when Paul and Silas preached: "These have turned the world upside down." — J. D. W.)

HE HATH GOTTEN THE VICTORY

Pocomoke, Md.

Dear Brethren:

"O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvelous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory." (Psalm 98:1)

When we hear someone say something about having a "right-hand man," we think of one who has someone willing to do whatever is asked of him.

"For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." (John 6:38) I am sure that the name Jesus means that *he shall save.* The word "arm" is used to picture something that extends from one thing to another; and is pictured as strength. In this I see One that is able to reach down to us in our most miserable condition, and lift us up and place our feet on a solid foundation. The word "holy" is used also. I see Jesus doing all things in holiness and righteousness; and when He lifts us up from our fallen condition, his holiness and righteousness is imputed to us; for we have none of our own.

We read in Luke 10:30-35 a parable where a man (typical of a child of God) left Jerusalem, (representing a high place,) to go to Jericho, which represents a place of destruction, was struck down by thieves, — in my words, stripped of his self-righteousness and love of his worldly possessions. He could not do anything for himself. The priest and Levite saw him but couldn't do anything for him. Then the Samaritan (which was the type of Christ,) came where he was and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine — typical of the right-hand and holy arm, and furnished him transportation to the inn. The Samaritan did not tell him, "I have helped you this time, don't let it happen again." No, not that! he paid the inn-keeper for caring for him, saying if there was anything more, he would pay it also.

Dear reader, this is to my way of thinking the way God's right hand and holy arm works. He does not ask you what you want and when you want it: He gives you what you need when you need it. If you have been visited by this right hand and holy arm, you will sing a new song, for you will know He has done marvelous things. "His right hand and holy arm has gotten him the victory." Amen,

In bonds of love and fellowship,
Frank A. Holland

REPENTANCE

"Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." (Hebrews 12:16-17)

This Scripture worried us for a long time until a few years ago. We thought:

"Does this mean that Esau really desired repentance within his heart, and that this desire was so great that he wept over it, and that he was not granted repentance because he was not one of the chosen?" You can imagine the anxiety this caused us.

We have not heard anyone expound upon that text in preaching, nor do we remember reading anything upon that text from any writer. We believe the meaning is this, and trust that God directed these thoughts to us: To come right to the point, we do not believe that Esau desired repentance over his sins. To the lover of the truth, we ask you to look up the meaning of the word *repent,* and you will find that it has more than one meaning. We will quote two meanings from Webster: "To amend or resolve to amend one's life as a result of contrition for one's sins. 2. To change one's mind with regard to past or intended action, conduct, etc. on account of regret or dissatisfaction." If there was not another Scripture to back up our views, then we would certainly be in the dark, and the views would be guesswork.

If Esau did not desire repentance from his sins, what type was it, and why did he seek it so carefully with tears? We call your attention to the 27th chapter of Genesis. Isaac told Esau to go in the field and get some venison, prepare the meat and then bring it to him, and he would bless Esau. Rebekah overheard this, so she prepared goat meat, and told Jacob to take it to Isaac. Jacob put on goat skins (Esau was a hairy man), took the meat to Isaac, and told him that he was Esau. Therefore, Jacob got the blessing in a deceiving way.

When Esau came back with the venison, this caused Isaac to tremble, yet he said that he blessed Jacob and *he shall be blessed.* Isaac meant that he had blessed Jacob and *he would not repent or change his mind.* It is human nature for a little child to plead, cry, etc. in order to get what he wants. By such pleading and crying, the child may be able to persuade the parents to change their mind and "give in to the child."

When Esau heard Isaac say that Jacob shall be blessed, this caused him to cry: "And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my Father." (Genesis 27:34) All of Esau's crying did not persuade Isaac to change his mind. Therefore, Jacob got that blessing, and all of Esau's tears did not cause Isaac to repent or change his mind about the matter.

True repentance is a gift of God. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17) It is the Grace of God that causes one to repent. One has a *Godly sorrow* over his sins, and he desires repentance. The pattern of this experience is mentioned in Jeremiah 31:18-19: "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented: and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth." Notice that Ephraim could not repent until God turned him.

Judas had a natural remorse. He knew that word would get out among Jesus' disciples that he betrayed him. Therefore his repentance was natural or outward. "Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, what is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of

silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself." (Matt. 27:3-5) (see Acts 1:16-19) Judas sunk into despair, and rather than bear the scorn of Jesus' disciples, he went and hanged himself.

God's people may be perplexed to the extent they walk upon the banks of despair, but the Grace of God keeps them from sinking in it. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair." (2 Cor. 4:8)

Therefore, dear one, if you mourn over your sins, and desire a closer walk with God, and feel the need of repentance, and feel the need of the mercy of God, this is some sweet evidence that Grace has touched your heart. "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord." (Psalms 27:14)

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

THEY PREACH THE CERTAINTY OF GOD

209 Taylor Street
Collinsville, Va. 24078

Dear Brethren in Christ
Jesus our Lord:

I enjoy reading your letters in the *Signs*, and the *Voices of the Past*, for they are very comforting. They preach the certainty of God, and give him all the honor and praise. The writers know our weakness and nothingness and call upon the Lord for mercy, depending on him for all our needs. When we know this, we rejoice in God's love in sending his Son into the world, and him taking our sins on himself and bearing them to the cross, saying, "It is finished."

We cannot have a good thought unless it comes from God — and they ascend back to Him, giving Him all the honor. All who are born of the Spirit sing, "Great and marvelous are thy works Lord God Almighty, just and true all thy ways, thou King of Saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name; for thou only art holy." These all believe in God, while others believe in the works of the creature and the will of the flesh, to spend eternity in heaven, giving glory to men. This is nothing other than the carnal mind which is enmity against God. Our prayer is, Father forgive them they know not what they do.

The Apostle Paul persecuted the church before he was born of the Spirit of God, but he was a chosen vessel, and obtained mercy for he did it ignorantly in unbelief. Then he preached the gospel, although he was hated for it, because he did not honor men. "But I certify you, brethren, for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Galatians 1:11) "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world; that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." (Ephesians 1:3) "Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began: but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ; who hath abolished death, and hath brough life and immortality to light through the gospel." (2 Timothy 1:9)

And we read in 1 Peter 1:18, "For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot; who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God that raised him from the dead,

and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God." And in 1 John 4:4, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth not God heareth us not. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." There is a difference in working in the Lord, and working for the Lord.

I enjoyed Sister Cisco Barron's letter. The things are going on now. "But Christ being come a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands; that is to say, not of this building. Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." (Hebrews 9:11)

In John 6:37, we read, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out; for I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me, and this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise him up again at the last day."

In Christian love,
Mattie Underwood

LIKES THE WORDS "LITTLE FLOCK"

Rt. 4, Box 77
Arab, Ala. 35016

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a check for $8.00 to renew my subscription, with the extra $1.00 to be used as you see fit.

I enjoy the paper very much. I feel very close to the *Signs* for it has been in my family almost as far back as I can remember. I have met and talked with Elder Spangler, and heard him do some wonderful preaching. I am also personally acquainted with two of the Associated Editors, Elder Griffin and Elder Lambert. They both have wonderful gifts when given light and liberty, to feed the little flock. I like the words "little flock." I do not worry about the up-building, or the falling away, for I feel assured that All is in God's capable hands. "He adds to the church daily such as shall be saved."

I have been very lonely since I lost my companion in May of 1966, and not being blessed with children. I also lost my only sister last April. But I have been so very wonderfully blessed with numbers of recorded sermons on tape; and many lonely nights in the wee hours of the morning, I listen to His word preached. Too, the good brethren and sisters at Dorsey Creek Church, in the Five Mile Creek Association, have allowed me to be counted with them. We have our regular meetings each 4th Sunday with Elders C. C. Hand and H. Clyde Moon as our pastors. We also have a new church building almost completed; and we are very thankful to the giver of every good and perfect gift for it. Many, many people have helped us, as we are so few in number.

May God bless each and every one that has any part in putting together the *Signs of the Times* for us poor worms of the dust to read and feast upon. And may it still contend for the same doctrine it has from the beginning.

A very unworthy sinner,
Fannie R. Hyatt

BY GRACE ONLY

10817 Lupine
Sharonville, Ohio 45214

Dear Brethren:

It has been my desire for sometime to write my feelings about the grace of God. My love for God began four or five years ago, but I believe that his love for me began before the foundation

of the earth, if he loves me at all.

I believe with all my heart that it has to be by grace if I am one of his.

I am a member of Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church at Blanchester, Ohio. I joined in November, 1966. I had no great experience to tell the church when I asked for a home with them. Brethren and Sisters I want to tell you how great the love of God for his children is — Christ our Saviour died for his loved ones. He suffered and died for everyone of his children; and every one he died for will be with him someday. He chose his children before the foundation of the world. He saw the fallen state they were in, and knowing they were not able to help themselves, He left the right hand of the Father in heaven, and came down to save them from their sins. He said he came to seek and to save that which was lost, and he did exactly what he said he came to do. All the devils on earth didn't stop him, for He has all power. I am very dumb concerning scriptures, but I believe God revealed to me the truth of salvation by grace.

I have heard some say that they knew they were going to heaven. I wish I could say that. I know that if I reach heaven it will be by the grace and mercy of God. If I receive justice I know I am bound for hell. I have to beg God for his love and mercy every day of my life; and I desire that each of you pray for me. I get so weak sometimes that I doubt if I am one of His; and at other times I know I feel his love in my heart.

If we are saved it is by the grace, love and mercy of our God. God bless each and every one of you.

Vernon Wilson

BELIEVER SINCE A SMALL CHILD

843 Glendale Ave.
S. Charleston, W. Va. 25303

Dear Editors:

I am sending this check to renew my subscription; the rest to be used as needed.

Elder Wood, I have neglected to write and tell you how much I enjoyed meeting you and your wife when I visited the Mt. Zion Church, near Aldie, last Spring. Your sermon was wonderful, and exactly what I believe. I had wanted to hear you preach ever since reading your articles in the *Signs*.

I am made to wonder at times about this great love the Old Baptist people have for each other, even though they meet as total strangers. But I know it has to come from our dear Lord, who instills this love into our hearts that flows from breast to breast.

I feel I cannot thank my Lord enough for giving me this great blessing — to believe this wonderful doctrine since I was a small child.

I hope to visit you again at Mt. Zion Church in the near future.

A sister in Christ, I hope,
Mrs. Lester Haning

"WORSHIP"

Dear Brother Spangler:

I hesitate to attempt to write anything for publication, realizing my inability, and not wanting to seem an authority, informer, or teacher on any subject.

If my mind is so directed, I shall try to write a little of my thinking lately on the word "worship."

Worship is a word we see a lot of in daily papers and hear many times on the radio. It is given as an invitation to all mankind, such as, "come worship with us," "come to the house of worship," and many more ways of advertising meetings in the land today. This word is much used, and little understood, according to my belief. We worship the thing or things that are foremost in our minds, — and this is in spirit if the mind is directed, or if not directed, the natural or worldly mind is present. The natural man will wor-

ship, and does; but what? things of nature, worldly goods, worldly lusts, silver and gold, just as they did in the Bible when Moses went up in the mount, and they were left alone. The Israelites were worshipping a golden calf. What is different of man today when left alone? When God isn't present, man is left in his natural state, which is of the world worldly.

My understanding of worship in a spiritual sense is something given of God, — ordained of God; and in it God is given all power, honor and glory. He is the source, the spark that inflames, keeps burning and keeps alive, consumes the dross and causes man to ascribe all honor to Him on earth and in heaven, from whom all blessings flow.

Only the blessed of God, the chosen ones, are to worship Him. As they look up to Him they admire Him from the bottom of their hearts, and adore Him above all things, for He is foremost in their minds. This takes an understanding of the Holy Spirit from above; and this I feel for only brief moments — we have no control over time or place. When this manifestation comes, we see Him high and lifted up, and his train fills the temple. He has all power on earth and none can stay His hand, or say, Why doest thou? "They shall all know me from the least to the greatest of them."

The house of worship is where He comes to us: this we feel in our soul, and we worship Him in spirit and in truth. I hope I have been, and will be blessed in the future at some time and humble place, to worship Him our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Hopefully,
Julian Williams
Keeling, Va.

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OUR VISIT TO THE WEST COAST IN 1968

In the Spring of 1968 I received an invitation to visit the Three Day Meeting in the state of Washington.

On August 7th my wife and I left for the Northwest, arriving in La Grande, Oregon, about 2 A. M. on the following Saturday morning. We were met at the station by Brother and Sister Lloyd Spikes and conveyed to their home in Elgin, Oregon. After sleeping for a few hours we left for the meeting at Naches, Washington, arriving for the service at eleven A. M. It was soul-refreshing to meet again with the lovely members and friends, as we had visited these brethren twice before. These churches are served by our dear yoke-fellow in the ministry, Elder Attebery, of Hermiston, Oregon. Elder Attebery is a highly esteemed minister, sound in the faith and faithful to the churches of Washington and Oregon. It was heart warming to again meet with him and those associated with him.

The service was held in the Grange Hall both Saturday and Sunday. Lunch was served both days; and morning and evening services were held both days. They are few in number but manifest a faithfulness that belongs to the Lord's people. The Spirituality of these lovely brethren and friends in listening to the service and singing the songs of Zion, was heart-warming.

The next weekend was their three-day meeting time at Mossy Rock, Washington. They have recently erected a new meeting house, where the services were held the three days. Here we met with members from Portland, Washington; Elgin, Oregon; Naches, Washington; and the local church at Mossy Rock. There were some there from a distance of five hundred miles. We visited one night in the home of Sister D. C. Davis, widow of Elder D. C. Davis; and one night with Sister Vernie Schoonover, of Morton, Washington.

Here we met with Brother and Sister John Simpson, Sister Mildred Simpson and husband, Sister Maude Schwartz, Mabel Schliesmayer, Sister Josie Mitchell, Norma L. Martin, Brother and Sister Bert Knox, Sister Carl Jansen, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. O. Hall, Sister C. A. Halstead, Sister Beatrice Haan, Brother and Sister Will Casey, Sister Daisy Baker, Brother Wesley Bond, Brother and Sister Spikes, and Brother Ben Preston of Oregon, and Sister Opal Hunting of Washington; and other friends.

Many times during the long trip out, which covered about three thousand miles, questions would arise in my mind as to whether the Lord had sent me, or whether I was running without tidings; and often it caused a great searching of heart. While speaking on Satur-

day of the three-day meeting from the text, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name," and speaking of our need as His people to have the same mind He had in him, who being in the form of God and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, yet bowed the heavens and came down to our low estate, and took upon him the form of a servant, and took not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, and redeemed us from the curse of the law by paying our debt of sin that we could not pay; when suddenly while speaking I felt very deeply that God in His providence had sent me among these lovely people again; and the feeling was so strong that I paused and mentioned the fact.

The following week we visited with Elder Attebery and Sister Attebery in their home; and in the home of Sister Brown at Chatteroy, Washington, where we had a spiritual visit in singing and discussing the word of God.

The fourth weekend in August, meetings were held Saturday and Sunday near Elgin, Oregon. Here we met with Brother and Sister Burch, Sister Elva Spikes, Brother Wesley Bond, of the local church, and most of the members of the other churches. Here again we met with members and friends from two to five hundred miles.

On Sunday after service Brother Ben Preston manifested a desire for membership in the church. The brethren had looked for him to come for many years; and I question that there was a dry eye in the house as he stood before the church and told of the dealings of the dear Lord with him. He was gladly received, and Elder Attebery requested that I perform the ordinance of baptism.

When we met at the small river that flows through Elgin, Oregon, Deacon Lloyd Spikes' wife presented herself for membership, and amid much rejoicing was received and baptized.

Sunday evening about seven o'clock we left by train for home. Many of the members and friends went with us to the station, and amid tears both of joy and sorrow we left them standing by as the train moved out. We can yet picture our dear beloved yokefellow in the ministry, Elder Attebery, whom we have learned to love so much for Jesus' sake, and his wife and the others, waving us farewell as we moved for home.

After three nights and part of three days, we arrived home safely, with many, many precious memories of God's abounding grace and mercy.

D. V. Spangler

EDITORIAL

THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA

One of my yokefellows in the ministry of Jesus Christ has requested that I write on this subject. His inquiries are so vital that for me to confine my remarks to one article would be out of the question. I will, as blessed of God, notice each one of the churches in sequence.

In the outset, let me say that I think the brother should have answered his own request, for I feel sure that he has been exercised and deeply concerned about the things spoken. Nevertheless, I attempt to write as requested, leaving the issue in the hands of Him that holds the destiny of all things in His hands.

I have written some along this line in days that are past and gone, but I will ignore that and deal with the situation as being something new. I will forget what all of the commentators have said; I will endeavor to forget what my brethren may say in criticism

about what I say; I will beg for grace, as given grace, to not know any man after the flesh. Maybe I am mistaken, but I think that I have ceased to be too concerned about private interpretations of the Scriptures, about preconceived ideas and notions about those same Scriptures, and the consequences that will befall me if I do not follow that path. Maybe I am mistaken, but I think that I desire to preach and write Jesus as the way to heaven. I am sure that I will not have much evidence that a man will ever get there, unless that he is on the way now. It is of the utmost importance that we be right now. It is of the utmost importance that we be a follower of Christ today.

The book of Revelation has been called a mystery. I am sure that it is not so to those to whom it is sent. It is hard to accept God's way. The disciples desired to know why the Saviour spoke in parables, and our lack of hearing ears have caused us to find fault with the book instead of acknowledging our lack. To find understanding and comfort from this writing, we must have an ear with which to hear. It is sure and certain that if we have this kind of an ear that this writing will not be complicated.

It seems that the whole book was addressed to the seven churches of Asia. God has been pleased to send men into every aspect of the Christian's work. Each of them have had special qualifications to that end. To Paul was given the calling and training to minister to the Gentiles; to John was given the calling and training for the great work that comes from the Isle of Patmos. To say that each of them could have served as well in the other places, is to have a more vivid imagination than I have.

Another thought that we hear much about is that the whole thing is prophetic. We should remember that the command to write covered things which he had seen as well as it covered the things that existed and the things that were to come. There is little, if any, doubt that any portion of the Revelation covered any other matters than those connected with these seven churches. If all Scripture is given to the man of God, who will be able to say that any portion of this is not pertinent to our welfare? If *any* of it pertains to us; if our welfare is related to this, then it follows that all of it pertains to us. We hear, at times, that those entreaties, commands, threatenings do not belong to us. If this portion does not belong to us, it is a death knell to say so, for when we say it, we are saying that we do not have hearing ears, and that we are not men of God. Furthermore, if some man has authority to tell us that this does not belong to us, what particular way does that differ from the rankest Catholicism? And if he can tell us what belongs to us, and that is the policy of Primitive Baptists, then by all means let us join the ecumenical crowd, for we have a shorter distance back to Rome than any of the fledgeling Protestants.

"John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." (Rev. 1:4, 6) Now that is the essence of the whole Johnanine testimony, and it all is to seven churches, and it all is to us, and it means to us what it meant to them, but, in both cases, it only concerned those that had hearing ears.

"Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience,

and how thou canst not bear them which are evil; and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars; and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." (Rev. 2:1, 7)

What was said to this church can often be said about any of the churches of Christ in this day and age. In fact, the seven churches mentioned show forth the complete charge to the militant church as a whole. If this conclusion is not correct, to wit, that it is a message for the churches in all ages, then we do not have a message like unto this, and the concern of our young brother about these scriptures is uncalled for and unneeded. Other churches had an early existence as well as these; other churches were afflicted with heresy and evil surmisings. The churches of Judea, and Corinth, and Phillipi, and Thessalonica, all, all, were beset by difficulties on every hand. Their difficulties were as acute as any that were found in the seven churches of Asia. It has been said that nothing significant was meant by the number seven. Then why use it at all? With all the many churches that certainly were tormented by tormenting spirits, why did the One whose eyes were a flaming fire, thus knowing the need of all, why, I say, did He not send a message to at least eight? Suffice it to say, that the conditions in these churches are in ours; suffice it to note that a cure for their sorrow was given, but all of them have been removed, signifying that they did not have ears to hear. Have we?

The Lord Jesus Christ has ever walked in the midst of the churches. Only the love of God manifested the glorious walk among his people. This walk originated in the mind of God, and it has been made manifest often down the ages. (Dan. 3:25; John 8:56; I Cor. 10: 4) The hold that he had upon the seven stars is more than men can ever understand. How many times, how many times, he held to Paul after he had been called to minister at Ephesus and other places. These stars need holding, they need to be held in the hand of One that holds all things by the word of his power.

This walk of Christ is another wonder to the children of God. He walks in the midst of the church, even though at times she is not aware of it. (Luke 24:15, 17) When she travels through the fire of persecution, He walks in her midst.

Christ knows his church. "I know thy works" sets him forth as the omniscient Son of God, as the dear Husbandman of the Vineyard of the Lord. She was not indifferent to good works. There was not any idleness found in her. Much is found to commend in this church. She was looking well to her household. (Prov. 31:27) She had many labors; she had patience as she labored, and even with those that labored not; she bore her burdens, knowing that He who had called her to this warfare was able to sustain her in the conflict. One of the most beautiful features of this church was her hatred of evil ways. She could not bear to shelter an evil doer. Let he or she that thinks smuggling and covering up tale bearers, whoremongers, liars, covetous members, drinking Baptists, gamblers, adulterers, and fornicators, is permissible, remember that Ephesus hated all such. If we have ears to hear, this is addressed to us, even if two thousand

years have lapsed since it was given. This laboring has been for Jesus' sake, those that are witnesses for the truth are looking to Him as they run the race. As long as they are running for Jesus' sake they will consider Christ as having endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, but if the running of the race, if the labor of love ceases to be to His name's honor and glory, there will be a growing weary with Christ, with the race, with the labor, and fainting comes. What unity there is between this charge of the Saviour and the charge of Paul. Be not weary in well doing for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not, (Gal. 6:9)

Christ did have something against them. It was not because of a lack in zeal, in good works, in patience, in bearing burdens, in hating evil, in all these things they were likened unto a faithful steward. They had left their first love. They had fallen. There has never been a case of an heir of promise ceasing to be an heir; there has never been a case of a child of God ceasing to be a child and becoming a child of Satan, but there are at least two cases where brethren fell. The church at Galatia did say that they were justified by the law, therefore, says Paul, they had fallen from grace. From time to time I have heard lovely brethren say (not in a lovely manner, but) rather heatedly, that there was not such a thing as falling from grace, when Paul was inspired to write a whole letter to a fallen church; and the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, tells the church at Ephesus that she had fallen. Some of these closing of eyes to the Scriptures, some of the bitter denunciations of those that we serve because of our quoting the pure and unadulterated written word of God, causes deep concern and much anxiety.

At one time this church had not fallen. At that time the Lord had nothing against her. Certainly, up until Paul bid them farewell, they had not fallen, but before he left them he told them of what was coming. Now, some years later, the things that Paul said would come, have now come. This church has now fallen; she has now turned her back on the work of the sovereign work of the Spirit in making perfect the saints of God. Paul's letter to Ephesus does not show them fallen, but John's testimony shows that they did fall.

The eyes of the Lord are piercing. They are as a flaming fire, seeing, not only *what* we do, but *why* we do it. As He walks, he talks; as He comforts, he rebukes; as he commends the faithfulness, he gives sharp reproof of forgetfulness. Have you been negligent? Have you been forgetful? Have you been unmindful of His mercies? Ah, yes, this leanness, this lack of the intense love of earlier days, how sore it becomes. Gaze on the scene, dear reader, travel with Ephesus in her early love and her fallen condition, and listen closely as the One shepherd walks among her. Do you remember how vivid former years are visualized as He calls you to remember? Did it astonish you when He said, Remember thou art fallen? Did you hang your head in shame, acknowledging His charge as being true? Or did you go heedlessly on, tossing your head and saying that there is not such a thing as falling; there is not such a thing as being out of grace. Oh, how awful! To say that we are always in grace is to charge our sins on grace; to say that I have no remembrance of any fall, is as serious as Peter saying, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

The only way that a fallen church or a fallen saint will ever be back in the much desired state of having done all things faithful is by way of repentance. Repentance is a gift of God, wrought in us by the effectual workings of God's grace, but none of my readers will ever find where any writer indulged in "waiting till God drags you to repent" for that doctrine is just as repulsive as saying that the natural man understands the things of the Spirit. Peace

is given us by Jesus Christ. Rest comes only after a cessation of labor. Repentance is a gift of God. All of this is true, but we are commanded to strive for peace; we are commanded to labor for the rest that we will never get until we quit laboring; we are commanded time and again to repent. (Rom. 15:30, 33; Heb. 4:10, 11; Mark 6:12)

Sometimes we have had trouble in our churches by those that repented, but no change was seen in their daily lives. As noted elsewhere, liars are not to be sheltered in the kingdom of heaven. The fowls may come and get on the mustard tree limbs but that does not put them in the tree. (See Mat. 13:32) Men may say things from the lips but it does not go deeper within. She was commanded in this case to remember, to repent, to do the first works. If this is not done, there will be a quick coming to that church or that individual. There will be a quick removal of the candlestick out his place. Only repentance is given her as the cure or restoration of that.

Much speculation has been had about the Nicolaitanes as to who they were. Why? The important thing is that the walking Saviour hates them. Speculation has been rife that they were people that believed in unconditional predestination of all things. Since God is a Sovereign Ruler, never changing towards those that were chosen in Christ, never learning anything, never forgetting anything, seeing all things in the realm of his church (and she is in every nation and kindred and tongue), we are well assured that He does not hate that which testifies concerning Himself. Prying into the imaginative illusions of the natural mind is not glorifying to God nor comforting to His vessels of mercy. All that I have any authority to expound is that they were a hateful, heretical, baneful people, and that my Saviour hated them. They hated them at Ephesus because like begets like; they followed in His steps.

Once again, at the expense of being trite, let us repeat with the Saviour that only those with hearing ears can hear and receive these special instructions. These that hear are moving forward to perfection. The Lord is working mightily to them, enabling them to overcome. This is grace salvation, this is the answer to Paul's prayer in behalf of the Hebrews. "Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and forever. Amen." (Heb. 13:20, 21) Salvation by grace is a doctrine that the saints love, and their Saviour loves it. They do not love the ungodly thought of us doing ungodliness by grace, and their Saviour does not love it. They do not like falling, and their cry is for mercy. It is Christ that they come to, He having loved them with an everlasting love, making manifest that love by dying for them, and for being set for their fall, (but not the cause of their fall) and for their rising again to serve him in newness of life.

What a precious boon it is that another witness has told the churches of the unspeakable gift of all things that pertain to life and godliness, (2 Pet. 1:3), and that this includes anything and everything that is needed for this, as well as all others, including the poor wayfaring, destitute, (in themselves) churches of today, to overcome any tendency to weakness in leaving the principles of grace, in leaving the many lo heres and lo theres with which a weak and tender branch comes in contact, and in abiding in the true vine and bringing forth fruit to His name's honor and glory. Too, this given full supplies will cause this church, any church, any individual, to overcome every hateful way, with the espouser of that way, and such fulness will enable us all to turn away from false ways, hateful ways, and walk in the living way.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

Floris, Davis Co., Iowa, March 20, 1876.

Mr. Beebe: — I desire to know the meaning of Mark xvi. 16-18, especially the signs that shall follow them that believe. I wish you to explain these three verses in your next paper, and oblige,

John P. Thompson

REPLY

The commission given in the fifteenth verse was unto the eleven apostles, to whom Jesus appeared after his resurrection, and immediately before he ascended up into heaven; and he said unto them, namely, the eleven disciples, while they sat at meat, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Previously to this they were forbidden to go among the Gentiles, or into any city of the Samaritans; but now that Christ was raised from the dead, and from under the law which he came in the flesh to fulfill, having finished the work which the Father had given him to do, he is exalted far above all principality and power, for to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins. He said to these same apostles, at this time, "All power is given unto me, in heaven and in earth: Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world, Amen." — Matt. xxvii. 19, 20. And in John xvii. 1, 2, "He lifted his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."

Now the restriction by which their preaching had been limited to the lost sheep of Israel, was no longer to limit the field of their labor, because he had now removed the wall of partition which had separated Israel from all other nations, and his mediatorial power over all flesh had come, they were commanded to, Go, therefore, and teach all nations; or, as recorded by Mark, Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; but not until they should be endowed with power from on high, which endowment they received when the day of Pentecost had fully come.

As even the apostles had no power to quicken, or save those unto whom they preached, nor even to know who of all the nations unto whom they preached were the redeemed people, whom God had given to his Son, this evidence should inform them conclusively, "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved." Faith in the Son of God, and obedience to him, are still the evidence by which God's saved people are and shall be known to the apostolic church. This is the work of God that they should believe on Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, and as faith is the gift of God, and the fruit of the Spirit, it is therefore affirmed that whosoever believeth on him hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life, and therefore shall be saved. And as living faith is productive of good works, so baptism is a manifestation of saving faith, showing that God worketh in them to will and to do of his own good pleasure. And these signs shall follow them that believe. It has been suggested, that if it be meant that all who believe shall be baptized, it must also be meant that they should also perform all the signs which are to follow. But a more careful reading will show that the signs are to follow them that believe, whether they be baptized or not. By reading the Acts of the apostles, and their several epistles to the churches, we shall see that the signs mentioned in our text did, in many cases, follow literally. The special gifts of the Holy Ghost did follow in attestation of the holy calling and divine qualifications of

the apostles of the Lamb, to whom this promise was made; and those who, by the laying on of the apostles' hands, did receive these special and particular gifts. But these gifts of miracles were not given, even in the apostles' days, to all believers who were baptized; for there were in the churches those who, though having other gifts for edification of the body, had no part nor lot in the matter. One indeed seemed earnestly to covet it, and offered money to buy it, but was sharply rebuked by Peter, for the thought of his heart, which on that subject was not right in the sight of God.

These signs did follow just as our Lord said they should, and his saying was fulfilled to the letter. But as all signs have some definite signification, as when the fig tree blossoms, it is a sign that summer is near, so these wonderful works which should be performed in Jesus' name were signs; not only that those who believed the word as preached by the apostles, were those unto whom it was given on the behalf of Christ to believe on him, but also that he was with them alway, for he had said to them, "Without me, ye can do nothing."

Let it also be observed that these signs, of casting out devils, speaking with tongues, healing the sick, &c., were to follow in his name; not like the signs performed by the magicians before Pharaoh, by enchantment, or by human power. When Peter and John had said to the poor, helpless, lame man, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk," the people were astonished. And when Peter saw it he answered unto the people, "Why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?" He declared that it was by the name of Jesus, whom they had put to death, whom God had raised from the dead, "And his name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know; yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all." — Acts iii. 6, 16.

In his name, means by his power, by his command; for his name is above every name, and God will not hold them guiltless who dare to take his sacred name in vain. But all the saints have a vital interest in his name, and he has sealed it upon them, and in it they have a strong tower into which they run and find safety.

In a spiritual application these signs do even now follow those who have the faith of God's elect. Even devils are subject to them through his name. And by virtue of his name a new song is put in their mouth, and they are enabled to speak in a language peculiar to those who truly do believe the gospel as preached by the apostles of the Lamb. The Ashdod language, which was once their dialect, has now become a senseless jargon to them, and the pure language which God has turned to his people is their medium of communication. They take up serpents, especially such as John the Baptist refused to baptize, and even lay their hand upon the cockatrices' den, without being hurt, and they are astonishingly preserved from deadly poisons, and their fervent, effectual prayer shall be heard for the sick. They shall anoint the sick with the unction which they have received from the Holy One, and they shall recover.

Although these special gifts, as signs, in their literal application were given specially to the apostles, they shall follow in their spiritual application those who believe through their word, for all who are true believers were added to the apostles. The apostles were the constituents of the church in her gospel organization, and their names are in the twelve foundations of the holy city, (Rev. xxi. 14,) and God has added *unto them* such as shall be saved; and they are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe July 1, 1876.)

OBITUARIES

ELDER H. G. BROWN

It is indeed with a sad and heavy heart that I undertake to record the death of our beloved pastor, Elder H. G. Brown, who passed away Thursday, November 28, 1968. Elder Brown was ordained a minister of the gospel in May, 1943, and was called by the First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis, Tenn., as pastor immediately. He went in and out before us for over twenty-five years; which is longer than most of the members at the present time have been members of this church.

Elder Brown loved to talk on the Scriptures, either from the stand or in private conversation. The writer has spent many pleasant hours in his company. We feel that truly a father in Israel has fallen in his passing from the shores of time. His gentle manner and humble character endeared him to all who knew him as pastor, minister or friend. He set forth the doctrine of God our Saviour in such a manner that even though one may disagree with him, they must admit that he had a "thus saith the Lord" for his position in the matter.

We, the members of the church, mourn Elder Brown's passing, but feel truly thankful unto God for this gift that was bestowed upon us for these many years. He was a pastor in every sense of the word, and one who taught by example the principle of love. He was a person altogether lovely to those to whom he ministered, as well as to those who knew him as a kind and gentle man.

We pray that God will reconcile us unto his will in this and all other matters, and that He will bless us to continue to dwell together in peace and love for one another. May we be blessed to follow the example which Elder Brown demonstrated while in our midst; and may we always desire and pray for the welfare of our brethren, as for ourselves. This was his manner, and was the principle theme of his preaching, praying and careful consideration of everyone concerned in all matters.

We will long remember this able and gifted pastor as we travel the journey of this life; and his memory will ever be pleasant and precious to our minds. Our hope and prayer unto God is that we will all be gathered together again, to sing praises to our Heavenly Father when we, as Elder Brown has done, shall have finished our earthly course. Then we will be parted no more from the joy and fellowship of the communion of saints, which is our whole desire, if we know our hearts.

Written by order of the Church while assembled in conference.

Richard H. Campbell, Clerk

MRS. JAMES H. MALOY

Mrs. Maloy died in a Geneva Hospital after a short illness, February 4, 1969; aged 84 years. She was the widow of the late Deacon J. H. Maloy of Traveler's Rest Primitive Baptist Church, and had been a faithful member of that church since 1914, and was known far and wide for her devotion to her church. Her parents were J. O. Morgan and wife who had lived in Samson, Alabama for sixty-one years.

Funeral services were conducted at her beloved church February 6th, with Elders Ivey Watson and J. J. Collins in charge; using as a theme Revelation 7:7-15, "Washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

She lived a remarkable life. She had three sons: Ernest S., of Samson; J. T., of Enterprise; and Travis, of San Diego, Calif.; four daughters: Mrs. Grady Dunn and Miss Reva Merle, of Samson; Mrs. Charles Pridgen, Freeport, Fla., and Mrs. W. J. Eason, deceased; twenty-one grandchildren and twenty-eight great grandchildren. Grandsons served as pallbearers. Interment was in Traveler's Rest Cemetery. Her family is one of the most prominent in this section, and she will be sadly missed among the Primitive Baptists.

J. J. Collins

WESLEY G. THOMPSON

Mr. Wesley G. Thompson, aged seventy-three years, passed away July 25, 1968. He is survived by his wife, Anna; two sons, Wesley and John, and their wives, and seven grandchildren. He was gifted and prosperous in business, and many, both in the church and surrounding countryside, could testify to his unobtrusive generosity. He truly lived according to Christ's precept, "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth."

We loved him dearly, not only for his kindness to us, but for the loving attitude he showed toward us. He proved his love to the church and the people of God by his regular attendance at our meetings at Duart, and sometimes elsewhere; and his willingness to contribute when help was needed.

He passed away rather suddenly, but said some sweet things at the last, which were a great comfort to his family as well as to us. We all sorely miss him, but we believe he is in the Paradise of God. His funeral service was held in their commodious home by his pastor, Elder George Ruston, assisted by Elder Alex McColl. Elder Ruston spoke from Philippians 4:4. Interment was in the nearby cemetery.

Sister Esther Ruston

SISTER MINERVA McLEAN

Sister Minerva McLean, widow of Frank McLean, passed away in her seventy-eighth year on November 28, 1968. She had led a very self-sacrificing life, caring for several of her husband's relatives as long as they lived. She and her husband raised a lovely family: four boys and one girl; and all regularly attended Ekfrid, Ontario, meetings as long as they were at home. It was their delight to entertain church friends in their home. After some time her husband developed a very trying affliction, and she tenderly cared for him several years until the Lord took him home.

She was baptized by her pastor, Elder George Ruston, in 1955, and was ever a faithful member and beloved friend. After some years she was terribly injured in an automobile accident, but, miraculously it seemed, she recovered sufficiently to attend meetings. After a while the results of it became evident again, so it was necessary for her to go to a nursing home, where she gradually failed until the Lord took her to her heavenly home.

Her funeral service was conducted by her pastor in the Ekfrid Meeting House, using as a text Revelation 14:13. Interment was in the adjoining cemetery. We dearly loved her, and she is missed very much.

Sister Esther Ruston

BROTHER PHILIP SCHLEIHAUF

Brother Philip Schleihauf passed away March 18, 1969. He was married to Janet Pollard, a granddaughter of Elder William Pollard. They told us it was impressed on both their minds to be baptized, but before they could speak to the church she became ill, and died after a lingering illness. He still had the desire to be baptized, and told his experience to the church, and was baptized May 23, 1965.

He enjoyed the meetings for a while until his health failed; and his daughter, Byrl, tenderly cared for him. He also left three sons and several grandchildren.

His pastor, Elder George Ruston, preached his funeral sermon from Revelation 14:13. He was interred in West Lorne Cemetery by the side of his wife on his eighty-third birthday. We dearly loved him as one of the dear Lord's little ones.

Sister Esther Ruston

SISTER FLOSSIE BISHOP

Sister Flossie Bishop, widow of George Bishop, passed away October 10, 1968, aged eighty-four years. She had always attended meeting faithfully, and was baptized by her pastor, Elder George Ruston, thirty years ago. She was one of the most spiritually minded persons we ever knew; and many enjoyed talking with her on the Scriptures.

She suffered a stroke and was laid aside for several years before her death. She was tenderly cared for by relatives until it became necessary for her to be put in a nursing home in Strathroy, Ontario, where she still received excellent care.

She is survived by one brother, Arthur Lavitz, who was unable to attend her funeral on account of age and distance; also by several nephews and nieces.

Her funeral service was conducted by her pastor, Elder George Ruston, who spoke from Revelation 14:13, assisted by Elder Alex McColl and Pastor E. J. Knight, a Strict Baptist minister from Grand Rapids, Michigan. Interment was in Alvinston Cemetery, Ontario.

Written by one who dearly loved her in the Lord.

Sister Esther Ruston

ELISHA F. BRYANT

Brother Elisha F. Bryant was born April 24, 1895 and departed this life October 16, 1968 at the age of 73 years.

He was the son of the late John W. and Sarah Adeline Akers Bryant of Patrick County, Virginia. He was married to Miss Beulah Jamerson of Patrick County on September 14, 1919.

To this union were born two sons, J. Nelson Bryant of Bassett and R. Randolph Bryant of Fieldale, Route 1; one brother, Floyd H. Bryant of Fieldale; three sisters, Mrs. H. A. Byrd and Mrs. D. A. Turner both of Fieldale and Mrs. G. F. Thomasson of Bassett. Also, four grandchildren remain.

Brother Bryant was a Veteran of World War I, and was a faithful member of Union Primitive Baptist Church and attended the meetings as long as his health permitted. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of predestination and election. He often talked of the goodness and mercies of God.

His funeral was conducted at Collins Funeral Home in Collinsville by his Pastor Elder Leonard Brammer and Elder R. A. May, with a large crowd in attendance. He was laid to rest in Roselawn Burial Park by the side of his beloved wife, Sister Beulah Bryant, who departed from this life December 29, 1967.

May God richly bless and comfort his fam-

ily and the Church at Union and cause them to be submissive to his will.

Written by a sister in hope,
Clora S. Akers

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

In accordance to a request of the Robersonville Primitive Baptist Church, I, the Lord willing, will attempt to pen a few lines in memory of our departed and beloved sister, Sister Vada Andrews Manning.

Sister Manning entered this life on August 15, 1879, and was called home on December 10, 1968, thus making her stay upon this earth 89 years, 3 months, and 26 days. She was the daughter of the late Samuel L. and Liza Briley Andrews and the widow of the late Joseph R. Manning.

Sister Manning united with the church at Robersonville on the fourth Saturday in May, 1911, thus holding membership with the church over 57 years. It was indeed an inspiration to the writer, her fellow brethren and sisters, and her friends to have known this dear sister and to have been blessed to observe the manifestation of God's love within her heart and soul as she was so ably blessed to express in her everyday walk of life.

The church at Robersonville grieves over their loss, but we have a precious hope our loss is our dear sister's eternal gain. Sister Manning was a firm believer in salvation by grace and professed a hope in an all wise, all powerful, and merciful God. She desired to extol all honor and praise to God for the blessings she felt to have received from his bountiful hands of love and mercy.

Surviving are two sons, Harold L. and Elton W. Manning, a sister, Miss Selma Andrews, seven grandchildren, seventeen great grandchildren, and two great great grandchildren. To the family we extend our heartfelt sympathy and may you be comforted by the comforting spirit of our Lord is our prayer.

Her funeral was conducted in the Robersonville Primitive Baptist Church by Elders I. S. Connor, E. C. Harrison, and W. E. Grimes. Interment was in the family plot in the old Robersonville Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, a token of the esteem in which she was held.

RESOLVED: That a copy be placed on the church record, a copy be sent to the family, and a copy be sent to *Zion's Landmark, Old Faith Contender* and, *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of conference first Saturday in January, 1969.

Elder I. S. Connor, Moderator
Johnny Ray Gardner, Committee

WILLIAM ALLEN REAVES

William Allen Reaves was born July 11, 1899, in Cumberland County, North Carolina, and passed away January 17, 1969. He is survived by his wife, Lora Hutchins Reaves, and a sister, Mrs. Ida Smith, of Durham, North Carolina.

His funeral was conducted by Elder T. F. Adams at Hall-Wynne Funeral Chapel in Durham and his body was interred in the cemetery at Willow Springs Primitive Baptist Church.

He received a hope in the Lord when a very young man. On February 16, 1919 he was received into the fellowship of the church at Durham, North Carolina where he remained a faithful member until his death. Brother Reaves possessed a gentle, trusting nature and his life was graced with that peculiar combination of faith and humble dignity which the Lord gives only to His people.

We remember that Paul wrote to the churches of Galatia: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law."

This is more expressive of Brother Reaves' life than anything we could say.

Submitted by request,
Catherine M. Copley

MRS. ENA FLETCHER

Mrs. Ena Fletcher was born November 30, 1885, a daughter of Deacon and Mrs. D. H. Campbell. She was married to Hector Fletcher October 28, 1922, by Elder J. B. Slauson; and passed away July 1, 1968, aged 79 years. She is survived by her husband; one son, Campbell, and his wife and their three children, who shared the home at Lobo; also by one daughter, Gladys, her husband and their four children in Saskatchewan.

She was very afflicted for some years, being quite incapacitated for doing any work, but was able to get around with help until awhile before her death. She received most loving, tender care from her husband and son and his wife and children. She naturally had a very sweet disposition, and was very much beloved. She must have had spiritual comfort, as one day when we called to see her, she seemed so happy in spite of her physical affliction, and said, "I was sitting here thinking that the lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage." (Psalm 16:6)

Although she never felt worthy to be a member of the church, she was always forward to entertain the brethren and friends, both in their homes and at Quarterly Meet-

ings, as long as her health permitted.

Her pastor, Elder George Ruston, conducted her funeral service at Strathroy, Ontario, speaking by request from the words in Psalm 17:5: "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." Interment was in Poplar Hill Cemetery.

Sister Esther Ruston

MINNIE HOUSTON WHALEY

In loving memory of our dear sister in Christ, Mrs. Minnie Houston Whaley. She was born September 4, 1886, and died August 9, 1968.

She came before the church on July 10, 1910, and was received and baptized the fifth Sunday by Elder Gardner Bryan. She lived a very quiet and devoted life, and took everything quietly and patiently. We feel that Sister Whaley was at peace with God and all mankind when the great God of Heaven called her home, to await the great resurrection morning. We, the church at Sand Hill, cannot wish her back, for we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. We read that the tabernacle of God is with men and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, but singing and praising our great and wonderful Father forever and ever.

Sister Whaley leaves to mourn their loss, three girls and two boys, and a host of friends and relatives. She was laid to rest under a mound of beautiful flowers. At the time of her death her pastor was unable to attend the funeral, and Elder D. B. Stokes of Jacksonville, N. C. was called, and he was richly blessed to preach.

Done by order of conference at Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church September 7, 1968.

L. L. Yopp, Moderator
Brantly Kennedy, Clerk
Written by Oscar Howard

SISTER BRUNETT C. POTTS

The subject of this notice was born in Rains County, Texas, May 12, 1870, and passed away January 8, 1969. She was the daughter of Mario and Lucinda Clifton, pioneer citizens of that area. She was married to the late J. W. Potts in 1886, who preceded her in death many years.

This noble departed sister, and I verily believe humble saint of God, was the mother of nine children; and during her lengthy widowhood underwent many sore trials and trying hardships. But her God and Saviour, we feel, was her good and faithful keeper, keeping her meek, humble and faithful unto the end. This blessed assurance here affords us evidence to believe that He will be her everlasting portion in the sinless, painless state of glory. Blessed thought! Happy imperishable prospect!

Three of her nine children survive: Mrs. Amanda Pearson and Mrs. Kate Nix, of Emory, and Mrs. Rita Alexander, of Point, Texas. Also three grandchildren, six great grandchildren and eight great great grandchildren survive.

Funeral service was conducted by the writer, assisted by Mr. Frank Kemper, at the Baptist Church, Emory, Texas, January 9, 1969, with burial in Greenview Cemetery, Hopkins County. She had been a member of Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, Cash, Texas, for many years, attending her meetings as long as she was able.

May God bless and comfort her loved ones in the passing of this noble soul, if it be His will.

Elder John Lee Smith
Spearsville, La. 71277

SISTER MARIE DRIVER

Sister Marie Driver was born at her father's farm home at Palmyra, Ontario, August 8, 1887. She was the second child, in a family of eight, born to Thomas L. Carey of Palmyra, and Effie MacLaren Carey, formerly of Clearville, Ontario.

On August 14, 1949, Sister Marie spoke to the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, was received and baptized by her pastor, Elder George Ruston, near Wallacetown at Lake Erie. She was of a very quiet disposition and a very faithful member, appearing to enjoy the fellowship of the church always.

On February 7, 1968, Sister Marie calmly deceased at her home in Ridgetown, Ontario, after a long period of ill health. Funeral services were conducted February 9th by Elder Ruston. She was interred in Trinity Cemetery, Howard Township, Kent County, beside her husband, Thomas Driver, who had pre-deceased her in Arizona, U. S. A. in May, 1920. They had gone to reside there, hoping to improve his very poor health.

Sister Marie is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Paul Kritz, of Cartier, Northern Ontario, and two sisters: Mrs. Clifford Sinclair, of Rodney, Ontario, and Mrs. Herbert Cockburn, of Weston, Ontario.

Sister Edna M. Turner

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 137 DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1969 NO. 6

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/69
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

Behold us Lord that we are vile
And burdened down with sin;
Depending on Amazing Grace
Eternity to win.

And tho' our sins be black as night,
Thou bid'st us to press on;
And holy love and friendship meet
Till we surround the throne.

Give strength and kind encouragement
To those along the way;
Thy precious and thy humble poor
That long to see the day.

Grace and eternal life, O Lord,
Be pleased to us impart;
Eternity is just at hand
With thee we will embark.

Wayne Mitchell
Smithfield, N. C.

HENRY RUSTON DIES SUDDENLY

Henry Ruston, aged forty-five, son of Elder and Sister George Ruston, was away from home at Warwick, Rhode Island, on a business trip to New Jersey. He phoned his wife at 10 P. M. April 15th; had turned back the bedding, then fell dead on the floor. When he did not arrive to give his speech next morning, a friend went to the hotel and found him where he had lain for twelve hours.

He leaves a lovely wife and two sons and a daughter. We have a sweet hope that the Lord has taken him to a better land; as he made every effort to get to meetings, often driving with his family one to two hundred miles, having to rise very early. Several years ago he told me that he felt that the God in whom his father and I had such faith, had been watching over and caring for him all his life.

By his wife's wish, he was buried in our family plot in the cemetery by our Dunwich Meeting House. We know it must have been the Lord's time to take him, and we pray for resignation to His will.

Esther Ruston

"AS A VISIT OF A DEAR BROTHER"

Elgin, Oregon 97827

Dear Elder and Sister Spangler:

It is past time to renew our subscription . . . We look forward to the coming of the **Signs** as that of a visit of a dear brother in Christ.

We have postponed our renewal hoping that we would have a mind to write, but, alas, we are no more prepared of mind now than at the time of the expiration date. Though we feel ill-prepared, we shall endeavor to write a little of our meditations, trusting that God will so direct our mind that we shall say nothing amiss.

We have noted the many places in the Scriptures, the words, "As it is written;" "For it is written;" and "It came to pass,"and cannot but associate these phrases with the fore-ordination and predestination of all things. To the world at large the doctrine of predestination is an awsome thing, for through their natural eyes they cannot view the Lord God as omnipotent — one who has ever known the end from the beginning; and who has declared himself to be I Am that I Am.

Dear Elder, we recall your quoting Exodus 12:41, "And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty

years, even the **selfsame day** it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt." Oh, how beautiful is this knowledge — to know that all things, times, and events are in His hand; for has He not declared, "To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven." (Eccl. 3:1)

Isaiah 14:24 reads, "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed so shall it stand." No, dear ones, the coming to pass of the purposes of God is not hung upon the thread of "by chance," but are rather anchored to the will and purpose of our almighty God, who declared the end from the beginning: so declaring in Isaiah 46:9-10, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness . . ." (2 Timothy 3: 16) "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter 1:21)

Therefore, all the "as it is written," and "for it is written," scriptures hinge not upon the will of man, but upon the purposes and decrees of God. "And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon Mt. Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, **written with the finger of God."** (Exodus 31:18)

Can we go to any less authority than God himself to establish his fore-ordination and predestination of his purpose? We think not. Here was the giving of the Old Covenant, to which the man of this world clings to today; but not so with the child of God, for it pleased God to give unto him a New Covenant: "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their mind and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me from the least to the greatest." (Hebrews 8:10, 11)

Dear ones, it seems the more we write to substantuate the power of God, and of His being of one mind and purpose, the more we are convinced that we could not cease writing until the scriptures would be quoted in their entirety. Therefore we shall lay the subject aside, and tell you that we are well . . . We were at Naches last Sunday and found Sister Mitchell able to come out after an illness. Sister Brown and Sister Halstead were down from Spokane, so had twenty in attendance . . .

In bonds of love,
Lloyd and Florence Spikes

ELDER WARREN TO SISTER DAVIS

Berlin, Md. 21811

Dear Sister Mary:

We want you to know that, though I do not write very much, we do think of you many times and have spoken of you several times in the last few days. I just mentioned a few minutes ago that I felt I should do a little visiting today but have about given it up because there is snow on the ground, and I do not feel very good either. My wife called my attention to the fact that I had some writing to do, so here I am in my feeble way trying to jot down a few words to one that we would be so glad to see once more; but that remains in the hands of a higher power. One year ago yesterday I underwent surgery in a Wilmington, Del. hospital and hope to be thankful that I am well as I am, though I do not feel very good at any time. I have heard several who have had the same trouble say that you will always have some trouble, but I believe I can say from my heart thank God I am as well as I am for I do get around to my

regular meetings. I mentioned that we would be glad to see you again but if we are never blessed in that way I am thinking of the words of the poet when he wrote "Bless be the tie that binds our hearts in christian love." Thus the poet has set forth in those few words the feelings of a people all over the world of like faith who have been taught the same truth, and by such have been made to love one another for the truth sake. I have often thought of that love which does not deal with the outward appearance of man but deals in the heart, giving his chosen ones here in this world a mind to love one another, not for their outward looks but for that which they believe, being of one mind in their belief of salvation by grace and grace alone.

My mind often goes back to days of yesteryear when we would meet together in homes, and there would be a dear old sister there whose face was wrinkled, but there was something back of those wrinkles that was far greater than the outward looks of any one. I could see a love she had for her brethren, and we had for her, that is far greater than any natural love. I am not saying this to reflect in any way on one's looks for I think that all of us like to look good outwardly, but it is my feeble way to express my feelings of that inward love that we have for others of like faith, which comes from the ETERNAL GOD who doeth all things well, — the God who in six days created the heavens and earth, the sea and all that in them is; and rested the seventh day. (Exodus 20:11) I believe that his (God's) work was a perfect work and that which he ordained from before the beginning of time is coming to pass just as he (God) purposed and planned it. I know that this poor worm of the dust often wonders about many things and would like to see it some other way, but, dear Sister, that to me is the desire of the flesh. When my mind is led back in the spirit, as I hope it is many times, I feel ashamed of my thoughts. Have you ever been there? If so then we have a mutual feeling about the matter and our hearts go out to each other with the feeling of love for each other: that heart felt feeling that the world knows nothing about. I often think of what our blessed Lord said about these things being hid from the wise and prudent and revealed to babes. The world, I mean those that are not God's chosen people, will never understand these things for the teachings do not come, as I understand it, from the teachings of man, but the Lord and him alone.

I have often thought and mentioned in my remarks about babes, as I mentioned above. I mean an infant in its parent's arms only to set forth our weakness, for, when we see such, do we not see that just as the child has to depend on that parent, we are just as dependent upon our heavenly Father for all that we have or ever will have. Dear sister, I feel that you will agree that we are poor helpless creatures, and that at this moment, the breath we breathe is given to us; and what a wonderful blessing it is to be given a mind to feel, if only for a few brief moments, that there is the power of all powers who is taking care of all things. I often think why am I writing in this way. Have I ever experienced any of the things that I have mentioned? But then again, I hope so; for as I grow older and realize that the most of my life is in the past, I am hoping for a better land, one where all the tears; sorrows and cares will be wiped away, with rest for every one of his (God's) chosen people. I have heard it said, and I believe it to be so, that one has to be tired before he can rest. I have felt much more in the last few years that God has a purpose in all of the storms of life that he leads us through, to give us a mind to seek him (God) as our refuge for we know of no where else to go. Then I often think of the words of the poet.

'Tis a point I long to know;
Oft it causes anxious thoughts;
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?

The words of the poet above have been very fitting to me for a long time,

for I have felt to desire some evidence that I am a child of God; and it has caused me to have many anxious thoughts. I have thought so many times, "Do I love the Lord? Well the Bible says, we love him because he first loved us. Then am I his, or am I not?" I have never been able to know but I am hoping that I am. Now I do not believe that anyone knows that he is, for hope that is seen is not hope, for if you see it you have nothing to hope for. Of course there are some that see it in a different way but this is the way I see it.

Now if we are what we hope to be, I believe that you will agree with me once more, that it is for nothing that we have ever done or ever can do, but by the grace of God, his unmerited kindness. I hope I have been made to see that all of my works are vanity and even my thoughts, for I believe the Psalmist said, "The Lord knoweth our thoughts, that they are vanity."

Thus, Dear Sister, I would like to close these few remarks by summing up these few rambling words with these thoughts. Our love and fellowship for each other, our experience, our understanding, our hope for a better place when we are taken away from these mortal shores, is by the grace of God and that alone. For the poet has said again, "Without free grace, I know I'm lost."

My wife joins me with much love to one far away in body but close we feel in spirit.

In bonds of love and fellowship,
Authur R. Warren and Wife

KNOWS THERE IS NOTHING HE CAN DO

Route 1 Box 279
Steens, Mississippi 39766

Dear Elder Spangler,

For sometime I have wanted to write you about my thoughts on Ephesians 1: 4, 5, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we shold be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will."

I believe that this means that everyone of his children was chosen before the foundation of the world and not by any works done here on earth. I also believe that God predestinated every move made upon the face of his earth. God predestinated all things because they are for his purpose, and they are good in his eyes.

When Joseph was sold by his brethren this was evil in the eyes of them but it was for God's good will and glory. Joseph was sent to Egypt for the purpose of supplying food for the people in the seven years of famine. So what looks bad and evil is for his own good will and glory. Because what is taking place now has already taken place in God before the foundation of the world. Ecclesiastes 3:1: "To every thing there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven." Eccl. 3:15: "That which hath been is now and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past."

I believe this means that everything is taking place at the time and season God purposed; and because of this I believe each and every man is just fulfilling his purpose here on earth.

I know this is a hard doctrine. I would like to be able to say that I know that I am a Christian. In John 14:6. "Jesus saith unto him I am the way, the truth and the life: No man cometh unto the Father but by me." John 6:44: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." This writing in John states that no man can just say I accept Christ and be saved.

I hope I believe the truth and that I am one of his chosen children; but for me to say I am one of the chosen children I just cannot do. I am just a youth in years, being 19 years old, but I was made to see that there was nothing that I could do to save my soul. I do not have any hard feeling against anyone else

about their belief because I believe they believe what they do because they cannot help it, just like I cannot help what I believe.

James McCool

"OVERCOME"

730 Kennedy
Duncanville, Texas 75116

Dear Editors:

May I share with you some of my meditations on the word "overcome," primarily as it occurs in the writings of the apostle John? On some occasions and in some circles, this word has been abused and misused, it seems; may this attempt be rather for the edification of the Church of our Lord. The word translated "overcome" is also rendered "to conquer (Rev. 6:2);" "prevail (Rev. 5:5);" and to get the "victory (Matt. 12:20, I Cor. 15:53-57, I John 5:4, and Rev. 15:2)."

In the gospels the word occurs three times, and each time it is Christ, not man, doing the overcoming (Matt. 12:20, Lk. 11:22, and Jn. 16:33). Paul uses this word six times in I Cor. 15: 54-57 — death is swallowed up in **victory**; O grave, where is thy **victory?** Thanks be to God, which GIVETH us the **victory** (i.e., the "overcoming") **Through Jesus Christ our Lord.** The other three times are in Romans: Romans 3:4, which Paul quotes from Psalm 51:4 (where David is speaking of God overcoming in His judgment and justice); and Romans 12:21, THE ONLY PLACE IN THE SCRIPTURES the saint is actually, directly **told** to overcome — Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

Paul endorsed and used exhortation, but he certainly did not use scare-tactics. Exhortation is more than a harangue of commands and demands. Webster's dictionary says primarily that exhortation is to incite (move to action, or urge on) by argument or advice, or to give warnings or advice; and exhortation is broad enough to include "language intended to encourage." Nothing is more encouraging than to be told of what Christ has done for poor sinners. On the other hand it is most discouraging to a weak and weary sinner to be told that he must be up and doing something if he expects anything from God.

It is sad and strange to see forgers of the law try to hammer out chains of bondage for the Lord's people from this beautiful word, "overcome." Think of this word a moment: to conquer and overcome death, hell and the grave, indwelling sin, the world, the flesh and the devil, and all because it pleased the Lord to give it to those in Christ Jesus by His free, sovereign, unmerited, unearned grace, to the end that He should receive all the worship, glory, adoration, honor and praise, world without end.

Now, to take such a beautiful thought and hammer out of it fetters for the legs of Christ's sheep must certainly be the work of the harbinger of a conditional covenant. He will muddy the water and confuse the issue by **implying** that John (and through him, Christ) is continually exhorting everyone ("good" and bad," spiritually alive or spiritually dead) to overcome; that this overcoming is the work of the creature in a manner separate and apart from the influences of divine grace; that this overcoming is entirely up to anyone's "free will;" and that

> "They can if they will,
> They sha'n't if they won't,
> They ought to, because
> They'll be damned if they don't!"

Yet, who has ever heard a work-monger who could say when a person had done enough "good works" to overcome anything? What task-master of Pharaoh ever cried, "Enough"?

> " 'Run, run and work,' the law commands,
> Yet finds me neither feet nor hands.
> But sweeter news the gospel brings;
> It bids me fly, and gives me wings!"

Let us now consider the apostle John's language in I John and his record of Christ's use of the word in the Revelation. Of over thirty times some form of this word is used in the New Testament, John uses it twenty-one times in these

two books.

What saith the scripture? Just exactly who **has** overcome? Young men have overcome; little children have overcome; believers have overcome (I John 2:13-14, 4:4 and 5:5). In Revelation 12:10 they are called, "our brethren." They have already overcome, not in and of themselves, but of God's grace, and in Christ Jesus.

Now, why and how have they overcome?

1. The primary reason given for their having overcome is, ". . . because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world (I John 4:4)." It is "Christ in you" which is "THE hope of glory (Col. 1:27)." Christ worketh effectually in His people (Eph. 3:20, 4:16 Gal. 2:8; Phil. 2:13) and secures most certainly the fact that they shall overcome. "Secured of grace's conquering reign, they **all shall** conquer too."

2. "This is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith (1 John 5:4)," which is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God (Eph. 2:8), even the fruit of His Holy Spirit. (Gal. 5:22)

3. "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (I John 5:5) And is not belief **given** to His people (Phil. 1:29)?

4. ". . . I wrote unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father . . . because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one." (I John 2: 13-14) How knew they the Father, but by revelation through divine grace? "Neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." (Matt. 11:27) How did they become strong? "It is God that girdeth me with strength," says David in Psalm 18:32, and they are strong in the Lord, and in the power of HIS might (Eph. 6:10), and certainly not in their own strength and might.

How was it that the Word of God abode in them? Christ said, "Abide in me, and I in you," to those whom He later told, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, He may give it you." (Jn. 15:4,16) Does this sound as if abiding in Christ and Christ abiding with and in His people is contingent on the creature's will? I think not.

5. "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. (Rev. 12:11) The blood of Christ is **the** procuring agent which secures these and all other spiritual blessings. The word of their testimony is one of these blessings given unto them by their Lord. "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." (Prov. 16:1) "I create the fruit of the lips . . . saith the Lord." (Isa. 57:19) Let no puny man think that his own personal eloquence will be the means of his overcoming; the word of their testimony must be and shall be (by God's predestinating grace) Jesus Christ, the Word of God.

The fact that they loved not their lives unto the death is **not** a means of their overcoming, but rather a result thereof. Love for Christ supplants love for one's own self. "We love Him because He first loved us." (I John 4:19) That is not only the sufficient reason; it is also **the motivating force.** An effect is not the cause of its own cause. "Loving not their lives unto the death" did not produce the overcoming; rather, because they **had** overcome (in Christ), the end result was that they loved Christ more than their natural lives.

Now that the overcomers have been more or less identified and the cause of their overcoming briefly stated, it might well be appropriate to point out that in Revelation, chapters two and three, and in chapter twenty-one, verse seven, the overcomers are given promises, and **not** commands, demands and threats that they "overcome, or else!"

"Comfort ye my people, saith your God," and Isaiah prophesied of Christ: "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary . . ." (Isa. 50:4) He does exactly that in Revelation two and three. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life." "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before His angels." "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in His throne." "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

What seasonable words to His weary ones! What beauty! What grace! "Grace is all they sing above!" God Himself effectually works all things necessary to cause and insure His people's overcoming and then gives such marvelous promises to them.

"Salvation, O melodious sound
To wretched (Rev. 3:17), dying men;
Salvation which from God proceeds
And leads to God again!"

I may not have any part or lot in this matter. Who could say they will not be overcome by evil if Christ has not undertaken for them? Further, if I were certain to be numbered among His children, yet, if he were the type of "saviour" that "turns his back on his disobedient children," (Thank the Lord that Jesus Christ is **not** that type!) as has been implied about Him, then I most certainly would have perished long ago. I see little evidence of my being in that vast army of overcomers, but I have this quiet confidence: Those for whom Christ bore the pains of Hell — whoever they are, wherever they are, every one of them, whether I am one of that number or not — they most assuredly **have** overcome all things and will, every one of them, some day be seated with Christ on His throne.

One unworthy of God's grace,
C. C. Morris

HAS ASSURANCE WHILE SOJOURNING HERE

Smithfield, N. C.
Rt. 2,

Dear Elder Griffin:

I hope that I am thankful to God that we have precious brethren such as you and all the Editors of the **Signs,** who so earnestly contend for the doctrine of Election and Grace, as you brethren do.

It gives me sweet assurance while sojourning in this troublesome world that at least there are some that still declare boldly that God is able to save his children. Not only is able, but has saved then with an everlasting salvation, and is able to keep that which is his.

The modern world preaches a God that is not able to save unless you let him. My brethren, I cannot preach nor worship a God that is weak, and dependent on me to make a choice of an eternal nature. But I hope by God's grace to be enabled to preach and worship a God that loved his children so well that he left their salvation not up to chance, but chose them out of nature's darkness and brought them by love and grace into the marvelous light of his darling Son Jesus, who saved them eternally.

There are those who say that if the doctrine of election were true, that God would save you even if you didn't want to be saved. Well this is not true! I have never seen an Old Baptist that has not been made to go down on his knees and beg this great God for mercy, even when he knew that he did not deserve mercy. God shows his children what they are by nature — that they are hell-deserving sinners, and unless God saves them by his mercy, they are lost eternally.

Elder W. E. Turner is our pastor, and I have heard him preach so wonderfully that God didn't need our help, but that

we needed all our help from this God who holds the keys of death and hell in his hands. The world says that Old Baptists preach that what is to be will be, even if it never is. This is not true! We preach what is to be will be, and it is going to be because Israel's God has declared it to take place. He is the God that does his will in heaven and on earth, and none can stay his hand or question what He does.

I do not believe in a God that is a failure. I believe that if Jesus had died on Calvary's cross for me, and that then I would not accept him or let him come into my heart, that that would make Jesus a failure. He, my brethren, is the great Physician that has never lost a case. He is a sin curing Doctor, who doesn't just offer us a remedy to take if we will. He gives us the cure — and pays the bill. He paid the bill on Calvary for everyone of his children: because they had not wherewith to pay.

I have had my name with the Old Baptists since 1961, and it seems that I love them more as time goes on. But it seems that most of the time I feel as the poet did

"While sorrows encompass me round
And endless distresses I see,
Astonished I cry, can a mortal be found
Surrounded with troubles like me."

I hope that I have not taken up to much of your time. I wish to subscribe to the **Signs.** Am enclosing poems that I wrote not long back, for your consideration.

An unworthy brother in hope,
Wayne Mitchell

EXPERIENCE

1108 Wentworth Street
Reidsville, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

With fear, the Lord willing, I will try to write something of my experience. I realize that without the love and grace of God this cannot be done.

As far back as I can remember, my dear mother carried me to Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church. There were very few times when the doors were open that we were not there. When I was about the age of ten, she joined the church and was baptized by Elder Alvis Stanfield. I was ashamed for my classmates and friends to know that she was a Primitive Baptist, and that I went to that church also.

I made up my mind then and there that when I grew up, I wanted something bigger and better, — a big church with an organ or piano, and all that went with it. When I married, my husband and I started going to a different denomination. One night at a tent revival I went down to the altar of prayer, thinking that this was what I had been seeking all the time. A voice came to me, saying, this is man made religion! I cried all the way home — so ashamed of what I had done. I didn't tell anyone, not even my parents; but someone told my father, and he said that when I was baptized he wanted to attend. I promised him I would let him know.

In a few days the pastor of the church where I was to join, came to see me. He asked when I wanted to be baptized, and I told him that I didn't know. He wanted to know what I meant, and I replied, Just what I said. I was not bothered with him anymore. I still was not satisfied and I kept going to different churches, seeking.

The Primitive Baptist Church is the only place I have ever found any comfort. I offered to the church at Pleasant Grove the third Sunday in April, 1968, and was accepted in love and fellowship, and baptized by Elder Donald Smith the following morning. I feel like I left something in the water that morning that had plagued me all my life. There are times that I travel very low in the valley, but, thanks to God above, there are times I view the mountain tops. If not deceived, I feel that Brother Donald is truly one of God's servants.

I had a dream before I joined the church, that I was to be baptized: my mother came out of the clouds dressed in white, and I never was so glad to see anyone. She took me by the hand, and

we walked down to the liquid grave. She then ascended back to heaven and all its glory.

My son, going on eighteen, attends church services with me every Sunday that I am blessed to attend. He will never know what a joy and comfort this is to me. I hope I am thankful to my Lord for this and every other blessing bestowed upon a sinner such as I. Come June, he will enter Chapel Hill Hospital for the third operation of a broken leg bone received four and one-half years ago. When you have a mind to pray, please remember my son, my husband and me in prayer.

During the recent illness and hospitilization of my father, Brother Donald Smith came to see him. Daddy told him that he had tried to pray for the Lord to have mercy on him, and desired that Bro. Donald pray for him. I have never heard a sweeter prayer uttered. I told daddy that I had felt for a long time he had a desire to join the church. His reply was, I am not good enough to join the church. I felt the same way when I asked for a home; and I feel so much of my time now so unworthy to walk among you, my dear Brethren. I know that if it be God's will, at His appointed time and place, he will join.

I have a hope that some day I will see my Saviour for myself and not another. Give my love to Sister Spangler.

A sister in Christ I hope,
Frances Cobb Oakley

EXPERIENCE

By the request of my daughters I will try to write a little of what I hope has been the dealings of the Lord with me. I am eighty four years old now and was very young when I first became in trouble over my sins, — something like 8 years old, from then until I was about 12 years old. Then in my teens I began to go out with young people and enjoyed going to dances. I couldn't dance but kept trying, and would go home and feel so condeemed over it.

I was married at the age of 24. When I was in my thirties my brothers and sisters were passing away, — one every year for seven years, and I was in mourning and felt it would be my time next, and I wasn't prepared to die. There was nothing I could do about it. I would often stay awake at night. My father was a Deacon in Republican Church and my mother was a member too, so I was raised to go to the Primitive Baptist Church. I was at an association in 1914 when Elder Issac Jones preached and his text was, "And He shewed me a pure river of water, clear as a crystal proceding out from the Throne of God and the Lamb," and I surely did enjoy it. It was the first time I had feasted on the crumbs from the Master's table; and from then on I would go to church and shed tears when the preachers were preaching. It seemed they were telling my experience better than I could.

I remember being at a church where they preached outside and I feasted on the preaching; and when they were closing I leaned against a little knotty white oak bush for support. I was trembling; and I thought the members shone so they sparkled. One of the members came and put her arms around me and said, Come tell us what the Lord has done for you. I was surprised for I didn't think I had anything to go to the church with.

As time passed on I began to thirst for baptism. I craved to be baptized as if thirsting for a cold drink of water on a hot summer day. I wanted my husband to know how I felt but couldn't make it handy until one night I was stricken down with something like acute indigestion. My breath was cut off every few minutes and I couldn't speak. So between times I could speak I told my husband I wanted to be baptized. We had a doctor two nights to give me shots before I could get relief. I didn't get able to go to church that weekend but went the next month and offered myself to the church and was received and was baptized by Elder P. H. Johnson on the second Sunday in September, 1915.

I had heard of some being baptized

and coming out of the water so happy; but instead I brought home a heavy burden that lasted all the way from the water and all day Monday until about sundown. I milked my cows and went down to carry my milk to the spring house. My burden was so heavy if I ever prayed in my life it was then. I ask the Lord if I had done wrong to forgive me and if not to make it known to me in some way. The burden left me and I felt so light and happy and it lasted me three weeks.

I've had many ups and downs along the way. Once I was milking my cow and no one was near me. I was rejoicing in a Savior's love. A bright light shone around me and I was so happy. Another time I was doing my dishes and the same thing took place again.

I never had many good dreams but one I had about 15 years ago has meant so much to me. I dreamed I was in a building and the judgment day had come, and I was rejoicing and so happy. I said I was going out to meet my Savior — My hope is sufficient to meet Him, and I was prepared to go at His coming. But when I got out of the building I awoke. If I could be as happy as I was in that dream when I come to die I would not dread to go.

This is my humble hope, and all the riches and money couldn't buy it if it could be sold.

Naomi Hollandsworth Holley

Sent by her daughter, Mrs. C. R. Ball, Hampton, Va. Sister Holley will be 85 years old May 8, 1969.)

I BELIEVE THAT JESUS CHRIST IS THE SON OF GOD

Is this too much for a poor sinner to say while begging for guidance along life's way.

I search the Scripture to sustain what I believe is true; I believe in Him who said I will never leave nor forsake you.

I believe that I am but a creature God created, and I hope predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son.

If not deceived, I love the Church and the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace. I have believed this from the days of my youth to be the blessed truth.

I do not understand the work wrought of God upon man. I get my Bible and look; I find the Lord said to Jeremiah, write thee all the words I have spoken unto thee in a book.

I believe I have heard in the middle of the night that tender voice within me say; get up and write.

My parents were kind. They taught me to mind, but unto God I believe I learned obedience by the things I suffered; and I must obey my master's command hoping He will bless my trembling hand.

I believe He gives me grace to praise His Holy name, when I feel I should hide my face in shame.

My earthly friends tell me it is left with man to stand or fall; that Jesus came to save all, but I find there is a remnant whom the Lord shall call.

I believe I have been taught to know I am a sinner here below, and to the grave I soon must go; for life's evening sun is sinking low.

One of the nicest times I know is the cool and calm of the evening. The day is spent and that restful sleep is nigh, and we are ofttimes given to praise the Lord on high.

When my soul was troubled and I could find no rest, I felt the eagle had stirred up my nest. In a dream I was carried beside the still waters and the grass so pretty and green, it was so peaceful I wanted to remain but the Lord knew best.

My field became a wilderness, and I became wearied with my journey in the night. I believe I found His truth to be my shield and my path to light.

I believe I received a precious hope of being numbered with that great host and baptized with the Holy Ghost, before I was baptized in the waters of the river, the lowest place around. This does not save, but typical of the grave, before we can be resurrected, we must go down.

I have felt that upon me there must be a woe. I feel so unworthy and misfit wherever I go. I hear the voices of my Brethren sing, and I do not know how to take a part, though I feel to sing praises in my heart.

There have been many trials and troubles along life's way, but it has not been all sorrow. I believe I have been taught to be thankful for my blessings today and boast not of tomorrow.

Ofttimes I am made ashamed to complain, for the joy I have found is beyond words to explain. I have no great riches to decay and rust, though I hope I have been given in God to trust.

I have many earthly ties, though I am not worldly wise. I am dependent upon the Lord whom I believe hears my cries. I believe that in weakness I shall die, but I hope to be raised in power from on high.

I believe the Gospel is comforting 'tis true, and an awaking power too. It comes as the rain and by it I heard that Isaiah saw the train, and I was awakened to a dream I could not explain. My pastor, Elder W. C. King, made it plain.

In the darkness of the night I saw a vision so bright, the cross that reached from one end of the earth to the other. Sometimes I believe it has been upon me since I was born of my mother, and it reached from earth to Heaven, pointing to him whose name is Holy and reverend.

When I think of things so precious, I humbly try to thank him who has been most gracious. I ofttimes feel, who am I, these wondrous things to see, do I bear the cross in me.

The Temple I have seen in a dream its beauty untold, the door in the side of pure gold, the garments of the Saints were pure white, and the gracious Lord was the light.

I believe those included in the election of grace, their affection for one another will show in their face. I believe in good works wrought upon us by Him, and we do walk in them.

I see things that are not pleasing, a people enjoying sin for a season. I cannot rejoice in this. I have a sin sick soul; that is my reason. I know the precious things I hold so dear is but foolishness to them, for they have not been taught to fear.

I believe that to all things there is a time and place, and I do not appreciate foolishness concerning the Lord and His Grace.

These are some of my experiences, if indeed I know, for ofttimes I walk with a bowed head, feeling so very low.

The fear of the Lord is to hate evil and pride, from such His goodness he will hide.

May my last moments on earth be spent praising Him whom our gracious God has sent. All honor and praise I give to thee, whom I hope saved a wretch like me.

When the graves give up their dead, he will know for whom His precious blood was shed, for by Him only was the Lamb's Book of Life read.

I believe that Jesus Christ is the chief corner stone; and when He comes without sin unto salvation, we will know even as we are known; and He will change our vile bodies like unto His own.

To each of His flock will be given a white rock. In the rock will be a new name written, and I believe it will be me if my soul is blessed to see that Heavenly home, but I will not be presented to the throne of God and His Son, as Clifton Robertson of Route 1, Reidsville, North Carolina. Lord have mercy on me.

Clifton Robertson
Rt. 1, Reidsvile, N. C.

ACCOUNT OF DISTRICT MEETING

The District Meeting of the Conecuh River Association convened at Union Church, Brantley, Alabama, on Saturday, March 29, 1969.

According to records this church was organized in 1832, and for a time was in the Patsaliga Association. Elder M. M. Meredith is buried there, who was

an able pastor for many years. Elder J. P. Morgan is the present pastor, and serves several other churches in that section ably and well.

The meeting was well attended, with about a dozen ministers present. Elder Ivey Watson, of the Claybank Association, preached first; followed by Elder James W. Johnson, of the Ebenezer Association, who was recently ordained and has been called to several churches. In the afternoon Elder J. Y. McCormick, a young pastor in South Florida, preached first; followed by the writer of the Western Primitive Baptist Association. It was a wonderful meeting with Elder Warren King in charge.

J. J. Collins

THEY RECEIVE GRACE FOR GRACE

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." (Ephesians 1:4)

In this scripture the "us" and the "we" are both the church or the children of God. So, if we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, then our names were written in the Book of Life, or His memory, because the Lord knows them that are his. (2 Tim. 2:19) In Psalm 139:16, we read, "Thine eyes did see my substance yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there were none of them." To me this book that is spoken of is the Book of Life, for it is said, "In thy book," His Book of Remembrance. He remembers all things and all events, for he saw the end from the beginning. "Remember the former things of old: for I am God and there is none else: I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isaiah 46:9-10) He could declare the end for everything is open before him. So, according to this scripture, the church is as old as God, in his mind and purpose.

Jesus was ordained before the foundation of the world to come at the appointed time, as a living Saviour, to suffer and die on the cross for those who were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world; for in 1 Peter 1:20 we read, "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was made manifest in these last times for you." The "you" in this verse are the ones that were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. All the church was chosen in Him before the world was; and if chosen, their names were written in heaven, or the book of life, for we read in Luke 10:20 to "rejoice because your names are written in heaven." Jesus is the life, and where Jesus is, is heaven to his people. So our names were written in Jesus, or we were given grace in Jesus before the world was. We read in John 1:16, "And of his fullness have we all received, and grace for grace."

The "we" is here spoken again, meaning the church; and to me the grace for grace means that if there was grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, the grace will be made manifest to you here in this time world: You will be shown what a great sinner you are. And will also suffer for his name's sake, for it says that if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him; and great is our reward in heaven.

We read that whoever God begins a good work in he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. I believe He began that work when He chose them in Jesus before the world began, and will complete it the day Jesus comes again to gather the ones He chose and saved with his own precious blood which was shed on Calvary's cross — and will take them home to die no more, where all tears will be dried, and they will be with him in that blissful home forever.

"Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy on his afflicted." (Isaiah 49:13)

Yours in hope,
Charles R. Ball, Sr.
205 Beverly Street
Hampton, Va. 23369

Oakton, Va.

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

I am trying to write a few lines in regard to my experience. I know I made a very awkward approach when I went before the church asking for membership. I was so filled with emotion that I could not express myself: I could not tell what the Lord had done for me in leading me through a long, dark pathway, until I was shown the light and given a hope of his garce. He led me to the church which I had loved for a long time, but did not feel fit to enter to be with the dear ones.

Elder Lefferts asked me once why I did not come to the church. He said, "You are always at Frying Pan, so you must be interested." I told him I did not feel fit; but he said, "When you think you are fit, and without sin, we don't want you." Not long after Elder Lefferts died, I offered to the church, but had very little to say at the time. I felt sure they would not accept me, but to my surprise and joy they did. The day I was baptized everything seemed so bright and beautiful, It seemed there was a halo around me.

Dear ones I have had many dark and troubled days, but I believe in absolute predestination, and I know all is right and it is the Lord's will.

As you know I am no writer, but I wanted you to know a little something of my feelings.

An unworthy sinner with a precious hope,

Adelaide Hornbeck Fertney

(The above was given us after Sister Fertney's death. See obituary in the April issue. — J. D. W.)

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the **Skewarkey Union** is appointed to be held with Williams Church, Edgecombe County, N. C. the 5th Sunday in June and Saturday before.

Elder M. E. Garner was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder D. B. Handy, alternate. The church is located 4 miles north of Leggetts, N. C. Take Highway 44 north in Leggetts, drive two miles, turn left on black top road 2 miles to the church.

We extend a cordial invitation to all to come and visit with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Williamston, N. C. 27892

ORIGINAL WHITE OAK UNION

The next session of the **Original White Oak Union** will be held, the Lord willing, at the church in Wilmington, N. C., the fifth Saturday and Sunday in June, 1969. The church is located in the city of Wilmington on Castle Street.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

L. H. Southerland, Clerk
Chinquapin, N. C.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF APPOINTMENTS

Elder W. D. Griffin of Newark, Delaware, is expected to fill the following appointments:

Gretna, Virginia, Thursday, May 29th, at 7:30 P. M.

Dan River, Friday night, May 30th, at 7:30 P. M.

Malmaison, Saturday, May 31st, at 7:30 P. M.

He is expected to fill the regular 1st Sunday appointment at Monticello Church, between Reidsville and Greensboro, N. C., June 1st at 11 A. M.

I hope the brethren will attend these services. Elder Griffin is well known and esteemed among us.

D. V. Spangler

ANNOUNCEMENT OF APPOINTMENTS

Elder Woodrow W. Hudson, Jr., of Bastrop, La., is expected to fill the following appointments:

Dan River, Friday night, June 13th, at 7:30 P. M.

Pleasant Grove, Saturday at 2:30 P. M.

Durham Primitive Baptist Church, June 15th at 11 A. M.

Bush Arbor, Sunday night, June 15th, at 7:30 P. M.

Rocky Mount, Va., Monday night, June 16th, at 7:30 P. M.

Thence to Canada for their Quarterly Meeting.

I hope our people will attend these services. Elder Hudson is an able minister of the gospel.

D. V. Spangler

Danville, Virginia June, 1969

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UPPER COUNTRY LINE UNION

The next **Upper Country Line Union Meeting** is appointed to be held with Bush Arbor Church, Caswell County, N. C., the 5th Sunday in June at 10:30 A. M. The church is located ten miles south of Yanceyville, N. C. on Highway 62, about seventeen miles north of Burlington, N. C.

A cordial invitation is extended to all.

Earl S. Rudd, Church Clerk

CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** convenes with Shiloh Church in Pamlico County, N. C., the 28th and 29th of June.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

EDITORIAL

"Lord, help me." (Matthew 15:22-28)

We hope the above scripture has been given to us as a subject for our consideration in this issue of the **Signs.** Knowing that we were expected to write, we have been very perturbed, as we feel to be in a very low place. All we could say was, What shall we write? In the world at large is distress, misery and confusion, caused mostly by the utter selfishness of both men and nations, who have sown to the wind and are now reaping the whirlwind.

Looking within ourselves, we are made to ask, What am I and where am I? Our faith seems very small, and we seem often to be walking in darkness which can be felt, yet seeing so much indwelling sin and corruption that we loath, proceeding from one who has professed to love and follow the Lord, we cannot but cry, "Lord, help me." Turning, as we often do, to look at the low condition of Zion, the lukewarmness in some, and worldliness in others, she seems to be like Hannah of old, mourning, and traveling much of the time in bitterness of soul, in many places subject to the taunts and sneers of Peninnah (the worldly denominations), who has many children. With the poet we would say,

"To see thy saints in mourning clad,
And foes by their distress made glad,
Oft fills my soul with poignant grief,
Lord, send thy servant quick relief."

This morning, as we said, What shall we write? the words came, "Lord, help me," so we turn to the above Scripture, hoping and praying that the Holy Ghost will bless us to write to the comfort and instruction of God's humble poor. We find this was the prayer of the woman of Canaan. This woman was a Gentile, spoken of in another place as a Syrophoenician, dwelling along the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. This was a low country along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, and Jesus had not commanded his disciples to go in the way of the Gentiles, yet she came out of that coast and

cried unto him; he was preaching unto Israel, yet she cried. In her case she had nothing to encourage her, she was an outcast, a dog, so many things to humble her, and the painful sight of her daughter made her case a pressing one. She knew she was an outcast, that those he and his disciples were ministering to were different to her, so we often say our case is different, we have no legal right to a blessing, for we are outside of that blessed people. Such a desperate case will bring a cry like unto hers. If she had cried unto any one else it would not have been recorded, neither would it have interested us.

She cried, "Have mercy on me, O Lord." Just consider what that means, she believed he had all power and dominion, that devils at his presence would flee, that sickness lost its hold, and nothing could stay his hand. She also shows that she believed him to be the Messiah, the son of David, and she lays her case before him, she told him her trouble. How many today there are that are in trouble, some are crushed to the very dust, and they may seek around them in the country in which they are, as she could have looked all over Tyre and Sidon and not have found one to help her. Some will laugh and some will scoff, some will blame, and some will say, I am sorry, but none can help as Jesus can. She turned her back on Tyre and Sidon and came, even with the word against her, crying, "Have mercy on me." She had no legal right to expect his aid, she knew it, she cried only for mercy. We have no right to expect his aid, yet where else can we go?

This account is left on record to encourage us, "But he answered her not a word." One might say, How discouraging, this was enough to turn her back. But no, she could not be turned back, no other cure and she had nowhere else to go. Her cry for mercy is wonderful and should encourage poor sinners who know that they are doomed to hell unless the Lord has mercy on them. He may be silent to them, but this will not satisfy, and we are sure they will not be content to take it for granted that Jesus died for them because they know they are sinners. They will cry for mercy, and because the Lord is silent they will be very troubled, and Satan will tempt them to despair: there will be much to try them. This silence was to try her faith, and it also will try yours.

If your religion is a natural one you will get tired, and, like Pliable, you will turn back when you come to the first Slough of Despond. The world does not understand us, how can they? and in this case the disciples, knowing that she was a Gentile, and that the Jews had no dealings with them, besought him to send her away. The poor soul found much to discourage her, yet she cried. How long this lasted we are not told, neither can man tell how long the soul in trouble will suffer under the silence of the Master, but of this we are sure, none but he can help or do poor sinners good.

"Could the creature help or ease us,
  Seldom should we think of prayer;
Few, if any, come to Jesus
  Till reduced to self-despair.

Long we either slight or doubt him,
  But when all our means we try,
Prove we cannot do without him,
  Then at last to him we cry.

Fear thou not, distressed believer,
  Venture on his mighty name,
He is able to deliver,
  And his love is still the same.

Can his pity or his power
  Suffer thee to pray in vain?
Wait but his appointed hour,
  And thy suit thou shalt obtain."

At the disciples' request to send her away, Jesus noticed her, and said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." This also seems to be against her, and here we would say, if we never find the word against us, it will never be for us. Much there is in the word of God to humble and try the children of God, but so urgent is their case they evercome by the strength of faith that God has planted in their souls. She knew he was sent to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," but although his words were against her, yet she came and worshipped him saying, "Lord,

help me." It is good when every rebuke and chastisement of the Lord to his people, instead of driving them away, brings them to his footstool. Few come to him but through much tribulation. Sometimes there are troubles in business, in the family, among supposed friends, which will have to come to bring us to see what a wicked, sinful heart we have, just as the pot must boil before the scum will rise to the top; and at such times how God's word will reprove us, and the heavens will be as brass, yet, if we are the right characters, we shall still cry, still worship, saying, "Lord, help me."

Again, he speaks to try her faith, and says, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." How humbled this poor soul was under this trial, when Jesus referred to her as a dog, for we believe Jesus here spoke only just as the Jews in general spoke of the Gentiles, calling them dogs. She had, perhaps, often been called that by the Jews. Far from being hurt, she said it was the truth, owning what He said to be so, that she was just a dog, a poor vile sinner, unworthy of His notice. Thus faith, the gift of God, in this woman so prompts her to confess her low-down condition. While she could not claim the food of the children, yet she begged the crumbs that fell from the Master's table. How low the Lord's people often feel about themselves to be, yet there is a great difference between feeling to be like a dog, and in being a dog. Mephibosheth confessed that he was just a dead dog. He said to David, "What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?" Such, we believe, is the low place of many in their feelings today, unto whom the word of the King has come. Thus there is such a thing as being brought down as a dog, and unless we are brought there, we might say we are like a dog, but do we feel it? We know this poor woman was very humbled to admit the truth, and when Job said, "Behold, I am vile," he had been brought low. Thus, dear friends, let us be thankful if we have been brought low; it has not been pleasant, but it is profitable unto godliness.

This woman is commended to us for her great faith, and it is a great faith that trusts only in the Lord when everything is against us, when instead, as we once thought, of walking in light, we walk in darkness, when we see sin mixed with all we do, and rebellion rages at every cross-providence that is meted out to us. To persist in the thing that is right when all seems to be wrong, is an act of faith. This woman, because of a devil in her daughter, was humbled in the dust. She came from a low country, where there were swamps and where reeds grew, and as a bruised reed, she learned to her comfort that Jesus did not break the bruised reed. So this world is a low place for an heir of heaven to dwell in, and there are swamps of sin, and sometimes the enemy comes in like a flood, and every bit of solid ground that we have to stand on is gone; in fact, the soul finds here below no rest for the sole of her foot. Faith brings us from such a coast, and enables us to cry, "Lord, help me," and in the same hour, which means a set time, Jesus hears. This does not mean that there is a time when Jesus does not hear, for he always hears our cry, but often he hides the purpose of his grace, as in the case of this woman. He did not seem to regard her, which resulted in her crying the more. A prayer of faith cannot be put off, it will not give up. Such is the case of many of God's afflicted children, they will endure, looking in, through and over all their woes, which press them sore. Against all reasons and opinions of men, faith, which is God-given, will continue to assert that God is his own interpreter, and he will make it plain. It is here, under the silence of our Lord that He is refining the gold, and showing what a heap of dross there is to every one.

We said at the commencement of this article, that the trouble in this world to-day is the result of man's selfishness; it is so in each of us. We love self, and though we know self must be denied, we cannot do anything of ourselves, and God is merciful to us, and sends trouble,

the thing we hate and dislike. It will generally come where least expected, and how galling to our pride. It was this woman's daughter, and what a trial she was. Some would say, Why the Lord was not in that. **Yes He Was!** He had a purpose in that, as he had in Job's trials. Earth and hell can do no more that what our Father please. Faith believes this, but when faith is sharply tried the soul will be very faithful. Even then they will find a great desire to read and think of those who overcame, and like James they will say, "Behold, we count them happy which endure." Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord: that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy. We look at our friends in sickness, and by acts of kindness show our sympathy, and it is right we should. We look at our friends in distress and want, and either by word or deed help them to bear their load. We see others mourning an absent God, and would encourage them, but do we realize, do they realize, that our God, who is Lord of lords and King of kings, has bid the tempest rage, created the waster to destroy, that famine, plagues and deaths do but his bidding, and in all he sends to his own he is very pitiful, and of tender mercy? Wait at his door, or, as David says, "As the eye of a maiden is to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes wait upon the Lord, till he have mercy."

God grant in this day that his afflicted poor shall tread the furnace where no one else can accompany them but the Son of God, and find that he is pitiful, more pitiful than disciples, brethren or all flesh put together. "He cheereth souls distressed, and loves to bind up bruised reeds, and heal a bleeding breast." He is pitiful to poor polluted worms, who feel to be the offscouring of all flesh. He pities them, — we are living witnesses, for when we have felt hell-deserving, unable to confess anything but sin, he has been merciful with a tender mercy. When David was in trouble at Ziklag, the brethren would have stoned him, everything seemed to be against him, which only hastened David to a throne of grace, and while the trial may be long drawn out, as in Joseph's case, who was so unjustly accused by Potiphar's wicked wife, yet patience will have her perfect work. God's afflicted will have no prayer more suited to their needs, and each rebuff they have, whether from sinner or saint, will drive them crying, "Lord, help me," to the One, who has never sent one away.

We write this in much weakness, may God bless it to many who feel they can look only to him for a crumb of mercy.

(Editorial by Elder George Ruston April, 1933.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"CHANGE OF RAIMENT"

(Zechariah 3:4)

Adam and Eve sinned, and the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons. But they must be stripped of this fig leaf dress before the Lord clothed them with coats of skins which He made.

Joshua, the high priest, representing Jerusalem a brand plucked from the fire, stood before the angel of the Lord clothed with filthy garments; and the Lord commands, "Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by."

The prodigal son returns home in his defilement and rags; he is not fit to enter the house, or sit at the merry feast. But the father said, "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive

again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry." (Luke 15: 22-24) This is putting the best robe upon the worst back. But how comely is the prodigal son clothed in the best robe. There he sits at the table beneath the smiles of his loving, pardoning father. So the believer in Christ is altogether loveliness, the perfection of beauty in his robe of imputed righteousness and diadem of beauty, crowned with the loving-kindness of the Lord. And thy renown has gone forth for thy beauty, O believer, for it is perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God. (Ezek. 16:14)

How wonderful and precious is the language in Ezekiel 16:8-12: "Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine. Then washed I thee with water: yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee, and I anointed thee with oil. I clothed thee also with broidered work, and shod thee with badger's skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk. I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck. And I put a jewel in thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown on thine head."

But before a vile transgressor comes into this blessedness by faith in the Lord our righteousness we have to be stripped of all self-made apparel. It is bitter and humiliating that "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags," and though the sinner patch and mend, and try to cleanse his garments, they remain to his dismay and shame nothing but filthy rags, and filthy rags of self-righteousness can never be worn in the palace of the great King. We cannot be wearing our self-righteousness and Christ's imputed righteousness at the same time. What! unite our filthy rags with the spotless, lovely, fragrant, everlasting righteousness of the Lord our Redeemer? No, we must have these filthy rags torn off our backs, and then

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress,
Helpless, look to thee for grace,
Black, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die."

Christ Jesus in his obedience and blood is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. His righteousness is unto and upon all that believe. He of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption, that according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. We are accepted in the Beloved, and are beautiful and glorious in the eyes of the Lord. This is the fine linen, clean and white, the wedding garments of the Lamb's wife. (Rev. 19: 7, 8) Her raiment is of needlework, her clothing wrought gold, (Psalms 45: 13,14), all of it the work of the hands of our Lord Jesus Christ, the covenant head and husband of the church. All our weavings are spiders' webs, but they shall not be garments; we cannot cover ourselves with our works before our God. •(Isaiah 69) But, blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are covered (Romans 4:7)

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
'Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

A sinner thus arrayed is pardoned, and justified, and in this blessedness can sing, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels." (Isaiah 61:10)

Take a glimpse again with me at the prodigal son. See him in his wretchedness in the far-off country; a mighty famine in the land, and he is in want. All his substance he has spent in riotous

living, and he would be willing to fill his belly with the husks that the swine were eating. But no one cared for him, no man gave unto him. The swine fared better than the prodigal son. See him again welcomed with kisses, and in his father's house he banquets with his father, and all the guests delight themselves upon the very best the house affords, and he, clothed in the best robe, eats the feast beneath the loving countenance of his father. All is happiness now, and in his heart he can say, O, my father, thy banner over me is love. What better food is there for a hungry, perishing sinner than Christ crucified? "Even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." (1 Cor. 5:7) Let us keep the feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. On his hand is the ring, and this tells him he is not in the house as a slave, or as a hired servant, but he is free, welcome, a child at home; and it signifies that God our heavenly Father's love is unchanging, everlasting love. And shoes on his feet. These shoes make beautiful even a prodigal, vile, gone astray sinner. The feet and footsteps of that son going astray into a far country were not beautiful. But he was brought back, and blessed; and beautiful are the feet that are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. In such shoes we can stand before God, and in such shoes we shall never go astray from the path of life, but we shall walk in love, in the footsteps of the flock, as the dear children of God. Oh, there is no satisfaction for contrite souls, for humble, repentant, returning sinners but in Christ Jesus. He changes our estate, gives us "a change of raiment." He puts off our sackcloth, and clothes us with gladness. Christ is our only storehouse of all good; his fullness is unto all believers the fountain of living waters. Oh the love, mercy and grace of God, our precious Saviour is the fountain. He liveth in me, saith Paul. (Galatians 2: 20)

There is no want in our heavenly Father's house, there is bread enough and to spare, and our Father's love, and kisses, and forgivenesses are the sweetest part of all our feastings: they season and sweeten all things.

Frederick W. Keene

(The above by Elder Keene appeared in the November, 1925, issue of the *Signs* — J. D. W.)

CIRCULAR LETTER — 1915

(Written by Elder H. H. Lefferts.)

The Juniata Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 8th, 9th and 10th, 1915, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

Dear Brethren:—It is our mind at this time rather than to address you on some doctrinal subject, to write you instead our feelings with reference to these associational meetings. Are they profitable? We believe they are, for the following reasons: they afford an opportunity for brethren living at some distance from each other to get together once a year at least. They give the churches an opportunity to hear different ministering gifts from various sections of the country, many of which they would not otherwise get to know or hear. They serve to keep the churches posted as to each other's condition as to growth or decline, order or disorder. They afford a stimulus to each seperate church to so maintain itself as to have the good will and respect of sister churches; and lastly, but not least, they edify, instruct and comfort the people of God to an extent not measurable.

Like all blessings, they may be abused. Associations are abused when they are used as a means to subordinate the churches to human authority, when occasion is taken to lord it over the churches. An association is a body of churches which voluntarily associate themselves together for purposes of edification and comfort. The association has no judicial authority over individual

churches, but a wholesome effect is sometimes brought to bear upon a disorderly church when it realizes it may be dropped from the correspondence of sister churches unless it sets itself in order. An association has a perfect right to drop a church from its number on account of disorder, but has no right to interfere in the internal affairs of any church, whether that church be disorderly or not. An association is not a board of conciliation to settle differences between brethren, nor can it issue any edict settling disputed points of doctrine. It can array itself on the side of this doctrine or that, but it cannot bind men's consciences to its mandates. We believe the custom of sending letters by the churches to the association is a good thing, but is often overdone. The purpose of a church letter is never to take a text and try to write a sermon upon it, but should be a short, plain, honest statement as to the condition of the church writing the letter, and the truth as to its condition should never be evaded so as to deceive the sister churches of its correspondence.

Paul wrote letters to the different churches, and the brethren individually, and as a body, frequently interchanged messages of love and fellowship, even in apostolic days. It is sometimes said that we have no Bible authority for associations. We have as much authority as we need in Hebrews x. 25: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." What is an association but an assembling of brethren together to worship the Lord, and to comfort and edify one another? Of course, if the association is to degenerate into a debating forum and a place for brethren to quarrel and find fault with each other, the sooner it disbands the better, but where love abounds, associations are useful and to be encouraged.

When we consider how our forefathers used to travel in much inconvenience and hardness in order to get together, and when we see how highly favored we are to-day to have such comfortable modes of travel invented for us, it looks as though brethren should get together more easily, in greater numbers, and more often than they do, but such is not the case. Indeed, in many communities the reverse is true. It seems that the love of many is waxing cold, and some sleep; indifference seems to have paralyzed them. This is regrettable, causes much grief to the ministry and to the churches, but is an evidence that we are living in the last time. Back in the sixties and seventies Elders Furr and White came all the way through from Virginia on horseback to serve these churches in the Juniata Association; today we come in carriages, automobiles and railroad trains, yet the number in attendance at our regular meetings is not as large as in bygone days.

In surveying the condition of things among the Old school Baptist churches generally, our greatest comfort lies in knowing that our God reigns, and that he will do his will among the inhabitants of the earth as well as in the army of heaven. None can stay his hand, or say unto him, Why doest thou?

J. M. Fenton, Moderator
Moses F. Starr, Clerk

OBITUARIES

TRIBUTE OF RESPECT
ELDER WILLIAM ARTHUR SPEER
11-29-88/1-19-69

W. A. Speer was used as a servant of God to the public and a servant of Jesus Christ to the churches. God richly endowed him with wisdom of the fundamental basics of good laws made manifest in his successful career as attorney, mayor, judge, and chancellor. Godly wisdom enabled him to comfort and edify many in his career as an ordained Minister of the Gospel. The beneficiaries of this one who was made noble by the Grace of God will cherish long the benefits derived from God through W. A. Speer. He was a student and practitioner of law from boyhood. He was admitted to the Bar as Attorney at the age of twenty-three; elected as Mayor of ElDorado, Arkansas, six years later; served as circuit Judge nine years and Chancellor of Chancery Court for eighteen years.

Judge Speer's court decisions as Chancellor won state recognition as having the least percentage of reversals of any other judge in the state. The writer asked, To what do you at-

tribute this distinction? His answer was, "Brother Lambert, if I have ever been inspired in the pulpit to preach I have been inspired in making right decisions by the same God. I am at ease while hearing a case, ready to make a decision at the end of the testimony. I depend upon God to bring out of my subconscious mind all relative testimony and law necessary to sum up the case and render the court's decision." W. A. Speer so felt the controlling power of God in all of his activities that he was confident that the Lord ordered all of his good thoughts, words, and actions.

He was born Nov. 29, 1888, became a member of Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church many years ago, was ordained and served churches for many years, died Jan. 19, 1969, at the age of eighty. His funeral was conducted by Brother Gary M. Jones, Dr. David Shepperson, Sr., and Elder E. J. Lambert.

Our heartfelt sympathy and prayers are for his widow, Margie, and his daughter, Mrs. Robert Myer; as well as his three brothers: Clyde, Durwood, and Ross; his sisters: Leona Scott and Camilla Britt; his granddaughter, other relatives, and many friends.

Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church is aware that other churches of his pastorate and many Ministers of the Gospel, will greatly miss Elder Speer's companionship, preaching, counsel and advice. He emphasized the vanity and inability of man to do good, salvation by grace through Jesus Christ and the sovereignty of God. May God reconcile us to His will.

This TRIBUTE OF RESPECT composed by Elder Lambert is in accord with request of Rehobeth Church, ElDorado, Arkansas, while in conference on the 8th day of February, 1969. One copy to be sent to the family, one copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and one copy for the records of Rehobeth Church.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Moderator
Neila Ryan, Clerk

SARAH ALICE BRUMLEY

Good Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Franklin County, Texas, feels greatly the loss of one of its precious members, Sister Alice Brumley, who was born Jan. 30, 1900, died March 11, 1969, at the age of 69 years. She was the daughter of the late Elder J. S. Robbins and the widow of Perry T. Brumley who died 19 years ago. Although she had no children of her own — the experience of a motherly love was her lot in raising her husband's children. Her closest blood relatives to survive are one niece and two nephews. Sister Alice's confinement in a hospital four and one-half years ago for a long time which brought her up to the brink of death was ordained by the Lord for her good. Her attitude had been so changed that she was made willing to go home to her friends, the church, and was baptized November 26, 1967. She was not satisfied just to meet with the church at regular meetings but arranged to live in the home of a member of Good Hope Church, Sister Neomie Rhoades, until she was readmitted into the hospital.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder E. J. Lambert, at Good Hope Meetinghouse and burial was in Good Hope Cemetery.

Good Hope Church prays to be submissive to God's will in taking from her a faithful and loving member who believed in the Sovereign God, the complete Saviour of sensible sinners, and the inability of herself meriting any of the blessings of God by her own doings.

This written by her pastor in compliance to the order of the church in regular conference March 22, 1969. The church orders copies for filing, proper distribution, and publication in the *Signs of the Times*.

Read and adopted March 23, 1969.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Pastor

CARRIE S. DIX

Sister Carrie S. Dix was born June 7, 1889 in Rockingham County, North Carolina and fell asleep in Jesus January 4, 1969 at the age of 79. She was the daughter of the late Joe and Nannie Harris Setliff, and on December 22, 1915, was married to John W. Dix who preceded her in death by 6 years.

To this union three children were born; two daughters, Mrs. Eleanor Josey and Mrs. Pauline Josey, both of Danville, Virginia; one son, William Dix, also of Danville, Virginia, with whom she made her home; one stepson, Dewey Dix of Christiansburg, Virginia. She also leaves to mourn their loss 18 grandchildren and several great grandchildren, four sisters and two brothers.

Sister Dix united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Dan River, together with her husband, in July 1938 and was baptized the following month by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler. She remained a faithful and lovely member until death, often attending her meetings when she really wasn't physically able. Although she wasn't well for several years, she never complained of her lot but bore her afflictions with much patience and fortitude. She was a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God, and the resurrection of the body.

She was a kind, loving mother and stepmother, always ready to lend a helping hand whenever she could. Surely a mother in Israel has fallen.

We feel that the Lord has called her home to be with Him where there is no sorrow, sick-

ness, disappointments or sad farewells, but all is peace and love. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.

In the absence of her pastor, funeral service was conducted by Elder Haywood Wray at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church and her body was laid to rest, beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, in the church cemetery beside that of her husband to await the second coming of Christ and the glorious resurrection.

Written by one who loved her,

Lelia Blackwell

LAUTY J. FUTRELL

In loving remembrance of our beloved deacon, Lauty J. Futrell who was born March 22, 1909 and died February 15, 1969. He came before the church June 27, 1954, and was gladly received. He was a very lovely brother. He was baptized by the pastor, Elder L. E. Bryan. On the second Sunday in December, 1955, he was ordained a deacon of Sand Hill Church.

He was well thought of by all who knew him, and left behind a good name. He was a grandson of the late Jonas Futrell who served as a deacon many years ago. Having a hope in the Lord we cannot wish him back, for we feel our loss is his eternal gain.

Brother Futrell was married to Miss Veir Kennedy and to this union were born three girls and two boys, who together with his wife survive.

His funeral was preached by his pastor, Elder L. L. Yopp, and he was laid to rest in the Sand Hill Church Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers. May the great God of heaven lead, guide and be a precious father and husband to those who mourn.

Done by order of Conference in March, 1969. Written by Oscar Howard.

L. L. Yopp, Moderator
Brantley Kennedy, Clerk

MRS. LAURA HOUSTON KENNEDY

In loving remembrance of our dear sister in Christ, Mrs. Laura Houston Kennedy, who was born November 12, 1893 and died December 8, 1968. She asked for a home in Sand Hill Church, Duplin County, N. C. and was gladly received, and was baptized by the pastor, Elder Isaac Jones.

She was married to Mr. Ashley Kennedy in 1917, and to this union were born seven children, four boys and three girls, all of them having preceded her to the grave.

We of Sand Hill Church feel that our loss is her eternal gain. Sister Kennedy lived a quiet and devoted life, and believed in salvation by grace. She attended meetings as long as she was able to go, and enjoyed going.

Her funeral was preached by Elder L. L. Yopp, and she was laid to rest in the Cemetery at Sand Hill Church. He who does all things well will call this sleeping dust at his own time and conform it to the Saviour.

Done by order of Conference at Sand Hill Church March 8, 1969. Written by Oscar Howard.

L. L. Yopp, Moderator
Brantley Kennedy, Clerk

MARIBEL YOUNG

Maribel was born near Dutton, Ontario, Canada, and departed this life January 15, 1968, at the age of seventy-three. She was the daughter of the late Dugold and Jennie Blue.

Funeral services were conducted by our pastor, Elder George Ruston, at Humphrey's Funeral Home in Toronto, and burial was in York Cemetery. Elder Ruston spoke comfortingly from Psalms 23, 90, and 91.

Though she never united with the church, she was a strong believer in salvation by grace. She attended meetings as long as her health permitted. She was a good hostess, and loved to have our ministers and Old Baptists to visit in her home.

She left behind a devoted husband, Harry Young, and a loving family, two daughters, Mrs. Helen Gray, Mrs. Jean McPhedran, and one son, Donald Young, all of Toronto, Canada. Their youngest daughter, Mrs. Mary Clarke, predeceased her in 1961. Surviving also are eleven grandchildren.

"It is not death to die —
To leave this weary road,
And 'midst the brotherhood on high,
To be at home with God."

Written by her sister-in-law who loved her.

Verna Carscadden

MRS. SARAH JANE STOCKS WILLIAMS

God in his infinite wisdom saw fit to remove from our midst by death, our dearly beloved and highly esteemed sister, Mrs. Sarah Jane Stocks Williams, wife of the late Walter D. Williams, Sr. She passed from this life December 7, 1968, after a long period of illness, at the age of 84. Sister Sarah was a gentle, lovable person: one who was an honor to her family, to her church, and to her community. She was a kind friend, a good neighbor, and an ideal wife and mother, — a woman who lived an exemplary life. One enjoyed visiting in her home for she was a gracious hostess

who made one feel welcome and wanted.

She was a firm and steadfast believer in Salvation by Grace, and many were the times I heard her express this belief. She united with Hancock's Church by experience and baptism in February, 1928, and was a true and faithful member until death — always filling her seat as long as she was able. She loved her church and was deeply concerned with its welfare. Mingling with her brethren gave her great pleasure.

We miss our dear sister but feel that our loss was her eternal gain. To her family goes our deepest sympathy, and we pray that God will bless and comfort them.

Done by order of conference while in regular session.

Elder A. P. Mewborn, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

SISTER MATTIE OWEN

Sister Mattie Owen was born January 6, 1889, and died January 4, 1968. She was the daughter of the late James R. and Molly Jackson Bryant. She first married George G. Barksdale, who died July 1, 1943, and later marred William D. Owen, who died February 3, 1953.

Sister Owen moved her membership to Malmaison Church by letter in March, 1946, and was a devoted member. She loved her church and the doctrine it stands for, attending as long as she was able.

She leaves to mourn their loss, four daughters, three sons, sixteen grandchildren, and eight great grandchildren; four step-sons and two step-daughters. Also one brother and one sister.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, after which she was laid to rest in the family cemetery at Spring Garden.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we send the family a copy of this; put one on our church book, and one to the *Signs* for publication.

Done by order of the church.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Kate Dodd, Clerk

SISTER EMMA ALICE HALL

Sister Emma Alice Hall was born February 3, 1878, and died December 25, 1968. She was the daughter of the late John and Virginia Walton Hall; and was married to John J. Hall, who died in 1950.

She was one of the oldest members of Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church; and was faithful, attending as long as she was able.

She leaves three daughters and four sons; fourteen grandchildren and twenty-two great grandchildren, and a host of friends to mourn their loss. May our loss be her eternal gain.

Her funeral was preached by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, after which she was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park.

May the Lord bless her family to be reconciled to His will, for he doeth all things well.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the family; one put on the church book; and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of our church.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Kate Dodd, Clerk

SISTER GEORGINA ROGERS

Sister Georgina Rogers was born in England August 14, 1879, and passed away in London, Ontario, January 26, 1969. She was married in England to a Mr. Arnold, by whom she had three sons and a daughter. She was left a widow before the children were very old, and was persuaded to come to Canada. She and her children had a trying time until they were raised. She had joined a Strict Baptist Church in England by relation of her experience and baptism. She found a meeting in London, Ontario, of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada in fellowship with the Strict Baptists of England, and they received her as a member with them by relation of her experience. She later was married to William Rogers, who proved a very kind and loving husband. He always attended our meetings with her, and we believe he loved the same truths she did, and was highly respected. He died in November, 1955.

Sister Rogers was unusually gifted spiritually, and had a wonderful knowledge of the Scriptures, so she was a comfort to many of the Lord's little ones. She suffered for many years from a chronic affliction, but by the kindness of friends, was brought to meetings until she became unable to go. She longed for the Lord to take her to her heavenly home.

Her pastor, Elder George Ruston, conducted her funeral service in London, Ontario, speaking from the words: Absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. (2 Cor. 5, 6) Interment was in Forest Lawn Memorial Cemetery, London, Ontario.

She is survived by two sons and a number of grandchildren.

"Safe landed on that peaceful shore
Where pilgrims meet to part no more."

The Lord is become her everlasting light: the days of her mourning are ended.

Sister Esther Ruston

OWEN SMITH TYREE

Owen Smith Tyree was born November 7, 1893, near Rocky Mount, Va. He was the son of Alwilda Law and William Smith Tyree. He served his country he loved so well in France during World War I. On December 22, 1920, he was married to Lulie Turner. He is survived by his widow, two daughters: Mrs. Frances McGhee and Mrs. Lucy Prillaman, Rocky Mount, Va.; three sons: Jesse O., Bassett, Va.; William T., Rocky Mount, Va.; and Claude K. Tyree; along with ten grandchildren.

He passed away July 4, 1968, at McGuire Veterans Hospital, Richmond, Va. On July 4, 1927, just forty-one years prior to his death, he united with Chestnut Primitive Baptist Church; and on July 30, 1930, he was ordained a deacon. He served his church as Clerk from 1930 to 1966, when he resigned due to ill health.

He was a devoted husband, a loving father, and a kind neighbor. He was faithful to his church, it being one of the last places he went before entering the hospital. He suffered with chronic leukemia for more than five years, and suffered many attacks of pneumonia and kidney ailments. He was always saying that he was giving out, but didn't want to give up. On the night before being transferred to the Richmond hospital, he told a neighbor minister, his wife, my brother and me, that he wasn't looking forward to anything else in this world, but was looking to Jesus. For he said Jesus had promised him a home in heaven, and that He never goes back on a promise. He was not only thinking of the promise to him alone but related how happy he was that Jesus was going to save his people.

Though our hearts are heavy with sorrow over our earthly loss, we feel that it is his eternal gain, and another one of His children has been called home.

His funeral was conducted July 6, 1968, at Chestnut Primitive Baptist Church by his pastor, Elder C. E. Turner, and his neighbor and friend Mr. W. M. Stump, Jr. He was laid to rest in the Turner family cemetery amid many lovely floral tributes, there to await the coming of Christ in whom he had trusted for so long. Written by a daughter,

Mrs. Frances T. McGhee

GROVER LINVELL GARDNER

January 1, 1969, relatives and friends gathered at Filbeck and Cann Funeral Home, Benton, Kentucky; to pay last respects to Grover Linvell Gardner. Services were conducted by Mr. Joe C. Gardner and Mr. Ralph Fink.

December 30, 1968, a kind and loving Father saw fit to reach down from above and lift Linvell out of a "Dark and Thorny Desert," carrying him beyond this vale of sorrow to a home not made with material things of this world; but to a home where ransomed souls will dwell on high.

Linvell was born January 27, 1906, which made his life here 62 years, 11 months and 3 days. He is survived by his wife, Mable Counts Gardner, whom he married July 24, 1927. To this union were born three children: one son, Grover Thomas Gardner, Phoenix, Arizona; two daughters, Mrs. Audrey Lee Green, Benton, Kentucky and Mrs. Jeanett Swatzell, Scottsdale, Arizona. He also leaves five grandchildren, two sisters and a brother.

He was laid to rest in Mt. Zion Cemetery, Hickman County, Ky., to await the return of a sovereign God, one who has all power. This is the God Linvell loved. He professed his love by baptism, walk and conversation of grace and grace alone, while here upon God's footstool.

May he rest in thee until the splendid courts of glory sweetly echo with their song; "Welcome to the blissful plain."

Written by Mable's request,

Dorothy Pryor

J. THURMAN GRAHAM

Son of Jack and Addie Graham, was born March 18, 1897. He was the grandson of Elder Amos Dickerson. Married to Edna Thompson November 29, 1922.

Surviving him are his wife, Mrs. Edna Graham; a son, Richard Graham, and a daughter, Mrs. Jean Rhudy.

Brother Thurman united with the church at Valley View, August 16, 1925. He was appointed a trustee August 20, 1960, and ordained deacon May 27, 1967. His love for the church was evident, and he was a faithful member through the years.

His health and sight had failed him somewhat in the last few years, which he bore patiently. He departed this life September 28, 1968, after suffering a massive stroke at the age of seventy-one.

Uncle Thurman had many friends within and without the church. We in the church will miss him and our sympathy goes out to his family.

He was laid to rest in Sunset Cemetery in Christiansburg, Va. October 1, 1968.

Elder B. O. Thompson conducted the funeral service.

Written by his niece,

Kathleen Martin (Clerk)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 137 DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1969 NO. 7

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/69
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

O Gracious God thy spirit send
To mortals here below;
Who love to sing thy holy name
While on their journey go.

Thy strength and love to us impart
A precious hope within;
And give us joys and happiness
While in this world of sin.

Jesus our Saviour, blessed name
Who died for all our woe;
He holds the future in his hands,
Did all the work below.

Depraved and sinful tho we are
Electing love did win;
He paid the cost upon the cross
And saved us from our sin.

J. Wayne Mitchell
Smithfield, N. C.

"DEAD IN TRESPASSES AND SINS"
(Eph. 2:1)

At the age of fourteen, I had
Quite a peculiar dream,
And that it had significance,
To myself, it doth seem.

I viewed my body in a casket
Covered with cloth quite black,
After I had with my own hands
Oddly turned the lid back.

I, "dead in trespasses and sins,
Myself, I plainly saw" —
In type, saw myself dead in sin,
Prisoned under the law.

I hope that I had been quickened
When I in sin was dead,
For at the age of ten or 'leven,
I began to feel a dread.

If born again we have two natures,
Born of flesh, Spirit too;
We are two persons, as it were,
The old man and the new.

The new man can see the old man,
Can see his lost estate,
And to the law we flee in vain,
Its demands to placate.

I dreamed I was dressed uniform
At th' age of four and ten,
But was two years too young for war,
Which proved to be within.

But I trust that peace ensued which
Deliverance doth bring;
O the peace I experienced,
I hope in Christ the King!

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, N. C.

ELDER WARREN
TO THE MERIGOLDS

Berlin, Md. 21811

Dear Bro. & Sister Merigold:
Whitefield, Maine

As I had thought some time ago that I might be in Maine today but as it has not worked out that way, I know of nothing better than to visit with you dear people than through the medium of a few written words. This is the fifth Sunday and I have no appointments around here. I still do not feel very good and wonder sometimes if I will ever, but that remains to be seen. I get miserable during the day every day, my face just draws and burns. I feel sometimes through that the Lord has blessed me in so many ways for I can still get around some and that is more than a lot of people can do.

I feel many times to say with the poet. "This world is not my home." We visited sister Margie Holloway's mother one time and she said that those words had

been going over in her mind all day; and I was asked to read that hymn at her funeral. Dear ones, I know that you would like many times to hear preaching, but just take your hymn and tune book and read those beautiful hymns that were written so many years ago, fitting to the needs of the saints of that day and just as fitting to the saints of today; and you will see many times a sermon in every verse. Sister Ethel Holloway carried us down last week to see a dear sister in Virginia who cannot get around very well and we sang some hymns, and someway I felt that I could see in some of the hymns a sermon in every verse and did try to talk a little from one of the hymns. I heard Elder Spangler talk from the hymn "Rock of Ages" one night. That hymn is a very good one, I have read it at funerals many times.

As I am writing my mind seems to go to the words of the Psalmest who wrote in the 133 Psalm: "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." So you see dear ones up there many miles from us here, that I believe, and I believe that you believe that God has a people in every nation, kindred and tongue who have been or will some time in this life, be taught that they are not their own keepers; and are taught that all they have or ever will have comes from the Father of lights with whom there is no variableness neither shadow of turning. It is wonderful when we are blessed to see that our blessings come from the eternal God, who I believe watches over his little ones here in this life, and gives them a mind to feel that not only this life but also hoping for a life to come when all the trials of this life will be taken away, and there will be nothing but peace and rest.

The Psalmist said in the last verse of the 17th Psalm "I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness."

I have contended for a long time that I do not believe that anyone knows what it will be like in Heaven but I do believe that it will be rest and that is enough for me. Now as I grow older and older I feel the condemnation of sin more and more every day, and can say with the Apostle Paul, "I die daily." That death is not the corporal death when this old body will cease to function, but seeing that we are sinners every day and then to mourn for our sins. To experience this as I have many times, gives me a little hope that I have had some experience in grace. I believe that at times we are given minds to look away from the things of this world and view Heavenly things, just a little foretaste of Heaven. It many times only lasts a short time but those few moments are more comforting than looking at the joys of this world, for we know that our stay here is but a short span of time. The Bible says that our life is like the vapour that appears for a short time and then vanishes away. I like the next verse that follows that," For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, ye shall live, and do this, or that." (James 4,15)

We have been taught, I hope, that God's will is being done daily, but, as I believe that the scripture confirms us in what we have been taught, what more would we want than the scripture I mentioned above.

There are many things taking place in this world that we are made to wonder about, and to feel why does it have to be, but then are we not made to feel that we have no right to question why. I have believed for a long time that there is nothing that has ever transpired against the will of God, for if it was against His will it would never be. The pathway that leads on and on in the strait and narrow way that leads the Lord's people to their Heavenly Home is not always a pleasant one, but, dear ones, you have learned as I have, that the bitter must go along with the sweet. I know that many times we would have it some other way, but when the tempest of the storm is passed, can we not see the mighty hand of God in the matter giving us a mind to seek a better place. I have thought many times of the poet when he wrote these words:

"Then why my soul complain and fear?
The crown of glory see!

The more we toil and suffer here,
The sweeter rest will be."

One must be tired before he can rest. I have in times past, thought, Well that, what ever it might have been, is past and I'll go along now without any worries, but, you know, something else would take place; all I believe to teach me that I cannot direct even my natural steps, much less my steps to that immortal glory that awaits the Lord's chosen people. I like to think of the word grace for, as I understand it is the free gift of God; and many times have thought of the poet when he said "Without free grace I know I'm lost." There are many in this world that believe they can do something to get that grace. But let them believe it if they want to. If God wants them changed, he will do so. I have no desire to try.

We hope that both of you are doing very well, just wanted you to know that even though we are far apart in person, not very far apart in our minds I hope.

Yours in sweet fellowship,
Arthur R. and Mattie Warren

THE WOUNDS IN HIS HANDS

"One shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? then shall he answer, those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends." (Zechariah 13:6)

This is prophecy concerning Christ, and was spoken hundreds of years before Christ was born. While I cannot bring out the beauty in this as I would like, I would like to write some of my thoughts concerning it.

When I received a hope in Christ and felt a love in my heart that I had never felt before, my mind went back to the day He suffered on the cross; and from there to the counsel of God in eternity. I believe that His sufferings were prearranged in the counsel of God. That was the reason the Prophet could speak as though it had already been. There are many things said about what Christ's mission into this world was. It is plainly taught in the Scriptures what He came to do: not to try, but **to finish** a work the Father gave him.

In Genesis 2:1 we read, "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the hosts of them." I believe in the foreknowledge of God: that all things from the beginning to the ending of time were one eternal now with God. There is nothing new under the sun with our God. He was not disappointed in the fall of man. Some say the law was given to be kept, but evidently not; for we read that the law entered that the offence might abound; but where it abounded grace did much more abound. The chance system and conditions are out of the picture, as far as I am concerned, for I cannot find where chance has ever done anything. We read about a man that fell among thieves and was robbed and beaten, and left half-dead; and there was a priest passed by where he was by chance, and a Levite likewise. The free-will chance system failed to help this man, as it will fail to help all others. But a good Samaritan came where the man was. I believe the Samaritan came according to the eternal purpose of God — He dressed the man's wounds and poured in oil, (which I believe represents the sovereign grace of God,) and put him on his own beast, (which represents the power of God) and took him to the inn and paid two pence for his care, saying if there is anything lacking he would pay it when he returned.

God does a perfect work: his work is ordered and sure. Christ came into the world to do the work that was given him before the world was. Yet it is preached that Christ came and made a way whereby all men can be saved if they will just believe and accept Christ as their Saviour. If this is true then salvation depends upon the will of men, and not the will of God. Yet Christ said, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." (John 6:38-39)

We know according to the scriptures that God gave Christ a people. (John 17: 2) "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." Also, the fourth verse, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." What was the work? it was to give eternal life to as many as the Father gave him. This people that God gave his Son in the covenant of grace ordered in all things and sure, were the ones that put the wounds in His hands. The whole family in heaven and earth is named in Him; and God named them. "Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands . . ." (Isa. 49:16) He came into this world for the specific purpose of saving his people. When he was praying in the garden, the agony he suffered was for the sins of his people: the ones who put the wounds in his hands. Jesus said that no man hath greater love than this that a man lay down his life for his friends. I do not believe there has been a man who suffered as our Lord suffered: the crown of thorns pressed on his blessed head; the nails in his hands holding his weight, etc. When he cried out, It is finished, I believe the whole family of God was saved. Some say he made the way, and it depends on the will of men, but Old Baptists say that He saved his people.

I am glad that my name is recorded among ones declaring that He finished the work his Father sent him to do: to save his people. He said, "I lay down my life for the sheep." When he spoke of his sheep, he spoke of his people only. "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life: and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (John 10: 26-28)

Dear children of God, you may often feel forsaken and cast down, and surrounded with troubles, but your salvation is sure. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her wardare is accomplished, and her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received at the Lord's hands double for all her sins." (Isaiah 40:1) Your debt is paid — the one that received the wounds in his hands in the house of his friends, paid your entire debt: He bore all your sins, — the sins of the whole family. The Son will call them, and manifest to them that he is their Saviour, and that heaven is their home.

Some will say, You have taken the preacher completely out of the salvation of God's people. I have not! for he has never been in as far as his works are concerned. The preacher is to feed the lambs and sheep, not to save them. The great Shepherd saved his sheep almost two thousand years ago; and he calls preachers who were ordained in eternity to feed his children. The preacher cannot carry the food around with him, but the great Shepherd must give it to him before he can give it to the lambs and sheep.

Brethren, some glad day we will meet our King; and while we are waiting for his second coming, let us love one another and live in peace as much as possible, forgiving each other their trespasses and labor in love for peace. Remember me in your prayers.

A sinner saved by grace if saved at all,
Garrett Wilson
1741 Davis R. D. Rt. 1,
Maineville, Ohio 45039

HAS BEEN RICHLY BLESSED TO FEAST

308 N. Wyandotte,
Shreveport, La., 71101

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

How often do I think of you dear ones, and re-live our wonderful visit with you last summer. I wish the miles between us were not so great; but let me not complain, because I hope we've been given that love which miles, nor anything else, can never sever. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor pow-

ers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Lately I feel to have been richly blessed to feast from the bountifully furnished banqueting table of Almighty God. Oh, that I could praise the Lord for his goodness and mercy to one so underserving.

I have been privileged to attend our church meetings almost each week end, and I trust I have been given ears to hear, and a heart to understand what our precious Elders have been blessed to bring forth.

I have spent many week ends with Bro. and Sister Barron, and look forward to many more. It is so wonderful to visit with those of like precious faith, and talk on the scriptures; and also to listen to the wonderful messages on the tapes which have been recorded in the past.

I am enclosing a copy of a letter I received from Elder Warren. I enjoyed it very much, and would like to share it with others, if you have a mind to publish it. I realize that you have a heavy load and responsibility; and if I know my heart, I've tried to pray the Lord to guide, direct and strengthen you and the other editors to continue to stand fast for the doctrine of Salvation by Grace: ever contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

We would love so much to see you all again.

In love and fellowship,
Mary Davis

TOGETHERNESS

There is a small number of people in this world of forgetfulness, who remember what true togetherness means. They were taught by a Teacher, who, though they forget him now and then, draws them back into a sweet remembrance.

These people sorrow and mourn when selfish, worldly wants and desires tear them apart. The fellowship, faith, hope and love, that drew them together, is a part of their very being. When these marks of God's children are hidden in dissension and strife among themselves, they sorrow and long for the peace they once knew. Trouble and grief are their lot, until the sweet love and charity, which has been hidden for a season, brings them together again.

Ah, sweet mystery of life, to know that he who begins a good work in a vessel of mercy, continues it till all such vessels rightly fitted together form his building, "In whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth into an holy temple in the Lord."

The cord that binds them together is Jesus Christ, for in him, and him alone, is the nation whose God is the Lord. Hate, as the world knows hate, is a foreign and strange word to their tongue since the Spirit of love entered their hearts. The only hate within them is that hate they feel for themselves: the old man of sin, that they carry about as a thorn in the flesh, till the day the deliverer comes. It wars with the Spirit or the new man, as long as we tabernacle in the world of sin and sorrow.

We hope to be led to write the feelings in our own heart about a people who are so weak they can do nothing of themselves, to reach the holy temple in the Lord. And yet are built to such specifications, they can do all things, through Christ who strengthens them; how each little piece of lifeless clay, inert and helpless, can be molded into an honorable vessel, so that when it is fitly framed together with like vessels, grows into an holy temple in the Lord.

It is our desire to tell how those little ones, who are scattered all over the world, are drawn together, hewn into a timber, and shaped to fit into its own place. No other spot in the building will be left for this particular vessel of mercy. We are promised that "I go to prepare *a place for you.*" These wayward ones are turned from their selfish desires and lusts. They long to turn

their eyes inward and view their own sins, and cry for charity, when they look on a brother's. They cry unto the Lord, "Draw me, we will run after thee." The holy temple is incomplete until all the pieces are drawn together, and fitly framed into the building.

They are shaped and made ready for their special place through their trials and tribulations in this world. We are told in the Bible, if we escape these tribulations in the furnace of afflictions, then we are bastards and not sons. Even in our groanings and complaints, a still small voice makes us beg for enough trouble, beg for enough cares and sorrows, to temper us; to make us "wait upon the Lord" and to "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." Such is the experience of one, who through many doubts and many fears, still has that blessed hope within him.

How we long at times to escape the wasteland, the wilderness, the deserts and the valleys of despair. If we had our desires we would always sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; but without the darkness we could not know light, and without the doubts and fears, we would never know of his sweet mercy and see his sweet smile of deliverance. How wonderful that a God of purpose decreed it so.

"They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble." Is it not wonderul to know of the straight way, the rivers of waters, and how they figure in the shaping of each piece for the building? His purposes and promises are our guide and shield as he fashions and draws us together in one.

Have you thought about the many strangers drawn together by this invisible force, as they fulfill the blueprint God made for his temple? Even though the world believes these to happen by chance, we know they all fit in the foreordained plan of God, for "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Are we not taught in the Scriptures of people, of times, of events and places, that shaped the pieces as the holy temple grew in the Lord? "He will say to the North give up; and to the South, keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth."

Let us meditate upon the drawing together of some of these children of God; of how he introduced strangers and led them about, as he fitted them in his purposed building. All these travels of the saints before us redound to his glory and praise, and comfort us who follow them, if indeed I can lay claim to such riches. I am so unworthy to even think on such things. They are too high, I cannot attain unto them but must beg that he reach down his mercies to this poor, helpless sinner. Pray for me.

Since Paul was given as a pattern for those who should follow him, let us see how he and a stranger were drawn together, and think on the results. We know how he was stopped on his sinful journey to Damascus, and how totally depraved he was in all the events that happened there. He was utterly helpless in the matter, but in the mind and purpose of God, Paul's experience of grace and mercy was not complete till he and Ananias, a total stranger, were drawn together in a miraculous way.

Paul was kept blind till their togetherness made him whole. Ananias was as useful in God's purpose, as Paul, in setting before us the inability of man. He was reluctant and afraid of this one who was on the way to destroy him, but went forth in obedience and faith. His meeting Paul set the chain of events, that led Paul to the "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold," and many other miracles, as the elect, both Jew and Greek were set apart, as the temple in the Lord grew.

The pitiful means and missions of man are all together vanity, in comparison to the drawing together of these

disciples to go forth preaching Christ, the way, the truth and the life.

Consider Phillip and the eunuch, who lived in different countries: Phillip preaching Christ and the eunuch worshiping under the law of Moses. They were drawn together, not by chance, but by an angel of the Lord directing Phillip to the road travelled by the eunuch, who was on the way back to Egypt (meaning darkness or the law). However, Phillip preached unto him Christ, and he believed that Jesus was Christ the Son of God, and was baptized, — forming another timber in the building of God. These were fashioned and made ready at the direction and supervision of the Holy Spirit. The poet says, "He moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." The more we study the written word and hope for a revelation of it, the more we agree with the poet. "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."

When Mary, the mother of Jesus, greeted Elizabeth, the mother of John, we are told in the Bible that John leaped in his mother's womb for joy. Neither of the children were born, but what wonderful blessings and comfort are experienced by the children of God through the ages as a result of their mothers being drawn together. Nowhere is recorded in holy writ, a more beautiful song of praise and adoration of her Lord and Master, than was spoken by Mary, as she carried him in her own virgin body; miracle of miracles.

The little children of God are carried to the heights in John's relationship with their Saviour, as he prepares the way for Him in their own wilderness. They praise God as they are baptized with his Son, and behold the Holy Ghost descending from heaven. Although these are only experiences of grace and prayer now, they are a hope that is an anchor of the soul both sure and stedfast.

It makes us long to be given strength to press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

We pray to be molded, hewn, and shaped to fit in the holy temple, as we read the divine history of John, the messenger of the Lord. We also suffer and doubt with him in prison, when our Lord hides his face from us in a little wrath. We wonder is he clean gone forever; and cry out with John, "Is this the Christ?"

However, we know, if we have the witness within us, that we must be shown, over and over; that these things must need be, to fulfill the purpose of God in fitly framing his building, that is growing into the temple of the Lord.

How wonderful to meditate upon the fulfillment of prophecy and the purpose and promises of God. We, who are unfit to even dream of such claims, still hope to be numbered with those he loves and calls from afar, as he draws his own to their heavenly home.

We see his purpose to send Joseph into Egypt to save much people alive; and the long, long journey back from the land of darkness. The meeting again, of Joseph and his brethren, who knew him not, was brought about by providential necessity. Yet God's purpose in it still comforts and feeds his sheep today.

His making vessels of mercy out of inert, dead clay, to fit into their own place, included the weak and the poor, as well as the rich and the mighty. The scriptures teach that he has a people in every kindred, nation and tongue under heaven. On that final day his loved ones will be gathered from all walks of life, and from the far reaches of the earth.

Ah! precious ones, can you imagine a place, where you will be together with saints like Paul, Phillip, John, Joseph and those others spoken of in inspiration? Can you even turn and look into your brother's sweet countenance here with you now, and imagine being permitted to live with him forever in that sweet beyond?

I know that within myself, these things are impossible, but am constrained to believe, that he who bestowed his love upon a poor and undeserving peo-

ple, could have included me.

Someday, somewhere, when he has finished that holy temple in the Lord, when all the building is fitly framed together, there will be a love and a togetherness, this wicked world never knew or dreamed of, and can never know.

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Spearsville, La.

Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Editors:

I am a little late in sending renewal for our much loved paper, the *Signs of the Times,* and am enclosing check for two years. I would be lost without it for it has been coming to our house most of my life — long before I was grown, and I will be seventy-three this month. I am blessed to attend meeting each Sunday: as it is over one hundred miles to the closest church besides ours here in Memphis, we meet each Sunday.

We are sad over the loss of our much loved pastor, Elder H. G. Brown. He had been failing in health, but we were not expecting him to go so quickly. He went to his grandson's birthday party with no signs of feeling ill, went home and went to bed. The next morning at 8:30 his wife went to see why he wasn't up; and he was gone — without a sign of struggle. How good it is with those who are blessed with such a passing on. His wife is not at all well and was not able to attend his funeral from shock.

I hesitate to continue to take up space and your time, yet I want to say that I feel thankful to God for the *Signs.* It brings letters from far and near, telling the same sweet story of Jesus and His love, and power to save; and telling our own experiences so well that it often gives us renewed strength and hope to know that our Redeemer lives. O may He ever keep us to the end, and bring our children along life's way and in due time give them a sweet hope as an anchor to their souls.

We are blessed to have two ordained ministers: Elder H. R. Prince and Elder C. S. Young, who is my nephew. He is deep in doctrine, and we hope that God will uphold him to the good of his children. God is able to do so, and he does all things well: Bless His holy name.

We hope it will be God's will that you dear brethren come our way again sometime. We are expecting Elder J. L. Smith of Louisiana and Elder R. L. Biggs of Nashville this week end.

Remember us in your prayers when you can.

In hope of eternal life,
Mrs. Carrie Campbell

Fayette, Ala.

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is remittance for two more years for the *Signs.* I hope I don't miss the April issue. Although I am poor comparatively in this world's goods, I would rather miss some natural food than to miss the spiritual food I get from the *Signs.*

I thank the Editors for putting out the good news to believers.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
James V. White

UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

The sixty-third session of the **Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association** convenes with Bush Arbor Church the 3rd weekend July 19th, 20th and 21st: Saturday, Sunday and Monday. Services beginning at 11:00 a. m. Saturday before the third Sunday July, 1969.

Bush Arbor Church is located approximately 15 miles north of Burlington, N. C., highway #62, and approximately 8 miles south of Yancyville, N. C. highway #62, the church may be seen just off #62 highway in Caswell Country.

More specific directions are as follows: approximately 2 miles northwest of old Anderson School and 1 mile south of Jericho just off highway #62, Caswell County, N. C. The Church may be seen from highway #62.

We extend a cordial invitation to correspon-

dence and friends of our faith and order and especially the ministering brethren.

Donald E. Smith, Clerk

SLATE HILL MEETING

An all-day Meeting is appointed to be held at **Slate Hill Old School Baptist Meeting House** the first Saturday in August (August 2nd). Lunch will be served.

All lovers of Gospel Truth are invited.

A. J. Slauson

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **Staunton River Association** convenes with Springfield Church before the second Sunday in July and continues through Sunday.

Weatherford Church will contribute the use of their facilities for the meeting at the request of Springfield Church. Weatherford Church is located on Highways 760 and 763. Watch for signs in the Town of Gretna, Va.

We invite all who have a desire to attend.

Burnell B. Williams, Assn. Clerk

ANNOUNCEMENT

I am a crippled sister and want to take orders for Bibles. One is white, price $6.00 each; and a larger one is black, price $10.00. King James Version, and have leatherette backs.

I expect to be at the **Pigg River Association** at Little Creek Church the first three days in August where I will have samples, and will be glad to talk with anyone interested.

Or write me at my home. After July 1st my phone number will be 721-2541.

Mrs. Pearl Dudley,
Rt. 1, Box 382,
Hardy, Va. 24101

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Pigg River Association* will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Little Creek, Franklin County, Virginia, beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in August, 1969, and continuing through Sunday. (August 1, 2 and 3.)

The Little Creek Meeting House is located four miles from Rocky Mount, Va. Take Route 919 to the intersection of Route 641.

Our correspondents and other brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

John D. Wood, Clerk

Danville, Virginia **July, 1969**

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Reidy Pickeral, Va.	$40.00
Louis Stewart, Miss.	1.00
Mrs. S. E. Goard, Va.	1.00
Harry Ward, Md.	5.00
Mrs. D. T. Scott, Can.	3.00
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Miss Verna C. Allison, Can.	3.00
Jane Carroll, Ark.	3.00
Mrs. Charles Stewart, N. C.	6.00

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held with the church at Mill Branch, the Lord willing, the fifth Saturday and Sunday in June, 1969.

The church is located about three miles south of Sharpsburg, N. C. south of highway 301.

All who have a mind to attend are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

EDITORIAL

THE SALT AND ITS SAVOUR

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men."

Matt. 5:13

In the East salt was the universal remedy for decay, rot, and corruption. Salt was the life of life as it must be in everything to keep the food of man and beast from rapid decay and corruption. In the East salt became the very word for uncorruptness, sincerity, and loyalty. Salt was used in food for man as well as for beast. (Job 6:6 & Isa. 30:24) Salt makes food good and pleasant to the taste. Salt was of great importance in all Hebrew worship. Washing new born infants in salt water was considered by the Israelites as a **Must.** (See Ezek. 16:4) The Israelites used salt to preserve; as a medicine; in moral and religious functions; in fact: salt was an emblem of partnership, friendship, and fellowship. Salt is a symbol of that which is necessary for the salvation of man: the unrevokable covenant of God to save His people eternally. The salt of God's Covenant shall never lose its savour.

"And every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering: with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt." (Lev. 2:13) **The salt of the covenant of thy God** was and is a pact that cannot be made void. Every good work must be inwrought by the Spirit of God which was symbolized by oil: in other words, the good works of the faithful are those works which the Holy Spirit inspires, energizes, and matures. Oil was used to symbolize this. Frankincense was used to symbolize that the graces and gifts of the Spirit are graciously received by the recipient and borne heavenward in **prayer.** Salt is the symbol of the incorruptible, perpetually abiding signs and fruits of God's covenant of grace.

A Covenant of Salt was considered as the most solemn and binding bond that could be entered into by the covenantor and the covenantee. The Lord performs perfectly and thoroughly every particle of His covenant. All His purposes in creation, providence, and glory shall be perfected in due time. The eternal happiness of the whole family of God's elect shall be the climax which will prove the perfect work of God. He foreknew his own. He predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son, Jesus Christ. It is the essence of His will that each and every one of these shall be called, justified, and glorified. Jesus verifies this statement in saying: "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." It behooved Jesus to perform the elect's part in this covenant because God's people failed to keep the law and greatly sinned. The **counsel** of His will demanded that the law be kept and violators punished. No sin could be tolerated. God is merciful and forbearing. He gave the law to the first Adam. He broke it. He gave it to the second adam which was Jesus Christ. He kept it. God wrote the law two times on tables of stone. The ten commandments were twice written by the finger of the Lord Himself. These were written upon enduring tables of stone. This shows how deeply and permanently they were to be engraved upon the heart of His people. Once it was written upon a tablet that was broken. Again He wrote these commandments upon an unbroken tablet. This symbolically sets forth the truth that they are

written first as the whole duty of man in nature which he brakes willfully; secondly, they are written in regenerated man which he prays to be enabled to keep. First, as a duty: secondly, as a desired privilege. When given to man they were broken, not kept. The second writing of the commandments were by special command deposited for safe keeping in the Ark of the Covenant, the most inviolably sacred place outside the courts of Heaven. Thus it was **salted,** or preserved. Natural man hates these laws. The regenerated man loves them.

The One who knows the universe because He made it, and all eternity because He inhabits it, has condescended to tell us in these laws things that are good, true, pure, and right. When the Holy Spirit gives us the inner meanings of these laws we constantly pray that our hearts be trained, our minds disciplined, and our very beings sanctified, to obey these laws in noble Christ-like behaviour.

The **salt of the covenant** is that the second writing of these laws by the finger of God's love should be preserved in the Ark of the Covenant. "At that time the Lord said unto me, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, and come up unto me in the mount, and make thee an ark of wood. And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables which thou brakest, and thou shalt put them in the ark." Deut. 10:1-2) Read the 5th verse of Deut. 10, and you can with your mind's eye see Moses pointing at the ark and saying, **"There they be".** The **Ark** and the **Mercy Seat** tabernacle. These with the two cheribim at each end, formed originally the whole were placed in the most holy place in the furniture of the tabernacle. All other furniture placed later were subordinate to them. Only high priests could commune with God in this place only once each year. These two things were hidden by a veil from the people. These two tables of the testimony were placed in the ark, not as an object of worship but as a basis of all moral dealings between God and man. These symbolized the **Divine Law of Holiness,** covered by the **Mercy seat,** the type of reconciliation. The law remains even now as good and right. It is now just as when in the Ark. The law's thunders were hushed by Jesus Christ. Its lightnings were laid. It remains in all its perfections now as then, yet through Christ it ceases to be our enemy and condemnation. It is with Christ in us as the basis for righteous living. There is no condemnation from the Law to them that are in Christ Jesus; for what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God hath done by sending Jesus in the likeness of sinful flesh, to be the propituary or the **mercy seat** for us. Jesus is at once high priest and victim. He is at once mercy seat and victim. In His offering made once for all we are complete. The Throne of Judgment becomes a Throne of Grace in Him. Jesus is the SALT of the Covenant to every heaven-born child of God who earnestly desires to do the will of God which is to keep His laws. The salt of the covenant is God's innumerable mercies which makes even His chastisement sweet to us.

While upon the subject of salt we wish to do what Jesus said: "Remember Lot's wife". (Luke 17:32) Many centuries after this fact of Lot's wife being turned into a pillar of salt Jesus directed that it should be kept in memory. These dark monuments have obtained a place in the word that liveth and abideth forever, that their warnings may be available in all times to all nations. We read in Gen. 19:26: "But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a **pillar of salt."** What is the significance of this? Let us first consider how that Abraham cautiously and persistently prayed for Sodom. We find in the last ten verses of Genesis 18th chapter that Abraham repeats his intercession for Sodom on the plea of justice for the righteous. Six times he intercedes with such earnestness and heart-felt yearning, that in his great auguish and desire he trembles as he plants each footstep in advance. He fears to offend God, yet because of being love-impelled — Abraham ventures further. Humility is the keynote to this prayer. Persistence is

the **Salt** of the prayer. His continued praying shows his unshakable confidence in a wisdom, a holiness, a purity, a love and power, whose ways were different, but yet infinitely higher and better than the ways and thoughts of man!!! Abraham persisted and God continued to grant that He would not destroy Sodom for the sake of five righteous. When he got down to five, Abraham did not have the heart to ask more. Sodom was destroyed, yet there were four who were delivered from its destruction. You may conclude there were just three because Lot's wife became a pillar of salt when she looked back. Let us list some of the mercies of God toward Lot's wife: 1. She was numbered with the righteous. 2. She left Sodom. 3. She followed the leader. 4. She was more favored than her neighbors. 5. She was a monument of distinguishing mercy in her deliverance. 6. She was not destroyed by fire and brimstone. We are not so much amazed that the men of Sodom refused to listen because it harmonized with their unbelief. We are not so amazed by the fact that Lot's sons-in-law refused to listen because they were confirmed infidels. It is strange and sad, as well as amazing, that Lot's wife-warned, and believed the warning, alarmed, moved to escape, yea brought by the hand of God Himself to the very verge of safety — should linger, disobey, look back, and become a pillar of salt. She certainly became inactive. She was no more useful other than a **monument of dis-obedience.** When we remember Lot's wife we must realize that disobedience to God's laws make us unfit for active participation in the Kingdom in this world to say the least of it. The smiles of God's kind providence is experienced by those of His people who are obedient to His commands. Disobedient children of God know from experience the terrible pangs of a condemned conscience. Elder Gilbert Beebe says in referring to: "If any man defile (or destroy as in the margin) the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." See 1 Cor. 3:17 & page 69 of March 69 SIGNS) — "The destruction of which the apostle warns us to beware is not the interminable perdition of the ungodly, but that destruction which is parabolically compared to salt that has lost its savor, and is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under the foot of men. Paul says, 'I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.' It is in this sense Christians may be destroyed as to their usefulness in the church, their communion and sweet fellowship with the saints, and enjoyment of the approving smiles of their God. This is indeed a sorer punishment than Moses ever inflicted on those who despised his precepts, though they died, or were put to death without mercy, under two or three witnesses. None but the chastened sons of God can know how sore a plague is sin, and how terrible the strokes of God's chastising rod." (Portion of editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe March 15, 1880, reprinted March, 1969.)

We dare not pry into the secrets of God to tell you the eternal refuge or dwelling place of Lot's wife. Her eternal abode is not revealed unto us. However, it is plainly revealed that, "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God." (Luke 9:62). Jesus told his disciples, "Remember Lot's wife." We can say, Remember Judas. We do not know his eternal abode but we do know that he was one chosen of Jesus as one of the twelve. We do know the bitter end of Judas here in the world. Rock salt has lost its saltness.

When a city was salted it meant perpetual desolation. This followed destruction. Those who have once tasted of the mercy and goodness of God, and have drunk of that Spiritual Rock, Christ Jesus, can never have satisfaction again in following after their lusts. Every time they follow the lusts of the flesh they keenly feel that they have displeased God. Habitual following the world will make them neither fit for the world nor the Church. They are mis-fit. When

one has brought shame and reproach upon the church to the extent that he is cast out, he has lost his savor! I do not mean that this is always the case when **men** cast one out of communion; it is when **God** casts one out. Even though he may have an abode of happiness after this life — he will suffer unending misery here. Read the last half of the 9th chapter of Mark and you will find that Christ's disciples were disputing among themselves the question, Who should be the greatest? Surely these had been regenerated, yet they needed conversion. No ones but the regenerated could really hear the teachings of Jesus. This dispute showed ambition, strife, and selfishness. Pride is the mother of contention, quarrels, and wrangling. These things are offensive. They had gone so far as to forbid one from doing miracles in the name of Christ because, "He followeth not **us**" (Mk. 9:38) Many of us are guilty of offending God's people because they are not in our particular sect. The greatest punishment seems to be the lot of the offender of humble sincere conscientious believers in Christ who feel so little and insignificant. Jesus said, "And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and we were cast into the sea." (Mk. 9:42) What a hell experienced through life here for regenerated children to offend humble believers!!! What a hell, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched". (V. 44) This worm is that worm of conscience which pangs the soul with bitter reflections of the happiness once enjoyed and lost, and the perpetual misery experienced. This anguish causes weeping and gnashing of teeth that only the child of God can experience here. Yes, it would be better for you to cease to live here than to have this sin ever before you, — tormenting you both day and night. Jesus adds, "For everyone will be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt". (V,49) The persecutions, struggles, and sufferings of the disciples were to be as salt to preserve and freshen the divine life in them. Continued pangs of guilt were good for them.

The burning fire which consumes the ungodliness in every new-born child of God was to make them more and more fit sacrifices to be consecrated to God. No one can ever quench this fire. One may think his conscience will soon quit its fiery darts. One may surmise that he can continue to disobey God until his conscience will bother him no more. If one be given a Holy Ghost conscience he can never quench it. To have peace of mind he **must** obey it. Your faith is tried by fire. Do not think that something peculiarly strange has happened unto you. Everyone's faith is tried. The trial never ends in this life. The warfare never ceases. Every time you think of rebelling, you keenly remember rebelling before — and there is a fresh pang of conscience. You painfully re-live every rebellion! What is the consequences? You say, Lord, not my will but thine be done. You are ready to persevere trusting the consequence with God. You are ready to make the supreme but reasonable sacrifice of your **body** to Him. You are careful that each and every word said, and each and every action performed, will be to the glory of God and the right influence to others.

Everyone either effects a good influence upon others or a bad influence. We may be firm in the theological doctrine of the bible that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was: " For us an offering and a sacrifice to God **for a sweet smelling** savour" (Eph. 5:2); yet, if we are not followers of God as dear children, and do not walk in love: our firmness loses its savor. See verse one. The predestinated purpose of God is to make His children like unto Himself. Jesus Christ was that salt with savor that made His people before God of good and pleasant taste and smell. Paul exhorts to unity, holiness, humility, and love. If we follow as dear children and walk in love what a savory influence it has on our fellowman and in our souls. This is the intent desire of every heaven-born child. How far we fall short of it! May we breathe

a prayer coming from the very depths of our innermost soul in the name of Jesus Christ for His blessings in our walk and talk and thoughts.

Father of Mercies: Give us feeling of kinship with Thee. Make us to realize that the sum of all that is true, beautiful, and good comes from Thee. Harmonize our will with Thine. May we, like children, believe without suspicion, love without distinction, and hope without limitation. Grant that we should turn away wrath with soft answers, glorify Thee with our whole life, be peacemakers in Thy kingdom, and spread good will to men. Make us to realize the value of right use of our God-given talents, and enable us to use them rightly. Teach us to separate the precious from the vile, right from wrong, truth from error, and wisdom from foolishness. Lead us in the old paths of righteousness for Thy name's sakes. Forbid that we should offend, cause one to err, speak unkindly, or do anything to cause our brother to stumble. Bless us to comfort sensible sinners, encourage the timid, strengthen the weak, feed the lambs and sheep, rightly divide the word of truth, teach those who desire to learn, reprove and rebuke willful offenders, and denounce heresy. May our writing, talking, preaching, acting, and thinking be sanctified by Thee that those who read, hear, and observe, — may experience a deeper feeling, have a better understanding, a new insight into some department of the spiritual life, and have nobler aspirations of life.

Lord, bless the labor of our hand and mind in preparing this article that our research, prayers and dilligent persistence may have a savory effect. Bless Thy people everywhere and revive us again that we be willing to sacrifice ourselves for peace among true believers and that there will be an end to unseemly strife as to which shall be the greatest. Grant this, Lord, and Thine shall be the praise forever more. AMEN!

E. J. L.

EDITORIAL

I would like to call your attention to a portion of the 49th chapter of Genesis, and ask that you read the entire chapter at your first opportunity. I begin reading at the 8th verse and read through the 12th.

"Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: his eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk."

There is only one portion of this which I have read that is in my mind now, but, of course, I wanted to read what I have in order to show the connection concerning this Shiloh that should come: ". . . unto him shall the gathering of the people be," which is the last part of the 10th verse.

The portion I have read, (and including much more in the 48th and 49th chapters,) is a part of the blessing that Jacob bestowed upon his twelve sons shortly before he was to leave the land of the living. He called his sons together and blessed them, as was the custom in that day. I do not mention any thing at this time except that which pertains to Judah; but you will recall that he had twelve sons: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Zebulon, Issacher, Dan, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Joseph, and Benjamin. I read that which pertained to Judah.

Judah was the head of one of the tribes of Israel; and if we trace it out we find that the government remained with the posterity of Judah, as mentioned in the blessing of Jacob. For instance, David and Solomon and all the other

kings and rulers to the days of the coming of the Lord into the world. We are informed that most of the members of the Sanhedrin, the law giving and judging body, were of the tribe of Judah. So we may be sure that the blessing given Judah by his father Jacob, was by inspiration of the will and purpose of God, and showed what should be until his descendant the Messiah should come.

Now in what he said pertaining to Judah as a lion's whelp, that he had gone up from the prey, etc., was in reference to the power and glory, as well as the purpose that God had for his people in giving them through Judah the person Shiloh; who without doubt was the Lord from heaven. And also that the sceptre should not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until this Shiloh should come.

It is most interesting to note that when Israel was in captivity, they were allowed a degree of freedom which was unusual for captives to have. They had their own laws and customs to a great extent. This was so in Egypt and in Babylon, and also when they were in subjection to the Romans. The descendants of Judah even in captivity were not deprived of the septre's power. They were not free of course, but were largely granted their own laws and customs.

Judah was called a lion's whelp. You will remember that in Revelation when there was great concern as to who should be able to open the book, and there was none found able; but then it was proclaimed that the Lion of the tribe of Judah had prevailed to open the book and to loose the seven seals. So, carrying out Jacob's blessing as recorded, the Lion of Judah prevailed; and this is what John saw in the revelation. There can be no question but that this Shiloh was verily Jesus the Christ the Son of God, and that the sceptre did not depart from the tribe of Judah until He made his advent into the world.

I do not know how many hundred years it was from the time Jacob blessed Judah until Shiloh came, but there is one thing certain: the God of Jacob enabled him to bless Judah as he did, and the matter was fulfilled perfectly: as it was also concerning the other tribes.

But more important in our consideration is Judah, and He who came into this world from heaven. He was made of a woman, made under the law, his mother being of the tribe of Judah: his Father was of course, God. So we see how that in the infinite wisdom of God and according to his eternal will and purpose, the Lord was made known in type hundreds of years before his advent. Those who have eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to understand as they read the Scriptures, see far more than the literal word that is written. And many in those days by the eye of faith, were enabled to look beyond their own day and behold the fulfilling of the types; and in the account we have under consideration, that the sceptre did not depart from Judah until this Shiloh should come.

You will recall that when Shiloh came, when John the Baptist declared that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, the Jewish world was in a terrible shape, for they had gone far away from the precepts which Moses had delivered to them from God, and formulated many of their own doctrines and practices. They were trusting, (as Israel often trusted,) entirely in themselves, and felt they were righteous by their works. You will recall that the Babylonian captivity was by reason of their transgressions in turning away from God; and yet God manifested his long-suffering in the midst of these things. We have been amazed that God would be so gracious and merciful when they would deny Him — when they would turn away from him and follow heathen gods, and practice many things of these gods. We are amazed that He did not just cast them away and forget all about them. It is evident that God today is a longsuffering God: if he were not, he would deal with our nation and the nations of the world as we deserve, since for the most part we have turned from him, and do not recognize him as the

God of power, of glory, and of mercy.

During the three or four hundred years before the coming of Shiloh, men went further and further away from God, to trust in themselves, in their own works for righteousness. They trusted that by their austerity and practices they could bring themselves into favor with God. And it is evident that this same spirit is rife in the world today, because all except the Lord's people still think that by certain incantations, rituals, and being careful to maintain what their leaders have told them is the right way to worship God, they feel that they are doing God's will; and that by doing so they purchase unto themselves a good degree; and shall eventually be brought into heaven and immortal glory. This is trusting in their own works.

But when one is born of the Spirit, all self-righteousness and trust in self is removed, and he no longer claims that he can of himself do what will be well pleasing in the sight of God. He is then made to realize that what he is, is by the grace of God, and that without the grace of God he does not know anything concerning the truth and the true worship of God. The world has the same understanding and feeling that Saul of Tarsus had as a Pharisee of the Pharisees, feeling that in all of his activities, however horrible they were, he was doing God's service. Unbelievers, as they were led by that same spirit have persecuted and put men to death, not for sedition or having different political views, but simply because they could not conform religiously with the leaders. I cannot imagine how men can be so low, so devilish, that they would burn at the stake, or drown or throw men to the wild beasts, merely because they could not conform to a system of philosophy foreign to their convictions.

I am sure that you will not find in all history where one of the Lord's churches or people, has stooped so low as to try to make men conform to the doctrine and practices of God our Saviour, for they have known that were it not for the grace of God, they would be just like all others who are without knowledge and understanding. They know how dead they are in themselves, and that grace is the only thing that can bring anyone into the knowledge of the truth, and give them hope of eternal life. The world always runs after false gods. I think of the Crusades of years ago, to which were gathered large armies under the approval of the supposed head of the church, and made pilgrimages to Jerusalem for the avowed purpose of re-capturing Jerusalem, and putting down those who opposed their system of religion, which they called the religion of the Lord and Saviour, when, as a matter of fact, they were acting contrariwise to the spirit that the Lord implants in the hearts of his own people.

You will agree with me I am sure, that, while we cannot agree and say Amen to the religious systems of the world, we are perfectly willing that each man should have the right to worship under his own vine and fig tree, in the way that seems right to him, without being molested by anybody, so long as he creates no civil disturbance.

When the Lord brings his people out of Egyptian darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God, they know that it was the love of God and his drawing power that delivered them, and that without it they would ever remain dead in trespasses and sins — not knowing that they were dead and without God in the world. Each one of you who know the truth, know that it was not when you were "up and doing", (as we are often told we ought to be,) but it was when you were dead in trespasses and sins, that, ". . . God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. . ." When one is first quickened to the knowledge of what he is in his flesh, it is common that he strives to justify himself by his own works, trying in every way he can to deliver himself from death and condemnation. But in

this he fails completely and is in a frightful condition until the Lord delivers him.

Knowing this experimentally for ourselves, we know that others can only be brought to the knowledge of the truth by the same grace of God. We are willing therefore to stand still, and leave the cases of every person in the world in the hands of Him who alone is mighty and able to save.

Isn't it wonderful to know that Shiloh came; to know that the Lord came in a body that was prepared for him in a miraculous way, born the Son of God. God did many wonderful things all through the ages — the Book is full of them; and he brought Jesus, who was Shiloh of the tribe of Judah, coming through the lineage of David and Solomon and others of that tribe.

As I have remarked, the Jews were in a sorry plight when John the Baptist came preaching that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. They were so dead and lacking in understanding of the real meaning of the writings of their prophets, that they verily thought they were the children of God, and the whole kingdom belonged to them. The self-righteous ones felt that all others were the scum of the earth; such as the publicans. But under the light and revelation given in the coming of Jesus, it was made manifest that those who were counted as nothing, whom the Pharisees would avoid meeting in the street, were typical of those who were beloved of God. The self-righteous claimed Abraham as their father — and felt that was enough; but John the Baptist rebuked them and told them that God was able of "these stones" to raise up children unto Abraham. John knew the power of God, and that the kingdom was at hand, and that this Jesus, this Messiah, this Shiloh was then being made manifest.

But we must bear in mind that the Sanhedrin was still in power, though under the Romans, until Shiloh came, and that many, if not all of them, were of the tribe of Judah; and they were in this manner wielding the scepter and were yet lawgivers manifesting the purposes of God, so that as it was written: ". . . The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come."

"And unto him shall the gathering of the people be." It is so very interesting to know how this was accomplished. We know that his own people after the flesh did not believe in him, and rejected him outright. But this was no problem, for all of the people who should be gathered unto him, were those who should be born of the Spirit, and not just merely born of the flesh. Those who know these things have great regard for what Jesus said, "The wind bloweth where it listeth; thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit."

So these who shall be gathered unto this Shiloh, are of an entirely different generation — born of the Spirit of God; and they are gathered by the irresistable power of God, for he alone draws them and no others can come to him. God has in his own power to give all the experiences, all the revelation to each of them, that marks and sets them apart as his, revealing unto them that Jesus is the Son of God, and that He is the Redeemer given them of the Father. We see the beginning of the gathering when the gospel was first preached and Jesus made his appearance, being about his Father's business. This gathering proceeds as ordained, and will continue until complete; for Jesus said, "All that the Father hath given me shall come unto me."

As God reveals to his people, he also hides from others. That is, does not bring them into the knowledge of the truth. Jesus said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." That Jesus was the Christ was hidden from those who crucified him, for we are told that if they had known that he was the Christ they would not have crucified

him. There is no promise that these things will be revealed unto the world. I know this is speaking plainly; but talk to some of your friends and neighbors, and do you not find that many know nothing about revealed religion and a hope of eternal life. Talk to them about the power of God, that salvation is by grace alone, and they do not know what you are talking about.

To be among those who are manifestly the children of God is a serious matter. No wonder we desire to walk circumspectly in this world. We feel with the apostle, "Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons we ought to be in all holy conversation and godliness." To be brought into the knowledge of the truth changes the whole outlook of our remaining days in this world, because we are made to realize that God has had pity upon us, and has given us a Saviour, and that there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved: — not can be, **but must be.** So we are enabled to look unto Him, and trust in Him alone.

"And unto him shall the gathering of the people be." He said that he would bring his sons from afar, and his daughters from the ends of the earth. Yes, they are all going to be gathered together, — all of them: for the Lord knoweth them that are his. It matters not how much confusion may get among them, we have the assurance of Paul that the Lord knows them that are his, and in this they are sealed.

Jesus does not make an universal proclamation; he does not promiscuously throw out an invitation to believe and join the church. No, but in the person of the Spirit he reveals the truth, and dwells in each and every one of those that the Father gave him before the world began. We can't forget this, for the whole testimony is that God chose his people in his Son before the world began. And he has fixed it so that each one in his own time is sealed with the holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of his inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession. Each one of them go back in their meditations and remember the mighty work that went on in them. These things they cannot forget, for the hope they received is the anchor of their soul sure and steadfast. His salvation is sure, for it is declared of God, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."

These things my brethren are for the gathering of the people to Him. It is sure and certain because it is all the work of the Lord and in no way contingent upon the will or the works of men.

These are troublesome times in the world's history, but I would have you to remember that the same God that brought the world into existance, is the one that sustains it, and that the people of the world are no farther out of the reach of His power now than they were in any other age of the world. God is therefore ruling and reigning and causing all things to fall out to accomplish his eternal will and purpose.

So shall it ever be while the world stands. God lives, rules and ever reigns, and never forgets his people, because he gathers his people unto Shiloh, and even death cannot remove them. He will bring them from the dead, comforming them to the image of his Son, as he has predestinated them to be, fitting them for heaven and immortal glory where all his people shall praise him forever.

J. D. W.

(The above was condensed from a taped sermon.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Clay Village, Ky., April, 1879

Brethren Beebe: — With your permission, I will try to comply with the request of brother Nathan Hart, of N. J., which is that I should give my views through the *Signs of the Times* on 1 Cor. 1:23, 24, which reads as follows: "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but

unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

Paul dedicates this epistle "to them that are sanctified [set apart] in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours." He exhorts them to be of the same mind and of the same judgment. He has been informed that there are contentions among them. One is of Paul, another of Apollos, another of Cephas, and another of Christ. He asks them if Christ is divided — if Paul was crucified for them. He points out one prime object in the preaching of the gospel. It was not to convert sinners to God, or make christians of them, as the Arminians now say, but that the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness. He also informs us that God will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. He then asks, "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" He then says, "After that [after he has made foolish the wisdom of this world] in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Not to save sinners or unbelievers from their sins, as work-mongers think, but to save or deliver believers from those divisions and other errors to which they are incident. He further says, "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom." The Jews required some tangible evidence that natural minds could comprehend; but Christ told them, when they called on him for a sign, that there should be no sign given them but the sign of Jonas the prophet, which was a very portentious one; but they failed to understand it. The Greeks seek after wisdom, but by that worldly wisdom they could not know God; it must be made foolish before the preaching of the cross could profit them in any degree.

"But we [who are sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be saints] preach Christ crucified." This is a part of the subject on which my brother requests me to write; and O that mine now could be the "pen of a ready writer," that I could even do half justice to the momentous, all important theme.

Christ crucified has been the excessive joy, the rapturous enthusiasm of the saints in all ages. Patriarchs and prophets looked forward through the vista of long succeeding ages with emotions of thrilling ecstasy, with assurances and the most soothing anticipations that a crucified Savior was their first and last and only but steadfast hope of salvation from their sins. "They saw his day, and were glad." By faith they saw him wounded for their transgressions, and bruised for their iniquities. They had his infallible promise that he would "ransom them from the power of the grave, redeem them from death." — Hosea 8:14. Those holy seers knew they had all gone astray, but that the Lord had laid on him all their iniquity. — Isa. 53:6. What a scene for those holy men of God! By faith they could behold the beloved, the dearly beloved Son of God, brilliant with the lustrous glory which he had with the Father before the world was, far, far beyond the reach of enemies to annoy or dangers to threaten him, leave that supermundane residence, and plunge into this wretched world of suffering, misery, degradation and death. What incentive could have moved the dear Redeemer to condescend to such unparalleled humility? It was *love*; love was the great moving cause. But love for whom? for friends who would lay down their lives for him? No; but for cruel enemies, traitors, rebels. These were the ones for whom he died.

"What pangs are these that tear his heart?
What burden's this that's on him laid?
What means this agony of smart?
What makes our Maker hang his head?

"'Tis justice with its iron rod,
Inflicting strokes of wrath divine;

'Tis the vindictive hand of God,
Incens'd at all your sins and mine."

Amazing, wondrous, unparalleled condescension! It was love, unalterable love that brought the dear Redeemer down from his supernal abode of excellency,

"To suffer in the sinner's place;
To die for man. Surprising grace!"

Yes, he was "made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." — Gal. 4:4, 5.

Notwithstanding all our defilement and wicked rebellion, that love could undergo no alteration. As soon could God cease to love his dearly beloved and only begotten Son, as he could the rest of his children. — See John 17:23, 24. Even sin, hateful as it is in his sight, could never stop the current or change the course of the love of God to his people, disobedient and rebellious as we are. Nay, "God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Did not wait for us to cease to be sinners, and perform a certain routine of good works, that he might save us: that is Arminianism; hence they do not believe that Christ came into the world to save sinners. No; they must cease to be sinners before he will save them. Now we believe that *"there is something done for the sinner."* "He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." — Mark 2:17; Luke 5:32. "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." — 1 Tim. 1:15. And that salvation was effectually finished by his crucifixion. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." — Acts 4:12. Well may we then "preach Christ crucified."

But we are not to conclude that his suffering on the Roman cross constituted all his crucifixion. See what he endured in the garden of Gethsemane, when he sweat as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground. Here was a cross indeed. In fact, his whole life, from his bed in the manger to his grave, was one continued cross. His people are frequently commanded to bear their cross, take it daily and follow him. — Matt. 10:3; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23, and many other places. But those commands did not signify that they were to bear the Roman cross, made of wood. Our old man is to be crucified continually, and the apostles could rejoice that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. — Acts 5:41.

But in Jerusalem and on Calvary was a tragical, terrible cross, where he was overwhelmed, immersed, baptized in suffering. That direful scene never had a parallel; yet with all the meekness of a lamb he bore it, while the dreadful vials of wrath were poured out upon him without mixture. Yes,

"He that distributes crowns and thrones
Hangs on the tree, and bleeds and groans;
The Prince of life resigns his breath,
The King of glory bows in death.

"And did he bleed, for sinners bleed?
And could the sun behold the deed?
No; he withdrew his sickening ray,
And darkness veiled the morning day."

And while the earth was convulsed, the rocks rent, and the veil of the temple severed in twain, man, unmoved, inflexible, callous man, could remain unmoved, except by vengeance and an insatiate desire to shed his blood — to take away his life. And yet for man, the monster man, he died; died to redeem, died

"To raise him from the depths of sin,
The gates of gaping hell,
And fix his standing more secure
Than 'twas before he fell."

And although his people were guilty as the rest, he "removed their iniquity in one day." — Zech. 3:13. It is for the work of that auspicious day that "we preach Christ crucified."

But although the preaching of Christ crucified is to the saints an animating and reviving cordial, it is to the carnal Jews and other Arminians a stumbling-

block and to the Greeks foolishness. And how is Christ a stumbling-block to the Jews? Well, exactly as he is to all other work-mongers. The Jews claimed to be Moses' disciples, and if they would only be circumcised, and keep the law, all would be well; and they think they can get along very well themselves. But only preach Christ crucified to them, and by that crucifixion he completely saved his people, without any of their works, good or bad, and the Jew, (or work-monger), being blind, and cannot see, bang they come against that stumbling-block, and into the ditch they go.

"And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offense," &c. — Isa. 8:14. "And to the Greeks foolishness." The Greek, whether an ancient or modern one, is a real wiseacre; must have a fine stock of the wisdom of this world. The modern one, if he is not of the ancient order, must understand their language, by which, and by other scholastic attainments, they seek after wisdom; but instead of asking it of God, they go to their theological schools, where they learn to "teach for doctrines the commandments of men." — Matt. 15:9. Talk to them about the crucifixion of Christ saving any one; foolishness! They will begin directly to cry out about their Dianas, or other imaginary gods. It matters not what they call them: they may call them by the name of our God; but hear them talk about theirs, and you will soon discover that he is as unlike ours as night is unlike day; so that when they give him the name of ours, it does not make him at all like ours, either in his nature or in his works. He will not save them until they do their part of the work; "but wants to save everybody," as one told me recently, if they would only repent and believe.

"But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." When our God calls, "the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live;" it matters not of what nationality they may be, whether Jew or Greek, barbarian, Scythian, bond or free, they must hear, and that call is the funeral knell to all their former boasted powers. The power of God and the wisdom of God give potency and efficacy to that call. He "who hath saved us, [not who will save us, if we do our part,] and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works," (2 Tim. 1:9) calls from death to life, "out of darkness into his marvelous light." — 1 Peter 2:9. This is an effectual calling; for "whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." — Rom. 8:30.

"Christ the power of God." Omnipotent, regal, reigning power. "All power in heaven and earth." Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. He has power "to subdue all things unto himself." — Phil. 3:21. Power to subdue our iniquities, and cast all our sins into the depths of the sea — Micah 7:19. And blessed be his name, power on earth to forgive sin. This is authoritative power, exercised because he has suffered for the sins of his people, redeemed them from under the law, satisfied all the demands of justice; therefore he can with authority forgive them. Besides, he has power over all the enemies of his people, to shield them from all danger, and control all things for their good. The last enemy is death, but he has conquered that; but that is not all, for he has power to raise us from the dead, to change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself, (Phil. 3:21,) and thus cause "this corruptible to put on incorruption, and this mortal to put on immortality." — 1 Cor. 15:53. And after having done all this, he has power to induct us into his glorious presence, where there is fullness of joy, and at his right hand, where there are pleasures forevermore. — Psalm 16:11. Truly, he is "Christ the power of God

and the wisdom of God."

This wisdom is infinite, limitless. It was "set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." It rejoiced in the habitable part of his earth, and its delights were with the sons of men. — Prov. 8:23, and onward. That wisdom had not only comprehended, but fully grasped the gracious and glorious way of the salvation of sinners from their sins, made a complete revelation of that wondrous way, and so completely comprehended all things in relation to the momentous work, as to render a failure in any part of it utterly impossible; and therefore should incite the most sublime praises and hearty thanksgivings in every redeemed, grace-given subject of his kingdom. He not only has this wisdom intrinsically, but when asked for it in faith by his children, he gives it to them "liberally, and upbraideth not." — James 1:5. It is a precious boon, for it is "pure, peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." — James 3:17. How different from "the wisdom of this world," which is "earthly, sensual, and devilish." The dear Redeemer is even "made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." And besides all this, his wisdom completely comprehended all the machinations and devices of our enemies, and exactly how to frustrate them.

"Though many foes beset our road,
And feeble is our arm,
Our life is hid with Christ in God,
Beyond the reach of harm."

This wisdom, too, has amply provided all that is needful to supply and support us in time, all that is necessary to fully beatify us in eternity. What a prospect is before us! What ecstasy awaits us beyond the end of our weary pilgrimage here!

"Fair, distant land — could mortal eyes
But half its charms explore,
How would our spirits long to rise,
And dwell on earth no more.

"No cloud those blissful regions know,
Realms ever bright and fair;
For sin, the source of mortal woe,
Can never enter there."

Your brother in hope,

J. F. Johnson

(The above by Elder J. F. Johnson appeared in the May 15, 1879 issue of the *Signs*.)

ORDINATION OF DEACONS

Pursuant to the request of Little Creek Church, Franklin County, Va., on Saturday, March 1, 1969, the following Elders: J. L. Bocock, Rufus Brown and W. M. Holland, were organized into a Presbytery by selecting Elder Holland, Moderator, and Elder Bocock, Clerk. Deacon J. R. Holly was selected to lead in questioning, and Elder Rufus Brown to offer the ordination prayer. And Deacon P. D. Akers was chosen by the church to be their spokesman.

The following deacons were also members of the Presbytery: Claude Johnson, Albert Hudson, James Holly, Oliver Powell, John Plunket and Edwin Dyer.

Brethren Lewis C. Aker and C. T. Abshire were delivered into the hands of the Presbytery to be examined as to their qualifications as deacons, and if found qualified, to be ordained as such of our faith and order.

Deacon Holly questioned the church spokesman in reference to the scriptural qualifications of these brethren. His answers were satisfactory. He also questioned both brethren relative to doctrine, faith and order. A motion was unanimously carried to proceed with the ordination with the laying on of hands, and prayer by Elder Rufus Brown.

Then Elder W. M. Holland delivered the charge in a very impressive manner; and Deacons Lewis C. Aker and C. T. Abshir were given back to the Church; and the Presbytery was discharged.

To all the churches of our faith and order, we recommend our beloved brethren as servants of God. It is our prayer and hope that they may prove a blessing to our people, and go wherever He directs, and be kept by His power, and thus hold out to the end as good and faithful servants of Almighty God. Jesus has chosen Zion and put them under His manifest care and government in his churches where it is the delight of all those in sweet fellowship to obey those that have the rule over them, and to "submit themselves"; and God enabling, this we will do for Christ's sake, for the church's sake and for our own sake.

Elder W. M. Holland, Moderator
Elder J. L. Bocock, Clerk

OBITUARIES

B. FRANK "CURLEY" MURPHY
(2-15-1890 — 3-23-1969)

Rehobeth Church, Union County, Arkansas, has lost by death another one of its members to wit: Frank Murphy. It causes us much concern to see our precious members taken by death. We pray the Lord to reconcile us together with his family to His will and our lot in this matter. Brother Murphy was born February 15, 1890, to M. G. and Mattie Smith Murphy in Union County, Arkansas. He died March 23, 1969, at the age of seventy-nine (79) years. Survivors include his widow, Mrs. Mary Murphy, ElDorado; three daughters: Hazel Wood, Ruth Baggett, (both of ElDorado) and Pauline Walker of Bastrop, La.; two sisters: Mrs. C. S. Yarbrough and Mattie Moore Harper; one brother: Warren Murphy, all of ElDorado. Nine grandchildren and seven great grandchildren also survive. Brother Frank was buried in the Rehobeth Cemetery after his funeral, which was conducted by Elder John Lee Smith of Spearsville, La. in the Bailey Funeral Home Chapel at ElDorado.

Brother Frank's belief was not in himself but Christ Jesus, the perfect Saviour of poor hell-deserving sinners. His faith was the same as his parents, brothers and sisters. The Murphys have been prominent members of Rehobeth Church since its constitution. He did not profess himself as worthy of salvation, yet he experienced a little hope that God's rich and boundless mercy embraced him in the Covenant of Grace.

The prayers of Rehobeth Church members and friends are in behalf of especially his widow and all those who mourn his passing.

This obituary written by order of Rehobeth Church in regular conference on April 12, 1969 by his pastor. Copies ordered filed, distributed, and published in the *Signs*.

Elder E. J. Lambert

HALLIE MEADS JENNINGS

A little past midnight January 11, 1969, our Heavenly Father took home one of his jewels in the form of Hallie Meads Jennings.

She was born February 1, 1886, the daughter of Elder Charles and Ann Jones Meads; and widow of Julius C. Jennings. She was a native and life long resident of Pasquotank County, N. C. She is survived by one sister, Lula M. Eues. She had no children of her own but was blessed with step-children who loved and cared for her.

Sister Hallie joined Flatty Creek Primitive Baptist Church in early life, and was a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God.

She had been in poor health a long time and suffered much the last few months. She often said that she longed to pass from this life to the precious home she hoped her Heavenly Father had prepared for her.

Her funeral was held in Twiford's Memorial Chapel, Elizabeth City, N. C., by her pastor, Elder I. S. Conner, and at her request she was laid to rest beside her nephew, Gaston Penn Meads in New Hollywood Cemetery, Elizabeth City, beneath a mound of beautiful flowers — a wonderful evidence of the love and esteem in which she was held by her many friends.

We grieve not as those without hope, but feel that our loss is her eternal gain; and that she heard her Father say, "Child come home." May we bow in humble submission to God's holy will, and give due praise and glory to Him for his grace while we live, for the promise of his presence in death, and for the heavenly abode of uninterrupted happiness He has prepared for his own before the foundation of the world.

Written by a sister-in-law in the flesh, a sister in Christ, I hope.

Maud S. Meads

ELDER E. M. SMITH

We, the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association, write in regards to our dear Brother, Elder and Clerk.

Brother Smith joined Upper Town Creek Church and was baptized June 16, 1940. He was ordained as Deacon May, 1945; liberated to speak January, 1963; ordained to the ministry November, 1963.

Brother Smith served the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association for many years as Assistant Clerk, and on Friday, October 11, 1957, at dear old Red Banks Church in Pitt County, North Carolina, he was chosen Clerk. Brother Smith served well and faithful until his death on November 25, 1967.

Brother Elwood leaves to mourn his death, his devoted wife, children, Association and host of friends.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder M. E. Garner, and others in Upper Town Creek Church, and his remains were laid to rest in the Elm City Cemetery waiting for the coming of the King of Kings.

If we could express Brother Elwood in a few words, we would say Meekness. We read in the writings of David that the Meek shall inherit the earth. (Psalms 37:11)

Done by order of conference of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association.

Elder A. P. Mewborn, Moderator
Brother W. W. Stallings, Clerk
Brother Carroll Williams, Ass't. Clerk

HENRY AYLMER DAVIS
(3-20-89 — 1-27-69)

Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, ElDorado, Ark., mourns the passing of another precious member: Aylmer Davis, born March 20, 1889, died January 27, 1969, at the age of 79 years. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Eva Mooty Davis; two sons, Jeff and Nolan; one daughter, Mrs. Raymond Haney; three brothers: Marlin, Minor, and Johnnie; five grandchildren and one great grandchild, as well as many other relatives and friends. His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder E. J. Lambert, assisted by the Ebenezer Baptist Church Pastor, David D. Crouch. Burial was in Ebenezer Cemetery.

Brother Davis trusted solely in the merits of Jesus Christ to perfectly save His people from their sins. He was made to rely on HIM wholly for there was no other to help. He was a very faithful member of Bethel Church for many years. Notable characteristics of humility, patience, meekness, unselfishness, faith, hope and love — all graced his life. He was blessed to render service to others secretly behind the scenes — not for the praise of men.

We pray to be reconciled to God in our loss of this dear brother. We pray God's richest blessings upon his family and many friends.

This Obituary composed by Elder Lambert by order of the church in regular conference on 3rd Saturday in February, 1969. It was further ordered that copies be given the family, a copy filed with the church records, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication. Read and adopted 3-15-69.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Moderator
Jean Burns, Church Clerk

ANNA FLORENCE BRANHAM

It has pleased Almighty God to remove from our midst Sister Anna Florence Branham, age 93, of 4840 Washington Street West, Charleston, W. Va.

Sister Branham passed from this life on Sunday, January 5, 1969, in the St. Francis Hospital.

The funeral service was conducted on Tuesday, January 7, 1969, by the pastor Elder J. C. Hammond in the Cunningham Funeral Home after which she was laid to rest in the Branham cemetery.

Sister Branham was the oldest member of the Hopewell Church, having united with the Church July 6, 1907. She was baptized by the late Elder J. W. McClanahan.

Left to mourn her loss, in addition to a host of friends and relatives, are two sons and four daughters: J. H. and William of Charleston, W. Va.; Mrs. Tina Rose and Mrs. Freda Tison of Charleston, W. Va.; Mrs. Christine Harris of Akron, Ohio and Mrs. Beulah Byrd of Cortez, Florida.

While we all mourn the loss of Sister Branham, especially her children, we feel that our earthly loss is her Heavenly gain. May we all be given courage from on high to submit to the will of the Heavenly Father.

Elder J. C. Hammond, Moderator
J. J. Bird, Clerk

HENRIETTA LUELLA CAMPBELL

Henrietta Luella Campbell, wife of the late Samuel D. Campbell, who predeceased her in 1958, was born October 5, 1875, in Iona, Ontario, passed away on June 20, 1968, at St. Joseph's Hospital, London, Ontario. She was the daughter of the late Deacon Duncan and Katherine McAlpine, mother of the late Sister Katherine, and leaves to mourn her loss one son, Dr. Mac D. Campbell of Miami, Florida, and one daughter, Jean Henrietta, the latter residing at the family home in London, Ontario. Also one sister, Mrs. Peter McPherson of St. Catherines, Ontario.

Sister Etta, as she was lovingly called, joined the Covenanted Baptist Church at Lobo, Ontario, in September, 1944, being baptized by her Pastor Elder George Ruston. She attended the Church all her life and often related to her family and dear friends the experience she had as a child of nine years of age. A great reader of the Bible and a firm believer in all the Scriptures, she had a wonderful memory of its contents and enjoyed conversing on it. She also looked forward to the *Signs* and received comfort from the sermons, and letters telling the experiences of the writers. Her home was always open to the "Old School Baptists" members and friends and dearly loved to entertain and visit with them.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder George Ruston, assisted by Elder Alec McColl at the Logan Funeral Home in London, Ontario, and her body laid to rest in the family plot at Fairview Cemetery, Dutton, Ontario, on June 22, 1968.

This is written on behalf of the family by her daughter Jean who misses her but knows that she is happy in her home beyond, where the last few years she longed to go.

Jean H. Campbell
London, Ontario

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 137 DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1969 NO. 8

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8/69
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

Look down, O great Jehovah God,
On those that love thy name;
Inspire our hearts to sing thy praise
And speak about thy fame.

How thy dear darling Jesus loved
A helpless humble poor;
And died for man the creature's sin
Which opened every door.

Thy saints in thee have been foreknown
By God's Electing Love;
Predestined here by faith to see
A happy home above.

Cleanse out our hearts, O Gracious God,
And make us live to thee;
Command, behold it shall stand forth
And ever shall it be.

J. Wayne Mitchell
Smithfield, N. C.

ELDER RUSTON TO THE MERIGOLDS

Dutton, Ontario
Jan. 1, 1969

Dear Brother and Sister Merigold:

Thank you for remembering us with the Season's greetings and with the letter written on the card.

We are both feeling the effects of old age and find it very difficult to know just how to slow down . . . I have been at twenty-two funerals in 1968. Six of them were dear brethren that we miss, but I believe it is well with them . . .

I often think of the good visits we have had in Maine. I hope you can get together and feel the love and fellowship one to another as is felt when our dear Jesus is one in your midst. I feel so unworthy of His love and mercy, but when some of the words come back to my mind that He spoke to me, it makes me desire to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified for a poor undone sinner that I feel to be; and if his love is so sweet to poor sinners here, what will it be to be there in Heaven above where all is love?

I feel so much of the time like a little child that longs for a look or kiss from the ones to whom they belong. Jesus said, "Ye are not of the world, I have chosen you out of the world." "O for such love let Rocks and Hills their silence break."

The many who have gone on before, we cannot help but miss, but as our minds go to God's word we find much to encourage us to hold the things of time with a loose hand. Hart has a hymn which says

"The soul that would to Jesus press
Must fix this firm and sure,
That tribulation more or less,
They must and shall endure.

The world opposes from without,
And unbelief within;
We fear, we faint, we grieve, we doubt,
And feel the load of sin.

Though we are feeble Christ is strong,
His promises are true:
We shall be conquerors ere long,
And more that conquerors too."

How blest we are to have such lovely hymns along with the Psalms and the Word of God; to have been taught by God that it is the work of God that we believe on him whom He hath sent.

Much love and best wishes from both Esther and me, and in sweet fellowship.

I remain your brother
George Ruston

EXTRACTS FROM LETTER

Whitefield, Maine
April 27, 1969

Dear Esteemed Brother and Sister Wood:

We have thought of you two so much of late. Hope you are feeling better than when you wrote last in December.

What sad changes there have been in your vicinity. It was so hard to know of the dear ones who have passed since we were there: Brother and Sister Norman, Brother Dade, Sister Friese, and others whom we met when there. All had lived their appointed time in this world, and it is so wonderful to feel the assurance that each is safe in God's haven of rest, awaiting that great day that we have hope for: to be raised in the likeness of our Saviour, to see him as he is and be satisfied . . .

We often think of and live over the blessedness that was ours to be permitted to visit with you in your home, and with the others we enjoyed so much being with. How we would love to see and talk of the better things with you both again.

We both were down with the flu at the Christmas season. . . Arthur is just now getting around from a heavy cold near pneumonia. He has just returned from the Veteran's Hospital, where he had the best of care, and they helped his condition right away. I knew his age, 92, was against him, but the great Physician was present with him and he is now doing well. . .

Yours in a sweet hope,
Arthur and Etta Merigold

"RICH IN FAITH — POOR IN SPIRIT"

Boones Mill, Va. 24065
Rt. 2. Box 423,

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

Your letter dated yesterday arrived in due time, and brought us cheer.

Last evening at Rocky Mount Church we enjoyed hearing Elder Woodrow Hudson. He is a lovely character and walks in the power that brought down the walls of Jericho. Elder Spangler introduced the meeting with song and a beautiful prayer; then became ill and had to leave; but soon recovered.

Jesus came into the world in need of nothing. By his obedience He wrought a coat of righteousness, and did therefore have two coats. In obedience to a revealed will He gave one of those coats to his bride, and she is arrayed in fine linen clean and white. Moreover, He took all her sins and transgressions and bore them to the cross, and put them away forever; and did therefore die for his people.

Now He prays for them, and his prayers add their power and virtue to keep faith from failing. However, He puts faith in the furnace of affliction: so to be "rich in faith" is to be "poor in spirit," and yet, as you say, "In the best of bonds."

God could have made the world in an instant as easily as He did in six days, — could have spoken to the fathers and sealed their instruction in a moment as easily as He did "at sundry times and in divers manners." But our God is made unto us Wisdom, and his children who are slow of hearing, weak, dim sighted and foolish, will all one day realize that He in Wisdom made all things and did all things, here a little and there a little, that his poor brethren might grow in grace "to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God."

Such is this Wisdom that never a saint lived a day on earth but what all things worked together for his good! It is the same God which worketh all in all. He does not profit by experience for He declared the end from the beginning.

I believe He destroyed the temple at Jerusalem to teach his children that He is worshipped in Spirit and in Truth, and not in houses made with hands.

A mighty writer said, "A new commanment I **write** unto you", but Jesus said, "A new commandment I **give** unto you." Because of this I will content myself by saying to you dear people, that

you are not exhorted to do anything that Jesus has not promised to do for you. So when the General Assembly raise their everlasting song, it will be to praise His wonderful works, which are more than can be numbered. This is true, and the brightness and goodness are far greater than mortals can contain; although we frequently feel to ask, "Where is the blessedness I knew?" Like Jonah, we feel we do well to be angry: turmoil and darkness come, and we resemble the woman who prayed for her children, and would not be comforted.

But Jesus is still a very present help in trouble, and faith will look to no other. Gladys joins me in sending love.

Your Brother,
J. L. Bocock

SEED

(By Elder H. M. Curry)

Seed is that from which anything springs; original; first cause. It also signifies descendants, generation, race. Everything comes from the seed. Everything's seed is in itself, and everything brings forth after its kind. In the creation God commanded the earth to bring forth grass, (all flesh is as grass,) the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind. He also commanded the waters to bring forth the moving creature which hath life. And the waters brought forth abundantly, the living creatures after their kind. He also said, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so."

Thus we see that at the command of God everything brings forth after his kind. How beautifully true do all things remain to the law of creation! In what exact harmony do they fulfill the command of the great God, in multiplying and bringing forth after his kind! God created Adam, and in him was given the seed of natural life, the source and origin of all mankind. In him they had their life, their name, and their identification. In him also were created all the passions and propensities of nature. And he was commanded to be fruitful and multiply. So the human race to-day are only Adam multiplied. But by Adam sin entered the world, and death by sin. How did sin originate? It came from the seed. For lust, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin. Hence lust is the seed of sin. Now, when Eve was beguiled, before she could conceive lust, (according to the law of conception,) there must be in her nature a similar seed, otherwise she would have proved barren, and no sin would have been brought forth.

But it was God's purpose that sin should enter the world, and death by sin. He never would have said to Adam, "Thou shalt surely die," except the seed of sin and death had been in him. God created all seed, the seed of sin and evil not excepted. How else could he be the Creator of heaven and earth and all that in them is? He forms the light and creates darkness; he makes peace and creates evil. — Isa. xlv. 7. These things are according to his purpose. How else could all things work together for good? —Rom. viii. 28. How else could he be God, and beside him none else? The seed of sin brought forth the transgression according to God's purpose, both of grace and creation. It was according to his purpose of grace, because Christ stood as a lamb slain. It was according to his purpose of creation, for "there was not a man to till the ground." Since "by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin, and so death (or separation) passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," (Romans v. 12,) we must forever remain in that condition, **without salvation by grace.** For the man (Adam, and his seed in him) was driven from the garden of Eden to prevent him from putting forth his hand and taking of the tree of life, and eating, and living forever. "Being alienated from the life of God, (Eph. iv. 18,) "without Christ," "having no hope, and without God in the world."—Eph. ii. 12. every imagination of the thoughts of our hearts is only evil continually.—Gen.vi. 5. All our thoughts all our desires, all our emotions, imaginations, unbelief, and all the works of

the flesh, (see Galatians v. 19,) spring from the seed of sin, and are necessarily wicked. We are born of the flesh, and are flesh.—John iii. 6. And "they that are in the flesh connot please God."—Romans viii. 8. Neither can flesh and blood inherit the kingdom of God.—1 Cor. xv. 50. We are a corrupt tree, that cannot bring forth good fruit, (Matt. vii. 18,) and are by nature the children of wrath, even as others.—Eph. ii. 3. We are indeed a seed of evil doers.—Isa. i. 4. But God, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.—Eph. ii. 4, 5.

Here we see a manifestation of salvation. This salvation and all things that accompany it must come from the seed. The kingdom of God is like a seed. "The seed of a woman" (Gen. viii. 15) brings forth salvation. Christ is the seed of eternal life, and from him all our salvation springs and flows. As our natural life with its attendant evils was given us in Adam, so our eternal life and all its spiritual blessings were given us in Christ. As we are brought into manifestion as children of the flesh by a birth of the flesh, originating from the seed of the flesh, so we are manifested as the sons of God by a birth of the Spirit, or of the seed of Christ. So that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. It is this seed, or spiritual life, that brings forth repentance. It also brings forth faith, without which it is impossible to please God. It is the tree of life, which brings forth all the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.—Gal. v. 22, 23. It is the good tree, which cannot bring forth evil fruit.—Matt. vii. 18.

Salvation not only springs from a seed, but is only for a seed. The promises are only to a seed. "Unto Abraham and his seed were the promises made."—Gal. iii. 16. "Unto thy seed will I give this land." —Gen. xii. 7. "All the land that thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever."—Gen. xiii. 15. The promise was made to Abraham and his seed, and embraces all the offspring of that seed as children of the promise. "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise."—Gal. iv. 28. "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee." And the covenant of this promise made to this seed cannot be disannulled by the law; for the Scripture says, "The covenant, that was confirmed before God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect."—Gal. iii. 17. So the promise is sure to all the seed.—Rom. iv. 16. This promise secures the blessing of the same seed: "Surely blessing I will bless thee." —Heb.vi. 14. "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." —Gen. xxii. 18. "All that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed." —Isa. lxi. 9. Neither is this seed to labor in vain, nor bring forth trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them.—Isa. lxv. 23. Not only is this seed blessed, but it is chosen; for the blessings came according to the choice. For God hath blessed us according as he hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world.—Eph. i. 3, 4. "Ye are a chosen generation," or seed.

If further proof is wanted of the choice of the seed, it may be found in this: "And because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed."—Deuteronomy iv. 37. Also, "Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers, to love them, and he chose their seed." This choice is to salvation, and is from the beginning; for "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation."—2 Thess. ii. 13. Not only is the seed blessed and chosen, but it is redeemed. "Fear not, O Jacob; I have redeemed thee." "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed." "He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied."—Isa. liii. 10, 11. This brings us to unconditional election, be-

cause it was made in the seed before the foundation of the world. And to particular redemption, because he hath redeemed us out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.—Rev. v. 9. Now that the seed is chosen and redeemed, it must be gathered. "I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west."—Isaiah xliii. 5. God gathers his children, because he redeemed them. This gathering is limited by the redemption; and as all men are not gathered, all cannot be redeemed.

God's covenant is also established with this seed. "I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee."—Gen. xvii. 7. And this is the covenant that is established with them: "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."—Hebrews viii. 10, 11. This seed is redeemed, gathered, and brought into the bond of the covenant; but it must be blessed with all spiritual blessings. Our Savior said to his disciples, "Seek, and ye shall find." This seeking of God is by the same seed. "I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain."— Isa. xlv. 19. It is this seed that seeks and finds, that knocks and it is opened unto them. It is this seed that seeks the Lord with all the heart, and that while he may be found. Seeking is one of the spiritual blessings with which this seed was blessed in Christ. The pouring out of the Spirit is to be upon this seed. "I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." —Isa. xliv. 3. So the pouring out of the Spirit upon the day of pentecost was the fulfillment of God's word to this seed. So also at the house of Cornelius. This seed also has God's words in its mouth. "My words which I have put in thy mouth shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever."—Isa. lix. 21. This is his covenant with them. God is also served by this seed. "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation."—Psalm xxii. 30. This seed shall also be justified in the Lord, for it is written, "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified." —Isa. xlv. 5. This, then, is the seed that is freely justified by Christ from all things from which it could not be justified by the law of Moses. This is the seed that is washed, sanctified and justified in the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.—1 Cor. vi. 11.

Now, through this seed **we can look back** from justification to our calling. "For whom he did predestinate, them he also called." **We can look forward** to the glorifying. "For whom he justified, them he also glorified." And to the final resurrection and adoption of all the seed, **for adoption is the end of predestination.**

Thus it is clear that the children of God and all their blessings come from a seed, and that seed is Christ. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

Yours in hope.

H. M. CURRY

(The above was copied from the *Signs* of August 15, 1883. Elder Curry shows how beautifully all of God's work harmonizes from beginning to end, in nature and in grace. — J. D. W.)

NEITHER HAVING DONE GOOD OR EVIL

"For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; It was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." (Romans 9:11-13)

We trust that God will enable us to rightly divide the word of truth, and

also to write in the Spirit of love. We wish the reader to keep this expression in mind: "that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." We believe election is taught in the text. God loved Jacob and hated Esau before either were born. (Of course, this love and hatred dates back before the foundation of the world, or even before time was in existence.)

If God decided to love Jacob and hate Esau after they were born, then this would be according to their looks, or to some of their actions or deeds. That being true, then the purpose of God according to election would not stand. But, the Scriptures teach that God chose a people in Him from before the foundation of the world. Therefore, God chose His people before they were in existance. The actions of the creature did not influence God in choosing them to be conformed to the image of His son. Also, God did not choose His people because He foreknew they would be better than the rest. There is not any guess work in the matter. God called His people out of nature's darkness and left the rest where they were. Therfore, by nature, God's people are not any better than the rest.

In the sixth verse of this chapter, we note that Paul said, "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel." Meaning, just because one is a natural Israelite does not mean that he is a Spiritual Israelite. Notice the 7th verse, "Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called." Just because one is of the natural offspring of Abraham does not mean that gives him a ticket to heaven. Natural Israel is a type of Spiritual Israel. "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." This does not mean the natural offspring of Isaac. (Remember that Esau was a son of Isaac.) In this instance, we see Isaac as a type of Jesus Christ.

Also, notice there is sharp difference between being of the seed of Abraham and being the children of Abraham. One may be of the children of Abraham and not be of the seed of Abraham. (Gentiles) We wish to call your attention to the 8th chapter of John and ask you to read verses 12 thru 44. As Jesus was talking to the unbelieving Jews, they remarked that they were Abraham's seed. We quote verses 37 thru 39: **"I know that ye are Abraham's seed;** but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, **if ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham."** Jesus plainly told these Jews that even though they were of the seed of Abraham, did not mean they were the Children of Abraham. They proved what they were by their works. They did not do the works of Abraham. "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." (James 2:17)

All of natural Israel are of the seed of Abraham, but all are not of the Spiritual seed of Jesus Christ. ". . . Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved." (Rom. 9:27)

The promise that was given to Abraham had a deep Spiritual meaning, "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: (no eternal life promised under the law — just natural blessings) Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. **Therefore it is of faith,** that it might be by grace; to the end **the promise might be sure to all the seed;** not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all." (Rom. 4:13-16) The meaning in a nutshell is this: The promise is sure to all the Spiritual seed — both Jews and Gentiles. The Jews are of the law, and the faith of Abraham also reaches to the Gentiles.

"Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I

hated." These were the twin sons of Isaac, so both were of the seed of Abraham. The Lord said unto Isaac's wife: "Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger." (Genesis 25:23) As we think of the two nations, we think of sheep and the goats, or of the elect and the wicked.

The natural man would like to twist the Scriptures around and try to make it mean something other than what is written. We make no apologies for the truth, and it does not need any of our weak support. We know it is our duty to speak the truth in love, and we further believe that it is our duty to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, and not try to "whitewash the truth".

"Jacob have I loved." Remember the Scripture: "Two nations are in thy womb." Therefore, Jacob represents the nation of God's people. "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." (Deut. 32:9) This Scripture gives solid proof that Jacob represents the people of God whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance. (see Psalm 33:12) "The Lord's portion." This means a part or fraction, doesn't it? This is in harmony with the Scripture that says, "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of Grace." (Rom. 11:5) Also we read, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32) Jesus did not say "big flock", but rather little flock. This also shows that God's people are few in number compared to all of mankind.

"Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird, the birds round about are against her . . ." (Jer. 12:9) This Scripture also shows that God's people are few in number. How? The Scripture says "as a speckled bird" in the singular, and not in the plural. Yet, the birds round about are mentioned in the plural. This Scripture shows that there is a difference between God's people and the world. God's people are spoken of as "Children of Light." The world is in darkness and hates the light. Therefore, God's people are hated by the world. "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John 15:19)

Let us get back to Jacob. "He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." (Deut. 32: 10) I believe this Scripture shows where God finds all of his people. This not only applies to Jacob himself, but it also applies to all of God's people. We ask you dear reader, have you been there? Do you know what it is to be in a barren condition? Have you been in a place where there is not any rest? Have you become so helpless (in a Spiritual sense) that you could not lead yourself, and that you could not travel on your own strength and you desired guidance, and prayed as one did: ". . . lead me to the rock that is higher than I." (Psalm 61:2)

God found Jacob in a desert land. We believe this means it was the time when God first made himself known to Jacob. So, when God first made himself known to you, you were not in a pleasant condition. God showed what you were by nature, and that you were a lost and ruined sinner. "Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations." (Ezekiel 16:2) It is necessary for one to be taught that he is a sinner before he will have any need of mercy. When one realizes that he is a sinner, he cannot help but cry for mercy. He cries because he feels the need of mercy. This prayer is not mechanical, but one cries for deliverance because he wants relief.

The love of God is everlasting. We believe that God has loved his people from all eternity. As God has chosen His people from before the foundation of the world, we believe that God has loved this same people from before the foundation of the world. "I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." (Malachi 3:6) We

believe the comfort of this Scripture shows that God is not changeable, and that He will continue to love his people, and that He will never forsake them even though in their feelings they may feel that God has forgotten them, or forsaken them, etc.

"But Esau have I hated." The love of God is perfect, and the hatred of God is perfect. Love and hate are two opposites, just as light and darkness. We think of the love of God as the positive side, and the hatred of God as the negative side. We believe the hatred of Esau is in a negative sense, meaning that God surely determined from all eternity to **not** have mercy upon all of Adam's race. On the positive side, as God determined to save a few, He also determined in a negative sence to not save the rest of mankind, but rather leave them where they are and let them perish in their sins. We believe this is what is meant in the sense that God hated Esau. Meaning, that God has hated the wicked from all eternity, or that God has determined beforehand to **not** have mercy upon the wicked, or **not** save the wicked from their sins, or just let them perish in their sins.

We quote from Zanchius: "When hatred is ascribed to God, it implies (1) a negation of benevolence, or a resolution not to have mercy on such and such men, nor to endue them with any of those graces which stand connected with eternal life. So, "Esau have I hated" (Rom. 9), i.e., "I did, from all eternity, determine within myself not to have mercy on him." (**Absolute Predestination**, pg. 58, by Jerome Zanchius)

The wicked do not know anything about the wisdom of God. This wisdom is hidden. See I Cor. 2:7. Also, consider these Scriptures: "But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." 2 Cor. 4:3-4) "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thes. 2:10-12)

"And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matt. 7:23) Someone might say, "Wait just a minute. I thought you said God knows everything. Well, you just quoted the Scripture that God never knew the workers of iniquity. So, here is something that God himself acknowledged that he did not know." In answer to that, we believe this means that God never knew the workers of iniquity or the wicked as His people. As God never knew the workers of iniquity as His people, He certainly knew that they were not His people, didn't He? And, since God knew they were not His people, He certainly knew they were workers of iniquity, didn't He? If not, then how did He know?

This is a hard doctrine. The world cannot stand it, and they hate it. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14) Paul knew there would be opposition brought in. The world says, "How cruel it would be not to give everybody a chance to be saved." If it were left up to us to save ourselves, or to perform certain conditions in order to merit our salvation, we would all be lost and doomed to everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, because we know that our righteousness is as filthy rags in the sight of God. Oh, how we do need the grace of God!

"What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." (Rom. 9:14-15) Who are we to question God? He was not obligated to save any. Who are we to question as to why He does not save more, or why does He not save all? If our souls were cast in hell, would we have any reason to blame God or charge him with

injustice? But, rather, would not we say as the poet, "If my soul were cast in hell, thy righteous law approves it well."

"I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." This is God's business, and He did not ask our advice. Who is man to try to tend to God's business? When God created the world and everything therein He did not consult man about the matter. This was all done and accomplished before God formed man of the dust of the earth.

"Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?" (Romans 9:20) It would do well that we take heed to that Scripture, and be reconciled to the will of God. God is the potter and we are the clay.

Let us remember that the wicked are not in trouble as other men, and they do not know anything about the soul afflictions of God's people. (see Psalms 73:5) ". . .The wicked shall do wickedly and none of the wicked shall understand . . ." (Daniel 12:10) The wicked will not come unto Jesus, and they will not cry for mercy, because they will never feel the need of mercy. The wicked love sin, and live in it, and have pleasure in unrightousness. Some of the wicked may appear to be righteous or religious in the sight of men, but it is for some selfish motive to promote their own business, interest, or seeking the praise of men, etc.

A sinner who comes to Jesus seeking mercy will not be turned back. Yet, one cannot come to Jesus unless he is drawn by the Father. "No man can come unto me, except my Father which sent me draw him." (John 6:44) We believe that God draws His people by his love." "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." (Jer. 31:3)

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:37) This is a positive expression, and it means that God's people will not fail to come to Jesus. Again, none of the wicked will be included in that number that will come to Jesus. Only those that were given to Jesus for his bride will come to him; and all of them **shall** come. Now, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Therefore, all of God's people are sinners, and they will come to Jesus seeking mercy and none of them shall be cast out. Therefore, dear one, if you feel the need of mercy, and find that you do not have the ability to do anything to merit your salvation, this is some sweet evidence that you are included in that blessed number. If you have ceased from your own works, and you do not have any tools to work with, it is some sweet evidence that you are a fit subject to enter into that rest. "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." (Heb. 4:10)

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

CANNOT EXPRESS HER ENJOYMENT

810 S. Rose,
Lodi, Calif. 95240

Dear Brethren:

It is time to renew my subscription; and I will take this opportunity to tell you that I enjoy your paper more than I can ever put on paper. I have some old copies dating back to 1918. I treasure these papers which a sister in Christ gave me. I re-read many of them, and by articles file them on cards.

Would like to know if you have any articles by E. G. Webb. I understand he was an able writer. If you do have any, would it be possible to include some in your paper. (We do not have any of his writings available. — Ed)

God bless you all in your efforts to publish the truth as it is Christ Jesus.

Mrs. William Holland

ELDER W. W. HUDSON AND FAMILY ARE IMPROVING

Elder Woodrow W. Hudson filled his appointments which were announced in the *Signs*, and the brethren greatly enjoyed hearing him. He came with Sister Hudson and their two children to our home for a day or two of visiting, and then left expecting to attend the Quarterly Meeting with the brethren in Canada.

While driving near Bath, N. Y. a large truck swerved onto their side of the road, striking and virtually demolishing their car. Brother Hudson suffered a badly broken arm and severe head and other wounds. Sister Hudson suffered a badly broken arm and other wounds, and their 2½ year old daughter suffered head and other wounds; while their 5 year old son suffered shock, cuts and bruises.

We are glad to say the children were able to leave the hospital after a few days, and that after about twenty days Brother and Sister Hudson were able to fly to their home in Louisiana, where it is expected to require several weeks for their recovery.

We will give a further report in our next issue.

J. D. W.

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the **Skewarkey Union** was appointed to be held with Briary Swamp Church the 5th Sunday in August and Saturday before. The church is located about 2 miles south of Stokes, N. C. on highway 33.

Elder E. C. Harrison was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder M. E. Garner, alternate.

We wish to extend a cordial invitation to all to come and worship with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Union Clerk

LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The **Lexington-Roxbury Association** is appointed to be held at the Old School Baptist Meeting House at Holcottville, Delaware County, N. Y. Wednesday and Thursday, September 10 and 11, 1969. Those coming on Tuesday take the Denver Road at Kelly's Corner to the Crystal Spring Farm, the second house north of Denver Post Office and store. Those coming Wednesday go directly to the Meeting House.

Brethren and friends, lovers of the Gospel truth, are invited to attend for the hearing of Jesus preached, the way, the truth, and the life.

Elder A. J. Slauson, Moderator

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **Smith River Association**, the Lord willing, is to be held on Friday before the 1st Sunday in September with the Pine Creek Church, Floyd County, Va. (about three and one-half miles east of Floyd on Rt. 221 — look for association signs.

On Saturday and Sunday the association will meet at County Line Church, located just off the Parkway on Road 635.

All lovers of the Truth are invited to meet with us.

Amos Hash, Clerk

ORIGINAL WHITE OAK UNION

The next session of the original **White Oak Union** will be held with the church at Stump Sound, the Lord willing, the fifth Saturday and Sunday in August, 1969.

The church is located about one mile east of Holly Ridge, North Carolina.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

L. H. Southerland, Clerk
Chinquapin, N. C.

PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCEMENT

Stockdale, Texas

Dear Brethren:

It is time to renew my subscription and I do not want to be without it as long as I can see to read it. I was just a small girl when my parents subscribed for the *Signs*, so I would be lost without it.

I want the brethren to know that we of Mt. Olive Church, Stockdale, Texas, are still, by the grace of God, carrying on. We are blessed with a little band, who surely must be kept by the dear Lord's loving care, for we cannot keep ourselves.

The **Pleasant Valley Association** is set to meet with us the 3rd Sunday in August, and Saturday before. Stockdale is at the intersection of Highways 123 and 87. Ask for

Lela Culpepper

OUR HEARTFELT THANKS TO ALL

Kingston, N. Y.

Very Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

Beloved in Christ's rich and precious love that enables and causes hearts to run together as two drops of water: We feel this is the reason of this message

of love to you both, with thanks and praise to the God above for his goodness and kindness to you, that has enabled you to be one in true married life for these 50 long and short years. I know whereof I speak as my married life consisted of about 61 long years, yet they were short.

Knowing you both have a heavenly Father, you have something precious to look forward to in the world to come.

With much love to you two saints in Christ.

Your little brother in Christ's love,
Amasa J. Slauson

(The above was received with an Anniversary Card from Elder Slauson. We received many cards and other expressions from brethren and friends who learned of our 50th Wedding Anniversary the 10th of June. Our children held a reception in honor of the occasion and more than a hundred brethren, friends and relatives gathered from nearby states.

We appreciated all the cards and expressions of love and fellowship, though so unworthy of their esteem. These all reminded us that truly it is by the grace of God we are what we are; and that God has greatly blessed us all of our lives. We feel that we know the truth of Jeremiah's language, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

Virginia and John Wood)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND
(To June 1, 1969)

Alma Viola Mortimer, Can.	$3.00
F. L. Lambert, N. C.	1.00
Mrs. N. B. Kilby, Ga.	3.00
L. D. McCumbers, W. Va.	3.00
Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.	1.00
Mrs. W. B. Hayes, Ala.	1.00
Victor D. Borst, Jr., N. Y.	8.00
Mrs. Alene Lindstrom, Tex.	2.00
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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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EDITORIAL

THE CHURCH AT SMYRNA
Rev. 2:8, 11

"And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. Fear none of these things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

Too often I have had it said to me, this or that scripture does not apply to us in this day. If the Old Testament, or any part of it, does not apply to us today, then there is not any evading the fact that Paul telling Timothy that all scripture is to the man of God and for his correction and instruction, was an empty, meaningless gesture from Paul to Timothy; from Paul to us. I am saying here, once and for all, that all scripture is profitable for all the men of God. If there was an exception, it does seem logical that Paul would have pointed out that exception; it does seem that, since he was the Apostle to us Gentiles, that he would have gone to all care in clarifying the matter for us.

If John Doe is allowed to mark some part of the Bible as not being binding on us today, then, for the life of me, I am unable to see why the next elder cannot do the same thing. And if this policy is pursued (and if it is right, it is worthy of pursuit) soon none of it is going to be left to us. For my part, as God gives me grace, I expect to hew to the line — to the law and to the testimony — for, mark my words well, when we do not have the spirit of receiving what has been given us by inspiration, it is because that there is not any light in the one testifying. (Isa. 8:20)

When the Saviour fed five thousand it pleased him to distribute the food through the disciples.

Many years ago a group of Old Baptists were visiting in a noted park. Each visitor was asked to sign a register. In the group were two ordained ministers of the Old School Baptist people. I was one of them, and I signed my name without any title of any kind, and moved away from the group, as I wanted to look into other things. Unexpectedly, I was called back to the desk. A precious sister asked me to sign the register correctly, using the word elder before my name. She said, "You are an elder, aren't you? You are a minister, aren't you? Tomorrow or sometime in the future others will be here, and if you do not acknowledge him in all your ways, that visitor will wonder if that man was the same man that my people knew years ago." I signed as she asked me to, and I do not hesitate any more if I am asked if I am a minister. The highest authority on earth has said that I am. Shall I impugn their work? Shall I cast reflection on their deliberations? If I am in any public gathering and an officer calls for a minister I go forward and tell him that I am one.

The One whose face shown with the light of heaven made Himself known unto John as the caller and upholder of stars or angels or ministers. To this angel, the One like unto the Son of man addressed his message to this church through him. As natural food passed through the hands of the disciples, also does these messages come to the minister first. This minister is a man that has been called to minister to the flock in this place, and in our immediate surroundings there will be situations and settings exactly like unto this one. In the most of cases these local churches will have ministers. The situation will often be similiar to this Asian church, and the message has not been changed from those churches to the ones of today. Christ has called ministers as overseers or undershepherds over these local flocks.

Every minister (as well as the lay members) feels his sinfulness. They all feel to be the chief of sinners, not fit to be a witness, but these feelings do not give us the right to call in question the work of the Spirit in calling and qualifying ministers. Nor does it give us the right to hedge and dodge and deny being called to minister to the saints, to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.

What is said to this church is said by one in Authority. He is the forerunner, the first born from the dead; He is the One that is first in facing danger and obstacles; He is the One that always obeys and is always heard. He is to the little one in the school of grace, what the letter Alpha (A) is to the first grader in literal school; and since none will ever know Alpha without going to Omega (Z), so also is Christ the only One that is wisdom to us all the way

through this life.

Great is the mystery of godliness, and no less true is it after we read John's description of the One that spoke. And yet, with all His majesty and splendor, he died. The crowning of every gospel sermon is the resurrection of the dead. Regardless of how many truths are presented, they fall as unopened gifts when the resurrection of sinners is not preached. Regardless of the joys of heaven; regardless of the shed blood of Jesus; regardless of the security of sinners while tabernacling in this life, heaven is an empty abyss if sinners are not saved in soul, in body, in spirit, for certainly we are that now, and it is that which is **now** that the gospel is addressed to.

But why introduce the resurrection of the dead into this series of articles? Do not ask me, ask Christ. Ask the One who was clothed with a garment down to His feet. Ask the One who had a golden girdle on. Ask the One who had a sharp two-edged sword in his mouth. Ask the One whose countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. Go to sacred history and ask Paul why he argued the resurrection of (not from) the dead before the Sanhedrin court. Ask him why the rebuke of the Corinthians for their doubt and quibbling about how the dead are raised. Grave things are facing these brethren. If there be no resurrection of the dead, why be concerned at all. That is the reason of the Christ introducing the subject of the resurrection to them. He is saying, I know what you are surrounded with; I know the false, professing, nominal Jews that are seeking your life (both as to the church, and to natural life, as well as casting sly, sneering insinuations in their face about heaven); I know how you are entering into a long period of suffering; I know the trials that await you by the cunning temptations that the devil is going to bring against you. But do not be dismayed, for all that is facing you faced me before it faced you, and even though they killed me and nailed me to the rugged tree, I am alive. As they did not overcome me, neither shall they overcome you.

"I know thy works." This is not the way of condemnation. This is approval of their works. They were obedient people. God was working in them both to will and to do of His pleasure. I do not want to lay myself open to the challenge by those that know the meaning of words. God is the effectual cause of all righteous thinking and action. The oldest and best promise of God is that, "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and **cause** you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and **do** them." (Ezek. 36:25,27) How irony it is to blame our Methodists friends for foolishly sprinkling people, claiming, and that wisely, that there is not any efficacy in the work, and then for us (of all people) to turn around and liken the work of God as having no efficacy in producing good works — that His sprinkling is as worthless to produce an effect as is the sprinkling by men. God always approves what he does. God saved us from condemnation, and I preach that; God saves us by His grace, and I preach that. God works effectually and mightily in his people, and I preach that. This work of grace and love is approved of God (Job 14:15, Eph. 2:8, 10; Heb. 6:10), and we preach, if we preach the gospel, the approval of all the works which he hath wrought in us.

"I know the tribulations." Ah, the fellowship and divine relationship between Christ and His people. How unpleasant is the meditation when at home in the body — are my tribulations such as belong to the body of Christ. Am I having to pass under the rod because of wrong doing, or am I indeed suffering for the sake of Christ? Anxious moments tarry, and frequently threaten to overcome that He is not mine and that I am not

His, and yet I know and am assured that bastards do not desire to know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings. (Phil.3:10) It is my feeling that none of our trials and afflictions are outside the pale of what our Saviour endured for us. Thus, his knowledge of the tribulations of this church was not limited to knowledge but it went further than that, for He became acquainted with them by first suffering for them.

Perhaps it is not amiss to meditate and write about the knowledge of God. That it embraces all things can not be questioned; that His knowledge reaches as far into the future as it has reached into the past. It would seem sometimes that the thought of God knowing all things would cause us poor sinners to be careful **what we think** as well as what we do, for God **hears** what we think. That God knows all things is generally accepted as Bible truth, but it seems to be a part of the subject to say that God knows **what** we do, but equally as sure, that He knows **why** we do as we do. The motive in our heart is known equally with the certainty of the deed.

"I know thy poverty." This may be poverty of a bank-account-kind, but I doubt it. It does not seem to be conducive to much soul searching, to apply this to a shortage of the riches of this time world. If the lack of earthly things call for a charge from Christ, then many more of the people of the earth are benefitted by these writings as much as are the Primitive Baptist people. God's grace does not cause the works of ungodly men and women, even though they be called by men as benevolent; God knows the sickness and death of the non-elect as well as of His people, but that does not mean that He is writing to the non-elect about his knowledge of their tribulations. Surely He knows the subjects of his glorious kingdom, and that they are poverty-stricken in spirit. He knew what it was to be poor; to have no home, to have no name, and even to be betrayed by his own household; and He knew the leaness of soul and the barren branches that His precious people felt to be.

"But thou art rich." Not rich in faith (although these poverty-stricken ones were so), for, in the midst of all the loveliness of the ones suffering under tribulation, of the faithfulness of those laboring in the kingdom of heaven, of those that had fled for refuge having left all behind, there were imposters, having slipped in unawares to spy out the liberty of this body of saints. They were rich in their own feeling, they were fat on the good things that they were stealing from the children of God. In every age the troublers of Israel will be found among those that say one thing and do another. They will have ways like unto sheep; they will make much to do about eating and drinking of their own and of wearing garments with the appearance of the saints dress, but they are not inwardly clean. If I had a message to leave my brethren, as I come to the threshold of the evening of my ministry, it would be to do less shooting of arrows into the camps of Babylon and to take a careful scrutiny of those within our own borders. The troubles we have known have come from within. The treason and unfaithfulness that has come upon us has been by those that came telling old wives tales and sob sister stories; who acted enough like a sheep to get in; who knew many of the peculiar vernaculars of the little children so as to rob while appearing to assist; who had the outward likeness but not the inward cleanness.

Riches in the garb of this world; riches in the strange potions of foreigners; riches in those things which hide the real reason for being present, these are indeed those that are rich, and herein is sorrow for the city of Zion. Being rich is alright. There is not anything to condemn in those that have earthly riches, and Old Baptist ministers are as far from preaching the gospel as they will ever be when they are lambasting the rich. Condemn those that are rich in self-righteousuess, yes; rebuke those that have not submitted to the righteousness of Christ and are going about (as though they were Jews) setting up

their own righteousness, yes put out from the body all those in the body (but not of the body) that would dare set up another gospel under the auspices of the church, that would slip in, claiming this and that. (Matt. 19:20; Luke 18:13)

This church, like every one founded on sound doctrine and wholesome practice, will find many enemies. It would not be safe to minimize the world being against the speckled bird, but neither is it safe to presume that our only enemy comes from without. The Spirit witnesses to these beloved brethren that enemies of every kind are to intimidate them, but that none of these things are to be feared. That they would suffer them, there can not be any dispute. If this is called the predestination of all things, then let us call it by the right name. All predestination is an arrangement before, a marking out, a setting of time and place. God's predestination, his purpose, his establishing, his election, and many other like words show the power and wisdom of God in placing a limit on things. When God's predestination is attacked, then, also and likewise, is His purpose, and all of His work, both in grace and providence, in action or, as some say, in permission. I apologize for my mistakes, but, if, as it is so vehemently asserted, God has handled adversity in a haphazard way in the scriptures, I see nothing to be gained by apologizing for him.

This suffering was appointed by somebody. If God did not appoint it some one else did, or, if not that, then the Spirit was writing to this church and warning them about somethng that **might not** come. If some one desires to say that the suffering was not appointed, but was foreknown, then immediately another question presents itself, to wit, if God foreknew it, it had to be certain, for it is not likely that a man, much less God, would foreknow an uncertainty. If it was certain, then somebody had to make it certain, someone, either God or the devil, had to appoint it. I would never think of forcing a brother or sister to conform to understanding the purposes of God, but I do not feel free to smuggle a denial of God's purpose.

"Behold the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried, and ye shall have tribulation ten days." I have said what I have said about predestination because I am expecting, God willing, to say much more about it and related subjects before I am through with these churches and the things that the Spirit says to them. I want to say something about the devil's work. I have had but little inclination to preach and write about the devil, hoping that I have been called to preach Christ and salvation, but as it bursts right out in the streets of Zion that God does not control the devil; that He lost the first conflict with him in the garden, and that he has been sorely disappointed since then, I want to go on record once more and affirm in a brotherly manner that as far as the Bible is concerned, God made all things that were made; that without him that nothing was made; that what he did make he made it for himself. It is folly, my dear brethren, to assert that God foreknew some of the devilment that would take place in the garden, and yet that he went on and made and set the garden in array, knowing that it would forestall his plan.

I have had it said unto me, "Why be concerned about where the devil came from?" Well I am. If God is before all things, then I have **nothing** to be alarmed about; if He is not, then I have **nothing** to glory in. There is not a single place of neutrality expressed in the Bible. God has not compromised with the devil. Or has He? If God made all that was made, then what? God created the devil, or he is self existent. Admit one or the other. All things were created by Him, and if the devil is a thing, God created him. If God did create him, then it was done for the pleasure of the Creator. (John 1:3; Rev. 4:11)

The idea that the God of wisdom and power created an angel and the angel rebelled and was cast out of heaven, is too puerile to be seriously considered. If this were true, and I dared preach the surety of poor sinners, even a ten year old would look at me with pity, for he

would know that heaven was just as insecure now as it has been.

God did not make something and it fail for what He made it. All that the devil has ever been or done has been devilment. And believing as I do that God created him and that to destroy, (Isa. 54:16), I do not want it preached in the pulpits that I go into that God is the instigator of sin. As plainly as I feel that the scriptures teach that God created all things, just as plainly do I not believe that the holy God is the author of sin.

Dearly beloved, stand fast in your calling. You will suffer, yes; you will be cast into prison, yes; you will endure severe trials, yes. For ten days (years) these brethren were to be persecuted and put to death, and if we are what we hope we are, we will experience all of these things.

God is our refuge and our guide. This guidance will be unto death. He being with us until death, and faith being a fruit of His Spirit, it follows that faithfulness will be wrought in us to the end, and faith being a gift of God, (Gal 5:22; Eph. 2:8), and other things being sinful, (Rom. 14:23), nothing will avail us anything save that which faith enables us to do, and the crown of life is given at the end (See I Pet. 1:3).

W. D. G.

EDITORIAL

PROPER SUBJECTS FOR BAPTISM

In reading history, and of late **Orchard's History,** we note the wide difference of opinion and practice of those who hold to "believer's baptism" only, and those who hold that any and all should be baptized in order to receive regeneration and salvation. This difference is fundamental and therefore important, and we desire to examine the subject a little.

We read in Matthew 3: 13-15, "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him."

This John was the one of whom it was written, "Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare the way before thee." John came, saying, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Before John was born the angel had said unto his father, "He shall go before him (the Lord) in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just: to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (Luke 1: 17)

We read that the law and the prophets were until John, so we know that the "fulness of time" was come that the One of whom the prophets had spoken, should make his appearance. John plainly said that he himself was not the Christ, but was the one who as the forerunner of Christ, should declare that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore, I am come baptizing with water. And John bare record saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost."

John testified that Jesus was the Lamb of God who should take away the sin of the world; and in order to make him manifest, "I am come baptizing with water," which plainly indicates that there was something in baptizing with water, that was distinctive and typical of the coming and the mission of Christ.

This baptism was not a variation or continuation of the numerous washings under the law. Those washings had their typical importance, but baptism was

none of them. Baptism was not something effectual in putting away the sins of the flesh. Certainly it was not so with Jesus, for he had no sins; and it is no more so with the Lord's people. John's baptizing pre-figured rather the way and manner in which it was purposed of the Father that Jesus should put away the sins of his people. There was the immersing, signifying the burial of the dead; and the raising, signifying the resurrection of the dead.

When Jesus came for baptism, John forbade him, for John knew that what he was doing typically in baptizing, he himself needed actually at the hands of Jesus in accomplishing his mission in the world.

It is therefore evident that baptism has a deeper and more important significance than is usually attributed to it in the thinking and practice of men. Paul said that "John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, that they should believe on him which should come after him; that is, on Jesus Christ." So John, as the forerunner of the Lord, making straight his paths, not only pointed out Jesus as the Lamb of God who should take away the sins of the world, but in baptizing them on their confession of sins and their bringing fruits meet (or worthy) for repentance, anticipated typically the way and manner in which their forgiveness of sins should be obtained.

Looking at it after its fulfillment, it is plainly seen what was and is the significance of baptism. Its proper use is therefore more imperative since it has but one purpose among the Lord's people.

John did not baptize unless one brought forth fruits meet for repentance, refusing to baptize without them. The repentance was before the baptism: baptism was in no way the cause of repentance. When Peter wrote that baptism was, "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God," he was saying that the answer of a good conscience toward God indicated a previous discharge from the guilt and condemnation of a guilty conscience: that the filth of the flesh (sin) was already put away; and that the ordinance of baptism having been commanded of such, was entered into in recognition of an experience in which Jesus was revealed as the Saviour of the sinner by His obedience in the fulfillment of the law, and by His sacrifice for sin, in which He died, was buried, and then arose from the dead. When one submitted then, as now, to this baptism, it was a confession that he had not only been quickened to the knowledge of being dead in trespasses and sins, but also had experienced relief from so great a condemnation by the appearing of Jesus as his Saviour.

In other words, those who had a good conscience toward God, having been born of the Spirit and given hope and assurance that Jesus had saved them by his life, death, and resurrection, were the only proper ones to come under the ordinance. Those who were pricked in their hearts at the preaching of Peter, were commanded to arise and be baptized, — not as causitive of the pricking, but rather because of the pricking. The Eunuch was baptized after his confession that he believed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God.

What we are trying to say, is that all were brought into the knowledge of their redemption before they were baptized; all were "saved" before they were baptized in every instance mentioned in the Scriptures.

But when men began to preach "another gospel" in the early days of the church, and teaching for doctrine the commandments of men in their blindness and zeal, they theorized many things contrary to the doctrine of God our Saviour, and worshipped their theorizing rather than God. It has always been true that in the absence of the teaching of the Spirit, men have framed their own dogmas; which are much more important to them than the revelation that God has given in His Word.

These theories compose the greater portion of their doctrines even today, and do not speak the words that God commands, but have diminished them, (Jeremiah 26:2) while adding much that

is far different than the "simplicity of the gospel."

It is in line with these things that we find the ordinance of baptism has taken on what is referred to as "baptismal regeneration," meaning that by the ordinance the subject is regenerated without reference to the imputed work of the Spirit of God. They invite everybody to partake of it with a simple "I believe", without giving a reason of a hope or evidence of a work begun in them by the Spirit of God.

In **the Church** baptism is to be administered only to those who have been born of the Spirit, and thus give evidence of having been begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. In submitting to baptism, a brother or sister acknowledges his faith that Jesus died, was buried, and arose from the dead, all for the redemption of the Lord's people.

There is much more to be said concerning this wonderful subject. We hope what we have written will suggest that others give their thoughts also.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

CHARITY

In the Signs for December 15th we tried to present some thoughts on the nature and function of the various gifts placed in the church by the wise Masterbuilder for the comfort and edification of the body of Christ. No presentation of the subject would be complete without saying something of Charity. Paul in the close of the twelfth chapter of first Corinthians, after having enumerated the various gifts, says, "Yet shew I unto you a more excellent way." He then continues in the thirteenth chapter to expound the best of all gifts, charity. Charity is the life, beauty and effectiveness of all ministry in the church of God. Without it one is as "sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." The word in the original Greek which is translated charity in the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians is the same word which is translated "love" in Galatians 5:22: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace," and is translated "love" instead of "charity" in other places in the New Testament. Therefore we conclude that love and charity are one and the same thing.

King James the First, of England, in 1604, acting on a motion made by John Reynolds, a Puritan, in Hampton Court Conference, and adopted by that body, appointed fifty-four scholars and clergymen to assemble and translate the Scriptures into the English tongue. Forty-seven of those appointed served in making this new translation, which was completed in 1611, and henceforth known as the "Authorized Version." This version still remains the most popular with English speaking people, while very persistent efforts are being made to supersede it with a much more recent "Revised Version." It is true that the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments, were written by inspiration of God, and contained no errors as originally given to holy men of old, but in making the various translations that have been made since the Scriptures were thus given by inspiration of God, such translations were made by fallible men, for whom inspiration was not claimed. We would not dare say that the forty-seven men who assembled in King James' time to translate the Scriptures into English were inspired men. On the other hand, it is to be supposed that they made mistakes, though it was not their intention to do so, as they labored diligently to have everything as correct as possible. Why these forty-seven men saw fit to translate the Greek word **agapen** as charity in some places and as love in others, we do not know, but as both charity and love are one and the same word in the original tongue, it is not worth while for us to try to discriminate between them, and try to make charity mean something that love does not.

To our mind, it would not a whit

change the meaning of the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians if the word "love" were read in every place where "charity" is used. Nor must we confuse charity as scripturally used with charity as it is used in a common sense by the world at large to-day. People nowadays speak of charity as something external, visible, tangible, while in the Scriptures it is an **inward grace-born virtue of the heart.** The outward act of benevolence in giving to alleviate the hard lot of the less fortunate of mankind is usually regarded as charity, but not so in the Scriptures. According to Paul, a man might bestow all his goods to feed the poor, and be by the world therefore called a charitable man, yet charity be wholly lacking in the act and in the sight of God. God looks upon the heart, and his judgment is according to what omniscience sees therein, while man hesitates not to call a man a christian if his outward life is all right. Just so the outer surface is clean, it matters not if the interior is full of dead men's bones, so says men's judgment. If the heart be pure, it matters not if the outside be in rags, so says God's judgment. Since it is the judgment of God that concerns his people, we can afford to pass the other by with scant notice.

The way in which society is constructed makes poverty necessary. "The poor ye have always with you." It has been said that man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn. In the struggle for existence the fittest survives, the weak go to the wall. As long as man's nature continues to be so supremely selfish as it has ever since man was made, some are bound to accumulate more than their share of ease and riches, while paupers and beggars will continue to be a by-product of so-called civilization.

It frequently occurs that those who have achieved success in life by gouging out the existence of their fellow-men, seek a truce with their conscience by handing out a dole to the poor, and expect therefore to be called charitable benefactors of the race. The truth is they are but giving back to those they have robbed a mere pittance of the living taken from them. Why call this charity? If a man robs me of a hundred dollars, and then puts a ten-dollar bill on the collection plate next Sunday, does that atone for his treatment of me? Not until he comes to me and makes restitution of all he has deprived me can he make it right. So the increase of two cents a gallon on oil all over the country cannot be squared by the donation of a pipe organ to some big city church later on. The endowment of a public library by a steel magnate cannot amend for the hundreds of arms and legs and eyes and lives lost in laying the foundation for that magnate's wealth. Why call all such things charity? They are all a hideous travesty of the truth. They are all but crumbs flung to the masses by the princes to keep the crowd from pressing too hard upon their masters.

Jesus laid the axe to the root of the tree that time that a rich young ruler came who had great possessions, yet who professed to have kept the law. Jesus told him, "One thing thou lackest." That one thing was love, or charity. Without love all obedience is but disobedience. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Had the young ruler really loved his neighbor as himself, could he have had great possessions? Had such love really actuated him, he could have had not a moment's rest so long as he possessed one farthing more than his neighbor. The fact that he had great possessions showed his obedience to the law to have been but formal, literal. It bespoke an entire absence of the knowledge of the spirituality of the law. Self-love, not love for the neighbor, was his guiding star. If the real charity of Christ was in a millionaire's heart to-day, and ruling him to the exclusion of all else, he would be a poor man to-morrow, for he could not rest in peace until he had descended to the level of the poorest and the weakest. To prove this we have but to point you to Jesus. He was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, yet he made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant, was made in the likeness of

men. Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Here is charity in all its length and breadth and height. God, though the earth is his and the fullness thereof, became a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and had not where to lay his head. Did not he descend to the level of the poorest and the weakest of all his people? Yes, he went even lower than they, he was numbered with the transgressors, and made his grave with the wicked in his death. Is not this charity in all its glory?

The source of all our charity is Christ. There can be no charity in the hearts of men only as it is engendered there by the Holy Spirit. Jesus laid down his life for his people. This laying down his life applies not only to his final death upon the cross, but all the way along through his life. He was continually laying down his life for their sake. The grace of God in the hearts of his people constrains them to serve one another, to lay down their lives for one another. Paul laid down his life for the church. He counted all the former things as dung and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. He was crucified to the world and the world was crucified to him. He died daily. Here was a continual laying down of his life. Peter was told that when he should become old another would take him and bind him and carry him whither he would not. He, too, laid down his life for his brethren.

Jesus calls his servants from the daily walks of life to his service, and no matter how bright the prospects before them they do his bidding and lay down their lives for the brethren. To spend and be spent in the Master's service, without thought of reward or recompence, is the acme of true charity. We asked one who professes to be a preacher the other day, how long he thought the ministers of various creeds would keep on preaching if their salaries be taken from them. He replied, "Not long, and I, for one, if I cannot make a living preaching, will leave it and go into something else." Surely not much laying down one's life for the brethren here, not much real charity, yet this same man is strenuous in sending sums to foreign missions; being charitable to the heathen, he calls it. Paul lays great stress on the importance of charity. No gift for the comfort and edification of the people of God is valuable without it. Though one speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, it is an empty sound. It lacks force and directness. One might have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, might even have the faith to remove mountains, still if charity be lacking he is nothing. One might give his substance to the poor, and his body to be burned, but without charity it profits nothing.

Paul lists sixteen characteristics of charity or love: long-suffering, kindness, lack of envy, not boasting, not puffed up, decency, unselfishness, patience, right thinking, abhorring iniquity, rejoicing in truth, "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things," and never fails, and at the close of this thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians, concludes by saying, "Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Why is charity the greatest of the three? Is it because it lives longer than either faith or hope? That may be part of charity's greatness, but it is not all of it. Faith and hope end with this time state, but charity (love) continues on through all eternity. At the close of the believer's mortal life faith is lost in sight, and hope is swallowed up in fruition, but charity never fails. The greatness of charity consists not alone in that it is longer lived than either faith or hope, but also in that it is the very energy, the very life-blood of both faith and hope. Faith without love, hope without love, are dead things. Love is the vitality of all the gifts and graces of the Spirit. Love is the cement that compacts faith and hope. It is the knitting that binds all believers' hearts together. We once heard a man say that he believed the doctrine that the Old School Baptists preached, and hoped in

the mercy of God. This same man lived not far from an Old Baptist Church where there was regular preaching, and very seldom went to hear it. What was the matter with him? He lacked charity. His faith and hope may have been of the right sort, but charity, or love, being absent, he was of no value to the church, he profited nothing. Had charity been his it would have immediately energized his faith and hope and his steps would have immediately turned Zionward. He could not have helped it, he would have shown his faith by his works. Love is the fount of all good works. We might say that a man with faith and hope present and charity absent is like an electric light with the current turned off. The wire is there and the lamp is there, but no light is radiated. Just the moment the key is turned, however, the whole room is lighted from that same wire and lamp, owing to the energy transmitted through it. So one might have the proper faith and the good hope through grace, yet both lie dormant in inactivity until electrified by that love that passes knowledge, that current of eternal vitality which streams from the Head of life through all the members of the body in some stage in the existence of each of them.

Herein, then, it seems to us the preeminence of charity lies: in that it gives faith and hope their meaning and substance, transforming them from inactive principles into flaming guiding stars of a spirit-filled life. Charity submerges the interest of the individual in the benefit of the whole, it compels the esteeming of others better than ourselves. It will not compromise with error, for it rejoices not in iniquity; it will not make a brother an offender for a word, for it thinketh no evil. Charity makes one strong to bear the infirmities of the weak. It receives into its fellowship him that is weak in the faith, but not to doubtful disputations. If smitten on one cheek, charity turns the other also. When reviled, it reviles not again, returns not railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing. It glories in infirmity, that the power of Christ may rest upon one. It suffers long, and even then does not get out of patience or become angry, but is kind. What a lofty ideal is before that believer who truly desires to be charitable. It is a goal worth striving for, but only grace can strengthen for the race.

May the Lord accomplish in us all this charity that is so excellent, that our gifts may be enlivened by it, that the fragrance thereof may delight the worshippers in his holy city.

(Editorial by Elder H. F. Lefferts January 15, 1915.)

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church, Caswell County, N. C., a presbytery met April 13, 1969 at 2:00 o'clock p. m. for the examination of brother Earl S. Rudd, Dewey O. Chandler, Jr. and John E. Herndon, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, ordain the three above mentioned to the full work of the office of deacon.

The solemnity was begun by singing hymn number 264 Hymn and Tune Book. Prayer was offered by Elder Haywood Wray. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders W. Curry King, E. F. Oakley, Kenneth Key, Haywood Wray, Wallis A. Smith and Donald E. Smith.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder W. Curry King as Moderator and Elder Donald E. Smith as Clerk. Elder Kenneth Key was chosen to perform the examination of the candidates.

Deacon A. C. Byrd having been duly appointed by Bush Arbor Church in conference March 8, 1969, spokesman for the church requested the candidates be presented to the presbytery as following: John E. Herndon by Deacon G. F. Squires, Earl S. Rudd by Deacon B. L. Mabe, Dewey O. Chandler, Jr. by Deacon Robert Apple. Examination was made by Elder Kenneth Key using scripture reference 1st Timothy 3rd chapter. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidates, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Wallis A. Smith. Elder W. Curry King delivered the charge to the candidates. Scripture reference used was the 6th chapter of Acts, verses 1 through 7. The Moderator asked Deacon A. C. Byrd if the church approved the work of the presbytery,

which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to Earl S. Rudd, Dewey O. Chandler, Jr., John E. Herndon and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The three ordained deacons were delivered back to the church as ordained deacons of the Old School, Primitive Baptist Church at Bush Arbor.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder E. F. Oakley.

Elder W. Curry King, Moderator
Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

OBITUARIES

SISTER MARY ETHEL SINCLAIR

Sister Mary Ethel Sinclair (Marshall), widow of the late Oliver Sinclair (1939), died at St. Joseph's Hospital, London, Ontario, on July 29, 1968. She was born in London Township in June, 1886, and died in her 83rd year.

She is survived by one daughter, Myrna, of London, and two sons, Orville of London and Wilfred of Toronto.

Her funeral service was conducted by her pastor, Elder George Ruston, at the George C. Logan Funeral Home in London, on July 31, 1968.

She was received into church fellowship in June, 1917, at Ekrid, and was baptized at Lobo by Elder J. B. Slauson. She was a worthy member for over 61 years, and was dearly loved and highly esteemed by her friends in the church. In her later years she was much at the feet of Jesus. Her failing health and eyesight made her much dependent on her dear Lord and Saviour. She was faithful to the cause of truth, and came among her cherished friends to meeting as long as she was able.

Sister Sinclair's interest and kindness were both a great encouragement to the writer in his early ministry. She manifested a steadfastness and humbleness that become those that fear God and hope in his mercy. She will be greatly missed by her family and friends.

Written by
(Elder) D. Alex McColl

SALLIE ALDRIDGE KING

Sister Sallie Aldridge King, the wife of A. I. King, was born in Caswell County, North Carolina, on June 27, 1907 and departed this life January 22, 1969 at age of 61. She was the daughter of G. Rich and Lizzie Stainback Aldridge and leaves to mourn her departure her husband and father and the following children: Thurman, Hansford, and Richard King of Route 1, Yanceyville, N. C.; three sisters, Mrs. E. D. Boswell of Reidsville, N. C., Mrs. T. W. Chandler of Yanceyville, N. C., and Mrs. Ben Terrell of Burlington, N. C.; three brothers, Carlton Aldridge of Yanceyville, N. C., Stamey and Hulen Aldridge of Reidsville, N. C., ten grandchildren together with a host of other relatives and many friends.

Sister King was received into the fellowship of the church at Bush Arbor at her September, 1942, meeting and was a most faithful member. She had a long lingering illness of some 8 to 10 years. We feel that she now has ceased from all pain and that her spirit is resting with her Lord and Master. May God's blessing be upon each member of her family, and may they be able to say, "Not mine but God's will be done."

Her funeral was conducted by Elders Wallace Smith, Donald Smith, E. F. Oakley, and the Mr. A. B. Falls, Jr. Her body was buried at Bush Arbor Church Cemetery to wait for the coming of her Saviour, Jesus Christ, who will call her from the sleeping grave to be made like unto His own glorious body, where sickness, sorrow, and death will never come.

Done by order of the church at Bush Arbor June 7, 1969.

W. C. King

TRACY C. EDWARDS

We are called upon with sad hearts to record the death of our dear Brother Deacon Tracy C. Edwards, who was born in Duplin County on July 4, 1889, and departed this life January 30, 1969, making his stay on earth 79 years, 6 months, 26 days.

Brother Edwards united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Muddy Creek, fourth Sunday in May, 1932, and was baptized the same day. He was ordained as deacon the fourth Sunday in February, 1949.

He was married twice. He was first married to Anna Fountain on January 3, 1915. To this union one child was born who passed away in a few hours after birth. The mother passed away the following day, December 3, 1915. On October 7, 1916, he was married to Caroline Shepard, who survives him along with seven lovely children. One boy and six daughters. Ruby Brown of Chinquapin, N. C.; Dora Stokes and Clara Bennett both of Raleigh, N. C.; Pansy Dobson of Smithfield, N. C.; Glenda Dersen of Burlington, N. C.; Tracy C. Bird of Greenville, N. C.; Carnelious Edwards of Beulaville, N. C. and several grandchildren, and one sister Dora Thigpen of Beulaville, N. C. He lived a devoted life to his

family, his community, and to his church.

When at church, he would often talk about how glad he was to be with his brethren. He was a true believer in Salvation by the Grace of God. The memory of this dear Brother will never die in the hearts and minds of his wife and children. His brethren and sisters in the Church and many friends who will greatly miss him. But we believe he was rich in faith and that he has gone to a home of rest, therefore, we sorrow but not as those who have no hope. We thank our God for his goodness and mercy and for blessing us with such a leader and Deacon as Brother Edwards was. The Church has lost one of its most faithful members. We feel our loss is his eternal gain. His funeral was conducted at Muddy Creek Church by his pastor, L. L. Yopp. His body was laid to rest in Devotional Gardens near Warsaw, N. C., beneath a mound of beautiful flowers. May the Lord in his mercy, comfort and reconcile his companion, the children and all who mourn his passing. Therefore be it resolved that we bow in humble submission to the will of God who doeth all things well.

We, the Church at Muddy Creek, extend our love and heartfelt sympathy to the family.

It was requested that a copy of this obituary be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, one to the family, and one recorded on our Church record. Done by order of the Church May 24, 1969.

Written by one who loved him very much.

L. H. Southerland
Elder L. L. Yopp, Moderator
L. H. Southerland, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT FOR ELDER WILLIAM EDWARD GRIMES

Though beclouded with a deep feeling of unworthiness and inability I, in submission to the request of the members composing the Spring Green Primitive Baptist Church, will attempt to express a few remarks in memory of our departed elder and brother, Elder William Edward Grimes. Being made conscious of the daily walk our esteemed elder was richly blessed to take in life day by day, creates within my mind an awareness that this task is far out of reach of ths mortal being. Thus I am led to utter a feeble petition to our Lord, desiring that I might be inspired beyond this carnal mind, that mind our beloved elder made mention of the depravity and condition of from time to time in his discourses.

Elder Grimes entered this life on January 12, 1881, and was called home on February 11, 1969, thus making his stay upon this earth 88 years and 30 days. He was the son of the late William Thomas and Pattie Branhill Grimes. He was born in Martin County.

Elder Grimes united with the Falls Primitive Baptist Church in August, 1912, was liberated to speak in public in September, 1914, and was ordained to the full office of the ministry in December, 1922. He transferred his membership to Spring Green Church by letter in September, 1922. Thus Elder Grimes held membership a little over 56 years and attempted to declare the wonderful truths of salvation by grace, for a little more than 54 years. At the time of his death he held the pastoral care of Flat Swamp, North Creek, Conoho, and Spring Green churches. He was also currently serving as moderator of the Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association. He was well known to Primitive Baptists in many sections throughout our state and in other states holding various appointments throughout the same. He performed many marriages and conducted funerals in a number of counties.

Elder Grimes was a firm believer in salvation by grace. The theme of his discourses was the love of God in his kind acts of mercy and grace toward poor sinners. He rejoiced in a sweet hope that he had experienced that new birth, a gift from God to poor sinners granting them faith in the divine sovereignty of an all wise, powerful, and merciful God. Outstanding in his discourses was the topic of the resurrection. Our dear brother and elder professed a strong belief in the hope that he would one day be raised like his Savior, be like him, and be satisfied. Our elder was never satisfied here in this life, longing for that day of immortality and incorruption beyond the grave.

He was considered an outstanding gift and possessed much poise and clear thinking in presenting his discourses. He possessed one of the loveliest and charming personalities to be found anywhere. His love to his brethren, his devotion to the cause of our eternal Savior, and his humbleness and gentleness to all made him dearly appreciated and most acceptable.

He was first married to Annie Roebuck in 1906 who preceded him in death in 1956. Surviving this union are 4 sons, 3 daughters, 20 grandchildren, and 8 great grandchildren. His second marriage was to Sister Ludie Corey Williams House in 1959, who also survives.

Funeral services were conducted in the Spring Green Primitive Baptist Church by Elders I. S. Connor, S. R. Boykin, E. C. Harrison, and W. W. Taylor of Texas. Nine other ministers from this and other associations were present and each was also called upon to make a few remarks. Interment was in the Spring Green Church Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, a token of the

esteem in which he was held.

RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* and *Old Faith Contender* for publication, a copy be sent to the family and a copy be placed on the church record.

Done by order of conference fourth Saturday in March, 1969.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Johnny Ray Gardner, Committee

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

We, the Primitive Baptist Church at Robersonville, bow in humble submission to the will of our God, and we hope our heavenly Father, in calling away the spirit of life of our dear brother and deacon, Marcellus Everette Roberson. He will be greatly mourned by the membership of our people.

He was born on June 7, 1891, making his life span 77 years and 8 months. There will be much sorrow in the family of loved ones. So many lovely memories to pass through minds of all that were near to him by relation or friendship.

We feel that his dear companion Sister Mary and the children and grandchildren are comforted in feeling that all was done to aid and comfort and make his last days his best days. And in all our sorrow we confess our loss is surely his eternal gain, and is now sleeping the rest in the paradise of his peace, then the glorious resurrection, the hope fulfilled by him in the joys of everlasting praise to God the Father and the Son our Savior, Jesus the Christ, and the everlasting Spirit. May these joys comfort the sad hearts in these days of disappointment and may they cause us to say together our God is too great to be unjust, too good to be unkind, to wise, to make a mistake, and too righteous and merciful to change.

May He continue in mercy to keep us and lead us in life's uneven journey to the place our page of life's book is turned. We beg it be in sweet submission to the greatness of God in his eternal wisdom in all things both visible and invisible, in time and eternity.

It was agreed a copy be given to the family, a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times, Old Faith Contender*, and *Zion's Landmark* for publication, and a copy be placed on the church record.

Submitted in love, according to request and as passed in conference first Saturday in March, 1969.

Elder I. S. Connor, Committee

INFANT BUTLER

Funeral services were conducted at Goodwater Cemetery by Elder J. J. Collnis on June 7th for the infant daughter of James R. Butler and wife of Dothan, Alabama. She is survived by her parents; her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Grady Barnes and Mr. and Mrs. John R. Butler; and her great grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Barnes, and other relatives.

J. J. Collins

J. S. SORRELLS

Deacon Josephus Sorrells died suddenly May 25, 1969, after a long illness. The writer had been with him in three glorious communion meetings at New Hope, Bethlehem and Ephesus Churches, the three previous Sundays, — How we enjoyed those services! He was an able Deacon and had been a Primitive Baptist some 50 years.

He was 78 years of age. He is survived by his wife, Sister Mae Sorrells, and eleven daughters: Sister Ollie Pate, Dollie Harrison, Mollie Holloway, Vestie Champion, Annie Bell Mott, Wanda Webb, Tea Butler, Robbie Waters, Tessie Campbell, Bettie Petretta, and Aline Butler. Also by three brothers: Elder E. R. Sorrells, Frank and Robert L. Sorrells; thirty-three grandchildren, and fifty-five great grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted at Tabernacle Church, Hartford, Alabama, May 26th by Elder V. C. Hartzog and the writer; with interment in the adjoining cemetery.

J. J. Collins

JAMES F. HARRIS

Brother Harris was born December 28, 1878, and died April 15, 1969; aged 90 years. He had been a faithful member of his church for some 75 years, and a leading citizen and pioneer of Vicksburg, Alabama.

He made a request several years ago that the writer conduct his funeral, and this I was blessed to do at Goodwater Church on April 17th. For many years he was my good neighbor and friend.

He is survived by one son, Allie O. Harris; five daughters: Lottie Summers, Lettie Smith, Nell Wright, Willie Hicks, and Beulah Weeks; 27 grandchildren and 46 great grandchildren; and many other relatives and friends.

J. J. Collins

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 137 DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1969 NO. 9

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/69
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"HE HATH DONE ALL THINGS WELL"
(Mark 7:37; Heb. 2:14)

All things were done well here below
By Christ, the Son of God,
Who hath entered heaven above
By his own precious blood.

I heard a sermon on this text
By an Elder so true;
When he announced his text the tears
Did my own eyes bedew.

This comforting sermon was preached
By the late Elder Fly,
Who, we believe, has now entered
That rest beyond the sky.

It remaineth to God's people,
According to scripture,
Who were chosen in Christ ere time,
And their salvation's sure.

All things were done well in creation,
Providence, and in grace,
By which God hath called a number
Of Adam's fallen race.

All were concluded under sin,
According to God's word,
When Adam willfully transgressed
A command of the Lord.

For all were in him as their head,
And Satan did conspire
To bring them under his power,
And he was a liar.

Jesus, that "he might destroy him
That had the power of death,"
Himself took part of flesh and blood,
And did this through His death.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, N. C.

WATER TURNED TO WINE

Box 357,
Elgin, Oregon 97827

Dear Elder and Sister Spangler:

We had not heard of your illness until you had recovered enough to be back in harness, and although we regretted to hear of your illness, we were most pleased to hear that you are able to be about your work, fulfilling your appointments.

We received a nice letter from Brother Carter, and were most humbled to know that his writing us was a manifestation of his love, of which we know ourselves to be most unworthy. Yet, in spite of our feeling of unworthiness, we are hopeful that he will continue to write a few lines from time to time.

Dear ones, for some reason we feel burdened to write you a few lines in regard to a portion of the 2nd chapter of John.

"And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there and both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

"And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it.

"When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, and saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou has kept the good wine until now." (John 2: 1-10)

The first verse denotes that a marriage is taking place; and in reading Mark 10:7, 8, we see the **oneness** of man and wife. "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh."

Now if we turn to John 17:22, 23, we see the **oneness** of God the Father, God the Son, and the child of grace. "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."

It would seem that the six waterpots (law) represents the old covenant, and must needs be filled to the brim of works before the sinner can drink of the wine of grace, and be a recipient of the New Covenant. "I will put my laws into their minds and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." (Hebrews 8:10) "And wine (grace) that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil (salvation) to make the face to shine, and bread (manna from the throne of God) which strengtheneth man's heart." (Psalm 104:15)

"Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (John 1:17) Grace can be dispensed by no other than our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to the needs of the poor sinner that is made to cry for mercy; and is such a one that has part in that **oneness** spoken of in John 17:23.

I have heard this miracle denied by some not of our faith, saying that it was not wine but grape juice. Yet it would seem from the standpoint of human judgement, to be equally as great a feat to change water to grape juice as it would be to change water to wine. It pleased Jesus to give thanks unto God that these things were hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardneth."

Dear ones, I know this is poorly written and that I have only hinted of that which I understand this to mean, but the scriptures say that we only see as through a glass darkly; but we are made to rejoice in the knowledge that if we can see at all, it is only by His grace and His mercy.

Do hope that you will forgive us for being so neglectful, for though you are often on our minds in sweet love, we are the world's worst at writing.

In Christian love,
Lloyd and Florence Spikes

SOME EXERCISES OF MIND

Dutton, Ontario

Dear Elder Wood:

When Hector Fletcher of Lobo, Ontario, sent me the particulars for his wife Ena's obituary, he wrote some of his exercises of mind which may be comforting to others, if you care to use them in the *Signs*.

Esther Ruston

"In the years of my twenties while in company with others in farm work in small groups of mostly young men, the language was not the best. If I made a slip of my tongue, it was sent to my mind, "Lo I am with you always." I would feel so ashamed that it soon stopped. While at work in the fields one day I was quoting the first few verses of the 8th chapter of Romans, and I heard these words, "That promise I give unto you." I went home and told Ena.

On one occasion, while making syrup

in the bush, I was putting on a fire, which I had done many times before. This time the thought struck me of the awfulness of Hell. One day while working in the field in deep thought, the hymn, "Why art thou then cast down my soul?" came to me. On another occasion, on our anniversary day, I thought that Ena and I had done very well, as we started out with a very heavy mortgage. Of course I was thinking of the world, and a portion of the 23rd Psalm came to me with such sweetness I had not known before: "In pastures green He leadeth me the quiet waters by." It was on my mind for days and days.

In one of my downcast times, while in the field, "My grace all sufficient shall be thy supply," came very sweetly. At another time I was in the field very cast down. I dropped on my knees asking the Lord to be merciful to me a sinner, with tears on my cheeks. I grabbed those words as a drowning man would.

I hope these few happenings won't burden you to read.

Very unworthily,
Hector Fletcher"

SHORT HISTORY OF NORFOLK CHURCH, NORFOLK, VA.

Thirteen people requested Elders Joshua T. Rowe of Baltimore, Maryland, and L. Charles Meads of Weeksville, N.C. to come to Norfolk for the purpose of constituting them into a church. They did this because they had letters of dismission and desired to be regularly constituted into a Primitive Baptist Church.

They met at the corner of Camp Avenue and Poole Street in a hall for this purpose on August 30, 1908, at 10 o'clock A. M. A Presbytery was formed and Norfolk Church was declared by it to be God's workmanship. The name of Brother Warren E. Brickhouse was added to the church that day, making the original membership fourteen.

The first sermon ever preached to Norfolk Church that afternoon by her first pastor, Elder L. C. Meads, who based his remarks upon Matthew 11: 28-30. I have much reason to believe those people spent that day in the service of God the wise Master Builder.

I sometimes take courage in remembering the rich mercy that led this sinful wretch to Norfolk Church. The rememberance is sweet but the power has subsided.

Elder C. N. Bunn of Richmond, Va. serves Norfolk Church to this day, and we hope to thank God and take courage for such a bright and burning light as Norfolk Church in such a city as Norfolk. Truly grace is amazing.

By grace alone, if at all,
J. L. Bocock

THANKFUL TO BE NUMBERED WITH THE BRETHREN

Prospect Hill, N. C.
Sept. 9, 1968

Dear Elder and Sister King
and Prospect Hill Church:

I am so thankful to be numbered with you dear people, as unworthy as I feel to be, for I desired to be with you for a long time. I have left the place with a heavy heart so many times; but that August 25th everything was taken out of the way. I forgot self and the things around me. It all seems like a pleasant dream come true. I count it a blessed privilege, and can truly say, "O Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth."

I have long since learned how frail I am, and that I can't live as I would like, so I go from day to day with, "O Lord undertake for me." As I look back over the years, I somehow feel He has been gracious; and I am thankful often that it is as well with me as it is.

I find no pleasure in things of this world, and so often long for that City whose builder and maker is God; where there will be no more sorrow and trouble. O that I knew He was my Friend!

It is so good to know in these distressing times that God rules in heaven and earth, and does all of his will. I feel

to say with Job, "Though He slay me yet will I trust in Him."

We attended services at Gooch Memorial yesterday and had a most pleasant day. Though I have gone there all my life, yesterday was very special. I know no place on earth I had rather been.

Pray that I might walk softly before God; that I might lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and honesty, depending on the God I know is able to keep me from falling, and to present me faultless before Him in love.

Humbly I beg,
Ethelene B. Watson

EXPERIENCE

Elder & Sister B. O. Thompson
Copper Hill, Va.

Dear Bro. and Sister,

I have wanted to talk to you for several years, long before I joined the church, but seems like I've been held back.

I tried to do a lot of "getting-ready" to join the church. I think I knew that I couldn't do anything, yet I tried to choose the time, the place, be dressed just right, and all that. I wanted so much to tell the church how unworthy I was (and am), that I'm sorry for all the wrongs I've done, how much I love them, how good the Lord has been to me, and that I believe in "Salvation by Grace". Well, I couldn't do any of that. I was choked with love and tears and could say only a few words, and answer a few questions, but happy. I have had to be shown over and over that I can do nothing of myself.

I lay awake at nights, thinking of all the times the Lord has lifted me up into his light and given me hope. Once I was sick and in a hospital for about seven weeks. The doctors kept calling my family to come, saying I could last only a short time, or a few hours. I knew I was hurt badly, but family, friends, loved ones, no one meant anything to me. My physical condition, and whether I lived or not didn't bother me at all. The Lord was there. I felt his presence, his love, as it filled the room. I was surrounded by a quiet, joyful peace I had never known before — and I have never been happier.

I was shown a line between life and death and I was on that line. I had to fall to one side or the other, but either way I went, the Lord was going to be with me; so, I had no worry. I believe I lived a part of the 23rd Psalm. I believe I walked through the valley of the shadow of death and feared no evil because He was with me. I believe my cup was filled with goodness that comes only from above. A few words that kept ringing through my whole being during that time was (121st Psalm) "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth".

I have done nothing and never will to deserve the blessings I feel he has bestowed upon me. Once I saw a light in a garden that was so pretty, so bright it shined everywhere. It was a light full of love and joy and had a glow, a ray of sparkling brightness that was brighter than all earthly lights. I didn't see Jesus in this, but it all came from a halo around the head of Jesus.

Then another time I was placed face down in sand at the base of a lifeless tree — just the trunk of a tree with no branches. I couldn't move or speak. A soft voice spoke to me saying the tree was my life and that my husband and I would rebuild my life, with His help.

Another time it seemed I was forsaken forever. I felt that I had lived just as long as I could. I was sure to die and if I died I would surely go to hell. I saw everything beneath me "scooped-out", and filled with burning flames everywhere. I was certain to go into this burning hell. I saw this for several weeks and rushed from my room each morning to hide the tears — tears of fear. Then suddenly I was lifted out of this torture by a hand so gentle it couldn't have been anyone but the hand of God.

You two visited in our home while I was going through this and Oh! how I

wanted you to know. I wanted to talk to the church, but I was so different. I have heard of so many people fighting a desire to go to the church, while I wanted to join the church and couldn't. I see that as a blessing in itself since I hadn't been made ready; but I had to be showed this.

I must quit and am sorry I've been so lengthy. Love to you both.

A Sister, I Hope,
Ora T. Nichols

ENJOYED THE BEAUTY OF GOD'S WORK

307 S. Daniel Creek Road
Collinsville, Va. 24078

Dear Brethren:

We do not all see the same glory at the same time. I have seen many snows but never saw one or experienced such glory in it, as I did the one that began to fall during the night of February 28th. It seemed heaven came down with it; and it snowed all day March 1st.

There were some interruptions in the electric power, but I do not feel that anyone suffered too badly with the cold. I could not get at any chores, for I was so completely wrapped up in the beauty that covered the earth and trees. Many of the meetings were cancelled, but I was so contented with the situation that I could scarcely have enjoyed being at a meeting more.

Should any feel to pray for me I would be glad. I am slow of understanding and knowledge.

A little one in Christ I hope,
Edith Brooks

WALK AND EXPRESSIONS OF A CHILD OF GOD

P. O. Box 295
Nags Head, N. C. 27959

Dear Editors:

With hesitation I am enclosing some of my thoughts and feelings which came to me following the death of a precious member of the Old Baptists at Kitty Hawk, N. C. . .

To Those in Hope:

On this day, May 28, 1969, (within the space of time for this world to stand, and within an everlasting eternity,) Almighty God the Heavenly Father mercifully in his time and pleasure saw fit to bring an end to one of His beloved children's earthly life.

Why these things be, when and how they come, is a mystery to men; and, except for those few parts of his ways and working it pleases Him to reveal to his people, they are in truth mysterious. For sure there are many questions as to the whys of their being as they are, but puny man has no right to question why the God of heaven does his work in his own way. His own beloved Son Jesus Christ gave the only necessary answer as to why his Father does any and all his works, when He said, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

Dear children, there is no need of another answer; for as Almighty God created it all himself, and holds all in the palm of his hand, what other answer could possibly be given. I believe that as the Holy Spirit works in one, he or she is then fully satisfied with that answer. When the Holy Spirit works in one, then the pleasure of God is also his pleasure: then "God's rights" far surpass all other so called "rights", making them null and void.

Much of the time of His children's sojourn here, their minds will be confused and full of questions, but, dear ones, the merciful and freely grace giving God, did not promise that their minds would always be at ease, but He did give them the unalterable promise that their every need would be supplied. He never has and never will be slack in his fulfillment of every jot and tittle of every one of them. His children while they live out their lives here, suffer many pains, disappointments, persecutions, and sometimes heartbreaks from the loss of a loved one, as did Mrs. Elderidge Beacham, of Kitty Hawk.

Mr. Elderidge Beacham was a dear member of the Old Baptist Church, as his wife is, at Kitty Hawk, N. C. I was made to love him because of my hope in those things which he gave evidence of having been taught by the Teacher of all teachers; and he expressed his fellowship for me. He was a very soft spoken and humble man. His walk and every expression was what I considered to be those of a dear Old Baptist, and a child of God with a precious hope. I cannot but feel he is now sleeping that peaceful sleep of those waiting for the precious Saviour to take them to their everlasting home, where they shall ever sing praise unto their Heavenly Father. . .

I hope I have not said anything amiss, but that what I have said will be of some comfort to them. May we give all praise unto the only One from whom any good can and does come, the One God and Lord, and King above all else.

In humble hope,
Troy G. Shepard

GLAD TO BE WITH LOVED ONES AGAIN

Macclenny, Fla.

Elder Slauson:
Very dear Brother, Beloved in the Lord:

I am very thankful we had the privilege of attending the meeting on the 3rd Sunday of May, and be with the loved ones of like precious faith. It gave my soul joy to be there and enjoy the message. David writes, "O taste and see that the Lord is good."

Who but His little children have been given eyes to see and ears to hear, and made alive that they can taste. Dead people have no taste. God's goodness, mercy, love and saving grace is all a sweet taste of kindness and goodness from Him where sin has been made bitter — the flesh of ourselves has become bitter; but what the Lord does for us and provides for us, is so good. Ever since we have been drawing the breath of life, everything God has given us has been for our good. We could not love him except he first loved us. There is no way to put away one's sins but as God gives us his grace through his beloved Son.

"Taste and see that the Lord is good," to give us such mercy, when by nature we are the children of wrath even as others. But God who is rich in mercy and great in love wherewith he loved the sinner, even when dead in sin, provided salvation for that sinner that he should be before God the Father without blame in love through His blessed Son. What wonderful goodness on God's part.

WHAT GOD HATH PROMISED

"God hath not promised skies always blue,
Flower strewn pathways all our lives through.
God hath not promised sun without rain,
Joy without sorrow, peace without pain.
God hath not promised we shall not know
Toil and temptation, trouble and woe:

He hath not told us we shall bear
Many a burden, many a care.
But God hath promised strength for the day,
Rest for the laborer, light for the way,
Grace for the trials, help from above,
Unfailing sympathy, undying love."

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises."

Many thanks for the lovely birthday card.

With love and sweet fellowship,
Sister Irma Smith

HIS PLEASURE IS INSTANTLY FULFILLED

God's absolute predestination of all things, and the very principle under which it exists, is the only principle under which one's hope in Jesus Christ exists, and continues as a hope. For every existing true principle of which absolute predestination consists, involves no more and no less than the unalterable certainty under which the sovereign, almighty and Holy God of heaven also exists. It is my feeling that those principles are in fact and in truth, just one and the same principle in its whole and complete single unit.

To my mind the very and true meaning of the word God, as it applies to the

Creator of heaven and earth, is the very principle under which all outside Himself are totally void of any ability to hinder or alter, take from or add to in any manner either seen or unseen, that which God ordained before the world was, of His will and purposes, of His creation, choosing, beginnings and continuations, endings, condemnations and saving, blessings and mercies, grace and revelation, etc, etc. — all things to be and do and take place throughout all time, an unto all eternity.

To my mind this is the only true principle under which one could have a true conception of the consistancy of the True and Living God of heaven.

We hear voices of many people speaking the words God and Christ, and grace and heaven, while going right on saying what things man can do toward helping arrange and re-arrange things in order to assist God in his decision of who he shall or shall not admit into heaven. But just as sure as God sits upon his throne in heaven, these are speaking words of which they have no knowledge of what they really mean, or what they represent.

I believe these things are true, and I desire to hasten and say that if what I have written is according to Holy Truth, this knowledge came or comes to me not by reason of my doing anything good to merit or deserve this knowledge. If I have received knowledge, or any other mercy or grace from the Almighty and merciful God, then I unhesitatingly declare that it came unto me surely as a free gift. If I know anything as I ought, this poor sinner has never of himself done even one good thing: — good as it seems good in the sight of God.

I feel and hope to believe in the God which before the beginning of this time world, did fix and confirm, and absolutely predestinated and declared all things which were ever to be during all time, and throughout all eternity. A God who works and none can hinder, hinders, and none can work: a God who asks for nothing, for He already has everything — so there is no thing with anything to offer Him. He is the only creator of all things: if it were his desire for anything more, he would have created it.

His every pleasure is instantly fulfilled merely by His desire of that pleasure for himself.

Troy G. Shepard
P. O. Box 295
Nags Head, N. C. 27959

ENJOYED THE SERMON

Reidsville, N. C. 27320

Dear Brother Spangler:

Just wanted to write you a few lines to let you know how Sister Frances Oakley and we all enjoyed your sermon yesterday at Dan River, I don't think I will ever forget it, for you explained it so plainly. I believe it was taped by someone, and if so, would like to see it printed in the **Signs.** If not I hope you will have a mind to write on it for publication, for others to read.

I certainly commend you for what you said about being quiet in church. I was carried by my dear old mother and father, who were members at Pleasant Grove Church, and we were taught to be quiet. . . I have seen times when the church doors had to be closed while communion was being taken, and that is a time everybody should be very quiet.

The baptismal service was real pretty and sacred. Wish you could visit us at Pleasant Grove sometime, for we would be so glad to have you.

God bless you and yours is my prayer.

Sister Rena C. Smith

FINDS A LACK OF GOD GIVEN LIGHT

Dinuba, Calif. 93618

Dear Editors:

Sorry I have neglected my renewal until now. It is refreshing to read the writings from the past; as well as the thoughts and understandings of so many still living.

I find after sifting through all that

comes over the air and in various denominational periodicals, that, to my understanding, there is a lack of God given light of what is hidden for the comfort and consolation only for those whom God through and by his Holy Spirit, has chosen to reveal that ever existing relationship, which has no beginning and will never have an end, which ties and brings a seeking soul to embrace the fullness of such a promise given in love by God's grace, to a fallen unworthy individual. Yes, a gift unmerited; still with a drawing power so irresistable when felt, that to believe takes no effort. And the faith wrought by that belief is a free gift, (and is not refusable, nor is it acceptable,) so associated with evidence that banishes all unbelief and doubts.

So, with belief being founded and caused by evidence of a reality of an existing fact revealed, pray tell what part does personal acceptance play, — either now or ever? For me, salvation is a finished work for a subject or beneficiary. Whoever having been such, and who is designated in the Promise, will receive the fullness of all the benefits that lie in store for him. The question is, Are we, you and I, included? We hope so.

George A. Carlson

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 1,
Danville, Va.
July 25, 1943

I have had a desire for a long time to write my experience but I feel so unworthy to speak about His precious name; yet I had a dream a few nights ago that made this desire so strong that I can't pass it by. I dreamed I knew the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and I knew I was one of his little children; and I was so calm and happy. When I awoke I still had that calm and happy feeling: O if I could just go on like that forever; but that is not the Lord's will.

I traveled in an awful wilderness for years. Every waking hour was one endless path that led around and around in a wilderness; and when I would go to sleep, I would ramble in caves of wild creatures. No human tongue could tell of my troubles. I would try to pray to God to release me from this awful bondage, but I never felt my weak prayers went higher than my head. I felt doomed to trouble like this for the rest of my days, — and hell when I died.

On the 16th of September, 1937, while at work in the cotton mill, a beautiful light came down around me. I looked up to the heavens and said, O Lord what must I do? And Dan River Church appeared to me in a beautiful light. I did not feel that I could possibly wait the week and a half until the meeting time to go to church. I felt that I wouldn't offer to the church that day, for I had not been to the church many times in my life; and I didn't feel like they would have me.

I tried in my weak way many times that week to call upon the Lord that Elder Spangler might be there when I went; but when I walked upon the church grounds someone told me that Elder Spangler had gone to an association. When I went into the house and sat down, soon he came in; and I felt the Lord had answered my prayers. After preaching, when they published an open door for the reception of members, the next I knew I was before the church asking for a home with them. But for some reason God stilled my tongue, and I could not tell them the things I wanted to tell: I felt that I wanted to fall at their feet and ask them to take me in.

They received me most graciously, and I was baptized by Elder Spangler the following day, September 26, 1937. I thought this new found happiness would last forever, but, alas, the Lord would not have it so. A little here and a little there is enough to keep up my little hope in Jesus Christ.

Mrs. Sam Walker

REPORT OF UNION MEETING

1302 Walnut St.,
Benton, Ky. 42025

Dear Editors:

Brethren, if it is the Lord's will I would like to see a report of our Union Meeting in our family paper, the **Signs.**

The churches of our Soldier Creek Association met in this union meeting at the Zion Church in Mayfield, Ky. Friday morning before the 5th Sunday in June, and continued the meeting through Saturday and Sunday. Elder Paul Poyner was our Moderator, he being the only ordained minister in this association at this time.

Although we feel poor, sick, and needy, and very few attend our monthly meetings, we were blessed to have visiting with us at this meeting Elders J. N. Darnell and W. Y. Chandler from the Little River Association. Elder Darnell was with us the three days but Elder Chandler left Saturday afternoon to conduct the funeral of Sister Watkins, at Simpson, Ill. on Sunday afternoon. Elders R. L. Biggs, of the Bordeaux Church in Nashville, Tenn. and Herbert Prince of the Memphis Church, Memphis, Tenn. were with us the three days.

Saturday morning Elder Swayne Young and Brother Richard Campbell of the Memphis congregation came. They returned Sunday for their appointments at their home church.

Surely we witnessed Paul's words to the church at Phillipi, "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ." Elder Poyner asked each elder to take part in the Introductory Friday morning. Eld. Chandler spoke first using the text Isaiah 46:11, "Calling a revenous bird from the East, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country. Yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." Elder Prince used the text from the second chapter of I Corinthians, "Desiring to know nothing among you but Christ and him crucified." Elder Darnell spoke very comfortingly about man's inability to recover himself from his fallen state: or "Where sin abounded grace did much more abound." Elder Biggs offered prayer for God's will to be done and not ours, and to reconcile us to His will, if it were His will.

Each day the ministers took part in the meeting. The congregation was hungry for truth to renew their hope, strengthen and comfort them. Words cannot describe the fellowship, humbleness, love, hope, faith, and charity that abounded among this people, walking and talking together in peace friend to friend. Surely it was a Union indeed.

The brethren and friends opened their homes and cared for our visitors each night. May our Lord and Master have all the praise for supplying our need, and giving our friends, lovers of the truth, and these able ministers a mind to come and be with us, and help when we felt we needed them so greatly for encouragement to press on; and to preach to us the unsearchable riches of our God, His soverign grace and abounding love to poor sinners as we know ourselves to be.

"What wondrous love is this, O my soul."

A sister in hope,
Effie Bowden

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 3
Reidsville, N. C. 27320

To the People of God:

All praise, honor, and glory be unto God the Everlasting Father who is unchangeable, the Creator of all things; who rules and reigns forever in Heaven His throne, and earth His footstool. Thanks be unto Him daily for the unspeakable and immeasureable gift of His only Son our Saviour, Jesus Christ the Lord.

Obeying the command of my Lord, I write of that day when it pleased Him to make known unto me the joy and meaning of, "This day in the City of David is born a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

We, being raised in Primitive Baptist homes, went to meetings often and read the Bible when first married; and I enquired of the Lord should we join, and He spoke to me one day, "Ye have ten years." In 1950 the deathly warning came, "Your time is most up." In fear, and telling no one, I had the family picture made, took out insurance on myself as the rest had it, — and did charity nursing at the hospital.

In June, 1951, the Lord spoke to me, "Go now, visit these people and I will go with you, and show you concerning them." This was an Arminian people close by, and we had never been; but we went that evening. On Monday evening in September, 1951, I was driving our two daughters home, when the world seemed to stand still; and I found myself beholding a host of people in the heavens, singing in beautiful melody, "Glory to God in the highest, Peace on Earth;" and a glorious light was about them, and their faces and clothing were lighted of it. The cold presence of death was near, and I felt this would be the last night for the family together. After retiring, the Lord spoke, "Take thy shoes off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." With this was a great light, and it was Jesus hanging on the cross in death. Such sorrow filled me — sorrow I had felt all my life for Him. The voice said, "Look;" and on the right was a Glorious One, so whole, so new. And the power of His love went out to me, saying, "I am He that was dead and am alive, alive forever more. I am your risen Saviour. I have loved you with an everlasting love."

With this He filled the space with, "Follow me, Follow me," departing, there was a spreading of wings, and underneath a straight, narrow road over hills and valleys on to mountains. The road was even: the low was raised up, the high made low, the rough smooth. A great burden was gone, and joy came to know the Saviour lives and owned even me. I was given a desire to go into the water, and it was spoken, "Ye must be baptized."

Having promised, I went to this revival meeting, and was taken to the front of the filled house. The leaders expected me to join: they had worked many ways to get me to join. The Lord said, "See, they gather together but not by me; they sell my blood for nought." Then, showing me this people with their eyes darkened and closed, doing unprofitable works, the Lord said, "I have given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, ears that they should not hear: let their table be made a snare and a trap and a stumbling block, and a recompense unto them." Seeing myself in this multitude of people, the voice showed me I had **good bread**, and I was looking for a needy person to share it with — and there was not one. Asking what to do with it, they said, "Sell it, sell it." It was not mine: it was given me, and I couldn't sell it. They had asked me to sing and teach, saying they needed me.

Seeing these things troubled me, and I cared not for them; but the Lord said, "Learn and suffer these things now and lay them in your heart, for the day will come when it will fill the earth. See that they take not thy children." They enticed them, but they went not with them.

We had never spoken of these things, and I felt so small to speak to my husband of so great a matter. He received it in an understanding way, yet I felt so alone.

That "Follow me, Follow me," troubled me, and I knew not where to go. Then I read, "He called disciples and went before them making the way." So, given to go to the Primitive Baptist meetings I knew about, I was shown their works: some holding dead form without the fruits of the Spirit of Christ, in uncleaness and darkness.

I was cut off from all until the fourth Sunday evening in October. Coming home, I walked out over a hill. The sun was going down and it was cold; yet I must go and pray this last time, for I had done all I knew. I heard my little daughter, who had followed me, cry out for me. I went back, questioning for

what cause I am thus led: and I saw a desolate sun sinking low. In the night I was given peace to let all be still, and to say, "Here I am and I know not any place else to go to find the answer." I was ignorant indeed of the purpose and way of the Lord with me: this I knew, I had nothing of self to do with it.

Only out of duty for kindred's sake, I went to the meeting at Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church the next Sunday. There the presence of the Lord came to me as soon as I was seated, and said, "I have brought you, it is my way: the way I bring my children. It is for you to know and understand it. You are planted here." Many other things were said, including, "Ye shall suffer many things for my name's sake, but I am with you. Go now and be baptized in my name."

Willing to obey the command, I went before the people and told them I wanted to be baptized. They received me — and what a blessing! The next Sunday my husband joined at the water, and we were baptized, feeling it a privilege to fulfill this given desire.

May the grace of God keep us always.

Rachel Wray

ARKANSAS DISTRICT MEETING OF SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION AT BETHEL

Elder Woodrow Hudson,
Sister and Children:

This note of concern is being written by order of Arkansas District of Churches.

We have been greatly burdened in your behalf, and much time has been spent in fervent secret prayer for your full recovery and that you be blessed again to serve the churches of your pastorate; as well as to visit among the brethren whom you love so dearly. We are thankful to God that he has answered our prayers to the extent that you are speedily recovering.

We have not replied **against** God in this matter but we have begged Him to give us a little understanding as to His purpose for this car wreck. We know that all things work together for the good of His people and to His praise. We thank God that he has given us some answer.

No doubt that you have prayed God to enable you to be His minister in awakening God's people out of sleep. Your tragedy shocked His people not only in this section but also in Virginia, North Carolina, and even in the Dominion of Canada. We suppose that your wreck had a greater impact upon the hearts of the brethren in Canada than should you have been blessed to speak wonderfully through their three days meeting. Your tragedy no doubt better sealed your preaching in Virginia and North Carolina in the hearts of the brethren who heard you.

We firmly believe your brethren among us will appreciate you more than ever before. We were too prone to take you for granted. We considered you to be young enough that we would have you around doing us service anytime and all times we might need you. God showed us differently. We feel that we are made in this case to be more concerned and thankful for you and the other ministerial gifts.

We are praying that after you have come through it all you will be made to see how that God worked even the wreck to your good and His praise. Do you not already know that you have more friends than you thought you did?

May the Lord richly bless all of you in every way is our sincere prayer for Christ's sake. Amen.

This by order of the Arkansas District of Churches this 20th day of July, 1969.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Moderator
Deacon Barney Evers, Clerk

ELDER HUDSON IS MUCH IMPROVED

We are glad to hear from Elder Hudson as follows, "I am still improving, and my strength has increased."

From others we learn that he was able to speak about fifteen minutes both Saturday and fourth Sunday in July at his home church, Liberty Hill, Farmerville, La.

This is good news to all of us, and we pray that he will soon be restored to his former good health. We expect to have a statement by him in the October issue.

J. D. W.

West Lodi, Seneca Co., Ohio

Dear Brethren: — I send you the following incident of soldier life, which I hope you will give a place in the **Signs of the Times.** It so plainly shows the hand of God in it that I send it to you for publication, so that others may read and be interested, as I know they will be. It is too good to be lost.

I am yours in hope of a blessed immortality beyond the grave.

John Barger

"Cover my defenseless head
With the shadow of thy wing."

A party of northern tourists formed part of a large company gathered on the deck of an excursion steamer that was moving slowly down the historic Potomac one beautiful evening in the summer of 1881.

A gentleman who has since gained a national reputation as an evangelist of song had been delighting the party with the happy rendering of many familiar hymns, the last being the sweet petition so dear to every Christian, beginning, "Jesus, lover of my soul." The singer gave the first two verses with much feeling, and a peculiar emphasis upon the concluding lines, that thrilled every heart. A hush had fallen upon the listeners that was not broken for several seconds after the musical notes had died away. Then a gentleman made his way from the outskirts of the crowd to the side of the singer and accosted him with, "Beg your pardon, stranger, but were you actively engaged in the late war?"

"Yes, sir," the man of song answered courteously, "I fought under General Grant."

"Well," the first speaker continued, with something like a sigh,"I did my fighting on the other side, and think, indeed am quite sure, I was very near you one bright night, eighteen years ago this very month. It was much such a night as this. If I am not very much mistaken you were on guard duty. We of the south had sharp business on hand, and you were one of the enemy. I crept near your post of duty, my murderous weapon in my hand; the shadow hid me. As you paced back and forth, you were humming the tune of the hymn you have just sung. I raised my gun and aimed at your heart. I had been selected by our commander for the work, because I was a sure shot. Then upon the night rang the words,

"Cover my defenseless head
With the shadow of thy wing."

Your prayer was answered. I could not fire after that. And there was no attack made upon your camp that night. You were the man whose life I was spared from taking."

The singer grasped the hand of the Southerner, and said with much emotion, "I remember the night very well, and distinctly the feeling of depression and loneliness with which I went forth to my duty. I knew my post was one of great danger, and I was more dejected than I remember to have been at any other time during the service. I paced my lonely beat, thinking of home and friends, and all that life holds dear. Then the thought of God's care for all that he has created came to me with peculiar force. If he so cared for the sparrows, how much more for man created in his own image; and I sang the prayer of my heart, and ceased to feel alone. How the prayer was answered I never knew until this evening. My heavenly Father thought best to keep the knowledge from me for eighteen years. How much of his goodness to us we shall be ignorant of until it is revealed by the light of eternity! "Jesus, Lover of my soul," has been a favorite hymn; now it will be inexpressibly dear." — THE AMERICAN.

(Republished by request)

Randolph, Ohio 44265

Dear Editors of the *Signs*,

By looking through my old letters I have found this short little one from

a dear brother, where I subscribed to the *Signs of the Times* for him a few years ago. He is about 93 years old, he lives in the country in W. Va., and is unable to go to any church of his kind.

I would like very much for you to publish his letter in the *Signs* if you think it is all right.

Here is a check to help with the Indigent Fund. May God bless you and the writers to continue with the *Signs of the Times.*

May God bless you and your family.

In love and hope,
Mr. Alpha Sears

Oct. 28, 1968
Hallburg, W. Va. 25101

Dear Alpha and Mary,

I received your letter and was glad to hear from you all. We are all very well at this time. Hoping when these few lines reach you they will find you all the same.

Now you asked me if I enjoyed the *Signs of the Times.* I never enjoyed anything better in my life. I read them all a time . . . The good Lord surely was with the one who sent them. We are saved by the Grace through faith and that not of ourselves, but through and by the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now I will have to close hoping to see you all soon or later.

May God bless you all is my prayer, and I ask when at the throne of grace you remember me in your prayers.

L. D. McCumbrs

SALISBURY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The **Salisbury Old School Baptist Association** will be held with the Little Creek Church near Delmar, Del. on Oct. 22 and 23, 1969.

Those coming on Tuesday traveling on Route 13 turn on Whitesville road about three miles north of Delmar, Del., go about two and one half miles, stop at residence of Albert Krewatch on left just before getting to meeting house on right. Telephone (code 302) 875-5543. Those coming on Wednesday go directly to meeting house.

We extend an invitation to those of our faith and order and also to our many friends to be with us.

Bertha White, Clerk
Pattie Krewatch, Asst. Clerk

KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association** is appointed to be held with the Church at Norfolk, Virginia. First Sunday in October, 1969, Saturday before and Monday following, October 4th, 5th, and 6th, 1969.

The Church is located at 3032 Tidewater Drive, Norfolk, Virginia. Tidewater Drive is Highway 168, running north and south through Norfolk.

The Church is located near Williard School and park, a short distance from the intersection of Tidewater Drive and Lafayette Boulevard.

The Association will probably be held at Williard School.

Those coming in on Highway No. 13 may turn on 168 near State Highway Office building.

We extend a cordial invitation to those who have a desire to meet with us.

E. C. Harrison, Association Clerk

CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **Contentnea Association** convenes with the Pleasant Hill Church in Edgecombe County, N. C., beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1969, and continues through Sunday.

Services on Friday will be at the church just off Highway 43, between Pinetops and Rocky Mount. The Saturday and Sunday services will be in the West Edgecombe School, just off Highway 43 near Rocky Mount.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 3, Box 354
Tarboro, N. C.

CONTENTNEA UNION

The **Contentnea Union** will convene with the Damascus Church at Farmerville, N. C. on August 30th and 31st.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **Seven Mile Association** is appointed, the Lord willing, to be held with the church at Hickory Grove Meeting House, Johnston County, N. C., Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 19, 20, 21, 1969. The meeting house is located eight miles east of Benson, N. C. on Highway 50.

Our brethren and friends are cordially invited to attend.

Elder W. D. Godwin, Moderator
James G. Young, Clerk

BLACK CREEK
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The 1969 session of the **Black Creek Association** is appointed to be held with the church at Wilson, N. C., beginning Friday before the fourth Sunday in October and continue through Sunday. The meeting house is located at the corner of Green and Jackson Streets. The Saturday and Sunday services will be held in the school building in the town of Black Creek just off 117 highway. It will be the same location as last year's Saturday and Sunday services were held. Consult road map for exact location of the town of Black Creek, N. C.

Brethren and friends and lovers of truth are invited to worship with us.

W. E. Turner, Clerk

DEDICATION SERVICE OF THE
DURHAM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH,
DURHAM, N. C.

The Durham Primitive Baptist Church has erected a new meeting house, in the town of Durham, N. C. and expects to hold a dedication service in the meeting house September the 21st. Beginning at 10:00 A. M. Sunday. There will also be service Saturday afternoon before at 3:00 P. M. and Saturday nite at 7:30 P. M.

A number of visiting ministers are expected to attend, together with the Pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler.

A cordial invitation is extended to all our Brethren and friends to meet with us.

The church is located on Pacific Avenue, on the north side of town, just off U. S. highway No. 501, leading from Durham to Roxboro. Those coming by car on freeway number 85, will turn north off 85 or either Roxboro Road, follow 501 north about one mile to Liggett and Myers office building, near County Home. The church property adjoins the Liggett and Myers Tobacco office building.

Danville, Virginia September, 1969

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The **Lexington-Roxbury Association** is appointed to be held at the Old School Baptist Meeting House at Holcottville, Delaware County, N. Y. Wednesday and Thursday, September 10 and 11, 1969. Those coming on Tuesday take the Denver Road at Kelly's Corner to the Crystal Spring Farm, the second house north of Denver Post Office and store. Those coming Wednesday go directly to the Meeting House.

Brethren and friends, lovers of the Gospel truth, are invited to attend for the hearing of Jesus preached, the way, the truth, and the life.

Elder A. J. Slauson, Moderator

SOUTH ARKANSAS ASSOCIATION

The **South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association** will convene with White Water Church beginning on Friday before the third

Sunday in September, 1969, and continue through Sunday. The Church is located two miles Northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas. Come to Tinsman and ask for direction to the Watson Church. Anyone can direct you to the church.

All ministers and visitors are welcome.

Ross Watson, Assn. Clerk

SOUTH OUCHITA ASSOCIATION

The 1969 session of the **South Ouachita Association** will convene at Rehobeth Church on the fourth Sunday in September, and starting on Friday before (three days). The Church is located 5 miles north of El Dorado, Ark. on Hwy. 7, one-half mile west of Williams store. Elder J. L. Smith has been appointed to preach the Introductory Discourse. Lovers of the Truth are welcome.

Elder W. W. Hudson, Jr., Modeartor
Elder David E. Turner, Asst. Moderator
Brother Eugene Patterson, Clerk

EDITORIAL

PSALMS 68: 13

"Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold."

Some time ago we received a good letter from a sister in England, who is a reader of the **Signs of the Times,** asking that we give our views upon the above Scripture, which we will do if God permit.

The Lord often by the mouth of his prophets reminded Israel of her humble beginning, and when she came before her God she was taught to confess, "A Syrian **ready to perish** was my father; and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few." — Deut. xxvi. 5. The prophet Isaiah saith (chapter fifty-one), "Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." Thus Israel in our text is referred to as having "lien among the pots." Down in Egypt when a Pharaoh arose that knew not Joseph, Israel was forced into servitude and they afflicted them sore, yet the more they afflicted them the more they multiplied and grew. They made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with vigor. (Exodus I:14) And the children of Israel sighed by reason of their bondage and they cried and their cry came up unto God. Their taskmasters were so cruel that the spirit of the people was broken and their resistance was gone. What was really a great nation, mightier than the Egyptians, was reduced to a nation of slaves, subject to the Egyptians and ready to perform any menial labor that was required of them. Thus the expression, "Though ye have lien among the pots," means that the Israelites had been common slaves to the Egyptians, living and sleeping among the pots of service. The term "pot" does not signify a vessel of a certain kind, but is applicable to a variety of shapes and kinds, thus jars, pitchers and bowls, cauldrons and kettles were commonly called pots, and Israel in Egypt labored and lay among them, and the Lord tells us in Psalms 81:6, "I removed his shoulder from the burden: his hands were delivered from the pots." This wonderful deliverance of Israel is set forth in the Psalms from which our text is taken. It was a triumphant deliverance, as set forth in the seventh and eighth verses: "O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness; Selah: the earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: even Sinai was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel." Thus Israel was brought from among the pots of Egypt to a land promised unto Abraham and his seed, but came not in her own strength of the Lord. When she overcame, she went forth in the strength of the Lord. When she fell she fell because of unbelief: the word did not profit them (that fell), not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. Thus faith was the power that lifted them from among the pots, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God. They could not stir until "the Lord gave the word." (Verse eleven) The word was the word of faith

that freed them from the bondage of Egypt and carried them to their inheritance. Thus Israel of old in all her trials, conflicts and deliverances was borne and carried on the wings of love and mercy, spoken of as the wings of a dove. This dove sets forth the Holy Spirit that was with them in all their travel. It can be said that the Jews in the land of Canaan, with their types and shadows, and their temple with its many and varied vessels, were but servants. For Paul saith, Jerusalem which now is, is in bondage with her children. She lay there among the pots of service and with such light that the law gave, which, like the moon, was but a borrowed light, and is a type of the moon, when it shone in the night of Judaism, it gave its silvery reflections of hope to the patient watchers for the gospel day to appear. Faith also is in evidence in her flight to the perfect day of the gospel, faith as of yellow gold that has been tried in the furnace. Thus the feathers or outstanding details of the journey of Israel are set forth by Paul in Hebrews eleven, all acts of faith, which is the pure gold of the kingdom. All their travel is covered with promises, faithful promises of a better country and a better king, a heavenly land flowing with the milk and honey of the gospel, a heavenly country with a city prepared for them, whose builder and maker was God. We believe Israel then was a type of Israel now, and the land was a type of a better land. The land was promised to Abraham and his seed, yet Abraham never enjoyed any inheritance in it, not so much as to set foot on. He sought a better country, that is, an heavenly. Israel to-day among the Gentiles, has lien among the pots. Mankind are the pots, all made of clay, of the same lump. (Rom. 9: 21) All by nature children of wrath, and there they all would lie but for the mercy of God. It is God in covenant love that has set a value on some, so that they are called vessels of mercy, distinguishing them from the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction. God's favor, spoken of as grace, is that which distinguishes them from their fellowmen. Until grace comes they are slaves to sin and Satan, full of all manner of uncleanness, with self-righteousness and every hateful way. Jesus was the light to lighten the Gentiles, and as Gideon's army of three hundred men took lamps in their pitchers, so we have this treasure in earthen vessels. This treasure is Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, who dwells among us, and in us. Before we had a knowledge of this we were as pots full of all manner of sin and iniquity, and we had to be emptied from vessel to vessel and our taste and scent changed. The light of truth planted in the heart is one of the first evidences of covenant mercy. It is spoken of as a call by grace. God called Abram alone, and said, Get thee out from thine own people and thy father's house, and grace says to those to whom it is sent, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, **saith the Lord.**" With this word from God's mouth applied to the heart of a sinner, he sees where he lies, and has lien from his mother's womb. It is the knowledge that this light gives that is called an experience of grace, thus experience is truly said to be the life of knowledge. The three Hebrew children would have lien with the pots forever had not the Lord given them the word, the Word of Faith, it was that that lifted them high above the multitude about them, to shine down through the ages to come with a glorious brightness of silver and gold that the furnace only could give. It is the Word of faith to-day, given from the Lord, that lifts the poor from the dust and the beggar from the dunghill. Yet they are often left to mourn, lying among the pots, and vexed at the scorn and contempt of those who dwell at ease, knowing the truth of what Job said: "He that is ready to slip with his feet is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease."—Job 12:5. While he may not feel that he differs much from a worldling, yet he does, for the worldling is a sinner and does not know it, but he knows it and feels it, too, and he could cry with Job, "Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?" All this is to hide pride from man and to teach

him what is in his heart. To make him sick of the world, himself and sin. Here David cried, Oh that I had wings like a dove, that I might fly away and be at rest. When the Lord speaks the word his soul is lifted on the pinions of love and flies to the clefts of the Rock and there he rests secure, persuaded that nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus the Lord. Thus a living experience, which is the result and effect of the word of faith in the heart, carries the soul from the condition of a slave to sin to the freedom of a son of the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all. This is set forth in type in the purification of the leper. The priest took two birds, one of the birds was slain and its blood put in an earthen vessel, and the live bird was dipped in the blood of the slain and set free, typifying the church rising as a conqueror through the blood of Christ. When Moses counted the number of the children of Israel, each had to give a half shekel of silver as a ransom for his soul. The rich could give no more, and the poor could give no less, so God's dear family are numbered, and each must have an experience of grace; the poor can have no less, and the rich can have no more, for it is the evidence of the soul's redemption, for it was for us that Jesus was sold for thirty pieces of silver. In the tabernacle of old the boards were socketed together with silver sockets, in the tabernacle that God has pitched, and not man, brethren are knit together in the experience of God's mercy to love and respect his word, for they know that the words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. (Psalms XII. 6.) Thus Israel today, as on the wings of a dove, is raised above the earth, ready to wing her flight to her heavenly home.

"Like Noah's dove, she flits between
Rough seas and stormy skies."

Not finding rest here below for the sole of her foot, she soars above the ruins of this earth, standing out like a city set on a hill which cannot be hid, shining to those whose eyes are opened to see it in the glorious brightness of her Lord. How bright, as polished silver or gold, is an experience of grace, how it raises the person far above the kings and princes of this earth, that come to naught, for such, we know, are left to glory in their shame. But a gracious character has passed through the fire and lives. While this vain world will be burned up, he lives and is sustained by God's holy Spirit. God is his purifier. I will, saith he, refine them as silver is refined and purify them as gold is purified. Through this furnace work they are brought, and their testimony, every one of them, will accord with the sound of the silver trumpet which was to be made of one piece, and when one shall examine those glorious wings the feathers of God's love which warms these cold hearts of ours will stand out as yellow gold. Let us consider what this brightness of silver and gold means. It means trials and afflictions, crosses and losses, partaking of the sufferings of Christ. The Lord grant that we as a people shall be purged from worldliness, pride and idolatry, rising above the world, shining as the brightness of the firmament, only feeling to live when on the wing, and our affections set above, desiring above all things that we, as Peter saith, might be diligent, that we may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless, mindful of the truth that we were once slaves, but are now sons.

In conclusion, 1 John 3:2: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see his as he is."

(Editorial by Elder Ruston, February, 1932.)

EDITORIAL

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this

present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." (Titus 2:11-13)

The entire second chapter of Titus must be read for the context of the above verses. Also, note that the reason for the admonition or exhortation by the Apostle is plainly set forth in the first chapter, where he wrote, that "A bishop(elder) must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy temperate; **holding fast the faithful word he hath been taught,** that he may by **sound doctrine** both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers . . . whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching those things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake . . . Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith . . . They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him."

"But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine." Because there were many who did not speak sound doctrine, but were unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, the Apostle said, "whose mouths must be stopped." That is, their preaching should not go unrefuted, since they were preaching things contrary to sound doctrine.

Titus, and all other gospel ministers, were exhorted to hold fast the faithful word which they had been taught: which was one of the qualifications of a bishop which Paul enumerated in the first chapter. When Paul wrote to Timothy his second epistle, he said, "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."

Sound doctrine and sound words, we conclude, are the same. It would be impossible to preach sound doctrine without using sound (or proper) words expressing that doctrine.

There were many in that day who were not contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. Paul knew this from his own experience. He had been there himself once, but was now brought out of that darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God; and he knew as well as any man the difference between light and darkness. The things the servants of God were to preach and teach were the things they had been taught by the working of the Spirit of God in their hearts: things which were revealed in them pertaining to the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

Each one should recognize that to be a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, one must preach and contend earnestly for the very things Jesus taught, which also the apostles set in order among the brethren and churches, Jesus having commanded them: ". . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

In our early days of coming before the brethren, we remember that our chief concern was to uphold the doctrine of predestination and election. We still do this with such ability as we are given, for we know that the gospel cannot be preached if these things are left out or glossed over.

How well we remember first reading the text at the beginning of this second chapter of Titus, with understanding: "But speak thou the things that become sound doctrine: that the aged men be sober, grave temperate and sound in the faith, in charity, in patience." And to exhort the aged women, the young women, young men, and servants, as we read in the second chapter. The Apostle called this sound doctrine and admonished Titus to so speak in his preaching to them.

But our main desire now is to consider the eleventh verse to the end of the chapter. When the Apostle wrote, "For (because) the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men . . ." he meant not an universal appearance, but to all classes and conditions of men. Note that Titus was to speak to old men and old women, young men and young women, and servants; for of

these the whole household of faith consisted. And they were the ones that the grace of God appeared unto. It would be entirely inconsistent with the Apostle's language and intent, to consider "all men" to mean every man of the Adamic race.

Then the Apostle hastens to say that this grace teaches us something. It is when this teaching is manifested in "us" that we have evidence that the grace of God has appeared to us, for this evidence always appears powerfully and never unto any but those who shall be saved, for it always manifests salvation to whomsoever it comes. It never appears without making a great change in the person's life from then on as long as he lives. He is taught that, "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, he should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." In this appearing and bringing salvation, as with Saul of Tarsus, there is a turning away from old things, for the enjoyment of old things has passed away. The wonderment of God's grace instills the denying of ungodliness and worldly lusts to such an extent that he ever desires to live soberly, righteously and godly his remaining days in the world.

When we see these things in the brethren, as manifested in their walk and conversation, talking of their blessed hope, and of their looking for the glorious appearing of their God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for them, that he might redeem them from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, it is sure and certain evidence that they have been taught of God and that his grace has appeared unto them. This means that they have the witness within and testify to what they have seen, felt and handled of the word of life.

Exhortation in the mouth of a servant who is in the hands of God, the persons exhorted being also in the hands of God, has its effect. Otherwise it is vain and empty.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

PROVERBS 9:1-5

"Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table: she hath sent forth her maidens: she crieth upon the highest places of the city, whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: as for him that wanteth understanding, she sayeth to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled."

Any one will know that this is the work of wisdom. That it is a work which is done. Not only in the building, but in all of it. It is all spoken of in the perfect tense. Therefore it is done. That which is has been, is now, and the Lord requireth that which is past. There can be no house in all the world to compare with this one. Houses are built on their foundations, whether good and sufficient or weak and untrusty. This house is built in its foundation. Every piece of material, speaking after the manner of men, is built in the foundation. The house of Abraham was in him when God made the covenant with him, therefore every member of his unborn family, and yet sure to be born family, received the covenant in him. The whole of his house, or Israel, was in him, and received the promises in him. They were not then in any developed existence, and yet they had a life existence in Abraham, and were in perfect unity, in a covenant sense, with Abraham. In him they received the promises.

In the text we have something more to our interest, more precious to us. It not only embraces all the seed of God who were literal Israelites but it embraces all the chosen of God in every nation on earth. The elect out of every nation, kindred and tongue under heaven. Wisdom has not been enlightened by any new developments since the world began. It was wisdom before the world began and it is wisdom now, and

ever will be, and without any change either in addition or subtraction. Paul tells us of Jesus Christ that he is made unto us Wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. (1 Cor. 1:30.) Therefore our Jesus, the Christ, is this wisdom who has built this house. He was in the beginning with the Father, and all things were made by him and for him. Without him was not anything made that was made. He was in the beginning with God and he was God. Therefore this house, his house, was built by him in his eternal choice before there was one of the members thereof in personal existence. This establishes the fact that there was an eternal life unity between him and the members of his body, the church, before there was a single development of them in the world. David had a very clear view of this fact, and he said, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."— (Psalms 139: 14-16.)

This is clear that every member of his body, or pieces of material of this house were fully and wholly in him before the world began. There he was laid in Zion for a foundation, and all his children were with him then. "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste." — Psalms 28:16. This is the Foundation who was laid in eternity by the hand of the Three-in-One-God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. In this God is their salvation, and there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. (Acts 4:12.) These children being in him his life is their life, so that they are as secure as he is secure. And he being in the Father he is as secure as the Father is secure. Here we see that the Foundation and the building are both one. Or they are both in one. Hence the words of Jesus, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. 16:18.) He is the tried stone which evercame all the gates of hell, and when he overcame he overcame for all who were in him. Therefore to prevail now would be not only to prevail against the members of his body but against him, the Foundation. That would be to destroy him as the foundation and leave the church of God without hope and without God, without salvation in this world or the world to come.

"Wisdom hath builded her house." Here is the church of God built in our Lord Jesus Christ. He is ascended up to the Father, and has forever taken his mediatorial throne at the right hand of God where he maketh intercession for us. This intercession is accepted of the Father, and is at all times heard and granted, for it is according to the will of the Father.

The Seven Pillars. The fullness of God in Christ Jesus. The figure seven denotes fullness. There are seven spirits of God gone out into all the earth. He had seven eyes when John saw him on the Isle of Patmos. He is of eternal self-existence, omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience, omnificience, omnipercipient and immutibility. I do not say that these are the seven divine principles of our God, for there are many other such words which apply to him, and which will apply to no other one in heaven or in the earth. But he has all of these, and they are in and of himself. He did not accumulate them. They were with him in the beginning, and he could not be without them. Anything short of these cannot be the God of our salvation. Upon these principles or pillars which are in and of himself our foundation stands, and the church or house of God stands in him. Therefore she stands on the foundation which he has laid, and "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." — (1 Cor. 3:11.)

The seven pillars are in him and upon him, and in him is the whole church of God built.

By this same wisdom was our Lord slain. The same wisdom that did the rest also slew her beast. The Jews and wicked men nailed him to the cross, they spoke to the Governor to have him crucified. They were guilty of his death, and yet he laid down his life of himself. He offered himself to God by the eternal Spirit. When he was baptized the Spirit came down on him and abode on him. It was this Spirit that drove or led him into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. Note that this is the very purpose for which the Spirit led him into the wilderness. Here his power to overcome should be made known. It could not be known any other way. He must come in personal contact with the enemy of God and all his poor little ones, the devil. He came out against the Son of God with all his powers, and tried him in every conceivable shape and way, and yet he could not prevail. He was a tried stone, a sure salvation. But he had to die. He first must overcome the devil in every point. Death is the last enemy. He must overcome him. He must not prevail, not even to say, I did not have a trial, give me a chance and I will hold him. No. He must overcome. Therefore wisdom decreed that he must go there. He must go there to overcome.

All this was among the "all things" which must work together for the good of them who are the chosen of God and who are the called according to his purpose. Therefore wisdom made the provision. It was not left to the devil to do and then for Him to overcome. No, wisdom made the provision in the beginning, so there is nothing left to fate nor to blind chance. It is all of God and of his own eternal purpose. **Wisdom slew him.** In doing this wisdom spilt his blood. It came forth as blood and water. It is mingled as wine. Herein is the refreshing that all the host of God's children have in him. Wisdom prepared the house of wine, the banqueting-house into which he leads us, and gives us such refreshings as we can find in no other name under heaven. With these refreshments has she furnished her table. Then the Holy Ghost and the Father fully agree, so that there is nothing to cause one word of confusion. The table is fully furnished with all the needed vessels, and with all that the children need to subsist upon. There is not a single condition to be complied with on their parts. It is all of God, of our Lord Jesus, as ministered by the Holy Spirit, and fully accepted by the Father.

Her maidens which she has sent forth doubtless refer to the scattering of her branches over all the earth and to her ministers. She was scattered according to the word of: "Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered." Then he said to them, "As ye go preach." Wisdom sent them forth even though it was done by the severest persecutions. They were not to go until they were rejected or persecuted. They were to abide in the city where they were as long as they were received, but when they were persecuted there they were to go to another city, and preach as they went. Do not stop preaching because you are persecuted therefor. No. This was God's vehicle for the spread of his word. Thus he made his enemies do his will. They took his ministers in chains to keep them securely. There could be no escaping. They carried them to the very spot where they were commanded to go to preach the word of God. Men meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. It is what God meant that should prevail and not what man meant. Thus they sent Paul to Rome, and other places, to preach the word of God. Who sent them forth? Wisdom did it. They did just what they were sent to do. They cried that the table is spread, the beast is slain, the wine is mingled. All this time wisdom is crying in their cries. She is saying the same things; they are saying it as wisdom says it in them. There is perfect agreement in the delivery of this word. There is no uncertain sound in the mountain of our God. All of it is in the holy city where our Lord was crucified.

Now, see to whom this city is made:

"Whoso is simple." Not one wise one is spoken to. The simple only are commanded to turn in hither where this great provision is made, and where this wonderful work has been going on. How strange are the works of God! All this for a few simple ones who want understanding. Foolish, simple, crippled, maimed, sore, stinking, not molified, no ointment poured forth, and none to pour out, destitute. Oh how miserable these who are now commanded to turn hither. What will wisdom do with such a foolish company as this? She says to them, "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled." Jesus said, Except ye eat of my flesh and drink of my blood ye have no life in you. This is the bread and this is the wine. Wisdom has prepared it all and it is life-giving and life-sustaining. There is no life without it. All outside of this is death. To not be made a partaker of this bread and this wine is to be left in death. When one is given to eat this bread and to drink this wine he has life for evermore, and shall not see death.

I do hope that the Lord has given us to eat and to drink at this, his table, with all the little ones. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us to the end.

With this love to all the saints, I am your brother in this blessed hope,

L. H. Hardy
Atlantic, North Carolina

(The above by Elder Hardy was published in the *Signs* of April, 1932.)

HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE

"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." — (Titus 1:2)

Recently a man said to me that he had accepted Christ and got himself saved, and that ever since then he has felt sure that he is saved, and that he has a feeling of assurance of a home in heaven after this life. I understood from his conversation that he felt that he had saved himself through his own free will and volition in the matter, independent altogether of being led in any manner by the Spirit of God. That is, while being in the state of an alien sinner, a natural man, dead in trespasses and sins, he had, of his own volition, decided to accept Chist in order to get salvation — spiritual life—eternal life, and a feeling of assurance that heaven would be his home in the hereafter.

If I correctly understood him, and I think I did, the above is an outline of what he claimed he did and his feeling of accomplishment, as he viewed it, as nearly as I can state it. I take it from what he said that he evidently considered himself unsaved before he did what he called accepting Christ. I suppose he did that, in his view, in order to get saved. Now if he is correct what do we have? Would we not have to say that if he did save himself to eternal life in that way and under such circumstances, then beyond question a dead, alien, unregenerated sinner took all those steps by being led by his own spirit and obtained spiritual life? I say this because, as I understand, there are only two spirits; the Spirit of God and the reverse—the evil spirit. Every spirit, in my view, which is not of the good spirit or the Spirit of God is obviously an evil spirit. Therefore, according to his version, if he **is correct about getting himself saved,** the evil spirit led him to salvation, because without the righteousness of Christ—the Spirit of God in him, man himself certainly has none other than the evil spirit. "For there is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." (Eccl. 7:20)

My view is: That if he is a saved sinner, and I truly hope that he is, he was saved by grace and not of himself, and it was not according to his works but according to purpose and grace before the world began; and because he was a son before he felt himself to be in need of a Saviour, and before he took any steps; and all such steps he took were because of righteousness dwelling in him and because he was a son and not in order to be one. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Romans 8:14)

He further stated that he felt sorry for any person who did not have anything more than a hope. He asked whether I knew I was saved and I told him I did not know it. He then asked me why I did not know it. I answered that if I felt an assurance I would not have any hope. I believe I would be terribly miserable if I had no hope. I would not question those that disclaim having a hope in the correctness of their statement because it comes to me just here that there are people in the world in that condition, for the Apostle said that there were those that were in the world "having no hope, and without God in the world:" (Eph. 2:12) I do not now and have never understood that a person can have an assurance and a hope for the same thing. Your feeling must be one or the other. Paul said: "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (Romans 8:24-25) This same Paul said; "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." (I Cor. 13:12) This is in harmony with what he had previously said in the same chapter concerning, as I understand it, the difference in knowledge now (in this life) and hereafter (in future life) "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. (that is now) But when that which is perfect (future state—after this life) is come then that which is in part shall be done away." (1 Cor. 13:9-10)

It is my understanding, with all due respect to every one's belief to the contrary, that a hope is all the child of grace—the children of God are given to have in this life during their pilgrimage here on earth. I believe the above text is proof thereof. It also proves, as I understand, that the beloved apostle Paul had a hope instead of a feeling of assurance of eternal life. You note he said "In hope of eternal life." If a person has more than a hope, he has more than the apostle claimed. Is it not comforting and consoling to the poor little child of grace to be enabled to feast on this scripture? It will be noted that in the first verse of this chapter, Titus 1:1, it says; "Paul a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ." A servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ and yet did not claim any more than you claim. Did not make any claim of a feeling of perfect knowledge and no feeling of assurance of eternal life, but hope of eternal life. I feel to hope that I have been given to feast on this testimony and comforted by this scripture. I believe this language is comforting to all that have been enabled by his Spirit and revelation to be "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." Yours is a precious hope,

Elder W. A. Speer

(The above by Elder Speer appeared in the August, 1946 *Signs*. See obituary in the June, 1969 issue.)

OBITUARIES

SISTER LILLIE VAUGHN TURMAN

Sister Turman died at her home in Bethlehem, Pa. June 29, 1969. She was born October 24, 1874, in Burks Fork, Virginia, the daughter of the late Green and Mary Jenkins Vaughn. Her husband, Brother C. M. Turman, died about twenty years ago. She was a sister of the late Elder C. W. Vaughn.

Surviving are three sisters: Mrs. Lester Van Dyke, Hopewell, N. J.; Mrs. Weldon Hylton, Willis, Va.; and Mrs. Carl Shelor, Chattanooga, Tenn.; one son: Dr. Christopher Turman, Jr., Rydal, Pa.; four daughters: Miss Lillie Turman, Bethlehem, Pa. with whom she resided, Mrs. I. C. Warner, Purcellville, Va.; Mrs. Guy Herbert, Galax, Va.; and Mrs. William Carper, Raleigh, N. C.; together with 11 grandchildren, 21 great grandchildren, and 2 great great grandchildren.

Sister Turman united with Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, and was baptized the 4th Sunday in September, 1936, by Elder H. H. Lefferts. Brother Turman was a deacon there and they were both faithful to attend all their meetings until they removed to Pennsylvania. They were greatly loved by all who knew them.

Funeral services were held in Bethlehem, Pa., July 3, 1969, and interment was in the Church of the Redeemer Cemetery, Bryn Mawr, Pa.

Another one of the Lord's redeemed is freed from all earthly trials and cares, and is awaiting the return of her Saviour, who shall change her vile body in the resurrection and fashion it like unto his own glorious body, to ever be with the Lord; where she shall praise him forever.

John D. Wood

BESSIE MAY BOHANNON

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our beloved Sister, Bessie May Bohannon, April 17, 1969. She was the daughter of Sarah Ingram and Thomas Woodall, born May 27, 1890, making her stay on earth 78 years, 1 month and 10 days. She was married January 24, 1907, to George Thomas Bohannon, and to this union, six children were born; five boys and one girl, four boys preceding her in death. Billy Lee Bohannon, of Richmond, and Mrs. William Goodrich, of Newport News, with 13 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren survive.

Sister Bohannon united with Springfield Church June 11, 1966, and attended her meetings as often as she could for she loved her church. I had the pleasure of having her stay in my home several times. She would talk so much about the goodness and mercy of God to her and being so unworthy of all the goodness God had bestowed on such a vile sinner as she felt to be.

Sister Bohannon died in a nursing home. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Eldler O. K. Tench at a funeral home in Richmond, Va. She was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in the cemetery there to await the coming of her Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

May it please God to reconcile all who mourn their loss, for we feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by one who loved her.

Maude H. Doss

BROTHER AND SISTER CLAY

Brother George Clay was born October 23, 1875; and Sister Emma Clay was born December 9, 1884. Brother Clay died May 17, 1962, and Sister Clay died July 19, 1968.

They were married December 27, 1905, and to this union were born four children: Mrs. W. C. Sutherland, Va.; Leonard Clay, Stem, N. C.; and Lt. Col. Marvin J. Clay, Dayton, Ohio. The oldest son, Algen, died seven years ago. There are seven grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

They united with Dutchville Church in 1927, and proved faithful members until the church disbanded; then they attended Gooch Memorial Church until they were disabled. Their home was truly a home for Primitive Baptists. My father, the late Elder L. J. Chandler, and my mother spent many enjoyable hours with them.

Brother Clay's funeral was conducted by the late Elder Harvey Smith; and Sister Clay's was conducted by Elder Donald Smith. They were laid to rest in Oxford Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord. Written by request.

Annie C. Gregory

SISTER CORA ALLEN FRENCH

Sister Cora French was called from this life February 26, 1969, making her stay upon this earth 77 years. Her husband John W. French died several years ago leaving her with one child, a daughter, Mrs. James L. Cox, Reidsville, N. C. Sister French united with the Church at Dan River on July 20, 1962, while service was being held for her at the home of her daughter, but was never able to be carried to the liquid grave for baptism.

It was indeed a privilege to have known this dear sister and to have had the opportunity to observe the manifestation of God's love within her heart and soul as she was so ably blessed to express in her conversation with brethren and sisters.

The Church at Dan River grieves over the loss of our dear sister, but we hope and feel our loss is her eternal gain. We rejoice in this because she professed a hope in an all wise, all powerful and merciful God. She had the desire to give God all the honor and praise for a finished and complete salvation.

Her funeral was at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church by her Pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, and she was laid to rest beside her husband in the church cemetery.

RESOLVED, That the Church extend her love and sympathy to the bereaved family. May God's blessings be upon all that mourn her passing.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this memorial be recorded on our church records, a copy sent to her daughter and a copy to *The Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the Dan River Church at her conference Saturday, May 31, 1969.

Coley S. Strader

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 137 DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1969 NO. 10

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10/69
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

COME, DEAR LORD

Come dear Lord, thou blessed Jesus,
Come and warm our cold, cold hearts:
This, O this, would greatly please us —
How we languished in these parts!

Seems we're prone to sin and trifles,
And thy name we scarce adore;
Turn, O turn us to our Bibles:
Help us love thee more and more.

We are weak, but thou art mighty;
We are sinful, thou art good;
Help, Lord, help, do help the needy:
Wash our souls in Jesus' blood.

Come, dear Lord, come, do not tarry;
Take thy ransomed ones away;
O, that thou would come and carry
Us to realms of endless day.

Yet we know we cannot rush thee;
None can change thee in thy course;
Saints can't open, fiends can't hush thee —
Thou of truth and life the source.

Patience, then, Lord, patience grant us:
May we learn to bide our time;
Thou can never disappoint us —
All the glory, Lord, be thine.

Now we're near our journey's ending,
And our stay here can't be long;
Be thy grace our path attending —
Make it in our hearts a song.

May we sing the song of angels,
And of Moses and the Lamb;
Join with saints of all the ages,
To adore the great I AM.

Then in heaven, that home supernal,
All thy saints shall be like thee:
In that land of bliss eternal;
Happy we shall be, and free:
Free from sin and all pertaining
To our lot as sinners vile;
There with thee forever reigning,
In the presence of thy smile.

(May be sung to the tune, Brethren We Have Met to Worship, Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken, Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing, or to any other tune with the 8s and 7s meter.)

Elder John Lee Smith
Rt. 2, Box 59A
Spearsville, La. 71277

LETTER OF THANKS
FROM ELDER HUDSON

We take this as a means to express our appreciation to all the readers of the **Signs of the Times** for your letters and cards of encouragement, your prayers, and your contributions. Words cannot express our appreciation. May the Lord be praised.

How wonderful are the comforts of love! Almost three weeks are gone from our memory. How thankful we are that our God has delivered us in such a wonderful way and has blessed us with sweet meditations. The brain specialist told my wife at the hospital in New York that I would never talk again, and that I would not be able to work again. It gives me much comfort that God controls all things, and that He does not leave things up to men. My speech is good, and scriptural thoughts are entering my mind, and, the Lord willing, I will be able to work again in the future.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear." Notice that the name of Jesus sounds sweet to a believer, and not to an unbeliever. It has a special meaning to the believer. "Blessed are they that know the joyful sound." Why is the sound joyful to one and not the other? The things of God do not come

by natural learning. All our efforts, learning, wisdom, etc. cannot teach us to know the Lord. This must come directly from God. Paul said that he had not received it from man. We cannot teach others to know the Lord — we have many dear to us in the flesh, but we cannot help them to know the truth.

The grace of God teaches one something: it teaches him to know that he stands in need of something special. He is taught to feel the need of a Saviour by the Spirit of the living God. This is taught in the school of experience, and God is the perfect teacher and there are no misses or guesses in the matter.

God has purposed all things, and they take place exactly as he determined from the beginning. This is a wonderful subject. And we are glad to know that we are in the hands of such a wonderful God; and that he can take us and use us in the way that he sees fit. "God declared the end from the beginning." My brethren, this covers the whole matter. There is no new thing under the sun. God is an all wise God. If he were ignorant of something yesterday, then he would be that much un-wise. If he were learning today, then He was ignorant of that yesterday. He does not need to learn anything, because He knows all things.

"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning." This covers it all.

The Holy Ghost, which is the Spirit of Truth, teaches all of the Lord's people. Herein is the difference: one is taught of the Spirit, and the other is taught of men. One knows that he is a ruined sinner and deeply feels the need of a Redeemer. The other knows not his real condition before God. One has a longing desire in his heart. He needs Jesus who is the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. There is something that draws him to Jesus. This is the love of God and is the golden chain that binds His people together. Jesus said, "No man can come unto me except my Father which sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day."

Again may we thank you all for your earnest desire and your concern.

Yours in hope,

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick Street
Bastrop, La. 71220

LETTER TO ELDER AND SISTER W. W. HUDSON, JR.

Rt. 2, Box 59-A
Spearsville, La., 71277
July 2, 1969

Dear Bro. & Sister in that blessed Faith:

If you could know how many prayers have gone up to God in your behalf, how many anxious, sympathetic tears have been shed; if you but knew how many dear, loving souls have made diligent, loving inquiry about you, so warm and so full of that sweet, tender devoted christian spirit so characteristic of the dear children of God when they are greatly concerned for the welfare of those they love in spirit and in truth; if indeed you could go into the sweet depths of all those blessed precious emotions — I feel sure it all would conspire greatly to off-set all the pain and worry, as well as the distress and uneasiness of what you have had to under-go since late Thursday P. M., June 19.

Thank God, you and your sweet, precious children were **not** in that wreck **alone.** OUR GOD WAS THERE WITH YOU — BLESS HIS HOLY NAME!!

My prayer — if pray I could — would be that the same God who was with you in a somewhat similar circumstance twelve years ago, Sister Remona, when all, or most all, despaired of your very life; yet it could not be then; God's time was not yet; and you were brought through it, to the sheer joy and happiness of so many, including this poor sinner; — that He in this instance would give you both grace to trust Him and patience to bide His time. Oh, for reconciling grace!

My dear noble Brother, if it shall be soon, or perhaps in His holy providence our blessed Lord shall wisely defer the

matter longer than that we poor ignorant mortals in our frenzied haste might wish — be that as is may, soon or late, I trust it may be God's good, holy will that I see you again before too long, and again hear you, under God's powerful Spirit, proclaim the holy Christ as the one and only Saviour of poor sinners.

My dear, noble Brother and Sister: It would be quite an impossible task for me fully to express what you are to me. I hope you will believe me when I tell you, let come what may, let fall what will, I have a vital and an abiding interest in your welfare — here and here-after.

"God be with you till we meet again."

Yours in hope of the mercies of God,

John Lee Smith

CIRCULAR LETTER

To the Primitive Baptists comprising the Pigg River District Primitive Baptist Association and our correspondence who are now in their 144th Session being held with the Little Creek Church in Franklin County, Virginia.

We greet and welcome you as saints of the Lord.

It has fallen my lot by rotation to compose this session's Circular Letter. This task is an honorable one as it speaks, if accepted, for the entire body of believers in Christ. I feel quite incompetent for such a task but my prayer is that God will direct my thoughts in a way that what is said will be edifying and comforting, and to the glory of our Triune God.

The word Christian claims my attention. What do we mean by this appelation? Dictionaries give varied definitions, but the best one is, "A disciple of Christ." We read in the Bible that the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch. This was while Paul and Barnabas were preaching there in the year 42 A. D. They did not call themselves Christians, but it was said of them, and for a very good reason. They were following Christ in precept and example, and had become believers in the doctrine that was preached by the working of the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven.

God's little children are all taught of the Lord, and great is their peace. Every one that God loved before time, and gave his Son in covenant, will be brought into this glorious knowledge here in time, and made to praise His name while they live here in this unfriendly world.

The Holy Ghost comes to them while they are dead in trespasses and sins, and quickens them into divine life. A new birth takes place, and the Holy Ghost their teacher, abides with them forever.

The Holy Ghost teaches them that the way of life and salvation is by Jesus Christ. Faith is given them to believe what the Holy Ghost teaches, for these things are spiritually discerned. The new born babe in Christ is nourished by the sincere milk of the Word. While still living in this old tabernacle of clay he is a living spirit. Having been born of that incorruptible seed from above he will never die.

Do not all these things take place with us while we live here in the world? Jesus said, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." You dear saints, as living souls shall cease to exist when mortal life shall cease. The soul that sinneth shall die. The natural man, or the first man Adam, is a living soul. The new or inner man is spiritual. As such he will go back to God from whence he came, but the old man to the dust must return.

Much more could be said on the subject, but enough has been said to convince everyone whose eyes have been opened, that salvation is of the Lord. They were believers that followed Christ, and called Christians. They were as a city set on a hill whose light could not be hid. May we in like manner let our light so shine that men may see our good works and glorify our Father in Heaven. Let us follow Paul's admonition: "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."

Humbly submitted in Christian love,
Elder P. E. Ingram

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE UPPER COUNTRY LINE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION 1969

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

It is inspiring to witness our brethren and friends of like precious faith brought together in one accord, one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. We desire to welcome you in the spirit of love to the sixty-third session of the Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association convening with our sister church at Bush Harbor, North Carolina, the year nineteen hundred sixty-nine.

We gather here for one purpose only—to praise God from whom all blessings flow. No greater blessing has man ever received than to feel that great love of God. "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me saying, Yea I have loved thee with an everlasting love. Therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." (Jeremiah 31:3)

When I was appointed to write this letter, I wondered, "Why appoint me, one of the weakest of all God's saints?" Yet I love my brethren and desire to be submissive to their wishes. Much of my way here I travel in darkness trying to pray for light that we could see the glory of God once again.

We believe our Lord is a God of purpose, yet what his purpose is concerning us, we know not. The poet says:

> "His purposes will ripen fast
> Unfolding every hour.
> The bud will have a bitter taste
> But sweet will be the flower."
> (Cowper)

Brethren, isn't it the love of Christ dwelling in us that makes us travel many hundreds of miles to meet together? Jesus says: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matthew 18: 20)

As we leave this meeting, many of us will never meet on this earth again. But if I am not deceived, I have a sweet hope that we will meet on that Heavenly shore where sickness, sorrow, pain, and death are felt and feared no more.

Submitted in the love of God and of my Brethren.

Written by Warford N. Tilley.

Elder W. Curry King, Moderator
Donald E. Smith, Clerk

THANKFUL FOR THE SIGNS

12709 N. Dakota St.
Spokane, Wash. 99218

Dear Elder and Sister Spangler:

I am late in sending in my renewal to the **Signs**. I have thought of you folks often, and hoped I would be given a mind to write; but thinking about it was as far as I ever got. I wished that I could have attended more of the meetings when you were out here, but I just wasn't able to.

I recall what you told me: "Remember, the view from the mountain is fine, but the water's in the valley." I seem to have been in the valley quite awhile now. I know I don't deserve any crumbs from the Master's table, but I surely hunger for them. It seems my life is full of natural things rather than spiritual since my baptism; and I do not understand why. Nevertheless, my hope and faith is in God alone, and I know that of myself I can do nothing . . . I can't write as I would like to — I feel to be such an empty vessel.

Hope that you are both well, and that you are much better since your illness. I am thankful to God for the **Signs**, and I hope I will always be able to have them in my home.

I am enclosing check for three renewals as shown . . . God bless you both, and all of His loved ones everywhere. I pray I am one of His, though not fit to be.

In Christian love, I hope,
Caroline Martin

GOD IS NOT DEAD

(Written about seven years ago.)

I have read so much in the last few months about God being dead, and I feel to agree that the people who say these

things may believe God is dead. In the first place God has never been or will he ever be alive to any of us unless we have a spiritual awakening from above. We knew nothing about him, therefore we could easily say God is dead.

To know God one must believe that he is, and have a personal experience with him. When one has been made acquainted with the King of Kings, and come to meet him in the way, then they can say, with Paul of old, "He is alive for evermore." To the spiritually minded God is the maker of Heaven and Earth and all things that exist, whether it be the greatest or the least. There is no power in Heaven above or in the Earth below which is not given from above.

No nation has ever been able to escape the wrath of God that has become completely engulfed in sin. We can go back in church history to the long ago, and find where the great city of Babylon was destroyed, to rise no more at all; also Sodom and Gomorrah when they became so vastly rich and increased in goods, they denounced God; and according to church history and the ancient books I have been able to locate, God destroyed these cities forever, The Great Pharoah and the mighty King Herod were destroyed. I have searched as far back in ancient history as I can find books to go, and in all the research I have done, God has ruled the Universe from the begining of time. The great writer of antiquities, the Jewish historian Josephus, writes that the history of the beginning of time was in the sacred books at Jerusalem.

I do not think it strange at all for people to be writing long articles about God being dead. If we read the Bible we are expecting such things. People who search the Bible find it is a store house full of the things that shall befall us in the latter days. It teaches us that some shall even claim to be God; which we have already, and are witnessing today. It also teaches in Timothy 4:3 that the time will come when people will not endure sound doctrine but after their lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables.

Second Timothy chapter 3 tells us that in the last days perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of their own selves, boasters, proud blasphemers, disobedient to parents, false accusers, despisers of those that are good, having a form of Godliness but denying the power thereof. It would not take a very learned person to know that all of this is coming to pass in this day.

We can see many things that are foretold in the Bible being fullfilled right before our own eyes. We are told we must be born of the spirit, for the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit, neither can we know them because they are spiritually discerned. But I believe we can expect to hear a lot more in the future to shock us than the theory that God is dead. The spiritual child does not find the way to the cross a smooth flowery way. They wouldn't be following Christ if they did.

We find all down through the ages that the Prophets, Apostles, and followers of Christ were greatly persecuted and even the Saviour himself; and the Lord allowed it to be so, I believe God's children will have a hard way to travel here below. One time in history man became so great in his own eyes he intended to build a tower to Heaven, to take a short cut no doubt, but he was hindered of his design.

When a nation becomes so rich and has need of nothing, men forget God; but in time of great distress, troubles, or poverty, the first thing that enters the mind of men is, Lord be merciful unto us. But let us cast our eyes to watch, and see what shall be in the latter days. It is all recorded in the great store book to which we have access. "Watch for in a time ye think not the Son of Man cometh."

Eunice Dean
11475 S. W. 41st. Street
Miami, Fla.

HIS CONTACT WITH THE BRETHREN

1042 5th. St. Apt. 8,
Crescent City, Calif. 95531

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I have changed my address to that shown above.

The **Signs of the Times** is my contact with the Old Primitive Baptists brethren. The closest church is 86 miles at Grants Pass, Oregon. I am glad that I can yet drive and can get there during the summer. Winters are bad to travel on account of the snow.

I haven't seen my brother W. O. Hall since he and his wife were down your way last winter. He said he enjoyed the preaching very much at the different churches.

I spend most of my time reading God's Holy Scriptures. I know that my years are not many. I try to live according as we are taught in the gospel, but at times I feel I am not worthy to stand before our Lord Jesus at his coming again. After reading awhile I often get over the darkness, and light is before me. I guess we are all much alike in this.

The grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ be with you at all times.

An unworthy brother in hope,
Evan Hall

"I THE LORD DO ALL THESE THINGS"

"I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things."

(Isaiah 45:7)

The Lord did not say, it is my will to do all these things. He asked for no other counsel than his own, due to his sovereignty, power and will in the matter. He did these things, and in due time, passed the knowledge of the part he wanted man to know, through the Scriptures and experience.

Light and darkness are exact opposites; so are good and evil. Yet the Lord put them in the world that he created. This world houses all his vessels of mercy, as well as his vessels of wrath. We all live together, and are faced with the darkness of evil, as well as the light and peace. Why? Because he determined within himself to do so, to bring honor and praise to himself and portray his glory.

When we read that, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," we believe it means all things good and bad. The darkness God created, was to show his wonderful light, by contrast. Also, the evil, to make his children realize his mercy and goodness, when they receive sweet peace from the Comforter he sent, when he left the sinful world, to go to the right hand of his Father, to make intercessions for them. He told Adam, "Thou *shalt surely* die," foretelling Adam that he would sin, because the penalty of that transgression was death.

"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isa. 46:9-10)

Do you believe he looked across the vast gulf between the beginning and the end, choosing to ignore the great matters in between? What about the things that are not yet done? He did not say he willed to do all his pleasure concerning only the light he formed, and the peace he created, and just *"some"* of the things between the end and the beginning, but he did say, the things that are not yet done, meaning the *all* things that would come to pass, from beginning to end. (as in Isa. 45:7)

The great God that numbered the sands of the sea, the hairs of your head, and is in the sparrow's fall; also fills the immensity of eternity and dwells in the heart of each of his people. His counsel (that was standing then, is

standing now and will stand forever) is his will to do all his pleasure, in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

We hear quoted so often, that the steps of a *good* man are ordered of the Lord, but the same Bible says, "A man's heart deviseth his way, but the *Lord directeth* his steps," and "Oh Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

I am not afraid that my belief that he willed all things, accuses my Lord of being the author of sin, for he was made like unto us, except sinless. He is not, nor was he ever under any law. He is a law unto himself, and made all things for his own glory and pleasure. Since sin is a transgression of the law, he cannot be a sinner, not being under law.

The Book says the law entered that the offence might abound. Did this happen outside the will of God? No, for it follows that where *sin* abounded, *grace* did much more abound. Without sickness we need no healer; without sin, we need no Saviour. "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, *and for sin,* condemned sin in the flesh." (Romans 8:3) Aren't you glad it was left in the flesh, and that this Counselor willed to send his beloved Son, *for sin;* and with his indwelling, cleansed our souls from that sin? Wonder of wonders!

My heart aches, and I go about in sack cloth and ashes, weeping unshed tears, because of my sins and lusts after the flesh. As I mix and mingle with God's anointed, I wonder how they endure me. If they could only see into my sinful heart! Their acceptance of me, and my shortcomings, help to strengthen me to believe with Paul, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief.

I do not try to blame the sufferings and damnation I feel at times, on the blessed Saviour, nor the Father, who predestinated all things. I sometimes hope he called me, and loved me, and saved me, and put a love for him in my heart, that makes me long for his mercy and forgiveness.

But at the same time, he put a Godly fear of his power, his wrath and mighty being, as Jehovah God the creator; who set all things into existence and willed *everything* to be just as it was, as it is, and as it will come to pass in the future. It is always now with him, but this stage of life, in which we have our being, was arranged by him and passes just as he willed it.

His sword, the wicked, is the means he uses to measure the faith of his elect. Read in the Scriptures, how that sword of the Lord, the wicked, that he created, moved in all ages to help his chosen ones and bring about the fulfillment of his purposes. It crucified the blessed Saviour, without which crucifixion, not one of his children would or could have been saved.

How can we, who are nothing and less than nothing, question the majesty, power, purpose and will of our creator? For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and *invisible,* whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. He is the potter, we are the clay, and as the poet says, it is not for us to reason why, nor God the answer give.

"Oh Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear?" (Isa. 63:17) This people, who asked the Lord, why he made them to err from his ways, and hardened their heart from his fear, were not the Egyptians nor Pharaoh, but Israelites, or the people of promise. They said, "*We are thine:* thou never bearest rule over them; they were not called by thy name."

It is not given us to know, why he willed it thus; but in his purpose, the experience of his chosen is up and down. They at times are allowed to dwell in the sunlight of his smile; at other times in disobedience and rebel-

lion, then in terrible doubt and dismay. The cycle of life in a poor, lowly, unworthy human being, makes up the suffering, trials and tribulations that must be his lot, before he is numbered with the sheep, on the right hand of the Father at the final day. Why God set up this path for his elect, is in his own counsel and is a mystery of godliness. We cannot understand why he chose the most wicked, weak and sinful characters, to bestow his mercy and goodness on, but so we are taught. I feel it is for his own glory.

We trust their weakness, doubts and fears give evidence, we are included in that number. I hope to be kept from asking the Potter, why hast thou made me thus. He taught that I have not the right to ask. His ways are as far above ours as the heavens are above the earth.

If he hardened the Israelites' hearts, and made them err, so they would see their weakness and folly, and their lost condition without him, is it unseemly that they begged for his mercy and strength, as we do today?

Dear ones, my hope is in the power, purpose and *will* of God; not just predestination.

I search my heart for the evidences that we are told are witnesses. The love of the Saviour and the fruits of the Spirit are manifested in us when we love the brethren, when we long to be with them, when we yearn to be brought closer to him through prayer, hope, faith and charity for our fellow man.

Some of us think there are things too small or minute for him to bother with or notice; also too vile or sinful. But how can he sift his precious wheat from the chaff, if he did not will the chaff, or refine the gold, if the dross escapes his notice?

His sovereign will holds the destiny of man in his hand. "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turneth it whithersoever he will." "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will be hardeneth."

Do you, dear child of God, blame him or his foreknowledge, when you think foolish things? That is sin you know. When we follow our own lusts, and sin, if we are one whom he loves, he willed that the Spirit of truth within us, would stir our *pure* mind of remembrance, and cause us to mourn and grieve. It is hard to understand, that we have an old man of sin, that still wars against the Spirit, after we have tasted the goodness and mercies of God. The inner and outer man struggles until death frees us from this world, and we are wafted into his sweet presence.

Ours is a hard doctrine. These are hard sayings and who can hear them. We do have seasons of rejoicing, when we are lifted up and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. However, this warfare, while we are intombed in this body of flesh, is not unknown to God, nor out of his will and purpose.

We are walled in and protected by the shalls and wills of God. They encircle those he loves, and shut out those he willed to harden.

"For the creature was *made* subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." "And he doeth according to his *will* in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand or say unto him, what doest thou?" "But now, oh Lord, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand."

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Spearsville, La.

ENJOYS WRITINGS IN THE SIGNS

230 Marilee Row
Grants Pass, Oregon 97526

Dear Elder Wood:

I just received my August *Signs* and have read everything in it. Elder Curry's article about *Seed* is wonderful. I was five months and two days old when he wrote that article; and I lived

to hear him preach several times there at Lebanon, Ohio. I also enjoyed Elder H. H. Leffert's article on *Charity*. I heard him preach once when he preached my father's funeral at Strausburg, Va. January 12, 1935.

Elder Wood, I also enjoyed your editorial *Proper Subjects For Baptism*. Also Elder W. W. Hudson, Jr.'s in regard to Jacob and Esau. Really I enjoyed all in there. I have been taking the *Signs* for over twenty years and have given several subscriptions to some of my friends. I think it is the best yet.

I see that my subscription, and my daughter's, are due. She is not a member but loves to read the *Signs*. I am enclosing my check to cover.

May God bless all of you editors and staff to keep this wonderful paper coming to us.

Yours in a precious hope,
C. H. Greathouse

TO A 16 YEAR OLD COUSIN

John Allan McColl
R. R. 3, Glencoe, Ontario,
Canada

Dear John Allan:

I have been thinking of you as you have reached your sixteenth birthday, and how you must have been looking forward to this time when you would be old enough to obtain your driver's license; how you have been taking a man's part in working on the farm to an increasing extent, and embarking upon life with all the vigour and enthusiasm of youth; and I wanted you to have this Bible.

At this time I would like to have you consider a few things about the wonder of this Book of Books. It is really a library of sixty-six books written by between thirty and forty different authors over a period of at least fifteen hundred years and yet can now be bound in a little volume that a child can carry in its little hand. It has not only been unified by the binder in one book but so unified by God the Author inspiring the various writers that it has the miraculous unity of One Book! While there are thousands of tons of books printed each year, and "best-sellers" come into the limelight for a few months and then are forgotten, the Bible continues to out-sell all the other books in the world by a wide margin. It has been preserved in a miraculous way over the centuries in spite of concerted efforts to destroy it — the spot can still be seen in old London where baskets full of Bibles were burned by order of the Church of Rome.

God is mentioned in every book except the book of Esther and one cannot read that remarkable account without realizing that God is there everywhere present. Five hundred times in the five books of Moses it prefaces or concludes its declarations with the sublime assertions, "The Lord said," or "The Lord spake!" Three hundred times in the following books it does the same, and in the prophetical, twelve hundred times with such expressions as: "Hear the Word of the Lord," or "Thus saith the Lord."

Consider how Jesus Christ himself, who was the Word of God made flesh, quoted the Holy Scriptures throughout his earthly ministry; how often he silenced every argument with the simple statement, "It is written." When tempted for forty days in the wilderness by Satan himself, the only weapon, three successive times, in his divine hands is the Sword of the Spirit, the Bible. He quotes, thrice successively, the Book of Deuteronomy, each time using a single sentence, whose whole force lies in the use of one or two words. Even when Satan seeks to overcome him by quoting (but at the same time mutilating) a verse of the 91st Psalm, Jesus Christ confounds him by replying once more, "It is written."

In his second epistle Peter tells of being on the Mount of Transfiguration with James and John and hearing the voice of God from Heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well

pleased." Yet he immediately asserts that, "We have also a *more sure word of prophecy,* whereunto ye do well that ye take heed . . . ," declaring that the inspired Word of God is even more wonderful than the voice which they heard from Heaven — and this inspired Word is available to us to read!

If an earthly king or queen were to write to us how we would prize every word and read every line over and over! — yet here in the Bible we have the King of Kings and Lord of Lords speaking to us.

I cannot urge you too strongly to read a chapter each night and morning in the privacy of your own room; start by reading a chapter of the Gospels at night and a chapter of Proverbs in the morning and read them over and over; and you will go out to face the world each day as a strong man armed. It is good to set a definite time each day and read the Bible systematically when you are young. I knew a man a few years ago who became interested in the things of God late in life and his great regret was that he had not read the Bible when he was younger and his memory more retentive. I am sure that as you have gone out into the world and seen the different values that other people have, you have sometimes wondered whether your own family was right or whether they were just old-fashioned; but I would say, "Don't accept anything that you hear from your parents, or your minister or any other source, as truth unless it measures up to the Word of God, for it is the Supreme Authority, the Court of Last Resort." Acts XVIII:11 states that the Bereans were more noble than the saints at Thessalonica because "They searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were so." You do not need a commentary to help you understand God's Word, for, if you read it prayerfully, the same Spirit that inspired the original writers can illuminate you and give you an understanding as you read it.

But there may be special times of crises in your life when you have a special problem, and I would say, open your Bible wherever it will open, like one drawing a bow at a venture, and you will find a special message for the particular situation that confronts you, for it has the answer to every problem that you will ever face in life. The late Dyson Hague, M. A., former Canon of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, when once faced with the necessity of going abroad and leaving his family because of failing health, opened his Bible in just such a way and it opened at Gen. XXVIII:15 — "Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land." What a flash of comfort came into his soul as he read that verse — God's own Word to him.

John Bunyan, an uneducated tinker, had only the King James version of the Bible and yet he wrote "Pilgrim's Progress," which is second only to the Bible in the English language. Joseph Conrad, a Polish orphan, learned English by reading the Bible and became in his day the greatest novelist in the English language. After the First World War a man in Australia, in reading his Bible noted how Noah had pitched the Ark with pitch, and when he discovered the place where the Ark must have been built, found the untold wealth of petroleum reserves in Asia Minor; and this was the beginning of the Anglo-Dutch Oil Co. (Shell).

What a remarkable age it is, John Allan, for you to be growing up in, for during the brief span of your life human knowledge has increased more than it had during all the previous centuries of man's life on earth. (Society is changing so fast that half of last year's graduation class of university students went into jobs that didn't exist at the time that they were born. More than half of the sales made by some of our major corporations involve products that were not on the market 10 years ago.) — It is prophesied in Daniel XII:4 — "Many shall run to and

fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Also less than fifty years ago the prophecy of Jacob on his dying bed that "Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea, and he shall be for an haven of ships; . . ." was fulfilled 3600 years later when the British government developed Haifa (in the land of Zebulun) as a port for Israel. In your own lifetime you have seen the fulfillment of Moses' blessing of Asher 3400 years ago in Deut. XXXIII:24 — "Let Asher . . . dip his foot in oil" — with the development of oil wells in the land of Asher in Israel; and in the Six Day War less than two years ago was there not a fulfilling of Leviticus XXVI:8 — "And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight; . . ."?

There could well be many more things happening not too many years hence in the light of Bible prophecy. Watch what is going on in Israel, and read your Bible to see the many prophecies in Ezekiel and Revelation and the other Scriptures concerning Israel.

I remember some years ago when I was on the Grand Jury that Dr. John Fisher, the Pathologist at Victoria Hospital, whenever he took the oath to testify, always took it upon the open Bible; a busy man snatching even a brief moment at such a time to read God's Word. Even though you too may be busy, John Allan, and I know that you are very busy, a few minutes each day spent with the Word of God will be spent to the greatest possible advantage and it is my prayer that it might be a lamp unto your feet and a light unto your path.

Sincerely,
Duncan W. McColl
R. R. 4, Appin, Ontario,
Canada

LETTER TO ELDER LOYD WALL

Steems, Miss.

Dear Elder Wall:

I hope this note finds you okay. We are, except tired from the long tirp home.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:8-10)

After reading this I am made to believe there is not anything I can do for my own salvation. It says, "By grace are ye saved." Where does this grace come from? In I Corinthians 1:4, we read, "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ." And with grace meaning the free mercy of God, one can see that grace is the gift of God. How can anyone work for a gift? A gift is something given without being worked for. "Not of works lest any man should boast."

I believe that all of the ones who received the gift were saved; and the ones who were not in this number were the non-elect of God. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Romans 3:23, 24) This shows that all men have come short of the grace of God, and, were it not for His gift, all men would be lost. But through His mercy an elect number were given this grace.

In John 17:12, we read, "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name; those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled." All that were given Him by God were kept and given the gift of grace. Yes, the gift of grace was given each one of His children, and everyone of their sins was washed away by his blood. Every man is born a sinner, but the ones that Jesus died for have their sins washed away, and not by their own washing. If any could wash away his own sins, then Christ

died in vain. But it says, "for by grace are ye saved," and how can one obtain this grace but as a gift from God?

Elder Wall, we want you to come to our association. Please come if you can.

In hope in Christ,
James McCool

ORIGINAL WHITE OAK UNION

The next session of the Original White Oak Union is appointed to be held with Sand Hill Church, Duplin County, North Carolina, the fifth Saturday and Sunday in November 1969. The church is located near Pottershill on Highway No. 41.

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and worship with us.

L. H. Southerland, Clerk

NO SESSION OF THE
VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING

We regret that we will not be able to hold a session of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting until further notice. So many of those who used to entertain our visiting brethren and friends have passed on to their rest that we are unable to properly care for our brethren at this time.

John D. Wood

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND
(To August 1, 1969)

Elmer Prince, Ky.	$3.00
Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.	1.00
Daisey Baker, Wash.	3.00
Fannie Davis, Wash.	3.00
Mrs. C. C. Dodd, Va.	1.00
P. L. Lynch, Va.	3.00
C. W. Vass, N. C.	1.00
Mrs. J. S. Carter, N. C.	3.00
Mary McCollum, Can.	3.00
G. E. Ragsdale, Ga.	3.00
H. B. Briggs, N. C.	3.00
Essie Oglesby, Tex. in memory of Mrs. Robert Sexton and Grandfather John Rateliff	3.00
Alpha Sears, Ohio	3.00
Will Waldrop, Ala.	1.00
Mrs. P. D. Kirkwood, Ky.	1.00

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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A REQUEST

If any of our readers have writings by Elder H. M. Curry which we have not published, we would appreciate receiving them. We have re-published all that we have found in old copies of the *Signs of the Times* and other papers.

Many have been the favorable comments, with desire for more to be published if we have them. We would appreciate hearing from you, if you know of, or have, other writings from his pen.

Address us at Manassas, Va. 22110.

J. D. W.

ORIGINAL WHITE OAK ASSOCIATION

The next session of the original White Oak Association is appointed to be held with the church at Muddy Creek, Duplin County, North Carolina, beginning Saturday before the third

Sunday in October and continuing through Monday.

The church is located about five miles Southeast of Beulaville, North Carolina. We invite all who love the truth to come and worship with us.

L. H. Southerland, Clerk

EDITORIAL

THE LANGUAGE OF LOVE

"Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me."

(Ruth 1:16-17)

These words of Ruth breathed by the Spirit cannot stand elaboration without corrupting some of the preciousness of the expression. These words better express the Eternal Language of Love than any other that I can now recall. No one but a live soul which has been filled with God's Love and dedicated to a labor of love could conscientiously make such expression. No natural man with the greatest of worldly skill could manufacture a saying which would convey as much sacrifice, courage, devotion, trust, and love as these words convey. It is most emotional, stirring, melodious, and beautiful. Thousands and thousands of quivering lips have quoted from the innermost soul this expression of Ruth in every century and decade since its publication. Dear ones, have you ever quoted these words in trying to convey the real desire, purpose, and love in your hearts?

Languages and dialects are very many and varied. They can be catalogued as three sorts of languages. We shall term them as celestial, terrestial, and infernal, or heavenly, worldly, and hellish. Saints speak the heavenly; worldly men speak worldly; and, the children of the devil the infernal or hellish Language. Paul said in Philippians 3:20, "For our conversation is in Heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." John said in John 3:31, "He that is of the earth is earthly; and speaketh of the earth." Swearing, cursing, and blasphemy is the language of the devil, who speaks as men of Belial. We want to concentrate upon the heavenly language of love in this treatise.

We quote one phase of the definition of **language** from Webster's unabridged dictionary to show that the language we are now considering is more than mere words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs uttered by the tongue: "Any means of expressing or communicating feeling or thought. In the usual sense, **language** means a system of conventionalized signs; that is, words or gestures having fixed meanings. But not all inteligible expressions are fixed, nor are all used exclusively for communication, since language plays a large roll in our thinking processes. Hence **language** may mean (1) expression that conveys ideas, (2) expression that symbolizes ideas. Bodily expression, whether gesture or articulation, and inscription, as printing, writing, etc., are its chief forms, but any systematic symbolism in a more or less transferred sense, is called **language**, as the **language of art**."

I looked in the eyes set in pools of tears of a precious person yesterday. Even though this person could utter nothing with her tongue, the soul communicated much to me. Eyes are correctly called, **windows of the soul.** Much was revealed through these eyes. Experiences of sadness, compassion, desire, and submission were all expressed through these eyes. The language of the soul. The eyes can convey more than the tongue can express. You can see in the eyes whether or not the tongue is expressing the truth. I like to look in the eyes of one with whom I talk. Language of love is spoken through the eyes. People who greet me with words of the tongue as they look some other way, have not really greeted me. They have hidden from me their true feeling. If there be joy, happiness, contentment, and love in your soul, I can see it better in your eyes than you can say it with

your tongue.

The tone of the voice means much in expression. Love in the soul mellows the voice and eradicates all harshness of tones. Love makes the voice softer than many years of speech-training. Love gives a musical sound to words which otherwise would be but noises. Shakespeare said, "Her voice was ever soft, gentle and low; an excellent thing in woman." We are inclined to go further than the poet in asserting that this would be a crowning charm in anyone. Coarse loud talking veils the greatest words of love spoken with a shadow which would completely hide the beauty of the expression. Soft, gentle, and low voices of mothers have often soothed fretful children. We read in the Scriptures, "A soft answer turneth away wrath." God revealed Himself to the prophet of old, in "the still small voice." Hypocritical words may be noted by the tone of the voice. I must see your eyes and hear your voice to enable me to more perfectly judge what you mean by your words. There may be deception in the words but not in the voice. A voice mellowed with love-tones bespeak God's love in the soul.

The countenance of the face many times flash the love of the soul. Many days have been spent in trying to train the face to smile. Habitual smiling as result of training is artificial and can easily be detected from the smile that love empowers. There are different kinds of smiles. There is the vacant and cold smile which is result of much training. There is the smile of hate. There is a smile of approval and a friendly smile. Yet there is one smile which excels all—, **the smile of love**—. The smile of love is so powerful that it is always reciprocated. The smile of love cannot be ignored. These precious, beautiful, and inspiring smiles are results of experiences of godly love flooding the soul.

Position and movements of the limbs or body express more than words can convey of the true character, condition, and desires of the soul. We are unaware of our posture and gestures most of the time but they speak much even when tongue is silent. These gestures give real meaning to the words of our tongue. True heartfelt love beautifies and graces these gestures much better than years of disciplined conscious training. Love speaks well in all postures, gestures, and actions; while mere words cannot fully convey the **language of love**. I have taken limp hands in my hand while the persons offering their hands were turning away and quickly withdrawing the hands. Such "handshakes" show mere habitual formality with no indication of love and fellowship. Loving fellowship has been communicated through warm handshakes, loving embraces, kisses, gleaming eyes, and beautiful smiles.

Read the book of Judges before you read the book of Ruth in order to see the contrast of pictures portrayed. Public corruption, wild and rude action, and a disregard for justice; all prevailed in the time of the latter part of the Book of Judges. Having these lurid pictures in our mind when we begin to read the Book of Ruth will make us more appreciate the quietness, serenity, and peace so manifest in this writing. It proves to us that amidst national corruption there are a few endowed with the best of character and greatest of love and devotion. It proves that there is a people who have a devout trust in an overruling Providence that will never fail in its reward to those who trust in Him during the greatest tribulations. It proves there is no condition, however adverse or afflicted, that can completely destroy hope in those who love.

The circumstances of Naomi must be considered before we can appreciate the resolution of Ruth. Naomi is left desolate in a foreign country. She has lost her husband, her children, and her peace of mind. She has been "emptied" of all the enjoyment of the Moab of this world. She is alone in the sense that she is the only one left who had dwelt in Canaan. Her daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth, were citizens of Moab. Orpah and Ruth were tied by nature to their families and could well call Moab their home as they had known no other dwelling place. The only natural tie to

Naomi is the fact that she is the mother of their deceased husbands. Naomi left Bethlehem ten years before for Moab because of a famine in the land. Naomi hears that the Lord has again smiled upon her home land in giving them bread. There is no longer a famine in her own country, so she and her two daughters arise and start for the land of Judah. After beginning the journey together Naomi begins to realize that the girls have closer ties in Moab than anywhere else. This is where they were reared. I am only the mother of their husbands. Why should I even think they are as close to me as to their own mothers because I am only the mother of their husbands who are now dead. They have dealt kindly with me and their husbands. They have completely performed their duty to me and mine. They are not in debt to me for any further kindness. Why should I be so selfish as to continue to accept their kind hospitality to accompany me further. They will without a complaint but I must loose them from any further generosity to me for their sake. I am too old to marry again and raise up other sons for their husbands. Even should I be young enough, and so fortunate, it would be a long time for them to wait for husbands. This journey will be long and difficult. My goal of reaching home is enticing enough to persevere in tribulations, but what about their goal? They are leaving home, — not going home! I must urge them for their own good and welfare to return to their own homes. I must make the journey alone. She urges them to return home, prays the Lord's blessings upon them; Kisses them, thus putting a seal upon her words.

These words and kisses of fond parting so shocks Orpah and Ruth that they weep and vow that they will return with Naomi to her people. Naomi again argues the fact by reasoning more in particulars. The last statement being: "It grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the Lord is gone out against me." (See Ruth 1:13) What weeping must have followed! This persistence of Naomi convinced Orpah that she would fare better in her own land with her own people in hope of another husband, than to accompany her mother-in-law in such difficult, long journey of self sacrifice. Orpah kissed Naomi and returned to her own people, but Ruth did not. Naomi urged Ruth to do as her sister had done. This was the third time of urging for Ruth. Surely these persuasions had different results in the hearts and minds of these two. Each considered what was being said. Each one was "counting the cost" all the time. The cost is too great for the selfish minded. The cost is a privilege to the spiritually minded. Orpah is being convinced to return home while Ruth is becoming more resolved to follow on. **The Language of Love** which Naomi spoke must have been conveyed into the very soul of Ruth by the Spirit so that when Naomi was through speaking, Ruth's cup was filled to overflowing. Ruth was receiving a flood of God's eternal love which could not be retained in quietness. Love bubbles forth in unmistakable terms. What a love feast when two hearts are melt together! Such a love commands communication. Such love demands expression. These lovely expressions give peace in uniting lovely hearts. Many waters cannot quench love. Much tribulation cannot subdue it. The fiery furnace of affliction cannot destroy it. Worldly reason cannot discourage it. Hate cannot disrupt it, because love is the strongest. We shudder at the thought of attempting to break into segments Ruth's expression for fear of polluting it; yet, we realize it cannot be polluted. We shall not change it nor delete any of it. God grant that we speak our own heart in this matter, using Ruth's language as guidance.

"Intreat me not to leave thee". You may think it better for me that I leave you but do not further urge that I do so. These reasonings you have made would result only in natural happiness for the time being, but natural comforts do not mean happiness to me. I am tired of my citizenry in the Moab of this world. The things of Moab no longer entice me.

Worldly reputation, security, honor, and ambition are no longer bright goals for me to reach. Mansions for my body to dwell in and treasures here on earth would not satisfy the yearnings of my soul. I had rather be with you and enjoy your fellowship than to have the fellowship of the world. I want to be united with you.

"Or to return from following after thee." I have followed you this far. I want to continue on. You are older and wiser and more experienced than I am. Your conduct and demeanor has been such that I have such esteem for you that I would like to imitate you. I do not desire the position of leadership. I am neither worthy nor capable. You have led so well. I am ready, willing, and anxious to tread in your footsteps. Your walk has proven to me that you have been directed by an unseen Being. I trust that you are acquainted with the road from here to Bethlehem. I am not. Where you lead I will follow. I had rather sojourn with you than to dwell in Moab. I had rather follow you on your pilgrimage through the wastelands and wilderness than to rest in Moab. Something that I cannot explain nor understand is working so mightily with me that a firm resolution is so fixed in my mind and heart that I must speak positively and plain. Something tells me that even if the road be rough we will be enabled to persevere.

"Whither thou goest, I will go." If you go through deep waters, I will go through deep waters. Regardless of how rugged the road or how long the journey, I will be with you. When enemies are to be faced, I will face them with you. If you must fight, I will fight also. If you run, I will run with you.

"Where thou lodgest, I will lodge." Where you choose to rest when tired, I will rest. Where you drink, I will drink. When you stop to eat, I will stop and eat whatever you eat. If the place you lodge is in the open air, it will be good enough for me. If you have nothing but the bare hard ground for your bed, that will be where I lay. When you sing, I want to sing with you. When you pray, there I want to pray. Where you worship, I will worship. I have a firm conviction that we will reach your land and people even though the struggle be long and difficult. I shall go all the way with you to your home where you have heard there is bread. The bread that the Lord has given your people must be much better than we have in Moab. You must have eaten some of it before the famine in your land which caused you and family to leave your home and come to Moab. Your determination to make this difficult journey, even alone, signifies your great desire for this bread. Could this be the **Bread of Life?** Could this be bread for the soul instead of the body that you so much desire? If this bread you have eaten in the past be so delicious that you are willing to sacrifice all for it, I will sacrifice.

"Thy people shall be my people." You are different from my people in Moab. Your family had such love for one another. Even this love was so great that it included Orpah and Ruth of the Gentiles. You loved more than your own. You manifested love even for those who were against you. You are proving to me that your people must be as you are. I am not going with you just to keep you from going alone. I shall stay with you in your land. I shall consider your people as my people even though they do not consider me as belonging to them. I will not return to the Moab of this world as it holds nothing for my satisfaction. **Your God must be great!**

"And thy God, my God." You talk about the great Creator, Ruler, Governor, Director, and Keeper. You pray to the Father and beg his blessings like a little child. You show that you depend upon Him for everything. Even though you tell us He "Has gone out against you," you do not blame Him. You blame yourself to such extent that you feel to deserve being cut off forever. Even though you are bitter, you are not bitter against God. You trust Him still. Even though He slay you, I feel you would die trusting Him. I am being given to trust in God who worketh all things according to the counsel of His own will.

Your God shall be my God!

"Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried." A still small voice that must be from God says to me, "Blessed are they that die in the Lord." Though He slay you, you trust Him. Surely then you die in the Lord. I have in my heart that abiding faith that I too will die in the Lord. Anyway, my pledge is to accompany you unto death. I want to die with your people. There is a daily dying. I have experienced some of this. I expect to experience more of this dying as I go along. I want to die to the lusts of the flesh and live after the Spirit. I want to die to serving the law so that the law will have no dominion over me. I want to be raised to walk in newness of life. When your people reach the end of your journey here in time, you die in hope of the resurrection. Your burial places are sacred because of the hope of the resurrection. I want to be buried in a sacred place. I know no sacred place that would be so sacred as being buried with the King of Kings. If I be buried with Him, He shall raise me to walk in newness of life.

"The Lord do so to me." I rely upon Him to perform all these things for me. He has worked the will in me. I trust that He will give me the power. If He has begun a good work in me, He will perform it. His gifts and calling are without repentance. I pray Him to perform by enabling me to pay this vow which I have made. I can do nothing without Him. There may be **more** in store for me than this vow covers. God knows.

"And **more** also, if ought but death part thee and me." It may be that it be God's will for me to part from you in fulfilling His purpose. May it be God's direct leading. God may have some special purpose for me to fulfill which will necessitate our parting to some extent. If the Lord direct my steps, He will delight in my way. If it be to satisfy some carnal desire of mine, may He strike me dead. I trust Him to lead me to such extent that I vow not to depart from you unless He lead me to another. **I must go with you!!!** E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD

Beloved Editor:—The columns of the "Signs" are richly furnished with precious truth, and therefore I have felt that it was needless that I should write; but now the subject heading this article is upon my mind, and for my own relief I will write upon it, and submit it to you.

The apostle Paul says, "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." (Rom. VIII. 19.) The creature mentioned in the text is, doubtless, the "new creature," or christian, in his twofold and complex nature, who ardently desires and earnestly expects deliverance from the bondage of corruption. Therefore the consummation of this wonderful salvation is yet future; but now we are saved by hope. And from the whole scope of the apostle's subject in this connection, it is evident that the earnest expection of the creature must continue to wait until hope is satisfied in fruition. The sons of God will then be manifested, and we will no longer wait.

In the treatment of this subject three prominent thoughts therefore present themselves for consideration; first, the waiting; second, the manifestation; and last, the happy issue.

1. **The waiting.** Here we must notice who waits, why they wait, and when the waiting will cease. The text says, The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth; and below we are assured that "The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Therefore it is "the creature" that waits. But who is the creature? It is the heir of salvation, the lost, but redeemed and quickened sinner, assuredly. And as thus regarded, this one, who is in Christ, and therefore a new creature, is a son or child of God, although now a partaker of flesh and blood, and under the bondage of corruption. "Forasmuch then as the

children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself (Jesus, the Son of God) likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them (the children) who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Heb. II 14, 15.)

Now therefore the children of God while here on earth are, like their Elder Brother, when he was on the earth, composed of **two natures,** human and divine, or flesh and spirit. For, with him, they have both an earthly and heavenly parentage; for although woman is their natural mother, yet God is their spiritual Father. And so, while Jesus is one with them in the flesh, as born of woman, they are equally one with him in the spirit, as born of God. And therefore they are the heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, because they are the children of God and brethren of Christ — (Rom. VIII, 17; Heb. II, 11.) O what a wonderful and blessed union this is! A union of life and nature, and therefore of suffering and glory!

Now, since the children, whom God gave his Son, **are partakers** of flesh and blood, as he likewise was, we, who are on this side of the vail, cannot know them only as partakers of flesh and blood, that is, not apart from flesh and blood, or abstractly, as purely spiritual; for such they are not yet, but shall be. And now this is why they wait; for as born of the flesh, they bear the image of the earthly man, as Jesus also did in the days of his flesh; and this "outward man" of theirs must die and be quickened, and undergo a radical **change** before the manifestation of the sons of God, and entrance into glory.

And therefore we who "have the first fruits of the Spirit, (who are born of the Spirit) even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of **our body.**" This waiting then must evidently continue until the adoption takes place, in the redemption of our body, and our consequent final deliverance from bondage and fear.

But then again, our waiting is here on earth, but not yonder in heaven — is now in time, but not beyond in blest eternity. "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." (2 Cor. V. 4.) All the suffering, sorrowing and waiting of the beloved Son of God was in the days of his flesh, on this side of death. And so we, who have been born of the flesh and of the Spirit, do likewise suffer with him here in the days of our flesh, because we yet bear the outward image of the earthly man; but this earthly image, now so marred and despoiled by sin, we shall put off in death, and then, as it were, in the twinkling of an eye, our change shall come, and we shall be enraptured with the manifestation of the sons of God.

2. **The manifestation.** This shall be at the end of the waiting; for when the sons of God shall be manifested, our waiting time will then be over. But now we wait, and must wait on. Therefore the sons of God are not yet manifested, although this manifestation will surely be, or else our earnest expectation, faith, hope and waiting are all vain. But with our father Abraham we believe that what God has promised he is able also to perform, and that he will in his unchanging faithfulness bring the many sons unto glory. Then, O when shall this manifestation of the sons of God be? Dear child of hope, not in time—not in the present state. For **you** must first walk through the valley of the shadow of death, and go up on the other side. But O you need not fear! for your Captain has gone before you and swallowed up death in victory, and you shall be brought off more than conqueror through him that loved you. For he declared, and will fulfill it, " I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction."— (Hosea XIII 14.)

Remember, dear child, that although the children are partakers of flesh and blood, yet "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold I

shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep , but we shall all be **changed,** in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and **we** shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory."— (1 Cor.XV 50-54) Until then you must wait. And you must wait, because your change has not yet come; for although you, as born again, are now a child of God, and have the sealing testimony and earnest of the Spirit, bearing witness with your spirit that you are a child of God, yet this is an inward work, wrought in you by the Spirit of Life, and the evidence of it is given to your faith, which is a spiritual faculty or power, and not to your natural faculties; for you, as born of the flesh, are still in possession of the outward man, or being, which has not been changed in its nature, and this stamps you with the image of the earthly man, which you now bear.

And therefore "It doth not yet appear what we (as the sons of God) shall be;" for our manifestation and appearance now is that of the children of Adam, and not that of the sons of God. And this gives you a great deal of concern and trouble too; for you are often made to see yourself from an earthly stand-point, and in the fallen image of Adam, as descended from him; and then the devil comes to you and says, If you were a child of God, a christian, would you be as you are? or would God deal with you as he does? And thus you are sorely tried, and made with earnest expectation to wait for the manifestation of the sons of God. For you do not wish to be mistaken or deceived about this, your dearest desire and hope; but yet you bear so little of the divine image of him who is altogether lovely, and so much of the earthy image of him who sinned and died, that you are made to exclaim, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" For you deeply realize that **you** are a sinner, and that the just penalty of sin is death.

And yet dear soul, **you** are a child of God, and shall be so manifested. What! you exclaim, are the children of God **sinners?** As partakers of flesh and blood they are; but they shall be saved from their sins, washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. It is true the world does not know you in this divine sonship, because it knew him not; but it judged your Elder Brother, and judges you, as men in the flesh; for it knows nothing of your **inner** life — the **new man** — Christ in you the hope of glory. To the world this is a hidden mystery, and made known unto the saints. "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." (Col. III. 3.) "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness." (Rom. VIII. 10.)

Such is your complex nature and being now; but such it shall not always be; for **mortality** shall be swallowed up of life. (2 Cor. V. 4.) Is it any wonder that while **you** are composed of elements and natures so opposite as life and death, sin and righteousness, you should realize an unwilling subjection to vanity, bondage and fear? and feel a warfare in your members? Or is it strange that while here in this state, dwelling in the tents of Kedar, as it were, you should sometimes walk in darkness and have no light? Is it not to be expected that such an one, though a child of God and joint heir with Christ, will necessarily groan, being burdened? And shall we therefore yield to doubts and fears, give way to unbelief, or give place to the devil, because we thus suffer with Christ on account of sin, and with him are tempted or tried, and conclude that we are not the sons of God? Was not our dear Master the Son of God and object of his love when he was here on earth in fashion as a man? And yet he was "a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief," and was in all things made like unto his brethren. When the devil came to him and said, "If thou be the Son of God," &c., he said, "Get thee hence, Sat-

an." And in behalf of the children whom God gave him, who, as he was, are partakers of flesh and blood, he has destroyed the devil, overcome the world, put away sin, swallowed up death in victory, led captivity captive, and ascended up into glory.

Therefore, O child of sorrow, with uncomplaining patience, meekness and hope, submit to the will of your Father in heaven, until that which is in part shall be done away; for although you now suffer with Christ, yet your sufferings shall have an end, as his did, and then you also shall be a partaker with him in his glory. By and by the sons of God shall be manifested, and then your time of suffering and of waiting will be over, and you shall bear the image of the heavenly Man, and be satisfied with the likeness of the Son of God. Then, O when shall the manifestation of the sons of God be! It shall be in the resurrection, the glorious resurrection! when "the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and WE shall **be changed.**" For so it was with our Forerunner into glory, the first born from the dead among many brethren, who was "declared (or manifested) to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, **by the resurrection from the dead.**" (Rom. I 4.) And so likewise shall it be with his many brethren, who "are the children of God, **being the children of the resurrection.**" (Luke XX. 36.) It is true that when Jesus was baptized he was then confessed to be the Son of God, by the witnessing Spirit, and the approving voice from heaven; but this was the attestation of his Sonship, rather than the manifestation of it; just as his baptism was the figure and pledge of his death and resurrection. And this will apply to all who experimentally die with him unto sin, and live with him unto God; for baptism is to them also both the figure and the pledge that, "If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." (Rom. VI. 5.)

The believing children of God are therefore "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." (Col. II. 12.) Yet this is through the medium of faith, and is now to us "The substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen." But when the manifestation of the sons of God shall come, we shall then no longer need the blessed pledges of gospel ordinances, and the sweet assuring voice of faith and hope; for all that which lies beyond, within the vail, to which these point, and of which they speak, will then be ours in blissful fruition. Therefore let us say with afflicted Job, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come." (Job XIV. 14.)

3. **The happy issue.** This manifestation of the sons of God will be unto glory and joy everlasting. Yea, themselves shall be glorious in holiness, and shine in all the heavenly resplendence of righteousness, life and immortality. For they shall awake in the power and beauty of a holy and endless life, and with the likeness of the immortal Son of God! And with this they shall be **satisfied.** Yes! for they will then have realized their earnest expectation, in being presented holy and without blame before him in love. As the sons of God manifested, they shall appear "altogether lovely." And then it will appear what we shall be, for "When he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (John III. 2.) O what an infinite and eternal weight of glory will burst upon us when we shall see our EMMANUEL **as he is!** But O how joyous will be our surprise, and unbounded our rapture, when **we shall be like him!** We will say, "Lord, it is enough." And then will we with unspeakable delight and praise say, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! — THE SONS OF GOD!! O what superlative honor, excellence and glory bestowed upon the chief of sinners, and suffering, dying creatures! How transcendantly wonderful is this, "The creature itself delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God!" "Mortality swal-

lowed up of life!" "Death swallowed up in victory!" Grace triumphant! Sinners saved! Jesus crowned with glory! And God well pleased in the manifestation of his sons! This is HEAVEN.

"There, where my blessed Jesus reigns,
In heaven's unmeasured space,
I'll spend a long eternity,
In pleasure and in praise."

Then, beloved children of God, "rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." (1 Peter IV. 13.)

In the fellowship of suffering, and the hope of glory, your brother affectionately,

D. Bartley
Willow Hill, Ill.

(The above by Elder David Bartlett appeared in the *Signs* August 15, 1871.)

IT IS INDEED A JOYFUL SOUND

"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance."

(Psalm 89:15)

The above language has been on my mind for several days, and I think I can look back to some bright spots in my past life where I could joyfully accept the above saying of David. He did not say to **hear** the joyful sound; still he does not mean that we shall not hear as well as know it. We hear many sounds throughout the whole earth, but they are not joyful sounds. We hear many bells all around us that are called gospel bells, but they are not joyful sounds to the people of God, but to the contrary they are but sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. Paul said, "For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" A good soldier must know the sound of the trumpet in time of war, for when he hears it sound for action in battle he knows it means for him to go forth to the fight.

When I lived on a farm some years ago, I had a horse that would stop still in the field when he heard my farm bell ring at noon for dinner. Sometimes we would be at the far side of the field when the bell rang, and we often had trouble to get him over to the near side of the field so that we could unharness him for dinner. Our neighbors all around us would often ring their bells before mine, but the old horse would never take any notice of the sound of them, but just as soon as my bell rang he would stop and lift up his head and neigh. Instinct taught him to know the sound of his master's bell, and he knew full well what was laid up for him by his master.

Thus it is with the Lord's people, they know the joyful sound, and they are blessed who hear it, for it gives them beauty for ashes and the oil of joy for mourning. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." (Isaiah 40: 1, 2) Salvation by grace, and grace only, is the joyful sound.

"Amazing grace (how sweet the sound),
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."

O how I do long for such sweet seasons as I had in my first love, in hearing the joyful sound, but instead I grope in darkness most of the time; and I often wonder if those bright seasons were mine to enjoy in knowing the joyful sound as David sets forth in his beautiful Psalm. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound." I am often troubled with sin and Satan, so much so that I think I will stop trying to write on spiritual things, for most every time I sit down to write I find him at my side ready to contradict everything I write, but always willing to dictate for me if I will just let him. Sometimes I fear that I am a captive of the devil at his will; I often feel like those dear souls who were led away captives: "By the river of Babylon, there we sat down (Yes, they felt too weak to stand); yea, we wept,

when we remembered Zion." They had to hang their harps upon the willows; they had no use for them, but they that carried them away required of them mirth while in their distress of mind.

Satan will always appear to us at the weakest point and ask us to do things just to grieve us. But all those dear captives could say in reply was, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" O no, they could not sing, neither could they hear the singing of birds nor the voice of the turtle in that land, but they remembered Zion and it made them weep. Yes, they wept when they remembered Zion. Bright spots in their past lives, where they sat down under God's shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to their taste.

O the joyful sound I can remember in the days of my youth. My memory carries me back to a very bright spot in my life more than twenty years ago, when I attended a May meeting at New Valley, Va. Dear Elder White was there, and to me his face did shine as the noonday sun. Elder Eubanks preached in the forenoon, followed by Elder Wm. L. Beebe, and I will say right here, if I have ever known the joyful sound as set forth by David in this eighty-ninth Psalm, I believe I knew it that day, for I was made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Elder P. G. Lester came in the afternoon; it was my first time of meeting him, and when he went up into the stand to preach, I wondered in my mind if such a fine looking man as he could preach comfort to a poor, plain sinner like me. Before he got half through with his discourse I felt like clapping my hands, for joy filled my whole being, and I wept for joy.

Dear reader, did you ever weep for joy? If so, then you know what I mean. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance."

"Blow ye the trumpet, blow
The gladly solemn sound;
Let all the nations know,
To earth's remotest bound,
The year of jubilee is come;
Return, ye ransomed sinners, home."

But I am making this letter too long. I fear I have only seen the passing shadow and missed the substance altogether; and if I should write on and try to tell something of walking "in the light of thy countenance" I might not be able to mount up with wings as eagles, run and not be weary, walk and not faint.

I thought the last letter I wrote and sent to the dear old **Signs** would be my last one, and I told one of my esteemed sisters so at Frying Pan at our meeting in February, and she turned to me and said, "I am sorry to hear you say that, for I know of an afflicted woman who said she had been comforted in reading your letters in the **Signs.**" I then said to her, "O, I reckon I will have to take my vow back: if I have ever given anyone comfort in my poor way of expressing myself, I am willing to keep trying to write to the dear old **Signs,** should the editors see fit to publish my efforts."

Yours, with a desire for fellowship.

John F. Oliver

March 28, 1910
Herndon, Va.

(I have often heard the brethren, most of whom have passed on now, speak of Brother Oliver; and when I have found one of his articles in the **Signs**, I have read it with much interest. It was so with the above, and I felt the brethren would find their own feelings reflected in Brother Oliver's account of his experiences.

When you read the **Signs** and especially enjoy a brother or sister's writing, do you let him know about it? Why not write him a note? He would appreciate it and be encouraged as was Brother Oliver. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

DANIEL LESTER DeBRULER

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write the obituary of my beloved brother in Christ, an uncle who departed this life on March 31, 1969. We desire to bow in humble submission to the will of the God he was given to love and serve so faithfully as long as his health permitted, always filling his pew and

always willing and ready to help with singing at funerals at his home church, as well as others.

Daniel Lester DeBruler was born in Caswell County, North Carolina on August 19, 1896 and spent most of his life in and around Burlington, North Carolina, the youngest son of Joseph F. and Chestina Oakley DeBruler, he is survived by his wife, Wannie Councilman DeBruler of 1603 Melody Lane, Burlington, North Carolina; one son, Joseph Haston DeBruler, 1536 Albright Avenue, Burlington, North Carolina by a former marriage to Estelle Rimmer, who departed this life in 1921; two brothers, A. T. DeBruler, Route 3, Burlington, North Carolina; E. J. DeBruler of Burlington, North Carolina.

He joined McCray Primitive Baptist Church on August 15, 1954 and was baptized by his pastor, Elder W. C. King on Sunday night, August 15, 1954 at the Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church. His funeral was conducted April 2, 1969 at McCray Primitive Baptist Church by Elder W. C. King and Elder Ernest Oakley. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery under a beautiful mound of flowers, to await that glorious resurrection.

May the Lord comfort his precious companion and those left to mourn.

Written in love and respect by his niece.

Thelma D. Stephens

IN MEMORIAM

In accord with God's decree, our beloved pastor, Elder W. E. Grimes, passed from this life February 11, 1969, at the age of 88. He was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for 56 years, and a minister for 47 years.

In the passing of Elder Grimes, the church at Flat Swamp lost a pastor who had served her about 37 years. We mourn his passing, but feel truly thankful unto God for this gift that was bestowed upon us. He rendered unto the church a faithful and devout service, and was a firm believer in salvation by grace. His sermons were of a high orthodox order and were endorsed by lovers of the truth. We feel that truly a father in Israel has fallen. In the days of prosperity he was never exalted; in the days of adversity he never faltered nor flinched, but stood firm on "that rock that the gates of Hell shall not prevail against." (Matthew 16:18)

As a pastor, minister, or friend, his gentle manner and humble character endeared him to all who knew him.

The Church at Flat Swamp desires to be submissive to the will of God in removing our brother and pastor from our midst — removing one "that has fought a good fight, has finished his course, has kept the faith, and has gone to receive a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give at that day."

While we bow and submit to God's will, we pray Him to keep us in the doctrine he preached, and even to keep us in the paths of his admonitions.

Brother Jim and Sister Ella Roebuck
and a friend, Mary Jenkins

THOMAS RICHARD BREEDLOVE

Whereas, the Lord has seen fit to take home our beloved brother, Thomas Richard Breedlove, June 8, 1969. It is with much fear and trembling that I am now called to write a memorial. This, to record something of his life and his death.

It is not easy to put into words the tremendous feeling we have in our loss, but would beg to be submissive to His will. For what greater blessing can come to one of his servants, than as in Psalms 116:15, "Precious in the sight of the Lord, is the death of his saints." One who had such a hope was our brother in life.

He was one who filled his place well among the churches where he was known, as well as among the people of the world around him publicly. This I would say; he filled every qualification of a deacon, I Timothy 3rd Chapter. He did not shirk his duty, but often went far beyond, caring for the sick and afflicted; the widows and orphans, giving of himself untiringly till the end. He held fast to the Faith, in boldness and gravity in the duties of the office. Also he was called upon by neighbors to mediate for them in troubles and was not one for quick decisions. He held the position of clerk of our church at Harris Springs, Newton County, Ga. for fourteen years. He joined the church, with his dear wife, November 10, 1934. He was clerk of the Yellow River Primitive Baptist Association for 32½ years.

Brother Breedlove lost his left arm as a young man, yet he never asked for help in the service of dressing himself. He was in the first class in 1909 that graduated from Monroe A. & M. School and then attended the University of Georgia, finishing the course in agriculture. He was a dairy farmer for many years and for fifteen years directed the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, except for one year when he was in Washington, D. C., as Director of the Southern Region of the Production and Market Administration. In his county he was the first President of the Walton Electric Membership Corporation.

Brother Breedlove was the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. William Luther Breedlove. On

December 26, 1915, he married the former Miss Mattie Estes of Rutledge, Ga.

Elder J. M. Mewborn of Willow Springs, N. C. with Mr. Clifford Jett of Monroe, Ga., and Elder T. L. Huff of Lawrenceville, Ga., conducted the final service at the First Baptist Church in Monroe, Ga. Elder Mewborn's texts were from Proverbs 22:1, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold," and Romans 14:17, 18, "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God and approved of men." Brother Breedlove's request was that there be no eulogizing. But these texts spoke of his life more fittingly than the mere words of man could have done.

The survivors are, with the exceptions of the death of two sons, T. R. Breedlove, Jr. and William Luther Breedlove, his daughters, Mrs. Alton W. Kitchens of Greenwich, Conn.; Mrs. Floyd W. Adams, Jr., of Columbus, Ga.; Mrs. Leroy C. Lee of Doraville, Ga.; and Mrs. Henry S. Verner of Rutledge, Ga.; and sons Mr. James I. Breedlove of Atlanta, Ga.; and Mr. Preston Breedlove of Monroe, Ga.; and daughters-in-law, Mrs. Sarah Eddie Malcolm of Monroe, Ga., and Mrs. Jackie Bradley of New Orleans, La. With twenty-one grandchildren and two great grandchildren, he is also survived by sisters, Mrs. O. A. Chandler, Mrs. Luther Allison, Mrs. Martha Mercier, Mrs. Curtis Chandler, and Mrs. John McGee, with one brother Mr. Howell Breedlove.

The pallbearers were his grandsons, Dr. Russell Kitchens, Misters Hal Breedlove, Mike Breedlove, T. R. Breedlove, III, Alan Verner, Thomas Verner, and Bruce Breedlove. Honorary escorts were the deacons of the Yellow River Primitive Baptist Association and members of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

Interment was at the Resthaven Cemetery in Monroe, Ga. The E. L. Almond Company of Monroe in charge.

Elder Burch C. Wray, Mod. Pro Tem.
Carolyn Peters Alston, Clerk

VIRGINIA L. HAMPTON

Sister Virginia L. Hampton, age 52 years, passed away June 29, 1969. She is survived by her husband Edward L. Hampton; two sons by a former marriage, Fred Smith of Anderson, Indiana, and James Smith of Miami, Florida; one daughter, Mrs. Patricia Bazzie of Ridgeway, Va.; three sisters, Mrs. Daisy Stephens and Mrs. Helen Stickler of Yawkey, W. Va. and Mrs. Ruby McClanahan of Poca, W. Va.; three brothers, Rader and Clay Wade of Yawkey, W. Va. and Paul Wade of Sumerco, W. Va., and three grandchildren.

Sister Hampton was the daughter of the late Elder W. I. Wade. She united with the Sarah Primitive Baptist Church, Boone County, W. Va. in June, 1950. She moved to Florida in 1960 where she resided until the time of her death.

There being no Primitive Baptists available in that section, the funeral service was conducted by a Missionary Baptist Preacher, Van Orsdel, in the Hialeah Miami Springs Chapel and was in the form of an eulogy. He talked for about fifteen minutes and read a song from the late Elder H. J. Bird's song book, "A few more trials here below" after which she was laid to rest in the Dade Memorial Park.

Done at the request of Sister Ruby McClanahan.

J. J. Bird
Clerk of Hopewell Church

TIME

Time is a fleeting thing,
At most we're here but days:
We stand one evening in the mist
And look backward on our ways.

We hold to memory's shadow
And look sadly up the hill;
The road we've traveled downward,
And down we're going still.

We cannot change one single thing:
The good, the bad, the dear;
We can only say, "God, help us,"
The time is drawing near.

We will reach the shadow soon
In the valley just below,
Where green grass grows in beauty
No rain, no sleet, no snow.

But now a void of empty space
As time goes flying on
No hand to hold in closeness
No victory ever won.

We look below at the valley
The city where the trail must end
We know we're lost and helpless
Unless help the Lord may send.

"The chiefest of sinners have I chose"
And Lord you must mean me
'Cause I'm the best at doing wrong
This world will ever see.

(Written by Virginia Hampton, June 7, 1969, shortly before her death. See obituary above.)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 137 DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1969 NO. 11

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/69
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

WITHIN THE VEIL
(Heb. 6:19)

JESUS is now within the veil.
And crowned with glory there,
Having entered heaven itself,
With no more sins to bear.

He bore the sins of his people
On the accursed tree,
And entered heaven "by his blood,"
I hope he shed for me.

"Hope as an anchor of the soul,"
Is cast "within the veil,"
By the cable of faith therewith,
On Christ, the One we hail.

Now we read that Christ is our hope;
He is "that blessed hope,"
For whom the saints are now looking,
Enabled with trials to cope.

From time to time hope is enhanced
To rejoicing therein,
Which is a foretaste of heaven,
Where full joy doth begin.

In a dream, I held a long cord
That entered within th' veil,
And I looked for Christ to appear,
But in this I did fail.

However, I felt the Saviour
At the end of the cord,
And my thoughts of the Beloved
Much comfort do afford.

Some day he will come in the clouds,
When all the dead shall rise,
And the elect will see him with joy,
When he appears in th' skies.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, N. C.

CHURCH LETTER, 1969

To the Sister churches of The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptists Association, the Middleburg Church sends greetings.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

As we travel among the brethren we often hear mention of a reason for your hope. In 1st. Peter chapter 3, verse 15, we read: "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."

The brethren sometimes feel that their hope is small, and doubts arise. Though their hope is small, hope is hope, and if it is by the grace of God it will last and keep the elect through all their journey.

"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enterth into that within the vail." Hebrews 6th chapter, 19th verse.

The brethren cling to this hope, for it is by the grace of God that they have received it; and they find they love the brethren. Also they find they love the things they once hated. Other doctrines than the one that gives all the glory to God is bitter to their taste.

Hope we like to think of as the handful of meal and a little oil in a cruse, as recorded in 1st Kings 17th chapter, 12th verse. This hope is like the meal and the oil in this same chapter 14th verse: "For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth." The 15th verse reads, "And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah, and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days."

The widow obeyed the word of God which Elijah the prophet spake, and had faith that God would sustain her and her household. This faith given by God was accounted unto the elect family as righteousness before God sent his son as a sacrifice for the chosen people of God.

At the appointed time Jesus the Son of God, came and provided salvation to the elect thru his death, burial and resurrection . This gave the elect the hope of eternal life. In Luke 2nd chapter we read of Simeon a devout man and the Holy Ghost was upon him. The 30th verse reads, "For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before all people."

When the elect are given faith and hope they are concerned for the welfare of the brethren; and by this charity enters in. Charity is God's love in action. We have Faith, Hope and Charity, making the three fold chord. The scripture tells us that the three-fold chord is not quickly broken. It is stated that God first loved us. Before we were formed God knew us. In Jeremiah 1st chapter 5th verse, God spake, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee."

The elect have hope because God is omnipotent. God, having all power, foreknew them before the world was formed. Also in Romans 8th chapter 29th verse we read, "For whom he did forknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren." God knew all his chosen, elect family before the beginning of time and will see that all of them are brought in.

God is omnipresent. He is everywhere and protects his people. God's arm is not short and he watches over his people with loving care.

God is omniscient. Having all knowledge God knows the past, present and future. Therefore God could say in Ecclesiastes 1st chapter 9th verse, "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun."

So therefore we do not have to go out, as the worldly religion teaches, and win souls to Christ. It was already taken care of in the beginning. The price has been paid. The way of salvation provided and the reservation already made in heaven for the elect. The Comforter provided for the journey. God has provided the Comforter to sustain the elect when the trials and rough places come. The brethren rest in this hope that the Lord knoweth them that are His.

This church holds meetings on the months of the year having a fifth Sunday, when the Lord so wills. Our pastor is Elder Amasa J. Slauson of Kingston, New York.

Done on behalf of the Middleburg Old School Baptist Church.

Sister Beatrice E. Hocking, Clerk
Written by
Deacon Woodrow W. Bellinger

"GOD IS THY REFUGE"

"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee: and shall say, Destroy them." (Deuteronomy 33:27)

Moses was inspired by God to speak these words many years ago to the Children of Israel. Soon afterwards he died. Of course these words are applicable to the Spiritual Israelites in this day and time.

There are different angles of thought in this text, and there is both milk and meat therein — that is, if the Lord will bless us with the sweet meditations concerning that text. It would do well for the reader to read the 28th and the 29th verses also.

Briefly, let us first consider the prophesy. The Children of Israel did not get the land of Canaan by their own might or power. If so, they would have said that their own hand got the land.

God was with them in the wilderness during the 40 years they traveled therein and their clothes did not wax old, nor did their shoes wax old. The way got rough and mighty dark for them. Often, they murmured against Moses.

For example, let us quote Exodus 16:2-2, "And the whole congregation of the Children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness: And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger." The wilderness was not sown, meaning they did not cultivate any crops there. (see Jer. 2:2) So, they depended upon God for their natural food and water. God was with them in a cloud. When the cloud moved, they moved, and when the cloud stopped, they stopped. (Exodus 13:21-22, Numbers 9:15-23)

The river Jordan parted and they walked on dry land. They did not defeat Jericho by their own might. They were commanded to march around the city once each day for six days. On the seventh day they compassed the city seven times. After the priests made a long blast with the trumpet, the people shouted and then the wall of the city fell down. This was to show them that God delivered the enemy into the hands of the children of Israel. (See Joshua 6th ch.)

Later on we note that God inspired prophets to write concerning the desolations, and destruction that would be brought upon Israel. They would be driven from their own land and would be trodden down of the Gentiles. They would be scattered among all nations. Yet, God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew. As a nation he has not cast away Israel.

In a natural sense, one may wonder how it is that the Children of Israel have been preserved throughout all these years. Carnally speaking, it looks like they would have mixed with the other nations to the extent that the full blooded Jew would not be in existence. But, they are a separate people, and even the world knows there is a difference between a Jew and a Gentile.

We trust that you are seeing the sweetness of this type, meaning that the natural Children of Israel are a type of the Spiritual Children of Israel. "He is not a Jew which is one outwardly, but he is a Jew which is one inwardly." (Rom. 2:28-29)

Prophesy not only speaks of the destruction brought upon Israel, but it also speaks of the restoration. (The 36th chapter of Ezekiel is a good one.)

During June of 1967, we trust that we saw the hand of the Lord as He was with the small nation of Israel during that crises. The Arab nations boasted that they would push Israel out to the sea. God was with the Israel army as the enemy armies were destroyed. Notice the last phrase of the text: "And he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them." Here is something else to think about: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem." (Zechariah 12:9) Let us not look upon this in a natural sense and say that Israel won that quick war because they struck the first blow, and give the leaders the credit for being such cunning fighters. Let us rejoice that God enabled Israel to prevail over her enemies.

Following this reasoning, we can see that God has been the refuge of Israel through all these years, and he has delivered them from the enemy time and time again, and I believe that we shall see more of this in the future. Let us quote part of Deut. 33:29: "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency!" If Israel was a great big mighty nation, she would say that her might and power delivered her from her enemies. But here is a people saved by the Lord, and there is not any other nation like unto Israel. They are a separate people from all other nations. "I will make a difference between thee and the Egyptians."

We cannot say that the text does not apply to God's people among the Gen-

tiles. Also, that text is not obsolete. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." (Romans 15:4)

As the Lord enables us, let us consider the Spiritual meaning of this text. (The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them.)

We may wonder: Does this text have any meaning to me? If we had never felt the need of a refuge, we do not know anything about the sweetness of this text.

What type of refuge do we need? Do we feel that we are able to help the refuge, and make it stronger by our own strength? If we believe that way, then we cannot rejoice in the mercies of this God, nor can we praise him for such a wonderful deliverance, because we would not know anything about it. We would be praising ourselves for our own deeds.

This text is something that causes a poor, unworthy, broken hearted sinner to rejoice. When one sees that he is undone and helpless, and feels the need of salvation, he is a fit subject to receive the richness of this text.

The subject of the "eternal God" is beyond our understanding. Before there was time, God existed, and our frail minds cannot comprehend the fact that God has always been. We may wonder, what was before God? Who made God? Where did God come from? How long was God in existence before he created the world? These questions only show the weakness of the human mind.

All of the reasoning of the wise men of this world cannot understand the ways of God. "There is no searching of His understanding." (Isaiah 40:28) There is a great difference between the wisdom of man and the wisdom of God. We can only think as humans think, birds think as birds, animals think as animals, and we cannot think as God thinks. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:9)

God reveals some things to His people, and it pleases him to withhold some things to himself. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." (Deut. 29:29) Therefore we only see in part. We may see part of a mystery, and attempt to figure the rest out by our own understanding. The world by wisdom knew not God. There is no searching of His understanding. No wonder Paul said, "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Rom. 11:33)

This refuge is eternal and is from everlasting to everlasting. The Psalmist rejoiced in this and said: "Lord thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations, before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hast formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God." (Psalm 90:1-2) Time had a beginning and it shall have an end, but this God shall endure for ever.

This refuge is all wise and all powerful. He is the almighty God. This God declared the end from the beginning. (see Isaiah 46:9-10) This means that God purposed all things even before He spoke time into existence. He is not surprised by any actions that take place today, or that shall take place in the future, because God has purposed it from the beginning. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." (Acts 15:18) "That which hath been is now, and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past." (Ecc. 3:15) God does not have to explain to man why he purposed things and what was the motive, etc. God was not obligated to save any, yet it pleased him to save a few. Notice the patience that

was given to Job, as he said, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil." (Job 2:10)

God has created all things for his pleasure, and all power belongs unto him. The decrees of God shall stand. "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it, I will also do it." (Isaiah 46:10-11)

This refuge is not as some cruel ruler or government, but this God is a God of love, and He is a Holy God. He loves righteousness and hates wickedness. (see Psalms 45:7) "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." (Jer. 31:3)

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose." (Rom. 8:28) This text did not say *some things,* but it mentioned all things. All the evil that was brought upon Job worked together for his good. "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." (Job 23:10) "My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations. Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." (James 1:2-3) Peter's denial of Jesus worked together for his good and for his brethren. He was taught the fact that he was not his own keeper, and he was taught to depend upon God to keep him. As Jeremiah said, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jer. 10:23)

"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou are converted, strengthen thy brethren." (Luke 22:31-32) Peter was converted from the error of thinking that he could keep himself by his own strength. He was taught that he needed the Lord to give him strength, and that without him we can do nothing. If Peter had not gone through the painful experience of denying Jesus, he would not know anything about the consolation that we are kept by the power of God. Notice the sweetness of the words of Peter in this Scripture: "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (I Peter 1:5)

All the sorrow that was brought upon Jacob worked together for his good. He thought that his son Joseph was dead throughout all those years. We will not go into detail, but let us think upon this point. Joseph told his brethren: "You thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good." (Genesis 50:20) We believe the theme of this is to show that God can bring a clean thing out of an unclean. The death of Jesus is a good example. It was by wicked hands that killed him, yet the ultimate motive was for the salvation of His people. By this, we may say that the cruel death of Jesus worked together for the good of his people.

"The eternal God is thy refuge." Is this text addressed to us? Dear one, do you feel the need of a refuge that will stand the storm? Do you need a refuge that will stand against the fiery darts of Satan and against the trials, tribulations, and afflictions that come your way?

When clouds of darkness come your way, and your soul is shut up in prison, remember that God is your refuge, and that he is tenderly watching over you. "If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there." (Psalm 139:8) God has a purpose for you to walk in this path of darkness. Doubts and fears may come your way, yet the purpose of this is for your soul to be exercised, and to bring you down and to pray unto almighty God. "It was good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." (Psalm 119:71)

"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." It is very sweet and comforting to think of the expression "underneath." God reaches down! If his arms could not reach down, it would not reach my case. If it was up to me to come to him, my

case would be hopeless.

Here is a refuge that comes to you and reaches down and delivers you from the bondage of corruption. "Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name." (Psalm 142:7)

God reaches down and delivers his people from trials, distresses, prisons of darkness, and lastly, death. "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God; many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." (Psalms 40:1-3)

"And he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee: and shall say, Destroy them." This was accomplished by God in the face of Jesus Christ. "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. 2:9) Jesus is the eternal son of God. "The word was made flesh." (John 1:14)

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that *through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.*" (Hebrews 2:14) The devil is the enemy. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Jesus died in room and stead of his people that they might go free. He has satisfied the just demands of the law, and therefore the justice of God has been satisfied by the death and resurrection of Jesus. Jesus died under the law and rose up under it. Since he has satisfied all the demands of the law, there is not any charge that can be brought against the elect. The debt has been discharged. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." (Rom. 8:33)

You are sealed with the Holy Ghost. This is the earnest or pledge of our inheritance until the "redemption of the purchased possession." (see Eph. 1:13-14) We read in one place that Jesus has put all things under his feet, but we do not see all things that are put under his feet.

This salvation is made manifest to his people in due time. Part of it is experienced here and fulness of it shall be experienced in the sweet by and by. Before one can know anything about the sweetness of Jesus Christ, he first must know something about the fellowship of the sufferings of Jesus Christ. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." (2 Tim. 2:12) "We are crucified with him." "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." (Rom. 6:5)

Dear one, do you know anything about the sorrow of darkness, and about the sorrow of being separated from your God? Do your sins cause you to mourn? Have you felt the conviction that you are a ruined, wretched, polluted sinner? Have you come to the place when you have found that there is nothing that you can do to merit your case, and as you are brought before the court of justice, your only plea is for the mercy of God? If you have traveled this path, we trust you know something about walking in darkness and in the land of death. This is the path which the redeemed of the Lord walk. This is the path that leads from death to life, or the path that leads from the bondage of darkness to the glorious light of God. "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen." (Job 28:7) This is the way that leads to life. This is the path that Jesus walked, and all his people must walk in that path. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life." (John 14:6)

Not only is it necessary for one to experience the sorrow of this death, but in due time it is necessary that he experiences a sweet deliverance. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." (Psalm 30:5) When one is in the valley, he is mourning over his sad case, and he is pleading unto God for deliverance. After one experiences a sweet deliverance, he can-

not help but sing praises unto God for such a wonderful salvation.

We think of this deliverance as the power of his resurrection. "That I may know him and the power of his resurrection." (Phil. 3:10) "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us unto the kingdom of his dear son." (Col. 1:13) The "power of his resurrection" is something to be experienced before one can believe it from the heart. It is one thing to talk or read about the power of God, and another to feel it within your heart.

Do you believe in the resurrection? Do you believe that God is able to raise these vile bodies and fashion them like unto the glorious body of Jesus Christ?

The grave shall not hold the body. Just as the grave did not hold the body of Jesus, and there was nothing that could hinder Jesus from rising from the grave, then the grave shall not hold forever the bodies of the saints. "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." (Daniel 12:2) "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." (Psalms 17:5) David knew that he could not see the face of God in righteousness as he dwelled upon this earth, but he was blessed with sweet assurance. He knew that he would awake with the likeness of God. He knew that he had to sleep the sleep of death first, and then he would awake with the likeness of God.

This is a great mystery now, but it shall be revealed when time shall be no more. The former things of this life shall be passed away. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3:28)

We shall not attempt to question God as to how he raises the bodies of the Saints, or try to reason out as to how the risen bodies of the Saints shall look, "Beloved, now are we the Sons of God, and *it doth not yet appear what we shall be:* but we know that, when he shall appear, *We shall be like him;* for we shall see him as he is." (1 John 3:2) John did not know, but he rejoiced in the fact that we would be like unto Jesus, meaning this vile body shall be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus.

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (1 Cor. 15:51-52) Notice that Paul declared that all (both dead and living) shall be changed. *Now, we do not see any hint that any of the dead would be changed before the last trump.* This change shall take place when the trumpet shall sound. The dead shall be raised incorruptible. This means the dead bodies of the saints. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and *the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds,* to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. 4:16-17) The "dead in Christ" has reference to the bodies of the Saints that lie in the grave. These bodies shall rise. "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." (John 5:28-29) We read in one place that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust.

"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." (1 Cor. 15:26) Dear one, think of the text: "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee: and shall say, destroy them." This is something that keeps you pressing on, is it not? From time to time, you are

blessed to look beyond this vale of tears and sorrow, and to view the city of God. It is though you are traveling through a wilderness here, and we think of this as the wilderness of sin. Even though there are many troubles, sorrows, temptations, afflictions, etc., it is wonderful to know that this God is keeping you by his mighty power. "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." (2 Cor. 4:16) No wonder the Apostle said, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Rom. 8:18) This glory is something that is eternal. We receive a taste of it here, but we shall receive the fulness in yonder's world. We see in part here, and are looking through a glass darkly here, but we shall see him face to face. "And as we have born the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." (1 Cor. 15:49)

The enemy shall be thrust out in the resurrection. This will be the final victory. This is something that will cause the saints to shout and sing praises unto this eternal refuge for ever and ever. "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, *which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*" (1 Cor. 15:54-57)

This is a glorious victory. May the Lord give us strength to press on for the mark of the prize of the high calling. May the Lord enable us to boldly and humbly declare all the counsel of God. May we be given to earnestly contend for the faith that was once delivered to the saints. We trust that God will bless this for the edification of the reader.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

DUTIES OF DEACONS

To the readers of the *Signs of the Times:*

I have a mind to write about the duties of Deacons, and the office they hold.

"And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.

Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables.

Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, Proch-o-rus, and Ni-ca-nor, and Ti-mon, and Par-me-nas, and Nicolas a proselyte of An-ti-och:

Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them." (Acts 6:1-6)

Concerning the duties of a deacon, I will quote from Hassell's Church History, page 306:

"Their duties were to attend especially to temporal interests of the church, and of the poor. (Acts 6:2) Deacons are not, like Bishops, required to be 'apt to teach'; but as they were to be 'full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom,' and to serve the Lord's table, and the sacred feast was not to be eaten with the disorderly, and the 'wise' brethren

were to 'judge' between brethren at variance, and the Deacon like the Bishop, 'must rule his own house well,' it would seem that Deacons ought to exercise a special regard for the order and peace and spiritual health of the church. In this manner they can be valuable 'helps' to the pastors.

Philip was not only a Deacon, but an evangelist, a traveling preacher of the gospel, like Timothy." etc.

I understand the above is what the Primitive Baptists practiced eighty years ago, and even dating on back to the days of the Apostles; and we have no right to add, or take away from the scriptures.

In the Bible we do not find that Deacons ever baptized any one into the fellowship of the church, or ever served in the communion in breaking the bread, or ever took a part in laying on of hands in a presbytery. This work belongs only to those that have been ordained by a presbytery to that of a gospel minister.

According to the Hassell's Church History, the above is what the church stood for more than a hundred years ago.

Hassell's C. H., page 832, Query 27: What number of ministers are sufficient to compose a Presbytery? Answer: Two or more.

Let us notice no Deacons were mentioned, and we ministers have no right to practice or preach anything contrary to the things that are laid down in the scriptures.

Again I quote from Hassell's C. H.: "How far can a church that has no pastor or ordained minister, though they have some other ordained officers, proceed in discipline to receive or turn out members, and be orderly in their proceedings? Answer: We think that such an organized church has full power to receive persons to baptism, and call upon an authorized minister to baptize them; and that such a church has full power to excommunicate disorderly members."

What I am trying to do is to prove that there are three things that a Deacon has no authority to take part in: they cannot ordain, they cannot baptize, and they are not allowed to serve in the communion as a minister; and the ministers have no right to ask the Deacons to do something that was not practiced in the apostolic days.

My reason for writing on this subject, is there are some that seem to think that the office of a Deacon is no different from that of a minister of the gospel.

James R. Hollandsworth

CONDITIONALISM

Rt. 2 Box 423,
Boones Mill, Va. 24065

There are so many people who, when troubled about being right with God, take certain steps and do various deeds and works in hope of "getting right with God."

Those who feel to have succeeded in their endeavors have great confidence in themselves and in their works. Such suppose they are able to do things which please God, and avoid doing the things which displease him. Upon their doings they rest their trust, and call it "time salvation". Then they purpose to make up the full weight by tossing the name of Jesus upon the scales, and calling His work salvation number two: "eternal salvation". Only a human could be so vile, so unholy, thankless and vain.

Such people therefore practice a religion based upon creature works of righteousness, and their vain trust in human endeavor is manifested with their great boldness and conceit; and such are void of faith to understand that the entire Bible stamps all our righteousness as filthy rags. (Isaiah 64:6)

Genuine saints when troubled about being right with God, have a zeal of God, and they too go about to establish their own righteousness for a season. However, these all fail utterly, and when the eyes of their understanding are opened, they see their best deeds as

filthy rags and do not desire to keep such things, and count them but dung. So then the next thing they are to do with everything of that nature, is to separate themselves from it, and declare against it. Those who cherish and treasure and worship their own works, and call it "time salvation", are repulsive to every heaven born soul.

Every new born soul tries hard to keep the law for a season, only to learn their total depravity and ignorance.

Was it so with you? None of the people of God can draw comfort from their doing. To every saint Jesus is the Fountain of every blessing. The end of the law to every saint is Jesus. Their God given faith looks to Him, and he prints this in the heart of all He teaches: "Harken unto me, you stout-hearted, **that are far from righteousness**; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry. And I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory." (Isaiah 46:12,13)

In these wholesome words are comfort for every saint, and trouble for all who embrace "conditional time salvation". If I am anything, I am an "absoluter". In the English language, the prime meaning of the word "absolute" is "complete". Nothing can be "pure" except it be complete, and nothing can be complete unless "it is finished." Hence any doctrine not absolute is neither pure nor complete. A view of things by faith "which must shortly be done" will make an absoluter instantly. Only God can make anything. If he were a circle it would have no circumference. He created all things, including time. Time is like a screen upon which He saw the show before it began.

Since time began no saint ever spent a day or a moment on earth but what all things were working together for his good. (See Romans 8:28) Nothing ever can come to pass differently from the way God saw it, Purposed it, Decreed it, Declared it.

Every whit of salvation is by grace, and all grace is promised grace. There are no blessings but promised blessings. A promise cannot be offered. A promise cannot be conditional. The things that God has promised to the "heirs of promise" are binding upon the Promiser.

Those who are strangers to the promises worship their own works: from such the saints are separate.

In bonds,
J. L. Bocock

ENJOYED THE ASSOCIATION

Rt. 3, Box 427,
Martinsville, Va. 24112

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

Thanks be unto God for the three lovely days of the Pigg River Association at Little Creek Church. So much could be said in connection with the Spirit of God being present, and of it being so peaceful and in fellowship.

I often think of the wonderful visit we had at Brother and Sister Rice Akers' from the Pigg River Association at Rocky Mount, and how that Sister Wood talked so wonderfully about the works of God — the subject I remember so well. "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform."

These mysterious ways are performed in and with a dear child of His — the wonderful things that are in store for his chosen and elected ones. They were purposed and foreordained of Him in the beginning before they were formed of the dust of the ground. All these things are of God, and to his praise. He and he alone doeth all things after the counsel of his own will. He is great and eternal, all powerful, all wise, sovereign, merciful, just, righteous, holy, divine, light and life. He is the ever to be adored omnipotent Lord God Almighty. In the beginning He stretched forth the heavens, and chose a particular people to be conformed to the Word. "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God."

He declared the end from the begin-

ing, and from ancient times the things that were not yet done, and said, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isaiah 46:10) These chosen and elected ones have ever been in the bosom of God the Father, and their names were written in the Book. It is one Book with no extra space for any to be added — and none shall be erased.

These were before ordained according to His will and purpose before the earth was spoken into existance, before the first man formed from the dust of the ground and the breath of life given, for God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. Yes, before we came from the loins of Adam He had already chosen and elected his people for that Heavenly Place. God the Father sent his Son into the world in a body in likeness of sinful flesh, born of a woman, and called the only begotten of the Father, to save his people from their sins. He came saying that he came not to do his own will but the will of the Father which sent him. In John 6:44 he said, "No man can come to me except the Father which sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."

Jeremiah 31:3 reads, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." This does not mean that a man must volunteer by his own works to accept before it is too late, as the world teaches. The Apostle said that he was not taught it of man, neither received it of man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. We read in the 2nd chapter of Ephesians that He quickens the dead in trespasses and sins, who once walked according to the course of the world, who were by nature the children of wrath, but that God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, quickened us together with Christ. This is all of God only, and we learn that it is by grace that we are saved through faith; and that not of ourselves: it is the gift of God.

So it is salvation you had all the time: you did not make the choice. In Philippians 2:13 we read, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

Remember a poor sinner, if saved it is by grace and grace alone: a burdened brother in hope of eternal life.

Raymond Brammer

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The **Staunton River Union Meeting** will convene with the Bradley Road Church, Danville, Va. the fifth Sunday in November and Saturday before. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

R. T. Holley, Clerk

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union Meeting** will be held with the church at Aycocks, the Lord willing, Wayne County, N. C., the fifth Saturday and Sunday in November, 1969.

The church is located on Rural Paved Road 1504, north of Fremont, N. C. We invite all those who have a mind to meet with us.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the **Skewarkey Union** was appointed to be held with the Skewarkey Church, Martin County, N. C. Elder E. C. Harrison was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder I. S. Conner, alternate.

The meeting house is located on Highway 17 south in Williamston, N. C. We extend a cordial invitation to all to come and visit with us.

Elmer B. Peels, Clerk

Danville, Virginia November, 1969

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OUR APPRECIATION

We acknowledge with appreciation a donation of $50.00 by Mr. and Mrs. John Lingle, of Dearborn, Michigan. This was given in memory of our departed Sister Stella Parsons, mother of Mrs. Lingle, by friends of Mr. and Mrs. Lingle. Such donations enable us to send the *Signs* to a number of people who are unable to pay.

The *Signs of the Times* was much loved by our departed sister, and it gives us much pleasure to acknowledge this gift in her memory.

The Editors

EDITORIAL

"And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaintanes, which thing I hate. Repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." (Rev. 2:12, 17)

Many dark sayings are found in these things. They are too mysterious for us to enter into controversy about them. I am prone to that malicious trait, even having arraigned the Almighty because He crosses my path and besets me behind and before. Even though that is in my sure of, to wit, calling the dear brethren

make up, I detest that spirit. This I am by bad names; assailing true and tried soldiers because that they differ with us on scriptural matters, is not preaching the gospel. It is the most childish way of gaining publicity, therefore, as I write and preach, that kind of scurrilous attacks will go unnoticed, and every earnest inquiry for a better understanding of what I present in my writing or preaching will receive the kindest of interview.

At all times we must remember that God sits as a refiner of his people. These churches were all given to know this vital truth, and whether we know it, or acknowledge what we do know, it is still sure that the One who is talking to these churches, is the only one in charge of the government of these churches (Isa. 9:6,7); that we are as much under the things said to them as they were; that what was applicable to them, is applicable to us. His eyes as a flame of fire, his feet burning as a furnace, the sword going out of his mouth, these characteristics of Him are as plain to us today as they were to those bodies two thousand years ago. This was shown to John in the beginning, and is refreshingly brought to the attention of each member of Pergamos, or, for that matter, each and every church of our day and age.

Two things are absolutely necessary for gospel rest, whether for individuals or churches. These two things are, First, a complete cessation of our work. There is not any joy and peace and rest promised unless this cessation is as complete as God's in His creative work. Often this is quoted as being far more important than that which follows, which brings us to the, Second, Which is that it is as necessary to labor to enter into this rest as it was to quit our former labor. The kind or quality of labor changes but the devotion and completeness of each remains the same. The introduction of the next verse shows the source of both the quitting of one labor and the prosecution of the other; to wit, "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit," etc. (Heb. 4: 10, 11) There is peace and liberty and joy and rest in obedience which has been rendered because of the effectual workings of God's Spirit in his people and churches.

God is the Saviour of His people, and besides Him there is not a Saviour. The Son was given; the child was born. This gift was from all eternity. As much was known about the church at Pergamos and us in eternity as time has displayed. This church at Pergamos (and us) was blessed in Christ with every needed blessing. God did not learn the things that were found in Pergamos by them doing those things, whether the works were commended or condemned.

The language does not say to me that Satan was in this church but that he was **among** them. God knew (knows) as much about the whereabouts of Satan as He did about the church; his works are made manifest (not made known, but manifest) as well as are the fruits of love among the people of God. One is commended, the other is condemned; one is told, "Well done," the other is commanded, "Get behind me, Satan." Satan has always slipped in among the churches, but he has not been one of the children **in** the churches. These letters are not addressed **to** Satan. He is not told to get out, to change his way, to repent; only those **in** the church are commanded to do anything, even to taking charge and dealing with Satan and his coherents.

It is not any wonder, dear reader, that Paul commends the people of God to His amazing grace. Luke before him had been inspired to write that God's works were known unto Him from the beginning, and the work of God had been made manifest in the life of Paul. He knew God (not just the testimonies about God), and this knowledge is imparted unto every one cut by the true pattern. This solemn truth is frequently forgotten, but our forgetfulness is not lost to Him with whom we have to do. He reminds us from time to time that He knows our works. He is not a tyrannical dictator; He is not a religious ogre

to give us spiritual nightmares; He is not one that condemns our wrongs but never commends our labor of love. What a boon it is, dearest brethren, that we have such a faithful High Priest as this on our side; One that knows and approves our faithful works (I Thes. 1:3; Heb. 6:10; Job 14:15); One that knows our weakness and proneness to sin; One that knows the whereabouts of Satan at all times, even when he sneaks in among us.

"I know thy works, and where thou dwellest." Where do they dwell? What is the dwelling place of poor sinners? where is the dwelling place of them? Ah, dear trembling saint, draw near and hear what the Spirit saith to thee. It was said by David that he would dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Upon what base did he look for this dwelling? In his works? Never, my God, not that, but upon the firm foundation that the Lord was his Shepherd. These poor sinners at Pergamos, but not any more so than those to whom I write, have dwelt in Him in all generations. I feel sure that I write the good news of gospel when I say to you that wherever a poor sinner dwells in Him that He dwells in them. Isn't that your experience? and isn't the dwelling bare and lonely when He is not present. This dwelling place is now, for I write of gospel blessings, not of heavenly (that is, not of that heavenly abode that awaits the people of God), and that in the house of God many mansions are there; that they were all prepared for our usage and dwelling by His having gone to the cross and the grave. (See John 14: 1,3)

If any thing or time or person or event is not under the complete authority and jurisdiction of this One that dwells in Zion, (See Psa. 132:13,14), then the gospel can not be preached to those that dwell here. If there is an anterior power to God, there is not, nor indeed can not be, any gospel unto those that dwell in Him and He in them. If there is an equal (to say nothing of a superior) power outside the realm of God's rule, there can not be any gospel preached. Unless Satan is a creature, we had as well fold our tents, lay aside our escutcheon, lay our pens down to rust, turn our backs on the pulpit. Unless he is a creature God, there is a creature outside His domain, and if I attempted to preach the gospel to a tried saint it would not be the gospel, and would be received with disdain.

Praise ye the Lord. God knows the whereabouts of Satan, even though he gets in the bounds of heaven (church), and He has wrought in them that are in, and a part of, the church. He knows their holding to his name, and to every good thing; He knows that they have not denied the faith, even in the time of martyrdom of one of their faithful fellow travellers. The only thing told us about the martyrdom of this servant at Pergamos is that he was slain. Often I have been asked, "If persecution came on us again would we be able to stand? My answer has always been, "We are not able to stand, but if we were blessed with the faith that they had, we certainly would stand." No human faith, however founded on an arm of flesh, could stand when a beloved servant is being killed. Equally so, no one that has been given the faith of God's elect but what will stand under all trying circumstances.

Among commentators it has been a common thing to put the doctrine of Balaam and the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes as being about the same thing. Why? WHY? If this is true, the Spirit did not reveal it to John. To the law and to the testimony, and when we have been given grace to preach and believe in the law of Christ and His testimony, wouldn't it be a lovely thing to stop there? Hundreds of books have been written with the thought in mind of interpreting what John said. Do these men agree? About like the men of confused tongues would agree about building their tower to heaven. (Gen. II) Unless we have a keen spirit of discernment, we will find it hard to see and believe that Balaam was an imposter, and that he taught Balak to cast a stone of stumbling before the children of Israel. The lack of this discernment leads us to com-

promise, to ecumenicity, to the thought that we need to join in any movement towards working together for the common good. It behooves us to watch carefully for this Balaam-like spirit, seeing that many come professing an interest in the cause and yet are ever watching for an opportunity to betray the churches. (Read Numbers 22, 23 and 24; 31: 16; II Pet. 2:15,16; Jude 11)

In connection with these solemn things I feel to call your attention to the exact words of John as inspired by the Holy Ghost. Both of these false doctrines were **among** them. The church was harboring and giving asylum to these that were holding to these things. Both the Saviour and His apostles were always tender to believers in their weakness but they did not tolerate shielding those that slipped in to spy out the liberty of the saints. Let me say further that if I find a situation like unto these in the churches that I attend that I will rebuke the harboring of such characters; that I will say unto them, Repent, or look for the visitation of the Lord in the heat of His vengeance. This visit of fighting will be **against** the false followers of the Lamb but it will be **for** the benefit of the true followers. The commands of Christ to His poor and afflicted people will be accompanied by enabling grace to perform.

Once again I feel to notice the continual din from critics of God's sovereign will over His creation. No one is sure about the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes. The inspired apostle did not tell us what it was, but you pick up any paper or periodical or listen to any opponent of predestination and they can readily tell you that the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes was a belief in absolute predestination. I think it useless to cast pearls before those that would destroy them and rend you, but I think it advisable to at all times encourage the Lord's people. Thus I say to you that in The New Schaff-Herzog Religious Encyclopedia they surmise and infer and deal in probabilities and conjectures as to what they believed. (See page 168, 9, Vol. 8) Dr. John Gill in his commentary on this has this to say, "These heretics sprung up in the times of the apostles and their doctrines seem to be those of Rome." (See the same, Vol. 6, page 945) All other students of Bible literature suppose and infer and conjecture this and that and the other, but none of them say that these people believed in absolute predestination. It does seem that the church has always been surrounded by those that were wise (?).

Once again, (as John did time and time again), let us note that no one will hear these solemn charges except those with an ear to hear. Let us further note that none with this hearing ear will fail to hear. To those with a hearing ear in this church, together with those in the churches that I serve and those that my yoke fellows serve, will hear these solemn things. The reading of these literal statements, as well as the hearing of the literal (natural) ear, will frequently hear these things but their death knell has already been pronounced. (Rom. 11:8)

Those with open eyes, unstopped ears, and an understanding heart will overcome. God does not open the eyes save to see; He does not unstop deaf ears save to hear; He does not remove the hard and stony heart, giving a heart made tender by the love of God save that the receiver understand. These gifts are given us from day to day; they are perpetuated in all time to the praise of His grace. (See Phil. 1:6; 2:12, 13; Heb. 13:20,21) These people were not enjoined to overcome. He did not say to anybody that they ought to believe; He did not say that the gospel was the power of God to him that would believe; He did not say to these people that "if" they would overcome that He would give them certain blessings. He did not say that to these infantile churches nor has He said it to us that are in the latter days, but he has said, "To him that overcometh" and we are not left as to where this gift of overcoming comes from. In another portion of this same book we are told that salvation and strength and the kingdom and the power of Christ is come, and that the children over came Satan by the blood of the

Lamb, and that as a result of this, they were to rejoice in the heavens. (Rev. 12: 10,12) And another thing, dear brethren, our Head has overcome the world, the law, the devil, which things are all united to keep us from overcoming. How can they fail to overcome? And another thing, When the people of Israel were sent down into Canaan what did they find? They found a goodly land, although strong and well fortified. They brought tokens of that rich country, flowing with milk and honey, and they had two believers (See Eph. 1:19,20) that said they were well able to overcome the land. Calab and Joshua (Holy Spirit and Christ) encourages us today in the same way,

God's people are living on hidden manna today. That faith and doctrine that identified the children of God in the times of the Saviour and the trying and perilous times of planting the early churches will ever be a distinguishing mark of identity down the ages. Except the nectured food of babes be hid from the wise (?) and great (?), how could the little ones ever survive? Unbelief questions what we eat, yea, even as to whether we will eat, and thinks nothing of tempting the Lord about it (Psa. 78: 19), but true faith cries out in joy as it visualizes the table spread in the midst of its enemies, knowing that the life in the Bread is hid from them all. It is not any small wonder to the poor flock of Christ that He has hid the life giving nutrients from the enemies of the cross.

Who hath made the churches of Christ different from those that have the form but not the power? To the writer of Ephesians and to his brethren in that church, it was the God of all grace that made the difference. The stone that is given is a different stone. Our Saviour is reckoned as a Rock, and that he is alone in saving, alone in power, alone in grace, alone in mercy. He is the white stone that is given to all those that overcome by His blood. From the standpoint of imputation, He became a stone of offence, seeing that he was like unto His brethren, being put to death as a common criminal. Let me hasten to assure you, dear readers, that He rode the beast that had never been sat upon; that He was the first to fulfill the law that he was made under; that he, being made of a woman, was the first not to break the law which she had broken. The stone is white, which carries with it purity. It is a pure white, not spotted, not defected, but, having been made under a broken law, He fulfilled that law for Himself as well as for His bride, and then washed away all ordinances and handwritings against her and Himself as her Husband, and is now forevermore the Rock of salvation to the church at Pergamos, to the saints of God among my multitude of readers, and I hope my Rock that would extol His great name.

The stone has a new name in it. This name is the Lord our Righteousness. The mentioning of this name will open a door for you among all of the Lord's people and churches, but in all ages these people will be sceptical towards any that come talking about the old regime of the law (which has indeed fallen), or that has an impediment in their speech to where they cannot pronounce Shibboleth, or that tells about being brought up out of the pit of sin by the Lord, but forgets it between that deliverance and placed on the Rock in such a way that he or she would sing the old song.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

MATTHEW 10: 29; LUKE 12: 6

"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father." — Matt. x:29. "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?" — Luke xii:6.

In the testimony of the Scriptures how often are things that are small, and of little value according to our finite judgment, linked with the greatest

things, either as their cause or their effect. In the connection of these two texts the blessed Master said that the very hairs of our head are all numbered. Nothing could be more trifling or unnoticeable in the view of mortal minds than a solitary hair from the head, yet not a sparrow falls without our Father, and every hair of the head he has numbered. If we pause for a moment to consider what this all signifies we shall be compelled in wonder to say, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." Who among men was ever able to number the hairs of his own head? Who ever thought of undertaking to count the hairs upon the head of another? Such a thing could be accomplished, no doubt, but who would have patience to finish such a task? We should count the time spent in such a thing as being utterly wasted, yet our Father has numbered them all upon the heads of all mankind. So also who among men even notices the fall of a sparrow, either through death or any other cause? But not one of them among all their unnumbered millions falls without Him; not one of them is forgotten before God.

The Saviour spake these words for the strengthening and encouragement of his disciples, after he had told them plainly that all manner of trials and persecutions awaited them in the coming warfare which was before them. Fear not these things, he would say to them, your Father will care for you, and as evidence full and satisfying he reminds them that their Father cares for the least things of his creation, and that much more will he care for his children. God cares for one sparrow, and ye are of more value than many sparrows. If he has numbered the hairs of your head, much more sure is it that he has numbered you, and not one shall be lost or suffer harm. This is the teaching in brief, as it seems to us, of these Scriptures.

There are some reflections in our mind of which we wish to write. First, let us notice in the words of the two texts two special things, viz., that sparrows were of so little value that when two pennies were spent for them one was (as we say) thrown in. Two sold for one farthing, but five would be given for two farthings, and while Luke records the Saviour's language: "And not one of them is forgotten before God," Matthew says that "not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father." Two truths are declared in these two expressions, viz., that God remembers the sparrows, and that he is with them and appoints their very falling. It is good beyond expression to know that our heavenly Father remembers us always. How exceedingly full of consolation is it that he not only remembers us, but that he is with us, that he is with us when we are low and cast down as well as when we soar above. What is more beautiful to see than the happy birds flitting through the air, full of life and gladness? The God who made them has filled them with this life and gladness; surely he must be mindful of them and be with them. But when they fall, either through weakness or death, is it as sure that he remembers them and is with them? Jesus has silenced this question once and for all. He says that our Father remembers them, and that he is with them so that they cannot fall to the ground without him. Well might he add, "Fear ye not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows." He remembers you when it is well with you, and he has you in just as perfect remembrance when all seems ill to you. He is with you when you in joy and love soar above, when you are prosperous and blessed, and he has not forsaken you when you are cast down and come near to perishing.

Second. This truth sets forth the great things of his omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence. The sparrows flit all around us and we pass them by without notice, but would it be so could we see that in each one of them there is revealed the great things, the deep things of God? We wonder at the power that holds the worlds in their orbits and causes them to move on their stately march through the heavens, but the

same attributes of Jehovah that are made manifest in them also appear in the smallest things. To us finite creatures some things are great and some things are small, but a poet has said with truth, "Great God, with thee there's nothing great, with thee there's nothing small." There are wonders in the sparrow that do not appear in the worlds above or in the earth upon which we tread. Life, thought, feeling, love, fear, with all other emotions of what we call life, belong to even the sparrow. Every one of these things is far more wonderful than any world of dead matter.

But in addition to this, God's providence towards the little things implies his omnipresence and omniscience, as well as his omnipotence. It is not his care over one sparrow, but his care for them all, and not only for the sparrows does he care, but for all his animate creation, from minute forms of life, so small that, as the microscope has revealed, thousands of them can stand upon the point of the finest needle, or so large that the deep is made to boil at their presence and sporting. God made the sparrow as well as behemoth; his handiwork is as wonderful in the one as in the other. If, then, we can remember that the little sparrow sets forth the most wonderful attributes of our God, we shall not wonder that it is said that he remembers them and that they cannot fall to the ground without him, and poor, little, weak, insignificant worms of the dust as we are, yet we are the children of God, and in his sight are of more value than many sparrows. If he has care for one sparrow, will he not much more care for us?

Third. The little things enhance the glory of God no less than the great things; they made manifest his kingdom and power and purpose, and the great things can do no more. We recall that once we saw a large and powerful engine, which was able to move machinery that covered acres of ground, and that we stood in admiration of the wisdom that had designed and built it with such power that there was no apparent effort, either in starting it or in its labor afterward, but resting upon a beam in that engine stood a fac-simile of it, so small that it could be placed in a large thimble, and in this small engine each part of the large one was duplicated. We felt that we did not know which to admire the most, the skill manifested in the little engine, or that which appeared in the large one. Did not the minute engine display the wisdom and skill of hand of the maker just as much as did the larger one? Is it not as much to the praise and glory of the Maker of all, that he has made the minutest things perfect in their kind and that they are all under his constant control, as it is that he ordered the great events, or created the great things of the universe? We gaze upon some one vast world with awe at its greatness and the majesty of its Author, but when we think upon the multiplied millions of little things, and remember that they each and all are alike in the presence of the all-seeing and every-where-present God, does not this seem just as wonderful, and does it not show forth the glory of God as much as do the worlds above? So when we read that not a sparrow falls to the ground without our heavenly Father, there is involved the wonderful infiniteness of the wisdom and power of God, since not one sparrow only, but all sparrows, are included in this declaration of the blessed Lord.

Fourth. It is not only in the small things seen in nature, from grains of sand to minutest insects, that the glory of God appears, but in his providences also. How many there are who can witness that during the past of their lives there have been times when their whole manner of life has been changed by some little incident that would not have been remembered by them were it not for what followed out of that little incident, and from what has followed that small incident has been seen to be big with meaning, and fraught with the eternal purpose of God, as well as the greater things. The falling of a sparrow is a small thing, if anything is, yet it is not small in the sight of God, for he is with

the sparrow when it falls. If what we call great things are in the appointment of God, and are moved on by his unerring wisdom and unfailing power, who shall dare deny that the small things are so, too?

Fifth. Out of this truth springs up great assurance for all who love God. He does not forget the sparrow, not one of them is forgotten of him, so no matter where we rove or rest, no matter whether it be night or day, we are assured that he has not, and that he will not, forget his disciples. "Ye are of more value than many sparrows." Still further, he abides with the sparrows. How full is that truth. He remembers, and he abides. What more could any one ask? What more could God give? Sometimes we hear it said that not one sparrow shall fall to the ground without your heavenly Father's notice; that is most blessedly true; that is said in the words, "And not one of them is forgotten before God." But it is better still than that, he is with them when they fall. They do not fall by chance; the purpose of God is in their fall as much as it is in their flight, and the lesson in part seems to us to be this: that our heavenly Father is never far from us, no matter how dark the night may be, no matter how much distress we encounter. If the dart of the enemy wounds us, there is a purpose in it, and we do not fall without our Father in heaven. How blessed is the consolation of such an assurance, when it is a dark and cloudy day with us. If we fall by the hand of our enemy, God is with us even there. He has made the fire his chariot to convey his children home. He is always with his children in the furnace, though it is not always that he is seen.

Sixth. Let us notice that the sparrows are not always kept from falling, but that the teaching is, that God is with them in their falling. We may be sure that when they fall to the ground some purpose infinitely wise and loving is in it. It would be dreadful indeed to fall and not find the presence of the Father there. It was a journey full of sorrow and despair that Jacob took when he fled from the anger of his brother, but in the place where he fled God appeared before the dawn, and he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not." Jacob was not hindered from going down into the darkness, but the Lord was there before him. Not one falls to the ground without him. God is with us when it is well with us and when we soar above, but he is with us no less when we fall, either into darkness or into trials. The presence of God attends the falling to the ground as well as the soaring on high into blessing. He said, When thou passest through the floods I will be with thee; and through the fire, it shall not kindle upon thee. God was with Paul and Silas in the dungeon at Phillippi, and they were not sorrowful, but rejoicing.

Seventh. We will close these reflections by calling attention to one objection that has often been made to the doctrine of the text. It is said that it is beneath our view of the almighty Sovereign of all to suppose that he takes notice of the little things. It belongs to him to uphold the worlds of the universe, to cause nations to rise and to fall, to bring men to the throne of government, or to bring down those who rule wickedly, to call men of wisdom and might to fill places assigned to them, but it is beneath our thought of the glory and dignity of the God of heaven to suppose that he takes notice of ordinary men or events. But is it so indeed? On the contrary, does it not, beyond all our power to express it, display the infinite wisdom and power of Jehovah to believe that he not only knows the great things, but the little; that he rules not only in worlds and in nations, but in the smallest affairs of men?

Suppose that we are told that a certain king is capable, without the need of any advisers, of governing a nation; that he has such a grasp of affairs that his rule is the very best possible for all his people, and that were others to interfere and advise, it would be always to the detriment of his kingdom; would not the world stand in wonder and admiration of such a king? And especially would

this be so if we were to learn that this king was possessed of but one supreme desire, and that this was to rule in wisdom and righteousness. But now in addition to all this, we learn that this king is possessed of such wonderful wisdom that he knows individually each and every one of all his millions of subjects, that he knows just what is best for each of them, and that he appoints just such things for each one as will be to his good, and that not only in the great affairs of state, but in the minute affairs of every one of his subjects, he is capable of ruling without any advice or help in any way, would we not all find it impossible to praise this good and wise king enough? Just this is what we are taught in the word, and especially in the text, is true concerning our King and our Father in heaven.

We feel to leave these reflections to our readers, and we trust they may find something good in them.

(Editorial by Elder Chick August 15, 1911. Republished by request.)

ROMANS 5: 14.

"Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression."

A brother in the ministry asks that we write upon the above text, and while willing to give such as we have, are sure that we shall not impart new light to him on the subject. More than likely he could do greater justice to the text than we; however, we shall try to comply with his request.

The first word, "nevertheless," implies connection and reason for the statement made. This fifth chapter of Romans is devoted to the utter depravity of man by nature and the justification of the sinner through Christ. It must be upon these principles, therefore, that the import of the text at the head of this article be found. We shall therefore take up the condition of man through sin first of all.

The law was given to Adam individually, and contained only two commandments: "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." "Neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." When Adam received this law no mortal was on earth other than himself, hence we say he received it individually. Nevertheless, he being the progenitor of all his posterity, his descendants being yet in his loins received the law in him. When Adam transgressed the law it was with full knowledge of the consequences, but his descendants being in his loins, were absolutely ignorant of the law and its demands, yet in that vital relationship sinned in his transgression. Therefore by the transgression of one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.

No other law was given until by Moses, written by the finger of God, and by Moses read to the Israelites. Notwithstanding the fact that no law was given from Adam to Moses, death reigned. In other words, death had already passed upon each offspring of Adam, who in him transgressed the law of God in the garden of Eden. No power of earth could make null and void the law of the Lord God. It had been violated, and each and every son and daughter of Adam was under its curse. The manner of life of the children of Adam, beginning with Cain to the giving of the law by Moses, fully demonstrated the fact that death reigned. The flood was visited upon the world because the imaginations of the heart in man were evil, and that continually. Men and women seemed to be utterly void of self-respect, yet there was no punishment for their unrighteous deeds. Sin is not imputed where there is no law. Therefore the descendants of Adam were ignorant of sin and of their lost and ruined condition.

There was not so much as a lamb offered for sin during that period — no sin-offering whatever. Death therefore reigned supreme from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after

the similitude of Adam's transgression. The word "similitude" means image, likeness, or in like manner. No law having been given the children of Adam, either in an individual or collective way, they could not sin after the similitude of his transgression: personally, wilfully, with full knowledge of the penalty.

We feel it equally legitimate to say that in the giving of the law from Mt. Sinai the children of Adam received that law after the similitude, or image, in which Adam was given the law in the garden, and that they transgressed the law given them after the similitude of Adam's transgression: personally, wilfully, knowing the penalties thereof.

We have long felt that Paul in saying, "Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," meant to emphasize the power of the law, that from its demands there was no escape. The law said, In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. Adam and all his posterity therefore were separated from God; death reigned.

Our text does not signify, on the other hand, that conditions changed, so far as the reign of death was concerned, when Moses gave the law. Death reigned from the transgression of Adam until the crucifixion of Christ, the atoning Lamb of God. For as by the offence of one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, even Christ Jesus, shall many be made righteous. Sin, and death by sin, entered by no means or way other than through the transgression of Adam; neither could righteousness come and grace reign except through Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness.

All law demands obedience. The first law was disobeyed by Adam; the second was disobeyed by the Israelites. Death reigned because of Adam's transgression; condemnation and literal punishments were visited upon Israel because of their disobedience. The law of commandments revealed the fact to the Israelites that they were sinners, and that all their lives had been spent in the very things the law forbade. Nor did that law change their mode and ideas of living, except in minor degrees. It was not intended to make them perfect, but to give them a rule of outward life.

In conclusion we shall say, the law given Adam had the seal of God's power and majesty upon it, and obedience thereto was absolutely sure, even though transgressed by Adam. That law was in full force when Christ came and demanded perfect obedience. He, the second Adam, came to render obedience even unto death. Therefore the law that said man should not eat, partake of nor even touch the tree of the knowledge of good and evil lest he die, was obeyed absolutely by the Savior of sinners. As a man he lived and died never having partaken of that tree, which tree is far from being such as thousands imagine. While verily man, with all the propensities and lusts of the Adamic nature, yet he never satisfied that nature, dying absolutely pure (virtuous), harmless and separate from sinners, not having touched the tree. Therefore the law Adam disobeyed, through which disobedience death came to him and all his descendants, was obeyed by Christ, "the Son of man," and through his obedience life eternal came to all the family of God.

The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord; and as sin reigned unto death, even so doth grace reign through Christ Jesus. Where sin abounded (in man), even so doth grace much more abound by the man Christ Jesus. These declarations confirmed the testimony of Paul, and we hope confirm ours also.

Now, dear brother, if anything here written can in any way be helpful to you we shall be glad and feel well repaid for the effort to comply with your request.

(Editorial by Elder H. C. Kerr June 1, 1921.)

OBITUARIES

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT
ELDER GEORGE GOLD TREVATHAN

It is with fear and trembling that we attempt to pay homage and respect to one that has meant so much to so many people. Our

prayer is that God will enlighten our minds and give us wisdom and knowledge to write in love and humility. We pray that God will make us submissive to his sovereign will.

Elder George Gold Trevathan was born March 19, 1875, in Rocky Mount, North Carolina. In June, 1925 he united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Lower Town Creek; he was baptized by Elder A. M. Crisp. He was ordained a Deacon of the Church in December, 1925, and served as Clerk from 1925 to 1954. The Church saw the workings of the Lord with him and felt he had a gift to speak. He was liberated in February, 1928, and ordained to the gospel ministry in February, 1938.

During his long ministry, Elder Trevathan served as pastor of Cross Roads and Old Sparta Churches in Edgecombe County, Lenoir and Beaver Dam Churches near Kinston, Moore's Church in Wilson County and from October, 1951, until his death Providence Church at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.

In August, 1966, he moved his membership to the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church in Rocky Mount which he had attended since earliest childhood. He attended the meetings regularly and preached with strength his deep belief in Salvation by Grace and the love of God for His Children.

He was a loving father to his children and a Father in Israel to all the children of God. He believed in and preached of an all wise God and Jesus Christ, Savior of Sinners. He often spoke of his early and late experiences when attending the Church at the Falls of Tar River and of the dealings of the Lord with him. All who knew and loved him often went to him for comfort and enlightenment. We are humbly grateful to an all wise God for blessing him to live many years among the people he loved so dearly.

Elder Trevathan was called home June 29, 1969, at the age of 94. He was married to the former Mary Stallings who preceded him in death several years. He leaves to mourn three sons, Earl, of Fountain; Fred, of Farmville, and W. C., of Greenville; two daughters, Mrs. Emily Bulluck, of Pinetops, and Mrs. A. V. Cousins of Rocky Mount; four grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren; and all who have been blessed to know him as a Father in Israel and a Brother in Christ. He will be greatly missed by his family, friends, and the many Churches he visited, but we feel he is happy in the rest of the Lord waiting for the morning of the resurrection to be raised and fashioned like our Savior Jesus Christ, to see Him, be like Him and be satisfied.

His funeral was conducted from the Chapel of Gay-Yost Funeral Home by his Pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, and Elder A. M. Mewborn. There were nine other ministers from many Churches and other Associations who spoke words of comfort. Burial was in the Pinetops Cemetery amidst a mound of flowers and host of friends. There he rests in peace to await the second coming of our Lord. This he was praying for and looking forward to for a long time.

RESOLVED, That the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church extend our deep felt sympathy to his children and all his family. That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the *Signs of the Times*, one to the family, and a copy to be put on the records of Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church.

Done by order of Conference July, 1969. Written by two who loved him dearly in bonds of nature as a Great Uncle, and, we hope, as a Brother in Christ.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Lois Hughes and Nina Pearson,
Committee

ELDER MILLARD I. McLEOD

Elder Millard I. McLeod was born in Crenshaw County, Ala., May 11, 1903, the son of the late Brother George A. McLeod and Sister Mary Susan Richburg McLeod. At about the age of 17 he moved with his parents to Andalusia, Alabama, and lived the remainder of his life in this section of the state. He had been in declining health for several months, and quietly passed away at his home in River Falls, Ala., March 4, 1969. He, together with his wife, united with the Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church at Gethsemane, near Brantly, Alabama, on Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in March, 1948, and was baptized the following morning by Elder J. N. Marrow. A short time later he began to speak in public and was soon liberated to the stand. Sometime later he moved his membership to Shiloh Church near Andalusia, where he was ordained to the full work of the ministry by a Presbytery composed of Elders W. F. Beauford, M. K. Duren and E. F. Lassitter; and in this capacity he served faithfully the remainder of his life.

At the time of his passing he was serving four churches: Zion Rock, Harmony, Naomi and Shiloh. He is greatly missed among the churches. He was ever ready to give a reason of his hope, and was an able defender of the gospel of God our Saviour.

He leaves to mourn his passing his devoted wife, Sister Nora Lee McLeod, of River Falls; two sons, Glenn of Pace, Fla., and Gerald, of San Antonio, Texas; one daughter, Mrs. Calbert Briggs, of Andalusia. Also five grandchildren; one brother, Clayton McLeod, Pace, Fla.; two sisters: Misses Mary and Lula Bell McLeod, Andalusia; and many brethren and

friends.

His funeral was held at Foreman's Funeral Home in Andalusia March 7th, with Elder J. P. Morgan officiating; where a large concourse of brethren and friends paid their last respects to the beloved Elder. After which his body was laid to rest in the Andalusia Memorial Cemetery beneath a large mound of flowers, to rest in peace until the morning of the Resurrection, when Jesus comes the second time without sin unto salvation, to gather his elect according to his promise. We believe this precious brother will come forth from his sleeping dust and be caught up in the air to meet his blessed Saviour, and will hear that welcome applause, Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord prepared for thee from the foundation of the world.

"When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun."

Written by one that loved him,

E. C. Weaver

BONNIE H. PITTMAN

Mrs. Pittman, beloved companion of Brother Jesse F. Pittman of Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, Cottonwood, Ala., died in a Panama City, Florida, hospital June 10, 1969, after a lingering illness. Her home was in Youngstown, Fla. but was a native of Alabama. She was 66 years of age.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders A. B. Chumney and J. J. Collins at Ramah Church June 12, with interment in the adjoining cemetery. She is survived by her husband; three daughters: Mrs. W. L. Elbow, Mrs. James Kleinebreil, and Mrs. Christine Ross; five sons: Willis, Fred and Robert, of Pinellas Park, Fla.; Eugene of Montana, and Troy of Montgomery, Ala.; four sisters: Cora, Argie, Erie and Vallie; two brothers: Odell and Don; twenty-five grandchildren and fifteen great grandchildren. She lived a glorious life in the Lord.

J. J. Collins

MRS. DIXIE H. COLLINS

Mrs. Collins, mother of Elder D. W. Collins, died in a Dothan Hospital after a short illness on July 28, 1969, at the age of 64.

She is survived by her beloved husband, Frank Collins of Slocomb, Ala.; three sons: Elder D. W. of Dothan, Ala.; Dolan W. and Joseph T. of Slocomb; four daughters: Nadine, Ann Bolin, Martha and Julia; four brothers: Mike, Charlie, Bruce and Joe Hinson, all of Graceville, Fla.; 29 grandchildren and 7 great grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted July 30 at Bethlehem Church, Malvern, Ala., with Elders J. J. Collins, A. B. Chumney and V. C. Hartzog, with Elder J. A. Tew directing the singing. Truly she lived a wonderful life in the Lord.

J. J. Collins

CLINTON F. PITTMAN

Brother Pittman died July 28, 1969, in a Marianna Hospital, Florida, after a long illness. He is survived by his mother, Sister Mary H. Pittman; his wife, Donia; brother: Chalker; three sisters: Mrs. Ethel Skipper, Mrs. Eunice Weese, and Mrs. Audrey Borland, and countless other relatives and friends. He was 66 years of age, and a dear lover of the truth.

Funeral services were conducted at his beloved Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, Cottonwood, Ala. July 30, 1969, with Elders A. B. Chumney, J. J. Collins, J. J. Watson and Paul Stott in charge. Interment was in the adjoining cemetery.

J. J. Collins

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN PEELE

Benjamin Franklin Peele, a beloved member of the Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church, departed this life on April 16, 1969, having been born on September 18, 1877. He was more than 91 years of age.

He was the son of the late Jesse Biggs Peele and Martha Godwin Peele. He spent all of his life on the farm, and never married, and farmed until retirement by reason of advanced age.

He was well versed on local and world affairs. He also possessed an unusual wisdom, and remarkable memory. He was loved and respected by young and old, plain in manner and conversation; a friend to all.

Brother Peele was well versed in the Scripture, and united with the Church at Bear Grass, Saturday before the Third Sunday in August, 1955 and was baptized on Sunday by Elder A. B. Ayers. He faithfully and with humbleness of spirit attended his church. He spent much time visiting the sick.

May Almighty God reconcile us to our loss. We feel our loss is his eternal gain. We, the Church at Bear Grass, express our heartfelt sympathy to the family.

Brother Peele is survived by two sisters:

Mrs. Sallie Coltrain, Route 1, Oak City, N. C.; Mrs. J. A. Nelson, Williamston, N. C.; two brothers: W. G. Peele, Williamston, N. C., and Oscar Peele, Jacksonville, N. C.

Funeral services were conducted in Biggs Chapel, Williamston, N. C., by Elder E. C. Harrison. Interment was in the Peele Cemetery near his home.

By order of the Conference:

E. C. Harrison, Moderator
E. B. Peele, Clerk
E. C. Harrison, Committee

OTIS GRAY HICKS

Otis Gray Hicks was born August 13, 1888, and died June 15, 1969. He spent his entire life near Farmerville, La.

Survivors are his wife, Mrs. Emma Hicks; two daughters: Mrs. J. A. Andersons, Farmerville, and Mrs. George Hampton, Panama City, Fla.; five sons, J. D. Hicks, Eldorado, Ark.; Roland Hicks, Farmerville; Jessie J. Hicks, Farmerville; R. Lee Hicks, Farmerville; and Zane Hicks, Farmerville. Surviving also are one brother, Earl Hicks, Farmerville; 13 grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren.

Brother Hicks was blessed to come into the church in 1917, and was ordained a deacon July 26, 1947, at Liberty Hill Church. He was very humble, meek and gentle, which I believe are traits of the great Creator's children. He shall not only be missed by his precious family but by his neighbors also. I wish I could feel myself to be as strong in the doctrine of salvation by grace as he was. I do believe he will hear the words when time and timely things shall be no more, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

I was asked to conduct his funeral with the help of Elder John Lee Smith.

In hope of eternal life,
David E. Turner

COY PRILLAMAN

Our beloved Deacon and Brother Coy Prillaman passed away March 27, 1969, at his home. He was born June 22, 1904, the son of the late James Mabie and Mary Elizabeth Shumate Prillaman of Franklin County. He was married to Myrtle Lemmons of Franklin County on December 24, 1930. To this union were born two daughters, Mrs. Huston Jones, Ferrum, Virginia; Mrs. Mickey Kisey, Henry, Virginia, who were left to mourn his passing. Also, four sisters, Mattie Prillaman and Mrs. Alma Chaney of Henry, Virginia; Mrs. Charlie Smith, Danville, Virginia; Mrs. Charlie Childress, Fieldale, Virginia; one brother, Fred Prillaman, Henry, Virginia, and two grandchildren, and a host of friends and also brethren and sisters in the Church.

He united with Union Primitive Baptist Church on the 4th Sunday in April, 1963, and was baptized on the 4th Sunday in May, 1963, by his beloved pastor Elder Leonard J. Brammer. He was ordained a Deacon on October 24, 1964, and served well and faithfully as long as he was able to get to church. He was always faithful to go to church and the last few times he was carried in an ambulance and seemed to enjoy the services very much despite his paralyzed condition which he bore well, always looking to a better place to go to when the Lord saw fit to call him. He was blessed with a loving wife and daughters to care for him in his affliction, even after he had one leg amputated.

Even though we hate to give up our dear brother we believe in the Almighty power of God to carry him to a land of rest and happiness to which we are sure he has done. His funeral was conducted by his Pastor, Elder Leonard J. Brammer, assisted by Elder P. E. Ingram and Elder Tom Turner. He was laid to rest in the family cemetery to await the coming of the Lord. So farewell dear brother until we all can meet with our Lord in eternity. May the Lord reconcile his family and friends to the Lord's will.

Written by an unworthy Brother

Claude R. Hopkins
Clerk of Union Church

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT
SISTER OMEGA MAE LANDERS

Resolution of respect from the Hopewell Church of Kanawha County, W. Va.

It has pleased Almighty God to call from our midst our dearly beloved and faithful member of our Church, Sister Omega Mae Landers. Sister Landers was baptized by Elders H. J. Bird and J. C. Hammond and received into the Church July 7, 1963. She passed from this life Sunday, June 1, 1969.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we humbly submit to the will of Almighty God. While our loss is her eternal gain, she will be sadly missed by the Church and her many friends and relatives. No one will ever fill her place in the hearts of the Brothers and Sisters.

May a copy of this resolution be sent to the family, a copy incorporated in our minutes and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Elder J. C. Hammond, Moderator
J. J. Bird, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 137 DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1969 NO. 12

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12/69
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ELDER CURRY PREACHED ALL SALVATION THROUGH THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

Pleasant Plains, Ill.,
October 12, 1899

Elder J. K. Womack,

My Dear Brother:

I have just read your letter in the **Signs of the Times,** and it made me glad indeed. In these days of apostacy from the truth on the part of many who have recently professed to hold it, admonishes me that perilous times have come. It is not every one who says, "Lord, Lord," that shall enter into the kingdom, but he that doeth the will of the Father, so it is not every one that pretends to preach, that is called of God as was Aaron. There are many false preachers among us, men who have called themselves, and for a show pretend to preach grace, when inwardly they know nothing about it at all. It is a fine point, my brother, to discern a false minister from a true one; Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light, then it is no wonder if his ministers be transformed as ministers of righteousness.

Experience is the only thing that can bring God's children to a knowledge of the truth, experience of the deep things of God. When God leads us into deep soul troubles, and we expend all our strength to no avail, then he comes and delivers us, and makes us know that he is God, and beside him there is no other. It was in the belly of hell that Jonah learned the fruitlessness of human effort, and through his deliverance from this hopeless grave he learned that salvation is of the Lord. This deliverance is what men would call time salvation, and which they now ascribe to works, but Jonah, the man who experienced it, ascribes it to the Lord without reserve. These men who preach time salvation, as they call it, by works, have never yet experienced deliverance from the belly of hell; a whale has never swallowed them, consequently they are not qualified to declare that salvation is of the Lord.

I have never yet been guilty of preaching salvation through any other than the Lord Jesus Christ, either for time or for eternity. I cannot preach the law, for the very things I have not, are the things the law demands, and the things I must have, the law cannot give. I trust I have become dead to the law by the body of Christ, I am crucified with Christ, yet nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Yours in love of truth and righteousness.

H. M. Curry

(The above is copied from the *Signs* of May 15, 1900.)

SISTER HUDSON'S TRIAL AND FAITH

On June 19, 1969, we were in the State of New York on our way to a quarterly meeting in Canada at Elder Ruston's

Church. As we entered the town of Bath, N. Y., we immediately came into a curve where we saw a dump truck coming from the opposite direction. To our horror, the dump truck, which we later discovered was loaded with ten tons of asphalt, came directly toward us. Woody (Elder Hudson) attempted to leave the road to avoid a collision. However as we left the road, the truck did too, seemingly determined to hit us, which it did.

As soon as the initial impact was over, I realized Cherie (daughter) was unconscious as well as Woody.

In the emergency room the doctor told me Woody would have to be sent to another hospital. The children and I were X-rayed (Tim (son) had his cuts sewed up.) and sent to separate rooms.

I have never been in more misery or been any lower in my life than I was that night. I didn't know if Woody or Cherie were dead or alive. Tim, I felt sure, wasn't seriously injured, but Cherie never did cry right, so I was sure she was badly hurt.

That night I prayed if ever in my life I have prayed. All night long I tried to pray to God, not to let my husband die, but to make him well and let him go back to his churches and us and be as he was before. I prayed, and as I prayed I would think how feeble I was praying or how empty the prayers seemed to be, but I could not seem to be able to stop my weak and feeble entreaties to God to make my husband as he once was. All this time I was in such awful pain. My head seemingly would split open from a skull fracture, my eye throbbed, my arm ached (my left arm was broken) and I was aching and hurting all over my body. Still I could not stop praying. Shortly before morning the brightest light I have ever seen filled the room I was in. I really do not know whether the light filled the room or just my soul, but I do know with the light came the assurance to me that Woody was going to be all right.

From that instant I did not worry about Woody any more, but then I started worrying about Cherie and prayed that she too would be spared to us. However, it was not long until a nurse from pediatrics came to tell me the children had awaked and were asking where mommy was. She assured me they were going to be all right. Cherie had a fractured skull and a broken rib, while Tim had cuts, and both had bruises. Before lunch I got to see them and stayed with them until we were released.

When we were released from our hospital I went up to Elmira, N. Y., to stay with Woody, and our mothers came up and got the children and took them home.

When I went into Woody's room he knew me, but he wasn't as well as I thought he would be. Upon seeing that light and receiving the assurance that Woody was going to be all right, I really didn't worry any more, and in my mind I had him a lot better than he actually was. Although my faith got weak at times I always remembered the night when I was so low and the light appearing, and my faith would be renewed.

When I got to his hospital, I made no effort to see Woody's doctors until June 25, (three days later) When I did see the doctor, he told me Woody would never talk again, or work again, and explained why. All the time this neurosurgeon was talking and explaining Woody's situation to me, there was a strong feeling that the doctor's opinion was not true.

Again, I knew from that first night Woody was going to be all right. My faith got weak at times before we got to come home. But, I always remembered that first night.

Mrs. Remona E. Hudson

(The account shows that my wife was given special faith during such a trying time. For the past year I have been impressed to "dwell" upon this subject in most all of my sermons: "God will give His people grace in time of need. We do not need the strength today that we will need in the future." Little did I realize that I was preaching to my wife and myself all this time.

The natural person's hopes would be darkened by such discouragement from

the neurosurgeon. Remona was given the faith that I would preach again, and the neurosurgeon's words that, "I would never talk again," did not dim the special faith that God gave to my wife.

Woodrow W. Hudson, Jr.)

ENJOYED A "FEAST OF FAT THINGS"

4511 N. E. Prescott,
Portland, Oregon 97218

Dear Brother Wood:

I had the enclosed letter from Brother Winfrey, and have enjoyed it so much that I have copied it, and if in your judgment you feel it would be of comfort to the household of faith, you may publish it in our dear family paper, the **Signs.**

I was blessed to go to Mossy Rock, Washington, for their third Sunday meeting, and truly it was a "feast of fat things." The pastor, Brother Attebery, was there, and also Brother Ben Preston, who is a member of the dear ones at Naches, Washington, where I also am a member; and was such a help to Brother Attebery. It was a joy indeed to be there.

Sister Baker and her daughter enjoyed their visit with you so very much when they were there more than a year ago. Time indeed goes so fast as we grow older it seems, but my health is good, for which I do feel grateful.

With love to all the Household of Faith.

In a precious hope,
Mrs. J. W. Taylor

THE LETTER FROM ELDER WINFREY

Liberal, Kansas

Dear Sister Taylor:

Brother and Sister Stallard gave me your letter last meeting time, and as I have not been feeling well due to surgery, and another surgery in the offing, I have neglected answering your most welcome letter.

We cannot completely give God the praise we would for our many blessings from his bountiful hands, because of our flesh and sinful bodies. I've often told the brethren that when the Scriptures speak of the evil man, the corrupt, etc., that we do not have to go looking at what we call the non-elect outside our own house, or this tabernacle of clay. I have always maintained that as far as fleshly bodies are concerned, the children of God are by nature the children of wrath even as others. The difference I think, is that the born-again, regenerated, saved and called with a holy calling, realize they are sinners and know that according to their own work and righteousness, are hell deserving creatures; but a quickening of the Spirit coming down from God out of heaven, gives the poor, trembling sinner a glow of hope, and they press toward the mark of the high calling of God through Christ Jesus our Lord.

Dear Sister, how many times have I sweat great drops (almost like blood, as it were) when I see myself as I really am; and am made to pray to God to be merciful unto me a sinner. However, we know that Jesus having died for the sins of his people, the Father looks at his children through the Purifier, his Son, and sees them pure and undefiled, standing without blame before Him in love.

When Jesus comes again without sin unto salvation, it is because He has put our iniquities away from us as far as the east is from the west, and no more will He be made sin who knew no sin; no more will He have to wear a crown of thorns upon his lovely head to represent our many sins, because He died once for all. The commandment was given to one man, and by his (one man) disobedience sin entered the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men. By the obedience of **one man** many were saved. Had men begun to multiply upon the earth, and had there been many men given the commandment, then there would have had to been many saviours. One man died under the law —

one man died unto salvation by keeping the law. The debt was contracted by death, so had to be paid by death.

The one that died by disobedience was made subject to vanity, and him not willingly; in fact, God did not counsel with men as to how he would be created. The man Jesus was not made subject to vanity — subject to suffering and pain, and humility: Yes. So God's children had a perfect sacrifice without spot or blemish — no fault to be found in him by kings or high commands. God had prepared a body for his Son, God in the flesh, the perfect fulfiller of the law, who laid down his life that through his death, we, if we are what we hope we are, might attain the glorious presence with God on the other side of corporal death, unto eternal life which He who cannot lie, promised before the world began.

May you from time to time be drawn unto Jesus by the Father, and be made to feast on the fat things of an eternal covenant keeping God, is my prayer

(Elder) W. A. Winfrey

EXPERIENCE

809 Elm Avenue, S. E.,
Roanoke, Va. 24013

Dear Brother Wood:

I had a mind to be baptized long before I was. I didn't feel that they would accept a poor sinner like me, but on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1918, I was worried and impressed. I felt that I just had to be baptized, but felt I was too unworthy to be with them; but my husband came in on the following Saturday, and said, "Maude, Elder Odie Plybon is going to preach over here this evening and tomorrow, and I want you to go with me." I said, "Allen, you know company has sent word that they were coming, and I have to stay here and fix a meal; but I will dress the two little girls and you can take them." And he said, "No, Maude, if you don't go, I won't go."

So I just dropped everything and went with him. I didn't have any idea of joining the church that day; for on Wednesday before I fell upon my knees and tried to beg the Lord to show me how to go, and keep me in the right path, and said, "O Lord, if you will just spare me until the first Sunday in October, I will go to Palestine and offer to the church; but, Lord, please show me the right path to take." When I arose to my feet, I felt that I would go out there and offer to the church.

Then on the fourth Saturday I went with my husband to Fairview Church, as I said, where Brother Goode and Brother Plybon preached. I hope I received some of the crumbs that fell from the Master's table. When they stood to sing the last song, I was up there among them before I knew it. I did not tell them much, but they received me and I was baptized the next morning by Brother Goode. I felt that I left something in that water that has not worried me since. I felt so happy when he raised me out of the water.

Last August, 1968, I had prepared to go to bed and went to shut the door. I saw a little white something coming up over our hedge, and I stood there and watched it. I could not stand on my feet long so I shut the door and went to bed, and shut my eyes as I laid down. I opened my eyes and it had followed me up to the window near my bed. It looked like Jesus, and a lady from her waist up; and He put a white robe on himself and sat down near her. I did not see them talking but the lady smiled one time. I looked at it a good while and then went to sleep. When I awoke and opened my eyes they were gone; and I said, "Thank the Lord for showing me Jesus," for I had been wanting to see him.

I thought probably He had come for me, but I am still here, and will be until He calls me. I am not able to go to church as I would love to, but I think of the loved ones up there every meeting. I hope I love Jesus and that He loves me; but if I do, He loved me first.

I feel too unworthy yet to be with them, but I am proud to hear them talk and sing.

I am sending $4.00 to renew my *Signs of the Times*. You have been very faithful to send them on time, and I enjoy reading them all so much.

May God bless the editors to keep the good writings coming, for it is all the company I have. I can't see to read much, but I can read a little at a time. The good Lord has blessed me many ways. I will be 86 the last day of August. I have been shut in with arthritis or something like that for three or four years.

A poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

Maude Hodges

(We appreciated hearing from you, Sister Hodges. — J. D. W.)

ACCOUNT OF MEETING IN MEMPHIS

Tennessee Ridge, Tenn. 37178

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing check for seven dollars for renewal subscription to Blanche Gillum, address changed to Denver, Tenn. 37054. She states she is 82 years of age and very feeble, and can't see very well, but she wants to take the *Signs* as long as she lives. She has been a subscriber for a good number of years. It goes to prove that where the Lord begins a good work in one, He will continue it until the day of Jesus Christ. She has been a firm believer in the doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ for many years. Also it proves that He keeps his people in the paths of righteousness according to his will and purpose.

I would like to mention a trip my wife and I made last weekend with Elder R. L. Biggs and wife, to Memphis, Tenn. He always makes this trip the second Saturday and Sunday in August when possible. It is a two days' meeting.

During the meeting we had five visiting preachers: Elder David Turner, Bastrop, La.; Elder R. L. Biggs, Nashville, Tenn.; Elder Paul Poyner, Murray, Ky.; Elder Eulie McCool, Steens, Miss.; and Elder Albert Brock, Fayette, Ala. The home preachers were Elder Hubert Prince, Memphis; Elder Swayne Young, Memphis; and Brother Richard Campbell, Memphis.

All had wonderful liberty while preaching, and everyone seemed to enjoy it. It was a heavenly place for all who believe the doctrine of Jesus Christ. All seemed to be fed on the food that comes down from heaven. These, and all other blessings, are evidences of one being called out of nature's darkness into His marvelous light.

Yours in hope,
Harvey Vick

EXPERIENCE

Mayodan, N. C.

Dear Brother and Sister Wray:

I have wanted to write you for some time but it seems when I attempt to write all words fail me.

I was disappointed over missing the Union Meeting. I had looked forward to being there so much. I was sick all last week but I managed to get dinner ready, all but packing. I prayed as best I could that the good Lord would see fit to let me be with you, but to my sorrow I just couldn't make it. I am sure there was a purpose in it, for the Lord doesn't make any errors. I am better today, thanks to the good Lord, and if He wills it, I hope to be with you all at Pleasantville the next meeting day.

I have always loved the Primitive Baptist people. Before I was blessed to come into the church I had not known love and happiness such as this. There are not words to express the joy I have had, yet I have days that I am so weighted down and burdened that I wonder if I have a place with you good people; and if not, I try to pray to God to show me the way and give me

strength and keep me and to have faith to go on.

I was so happy when I went down into the water the day I was baptized. They were the sweetest moments of my life. I thought to myself, dear Lord, if I can always be this happy, how wonderful it would be: everything was so beautiful to behold. I felt like a little child. I was so overjoyed I was almost bursting with the greatest love and delight anyone can witness. I wanted so much to talk the day I joined the church, but all I could do was cry, I was so happy; and O, the wonderful joy and love I felt — just could not say one word.

I don't know if any thing I ever felt in my heart was worthy of mentioning or not, but I wanted to share it with the dear brothers and sisters at Pleasantville. My first experience, if it can be called such, was when I was fourteen years old. I had always had poor health — it seemed there was always something wrong with me. I had a nervous condition at that time. My mother was cooking dinner and I was in the kitchen to be with her, and felt awful. While mama went for water, I tried to pray, and all I could say was, "Lord have mercy on me a sinner." I heard something, or it seemed so, and I opened my eyes and saw a beautiful snow white dove come fluttering in the door and across the kitchen to where the stove was. I raised up to see where it was, and it fluttered down behind the stove, and Jesus was standing in the corner. The dove lit on his shoulder. Jesus was in a snow white robe, his hair was golden, as was his beard; and a golden crown studded with stars was upon his head. It was the most beautiful sight to behold.

My mother came in, but it had disappeared and I was crying. She asked what happened, and I said, I don't know, but I saw Jesus. She said she was glad, and wished she could have seen him too. I began to get better after that, and I studied about it much, and would think how happy I would be if I belonged to the church, but it seemed I couldn't go.

After I was married my health was not any better. I did a lot of hard work. We raised three children. My husband was always good and kind, and worked so hard — I helped all I could. When our last baby was 14 months old, I entered the hospital for surgery. It was serious and I was afraid to be operated on. The night before I felt I had to pray to God for help or I would surely die. Again all I could say was, Lord have mercy on me a sinner. I went to sleep that night still in fear, but awoke before day and felt that a weight had lifted from my chest. I told the doctor when he came in, I might die on the table but I wasn't afraid; I just hated to leave my family, but the Lord was with me. I was real sick for a long time, having a nervous breakdown and blank for about six months. But the good Lord was with me and I was blest to be back with my family again and do my work. This was in 1922; then in 1933 I had to have a kidney removed. I felt that I could not go through with it, but the doctor said it was the only chance and I might not come through it . . . I believe if I ever prayed it was that night, and if my prayers were ever answered, it was then. I awoke from sleep happy and light as a feather, and wasn't afraid. I did a lot of suffering but the Lord saw me through it all . . . Soon afterwards I had an attack of kidney colic, and my husband had to go for the doctor. There was no one to stay with me and I didn't want him to go. But he said he would hurry, and that I would be all right. I had to pray to God to help me, if it could be his will; and this was another time he heard my prayer. I was so sick it seemed I could not bear the awful pain, for I had never suffered such agony. I prayed for God's mercy on a sinner such as I, if it were his will, if not, to give me faith to bear my suffering with grace in an humble way. I was facing the east, looking out of the window, and there rolled up the blackest cloud I had ever seen. The cloud seemed to burst in the center, and a most beautiful fleecy cloud rolled out of the center, and in the center of the snowy white cloud Jesus appeared. He was so beautiful; his robe was snow

white, as were his hair and beard, he had the kindest countenance, and I felt that I wanted to touch him. I was afraid to move for fear I would loose sight of him. I was so happy and could not thank him enough for all he had done for me. My pain was all gone, and when my husband came back with my medicine I told him I did not need it, that I was all right.

Well Brother and Sister Wray, I hope you can read this if it is worth the time; but I feel unburdoned since writing it. Please remember me in your prayers. I love you both and the Lord willing I hope to be with you the first Saturday and Sunday. Sister Lillie told me what a wonderful meeting you had last Sunday, and I know I missed a lot. It seems I miss a lot of things I hope for the most. I pray that God will strengthen my faith and give me grace to live up to what I have professed. May the good Lord be with us and keep us until we meet again.

Your sister in hope,
Kate Griffin

CIRCULAR LETTER
1969

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church of Shokan, New York, being held at the Old School Baptist Meeting House at Halcottsville, Delaware County, New York, September 10 and 11, 1969, sends love, fellowship and greetings to the several churches with which we correspond.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

We thank God that it has been His good pleasure for us to meet together again at this association. It is a time when the brethren gather with spiritual joy. They meet as one, for they have a mutual foundation on which to base their hope. Hope is very precious to the elect of God, for without it we would be of all men most miserable. (I Cor. 15:19)

God in his good pleasure elected himself a people before the beginning of time. It was his good pleasure to create the world and set up a time state for his elect people to sojourn in. God knew the weakness of this people. He knew they would be beguiled by Satan, and wallow in the miry clay of sin.

It was because of such that, "Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste." (Isaiah 28:16) This elect seed shall not make haste about their salvation, for it has already been taken care of. God laid out the way of salvation, and no other way will be acceptable with God.

You can't do business with the Devil. It will not be approved of by God. In this age, when our nation's leaders are trying to make peace treaties with the enemies of truth and freedom, God will let man go until man finds how weak he is, then God will be made manifest to his glory and honor. Man will find that he cannot save himself by his own works. "For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it and the covering narrower than he can wrap himself in it." (Isaiah 28:20) God will not give his honor to another. God asked Job in the 38th chapter, 4th verse, "Where wast thou when I laid the foundation of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding." God was using Job to make manifest his glory and power.

The same with Moses. Moses by all rights, according to man, should have been killed at birth. God had appointed him as a tool in God's hand for the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt after four hundred years. God has set up these appointments in time and each one falls into its proper place at the appointed time. God put fear in the midwives when Moses was born. He also put love in the heart of Pharaoh's daughter so that she took the baby Moses and reared him as her own child. God also put it in her mind to have Moses' own mother for his nurse. Noth-

ing was by chance — it was all appointed of God. While all this was taking place, Moses knew nothing of it. So with the elect child of God. The appointment for his natural birth and spiritual birth have all been made. The child of God is still living in his carnal self, as was Moses when he went to dwell in the land of Midan, until the appointed time, when some incident, as with Moses and the burning bush, then the Lord speaks, and we can find no defense, no way out for ourselves. All our own works and selfrighteousness melt away and our filthy rags are exposed. We find we have no foundation by our own works. God has provided the foundation, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (I Cor. 3:11)

God has provided all the salvation the elect will ever need in His son Jesus. Jesus paid the price of our redemption with his life on the cross. He paid it for those of the elect which had already lived, having kept the faith. "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." (Galatians 3:6, 7) And to those which came afterward in Galatians chapter 3, verses 27 thru 29, we read, "For as many of you as have been baptized unto Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Abraham sent his servant to seek a wife for Isaac. When he met with Rebekah's kin folk he said, "I am Abraham's servant. And the Lord hath blessed my master greatly; and he is become great: and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and menservants, and maidservants, and camels, and asses. And Sarah my master's wife bare a son to my master when she was old: and unto him hath he given all that he hath." (Genesis 24:34-36) Therefore the elect of God have this immense inheritance laid up for them, and there was not one thing that they had to do to get it. If they had done any work for it it would not have been an inheritance. It would have been wages. When man works, all he can work is sin. The Bible says that the wages of sin is death.

The elect have the man Christ to base their faith on. "And a man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. (Isaiah 32:2, 3) Also in 2nd Timothy 2:19 the elect are assured that: "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his."

W. W. Bellinger

CORRESPONDING LETTER
(Written by Elder Lambert)

The Sulphur Fork Primitive Baptist Association during its 124th Annual Session with Fellowship Church sendeth greetings to the associations and churches with whom we correspond: —

Your presence, love, fellowship, and communion during this meeting have lifted our hearts, bound us closer together, and caused us to rejoice in God's abounding mercy and grace. Your ministers are being graced to preach the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ to the comfort of poor trembling sinners; to the edification of the saints; and, to the praise of the glorious name of Jesus Christ. Your correspondence is greatly appreciated. We pray that it be continued without being marred. We thank God for the PEACE which is ours to enjoy because of His loving-kindness to us. We trust that we are experiencing God's LOVE to such great degree that hatred, strife, confusion, and vain-glory is being driven from all

our hearts.

Brethren: receive this as our epistle of love to you. We yearn for your visits, love, and prayers. May God grace us to continue stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. (See Acts 2:42.)

May we meet again in peace at our next session which convenes with Prospect Church on Friday before the 1st Sunday in October, 1970, is our prayer for Christ's sake. Until then, farewell in the Lord.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Moderator
Brother G. C. Fowler, Acting Clerk

LORD'S PEOPLE ARE COMFORTED

225 Emerson Street
Winona, Miss. 38967

Dear Elder Spangler:

Enclosed is my little remittance for the good paper the *Signs of the Times.* May the Lord be praised for his wonderful work to the children of men: it is through this medium that the Lord's people far and near are comforted, built up and established in the doctrine of God our Saviour.

God speed to you Editors, may you continue to be blessed in the good work, for Jesus' sake. When at a throne of grace remember me and mine. God bless his people everywhere, is the prayer of an unprofitable servant.

Elder Louis Stewart

"THESE AGREE IN ONE"

R. F. D. 3, Box 269
Martinsville, Va. 24112

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I have had a mind to write some for the past few years, and more so of late.

In 1 John 5:7, 8, we read "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water and the blood; and these three agree in one." Now we believe that the Father is from everlasting to everlasting, without beginning or ending; that he spoke the world into existence, and upholds all things by the word of his power; that he formed the earth and the heavens; that he speaks and it is done, commands and it stands; and whatsoever his soul desires even that he doeth.

We believe that God made the world in six days, and on the seventh day he rested from all his labor. He saw that what he had made was good. "And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air; and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." (Genesis 1:26) We believe that the "us" under consideration was the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost. In our text we understand that the Word is Jesus, because he was ever with the Father. "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am." (John 8:58) And, "I and my Father are one." (John 10:30) We believe the three are one and cannot be separated. I love the firmness of the last line of the 7th verse: "And these three are one."

I believe this is the same God, the same Father, and Word, and Holy Ghost that spoke to Abraham, and said get thee out of thy country, and from kindred, and I will make of thee a great nation; and to Moses at the bush; and the one that blessed Jacob and Daniel, etc. This God has the preeminence over all things.

I heard a man say a few days ago that the Lord was trying to get people to do things. My dear reader, I do not believe the Lord has ever *tried* to do anything. Also I heard a man say that Paul would not have had to preach had he not wanted to; but I do not believe he had a choice, that he went not against his will, but willingly.

Now as to the three that bear witness in the earth. First, we have the Spirit as a witness within. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in truth." (John 4:24) "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." (Galatians 4:6) "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." (Romans 8:9) "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." (1 Cor. 12:4) "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit." (1 Cor. 12:13)

There is the good Spirit, and an evil spirit; and the only way we can discern them is by the Spirit of the Lord. If there had not been an evil spirit, we would not have been taught this: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." (1 John 4:1) The following verses tell us how to discern the spirits, and that the spirit of antichrist is already in the world. Antichrist means against Christ or a disbeliever in Christ. Do we not see much of this? We are told in the Bible that it will wax worse and worse. Is it not the spirit of antichrist that would have us to leave our Bibles and follow the customs and traditions of men? The Spirit of the Lord does not lead that way.

To me it is very clear that if we serve the Lord, or if we walk in His ways, we must be led of the Spirit of the Lord; and that they who are led of the Spirit of the Lord, have the witness within. This witness is Christ formed in us the hope of glory, and he said that he would not leave himself without a witness. Those who are led of the Spirit of the Lord will have many sorrows and trials, afflictions, heartaches and pains, and will feel alone, yet not alone because the Lord promised, "I will never leave thee." What a wonderful promise! Those that he said he would never leave, are the ones that have the witness within; and one cannot claim this promise unless he does have the witness within.

We confess that we are unworthy and unfit to receive the least of his mercies, but we still cry unto Him because there is no one else to turn to. The spirit within us gets hungry for the things of God: it looks to Him as for hidden treasure.

The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God — it is emnity against God. O how we desire to get away from this carnal mind and look with an eye single to Him who is pure and holy, just and true in all his works and ways. Were it not for the Spirit within us we would not desire these things, for the carnal mind does not feed on the Spirit of God: it feeds on the flesh and the things of this world; but Christ speaking to his children, said, "Ye are not of this world."

Now we believe that the water is very essential. We see the importance of it in the Scriptures; we see the importance of it in our lives. One that has tasted of this water cannot live without it. Some may say that to have this water, is to be baptized in natural water. We have already said that the natural man cannot receive the things of God — he may have been baptized, he may have been sprinkled, he may have been dipped; but all to no avail if he has not been made to drink of the water of life. We are taught in John 4:11 that the water the Lord gives is a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

I feel that those that have drunk of the water of life will have a desire to be baptized: not to obtain everlasting life, but *because they have life.* Baptism is not to put away sin, but is the answer of a good conscience toward God. We find the prophet in writing about this living water, saying, "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go

out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and winter it shall be." (Zech. 14:8) And Jesus saying unto her, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." (John 4:10) "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." (Rev. 22:1) "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." (John 7:38)

I read in the paper a few days ago that three people were stranded in a California desert, and died from heat and lack of water. It was said they went the wrong way because water was within a half-mile of them. If one were starving for water, and water was within arm's reach of them and they knew it not or could not reach it, it would not do them any good, would it?

People tell me they know the Lord, but they deny it when they begin to talk, because they talk about a Lord you have to reach; but if I am not deceived, He reached down for me: He came all the way, and I did not have to meet him half way. Some may ask, What did He do? He poured in the oil and the wine. He gave me to drink. He gave me living water that I should live. "Ye shall live because I live."

I want to dwell just a little on the Blood which is in the text. We think of our Lord as He shed his life's blood that we might live. And we think of the children of Israel, how they were delivered from the great bondage they were in. The blood must be upon the door posts for the death angel to pass over them. Had it not been for blood it would have been death; and today it would be death without the blood of Christ. "Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." (Romans 5:9) "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Hebrews 9:14)

So we see that without the blood of Christ we would not have life, or be saved. Inasmuch as the Father and the Word, and the Holy Ghost bear record in heaven, the Spirit and the Water and the Blood bear witness in earth: and these three agree in one, if we see one of these we must see the other, because they cannot be separated — they are not single handed, they agree; we do not have one and not have the other. We cannot separate God and Christ and the Holy Ghost, because they are one.

I believe the body of Christ is one, and we are members of his body, and of his flesh, and of his bones. So then the church is one in Christ, — many members but one body: none little, none big, but one body in the Lord. We believe the church is made up of members who have this witness within. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." They believe the record that God gave of his Son; and it is the work of the Father that they believe on him whom he sent. I believe that where you find this record, and this witness, you will find the Church of God; and if we do not see this then it is not the Church of God, which is the pillow and ground of the truth.

This is an endless subject, and I have only hinted at it. May the Lord bless the reader to read with the same mind I hope I have had to write it.

Your brother in bonds,
(Elder) Leonard J. Brammer

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association in her seventy-ninth annual session to her correspondents.

Dear beloved in the Lord:

Through the mercy of our God we

are blessed to meet again. We realize that this blessing is not because of our righteousness or merit before him, but alone of his mercy and goodness to us, for we are kept by the power of God through faith, ready to be revealed in the last time.

Our Association sends greetings and our expressions of love to those in correspondence with us and to all the saints in Christ Jesus scattered throughout our land.

Dear Brethren, we are persuaded that Zion is on the eve of experiencing severe trials and persecutions. She seems to be in a state of "lukewarmness" when Godly love is not as manifest as in by gone days. May God revive us again; may he strengthen our faith, renew our hope; and enable us by his grace to withstand the fiery darts of satan and the troublous period that confronts Zion at this time. May he forbid us, and keep us from compromising with the world. May God bless us to contend earnestly for the faith of God's elect.

We hope and pray that we have been made thankful for this Association and that the Good Lord will gather us back together next year. Until then, farewell in the name of the Lord.

Written by Eugene Patterson.

Elder W. W. Hudson, Jr., Moderator
Brother Eugene Patterson, Clerk

DOES NOT WANT TO MISS A COPY

Rt. 3, 14778 Springdale Ave.
Middlefield, Ohio 44062

My Dear Brethren:

Again I want to say, many thanks to all you editors and writers to God's humble poor, who are saved by grace; or there is no hope. We thank and praise God for such love for poor sinners, that He sent his only begotten Son to suffer, bleed and die for us. When we had no hope, He put a hope in our breast — a hope anchored both safe and secure in Jesus Christ our Elder Brother and Redeemer.

My hope grows stronger as I get nearer to the crossing. Yes, I hope I am one of the *little ones* that God said to Moses, Your little ones shall be carried over Jordan into the Promised Land. We thank God that we are carried across, for we know we could not make it on our own.

O how the dear writers comfort and feed our souls! Elder Lambert's article in the October issue made us to rejoice in God our Saviour. The language of love touches our hungry souls and makes us rejoice. Yes, Brother Lambert, we love to see the gladness in the tear-dimmed eyes, yet glowing with God's redeeming love, and feel the warm handclasp and embraces of the dear brethren and sisters in the Lord.

Then that wonderful letter from Duncan W. McColl of Canada to a cousin, John Allen McColl: I pray, if John has been quickened by the Spirit of God, that he will take that advice, and read and study the Bible, for it lightens the pathway and is a lamp unto our feet; and causes us to rejoice in God our Saviour.

I am made to believe the prophet Amos 8:11, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even unto the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it." Yes we hear them preaching salvation by works; they teach for doctrine the commandments of men. Oh, how it fills my soul to hear the gospel preached by one who has tasted of the Lord, and realize that he alone is good. Write on, preach on, you servants of the most high God. He is my refuge, under the shadow of his wings I shall abide. By his righteous judgment He shall justify many; Yes, even as many as the Lord

thy God shall call. He has made our calling and election sure. Our God is not dead, if so be that we have passed from death unto life.

Pray for me for I need your prayers. May God's blessings be yours to enjoy.

We do not want to miss one copy of the good book, the *Signs of the Times.* It lifts us up and makes us rejoice in the Saviour's love. Your spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of the Living God. Let God be praised.

Here is $10.00 as my subscription is out. Also send the *Signs* to my son and daughter as shown. The balance is for the Indigent Fund.

Saved by grace if saved at all,
Claude and Mary Thomas

REPORT OF SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

218 Shad Point Road
Salisbury, Md. 21801

Dear Editors:

The Salisbury Association, like all things in this time world, was a time of sadness and joy. We were made sad with the news that Elder Spangler and Elder Wood were both unable to attend, as they have been coming since before I became a member of this body in 1945, and also that Elder Cecil Turner could not come this way as planned on his return from Canada due to the illness of Frank Simpkins; and many more we had hoped to see that did not arrive. Too we missed the dear Mother in Israel who had done so much to help get the Church house ready for this meeting and had been faithful to attend more than sixty years; and the other Sisters God has removed from our midst since our last meeting; but how we did rejoice when we heard His name praised in the beautiful singing and preaching of the dear Elders who were with us. Some of the Elders and brethren had never attended the Salisbury Association before, but we feel so thankful their feet were directed this way and hope they felt the love that overflowed our hearts so they will want to return again.

The meeting was opened with a hymn then prayer by Elder James Hollandsworth, and Elder John Lee Smith spoke from the 8th chapter of Romans. After a bountiful lunch of natural food we had some delightful singing. Followed by Elder J. T. Prescott using as a subject the 11th chapter of Romans, verse thirty-two. Elder Hollandsworth used the 3rd chapter of Galatians; then some remarks by our Moderator, Elder Arthur Warren.

Thursday morning Elder I. S. Conner spoke from 2nd chapter of Matthew, verse one, followed by Elder John Lee Smith, using first Corinthians, chapter one. After another good lunch Elder Griffin spoke from the 32nd Psalm; followed by Elder Warren.

Our business sessions were short and all in harmony.

We heard it said once at the Virginia Corresponding Meeting that the North and South met and all loved one another. I feel that was the way it was this year at the Salisbury Association. We were so very thankful to have brethren from Louisiana, North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland, and Delaware. We do pray if it is God's will you will all again meet with us at Snow Hill, Md. next year where we hope to again be lifted above the troubles and trials of this sinful world in praise to His Holy Name, and have, as we feel we did this year, a foretaste for a little while of Heaven.

Thursday night after the Association was officially over Elders Griffin, Hollandsworth, and Prescott with about twenty-five of the brethren and friends met in the home of Brother and Sister Elmer Hastings where, after some lovely singing, Elder Griffin spoke in prayer and Elders Hollandsworth and Prescott each preached so very comfortingly;

followed by a few remarks from Elder Griffin. It seemed just the right finish for the Association.

I am enclosing a check for ten dollars ($10.00) to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times* and to use as needed.

May God continue to bless us with meetings like this that we can get together and talk of His Mercy and Goodness as long as we stay in this world.

Yours in hope,
Ethel Holloway

CELEBRATING FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

In honor of the fiftieth wedding anniversary of Elder and Mrs. D. V. Spangler, their children extend an invitation to the brethren and friends to join with them in celebrating the occasion between the hours of two and four o'clock Sunday, December the twenty-eighth, 1969, at their home on Beechwood Lane, Route one, Danville, Virginia.

PLEASE NOTE: Though we have received an increase in price of 12% from our printers beginning November 1st, we do not expect to increase our subscription price because of it. We will maintain the price as long as possible at the present level. — EDITORS

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To October 1, 1969)

Mrs. Fannie Mae Harper, N. C.	$ 1.00
Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.	1.00
Mrs. Walter H. Lyndon, N. C.	2.00
A. S. Hall, Va.	1.00
D. O. Chandler, Jr., N. C.	3.00
Gordon H. McGee, Ga.	1.00
Mrs. C. T. Braswell, Tenn.	5.00
Mrs. Maurice Sherwood, Ore.	3.00
Bena Mosley, Ala.	1.00
C. D. Turner, N. C.	3.00
Mrs. B. M. Duncan, Tex.	8.00
In memory of Mrs. Stella Parsons, Md.	50.00

Danville, Virginia December, 1969

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EDITORIAL

END OF VOLUME 137

As you read this December, 1969, issue you are reading the last number of the one hundred thirty-seventh volume of the *Signs of the Times;* which is a long period of time.

The principles on which the *Signs of the Times* was founded have been reiterated many times during the past 137 years, both by re-statement as first listed, and by their being the substance of every scriptural doctrine which has been maintained during the years.

We again state these principles upon which we stand by re-publishing Elder Gilbert Beebe's statement in the January 1, 1859, issue, and trust that we,

and others after us, shall be enabled to stand fast therein without wavering. We believe these principles state the fundamentals on which all truth is founded, and they state our own understanding of the teaching of the Scriptures which we desire to see maintained. We would rather see the *Signs of the Times* cease to exist than to deviate from the truth.

J. D. W.

The following is copied from the January 1, 1859, issue of the *Signs*:

"The same leading sentiments which we published, and to which we pledged our paper twenty-six years ago, are still nailed to our mast-head. We have found no occasion to either change or alter them. They are as follows:

The *Signs of the Times* — Devoted to the Old School Baptist cause — maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfections of the Great Jehovah, — the revelation which he has made of himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, that these Three are One.—1 John v. 8.
2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.
3. Eternal and Unconditioned Election.
4. The Total Depravity and Just Condemnation of Fallen Man.
5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.
6. The Sovereign, Irresistable, and, in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Ghost in Quickening and Regenerating the sons of God.
7. The Final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God by Grace.
8. The Resurrection of the Dead, and Eternal Judgment.
9. The Church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers — that to her is given able Ministers of the New Testament — that the Scriptures are the only infallible Rule of Faith and Practice to the Saints of God.
10. The *Signs of the Times* will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath School Unions, &c., &c., waging war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of Institutions.

With this plain statement of our sentiments, we issued our first proposals for this paper in the fall of 1831; and if at any time or under any circumstances, we have swerved from these leading sentiments, we are not conscious of it. Certainly it has never been our intention to do so. We then believed that the first and sixth articles fully involved the doctrine of the Eternal Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ, and implied his Mediatorial identity as the Head over all things to his Church, and the Eternal, vital union of Christ and his seed, which are a "Chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, and a Peculiar People. A Seed that shall serve him, and be counted to him for a Generation, and a people which he has carried and borne all the days of old."

Such are still our views; and to their defense we pledge such ability as the Lord may graciously bestow on us."

EDITORIAL

"For many are called, but few are chosen." (Matthew 22:14)

It has been requested by several brethren that we write upon the above Scripture, and in doing so we expect to refer to the parable as a whole.

It is our mind that this fourteenth verse belongs to the parable that Jesus had just spoken. Jesus was in the temple surrounded by a multitude including the chief priests, scribes and Pharisees. These were bitterly opposed to him and his teachings. They had seen him ride as King into Jerusalem, and heard the multitude cry, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." He had cast out money-changers, healed the sick and blind, cursed the barren fig tree, and confounded the scribes and Pharisees with his parables. They knew he spake of them, and would have laid hands on him but they feared the multitude because they took him for a prophet. Now we would have our readers bear in mind that the parable of which our text is a part, was referring to them and their day, and while we have little doubt but that it can be applied to our day, yet we shall dwell upon it as it relates to the people in question.

The brethren who have asked us to write upon this subject, like many others of God's dear saints, are exercised as to their calling, whether it is an effectual call or not. In this they do well, for Peter has enjoined on the elect to give diligence to make their calling and election sure. As a denomination we believe in an effectual call, which is a call out of

darkness into God's most marvelous light. We believe that God has a people, chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began, and called with an holy calling, "not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," and that it is God's pleasure that not one of his chosen shall ever perish.

Some have thought that the "many called" refer to the elect of God and the "few chosen" those who are chosen into the visible church of God, professing his name before men and walking in the ordinances of his house, or chosen to proclaim his truth and work in his vinyard. It is our mind, as stated before, that the text applies to those immediately in the hearing of our Lord as he spoke the parable in the temple. To the Jews under the legal dispensation God had often called. He called them by priest and prophet, but for the most part they regarded not their call. "They mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets." But few when they went to the sacrifice were given to see beyond the type of the thing signified. Just as there were many who fell in the wilderness through unbelief, so, many who were bidden by Moses (the law) to the types and shadows of the old dispensation would not come, for they were a wicked and rebellious people, and God sware that they should not enter into his rest.

In the parable before us the king sent out his servants; Abel was one of his servants, as was also Enoch, the seventh from Adam; Noah also was a preacher of righteousness, so also was just Lot, but they were not regarded; and after God had chosen the tribes of Israel and had led them out of Egypt, feeding them with angel's food and giving them to drink water from the rock, yet there were only two entered into the promised land, and the rest fell in the wilderness. Their children were little better, for it often seemed evil unto them to serve the Lord. He raised up judges for them, but they continually violated the commands of God. Again he sent prophets, "rising up early, and sending them." These declared that the king had prepared his dinner, his oxen and fatlings were killed and all things ready, "Come," they said, "unto the marriage." There could be no clearer testimony than that which the prophets spake concerning Jesus, for they spoke of him. "But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: and the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them."

The scribes and Pharisees made much show of religion, just as the fig tree had many leaves, but there was no fruit. He cursed the tree which represented national Israel, they bore no fruit, and Jesus told them in chapter twenty-one, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Just as their fathers had slain the prophets, so they followed in their pernicious ways; and on cursing them Jesus said, "Behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation."

When the king heard of their slaying his servants, that is, when their guilt was fully manifested, their cup of bitterness full, he was wroth, and sent his armies, which were the wicked, who are God's sword. The Roman armies came and destroyed those murderers and burnt up their city. "Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage." In another parable they were told to compel them to come in, and we believe the power of the king accompanied his servants so that they were able

to gather together all, as many as they found, both bad and good: bad representing harlots, publicans and sinners, and good, those of the Jews who could say, "Touching the law, blameless, and the wedding was furnished with guests. And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: and he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? and he was speechless."

From another parable we learn that those gathered were the poor, the maimed, the halt and the blind, and these were compelled to come in. "Where the word of a king is, there is power." Under the legal dispensation it was do and live, but under the gospel it is believe and be saved, and they believed according to the working of that mighty power that wrought in Christ when it raised him from the dead. Thus the power of the King, our Lord Jesus Christ, said, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles . . . but rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," and when these lost sheep came it was in humility, desiring mercy, and being humbled through sin abounding, they were made acceptable only through the Lamb of God, and the merits of his righteousness. Then the language of Isaiah was theirs: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with garments of salvation he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom deckeeth himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels." Wherever such characters are the Lord is there in the midst; in other words, the King comes in to see the guests. Cornelius could rightly say to Peter, "Now therefore are we all here present before God," and when Peter or any true servant of God speaks in God's name, they hear, not as the word of man, but God.

"He hears our praises and complaints,
And while his awful voice
Divides the sinners from the saints,
We tremble and rejoice."

Let us return to our subject. Many of the Jews were indifferent to the call of Moses and the prophets, for they were not all Israel that were of Israel, for it is written, "God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear." There was "a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing them to err." This bridle was pride, and we read, "Pride goeth before destruction." Now while the many that were called would not hear, there were a few who did hear. There was Simeon, to whom it was revealed that he should not see death until he had seen the Lord's Christ. There was also Anna the prophetess, and here and there a few that clave to him with purpose of heart. Yes, these chosen few were the "we" that Peter speaks of when he says, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." They also were those addressed when Jesus said, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." They also were the remnant of whom Paul tells us when speaking of his believing brethren: "Even so at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace."

Now when the murderers were destroyed, and their city burnt, and the Levitical priesthood, with all that pertained thereto, dead and buried, there were those who still clung to the law. It was such with their legalism that bewitched the Galatians of whom Paul wrote, "I would they were even cut off which trouble you." Whenever such an one is asked to give a reason of his hope, he is speechless. The King commanded, Cast him out: that is, cast him where he belongs, into outer darkness, the darkness of Sinai; being under the law and clinging to it he must of necessity be under its curse, and there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. They that would cling to the law are still married to Moses and have no need of Christ's righteousness; for they, going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of Christ.

Thus we have in our feeble way tried to show who were the many called, and who were the few chosen, and that our text applied to the Jews and not to the Gentiles, for it was to the Jew that Moses and the prophets were sent. The Gentiles walked in darkness until Jesus came, and his call to them enlightens them and proves their election sure. The testimony of that blessed few has been left on record that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Sometimes it is the lot of saints today to mourn that there are few going to Zion with their faces thitherward; yet while there was a remnant of the Jews according to election, yet of the Gentiles there is a number that no man can number, and with us, each one that is brought from the highways and hedges enters the kingdom of heaven, sits down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect. Therefore, though there are but a few here and a few there, yet when the King comes in to see the guests we are lifted up at the sight, and realize him to be the Lord of hosts.

(The above was an editorial by Elder Ruston in February, 1925.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

SALVATION BY GRACE

The wise builder looks well to his foundation to see that it is firmly laid and sufficiently strong to support the complete building before he commences to erect the superstructure; then if he builds wisely, squares and plumbs all by the foundation and corner-stone, the entire structure will harmonize; otherwise he will find contradictions and misfits to constantly plague him in his effort to build. There are certain fundamentals underlying this most glorious of all God's works, which, regardless of where or from what angle we approach it, we must respect and hold those truths inviolate. Salvation is of the Lord. He is the author and finisher of it. Every step in the achievement of it from its inception to the culmination is embraced and settled in one covenant, every stipulation of which is ordered, sworn to, sealed and made immutably certain of fulfillment. (2 Sam. 23:5; Heb. 6: 17-20) Both in the purpose to save and in the execution of that purpose, God is an independent sovereign; without a counsellor, unprovoked, uninduced, he hath done whatsoever he pleased in heaven, in earth, in seas and in all deep places. (Psalms 135:6; Rom. 34:36) Salvation from the first great purpose to the last grand end is wholly of grace, independent of and entirely separate from worthiness or merit in or of the ones who receive it. (Eph. 2:8-10; Rom. 11:5, 6) In the very nature of grace it it could not but be so. It cannot divide honors with any agent. Either is it wholly of grace or it is not by grace at all.

The whole scope of this marvelous work subsists in two great gifts: the gift by the Father of the elect to Christ to be his bride, his church; and the gift of Christ to the church to be her husband and head in an indissoluble union. In the one are title, honor, position, wealth and glory to be conferred; in the other enmity, weakness, poverty, disgrace, shame, rebellion, sin and death to be overcome and put away before this union can be honorably consummated, and the glory of God exalted. The achieving of this noble purpose is called salvation, and is entrusted to Christ, who voluntarily assumed the sacred responsibility, accepting all the names and titles belonging, as a certain seal of the imposing obligations. Not obligations to the chosen bride, to be, but to the Father with whom he is bound in covenant. This covenant is called. "The eternal purpose which he (God) purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." — (Eph. 3: 11)

The subjects of this salvation are sinners of the family of Adam, whose offspring they are, and in whom they became involved in sin and death by the

one offense of Adam, who was both their seminal and judicial head. (Rom. 5:17-19) Because the subjects of this salvation possess no qualities in themselves, neither inherent nor acquired, which are meritorious, but are wholly unworthy of and separated from the remotest right to any claim upon the Christ by whom salvation is wrought out, and the blessings in and through him, by which salvation is communicated, **this salvation is said to be by grace.** (2 Tim.1:9) Because all things that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, were created by him who is the image of the invisible God, and for him (Col. 1:10), therefore the purpose of God to save some of the fallen race of Adam, and leave others to the just consequences of their sins to perish everlastingly, did not terminate in the ultimate happiness of the former and the ultimate misery of the latter; but every purpose of God must have for its final end the glory of God. The testimony of Holy Writ unites in support of this truth. "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." — (Rom. 9:22, 23) "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." (1 Cor. 10:31) We deem these to be essential truths, and comprehend the foundation and framework of the christian's hope; and are so clearly and abundantly taught in the sacred record that there is little cause for arguing the proofs of them in the present treatise.

Election is one important branch of salvation by grace, and is the sovereign act of God. To elect is to choose, to express a perference for this rather than that. The very nature of the term requires that there be two or more objects from which some are taken and some are left, or refused. If all were taken there would be no perference given, no choice made. If the subjects of salvation are eternal children, the offspring of God as the children of Adam are the offspring of Adam; then an innate right to the heavenly patrimony inheres as an essential part of their being, and hence is in no sense of grace. Any theory which sets up a relationship between the Savior and the saved, as a ground for their eternal happiness, which is not established by grace, denies that salvation is by grace and makes a farce of the doctrine of election. "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." — (2 Thess. 11:13, 14) Here it is plainly stated that these brethren, whom the Lord loved, were chosen to this salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, and that the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ was to be obtained in this way; and not by an innate right which eternally inheres in the ones chosen. Bible election is called, "The election of grace" (Rom. 11:5); and those chosen and those refused were of necessity of the same kind and class, in like circumstances and standing in the same need; or it could not have been an election of grace. Moreover: If those appointed to obtain salvation through Jesus Christ (1 Thess. 5:9) were not equally sinners and exposed to the same degree of condemnation and punishment as those rejected shall receive, then their appointment was not the sovereign act of Jehovah, because the difference between the objects compared was sufficient grounds for bias; and the salvation following their appointment could not be by grace, because of supposed merit in those chosen or appointed. Any supposition which proceeds upon a hypothesis which recognizes a distinction that would deny the equal guilt of those who were chosen to obtain salvation and those who were passed by, and that they equally deserve to perish forever, denies that there is either equity in the law or grace in the gospel. It throws the whole economy of the salvation of sinners into

the utmost confusion, and strips the gospel of grace of all its charm and beauty.

A casual survey of the names and titles of him who came, full of grace and truth, to accomplish the salvation of sinners will afford a comprehensive view of the scope of the work which he came to do, and the thoroughness with which he had engaged to complete it; also the complete history of those he came to save is unveiled in these names and titles which he wears. In fact, they represent a complete transcript of the covenant of grace.

Redeemer: to purchase the freedom of his people from sin and death and the power of the grave. **Surety:** to liquidate the insolvent's debts. **Lamb of God:** to be a sacrifice, and take away the sin of his people. **The Lord our Righteousness:** to justify the ungodly and present them faultless before the Father's glory. **Propitiation:** to satisfy the demands of infinite justice against his people. **High Priest:** to offer his own body a sacrifice acceptable to God. **Mediator:** to stand between the offender and the offended and represent the interests of both. **Life and Light:** by which his children live and walk. **King:** who reigns in righteousness in and over his people. **Savior:** who ordained, established, executed, imparted and perfected salvation for the elect. **Good Shepherd:** who laid down his life for the sheep and delivered them from the power of darkness and the jaws of death, into the Shepherd's fold. **Captain of our Salvation:** who met by himself and subdued all our foes, made an end of sin, destroyed him that had the power of death, conquered death and the grave and put all enemies under his feet. **Resurrection:** who in holy triumph bore his children through death and the grave to immortal victory in eternal bliss. **Intercessor:** who is at the right hand of God in the Majesty on high (the court of highest authority, whose judgments are final), representing every interest of his people, and always causing us to triumph in Christ. Notice that every name and title of the Son of God, as well as every type under the legal dispensation, and every prophecy concerning him, pointing to his mission in the world strongly emphasize that his mission was to glorify his Father in the salvation of sinners.

Let us make a brief inventory of their needs. They became sinners by transgressing the holy law given by their Creator, and died under its penalty in trespasses and sin. This corrupted the whole course of nature and left them corrupt from the sole of the foot even unto the head, with no soundness in them, having no hope and without God in the world. There is none righteous, no, not one; and without holiness no man can see God. But God, who is rich in mercy and full of grace, for his great love wherewith he loved them, even when they were dead in sin, hath quickened them together in Christ. He chose those upon whom he set his love with nothing, absolutely nothing, in themselves as a cause for that love or choice; but freely, sovereignly, independently Jehovah willed to choose this and refuse that. "With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?" is a challenge that has never yet been answered. He chose those whom he would have mercy on and predestinated to adopt them as his children by Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved. (Eph. 1:5, 6)

It will be noticed that every step in the accomplishment of the salvation of the elect is to the praise of the glory of God's grace. Grace is the exalted Sovereign in the matter of salvation, who takes charge and reigns; enters the strongholds of sin, strips it of its power, disarms the strong man, takes possession of the house in which they dwell and spoils their goods, dismantles their fortifications, breaks down their bulwarks, and brings them into complete subjection. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound (notice that

much more): that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 5:20, 21) Jehovah chose his people in Christ before the foundation of the world, even before they had being, when all futurity existed only in the purpose and thoughts of God. Here the whole covenant of redemption was ordered in all (both persons and things) and sure. "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." (Isaiah 15:24)

Christ was given as the covenant to the people of God, and he was full of grace and truth. Every grace blessing was in him, and he is the truth of every type and offering under the law, and of all prophecy concerning the hope and salvation of the elect of God. The Father gave them eternal life in Christ and he brought it and gave it to them as a gift of grace. "This is the record (which is in heaven), that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." (1 John 3:11) "As thou hast given him (Christ) power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." (John 17:2) Christ is that eternal life which he gives to the heirs of promise. "This is the true God, and eternal life." (1 John 5:20) Only those who partake of Christ's flesh and blood can have this eternal life. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." (John 6:53) The first relation which the people chosen to be heirs of salvation bore to God was that of creature to their Creator in common with all mankind; and of necessity prior to their creation they had no being except it could be said they existed in the purpose and thoughts of Jehovah. They, together with all of their kind (all of the race of man), were dealt with as rational creatures under the law given them by their Creator. This was a law of justice, and consequently could grant no immunities nor show any favors. The people whom God had purposed to glorify were as certainly exposed to everlasting condemnation for the transgression of the law as were those left out of that purpose. This was definitely proven when all came under the penalty of the broken law and had the sentence of death executed against them because of the offense of one, or by the one offense in the morning of time. All died together in sin: "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." (Eph. 2:1-3) Here all distinction between those quickened and those not quickened is completely erased, so far as their standing as creatures is concerned; and Paul's questions, Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? and, Are we any better than they? must find the answer outside of the creature, and in the gift of God by grace, if a distinction is ever to exist.

Thus when the great Sovereign of all worlds made choice of certain of his creatures, whom he purposed to bring into being, to bestow his favors of grace and glory upon, he did so without either worth or merit in those chosen, or anything whatsoever to distinguish them in kind, quality, origin or degree from those whom he rejected, therefore acted as an independent Sovereign, exercising the right to do as he wills with his own. Hence we conclude that whatever cause there was for choosing this one rather than that, or for choosing any of his creatures at all to these exalted favors, was entirely outside of and apart from themselves, and to be found alone in God. "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight," is a sufficient reason for all that God does.

(The above by the late Elder J. R. Hardy of Dallas, Texas, is taken from the August, 1938, issue of the *Signs*. It is re-published by request, and is worth the close attention of our brethren.)

OBITUARIES

FLORA ANN BOOHER

Sister Flora Ann Booher was born at Three Springs, Pa. July 19, 1892, and died August 3, 1969. She was a daughter of Samuel and Blanch (Waite) Cohenour. She was united in marriage to Harry S. Booher on March 23, 1909, who preceded her in death July 12, 1944. To this union were born twelve children, eight of whom survive: Mrs. Violet White, Reading, Pa.; Mrs. Dorothy Henry, Mt. Union, Pa.; Mrs. Virginia Leonard, Manassas, Va.; Harry D. Booher, Whitensburg, Mass.; Donald S. Booher, Shirleysburg, Pa.; Max L. Booher, Mt. Union, Pa.; Mrs. Ida Mae Berrier, Malvern, Pa.; and Blair F. Booher, Manassas, Va. Surviving also are 36 grandchildren and 35 great grandchildren, and the following brothers and sisters: John Cohenour, Aliquippa, Pa.; Orville Cohenour, Mill Creek, Pa.; Mrs. Daisy Lender, Huntingdon, Pa.; Mrs. Ida Hamman, Mt. Union, Pa.; Mrs. Tola Cornelius, Roy Cohenour and Bernard Cohenour, of Mt. Union, Pa.

Sister Booher united with the church at Trough Creek, Cassville, Pa. about seventeen years ago, and was faithful to attend her meetings at every opportunity. She was a lovely person and had a host of friends. She was a gifted writer of poetry upon many subjects, expressing the beautiful things she saw in them.

Her funeral was conducted at Orbisonia, Pa. by the writer, and interment was in the Jordan Cemetery nearby. The large number of friends at the funeral home and cemetery, and the numerous flowers from them, bespoke the high regard in which she was held. She now sleeps awaiting the coming of her Lord who shall change her vile body and fashion it like unto His glorious body, fitting her for heaven and immortal glory.

The following was left by Sister Booher addressed to her children, and was read at her funeral service:

Dear children do not fret for me,
This life on earth is run.
Now I must enter in that door
Where you all shall come.
I've tried to lead the honest way
And trust you follow on.
This night will pass, and very soon
I'll greet you in the morn.

Mom

John D. Wood

CORA SCOTT DUNN

Sister Cora Scott Dunn, wife of William C. Dunn, was born in Orange County, North Carolina, on March 15, 1897, and departed this life May 6, 1969, at the age of 72 years, one month and 20 days. She was the daughter of Thomas and Nancy Virginia Scott. She leaves to mourn her departure, her husband and the following children: two daughters, Mrs. Ruth Payne of Route 5, Burlington, N. C. and Mrs. Agnes Byrd of Park Ave., Wilmington, N. C.; one son, William T. Dunn of Route 5, Burlington, N. C.; and one sister, Mrs. Pearl Hall of Route 4, Burlington.

Sister Dunn was received into the fellowship of the church at Harmony, and was baptized in 1918. She was a most faithful member for 51 years. She was the only surviving member at Harmony Church when her Lord and Savior called her home. She attended Gilliam's Church regularly. Her last meeting was the fourth Sunday in April.

Sister Dunn was loved by all who knew her. We feel that she is now resting with her Lord and Master. May God's blessing be upon each member of her family, and may they be able to say not my will, but God's Will be done.

Her funeral was conducted at Gilliam's Church by Elders Wallace Smith, W. C. King, and Mr. Ben Cox.

She was buried at Alamance Memorial Park to wait for the coming of her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who will call her from the grave to be with Him in the House not made with hands, where sickness, sorrow and death will never come.

RESOLVED, That a copy be given to the family, one placed on our church records and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order in conference, as requested, at Gilliam's Church, Saturday before the fourth Sunday in July, 1969.

Written by:
G. L. Saunders
Wallace Smith, Moderator
Freemon Somers, Clerk

SISTER MOLLIE O. WALSTON ROBBINS

Mollie Robbins was born September 15, 1894, and called home by our Heavenly Father October 18, 1967, at the age of 73 years. Born of godly parents, Van Buren and Rhoda L. Owens of Edgecombe County. She married Joseph Mark Walston in 1912. God blessed their union with nine children, for which they felt indeed blessed. They were received in the White Oak Primitive Baptist Church in Saratoga, N. C. by experience and baptism in the

year of 1923. Both were faithful to the Church and always willing to discuss and defend the precious truth that God revealed to them, and they lived together happy in the faith that God delivered to His Saints.

Brother Walston preceded his precious wife and seven of their darling children in death during the year 1934. Because necessity was laid upon her by her Heavenly Father, our sister and her children were made willing to press onward to care for each other. Sister Walston met and married Jim Robbins a few years later; and of this union there were no children. Mr. Robbins was called to go the way of all the earth, in death, February 18, 1965.

Sister Robbins was at this time in the midst of a lingering illness that caused her health to fail and I am sure that until her death she never had another day without pain. However, she was blessed to remain faithful to her children, her grandchildren and together with her precious daughter, Ellen W. Bottoms, whom God called into the fellowship of the church, they filled their seat at meeting time. She visited other churches of her faith whenever she could.

Truly a Mother in Israel has fallen from nature's darkness and now has been brought into the reality of the marvelous light of God. We loved her so much and truly do believe that she was happiest when she and Sister Bottoms together would sit in the congregation of her precious brethren and sing the wonderful hymns of the Church. Her eyes became a mirror of her soul to me when they would sing a favorite hymn, "Mercy, Oh Thou Son of David," and I feel that we could see the evidence of the Salvation of God shining from within her.

Sister Robbins leaves to mourn her passing, two beloved sons, J. L. Walston of Petersburg, Va. and Joseph R. Walston of Kansas City, Kansas. Five precious daughters, Mrs. Russell Jones of Richmond, Va.; Mrs. I. L. Spain of Jacksonville, N. C.; Sister Ellen Bottoms, Mrs. Lawrence Williams and Mrs. Luther Boykin of Wilson, N. C. She also leaves a host of grandchildren and great grandchildren. She was blessed with a large family in nature to love her, but also her brethren, the precious Church she loved so much, all being a part of the redeemed family of God. Although the last two years of her life she was an invalid, she always bore the mark of patience and remained faithful to the family she loved and her Church, and always blessed to remember her Saviour, giving thanks for His mercy and grace and loving kindness to her; always ready to help others and most concerned about those she loved.

We shall miss her, but we are sure that our loss is her eternal gain, and we could not wish her back in this sin cursed world, because we feel that even now she doth know the paradise of God. And soon, just in the morning to her, she will hear the voice of Jesus call her out of the tomb, into a new and perfect body, into heaven and immortal Glory, when she will be reunited with the children of the Heavenly King, and again to sing ceaseless and undivided praise to the Name of The Father, The Son, and The Blessed Holy Spirit, in a world in which death, sickness, pain and sin cannot enter. There in Heaven's Kingdom she will bask in the sunlight of God's love forever and forever.

Her funeral was conducted by her Pastor, Elder A. P. Mewbern, who loved her so much; and by Elder S. R. Boykin.

Written by two who loved her,
Sister Ellen W. Bottoms
Elder A. P. Mewbern

LOUISA B. COLLINS

The daughter of Ferdinand and Martha Ann Brumfield, she was born January 25, 1878, and died October 17, 1968, making her stay on earth more than 90 years.

Aunt Lou leaves two daughters and four sons: Carson Collins and Arline Irby of Newport News; Davis Collins of Massachusetts; Harvey Collins of Danville, Va.; Wade Collins and Eva Yeatts of Chatham, Va. (Eva Yeatts has died since the death of her mother.) Also surviving are two sisters, Mrs. Susan B. Holley of Danville, Va., and Mrs. Annie B. Compton of Gretna, Va.

Aunt Lou was married to Adolph Collins about 75 years ago, with her husband passing on in 1951. Aunt Lou joined Whitethorne Primitive Baptist Church many, many years ago and later moved her membership to the Bradley Road Primitive Baptist Church. She was a faithful member of that church until her death.

I, the writer, had the privilege of taking her to the meetings a lot and which she enjoyed very much. We loved her very much and miss her a lot at the meetings, but God loved her best and called her from this sinful world to wait for the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Her funeral was held at Barker Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder H. W. Wray and Elder Raymond Payne. Her body was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

He requested that a copy be put on our church book, one sent to the family, and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Written by her nephew,
Russell Holley

CHARLIE WILLIAM PICKERAL

God saw fit to call from our midst by death, Charlie W. Pickeral, who died August 2, 1968. He was born June 8, 1892.

Brother Pickeral was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Johnnie Pickeral. He was united in marriage March 12, 1914, to Eva Keesee Pickeral, who survives. To this union were born one daughter and five sons. Pauline Muse and Marvin Pickeral of South Carolina; Rodney Pickeral, Sylvester Pickeral, and Jessie Pickeral of Danville, Va.; Calvin Pickeral, Norfolk, Va.

Brother Pickeral joined Danville church in August, 1962. He was a humble brother and was faithful to attend his meetings when health permitted. Brother Pickeral believed in salvation by Grace.

His funeral was held at Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Home by his Pastor, Elder H. W. Wray, and was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park to await the Second Coming of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

It is RESOLVED, That a copy be put into our church book, one sent to the family, and a copy to be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
R. T. Holley, Clerk

ANNA LEE FOWLER

Sister Anna Lee Fowler was born December 12, 1887. She was the daughter of Lucian and Martha Elizabeth Martin.

Sister Fowler received a blessed hope in Christ early in life. She joined the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church October 31, 1959, and was baptized by Elder J. C. Hammond, assisted by Elder Aubrey Dolan, and was received into full fellowship of the church. Her beautiful countenance reflected her happiness within while attending services.

She was called to her eternal rest at the age of 81 years, on January 12, 1969, while at the Hillview Convalescent Home, Huntington, W. Va.

She will be sadly missed by the family and a host of friends, as well as the few remaining members at the Hopewell Church that have been blessed over the years with her faithful attendance and loving fellowship.

Our sister in Christ, leaves behind to mourn her passing, her husband, Carl R. Fowler of Nitro, W. Va.; two sons, Joseph L. of Nitro, and Freeman E. of St. Albans; one daughter, Mrs. Joseph C. Stutler of St. Albans; two sisters, Mrs. Lydia Kelley of Nitro, and Mrs. Myrtle Melton of Poca.

The funeral service was held Tuesday, January 14, 1969, in the Cook and Pauley Funeral Home at Nitro, W. Va. The service was conducted by Elder V. B. Linn. She was laid to rest in the Melton family cemetery, there to await the coming of our Lord.

Written by request of the Hopewell Church.

V. B. Linn

PEARL W. MELTON

Mrs. Pearl W. Melton was born February 14, 1882, at Martin's Branch, W. Va. She was the daughter of James Goff and Jane Wallace Goff.

Although Pearl Melton never asked for a home in the church she came as near living what I have been trying to preach for the past 20 years as any one I have known. She was firm in her convictions in the sovereignty of our God. Her heart and home was always open to the Old Baptists. Each year it was our custom in the bounds of the Hopewell Church to gather at her home for services on Saturday night of the June meeting. It was a "Bethel Spot" in the lives of many who have had the blessed privilege of knowing her; for to know her was to love her. She was encouragement to this poor boy early in the ministry. The decrees of God seemed to mean more when I could hear her express her feelings.

She answered her call at the age of 86 years, 11 months, and 4 days, while at her home, on January 18, 1969. She told the nurse just a short time before she died, that she had a time to die and that she would live just that long. She will be sadly missed by her family and a host of friends, as well as those few members at the Hopewell Church that feel that she was one of them.

Her late husband, Edward Melton, like herself never joined the church, but was a firm believer and staunch supporter of the church. He preceded her in death in 1951. She leaves to mourn her departure one daughter, Mrs. Roy F. McClanahan of Nitro, W. Va.; two sons, John Melton and Charley Melton, both of Lanham, W. Va. She is also survived by 1 grandson, 5 granddaughters, 6 great grandchildren, other relatives and a host of friends.

The funeral service was conducted on January 21, 1969 at the Gatens Funeral Home at Poca, W. Va. by Elder V. B. Linn. A large crowd gathered to pay final tribute to her. She was laid to rest in the family cemetery to await the awakening of the bodies to which her faith looked.

We believe for her to die is her great gain. May the Lord comfort the children and friends that will long for her, and may we be made submissive to his will and say, "Not my will but Thine be done."

Written by request.

V. B. Linn

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 138 DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1970 NO. 1

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS
1/70
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

THE BEASTS OF THE FOREST
(Psa. 104:20; Rev. 20:10)

In a dream, beasts of the forest
Were rushing toward me,
And there was no way of escape,
As far as I could see.

Seeing myself in great danger,
I now began to pray,
And when I resorted to prayer,
The whole herd ran away.

Now these beasts may be emblems of
Enemies in this land —
The wicked men, and the devil
Present on every hand.

According to scripture, Satan,
As a roaring lion,
Is seeking whom he may devour,
This chief foe of Zion.

He had nothing in the Saviour
That he could work upon,
But a plenty in our nature,
By experience shown.

We read that the devil was cast
Into the lake of fire,
Where the beast (in Revelation),
And the false prophet are.

They'll be tormented forever
For their iniquity,
These foes of the Lord of glory,
Who fills immensity.

In the grave and in yon heaven,
They'll never the saints molest;
"There the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary be at rest."

C. W. Vass
409 New York Avenue
Elizabeth City, N. C. 27909

E

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE
SALISBURY ASSOCIATION
(Written by Elder W. D. Griffin)

Since it is a custom of long standing, based, as we believe, on scriptural authority, to write a Circular Letter to the brotherhood, it is with much fear and trembling that I come before you.

Paul in each one of his letters greeted the brethren in the most tender salutation, calling them saints and beloved of God; and pointing out to them that their peace and grace and love came alone from Jesus Christ. And each time he ended each letter by commending them to the grace of God. Too, when he sent forth his tender farewell to the church at Ephesus, he was glad at the pleasant prospect of commending them to God. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified. (Acts 20:32)

Our welfare today is as theirs in their day. We are dependent on the Word of His grace, as they were. Our being together as a body; our deliberations as an association, can be ended with a day, or at an hour. As none of us are indispensable to the extension of the borders of Zion; as the time of our departure draws ever closer; as ties are severed by the ravages of time, it is obligatory upon me, as a servant of Jesus Christ, to write to you at this time about the sure mercies of God, to stir up your pure minds concerning His everlasting promises to you as his humble followers.

I do not feel any hesitancy in commending you to God; to tell you of His loving kindness in dealing with his

church and people; to tell you that the Word of His Grace belongs to you, to settle you, to ground you, to plant and establish you in this rich and fertile kingdom. This word made manifest in your gathering will not scatter nor divide; it will not cause licentiousness; it will not give rise to false doctrine nor principles contrary to what you have learned at the feet of Jesus. It is given of God, and is for the building up of the church of God. This final message of the long time pastor of this church is applicable to our day and our case as a people.

For many of us this will be our last association among the saints here. As we have been through trials and afflictions on every hand, and have had sufficient grace for deliverance each time, we, as the writer, and the association as a body, and each of our visitors, feel to commend one another to the care of the Covenant Keeping God, realizing that our times are in His hand; that our hopes being revived; our churches being built up; our having a lot and parcel among those that are set aside or sanctified, is dependent on this God and the Word of this Grace.

Do not be misled, dearly beloved, into thinking that this commendation will preserve you from the bonds and afflictions of this life, but be assured that this grace, and the Word of it, will preserve you in them all.

Elder Arthur Warren, Moderator
Maude T. Laws, Hon. Clerk
William S. Adkins, Clerk
William A. Davis, Sr., Asst. Clerk

PREDESTINATION AND OBEDIENCE

"Arise and go into Damascus and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do."
(Acts 22:10)

In these words of God spoken to Paul, and their fulfillment in Damascus, we have Predestination, command and obedience all blended in beautiful harmony. God had appointed what Paul was to do. Ananias was to tell Paul about it, and he was to do it. God appointed the obedience, Ananias filled his place in the purpose in delivering the exhortation, and Paul obeyed in doing the things that were appointed for him to do.

To the Ephesians Paul said, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2:10) Now notice how Predestination, exhortation and obedience harmonize in the church at Ephesus; Paul preached and wrote to them exhorting them unto love and good works. They were walking in good works and God ordained that they should do it.

I presume that no one will deny that God has a wise and gracious purpose in the obedience of His people; if not then there is but one question on this point, and that is this, is man able to defeat that purpose? I answer, No. Then if God does have any purpose in the obedience of His people then there will be all the obedience necessary to accomplish it, and God will bring about and use everything necessary to cause that obedience. Is God the cause of obedience? If so, will He not cause all the obedience He desires? If not, why? And if we desire more obedience than God desires, which desire is best, ours or God's?

When Paul, to the Philippians said, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," he also said, "For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

With these facts before us, we have every reason and encouragement to "reprove, rebuke and exhort with all long suffering and doctrine." And when we see men walking in good works we know according to God's word that He has before ordained that they should walk in them." (Eph. 2:10)

Now a few words about the way the Lord has chosen to lead His people to walk in good works. He has given to

us His word of truth, full of the wonderful story of His wisdom, purpose, love, power, goodness and mercy, and of His wonderful works towards the children of men.

In this word we also find His law of commands with the instructions and exhortations of His Apostles. God must have had a purpose in giving us all these things, and that purpose must be accomplished in them. By the mouth of His Prophet the Lord said, "As the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." (Isa. 55:10-11)

This being true, God does have a purpose in His word, and that purpose shall be accomplished. Then God calls and sends his servants to preach his word and to proclaim his law and to exhort his people unto love and good works, and it must be that He has a purpose in all these things.

By and through these things God teaches, encourages, leads and causes his children to walk in these good works which He has before ordained that they should walk in them, so God has not only ordained or purposed obedience but He has also purposed everything by which it pleases him to cause that obedience and thus to save his children from idolatry, from disobedience and from every false way.

Paul said, "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (I Cor. 1:21) According to this text it is God who does the saving or delivering of believers from the things from which they need to be delivered, and He thus saves as sovereignly and effectually as He saves the unbeliever from the power of sin and death. So of him Paul says, "Who hath delivered us from so great a death and doth deliver, in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us." (2 Cor. 1:10) *In this text Paul represents God as doing all the delivering or saving, both past, present and future.*

It seems to be hard for some to see the harmony between Predestination and obedience, but since the Bible teaches both, they must harmonize or else the Bible is wrong. *The difficulty lies in the fact that they fail to consider Predestination as a whole.*

Predestination is a complete body of facts all joined together so as to form a perfect system. The human body is a complete system, all the parts working in harmony, but if you cut it asunder you spoil it.

So *if we undertake to limit Predestination, to take some things out of it, and leave some things in, we would spoil it, break the chain of its harmony and make it a mess of confusion.*

It is impossible for any man to see any harmony or consistency in this subject without considering that God has Predestinated all things or nothing. We can not divide the governments of this world between God and satan.

What presumption in man to undertake to stake off God's dominion and to set his bounds and then turn the rest over to the destiny of blind fate, to the opposing power and government of men and devils.

Those who believe the Scripture must believe that there is an appointed time to man upon the earth. (Job 7:1) That, "there is a time to be born and a time to die." (Ecc. 3:2) "It is appointed unto men once to die." (Heb. 9:27) If God, then, has an appointed time for a man to die, *He must have appointed all the means necessary to keep him alive until that time and everything necessary to take him away at that time.* If a man is shot down helpless on the battlefield, we say that he would have died there if he had not been cared for, and so he would, but God in his Providence had purposed and provided that he should be cared for so as to recover and live all the days of his appointed time. If a man falls sick of

some malignant and fatal disease, we say he would die without the physician's skill and medicine, and that may be, but God has purpose and provided the doctor with all his skill and medicine and ordered every circumstances which led to the presence and ministration of the physician and guided every nurse's hand which administered to that sick man, and so he recovers and lives until God's appointed time for him to die.

To understand Predestination, we must consider it as a whole. I can not see how any one event can be fixed or determined so that it will certainly come to pass, and at the same time all the circumstances and influences necessary to bring it about be left to the contingency of chance.

All must be determined or else nothing is determined; all must be certain or else nothing can be certain.

W. I. Carnell

(The above article was published in the March, 1926, issue of the *Lone Pilgrim*. We re-publish it by request.)

LOVES THE *SIGNS*

St. Charles, Ky. 42453

Dear Elder Wood:

I am sorry I am late in my remittance, for I love the old paper, and now it is about all the preaching I get. Elder Biggs from Nashville is our pastor and we all love him as a man and for his sound preaching, but we are now so few in number. Yet the Lord has said that where two or three are gathered together in his name, he would be in the midst of them. It seems that many people cannot endure sound doctrine, and the older members are passing away. Yet we know it is all in the hands of the Lord, even if the churches should go down. We know that there is no power in heaven or earth which is not from above.

I lost my husband August 26, 1968. I have sold my home and am very broken up, but that is the way of all the earth. There are many things taking place that we wonder about. When a nation gets rich and prosperous they forget God. There is much so-called religion today. God made the world and all things therein, but he dwells not in temples made with hands, neither is worshipped with men's hands, but those that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

I am sending you a check for payment on the *Signs*. Do what you want with the rest.

In love and fellowship,
Mrs. W. B. McGregor

WATCH OVER ONE ANOTHER FOR GOOD

208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

Dear Editors:

May the Lord continue to bless you editors in your labors and may we be drawn together in bonds of love. May we be given to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." (Jude 3) May we be blessed to stand firmly in the truth in the spirit of love.

May the Lord keep us from seeking to please men. Notice that Paul was given the grace to withstand Peter to his face. (see Gal. 2:11) May we be given a single eye to the glory of God.

It is true the arminians may cause us some misery, but not nearly as much as our brethren fighting with one another would. The root of the matter is Satan who puts the root of bitterness within the people of God. Yet Satan cannot separate us from the love of God. Notice the sweet assurance in Romans 8:38-39: "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Paul was given the knowledge to see the troubles that would come upon the people of God. Notice these words of exhortation to the Galatians: "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another." (Gal. 5:25-26) It is an evil spirit that causes one to be envious of others.

May the Lord bless us to watch over one another for good and not for evil. If we watch over one another for evil, we will find the faults, because that is easy. We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. How wonderful it is when Brethren dwell together in unity. (see Psalms 133:1)

The love of God is what causes us to overlook the faults of our brethren. "Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins." (Proverbs 10:12)

Yours in a sweet hope,
W. W. Hudson, Jr.

INFORMATION WANTED

Amarilla, Tex. 79109

The Signs of the Times,
Danville, Va.

Kind Sirs:

I am trying to get some information about the Primitive Baptist Church in Obion, Weakley County, Tenn., the "Cain Creek Primitive Baptist Church." It is not far from Martin and Union City, Tenn.

I would appreciate the name and address of the pastor or the church clerk. It is an old church, over 100 years. My ancestors were all members and are buried in the church cemetery. I would like this information as I plan to visit there, God willing, this coming summer. The members of the family are few in numbers now, but they want to visit the old church and homestead.

I am seventy-six years of age and the last of the family that belongs to the Primitive Baptists. I have known of and read the *Signs of the Times* all of my life, and love it.

I will appreciate any information you can give me. Thank you, and God bless you.

Miss Johnnie Lee Ponder
2117 Tyler Street, Apt. 1
Amarillo, Texas 79109

(Since we do not have this information, will someone acquainted with this church, please furnish the desired information — Ed.)

A GLORIOUS ONENESS

"There is one body and one spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling: One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, through all and in you all."
(Ephesians 4:4-6)

In the above scripture the Apostle Paul sets forth the glorious truth of the oneness and unity that is taught in the Holy Scripture. There is one God and Father of all the elect family that has lived, and will yet live, in this world. He is their All in All, and the fulfillment of all their hope, faith and desire since they have been made to behold His glory by the Spirit of Life, which has been placed within their very being.

The *One Body* is the whole household of faith from righteous Abel to the last heir of promise that will be born into this time world. The body is one, but there are many members; and God has placed each member in the body, and it fulfills that which is pleasing unto Him; and to the edifying of the body in Christ. As a natural body has many members, and each is needful to the wellbeing of the whole body, so is each of the members needful to the wellbeing of this whole body. The members are placed in the body so, "that there should be no schism in the body: but that the members should have the same care one for another." As a man would not choose his right hand over his left hand, or his arm over his leg, but has the same desire for the one member as the other, even so God has the same love

for all members of the one body. Each member is just as secure as any other, and each is just as necessary to have a complete body; and God will have no less.

As the members of the natural body are dependent upon the functions of the other members of the body, it is also true with this body. And Paul goes on to say, "And whether one member suffers all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored all the members rejoice with it." This is something that all God's children believe and have seen and experienced many times. They weep with a brother when he weeps and rejoice with him when he rejoices.

There is *One Hope,* and it is common among all the children of God that He is their Father. They do not feel to be worthy of being his children, but they cannot help but hope that by his grace and mercy they have been placed among those to whom all the precious promises are made, and that they are of those for whom Christ came into the world to save. They can surely see that they are sinners, and the scriptures say that He came to save sinners. They have been made to believe that there is one God, and that He has a people in every nation, kindred, tongue and people; that there was one sacrifice for the redemption of that people unto himself. Therefore they think of that people as a unit that cannot be divided from that unity of redemption. This seems to be what Paul was saying when he says, "There is one body." Their hope is that each member is just as secure as every other member: because, since God would only accept a sacrifice that was without spot or blemish, surely that which is redeemed by that perfect sacrifice will be perfect, whole and complete in every sense of the word.

There is *One Spirit,* and that spirit is the life of the one body. This spirit of life is that which is sent down from heaven and gives life to each and every member of the body. It causes each member to function and perform that which is needful for the good of the whole body. As Paul says, "From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Every member is therefore needful, and the Spirit of Life enables them to fulfill that need according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Their sufficiency is of Him; and regardless of how wretched and undone they feel to be, this spirit that has been placed within their very being, will cause them to stand and fill their place.

Jesus told Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." This then is the way that the members receive the Spirit, and are made partakers of the inheritance and blessings of the body. This manner indicates the sovereign and holy work of God in bestowing this grace upon the heirs of promise. Even natural birth is above the power of man, and this birth is of an infinitely higher order than that. It is this birth of the Spirit which imparts the spiritual life to his elect and makes them members of the One Body.

Jesus Christ is the *One Lord* who is head over all things to the church, which is his body. He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending. He is the one who stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and was offered without spot and without blemish for the redemption of the Church, which is his body. He is the only Potentate, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He is the one who of God is made unto the body, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. He was made all things that were needful unto this body of the elect family of God. He is the foundation that was laid, and upon which all the building stands. Isaiah says, "Therefore thus saith the Lord, behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, as stone, a tried

stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: that he that believeth shall not make haste." With this foundation, a sure foundation, and the power and wisdom that insures its eternal existence, the children have a blessed refuge and a strong consolation when they lay hold upon the hope that is set before them. This hope that is the anchor of the soul, is anchored in Jesus Christ the one Lord, who is the Shepherd and Bishop of their soul.

There is *One Faith,* which is the gift of God. This is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. This is given unto men whereby they behold the glory of the heavenly kingdom while in this time world. They cannot behold the fullness of the glory while in the flesh, but they see as through a glass darkly by this eye of faith, and behold and experience things which the world knows nothing. Though at times it may seem weak, it continues to lead them, and will last through all their earthly pilgrimage. At other times they feel bold enough to say with David, "But I will hope continually and will yet praise thee more and more." Or with Job, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in him."

It is the same faith that moved Noah, that moves God's people today. This is the sense in which there is one faith. It is faith in the same power, and it is sent from the same source. These common experiences, and common faith in the same giver of the gift, cause God's children to have an abiding love and fellowship for one another.

There is *One Baptism,* and that is the baptism of the Holy Ghost; and this is referred to at times as being born of the Spirit. It is One since it is to all the members of the body. It occurs in time to the different members when the Spirit is made manifest unto them; but the body stands as a unit in the mind and purpose of God, and was complete in his eyes before the foundation of the world.

There is *One God and Father of All,* who is above all, and through all, and in you all. Job said, speaking of God, "But He is of one mind and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." This is a grand and glorious truth to those who have been given a reason to hope in His promises. This is the reason that all the other things are spoken of as being One. They are things that were determined by the One God who is of one mind, and changes not. Before the beginning of time the counsel was held, and all these things were determined as surely as though they had already happened. The One Lord was determined as the One Sacrifice for the One Body, (which included all the members), which is given the One Faith by the indwelling of the One Spirit, and baptized with the One Baptism. Since God is of one mind, and what his soul desireth even that He doeth, what can ever change or alter any of these decrees in any fashion, seeing that in Him is All Power. Paul said, "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

This is the heritage of all the redeemed family of God, and it is sure and certain to all those that were chosen in Christ Jesus, the Lord before the foundation of the world. There is nothing that can separate them from this love, and the loving kindness that has drawn them to Him. Moses said when telling the Children of Israel of their blessings, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." These everlasting arms are underneath upholding all His elect in all ages, and is sweet comfort to them when they see that but for His mercy, they would be lost world without end. These characteristics of God: eternal, everlasting Father, omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscience, are the towers and bulwarks that God's people observe and trust in as they walk about

Zion, beholding the beauties and glories of His kingdom.

The promises of God unto his children are so grand and glorious to the heirs of promise, that they are fearful to claim to have a hope in them. They see themselves as they are in nature, and, being made to see what they must be by grace, causes them to go mourning and bemoaning their wretched and undone condition most of the time. They go weeping and begging God, in spite of their sinful condition, to have mercy on them, and to show them more evidence that they are His. David spoke of this condition of God's people when he said, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

Surely the precious seed is that spirit that has been planted in their breast, and the sheaves represent the harvest that they shall reap, which is the salvation of their soul. They go weeping now, but in hope; and they shall assuredly receive the fruits of the harvest, which is life everlasting. The planting, cultivating, and harvesting is all the work of God in their lives. It is to His glory and to their good, because, "It is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

God will bless each and every heir of grace with the hope of his calling sometime during his earthly pilgrimage. May it be His good pleasure for them to walk together in peace, love and fellowship one for the other. As Paul says, "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and in the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." When this is done, He will send his angels to gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. He will then receive them unto himself and present them unto God as his bride; and they will dwell in perfect bliss eternally as one.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell
2761 Cochee Cove
Memphis, Tenn. 38118

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the Contentnea Union is to be held, the Lord willing, with Otter's Creek Church, Edgecombe County, N. C., the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in March, 1970.

The church is located on 258 highway between Tarboro and Farmville, N. C. (on old part of 258). All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 3
Tarboro, N. C.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To November 1, 1969)

Elder Louis Stewart, Miss	$1.00
Roger B. White, Tex	1.00
Eva Hollar, N. C	3.00
Mrs. A. D. Hodges, Va	4.00
Gladys Robinson, N. C	1.00
Lillie Sawyer, Ala	1.00
J. Fred Clark, Ala	3.00
C. B. Carter, Ala	3.00
George Pollard, Ala	1.00
Mr. and Mrs. Hobart Stallard, Kan	3.00
Mr. U. G. Williams, Tenn	5.00
Ethel Johnson, Md	3.00
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Mrs. Pearl McIntyre, Can	1.00
Elder Louis Stewart, Miss	1.00
Mrs. Charles B. Morris, Calif	1.00
Mrs. Audrey E. Dyer, Va	3.00
Leroy Reed, Idaho	2.00

Danville, Virginia **January, 1970**

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EDITORIAL
BEGINNING OF 138TH VOLUME

For a number of years we have greeted our brethren and friends at the beginning of the New Year, and a new volume of the *Signs of the Times,* the 138th. In being blessed to do so again we are mindful of the grace which has sustained us in the love of the gospel, and mindful of God's mercies which have preserved his people from the beginning until now.

We feel that we can say that we know He has been merciful, for without his mercies none of us would rejoice in the doctrine of God our Saviour; nor would we know the great difference wrought in those who have been brought out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Elder Spangler said while preaching a few years ago, "My friends, if you believe this doctrine, thank God that you do." Surely, if we believe the truth it is a gracious gift of God. Everyone who has been taught of the Lord knows that it was the Lord who quickened him while he was dead in trespasses and sins, and was walking according to the course of this world, and had the same spirit that now works in the children of disobedience; that he was by nature a child of wrath even as others. But the Apostle assures us, and our experience assures us, that, "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." (2nd chapter of Ephesians)

Then there is also that wonderful sealing with the holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory. Does this not mean that we experience a bit of heaven while here below? — enough to contrast earthly joys with heavenly joys, so that we press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

No wonder we thank God for his merciful dealings with us, as we are given to realize what we really deserve at his hands.

The purpose of the *Signs of the Times* is to earnestly contend for the things God has delivered unto us. This God has enabled the writers in the *Signs* to do for 137 years. His name has been praised and lifted up above every name for his mercy toward his people. Multitudes have testified of the comfort and edification they have received in the application of the truth in the confirming of their own experiences,

when they read of the Lord's dealings with their brethren scattered through the land.

We look to the Lord to continue to sustain the editors and writers in the year to come, — surely He sustained the *Signs* in the years past as one of the all things that work together for good to them that love the Lord and who are called according to his purpose. We pray that He will continue to impress and enable the editors to write, and also the brethren, that the paper may continue sound in the faith, and a means of communication among the Lord's people. Many of our correspondents call the *Signs* "our family paper," and they are glad to have it come into their homes regularly, for they expect it to continue to be "clean" in its contents of doctrine and experiences.

The writer is conscious of his many short-comings as an editor. There are many things in which he realizes he does not measure up: sometimes he cannot write and seems to be dead to spiritual things. He cannot possibly answer some of the correspondence from the brethren and friends, and he cannot possibly edit and type for the printer some excellent articles, because of their length or lack of clarity of expressions. But our brethren have been charitable; and, the Lord willing, we will continue to do the best we can.

So brethren continue to write, for your writings and the continued support of our subscribers and donators to the Indigent Fund, will, the Lord willing, help keep the *Signs of the Times* coming into your homes regularly.

May the dear Lord be with each one of you in the years to come, and keep you in the faith unto the end.

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL
PEACE ON EARTH

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."
(Luke 2:14)

Luke gives the words used by a multitude of the heavenly host in making a supernatural announcement of a supernatural birth. There are only fourteen of these words. Some of the ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of Angels said these words to the lowly shepherds almost two thousand years ago. What an impact they have had upon the earth! Millions and millions have quoted them since then. Volumes have been written about them, yet the meaning of these few simple words has not been fully and completely understood. They very beautifully express the simple principles of the new creation, the new covenant, and the new religion.

The first note of this very brief but sublime hymn is, "Glory to God in the highest." Christ's obedience to His Father's laws; His consecration to His Father's will; His prayers, teachings, and death: — Yea, His entire life focuses the spotlight upon God, the Father. He did it when He declared that none was good save the Father. He did it in the statement that none could come to Him except the Father draw him. When He declared that He could do nothing of Himself, He glorified the Father. He did it when He made for Himself no reputation in order to reverence His Father. Yes, Jesus Christ fulfilled the announcement of the multitude of heavenly host by glorifying God in the highest.

The second phrase of the angelic anthem is, "On earth Peace." Here was the announcement of the appearance of the Prince of Peace. Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace as announced by prophecy in Isaiah 9:6. The Son of the King of creation, providence, and disposer of all things is rightly termed, *Prince*. Jesus being the *author* of peace as well as the *Son* of God fully manifested His name, "Prince of Peace." Jesus being born on earth verified the announcement, "On earth peace." Jesus made peace with God in behalf of His brethren by suffering in their stead the punishment due them for their sins,

and fulfilling the law for them. Jesus made peace between the Jews and Gentiles by breaking down the bars, the ceremonial laws, which separated His people among them. He made peace between the men of high degree and the men of low degree by bringing down the exalted ones and lifting up the lowly. He unified the rich and the poor by proving the vanity of earthly riches to the wealthy as well as the importance of heavenly treasures to the beggar. He proclaimed the gospel of peace.

The angels of Heaven concluded this memorable song by saying, "Good will toward men." Four hundred years had passed since the prophet, Malachi, wrote: "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings . . ." (Mal. 4:2) Such a long time of silence from Heaven!! It is no wonder that gross ignorance of God's laws was the state of the people of the earth. It must have been the time of ignorance that God winked at. See Acts 17:30. Spiritual darkness had covered the face of the earth for so long. God's people had transgressed His laws to such great degree that justice demanded a curse from God instead of good will toward them. This curse was stayed until His only begotten Son could bear the just vengeance and wrath of God. *Good will toward men* was brought to light in every thought, word, and act of Jesus Christ while here on earth. God's good will toward men is briefed by Jesus when He said, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." Read John 6:35-40. This good will begets good will toward God in the hearts of every one who realize its goodness.

God grant that we further meditate on the subject *peace on earth* in this article. Unity and concord are the closest synonym in the English language to the root word which was translated, *peace*. The simple definition: "PEACE, that state of mind in which persons are exposed to no open violence;" is quoted from Buck's Theological Dictionary. Since peace concerns the state of mind of persons, we shall emphasize the importance, joy, and happiness of social, ecclesiastical, and spiritual peace. Social peace is mutual agreement one with another, whereby we forbear injuring one another. David said, "Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace and pursue it." (Psalms 34:14) What are we to pursue and seek? Unity plus concord equals peace. The Holy Spirit teaches us that we are in unity with evil. This is our first lesson. Secondly, it makes known to us that we *were* in concord or agreement with it, but the Spirit has changed our feeling so that we hate that principle we loved. This causes us to desire to depart from that with which we are connected. We possessed a false peace of mind while we were joined to evil and had pleasure in it. The result of regeneration is that we do not have a quiet peaceful mind. We find ourselves involved with something we hate. Having been regenerated, we need conversion. We find that we must depart from evil before we have peace of mind. Wisdom from above causes our minds to be in a terrible state of uneasiness which makes us fear God. This is regeneration. We then realize our great need for understanding. We pray for it. God answers our prayer by empowering us to depart from evil. This is conversion. Job quoted God as saying: ". . . Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding." (Job 28:28) Wisdom plus understanding equals peace of mind.

Jesus made peace with God for all the elect by offering Himself. He is our only peacemaker with God, the Father. Jesus united all of the chosen of God with the Father. None can ever sever

this union that Jesus perfected. All our righteousness is as filthy rags in God's sight. The imputed righteousness of *Jesus* only constitutes *peace toward God.* We must be born again AND BE GIVEN THIS FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST, before we can realize God's good will of *peace toward men.* When we are in realization of this we have peace of mind. This peace shall fully be realized in eternity. This is the good news to a sensible sinner. This is the Gospel of Peace!! "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." (Heb. 10:22) When this peace with God is realized in the conscience, all stumbling blocks are removed, and forbearance is easy. "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them." (Psalms 119:165)

Where is *Peace?* The United Nations is a unit composed of representatives from the different nations of the world whose proposed purpose is to achieve peace for the world. Even though they be together in body, their minds are far apart. Instead of concord there is contempt in all their maneuverings. Pride, envy, hatred, wrath, and strife are some of the stumbling blocks that prevent peaceful solutions of problems. These are all so manifest in the meetings of the United Nations that we must look elsewhere for peace. The same stumbling blocks prevent the Senate and House of the Congress of the United States from passing laws conformable to the Constitution. Our higher institutions of learning have been so scarred and battered with riots and confusion that we cannot find peace reigning there. We find states, communities, and homes in abundance where peace does not reign. We ask again, Where is peace?

Paul exhorts: "Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:6-7) To taste the peace of God is to realize that none but God through Christ Jesus, the Prince of Peace, can be the Author of Peace in our hearts and minds. We must admit that none but God can effect peace anywhere at anytime.

Peace on earth? Yes, but where? It is in the minds and hearts of all while they are blessed with faith in God, "Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." (See Eph. 1:11) Those who in *everything* by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving make their requests known unto God, experience the peace of God. Peace is reigning in the individuals who do not offend others by their thoughts, words, or actions. Peace is the state of the minds of the people who think upon the things which are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report; seeking praise-worthiness and virtue in all things of which we think. (See Phil. 4:6) Wherever we find virtue, — wherever we find praise: we find the peace of God which is of the God of peace. When our minds are so disciplined to think upon these things, our minds do not have time nor space to think upon anything else. I cannot so discipline my mind, but I KNOW WHO CAN!

When our minds are disciplined by God we are continually separating the precious from the vile. When our minds are disciplined by carnality we are prone to consider the vile things as precious, and the precious as vile. The Holy Scriptures are able to make the child of God wise as to whether we are being disciplined by the old man or the new man in our dealings with our fellowman. Our wills change according to the spirit that prevails. We are in possession of a good will when the Holy Spirit is reigning. When lust reigns our will is evil. We find a warfare even in our minds. Do we find peace in our minds? Are our minds so quiet, calm, and undisturbed? My mind

is not, because I find the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. I find a warfare within my own mind. There is a mixture of good and evil thoughts that require the judgment of my heart, or will. I am constantly making decisions by approving and disapproving. My will is forever judging the thoughts of my mind. If the judgment of the will were always the same, I would find peace in my mind. I find my judgments so unstable that I cry out as the Apostle Paul: "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin." (Romans 7:14) This state of mind is relieved only while in diligent prayer to God to discipline me. I am made to plead for His grace and mercy. I cannot understand myself. How can I expect to understand others? When I realize my carnality, I hate it. I love it when I am unaware of its presence and damaging effects. There is such a clash of wills that I am unable to do the things I would. When there is such need of forgiveness even for our own thoughts, it is so easy to forgive others. While we condemn ourselves, it is easy to forbear others. While we question our own understanding, we do not condemn the understanding of others. Where can we find *peace*? We find it in the grace and power of Jesus *for* us, *in* us, and *to* us.

Where is Peace? Peace is whenever Jesus appears to us. Peace is wherever Jesus reigns. Peace is the appetizing flavor of the fruit of the Spirit. We read the last part of a sermon by Zacharias: "To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, *to guide our feet in the way of peace.*" (Luke 1:79) This was spoken by John's father of Jesus. Peter said, "For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it." (I Peter 3:10-11) I have found in my search for peace that I can only find it in the Church. Jesus is Governor of His church. He is the Head, the church is His body. It is no wonder that David was glad when they said unto him, "Let us go into the house of the Lord." It is no marvel that he realized the necessity of his feet standing within the gates of Jerusalem which was builded as a city compact together. It was where the tribes of the Lord went up unto the testimony of Israel to give thanks unto the name of the Lord. Peace be to that City of Peace. "Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity be within thy palaces." The City of Jerusalem, The House of the Lord our God, the house of prayer: yea, the Church of our Lord is where peace is found, enjoyed, and greatly appreciated. (Read the 123rd Psalm.) Peace is in the church and God is the author of it. It pleased God to set Zion upon a hill as the perfection of beauty. He would shine through the Church. Jesus lighteth every man that cometh into the church. Jesus bids them: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5:16)

Peace is the first word that Jesus commanded the seventy to say as they entered each house: "Peace be to this house." (Matt. 10:15) Paul prefaced every letter he wrote to both individuals and churches by imploring grace and peace upon them. (Of course there is no peace unless there is grace.) The first on the agenda of every conference of the Church is to inquire relative to the *peace* of the church. Among the first words of Christ's sermon on the mountain were, "Blessed are the *peacemakers* for they shall be called the children of God."

Unity plus concord is peace. Jesus said, "Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. 18:19-20) *The two together* equals unity: to *agree upon anything*

equals concord: thus, there is peace. The agreement is to be upon *anything.* I am pleased that the two do not have to agree on *everything.* Where two or three are gathered together, shows unity. When it is *in His name,* proves concord. Both unity and concord mean peace. This discourse of Jesus was in answer to the question: Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? Jesus Christ is teaching His disciples a very important lesson in this treatise: Forgiveness of offences. He teaches us the value of humility and the evil of pride. Pride is the great stumbling block and cause of contention among brethren. "ONLY by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom." (Prov. 13:10) Christ advises Peter in answer to his question relative to the number of times to forgive a brother of his sins against him: ". . . I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven." (Matt. 18:22)

I have sinned against the Lord more than seventy times seven. I trust for Christ's sake, He has forgiven me. Should I not forgive a brother that trespasses against me many, many, many times? If I be "Well-advised" I will continue to forgive him. I am not to forgive him for his trespasses against the *Lord,* for this is the Lord's business. He chastises, corrects, and takes vengeance upon whom He will in His way. It pleases the Lord to use the wicked as His sword, to render judgment even to His own. (See Habakuk 1:6, 12; Prov. 16:4; Psalms 17:13.) I have more tolerance for those who depend upon themselves to merit salvation, than I have for those who take upon themselves the responsibility to chastise, punish, or take vengeance against any whom they think offend the Lord. If we could be so well advised to know that He will take vengeance, chastise, correct; or have mercy upon His own offenders. Yes, He goes further than that: He takes vengeance in behalf of His people upon their persecutors. God has so ordained, and that right well, that He is the God of battles. He does our fighting for us. It would be foolish, and out of my jurisdiction, to say, I forgive this one of his offence to God. I am wise, I trust in my right mind, to forgive, have mercy upon, and forbear those who wrong *ME.*

I may differ with you on some theological point of doctrine, but if we have the same *faith,* we are agreed on the vital thing. Sometimes in pridish discussions we charge consequences. We say, If you believe *this,* you believe *that.* The other party answers, I believe *this,* but I do not believe *that.* If I want to prove to him that I am wiser than he, I further contend until it becomes contentious: If you believe *this* you are bound to believe *that.* We wrangle. I try to force the issue. I fail to get him to admit to my reasoning. My pride is so hurt that I tell him, You do not know what you believe. What have I done? I have charged consequences which is a violation of honorable controversy among men! I have offended him and ought to beg his forgiveness.

When I was a boy I got the idea that it was my job to discipline my younger brothers and sister in the absence of my father and mother. I was threatening to whip one of them one day when my father appeared on the scene. I well remember the scolding and lecture my father gave me. He made me to know that that was *his* business. I did not forget it. Sometimes we act as little children not only by trying to attend to the Lord's business, but also to delve into the secrets of God. We argue by using our vain imaginations about all that God did before the foundation of the world; why He did it; and how He did it. When we go beyond Scriptural revelation, we are trying to pry out the secrets of God. Since the Scriptures contain that which it pleased God to reveal to us and our children, Why should we quarrel over these things that are not simply expressed in the written word? "Secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things

which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of the law." (Deut. 29:29) This should be sufficient for us to understand that there are no words of the law of the Lord to be considered unnecessary. The one who consoles himself with the idea: "I shall have peace though I walk in the imagination of mine heart," puts himself liable to God's great curse: ". . . And the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven." (Deut. 29:19-20) Yes, it is *under heaven* that some have their part taken away out of the book of life, and out of the holy city." (Rev. 22:19) This holy city must be the church on earth which is *under* heaven. The *part* that is taken out of the book of life must be that part which is to be experienced here. I do not want to be separated from the church here on earth. I want to live in peace with my brethren. I want to enjoy the happiness of salvation here. I want to be united with brethren of same faith here, and to strive for concord. I want to rely upon the precious promise quoted by Paul: "Finally, brethren, farewell, Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you." (2 Cor. 13:11)

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

AN INTERCESSOR IN THE COURT OF HEAVEN

Dear Sister Workman:

In your letter today, you ask why Christ has to intercede for his people after he has paid their debt to God for them. I understand you to mean, Why is it necessary for the elect to have an Intercessor in the court of heaven, when Christ has already made atonement for them? This has given me something to think about, and I can do no more than to write you some of my thoughts as they have come to me. At first thought, it would seem that the atonement for all the elect's transgressions having been perfectly and completely transacted by Christ, and all their sins having forever been put away by his sacrifice of himself, any further heavenly work by him in the way of intercession would be superfluous. Of course, this kind of reasoning can easily get us into a snare, for we know the intercession of our Lord before the throne of God in heaven's court is absolutely necessary, else the Divine Plan would not so have been arranged as to include this priesthood of Christ. We can do no better than go to the Scriptures.

Space would not permit me in this letter to cite all the Scriptures treating on Christ's priesthood, but let us take some of them. The last words of Isaiah fifty-third chapter are, "He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." This was partly fulfilled when Christ, while on the cross, said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." If all our transgressions had come to an end when Christ made atonement for them in his death, perhaps no intercession by him for us would now be necessary; but while the atonement was finished in his death, our transgressions did not end then. We are continually transgressing, notwithstanding the atonement is an accomplished fact. We are sinners by nature and sinners in fact and by act, even though God does not charge this up to us since Christ has borne the sins of many. The fact that Christ is in heaven and we are on earth, our Head in glory but we ourselves still living in the presence of sin in this lower world, *his intercession is required to cleanse us moment by moment, hour by hour, day by day, from our sins experimentally.* I doubt very much if we could have at his hands any experience of absolution were it not for his present heavenly work of intercession for us, despite the fact that the atonement has been finished, and accepted by the Father. On the

cross, Christ's plea that the Father forgive his persecutors their cruel and wicked deed, was based on the fact that he was at that moment dying for them; yet even though he was accomplishing the atonement for them in the sight of God, how could they ever experience for themselves forgiveness except as he prayed for them that it might be so? *We might just as well say, What is the use of our praying to God for anything? If God has predestinated before-time our blessings for us, will we not get them anyway, whether we pray or not? No, we will not.* It is as much a part of the divine plan that we should pray for these blessings, as that God has predestinated these blessings for us.

Christ's atonement for us on earth is the basis of his priestly work for us now being executed by him in the heavens. His work would not be complete without this heavenly work of his ensuing from the work which he did for us on earth. His atonement without his intercession would be like a foundation without any building on it; and there could be no intercession without his atonement preceding it, else it would be like a house without any underpinning. When Christ said on the cross, "It is finished," what did he mean? Among other things, he did not mean that his work was done; but he did mean that all his *Earthly work* was done. He must now die and rise from the dead and go out of sight to enter upon his heavenly work for his people, which was to prepare for them the mansions in the Father's house in the heaven of heavens; and by his intercession for them, also prepare them to dwell in those heavenly mansions when it should come God's time for them to do so.

When Christ warned Peter that the time of Peter's denial was nearing, he told Peter, "But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." Would his faith have failed if Jesus had not prayed for him? Evidently so, if language means anything. By the same token, what would happen to us now as we go through this world were it not for Christ's praying for us? Our discouragements and difficulties would defeat us. Our stumblings would result in our falling. While our salvation might not be affected, inasmuch as our atonement is accomplished, yet our comforts and deliverances would be nothing at all without Christ's present intercession for us. We would be without any spiritual experience of salvation were it not for his intercession for us now, and would have to wait until we reach heaven before experiencing the forgiveness which his atonement has secured for us. In John 14:16, he says, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever." Would this Comforter ever have come without Christ's intercession? I believe not. The Holy Ghost has come upon the church and abides within the church throughout the ages, all because of Christ's heavenly intercession for his body ever since his ascension. If ever there is a prayer, a real prayer in the soul of any of the children of God, why is it? Only as the result and fruit of Christ's praying for them, now being accomplished for his body by him up there before the throne. All our time-experience of the grace of God rests on the intercession now going on for us above. Had Christ ceased to do anything at all after his intercession we down here would have long since ceased to know anything about mercy and grace while we were down here. Our present experience, so far as spiritual things are concerned, would be a vacuum, and we should have to wait until we get to heaven before knowing anything about heavenly things. It is his intercession that keeps us alive. Like a tree growing in the soil and reaching up its branches to the sky, so Christ's intercession is rooted in his atonement and is the process by which he keeps lifting us up from the earth heavenward.

I leave this subject for you to further follow out in your meditation. May the Lord prosper you in this respect. I have

but touched a few things as they have come to me. Oh, may he bless us to realize more and more in our own experience that carefulness and prayerfulness which are the fruit of what he is doing for us now, that we as branches of the Tree of Life may have our breathings toward him, and thus overcome that earth-drag which clogs our steps and thoughts, and threatens to keep us tied to temporal interests.

Yours in the blessed hope of his appearing.

(This letter was published in the May, 1939, issue of the *Signs of the Times*. By request we re-publish it. It is a subject often inquired into, and is clearly presented by Elder Lefferts.)

OBITUARIES

STELLA WEST PARSONS

Sister Stella West Parsons was born April 30, 1879, in Worchester County, near Snow Hill, Maryland; and died August 13, 1969. She was the daughter of Minas Burton and Hettie Ann Ruark West, — one of twelve children. She was united in marriage to Raymond G. Parsons on January 15, 1903; and to this union were born four daughters: Mrs. Gladys Lingle, Mrs. Lottie Kell, Mrs. Frances Parish, and Mrs. Alice Majors, who survive. Surviving also are three grandchildren: Mrs. Thelma Strohmaier, Clement W. Kell, Jr., and William J. Majors, Jr.

Sister Parsons was received into the fellowship of the Nassawango Old School Baptist Church, Wicomico County, Md., September 24, 1905, and was baptized by the late Elder Thomas Poulson. She was a member of this church almost sixty-four years.

In the passing of this dear sister the Nassawango Church has lost a devoted member, who by her daily walk and conversation manifested her love and devotion to the Church of God. I have never known one who put forth more effort to attend her church services, even when not physically well, than she did. Her home always had an open door for the members and friends of the church; and she was appreciative of the visits of her friends, always meeting them with a smile.

Her mind was much exercised concerning spiritual things, and one did not visit long in her home before spiritual things were mentioned; and she often referred to hymns and sermons she had heard in former days. By adorning her profession with a godly walk and spiritual conversation, she left evidence that she is asleep in Jesus, — a blessed sleep. I have never known one more tenderly cared for by her daughters than our dear sister. Her last days were spent with her daughter, Mrs. Frances Parish of Ellicott City, Maryland.

Her funeral was conducted by Elders W. D. Griffin and Arthur Warren at the Hill Funeral Home, Salisbury, Md., and interment was in the Parsons' Cemetery.

Sister Parsons' husband, Raymond G. Parsons, was born February 21, 1880, the son of Joshua J. Parsons and Mary Brittingham Parsons, of Wicomico County, Maryland. He died July 25, 1964, and his funeral was also conducted by Elders Griffin and Warren. They were a devoted couple, and Mr. Parsons always welcomed those who visited in the home, and manifested that he also had an interest in the things of the Lord. It is a great blessing when husband and wife can see eye to eye in the things of the Lord; and truly it was so in this household.

Written by request of the family.

D. V. Spangler, Pastor

JOSEPHENE THOMAS TERRY

Sister Josephene Thomas Terry, widow of the late Thomas T. Terry, who preceded her in death July 29, 1941, was born September 20, 1878, and passed away August 16, 1969, at the home of her son Rex H. Terry, Meadows of Dan, Va., at the age of 90 years, 10 months and 26 days. She was the daughter of the late Daniel and Angeline Thomas.

She leaves to mourn their loss five sons and one daughter: Conway L. Terry, Rex H. Terry and Arley M. Terry, of Meadows of Dan, Virginia; Carmie E. Terry, Mt. Airy, N. C.; Thornton S. Terry, Axton, Virginia; and Mrs. Ettie Barnard, Meadows of Dan, Virginia. Surviving also are 36 grandchildren, 56 great grandchildren, 5 great great grandchildren, and one brother, Jimmie Thomas, Hillsville, Virginia. Five sons preceded her in death, namely, Neal, Oakney, Charlton, Kemper and Kennett.

Aunt Josie, as we lovingly called her, united with Bell Spur Church July 31, 1954, and was baptized by the pastor, Elder Samuel E. Terry. She was elected church clerk January, 1957, and was clerk until February, 1967. She served faithfully as long as her health permitted. She lived a devoted life to her family, community, and church. She was a firm believer in Salvation by the Grace of God.

Her family, brethren and friends did what they could for her, but none could keep her here when God's appointed time came for her. The writer had the privilege of being with

her some in her last days. She bore her afflictions quietly and patiently. She often said that she wished she could die, that her husband had come for her and she was ready to go.

Her funeral was conducted in the Bell Spur Church August 17, 1969, by Elder Amos Hash and Elder Bennie Clifton; and her body was laid to rest by the side of her husband, beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, in the Terry-Barnard Cemetery. There to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, when he comes to call for his people and take them home, to be like him, where sorrow, sickness, pain or death will be no more.

We feel that our loss is her heavenly gain. "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be his holy name." May we be submissive to His holy will, who doeth all things well.

Done by order of Bell Spur Church while in conference October 18, 1969.

Ilene Terry, Church Clerk

ELIZABETH NORMAN TOPPING

Sister Elizabeth Norman Topping was born at Aldie, Virginia, August 27, 1878, the daughter of the late Brother and Sister Eppa and Rebecca Norman, and the last of their family. She was a sister of the late Brother C. Walter Norman. She died October 18, 1969, at the age of ninety, in Hillcrest Nursing Home, Winchester, Virginia. Surviving are a number of nieces and nephews.

In 1943 she was united in marriage to the late Elder D. L. Topping and lived at Glen Burnie, Maryland, for many years. After Elder Topping's death September 17, 1947, she continued to live there until her health made it necessary for her to come to Herndon, Virginia, and live with Brother and Sister Norman. Sister Topping was a member of the church in Baltimore and was faithful as long as she was able to travel. She attended the churches near Herndon when she was able.

Her funeral was conducted in Herndon at Green's Funeral Home by the writer, and she was laid to rest in the Union Cemetery, Leesburg, Virginia, to await the resurrection, when she together with all the redeemed shall bear the image of the heavenly and fitted for heaven and immortal glory.

John D. Wood

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT OF SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

In the past year our gracious God has seen fit to remove from our midst four lovely sisters: Sisters Maude Morris, of the Salisbury Church; Bertha Tomlinson, of Little Creek Church; Stella Parsons and Della Pusey, of Nassango Church.

We know by their walk and talk they trusted in the allwise God, and not in their own works.

Let us bow in humble submission to the holy will of God; and join with the hymnist in saying, "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep;" and say, Thy will be done, O God. Written by Brother Frank Holland.

Elder Arthur Warren, Moderator
Maude T. Laws, Hon. Clerk
William Adkins, Clerk
W. M. Davis, Sr., Asst. Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

The Welsh Tract Primitive Baptist Church, Newark, Delaware, authorized me to report the passing of Edwin L. Shakespere, Trustee and Church Treasurer.

Edwin L. Shakespere was born February 9, 1904, and died August 30, 1969, at the age of 65. Suffering a severe stroke, he died one week and one day later in the Wilmington Memorial Hospital. Son of the late Edwin L. and Nellie Alkers Shakespere, he is survived by his wife, the former Annabelle Jarmon, one sister, Mrs. Fred Trimble, Sr. of Hockessin, Delaware, and several nieces and nephews.

"Shake," as he was affectionately called, had been employed at the Newark Post Office for 22 years, acting as Assistant Postmaster while the Assistant Postmaster was in the service. He worked at the Farmers Trust Company, Newark, Delaware, until it merged with the Wilmington Trust Company. During his 23 years with Farmers Trust Company and Wilmington Trust, he served as a Loan Officer and also was in charge of Real Estate and Insurance. He retired several months ago following a severe heart attack. A trustee of Welsh Tract Church, he served as Church Treasurer from 1938 until the time of his death, filling that capacity in a very satisfactory manner, always having the best interests of the church at heart.

Although he was not a member of Welsh Tract, a more loyal person, so faithful in attendance at the meetings, would be difficult to find. He always enjoyed the companionship of Old Baptists and whenever possible he and his wife, Annabelle, entertained them in their lovely home. Everyone enjoyed their hospitality and the warmth of Christian fellowship. He will be sadly missed.

Funeral services were held September 2, 1969, conducted by his nephew, Fred Trimble, Jr. of Walkersville, Maryland. Interment was

in Welsh Tract Cemetery.

We resolve that three copies of this Respect be made to be put in the Church record; to be sent to the family; and to be published in the *Signs of the Times.*

We send our sympathy to his family and trust that our loss is his eternal gain.

This done by order of our September meeting.

Elder W. D. Griffin, Pastor
Ruth Lucht, Clerk

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

J. J. WATSON, Pastor

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 10:30 A. M.

V. C. HARTZOG, Pastor

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

A. B. CHUMNEY
D. W. COLLINS, Pastors

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., six miles SE. of Sulligent, Alabama.

C. C. HAND, Pastor
5840 Court O C P
Birmingham, Ala.

MACEDONIA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located one and one-half miles Southwest of Sulligent, Alabama, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M. All lovers of the truth are invited.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
HOUSTON PITTS, Clerk
Steens, Miss.

MT. ZION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each 4th Sunday at 11 A. M. about 10 miles N. W. of Birmingham just off of 78 Highway in Westwood, 2601 Forrestdale Blvd.

H. C. MOON
C. C. HAND, Pastors

OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., 6 miles S. W. of Winfield, Ala.

C. C. HAND, Pastor

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each second Sunday afternoon at 2 P. M., ten miles SW. of Fayette, Alabama.

C. C. HAND
R. W. RHODES, Pastors

ELAM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located two miles North of Goshen, Pike County, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 o'clock.

J. P. MORGAN, Pastor
A. C. CARTER, Clerk
1335 Avalon Lane,
Montgomery 6, Ala.

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.

C. C. HAND
R. W. RHODES, Pastors

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

V. C. HARTZOG, Pastor

MT. CARMEL CHURCH, Coffee Springs, Alabama, meets each first Sunday 11 A. M.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

ZION ROCK OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, twenty-two miles South of Andalusia, Alabama, meets every first Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
NORA McLEOD, Acting Clerk

PILGRIM REST CHURCH, located five miles north of Fordyce, Arkansas (about ¾ mile off Hy. 167, and located near Barnes Lumber Co.) meets each third Sunday at 10:30.

W. W. HUDSON, JR. Pastor

HARMONY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, ten miles South of Jay, Santa Rosa County, Florida, meets every second Sunday and Saturday before at 11:00 A. M.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
GRACE UTLEY, Clerk

NAOMI OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets every third Sunday at 11:00 A. M., six miles South of McKenzie, Alabama.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
E. C. WEAVER, Clerk
Rt. 5, Box 50-B,
Andalusia, Ala.

SHILOH OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, seven miles Northeast of Andalusia, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
NORA LEE McLEOD, Clerk
Rt. 3,
Red Level, Ala.

MT. ZION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located 14 miles south of Fayette, Ala., meets each first Sunday at 2 P. M.

W. L. NORRIS, Pastor
1414 8th St., Tuscaloosa, Ala.
EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.

MT. CARMEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located southeast of Millport, Ala., meets second Sunday afternoons at 2 P. M.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.

PLEASANT RIDGE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located at Moores Bridge, Ala., meets each 4th Sunday at 11 A. M.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.

SALEM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located 6 miles south of Gordo, Ala., meets each 4th Sunday at 2 P. M.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.
W. L. NORRIS, Co-Pastor
1414 8th Street
Tuscaloosa, Ala.

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

WHITE WATER OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located about one mile northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, meets each fourth Sunday afternoon at 2:30 P. M. The annual Homecoming is still held the first Sunday in July and Saturday before, with services beginning at 10:30.

DAVID E. TURNER, Pastor

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Stockton, California, meets second Sundays, 10:30 A. M., at 5620 E. Marsh Street. All lovers of the truth invited.

T. R. JEFFERSON, Pastor
MYRTLE TIPTON, Clerk
733 7th St.
Hallister, Calif. 95023

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Compton, California, meets each fourth Sunday at the home of L. W. Langwell, 12812 S. Williams Street.

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in the United States), meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is located one mile south of Newark, Delaware, just off of Highway 896.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

NEW HARMONY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Hiram, Ga., meets every second Sunday at 11 o'clock.

O. J. CROKER, Pastor
C. C. HAND, Asst. Pastor
G. E. RAGSDALE, Clerk

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located at 5th and East Park Street, Weiser, Idaho, meets each 4th Sunday at 11 o'clock. Address any communications to:

ERNEST J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
FLOSSIE ATTEBERY, Clerk
Rt. 1, Box 202,
Hermiston, Oregon 97838

PLEASANT VALLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas. Meets with Mrs. Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C. on each second Sunday.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE LOST CREEK CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, meets first Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Kentucky, ten miles south of Grayson and two

miles from Denton, on Grayson Highway. Leave U. S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

NEW HOPE CHURCH (better known as Lick Creek) meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Kentucky.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE ZION CHURCH OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS, Mayfield, Kentucky, meets first Sunday each month at 11 A. M., on South 7th Street.

J. N. DARNELL, Pastor

NEW HOPE CHURCH, Spearsville, La. meets first Sundays and Saturday afternoons before at 3:30.

J. L. SMITH, Pastor
C. C. BARRON, Clerk

LIBERTY HILL CHURCH, located six miles northeast of Farmerville, La., ¼ mile east of Farmerville-Marion Highway, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30. Services are also held on each second Sunday at 10:30.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

UNION CHURCH, located near Linville, La., meets each third Sunday at 10:30 and on Saturday afternoon before at 2:30 P. M.

DAVID E. TURNER, Pastor

BETHEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located three miles N. E. of Steens, Miss. on Millport Road, meets third Sunday afternoons at 2 P. M.

H. C. MOON, Pastor
Hanceville, Ala.
EULIE McCOOL, Asst. Pastor
Steens, Miss.

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Baltimore, Maryland, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Street, near Calvert.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on Falls Road about twenty miles north of Baltimore.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

HOPEWELL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Hopewell, N. J., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. All visitors are welcome.

ARTHUR R. WARREN, Pastor
MARY L. HELLINGS, Clerk
4 Maple Lane
Pennington, N. J. 08534

OLIVE AND HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Shokan, N. Y., meets each 2nd Sunday at 2:00 P. M. March through and including November.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
DEACON E. K. ADSIT, Clerk

THE WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Warwick, Orange County, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are held at A. R. Vail's home, 55 Maple Ave., Warwick at 11 A. M.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

THE MIDDLEBURG OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH meets at the home of Deacon Woodrow W. Bellinger, Duanesburg, N. Y. on fifth Sundays when the Lord so wills.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
BEATRICE E. HOCKING, Clerk
419 Toll St., Scotia, N. Y.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, New York City, meets every first and third Sundays at McBurney Branch Y. W. C. A. 215 W. 23rd Street, corner of 7th Ave. (Elevator to 2nd floor.) 11 A. M. — 1:30 P. M. All visitors are welcome.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

THE WILSON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Wilson, N. C., meets each second Sunday at 3 P. M., and Saturday evening before at 7:30 P. M. The location is on the corner of Green and Jackson Streets.

D. B. STOKES, Pastor
MRS. BETTIE RICHARDSON, Clerk

FALLS OF TAR RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Rocky Mount, N. C., meets each second Sunday and Saturday before.

Quarterly meetings March, June, September and December.

D. B. STOKES, Pastor
NINA PEARSON, Clerk

MOONS CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Providence, N. C. off Route 86, on Park Springs Road, meets each third Sunday morning at 11 A. M.

KENNETH KEY, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:00 P. M.

C. M. HAGGOOD, Pastor
ANA STEWART, Clerk
Granite, Okla. 73547

BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin, Oregon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes. Address communications to Lloyd Spikes, Elgin, Oregon.

ERNEST ATTEBERY, Pastor
SPENCER BURCH, Clerk

ROCK SPRINGS OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, meets each first Sunday at 10:30. The meeting house is located on highway 222, about one-quarter mile of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets each 5th Sunday from May through September; and meets at Needmore, Pa., on 5th Sundays from October through April, with all day meeting the 2nd Sunday in October.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
ORIEN MELLOTT, Clerk
McConnellsburg, Pa.

THE FIRST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH of Memphis, Tenn., meets each Sunday at 10:30 A. M., except the first three weeks in October when we dismiss for associations in the area. The church is located on Andrews Road, one block north of Highway 70 in the Ellendale Community, 7 miles east of Memphis.

H. R. PRINCE, Co-Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis
C. S. YOUNG, Co-Pastor
807 Pope St., Memphis
RICHARD H. CAMPBELL, Clerk

CANE CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and is located nine miles Southwest of Martin, Tennessee. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
J. B. JONES, Clerk
Rt. 1, Martin, Tenn.

BORDEAUX PREDESTINARIAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Nashville, Tenn., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. The church is located on the old Hydes Ferry Road in Bordeaux, in Nashville. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE WALNUT FORK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Cottage Grove, Tennessee, meets on the second Sunday of each month.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor
R. L. VEAZEY, SR., Clerk

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Sharps Chapel, Tenn., meets at 11 A. M. each second Sunday. We are located about fifteen miles north of Maynardville, Tenn., on Big Valley Road. There is a sign on the main highway showing where to turn.

JOHN WILDER, Moderator
N. E. LAY, Clerk

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, Houston, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before 10:30 A. M. Church is located at 815 Little York Road between Highway 75 and East Texas Freeway 59.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
IRENE WISENBAKER, Clerk

MT. ZION CHURCH, Rt. 2, Box 23, Weslaco, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.; and each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. seven miles West of Weslaco, on highway 83.

JOE L. HAMRICK, Pastor
E. B. AULT, Clerk

SARDIS CHURCH, Amarillo, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 10:30, in the home of E. J. Parsons, 1711 Lincoln Street.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, has moved their meeting place to 3629 8th Avenue. They meet each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Take College Ave. bus to Butler and Ryon; go one block West, then half block North to church.

C. U. LANDERS, Pastor

THE ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST CHURCH, Lawn, Texas, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
MRS. NOLA STEWART, Clerk

AN ARM OF PILGRIM REST CHURCH, meets each second Sunday and Saturday night before at Earth, Texas.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
A. A. CHAMBERS, Clerk

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets on the second and fourth Sundays of each month at 10 A. M., in the meeting house at intersection of Highways 123 and 87. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

GERALD D. SHIPMAN, Pastor
LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk

THE OLD SALEM CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS, four miles South of Teague, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

SAINTS REST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each Sunday at 10:30 A. M., at 2710 Engle Street.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
D. G. CONNELL, Clerk

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Winnsboro, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
E. M. REEVES, Clerk

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30.

LLOYD WALL, Pastor
GUY SISK, Clerk

The churches of which Elder E. J. Lambert is pastor meet as follows:

PHARON, meets first Sunday morning and Saturday night before, 5 miles NE Hawkins, Texas.

REHOBETH, meets second Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles N ElDorado, Arkansas.

NEILA RYAN, Clerk
1601 N. Emmett
ElDorado, Arkansas

BETHEL, meets third Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles NE ElDorado, Arkansas.

JEAN H. BURNES, Clerk
606 N. Parkway,
ElDorado, Arkansas

GOOD HOPE, meets fourth Sunday morning and Saturday morning before 7 miles NE Winnsboro, Texas.

GERTRUDE JONES, Clerk
905 Y Drive
Winnsboro, Texas

Everyone welcomed.

ELDER E. J. LAMBERT, Pastor
306 Richardson St.
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located on Route 28, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia.

ARTHUR L. CARTER, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is near Lucketts, about eight miles north of Leesburg, Va.

The brethren and friends will please note that the meetings at Broad Run Church, near Poolesville, Maryland, have been discontinued; and that the meetings are now held each third Sunday at New Valley, as shown above.

L. D. DUKE, Clerk
Charlestown, W. Va.

MT. ZION CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, Virginia. on Route 50, between Washington and Winchester, Virginia.

MRS. RAY HAWLING, Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are aways glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Manassas 368-4857.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 8:00 P. M., Fairmont Park, 2023 Tidewater Drive.

C. N. BUNN, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Qualla Road, Chesterfield County, Virginia, meets each first Sunday at 10 A. M. Following are directions to the meeting house: South from Richmond at McGuire Circle, take Rt. 360 nine miles to "Longest" Service Station; turn left and go one mile, and turn right on No. 363 one mile to church.

ELDER C. N. BUNN, Pastor
LILLIE WEIDER, Clerk
2560 Elliham Ave.,
Richmond 34, Va.

DAN RIVER CHURCH, between Danville, Va. and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville, Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday night before, on Bradley Road.

H. W. WRAY, Pastor
R. T. HOLLEY, Clerk

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each first Sunday at 11:00 o'clock. This church is located seven miles west of Gretna, Virginia on 605 one-half mile from Route 40. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
RUTH MATTOX, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Chatham, Va.

BELLVIEW PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday night before at 7:30. This church is located near Cave Springs about four miles from Roanoke, Virginia, one mile from 221. All visitors are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
J. A. SOWDER, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Salem, Va.

SANDY LEVEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each third Sunday afternoon at 2:30. This church is located on Route 635 about 5 miles south from Hardy, Va. 10 miles from Vinton, Va. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each fourth Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday before at 7:30 o'clock. This church is located on highway 623 about two miles from Fairystone Park. All visitors are welcome. No Saturday meetings during winter months.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
CLAUDE R. HOPKINS, Clerk
908 Myrtle Rd.
Martinsville, Va.

BETHEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, of Predestinarian Faith, of Riffe, Washington, meets each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before at 11 o'clock. For information write the Clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. OPAL HUNTTING, Clerk
Silver Creek, Wash. 98585

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, Naches, Washington, meets at 11:00 A. M. each second Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MARGUERITE SIMPSON, Clerk
1306 Fairview Ave.
Yakima, Wash. 98901

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 138 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1970 NO. 2

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/70
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

LIKE A LETTER FROM ALL THE BRETHREN

Duanesburg, New York 12056

Dear Elder Spangler,

Enclosed is a check for $7.00 to renew my subscription to the *Signs* for two years.

Hope you are feeling better. I missed seeing you at the Salisbury Association. I had been looking forward to meeting you and Elder Wood, but it was not the Lord's will. God's arm is not short that it can not sustain us wherever we are.

I am very thankful that the Lord made it possible for me to attend three associations this past year. It was wonderful to hear the gospel proclaimed at these meetings.

We were afraid that we would not be able to have the Lexington-Roxbury Association, but the Lord sustained us mightily. There were only three Elders there including Elder Slauson. We had wonderful preaching. There was a warm fellowship among the brethren. It seemed that the Lord was in our midst.

I hope the Lord will strengthen you editors of the *Signs* as I feel the Lord has provided the *Signs* as an excellent means for the brethren to keep in touch with one another. When I receive the copy of the *Signs* each month it is like a letter from all the brethren.

We read sermons from the Elders, and the letters expressing the hopes, fears and experiences of the brethren are like a covenant meeting where all express their minds.

Many times I wonder am I His or am I not: do I love the Lord or not. But still I can't give up that Hope that I am.

Will close with hope and trust in the Lord,

Woodrow W. Bellinger

THE VALUE OF "LITTLE THINGS"

Box 304
Emory, Texas 75440

Dear Editors:

My subscription date says I am due another year's subscription, so I enclose check for one year and for 4 extra copies of the November issue.

I was greatly impressed with Elder Chick's editorial republished in the *Voices of the Past*. I have learned something about sparrows that seemed almost uncanny to me. When I lived in Houston, Texas, I had a small patch of grain-sorghum. I had planted it in other years, and the sparrows got the most of the grain. This particular year I thought I would cut the sorghum down and probably they would not get all the grain. Early one bright morning the sparrows were on the ground in numbers, and I went into the house and got my gun. I killed several and lamed several; and the rest flew away to nearby trees. To my surprise, one came back and tried to rescue one of the wounded ones that was bleeding and could not fly. He had the injured one in his mouth and carried him sev-

eral feet.

This incident made an impression on me. I thought that if a little sparrow has that much concern for one of his fallen companions, this will put an end to my shooting; and I have not shot a sparrow from that day to this.

I had read this passage of scripture (Matthew 10:29) a few times, but had never learned the true meaning — like so much of the Bible to me. With Elder Chick's explanation and my personal feelings and experience, I feel I can vouch for every word that was written. Sometimes we hear it said that not one sparrow shall fall to the ground without your heavenly Father's notice. This is most blessedly true in the words, "And not one of them is forgotten before God." Many times I have wished I had the standing before God as the sparrow; and I hope I am not overvalued when it says, "Fear not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows."

. . . We fail to see the value of little things — their true value and meaning as related in the Scriptures. Do we understand the significant meaning of a broken-heart and contrite spirit, the expansiveness of the yeast, the magnitude of the mustard seed? etc.

May I and we all see the beauty of the unsearchable riches of our Maker the Lord God.

Guy Sisk

GOD IS NOT THE AUTHOR OF SIN

I am glad to say I never heard the doctrine preached, "That God was the author of sin." "Or that the predestination of God caused any man to sin."

I would not fellowship any one that preached such things, nor allow them to preach in the church where my membership is, or in my association, if I could prevent it.

I am glad to say we have no such doctrine preached among us in this country, and I hope the brethren will never allow it among us. Although the Arminian, two Salvationists, and Conditionalists have accused our people (who believe the doctrine of predestination as set forth in the Old London Confession of Faith) of preaching this very doctrine, we know our folks in this country do not preach it or believe it. We also know those who tell such things on us are telling the same Old Arminian lie that has been told on those who have loved the Truth for ages past. And the same Spirit is in them that was in their fathers who falsely accused our Lord and Master when He was on earth, of preaching a false doctrine, and betrayed Him into the hands of those who crucified Him.

"If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" Those who are in accord with the Doctrine of Predestination as it was taught and believed by Old School Baptists in past ages, believe and teach that God hath decreed from all eternity all things whatsoever come to pass. All of those who are in accord with the doctrine of Old School Baptists of past ages believe that God is neither the author of sin nor hath fellowship with any therein.

(Elder) H. F. Hutchens

(The above was published in the April, 1926, issue of *The Lone Pilgrim.*)

THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND SATAN'S KINGDOM

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

For some time now, my mind has been on The Kingdom Of God and also on the Kingdom Of The World, or Satan's Kingdom, particularly as to just where the line of demarkation between them could be set. Also as to what does each consist of or where they begin and end. After some study and meditation, I will attempt to write briefly what may be of some interest to the Lord's chosen ones, realizing that without guidance from above, nothing of value will come forth.

Now as to the type of Kingdom we

have in mind as The Kingdom Of God, will state that it is that Kingdom told of in Daniel 2:44 — "And in the days of these Kings shall the God Of Heaven set up a Kingdom, which shall never be destroyed and the Kingdom shall not be left to other people," etc. Elder Wood in the November, 1965 *Signs* dwelt at length on this Scripture, and among other salient things, stated that the Kingdom of God in this world IS THE CHURCH OF GOD, set up when the fullness of time had come. Then God sent his Son into the world and the Kingdom was set up. Christ said to his disciples, "For the Kingdom Of God is within you." (Luke 17:21) and He also made it clear as to how His people gained entrance into this (His) Kingdom, — "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom Of God," (St. John 3:3) and "Except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom," — Luke 3:5. Therefore, keep in mind we leave out every semblance of natural or worldly things created by God in the beginning of time and all other types or kinds of Kingdoms of which there be many, over which God in his Supreme state and power has full control and all will come to their destruction at the exact time He has willed they shall.

This Kingdom Of God as we have it in mind, does include the Kingdom Of Heaven as we can see no point in trying to separate them, altho the latter is mentioned many times in the Scriptures, such as St. John's words in 3:2 — "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." It can be further shown that God's Kingdom is separate and apart from the world and all semblance of things earthy or natural, for said Jesus in St. John 18:36, "My Kingdom is not of this world." The Apostle Paul, in I Cor. 4:20 wrote, "For the Kingdom Of God is not in words, but in power." When we take a good long look at this greatest of all Kingdoms, as we are given the Spiritual vision to view it, how priceless and precious becomes our hope of being therein thruout all eternity. We are made to long for further evidence and assurance that our names are written in the Lamb's Book Of Life. Pages can be written about this everlasting Kingdom of God but it would be repetitious and would not add to the wonderful writings by our inspired Elders and others thruout the past. Now to the other Kingdom we have in mind: Satan's Kingdom and dominion, "The Kingdom of the world."

That Satan did have a Kingdom designated and set up in the mind of God before the world was, which was established here on earth at the appointed time and which has existed thruout the ages, and will continue until the Lord destroys all the Universe and everything thereon and therein, including Satan's dominion; and banishes him with his angels into that eternal state of darkness, is too well known by the Lord's people to warrant any lengthy discussion on it. Christ said he had one: "And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?" Many Scriptures could be cited.

Turning to Genesis 3rd Chapter we find that God did create Satan, in the form of a serpent and we see right here who he was to have dominion over; how he was equipped with that beguiling tongue, the tool, as-it-were, with which he was to work his cunning, wickedness and corruption into the countless multitude that were destined to be under his dominion. We see that Satan's wisdom was great, in that he knew if he could cause Eve to eat of the forbidden fruit, she in turn would induce Adam to eat of it, thereby their fall was certain; and thru that one incident, he (Satan) was assured of his power and dominion over all future generations of mankind. We see that he was to be, "The deceiver of the whole world" in the form of an evil Spirit, tirelessly and relentlessly to go about the whole earth thruout all time, seeking whom he may devour. Peter

so stated this in I Peter 5:8, showing that he was ever to be an adversary of the Lord's people.

As to why Eve and Adam did eat of the forbidden fruit and what this was a type of, we find that Elder Hudson's writing in the February, 1968 *Signs* is most informative, and other inspired writers have given enlightenment on it. As to God's purpose in creating Satan, we find a most interesting and enlightening article by Elder Griffin in his Editorial in the February, 1966 *Signs*. Please read both these articles. The latter brings out clearly that God created him a devil to play and act the devil and that He designed and determined the work the devil would do before the world began. Satan's cunning and effective adversity has never diminished one bit thruout the ages. We see how cunning he was in Job's time, (Job 1st Chapter), when he went among the sons of God to present themselves before the Lord, but the Lord knew him and inquired, "Whence comest thou?" Satan told of his going to and fro upon the earth, and we know that he does so in these days; and judging from what we see all about us, how his dominion has increased so alarmingly, we might well believe that he now travels about with greater speed than in Job's time when he said he was walking to and fro on the earth. His magic powers has the multitudes, countless millions upon millions of human beings, under his dominion. We see the thousands upon thousands of so-called evangelists and professors, false prophets and all such, running to and fro over the whole universe, backed up by the billions upon billions of dollars raised annually for their use, and the existence of all the thousands of fine structures, many costing millions to erect and maintain, from which comes false doctrines and anti-Christ material of all kinds. Surely Elder Harding, in March 1858, had this in mind when he wrote, "All those Ishmaelitish Preachers, WHO UNDER THE MAGIC POWER OF SATAN, are transforming themselves into Ministers of Righteousness." etc. Read his writing in the December 1966 *Signs*. Christ also warned his disciples in Matthew 24:24 by saying "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets and shall shew great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

While on the subject of Satan and his "Modus Operandi," will cite how brazen and gluttenous his appetite was, and is, in trying to gain control over the Son Of God, when he took Jesus up on the mountain and offered Him all the kingdoms of the world, AND THE GLORY THEREOF if He would bow down and worship him. What glory do we see today existing in the Kingdom of the world? Is it any wonder that Satan's dominion is so alarmingly large today as compared to the "REMNANT" or the Lord's people. Mention was just made of the great expenditure of money and the work of the multitude UNDER THE MAGIC POWER OF SATAN, in that one particular field. Let us take a quick glance at another kind: the multitudes of the past, present and future to come, that use their bodies, their effort, time and their wealth also, for vicious, vile and sinful actions, products of benefit to filthy minded, and properties of great value, that serve Old Satan and him only. In years past the main "Dens Of Iniquity" were mainly confined to large cities and patronized largely by those of the "underworld" type to engage in whoredom, dope and such things. In these later years, we now find the smaller places of similar type scattered everywhere and the larger establishments in the world's big cities and strategic sites devoted largely to idleness, worldly pleasure and riotous living; and these establishments are luxurious, indeed, and people of wealth and prominence flock thereto, particularly at night time. I know a man who in times past set foot in many of these "Dens Of Vice" as a curious minded observer, while with friends, or in conducted tours, etc., in cities such as

Paris, France, while in the Army in World War I, San Francisco, Butte, Montana, Reno and Las Vegas, Nevada, where in the last mentioned place, one section of the City is "The Strip" composed of several luxurious "Clubs" which cost many, many millions of dollars to construct, solely devoted to gambling, and entertainment that is putrid to the Lord's people. Traveling thru these establishments at night time is, in reality, being in "Satan's Kingdom" and the "Kingdom OF VICE AND SIN" and truly the baliwick of the Devil. I beg the Lord's forgiveness for this. Pages could be written detailing the many and varied operations of Old Satan. We only have to look about us daily to see enough of them to know that he is everywhere and will never let up as long as this time world endures.

It seems worthy of mention that we see in Job, 1st Chapter, where Satan, or the Devil, was just one being and was spoken to by the Lord in that sense, yet when Jesus talked to him — the unclean spirit in the Gadarene — and asked him, "What is thy name" — his answer was, "My name is Legion" (which means many); and then it is shown, "And all the devils besought Him, saying, send us into the swine, that we may enter into them." It is shown that there were many swine in the herd, yet there were enough devils to enter into every one of the swine. (Mark Chapter 5)

Now as to the dividing line that separates the Kingdom Of God from that Kingdom Of The World, or Satan's dominion, we can see that the All-Wise and Eternal God definitely set it before the world was, when He foresaw all that was to come to pass and wrote the names of all the elect that was to compose his Spiritual Kingdom, in the Lamb's Book Of Life, and all those whose names are not therein, compose that worldly kingdom. Jesus verified this fully when he told those Jews they were not in his Kingdom — that God was not their Father, but rather, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." (St. John 8:44) In Matthew 25:41 "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

These verses seem apropos:

"A wicked world and wicked heart, with Satan are combined;
Each acts a too successful part, in harassing my mind.
But fighting in my Saviour's strength, though mighty are my foes,
I shall a conqueror be at length, o'er all that can oppose."

An unworthy one, hoping that he has been brought forth from the Worldly Kingdom into the Kingdom Of God,

Wm. O. Hall
P. O. Box 595,
Mount Vernon, Wash. 98273

LETTER TO HIS MOTHER AT THE DEATH OF HIS BROTHER

208 Frederick Street
Bastrop, La. 71220

Dear Elder Wood:

Recently I came across a copy of my letter to my mother, which was written a few days after the death of my 18 year old brother who was accidentally killed while cleaning his rifle during August of 1962.

You have my permission to publish this letter if you feel that this will be of any benefit to the readers of the *Signs*.

Yours in a sweet hope,
W. W. Hudson, Jr.

COMFORT IN TIME OF TROUBLE

August 30, 1962

Dear Mother:

I hope this finds you feeling better, and that the Lord is giving you strength to carry on. "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds." (Psalms 147:3) "God is our

refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." (Psalms 46:1) Now, God is our all in all. He is the only one who can give us comfort, meaning He is the God of all comfort and mercy.

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." (2 Cor. 1:3-4) Paul plainly states that God is the direct source of all our comfort, yet God does use other means (as well as direct operation) in comforting his people. Meaning, Paul was a means or instrument in comforting God's people.

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." (Isaiah 61:1) As it took the Spirit of the Lord for Isaiah to comfort God's people in those days, it still takes the Spirit of the Lord in these days to comfort one another. As of myself, I have also been in deep sorrow during the recent loss of our precious one, but the Lord has been blessing me with sweet meditations concerning "Yonder's World." And I hope and pray that the Lord has also been blessing you with the same sweet meditations.

"One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever." (Ecclesiastes 1:4) Each generation has a ruler, king, etc., but they die just as the other people die. Therefore, the different generations have different rulers. They do not have the same natural rulers. But it is wonderful to know that God has been the God of all ages, and that He will continue to be God. "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. Thou turnest man to destruction and sayest, Return, ye children of men. For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night." (Psalms 90:1-4) We are timely creatures, but God is Eternal. There is no time with God!

Let us quote St. Augustine: The City of God, Book 13, Ch. 10, Pg. 364: "For whatever time we live is deducted from our whole term of life, and that which remains is daily becoming less and less; so that our whole life is nothing but a race towards death, in which no one is allowed to stand still for a little space, or to go somewhat more slowly, but all are driven forwards with an impartial movement, and with equal rapidity." It may take a little time to study this expression of Augustine, but I think that you will agree with him on this.

We are all born to die. Whether we are young, or old, rich or poor, one thing is certain: death is facing all of us. This body shall return to dust. We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we shall carry nothing out. "As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand." (Ecc. 5:15)

We all race to the same goal, death. "Yea, though he live a thousand years twice told, yet hath he seen no good: do not all go to one place?" (Ecc. 6:6) Some complete their journey when they are young, and some when they are old. As soon as we are born in this world, we are born to die. As each day is passing along, we are getting nearer to our end of the journey, which is death.

Now, it is good that we do not know the times nor the seasons. But God knows. "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die: a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted." (Ecc. 3:1-2)

"Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep, in the morning they are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth." (Psalms 90:5-6) We may compare the span of a person's life to a natural day. When the sun rises, we think of a new born child. When the sun sets, we think of death. The day is short for some, meaning that some die young. Of course, as we see the young, we think of their life as the morning time. But we do not know. The last time I saw Ted alive (15 days before his death), I did not dream that life's evening sun was sinking low for him. None of us knew, and it is good that we did not know. God knows what is best for us, and he fixed it so.

When we take stock of ourselves, we do not know what the morrow may bring. As Solomon said, "all is vanity." What would it profit us to own all the riches in this world? They will corrupt, and we will corrupt. "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it. (Ecc. 12:7)

Oh! May we *not* set our affections upon the perishable things of this world. Oh! May we set our affections upon things above, which are eternal. The first man is born to die, but God bless your soul, the second man is born to live! This is something sweet and precious to our poor souls. "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven." (I Cor. 15:47)

We are strangers here below. This earth is not our home, but it is a temporary dwelling place. When we have completed our journey here, the Lord will carry us home. This is something glorious to look forward to.

Our journey here is not an easy one. It is full of troubles, sorrows, heartaches, pains, etc. But we do not travel on our own strength. The Lord has promised that he will be with us. The Lord gives us fresh courage and strength to press on for the mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. (see Phil. 3:13-14)

"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." (Isaiah 43:2) Whether you are in deep distress, or lifted up upon the mountain top, the Lord is with you. We may feel forsaken by men, but it is wonderful and comforting to know that God never forsakes his people. God has an all seeing eye, and He tenderly watches over His people.

So, may we press on, ever looking unto Jesus, and knowing that some sweet day the Lord will carry us home to this eternal rest. Weary people need rest, and God's people are a weary people. The former things of this life shall be done away, and there will be nothing natural about it. The things we see with our natural eye shall perish, but the things we see with this eye of faith shall stand for ever. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away. (Rev. 21:4)

May the Lord bless you and give you fresh strength and courage to press on is my prayer.

Love,
W. W. Hudson, Jr.

THEY PREACH
"SAVED BY GRACE"

Rt. 1, Box 38A,
Glade Hill, Va. 24092

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a check to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times* for two years, and one dollar for the Indigent Fund.

My subscription runs out soon, and I don't want to miss a copy as I enjoy it so much. I do believe the Primitive

Baptists for they preach Saved by Grace, and not of ourselves. I do not belong to any church, but love the Primitive Baptists, and go to hear them whenever I have a way and can. I do not go as much as I would like to. I lost my husband, and my children are all married and away, and I don't drive, so I can't go regularly.

I ask the prayers of you all whenever you feel to pray for me. I used to go with my parents to church when my father S. Lester Perdue, was living, and I enjoyed it so much.

Mrs. Nannie Arrington

HIS REASONS

P. O. Box 295
Nags Head, N. C. 27959

Dear Editors:

I see it is time to renew my subscription to the dear *Signs of the Times*. I do not want to miss a single copy so I am enclosing a check for two year's subscription.

Here the question comes to my mind, Why not stop writing right here? you have explained what the check is for. But somehow I desire to express my reasons for renewing my subscription to the *Signs*. First of all, as far as I am enabled to separate the truth from un-truth, the *Signs of the Times* contend for the truth as I feel it to be; and, secondly, I think of no way I had rather spend the money the merciful God has blessed me with, than to obtain that which praises, honors and glorifies the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. I feel that there is none other deserving of any praise or honor.

In sweet hope,
Troy G. Shepard

"THE LORD IS OUR LAMP"

4 Maple Lane,
Pennington, N. J. 08534

Dear Brother Wood:

This has been a year wherein God has shown me his great mercy and love alike, and endowed me with enlightenment on some scripture that has been a mystery heretofore; but like a light for me to better see many beautiful things, my thoughts were directed to the 29th verse of 2 Samuel, 22nd chapter: "For thou art my lamp, O Lord, and the Lord will lighten my darkness."

Before this I dreamt of holding up a lighted lamp for my mother to better see the way she was walking, (she passed away twenty-one years ago.) Strange, indeed, the way God does guide one up from the dark valley to marvelous heights where they experience a glimpse of enlightenment and joy.

Enclosed is remittance for another year's subscription, and the remainder for the *Signs of the Times*. I feel blessed to have the privilege to read the various gifts expressed by the writers in this wonderful paper: another lamp, O Lord, to lighten my darkness along life's pathway.

In Christian love,
Sister Mary Hellings

RE-READS THE OLD ISSUES

5027 Abbott Ave.
Columbus, Ga. 31904

Dear Brother Editors:

My subscription is fast running out, and as the *Signs* means so much to me, I do not want to miss a single issue; so am renewing it now.

I do not get to go to meetings every Sunday since there are none near me of my faith . . . When I get to wanting to hear something and can't go to meeting, since I have kept every issue of the *Signs* I have received, I get them out and read until I get satisfied. Then I feel just like I have been to church.

The letters and the sermons I have read in the *Signs* are really inspiring to me. I am an ordained minister and I love to hear the brethren preach. We have some gifted ministers in our association, which is the Western Primitive Baptist, near Dothan, Alabama, more than a hundred miles away.

My wife and I have both had to retire, and we can't hold out to travel as we once did. The Lord takes care of his children, and I hope I am one of them; and am so thankful that it is as well with us as it is.

Remember us in your prayers.

Your brother in Christ, I hope,
Henry H. Collins

IN MEMORY OF PARENTS

2220 Hollywood Way
Burbank, Cal. 91504

Dear Elders:

Please accept this gift of $50.00 in memory of my parents who are deceased, Mr. and Mrs. Orville Winchell, of the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church in New York for many years. He was a Deacon there. Also to the memory of my grandfather, Elder Jacob Winchell, who was pastor of the Olive and Hurley Church for thirteen years.

The *Signs of the Times* has been in our home all my life, and I am very grateful to all. May God bless you all.

Lelah R. Hill

RECEIVED WITH THANKS

(We acknowledge receipt of the above gift of $50.00 for The Indigent Fund by Sister Lelah R. Hill, of Burbank, California, in memory of her father and mother, Deacon and Sister Orville Winchell, deceased; and in memory of her grandfather, Elder Jacob Winchell, who was pastor of the Olive and Hurley Church for thirteen years, from 1854 until 1867.

It was our privilege to know Brother and Sister Orville Winchell, who were very loyal and lovely Old School Baptists.

Editors)

IN MEMORY OF THEIR PASTOR

R. R. 1
West Frankfort, Ill. 62896

Dear Editors of the
Signs of the Times:

Please accept the enclosed donation of $50.00 in memory of our departed friend and Moderator, the late Elder C. M. Weaver.

Mr. and Mrs. Allie Neal

RECEIVED WITH THANKS

(We acknowledge receipt of the above gift of $50.00 for The Indigent Fund. This gift shows their appreciation for the memory of their highly esteemed friend and pastor, who died in 1957 at the age of 89.

We receive this gift with many thanks. It will be used in maintaining our Indigent Fund.

Editors)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
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Danville, Virginia February, 1970

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INFORMATION REQUESTED

11475 S. W. 41st Street
Miami, Fla. 33165

Dear Bro. Spangler:

Enclosed is money order for the *Signs of the Times* for another year.

I also want to ask you if you know of a Primitive Baptist Church anywhere in Denver, Colorado. I have a brother there who wants to know if there is one in that area.

Thanking you,
Eunice Dean

(Will someone please supply Sister Dean with the above requested information. Ed.)

EDITORIAL

"And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass; I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. But that which ye have already hold fast till I come. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessel of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." (Rev. 2:18, 29)

I would beg the Lord that he enable me to approach the mercy seat in softness of step and humility of mind as I undertake the task before me. If I am thus blessed, not only will I desire to bow in graceful submission and resignation to his holy will, but I will have in mind as I write, both those that are his humble followers, and also those that are out to gain notoriety regardless of whose expense it is necessary to tread under foot. I am not writing what any so-called theological commentator

thinks, nor have I consulted with any elder as to what he thinks. I have not been guilty of this for forty-five years, and, God willing, I will not begin it in the evening of life. There has been much, and there will, no doubt, be much more in my preaching and writing that can come under the justifiable censure of my brethren, but if it *is* justifiable it will be brought to my attention as my brother, not as one out to destroy. I would beg my readers to throw a mantle of charity over these things, for that they are important and sublime I am sure that none would deny.

I think that we have it laid down in no uncertain language that these matters are for all the churches in general, although the Spirit particularizes the things found in each church. Too, I think that it is constantly kept before them (and us, if we are churches) as to who is doing this sending forth of these things. Just here let me note that we are not fatalists. There is not a word of truth in the thought that predestinarian Baptists are fatalists. What is more, those that know their subject, that know history, that know language, they know the difference between a fatalist and a predestinarian. Perhaps it might be asked, Why, then, are we so often charged with being fatalists? Because that it gives the one thus making the charge a cudgel to browbeat us before their ignorant followers. The control of the masses by nefarious schemes is not limited to the Catholics.

God did not decree and leave the scene to fate; He did not withdraw as a fanatical dictator and leave us to face fatality without the application of a Fatherly chastening or the kind approval of our faithful stewardship. God determined and Jesus is at the Head of these churches directing things to the honor and glory of the three-in-one God. As the Head of this gospel kingdom it is well to note the kind of eyes that he has and the kind of feet in which he walks among these churches. He sees all, and his walk is an enduring walk, ever walking among his saints.

If the knowledge of God's knowledge (post and present and pre) does not humble us in dust and ashes, then that knowledge of him is a dead knowledge and goes no further than a letter or head affair. Perhaps it seems that way, but there is a tendency to look at his knowledge as belonging to events and not embracing our whims and fancies and every thought. He knows events and he knows by whom events come about and he knows the why and the motive. (see Matt. 18:7) The good things, the things that are lovely, were spoken of first. I would be foolish to minimize the importance of well doing; I would be equally foolish to tell the people of God that doing well becomes boresome or monotonous or tiresome, and that this is enough to leave it off for (Gal. 6:9; 2 Thes. 3:13); I would be foolish to tell them that they would not reap in due season, and that they would reap whether they fainted or did not faint. Also, I would be foolish to tell the churches that their works, and charity, and service, and faith, and patience, was wrought in them by anything less than the grace of God working effectually. I know that God is well pleased with these good things; how could he be otherwise, seeing that they are the production of his Spirit in them. (See Psa. 105:45; Ezek. 11:19, 20; Job 14:15; Rom. 14:23; Heb. 11:6)

Evidently, the Son of God was well pleased with these things. Was he well pleased with all that they were doing? If, in arguing for the doctrine of God's sovereignty, his universal rule over all things, his absolute predestination of all things, we are trying to say that God is as well pleased with the disobedience as he was with the obedience, you will have to look over me because I am not in accord with that kind of reasoning. When God tells me that he is well pleased with the walk of his subjects of grace, but not well pleased with their wrong doing, I do not desire to reply against Him. Do you?

The apostolic commandment to the young minister was that he rebuke some

of those recalcitrants of his day in a sharp manner. This was that they be sound in the faith. This had not been followed in the Thyatiran church. They had suffered *that* woman to teach and to seduce the servants to do things not pleasing to the Christ.

Perhaps this is the age of the Reformation when times were so trying, when the old harlot, which is none less than the vicaress of Rome, was slipping and sliding into the churches for no other reason than an effort to make shipwreck of their faith. At all times and places it is best to keep a sharp look out for this kind of woman. As soon as we become satisfied to take people by what they say instead of by what they do, we are inviting trouble into our ranks. Perhaps her nefarious schemes were literal, but this is doubtful. I leave all the questionable things that Rome has been charged with in a literal way between them and their God, and venture to make the statement that her seduction and enticement was in a spiritual sense.

These kind of silly women (I speak of churches and members of such bodies, not our sisters in Christ) are all ways and always looking for weak spots in the armour of the professing churches. Their approach is for the purpose of seduction and to rally all unstable souls under one common purpose. Their corrupting influence works now as it did then, and it runs about like this, Let us form a league of Christians for we are all aiming for the same heaven and serving the same Master; we are wasting time and effort and money in our efforts to attain the goal separately; let us put our resources together and do the same work with less time and money. This is spiritual fornication. May the Spirit of the Lord enable us to steer clear of this joining field to field with any of the isms of the day, but striving to live in peace with those that are peaceful.

There is not any subverting of the Scriptures that will remove the dire promise that is made to the impenitent. This is true in the case under consideration, and it is equally true in any case of our day. We are at a low ebb when we are dissatisfied with the plain declaration of the Lord, seemingly thinking that we know more about what He meant than He himself did. It does seem to charge God with foolishness to say that He did not mean for this evil woman to repent.

It does my poor soul good to read that He gave her space to repent. How tender and full of compassion is our God. How great and long the longsuffering of God towards those that make up His militant body. Yet she repented not. I do not find any reason for me to add a postscript to what He said about her — to write something that He did not say; to apologize for her (and Him) by saying that she could not. She could not because of her wickedness, but not because that the Lord made her wicked.

The casting of her into the bed is going on now. Oftimes God is carrying out His promises when we think that He is waiting. She is now (the spirit of Jezebel, the spirit of the harlot) in the bed, but she does not know it. She is stalking any that she can entice to lay with her, and what great tribulation awaits any that listens to her. (See Prov. 7) Her bed is growing harder even day by day. Her own children are rising up and giving even the Pope much trouble to keep them in line, and yet what is being done is moving towards that time when her children shall be killed with death. This is the one time that this expression is in the Bible. The children are not dead, but they are going to be killed *with death. Killed with death.* How many of her children? I offer no improvement on the language. They shall all be killed with death. But how is this to be done? When is it to be done? I do not know *when,* but I think that I know *how.*

Ah, dear children of God, He will avenge His elect. (Luke 18:7, 8) To all those under the altar (Rev. 6:10); to those whose blood ran freely under the crushing tread of the horde of these

children and their mother; to the poor and oppressed of this day and age, all is tending toward this eventful time. Death has accompanied the children of God; sorrow has gathered thick around them; desolation has thundered long and loud; the infantile churches, and now those of full age, all, all, have known the terrors of this woman and her children, but rest assured, dear brethren, that the time is now approaching (as to how long no one knows) when her children that have had life in its fulness (in persecution, in stripes, in fire, in a thousand ways, causing death of the body of the saints) will be brought before God to be killed with death. The first and last glimpse of the Saviour will be had as the wicked are judged out of the books. They shall see Him whom they have pierced; they shall bow before him and their tongue shall confess Him as the Lord, and then they shall be killed with death, the second death, killed to all hope and prospect of ever seeing Him again.

As the churches see this bed cast up; as they behold the sly workings of this woman as she plies her trade, and as they begin to see the crumbling of this fallen Babylon they begin to learn the searching and probing of the reins and hearts. Where are we? How is our stewardship? What would a thorough examination reveal about us? Would fire be applied to us? Would we be saved, as by fire? How would we respond to the judging of us? Would we expect the gift to be the same if our works were bad as it would be if they were righteous? Would we say that a thing done "according" to something would not be that way? As I examine the things found here let me say this, to wit, it means exactly what it says, and it says that ALL THE CHURCHES shall know this searching; that they all shall know that He gives unto each one according to their works. To this Jezebel, there is not any mercy shown, but these churches shall know the searching, the works found, the gift according to those works, and, flowing out from these experiences, the great mercy of God.

There is not any killing with death for the ones not contaminated with this doctrine; there is not a long list of regulations causing galling as the saints bear the yoke. Not any burden under grace save that the Lord searches the reins and hearts and that He gives us the rod of chastening when we stray. The requirement is simple; the command is easy to those that love Him. Hold fast to that which you have. Hold fast that ye be ready when He comes.

As I come to deal with these closing verses relative to this church, I am under criticism for what I have already said concerning these vital matters. It is not Christ that is here spoken of as overcoming. It is Christ that is speaking of another overcoming. It is not the Holy Ghost that overcomes, for Christ had overcome Satan and all stood as an obstacle to the children of God. In His official work He was to make manifest the works of Christ.

The question arises, to wit, If it is the child of God, if it is the children of God in this church (and thus among all churches) that overcomes, how is it that they shall rule the nations with a rod of iron? Let us remember that this one that overcomes, is to do this ruling and breaking to shivers *even* as Christ received of His Father. He was given to rule with a rod of iron (12:5; 19:15). This is the gospel day, it is the day of grace, it is the day of Jesus Christ. This gospel is the power of God; this grace is effectual grace (no conditional grace is mentioned); this Christ is the King and He has all power given into His hand.

The day is now here wherein an oven shall burn. All of those filled with pride (as Jezebel), yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be as stubble. During this day, this day wherein kings and priests reign *with* the Lord Jesus Christ as He sits on the throne of His glory, the burning shall be so intense that none of the wicked shall have root or branch

left them. Primarily, the wicked are those that deny the doctrine of saving grace, those that deny that Christ has come in the flesh. These unbelievers, all of them believing in the same thing, had a wonderful time while the oracles of God were with them. Israel, in his pomp and splendor, looked with disdain on any one else. But this burning day has not left them a single root nor branch that has the approval of the Lord. The legal system has fallen, Babylon has fallen, Moses is relegated back from the promised land so that he can never enter.

The children of God go forth under the banner of the Lord and of Gideon and they are conquering and ruling and treading down the wicked under their feet. Stubble is not any good, why not tread it down after it has been burned into ashes? (Mal. 4)

This little child of God does not feel all this in his flesh. He or she would say, When have I ever overcome (Matt. 25:37). To these precious ones that often feel to be faltering, feeling that they are walking in darkness and have no light (Isa. 50:10), the morning star is given unto them. Christ does not need the morning star for *He is the morning star*. It is always morning when Christ is present. He is our perpetual Youth. (Psa. 110:3)

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

PSALMS 72:16

"There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth."

Sister Phoebe Horton, of Warwick, N. Y., has asked that we devote the editorial space of our family paper to an exposition of the above Scripture. It will doubtless appear to all who will read this Psalm that it has to do with Christ and the subjects of his kingdom. He is King of kings, of whom it is said, "He shall judge the people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment." What he would do for his people and to their enemies is further enlarged upon in the Psalm. We quote a portion of what is said, as follows: "He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. * * * He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust." His absolute rule over the whole earth, and the fact that he will be worshipped are further evidenced by the following: "The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him."

In considering the text, we will divide it into three parts: (1) "There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains." Whatever this signified, there is no question about it; it was most certain to be, for the mouth of the Lord had spoken it. Corn is known for its food properties: it is full of strength and substance. The concordance in the Bible which we have before us says there were eleven Hebrew words used for describing it in its different states. The world shall not stand long enough to exhaust the great variety that there is in the Lord Jesus Christ. Eleven of the original apostles testified of the wonderful things of Jesus, but neither they nor all who follow after shall ever be able to tell the half. That he was the bread of life which came down from heaven, we have his own words to show: "I am the living bread which came down from

heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." — John 6:51.

The text says, "There shall be an handful of corn in the earth," etc. An "handful" is not a large quantity, but rather a small portion. At the most, therefore, comparatively speaking, we actually know but little of the Christ in this life, either as to his sufferings or the glory which followed. He reminded one of the beloved disciples, who could not watch one hour with him, that the spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak. We do but taste the cup which he drank to the dregs. Earthen vessels are not capacitated to contain the fullness of the joy that will some day, we hope, be ours, hence it is said, "Now we see through a glass darkly." This "handful of corn" was to be "in the earth," *and not on the earth.* The seed which is imbedded in the earth can neither be blown away by the winds of doctrines of men nor destroyed by the fowls of the air: it will in due season come forth and bear fruit. Jesus did not come on the earth to offer salvation to all who would accept. The angel of the Lord who appeared unto Joseph said concerning Mary, "She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." We are told concerning him that he "who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in the fashion of a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." He came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. His own words are, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Jesus, the blessed Son of God, was verily that corn of wheat which fell into the ground; it was he who was born of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

The fact that so-called learned men deny this truth only proves that He has hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes. Neither is this handful of corn said to be in the earth universally, as some would have us believe, but is declared to be in that part, or portion of the earth referred to as "upon the top of the mountain." There is a definite number, known unto the Lord from before the foundation of the world, of the human race spoken of as a "chosen generation," and these are they whom God highly exalts and separates from the rest of the world by making of them a peculiar people, and they shall show forth his praise. Isaiah, by faith, saw the risen Christ coming from Edom, "with dyed garments from Bozrah," glorious in his apparel and traveling in the greatness of his strength. Bozrah means "sheepfold," which signifies that Jesus was made like unto his brethren in all things except that he was without sin. The Word verily was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth, is the testimony of the inspired apostle, John. Whatever knowledge we may have of Jesus today, regardless of its limitations, is that which has been made known us by the workings of God's mighty power. He writes his law in the inward part, even the heart of his people, and, therefore, they cannot be moved.

(2) "The fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon." Lebanon, with its high and lofty snow-capped peaks, and its wonderful cedars, was full of significance. Her cedars were evergreen, implying eternal life, and they received their refreshing from the pure waters

on high. True, they were accustomed to the penetrating icy winds from the north country, nevertheless they endured, being sustained and kept by the power of him who held the winds in the hollow of his fists. These were typical of the trees "upon the top of the mountains" among whom the Lord of glory dwells. Ezekiel took up that line of thought, and the Lord spoke by him, saying, "I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent: in the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it; and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell."

How remarkably this prefigured the coming of Christ through the house, or lineage, of David; his crucifixion, according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; his resurrection from the dead to the pre-eminent position of being Lord of lords and King of kings. The fruits, or effects of this have followed all down through the ages by the manifestation of his quickening power in raising sinners from their dead works to serve the true and living God. What a shaking there is when the wind of his Holy Spirit begins to blow upon the valley of dry bones. Truly, the dead are raised up, the blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk and the poor have the gospel preached to them. God's children are well acquainted with the hardships and trials that are the lot of those who follow Jesus. The record is that this world was not a friend to him while here in the flesh, and neither is it today friendly towards those who contend for his principles, but they have the assurance that they shall be brought forth more than conquerors through him that loved them and gave himself for them.

(3) "And they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth." Who is it that shall flourish? They of the city. What city? Mount Zion, the city of God. The positive manner of the language employed makes it certain, both as to the fact and the extent to which they shall flourish. We can well imagine that we hear a great chorus going up all over the country, saying, "We are all dried up, and there seems little or no life in us." Notwithstanding this, we are persuaded that our text speaks the truth when it says, "They of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth." Many of us know how perfectly natural it is for the earth to bring forth grass. It seems to be a fixed trait of mother nature to cover her footstool with grass after the passing of winter; it comes forth abundantly almost universally, and not only without the assistance of mankind in great areas, but in spite of all that man can do to prevent it in many places. It is just as natural for the "new creature" to flourish by the rivers of the water of life, for when one is born of the Spirit, that life which is imparted unto him is as certain to hunger and thirst after righteousness as the sparks are to fly upward, or that water is to seek its own level. That which is counterfeit will not satisfy the cravings of such living souls, and they will be found fighting the good fight of faith. Such characters know how the grass flourishes in the earth and that it can bring forth nothing good. They become absolutely convinced that nature's barren soil cannot produce spiritual fruit, therefore, they cry unto the Lord. When the Lord is pleased to answer their prayers they are witnesses to the fact that the desert is made to blossom as the rose. What wonderful music there is when the barren are made to break forth into singing, when their hands are loosed and they are brought on Pisgah's top to view the wonders of God's redeeming love. One of the poets described some of the wonders of this city in the following lines:

"Zion's a city God hath blessed
With peace and everlasting rest;
A glorious city, strong and fair,
And Jesus dwells forever there.

Her ancient walls appear to be
The workmanship of Deity;
Founded in grace, they still appear
Without a flaw or chasm there.

Oft has this city's strength been tried,
By mighty foes on every side;
But all in vain it yet has been,
She baffles Satan, hell and sin.

Count ye her towers, how high they rise,
Her golden spires, they pierce the skies;
Her golden streets are fair to view,
Her palaces and bulwarks, too.

Then round her walk, her turrets tell,
Mark all her brazen bulwarks well;
Spread far and wide her deathless fame,
Her pearly gates and walls of flame.

Her founder's love has ever proved,
Like Salem's mount, which ne'er was moved,
'Tis fixed on this eternal base,
The grace of God, and gift by grace."

This city, then, shall flourish like the grass of the earth, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. If we have been given a good hope, through grace, in the mercy of God and can, by faith, behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world, we are, indeed, the most wonderfully blest of all peoples on the face of the earth. Let us, therefore, lift up our voices, as much as in us is, in songs of sublime adoration and praise and extol the great Ancient of days for his rich and distinguishing grace.

(The above was by Elder Dodson in the June, 1933 issue of the *Signs*.)

RESTITUTION
(Acts 3:21.)

A sister whose address is Harding, West Virginia, wrote, asking as follows: "In the restitution of all things, what will be the 'all things' that are to be restored? I have never heard any views on this neither have I been enabled to grasp its full meaning."

We cannot tell why our ministers of late years have been silent on this subject of "restitution," unless it has been simply because their minds have not been exercised to speak and to write of it. In looking back over the writings of Old School Baptists years ago, one occasionally comes across references to this subject, which shows that our people of former generations accepted and believed the doctrine of "restitution." Nowadays, however, when this subject comes up, it seems to strike many as something they never heard of before. Thus, it may be good for us to be reminded of those things which we have let slip through not having been taught them. Restitution simply means restoration, the act of giving back what had at some former time been taken away. In this connection, it means restoring to the Jews what God had deprived them of. It means restoring the Jews to their own land and giving back to them the land taken from them. Not only, however, does restitution apply to giving back to the Jews their former land, but it means restoring the Jewish nation to covenant relationship with the Almighty through his Son Jesus Christ whom they rejected and crucified; but whom at his appearing again they will believe in as their Messiah and Redeemer. This can take place only when the Gentile church has been brought unto completion; and from the signs now among us, we believe this is about at hand. Religious organizations, that is the form of religion, may continue on for some time to come, but the true body of Christ, which is his church, seems to be about finished. Already, and for some years past, the world has been witnessing the steady movement of the Jews toward their own land. The World War of 1914 to 1918 gave this movement a great impetus, and since then it has been growing by leaps and bounds. "He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

Just exactly as the word here says, God the Father will send to the Jews his Son Jesus Christ. This Jesus was before preached unto them in all the types and shadows of the Mosaic covenant. He was declared by all the prophets unto them. It is perfectly true that the Mosaic covenant was disobeyed by the Jewish nation, wherefore they were cast out; and since their being cast out, God through Christ by his grace has brought the Gentile church in. When this body of Christ is completed from among the Gentiles, then will be brought to light the kingdom of heaven among the restored Jewish remnant in the land of promise. The covenant made by God with Abraham was before the law four hundred and thirty years, and the law which was afterward cannot by any means disannul the promise which preceded the law. But the Jews, as well as the Gentiles, cannot come in by the works of the law; they cannot possibly come into the kingdom by flesh and blood: it must be by promise and wholly by God's grace. It will not and cannot be by their own might and power, but by the Spirit of the Lord. This is why the present world-movement of Zionism has about come to a standstill on account of England's refusal to execute vigorously the mandate over the land of Palestine assigned to England by the League of Nations. England is afraid to antagonize the Arabs which are opposed to the Jews coming back to Palestine. Thus, the movement of Jews in that direction has been slowed down, but it is with almost breathless interest that we look for the next development in world affairs which will speed it up again. Jesus Christ is at the present time in the heaven and has been in the heaven ever since his disciples with their own eyes beheld him ascend up out of their sight; he will appear again at the fullness of the times of restitution, will appear to the Jews, and when they see him next time they will not say, "Away with him, crucify him. We will not have him to rule over us." No, they will say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." They will gladly hail him as their King and Messiah. There is no spirituality in them as yet, and will not be until they are circumcised in heart, and that will not take place until they are back in the land, as Moses says in Deuteronomy xxx:6. There is not a single one of the prophets but who declares this restoration of the Jews to their own land. As Acts iii:21, says, "the mouth of all his holy prophets" has spoken it. Moses, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Amos, Jeremiah and Isaiah all say so. Had we space, we would quote them all. "Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel." — Hosea i:11. "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms, any more at all." — Ezek. xxxvii:21, 22. Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones refers entirely to this time of restitution, and not to the Gentile church at all, though it is often made to apply that way. You will note in this vision of the valley of dry bones, that the bones came together while there was still no life in them; flesh and sinews came upon the bones and yet there was no life there. What an amazing picture is this of the coming together of Israel which we are witnessing today! In all this world-union of Jews everywhere for the purpose of returning to their own beloved land, there is no spiritual life from God yet. Nevertheless, the bones are coming together and the flesh and sinews are coming upon the bones. Never since the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans under Titus in 70 A. D. has

there been such a world movement of Israel toward their own land as in this present time. We are today seeing the verification of Ezekiel's vision, and the breath of spiritual life will be breathed into this restored remnant some time following their restoration to the land; just when, God alone knows. They are coming up out of their graves now, and the "graves" in this instance mean the different nations of the earth where the Jews have been scattered during their dispersion from their land. These graves are now opening and the dry bones are coming up out of them and are coming to their fellow-bones and are receiving flesh and sinews, yet are still spiritually dead. The time of their awakening, which will take place when the Lord from heaven appears to them, may be much nearer than we think. Remember, it comes as a thief in the night and none of us will know of it until it is a matter of full realization. Read Amos ix:14, 15; also Jeremiah xxxi:10-14. Indeed, search through all the prophets and then stand amazed at the declared wonders of prophecy you see revealed there. The marvelous workings of God's eternal plan and purpose are nothing short of stupendous. The present distresses among the nations of the Gentile world are plainly of the Lord, are plainly the fulfillment of his written word. Economic depressions, droughts, famines, wars, pestilences, earthquakes, floods and all their kindred ills are vials of the seven last plagues being poured out from heaven, all to wear down the political and world supremacy of the Gentiles to prepare the way for the kings of the east, to usher in the kingdom of heaven among the restored Jews, and when that is done the whole world will realize such a blessing flowing to all nations because of the kingdom of heaven, such an age as the world has never yet seen. Then, that which missionaries have been trying to do for one hundred and fifty years by proselyting and money raising will be done instantly, because it is expressly declared in the prophets that even the heathen shall know that God is the Lord and that Israel is his people, when the Lord shall set up his kingdom to reign; in that day when he shall take unto himself his great power and shall reign. Prior to this coming in of the kingdom, there will be some kind of world-federation, a last and most desperate effort on the part of Gentile world-power to retain their hegemony over the world which they already feel slipping from their grasp. When this world-federation is an established fact, we shall expect to see the "man of sin" at the head of it. But it will all go for naught. The final act of this "man of sin" with the world league backing him up, will be to move against the helpless restored Jews in the holy land; and that move will be the last desperate act of the Gentiles to retain their hold on world power. It will be nothing short of suicide for them.

In confirmation of this fact revealed in Holy Writ, read Ezekiel thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters. There you will find, just exactly as God has predestinated it, the assault of allied powers against the restored Jews, which will not only be fruitless, but absolutely fatal to Gentile supremacy: they shall die by thousands upon the mountains of Israel and be buried there, not because the Jews will be able to defeat them by themselves but because the Lord will himself appear and fight against them with the fire of his own wrath and indignation. This "day of the Lord" shall not come until the world shall first witness the rise and supremacy of the "man of sin" whose number is 666. So Paul says in 2 Thessalonians ii:3, 4.

Strange as it may seem, the very day we received the request from this sister in West Virginia for information upon this subject, we received the February number of the *Gospel Standard* from London. To our amazement, we found in that number an article written by Mr. J. C. Philpot in 1854, over three-quarters of a century ago. We cannot

forbear letting you have part of it, but wish you could read all of it. It comes from out the past as a startling confirmation of what we believe, but which we find few people at the present time do believe. Here it is:

"The restoration of the Jews to their own land seems to us as clearly revealed as their dispersion. (Deut. xxx:1-5.) It seems evident from the words, 'that the way of the kings of the east may be prepared,' that there will be a gradual preparation for their return, and that it will come to pass, not as a sudden miracle or unexpected event, but will take place as a matter long anticipated."

Now, this is amazing when you consider that when Mr. Philpot wrote these lines Zionism was not heard of as yet, and there was not yet any world-organization of the Jews in 1854. Mr. Philpot bases his assertions entirely on the Bible and not on the events of his time: a most wonderful proof of the spiritual insight of Mr. Philpot into these hidden things. Not one single word of what Mr. Philpot has written needs changing in the light of what we know today: events as they have come to pass show clearly that Mr. Philpot was entirely right. Let us quote him a little further:

"Most clear and distinct are the promises that the ten tribes thus carried into captivity, called in the Word of God from their leading tribe, 'Ephraim,' and sometimes termed 'Israel,' as distinct from the tribe called 'Judah,' will be restored to their own land. We will not multiply quotations. It will be sufficient to refer our readers to the following passages: Isaiah xi:11-14; Ezek. xxxvii:19-28; and to one which, from its distinct mention of the 'house of Joseph,' that is, the ten tribes (Joseph being the father of Ephraim), we can hardly forbear quoting: 'And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them; for I have mercy upon them; and they shall be as though I had not cast them off; for I am the Lord their God, and will hear them.' 'I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; and the place shall not be found for them.' (Zech. x:6, 10.) The drying up of the river merely prepares the way for the return; but years may intervene before the event is accomplished, and there appears every reason to believe that Babylon will be destroyed before it takes place. See Isaiah 14th chapter."

So wrote the able Mr. Philpot seventy-seven years ago. All that has transpired in these seventy-seven years does not make necessary the change of a single word of his prediction. "Years may intervene before the event is accomplished," he says. Well, years have intervened and it is being accomplished under our very eyes. As events come to pass day by day, they reveal what has been in the Divine Mind from eternity; history is nothing more or less than the unrolling of predestination. The Bible will interpret these events as they come to pass, if only we are given to understand them in the light of the Spirit. It is good for us to watch, and to pray as we watch. May the Lord give us ever more and more of his light and not leave us to sleep on in darkness; that is, in ignorance of his wonderful purpose.

(The above was an editorial by Elder H. H. Lefferts in the April, 1931, issue, and is republished by request.)

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Bellview Primitive Baptist Church, Roanoke County, Va., a presbytery met August 16th, 1969 at 8:30 p. m. for the examination of brother Lane Carter and G. W. Conner, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, ordain the two above mentioned to the full work of the office of deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder J. L Bocock. All Elders and Deacons of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders J. L. Bocock, L. J. Brammer, J. R. Hollandsworth, Rufus Brown, W. M. Holland, L. R. Agee and Donald E. Smith. Deacons: Claude Hopkins, D. O. Chandler, Jr., Robert Walker, Joe Mangum, P. D. Akers, Edwin Dyer, Claude Johnson, Nelson Reed, Redge Metz, Tiras Conner, G. T. Rakes, C. T. Abshire, Jimmy Holley, P. L. Lynch, Roy Gearhart, W. R. Bernard, N. F. Conner, T. K. Dalton, Brammer Nichols, L. C. Hunt and Harry Cannaday.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder L. J. Brammer as Moderator and Elder

Donald E. Smith as Clerk. Elders J. R. Hollandsworth and L. R. Agee were chosen to perform the examination of the candidates. Brother Grover Cleveland Turner having been duly appointed by Bellview Church in conference August 16th, 1969, spokesman for the church delivered brethren Lane Carter and G. W. Conner to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elders J. R. Hollandsworth and Lee Roy Agee using scripture reference 6th chapter Acts of the Apostles and 1 Tim. 3rd chapter. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidates, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder William Holland. Elder L. J. Brammer delivered the charge to the candidates. Scripture reference, the Bible as a guide to be used in their endeavors.

The Moderator asked Brother G. C. Turner if the church approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to brother Lane Carter and G. W. Conner and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The two ordained deacons were delivered back to the church as ordained deacons of the Old School, Primitive Baptist Church at Bellview.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Donald E. Smith.

Elder L. J. Brammer, Moderator
Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

OBITUARIES

ELDER G. G. TREVATHAN

Elder G. G. Trevathan was born March 19, 1875, and was called to his eternal home June 6, 1969, making his sojourn on this earth 94 years and nearly three months. He was married September 6, 1899, to Mary Stallings who preceded him in death, on February 21, 1958. To this union the Lord gave eight children, five of them are survivors of their father. They are Mrs. Emily Bullock of Pinetops, N. C.; Mrs. Sarah Cousins of Rocky Mount, N. C.; Earl of Fountain, N. C.; Fred of Farmville, N. C. and W. C. of Pinetops, N. C.

Brother Gold, often called "Pop" by those who loved him, united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Lower Town Creek second Sunday in June 1925, and was baptized by Elder A. M. Crisp. He was examined and ordained deacon in February 1926, and was liberated to preach wherever he hoped to be called in January 1928, and ordained to the full work of the Gospel Ministry second Sunday in February 1938. The Elders who served in the ordination were E. L. Cobb, J. D. Fly, C. I. Robbins and J. C. Smith.

In the year of 1966 in August, he moved his membership to the Falls Church, Rocky Mount, N. C., and was a minister there until his death. He lived to see two of his sons baptized into the church he loved and to see both of these ordained as deacons. He loved to be referred to as a little preacher, yet his gift was wonderful and used so very much by the churches in the Keheukee, and the Contentnea Associations as well as the corresponding churches in several surrounding states. He was slow to speak and yet there was much wisdom in his council, and his advise was sought after by the ministers, deacons, and brethren who loved and respected him and his gift so much. Many scriptures and thoughts enter my mind as I think of his life, his ministry, his death and his hope of the resurrection, and I am inspired to write some of them here.

Certainly a servant of God has fallen, a servant called, qualified and sent forth into Israel to serve His people, by Israel's God; and He has called His servant out of natures' fallen estate. As He calls His servant home, He only completes His oath given to all His chosen servants, as it is given to David in the 89th Psalm, "Once I have sworn to my servant David, I will not lie, I will visit His transgression with the rod, His inequities with the stripes; nevertheless, I will not utterly take my lovingkindness from Him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." Thus, our hope is bright, our faith strong, our aspirations made secure by the divinity of the promises of God. Because God swore an oath to His servants, and in the completion of His oath, we are given grace to continue to press onward and upward toward the mark of the prize of the high calling as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Pop is "Pop" to so many children. To his sons and daughters, grandchildren, great grandchildren, nieces and nephews, and all whom he held so dear by nature's ties, and also those he loved so much by the ties of the Holy Spirit. He has been a member of two Primitive Baptist Associations, the Kehukee and the Contentnea, but his children reached far beyond any associational barriers. In the church of the Living God, he is loved and will be greatly missed by so very many in North Carolina, Virginia, and South Carolina to my own knowledge, and probably in other states as well. He was, at the date of his passing, pastor of Kitty Hawk Church, but served others — Moores, Old Sparta, Nahunta, and others that I cannot remember now. Not only was he a God fearing called minister, but a good pastor, a wise counselor, and a wonderful yoke fellow in the ministry. He was especially kind to me and the young ministers of

his day. He was always ready to assist in the ordinances of the church, and willing to supply the churches when the pastors needed to be away. To sum this up, to us he was "Pop." "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the earth which the Lord thy God giveth thee," writes Moses in the law of God; "He that beginneth a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ," writes the New Testament writer; and "The days of a man are three score years and ten," we do by faith hear the inspired writers. When we hear these wonderful scriptural promises we cannot help but know that Pop was an inspired man of God. We saw these scriptures fulfilled in his life and now in his death. He was blessed preacher of both the New and Old Testaments, but also was wonderfully blessed with a vivid and real experience of grace which was always a great source of comfort to him, and he delighted in preaching this glorious experience when he was blessed to do so. He loved tangible things in nature as well as in spirit. God's people, his neighbors, his friends, as well as his family, were many times comforted by his precious experiences of Grace.

Loving earthly things made him a good witness, and some of the most precious moments of my life were those when we could together witness the precious gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Being made so emphatically a child of grace, he could preach the mercy, love, faith, grace, long suffering, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ as few men could parallel in his day. Certainly, we shall miss him, but we cannot want him back to suffer the hardships of this mortal life again. Yes, we love him but do we want to see in his countenance the lines of pain again? worry again? uncertainty again? Being a man of nature, he knew these adversaries over and over again, but now he can know them no more forever. How long must he wait? This has been a great concern for me when I remember that all of his servants must wait until He comes again, but now I hope in His mercy, God showed me that the waiting is over for the dead in Christ. He is as one asleep who is awakened by his father in the beauties of the morning, awakened to a new and better day, no more heartache and yesterday's worries, pain and suffering washed away by the blessed darkness of night, a new day, a new beginning free from all but the precious love of God and His children in that wonderful world where congregations never break up and happiness shall never cease.

What is the resurrection like? How are the dead raised up? In what body will they be? Certainly we like may others think of these questions, and there has been a time when they were of much concern to me. But listen to the inspired work, "Thy dead men shall live together with my dead body shall they arise . . ." God will give it a body that pleases Him; today shall thou, not someone else, be with me in paradise; whom I shall see for myself, mine eyes shall behold and not another, when I wake in thy likeness I'll be satisfied; this vile body fashioned like His own glorious body. As we by faith hear these and so many other beautiful promises that are made to the servants of God, our concern is gone and we are made to be at peace with our Saviour and all just men.

John sums up our feelings when he writes, "Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord, yea, henceforth sayeth the Spirit, they do rest from their labors and their works do follow them." These weeks have passed, and we miss Pop greatly with full knowledge that we can never in this world see him again, yet our hope is strong that one day we will see him, beyond the earth, in a never ending eternity where the lights of the earth can never shine, the sun and the moon will be of no effect because God Himself shall be the light of that city. No darkness there, just one bright eternal day of joy, because where there is no darkness, there is no sin, and "Pop" will join the children of the Heavenly King who shall bask in the sunlight of God's love forever in that bright celestial city that shall continue eternally, world without end.

Written by one who loved him,
A. P. Mewborn

DEACON BERNARD G. BIRD

The Lord has seen fit to take home our beloved Brother, Bernard G. Bird. He was born October 19, 1891 — died August 23, 1969. It is with sorrowful heart the writer will try to record of his life and death, but wish to be submissive to the great I am. We feel that our loss is his great reward.

Brother Bernard was raised a farm boy by Primitive Baptist parents — Callie Hill Bird and Callie Bird. In middle life he went into Industrial work and moved to Huntington, W. Va. There he joined the Harmony Church and was baptized by the late Elder H. J. Bird. He served this church for several years as Clerk. In 1960 he moved his membership to Providence Church and they ordained him as Deacon. He fullfilled this to the best of his ability. He never shirked and was always working for the good of the church, never thinking about personal rewards.

He filled his seat well. In his last sickness (heart ailment) he came home from the hospital on Friday and made arrangements to fill his seat Saturday but his good wife arose Sat-

urday morning and he had died in his sleep.

Brother Bernard, many times worked on the church property when he was not able. He had a love for the church and its members. We don't have words to express that love.

He leaves a widow, Mrs. Vera Johnson Bird and two children, Norma Bird and Violet Jane Bird, and four grandchildren, and the church to mourn their loss.

At his request his funeral was held in his church house by his Pastor, Elder W. P. Oneal. He was assisted by Elder Veldon Linn in the presence of a host of relatives and friends.

The church has lost a very able member. We would like to be submissive to our God. We feel that our loss was our Brother's gain.

The writer feels that our Brother filled the office of Deacon well, he never faltered but he did not expect any reward, but was for the love of his church and he never felt he had done enough.

He will be missed by all, but the writer feels that he filled out each allotted day well.

Done by the order of the Church September 27, 1969.

Elder W. P. Oneal, Moderator
Virgil L. Byrnside, Clerk and Writer

LELA BRITTON

It was the request of the church at Bear Grass for me to write an obituary of Lela Britton.

It is indeed with tear dimmed eyes and a heavy heart from a standpoint of nature that I attempt to write a few words in memory of one whom I loved so dearly.

My dear aunt, and our beloved sister, Lela Wynne Britton, was born in Cross Roads township 82 years ago on September 3, 1886, the daughter of the late George W. Wynne and Margaret Peel Wynne. She was married on December 10, 1905 to William Henry Britton who preceded her in death in 1950. To this union were born six children, three boys and three girls. One son preceded her in death years ago. The five surviving children are three daughters, Mrs. Helen Carson of near Robersonville, Mrs. Floyd Whitfield of Hamilton, Mrs. Lela W. Leggett of Stokes, two sons, J. D. Britton of Robersonville and William C. Britton of Williamston. She had She had attended the Primitive Baptist Church twelve grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren.

Sister Lela Britton united with the church Saturday before the third Sunday in May 1948, and was baptized on Sunday morning at Everett's Bridge by Elder A. B. Ayers. Sister Lela was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace and professed a precious hope in an all wise and merciful God. She was most faithful in church attendance, especially her home church, up until three years before her death. After a fall she became an invalid and was confined to her bed. She lived the remaining three years as an invalid in the homes of her daughters at various lengths of time. She was devoted to her family and always found time to do for others whenever her health would permit it. Everyone held her very near to their hearts as they fellowshipped with her whenever they saw her. She was a good mother and neighbor and friend to everyone. She took her burden of afflictions with patience and understanding that her Redeemer would repay one day. She enjoyed the company of others and relatives during her illness, and she never failed to recognize me whenever I visited her. She would always call me by my first name and talk very happy, and sometimes I would hear her singing when I would visit. After taking her burden of illness for sometime in her heart and mind, the end came gradually to our beloved sister, Monday evening, May 19, 1969, while she was in the home of one of her daughters, Mrs. Joseph Leggett of Stokes.

Her funeral was conducted in Biggs Chapel in Robersonville, N. C., by her pastor, Elder E. C. Harrison, of the Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church. She was laid to rest in Robersonville Cemetery in the family plot with a beautiful array of lovely flowers; to await the resurrection morn.

Written by her niece,
Ethel M. Rogerson

MRS. KATE JOYNER BRADLEY

I have been given a mind to write a sketch of the life and death of my dear aunt, Mrs. Kate Joyner Bradley, whom I esteemed and loved very much. She was born July 12, 1891, the daughter of the late M. D. and Hester Gray Joyner, and passed from the walks of life here suddenly April 10, 1969, while visiting a niece, Mrs. Ann Harvey, in Richmond, Va. She was married to James Benjamin Bradley who preceded her in death April 1, 1943. She was 77.

Aunt Kate, as I always called her, was the only active member of Old Kehukee Church, (organized 1742), near Scotland Neck, N. C. all of her life, but did not ask for a home with them until August, 1966. She was baptized by the pastor, Elder S. R. Boykin, assisted by Elders D. B. Handy and I. S. Connor.

One of the many good traits or characteristics, which was through the goodness and

mercy of our Heavenly Father, was her faithfulness to Kehukee Church. The members of the other churches and friends will long remember how she begun her preparation for each meeting well in advance. This was to see that ample food was carried for each meeting and all other necessities administered including the provision for the pastor. All of this will be long remembered. Though the church had but one active member, yet she (the church) lived as though there were many in the militant state. This was a beautiful sight. Her neighbors said that she carried much cheerfulness in dark hours and her concern was for others so much of the time. She loved people and possessed many friendships.

She leaves behind to mourn her passing three sons, James E. Bradley of Wake Forest, N. C.; Maurice D. Bradley, Tarboro, N. C.; and Richard B. Bradley of South Boston, Va.; eleven grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Her funeral rites were held at the Scotland Neck Funeral Chapel by Elder Boykin, assisted by Elders D. B. Handy and I. S. Connor, with interment in Nahalah Cemetery. It is my humble trust and hope that God in His infinite love will raise her vile body at the resurrection of the just when the King of Kings and Lord of Lords shall come the second time, when corruption will put on incorruption. There will be no more sting of death when it is swallowed up in Victory.

Her nephew,
Albert R. Cherry
Raleigh, N. C.

JAMES REUBEN HOOKS

James Reuben Hooks passed from this life on August 16, 1969, at the age of seventy-three. He was a son of Elder James Christopher Hooks and Susan Barnes Hooks. He was reared on his father's farm near Fremont, North Carolina. He was a veteran of World War I, and a bookkeeper and farmer. In 1927 he married the former Oneida Brinn of Hertford, North Carolina.

He was respected by all who knew him for his strong moral character and unquestioned integrity. He united with Aycock's Primitive Baptist Church on May 28, 1939, and was ordained a deacon a few years later.

He was an ardent believer in Salvation by the Grace of God. We feel that in the words of Tennyson, "He has met his Pilot face to face, now that he has crossed the bar."

Written by
Jimmy Aycock
Fremont, N. C.

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT FOR SISTER LILLIAN ROSS

By request of this dear sister I will try to write a short memorial to her. She was my next door neighbor for over forty years. I felt like she was more than a neighbor. We were very close. We shared everything: in raising our children, we shared sickness, and death, joys, and sorrows. She joined the church at Spring Green in September, 1914, and was baptized with her dear companion. I never saw any enjoy their church more. Their greatest pleasure was in visiting other churches and entertaining the members in their home. But after she lost her dear companion it almost ruined her. Her health failed and soon she didn't have a mind, and seemed to be living in another world. She lived to be 80 years old and passed away May 1, 1969.

Her funeral was conducted in Spring Green Church by Elder E. C. Harrison. Her body was laid to rest beside her husband in Robersonville Cemetery. She leaves several children and grandchildren, a sister, and brother. I often think how beautiful heaven must be, sweet home of the brave and free. How I do hope dear Lord there is a place for me.

Written by one who loved her,
Sister Annie Edmondson, Committee

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

We, the Church at Tarboro, wish to bow in humble submission to the passing of our dear Brother Kelly Turner, since it has pleased our Almighty God to take him from our midst.

Brother Turner was born May 17, 1891, and died October 28, 1969, making his stay on earth 78 years. For many years he was blessed to attend our church before asking for a home, which he joined in September, 1966. To know him was to love him.

Now we, the Church, Resolve, 1. That we feel our loss is his eternal gain. 2. That our sincere sympathy goes to his family and hope they will continue to come to our meetings. 3. That three copies of this Resolution be made: one for the Church, one to be sent to the family, and one to be published in the *Signs of the Times*.

This done by order at our November meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 138 DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1970 NO. 3

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3/70
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

HEAVEN ANTICIPATED

O how the thought that I shall know
The Man that suffered here below
  To manifest His favor
For me and those whom most I love,
Or here, or with Himself above,
Does my delighted passions move
  At that sweet word — FOR EVER!

For ever to behold Him shine,
For evermore to call Him mine,
  And see Him still before me!
For ever on His face to gaze,
And meet His full assembled rays,
While all the Father He displays
  To all the saints in glory!

Not all things else are half so dear
As His delightful presence here —
  What must it be in heaven?
'Tis heaven on earth to hear Him say
As now I journey day by day;
Poor sinner, cast thy fears away,
  Thy sins are all forgiven!

But how must His celestial voice
Make my enraptured heart rejoice
  When I in glory hear Him!
While I before the heavenly gate
For everlasting entrance wait,
And Jesus on His throne of state
  Invites me to come near Him!

Come in, thou blessed, sit by Me;
With My own life I ransomed thee;
  Come taste My perfect favour;
Come in, thou happy spirit, come,
Thou now shalt dwell with Me at home —
Ye blissful mansions, make him room,
  For he must stay for ever!

When Jesus thus invites me in,
How will the heavenly hosts begin
  To own their new relation!
Come in, come in, the blissful sound
From every tongue will echo round,
Till all the crystal walls resound
  With joy for my salvation!

Joseph Swain, 1761-1796
(Selected by C. W. Vass)

ENJOYED THE UNION MEETING

Dear Brother and Sister Spangler:

I want to write a few words about how much I enjoyed the Union Meeting at Dan River the 5th Sunday in November. Elder Brammer was wonderfully blessed to preach my feelings. I certainly believe what he said, that if you had the love of God in your heart, you would love and fellowship all of God's little ones. It is pitiful, and I feel sorry for any that cannot fellowship their brothers and sisters. My concern is, can they fellowship me?

I hope I love all the Lord's people, and that on my dying bed I will still be blessed to feel that I have left non-fellowship for none of them. There is no greater blessing or sweeter times in our lives than when our cup runs over with blessings from our Heavenly Father.

I enjoy coming to Dan River and Reidsville Church. We hope the Lord will spare you many years to serve his people . . . I know you made the sweetest talk to Brother Key at his ordination, and he told me that it meant so much to him. I felt that God came down and blessed you dear soldiers of the cross there.

I hope deep in my heart I am a child of God, and love and fellowship all of God's people everywhere. I hope I am your sister, as I am a begger for mercy.

Rena C. Smith

THERE WAS NOTHING LACKING

Benton, Ky. 42025

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

Find enclosed check for renewal of Elder Paul Poyner's subscription for two years.

We are pleased to report that our Soldier Creek Association, in its one hundred twenty-fifth session, met in peace at our sister church, New Providence, Calloway County, Ky., on October 10, 11, 12, 1969; with Elder Poyner, Moderator. When we say "In peace," we mean there was no charge made against any church or member. The churches present answered, "In peace." We hope we are thankful to our Lord for his mercy towards us poor, unworthy creatures.

We never before in my sixty years, saw conditions as they were this year. The few members of this church where the association was held, were sick — some under doctor's care and unable to attend, but tried to look after the welfare of the guests. The beauty of the fellowship and love shown to us by friends who were not members! They helped the members in every material way necessary for the comfort and pleasure of those attending the meeting; and members of other churches in the association opened their doors for visitors, and there was nothing lacking that human hands could supply.

Surely the Giver of all good gifts was the Way, the Life, the Light, the Peace and the Comfort and Joy; for where we could not see any way to have a meeting, it was shown us that we were gathered together in a way we could not see, and made to sit together in heavenly places, and feast on the riches of His love — forgetting the frailty of humanity for a while, and made to know how rich our Father in Heaven is, and how all our need is supplied. Jesus is our need, and in Him all fulness dwells.

While it becomes a habit to meet in our monthly meetings, our Union meetings each year, and in our yearly Association meetings, it is good for us to know and see that we cannot go or come without the strength given, the way provided, and all things supplied by Him who is God of the whole earth. There is nothing too hard for Him to smooth, or too crooked for Him to straighten. We of Soldier Creek Association surely learned again, "How great God is!"

May we never doubt His love for His children whom He foreknew and elected in His Son before the world began.

Effie Bowden

MUCH CONSOLATION IN READING THE *SIGNS*

1414 Woody Trail, N. E.
Atlanta, Ga. 30319

Dear Sirs:

My mother is past reading the *Signs of the Times* now, and her memory is almost gone.

In cleaning her house, I found her books of the *Signs*. I brought them home with me, and I have gotten much consolation in reading them. It is food for my soul for I believe it with all my heart. If I did not believe the way the Primitive Baptists do, I don't think I could face life for another day; for I know that God has a purpose for all things.

Please enroll my sister and me for two years each on your mailing list, for which I am sending a check . . .

Looking forward to receiving the *Signs*. My mother's latest number is in 1960. Thanking you very much, and I hope I have a fellowship in Christ with all of His dear people.

Lovette McGinnis

HAS NOT MISSED AN ISSUE

Rt. 87, Box 126
Shady Spring, W. Va. 25918

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I regret that I let my subscription be past due, and I am thankful for your goodness in keeping it coming on, so I have not missed an issue of the *Signs*. I enclose $5.00 for renewal of one year, and the balance to Elder Wood for postage on the Minutes he sent me.

If you have an extra copy of the Minutes of the association that Elder Woodrow W. Hudson belongs in, I would like a copy of it. (Elder Hudson please note and supply the request. — Ed.) I believe he is a called servant of God.

I am sending a typed letter of Elder C. K. Haines which appeared in the May, 1910, issue of Spiritual Law Counsel, which, in my judgment is to the point of what I hope to believe today. If it proves to your satisfaction, you may reprint in the *Signs*. Elder Haines is gone from the shores of trouble to be with the Lord.

Thank you,
Wallace Harvey

(Thanks, Elder Harvey, we will republish in this issue. What Elder Haines wrote is what we also believe. — J. D. W.)

EVIDENCES OF GOD'S GRACE

13 Briar Drive
Hampton, Virginia 23361

Dear *Signs of the Times*:

I am sending a check to renew my subscription. My dear sweet mother (Callie Clark) ordered this dear book for me. I enjoy reading the *Signs of the Times* so very much. I have thought about not renewing my subscription, as I feel at times that I am out of place reading the wonderful words that this book contains. Although I would miss the paper so much. I look forward to each copy, and read them as soon as I can after receiving them.

I am not a member of any church. I don't think I ever will be, for the doctrine the good old Primitive Baptists teach is the only doctrine there is to my belief, and I don't deserve to be among such sweet, humble souls, yet I go every time I can. As far back as I can remember I have enjoyed going to hear the Primitive Baptists. I have begged in my weak and feeble way for years, if it be God's will to give me some sign of a hope of eternal life.

I remember back in 1960 I went to the hospital for a minor operation. Before they put me to sleep I tried again in my weak way to ask God if it was His will to spare me my life, if not to forgive me of my many sins. I kept repeating this to myself until I was asleep. While I was under the anaesthesia, I saw what looked like a big mountain and behind the mountain was a light. This light got brighter and brighter and then the words: "Thy Sins are Forgiven," came up in letters. They kept coming up small at first and getting larger as they disappeared up into the sky. I saw this in the sky for what seems like a few minutes. When I awoke I told the nurses, who were mostly Catholics (as this was a Catholic hospital) about my experience. I said over and over, "God has forgiven me of my sins." They just patted me on the arm and said, "Yes, we know." I kept on telling them that He really had forgiven me of my sins. They didn't seem to care or understand. I wanted them and the whole world to know how happy I was. I felt that they should be as happy as I.

I don't think as long as I live I will ever forget that sweet and wonderful feeling. I felt so close to God, so light, no pain, just happiness. I felt like I would never fear or be sad any more. Although this feeling soon left me and I felt like this wasn't really meant for me at all, as I was under anaesthesia and not myself. I can't explain but it seems that the words were meant for another body not the body that was now living and breathing inside me.

Three days passed, the doctor came in and told me that I must have major surgery. This time before being put to

sleep, again I tried to beg the good Lord to spare my life if it was his will, and if not to show me that the words that I had seen before were really meant for me and not for someone else. This time while under the anaesthesia I saw a small baby, just old enough to sit alone, sitting on a table and then the words seemed to say, "You were forgiven for your sins since you were that size." This was oh so sweet but I didn't feel as happy as I did after the first experience.

That's been over ten years ago. I still try and beg for mercy and hope, and it seems that the better I try to live, the more people I hurt. I go along at times forgetting the good Lord, if everything is going along smoothly and no one is sick. Then vile, sinful, and selfish me when trouble or sickness arises I try so hard in my weak way to beg for mercy and help, as I know that all our help, faith, courage and strength comes from the Father above, and if we are blessed to be in that blessed number it surely is nothing that we poor mortals have ever done, or will ever be able to do. We are all in His hands and think, Oh, just think what wonderful hands to be in!

If I have written wrong I hope God will forgive me. If this letter finds its way to the wastebasket I will not feel the least bit hurt or bad, for I feel at times that I am trying to be something that I am not by writing this, but for some reason I had a desire to write.

Please pray for one who needs the prayers of God's Saints for I cannot pray, but often find myself trying.

May God bless each Editor and their household.

Ruth Turner
13 Briar Drive
Hampton, Va. 23361

SERMON SUBMITTED FOR VOICES OF THE PAST

On November 9, 1969, the annual meeting of the Bethel Association of Southern Illinois was held jointly by Bethel Church of Benton, Illinois, and pleasant Hill Church of Johnston City, Illinois. Nine Mile Church of DuQuoin, Illinois, sent a letter but was providentially hindered from being with us.

Thanking the kind providence of God, who has preserved us until this time.

The first session of the Bethel Association of Southern Illinois was held in the year 1828: From then until now she has preserved a correct record of all her annual meetings. From its organization until now, we sincerely desire that all shall know that we as an association are yet standing unmoved and contending for the grand doctrine of Sovereign Grace, so highly esteemed and dearly loved by the Bethel Association of Southern Illinois.

We submit for "Voices of the Past," a sermon preached by the late Elder C. M. Weaver, and recorded.

The recording was played at his own funeral, there being no Primitive Old School Baptist Minister available.

His last preaching service was October 1956, age 89 years. He passed away January 15, 1957.

Submitted by Clerk of Association:

Allie Neal
R. R. #1
West Frankfort, Illinois

(See Voices of the Past.)

ELDER ATTEBERY IS NOT WELL

1042 5th Street, Apt. 8
Crescent City, Calif. 95531

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

Enclosed is $6.00 for renewing my subscription, and the remainder is for the Indigent Fund.

At times I cannot write — too many years behind me (84), otherwise I am quite well and can get around better than some men at fifty years.

I have a letter from my brother W. O. Hall, at Mount Vernon, Washington,

stating that our beloved brother, Elder Attebery, is in bad shape physically. He was at his son's in Vancouver, Wash., and was taken to near Spokane for treatment. I hope and pray that he may overcome his sickness. We would miss him more than tongue can tell.

We all have our afflictions. The Apostle Paul said that when we were illuminated we had a great fight of afflictions. How true it is! We trust in God and our Lord Jesus Christ for all things — without Him we cannot do anything. I am so far from any church. I hope to be able to attend some meeting next summer, if it is the Lord's will. My brother, W. O. Hall, is afflicted with ear and head trouble; and my memory has failed me so that I cannot quote Scriptures like I used to.

The grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

Evan Hall

"STILL STANDING FIRM"

Swansboro, N. C. 28584

To the Editors:

According to the record, the *Signs of the Times,* was established in the year 1832 by the late Elder Beebe and has been in continuous publication since that time, which has been one hundred and thirty-seven years. What a miracle, with all the opposition to the doctrine of predestination and salvation by grace that some men could muster, it has withstood their onslaughts, and is, even in this year 1969, still standing firm for the principles on which it was founded. We mention this as an evidence that certainly it was in the providence of God for it to survive these many years; and to be blessed in these recent years with godly men such as now constitute the Editorial staff, together with those who have supported its publication in other ways, by the grace of God, to uphold its banner. Nothing but the love for truth, the cause and His people, we believe has been the motivating spirit that has sustained you, and those before you, in your untiring efforts in making it possible and available to those that have been made to love the doctrine that it supports.

"IS THERE NOT A CAUSE." He has promised to never leave nor forsake his children. The Lord only knows how many have been comforted by the writings that have appeared over these many years, that were providentially hindered by illness and other ways from attending church services. The *Signs* has been a Godsend to those who were shutins and could not meet with their brethren as so many of us are blessed to do.

As this year 1969 draws to a close, we wish for each of you and the whole household of faith the blessings of the Lord upon you and your families. As we look around, there are so many faces that have been removed from our midst. Yet we cannot wish them back or question the will of God. He is able and will call men of His own choosing to preach the gospel to the poor.

Our hope and prayer would be for the Lord to continue to bless you to carry on the good work that He has enjoined upon you to do, throughout the coming new year and in the years to come. May He give you strength and grace to publish the Word of God and the Lord's people be comforted. It is a source of joy to read from the hand of those in all sections of our country when they testify to the things that we ourselves have been made to believe.

We do not recall having seen in print the experiences of Elders Spangler or Wood nor the associated editors, in their call by grace and to the ministry. Hope that we can see them published sometime in the future.

Enclosed you will find check in the amount of $5.00. The extra dollar for the Indigent Fund, the four dollars, subscription to the *Signs* for one year.

May the Lord bless His people,
J. J. Rhue

LETTER FROM
BROTHER B. K. SMITH

Camp Drake, Japan
December 13, 1969

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

I received your letter and was delighted to hear from you; regret I have not written you for so long. I was grieved to hear of the passing of Brother and Sister Norman whom I loved dearly, but feel that our Lord is in the matter of all things.

I have not been exercised freely to write due to many reasons: feeling to have been cut off, as it were, but nevertheless God's will is done as it pleased Him in eternity before the foundation of the world. I have had a desire to write to the brethren everywhere, expressing the love I believe to be in my heart towards them one and all, if I am not deceived . . .

I do not desire to be involved in matters pertaining to the flesh, for I have found, according to my experience, that my own sins have gone over my head and swallowed me up; yet I am given a hope in the mercy of the Sovereign God who through Jesus Christ overcame the world, and is Creator and Master, declaring all things whatsoever for a purpose unto himself — to his own pleasure, praise, honor and glory.

I find that I am in a straight betwixt the two. If it be His will, and if I am not deceived, then I must advocate that Christ came into the world to save sinners: those sinners who were given a law which could not be kept: therefore by the foreknowledge of God and His determinate counsel, He delivered the Saviour and Redeemer Jesus Christ for the atonement of the sins of His people whom He loved from before the world was. The Lord does not need to prove to any person anything, for He is no respector of persons. All things come to pass according to His will, for He did predestinate all things whatsoever to his good pleasure. He created good and evil as it pleased Him, for he is God and there is none else. There is no other God besides him.

How I like to think that I love the Lord; yet I know that if I sincerely love Him it is because he willed it so. If I ask of him anything I am brought to the lowest of the low begging for mercy, and that his will be done, having confidence in a hope even against hope, that it is just as it is for he declared the end from the beginning — a finished work from before the foundation of the world. His people are scattered, yet He will gather them together in a perfect love without blemish or spot, according as it is written in the testimony of Jesus Christ, our Scriptures, which bear witness with our own experience. How sweet it is! I hope my sufferings are for Christ's sake.

The Lord blessed me by his grace with an heart attack on November 1, 1969, and I can honestly say that a prayer was not in me as in fear. The words came to my mind, "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." I had no fear that I know of, though I was aware that I was near death in a natural sense, and I longed not to leave my beloved wife and sons. Yet I was given a consolation that God does "Move in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." I had no choice in the matter, and had I any fears I was relieved.

I believe that I witnessed an experience that I shall never forget, and yet it goes beyond my comprehension. The Lord willing, someday perhaps I can relate it to you. I have not been so blessed to express the matter as it appeared to me, although I did make mention of it in a letter to my Mom and Dad. The fulness of it escaped me, yet I appeared to be floating through a garden towards what appeared to be a corner room in a great mansion. It was not light but light enough that I could see it was a garden. I saw a brightly lit room that was occupied by a number of people, who appeared to be clothed with gowns or robes; and I

knew them. Yet I cannot tell that I knew them, only that I felt to know them, and it was pleasant. But as I came to the door, one turned to face me, and grew nearer. I cannot describe my exact feelings except I felt to know Him. I noticed that his robe was of many colors. They were not run together, and I do not recall specifically the colors; but it appeared to be beautiful. His hair was not long nor short, but shown brightly as if it were arrayed with sparkling stones; and as we came face to face, He closed the door — and I found myself fighting the medical people there in the emergency ward.

I do not know if this was an experience of any significance, but it was my experience during that period. I have been hospitalized now for 44 days, and was moved from Vietnam to here in Japan.

I have wanted to write many times, and have thought of you all constantly. If I know my mind, and I hope I do, I feel a deep love for you, not only because of our hope, but according to the flesh also. I hope the Lord has enabled me to be thankful to have been with you, and for the love that is in my heart for you. I cannot help but believe that all things are by the grace of God — that by his grace all things come to pass. I hope I believe that Christ came into this world to suffer and die, and arise for the salvation of His chosen vessels of mercy, whose names were written in him before the foundation of the world. Paul said, "I am what I am by the grace of God." He also wrote my hope in saying that he thanked God that Christ came into the world to save sinners of whom he (Paul) was chief. I would have to say that if I am not deceived, this is my experience.

Give my love and regards to all the kindred in hope there with you. I sincerely hope that if I have a prayer, it is continuously for the comfort of God's people who are scattered abroad in every nation, kindred and tongue; that His will be done according to his own purpose, pleasure, praise, honor and glory. I beg that the Lord will forgive error, and give you a charitable mind towards me, for I am but a worm of the dust, finite, fallible, and subject to all error. If there be any truth herein, I hope the praise is to our Creator God through Jesus Christ the Lord and Saviour.

My love to you is more than words can express. May the Lord continue all blessings upon you and keep you steadfast in the faith wherein you are well grounded, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

A little brother in hope,
B. K. (Bud) Smith

"WILL NOT ENDURE SOUND DOCTRINE"

Greetings:

I feel impressed to write unto you to comfort you in this day of fiery trial and affliction that was foretold by our dearly beloved apostles. "Think it not strange," said the apostle, "for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears." (II Tim. 4:3) This was said by the apostle while he looked into the future by the eye of faith; was inspired to speak as the Spirit gave him utterance. This statement was made directly to the church, and was given as a warning of just what should transpire in the church, and was as positively predestinated of God as were the words inspired of God.

The true servant of God did not say the time may come, but said the time will come; he did not say they may not endure sound doctrine, but he did say they will not endure sound doctrine; he did not say they might heap to themselves teachers having itching ears, but he said after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves, etc. Scripture teaches us very plainly that in all ages of the world there is a class of people that will not endure sound doctrine,

and the scripture plainly shows them up as being very apt and zealous worshipers, and at this day we have them going about crying, Peace, Peace, when there is no peace, seeking to establish a righteousness of their own, and in so doing they deny the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Dear child of God, the prophecy of our beloved apostle is today come to pass and is in our midst. Men whom we did look upon as being sound in doctrine have now proved beyond a doubt that they will not endure sound doctrine and have turned away from the truth and are now turned unto fables.

If our blessings depend upon our obedience, then it is a fact that salvation is not now nor never was by grace. If by Christ's obedience many were made righteous, then it is a fact that such blessings come to us by Christ's obedience and not by our own obedience.

If we obey God in order to get blessings, then do we worship God for naught? If he hath delivered us, and doth deliver us, do we trust that he will yet deliver us? If faith is counted to us for righteousness, then is any man justified by works? If known unto God are all his works from the beginning, and we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, whose good works are they, ours or God's? If God ordained that we should walk in them; if the good works are in Christ, whose good works do we walk in, ours or Christ's? If they will not endure sound doctrine, is it because they do not exercise the will? If God works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure, can we will or do without his good pleasure? If predestination is the purpose of God covering all events, is there any event that God's purpose does not cover? If God declared the end from the beginning, did He declare the events between the end and beginning? If not, do they fall out by chance? If all things work together for good, can anything work for bad? If so, does the wrath of man praise God? If Christ is the vine and we are the branches, do the branches bear fruit of their own will? If so, why don't they bear fruit in the wintertime? If the branch cannot bear fruit without the vine, then it is evident that there will be no fruit until the vine produces it.

If they that are of God hear God's words, are they who will not endure sound doctrine of God? Is time conditional salvation sound doctrine, and if so, is salvation by grace unsound doctrine? If grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, who did time conditional salvation come by? If our blessings depend upon our obedience, are they according to the choice made in Christ before the foundation of the world? Do we obey to get a blessing, or do we obey God because we are blessed; and if so, then is not the blessing the cause of our obedience? If by our obedience we can escape the chastening of the Lord, are we sons or bastards, which? If teachers having itching ears turn from the truth, do they preach the truth? If the grace of God brings salvation and blessings, mercy and peace, what more do we need? I myself realize after I have done the best I can, I am only an unworthy and unprofitable servant, I do not feel worthy of the blessings I do receive.

Dear child of God, let us hold fast to the sound doctrine of God, and ever remember that He is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Your servant in bonds and affliction,

(Elder) C. K. Haines
Princeton, Kentucky

(The above by the late Elder Haines is copied from the May, 1910, issue of the Spiritual Law Counsel, and republished by request.)

"AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE"

2463 Fernleaf Lane
Decatur, Georgia 30033

Elder John D. Wood
P. O. Box 186

Manassas, Virginia 22110

Dear Elder Wood:

For a short time past, I have had a desire to write some comments on the passage of scripture, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." (Jer. 31:33) But when I considered that perhaps numerous articles may have been written by ministers and others and sermons preached on the passage, I have hesitated the attempt to write. Still the desire remains; and the attempt.

In order to get a broader view of the passage quoted and a foundation for some comments, it seems in order to quote more in the same chapter:

"Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jer. 31:31; also Heb. 8:8, 12)

First some attributes of God. According to the scriptures some of the attributes are:

OMNIPOTENT — Unlimited in power.

"Declaring the end from the beginning . . . saying my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isa. 46:10)

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude . . . saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." (Rev. 19:6)

OMNISCENT — Infinite wise.

"Great is our Lord, and great power; his understanding is infinite." — Ps. 147:5)

"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." (Acts 15:18)

OMNIPRESENT — Everywhere present at once, at the same time.

"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" (Ps. 139:7, 10)

"Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." (Heb. 4:13)

ETERNAL — Everlasting, changes not.

". . . from everlasting to everlasting thou art God." (Ps. 90:2)

". . . the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God —." (1st Tim. 1:17)

JUST AND HOLY —

"A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." (Dt. 32:4)

"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty." (Rev. 4:8)

He is a spirit and a God of love and of mercy.

"In the beginning God, created the heaven and the earth." (Gen. 1:1) "He created man in his own image." (Gen. 1:27) Then, ". . . the Lord God FORMED man of the dust of the ground, . . ." (Gen. 2:7)

"All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." (St. John 1:3)

Now for some comments on the subject: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." (Jer. 31:33) Paul's language, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their Hearts." (Heb. 8:10)

The immediate consideration is, *"My law."* Strong's Exhaustive Concordance,

lists the word "law," 290 times in the O. T. and 216 times in the N. T., and of the latter, 77 times in Romans.

What is Law? The definition I like is that by Wm. Blackstone in his "Commentaries on the Laws of England": "Law in its most general and comprehensive sense, signifies a rule of action — prescribed by some Superior, and which the inferior is bound to obey." He further comments in part, "And first, it is a rule: something permanent, uniform, and universal."

PERMANENT — Something fixed, invariable, as the revolving and rotating of the earth, the law of gravity.

UNIFORM — Not varying, same form.

UNIVERSAL — The whole, all, entire, present everywhere.

When the unerring time for spring comes, and the sun warms the ground, the plants and trees take up the sap: it produces the green leaves and fruit "after its kind." The chlorophyll turns the leaves green. When autumn arrives, and the sap is no longer taken up, and as the chlorophyll diminishes, the pigment in the leaves is manifested in the different colors. All of this is by the predetermined law by the Creator.

The Psalmist David, after reciting a number of works of the Lord, says, "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches." (Ps. 104:24) It might be noted in passing that this is the only chapter in the Bible in which the word "sap" is found.

One of the laws of psychology is, that when a stimulus — an experience is carried over the nerves to the brain there is an impression made on the brain. The intensity and/or the frequency of the experience determines the extent of the impression. When the same like stimulus or experience is had, memory of the former experience is called to mind, giving knowledge of that experience. This is a wonderful work of the Creator. David said, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made." (Ps. 139:14)

In the passage under consideration, the Lord said, "I will put MY LAW," — it is not some other law. I believe he was speaking of his Divine Law, his Spirit. It is written IN the heart for a permanent record and feeling, and INTO the mind to give knowledge. When the spirit is written in the dead sinner's heart and it is made manifest, it produces an effect. He is made alive, the light shining in the heart causes the sinner to see his condition in nature: that he is vile, a sinner, made low and helpless in feeling, and that he is unfit to grace the Divine Heaven. David said, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Ps. 51:5) Jeremiah said, "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it." (Jer. 17:9) When God's Spirit is put into the mind, then the sinner has knowledge of his condition. Man by nature is dead to the divine law of God. Any dead subject has no power to move, act, or think. He can not acquaint or introduce himself to the Lord; it is the Lord who makes the introduction to those he has chosen. "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." (Romans 8:6)

When the divine law shines in the heart and is put into the mind, all are brought to one common feeling and knowledge of his low and helpless condition, unworthy to approach unto High Heaven. Here the application of the Divine Law, the rule by the Superior, brings all to a *uniform* feeling. Also the law is *universal* in its application; it matters not where the subject may be, God is there, and able to reach all; and "None can stay his hand." God's mercy and saving grace is what a live sinner desires. Here may I inject the thought, that it is evident a greater measure of God's Spirit is given to his called ministers than to others.

Here I would like to briefly consider "the house of Israel and the house of Judah," in the passage quoted above. The Lord told Jeremiah, and quoted by

Apostle Paul, that he would "make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah."

I understand that the house of Israel and the house of Judah refer to those of God's Church, the body of Christ, God's elect, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. If this is true, was God unjust or unrighteous in not electing all, or not giving all a chance to be saved? Not, as I believe it. God does not operate on a chance system.

The Lord said to Jeremiah, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee — and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." (Jer. 1:5) Again he said to Jeremiah, "Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel he made of clay was marred in the hands of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the Lord came to me saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as the potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel." (Jer. 18:2, 5)

It is noted that the first vessel of clay the potter made was marred in his hand, and the implication is, the second or "another vessel" was not marred, "as it seemed good to the potter to make it." So is the house of Israel in the Lord's hand. When God created and formed man he was made subject to sin, and when Adam transgressed the law, (not by choice or chance) sin fell on all succeeding generations. The other vessel the potter made, I believe, represents the elect house of Israel and house of Judah, those for whom Christ came and redeemed. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." (Romans 8:3)

The Lord said to Job, "Where wast thou when I laid the foundation of the earth? declare if thou hast understanding." (Job 38:4) Also to Job, "Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous." (Job 40:8) "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew . . ." (Det. 32:2) "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." (Isa. 55:11)

Some 660 years after Jeremiah, the Lord speaking through the Apostle Paul, declared, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? (Romans 9:20, 21)

Jesus said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." (John 15:16) Also he said, "I thank thee O father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for it seemed good in thy sight." (Mat. 11:25, 26) (Note the past tense, "seemed.")

In conclusion, a brief personal note.

The experience of the Apostle Peter just before the Crucifixion of Christ, when Peter promised and avowed he would go with him even unto death, and then denied Christ three times, but the Savior told Peter, "I have prayed for thee." (Luke 22:31, 34) This has been and is a great consolation and comfort to me. The reason why:

During World War One I was on the Meuse-Argonne Battle Front 22 days. The U. S. Army, 4th Division that I was in, after a few days taking certain ground, was holding a portion of the battle line. My buddy (Burger from Penn.) and I had dug a shallow dugout in the rocks and roots for a shelter and sleeping or staying in during the night. Late one afternoon the shelling seemed

to be more than usual. Some of the shells were hitting in or near other shallow dugouts, and some of the soldiers were calling for stretcherbearers. A shell hit near the head of our dugout and knocked small rocks and dirt in on us. I said to my buddy, "It looks like our time is next." The unexpected reply came, "Trust in Jesus." Somehow, I felt that my mother, who was of the Primitive Baptist faith, was offering a prayer for me. If I have ever prayed it was there. I promised the Lord if he would return me home, I would ever do his will. I saw a bright soft light momentarily hover over the dugout, and I was given a feeling of relief. This is no fantastic story with me.

It is this solemn promise to the Lord on the battle front in France, and a multitude of others since, I have broken, that makes the experience of Peter on the occasion mentioned, so sweet to me.

When the sinner is arraigned before the High Divine Court of Justice to be judged for his fitness in a home in heaven, his plea is Unworthy, Guilty, Guilty. His petition: "God be merciful to me a sinner." (Luke 18:13) Then to his elect the glorious news, "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Mat. 25:34)

I hope that I may be among the number.

Elder Wood and Elder Spangler, do with this as you see fit as to the *Signs of the Times.*

In hope of a home in heaven,
Reuben A. Braswell,

SIGNS SETS FORTH WHAT HE BELIEVES

P. O. Box 9134
Springhill, W. Va. 25309

Dear Brethren:

I see that my subscription has expired with this issue, so am sending money order for one year renewal, and the remainder to use as you see fit.

I enjoy the *Signs* very much, for if I know what I believe, it sets forth the doctrine of a Sovereign God — the God of all grace, and a whole and complete Saviour who is not *going to save* if one will let him, but has *already done it,* saying he would bring his children without the loss of one; and that his own arm has brought salvation.

I enjoy the Editorials so much, and for some cause I especially enjoy your writings Elder Wood. My grandson, B. K. Smith, has mentioned you and Sister Wood often, and it makes me want to meet you. I have received word that he has suffered an heart attack in Vietnam, and later heard that he was improving.

May it be the will of the most high God to bless you all. An unworthy brother in hope of eternal life.

John J. Smith, Sr.

(Our latest word from Brother "Bud" Smith is that he was removed to Japan from Vietnam, and is greatly improved. See his letter this issue. — J. D. W.)

A FEAST OF FAT THINGS

Rt. 2, Box 518
Bassett, Va. 23055

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I enjoy reading the dear *Signs* so much. It is a feast of fat things to read the sweet experiences of God's little ones. Jesus told Peter, "Strengthen thy brethren."

I feel that the wonderful writings that God's called ministers are given

grace to write, are food from God's blessed hands. How sweet it is to be given a crumb of the life-giving bread! If not deceived, He in his great love has comforted me many, many times when I felt that surely I was a poor, mistaken mortal: I feared that I had "caught the shadow and missed the substance."

I feel that God in mercy often hides His face to show poor ones like me how weak and helpless we are. All of His ways are good, right and just. He has been so good to me all of my days.

I have enjoyed Elder Wood's good sermons in the *Signs*, and also Elder Lambert's; and the "Voices of the Past" are so good to read. I hope to be blessed to read the *Signs* as long as I live.

May God be pleased to continue to lead, guide and bless the dear Editors as He has all the years it has been coming to us hungry ones. I am sending renewal for two more years; and balance for Indigent Fund.

Your least sister, if one,
Callie Clark

BLACK RIVER UNION

The next session of the **Black River Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with the Black River Church, which is located on the east side of Dunn, N. C. just east side of I-95 highway.

All who love the doctrine of Salvation by Grace are invited to attend.

C. D. Turner

ORIGINAL WHITE OAK UNION

The next session of the **Original White Oak Union** is appointed to be held with the Bay Church, the Lord willing, the fifth Saturday and Sunday in March, 1970. The church is located about one mile west of Verona, North Carolina. We invite all lovers of the truth to come and worship with us.

L. H. Southerland, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The **Staunton River Union** meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, with Cane Creek Primitive Baptist Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in March, 1970.

The church is located on Highway 726 in Pittsylvania County, near Ringgold, Virginia.

All who love the truth are invited to meet with us.

Fannie D. Wiles, Church Clerk
14 Brown Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To January 1, 1970)

Preston Gay, N. C.	$ 3.00
Mrs. Oscar Lilliard, N. C.	6.00
Mrs. Vivian Hardy, N. C.	2.00
Lelah R. Hill, Calif. (in memory of parents)	50.00
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Danville, Virginia March, 1970

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EDITORIAL

"For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken." (John 19:36)

How greatly favored we are that God has seen fit to preserve His word down through the ages, that His dear children might see clearly that not a word was spoken by him in vain. We are told by inspiration, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Matthew 24:35)

In looking through the scriptures to find the words, "A bone of him shall not be broken," we turned to Exodus 12, where Israel was brought to the time when they were to depart from Egypt, when they were to take a lamb without blemish, a male of the first year, to eat for the passover; and Exodus 12:46 says, "In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; *neither shall ye break a bone thereof.*" Again in Numbers 9:12, "They shall leave none of it unto the morning, *nor break any bone of it.*" And in the lovely Psalm 34:20, "He keepeth all his bones; not one of them is broken." Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 13:1, "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established."

Amongst the various types we see in the Old Testament, Joseph seems one of the most beautiful. Loved of his father, hated by his brethren, and sold into Egypt when he was seventeen years old for twenty pieces of silver. Our Lord was sold a full grown man for thirty pieces of silver. The wonderful ways of God in Joseph's life were seen in his control of *all things.* His father had made Joseph a coat of many colours; his brothers slew a kid of the goats and dipped the coat in blood. Jacob saw the coat and thought an evil beast had devoured him. The coat, a type of the coat that Jesus wore, was not torn; and we read in John 19:24, the soldiers said amongst themselves, "Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, to see whose it shall be": that the scripture might be fulfilled which saith, "They parted my raiment among them and for my vesture they did cast lots." Oh how can ignorant men read the scriptures and yet deny him who by his appearing as our Saviour Jesus Christ, by his own self, "Hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel"?

Christ was to be born in Bethlehem, yet Mary and Joseph were in Nazareth over sixty miles away from that city; and to fetch them down there, a wicked emperor, Augustus, commanded the world to be taxed. And Joseph had to take Mary, his espoused wife, great with child, over hills and valleys to the place where Christ should be born.

Angels heralded his coming, — man lodged him with the beasts. We mention these truths to show that God's word had to come to pass, for Jesus is the Word made flesh, and every word that was spoken by the mouth of his prophets concerning him since the world began, must come to pass as surely as He said, "Let there be light: and there was light." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

When Israel kept the first Passover, the blood of the lamb had to be taken and put upon the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses wherein they should eat it. Leaven, a type of sin, was not to be allowed in their houses. Unleavened bread was to be used, which was a type of the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. As we read in Exodus, it is wonderful that Moses took Joseph's bones and carried them with them. The loveliness of Joseph seemed never to have been marred by blacksliding as we see in other favored ones in God's word. He stands out as a beautiful type of Jesus our Lord: his bones, which set forth the strength of his body, were not broken. His coat of many colours that *his father* made him, sets forth the varied scenes through which Jesus passed as he travelled the path laid out for him by his Heavenly Father.

We have said that man lodged Him with the beasts, but wise men, led by a heavenly light, came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." Herod and all Jerusalem were troubled; and Herod gathered the chief priests and scribes and demanded of them where Christ should be born. They told him part of what Micah the prophet said, but like so many today, they did not tell it all. They said, "And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel," but they left out, "Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." They are the ones who would break his bones; they are the same kind that cried "crucify him."

That brings me to my subject, "A bone of him shall not be broken." The bones are the strength of the body which enables one to bear burdens; to run and not be weary, and to walk and not faint. Our Lord Jesus Christ, "Is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence." Our Lord, being the Word of God, sustained his body under every load. We are told in 1 Peter 2:24, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead in sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye are healed."

To the church of the Living God, the Word is food: it is also that which gives strength to the body, it is that which, like the bones, enables one to walk in the heavenly way. All our help must come from Him, and without Him we can do nothing. The word of God, like the bones of the body, cannot be added to or anything taken from it. Could such a thing be, the body could not function correctly. Our Lord Jesus as a man was perfect. In Psalm 37:37, David saith, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace." The end implies that for which he came into the world to do. He came to seek and to save all that the Father gave him before the world began; yet we are told in Hebrews 2:10 that, "It became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation *perfect through sufferings.*"

Man by nature "Receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The Word of God created all things, and when the Word was made flesh, He, by his almighty

strength, overcame everything that stood against those he loved; and when the Holy Spirit, by his Word, quickens a subject of grace, that Word is effectual in convincing him of sin; and it also enables him in approaching God by cries and prayers, to come in the right and only way. We are told that "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 10:17) Faith in Christ are the bones that cannot be broken, and it is by faith that the church of God has in all ages walked in him. Hebrews 11 describes how his people overcame; and in chapter 12:1, 2, those gone before are spoken of as a great cloud of witnesses; and we are told to "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us . . . looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith."

Let us not think for a moment that when the Lord speaks to a poor sinner it will puff such an one up, so that he will think himself somebody. Look at Gideon who threshed wheat by the winepress to hide it from the Midianites. (Judges 6:11) "The angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us from Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites. And the Lord looked upon him and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?"

The account of dear Gideon and the Lord's dealings with him have been, and still will be, an encouragement and help to God's humble poor and afflicted people in this day. The Word was made flesh, and the Word is still made flesh in those who belong to the body of Christ; and they learn that God's strength is made perfect in their weakness, and that it is out of weakness they are made strong. They who walk the heavenly road will need the word of His grace every step of the way. Gideon learned a lesson every step that he took, that all the glory should be unto his sovereign God.

While Israel journeyed in the wilderness carrying Joseph's bones, how often their thoughts would go over the past: fed with bread from heaven and water from the rock, in a pillar of a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Surely they would think of God's constant protection and care; they had also the wonderful deliverance at the Red Sea, and saw Pharoah and his army overwhelmed while they were spared. The path that we travel today is not of our own making, nor can we, if we are His, walk in our own strength. Let us remember, "My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth."

G. R.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

PREACHING UNTO THE SPIRITS IN PRISON. — TO THE DEAD, &C.

Reynolds, Ga., Feb. 24, 1872

Brother Beebe: — Please give your views on 1 Peter 3:19, also on 1 Peter 4:6, and may the Lord grant you the light of revelation on them.

Yours in Christian love,

J. P. Glover

These passages read thus: "By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison." "For, for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according no men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit."

In urging on the saints a strict observance of all the relative duties which devolve on them in the various relations they sustain to others, whether in or out of the church, as children to parents, husbands to wives, servants to masters, and as citizens to kings, gov-

ernors, judges, magistrates, &c., and in bearing reproaches and persecutions patiently, he reminds them of the example of their Lord, who when he was here in the flesh once suffered for sins; not for sins which he had committed, for he was *just,* but he suffered for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. He suffered for us in the flesh, and was put to death in the flesh. But he could not be holden of death, beyond the time appointed; but being put to death in the flesh, he was quickened by the Spirit. And the first text proposed for consideration informs us that the Spirit by which his crucified body was raised from the dead, is the same Spirit by which he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometimes were disobedient, or which were by nature children of wrath, and dead in trespasses and sins.

In the commencement of this epistle he speaks of the elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, being begotten to a *vital,* lively, or immortal hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and in our text he shows that the Spirit that raised Christ from the dead is the same Spirit by which he preaches liberty to the captives for whom he suffered, and bids the prisoners go free. The prisoners for whom these gracious provisions were secured in Christ Jesus, are those, as we understand, whom the prophet called "prisoners of hope," unto whom it was said, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation." And of whom it is said, in the same prophetic connection, "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope: even today do I declare that I will render double unto thee." — Zech. 9:9, 11 & 12.

These prisoners were children of Zion, daughters of Jerusalem, and subjects of that King whose coming was proclaimed, as coming to them with salvation, deliverance, emancipation, light, life and liberty. He who was delivered for the offences of these prisoners, was raised from the dead for their justification. From these, with other portions of the scriptures, we feel assured that the prisoners which Christ at his resurrection went by his resurrection life or spirit and preached to, were and are those whose sins he bore in his own body on the tree. And that he went by the Spirit and power that raised him from the dead: for he himself said, "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." — John 6:62, 63.

In prophecy his testimony is given in the most clear and emphatic language. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn," &c.

Christ having been put to death in the flesh, that he might thereby redeem these prisoners, and bring them to God; was quickened by the Spirit of the Lord God which was and is upon him, as the anointed Savior; and by the Spirit went and preached to the spirits in prison. It is not necessary that he should go to them in his fleshly body, for he has told us that in the work of quickening, the flesh profiteth nothing; his flesh was indispensible to his bearing our sins; for he was put to death in it; but now having suffered for his people in the flesh, he has put away their sins by the sacrifice of himself, and by his one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, now as the risen, exalted Savior, he goeth forth by his Spirit, in preaching

glad tidings to the meek; in proclaiming liberty to the captives; for all to whom he preaches good tidings were prisoners, captives, and in a pit wherethere was no water; but though they were all lawful captives, justly condemned by the righteous law of God, yet they were prisoners of hope; and by the grace of God to be delivered; therefore the joyful proclamation, by the spirit that brought him again from the dead, "Behold thy King cometh unto thee! he is just and having salvation."

Until the risen Jesus, by the spirit of life and immortality, comes to each of us with these good tidings, our prison walls are strong and invulnerable. But, at his words which are spirit and life, the gates of our prison are opened, the prisoners are discharged, and brought out of their prison houses: The risen and anointed Savior has the keys of hell and death; and when he openeth, no man can shut; and when he shutteth, no man can open. When first he is revealed to us, like John, we fall at his feet as dead. "And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive forever more, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." — Rev. 1:17, 18.

Submitting what we have written to Brother Glover, and to our readers generally; we will give such views as we have on the other text submitted, which reads as follows: —

"For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." — 1 Peter 4:6.

We find it much easier sometimes to tell what a passage of scripture does not mean, than to demonstrate and explain what it does mean. The popish theory that the gospel was or had been preached to the departed spirits of men after they have left this world, cannot be entertained by those who accept the testimony of the word, that there is no work nor device in the grave. — Eccl. 9:10. But to those who are dead; or at least to many of them, the gospel was preached while they were in the flesh, or before they left the world.

The Apostle Peter, in connection with this passage in the preceding chapter on which we have been commenting, speaks of its having been preached by the Spirit of Christ in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing; but it was preached then to men who were in the flesh, but who in Peter's time were dead. The same spirit that quickened and raised up Christ from the dead was in Noah, and by it he was a preacher of righteousness unto the antedeluvians. And Peter also shows that the gospel was preached, in prophecy, and in types and shadows unto the patriarchs and Old Testament saints, and by the Spirit of Christ. "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you:" (You Gentiles which are elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." &c.) "Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand of the suffering of Christ, and the glory that should follow." — 1 Peter 1:10, 11.

Although the gospel of the kingdom, by the which the Spirit of Christ in the prophets did preach unto the faith of the Old Testament saints, of the grace which should be brought to his elect people among the Gentiles, it was signified by the Spirit of Christ to their faith: for the dispensation of the law and the prophets continued until John; and the gospel dispensation was ushered in by the resurrection of Christ which was effected by the same Spirit which had in the former ages preached the gospel to them which are dead.

But why was it preached, unto them that *are* (not were) dead? It was for this cause; "that they might be judged according to men in the flesh; but live according to God in the spirit." As men in the flesh, they were the seed of Abra-

ham, and under the law of a *carnal* or fleshly commandment, in a worldly sanctuary and bound to observe carnal ordinances. As men in the flesh they were judged according to the requisitions of the covenant which gendereth to bondage, which could make nothing perfect. As men in the flesh they had to be circumcised and keep the law of Moses. All that law required of other Israelites which were born of God, and in whom the spirit of Christ dwelt, and to whose faith it testified before hand of the prospective sufferings of Christ, and of the glory of his kingdom which should follow. The law in its letter required of them as men in the flesh, offerings and sacrifices, and perpetual service, and condemned them for every act of transgression or disobedience to the same temporal penalty, but as the spiritual people of God, they lived according to God in the spirit. Receiving the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls. The power of faith in them as the fruit of the Spirit of Christ which was in them, enabled them, as it had Abraham to see Christ's day, and to rejoice in it and be glad.

Here then we have explained to us the great object and design of the preaching of the gospel, that they unto whom it is preached should be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit. The little word *also* in the text has great importance. It shows that not only the Jews which were under the old covenant of works were as men in the flesh bound to obey the law, or covenant which was in their flesh, while as a spiritual people they lived to, and had communion with God, but the Gentile saints also, who are not under the old covenant and who are forbidden to touch, taste, or handle those ordinances which were binding on those who were under it; still are to be judged as men in the flesh by him who is ready to judge both the quick and the dead. Judging Gentile saints as men in the flesh, they are subject to all the laws and regulations which are enjoined on them in their fleshly relations. As in the context Peter admonishes the scattered saints, as men in the flesh, to observe every obligation devolving on them. As a chosen generation, to obstain from fleshly lusts, to have their conversation honest among the Gentiles; to submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the King, or to Governors, for so is the will of God to whom we live in the spirit. In our fleshly relations, "Honor all men, love the brotherhood, Honor the King." Servants in the flesh are commanded to be subject to their masters. Wives, husbands, parents and children, all are admonished. These are all fleshly relations, and although the King and governor with their subjects, the master with his servants, the husband and his wife, parents with their children, who are called to be saints, are all one in Christ Jesus, and in all spiritual things are on perfect equality, still their fleshly relations so long as they remain in the flesh, devolve on them the same relative fleshly obligations as though they were not brethren in the Spirit. Children should honor and obey their parents in the Lord. Husbands should love their wives. Servants obey their masters, for they are judged according to men in the flesh.

Being subject to the laws which are binding on men in the flesh, they are judged by them in regard to all relative obligations; and their spiritual privileges in the kingdom of Christ, and their subjection to the laws of the kingdom in all spiritual matters of faith and practice, does not release them from their obligation to their families, their neighbors, or fellow men, either in or out of the church. They are judged according to men in the flesh. Husbands in the flesh are required to love their wives, and to provide for those of their household, and if they neglect to do so, they deny the faith and are worse than infidels: children must honor and obey their parents, servants their masters, citizens their rulers or magistrates, and as all these

duties are only applicable to men in the flesh, they are judged, acquitted or condemned, according to men in the flesh.

But while they are judged according to men in the flesh, they are to live according to God in the Spirit. In all spiritual things, they are governed by the law of the spirit of life which in Christ Jesus. As members of Christ, the saints are members one of another, in a spiritual life which is not in the flesh: for in Christ there are no fleshly distinctions, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bound or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." — 1 Cor. 12:13. "For as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bound nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." — Gal. 3:27, 28.

While as spiritual children, we are brethren, fellow members of the one body, our fleshly relations to earthy kindred or others is unchanged. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." — 1 Cor. 15:50. Yet as we are in the flesh, we are judged as men in the flesh, and required to mortify the deeds of the flesh, and live according to God in the spirit. "For, for this cause was the gospel preached to them that are dead." — To them that are now dead, as it is *also* now preached unto us, who are still in the flesh; that they, as well as we, might be judged according to men in the flesh by him who is ready to judge both the quick and the dead or both the living and the dead.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe August 10, 1872.)

"IF A MAN DIE SHALL HE LIVE AGAIN?"

"If a man die shall he live again?" The one question that concerns God's people most is this momentous question that was on the lips of Job more than three thousand years ago. And I am persuaded that the same question has seriously engaged the mind of every rational human being. With Job the question was the same as with you and me.

The question was not primarily whether a man dies but whether a man shall live again after he is dead. That man does die needs no argument. It is a fact supported not only by the unimpeachable testimony of Holy Writ but also by man's own intelligent observation and common sense reasoning. I take it for granted that all who concede the fact of death are profoundly concerned to know what is the correct answer to Job's question. But those desiring such knowledge would not expect to get it from the atheist, that foolish one, who has said in his heart, "There is no God." Nor from the scoffing Sadduces who deny the resurrection of the dead. And surely not from those modern theologians who deny the fact of death. Who tell us that man does not die, that he only seems to die but lives right on forever. Because, as they presumptuously suppose and teach, man is an immortal being. I shall not waste time to refute such vain speculation and unscriptural dogmatism.

There is only one place where we can find the correct answer to Job's question, and that is in the inspired word of God. And just here I want to use the word of Jesus as the scriptural basis of all I believe and teach, — all that the Bible teaches relative to a future life for the dead.

On one occasion Jesus said to His disciples, "Because I live, ye shall live also." Jesus was not speaking of his living at that time with his disciples. He was speaking of his living again after He should die on the cross and be buried and rise again the third day. He was declaring before hand his resurrection from the dead unto everlasting life, and was giving his disciples the blessed assurance that because he

would live again they too would also live again in the resurrection of the dead.

Job believed that he would die and he also believed that he would live again. Hear his words immediately following the question, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait until my change comes."

And where was Job expecting to wait until his change should come? Let him tell us. "O that Thou would hide me in the grave, that thou wouldst keep me secret until thy wrath be past. That thou would appoint me a set time and remember me!"

The change Job mentions here is the same change that Paul speaks of when he said, "We shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump. For the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible. And we shall be changed. For this mortal must put on immortality and this corruptible must put on incorruption. When this mortal shall have put on immortality then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written. Death is swallowed up in Victory. Oh death where is thy sting, Oh grave where is Victory. The sting of death is sin, the strength of sin is the law, but thanks be to God who giveth us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." I thank God for the hope of eternal life. For the hope of living again after that I am dead and returned to the dust. I thank Him for His promise to ransom me from the power of the grave and redeem me from death. And when at last I lay me down to die I could wish for no greater boon, no sweeter joy than to be conscious of the presence of my blessed Lord and to hear him sweetly whisper, "I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am there ye may be also." And the response of my weary waiting heart is, "even so, come Lord Jesus." Amen.

My final valedictory. As I now approach my eightieth milestone I am keenly aware that my race is nearly run. The evening twilight seems to be telling me that my day will soon be done and my work on earth be finished.

Before that inevitable hour has struck I want to leave this farewell message and this final testimony concerning some of the things I hope the Lord has done for me. Giving me the blessed assurance of his love and of his abiding presence as my spiritual Comforter.

In the days of my youth God revealed to me that I was a guilty condemned sinner in his sight. For the first time I now realized my need of divine help, and for the first time I called upon God for mercy. For weeks and months thereafter I waded the ever deepening flood of sorrow in an inexpressible agony of mind, until that never to be forgotten moment I felt my sins forgiven. I had done all in my power to get relief from the awful burden that weighed upon my heart and pressed me down deeper and deeper until I was convinced there was no hope for me.

Finally I came to where I felt resigned to what I believed was my awful impending doom. And just then, O thank God, just then something occured with me that I have never been able to fully describe or to express with words. In a moment, in a twinkling of an eye I seemed to be completely swallowed up with a glorious heavenly light and all nature seemed to be praising God. And my once sin laden sorrow-filled heart was now overflowing with an unspeakable joy. For me this was a dawning of a most wonderful new day. In the light of which God in his infinite mercy has permitted me to live and for more than half a century to labor and sacrifice, to suffer for and to serve the people I love above all people, the Primitive Old School Baptists.

And when my work in earth is done, when death has silenced this poor stammering tongue, I pray God that it may be truthfully said of me that I fought a good fight and kept the faith.

When the time has come, my dear people, that I must leave you, God will take care of you and supply all your needs according to his riches in glory. And when you are listening to this, my farewell message, I shall be resting from all my labors and be free from all sorrow and care. The sleep of death will be sweet and the awakening will be most glorious. With the fond hope of meeting those I love and leave behind, in that beautiful home over there.

I now bid you all farewell till we meet to part no more in God's sweet by and by.

(The above was by the late Elder C. M. Weaver, of Johnson City, Ill. from a recording.)

OBITUARIES

ELDRIDGE ELISHA BEACHAM

Eldridge Elisha Beacham, a son of the late Decature Beacham, Jr., and Annie E. (Dolly) Beacham, was born July 24, 1899, and departed this life May 28, 1969. He was a native and life-long resident of Kitty Hawk, N. C.

Surviving are his widow, Esther Tillett Beacham, of Kitty Hawk; one son, Burvell G. Beacham, Milton, Mass.; one brother, Dexter A. Beacham, Washington, D. C.; two sisters, Mrs. Blanche Beacham Midgett, Staten Island, N. Y., and Mrs. Zola Beacham, Tillett, St. Ignace, Mich., and two grandsons.

Eldridge was not "known for much speaking," but was the type of person whom to know was to love and respect. His daily walk and conversation demonstrated his desire to humbly walk in the footsteps of the Blessed Lord, in whom he put his trust. He was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace, and lived daily in the hope of some day being numbered with the redeemed of the Lord; and to sing his praises forever.

He and his wife united with Providence Primitive Baptist Church at Kitty Hawk May 2, 1954, under the pastorate of the late Elder John P. Tingle, and was baptized by the late Elder George G. Trevathan. He was a faithful member, giving his time and substance to the support of the church. He served as church clerk from Feb. 7, 1965 until his death. Even before becoming an enrolled member of the organized church, his home was frequently the gathering place for visiting elders, other members and friends of the church, where many pleasant hours were spent in singing the old songs of Zion and the Lamb.

May we who are left to mourn his departure bow in humble submission to the will of "Him who doeth all things well," being blessed with the feeling that our loss is his eternal gain; and a hope that when we are called to go, we, too, shall have a place with the ransomed of the Lord.

Written by his brother-in-law.

Spencer L. Midgett

MARTHA ROBBINS WOMBLE

Martha Robbins Womble, the daughter of J. B. and Jane Robbins, was born in Nash County on November 12, 1883. At the age of 20 she was married to Dorsey Womble on December 23, 1903. This union was blessed with three children, one son and two daughters.

On the second Sunday of May, 1914, Sister Womble was baptized into the full fellowship of the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, by Elder P. D. Gold. Henceforth, Sister Womble was a faithful member to her church and belief. She was taught by God and was sound in the faith and doctrine of Jesus Christ, our Lord. All through the following years she derived much pleasure and comfort from reading her Bible.

Her husband, Dorsey, was in declining health for many years prior to his death which preceded hers. During this time, as her pastor, I visited in the home very often. Her conversation was about her family and the goodness of the Lord. By God's grace, she was given a deep concern for the welfare and the well-being of her church even though there were times when she was providentially hindered from attending.

After the death of her husband, Sister Womble moved from Nash County to Raleigh, North Carolina, to live with her children. She still attended her church meetings at the Falls as often as her health permitted. At times, by nature and physical strength, it would appear that she was unable to be there.

I remember well her last visit to the church on the second weekend in November, 1968. Her actions and her talk on that day were as if she had received a revelation from God. In her conversation with me as she was leaving, she looked around the meetinghouse and at me and said, "I will not be back." On January 5, 1969, God called her from this world. As I look back to her last church service and conversation with me, I know that she had been foretold of her death. Yet she was not afraid because her God had promised never to leave or forsake. I was in Tarboro on January 5, 1969, and after morning services I asked the deacons from the Falls Church to go with me to Raleigh. I had a premonition that something had happened. When we reached the hospital, I was told that she had passed away. Death rends a deep wound to

those of us who are left; but only by death can the elect be set free to be with Him who has begotten them by His mercy.

Survivors are one son, James Earnest Womble, and two daughters, Mattie Mae Tudor and Edna Earl Womble, all of Raleigh, N. C.

Funeral services were held at Johnson Funeral Home on January 7, 1969, by her pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, Jr. She was laid to rest in the Nashville Cemetery, Nashville, N. C., beside her husband to await the coming of Him who is the Lord of Lords and the King of Kings.

Written by her pastor, who loved her and tried to serve her in Christ.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Jr.

LATISHIA WORLEY GIBSON

Sister Latishia Worley Gibson, age 80 years, passed away November 19, 1969, in Memorial Hospital, Lynchburg, Va. She was born in Pittsylvania County, Va., July 9, 1889, the daughter of the late James and Phoebe Owen Worley. She was the wife of the late David L. Gibson.

She is survived by two sons, Marvin and Fred, both of Gretna; five daughters, Mrs. Harvey Myers, Pittsville, Va.; Mrs. Mervin Cathran and Mrs. J. L. Kelly, of Hurt, Va.; and Mrs. Robert Davis, of Newport News; three brothers, Mack and Sam, of Gretna, Va. and Edgar, of Okley, W. Va. Surviving also are 22 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren.

Sister Gibson joined Springfield Primitive Baptist Church July 11, 1931, and was a faithful member as long as she was able, being afflicted for several years and had to be assisted to get into the church for a long time. She was of a sweet disposition and much loved. The church was blessed to observe the manifestation of God's love within her heart and soul, and by her walk of life. The children tenderly cared for her in her illness.

Funeral services were held at Springfield Church by the pastor Elder O. K. Tench, and she was laid to rest in Gretna Burial Park. Many beautiful flowers were placed on her grave: a token of esteem in which she was held.

May the Lord reconcile all who feel their great loss. Written by

Annie Tosh

JAMES BILLY TOTTEN

A little past midnight Nov. 21, 1969 at 12:40 a. m. it pleased Almighty God to remove from our midst Brother James Billy Totten of Route 1, Reidsville, N. C. He united with the church at Pleasant Grove June 1, 1969. He was never baptized with water. We believe that he was baptized with the Holy Spirit.

Left to mourn their loss were one brother, Dwight W. Totten of Alexandria, Va.; three sisters, Mrs. Johnny Cobb of Route 1, Reidsville; Mrs. Harry Perkins of Route 4, Burlington; and Mrs. Haywood Cobb of Route 1, Ruffin.

The final rites were held Sunday afternoon at 2:30 o'clock at Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church. The funeral was conducted by our pastor Elder Donald Smith and Elder Wallace Smith. His body was laid at rest at Camp Springs Methodist Church awaiting the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

He died a very young man. The Scripture tells us that the young will die and the old must die. The Church will miss Brother Totten very much but God knows best.

He had been in poor health a long time and suffered much the last few months. We grieve not as those without hope, but feel that our loss is his eternal gain. He had very much love for the Brothers and Sisters at Pleasant Grove Church.

Brother Henry Page
Route 1, Ruffin, N. C.

MINNIE SPICER STALLINGS

Sister Minnie Spicer Stallings, wife of one of our faithful and devoted deacons of Pleasant Hill Church, Brother Callie Elwood Stallings, has gone to her place of rest. She was born June 29, 1888, and died November 3, 1969. She was born, reared and lived her entire life in Edgecombe County, N. C.

She was the mother of six children, of which the following five are living: Ellie S. Barnes, Rocky Mount, N. C.; Myrtle S. Pridgen, Sharpsburg, N. C.; Richard E. Stallings, Alexandria, Va.; Minnie V. S. Bone, Rocky Mount, N. C.; and Rosa Pearl S. Landen, Rocky Mount. Surviving also are the following: twelve grandchildren, ten great grandchildren, one sister, Mrs. Mary S. Cummings, and one brother, Ernest L. Spicer, Waycross, Ga.

We miss her so at Pleasant Hill, but after suffering for five months, we feel she is asleep from which none wake to weep.

Her funeral was conducted by Elders Leslie Coker and Henry Jones.

She was a precious member of Pleasant Hill Church, and, as her family says, "was devoted to her church, a wonderful wife and mother; we will always be thankful for her love and teaching. She looked forward to her children to gather at home every Sunday night." They rise up and call her blessed.

Written by request in conference the 4th Saturday in November, 1969, by one who loved her.

Emma F. Brake

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT
BROTHER W. T. CHESTER

Zion Church, Mayfield, Kentucky, while in conference first Sunday in September; agreed to write a resolution of respect, for a dear Brother.

Christ saw fit for Brother William Thomas Chester to fall quietly asleep in his encircling arms, about 3:00 P. M. July 20, 1969. By the Grace of God, Brother Chester lived a life of 88 years, 3 months and 11 days.

Brother Chester united with the Primitive Baptist Church September 15, 1914, and was baptized by Elder H. M. Oliver. He was a dear soldier who held fast to this faith until the end came. He murmured not at the troubles of the way. He was always with Zion Church's little flock in spirit, when they met each first Sunday even after ill health would not permit him to attend Church. He was loved by the Baptists in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Alabama, through his attendance of several associations in that area, with the late Elder O. W. Perkins.

He was married to Myrtle Marine, June 2, 1903. To this union were born two daughters: Mrs. Marine Bagwell and Mrs. Ina Warren, both survive him. He is also survived by five grandchildren and ten great grandchildren.

Mrs. Myrtle Chester died October 27, 1917. After her death Brother Chester was married in 1919, to Fannie Hendrickes, who preceded him in death July 1, 1952.

Brother Chester's request was that Elder J. N. Darnell conduct his funeral, with Ina's Pastor assisting. Due to the fact that Elder Darnell's health often fails him, services were conducted at Byrn Funeral Home, by Mr. James Shockley. Mortal life having ceased, he was laid to rest in Soldier Creek Cemetery. There to sleep in those arms that encircle him, until the trumpet of God shall sound. Then may he dwell with thee at home; and be with the Saints around the Angelic throne, singing praises with the Lord and King.

Written by Sister Dorothy Pryor, complying with Brother Chester's request of about four years prior to his death.

Elder Paul Poyner, Moderator
Sister Birdie Lawson, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT
DEACON F. ELLIS AMASON

Bethel Primitive Baptist Church of Union County, Arkansas reports the loss of another one of its precious members, to wit; Deacon F. Ellis Amason of McNeil, Arkansas. Born December 22, 1900, he died November 20, 1969. He became a member of the church May 21, 1950, and was ordained as deacon of the church December 19, 1964.

Survivors include his widow, Mrs. Mary Daniels Amason; one daughter, Mrs. Gloria Westbrook; three sons: Arthur, Charles, and Maurice; one sister, Mrs. Frank Davis; three brothers: Charley, Curtis, and Woody Amason; seven grandchildren, and a host of other relatives and friends who mourn his passing.

The funeral was conducted at Bethel Church November 22, 1969, by his Pastor, Elder E. J. Lambert, assisted by Elder T. F. Sanders, McNeil. Burial was in Bethel Cemetery.

Superlative characteristics of meekness and understanding graced his life. He shall be remembered for his wise counsel and devotion to his family, friends and church.

The above letter ordered written by Bethel Church in regular conference on December 20, 1969. Read and approved the same day.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Moderator
Mrs. Jean Burns, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

We, the church at Hickory Grove, feel greatly the loss of one of our members, Sister Lenora Lee. She was born November 18, 1890 and died June 18, 1969 making her stay on earth 78 years and 7 months.

Sister Lee died at her home near Coats, North Carolina. She was the daughter of Primrose and Eliza Johnson and was the widow of Brother Seth Lee who preceded her in death on March 4, 1956.

She leaves to mourn their loss, six children; two sons and four daughters, eight grandchildren, two great grandchildren, four sisters, one brother and many relatives and friends.

Sister Lenora united with Hickory Grove Primitive Baptist Church August, 1921, by experience and baptism. She was a faithful member as long as she was able to attend. She was a loving mother to her family and a friend to all who knew her.

We, the members of Hickory Grove Church, extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family in the loss of a faithful member.

Her funeral was conducted at Rose Funeral Home by Elder Wilber Barbour and Mr. Howard O. Beard and was laid to rest in the Family Cemetery near Peacock Cross Roads in the presence of a host of relatives and friends.

Be it resolved that a copy of this be sent to the family, one to the *Signs of Times* and one put on the church book.

Committee:
Sister Georgia E. Hill
Sister Lucy Beasley
Sister Gertrude Royal

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 138 DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1970 NO. 4

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4/70
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ELECTION AND PREDESTINATION

As many as the Lord hath chosen,
So many shall believe; not all
The power and craft of Hell
Shall one of them deceive.

Those God has foreordained to love,
They must and shall believe,
But those who say it's man's free will
Their very selves deceive.

It's not because the man believes
That he is saved at all. God hath
Ordained he should believe
Though ruined in the fall.

Though in our Adam nature dead,
In death we must remain till
God the Holy Ghost comes down,
And we are born again.

God foreordained it should be so,
For 'tis Jehovah's plan
To call his people by his grace,
And bring them to the Lamb.

Before God formed his creature man,
Before the birth of day, God
Foreordained redemption's plan, and
Christ the only way.

The man that goes to God in time,
Was loved ere time began:
The Father's own eternal choice
Redeemed by Christ the Son.

Selected by
F. E. Skinner
Fletcher, Okla.

COVENANT OF GRACE
UNCHANGEABLE

Rt. 4, Box 46A
Rocky Mount, Va. 24151

Dear Elder Spangler:

I find it time to renew my subscription to the *Signs*. Surely time is slipping by us and many things come and go, and the only thing that I can think of that never has changed, nor will it ever change, is the Covenant of Grace.

I would rather feel an interest in that Covenant than to own the whole United States. Everything we can see or touch will sometime cease to be, but "My word only, saith the Lord, shall not be shaken." O for grace to sustain us through lean seasons, and for a spirit of prayer that would pray for things that are right.

May God ever be the Moderator of our lives, and give us temperance in all things. We hope you and yours are well.

Sincerely,
The James R. Holleys

ENJOY LETTERS FROM ALL
PARTS OF THE COUNTRY

Rt. 1, Box 192
Providence, Ky. 42450

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

Enclosed is a check for one year's subscription for the *"Times."* It is a great paper, and we surely enjoy reading it and the letters from all parts of the country. We are Primitive Baptists. My father was a Primitive Baptist elder, and my wife was reared in a Primitive Baptist home. We love all the dear people who believe in Predes-

tination and Election, for we know if it was left to us, we would wind up in an everlasting hell.

Thanks to our Heavenly Father, it isn't left to man, for He chose his people before the foundation of the world. If we are his, we were chosen in Christ who suffered and died for us. If we are not in that number of the elected, we know there isn't anything we can do to save ourselves.

May God's richest blessings be with you, and may you continue in your good work.

Brother and Sister in hope,
Wallace and Lou Ella Clayton

"ABLE TO LIVE ONLY ON WHAT HE GIVES"

51 Doncaster Avenue
London, Ontario
January 18, 1970

Dear Elder and Sister Hudson,
Cherie and Tim:

It seems such a short time since I was asked by Elder Ruston to write you folks and invite you to come to visit the church in Canada last June. It was the first time that he had asked me to write and invite any visiting minister. We looked forward so much to your visit.

We felt to be under such a cloud when we heard of your accident. You were in our daily prayers. It had such an effect upon me — having somehow felt the responsibility of having invited you. Well do I remember of trying to speak on the Saturday morning. The only Scripture that came to mind in our sadness was "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" It seemed to express the only fit confidence — confidence in a God who must still be too wise to err and too good to be unkind.

God is better to us than our fears and we feel in answer to many prayers that God the Great Physician is caring for his own — God with whom all things are possible as he is the giver and preserver of life. What a blessing to have confidence in him! What a blessing you have been restored! What a blessing to read of your experiences and the confidence that you were given by God, how your faith was sorely tried and yet how you have been brought off more than conquerors — more than conquerors because you have been able to give all the praise to his great name.

So shall all his people be! They, like the children of Israel travel through the wilderness — often as a wilderness of woe — as strangers here below — being able to live only on what he gives: bread — the word of God, water out of the rocks — water out of the wells of salvation — which springs up even unto everlasting life.

Paul was persuaded that "tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." He also was persuaded that "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit."

In some of our troubles we experience as Paul: "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort; *Who comforted us in all our tribulation,* that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." (2 Cor. 1:3-4) When we are persuaded to trust in one who hath delivered, who doth deliver and whom we trust will yet deliver, we have our confidence in the right place.

If not deceived, God in his kindness gave me something to go on: "Preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, along with your work in the schools." (I am a principal of a large K-8 school.) I have gone in the strength of this for some time. It has been a great blessing to me to buoy me up.

Our church in Canada is seemingly at a "low ebb," yet sometimes I feel within that the remnant will yet take

root downward and bear fruit upward. We felt a blessing from God when we spoke on 2 Kings 19:4: "Lift up thy prayer for the remnant that are left."

So we travel on. Our prayers are that you and yours will be completely restored in health and that he may bless the trials to the good of your souls, to the glory of his name and to the welfare of Zion.

The Lord willing we would that we might some day meet together. We would love to see you if you feel to come this way.

Yours in hope and fellowship if not deceived,

D. Alex McColl

SISTER RUSTON TO ELDER RUSTON'S FATHER AND MOTHER IN 1913

New York City
December 14, 1913

My dear Father and Mother Ruston:

I do not know whether you will be surprised to receive such a letter as this from me, but I feel I must write and tell you what the Lord has done for me. I never remember the time when I did not want to pray that God would reveal my sinfulness to me, and Christ as my Saviour; and I would be affected at times by preaching or what I read, but I never felt it rested with as much weight on me as I wanted it to.

After we came to America this time, and we were comfortably settled in Brooklyn, I was wicked enough to wish there were no after life, as I was so happy and comfortable I wanted it always to continue. This thought frightened me, and I felt I must pray to be shown the vanity of this world. I went on like this until about two weeks after our baby Rhoda was born, when I began to be troubled with a heavy burden — a constant pressure on my spirits, and I could not rid myself of it. I could not understand it: all I felt I could do was to pray to God to remove it, for, although I tried to free myself of it, it only grew heavier.

Then the house where we lived was sold and we had to move, and you know what troubles we met with in that. I thought they would quite crush me, but still I felt I must pray for I felt that none but God could help me; and although I still had my heavy burden, I did feel that He gave me strength for my day, as I felt I could not have endured what I was suffering if He had not helped me through. I felt so pressed down, and although I felt a little something to make me hope it was God working in me, I still thought perhaps it was loneliness or home-sickness, and that if George could be with me more, I should feel better; but I was to find it a mistake, for on some of the days he was home from work I suffered the most.

I felt if I did not get relief either my mind or health would give way. I lost all pleasure in my home, husband or children, and felt I could hardly force myself to eat. All that made me do so was the thought that I had my little baby to feed, and that she would have to suffer if I were ill. All I could do was to drop on my knees and groan, "Lord help me," for in no other way did I feel I could find relief. I was so afraid it was not His work, and, if not, I felt I was most miserable: for I had tried to get rid of my trouble in every way, and could not; and if God did not help me, I did not know what I should do. This was a week ago yesterday, on Saturday morning, December 6th. It was terrible: I felt I could not bear it. I felt like the woman who could not lift up herself, and had spent all she had but was no better, but rather was worse.

I told George I did not know what I should do: it seemed more than nature could bear. I read the Bible but could not find comfort. "When the poor and needy seek water and findeth none," seemed my case, and "The rebellious dwell in a dry land." I was terribly rebellious, but felt I could not prevent

it. As each Sunday had come around I had gone to meeting, hoping and praying there might be something for me, but although I did seem to get a little hope at times, I would come away and forget the very words which encouraged me — and sink lower than ever. Although I did feel there must be a blessedness if only one could experience what the minister, Elder McConnell, preached about; and I felt such a love to him and all God's people. I was so afraid it was only a natural love because they were so kind to me; and yet I could not think it was, for there were one or two I am sure had nothing in them naturally to attract me: yet when I heard them speak on the things of God, I loved them so much.

I was telling you about last Saturday week. In the afternoon I felt a happiness stealing over me, and I told George I did not know how it was or what made me feel like it, but I felt I must thank God for relieving me; for I felt I should have broken down under my burden if it had not lifted a little. We were rather busy, and were late going to bed, so I thought I would not stay to read as I had read some earlier in the day; but then I thought I would not neglect it. I opened at the Psalms and there seemed a light on the Word which I had never seen before, especially the beginning of Psalm 9. When I got to the third verse I felt I could really feed on it, for I felt God had indeed turned back my enemies; and I told George so. He starting reading aloud, "Ho every one that thirsteth," and when he got to, "He that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat," I said, "I am sure I have no money for I cannot do anything of myself." He went on reading, but I did not hear him, for then it seemed to me that Calvary was brought up before me, that I felt my burden was all gone and I could stand up straight; and I saw Jesus on the cross, bowed down with it and bearing it all for me. It was like a vision, so wonderful. Although I had prayed for it, I had never thought it possible it could be revealed so clearly to me. I felt I wanted to do nothing but praise Him.

George had been exercised about baptism for a long time, and had hoped I should join him, but I always told him I had to be shown a lot more before I was a fit subject for baptism; but now I felt I wanted to tell the dear church people what a dear Jesus I had found, and felt He had done so much for me that it was but a little thing to follow Him in that. The next day being Sunday, I told the minister about it in the intermission, and in the afternoon, there being a church meeting, we gave in our testimony; and being accepted, it was arranged for us to be baptized the next Sunday. I have had many temptations during the week but the sweetness has continued. Satan has tried to take away my peace, but he has defeated himself, for when I felt burdened and dejected again then the blessed hope of heaven has made me feel how He has blessed me, and I hope to go there and praise Him for ever and ever.

My prayer has long been, "O love divine, how sweet thou art, when shall I find my willing heart, all taken up in thee," etc. especially, "God only knows the love of God, Oh, that it now were shed abroad in this poor stony heart. For this I sigh, for this I pine, this only portion, Lord, by mine, be mine this better part." Now I feel the love of God is shed abroad in my heart. Recently I had so much happiness, I had to say, "Surely this is none other than the gate of heaven," and yet, "If such the sweetness of the streams, what much the fountain be? where saints and angels draw their bliss immediately from thee." I have so longed for today to come that I might openly confess Him; and, Oh! what happiness there has been in it. We were baptized in the river Hudson, and then went to the meeting-house for lunch and afternoon service; and what a feast of fat things it was.

The minister spoke of the burden all

God's people have to labour under, and how it is all laid on Jesus; and how the Comforter is sent. It seems that I must be travelling in the King's Highway of holiness, for it does indeed seem a path of peace; and I can see my experience in God's people right through the Bible. And I feel that the good old hymn writers felt the same, for their hymns are just the expression of my heart; and in the present day God's ministers preach it, and the people all talk the same language. The other day I was so discontented and pressed down by worldly things, I wished I could go straight to heaven and praise God without being troubled by the cares of this world. Then it came to me, "Casting all your care upon Him for He careth for you," and I had such sweet peace. It is certainly "the peace of God which passeth all understanding." "Faith is the substance of things hoped for," and surely God has given me the substance of what I have hoped and prayed for for so long. I do pray He will keep me near to Him, for I feel so prone to wander.

How good God has been to bring dear George and me to His banqueting house together. It is a deeper love than our earthly companionship, although we feel God gave us that too; but to be able to pray and talk together and walk the heavenly road, is so wonderful it seems to be far greater than the earthly happiness we have always had together since first we knew each other.

Well, dear Father and Mother, I have prayed I might not write anything but what I have really been taught; and hope I have not.

With my best love, I remain your loving daughter,

Esther

WITH HIM HE FREELY GIVES US ALL THINGS

Rt. 2, Box 423
Boones Mill, Va. 24065

Dear Brethren:

It is not the business of the servant of God to set forth one untenable proposition for the purpose of refuting another. We do not have anything but that which we have received, and we have received no fellowship for any of the people who trust in their works for either a part or all of salvation, — and boast as though we had not received it.

If God gave us Christ, how shall He not with him also freely give us all things? And if we have Christ we have all things and abound. Anything we do not have now we do not need now; and faith is content with such things as we have.

As for the doctrine of obedience and disobedience: by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners; even so by the obedience of one man (Jesus) *shall* many be made righteous. Now those made righteous by Jesus Christ shall do righteously according to the measure of the faith of God in each heir of righteousness. When such sin, they have an Advocate with the Father.

Those who claim that our spiritual comfort is conditional upon our behaviour, are destitute of all scriptural companionship, for Jesus is the Friend of sinners. Those who say that "Christ in you the hope of glory" is a conditional matter are not only false in their declaration, but do themselves know nothing of how to behave either in or out of the house of God, for it is hid from all prudent people. Prudent people are fleshly-wise, to tell others how.

Not only are preachers and deacons gifts to the church, but each member is a gift to the church. Everyone the Lord calls is fully taught by the Lord in that call to know of spiritual things; and to that call and things of the Spirit and to Jesus, he should ever look, and never to man.

There is a gift in each saint that only God can bestow, and this cannot be done by man in any respect or to any degree. To think that a man can embellish the work of God, and better qualify His workmanship, is to deny,

"He is the Rock, his work is perfect." Those who are put into the service of God are all qualified by the Spirit by which they are set apart.

There is faith in each Church, and without faith there is no real profession of faith. The fact that, "The just shall live by faith," is sweet to the faithful; while do your duty is an underhanded, subtle, carnal, flesh-pleasing theme.

The Lord no doubt will preserve His faithful ones, and will give them from time to time to see that He will do it in the might of His power. Where grace is proclaimed, God's power is preached. Where works, duties, laws, etc. are preached the creature is exalted and the Creator abased.

Those who respect the planting of the Lord regard it as holy ground; and the inhabitants of Zion as a sanctified, preserved people. These do not feel disposed or called to embellish the work of God, but rather to deny themselves. Their desire is, "Lord submissive make us go." For so long as this world endures such shall flourish in the courts of our God, knowing that He can all our sorrows heal.

In gospel bonds,
J. L. Bocock

"COMFORTING TO FEEL HIS GUIDING HAND"

100 Hermosa Avenue
Apartment 3E
Long Beach, California 90802

Elder D. V. Spangler, Editor
Danville, Virginia 24541

Dear Elder Spangler:

It is time to renew my subscription for two years to the dear old *Signs*. What a wonderful manifestation of God's loving care and guidance from 1832 (twenty-nine years before the beginning of the Civil War) through peace and war, good years and lean years (137 of them) this beloved paper of glad tidings has persevered. May it be His holy and divine purpose to make it possible to continue it through many, many more years as a beacon to those who love the Lord and are called according to His purpose.

How sweet and comforting it has been through an extended illness, from which I have not fully recovered, to feel His guiding hand and comforting spirit. We know He never leaves nor forsakes us but how wonderful it is when we can feel Him near. I have prayed for patience and reconciling grace in my ordeal, especially during four times in the hospital in the past year (hepatitis). We know all things work together for good to those who love the Lord and are called according to His purpose (I hope I am one of His).

The following poem which I wrote when my precious mother passed away five years ago, if not deceived, expresses my faith and hope.

GOD IS MY LOVE

There is an end of the land
And an end of the sea
But there is no end
Of God's love to me.
He is the spirit of prayer
The answer to prayer,
The very air I breathe.

When He leaves my heart for a season
I am sighted but unseeing;
Hearing yet unheeding
I exist but seeming for no reason

When through troubled waters I must go,
His everlasting arm holds me:
He is my shield
Against the evil about me.

He is the shadow of a great rock
In a barren, weary land,
A shelter from the storm's shock.

He has no beginning;
He always was, is, will be
The glory of my happy days
The comfort of my mourning nights.

I am enclosing, together with my check for $15.00 (fifteen dollars) seven of which is for the renewal of my two-year subscription and the remaining $8.00 (eight dollars) to be used for the "needy" fund. The term "needy" I like better than indigent. We are all needy

in spirit and this seems less discriminatory.

May God bless you and your co-editors in your work which I know is a labor of love.

In hope,
Helen Jane Jones

P. S.: I hope you, your companion and family are well and happy.

ENJOYED ELDER LEFFERTS' PREACHING

Collinsville, Va.

Dear Elder Wood:

Truly hope this finds you and your family enjoying the blessings of life, and to everlasting happiness. I received the January issue of the *Signs,* and enjoyed the writings very much.

Elder Lefferts has passed on, but his writings and preaching still linger with me. I well remember his text preached at Roanoke twenty some years ago, on the 8th chapter of The Song of Solomon. I cherished it and still do.

I am enclosing an article written by him as an Editorial in the *Signs* of February 1, 1921, and would like to see it reprinted in the *Signs* if you see fit.

Sister Mattie Underwood

(See Voices of the Past.)

"WOE TO THEM THAT ARE AT EASE IN ZION"

"Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came!" (Amos 6:1)

We believe this Scripture also applies to Spiritual Israel as it did to natural Israel. Bible readers are familiar with the calamities, judgments, etc. that were brought upon natural Israel.

There is great danger of being at ease, and there is a woe pronounced upon this state! We may think of this as being carnal ease, or one being not concerned about one's own Spiritual welfare, or not being concerned about the welfare of Zion. As we think of one being at ease, we think of one getting lazy. One may say, "there is not any use of me praying, because what is going to happen is going to happen anyway, whether I pray or not." One is at ease if he does not pray unto God. One is at ease if he does not feel the need of guidance, and for God to direct him as he travels along this pilgrim way.

True prayer is inspired by God. Prayer is part of the predestination of God. God has determined certain blessings for his people, and He has also determined that they should pray for them. "He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him." (Psalm 91:15) It is a positive declaration that God's people shall call upon him. They must pray, and this is not mechanical. God puts the burden upon the heart, and one cannot help but pray, and he prays because he wants some relief. This is heart-felt!

One is in a state of "at ease in Zion" when he has a careless, indifferent attitude. In the 6th chapter of Ephesians Paul admonished the brethren to put on the whole armour of God. It is true that one cannot do this by his own efforts, but through the strength of God he can. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4:13) One is careless and at ease, when he sits back and says, "we have got the truth, got the doctrine of God, and we are right, so there is nothing to be concerned about." There is much to be concerned about!

It causes concern when we realize that we do not have the same degree of the light or the presence of God as it was in ages past. Many are at ease because they do not realize this, and they are in a sleepy state, and are certainly at ease in Zion! This light of God is being removed so gradually, that those that sleep in Zion do not realize

that God is removing his presence from us! Oh! May the Lord wake us up, and cause us to be concerned about the sad state of Zion!

Why do we have this carnal ease? We are blessed with better material things than our forefathers, but they were blessed with a better degree of the riches of God than we are in this age. While we are blessed in a natural sense, it looks that we are experiencing leanness of our souls at the same time. "And he gave them their request: but *sent leanness into their soul.*" (Psalm 106: 15)

We should be thankful for the opportunity to meet together and sing the sweet songs of Zion, hear the Gospel preached, and enjoy this sweet fellowship of the Brethren. How miserable it would be when we would not any more upon this earth have the opportunity to have public worship. It would also be miserable to meet together and feel that God had forsaken us. One has the desire to hear, but finds in sorrow to his soul that he is shut up, and cannot meditate upon Spiritual things as he would desire to.

The evil day is before us! The motive of Satan is to separate and divide God's people, stir up confusion and hard feelings between brethren, etc. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." (1 Peter 5:8) We need the presence of God in this evil day! May the Lord enable us to put on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the assaults of Satan. We cannot stand against Satan in our own strength, but through the Lord we can stand. Our enemies are too strong for us, therefore we need the presence of the Lord, who is our strength and our deliverer. "He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: *for they were too strong for me.*" (Psalm 18:17)

As we travel down a natural road, we see a ditch on the left, and one on the right. As we think of the way that leads to the truth, we see a ditch on the left and one on the right. "And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee saying, *This is the way, walk ye in it,* when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." (Isaiah 30:21) One ditch is conditionalism, of one trying to earn salvation, his blessings, etc. by his own works. The other ditch is the "fatalist point of view," or one trying to hide his faults, weaknesses, shortcomings, sins, etc., behind the predestination of God.

The weapons of our warfare are not carnal. A good Spiritual weapon is prayer to God, to walk in an humble manner before our brethren and to watch over one another for good and not for evil. It is good to walk in love. If we love God, we cannot help to love our Brethren. "Walk in love . . ." (Eph. 5:2) May the Lord bless us to speak the truth in love. "But speaking the truth in love." (Eph. 4:15)

We are at ease if our mind and affections are set upon things of this earth. May the Lord bless us to see and feel that our stay here upon this earth whether few or many years, are not worthy to be compared to that everlasting glory that shall be revealed in God's children. Let us remember that the "love of money is the root of all evil." (1 Tim. 6:10)

May the Lord bless us to be concerned about the Spiritual things of God. May the Lord bless us to read the Bible. Let me ask you, dear reader, how long has it been since you have read the Bible? Has it been a long time because you just had to watch all those TV programs, etc.? Have you been at ease so long that you cannot remember when you actually prayed to God? The position or the place where you pray does not make any difference. It is when we pray to our God in secret, and the things of this world are shut out. It is good to pray unto God. He is able to supply all of our needs. There is nothing too hard for God. When we are in that dangerous sleepy state, may we pray that the Lord will awaken us out

of this carnal sleep, and once again bless us with his manifest presence.

Many times when we pray, it seems that God does not hear us. It looks that He will not bless us. But let us not give up, and let us keep praying. If we do not faint, in due time the Lord blesses us. "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that *men ought always to pray, and not to faint;* Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And *shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?"* (Luke 18:1-7) The first verse is the key to this parable, that we should keep praying in spite of discouragements. We will not go into detail, but you Bible readers are acquainted with the case of Jacob wrestling with the angel all night. (Genesis 32:24-30) Jacob had the courage and determination when he said: "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me."

May we pray that the Lord will bless Zion to waken out of this sleepy state, and set her affections upon things above, and be concerned about the things of God. May the Lord revive us! "Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?" (Psalm 85:6)

We close with quotation of Eph. 6:18: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

MADE ACQUAINTED WITH TRUTH THROUGH EXPERIENCE

234 Baker Street
Warren, Ark. 71671

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

My subscription has expired, so am enclosing check for two year's renewal; use the remainder as you see fit. I don't want to miss a single copy. The messages that are sent forth through the *Signs,* are what I hope I believe and love. I know nothing personally of, nor acknowledge any conditionalism upon the will of the creature. For the creature has not the will nor the power to accept, or do worship and service to God from birth until death. If there is any doing the will of God, any salvation given, promises or blessings obtained, it is that which emanates from the inner man, (Christ in us the hope of glory,) through the divine principle of faith, hope and love given us of God, in which He receives all the honor and glory. The creature is utterly abashed, and our God and Saviour extolled. This salvation, promise or blessing is only obtained by God working within us according to His good pleasure.

God never began a work which he did not accomplish to His own glory and the praise of His grace. His ways and works are contrary to the will of the creature. He is sovereign over all things in heaven and earth, doing His will in the heavens and among the inhabitants of the earth. I believe in Christian obedience, such as emanates from the grace of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost which is given us as new creatures in Christ Jesus. We put off the old man with his deeds (thus fulfilling the desires of the flesh,) adultery, stealing, lying, etc., to walk in newness of life. This can only be according to enabling grace. When grace does not reign and rule within us, we are left destitute of power, and are unable to worship or serve Him. He gives according to his own will and pleasure. Of ourselves we can do noth-

ing; in Him we can do all things according to the strength afforded of him. As we are mortals, afflictions, crosses to bear, and losses are our lot, so that we may know that here we have no continuing city. Whether these sufferings are the effects of our sins or the dispensation of God for our benefit, we acknowledge, when we understand, that they are good.

Without these troubles and tribulations, we would have little evidence of our sonship, nor would we desire a better country. I cannot feel that anything comes to pass by chance. We know that sin entered by the disobedience of one, and death passed upon all; whereby according to divine justice, all would be forever lost. This fact I was made acquainted with in my experience, if I have ever had an experience of grace. I came to realize that if I had never committed a sin in life or had died in infancy without the knowledge of good and evil, I was lost by reason of total depravity. Salvation came to me, (I did not go to it,) when my condemnation was taken away, and Jesus appeared as my Saviour. So, dear friends, there is no salvation save in Jesus; and that is a free gift. I have no other hope for myself, or anyone else; and if my portion is to be with the damned, I must say it is just and right.

I find also that we are equally dependent upon Him for spiritual joys as we travel through this thorny maze. We are kept by the power of God unto salvation. While I desire to encourage God's people to an orderly walk, I cannot divide salvation into many parts as some do, and thus divide the glory with men, because man is utterly helpless. If God does not have all power over man, then I know not how to trust him. I admit that I am ignorant and do not understand many things, but I thank God that He has graciously given me hope to know the truth. God has all power, — where is any place for anymore? He is all powerful. There is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained by God. "I am God and there is none other." He made all things that be: He has set their bounds and habitations, and they cannot go beyond their decreed purposes. All things fulfill His eternal purpose.

Yes, they all fill the very place He before determined that they should. It makes no difference what the thing is: good, bad, or indifferent according to man, I believe the all wise and powerful God that I hope I love, willed it so. There is nothing that ever has or ever will occur, that God did not will. He willed to make the old crooked serpent. He was not forced to make anything, but He freely and purposely made all things for his own glory. There was no one to counsel him, but his own hand made the earth and garnished the heavens; and all things will fulfill the purpose for which God intended it. His own arm brought salvation, and of the people there were none to help.

I believe that this all wise God did choose and elect his people in his only Son, who was full of truth and grace. Yes, their names were written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world — not for any good foreseen in them, for it is a free gift from God. It is not of works, but of grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; for you are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God before ordained that you should walk in them. He has mercy on whom He will have mercy, and hardens whom he will. It is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God what shows mercy. With his love and kindness He draws his own.

Your unworthy sister in hope of mercy,

Mrs. Charlie Harrod

"WONDERFUL TO BE SATISFIED WITH THE FATHER"

Yanceyville, N. C.

Mr. and Mrs. Cisco Barron
Spearsville, La.

Dear Brother and Sister Barron:

We learned just recently of you having lost a brother since you were here. These partings are sad and always leave a scar. There is only One, with whom I feel you are well acquainted, that possesses and distributes the real healing power for these wounds. Time is also a healing ointment — a "product" of this world.

The world "time" brings to mind Elder King's sermon at Prospect Hill Church last fourth Sunday. He set forth our usefulness for, and reliance on, time in this world. What a schedule we gear ourselves to, such as "A time (we set) to go to bed and a time to get up." In other words we find ourselves living by a time table — doing so even unconsciously. Then he went on to speak so beautifully of God's eternal "now," where "time" shall be no more. Isn't it wonderful to think upon: to have no thought of the past and no fear of the future — to be ever satisfied with the Father. Oh! to even grasp a faint hope of such a picture is almost inconceivable and almost leaves me in a fearful state. Elder King was so wonderfully blessed to portray such a picture this Sunday in his praises to an eternal God, declaring as always the glory of the Father.

Another thought comes to mind. A few months ago the word "measure" seemed to stay on my mind for several days. I began to wonder why, and after a while even wondered if there was some scriptural connection. I even checked and read several passages of scripture but nothing seemed outstanding. Then one night after retiring the word was made beautiful to me. I cannot seem to put it into words but I did feel a something there that I feasted upon for most of the night. Somehow "time" and "measure" seem to cohere for me. Does this make any sense to you? I'm very doubtful; but I have enjoyed my little chat with you.

We were so happy you worked in a little visit with us, though it seems almost like a dream that you and all the other dear folks were here. Burch and I both treasure our friends and especially the ones of like faith. We hope the good Master will continue to smile upon us in the form of giving His little ones a mind to come our way occasionally, as well as for the many other favors He has bestowed upon us we want to be thankful.

Give our regards to Mary — want to acknowledge her letter but will have to do so later. Too, remember us to Elder and Sister Smith, also the Hudsons. Think of them often. May it please the Father of all grace to continue His watchful care in tender love and mercy toward them.

Burch also wishes to be remembered to one and all and especially to tell you how please we were that you would even consider us in your visit to North Carolina.

I know of no special news of the people you know back here. I hear we had a good Union (5th Sunday) meeting at Dan River Church. We did not go because of the death of a next door neighbor just a few minutes before leaving.

I must bring these remarks to a close.

In bonds of love,
Mary Blaylock

APPRECIATES THE *SIGNS*

Quarryville, Pa. 17566

Elder David V. Spangler

Dear Elder and Brother:

First of all I trust you and yours are well. I trust blessings in Jesus Christ, our Lord, continue to be yours in the new year. May his peace, in all spiritual blessings, abide with you and yours. I know you give Him all the glory.

I wish to say that I appreciate the timely writings and editorials published in the *Signs*. They are truth for our time, were of old or past time, continue as landmarks and guideposts in all future time — until the second appearing

of Jesus Christ, Lord of all.

Let us take the January, 1970, issue of the *Signs*, just for instance — one of twelve that comes to our mailbox in the course of one year. What truth in print! There is "Predestination And Obedience," "Watch Over One Another For Good," "A Glorious Oneness," Editorial "Beginning Of 138th Volume," Editorial "Peace On Earth," all this and more in just one issue of our most precious periodical.

The purpose of this letter is the renewal of my subscription. Enclosed is a check for $8.00 to pay to April, 1971. I would appreciate an extra copy of January, 1970, if available. I want it to pass around to different persons for them to read, then, if someone did fail to return it I would still have my own.

May free grace abide and all spiritual blessings in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Unworthily,
Charles B. Osborne

ENJOYED THE ASSOCIATIONS

1231 Pecan St.
Channelview, Texas 77530

Dear Brethren:

I have been blessed to enjoy the *Signs of the Times* this past year, and am sending check for two years subscription.

It brought joy to my heart to hear the gospel preached while at the Upper County Line Association. I spent two years with a limited order of Baptists, but if not deceived in everything, the Lord opened my eyes and led me to the true absolute Primitive Baptist faith. I spent ten months in the dark valley disturbed, seeking help. When relief came I was received in the Shepherd Fold Primitive Baptist Church, Houston, Texas.

I was also blessed to visit the South Alabama and the South Ouachita Association last summer.

I hope the Lord will bless you dear brethren in putting out the *Signs;* and bless all the chosen ones.

A brother in hope,
Earl W. Hall

APPOINTMENTS FOR

ELDER W. W. HUDSON OF BASTROP, LA.

Bush Arbor Church — Tuesday night, April 7, at seven p. m.

Dan River — Wednesday night, April 8, at seven p. m.

Roanoke, Va. — Thursday night, April 9, at seven p. m.

Frying Pan, near Manassas, Va. — Sunday, April 12, at eleven a. m.

Rocky Mount, N. C. — Monday night, April 13, at seven p. m.

Tarboro Church, Tarboro, N. C. — Tuesday night, April 14, at seven p. m.

Pleasant Hill Church — Wednesday night, April 15, at seven p. m.

Elder Hudson is well known and highly appreciated among us, having visited some of our churches last year on his way to Canada. He was in a car wreck on that trip, and has been unable to be at his occupation since, but writes that his doctor will allow him to go to work in May.

I hope our ministers will circulate these appointments and go to hear him.

D. V. Spangler

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To February 1, 1970)

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Danville, Virginia **April, 1970**

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** will convene with the church at Old Beulah, the Lord willing, the fifth Saturday and Sunday in March, 1970. The church is located in Johnston County near Kenly, N. C.

Everyone who has a mind to do so is invited to attend.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

EDITORIAL

VARIOUS CUSTOMS AND PRACTICES AMONG OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE COUNTRY, AS OBSERVED BY THE WRITER

For several years I have had a desire to write an article describing the different practices among the churches in different places. I note the different practices among those who preach the same doctrine, yet whose fellowship is not affected.

First, I will mention some practices in CANADA:

PRAYER: The first part of the service is prayer. The minister enters the pulpit, and while the congregation stands, the minister prays.

COMMUNION: When communion is served each person holds his bread until all have been served; and when the minister says, "And they all did eat," all eat the bread at the same time. Leavened bread is used in the service; as it is in most places in the North, but not all. The difference in the use of leavened and unleavened bread has never affected their fellowship.

SINGING: In the Dominion they have a small book containing the Psalms in metre, and some Paraphrases in verse. When I first visited there over thirty years ago this book was used exclusively in their services. Hymns were used between services, which most knew by heart. The Psalms and Paraphrases are sung in familiar tunes. Their singing is wonderful, and the congregation joins in the singing.

NORTHERN STATES: In the northern states the congregation does not stand during prayer; and hymn books are used in singing. Some have the same custom of holding the bread in communion, and others do not.

DEACONS: In the North the deacons are appointed by the church for the most part, and not formally ordained by a presbytery as in the South.

CONTRIBUTIONS: Collections are taken by the deacons immediately after the conclusion of the sermon, by passing a plate or basket. There is no formality observed in this.

MEETING HOUSES: The place of worship is referred to as The Meeting House. In other areas the meeting place is referred to as the church, for the most part.

RECEIVING MEMBERS: In years past it has been customary for those expecting to offer to the church for membership, to first speak to the pastor about it, laying their case before him for his advice. Though there is no set rule in the matter. This practice is not followed at present as much as in the past. When a person offers to the church for membership, he is said to be going before the church, instead of joining the church.

USUAL PRACTICES IN THE SOUTH AND WEST:

DEACONS: The usual practice is for the church to choose one or more whom they believe meet the scriptural qualifications of the office. Then a call is sent to a minister or ministers who join the pastor in organizing a presbytery for this work. After due examination, if believed qualified, the presbytery proceeds to ordain by the laying on of hands and prayer; and then a charge is given regarding the duties of the office. In one area that I know of, at some of the ordinations of deacons, the deacons present take part in the laying on of hands. This is not the usual practice over the land.

CHURCH EXPENSES: Contributions are made by the members and friends directly to the minister in some areas. In other places the contributions for the minister and for church expenses, are handed to the deacons; and distribution of the funds is left to them.

In some communities, especially at associations and appointments of visiting ministers, the congregation is called on to contribute; and while a hymn is being sung, the people go forward and lay their contribution on the table. In other words, in the South and West there is no fixed rule.

PRAYER: In some parts of the South some ministers stand while praying, while in other areas they kneel. There is no fixed rule in the matter. In the deep South and West, I believe they all kneel in prayer.

COMMUNION: Unleavened bread with the wine is served in the communion service. In some places the deacons personally serve each of the members, who are requested to sit in every other pew so as to be easily served. In other places the elements of the communion are handed to a member at the end of the pew, and they then pass it to others in the pew.

FEET WASHING: In the Middle Atlantic States of Virginia and North Carolina, some of the churches engage in literal feet washing, and other churches do not. Where a church does engage in the practice it is left to the choice of each member whether they engage or not. I do not know of any church where all engage in this. It has never been a problem with them and the most charitable attitude is manifested by all. In the Northern Churches most of the members have never observed this practice, or even witnessed it.

In the deep South and West, from my observations, the members have all engaged in literal washing of feet; which is usually done at the conclusion of the communion. In the North, South and West there has never been a question of fellowship among them over this practice. The ministers of the South and West have visited freely among the Northern churches; and the ministers from the North likewise.

There is a section of the country where there is a tendency to make a test of fellowship about literal feet washing; and they are finding such an attitude discouraged by brethren when the matter is pressed. Elder Sylvester Hassel, in the Primitive Baptist Church History, has this to say about the practice, on page 845, "This appears to be an open question among Baptists, some approving and others disapproving the literal observance as a church ordinance or rite." In relation to the Kehukee Association, the oldest Primitive Baptist Association in the United States, Elder Hassel has this to say, "Some of the churches of the Kehukee Association never observe it at all, others observe it annually and connect it with

the communion or the Lord's Supper."

On page 847, Elder Hassel continues as follows, "The discussion of the subject of feet-washing on both sides has been characterized by a true Christian spirit, worthy of commendation." "It would be a sad day for the church were the observance or non-observance of this rite ever be set up as a bar to fellowship. So far from this at the present time, it has been customary with the churches of the Kehukee Association to excuse any or all who did not feel disposed to unite with them on such occasions."

I have set forth the above, to show that in different parts of the country there have been varying practices; yet brethren in the North, South, East and West have been blessed to live in peace and fellowship with each other; and to manifest a charitable spirit toward others whose customs and practices differ with theirs. Where you do not find this manifested, you will find a people with many factions and groups where very little love and fellowship abounds.

In conclusion, let us ever be mindful of the Apostle's word as to who is to be received among us. "If they bring not this doctrine, receive them not into your house," etc. Which doctrine is the doctrine of rich and reigning grace in the salvation of every vessel of God's mercy.

D. V. S.

EDITORIAL

"LIKE A GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED

"The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field; Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." (Matthew 13:31-32)

Jesus spake many things in parables to great multitudes who came to Him on that day as He sat by the seaside. The multitudes gathered were so great in number that He went into a ship to speak. Matthew records the parable of the sower. Jesus closed with the words, "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." Jesus did not explain the parables to the multitudes. The disciples did not understand the heavenly meaning of these earthly things related by Jesus until He explained them. These sayings were shrouded in mystery. He explained them to those to whom, "It is given you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." (V. 11) If you have been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, you yearn for explanation. If you have wisdom, you shall become wiser. If you have spiritual life, you shall have it more abundantly: "For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath." (Mat. 13:12)

This could be called the time of the height of the popularity of Jesus' "Favor with man." I am convinced that all other men would have used such occasion to glorify themselves by enticing as many as they could to join them. It is natural with men to think that in numbers there is more power. All who follow this inclination will boast of the numbers they have persuaded to adhere to their pleadings. Power of God must be displayed, not the power of men. God's mighty work must be displayed in such manner that no group of men could take the glory. God's crowning work of His kingdom must be done secretly being hidden from men.

What contrast between the sight of the throngs of people on the seaside, and *a grain of mustard seed.* Should Jesus have told them that these great multitudes of people which you have just seen is very small compared to the number which now is the kingdom of heaven, it would have sounded more reasonable. What He did tell them in comparing the kingdom to the smallest

of seeds must have been different than they expected.

Mark quotes Jesus: "And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it." (Mark 4:30-32) It is remarkable that just *one* grain of mustard seed was sown. One commentator describes the mustard tree berries as much smaller than a grain of black pepper, having strong aromatic smell, and a taste much like that of a garden cresses. If one berry is much smaller than a grain of black pepper, how small would one grain of that berry be? It is so insignificant in size. God sowed the kingdoms of the earth, and one grain of the smallest seed sown is *His kingdom.* The Son of man sows children in His kingdom. (See Matthew 13:37-38) The kingdoms of the earth grow rapidly and dwindle away but God's own kingdom grows slowly and shall ever increase. We read in Daniel 2:44: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." We hear much of the decline of the Church. We cannot believe it in the face of so much scriptural proof otherwise. There shall be no end to the *increase* of Christ's government and peace in His kingdom because it shall not be left to other men. The *zeal* of the Lord of hosts shall perform this. Read Isaiah 9:6-7. Our zeal to help the Lord in this matter would result to a zeal of ignorance. Our unbelief in the Lord's perfect and complete performance in His secret way, sometimes inspires us to act foolishly by trying to speed up God's will. Abram tried to hurry God's promise which resulted in the birth of Ishmael. God's secret and extraordinary procedure resulted in the birth of Isaac at the set time of God.

A grain of the seed of the Holy Ghost through due process brought into being a little baby. Eternal life was in this seed. All of God's chosen people were wrapped securely in this seed. This seed became the only begotten Son of God which was born in Bethlehem. God blended Himself for the first time with any of His creation when Mary was conceived with the Holy Ghost. All of His creation can call him *God,* yet none of His creation can call him, *Father,* but through Christ Jesus, the Son of God and the Son of man. Mary was highly blessed among women to give birth to this Son. Eternal Life was in the seed. It grew after it was planted. Mary's flesh did not produce any of this eternal life. She did not design the characteristics of this Son. God curiously and wonderfully wrought this work, as in all other births, that Jesus should come forth as a little babe. It was determined of God that men should see this baby wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger. This was *the sign.* It is yet *the sign* "Unto us a child is born." (See Isaiah 9:6)

There is no proof that Jesus experienced any extraordinary growth from His conception to His crucifixion in the *natural* sense. There was no difference in His natural appearance from ordinary men, because Judas had to point Him out by kissing in order to show which one of the group was He. If Jesus had begun His extraordinary ministry while yet a babe in nature, surely the Scriptures would have pointed it out. We have no record of his talking while a baby. We have no authentic record of His supernatural power being displayed in childhood. (We do have some very interesting stories under the title, *Infancy I* and *Infancy II,* recorded in the apocryphal books of the New Testament. These seem to be imaginative.) It was normal for him to

grow in stature as other men. Luke records: "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." Was Jesus as wise when He was born as He was when He was crucified? Mark says He *increased* in these four things noted. There must be a gradual growth in Jesus to typify this Kingdom. It was normal that He should begin His remarkable career after becoming thirty years of age. The record does give us one incident when He was twelve years old proving His divine wisdom and knowledge of the fact that He was then launching upon the divine career: ". . . Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

Eighteen years passed from the time that He astonished the doctors with His wise questions and answers before His baptism and public ministry. Why? He was under the law. Eighteen years intervened that must have been well used in fulfillment of the law. He must serve His time under the dominion of the law. When this service was fulfilled, Jesus was ready for baptism. This act of baptism was at the proper moment. This baptism meant something to Jesus. His status was changed. This was the crowning act of the fulfillment of righteousness: "And Jesus answering said unto Him, Suffer it to be so *now*: for thus it becometh us to *fulfill all righteousness*. Then He suffered Him." There had been silence from Heaven concerning Him for thirty years. This silence was broken upon completion of Jesus' baptism. This Voice said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am *well pleased*." (See Matt. 3:16-17) Some may think that Jesus began immediately to preach but He must first be led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. This temptation must not come immediately but after forty days and forty nights of fasting. After the temptations: "Jesus *began* to preach, and to say; Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. 4:17) He then began choosing His apostles. His command to the two fishermen were: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Jesus had served *God* through these thirty years *for* His people. Now, He could be of great service *to* His people. Jesus chose only twelve apostles to whom was given extraordinary powers. He sent them forth preparing a people for the kingdom. Jesus later sent forth the seventy assuring them that: "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth the labourers into his harvest." (Luke 10:2) Surely there were those whose growth in the faith were ripe for the labourers. These seventy were not to prepare the people but to preach *Peace* to a prepared people. These seventy were not to gather in the young and unregenerated but to preach the Gospel to those whom the Lord had made ready to receive it.

Peter was the first to be chosen as an Apostle of Jesus during the natural life of Jesus. Peter was the first to be chosen to feed His sheep and lambs after the resurrection of Jesus during His sojourn before His ascension. Peter was the spokesman for the brethren during the time of their "*Wait* for the promise of the Father which ye have heard of me." Peter spoke to about one hundred twenty disciples relative to one who should take the bishoprick of Judas. Peter spoke to the thousands gathered at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost after such wonderful demonstration of the fulfillment of the Father's promise. Yes, Peter was the first to preach to the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius and to witness the pouring out of the Holy Ghost upon them.

The church at Jerusalem must have been composed of about one hundred and twenty names because that was the record given of those congregated when Peter spoke to them relative to choosing a replacement for Judas. About three thousand souls were added to the church at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. This was the gathering of the harvest of the ripe ones into the fold. During this period the Gentiles

began to be received.

Paul of Tarsus, which was over three hundred miles from Jerusalem, was Christ's chosen one to bear the Gospel to the Gentiles especially. We find the first church of note composed chiefly of Gentile converts to be Antioch Church. Paul was a member of this church. The Holy Ghost separated Paul and Barnabas to the work of the ministry which was sanctioned by proper ordination. God knew how to control things so that Paul and Barnabas would "turn to the Gentiles." (Read Acts 13.) Differences in customs and traditions between the Jews and the Gentiles caused a rift between Jerusalem and Antioch Church. They did not isolate themselves from one another because of these differences but met together and agreed on a negotiated peace. Read 15th chapter of Acts. The same Holy Ghost, the same Father, and the same Jesus Christ were believed upon by both Jew and Gentile in both Antioch and Jerusalem congregations, or churches. Even though disputations and dissension abounded there was hope for negotiated peace for they desired fellowship, unity, and understanding. This is true of all children of God who have experienced necessary growth of the faith that was planted in their hearts; — though it was, "As a grain of mustard seed," when first planted.

We wonder why local churches increase in growth, decrease, and finally fade away. God teaches us a lesson. The place of the church is only a candlestick, or candle holder. There is no light in the *holder*. A holder may contain several *candles*, but there is no light in the candle, unless Jesus has lighted it. He lighteth every man that cometh into the world. The world spoken of, of course, is His kingdom. Jesus is the life and light of His kingdom. When Jesus appears the light shines. When He absents Himself, How gross is that darkness! Is the candle always lighted? I have seen candlesticks with many candles but no light. The candle cannot light itself. I have seen natural candle holders with many candles, yet just a few lighted. The owner can light them, snuff the light out, and re-light them at his will. A church, or church member, is no different from any other organization, or man, unless Jesus, the Life and Light is present. The candlestick may be removed, but not destroyed.

Anytime, or anywhere, that members of a local church become proud of themselves, and feel that they are above other people, it is evident that Jesus is not in the midst. The proud Jews stumbled. They fell. Did their fall disprove the promise of God that His kingdom should grow? Did their stumbling and falling result in the kingdom becoming smaller? NO. God's purpose and will in this matter was to enlarge His kingdom, and to make the Jews aware of the fact that His manifest favor was turned to another people. Let us hear Paul on this question: "I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come to the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy." (Rom. 11:11)

Should we bother the soil in which the seed of Eternal Life is sown? Should we probe a person to see whether or not the faith, "as a grain of mustard seed," is evident? that is, before it is made manifest. No. Should we hear that a certain seed is planted at a certain spot, we would not stir up that soil to see how the seed was progressing. We would let it alone and let nature take its course. We would not be forever probing the spot. The Spirit works secretly in the growth of the faith as a grain of mustard seed. It is secretly hidden in the soil of the person to be manifest in God's appointed time and way. Its growth until the time of harvest depends upon God, Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will. All things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. Tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword, death,

life, angels, principalities, powers, things past, things present, things to come, and all other creatures: — *all* are ordained for the good of His people, and for the increase of His kingdom.

This kingdom shall shoot out its branches into all parts of the world. Many saints shall come as heavenly birds being drawn by the sweet odor of prayers, humility, love, and unity. They shall lodge there, eating the manna from Heaven, under the shadow of the ordinances, ministers, and blessings of the church. Saints shall sing praises together as birds chirp and sing. One church may be far distant from another church as the ends of branches are far apart. One group of saints in one church may not even be aware of saints in other churches, but all should be consoled with the fact that all of their feastings are from the same source. When a group is busy with feasting, fellowship one with another, and praising God together, saints do not have time to be concerned with saints in faraway places. Saints may go from church to church as birds flit from branch to branch, yet they are in the same tree and borne by the same roots. As all sap must come from the root, so the enlivening spirit flows to each and every branch from and through the root, Christ Jesus. Some branches may be cut off by the Husbandman. Some branches may be grafted into the tree. This is the work of God and we should realize that a good tree is known by the fruit it bears. A good tree brings forth good fruits. A good live tree may seem dead in the wintertime but when the sap rises in the spring there is manifestation of life. Some churches may seem dead for awhile when Christ turns His back but will enliven when Christ favors it.

Take courage, brethren, for the kingdom of heaven is increasing by the mighty power of God. Isaiah prophesied this growth as God spoke thru him: "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: *for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.*" (Isaiah 11:9) It is no accident that the Bible is the best seller of any other book in the world. We venture to say that the Bible is in more homes now than it has ever been. It is written in more languages and dialects than any other book. There have been more books written about Jesus Christ by composers than any other person. Christianity has experienced a slow but sure growth. Commentators will tell you of the rapid growth of modern Communism. They compare its growth with Christianity. They would have you believe that there is danger of Communism swallowing all who embrace Christianity. Believe them not. Many Ideologies have sprung up and experienced rapid growth through the centuries, but have just as rapidly declined and died out.

Sometimes we become heart-sick because hope is deferred. We feel as the prophet of old: "Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life." God's answer to him was: "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal." (See Rom. 11:3-4) Sometimes we become faint-hearted as Jeremiah: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." (Jer. 8:20) Instead of doing us harm, this sickness of heart is used by God to cause us to pray to Him for mercy and deliverance. Was the harvest passed? No. We are gathered into folds here after becoming ripe for the churches. We trust that when we shall be perfectly conformed to the Image of Christ, we shall be gathered into Eternity to enjoy endless life with God and the complete family of God.

May God bless us to be content with our lot, and reconciled to His will.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

FELLOWSHIP

Elder H. H. Lefferts

Fellowship between the children of God is of two kinds. There is church fellowship and there is Christian fellowship. Church fellowship exists between members of the church; that is, between baptized believers of the same faith and order. Christian fellowship is wider, and exists between all who are believers in Christ, whether baptized or not.

Fellowship is always between equals. It cannot exist between individuals of different standing or of different experience or condition. There must be equality of condition in order for there to be true fellowship. For instance, fellowship cannot exist between an unbeliever and a believer, because there is a difference of condition between the two which cannot be bridged. Further, there cannot be church fellowship existing between one who has been baptized and is obedient to the ordinances of Christ and one who, though a believer, has never been brought into subjection to his brethren. Here, too, is a difference in condition, and while there may be, and truly is, Christian fellowship existing in this last instance, there cannot be church fellowship.

This matter of fellowship does not come and go according to our will; it is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, and not to be controlled by the human will. When one has ever had real fellowship for another it cannot be forfeited.

To make our meaning clearer; if one is a member of the church and becomes guilty of some breach of church order, it may become necessary to set that one aside from the fellowship of the church, but if that one has ever been in the hearts and affections of the church he will still be loved, and for him there will still be Christian fellowship, even though he be cut off from partaking of the privileges and ordinances of the church.

Thinking of the church as the spiritual mother of us all, fellowship is the great, brooding, yearning motherheart that watches over all her children. If they stray from the fold fellowship goes after them, seeking to reclaim them. If they behave themselves unseemly, fellowship seeks their correction, not their destruction.

Mother-love is one of the most beautiful things in all nature. How insistently a mother will cling to an erring child, how longingly goes out her heart after the wanderer, earnestly desiring that he may realize his wrong and come back to her feet for forgiveness.

If spiritual things transcend the natural (and we all believe they do), then how patiently and prayerfully should the fellowship of the church go out after that one who, pursuing wrong, seems blinded to his course. The fellowship of the brethren will long and gently labor with that one to endeavor to show him his wrong; they will pray the Lord to grant him repentance, that thus he may be saved to the church, and not be cast off from it.

Exclusion is an ugly word. The church should not have much use for it. It is never to be employed except as a very last resort to keep the house clean after all efforts at reclamation have availed nothing. *The whole purpose of Christ and his gospel is to save, not to destroy.*

Christ himself sought the lost sheep to restore them to the fold. He himself says he came not to destroy the world, but that the world through him might be saved. No one ever loved the sinner more, or ever served the welfare of sinners more wholeheartedly than the blessed Jesus. He bared his back to the scourgers for sinners, he even gave his cheeks to the spittle of his enemies, that sinners through him should be cleansed from sin, raised from the dead and restored to the glory of the Father which they had with him before the world

began.

The gospel which Jesus sent his apostles to preach is filled with love and mercy and patience, and long-suffering to poor, erring creatures. By no means did the disciples have the patience with men which Jesus himself had. The disciples rebuked mothers for bringing children to Jesus that he might lay his hands on them. But Jesus quickly showed them their shortness of sight when he said to them, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." Again when the disciples came across a man who was healing in Christ's name they asked Jesus to command the man to stop it. Jesus, however, told them to let the man alone, that he who is not against us is for us.

Thus we shall never while in the flesh be able to comprehend the great heart of Jesus. His love is high enough, deep enough, wide enough, to embrace sinners of every class and condition. Where once he bestows his love he loves unto the end. He never casts away. He does reprove our backslidings, corrects our ignorance, instructs us in righteousness and rebukes our sins. He chastens his children with his fatherly chastisements, but never with the rod of wrath or condemnation.

Following out the great principle of the gospel of Jesus, which owes its vitality to the eternal love of God and his inexhaustible grace, what use can the church have for exclusion? Certainly it is so harsh, and an instrument of such severe discipline, that never should it be employed by any church until every shred of patience has been utterly worn out in seeking the restoration of the erring.

If ever we need the mother-love of the church it is when we are weak and easily yielding to wrong. Should the brethren desert us in that cruel time of our deepest need, where then is the evidence that Christ is in their midst?

By all we have said we do not mean to imply that the church should be slack in keeping its house clean, that it should cease to administer the discipline of the church to its members as laid down by inspiration. Of course all this must be done, but very many times churches are too quick to condemn a brother for a fault, without due examination into the matter; too quick to exclude without first laboring with the sinner and seeking to reclaim him or to save him to the church.

Fellowship is a precious thing. It is not to be tossed about like a rubber ball, as though it were something to be treated with lightness and insincerity, yet at times we talk of fellowship, and about taking it away from this one or that one, as though it were something that we could handle, like sugar or some other commodity. The Spirit of Christ can alone give us spiritual fellowship for another, and when so given cannot be taken away.

It has been our privilege to have this fellowship with the Lord's people, and we feel that no matter what they might do to us we could not cease to love them. It would be a shame could we not have like confidence that no matter what we might do the fellowship of God's people would still be ours. Nor does such confidence in the fellowship of the church encourage us to want to do wrong. No, but rather spurs us to maintain a good behavior, that we may, in some slight measure at least, be worthy of their love and fellowship.

Salvation is ministered through the fellowship of the brethren to each member of the church. Many things which one might do if one were not in the church, one does refrain from doing because he fears to offend the brethren. This fear is not because one fears exclusion, but fears to hurt the feelings of those one loves.

The more we reflect upon what fellowship means the more should we exercise great care and longsuffering in dealing with transgressions against the order of the church. Too much patience there cannot possibly be, but too much haste there certainly often is.

As to what is the order of the church our people are not unanimous. Various

constructions are put upon certain passages of the New Testament, which leads to variations in church order throughout the country. In view of this variation, whenever any one church is considering a matter of discipline or order, it is well to get the mind of the whole church before taking any radical action; not simply to be guided by the pastor, who is but a man and may err as easily as any, nor simply to be guided by a section of the church, but labor to get the minds and counsel of the whole church, and then in the light of such counsel proceed to act.

Part of a church might not see any given matter in its right light, but the whole church, if left to act with perfect freedom, and without any coercion whatever, will seldom decide any matter wrongly. The Catholics have unbounded confidence in the infallibility of the Pope. We have no confidence in any man, but we do have confidence in the infallibility of the whole church, for the mind of the whole church is Christ himself. He never errs.

(Editorial of Elder Lefferts Feb. 1, 1921. Republished by request.)

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church, Guilford County, N. C., a presbytery met September 7, 1969 at 3:30 p. m. for the examination of Brother Leonard Harvey Key, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, the above mentioned to the full work of the gospel ministry.

The solemnity was begun with song and prayer by Elder H. W. Wray page 154 hymn 381 Hymn and Tune Book. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders D. V. Spangler, Kenneth R. Key, Leonard J. Brammer, Ernest F. Oakley, Wallis A. Smith, P. E. Ingram, H. W. Wray, W. Curry King and Donald E. Smith. The deacons of our faith and order were called in council to the presbytery.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder W. Curry King as Moderator and Elder Donald E. Smith as Clerk. Elder L. J. Brammer was chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Deacon Tommy Batts having been duly appointed by Greensboro Church as spokesman for the church delivered Brother Leonard Harvey Key to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder Leonard J. Brammer using scripture reference Tim. 3:1-7. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder P. E. Ingram. Elder D. V. Spangler delivered the charge to the candidate. Scripture reference, 1st Peter 5th chapter.

The moderator asked Deacon Tommy Batts if the church approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to Elder Leonard Harvey Key and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained Elder was delivered back to the church as an ordained Elder of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Greensboro.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder E. F. Oakley.

Elder W. Curry King, Moderator
Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

OBITUARIES

GREELY REDDEN EGGER

Our precious brother was born November 1, 1919, and died May 13, 1967, thus being forty-seven years, six months and twelve days old.

He was united in marriage to Miss Lillian Moore, it being my pleasure to unite them in holy matrimony before I left Alabama. To this union four children were born, to wit, Mrs. Amanda Pennington, Sulligent, Alabama; Miss Linda Egger, at home; Roger, Sulligent; Chester, Vernon, Alabama; and one grandson, together with our Sister Lillian.

He joined the Primitive Baptist church called New Prospect, near Sulligent, Alabama, on July 22, 1962, and was baptized by the late Elder H. M. Brock. God blessed him with an active mind in regard to the welfare of his kindred in the Lord and it was not long before the brethren detected a lovely gift in him and he was ordained a deacon on October 13, 1962. This office he filled with satisfaction and approval until he was called away.

His family lineage had long been Baptistic, but this did not give him a knowledge of God until it was revealed to him. He was the only son of Redden and Amanda (Williams) Egger. He had three half sisters, to wit, Mrs. Mavis Moore, Mrs. Lissie Ross, Mrs. Nora Bell Guyton; four half brothers, Roland, Clauson, M. L.

and Nolen.

His funeral was largely attended by the sorrowing family, brotherhood and community friends. It was conducted by Elders Willie Norris and Claude Hand at New Prospect Church; after which he was laid to rest in the church cemetery, there to sleep in Christ until the resurrection when he shall come from that sleep to life everlasting, soul, body and spirit.

W. D. G.

REASON CECIL ALBRITTON

Mr. Reason Cecil Albritton departed this life on January 9, 1970 at the age of 50 years. He was born on January 20, 1919. His survivors are four brothers: Arthur Albritton, Downsville, La.; David Albritton, Amarillo, Texas; Henry B. Albritton, Farmerville, La.; Marvin Albritton, Farmerville, La.; and two sisters: Mrs. Lettie Fellows, Dryden, New York; Mrs. Leroy Iles, Kinder, La.

The Brethren at Liberty Hill Church will miss seeing Cecil at the meetings. There were very few meetings that he missed. It is true that a disease affected his health when he was less than two years old. His lot was a life upon this earth of affliction. "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." (Zeph. 3:12)

We believe that Cecil is at rest, and know that he enjoyed the meetings. The last time we all saw him at meeting was on the fourth Sunday in December, 1969.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer, and assisted by Elder David Turner at Liberty Hill Church on January 11, 1970, and his body was laid to rest at the cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.

LEONDAS HENDRIX

We are called upon with sad hearts to record the death of our dearly beloved brother, Deacon Leondas Hendrix, who was born January 7, 1879, and departed the sore travail of this life July 16, 1969. His stay on earth being ninety years, six months and nine days. Brother Leondas united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Pilgrims Rest, near Graceville, Florida, May 20, 1917; and was baptized the same day together with his wife and several others.

His wife, Sister Mamie Hendrix, departed this life many years ago, leaving two lovely children: one son, Buford Hendrix, Jay, Florida, and one daughter, Mrs. Mary Ellen McCoy, Milton, Florida.

By request his funeral was conducted by Earlie B. Hughes and Elder J. A. Tew July 18, 1969. Having in remembrance that Brother Leondas believed in salvation by grace and grace alone, the text used was Isaiah 26:19, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise."

Brother Leondas was blessed with a wonderful experience, and above all, a forgiving spirit. The remembrance of this dear brother will never die in the hearts of his dear children, brethren, sisters, and many friends. We sorrow, but not as those who have no hope. We thank God for his goodness and mercies, and for blessing us with such a leader and deacon as Brother Hendrix. May the Lord bless and comfort those who mourn his death.

He was laid to rest in Harmony Church Cemetery by the side of his wife, to await the call of our Lord and Saviour. We believe he will hear the Voice saying, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

In hope of eternal life,
Earlie B. Hughes and wife

THOMAS CLEG NASH

Thomas Cleg Nash, age 67, departed this life on January 16, 1970. The survivors are his widow, Mrs. Inez Pepper Nash, of El Dorado, Ark.; four daughters, Mrs. Barney Sullivan and Mrs. George Breazeal, both of El Dorado, Ark.; Mrs. Robert Burke, Hattiesburg, Miss.; Mrs. Rowdell Snowden, Alexandria, La.; three brothers, Needham A. Nash, William E. Nash and Hartsell C. Nash, all of El Dorado; three sisters, Mrs. J. C. Wood, El Dorado, Ark.; Mrs. K. M. Britt, Texarkana, Tex.; and Mrs. J. T. Sturdivant, Columbia, Miss.; eight grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Brother Nash has been a strong believer for many years. He knew that he was slowly dying with cancer, and he requested a special meeting at Smyrma Church on the 1st Sunday in September. He united with the church that day along with his son-in-law, Brother Barney Sullivan, and his granddaughter, Sister Diane Mattox. They were all baptized by Elder David E. Turner that day.

Elder Turner, the pastor of Smyrma Church, was faithful to visit Brother Nash in his home and in the hospital. But Elder Turner was not able to attend the funeral due to sickness.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder John Lee Smith and the writer. Brother Nash's body was laid to rest in the cemetery in the sure hope of the resurrection of these vile bodies.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.

IN MEMORY OF OUR LOVING MOTHER SISTER MATTIE BROWN

It is with sad and lonely hearts that we attempt to write a memorial of our dear mother, Sister Mattie Brown. She was born March 10, 1884 in Duplin County. Death came to her at 4:00 a. m., November 16, 1969 in Duplin General Hospital. She was the oldest child of Owen W. and Menerva Brown.

Her marriage to Berry Horne came on the scene Easter Sunday, 1906. To this union were born six sons and one daughter, with only three living to maturity. After being left a widow for about 1½ years, she was married to Robert D. (Bob) Brown on Easter Sunday, 1918. This union was blessed with three sons and two daughters who are all living to mourn her passing. She gained three sons and one daughter as stepchildren.

She loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace and offered her body to the church at Cypress Creek on Saturday before the second Sunday in May during Conference. She was received to the church in full fellowship. Baptism was the following morning which was the second Sunday in May, 1934. Baptism was in the Nine Mile Creek near the church by Elder R. W. Gurganus. She was faithful to the church and attended sister churches so long as her health permitted. Her love for the brothers and sisters was very clear to everyone by the love that was shown them in her home. All the family felt it too for they enjoyed being around and helping her with the duties of caring for their company. She was a loving and faithful friend to everyone, a loving wife and a darling and loving mother to her children.

Her health was very poor for several years and she spent the last thirteen weeks and three days of her life in Duplin General Hospital in which she was very sick. During her prolonged illness, she never lost the love she had for the brothers and sisters. After death she remained in Edgerton Funeral Home until 3:30 p. m., Sunday, when her body was taken to the home of her daughter, Mrs. Ervin Simpson. The family was all there together. Her remains were taken from the home to Cypress Creek Church Monday at 1:00 p. m. The funeral was conducted by Elder L. L. Yopp and Mr. Roy Thompson. Burial followed in the Horne Cemetery. The beautiful array of flowers and large congregation at her funeral proved how much she was loved by everyone who knew her.

We all miss her very much but couldn't wish her back in her suffering for we feel that her suffering is over. We see her now as a rose in heaven and feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by two who love her very much as a mother and a sister in Christ.

Her daughter, Anna Simpson
Daughter-in-law, Arlene Brown

ALBERTA HOUCHINS HATCHER

Sister Alberta Houchins Hatcher, was a daughter of the late William Moses Houchins and Sister Amanda Turner Houchins, born July 8, 1876, and died January 15, 1969.

She was married to George C. Hatcher in 1899, who preceded her in death. Two brothers survive, Walter G. Houchins, Sr., and John W. Houchins, with whom she spent most of her widowhood. Also surviving are several nieces and nephews.

The Lord graciously opened her ears to hear the Gospel proclaimed by Elder Medley as she attended an Association at Jacks Creek Church when about eleven years old. The name, the place and the sweet sound of the Gospel she never forgot. She joined County Line in 1921, a place she loved and attended many years. She enjoyed attending other churches, and the Associations; but as her many afflictions weighed heavy upon her, she expressed often it would be far better if she could pass away quietly, and leave her many afflictions.

A dream gave her some comfort some time before she passed away. In her dream she came to a fence where many people waited to get through a very small white gate. And while she waited with the others at the fence some one came to her and told her how to fold her hands so she would be small enough to pass through the gate; and she passed through leaving many desiring to pass through. She came to a room with a bed spotless white, her mother and grandmother were in the bed, and when she would have said something to her mother, she turned and kissed her grandmother. Awakening from her dream she was unable to know what she had desired to say to her mother.

We at County Line, together with a host of kindred and friends, miss her very much, but we feel our great loss is her great great gain.

Noel F. Conner

P. S.: Since I sent the notice of Sister Hatcher's death, my father-in-law, Mr. Walter G. Houchins, Sr., one of her survivors, passed away January 24, 1970. He had five sons, four survive, and four daughters — three survive.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 138 DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1970 NO. 5

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5/70
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

A SONG AND A PRAYER

(Psa. 25:7; Rev. 5:9)

MORE than a score of years ago,
I was trav'ling by train;
I was going to the mountains
To see my folks again.

'Twas a journey I oft recall,
O'er a much-traveled road,
For 'twas a time of rejoicing,
As my tears freely flowed.

I carried my song book with me,
And read a very sweet song,
But was not in a place to sing
As the train sped along.

"JESUS, thou art the sinner's friend"
Is the song referred to,
And it is a prayer to the One
Who is precious and true.

I read this song repeatedly,
Weeping for joy indeed;
May I be remembered by him,
Who knows my every need.

At different times, I believe,
I have been lifted up
By the felt presence of Jesus,
Who drank the bitter cup.

It behoved him to be made flesh,
Our nature to assume,
To suffer to save his people
From an eternal doom.

How good to have a hope in him,
As we journey along,
While looking for him to appear,
Then to sing a new song.

C. W. Vass
409 N. Y. Avenue
Elizabeth City, N. C.

LETTER OF ELDER RUSTON TO HIS SISTER IN ENGLAND

New York City
1914

My dear Sister Tilly:

There is a matter that has been troubling me for some time, and I think I should write home about it. I certainly should be glad if I were able to talk with father on the subject. When I was admitted into the church fellowship by baptism a little more than a year ago, there were those who expressed a desire for me to speak sometimes in the meetings, (after having heard me speak in prayer to their comfort.)

The pastor called on me several times, and when I remonstrated he told me it was the desire of the members to hear me. I spoke in my feeble way, hoping I should not be asked again; but later our pastor was asked to speak at other churches, and told me that when he baptized me he believed he was baptizing a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ; that I had been a comfort to him and a help, and hoped I would speak when he was away with the ability that God gives. I spoke, though with much trembling, yet I was told by many that they believed I had been helped. This occurred several times. Recently Elder Durand, the oldest minister of our kind in the U. S. A., was here for the day, and I was asked to speak then. He gave me some words of encouragement and said he believed I was called to preach. Two Sundays ago our pastor was to preach at Philadelphia, and the people there asked that he bring me with him. I went, and was asked to speak morning and evening.

With my speaking I have sometimes

had comfort, but generally I have a feeling that I have no ability and would much rather be a listener. I was hoping that my visit to Philadelphia would finish the matter; instead of that, to my surprise, after service last Sunday there was a meeting and our pastor said that it had been the request of the members that George Ruston be liberated by the church to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ according to the gift that God had bestowed upon him, wherever a door might be open. I was asked to relate my exercise of mind on the matter. I requested that the matter should be dropped indefinitely as it was a surprise, although I had feared it; that I was so young in the church I was sometimes afraid I should go wrong or express myself wrongly on the Scriptures. They would not take my advice in that, and after I related my exercise of mind, they voted on the matter unanimously.

In joining this church which I love as the church of Christ, I am subject to them; and desire to be. I say solemnly that I never sought this, and feel the seriousness of it; but I cannot help but confess that God has been my help and comfort in the past, and I hope He will be my stay in the future, whatever is before me. I have had many expressions of comfort at times from what I have said, but I desire God's commendation. The thoughts of preaching have troubled me for years, and I might have spoken to others of the trial of mind I was under but for that constant fear that I would only bring closer the time I dreaded.

Once while in the Royal College of Art in London, after having been called upon to speak at a student's meeting where I had to condemn the religion of today, and to speak of what I believed to be the truth, I was troubled and hoping to banish the thought from me. I turned to my Bible, and right before me was, "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman," etc. (Ezekiel 3:17) I closed the book in disgust, thinking I would avoid reading the Bible and read other books dealing in art. I saw the professor and asked him what I should read. To my great surprise, he said, "Read the Bible." He did not care about the Bible, and why should he say that unless there was a deeper cause?

When I returned to America it was a very rough voyage, and my mind was on Psalm 107 for some time. In my cabin were three young men, who, seeing I was religious I suppose, suggested that I ought to go to the service. I said I would go if they agreed to do the same. When we got there there were about ninety people, and no one to take the service. The young men in my berth immediately said I could take the service. I told them I had never done any preaching, and that what I might say might not suit them. They insisted; so I spoke from Psalm 107, praying that God would help me. The words were, "They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end," etc. I spoke for three-quarters of an hour but don't know if any were profited or understood what I said.

I did not talk on these things to any here, wishing rather to hide them. The day I was baptized the pastor spoke from, "The harvest truly is plenteous but the laborers are few," etc. While I received much comfort from the preaching, I was very worried to think that he should have taken that text; and that Sunday evening I took the Bible to read, and before I knew it, I was reading the chapter from Ezekiel, "Son of man," etc. (chapter three) I have tried to avoid this matter. I know the seriousness of it. I have tried to interest myself in art, and forget that; but I cannot. I know in keeping of God's commandments there is great reward, but I know it is a hard road. Any who have had a father like we have had know that it is not an easy path.

Oh, Tilly, it is difficult to go before people with nothing prepared, but simply cry that God will pity me. At Philadelphia at the evening service, the thought that there were four preachers present came to my mind and embar-

rassed me for a moment, but I am thankful that I was able to continue. To liberate or license a man to speak, means that he is subject to the church that sends him out, and they can withdraw that license if he should be unsound. He does not administer baptism or communion until he has given proof of his gift, and is ordained. I am but a child and feel helpless, but I do love my God and His people wherever they are.

With love from
your affectionate brother,
George

ELDER RUSTON
TO ELDER HUDSON

Dutton, Ontario
January 20, 1970

Dear Elder and Sister Hudson;

We were glad to hear from you again and to learn that both you and the children are improving. It will take time for their nerves to get over the shock. It is wonderful that you are as well as you are after such a terrible experience. I hope you don't get back to work too soon, and we certainly are thankful that Remona's left arm is so improved, and hope that yours will improve in time. Yes, that was a good subject for you to write on: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us." I was so glad to read Sister Hudson's piece in December *Signs* telling of her exercise following the accident. The Lord was there and it is wonderful to have a God near at hand at such a time, and to feel his presence.

We are witnesses of God's truth and we learn that his mercies are new every morning and great is his faithfulness. After reading your article in January *Signs,* "Watch over one another for good," I felt I would like to send a kiss right to Bastrop, La., just for you, and as the thought stayed with me I knew my Lord could do that for me. That expression of the Church in Canticles (Song of Solomon 1:2) always seems sweet to me: "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth for thy love is better than wine." His love in times past forbids me to think he'll leave me at last in trouble to sink. It is true what you said: "The love of God is what causes us to overlook the faults of our brethren."

May you feel his loving embrace in the days ahead as you have in the days that are past. Love and best wishes from both Esther and me.

Yours in sweet fellowship,
George Ruston

"OVERWHELMED"

Kirkland, Tenn.
April 11, 1899

David L. McNees,

Dear Brother:

Though you are a stranger to me in the flesh, I hope that we are not in the Spirit. I have just read your article from you in the *Signs of the Times,* upon the subject of "What shall we do?" I wish to say to this, my dear brother, that such men as you and those of like precious faith, are very dear to me.

This difference among those called Primitive Baptists is no surprise to me. When I united with them I found but few that were not prejudiced against the truth of predestination. Somehow they had been taught in the past that Elder Gilbert Beebe, of Middletown, N. Y., was a heretic upon this subject. I examined his writings and found them to be the truth as it is in Jesus: God's truth, holy truth, truth that could not be overthrown by all the powers of earth and hell. I had been a Missionary Baptist for about fifteen years, and had preached all the truth that I saw. When it pleased the Lord to show me the truth, as I hope, I was overwhelmed at seeing my own weakness, and I felt that I had been lost to the truth all

these years, and had been teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. I saw that God had hid these things from the wise and prudent, and had revealed them unto babes, and that he had done this because it seemed good in his sight.

I felt myself to be a great sinner, unworthy of the least of all the blessings which God in mercy had bestowed upon me. I saw that the election had obtained it, and the rest were blinded. I saw also that God had mercy upon whom he would have mercy, and whom he would he hardened. I saw that he worked all things, (not some of them, but all,) after the counsel of his own will. There is no warfare in God's revelation—and no contradiction, but all is yea and amen in Christ Jesus. God in his own time and way is going to separate his people who see the truth, from those who do not see it. That will be a happy day for the church, for she is the only one of her mother.

Before I united with the Primitive Baptists I saw the church, and with humility I say it, as the true church, and the only church set off from all other so called churches; and I saw her clear as the sun, fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners. I saw the church as safe and as distinct from all the doctrines of men, as the ark of Noah was distinct from the unbelief and sin of the antidiluvian world. The church has a revelation of faith. She is saved by grace through faith, and that not of herself, it is the gift of God. It is of faith, that it might be by grace. She walks by faith, and not by sight.

I will close by saying that God is bringing to pass just what I saw would come to pass. I told a brother over ten years ago of the things of which I have spoken, and he will testify to the same.

I am very feeble today, and scarcely able to sit up. I have been afflicted with catarrh of the stomach for thirty years. I felt I wanted to say these things to my brethren in the Lord, for if I know myself, I do love them very much.

I am glad to know there is a church in Memphis which is contending earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. I was privileged last fall to be among the people of God in the Bethel and Soldier Creek Associations in western Kentucky, near Fulton and Mayfield. Such love and fellowship I have never seen before: they all saw eye to eye, and spoke the same things. I was with Elder Bartley, of Indiana, for about two weeks. I do not think I could express on paper how much I love this dear brother. His writings in the *Signs* are so full and rich of the marrow of the gospel. I saw many precious brethren. I do feel to thank God for raising up these brethren, and others of like precious faith.

Dear brother, if I never see you, and others of like faith, in this world, I hope to meet you where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

Yours in hope of a better life,
J. K. Womack

(This is the letter to which Elder Curry referred in his republished letter in the December, 1969, issue of the *Signs*. We feel that the brethren will be interested in the brief account of the Lord's dealing with Elder Womack in confirming him in the doctrine which was being assailed among the brethren. — J. D. W.)

WILL THE BODIES RISE AGAIN?

Corporal death was pronounced upon our first parents in the garden of Eden when they partook of the forbidden fruit. "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shall surely die." I believe that two types of death were under consideration, corporal death as well as spiritual death which was a separation from God. The spiritual death took place that day and corporal death came some nine hundred years later.

There are many scriptural types of the resurrection of Christ's body and of the saints in both the Old and New Testaments: Jonah's deliverance after three days and nights from the whale's belly; the dry bones coming together

and living when God commanded Ezekiel to prophesy unto them; when Jesus "cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth! And he that was dead came forth:" and those coming forth from their graves after Christ's resurrection. If Christ had not risen from the grave, how could all the types that prefigured his resurrection have been satisfied? Men of old lived in great faith of the resurrection of their bodies. Job believed that though he should die and return to dust, yet his body would rise again: he would see God in his flesh, his own flesh and body. "And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." (Job 19:26)

Though David saw and experienced many troubles upon earth as it is the lot of God's people, yet he believed that almighty God who speaks and it is done, would quicken him again (quicken means to make alive, to resuscitate) and bring him up again from the earth. "Thou which hast shewed me great and sore troubles shall quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth." (Psalms 71:20) Isaiah speaks of the members of Christ's mystical body as rising again from dust and living in the flesh. "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is as dew of the herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." (Isaiah 26:19) Daniel was given to believe that many would awake at the sound of the trumpet to everlasting life. This is the first resurrection. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." Many shall awake to shame and everlasting contempt showing that there will be a resurrection of the just and the unjust. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." (Daniel 12:2)

Sins are committed in the body and by the body, and the body will be punished for them unless otherwise redeemed by the precious blood of Christ Jesus. If the bodies are redeemed by him, these bodies will forever sing praises of glory to his dear and holy name for having been redeemed from eternal punishment.

"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is head of the church; and he is the saviour of the body." "For we are the members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." (Ephesians 5:23, 30) If the bodies of all the saints comprising the mystical body of Christ (the church), were to be left in the grave, Christ would be a head without a body. Christ would have died in vain if the bodies that are sown were to forever lie in the graves. The grave would be the victor and the sting of death would continue. But thanks be to almighty God who gives us the victory over death and the grave through Jesus Christ our Lord. If the same bodies that were planted were not resurrected, it would not be a resurrection but a creation. It is the same "it" that is sown that riseth, "It is sown, it is raised." Christ and his church are one for the scripture says, "They two shall be one flesh." But the flesh of Christ's mystical body (which is the church) is not and will not be fit to dwell with him in glory until it has been made like his own flesh. Flesh without sin, flesh without corruption, flesh without mortality; the flesh of his bride must be made incorruptible and immoral before it can enter into his kingdom. "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory." (I Cor. 15:53, 54) "If children then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ."

The apostle Paul establishes as a fact and example the resurrection of Christ and his saints to such a degree that there should be no room for doubt or speculation. Christ being the first fruit of them that slept, his resurrection is a sample and assurance of the saints.

Some during the apostle's day were denying the resurrection of the bodies, but Paul seemed determined to show beyond question that the gospel which he had declared and preached unto them which they had believed and were saved by, unless they had believed in vain, was the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. This was the good news and glad tidings of the gospel.

"The gospel is the power of God unto salvation." True faith is a fruit of this salvation. "By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain." (I Cor. 15:2) Many who followed after Jesus while he was here on earth, only followed until certain "tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." (Matt. 13:21) and they ceased from following. Their following and belief was not mixed with faith, a head knowledge without true faith is all in vain. "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures." (I Cor. 15:3) This knowledge of the true gospel (as it is in Christ Jesus) which the apostle Paul delivered unto them is not after man. "But I certify you, brethren that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Gal. 1:11, 12) This was the gospel which he had received from a Divine source. "How that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures." Why did Christ die? It was necessary that the only begotten Son of God should suffer, bleed, and die. Christ was made the Surety of the new covenant and as Surety he had in the eternal covenant engaged to die for lost sinners. To offer a complete sacrifice in order to fulfill God's just and holy law, to put away sin, and to endure the punishment which was due to us, he "was made a curse for us." Our precious Lord died under the law, for death was the penalty of the law which was due his people. He died under the weight of imputed sin. "He was made sin for us." It was necessary for Christ to die in order for his resurrection and ours. "And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." (Rom. 1:4) "As Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures" he was "buried and rose again the third day according to the scriptures." (I Cor. 15:2, 3)

We have many prophecies which speak of his death and the rising of his body. It was not to be left in the grave but came forth as the first fruit of them that sleep. Justice being satisfied, the law being magnified, holiness being fulfilled, the whole debt being completely paid, the way was clear that God raised his dear son from the grave. A truth confirmed to us by many infallible witnesses as we have testimony both from heaven and earth, from heaven we have the testimony of angels, God's holy angels. The angels said, "He is not here: for he is risen, as he said Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead." (Matt. 28:6, 7) Death has lost its prey. The grave could not retain him. We have testimony from God's chosen men, who were eye witnesses of this most holy truth. He was seen by all the apostles and above five hundred brethren at once. Last of all, he was seen of the apostle Paul. We are not sure what time the apostle Paul saw Christ, he could have been referring to the time when he was on his way to Damascus to persecute the Lord's people and was struck down by a light brighter than the noon-day sun or when he was caught up to the third heaven into paradise and heard unspeakable words which it is not lawful for man to utter. He considered himself to be the least of all the apostles because he had persecuted the church of God. His apostleship came not by anything he had done to gain the favor and mercy of God, "Not of works." "But by the grace of God, I am what I am." Just as the apostle laboured

against the church of God before his conversion, he laboured more abundantly than they all after his conversion. Oh, how the grace of God changes a man. He assures us that it was not he, but the grace of God which was with him. He did that which it was ordained of God for him to do "so he preached."

If all the apostles preached that Christ rose from the dead, "how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" (I Cor. 15:12) Just as sure as Christ is risen, so shall all the saints be raised, "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." (Rom. 8:11) If Christ be not risen, then who can call him Christ? A dead Christ ceases to be of any benefit to anyone. Christ remained in the grave the exact length of time the scriptures confirmed that he would, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it again." (John 2:19)

If Christ be not risen, the apostles would all become false preachers and witnesses of God, "Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ, whom he raised not up if so be the dead rise not." (I Cor. 15:15) All faith would be in vain and ye are all yet in your sins. And "They which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." (I Cor. 15:18) There would be no hope, no faith, or salvation since all hangs upon Christ as risen from the dead. If Christ be not risen from the dead, how could he now be at the right hand of God making daily intercession for all his people both the dead and living. "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived that he might be Lord of both the dead and living." (Rom. 14:9) His resurrection was attended with the resurrection of many of the saints who had been sleeping in their graves until that time but were awakened, raised, and attended the Lord after his rising.

"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." (I Cor. 15:19) There seems to be no entering into glory except through suffering nor an entering into the rich experiences of his grace, without trials, tribulations, and afflictions. "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." If we have a hope of being conformed to his glorified image hereafter, then it is necessary that we be conformed to his suffering image while he sojourned here below. "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." (I Peter 2:21) "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." God knows what peculiar trials and afflictions are needful for us. There surely is a necessity for the children of God to suffer in mind and body though these sufferings may differ widely both within and without. Was suffering not so with Christ? Has he not led the way when he said, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24:26) Jesus also said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6) Is following in the footsteps of Christ and the flock which has gone on before all in vain? No, thanks be to God, our hope extends far beyond this life. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." (I Cor. 15:58) We have the sweet assurance that "If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him."

Christ paid double for all the sins of his people, and what a great price it was. "Ye are bought with a price, wherefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's." The verb "are" is used in meaning more than one which signified both body and spirit. Christ will not leave the bodies of his saints forever in the grave and

let death and the grave be the conqueror. Christ will not lose the purchase of his blood. If the bodies riseth not, then how can they be made like to the glorious body of Christ? Should we question the power of God both to his son and his saints? Man consists of soul, spirit, and body. The soul and spirit does not die at the time the body dies, for the soul does not die and since the body is the only thing that dies, it therefore is the only thing resurrected (resurrected means to rise again, rising again from the dead, resumption of life again from the dead). The same body must rise again in order that there be a resurrection. "But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." (I Cor. 15:38) Seed that is sown even though it dies does not lose its being, its substance; but that same self seed rises up again, it doesn't come up another seed but yet has different qualities even though the same bodies. It is sown a dead seed but is raised a living one, it rises in a far more glorious state. It is true with the bodies of the saints. "*It* is sown in corruption; *it* is raised in incorruption. *It* is sown in dishonour: *it* is raised in glory: *it* is sown in weakness: *it* is raised in power: *it* is sown a natural body: *it* is raised a spiritual body." Notice that "*it*" refers to the body in every instance. Our vile body must be changed, but if not the same body, it would not be our vile body.

"As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." The apostle Paul, through the power of the Holy Spirit, has shown that our body as well as our soul must be with Christ in the kingdom of heaven. "All that are in the graves shall come forth." "This corruptible must put on incorruption." "And this mortal shall have put on immortality." How can the saints of God be glorified in body unless the same body comes up from the grave? "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (I Thess. 4:13-18)

In considering the holy truth brought forth by the prophets and the apostles, I can't keep from believing that *the bodies will rise again.*

In hope of mercy,
(Elder) Joe L. Hamrick
1010 S. 16th Street
Harlingen, Texas 78550

COMFORTING TO READ

843 Glendale Ave.
So. Charleston, W. Va. 25303

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a check to renew my subscription for another year; the balance to be used as needed.

I feel so thankful to our dear Lord for inspiring the editors down through the years to write and keep the *Signs* so sound in the doctrine that I believe Christ preached while he was here on earth.

How sweet and comforting it is to read the articles written by the dear brethren that are so closely related to the way I feel and believe. They are like crumbs falling from the Master's table.

May the dear Lord keep and bless you for many years to come. Please pray for me when at the throne of grace.

Your sister in Christ, I hope,
Mrs. Lester Haning

THE LORD LEADS AND SUPPLIES HIS PEOPLE

A225 Emerson Street
Winona, Miss. 38967

Mrs. Lucille Young
Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Sister Young:

As the year of our Lord, 1969, is coming to an end, it is a reminder to us of many things. First of these is that we are one year older, and are that much nearer the end of our journey of this pilgrim life. Second, it brings to mind the way the Lord has led us these many years, both in providence and grace. As the cares of life with the infirmities of old age, we feel more than ever our complete dependence upon the Lord for every blessing, both natural and spiritual.

Realizing then our feeble frame, let us turn to the Holy Scriptures, and by divine teaching see how the Lord led his people in olden times. And therefore see if our experiences harmonize with theirs. For whatever was written aforetime was written for our comfort, that we through the scriptures have hope.

Let us view and review in a brief way the Lord's dealings with Joseph and his brethren. For brevity we will not treat upon all their Bible history: however many wonderful things are contained in this portion of God's word which are types and shadows, having their fulfillment in Christ and the gospel church in our day.

"And the famine was sore in the land." (Genesis 43:1) As there are natural famines, even so there are spiritual famines; and God sometimes sends both to fulfill his purpose. The Lord of all glory knows what is good for his people more than they know themselves. Experimentally He can and does bless us with the fat of the land (gospel land). And what is the fat of the land? It is the love and grace of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost; and is made manifest when the Holy Spirit raises us up and makes us sit together in heavenly place in Christ Jesus. If we were blest to continue in these blessed places, we would become negligent, and cease to look to the Lord from whom these blessings come. So, that we might learn where our strength lies, he sends a famine in the land (of our souls); and as Joseph's brethren through necessity were forced to go down into Egypt to their brother for these natural blessings, even so must spiritual Israel go down on their knees in spirit before their spiritual Joseph (Christ) to receive spiritual blessings.

Now Joseph's brethren carried money in their sacks; but the money was returned. In this world everything has its price — nothing is free. This also means religion and religious things of the world: salaried ministers, foreign missions, and all their different auxiliaries must be supported by money, — they say, to win souls to Christ. But it is not so in the gospel kingdom. "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye buy, and eat; yea, come. Buy wine and milk without money and without price." As the poet says, "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling."

Yes, Joseph's brethren carried their treasure in their sacks. All the blessings of natural Israel were temporal or natural, — the blessings of spiritual Israel are inward and spiritual. Paul the Apostle says, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be of God and not of us." It takes the power of God to enable one to preach the gospel; it takes the power of God for one to hear the gospel. "He that hath ears, let him hear what the Spirit sayeth unto the churches." No man can hear what the Spirit says without spiritual ears, — and no one will have spiritual ears until God gives them to him.

Now Joseph knew his brethren; but his brethren knew him not. Here is a wonderful statement of truth in the letter, and it has its counterpart in the

Spirit. Dear trembling child of God, do you know your spiritual Joseph? If you should ask a worldly religionist this question, no doubt he would have a ready answer. Then ask him, how do you know him? "Oh, I read about him in the Bible, or I heard my parents speak of him, or I've heard the preacher speak of him." But such a knowledge as this does not satisfy the children of God.

I am sure that if Joseph had not made himself known to them, they would not have known him. Do you, little child of God, know your spiritual Joseph? know Jesus the Saviour? "Oh, I do wish I could positively say that I know him," says a subject of God's grace. Did you ever consider that the very fact that you desire to know him, is evidence itself that you do know him? Our present peace of mind as well as our eternal destiny depends upon our knowing him. Our blessed Saviour said, "No man knows the Father but the Son, and no man knows the Son but the Father, and he to whomsoever He reveals him." So if we know him, it is by the power of God's revelation. To know God from a spiritual standpoint, is to love Him. Why do they love Him? because he first loved them. Dear sister in the Lord, do you know him? do I know him?

From a scriptural and experimental standpoint, knowledge and love, like links in a chain, are so welded together they cannot be separated. Why did Joseph make himself known to his brethren? because he loved them. Why did he love them? because they were his brethren. Now Christ is our elder brother. It is needful that God's people know him — know him as their Saviour. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall (not try — no conditions here) save his people (no one else) from their sins." Yes, know him in the pardon and forgiveness of our sins. It is written in the prophets, "All thy children shall be taught of God, and great shall be their peace."

Again, it is written in 8th chapter of Hebrews, "All shall know me from the least of them to the greatest. And their sins and iniquities I will remember no more." Blessed words are these.

Now Joseph, before the years of famine, stored away in the cities of Egypt this natural food. So God, in his infinite wisdom and love has from the foundation of the world prepared this gospel food for spiritual Israel. The natural food lasted seven years. This seven means a completeness, (see other scriptures for the number seven.) Nor will gospel food fail as long as one of His children remain in this troublesome world, — this food will he receive from the day of birth until the day of his death. It will completely supply his ever spiritual need.

I must close. There is no end to these gospel subjects. I see the whole gospel from the time it was first preached in a manifest sense, as a complete unit, and will not be complete until the end of the world. I realize that in my feeble attempt to set forth my views of these great truths, I have hardly touched upon this portion of the scriptures. Please cast a mantle of charity over this poor letter, and when you are at the throne of grace remember me.

Yours in Christian love,
Elder Louis Stewart

POWERFUL OPERATIONS OF GOD'S SPIRIT

4 Maple Lane
Pennington, N. J. 08534

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

During the month of March I am reading about the *wind* in the Bible. The powerful operations and motions of God's Spirit, quickening or reviving the heart toward God, are compared to the blowing of the wind. How marvelous is each precept, each comparison set forth for the teaching of those who earnestly search the Scriptures.

I find it interesting — there are thirty-one chapters in Proverbs, one

for each day of this month. This morning, the eleventh day, my attention was drawn to the 29th verse of the 11th chapter: "He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind." How true these words continue to live down through the ages, and bow the spirit in much unhappiness. But soon springtime shall hush the wailing winds of winter and spread her glorious beauty on the earth.

"Grace fills the garden of the Lord
With blooming joys from heaven.
The warm south wind is in that word,
Which shows my sins forgiven."

In one of my earlier experiences the voice of the Saviour came to me on the wind. I was standing by an evergreen tree that seemed to be dying. I was grieved and low in spirit because I had no other tree. A broad shaft of light came down over me and the tree, and I closed my eyes in fear and trembling. Then a comforting voice came from afar on the wind that was ahead of rolling clouds. "I am the light and the life, in me thy spirit shall ever live."

When I opened my eyes I was amazed to see the tree standing ever-so-much taller, and all green and sparkling with sudden beauty and loveliness as it blossomed forth into a glorious light, with a shower of gilted raindrops falling upon it from heaven. All the while the wind, now gentle, stirred the boughs which had become wonderously fresh and fragrant; and also stirred my mind, as it seemed, to picture the church of the living God and a subject of God's grace standing before the church. The church is spoken of as regards the members, as trees of righteousness, and the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified. The wind blowing on the evergreen tree was a breath of eternal life shown unto me, — its crown of beauty suggestive of a crown of righteousness.

Seeing it in a dying state, I saw myself under the law; but after the shaft of light, God's judgment came, and a voice spoke to me from heaven, — and that was peace and acceptance in the Lord. The shower of gilted raindrops was the Holy Spirit; and the fragrance . . . How sweet the fragrance of the merit of Jesus!

Just as I saw the tree had grown, so I realized the child of God grows in grace and knowledge of the truth: even though in fear and trembling, one never looses the experience of a sinner who feels unworthy before the sight of God; even as Joseph's brethren felt when they stood before him, and just before deliverance came to them.

There were many other portions of scripture that came to my mind, of which this one seemed most impressive: "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven."

Even thus, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." (John 3:8)

Sister Mary Hellings

IN MEMORY OF LOVED ONES

Snow Hill, Md.

Dear Elder Spangler:

The enclosed $50.00 contribution to the *Signs* is in loving memory of Charles H. and Bessie Staton Jarmon, Newark, Del. and Archer C. and Martha Hastings Holloway, Newark, Md. and Elizabeth Jarmon Holloway, Snow Hill, Md. We feel richly blessed to have been in the family circle of these fine devoted Christians, and to have had the benefit of their love and guidance over the years. For these and all other blessings, we are truly and deeply grateful. We thank you Elder Spangler, for the many pleasures you have brought into their lives, — and into ours.

Respectfully yours,
Wm. H. Holloway
Helen H. Scheer
Margaret H. Thorne

P. S.: We hope you and your fine family are in good health and will have a good year in every way in 1970 — and always.

Sincerely,
William

(We appreciate the above contribution to the *Signs*, and will add it to our Funds. — Editors)

A LOVER OF THE TRUTH

Rt. 1, Box 59A
Darlington, Md. 21034

Dear Elder Wood:

I would like to express my appreciation and to thank all the editors of the *Signs of the Times*. I feel they are a God-send to a sinner like me.

Some of the writers express my feelings and experiences better than I can. It is such a wonderful blessing to have editors like you who publish nothing but the truth — sound doctrine, and give God all the power and all the glory.

May the Lord bless you to continue with the *Signs* many, many years more. I hope I love all the brothers and sisters everywhere. It is such a pleasure to meet with them.

In sweet fellowship I hope,
and a lover of the Truth,
Esther Miller

"FOOD FOR HUNGRY, POOR AND NEEDY"

Rt. 1
West Frankfort, Ill. 62896

Editors of the *Signs of the Times*:

How we here in Southern Illinois enjoy the publication. It is surely food for hungry, poor and needy; and that surely is us. Since our Elder C. M. Weaver's passing we have had a famine of the spoken word. Our testimony will have to be this, (if we are what we hope we are,) : The Spirit of Christ has provided a Sanctuary, an Altar and a Sweet Hope.

Surely the Editorial, Voices of the Past, and "If a man die shall he live again," was hope to journey through this life, and hope to die by. We thank you all. . .

In brotherly love and hope: Members of Bethel Association of Southern Illinois.

Allie Neal, Clerk

NOTICE OF
PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

15514 South Brentwood
Channelview, Texas 77530

Dear Elder Wood:

Hope this finds you and your precious wife doing well. It has been almost twelve years since we saw you at Elder Lambert's church in Winnsboro in 1958. You also visited our association here in Houston at that time. You were making a tour of the south, and had also visited Elder E. B. Ault's church in the Rio Grande Valley.

Though we had known you through the medium of the *Signs of the Times*, the experience of seeing you in person in the demonstration of the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, left a very warm and tender place in our hearts. My soul does magnify the Lord for you dear Elders whom the Lord has placed in our midst to preach the gospel, and bring glad tidings.

We are holding our twenty-fourth annual session of the *Pleasant Valley Association* here in Houston, Texas, with the Shepherd Fold Church, 815 Little York Road, the third Sunday in August and Friday and Saturday before, 1970. If you will publish it in the *Signs of the Times*, we will appreciate it. We invite our friends and brethren, especially the ministers, to meet with us.

For any information please call Jerry Evers, HO 5-0693, or Jimmy Lindsey, GL 2-7231. The Area Code is 713.

In bonds of love,
Jimmy Lindsey, Clerk

BLACK RIVER UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with Reedy Prong Church, the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in May.

The church is located 12 miles east of Dunn, N. C. Travel No. 55 highway to the 4th hard

surface road, turn left one and one-half miles to the church. Those coming from the east turn right 4 miles west of Newton Grove.

Those who love the doctrine of Salvation by the grace are invited to attend.

C. D. Turner

ORIGINAL WHITE OAK UNION

The next session of the *Original White Oak Union* is appointed to be held with the Southwest Church, Onslow County, fifth Saturday and Sunday in May 1970. The church is located about 5 miles west of Jacksonville, North Carolina on Highway 53. All lovers of the truth are invited to visit with us.

L. H. Southerland, Clerk

SOLDIER CREEK UNION

The next *Union Meeting* of the churches of the *Soldier Creek Association* will be held with the New Providence Church in Calloway County, west of Murray, Ky., the fifth Sunday in May and Friday and Saturday before, the Lord willing.

We look forward to seeing our corresponding elders, brethren, sisters and friends — those who love the doctrine of God's sovereign grace.

Elder Paul Poyner, Moderator
Effie Bowden, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To March 1, 1970)

Mrs. M. L. Lucas, Ala.	$12.00
Lydia B. Chafin, Ala.	1.00
Mrs. J. O. Morrow, Tex.	3.00
Mrs. J. D. Neely, Ark.	1.00
Elder R. H. Hale, Tenn.	2.00
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Levi Goard, Va.	1.00
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Mrs. Fannie Padrick, N. C.	1.00
In memory of Mr. and Mrs. Lester Perdue, by Nannie Arrington, Va.	5.00
Elder George Ruston, Can.	20.00

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

EDITORIAL

THE CHURCH AT SARDIS

"And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and

they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." (Rev. 3:1, 6)

Lovely writers have spent much time in drawing conclusions as to the time state of each of these churches, and have made many literal interpretations concerning the part that this man and that man had in these churches. The most of the writers have taken the many references to allegorical parables and have then gone into the pages of profane history and have woven highly mystical calculations as to the part this earthly king, or that cruel warrior, had in these sacred things.

If I were going to denominate a certain time as belonging to each of these churches I would designate it as being right now. If I had been writing a hundred years ago, I would have said the same then, and if I were writing a thousand years from now I would say the same. I have read carefully all that I could get my hands on regarding these sublime matters, and no two of the commentators agree as to Who and When and Where in regard to this book. If this is a good criterion to go by, it is suggested that many have been reading these messages that did not have an ear to hear. Not having the kind of ear needed, *but still having ears,* they have interpreted what the Spirit has said to the churches with the same *kind* of expounding that they have ears. I plead with my dear kindred in Christ to be patient with me, for I make no profession of knowing more about these things than did they before me. If I have an ear, *a hearing ear,* I will also have an understanding heart; if I do not, then my writing is as useless as that which has gone before me.

Our state as a church is in a pitiful condition if we are not able to see our present condition in this Sardis church. Too, any ancient church of the past has been "ready to die" if she did not perceive these things in her midst. I do not know anything pertaining to the future. I do not have a desire nor ability to delve into the future with an intention to warn nor to prepare for it. The present is all that we have; the past can not be mended, the future has not been unfolded. If I pray, I beg the Lord to give us a true regard for our present condition, and to seek Him right early for grace to apply our hearts unto wisdom in present matters. And for fear that I be misunderstood in talking about our present condition, let me say that I am not running down the church of today by telling how corrupt her ministers are and how little godly interest there is in her members. I will leave that work to those that are busy telling us what the future holds and what part John Doe plays in that future. What the Lord said to Daniel, suits all of Daniel's faith; "Go thy way till the end be."

These momentous matters are spoken to the angel of the church at Sardis. These angels were held in the hand of One that had the seven Spirits of God. John is writing the things shown to him by this Holy One with the seven Spirits. These angels are reminded all along that they are not their own; that they were called, qualified, and sent forth to minister, but that He does not relinquish the handling of them as they take the oversight of the various churches. We may safely say that among these seven angels or servants that conditionalism was unknown among them; He either held them, or He did not.

Is there one Spirit or seven? If I must heed the charge often thrown at me that I spiritualize too much, then by all means let me say that we do have to do with seven Spirits instead of one. If I am permitted to make use of the numeral seven as denoting completeness, like is done in so many instances in the Bible, then I do not hesitate to

say that the church is under one Spirit. We would not do violence to the Bible to say that by the seven Spirits of God, something is to be understood as being equivalent to seven operations of the Holy Spirit. These ways in which divine power is manifested has immediate reference to the work of redemption. Many rich things are called to our attention along this line, such as the Spirit of truth; the Spirit of adoption; the Spirit of promise; the Spirit of glory; the Spirit of grace; the Spirit of faith; the Spirit of sanctification.

It would seem that this message is of special importance to Sardis and us. If Wisdom has builded her house (and she has) ; if she has hewn out her seven pillars (who would attack that seven as not being symbolical of completeness?) ; if she has killed her beasts; if she has mingled her wine; if she has furnished her table; if she has sent forth her maidens, and they have cried upon the highest places of the city, then she has opened the door into the city and has commanded the simple to turn therein and eat to the fill of the provisions she has set on her table. This message to the Sardisean church is for the simple children of God. This is not intended to set them forth as being mentally retarded, but as being of that class that know in part and see in part. It is a message of simplicity. There is not any need to complicate the message by introducing things that John did not say while being moved by the Holy Ghost to write.

"I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." What a solemn declaration! What an arresting address is this! This part of the message is enough to cause an examination as to whether we are in the faith; to cause us to ask, Is it I? Yet, there was in this church, as there were in the early churches under Paul, (Gal. 2:4) members that had slipped in unawares among the brethren. The brethren had not been able to see them as imposters, but He that knoweth all things knew their works; He knew that they had a name to live, but that they were dead. This declaration is not followed by a command to repentance. They are left with the declaration. The announcement is their doom, for they are trusting in their works, and the only effect that such has upon the dead is to cause them much sorrow. (Mat. 19:22)

"Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die." These in the first charge are dead; the ones in the second charge are ready to die. These are the weak, the simple, the poor, the afflicted, all of which are not able to fight, but are preserved in Israel as vine dressers. (Jer. 52:16) There is a lot of difference between being dead, and ready to die. The dead know not anything (spiritually), but the living know that death is but a step away, (I Samuel 20:3), and they know that their sins would condemn them to death, and that they are ready to pass the sentence of death on themselves. (2 Samuel 12:5) Those that were pronounced dead were never alive in Christ; in their relationship to the church they were dead, being still in the same Adam nature that they ever possessed, but those that were ready to die, were not dead. The former did not bring out anything from the Saviour for them; the angel of the church was not commanded to do anything for them. He was commanded to be watchful for those ready to die; to strengthen them that remain. (Pro. 11:30; 2 Cor. 11:27; Heb. 13:17) Let it be remembered that everywhere there are the nominal followers of the Lord; that there always have been, and always will be those that follow until the loaves and fishes give out; that the time is coming, and now is, wherein the dead will go away. That is one side of the picture, but the other side is a lovely one. They will remain. They have nowhere else to go. Jesus has the words of eternal life.

There is, seemingly, not enough time for a minister in his labors. Paul went here and there strengthening the breth-

ren (Acts 14:21, 22; 18:23), and what a lovely thing it is to have it said about a minister that he is a good pastor. He has received this wisdom from above, and he has delivered to the brethren what has been received (I Cor. 15:1, 2; Acts 20:24; Gal. 1:12), and they remain. This is a hearer of the word as well as a doer; he will hold fast, because the command of the king is to do that. (Ezra 5:8; I Thes. 5:21) God commands in sundry manner, but with one object in view, to wit, obedience. There is not in the realm of the Bible a conditional repentance. A thing granted by the Lord to Israel; the gifts and callings of God being without repentance, it follows that repentance is the result of the immediate work of God's Spirit in the churches of Asia, and those of our time as well. But there is an objection to that kind of preaching and writing. This is called machine doctrine, that is, that it puts obedience on a mechanical basis. I did not say that; the prophets and apostles did not say that, *but I will tell you what they did say.* "I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes," etc. (Ezek. 36:27) In the time of the infantile state of the church (about the same time of these seven churches of Asia), the Lord poured out His Spirit on all flesh, and it accomplished certain ends, to wit, each one thus blessed gladly received the word of the Lord. (Acts 2) The Saviour held in his hand the stars of these churches, and equally so, his words to the individuals were spirit and life.

It would seem that it is enough to remind the people of God today of the same things that were said to these churches. God causes his people to sleep; he causes them to wake up; He causes them to remember, and he causes them to watch. When Gideon led the men of Israel to the water the Lord elected the ones that were to go into battle. Those that raised a handful of water to their mouth and lapped like unto a dog were elected to go. A man is watchful of the enemy as he drinks like unto this; he also is able to see that the water is clean; that it is free from impurities. But a man that crawls on his belly to drink is rejected, because he can not watch the enemy and he does not know what he is drinking.

If a watchman does not watch, the Lord comes on him as a thief. He does not cast him out of the camps, *but He does come on him suddenly,* and the fruit of his doings shall be as gall in his stomach. These angels (servants) had an ear to hear what the Spirit was saying. The thing said, it being by divine power, had life in it; it produced action. It is true today; it will ever be true. The warning will cause us to take heed (if we have ears); it will give us an incentive to be ready for His appearing.

Many will enter in at the broad way, and as many as enter in there of the Lord's people, it will be a way of destruction. A few will enter in at the strait gate and narrow way. I thought at one time that none went the broad way except the non-elect, but now it appears different. How can we ever apply the few to the elect only, seeing that the same writer tells us of an innumerable (not just a few) host which can not be numbered? We have ever been preaching that God has a people in every nation, kindred, and tongue; if so, there are many of them in the broad way, and I would reckon them as being in the category with the eunuch, needing some man to teach them. (Acts 8:31; Eph. 4:12; I Tim. 3:2; 2 Tim. 2:2, 24, 25) A few will always be found in the church that have not defiled their garments. These are sometimes referred to as being the very elect, but whether that is correct or not, we do know that we have a few that are not spotted by following some idolatry. These special ones are among us today; it will always be that the majority will be sent back from the battle, only a few being given a pitcher, and an ear to hear the trumpet. (Judges 7)

These are worthy. It is vain and trite to be confronted with gainsayers to

where we must always explain where this worthiness comes from; to be brought before those that stumble at the written word and we must explain over and over that this overcoming grace comes from above, and yet it is true; therefore let us repeat again and again that these who are not defiled, who are walking in the presence of the Saviour, who are worthy, who overcome, who are clothed in white raiment, whose name is not blotted out of the book of life, whose name is confessed before the Father and his angels, these, from day unto day, from dispensation to dispensation, have all of these blessings according to the riches of his grace.

May God increase our faith and our vision *and open our ears to* understand the faithfulness of the Lord in dealing with his servants and his churches. Let us faithfully consider that not one of those for whom Christ has died will ever be destroyed by the charges and commands given these churches (and us today), but that He will correct, and instruct and edify, as he chastens and rebukes and reproves. May He have mercy upon us if we say that we have no sin as regards our standing in our present day churches.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Reisterstown, Md., Oct. 16, 1878

Dear Brethren: — A few weeks since I noticed in the *Signs* a request from "A Friend" for my views upon Rom. i. 20: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." If I knew precisely what questions were in the mind of the writer, I might be able to write more to the point, and in a more condensed manner: or if I knew the name, I would respond by private letter; but as it is, I will suggest a few thoughts through the *Signs,* and leave the result.

In this wonderful epistle to the Romans, the writer, Paul, seems to have been led to pen down a complete system of gospel truth in regular and systematic order. Accordingly, he first lays down and enlarges upon the doctrine of man's total depravity, embracing the first three chapters; then, in the next three chapters, he argues the doctrine of justification by faith, through the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ, and shows that since man is totally depraved, and already condemned by a broken law, he cannot be justified by his own works; then, in chapters seventh and eighth, he presents the daily conflicts and deliverances, the hopes and expectations of him who is justified by faith. From chapter ninth to twelfth he answers objections, which men then and now bring against these sublime yet soul humbling truths; and then, to the end of the epistle, speaks in the language of exhortation, and instructs his brethren as to how they ought to walk in the world. Thus we have a complete and perfect model of christian doctrine and christian practice laid down in this epistle. First, sin and its fruits, and then salvation; its method, and the resulting fruits. And here, too, is a good pattern for the minister of the word to follow. Total depravity, man's inability, salvation by grace, and exhorting to a consistent walk, are splendid parts of every gospel sermon.

Now in the course of enlarging upon the doctrine of total depravity, in the first of this epistle, Paul would meet with a variety of objections on all sides, and just such objections as are alleged today. The language of the text is an answer to one of these objections or cavils. Paul had declared that all men are condemned for sin, and that the anger of God had been incurred thereby. From this curse there were none exempt. In this respect the Jew is no better off than the Gentile, and the Gentile has no advantage over the Jew.

But neither Jew nor Gentile were inclined to admit this. The heart of man is deceitful, as well as wicked, and will not let him believe that he is so totally corrupt as he is. Rather than admit this, man has the fearful temerity to arraign the justice of God, and the unblushing effrontery to seek to shield himself under the plea of ignorance on the one hand, or of outward obedience to forms on the other. Man is judged according to what he is. The fountain is corrupt, the tree is evil, the heart is depraved; therefore the works are evil. His works are of the flesh, and show the state he is in. Both Jew and Gentile are the fallen sons of a fallen father. The condition of man is no worse in the sight of God, or in reality, after a long life of sin, than it was when he was born. He was born totally depraved; he is no worse at the end. His evil works are the proof of his depravity.

Two texts, which I will quote, settle forever the condition of the unquickened sinner. "The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." — Rom. viii. 7. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." — 1 Cor. ii. 14. This is the doctrine laid down in these first three chapters of Romans by the apostle, and in proof of its truth, he appeals to the fearful abominations which prevailed everywhere in the world. And thus he boldly vindicates the justice of God in condemning the whole world of mankind. But the Jew hates this doctrine. The Pharisee is perfectly willing to believe that the wrath of God abides on the Gentile; "but I," he says, "am a keeper of the law; God has favored me. I am good and holy; surely I shall be saved." But Paul says to the Jew, "Ye shall be judged by the law which has been given you." "The law in which you trust does not justify you; it can only condemn you." "Outward tithing of mint, anise and cummin, praying, alms-giving, and reading the scriptures, will not save you. The law is love to God with the whole heart, soul, mind and strength, and to your neighbor as to yourself. Therefore your outward works are barren and unprofitable; you cannot be saved by them."

It has been the case in all ages of the world, that the man who thinks to be saved by his good works, rests in the law. He does not see its spirituality, for if he did, how soon would his boasting be stopped, and he tremble with terror. Paul had this experience, and he knew whereof he spoke. In this manner does the apostle silence the objection of the Jew to his doctrine, that all men are under the curse; that the Jew is no better off than the Gentile. But now the Gentile comes up with his objection, (and this is what Paul meets in the text.) The Gentile says, "It is not just that I should be condemned. No law was ever made known to me; I did not know any better."

Now this is precisely the argument that men use today when assailing the truth of God. The argument is, "If God does not give men a chance to be saved by sending them the gospel, he is unjust to condemn them." Thus the principle of total depravity is entirely ignored. The logical conclusion from this would be, that the more ignorant of the truth men are, the better chance they would have to be saved, a conclusion too monstrous to be entertained for a moment. If men are judged according to the light they have, and, if they have no light at all, must not be condemned: and if men are condemned for not receiving the gospel, and are saved only when they receive it: then it follows that Missionaries are the means of damning seventy-five per cent of the heathen who hear them. For upon the above principles, all the heathen would be saved if left in ignorance; while of those who hear the word, not more than twenty-five per cent profess conversion and are saved. Thus error is always self-condemned. But Paul, in the text, fairly and squarely meets this objec-

tion, and shows that the fault is not in God or his revelation, but in their own carnal hearts. God has revealed enough of himself, but their blind and impenitent hearts could not comprehend him. Men love not the light, but cleave to the darkness, because their deeds are evil. The heathen now have precisely the same revelation in the works of nature that the Gentile had then, but he does not comprehend Him that speaks, because of sin. The man who reads the Bible today has the same revelation that the Jew had; but, like the Jew, he does not comprehend it. The truth is, both Jew and Gentile, both he who reads the Bible and the heathen, must have an unction from the Holy One ere they can understand the word of God, either in nature, in providence, or in the scripture. Much is said about teaching the Bible; but a knowledge of the letter of the word leaves a man just as ignorant of the truth as the Jew was in his day, and no man knew the letter of the word better than he. All human teaching in divine things leaves its subjects just where it found them. We must be born again. The fault is in man.

Now, Paul says the Gentiles are without excuse before God; that is, they have no plea to turn aside the overwhelming tide of God's judgment against them for sin. When a Cornelius is brought to the bar of God's judgment in his experience, he never feels like pleading ignorance to shield him, or as an excuse. He must acknowledge that he is justly condemned. He feels, "I have loved sin and run after it, my heart is depraved, and God is just when he judges me. I am without excuse." The selfrighteous and the worldly man may cavil and find fault at the law of that God who says, "The soul that sins shall die;" but the convicted sinner has not a word to say. The wonder to him is, not that he is condemned, but that there should be salvation for such a guilty wretch. Like Isaiah, he sees God in his temple and hears the seraphim thrice proclaiming his holiness, and is constrained to say, "I cannot speak, for my lips are unclean, and I have seen the Lord." Or like Job, he says, "Though I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean, yet thou (God) shalt plunge me in the ditch, and my own clothes shall cause me to be abhorred." Thus neither his righteousness nor ignorance will save him from death.

And, also, let it be noticed that in this connection Paul *is not* talking about salvation or the gospel being *offered* to men, and so they are without excuse, because they have been given a chance to be saved, and have rejected it; but he is showing the state of man under the law, irrespective of the gospel, and before the gospel comes in, and he asserts that man is already condemned, and abides in death. Man is already lost and cursed. The law has doomed him to everlasting destruction, and in it there is no remedy. God is not bound to provide a remedy for any man; and we all must say, If my soul were sent to hell, his righteous law approves it well. No man is or can be condemned for rejecting the gospel, because *all are already condemned by the law*. The fact that men do not love the gospel, but reject it, does not condemn them, but *shows that they are already condemned,* and dead in trespasses and sins. And in the first three chapters of Romans Paul shows conclusively whence man's condemnation arises, and that it is *not of the gospel.* Men are without excuse, because they have sinned against God, and have disobeyed his law; and *not because they have rejected Christ or his gospel.* The condemnation is, that men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.

But Paul gives, in the text under consideration, the reason why the Gentiles are without excuse. "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, even his eternal power and Godhead." The invisible things of God, which from the creation of the world are clearly seen, are "his eternal power and Godhead." The very

first words of the Bible are, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The heavens and earth, then, testify to the power and supremacy of God. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no place where their voice is not heard." Such is the testimony of inspiration. God's sovereignty, omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience and wisdom all appear in the things which his hand has made. How blind, how hardened by sin must man be, when all this makes no impression upon him, and he still lives on regardless of God, neither knowing him nor desiring to know him. Yet such is the state of mankind, and in this state he will die, unless it should please God to call him by his grace, and make him alive from the dead.

Let it be noticed that Paul does not say that the pity, love or mercy of God is here revealed, neither does he say that life and immortality are brought to light here, neither is a way of redemption pointed out; but "his eternal power and Godhead." Only this was revealed, and even this they did not receive. They loved the creature more than the "Creator." They changed the image of the incorruptible God into an image made with men's hands. They did not like to retain God in their knowledge, and so were given up to work all iniquity. And this they did willingly. Men today are not only ignorant of God, but are willingly ignorant. The true born child of gospel grace feels that he is ignorant, but he is not willingly ignorant. Therefore the Gentiles could not say, "We ought not to be condemned, for we did not know any better." If they did not know any better, it was because of their own evil hearts, which hated the ways of God, and loved sin rather than holiness. God had spoken forth his eternal power and sovereignty in every thing that their eyes looked upon. Thus is every mouth stopped, and all the world is brought in guilty before God. To this rule there is no exception. Human reason cannot lead a man into the truth. "No man by searching can find out God." Human obedience cannot justify a sinner; all human righteousness is as filthy rags. So neither the Jew with his legality, nor the Greek with his wisdom, can climb to heaven. The one is dishonoring to God, the other is foolishness.

The summing up of this sublime argument of the apostle is, that God cannot be charged with foolishness or injustice in his dealings with men, and that man cannot reply against the decree of condemnation passed upon him; for no matter how many revelations God makes, nor how he speaks either to Jew or Gentile, it only serves to throw out into clearer view the blackness and deformity of the heart of man, as light reveals more clearly the darkness amid which it shines. That the Gentiles heeded not God's works around them, which showed his power and Godhead, proved that their hearts were blind and vile; and the clearer light given by Moses and the prophets to the Jews, proved that between them and the Gentiles there was no difference. And so man must admit that he is vile, and has no goodness and no light in him, and that God is just, and that he cannot excuse his sin on any ground whatever before God.

I leave these suggestions for the consideration of my unknown friend, hoping they may not darken understanding as words without knowledge.

As ever, your brother in hope,

F. A. Chick

(The above was written by Elder F. A. Chick October 16, 1878, and published November 15, 1878.)

OBITUARIES

DEACON ANDREW THOMAS DeBRULER, SR.

On November 25, 1969, God saw fit to remove from us our highly respected and beloved brother, Andrew Thomas DeBruler, Sr., who was born on April 12, 1894, making his stay

on earth 75 years.

He was born in Caswell County, N. C., the son of the late Joseph F. and Chestina Oakley DeBruler. His first wife, Bertha Tatum DeBruler, died in November, 1946. He later married Mrs. Elma Long Morton, who survives to mourn his death with the following: two daughters, Mrs. P. N. Thompson of Burlington, N. C. and Mrs. William O. Stephens of Reidsville, N. C.; three sons, Roy and Carl DeBruler of Burlington, N. C. and A. T. DeBruler, Jr. of Kings Mountain, N. C.; one brother, E. J. DeBruler, Burlington, N. C.; one stepdaughter, Mrs. Devoy Hopkins, Burlington, N. C.; one stepson, John I. Morton, Alexandria, Va.; sixteen grandchildren; three great grandchildren and five step grandchildren.

Brother DeBruler asked for a home with the church at McCray at her June, 1937 meeting and was received and baptized by his pastor, the writer of this obituary. The church called for his ordination as deacon the third Sunday in October, 1938. He also served as finance committee for the Upper Country Line Association for 23 years (1938-1961). All these positions were filled with love and loyalty to duty. He loved the cause for which he stood, believing only in salvation by grace, having been taught his own weakness and the need for mercy that God only could give. We thank God for his humble life of service to Him and to His people. May the blessings of our Heavenly Father be upon each of us who mourn his departure, and can say, "not my will but Thine be done."

By one wo loved him dearly.

W. C. King

MARY ANN RICE

It is with a sad heart that I try to write of the death of Sister Mary Ann Rice. She was born September 19, 1880 to William J. and Octavie Williams Handy.

Sister Rice died November 6, 1969, she is survived by her husband Allie M. Rice, and two brothers, Grover C. Handy, Danville, Va., Claude S. Handy of Morgantown, W. Va.

Sister Rice joined Dan River Church May 25, 1930 and was baptized the following day. She was devoted to her church, and attended services when she was able. I feel sure Sister Rice is with her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, bless His Holy name.

Written at the request of the church while in conference, Saturday night before the fourth Sunday in November, 1969.

Rosa Cox

Rest In Peace

"You are not forgotten loved one
Nor will you ever be,
As long as life and memory last
We will remember thee.

"We miss you now, our hearts are sore
As time goes by, we miss you more,
Your loving smile, your gentle face
No one can fill your vacant place."

(Poem suggested by her husband.)

MARY LOUISE HAZEN

The subject of this sketch was born March 18, 1882, and departed this life August 25, 1969. Sister Hazen was the daughter of Mr. Mac Lewis and Marie Goodwin Lewis. She was united in wedlock May 1, 1901, to Mr. J. D. Hazen, who is deceased.

She is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Myrtle H. Williams, of Lake City, Florida. Two sons are deceased: Lamar and Jay Dee Hazen. Surviving also are three grandchildren: Mrs. Betty Dennison, Truby Lamar Hazen, Jr., and Danny Hazen.

In the passing of our beloved sister in Christ, the Old School Baptist church has lost a devoted member whose memory will linger in the hearts of many of God's people pleasantly for many years. She was a member of the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, Sarasota, Florida. She traveled extensively over a part of the United States, and was widely known among the Old School Baptists.

The writer knew her many years and esteemed her highly for the truth's sake. She loved sound doctrine and the old hymns of Zion. Many years ago it was my privilege to know both Sister Hazen and her departed husband, and many hours were spent in discussing the word of God, both in their home and in our home in Virginia.

She has left evidence that she has gone home, to be forever with the Lord in whose mercies she trusted. Her funeral was conducted by Elders Donald Hazen and Dorie Thomas. Interment was in the New Hope Cemetery, Brooker, Florida.

It was her request that this sketch of her life and passing be printed in the *Signs of the Times*, of which she was a subscriber, and a believer in the doctrine set forth in its pages.

D. V. Spangler

W. C. LEE

Brother Lee died suddenly January 3, 1970, at his home in Newton, Alabama, being 67 years of age; and having lived in the same

house all his life. He was a close friend of the writer, who conducted his funeral at Bethel Baptist Church, Newton, Ala. on January 5, 1970; with interment in the local church cemetery.

Survivors are a brother, John, and a sister, Mrs. Emma Thomas; and several nieces and nephews.

J. J. Collins

MRS. NANCY C. PYNES

Sister Pynes died in Panama City, Florida, February 20, 1970, at the age of seventy. She was a devoted member of Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, Cottonwood, Alabama.

She is survived by two daughters: Mrs. S. C. Levins and Mrs. John M. Smith; two sons: Dewey J. and Louie T. Pynes; three brothers: Elder A. B. Chumney, and Joe and Bryant Chumney. Surviving also are six grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted at Smith Funeral Home Chapel, Panama City, Fla. on February 22 by Elder J. J. Collins, using as a theme, The Resurrection; with interment in Calloway Cemetery.

J. J. Collins

WILLIAM A. COLLINS

Uncle Abram, aged 95, died in a Graceville Hospital January 22, 1970, after a long illness. He was a pioneer citizen of Geneva County, Alabama, but had lived on Rt. 3, Bonifay, Florida, for some thirty years.

The writer held special services for him on the first Sunday in October for many years; and at the last of these he expressed a hope to be at Bethlehem Church once more in life. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and had been a member of the church for seventy-five years.

He is survived by two daughters: Mrs. Walter Ard and Mrs. Chester Lowery; seven sons: H. C., Ed, Ben, Howard, N. L., John T. and Charlie B. Collins. Also by three sisters: Rosie, Kate, and Welthie; two brothers: J. J. and A. C. Collins; and by twenty-seven grandchildren, fifty great grandchildren, and three great great grandchildren. He lived a wonderful life.

Funeral services were conducted at Black, Alabama, on January 25th with J. J. Collins, Otha Martin and Ralph Watford officiating.

J. J. Collins

FRANK LESLIE LAMBETH

The subject of this sketch was a retired tobacco farmer and warehouseman of the Monticello Community, Guilford County, N. C. He departed this life February 23, 1970, at the age of seventy-eight years.

He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Maggie Lambeth, and two daughters: Mrs. Edith Alexander, of Miami, Fla., and Mrs. Katherine L. Zarker, of Nashville, Tenn.; also by several grandchildren.

Though Brother Lambeth believed in the doctrine of sovereign grace, and the principles of the doctrine of the Primitive Baptist Church, he did not unite with them until the 2nd Sunday in June, 1953. He was baptized by the pastor, Elder J. W. Gilliam, the 2nd Sunday in July, 1953, and was ordained a deacon in December, 1953. He filled this office well until he was called away.

Brother Lambeth was of a quiet, lovable disposition, and delighted in talking on the Word of God — the things he believed. He was loyal to attend his church as long as he was physically able. His faith was adorned with an orderly walk and godly conversation.

He suffered for several years with an incurable disease, but was blessed to bear his sufferings with great patience; and manifested that he was reconciled to his departure. He has left evidence that his departure was to be forever with the Lord.

Funeral services were conducted from the Lambeth-Troxler Funeral Home, Greensboro, N. C. by Elder Kenneth Key and a Methodist minister, and the writer. He was laid to rest in the cemetery at Monticello Church.

D. V. Spangler

HUGH PATRICK SMOTHERS

Our departed brother, Hugh Smothers, of Reidsville, N. C., was born August 8, 1869, and departed this life in October, 1969, at the ripe age of one hundred years, and about two months. He was married to Lou Kennon Roberts, who was called away in 1949.

He is survived by the following children: Mrs. Bruce Hill, Miss Addie Smothers, Mrs. Earl McCollum, T. B. Smothers, all of Reidsville; Mrs. W. J. Lambeth and Reuben D. Smothers, of Brown Summit, N. C.; Mrs. Birch Neal, of Stokesville, N. C.; and Mrs. J. W. Everett and H. P. Smothers, of Greensboro, N. C. Surviving also are twenty-five grandchildren and seventy great grandchildren.

Brother Smothers joined the Macedonia P. B. Church July 23, 1922, and was ordained a deacon January 25, 1925. He was blessed to fill the office well. He later moved his membership to Pleasantville Church; and at the time

of his death, was a member of Monticello Church. Brother Smothers attended services at the Reidsville Church the second Sunday in May (Mother's Day) and saw his son and grandson baptized; and this was the last service he attended.

His one hundredth birthday was celebrated by a host of relatives and friends on August 8th; and he received a birthday card from President Nixon. Our brother was blessed to live an honorable life among his brethren and friends: manifesting his faith by his works. His delight was to assemble with the saints to sing and to hear the gospel preached. We believe he has departed in the triumph of that living faith, to be forever with the Lord.

His funeral was conducted from the home of his daughter, Mrs. Bruce Hill, by his Pastor, D. V. Spangler.

D. V. Spangler

LILLIE BET COLEMAN
GARRISON MASSEY

Sister Massey, a native of Alamance County, was born November 3, 1889, and expired December 27, 1969, at the age of 80. She is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Nannie Mae Compton of Route 3, Burlington, N. C., nine grandchildren and seven great grandchildren. She was the daughter of the late Jim and Sallie Lowman Coleman and married to J. Lawrence Garrison, who died in 1920, and to Bronna Massey, who died December 29, 1947.

She was a retired bookkeeper for Elmira Mills in Burlington and had served as precinct registrar for vital statistics for several years.

The church fervently feels that the manifestation of Sister Massey's faith paralleled that of Ruth. Ruth 1:16-17, "And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me." She united with Bush Arbor Church October 8, 1938. Certainly she lived, lodged, died and was buried with the people that God had given her to love, not ashamed to be called our people or to worship the God that we hope we have been given to worship. In conclusion may I say, that I feel that the death of our dear sister was precious in the sight of the Lord, who loosed her bonds of sorrows and afflictions of this life to await that heavenly call, come ye blessed of the Lord inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

The funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church December 28, 1969, by Elder Wallis A. Smith and Donald E. Smith. Burial was in the church cemetery underneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the church extend her love and sympathy to the bereaved family.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this memorial be recorded on the church records, a copy sent to her daughter and a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church in their conference Saturday, March 7, 1970.

Written by Donald E. Smith.

Elder W. Curry King, Moderator
Deacon Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

WALTER ALLEN ALDRIDGE

We, the church at Bush Arbor, bow in humble submission of Almighty God to the calling from us of our highly esteemed brother, Walter Allen Aldridge.

He was born in Caswell County, N. C. September 16, 1907, and departed this life on December 19, 1969, making his stay on earth 62 years. He was the son of the late Jeff Walter and Hattie Poteat Aldridge, and leaves to mourn his departure his wife, Lizzie Rudd Aldridge, and the following: three daughters, Mrs. Malinda King and Mrs. Ruby Jefferson of Route 1, Yanceyville, and Mrs. Janice Andrews of Graham, N. C.; one son, Loftin S. Aldridge of Route 1, Yanceyville, N. C.; five grandchildren; one great grandchild; and many friends.

Brother Aldridge united with the church at Bush Arbor when a young man. He was a veteran of World War II, a member of American Legion Post #89 at Yanceyville, N. C., a farmer and retired merchant.

He was sick for more than a year, critical for some two months. He often said that he wanted to go home and be with God. He was a most patient sufferer. His funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Church on Sunday, December 21, and his body laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

RESOLVED, First, that the Church at Bush Arbor extend our heartfelt sympathy to his wife and children and that His grace may be sufficient for you to say, "not my will but Thine be done." Second, that a copy of this be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, a copy be sent to the family, and a copy be spread on our church record book.

Done by order of Bush Arbor Church in conference at her meeting March 7, 1970.

W. C. King, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT FOR SISTER MARY GRIFFIN

Trusting to be led by the divine spirit of our Lord, I will endeavor to pen down a few lines in memory of my dear great aunt and our beloved sister, Sister Mary Magalene Roberson Griffin. Aunt Mary entered this life on May 5, 1886, and was called from our midst on December 1, 1969, thus her sojourn upon this earth was 83 years, 6 months, and 25 days. She was the daughter of the late Jim and Nancy Graves Roberson, and widow of the late John L. Griffin. She was a native of Martin County, N. C., where she spent almost all her life.

Aunt Mary united with the church at Skewarkey the second Saturday in July, 1941, thus holding membership a little over 28 years. It was the writer's privilege, and indeed a privilege, to be blessed to walk closely with our dear sister throughout the latter years of her life. I was blessed to visit her many times, especially during her declining years, and was blessed to hear our beloved sister express in her conversation from time to time her hope in the surety of the precious and sweet promises of God to his unworthy children — a true manifestation of the strong faith that was anchored in her heart and soul, — a gift that comes only from God. She felt to be unworthy and possessed a sincere spirit of humbleness and meekness — truly an evidence of her dependence upon God for his mercy and grace. She was blessed to stand fast in the faith until the end, although due to afflictions she was unable to attend her meetings regularly in the last few years.

Surviving are a brother, Church Roberson of Greenville, several nieces and nephews, great nieces and nephews, and a host of friends who have been most dutiful to her throughout the years.

Her funeral was conducted in the Skewarkey Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder E. C. Harrison. Interment was in the Skewarkey Church Cemetery beneath an array of beautiful flowers.

Aunt Mary was the last surviving member of five dear sisters who composed the Skewarkey Church when I asked for a home there 11 years ago. Although I hope to be reconciled to the passing of our dear sisters to their haven of rest, there was indeed a consolation and inspiration in their guiding hand that I yearned for from time to time — now there exists an empty spot. May it be the will of our God to bless me to stand fast in the doctrine and order that these and many others stood for at this place these many years, is my prayer in Christ's name.

RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to *"Zion's Landmark," "Old Faith Contender"* and *"Signs of the Times"*; a copy be sent to the family; and a copy be placed on the church records.

Done by order of conference the second Saturday in December, 1969.

Written by one who loved her, a great nephew and brother in Christ I hope.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Johnny Ray Gardner, Committee

ANNIE HILL GLENN

Annie Lee Hill Glenn was born in Orange County, North Carolina on February 18, 1890. the daughter of Duncan Hill and Virginia Elizabeth Glenn Hill. She died March 27, 1969. She married James Roger Glenn who preceded her in death. To them were born six children: Mrs. Virginia Elizabeth Addison, Mrs. Lucille Choate, Miss Norma Glenn, Mrs. Annie Lee Mannon, Ervin Glenn, and Jack Glenn, now deceased. In addition to ther five surviving children she leaves eight grandchildren, two great grandchildren, and a sister, Lorena Hill Hopson. Her funeral was conducted at Clements Funeral Chapel in Durham, N. C. by Elder Wallis Smith and her body was interred at Maplewood Cemetery.

Sister Glenn was received into the fellowship of Durham Primitive Baptist Church on August 21, 1927. She remained a faithful member of this church through severe afflictions and adversities. She possessed a gentle, loving disposition which had great influence among her children and brethren. For many years she was confined to her home by illness, but the Lord gave her faith and strength to endure the afflictions through which she was called to pass.

She willingly gave her support to her church in every way she could. In 1969, when it became necessary for the Durham Church to move to another location and erect a new building, she said she was thankful that God had enabled her and spared her long enough to contribute to the building of this house. Though she did not live to see its completion her children have since shown many kindnesses to her church. She especially loved the songs of Zion, and one of her favorites was "Approach My Soul the Mercy Seat —" and she was overheard softly singing this hymn while on her bed of affliction.

The Durham Church feels the loss of this quiet, loyal member whose faith was proved by her works and whose chief interest in this world was the Lord and his people, but we acknowledge the sovereignty and love of God — both in the giving and the taking of this lovely jewel of His mercy.

Submitted in love and respect,
Catherine M. Copley

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 138 DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1970 NO. 6

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/70
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

COMFORTED IN THEIR CORRESPONDENCE

Rt. 1
Martin, Tenn.

Mrs. Lucille Young
Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Sister Young:

I was much comforted in reading your letter. Oh, why do we exchange our groanings to each other? Is it evidence that the Lord is gracious to poor sinners such as I?

Your writings were not strange words at all. When we are made to seek a city whose builder and maker is God, for a small moment all things are beautiful. We have to be brought into the depths of misery before we can beg for mercy. Do we not cling to everything in nature just as long as God allows? No wonder the poet could say, "I am a stranger here below, and what I am 'tis hard to know." I just don't know myself. I have to be cast into the lap of mercy, and the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord. Our heritage here is afflictions, poverty, persecution and hated of all men for Christ's sake — a little flock, and our name cast out as evil; not reckoned among the nations: a peculiar people with doubts, fears and temptations. But the promise is that we shall one day be conquerors through Him that loved us before time began. He came into this world to suffer, bleed and die for you, and I hope for me.

Peter tells us to give diligence to make our calling and election sure. To whom do we make it sure? Surely not to the great I Am, for he knows our thoughts afar; so it must be to the brethren. When you hear them speak of such heavenly things, doesn't it touch a tender spot? having such confidence in their walk and conversation; for their talk and walk is not of the flesh, for we have no confidence in this old flesh. To me these are the things which are not put under a bushel and hidden when a few of the broken family of God are permitted to meet by the grace and love of the One who showed us our many sins, which, as you said, roll up before us like waves of the mighty deep. But, Oh, how gracious, "Where sin abounds, grace does much more abound."

My trials are many, and my loneliness seems more than I can bear. (Sister Jones lost her dear companion last year.) I think of the blessed Saviour when he went to the garden of Gethsemane alone. Did those disciples think as you and I do sometimes, that they could help Jesus? They could not even stay awake one hour! Did they answer Jesus when he came and asked, "Could you not watch with me one hour?" or were they like Peter when the cock crew, and Jesus looked on him? All Peter could do was to weep bitterly. Are these some of your experiences, Lucille?

It has to be the Lord of glory to keep me, for with sadness I realize that destruction, misery and woe would quickly be my fall. The world would have us believe that trusting in the Lord is easy; but not so, for the flesh

is all guilty. I well remember one night I toiled all night, and just before dawn I was comforted with the words, "I am he that was dead but am alive forever more." All the poor sinner has here for comfort is to be made to stand still and see the salvation of our Lord. He gives us everything, — every good and perfect gift comes from the Father of light. How tender is his mercy that makes us hunger and thirst after his righteousness — and his promise is, You shall be filled. Do you need anything else?

"He gave me a will to accept what he gave,
Though I was averse to his purpose to save;
He wrote in his will my repentance and faith,
And all my enjoyments for life and for death.

My trials and sorrows, my conflicts and cares,
The spirit of prayer, and the answer of prayers,
The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will."

I hope that I can ever be kept at your feet, feeling that you do not have to look up to see this poor sinner while we have to stay in this low ground of sorrow. May it be the Father's will to keep us in his tender care, ever mindful of us that we go along in peace with one another.

. . . It was good news that both Brother Richard and Swayne were given liberty to comfort you all last Sunday. Aren't the wills and shalls of our God sound and durable when Jesus is preached? It cures everything, and somebody is prepared to hear it.

In bonds of love,
Asinath Jones

THE BRAZEN SERPENT

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3:14, 15)

This portion of scripture and the background of it, contains such a depth of meaning, such a scope of divine truth that it does seem presumptious for one so unskilled as I even to comment on it; but it has been much on my mind for several weeks and I can't seem to get rid of it. This morning, sitting here alone, while the snow falls fast and the wind howls outside, I feel constrained to make the effort. Whether I shall write anything worth reading, only the Lord knows.

The subject of my comments was the words of Jesus, and it should be noted at the outset that He spoke of himself as the Son of Man. We know He was and is both the Son of God and the Son of Man, but here it was in consideration of himself as the Son of Man that He spoke.

The text takes us to the Old Testament and to the beautiful and almost innumerable types of our Lord Jesus Christ found there. The reference here is to the wilderness experience of the Israelites, and is recorded in the 21st chapter of Numbers, verses 5 to 9 incl. Here, as on so many occasions, the people, "A mixed multitude," on the journey from Egypt to the promised land, complained bitterly against God and against Moses, saying he had brought them out into the wilderness to die; that there was no bread, no water, "and our souls loatheth this light bread," referring to the manna God had sent from heaven for their sustenance. This "mixed multitude" had so soon forgotten their divine deliverance from Egyptian bondage and all the suffering and oppression it had entailed; so soon they had forgotten their miraculous crossing the Red Sea; so soon they had forgotten the divine protection by day and by night as they journeyed. Oh, how soon we, too, forget the past goodness and mercy of God when faced with what appears to be an insurmountable problem!

The Lord was displeased with their complaints and He sent fiery serpents among them, which bit the people and "many of them died." This brought them to Moses in confession — to Moses a clear type of our Lord Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, our Intercessor; and begged Moses to pray unto the

Lord to take the serpents away. How often it takes a dire calamity, a sudden blow to bring us to a realization of our miserable ingratitude for all God's manifold mercies; to confess to Him and beg for yet more mercy! But our gracious, wise Heavenly Father knows exactly when, where and how to inflict the necessary blow. And Moses prayed! The Lord heard the prayer, and instructed him to make a fiery serpent and set it upon a pole; so Moses made a Serpent of Brass and set it upon a pole, and it came to pass that if the serpent bit a man, when he beheld the Serpent of Brass, he did not die — he lived.

It would seem strange that the very thing that bit them was required to take away the effects of the bites, to draw away the resultant poison, but therein lies the glorious truth hidden from the wise and prudent, but revealed unto babes. We believe the serpent here represents Satan, the perpetrator of sin; the bite represents the deadly effects of sin on all the Adamic race, for all are partakers of sin. But how could beholding the serpent counteract the poison? and why must the serpent Moses made be of brass instead of wood, lead, clay, or any other material? and why must it be set upon a pole? All of these things are highly typical and they point to another pole — a wooden cross on which the Prince of Glory must be crucified.

Wherever brass is mentioned in the Bible, it is typical of judgment, or condemnation. For instance, the brazen altar in the tabernacle was the altar of sacrifice, type of the cross on which Jesus was made a sacrifice for sin; the laver of brass, a vessel holding water for washing the hands and feet of the priests after serving at the altar and before going into the holy place. It is significant that although the sacrifice had been made for sin on the brazen altar, their hands and feet must be cleansed before going into the holy place. What a beautiful picture of the cleansing from the defilement of our sins. Sin and its devastating effects must be dealt with, condemned, before eternal life, before reconciliation to God is made possible. Beholding a leaden, ciay or wooden serpent would have had no life sustaining effect, even in a typical sense, but the *Brazen Serpent,* typifying sin judged (condemned) meant to one who beheld it, complete nulification of any effects of the bite.

Now, to the glorious fulfillment of the type in Christ Jesus, our Lord. He, too, must be lifted up, that any who beheld him there in condemnation for *their* sin, would have eternal life. But wherein does Jesus fulfill the type? He was not the antitype of Satan, for in no sense was Satan ever a type of Christ. Jesus had not inflicted the bite of death upon anyone! To answer this, we must go deeper and ask what, actually, was under condemnation as Jesus hung on the cross. Was it Jesus, himself, the spotless Lamb of God, in whose mouth was found no guile; who when he was reviled, reviled not again; who hated sin with all the intensity of His holy nature, yet prayed for them who despitefully used Him? Was it this Jesus who was under the condemnation of God? I believe not. I believe it was actually sin itself that was under condemnation. But the Apostle Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 5:21, "For He (God) hath made him (Jesus) to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him (Jesus)." How unspeakably lovely is this statement, and how far beyond the realm of human comprehension! But it explains, as far as the human mind — even the regenerated mind, can grasp, how Christ is some mysterious way known only to the mind of deity, was made *to be* sin, therefore able to take upon himself all the vengeance of an offended, holy God; and as we behold Him there, we are forever free from condemnation. Oh, how I love those words "forever free."

In this connection, as I write, something comes to my mind which I never saw before and I don't recall hearing,

and it is very beautiful to me: Paul tells in Romans 8, "God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin (as an offering for sin) condemned sin in the flesh." I had always interpreted this to mean that it was in our experience, in our "dying daily" that God condemns sin in our flesh; but at this moment I see it in a larger, fuller sense: that it was in the flesh of His beloved Son on the cross that sin was condemned and *put away* by the shedding of His own blood. Of course, there is a sense in which our sins are condemned as we are cleansed from the defilement of sins, but there is a distinction between *sin* and *sins*, and Paul did say sin, and he did say "condemned" (past tense). It is in our sins that the type of the laver of brass comes in. Both blood and water flowed from the side of our dear Redeemer as He poured out his life for our redemption and salvation," — blood for the remission of *sin;* water for cleansing us from the defilement of *sins*.

These things are deep: they are too great for me, but how very lovely is even a glimpse of the hidden truth here and there along our journey! What a wealth of truth and revelation lies hidden in the pages of this Book of Books, the written word! Oh, that He may be pleased to give us seeking minds and hearts, a burning desire to know more of Him who fills every chapter and verse of this greatest of all books; and to search this Book for a glimpse of Him. I echo again and again the lovely words of the hymnist, "Show me the truth concealed, within Thy Word; and in Thy Blood Revealed, I see the Lord."

I think I have not been able to bring out a great deal of the depth and beauty I see in this Scripture, but I've done what I could with what ability was given me. I would not and do not dare to deny that the Lord has graciously shown me many things. To do that would, I believe, be to deny my adorable Saviour just as surely as Peter did when he declared, "I know not this man." Oh, how we need His love, mercy and grace! I am comforted, strengthened and sustained by the promise "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Jesus Christ." This promise was given to me in an immediate answer to a specific prayer in September, 1941, about ten days prior to the call of Salisbury Church, of which I was not at that time a member, to Elder Spangler for her pastor. Now, after nearly thirty years: that He has abundantly fulfilled that promise; that He is today fulfilling it; that I believe He will yet fulfill it, is the solemn testimony, sworn to and sealed before God, published and declared before men of one who, though a sinner and the least of all saints, was beloved of the Father for Christ's sake.

Mildred V. Dykes
1114 Mt. Hermon Road
Salisbury, Maryland

DID HE DIE IN VAIN?

2605 Layfayette Ave.
Greensboro, N. C. 27405

Dear Editors:

The time for renewing my subscription to the *Signs of the Times* is past due, for which I am sorry. I am sending my check in the amount of $7.00 for two years.

I do not know whether I am a child of God or not, but I have a little hope I am. Most of the time this hope seems small, and I seem to have so little evidence that I feel it is mockery for me to claim a hope. The best way I know to express it is, I hope that I have a hope.

"God, so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should never perish but have everlasting life." Was God offering salvation to everyone who would, of his own accord, believe in him? I say, no. If that were true, no one could be saved, because no one can believe in God unless God first reveals himself to him through His Son Jesus

Christ. This belief is the gift of God and cannot be obtained in any other way. Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." If any man would enter in in any other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

Dear Child of God, Jesus died to save you from your sins. Did he die in vain? Of course not! He has already saved everyone that the Father gave him before the beginning of the world.

God the Father and God the Son are one, and possess all the power both in Heaven and in Earth. That being true, where is your power? You do not have any power at all except it be given you from God the Father through his Son Jesus Christ. Even the power to think or to breathe must come from him. O how weak and helpless we are! but thanks be unto His holy name, no one is able to pluck one out of his hands.

May the Lord who is rich and full of grace and truth, be with you all.

A brother in hope,
J. M. (Jake) Denny

Dallas, Texas

Signs of the Times,

Dear Brethren:

My subscription expires in February so am enclosing a check to cover another year. Use the balance in any way.

The January issue is a wonderful beginning for the New Year; all the reading material used is good. Thanks to everyone who has part in publishing this periodical. We are so blest to have it.

In bonds of love to all,
Pearl Lee

COMFORTED BY WRITINGS

Rt. 2, Box 134
Meadows of Dan, Va.

To
Elder W. D. Griffin,
c/o *Signs of the Times*

A beloved witness chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and called at the appointed time by the Holy Spirit. I would like to greet you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, telling you through the *Signs,* how much you have comforted me in your writings in this paper, especially the latest on Revelation 2:18-29.

It is sad to the natural eye to behold these things going on in the professed Old School Baptists, and without the merciful hand of God I would be among it also. But God led me out with a strong arm, laying his rod on my back, supplying his staff to lean on and blessed me to sing the song of Moses and the children of Israel, as recorded in Exodus 15th chapter. Blessed be his dear name forever and ever, for there is no other God like my God.

You spoke of enduring hatred for the things you stand for. My brother, you are not alone. I know it's not popular among some Baptists today, to stand for the truth. But God is the one doing the standing in his witnesses, so I desire to give him all the praise, honor and glory. I have a hope that some bright morning we will be in that number that have not received the mark of the beast, but among the ones you spoke of who have overcome through Jesus Christ, — whom, I believe, I saw die on the tree, and opened a channel of mercy to me. I had a dream not long ago that I was going to be put to death for the things I was standing for; and the blessed part was that I was not afraid.

Now, Elder Griffin, may you be enabled to overcome through the Lord Jesus Christ; to stand and blow the trumpet in Zion, and declare the gospel to His little sheep, — the ones who hear His voice and will not follow after another. And may you say in the end, "I have fought a good fight, and am now ready to be offered." I feel there is a crown laid up for you, and all that love the gospel.

Will you allow me to say, "Your little sister in Christ Jesus," although I feel

to be a poor, wayfaring pilgrim much despised by the world.

Mrs. Lewis (Paulene) Spencer

P. S.: Enclosed is $10.00, please renew my subscription for two years. Use the other as you see fit.

"OH, FOR A CLOSER WALK WITH HIM!"

Rt. 2, Box 30
Snyder, Texas 79549

Signs of the Times,
Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a check to renew my subscription to the *Signs*: the dearest publication to ever enter the Post Office. They come laden with news of an all-wise, all powerful God, who spoke the world into existence, and created and formed all things therein without the help of puny man. I desire to be thankful, and try in my weak way to worship such a wonderful God. Oh, for a closer walk with Him!

I have a desire to relate a few precious experiences that I feel have been the dealings of the Lord with me. When about fourteen years of age, in a dream I sat at the top of a ladder and viewed heaven with its resplendent beauty, and saw a host of angels singing praises unto God. And, Oh, I desired to join in with them, but felt so unworthy to be seen. I believe I heard Brother John invite me to join them, but I couldn't. If not greatly deceived, I heard the blessed Saviour assure me that I was a child of God, and will one day at his appointed time, join that host to sing praises forever more. Oh, blessed assurance!

Once I attended a dance, and on my way home I had a strange feeling, and was made to realize I had sinned. I said, "Lord if you will forgive me, I won't dance again," — and I haven't. A few years later I started attending moving picture shows, feeling all the time I shouldn't, and was so condemned, and promised, as I did attending the dance, that if the Lord would forgive me I would not attend again; and I haven't. I had the same experience in attending a football game.

But, dear brethren, I do things daily that are wrong, and have to ask the dear Lord for forgiveness; and we are made to realize that His grace is sufficient to cover all our sins. Chastisements are not pleasant at the time they are administered, but we are taught that without chastisements we are bastards, and not sons. Knowing this is true, we can glory in them. I could relate many more experiences of how the Lord has dealt with me, but will not take up more of your time, as you receive lots of letters to be read that are more inspiring and uplifting.

I have read a great number of back issues of the *Signs* while housed in this winter, and have enjoyed rich spiritual blessings while reading them. I have read so many editorials through the years that I know each writer before I reach the close of the article. I have been blessed to meet each Editor and their wives, except Brother and Sister Ruston; and I long to meet them.

May God richly bless you dear editors to publish the *Signs* many more years to come, and give you wisdom and understanding to continue to write of this ever-loving God that I try, in my weak way, to worship and adore from day to day. And may He bless all the writers, and those who believe in his holy name, is my humble prayer.

A little sister in a sweet hope,
Mrs. J. P. Madding

FEELING POOR IN SPIRIT IS FOLLOWED BY REJOICING

807 Pope Street
Memphis, Tenn. 38112

Dear Editors:

Seeing that I am so very poor in spirit, and unable to express myself in suitable words that might be edifying or comforting to God's people, I have

neglected to send in my remittance; so am sending check for two years — the balance to be used as needed.

I am sending two letters which brought me comfort. And as I meditate over the rich words penned in these letters, I am made glad — made to believe that of a truth I do know the joyful sound. And as my mind continues along this line, I'm made again to believe and remember times when my soul was lifted high and rejoiced under the sound of the gospel preached; and I have thought of what the apostle said about the preaching of the gospel: That the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God. He also said that we preach Christ crucified, and to the Jews it was a stumbling block, — but here is what gives me sweet comfort at times, "But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

So even though my soul is cast down within me, and I feel so poor in spirit, I cannot deny that *I do believe* I have heard the gospel preached in the Spirit, and did rejoice exceedingly, believing it indeed was the power of God and the wisdom of God. This is my comfort this morning. The same apostle said that he reckoned the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the things laid up for God's people.

Sometimes my mind falters greatly as I use us, ye, and we, believing they are directed to and include God's children. Unless the hope and feeling is that I am included in these pronouns, there is no comfort. It is only when we find our inner experiences coinciding with the ones we are reading that we are comforted.

As I thought on these things this morning, I have been comforted. How kind and gracious the Lord is to his poor, weak, afflicted children! We complain, murmur, and many times are rebellious; yet in due time He sends the Comforter to remind us of his promise that, "My loving kindness I will not utterly take from them . . . I will never leave nor forsake them." The waves of trouble may roll high but will not overflow: the flames shall not hurt them; the darkness they may be in does not hide them from Him, nor hinder his comforting Spirit when it pleased Him to send it. He knows there are things they must learn in their troubles that they could not learn anywhere else.

Such wisdom is too much — too high, I cannot attain unto it; but my soul rejoices in it. I thank God for these few hours this morning. Maybe I will go for a few days at least on the strength of it; or perhaps it will vanish mysteriously as it came, and I will be as before. Whichever it be must be right. My mind and heart goes out in prayer to God for all those here among us whose health is poor and troubles and afflictions of many kinds abide. May God in his rich mercy and loving kindness go to the hearts of each one and comfort them with His presence, — supplying their needs as he well knows how.

In humble prayerful hope,
Mrs. J. E. (Lucille) Young

APPRECIATE THEIR ELDERS

203 Line Street
Farmerville, La. 71241

Dear Editors:

I see that it is time to renew my subscription for the *Signs of the Times*, which I am glad to do; so please renew for two years, using the rest for the Indigent Fund.

If not deceived, I can truly say I enjoy reading the experiences of some of God's little children. We are not all blessed to have the same kind of experiences, neither are we blessed with the same gifts: some are gifted to preach, some to sing, etc.

The Lord opens the scriptures unto us, giving us understanding. The secret things belong unto the Lord, but re-

vealed things unto His children. I may not be one of God's little ones, but have a little hope sometimes that I am.

I would like to say we are blessed to live where we can go to church every weekend, — Liberty Hill on the 2nd and 4th weekends; Good Hope on the 1st, and Union on the 3rd. If not deceived we have some of the best preachers there are: Elders Hudson, Smith, Turner and Jones. I wonder sometimes if we really appreciate these gifts the Lord has so wonderfully blessed us with.

May the Lord richly bless the Editors and all who have part in publishing the *Signs of the Times.*

Your brother,
Eugene Patterson

THINGS PART OF THE MINISTRY

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountain of waters."

(Rev. 14:6, 7)

I have had people ask me, What is the gospel? and I wonder if some of our own ministers know why it is preached. I now, if the Lord is willing, go to other scriptures to point out the purpose of the gospel being preached; and also things that are part of the ministry. "As much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are in Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth: to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." (Romans 1:15, 16)

I believe with all my heart, that Jesus Christ is all of our salvation, and every time the gospel is preached, Jesus is preached effectually to the ones that are given to receive it; and the ones that receive the gospel obey the gospel according to the faith that has been given them. I realize that the gospel is glad tidings, or good news from a far country; but to comfort the Lord's people is not by any means all that is contained in the work of the ministry. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (Matthew 28:19, 20) We see that teaching is part of the ministry.

"This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto man. But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and striving about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject, knowing that he that is such is subverted and sinneth, being condemned of himself." (2 Titus 3:8-10)

The things contained in the ministry are: to comfort, instruct, admonish, exhort, and to warn the flock of God. And all of this is the work of the Holy Ghost: God working both to will and to do of his good pleasure. No part of our salvation is conditional. God speaks and it is done, and commands and it stands fast.

"This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandments of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour." (2 Peter 3:1, 2)

"Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though you know them, and be established in the present truth.

Yea I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me." (2 Peter 1:12-14)

Here we see that it is needful that the ministry be moved by the Holy Ghost to stir up the pure minds of the brethren in a way of remembrance. I have no patience with a doctrine that is preached and used as an excuse to do wrong. "If we say that we have fellowship with Him (Jesus) and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John 1:6, 7) It is good for us to have knowledge to know that we cannot live just any way, and yet feast on the joys of salvation, or have fellowship with God.

"I rejoice greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father." (2 John 1:4) I agree with John; and the evidence that we know the truth, is that we do walk in truth; and love to do so.

I believe that Satan knows that God has power over all things; and he can quote scripture to the letter; but there is one thing that he cannot do, and this is, he cannot love God, or the people of God. Satan cannot know the joy of salvation; neither can he nor any of his children, know what it is to feel to be the greatest of all sinners. Only those born again can feel their sinful depravity: they are the only ones that ever seek the Lord with all their hearts.

I do hope that what I have written will be of comfort to someone.

Dear Elder Wood, I hope you and Sister Wood are well. You may do with this as you see fit.

Yours in bonds,
(Elder) James R. Hollandsworth

CONTAINS MUCH FOOD

1400 East State Line
Fulton, Ky. 42041

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

My wife and I both enjoy the writings in the *Signs* so much. We feel it is the true gospel, and contains much food for God's people.

The writers in the dear *Signs* set forth Jesus Christ and him crucified; and that He is the way, the truth, and the life, and that there is no other way in heaven or among the inhabitants of the earth by which we are saved. For it is through the love and mercy of our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ and not of works lest any man should boast; but is truly a gift from our Heavenly Father.

Enclosed you will find $4.00 for the renewal of our subscription.

Yours in hope,
Burch P. Moon

"HE SHALL SAVE HIS PEOPLE"

"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21)

Was this child born in vain? For today they say he wants to save you if you will just let him, but the Bible does not read this way, it says he *shall* save his people. No maybe or if about it, but he shall save them. To my mind this shall is a promise made before the foundation of the world. Because the word shall means a promise.

To explain the part before the foundation of the world: Eph. 1:4, 5, "According as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." With predestinate meaning to ordain beforehand by an unchangeable pur-

pose; and the foundation is first part of anything.

We now have shown what He came to do, but did he do it? John 17:12: "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled." With this, one can see that not one of his children was lost then or now.

John 6:44: "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." After reading this I would like for one to tell me how can I go to Jesus on my own will and be accepted by him, when he has said no man can come to me except by the Father, and also that no man can come unto the Father except by him (Jesus). So I would like to know how a weak man can have the power to refuse to be drawn by the Father, or make the Father draw him.

Yes, I go along with the part that man is saved by good work. But not by good work done by man, but the good work that the Lord works through him. For God works everything here on earth. It is not in man to work his own salvation, for if it were, man never would. Because man's own sinful nature would keep him from it.

Some people today say that man can be saved today but lost tomorrow. This seems hard for me to believe because God referred to his children as sheep and unelect as goats. And by all points of nature, you cannot take a goat and make a sheep out of him or take a sheep and make a goat out of him. So be lost today and saved tomorrow and be lost again the next day, just does not have any proof in the Bible; or natural proof. Eph. 1:4 says, "According as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Which means that everyone of his children were chosen before the foundation of the world and their names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Their Salvation already being worked out before the forming of the world.

In his own language, Jesus referred to the children of God as the elect. Elect meaning those chosen to eternal life by Divine Sovereignty. When one is elected it is not by him but by God. As an example, when one is elected to office here on earth it is not of his power but by the people. And God's election is the same but he is the whole popular vote.

No, Jesus did not come in vain; he fulfilled the scripture when he died upon the cross and arose again. He said it is finished and I believe that everyone of his children's salvation was finished upon his death on the cross. Each and everyone he died for shall be housed in Heaven, and not one of them being lost along the way.

I hope that I am one of those elect and I hope I believe in the truth, but for me to say I know I believe the truth would set me up as a judge of what is wrong and right. If man was able to declare he knew the truth he would also be able to know he was a child of God. Why would one say this? Well, man knows nothing that is not given by the Lord. Job 8:9 says "For we are but of yesterday and know nothing because our days upon earth are a shadow."

Some of our people want to down the other people of the world for their belief. Yet the Old School Baptists say that everything is predestinated. So those people are just fulfilling their appoinment here on earth. We believe everyone believes what he believes because he cannot help what he believes.

If saved it is by grace alone,
James W. McCool

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The *Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association* will convene with Malmaison Church, the Lord willing, Friday before the second Sunday in July and continue three days: July 10, 11, and 12, 1970.

Malmaison Church is located on Highway 726, about 8 miles N. E. of Danville, Va., in Pittsylvania County. Visitors coming from all directions should travel Highway 29, where markers will be placed at the intersection with Highway 726.

All lovers of the truth as set forth by the Primitive or Old School Baptists are cordially invited.

Burnell B. Williams, Clerk

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the *Skewarkey Union* was appointed to be held with the Kehukee Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in May, 1970. Elder B. D. Handy was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder E. C. Harrison, alternate.

The church is located about one mile from Scottland Neck, N. C. just off Highway 125. We cordially invite all to come and worship with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Clerk
Rt. 2
Williamston, N. C. 27892

APPOINTMENTS FOR
ELDER W. D. GRIFFIN

Elder W. D. Griffin, of Newark, Delaware, is expected to fill the following appointments:

Durham Primitive Baptist Church, Thursday night, June 4th.

Dan River Church, Friday night, June 5th.

Bush Arbor, Saturday night, June 6th.

Monticello, regular service Sunday, June 7th, at 11 A. M.

Greensboro, for afternoon service, June 7th.

Elder Griffin is well known among our people and esteemed highly as a minister. We hope our people will make a special effort to hear him.

D. V. Spangler

Danville, Virginia **June, 1970**

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EDITORIAL

IS ADMONITION COMPATIBLE WITH GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY?

There is some questioning in the minds of some of our correspondents as to whether admonition (gospel) is part of the doctrine of God our Saviour; whether admonition is compatible with the Sovereignty of God and His working all things after the counsel of His own will.

Our understanding and position is that both are plainly taught in the Scriptures, and we feel there will be no questioning when both are properly understood. Old School Baptists have always taught and believed this, for the Lord preached it and the writers of the Epistles and the servants of God through the ages have continually admonished the brethren. Read Christ's Sermon on the Mount and the 12th chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans, for examples of their preaching.

We would like to consider both of these points, as the Lord may direct, both to let the brethren know how we understand the matter, and to answer some of the questions which have been propounded at various times.

There has never been any question with us as to what the Apostle taught in the 8th chapter of Romans: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose." And continued, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" Then he listed every conceivable thing which might be considered to oppose them, but which could not separate them from the love of Christ.

So it is evident that all things are under the control of God; and we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

To the Ephesians the Apostle wrote, "In whom we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who *worketh all things* after the counsel of his own will." This, together with all things written by the prophets and Apostles concerning the power and sovereignty of God, leaves us without doubt as to God's sovereignty in the redemption of His people, and as to all things being under his immediate control to accomplish His will. These things we believe implicitly, or we deny there is a God at all.

It is evident that all our pathway in this life is laid out in God's will; that His unseen presence and power leads, directs, controls and protects so that our living and dying are precisely in the bounds of His sovereignty. We believe that all events are in His hands, so that all things are working together to bring His elect people into the world — every one of them; and He, in his own time and way, brings them to the knowledge of the truth, causes them to be born of the Spirit, and gives them sure evidence that He is their God and Saviour; and they are his people. This, we understand, is the purpose He has for all things. It is not the world He is concerned about in its eventuality, but His people who are in the world;

and to their salvation and redemption He directs all his purposes.

Concerning this we will be understood to hold that the church, composed of individual members, is His overall concern; and that no event or circumstance in the time world can possibly prevent their salvation nor their being conformed to the image of His Son; for this is as sure and certain as God himself. To this end He has announced himself: "I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people."

The Scriptures, being God's word, are an accurate account of God's dealings with his people: How they fell into disobedience and condemnation along with all the Adamic posterity; and how He promised their redemption through the Seed of the Woman. It is shown that not the whole of the Adamic family is included in the redemption, for it is stated by the Apostle in Romans, quoting from Genesis concerning God's word, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." Which he followed with, "That is, they which are the children of the flesh are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." (See also the account by the Apostle in the same 9th chapter of Romans concerning Jacob and Esau.)

The Scriptures show that God gave the law at the hands of Moses, and that none could keep it. Yet many seem to hold that God gave this law in order that man, by keeping the law, could redeem himself. But this is contrary to all the facts pertaining to redemption.

We conclude with the Apostle Paul, that the law entered that the offense might abound, since he said that when the commandment came to him, sin revived and he died. So the law was not intended to give life, but rather to show that all are condemned in sin. In Romans 3:20, he wrote, "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

It is shown in the Scriptures through many types and shadows, that God *had provided* already for his people's redemption. These types were all perfectly fulfilled in the coming of the Son of God into the world, and His keeping the law for those the Father gave him: — God having chosen them in His Son before the world began; so that by his death and resurrection and ascension into heaven, complete reconciliation with the Father was made, and the children were fitted and prepared for their eternal inheritance in heaven; and are now being kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, as the Apostle Peter gives us to understand.

The foregoing being true, we are to consider the purpose of the church in the world, and the preaching of the gospel unto them. When all things are focused to the conclusion, it is for the purpose of comforting the sheep and lambs: the people of God. It is not for the purpose of imparting the Spirit to anyone: it is not for the purpose of making Christians, for God has already taken care of that in his loving them and choosing them, sending forth His Spirit into their hearts, bringing them out of darkness of their natures into the marvelous light of the Son of God: thus revealing unto them that He is their God and that they are His people.

The church, then, is composed of all that the Father gave unto his Son before the foundation of the world; and all of these the Son came into the world and redeemed. The true church is composed of those who have been taught the same things, and are, therefore, all of like precious faith; and to these the writers of the Scriptures addressed their epistles. Many of these are not brought into the visible, organized church in the world to partake of the ordinances. Just why this is true, is hidden with God; but it is evident that all are not, for we know that many have testified of their hope and faith who are without question members of *the Church* without being identified openly with the visible church. Upon their testimony we cannot but have love and

fellowship for them since they have the same witness within that others have.

After his resurrection Jesus said to the eleven, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

The experience of every chosen one gives the reason of the hope which is in him, and is the evidence of God's dealings with him; and evidences his spiritual birth. In these things the Scriptures are confirmed in him as being of God and true; for the Spirit testifies both in the Scriptures and in him. Thus he is familiar with the weaknesses of all of the saints in their experiences, and with their rejoicings when the grace and mercy of God is manifested to them. He knows how weak he is in his flesh, yet he knows there is something in himself which causes him to know and love the truth, and to desire to walk in the truth. These are not ignorant people — though they may be counted as such because they cannot conform to the notions of men in religious matters, for they have been taught something, being subjects of God's revelation of deep matters above and beyond the wisdom of this world. And these things are reflected or shown in their walk and conversation. They are familiar with and love the things which Jesus commanded his disciples to teach, and by the grace of God are made receptive to the admonitions and commands given them through the Holy Spirit. God has written his laws in their hearts and put them in their minds, so that when the Spirit utters the commands and admonitions in them directly or through the servants of the Lord, it is like Jeremiah's "fire shut up in his bones," their every desire is that they be enabled by God's grace to walk in them. **All these things are through the Spirit both in application and effect.** They are not conditional in any sense, for both the giver, the Spirit, and the ones admonished are in the same hands and under the same power and authority; **so that all things are accomplished according to the will and purpose of God from the beginning.** Thus these things are not Arminian in any sense of the word.

How well I remember that in my early ministry, one of our deacons in questioning me to find out just what I thought on many subjects, said to me, "Brother John, sometimes when you do not feel like preaching, why don't you admonish the brethren?" My reply was that I believed admonition comes from the same source that preaching does. This is what he wanted me to say, for in this reply he fully concurred. This has always been my understanding on the subject, and I have found on several occasions, both in my own experience and in others, that when admonition has been given through the Spirit (without design or studied intention) it has had its effect. All will agree that sometimes while reading the Scriptures something (which can be nothing but the Spirit of God,) makes application of the written word in the heart; or it may be while listening to someone preach; or come suddenly with great power when not thinking of such things. Such is the way God deals with his people. No wonder the apostle wrote, "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness."

I have many times considered admonition as given by the Saviour and the writers of the Epistles, in its relationship to the purposes of God, and I have been brought to this understanding: **that one will not be benefitted by admonition unless the Spirit of the Lord is with both the one admonishing and the one admonished. In other words, one cannot of himself either admonish or be admonished to the effectual purpose of admonition.**

I remember a brother, long since dead, who had remained away from his meetings, due to some misunderstand-

ing, for about twenty years; but finally came one morning. When I was about finished speaking on the subject which was under consideration, without previous thought or intention, I said that I did not think very well of a person who remained away from his meetings for twenty years, when he lived within easy reach of the meetings. When I had said this, I became concerned as to what I had said, and that a brother was present who was guilty of such; and I felt that I had made matters much worse. But when I stepped out of the pulpit, the brother came to me with extended hand, and said, "You gave me just what I needed this morning." This is the way I believe admonition becomes effective.

If these things are not true, why did the Spirit move the writers to record many commands and admonitions unto the household of faith?

Why did the Apostles set all things in order?

Why did Paul write to Timothy and the brethren that they should know how to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth? (1 Timothy 3:5)

Why did Peter write, "This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandments of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour."? (2 Peter 3:1, 2)

Why did Paul write Titus, "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine."? Read the entire 2nd chapter of Titus, and note that he said, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, (all classes of men: male and female, young and old, etc. as in the context,) teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, *zealous of good works.* These things speak and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee."?

And what did Paul have in mind when he wrote in the 12th chapter of Romans: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, *by the mercies of God,* that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. For I say, *through the grace given unto me,* to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."?

We quote one or two more of the many commands and admonitions, feeling these are sufficient for our purpose. Jude wrote, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

Paul wrote to Timothy, "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be instant in season out of season: reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." (2 Timothy 4:1-4)

Whether I have presented these things clearly as I understand the Scriptures to teach, only the readers can know as they read. I believe that what I have endeavored to present, is

what the Scriptures teach, and what our brethren have been advocating through the years. We have not advocated that anyone, by taking thought or exercising their flesh, could cause himself to comply with things which are the fruits of the Spirit alone. He knows that all obedience is wrought in him by the grace of God; and all is perfectly in accord with God's will and purpose.

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

PSALMS 68:13

"Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold."

Some time ago we received a good letter from a sister in England, who is a reader of the *Signs of the Times,* asking that we give our views upon the above Scripture, which we will do if God permit.

The Lord often by the mouth of his prophets reminded Israel of her humble beginning, and when she came before her God she was taught to confess, "A Syrian *ready to perish* was my father; and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few." — Deut. xxvi. 5. The prophet Isaiah saith (chapter fifty-one), "Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." Thus Israel in our text is referred to as having "lien among the pots." Down in Egypt when a Pharaoh arose that knew not Joseph, Israel was forced into servitude and they afflicted them sore, yet the more they afflicted them the more they multiplied and grew. They made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with vigor. (Exodus i. 14.) And the children of Israel sighed by reason of their bondage and they cried and their cry came up unto God. Their taskmasters were so cruel that the spirit of the people was broken and their resistance was gone.

What was really a great nation, mightier than the Egyptians, was reduced to a nation of slaves, subject to the Egyptians and ready to perform any menial labor that was required of them. Thus the expression, "Though ye have lien among the pots," means that the Israelites had been common slaves to the Egyptians, living and sleeping among the pots of service. The term "pot" does not signify a vessel of a certain kind, but is applicable to a variety of shapes and kinds, thus jars, pitchers and bowls, cauldrons and kettles were commonly called pots, and Israel in Egypt labored and lay among them, and the Lord tells us in Psalms lxxxi. 6, "I removed his shoulder from the burden: his hands were delivered from the pots." This wonderful deliverance of Israel is set forth in the Psalms from which our text is taken. It was a triumphant deliverance, as set forth in the seventh and eighth verses: "O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness; Selah: the earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: even Sinai was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel."

Thus Israel was brought from among the pots of Egypt to a land promised unto Abraham and his seed, but came not in her own strength, but in the strength of the Lord. When she overcame, she went forth in the strength of the Lord. When she fell she fell because of unbelief: the word did not profit them (that fell), not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. Thus faith was the power that lifted them from among the pots, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God. They could not stir until "the Lord gave the word." (Verse eleven.) The word was the word of faith that freed them from the bondage of Egypt and carried

them to their inheritance. Thus Israel of old in all her trials, conflicts and deliverances was borne and carried on the wings of love and mercy, spoken of as the wings of a dove. This dove sets forth the Holy Spirit that was with them in all their travel. It can be said that the Jews in the land of Canaan, with their types and shadows, and their temple with its many and varied vessels, were but servants. For Paul saith, Jerusalem which now is, is in bondage with her children. She lay there among the pots of service and with such light that the law gave, which, like the moon, was but a borrowed light, and is a type of the moon, when it shone in the night of Judaism, it gave its silvery reflections of hope to the patient watchers for the gospel day to appear. Faith also is in evidence in her flight to the perfect day of the gospel, faith as of yellow gold that has been tried in the furnace. Thus the feathers or outstanding details of the journey of Israel are set forth by Paul in Hebrews eleven, all acts of faith, which is the pure gold of the kingdom.

All their travel is covered with promises, faithful promises of a better country and a better king, a heavenly land flowing with the milk and honey of the gospel, a heavenly country with a city prepared for them, whose builder and maker was God. We believe Israel then was a type of Israel now, and the land was a type of a better land. The land was promised to Abraham and his seed, yet Abraham never enjoyed any inheritance in it, not so much as to set foot on. He sought a better country, that is, an heavenly. Israel today among the Gentiles, has lien among the pots. Mankind are the pots, all made of clay, of the same lump. (Rom. ix. 21.) All by nature children of wrath, and there they all would lie but for the mercy of God. It is God in covenant love that has set a value on some, so that they are called vessels of mercy, distinguishing them from the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction. God's favor, spoken of as grace, is that which distinguishes them from their fellow-men. Until grace comes they are slaves to sin and Satan, full of all manner of uncleanness, with self-righteousness and every hateful way. Jesus was the light to lighten the Gentiles, and as Gideon's army of three hundred men took lamps in their pitchers, so we have this treasure in earthen vessels. This treasure is Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, who dwells among us, and in us. Before we had a knowledge of this we were as pots full of all manner of sin and iniquity, and we had to be emptied from vessel to vessel and our taste and scent changed. The light of truth planted in the heart is one of the first evidences of covenant mercy. It is spoken of as a call by grace. God called Abram alone, and said, Get thee out from thine own people and thy father's house, and grace says to those to whom it is sent, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, *saith the Lord.*"

With this word from God's mouth applied to the heart of a sinner, he sees where he lies, and has lien from his mother's womb. It is the knowledge that this light gives that is called an experience of grace, thus experience is truly said to be the life of knowledge. The three Hebrew children would have lien with the pots forever had not the Lord given them the word, the Word of Faith, it was that that lifted them high above the multitude about them, to shine down through the ages to come with a glorious brightness of silver and gold that the furnace only could give. It is the Word of faith today, given from the Lord, that lifts the poor from the dust and the beggar from the dunghill. Yet they are often left to mourn, lying among the pots, and vexed at the scorn and contempt of those who dwell at ease, knowing the truth of what Job said: "He that is ready to slip with his feet is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease." — Job xii. 5. While he may not feel that he differs much from a worldling, yet he does, for the world-

ling is a sinner and does not know it, but he knows it and feels it, too, and he could cry with Job, "Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?" All this is to hide pride from man and to teach him what is in his heart. To make him sick of the world, himself and sin. Here David cried, Oh that I had wings like a dove, that I might fly away and be at rest. When the Lord speaks the word his soul is lifted on the pinions of love and flies to the clefts of the Rock and there he rests secure, persuaded that nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus the Lord.

Thus a living experience, which is the result and effect of the word of faith in the heart, carries the soul from the condition of a slave to sin to the freedom of a son of the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all. This is set forth in type in the purification of the leper. The priest took two birds, one of the birds was slain and its blood put in an earthen vessel, and the live bird was dipped in the blood of the slain and set free, typifying the church rising as a conqueror through the blood of Christ. When Moses counted the number of the children of Israel, each had to give a half shekel of silver as a ransom for his soul. The rich could give no more, and the poor could not give less, so God's dear family are numbered, and each must have an experience of grace; the poor can have no less, and the rich can have no more, for it is the evidence of the soul's redemption, for it was for us that Jesus was sold for thirty pieces of silver. In the tabernacle of old the boards were socketed together with silver sockets, in the tabernacle that God has pitched, and not man, brethren are knit together in the experience of God's mercy to love and respect his word, for they know that the words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. (Psalms xii. 6.)

Thus Israel today, as on the wings of a dove, is raised above the earth, ready to wing her flight to her heavenly home.

> "Like Noah's dove she flits between
> Rough seas and stormy skies."

Not finding rest here below for the sole of her foot, she soars above the ruins of this earth, standing out like a city set on a hill which cannot be hid, shining to those whose eyes are opened to see it in the glorious brightness of her Lord. How bright, as polished silver or gold, is an experience of grace, how it raises the person far above the kings and princes of this earth, that come to naught, for such, we know, are left to glory in their shame. But a gracious character has passed through the fire and lives. While this vain world will be burned up, he lives and is sustained by God's holy Spirit. God is his purifier. I will, saith he, refine them as silver is refined and purify them as gold is purified. Through this furnace work they are brought, and their testimony, every one of them, will accord with the sound of the silver trumpet which was to be made of one piece, and when one shall examine those glorious wings the feathers of God's love which warms these cold hearts of ours will stand out as yellow gold. Let us consider what this brightness of silver and gold means. It means trials and afflictions, crosses and losses, partaking of the sufferings of Christ. The Lord grant that we as a people shall be purged from worldliness, pride and idolatry, rising above the world, shining as the brightness of the firmament, only feeling to live when on the wing, and our affections set above, desiring above all things that we, as Peter saith, might be diligent, that we may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless, mindful of the truth that we were once slaves, but are now sons.

In conclusion, 1 John iii. 2: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall

see him as he is."

(An Editorial by Elder Ruston in the February issue, 1932.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT

The Greek word *"aionios"* is sometimes translated in our New Testaments as "eternal" and sometimes as "everlasting." Hence, the words "eternal" and "everlasting" set forth limitlessness in both the happiness of the redeemed in heaven and of the misery of the wicked in hell. One is not warranted by the Scriptures in saying that the suffering of the finally lost is any less eternal than the happiness of the ultimately saved. In other words, if one believes the blessedness of the Lord's redeemed to be eternal and never-ending, then one must concede, painful though the concession may be, that the misery of the impenitent wicked is equally eternal and never-ending. One of the marked characteristics of the modern world and of our country is the inability of government to cope with lawlessness and to adequately and unfailingly bring the guilty to justice. One cause for this failure on the part of government, though by no means the only cause, is the fact that many people sympathize with the criminally guilty so that, if caught, justice and punishment are not meted out, or else, if punished, the sentence is light and ineffectual. Too much disposition on the part of a great section of the public to condone crime or law-breaking is responsible, in great measure, for the rising tide of lawlessness on every hand. This policy on the part of the public reflects itself in spiritual circles so that, in recent years, there has been an ever increasing disbelief in an eternal hell and in final and never-ending punishment for the wicked. It has come to be thought by some that since God is a God of love and mercy, he would not think of such a thing as cruelly burning forever the impenitent in a literal hell. Such a false sentimentalism ignores or forgets the plain teaching of the word of God. It is not what we think God ought to do, it matters not what may be our personal opinion about these things: it matters much what the Scriptures teach about it. We are sure that neither ourselves nor anybody else enjoy the thought of the wicked suffering in hell forever, but whether there is any personal enjoyment or comfort in it to us alters the facts of the case not at all. We get no comfort or enjoyment out of the fact that want and misery and distress are everywhere around us in the world today, but the facts of poverty and need thus prevalent everywhere are not changed a jot by the fact that we get no comfort out of contemplating them.

On this doctrine of the "eternal punishment of the wicked," we want the facts, not guess-work: and for facts one must go to the Scriptures, and particularly to the words of Jesus himself. In the parable of the sheep and goats in Matthew xxv. 31-46, Jesus said concerning those on the left hand, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Those rejected by the Savior-King are declared to be left under the curse of condemnation and are sent away into a prepared place which is that of everlasting fire, the same to which the devil and his angels are foreordained. Here the word "everlasting" is precisely the same as is elsewhere translated "eternal." Hence, the blessedness of the redeemed being eternal, the woes of the lost are equally eternal. Again, in the forty-sixth verse of the same chapter, Jesus said, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." In this passage, the words "eternal" and "everlasting" come from the same Greek word in the original manuscript. To endeavor to discriminate between the meanings of these two words

is not warranted here. In John v. 28, 29, Jesus says, "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

Thus is taught the truth of the resurrection of the Lord's people to immortality, and also is taught the other side of the truth, which is that the unregenerate wicked are also to be raised from their graves unto judgment and that, as the outcome of God's just judgment made publicly known, they shall go away into the punishment declared in Matthew twenty-fifth chapter. Paul, speaking before Felix, as recorded in Acts xxiv. 15, boldly affirmed that there is to be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust. By the "just" in this passage, he could not have meant Jesus, because the resurrection of Jesus had already become an accomplished fact, and there is not again to be another resurrection of Jesus: but Paul meant by the "just" the people of God, those justified before God by the imputed, perfect righteousness of his Son; and by the "unjust" he meant those not divinely taken care of in the finished work of Christ on Calvary. This twofold resurrection has not taken place yet, but is to take place in the future. It will take place with the elect of God at the fulfillment of 1 Thessalonians iv. 16, 17. It will take place with the non-elect at the fulfillment of Revelation xx. 12-15.

Nor do the Scriptures teach that the eternal punishment of the wicked is merely annihilation. Christ did not die on the cross simply to redeem his people from being annihilated, but to redeem them from endless misery and woe. To say that the wicked shall be simply annihilated or brought to oblivion and nothingness, is to greatly detract from and minimize the glorious work which Christ came to accomplish for his people. Whatever it is that the wicked shall have to suffer eternally, is exactly what Christ came to save his people from. Therefore, just to that extent to which we sentimentally extenuate the endless misery of the wicked, just by that much do we neglect to exalt Christ and just that much do we cloud the glory of Calvary. The meaning of Calvary is measured by the distance between the bottomless pit and the infinite heaven of glory. Wherever the Scriptures speak of the wicked as being destroyed, they never mean destruction in the sense of annihilation or nothingness. For instance, in Philippians iii. 19, and in 2 Thessalonians i. 9, the word "destruction" far from meaning reduction to oblivion or nothingness, means the eternal ruination of the wicked beyond all possibility or hope of restoration to any vestige of power or influence whatsoever. Punishment is not punishment unless the one punished is conscious of his punishment.

Inasmuch as the blessedness of the redeemed shall be a joy eternal of which they shall never cease to be conscious, it must follow that the misery of the wicked shall be such as they shall not cease to be conscious of, since Scripture language used to express the joys of the former is used with equal force to express the woes of the latter; and spiritual honesty would demand of us that we give the language as equal force in the one instance as in the other. It does not follow however that the wicked have to have eternal life in order to suffer forever, in the same sense that the saved are to have eternal life in order to enjoy God forever. What kind of life the wicked are to have in the midst of the fires of hell, we do not know; and may the grace of God through Christ forbid that we ever shall know. All the fires that we know literally about are fires that eventually go out for lack of something to be consumed by their flames: but that fire that burns in the eternal lake of fire is no earthly fire. It is far worse and more terrible than that: a fire whose flame shall never be quenched, and of

those who shall eternally dwell with that fire, it is said that their worm never dies. In the ninth chapter of Mark, Jesus three times emphasizes the fact that the fires of hell never go out and that the worm of those in that fire never die. What is the "worm" if it is not the gnawing conscience of that one justly condemned by the holy God? I hope I myself have known what it has meant to be convicted of sin. If so, then at that time I knew the "gnawing worm" of an awakened conscience. In that experience I believe I had a taste of what hell means, I knew its fierce flame and its undying worm. But for the grace of God in the blessed Christ toward such a sinner as I then knew I was, and still by nature am, I should forever have remained in that hell of unquenchable fire and should forever have had that gnawing conscience as my eternal companion in the burning lake.

Could anything be more dreadful to think about? The blood of Jesus Christ is all that saved me from that eternal burning. It is all that saves you. It seems irreverent to deny the fact that a burning hell and an undying worm await the unredeemed: irreverent because if there is no such place, then what did Christ die to redeem us from? By so much as we deny the just judgment of God upon the wicked, by just that much do we deny the glorious work of Christ in dying to redeem us therefrom.

What kind of a body the wicked will have to have in order to suffer in hell, I do not, nor does any one know. Since we know of a surety that Christ is able to change the vile bodies of his people into the likeness of his own glorious body so that they shall dwell satisfied with him forever in heaven, is he not just as able to give the wicked the bodily likeness of their master Satan so as to dwell with the latter to suffer forever? We do know that God can do everything, and we do know that God's justice is not as man's perverted sense of justice. Man's laws can be and are evaded and punishment by them is escaped, but there can be no escape from or evasion of the holy and divine justice of the eternal God. God is assuredly a God of love, but to whom is he a God of love? To them only who are in Christ Jesus. To all and sundry outside of Jesus Christ, God is a burning and consuming fire eternally.

Let us not forget when setting forth the grace and mercy and love of God in Christ to his people, that God is a Perfect Being of inexorable justice and may our hearts be lifted up unto him in adoration and thanksgiving that he from before the foundation of the world, gave us who do believe in him a hiding-place in his Son from that divine wrath which shall one day disclose itself to the eternal discomfort of all those out of Christ.

(Editorial by Elder H. H. Lefferts November, 1932.)

ORDINATION OF AN ELDER

Pursuant to the request of The First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis, Tenn., a presbytery met on May 5, 1968, for the purpose of examining Brother C. S. Young, and if finding him fit and qualified in accordance with the written word of God to their satisfaction and discretion, to ordain him to the full work of the gospel ministry.

All the elders and deacons of our faith and order were requested to sit in the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders Paul Poyner, H. G. Brown, and H. R. Prince. Deacons Elmer Prince, J. W. Brown and R. H. Campbell. The presbytery was organized by electing Elder H. G. Brown as Moderator, and Deacon R. H. Campbell as Clerk. Elder Paul Poyner was appointed by the Moderator to deliver the charge to the candidate.

The solemn service was begun with the singing of an hymn in the Goble Hymn Book; and prayer by Elder H. R. Prince.

Brother Campbell having been duly appointed to be the spokesman for the Memphis Church, presented the candidate before the presbytery for examination. The Moderator then proceeded with the questions regarding the qualification of Brother Young. The presbytery, being satisfied with the examination and the answers given by Brother Campbell, requested that the candidate kneel in their midst for the performance of the laying on

of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder H. R. Prince.

Elder Paul Poyner then delivered the charge to Elder Young, using 1 Timothy, chapter five, for his scriptural reference.

The right hand of fellowship was given to Elder Young by all the members of the presbytery as a token of brotherhood, and wishing him success in the field wherein God had placed him. Elder Young was then delivered back to The First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis as an ordained minister of the Old School Baptist Church.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read for approval, adopted and ordered submitted to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Elder H. G. Brown, Moderator
Richard H. Campbell, Clerk

(Brother Campbell submitted the above minutes soon after the ordination of Brother Young, but they became misplaced among other papers. We regret this, and are publishing them immediately after finding them. We regret this very much and assure all that it was an oversight. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

LILY NORVILLE LUPER

Sister Lily Norville Luper was born in Pitt County January 2, 1891 and departed this life January 22, 1970, at the age of 79.

On December 15, 1912 she was married to S. Cooper Luper who survives. In addition to her husband she leaves two daughters, Mrs. Mattie May Williams and Mrs. Lily Sylvia Pollard; one son, Cooper Jackson Luper, all of Rocky Mount, N. C.; four grandchildren and five great grandchildren; one sister, Mrs. W. B. Bridgers, Wilson, N. C.

Sister Luper united with Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church on Saturday before fourth Sunday in October 1921. She loved her church and attended regularly when she could, though poor health hindered her at times the last few years. The Lord enabled her to attend her meeting on Saturday in December before she passed this life in January.

She was a wonderful wife and loving mother, a loving neighbor and a friend to all. To know Sister Luper was to love her. We all will miss her greatly.

We desire to extend to her bereaved family our deepest love and sympathy, hoping that God will comfort and sustain them in their distress.

Her funeral was conducted in Johnson Funeral Home by her beloved pastor, Elder C. N. Bunn and Elder Henry C. Jones, after which she was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery to wait for her Lord to call her home.

It is RESOLVED, A copy of this be put on the church records; one sent to the family; and a copy to be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of conference.

Fannie Mae Harper

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It has pleased Almighty God to remove from our midst, Sister Libbie Hudson, age 80. Sister Hudson united with Hickory Grove Primitive Baptist Church, July, 1924, by experience and baptism. For several years she was not able to attend on account of ill health.

Sister Hudson was the daughter of Jim Tom and Harriet Weaver Adams, and wife of Retto Hudson who preceded her in death August 11, 1943.

Sister Hudson passed from this life on Sunday, January 4, 1970, in Johnston Memorial Hospital at Smithfield, North Carolina.

She leaves to mourn her loss one son, three daughters, one stepdaughter, 29 grandchildren, 39 great grandchildren in addition to a host of friends and relatives.

The funeral was held Wednesday afternoon at Stone's Creek Advent Christian Church by Elder W. D. Godwin and Mr. Michael Whitley. Burial followed in the Johnston Family Cemetery.

We, the Church, Resolve, that we feel our loss is her eternal gain; That our sincere sympathy goes to her family; That three copies of this Resolution be made, one for the Church, one to be sent to the family and one to be published in the *Signs of the Times*.

Committee,
Sister Georgia E. Hill
Sister Gertrude Royal

IDA JAN BOWERS

Sister Ida Jan Bowers was born to Elizabeth and William Yarborough January 28, 1879, in Leon County, Texas; and passed this life April 19, 1969, after a little more than 90 years' stay in this life.

She was united in marriage to Thomas Wilson Bowers October 24, 1897, in Grosbeck, Texas. To this union were born seven children. Three of the children preceded her in death; and Brother Bowers passed from this life in April, 1951.

Sister Bowers united with Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church, Lawn, Texas, in 1927. We can say, surely, surely she was one of the most devoted, kind and loving members that we have ever had the pleasure to pastor. She was faithful to attend church at every opportunity her health would permit. She was a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God. The *Signs of the Times* came into her

home over half a century, and she loved the precious truths it stands for.

The last few years of her life were devoted to much reading and writing. She wrote a lengthy history of her early life and the many changes she had witnessed during her life.

She leaves four children to mourn her passing: two sons, Harvey and Rayford, Levelland, Texas; two daughters, Mrs. E. M. Barnes, Gustine, Texas, and Mrs. Buford Badgett, Levelland, Texas; also, eighteen grandchildren, thirty-four great grandchildren and one great great grandchild; and a host of friends who will also miss her sweet, smiling face; but we surely believe our loss to be her eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer, and we laid our beloved Mother in Israel to rest in the Levelland City Cemetery by the side of her dear husband, to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Written in much love and high esteem.

Elder C. M. Haygood

LORENA JACKSON HITCH

Miss Lorena Jackson Hitch, age 88, of Portsmouth, Va., died November 3, 1969.

Sister Lorena Hitch attended Primitive Baptist Church in Norfolk, Va. Surviving are a niece, Mayor Ann Kilgore of Hampton; two nephews: A. V. Pearce of Portsmouth and John Wiley of Norfolk; and twelve great nieces and nephews.

Elder C. N. Bunn, her dear Pastor, conducted a very quiet and sweet funeral by reading St. John 14:1, and the beautiful hymn "In Sharon's Lovely Rose." He said, "Behold how Jesus loved her and died for her. We loved her too. She has been taken from the evil to come and she will live in that upper and better kingdom. She's not dead — only sleeping that blessed sleep from which none of His ever wake to weep in the arms of her Savior." At the grave he read St. John 14:27, and the lovely hymn "Rock of Ages." He said, "God doeth all things well and His mercy endureth forever." All the nice expressions he made warmed our hearts.

It is with a sad heart I try to write her obituary. It is hard to give our loved ones up, but the dear Lord loved her best and called her home. He's the keeper of the flowers and her blessed spirit is resting in her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. She did not dread to die — she said to me, "Pearl, if this is my time to go, it's just all right." She had a good sweet, lively hope in the sunshine of His love; an all wise, all merciful, and all powerful God. Oh, that marvelous light that shined out of darkness into her heart is under His control. Who can turn it off or on? He gives us grace and faith and it does something for us and it stays done. The foundation of God standeth sure. The Lord knoweth those that are His.

She reminded us of a rose blooming; fair, soft and musical was her voice, modest in her manner, graceful in her step and gesture. She's where the roses will never fade or die. We believe Jesus planted her in a garden of green, enclosed from the world without, hidden from those who believe not, and of the Lord she will flourish in the Heavenly courts everlastingly. She will sing the Savior's love and Heaven will be her home.

May the dear Lord comfort and sustain all of her loved ones, and especially her sorrowing great niece, Linda Dickens, in their loss of one so near and dear to their hearts.

Her memory will be sweet to me, and it will be to Elder Bunn and every member of the Norfolk Church congregation and to her family, friends, neighbors, and to all who have known her. I do feel that the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give her the fadeless shining white robe of righteousness that was dyed in the blood of the Lamb like His son wore.

Peace and love will reign and she with her blessed Jesus will drink endless pleasures in forever and ever.

Submitted in love,
Pearl Fickett

SISTER ELIZA SIMPSON

In memory of Sister Eliza Simpson. It pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our dear Sister Simpson on February 6, 1970. She was born February 5, 1893, the daughter of Joel and Nancy Simpson. She joined Springfield Church October 13, 1957, and was a faithful member as long as she was able to attend. She loved her church.

We had the pleasure of her visiting in our home many times, and she enjoyed talking of the goodness and mercy of our Lord. We shall miss her: she always had a smile and kind word for everyone.

She is survived by one brother, David, and two sisters, Mrs. Sallie Barbour and Sister Elmer Simpson, of Pittsville, Va.

Her funeral was held at Springfield Church by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and Elder Leonard Brammer, and her body was laid away in Weatherford Church Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord. Written by

L. R. Willis

IDA FLORENCE WATSON BOWEN

On April 3, 1969, God called Mrs. Bowen from our midst. She was born September 24, 1882, and was married to Joe Bowen March 16, 1905; and to this union three sons and two daughters were born. For more than eighty-

six years Mrs. Bowen lived on this earth, spending her entire life in Calhoun County, Arkansas. For many years she attended Old White Water Church, firmly believing in salvation by grace and grace alone.

She lived a quiet life of simplicity, proving herself to be a faithful homemaker, a dear wife to her husband, and a wonderful mother to her children. Her husband was ill for many years, and passed away in 1955. Mrs. Bowen bore her lot well. Several months of her last days were spent in illness and bodily afflictions. By the grace of God she bore her afflictions patiently until God called her away at her home on April 3, 1969.

She leaves to mourn her passing three sons: Virgel, Verner and Joe Bowen, of Tinsman; two daughters: Mrs. Louis Whitehead, of Hampton, and Mrs. Grover Martin, of Thornton; two brothers: Ray and Ross Watson of Tinsman; two sisters: Mrs. Effie Hopper, of Lake Village, and Mrs. O. B. Johnston, of Hampton; also six grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren, and other relatives and friends.

After a brief funeral discourse by the writer, Mrs. Bowen's body was laid to rest in the Watson Cemetery beneath a mound of lovely flowers, to await the resurrection morning when all of God's children will be gathered home to rejoice forever.

May the love of God, the communion of the Holy Spirit, and the grace of Christ be with the beloved family and all who mourn her passing.

Elder W. W. Taylor
Rt. 2
Tinsman, Ark. 71767

LUDY COMER ROBERTS

Sister Roberts was born March 25, 1895, near Madison, Rockingham County, N. C., and spent her life in this area. Her parents were Cam and Chaney Carter Comer. She was married to A. Glenn Roberts December 5, 1914, and to this union were born eight children.

Sister Roberts was a member of Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church for more than 40 years. She was faithful to attend her meetings until she took her bed. She was an invalid for six and one-half years, very afflicted and not able to talk. When we visited her, the reconciliation and love of God shined in her countenance. She manifested the peaceful fruits of the Spirit of her Saviour in her walk and life, showing humility, meekness and love, bearing all things that came, affliction, sorrow and trials, as a true soldier of the cross. She cared for an afflicted daughter, Nancy, until she passed at age seventeen; and cared for her mother-in-law as long as she was able.

She and Brother Roberts made their home with their daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Rufus Knight, after her illness. It is commendable indeed the care she received. Brother Roberts never left her more than a few hours this long time, always there attending to her, manifesting love and care; as did the family. She never wanted for care or comfort.

She passed away October 13, 1969, in Reidsville Hospital. Her funeral was held in the Pleasantville Church House by her Pastor, Elder H. W. Wray, and she was laid to rest in the cemetery there.

Survivors are, her husband; two daughters, Mrs. Rufus Knight, and Mrs. Polly Everrette; five sons, Ray, Reidsville; Ralph, Houma, La.; Kent, Lexington, S. C.; Rex, Lynchburg, Va.; Jerry, Largo, Fla.; nineteen grandchildren and fourteen great grandchildren. Surviving also are three sisters, Mrs. Sallie Jones, Mrs. Lillian Strader and Mrs. Grace Pascal; and two brothers, Govenor Comer and Bob Comer.

May the Lord comfort all who mourn her passing, and bless us to be submissive to His will.

Written by request of Pleasantville Church while in conference the first Saturday night in December, 1969, and approved in March, 1970.

Rachel Wray

EDD H. CHANDLER, SR.

Brother Chandler departed this life on January 5, 1970. He had been very lonely after the death of his wife on January 28, 1968. Survivors are four sons, Milton Chandler, Waylon Chandler, Edd H. Chandler, Jr., all of Ruston, La., and Lavon Chandler of Greensbore, N. C.; two daughters, Mrs. Lorene Berryman and Mrs. Dan Fallin of Ruston, La.; one brother, Cleve Chandler of Camden, Ark.; 16 grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren.

Brother and Sister Chandler were both firm believers in the doctrine and they were very humble. They were baptized September 3, 1933 into New Hope Church near Spearsville, La. Brother Chandler was ordained deacon May 6, 1951.

The churches in the South Ouachita Association miss both Brother and Sister Chandler, as both of them visited the different churches, and it brings sadness to our hearts because we will not see their faces any more upon this earth. The writer has visited in their homes often and the times we spent together were enjoyable. They loved to talk on the "things of Zion."

The funeral services were conducted by the writer and assisted by Elder John Lee Smith in the Kilpatrick's Funeral Home in Ruston, La., and his body was laid to rest in Douglas Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 138 DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1970 NO. 7

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/70
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE GLORY OF CHRIST

(John 17:24)

Christ is called the Lord of glory,
Who fills immensity,
And the saints, glorified with him,
Shall his own glory see.

Yea, Christ is "the hope of glory,"
And his very name is sweet;
Oh, may I greet him in glory,
Where all the saints shall meet.

May I behold his glory there,
That of the Holy One,
The One who is King of glory,
God's only begot'n Son.

Jesus, now exalted on high,
Seated at God's right hand.
Is "as the shadow of a great
Rock in a weary land."

In a vision, Isaiah saw him
"Sitting upon a throne;"
He saw him "high and lifted up,"
Where his glory is shown.

He's "the rock that is higher than I,"
On which his church he builds;
She was chosen in him afore time,
Before he formed the hills.

He is "the high and lofty One,"
Who is for ever blest,
And to the people giv'n to him,
"There remaineth a rest."

He is "the lily of the valleys,
The bright and morning star;"
All glory to him in heaven,
Where saints and angels are.

C. W. Vass
409 New York Avenue
Elizabeth City, N. C.

EVIDENCES OF GOD'S GRACE

822 W. Harrison
Lovington, N. M.

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing two articles that our son, David, sent us recently. We enjoyed them and found so much comfort in them that we wanted to share them with all our friends.

Although David felt they were not worthy of publication, he gave his permission. I know you will not accept it if you do not feel it to be sound.

David and his wife, Barbara, live at 8 Central Park, Brownesville, Texas, where they both are teachers in the public schools. He is 23 years old.

Sincerely,
Walter and Ferne Harrell

(We shared your joy when we read the articles. — J. D. W.)

UNABLE TO FEND FOR HIMSELF

I am weak. I am feeble. I am as a newborn babe, unable to fend for myself. I have much in the earthly sense; all of which I have only because of the goodness and mercy of our precious Saviour.

I fear that I am a goat. I long to become a member of the flock. I long to hear my Saviour call. I am young in years, but seemingly old at heart. I fear and tremble at the dangers of the world. How I long to see the Saviour. Lord, Lord, when will you come?

So often I have wished to be able to write about the precious Saviour, but all my words are as cold embers, dark and gray with no glowing life. Life that only the guiding hand of the Lord can

add. My reading of the Bible seems futile at times. Yet, sometimes I feel a fullness inside when I read. There is a longing, yearning feeling for something, and the feeling, at times, that I am not alone. John said, "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven." (John 3:27) The crumbs from the Master's table . . . how I long to receive them.

Thoughts of the Lord are much on my mind these days. It seems to be all I concentrate upon. It occupies my whole mind most of the time. I feel very unworthy to think of the Lord. The Lord has provided me with all my earthly needs. He watches over me. I feel He has a purpose for me. I do not know His will. Lately I have been wanting to write my thoughts. I fear they are feeble, but they are what I feel.

Lately I have been thinking a great deal about the Crucifixion and salvation. Christ died on the cross in order to save His people from their sins. Now this, in my opinion, does not mean that He died to save all people from their sins. It was the children of God, those who were foreordained and predestinated from the beginning of time, who were saved.

Who, then, are children of God? Jesus taught, "For God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosover believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) Now, if we stop here and read no further, the verse is saying that those who believe on Christ will be saved. Could this mean that all the world could be saved? If we read on, however, we find that "He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John 3:18)

Now it seems to me that Jesus is saying that those who believed not were condemned, and condemned from the start. Those who do believe will find salvation. Who then believes in Him, and how is it that they do believe?

Now many churches today preach that the decision to believe or not to believe is left up to man. If this were true, would not this then make man able to effect his own salvation and therefore take the power of salvation away from God and put it in the puny hands of man? I cannot and will not follow this line of belief. Man is not even capable of deciding what to wear most of the time. How then can man think that he can achieve anything so magnificient and holy as salvation? Christ pointed out the futility of man alone when He asked, "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature?" (Matthew 6:27)

How then is man saved? Jesus said, "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." (John 6:35) "No man can come to me except the Father which sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:44) "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:37)

Those who believe, those who are saved, are the children of God. They believe because the Father led them to believe and drew them to Christ. It was the doings of the Father and man had nothing to do with it. Just as man does not bring about his own birth in the flesh, neither does he bring about his own birth in the Spirit. It is God who saves, not man. All glory and praise be to His holy name. Amen.

The book of James is rather startling to one of our belief if it is read rapidly and not thought out thoroughly. James asked, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?" (James 2:14) Now, to a casual reader, this seems to be saying that faith is not sufficient for salvation. And I believe this is right. Paul says we are judged by our works. Now let me ask this, "Is good works enough for salvation?" No, I don't believe it to be so. Can a person have faith in God

except it be given him of God? Therefore in order to have *true* faith of God, and in God, we must be given it of God. James says that every good gift and every perfect gift is given from above; and can there be a better gift than a strong faith that will stand the test of trials and tribulations? In order to be given this faith, I believe that we must be one of the chosen in God. Paul says that the chosen are led in the way of good works according to the pleasure of the Almighty God. Therefore, the way I see it, faith and good works are inseparable, and both can be taken as signs of the bountiful and tender mercies of the Lord and Father. Amen.

Rejoice in your tribulations, for just as an earthly father chastises his children, so does the heavenly Father chastise his children. They are tried in the spirit; and "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those that love Him." (James 1:12)

May He bless you in His tender mercies and lead you in the paths of righteousness. Sing His praises never ceasing, in sorrow and in happiness, for there is no fault in Him. Praise and honor be to His Holy Name, the only name on earth in which there is truth and life for those that love Him; there is none for those that don't love Him.

David Harrell
8 Central Park
Brownsville, Texas

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514 Glover Road
Westview
Wilmington, Del.

Elder and Sister Griffin,

My dear pastor and wife:

If it is in God's plan, may He give me words to express some of my travels.

My parents were both members of Smith Mill's Church. So you can see that I have been among the Primitive Baptists all my life, although I know just being among them does not make me one of them. I was around fourteen years old when I felt to be so different from others of my age. I feared that I was not wanted among my friends.

My mother read to my father from the Bible and the *Signs*. Some of the things that she read from the *Signs* made me to slip them out, hidden in magazines, so that I could read them without anyone knowing that I was interested in such wonderful things. It was comforting to know that others were being led the same way that I felt to be. Yet, he had visited them, and made their burdens light. For me I felt to be too unworthy of His help, yet I was made to beg for mercy.

Elder A. B. Francis was pastor of Smith Mill's Church. To me he was a lovely, Christ-like man. I loved him and his dear wife. I missed but few services, although I could not talk much of these divine matters, but it was good to be near those that did have the gift of talking about them. Too, Elder C. W. Vaughn visited in my parent's home often. After filling an appointment on this particular trip, he stopped at our home for the night. As they were talking he turned to me and said, "Agnes, wouldn't you like to be baptized?" What a shock it was to know that anyone knew my feelings. I told him that I hoped to some day, but that there was no hope for me at that time.

A short time before James and I were married, as we rode to the service at Delmar, he said to me, I think that I know what your trouble is about; you should talk to the church. My secret was out on every side; how troubled I was that night only the good Lord knew. In my agony I said, "You do not know anything about me." Just to think that this young man had asked me to marry him and I had consented, and yet he did not know what a sinner I was. How could he know my condition? I had been trying so hard to keep it from everyone, and here my future companion knew it.

Years later the Lord brought Elder

Spangler to the Eastern Shore. With Elder Kerr's passing Snow Hill was without a pastor, but during this time Elder Spangler was called as pastor. My burden to be baptized had not lessened any, and the time drew near for meeting. I found out that the Lord does not need any help in his work. I do not know where to find it, but I know that it reads like unto this: "I looked and there was none to help." I enjoyed planning for the weekend of our services. There were words of encouragement, and I feel even now that the interest they showed to me was comforting. I just did not have the strength to ask for a home that night with those people.

The next day was time for services at Salisbury. Like it is today, the two churches visited back and forth a lot, and the most of us were on hand for the services. At the end of the services Brother Handy Truitt went up front to go before the church and then his dear wife, Sister Maude. I longed to go; no mortal, save those led in like manner, can know the state of my mind. My feet were glued to the floor and I could not go. In the midst of my despair there came a ray of light and hope. It would not be long until service at Snow Hill again, and then maybe the Lord will enable me to go. My burden was so heavy; I could not talk about it, only a continuance of weeping. My father came to see me and we talked of the precious Saviour, and of how that he hoped I would be given strength to follow the Lord in baptism when the others were baptized. All the love and attention could not relieve me; I could only weep and beg the Lord for mercy.

When the day appointed for service came, I carried my mother-in-law, as was our custom. The service was about like usual with everybody seemingly happy and contented with their lot. But how miserable I felt, only the dear Lord knew. At the close of the service Elder Spangler announced an open door of the church. I do not remember what he said, nor what I did, but there I was on the front seat. I could tell but little of my feelings; only to tell them that I loved them and begged for a home with them. Among those that came and expressed gratitude to God for bringing me home, was our dear departed sister, Ida Holloway. There was a time of great rejoicing and contentment as my church home became so precious to me, but I soon found out that I had doubts and fears still, with a cloud of despair that I had deceived them.

The day of baptism arrived and with it much sweetness and happiness was granted to me. The beautiful gathering at the water with Brother and Sister Truitt going before me, and last it was granted me to follow my precious Jesus into the water and be baptized as was He. It seemed that heaven's light settled around us; that all sorrow and trouble had flown forever. No one, save he or she that has been blessed to deny themselves, take up their cross and follow their Lord, will ever know the happiness I felt when I walked into the meeting house.

Since that happy day I have had much sickness and many heartaches, which our human nature does not ask for, but I hope that I have been blessed to say from the heart, Not my will, but thine be done.

When Elder Spangler was so ill with his heart we were so fearful the dear Lord would take him, but he was spared to come among us again. How little we know of the ways of our God. I feel that his illness changed your way of travelling also. I know what it is to have to walk away from so many precious things. I am sure that for you both there have been many heartaches. I hope we of the Eastern Shore have been given grace to show our appreciation of such a great sacrifice. By the grace of God, may I never cease to praise him for sending you among us. He has blessed you to take the things of God and show them unto us. When you brought me the book I wrote in it that it was a gift from my pastor, and I want to thank both of you for

all the kind deeds that you have done for me and mine. To thank you seems so little, but I am little, helpless and so dependent on the God of all strength. I am also forgetful of mercies for I find myself working so hard to fix things. What a poor helpless being that I am.

May God continue his blessing to each of you in your travels, and the wonderful work he has called you to. If I have said anything amiss please tell me for I do not want to be wrong or offend.

In bonds of love and fellowship,
Your little sister in hope,
Agnes Truitt

"HEREBY PERCEIVE WE THE LOVE OF GOD, BECAUSE HE LAID DOWN HIS LIFE FOR US." (First John 3:16)

Deut. 32:3, reads, "Ascribe ye greatness unto our God." We do not think any scripture ascribes more greatness unto God than the one we have quoted as a topic for this writing, "The LOVE of God" in that He laid down His life for us. The Apostle knew, and so did the Holy Ghost inspiring the writing, that the love of God in its fullness was, and is, far beyond the understanding of the Lord's people to whom he was writing. Therefore, he gave the manifest action and proof of the love of God; saying, "HEREBY PERCEIVE WE THE LOVE OF GOD, BECAUSE HE LAID DOWN HIS LIFE FOR US." The love of God is perceived in the greatness of His person. God is the greatest of the great, whatever that great may be. Then, He could give no greater than to give Himself for us. God so greatly and graciously LOVED His people, that He gave His only begotten Son — that they should not perish, but should have everlasting life.

Christ Jesus is both God and man. In the essence of the Divine nature He is with God the Father, and is God; the brightness of the Father's glory and expressed image of His Person, upholding all things by the word of His power. He is the Rock of Ages, the Alpha and Omega, the Heir, beauty, fullness, glory of heaven and of His people, King of righteousness, peace, and glory; also Lord of lords, and King of kings, in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. The scripture not only speaks of the love of God, but declares God is LOVE. And, in this, the love of God is manifest, that He sent His own true Son into the world, that we might live through Him. And in that he LOVED His own, He loved them to the end; meaning He laid down His life for them. In His love and in His pity, He redeemed them from the horrible, deplorable, sad, pitiful condition they were in by nature. But God commendeth His love toward us while we were yet sinners, without strength, dead in sin, by giving His Son who died for us, the ungodly. "HEREBY PERCEIVE WE THE LOVE OF GOD, BECAUSE HE LAID DOWN HIS LIFE FOR US."

This is the greatest manifestation, I think, of the LOVE of God that He, Himself, had to give for and to His poor and afflicted people in this life. He could not give greater than Himself, greater than His only Son, in truth and in love. Heaven possesses no greater than the Possessor of both heaven, earth, and all things. The greatness of the love of God consists in the greatness of that Person, our Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, in truth and love. He, Himself bore our sins in His own body on the cross under the curse and wrath of divine justice, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, the Father. The greatness of the love of God for us is described in the duration of it; also in the effect and manifestation of it experimentally to His people. "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me saying, Yea, I have LOVED thee with an everlasting LOVE; therefore with LOVING-KINDNESS have I drawn thee."

No one could love without an object to love. The Bride of Christ evidently

is the object of His love. And as likeness begets likeness, and as God is LOVE, they that are born of God are born of love. We love Him because He first loved us. Paul in speaking of the greatness and duration of the love of God to *us* and for *us*, said, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter." To which the Apostle answers, "Nay, In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that LOVED us, For I am persuaded that neither life, nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate *us* from the LOVE of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." If the above is not enough to make a poor tried sinner shout and sing "Glory Alleluiah, the Lord God Omnipotent reigns, and that, in perfect, enduring and eternal love to and for His people," it must be because he hasn't tasted the Lord is gracious in love. "Unto Him that loved *us*, and washed *us* from our sins in His own blood, and made *us* kings and priests unto God and His Father; to whom be glory and dominion for ever."

Paul said, "The life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who LOVED me and gave Himself for me. HEREBY PERCEIVE WE THE LOVE OF GOD, BECAUSE HE LAID DOWN HIS LIFE FOR US . . . God, who is rich in mercy for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when dead in sin, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace are ye saved). And hath raised us up and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness to-ward us in Christ." Thus, His children are made by experience to partake of a great measure of the love of God, by the manifestation of His love to Them — the *us*.

John said, BELOVED (Beloved of God) if God so LOVED us, we ought also to LOVE one another."

Oh yes, say we, "I love them, but not their ways." Do we love our own ways? Did Jesus love our ways? Or, did He love *us* and in LOVE die for us? He loved us in person and commanded us to love one another — in person, but all in Christ. We love with the same love that Christ loves us. This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. His commandment is that we love one another. Do we understand it? Let us examine it a little closer. Jesus said, "This is the work of God that ye believe on Him whom God hath sent." Whose work is it? — "God's." Who believes? — "Ye." Likewise, "This is the LOVE of God, that we keep His commandments." Whose love is it? — "God's." Who are to keep his commandments? — "We." What is His commandment? — "That we love one another." Love is the fulfilling of His commandments, and love is of God. His commandments are fulfilled *in* us by His love and *not* by us; it is the LOVE of God *in* us by which we love God and love one another. "Do I love the Lord, or not? Am I His or am I not?"

When Jonathan had heard the words of David to Saul, "The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved David as his own soul." Paul desired for the saints at Colosse that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love.

We know only the sovereign love of God can burn up wrath, envy, hatred, tattling and strife in the heart and fill it with love and kindness, tenderness, forbearance and forgiveness, causing us to love God and the *beloved* children of God, in deed and in truth. Christ is altogether lovely and they that love Him, love His people in Him. Whom the Lord loveth, they love Him, and they that are begotten of Him. He chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth, which is not joyous, but grievous, but afterward yieldeth

the peaceful fruit of righteousness and love unto them that are exercised thereby. Tribulations worketh patience, patience experience, experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed; because the LOVE of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

"HEREBY PERCEIVE WE THE LOVE OF GOD, BECAUSE HE LAID DOWN HIS LIFE FOR US." Jesus said, "No man taketh my life from me, I have power to lay it down and power to take it again." He didn't merely lay a body down — He laid His life down, His all, and He took the same life up again that He laid down. He was a wholesome Man, and He rose a wholesome Man. He said, "I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore." He that died unto sin once, now liveth unto God: the Mediator, the Man Christ Jesus, glorified in the very presence of God, the Father; upon the throne of His glory and His kingdom, with all things put under His feet. Greater love hath no man, than to lay down his life for his friend. But God commended His LOVE toward *us* in that while we were sinners, enemies, dead in sin, Christ died for us, redeemed us to God, to an eternal inheritance, to ever be with and like Him, who is our inheritance, being heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. We shall be like Him, blessed truth! It was Christ that died, poured out His soul unto death, lay in Joseph's tomb, rose from the dead the third day, and is alive forevermore. "What wondrous LOVE is this, Oh my soul!"

We have no time for a part man doctrine, a part saviour, a part sacrifice, a part death, a part resurrection, a part born again man, a part redeemed, justified, glorified person — or what? Behold what manner of LOVE the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God, and that when we were by nature children of wrath, even as others. He did all He did for *us* and His Namesake, and is doing all He is doing for *us* and His Namesake, and all is to the glory of God who works all things for their good, according to the counsel of His own will. Can we fathom the manner and greatness of that love? Nay, but, HEREBY PERCEIVE WE THE LOVE, THE WILL, THE PURPOSE, THE POWER, THE GOOD PLEASURE OF GOD, BECAUSE HE LAID DOWN HIS LIFE FOR US.

We wish in closing to quote Hymn No. 10, Lloyd Hymn Book.

"Love divine how sweet the sound,
May the theme on earth abound;
May the hearts of saints below,
With the sacred rapture glow.

Love amazing large and free,
Love unknown, to think on me;
Let that love upon me shine,
Savior, with its beams divine.

Better than earth's gilded toys,
Or, an age of carnal joys;
Better far than Ophir's gold,
Love that never can be told.

Better than this life of mine,
Savior, is Thy love divine;
Drop the veil, and let me see,
Rivers of this love in Thee.

While in Mesech's tent I stay,
Love divine shall tune my lay;
When I soar to bliss above,
Still I'll praise a Savior's love."

John L. Sanders
44 Durrett Grove
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35401

THE VEIL WAS RENT

361 Meadowbrook
Ballwin, Mo. 63011

Dear Editors of the *Signs,*

Again it is time to renew my subscription. A $7.00 check is attached for a two year renewal. It would be a missed opportunity if I did not express appreciation for the continuing work and profitable effort in the preparation of this periodical. It is a unique bond that is shared by people of like faith; for which we should be truly thankful.

For some time thoughts concerning how the Holy Spirit dealt with man

under law, the legal dispensation, as compared to grace, have occupied my mind. I do not recall seeing articles on the subject nor hearing it in preaching, but would be pleased to have others' thoughts on the matter.

In the Old Testament, ". . . holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (II Peter 1:21) But it does not appear that there is an indwelling of the spirit, nor that ". . . the body is the temple of the Holy Ghost" for those prophets of old. The exercise of the Spirit in the O. T. was not completely external, but neither was it internal (indwelling) in the sense that it was after Pentecost.

For a clear view of what this different working of the Spirit is *now,* as compared to olden times, we can, I believe, turn to the things that are wonderfully and typically foretold in the things set before us in the O. T. We have a typical application of the illuminating of the Spirit in the tabernacle, and its furniture, and the change that took place in the tabernacle as the covenant of grace was brought in.

In the tabernacle we find that the golden candlestick, along with the table of shewbread, was set without the inner veil. (Ex. 26:35) It is this golden candlestick that is of particular interest here, in that it is both typical of Christ and also of the Holy Spirit. It typifies Christ in its purity, and in the fact that it is beaten work, (the suffering of Christ). The Holy Spirit is represented here in the light that proceeds from this lamp, or rather from the seven lamps on the candlestand. This light is caused by the burning of the ". . . pure olive oil beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always." (Ex. 27:20) It is generally assumed, and correctly so, I believe, that the oil represents the Holy Spirit.

It might also be pointed out that the "anointing" with oil, the setting apart of an individual, was an *outward* act, and limited primarily to the legal dispensation. Anointing, in this respect, I believe is limited totally to the legal dispensation. This shows that those under the legal dispensation, before the offering up of Christ, did not have the blessing of the full "indwelling" of the Holy Spirit.

In the tabernacle we see that the light from the burning oil (the revealing of the spirit) was the only light in the tabernacle. At least from the description of the structure it would appear that no external light could come in, and no other source of light is mentioned. So the light could shine only as far as the inner veil. The veil is also a representation of Christ. (Heb. 10:20) It hung at the entrance to the holy of holies, the place where God said he would meet with his people, above the mercy seat, between the cherubims. So, to meet and commune with God, the high priest must go beyond the veil. We see here that ". . . no man cometh to the Father but by me." (John 14:6)

From both a literal as well as a spiritual sense they were still in darkness. They were walking by law (literal obedience) and not by the light of faith. This is typically shown from the fact that there was no literal means of lighting the holy of holies from within the veil.

All of this was changed when Christ was crucified. The veil was rent. It was torn by an unseen hand from top to bottom. Now the light from the burning oil, proceeding from the candlestick, for the first time shown through the rent veil revealing that area within the holy place — the holy of holies that had before been kept in darkness. This then, is the literal and typical picture of God the Father being revealed by God the Spirit through the sacrifice made by our God and Savior Jesus Christ.

What is foretold here in type, is it not the same that happened on the day of Pentecost? Christ had been crucified and the Comforter did come. Not only did the Spirit come filling "all the house" (the same kind of filling as under the legal dispensation) but in addition, "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost," (internally quickened by

the Spirit). No longer must they depend on law written on stones, but now the law was written in their heart. Now the things that had before been hidden, were, and still are being revealed by the indwelling Spirit, (light shining into the holy of holies through the rent veil).

We see in I Peter 1:10, 11, that the prophets desired to know more of the things which they were moved to prophesy. In verse 11 the wording reads, ". . . what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was *in them* did signify . . ." This "in them" could be interpreted to be the same relationship (the indwelling spirit) seen at Pentecost and after, but I do not believe so.

In John 14:26, Christ says, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things . . ." This is indicated to be a new relationship, and not one of the past. Under the relationship of the O. T. even Balaam's ass replied against him, when used by an angel of the Lord. But this in no way implies that there was any spiritual thing regarding the animal. His internal parts were used by the angel, but there was no "indwelling" of the animal. Neither does the implication of the spiritual dealings with the prophets of old indicate that they had a "spiritual" understanding of what they spoke — not in the sense of the spiritual understanding under grace. Until the spiritual way to God had been opened, through the crucified body of Jesus (the rent veil) the Holy Spirit did only reveal these things outwardly, (the light from the candlestand shining only in the area without the veil).

To go a step further, let us look again at what happened on Pentecost. Once the indwelling of the Holy Spirit was accomplished, His coming into the heart and revealing God, through the sacrifice of Jesus, then comes the wonderful discourse of Peter in Acts 2. He explains the meaning of the words of the prophet Joel; he rehearses the works of Jesus, proving that he is Lord and Christ; and in verse 21 he declares salvation by grace.

If this is a correct interpretation then the Holy Spirit is an indwelling spirit to those that believe, to those that are called according to his purpose. The body, under grace, is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit quickens, comforts, teaches, counsels and reveals those things of God that are needful for each of those of the household of faith.

Sincerely,
Wayman G. Chapell

SIGNS IS DEAR TO HIM

230 Marilee Row
Grants Pass, Oregon 97526

Dear Elder Wood:

I am enclosing an obituary of my 92 year old sister, and a check for the Indigent Fund. I hope you can publish this obituary in the best paper on earth, which I have been taking over 22 years; and it seems dearer to me all the time. I never fail to read every word in it each time it comes, and some of the wonderful letters I read several times.

I used to write Elder Dodson. He said he knew my father very well and had preached with him and slept with him. It shouldn't be too long now before I will be going home to meet all of my loved ones, as I will be 88 my next birthday.

May the good Lord bless all of you editors and keep up the good work from now on.

Your brother in sweet hope,
C. M. Greathouse

DESIRES THAT WE GO NEITHER TO THE LEFT OR THE RIGHT

308 A Wyandotte
Shreveport, La. 71101

Elder and Sister Hudson
Bastrop, La.

My Dear Ones:

I have been thinking of you all and thought I would scribble a short note tonight. Remona, we certainly missed you at Liberty Hill Sunday. Seems like ages since I last saw you. Do hope you are doing better and have a little relief from your sinuses.

In my feelings, we were blessed to feast upon the crumbs from the Master's table Sunday. If I know my heart, I believe that wonderful doctrine of predestination and a sovereign God that you were blessed to so ably set forth, Brother Woodrow. It was indeed much comfort to me and also strengthening.

Oh! the very longing and desire of my heart and soul is that the Lord will lead, guide, direct and fill you precious Elders with words of wisdom and comfort to feed the little flock, and to continue to stand fast and "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." May the Lord lead and guide our wandering feet so that we will (as you so humbly begged in the prayer on Sunday) neither go to the left nor right, but keep us in the right way so that we may humbly, yet boldly contend for this precious doctrine, and not shun any part of it because of fear of any man or men.

Love,
Mary Davis

FELT TO BE THE LEAST

Rt. 1, Box 34
North East, Md. 21901

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

Hope these lines find you both feeling better. I know you were very tired last Sunday.

Elder Wood, your sermon Sunday was of so much comfort. It seemed we were all drawn so closely together by God's abounding grace. Although I felt to be the least of them all. Surely God was in our midst and enabled you to preach the power and glory of our God.

I am still feasting on that lovely day. It humbled me very much, and also gave me strength in the Lord, for He put words in your mouth for our comfort. He knows our every need, and our thoughts from afar.

I felt I must write you a few words, and am always so glad to hear from you. I hope we may be blessed to meet at Black Rock the 1st Sunday in June for the all-day meeting. We are looking forward to you coming to spend the night with us soon. The Benjamins send their love and best regards.

"If fellowship with saints below
Is to our souls so sweet,
What heavenly raptures shall we know
When 'round the throne we meet."

With love and sweet fellowship,
Mrs. David Farmer

"CANNOT BE MOVED"

Rt. 1, Box 297
Purlear, N. C. 28665

Dear Editors:

I have been a reader of the *Signs of the Times* over two years, and it has been a feast of fat things to me. I want to say, Many thanks to all the editors and writers to God's humble poor. We are all one for we have one teacher. God said that no man shall teach his neighbor to know the Lord, but all should know him from the least to the greatest.

I have been a Bible reader since very young. I can't do much work anymore, but hope I can keep my eyesight. I feel thankful to the good Lord for giving me understanding when I read, and for blessing me to keep up and going. I was 85 years old April 8, 1970.

It is wonderful to read the "Voices of the Past"; to read the predestinarian doctrine which was preached and written many years before I was born. We have the book by Elder J. D. Cockram, who gave God all the glory. I remember that Elder Wyatt and my father

were persecuted for the doctrine. They were God's servants contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. I believe God's children see alike, for our dear Saviour is our teacher; and He is the way, the truth and the life. Each day He makes me able to ask him for his mercy; which I don't feel worthy to receive; and I can't be moved from what He has taught me. According to nature, my time here isn't long, and I am looking forward to that great city whose maker and builder is God.

I am enclosing $5.00.

Lessie L. Craven

UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

The sixty-fourth session of the *Upper Country Line Association* will be held with Big Meadows Church July 18, 19, and 20, 1970; beginning Saturday before the 3rd Sunday at 11 A. M.

The Big Meadows Meeting House is approximately 15 miles south of Graham on Highway 87, and 10 miles north of Pittsboro in Chatham County, N. C. Travel approximately 15 miles south of Graham on Highway 87; cross Cane Creek just inside Chatham County, and take first hard road right. Go about 2 miles, and take left on hard-surface. The place of meeting will be located 1½ miles on the right.

We invite all of our corresponding ministers, brethren and friends of our faith and order to meet with us.

Donald E. Smith, Assn. Clerk

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Pigg River Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Town Creek Church on Friday, Saturday and 1st Sunday in August, 1970.

The Town Creek Meeting House is in Franklin County, Virginia, 3½ miles west from U. S. Route 220. Turn off 220 on State Road 605 at the sign directing to Ferrum, Henry, and Philpott Dam. This sign is about 12½ miles from Martinsville north and the same distance south of Rocky Mount, Virginia.

A cordial invitation is extended to our correspondents and other brethren and friends to meet with us.

John D. Wood, Clerk

Danville, Virginia **July, 1970**

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SLATE HILL MEETING

There is an all-day meeting apponted to be held in the Old School Baptist Meeting House at Slate Hill the first Saturday in August (August 1st) 1970.

Brethren and friends, lovers of gospel truth, are invited to meet with us. Lunch will be served.

A. J. Slauson

EDITORIAL

WHAT WONDROUS LOVE!

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for GOD IS LOVE." (1st John 4:7-8)

I cannot refrain from calling upon all those who fear the Lord to give attention while I tell what God has done for my soul. I must tell of the power of His wondrous love. I must tell of the changes it has wrought in my heart and mind. I must hint at the joy, peace, and happiness experienced, — even amidst tribulations. I must tell you that LOVE does not do away with the Ten Commandments and the many other tributary commandments quoted in the Scriptures. The whole *duty* of man is to fear God and keep His commandments. Perfect love casteth out fear and causes one to LOVE God and his fellowman, and all these commandments become a right principle in his heart. I must tell you that this wondrous love changes *duty* into a *privilege,* and *burden* into *desire.* This love is the only thing that can change one's character, will, or life. It is the only thing that will cause one to love his enemies, do good to them who despitefully work, and pray for those who persecute. I must emphasize that LOVE is the Virtue of virtues as well as the Gift of gifts. It is GOD for God is LOVE!

"What wondrous love is this, O, my soul? What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dreadful curse for my soul? When I was sinking down beneath God's righteous frown, Christ laid aside His crown for my soul." These words of the good old hymn have been flooding my mind and heart for several days. I want to bear this news and sing His praise to the children of men for the wonderful work of LOVE. It is the love of God, "Shed abroad in our hearts which is given us by the Holy Ghost," which causes us to "glory in tribulations also." The commandment of love was that which gave Paul the knowledge of his sins. This commandment killed the proud, mighty, and self-righteous Saul, the great. The commandment of love caused the new person, Paul, the little, to manifest opposite characteristics. This new man, Paul, confessed his sins and ignorance. He trusted no longer in himself but in Christ Jesus. He manifested humility, dependence, and trust. What Wondrous Love is this that changes a persecutor into a worshiper, a self-righteous man into begging for the mercies of God, and supplants the spirit of gentleness which subdues the arrogance already in us! Life void of love is a living death. Though rich in this world's material goods, a man without love is very poor. Though a man may be as a pauper naturally, if he be possessed with Godly love, he is very rich. Augustine said, "Charity is patient in adversities, temperate in prosperity, strong in grievous sufferings, cheerful in good works; most secure in temptation, most expansive in hospitality; most joyous among true brethren, most patient among false ones." What wondrous love is this which is the power of prophecy, the basis of knowledge, the fruit of faith, the riches of the poor, and the life of the dying.

How tender, soft, melodious, and meek must have been the tones of the voice of Jesus as He talked to the arrogant Saul while Saul was on the way

to Damascus with warrants of arrest. It is true that a soft answer turneth away wrath, and that grievous words stir up anger. Jesus did not approach Saul in the dignity of the Creator giving authoritative commands. He approached him with a simple question, "Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Jesus gave an humble answer to Saul's question: "Who art thou, Lord?" He answered, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." These words caused Paul to fear and tremble. These words caused Paul to ask, "What wilt thou have me to do." The Lord said, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." Paul experienced a drastic change of characteristics. Paul was made willing to do anything that Jesus would have him do. The love of God inspires one to love God and his fellowman. One who possesses this love by gift of the Holy Ghost will not be trying to find excuses for not obeying the commandments of God, but will be diligently trying, and praying for power to do them. While love is on the throne of the soul, one will be so conscious of the depraved condition of his carnal mind that his best falls far short of the requirements of love. While love reigns in the soul, one is patient, kind, generous, humble, courteous, unselfish, sincere, and of good temper.

Many schools of training have been established for the purpose of transforming the will, renewing the mind, teaching morality, and making many rules for proper conduct. NONE of these institutions have succeeded. The wicked will do wickedly. The wicked cannot so polish their wills to reach beyond the realm of wickedness. It requires the baptism of the Holy Ghost, which is regeneration, to make a new person. It requires the "Love of God" shed abroad in the heart which is given us by the Holy Ghost, to transform the will, renew the mind, effectually teach Christianity, and inspire proper conduct in each and every circumstance. God's School of Love is successful in its operation and objectives. A child of God cannot reach these supernatural objectives in this life but he will forever be doing his best and praying to be empowered to reach the goal.

There have been many ideas suggested relative to the "tribulations" Paul had under consideration in Romans 5:3-5: ". . . We glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope; And hope maketh not ashamed; *because* the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us." We understand that *tribulation* is derived from the Latin *tribulum,* which was the threshing instrument, or roller, whereby the Roman husbandmen separated the corn from the husks; and "*tribulation*" in its primary significance, was the act of this separation. The love which is of God is the eternal good, or fluid, infused in the soul by the Holy Ghost. This love is the precious substance which shows up the impurities of the best in the minds of natural men. All the "goodness" of carnality appears to be the crust of vanity that needs to be separated from this love which is precious. It is not a pleasant experience to be on the threshing floor.

The purpose of God threshing His people is to separate the precious from the vile in each and every person. Sorrows, adversities, severe afflictions, heartaches, and sundry troubles are all used as "threshing instruments" in the hands of a loving God, to "refine" His people. The greatest of these tribulations that I have experienced is a guilty conscience for having violated the law of Love. I undergo continuous threshings which make me to cry out, O wretched man that I am! I have never complained to God of any cruelty to me. I have felt that I deserved far more punishment, or chastisement, than has ever been administered. What wondrous love is this that causes one to even thank God for these tribulations; yes, even to thank Him for making us to

know how stubborn, unruly and rebellious we are by nature. It is necessary that we be baffled, smitten, and scourged before we can realize how vain we are. The flail in the hands of the Thresher is used to bruise the sheaves and break out the wheat from the straw. Blows of pain, aches, misfortunes, and daily dying are used to divide the flesh and spirit. The breaking off the worldly crust is unpleasant while being experienced but afterward yieldeth the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who are exercised thereby. We do not have any idea how much chaff there is in our hearts before the threshing. I have more confidence in the person who feels to fail in all of his efforts in meeting the requirements of God's law of love than I do for those who feel they are the loveliest. The love of God causes the boaster to be aware of his boasting, the disobedient to be aware of his disobedience, and the ungrateful to be aware of his ingratitude. Our nature is to boast, disobey God's law, and to be blind to His goodness toward us. This love is the purest of the pure which show up our impurities.

Paul discussed the varied gifts of the Spirit in 1st Corinthians 12. He ended this chapter with, "But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet show I unto you a more excellent way." He ended the 13th chapter by saying: "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Paul proves by contrasting the grace of charity, the great love, with all other gifts, or talents, that void of charity, all is vain. He proves that the way of love is much more to be desired than the way of great accomplishments and display of many talents. We are to: "Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts . . ." (1 Cor. 14:1) These gifts are good enough to be desired and coveted; yet, love is that which is to be followed. What wondrous love is this which causes one to prefer being rich in love and weak in faith, rather than being strong in faith, yet void of love. I had much rather hear a short simple loving sermon than to hear a long eloquent discourse on theology. I had rather hear one urge the necessity of following after love which make peace and unity, than to hear a lecture of one trying to prove that he is strong in the faith. I had rather see the disposition of love in a person that is weak in the faith, than to hear words of great faith from a loveless individual. I admit my weakness in the faith as well as my disobedience to the law of Love. God help me!!

Paul's analysis of *charity* is brief yet reveals so much. Let us quote: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth . . ." (1 Cor. 13:4-8) This wondrous love works patience and longsuffering to the injuries which come from man as well as the afflictions suffered from God. This wondrous love works reconciliation to suffering and submission to God's will. It weans us from our own will and works contentment in our hearts to be content with our lot. The first ingredient of love is *patience*. The second ingredient spoken by Paul is *kindness*. Kindness is anxious not to give offense to any creature. Kindness watches for opportunity to assist anyone to be more comfortable. Christ's life was spent in doing kind things for the poor, halt, maimed, blind, diseased, and sinful. Someone said, "The greatest thing a man can do for his Heavenly Father is to be kind to some of His other children." Persons deserving love most, least need it; persons deserving love least, need it most. Try being kind to your enemies and you will be surprised and pleased with the results. Try a soft answer to the wrathful.

The third ingredient of charity is, *"Envieth not."* I can think of no word in the English language to use properly

as an antonym to envy. Gladness, happiness, and rejoicing in heart when we see the good fortunes of others, certainly must be the positive way to put it. I suppose that envy is the basest of passions that make men most miserable. It is something that nothing but the love of God can abate. Envy causes us to feel uneasiness in the sight of another's possessions, or happiness. Envy causes us to dislike one because of his fortunes or happiness. It is the most difficult vice to hide. Am I irritated when another is praised? Am I hurt because another can write and preach better than I? God rid us of envy.

The fourth ingredient of charity is *humility*. "Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up." Love certainly crushes pride, makes it detestable, and dethrones it. Pride is the begetter of all wranglings, jars, and discords. We read in Proverbs 13:10, "Only by pride cometh contention." One has to learn through hurt pride that you can't push yourself ahead by patting yourself on the back. Love is the only thing that can teach us this truth. One in possessession of this wondrous love learns that he can never get the right "pitch" to sing his own praise. Deeds done and work accomplished thru love need not to be told by the doer. If love prompts an action you will not want to take time to tell about it. You will be interested in the next act. This wondrous love makes you use the time in praying that those without it use in boasting. God grace us to be HUMBLE.

The fifth ingredient of love is *courtesy*. Charity, "Doth not behave itself unseemly." Love begets politeness, good behavior, proper etiquette, cheerfulness, and good manners. This is a banner of love that draws attention from every one with whom you come in contact. One with Love in his heart can act properly in strange places without special training. Courtesy prompted by love is the simple passport which enables one to mingle with any society, and enter even palaces from his own humble cottage. Behavior is a mirror in which every one shows his true image. If one be filled with love his behavior will be proper in every circumstance. One without love may go through all kinds of training, yet his behavior will be irritable to others. My mother constantly reminded me to behave myself. May the wondrous love of God teach me good behavior.

The sixth ingredient of love is *unselfishness*: "Seeketh not her own." Love will make one willing to give up his own rights. A true lover will regard the rights of others and disregard his own rights. True love puts self in the background. The man void of love, loves himself supremely. Love does not cause one to demand his rights to the extent that it hurts or wounds his brethren or fellowman. Even though one feels that someone is due him an apology, charity will not seek it. If one be wounded without cause, love demands that he take it without a murmur. God grant that we sacrifice contending for our own rights and peculiar convictions which would tend to cause trouble.

The seventh statement concerning love is: "Is not easily provoked." This means *Good Temper* is one of the sterling characteristics of the possessor of this charity. Good temper is evident when a person cannot *lead,* he refuses to *drive*. One does not become fretful and impatient when accomplishments of his efforts are delayed, because delays are inevitable. The best of people have been often provoked to such extent that bad temper was manifest. It is common to hear the expression, "He would be very good if he could control his temper." Ill temper with high moral character means that the possessor is weak in love. Ill temper is the sin of the disposition of a person which is very common and hurtful to his influence. God grant that we be, "Not easily provoked."

We can not do more than hint at some of the characteristics of love in this article. We shall speak of *one thing* this love does which is necessary to bring

into our experience all these characteristics. This is relative to *all things*: "Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." (1 Cor. 13:7) We bear all things because we are convinced that, "All things work together for good to them who love God." We know that the wrath of man can do no more against us than we deserve because: "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." (Psalm 76:10). We believe, bear, hope, and endure all things because: "The Lord hath made all things for Himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." We have strong consolation that God's purpose for the wicked referred to in Proverbs 16:4, is to use as His sword to render judgment and correction to His people for their good; as well as, to deliver their soul from the wicked. David prayed, "Arise, O Lord, disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the *wicked, which is thy sword.*" What wondrous love is this that makes us confident in the statement: "For *of him,* and *through him,* and *to him,* are *all things*: to whom be glory forever. Amen." (Romans 11:36) Lovers are aware of the fact that they cannot love too much. Sometimes we are disappointed because our love to our fellowman seems to be without success. However, we believe that God surely will restrain love that is not God-honoring and helpful to our fellowman, just as surely as He restrains wrath and hatred which will not work for our good and His praise. Brethren, there is no danger of too much true love being lavished upon our fellowman and God! Let us rejoice in the Truth. We sorrow when iniquity abounds, — even in our own hearts. May love so flood our souls that we think no evil. When evil thinking comes into our minds, may LOVE arise and say, *No, no, not that!*

We close with the first expression of the text which heads this treatise: "Beloved, Let us love one another, for love is of God." What wondrous love is this, O my soul? which causes us to see how short we come in meeting these requirements. God has loved us so wondrously, may we pray that we be enabled to love our fellow man and our brethren *just a wee bit.* May our soul taste from time to time, a little bit of the sweetness to such extent that we may sing: WHAT WONDROUS LOVE IS THIS, O MY SOUL?

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ECCLESIASTES

Solomon, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, contributed three books to the Old Testament Scriptures: Ecclesiastes, Proverbs and the Song of Songs. The Song of Solomon sings of love, the love of Christ and his bride for each other; Proverbs gives us the sayings of perfect Wisdom whose value surpasses richest gems and Ophir's gold; Ecclesiastes preaches legalism and unfolds the outlook of man under the law. It is of the latter, we wish now to write; hoping to give a sketch of the book's substance.

The sayings of Ecclesiastes are frequently quoted as being on a par with the writings of the New Testament; such is not the true purpose for which the Holy Ghost caused the book to be written. Taking the Bible from beginning to end, it stands absolutely alone in all literature; and were all books to be destroyed, leaving only the Bible, we should still have in these holy writings all necessary for the thorough furnishing of true believers to every good work. In the Bible, we have recorded by inspiration *things spoken by righteous men,* things said by *wicked men*; we have therein the *actions and words of the devil set down, the careers of false teachers,* as well as the *record of God's dealings with men,* the narrative of the *complete work of the Lord Jesus Christ* and the *operation*

of the Holy Ghost upon and within the elect.

The Bible is thus a complete but diversified book, all written by the Spirit, but showing us all sides of life, all kinds and conditions of men, all sorts of teachings, the true and the false. For instance, in the book of Job, we have set down there for our learning: the doings and sayings of Satan, the words of God, the experience of a man of God under sore affliction, the teachings of false doctrine uttered by professed comforters, and the sayings of Elihu against whom the Lord voiced no reproof. Job's three friends did not preach the truth. As we read the things they told Job, we find in their sayings many expressions which sound good and seem good, but the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath." If God did not approve their sayings, we certainly must not. However fair and plausible may be the professions of men, if they occasion God's wrath beware. Many preachers say some good things, but if they do not square with God's word, we cannot believe them.

Now coming to Ecclesiastes the Preacher, we find upon careful examination of his preaching that he *does not set forth gospel or grace at all, but only law and condemnation.* Yet, occasionally one will meet with or hear quotations from the book of Ecclesiastes uttered as though this legal preacher is to be regarded equally with Paul, Peter, James, John and even Jesus Christ. This book of the Preacher is short: twelve brief chapters covering but eight pages in our Bibles. In this small compass, the phrases "under the sun" and "under heaven" are repeated thirty-one times; and therein is the keynote to the theme of this legal preacher. He is considering things under the sun, earthly things, and not heavenly things at all. He is voicing the viewpoint of man under law who knows that there is one God and who knows that he must some day face that God in judgment. There is not one word in all the book referring to the cross of Christ, the death of Christ for his people; not one single word of the resurrection of the dead nor of justification by faith through the shed blood of the Redeemer. The new creation that is in Christ Jesus is not seen at all in Ecclesiastes, not a hint of the gospel of grace.

In short, Ecclesiastes is not a survey of the heavenlies, but wholly of the earthlies. No hope of any future life after death is hinted at until we come to the eleventh chapter; then there is an intimation, and only an intimation, that there may be a future, and we are advised to cast our bread upon the waters in the hope that it shall return to us after many days; but even here not a word of immortality is assured us. The phrases "to the earth," "upon the earth," "of the earth," occur in all ten times. "Vanity of vanities," "all is vanity," "this is vanity," are repeated in all thirty-three times. We are told no less than four times in the book that there is nothing better for a man than that he eat, drink and enjoy his labor.

In view of all these expressions, it is clearly evident that this Preacher's view of life is depressing and discouraging; and all because it is inspiration's record of the viewpoint of a man who is under law, who realizes the emptiness of all things earthly, who sees nothing ahead in the future but that he must meet his God in judgment and can see no way of escape from it: hence, resolves that the best thing man can do is to get out of this life all the best there is in it. No one who has a hope of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ and who daily lives upon his sustaining grace, will accept this legal estimate for one moment. We know that we do live our lives under grace in hope of the glorious immortality that is to come, that we cannot be satisfied with the joy of our labor here nor be appeased with things which satisfy the

appetite of the natural man. In contrast to this advice of Ecclesiastes to get all the good we can out of this present earthly life, Jesus said that he who seeks to save his life shall lose it and that our lives do not consist in the abundance of the things which we possess. Also in contrast, the inspired apostle counsels us to make no provision for the flesh to satisfy the lusts thereof. Whom are we to believe: Christ and Paul or the legal preacher? This Preacher says, "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever." And so it does appear to man under the sun who looks at only earthly things; but that the earth abides forever is not true to the man of faith who looks above and beyond the earth to the glorious inheritance being reserved for those being reserved unto it. Christ said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away." Peter said, "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up." Whom shall we believe: Christ and Peter or the legal Preacher?

In chapter three Ecclesiastes sets down what is frequently called by some the doctrine of predestination: but it is such a view of that doctrine as is no comfort to him nor to us. He does not see predestination centered in Christ, he does not see it at all as Paul does, as a golden chain of doctrine reaching from eternity before time, through time, to eternity beyond time. This man under law sees life and death, sorrow and laughter, gain and loss, loving and hating, war and peace, and so forth, as only a weary round of labor and travail from which man cannot escape. See how he sums up this fatalistic view of things in verses nine and ten, "What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboreth? I have seen the travail which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it." He sees the inevitable events of human existence under the sun as a sort of fatalistic treadmill from which there is no hope of escape, but only a succession of ceaseless labor which God has given to his creatures to be exercised with. How opposite is all this to the joyous and triumphant doctrine of predestination believed by Paul wherein he assures us that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose; that the foreknown children of God are the ones to be conformed to the image of his Son, that these thus predestinated are effectually called by saving grace, that they are justified and to be glorified. What an infinite difference between predestination as looked upon by man under the law, and that same doctrine as believed and rejoiced in by the man under grace! Which do you prefer? Ecclesiastes or Paul?

Some folks think that when they believe that whatsoever is to be will be, that makes them Old School Baptists. We have had outsiders tell us they were of our faith. When we have asked them for proof, they invariably say because they believe in the sureness of the inevitable. What a sad estimate of our faith is this! Unless one has been made to see himself as a lost sinner justly condemned under God's law, unless one has been brought to repentance and to the belief of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ and has received a hope of eternal life through the merits of God's Son; unless one has been, through the Holy Ghost, baptized into Jesus Christ and has put on Christ by baptism, that one is not a true Old School Baptist, no matter how much he may aver that whatever is to be will be.

We have not the space here to go all through this book and point out the contrasts between man under law and man under grace. It is an interesting study. Just a few more things we will call attention to. In chapter nine, verse eleven, he says that time and chance happeneth to all; and in chapter seven, verse seventeen, he believes a man may die before his time. Thus, like all legal preachers, he is not consistent in his

doctrine of predestination or any other doctrine. In verse three of chapter seven we are advised to go to the house of mourning rather than to the house of feasting. That sounds well, but what reason does he give? It is in order that our hearts may be made better by the sadness of our countenances. What sophistry is this! Like all legalists, he emphasizes the outward appearance and that man is made better thereby. This is the same doctrine preached by the Pharisees in the day of our Lord, and Jesus condemned them as hypocrites and told them that while they were outwardly pious, they were inwardly full of uncleanness. Against this Jesus warns his disciples thus, "When ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast." The truth is that no amount of outward piety will have any righteous or purifying effect upon any man's heart. The regenerating work must come from the inside, not from the outside.

In verses sixteen and seventeen of chapter seven, we are counselled not to be too righteous nor too wicked. Evidently we are advised to adopt moderation in both goodness and wickedness. This is dreadful when we consider that the Preacher assures us that judgment in the presence of God lies ahead of us and that God shall bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good, or evil. How does he expect to stand in that judgment when, contrarywise, he tells us to be moderate in both being good and in being bad? Over against this, remember what Christ said: "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." No middle-of-the-road policy will do if we hope to stand justified before God in that day: we shall have to be clothed in an absolutely perfect righteousness, not in any righteousness that is moderately perfect. It must be the righteousness of Christ or nothing.

Going again to the third chapter, verses nineteen and twenty, we have this legalist's estimate of men and beasts and of the end of them. Death ends all. As dies the beasts, so dies man. How false this is! Yet, let us remember, it is the belief of one who sees only things under the sun, of one who is looking at the earthlies: no view of the hereafter is here, no appreciation whatever of the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. How wonderful the Bible is! Here we find recorded centuries ago things which men today are calling "modernism." The boasted modernism of today is nothing more or less than ancient philosophy revived. Men and beasts are not alike, they do not have the same breath, they are not the same flesh at all. After God had made all the beasts he made man. Nowhere is it said that God breathed into any beast the breath of life. Man alone was inbreathed by the Deity, man alone was made in God's image. Man has a distinction and dignity that no beast ever had.

Science, falsely so-called, tells us men and beasts have derived from the same original one living cell. It is absolutely false. The inspired writer of the letters to the Corinthian brethren tells us, "All is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds." Human flesh is not beasts' flesh, nor birds' flesh, nor fishes' flesh. Whom shall we believe: Paul or the legal preacher? All do not go to the same place when they die. Ecclesiastes sees no further than the return of the body to dust and the return of man's spirit to God. He has no view whatsoever of the resurrection of the dead at this hour nor at any time yet to come. Even David in the Psalms knew better than that, for he says that though the wicked are laid in the grave like sheep and death shall feed on them, yet shall the upright have dominion over them in the morning of the resurrection. Beasts, when they die, go neither to hell nor to heaven: but the word assures us that while the wicked are turned into

hell, the souls of the righteous go to be with the Lord to await the resurrection of the body at the last day. None of this does the legalist see.

"That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been: and God requireth that which is past." No, not at all. If God requires the things that are past, then will he require at our hands the satisfaction for our transgressions. This he will never do. As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us through the perfect atonement which Christ made for all his people. Our sins and our iniquities God will remember against his chosen no more forever. He does not require the thing that is past. Again, this Preacher mournfully bewails the fact that there is nothing new under the sun. "Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new?" Yes, there are infinite new things to them that are in Christ Jesus even while they dwell "under the sun." To the man under law's condemnation, to whom the heavens are brass, there is nothing new and only a ceaseless round of weariness and unrequited labor. To the believer under the gospel of grace, old things have passed away and all things are become new. This new creature, recipient of the birth from above, stands in a wholly new kinship with God. He is possessed with a new and lively hope which looks unto and waits for, a new heavens and a new earth in which dwells righteousness. When the virgin Mary conceived by the Holy Ghost and brought forth the Son of the Highest, that was a wholly new thing in the earth "under the sun." When the church at Jerusalem was baptized in the Holy Ghost and three thousand were added to the church, that was a wholly new thing in the earth. There is a world of new things to the man under grace.

The twelfth chapter of Ecclesiastes is sometimes construed to apply to a young believer in grace. It has no such application. After looking at all things under the sun and taking his view of things earthly, knowing there is a God and that judgment awaits him in the presence of that God, this Preacher advises the young man to so conduct himself as to be able to meet satisfactorily that judgment when it comes. The twelfth chapter really begins with the ninth verse of the eleventh chapter. His advice to youth is to let his heart cheer him, walk in the ways of thine heart and walk in the sight of thine eyes; only *be careful,* because for all these things God will some day bring this one to judgment. Again, legalism! This is the same kind of religion preached to young people today by legalist: go ahead and have a good time, but be careful, because you will have to pay up for all your naughtiness; hence be innocent in your pleasures and not supercilious in your goodness. What folly! "Remember thy Creator." Yes, while you are young. Just what the world preaches today. Not a word said about remembering the Redeemer, remembering his mercy and lovingkindness: but only remember the Creator. God's creatorship and judgeship are all this legalist sees.

This Preacher concludes by saying he sought to find out acceptable words, even words of truth. Well, some do make that endeavor and with all their searching never find God, with all their learning never come to the truth. With all this man's own voluntary searching, he got no further than the law. The words that he found were as goads, and gospel words are not such. A goad is a stick or rod used to prod a dumb animal, such as an ox or an ass, and make it go ahead. Just that was the law. Israel was a stiff-necked and rebellious people and needed always to be goaded by the commandments. Moses, their lawgiver, the "one shepherd" of the Jewish nation under law, was ever reminding them of their duty. The Levites, after Moses, were the masters of the assemblies who freely used the goads on the people, threatening them with judgments in order to subdue them into obedience. Not so at

all are the gracious exhortations of the gospel. These act on our hearts, those goads prodded the flesh. The teachings of grace are inward guides which teach us the denial of our ungodly lusts and draw us to lives of sobriety and godliness. A man of God, from within himself is graciously able to bridle his whole body, for the reason that his body is indwelt by the Holy Ghost which gives him the enabling power to control his body. This is just the opposite of the way beasts are controlled. "We put bits in horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their body." — James iii. 3. The believer's body is controlled by inward grace, not by outward prods and goads of a law written on tables of stone.

Now, we come to the conclusion of the whole matter and that will settle it. Ecclesiastes sums up his whole sermon in these words, "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." If any of us have so far had any doubt about this being a law-preacher, this ought to settle it. He tells us that we must all face God in judgment and that every work and every secret thing will be called forth to the light. To prepare for this, we are to fear God and keep his commandments. This is the counsel of despair. Any sinner who thinks to be judged in the final judgment according to his works is bound to be cast into the lake of fire. This preacher is advising wrongly. The apostles told their people to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and they should be saved, this preacher says for us to labor to keep the commandments. Which course is the safe one? Shall we seek to be saved by our works or by faith through the Lord Jesus Christ? The fear of God which Ecclesiastes has in mind is not that holy reverential fear which is the hatred of evil and the beginning of wisdom. This fear he talks about is the sort of fear which enslaved the servant who had the one talent, as told in Matthew xxv. 24, 25. "Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou has not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: and *I was afraid,* and went and hid thy talent in the earth." This man's end was condemnation. The end of any sinner who thinks he can meet God in judgment upon the basis of having kept God's commandments, is condemnation. "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." "By grace are ye saved."

(Editorial by Elder H. H. Lefferts in May, 1932.)

PREDESTINATION

(By the late Elder P. D. Gold)

A question is somewhat stirred among Baptists concerning the extent of predestination. Some hold that it reaches to every event relating to the affairs of our lives, comprehending all things good and bad, in themselves considered; and these hold that the Lord has unlimited and absolute control over all wicked men and devils, and that no event however wicked in itself transpires contrary to the purpose of God, or defeats his purpose; but that everything, good or bad, is worked according to God's will; "Who works all things after the counsel of his own will." They feel that if any spirit or event is not absolutely under the control of the Lord it might defeat his purpose.

Others hold that the Lord works in his people all their good works, but they make a distinction between the good works that the Lord predestinates to be done in his people, and the evil works which men do who are not led by the Spirit of God.

To my mind it is true that God works in his people both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and ordains peace for them because he has wrought all their works in them. But to my mind it is also true that every event is absolutely under the power of God, whether it be good or evil in itself, and it is absolutely certain before hand that everything will transpire according to the purpose of God, and that men, even

wicked men meaning it for evil, do those things which God determined before to be done, not only what he would do in or by righteous men, but also whatever would be done by wicked men. To purpose that wicked men shall do wicked things, in accordance with their wicked principles, and as manifesting what is in them, God not, however, working in them to do these things, but Satan working in them, yet God using those according to his predestination to his own glory, displays a holy sovereignty beyond the power of mortal man to comprehend, yet it must be true. For he makes the wrath of man to praise him, and then restrains the remainder of wrath. But he *works* in his people both to will and to do according to his own good pleasure. In that sense those whom or all that he foreknew he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son.

I see no need for Baptists to dispute here, nor elsewhere. We all believe in the righteous, unlimited and eternal supremacy of God over all, and that he is *in* all his people. God means it all for good, though men mean it for evil.

The Lord cannot do wrong, but all his works praise him, and his saints shall bless him.

If God has shown those deep things to some and not to others, let not the strong despise the weak. My brother, if the Lord has shown you more than he has to others, he will also give you love and meekness enough to bear with others that have not seen so much. If the Lord has not shown these things to you surely you ought to wait patiently and not blame others.

You may all be sure that the Lord will do right.

Elder P. D. Gold
(In *Landmark* in 1885.)

OBITUARIES

M. V. GREATHOUSE

Brother Greathouse died March 10, 1970, at the age of 61. He was a close neighbor of the writer for many years; and was a good student.

Funeral services were conducted at Hartford Baptist Church March 11th by ministers Kenneth Cook, Eugene Brannon and Elder J. J. Collins. Interment was in Hartford City Cemetery.

He is survived by his wife, Kathryn; two sons, Larry and Gregory; four daughters, Glenda Miller, Bertie Johnson, Geraldine Ward and Teresa Greathouse; one brother, Crawford; and two sisters, Mrs. Vera Bell Thomley and Mrs. Willie Mae Gillman; and many other relatives and countless friends.

J. J. Collins

MRS. NANCY AUSTIN

Sister Austin died March 19, 1970, at her home Rt. 1, Black, Holmes County, Florida, at the age of 103 years. She had been a member of her beloved church some 90 years, and was a most devoted member, a good citizen; and knew her Bible well. The writer served as her pastor several years.

Funeral services were conducted at New Zion Church, March 21st by Elder J. J. Collins, using as a theme, The Resurrection. Interment was in the adjoining cemetery. She is survived by three sons: Sam, Albert and James Urquhart; two daughters, Mrs. Willie Clark and Mrs. Elvia Grubbs; 24 grandchildren, 61 great grandchildren; and 6 great great grandchildren.

What a wonderful life she lived so devoted to her family, her community, and her church. A vast concourse attended her funeral.

J. J. Collins

ASA FRANKLIN PILCHARD

Our dear brother, Asa Franklin Pilchard, was born July 5, 1893, and passed away Sunday, January 18, 1969. He was the son of the late Henry and Susan Pilchard. His wife, Mariam Payne, preceded him in death on June 13, 1958. His surviving children are: Mrs. Thelma Burbage and Mark O. Pilchard, Klej Grange, Pocomoke, Maryland; Mrs. Mildred Peacock, Willingbar, N. J.; Franklin Pilchard and Mrs. Dorothy Massey, Arlington Heights, Ill.

Brother Asa, as he was called by the Old Baptists, was a lovely brother in faith. He went before the Snow Hill Church October 5, 1964, and was baptized by his pastor, Elder W. D. Griffin. Our ages differed but our faith was in accord. He loved the Old Baptist faith and attended church when his health permitted. Such a travel in life as this dear one had! He lived through many changes and many ac-

complishments that God afforded man; but in the one thing that mattered there was no change. His God whom he worshipped was the same the day he was born, and the same the day he died. He believed in salvation by grace — that it was a free gift of God, and he had all power and had done a finished work.

His faith was his arm of strength during his illness. In his weary suffering, he manifested a spirit of Christian endurance, sustained by the grace of the giver of every good and perfect gift. During his illness he had a wonderful daughter, Thelma, to lean upon. God had placed her there for Brother Asa's comfort in times of pain and lonliness. She cared for him, and made her home open to his brethren. Her cordial welcome manifested the love of God in her heart, and respect for her father.

His funeral was held January 21, 1969, and he was buried in the family cemetery near Pocomoke, Maryland. His face has been sadly missed by his brethren, but we know, as did he, that this was the will of God. His appointed time had come. May it please his descendants to know that we did love and respect him, and the esteem in our hearts will never be lost. He was a dear brother who preceded us in death but had a hope that someday there would be no parting.

Sister Audrey Davis
New Church, Va.

WILLIAM OLIVER TURNIDGE

William Oliver Turnidge, son of the late Elder James Calvin and Sara Pigg Turnidge, passed away January 23, 1970, at the hospital in Ontario, Oregon, at the age of 88 years, 4 months and 20 days. He had been in failing health for several years, but was semi-active in a retired life until May 7, 1969, when he was entered into the Casa-Loma Convalescent Center in Fayette, Idaho, where he remained until the day of his death, when he was taken to the hospital for special treatment. However he did not respond to this treatment, and the Master called him home that evening.

He leaves a devoted wife, Viola, and five children: Rex L., Portland, Oregon; Raymond C. of Kearns, Utah; Hilda I. Kellis, Spokane, Wash.; Sheldon C. of Bountiful, Utah; and Opal W. Clapp of Meridian, Idaho; also 19 grandchildren and 16 great grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews.

Although Oliver never joined the church, he was a firm believer of Primitive Baptist doctrine, and faithfully accompanied his parents to church and continued to attend when possible after the passing of his parents.

Services were conducted January 26, 1970 at the Northam Jones Funeral Home, Weiser, Idaho, by Mr. Arthur Coats of Nyssa, Oregon. Interment was in the family plot in Hillcrest Cemetery. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Ruby G., and two brothers and five sisters.

Written by his wife,
Viola Turnidge

DAN PATTERSON

Mr. Dan Patterson departed this life on March 26, 1970, at the age of 55 years. Although he was not a member, he was a firm believer in this doctrine, and attended Liberty Hill Church near Farmerville, La. His mother, Sister Josie Patterson, and his brothers, Deacon Eugene Patterson, Deacon Royce Lee Patterson, and Brother John, Jr. (Buck) Patterson are all members of Liberty Hill Church. Dan is survived by his mother, six brothers, and two sisters, and also his wife.

It was during January that the doctor told Dan that he had leukemia and that he had about two months to live. Naturally all this upset Dan at first, but he wanted to know the truth, and a few days later he was blessed to be braced against all his troubles. God gives his people grace in time of need. Dan was blessed with endurance to the very end. This is a very good lesson for all of us living upon this earth. I visited Dan a number of times since January of this year, and I saw him just five hours before he departed.

Dan's life during his sickness is something to think about, and there is much comfort for us. When we are in trouble, when we are sick, and have heavy trials, etc., what a mercy it is to remember there is a God who is able to give us the strength and grace to bear whatever comes upon us. God will not put more upon us than we can stand.

Dan's funeral services were conducted by the writer at Liberty Hill Church on March 28, 1970, and his body was laid to rest in the cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.

IN MEMORIAM

With a sad and aching heart, I will try to write a few lines in memory of my sister, Katherine Whiteman, whom I loved very dearly. She was born February 16, 1878 and passed away February 23, 1970, making her stay on earth ninety-two years and seven days. She was the third of eleven children, six girls and five boys, born to the late Isaac R. and Sabina J. Greathouse. All were born in the state of Kentucky. Many people throughout the United States knew our father, who was an ordained Elder in the Primitive Baptist

Church, who preached for over sixty years and wrote many articles for the *Signs of the Times*.

Katherine had much of the care and responsibility of her younger brothers and sisters as they grew up. In 1900 we moved to Ohio where we lived for seven years, then our father, sister Katherine, brother Clarence and myself filed on homestead land in New Mexico. In time, we built up a twenty-thousand acre ranch where we raised cattle for many years.

In 1909 Katherine and Levi Whiteman were married. To them were born three children, Ridgley, now of Buena Park, California, Charles of Lakewood, California, and Mildred, who passed away in 1933 of leukemia.

Katherine and her husband Levi owned and operated a printing shop in Clovis, New Mexico. In this building Katherine and her daughter Mildred had a studio where they taught dancing. They specialized in the Spanish and Indian folk dances. They and their students presented many programs for civic organizations and clubs in the state. They made the beautiful costumes used in these programs.

When her daughter passed away, Katherine did not want to live any longer, and each night would pray for God to take her home before morning. Finally she decided if God wouldn't let her die, he must still have work for her to do on earth. So she again took up teaching children, for she firmly believed that if they were given interesting things to do in ways to use their abundant energy, that they wouldn't get into trouble. This she proved many times, when unruly ones were sent to her. She also sent many gift packages to the crippled children in the Carrie Tingley Hospital at Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, to make their lives more happy.

Words of consolation and a beautiful tribute were spoken by Pastor Walter Hunt. She was taken to Portales for interment near our father and mother. Here she awaits the resurrection of the just when the King of kings and Lord of lords shall come and her body shall be raised, an incorruptible one, fit for heaven. I often think how beautiful Heaven must be, sweet home of those whom Christ had made happy and free. How I do hope, dear Lord, there is a place for me.

Written by her brother, who dearly loved her.

Charlie H. Greathouse

MRS. JANICE GIBSON

I desire to leave on record something about my dear afflicted sister, Janice Gibson, who passed from this world at the age of 62 years and a few months, in a hospital in Memphis, Tenn.

She was an humble, sweet sister, and suffered much in her lifetime. I was called to her bedside December 31, 1969, and stayed near her for five weeks. Her suffering was great though she never one time cried out against it. She died March 4, 1970, of cancer of the lung. To each one who visited her, or asked about her, we give thanks to God for the charity shown and the prayers in her behalf; also for the flowers and cards of sympathy.

She spent three weeks with me here in North Carolina several years ago, and we took her with us to hear Elder David Spangler preach at Monticello Primitive Baptist Church. She told me she never heard anyone preach sweeter than he did. Surely she knew the joyful sound. To know her was to love her. She told me during her visit that she was lying on her bed one night suffering with a broken foot, and she was talking to her Lord, and He spoke saying, "You are my child." I said, "Sis, that experience will someday house you in heaven, where there will be no sorrow, pain, or heartaches — all tears will be wiped away."

During her illness and last days, we talked about that experience, and she said, "I have no home here on earth." And I told her, "But you have a beautiful home not of this world, and when you've finished with all this suffering, I am made to believe Jesus will come to carry you to be with him forever." To this tears filled her eyes, and she said, "That's what I am waiting for." What more can we hope for than this kind of testimony from one dying? She gently fell asleep, leaving us sweet memories of her.

She was not a member of a militant church, yet bore evidence of being one of the invisible body of Christ. She leaves a family saddened by her departure: her father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Harriman, Memphis; two brothers: Marvin R., Los Angeles, and Renard R., Memphis; and two sisters: Mrs. W. J. Vinson, Dallas, Texas, and the writer, Mrs. Fred Cobb, Ruffin, N. C.; and several nieces and nephews. We shall miss her, though our loss, we feel, is her gain.

Her husband preceded her in death about 8 years. Her body was laid beside him in the National Cemetery, near Memphis. Written by her unworthy sister, who misses her and loved her.

Sis, you now have left us saddened
Here on earth to see no more:
Someday may you wake in Jesus
Over on the golden shore.
May we then be gathered together:
There we're free from pain and sin
To praise and honor our precious Saviour
In a world that has no end. Amen.

Mrs. Fred Cobb

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 138 DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1970 NO. 8

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8/70
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ENJOYS READING THE *SIGNS*

789 E. Paxton Street
Danville, Va. 24541

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

Enclosed you will find $10.00 for the *Signs* for 1969 and 1970. Use the balance for the Indigent Fund.

I regret that I have not remitted sooner for the *Signs* that continued to come in my mother's name, Sallie B. Hall, who departed this life February 3, 1968. She lived with me twenty years. I feel confident that she is at rest in that heavenly home that God has prepared for his people. I continue to miss her daily, yet I know that my loss is her gain.

Please send the *Signs* in my name, Lillian H. Holt. I enjoy reading the dear *Signs* so much, as I do not get to attend church except the first weekends at Malmaison, my home church; since I am a nurse working night duty.

Oh how I miss the fellowship of the saints, and the gospel preached as I believe it! I find myself so often down in the valley, as one lost and undone; yet I would not exchange the hope I hold in my breast for all the riches of this world. I know that God's grace is sufficient to sustain his little ones.

I find much comfort and feel the closeness of God in my work, as I go about ministering to His sick children in the middle of the night.

May our Lord enable you dear Editors to continue to stand fast and preach the unsearchable riches of His grace.

A sister in hope of eternal life, yet I feel to be the least if one at all.
Lillian H. Holt

APPRECIATE THE VISITING ELDERS

218 Shad Point Road
Salisbury, Md. 21801

Dear Brethren:

We feel so very grateful to our Heavenly Father for the charity He puts in the hearts of his ministers, that they are willing to travel many miles to visit us in the Del-Mar-Va area. We have but few Primitive Baptist ministers in the eastern states, so you who have many gifts among you cannot know what a blessing it is to us and our pastors when your Elders come to be with us.

It is seldom that Elder Warren or Elder Griffin get to enjoy another Elder, as they both serve one or two churches each Sunday; and I feel it means so much to them when others visit with us, and they can exchange views and discuss different ideas.

It has been said we are fussy about how an Elder stands, or whether he speaks loud or low — nothing could be farther from the truth. As long as he preached Jesus our all in all, we are thankful to hear him.

Several of our churches have an annual Yearly Meeting, at which time we need a visiting Elder. Now we have

started having an All-day Meeting each fifth Sunday, and hope some of you will consent to be with us. So dear brethren when your pastor asks to be excused that he may visit us, please consider our need and bid him Godspeed.

Elder Cecil Turner was with us at our first Fifth Sunday All-day Meeting, and we cannot express how much the visit with him and the dear ones who accompanied him, meant to us. We hope whenever possible you will do as he did, and visit with us a few days, that we may get to know each other better and have more time to praise our Heavenly Father in song and word together.

My heart is so overflowing this morning as I remember the good talk and beautiful singing, that I felt I must tell you all through our family paper, the *Signs of the Times,* what a blessing it is when you visit us.

We are looking forward to the Yearly Meeting of the Salisbury Church when we hope Elder Donald Smith will visit us with friends from his part of the country; and then to the fifth Sunday in May when, if it is God's will, Elder Wallis Smith and Elder Spangler will be with us.

May God enable us to make you all feel so welcome you will want to come back again and again. I wish I were able to express to each of you who have visited the Salisbury Association, how thankful we were and how much your visit meant to us.

In grateful appreciation to Him who does all things well.

Ethel Holloway

MUTUAL COMFORT

308 A Wyandotte
Shreveport, La. 71101

Dear Remona:
(Sister W. W. Hudson)

. . . If I know my heart, I would love to be granted to write a few words of comfort to you concerning your lack of hearing and feasting upon the written word or the preaching. I feel to have fellowship for you because this has indeed been my experience from time to time. How it seems that times I can only read the letter and there is nothing more there for me.

I seem to be blessed at times with a hearing ear and understanding heart as I sit under the sound of the dear Elders' voices as they are lifted up and blessed to speak words of comfort to the little flock and sing praises unto almighty God. Yet I often find that I am given to feed upon the Holy Manna for those few moments and as soon as I leave the church, all has vanished from me. There are a few occasions when I hope and trust that I have been given to continue with sweet meditations upon certain sweet messages that I have been blessed to hear. Such was the case that 2nd Sunday that I mentioned about when Bro. Woody's sermon touched me so as he was wonderfully blessed to preach the sweet doctrine of predestination and sovereignty of God as he spoke so beautifully about Joseph and his brethren. Somehow that has stuck with me; and also Bro. John Lee's on 5th Sunday when he was richly blessed to declare and proclaim that sovereignty and predestination of God.

Is it not much comfort to know and be given to realize that your experience coincides with David's, a man after God's own heart? Was he always upon the mountain top basking in the sunshine of God's love? Indeed not, for we find that he traveled in the valley and as recorded in the Holy Writ, he felt cast down and forsaken at times. "How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?" We hear him again on another occasion when he begs for "the joy of thy salvation" to be restored unto him. This salvation had not been taken from him but the joy he no longer felt. Had he not been traveling in the dark and cold valley, he could never have known of the mountain top. "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." "The

Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life . . ." Could he ever have known of the sweetness and beauty of the "light" had he not first experienced darkness? One who has traveled in the valley indeed feels a need for guidance, protection, food and strength — a need for the shepherd. Does not this sweet evidence strengthen your faith and hope?

You mentioned Sister Ruston's letter that was in the *Signs*. I too enjoyed it and thought it such a sweet experimental letter. My dear, you say that you worry about your sins and shortcomings not causing more concern to you as you feel they ought. You are doing nothing more than expressing a concern over them when you make that statement. At times my sins are before me and seemingly have me rolled in and there is such great concern, but at other times the concern is not so great. I don't know if your experience is like this or not.

I am glad that you have been blessed to read a lot in the *Signs* lately. I very well recall the article by Elder Lefferts on "Restitution" and how much I enjoyed it. I had never before heard an explanation concerning the "valley of dry bones" either, and enjoyed reading it. Bro. John Lee preached on the restitution about the first Sunday in March, if not mistaken about the date. Bro. Jones preached first and then Bro. John Lee followed and he was really exercised during the short while he stood. He continued to preach to those standing around while we were having lunch. I enjoyed listening to him so much. So seldom that we have that chance when he is not in the stand preaching.

I could not help but think of Bro. Woody's appointment at Bush Arbor last night and at Dan River tonight. Do hope he had a nice trip and hope and pray he will be blessed with good liberty to comfort the little flock up there at the various churches as I feel he has been blessed to do at home. . . .

Love,
Mary Davis

FROM ELDER SLAUSON

46 Cedar Street
Kingston, N. Y.

Elder and Sister Wood,

Dearly beloved in Christ:

I hope you dear people are enjoying the blessed gift from God of good health, and above all the nearness and closeness of your dear Heavenly Father living in you and walking beside you, that the old man of the flesh is put in the background, and that you are enabled through the Spirit to mortify the deeds of the body; that you can feel that for you to live is Christ — that Christ being so near you that you can feel it as a warmth of heavenly bliss. What better or more can I wish you than this!

As for myself, God has given me a wonderful winter, with only one cold during the long, cold winter. There have been but few days that I haven't been out on the street for a walk, and most of the time twice a day. "Like one alone I seem to be, O, is there anyone like me?" To give you a picture of myself: I am a poor, helpless, lonely praying sinner, at home and on the street and in the closet of my poor heart, when and where none but God knows. But, dear ones, my faith tells me that our God knows all about it, and sometimes I do feel that His rod and His staff comfort me; that His rod or His correcting counsel and His staff of love and saving grace, gives me strength and courage to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Jesus said that, "In the world ye *shall have* tribulations, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Dear ones, how glad I am that Jesus has overcome the world. I feel He has overcome it for me, for I feel that the world is put under my feet, so to speak. Though

I am in the world, I am not of the world. Jesus said, "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine."

I live in Kingston, a city of three thousand population. I have lived here over 38 years, and a very few that I know understand the language of salvation being all of the will, and way, and power of the saving grace of God; that God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and there is nothing the poor sinner can do about it. God said, "I will put my laws in their hearts, and in their minds will I write them," and when this is done, then something has been accomplished. "It is the work of God that ye believe on him whom He hath sent." Jesus said that, "None can come unto me except the Father who sent me, draw him; and he that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

As we understand it, the creature is brought into the kingdom of God, or to God, or to know God, by a power that he cannot resist; and he is made to hate his own ways or the ways of his flesh. Where he was blind and deaf to those things, now being born of the Spirit, he can see and know just how wretched and miserable and vile this old man Adam is. But thanks be to God, when the stronger than he comes (Christ) the strong man (Adam) is bound. So the creature is now brought into subjection — Christ now living in this man; and God's love and law is ruling and guiding and directing this little child of God so that he is wanting and desiring to live a godly life. He is married to another, even to Christ, and is rooted and grounded in the love of God. Love is most powerful and the strongest tie we can think of. "He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love.

Beloved ones, this love has kept me and bound my soul fast for the past sixty years. O, I pray God to give me more and more of His great love, and land me on the Heavenly Shore; that I can feel some assurance of seeing Jesus as He is and be like him. It seems too good to be true for poor me. If it is true, it will be because Jesus suffered for me. There is nothing in me to merit esteem or give the creature delight.

I am now in my 88th year. I breathe after the blessed Lord's love and saving grace, help and mercy, each day that I live. When you are impressed to pray for the poor in spirit and needy, remember me. Much love to you both.

Brother Amasa Slauson

---

730 Kennedy
Duncanville, Texas 75116

Dear Elder Spangler:

Enclosed please find a check for the renewal of my subscription to the *Signs*.

I especially enjoyed and appreciated the weighty truths brought out in the writings of Elder Bocock and Elder Lambert in the April issue. These two writings were of much comfort and encouragement.

Enclosed also are some thoughts I have had on the subject of afflictions. You may use this effort at writing on that subject as you see fit.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. (Col. 4:23)

In hope of eternal life,
Carey C. Morris

"THE AFFLICTED PEOPLE"

730 Kennedy
Duncanville, Texas 75116

"For thou wilt save the afflicted people; but will bring down high looks." (Psa. 18:27)

According to the dictionary the word "afflict" means to cast down, to strike down, to overthrow, to trouble grievously. "Afflict implies not only the infliction of pain or suffering but also acute annoyance, embarrassment or the like," says Webster.

The Lord's purchased people are an afflicted people. This is so character-

istically true of them that the psalmist calls them "the afflicted people." There are many kinds of affliction, some from outside ourselves, such as persecution and violence done by others; and some from within, such as worry, fears and doubts, or a troubled conscience. There are bodily afflictions such as the loss of sight, hearing, or the loss of a limb. We sometimes speak of those poor individuals who do not have their natural senses as being mentally afflicted. Far worse and more fearful than any natural affliction, no doubt, is spiritual affliction which seems to threaten to destroy body, soul, and spirit eternally.

A person can endure many natural afflictions when he is supported by the hope of a better eternity, but when his hopes are blasted by spiritual torments about indwelling unconquored sins, and it is made to appear that he has no grace but has been deceived all along — this is an affliction that far surpasses natural afflictions. The verse

> "Oft the united powers of Hell
> My soul have sore annoyed;
> And yet I live this truth to tell,
> *Cast down* but not destroyed."

is speaking of these afflictions of the soul.

Afflictions come from many directions, but as they are all at the wise disposal of our Sovereign God, they are part of the "all things" that work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. (Rom. 8:28)

Hear the afflictions the apostle Paul suffered. "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." (II Cor. 11:24-27) "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." (II Cor. 4:8-9)

Cast down, Paul says; the very term that defines affliction. Again hear his writing from the prison in Rome to Timothy: "Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, persecutions, *afflictions*, which came unto me at Antioch . . ." These were all primarily afflictions of the outward man. "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light *affliction*, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." (II Cor. 4:16-17) But the inward man suffered also: ". . . we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears. Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus." (II Cor. 7:5-6)

Though hatred, misunderstanding and persecution assail from without, and fears and doubts from within, this is no reason to think that the Lord will not deliver the afflicted one. Indeed, these very afflictions are evidence and encouragement that the Lord Jesus Christ has undertaken in the tormented one's behalf, as Psalm 22:24 indicates: "For He hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath He hid His face from him; but when he cried unto Him, He heard." The afflicted ones are to be brought down, and are being brought down in their experiences, down to the footstool of their Lord, their only source of comfort. Their afflictions, whether in body, soul or spirit, are the very means in the hand of the Lord to bring them down (not that He is limited in any way to the use of means). By His providence they are made to cry to Him as the giver of every good and perfect gift, and their cry is not despised or un-

answered.

"For He hath *not* despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, neither hath He hid His face from him; but when he cried unto Him, He heard." This text is found in a psalm that prophesies of the agonies and death of our Saviour, and applies to Jesus Christ in His affliction, suffering for His people, purchasing all spiritual blessings for them. These blessings include the answer to their cries in their affliction; therefore the text has a twofold application: to Christ, and also to His people. In His life and death He wrought out a perfect righteousness for His elect, which He administers in His resurrection and intercession for them. Though they suffer terrible afflictions from time to time, yet because of His imputed and imparted righteousness His elect can be designated as righteous. This calls to mind another twofold text, applying to the Lord Jesus Christ and also to His children: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." (Psalm 34:19) Jesus Christ is THE Righteous (I John 2:1) who is now delivered out of all the afflictions through which He once passed. "For Christ also hath *once suffered* for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God . . ." (I Pet. 3:18) In this suffering and bringing us to God, it must needs be that those clothed in His righteousness and therefore called "the righteous" ultimately *must* be delivered out of all their afflictions also. This is true for many reasons, but to name no other, look to the fact that Christ is the head over all to the body, His church, and the body must go where the head goes. Can the Head be eternally glorified and any part of His body be eternally afflicted? Absolutely not! Consider further the covenant union of Christ and His bride in the hour of affliction. "In *all* their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them: in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bare them and carried them all the days of old." (Isa. 63:9)

What affliction have you felt that was not borne by that man of sorrows who was so acquainted with grief? The one who was stricken, smitten of God, and *afflicted*? He was oppressed and He was *afflicted,* yet He opened not His mouth. Why? The text tells us, He bare them (His Children) *all* the days of old. Indeed, when did He NOT carry them and bear them, since they had been IN Him from before the foundation of the world? Even as Aaron the high priest bore the names of the tribes of Israel engraved on onyx stones upon his shoulders, and upon his heart engraved on the twelve precious stones of his breastplate, so our great high priest Jesus Christ has forever borne His people upon His mighty shoulders and upon His heart in eternal covenant union with them. This being the case, in the fulness of time He bore them and their sins alone into the presence of His Father to receive that just and holy affliction which was so completely due — *not* to that Holy One, but due to His people. As His death removed the sting of death for His people, so His suffering afflictions removed the sting of afflictions for His people. Jeremiah gives us the words in prophecy of what suffering must have poured through the soul of the Lamb of God.

In Lamentations 1:12 and 15 it is recorded: "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath AFFLICTED me in the day of His fierce anger . . . The Lord hath trodden under foot all my mighty men in the midst of me: He hath called an assembly against me to crush my young men; the Lord hath trodden the virgin, the daughter of Judah, as in a winepress." As Almighty God judged the sins of His people upon the Son of man, it pleased the Lord to bruise Him. (Isa. 53:10) The elect were "in the midst" of Him: therefore Jesus must be trodden under the foot of God. His young men were (and are) in Him; so the assembled wicked (who are God's

sword, Psalm 17:13) must crush Him as the hand and council of God had determined before (or predestinated, in the original) to be done (Acts 4:28), thereby bringing in eternal redemption for the ransomed ones.

Now, consider these afflicted ones, of whom Zephaniah (3:12) speaks: "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they *shall* trust in the name of the Lord." Truly their very afflictions are blessings in disguise, and they work "for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." (II Cor. 4:17) The one who inherits *this* lot is taught by the Lord in his everyday experience to trust in the name of the Lord. They can truthfully say, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn Thy statutes." (Psa. 119:71) They can sing in their afflictions such songs as this world can neither understand nor appreciate:

"O Zion, afflicted with wave upon wave,
Whom no can can comfort, whom no man can save . . .
From all their *afflictions*, (Christ's) glory shall spring,
And the deeper their sorrows, the louder they'll sing."

And,

"Poor and *afflicted*, Lord, are thine,
Among the great unfit to shine;
But though the world may think it strange,
They would not with the world exchange."

Down to the verge of death His people sing His praises, hoping and expecting to sing His honor throughout eternity.

"When by *affliction* sharply tried,
I view the gaping tomb,
Although I dread death's chilling tide,
Yet still I sigh for home."

To be afflicted will increase the patience and faith of the child of God. It is tribulation that worketh patience, and patiently he or she can wait upon the Lord and say with David, "Thou wilt save the afflicted people." "The Lord hath comforted His people, and will have mercy upon His afflicted." (Isaiah 49:13)

May the Lord bless these observations and comments to His own honor and glory, and to the comfort of the hearts of the afflicted in Zion.

In that blessed hope,
Carey C. Morris

SALVATION BY GRACE

I think that in writing about predestination it is also important to include salvation by grace. To me the two topics are inseparable; predestination being the beginning and salvation the end.

In reference to predestination, I have heard many people say that they could not believe in a God who would save one person and yet condemn another from the beginning of time. (See note.) I think the Apostle Paul answered this in his letter to the Romans. (Rom. 9:9-16)

We have seen then that God does distinguish among the peoples of the earth, and some are saved while others are not. This salvation also does not come by works, nor does it come by the will of man. We will turn to the Apostle Paul again to demonstrate this. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any should boast." Most people today believe, or profess to believe that salvation is up to the person to accept or reject as he sees fit. If this were true, then salvation would be offered to all people, would it not? In that case everybody would be eligible for salvation; however, I have shown at the beginning that not all people are loved of God and therefore not all people are eligible for salvation. At this point they usually intercede with the statement that only those who live good lives and do good works will be saved. We have already pointed out in the 9th chapter of Romans, that it is not of works, but by grace that we are saved. I am not deriding good works. I think good works are an essential part of every

Christian's life. The Apostle Paul writes, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2:10) Therefore, if we say that it is the good works that lead to salvation, then we are getting the cart before the horse. As I understand then, we are first saved by grace and then led into the good works that God has before ordained that we would do.

By using the Apostle Paul as an example, let me illustrate what I have been trying to point out. Saul of Tarsus was not by any means a man of good works. At least not from the point of view of the Christians. He was persecuting them, whipping them in the tabernacles, and throwing them into prison. In persecuting the children of God, he was also persecuting the Lord. Paul was on his way to Damascus to persecute more Christians when a bright light surrounded him and the voice of the Lord spoke to him. Paul fell to his knees and was blinded. Jesus said that a man cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven unless he be born of the water and of the Spirit. This was Paul's birth of the Spirit, or conversion. Now did Paul, by doing good works entice the Lord to speak to him and convert him? Was Paul given the chance to think it over and decide if this was what he really wanted? Was Paul ordained to fulfill the purpose of the Lord? Was he saved? The Lord told Annanias, "Go thy way; for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." (Acts 9:15) I ask you, did Paul perform good works and walk in the way of the Lord after his conversion? Paul wrote that man will be judged according to his works. I believe that this is just another example of the care of the Good Shepherd for his sheep. They are led in the way of the Lord and unto good works.

I believe also that a person must repent of his sins before he can be saved. This is very confusing to many people. Christ said, ". . . except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3) If a man is already saved by grace from the beginning of the world, then why should he have to repent? In my opinion, repentance and birth of the Spirit are closely related. The Apostle Paul tells us that the children of God are led to repentance. "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth to repentance?" (Romans 2:4) I am not saying that the way of the Lord is always easy for His children. Paul did not lead an easy life at all. Sometimes this conversion comes through many trials and tribulations with much suffering. I think the Lord tries His children in the Spirit, but His is the only true salvation. Our prayers do not go unheeded. The Spirit hears our pleas for mercy, and intercedes for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. He is the Shepherd and His sheep follow His voice. He will raise them up in the last day to live with Him in Paradise. All praise and glory be to His Holy Name. Amen.

Now I began at the beginning of this paper to talk about the relationship between salvation by grace and predestination. I would like, God willing, to continue on at this point to write on predestination. I am going to refer to the writings of the Apostle Paul now in my discussion of predestination. Now there are two instances that I would like to write from the Bible and quote the scriptures exactly as they are written in order to make the meaning more plain. (He quotes Romans 8:28-31 and Eph. 1:4-11; which read.)

It seems to me that Paul could not have spoken much plainer on the subject of predestination. He refers to God as ". . . him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Now to me *all things* means just that. All things are done according to the will of God. All things to my way of thinking, leaves out nothing. He works salvation, our lives, the lives of all, according to His will and purpose. How

can we therefore live or die or anything else except it be by the will of Him who directs us? I have tried to write a paper dealing with the two subjects of salvation and predestination. I feel the attempt has been weak at best. I hope the Lord will bless me to see the light if what I have written is not the truth. I want to believe in the true and living God, and if I truly believe, all the credit is His, not mine, for I am but a lowly sinner with no hope for salvation except it be by the tender mercies of the Father. I believe what I have written is the truth. My hope is in the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for without Him there is nothing. Amen.

David Harrell
8 Central Park
Brownsville, Texas

(Note: Those who say this do not know that *all* are condemned in sin because of the transgression, but that *all the Lord's people* are redeemed from their condemnation by God's grace. — J. D. W.)

THE FALL OF MAN

Rt. 2, Box 423
Boones Mill, Va. 24065

Dear Brethren:

Wisdom in God is not older than his knowledge. Those who suppose God learns of their deeds in time worship an idol deficient in knowledge.

Did not God know when He placed Adam where he would be subject to vanity, that he would transgress? If not, where is His wisdom? Did God lack the power, and did God lack the wisdom to make a man that would not yield to temptation? If so, where is the perfection of His wisdom and power? If it had been God's will to keep Adam from falling, then Adam could not have fallen. We who believe in the predestination of all things, do therefore believe the fall of man was predestinated. Only a fool (and a very evil one at that) will deny that God's wisdom and power would have had Adam different from the way he was if God had wanted him different.

Now God has never wanted anything, and therefore did not want Adam's fall different. He brought it all to pass, and it all came to pass according to God's purpose. Those who advocate that God was disappointed and his purpose thwarted by the fall of man, cannot possibly believe that God is able to take a fallen wretch and make him incorruptible.

Either the introduction of sin into the world was all according to God's purpose, or else there is no eternal wisdom which determined the coming and sufferings of Jesus Christ. My brethren believe that redemption owes its existance to an everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure. God knew that man would sin as well as he knew how he would save his people from their sins.

If God had rather that Adam had not sinned, then there is not a created thing as God would originally have rather had it, because all creatures are in some way affected by sin. Not one act of Jesus Christ the Saviour of sinners would be as God originally would have had it. Indeed it is true that one eternal song of redemption praising God for salvation from sin will not be as God willed it, if He had rather man had never sinned. The lie that Adam was able to stand but liable to fall is water in the sea of infidelity; and Articles of Faith deny themselves and follow truth where they state, "The scriptures are the only rule of faith."

The Lord promised Adam's fall, and it is clearly set forth in Genesis 1:29, "And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, **and every tree**, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat." This is Bible proof that Adam man was originally intended to eat of every tree and dwell upon all the face of the earth. Look at Acts 17:24-26, "God who made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands, neither is

worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing He giveth to all life and breath and all things: and hath made of one blood all nations of men **for to dwell on all the face of the earth** and hath determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitation."

God has never been governed in his actions by anything except his own will.

Look at Revelation, we read: "Thou hast made all things for thyself and for thy pleasure they are (now exist) and were created." From this I offer proof that all things were created for God's pleasure, and they **are still existing** for the same purpose. In his wonderful doings God is guided by His Wisdom, and, consulting only his own will as he worketh all things after the counsel of His will. In unfallen Adam wisdom and power are manifest, but love, mercy, justice, wrath, and salvation from sin must remain unknown as long as man is innocent. How can mercy be bestowed on one who is not a sinner? How could Atonement be needed without a transgressor?

Unless we are blessed to believe that the fall of man was embraced in the predestination of all things, then salvation from sin must be held as unforseen and undesirable. The design and intent of this article is not so much to prove that the fall was purposed, as to remind my precious brethren that, "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." If Adam had not sinned he would have abided alone. Jesus is the "corn of wheat" in the church of God. If Jesus had not died he would have abode alone. Remember Satan did not afflict Job until after God called his attention to Job, — even Satan was plainly shown that Job did not do good to gain blessings, but rather served God "for nought." God is the good Tree of Life and cannot bring forth corrupt fruit, yet He has a purpose in Satan; and His purpose is most wise, pure and holy. God meant it for good, while Satan and all the wicked just work out their nature, and they mean it for evil, and are therefore guilty. As Judas was moved by the love of money to betray Christ, so were the wicked moved by their envy and hate to take and crucify the Lord. They did just what they wanted to do, and therefore their acts were voluntary. The earthly Adam was never able as an inmate of Eden, or an exile from Eden, to either fight the battle or gain the victory.

Gospel order stands in the power of God and has never rested in the hands of a creature. Every single conditionalist of all shades and grades are strangers to the gospel, and gospel order is known only to them that are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called, — from first to last God works it all after the counsel of Him who is Lord both of the living and the dead. The resurrection of the dead and the God of Promise brought cheer to Adam and Eve's hearts on the island of time, when straightway after the fall the announcement was made that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent. From the dark cloud of Sinai the Lord thundered forth his hatred of sin, and wrote his curse in flames of fire upon the face of heaven. Yet it was revealed, seen, and declared that One would come from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, who unaided and unassisted would save his people with his own almighty arm. "Mighty to save" was the inscription displayed on the banner of His Majesty — riding the chariot of his grace, conquering and to conquer.

Who will deny these things except those who are so ignorant as to know nothing of the Truth? The glorious design of His wonderful doings is stamped on all things; and spell, His kingdom cannot fail.

In bonds,
J. L. Bocock

WOULD BE HAPPY TO RECEIVE LETTERS

Rt. 2
Goshen, Ala. 36035

Dear Elder Spangler:

Enclosed is a check to cover two year's subscription to the *Signs* for my grandmother, Mrs. J. L. (Mary) Folmar, who is, and has been for the past twenty months in the Nursing Home in Luverne, Alabama. Will you please continue sending the publication to her son's address: E. O. Folmar, Rt. 2, Goshen, Ala. 36035.

My grandmother often thanks the Lord, whom I have never known her to be ashamed of, for all those who have to do with the publication and selfless distribution of the *Signs of the Times*; and she expresses her love for all who love the Truth which it contains.

If any should feel to write her, the address is Mrs. J. L. Folmar, c/o The Luverne Nursing Home, Luverne, Ala. 36409. I am sure she would be happy to receive letters from any of her faith. Do as you see fit with the balance of the check.

Yours in Christ, I hope,
Ann Folmar

Rt. 1
Brown's Summit, N. C.

Dear Editors:

I am late in renewing my subscription, so am enclosing $5.00 for one year's renewal, with the extra for the Indigent Fund. I would hate to miss a copy.

I enjoy the *Signs* very much and read many articles over many times. My age and health does not allow me to attend church as often as I would like to, so I get lots of enjoyment reading the *Signs*.

Yours in hope,
Mrs. D. S. Chrismon

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 2, Box 10
Star City, Ark. 71667

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing a letter from our beloved pastor, Elder J. L. Sanders; and I would also like to write a few lines, the Lord willing.

Having been reared in a Primitive Baptist home, I have been among these lovely people all my natural life. In the years that I went to church with my parents, it seemed that I had no doubt of the Old Baptists being the true church of Christ. I did go to other denominations a few times, but I never really enjoyed being there, and always felt out of place.

If I know anything about a hearing ear, I heard my first sermon back in 1934 at an association near home. The first preacher was Elder Jonny Everette, who was well known in Arkansas, west Texas and Louisiana. There was something about his manner and delivery that left no doubt he was speaking under the power of God. I was a young, single girl then, an I seemed to enjoy his sermon. After our marriage, my husband and I always attended meetings regularly. There were times when I seemed to be very burdened, and would try to read the Bible; though it seemed to be a sealed book, and I had a fear of not having any understanding at all.

After the death of my parents I subscribed to the *Signs,* for I did not want to be without them. It seemed I could hardly wait from one month to the next. After it was too late, I regretted I had not taken time to read the *Signs* to my parents after they became unable to read them. It seemed I was always too busy with my own family and helping care for my parents.

Through the years I have been so doubtful of myself:

"When I experience call to mind
My understanding is so blind:
All feeling sense seems to be gone,

Which makes me fear that I am wrong."

But there were no doubts of what I hope to believe, if not deceived. "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." Without the grace of God we would be without hope. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Without the grace of God we could not walk — only stumble in the road to destruction. If we are kept, it is through His goodness and mercy.

My burden seemed to be getting heavier; but a small voice seemed to say, "The time is not yet," and I began to wonder if that time would come, or if I would be given a mind to know the time. After an illness last spring, when I was in the hospital over four weeks, I missed the annual May Meeting at Providence Church. I had wanted to be there so badly, I begged the doctor to release me. I thought if I was at home I would be able to go — not realizing how seriously ill I had been. The thought never occurred to me that I would not get well, and it was a few weeks later that I found out that my family and doctor had almost given up hope for several days. I know it was through the goodness and mercy of God that I did recover, though I lost the sight of one eye.

I hope the Lord has given me an eye of faith that will mean more to me than the natural eye. My recovery was slow but I was able to go to meetings here at home and nearby churches. I hope to be thankful for that.

I became more burdened as the months passed, and I tried to get some comfort from reading the Bible and the *Signs*. At times it seemed to help and I got a little comfort. "Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." I know that I am very poor within myself. "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." If not deceived I have been comforted. I was so afraid I was deceived. I was fearful of mentioning my troubles to anyone. After traveling in this valley for several months, it seemed there was no way out, — I could only cry, Lord, help me.

When it seemed I could go on no longer, I wrote Elder Sanders, pastor of Providence Church, and told him something of my troubles. I had thought several times that if I did ever ask for a home in the church, I wanted it to be here at Providence; but that was not God's will. Our meeting, this year, the first Sunday in May, was at our sister church near Warren (Antioch). Until the last minute after the opportunity for membership was given, I did not know whether I could take that step or not — I knew I needed the Lord's help. I was given the mind to go, and was received and baptized that afternoon near my home, with my membership at Providence. I requested Elder Sanders and Elder Freeman (also of Alabama) to baptize me. It seemed that when I came up out of the water, my burden had been lifted, and I felt a great relief. I realize that I need the Lord's saving grace and care to keep me in the faith, for I know that within myself I am very weak.

I only meant to write a few lines, and I feel I have been too lengthy, but what I have written is from my heart, if I know anything.

In bonds of love,
Veola Donaldson
(Mrs. Havis Donaldson)

1017 Madison Street
Reidsville, N. C. 27320

Dear Elder Spangler:

Please renew my subscription for two years. I am a little late, so I thank you for not stopping the paper.

I want to continue to get the paper as long as I live for I believe it sets forth the truth, which is salvation by grace alone; also the name of Jesus is named above every name.

With love and hope of eternal life,

R. Allen Carroll

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 2
Marion, La. 71260

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I enjoy reading the *Signs*. Just to know the experiences others have gives me strength to read them.

I enclose a letter from one of our sisters in Tucson, Ariz. telling of her experiences. Would you please print it in the *Signs of the Times*.

I copied her letter as she was sick when she wrote it, and is very old.

Ada Pilgreen

---

121 South Olsen
Tucson, Ariz.

Dear Ada:

I can't sleep so will write you something of what makes me believe as I do.

I was made by a higher power than myself. When I was very young, I thought I could be good and save myself. So I joined the Missionary Church and thought I was doing right, but still felt alone and trembled. I went on like this until I was married and, as you know, my husband, John, believed Primitive Baptist doctrine, and made fun of my church, so that it hurt me. I went on that way for some time.

I got to reading one of the Baptist papers, and learned what the preachers meant when they said, "dead sinners." I thought they were crazy people and that the ugliest people in the world belonged to that church. But, oh, I was shown what good people the Primitive Baptists were.

The good Lord showed me how little I was, and I fell on my knees and begged for mercy. When I noticed what I was doing, the ants were crawling around me. I mashed one; and it came to me that it was not more harm for God to crush me than for me to crush the ant — because I was nothing and less than nothing. We have to become as little children: I was as little as the ants which crawled upon the earth.

I was made to see that God could not sin: He is holy and just in all things. I said, "Lord if you were on the earth and I could see you, I would know there was a true and living God." Then these words were spoken to me, "Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool." At that time I did not know it was scripture; and I fell on my knees and worshipped Him at his feet. It seemed that I washed his feet with my tears and wiped them with my hair.

It went on like this for 20 years. I wanted to join the church, but felt I was too mean, for they were such good people. What I once hated, I now loved. I joined the church and was baptized; and it was the happiest day of my life. It seemed the heaven came down on me.

Dear Ada, these are some of what make me believe what I do. I love my brothers and sisters so much. That is all the hope I have sometimes. I have been very sick.

One who loves you,
Edir Day

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the *Skewarkey Union* was appointed to be held with Lawrence's Church, Edgecombe County, N. C. the 5th Sunday in August and Saturday before, 1970. Elder B. D. Handy was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder I. S. Conner, alternate.

The meeting house is located one mile northeast of Lawrence's on Highway 258. We cordially invite all to come and worship with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Clerk

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Sandy Grove, Nash County, N. C., the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in August, 1970.

The church is located on N. C. Highway 97 about one mile west of Spring Hope, N. C. We invite all who have a mind to attend.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

YEARLY MEETING AT FLAT SWAMP

The *Yearly Meeting* of the *Flat Swamp Church* will be held, the Lord willing, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 4, 5. and 6, 1970. The Meeting House is located 3 miles west of Robersonville, N. C.

Brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

J. T. Prescott, Pastor

ORIGINAL WHITE OAK UNION

The next session of the *Original White Oak Union* is appointed to be held with Cypress Creek Church, Duplin County, North Carolina, the fifth Saturday and Sunday in August, 1970.

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and worship with us.

L. H. Southerland, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To June 1, 1970)

Wm. O. Hall, Wash.	$ 2.50
Mrs. James di Zerega, Va.	3.00
Joe McKenzie, Can.	3.00
Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.	1.00
Miss Reidy Pickeral, Va.	40.00
C. H. Greathouse, Ore.	5.00
June Hudson, La.	3.00
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Beulah Williams, Ark.	1.00
A Friend, Va.	6.00

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THREE-DAY MEETING AT MOSSYROCK, WASHINGTON

The Bethel Primitive Baptist Church of Predestinarian Faith expect to hold their annual Three-day Meeting at Mossyrock, Washington, the third Sunday in August, 1970, and Friday and Saturday before — August 14, 15, and 16, 1970.

Elder D. V. Spangler, one of the editors of the *Signs of the Times*, expects, (D. V.) to attend the services, together with the pastor, Elder Ernest Attebery.

A cordial invitation is extended to all who may be able to attend.

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the *Contentnea Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, with Lower Town Creek Church, Edgecombe County, N. C., the fifth Saturday and Sunday in August.

The Church is just off Highway 43 between Rocky Mount and Pinetops, N. C.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 3
Tarboro, N. C.

EDITORIAL

"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth. I know thy works: behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

(Rev. 3:7, 13)

I hope, dear brethren, that I am blessed to say humbly that these things are too great for me. I would rather be cast into the sea with a millstone around my neck than to mislead one of the Lord's humble followers. I beg each of you to examine closely what I say; if it will not lay parallel with the written word, cast it from you. My desire is that you remember who is speaking to these churches. It is not John, as the man, John; it is not any of us poor angels or messengers. It is the Lord Jesus Christ. Methinks, however, that it behooves every minister among us to look into these things and to visualize himself as the angel being spoken to. I hope that each of my readers have the weight and significance of these things impressed upon their minds, for, undoubtedly, they are all matters that concern us today — in fact, if we are men of God, all Scripture is given for correction, instruction and indoctrination.

It is to be hoped that the announcement of who is talking will not be lost upon us, and if we have ears to hear I am sure that it will not be. We have to do with One that is holy in all things. Holiness becomes the house of the Lord (Psa. 93:5), and if there is not a desire to walk in holiness before the Lord, we have missed the calling which characterizes the children of God. Let us ever remember that preaching the fundamental doctrines of God our Saviour does not induce people to licentiousness, rather it induces them to be in behaviour as becometh holiness. (Titus 2)

Our Speaker is also true. His judgments, it is acknowledged, are unsearchable (Rom. 11:33), but they are also true and righteous altogether. (Psa. 19:9) He is truth, and it is in this Truth that freedom is found. (John 8:32)

We also have to do with One that has the key of David. What an amazing matter it is that God has interwoven the name of David in the life of Christ and His brethren. It is not easily understood how any one could lay the blame for their sins on God. He is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity (Hab. 1:13), and as far as I remember God never has approved of sin, but has always reproved it; as far as I remember not one of the children of God in the Bible have justifiably claimed exemption from the penalty of sin because that "God has made me thus and so." Yet, how precious is

the doctrine of God's saving grace. That salvation has had to do with sinners. It is not with the thought of minimizing the sinfulness of sin, nor to treat lightly the consequences of sin, nor is it to say that God puts a premium on sin, but it does seem that the greater the sinner the greater the measure of grace. This is evident in the cases of both David and Paul.

The type is beautiful which shows us Christ as being the Son of David, and yet that David calls Him Lord. In the matter of this key; who is speaking to the angel at Philadelphia, and who it is that possesses this key, we will not have any unbrotherly disagreement, for I do hope that I have a higher calling than to be continually raising issues over divine things, and I refuse to be drawn into them. I do know that it is too high and lofty for me, and it behooves me to tread softly in the presence of such a Majesty, and to deal gently with the humble train of followers of such a Sovereign. I would not use the scalpel in the counsel room of the Almighty and dissect the Holy One of Israel to suit my fancy. I would preach and believe that God is the Saviour; that this eternal Logos Word was made flesh; that He was put to death in the body and justified in the Spirit. This I would do, but have experienced that I can not, therefore, if blessed to come to Him that opens (remember He opens first), I would beg Him to open to me the storehouse of love that I might testify to this opening of the heaven and revealing Jesus to me; of His opening the door of the church for a poor vagabond in the earth to rest in; of His opening to me the sacred volume that I might, as I humbly hope, expound the Scriptures to the consolation of the children of God; of His opening to me an open door among the saints of God in His vineyard; to give me a bright and shining hope that He will open my grave and bring me forth in the likeness of Christ; that in that great and glorious day heaven will be opened to me there to forever sing His praise. Likewise I would adore His lovely name that has shut and sealed to me and from me the ways of death; that has enabled me to be shut out from the counsels of the ungodly; that has shut every door in my face of the institutions of men so that I have not attended any convention of men that has had religion or politics as its theme.

The Bible has not favored us with the doctrine of election and then condemned it; the Speaker to these angels did not send forth sweet and bitter things out of the same fulness. The door was not set before them because that they had strength to open it, that is, a conditional door that they could open if they would, or leave closed and suffer loss. The door was set before them; it is a given door. God favors his own work; he desires it and performs that which he desires (Job 14:15; 23:13; Phil. 2:13; Heb. 13:21), and he does not open the door and then give the glory of opening it to another. This is a division of the glory and this is one thing that God will not do.

What is said about this church is said about the flock at all times. The church is builded on the Rock and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The works of each one, individually and collectively, are known to him with whom we have to do. These precious things are in the churches today, and how lovely to behold the Strength of Israel as it is made manifest; to see that those moved by the love of God are keeping themselves unspotted; that idols are not making the profession of the children a farce; that they are not denying the name of the Lord.

The Philadelphia church has been gone a long time, but the brotherly love that was shown in it is still known among the churches of today. Too, the synagogue of Satan is still here. The lying spirit is still present — people are still professing to be of God; they are still going about to establish their own righteousness; they are still doing all they can to identify themselves with the true Israel of God. Undoubtedly,

it would not be the mind of the Saviour to say that all of these that hover around the synagogue of Satan are chosen vessels, for "they are not all of Israel, which are of Israel," therefore, the general tenor of the Bible would say that the elect vessels around Satan's synagogue would be brought to see Jesus as the Messiah and be gathered into the church at Philadelphia.

Faithfulness begets faithfulness. This church would never have been known as a place of brotherly love had not God's grace and love kept them to where they kept the word of his patience. Let us remember that "we have access by faith (a gift of God, a fruit of the Spirit) into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God, and not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulations worketh patience," etc., and then we are ready (kept to that end) to join with Paul and say that all of this comes about in the Roman church, the Philadelphia church, and our churches today by the love of God being shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given us. This keeping them in the hour of temptation is because of his delight in the prior work of working effectually in them. This delight is in his work as he works in the garden among the lilies.

Whatever the hour of temptation, it was not a conditional atmosphere wherein they would be preserved from extinction. They were not thus preserved, therefore, this temptation was an experience that churches and individuals are called on to pass through, and in this trying hour they are always kept. This *world* could be a bone of contention as just what it means. To me, it is not the created world of people and places and things, but it is the world of His people. This world is as complete as any world can be; it includes all that make up that world. This hour of temptation comes to all alike in this world. In whatever age or era of the existence of this Philadelphian church, she is kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation so that she falls not into this dire affliction. That the hour of temptation will come, we must be sure. We could not expect to escape the trial of our faith, seeing that our counterpart had it come his way, even though he feared God and eschewed evil. (Job 23:10; Zech. 13:9; I Pet. 4:12)

How often does the royal Speaker use the word *behold*? It is always used to call attention to some important matter. It is used in addressing both the obedient and disobedient. Twice it is used for the welfare of this obedient church, even though one time it has reference to the evil one. Watching had come to a low ebb in some of the other churches, but it did not lessen the fact that He would come as a thief on them; this church was a watchful church and yet He is careful to command them to carefulness, to watching, to holding fast. To the disobedient he comes as a thief; to the obedient he comes quickly. These (as had the Philippian brethren) had been obedient, but they were commanded to continue in that same careful watching and holding fast.

I dare not be flippant nor treat lightly the sacred charge of my Saviour in regard to overcoming. It would be the height of blasphemy and sacrilege for me to interpret this sacred language so as to say that it is not important to be found walking in the truth as He is the Truth; to be found walking in the light as He is the Light. It would also be blasphemy and sacrilege for me to tell God's children that their welfare in this life is in their hands. These two things I feel impressed to contend for; to wit, That there is not anything unjust or unholy or bad about the commandments that are given in the New Testament. There is a decree of God about them that is savory to those that love God; that the decree is not given with the mind to mock or tantalize the children of God. The decree? It is simple, it is characteristic of God, it is palatable to those that love God. Secondly, that this love is not a conditional

love; it is not acquired by diligence nor skill, but it is a fruit of the Spirit; it is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given us to that end. (Rom. 5:5; Gal. 5:22)

At this church, as well as in all churches, past, present and to come, there are those who forget those things of the past and are pressing forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. It is not strange to read of people pressing forward in the kingdom (Luke 16:16), and Jacob, in the meanderings of a vagabond in the earth, will sue (press and overcome) for a blessing; that blessing, when sought according to the inditement (Rom. 8:26, 27), will end in victory, in overcoming. These are pillars in the church, in the temple of God. These are they that are placed in the kingdom according to the eternal purpose of God which was purposed in Jesus Christ. They are placed there as pillars, and their work is cut out for them in support, in helps, in lending a hand to the brotherhood.

These are blessed to the church. The pressure on those that press into the kingdom is such that they will go out no more. The pressure on the woman sick with the flow of blood brought her nearer the Saviour; the pressure of the world and the flesh will cause us to press nearer; the power of Him that placed us as pillars will press us closer, will cause us to sing,

> "Closer and closer let us cleave,
> To his beloved embrace;
> Expect his fulness to receive,
> And grace to answer grace."

and those thus exercised will have written upon him the name of God, the name of the city of God, and it shall be such a divine wonder in the life of a poor sinner to find that he is so signally blessed to be set apart as a follower of God, as a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. He will not need to carry identifying badges where he goes; neither will he have a literal name plate to show his citizenship. He will not be too sure that he is a pillar in the church because his name is in his forehead and he is not able to see that himself. But what a blessing that he will be known to others, for his name will be clearly seen by all save he himself. This identification is not an earthly one. Even though it is so clearly seen by fellow travellers it will not open the inn to him; it will not make welcome among the dignitaries of the earth. They are looking for names that can be seen by those that fill the inn. This name and this relationship will be known by those that are born from above, for they know heavenly things, and things that are ever new.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

CHASTISEMENT

In the attempt to comply with the request of a brother living in Indiana and knowing at the same time that any effort of ours will be useless and to no point except the Lord be in the matter, we take up the above tremendous subject, which would require a volume to do it justice and which can be but barely outlined in the space we have before us. The Lord commanded prophet Hosea to take unto himself an adulterous woman for a wife, so he married Gomer the daughter of Diblaim. This is one of the bitterest things the Lord ever told a prophet to do, but in so doing the Lord intended to give Israel an object-lesson whereby they should know just in what position they were before the Lord. Of this marriage of Hosea with Gomer, were born three children: the first a son whom he named Jezreel, signifying the Lord will scatter; the second a daughter whom he named Lo-ruhamah, signifying without mercy or unpitied; the third, another son named Lo-ammi, signifying not my people. Thus, the fruit of Hosea's marriage to Gomer meant scat-

tered, unpitied and forsaken.

Thus Israel had a picture set before their nation, in this marriage of the prophet, showing clearly that Israel was an adulterous nation and had departed from the Lord who had redeemed them out of Egypt, and had gone whoring after false gods and false ways, attributing to lovers the thanks and praise rightly due unto the true God. The blessings which Israel had received at the hands of the Lord, she thought came to her from her lovers. Therefore, the Lord said he would take these blessings from her, that he would scatter Israel, show her no mercy, and treat her as if she were not his people at all. As the fruit of Hosea's marriage with Gomer was Jezreel, Lo-ruhamah and Lo-ammi, so would the fruit of Israel's strayings from the Lord result in their being scattered mercilessly into forsakenness and desolation. Yet, "the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered: and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God. Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel."

There is, therefore, no escaping the conclusion that the chastisement of Israel is to bear fruit in the restoration. Where it was said to them, "Lo-ammi," it shall be said "ammi" and "Lo-ruhamah" is to be changed to "ruhamah." Instead of no mercy, she shall obtain mercy. The object of the Lord in the chastisement of his people is never to cast them utterly away from him, but to discipline them for their safety and instruction. Chastisement has for its object the good of the one chastised. This good effect, it always has in the case of the people of God. When God chastises the nations outside of Israel it is for the casting down of those nations, and is often for their destruction. For instance, time and again throughout the Old Testament, the Lord destroys whole peoples in order to do his own Israel good and to deliver them from their troubles and their captivities. The Lord did not hesitate when it became necessary, to give Egypt for the redemption of Israel out of Egypt. "I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee." — Isaiah xliii. 3, 4.

The Lord uses wars, famines, pestilences, deaths, distresses of every sort in order to wear down the nations very much as water continually dropping wears even stones. This he does in order to debase the nations of the earth to bring about the exaltation of his own everlasting kingdom. It is true that the Lord did at one time greatly prosper Babylon and did give Judah into Captivity thereunder, but how did it end? It ended by Babylon herself going into captivity, not for a few years only as had Israel, but permanently. The Tigris and Euphrates rivers which once watered Babylon and made it exceedingly fertile, began to steadily dwindle; and as they dwindled, the Babylon they watered also dwindled until Babylon passed into the limbo of dead nations.

Just as surely as ancient Babylon died, it is just as true that the Babylon of the modern world will also, and is now, dwindling never to rise again. As the Lord dried up the ancient river Euphrates, so does he now employ the four horsemen to afflict modern Babylon; just so does he dry up the modern Euphrates which waters and nourishes modern Babylon. This river Euphrates represents the resources of the nations' wealth without which they will surely die. When their gold and their silver are gone, their river is dried up and they must perish. As this Euphrates dries up, the nations find themselves unable to resist the coming of the kings out of the east to overwhelm them. Thus, we see distress, famines, pesti-

lences, wars and all their train wearing down the nations to make way for their overthrow by portentous things out of the east. (Revelation xvi. 12.)

My main object in speaking of these things now is to show that while God's chastisement of the nations of the earth means death and destruction to them, **his chastisement of his chosen people means life and salvation to them.** In the case of God's Israel, his fatherly chastisements bring restoration; in the case of the world, the fierce fire of his anger consumes it. "Behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths." What a blessing it is that we cannot find our own paths. If we could succeed in walking our paths, those ways of our own devising, we would wander utterly away from the truth and salvation. However, the Lord so hedges us about with his chastisements that we cannot find our false lovers though we seek earnestly for them, and each time we try to force through this hedge of his care, we run ourselves through with thorns. Thus, does he prove to us that we are his people and that we cannot direct our own steps, cannot find our own way. Each time we are determined to have our own way we run against his "wall" which shuts us in. Chastisement, therefore, to the children of God is disciplinary and is for their instruction in righteousness and for their growth in grace. Chastisement is one of the inevitable marks of the Lord's people. Could we rid ourselves of it, we would prove ourselves to be bastards and not sons. To successfully avoid chastisement, would be to rob ourselves of our spiritual birthright.

In a recent **Signs** we published an article of the late Elder L. H. Hardy on this subject in which he showed so aptly that the righteous (not the wicked) have many afflictions, but the Lord delivers him out of them all. So many people associate affliction with disobedience. Some falsely reason that the way to get rid of affliction is to be obedient unto the Lord. This is spurious teaching and cannot stand against the truth of revelation. The Lord chastens all whom he loves, he scourges each and every son whom he receives. To be without chastening is to be a bastard, an illegitimate child. If the church in the days of the apostles, and if the apostles themselves, could have adapted themselves and their teachings to the world in which they then lived, they would have avoided persecution. To have bought exemption from persecution at such a price would have been to deny the faith and the blood of the Lord Jesus. Such was utterly impossible. The church at Rome, if it could have conformed to the pagan Roman world of its day, would have secured peace from martyrdom. It could not be. The followers of Christ can no more conform to the world, no matter in what age they live, than they can blot the sun from the sky or create another world. This inability to conform to the world is a lively mark of the true church and is proof that she is indeed the body of Christ; that as her Head was hated by the world of his day to which he would not yield allegiance, so his body the church is hated by the world to which it cannot yield obedience.

Chastisement, therefore, is a mark of righteousness, not of unrighteousness; of obedience, not of disobedience. In the church at Laodicea, there were mostly those who thought themselves rich when they were, in the Lord's eyes, wretchedly poor; they were increased with goods, needing nothing. Nevertheless, even in Laodicea were a few the Lord loved. These he rebuked and chastised. He did not rebuke and chasten the self-sufficient, proudful ones, but only those he loved. Was not this rebuking and chastening, then, a sign from the Lord that he loved them? Indeed, yes. This Laodicean church aptly describes modern christendom, both Catholic and Protestant. Never at any time before in the world's history has the so-called church been as fat, as prosperous, as wealthy in lands, houses and church edfices as today; never has she been as self-sufficient, self-righteous, wanting nothing, as now. Yet in

the midst of even modern christendom are a few whose names are unsullied with idolatries: these elect names are the Lord's. As proof that they are his, he chastens and rebukes them. (Revelation iii. 19.) To these the Lord says, "Repent," and indeed his elect ones are even now repenting of the modern conditions prevailing all about us, these chosen ones are turning away in horror and disgust from all the pridefulness of the modern world and its religiosity.

In conclusion, it is an awful error to say that chastisement is a mark of the Lord's displeasure. When visited upon the reprobate wicked, it is a mark of his anger; but upon his elect, it proves to them his fatherly watchcare over his people whom he loves. Just suppose that chastisement is a sign of disobedience in the one chastised, then it would follow that the way to avoid chastisement would be to obey and to stop disobeying. If correct, the chastisement would cease the very moment the child obeyed. If the chastisement ceased, then that child would be a bastard and not a son. Do you not see what a terrible conclusion such false reasoning would bring us? It cannot be. If disobedience brings chastisement, then the very worst thing we can do is to obey; since obedience would then bring exemption from chastisement, it would also prove our illegitimacy and not our right to the promise as real sons of God.

H. H. L.

(Editorial by Elder H. H. Lefferts March, 1931.)

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church, Pittsylvania County, Va., while in conference January 3, 1970, a presbytery met January 31, 1970 at 7:00 p. m. for the examination of Brother Richard Stegall, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of deacon.

The solemnity was begun with song and prayer by Elder Kenneth R. Key. All Elders and Deacons of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders Kenneth R. Key, O. K. Tench, J. L. Bocock, W. A. Smith, R. S. Payne, L. H. Key and Donald E. Smith. Deacons: Earl S. Rudd, C. G. Stegall, Gold Minter, G. F. Squires, D. O. Chandler, Jr., H. C. Brown, Russell T. Holley, S. A. Slaughter, M. H. Pickeral, W. H. Simpson, Harold Weatherford, Andrew Gibson, D. L. Simpson, Henry Blalock, B. B. Williams, W. H. Dove, Joe Mangum, P. L. Holley and Julian Williams.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder O. K. Tench as Moderator and Elder Donald E. Smith as Clerk. Elders J. L. Bocock and Wallis A. Smith were chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Brother Julian Williams having been duly appointed by Malmaison Church in conference January 3, 1970, spokesman for the church delivered Brother Richard Stegall to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elders J. L. Bocock and Wallis Smith using scripture reference 1 Tim. 3rd chapter. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Raymond S. Payne. Elder Kenneth R. Key delivered the charge to the candidate. Scripture reference, the Bible as a guide to be used in his endeavors.

The Moderator asked Brother Julian Williams if the church approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

The right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given by the presbytery to Brother Richard Stegall. The ordained deacon was delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon of the Old School, Primitive Baptist Church at Malmaison.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Leonard H. Key.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

OBITUARIES

ELDER W. Y. CHANDLER

Elder W. Y. Chandler was born January 29, 1896, and died May 4, 1970, thus being a little over 74 years old. He was married to Miss Hettie Wood December 10, 1919, and to this union were born 5 children, 3 girls and 2 boys: Mrs. Elizabeth Linberg and Mrs. Lillian Neisen, of Evansville, Ind.; and Mrs. Laura Jean Bland of Henderson, Ky.; William L. Chandler, Pittsburgh Pa.; and Wade Y. Chandler, Jr., Rockport, Ind. Surviving also are 20 grandchildren and 8 great grand-

children.

Elder Chandler professed a hope in Christ and asked for a home with Dry Creek Church Saturday night before the 4th Sunday in August, 1941, and was baptized the Sunday morning following by the writer. Elder Chandler was an Engineer on the L and N Railroad, and on account of his work he did not attend Church regularly for some time; but he was impressed to preach, and was liberated March 14, 1954, and ordained to the full work of the ministry November 30, 1958. He had the care of Rock Springs Church in the Soldier Creek Association for several years.

His funeral was held at Hughart Funeral Home, Hopkinsville, Ky., May 7, 1970, by Elder Paul Poyner, Elder R. L. Biggs and the writer. Elder Biggs preached the doctrine that Elder Chandler believed so strongly; and I tried to speak on the Resurrection, using as a text, "As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly," and the Adam man, Wade Chandler, being adopted into the family of God, bore witness that he was redeemed by the blood of Jesus. The body was taken to Evansville, Ind., and laid to rest May 8, 1970.

We would say unto his wife and children not to weep as those who have no hope. May God bless all is our prayer for Christ's sake.

J. N. Darnall

IN MEMORY OF
BROTHER BENJAMIN W. HARWARD

The Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church lost a beloved brother and one who fulfilled the office of a deacon, when it pleased Almighty God to call Brother Ben, age 53, from this world on October 3, 1969. May our Lord and Saviour be pleased to reconcile all of us who mourn his passing and again make us to know that his will is done in the armies of heaven and amongst the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay his hand.

Brother Harward was a strong believer in the total depravity of man, the surety of the wills and shalls of God, and had been made to know that he was a sinner by nature and by practice, and that salvation was by the Grace of God and not by the works of puny man. He loved to be among those that spoke his language and his delight was in discussing the scriptures and declaring the sovereignty of God.

A great desire was given our dear brother to live and walk with those whom he felt were the children of God and at a special meeting on April 23, 1960 where the gospel had been proclaimed by Elder A. P. Mewborn he was made willing to go home to his friends and declare in an humble manner that I am a sinner and unworthy to be with you but desire a home among you. Elder Mewborn baptized him on Sunday morning and I have often rejoiced at the happiness described by Elder Mewborn while he and Brother Harward were returning to the shore. Elder Mewborn said, "That there were many sharp shells that were hurting his feet and that he asked Brother Ben if the shells were cutting his feet." Brother Harward replied, "Shells! What shells?" He was not aware of any shells because it pleased God to remove his mind from the vain and perishable things of this world and to center it on the divine and heavenly things of God.

His funeral was held in the church he loved and services conducted by those that were so dear to him, his pastor Elder C. N. Bunn and Elder A. P. Mewborn. His body was laid to rest in the Green Lawn Cemetery to await the morning of the resurrection when his Lord will say to him, "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

We at the Norfolk Church, together with his children, a host of kindred and friends everywhere miss him very much, but could not wish him back, because we feel that he is with his Lord in paradise.

Done by order of the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church in conference Saturday night before the 3rd Sunday in December 1969.

Written by one who loved him,
Ruby Coward

EULA TAYLOR HALL

Sister Eula Taylor Hall, a member of Liberty Hill Church, departed this life on February 20, 1969. She was born on September 9, 1889. Her husband, Mr. Carl Hall, who was well known among the Primitive Baptists in this area, passed away in 1951.

The visiting ministers and other brethren (many have departed) well remember the home of Mr. Carl and Sister Eula Hall, as many visited in their home. The evidence shows that they did not have the love of money, because they helped many who were in need.

Sister Hall is survived by two sisters and a number of nieces and nephews. Her sister, Mrs. Josie Patterson, and her nephews: Eugene, Royce Lee, John, Jr. (Buck), and A. G. are members at Liberty Hill Church near Farmerville, La.

Sister Eula Hall suffered a severe stroke a few years ago, and was confined to the nursing home in Farmerville, La. for a lengthy period.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder W. W. Taylor and assisted by the writer at Liberty Hill Church, and her body was laid to rest in the cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.

JAMES RUFUS SPENCER

James Rufus Spencer was born September 2, 1896, in Johnston County to the parents of Elder James Turner Spencer and Nancy Ann Stancil Spencer; and died May 25, 1969.

Brother Rufus was sickly in his last years, and it was in 1967 at the hospital in Petersburg, Virginia, that he asked for a home in Creech's Church, along with his wife.

Brother Rufus was no stranger to the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. He was raised in a Primitive Baptist home yet this did not make him love the truth, but would only have given him a respect for the people of God. But God who is rich in mercy was pleased to reveal this to our dear brother, to make him feel his unworthiness, and also to turn him from self to view by an eye of faith the beauty of God's mercy as it is in Christ Jesus.

Our brother attended the church at Creech's very often before his sickness, and on one occasion he asked me if he died first would I come to Virginia to conduct his funeral. I answered that I hoped before he passed away that I would be blessed to baptize him, and that if I was living by God's Grace I would come.

It was in July that I was called to go to Hopewell, Virginia, to see Brother Rufus who was stricken with heart trouble. Deacon Luby Batten, Sister Nellie Hocutt and I were blessed to go, and I had the feeling when the call came that he wanted a home with the Church. How often does God send affliction to bring his people down and making them willing to go home crying how great things He has done for them.

When we walked into the room at the hospital, we were greeted by a flood of tears and that he wanted a home with the Lord's people — unworthy, yet possessing a hope. He was received along with his wife and was baptized the 4th Sunday in October, 1967,

Brother Rufus Spencer's funeral was conducted by Elder D. B. Stokes at Gould's Funeral Home in Hopewell, Virginia, and was laid to rest in Blanford Cemetery in Petersburg, Virginia. Brother Spencer is survived by his wife, Sister Minnie Spencer, 4 daughters, 3 sisters, and 11 grandchildren.

We, the Church at Creech's in Johnston County, shall miss him, but we hope to bow in humble submission to the Eternal Holy Will of God, and may his family and friends be blessed to find grace in their hour of sorrowing to sustain them.

Done by order of Conference of Creech's Church in June, 1969.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Curtis Johnson, Clerk

SISTER LELIA L. HAMILTON

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call home our beloved Sister Lelia Hamilton on March 19, 1970.

Sister Hamilton united with the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church in September 1963. She was married to the late D. B. Hamilton.

Sister Hamilton was a faithful member of her Church, and loved to talk with the brethren and friends of the Grace of God, and how she felt the Lord had blessed her all the days of her life. She was in ill health for several months, and in all of her trials and tribulations, she was blessed to look to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; for her faith and trust was in him. She spoke often of being willing to depart this life to be with Jesus Christ where there would be no more heartaches, sorrow and pain.

She is survived by three sisters: Mrs. Ruth Dixon of Rocky Mount; Mrs. Bertha Minton of Ahoskie, and Mrs. E. L. Mizelle of Enfield; one stepson: Burkett Hamilton of Smithfield.

Her funeral was conducted from the Chapel of Gay-Yost Funeral Home by her Pastor Elder D. B. Stokes. Burial was in the Riverside Memorial Cemetery in Smithfield, where she rests in peace to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Resolved; That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the *Signs of the Times*; one to the family and one for the church as a permanent record.

Done by order of Conference May, 1970.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

DEACON FRANK R. DEW

Deacon Frank R. Dew, son of the late George D. and Lucy Perry Dew, was born June 8, 1887; and was called home by our Heavenly Father, March 3, 1970, at the age of 82 years.

Brother Dew was blessed by God to unite with The Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church in June 1964, and ordained a Deacon in September 1964. He loved the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace and stood firm in his hope and faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He served the church and his brethren faithfully and was enabled by God to walk circumspectly before him in Love.

We at the Falls Church loved him dearly and will miss him, but we feel to believe that he is at long last resting in the arms of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. In Brother Dew's last few days he spoke often of his hope and longing to be with the Lord. He will be missed by all who loved him, and the vacancy

can never be filled by mortal man.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Nannie Fly Dew; three daughters: Mrs. Mildred Kerr of Rocky Mount, Mrs. Dorothy May of Red Oak, and Mrs. Frances Whittington of Benson; one sister, Mrs. Addie Winstead of Wake Forest; two half-brothers: Duncan J. Dew of Portsmouth, Va., and J. Howard Dew of Wilmington; three half-sisters: Mrs. Lois Cross and Mrs. Julia Strickland of Rocky Mount, and Mrs. Mattie Saundars of Spring Hope; six grandchildren and one great grandchild.

His funeral was conducted from the Chapel of Gay-Yost Funeral Home, by his Pastor Elder D. B. Stokes where relatives and friends gathered together to pay their last tribute to a loved one. The display of flowers was in evidence of their love for our Deacon, Brother, and Friend. Burial was in Pineview Cemetery, where we feel he is asleep waiting for his Lord and Master.

Resolved; That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the *Signs of the Times*; one to the family and one for the church as a permanent record.

Done by order of Conference May, 1970.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

STEWART HANGER

Stewart Hanger was born in Grundy, Va., October 18, 1902, and passed away at his home in Mossy Rock, Washington, February 24, 1968, at the age of 67. He is survived by six sisters and one brother: Mrs. Gertrude Sumner and Mrs. Roase Riordan, of Onalaska; Mrs. Martha Bartley, of Mossy Rock; Mrs. Bernice Cheney, Silver Creek; Mrs. Helen Sheney, Glenonia; and Mrs. Margaret Hugh, Raudall; and Ray Hanger, Onalaska.

He had been in a hospital in October, November and part of December, when, being improved, he was taken home where he remained to the end of his earthly career. He had for years attended the Old School Baptist Church in Mossy Rock; and his worth to them is not easily estimated. When the church which was at Riffe, Washington, had to be torn down or moved to higher ground because that area was to be all under water by a huge lake being formed, he helped in every way he could. The best timber in the building was brought to Mossy Rock and used in the building built there on the land Elder and Sister Davis had given for it.

He was always present at the meetings, and in winter would have the building warm when the members arrived; and if the pastor did not come they would sing the dear hymns, and he would read two or three chapters from the Bible, of which he was an avid reader. He was so good to help in the expenses of the church and in all other ways, and his loss is deeply felt by all; but we realize that our loss is his gain, for he had said in his illness that he was not afraid to go.

Services were held at the Mossy Rock Community Church with Mr. Paul Bunton officiating. Interment was in Doss Cemetery. The building was crowded, and the many beautiful floral pieces spoke of the deep esteem in which he was held. Written by request.

Mrs. J. W. Taylor
4511 N. E. Prescott
Portland, Oregon 97218

SISTER MARY DOSS

Sister Mary Latisha Doss was called from this life May 23, 1970, in Memorial Hospital, Danville, Va., at the age of 67 years. She was born June 26, 1902, the daughter of Chissley and Elizabeth Hardy. She was married to Brother Lundy Doss November 6, 1916, who preceded her in death January 15, 1961. Together they united with Springfield Primitive Baptist Church November 8, 1924, and were faithful members.

Sister Mary had been in poor health several years but grew worse for three weeks, and seemed to realize her time here was about ended. She told the writer the day she died, "When I lie down at night I wonder if I will awake in the morning." She was such an humble person, kind spoken, and always much concerned about the sick and afflicted. She worked hard in rearing their big family, and was so patient and good to them; and they were also good to her and loved her. She manifested a great love for her church and loved the preaching of the gospel of God our Saviour.

Five boys and five girls survive: Reuben, Leroy, Frank and William of Gretna, Va., and Raymond of Danville, Va.; Mrs. Roy Dalton, Mrs. Ollie Collins, Mrs. Morris Mills, of Gretna, Mrs. Bernice Crane of Danville, and Mrs. Irene Floyd of Hopewell, Va. Surviving also are one sister, Sister Maude Doss of Gretna; 26 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at Springfield Church by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and she was laid to rest in Gretna Burial Park. There was much evidence of respect, devotion and friendship manifested by the congregation, and many beautiful flowers.

May the Lord be with and comfort her beloved children and all who mourn, and reconcile us all to say, Thy will be done. Written by

Annie Tosh

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 138 DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1970 NO. 9

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/70
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

PRAYER

A sister asked me some time ago
To write something on prayer,
But I've hesitated to try,
I do hereby declare.

Many times I've endeavored to pray,
Which seemed to be in vain,
But I would pray without ceasing
While on earth I remain.

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Unuttered or expressed,"
And I hope that with this desire
I have at times been blessed.

Fervent prayer is a solemn thing,
Proceeding from the heart,
The supplication to the Lord,
Who doth knowledge impart.

I believe that all true prayer is
Indited in the heart
By the Lord God omnipotent,
Who in heaven above art.

Even Jesus, the mediator
Of the New Testament,
Offered up prayers to the Father
When he to earth was sent.

He was sent to redeem his own,
Who are with him joint-heirs,
And now seated at God's right hand,
To him presents their prayers.

He said he prayed not for the world,
But for them given him;
They were giv'n to him to redeem,
And I hope I'm one of them.

C. W. Vass
409 N. Y. Avenue
Elizabeth City, N. C.

ENJOYED THE MEETING

Rt. 2, Box 518
Bassett, Va.

Dear Elder and Sister Wood,
and the Dear Editors of the *Signs*,

I hope all are well, and rejoicing in the sweet sunshine and love of blessed Jesus. He is all our salvation, our grace, love, mercy, and truth. He is all we will ever need in this low ground, and in that sweet home above.

O! am I his or am I not? I hope I have a hope in Him. Today, while the dear Elders at Riverview Church were preaching Jesus and him crucified so wonderfully, I, who am the least of all, feel I was wonderfully fed on the crumbs that fell from God's eternal throne of love. How my poor, weary soul did leap for joy! I was given a desire to humbly bow my head and thank the Lord, who, in his tender mercy, comforted one so vile as I.

For some time I have been down in the valley — so low and so barren, wondering if I have only caught the shadow, and missed the substance.

It is sweet to meet God's dear, precious children, and hear them sing and pray and preach the blessed Truth as it is in Jesus. We sang that wonderful song, "God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform." I love that hymn, and had wanted for a long time to hear the little ones of God sing it again . . .

Dear ones, I hope you will pray for me when you are blest with a mind to beg for the sweet mercy of God.

Your least sister,
Callie Clark

EXPERIENCE

Brother Cecil Turner, a dear servant and able minister of God who baptized me over 20 years ago, requested that I write, so it is with much fear and trembling that I attempt to write a part of my feelings, and how I get along.

I have felt for sometime to be cut off. I seem to be so far away, and cold, that it causes me trouble and grief. I am made to wonder if surely I am mistaken in the whole matter. I feel that I have caught the shadow and missed the substance. I long for and try to beg for a thankful heart, to thank and praise my God for being so good and wonderful to me and mine. I have been so wonderfully blessed all the days of my life, and have been so undeserving of His notice. I desire to be kept at his precious little children's feet; to be humble and kind. It is not my desire to hurt a hair of one of their precious heads. I feel that when we are blessed with the Spirit it is not possible to harm one of his little ones.

I desire to bear my burdens and trials humbly and without grumbling at my lot; because I know if we are what we hope and profess to be, we cannot sail on flowery beds of ease; but the life of a pilgrim is a hard road to travel. O Lord, help us to look unto the hills from whence cometh our help. It seems that I go to church longing to hear preaching and be comforted and lifted up, but most of the time it is a sealed book: yet I realize it is the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. His precious word is indeed food to the poor, hungry soul when one is blessed to preach Jesus and him crucified, and I know it takes the same power to receive it as it does to preach it.

If I am one in that blessed number that Jesus left his lofty heights in Glory and came down to this low ground of sin and sorrow to suffer, bleed and die on the Roman cross, then nothing shall ever be able to separate me from the love of God. I have read the scripture in Luke 23:26 where they crucified my Lord, and have shed many tears, and felt as guilty as if I had been there and driven the nails in his dear hands. I have felt that if I had been there, I would loved to have handed him some cold sweet water to drink. I feel a lot of time like Mary must have felt when she was seeking her Lord, (John 20:11), and went to the sepulchre, and seeing He was gone, stood weeping. On seeing a man she thought was the gardner she said, "They have borne my Lord away, please tell me where they have laid him." Then it pleased Jesus to reveal himself to her: he gently spoke her name, Mary. She knew at once it was her Lord. How happy she must have been to see him — she must surely have felt her great need of him or she would not have gone seeking him.

I feel so many times, that if I could but touch the hem of his garment I would be made whole. Once I was being ridiculed and made fun of until I felt I must surely throw up my hands in despair. Inwardly I cried, O Lord, what does one do in a case like this? and the words came to me, "Forgive them, Lord, for they know not what they do." I felt a lot better and was given grace to bear my burden. I know the road is full of thorns and thistles, and many, many troubles, but am made willing to bear my burdens to bear the name of Jesus.

I oftimes think of the parable of the sower that went forth to sow: some seeds fell on good ground and grew up and bore fruit, while others fell on stony places and the sun bore down upon them and the weeds grew up and they did choke. I feel like a seed that fell by the wayside. I know unless the goodness and mercy of my Heavenly Father keeps me, I will surely fall by the wayside. I beg that He will keep me in the way that he will have me go. I long for more and better evidence that I am one of his little ones, and not deceived in the whole matter.

I have tried to pray for a dream, and just recently I dreamed I was an

angel as pure and white as the angels in heaven. I thought my little granddaughter told she saw me, and I told her it must have been someone else; and she said, "No, grandmother, it was you." I thought I was so happy that I cried and cried. This gave me reason to rejoice for a season; but I long for more crumbs from the Master's table to feed my hungry soul. I know I have been made to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and I know He has a bountiful storehouse of mercy that is sufficient for all his children; and He allows just enough to keep us pressing onward and upward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling as it is in Jesus Christ our Lord. It seems that through the eye of faith I can view a whole sea of heavenly angels dressed in pure white with crowns on their heads and harps in their hands, all happy and praising King Jesus as he sits on his throne, making intercession for all the saints of God; and watching over them in the dark hours of night and when the storm clouds gather, — watching over them when they are unmindful of Him. He's in that city whose builder and maker is God: it is a beautiful place where all is love and all tears are wiped away. No pain or fear or sad farewells shall ever enter there, just peace and joy and love.

Once I was begging my Lord to go with me over the dark river of death, of which I knew nothing; and to hold my hand. I thought that with God holding my hand, who could be afraid; and He spoke to me and said, "I am with thee always even unto the end." I was made happy and was lifted up for a time. Another time I was so troubled it seemed surely I would be overcome, and I was continually trying to beg for mercy, and the words of a song were made known unto me: "Fear not brethren, joyfully stand on the borders of your land; Christ your Father's elder Son bids you undismayed go on." Were it not for my dear Saviour's caring for me and speaking peace to my poor soul, I could not go on; and yet I know these things of which I speak are very necessary to keep me under the rod. I feel so much of the time to be in a valley of dry bones bleached in the sun. But He has only to speak and I come to life like the dew on dried grass, or a fresh summer shower. He waters us with love, grace, and understanding in our hearts, so that we are set apart from the world; and we are a peculiar people the world does not understand; but grant, Lord, that I may be a witness of our Lord and Saviour.

Dear reader, please pray for me when you feel you don't have a friend on earth or in heaven, I desire and need your prayers. I realize more of late that I am not my own keeper, and that unless I am kept by His unerring Spirit and tender mercy, I will fall by the wayside, and be forever banished from the dear fellowship of the Church of God. This I don't believe I could bear. I want to be found mixing and mingling with the dear saints of God: I want to live with them, die with them, and be buried with them. It is my humble desire that I may be blessed to remain with them, but am so unworthy, and do feel if they knew me as I and my Lord knows me, they could not fellowship me. I feel if one at all, surely I must be the least one. With Paul I feel to be the chief of sinners. I hate my life and the way I live, because I cannot live like I would love to. "The things I do I would not, and the things I would not, I do. Therefore it is not I that do it but sin that dwells in me."

As long as we live we must put up with this tabernacle of clay: the carnal mind is not subject to the laws of God neither indeed can be. "It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth but of God that showeth mercy." Our dear pastor, Jimmie Hollandsworth, who is blessed to be as wise in the true knowledge of God as any I have ever known, said something while preaching that I thought was so humble and good, and it has remained with me. He said that while vacationing in various parts of the country, he tried to conduct him-

self in such a way that the Lord would not be ashamed of him. I thought, what a good example that is to set before us! But I fall so far short of the way I wish I could live that I feel like the Prodigal son who spent all and was no more worthy to be called his father's son, but wished to be only as one of the hired servants.

I know that when Jesus bowed his head and said, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost, if I was not included in that blessed number, there is nothing whatever I can do to enter into the courts of glory. I am just as helpless as a leaf being tossed about in a whirlwind, to catch hold of anything to help me; so am wholly dependent on the Lord and Saviour. We must stand still and see His salvation. I feel sometimes to cry, "O Lord, restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." Sometimes while in the mill running my machine, I am given to meditate on the goodness and mercy of my Heavenly Father, and I feel his mighty power overshadows me to the extent that I am made to praise his holy name. He is the "fairest of ten thousand and altogether lovely"; He is the bright and morning star, the Lily of the Valley, and ever to be adored, and greatly to be feared. "If these be still, the rocks would cry out."

These rejoicing seasons are jewels to me, and certainly worth more than gold or anything the world can offer. Once I was greatly troubled and felt forsaken, when the words came to me, "Peace be unto you from God the Father." They came with power, and a great calmness settled over me, and I was at peace for awhile. These things follow me, and remain to comfort me.

My dear uncle, Leonard Brammer, who is an able minister of God, said on one occasion, that when you were troubled try to remember that Jesus was there before you. This has been a great comfort to me.

Please excuse mistakes, Brother Cecil, and forgive me for writing so much. A little sister with a sweet hope of Glory.

Edna Rea
Rt. 2, Box 650
Bassett, Va. 24055

BROTHER HALL TO HIS SISTER

P. O. Box 595
Mount Vernon, Wash. 98273

Dear Sister:

In your letter of February 26th, you state, — "However, I don't understand how God would choose only a few of His creatures to go to Heaven. As I always told Father, — What incentive could one have to lead a better life?"

Now this shows you have been concerned over this rather puzzling matter and are still giving it thought, which is evidence you have long desired to understand it and are still of the mind to reconcile yourself to it, I believe. I have been impressed to write you, and in my feeble way to tell of my own deep concern over the very same thing many, many years ago, and how, in due time, it was all cleared up to my complete satisfaction, not of my own effort or self-sufficiency but by the enlightenment given by that *mysterious power from above* when it was His will and pleasure to reveal Himself and some of the mysteries contained in HIS BOOK OF TRUTH.

This brings us right into the very mysterious and SECRET things which the Lord has chosen to belong to Him, — to be revealed only as His pleasure and designs dictate. One of his servants, some 100 years ago, wrote, — "Secret things belong to God, but such as are revealed belong to us and our children." Human knowledge goes no further. *No finite intelligence can fathom the infinite depths of the Godhead.* It seems certain that He revealed considerable of *secret things* to the Old Prophets and Apostles who wrote of them in the Old and New Testaments; among them this very thing we have

in mind, that the Lord's elect or chosen ones are so few in number as compared to the non-elect or world-at-large.

Getting back to the question, "What incentive could one have to lead a better life?" To treat with this question rightly, we would have to deal with mortal man first in his natural, worldly state of being. As such, their worldly "incentives" or motivation was largely dependent upon their parents, or those charged with their worldly care while in their early years. From the creation on thru early times, people generally were admonished by their elders, parents, and others, to be of good character, to respect their parents, and the moral and legal laws of their day. Being natural, worldly people, many failed to lead exemplary lives, both young and adults in all walks of life; even kings of olden times "Did wrong in the sight of the Lord," says the Old Testament. As time has passed down thru the many centuries, man has not improved as to leading exemplary and good lives, and we only have to look briefly about us here, and consider what goes on thruout the whole world, to see where man's actions have led the world — to the very brink of destruction. In stating what *man's actions* have done, I mean the natural, worldly people as a whole, and do not include those good people the Lord has separated from among the masses who are His true disciples and followers. Naturally, some could have it charged to them of much wrong doing in the sight of the Lord before He wrought His change in them. After He changes His chosen ones, they will never be found aiding and abetting the shocking crimes, violence, whoredom, and the multitude of Satan's vile works we have seen in the past, and are seeing today.

Now while still treating with natural, worldly man and trying to get to the point of what governs his incentives or motivation to do good, my mind turns to the first man Adam (and of course his wife Eve), who we find in the beginning of Genesis dwelling in a worldly paradise, with all their worldly needs supplied and without any other mortal man around to sway them into wrong doing. Surely they should have had, and did have, every reason to lead a good life and do as the Lord told them. They did not have any knowledge of what God's action or His will was as to saving only a part of mankind or choosing from among the future generations, etc. So we must say that their lack of incentive to do right in the sight of the Lord, could not be charged up thusly. *The fall of Adam came,* and sin entered into the world, — the *sin* being an act of a thing. It has continued on thru the ages, involving every living human being. In Psalms 51:5, David wrote: "Behold I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me." Many scriptures could be cited verifying this fact.

Further, there was the Apostle Paul (formerly known as Saul) who wrote in Acts 26:5, ". . . that after the most straitest sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee." Here we see he was a very religious man, as well as an educated man. Surely he should have had every incentive to live a good life and do right in the sight of the Lord — if his knowledge of the Lord had been gained thru *the Lord changing him.* But he was still an unregenerated natural man, and his new birth by the Lord God came later when he was on the road to Damascus to bind and imprison the Lord's chosen followers. Read his miraculous conversion in Acts 9:1-13. Read how he was a party to the stoning to death of Stephen, Acts 7:58. Read of the great change after he was CHANGED BY THE POWER OF GOD, in Acts 9th chapter, and see that HIS INCENTIVES WERE THEN TO DO RIGHT IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD.

One more scriptural record before leaving this subject, that of the two malefactors (criminals, sinful men, convicted of thievery) hanging on either side of the crucified Jesus. It seems certain that their incentives to do right

and to live good lives, were non-existent, or nil, and that neither of them knew Jesus other than by a "head" knowledge, and had no reason to live a bad life because of their knowledge of His will or manner of converting and bringing to Him only a portion of the multitudes of living souls. Notice that the one suddenly became aware of who Jesus actually was, by and thru Jesus having revealed Himself to him; and he begged Jesus to remember him and to have him in Paradise with him, etc.; to which Jesus answered that he would so act. Notice that the other thief, railed upon Jesus and said, *"If thou be Christ,* save thyself and us." This one did not know Jesus or he would not have said — "IF THOU BE CHRIST," etc. Excellent proof that Jesus meant what he had said, "I came into the world to save sinners." Notice that this thief's vileness made not one whit of difference to Jesus, when it came time for Him to do his Father's will as he prayed before being crucified — "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou has given me, for they are thine." (John 17:9)

Some Scriptures bearing upon the foregoing writings are: Proverbs 16:1: Solomon said, "The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord." Psalms 17:7: "The law of the Lord is perfect in converting the soul."

Now as to the INCENTIVES or MOTIVATION of those people of past ages, after the Lord's miraculous power changed them from their darkness into His light and revealed himself to them as He so chose to do. We have already referred to the Apostle Paul's change, and the thief on the cross. We only have to read of Samuel's experience, I Samuel 3:7, "And Samuel did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed to him," to see that Samuel's incentives were good thereafter.

Turn to Jeremiah, 1st chapter, and see the miraculous way he was brought into the LIGHT AND POWER OF GOD, and how he was a true servant and prophet. You will not find that he ceased to have good incentives and failed to live a good life, etc. Look into the records of other old Prophets of Old Testament record, as well as to check over the lives of St. John, Peter, Timothy and various others, and see how they lived after the Lord changed them into His servants from earthy, worldly and generally uneducated, ignorant fisherman, etc. Should I run thru several of their records, this letter would be entirely too lengthy and tiresome to you.

Now as to a few Scriptures treating on the Lord's people being but a few or a "REMNANT," which is a small part of the whole thing. In Deuteronomy 7:7, "For the Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; FOR YE WERE THE FEWEST OF ALL PEOPLE." Isaiah 11:11, ". . . The Lord shall set His hand again to recover the remnant of His people." Ezra 9:8 — ". . . To leave us a remnant to escape . . ." Isaiah 1:9: "Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom," etc. Isaiah 11:16 — "And there shall be a highway for the remnant of His people, etc." Jeremiah 15:11: "The Lord said, verily it shall be well with thy remnant," etc. Jeremiah 23:3: "And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries, whither I have driven them." Jeremiah 31:7: ". . . O Lord, save thy people, the remnant of Israel." Jeremiah 42:2 ". . . And pray for us unto the Lord thy God, even for all this remnant, (for we are left but a few of many) etc." And many more.

In the New Testament, in Matthew 7:14: "Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, AND FEW THERE BE THAT FIND IT." These are the words of Jesus, strong proof indeed. Note that He said in verse 13 that many there

be that go in at the broad gate that leadeth to destruction. Romans 9:27: "Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, A REMNANT SHALL BE SAVED." Romans 11:5: "Even so at this present time also there is a REMNANT according to the election of grace." Lastly, in Revelation 11:13: "And the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of Heaven." There are also mentions of *Remnant* in Rev. 12:17, 19:21.

Now all this — all these words by the inspired prophets and apostles — cannot be brushed aside, and especially so at this very time, when we actually can see the scarcity of people DOING GOOD IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD as compared to the multitudes that are bent on destroying the very foundations of our civilization and way of life as we have been taught to live this short life on earth.

I have scarcely "scatched the surface" so-to-speak, of the vast volume of Scriptural proof to be found, treating on THE FEW THE LORD HAS CHOSEN from among the countless millions upon millions from beginning of time to ending of this time world. I can only say, read the Bible, always in a prayerful mind, asking the Lord to give you understanding of some of His ways that He has seen fit to hide from the world at large. If you do not find Scriptural proof of what anyone, in any walk of life, gives out to you as being THE GOSPEL OF OUR LORD, then do not accept it; even what I have herein written.

I submit this to you to read and meditate on at your convenience, and if you decide it is of no value, or has not cleared up your mind as to the points you raised, throw it away. It is submitted in the hope you will get something of value from it.

In Christian love, I hope,
Bill (Wm. O. Hall)

44 Durrett Grove
Tuscaloosa, Ala. 35401

Dear Sister Veola:
(Mrs. Harvis Donaldson)

I was real glad to receive your letter. I had been thinking of you and was real glad to hear from you.

At the present, or just previously to the present, it seemed I couldn't be settled in mind just what I wanted to do — read or cut grass, etc. then the postman delivered your letter, and after reading it I felt like trying to write in answer to it.

I was much pleased by you offering for baptism and church membership, Sister Veola, believing with all my heart it was the work and effect of the grace of Christ wrought in your heart and mind. You well know our infirmities are mixed with our most humble performance, that we may, as you say, glory not in ourselves but in the Lord. Without those infirmities or tribulations we would have no fear and trembling and would be like the Pharisee, glory in ourselves. But the Lord said — no flesh can glory in his presence. But He chose his people in their infirmities and in the furnace of afflictions, and thereby separated them from all the children of the flesh. He thus teaches his own by experience and will not leave them without a measure of comfort by the fruits of the Spirit of Christ; but gives them assurance to taste that He is gracious — the good word of God, the power and glory of his free grace, mercy, truth and love. Yes, and a sweet hope, all of which Christ is to them, and is made of God unto them; and thus they are made accepted of God in Christ unto Himself. And, as you said, that is the way it is with his children whether I be one or not. And that God knows, as He knoweth them that are his; but I do not know, save only in part — a very small part which evidences produce — such as we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren,

So in that sense we know in part and

prophesy in part, but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part passes away. But after all, we are said to be saved by hope; and though that hope seems so little and dim, yet if it is real, which it seems we can only hope it is, yet it is as large as Christ is who is our hope, and He filleth the heavens, yes, the immensity.

Sister Veola, I wish to say again and again, I am always made to feel glad to see the Lord's children follow him in baptism. It seems there are so few of them that do, comparatively, and those that don't, we are often made to wonder just what their feelings are concerning it. We feel it is a sacred ordinance of the Lord and that He must lead to and in it; and many times we would love to say something to individuals, but fear we may drive them from it instead of helping them. We think it should all be in fear yet willingly, desiring to obey the dear Lord who has and will continue to do so much for us poor and unworthy sinners. The Lord's people all have in a measure the same feeling experimentally, and that is where the union lies, — feeling to be the poorest of the poor in themselves and yet in a measure the richest of the rich in Christ. But without being poor in the Spirit, we could never feel to be rich in Christ. Only the poor in the spirit feel the need of Christ.

I remember the pleasant smile on your face after coming up out of the water. May the dear Lord ever bless you with his sufficient and enduring grace through all the trials and afflictions of this life and then receive you in his likeness in glory, to ever be with him.

Your very unworthy brother,
I hope in Christ,
John L. Sanders

"WHEN WE ARE CHANGED FROM JUDGE TO BEGGAR . . ."

2768 Clifton Ave. N. W.
Roanoke, Va. 24017

Dear Editors:

Having just finished reading the July, 1970, issue of the *Signs,* I feel so impressed to send these three subscriptions, one for a cousin and for my two brothers . . .

Why do I want them to receive these subscriptions? Because the writings of this July issue may satisfactorily answer questions I feel arise in their minds from time to time; and because I was reminded of some of my exercises of mind in my journey through this life so far, and my hope of that place beyond this life.

We came into possession of some of our grandfather, Elder Asa D. Shortt's, old papers, letters and minutes recently, and they are a joy and comfort to us as we read them. I was especially touched by one quotation of Elder R. H. Barwick (1899), which one said was well said:

"Jesus taught his disciples to pray for forgiveness, just as they forgave those who had wronged them. It is true yet, that just as sure as we hold hardness or malice in our minds against any who have really wronged us, much more against an imaginary wrong, just that sure the door of prayer is shut to us, and we need not try to find the Lord in our troubles. When we come low enough that we are engrossed in our own poverty and great necessity; when our own spirit is broken and ourselves undone, then we are not caring about the wrong of others: we get down off the judgment seat and leave that to the Lord. When we are changed from judge to beggar, there is hope for us."

As I read these words I thought of the 6th verse of the 2nd chapter of Collossians, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him . . ." When we consider Jesus' "walk" while on earth as man, we must see where and how his feet walked. And it does mean much to me for several reasons. One is, as I beheld a hand

come down and hover protectingly over one, and turn palm outward against anything coming against this one, I found myself feeling, I cannot deny God. Through much sorrow, trials, and trying events, I felt I must leave all times, events, and things in God's hand. On one occasion, after many trying events, I came home from work feeling that everything that seemed to be from God, was taken away from me: I felt I would fall to the ground as I walked from the bus line to the house. My footsteps halted as I felt the vital things being taken away. It seemed all flesh was stripped from my bones; and as I beheld the "valley of dry bones" even my bones seemed to dissolve, and a cry was wrung from my inner heart, "Lord help me to get home, and not fall here on the street." I could go no farther. As I said "Lord help me," these words came with such life and strength: "To be clothed upon." Clothed upon with what? humility, I hope. Though my judgment be taken away, may I know something of the humility of the meek and lowly heart of Jesus: for He said, ". . . for I am meek and lowly in heart."

A dream of being in a room full of beds, and each bed full of afflicted ones — beds of afflictions. I was in one bed. A small child, a baby, was brought in. All said they loved the baby, but none had any room for it. I looked at the child, and said, "Put it on my bed, here is room for it." I put out my hand to its feet as it lay there, thinking they were cold; but its feet warmed my hands; and I felt, "O, to walk in all things as this child walked— meekly, humbly."

As I sat at the breakfast table Sunday morning of the Kehukee Association at Norfolk Church in 1969, I was lost in thought so deeply as not to hear what was said to me. I could see the ocean from where I sat; and the water was rough and rolling from a storm that was brewing. I seemed to see Jesus walking on these waters; and again my desire was to follow him.

Humbly,
Catherine A. Houchins

"SAVED BY HOPE"

Rt. 2
Smithfield, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler:

Of late I have been burdened to write and preach about our hope in Christ Jesus. So many are crying loudly that they know they are saved. It is my desire to contend for the doctrine of Election and Grace and a precious Hope of Eternal Glory. Without a doubt I do not believe that we know we are saved. I go to the Apostle Paul's writings in Romans when he was blest of God's grace to write, "For I know that in me, (that is in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing." I believe that he saw himself as he was, imperfect, sinful and unable to save himself.

When we are blest by God to see ourselves as Paul did, then we are thankful for a sweet hope in Jesus to save us from our sins. Paul wrote again, saying, "For we are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for." If we could see what we hope for then we would have knowledge, and we would not need hope.

I believe I can tell you how a man, woman or child can know he is saved. The only way is that they sin not. Who can say he has no sin? The Scriptures say that the thought of foolishness is sin. Have you, dear reader, not had a foolish thought even in the past hour? It is also recorded that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Does that Scripture leave anyone out? We read that the wages of sin is death. Does not everyone have to die? The Scripture says, "And sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

I have often heard about big sins and little sins, but there are no big or little sins. Sin is sin; and the consequence is death. The very thought of foolishness

puts us in the need of the mercy, grace and love of Jesus Christ, who alone lived a sin free life; yet who died because of the sins of his elected children — whereby we have hope that He died for us: Christ in us the hope of glory. "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, and which enters into that within the veil." If we knew we were saved, we would need no anchor of the soul: we would not be sure and steadfast in pressing on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

How sweet to the poor and needy child that hope in Christ Jesus is! It never leaves nor forsakes one while traveling this world of sorrow. It causes us to beg God for mercy; for we know that without his mercy we are lost. Despite all the doctrines of men, let Israel hope in the Lord. The people who say they are saved are evidently without Christ, in that, "At that time (before regeneration and a hope), ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." Today, if we have no hope, we are without God. Jesus and his finished work is the hope of the Primitive Baptist Church today. Without the finished work of Jesus, all is vain.

In conclusion, I will say that there are those who would take away our hope, and do away with the doctrine Old Baptists have believed from the beginning . . . and have us made into Arminians. May God bless us to detect worldly religion and keep it from creeping into our churches. They would deceive the very elect if possible. Thank God it is not possible.

In hope of eternal life,
(Elder) Wayne Mitchell

Box 295
Nags Head, N. C. 27959

Dear Editors of the *Signs,* and Elders of the militant church, and I feel the precious servants of the most High God, and Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ:

I am unable to find sufficient and appropriate words which could even remotely express the depth and height of my feelings this morning, concerning the unsearchable riches of the most merciful grace giving God and Saviour of his people.

There is not one doubt in my mind but that the *Signs of the Times* is a means which the merciful God uses to give comfort unto his poor and afflicted people. Whether I be one of them I do not know: I only know that His allowing this poor sinner to even hope, is so great a blessing that I am caused to desire that I be enabled to render any and all praise and honor unto His glorious name.

Dear Editors and Elders and servants of the most high God, and those whose writings I find in the *Signs,* how great and marvelous are his blessings unto you, as his Holy Spirit guides and leads you in your writings, and the printing of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. It is a true saying, that it is far better felt than told. And how great are his blessings unto the readers of this paper when they are given the blessed understanding of the true meaning as set forth in the paper. It just means far more than tongue can ever tell here below.

I am enclosing some writing which are according to my mind and feelings; and though I know that my own efforts can profit nothing, if you find it is in accord with the truth, giving all praise and honor to the only true God, you may print it in the *Signs.*

Troy G. Shepard

"LOVES THOSE WHO BELIEVE SALVATION IS BY GRACE ALONE"

Box 295
Nags Head, N. C.

I know that I love the Old Baptists,

who express their belief that salvation is by the grace of God alone, and in no wise by the work of the fleshly creature. But the question so much upon my mind is this, Is the love I feel for them in truth born of the Holy Spirit? I know that there has come a change, so that my thoughts are at times upon things different from what they once were; and that my feelings are different concerning things I feel to be of an un-worldly nature; and that at times I feel a deep desire to refrain from praising or honoring any man in his flesh, and that I might be enabled to render all praise unto the precious name of the Lord, and have no confidence in the flesh of men; but that my faith might be centered upon the unhindered ability of the just and holy God.

I do so hope that it is not in vain that I go daily searching for more evidence of my hope being born of the Spirit, for without this I can do nothing which would be pleasing in His sight. I am so helpless and prone to the ways of sinful flesh; and then afterwards am so filled with shame and hatred for the ways of my fleshly self, that I am not fit even for this world, much less to feel a precious hope in Christ.

I desire the privilege of greeting Old Baptists as brother and sister, but there is so great a fear in me, that were I granted such privilege by their accepting me as one of their members, I fear that I would have deceived those dear ones. Some times I have been asked, Why tarry? and my first thought in reply is my feeling of unworthiness, and that I might cause hurt in some way or manner; and I don't want to do such an awful thing. I do feel a desire that I might be enabled to go into the water and follow the Lord in baptism; but I know that that is accomplished only when performed in the Holy Spirit. Some have said that the Spirit was not literally with them to such a degree as to carry them forward begging a home with the brethren; but I have desired that I might feel the power of the Spirit with me to move me toward and unto that end, otherwise it would not be to the honoring of His precious name.

The 3rd Sunday in May when an open door was announced and a hymn was being sung, for a period of time it seemed I almost went forward; but somehow I did not go . . . In my feelings these words are true, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," and I hope that if and when I should ask for a home, it will not be this poor mortal directing my steps in so serious a matter.

I am well acquainted with my own awful ways, and if there was ever a time when I was not committing some evil sin, it was wholly by reason that I was restrained by the merciful grace of God; for it just is not in me of myself to do anything good and well pleasing in His sight. I desire to be thankful for the fellowship expressed by some Old Baptists towards me, and I desire that they would not interpret this writing as a reflection upon their encouragement of my request for membership.

Troy G. Shepard

"THE SIGHT SATISFIED HIM"

Boones Mill, Va. 24065

Dear Elder and Sister Hudson:

Thank you for your good and brotherly letter of April 21. It arrived in due time and brought us cheer.

We all remember you with much pleasure, dear brother, and as the song says, "hope to meet again."

The word of promise brought joy to the hearts of Adam and Eve on the island of time when soon after the fall the announcement was made that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent. Jehovah thundered forth His hatred of sin from the dark cloud of Sinai and wrote His curse in flames of fire on the face of heaven. Yet it was revealed and it was seen,

and it was declared that one should come from Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah, who alone should, could, and would bring salvation unaided and unassisted. In fulfillment of that promise the mighty captain of the salvation of His people came forth "glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His own strength," and "Mighty to save," was the inscription displayed on the banner of His majesty.

In many infallible proofs of his power and majesty, He, while here incarnate, opened his mouth and the blind saw, the deaf heard, the dumb spoke, the lame walked and the lepers were cleansed. His voice is more mighty than death. The heavenly warrior showed his ability to heal sin, shatter the chains of guilt and purge the horrible caves of human corruption and misery. His power was such that no man or combination of people could take His life, but He had power to lay it down himself. After He demolished the castles of every foe, He came forth from the grave and entered the gates of the eternal city. Now He is Jesus and this is he that rides the chariot of grace, conquering and to conquer! When Jesus begins to deal with a sinner the armor of the rebellious is taken from him, his hard heart is broken up with tender emotions, the enmity is destroyed and love takes its place. The sinner who cared not, is made to care, who believed not, is given faith, who loved not, is caused to love, impenitency is changed into grief, the proud spirit is subdued and phariseeism is removed.

A victory is thus given as an earnest of another which shall be given in the resurrection. Meantime Jesus will not quit the field until He has completed the conquest and swallowed up death in victory.

He has never failed and He will never fail. In the deep travail of his soul He saw his seed and the sight satisfied him; for He saw them safe and saved for time and for eternity.

Much love to you dear people.

Your sinful brother,
(Elder) J. L. Bocock

EXPERIENCE

Fieldale, Va.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I feel to write this letter for the *Signs*, for I do much thinking. I haven't been a member of the church very long, and when I joined I could not talk for weeping, and didn't tell my experience the way I wanted to. I believe the brethren felt what was in my heart, for they received me as a member. I felt so unworthy but was so happy.

I loved to go to Primitive Baptist churches even as a child. My mother was a member of Union Church of the Smith River Association. She tried to teach me to fear God. I would pray for God to take care of me when I was afraid or when I was in danger. I remember my mother getting sick one time, and she said she thought she was going to die; and I prayed that God would make her well again.

When I was about 10 years of age, I dreamed I was in heaven and standing in line to be judged. There was a large man behind a desk who had a kind face, and wearing a long white robe. He told me I didn't pass for I had a dirty spot on me. I told my mother about the dream, and she seemed about to cry. This dream bothered me some, but I went on like any child, being mean and full of mischief.

Sometime after I married I visited my Daddy in the hospital, and he seemed so troubled. He had already told me his experience in which he felt to be with God. I told him maybe he should join the church; and he asked me if I would join and be baptized with him. I told him I was not good enough, and he said he wasn't either. Sometime later he joined the church, and I went to his baptizing. He was so happy, and I felt the grace of God was with him. I didn't

understand then why the pastor, Elder Leonard Brammer, and the other members were so happy too.

I went to several different churches after I was grown, and felt I was in the wrong place. Many times I would pray God to help me; and I feel my prayers were answered, but sometimes in a different way than I asked for. I went on doing many things wrong, and would feel guilty. When I had been married about seven years my husband and I separated, and I felt the world had come to an end for me, for I loved him dearly. Again I turned to God, praying that He would make me strong enough to stand any burden put upon me. I would go to Republican and listen to Elder J. P. Helms preach. Sometime it seemed he was preaching only to me, for he preached about things that were in my mind and heart. I would weep, but didn't know if I was weeping over my sins or my personal problems.

My husband came back to us and we moved to Fieldale, Va., and we were very happy in our family life. One day I carried my mother and daddy to Union Church on Saturday. I said that someone else could take them on Sunday for it was such a long way to drive. But something happened to me that day. It was as though a small voice was saying, Who was I to say whether I should go to church or not. It seemed everything I did was wrong; and I wept alone. I took mother and daddy to church on Sunday; and heard Elder Leonard Brammer preach. I cried so that I didn't go back for awhile: I was ashamed for anybody to see my tears. I should have realized then what was troubling me for I had no personal problems.

This feeling passed and I believe now it was because I was living in sin, going to swimming pools, dances, etc. and thought I was having fun. One of my girl friends said to me, "You aren't enjoying yourself, are you?" She could see that I was only pretending.

Then we built our first home above Fieldale. Sometime later I had a dream, I was then carrying my second and last child; I dreamed I saw Jesus standing at the foot of my bed, wearing a long white robe, and was looking at me very seriously. I was sitting up in bed with my arms outstretched, saying over and over, "Jesus save me." My son awoke me, as my husband was on the night shift; and I was still sitting up in bed. He said that I was saying over and over, "Jesus save me." I cried for a long time before going back to sleep, for I felt I was lost, since Jesus had not reached for me in my dream. I felt one had to have a sign or dream to show when to join the church. I prayed for my baby to be normal, being afraid that God would punish me and it wouldn't be normal.

I would pray for an answer to my dreams, and would ask myself, What did it mean? When I was alone I would cry and try to pray, and felt I would surely die, and that God wouldn't hear my prayers anymore. When my daddy died, I grieved for him a long time, and cried in church everytime I went. I wondered if I was grieving over the loss of my loved one, or was it my burden of sin that was troubling me. I tried to keep this feeling out of my mind and to act as normal as possible. Then my mother died and I grieved for her, but felt she was at peace at last; for she was never satisfied after daddy died.

My burden seemed to get heavier and I began to understand what was troubling me: I felt I had to join the church. I went to Union Church the fourth Sunday in January, 1969, and felt that Elder Brammer was blessed to preach a beautiful sermon; and I was touched very deeply. I didn't join the church, but I came back home dissatisfied. I put off going back to meetings for a few months. Then I realized I had to have a serious operation. Again I was afraid I was going to die. One day I knelt beside my bed and prayed that God would show me what to do. Should I have this operation, or not; and if I died would he have mercy on me? I

was weeping all the time I was trying to pray.

I went into the kitchen, and these words came into my mind, "What more can he say than to you he hath said?" I realized this was part of a song. Then I looked into my mother's Testament, and there were some songs in the back; one was "How firm a foundation." The verse that touched me most was

"Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed!
For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand."

I felt that this meant God would be with me in the hospital. The next verse also touched me: beginning, "When through deep waters I call thee to go," etc. I felt this meant I was to join the church and be baptized. All the words of the song were so beautiful, and seemed they were meant for me.

I went into the hospital for the operation, and felt that God was with me . . . After I was able to come home I was very weak and improved slowly, and realized that I was still carrying a burden. I called Elder Brammer and told him how I felt; and he came by to see me. I felt the Lord sent him to help me. I told him some of my experience, and that I wanted to join the church, but didn't think I was worthy. He said that was the way everybody should feel. He advised me to start going to church, that it would help me. I felt better after talking with him, but put off going to church.

. . . I started reading my Bible and tried to pray. One night a great calmness came over me, and I felt, What I must do. I went to church the 3rd Sunday in August, 1969, at Martinsville, Va. The first time I had been to church since my operation. Elder Posey Ingram was there as Elder Cecil Turner was away. The songs were beautiful, and I cried and was not ashamed of my tears. I felt Elder Ingram prayed the most beautiful prayer I had ever heard. My sister was with me and told me later she felt she knew what I was going through.

The 4th Sunday in August, 1969, my sister called asking if I was going to church, and I told her I had decided not to go, that I had not slept much the night before. She wanted to go with me if I went. Suddenly I told her I was going and would come over and pick her up. On the way I was laughing and trying to be humorous as usual, and enjoyed trying to help sing the songs until they started to sing, "In the sweet by and by." The tears began to roll down my face, and I was not ashamed. Elder Brammer prayed a beautiful prayer and preached a very touching sermon. I felt a change come over me . . . I don't remember the last song they sang for I was saying, "Lord, what must I do?" Everybody had moved away from me and were shaking hands. Then something happened for I began to cry again, and couldn't take the steps forward fast enough.

They received me by faith, for I couldn't say what was in my heart; and a few days later I felt troubled because I couldn't tell them what I wanted to. I looked forward to my baptizing, which was the fourth Sunday in September, 1969, by Elder Brammer near Union Church. It was a beautiful day, and the happiest day of my life.

I have had many troubles since then, but when I am sitting in church and hearing the wonderful sermons preached, my troubles seem very small. I feel I need all of your prayers. I realize now that we cannot be perfect in this world.

An humble sister,
Ruth T. Craig

"FEASTING ON THE CRUMBS"

Salisbury, Md.

Dear Sister Truitt:

Just a few lines to express my sincere thanks for the hospitality and fellowship shown me in your home. And above all I desire to praise and thank

our Heavenly Father that we were blessed to feast on the crumbs from the Master's table, giving us hearing ears and understanding hearts. I have been feasting on these crumbs this week. I have thought so much of how rebellious I was about going, but God in his providence laid it upon your heart to encourage me to go and be with you all, and I am thankful, I hope, for the many rich blessings received last weekend.

I have recalled with tears of rejoicing Brother Wallace's text and sermon to us on Saturday evening at Brother and Sister Davis'. Truly the Lord was in the matter. I feel all were blessed to feast at the Master's table. The age of the children of God all being one, opened many new doors and has given me a new insight on many things. We through faith hope to be included in this number, and though of ourselves unworthy, through His grace and mercy we possess a sweet hope that we too are among those given unto Him before the foundation of the world.

"A child of Jehovah, a subject of grace,
I'm of the seed royal, a dignified race."

How wonderful when we are blessed to feel this sweet hope in our poor, trembling breasts.

Was so thankful that Sister Agnes could be with us. Her trials are to the world severe, but we know that our Heavenly Father abideth ever and will comfort and sustain her, and we hope us, when storms of trouble rise. He is our Rock of Ages and our Anchor in the storm.

I feel that our conversations around the table were times of sweet fellowship. "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love." I could go on and fill pages of thanks unto Him for the rich blessings He bestowed upon this poor worm of the dust. "A debtor to mercy alone."

Hoping to see and be with you all again this weekend, if it be the Lord's will, and as often as it pleases Him to bring us together to worship and sing praises unto Him. The trials and temptations of this life are many, but He is our Sovereign Protector, and is ever nigh.

Yours in sweet hope,
Jimmy Messick

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The *Smith River Association* is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with Paynes Creek Church on Friday, Saturday and 1st Sunday in September, 1970. (September 4, 5 and 6.)

Paynes Creek Meeting House is in Floyd County, Virginia, on the Parkway near Milepost 150.

Our brethren and friends are welcome to meet with us.

Amos I. Hash, Clerk

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Seven Mile Association* will be held, the Lord willing, with Liberty Church the third weekend in in September — Friday, Saturday and Sunday, 1970.

The church is located about five miles north of Dunn, N. C. Those traveling 421 from the northwest will turn left at second traffic light at Dunn, then will be on old Highway 301 to north edge of Dunn: look for association pointer; that will be a left turn, about four miles to the church.

Those traveling Highway 55 south will turn left at first flashing light at Coats, N. C. on Highway 27, (school house will be on left there) follow 27 about five miles to second intersection: there you will notice an association pointer turning right to the church about three miles.

Those coming from the north on I-95 will take Highway 27 at Benson to first intersection three miles and will notice association pointer, turning left about three miles to the church.

We invite all lovers of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

C. D. Turner

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The 1970 session of the South Ouachita (Wash-i-taw) Primitive Baptist Association will convene with New Hope Church, located one and one half miles northwest of Spearsville, La., Commencing on Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1970. Lovers of the truth are welcome.

Elder W. W. Hudson, Jr., Moderator
Elder David E. Turner, Asst. Moderator
Brother Eugene Patterson, Clerk

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Sister J. R. Hardy, formerly of Winnsboro, Texas, is now living in Florida, and wishes the brethren and friends to address her at: 6015 U. S. Highway 301, Lot 14, Allenton, Fla. 33532.

LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The *Lexington-Roxbury Association* is appointed to be held at Halcottville, Delaware County, New York, Wednesday and Thursday, September 16 and 17, 1970.

Those coming Tuesday take Denver Road at Kelly Corners to Crystal Spring Farm. Those coming Wednesday go to the Meeting House at Halcottville. Brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

(Elder) A. J. Slauson

BLACK RIVER UNION

The next session of the *Black River Union* will be held, the Lord willing, with Mingo Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in August, 1970. The church is located about four miles south of Dunn, N. C. Follow Highway 421 south through Dunn about three miles, turn left at intersection. The church will be on the right side of the road.

We invite all who love the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God.

C. D. Turner

KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the two hundred fifth annual session of the *Kehukee Association* will convene with Tarboro Church the first Sunday in October, Saturday before, and Monday following; October 3, 4, and 5.

The association is expected to meet in Tarboro High School, Johnston Street, Tarboro, N. C. on Saturday and Sunday. On Monday the association will meet in the Tarboro Church located at the corner of St. James Street and Albemarle Avenue, Tarboro, N. C.

We invite all our corresponding brethren and friends of our faith and order to meet with us.

Johnny Ray Gardner, Assn. Clerk

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Mrs. Agnes Jones, Tex.	$ 1.00
A. B. Arrington, N. C.	1.00
Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.	1.00

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EDITORIAL

I PETER 5:7

"Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you."

The children of God often find themselves utterly at a loss to understand or comprehend the ways of divine providence and grace, and can only say as one of old, His ways are past finding out. It is he himself that teaches that he ruleth in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? They confess this, and at times are thankful it is so, for is there not comfort and security in such a doctrine? In it we see that not a dog can move his tongue, or a devil either, unless it be subject to the will and purpose of him that worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Men are also subject to him, even the rulers of this world, for when Pilate said to Jesus, "Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." He is before all things and by him all things consist.

An understanding of such a doctrine, imparted to us by God himself, is of great comfort to the soul, but few are able to travel long in the path of life, reconciled, with a calm and thankful heart, from every murmur free. God has ordained a furnace of affliction, and if he gives faith that believes that he who has promised is able to perform, he will try that faith; and just so, when we, as we hope, by his Spirit, have been taught to trust in his name and to rejoice in the truth that not a single shaft can hit, until he, the God of love, sees fit, we find the question asked, Do you believe God had anything to do with the sinking of that vessel, or the burning of that family and home? How has God anything to do with the sickness of this man? or with the death of his wife at such a time as this, when he needed her so much? Thus we ask ourselves many questions, and are asked many such questions by others, and often such questions, when asked in the face of terrible trials, and what men call accidents, are almost staggering, especially if we are ourselves affected by the trial. If a terrible bereavement comes upon us we find it not so easy to live the doctrine, yet Job, sorely afflicted, did, when he said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." — Job 13:15

He has said, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father. * * * Fear ye not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows." Again, he saith, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed as one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

It is the trial of faith that will show to us how little faith we have, and how little we truly believe the doctrine to which we have subscribed. There is not one of us but has his, or her, trials; some hard to be borne, and we do well to consider that

> "Whatever cross lies at thy door,
> It cometh from the Lord."

It is a crook of the Lord's making, and as long as he sees fit for it to be, none can straighten it. It may be to bring down our pride, to "hide pride from man," or to show us wherein our strength lies, or to make us of comfort to the saints, or to prove to men and devils, as in the case of Job, that our religion is not a fair weather religion, but that it can stand fire and flood; and in all these trials, and many others, too numerous to mention, the presence of Christ is seen, as he was in the furnace of old, thereby proving that he careth for us. In all the ages the Lord has

proven his care for his people in the furnace of affliction; such a way is needful or it would not be. He raised up a wicked Pharaoh who knew not Joseph, and he set over Israel taskmasters, to afflict Israel with burdens, but the more they were afflicted the more they multiplied and grew. The Egyptians made their lives bitter with hard bondage, yet the Lord still cared for them. Moses was born, and was hidden three months by his mother, who feared not the wrath of the king, and when she could no longer hide him she took for him an ark of bulrushes and laid it in the flags by the river's brink, the very river where the wicked Pharaoh had commanded them to drown their sons, yet God cared for him there. He was taken by Pharaoh's daughter and nursed by his own mother in the house of Pharaoh, the very man who wished to destroy all the male children of Hebrew origin. From this we can take this lesson: that the church of God nurses her children in the furnace of affliction. They are strengthened in the doctrine; the more they are afflicted the more they are trained up in the nurture and admonitions of the Lord.

In the word of God there are many instances that seem just happen so, mere chance, yet when we trace the chain of circumstances connected with the particular case we find a wonder-working Providence governing all things: as, for instance, the Syrians had gone out by companies and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid. Who can describe the terror and abject loneliness of that little maid? Think of the parents, her mother, if mother she had, wringing her hands, sighing and pining for her little daughter. Many would there be in Israel then who would say, Tell us, did the Lord have anything to do with that? Thank God there were some then, and doubly thankful we ought to be, there are some now, who unhesitatingly would declare, It is the Lord. Some who by faith could see the companies of Syria going just so far and doing just whatsoever God's hand and God's counsel determined before to be done. The child must leave the arms of the parents, must go into a strange and foreign land, and must go into Naaman's house. God cared for that little captive maid; he had a purpose. In Naaman's house she witnesses to the truth, and her testimony was for one whom God cared for, though in God's purpose he was held by a more relentless foe than even the captive maid. He was none other than Naaman, the captain of the host, but he was a leper. Yes, He cared for Naaman. He cared for Saul of Tarsus, even while he went about breathing threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord. Saul did not understand, he had no eye to see, the Lord using his persecution for the furtherance of the gospel. It is written, "As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and hailing men and women, committed them to prison." The following verse declares the result in the purpose of God. It says, "Therefore they that were scattered abroad, went every where preaching the word." Thus a persecuting Saul of Tarsus, in the purpose of God, did more then than all the missionary boards can do to-day, although they claim to be on the Lord's side, for there has never been a preacher of the word sent by man, anywhere. Why is it that Saul of Tarsus, Naaman and his companies, Pharaoh and his host, or the devil himself, can do nothing other than God's hand and his counsel determined before to be done? The simple reason is, "He careth for you." For God's dear saints there is a covenant, ordered in all things and sure, and in this covenant

"Jesus is engaged to save
The meanest of his sheep,
All that the heavenly Father gave
His hands securely keep.

Nor death, nor hell can e'er remove
His favorites from his breast."

They are loved with an everlasting love. God has predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to

himself according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. As this is his purpose he will care for us along the line that we must travel.

I might predestinate my trunk to go from here to New York City by railroad. To bring that about, the track must be there, the sleepers in their place, the station, the signal boxes, the men, the engine, coal, steam, and all other requirements must be there or ever my trunk can safely be delivered to its destination. Thus we believe Paraoh was in the purpose of God, foreordained to that very condemnation, as was the devil himself, and as were the companies of Syria, and if the word be true, that God has created the waster to destroy, and these wasters of Israel were in Israel's life of old, in the life of the captive maid, yes, and in the life of our blessed Lord, who shall say they will not be in our lives? Peter tells the scattered saints of old of a fiery trial that was to try them, and it is true today. God's dear scattered saints are a poor and afflicted people, having fiery trials; yet Peter by inspiration says, "Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you."

There comes before our mind one dear sister, over eighty years of age, whom we once saw lying on her couch under terrible distress. Trouble had come upon her in her advanced age and was crushing her to earth: we said, Why should these things be? Faith answered, "He careth for you."

> "Blind unbelief is sure to err
> And scan God's work in vain."

He is a very present help in time of trouble.

> "The flame shall not hurt thee, I only design
> Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine."

We have seen another, younger in years, afflicted in body so that she could hardly move a limb, given up by earthly physicians, having little to look forward to but death and that which is beyond, and to the honor of his name we have seen that he careth for her. Is he not the helper of the helpless? We visited such an one one day, and while there she said, "Sing Rock of Ages." We sang that and "Father, we'll rest in thy love," and as we got in our car we heard the afflicted one singing by herself in the house, and all we could think of was, "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God." Later we asked why she sang when we left her a few nights before, and the reply was, "Because I was happy." It is because "he careth for you" that the theme of Jesus and his love makes the captive's portion sweet. It is his care that made David say, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." His care for Israel of old was wonderful. He brought them from under Pharaoh's yoke with a high hand and an outstretched arm and led them through the sea, gave them bread from heaven, water from the rock, a cloud by day and pillar of fire by night, their shoes did not wear out, nor their clothing decay, all because "He careth for you," for were they not a type of Israel to-day? They rebelled and we rebel, too. There is nothing that brings out the spirit of rebellion more than trouble. "The trial of your faith." It is easy to say, "Thy will be done," but his will is a cross, and under the trial he sends we kick like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke. It is galling and so humiliating, especially if it affects our personal reputation, we feel ashamed to be seen among the brethren, we ask the reason why. Pride must be abased. He made himself of no reputation; we would be his, yea, be like him, but it is unpleasant to die daily, to take buffetings. Oh the strugglings and strivings we have to be freed from the yoke!

Paul prayed very regularly to be delivered from a thorn in the flesh, but his request was not granted, and there is not a doubt in our mind the reason

for it was that "He careth for you." All these trials, crosses, losses, thorns and snares we must and shall endure in this life are for the lifting of Jesus on high. They are to show us, as we are exercised thereby, how base and vile, unworthy and helpless we are, and, like Paul, we are taught of him to know that when we are weak, then are we strong, and we glory in our infirmities (that are made plain to us in the furnace) that the power of God might rest upon us. Thus his care is such towards us that we shall at last confess, as did Israel of old, that the Lord delivered us, and that "there failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass." — Joshua 21:45

(Editorial by Elder Ruston in the March, 1929, issue.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"It is finished." (John 19:30)

The thirtieth verse of the nineteenth chapter of the gospel according to John contains these words: "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, 'It is finished': and he bowed his head and gave up the ghost." This verse is a part of John's narrative of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, and the words of Jesus contained in it form the sixth of his seven sayings on the cross, and are of momentous meaning and sacred import to all true believers in the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The words, "It is finished" embrace in their application the predestination of God in sending his beloved Son into the world to die for believers and in making it possible for the Holy Ghost or Comforter to come into the world to reprove it of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, and to manifest unto the heirs of glory the riches of their heavenly inheritance, to show unto them the things of Jesus, to quicken them into eternal life, and to guide and instruct them in righteousness. It is through this finished work that the law was fulfilled in Jesus Christ; that Satan's head was bruised by the woman's seed; that death became a conquered foe; that the power of the grave was overcome; that the types which relate to the life and death of the Redeemer had their fulfilment; that the way into the holiest by sacrificial blood was now made open; that all the called of God received justification; and by which the old dispensation came to a glorious close.

The finished work of Jesus meant that the cross became the grave of sin for believers and that the resurrection of the dead in Christ became possible. It is true in a certain sense that Jesus uttered these words somewhat anticipatively, for he had not yet bowed his head nor given up the ghost nor commended his spirit to the Father nor reposed in Joseph's rock hewn tomb wherein man had never been laid. All the prophecies that relate to Jesus until the time of his death had their fulfilment in these very remarkable words of triumphant accomplishment, which marked the goal of the very incarnation of Christ. The fact that Jesus uttered these words before he bowed his head in death proves that he laid down his life willingly to become a ransom for many.

Let us now briefly consider some of the aspects of the work embraced in the words, "It is finished." Scripture teaches that sin is a transgression of the law and separates the sinner from God, and brings him under its awful curse and dread penalty. It imposes upon him death to that sinless state which he had enjoyed when in Adam, his federal head, he walked with God in Eden, and also demands bodily death of the transgressor and further imposes the penalty of eternal wrath and woe with eternal separation from God. Because of his sin-marred nature the offender can not beget an offspring free from the taint of sin and from the

curse and penalty of the law or capable of attaining any righteousness of their own. Through inherited sin and because we act out the nature within us, we are all by nature carnal and sold under sin, and we do the sins of our corrupt nature whether of heart or hand, as we transgress even by a foolish thought. Though outwardly we may be moral and law abiding, cultured and refined after the manner of men, inwardly we are full of dead men's bones by nature, and God looking on the heart, finds no goodness there, no claim even to his mercy. The life of the soul is in the blood, and the soul that sins must die. God is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and such is his ineffable holiness and matchless glory that none but the holy can stand in his presence. It must then be by the shedding of blood that the remission of sin is effected, by the giving up of life, by some one's enduring penalty for sin, who is qualified to do so, by enduring suffering, by taking the place of the sinner and suffering in full the penalty due the sinner.

More than that, the blood that is shed for sin must be holy blood, and the sacrificer must be holy, and the sacrifice also holy. The law can not be lessened one jot or tittle or the honor of God would be tarnished, his glory and holiness set aside, and he would in fact cease to be God. Man, a guilty, hell deserving, helpless sinner could not possibly meet one of these divine requirements, so had no hope through himself. But God in matchless grace had ordained the way to rescue fallen man before the transgression or ever the stars scintillated in the heavens. In the counsel of infinite wisdom he made a covenant with his eternal Son whereby he prepared a body that in the fullness of time was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary, contrary to nature, through the operation of the Holy Ghost. This body is spoken of as a holy thing, a new thing that the Lord created in the earth, when a woman encompassed a man. This child that was born, this son that was given in the person of this holy thing was Jesus the Christ. He was the word made flesh, he was God manifested in the flesh, the God-man, having a holy human nature and taking the flesh and blood of believers. The blood that flowed through his veins was the blood of the son of God as well as the blood of the son of man. This blood had all the power, efficacy, and virtue of the Godhead, for in Christ dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily. This blood was holy blood and could cleanse from all the taint and filth of sin. So awful is sin that it took nothing less than the blood of the son of God, who has all power, to cleanse the sinner from its taint and curse. That is why the blood of the son of God had the efficacy to remove sin and made possible the justification of the sinner, because the son of God represented God. As Jesus was holy, he could make a holy sacrifice by offering himself through the Holy Spirit. Both the offering and the offerer must be holy to satisfy divine justice. So Jesus alone was able to save a penitent sinner, being both priest and offering, thus meeting all the requirements demanded by the holiness of God.

In his finished work on the cross Jesus was the antitype of the offerings spoken of in the Old Testament, finishing all that was signified by them, relative to his death. Jesus was our sin offering. A sin offering was made because of the nature of sin. Believers must have a new nature imparted unto them in the new birth that is necessary for them to enjoy the blessings of eternal life. There was another offering called the trespass offering made because of the sins of our nature, the sins that we perform in thought or act. Jesus was the antitype of the trespass offering and so atoned for all our trespasses, if so be we have a hope in his mercy. Under the legal dispensation restitution was made by the offender to the offended and one fifth added to the value of that which was restored. If a wrong had been done against Jehovah, a fifth part was added and given to

the priest. If a neighbor had been wronged, the person who had been defrauded received the extra fifth. An unblemished ram from the flock was always offered as a trespass offering. How very beautifully this foreshadows the redemptive work of Christ, who gives the redeemed subjects of his grace not only restoration, but eternal salvation, and security from ever falling again under the condemnation of the Adam-transgression.

Thus God brings a greater glory to himself and a greater blessing to the subjects of his love and mercy. There were three sweet-savor offerings of which Christ was the antitype, and his finished work embraced all these, the peace offering, the burnt offering, and the meal offering. The sweet-savor offerings denote acceptability with God and our acceptance in him through Christ. The burnt offering offered at the altar at the entrance to the court of the tabernacle or temple often consisted of a bullock without blemish, though sometimes sheep and goats and even turtle doves and pigeons were offered. The offering of the burnt offering signified that by the laying on of hands on the head of the sacrifice that the ceremonial righteousness of the sacrifice was imputed to the sacrificer, just as ceremonially the sins of the sacrificer in the sin and trespass offerings were imputed to the sacrifice that died for and in place of the sacrificer. In the case of the sin offerings in type, sins were put off the offerer, and in the case of the burnt offering, righteousness was put on the offerer, the ceremonial righteousness of the innocent victim being transferred or imputed to the offerer.

Jesus Christ is both a sin offering and a burnt offering, and through faith in him by his finished work on the cross, the sins of believers are imputed unto him and his righteousness unto them. The peace offering differs from the burnt offering in that part of it was eaten by the priests, and it denotes that peace with God believers enjoy through Christ in walk and fellowship with God. Jesus is also our true peace offering, having made peace through his death on the cross, and we spiritually feast upon him. There was another of the sweet-savor offerings that demands attention, the meal or meat offering, which was a bloodless offering, and may represent the life of Christ in his suffering and in his holy attributes. This was eaten by the priests, consisting of meal ground fine to the same evenness throughout, and mixed with salt, signifying the preserving power of grace. Oil was mixed with the meal and also poured upon it. This beautifully typifies the holiness that was in Christ in his incarnation, for he was conceived of the Holy Spirit which this oil typifies. The pouring of the oil upon the meal denotes the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon him. The meal was baked in a pan or oven, so subject to great heat. Jesus was subjected to great suffering, and of him it was prophetically written, "From above hath he sent fire into my bones." If we have the life of Christ, we have a life of trial and affliction, of suffering and sorrow as it may please God, and in this we fellowship the son. On the cross when Jesus finished the work of redemption, he felt the flaming wrath of God on his holy soul because of the sins of believers.

In the finished work of Jesus we must not fail to note that judgment and mercy met at the cross. Judgment was executed, not upon the believing sinner, but instead upon Jesus, his faithful surety. All the pangs of torment that the saved sinner would ever have to endure were suffered by Jesus before he said, "It is finished." When he was forsaken by God during those awful hours of darkness, the seven fold thunders of God's righteous wrath flamed in full against his dear Son, instead of against the transgressor, so that divine justice was satisfied, God's holiness vindicated, the law fulfilled, and the work of redemption accomplished once and forever that righteousness and peace might

meet together.

When Jesus said, "It is finished," the spotless Lamb of God had made full expiation for believers' sins that life and immortality and fellowship with the son of God might be made blessed and golden realities for all the elect of God.

Arnold H. Bellows

(The above by Elder Arnold H. Bellows appeared in the *Signs* for April 1942.)

OBITUARIES

ROSA ALICE COLEMAN

Sister Rosa Alice Coleman passed from this life, November 7, 1969. She was born in West Virginia, the eldest daughter of Elder Floyd and Armeda Riffe. She came to Washington with her parents, where her father established the first post office in Riffe in 1893.

Rosa Alice Riffe married Isaac Ferrell Coleman. He was ordained an elder later in life, and after serving the church for many years, Elder Coleman died in 1953. To this union were born five daughters and three sons, all surviving with several grandchildren and great grandchildren; also two sisters and a brother.

Sister Coleman joined the church at an early age, in fact, her Christian experience began almost in infancy. She was faithful in attendance, loving to hear the gospel saved by grace preached. She was hospitable to friends, the church, and visiting elders, and often asked for meetings in her home.

Sister Rosa, as she was fondly known, joined the Little Zion Primitive Baptist Church of Chehalis, August 7, 1955, Elder Howard Eason, Pastor. She soon became too feeble to attend meetings. Her last years were spent in a nursing home where her daughter, Mrs. Florence Mills, lived near enough to visit her often, to anticipate her needs and to inform the family of her welfare.

Services were held in the Boone Mortuary Chapel, Chehalis, Chaplain Richard E. Barada, officiating in the absence of Elder Howard Eason, her pastor. Burial followed at the Claquato Cemetery, west of Chehalis, where our sister now rests beside her husband, asleep in Jesus.

This written at the request of Sister Coleman's sisters, Vernie Schoonover and Maude Schwartz, by Myrtia Bright, member of the Little Zion Primitive Baptist Church of Chehalis.

ELDER W. H. SMITH

Elder Smith died in a Dothan Hospital June 18, 1970, after a long illness. Funeral services were at Garden Chapel Funeral Home, Hareford, Alabama, June 18th; and interment was in Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church, Malvern, Alabama.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. W. H. Smith; two daughters, Annie Lee and Mrs. Bonnie Ree Goodson; and one son, David Bryan, of Detroit, Michigan.

Elder Smith was 78 years of age. He and the writer were members of the same church for many years at Wright's Creek; and were also co-pastors there. He was a prominent teacher, and one of the ablest principals I ever employed. He will be sadly missed by his family and Geneva County, and the Wiregrass in general.

J. J. Collins

MRS. GLADYS LAMB JONES

Mrs. Jones died in Columbus, Ga. April 28, 1970, aged 49 years, after a long illness. She was a former student of the writer and an active member of her church; and devoted to her family.

She is survived by her husband, Eddie L. Jones; two sons, Carl and Larry Lamb; four daughters, Mrs. Shirley Waters, Marcy and Marilyn Lamb, and Terri Jones; her parents: Mr. and Mrs. O. C. Strength; two sisters, Minnie Lamb and Frances Butler; two grandsons and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were conducted at Goodwater Church, Wicksburg, Ala., April 30th by the writer.

J. J. Collins

CHARLIE B. JOHNSON

Brother Johnson died suddenly at Chipley, Florida, June 6, 1970, at the age of 67 years. Interment was in Mt. Gilead Cemetery near Wicksburg on June 8th, with Mr. T. E. Brannon and Elder J. J. Collins officiating.

He was an active citizen of West Florida. He married Miss Lavada Tindell 39 years ago, with the writer officiating. Mrs. Johnson survives her husband. Surviving also are one sister, Mrs. Dora Eldridge, and other relatives.

J. J. Collins

SALLIE LOU GRAY HUTCHENS

In loving memory of Sister Sallie Lou Gray Hutchens who was born in Patrick County,

Virginia, July 24, 1893, and died in Brooklyn, New York, October 31, 1969, at the age of 76.

While still a teenage girl Sallie Lou Gray was married to the late Elder H. F. Hutchens, a minister of the Primitive Baptist Church. They lived together in North Carolina for more than thirty years. At the time of his death February 26, 1936, they were living in the little town of Newport, North Carolina.

In April of 1936, Sister Hutchens united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Newport and was baptized by the late Elder W. W. Roberts, who was pastor of Newport Church at that time. Sister Hutchens for the rest of her life remained a most loyal and faithful member of Newport Church, both financially and spiritually. Thru the years she contributed regularly and liberally to the welfare of the church and attended church meetings as often as possible. She dearly loved the Old Baptist hymns and often quoted verses from her favorite ones.

Soon after her husband passed away, Sister Hutchens left Newport, N. C. She first moved to Rocky Mount, N. C. and from there to Brooklyn, New York, where she soon made good friends as she always did wherever she lived. One of her favorite pastimes was receiving and writing letters to the many friends with whom she corresponded as long as she was able.

Sister Hutchens "fell in love" as she put it, with New York and liked living there so well that she made it her home for nearly thirty years. A few years prior to her death she purchased a lot in Rosemont Cemetery, New Jersey, and requested that she be buried there.

In the early part of 1969 Sister Hutchens suffered a series of strokes from which she never fully recovered. Although she could no longer keep up her regular correspondence with her many friends, it is consoling for them to remember that she was happy and blessed with good health in her declining years; and when she became an invalid, a great comfort to know that she had the best of medical attention, and nurses to care for her and make her as comfortable as possible.

Indeed, many people who knew and loved her will long remember Sister Sallie Gray Hutchens who passed away October 31, 1969, and was buried in Rosemont Cemetery, New Jersey, on November 4, 1969.

Resolved: That a copy of this Obituary be sent to *Signs of the Times* for publication; and a copy recorded in our church record.

Done by order of Conference at our June meeting 1970.

M. L. Simmons, Moderator
Ethel Mason, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

By request of Hickory Grove Primitive Baptist Church, we will try to write a few words in memory of our dear Brother Eldridge McLamb, who was a faithful member.

Brother McLamb was blessed with a sweet hope in Jesus and was a firm believer in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace.

He united with the church at Hickory Grove in September, 1908 by experience and baptism. Brother McLamb proved very faithful and profitable to the church, both as a member and as a deacon. He was ordained deacon in October, 1928, and appointed by the church a trustee to church property in the February, 1932 meeting. He always took his place in the church, in the community, and in his home with humbleness, and in the reverential fear of God. Brother McLamb lived a faithful member until taken sick after Christmas, unable to attend church again. He entered Wake Memorial Hospital, January 13, 1970 and remained there until death March 14, 1970.

He is missed by all churches of the Seven Mile Association and churches of the same faith. His godly deportment, kindness and faithfulness gained respect and love of all who knew him.

He was born August 7, 1888 and departed from this life March 14, 1970, making his stay on earth 81 years, 8 months and 7 days. He was the son of Nathan and Sarah Ellen Hodges McLamb.

On December 13, 1911, he was married to Sister Lutie Baggett, who preceded him in death June 28, 1964. To this union one son was born, Samuel B. McLamb.

To mourn his death is his son, Samuel, two grandchildren, two great grandchildren and one brother, Lawrence McLamb, and many relatives and friends.

His funeral was conducted at Hickory Grove Primitive Baptist Church by Elder W. D. Godwin, Elder C. D. Turner and Stewart Humphrey. His body was laid to rest in the Roselawn Cemetery at Benson, with mounds of beautiful flowers, to await the glorious resurrection morning when we all hope to meet around God's throne to eternally praise Him. We feel sure that, while his body is resting in the dust, his precious spirit is resting with God who gave it. The church extends her love and sympathy to the bereaved family.

Therefore, BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy be put on the church records, a copy sent to his son and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times*.

Committee:
Sister Georgia E. Hill
Sister Leecy Beasley
Sister Gertrude Royal

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 138 DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1970 NO. 10

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10/70
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

REJOICES IN READING LETTERS FROM THE YOUNG

1021 Griffith
Dallas, Texas 75208

Dear Editors:

It is time to renew my subscription to the *Signs,* and I don't want to miss a single copy. I surely enjoy the letters and Editorials.

Some of the writers express my experience better than I can. I rejoice when I read the letters from the young expressing their hopes and fears. It is evidence that their lives have been touched by the hand of God; and it is good to know there are a few young people who are interested in something other than rioting, disturbance, and such. Only God knows what this old world will be like if it should stand fifty years more; but we know God has a purpose in all things. Some seem to think that God only predestinated the good things, and left the bad out; but I believe He had a purpose in all things. If he foreknew all things, how could anything he foreknew keep from coming to pass.

In these few lines I trust I haven't said anything contrary to the doctrine of salvation by grace. I feel a kindred to all the household of faith, and trust I am not deceived.

I am sending a check for $7.00 for two year's renewal. May God bless all the editors of the dear paper and give them health and strength to carry on the good work.

In hope of eternal life,
Mrs. T. H. Graham

(It was good to receive your letter, Sister Graham, and for you to express your thoughts and feelings. — J. D. W.)

REPORT OF GOOD MEETING

St. Charles, Ky.

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

I hope I am thankful for the good meeting we have had. It was our communion meeting the fourth Sunday in July. To my knowledge it has been held for one hundred years on that date, being told so by my father. We had two wonderful ministers, Elder Darnall of Cadiz, and Elder Biggs of Nashville.

We are few in number and our faith gets weak, and we get to wondering whether the Lord will be with us. The whole earth is showing forth His praise and power, and we are told "to be still and know that I am God," and to wait upon the Lord and the wonderful things that are in store for his chosen and elected ones. All things are of God and are to His praise. In Isaiah 46:10 we read, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

I only wanted to write a few lines to tell you what a good meeting we had, and of the love, fellowship and peace that was manifested. He has said that with loving kindness he has drawn us. "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God."

"For God is love." (1 John 4:8, 9)

My hope is that I love Him as I ought.

Mrs. W. B. McGregor

(We were glad to receive your letter, Sister McGregor, and to learn of your good meeting. David wrote in the 133rd Psalm, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" — J. D. W.)

GLAD TO HAVE ELDER POOLE

2238 McCurdy Rd.
Stone Mountain, Ga. 30083

Dear Elder Spangler,

I have had a desire for many months to write to you and express the thoughts which have borne heavily on my mind. Yet I have hesitated, for, although I remember you well from your visits to Georgia and cherish those memories, in years past, I know I am a stranger to you.

My hesitation also stemmed from the fact that I have always held you in the highest esteem and have a deep respect for you as a man of God. How can I, one so low and one so weak, correspond with a man so far above me in stature and position among the flock of God's people?

First of all, you must know we in Georgia (mother, grandmother and I) have indeed been blessed to have had Elder Poole sent to us by God's holy and divine purpose. Daily we are thankful for him. He has served us faithfully — comforted and consoled us in our troubled condition. His first thoughts — his deep concern — is for the welfare of the few he serves here. These things he has said to me and he has evidenced them in his actions. He walks in humility saying *we* are important to him, and he is thankful for each one here. I only hope and pray we, too, serve him well and help to uphold him and sustain him in his endeavors.

For many years, since the division of the churches here, my family and I had virtually no place to go — no pastor to turn to. We hungered for a home and a Shepherd to lead us for we were left bereft and alone wandering in the wilderness. I have two sons, Russ 15 and Dean 13. I was raising them with no religious training for, of course, I could not turn to any worldly church. Though I know we can teach no man our faith — we cannot save anyone, even our own dear loved ones — I deeply felt I was not providing my children with the proper upbringing. I longed to have them hear the doctrine of grace — to raise them with a knowledge of my belief.

And now, that Elder Poole is here my boys have been to church every Sunday for two years and I feel they have been given the blessed opportunity to hear Salvation by Grace preached. When they are men, at least they can detect the difference between what we teach and preach and what the world believes. For these things I am thankful.

Yes, we wandered in a barren wilderness — seemingly lost and without hope of hearing the truth preached. But God, in His infinite wisdom and power has seen fit to place Elder Poole in our midst.

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform . . ."

Elder Poole is deeply devoted to you and has spoken so highly of you many times. He feels you have been gracious to him and have helped him through his own troubled times. What a joy it was for mother and me (grandmother, too) when we learned he was to be baptized and join the Upper Country Line Baptists. It seemed to make things complete, for until that time, he was "standing alone" so to speak, affiliated with no group.

All things take place according to God's divine will and in their proper time. We must wait upon the Lord. God, who is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent, knows the depths of our hearts. He knows our needs, before we ourselves know them and has, from the beginning of time, supplied that which

seemed fitting in His sight. Thy will, O Lord, be done in Heaven as in earth.

Who are we, the creatures of His making, to question the will of God? Yet, the flesh cries out for help — for deliverance — and we feel the presence of the hand of God in leading Elder Poole to us.

I am so happy to know that he will be ordained in July as a minister in full fellowship with the Virginia Baptists. I hope, God willing, to be able to attend the meetings there at that time. My husband has a business trip to Chicago during that week and I have told him how very much I would like to come. If time allows and the distance is not too far out of our way, we will be there.

I have not visited the churches up your way since I was growing up. Grandmother and I visited Aunt Carolyn and Uncle Douglas each summer and attended church then with them.

You have meant so very much to my mother and father on their visits. They have returned each time with lifted spirits and have been so grateful for the warm welcome extended to them by you and the church members there.

Let us give thanks unto God for His mercy and lovingkindness. Let us always praise His holy name and look unto Him from whom all blessings flow. May he endow us with trust and patience to wait upon His will. Let us be enabled to say with David

"Be still, and know that I am God."

Katie Kilby (Mrs. Neal B.)
Granddaughter of Mrs. Kate Alston
Daughter of Mrs. Florence Gibson

SERMON BY ELDER JOHN LEE SMITH AT THE UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION, 1969

Brethren, Sisters, and Kind Friends,

I don't believe that I have words sufficient that would rightly convey the joy and happiness that my wife and I have felt and realized since we have been in your presence in the meetings in Virginia and North Carolina. Every act of kindness has been shown us in homes and elsewhere. We want you to know that we just consider it a continuation of those blessings of our God, who is so good to the children of men, both in providence and in grace, while we ourselves do not in anywise merit any of His goodness, yet He is pleased none the less to confer.

I think my brethren at my back might know what I feel and what I mean when I tell you in all truth and candor that I am somewhat of a frightened boy at the moment. I believe that I can say that I have pretty well passed that point of stage fright. I don't know of an individual out there that I am afraid of. I don't mind looking into your faces; I love to. I don't believe that I have any fear of all of you combined, nor of these my fellow servants at my back. But I trust that I have a holy, awful, reverential fear of the God of my being as I thus appear before you and in his august presence whose very being itself fills all immensity. That One who is the high and lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity, and whose name is holy.

If it be His good will toward me this morning, I would love to speak to you for a little while of what I shall designate as the eternal blueprint; also as the eternal, mighty sovereign Builder. Now what I have just said is not scripture phraseology; certainly not. I use it in the sense of analogy; though poor it is, it somewhat sets forth what I hope to bring to your attention shortly, God being my helper, and to go right on into the matter not knowing what disposition He has determined to make of me; but that is in His hands, and right for the moment, fearful as I am, I am willing to leave the consequences with him.

I call your attention to Paul's letter to the Ephesians beginning with Verse 1. "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God," (not separate from that will, not independent of it, not

without it, but *by* the will of God), "to the saints which are at Ephesus." It goes further, "and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:" Though I could hardly call you saints at Ephesus, but I trust that I am before a people who are the faithful in Christ Jesus. If this be the case, these solemn and eternal words are just as much addressed to you as they were to the Ephesian brethren. "Grace be to you," he goes on, "and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." No true grace or peace can come from elsewhere; that is its source, and foolish is the man, churlish is the person, unwise or untaught is that being, who will seek those happy blessings anywhere else.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," (and I believe he was that and is that), "who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." He hath blessed us. In the mind of the eternal God, this that we are realizing today, right now, momentarily I trust; it is a present occasion with us. But the matter hath been with God from the aeons of eternity: That God, who is in one mind and changes not, and what His soul desireth even that He doeth. Job says He is without beginning of days or ending of years. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Every spiritual blessing that you ever have enjoyed whether in time, and those that you may further enjoy in time and in the illimitable eternity, they are yours by virtue of the fact that they were stored up for you in the great repository, to wit, the person of Jesus Christ before time had its birth.

"According as," we want to talk about the blueprint here some now, "According as he hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." In the absolute sense, there never was anything that moved or induced the great *I am that I Am* to do anything. I am trying to tell you, while in human phrase, it is said that He chose His people; but this is a great condescension of language. And in the condescension it is truth verily as it relates to them. But in the absolute sense I want to affirm to you that I believe that there never was a period in all of the vastness of eternity when they were not God's chosen people. "According as he hath chosen us in him . . ."

Now this choice is in Christ before the foundation of the world. There were no angels present to help nor devils to hinder when the invariable choice of the eternal God stood as unchangeable as the very pillars of heaven itself. "Before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy," not that we were that, but that we *should be made* that. And I'm going to say, that in a practical experimental sense, this being made holy with reference to His people is here in time. And the salvation that they are to realize a portion of, is here in time and it's beginning with them, — not with God; and it will have its culmination in the unalloyed regions of bliss.

"Having predestinated us . . ." Now we hear lots about predestination. There are many terms here that I want to use. As far as I am concerned I am not going to try to tell you just what predestination means. Nor am I going to tell you just what foreknowledge means. All of those characteristics belong to Jehovah. I don't believe though that God ever foreknew a thing that he didn't predestinate. And also if you want to call it foreappointed, foreordained, or decreed, I believe that all of these things are encouched in what I designate in human phrase as the eternal blueprint which was indelible in the mind of deity before time had its birth. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children . . ."

Now if God will be my helper, I would love to designate a little bit between a purpose and the purposer, and the accomplishment of that purpose. I

think that I am bold, I trust that it may not be a brazen boldness but a holy fearful boldness, to assert in your presence that none of these things that I have designated or named briefly here in this mighty scheme, (or call it what you will), not one of them, or all of them together, ever did actually and really save a sinner insofar as the death and the burial and the resurrection of Jesus Christ was concerned, and the benefits of those mighty things being applied to their hearts and the work of regeneration by the Holy Spirit. One might ask, I wonder does that brother believe that predestination is the cause of things. I affirm and believe with all the powers of my soul that the eternal God is the cause of all causes and of all effects, either immediately or remotely, either directly or indirectly, either in a positive manner or in a negative way, it matters not which, He is before all things, and by Him, *not* by all the *things,* but *by Him* all things consist.

"Having predestinated us *unto* the adoption of children." Now this predestination does not stop short of that adoption, it reaches there. It reaches all the journey through. I am not a master scholar but still we have two little words here in our mother tongue, English, that I believe most any ordinary child that knows the common rudiments of our English tongue would tell you that there is a difference. The predestination is *unto.* "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by predestination." I couldn't say that, because I would be reading something in there that my God did not put there; it is *unto* that, but it is *by* Jesus Christ. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." These things are according to that, but we don't want to try to rule any member of the Godhead out. If that's the right way to say it. Oh no! I don't want to introduce any doctrine that would supersede the Godhead. I think much of the revelation, I trust that I do, but if I know my heart I think more of the revelator, if that can be possible, than I do of the revelation itself, and that's what I want to hold clear and distinct before you. God being my helper, I want you to know that the revelation didn't make one scintilla of doctrine. If there had not been something to *reveal* there would have been no revelation, but there was truth divine just the same as there was an eternal God. I want you to know that the truth of our God is just as eternal as the God who is the author of it. For my part, I do not believe that anything in heaven and earth or hell, in the air or sea or all deep places, in time or eternity, ever has come unawares to our God, who upholds all things by the word of his power.

If you ask me, Is He the cause of sin? in a positive sense he is not. Not one whit more than light is the cause of darkness. If there is darkness in a room and I go in there with a light, the light dispels that darkness; it removes it. So the light is the positive cause of light in the room. But if I turn out that light or carry it away, darkness ensues as a natural consequence; but, I wouldn't say that the light caused the darkness; would you? It is not the immediate cause, if it is any cause at all it is only secondarily and negatively so. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children . . ." Now I want you to know that I am not trying to water predestination down. I want you to know that I am not trying to limit it or trying to stretch it. I want it to rest in the hands of the eternal God, and I believe that everything embraced in it is just as certain of coming to pass as God is God and truth is truth. But I still believe that predestination is not only not the author of sin, but that the God of heaven is not the author of sin. He stated He was not the author of confusion.

The God of heaven is not even the author of the Declaration of Independence. Because had he written it, there would not have been those deletions that

we find. There would not have been those alterations and changes. But I do believe this: that it is a part of the blessed and eternal blueprint. His *wisdom* is involved in this blueprint just the same as the *ignorance* of men. And righteousness is in there just as the most inveterate wickedness that ever pervaded the universe. But to say that sin flows immediately from God or that He infuses it into a soul the same as he does righteousness, I want to be excused from that. But I do believe that the eternal God has a purpose in sin and I think that the scriptures sustain me in this. He has a purpose in it worthy of himself and he has control over it, and it will finally be made to subserve his eternal purpose as being part of the blueprint, just the same as righteous things; and yet we cannot excuse our sins thereby.

I don't like that branch of predestination that men sometimes urge: "The reason that I did it is because it was predestinated that I do it." But if I try to shirk my duty and say the reason or cause that I didn't come, is because that God predestinated it, I might as well say brethren, the reason why I took out after that old, sorry, no-good woman was because God predestinated it. It's true enough, one can't take off after a wicked one or good one either without the eternal God; that's true enough. But when we speak of the *cause* we usually have reference to that that motivates you *immediately* to the work or to the action. Now then, if it were to come up, (I think I have used this in word or in conversation several times, I want to reiterate it here, if I may), if there were to come up a dreadful hailstorm suddenly, I believe it would send those out there scurrying into the building. If you asked me what caused them to run into the building, I wouldn't say that *predestination* caused it; I would say that the *hail* did. But I *do* believe that predestination *embraced* it. I believe that foreknowledge embraced it. I believe that the decrees of God embraced it, and I believe that he had a holy purpose in it. I believe that.

In God's account, His purposes are just as holy with reference to sin and wickedness as they are to righteousness and holiness. But now the one who acts can't excuse himself and say, well, now if God had a purpose in it, and then I've performed it, then if God's purpose was good, that would have to make my purpose good and that excuses me from sin. But now that's getting a little far over into the field of presumption. And I don't want to go there, God being my helper. What did Joseph tell his brethren? He said, "But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it unto good." (Gen. 50:20) It's part of the blueprint, both the evil and the good, but God's was a *good* purpose while theirs was a *wicked* one. I believe that God had a holy purpose; I believe that He had a purpose worthy of himself.

In the awful sin that David committed, (you might say a joint or dual sin, the sin of murder and the sin of adultery), I never did hear David offer an excuse about it. I never did hear him say, now God, you purposed this. You absolutely predestinated it from the annals of eternity and that ought to excuse me. I didn't hear him saying something else either; I didn't hear him saying, "You know the nature of man, you know he is weak, and you know, Lord, that this was an extraordinarily beautiful woman. She wasn't a common woman; she was preeminently beautiful. Most any man in my position would have done that." We don't hear anything like that out of David; and I'm glad we don't. He's not offering any flimsy excuses and pleas. And yet, I believe that he believed in the sovereignty of God just about as much as anybody who ever tread this old earth, except the Son of God himself in the flesh. Oh no! Now David didn't say, "now this is the line of ancestry through which the Messiah is to come. Now I see a good thing down yonder." Well, so do I, but a good thing couldn't be seen right then by any except God.

David was just as evil in his actions, he was just as *sinful* as God was *good*. But it was all a part of the eternal blueprint.

But I want to ask you something. Did you ever see a blueprint build a building? Did you ever just lay the blueprint down and leave it there and that building got built? I don't believe you have. Did you ever see a recipe cook a meal? I don't believe you have. There are some excellent cooks in the state, in the old "Tar Heel" State of North Carolina and the good "Old Dominion" State; some of the most outstanding cooks we have ever seen. They have lots of it in their head but they undoubtedly have lots of recipes piled back yonder in the cabinet drawer. But I don't believe that the recipe ever did cook a single meal. But I believe that it's a wonderful thing when those meals are cooked according *to* the recipe, let it be retained in the head or in print. What I'm trying to say is that the purpose is one thing and that the purposer is another thing, and the accomplisher of that purpose. Indeed so. I believe that the God of heaven may or may not use means as it suits Him. He could have created all the myriads of men and women as he did Adam and Eve. It was not that he ran out of creative power right then and had to quit with those two. He could have gone right on repeopling and replenishing the earth so far as his power was concerned in the awesome act of creation. But he ordained another law whereby the earth is increased; and that was well pleasing in His sight. It was not because He was in a pinch that He had to have it that way.

He works all things after the counsel of his own will. You might say, "Well now, he stirs up men to sin sometimes." Yes, but in doing that he doesn't stir up a *good* nature and give them a *bad* nature. I stir up a yellowjacket nest sometimes and he stings me. But if I stir up the little old fly or gnat or something like that, that didn't have the nature to sting, he wouldn't sting me. He would only act out his nature. And when the Eternal stirs up a wicked man to do His will, he doesn't infuse any wickedness into him. That wickedness may lie dormant, it may be asleep right there and He stirs it up. God does that stirring in a RIGHTEOUS MANNER, but the sinner acts or performs in a SINFUL MANNER.

(Concluded next month.)

UPPER COUNTRY LINE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION CIRCULAR LETTER 1970

In behalf of Big Meadows Church, the host church, and this the Upper Country Line Association which is now in session for its sixty-fourth time, we thank God that He has spared our lives and blessed us to meet together once more in His name.

We wish to welcome you messengers from sister churches who have come bearing tidings of love and peace. We extend greetings and welcome to our correspondents and all lovers of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

To you dear yoked brothers in the ministry, we are glad to have you come. May God so use you that His children will be fed and in so doing that we will be mutually comforted together.

How good it is to be gathered together with those we have been made to love, unmolested, where for a few moments our minds can be taken from the vain and perishable things of this world and placed upon better things, things that are eternal.

We read in the seventy-third Psalm that "Surely God is good to Israel." As we review the way in which we have been brought, can't we say surely God has been good to us. When we were wandering as a pilgrim alone in a wilderness way, sinking in despair and woe, where no earthly hand could reach us to give us help, then in due time God came to us just where we were and brought peace to our troubled mind.

He made us willing in the day of His power and made us not ashamed to declare the riches of His grace to his children. He carried us home to our dearest friends in bonds of love whose company is sweet and union dear. Oh, how sweet the years have passed away since we have been meeting to sing and pray. How oft I've seen their flowing tears and heard them tell of their hopes and fears.

May God continue to be so good to each of us that we may continue in His love with a desire in our hearts to be with our brethren and share with them in times of sorrow as well as times of rejoicing. May we ever be able to look over each other for good and not evil and have forbearance for each other.

I pray that God will bless us with just enough afflictions to keep us humble and at each others feet. As we journey on we would not ask God to change the way, whether it be rough or smooth, but grant us grace and courage to press onward toward that City beyond this vale of tears, and make real His promise to be with us alway and be there to crown our journey's end.

Submitted by your little brother in hope

Kenneth R. Key

THE LATE ELDER WADE Y. CHANDLER'S EXPERIENCE

Rt. 6, Box 408
Hopkinsville Ky. 42240
March 8, 1965

To the Editors of the
Signs of the Times:

Dear Brethren:

I have tried before to write my experience, or give a reason for my hope of life in the world to come, and as I am traveling through my seventieth year, I realize at best my days can't be many, so I would like to leave a record of a sort for my children so that they may know in part what I have lived.

When a small child, my father being an Elder of the Old School Baptist faith, when he would have company I would sit behind the door or bed and listen to those dear old brethren speak of their hope, as they rejoiced in tears; and I wondered, Why the tears? Little did I know then as a six year old what was before me.

In the fall of 1902 just after one of those meetings, when my sister three years my senior and I were on our way to school, I was in tantrum, throwing rocks at my sister. (We had an older sister deceased whom we both loved very much.) This sister came to me there in the road, beautiful beyond words to express, very different but I knew her and called her name. She never touched the ground and neither would let me touch her, although she extended her hands toward me. As I called her name and wept, my sister who was with me ran to me and embraced me, trying to comfort me. I carried this burden for the next twelve years without any understanding.

On the eighteenth day of November, 1914, I was made to know that I was a condemned sinner. I was a thousand miles from home and friends, but I felt I had to talk to someone, and as I was close to a mission where services were in progress, I went to the minister and desired to talk with him. After relating my experience, he said you are on the right track but you have got to accept Christ. How could one so steeped with, or in sin as I was accept that? This he could not see, feel, or know. So I went from bad to worse, and tried to drown my troubles in drink.

During World War One in 1918, I came back to live in Kentucky. And there God gave me one of the sweetest, meekest girls that lives for a wife. She was raised by Old School Baptist parents. In my troubles I caused her much grief. She joined the Methodist Church in 1917, and in 1934 I tried to cast my lot with them, and for a time things seemed to go well: I tried to take a

hand, and tried to bring myself to think I was doing right — conducting prayer meetings and teaching God's word, until on one occasion as I was walking home from these services, the sun was shining bright as it ever shone, and I was gloatingly boasting of the things I was at last doing for the Lord. Suddenly I came to the end of the way: I had the wrong road. I was struck down and was in total darkness.

When I arose to my feet again I thought, I will return and take the other road; but when I would have turned, I could not turn for there was a pressure to my back; and as I looked up, there was a granite wall that reached beyond sight: sins of every color which I had committed but could not scale, and before me was nothing but space, and I was doomed to float there helpless for all time. But thanks be to God, if not deceived, I was given to pray for mercy, knowing my just reward to be eternal punishment according to my works, for I had never done anything that was not mixed with sin. Even though I was floating in space begging for mercy, I saw that mountain of sin and felt the sweet presence of the blessed Saviour as his arm encircled my body; and I was wafted over that mountain and placed in a beautiful garden or pasture where everything was praising God, even the streams of water and the birds in the branches seemed to declare the goodness of God.

Oh, how pleasant to dwell in peace after such a struggle! But not for long. On Friday evening before the 4th Sunday in August, 1941, I rolled my engine over the pit in the roundhouse at Howell, Indiana, only two and one-half blocks from home. I asked my friend who was firing the engine if he would make my reports for me, that I wanted to hurry home. He wanted to know if I was sick, and I told him I felt bad. He said that he would make out my reports. I knew not why I did it, only that I wanted to see the children whom I had not seen in two weeks, except in sleep. As I walked down the street with my clothes box on my shoulder, I froze and couldn't move — it was only a moment, but seemed an eternity to me. When I was given to think the blessed thought that this was the Little River Association time. So I broke my stance and ran to the house. My companion had put the children to bed, and just as I stepped onto the porch, she turned the light out; but as I called to her, she opened the door, turning the light on again. After greeting her, I asked if she knew it was the Little River Association time, and she said, You know I do. So I asked her to get the children's clothes ready and we would start early in the morning, and she answered, I have their clothes already laid out. She said she had not thought of making the trip, but had made the necessary arrangements.

I had no intention of asking for a home, but I did that Saturday night, and was received and baptized the next morning. It was raining when we came out of the water, and Elder Biggs met me and clasped my hand, and said, Brother Chandler I am glad for you, but I am also sorry for you, for you do not realize what is in front for you; but I think I do. I thought, how wrong can one be, for I had just left one of the greatest burdens in that pool that man ever carried, and I was as free as as a zephyr breeze. But before I arrived back home, I was fearful I had imposed on the church, and also Elder Darnall in asking him to baptize me. As time went on, my burden became almost unbearable; and I was visited twice by a man who said to come and go with him. Both times he took me to the same place: the pews were full, but the stand was vacant, with the Bible opened there. As we entered the door each time, the messenger would vanish. I cannot forget the approach to the church, and if not deceived, I was led there in reality. So I am bound to say not of works lest any man should boast, but by grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourself it is a gift of God.

My dear children, I merit nothing in

this life, and if my soul were sent to Hell, God's righteous law approves it well; but God, if I am not deceived, has given me a precious hope that I would not exchange for the wealth of this world, — a hope which as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast. If it is sure and steadfast what more could one desire. David said in the 145 Psalm that, "He will open his hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing;" and if our hope is sure, we will be raised in that glorious body, be like him, see him as he is, and be satisfied.

So I say to all of you, Let no man deceive you, but read your Bibles I have given you — read and ask God to give you understanding; and call no man father upon the earth, for one is your Father even God which is in heaven.

Sometimes when I am weary and sad, I wish that the golden gates were nearer; but I know I can wait for a joy so great in that beautiful, that blessed City. So do not weep for me, for I am trusting in that great Shepherd of the sheep, who declared, "I am the way, the truth and the life." This is a sure anchor. If anything should happen, look after mother. I love you much indeed.

Your Daddy,
Wade Y. Chandler

(See obituary in August issue.)

Sharps Chapel, Tenn.

Dear Elder Wood:

I notice my subscription has run out, so I enclose $4.00 to renew for one year.

I was at Nashville, Tenn., the first Sunday in August. They were having their Annual Union Meeting, and I had the pleasure of seeing Elder Biggs, Elder Poyner, Elder Darnell, and several others. I could only attend the service on Sunday, and it was a great inspiration to be with them once more.

Elder Bocock had an article in the *Signs* in the August issue and I enjoyed it very much — so much that I wrote him a letter of encouragement. I am enclosing a copy of it for your inspection. Read it and make any corrections necessary, and if you should have space sometime, you have my consent to publish it; not that I want to have my name in your paper for publicity. Some of the brethren and friends ask why I don't write my views and send them to the *Signs*. All I could say was that all the articles I read in the *Signs* are worth so much more than anything I could write.

In hope of eternal life,
(Elder) John Wilder

NOT AFRAID OF DEEP WATER

Sharps Chapel, Tenn.

Elder J. L. Bocock
Boones Mill, Va.

Dear Brother in the Lord:

I had the pleasure of reading your article in the *Signs of the Times,* and was very much impressed by the way you expressed your subject, *The Fall of Man.* Your writing was without fear of contradiction, and you proved your subject well. So many of our brethren are afraid of getting into deep water where the true believers are. They want to dwell on the bank and not get their feet wet.

We like to use the term absolute predestination. However we only read of one Absoluter, and that is God. He absolutely fixed all things and made all things for his pleasure. I contend that if he had made one thing and it failed to do what he made it to do, he would be imperfect in his workmanship. We understand that He made all the constellations in the heavens, and not one of them is turned loose to chance. We see them going at lightning velocity, and if one of them should be turned loose to chance, where would be the safety of the others? Now if the heavenly bodies are under his control, isn't it logical to say that the earthly bodies are controlled by the same power? If

one of the earthly bodies were moving according to its own will, where would be our safety? Is God ruling all things, or just part of the things?

In the book of Genesis we find written, "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." According to my understanding everything was completely done, and time was required to manifest what was done in eternity. "The Lord of hosts has sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; as I have purposed so shall it stand." (Isaiah 14:24)

We hear a lot of talk about people helping the Lord: I think they have that in reverse, for we are the ones who need help. It is written, "I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds, for every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills . . . If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof." (Psalm 50:9-12)

It is also written, "Behold the Lord will come with a strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out the heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? . . . To whom will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him." (Isaiah 40th chapter)

We cannot contemplate His great and awful majesty, his profound wisdom, deep and unsearchable judgment in all he has condescended to show by his Spirit unto the heirs of promise of the immutability of his counsel.

May the Lord bless you to hold fast to the truth as long as we live here. This letter is to acknowledge and endorse your writing on the subject of The Fall of Man.

Yours in hope of eternal life
(Elder) John Wilder

GOD TAKES CARE OF HIS OWN

Rt. 2, Box 650
Bassett, Va. 24055

Dear *Signs of the Times*:

I see my subscription has expired, so am sending money-order for two years. I enjoy reading the *Signs*, especially the letters telling the experiences of grace, — of how the dear saints of God get along in this troublesome world. Were it not for the goodness and mercy of our dear Saviour we could not withstand the trials and persecutions of this life. God, in his infinite wisdom and tender mercy, watches over and takes care of His own, even though at times he may turn his dear face away for a moment, to show us just how wholly dependent we are; and unable of our own efforts to lay hold of anything that would be acceptable in His sight; because it must be without spot, blemish, or any such thing. Every good and perfect gift comes down from the Father of Lights: our Saviour is light, and in him no darkness dwells, but all fullness dwells.

The ever to be adored Lord God of heaven and earth, "Is everywhere present and nowhere absent. "If I make my bed in hell He is there." I lift up mine eyes unto the heavens and daily beg that He will remember this poor, sinful wretch, and have mercy on me a sinner.

Dear reader, I desire your prayers when at the throne of grace, and sometimes feel you don't have a friend on earth or in heaven. The scripture says that the prayers of the righteous availeth much. I feel that the Lord's people are the salt of the earth: about the only thing that keeps it from cracking at the seams. I believe that when the last one of His beloved children that He died for, are brought into the fold, then

time shall be no longer. Until then God has a purpose for this world as a traveling place for his pilgrims. So have patience wayworn traveler, it is but a little while and God will come in a cloud with a host of mighty angels, to gather his jewels home. The children of God that are alive then, will be changed in a moment in the twinkling of an eye, freed from sorrow or any such thing, to be caught up in glory with Jesus and all the redeemed of the Lord, where all is peace, joy, and love; to never be separated from our blessed Lord.

Won't that be a wonderful time indeed! I have a precious hope to one day be in that number; and though it seems small at times, I would not exchange for the world.

A little sister in hope,
Edna Mae Rea

"BROTHERS AND SISTERS SEEM SO NEAR"

Box 298
Floyd, Va. 24091

Dear Elder Wood:

I am sending $5.00 to use as you elders please. Many thanks for the good church book (the *Signs*) which I have been receiving for years. I live with my son and his wife, for I have been in a wheelchair for 15 years or longer. Can walk a little with a walker.

In my travels from nature to grace, the good Lord showed me plainly that the dear Old Baptist was the right church. I don't feel worthy of such a blessing, as I have never been any help to them; though I do love my dear Lord and Saviour better than anything on this earth. My dear brothers and sisters all seem so near as I read their writing in the good *Signs*. I am 87 years old now. . . .

God bless you all,
Eliza Turner

"IT IS ALL IN THE LORD'S HANDS"

Reidsville, N. C.

Dear Brother and Sister Spangler:

I have wanted to write you for a long time, although I did not feel worthy to. I heard you speak yesterday, and I believe just what you said.

I believe God made the whole world in six days, and rested the seventh — he made everything in it. He knows who is saved and who is lost before they were born. He knows every thought you have, and knows what you need and when you need it, and how much you need before you ever ask him. He knows how much trouble we need; and I believe the more trouble we have, the more we know about God; and it will make one have patience, faith, and charity, and charity is the greatest of all. If you have the love of God in you, you can forgive everything anyone says or does to you. Sometimes we say things we are really sorry for.

I worry a lot, and can hardly stand for anyone to be angry with me. Sometimes I can stop and think, Well it is all in the good Lord's hands; and He knows best for me. Sometimes I can be glad to have troubles and trials, and when we have problems it is good when we are given to go to the Lord for help; for He is the only one that can help.

I lost my dear husband about four years ago, and I do believe God has blessed me. I had a lot of problems, and when I could realize it was all in the Lord's hands, everything worked out just fine. I believe one cannot pray until it is put in the heart, and when you pray there will be some tears shed. When we are in trouble He never leaves or forsakes us. If He loves you, he will love you to the end of the world and evermore.

What worries me is whether I am His or am I not. You may publish this if you care to. I love to read the *Signs of*

the Times, for it is a good book.

A lonely sister in hope,
Ola S. Paschal

LORD'S PEOPLE ARE NEVER STRANGERS

R. R. 1
West Frankfort, Ill. 62896

Dear Editors and those
of Precious Faith:

Since coming home from the Buttahatchea Union Meeting, held with Poplar Springs Church, Fernbank, Ala., these two scriptures have been much on my mind: Luke 22:32, "converted," and Psalm 51:12, "joy of salvation."

I wish all of like precious faith could have been there. Surely it was "dwelling together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." I need not tell you of the love and hospitality I have found among the Old School Baptist people. You all know that one of the fruits of these people is that they are never strangers, but a feeling you have known them before this time world. I dwelt among another people for a few years but was never satisfied. But since hearing, and a sweet dawning of light by the Holy Spirit, and given a home among these people, I think and hope I know what "joy of salvation" means, and the word "converted" from darkness into light, I thank God the giver of all perfect gifts; and all of the Buttahatchea Union Meeting.

I felt unworthy to be among them, or to try to describe the joy I found there.

A pilgrim here below,
Cecil Neal

THOUGHTS

I know that I am a sinner
My Lord made me this to know;
Without true Godly sorrow
He says where I must go.

For this I have no power
The choice is God's to make;
Yet He sent His precious son
To die for sinners' "sake."

Sometimes I am elated
And feel my Savior near;
More often I am troubled:
My elation turns to fear.

How could a perfect Savior
Die for a worm like me —
Yet, if I am in "His Promise"
My sins nailed Him to the tree.

To those that He has chosen
To be with Him above,
He cleanses with His power
And saves by His love.

I hope I am in this number,
But of this I can't be sure;
Because of vain carnality
I am so impure.

I know that I am a sinner
I can truly say with Paul
That if I am a Christian
I am the least of all.

I know of the power of Jesus,
I know my weakness too,
If I am to be with Christ above
He'll have to take me through.

Reeves O. Smith
North Creek Primitive Baptist Church
Belhaven, North Carolona

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Seven Mile Association* is appointed to be held with Liberty Meeting House on the 3rd Sunday and Friday and Saturday before in September, 1970. (September 18, 19, and 20)

Liberty Meeting House is located about four miles northwest of Dunn, N. C. on the old Fairground Road. There will be pointers for direction. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren, sisters and friends to meet with us.

Elder W. D. Godwin, Moderator
James Young, Clerk

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Contentnea Association* is to be held, the Lord willing, with Hodnot Creek Church, October 9, 10, and 11th. The Friday meeting will be held at the Meeting House just off Highway 58, five miles north of Swansboro, N. C. The Saturday and Sunday meetings will be held in the Swansboro High School, two miles west of Swansboro on Highway 24.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. (Look for signs.)

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 3, Tarboro, N. C.

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the *Contentnea Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, with Pleasant Hill Church, Edgecombe County, N. C. the fifth Sunday in November and Saturday before. The church is located between Rocky Mount and Pinetops, N. C., just off Highway 43.

All lovers of the truth are invited to visit us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

ORIGINAL WHITE OAK ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Original White Oak Association* will be held, the Lord willing, with the Stump Sound Church, Onslow County, North Carolina, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1970, and continuing through Monday.

The church is located about one mile East of Holly Ridge, North Carolina. We invite all lovers of the truth to come and worship with us.

L. H. Southerland, Clerk

SALISBURY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The *Salisbury Old School Baptist Association* will be held at the Snow Hill Church on Washington Street in Snow Hill, Md. on October 21st and 22nd, 1970.

Those coming on Tuesday from the south on Route 13 call Brother Bill Davis at New Church, Va. Telephone (703) 824-4421. Those coming from the north call Brother Harry Ward at Snow Hill, Md. Telephone (301) 632-1861. On Wednesday go directly to the church.

All lovers of the truth are invited to be with us.

Maude P. Truitt, Clerk
Elsie C. Beauchamp, Asst. Clerk

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The 1970 session of the *Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association* will convene, the Lord willing, with Old Beulah Church, Johnson County, North Carolina, the fourth Sunday, Friday and Saturday before in October.

The *Friday services* will be held at the meeting house which is located about two miles southwest of Kenly, N. C. Those coming from the North turn right at the 301 Highway stoplights in Kenly. Those from the South turn left and go to road crossing at the edge of Kenly, turn left. Those from the West turn right and proceed to the meeting house.

The *Saturday and Sunday* services will be held at North Johnson High School building which is located on 301 Highway about two miles south of Kenly.

An invitation is extended to all our ministering brethren, brethren and friends.

W. E. Turner

BRETHREN WILL PLEASE NOTE

We must again call attention to the brethren who send in notices of church meetings, associations, etc., that we must have these notices about forty (40) days before publication date in order to have time to process them. For instance, if your notice should be in the December issue, you should mail it to us at Box 186, Manassas, Va. so we will receive it before the 25th of October.

Because many articles are typed single space, we often have to re-type them. Single space does not give us space for corrections, etc. Please remember when you type to make your articles, etc., double spaced. This will make our work less arduous. If you send carbon copies, please be sure they are legible.

Again we request that when writing obituaries that they be double spaced and limited to not more than 300 words. Most obituaries are of local interest only.

EDITORS

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To August 1, 1970)

Sarah Burt Welling	$ 2.00
Richard H. Campbell	5.00
Elder Louis Stewart	1.00
M. B. Bailiff	6.00
Will Waldrop	1.00
J. B. Barrow	1.00
Quincy Gladding	3.00
Robbie Holloway	3.00
Nannie Varnie	2.00
Maude P. Truitt	5.00
Mrs. Glendora Primo	1.00
Mrs. Rachel Green	1.00
Mrs. Neal Kilby	13.00
Mrs. Tom Strickland	1.00
Mrs. Blanche Brown	8.00
A Friend, N. C.	2.00

Danville, Virginia **October, 1970**

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Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

BUSINESS OFFICE

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EDITORIAL

HOW OUR BRETHREN DO

"And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do." (Acts 15:36)

We have been greatly blessed of the Lord to visit our brethren in many cities since our last writing. These visits have meant so much to us. The encouragement, inspiration, joy, love, peace, and pleasant experiences so comforted us during this time that we consider them as very precious memories to be cherished as heavenly and sublime treasures. We thank God for the smiles of His kind providence during this tour. The radiant ring of God's love prevented any dart of Satan from wounding our hearts. Today we say, Thank the Lord for these tokens of your great love to us.

We wanted to see how our brethren do. We wanted to see the expressions on the ministers' faces as they preached. We wanted to observe the tones of their expressions. We wanted to feel *life* in the words they spoke. We wanted to sit under the dew-drippings of the sanctuary and drink of the water of eternal life. We desired to feast upon the heavenly manna as the word of the Lord was being expounded by His servants. We craved to know more of Jesus and His truth as the *word* was divided rightly by preachers of the Gospel. We prayed God to grant us wisdom sufficiently to comprehend and retain knowledge and understanding as we were being fed through the mouths of these under-shepherds. God had given us peace in our hearts to such extent that we went seeking peace.

We were anxious to learn *how* our brethren read the Scriptures, prayed, sang, assembled themselves, conversed together, gave alms, and performed kind deeds. We yearned to see the evidence of God's mighty spirit of love working in the hearts of God's humble poor. We found the things sought for which gave us gladness of heart.

We are glad to report that our last tour in visiting the churches in North Carolina and Virginia gave us great encouragement. We appreciated the excellent meeting of the Staunton River and Upper Country Line Associations. The preaching was more inspirational and lovelier than ever before. We never enjoyed singing as much in our lives. They sang with the spirit and understanding also. Hearts were blended together as voices were blended in har-

monizing spiritual songs in the homes, before formal meetings opened, after they closed, as well as during formal singing service. Prayer in the homes, reading the Scriptures, and discussing the word of the Lord, made us to know that family worship is not a thing of the past. Godly zeal is yet prevalent and fellowship more sacred than heretofore. Our heart-to-heart talks with ministers and families were sweeter experiences than in formal worship services. We are encouraged to believe that as the world becomes more wicked and the love of many shall wax cold; — that the "Faithful Few" will be drawn closer together. We believe that manifest tokens of God's rich and abounding grace will result in bringing the Lord's people into closer embrace of unity and peace. (God speed the day that His little children shall lay aside these petty things that divide them and come together openly praising God for His wonderful goodness to us.)

Take courage, brethren, for God is shining out of Zion, the perfection of beauty. Righteousness *reigns* in His people, even though sin may *dwell* with them. Sin abounds but Grace much more abounds.

The multitudes of glorious thoughts have so flooded my mind for the past many months that I thank God for any medium of proclamation. I thank God that He has given us this medium, *The Signs,* through which we can express some of our thoughts to the readers. Surely God has kept the *Signs* for it is still coming to us regularly after its long tenure of almost one and one-half centuries. Multitudes of God's sensible sinners have been comforted, encouraged, and edified through this medium. The time, meditation and prayer devoted by the writers and editors of the *Signs* is enormous. May God grant each reader to know and to appreciate the deep concern and the hours used by the contributors and editors in order that the reader may have something worthy to read. May the reader know that much time is devoted to research in re-reading and re-studying in order that the word of the Lord may be rightly divided. Nevertheless, the reader should do his own researching to see whether the things written are in accord with the Holy Scriptures. We thank God that we can have these heart-to-heart talks with you regularly through the *Signs.*

We want to know *how* you pray. We know God's quickened ones pray. We know, also, that there are hypocritical prayers. Even hypocritical prayers are rewarded. Jesus teaches that if one prays in the streets to be seen of men that they have their reward because men see them. When you pray in secret God rewards you openly. The manner of prayer manifests the seriousness of it. Prayers indited by the Spirit of God cannot be fully expressed in words. Spirit inspired prayer results in groanings that cannot be uttered. The Lord's prayer as recorded in the 17th chapter of John was not suppliant pleading as former prayers of Jesus, but the expression of desires of a Companion Who had perfectly finished the work that His Father had assigned. This work was for those whom the Father had given Him. Jesus could express these desires with authority in behalf of His people because He had met the requirement in their stead. We firmly believe that the desires of Jesus are being perfected by the mighty working of God.

The *manner* of prayer that Jesus taught His disciples is being prayed in principle by every heaven-born child of God. Read Acts 4:23-30. This is the first recorded prayer of the Christian Church. What had these followers of Christ experienced? Not only had Christ been crucified, but some of the apostles had been imprisoned. They were being very wrongly treated by SUCH A HOST OF ENEMIES. Peter and John had testified before the elders, rulers, and scribes relative to the healing of one that it was through Jesus Christ of Nazareth whom they had crucified, that he was healed. The apostles and the believers in Jesus Christ

had undergone great persecutions. Of course, when John and Peter had been released from this trial, they sought out their own company and made report. This prayer by the church in one accord was in response to this report. We term this, The Church's Prayer. This is a simple Scriptural prayer based upon what God had of His own power revealed, and His purposed redemption by Christ. All their preaching and prayer was based upon the very Word of God which God had blessed them to apprehend and believe. This prayer is based more upon precious truths — yea — great truths, than upon special promises. They confess their faith in this prayer as well as base their appeal upon the *sovereign might* and certain accomplishments of God according to His purpose; — even in the face of radical opposition. The church rests its point on the same great truth that Peter brought to light in his discourse as recorded earlier. The point is that the church believingly recognizes that this combined agency of rulers and people against Jesus only accomplished the merciful purpose of God. The combined agencies of rulers and people against Jesus as well as His followers, laid the foundation for the establishment and spread of His gracious salvation to the uttermost parts of the earth.

Think for a moment upon each word of this prayer. It is revealing to note that no word or thought is expressed that the church desired to avenge these great persecutors. They did not ask God to take vengeance. They only said, "And now, Lord, Behold their threatenings." The Church knew that God was able, and would so rule and overrule that all would work together for the fulfilling of His purpose. It is revealing to note that they did not plead to God to make them immune to further dangers and threatenings. They prayed that their faith and courage might not fail. They did not pray for the destruction of their enemies, nor the removal of obstacles, but for stedfastness to endure persecutions and boldness to face difficulties. They prayed for strength to surmount these difficulties. They prayed for God's miraculous interposition, but not for *their* personal help and comfort in a selfish manner. Faith in God's Word and Christ's work is the embodiment of this simple word prayer of the church. Is this your prayer??

". . . Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child, Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants that with all boldness they may speak thy word. By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child, Jesus." (Acts 4:24-30) God heard that prayer and answered it wonderfully.

God is a rewarder of them who diligently seek Him in unison as you will find in reading the remainder of the 4th chapter of Acts. Brethren, I want to encourage you to pray and faint not. Pray in hopes of receiving strength, patience, and boldness to endure persecutions and trials. God will not permit anything to frustrate His grace. He is God over all to such extent that each and every trial, difficulty, and persecution that you experience, even at the hands of your worst enemies, is for the softening of your hearts to God's glory; — if indeed be, you are one of His little ones. In this world you shall have tribulations. You shall be persecuted. How do you take the chastening of the Lord? It proves He loves us.

The glorious purpose of God in all things are for your benefit, dear trem-

bling ones. All things are yours for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. See 1 Cor. 3:21-23. What is your attitude to all things?

I want to know how you feel to be in relation to all things? Do you feel to be the prisoner of circumstances to be used as a mere machine? Are you under bondage of things? I have heard people complain of the circumstances as though they were victims of fate. If Christ has made you free, then you are in different relation to things than heretofore. If you be free, all things are *yours* instead of you being *theirs*. If you be translated into the kingdom of His dear Son; if you be delivered out of the power of darkness, then, all things are yours. Please read Colossians 1. When we realize all things are ours as God's gracious gifts, we appreciate them more. God is *for* His people. All things work together for His people. I have been amazed lately as I look at things. I see a beautiful flower. I think, God made this flower for me. I see the trees. I think, These are for my benefit. I look at the things that I considered before as evil, yea a complication of many confusing evils, and I think, All these are mine for they are a train of God's ministers for good, chariots of fiery and glorious discipline, to which Satan himself is harnessed, if God pleases, to do God's bidding to make me better fitted to persevere.

Brethren, even the world is ours. When our hearts are purified by His wondrous love it makes us to enjoy more our friends, music, works of art, nature, than ever before because we see God in them. We know that things present and things to come are for our good, if we be Christ's. His promises are ours. The great victory to come will be ours in eternity.

Brethren, how do you do when you fall into divers temptations? How do you count it? Do you count it as against you? James said, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." (James 1:2-3) There is not a phrase that better describes the real purpose of our discipline in this world than the one James has given us. It is to work patience in the trial of our faith. It is interesting to note that this only applies to those of *"My brethren"* whom James addresses. There is one good thought concerning those who *fall into temptation.* You have to be raised above temptations befor you could fall into them. Of course, God raises them above and lets them fall at their own instant will in order to teach them dependence upon Him. You have experienced that limits are so set to your strength that you cannot do the things you would. Your desires go far beyond your ability. Your goals are much higher than your performances. Your energy so often has to droop its tired wings and sink back baffled. Your flesh lusts against the Spirit. Your passions go far astray from your principles. You find you are brought into the captivity of sin. How terrible are these experiences to a child of the most high who has been a recipient of that wonderful faith. You are made to cry, "Help thou mine unbelief." While in these terrible experiences you have no faith sufficient to boast about. Do you not have a very little faith? Yes, God's children who have been given this faith, even though it be weak, it is strong enough that you do not despair even though in great trouble. There is enough to inspire you to pray for increase of faith.

How wonderful it is when the day comes after the night. How glorious it is when consolations come after a night of sorrow. How rewarding it is for peaceful calm to come in place of the howling storm. It is for the trying of your faith, for your very small island of knowledge to be embosomed in an ocean of mystery. It is for the trying of your faith that the Bible is not plain to your understanding. It is for the trying of your faith that God's voice is not audible when you are perplexed, neither are you convinced of the right way to go when in doubt.

We work by love and live by faith. If we have faith we must expect trials. Sight is not in faith because the Scriptures say, "We walk by faith, not by sight." Faith must be tried before it be found to praise and honor. The unfaithful feel that everything is a snare to them. The faithful feel that every state of being or condition works a blessing in some way to the faithful. Prosperity to the faithful works thankfulness. Adversity works patience to the faithful. Adversity will cause the faithless to turn back and forsake but will cause the faithful to patiently persevere regardless of difficulties.

We must close with the prayer that God will be pleased to grace each and every one of you to contend steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, contending for that precious faith of God's elect. May He bless us with an abiding faith in His wonderful promises. May He bless us that we may strive for peace and increase in love for God and one another. Write us when you can as we yearn to hear HOW OUR BRETHREN DO.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

HEBREWS 4:1-12

Mr. Beebe: — My wife is an Old School Baptist and very much afflicted, and has been so for the last eight years, so that she does not have the privilege of hearing preaching often; you would confer a favor by giving your views on Heb. 4:1-12.

Yours with respect,
E. Cory
Blooming Grove, Jan. 2, 1860

REPLY

"Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left *us* of entering into rest, any of you should seem to come short of it," &c. The inspired apostle describes the endless rounds of legal ceremonies, rites, sacrifices, toils and labors required of the carnal Israelites under the Levitical law as a state of bondage and fatigue, allowing not a moment's respite or rest, for the law not only required a perfect obedience, but also a perpetual labor. But the gospel in direct contrast in that respect, is set forth as a rest that remaineth for the people of God. The former dispensation is set forth by the six days labor in the creation of the world, and the six days of every week in which the Israelites were commanded to labor and to do all their work; also by their tedious wanderings for forty years in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, and other significant and impressing figures which are used in illustration. While the rest which the gospel presents and which remained after the expiration of the legal covenant to the people of God, is exemplified by the hallowed day in which God rested from all the work of creation; and the seventh day of every week to the Hebrews, also the possession of the land of milk and honey, to the Israelites after their tiresome journey in the wilderness. Indeed, all the sabbath days, sabbatic years and other legally appointed times of rest to the carnal Israelites, were figurative of that spiritual rest which believers in Christ enter when fully and experimentally delivered from the toil and bondage of the law. With this brief explanation of the types employed in our subject, as a key to the admonition in our text, we pass to notice the entering into the rest which is left unto the people of God.

At the expiration of the old covenant dispensation all the rites and ceremonies of that covenant were abolished. The shaking of the heavens and the earth was to remove the things which are shaken that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. (Heb. xii. 27.) Of the things shaken and removed, the apostle includes the old covenant with all its rites and carnal commandments. (Heb. viii. 13; x.9.) But the things which cannot be shaken remain. The covenant of grace and salvation in Jesus Christ, embracing the promise of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, made before the world began, could not

be shaken. The kingdom prepared for the saints from the foundation of the world, as described and contrasted with the Sinai covenant in Heb. xii. 18-24, is a kingdom that cannot be shaken; for it shall never be destroyed nor left to other people. (Daniel ii. 44.) It shall stand forever. "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." — Heb. xii. 27. While the commonwealth of Israel organized nationally under the covenant of works, as we have shown, could not rest, only in a ceremonial sense, the kingdom of Christ, embraced in the covenant of grace, is emphatically a kingdom of rest. "For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever; here will I dwell, for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision, I will satisfy her poor with bread." — Psa. cxxxii. 13-15. The bread which is to sustain our earthly nature, is obtained by toil and labor, and by the righteous decree of God, man shall eat it in the sweat of his face, until he shall return unto the dust, &c. But the bread of life which sustains those who belong to the kingdom which Jesus claims as his rest forever, is not obtained by toil and sweat, it cometh down from heaven, is freely given, and divinely blessed, to fill Zion's poor. "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious." — Isa. xi. 10. The apostle finds a promise of rest to the people of God implied in the types, the entering into Canaan, the seventh day, &c., and this promise is exclusively to the people of God who shall all be righteous, for the wicked are like the troubled sea which cannot rest. But Paul says, "For we which have believed, do enter into rest." Again, "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works as God did from his." When God had finished the six days of creation, he rested from all the works which he had made. Nothing more has been created; nothing more required to be created. So, when the people of God enter into God's rest, they find it a perfect cessation from all of their own legal works to commend them to divine favor, for Christ is their righteousness. He is made the righteousness of God unto them, and as the righeousness of God cannot be improved or made more perfect than it is, they have only to rest in it. When trembling at the startling thunders of Mount Sinai, before Christ was revealed to them as their righteousness, they labored hard and long.

"They toiled the precept to obey,
But toil'd without success."

Guilt-stricken and despairing with deep contrition they confessed their guilt, and the justice of the fiery doom assigned them by the holy law of God, while on their heart the crushing burden pressed them down. But while in this state, far from the reach of human aid, the blessed Savior appears in all the glory of the Father, in all the irresistible attractions of life and immortality, and his voice is heard, not in the terror of Mount Sinai, not in bursting peals of wrath, but in the still, small sound, which thrills the heart with heavenly rapture and supreme delight, and his words are, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls, for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." — Matt. xi. 28, 29. This is not a mere invitation, but a heavenly calling which cannot be resisted by any unto whom it is addressed, it is the King's word and full of power. At his word, the burden is removed from the heart, yea, a new heart is given, a new spirit is put within, and a new song breaks forth in sweetest melody of praise unto God and the Lamb. The toil-worn soul is now released from Moses' yoke, which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear, and ceasing

from all his own works to justify him before God or to meet the fiery demands of the law, he enters into that rest which remains for the people of God when all things else have passed away. This is the rest which Paul enjoyed, when he said to all the troubled saints at Thessalonica, Rest with us. Cease from your own works as God did from his. Come under the yoke (or law) of Christ, your King, learn of him, for he is meek and lowly; he will condescend to instruct you, and lead you about and keep you as the apple of his eye, as he did Jacob, and although he will stir up your old nest, and tear it to pieces, he will teach you to mount up with wings as eagles, to run and not be weary, and to walk and not faint; for his yoke is truly easy, and his burden is light indeed.

Now for the admonition. "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." We have seen that such a promise is left, and such a glorious rest remains for the people of God, but how can any of God's people even seem to come short of it? Much perplexity has been occasioned to some of God's people by mistaking the true import of the admonition, by supposing that the rest remaining for the people of God, will not be entered until we reach the final consummation of our glory. But the apostle does not say, there shall a rest remain, &c., but "there remaineth therefore a rest." The things that are shaken, are removed, and the kingdom of Christ is received, which is that Zion of which the Lord says, "This is my rest forever, here will I dwell." It even now remaineth, and all true believers have entered into it, and in entering into it, they cease from their own works. But as in the type, the carnal Israelites who believed not the promise of entering into Canaan, could not enter in because of unbelief, their carcasses fell in the wilderness of Sinai; so the people of God seem to come short of gospel rest, whenever their doubts and fears and unbelief prevail. How can a child of God rest, confide and feel secure in the provision of the gospel while he doubts his personal interest in our Lord Jesus Christ? It is only when our faith triumphs over our unbelief that we confidently rest in the full security and blessed enjoyment of the house of our God. To doubt our calling of God, and our having been born again, fills us with trouble, darkness, and we recede from the place of our rest, and become entangled with the yoke of bondage, and find labor and fatigue, and until we are again delivered from our unbelief it is impossible for us to rest. But the moment our faith is renewed, or made to triumph over our doubts, we say, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." The Jewish Sabbaths were designed to illustrate the rest which remains to the people of God. It was enjoined on them to rest from all their work, to kindle no fires, gather no manna, to do no manner of labor, nor were they permitted to think their own thoughts, nor to speak their own words. So in our Sabbath of gospel rest. We are to kindle no fires. "Behold all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of my hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow." — Isa. 50:11. Under the gospel dispensation it is sabbath-breaking in this sense to kindle fires or get up revivals of our own kindling. When instead of waiting a visit or a message from the Lord, we think our own thoughts, make up our own creeds, speak or proclaim the vain imaginations of our own understanding, and speak our own words, we violate the gospel Sabbath law, and seem to come short of that rest which is promised to the people of God. But we are commanded to strive to enter into rest, by denying ourselves, by ceasing from our own works, and by trusting confidently in what God has said, and in what he has done.

"Go ye that rest upon the law,
And toil and seek salvation there;
Look to the flame that Moses saw,
And shrink, and tremble, and despair.

Let me retire beneath the cross,
Savior, at thy dear feet I'd lie,
And the keen sword that justice draws,
Flaming and red, shall pass me by."

Reviewing the whole subject, we think the Christian will perceive that there is reason to fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest (experimentally), we may seem to come far short of it. But still, although the faith of God's people must be tried, and they have to experience much tribulation, and sore temptations, and often oppressed with doubts, and failing of the enjoyment of that sweet rest which we desire, the final triumph of the saints over all their doubts and fears, over all their sorrows and their sins, is secured in Christ, and their divine inheritance of glory is reserved in heaven for them; and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time.

"O Glorious hour! O blest abode,
Thus to be near and like my God,
And flesh and sin no more control
The sacred pleasures of my soul."

Middletown, N. Y., March 1, 1860
(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe March 1, 1860.)

CALL FOR A PRESBYTERY

On Saturday night, May 23, 1970, the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in Rockingham County, North Carolina, in regular conference, by unanimous vote, called for a presbytery to ordain Brother James F. Poole to the work of the ministry, if found qualified.

Sunday, July 26, 1970, at 3:00 p. m. was set for the ordination.

The Presbytery was composed of the following Elders: Kenneth Key, O. K. Tench, Rufus Brown, James Hollandsworth, Posey Ingram, Leonard Key, and D. V. Spangler.

The Presbytery was duly constituted by electing Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator, and Elder Posey Ingram, Clerk. Inquiry was made of the church if they were of the same mind as when they voted to call for the Presbytery.

On motion and second the church appointed Deacon Gold Minter spokesman for the church. Brother Poole was then delivered into the hands of the Presbytery by Deacon Harold Weatherford.

The Moderator then appointed Elder Leonard Key to read the qualifications of a minister as recorded in the third chapter of 1st Timothy, and any other scriptural references to this qualification. Elder O. K. Tench was appointed to examine the candidate, and make diligent inquiry of the church whether the candidate possessed these qualifications. The Moderator then extended to any member of the Presbytery the privilege of questioning the candidate concerning any point of doctrine held by him.

The Moderator appointed Elder Kenneth Key to offer the ordination prayer, and Elder D. V. Spangler to deliver the charge. All members of the Presbytery were requested to lay hands on the candidate during the prayer.

Brother Poole was then delivered into the hands of the church, and his credentials were signed by the members of the Presbytery and delivered to Elder James F. Poole.

Those signing were: Elders Kenneth Key, O. K. Tench, Rufus Brown, James Hollandsworth, Posey Ingram, Leonard Key and D. V. Spangler.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Elder Posie Ingram, Clerk

OBITUARIES

VIRTUE M. BALLARD

Sister Virtue M. Ballard, of Vega, N. Y., departed this life July 11, 1970. She was born July 8, 1876, making her life on earth within three days of 94 years. She was the daughter of Jolson Sweet. She was united in marriage to Johnathan S. Ballard February 27, 1895, who died several years ago. She leaves to mourn her passing one daughter, Ora Sherwood; one son, William, and several grandchildren.

Sister Ballard united with the First Roxbury Church July 26, 1902, and was baptized by Elder J. D. Hubbell. She served as Clerk of the church until her death. Sister Ballard's heart and home were always open to do for and entertain her brethren and friends as long as her strength permitted.

Elder A. J. Slauson

LUCY BUNN WOMBLE

Lucy Bunn Womble, the daughter of the late George M. and Pattie Braswell Bunn, was born in Nash County, N. C. in 1888, and was

called home by our Lord, May 23, 1970. She was married to the late George W. Womble.

On January 29, 1967, Sister Womble united with the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church. She had been attending the Falls Church most of her life, and we feel to be grateful to our Lord and Master for bringing her home to the Church. She loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace and enjoyed meeting with the brethren, talking of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

All who knew her loved her dearly, and she will be greatly missed by all of us. She always had a smile and a loving word for everyone. We were blessed to be in her home a week before her death, and it was a joy to see her smile and listen to her conversation. It was a privilege to know her, for to know her was to love her. We will always feel a vacancy in our lives, but those who will miss her most, are those near and dear to her by the ties of nature; two sons, Marcus Womble and Randolph Womble of Rocky Mount; one daughter, Mrs. Pattie Howell of Greenville; three stepsons, Bennie and Allen Womble of Nashville; Rosemond Womble of Durham; two stepdaughters, Mrs. Ruth Howerton of Gibsonville, and Mrs. Eva Forsythe of Ahoskie; four grandchildren; 14 step-grandchildren; two sisters, Mrs. Ida A. Denson and Mrs. Selma Strawbridge of Rocky Mount.

Her funeral was conducted from the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church, by her pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes. She was laid to rest in the family cemetery where the beautiful flowers and the many friends gathered to pay their last respects. There she awaits the coming of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the will of God; for it is He that giveth and He that taketh away; That we extend to the family our love and sympathy, praying the God of Grace will reconcile them to his will; That a copy of these resolutions be recorded on our church records; a copy sent the family and a copy to the *Signs of the Times*.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

ASA CARPENTER

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write the obituary of my Dad, Asa Carpenter, of Rt. 3, Hurricane, West Virginia. He was born November 11, 1877, and died January 17, 1970, at the age of 92 years, 2 months and 6 days. He was the son of Samuel and Nancy Jane Bird Carpenter. Being moved to the farm when only six weeks old, he spent his entire life in Putnam County, W. Va.

He was laid to rest January 19 in the family cemetery. Funeral services were held in the Mt. Mariah Baptist Church by Elder Veldon Linn, of The Tygarts Valley River Primitive Baptist Association, who spoke such comforting words to all. Allen Funeral Home was in charge.

He married Amie Harper in August, 1899. To this union were born three sons, Herbert, Enoch and William and one daughter, Lucy. His first wife died in July, 1915. In November, 1917, he married Alivia Wade. To this union were born two daughters, Mildred and Dorothy. His last wife died August, 1922. The survivors include sons, Herbert and William, of Hurricane, West Virginia, and daughters, Lucy, at home and Mrs. Edith Lambert of Durlin, West Virginia. Two children, Enoch and Dorothy died when infants. Also surviving are six grandchildren and three great grandchildren, several nephews and nieces, and a host of relatives and friends as far back as I can remember. Dad had a sweet hope in Christ and was a believer in salvation by grace and grace alone.

After my stepmother's death, it was my wonderful privilege to keep house and look after Dad the rest of his life. While we miss him more than words can say, our loss is his gain, and he is now at rest. And we can say with the poet, "It is not death to close the eyes long dimmed by tears, and wake in glorious repose to spend eternal years."

By his daughter who misses him.

Lucy Carpenter

BESSIE JOHNSON PENNINGTON

After a lingering illness in a local hospital, Sister Pennington passed from this sinful world on February 14, 1970, to be with her Heavenly Father whom she loved and trusted so much. Brother Bartley Pennington also a member of this church preceded her in death March 10, 1964.

Sister Pennington was very devoted to her church and attended whenever her health permitted. She had a wonderful personality and was loved dearly by her many friends.

On my visits with her at her bedside, although she was unable to speak she would smile as if she wanted to tell me she was made satisfied with her afflictions and would soon meet with him where will be no more pains or sorrow.

We at Wilson Church mourn with her survivors but bow in humble submission to the Holy Eternal Will of God. May we pray that our Lord and Saviour will guide and direct her family through life and at his appointed time take them home with him also.

Her funeral was conducted at Wilson Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder D.

B. Stokes, assisted by Elder Curtis Raines and laid to rest at Evergreen Memorial Cemetery in Wilson, N. C.

RESOLVED, That a copy of the resolutions be sent to the *Signs of the Times*, one to the family, one to the church as a permanent record.

Done by order of conference May 9, 1970.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Preston Gay, Clerk

ANNA RUITH TRIGG

In memory of our dear sister in Christ, Mrs. Anna Ruith Trigg, daughter of James Eli and Hifay Watkins, was born December 10, 1905, and died April 25, 1969, making her stay on earth more than 63 years. On December 15, 1921, she was united in marriage to Joseph J. Trigg of Simpson, Ill., and to this union eight children were born: Hobart C. of Lompoc, Calif.; Violett B. of Smithville, Ark.; John R. of Germany; James R. of Simpson; Lucy J. of Simpson; Sarah J. of Jonesboro, Ill.; Ruith L. of Simpson; and Landean S. of Carlisle, Ind. Sister Anna leaves her devoted husband and family to mourn her passing, including two sisters: Mrs. Olla Shurpp of Simpson, and Pauline Whiteside of Marysville, Ill,; also her aged mother and 33 grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Sister Trigg joined the church at Rock Springs and was baptized the first Sunday in September, 1963. She was faithful to attend as long as her health permitted. Though suffering much before her passing, she bore her afflictions with patience. The last talk I had with her she expressed that she desired to go to sleep and awake in Jesus; and we believe she was granted her desire. Sister Trigg enjoyed the church and loved to sing the songs of Zion, for she had a lovely voice. She is greatly missed but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by request by her pastor.

W. Y. Chandler

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT
FOR
SISTER LYDIA MARGARET PEELE

In accordance to the request of the Skewarkey Primitive Baptist Church I, the Lord willing, will attempt to pen a few words in memory of our departed sister, Lydia Margaret Peele. Sister Peele entered this life on January 30, 1873, and was called from our midst on April 17, 1970; thus her sojourn upon this earth was for 97 years, 2 months, and 18 days. She was the widow of the late Ephraim Peele and the daughter of the late Harmon Thomas and Clementine Roberson.

Our beloved sister was received into our little flock by letter from Hayes Swamp Church in May, 1960; she held membership among the Primitive Baptists for approximately 40 years.

It was the writer's privilege to be blessed with many hours of association with this dear one, and thus many times I was blessed to share in her experiences as she related her expressions of a hope of life beyond this life. Yes, our dear sister possessed a hope of a new birth and regeneration not of herself but by the revealing power of her God. She was blessed to rejoice in a hope of a faith that was anchored within the blood of a redeeming Savior, an inherited gift by the mercy and grace of God.

Our dear sister by an eye of faith waited patiently and faithfully upon her God, trusting in his divine promises to his little ones until the end. She was blessed to manifest much love for her church and brethren, and her associations with them from time to time were her meat and her drink here in this life. I cannot find fitting expressions to describe the esteem in which she was held but may I conclude by stating this dear sister bore a wonderful name among many brethren and friends of her community as well, truly an evidence of that new birth wherein she hoped to possess.

Surviving are one son, two daughters, nine grandchildren, and 15 great grandchildren. Also surviving is one sister.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder E. C. Harrison and interment was in the Tice Community Cemetery beneath an array of beautiful flowers. To the family we extend our heartfelt sympathy and may you be comforted by the divine spirit of our God is our prayer in Christ's name.

RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to *Zion's Landmark* and *Signs of the Times* for publication, a copy be placed on the church record, and a copy be sent to the family.

Done by order of conference the second Saturday in May, 1970.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Johnny Ray Gardner, Committee

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 138 DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1970 NO. 11

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/70
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"IT WAS ALL IN GOD'S HANDS"

As I sit here in the hospital room all by myself (I mean with no other patient) I seem to want to write just a few things I feel the Lord has done for me. I am not good at explaining or expressing my feelings to people, but if I could just get what is in my heart and soul to come out, I doubt if I could find a stopping place.

I came into the hospital the 20th of May for a major operation. I am happy to say that I did not dread coming in for the operation. The Lord has been with me so many, many times I just felt it so strongly He was going to be with me through this, and that I was coming out O. K. Of course I have had several difficulties, but was expecting to have them, and I did not get scared over them.

The only thing I dreaded coming in the hospital for, was leaving my family for I have two small children six and seven years old. But it was shown me that God was going to look over them and care for them.

Right now is the first Sunday in June, and as things stand now I expect to be going home in a few days. I want to thank all for their lovely cards and the visitors I had. The day my pastor, Elder Leonard Brammer and his wife, came to see me I do not think Christmas time was ever as happy to me. I wanted to see them so badly and was so happy they could come.

I will close, giving all the praise to God, for I can't stop thanking and praising Him enough, for I know it was all in His hands. The nurses and doctors have all been wonderful, but God gave that to them too.

May God bless all his children wherever they may be.

A sister in Christ, I hope,
Odessa Brown
(Sandy Level Church, Virginia)

"GROWING UP AS CALVES OF THE STALL"

"But unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." (Malachi 4:2)

We trust that God will bless us to meditate upon the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ. Before attempting to comment upon this text, let us consider the surrounding verses because we realize there is a big fault of taking a text out of its setting. The truth must be rightly divided. The prophet was inspired to write of the judgments that would be brought upon the wicked. As Peter said that this world shall melt with fervent heat. (See Peter 3:10.) This world shall not stand forever. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." This world shall pass away, and the lust thereof, but the kingdom of God shall stand forever. (See 1 John 2:15-17.)

The Scriptures are not obsolete. The experiences of the people of God many

years ago are applicable to the experiences of God's people in this day and time. God is not changeable. Paul received this doctrine by revelation, and God still reveals this doctrine to his people during this day and time, and will to the future generations. We believe that God inspired the writers to write the Scriptures, and that God was in the matter during the King James translation from the original Hebrew and Greek languages to the English language.

Notice that this text is not directed to the world in general, or not to all of the human race. There is a class that fears God, and a class that does not fear God. "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Rom. 3:10-12) In the 18th verse we read: "And there is no fear of God before their eyes." The wicked have pleasure in unrighteousness and they do not have the fear of God in their hearts. (See 2 Thess. 2:12.) The Children of God mourn over their sins, and desire a closer walk with God.

"Unto you that fear my name." There must be a separation of the word fear. One who fears a wild animal, darkness, etc. has a slaveous fear. One who keeps the law because he fears the consequences of breaking it has the fear of torment. Let us consider natural blessings. There was not any eternal life promised under the old law. In short, if you obey my laws and keep my statutes, I will bless your land, but if not, then the desolations, judgments, curses, etc. will be brought upon you. (See Deut. 11:26-28 and other places.) In this sense, many would keep the law not because it was in their heart, but for the motive of receiving the natural blessings. Following this reasoning, notice that Paul said, "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." (Rom. 4:4) If you contract to perform so much labor and materials and Mr. X agrees to pay you so much after the work is finished, then after you have fulfilled your agreement, Mr. X is indebted to you for the amount he promised to pay you. When Mr. X pays you, he has discharged his debt to you. He has not given you a gift, but he is merely paying his debt to you.

Following this reasoning, if it were true that salvation depended upon something that the creature had to do, then salvation would not be of grace, but it would be of debt. In other words, God would be indebted to give salvation to those that kept the certain conditions. If one had to preform certain conditions in order to seal the contract and make this salvation certain to him, then he would have cause and reason to boast that God is indebted to give him salvation. Then the creature could rightly boast and praise his own self for the works that he had done. That being true, there would not be any praise to God in heaven, but it would be all creature praise. The Scripture says: "Where is boasting then? It is excluded." (Rom. 3:27) As we think of the will and purpose of God, all praise and honor and glory belongs unto God. "I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." (Isaiah 42:8) If salvation depended upon grace mixed with works, then God would be giving or dividing his glory with another. If salvation were conditional, then man could rightly say, "I have done my part and God has done his part." In this case, God would be dividing his glory with man. "Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and *their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men.*" (Isaiah 29:13) The fear of torment, and slavish fear, may be taught by the precept of man, but the fear of God in the hearts of God's people cannot be taught by man.

We read, "The fear of the Lord is

the beginning of knowledge . . ." (Proverbs 1:7) It is not left up to the creature to decide to fear the Lord, and then he would get wisdom. The wisdom of God cannot be passed on from man to man as natural wisdom can be passed on. ". . . I think thee, O Father of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." (Matt. 11:25) Notice that the wisdom is hid and this wisdom is revealed to God's people in due time. "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." (1 Cor. 1:30) Christ is made unto you wisdom. The world cannot receive the hidden wisdom of God. It is foolishness to the world. "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." (1 Cor. 1:23-24)

"And they shall be my people, and I will be their God: and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but *I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.*" (Jer. 32:38-40) Notice the expression "fear of God in the hearts." We read that God will take from you the stony heart and give you a heart of flesh. (See Ezekiel 36:26.) This gives us evidence that the religion of God is in the hearts of his people. The joy of salvation is felt within the heart. This causes you to rejoice, does it not?

The fear of God is a Godly fear, and it is a reverential fear. Paul said that we are accused of doing evil that good might come. Do not we hear the same in this day? Have you heard others say, if I believed in the doctrine of election of grace, predestination, etc., I would go out and have my fill of sin, and I would be saved anyway? A person who tells you this is either joking or else he is telling you the hidden secrets of his heart. A person may appear to be religious in the sight of men in order to promote his business affairs, to receive the praise of men, etc. Jesus said, "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward." (Matt. 6:5) What was their reward? It was to receive the praise of men. Therefore they received their reward, which was the praise of men. Men look on the outward appearance, but God looks upon the heart. (See Samuel 16:7.)

We do not wish to be misunderstood. It is good for one to keep the moral law. The law is not made for the righteous, but for those that break the law. In short, we believe that the people of God are law abiding citizens. Yet, the keeping of the law will not give one a ticket to heaven. The inheritance is not of the law, or by the deeds of the law. (See Gal. 3:18.)

"The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate." (Proverbs 8:13) This is the fear that we are trying to point out. This is the fear that is taught in the hearts of God's people. We know that the world has pleasure in unrighteousness. This is the condition of all mankind. "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." (Eph. 2:2-3) By nature, God's people are not any better than the rest of the world. Remember that they have all gone out of the way. There is none righteous, no, not one.

When you have the fear of God in your heart, you mourn over your sins and hate them. You have the desire within your heart to do that which is right in the sight of God. This is the fear of God in your heart. One who is man fearing wants to do that which is right in the sight of man in order to receive the praise of man. He hides from man when he wants to do his wickedness, so that this will be hidden from man.

The Scriptures point out that God's people have the desire to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. This desire is in the heart. The desire is to do that which is right in the sight of God. As the poet said:

"O for a closer walk with God!
A calm and heavenly frame!
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb!"

I believe that the poet had the desire in his heart. After Peter had denied his Savior three times, the Lord turned and looked upon him, and Peter went and wept bitterly. Peter mourned over the fact that he had denied his Jesus. He mourned that he was not strong enough to keep his own self. He mourned over his denial of Jesus, and realized that he needed the grace of God to keep him. David said: ". . . wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?" (Psalms 56:13) David knew that he needed the guidance of God; and do not we feel the same? We cannot keep ourselves by our own strength. If we were left to ourselves, we would fall by the wayside. We do not find any evidence that Peter, David, or any other saint mentioned in the Scriptures, were trying to hide their sins behind the predestination of God.

"But unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." We believe the sun of righteousness has reference to Jesus Christ. "Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death to guide our feet unto the way of peace." (Luke 1:78-79)

If you have never felt the need of healing, the text is not directed to you. If God's people never feel the need of healing, I believe the expression "healing in his wings" would be left out. There is a purpose in all Scripture. None of it is written just to fill up space.

If you fear the Lord, and feel the need of healing, this text is directed to you. So take courage, dear one. ". . . I kill and I make alive, I wound and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand." (Deut. 32:39) It is hurtful to the flesh to have the pride killed; and it brings one low in his presence. We think of the woman that washed Jesus feet with her tears. This is a type of God's people who weep over their sins and are blessed to see that Jesus is their Savior. He is your all in all. If we are saved, it must be by grace and grace alone. We need a Savior who comes to us and binds up the wounds. Jesus comes with healing in his wings. How wonderful! No matter how dark the path may lie ahead, the way will be easy when Jesus is there with you. "I can do all things through Christ which strengthen me." (Phil. 4:13) Jesus heals the broken heart and he leads through all the trials that lie ahead. ". . . I will be with you alway, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28:20)

"Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." (Isaiah 48:10) God's people were chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world. His people are an afflicted people. "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." (Zeph. 3:12) This shows the fact that the people of God are afflicted and poor. One is just as positive as the other. The Scripture did not say they might be afflicted and poor, or that most

of them are in this condition, but we believe it means that all the household of faith are afflicted and poor. The Scripture did not say that it was left up to them to trust in the name of the Lord, or that they might trust in the name of the Lord; but it has this positive expression that they *shall* trust in the name of the Lord. God's people shall not fail to trust in the name of the Lord. This is the power of God that is wrought in your soul that you feel the trust of the Lord in your own soul. "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the workings of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places." (Eph. 1:19-20)

The power of God is not great or glorious to the unbeliever. Notice the Scripture says that it is great to the believer. This means that the power of God is outstanding to the believer. ("The exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe.") It was according to the mighty power of God that he raised Jesus from the dead. It is the power of God that quickens one who is dead in sins and makes him alive in Jesus Christ. The Scriptures say that God quickened those that were dead in sins. This is a type of the future resurrection and it is a wonderful power. We believe this Scripture (Eph. 1:19) also means that God's people believe according to the working of his mighty power. The power of God causes you to believe. If you believe the truth from the heart, this is sweet evidence that God has wrought his mighty power within you. You are blessed with the belief that Jesus is our Savior, that he is our salvation, and in short, that he is our all in all.

"Ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall." Let us consider the natural meaning, and if the Lord will bless us, we can meditate upon the Spiritual meaning. How do calves of the stall grow up? My understanding is that a calf of the stall does not graze around after his own food. But he waits in the stall for his mother to come to feed him his meal. The calf in the stall looks to his mother for his nourishment, because there is not any food for him to graze around to eat.

The natural children of Israel are a type of the Spiritual children of Israel. God sent down manna for the children of Israel to eat when they were in the wilderness during those forty years. The natural children of Israel depended upon God for their natural food and water. The wilderness is a land that was not sown. (Jer. 2:2) The Israelites did not cultivate the land or grow any crops, because the land was not fit to grow any crops. Therefore, the natural children of Israel depended upon God for their natural food and water. Do you see the sweet connection in the text?

The Spiritual children of Israel depended upon God for their Spiritual food. There is no other source. We may go to other places, and come back empty. We cannot manufacture this food ourselves, or go to man for this Spiritual food. It must come directly from heaven from the Father of lights. We get our nourishment from God. He is the God of all comfort, and his mercy endureth for ever. What a wonderful mercy is this! If it was not for the mercy of God, our doom would be everlasting destruction from his presence for ever. It is just for a few moments of time that we can rightly praise him here as we dwell upon this earth. We are looking as though we are looking through a glass darkly. We cannot read our title clear here. But we trust that in our eternal home we can see him as he is and be satisfied, and then rightly praise him for this wonderful salvation for ever and ever.

May God bless the truth and pardon errors.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

" A PURE LANGUAGE"

"For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve him with one consent." (Zeph. 3-9)

David, in the 40th Psalm, says, "Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to usward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them they are more than can be numbered." This is the feeling of all of God's children when they are given to meditate upon his mercy and grace which has been shown toward them. They can behold his greatness and majesty all about them, and in their lives in his leading them in the way everlasting. They see his power in the sun rising and setting each day on schedule; and in the rainbow in the clouds according to his promise to Noah, "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

God promised not in the way of bargaining with man but in mercy towards them. He saw that the imaginations of man's heart was evil from his youth, and yet he promised these blessings to them in spite of what man is according to his flesh. This seems to be the way in which David is speaking of the wonderful works of God, and the innumerableness of them.

God's promise that he would turn to the people a pure language, is but another of the wonderful blessings that are to those that call upon his name from a pure heart. He promised that he would take away the stony heart and would give them a heart of flesh. A good man out of the treasures of his heart bringeth forth good fruit, because "by their fruits ye shall know them." A pure heart would therefore speak a pure language, and it will always speak words that are praising and glorifying the heavenly Father and the Creator God to whom it owes its very existance. This pure language is given that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve him with one consent. In each it will speak the same things and tell of His wonderful glory, honor, and majesty in bestowing grace and mercy on such worms of the dust. David said, ". . . thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to usward." This is the pure language from the heart purified by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

In another place David said, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." This pure language is the joyful sound that is known only to the Lord's people, and it is the good news of the gospel of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This is their conversation when they are gathered together, and is evidence that they are walking in the light of His countenance. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

What a blessing it is to believe this truth, and then to feel that maybe you have been blessed to understand this pure language, and rejoice with joy unspeakable as it falls on ears that have been blessed to hear. The praise then flows from the hearer of the one so blessed, fulfilling the promise, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please; and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it." Yes, it prospers in that whereto it is sent, and returns in the form of honor and praise to the great Jehovah God who has looked upon them in their afflictions, and blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. This is why it is such a joyful sound to their ears, as each, speaking in the pure language, tells of the wonderful grace and mercy displayed in God's dealing with the sons of men in this wilderness of sin.

When Moses was told to make the

garments for the priest, he was commanded to put two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod engraven with the names of the children of Israel; and also the breastplate was to have settings of stones, and upon the stones were to be the names of the children of Israel. In this way the priest would bear the names of God's people upon his shoulders, and on the breastplate of judgment upon his heart when he went in unto the Holy Place, for a memorial before the Lord continually. Also upon the hem of his garment was to be a golden bell and a promegranate alternating all around the hem. Then as the priest ministered before the Lord in the Holy Place, the bells would sound, to be heard by those in the outer court as evidence that he lived and was bearing their names in the presence of God: and offering sacrifices for their sins. Even so, God said, "Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands: thy walls are continually before me." Therefore His children's names are graven upon Christ's hands, and he has entered into heaven itself bearing their names before God the Father, as he makes intercession for them according to the will of God.

As the golden bells were heard by those without, the pure language that His children speak, is their blessed assurance that Christ is there living and bearing their names before God, making intercession for their sins. They could not hear the pure language unless they were ones to whom this promise was made; and one for whom Christ is making intercession. This is why the gospel is such a joyful sound, and it is an especially blessed people that hear it. As Christ said to his disciples, "But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears for they hear." None but the blessed hear the joyful sound, and none but the blessed people speak the pure language promised by the prophet.

Peter was speaking this pure language when he said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." This was revealed to him even as he spoke it, and Christ told him that God had made it known unto him, and not flesh and blood. Christ further stated, "And I will give unto you the keys of the kingdom of heaven." Keys are to unlock a lock that is placed upon something for safe keeping, and to make it inaccessable to anyone except those who have the key. The flaming sword in the garden of Eden was placed there to keep the way of the tree of life, which is Christ; and surely the only way anyone will ever learn of him is by the Holy Spirit. Christ told his disciples, "But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea." It was by the power of the Holy Ghost that they were to be witnesses of him; and it is by the Holy Ghost that his children witness of his wonderful power to save: and then they speak in the pure language just as Peter did when he made his wonderful confession. It is as it was on the day of Pentecost when the disciples (all Gallieeans) were heard by men from every nation under heaven, (each in their own tongue,) speak of the wonderful works of God. This pure language transcends all language barriers, and is from heart to heart, — not head to head; and pure love is communicated although they may not all speak the same natural tongue.

John was speaking this pure language when he wrote, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." It is only from the heart that has been purified by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, that such gracious and beautiful words can flow. They must be proclaimed from the heart of one who has experienced the peace and joy of their Saviour's loving care in times of distress and the troubles of this life. Then they are only appreciated by those of like precious experience; and this is why the Scripture records, "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith." The same spirit must be in the speaker and the hearer, for the message to be communicated from one to the other: and this is why

it is a joyful sound to both of them, — they realize the gloriousness of it.

This pure language was spoken by Ruth when she said, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go; and whither thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people and thy God my God." This has ever been the plea of those poor and afflicted lambs of God who have been made to trust in the name of the Lord. Their prayer is but to be kept by his mighty power, and to live the life of one of the chosen vessels; and to show forth a work of grace in their hearts. This they never feel that they are doing, but it is their desire and prayer to live and die with them.

While the gospel is good news and a joyful sound to the soul, it is not so to the man in the flesh. The man still has doubts and fears and goes mourning most of his days, but, praises unto God's holy name, it is not left in the hands of the flesh to do or not to do. As John said, "Ye are of God little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world." He that is in you, is Christ the hope of glory, and He is stronger than the man of the flesh. As it is written, "If God be for us, who can be against us."

Moses said, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." This is the sovereign work of God in the way that the doctrine (pure language) drops down from heaven upon the heavenly plantings, and causes them to bring forth and bud, to the honor and glory of God. It distils and purifies the heart and soul of the individual upon whom it falls, and transforms them into the children of light. It is sweet and precious to those who are so blessed; and they would not change it for all the wealth of the world, and the glory of it. They are made to see the perfection of God and the corruption of the world. They see the vanity of the creature and have no desire to follow after the flesh, — although they still live in the flesh.

In Revelation John wept because no one in heaven or on earth was able to open the book and look thereon, and read. One of the elders said that the Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed to open the book. "And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne." This was Christ who did that for his elect: which none other could do. "And they sang a new song." This new song is the song of deliverance that God's people sing in the pure language. Then it will be the language of the land, as we would say now, and they will all speak it.

Then in the days of the voice of the seventh Angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished, and all the family of God shall know as they are known. They shall with one consent, praise and worship God from a pure heart as they enter into the inheritance prepared for them from the foundation of the world. What a grand and glorious occasion that will be for those for whom it is prepared! It shall be a time of love such as has never been before; and they shall have all things common.

Solomon said, "For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of the birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." They shall know that the wilderness of this world is past, and ahead of them stretches the eternal day of glorious bliss in the presence of their Beloved.

Such is the heritage of all that call upon the name of the Lord in truth. This is their constant hope and prayer; and then, when they have the pure language of the children of God, it causes them to lift the hands that hang

down, and the feeble knees, and press on in the footsteps of the flock.

In bonds of love,

Richard H. Campbell
2761 Cochese Cove
Memphis, Tenn. 38118

(See notice of Brother Campbell's ordination to the full work of the Ministry in this issue. — J. D. W.)

SERMON BY ELDER JOHN LEE SMITH AT THE UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION, 1969

(Concluded)

We cannot excuse our sins because God is holy in the matter. "But as for you, you meant evil against me but God meant it unto good." (Gen. 5:20) Now to me this is the very epitome of the doctrine. I can't say it like I would like to; and you might ask, would they be saved without the purpose? CERTAINLY THEY WOULD NOT!! But I am telling you that the purpose is one thing and the purposer is another. The receipe is one thing, but that receipe is not a cook. What would you think if I said, "There are some receipes in North Carolina and Virginia that can cook some of the best meals I've ever tasted in my life." You'd say, "Now he doesn't mean the receipe; he means those that carry the receipe into execution. He means those cooks that performed it." That's what I mean here. God himself worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. But that doesn't say the counsel of his own will works independently of God. He doesn't work independently of his counsel. They go conjointly. They certainly do. Therefore, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ. . ." I don't want you to try to put predestination in the place of Christ for me. If so, hell will be my doom. Because without the shedding of blood there is no remission, my brethren. And predestination never did die on the cross for me. As wonderful a doctrine as it is, I'm not speaking irreverently of it. But God knows I'm trying to speak of that one who was the very theme and center of it. It was Jesus Christ who was the Saviour of sinners. He shed His blood. He did the obeying. He cried out, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me." Even then the very vengence of hell got hold of him. He was suffering all the pain, all the misery, all the shame, and all the degradation that all his poor afflicted people would have justly suffered. Just as much as they would have suffered had they gone to hell for all eternity and not known any mercy. You might say, "Well now if they had to go to hell for all eternity it would have been less than justice. Looks like they would have come out sometimes if He could." But it so falls out that we are sinful beings and there's no way of us atoning. Suffering of a sinful being does not atone for himself nor for anyone else, but suffering of a sinless being does do that. When he does do it; and he did when the eternal God ordered it.

Oh yes! I want you to know that that wasn't ordinary blood that was shed on the cross. I want you to know that this was holy blood. I want you to know that this was sinless blood. I want you to know that this was ordained blood. I want you to know that this was covenant blood, and it was shed for His people. Be they few or many, be they who they are and where they are, they are encouched in the covenant of grace. Now this blood, had it been the will of God, had the purpose included it, this blood could have saved 10 billion times 10 billion universes of races like this, had it been the will of God to have had them there and to have saved them. I want you to know my God didn't go to the extent of his ability. He didn't do his dead level best and have to quit. Oh no! He did it that way because he purposed it, and he purposed it that way because he would. It was His will from eternity. And who is that man or woman or boy or girl; who is that angel or devil or seraphim

that has a right to stand up to the face of his maker and say, "What doest thou?" We do it, but we don't rightly and justly and prudently do it. We do it sinfully. Now sometimes we question in a way of awe and amazement, that is one thing; but to question Him in a way of challenge is another. When that one said, "Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us and not unto the world?" (John 14:22) He was not challenging his maker. He was in great reverential awe. He knew that he didn't deserve it. It can't be that we're better than others. That's what he was saying; that's what his question implied.

"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of His will." All of the works that God does in providence and in grace is according to the good pleasure of His will. I want to tell you this. I don't believe that God ever has done a thing in time, or caused others to do a thing, or influenced or induced them to, or suffered, or permitted or allowed them, if you want to carry it that far, that He didn't determine in eternity. I think that everything that God determined in eternity was part of this mighty picture that I hope that I see an infinitesimal part of this morning. And He did it because He had that right. You know men often do things out of constraint, and reluctantly, because the moral laws tell them it is right that they do it. We can't say that it's right for God to do things, but we do say that what he does **is right**, irrespective of how it looks to men or devils or angels. He wasn't under any law that says, "You'd better; or you must." Oh no! Not that One! That high and lofty one yonder in whose sight the heavens are said to be unclean. How much more groveling worms like us. He wasn't under any obligation. I don't believe that His creation ever has brought Him into debt. I don't believe they can. I don't believe that they act on God and cause Him to react. But I do belive that **God** acts and His creatures **react.** Even in the mighty work of grace. Even in the good effectual prayer of a righteous man. That is not a prayer originating in man: one that he gets up, and uses it against the eternal Jehovah, and gets him to yield; that's not it. That prayer is a reaction of the grace of God in the soul. Indeed so, "according as his divine power," Peter says, "has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." I believe that prayer pertains unto life and godliness. I believe that faith does. All those characteristics that designate the children of God. I believe that they pertain unto life and godliness and they are the gift of God. Even faith is the Gift of God.

This natural life is a gift. I never knew of a child deciding where it would be born, did you? Talking about nature now: Foolish? Yes, you may say, but the point here is: did you ever know one deciding the sex or gender? Did you ever hear one say I'm going to be a boy or I'm going to be a girl; my daddy is going to be this, my mother is going to be the other. You might say, "that's mere tommyrot. That's the quintessence of foolishness." Amen! I say so, too. But it's no less foolish than for one to say, "I'm going to be a child of God, and I'm going to have great stars in my crown when I get up yonder. I'm going to be a big preacher and I'm going to bring them in by the hundreds and thousands. I'm going to do this and I'm going to do that." When one talks that way, it's just as foolish, and I think more heinous, than to talk about what he's going to do and what he might do before he was born. Life does not follow action in the cause and effect sense; but vice versa. Action proceeds from a cause; and that cause I grant you might be an effect back here from something else, and you go on back to the great **cause of all causes.**

Now then, I'm not afraid of getting God in a tight place. I stay in one most of the time myself, but I'm not afraid of getting the eternal God in a tight place. In 1910 I believe it was when that champion stalwart of the truth, J. C. Sikes, who in his prime, traveled

about 1200 miles from northwest Texas to Huntsville, Alabama, to discuss these issues with a man on the other side, who said, "Elder Sikes believes that sin depends on God for its being here." He said, "I don't believe a word of it. I don't believe it in anywise did or could depend upon my God. It being so vile a thing and God being so good." This is the substance of it. He said, "It got here without God." Elder Sikes said, "If that be the case then there would have been just as much sin in the universe had there been no God, as there is today." I hope that God forgave the opponent of that false, erroneous dogma. I trust that he cured him of that malady of trying to limit the eternal Jehovah; and yet on the other hand I don't say that I sin just because God knew or purposed I would. I don't think I would have ever sinned, or been here either, if my parents hadn't married; but that doesn't prove they didn't marry. And that doesn't prove that I'm not here. Yet I wouldn't want to excuse my sins on their marriage. I don't believe there would have been any sin if God hadn't given the law. But that wasn't sin, neither the **law** nor the **giving** of the law was sin, but the transgression of it **was**; and God could have **hindered** it, and would have done so, had it been his **will to have done** so.

A man told Elder Sikes one time that the reason why God gave man the law was to keep him from sinning. Elder Sikes said, "Yes, just exactly like I make a slip-gap out yonder so my hogs couldn't get out of a 10-acre field." He said, "If I was making a slip-gap in the field, and some man came along and said, 'Why are you putting that slip-gap there?' If I were to tell him, to keep my hogs in, (when that was the only way they could get out.)" Now he said this is the only way that man **could** sin. God had a holy purpose in it and yet you can't call the law or the lawgiver sin, but you can call the violaters in sin; and I'm in that number. I want you to know that I'm the one who sinned so far as I'm concerned personally. And that's what good old David said; David was blessed: this was a blessing from on high. Oh yes, he was blessed with repentance. And there is a repentance which is a scared repentance, you know, — not worth much. Poor old Judas had that. He thought, if I'll just go return that money I'll be all right. But no, no. Those other men said, "See thou to that." They cared nothing about that. There is a repentance unto life that needeth not to be repented of. But there is a repentance which is a reformation in manners too, which is a change in heart, and a change in purpose, and this is from the Lord. And good old David who had committed such an enormous sin, was forgiven that sin. But the Lord didn't turn around and say, "Well, it didn't make much difference anyhow. You're one of the elect; what does it matter?" **It does make a difference.** Now don't you tell me it doesn't!

Suppose I go into a home and tell the children, "It doesn't matter whether you pay any attention to father and mother. Just go on. Don't notice them. What does it matter? You're their kids, aren't you? And they're going to keep supporting you regardless of what you do." I expect the father would tell me to get out of there, and tend to my own business. We're running our own household. It **does** matter. It **doesn't** change the decrees of the eternal God, but it is **very unbecoming** to say, "Let us sin that grace may abound." I believe that grace will abound, all right. But I don't go out and tell people to sin in order to get that grace. I haven't been guilty of that and by the help of God I shall not. These things, they're all set, but they're set in such a way that God is the author of all righteousness, of all salvation, and of all true holiness; and man is the author, under the influence of the devil, of his own ruin. And he'll stay there. This ruin will be inexorable. It will be irretrievable save for the intervention of divine mercy.

My old father ahead of me — about 44 years my senior; (I don't begin to compare with him as a minister, as

a preacher, nor as a man.) He never recited a lesson of grammar in his life, but he was recognized to be one of the most outstanding ministers our way; and I don't say this to puff the flesh up either, because he would tell you what kind of a sinner he was; in good old blunt hard hitting English. A lady said to him one day, "Mr. Smith, if you can show me any justice in this stuff you call election, I'll be mighty happy over it." He said, "Lady, I don't think I can. But that doesn't mean it's not there." He said, "Your husband I expect practiced a little bit of election. When there's an election there's someone elected; that's true even in the polls. When they vote that doesn't mean everybody in the state has gotten to be governor, does it? There is never an election or selection except there be a rejection." Now, he said, "I'll give you a natural picture and just leave it with you; and I'll commend you unto the grace of God, if it be His will. When your husband chose or selected you as his wife, he didn't make old maids out of all the other women around. He didn't make a widow lady out of a one of them. He left them just where he found them." And that's the way of the election of the eternal God, beloved. It doesn't make one a sinner, it doesn't make one hell fit and hell bound, but it leaves him there. (Those not elected, of course.) If a great rich man, one that had his millions that you could hardly count with a computer, were to appear in this audience today and say, "I've got more money than a thousand men will ever need. I'm going to give each one of you but three a thousand dollars." Would those three have a right to get mad at him? I imagine I would if I were left out, but I wouldn't have the right to.

Elder Sikes told a man one time who was picking at him on election, "About the only ones I know of even in natural elections that get mad over the results, are those that are not elected." And he said, "Whether you love election or not there might be a day when you'd love to be one when He calls together his elect from the four winds of heaven." Then one would love to be an elect, I believe. Election doesn't hurt **anyone,** but it benefits **many.** It's God's business and he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ. . ." I want you to know that this is by Jesus Christ, but election is right there too. I believe the purpose is right around and Jesus is right around. It doesn't mean Jesus or God without a purpose, and it doesn't mean a purpose without a Jesus or a God or a Holy Spirit. Behold, things work in unison. But I want **The Person** for my salvation. I cannot trust fully any of the attributes of God, if that's the right word. If I just say his wisdom is sufficient, but I remember that his wisdom hasn't shed any blood. His wisdom hasn't hung on the cross. None of those things have hung there. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission.

I said that I believe that everything was in the eternal blueprint. But they're in there in the way that God has fixed them. If you ask me if he causes man to sin. I would say, not immediately. You don't have to push water down hill. If you don't hold it back it will go on down anyhow. Instead of God having to push man into sin, he's already in it now, and he'll go further into it by practice if He doesn't restrain him, either in his providence or in his grace. James said God cannot be tempted of evil, neither tempteth he any man. But we're tempted when we're drawn away of our own lust and enticed. I can't say, "Well now God led me into that." True enough, I wouldn't have **sinned** had there been no God because I wouldn't have **been,** and the law wouldn't have been. And the world wouldn't have been. In that sense everything has to have its being from God.

But we talk about the immediate part of it. I do not believe like a dear brother, (I trust he was a brother; but how in error he was,) over in Alabama, who took Brother Rhodes apart, or he tried to, but I think he got stung in the deal

after it was over with. Elder Rhodes preached from the text, Romans 5:12, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death hath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." And this brother followed Brother Rhodes; and he said, "Yes, sure he sinned, that that God **pours in comes out."** (I don't believe it like that at all. And I'm glad that I don't.) This elder said, "Here's the way it is; I give you a picture. I was raised on a farm with lots of horses and things, and we had a big well about halfway between the house and the lot. There was a pipe. We drew the water, poured it into the tub, and it passed down the pipe and came out down in the trough." That's the way he had God doing the sinner. Pouring that sin into him, you know. Just like the man pours the water into the tub and it runs down the pipe and comes out down yonder. Brother Rhodes took it; but at noon they had a little confab over it. Brother Rhodes said, "You had him pouring something that didn't exist." He first asked him, "Do you believe that sin is the trangression of the law?" He said "Yes." Brother Rhodes said, "Well, the law hadn't been transgressed and there wasn't any sin to pour at that time."

So you see my brethren, when you try to down the mighty work of God and the mighty doctrine of God, you're pretty apt to get stung; and I don't want to do it. Whether I have any true part or lot in the matter or not, I don't want to desecrate His name. I don't want to speak irreverently of my God. And I don't want to wound any man or woman or child just to be mean. Two things I try to pray my God would give me as I stand before an audience, and that is both firmness and kindness. I want to be extremely firm, but not at the expense of kindness. And I want to be, on the other hand, extremely kind, but not at the expense of firmness. I leave these things with you and commend you to the grace of God, who is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them who are sanctified. And if we never come again in the flesh together as we are today, if it may comport with the will of God, I would love to meet you in the uncloud-ed regions of glory, in that land of unalloyed bliss, in that land of sweet eternal bloom, in that land of perpetual day, in that land where there will be no night; where there will be no wars nor rumors of wars, no lovers of wars; there will be no sin, nor death, nor pain, nor old age, nor accidents. There won't be a mother there afraid her son has had a wreck when he hasn't gotten home. Oh no! There won't be such as that because all of His people will be there. There will be no separation, no dividing, there will be no sad good-byes. It will be a land of ineffable bliss. It will be a land of perpetual, eternal joy; over there, where we shall never grow old.

I want to conclude with David, when he said, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." (Psalms 17:15) And that's good enough. God bless you all.

(The above was taken from a tape recording of Elder John Lee Smith's sermon at the Upper Country Line Association in July, 1969. It was submitted for publication by Elder Donald Smith of that Association.)

BLACK RIVER UNION

The next session of *The Black River Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, at Liberty Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in November, 1970.

Liberty Church is located about four miles northwest of Dunn, N. C. All who will are cordially invited.

C. D. Turner

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the *Skewarkey Union* was appointed to be held with the Flat Swamp Church, Martin County, N. C., the 5th Sunday in November and Saturday before. Elder I. S. Connor was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder E. C. Harrison, alternate.

The Meeting House is located about three miles southwest of Robertsonville, N. C. We cordially invite all to come and worship with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Union Clerk

ORIGINAL WHITE OAK UNION

The next session of the *Original White Oak Union* is appointed to be held with the White Oak Church, the Lord willing, the fifth Saturday and Sunday in November 1970. The church is located about 2 miles west of Maysville, North Carolina.

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and worship with us.

L. H. Southerland, Clerk

THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS
(Haggai 2:7)

CHRIST, the desire of all nations,
"Hast ascended up on high,"
And having shed his precious blood,
By it his are made nigh.

The above text came to me one day
As I walked along a street,
And the meditation of mine
Was indeed to me sweet.

I oft think of Christ's perfections,
Of him who knew no sin,
Of One who is both God and man,
And of his coming again.

I desire to exalt his name,
And his glory to see
When he comes "in the clouds with pow'r,"
And I from sin am free.

Among every nation, his people
Are surely to be found;
To their desired haven of rest,
They're tak'n from this low ground.

Their journey to the promised land
Is directed by th' Lord,
Who orders th' steps of a good man,
According to his word.

The following verse of a song,
I heard lined many years ago,
Many times I have thought of with joy,
For all to Christ I owe:

"JESUS is all I wish or want,
For him I pray, I thirst, I pant;
Let others after earth aspire,
Christ is the treasure I desire."

C. W. Vass
409 N. Y. Avenue
Elizabeth City, N. C.

APPOINTMENTS FOR ELDER JOHN LEE SMITH

Malmaison — Sunday, Nov. 1, regular meeting

Gretna — Monday night, 7:30, Nov. 2nd

Weatherford — Tuesday night, 7:30, Nov. 3rd

Rocky Mt., Va. — Wednesday night, 7:30, Nov. 4th

Martinsville — Thursday night, 7:30, Nov. 5th

Bush Arbor — Friday night, 7:30, Nov. 6th

Stem — Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 7th and 8th

Dan River — Sunday night, 7:30, Nov. 8th

Gilliams — Monday night, 7:30, Nov. 9th

Pleasant Grove — Tuesday night, 7:30, Nov. 10th

Greensboro — Wednesday night, 7:30, Nov. 11th

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To September 1, 1970)

M. M. Richardson	$3.00
Elder Louis Stewart	1.00
Mrs. L. W. Kerman	1.00
Brittie Caudle	3.00
Eva Brittengham	1.00
Roy Murphy	3.00
Mrs. I. J. Bowles	3.00
H. F. Triplett	3.00
Chas. W. Burgess	3.00
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Mrs. Gladys Robinson	1.00
L. B. Hill	3.00
C. F. Helms	1.00

Danville, Virginia November, 1970

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EDITORIAL

"And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire; that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." (Rev. 3:14-22)

How often have we heard these things applied to a certain date. How much cutting out and adding to has been done in an effort to explain what God meant to say; to unravel and explain the mysteries of the kingdom of God. The book of Revelation is a book of time, but in the fulfillment of these divine things there is not any time. "And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer." (Rev. 10:5, 6) I respect the views of any one that is due respect (and all are that come in a brotherly manner), but I can not understand that I am under obligation to give deference to views that are contrary to what my Lord and Master has said. I believe in what this angel said as much as I believe in what another one said (Matt. 1:21); thus I feel that any effort to relate these sublime matters to a certain stage or day of time is lost in superfluity; it tells too much, and that which proves too much does not prove anything.

If these matters can be reckoned by time (day or year) then they do not pertain to the welfare of others in another day or year, and thus Paul's declaration loses its beauty. (2 Tim. 3:16)

It would seem that the whole book, including these charges by the Saviour to these churches, to the period from the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the pouring out of the Spirit at Pentecost, belongs to His final and triumphant coming. Of one thing I feel sure, the things found in any one of these churches will be found in other churches; the cure for these faults will be found in theirs; the commendation given the faithful churches will be applicable to ours.

The things found wrong in this church were said by the Amen, the faithful and true witness. It is Him that has given the whole of the vast testimony. (Rev. 1:5) We poor frail creatures add the word *Amen* to what we say, and, if led of the Spirit to pray, it is a becoming word to our prayers. If this word is added at the conclusion of a petition in the Spirit, that thing asked for will be granted. The Amen given is in perfect agreement to the will of God, (so it is, or so be it), but by Him it became so, by Him it is. It is interesting to note that at times the Spirit speaks the Amen; at other times it is the apostles that say Amen to what the Spirit has moved them to write.

The outstanding feature of this address to these Laodiceans is the proclamation of His sovereignty and power. These things are not to be trifled with because he calls himself the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God. These names cover all that we know of the Godhead, as well as a vivid description of the God-man Mediator. Whosoever blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth (the Amen); and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth (the Amen), and these distinguishing features and acts belong only to God. (Isa. 65:16) The calling of himself the Amen plainly proves his God-head. Let us, dear brethren, rejoice in the mercy of God that "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God — and that this Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself, and he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name was called The Word of God." (John 1:1, 14; Rev. 19:11, 12, 13)

Surely there are none that would question his right and authority to send this message to this erring church. After introducing himself, he begins to speak on the subject for which he sent the message to the church. The awful state into which the fallen church had sunk is enough to arouse us from lethargy, and the display of God's tender compassion is enough to cause us to lay our hand over our mouth in silence. Considering this in the order in which it is numbered, it is the last of the churches and her state is truly distressing. Nearly, if not all, of the others had spots upon them, but Laodicea was overrun with spiritual leprosy. Of deep concern to every one that has an ear to hear, is the awful attitude that she has toward herself. Is it out of place for us to lay this condition alongside ourselves? Is it carrying things too far to look for these matters in our own back yard as a church? It has been thought that I carry my illustrations to the extreme. Am I doing that here? If that church had, as had Galatia, fallen into this evil state, is it too much to say that we may be in the same sad state? She is placed before the angel, and us, as speaking peace to herself, as not being in need of anything.

That was her condition; that was how things looked to her. How was her case to Him? As he knew all about her, what did he perceive as her true standing? To Him, everything was in reverse; she was in the direst poverty, the most lean and barren and destitute condition that a professed church can get into.

In nature, I have stood in the bedroom of the dying and heard them speak of getting well; of what they would do when they had recovered. That is a sad state of our relationship with the earth, but it is not worthy of comparison to the dreadful state of churches and individuals that think themselves as being in a healthful state when they are dead to every spiritual blessing. To be rich, when we are poor; to be in the barn and all our goods in place, when in reality we are so wretched that all of our goods are spoiled; to not know the feel of needing grace and love and mercy, these are, indeed, the fallacies of one who is miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

"Come all ye that fear God, and I will tell what the Lord has done for my soul." (Psa. 66:16) He appeared of old to Jeremiah, saying, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love," etc. (Jer. 31:3) In the days when men's lips were unclean for witnessing to Israel, God used tongs to lift a live burning coal from off the altar and apply it to the lips that the called servant be a fit witness to prophesy to Israel, and we hear that servant saying, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." (Isa. 9:6) What a counsel that He has proven to poor sinners! The worth that he has been to those that had no understanding will never be known except those that have come under the counselling of wisdom. (Prov. 9:4-6) Come, dear reader, and listen while I tell the wonders of his counsel. Ah, what a display of his tender compassion and regard for his erring people. If the doctrine of men were true this charge abounding with love would not have been sent to Laodicea, nor would Jonah have been delivered on dry ground, nor would Jeremiah ever preached again, nor would Saul of Tarsus ever been called, nor would Peter have ever been blessed with a lively hope, nor would this sinner be writing to you and to you. Let none come telling me that the gospel is for those that are going toward Jesus Christ; let no one waste the time of such poor sinners as are at Laodicea, by telling them to do something for the Lord, and for themselves, so that the Lord will do something for them. No, no, not that, my precious Lord, not that! "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich." These had nothing to give; they were not in any condition to do anything. "I counsel thee to buy white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed." I counsel thee to come in your destitute condition and buy whatsoever thy soul stands in need of.

But aren't the things of the Spirit free? They do not cost anything, but they must be bought. We are told to buy the truth and sell it not. (Prov. 23:23) There is only one thing that will satisfy him with whom we must come to for all our supplies. There is only one kind of man to whom the Lord looks; that man is of a contrite spirit, he is poor, he is humble, he trembles at the word of the Lord. (Isa. 57:15; 66:2) The rich are not commanded to buy; the rich are not able to buy. Although there is a medium of exchange in the kingdom of God, only those that have nothing have this medium. Those that are without money and without price are commanded to this place of business. Those that are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, are counselled to buy these precious things.

Why speak in parables? Why say that these things must be bought, and yet say that salvation is free? Why mystify by saying that he that is without money and without price is commanded to buy, when, as a matter of fact, he can not buy anything? Why say that money is not important in the churches of Christ, and yet tell God's people that money satisfies and answers all? (Eccl. 10:19) I am not speaking in parables to those that are poor and wretched

and miserable and blind and naked. To that kind of reader, I ask, Am I speaking in riddles and parables to the servant of God, to anyone in the kingdom of God that has been at the ends of the earth, that has been swallowed up by the power of God, that has come to his wit's end, as had Jonah when he *paid* to the God of his salvation? (Jonah 2:9) None will say so.

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent." As far as I can see and feel and understand, I do not think any man can improve on that language. Unequivocally and unreservedly, I say that the Saviour said what he meant and meant what he said. Instead of it being grievous to be rebuked and chastened, when exercised thereby, we joy in and are comforted by the rod. The rod was a comfort to David long before the gospel dispensation, and I know that it was to the churches following the resurrection of the Lord. One and all, in whatever age of the church, have received the assurance that the chastening was for the correction of those loved by the Lord. And I do not have any hesitancy in saying that those receiving this assurance are blessed also by the power in the Speaker to have the zeal of Him imparted to them to where they are repenting.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." I would prefer my brethren to comment on this portion. My reason for this preference is this: The most of the Old School Baptists say that it does not mean what it says. We have spent a lot of time (I would say, we have wasted a lot of time) in ridiculing those that believe in salvation by works. We have not said what it does mean. We have told those that delight in skinning Arminians that it does not mean what it says, but we have not said much about what it says, let alone expounding what it means.

Once and for all (I hope) let me say that this is as much the language of the Saviour as it is in John 10:16, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: Them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." One of these declarations is as important as the other. That which would make John 10:16 precious, will also make Rev. 3:20 precious. That spirit in a man that takes one as the true testimony, will take the other.

What a condescension it is for Christ to stand without. He that had by right of creation, redemption, marriage, purchase, conquests, grace, to command all gates to open at his approach, is, nevertheless an humble suitor, and stands without. What a touching approach to His dove, his love, his undefiled one, and it is not only enough, but it actually causes everyone to cry out, as one of old, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord." (Gen. 24:31)

Who has not known the love calls of our Saviour? These come in a way that the world would not think of them coming. How often have we heard him call by inditing a good matter in our heart, by sending forth his light and truth and leading us to the holy hill of the Lord, by dire afflictions, sickness, even the near prospects, it would seem, of death to ourselves, and yet unless we have had our ears unstopped to hear the glad tidings, we would be as though we had never known him. These love calls have no effect upon a hard and stony heart, but when he puts his hand in by the hole of the door, and our bowels are moved within us, there is a ready response to Him.

I hope that I am one of the stars, one of the angels, held in the hand of him with whom we have to do, but even so, I do not feel adequate to describe the ecstacy and indescribable joy that there is in supping at the table of the Lord. Come, dear reader, tell us the unspeakable rapture that you have felt as the Saviour and supplicant were brought to sup together.

These that he loves and chastens, they

grow in zeal, and come to repentance, and they hear the voice as he approaches the door of their inner being. To these, and only to these, does he come in to and sups with them, and they are the ones that overcome. It is grace all the way, and this grace is recognized by granting to the recipient of it to sit with Christ in his throne, even as He overcame and was granted to sit with his father in his throne. It behooves us to notice the distinction that is made in these thrones. On the throne of His Father none will sit save Father, Son and Holy Ghost, but the Mediatorial throne belongs to Christ and we shall, through the blood of the Lamb, sit with him on it. Reader, what soul cherishing things await the members of His body.

Now I leave my comments on these sacred things. I would not be so naive and conceited as to think that I have satisfied all of my readers. I have complied with the request of my precious afflicted yoke-fellow (Elder W. W. Hudson), and to those that differ with me, I assure you that it will not cause me to love you less for Christ's sake.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest." (Luke 10:2)

For centuries before these words were spoken by our Lord, Moses in the law and the prophets had written concerning his coming into the world in the fulness of time, to be manifested in the flesh and suffer according to the will of God for the sins of his people, who had been chosen in him before the foundations of the earth were laid. Harvest time is when the fruits of one's labors are reaped. It is the time of fulfillment of the plans and purposes of him who determined to do all that is necessary in order to bring about that which is so greatly desired. Some of our agriculturists know what is involved by way of hard and arduous labor in hewing down a forest, removing the stumps and stones, and preparing the soil for the seeds which are to be planted. There is also much work to be done by the husbandman by way of cultivation before he can rightly expect to be rewarded for his labors.

The purpose of the law was that it was to be a schoolmaster unto Christ, and in manifesting as it did all through the ages the inability of the creature to meet its demands, and the necessity of looking to another, even unto Christ to bring in that righteousness which is not of the law but of grace, had now arrived. In the previous chapter Luke records the occasion of Jesus taking three witnesses (Peter, James and John) up into a mountain with him and "behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias; who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." Peter suggested the making of three tabernacles in memory of the event: one for Jesus, one for Moses and one for Elias, but we are told that he knew not what he said, for the truth of the matter was Moses and Elias had filled up the measure of their days, and the time was at hand for him whom they had portrayed in type and shadow to appear, and he was to be preeminently above and beyond all others. They were overshadowed by a cloud and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my beloved Son: hear him." And when the cloud was gone they saw no one but Jesus. Jesus had just said to his disciples, "there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God." This showed how near at hand his harvest time was.

He had already given his twelve disciples power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases, and sent them forth to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick; and he also gave them

specific instructions regarding their travels. They were to "take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece;" and they were told how to act towards those who received them, as well as those who received them not. They were so thoroughly instructed and supplied that they had to confess when they returned that they lacked nothing. He also manifested to them by a living example what takes place when the gospel is preached in demonstration of the Spirit and with power from heaven by taking the five loaves and two fishes and feeding about five thousand men, with a basket of fragments for each of the twelve tribes of Israel left over. Surely those who were fed must have realized the fulfillment of the law and feasted upon the things of the gospel which are prepared for those who love the Lord and keep his commandments.

As further evidence of the fact that the time of his harvest was at hand, we read in verse one of chapter ten that he "appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come." It would have been worse than foolish for them to have gone into places where Jesus was not to appear, but being the man of wisdom that he was who sat down in the counsels of eternity and figured out all of the cost of redeeming his people, he not only knew who his sheep were, but also knew that they would hear his voice and would follow him when he called unto them. "Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest." We read that as many as about three thousand souls were added unto the church in one day. This showed conclusively that Jesus knew whereof he spake when he said, "The harvest truly is great." It is written in the Proverbs that "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord," and he who was able to discern the thought of man and the intent of his heart had no need for any one to tell him when the time of his harvest would be. Had he not sent forth his word into the hearts of men which made them cry, "Abba, Father?" He knew they would be willing in the day of his power to forsake the way of unrighteousness and to enter into the gates of the city of the New Jerusalem.

In that day and time, which was the beginning of the setting up of the gospel churches, only a few labourers had been called, and the need for others was very apparent; but by way of emphasizing the insufficiency or the labourers he directed them to "pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest." It would not suffice for them to undertake this work on their own account, for the harvest is the Lord's and he must of necessity send forth the labourers into his harvest. We greatly fear that with the passing of nearly two thousand years and the modernistic trend of everything that the true significance of these things has grown dim in the estimation of those who are promulgating their own ideas about them. There are those who seem to feel they could have come into the vineyard earlier and by so doing reaped for themselves a much larger crop of good things, which they claim to have lost by not applying their lives to the Master's cause when they were young.

God forbid that we should say anything to the disparagement of a single solitary soul, be they old or young in years, which would delay one moment their entering into the service of joy of their Lord, but we are writing at this time regarding the harvest, and we would not be doing justice to our subject if we failed to warn against gathering in the crops before they are ripe. If the fruit or grain is not thoroughly ready for the harvest it not only is not as good as it otherwise would be, but it is more likely to spoil and do great damage to others in the process.

We have just had occasion to travel through a section of the country where there were great fields of golden wheat. Some of it appeared to be bent over with age and to the inexperienced eye it might seem as though the farmer was neglecting his duty by not harvesting his wheat, but we are sure that his judgement is backed by many years of experience and that he is quite certain of the proper time to cast in his sickle. The labourers on the farm just do not go out into the wheat fields some bright morning and begin harvesting the wheat without instructions from the man in authority; and here we would like to emphasize the fact that our text specifically instructs those under consideration to *pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers.* Men have absolutely no authority for taking this honor unto themselves by rushing into this harvest without being sent by the Lord of the harvest. Peter once thought that he was prepared to forsake all others and follow his Lord into prison and even unto death, but Jesus knew that he must needs learn by bitter experience his own weakness and utter depravity before he could feed the lambs and sheep of his fold. Therefore he said unto him, "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat."

Many of God's truly called servants have to be sifted as wheat before they are truly fit for their Master's use. It was good that Jesus told Peter he had prayed for him, that his faith fail not. Until he had sunk into the lowest hell, so to speak, where he was made to weep bitterly, did he realize that the compassion of his Lord never failed, and not until then was he told by Jesus to feed his sheep and feed his lambs. He was therefore taught that salvation in time was of the Lord, hence in addressing his general epistle to "the strangers scattered throughout" and the "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," concerning that inheritance which is incorrupt, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, that it was reserved in heaven for those "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

Jesus also said unto Peter following his denial of him, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee wither thou wouldest not." (John 21:18) Peter and all the elect of God must needs be taught the lesson of the prophet Jeremiah when he said: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Some of our modern day ministers appear to be of the opinion that it is within them to choose their times and seasons and that it is not at all necessary for them to go to Jonah's college in order to be qualified to preach, but we are persuaded that they will not preach "Salvation is of the Lord" until they have gone down into the belly of hell, where there is no eye to pity and no arm to save, or deliver, except that of God. Then and then only will they pay that which they will have been made to vow. The salvation or deliverance which Jonah experienced was in time and of the Lord, and altogether unconditional. It is claimed by some that "eternal salvation and common salvation must be dealt with separately because eternal is by grace and grace alone, and common is by works. In other words, eternal salvation is God's work, and common salvation is man's work." If this be true there is something radically wrong with us. We know by experience, we hope, that God is able to cause whomsoever he will to go down to the sea in ships, and do business in great waters, to see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep, but until he does deep will not call unto deep "at the noise of thy waterspouts" as "all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me."

This is a way that no man will choose when left to himself, and it is in keeping with inspired testimony, for the Lord speaking by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah said, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." This the true servant of God can witness to without reservation and is made to rejoice in it. We know enough about human nature, however, to know that it is susceptible to the reasoning of Satan, who is ever ready to sow tares among the wheat, and when this is done it will have to be allowed to grow until the time of harvest, when our Lord will come with his "fan in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." We fear there are some among those known as Primitive Baptists who feel they can be of assistance to the Lord in adding to the militant church such as he would own and have to be saved doctrinally, but we would humbly caution them to beware lest they bring forth Ishmaelites who may plague the true Israel of our God for many years to come. It is much better to watch and pray to the Lord of harvest to carry on his work of grace in the heart of poor sinners to perfection. When the fruit or grain is truly ready for the harvest there is not much likelihood of its spoiling or bringing reproach and shame upon the cause of our Master.

Some of the foregoing lines were written while we sat looking out over the broad expanse of the Atlantic Ocean, watching the tide ebb and flow, and the thought occured to us that as there is a fixed time for the tide to go out and a fixed time for the tide to come in, which it does year in and year out, and without any assistance whatsoever from puny man, and neither can he hinder it, so there is a fixed time for everything under the sun. The Psalmist said, "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favor her, yea, the set time, is come." The preacher said, "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven," and there must, therefore, be a time to sow and a time to reap, all appointed by God, for it is written "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." And according to the parable presented in the twentieth chapter of Matthew it would seem that the labourers who were hired and sent forth into the vineyard, all received their penny per day. Those who worked all day received no more than those who went in at the third, the sixth, the ninth and the eleventh hours of the day — they were all paid the same — no more and no less. It is, therefore, all of grace, and not by works of righteousness which we can do, and the God of all grace shall have all the praise.

(Editorial by Elder R. L. Dodson August, 1946.)

ORDINATION OF ELDER RICHARD H. CAMPBELL

Pursuant to the request of The First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis, Tennessee, while in conference July 5, 1970, a presbytery was called together August 9, 1970 for the purpose of examining Brother Richard Campbell, and if finding him fit and qualified in accordance with the written word of God to their satisfaction, to ordain him to the full work of the gospel ministry.

The elders and deacons of our faith and order were requested by Elder H. R. Prince to sit in the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders Paul Poyner, R. L. Biggs, David E. Turner, J. W. Jones, E. E. McCool, H. R. Prince, C. S. Young, and A. H. Brock; Deacons Frank Pilgreen, R. L. Jacks, W. E. Prince, and J. W. Brown.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Paul Poyner as moderator and Deacon J. W. Brown as clerk. The moderator was appointed to perform the examination of the candidate. Brother C. S. Young having been

duly appointed as spokesman for the Memphis Church, delivered Brother Richard Campbell to the presbytery. Examination was made of the candidate by Moderator using as his scriptural reference 1 Timothy chapter 3. The presbytery, being satisfied with the examination and the answers given by Brother Young, administered the laying on of hands as the ordination prayer was delivered by Elder David Turner.

Elder Prince delivered the charge to Elder Richard Campbell using as his scriptural reference 1 Timothy Chapter 5.

The right hand of fellowship was given to Elder Campbell by the members of the presbytery as a token of brotherhood, and praying God's blessing on this work as he enters the service to which he has been called and sent forth. Elder Campbell was then delivered back to The First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis as an ordained minister of the Old School Baptist Church.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read for approval, adopted, and ordered submitted to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

J. W. Brown
Clerk of Presbytery

OBITUARIES

WILLIAM LESTER SIMMONS

William Lester Simmons was born in Bedford County, Virginia, July 1, 1902; and departed this life January 31, 1970. He was united in marriage to Esther McGuire April 16, 1927. To this union two sons and two daughters were born: Randolph Simmons and Paul Simmons; Mrs. J. C. Doyle and Miss Diane Simmons.

Brother Simmons united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Basham February 2, 1958. He was not only loved by his church, but by all the brethren who had the privilege of knowing him. His passing leaves an empty place in all our hearts. Our sympathy goes out to our precious sister, the family and kinsmen in their dark and lonely hours. We know that God is able to bind up your broken hearts, and comfort you beyond words, just by giving you a small glimpse of what is awaiting your dear companion on the other side of the grave. Pain and sorrow cannot touch him now, and we can say that our loss is his eternal gain. If God be for us there is absolutely nothing that can prevail against us. So sleep on, dear brother, till your Lord shall come again without sin unto salvation.

Funeral services were held at Basham Church, conducted by his pastor, Elder J. L. Bocock, and Elder Cecil Turner.

Written by
M. C. Sumner, Church Clerk

MATTIE B. WILLIAMS

Once again God in his wisdom has seen fit to visit our church and remove from our midst a dear sister, Mattie B. Williams. She was born November 23, 1897, a daughter of the late John H. Butcher and Martha Evans Butcher. On April 29, 1914, she was united in marriage to J. Floyd Williams, who died in 1946.

Sister Williams joined Malmaison Church in Virginia in July, 1914, and was faithful to attend as long as she was able; and would send her love when she could not come. She was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace and Grace alone.

She leaves to mourn her passing, two sisters, two daughters, five sons, and fifteen grandchildren, together with a host of friends and relatives. We believe our loss is her gain.

Her funeral was conducted at Malmaison Church by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Elder D. V. Spangler; after which she was laid to rest in the family cemetery at her home at Keeling, Va.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Katie Dodd, Clerk

SISTER GEORGIA L. McGINNIS

Sister Georgia L. McGinnis was born May 21, 1895, and died at her home in Atlanta, Ga., May 25, 1970. She was married to Mr. John M. McGinnis, who survives. Also surviving are one son, Felton, of Lilburn, Ga., two grandchildren, two great grandchildren and brother Fred Johnson, of Roswell, Ga.

She was a member of New Harmony Primitive Baptist Church, Hiram, Ga., but had been unable to attend services for the past few years due to illness, however, she was an inspiration to us, as her home was a meeting place where services were held at every opportunity. She bore her afflictions patiently, with a steadfast hope that one day she would go to be with the Lord in that upper and better Kingdom, where sickness and death cannot invade.

We feel that she has entered into that rest she was waiting and hoping for.

Funeral services were held at the Roswell Funeral Home by Elder James F. Poole. Burial followed in Willeo Cemetery, near Roswell, Ga.

Written by request of New Harmony Church by one who loved her for the Truth's sake.

Geromie Croker Ragsdale

WILLIAM JASPER DUPREE

Deacon William Jasper Dupree was born in Nash County, N. C., on May 26, 1880 and passed from this earthly stage of action on May 13, 1969, making his sojourn on the earth nearly 89 years. As a young man he lived in several counties of the state and was respected by his neighbors and people as other men are. He married Dollie Jane Mercer on December 23, 1908, who resided in Greene County and it was here that he and his good companion lived together for about 61 years. To this union were born the following children who survive their parents: Mrs. Betty Mae Norville, Mrs. Ruby Craft, Mrs. Katy Lee Owens, William Dupree, and Charlie Dupree. Also surviving are 16 grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren.

His wife, Mrs. Dollie Mercer Dupree, was born May 5, 1885, in Greene County and passed on January 28, 1969. Brother "Jack" and his children lived good lives among their neighbors and worshipped in a neighborhood church. They had their share of trials and tribulations that are promised to the Lord's children, but apparently they were happy. The writer, as a youth was especially close to one of the sons and spent several nights in their home and it was always pleasant to visit them.

In the year of 1951 Brother Dupree went to the Meadow Church and asked for a home with the lovely people there. He was baptized into the membership of the church and soon was ordained Deacon. He remained with the church at the Meadow until October, 1957, when he moved his membership to Tyson's Primitive Baptist Church. This he did because it was easier for him to attend his conference meeting in the daytime at Tyson's than at night at the Meadow. Brother Dupree was happy in the church and his greatest delight in his old age was discussing the Holy Bible and its Scriptures saying, "How great things the Lord had done for his soul."

His wife was a faithful attendant with him at the Meadow and Tyson's Churches and delighted in the worship services, especially the singing of the hymns. It was a real joy to us who loved them to see the beautiful expression of happiness that glowed in their countenance as they would attend the meeting and worship.

Brother Dupree was widely known among the Primitive Baptists. He traveled extensively in North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and seemed always to receive a special joy in meeting with God's people wherever he went.

On January 28, 1969, the Lord called his wife, Dollie M. Dupree, out of nature's pain, worry, and sickness, and at the request of the family her funeral was conducted at the Meadow Primitive Baptist Church. The pastor, Elder A. P. Mewborn, who was pastor of the Meadow and Tyson's, rendered the services. Mr. E. C. Morris, pastor of the neighborhood church they attended when they were younger, assisted in the services.

On May 13, 1969, just a few months after her passing, Brother Dupree was called home. Again at the request of the family he was carried to the Meadow Church and the same ministers officiated at his funeral services. Their funerals were the second and third to be conducted at the Meadow Church, which is as old as the Constitution of the United States.

They were taken to the cemetery at Fountain and placed back into the earth's bosom to await that day that Brother Dupree delighted to talk about, when the Lord shall return for the purpose of carrying his people home. At the command of God they shall arise in His likeness and be satisfied, to forever dwell in the Lord's Kingdom where congregations never break up and the "Sabbath" they loved so much will never cease.

Done by order of conferences at Tyson's Church Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1970.

The church will send a copy of this notice to the family, a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and inscribe a copy on the church's permanent records.

Written by A. P. Mewborn
and Joab Tyson

SISTER MARTHA CAHILL TURNER

Sister Martha Cahill Turner was born May 31, 1883, and departed this life November 29, 1968.

She was the daughter of the late Elder P. A. Cahill and Tyminda Spencer Cahill. She was united in marriage to Flemon Harriet Turner February 7, 1909. To this union were born nine children; five daughters: Mrs. Susie Walrond, Mrs. Nannie Lou Moran, Mrs. Oyer Barrow, Mrs. Grace Harris, Mrs. Ruth Craig; four sons: George Turner, Posey Turner, Lee Roy Turner, deceased, and Perry Wilbert Turner, deceased; twenty grandchildren, five great grandchildren. Sister Turner joined Union Primitive Baptist Church October 21, 1911, and was a faithful member and attended the church as long as she was able.

Her funeral was conducted at Union Primitive Baptist Church on Sunday, December 1, 1968, by her pastor, Elder Leonard Brammer, with burial in the Turner family cemetery near Ferrum, Virginia, by the side of her husband who passed from this life April 23, 1963, awaiting the coming of our Blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and may the Church at Union be submissive to God's will.

Written by a sister and niece
In hope of Eternal Life,
Clora S. Akers

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 138 DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1970 NO. 12

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12/70
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

23RD PSALM

"The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want."

A brother recently expressed a wish that someone would write or comment, verse by verse, on the 23rd Psalm. A few years ago I was blest to be given some sweet meditations on the 22nd, 23rd and 24th Psalms. At that time, seeking more understanding, I did just a bit of research on the habits of sheep, and the qualifications and work of a good shepherd. If it please the Lord to be my director, I will try to put into words a few of the thoughts which were delightful to me.

The 22nd, 23rd and 24th Psalms together present our Lord Jesus Christ as a shepherd. They also present Him in the three official positions of prophet, priest and king. The 22nd presents Him as the good shepherd, who gives his life for the sheep; the 23rd presents Him as the Great Shepherd referred to in Hebrews 13: 20 as "that great shepherd of the sheep brought again from the dead through the blood of the everlasting covenant;" the 24th presents Him as the chief shepherd, the Lord of Hosts, the King of Glory.

It is to the 23rd that we now turn our attention. It is not only a beautiful song — it is a song of praise, and expression of deep and abiding faith which even the shadow of death could not begin to shake. In my meditations, I have seen in my mind's eye, the aged king musing on the years that were past wherein the Lord had been his Saviour and his keeper. He starts the Psalm with one of the most sublime expressions of faith in all the Scriptures: "The Lord is my shepherd; **I shall not want.**" No questions here, no doubts about it, no hoping the Lord would be his shepherd, no fear that he would ever want: just a simple, unequivocal declaration covering all time and eternity: "The Lord **is** my shepherd; I **shall not** want." The verses that follow are simply a testimony to and proof of that grand declaration.

The aged king, as the youngest son of Jesse, had, as a lad, been a shepherd. He recalled the constant vigilance, the hardships, the exposure to danger, the leading, the discipline, and most of all the tender care that make for a good shepherd; and as he mused on these things, he saw the Lord as his very own shepherd.

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me by the still waters." I've read that as the day wears on in the burning sun of the Palestinian desert, the grass becomes parched and dry, the sheep become exhausted and tend to lie down, and with no shade, no trees, no cooling grass, they try to bury their heads beneath one another's body. It is then that the good shepherd, ever watchful, ever mindful of their needs, leads them out, going before them to seek an oasis where fresh grass and water are to be found. There, in green pastures, the shepherd bids them to lie down and rest. The aged king knows the importance of the quiet hour, the value of rest from the cares and confusion of the day. He knows that it is in the quiet time that the Lord

speaks and reveals himself to his people. I, myself, can testify that the sweetest spiritual experience, the most profound meditations, the most delightful communion of my life have not come to me in the midst of the noisy crowd or in big meetings enjoyable as they are; or even under the sound of the preacher's voice, edifying as it often is, but nearly always in the stillness of the night alone with my Saviour and his written word. "He leadeth me beside the still waters." It is very doubtful if any of our grand old hymns were written in the confusion of the workaday world, but "by the still waters." Elijah, on Mt. Horeb, beheld the wind, but the Lord was not in the wind; after the wind the earthquake, but the Lord was not in it; after the earthquake the fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; but, ah! after the fire the still small voice. The Lord spoke to Paul on the Damascus Road in a most miraculous way; and Paul, relating that experience later, said that when the Lord revealed himself, immediately he conferred not with flesh and blood, neither went he up to Jerusalem to the other disciples, but unto the Arabian desert alone with his God and Saviour. Undoubtedly it was down there "by the still waters" that he received the greatest revelations ever given by God to any human being. "By the still waters." God knows the strife, the turmoil, the heavy burdens his people have to bear; but he also knows where the still waters are, and he bids his sheep "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

"He restoreth my soul; He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." The Lord knows that the path of righteousness is not an easy one. Many and frequent are the pitfalls in the path of one who desires to know and be more like his Lord. Temptations be in every shadow. Satan goes about "like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour." It should be noted that the roaring lion does not roar when he is about to spring upon his prey; his movements are quiet, stealthy and deadly. Temptations are insidious, often arrayed in dazzling colors, beautiful to the eye and sweet to the taste.

No one knew this better than the aged king who had known so many defeats; who had fallen into the very depths of sin, even committing one of the most heinous crimes recorded in Scripture. There is no doubt that he also knew the awful pangs of regret, of spiritual suffering, of bitter repentance, despising the very nature that gave being to these sinful thoughts and deeds. He knew heartache and loss; he knew discouragement, but he also knew something else! He knew where his strength lay, he knew the source of his victories. Acting on this knowledge, he cried, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills whence cometh my help; my help cometh from the Lord." etc. Also, "In my distress I cried unto the Lord, and He heard me." So, without reservation, he could declare, "He restoreth my soul." Beloved in the Lord, have we not been many times in the depths of dispair, when suddenly a precious verse of Scripture, a line of an hymn, or a few words spoken, perhaps unwittingly, turned our darkness into light, our sorrow into rejoicing? The Lord was restoring our soul. Oh what a Saviour!

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." I suppose the dread and fear of death is one of the most universal of human emotions, but it is very sad, it is tragic to behold one of the Lord's people in terror at the thought of death. As he approached death, the aged king's abiding faith needed no support — it supported him! He was fully persuaded that he would not have to go through it alone; that the Lord was with him as he stood in the shadow of it, and He would be with him when the hour came. The prospect of death would be a terrible spectre indeed, did we not have the assurance of the Lord's presence in that hour. No one can convince me, nor could anyone convince David that He who went to an ignominious death by

crucifixion for our redemption, rose for our justification, led us beside the still waters and restored our souls, will forsake us in the hour of death. So the aged king could state with deep conviction that he would fear no evil.

"Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me." No doubt the aged king recalled how, as a shepherd boy, his rod, his staff and his horn of olive oil, were necessary pieces of equipment in his care of the sheep. Dangerous animals sometimes attacked the flock, and with his rod he protected them from harm. Moreover, sometimes some of the sheep would become unruly and try to go astray, and the good shepherd would find it necessary to use the rod to bring them back into the flock. So David, in his meditations, sees the necessity for the rod in the hand of the Lord. How often our wise, loving Shepherd finds it necessary to apply the rod to his erring, straying children. But this is not all: While He **applies** the rod, He **supplies** the staff to support and comfort us through the chastisement. The rod and the staff are equally necessary. He does not promise to keep us from troubles, but He does promise to give necessary help and strength. "The flame shall not hurt thee, I only design thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine," says the writer. He did not keep Daniel from the den of lions; He did not keep Shadrach, Meschech and Abednego from the fiery furnace, but He preserved them from harm.

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over." Many were the enemies of David; he was a man of war, almost constantly in battle, in addition to his sinful nature which was the enemy of his soul. He did not deny the existence of his enemies, but he testified that it was God who gave him the victory. Perhaps he was thinking of his battle with the giant Goliath, and the spectacular victory. He may have thought of heartbreaking sorrow and loss, and the healing balm; or any of the many other battles in which the Lord had fought for him and put his enemies to flight.

"Thou annointest my head with oil." I expect he recalled his care of his father's sheep, watching each individual sheep as if it were the only one: bathing the bruises, cuts and sores with the healing oil; and saw in it the compassion and care of the Lord for each of his little ones. "Thou art still his peculiar care," says the poet — forgiving all their iniquities, healing all their diseases, redeeming their lives from destruction and crowning them with loving kindness and tender mercies. (103rd Psalm) The aged king, viewing in retrospect all the Lord's benefits to him, the loving kindness and tender mercies that had been his, suddenly realizes that it is all too much for him to put in words, so he humbly, gratefully, joyfully sings, "My cup runneth over."

"Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Here is the substantiation of the "I shall not want." The aged king, having seen on every hand the unmistakable and undeniable evidence of God's goodness and mercy in the land of the living through all his past years, can face without fear, anything that may befall him, either in life or death. He knows that each event of life or death will be but the unfolding of God's eternal purpose concerning him; that each circumstance, however painful, whether trial or benefit, will be "in mercy given." That this great Shepherd will never apply the rod without supplying the staff: that goodness and mercy will surround him, cover and protect him as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

And now the grand finale: "And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever." To the aged king, the day is nearly spent: the Good Shepherd is about to lead his sheep into the sheepfold. He begins to see the setting sun, the end of his life here, confident, without fear, that it will be the crowning day when his faith will be made sight; when he will see his Great Shepherd no longer through a glass darkly,

but face to face — not as the suffering servant of Jehovah, but as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Paul expresses it, "And thus shall we ever be with the Lord." The psalmist sings calmly, simply but with complete confidence, "And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

It is my fervent prayer that God will grant to each of us that unwavering confidence which is the "perfect peace which passeth understanding."

Mildred V. Dykes
1114 Mt. Hermon Road
Salisbury, Maryland

Rt. 7, Box 287
Dothan, Ala.

Dear Editors and Kindred
in Christ, Greetings:

"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." (Acts 15:18)

For some time this passage of scripture has been on my mind. The reading before this is, "After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."

It is said by some that Paul, or Saul of Tarsus, was under conviction when he obtained letters of authority, and began the journey to Damascus. That is just plainly presumptive. There is no evidence recorded to sustain that. It is also said that Paul's education helped him out doing the "missionary work" that he did. I want to ask one question. Did Paul go to some college to be educated to enable him to do a better job in the work that he did? "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." Remember Simeon, the man Luke refers to as a just and devout man waiting for the consolation of Israel, "And it was revealed to him by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And when Jesus was brought into the temple to be done for him after the custom of the law, then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel."

When Paul was stricken down by the power of God, and made to know that it was Jesus Christ, He told Paul he was a chosen vessel to bear His name before the Gentiles, and Kings, and the Children of Israel. It had then come time known unto God from the beginning of the world, that His name should be borne to the Gentiles, and that Paul was a chosen vessel to do that, according as God had chosen him in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that he, Paul, and all those called as he was, should be to the praise of the glory of his grace, who first trusted in Christ. Who first trusted in Christ? God himself! Because known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. No, a thousand times No, it was not because Paul had qualified himself by obtaining an education.

On the day of Pentecost the Eternal God, the Mighty, the God of every gift, even the God of all grace by which his chosen and redeemed are saved by faith and that not of themselves, it is a gift of God, used Peter and the other disciples to preach His everlasting gospel with such force that the multitude was confounded and amazed, that these men, knowing not letters, could preach with such force that they were pricked in their hearts, and made to exclaim, "Men and brethren what shall we do?" This question was asked after Peter had preached to them David's prophecy concerning Christ: "Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh,

he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses. Therefore let all the the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." (Acts 2)

After these truths had been preached to them and they had been pricked in their hearts, they were made to exclaim, "Men and brethren what shall we do?" Peter told them to, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

The Apostle Paul in his epistle to the Ephesians, wrote, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us, "Unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace wherein he has made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." This was and is all done that, "We should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ." Who first trusted in Christ? Was it not the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who trusted the salvation of his people to his only Son Jesus Christ?

Paul to the Colossians stresses, "Giving thanks unto the Father which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath redeemed us from the power of darkness (or delivered us from that power) and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."

We find Paul and Sosthenes, whom Paul refers to as our brother, asserting that we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God." The twelve disciples the Lord chose to be with him and to be witnesses to his preaching and all the miracles which he performed in their presence, were Jews; also the church in the beginning was composed of Jews. The Jews as a whole rejected him: he was a stumbling block. Though David, Isaiah and the other prophets prophesied of his coming and of the things he would do, and how he would die, Jesus did not measure up to what they expected of the Redeemer, the long looked for Messiah. They expected him to redeem them from the Roman power, and re-establish the literal throne of David, sitting on that throne as their King.

The Greeks! to them the whole thing was foolishness. The call is what makes the difference. When we hear that call, as did Cornelius and Paul, (and I hope that I did,) we are ready to exclaim that it is the Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. So as the Apostle Peter told Cornelius, "We all perceive of a truth that God is no respector of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."

The fearing him and working righteousness is made manifest because of the call, to whom the preaching of the cross is Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. They are the ones who are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus: He having blessed them according to the good pleasure of his will. Those to whom all things work together for good, are called, foreknown and predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son of God, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Being called, they are also

justified and glorified. So we are persuaded that not anything, even death itself, can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

With best wishes to all the household of faith, I bring this to a close. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."

Elder J. A. Tew

(We enjoyed Elder Tew's article, but will say that our understanding of, "Who first trusted in Christ," according to the context in the first chapter of Ephesians, refers to the elect Jews, of whom the Apostles and first disciples were. "That **we** should be to the praise of his glory, **who first trusted in Christ.** In whom **ye also trusted** after ye heard the word of truth." etc. The Ephesians, of course, were Gentiles. — J. D. W.)

REPORTS GOOD ASSOCIATION

Rt. 2, Box 23
Weslaco, Texas 78596

Dear Editors of the **Signs.**

It has been some time since I have written you, but I have been reading the **Signs** for 70 years.

The Lord blessed our Pleasant Valley Primitive Baptist Association with one of the best meetings I ever attended, at Houston, Texas, August 14, 15, and 16, 1970. Ten ministers were present — some from other states, and they were blessed to preach the wonderful things that Primitive Baptists stand for.

Some say I am extreme on the health of these natural bodies, but I lost my health, teeth and hair about 50 years ago, before I found what caused it. But the Lord has blessed me with good health ever since. Some say not to talk about health at the association — only about spiritual things. . . I contend that if we would spend 15 or 20 minutes talking about what is good for the natural body, it would be time well spent and would be a help to many who want to have a healthy body.

We have taken care of three Old Baptists at a time here at our home without coming under State regulations. . . Years ago when I was planning on a Home for Old Baptists it was suggested to call it Convalescent Primitive Baptist Home, which would be a good name; but the Lord has not brought it about. . . I still contend: let us feed the natural body with good nourishing food so we will have better health. . .

Look over my sinful ways, and remember me in your prayers,

Elder E. B. Ault

(Elder Ault is proprietor of the Ault Bee Farms at Weslaco, Texas, and manufactures honey and other products for good eating. We enjoyed a visit with him and Sister Ault several years ago, and visited other brethren and churches in south Texas. — J. D. W.)

"WHY HAVE I BEEN SPARED?"

Vandervoort, Arkansas

Dear Brother and Sister Britt:

I received your good letter but sorry to know your health is so bad. There comes a time to most of us when such is the case. We have for several years been "under the weather," as some say; but I would not complain. The Lord has been so good to me, though unworthy of his notice. If it were not for his mercy, justice would long since have claimed me a victim of His wrath.

Why have I been spared? I often wonder about it, since I have been so miserably wicked. I can witness to what Job said: "tabernacles of robbers sometimes prosper." Not that I've been prosperous, but with all my shortcomings, being spared, have been always blessed with enough to eat and to wear. So I know from experience that obedience does not beget prosperity, (Job 36:11) as Elihu preached. If it took obedience to cause years of pleasure and prosperity, I would never have had either; for, in looking backward, I see only rebellion and ingratitude. Why have I been such a blessed character? It is alone by God's mercy to rebellious sinners. I wonder sometimes if others see the same thing in their lives. Surely not!

It seems to me that no one is as ungrateful and disobedient as I am. When I come to lay my armour by, if things don't change for me, I cannot say as Paul did, — far from it, "I have fought a good fight and kept the faith," etc. I can't know that henceforth is laid up for me a crown. Wouldn't it be pleasant to know that, and be ready like he was: ready to be offered up? But, I am, "fond of (and cling to) my prison and my clay."

When I see so many around me in so much worse condition than I am, it reminds me of the kind of person I should be. I have been so blessed, and for nothing that I have done. Therefore I know it is not in accordance to obedience that I am blessed. If He didn't bless me while I am disobedient, I would come far short of blessings.

While my daughter is the only one of my children that is a member of the Old Baptists, I am blessed that out of four, even one is led aright. Though she has enough education that she almost has her doctor's degree in education, she has been led to the truth, and prefers "to suffer reproach from the world, with the children of God, than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." One day a stranger, a woman, was talking to a group of teachers, (she is a teacher) and out of a clear sky, looked at her and asked, "Mrs. Carl, how do you think about it? (about things being fixed.)" Irene answered that she believed they were, and that we are just carrying out God's providence — His plan for our lives. The woman turned and said, "Well, I'm glad I don't believe that." Irene thought it very strange that a stranger in town, who did not know a thing about her, would stop and address her with such a question. She said it looked like it was just to expose her belief. I am so thankful she was led to speak out for the truth; and not falter.

Does my being glad about that, show my pride, or is it through humble thankfulness that I am glad about it? I hope it is not the former. Besides loving her as a child, I enjoy the fellowship that I feel for her, which is indeed no little thing. I have never "boasted" about this before Old Baptists, and truly I hope it is not boasting now. I thought perhaps you would rejoice with me, that He has given me one to believe like I do; and one that is bold enough to bear the "reproach of the truth." It takes "courage" to stand for the truth, when all about you believe differently.

. . . How I would like to go to New Hope (Patmos) to their centennial meeting the first Sunday in August, but it seems there is no way for me to go. If I could only drive a car I would go, but, of course, I cannot do that. And, too, I would have to stay home with Arthur. Pat Dudney wrote me that she has not missed many meetings, and that they expect several preachers to be there.

I will close for this time, and will try to write again before too long.

In Christian love, I hope,
Nancy McDaniel

MORE ANXIOUS TO READ IT

Rocky Mount, N. C.

Dear Editors:

I have been reading the *Signs of the Times* about twenty-three years, and it seems the more I read the dear *Signs,* the more anxious I am to read it. The dear Lord has blessed so many to write about the Lord and his dealings with poor sinners.

Enclosed you will find check for two year's renewal. May God continue his blessings on each and every one connected with the paper, — this includes everyone of the dear writers.

In bonds of love to all,
Mrs. Fannie Mae Harper

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION 1970

To the ministers and messengers, together with the correspondents from sister associations with whom we correspond, composing the Pigg River Primitive Baptist Association, now in its 145th annual session with our sister church at Town Creek in Franklin County, Va.

Greetings:

In as much as it has fallen upon me at this time to greet you in the form of what is commonly known as a Circular Letter for this sitting, it is with much fear and trembling that I address you. I know full well that without the help of the Lord, what I might say will be like myself, unprofitable to any one.

The object of a Circular Letter, as well as the Introductory Discourse, is to set forth the faith and practice that this Association was founded upon, and what it has contended for these many years; which is an outstanding monument to our Great Head and Lawgiver. The outstanding principle of the doctrine is, "Salvation by the grace of God." Man having sold himself for naught, shall be redeemed without money. (Isaiah 52:3) The Apostle Peter said, "For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversations received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by Him do believe in God that raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God." (I Peter 1-21) Therefore all of God's children are taught of Him, or will be taught, and great will be their peace. This peace is brought about by the Comforter that was to come to take of His and show it unto His little ones; which is the Holy Ghost whom Jesus said the Father would send in His name, and shall teach them all things and bring all things to their remembrance, "Whatsoever I have said unto you."

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27)

The Lord has a people in every nation, kindred, and tongue, and His grace and peace will be made known to them somewhere here in life's way. It might be as in the case of John the Baptist, even leap for joy in his mother's womb, or even in old age, or in the grip of death: it is never too soon or too late to touch the heart of a poor sinner and cause him to say, as the Apostle Paul: "Who art thou Lord?" He will keep his blessed eye upon them here in time, and after death watch over their sleeping dust until the resurrection morning, when their spirits and bodies shall be re-united and adopted into the family of God, to sing His praise forever in that home where they'll never grow old.

Submitted in love for Christ's sake. Farewell in the Lord.

Elder R. A. May

EXPRESSES HIS APPRECIATION

Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Editors:

It is almost time to renew my subscription, so I am sending $10.00 for two years. Use the balance for the Indigent Fund.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the dear brethren and sisters who have so wonderfully been blessed to write such precious articles in the *Signs* year after year. Sometimes I get so low in the valley it seems there could be no one on earth as low; and that there could be no hope for me. Then I can pick up

some of the dear old papers and start reading, and very soon I will see that someone else has been in that same condition.

My hope and prayer is that God will continue to bless all the editors and writers, so that the *Signs of the Times* may continue for many generations to come.

We have just concluded our Annual Meeting, and were blessed to have elders visit us from five states; and they were all wonderfully blessed to preach the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

I am sending for publication the account of the ordination of our dear brother, Richard H. Campbell, who has been standing before us talking about the love and mercy of our God and Saviour for eighteen months.

Yours in hope,
J. W. Brown

THANKFUL FOR VISITING ELDERS

Benton, Ky.

Dear Brethren, Editors and Associate Editors of the highly appreciated paper, the *Signs of the Times*:

The August number has a piece from Sister Ethel Holloway which reminded us of the Soldier Creek Association, of our own thankfulness this last spring, May 30 and 31, when, on meeting together for our Yearly Union Meeting, we had with us Elder R. L. Biggs, of the Bordeaux Church, Nashville, Tenn.; Elder J. N. Darnell, of Dry Creek Church, Trigg County, Ky.; Elder Euley McCool, of Buttahatche Association in Alabama; Elder Albert Brock of the Hopewell Association in Alabama; and Elders Herbert Prince, Swayne Young, and Richard Campbell of the Memphis Church, Memphis, Tenn.

In our own association we have one ordained minister, Elder Paul Poyner. We feel very poor indeed in many ways, yet richly blessed to feel our God and Father so directed his humble servants to come our way, bringing glad tidings of great joy to us: preaching peace. Such peace as only can come from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

In all their preaching at the church, and in the home of Brother and Sister Warnard Locke on Saturday night, the Saviour of sinners, Jesus Christ, was exalted and man's inability to save himself was set forth. It was a time to be thankful to our God for his loving kindness, Oh how great. We do hope He gave us thankful hearts to give him all praise, all honor and all glory for our wonderful Union Meeting, and for his watchcare over us then, and at all times, now and forever.

A sister I hope,
Effie Bowden

Route 2, Box 423
Boones Mill, Va. 24065

Dear Brother and Sister Vass —

The beautiful poem in the May issue of the *Signs* brought cheer to me. The Ship of Promise brought cheer to Adam and Eve when soon after their fall the announcement was made that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent.

The lines in the poem

> "It behooved him to be made flesh,
> Our nature to assume,
> To suffer to save his people
> From an eternal doom."

are sweet to me for it was seen and declared that One should come from Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah.

So "it behooved him" the mighty Captain of the salvation of His people, to come forth "glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength." "Mighty to save" was the inscription displayed on the banner of His Majesty.

Oh how He rides the chariot of His grace conquering and to conquer! The strong man may be armed with all his goods in peace, but here is One much

stronger than he. The armor of the rebellious is taken from them, their hard hearts are broken up with a tender feeling, the enmity is destroyed and love is made to take its place. The sinner who cared not is made to care, who believed not is given faith, who loved not is caused to love. Impenitency is changed to grief, the proud spirit is subdued and Phariseeism is removed — a victory is thus given as the earnest of another which shall be given in the resurrection of the body.

Meantime, He will not quit the field but will perform the work He has begun, and you dear brother, your heart devised your way to "see my folks again" but the Lord directeth your footsteps (Prov. 16:9) so as the train sped along you did drink from that Fountain whose Name is Jesus while weeping for joy which this poor world can never give nor take away.

My every remembrance of you dear people is with much pleasure.

Gladys joins in sending love.

Your brother,
J. L. Bocock

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6)

My purpose in writing on this scripture is to show that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost were all in the one body of the child Jesus. We notice, "He shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily." (Colossians 2:9) "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him: and without him was not anything made that was made." (John 1:1-3)

All things were not made by them, but *by him.* Let us notice the 14th verse, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." The Word was made flesh, and in this taking upon himself the seed of Abraham, he was human, and also divine. If he had not taken upon himself a body of flesh, with sin excepted, there could never have been the death of the testator; and if no death of the testator, then we would never come into possession of the inheritance that God predestinated us unto.

We see here Jesus the only mediator between God and man, making intercessions for his people. I believe this interceding is done by God sending the Spirit of his Son in our hearts crying Abba Father. We have the Son pleading our case to the Father: and the Father always hears his Son. The Holy Ghost is the third person in the Godhead, and it is the Holy Ghost that takes the things of Jesus and shows them unto us. There is a vast difference in talking about the things of Jesus, and showing them unto us. I understand that the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost are in the glorified body of Jesus that God raised from the tomb. We will not see the Father in one body, and Jesus in another.

I know that some are confused by the way the Bible reads in some places, but however one may read, there is but one God, and He fills both heaven and earth. It was easy for him to speak from above, saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," because He has dominion over all things in all places, and at all times. All of the Godhead was in Jesus Christ, when he was a babe in the manger, for he had not the spirit by measure, as we have.

I would like to quote the late Elder Wilson Thompson as a witness on this subject:

"Now the Word, which was with God in the beginning, and was made flesh, was the man; but in the divine nature of that Word, the Word was God. So the Word was both God and with God. While there was no God with him, this could not be true if the Word was a distinct person from the Father; and, as such, was truly and properly God. If the whole fulness of the Godhead dwelt in the man Christ Jesus, then there could be no part of that fulness left out of Him, to remain among other persons distinct from Him in whom its whole fulness dwelt. The Father . . . dwelt in him, for he says: The Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works. I in the Father and the Father in me. I and my Father are one. If these, the Father and the Word, were two persons, they were both in Christ, and not distinct, but one. The Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit . . . is in him. Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy. Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. But this Holy Ghost was the Spirit of Christ which was in them when they testified beforehand the suffering of Christ and the glory which should follow." These words were taken from the book of the late Elder Wilson Thompson.

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of Life." (1 John 1:1) This is the Word that we read about in the first chapter of John. He made all things, and there was nothing made that he did not make.

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature: for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and having made peace through his blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." (Col. 1:14-20)

The firstborn means, one that is to go before; and he is before all things; and he has gone before his people, and has conquered all our foes, and rose from the grave, and ascended into heaven. Inasmuch as he has done these things, that is how sure our journey is. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are all in that glorified body of Jesus Christ that rose from the grave, and ascended into heaven.

"And about the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:45, 46) He was forsaken of his Father until the time he arose from the dead.

"And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost." (Luke 23:43)

James R. Hollandsworth
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"GOD WITH US"

Hopkinsville, Ky.

Dear Brother Wood:

You asked me why I had not written for the *Signs* of late; and requested that I write should I feel to. But writing, as are all other things, is in the hands of God. There is nothing that can bring such joy as hearing one of God's servants speak of the honor and glory of our God, and his gifts to men. So, if it pleased God to give me a mind and guide my thoughts, I would write some-

thing in regard to the precious gifts.

While reading in the first chapter of Matthew last night, the 23rd verse struck me as though it were electrified, and I was made to hope to see something most beautiful. It reads, "Behold, a virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." The first word was, Behold. One will never Behold until the command is given; but God speaks and it is done, and he never speaks in vain for his word shall not return unto him void. Therefore, when He speaks to one of his little ones, (and I am made to hope to me,) He has a message of beauty of which we are not given words to express or explain the half: for the half of his beauty has not been told, — and this is what is given us.

Isaiah 7:14 speaks of this Immanuel; and 9:6 he declares, "Unto us a Son is given," a precious gift indeed wherein is life. For this darling Son said of himself that he was the way, the truth, and the life. "The government shall be upon his shoulder," for there is none other worthy to carry the burden of the guilt of his people, his elect. Jesus, that precious gift, the perfect gift, has, thanks be to God, borne them all the days of old: their sins were never charged to them. Jesus stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world for those who were given in the covenant of redemption. He was born of a woman that he, whose name is *Wonderful,* might by the sacrifice of himself redeem us unto God. It took a perfect offering to satisfy the wrath of God, for all had fallen under the curse of the law, — all were guilty. God looked: and there were none good; looked and there was none to help, and declared "by my own arm have I brought salvation." That arm means Jesus to this old sinner.

It is wonderful indeed when we are given to see the beauty of His wonderful works which he has performed. The world knows nothing of this glory, for they glory in the things they think they are doing for the Lord. But we hope to rejoice in the things God has done for us; and our desire is to follow in his footsteps as much as in us is. We are made to thank Him for the desire. Yes, dear children, He is wonderful: he opened the eyes of the blind; and I feel to have been one of those blind ones, trying to lead the blind. What a beautiful experience it is to be given a precious hope, and say with the poet:

> "I once was lost but now am found,
> Was blind but now I see."

When we are given to see and receive this gracious gift, we can say in truth, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear," and to know that He is our *Counseller* (Isaiah 9:6); and to know that He ever stands at the right hand of the throne of his Father, making intercession for us. Yes, He is the *Mighty God,* for he declared that all power was given him in heaven and in earth, and that none should be able to pluck one of his out of his hands. When we can see him declaring that his righteousness was ours, and declaring to the Father that he had atoned for our sins, we can see something of just how Wonderful he is: and what a price he had to pay for such unworthy worms of the dust as we are. Brethren, I am made to cry often as did that man of old, "Create in me a clean heart," and, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation.

This is getting lengthy, but a few more words from this *Everlasting Father.* "I know my sheep, and am known of them. I call them by name and they follow me, and a stranger they will not follow; for they know not the voice of strangers." How pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, and to hear their blessed Redeemer given all honor and glory; and to be enabled to praise and worship his holy name; and to hear him say, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will,

but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will that sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

Brethren, do you have a hope in such a precious gift? He is all in all! He said again, "Whosoever cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." But none can come without the will; and God works in one to will and to do (come) as it pleases him.

He is also our *Peace*; for there is none other name given whereby we must be saved. In John 10:9 we read, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." He does not say they *may* but they *shall.*

In Isaiah 66:2, we read, ". . . unto this man will I look." Unto this gracious gift who is declared to be in the likeness of our flesh, who was made to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him; that we be made glorious within by the blessed Spirit, and clothed in his righteousness. Yes, unto Him will I look until my call comes.

May God bless you Editors and Associates many years to come . . . This is just a bit of my experience, I hope.

(Elder) Wade Y. Chandler

(The above was probably written in 1965, and sent after his death. — J. D. W.)

BETHLEHEM DISTRICT MEETING

The Annual District Meeting met at Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church near Malvern, Ala. July 31st and continued through August 2nd, 1970. The Introductory Sermon was delivered by Elder Chester C. Hornsby of the Claybank Association, followed by the Moderator, Elder J. J. Collins. The business session was held on Friday, after which Elders V. C. Hartzog of Columbus, Ga., and H. H. Collins of Columbus, Ga. preached to the congregation.

On Saturday the following Elders occupied the stand: James W. Johnson of Ebenezer Association; Elder Warren King of the Conecuh Association; Elder Leon Beauchamp of the Chipola Association of Florida; and in the afternoon: Elder Eugene Taylor of the Chipola Association, from Tallahassee, Florida; and Elder J. J. Watson of Cottonwood, Alabama.

On Sunday morning the services were concluded by Elder A. B. Chumney of Madrid; Elder D. W. Collins of Dothan, Alabama; and Elder J. J. Collins of Newton, Alabama; with the closing business session. All seemed to enjoy the fundamental preaching each day.

Bethlehem Church was organized 96 years ago last April; and plans to have a centennial anniversary in April, 1974. Among the pastors have been: Elders W. T. Bell, J. N. Purvis, J. W. Parker, J. W. Collins, J. J. Smith, F. A. Collins, H. A. Smith, W. J. Harrison, W. J. Hartzog, C. C. Hornsby, J. A. Tew, and J. J. Collins, who has served in all some 25 years.

Among the many able deacons of Bethlehem Church have been: Jasper Barnes, Isaac Stewart, J. B. Mitchell, J. W. Bedsole, H. T. Collins, Jessie Purvis, J. N. Underwood, M. A. Barber, Charles T. Collins, and others. Among her well qualified clerks have been: Isaac Stewart, P. J. Hartzog, O. H. Tew, J. A. Tew, H. T. Collins, C. C. Dalton, J. J. Hall, Jesse Carroll, E. C. Purvis, James T. Collins, Huey Harrison, B. M. Jaspur, M. A. Barber, Charles T. Collins, and W. T. Swann.

Bethlehem has one of the best planned cemeteries in this section, and is noted for the early pioneers who are buried there. Among the family names are: Hall, Collins, Purvis, Merritt, Tew, Underwood, Bedsole, Hughes, Paulk, Davis, Trawick, Harrison, and Rice.

This church has ever stood for salvation by grace and the fundamental principles of the first century Church as set forth by the Lamb of God, and continued by Peter, Paul, John, Luke, and the succeeding ministers in all ages. Truly

it has stood upon the bulwarks of Zion, and contended for the principles set forth by the *Signs of the Times* in its *Prospectus* of 1832. Well does the writer recall the first *Signs* he ever saw when pioneer John S. Bonds, grandfather of Sister Beatrice Purvis Harrod, gave it to him at his home near Brannon Stand many years ago. For more than fifty years he has been an avid reader of the dear old *Signs,* and knew personally nearly all its editors in speaking from Baltimore to Daytona Beach, and Raleigh to Nashville. Truly it has been inspiring to hear these true soldiers of the cross preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.

During his 52 years ministry the writer has conducted about one thousand funerals and almost as many weddings, and countless baptisms; and served as Pastor of ten churches. He realizes that his work on earth is nearly done, but the great giver of every gift maintains his course on earth, and we hope will be with him when he is called to his heavenly home.

The *Signs of the Times* has been ably supported in this entire section. Among those who stand upon its principles we might mention Elders W. J. Harrison, D. W. Collins, J. A. Tew, Henry H. Collins, and brethren H. T. Collins, J. M. Collins, James T. and R. C. Collins; and countless others. Truly it has been a boon to our pilgrimage here on earth. It seems to grow better as the years roll on; and especially the August issue where the articles by Elders Griffin, Lefferts, C. C. Morris, and those by Elders John D. Wood, E. J. Lambert and David Spangler are so inspiring. Well does the writer remember first meeting such fine ministers as J. W. Wyatt, Lester Dodson, J. W. Gilliam, S. L. Moran, W. C. King, W. R. Dodd, and Randolph Perdue on his first trip to the Staunton River Association in Virginia in 1940; and spending the night in the home of Deacon and Sister J. F. Williams near Danville, and seeing their charming children Burnell, Julian, and Naomi, who mean so much today to their church and the Baptists in general.

We have been so well treated in our travels in the ranks of true Primitive Baptists everywhere. What a wonderful night we once spent with Elder John D. Wood and his charming companion in Baltimore; and then a most enchanting ride over the Blue Ridge to Christiansburg from Martinsville with them. We much enjoyed our visit with Elder Leonard Brammer three years ago on our trip to his association, the Pigg River. What glorious preaching we heard that day. Also we enjoyed so much our trip to Nashville, Tenn. and the way we were treated in the wonderful home of Elder R. L. Biggs. We also remember hearing Elder C. C. Stone near Raleigh, N. C. who brought his letter from a church in England that he said was organized in 787. He spoke on Sunday morning with Elder J. B. Roberts and the writer.

We shall remember such charming ones as Elders H. H. Lefferts, W. D. Griffin, J. W. Gilliam, W. R. Dodd, L. J. Brammer, Warren King, J. L. Smith, S. L. Moran, Curry King, David Spangler, Paul Stott, H. A. Smith, J. T. Bowman, and J. W. Griffin; and deacon H. T. Collins, with Sisters Emma Trawick, Mary Pittman, Nettie Smith, Rilla Mae Hadden, Bay Purvis, M. A. Barber, Ruby Holloway, Ella Richardson, and Gaby Bell as long as we live. We would not forget our dear mother, and most devoted wife who is in failing health, together with our beloved daughters, one of whom has passed on.

May peace, love, unity and spiritual fellowship abide among Primitive Baptists . . .

(Elder) J. J. Collins

Danville, Virginia December, 1970

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"Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."

(Romans 1:3, 4)

EDITORIAL

END OF VOLUME 138

Those who read this have been blessed to live another year since they read the December issue of 1969, for this is the last number of the one hundred thirty-eighth volume of the *Signs of the Times*. Not a single editor has ever desired to take credit for the success of the paper, but all have believed the Lord has enabled them to be dedicated to their work in publishing those things which have been God honoring as well as edifying and comforting to His people. To hold fast to the doctrine of God our Saviour is the underlying theme, and to give the accounts of the experiences of those brought to know and love Him and his mercies, is what has made the columns of the *Signs* eagerly awaited each month by several hundred subscribers. The writings of the brethren and friends, together with the editorials, all reflect these things, and are in line with the first proposals which Elder Gilbert Beebe made in the fall of 1831 when he announced the principles on which the forthcoming *Signs of the Times* would be founded and maintained.

We like to re-publish these principles upon which the *Signs* continues to stand, and take the following written by Elder Beebe from the January 1, 1859 issue, as an expression of what we continue to maintain in our columns:

"The same leading sentiments which we published, and to which we pledged our paper twenty-six years ago, are still nailed to our mast-head. We have found no occasion to either change or alter them. They are as follows:

The *Signs of the Times* — Devoted to the Old School Baptist cause — maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfections of the Great Jehovah, — the revelation which he has made of himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, that these Three are One.—1 John v. 8.
2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.
3. Eternal and Unconditional Election.
4. The Total Depravity and Just Condemnation of Fallen Man.
5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.
6. The Sovereign, Irresistable, and, in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Ghost in Quickening and Regenerating the sons of God.
7. The Final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God by Grace.
8. The Resurrection of the Dead, and Eternal Judgment.
9. The Church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers — that to her is given able Ministers of the New Testament

— that the Scriptures are the only infallible Rule of Faith and Practice to the Saints of God.

10. The *Signs of the Times* will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath School Unions, &c., &c., waging war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of Institutions.

With this plain statement of our sentiments, we issued our first proposals for this paper in the fall of 1831; and if at any time or under any circumstances, we have swerved from these leading sentiments, we are not conscious of it. Certainly it has never been our intention to do so. We then believed that the first and sixth articles fully involved the doctrine of the Eternal Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ, and implied his Mediatorial identity as the Head over all things to his Church, and the Eternal, vital union of Christ and his seed, which are a "Chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, and a Peculiar People. A Seed that shall serve him, and be counted to him for a Generation, and a people which he has carried and borne all the days of old."

Such are still our views; and to their defense we pledge such ability as the Lord may graciously bestow on us."

It is because of the grace of God in them that the brethren and friends have continuously supported the *Signs* through the years. The past year found the brethren writing their experiences in the Lord's dealings with them, and their views on many scriptures, all of which have been in line with the gospel of our Lord and Saviour. We regret that we do not have space to publish all writings we receive, but we hope we shall continue to receive your writings, notes and comments, — for these, together with the editorials, are what make the *Signs* interesting and edifying to the brethren and friends, — and all to the praise, honor and glory of God.

We desire that the brethren and friends make mention of the *Signs of the Times* to those they feel should be reading the paper, and send in new subscriptions. These are needed to replace those who have passed from this life to await the fulness of their inheritance.

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." (2 Cor. 13:14)

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

JOB 40:4

"Behold, I am vile."

It is a very easy thing to repeat the above sentence, and many do so without the least feeling or understanding of its meaning, or how deeply experienced is the soul who, as Job, is in the presence of his God, and passing under his afflicting hand. Many sing, "Vile and full of sin I am, thou art full of truth and grace," and say, Have mercy upon us miserable sinners. It is easy to say, but saying it with the lips and feeling it in the heart are two very different things. To say it with the lips only, is deceitful, it is like a man who is rich, and in need of nothing, dressing in rags as a beggar, when he is no beggar, but a deceiver, and such a deceiver that any honest citizen would wish to expose and drive from his door. Such in their nicely worded prayers may deceive man, but they cannot deceive God. To such, unless grace prevent, God will say, "I never knew you," but His own afflicted people, who hate sin, yet groan under the body of this death. God will own, as he did his servant Job. God has the right to do as he will with his own. They are spoken of as an afflicted and poor people and there is no way that they can lose their birthright. Esau did, but they cannot, for God has ordained it so, and "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."

Many of God's dear people, who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, have not been led very deeply into a knowledge of their own depravity, others are led more deeply, and most of those who are so led are apt to write bitter things against themselves. Job had to pass through much trial and affliction before he knew himself to be vile. Years ago we thought none could be so vile as we,

our eyes had been turned within and we thought we knew ourselves. Job thought he knew himself, but when he saw God he said, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." The afflicting hand of God had accomplished its purpose when Job was brought to this confession. There are some of us who loathe ourselves, in other words, are sick of self, and while we are kept from acting out our nature, as some others may be left to do, yet while we, as whited sepulchres, look good and beautiful unto men, before God, before him with whom we have to do, what is our course and conduct? If one might speak for others, when, as Job, we are brought before our God, our only cry is, "Behold, I am vile." One word from him and we know what the woman meant when she said, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did." It was from this spot that Job could pray for the men whom he had been calling miserable comforters, and when we are humbled in the dust, and feel that we are vile before God, we can love our enemies, bless them that curse us, do good to them that hate us and pray for them which despitefully use us and persecute us. It is from this spot the truly humbled soul can have sympathy for the weak, and if a man be overtaken in a fault they can restore such an one, considering themselves lest they also be tempted, and they know with Paul, that if a man think himself to be something when he is nothing he deceiveth himself.

Job is a type of the Lord's people, and he had to prove, as they do, and as Habakkuk said, "His soul which is lifted up is not upright in him," and with David he could say, "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." When the ark of God was taken into the temple of Dagon, Dagon had to fall before it, and when God designs to dwell in man, he will bring down every high look and that soul will feel to be empty of good and full of ill, a lifeless lump of loathsome sin, without the power to do or will. When God is in his holy temple, all the earth must keep silence before him. It is here that one knows and feels that he justly deserves wrath, and can cry, "O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy." As we believe many can enter with us into the feeling of humiliation and nothingness that was Job's in the presence of God, we would declare that it was in God's presence, when God spoke to him, that Job said, "Behold, I am vile," and it is in the presence of God, under his all-seeing eye, that you cry that you are vile. Jeremiah tells us in chapter thirty-one, verses eighteen and nineteen, "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke; turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned. I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth." So after he was turned he repented, and after being instructed he smote upon his thigh and was ashamed and confounded.

False religion looks for dead sinners to repent, but God turns his children from dumb idols to serve the living God, and Jesus came to give repentance to Israel and the remission of sins. It is because repentance is already given to you that you cry, "Behold, I am vile," and you have no confidence in yourself, but in God who raises the dead. The Holy Spirit will bring judgment unto victory and the Lord's Christ will become more and more precious to your needy soul. You will count the afflictions of the Lord's people more than all the treasures of Egypt, and will want a "Thus saith the

Lord" more than the words of all flesh. This humbling under God's afflicting hand, which God will bring about in his own way, for his own glory, will cause you to desire to walk before men as before God. "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." You will see God in the trial, even though it be brought by a messenger of Satan, for "Whatever cross lies at thy door, it cometh from the Lord." "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." It is under affliction that the hidden evil of the heart is exposed. We rebel, like Ephraim unaccustomed to the yoke, our pride is laid low, our plans are spoiled and we also find it hard to kick against the pricks. Job did not like his friends joining hands with Satan to try and prove that he was a hypocrite, the very thing that Satan declared him to be before God. Job was proven not to be what Satan said he was, for Satan is a liar, and always was, and always will be proven to be.

A person that has no trial has no temptation, but those deeply tried are greatly tempted. Peter wrote to such when he said, "Ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." Deliverance is always in proportion to the trial, and Paul tells us, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," and that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Under the trial the soul is humbled, the proud heart laid low, the rebellious spirit made manifest, and all for the lifting of Jesus on high. What would we know of amazing grace unless we were shown the hidden evils of our hearts, and how could grace abound to us unless sin had become exceeding sinful? The wages of sin is death, and the soul cannot serve sin and God too, therefore there must be a dying unto sin if there is a living unto God. "His servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness." One who truly cries, "Behold, I am vile," is at the place where he is killed to sin and alive unto God, alive to his presence, and alive to those exercises and longings for Christ Jesus. His walk is not then after the flesh, but after the Spirit, his affections are set upon things above, and his faith is not what he can do, but in what Christ has done.

Thus the obedience mentioned above is the obedience of faith, for no other obedience will be well-pleasing unto God. This vileness will never be done away with while we are in this mortal life. It is there to remind us of the sufferings of Christ, that he suffered in the flesh and that he died on the cross, further, that he laid in the grave, for "He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death." While here in this life we can say by faith, "Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me." This is the incorruptible seed in us, our bodies are corruptible, but because Jesus rose from the dead and became the firstfruits, so all his followers must, and though our cry is, "Behold, I am vile," yet when the Lord himself shall come from heaven he will change our vile body and fashion it like unto his glorious body. Then we shall be with his likeness satisfied. While we are here his body is broken because of sin, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death TILL HE COME." If our vileness here shall, through the operation of the Spirit, cause sorrow of heart, a godly sorrow, and the triumphant grace of God be reigning over us, we shall show forth the praise of him who has called us out of darkness and we shall put off, concerning the

former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of our mind, and we shall put on the new man (which Peter calls the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit) which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

In conclusion, they who are brought into God's presence and hear his voice, and through his afflicting hand cry, "Behold, I am vile," will, as a result of God's work, lay their mouth in the dust, and they will be then possessed of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price.

(Editorial by Elder George Ruston December, 1933.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

INNER DISCIPLINE

At the outset we assure our readers that this is not an article on church order, nor the practice of the gospel church in its visible organization, either as it is or ought to be. Rather it is our thought to consider discipline from the standpoint of christian experience: that discipline of the soul by which the believers in and followers of Christ become trained in soul to obey him. The two words, "disciple" and "discipline," are very closely allied; the first signifying one who believes in and follows, the second meaning the training to which a follower is subjected in order to obedience, that training which comes to him and within him, not to bring about discipleship, but because he is already a disciple. A parent disciplines not some other parent's child, but his own, and not in order to make the child his, but because the child is already his, and to bring the child into obedience. Now, that teaching of the heavenly Father by which he produces obedience in his children is invariably the product of his own Holy Spirit, and nothing short of the operation of the Holy Spirit within the soul of the believer can effect obedience. Works of the creature, as they are unable to bring about salvation, so also they cannot produce obedience; but gracious works, as they are the outflowing evidence of salvation, so are they as well the outflowering of christian obedience.

We want to try in this article to set forth some ways in which the Lord effects experimental or soul discipline of his people, after which to contrast therewith some ways in which christian obedience can never be effected, but ways in which men and worldly organizations are continually trying to bring it about. It was said of Jacob many centuries ago that the Lord found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness, "he led him about, he instructed him." Now, how did the Lord instruct him? That is the point. Was it by delivering Jacob over to other men that they might teach him true religion and obedience thereunto? Indeed, no. Such instruction of Jacob, God's child, was too precious for the Lord to delegate to other hands than his own. "So the Lord alone did lead him." Notice it says the Lord alone did it. No man or men helped him to lead Jacob, nor did the Lord ask him for any suggestions as to how it ought to be done. "And there was no strange god with him." Since the Lord was the only leader and teacher Jacob had, it resulted in Jacob's having no other god to worship but the one true and living God. He could not turn aside unto idols, because the discipline to which he had been subjected in his soul by the direct leading and teaching of the Almighty had purified him from idolatry.

The reason the world is so full of idols to-day, and so many thousands bowing the knee to them, is because men in the mass are strangers to the internal spiritual work of God. They are being led and taught by men of their own selves, and not by the Lord alone, as

was Jacob.

Now, as to the manner of the Lord in teaching Jacob, the inspired record likens it to an eagle's training of its young. "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings." The eagle builds its nest only in mountainous districts, carrying a few sticks and brambles to the inaccessible shelf of a rocky precipice, where the eggs are deposited almost on the bare rock. Here the eagles are born and nurtured until ready to fly. Then the parent bird puts them through a course of instruction which appears cruel, but is for the young's good. The mother proceeds to stir up the nest by removing first one stick and then another; that is, she takes the very foundation from under the little ones. As this goes on, the young, not knowing what to do, begin to fall off the shelf, and down, down, down. But the alert eye of the mother is ever upon them. She does not intend her young shall fall so far as to be dashed to pieces. As they fall she swoops under them and catches them on her wings, to bear them to a place of safety. This process is repeated again and again, until the young, in fluttering, learn to use their wing muscles, and so to fly.

This training of the eagle's young is employed by the spiritual writer to convey some idea to us as to how it is the Lord disciplines his Jacobs: all his followers. The Lord removes the very foundations from under his people and lets them sink down so far, until they think death and obliteration their very sure portion. By the inner teaching of his Spirit he makes them to know the hidden evils of their heart, he shows them their sins, revealing the utter depravity of their human nature. Everything in which they ever trusted for salvation is taken away; their good works, if they ever thought they had any, are stripped from them; their wisdom becomes foolishness, their righteousness filthy rags. Their refuge of lies is taken away, their garments of fig leaves shriveled up by the scorching rays of the law's condemnation. Stick by stick the nest in which they so securely trusted is swept from under them, and they find themselves sinking down, sinking down beneath God's righteous frown. The teaching of the Lord is such that he will not share his throne in their affections with any rival power. He is a jealous God, and will not allow that his children shall serve any but himself. Through great tribulation he engraves this precept in the fleshly tables of their new heart and implants it in their spiritual mind: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." No truer words are to be found in all Scripture than those of the apostle that it is only through great tribulation that the disciples of truth enter into the kingdom. One of old said that it was good for him to be afflicted, for before he was afflicted he went astray, but "now have I kept thy word."

Every new appreciation of divine things comes through some measure of affliction. This is the internal or soul discipline by which the Lord leads his people in obedience to his truth. It is only as we are taught the vanity and weakness of ourselves over and over again that we can be made to flee the corruption that is in the world through lust. Only by being taught experimentally the folly of trusting in an arm of flesh can we arrive at that trust alone in God which shall never make ashamed. Society has its moral code, according to which its members must live if they expect respectability. Nations have their laws, which their citizens must obey if they expect to stay out of jail. But neither morality nor obedience to man-made laws constitute christian obedience. No outside authority, either of society or of church or of state, can tell one how to obey God, or compel one to be a child of God. The authority of God, that is, his irresistible power, working in the souls of his people dis-

ciplines them in the way they should go. In the absence of any heart knowledge of true religion, no amount of outside influences can effect regeneration. There is a world of difference between "reformation" and "regeneration," between the devil going out of a man and his being cast out of a man. "When the unclean spirit is gone out of man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first."

Here we have a picture of moral reformation, which is often mistaken by the world for spiritual regeneration. Persons sometimes make up their minds to reform their manner of living, sometimes even resolving to leave off swearing and other forms of wickedness, in order to get religion. By this means the unclean spirit voluntarily agrees to go out of the house instead of being cast out. For a while all goes well, and the house really seems much cleaner, more swept and garnished, than ever before. But, in the absence of any work of the Holy Spirit in the heart, this cannot last, there will be a gradual slipping back into the mire of wickedness, and the man will eventually be worse than ever before. The world is all the time looking for external influences to bring about an internal work. It can never be. One must be born of the Spirit and of the water before there can be any entering of the kingdom. In the absence of this work, which is always spiritual and internal, there can never be any effective substitute devised by men. Sinners must be born of God in order to be righteous, they must experimentally be taught of God's Spirit in order to be disciplined into obedience unto the truth. All the laws and compulsions of men can never force one sinner into being truly good.

We have frequently reminded our readers in these columns that God's people need not that any man teach them, for they have an unction from the Holy One and know all things. There is in the soul of each believer an inward monitor, an abiding grace, which teaches them the denial of worldliness and ungodliness, that they should live soberly and righteously in this present evil world. The best we can say to you is to heed this still small voice that speaks in your heart, and to walk in accord therewith as the Lord may measure unto you sufficient grace. One of us cannot be a rule for another, one cannot tell another what to do, one cannot lord it over another's conscience. Let each walk according to the light that is in him. If that light be darkness, so much more the pity. The nation of Israel of old seemed to repent of their transgressions again and again and turn unto the Lord, but it turned out to be only "seeming" and not reality. They were always doing contrary to the law and going after strange gods. When some great disaster overtook them then in their fright they would seek the Lord in a formal way and seem to turn over a new leaf of reformation. Sometimes it looked like real regeneration, but soon after the danger passed away they were as wicked as ever.

The Bible proves that where the Spirit's work is in the soul true obedience will be prompted through love, and not through fear of any threatened evil. A so-called preacher said the other day, "The passions, the appetites and the desires of men made it necessary for the promulgation of the ten commandments. Yet they still stand and are obeyed by the great mass of the American people." This preacher may have studied theology but he surely never studied his Bible. God's promulgation of the ten commandments by Moses certainly was never made contingent upon the passions, appetites nor desires of men. The wickedness of men never made it nec-

essary for God to do anything. Whatever God has been pleased to do for the salvation of sinners, he was never impelled thereto by any considerations outside himself, but induced solely by his infinite mercy and the good pleasure of his will. The promulgation of the Mosaic law, instead of being compelled by the wickedness of men, was but one of the several links in the chain of God's plan of salvation decreed in his eternal counsel with and in himself before time began. According to his plan, first came the counsel in eternity founded in God's foreknowledge, election and predestination. Then came the creation of the world. Next the formation of man out of the dust of the world. Then God put the man under law. Following came the transgression and the entrance of sin into the world, and then death by sin. The sending of the Mosaic law was another link in the great chain, for no other purpose than to show the impossibility of man's being saved through any obedience of his own. Yet the so-called preacher quoted above has the audacity to say that the ten commandments still stand, and are being obeyed by the great mass of the American people.

The ten commandments certainly do not stand to-day as a spiritual code, for they, with all the rest of the law passed away, with all that old covenant, in the death of Christ. To say that they still stand is to say that Christ did not finish the work the Father sent him to do. But more amazing it is to say that these commandments are being obeyed by the American people. The first and greatest commandment of that law was, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind and heart and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself. It is news to us to hear that the great mass of the American people are doing this. We had not noticed it. Indeed, labor troubles everywhere, with increasing unrest and strife on every hand, the rich getting all the time richer and the poor all the time growing poorer, does not have the appearance to us of loving the neighbor as one's self. Possibly it is like that young man who asked Jesus what he should do to inherit eternal life, and when he told Jesus he had kept all the law from his youth up, the Savior told him to go sell all he had and give to the poor. The young man went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. The world, as the so-called preacher says, may boast in its self-righteousness that it is keeping the ten commandments, but may the Lord have mercy on them if the great searchlight of his truth shall ever shine in their souls to bring them to real knowledge of themselves before his great throne of judgment.

Yesterday we came across another choice bit of literature from the pen of a modern writer, and we cannot resist handing it to our readers. Speaking of the recent world war and its attendant misery, he says, "The war can pay its measureless cost only if the world is shocked into change of heart." Now, did any one ever hear of anybody being "shocked" into a change of heart? As we have said before, true godliness can never be imparted by any outside influences whatever. Earthquakes, whirlwinds, fires, plagues and wars can never produce spiritual changes at all. The Lord does take out of his people the stony heart and does give them a heart of flesh, thus effecting a real change of heart in his people, but he never employs calamities to do this work. It is invariably the fruit of his own Spirit's work.

You know the old prophet looked for the Lord in the wind, but he was not in the wind; then he looked for the Lord in the earthquake, but he was not in the earthquake; then in the fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. After all these calamities, came a still small voice. That was the Lord, and that is the Lord. No amount of external troubles and influences can bring one person to know the Lord. True spiritual discipline, true religious training, true christian obedi-

ence unto the truth, are the fruit of nothing short of the still small voice of God in the soul, which is the Holy Spirit's teaching. Just as the wind blows where it lists, and we hear the sound of it, but cannot tell from where it comes nor to where it is going, so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Multitudes from all the coasts of Judea went out to see John baptizing in Jordan. What did they expect to see? Surely not what they did see, for what John was doing was very simple and unpretentious, not at all spectacular. He was only a reed shaken by the wind. Only a poor frail piece of humanity being blown here and there by the dictation of the wind of God's Holy Spirit. So is every one that lives in obedience unto the truth through the discipline of God in his soul. Just reeds shaken by the wind.

(Editorial by Elder H. H. Lefferts April 1, 1920.)

OBITUARIES

BASIL L. HUTCHENS

Basil L. Hutchens, age 67 years, 7 months and 22 days, passed away January 25, 1970. He had been in ill health for several months, and upon attending services at different churches in the Soldier Creek Association and other associations, on returning home he would be in bed for days, suffering and under the care of a doctor.

Basil joined the New Providence Primitive Baptist Church in Calloway County, Ky. the third Sunday in April, 1945, and was baptized by the pastor, Elder Paul Poyner.

We, his church brethren, sisters and friends, miss him greatly: his presence, his help in a material way, his words of wisdom upholding the truth as he had been led about and instructed in the truth as it is in Jesus Christ the Lord. He was ready always to give a reason of his hope for life and salvation in this time world, and a hope to be made a joint heir with his Saviour, and be made like Him to dwell in peace in that Eternal Home where there will be no pains or sorrows — no waiting to be treated by doctors on the tomorrows; but ever to dwell in that bliss that awaits the elect of God: the ones the Father chose in the Son before the foundation of the world.

His wife, Mrs. Jewel Rayburn Hutchens, was sick at the time of his death, and died April 9, 1970. She was not a member of the same church with Basil, yet their home was a home for his church friends; and preaching services were often held in their home at night during the Soldier Creek Union Meetings and Associations.

The survivors are five children, twelve grandchildren and two great grandchildren. The children are: Lorena Owen, Patsy Neal and James Hutchens, all of Murray, Ky.; Alice Faye Ethridge, Hardin, Ky., and Ola Mae Redding, Waverly, Kansas.

The funeral was conducted at a Murray Funeral Home by Elders Paul Joyner and Terry Sills.

His church friends and brethren feel that Basil would want his obituary published in the *Signs of the Times*, that his friends may know he had at last found rest from his sufferings; that death had released him from pain, and that he died in the faith once delivered to the saints.

Peace be to his memory.

A sister I hope,
Effie Bowden

ELEANOR AUDREY BONDS MOORE

Whereas it has pleased our eternal heavenly Father to call from our midst our beloved sister, Eleanor Audrey Bonds Moore, in accordance with a resolution of Skewarkey Church I will attempt to pen a few expressions in her memory.

Sister Moore entered this life April 8, 1916, and was called home May 27, 1970; thus her travel in this life was more than 54 years. She was the wife of George Herman Moore, who survives; and the daughter of the late John Dennis and Ella Lee Bonds. She was a native of Martin County, N. C., where she spent all her life.

Sister Moore united with Skewarkey Church the second Sunday in May, 1963, at the water's edge, where she was baptized by her pastor, Elder E. C. Harrison. She manifested much love for the church and brethren, and was faithful to attend her meetings when her health permitted. She suffered many afflictions during many years of her life. but was blessed to endure them with much patience until the end. Although her activities were limited, she was a faithful wife and mother, esteeming the welfare of her loved ones above that of herself.

She loved the doctrine of sovereign grace, and possessed a hope in an allwise, powerful and merciful God of being united through the redeeming blood of her Saviour, to the eternal city whose builder and maker is God.

Surviving are her husband, two sons, two daughters, and three grandchildren; also three

brothers and two sisters. To the family we extend our heartfelt sympathy: may you be comforted by the Spirit of God, is our prayer.

Funeral services were conducted in the Skewarkey Church by her pastor, Elder E. C. Harrison, assisted by Mr. Thurman Griffin and Mr. Timothy Creel. Interment was in the Church cemetery beneath an array of beautiful flowers.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be placed on the church records, a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* and *Zion's Landmark* for publication.

Done by order of conference the second Saturday in June, 1970.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Johnny Ray Gardner, Committee

SISTER CARRIE DALTON

Sister Carrie Dalton was born September 27, 1903, and departed this life August 7, 1970, at the age of 66 years, in the Lynchburg General Marshall Lodge Hospital. She is survived by her husband, Giles H. Dalton, and four sons: Wallace F. and Melvin H. of Hurt; Silas D. of Lynch Station, and Donald W. Dalton, of Bedford; also by three daughters: Mrs. James G. Bailey and Mrs. T. G. Dalton, of Gretna, and Mrs. Billy Atkinson, of Fort Bragg, N. C. Also surviving are four sisters: Mrs. Domeron Owen, of Burksville, Mrs. Morman Simpson, Mrs. Morman Pickeral and Mrs. Eva Pickrel, of Gretna; and fifteen grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at Weatherford Church by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Mr. Charlie Thompson. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

She united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church July 23, 1944, and was a faithful member until her health declined. May the Lord be with and comfort the family.

Marvin Brumfield

ANDREW PRINCE

Brother Andrew Prince, 78, passed away Monday, November 18, 1969, in a Greenville, Texas, hospital. Funeral services were held in the Coker-Mathews-Putus Funeral Chapel by the writer.

Brother Prince was a member of Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church at Cash, Texas. He was blessed to attend church regularly and carry people who had no way to go. He was a very humble man, and was loved by all who knew him. We feel to say that our loss is his eternal gain.

Survivors are: his wife, Sarah Prince, of Greenville, Texas; three brothers and three sisters.

Loyd Wall

PINK USSERY

Brother Pink Ussery, 85, passed away Monday, September 14, 1970, in a Greenville, Texas, hospital. Funeral services were held Wednesday, September 16, in Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church at Cash, Texas.

He had been a member at Mt. Zion for over sixty years, and was ordained deacon in the early 1920's. He was very devoted to his church and was able to attend up to death.

Survivors are, one brother, Cutler Ussery, and several nieces and nephews. Services were conducted by the writer.

Loyd Wall

COLUMBUS Z. MOSELEY

Brother C. Z. Moseley was born Dec. 14, 1918 in Crenshaw County, Alabama. He moved his family to Butler County, Alabama, eighteen years ago.

Our Lord God of all power, whom he loved and worshiped, called him home June 5, 1970. His stay here on earth was 51 years and seven months.

Brother Moseley was married to Dorothy Fegan of North Ireland, May 10, 1945. To this union four lovely children were born, two boys, and two girls, Sandra, Tyrone, Sheridan and Terry. One Grandson, Leslie Tyrone.

Brother Moseley united with Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church July 26, 1958, and was elected church clerk, Dec. 28, 1958, and ordained a deacon April 28, 1963. He served his church faithfully and humbly until his passing. Brother Moseley believed in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace through Faith which was delivered to the Saints. He attended church regularly until our dear Lord and Saviour chose to remove him from our midst unexpectedly. He will be missed by all his loved ones, relatives, and friends.

His funeral services were held Sunday, June 7, 1970, with Elder Sam H. Dean, officiating. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the resurrection when God comes and gathers His children up and carries them to their eternal home in heaven where they will never have to part from their loved ones again.

The church mourns the passing of this dear Brother. This writer, (along with the other members) will always remember his pleasant smile and loving expression of kindness to all his fellow Brothers, Sisters, and friends.

May it please God to reconcile his family and all who knew him.

James E. Duncan, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 139 DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1971 NO. 1

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1/71
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THANKS THE EDITORS AND WRITERS

14778 Springdale Ave., Rt. 3
Middle Field, Ohio 44052

Dear Editors of the *Signs*, the dear writers, and all who love the truth:

I feel this morning that I want to write and thank the Editors and writers of the wonderful messages of God's grace, for the joy that their efforts bring to the hungry child of God. I so much want to hear from you, and desire to hear the dear ministers of the true gospel of Jesus Christ, more than I have the privilege to hear.

I much enjoyed Elder Bocock's message on The Wisdom of God. Brethren write on! I detest the doctrine that Adam was able to stand but liable to fall. God knew when he put Adam and Eve in the Garden they would partake of the forbidden fruit; otherwise he would not have put it there. And furthermore, if they had not sinned we would not be here. God's purpose to send His Son and our Saviour into the world, to redeem those He had chosen in Christ *before the world was,* would have failed: which could not fail, because God, being all wise, *makes no mistakes.*

Oh, when we can see Jesus high and lifted up, then we know we have been quickened by God's Holy Spirit: for dead sinners do not see Jesus as their Redeemer. Therefore, as God's word says, The preaching of the gospel is foolishness unto them that perish; but unto us that are saved, it is the power of God.

I hear them sing, "Were you there when they nailed Him to the cross?" Yes, I hope so. I thank God that Jesus Christ, I hope, was nailed to the cross for me. If not, I feel I would not have a hope, nor a witness within that He died for me, and arose for my justification. It makes me want to shout, just sitting here thinking of God's grace and what Jesus suffered for me. Can you dear ones rejoice with me? Then you too, no doubt, have wrestled with a man all night, until the breaking of the day, as Jacob did, or until light and understanding lifted your heavy load; and sent you on your way rejoicing. And we thank God that we will rejoice until He calls us home.

It has been sixty-two years now since they broke the ice in Clinch River in East Tennessee, to baptize my sister, Mrs. Ben Fields, and several more and me. Oh how sweet the hour when I first believed! and it gets sweeter as the years go by.

Yes, Brother Bocock, God knew we would sin when he put Adam in the Garden of Eden; and, thank God, He did not have to experiment on a cure, — try this and try that, to see what would cure the sins of his people. But thank God, he had a remedy, a sure cure, before the disease struck. It was a 100 per cent cure, and not one of his chosen subjects will be lost. Jesus said, "All that the Father hath given me shall come unto me," and none of them would be cast out.

Write on, ye faithful of the Lord. Pray for me and Mrs. Thomas, as she

has been sick and not able to do very much. Ask God to heal her, if it is his will. In bonds of love, and in hope of eternal life.

Claude Thomas

P. S.: Here is $10.00. Renew my subscription for one year, and if the following is not getting the *Signs,* send it to her for one year . . . If she is, keep the balance to help some needy child of God. Thank you, and may God richly bless you all is my prayer. With love.

Claude and Mary Thomas

MIDDLEBURG OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH LETTER TO THE LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

To the sister churches of the Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, the Middleburg Church sends greetings.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

We thank God for sparing us to meet at another association. It is good for the brethren to meet together, for where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them. (Matthew 18:20) This was certainly evident at our last association. Though we were few in number with only three Elders, a wonderful evidence of God's love and abounding grace was felt.

How did it all begin? That we cannot answer. It is not needful for us to know. We have the scriptures to tell us all we need to know. It says in Romans chapter 8 verses 29 thru 31, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us who can be against us." In Ephesians 1:4 Paul writes, "According as he hath chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

God created the world in six days and rested the seventh. He is all powerful, all wise and everywhere present. How he could do this is beyond man's understanding, but not God's. It was God who created the family. He created man and said it is not good that man should be alone; I will make a helpmeet for him. (Genesis 2:18)

God, being all wise, knew the downfall of man: that sin would come about. He, therefore, determined the way of salvation for the elect of God. It was God's good pleasure to lay out the way through his son Jesus Christ. God set the time for Christ to come into the world. Jesus came and did the work of salvation for the elect of God, and returned to the right hand of God to intercede for His people. (John 17:4)

God was the master builder. He was all in all. God laid out the blueprint of the universe. He calculated the weights of the planets. God knew how many grains of sand by the seashore. God made up the formula for the liquids and gases of the earth. He put the proper chemicals in the earth to give the proper diet for man and animals to survive. God was the master electrical engineer, creating the electrical forces which we use today.

God was the master designer. He laid out everything in detail so that they would work harmoniously together. God put the planets in their proper orbit so that their paths would not interfere with each other. The 38th and 39th chapter of Job wonderfully substantiates all of God's work. The sun and moon all orbit to give us our seasons.

God was the master craftsman. He made all things that were made. God was able to bring into existence things which were never before.

God, before it all began elected a people, and engineered all that this elect people would ever need for their physical needs right on through to their

eternal salvation.

God, the master designer, laid out a blueprint of how it all should be. God, the master builder, brought all this into existence for His edification and glory. God then caused a record to be made of all this from beginning to end in His Word, the Bible.

Our pastor, Elder Amasa J. Slauson of Kingston, New York, meets with us on months of the year having 5th Sundays when the Lord so wills.

Our membership stands at three.

Done on behalf of the Middleburg Old School Baptist Church.

Written by
Deacon Woodrow W. Bellinger
Beatrice E. Hocking, Clerk

AN ARTICLE TAKEN FROM THE "SPIRITUAL LAW COUNSEL" OF SEPTEMBER, 1911

(By the late Elder Asa D. Shortt)

Dear Brethren:

By request I will try to write an article for your paper.

The twelve Apostles are the antitype of the twelve Patriarchs, so these Patriarchs are the great grandsons of Abraham, the grandsons of Isaac, the sons of Jacob, except Manasseh and Ephraim who were the sons of Joseph. These two sons represented Joseph, their father. It seems to me that Abraham represents the Father, Isaac represents the Son, and Jacob represents the Holy Ghost. The Father sent his Son into the world to do his will, and in order to do the Father's will he had to choose the twelve Apostles who are the antitype of the Patriarchs. While the Son was on earth he gave the Apostles power to preach and cast out devils; but when the Son was crucified they had to tarry at Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place, and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. This was to qualify them to preach the gospel to every creature. "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." So unbelief is the damning sin. It was said to Abraham in blessing. "I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thee." So Jacob had to bless his sons severally as God would have them blessed, and these blessings in a sense were natural blessings, but wonderfully portrayed spiritual blessings.

When Jacob blessed Judah he embraces the Lord Jesus Christ. And Jesus told the Apostles that if he went not away the comforter would not come, "but if I go I will send him and he shall take of mine and show it unto you." These blessings of Jacob to his sons wonderfully represent the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the Apostles. Then they went everywhere that God directed and preached the gospel to both Jew and Gentile, and established the militant kingdom here on earth, and this is the reason it is said, "Being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." The apostles were spoken of first, though the prophets were manifested first, so the last shall be first, and the first shall be last. So the testimony of apostles as well as the prophets is the word of God and will stand forever.

The testimony of the prophets pointed to the coming of Jesus, and the testimony of the apostles was for the establishing the fact that Jesus had come and had been crucified and rose the third day. And in about forty days he ascended up on high; he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; even to this day the ministry is for the establishing of the church in the doctrine and practice of the apostles. If we would confine ourselves to

the Scriptures in preaching, it would be so much better for the church. When we fail to do this it is the duty of the church to call our attention to it.

While the pastor has the over sight of the flock, the church is the judge in Zion. The preacher should watch over the church for good, and the church should watch over their pastor. When this is the case there will be harmony between pastor and church. When this is the case the church will love her pastor, and the pastor will not only love the church, but will be her servant. It is said, "We are your servants for Jesus' sake." While Jesus was Lord of all, he was servant of all. Where love exists it will bind together, also it will hide a multitude of sins. When we are possessed with love we will not be finding fault one with another. May it be God's will to give us more of his grace that we might serve him with reverence and Godly fear.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Asa D. Shortt
Floyd, Va.

(Submitted by Elder Shortt's grandson, Wilson A. Shortt, of Roanoke, Va.)

5840 Court O. C. P.
Birmingham, Ala. 35228

Dear Brother Spangler,

On this month's issue of the *Signs* I noticed it is time to renew my subscription, so am enclosing check to pay for another year.

Irene and I were sorry we couldn't be with you for Elder Poole's ordination. We had hoped up to the last to be with you, then one of the members of one of the churches I serve passed away and I was called to conduct her funeral on the Saturday I was to leave.

I have talked with Elder Poole's wife by phone since the ordination and they plan to be with us at our association the third week in September.

I am always happy when I see the Lord's people renounce the teachings of the world, and come to the Old Baptists. This makes us know that the Holy Spirit is yet working in the hearts of God's people to bring them to the knowledge of the truth, and to see the fulfillment of the scripture spoken so long ago by David, that a seed should serve him, and that it would be accounted to the Lord for a generation. (Psalm 18-30) I'm glad it wasn't to be generations, for there is but one generation of our Lord, there is none lost by death as is the case with our father Adam. We all in Adam have the sentence of death pronounced upon us. For in Adam all die, but in Christ all are made alive.

From the very outset we find that man's pilgrimage here was to be temporary, the first commandment that God gave man was to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth. From that time forward man has proven that in nature this is the only command of God that he in nature has been able to comply with, none of the commands respecting the spiritual nature of God is he able to keep. This only comes after he has been made a new creature in Christ Jesus our Lord, then the law of God becomes a joy rather than a burden; and we rejoice in the law of the Lord after the inner man. It would be wonderful if we could so completely subdue the outer man that we could do away with all his influence in our life, but so long as we live in this world I'm sure we will be plagued with his presences with us.

The covenant that David wrote about, as he represented Christ, was a covenant ordered in all things, and sure. It was made not to grow, and I don't believe it will diminish either.

Irene and I appreciate your invitation for us to come to your meeting so much, and hope before too much longer we will be able to visit you and the brethren in your section again. We would welcome another visit with us any time you can come our way.

Yours in bonds of love and fellowship,

Claude and Irene Hand

A BIRTHDAY GIFT

323 E. Commerce
Mangum, Okla. 73554

Dear Editors:

Am enclosing a check for $4.00 for one year subscription to the *Signs* for Bob Champean, 803 W. Brooks, Norman, Okla. — a birthday gift from an aunt. The late Elder W. N. Green was my father . . . Bob is a grandson of my father, and recently joined our little band of believers in Altus, Okla. He came to the church asking for a home with these not very popular people, saying that he felt very deeply and sincerely that God had revealed himself to him, and by His marvelous grace he had been made to believe and love this sweet doctrine. "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform."

My hope is that I was included among those the Father gave the Son: knowing that our precious Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ came and lived, suffered and died for those the Father gave him. He did not fail! "What wonderous love is this, Oh my soul?"

May God bless each of you to continue the *Signs*, and hold fast to the wonderful Truth.

In hope of God's mercy,
Willie (Green) Smith

HEARS FROM BRETHREN THROUGH THE *SIGNS*

209 Taylor Road
Collinsville, Va. 24078

Dear Brethren in Christ Jesus:

I greatly rejoice in hearing from you through the *Signs*. It is very uplifting to the children of God who have been born of His Spirit.

Those who say that God wants people to be saved, but they won't let him, are denying the words of God and the power of God; and dishonor the Father and the Son. Those that say that Christ died to redeem his people and they may still be lost, do not believe in Christ; and are therefore unbelievers. They do not have the words of Christ, much less keep them.

I heard this preached over the radio by those claiming to be the church of Christ; and who also said that people who were not baptized would be eternally lost. I do not agree with this. Many have the name without the Spirit of Christ, and are false idol worshippers of the unbelieving world. These have not the laws written in their hearts and minds.

"What agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you; and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Cor. 6:16) We read in Ephesians 4:4, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one Faith, and one Baptism." "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity."

I have enjoyed the August issue of the *Signs of the Times*. I think it should be read and considered by all of its readers.

With love and best wishes.

Sincerely,
Mattie Underwood

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the **Skewarkey Union** is appointed to be held with the Bear Grass Church, Martin County, N. C. the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1971. Elder E. C. Harrison was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder M. E. Garner, alternate.

The Meeting House is located on State Road 1001 in Bear Grass, N. C. We cordially invite all to come and worship with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Clerk
Rt. 2
Williamston, N. C. 27892

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The **Staunton River Union Meeting** will convene with the church at Malmaison the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1971.

We invite our brethren and friends and especially our Elders of this area.

Burnell B. Williams, Clerk

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, at Healthy Plains Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1971.

The Meeting House is located about five miles southeast of Bailey, N. C. on Highway 58. Everyone cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold Pittman, Union Clerk

ORIGINAL WHITE OAK UNION

The next session of the **Original White Oak Union** is appointed to be held with North East Church, Onslow County, fifth Saturday and Sunday in January 1971.

The church is located about five miles east of Jacksonville, North Carolina on paved road No. 1406.

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and worship with us.

L. H. Southerland, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To October 1, 1970)

Mrs. John W. Hawley, Va.	$ 1.00
Dezzie Casey, N. J.	1.00
Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.	1.00
Mrs. Mamie Aldridge, N. C.	3.00
Sam Dean, Ala.	5.00
Olin H. Smith, Ga.	3.00
Bena Mosley, Ala.	1.00
J. N. Darnell, Ky.	3.00
G. Wilmer Ensor, Md.	3.00
Mrs. Wesley Campbell, Can.	1.00
Mrs. C. H. Elliott, Va.	1.00
D. O. Chandler, Jr., N. C.	4.00
Harold Weatherford, Va.	6.00
Lawton T. Hill, Fla.	3.00
Mrs. W. H. Beacham, N. C.	1.00
C. L. Chambers, Tex.	1.00
Mrs. R. I. Murphy, Tex.	3.00
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Mary Sears, Ohio	3.00
Robert L. Cobb, Tex.	3.00
M. E. Welch, Tex.	3.00
Mrs. C. S. Flynn, Va.	1.00
Ruth Lucht, Md.	10.00
Elder J. J. Rhue, N. C.	1.00

Danville, Virginia **January, 1971**

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

(Jude 1:3)

EDITORIAL

It is again time to greet our brethren and friends at the beginning of another year, and another volume of the *Signs of the Times*. In doing so we are mindful of our frailties and our dependence upon the giver of every good and perfect gift; and to acknowledge that it has been by His goodness and mercy that we have been sustained and have received all things needful for our natural existence. We trust that we are thankful for all these things — and much more, for He has enabled us to know our sinfulness, weakness and mortality, — which He has subjected in hope.

God's mercy and longsuffering is the most sublime theme with which we can ever be engaged; and more especially when we know that He was the one that "began a good work in us" and will continue to perform it until the day of our redemption. What an amazing condescension that God is mindful of sinners at all, and that He deals with those of whom it is testified that He "chose in his Son before the world began," and makes them acquainted through "experiences" with the fact of life that they were dead in trespasses and sins and were in bondage and condemned, without any ability to redeem themselves; and then reveals his mercy unto them. It is so true that we love him because he first loved us!

God's mercy is nowhere in his Word promised to any except those who were chosen in his Son before the world began; and of these Jesus said, "All that the Father hath given me shall come unto me."

The Apostle Paul expressed his predicament when he said, "I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came sin revived, and I died." Meaning that he once felt his own strength and ability for righteousness, but when the commandment was applied in him by the Spirit's work, it brought an end (or death) to his boasted righteousness. So is every person "alive" in his feelings of strength and ability in so called spiritual things, even while they are dead in trespasses and sins — which condition we have sometimes heard expressed, "So dead they don't know it."

And it is while in this dead condition that the Lord's people are quickened by the Spirit of God to know their condition, otherwise they would never know of their existing state and inability to recover themselves. This is a portion of the way the Lord deals with His own in bringing them to the New Birth of the Spirit, and manifestly bringing them into His kingdom to receive the Spirit of Adoption, sealing them with the holy Spirit of Promise, which is the earnest of their inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, which is the adoption, the redemption of their bodies.

We have given quite briefly the difference in the faith of the Lord's people after they have been born of the Spirit, and those who are "alive while yet dead" in trespasses and sins: the one brought out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God, and the other remaining as they were in their darkness.

We leave this matter here, with the feeling that those who have been born again recognize their own experience in what we have written. These things are not merely theories, but are realities to those taught of God, being revelations from Him, as testified by the brethren in their writings in the Scriptures; and by every other person born of the Spirit.

Many people do not believe that the Scriptures are the inspired Word of God; but we have never heard of one denying them who has evidence of having been born again. And there is abundant reason why they do not. They have the same experimental evidence in themselves that the writers of the Scriptures had; and this is sufficient for each one of them, as much so as it was for Saul of Tarsus when he was brought to the knowledge of the truth.

The Spirit teaches all of His people the same thing, and they have fellowship one for the other.

The Apostle John wrote, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." (1 John 5:10) And he wrote, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." (1 John 1:3) Then notice this by John, "I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth." (1 John 2:21)

When Peter said, "Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God," Jesus replied, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." And Paul wrote to the Galatians in the same manner, "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

All these testimonies were evidences of the quickening and the birth of the Spirit; and as these things come by the Spirit only, John wrote, "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." (1 John 2:20) That is, you know all things pertaining to life and godliness by the teaching received from God, and not from man. These are things which we and the writers confess, and are why there is fellowship for each other — whether some lived a thousand years ago or are known to each other personally.

It is because they are born of the Spirit that they have faith, which is a fruit of the Spirit, and believe all things written by their inspired brethren and deny none of them, ". . . in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." (2 Peter 3:16)

Who among those "that have obtained like precious faith" with the Apostle can read the eleventh chapter of Hebrews and not agree with him that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," so that all things written set before us a vast panorama of God's work from the beginning: Including the creation of the heaven and the earth and the fullness of them; the formation of man from the dust of the ground; God's purpose in the entrance of sin into the world, and the promise that the seed of the woman (as the Redeemer) should bruise the head of the serpent; the choice of Abraham and his seed through Isaac, as typical of the elect who should be redeemed; the sacrificial worship pointing to the one great sacrifice; the coming of Jesus into the world, showing that the kingdom of heaven was at hand; the fulfilling by Jesus of all things written in the law and prophets; the crucifixion of Jesus, and his resurrection and ascension into heaven; the promise of his coming again; the preaching of the gospel by the Lord's servants; gathering out of the world all that are His and giving them hope in Jesus as their anchorage while they live, with grace sufficient for their every need; and then the completion of God's purpose as He has revealed, which is the adoption of the redeemed into the family of God, by the redemption of their bodies from the ravages of mortality and conforming them to the glorified image of the Son of God in fully preparing them for all that He has prepared for them.

With the beautiful and complete revelation by the Father in his Word, and its manifestation in him, who can deny the inspiration of the Word of God?

Let men deny the inspiration of the Scriptures, or any portion of them, or change the express wording and meaning to suit their own natural inclinations, which a great majority do, God's word and purposes are unchangeable and nothing shall turn him aside, for even men and devils who deny him are completely in His hands.

We recently heard a group singing, "The whole wide world is in His hands." We do not know how many believed what they were singing, but it is true that everything in the whole wide world is in His hands. May we be given grace in these troubled times to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord; and to stand aloof from things spoken of by Paul in the third chapter of second Timothy. We feel that we shall never hear of any Primitive or Old School Baptists taking part or approving of demonstrations, marches, etc. for such would not be worthy of the name.

We pray that the Lord will continue to enable us to bring the *Signs of the Times* to you, ladened with the same doctrine and experiences as in the past; and that the brethren and friends will be mindful that their support is needed in writings, subscriptions, etc. May God be with each of you in the New Year to comfort you in tribulations, confirm your hope, and give you peace and joy in assembling yourselves together to his praise, honor and glory.

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

EDIFICATION

"Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." (Romans 14:9)

This being the beginning of a new year as well as the twenty-fifth anniversary of tenure on the *SIGNS* EDITORIAL STAFF, and in accordance to my *Salutatory* January, 1946: I am impressed to write upon the subject of *Edification.* The last paragraph of my salutatory was as follows:

"May I say in concluding my remarks, that it is not my purpose to read or write critically to find fault — but for edification. May each of us be blessed to edification instead of criticism. May God keep this periodical hewing close to its original prospectus and from heresy."

I have heretofore written on the subject, *Peace*: I shall now proceed with *Edification.*

An *edifice* is a completed building. *Edify* is translated from a word which means: *to build up.* Edification is the act of edifying, the state of being edified, moral improvement or benefit. The spiritual application of edification signifies the advancing, improving, adorning, and comforting the mind. When one is blessed to rightly divide the word of truth, stimulate the desire to know more of the goodness and mercy of God, and to answer perplexing questions which confuse minds, people are built up and edified. We are edified when we are blessed to spiritually engage in prayer, preaching, writing, conversing, reading the Scriptures, examining our own status, meditating, hearing the Gospel, attending church meetings, and participating in the ordinances of the Church. We cannot edify others spiritually unless we engage in spiritual conversations prompted by love, faith, and hope. In order to edify others we must possess the God-given qualities of humility, forgiveness, forbearance, and meekness. We must be possessed with the desire to promote the happiness of them with whom we associate. Would it be proper for us to try to prove to them whom we consider weak in the faith that we are stronger? We find the answer to this question in Romans 15:1-3, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let everyone of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me."

The Holy Ghost reasoned through the writings of Paul upon the command, "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations." (Romans 14:1) Striving over words of none effect but to the subverting of the hearers, is contrary to edification. It would be contrary to edification to

contend that a person has no faith because of being weak in the faith. Paul enumerates a number of conscientious differences of opinions among believers in the 14th Chapter of Romans. He reasons that God is the one Who received them and is able to make them stand. He makes it plain that we are not to judge another's servant. We are not to wage wars on differences of opinions. Our right role is to follow after the things which make for *peace,* and to *edify* another. The God of personal religious convictions and different experiences blesses each to joy in his own convictions but it is self-egotism that causes one to condemn others whose experiences and convictions are different. Self-pleasing always inflicts injuries and misery upon others. Others bear our infirmities when they sacrifice to be sympathetic to us, speak to us with pleasing voices, and have smiles for us. These things edify the weak in the faith. We are not to yield to one another simply because another wishes us to yield, but our object should be in yielding to manifest spiritual benevolence for other's good. When my neighbor sees that I am unselfish in yielding to his selfishness, it will speak louder and clearer to him than thousands of words containing plain statement and firm reasoning. Bearing the reproaches of them, who through their infirmities bring reproach even upon the church, will do more to correct their errors, supply their deficiency, and lend strength to their feebleness, — than to accuse the weak of their infirmities.

Sometimes in these accusations we offend the little ones. Christ reasons that it is better that a millstone be put upon our neck and that we be cast into the sea than to offend one of these little ones.

It is better that the strong in faith bear the reproaches of the infirmities of the weak in faith than to condemn them. Christ bore our reproaches, as it is written, "The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me." Stronger brethren ought to bear the reproaches of weaker brethren. We wish to better clarify our position on bearing the infirmities of the weak by relating a true story of a certain high school football team. The coach of this team for several years was a man who was proud and arrogant. Every time this team failed to win a game, the coach would snarl and scold them because of their weaknesses. The team knew they were weaker than the opposing team because they were defeated. He drove them as slaves and punished them because they did not win. Through these years they muchly dreaded to come into contact with the coach. The result was that the team's morale subsided. They were influenced by his manner to greatly fear the coach.

This tense condition caused by fear of the coach accounted for their defeat by many teams. At last a new coach was employed. He startled the team by beginning the "work-outs" and skirmishes by calling the squad together for prayer. The demeanor of the new coach was so different that the players did not work as hard as heretofore because the new coach did not rule them with severity. The first scheduled game was played and this team was badly defeated. They went into the "dug-out" immediately after the game expecting a firm lecture because they played so badly. They felt to deserve it. The team was greatly surprised when the coach said, "I do not blame you for not winning. I blame myself for your bad plays. If I had coached you properly, you would have played better. It is my fault. I assume the blame for this defeat." What an impact these statements made upon each and every member of the squad! This inspired them to love and highly respect their coach. They were no longer driven and influenced by slavish fear. Love and respect inspired them to pay close attention to their coach's instructions and suggestions. This coach and team have been improving since then and seldom ever lose a game. They have won the admiration and respect of their opponents and

fans.

You may say, I agree with the principle but how does it apply in practice? Jesus edified the Pharisees even in their weakness when they complained and murmured and accused Him of receiving, eating, and drinking with sinners and publicans. Read the 15th chapter of Luke. Jesus spoke in parables showing the difference between the Pharisees and Scribes on one hand and sinners and publicans on the other. In the first parable the ninety-nine sheep represented the Pharisees and Scribes; the one lost sheep represented the sinners and publicans. His second parable classes the Pharisees and Scribes as the nine pieces of silver while the one piece that was lost represented the sinners and publicans. The younger son in the third parable represented the sinners and publicans, the elder son represented the Pharisees and Scribes. Jesus recognized these murmurers and accusers as being already in the fold of sheep; already as pieces of silver in the right place; and as the son who had been at home. This kind of edification will turn murmuring into rejoicing.

I want you to note that Jesus did not hint that their murmuring and accusations against Him proved them to be goats. He shows in the parable of the father and two sons that even though the elder son pouted and complained at the good treatment the younger received, his father was kind and gentle toward his elder son. Listen at the kind words of the father as he answers the angry words of his eldest son: "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad; for this, thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found." The proverb: "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger" (Proverbs 15:1) surely was effectually used by this loving and merciful father. Soft, tender, loving answers to complaining, wrathful, and accusing statements turn away wrath. No doubt the kind, loving, and encouraging words of the father made the son to feel at home and to accord with the judgment of the father that he should rejoice instead of being jealous.

Let us look for a moment upon the father's expression, "This, thy brother, was dead and is alive again; and was lost, and is found." He was dead to the enjoyments, happiness, and unity abounding in his father's house. He had strayed from the communion, association, fellowship, and presence of his family. There is a difference between *existing* and *living*. I have heard many precious souls exclaim while engaging in spiritual fellowship, "This is my life!" There is rejoicing in the whole church when a little lamb is brought before it and received into its fellowship! What a joy it is to live in unison with God's humble poor in church capacity!! The elect of God are the family of God and none of them shall be eternally lost. No sheep shall ever be turned into a goat. A wolf may be in sheep's clothing. A sheep may look and act like a goat. Only God knows the difference.

God governs this world. He governs each and every one of us to the extent of the depths of our souls. True religion is so personal and individualistic that in a mysterious sense it is, *God and I*. I must not misuse spiritual gifts in questioning God concerning what He will have this man, or any other man to do. I trust it is the Holy Ghost conscience that tells me that I have been commissioned to follow God. I am not to inquire into what the Lord will have others to do. My concern should always be, what wilt thou have me to do? Read John 21:20-22. Jesus said to Peter, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? *Follow thou me.*"

We trust it will be edifying to deal prayerfully with the first two verses of the fifth chapter of Ephesians: "Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children: and walk in Love as Christ

also loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour." The manner in which we are to follow God is, "as dear children." A little child sees his father walking and making footprints in the sand. The child attempts to walk in his father's footsteps. He plants his little feet in the first step. His eyes behold his father's next footprint. He stretches out his little legs but cannot step so far. However, the child follows after his father's steps but must make his own print a few times before reaching the next step of his father. We are like this little boy. Even though we follow God and Christ Jesus we take so many carnal steps.

Jesus Christ made giant steps, that we are unable to make. Yet, we are to follow Him in love, making as long strides as His grace permits. Christ took great strides in walking in love, Christ leaps from Heaven to the virgin's womb. He leaps from the earth to Heaven. We may not follow Christ in all things but we are to follow Him in love. Paul says, "If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." (2 Cor. 8:12) We cannot follow God either in His wisdom, knowledge, power, or might. This He reserves unto Himself. We cannot be God. When Adam contended to be like God in knowledge, he was cast out of paradise. When King Nebuchadnezzar was so arrogant to be like God in power, he was cast out of his kingdom. God is not to be imitated in His finger of His miracles, nor in the arm of His power, nor in the brain of His wisdom, nor in the face of His majesty, but in the *bowels* of His mercy: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, *bowels* of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." (Colossians 3:12) Bowels mean the inward parts. There is an outer and inner man.

As I read Col. 3:12, I am reminded of the death of Elder W. C. King, who was pastor of Bush Harbor Church near Burlington, N. C. His characteristics of being merciful, kind, humble, meek, forbearing, and forgiving; all were so evident in his walk, conversation, and preaching, that the easiest thing brethren ever did was to love and adore him. Yea, it was easy for those people who did not agree with what he preached to esteem and highly respect him. It seems that Elder King was blessed always to edify. He was blessed to build up all those with whom he came in contact. He humbled himself before his brethren: therefore his brethren exalted him. His death had more impact upon me than any other death that occurred during last year. He was blessed to follow Jesus in meekness, lowliness, and love.

Many things perplex, confuse, and cause us to question the reason why. The great cyclone that caused hundreds of thousands to die in East Pakistan the latter part of last year was shocking to millions of people. Some of us may think that this act of Providence was because they were worse than we. Some of us may think that we are His elect; therefore, we should not fear His judgments. Read the first five verses of Luke, 13th chapter. We will readily see that the reason we do not perish is because our Lord is better to us in gracing us space for repentance. Jezebel was given space for repentance but she repented not. (Rev. 2:21) Jesus said, "except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Lord, enable us to realize and appreciate Thy forbearance!)

I believe that the calamities which befall others are ordained by God to the edification of His people. Such things are to teach us the necessity of repenting from wrong doing and to pray to God to enable us to walk godly in this present world. When we have learned to see in ourselves the bitter root of sin, we shall learn to acknowledge that whatever deadly fruit it bears in another, it might have borne the

same or worse, under like circumstances in ourselves.

When the *Signs of the Times* entered the homes of the Baptists in 1832 its editor fought against Arminianism, unscriptural organizations, and unscriptural practices of the churches. Many Baptists held these views of Arminius at that time. The purpose of the editor must have had great success. Now, I do not know any Primitive or Old School Baptist Church who hold to the doctrine Arminius advocated. Elder Beebe did not fight against distribution of Bibles but against The Bible Society as being church-sponsored. The fight was not against the discussion of the Scriptures in the churches under the leadership of ordained elders, but against separate organizations of Sunday Schools. He emphasized but one necessary Scriptural organization. These churches which are scriptural have but one head, lawgiver, commander, and judge. This one is the Lord Jesus Christ. *Signs of the Times* is itself a tract: therefore the editor was against the formation of tract societies — not against the distribution of tracts. Editors of the *Signs* yet speak against sin, but not the sinner.

Many changes have come since the beginning of this periodical. Many Old School Baptist churches that once flourished are now no more. Many places which were garden spots for Grace Baptists seem to be barren. Yet it is edifying to know that the vineyards of the Lord have been planted elsewhere. We who are blessed to live in these environments of God's spiritual favors should hold fast our profession lest we should find ourselves dwelling in a barren land. When history proves that the initiation of some new practice and the abandonment of other practices or theories cause confusion, divisions, and strife; other churches should profit by the mistakes made by others. Let us strive for unity and peace. Let us cease from striving over words, phrases, and statements which would tend to bring confusion.

When I entered the *Signs* staff twenty-five years ago, Elder Dodson was its editor and owner. Elder Vaughn was the senior associate editor. Both of them have passed from time into eternity. Elder Griffin and I have changed our place of residence. Elder Dodson gave the paper to the Primitive Baptists and it was incorporated and a board of trustees was formed, according to the information I have. I am glad that the present editors do not wage wars or enter into debates and wranglings but devote their time and efforts in positively preaching and writing the simple Bible Truth. They are blessed to contend earnestly for the truth once delivered to the saints. May God grant that our foremost object will be to preach the truth. The preaching of Jesus Christ and Him crucified will never divide God's humble poor. Satan is the tool in God's hand who causes our enemies to put up bars declaring non-fellowship for those who manifest humility. Satan will run from humility.

Time demands that I close. I do so by wishing for each and every one of you a happy and prosperous 1971.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

WHAT IS FAITH?

Webster defines the word as signifying "Belief; assent of the mind to the truth of what is declared by another, resting on his authority and veracity, without other evidence." And what he denominates *Evangelical faith, justifying and saving faith,* he says is the "assent of the mind to the truth of Divine revelation, on the authority of God's testimony, accompanied with a cordial assent of the will, or approbation of the heart." And this definition is established by the colleges and universities of our country generally, and endorsed by all Arminians and legalists everywhere. But the definition of the term

as used in the scriptures, as defined by the inspired apostles, differs very widely from the popularly received definitions of men. The apostle John speaks of it as a child from heaven, born of God, and inspired with heavenly life, and triumphing over the world. "For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world: even our faith." That faith which is the creature of the carnal mind of man, the mere assent of the judgment of our fleshly mind, although cordially received and confidently relied upon, is but, at best, a creature of our own, born of the flesh, and can no more overcome the world, than can the flesh itself; because no stream can rise above its fountain.

Differing then, in parentage and birth as widely as the distance between earth and heaven, these two kinds of faith have no vital relationship with each other. The faith produced by the convictions of our natural judgment, however cordially assented to or endorsed by the will of man, is nevertheless a child of earth, which, could it overcome the world, would overcome itself, as it is an element of the world. But that faith which is of God, and in God, is the faith of the Son of God; and the Lord Jesus Christ is himself the Author and the finisher of it. This is the faith of God's elect. By it, all the saints are distinguished from the world, as none can possess it unless they be born of God, and as without it no man can please God.

We do not understand that the birth of faith is distinct from the birth of the saints; but an element of the new, heavenly and spiritual birth, which is not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man; but of God. That birth which is of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever; and, therefore, unlike the flesh, which is grass, and the goodliness thereof, which is the flower of grass, for they must wither and fall away; but the word of the Lord, the source, fountain and origin of true faith, liveth and abideth forever. This true and living faith is, then, an element of the heaven-born child of God, and only by it can we overcome the world, the flesh and the devil; only by it can we approach the throne of grace, draw nigh unto God, or cry Aba Father. For he that cometh unto God must believe that He is, and the belief in God's being and perfections is the act of vital faith.

This heaven-begotten and heaven-born faith, is *the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.* It is more than a shadow; for a shadow is not the substance of anything; though shadows do prove the existence of substances which cast them, and to some extent may portray the outline or shape of the substance of which they are the shadows, yet they have no substance in themselves. Thus in the ceremonial law, the meats, drinks, sabbath days and new moons, were the shadow of good things to come; but the body, or substance, is Christ. And as the faith of the gospel is the faith of Jesus Christ, and as the righteousness which alone can justify us before God, is by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved us and given himself for us, so it must be a substance, in distinction from all shadows, passions or exercises of the natural mind, or energies of unrenewed men. The christian's faith and hope are inseparably associated, and must operate together in the spiritual exercises of the saints while in their pilgrimage state. Faith is not the substance of hope, but it is the substance of things hoped for, by the christian. The things hoped for by the new man are spiritual, heavenly and eternal, for it enters within the veil, and is fixed on things which are not seen by the natural perceptions of men.

Nothing short of the faith of the Son of God can make real, or give substance to, the things thus hoped for. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered the heart of man the things which God hath prepared

for them that love him; but he hath revealed them unto us by his spirit; and all the revelations of the spirit to us are made to our faith. Hypocrites may hope, but their hope shall perish; for it is ideal, having no substance. But the hope of the christian is a reality, and faith points to Christ as the Hope of Israel, and the Saviour thereof, and gives reality to the things hoped for; and until hope shall yield to fruition, it is the substance of the things hoped for, as well as the evidence of things not seen; of eternal things, which are imperceptible to the eye or intelligence of unregenerated men. "While," says Paul, "we look not on the things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." We could not hope, in a gospel sense, for spiritual and eternal things which are not seen, if faith did not present them; hence faith is the substance on which hope is sustained, and just in proportion to the development of faith in us, will be the steadfastness of our hope, so far as christian experience is concerned.

When our faith is not in manifest exercise in our hearts, our hope flags, and we approach the borders of despair, and in great anxiety cry out, My hope is perished from the Lord! But the renewed manifestation of our faith, obtaining victory over the world, says, Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God. The faith that is born of God will lay hold of and endorse no other doctrine than that of God our Saviour, it will point out no other path for the saints to walk in but that which Christ has marked out by his precepts and examples, and it will admit as genuine no other experience than that which is led by the Spirit of God. And while all other kinds of faith may be attainable by the powers of the flesh, and when attained, can join affinity with other kinds of faith, that of which we speak can only come from God, and never can be known or felt by any while in an unquickened state, and when implanted in the heart, will not amalgamate with the faith of men nor of devils.

Another peculiarity of this faith is that it will endure trials of the greatest severity, and God has ordained that it shall be tried. All the sore afflictions, tribulations, persecutions and temptations to which the saints of God are subject, are designed for the trial of our faith, and when it shall be sufficiently tried, they who possess it shall come forth as gold, purified and refined, the power of faith shall be known by all the saints, in its victories over the world, the flesh and the devil. It shall triumph over death, and vanquish the gloom and terror of the grave. As in times past it has quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness made strong, caused the saints to wax valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens, women receiving their dead raised to life again, and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might receive a better resurrection. Others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonments: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins, and goat skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy. And what shall we more say? for time would fail to tell of Gideon, of Barak, and of Sampson, and of Jepthae, of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets.

This invincible, almighty faith by which all these victories were gained, is directly ascribed, in this very connection, to our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Author and the Finisher of it. Into the unity of this faith all the saints of God thus far developed have come; and into it all the redeemed of the Lord shall ultimately be brought; for, There is one faith, even as there is one Lord, one baptism, one God and

Father of all, one body, one spirit and one hope of our calling.

Having briefly treated on the nature, the origin, the peculiarities, the power and vitality of this faith, and labored to discriminate between it and all other kinds of faith, we will close by enquiring whether we, dear brethren, are in possession of it, and by pointing out some of the reliable evidences of its existence in our hearts.

The apostle has said, "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith." How important is this investigation; in nothing can we be more deeply interested. Without this faith, we may please men, we may gain the applause of the world, we may gratify the lusts of our carnal nature; but without it we cannot please God. In its absence we cannot know God, nor approach him. Only by it can we rest upon the provisions and gracious promises of the gospel, find access to the throne of grace, understand the truth, endure the trials of the way, quench the fiery darts of Satan, overcome the world, have communion with God, fellowship with his saints, or finally pass the chilling terrors of death and the grave without fear or dread. What are the evidences of its existence in our hearts? Of the many which God has graciously given, we can at this time only mention a few:

First. The faith of the Son of God in our hearts is always associated with hope and charity. Now abideth Faith, Hope and Charity, these three. If, then, we have the faith, just as its power is manifested in us, to the same extent will our hope be established in God, and our charity, or love, flow to God and to all who bear his image. The love of God shed abroad in our hearts will center in God as its Author and source, in his people, his truth, his government, his laws, his ordinances, and all the privileges of his church.

Second. Having this faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, or, in other words, are reconciled to God, rejoice that he is God, that he has all power in heaven and in earth; that he reigns supreme over all beings, all worlds, and all events, that he has numbered the hairs of our head, and will not suffer one of them to fall unbidden of him to the ground.

Third. If we have this faith, we shall learn by experience that we cannot control it, exercise or enlarge it; but on the contrary, it will assuredly control, exercise and govern us.

Fourth. Having this faith, we shall assuredly also have doubts, fears, trials, temptations and great conflicts with the world, the flesh and Satan, for our faith must be tried, that its power may be understood and appreciated.

Fifth. If our faith be of the operation of God, it will give us such views of the perfections, power and majesty of God, that we shall abhor ourselves, in dust and ashes, while we admire, gaze and wonder at the amazing power and grace displayed in our salvation.

Sixth. This faith will lead us to trust alone in God, for our eternal salvation, and for the salvation of all his redeemed family, while it will effectually destroy in us all confidence in the flesh. The more we know of God, by faith, the greater will be our confidence to resign our present interests and our eternal destiny to his hands, and beg that we may not be left to be filled like Ephraim, with our own ways.

In proportion as we feel the reigning power of this faith in our hearts, we shall be ready, willing and anxious to honor, praise, revere, obey and glorify God. It will lead us to love the assembling of the saints, to frequent the house of prayer, to pray for the prosperity of Zion, and to follow after those things which make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another. And under its power each of its recipients will be led to esteem others better than himself, And although we may feel poor, and weak, and altogether unworthy of a place or name among the children of God, we shall feel an irresistible drawing of heart and soul to be

in their company and fellowship.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, June 15, 1860.)

"THE MISSING DAY"

On May 1 Bob Gooding answered a "Contact 8" request on Channel 8 News that prompted hundreds of viewers to request a copy of a script entitled "The Missing Day." Mrs. Donald Maples asked "Contact 8" why an article such as the one she included with her request never made news on television or the larger newspapers. Mrs. Maples' text impressed Bob Gooding to such an extent that he decided to read it and gave appropriate credits and thanks to the Duncanville, Plainview, Longview and Post newspapers.

It concerns a missing day in time discovered and related by Harold Hill, president of the Curtis Engine Company in Baltimore, Maryland and a consultant in the space program. Mr. Hill stated that he thought one of the most amazing things that God has for us today happened to our astronauts and space scientists at Green Belt, Maryland. They were trying to determine the position of the sun, moon and planets 100 years and 1,000 years from now. In order to do this they had to plot the orbits through past centuries.

They ran the computer measurement back and forth over the centuries and suddenly it came to a halt. The computer signaled that there was something wrong either with the information fed into it or with the results compared to the standards. They called in the service department to check it out and found nothing technically wrong. The computer still came up with the same discrepancy . . . a day was missing in space in elapsed time. The scientists were dumfounded. There was no answer.

One of the team remembered a reference to the sun standing still in the Bible. Upon checking, they found in the Book of Joshua a pretty "ridiculous" statement for anybody who has "common sense." According to the Scripture, Joshua was concerned because he was surrounded by the enemy and if darkness fell they would overpower him, so Joshua asked the Lord to make the sun stand still. "So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day." (Joshua 10:13). There was the missing day!

They checked the computers going back to the time it was written and found it was close but not close enough. The elapsed time that was missing back in Joshua's day was 23 hours and 20 minutes . . . not a whole day. They again read the passage and there it said, "about (approximately) a whole day." This still did not account for the other missing 40 minutes. The 40 minutes had to be found because in projecting spacial orbits it would be multiplied many times over.

Again the man remembered somewhere in the Bible that it said the sun went backwards. In 2nd Kings, Chapter 20, Hezekiah, on his deathbed, was visited by the prophet Isaiah who told him that he was not going to die. Hezekiah did not believe him and asked for a sign as proof. Isaiah said, ". . . shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees?" Hezekiah replied, "It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees." (2 Kings 20:9-10) Ten degrees is exactly 40 minutes!

Twenty-three hours and twenty minutes in Joshua, plus forty minutes in 2nd Kings make the missing twenty-four hours the space travelers had to log in the logbook as being the missing day in the universe.

(The above most interesting account was submitted to us for publication by a subscriber. Bible skeptics may yet have to submit as scientific discoveries are made.

We give appropriate credits and thanks to all mentioned above and to WFAA, Channel 8, Dallas, Fort Worth, Texas. — Editors)

OBITUARIES

SALLY ANN EVANS

Our dearly beloved sister, Sally Ann Evans, a member of Pittman's Grove Church near Kenly, N. C., fell asleep in Jesus May 4, 1970. She was born January 5, 1883; and was married the 5th Sunday in August, 1902 to J. T. Evans. To this union were born eight children: five boys and three girls. Her husband was also a faithful member of Pittman's Grove Church, having united the 2nd Sunday in August, 1926, and was baptized that day with his wife who had united with the church the previous day. Brother Evans preceded her to the grave on March 27, 1946.

Sister Evans was a very faithful member in attendance, and her life was a living example of her profession. We all keenly miss her presence. Her faith and hope rested on the crucifixion of Jesus. Our sympathy goes out to her family and the church.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, the writer of this sketch; and she was laid to rest in the Pittman's Grove Cemetery beside her husband.

Done by request of the church and family.

W. E. Turner

WRIGHT BRYAN

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our dearly beloved brother, Wright Bryan. He was born July 6,

1891, and died August 16, 1970.

He was received into the fellowship of Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church, of Duplin County, N. C., May 14, 1961, and remained a faithful member as long as he lived. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace and loved the church and people in general.

Brother Bryan is survived by his faithful companion, Sister Annie Raynor Bryan; one daughter: Sister Lila Bryan Andrews; two sons: Vernie Bryan and Harrel Bryan. Also eight grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder L. L. Yopp, and Elder Harmon Brown at Sand Hill Church; and he was laid to rest in the Cedar Fork Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

It was resolved that a copy of this be sent to the family; one to be recorded in the Church Book, and one be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family.

Committee:
John L. Houston
Lloyd Kennedy
Brantley Kennedy

NANNIE LOU EVANS

Sister Nannie Lou Evans was born September 28, 1911, and passed away June 27, 1970. She was the daughter of William and Sarah Meadows Duke.

She was married to Willie K. Evans January 20, 1930; and to this union ten children were born: Willie Lou Cole, Stem, N. C.; Naomi Lee Brogden, Oxford, N. C.; Sarah Duke Newton, Butner, N. C.; Edith Dale Ramsey, Stem, N. C.; John William, Nelson Brent, Roy Lee, of Stem, and Willie Evans, Jr., Durham, N. C.; Elsie Lee Overby, Stem, N. C.; Eunice Estelle Hudson and Emma Mae Duke, Stem, N. C.

Sister Evans united with J. H. Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church August 9, 1969, and proved a faithful member, filling her seat in a wheel chair.

Her funeral was conducted June 28, 1970 by her pastor, Elder Donald Smith, and Elder Wallis Smith. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery. The flowers were many and beautiful — a token of the esteem in which she was held.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Memorial be placed on the church record, a copy be sent to the family, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times*.

Done by order of conference the second Saturday in July, 1970.

Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
O. Y. Clayton, Clerk
Annie C. Gregory, Asst. Clerk

ANNIE LOUISE McCOLL BLACK

My dear wife was born at Winnipeg, Canada, on September 12, 1895, and died quite suddenly in our home at Okanagan Centre, British Columbia, on July 16, 1970, following a series of strokes which started November 3, 1969, — also many years of suffering from arthritis. She was the youngest of nine children born to Brother Ebenezer McColl, and was a granddaughter of Elder William L. Beebe. Sister Annie was baptized in April, 1910, by Elder S. H. Durand at Southampton, Pa., while only 14 years of age.

We were married at Winnipeg, Manitoba, on March 28, 1917; and of our five children four survive at this time: Flora Leslie (Mrs. George Snowdon), of Okanagan Centre, B. C.; Gilbert Duncan Black, St. Thomas, Ontario; Muriel Elisabeth (Betty) (Mrs. Lloyd Blackman), of Regina, Saskatchewan; and William Theodore Black (Ted) of Loveland, Colorado. Our oldest son, Lieutenant James Wallace Black, was killed in Italy May 30, 1944, while serving in the second World War. She is also survived by her oldest brother, Brother Gilbert Beebe McColl, of Winnepeg, Manitoba; fourteen grandchildren, two great grandchildren, and three step great grandchildren.

Her funeral was held from The Towers Funeral Home, St. Thomas, Ontario, on July 21st to the Covenanted Old School Baptist Church at Dunwich, Ontario, where services were conducted by Elder George Ruston and Elder D. Alex McColl, who also conducted the graveside services at the McColl Cemetery at Eagle, Ontario, where she was buried close to her father and mother, and a sister and brother, there to await the glorious return of her beloved Lord and Saviour.

She was carried to her resting place by two sons, Duncan Black and Theodore Black; two grandsons, James Black and Christopher Black; and two cousins, Samuel McColl and Fergus McColl.

All glory and praise to our Almighty God and Father who doeth all things after the counsel of his own will.

Her bereaved and lonely husband,
James W. Black

(Brother James Black has asked us to add a little to this obituary. His wife, Annie, was a dear sister in Jesus Christ, and although we have laid away her bodily remains, we believe her spirit has gone to heaven, and is

rejoicing in being with Jesus Christ her Saviour.

Esther Ruston)

W. D. ADKINS

Brother W. D. Adkins, a very dear member of Rocky Swamp Church, North Carolina, passed away in March, 1970. I knew him all my life, and have always called him "Mr. Adkins." We miss him so much at church, for he was faithful as long as he was able to attend. He was so good in helping to keep the building and yard in good shape, always sending plenty of help to do the work. At one time he gave our little church three nice chairs, but someone broke in and took them. We could replace the chairs but they did not mean the same.

Brother Adkins is survived by four daughters: Mrs. Naomi Harris, Mrs. Ethel Craddock, Mrs. Marie Berry, and Mrs. Mary Nance; and by three sons: Lonnie, Ruffus, and Julius. Also by several grandchildren and great grandchildren. Their dear mother passed away in March, 1963. She was a faithful member also. We miss them both, but have a sweet hope that they are at rest with God, whom they loved.

Written by one who remembers them always,

Mrs. J. L. Smith
Littleton, N. C.

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

J. J. WATSON, Pastor

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 10:30 A. M.

V. C. HARTZOG, Pastor

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

A. B. CHUMNEY
D. W. COLLINS, Pastors

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., six miles SE. of Sulligent, Alabama.

C. C. HAND, Pastor
5840 Court O C P
Birmingham, Ala.

MACEDONIA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located one and one-half miles Southwest of Sulligent, Alabama, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M. All lovers of the truth are invited.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
HOUSTON PITTS, Clerk
Steens, Miss.

MT. ZION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each 4th Sunday at 11 A. M. about 10 miles N. W. of Birmingham just off of 78 Highway in Westwood, 2601 Forrestdale Blvd.

H. C. MOON
C. C. HAND, Pastors

OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., 6 miles S. W. of Winfield, Ala.

C. C. HAND, Pastor

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each second Sunday afternoon at 2 P. M., ten miles SW. of Fayette, Alabama.

C. C. HAND
R. W. RHODES, Pastors

ELAM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located two miles North of Goshen, Pike County, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 o'clock.

J. P. MORGAN, Pastor
A. C. CARTER, Clerk
1335 Avalon Lane,
Montgomery 6, Ala.

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.

C. C. HAND
R. W. RHODES, Pastors

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

V. C. HARTZOG, Pastor

WRITES CREEK CHURCH, 5 miles south of Slocomb, Ala., meets each fourth Sunday

and Saturday before.

E. B. HUGHES
B. A. ANDERSON
J. A. TEW, Moderators
J. T. COLLINS, Clerk
Slocomb, Ala.

MT. CARMEL CHURCH, Coffee Springs, Alabama, meets each first Sunday 11 A. M.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

PILGRIM REST CHURCH, located five miles north of Fordyce, Arkansas (about ¾ mile off Hy. 167, and located near Barnes Lumber Co.) meets each third Sunday at 10:30.

W. W. HUDSON, JR. Pastor

NAOMI OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, six miles south of McKenzie, Alabama, meets the second Sundays in December, February, April, etc.

ELDER W. C. STANLEY, Pastor
Duncanville, Ala., Rt. 1
E. C. WEAVER, Clerk
Rt. 5, Box 47, Andalusia, Ala.

SHILOH OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, seven miles Northeast of Andalusia, Alabama, meets the second Sundays in July, September, November, etc.

ELDER W. C. STANLEY, Pastor
Duncanville, Ala., Rt. 1
NORA LEE McLEOD, Clerk
Red Level, Ala., Rt. 3

MT. ZION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located 14 miles south of Fayette, Ala., meets each first Sunday at 2 P. M.

W. L. NORRIS, Pastor
1414 8th St., Tuscaloosa, Ala.
EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.

MT. CARMEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located southeast of Millport, Ala., meets second Sunday afternoons at 2 P. M.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.

PLEASANT RIDGE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located at Moores Bridge, Ala., meets each 4th Sunday at 11 A. M.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.

SALEM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located 6 miles south of Gordo, Ala., meets each 4th Sunday at 2 P. M.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.
W. L. NORRIS, Co-Pastor
1414 8th Street
Tuscaloosa, Ala.

MOUNTAIN FORK CHURCH, Madison County, Ala., meets each first and third Sundays at 11:00 A. M.

R. C. SIMMONS
R. H. HALE, Pastors
JAMES COLBERT, Clerk

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

WHITE WATER OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located about one mile northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, meets each fourth Sunday afternoon at 2:30 P. M. The annual Homecoming is still held the first Sunday in July and Saturday before, with services beginning at 10:30.

DAVID E. TURNER, Pastor

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Compton, California, meets each fourth Sunday at the home of L. W. Langwell, 12812 S. Williams Street.

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in the United States), meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is located one mile south of Newark, Delaware, just off of Highway 896.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

NEW HARMONY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Hiram, Ga., meets every second Sunday at 11 o'clock.

O. J. CROKER, Pastor
C. C. HAND, Asst. Pastor
G. E. RAGSDALE, Clerk

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located at 5th and East Park Street, Weiser, Idaho, meets each 4th Sunday at 11 o'clock. Address any communications to:

ERNEST J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
FLOSSIE ATTEBERY, Clerk
Rt. 1, Box 202,
Hermiston, Oregon 97838

PLEASANT VALLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas. Meets with Mrs. Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C. on each second Sunday.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE LOST CREEK CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, meets first Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Kentucky, ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton, on Grayson Highway. Leave U. S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

NEW HOPE CHURCH (better known as Lick Creek) meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Kentucky.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE ZION CHURCH OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS, Mayfield, Kentucky, meets first Sunday each month at 11 A. M., on South 7th Street.

J. N. DARNELL, Pastor

NEW HOPE CHURCH, Spearsville, La. meets first Sundays and Saturday afternoons before at 3:30.

J. L. SMITH, Pastor
C. C. BARRON, Clerk

LIBERTY HILL CHURCH, located six miles northeast of Farmerville, La., ¼ mile east of Farmerville-Marion Highway, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30. Services are also held on each second Sunday at 10:30.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

UNION CHURCH, located near Linville, La., meets each third Sunday at 10:30 and on Saturday afternoon before at 2:30 P. M.

DAVID E. TURNER, Pastor

BETHEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located three miles N. E. of Steens, Miss. on Millport Road, meets third Sunday afternoons at 2 P. M.

H. C. MOON, Pastor
Hanceville, Ala.
EULIE McCOOL, Asst. Pastor
Steens, Miss.

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Baltimore, Maryland, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Street, near Calvert.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on Falls Road about twenty miles north of Baltimore.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

HOPEWELL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Hopewell, N. J., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. All visitors are welcome.

ARTHUR R. WARREN, Pastor
MARY L. HELLINGS, Clerk
4 Maple Lane
Pennington, N. J. 08534

OLIVE AND HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Shokan, N. Y., meets each 2nd Sunday at 2:00 P. M. March through and including November.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
DEACON E. K. ADSIT, Clerk

THE WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Warwick, Orange County, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are held at A. R. Vail's home, 55 Maple Ave., Warwick at 11 A. M.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

THE MIDDLEBURG OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH meets at the home of Deacon Woodrow W. Bellinger, Duanesburg, N. Y. on fifth Sundays when the Lord so wills.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
BEATRICE E. HOCKING, Clerk
419 Toll St., Scotia, N. Y.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, New York City, meets every first and third Sundays at McBurney Branch Y. W. C. A. 215 W. 23rd Street, corner of 7th Ave. (Elevator to 2nd floor.) 11 A. M. — 1:30 P. M.

All visitors are welcome.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

THE WILSON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Wilson, N. C., meets each second Sunday at 3 P. M., and Saturday evening before at 7:30 P. M. The location is on the corner of Green and Jackson Streets.

D. B. STOKES, Pastor
MRS. BETTIE RICHARDSON, Clerk

FALLS OF TAR RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Rocky Mount, N. C., meets each second Sunday and Saturday before. Quarterly meetings March, June, September and December.

D. B. STOKES, Pastor
NINA PEARSON, Clerk

MOONS CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Providence, N. C. off Route 86, on Park Springs Road, meets each third Sunday morning at 11 A. M.

KENNETH KEY, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:00 P. M.

C. M. HAGGOOD, Pastor
ANA STEWART, Clerk
Granite, Okla. 73547

BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin, Oregon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes. Address communications to Lloyd Spikes, Elgin, Oregon.

ERNEST ATTEBERY, Pastor
SPENCER BURCH, Clerk

ROCK SPRINGS OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, meets each first Sunday at 10:30. The meeting house is located on highway 222, about one-quarter mile of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets each 5th Sunday from May through September; and meets at Needmore, Pa., on 5th Sundays from October through April, with all day meeting the 2nd Sunday in October.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
ORIEN MELLOTT, Clerk
McConnellsburg, Pa.

THE FIRST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH of Memphis, Tenn., meets each Sunday at 10:30 A. M., except the first three weeks in October when we dismiss for associations in the area. The church is located on Andrews Road, one block north of Highway 70 in the Ellendale Community, 7 miles east of Memphis.

H. R. PRINCE, Co-Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis
C. S. YOUNG, Co-Pastor
807 Pope St., Memphis
RICHARD H. CAMPBELL, Clerk

CANE CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and is located nine miles Southwest of Martin, Tennessee. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
J. B. JONES, Clerk
Rt. 1, Martin, Tenn.

BORDEAUX PREDESTINARIAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Nashville, Tenn., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. The church is located on the old Hydes Ferry Road in Bordeaux, in Nashville. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE WALNUT FORK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Cottage Grove, Tennessee, meets on the second Sunday of each month.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor
R. L. VEAZEY, SR., Clerk

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Sharps Chapel, Tenn., meets at 11 A. M. each second Sunday. We are located about fifteen miles north of Maynardville, Tenn., on Big Valley Road. There is a sign on the main highway showing where to turn.

JOHN WILDER, Moderator
N. E. LAY, Clerk

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, Houston, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before 10:30 A. M. Church is located at 815 Little York Road between Highway 75 and East Texas Freeway 59.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
IRENE WISENBAKER, Clerk

MT. ZION CHURCH, Rt. 2, Box 23, Weslaco, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.; and each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. seven miles West of Weslaco, on highway 83.

JOE L. HAMRICK, Pastor
E. B. AULT, Clerk

SARDIS CHURCH, Amarillo, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 10:30, in the home of E. J. Parsons, 1711 Lincoln Street.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, has moved their meeting place to 3629 8th Avenue. They meet each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Take College Ave. bus to Butler and Ryon; go one block West, then half block North to church.

C. U. LANDERS, Pastor

THE ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST CHURCH, Lawn, Texas, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
MRS. NOLA STEWART, Clerk

AN ARM OF PILGRIM REST CHURCH, meets each second Sunday and Saturday night before at Earth, Texas.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
A. A. CHAMBERS, Clerk

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets on the second and fourth Sundays of each month at 10 A. M., in the meeting house at intersection of Highways 123 and 87. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

GERALD D. SHIPMAN, Pastor
LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk

THE OLD SALEM CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS, four miles South of Teague, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

SAINTS REST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each Sunday at 10:30 A. M., at 2710 Engle Street.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
D. G. CONNELL, Clerk

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Winnsboro, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
E. M. REEVES, Clerk

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30.

LLOYD WALL, Pastor
GUY SISK, Clerk

The churches of which Elder E. J. Lambert is pastor meet as follows:

PHARON, meets first Sunday morning and Saturday night before, 5 miles NE Hawkins, Texas.

REHOBETH, meets second Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles N ElDorado, Arkansas.

NEILA RYAN, Clerk
1601 N. Emmett
ElDorado, Arkansas

BETHEL, meets third Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles NE ElDorado, Arkansas.

JEAN H. BURNES, Clerk
606 N. Parkway,
ElDorado, Arkansas

GOOD HOPE, meets fourth Sunday morning and Saturday morning before 7 miles NE Winnsboro, Texas.

GERTRUDE JONES, Clerk
905 Y Drive
Winnsboro, Texas

Everyone welcomed.

ELDER E. J. LAMBERT, Pastor
306 Richardson St.
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located on Centreville Road, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia.

ARTHUR L. CARTER, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is near Lucketts, about eight miles north of Leesburg, Va.

The brethren and friends will please note that the meetings at Broad Run Church, near Poolesville, Maryland, have been discontinued; and that the meetings are now held each third Sunday at New Valley, as shown above.

L. D. DUKE, Clerk
Charlestown, W. Va.

MT. ZION CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, Virginia. on Route 50, between Washington and Winchester, Virginia.

MRS. RAY HAWLING, Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are aways glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Manassas 368-4857.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 8:00 P. M., Fairmont Park, 2023 Tidewater Drive.

C. N. BUNN, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Qualla Road, Chesterfield County, Virginia, meets each first Sunday at 10 A. M. Following are directions to the meeting house: South from Richmond at McGuire Circle, take Rt. 360 nine miles to "Longest" Service Station; turn left and go one mile, and turn right on No. 363 one mile to church.

ELDER C. N. BUNN, Pastor
MRS. WM. L. LEE, Clerk
4407 Clairton Rd.
Richmond, Va. 23234

DAN RIVER CHURCH, between Danville, Va. and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville, Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday night before, on Bradley Road.

H. W. WRAY, Pastor
R. T. HOLLEY, Clerk

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each first Sunday at 11:00 o'clock. This church is located seven miles west of Gretna, Virginia on 605 one-half mile from Route 40. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
RUTH MATTOX, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Chatham, Va.

BELLVIEW PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday night before at 7:30. This church is located near Cave Springs about four miles from Roanoke, Virginia, one mile from 221. All visitors are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
J. A. SOWDER, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Salem, Va.

SANDY LEVEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each third Sunday afternoon at 2:30. This church is located on Route 635 about 5 miles south from Hardy, Va. 10 miles from Vinton, Va. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each fourth Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday before at 7:30 o'clock. This church is located on highway 623 about two miles from Fairystone Park. All visitors are welcome. No Saturday meetings during winter months.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
CLAUDE R. HOPKINS, Clerk
908 Myrtle Rd.
Martinsville, Va.

BETHEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, of Predestinarian Faith, of Mossyrock, Washington, meets each 3rd Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday before at 2:00 o'clock. For information write the Clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. OPAL HUNTTING, Clerk
Silver Creek, Wash. 98585

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, Naches, Washington, meets at 11:00 A. M. each second Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MARGUERITE SIMPSON, Clerk
1306 Fairview Ave.
Yakima, Wash. 98901

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 139 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1971 NO. 2

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/70
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ENJOYED THE ASSOCIATIONS

1231 Pecan,
Channelview, Texas 77530

Dear Editors,

We have been blessed with joys beyond measure at Associations this year. I have attended the South Arkansas, South Ouchita, Sulphur Fork, and Pleasant Valley Associations. We thank God for the visiting Elders, who traveled many miles to be with us all in the meetings. God blessed the Elders to preach, by one power, in one Spirit, one doctrine that is revealed by the Holy Spirit. These things are beautiful to the children of God, blessed with eyes to see, ears to hear the joyful sound, and a heart to understand.

I pray that the Lord will keep us humble and peace may continue in the Church. We know not our path, but have a blessed hope in the One with all power, all wisdom, the One who never learns, never needs to learn anything, for He is the giver of every good and perfect gift. To measure the work of God would be to limit His power. Since none of His works are measurable by man, may He bless us to declare what has been revealed to us.

I am sending a check for one year's subscription. Please send the **Signs** to Mr. and Mrs. Marlin R. Hibbs, 2309 Raymond, Pasadena, Texas.

May God continue to bless you in publishing the **Signs.** May he bless the writers with grace to stand firm, bringing the Gospel. May we be blessed to receive. Yes, we shall receive all that lays in store for us. The Lord is the author and finisher of our faith. This author wrote a book called the Lamb's book of Life. Yes, this author is God, the Father. God the Son redeemed all that was chosen. God the Holy Spirit brings to life all that have been redeemed. God the Holy Spirit comforts His children from time to time while living here, according to the will of God. He has promised to never leave or forsake us. He that has begun a good work in us shall perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. All His works are good. All good works are His. Charge the sin and shortcomings to my flesh.

I hope a brother,
Earl W. Hall

FEELS UNWORTHY

P. O. Box 9134
Springhill, W. Va. 25309

Dear Brethren:

I see that my subscription expires with this issue, so am sending money order for one year; the remainder to be used as needed.

Dear Brethren, I know within myself I am not worthy to call you brethren, but I hope in the precious Lord Jesus is my fitness. Sometimes I am made to feel that I am not fit to be in their company, and I desire to be at their feet at all times, for if one of them the least of all. The blessed God has been gracious to me all the years of my life, and why, I am not able to understand - only that it seemed good in His sight. If a child

of the most high God, surely the most disobedient of all. The poet wrote, "God works in a mysterious way his wonders to perform."

I have never met any of the Editors, but it seems I have always known you; and, if not deceived. I love you all, and all the writers in the *Signs*. I love to read the writings for they tell my experience better than I can. So I enjoy the *Signs very much*. The love I feel for you brethren I hope is the love of God shed abroad in my very soul.

Yours in hope of eternal life.
Elder John J. Smith, Sr.

WRITTEN UNTO THOSE OF LIKE FAITH

"For by grace are you saved, through faith and that not of yourselves; it is a gift of God." (Ephesians 2:8)

Simon Peter begins his second Epistle like this: "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 1:1)

A much quoted, but sometimes misquoted, passage of scripture is recorded in 2 Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promises as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Was the apostle throwing this out to the world, or was he writing it to those whom he addresses at the beginning of this epistle? It goes without saying that he was writing this only to those that he addressed in the beginning: "Them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." It is not possible to make the saying of the apostle to mean anything else.

We find in the beginning of the eleventh chapter of Hebrews that it reads: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Doesn't it stand to reason that if you have faith you will receive something that you hope for, you must have evidence you will receive it. We find recorded in this chapter that several of the old prophets accomplished seemingly impossible things, and were made to see and understand other things that God himself did.

The writer begins chapter twelve by saying, "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Since faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen, we must have the evidence that we will receive that substance or we have no faith.

The Apostle Paul in pleading his case before Agrippa, related his experience on the road to Damascus: "And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who are thou Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto you for this purpose: to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee. Delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles, unto whom I now send thee: to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. That they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." There are many instances of this faith which is in Jesus:

He being the author and finisher of our faith if we have any. It is seen in this 18th verse of the 26th chapter of Acts: "That they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith in me." This was Jesus speaking, which shows where faith comes from, since He is the author and finisher of our faith.

It is noted also that Jesus said, "Sanctified by faith in me." It takes a power above the person being sanctified, to do the sanctifying. In this case it was the faith that was in Jesus Christ. In Hebrews 10:1, we see that the writer, after enumerating the various things that were done under the law, says, "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect." So Jesus Christ by offering himself a sacrifice and the ransom price, has by His one offering perfected them forever that are sanctified. It takes faith to believe in Jesus — and He has to supply that faith.

My faith gets very low sometimes, and my hope almost vanishes, but there are times when it is so great that I would not trade it for the world and the fullness thereof. I am getting up in age and am afflicted with arthritis, and there are days I just can't work as I would like to. I haven't given up and do not want to as long as I can work at all. I realize, as Paul told Timothy, that the time of my departure is not far off. I cannot say with the assurance that Paul did, that I have fought a good fight, and have kept the faith, but I have a hope that there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give at that day; and not to me only but unto all them that love his appearing.

Dear Editors of the Signs, I am sending this to you to do with as you see fit. If there is anything in it that will be of any comfort to the readers, you may publish it.

(Elder) J. A. Tew,
Rt. 7, Box 287
Dothan, Ala. 36301

"GOD IS A SPIRIT: AND THEY THAT WORSHIP HIM MUST WORSHIP HIM IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH." (JOHN 4:24)

These words of Jesus have been in my mind for some time and I feel to write something about them, but unless the Lord guides my mind and gives me a better understanding than I seem to have, nothing of interest or benefit to His little ones will be the result.

Much could be written about the incident at Jacob's well if we should cover it fully. It was not by chance that Jesus was there — "And He must needs go through Samaria." (John 4:4) We see in his presence at the well, two types or kinds of water. In Him, "The Living Water" which he told the woman of in 4:10. In the well, the natural or earthly water. In Him that Spiritual Living Water that never loses its taste or becomes stagnant, nor can it be contaminated by, or mixed with, any earthly elements as to change it's state or lessen its power or good to God's elect. The source from which this Living Water eminates is GOD ALMIGHTY and it will never cease flowing as long as time on this earth continues. We see that those that used that water from the well, had to draw or bring it up by their own strength, and as Jesus said in verse 13, "Whosoever drinketh of this water (the water from the well) shall thirst again." We see that this Living water does not have to be obtained through the effort or action of mankind, for He said, "But whosoever drinketh of the *water that I shall give him* shall be in him a well of water springing up into eternal life." It was to be *given* by Him, and was, and is to be continuous, not needing to be replenished.

In the woman at the well, we see represented the worldly unregenerated multitudes, who know nothing of the Living Water, and neither do they know that their minds, their innermost secrets, are known to God, — an open book, as-it-were. She had a form of worship, yet she was a very sinful person for she told Jesus a lie, saying — verse 17 — "I have no husband," when she had had five husbands, Jesus told her, "Ye worship ye know not what," and this is the state of the multitudes all about us today who have all kinds and forms of worship, too numerous to detail here.

We come to 4:23 where Jesus said, "But the hour cometh, *and now is,* when the true worshippers shall *"worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him."* After Jesus had, we believe, revealed Himself to the woman, telling her He was the Christ (verse 26) she hurriedly went into the City and said to the men, "Come, see a man, which told me all the things I ever did: *Is not this the Christ?"* This seems strong evidence that she had been brought into *the spirit and the truth.* Then many of the Samaritans believed on Him, and they "Besought Him that He would tarry with them; and He abode there two days." (verses 40 and 41) "And many more believed because of His own word." They then knew that he was *the Christ,* the Saviour.

Now when Jesus said, *"God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth,"* He established the fact that unless the Father is worshipped *in spirit and in truth,* those worshipping Him otherwise, do so to no avail. How true this has proven throughout the ages since He spoke those words. The Lord's elect can look about them, everywhere on the face of the earth, and see what goes on. The worldly churches can be found real often, openly castigating and criticizing these churches, even their own, for their lack of effectual spiritual worship and failure to Christianize the world. Before me is an official publication (or portion thereof) of one of the larger denominations, stating that in 1969 their U. S. members contributed a record $133,730,777. This was under date of April 20, 1970. Also before me is a clipping from our local daily paper, dated May 16, 1970, and carrying the statements of two high heads — high officials — of this same denomination, on their departure to attend a big conclave of their denomination in Chicago. One said, "Lack of commitment and capitulation to gross materialism have reduced both *our* will to serve and our capacity for authentic witness to the Christian Gospel." The other said, "Disunity, prejudice, fear, divisions between groups and generations, distrust and spiritual apathy and confusion abound among *us."* Since they say *"our"* and *"us"* they refer to their own denomination, and apparently they went to the big conclave to try to remedy such a sad situation. This is strong criteria and not unlike other things seen in the Press, on TV, and heard over the Radio at intervals.

Now let us get down deeper into the meaning of the words of Jesus, examining each salient word separately.

First: — "God is a *spirit,"* which we know to be a supernatural being, invisible, without beginning or ending, omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient and Holy. Matthew 3:16 tells of "The Spirit of God, descending like a Dove and lighting upon Jesus."

Romans 15:19 shows Paul witnessed "Mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God." Many other scriptures tell of wondrous signs such as Jeremiah 10:2 — ". . . And be not dismayed at the signs of heaven." All those who have been "quickened" by the power of the Holy Spirit can witness to the mysterious and effective manner in which it works.

Second: — We have the word *they* — "*they* that worship Him"; and it denotes a people separated in a specific group from the multitudes of worldly

unregenerated mankind, and they can be none other than those John wrote of in John 1:13 — "Which were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, BUT OF GOD."

Third: — The word *"must"* as used by Jesus means just what it implies, otherwise he would have said "They should" or "They ought to" or "They might," He said they *must* worship Him, and so it is and so it will be as long as humankind is on this earth.

Fourth: — The shortest word in the text, *"in"* denotes that those worshipping Him are within, or inside of, or totally enveloped by that Spirit. This rules out any effectual Spiritual worship of God by anyone whom God has not quickened by His Spirit, regardless of how strong their desire, their natural spirit of worship and of what great means they resort to as individuals or as groups, large or small, poor or rich, in modest edifices or in great temples and synagogues costing much money.

It seems, too, that the Lord's elect, are actually unable to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth during a time when He has, for his own design and purpose, withdrawn Himself from them temporarily. Such as was the case with King Nebuchadnezzar, told of in Daniel 4:31-35, when he was driven from among men and was among the beasts of the field, when a voice from Heaven said, "O, King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; the Kingdom is departed from thee." Read how he fared during this spell of time until "Mine understanding returned to me and I blessed the most High and I praised and honored Him that liveth forever," etc. Also when Peter was left to himself, — void of the presence of the Holy Spirit within him, and swore that he did not know Jesus, etc.; and later went out and wept bitterly, when he was again brought to his senses by the return of the Spirit. And how about David when he was void of the Spirit and committed that terribly sinful act with Uriah's wife, and had him put into battle unto his certain death?

Fifth: — Again we come to the word *"spirit"* which appears twice in the text. It has a somewhat different meaning this last time, for we are treating with the effects of the Holy Spirit in man, as-it-were, in the worshipping of the Divine Being, the Lord of Lords and King of Kings. We do know that those possessed of the Holy Spirit, and not just of the natural spirit of man to worship, do worship Him in the same Spirit of which He consists. We see in Acts 20:22 that Paul said, "I go bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem," etc. In I Cor. 14:2, Paul wrote, — ". . . Howbeit in the Spirit, he speaketh mysteries." In Rev. 1:10 John wrote, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day," etc. Thus we see that only the Lord's elect people speak, act and worship in the Spirit, and they are accomplishing much. Ezekiel 13:3: "Thus saith the Lord God; Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit and have seen nothing."

Sixth: — Now to the last salient word *"truth"*: "They that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in *truth.*" Here it seems clear that Jesus brought Himself, His Spiritual being, into the matter. Those who truly and effectively worship God are in both God and in Jesus and Jesus said unto Thomas in John 14:16, "I am the way, *the truth* and the light. Just prior to His crucifixion, when He prayed to the Father (John 17:21-22), He said, ". . . That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." Although there are other Scriptural references to Jesus being *the truth,* we feel that His own words are sufficient to establish this and show why he spoke as He did to the woman at Jacob's well.

Concluding, it seems appropriate to say that all those that do not possess, or have within them *the spirit of truth,* are led by the spirit of error and their worship is entirely in that spirit and to no avail. In 1st John 4:5 we find, "He that is not of God heareth us not.

Hereby know we the *spirit of truth* and the spirit of error. Elder Gilbert Beebe, Sept. 1, 1880, wrote in the *Signs* — "But the spirit of error and delusion is the spirit of the world, and the world is in love with it." And also, "The Spirit of *truth* is the Holy Ghost and the spirit of error is of the world and of satan."

Jesus said in John 15:26, "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the *spirit of truth,* which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me."

"In the hour of my distress,
When temptations me oppress,
And when I my sins confess,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me."

Also in John 16:13, "Howbeit, when He, the *spirit of truth,* is come, He will guide you into all truth; for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak; and He will show you things to come."

"Thine inward teachings make me know
The mysteries of redeeming love;
The emptiness of things below,
And excellence of things above."

One who feels so unworthy and unable to tell but little of the workings of the Holy Spirit, but who has a hope that he does worship God *in spirit and in truth.*

Wm. O. Hall
P. O. Box 595
Mount Vernon, Wash. 98273

CIRCULAR LETTER

LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The Lexington-Roxbury Association now in session with The First Church of Roxbury at Halcottsville, Delaware County, New York, September 16 and 17, 1970, sends love, greetings and fellowship to the several churches with which we correspond.

Dearly Beloved in Christ,

We desire to extend thanks to God for His goodness and mercy to us that we have been enabled to meet again to honor, praise and proclaim His great and Holy name, and the great Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ for food and encouragement, comfort and strength to the lambs and sheep that God has brought out of the world into the fold as witnesses of His precious truth as it is in Jesus.

"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." (Ephesians 2:1) In this Circular Letter we desire to address you as such. Through the operation, work and power of the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit, the stony heart has been taken away and you have been given a heart of flesh; a heart that is meek and tender; a heart that has mercy in it; a heart that has love in it for God; a heart that can love those of like precious faith in God; and a heart that can forgive. A heart that esteems other brethren better than himself.

Now the law of God being written in the heart of such ones, they know they are not worthy of the goodness of God. A heart that has been made to pray, and does pray. A heart that has been made to cry to God, and does cry to God. A heart that can hate sin. A heart that was dead in sin, but since quickened is dead to sin and alive unto God by the Holy Spirit. This heart now is rendering thanks unto God daily and hourly for the many blessings and much kindness that they receive, and are made to say, "Oh, Lord, only because it seemeth good in thy sight." They are made to say with David, "What can we render unto the Lord for all of His benefits." The writer in Ephesians 2:8 tells us about salvation, "For by grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."

Is it not true that when one is quickened and his blind eyes are opened, and the stony heart has been taken away, and his deaf ears unstopped, and he has been taught of the Spirit, that such one has learned that it must be of Grace or they are forever lost. How sweet to read from the Apostle

here that Grace and Faith so sweetly go together. Can we have one and not the other? We don't think so. Both are gifts of God. Dear ones, think of it; what a gift! If Heaven is ever our home and we see Jesus as He is and be like Him, and our vile body be fashioned like unto His glorious body, is it not certainly true, that it will be the Gift of God. To such sinners as we know ourselves to be by nature, let us not question the Word of God. No! No!

Now unto Him who is able to keep you from falling and present you faultless before the throne of His glory with exceeding joy, to Him be all majesty, glory, dominion and power for ever and ever. In Jesus name and for His sake in a world with Him where joy and peace will never end. Amen.

Woodrow W. Bellinger, Clerk
A. J. Slauson, Moderator

CHURCH LETTER TO SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

The Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church to the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Snow Hill Church, sends greetings:

Dearly Beloved:

Through the goodness of the allwise God we have been kept through another year, and brought again to meet together in an association: to give praise and honor to His holy name. May it be in peace and meekness.

What a glorious blessing this is to a poor and afflicted people, whose very existence depends on the crumbs that fall from the Master's table to sustain them from time to time: — it is their meat and drink.

There have been many changes since we last met, changes that are frightening to us as we view the scenes around us; but we can be assured of one very important thing, one most precious to His little ones: God changes not and is still the God of Zion, wherein His subjects abide. There has been no change in His Word, nor any change in the sweet doctrine of salvation by grace: no change in His mercy and grace and longsuffering towards His little flock.

He will continue to keep watch over the flock in the field, which he bought with a price, a great price: the life, death, resurrection and suffering of His only Son, Jesus Christ. What great love to His Bride, the Lamb's wife! We cannot attain unto the sacred and wonderful heights of His greatness, power and mercy. We are given glimpses of His power by the Holy Spirit from time to time; and in such moments how precious is every revelation the Lord has made of himself to us! Such sacred sweetness is ours for a little while, and is such that language can never tell it. We see ourselves as a tiny speck, and God so great.

When the Lord's humble poor are brought down, and made to seek a place in which to rest, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, they find no way in themselves to be delivered of their distresses. It is then He hears their cry, and leads them forth by the right way that they might go to a city of habitation. In their despair Jesus appears unto them as the Way, and through Him they enter into the gospel rest and peace, and become fellow-citizens with the saints. Jesus is to them truly the Pearl of great price. As they gaze upon the Way, the Lord of Glory, and see it open before them, their souls rejoice with "Joy unspeakable and full of Glory."

We are blessed to have our pastor Elder W. D. Griffin, come to us each 4th Sunday morning and 1st Sunday night, preaching Jesus sweetly and comforting to the little flock. We had on the 5th Sunday in May an all-day meeting, and were happy to have Elder Wallace Smith, of Burlington, N. C., with us. Also Elder H. C. Moon, from Alabama, was with us in June; and in September we were again blessed to have Elder John D. Wood preach for us.

In the year that has passed we have

lost a dear brother, Asa Pilchard, who suffered a lengthy illness, but bore it with much patience, manifesting the grace of God that had been shed upon him. Also, we received by letter dear Sister Nell Gaskill, who by her walk and talk manifests that she has tasted that the Lord is gracious. . .

Written by Evelyn Davis

GLAD THAT THE *SIGNS* STANDS FIRM

P. O. Box 976
Swansboro, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I want to write and tell you how much I enjoy the *Signs of the Times*. . . . I believe in encouraging one of the Lord's servants.

I am not one that particularly enjoys reading a sermon. I know that one that is blest to preach sets forth the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, even when it is transferred to paper; but I love to be in the meeting when blest to feel the sweet fellowship of the Lord's people, and the Spirit of God freshly annointing one of His servants to preach in demonstration of the Spirit and with power. I believe it takes a special application at that particular time, to enable one to preach; and also a special application to enable one to hear. I know that God is able to apply a written sermon to the heart of a reader, but as far as preference goes, I would rather be there myself.

Reading the experiences of the Lord's people is my chiefest delight, because, although I have not had the same experience, I believe my experience witnesses in part with them. I also enjoy reading about one who is blest to defend the faith. So many today believe in a conditional God. I am glad that the *Signs of the Times* stands firm on the "absolute predestination of all things." Many do not believe this comforting doctrine. Paul said in Romans 15:1, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." Keeping in mind that I am one that is weak; but if not deceived, to me these are among the weak. In Amos 3:3 we read, "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" I am not insinuating that we should fellowship all the beliefs of man or other religious groups: in fact, I emphatically deny that we should.

I talked with one the other day who believed that God predestinated everything that pertains to the elect, but not all things. He stated that if a cow walked out in front of his car and killed him, it was decreed by God; but again stated that not all things were decreed by God.

I believe our religion is a revealed religion, and only when it pleases God to reveal a spiritual truth to one, will he be able to receive it. This brother is precious to me, and he can't help believing what he does any more than I can. I'm glad that man's knowledge of the scripture doesn't determine his being a Christian or not. As long as this brother and others like him do not fight against me proclaiming this doctrine, I hope we will remain in peace.

I believe that salvation is of the Lord; and as much as I believe God decreed sin to enter the world, I do not charge God with my sins, for I am the only one that is guilty of them.

May God continue to bless you and the other brethren to stand firm on this precious doctrine, and to continue to publish the *Signs of the Times,* is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Constantly in need of God's grace,

Robert H. Lyliston

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208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

Dear Elder Wood:

In my opinion, the following articles were outstanding in the October issue of the *Signs*: Elder Smith's subject on predestination on pages 219-223, Elder

Lambert's article on "How Our Brethren Do," and Elder Beebe's article on Hebrews 4:1-12.

The remarkable part about Elder Smith's sermon (all the labor in preparing it for publication is very much appreciated and may the Lord be praised) is that he said in a few words the same things which I have been trying to say. I went at great length in trying to express my feelings; and it is possible that I have been misunderstood because I have made such a poor attempt in trying to express my views.

I went at great length in writing these articles: "The Fatalist Point of View" in the December 1967 issue, and "Predestination," in the February 1968, issue of the *Signs*. Elder Smith's remarks as mentioned on pages 221-223 summed the matter up much better than I could express them.

Your article in the June issue was very good and I have heard good reports from it: "Is Admonition Compatible With God's Sovereignty?"

We trust this finds you all well. Remona has recovered okay from her sinus operation on September 12th. May the Lord bless you all.

Yours in hope,
W. W. Hudson, Jr.

SEEKING INFORMATION

62 Elm Street
Mill Creek Trailer Park
Wilmington, Delaware 19808

Dear Elder Bocock,

I am sending this letter to the **SIGNS,** as I would like it published and have your answer by way of the **SIGNS.**

I read your article in the August issue, and I must say I thoroughly enjoyed it and heartily endorse every word of it. I have heard men preach that Adam was able to stand but liable to fall, and I am glad you exposed that lie. You also spoke the truth when you said, "Articles of faith deny themselves." My articles of faith are the word of God: both old and new testaments, both that which I understand and that which I do not understand.

I read in Acts 2:23, where the Apostle Peter referred to Jesus Christ on the day of Pentecost with these words, "Him, being delivered by the determinate council and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." And my Bible tells me that God cannot lie. So, since God had predetermined that Christ should be cruciled, if Adam had not sinned then either Christ would have died for nothing or God would have had to lie.

You state, and I quote, "Those who advocate that God was disappointed and His purpose thwarted by the fall of man, cannot possibly believe that God is able to take a fallen wretch and make him incorruptible." Amen, Brother Bocock; and those who advocate that doctrine do not believe that God is able to do that, unless man will cooperate. I believe the first commandment is violated more than all the others combined, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." You will notice that I spelled gods with a small letter instead of a capital, because their gods are indeed small.

Now Brother Bocock, seeing God has given you a good understanding of His word, and seeing you are not afraid nor ashamed to preach it, (as some are) I have an important question on which I desire you to write and have published in the **SIGNS.** I am seeking information on a very important subject.

When Adam and Eve sinned they made themselves aprons of fig leaves to cover their nakedness, which is a symbol of self righteousness with which thousands are trying to cover themselves today. So God made them coats of skins and covered them, which, to me, signifies there was blood shed. That blood is a type of the blood of Christ, which He shed on the cross of Calvary for the sins of His people. The coats of skins are a type of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, with which His people are clothed. So here is the question that I would love to have unraveled. When God covered Adam the entire human race

was in the loins of Adam: so will you please explain to me how God could cover Adam while the whole human race was still in the loins of Adam, and not cover the entire human race? I have never heard this discussed, either by word or in writing. In fact, I have never heard it mentioned, but would certainly appreciate very much to have someone ex plain it to me.

A sinner, in hope of Eternal Life,
Roy S. Thomas

REPLY

P. O. Box 13,
Boones Mill, Va. 24065

Mr. Roy S. Thomas

Dear Friend:

Your question, "How could God cover Adam's sins while and when the entire human family was in his loins and not cover them all?" I am not inclined to ignore your question directed to me, as Elder Wood speaks of you and says you often attend at Rock Springs.

The answer to your question is very simple. God has given no spiritual blessings since the world began. That which reaches the saints in this time world to bestow blessings, only bestows a taste of what has belonged to them "from before the foundation of the world." All spiritual blessings were given "before the foundation of the world." and therefore before the human family had any existance, — and before Adam was formed.

The blessings which are bestowed upon the saints in time, are a small foretaste of what is to be revealed to them at the last time, and that which is to be revealed is "ready" for it is that which was given them before the world began. (Ephesians 1) So what the false spirits make their goal post, is every saint's **starting post** as "ye are complete in him" is the truth yesterday, today, and forever, and nothing can be added to a thing that is **complete.** On earth where earthly Adam abode, God is revealed as the giver of life and breath, etc. In the covenant and in the kingdom that is not of this world, God is revealed as the Gift: Satan knows the Giver. He knew God as the blesser of Job, etc., but Job knew the Gift. That Gift is unspeakable. It is like an ocean that is shoreless and bottomless, and from the fountain of it tiny streams reach His people to bestow upon them out of that vast treasure a sufficiency through faith. This that God bestows on saints on earth the Bible calls **a river.** "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God . . ." That river reached Moses and he did drink from that Rock; but what Moses drank was for Moses, and was of no benefit to Joshua. The Lord said to Joshua, "As I was with Moses, so will I be with thee . . ."

This clearly shows that God deals with His people as individuals. The first man Adam was one of these individuals. What each saint owns, is his own and is like a "garden enclosed" and "a spring shut up," a "fountain sealed." All each saint has is through faith, and that same faith holds fast to what it has.

I hope this answers your question, because what I have written here are simple generalities which on every hand and in every place, are admitted to be the truth where the songs of Zion are heard and where the prayers of faith are heard; and where the Lord doth bless His gospel for Christ's sake.

Your friend,
J. L. Bocock

THE LORD HAS NOT FORGOTTEN THE STAUNTON RIVER BRETHREN

Rt. 1,
Blairs, Va. 24527

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

We trust the great Jehovah is favoring you dear ones with health and happiness. My family is well.

We have enjoyed a wonderful Sunday at Malmaison Church today. Elder Tench preached wonderfully; also Brother Raymond Goad from Weatherford

Church. How refreshing to have gifts from our Heavenly Father in the Staunton River Association. We haven't had any new gifts for about thirty years, but the Lord has always blessed us with a preacher at every regular meeting of a church in the Association all of this time. So we can witness that the Shepherd has abundantly fed His flock as the hunger arose.

I am enclosing the ordination of my precious brother in Christ as well as in the flesh. We that have known him so intimately through the years, have no question of his heavenly call, as he has always been a very reserved person who would not put himself forward. Surely there are no volunteers among the true ministers of the Gospel of Christ. I believe the Scriptures speak of, how can a man preach unless he be sent?

We hope you have the space for the ordination notice in the **Signs of the Times.** This publication is a wonderful blessing to the Lord's people, and we thank Him for servants so intensely devoted as its editors.

Your brother in hope
Burnell B. Williams

(See notice of ordination this issue)

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER WALLACE HARVEY

Rt. 87, Box 126,
Shady Spring, W. Va. 25918

Dear Editors, and brethren of the elect family of mercy, chosen in Christ before the world began:

I have much enjoyed the very good articles in the **Signs of the Times.** I call to memory the first **Signs** I ever read. It was published at Middletown, N. Y. When I was a very tender lad of eleven years. My father was a subscriber, and my anxious moments were when I could slip out with the **Signs** to some secret place and read for the purpose of filling an empty place. I was in so much trouble, begging, crying and praying to be filled. It seemed I would simply starve to death between issues from one month to the next.

I did not tell my father anything about my troubles, or anyone else, for it was a private concern. It went on for several years, and I began to notice people had begun to call me "Preacher," which cut me to my heart. I wondered what they could see in this mass of sin that they should call me such: I never had asked God to make a preacher out of me — I had only begged for mercy that I might be spared a few more days, for death was in my face and Hell was my certain doom.

I went on in this condition, finally decided that I was going to Hell anyway and be punished forever, that I might as well partake of some of the world's pleasures. So I started going to dances and parties of one kind and another, only to come away with more troubles than I had before encountered. Nothing gave me any relief — all my begging, pleading, and trying to pray was of no avail. I married hoping that my companion might cheer me on my rugged journey to a miserable death. I began to talk to her about my deplorable condition, and she only made it worse for she was of a different faith. I had added sin to sin.

I went on in this condition until 1944 when I could not eat or sleep. I saw my case so vile, so low down that there was no one like me. I had sunk so low mercy could not reach my case. But I knew God was just in his dealings with me, and "if my soul were sent to Hell, his righteous law approved it well." I came to that great gulf, and looked down into the bottomless pit where the flames came up in my face to consume me, and I looked through the flames when they had burned out my eyes in my head, and I saw a faraway shore; and I saw an innumerable company all dressed in white and all singing the same song: and that song was the Song of Redemption by the blood of the Lamb. I was delivered out and across that great gulf which no man could

span, and was placed in company with the saints of God on the faraway shore; and I immediately looked down and my robe was whiter than snow: and my tongue was singing the same song I heard them singing, with no effort by me.

I went to the church then and asked for a home, and was received and was baptized by the late Elder J. H. Gentry. For three days my troubles were over — I was the happiest boy this world had produced. But my troubles had multiplied and seemingly nothing could ease my troubled mind: I thought I had deceived the church, and told my God that I was to blame and to let me go on in my doom, and not hold it against the church. My father came to my home to take dinner with me, but I would not tell him anything about my condition. Somehow he must have read between the lines for we were not discussing anything scripturally: he just simply stopped eating long enough to say, "Son, someday you will have to preach." He only put more kindling to my fire.

I began to go to different churches to hear different ministers, all Primitive Baptists of course, preach the unsearchable riches of Christ the Saviour. I would not venture to tell any of my troubles; but was approached by some to tell me that they had heard me preach, when I had not made the first effort publically. Some of them that I met at associations told me they had seen me and heard me in a vision — men that I never saw before or afterwards. My wife sometimes at the breakfast table would say, "I was at church last night and guess who the preacher was?" I would reply, "I don't know," and then she would say, "You were the preacher."

I vowed I would die first, yet I still live today; but I had to submit to try to reconcile myself by going to the stand. And now I am in the fifteenth year of, I hope, a minister's trials and troubles.

An unworthy servant,
Wallace Harvey

READING THE SIGNS MANY YEARS

Rt. 1, Clearmont Ave.
Wheelersburg, Ohio

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed is ten dollars for two years renewal, with the balance for the Indigent Fund. I have not missed a single copy. I have been taking the **Signs of the Times** for many years, and hope to take it as long as I live. Among all the other periodicals the **Signs** is first to me.

I am thankful that the Editors are as bold as lions in declaring the whole counsel of God — standing on the walls crying aloud and sparing not. I hope the Lord will bless all you editors to continue.

I was brought into this world in September, 1898, so am in my declining years, and will fall off at the appointed time, for my days are numbered as well as Job's days were numbered. I do not belong to any church, and never did, but inside I know I am an old time Baptist, for Jesus came to my house about forty years ago, and I was talking to him about the nail prints in his hands and the spear wound in his side; and I will never be able to tell what took place in me. When he was leaving my whole heart just melted away. I know I will never be able to finish telling all that has taken place with me.

May God bless all you wonderful editors, is my prayer.

William Sparks

GOD WORKS THE WILL AND THE DO

P. O. Box 441
Monticella, Ark. 71655

Dear Elder Spangler:

I greatly enjoy reading the wonderful letters and experiences of grace. I have reason to believe they are true inspirations of the Holy Spirit; for we are made to understand that the great

God of the whole universe, the Lord Jesus Christ, (and I hope He is mine,) works both the will and the do, according to his own will and pleasure, that which pertains to the spiritual and the natural. Without God we are nothing and less than nothing. God made the outward man a natural being; but before the foundation of the world He was pleased to choose a people for himself, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. And these are they in whom he has implanted the Spirit of righteousness unto good works in love unto obedience; having predestinated them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his own will.

Now we see a twofold being: the *outward man,* conceived in sin and born in iniquity, is dead in trespasses and sins. All that we say or do or think, without the effectual working of the Holy Spirit, is all vanity and against the law of God. But I see another, the *inward man,* which is the Spirit of Christ. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved,) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." (Ephesians 2:4-6) Good works can not come by the will of man. We cannot find joy, comfort or peace of mind by taking up the Bible, and reading through the Holy Scriptures at our own will: but only if it be the will of the Holy Spirit, — that same Spirit that inspired the Prophets and Apostles to write the unsearchable riches of truth and grace. Then and then only can we read and obtain understanding and comfort for the poor, sin sick heart. Yes, not by our will but the will of the Holy Father and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ the righteous.

Paul, the servant of God, wrote Titus concerning the difference between people who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and the people whom I believe are referred to by the Apostle John as being antichrist. By the will and pleasure of Him who reigns forever, He has chosen to himself a people whom Paul said, "Are looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." They are the good works by the Spirit of Christ that dwells in us. I am fully persuaded that these are the people that are identified as sheep which were spoken of in Matthew 25, "And before him shall be gathered all nations and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world . . . Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels . . . And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."

Now isn't this plain enough and proof enough that the world at large never did, or ever will wear a crown of glory in the heavenly kingdom of God the Father? I have no doubt that the goats believe there is a God; I am sure that they do. But at the same time they deny him by professing that it is in their power to choose or reject God; to do good or evil, and able to obtain eternal salvation by their own works; while they deceive themselves and would, if it were possible, deceive the very elect of God.

What was said of the non-elect in the thirteenth chapter of Jeremiah? "Then I went to the Euphrates, and digged, and took the girdle from the place where

I had hid it; and, behold, the girdle was marred. It was profitable for nothing. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, Thus saith the Lord, After this manner will I mar the pride of Judah, and the great pride of Jerusalem. This evil people which refuse to hear my words, which walk in the imagination of their hearts, and walk after other gods, to serve them and to worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which is good for nothing."

I certainly believe that it is just as easy for an Ethiopian to change the color of his skin, as it is for one to obtain eternal salvation by his or her own works. "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourself, it is the gift of God."

This is what the Lord said of his sheep, or people chosen in him before the world was, in Leviticus 21:24-26, "But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey; I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people. And ye shall be holy unto me (not can if you want to be, but ye shall be) for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine." In Matthew 1:21, we read, "And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for *he shall save his people* from their sins."

Dear Brother, I fear that I know nothing of the Holy Scriptures as I ought, and not worthy so much as to take the name of the precious Lord and Saviour between these sin polluted lips, to beg of him for that which I so hopefully desire; so may I ask of you, Elder Spangler, when you are before the throne of grace, if it is possible, would you remember this unworthy sinner in your prayers.

May the great God of heaven and earth keep us in the way which is pleasing in His sight. Enclosed you will find $4.00 for subscription to the *Signs of the Times.*

A brother in that sweet hope,
David B. Lawson

FEASTS ON THE WRITINGS IN THE **SIGNS**

Pennington, N. J. 08534
4 Maple Lane

To the Editors of the Signs

Dear Brethren:

The simple word of truth is often the most precious when coming to mind while one is busy with the everyday duties of life.

I have been blessed to feast upon the editorials and letters all year long, which I know all of you have taken time out of your busy days to write, and I realize I have written all too few appreciative words of thanks to you. So I pray God may bless all of you most abundantly day by day as you go about giving courage to those who have found, that in themselves, they do not have the strength to carry their cross. May God bless all of you for all the time you have given to listening to some troubled souls, and then speak to them of the WORD with power to nourish their hope that God will always make a way where there seems not a way in His divine guidance.

May it be in His divine guidance to bless you for all the service your willing hands have rendered for the benefit of His little ones in the Household of Faith, that you may know your labours have not been in vain with the publication of the **SIGNS,** which so many of us look forward to reading each month.

In Christian love
Sister Mary Hellings

Tarboro, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I have been impressed to pen a few thoughts on what the Lord has done for me while in this flesh. In us dwells no good thing unless the Lord guides and directs by his Holy Spirit.

In my early childhood I had a fear of death and of the Lord. My parents were true Primitive Baptists and taught good morals; they both joined Lower Town Creek Church, and took Zion's Landmark. I read one article someone wrote that the following year might be the end of time, and I felt disturbed over my condition, knowing I was unfit to die. I consulted by father, who told me not to be afraid for no one except the Father knew that.

I had respect for Primitive Baptists, and my father and mother would often have their neighbors visit them. They were so happy expressing their love and relating their experiences. I felt, if I could only join in with them; but, Oh what a vile sinner I felt to be I can't describe. As time went on I tried to forget my burden and to reconcile my mind by reading novels and story books. My oldest sister would read the Bible instead, and I would question her as to why she read the Bible; and she would answer that it was a comfort to her. Later she united with the church at Lower Town Creek, and I wished that I could be fit to be baptized with her.

I commenced reading the Bible, and every chapter seemed to condemn me. I was so condemned that I gave up all hope, knowing that I was wholly dependent upon the Lord's mercy. I felt that destruction would be my doom. My husband was also reared in a Primitive Baptist Home, He was a violin player and enjoyed it to the fullest extent. Later he became disgusted with it and had to lay it down. He was blessed with an experience of grace and a sweet hope in Christ, and united with the Tarboro Church August 4, 1929. I desired that I could feel the assurance he did and be baptized with him; but I felt so unworthy. I begged the Lord that if I was a fit subject for baptism He would show me. My mother and aunt spent the night with me, and as I was leaving their room, my every breath was begging the Lord to show me. A still, small voice spoke in my very soul, saying, "Thy people shall be a willing people in the day of my power." My burden was lifted and I felt there was not an obstacle in the way the next morning, and I was making every effort to get to old Tar River Church when they opened conference.

I tried to relate a little of my feelings to them; and I will never forget the voice of Elder Roberts when the church agreed to receive me into their membership. Elder Roberts baptized us. I have begged the Lord that I might show my faith by my walk and a godly conversation, and praying for grace that I may hold out faithfully until the end.

A little sister in hope,
Mrs. H. C. Brown

Rt. 1,
Delmar, Del. 19940

Dear Editors:

It is good to be able to renew these subscriptions . . ., for I feel it is a worthwhile gift to each of us. May the Lord give us eyes to read the comforting things found in these dear papers — and hearts to understand. May each one who has a part in arranging and publishing the material, be blest to continue on, and to search for the old paths ever looking for guidance from Him who doeth all things well.

Sincerely with kindest regards to all.

Irma L. Messick

Danville, Virginia **February, 1971**

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"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen." (*Hebrews 13:20, 21*)

EDITORIAL

"Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead." (Luke 9:60)

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith." (2 Cor. 13:5)

I stood on the street and listened to a man of another order deny much of the written word. I thanked my God that I belonged to an order that had adopted the Old and New Testaments as their written creed. Soon I was gathered in an Old Baptist meeting, and to my horror I heard one of them give a garbled explanation of too many vital and living truths. Were these my people? Were these the people that I had gloried in while listening to somebody else in their wresting and twisting and misquoting and privately interpreting the sacred writings?

A sister in the South (who desires to remain incognito, and yet is willing to come to my defense if I am assailed) desires that I write an editorial on these two passages, and that I tie them together. The matter that disturbs her is the negligence and indifference of the Lord's professing people, and the curt dismissal by our ministers of the commandments given in the Scriptures, when the inquiring children ask for an explanation of them.

I do not think that I have made too many loyal supporters among the old

order of Baptists because of my contention about some of the things that I feel the Bible teaches, but I do have an abiding assurance that I have met the approval of my heavenly Father in that respect. I have said it time and again, and will now say it once more, to wit, If you really want to know how well somebody is established in the truth just you one time cross them in their nature and you will find out. I want to tell you about a case in point. It concerns one of our sisters, who will verify what I am saying. It was during the second world war. The pastor of the church travelled four hundred miles to serve them each month. The sister's son came home for a short visit, and, although she only lived a mile from the church and would have been separated from her son for a couple of hours, she consoled herself that it would be permissable for her to miss one meeting. She met the pastor next month and explained why that she did not attend service the previous month. He very kindly replied that he understood because that his son was at home from the army at the same time. Let it be said to her credit that she was so humiliated that she has been one of the most punctual members since.

"I believe in absolute predestination without any strings attached to it." How often have I heard that, and as often have seen (and at times felt) the wrath of those same people when the coming to pass of that which they believed had been against what they wanted. Some able minister declared that the high mystery of God's predestination should be handled carefully, and I would add that it behooves us all to be careful that we do not *bend* the doctrine to suit our fancy.

The occasion of the first text is heart rending to our nature. I do not have a reader that would be a good OLD Baptist, a child of God loving Him and doing His Commandments, on this occasion. We speak and we ask,

"What think ye of Christ? is the test
To try both your state and your scheme;
You cannot be right in the rest,
Unless you think rightly of him.
As Jesus appears in your view,
As he is beloved or not,
So is God disposed toward you,
And mercy or wrath is your lot."

But if this was strictly applied to us, where would we be? Not many but what would be *yes* Christians if addressed as the man in our text. But all of our boasted following is blasted when we try to wait a while, when we introduce something that we desire to do first. My readers all think that this man had a feasible reason for waiting. Must I prove that? I can not, but Christ proved it there, and he will prove it to us. I dare not preach and write that it is permissible to neglect our natural household, to mistreat our earthly parents, to desecrate or violate the dead, but above that, and more important than that, and better than that, I dare not advocate, preach and write, that it is alright for me to disobey my Master to do that which belongs to nature.

If there is any certainty taught in the Bible, it is this: A man, any man, can not obey two masters. To those that act as though they can, they obey one and neglect the other. In my nature I am rebellious and stubborn, but I am not in such a strain to establish God's predestination of all things that I am going to call either one of them as being firm and established in the faith. If I am related to Christ, if I am in the faith, if I have been born again, I have, in that relationship but one Master. If I love God, I will do his commandments, and I will not bring up the doctrine of predestination or any other doctrine in order to have an excuse for not obeying God. It does not matter how many people tell me so, it does not impress me; God has not set some part of his government against the government of Christ. The rule is this: Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. (Col. 3:17). If I have got to get out and whoop it up that this includes rape and drunkeness and gam-

bling; that when I am left to myself that what I do is in his name, I beg to be excused. I do not believe that, and I do not want to give it Godspeed.

If, in order to be what is known as an Absolute Predestinarian, I have got to bow down to would be dictators, to accept what these fellows are pleased to call that doctrine, to forego all admonitions, exhortations, encouragement to obey commands of God, then, by all means, leave me out of that group. I am delighted, however, to take my stand among the ablest predestinarians that have ever lived, knowing that they loved exhortation and a lively interest in their children (in the gospel) walking in all the precepts and examples laid down in Holy Writ.

According to the lesson left us by the inspiration of God, our service to the commandments of Christ come first. If a man or woman has not been made willing to forego every natural relationship for the cause of Christ, that person has not yet followed Christ; that person has not yet to become His disciple. Yes, but that is hard, that is cruel, that is inhuman. If you were telling me that what I said was all that, it would be of small consequence, but when you say that is hard doctrine you are talking to Christ, who is your Saviour; definitely, not to me, a poor weak servant.

I have wanted to pay homage to the dead; I have paid homage to my children, but I have never had a clear conscience in doing so. I have assayed the thought of staying at home because I was worn out, but it has never been in my mind that I was fulfilling the predestination of God by doing wrong; it has caused me to feel the fiery indignation brought about by my refusal to assemble together; it has caused me much anxiety in that I had paid homage to one other than *the One.*

It may not grieve anybody but me, but if so, then I am grieved. As we enjoy the riches of this perishing day, we are more inclined to first BURY OUR FATHER BEFORE WE FOLLOW CHRIST. There is a greater tendency today to stay at home when the children come, or EVEN TO DRIVE ACROSS THE STATE TO VISIT THEM, than there was in the earlier part of this wave of prosperity(?). I have rebuked for this, and I have been persecuted for doing it; I have pointed out the scriptural way for parents and children to act toward each other, AND TOWARD CHRIST, and I have been called a softie and a conditionalist. I write on Absolute Predestination and many rise up and call me blessed; I write the next month on keeping the commandments of God and I am denunciated as a fence-straddler, as being inconsistent. These unfair and unscrupulous attacks on the whole counsel of God is causing deep concern among our people. The passing of cruel, inhuman, unscriptural, ungodly judgment against everybody except a few that are sound in certain principles of doctrine is causing many heartaches, and that soundness is also a part of the judgment of the same parties. Our inquiring sister said, "Please tell me why that certain doctrines are contended for all of the time and that others are never mentioned?" Why is it thought that a man is sound that will quote Romans 8:28 and unsound if he quotes I Tim. 4:16?" And I have had to put my hand over my mouth, for I freely admit that I do not know.

This poor sinner and servant (if a servant) has been contending for the salvation that is in Christ alone since 1930, and for the sure and absolute predestination of all things as long. I expect to continue as I am given grace to be found doing just that. I admit (not freely, and yet unreservedly—not freely, because it is against my nature to admit being wrong, but unreservedly, because it is the way of God's Spirit to consume every false way, to bring it into judgment and to move it out of the way) that I have been contentious about those precious doctrines. Contending for the faith is commendable (Jude 3), but being contentious, *and contentions,*

are not commendable (Prov. 17:14; I Cor. 1:11; Titus 3:9; I Cor. 11:16) and the early churches did not have such a custom by commandment.

If we are led by the Spirit of God we will love God and we will serve Him devotedly; we will not be found eating a mess of green gourds, nor will we be found dabbling around in the mudhole of sin, alleging that God is as well pleased with our sinning as he is our obedience, that a fountain *does* send forth both bitter and sweet waters, that God is as much the cause of our filthiness of mind as He is our purity of mind. Being led (not led at) by the Spirit, we will be led to shun evil and to hold fast to that which is good; to try the spirits, as to whether they are of Christ or the evil one; to let brotherly love continue, even though differences arise, and to disagree as brethren, instead of acting and saying that the difference is between a saint and hell bound people.

I have had brethren and sisters in the churches that I have served that did not subscribe to the same thing that I did about the doctrines of Christ our Saviour. I have gotten down and washed the feet of one brother in particular that was an avowed objector to the predestination of all things, but he was a lovelier brother than I was or ever will be; I have been asked to pray at the bedside of Methodists and people of other denominations, but I have not prayed them to hell, nor did I condemn them to hell. I will continue, as God gives me grace, to comfort and instruct, but I refuse to be led into condemning anybody as being a captive of the devil and hell bound.

I point out to our inquiring sister that it is better to obey God than it is man, even if that man or person is my wife, my children, my parents, or any one else earthy; having all the desires of nature that anybody else has; loving the things of the earth (in my nature) as well as anybody and having a family, and relatives, and business obligations, have as much need to pay homage to the earth as anybody; having, I say, all this I need the grace of God to enable me to let the dead bury the dead; I need to be brought away from perishing objects (family, friends, houses, etc.) and directed and led into the love of God that I give a drink of cool water in His name, or, if need be, to suffer death at the hands of the dead.

The taking of inventory is essential to the Christian as it is to the business man. The scriptures do not call it by that name, nevertheless, taking heed, being careful, examining one's self, all these, with many other like words, cover the same ground and are laid before (and wrought in us) for the same purpose, to wit, that we might discover our status before God. If we do not believe in examining ourselves as to whether we are in the faith; if we do not believe in endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; if we do not believe in being careful to maintain good works, in short, if we do not believe that a man that loves God will keep His commandments, what do we be believe?

In conclusion, there are ample directions given by the judges (Isa. 32:1) for our conduct towards God and man, and those directions have not told any of us to "bury the dead" by paying homage to ANYTHING OR ANYBODY in the earth, but that what we do we do it in His name. And, further, NO sacred writer has condoned or lent sanction to loose, indifferent living by the saints, but rather a rigid examination as to whether God has required this or that or the other at His hand.

—W.D.G

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

CIRCULAR LETTER

August, 1878

The Red Stone Association of Regular Baptists, now in session with the Indian Creek Church, in Monongalia

County, West Virginia.

Dear Brethren: Through the abounding goodness of the all-wise and supreme Ruler of the universe, we have been spared, and granted another precious privilege of assembling again in an associated capacity, to see the faces of many of our brethren and sisters, which makes our hearts swell with emotions of joy and gratitude to our bountiful Benefactor.

Dear Brethren, in accordance with our long-standing custom, we present this epistle of love in the form of a Circular Letter. In writing to you concerning the things pertaining to our Master's kingdom, we wish to say something in regard to the church of God. The primary or principal design of all governments is to give security and happiness to those governed. To this end laws and rules are given; but while these laws may be just and good, and fully sufficient to accomplish the object aimed at, yet if the people be ignorant of them, and have no regard for them, they fail to accomplish their design. So the King of Zion has set up a kingdom, and has given the inhabitants of that kingdom laws to be governed by, and it is highly important that they should be understood and obeyed; that there should be no deviation nor departure from the rules laid down in the scriptures of divine truth. While they are strictly adhered to, they never cause trouble, nor any disturbance, but tend to build up the peace and enjoyment of the church of Christ.

During the apostolic age, the form of the christian church was truly glorious. With what amazing diligence, boldness, prudence and zeal the ministers of Christ published the glorious truths of the gospel. They were ready and willing to suffer, and to make great sacrifice, for the cause of their great and glorious Leader, Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God. The church of God is known by her practice in her primitive days. So strict and unwavering was she in the doctrine and ordinances of Christ, that the wrath and indignation of ungodly men were brought down upon her; her members were thrown into prisons, and threats and persecutions were alike employed, to make them recant the doctrine and throw off their allegiance to the King of heaven. But this cruel treatment drove them closer to their heavenly Master. The true church was ready at any time to resign her worldly goods, the endearments of home, even life itself, for the cause of Christ. The framing of her conduct to suit the world, and to comform to its follies and fashions, was never seen or practiced by her. Her members looked forward with that blessed anticipation of meeting beyond this vale of tears, where sorrow and sighing are forever done away.

The church of God is called, "the bride, the Lamb's wife." The wise man asks, "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" John, while on the lonely isle, in vision sublime "beheld the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Such is the language of inspiration toward that fair one, the church of God. Our blessed Savior condescended to come into this lower world, to suffer and to die, even the death of the cross, to redeem his bride from ruin, to cleanse her, by his blood, from her stains, and elevate her above all principalities and powers of this world. The church of God being the body of Christ, and chosen in him before the foundation of the world, was, by virtue of that relationship, redeemed from the demands of the law. When Jesus, on the cross of Calvary, cried, "It is finished," divine justice received full satisfaction in the person of Jesus Christ; for he is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth. "For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."

While in a state of nature, there is no manifest difference between the heirs of salvation and the world at large; for the apostle says, "Among

whom also we all had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Christ's kingdom is not of this world, therefore she needeth not the fostering hand of the governments of this world, nor the aid of legislative bodies to assist her to carry out and execute her laws and discipline. All that the church of Christ needs at the hands of the temporal government is protection in the exercise of conscience, and the privilege and liberty to assemble, without restriction of time or place to worship God, without being molested or made afraid; and the church's obligation is to be peaceable, good and upright citilens of the commonwealth to which they belong, and be subject to the powers that be.

The church collective is a congregation of believers, called out of the world, and set apart for the worship of Jehovah. While the church of God exists upon the earth, the inquiry may arise in the minds of some, How is she to be designated from other institutions? We answer, by the doctrine and ordinances and practice that characterized the first gospel church that was constituted, at Jerusalem, which was made manifest by the teaching of Christ and his apostles. To show what was taught, we will quote a few passages of scripture, of their own writing. Paul, in the discharge of this great mission, says to the Galatian brethren, "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from the present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father." — Gal. i. 4. "Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." — Rom. iv. 25. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." — Eph. i. 4, 5. "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." — 2 Thess. ii. 13. These points of doctrine referred to, with many others, show the will of God in regard to his people, before the creation of the world, resulting in their manifestation in time.

The church was ever God's delight,
He knew each member well,
And they were precious in his sight
Ere they in Adam fell.

Our relation to Christ, and to each other in him, is the constituent form of a church. Jesus Christ is the Foundation and Head. He said to Peter, "Upon this rock (having reference to his divinity) I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." No, brethren, not all the wisdom of this world, nor the institutions of men, nor the combined powers of darkness, shall ever prevail against the church of Christ, because it is built upon a sure foundation; a foundation that never can fail. Though heaven and earth pass away, his word will never fail. The church is called the kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven, the ransomed of the Lord, the light of the world. Various are the titles given her. Seeing such a beautiful structure, reared up by God himself, who has laid down certain rules for the government of his people, when assembled in church capacity, we see that she is under the rule and reign of her Founder, and the laws are spiritual and divine, because they originated from a divine source.

Dear brethren, we should, as the body of Christ, stand united, as much as the Lord will enable us; because the adversary is going about, seeking whom he may devour, causing divisions and troubles in churches, and would, if it were possible, deceive the very elect. Christ said to his people, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." He holds the keys of life and death. He the beginning and the end, the first and the last. He has all power in heaven

and on earth. We should take his word as the man of our counsel, trusting in him for grace to help in time of need. For he will not leave nor forsake his children, for they are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. Trust in the Lord, for he will bring you off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him that hath loved us and given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savor. By his stripes we are healed, and he has forever perfected them that are sanctified, by his sufferings and death, his resurrection and ascension into heaven, where he ever liveth to make intercession for the saints, according to the will of God.

Dear Brethren, be not carried about by every wind of doctrine, but be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Let us endeavor to lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith. Dear brethren, let us strive to be of the same mind, and of the same judgment, united in the brotherhood, love one another, and pray for one another, and endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; striving with all the ability that God may give us to enter in at the strait gate, being careful to maintain good works, and to cultivate a friendly intercourse with the household of faith, knowing that we are poor, fallible creatures, and that there is no perfection in the flesh. May we look forward with joy to the period when we shall rise triumphantly to those unmeasured joys which God has prepared for those that love him. May the Lord of life and glory instruct you in divine things, and direct your hearts to the love of God, and may we meet where congregations never break up, and sabbaths never end. There will be no pain nor death felt or feared in that beautiful land of rest, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. Then shall Zion reign far above the reach of all her present sufferings and sorrows, in the peaceful bosom of her incarnate Savior, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit of all grace, be glory honor, power and dominion, both now and forever. Amen.

A. Winnett, Mod.
F. K. Cooper, Clerk

ORDINATION OF ELDER WAYMAN G. CHAPPEL

In response to a request of the First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis, Tenn. while in conference October 6, 1970, a presbytery was called together November 8, 1970, for the purpose of ordaining Brother Wayman G. Chappel to the full work of the gospel ministry should they find him qualified according to the written word of God.

The elders and deacons of our faith and order present on the occasion were requested to sit together in the presbytery. Those present were, Elders Paul Poyner, H. R. Prince, C. S. Young, and R. H. Campbell, and deacons Elmer Prince, Warnard Lock, and J. W. Brown.

Elder C. S. Young opened the presbytery with song and prayer. Elder Paul Poyner was appointed Moderator, and Deacon J. W. Brown Clerk. The Moderator was appointed to examine the candidate. Elder Campbell having been appointed spokesman for the church. Examination of Brother Chappel was made using as the scriptural reference 1 Timothy chapter 3. The Presbytery being satisfied with the answers given by Elder Campbell, they proceded with the laying on of their hands as the ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Prince.

Elder Campbell delivered the charge to Elder Chappel, using as scriptural refence 2 Timoty, chapters three and four.

The right hand of fellowship was given to Elder Chappel by the members of the Presbytery, and he was delivered back to the First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis as an ordained minister of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church.

The Minutes consisting of the work of the Presbytery were read for approval, adopted and ordered submitted to the *Signs of the Times for* publication.

J. W. Brown, Clerk of the Presbytery

ORDINATION OF ELDER JULIAN R. WILLIAMS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church, Pittsylvania County, Va., a prebytery met November 1, 1970 at 3:00 p. m. for the examination of brother Julian R. Williams, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the gospel ministry.

The solemnity was begun with song, "How did my heart rejoice to hear," page 140, hymn 343, Hymn and Tune Book and prayer by Elder D. V. Spangler. All Elders of our faith and order and all deacons of Staunton River Association constituted the presbytery. Those present were as following: Elders D. V. Spangler, Raymond S. Payne, Wallis A. Smith, P. E. Ingram, J. L. Smith, Cecil Turner, Kenneth Key, Haywood Wray, Rufus Brown, Leonard J. Brammer, O. K. Tench, Leonard Key and Donald E. Smith. Deacons: R. T. Holley, P. L. Holley, Wyatt Simpson, Richard Stegall, Clarence Stegall, Denver Simpson, Denver Gibson, Guy Willis, L. R. Willis and Burnell Williams.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder O. K. Tench as Moderator and Elder Donald E. Smith as Clerk. Elders D. V. Spangler and Cecil Turner were chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Deacon Richard Stegall having been duly appointed by Malmaison Church in conference October 3, 1970, spokesman for the church delivered brother Julian R. Williams to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elders D. V. Spangler and Cecil Turner. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Leonard J. Brammer. Elder P. E. Ingram delivered the charge to the candidate.

The Moderator asked deacon Richard Stegall if the church approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to Elder Julian R. Williams and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhool given. The ordained minister was delivered back to the church as an ordained Elder of the Old School, Primitive Baptist Church of Malmaison.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery dismissed with prayer by Elder Raymond S. Payne.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

OBITURARIES

JACOB MERREL ADKINS

Jacob Merrel Adkins was born July 18, 1891, and it pleased the Lord to take him away from our midst on September 24, 1970. We bow in humble submission to the will of our eternal God, believing that he is a righteous God and has an appointed time for all things.

He was the son of the late Jacob Merrel and Mary Emily Adkins. He was married on October 22, 1917, to Alice Laws who survives; and to this union were born three children who survive: J. Morris Adkins, Mrs. Alice May Fisher of near Berlin, Md., Mrs. Emma Katherine Esmark of Ridgewood, New Jersey. Also surviving are five grandchildren. The deceased has two brothers that survive Laurence Adkins of Parsonburg, Md. and Paul Adkins of Salisury, Md.

The deceased was a faithful attender of the Old School Baptist meetings as long as his health would permit, enjoying the friendly hand shake of his many friends and the preaching of the doctrine that be believed. In his later years, his hearing was not very good but he always went as long as he could. There were gatherings in his home many times and preaching by different ministers who visited there and he always enjoyed it so very much.

We will miss him but we feel that he had spent his alloted time here. We desire to say, if it be God's will, may his companion, the children, his brothers and all that mourn the loss of this dear one be made to feel that their loss was his eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Burbage Funeral Home in Berlin, Md. and his body was laid to rest in the Evergreen Cemetery in Berlin, Md.

Elder Arthur R. Warren

SISTER BESSIE GREEN

Sister Bessie Strader Green, age 75, died May 23, 1970, at Dundas Clinic, Dundas, Va. She and her late husband, Hilary S. Green, lived in the Monticello Community, N. C., for thirty-five years before moving to Dundas, Va. Born to this union were sixteen children, of whom fourteen survive. She worked hard raising this large family but was always patient and loving.

She and her husband joined the Monticello Primitive Baptist Church together in May, 1929. He preceded her in death in 1952. She manifested a great love for her church and enjoyed the preaching of the gospel of our Saviour, traveling from her home in Virginia to her home church many times when she was hardly able to sit up. She always entered the church doors with a smile on her face.

She was a wonderful mother, a good neigh-

bor, and a friend to all — to know her was to love her. It is hard to give our loved one up, but the dear Lord loved her best and called her home. She did not fear death and said "When the Lord calls, I am ready to go." She was in poor health several years but never complained. We believe her blessed spirit is resting in her Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Funeral services were held at Monticello Church, conducted by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler; and her body was laid to rest beside her husband in the church cemetery. There was much evidence of love, devotion, and friendship by the congregation; and many beautiful flowers. May the good Lord comfort all who loved her, especially the sons and daughters left to mourn their loss.

Vallie Chrisman, Church Clerk

MRS. JOHN B. PROFFITT

Roxie Mills Proffitt, widow of John Brown Proffitt of Christiansburg, Virginia, passed from this life on October 8, 1970. She is survived by three sons, Raymond, Ralph and Frank Proffitt, one grandson Randall Proffitt and one step-son Fred Proffitt. Funeral services were conducted by Elder Odell Thompson at the Richardson Funeral Home and interment was in Sunset Cemetery, Christiansburg.

Mrs. Proffitt was born November 22, 1890. She was a devoted wife and mother who walked humbly through Faith in the footsteps of her Lord. Her flowers and garden received much of her devotion and she delighted in sharing the fruits of her labors with others. She saw in these creations the handiwork of the Creator of all good things and she enjoyed a communion through them often affirming the scriptual reminder that, "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork:"

Hers was a beautiful and loving spirit and her life was a blessing to all who were fortunate to know her. To know her was to love her.

Submitted by a friend and neighbor
Ruby Altizer Roberts

SISTER MAUDE BRINDLE

Sister Maude Brindle was born in Floyd County, Va., on July 8, 1898. She made her home in Danville, Va., for several years. Sister Brindle departed this life on August 14, 1970, She leaves to mourn their loss three daughters, Juanita Sizer and Sister Clara Cumbo of Danville, Va., and Sister Glenna Underwood, of Eden, N. C.; also seven grandchildren, two sisters Mrs. Maggie Priddy of Princetown, W. Va., and Mrs. Florence Ferris, of Wheaton, Md.

Sister Brindle united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on May 28, 1950, and was baptised by her pastor Elder D. V. Spangler. She was a faithful member and attended church as long as she was able.

Her funeral was conducted at Swicegood's Funeral Home by Elders Haywood Wray and Wallace Smith, and her body was laid to rest in Schoolfield Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord.

Written by one who loved her.

Viola Walker.

IDA B. BUTCHER

Sister Butcher was born June 18, 1889 and was calmly and peacefully called to her heavenly home July 15, 1970, making her stay on earth 81 years. She was born in Rockingham County, North Carolina, the eldest child of the late T. W. and Sallie McKinney Scott.

In early life she was married to Turner Barber who preceded her in death by seventeen years. To this union were born nine children, seven of whom survive: daughters, Mattie Lou Sheffield of Greensboro, North Carolina, Neila Black and Naomi Pritchett of Danville, Virginia; sons, Claude T. and Calvin S. Barber of Danville, Virginia, Capers E. Barber of Reidsville, North Carolina and Thomas M. Barber of Ruffin, North Carolina. She also leaves to mourn their loss three sisters, Mrs. Blanch S. Cox, Mrs. Virginia S. Page, both of Ruffin, North Carolina, and Mrs. Georgie S. Snead of Danville, Virginia, thirteen grandchildren and seventeen great grandchildren together with a host of relative and friends.

She was also married to Brother Ed Butcher of Danville, Virginia in 1962, also deceased.

Sister Butcher joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church many years ago and was baptised by the late Elder J. F. Spangler. She loved her church and was a faithful member attending whenever her health would permit. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God.

A devoted wife and mother, she was loved by all who knew her. She bore her suffering without complaining and always had a smile for everyone. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, Blessed be his Holy Name.

The funeral service was held from Swicegood Funeral Chapel in Danville, Virginia by Elder Raymond S. Payne, after which her body was laid to rest in the Danville Memorial Gardens beside that of her husband, to await the second coming of Christ and the glorious resurrection.

The floral offerings were many and beautiful.

Written by one who lover her.

Written by one who loved her.
Lelia Blackwell.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 139 DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1971 NO. 3

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3/71
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

REMEMBERING THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

Chestertown, Maryland

Dear Brethren:

Since returning from the Salisbury Association much has been upon my mind. There are some who have asked me when I would write for the **Signs** again, but I seldom feel I can say anything that has not already been said, so I've remained quiet, letting those who have had the same experiences tell it better than I can. The travels of the Lord's people all tell the same wonderful story of God's abiding love and tender mercy. As I read the experiences of each one, I think of old Elder Jones. He loved to preach his experience, and often said if his experience was taken away from him, he would have nothing left. We wonder about God's love for us and why we love Him so. Then we are made aware of the fact that we love Him because He first loved us, when we were dead in sin and couldn't help ourselves. We do not merit such love.

At the Association there was much sweet preaching and I enjoyed all very much, but some even better than others. Since coming home, various parts of each service come back, time and time again, and I want to say a few words on my thoughts. When I say I "enjoy" hearing preaching, I know of no other way to describe it, so just remember, I mean that I "savor the taste" — to the fullest extent.

Speaking briefly, I enjoyed Elders Wood, Key, Warren, Smith, Garner and Hollingsworth very much and would like to hear from them more often if it were possible. But somehow the ones that keep returning are from the other pastors' messages.

Elder Brammer spoke from the 15th Chapter of Matthew, 13th verse, "Every plant which my Heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." Does that make you think of anything? It did for me. Do you not see in your mind's eye the beautiful garden you planted back in your early life? Perfect rows of beautiful plants — each one planted carefully and cared for tenderly. Folks praised you for its beauty and you took pride in showing it off, as the work of your hands. Then one day the Lord began a work in your life and you began to see your garden with clearer eyes. That plant there which looked most beautiful had to be rooted out, for Pride had no place in it, and next to be rooted out, Hate, then Envy, Jealousy, Spite and Dishonesty. As each one was rooted out, a new plant, planted by the Father, was planted. Then the garden took on a new beauty, with the flowers of Love, Humility, Patience, and oh, so many more of God's beautiful flowers. All planted by His Hand and tenderly cared for. No feeling of self-righteousness there! Just praise and glory to a wonderful Father in Heaven and nothing of ourselves. As the Lord continues the good work in our hearts, one noxious plant after another is removed and where we once thought the garden in our lives was beautiful, we found it to be ugly. But now it has taken on a

perfection under the touch of His Hand. When He starts a good work in His children, He continues it 'til the day of our Salvation. A beautiful message!

Elder Spangler spoke upon the sweetness and beauty of the name of Jesus Christ, and how important it is for us to get to know Him better. To know more about what His will is for us. The importance of searching the Scriptures and finding where it says, "Thus saith the Lord." To study and heed the admonitions within the Bible. It seems that in view of all that is happening in our world today, we have more cause to look forward with keen anticipation to the Lord's return than any preceding generation. Events are shaping up quickly, that cause true believers to search the Scriptures faithfully and study them, to see how they compare with events today. The intensifying of those characteristics which the Apostle Paul declared would mark the "last days" signifies that the end is approaching. These things were in existence then (read 2 Timothy 1-3) and are increasingly so today. Our God has given us a costly treasure in his Precious Word, for there the riches of His Wisdom, Love and Grace are made known to us. All we need for time and eternity lies hidden in the blessed pages of the Bible, and as Brother Spangler so emphatically said, **"Well - read it."** A little story I heard is worth repeating. A lady was entertaining her club one day and when the chairman was ready to open the meeting with prayer and Bible reading, she found she had left her Bible home. Asking the hostess for hers, she went to the stand where she usually kept it, but it wasn't there, and she couldn't find it. She called in her new maid and asked her if she knew where it was. The maid's face lit up with joy and she said, "Praise the Lord, Praise the Lord." The lady was amazed and asked her why she said that. She said, "Every time I start a new job, I always hide the Bible to see how long it is before they miss it." She had hid it in the linen closet under the sheets, and was happy she was in a home that used the Bible.

I am so thankful the Lord blessed me with a hearing ear and a receptive heart all thru the meeting and even though I enjoyed the short messages Elder Griffin gave us between regular sermons, I was so thankful I stayed over 'til the regular meeting at Snow Hill on Sunday. It seemed as though Elder Griffin saved the best for the last — the "icing on the cake" as it were. He spoke of the difference between Grace and Mercy, a powerful sermon. When he was through I felt full, and ready to go home. "Grace" has been described sometimes as kindness bestowed upon the undeserving. Grace finds the sinner, a rebel, and leaves him as a child of God. Grace finds him wandering on the brink of destruction, at the end of the world, and leads him through the gates of Heaven. None of us would ever have sought our God, were it not for Grace. We can look about us at the dregs of humanity and say with compassion, "There but for the Grace of God, go I." We also thank God for His Mercy. His infinite Wisdom provided redemption, whereby salvation and redemption are provided a people which He in justice alone would have rightly condemned. Grace refers to the sins of men and Mercy to their miserable condition. God extends his Grace to us, because we are guilty and His Mercy because we are in a miserable condition. Maybe my wording isn't placed exactly right, because the thoughts have been faster than my pen, but I hope my meaning is clear. By Grace are ye saved, not by our works, lest any man should boast. But because He had Mercy upon our sinful condition. I feel when we hear the Word of God preached, it is not as the word of men, but it is in truth the Word of God, which always works effectively in those that believe.

Ah, my precious Brothers, how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of Peace, and bring glad tidings of good things (Romans 10-15). The troubles of the world seem far away when we meet together in love

and fellowship, in peace with one another, and I trust, with our Blessed Lord. Throughout the long winter months, I only hear preaching once a month and the weeks are long between, but if it is the Lord's Will, I do not want to miss even one of those seasons of feasting. When I am at the banquet table of the Lord, I feel to be as Mephibosheth — lame in both legs, and feasting upon the richness of God's Mercy and Grace to one so small and weak.

Please overlook any errors and if any part is not in accord with the doctrine and order, please omit and forgive.

A little sister
Ruth Lucht

HIS GRANDFATHER'S EXPERIENCE

115 Bayou Drive
Channelview, Texas 77530

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

Please accept this money order for renewal of my subscription and use the remainder for the poor. The *Signs* started coming to me in July of last year. My father subscribed for me and I am not sure just when it will run out.

It is my desire to submit the enclosed article to the *Signs* for publication. It was sent to my mother last June from Mr. Pilgreen. I have done my best to write my grandfather's thoughts as nearly as possible. The pencil written tablet was well worn with time.

Robbie Holloway

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER R. W. RHODES

(Written July 9, 1918)

By your permission it is my desire, if it be the Lord's will, to speak a word of spiritual comfort to those that are weary of sin and sorrow; to those who wander in the wilderness hungry and thirsty. If I am able to comfort you, it is evident that I have been brought through thorny paths myself in the light of God's divine truth. I hope to have been given to see my exceeding sinfulness.

When I was a small boy, about ten years old, I heard a school teacher tell a dream of heaven. She told the dream to a class of young students. The dream was wonderful to me. Tears would flow in spite of me. Oh, how I longed to go to heaven when I died, but I thought such a sweet place is not for me. Something even then began to show me that I was a sinner and was condemned. Oh, such anguish of soul, I can not describe. Oh, that I were one of them that would dwell in heaven.

When school was out I went home with the others but in my mind I was alone in the midst of my trouble, — something suggested, if you will be a good boy, you will go to heaven when you die. I thought I could do this. Therefore I with a determined mind set out on a hard journey. I rebuked my little sister that night and told her if she would be a good girl she would go to heaven. Before I was aware my mind had grown cold and careless; so by and by I gave it all up, with the notion that I would be good when I got older.

As I went on there was now and then a serious thought about myself and the gospel. I loved to hear people talk about God and the scripture, but did not want anyone to know it. I wanted to read the Bible but was ashamed for anyone to know it. As I grew older I was considered a good boy by those that did not know me very well, but I was just as sinful as others. I was restrained from some bad habits, as I was raised by strict parents. For this I owe a gratitude that cannot be expressed.

I attended Primitive Baptist meetings and now and then would get some expressions that would stay with me. I was strange for some cause and other children my age did not seem to like my company. On one occasion when in the company of boys, I would not use profane language. Because of this, they called me preacher.

When I was about seventeen, all thoughts of a serious nature seemed to leave me. I became reckless and didn't care for anything. During a Missionary Baptist meeting, I felt better in my way of seeing and joined the missionaries. In a very short time it was revealed to me what a hypocrite I was. This brought me great trouble, with no peace of mind. I went out in the moonlight and knelt on a sandy place and promised the Lord that I was going to do better. Binding myself under a strict oath to that end.

As soon as I did something that I considered wrong, I went to bed in sorrow. In my sleep I dreamed the Lord spoke these words to me: "Now his oath is no good." This firmly condemned me. Oh, the sorrow and grief, trouble and misery, of a condemned sinner before God. After all my fig leaf apron has concealed nothing. I was made to understand that I was naked, guilty, and exposed to justice, which was well deserved. There was no place to flee, no hiding place, no refuge in the works of the creature. "Before the spotless throne of grace I fall, worthy to drink the wormwood and the gall."

Now for several years I was totally condemned without hope and without God in the world. I groaned under the yoke of bondage. I had no hope in the world to come. Yet at times I had great things in view for this life. I married at the age of eighteen which was a happy time, but I was distressed because of my unworthiness in the face of my Maker. I became disgusted with the conditional church which I had joined first. I believed the doctrine of the Bible and was not afraid to contend for it before anyone, although I did not feel to be included in all its glorious promises.

At this time my health failed me. I felt impressed to talk on the scriptures, but I would think every time I did it would be my last. I found that I was unable to quit. Finally my health got so bad, I was forced to seek the help of doctors. They said I had pellagra in the last stages. I was so distressed I could not sleep; I could not keep from praying no matter where I was or what I was doing. Tears dimmed my eyes.

One night unexpectedly I fell asleep and dreamed of being in a very deep valley surrounded by high mountains. Everything looked dry and parched, no vegetation growing. I thought I was in the lowest part of the valley and no way to escape. Something caused me to look behind and I saw in a lower part of this great valley a beautiful spring of water. There was fire between me and the spring. Then I saw the fire taken away and the water clear as crystal; and seeing this spring in the midst of a desert took away from my mind the thoughts of the mountains and my face was towards the spring. I awoke without any great burden of guilt, praising God. It was impossible for me to restrain my mind from praising Him.

I felt impressed to go to the Old Baptists, but did not want them to know it. I also was impressed to believe at times that the Lord had bid me go stand in the temple and speak unto the people all the words of this life. I could never do this without knowing of a certainty that it was given me of the Lord. Once I was in great trouble desiring to know whether the impression was of the Lord or not. It fell on my mind all at once to open the Bible and read where it opened, and see whether it would condemn me or not. Where I opened it, the first passage I read was when the Lord said to the prophet, "Open thy mouth and swallow what I give thee." Somehow I felt this scripture applied to me, but did not feel that I ever would give in to it. I felt to be so mean. On one occasion I went in a store to buy a Bible and the young lady clerk passed the ordinary Bibles and brought me a minister's Bible. "You wanted a minister's Bible, did you not?"

I read my Bible and could see the truth so plainly, and I thought that anyone could. When I saw one take the wrong view of the scripture, I would try to convince them of their

wrong. People in the community began to call me the preacher. This did not suit me and I resolved to quit talking scripture. But before I knew it I would be at it again. I was so burdened I often asked signs of the Lord to assure me whether the Lord had given me this impression or not. I felt that if He would give me a sign, I would not doubt any more. So I asked for the sign, and as soon as I did this scripture came to me in fiery tones, "There shall be no sign given this generation." So this not only shook my confidence in its being of the Lord, but shook my hope also.

Not long afterwards I was restored to my former frame of mind to ask a sign. I saw where the Lord gave a sign of the dry fleece and wet fleece and so on, and I was encouraged to ask a sign. During this time I loved to be alone all the time. Sometimes I would take my little family to my mother's on Sunday. We lived nearby. Then I would go back home and stay there alone all day. Some of my people thought I was losing my mind.

One evening I desired to go fishing. My objective was to get where I would be alone. I had only four hooks and two of them had no lead on their line. While digging bait I asked the Lord if my impression was of him, that I might catch a fish to each hook. So I set the hooks. The hooks that had no lead floated up on the top of the water. I had no hope of anything being caught on them.

The next morning I went to the two hooks that had sinkers first, but did not expect to find anything on them, but I took two fine fish off the first hooks. I put new bait on the hooks and went on down the creek to get the other two. They had nothing on them. I took them up and came back to take the others up. I had caught two more fine fish. So the sign was fulfilled, I had caught a fish to every hook. I concluded it was a good time to fish and did no more toward asking a sign. Sometimes the same impression would bother me so much, I could hardly do anything. I became dissatisfied where I was living. It seemed I would not have the trouble I was having if I could move. Consequently, I moved to a town called El Dorado, Arkansas. There I had my same burden but seemed to pass it off better for a while. My family got sick, my expenses grew heavy and I wanted to move back home. I was ashamed for anyone to know this.

Finally, I moved back home and began to go to hear the Old Baptists preach. I did not realize they knew I was a regular attendant. At first I would not go anywhere near the front of the church. To my surprise I was deeply interested in the preaching, more than I had ever been before. It was so sweet and comforting to me. I would find myself leaning toward the preacher. I read my Bible almost every time I had a chance. I became so interested that I would go quite a distance to the Old Baptist meetings, but did not think they would notice. One day the pastor of the church nearest home (Elder W. K. Smith) said, when he saw me at a district meeting, a long way from home. "Reason, what are you doing here?" I said, "I do not know." He replied, "I am satisfied you don't." Then he told another preacher brother, standing nearby, that I was digging after the truth. I wondered how he knew: He seemed to know more about how I felt than I did. At least he could tell my feelings better than I ever have.

Finally, the association was held at the home church and I made great preparations for it. The first day at dinner one of the old deacons said to me, "You just as well come on and be with us." I replied, "You don't want a hypocrite do you?" He said, "No." "I am afraid I am one." He said, "Well God's people shall be a willing people in the day of his power."

I became deeply troubled about joining and slept hardly any during the meeting. The preaching was so sweet to me. Finally, I became so willing on the night before the meeting closed next day, I promised the Lord that I would

join. The next morning, I was far from that notion, but when they began to sing I wanted to go. Something seemed to ask me what will you say if you go? Some power enabled me to trust the Lord for this.

I was received and Baptized by Elder W. K. Smith and I felt happy and free. I did not think I ever would be troubled any more. I was mistaken indeed, before sundown I was in deep trouble. I did not sleep any more until I was made willing to speak in the name of the Lord. As soon as I did, I hated that I had acknowledged my calling, but the next night I slept all night. It was the first sleep I had since the meeting began. Three weeks from the time I joined, I was given liberty to speak by the church.

I have felt at times that I was deceived and that I deceived the people of God. It was three weeks before I made any effort to speak in public. During this three weeks I dreamed of preaching to a large congregation seated all around me. The first effort I made in church was at Liberty Hill. It was the same congregation I saw in my dream, the pulpit being in one side of the house instead of being in the end. As they were all seated around me, it was given me to lose almost all doubt that the Lord was with me. By and by the flesh was puffed up over the idea of being a preacher. I knew it was a shame, but I could not or did not help it. I was exalted almost above measure. The Lord suffered me to go on.

Finally, I was called on to go to a place quite a distance from where I lived. I had never been there and the brethren had been told that I was a big preacher, and I knew it. I went on Saturday and found a big crowd of people. They had given me out and had already started service, but they stopped everything when they saw me. I went in the stand and was as dumb as a stump, as far as preaching was concerned I had to sit down; and Oh, how I did wish I was at home. My discomfort was so great that I thought I would leave that evening. The brethren would not hear of my going home. One of the old deacons came to me after service and said, "Well, Brother Rhodes, you made a failure today." I said, "I know it, Brother Bowen." He said, "Well I am glad to see you make a failure. I heard so much talk of your preaching and if you did not make a failure some times, I would be afraid it was not God's given gospel."

Nothing they could do or say helped my feelings. It was the first time I had ever been compelled to sit down without saying anything. I fully decided I was not a preacher any more, if I had ever been. That Sunday morning before service an older brother and I were nearing the church and talking. Some power strengthened me and made me feel reconciled over my failure. I feel that the Lord gave me sweet liberty that day. I went home feeling that the Lord had not utterly taken his loving kindness from me. This was a lesson which I was to remember. I have been made to feel glad that the Lord showed me where my strength to preach was, and I hope he will ever be pleased to keep me in an humble place, depending alone on his mercy.

Not long after this I said something in the stand at Liberty Hill Church in a way as if it had been scripture, but it was not. In substance it was the truth. A great pressure caused me to feel that I had sinned. Later on it came to my mind that if I had ever preached the gospel, it was by the Holy Ghost. Then, I was made to feel that I had sinned against the Holy Ghost, which was unpardonable. Oh my soul, how miserable I did feel. There was no place of rest for me. This sin is not to be forgiven in this world nor in the next. I tried to pray but could not. These words would distress me. "All manner of sin and basphemies shall be forgiven unto men except the sin against the Holy Ghost."

I was sure I had committed this sin.

Oh, how dark was the path under this trial. There was no comfort for me anywhere but I hope the dear Lord heard my pitiful cry for Jesus sake. I could not keep from trying to pray to relieve my troubled and weary soul. Then the spirit of the Lord brought this beautiful meaning of scripture to me. "The blood of Jesus Christ His son, cleanseth us from all sin." Therefore, I was loosed out of the great prison wherein I was helplessly buried, and was made to rejoice in God my Saviour once more. I found it hard to stay at home; and do until this day. Yet, I feel that is where I belong, for I feel to be so ignorant and sinful and unprofitable.

(Concluded next issue.)

EXPERIENCE OF MANY YEARS AGO

1902 McCutchen Street
Shreveport, La. 71108

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

It is with much fear and trembling that I finally decided to send you a copy of my story. It is the truth if I am not deceived; and I hope and pray that I am not because it is the most beautiful thing that ever came to me; and though it came to me many years ago, I still keep it in my heart and feed upon it, and re-live it over and over; not being able to feel the power of God's hands lifting me, but just thinking upon it fills my heart.

Some have asked me to send it after I finally let them read it, but I am full of fear; and I guess I was afraid some might not believe me, but I can only say that it happened to me, and I hope and pray that I am not deceived in believing it came from God, for nothing less could have done this to a wretch like me.

I want most of all to give God all the praise, honor, and glory for giving this to such as I am, if it be the truth in me; but sometimes I am what might be called a "doubting Thomas," but I am what God made me. My nature is of no good thing but if God has seen fit to save a wretch like me, then I hope to give Him glory forever and ever. This, if I am His child, is my anchor of hope: what I believe to be the hope of His calling.

Was it a dream? I was awake if I am not deceived. Was it a vision? I saw nothing but was filled with love, joy, and peace like I had never known. Whatever it was, I hope it was of God. If you find anything usable in it, you have my permission to use it, giving God all the credit, for in my flesh dwells no good thing . . .

I have been reading the *Signs* for some time, and it is full of love and comfort: the joy I have received from it is indeed a comfort and pleasure.

I was received into the church, and was so happy that they would have such as I am. I hope and pray that neither I or they are deceived in me. I loved the good old Primitive Baptist people long before I could ask for a home with them; but they have been so sweet to me and have comforted me more than they know. Do whatever you will with this, but please keep the good old *Signs* coming my way, for it is full of spiritual food for the hungry.

I wish to ask all of God's people to pray for me; and may God bless each and every one of you.

Just a poor, weak sinner saved
by grace, if at all,
Katherine Mathews

(Due to lack of space we are not including poetry. See next issue for the further writing. — J. D. W.)

A POOR SINNER'S EXPERIENCE

What we call society is in a very rapid pace of change. However, no matter how much change is going on in this world, I am thankful to God that his Word has and will remain unchanged from the beginning to the end. Because God said "I am Alpha and

Omega, the Beginning and the End." We should be forever-more praising our God for the mercies which we have received, and for the hope of Eternal Life which we feel that we have been given which is to come after this walk or journey in the wilderness has been completed and natural man is finished.

Often times I feel that I may be a deceiver as Judas was, and I know that Christ knows those of his. Christ said, "I know My Sheep, they hear My Voice and they follow Me." God having chosen his people before the foundation of this world, no man can take away or add to the number of Sheep in the Most Holy Master's fold. I feel so unworthy of the love which my brethren have shown me that I often wonder how God could love one such as I, if I be in that number. But I hope I can witness with Paul when he said, "By the Grace of God I am what I am." Knowing that only through grace could I have a hope of Eternal Life, because I am such a vile and weak being that I can do nothing, and am dependent on God to give me the strength to take my next breath.

I feel that I have been made to love the "Old Baptists" because the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace is so sweet to a poor sinner's ear when God opens that ear. I can only have a hope of being lifted out of the depth of hell, and set upon that strong foundation with a new song in my mouth to sing and praise the Living God who has not forsaken his children. Sometimes, I feel that I should depart from the Old Baptists because I have nothing to offer them, but as Peter said, "To whom shall I go" for the "Old Baptists" are preaching Christ; and He has the words of eternal life. I hope that I have died and risen again with Him and His blood was shed for me.

I felt to be burdened to go to the Old Baptists and ask for a home with them, but knowing myself I could not go. Then in April of 1968, they were having a Wednesday night meeting. While singing the hymn: "How happy are they who their Savior obey, and whose treasures are laid up above," I could not stay away any longer and I was asking for a home with Pittman's Grove Church. Also, my wife and a dear friend came up and were asking to be taken in. Oh, what a beautiful night that was! After being baptized the second Sunday in May, it seemed that I had been relieved of a great burden. However, it was not long before I felt to be burdened down again. At night when I tried to sleep, I could see myself standing before my brethren speaking to them of God's Holy Word and praising His Name with an everlasting praise. It seemed to stay on my mind, and I would at times find myself speaking aloud when riding along the road. Finally, I told one of the deacons. The second Saturday in September I stood and spoke to the congregation. After speaking several times, I had a dream that I was telling my friends about it and they began to laugh and make fun. I said that I would never stand and speak again; then I plainly heard a voice which said, "Stand and continue to speak in My Name."

The second Saturday in December, Pittman's Grove Church liberated me to speak to the other churches. I hope that God has and will continue to bless me to speak Words of Comfort and proclaim Salvation by Grace, according to God's Will. The world likes to proclaim Salvation by Choice according to man. The world cannot and does not know anything of Christ who came not to save the world but to save that which His Father gave Him. Through the manifestation of Christ Jesus dying and shedding His blood on the cross, He paid the Price of the Law of God which the flesh of man could not do. We all must die because of sin which abides in our flesh. "When sin is finished it brings forth death." Also as Paul wrote, "If Christ be in you, the body is dead

because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness."

On the old rugged Cross He hanged
But death could not reign;
He died not for what He had done
Only to save that which His Father had chosen.

The second Sunday in April 1969, I was ordained into the full work of the ministry. This is a high office and also at the same time a low office. Unless God has laid His hand of love upon me then it is all in vain. I know that Christ chose twelve and He knew one of them was a devil. Am I as one of the eleven or am I that devil? I have a precious hope that I am as one of the eleven and that a Crown of Eternal Life has been laid in store for me. I desire to be in a state of perfection, but, because of the warfare of the flesh, I often wonder am I a Child of God at all. I can only cry to God and beg for His rich mercies. "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion so then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy — For he saith to Moses . . ." (Romans 9:15-16). I continuously desire the prayers of all of God's children and the love which I am so unworthy of. As Paul said, "of sinners I am the chiefest."

Elder Curtis Rains

REMEMBERING FORMER YEARS

Swansboro, N. C. 28584

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

Since our enjoyable visit with you sometime ago, we have had many pleasant thoughts concerning your kindness, love and hospitality manifested to us while in your good home. Hope that both of you are enjoying God's richest blessings and that your health is still good, together with your loved ones. We have made slow but steady improvement since we were there. We hope to be thankful that the good Lord has spared our unprofitable lives until now and we certainly have much to be thankful for.

Elder Wood, while looking over some old minutes of some of the associations dating back many years, I noticed one dated October, 1933 of the White Oak Primitive Baptist Association held with the Church at Sandhill, Duplin County. Elder R. W. Gurganous a highly gifted servant of God was the Moderator at the time. While looking over the order of the preaching we found that you were the second speaker on Sunday morning and your text was, Ephesians 1:1-5. When seeing you listed as one of the speakers I wondered if you still recall your visit in eastern North Carolina. This Church where the Association was convening isn't very far from Swansboro where we live. Your text on that occasion was the same that I tried to speak from only a few days ago and enjoyed sweet liberty. The fourth verse was what impressed me very much, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." These are sweet words to poor sinners when the Spirit enables us to feel that we are embraced in the covenant that was ordered in all things and sure.

If indeed we know anything about the wonderful workings of the love of God in the heart of a condemned sinner, we realize it is according as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. If we have ever been blessed to sing songs of praise to him or preach the gospel of the Son of God to his humble poor and to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, it is according as he has chosen us. Our experience has taught us that everything that we are in grace while we sojourn here, and what we hope to be in the world to come, is according as he has chosen us in his son before we ever had a being in this world. What a wonderful thought when we can see

through our past lives where the Good Lord has taken care of us through every valley and dark place that we have been called to pass, and blessed us with every natural as well as all spiritual blessings that we ever received.

While meditating after looking through these old minutes and the *Signs of the Times* and other sources of the past, it makes us feel sad when we see so many names of the old servants that have passed on to their heavenly reward, but still hold a sweet place in our memory. So many changes have been brought about among the Lord's people that have caused heart aches and sorrows between brethren that once seemed to love each other and the cause of Jesus Christ and the Church. We wonder if there will ever be a coming together and a revival in the churches. One thing is reassuring, the Lord is still calling young men to preach the gospel to the poor, and we believe he will continue to do so until every heir of promise has been brought into the militant kingdom. When this is accomplished we can think of no more use the Lord will have for this world as we know it. All it will take when the time comes to destroy this universe is for God to withdraw his power, or to say "Let it be" as he did in the beginning when he said, "Let there be light and there was light." He has told us that "My grace is sufficient." This is where our hope lies.

May the God of all grace keep and uphold his people and gather them together from time to time and make them rejoice in a Saviour's love.

We hope for both of you a joyous Christmas in the true sense, and not only for you but for them that you love as well as those that love you. We pray God's blessings upon you in the years to come, and may you be blessed to preach glad tidings to his people as he has blessed you these many years; and we would hope that it is in the providence of Him that worketh all things after the council of His own will, for you to visit in our little Church and home sometime.

Your unworthy brother and sister,
Jabez and Vilma Rhue

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 2
Smithfield, N. C. 27577

Dear Elder Spangler:

My desire today is to write my experience. Before I begin I would like to say that I cannot express by pen or any form of communication, even half of the mercies of God to this poor worm of the dust.

I cannot say, as I have heard others say, "I was raised in a Primitive Baptist home." I was raised in an Arminian home with wonderful and loving parents. I was born June 14, 1942.

As a child I often felt that I was lonesome, though I had many natural friends. I was not particularly concerned with my sins; in fact I had quite a good time, naturally speaking. I enjoyed the pleasures of the flesh. I was raised to go to this society, Arminian Church, and from time to time I would think about salvation, but I felt I could "get saved" when I chose to do so. I went to Sunday School; and enjoyed the pleasures of the world. I was happy in a world that I thought I controlled. I truly felt that I was the master of my own destiny: that I could choose any way I wanted. My sins did not bother me because I felt I was as good as most people, and even better than some.

I went this way for about seventeen years — then something happened. My world began to crumble, and I began to see things I did not want to see. I began to see Wayne Mitchell as he really was. Sunday school did not show me these things: never has and never will. I began to see a polluted, destitute, helpless, hell deserving sinner: it wasn't my neighbor, it wasn't my brother — it was me. As my world was crum-

bling, I began to try to patch it up. I had evil thoughts, so I tried to think good thoughts. I had evil ways, so I tried to do good things. My speech was evil, so I tried to clean up my words.

Brethren, I failed miserably. The only thing Sunday school ever taught me was that I had a *free will.* I found this was a lie, that I had nothing but a will to sin, a nature so hell bent that all the works of my flesh could not alter my nature. God showed me that of sinners I was the chief, the worst of the whole lot, and that I was not better than any one, but worse. I could not help myself: I could not keep the law of God; I could not save myself. Then I began to be afraid, for I knew I was lost and couldn't do any thing about it. I tried. I promised God everything I could think of, and I broke each promise. I promised or bargained with God that if He would save me, I would be better and help him save others.

Brethren, I did not know about a God that did not need any help. Then God showed me hell, and I was in it. I was afraid to go to sleep for I knew that if I died surely hell would be my home, and I knew that I deserved it because I had transgressed the law of God, and was a sinner eternally lost. And then, when it seemed I tried every scheme to extricate myself from this horrible pit, and failed, the Providence of God that I did not know about intervened.

I did not know anything about Primitive Baptists, nor the God they trusted in. As I intimated, I was at the end of my rope — my good works had run out and I felt utterly lost. My uncle, Ruffin Mitchell, lived close to me, and one Sunday morning something compelled me to call him and ask him to take me to his church. It was the fourth Sunday in September ten years ago. He took me with him to Upper Black Creek Church that Sunday. I got to the meeting house and went inside; and as those dear saints began to come in, I saw the most wonderful love within them for one another. The expressions on their faces were truly touching.

They began to sing out of an un-noted Lloyd Hymn Book, and they sounded like angels. Around eleven o'clock Elder Gerald Pate stood up and welcomed the congregation, and opened the service with the most humble and at the same time glorious prayer. He prayed to an almighty God, a God that controlled him, and everything else. It was the first time that I had heard a man pray for spiritual blessings, and not give man praise for some deeds that men had done. But it was most glorious when they began to preach about a God that saved hell deserving sinners not because they were good, not because they had changed themselves for salvation, but simply because He loved them before they were ever born into this world. He preached to beggars, and I knew I was a beggar. He preached to people who could not help themselves, and I felt to be one of those. He preached of a hope of glory; and I felt a precious hope well up within my poor, trembling breast. It was a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

For many months after that Sunday I began to go to all the various Primitive Baptist Churches in our area. It seemed they all sang the same song of Salvation by Grace and Grace Alone. I had a deep desire to unite with the Primitive Baptist Church. Elder W. E. Turner it seemed knew me like a book. Every time I heard him preach it seemed he preached my experience and feelings in such a touching way.

Then one night I laid on my bed, but that bed could not hold me. I believe God made that bed too short for me to lie on: these words came to my mind, join the church *now.* I wanted to wait but could not wait; so I called my uncle and we went to Deacon Popes' house, and many of the brethren came there, and I told them my feelings, and was accepted into Pittman's Grove Church; which has been a wonderful home ever

since. I did not feel worthy then, and, Brother Spangler, I do not feel worthy now, but it has been so wonderful in my feelings to be in the church.

I do not know that I am one of His, I only have a hope that God has done something for me that I could not do for myself. I was baptized the second Sunday in November, 1961, by Elder W. E. Turner. Two years later Pittman's Grove Church called for my ordination as a deacon. Again I told them I did not feel worthy, but bowed to the mind of the church. While trying to serve as a deacon, I was again cast down; and I will now attempt to tell you of, I hope, my being called into the ministry of the God of all Glory.

It seemed to be a burden that I could not bear. I thought that of all the members of the churches around, I was the most unworthy for such a burden to be placed on. It came to me so plainly that I would have to preach, but I was not worthy to stand before the wonderful saints of God. I felt that surely they knew more than I, and what possible comfort could I give them. So I ran; and tried to run into the things of the world. Again I promised God that if I could wait a little while until I could accumulate some property and money, then I would preach. Again I broke all my promises to this merciful God. It then pleased God to take away all the natural wealth I had accumulated, and bring me to a poverty stricken nature. I will not hesitate to tell you that I had to go deeper into the belly of hell to preach than to join the church.

Again He taught me what I was in my nature. Brethren, I went to college to preach all right, but it was not the college of men but the college of experience, making me willing to be this great God's anything. I still worried about losing all my friends in a natural way, but I was taught that Jesus was the only real friend I had. He kept me when I could not keep myself; He loved me when it seemed no one else did. It was Jesus that gave me a hope when all was despair and sorrow. These words seemed to be in my mind, "Take no thought of what thou shalt say, for it shall be given thee in the selfsame hour." God then made me not to be ashamed to own his cause or to defend the doctrine of Grace; and I hope to preach it to the comfort of hell deserving sinners, not giving praise to men but ascribing all the glory to Israel's God — the God of all Grace, Truth, and Love.

I have had many experiences in my young life, but to be blessed to baptize a precious brother or sister who has testified that he believes in this great God, and has a hope in Christ Jesus, is joy unspeakable and full of glory. In August, 1968, the church at Pittman's Grove called for my ordination to the full work of the ministry. Elder W. E. Turner and Elder D. B. Stokes participated in the ordination.

I hope and pray that I have preached the God of Love and Saving Power to the comfort of His little ones. I feel so unworthy in my flesh, for I am a sinner by nature, but my hope is in the Lord.

In hope of life eternal,
Elder Wayne Mitchell

SIGNS MEAN MUCH TO HER

Brampton, Ontario
Canada

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

Am enclosing an obituary of a dear friend; also money-order for subscription for two years and balance for the Indigent Fund. My intentions were to write a letter for the *Signs* and have this obituary typewritten for you. How true the "spirit is willing but the flesh is weak . . ."

Words cannot express how much the *Signs* have meant to me. May the Lord see fit to continue to have it printed in the future, and may He richly bless the

editors, writers, and those who enjoy the precious Word of God.

Yours in sweet fellowship,
Mrs. Verna Carscadden

A GLORIOUS MESSAGE

Rt. 1
West Frankfort, Ill. 62896

This is not a Christmas story. I do not write of days but of night.

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night." (Luke 2:8)

"I saw the tents of Cushan (or darkness) in affliction." (Habakkuk 3:7)

We surely are in a night of darkness and affliction as we travel this vale of tears, troubles, sickness and death on every hand. "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." (Luke 2:13, 14)

What a glorious message! I hope my ears have been enabled to hear it; our printed word, the *Signs,* watched over by the editors. We travel far to hear the messages we love proclaimed by the earthly shepherds among the Old School Primitive Baptists, who travel far in sickness and in health.

The only things in my life on earth that matter are where we can speak to one another, and hear this dear message, "Peace on earth," the song of my hope. All other things fade into nothing. Not once a year, but all of a life lived in hope.

I had to write this feeling so unworthy to take up space or time.

A lone pilgrim,
Mrs. Cecil Neal

HER CUP RAN OVER

Rt. 2, Box 62-A
Ferrum, Va. 24088

Signs of the Times:

I write with the memory of my deceased mother, Betty Hatcher, whose membership was at Long Branch Church, Franklin County, Va.

On Wednesday morning before day, in a dream or vision, I was at Long Branch where a congregation had met for worship. During the service my mind was caught away and I was unaware of what was going on; when I became aware, we were shaking hands and my mother was standing beside me dressed in a long white dress or robe. She looked so very young and pretty that I cannot describe her beauty. While the people were rushing to get to her, I shook her hand and hugged and kissed her; and I was full of joy. Then I awoke.

Yesterday, January 3rd, was our regular meeting time at Long Branch. The roads were in some places icy but there were about forty people there. Brother Hale Terry and my pastor, Elder Amos Hash, were there to speak for us. They were so wonderfully blessed, and I was filled with the same joy that I was the four days before in the dream or vision. It was all so sweet to me that my cup ran over again.

Hattie Radford

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 5
Kernersville, N. C. 27284

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing some of my experiences that you may put in the *Signs,* if you see fit to do so.

When I was about ten years old I was standing in the yard, and all at once I was over shadowed with such a good feeling that I called to my mother and said, "Mother, I feel so good that I do not know what to do." It seemed to me that the tree branches were in praise to Almighty God. As the years passed by, I had a vision or dream in

which I felt someone lay his hand on my forehead, and I raised up to see who it was: It was Jesus standing at the foot of my bed. He wore a long, white robe, and his hair was as white as snow; and his eyes shined like gold. As I was looking upon this beautiful image, he went up. How good I felt! I felt that I would never have any more trouble; but how disappointed I was.

I went to hear the Primitive Baptists preach, and I enjoyed the preaching and singing — it was music to my poor soul. After I was married my wife and I attended the different Primitive Baptist Churches. I loved them so much that I desired a home with them, but did not feel worthy of such; and my wife's people being of another faith, I felt there might be a cross between us. But to my surprise, she joined the Primitive Baptists one Saturday when I was at home working. I had begged the Lord to give her a mind to join the Baptist church so that there would be no cross between us. After she joined she told me I would have to join too. I told her that I could not, and she said, "Yes, but you will have to." She said she had a dream that we were baptized together, and that an angel was standing in the water.

Oh, what a burden came over me! I had been begging the Lord to make my companion willing, and I would join also; and now I was rebelling against it. I got so burdened that I felt I could not live. It was a very dry time for it had not rained in a long time. It looked like everything was going to perish. I was so burdened that I went down to my barn, and went down on my knees and begged the Lord to send us some rain, — and a voice spoke to me saying, "Join the church and it will rain." I went to church the next meeting and when the doors of the church were opened, I went before the church and asked for a home, and they received me. That night I awoke, and it was raining so beautifully. I remember that small voice which spoke to me.

When I was baptized I was so happy that I felt the burden I had been carrying was left in the water. When I came out of the water there appeared a white streak about twelve inches wide connected to my breast that extended in the beautiful eastern sky; and wherever I went it went with me, and I felt so good. It has meant much to me, though I feel so little and unworthy to meet with God's people, whom I hope I love. I believe in salvation by the grace of God: one Lord, one Faith, and one Baptism.

Sometime after I joined the church, they called me to serve as a deacon. I asked the church to call someone else as I felt it would be a great burden on me, and I did not feel worthy to do so. The Moderator said, "Brother Williard, the church has called you to serve them, and you should be submissive to the church." I went home with a great burden, and I told my companion that I would not serve as deacon, and that I would not let them ordain me. My burden got heavier, and I began to beg the Lord that if it were right for me to serve the church, to give me a sign; and I had a dream that I was standing on the church grounds, and heard a child crying at the foot of an oak tree that stood on the grounds. I started to go where I heard the child crying, and as I got near the tree, a fire appeared between me and the tree, and I could not move. A voice spoke to me and said, "Wilt thou do my will?" and I knew it was the voice of the Lord. I said, "Oh Lord, what is thy will that thou would have me to do?" At my right I saw a table surrounded by the brethren; and when I saw this, I was able to move. The fire went out, and the child stopped crying. I believe the child I heard crying represented the church, and the table represented the communion table; and the brethren were the ones that I would have to serve. I believe the fire burned out my unworthy feeling and made me willing to serve the church as deacon.

I could continue to write of wonderful things the Lord has shown me but time and space will not permit.

Yours in a sweet hope,
Gilmer L. Williard

CHRIST THE GREATEST PERSONAGE
(Song of Solomon 5:10,16)

The greatest personage that ever lived,
I said of Christ as I slumbered;
He is "the chiefest among ten thousand,"
And bless'd are they with his numbered.

Yea, he's the one altogether lovely,
We read in the scripture of truth,
And somehow I had kindly thoughts of him
In the far-away days of my youth.

I read the New Testament nearly through
When I was fourteen years of age,
And was provoked at the treatment of him
By his enemies in their rage.

I didn't know it behooved him to suffer
According to God's appointment,
That he was from the high courts of glory,
By the heavenly Father sent.

We read that it pleased the Lord to bruise him,
And that he hath put him in grief;
He suffered an ignominious death
Along with the penitent thief.

He "endured the cross, despising the shame,"
And did the moral law fulfill;
In active and passive obedience,
He always did his Father's will.

Now there are many things to divert the mind
From heavenly things here below,
But may I ever be mindful of him,
Who is eternal life to know.

And now that I have reached my fourscore years,
May the remainder of my days,
In this changing world of sin and sorrow,
Be spent to the greatest One's praise.

409 New York Avenue
C. W. Vass
Elizameth City, N. C.

ORDINATION OF AN ELDER

P. O. Box 308
Swansboro, N. C. 28584

Dear Elder Wood:

On behalf of Hadnot Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Swansboro, N. C. we are inclosing for publication when you have space available, an account of action taken by presbytery called by our Church to convene October 9, 1970 during the sitting of our Association, The Contentnea, for the purpose of ordaining our young brother Robert H. Lyliston, which the Church felt had manifested a gift to preach the gospel of the Son of God. Many of our beloved brethren in the Contentnea and other Associations were present and sat with us and either participated or observed the work of this presbytery. We truly hope and pray that our dear brother and Elder will be led by the Holy Spirit and enabled to preach the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord and that he will be received in love and fellowship by our brethren wherever the Lord calls Him to go.

We invite you and all the other brethren to visit our Church when your mind leads you to do so. Done by order of Hadnot Primitive Baptist Church.

Vilma G. Rhue, Clerk

(See notice of ordination this issue.)

1302 Walnut Street
Benton, Ky.

Editors of the *Signs*:

Jesus is Truth, and Truth is what your paper — and Our Paper — is standing upon.

We older ones may get to the place where we can't go to church services, and the *Signs* would be our "preaching services." We know, too, we could get to where we couldn't see: God alone knows what our lot in this life is. To be submissive is our desire, if we know ourselves.

Enclosed is a check for another two year's subscription.

In hope,
Effie Bowden

Danville, Virginia **March, 1971**

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

EXPRESSION OF APPRECIATION

We wish to express through The Signs of the Times our sincere thanks to all who have so kindly remembered us on our Sixtieth Wedding Anniversary, as it is impossible to reply to so many individually.

Elder George and
Sister Esther Ruston

"So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are in Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." (Romans 1:15-17)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND
(To January 1, 1971)

Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.	$ 1.00
Sara L. Taylor, Pa.	3.00
Troy Shepard, N. C.	2.00
Mrs. C. J. Fowlkes, N. C.	3.00
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EDITORIAL
ISAIAH 43:10

"Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord."

The above sentence came to our mind a few days ago when journeying from one of our appointments, and with it we experienced a deep humiliation, while considering what manner of men we ought to be in all holiness of conversation, yet along with that, a holy gladness that the Lord had so bestowed his abundant grace upon us that we should be a living witness of his blessed truth in this dark and cloudy day.

A true witness is one who cannot be turned aside either by flattery or the fear of displeasing others, and *the witness of God testifies to the truth as much in his life and conversation as in*

the pulpit. God's witnesses are monuments of grace, living epistles known and read of all men, in them God is glorified, for they show forth the praise of him who has called them out of darkness into his most marvelous light. A doer of the word is a witness of the truth, and we are commanded to do all things without murmurings and disputings, that we may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life. We are his workmanship, and it is written, God's works praise him. Man's words spring from a source that is polluted, and vanity is stamped upon them; God's work is perfect. Thus the dying thief was through sovereign grace a witness, for when all the disciples forsook Jesus and fled the thief cried, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."

When priest and rabbi were laying snares and traps for Jesus the little children cast palm branches before him, and cried, "Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." They were witnesses, as also was the woman at the well, for she said, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?"

In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews Paul gives us an account of some of the many witnesses of God: an innumerable cloud, compassing us about as a great army, the army of heaven, for our comfort and instruction, witnesses that loved not their lives unto death, of whom the world was not worthy; and to-day where are we? *We are either witnessing to the truth or to a lie, to God or to mammon.* Paul was told by Ananias that he was chosen of God to know his will and see that Just One, and hear the voice of his mouth. "For thou shalt be his witness unto all men, of what thou hast seen and heard." John also was a witness and as such he tells what we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled of the word of life.

In the courts of this world a witness is one who has seen or heard or handled, and heaven demands these qualifications. When so many ceased to follow after the Lord Jesus because of his hard doctrine, Jesus said to Peter, "Will ye also go away?" Peter said, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." No life or comfort but from him, and Peter knew it. As he spake, the blind received their sight, the lepers were cleansed, the dead were raised and to the poor the gospel was preached. The brethren in the primitive church were enabled by grace to preach Jesus and the resurrection before a wicked and gainsaying people. To do so, with many of them, meant prison and death, yet in prison they witnessed; and in Rome, where many of them were slaves, they were cruelly treated, yet in those trials of cruel mockings and scourgings they were witnesses wherever they were, even to the very palace of Cæsar. If they were forsaken and alone, they were not alone, for the Lord stood by them, but while he was witnessed by them to their comfort, their persecutors saw him not.

To-day the world sees him not, neither does it know him, but he has not left himself without witnesses. John the Baptist bare witness of Jesus, he who was the faithful and true witness, went to John and was baptized in the river Jordan, and to-day there are witnesses who have received of the word of Life and have been shown by the Spirit's witness within what is the ordinance of God, and though man has sought out many inventions which have no truth in them at all, and sprinkling is one of them, yet they, as witnesses, go down to the watery grave as their Lord did before them. While those who cling to their sprinkling witness that they prefer the invention of Rome, the mother of harlots, to the pattern God's witnesses have seen in the mount. In this blessed ordinance they witness,

not only that they are dead to the world by the body of Christ, but they are also buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. They witness by their walk and conversation that they have been with Jesus and learned of him. Should it be their lot to lie upon a bed of affliction, yet they will be his witnesses there. If it should be the will of their heavenly Father that they shall have reproach heaped upon them, they will witness even there.

What a wonderful blessing to be a witness of Israel's God in this dark day. It makes the face to shine, yet the world sees it not. Confess Christ as a present help, and the world says how foolish, and while to us it is just as wonderful that God's people live, swallowed up by this wicked world, as ever it was that Jonah lived in the whale's belly, yet if we declare it as a fact unshaken by science, falsely so called, it is laid to our ignorance. But what does the opinion of man, who has not seen, heard, handled, tasted or felt of the word of life, amount to? It is of no account. While we have for many years enjoyed hearing the witness of men and women who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and have believed that their witness was true, yet the witness of God is greater, and the Spirit of God is in each and all of his witnesses, and the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. Thus it is a blessed and holy calling to be a witness of God and his truth. The result of the effectual work, wherever seen, produces children that will not lie, of whom God has declared that *no* weapon that is formed against them shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against them in judgment they shall condemn.

Paul tells Agrippa, "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come." He witnesses before Agrippa and Festus, and then must witness before Cæsar at Rome, and when he was about to seal his testimony with his blood he wrote, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." The lives of the brethren associated with Paul in Rome must have stood out clearly like stars in a dark night. To-day darkness has covered the earth, and gross darkness the people, and the church of God stands alone, yet the Lord is with her; but she is alone as a witness of the truth, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. She is despised and rejected of men, yet honored of God, she stands now a witness that God does indeed dwell with man. Where is there any other people that love one another as they do? for they witness that they are his disciples, for they love one another. While other organizations progress with the world, they are satisfied and happy to build upon the foundation, Jesus, the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and they will stand secure when this vain world in ruin lies.

May God bless us with grace to enable us to witness to what we have handled, tasted and felt of the word of life, and may he so bless those that see our good works that they may glorify our Father which is in heaven. This work of faith and labor of love is much seen in God's humble poor, who have a thorn in the flesh, yet witness that God's grace is sufficient for them; and who, though sorely afflicted, have the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush. They confess that in them, that is, in their flesh, there dwells no good thing, and they stand not in the wisdom of men, but the power of God. These declare plainly that they seek a city that has foundations whose builder and maker is God, and God is not ashamed to be called their God, though many and many are the times that they are ashamed of their poor returns, and

their life is one confession of poverty, sin and shame when speaking of themselves; and of glory, praise and power being unto their God forever, for he has redeemed them, they are his, and they witness to his presence, what it means to them here, and what it will be to them in a world that will never end.

G. R.

(The above was an editorial by Elder Ruston June, 1930.)

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

REMARKS ON MATT. 12:43-45

"When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out: and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation."

Brother Joel W. Swain, of Florida, has requested us to give our views on the above passage, and, as the servant of all the flock of Christ, we will give such views as we have.

The text is given in the form of a parable, and addressed unto the carnal Jews, as unto an evil and adulterous generation who were seeking after a sign. In all his communications with them, Jesus spake to them in parables; because that unto his disciples it was given to know the things of the kingdom, but to them which are without it was not given. In the parable, the man out of whom the unclean spirit went was Israel after the flesh, or the evil and adulterous generation to whom the parable was addressed. The unclean spirit which went out for a season, was, if we mistake not, the perverse and rebellious spirit by which the carnal Jews have always been characterized. The time when it went out was at the coming of John the Baptist. "Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth." "He was a burning and a shining light, and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light." — John 5:33, 35.

This spirit of Judaism or legalism which had from their beginning characterized the carnal Israelites, was and is an unclean spirit, restless and polluting, but at the coming of John, from its misconception of the nature and spirituality of the kingdom which was at hand, *went out,* or so far released its hold on national Israel, as to allow Jerusalem, and Judea, and all the regions round about Jordan, to go out unto John's baptism; and even those of them who could show no fruits meet for repentance manifested a desire to be baptized of John, in prospect of that kingdom which John said was at hand, and which they evidently supposed would be a restoration of national independence, and re-establishment of the throne of David, literally.

Now although this unclean spirit went out from the Jews for a season, it continued to be an unclean spirit, and could not affiliate with the spirit of truth and holiness of which John bore record, or that should pervade and distinguish the kingdom which was so soon to be ushered in; it therefore walked through dry places, seeking rest, and finding none. We do not understand that this unclean spirit of legalism went out of the scribes, pharisees and sadducees personally, for they were never divested of it; but it went out of the man, nationally, in the sense already explained, and in the persons of the pharisees and sadducees it wandered about. In the preaching and baptism of John it sought for rest, and were for a season willing to rejoice in it, but were repelled by John, who said

unto them, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" And when it was told them that "Except a man be born again he could not see the kingdom of God," they could find nothing in which the spirit which was in them could rest.

In all the preambulations of that legal, work-mongrel, unclean spirit, from the days of John the Baptist until the present time, that restless spirit has never found in Christ, his doctrine, his ordinances or people, any thing to give it rest, place or comfort. But the words of our Lord have been verified, "For the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." How frequently did this unclean spirit bring those who were of it to Christ, seeking for rest; and when those who were led by it were fed bountifully on loaves and fishes, or had their selfish curiosity gratified by seeing signs, which they required, they were inclined to take him by force and make him their king. But the rest sought by this unclean spirit could not be found in any thing pertaining to the spiritual kingdom of our Lord. And when they were told that "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you," they said, "This is an hard saying; who can hear it? And from that time they went back, and walked no more with him."

"Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out." Back to Judaism, to the worldly sanctuary and carnal ordinances, to the law of a carnal commandment, and to those legal ceremonies in which they could rest. "Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself."

Chagrined and mortified when they found that the Messiah had not come to reign as a temporal prince, not to elevate the Jews as a nation, and having no desire to have such a King as he appeared to them to be, to reign over them, the unclean spirit which led them resolved to relapse into Judaism; but in returning, this spirit, though unclean before, becomes seven-fold more violent and abominable than it was before; adding to the abomination of legality and rebellion, the spirits of blasphemy, bitter persecution, idolatry, and murder. By rejecting the Son of God as the promised Messiah, and Deliverer that should come out of Zion, to turn away ungodliness from Jacob, branding him as an imposter, blaspheming his sacred name, and wreaking their bitterest vengeance on him and on his disciples, and with wicked hands they crucified the Lord of life and glory.

The increased wickedness and violence of the Jews after the coming of the Messiah, is thus strikingly set forth in the parable, as in the accumulated abominations of seven additional spirits, more wicked than the former spirit that had hitherto corrupted the Jewish commonwealth. Now in the return of the unclean spirit with sevenfold reinforcement, he findeth the house perfectly prepared for his reception, with his multiplied auxiliaries. The house is empty. "Behold your house is left unto you desolate." The last elect vessel of mercy, or living child of God, called out, and none left of that remnant which is according to the election of grace. The new wine which was in the cluster, for whose sakes the nation had been spared so long, was gone. The Good Shepherd had called his sheep by name and led them out. Lot and his family had left Sodom. Noah and his family had entered the ark. The bare walls of the house of Israel were left, and Ichabod was written upon them, for the glory had departed. The house was now empty. The last vestage of former beauty and typical significance was swept out; the empty house was swept and garnished. The utter desolation of Jerusalem and Judea, in that day when the sword of vengeance should be bathed in heaven, (the Jewish heaven) is most strikingly set forth in prophecy.

"For it is the day of the Lord's ven-

geance, and the year of recompenses, for the controversy of Zion. And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up forever, from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever. But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it; and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness. They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing. And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof, and it shall be an habitation of dragons, and a court for owls. The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay and hatch, and gather under her shadow; there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate." (Isaiah 34:8-15)

God's people all called out, all Jewish ordinances now abolished, the handwriting of ordinances nailed to the cross, all types fulfilled and forever withdrawn, the house is desolate, empty and swept, and the returning unclean spirit has with him the cormorant, raven, dragons and owls, wild beasts of the field, the satyr and the vulture, making up the seven, who from the time of the setting up of Christ's kingdom, and the abrogation of all the rites and institutions of the legal dispensation, shall occupy all legal or work mongrel places of Judaism, forever and ever.

"And the last *state* of that man is worse than the first." Compare national Israel in her first state with her fearful end. "Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bear you." Trace the history of the seed of Abraham throughout their generations, and although the fleshly tribes were a stiff-necked and rebellious people from the beginning of their nationality, yet how much worse after they had ceased to be a type of the gospel church, and had become a type of Babylon the Great; and compare the judgments which she suffered from time to time for her transgressions, with her most terrible overthrow, as described by our Lord in Matt. 24, and the contrast by comparison will clearly appear.

"Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation." These last words settle forever the application of the parable to the carnal Jews. And this was most fearfully verified at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman army under Titus, when their punishment exceeded any thing that had ever before occurred on the earth, or that should ever again be witnessed of temporal judgments.

We have given such views as we have on this subject.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe November 1, 1871.)

ORDINATION OF ELDER ROBERT H. LYLISTON

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Hadnot Creek Church, Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1970. Conference was opened by Elder Rufus Brown.

Hadnot Creek Church, of the Contentnea Association, met in conference to ordain Brother Robert H. Lyliston to the full work of the Ministry.

The candidate was presented to the Presbytery by Brother Jesse Rhue and Brother Stedmon Brown. Examination by Elder D. B. Stokes.

The Presbytery having found Brother Lyliston, qualified, proceeded in the services. Elder Oliver Allen delivered the charge, and Elder J. T. Prescott delivered the ordination prayer. Laying on of hands was by Elders J. T. Prescott, Curtis Raines, D. B. Stokes, Wayne Mitchell, Henry Jones, J. J. Rhue, and Oliver Allen. Then Elder Lylston was presented back to the church by Brother Stedman Brown and Brother Jesse Rhue an ordained minister.

Then it was agreed that Elder Lylston go into the stand and preach the ordination sermon.

Conference was closed in order by Elder D. B. Stokes.

Elder J. T. Prescott, Moderator
W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

OBITUARIES

ELDER W. CURRY KING

It is indeed with a sad heart that I attempt to record a tribute of respect to our pastor Elder W. Curry King. He passed away October 17, 1970, at seventy-three years of age. Elder King was ordained a Primitive Baptist minister in 1921, serving the churches in this area for almost fifty years. He served as part-time pastor beginning in 1957 until February 22, 1959, when he accepted full-time pastor of Prospect Hill Church.

We, the members and friends, felt blessed and highly favored of God to have Elder King as pastor. His gentle manner and humble character endeared him to all who knew him as minister or friend. He came preaching the things most surely believed among us, backed up by a "Thus saith the Lord." Many comforting words of truth were spoken of the sovereignty of God and the finished work of our Savior. Surely the Lord was his shepherd. His prayers, faith, hope and dependence on God was so unique, no one questioned his sincerity. He emphasized the inability of man to do good and was confident that the Lord ordered all his good thoughts.

Elder King's last sermon at Prospect Hill Church the fourth Sunday in September was very impressive. "And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more." (Acts 20:22-25)

These were Paul's writings, but we feel this scripture described Elder King's feelings on this occasion. He seemed to see the setting sun, the end of his life here. Seeing on every hand the evidence of God's goodness in the land of the living down through the years, he could, by faith, face anything that may befall him, knowing that God held the future and each event of life or death would be but the unfolding of God's purpose concerning him. Elder King spoke often of that world of perfect bliss and a great desire to see the King in His beauty.

We will long remember this able and gifted pastor as we travel this journey of life. We pray that God will reconcile us to His will in this and all other matters, and bless us to dwell together in peace and love for one another. This was the principle theme of Elder King's preaching and careful consideration of everyone. We thank God for the pleasant association and fellowship that we have enjoyed with Elder King.

May God bless and reconcile his dear wife who has shared his joys and sorrows these many years.

Submitted in love, by request,

Etheleen B. Watson
Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
Hallie Griswold, Clerk

ELDER OTTO TILLY

On December 11, 1970 the Lord saw fit to take home our beloved Brother, Otto Tilly. Elder Tilly was born March 28, 1891. He was first married to Delphia Sturgill, and to this union were born four children. She preceded him in death; and after her death he was married to Lily Easter, and to this union were born four sons.

Elder Tilly joined the Primitive Baptist Church May 21, 1921, and was ordained September 21, 1928. He was a faithful servant, being sound in doctrine, and was dearly beloved by all the brothers and sisters, and highly esteemed by all sound Baptists. He went in all kinds of weather, in heat or cold, snow or rain, wherever he was called. He preached salvation by grace and grace alone.

In the forty-two years he did not depart from the doctrine of salvation by grace. After the division in the Elkhorn Association, he went to the Pocatalico Association in 1964 and was received as an ordained Elder in full fellowship in the Providence Church.

Elder Tilly was laid to rest in the Goode Cemetery. Before his death he requested that Elder O'Neal and Elder Harvey preach his funeral. We all miss him very deeply but believe he is at rest free from all pain and sorrow, and some sweet day will be raised and taken to his heavenly home, to praise his Lord forever and ever.

Written by
Elder William P. O'Neal

JAMES WESLEY (BUDDIE) DICKERSON

James Wesley (Buddie) Dickerson was born in Rockingham County, N. C., May 21, 1905, and died October 18, 1970. He was the son of Alexander H. and Mattie Cox Dickerson.

He is survived by his widow, Thelma Davis Dickerson; one son, Claude Franklin Dicker-

son; four daughters: Mrs. Joe T. Moore, Mrs. Donald Ray Edwards, Mrs. Frank Meadows, and Miss Edna Lucille Dickerson of the home. Surviving also are two brothers, V. C. and W. H. Dickerson; and three sisters: Mrs. J. S. Lawrence, Mrs. B. J. Layne, and Mrs. Carl Edwards.

Brother Dickerson was received into the fellowship of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church the fifth Sunday in June, 1954. He was a devoted member, adorning his profession with an orderly walk. He suffered with a heart condition for several years before his death, but continued to attend the services even when, I am sure, he did not feel equal to the task.

He was blessed with a devoted wife and children. His wife attended the services with him. Though not a member of the visible church she always manifested that interest in the things of the Lord that bear the marks of His children.

I knew Brother Dickerson from the time I was eight years old. We played together as children, as my father was the pastor of Dan River Church at that time. I was blessed to perform the ordinance of baptism when he was received into the church; and we walked together in sweet fellowship.

The family, church, and community have lost a faithful one, but he has left evidence that his spirit has joined the redeemed of the Lord who have gone on; and his body awaits the coming of the Lord, to awake in His likeness and be forever with the Lord.

His funeral was conducted at Dan River Church, and interment was in the Dan River cemetery.

D. V. Spangler

GUY CREASON

Guy Creason was born October 13, 1903, and passed away January 8, 1971. He was the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. D. E. Creason, and is survived by his wife, Imogene Locke Creason. Also by one daughter, Marylin Blagg, two grandchildren and one great grandchild; her son-in-law, Bobby Blagg; one brother, Gilliard Creason; and four sisters: Grace Locke, Garvaline Riley, Ruby Mason, and Mary Chandler.

Guy joined the Soldier Creek Old School Baptist Church the second Sunday in March, 1965, and was baptized with one other brother, Willie Mathis, the second Sunday in May, 1965, by Elder Paul Poyner. He was a faithful and helpful brother in any way he could help materially. He had not been strong for several months before he died, but bore his weakness without murmuring or complaining. Guy enjoyed the church services and having the church friends and ministers visit in their home. He will be greatly missed by the ones who meet together in his home church.

We, his church brothers and sisters, hope to bow in humble submission as we have learned how; and say, "God's will be done, not ours."

The funeral was preached Sunday, January 10th, at Linn Funeral Home in Benton, Ky., by his pastor, Elder Paul Poyner. The funeral director stated that the crowd attending the funeral was the largest he had ever had at a funeral, with the most flowers presented; which merely showed the esteem in which Guy was held.

This is written by the request of his wife, Imogene Creason.

A sister, I hope in the Truth,
Effie Bowden

GRACE LYLES

Sister Grace Lyles was born May 1, 1890, and departed this life September 21, 1970. She was the daughter of the late J. D. and Alice Chester Mathis. She had been a widow for several years without any children, but was blessed with faithful nieces and nephews; also three brothers, Luther, Other, and Willie Mathis, and their wives.

She had been a member of the Soldier Creek Primitive Baptist Church for several years; and her home was a home for the Baptists. Many times preaching services were held in her home, especially when our three-day meetings of the Soldier Creek Associations, and our Union Meetings were held with her home church. She attended services September 13th, and died September 21st.

Her funeral was preached by her pastor, Elder Paul Poyner, and by Elder Herbert Prince of the Memphis Church. She was buried in the Soldier Creek Cemetery near the church, by the side of her parents.

The beautiful flowers given by her relatives and friends were tokens of the high esteem in which she was held; but most of all, her church friends loved her for the truth's sake. She often said that she was reared by Primitive Baptists, but they did not teach her what she hoped the Lord had taught her by his grace and mercy. She depended upon Jesus Christ her Saviour to supply her with strength for the day, and the renewal of her hope in Him when it was his good pleasure; always willing for God's will to be done, not hers.

We are proud to remember her as a faithful sister in Truth.

A sister,
Effie Bowden

IN MEMORY OF
MRS. FLORA BELL FEGAN

"Flo" was the daughter of the late Mr. and

Mrs. Archibald McGugan, born December 11, 1883, at Poplar Hill, Ontario, Canada. She was the widow of Arthur E. Fegan. She passed away in the Riverdale Hospital, Toronto, March 25, 1970; and is survived by several nephews and one niece. Flo was a dear sister in our church and loved to entertain the Old Baptists; as her parents did. Her church came first in her life.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder George Ruston, assisted by Elder D. A. McColl, in London, Ontario.

Just before joining the church these words came to her. "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed." The same day five joined the church and Flo was baptized in July, 1956. It just seemed "perfect love casteth out fear." Our loved one had many trials through her life. In a letter after losing her companion she wrote, "Blest be the tie that binds (my kindred friends,) and said, The morning after his funeral the words came, Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal." Later she referred to a hymn, "It is not death to die," etc. She wrote telling me of Elder McColl's sermon being such a comfort to her. The text was, "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right." This text was also used by Elder McColl when we were so sad to hear of the Hudson's being in the hospital on their way to Canada.

The text at her funeral was "My beloved is mine and I am his." She had requested that Song of Solomon 2:16, be used at her funeral.

Flo left writings on "Passing Thoughts" with her pastor that are very lovely.

Written by request of Elder Ruston, and one who loved her. In hope of eternal life.

Verna Carscadden

ELIZABETH S. HALL

Sister Elizabeth Hall was born on Virginia's Eastern Shore, November 17, 1878, the daughter of Solon Clay and Sarah Carey Stevenson. She departed her earthly tabernacle July 25, 1970. She married Brother Henry Hall November 18, 1896, and from that marriage proceeded four children, May, Grace, Harold and Thomas. Grace, with whom she lived, died in 1957. The others survive her.

Sister Hall was not of Primitive Baptist family and for many years did not hold the doctrines "most commonly believed" by Primitive Baptists, but like the dutiful, faithful wife that she was, she attended her husband's meetings with him, entertained his pastor and brethren, provided for his meetings and did all the things customarily done by members of the Church.

Brother Hall died May 17, 1937, and for several years thereafter, she very seldom, if ever, came to meeting. I believe it was around the year 1950 that we began to see her again, occasionally at first, but with increasing frequency. I sometimes observed her as Elder Spangler preached so beautifully Jesus the Savior of sinners, and from her glowing countenance, it was quite evident that she had been brought to glean in the field where "handfuls of purpose" had been left for her.

She joined the Church at Salisbury, Maryland, and was baptized the first Sunday in November, 1955. I never knew a more radiant Christian. Her son's wife, a Presbyterian, said she never stopped beaming from the time she was baptized. I visited her frequently and how I cherish the memory of our many spiritual exchanges and Scriptural discussions. Sometimes, when I would leave, she would say "Mildred, why do we spend any of our time together talking about things of this world?" I wondered too.

Sister Hall was always poor in the things this world has for sale, but she was enormously rich in the things money has never been able to buy. To know her was to love her and she had a multitude of friends, in and out of other denominations. We miss her sorely, but feel thankful to the God she loved and worshiped for the years we had her.

Her final service was conducted by Elder Arthur Warren in the house of her beloved Church at Salisbury, and her mortal body was laid beside her husband's, to await the glorious resurrection of "the dead in Christ."

Submitted in loving memory,
Mildred V. Dykes
Salisbury, Maryland

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT
LEONARD S. HILL

Leonard S. Hill was born December 29, 1897. Died March 22, 1970. Joined the Primitive Baptist Faith and Order at Old Beechcreek Church near Atlanta, Texas, May 12, 1924. He moved his letter to Pleasant Hope Church July 27, 1935, and was ordained Deacon October 4, 1941. Was elected Church Clerk October 25, 1942, and Clerk of the Sulphur Fork Association on Friday, October 5, 1945.

He is survived by his wife, three children, three sisters, one brother and the entire Church Body.

We feel our loss is his eternal gain, for we believe he is awaiting the resurrection, and we do humbly submit to God's holy will.

Elders Lloyd Wall, E. J. Lambert, John Lee Smith, W. A. Winfred, and George W. Jones officiated at the services, with many friends and relatives present.

Written by his brother in the flesh
and a hope of the Spirit,
Elder Lloyd Wall, Moderator
H. S. Hill, Church Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 139 DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1971 NO. 4

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4/71
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER R. W. RHODES

(Concluded)

Sometime this same year I had a dream of the resurrection. I thought that a powerful voice spoke to me, and with the power of that voice I was raised up out of death into life. I felt so guilty and sinful, yet I was trying to praise the Lord. My pitiful voice did not have any sound to it. It did not seem like anyone could hear me. I could not see the being, whose voice I heard, very plainly. I thought I was raised up under a shed or cover to my grave. Some deep place from which I was being raised. It seemed the power that raised me suffered me just to pause under this shed, then bore me out from under it. I did not have anything to do with lifting either hand or foot. It was just as real to my mind as if it had been so. When I awoke I was sad indeed, for I thought that if God's people did not feel clear on the resurrection, then I did not know anything about the truth; so my soul was cast down because of the dream for eight months.

When I dreamed again of the second resurrection, as I hope was the case in my first dream, I thought I was totally dead. I did not know anything until the voice spoke life into me, or me into life. I thought I was facing a graveyard but was not dead, in the sense that I was in the first dream. Everything looked so dry and distressing and I thought that a close companion or brother was with me. Although I could not see him, I could hear his voice. All at once there came a great sound, the earth quaked and he that was with me spoke to me, and as quick as a flash of lightning I was changed to something that is impossible for me to describe. I felt free and clear of sin and guilt. I was praising God in a language that I now know nothing about. I saw or realized that those who were dead arose and ascended heavenward. I was lifted up with them and, Oh, how glorious was this to me.

Darkness and confusion was under our feet. The praise of the dear and blessed Lord was the joyful theme of my soul as I was lifted from the earth. Something caused me to stretch my hands upward, and my feet left the earth and everything about me was as white as snow. When I was quite a distance from the earth, beautiful clouds as white as snow came between me and the darkness. It was so plain and sweet to me. It is not lawful for me to utter these things for I am not able. If it were mine to give, He would enable me to utter them. I awoke and sadly found that it was just a dream. I have wished ever since that I could see and feel the same thing again. Oh, may it be the will of the true and living God to keep me and preserve me unto his blessed and heavenly kingdom. It will finally be that his children shall be taken to that peaceful and heavenly mansion.

This dream gave me great joy, and at the time of awakening, with the tears of joy still stinging my face, this scripture came to me: "Blessed and holy

is he that has part in the first resurrection, on such the second death has no power." It seemed that this scripture served to interpret both my dreams to me. Showing me that God's people when made alive from the death in trespasses and sin, are resurrected in the spirit to the love of God and true holiness. They are the same in body as they were before being born again. Only the strong man is bound and his goods are divided. He still has part of the goods, where he has had all of them till he was bound. Since that time the flesh is against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh. They are still the subject of corporeal death the same as anyone else, and they do feel sinful indeed when they are made alive.

Paul describes it when he was made to cry out, "O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death." He was one that heard the voice of Jesus and believed on him to life everlasting, but still had the body of this death, and desired to be free from it. Yet he was praising God as an Apostle of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This was the way I saw, and I hope it is the truth of, the first dream. If God's people go down in death corporeally, it would be denying the resurrection and purifying of the body to say that they have no part in the second. If I know anything about the truth as taught in the scriptures, the bodies are raised, for Jesus had his same body after his resurrection, — the same body that was nailed to the cross and was pierced with the sword. In Jesus' language, he describes it as a nail in sure place on this subject. When he says, "The hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live." God's people hear the voice of Jesus, not the voice of the preacher, and this causes them to live, whether they lived in Jesus' personal days or not. For he said, "The hour is coming." Yes, still coming just as long as there is an elect here in the body of living death (flesh). Jesus was talking to men and women that could all hear his natural voice. Yet he said to a certain class, "Ye cannot hear my word," but he said, "My sheep hear my voice and they follow me." So we see they that hear in spirit. These are the ones he had reference to when he said they that hear shall live.

He said, "Marvel not at this for the hour is coming, (mark the words hour is coming) when all which are in the graves shall hear the voice of the son of God and shall come forth; They that have done good unto the resurrection of life and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." According to my belief, both the righteous and the wicked come forth the same hour. So I felt to realize from the two dreams the meaning of this scripture, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." The wicked have no part in the first, but in the second. When God's people are raised the second time they go into their final and blessed destiny, life eternal. But the wicked undergo the second death which is the eternal fire of God's wrath. Not that they die from all sense or that they are burned up and are no more, but where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. This is my belief concerning the first and second resurrection.

Not long after this I got badly dissatisfied where I was living. I moved away from the home church, twenty-five miles away, soon after I joined the church. I did not feel that the brethren could have any confidence in me where they had known me all my life. I can't get that entirely out of my feelings, although they have treated me with all kindness necessary to make me feel at home. I did feel at home as far as my membership was concerned, but did not feel like it would ever do for me to try to preach at home.

After living away nearly a year my father moved me back. I made no crop that year and had nothing much, but the Lord has been very kind to me to provide me and mine a livelihood. Also my father has been very kind and good

to me. They are dear lovers of the cause that they believe I am called to serve; and may the Lord abundantly bless them and keep them, together with all our family; and also the many kind brethren and friends, for whom I feel to owe gratitude to the blessed Lord. This I can never express.

Just before I moved from this place I had a very serious dream. I thought I was going to quit preaching when I got back home. I dreamed of preaching to a great multitude of people who seemed to be deeply interested. They seemed to be getting nearer and nearer to me, so much so, I began to back away. I felt great liberty and as I began backing away to leave them, they did not say anything but kept following me until I turned my back to them. I was still preaching; and someone said, "He will have to go home and raise some feed." This dream has been a mystery that has bothered me ever since more or less. I hope it did not mean anything like turning my back upon the cause or the people of God.

May the Lord give me, if I am his servant in the ministry, strength and grace to ever trust him for both time and eternity; to be faithful even unto death to his blessed service, and never suffer me to shun to declare in Zion the work of the Lord our God in meekness and humble fear, in sincerity and fervent love, the power and blessed wisdom of the Spirit of almighty God.

I remember another dream I had not long after I was liberated to preach. Now, it is my hope that I do not put my trust in dreams too much. There is a filthy dreamer spoken of in the Bible and I may be one, but I feel that I have been comforted of the Lord in dreams, therefore I want to tell them for the comfort of others. The setting of this dream was a city inhabited by men, women, and children. The entire city was captured by well armed forces. I thought I realized that the sentence of death was passed on all of us, but I was not afraid in the least. They separated me from everyone except the guards that kept me. Finally, they put me in the darkest prison, it surely was thick darkness, and it did not seem that I stayed there long before something opened the door. I felt to realize it was not a natural power but was from above. When the door could no longer keep me in, the same guards took me out. I thought I told them I must go and preach to a small congregation that was in sight, but the guards did not want me to go. As I left them I told them I would still be subject to them when I was through. They followed me to the place where the brethern were. I thought I saw tears of joy on the faces of the people as I went in the stand. I awoke to find myself puzzled, and am yet, to know what it meant, or whether it will ever come to pass or not in a literal way.

One night I was at Brother W. A. Patterson's, there I was in deep trouble, for I felt totally condemned. I could hardly stand the heavy burden of sadness of spirit. Indeed my soul was exceedingly sorrowful. He went to the room with me when I went to bed; and was so kind. I felt to be unworthy of his kindness and wished I was at home. When he left the room I blew the lamp out and was lying there mourning because of my condition, when something with a very kind and serene voice whispered to me. "What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?" My poor soul answered, "Lord that thou bless me," and the voice said, "Blessings I will bless thee." In a second of time my mourning was turned into rejoicing, my tears wet my pillow, and Oh how my poor soul was filled with love to such a merciful God, who is able to fulfill all his promises. I feel to say with David, "Surely goodness and mercy has followed me all the days of my life." In so many ways he has blessed me a poor helpless worm that doesn't deserve anything but wrath and indignation.

I long to be free from vanity and sin, I hate my sins. I love the dear Lord, if I know myself, and his dear people.

We long to stand on the peaceful shores of eternity with the dear Redeemer and all the heavenly host, in unspotted garments that will never wax old or be moth eaten: Where there will be no more sorrow. Where the harp of the saints will not be hung on the willows any more. Where angels and archangels stand and sing the praises of the blessed Lord. Oh, may this be my happy lot when I am done with this world of tribulation.

About two years ago I became deeply troubled about myself and the whole church. I felt like some great calamity hung just over us. I felt that we justly deserved it and that there was no way to escape. Oh how my soul was borne down! Oh how I did pour out my cries to the Lord to lead us and cause us to be humble before him! I could not keep from praying no matter where I was or what I was doing. While in this condition, one day I was plowing in the field away from any dwelling. There was a cotton house in the field. A bad looking cloud came up and rained a big rain. Then the rain slowed and continued for a long time. My spirit was in prayer and I could not stop. After the hard rain was over I decided to get on my knees and speak out. I was afraid someone might hear me. Nevertheless it seemed like I just had to do it anyway. I went to the door and looked, then knelt down in the doorway. I never have been exercised so sweetly and earnestly since. I begged the Lord to show me his ways and enable me to walk in them. Then I felt that the church as a whole had grown so cold in love that the Lord would move the candlestick out of its place, or would spew us, in our sickening state, out of his mouth. Oh how I did plead with the Lord to give us repentance to turn us from all idolatry. To enable us to serve him without any desire to please anyone but him. To give us grace not to care what the world said about us. I don't know how long I stayed at prayer this time, but I think it was longer than at any other one time in my life. May the Lord ever enable me to pray earnestly without ceasing, with the intercessions of the Spirit.

Dark and cloudy it seems has been my pathway most of the time; but I feel that it is the Lord's will that I suffer here in this life, that he has chosen me in the furnace of afflictions that he might cleanse me and bring me forth without the smell of the fire on my garment. I feel to rejoice when I can hope to be partaker with Christ in suffering as He suffered for our sins. We suffer from fears and a conscience that is alive to the fact that we are naturally sinners. Then if we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him.

In the year of 1916 in June my home church saw fit to call for my ordination to take place in July. Following their calling I did not feel willing to go. In one way I was afraid it was not of the Lord, and also at this time I was enjoying sweet liberty with my preaching and I was satisfied to go on as I was. It seemed I was so cold and unconcerned spiritually when the time came, but I could not help it. One member of the presbytery, Elder Rawls, carried another member off to one side just as service was to begin. I did not anticipate being asked to preach but they requested me to go forward. I still felt so cold I could not think of a single hymn, but I got up anyway. I talked a little and they laid their hands on me without asking me a single question.

Since that time it has been my uppermost desire to be enabled to comfort and feed God's little ones. I feel to know that I myself am just a baby in Christ, indeed if I am in Him. When I hear an able doctrinal preacher preach it is so sweet to me, but I am not what would be called a doctrinal preacher, if I am one at all. I joined the church in September of 1914 at the age of twenty-two and I am the same poor weak needy creature that I have ever been.

There are many more things that I could mention but have already written more than I thought I could. Now may

the Lord bless and keep us and establish us in the truth. It has been my desire to relate what I hope to be the Lord's dealings with me, how he has led me in my short journey of life.

I have been requested to write this and have tried to comply with your wishes on the matter. I have covered pages with my weaknesses, but it is my desire to be fruitful to the glory of God and to be comforting to his dear people.

May the dear Saviour bless all that desire to trust in him, and keep us humble and at his blessed feet ever ready to comfort one another and to bear each other's burdens. Thus fulfilling the law of the blessed Saviour who said just before he suffered, "As I love you, even so love one another."

Oh, was He not full of love that he would stoop so low as to take upon himself our sins. Clothed with the likeness of sinful flesh, He became a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief so that he was made to fall on his face the third time and to cry to the Father, sweating as it were great drops of blood, all because of his love for us.

Oh, that love that bowed down the blessed Son of God so pure and spotless, holy and undefiled. Yet for the great love the Father had for us he delivered him up to death, — even the shameful death of the cross. Yea, to die and to bleed for his people. That suffering fixed us in the everlasting covenant of redemption. Love that laid the spotless robe of the holiness of Jesus on poor sinners. This gift of love causes them to be holy and without blame before him in love. His love causes poor creatures to love Him and his people. This love is so great that I cannot describe it. All praise, honor and glory, dominion and power be unto God and to the Lamb forever and ever. Amen.

Yours in a hope that is sometimes sweet and precious to me and is indeed more to me than this world. I could not give it for the world.

R. W. Rhodes
Randolph, Louisiana

(Submitted to *Signs of the Times* for publication by Robbie Holloway, a grandson. It was written July 9, 1918. Elder Rhodes' present address is Spearsville, La. 71277.)

"LONGING FOR PEACE — SEARCHING FOR AN ANSWER"

2238 McCurdy Road
Stone Mountain, Ga. 30083
December 13, 1970

Dear Elder Spangler:

Last night I lay awake many hours burdened and beset with a troubled mind. I feel I must write you for help — for guidance.

It seems there is no rest for the weary, no balm in Gilead, and I know not where to turn, — except to one who has been given an ear to hear and a heart to understand: one such as you. I have been brought down to the depth of despair, to the keen awareness of my vile state. I have prayed, and in my feeble way have attempted to probe into my soul, and search for an answer. None comes.

I have a hope, a priceless, precious hope, fleeting though it be at times. Yet I know God has known my thoughts from afar off; He has known my comings and goings, my every action; and I cry unto Him: "Teach me the way, O Lord; deliver me for my sufferings are great and my heart is smitten with grief."

We read comforting words in Psalm 102: "He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer . . . For he has looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth; to hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death; to declare the name of the Lord in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem; when the peoples are gathered, and the kingdoms, to serve the Lord . . . Of old hast

thou laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands."

I know the Lord sleeps not. He hears our pleas in the bold sunlight of day and the black silence of night's hours. He searches our souls, and He is ever our strength in weakness and our light in darkness. I feel I wander much of my days in a barren wilderness — forlorn and forsaken. Yet, I feel a penetrating longing in my heart for assurance, for peace and for spiritual rest.

David cried in supplication: "Consider mine affliction, and deliver me: for I do not forget thy law. Plead my cause, and deliver me: quicken me according to thy word. Salvation is far from the wicked: for they seek not thy statutes. Great are thy tender mercies, O Lord: quicken me according to thy judgments." (Psalm 119:153-157)

Notice the words "quicken me" used in these verses. Unless our hearts be quickened by the Lord, we cannot see him nor keep his statutes.

Yes, the Lord's children are truly afflicted — poor, weak and worthless; they feel a deep need for God's sustaining hand, and for his enduring mercy.

I stated earlier that I have longed for peace, and searched for an answer. More and more I cannot suppress the desire within me for a church home. I yearn to be numbered among those who believe the comforting and beautiful truths firmly held by the Old Line Primitive Baptists. I look with love and fleshly envy upon the faces of Peggy and Elder Poole each Sunday morning, for I know there resides in them the sweet knowledge and comfort that they have a home; — I do not. And, Oh how glorious was our visit there this summer, and how moving an experience for me when Peggy was received into the church. Perhaps a church home would calm my troubled breast, and drive dark fears from my soul.

We know God purposes everything under the sun: He brings us down in order that we may see our sinful natures, and abhor the wickedness of the flesh. We know, also, He lifts us up and carries us to the highest summits; and all things He does according to His will, for his glorification.

Elder Spangler, if it pleases you, please let me hear from you. You are a wise and prudent man: I need your comments and advice.

May we be granted, through his enduring mercy, the peace of God which passeth all understanding. (Phil. 4:7)

Katie Kilby

REPLY

Danville, Va. 24541
December 18, 1970

Dear Mrs. Kilby:

Your letter was received yesterday, and I was glad to hear from you. I had thought of you several times lately, and was inclined to believe that the unerring hand of a covenant God was leading you.

I have carefully read your letter several times, and, if I am a judge in the matter, it bears the marks of one whose face is toward Zion. I would refer you to the fiftieth chapter of Isaiah, tenth and eleventh verses: "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." Here we have the marks of one of God's people, who has exercises of soul unknown to those who trust in themselves. "Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow." Here we have the picture of those who walk in the light of that they have produced.

What a blessing when God turns our minds from self, to the work of our adorable Redeemer! No wonder the poet has said

"When I turn my eyes within
All is dark and vain and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child."

It is the living that cry, not the dead. When a child is first brought into the world, soon we hear a cry go up. What a wonderful sound it is to the parents! for they know the child is alive. Hunger and thirst follow the birth, even as day follows night.

I noticed your expression: "I have a hope, a priceless, precious hope, fleeting though it be at times." A few markers might be of benefit as we journey toward the Heavenly City: "We have passed from death unto life if we love the brethren;" "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound;" "It is through much tribulation that we enter the kingdom;" "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled;" "They that sat in darkness hath seen a great light."

The Promises are suited to our needs. Is it any wonder that Paul cried out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" and, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

If one promise from the Heavenly King has been sweetly applied to our poor souls, then we should take courage.

I was not surprised to receive your letter; and I would bid you to take up His cross and follow him. "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

In sacred bonds,
D. V. Spangler

(See next issue for further correspondence.)

"EVERYTHING BEAUTIFUL IN HIS TIME"

"He hath made everything beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end." (Eccl. 3:11)

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. He created the sun, moon, stars, plant life, fishes of the sea, fowl of the air; and man to inhabit the world that he had created by his mighty power and infinite wisdom. It is recorded that when the heaven and the earth were finished and all the host of them, "God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." It was well pleasing unto him and, as all of his work, it was perfect for the intent and purpose that he had in the creation of it. This is evident in the perfection of the universe: the moon revolves around the earth, they both revolve around the sun, and all of the planets of the solar system move in a predetermined path according to the determinate counsel of God. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." These are constant, present reminders to God's children of the awesome majesty of their Heavenly Father, and of the beauty and glory of his power.

God's promise to Noah was, "While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." The times and the season are still one following the other according to this promise, as we witness each year that we live. God, the wisdom, power, glory, and sovereign of all of his creation, established this covenant with his chosen people, and promised that it should stand as long as the earth remains. This will be as long as he has a work to perform in the bringing forth of his elect, making himself known unto them and completing the work of grace in their hearts.

This is the hope of those who believe from a pure heart, and is beautiful when viewed with the eye of faith by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the heart of believers. Their trust is in the shalls and wills of Almighty God, as they experience seasons of his mercy and grace which sustain them through the encounters with the adversary in

this life. They trust in him because they are made to depend upon him for all things; and they feel to know that nothing can alter or deter the purposes of God, because he has ordained them to his eternal glory — and therefore they are sure and steadfast.

Solomon was the son that was given unto David to sit upon the throne of Israel after him, and who was to build the house of God. David had thought to build the house, but God had told him, "Thou shalt not build an house for my name because thou hast been a man of war, and hast shed much blood." (1 Chron. 22:8) "Solomon thy son, he shall build my house and my courts: for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father."

These things were all ordained of God before Solomon was born, but they all came to pass according to the promise of God. God appeared to Solomon in a dream, and said, "Ask what I shall give thee," and Solomon's request was, "Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart." The Scriptures record that it pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this thing, and God said, "Behold, I have done according to thy words: Lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart: so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after shall any arise like unto thee."

Solomon wrote many proverbs, and sought to find out acceptable words, and that which was written was upright, even words of truth. "And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of men to be exercised therewith." He was given to see all the works that are done under heaven, and was made to acknowledge that all is vanity and vexation of spirit. He saw that man in his best estate and all his labor, is vain and selfish. We can see therefore that the writings of Solomon were truly inspired of God. The wisdom that was given him caused him to write, "He hath made everything beautiful in his time." Solomon, in this wisdom that was given of God, was blessed to see that all the work of God is beautiful in his time. Not just the deliverances and seasons of peace and joy, but also the seasons of trial and afflictions: they also are beautiful in his sight.

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven." Solomon listed twenty-eight things for which there is a time for them to occur. Some are what man would call great events, and some he would call trivial. In his nature man tends to call those things good which he desires, and to call those things evil which he does not like. Among other things Solomon said, There is a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace. Man will quickly tell you which of these things are good and which are evil, but Solomon said, "He hath made everything beautiful in his time."

According to this, all of these things are alike good in the mind and purpose of God. Everything for which God set a time and has a purpose, (and this includes everything,) is good in his time, because it is but another part of the perfect work; as was the creation of all things. These things are good and beautiful to all of those who, as Solomon, are given wisdom to view them as the handiwork of God; and this is done when they are given the mind of Christ. "For who hath known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him? but we have the mind of Christ." And again, "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God." This is the only way that God's children behold his work and the beauty of it.

As we view the travels of Joseph on his way down to Egypt, we can see many things that happened to him that, to the natural mind, are hard to understand. It was shown to Joseph in a dream that his father, mother and brethren would bow down before him;

but it does not say that it was shown him how this would be accomplished. Surely, if he thought on this dream in his travels, there must have been times when he despaired of it being fulfilled. This is true of each of God's children in their pilgrimage in this life. They have been blessed to see things beyond the comprehension of the natural mind, and given a hope in things eternal, but there are times when present trials and troubles of this life press so heavily upon them that they almost despair; and they fear that their hope is but a vain wish of the flesh. Solomon said it this way: "Also, he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end." The world is so set in their heart that, in the flesh, they can never push it aside and get a clear view of the work that God is performing in their heart and life.

We can read the experience of Joseph in a few minutes and learn the end of the matter, and see the handiwork of God in it. We see the dream and the fulfillment of it, and believe that all the steps were ordered of the Lord. Joseph could not see this along the way, just as God's people cannot see the end of their way until they reach it. When Joseph experienced the fulfillment of the dream, then he could say to his brethren, "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life." When he was sold to the Ishmaelites, put into prison and forgotten of the butler for two years, it would have been difficult for him to see any beauty in the work in progress; but in the sight of God these times were also beautiful. They were but another part of Joseph's trial of faith, which in the eyes of God, is much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, as Peter said. And it is common to the experience of all of God's children in all ages of time.

These trials and afflictions are for the teaching, purging and purifying of the child of God so that they will be vessels of honor fit and meet for the Master's use. Job when in his trials, although he knew not the way he took, was made to cry, "But He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." This is the time when, as recorded in Malachi, "And they shall be mine in that day when I make up my jewels." The jewels are precious in the sight of God; and the things that make them precious in his eyes are beautiful in his time; although they may not be to the natural mind, and to this body of flesh. The trembling child of God cannot see their way clearly, nor see the end of their way, but neither can they deny the hope that burns in their breast.

"But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." This is a promise of God that had been foretold by the prophets in all ages, and was fulfilled in the birth of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This promise was fulfilled by the same wisdom, power and determinate counsel and foreknowledge that created this world, and that has sustained it since the beginning of time. It is a beautiful and precious work in the mind of those who have been anointed with that holy spirit of promise, and have been blessed to behold it as their only hope of eternal life. They are the only ones who are blessed to see their own wretched and undone condition by nature, and to see and feel their need for a daysman betwixt God and man, that could lay his hand upon both of them. This they then believe God's Son to be; and they know their need of a redeemer.

John said, "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you." No man can teach any of these things to another, and it would not benefit them if they could. It is not the knowledge of these things, but rather the anointing which separates the chil-

dren of God from the children of the world. This anointing is of God through Jesus Christ; and it is to those, and only those, who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace: to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." There would be no beauty in these things unless they were sure and certain to someone. There would be no beauty in them unless the one who promised these things was able, beyond any possibility of doubt, to fulfill them according to his own will and pleasure: The God who created this universe is able. Faith is the gift of this omnipotent Creator, and by his own grace and mercy he places his own Spirit within their hearts whereby they cry, Abba, Father. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." These are the ones who are anointed of God, and are the ones to whom these promises were made. And these promises, (not as the one made to Noah: as long as the earth remains,) are eternal.

When given a mind directed by the Spirit, to meditate upon these grand and glorious promises of the great I Am, his children can witness with Solomon that, "He hath made everything beautiful in his time." Everything is beautiful as it is seen as a part of the whole. A poet once wrote, "The dark threads are as needful in the weaver's skilled hands, as the threads of gold and silver in the pattern he has planned." You must view the whole work before you can see the picture, and then it is beautiful in the eyes of the beholder. They can remember their times of being shut up in prison with no light: troubled on every side yet not distressed; perplexed but not in despair; persecuted but not forsaken; cast down but not destroyed. They see all the things that they have been confronted by, and yet they continue; so it must be that they are one of those for whom all these things work together for good.

By faith they see that all of these trials and tribulations of this life, are but for a short moment as compared to the vast immeasurableness of eternity; and are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in them. Then they are made to long for the time which Christ speaks of in Revelation: the time when he says, "Behold, I come quickly," and their prayer is, "Even so, come Lord Jesus." Come and receive us to thyself, that we may praise thee as we ought; that we may behold the beauty of the finished work, and see the glorious perfection of the salvation of the saints of God as treasured in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

WOULD NOT EXCHANGE HIS HOPE FOR THE WEALTH OF THE WORLD

130 Talbot Street, Apt. 107
St. Thomas, Ontario, Canada

Dear Elder Spangler:

The first paragraph of Elder Wood's Editorial in the January *Signs* just received, is how I would love to greet you now; and the last paragraph is my prayer for you and all those connected with the publishing of the dear old *Signs,* and those who write for it; and those who read it and are comforted and edified by the wonderful truths declared in their writings.

So many of the dear ones who write their experiences tell mine better than I can tell it myself; and this is a very great tower of strength. Although my first conviction of what a terrible sinner I was came to me at about eight years of age, now at eighty-four I grope along in the dark so much of the time, and almost envy those who write of such beautiful experiences; and yet I would not exchange the hope God has given me of His mercy and love, for all the wealth of this world that man

could give me.

I want to thank you for printing my dear wife's obituary in the January *Signs*. I must have omitted one line while copying it from a rough sketch I had first made. Immediately following her father's name on the eighth line, it should read, "and Sister Ella Virginia Beebe."

For several months I have been visiting with my son and had asked you to send the *Signs* to his address. I now have moved into an apartment and would thank you to send the *Signs* to me at the address on this letter. Also send me six copies of the January issue if they are still available. I enclose $15.00 postal order to pay for two years' subscription, the extra copies, with the balance to use as you wish.

It has been about thirty-five years since I met you and heard you preach here in Ontario, and now that I am living down here, I hope to see you and hear you again. It is a great blessing to be near the meeting places again, and I enjoy listening to our dear Elder Ruston and Elder McColl.

Yours in hope of eternal life through God's love and mercy.

James W. Black

(You had not included the omitted line, Brother Black, and we are glad to publish it as you mentioned above. — J. D. W.)

ENJOYED SISTER DYKES' WRITING

Rt. 2
Athens, Texas 75751

Dear Editors:

It is time to renew our subscription for the *Signs of the Times*; and I just want to say that we do enjoy the *Signs* so much, and look forward each month to its coming.

We especially enjoyed the letter that Sister Mildred V. Dykes wrote in the December issue on the 23rd Psalm. We have received much comfort from that chapter in years past: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." Her writings struck a soft spot in our heart. What a blessing it would be to meet and talk with Sister Dykes! and also see the other wonderful writers of the *Signs*.

Enclosed please find $7.00 for two years' renewal; and may God bless you all.

Mrs. J. C. Allen

PLEASE NOTE: Due to lack of space, the further writing of Katherine Mathews will appear in the May issue. — J. D. W.

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"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations . . ." (1 Peter 1:3-6)

EDITORIAL

TREASURES, — NEW AND OLD

"Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord. Then saith he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." (Matthew 13:51-52)

It is the same old sun that has been sending forth its brilliant rays for thousands of years which gives a new light and new heat today. The sun is giving this part of the earth fresh heat and light while I am writing now. Last night it disappeared from our sight which caused darkness to cover this part of the earth. This part of the earth became darker and colder until its re-appearance this morning. While it was night here another portion of the earth was experiencing a new day with a renewal of fresh heat and light. The sun is always sending forth new heat and light somewhere. Somewhere *now* a new day is dawning. Somewhere the sun is rising.

Somewhere *now* the Sun of righteousness, Jesus Christ, is arising in the souls of those who have been made to fear the Lord. This fear comes only to those who feel the depression of darkness and are aware of their coldness. They are also aware of their inability to better their condition, they become very sick and hopeless. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, Night comes before the Day in every Christian's experience. We read in Genesis 1:5, "And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day." The darkness comes first. Sensibility of this darkness causes fear. "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall." (Malachi 4:2)

The disciples could not see very clearly while Jesus spoke in parables to the multitudes. They must have realized this darkness in their souls and their lack of understanding as they heard Him speak. They wanted to see, feel, and understand more clearly, sensibly, and definitely each and every one of the particulars of these precious things. They asked Jesus to shed more light upon them. They asked for an explanation. These shining truths must have been at their greatest brilliance in the hearts and minds of these disciples when Jesus asked, "Have ye understood all these things?" Their answer, "Yea, Lord," proves that Jesus' explanation was complete and effective. His word returned not unto Him void, but accomplished that which He pleased and prospered in the ears and hearts of those to whom He was speaking. The light of eternal truth had caused the darkness of ignorance to flee away. They did not say that they understood all things. They did proclaim that they understood the particular things of which Jesus explained.

Jesus had spoken to the multitudes but even though they heard it naturally, they did not really *hear* it: "And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive." (14th V.) In the 13th verse Jesus makes it plainer: "Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand." This explanation caused these disciples to understand why that Jesus speaking did not have the same effect upon all alike. Jesus' explanation of the parable of the sower gave the disciples to understand that the seed sown was *The word of the kingdom.* They further understood that the Wicked One snatched this word of the kingdom away from those who did not understand. They understood that tribulations and persecutions would cause those who had not root in themselves to be offended because of the word. They understood that the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches was powerful enough to choke the word whose treasures were here upon this earth. The tree must be made good before the fruit is good. Jesus said, "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt; for the tree is known by his fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things." (Matt. 12:33-35) Jesus said these things above quoted to those who accused Him of casting out devils by the prince of devils, Beelzebub.

The explanation of the parable of the tares is so plain that none could successfully prove that even angels could transform a child of the wicked one into a child of God. Angels are sent to gather His children — not to make them. Read Jesus' explanation of the tares and wheat in verse 37-43; also, the parable in verse 24-30 in 13th chapter of Matthew. The sower of good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world. The good seed are the children of the kingdom. The enemy that sowed the tares is the devil. The tares are the children of the wicked one. Even the children of God are not to be gathered until they are ripe. The reapers are the messengers of God who are especially chosen, ordained, sanctified, and used by Him for this specific purpose. There is not a time when the harvest is at an end everywhere in the world. Somewhere the harvest is ripe *now.* When Jesus appointed the seventy and sent them forth into every city and place where He would come, He said unto them, "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest."

The parable of the net made it very plain that both good and bad would be

gathered into the position of being members of the churches upon earth. These disciples were given to understand that the final separation would be according to character, not position. Judas had a position with the chosen twelve. Neither Jesus, nor the eleven, cast him out. He rendered his service in his position, yet Judas' characteristics proved that he was a devil. Jesus said, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve." (John 6:70-71) Neither Jesus nor the eleven had to exclude him. Judas committed suicide. Judas had charge of the money. He must have loved his position. He loved thirty pieces of silver more than he loved his Master. This proves the statement to be true, "The love of money is the root of *all* evil." Both the parable of the net and that of the tares plainly teach that there is no time when the wicked shall turn to God. The net is the Gospel. Casting the net is preaching the Gospel.

The words that head this article is another parable showing the responsibility in regard to the truths these disciples had received. He, Jesus, termed these disciples to whom He was speaking as, *Scribes instructed unto the kingdom of heaven.* A scribe is a learned man. These scribes, instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, are not to be classed with those who made up the Sanhedrin with the Pharisees and priests. The Sanhedrin united all their strength and learning in order to entrap Jesus. They tried to ensnare Him in every possible way. A scribe is one who has learning sufficient and enough ability to write and speak publicly as one having authority. Ezra "was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given." (Ezra 7:6) God's scribes today are learned both in the law of Moses, and in the law of Christ Jesus. These scribes readily speak publicly and write for publication as God in His providence opens the door. They have learned — and are yet learning — from both the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed: the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed. The written Word of God includes the Scriptures of the Old Testament as well as of the New. Christ was as much man's Redeemer in the beginning of time of man as He is today. It is *now* in Eternity whether it be six thousand years ago in time, or one thousand years hence.

Jesus likens the scribe to an householder. A householder is not necessarily a house-owner. Of course, Jesus owns the kingdom of heaven. Pastors of churches could be termed as churchholders when they follow the specific instructions of the church-owner, Jesus Christ. Ministers are authorized to hold meetings, conferences, baptizings, communions, etc. God-called scribes are especially gifted to teach, advise, counsel, exhort, encourage, admonish, and reprove both publicly and privately. They publicly engage in singing, preaching, praying, and teaching. They bring forth from their treasure things both old and new.

The storehouse of all the precious things of the kingdom is Christ Jesus. Until He is formed in us as the hope of Glory; they are all mysteries. When Jesus takes up His abode in our hearts these mysteries begin to be unfolded. The radiance of the whole truth is so brilliant that the rays must be tempered to suit our weak eyes. We cannot stand too much revelation at once, it is given to us just in little bits. We cannot stand mid-day at midnight. We receive these treasures in our hearts in the degrees of abundance as our hearts are prepared of the Lord to retain them. Jesus teaches His apostles and ministers to avail themselves of what is old in teaching what is new. He used natural things, which were old, to illustrate spiritual things, which were new to them. The gospel is the blossoming of the law. Both the law and the Gospel are from the same source. The law must

be known before grace can be appreciated. The law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ Jesus. The law does not lead away from Christ but toward Him. We must consider the law as holy and binding before we can appreciate its fulfillment in Christ.

A treasure denotes a collection of things. Riches accumulated or possessed such as gold, jewels, precious metals, and other material things to hoard by the owner would be considered as natural treasures. To retain carefully in the mind collected knowledge and wisdom would be considered as mental treasures. Spiritual treasures consist of a collection of wisdom, knowledge, understanding, ambitions, and desires which make happy the *spirit* that is ruling in the hearts of those doing the collecting. The countenance, conversation, company, actions, and characteristics; — all make manifest the *spirit* ruling the collector's hearts. Whatever is treasure to the wicked is considered trash to the righteous; whatever the righteous consider as precious treasure, the wicked consider vile. The wicked will not treasure as truth the word of truth, but the righteous see, believe, and treasure the word of truth. Jesus said after He had commanded the woman to go and sin no more; "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8:12) Those whose Father was the Lord, believed Him. Many believed on Him as He said, "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him." (V. 28-29)

Jesus then said to the believers, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Jesus said many things to those who did not believe but boldly accused Him of telling untruths. Suffice it to quote Jesus' answer to the devil's theory, *"We have one Father, even God"*: "If God were your Father, ye would love me: For I proceed forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it . . . He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." Please read 8th chapter of John. You will see how boldly these children of the devil tried to defame Christ's actions, preaching and person. They went so far in their accusation as to imply that He was of fornication! (V. 41) Do not be surprised at the accusations that are brought against you to defame your name and effectiveness. Unbelief produces despair, but faith produces assurance. Jesus taught His eternal existence in saying, "Before Abraham was, I am."

Treasures both old and new are continuously brought forth by God's instructed scribes. Old experiences of Grace are made to shine forth as new experiences are realized. Old knowledge is brought forth to light as new revelations unfold. All who are recipients of the Gospel message into the hearts will long to relate it to others. They desire to proclaim their experience by stating each and every step of the leadings of the Holy Spirit. They want to tell of how the Lord led them from the first time they realized their hungerings and thirstings for the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, step by step to the present. They want to tell of their result in praying, searching the Scriptures, soul agonies and Christ's words to them. As dear children, they wholeheartedly trust the Lord to lead them, provide for them, protect them, de-

liver them, save them, and finally receive them into their eternal home of perfection, which is beyond this period of time. As dear children, they desire to please the Father by worshiping Him in Spirit, rejoicing in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh. Feeling their own inability, they deny themselves, take up their crosses, and follow Jesus.

Even the things of nature become precious treasures when the Holy searchlight shines upon them. Your bodies become temples of God, the earthen vessels in which these treasures are hid; the living sacrifices to be presented unto the Lord; and your hands, feet, ears, mouths, tongues, hearts, and minds: are all to praise and glorify God, as well as serve the brethren. Trees of the forest, flowers of the gardens, birds of the air, fruits of the orchards, plants of the fields, and the fish of the sea; — all are precious from which God's children garner an abundance of treasures. All these manifest God because they have life. Even every creature that is without any appearance of life is a source of inexhaustible treasures which are used to better inform those instructed unto the Kingdom. Some of which are: the grains of sand on the seashore; water of the seas, oceans, rivers, streams and springs; rocks of the hill and mountains; the atmosphere which envelopes the earth; ships that sail the seas, airplanes that scan the sky, rockets that penetrate beyond the atmosphere into outer space; the planets, stars, and other heavenly bodies; as well as air we breathe, and everything else in God's creation, which are under His strict dominion. "All things are beautiful in His time." God so minutely times each and every event that they each fit exactly in place as fragments fit in a jig-saw puzzle.

God so minutely timed a telephone call from Elder Durwood Bradley of Lubbock, Texas, that it came precisely as I was writing of things in space. When I answered the telephone my mind was soaring into space. It did my heart good to hear him tell of the wonderful *"lifting up"* that he experienced in meditating upon the paper entitled, *The Missing Day.* (Please read it as copied on page 17, January — 1971 issue of *Signs of the Times.*) This proves that research in the space program is a blessing of God which brings to light that the Bible is God's true history. It proves that the Bible contains answers to things that cannot be proven scientifically. It proves God's dominion of the sun. It proved that God hearkens to the voice of man in manifesting His greatness: "The sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of man: for the Lord fought for Israel." (Joshua 10:13-14.) The Lord hearkened unto Hezekiah to convince him that Isaiah was a true prophet from the Lord, and that God had answered His prayers as you shall read in 2 Kings 20:9-10. God works miraculous wonders to prove that He hears the prayers of those who are in the furnace of afflictions. He opens the windows of Heaven and pours out blessings upon all who use their talents to Glorify the Giver of every good and perfect Gift.

We beseech you, brethren, to heed God's commands and promises. Just as certain that He is the sovereign God, He will exactly fulfill each and every promise. May God bless the 3rd chapter of Malachi as living words spoken by God through the prophet to you. How dreadful and terrible are the experiences of those, His children, who are tempted to rob God. Curses come upon His people when they use their gifts and talents to glorify any other than God. You cannot escape the chastening rod of God when you misuse these precious talents. Pray God to enable you to use them rightly as you cannot do so of yourselves. Pray to know God's

will concerning you and walk in the path accordingly. Listen to God: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." (Mal. 3:10) May we be enabled by God's power to bring forth treasures both old and new into the churches of Christ. We are fully persuaded that to the degree this is done, yea — to a greater degree — will the windows of heaven be opened by God, and we shall receive in abundance happiness, joy, peace, and salvation. What a foretaste of the Eternal Heaven from our Eternal Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

PSALMS 116:12

"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord."

The above expression of David has rested upon our mind of late, and although we have no gift to expound Scripture, yet if the Lord will enable us to express the reflection we have had upon this text, so as to convey to our brethren some of the comfort it has afforded us, we shall feel that our writing has not wearied them.

The psalmist doubtless is here personating the Savior, and the primary meaning of his writing is prophetic of the suffering of Jesus in his advent to the earth, but as all his saints are to follow him in all things pertaining to their salvation, the language applies equally to the experience of every individual saint, and it is in this light we propose to treat the subject.

The question is asked, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits?" The inbred nature of man is to feel that he must either render some service to God to obtain his benefits, or to compensate him for favors past. This is perhaps one of the hardest delusions the saints have to struggle with. They seem to forget that every sin that an elect vessel of mercy has ever committed, or may ever be permitted to commit, was atoned for by Jesus upon the cross, and that in the sight of God they stand in Christ as holy as God is holy, and their heavenly Father has given them every blessing in Christ, and these blessings were all stored in Christ before the world began, so that they are not contingent, nor do they depend upon some *service* we are to render. If we are not to render service, "What shall we render?" We are not left in doubt how to answer this question, for David himself answers it. He says, "I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord."

What is this cup of salvation?

It appears to us that the Savior had reference to this cup in his answer to James and John, when they came to him with a request to be especially favored: "Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask. Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of?" And they said, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of." As said, this cup that Jesus speaks of is, to our mind, the cup of salvation that we are to take.

What is in this cup?

Let us go to the garden of Gethsemane, and we will see what was in this "cup of salvation" when our blessed Savior took it, and called upon the name of the Lord, saying, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." Never have any of the children of God been called to drink so bitter a cup, but they all must drink of this same cup. "The cup which our Father gives us shall we not drink it?"

Every child of God that has been long on their heavenward journey knows from their own experience what this

cup contains, better than it can be expressed in words.

In our pilgrimage in this world we are daily called to pass through trials, and meet with losses and crosses of a temporal nature, and sometimes it seems that our troubles are more than we can endure, and it seems to us that these things surely can have nothing to do with our salvation in Christ. But, dear child of God, they are all in this cup. You never had one pang of physical pain, nor met with a single loss of earthly goods, nor been bereft of a loved one, but what it was by the purpose of God placed in this cup to wean you from the world, and to bring you to "call upon the name of the Lord."

These are the temporal trials and afflictions that are in this cup, but every subject of grace knows of deeper trials, which they have to endure in the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, spoken of by Paul when he says, "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members." When cast down and mourning an absent God, have you not often felt to say, All these things are against me? and has it not appeared that with his own hand he seemed intent to aggravate your woes, so that you felt hope was well nigh gone, and your faith could not lay hold upon the promises. Then what did you do? Did you not resolve to do better, be more obedient, and by this means strain some of the bitter dregs out of this cup, so that it might be more agreeable to your natural taste? This is the course carnal reason would suggest, but David said, "I will call upon the name of the Lord."

The psalmist was permitted to go as deep in sin as it is possible for man to go, and therefore knew the depravity of the human heart, and was prepared to say with the prophet, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." There does not appear to be any thought in David's mind of what he should do to court the favor of the Lord in the future, but he was wholly actuated by a spirit of gratitude, and desire to render acceptable praise to God for his benefits toward him in the past, and at the present time. This is just the difference between carnal service, and the fruit of the Spirit; the first is actuated by a selfish desire, to obtain favor, and the other by a desire to render unto the Lord the tribute of a thankful heart for the benefits already received, and when we are influenced by the Spirit, this gratitude and praise is rendered to God without any effort on our part; it flows from the heart, as the odor is emitted from the flower, and like the flower, the more bruised and crushed it is, the more fragance it yields; so is the child of God, when the love of God is shed abroad in his heart, the more bitter and crushing trials there is in his cup, the more he "will call upon the name of the Lord."

May it be the pleasure of the Lord to pour out of his Holy Spirit upon us, that we may each take the cup he has prepared for us, "and call upon his name" for strengthening grace to enable us to say with our dear Redeemer, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt."

Benton L. Beebe

(Benton L. Beebe was a grandson of Elder Gilbert Beebe and co-editor of the *Signs* with Elder Chick until his death in 1904.
— J. D. W.

GALATIANS 5:4

"Christ is become of no effect to you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."

The churches of Galatia had been assailed by Judaizing teachers, preaching to them that they could not be saved unless they were circumcised and kept the law; and some of those converts who had began in the Spirit, were so far bewitched as to entertain the idea that they were to be made perfect by the works of the law, and thus they became involved and entangled with

the yoke of bondage; a yoke which neither they nor the fathers, not even the patriarchs of Israel, were able to bear.

The apostle proved very conclusively in this epistle that no man could be justified in the sight of God by the works of the law, and because they could not, therefore Christ had redeemed them from under the law, was delivered for their offenses, and raised from the dead for their justification; that he had set them free from the law, as a yoke of bondage, by himself becoming the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth; and hence they were saved by grace, and not by works of their own. Having fully, clearly and irrefutably, established his position of justification alone, and freely, or graciously, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, he admonishes them in the beginning of this chapter, to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and be not again entangled with the yoke of bondage, and in urging this admonition he testified that if they resorted to the law for life, that was a rejection of Christ. If they were circumcised, after the manner of Moses, they thereby pledged themselves to perform the whole law themselves, and thus leaving Christ entirely out of their justification, he shall profit them nothing. Of what avail that he died for them, if their justification was established on their own works, and not in his redemption?

Again, in the text under consideration, by inspiration of the Holy Ghost he testifies that whosoever of them were justified by the law, to them Christ had become of no effect: they were not saved by grace, but by works, as he had elsewhere testified, that if it were by works, then it was no more of grace. Salvation could not possibly be jointly of grace and of works, for if it were of the one then it was not of the other. *We, if saved at all, must be saved either wholly of grace, or wholly of our own works,* and if it were of the latter, Christ was made of no effect, and they were fallen from grace. That is, as grace is infinitely higher than legal works, so salvation by grace transcends salvation by works. Not that Paul either allowed that any could in reality be justified by the works of the law, which he plainly declared was impossible, nor that those who were saved by grace, could ever possibly lose their interest in that grace, which is equally impossible, but *on the supposition that any were saved and justified by the law, then they were not subjects of grace, nor were they interested in Christ.* Descending from grace to the theory of legal works, is truly a fall, and the depth of the fall is as great as is the distance of grace above works.

The great design of the inspired writer is to show that we cannot consistently hold that salvation is conditional, and by the works of the law, without rejecting Christ as the Savior, and grace as the principle on which that salvation is extended to any of the fallen sons of men.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe May 1, 1859.)

DOES NOT GET TO MEETINGS

545 N. 6th Street
Fairfax, Okla. 74637

Dear Brother Spangler:

I have just received my *Signs of the Times* and have read all of it, and enjoyed it all. I see my subscription is out in February, so I enclose my check for another year.

I read the letter from Willie (Green) Smith from Mangum, Okla., and I am wondering if her folks are related to B. M. Green, an Elder of years ago. I knew him well. He baptized my oldest son in 1925, who is now an elder; also at the same time baptized my youngest son. He also helped in my little girl's funeral in December, 1928. She was thirteen years of age. He loved her lots because she loved the church,

and because she would not cut her long hair or use make-up as many of her friends urged her to. She said she hoped to meet her blessed Lord some day and would want to wash his feet with her tears and dry them with her hair; and could not do it if her hair were short. She said that the Bible said that women should not pray with their heads uncovered. Dear Brother Green wrote her obituary in December, 1928.

I hope the Lord will bless all to keep the good old *Signs* coming. I am eighty-six and don't get to go to church, and I miss it so much.

May God see fit to have mercy and forgive a sinner saved by God's amazing grace.

Mary E. Hendricks

OBITUARIES

SISTER MARY LENA SMITH

Sister Mary Lena Smith of Mt. Vernon, Texas, passed away November 20, 1970 at Terrell State Hospital. She was born January 14, 1879, in Franklin County, Texas. She was ninety-one years old. Survivors are two daughters: Mrs. Bernice Kates and Mrs. Tom Jordon; one brother, Mr. Mat Moore, and one sister, Sister Kate Anderson.

Sister Smith was a member of Providence Church in Franklin County, Texas, and was very attentive to her church as long as she was able to go. I believe she was as well versed in the scriptures as any sister I ever talked with; and was blessed with a wonderful spiritual understanding. She was loved by everyone who knew her, and was as humble a saint as I ever knew.

I would like to say to her children and all that knew her, that I feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Elder E. J. Lambert and the writer, Loyd Wall, conducted her funeral, at which there was a large and attentive congregation.

Loyd Wall

LUCH JANE CARPENTER

Once again it has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst one of our loved ones, Luch Jane Carpenter, a daughter of the late Asa and Ann Harper Carpenter. She was born January 1, 1907, and died November 23, 1970.

She leaves to mourn her passing two brothers, Hubert and William Carpenter, Hurricane, W. Va.; one sister, Mildred Lambert of Durbin, W. Va.; and a host of relatives and friends.

She had been in ill health for several years, but never complained. Although she had never united with the church, she was a firm believer of Salvation by Grace and grace alone.

Funeral services were held in the Mt. Moriah Baptist Church by Elder Veldon Linn of the Tygerts Valley River Primitive Baptist Association; and she was laid to rest in the family cemetery to await the coming of our Lord.

Written by ones who loved her, and miss her very much.

Mrs. Vera Bird
Mrs. Callie Higginbotham

NORA W. LANCASTER

In loving memory of my foster mother, Nora W. Lancaster, who passed away November 23, 1970. She was born on September 4, 1890 to Elijah and Nancy Smith Williams. She married James Thad Lancaster on February 13, 1912. He died on December 19, 1967. Six children were born to this union, of which five survive. They are Martha L. Brake, Norfolk, Va.; Myrtle L. Proctor, Elm City; Lessie L. Lancaster, James D. Lancaster, and Alvin E. Lancaster, all of Rocky Mount, N. C. In addition to their children, they had room in their home and in their hearts for my brother and sister and myself. They treated us as their own. I loved them dearly.

She united with the church at Pleasant Hill on September 23, 1933. She loved and looked forward to going to church. She was able to attend Pleasant Hill on Saturday and Sunday before she died on Monday. She loved to be with the members, her children, and her friends. She manifested humbleness and patience, and she had a sweet smile for everyone. We miss her very much, but we feel confident that she is at peace and at rest from all her pain and labor. May we all be reconciled to the Lord's will and His promise that He will come again at the last day to raise these bodies from the grave, to reign with Him in that Eternal City.

Her funeral was preached by Elder Henry Jones and Elder C. L. Coker. They spoke very comforting. Her body was laid to rest in Upper Town Creek Church cemetery beneath a beautiful array of flowers.

Written by order of conference December, 1970 by

Fannie Mae Calhoun

OBITUARY OF ELDER WILLIAM CURRY KING

As I prepare to write this obituary, it is with much sadness. I feel to be at such a loss as what and how to say the things I would desire to say about one so great and highly esteemed among the household of faith. Elder King was born in Caswell County, North Carolina on May 6, 1897, to his parents, the late William J. and Alice Roscoe King. Departed this life October 17, 1970, making his stay 73 years, 5 months and 11 days. Leaving to mourn his departure is his wife, Sister Bronna King, together with a host of near and dear relatives and all those who knew and loved him.

His father passed away when he was only 14 years of age. I have heard him tell how saddened and what a loss he had sustained and how he begged God for mercy and counsel that he might carry on, yet knowing and feeling that God knew best. As he grew into adulthood he labored hard to provide for those whom he loved. He told of a desire he had to become a lawyer but his lot was cast with the poor and afflicted of Zion and we see that God had a greater work for him to perform. Having become acquainted with Miss Bronna Mae King, we see that God brought them together in such a way that she was to become his faithful and loyal companion and they were united in marriage on May 4, 1921, by the late Elder John W. Gilliam. Unto this union there were no children , yet there were many who came to him for counsel and advice as that of a father.

Elder King professed a hope in Jesus Christ and offered to the church the 2nd Saturday in May, 1917, and was received and baptized into the fellowship of Bush Arbor Church by the late Elder Ben F. McKinney and remained a faithful and loyal member until death. Having been burdened with more than a desire for membership of the church; he asked liberty to speak at his home church in their July meeting, 1917, at the age of 20 and was granted that privilege. The church seeing and recognizing the burden and the gift which God had placed upon him, he was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, the 5th Sunday in July, 1921. Going forth from that time forward preaching the glorious gospel of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. It seemed that God looked upon him with a favoring eye to bless him in all his endeavors both natural and spiritual. He soon became a great and useful minister being blessed to stir the minds of God's people and to feed the sheep; many were strengthened under the sound of his preaching. He was called to serve churches in our association and among those in which he served were McCray, 1924-1970, Greensboro, Assistant Pastor 1927-1932, Pastor 1932-1970, Bush Arbor 1929-1970, Prospect Hill 1959-1970, Gooch Memorial and Country Line. Elder King being blessed with such integrity, judgment, counsel and having such an oversight over the flock wherewith he was called, having the interest and welfare of his brethren at heart, he was chosen to serve as moderator of the Upper Country Line Association in the year 1933. In the year 1942 he was reelected and served this office with such meekness, humbleness and love having a desire for and maintaining peace and was annually elected moderator without opposition until death.

His early labors saw him as a farmer, tobacco warehouseman and later was employed by Smith-Douglass Company and retired, having worked for them twenty-seven years. Yet being so efficient and gaining the confidence of his superiors that not one time was he denied the many calls he had for funerals and visits to the bedside of the sick which he administered unto so untiringly with love and patience.

However, there were lean years in his early ministry and one experience he related I shall never forget. He had a meeting coming up and it was some distance away. He did not have money to buy gas to go and fill this appointment but he was greatly concerned as to how he would get there. Early on the morning of this appointment there came a man to his home and asked if he had any seed corn. The reply was, "yes," and the corn was purchased. Elder King said, "God has provided my way." How many times have we heard him say, "God will provide for his little ones."

He was blessed to declare the truth for more than fifty-three years among the Household of Faith, gaining fellowship and love as he went forth, truly being loved and esteemed by those who knew him. It seemed he was one of the favorites among our people and called upon far and near to pay last respect to those whom God had called from this life, having served in as many as three funerals in one day.

During his ministry there were no doubt many highlights, I am sure. One of these must have been when he baptized his dear companion into the fellowship of the church in November, 1941. Other baptizings we would like to mention were that of the blind, deaf and some even in chairs. He also baptized six men and later served as moderator in the presbytery and saw them ordained into the full work of the ministry. They are in this order: Elders Ernest F. Oakley, J. Harvey Smith (deceased), Wallis A. Smith, Kenneth Key, Donald E. Smith and Leonard Key, so we feel the fruits of his ministry shall re-

main with us for years to come. He was blessed to baptize many believers into the fellowship of the church during his ministry.

As we saw his ministry coming to a climax and age overtaking him he was approached many times concerning his health and his physical strength and his reply was, "I prefer to wear out rather than rust out," and we saw him pressing on as a faithful soldier of the cross, neither murmuring nor complaining but trusting in God. Elder King was a man that believed in peace and indeed a peacemaker. He was blessed to carry the banner of peace and to walk softly and humbly among our people. We find in Matthew Chapter 5, Verse 9, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

The last text Elder King read and preached from, was on the second Saturday night in October, 1970, from the 110th Psalms, Verse 3, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth." On the second Sunday in October, 1970, which was to be our communion service there were several ministers present and some of whom he had baptized. Elder King as always being considerate of his ministering brethren declined to speak. After preaching service all ministers present were seated around the communion table as we prepared to take of the bread and wine which is symbolic of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Elder King arose and began to speak and in doing so remarked that there were some present at this service that may not be present to enjoy the love and fellowship of a service of this kind again. To reassure us of the promises of God and of that sweet hope which God has placed in the hearts of his people. It was as though he was trying to tell us his time was short. Little did we know that it was the purpose of God that it would be the last supper our beloved pastor would have on earth with us. I cherish the sweet memories that God being so complete would bless him to finish his course in this manner.

I feel the example he set before us shall long be remembered and his voice shall echo in the hearts of those who loved him for years to come. As we look at the churches in which he served we can see evidence of his leadership. He contributed heavily in a financial way so that the buildings would be more comfortable for those who would come to worship.

His funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church, Caswell County, North Carolina on October 19, 1970, by the writer, assisted by Elders D. V. Spangler, H. W. Wray, E. F. Oakley, Kenneth Key, Leonard Key and Donald Smith. The church did not accommodate the enormous crowd that gathered to pay respect. There were many beautiful floral wreaths, also being a token of respect. I do not feel that this was the last token of respect, for each time we think of the life which God blessed him to live in our midst, it will be a token of respect. If we know our hearts we humbly thank God for having had the privilege to walk in sweet fellowship with one so meek and humble. I feel he could have adopted the language of the Apostle Paul, 2nd Timothy, Chapter 4, Verse 6-8, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

He was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. May God in his rich mercy bless all those that mourn and may the vacancy in which we have in our hearts be filled with the love of God.

BE IT RESOLVED, a copy be sent to Sister Bronna King, one sent to the *Signs of the Times* and one kept for church records.

Written by request of Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder Wallis A. Smith

Read and approved in their conference meeting on February 13, 1971.

Elder Wallis A. Smith, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

IN MEMORY OF ELDER KING

Yanceyville, N. C.
December, 1970

Much has been written about our dear Pastor, Elder W. C. King, since his passing a few weeks ago. Many fitting and appropriate remarks have been made; all, I feel, in appreciation and thankfulness to an all wise God who saw fit to call him home.

I would like, if I may be blessed to do so, to pen a picture of a dream I had of Elder King not more than a couple or three weeks before his death. At the time I thought of it as just a foolish dream, and even made some statement at the breakfast table the following morning. But since he has gone from our midst this dream has, at least partially, unfolded for me and become precious.

In this dream there was a fairly large rectangular shaped building sitting on a small hill, the building running lengthwise up and down the hill. I was on one side of the building in a shaded spot seemingly trying to read.

On the opposite side and a little farther up the hill I saw a white goat and a black animal. The features of the black animal were not clear but it was heavier than the goat though not much, if any, taller. These animals were standing upon the base of a statue. The statue was not clear but was about as tall as an average size man. The goat was standing on one side of the statue and the black animal on the other. These were live animals. I could see them move their heads a little, also their feet occasionally but they never left the base of the statue. At the same time I saw Elder King and a brother of the Church walking, with their backs to me and to the animals, going toward a small grove of trees on a flat area below us, though close by. They were the only people I saw and though I did not call to them I thought they should come back and do something about these animals. They never looked back. I was a little afraid and felt so helpless knowing I could do nothing myself.

There was a road that led to the right of this grove of trees and on out of sight behind it. In my dream I thought, "Well, they are just going to go around this grove and turn around," as might have been necessary if driving an automobile — yet they were walking. I watched them as they went and waited for them to appear on the opposite side of the grove but they never did. Meanwhile a lady appeared, vaguely, in the picture with me, but it was not at all clear to me who she was. Nevertheless, I complained to her because Elder King and this brother did not come back and do something about these animals. I did not receive an answer from the lady — and all was gone as dreams go.

The picture is yet unfinished. I want to fill in. I wish I could picture the two men for you as I saw them, also the pretty little dirt road. The men were looking toward each other as they walked but I was in the direction that I could see more of Elder King's face than the face of the brother. He seemed to be talking and in a jovial, happy, even elated mood. The brother, smiling a little, seemed very attentive and interested in what Elder King was saying.

Once when I told a sister about my dream she immediately remarked that the black animal represented the sins of the world that Elder King was leaving behind. This I believe. The goat (the world) never caused him to swerve. Nor had he time for idols and false images, not even to the last. Neither could any of these things follow him, they kept their place in the background. Of the animals, I like to think of there being no sheep in the picture, to me representing his work of tending the flock was over.

Another thought has just come to mind. Could the lady I saw vaguely represent his church he was also leaving behind? Or was she just an outlet for me to pour out my complaints upon? Or was it you, dear Sister King, knowing you to be the constant and loyal companion you were — also knowing you were standing by when your husband entered into this path of no return. Though it was not a path I saw. It was a narrow road, a pretty little dirt road. I was under the shade of some trees, but the road looked clear and bright as if the sun was shining upon it.

It did not take this dream for me to feel our dear Pastor rests in a better world. Nevertheless, I thank God for this picture of him, walking in brotherly love, going home; leaving all ugliness behind.

Mary Gordon Blaylock

ELDER DILLARD R. PYRTLE

The Bunker Hill Primitive Baptist Church of Forsyth County, N. C. desires to write a Memorial of their beloved brother and Elder, Elder Dillard R. Pyrtle.

He was born in the Stokes County to David R. and Nannie King Pyrtle the 28th day of September, 1890, and departed this life September 3, 1970.

He leaves behind to mourn his passing his wife, Sister Gracie Shephard Pyrtle; four sons, Wilbert Jethro, John Dillard, Benjamin Nathan and Samuel David Pyrtle; six daughters, Mrs. Guy Coe, Mrs. Levi Hayworth, Mrs. Rachel Wray, Mrs. Dixie Eaton, Mrs. Dorothy Lyndon and Mrs. Anne Minor; one sister, Mrs. Minnie Owens; one brother, Mr. Rufus Pyrtle, and twenty grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren. All that loving hands could do was administered to Brother Pyrtle by his loving wife and children.

Elder Pyrtle joined the Church at Bunker Hill in 1929, and remained a faithful member until death. During his ministry he served the following churches, Mayodan, N. C., Pleasantville Church near Reidsville, N. C., and Toms Creek Church near Denton, N. C. He was blest to also visit many churches and associations in various parts of the country.

This hymn recorded in the Lloyd's Primitive Hymnal expresses our feelings and belief concerning Elder Pyrtle's ministry more than we could say or express.

"His death we mourn who lately stood
A Herald of the Mighty God:
Proclaimed the Savior of our race,
And bore the message of his grace.

Laborious in his master's cause,
His view not lucre nor applause;

To spend and to be spent resigned,
If soul's thru Christ salvation find.

With pointed language, flaming zeal
He to the conscience did appeal;
With terror sought the soul to move,
Or draw it with the cords of love.

But all his labors now are o'er,
And we shall hear his voice no more;
His dust lies silent in the Tomb,
He's gone to Heaven, his final Home.

Jesus, tho earthly shepherds die,
Do thou thy Church still supply
With gifts instructions to impart,
Pastors according to thy heart."

Written by the request of the Church and his family.

Zennie L. Rhue

MRS. SALLIE PICKERAL

Our dearly beloved Sister Sallie Pickeral was born March 15, 1884, departed this life December 6, 1970. She was the oldest member of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, having united with the Church in September, 1908, and was faithful to attend her meetings as long as she was able.

Besides her husband, Brother Lee A Pickeral, she is survived by three sons, Morman, Henry, and Acy Pickeral; six daughters, Mrs. Bernice Atkinson, Mrs. Ora Floyd, Mrs. Virginia Harmon, Mrs. Lois Pallonte, Miss Grace and Nora Pickeral; two brothers, one sister, fourteen grandchildren, nineteen great grandchildren, and many friends and loved ones to mourn their loss, but we believe their loss is her eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church by her Pastor, Elder O. K. Tench. Her body was laid to rest under a mound of beautiful flowers at Gretna Burial Park.

Written by Marvin Brumfield

MARY L. GORDY

Once more we bow in humble submission to the will of our God who was pleased to take from our midst our very dear friend, Mary L. Gordy on September 30, 1970. We hope to be blessed to say with one of old, "The Lord hath given and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be his name."

The departed one was the daughter of the late Larry C. Brittingham and Eva C. Brittingham who survives. Our dear friend had been married twice, first to Glen Calhoun, who passed away in 1942, and later to Reese Gordy who passed away in September of 1968. There were no children by either marriage. There are, however, two brothers, two sisters, and three step-children who survive. She was not a member of the visible Church but always attended when she could, and we feel had a strong belief in salvation by grace. The writer well remembers calling her sister and her answer was, "I wish I were."

We all miss her so very much but feel that she had spent her allotted time here, and the Lord, who doeth all things well, was pleased to take her away from the cares of this vile world. It is the prayer of the writer that it may please the Lord to reconcile all who mourn the loss of this dear one, to feel that their loss was her eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Windsor-Disharoon Funeral Home in Laurel, Delaware and her body was laid to rest beside her first husband in the cemetery at Laurel, Del.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

MRS. ANNA LAWHEAD

Mrs. Anna Lawhead was born October 13, 1885, at Turners Station, Ky., and died September 20, 1970, at her home in Hurricane, W. Va. She is survived by her husband, Joseph Lawhead, and one daughter, Cecelia Ransdell, both of Hurricane. She was a daughter of the late James and Sarah Humston Russell, both Primitive Baptists of Cane Run Church, Turners Station, Ky.

She united with the Cane Run Primitive Church in November, 1902; and in 1932 Cane Run Church was amalgamated with Sulphur Fork Primitive Baptist Church, Campbellsburg, Ky. She was a faithful member there until her death; making it a total of almost 68 years. She was the granddaughter of the late N. A. Humston who served the Sulphur Fork Church from 1862 until his death January 26, 1890. This church was organized in 1801, and she loved it dearly for it stood for all she believed.

Her funeral was held at Indian Fork Primitive Baptist Church at Culloden, W. Va., conducted by her pastor, Elder Woodrow Lake; and burial was in Culloden Cemetery.

Her daughter,
Cecelia Ransdell

(We can add that Sister Anna Lawhead was a much loved and faithful member of the Old School Baptist Church, and we enjoyed sweet fellowship with her when we visited in her home many years ago, and since then by correspondence. We loved her.

Elder George and
Sister Esther Ruston)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 139 DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1971 NO. 5

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5/71
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

HAPPY TO SEE THE CHILDREN BELIEVING

Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I enclose check for $7.00 for two years renewal. I enjoy it so much; and appreciate the large printing, as my eyes are failing. I have had to give up some reading. I have a Bible with good print — it and the *Signs* are about all the reading I can do. I am so thankful for them both. I am now past my seventy-sixth year, and I am not sorry about that. Times are fearful now and none of us know what the morrow will bring.

The dear Lord has been so good to me: my hope and trust is in him. We are few in number here but have meetings each Sunday except three Sundays in October when we omit our meetings and as many of us who can attend associations. I have been blessed to go to several associations in Alabama, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Kentucky. Lots of our brethren have gone on before and we older ones are still here awaiting our time to go.

How happy we are to see our children believing this doctrine that is hated by the world. My oldest son is an ordained minister now: Richard Campbell; and my nephew Swayne Young. I feel sad about the suffering that will be in their way, but God in his sweet mercy will uphold them and give them grace sufficient for their day.

The sweet writings of the *Signs* are so precious. We feel to know the writers though we have not met them. Won't it be a glorious time when we all meet in heaven and be with Christ, the Lord forevermore.

Yours in a sweet hope,
Carrie Campbell

"A GARDEN ENCLOSED"

"A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." (Song of Sol. 4:12)

A garden is a lovely spot that is a thing of beauty and a source of pleasure. The world is full of ugliness, caused by man's destruction of nature's beauty, in his search for life's needs and pleasures. However, even man has reserved to himself gardens of beauty, tracts of rich, cultivated land for growing selected or rare plants.

These gardens are usually fenced, hemmed in or shut up, so that prowlers and intruders cannot destroy them. They are peaceful, restful, beautiful and truly garden spots for enjoyment, and they lift us above the turmoil of daily surroundings. The plants may be for beauty, or for food, or experiments, etc., but they are selected and grown with care.

I have been feasting on the garden, spoken of in the Song of Solomon lately, especially the way it was chosen, set apart and enclosed for God's purpose and pleasure. It teaches in beautiful language his election of the sheep, and

the passiveness of the sheep as he made them await his calling, his wooing and his redemption. As the husbandman selects the plants and nourishes them, so our God chose the plants that fill his garden and comforts, directs and leads them with the song of his love.

I believe the garden spoken of in the song, pertains to the whole of God's church that will be eternally saved; all of his chosen ones from before the world began; that host that no man could number, made up of every kindred, nation, people and tongue under heaven. It is all contained in the love song to his bride, by the Groom, who will come to claim her, when he takes her out of time, into that glorious eternity for which she waits.

His love is so great, so deep, so all enveloping it encloses this entire garden. Still, it reaches into the hearts of each individual plant within its wall. "How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out." We cannot fathom the great scope of his love for so great a host, at the same time we see him heal a leper or save a beggar. A vast sea of mercy, grace and love spreads out before us.

The life of the plant is provided for by this Gardener from the time he places each seed in the prepared soil, through its cultivation and growth, until it reaches maturity. How we try to reach upward for the sun and rain and the sustenance wherewith we are fed. It matters not the longings and yearnings within us. We are as the helpless plants uplifted toward the sky and are taught by his love and care, to stand still and wait upon the Lord. This love is meted out to us by seasons. As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and watereth the earth, and maketh it to bring forth and bud; so are we, the plants of his garden, watered and caused to find peace and comfort from his manna sent from on high. We cannot feed and water ourselves. The sun and rain are too high for us to reach. They are sent down to us in his own time, as he sees we stand in need of it.

His garden is not only nourished by his love and mercy, but is set apart and enclosed also. He has hedged it, hemmed it in and encompassed it in such a way that intruders, prowlers and destroyers are kept out. No briars nor brambles are allowed to grow there. Even though wolves in sheep clothing rise up among his children, they prosper for a short season, and die trying to survive on their own food and drink. Their own works do follow them as they are cut down, leaving his plants untainted because of His watchcare over them. They seek other gardens that contain their own kind of food. Isaiah says, "The wicked shall be confounded for the gardens they have chosen." Notice gardens is in the plural in this writing. There is but one garden, one bride for our Beloved. Also the wicked do their own choosing. We hope, Oh how we do hope, to be a selected, chosen plant in his garden of love and mercy.

We believe the hedge round about his garden is made up of the shalls and wills of Jehovah God, and that it is kept by his promises, which are yea and amen. It is an enclosure that will last as long as the great I Am. It is also kept as the apple of his eye, as he envelopes it so tenderly, and it is as firm and secure as, "a nail in a sure place."

Just as the Lord shut Noah in the ark, and caused it to ride upon the water that destroyed everything else on earth, so are the people of God always shut in and protected, while other plants in the garden are consumed. "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." (Matt. 15:13)

His kingdom, which is the garden in the Song, is likened to a pearl of great price, the great price being the life of his darling Son. No wonder it is so dear to him. Never in time or eternity has anything been bought at so great a price as the garden of his choice. For his kingdom is like a treasure hidden in a field, for which a man sells *all* he owns to buy the field, just for the treasure

in it. How costly the garden enclosed in his love.

One of our dear late elders often asked, "Aren't you glad, when you are *made* to be glad?" That is the way I feel about the garden being shut in from the world around it. I hope I am *made* to be glad it is so. One of the meanings of *shut* is: to close so as to hinder egress or ingress. He who opens and none can shut, and shuts and none can open, keeps us in (if we are included in that Eden spot) as he shuts the world out. The outgoing or incoming is in his hands. Our beauty is in and of our Beloved. His countenance shines through his planting, as he works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. If we are among that number who will ask, "When did we do these good things," it will be because we are his right hand's planting and his Spirit within us causes us to do those things. The plant in the garden grows, buds and flowers as it is fed by the Gardener. How desolate it becomes, how dry and wilted, when he withholds himself for a season.

He sings that the enclosed garden is his sister. A sister is one who is of the same parentage or a joint-heir. Paul says in Romans 8:17 that his children are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. What a precious heritage. That he should descend from glory, take on sinful flesh, and die for the sins of his people; then love and call this same people his sister, his joint-heir. She will share with him the same glory, when he comes back for her. How we sorrow and grieve because we fall far short of so great a love. It is beyond our comprehension. He comforts Zion by telling her, "He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord."

We try to pray, while in the wilderness and desert land, that He nourish and lead and instruct us, as he comforted his sister.

He called his garden by many names as he comforted and edified his people in the song. The same God who called her his sister, spoke to her as his spouse. So she is also married to him. The love of a groom and his bride is consummated in marriage to make it legal and binding; to make the bride secure and safe, in his love. Whereas a sister denotes a sharing of things heired from the Father, as a joint-heir with the Son; his spouse is protected by his name and taken into his bosom as his first love, as the fairest among women. He bestowed his love on the church, and through the Son, she returned it. He tells her, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." He perfects her in love and salvation, and tells her, "I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." What a perfect union with his spouse.

Tell me, dear ones, is there a safer place? The joy unspeakable and full of glory that goes on and on forevermore between them, seems as far away as the heavens are above the earth at times; as unattainable as the plant food. But again it comes as the rains upon the tender herb and as the dew upon the grass. It refreshes us again and makes us know that he is God.

A spring and fountain are sources of water springing up, in this case the water of eternal life. The source of supply is shut up and sealed in the garden. They are cut off from the world by the same hedge that shuts them in the garden, therefore the spring and fountain are for the enclosure only. They refresh the garden as it waits for its beloved.

Those he has enclosed in the garden find comfort and joy in his song of love, as he sings the endearing names to her all through the Scriptures: sister, spouse, spring shut up and fountain sealed, join the sheep fold, city on a hill, and many, many more for his little ones to rejoice about as they come from the lips of their Husband.

To feast on the comforting beauty of God's song to his bride is a blessing seldom enjoyed by the writer. My thoughts are often gone astray after the things in the world. However, my hope is, though small at times, to hear

a still, small voice within me say, "Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away." If I am ever fair it will be because the spring, the fountain of living water washed my sin sick soul.

The promise to his love, the lost sheep, the strangers in the world is that their souls shall sorrow no more, for they shall be like his garden, that drinks of the water of life.

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Spearsville, La. 71277

HAS BEEN READING OLDER *SIGNS*

Star City, Ark. 71667

Dear Editors:

I want to renew my subscription to the *Signs* as it will be due soon, and I don't want to be late; also a little extra to be used as needed.

I look forward to receiving the *Signs* each month, as well as the letters I get from the ones I hope to be my kindred in Christ. Without this good reading I would be very lonely. My efforts at writing are very poor, and I do not always know how to express my feelings.

During the past month I have been reading some of the older *Signs,* dating from 1919 to 1940, and have found some good reading in them by some of the older brothers and sisters and elders that I knew, or knew of. One sister wrote, "Can one who is such a sinner have any part in anything like this? who has done things, and do continually, that she would condemn in others." I feel this way about myself. I truly believe the Lord is our Refuge, and that without this guiding care we of ourselves can do nothing — only stumble along in our blundering nature.

Paul said in Philippians 1:27 and 29, "Only let your conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel . . . For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." This I hope to believe: that God rules all things, and that God's little ones do suffer. God is an all wise God and does his will in earth and in heaven; and does not need man's help. But I need his saving Grace.

"When sorrows encompass me round,
And many distresses I see,
Astonished, I cry, Can a mortal be found,
Surrounded with troubles like me?

Few seasons of peace I enjoy,
And they are succeeded by pain;
If e'er a few moments of praise I employ
I have hours and days to complain."

When left to myself I do complain, yet I know I have much to be thankful for, if I only knew how to be thankful.

In hope of a hope,
Mrs. Hovis Donaldson

SENDS OBITUARY FOR PUBLICATION

733 7th Street
Hollister, Cal.

Dear Elder John D. Wood:

Our subscription is up in March so am enclosing renewal. Also am sending an obituary of our dear beloved Brother William Echols.

As he had so many friends and brethren that are subscribers to the *Signs of the Times,* I would like to give you a little information concerning this dear brother. My father, the late Elder John F. Tipton baptized him when he joined the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, held in the Jaybuckle School near Reed, Oklahoma, in the year 1912. My father was a subscriber to the *Signs* from my earliest recollection until his passing away September 15, 1928. His funeral was preached by the late Elder Shipman, whom I knew and dearly loved, both he and his wife. And his obituary was in the *Signs* February, 1929.

As the members passed away and

others moved from the Hopewell Church, those that remained now belong to the Little Flock Old School Baptist Church, Altus, Okla., where Elder C. M. Haygood is pastor. My father and the late Elder W. N. Green were yokefellows — whom his daughter mentioned in the January, 1971, *Signs*.

I have from a child been made to believe that God foreknew and predetermined all things. If God will give me grace, I will always declare that God is the first cause of all causes, either directly or indirectly. It is written, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Also, ". . . for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." (Exodus 9:16)

It is written, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." And "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers; there is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God." Webster's Unabridged Dictionary says concerning the word cause: "Cause, that which produces or effects a result; that from which anything proceeds, and without which it would not exist." The Scriptures prove this from beginning of Genesis through Revelation; and we cannot deny the Scriptures.

This dear brother, who was baptized by my father, being a deacon, asked to assist in my baptism; also was in the presbytery in my ordination as deacon. Everyone that knew him, loved and respected this dear brother, William Echols.

A brother in hope,
Austin M. Tipton

GOD IS NOT THE AUTHOR OF SIN

2402 N. Main Street
High Point, N. C.

Dear Elder Wood:

I want to try to write about some things that have been on my mind lately. Sometime ago in a conversation with you, if I understood correctly, you said something to this effect: Some would try to use the doctrine of absolute predestination as an excuse for their acts. My reply was that at that time I had never heard a Primitive Baptist do that; but since that time I heard one preacher in a group conversation say that God made and predestinated everything, and anything we do God makes us do it; and went on to say that he believed God was the author of sin.

This has caused me some thought and searching of mind and scriptures, as well as inquiring among preaching brethren, who all quickly rejected this, as I felt they would before I mentioned it.

Paul, writing in the sixth chapter of Romans, asked, "What shall we say then? shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" In other words Paul was asking what shall we advocate or preach? or what shall our conversation be concerning this wonderful truth that he spoke in the previous chapter; that is, "That the law entered that the offence might abound, but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Now I feel that if one is in that blessed number that has been given a hope of forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Jesus, his eyes have been opened and he is turned from darkness unto light. One thing I believe this light does do, is to show him that he is completely undone and a totally depraved sinner; and is absolutely void of any strength within himself to be freed from that condition.

I can't see that when one is brought into the light of the knowledge of the law of sin and death, how he could say,

"God predestinated all things, therefore he made me sin." Such a one is brought, as I understand it, under the law of sin and death, brought into captivity of the law of sin which is in his members: that is, his flesh. This sin has been there all the time, ever since Adam: and I would say that before the law of sin and death is applied, he is alive to the law of carnal commandments; that he feels that he is capable of himself to do things that would justify him in the sight of God. The Apostle said that as touching the law he was blameless; that he was alive without the law once, but when this holy law came, (that is, written in his heart and mind,) sin revived — it was set in motion, it became exceedingly sinful. It was there all the time, but now abounded in his sight to the proportion that it engulfed him; and he was given to hear the sentence, "The soul that sinneth shall die."

Speaking of the New Covenant that he would make with his people, the Lord said, "Behold the days come, (meaning to me an appointed time,) saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant . . . I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." (Heb. chapter 8) Jesus told his people (16th chapter of John) that it was expedient that he go away, that if he went not away the Comforter would not come; but if he went away, he would send Him unto them; and when he is come he would guide them into all truth. This Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, was sent and the laws were put and written in the minds and hearts of his chosen people. The law of sin and death (the rod) to kill to sin to the extent that they could no longer live in it. The application of this law makes the sinner cry, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?" This is done over and over in the experience of the child of grace, as long as he occupies this earthen vessel: Paul said he died daily.

Jesus promised he would not leave them comfortless. As He came as the end of the Old Covenant, to fulfill the demands of that holy law, He comes now under the New Covenant as the "law of the Spirit of his life in Christ Jesus," (the staff) to deliver, to set free from the law of sin and death. He does not send sin into the hearts of his people, (or anyone for that matter) but the commandment to awaken to sin already there.

So Paul's answer to the question, "What shall we then say, shall we continue in sin that grace might abound?" is, "God forbid; how shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein." Paul is saying, as I see it, we shall not say this: it is not the truth for sin is not the strength of grace: it is not the moving cause of grace — God's love is! "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins . . . (by grace are ye saved)." (Ephesians 2:4, 5) "But unto everyone of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." (Ephesians 4:7) So we shall not say, "Let us sin that grace may abound." The truth is grace abounds according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

Now as to the principle of God's predestination of all things, we believe it to be the truth; and are made, I hope by the Holy Spirit, to love it. That He does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, is only truly believed and appreciated by those that have had a similar experience to that of King Nebuchadnezzar: That is, they that have had the law of sin and death applied in their hearts.

Now shall we say we sin because God predestinated it, and therefore makes us do it? I say God does not, nor ever has made anyone sin. We should not say that He does. "For by him (even Christ the Word) were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and for him: and he

is before all things, and by him all things consist." (Col. 16, 17)

Now for the reason that I would say, "For so it seemed good in his sight," He purposed that all (all he gave his Son before the world began) be concluded in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. (Romans 11:32) In his wisdom and purpose He created and ordained a power capable within itself, to preach a lie to Eve to beguile and deceive her, saying, "Thou shalt not surely die." Therefore setting Adam (the creature being made subject to vanity and therefore could not stand,) for the fall. And sin entered into the world by this one man, Adam. "Now the serpent was more subtile than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made." (Gen. 3:1) Eve was deceived by the subtility of the serpent, and the serpent or Satan was the cause.

"Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle," etc. Now here is the power of darkness created by him and for him. In this power of darkness is the mystery of iniquity. In Thes. 2:2, Paul speaks of this mystery of iniquity "that doth already work . . . with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness and unrighteousness in them that perish." "Only he that now letteth (God that created this power) will let, until he be taken out of the way." That is, when God's purpose is accomplished. Jesus told Pilate "Thou couldst have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above. Therefore he that delievered me unto thee hath the greater sin."

The one that had the greater sin was Judas, and Satan entered into Judas and Pilate and the others, to gather them to do, "Whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." (Acts 4:28) So this power to devise sin and to deceive, is in Satan himself. And if there be, or rather should be, an answer to the unscriptural question, Who is the author of Sin, it would be the Devil himself.

I am persuaded that the question itself is one invented by this power of darkness. I see it as a foolish question designed by the Devil to gender strife among the saints of God: an effort to, if possible, defeat the very truth that God did absolutely predestinate, ordain and purpose all things; and works them after the counsel of his own will.

In conclusion, one that has had the New Covenant laws applied in his heart and mind, will not, when he is exercised by them, use them as an occasion to the flesh for an excuse. The knowledge of law of sin and death works a work of repentance: (Oh, wretched man that I am," or "I am vile.") This is a bringing forth fruits meet for repentance; and the blessed children of God recognize these fruits in a brother or sister that comes begging for forgiveness; and they readily forgive them if they have an exercising within of the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

These are some of the things that have been on my mind, and I wanted to write or talk to you about them, Brother Wood.

In Christian love,
Paul Morton

REPLY TO ELDER SPANGLER

2238 McCurdy Road
Stone Mountain, Ga. 20083
December 21, 1970

Dear Elder Spangler:

I received your letter yesterday. I had awaited it with great anticipation for Elder Poole told me yesterday that you had written me.

I cannot express the joy I felt in my heart upon reading your comforting words of encouragement. I wrote to you with fear and trembling. I know what I want; I know the truth I love, but words are poor conveyors of inner feelings. I so wanted your confidence in me, your sanction and your blessing — and these your letter provided. I have read and re-read it many times today with untold joy.

There is not a single doubt in my heart about what I believe and what I want, — that is, my love for the gospel and the truth as held by the Primitive Baptists; and my desire to unite with Dan River Church. There are, however, so many doubts about my fitness, my worthiness. I would not for all the world add a single spot or blemish to the church. I know the church is sacred — it is without flaw, and I am not.

Although I look forward to this weekend with the deepest joy I have ever known, I know not how to tell the church what is in my heart. It is a somber and serious step — receiving a member into the church. They must search me and judge me. I know myself to be totally sinful, totally depraved and dependent upon God's mercy for my very breath.

How do I tell the church I love the brethren with an everlasting bond? How do I tell them I am in dire need of their fellowship and their acceptance? I know they have no need of me for I have nothing to offer. How do I tell them I cannot say with assurance that I am a Child of God? I can say, however, that all that I am, all that I have, whatever it be, is given me by the grace of God; and that my life, as everyone's is, is the fulfillment of God's divine providence.

Again, I am grateful and humbled by your letter. I will treasure it always. You bid me to take up His cross and follow Him. God willing, I will be with you this weekend and attempt to keep his commandments, and do as you bid.

May God bless you and sustain you always,

Katie Kilby

(Sister Kilby attends the services of Elder James Poole in Atlanta, Georgia. She visited with the Dan River Church at Mayfield, N. C. when Elder Poole was ordained to the ministry there. After attending the service she was burdened with a desire for membership in the church, and at our December, 1970, meeting she came before the church for membership; and was baptized the fourth Sunday in December.

Sister Kilby is the daughter of Sister Florence Gibson of Atlanta, Georgia, and a niece of our deceased brother, Douglas Alston, who is remembered by many of our readers.

D. V. Spangler)

HOPE FOR A SINNER

As I look back upon the vision or whatever came to me that night so long ago, I have to go even farther back and examine myself before and afterwards to piece together what seems to be the meaning.

If I am not deceiving myself, and I hope and pray that I am not, because just a hope of being one of God's little ones, brings joy to my heart and peace to my soul. Though I know I am not, nor ever will be worthy of being any part of His Bride, I do feel that I have a small hope of that precious promise that Jesus made to all that God gave him — which on that great day will be His Bride.

Long before this happened to me, I had many days of lonliness and heaviness, never knowing what was causing my depressions. I hated sin with all that was within me, yet I seemed to be the blackest sinner of all. It seemed I could not do anything right no matter how hard I tried, and couldn't understand by feelings nor my thoughts. I hated myself and every part of my being. I felt as I imagine Paul did when he said, "Oh wretched man that I am." and again when he said, "That I would, I do not; that I would not, that I do." He could not seem to do what was right; nor could I. But now I know that it is not I that do it but sin that dwelleth within me.

One day a lady came by to see me from a church nearby, and asked me to visit their church. Without hesitating, I said I would go that night; and even then I did not understand because

I never felt to be of church material. I didn't even know or care what they believed. All I knew was that I wanted to respect them and that maybe they could help me, and somehow show me the way to peace. But I know now that only God can do that. There is only one way, and that is through the blood of the Lamb.

After the lady left I found myself in the bathroom closet praying to God to forgive my sins, and bring me out of this wilderness of which I had become captive. I don't know how long I prayed, but that was the beginning of my search for peace. Not only did I go to church that night but I joined before I knew what I was doing. The preacher was saying, "Come all ye who are heavy laden and I will give you rest." These are the words I had wanted to hear for so long, and it seemed that God was on his throne with outstretched hands waiting for me. I went; but what was puzzling was the fact that I could not speak answers to their questions. None of this do I understand to this day; but when the time comes if it be God's will, I will understand.

I was baptized, and for a little while seemed to be at peace with God and with the world and all that was in it. I read my Bible every moment I could, and seemed to understand things that before had no meaning. It all seemed to have a new light and I could not seem to tear myself away from that Holy Book.

It didn't take many visits to the church to know that my belief was not their belief. I will not go into all of that because there are many churches and many beliefs, but there is only one God. I'm sure there will be many in denominations that will have part in the resurrection, — I can only hope that I might be among them. I do feel that unless you are truly in accord with others, that you should not take a part, because in so doing you bring confusion to yourself and others as well. I was getting more and more in confusion so I decided to go it alone with my Bible, and try to work out my own salvation: Maybe God would lead me out of the wilderness.

I read my Bible and I prayed in low places, and occasionally in high places. Many times when I would read something that struck my understanding, that is to say gave me light on the subject, I seemed to receive scraps from the Master's table, and seemed to be in high places. My heart would overflow with pure joy, and although I read alone, I seemed not to be alone but that Jesus was bringing me through.

I had dreams several times of something chasing me through woods, and in most dreams I would find my way unto a people clad in white, with a look of loving and caring, but I never felt good enough to be a part of them. Though I had dreams of that kind, it never occurred to me that it had anything to do with religion, — to me they were just dreams and meant nothing. I felt much depressed because I could not seem to find anyone with the understanding of what the Bible seemed to be telling me. They all had a different view than mine. No one seemed to care or even talk with me about it: I guess I was boring my family and friends, because all I wanted to talk about was the Bible and its teachings. I could not get my mind on anything else.

On this particular day I felt so terribly low, and my depression had almost reached bottom, and my hope was almost gone. I prayed over and over again on bended knees, and when I would arise I would be in trembles. I remember a thought that came to my mind: The devil feared and trembled also; so in my mind I classified myself with the devil, for I seemed to be the blackest sinner ever. I prayed for peace most of the night because I could not sleep, but I must have slept a little while because my husband awoke me at 2 o'clock in the morning to get his breakfast. His job called for early morning services and I always prepared his breakfast before he left. I got him off to work, and after locking the door

went back to bed; but again could not sleep.

Suddenly out of the quietness of the early morning, there came a knock at the door; and I was afraid. I tried to move but could not move any part of my body. It was like I was paralyzed. I could not understand what had happened to me. Somewhere in the back of my mind I knew someone was going to kill me, and that I could do nothing to prevent it. I heard another loud noise and it sounded like they broke through the door. Then quickly, after I could feel the presence of someone near my bed, I thought I was dying, but could not understand because I felt no pain. I lay there a little while quietly, then decided to see if I could move my legs. I moved over to the edge of the bed, then decided I would get up; but when I started to raise up, I was lifted up by some powerful force. I did nothing of myself but was lifted to a sitting position on my bed.

I had a feeling of quiet peace but still couldn't understand that without any effort I was raised up. Then I started to put my feet on the floor and my toes pointed like a ballerina dancer just lightly touched the floor, and bounced me upward, and I began to go slowly around and around into midair. I saw nothing but was so full of joy. My cup ran over, but I kept going upward and around, and each turn I made seemed sweeter than the one before. I thought, Lord this is too much sweetness for a sinner like me. I was as light as a feather, and I seemed to be in a cloud of love, joy, and happiness like I had never known before. I don't know how high I went but finally I thought about my family, and wished they could be with me.

It was then that I found myself back on my bed just as before, but I could move and was not afraid. I just wanted to sing praises to God, and to meditate on what had just happened to me. There are no words that I know of that can express the lightness, the love or joy I felt while I was on my journey. I would love to take that trip again but haven't been able to.

My hopes are that I have been born again, that I was killed in the flesh and buried with Christ. The old waxed away and a new hope given me, for I hope I look for new heavens and new earth; and this is worth more than all the riches and wealth of this world to me. If I am not deceived God has manifested in me the promise that he gave Abraham and his seed. I can only hope this is so, but even a hope is most precious to me. If I understnad what I read in the Bible and what I feel, I hope that I was slain as a sinner and have passed through the old law, and entered into His New Law, and am preserved in Christ Jesus. I am still a sinner, and will be as long as I live in nature, but I hope I know that it is not I that do it but sin within me, and that God has forgiven me, and my sins and iniquities he will remember no more. He will chasten us with his rod because it takes his stripes to heal us, but if he did not chasten us it would prove we are bastards and not sons.

I still have low feelings and sometimes high feelings, but as I understand God's love and the Bible, which is not the Word of God but the letter of the Word, for His Word is the Holy Spirit entered into our hearts: God's Spirit in us. I hope I know that if I am God's child nothing can separate me from Him and his love.

I am no good at quoting scriptures, but only know what is in my heart and mind. My prayers are that I might take that sweet journey again and have all my loved ones with me; and the next time go all the way for our last journey to Home Sweet Home.

In sincerity and hope of eternal life,

Katherine Mathews,
Shreveport, La.

"IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES."

2761 Cochese Cove
Memphis, Tenn. 38118

Dear Elder Wood:

I am enclosing the minutes of the ordination of a very dear brother to the full work of the gospel ministry. Elder Chappel has been a member of the church in Memphis for four years, but has been attending and believing the doctrine for several years.

He lived in Memphis for several years, and we would meet about half way between our offices for lunch and talk of the things that we love and believe. These are seasons that I will remember as long as I live and have a rational mind, it seems. We agreed on the things that we believed as much as anyone, I guess, and seemed to have a special kindred feeling for one another. I always felt that some day he would be ordained, because he has a deep understanding of the scriptures; and this is the opinion of all who have known him and talked with him.

Then he moved to St. Louis, Mo., being transferred by his company, and began attending a small church in Illinois. He began to talk for them, and they requested that we ordain him since his membership is still in the Memphis Church. Everyone knowing him as we did, and each being persuaded in his own mind that it was but the fulfillment of something they had anticipated, the church called for his ordination so that he could serve the church he is attending in Illinois. Elder Wade Chandler, whose obituary was in the *Signs* recently, was the former pastor of this church.

When we see such as this happen before us, we can but say, "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."

Incidently, this church is the one that had no pastor for several years before Elder Chandler was called as their pastor just before he died; but the members would meet, sing songs and have dinner on their regular meeting date for several years. Seeing the faith of these brethren and sisters, and the things that have fallen out to them, strengthens the hope and belief that God is still reigning and watching over his children in this day and age, as in times past.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

(See notice of ordination in the February issue.)

MANY FAITHFUL MEMBERS HAVE PASSED ON

Prattsville, Alabama

Dear Brother Spangler:

I enclose check for the following renewals, including my own . . . Please change my mailing address to Rt. 2, Deatsville, Alabama 36022. You may use the balance of the check to mail the *Signs* to others who may not be able to pay.

I would like to suggest that if you are planning a trip to Florida or other part of the southeast around these times, that you consider visiting us at Elam the second Sunday in March, or our District Meeting (Union) the fifth Sunday in March. Elam was constituted in March, 1830 . . . We would make other appointments in the area if you could be here long enough to fill them. Let me know if there seems to be a possibility you can come this way.

We have lost some of our dearest and most faithful members at Elam since you were here last. I am not enclosing obituaries of these brethren and sisters, but I would like to name them and briefly describe what they meant to the church. The brethren and sisters who have visited in this area will recognize them and know what we mean. If you care to publish all or part of this letter, you may.

Brother Homer P. Folmar departed

this life December 16, 1969, after having been a member of Elam Church for more than seventy-three years. He joined August 8, 1896, and was the oldest member at the time of his death: he had been a member more than half of the life of the church, which was constituted in March of 1830.

Sister Mattie Davison passed away November 25, 1969. She joined the church at Elam July 9, 1905, and was a member of the church more than sixty-four years. Sister Davison's husband, John M. Davison, was a member of Elam from 1905 until his death in 1959. Brother and Sister Davison were just as faithful to visit other associations in this area, as they were their own Conecuh River Association.

Sister Mary Folmar passed away August 25, 1970. She joined the church at Elam July 9, 1927, and had been a member for more than forty-three years. Her husband, J. L. Folmar, joined the church on the same day she did. Brother Folmar was ordained as a deacon of the church in 1928; and predeceased his wife on May 27, 1950. Brother and Sister Folmar lived almost in the church yard at Elam, and many Old Baptists found a welcome in their home.

Brother Milton C. Carter was the church's most recent loss. He and his wife, Mary Alice, joined the church at Elam together on August 8, 1954. Brother Milton was ordained a deacon a short time later. Practically all the ministers from a distance who have visited in these parts, have spent some time in the home of Brother and Sister Carter. Brother Milton died of a heart attack November 16, 1970. His wife and four children survive.

These brothers and sisters admirably fulfilled every purpose that God had for them in this life, and now they are gone to their well earned rests. No one will ever come along to fill their shoes. Our prayer is that God will instruct, guide, guard, and uphold us who remain, and those who follow after us, to the extent that we may fill our own shoes as well as these brethren who have gone on before us.

A brother in faith, I hope,
A. C. Carter, Church Clerk

CORRECTION

Richmond, Va.

Dear Brethren:

By request of the Richmond Primitive Baptist Church, please publish a note of correction in the *Signs*. In the January issue the time is listed in the Church Notices as 10 A. M. for the Sunday morning services. Please change this to 11 A. M. for the benefit of our beloved ministers and brethren who came from afar.

This little church extends a heartfelt welcome to all the believers of like faith, and especially to our ministers who have been given a mind to come and worship with us.

"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." (Romans 10:15)

Elder C. N. Bunn, Pastor
Mrs. Wm. L. Lee, Clerk

THE BLACK RIVER UNION

The next meeting of the *Black River Union* will be held, the Lord willing, at Black River Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in May, 1971.

The church house is located on the east edge of Dunn, N. C. and east side of I-95 Highway.

Our invitation is extended to all who are interested.

C. D. Turner
Rt. 3
Dunn, N. C. 28334

ORIGINAL WHITE OAK UNION

The next session of the *Original White Oak Union* is appointed to be held with Wilmington Church, fifth Saturday and Sunday in May, 1971. The church is located in Wilmington, North Carolina, on Castle Street.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

L. H. Southerland, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the *Staunton River Union Meeting* will convene (D. V.) with Strawberry Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in May, 1971. The meeting house is located on State Road 750 one mile from Wood's Store off Highway 41 north of Danville, Va.

All of our correspondents and lovers of the truth are invited.

Josephine N. Dodd, Clerk

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the *Skewarkey Union* is appointed to be held with the Rose Mary Church. Elder B. D. Handy was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder M. E. Garner, alternate.

The church is located on East 14th Street, Roanoke Rapids, N. C. We cordially invite all to come and worship with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Clerk
Rt. 2
Williamson, N. C. 27892

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the *Contentnea Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, with Red Banks Church, Pitt County, N. C. the fifth Saturday and Sunday in May, 1971.

All lovers of the truth are invited to visit us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

BOOK WANTED

A sister desires to secure a copy of Elder Durand's FRAGMENTS. If you have one you will sell, please write me giving the price.

John D. Wood
P. O. Box 186
Manassas, Va. 22110

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, with White Oak Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in May, 1971.

The Meeting House is located on highway 222 in Saratoga, N. C. Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 203
Stokes, N. C. 27884

Danville, Virginia **May, 1971**

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"As I besought thee to abide at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do."

(Timothy 1:3, 4)

EDITORIAL

"Whatsoever is not of faith is sin."
(Romans 14:23)

Two outstanding tenets of the doctrine of grace is made manifest in this part of scripture. First, it is clear that what we do when not under the dominion of the Spirit that it is sin. This excludes any thought of God being the author of sin. When not in possession of a living faith we sin always. Secondly, it is conclusive proof that all that we do in following the Lord is the result of His Spirit in us. We are as much in the wrong when we lay our sins on God as we are when we take any credit for our righteousness.

John Newton sang,

"Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far
And grace will lead me home."

and the man or woman that sings that without meaning what it says, is singing as much a falsehood as they would to sing that our eternal salvation is in our hands. There is not any escape from this dilemma. If God is not our present salvation (not a part of it, not some of it) we have not come thus far on the merits of grace nor will we get home on its merits. Thanks be unto God that grace saves us now, and that it is the grace of God, and that He is the God of all grace.

If our present salvation is dependent on us, then, by all means, we should trust in ourselves. Do we have any Bible characters trusting in themselves? Who? More than one hundred times the Holy Ghost uses this precious word. Each time that it is used it either tells us to trust in the Lord or gives us examples of what takes place when we trust in an arm of flesh. What a distinctive difference that is made between those that trust in God and that trust in man. Thus saith the Lord, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." In the last forty-five years I have had it confirmed time after time that presenting these vital truths to those that have not been exercised in the truth will not produce anything except gnashing of teeth. If I am of God (I John 4:6), those that are also of God will hear me. I am sure that the justification of the publican did not tenderize the heart of the Pharisee, although the same system of salvation was there that was under consideration in the above quotation, and I am equally sure that my presenting time salvation as being altogether the work of God will not tenderize anybody's heart. To those taught of the Lord I write, even though some of them might be in the same condition that the Galatians were in Gal. 3:1, 4. My feelings are truly set forth in Paul's question to those bewitched brethren. (Gal. 4:16)

Jeremiah truly presented to us the prophetical picture of one that trusted in an arm of flesh, and what the consequences of that trust were (they were cursed), and he truly gives us the prophetical picture of one that trusts in the Lord (he is blessed) and what the results of that blessing are. (Jer. 17:5, 8) In all the lids of the Bible there is not one word said about trusting in ourselves, but it is condemned time after time.

My home in heaven is a gift of God. In no sense of the word do I detract or reflect or minimize His glorious work in that gift. From His eternal design in the unfathomable mind of God to my being carried home to eternal glory, I lift my feeble voice and weak pen to praise His holy name for it all. God

has not changed His mind during time but He has changed dispensations. His declaration of His everlasting love was first revealed to ancient Israel and later spoken to us by His son. (Jer. 31:3; Heb. 1:2; Rom. 9:13) I have to sadly confess the inconstancy of my love, but I joyfully speak of the constancy of His. I would have this love through green pastures and mountain tops, but since He is my Father and knows more than His children, He sheds this love abroad in our hearts in devious manners. Entering the kingdom, as well as reigning in the kingdom, is through suffering and tribulation. This accompanies our entering, as well as our reigning. We never are able to lay aside our belief any more than we are able to lay aside our suffering with Him.

He saves us in time according to His purpose. This is not a compromised purpose; it is not a secondary matter; it is not a makeshift purpose. This purpose is not predicated on our works. It was given according to the riches of His grace; it is revealed the same way. Both the gift and the revelation are according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Eph. 3:11) "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." (Eph. 1:2, 3) If the choice was based on our foreseen merits, then, also, that much and no less, were we blessed in Christ according to our merits. But if the choice was based on the purpose of God; if our sins were imputed to Christ; if our sins were all laid on Him in covenant, then, by all means, logic, scripture or what have you, our welfare in time, and all after time is in Jesus.

Many have thought that ancient Israel represents the whole household of God's people, with the brethren representing the militant church. Speculating as to the pro and con of the type and anti-type we will leave to those that speculate. However, I feel as much that I sent my Saviour into Egypt (darkness) as Joseph's brethren felt that they had sent their brother into Egypt; they sent him to prison and to judgment; they sent him that his feet be hurt. (Psa. 105:17, 18) Why is such a sad thing laid down in the Book of books? Why all the gory in the life of the type and the anti-type? It had to be in their lives; if it had not been in their life, it would be in our eternal abode beyond this life, for, mark my words well, the shedding of blood could not be avoided, even though I have heard men say, in their misguided zeal concerning predestination, that the wicked which slew our Lord did not have to do it.

Someone had to walk this road from Israel down into, and up out of, Egypt. It had to be Joseph or it had to be the brethren. God's holy law had to be kept, and Jesus had to do it, or I had it to do. Somebody had to walk to a jot and to a tittle; it either had to be Jesus or it had to be me. As we are blessed doubly, so, likewise, He had to suffer doubly. Somebody had to walk for us; somebody had to suffer death for us *not walking*. Somebody must walk the straight edge of the law for us; and somebody must have their feet hurt because we did not walk.

God has said, "Then will I sprinkle clean water up on you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." (Ezek. 36:25, 27) Every shade of opinion in our divided ranks will agree that God puts His spirit within us. Every editor and every minister will agree to that much truth. Many of these are precious in the sight of the Lord and believing children, but,

according to what they say, they believe the part of prophecy that they want to believe. If half of prophecy is believed I strongly think that not any more of the New Testament will be believed. The Bible teaches that God puts His Spirit in the children of God, and that this spirit *causes* them to walk in His statutes and judgments and keep them. I would avoid the spirit that tells me that God is the author and approver of sin. But since I am commanded to not believe every spirit, what am I to do with the spirit that tells me that God's spirit does not cause me to walk right. Let me repeat (with kindness and good will) that I would avoid the spirit that tells me that God causes my sin. I do hope, with godly determination, to likewise avoid the spirit that tells me that God does not cause my righteousness.

Hundreds of times the gospel writers speak of the work of God. Not the first time is there a hint of weakness about the work of the Spirit. Talk to me about the sovereignty of God, and at the same breath mention that He stands in jeopardy in regard to our time salvation you at once throw me into confusion. God is not a sovereign if He wants things different than they are. We are indifferent towards the laws of God, but He is not indifferent towards us in obeying them. In the last forty-five years I have gone over the ground of God's sovereignty time after time. Two things keep me from avoiding the mention of them again and again. These two things are the need for showing John and his brethren that Christ *is* Christ, and the fact that people, even those that tell a lovely experience, are continually denying His sovereignty.

If there was one that God desired to be in the elect of God that He could not get in, or if there was one in that number that He did not desire to be there, I have not read of it. I would like to hear from those that have found this out. In the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, I have not read of one that the Father chose that was not in the redemptive work of Christ, nor have I read of one being added to the number chosen. If any of my readers have heard of such monstrosities I would appreciate hearing from them. But what about the work of the Spirit? Is it weak? Is it a failure? What difference is there in the Spirit failing to confirm and His failing to bring to Christ? What difference is there in making sport at humanity because that they have God trying to save eternally and at brethren because they picture God as wanting to save the born again children?

The choice of God was made in eternity. But the salvation of God's people is made in time. God finished His work; Christ finished His work; and I believe with all of my heart that the Holy Spirit is now engaged in confirming those chosen and saved. We are given the Spirit from God. It is given for a specific purpose. What? That we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. (I Cor. 2:12) Will this fail? Will the purpose fail of accomplishment? No, dear brethren, no, not that.

The gifts and callings of God are without repentance. (Rom. 11:29) God gave us the Spirit; it is freely given to us that we might know the things of God. We are taught that all the children of God will know Him (Isa. 54:13), and in the same verse to know what will be the result of that teaching. The teaching to know Him is, I suppose, the first or beginning of God's work. Will it be biblically said that He does not teach all of them? Who will say that? Is not the peace that is to follow also from the Lord? Is it not as sovereignly effective as the teaching to know Him? If so, is not their salvation at the beginning, as well as their peace which is to follow, both alike from the Lord?

God works in His people. Sometimes along the way I find the strangest twisting of good language that I have ever seen. There is not in the Bible an account of God being effective in this but not in that. There is not one

unfinished building in the kingdom of heaven. There is not an account of God determining the cost of a building and then not doing the building. He works effectively the will and the do. Not, readers, that He works *at* it and leaves the outcome to our fleshly nature. He works to will and to do in us. Look at it. He works, so everybody will say, the will, but He works *at* the do. The will is wrought in a sovereign manner, but the do is worked towards, and left for us to work out. What a mix-up. The will to do wrought, but the doing of what the will is bent towards is left unfinished, and left to the weakest being named in the Bible — a poor sinful man and woman. This is salvation by works pure and simple.

Salvation is by grace. John Newton sang it that way. Jonah found it to be that way. Joseph's brethren found it to be that way. Jeremiah found it to be that way. The children of Israel found it to be that way at the sea. They found it to be that way when water gave out. They found it to be that way when food gave out. Jacob found it out in the wilderness. Ruth found it out as she journeyed in a strangers field. Esther found it out before a strange king. Paul found it out first on the Damascus road and had it proven time and again in his eventful life. His salvation was a present salvation or a time salvation. He said, The life that I live (present tense) I live it by the faith of the Son of God, and this is the same faith that enables us to perform that which is acceptable to God. He further tells us that what he was at the time of writing, that it was by the grace of God. (I Cor. 15:10) I rest my case here. I am, also, with Paul, still a sinner (I Tim. 1:15), but what joy it gives me to join with that eminent apostle and declare throughout Christendom that salvation is in the present tense. At the time of this writing I look back through the midst of my weaknesses and temptations and I am not prepared to say that any of my salvation comes about by helping or hindering of this natural mind of mine. I freely feel some delight and satisfaction in trusting in God that raised the dead; that He has saved me even in instilling in me the sentence of death, for had I not had that death sentence instilled in me I would trust in myself. This is such a clear doctrine, such an universal doctrine, such a comforting doctrine, that my poor sinful feeling is, how does anyone sit in judgment against it. Is it because that the sentence of death is not yet clear in us?

This trust being in God, we look to him for our salvation in the past, presently, and for all time to come. (II Cor. 1:9, 10) Paul mentions this saving nearly one hundred times. *That is what he mentions.* It is not a grace that goes part of the way and leaves the balance to us. It is not failing grace, but *it is saving grace.* There is not a grace of conditions by us, but of performances by the Lord of all grace. This is what he petitioned the Lord for in the behalf of all churches; this is what he commended all of them to in the conclusion of his letters. Trusting in God, as I hope that I do, and desiring to be like unto the pattern unto all that believe after his day, I pray, if I pray, for one and all that that grace be applied to you from God, and beseech Him that it be our final blessing here.

But why go over this ground again? You have often been over it ere this; why be so persistent about it? I do not mean to be persistent nor contentious. I am feeling day by day the advancing years and the toll that is being taken of my faculties of body and mind. I desire to say at the approach of the close of my ministry that salvation is of the Lord, and to join with Peter that, "He has begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." The receipt for this inheritance is in your heart

(the new heart, the place where God dwells and works), the inheritance is in heaven, and you are kept ready through faith, and faith is the gift of God, an abundant fruit of His prevailing Spirit; and through it and in it we live by it, thus being in such a saved and kept state that any attempt to claim a salvation that is not by grace is sin.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ATONEMENT

"Did Christ atone for all our sins?

If so, why do we pray to him to forgive our sins?

And why is all our suffering here on account of our sins, if he has atoned for them all?

Why is Christ interceding for us, if a full atonement has been made for us?

Are we mistaken when at the first in our experience we feel that we are condemned sinners?

Did Christ atone for all our sins, or only for those committed before we were regenerated, and after this we atone for them ourselves?

What is meant by the forgiveness of sins?

And what is meant by the intercession of Christ?"

REPLY

The above questions were presented to us by letter some time ago, with the request that we would reply to them at our earliest convenience. They call attention to most solemn and weighty matters pertaining to the religion of Christ, and the hope of the believer. We do not feel at all able to write in reply as the subject demands, but yet this is the theme of all gospel ministry, and if one is called to preach at all, this theme must engage his attention, and still more, if one has been called to a good hope through grace, these questions and their answers have become most important to him, and must be the subject of his most earnest thought. Still further, upon the right conception of these matters must the hope and faith of all such ones rest. These considerations have induced us to present some thoughts upon this matter in this public way, rather than by private letter.

"Did Christ atone for all our sins?"

There can be but one answer to this question; the Bible is clear upon this one thing, if upon anything: "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity." "Himself bare our sins in his own body." This text suggests no limit to the number of them. "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities." "The Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all." "For the transgression of my people was he stricken." "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities." "And he bare the sin of many." "He was put to death for our sins, and raised again for our justification." In the great type of atonement under the ceremonial law once a year, the sins, every sin of all the people of Israel, were confessed upon the scapegoat which was slain, and the one that was sent away into the wilderness, and not one sin remained upon all the people when this was done. So also when the red heifer was slain, every sin was covered in all Israel. From all these Scriptures it is clear that Christ did atone for all the sins of all the true Israel of God. None of the above Scriptures suggest any partial atonement, either as regards the number of sins covered, or the completeness of the covering, and there is no Scriptures that speak of the atonement at all that could be twisted by any argument into the idea presented in the question above. An atonement that did not cover each and all our sins, would be as good as no atonement, seeing that one sin unatoned for would condemn any one of us to everlasting punishment. One transgression of our first

parents plunged not only themselves but all their unborn race in condemnation, guilt and unending woe. If sin then was such an exceeding sinful thing, it is no less now. So that one sin left unatoned for would plunge the guilty into irrevocable destruction from the presence of the Lord. We cannot be too careful or too earnest in insisting upon this; the whole scheme of the gospel hangs upon it; the good hope of the believer, which is through grace, hangs upon it; the very doctrine of salvation by grace hangs upon it. If not saved by grace, through the atonement which is in Christ Jesus, from all sin, then there is no salvation at all except through works of the creature. If by grace, it must be by grace all along the line, and the atonement must cover every sin. If our work, our repentance or our faith must be considered as the ransom price for any sin at all, then these things must be the ransom for all sin. If by grace, it is no more of work, and if by work, then it is no more by grace. The testimony is clear upon this in the word. But the apostle leaves no room for cavil, for he says it is by grace. Therefore the atonement of Christ must cover all sin, if it covers any at all.

The atonement lies at the foundation of all the gospel, yea, it is the very substance of the gospel. If we are right in the view we have of the atonement, we cannot be far wrong in any other principle of the doctrine of grace. If we are wrong in the view which we have of the atonement, we cannot be right in anything that pertains to the gospel. It is therefore all important that we have right views of the atonement; the glory of God is involved in it; the exaltation of the crucified and risen Redeemer is involved in it; the comfort, peace, happiness and security of the believer is involved in it. Except Christ did indeed atone for all our sins, his death was utterly in vain, the wisdom of God was at fault, and there is no certain salvation for any one; nay, it is then certain that no one can be saved. Surely every believing humble heart must shrink from the contemplation of such awful consequences as the above.

"If so, why do we pray to him to forgive our sins?"

It seems to us only necessary to say that if we pray for the forgiveness of sins, it can be only upon the ground of the atonement. It was upon the ground of the atonement under the ceremonial law that the high priest made intercession within the veil for the sins of the people. When he came within the veil, provision was made that he should come there with the blood, as full evidence that the required atonement had been made. It was the same with every prayer made by the priests for the transgressor: all was founded upon the blood of atonement. So when now we come before God as priests unto him, our intercession for not only forgiveness, but for every needed blessing, must be upon the ground of full atonement of Christ, and all our prayers must be in his name, God will not hear them otherwise. And Jesus, our true High Priest in the heavenly places, pleads before the throne for all whose sins he bore, upon the one ground that he has himself died for them, and put away all their sin by the sacrifice of himself. There would be no use to ask for any forgiveness or any other gift had not Jesus died. The law knows no forgiveness. Forgiveness is one of the precious gifts received for the rebellious when Jesus ascended on high and received gifts for men. Were it a fact that we ourselves must make satisfaction for sin, and could we make such satisfaction, then indeed there would be no room for forgiveness, seeing that we had paid all our debt against the law of God, but as we do not and cannot pay this debt, but Jesus does pay it, to us forgiveness comes upon the ground that he has died and risen again, and only upon that ground.

"Why is all our suffering here on account of sin if he has atoned for them all?"

Our sufferings here are not for atonement, seeing that a whole eternity of

suffering could not atone for one sin. In no sense is suffering on account of sin here an atonement for it; then indeed would the atonement of Christ be nullified, and all his work would be shown to be useless. But suffering is often for a trial of faith, and often as chastisement, to correct. David said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word." And again he said, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statues." The sons of an earthly father are chastised, but not to atone for their transgressions. The stripes inflicted upon a child are not payment for wrong which he has done, but for discipline, that he may learn not to transgress, and this is for his salvation and good, not to satisfy any demand of obedience from his father. The father having chastised his child, does not therefore remit the duty of obedience, as though the stripes inflicted were in place of the obedience. So God chastises his children, not to atone for their sins, but to correct and to lead them in the way of peace and blessing.

"Why is Christ interceding for us, if a full atonement has been made for us?"

This we have in substance answered in our reply to the second question, concerning prayer for forgiveness. It is only needful that we repeat that the very ground of the intercession of Christ is his own atonement .He pleads his own work in behalf of his chosen ones. He says in substance, Father, I have died for them. He does not, as the advocate, seek to extenuate their sins, or to make excuses for them. He at once confesses before God all their vileness and foul transgressions, and that they are without excuse. There is not one charge against them that he does not at once confess as being true. He does not plead for mercy upon the ground of the smallness of their guilt, or of extenuating circumstances. He pleads not for small sinners, but for great sinners. One said in former days, "O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great." He pleads for his own because their sins are many and great, and therefore he pleads his own wonderful work upon Calvary. His plea for them is all summed up in the words, I have died, and so his intercession avails always for them. Had he not died, he could not be our intercessor. The atonement is the sole ground of intercession. Instead of the atonement doing away with the need of intercession, it is the only ground upon which any intercession can be made, and such intercession is effectual always.

"Are we mistaken when at the first in our experience we feel that we are condemned sinners?"

We answer positively, No. At the first in experience the law of God is doing its work, the commandment has come to us, as it did to Paul, and sin revives and we die. The law is to us then as a schoolmaster unto Christ. We are then hearing the voice of God in the law, and the law of God, holy, just and good, can but condemn us. When applied to the conscience by the Spirit, at once sin becomes exceeding sinful. The glorious gospel has not yet come in, and the sinner hearing only the law, feels its condemnation. He is not mistaken under the work and sentence of the law; he is condemned and he dies. It is needful that we travel as did Israel, first of all by Sinai, and hear its thunderings filling our souls with fear. This is a needful experience, otherwise we could not understand the gospel of salvation, or rejoice in it. God has thoughts of peace to us in all this experience, but we are not yet prepared to receive the knowledge of this, or to understand in its fullness just what the atonement of Christ means, nor just what infinite mercy, which provides the atonement, means. To gain some conception of these things there must be first a knowledge of our condemnation and need. To appreciate bread we must be hungry. To understand what redemption in Christ means, we must feel the burden of sin and condemnation, and in mercy God leads us into the knowledge of the con-

demnation, that we may come to rejoice in the salvation afterwards, he leads us one step at a time, he shows us one thing at a time.

"Did Christ atone for all our sins, or only for those committed before we were regenerate, and after this we atone for our own sins?"

We do not need to repeat what we have already said in reply to this question: Christ atoned for all sin; all our sins, past, present and to come, were laid upon him; he bore them all away forever, and before God and his judgment bar not one of them shall ever arise to condemn the elect. We do not atone for sin after we believe, any more than for those committed before. If we sin, it is still true that we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus, who is the propitiation for our sins, these present sins which we commit now, as the text just referred to clearly shows. Beside, as said before, if one of the least of our transgressions be not embraced in the atonement of the Lord, we are forever without hope. But as all was embraced in his atonement, when we sin we are privileged to come, asking to be forgiven, and pleading as the justification of our plea, that Jesus has died, and that he has cleansed us from all sin by his one sacrifice.

"What is meant by the forgiveness of sins?"

As the atonement blots out all sin in the sight of God, so forgiveness blots out all sin from the conscience. The atonement regards sin as it is in the sight of God. Forgiveness regards sin as it rests upon our own heart and conscience. There can be no redemption without the atonement from the curse of the law, which says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." So there can be no peace of conscience until there is an assurance of forgiveness applied to the sin-burdened heart and conscience, and this assurance, as said before, comes only through the one fact that Jesus has died, and that full atonement has been made. Forgiveness brings us home to God in our own experience, reconciled, penitent and humbled. First there is conviction of sin, then there is confession of sin, and then God gives to the burdened soul the assurance, "Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee." Literally the word "forgive" in the original Hebrew and Greek means, "to put away," "to let go," and sometimes "to cover." The word "pardon" is from the same Hebrew and Greek words, and means the same things as forgiveness. The thought seems to be this, when assurance of forgiveness comes to a soul, it means that he is shown that his sin is taken away from him, as the scapegoat carried to a land of forgetfulness the sins of Israel, or that it is covered, as a robe covers all the body with all its deformity and uncleanness. Thus the very meaning of the word "forgive" involves the taking away of sin, or the covering it out of sight, and this is the work of the atonement alone.

"What is meant by the intercession of Christ?"

This is also already answered in substance, but we will add that an intercessor, as the word is used in the Scriptures, signifies one who stands between two others, bringing them together. Jesus stands between God and the humble sinner, and in him they are one. Redeemed unto God is an expression in the word that presents the full consummation of all the work of Christ, and through him we look to God and come to him, and through Christ God bestows all answers of prayer, and all spiritual blessings, and final glory upon all the redeemed. Jesus by the Spirit presents to us the love of God, and his glorious salvation provided for us, and he presents before God his loved ones in his own righteousness, and with the single plea for them, "I have died."

(The above was by Elder F. A. Chick, July 1, 1903.)

OBITUARIES

WOODY THOMAS CHAMBERS

Brother Woody Thomas Chambers was born

September 21, 1895, in Person County, N. C., and passed away January 5, 1971. He was married in April, 1919, to Mary Alice Bullock. He is survived by his wife, four sons and two daughters: Clarence B. Chambers, Creedmore, N. C.; Woody T., Jr., Oxford, N. C.; Garland L., Hampton, Va.; John W., Rocky Mount, N. C.; Mrs. Lola C. Russell, Durham, N. C.; and Mrs. Cyrena Howerton, Rougemont, N. C.

Brother Chambers was a World War One veteran. He had been in declining health for sometime, but was blessed to attend the last meeting at his church. He was a firm believer in Salvation by the Grace of God. We will miss Brother Chambers, but feel our loss is his gain.

His funeral was conducted at Gooch Memorial Church by his pastor, Elder Donald Smith, and Elder D. V. Spangler. He was laid to rest in Granville Memorial Park.

May God bless his family and the church he loved so dearly.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this obituary be sent to the family, a copy to the *Signs of the Times*, and a copy placed on our church records.

Approved by the church in conference February 13, 1971.

Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
O. Y. Clayton, Clerk
Annie C. Gregory, Asst. Clerk

SISTER BERTHA MEADOWS

Sister Bertha Meadows was born April 12, 1896, and passed away January 14, 1971. She was the daughter of Henderson and Virginia Philpot Meadows. Her only survivors are nieces and nephews.

Sister Bertha united with Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church August 7, 1965, and was baptized August 8 by Elder Wallis Smith. She was a faithful, loving, humble sister, always filling her seat when able to attend. She was confined in a rest home for sometime, but bore her afflictions well.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor at Eakes Funeral Home, and her body was laid to rest in Community Gardens, Stem, N. C.

THEREFORE, Be it resolved that we, the J. H. Gooch Memorial Church, thank our Lord for the gift of this lovely sister; and pray for grace to bow in humble submission to His holy will; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that a copy of this obituary be sent to her nephew; a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times*; and a copy placed on our church records.

Approved by the church Saturday, February 12, 1971.

Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
O. Y. Clayton, Clerk
Annie C. Gregory, Asst. Clerk

HETTIE HESTER BULLOCK

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write the obituary of my dear beloved Mother, Hettie Hester Bullock, who departed this life January 20, 1971. Mama was born November 24, 1883, making her stay on earth 87 years. She was the daughter of William Simon and Cornelia Brooks Elexson and the widow of the late L. A. Bullock. She is survived by the following: Mrs. Etheleen Watson of Prospect Hill, N. C.; Mrs. Irene Strickland of Oxford, N. C.; Mrs. Nancy Allen of Roxboro, N. C.; Andrew and Lucious Bullock, both of Oxford, N. C. Also surviving are five stepchildren: Mrs. Alice Chambers, Mrs. Anne Jackson, Johnnie Bullock, Sim Bullock all of Stem, N. C. and Norman Bullock of Durham, N. C.; twelve grandchildren and fifteen great grandchildren.

Mama asked for a home with the church at Gooch Memorial October 4, 1925, was received and baptized that afternoon by Elder B. F. McKinney. She was given to love and serve so faithfully as much as her health permitted, being blessed to attend the last meeting before her death. Mama was not known for much speaking, but was the type of person whom to know was to love. She always looked forward to the meeting days with the people and at the place she loved. (Micah 6:8) "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Her daily walk and conversation demonstrated her desire to walk humbly in the footsteps of the Blessed Lord in whom she put her trust. She was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace and lived daily in the hope of some day being numbered with the redeemed of the Lord and to sing His praises forever.

Elders Donald and Wallace Smith conducted Mama's funeral using a portion of Proverbs 31:10-31. "Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies." Elder Donald Smith compared her faith to that of Sarah and her courage to that of Joshua, and I would liken her patience to that of Job.

I feel sure that Mama is with her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (Ps. 116:15) "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be his Holy Name. We desire to bow in humble submission to the will of God, who makes no mistakes and controls all things from the least to the greatest.

Submitted by one who loved her dearly, her

daughter, Nancy B. Allen.

Approved by the church in conference Feb. 13, 1971.

Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
O. Y. Clayton, Clerk
Annie C. Gregory, Asst. Clerk

WILLIAM ECHOLS

William Echols was born in Texas September 5, 1877, and departed this life November 13, 1970, at his home in Chowchilla, Cal., at the age of 93 years. He just fell asleep no more to suffer pain or sorrow. As it is written, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." We thank God that this dear brother is asleep in Jesus. He was almost like a father to me.

His membership was in the Little Flock Old School Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church, Bakersfield, Cal. He joined the Hopewell Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church held in the Jaybuckle School near Reed, Oklahoma, in the year 1912, and was baptized by my father, the late Elder John F. Tipton. He had many friends and brethren who mourn his passing. All that knew him loved him. He was a faithful member and deacon in the church. Through the grace of God he lived according to the commandment received and given by Jesus Christ. "For I have not spoken of myself, but the father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." (John 12:49, 50) "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." (John 15:12)

Brother Echols believed in the true and living God, who foreknew and predetermined all things, declaring the end from the beginning. He loved to hear the preaching of the wills and shalls. It is written, "I will be unto them a God and they shall be unto me a people." Also, "All that the father hath given me shall come unto me." And, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

He is survived by his wife of sixty-five years, Exta Lee (McMinn) Echols, five daughters and two sons: Mrs. Rmead Calmels, San Francisco; Mrs. Blanch Mann, Daly City, Cal.; Mrs. Mary Crowder and Mrs. Ulave McCollister, Madera, Cal.; Mrs. Willie Lee Crader, Chowchilla, Cal.; Albin H. Echols, Fresno, Cal. and Roy S. Echols, South Lake Tahoe, Cal. Surviving also are one sister, Virginia McMinn, South Gate, Cal. and nineteen grandchildren and twelve great grandchildren.

Services were conducted by Elder T. R. Jefferson, assisted by Austin M. Tipton, and burial was in the Arbor Vitae Cemetery, Madera, Cal.

Written by one who dearly loved him.

Austin M. Tipton

NANCY ANNIE GILMORE

Sister Nancy Annie Gilmore was born March 3, 1884, in Union County, Ark. It pleased the Lord to call her home from the trials and sufferings of this life November 17, 1970; making her stay on earth eighty-six years, eight months and fourteen days. She was the daughter of the late Elder Henry Craven, and wife of the late Brother Preston Gilmore, who preceded her in death a few years.

Although she suffered much she bore it with patience and was resigned to the will of our Lord whom she loved. She was given a sweet hope in Christ as her Saviour at an early age, and was baptized into the fellowship of Good Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Union County, Arkansas, at the age of fifteen years, by the late Elder Archie, and was a firm believer in salvation by grace to the end.

She is survived by two sons: Charles P. Gilmore, Jr., Campbell, Calif.; and Quinton R. Gilmore, Monroe, La.; three daughters: Mrs. Cora Williams, West Monroe, La.; Mrs. Ina Newsom, Rayville, La.; and Mrs. Mary Gibson, Bastrop, La.; and by four brothers and five sisters.

Funeral services were conducted November 19th at Good Hope Church where her membership was, by the unworthy writer and pastor, and Elders David Turner and R. W. Rhodes to a host of relatives and friends. Her body was laid to rest beside her husband in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, a token of the love in which she was held, there to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour, to raise these mortal bodies changed and fashioned like unto His own glorious body; when we shall see Him as he is and be like him. This was her hope.

Her children have lost a wonderful mother and Good Hope Church a faithful member. But we believe our loss is her eternal gain. May the Lord comfort all who mourn, and reconcile us to His holy will.

Elder G. W. Jones

ARTHUR M. McDANIEL

My husband, Arthur M. McDaniel was called home January 8, 1971. Please insert in the *Signs of the Times* notice of his passing, as he was a deacon in the Good Hope Predestinarian Baptist Church.

Yours in hope,
Nancye Johnston McDaniel

ALICE McCALL LYNCH

We bow to the will of our heavenly Father in removing from our midst our dear sister, Alice McCall Lynch, who was born to John Peter and Laura Dudley McCall, September 14, 1893 and passed away July 10, 1970.

She was married to Posie Lester Lynch October 13, 1915, and to this union were born six children, three boys and three girls.

It can truly be said, Sister Lynch was a true wife and mother and above all a sainted mother in her church. Sister Lynch is greatly missed by all who knew her. And more by Rocky Mount Church, of which she was a member. She united with Rocky Mount Church June 24, 1927 and was baptized by Elder Randolph Perdue the following fourth Sunday.

Let us who knew her, thank the Lord for having known her for she was so kind and gentle to all that met her. So much could be said, but instead, let us all humbly bow before God and hope to meet her in that sweet rest she longed so to enter.

Following are her survivors, husband, Posie Lester Lynch, sons, Cecil D., Guy T. and Posie Lester Lynch, Jr. all of Rocky Mount, Va. Daughters, Mrs. Wilford Thurman, Mrs. Guy Woody, both of Rocky Mount, Va.; and Mrs. Hughes McBride, Roanoke, Va.; two brothers and one sister.

Funeral services were held at Lynch Funeral Home, Rocky Mount, Va., by the writer before a large congregation of friends and relatives and then laid to rest in the family cemetery near the home to await the coming of her Lord.

Written at the request of her husband by her unworthy pastor.

Cecil E. Turner

LESTER S. VANDYKE

Lester S. VanDyke, son of the late Andrew T. VanDyke, passed away February 13, 1971 at the age of 76. His wife, Hattie Vaughn was a sister to the late Elder Charles W. Vaughn, who was pastor 34 years at Old School Baptist Church in Hopewell, New Jersey. To this union were born one son and three daughters, all of whom live in the Hopewell area. He, too, lived in Hopewell, having only recently moved to a new home in Crestwood Village, Whiting, New Jersey.

His father was a member in the church for many years. While Lester never asked for a home in the church, he was a devoted and faithful friend, serving as trustee on both the church and cemetery Board.

The funeral service was conducted by the pastor Elder Arthur R. Warren in the Old School Baptist Church, and interment was in the Church cemetery adjacent to the Historic Meeting House.

Mary L. Hellings, Church Clerk

JAMES WESTLEY BOWEN

James Westley Bowen, aged 92, of Benton, formerly of Tinsman, Arkansas, departed this life November 26, 1970. He was born October 13, 1887, at Tinsman, and was married to Belle Speer December 25, 1903.

He leaves to mourn their loss, his wife, six daughters and two sons: Mrs. Marvin Erwin, Mrs. Willie Bennett, Mrs. Vila Williams, Mrs. Jessie Johnston, and Mrs. Jean Melton, all of Benton; and Mrs. Annie Lue Dunn of Tinsman; Burnett Bowen of ElDorado, Ark.; Gaylon Bowen of Haskell, Ark. Also a brother, Charlie Bowen and two sisters: Mrs. Mary Douglas and Mrs. Ada Nutt, of Tinsman; fifteen grandchildren, thirty-two great grandchildren, and two great great grandchildren.

Burial was at Watson Cemetery, White Water Baptist Church.

Written by one who loved him, his daughter,

Jessie Johnston

A MAN OF GOD

A man of God from young in life,
A comfort through the storms of strife,
One who fed the flock in need:
Speaking what his God decreed.

Pastor, friend, and neighbor too,
Seeking always God's will to do
With words of calmness and of love:
The peace that comes from up above.

He humbly walked in bonds of Grace,
Willing always the task to face,
Trusting in God to see him through;
And seeking His hand in all he'd do.

He preached of boundless love to man
And how God had a purposed plan:
He trusted in this God to save
His people from cradle to the grave.

Now his earthly race is run;
He will be missed for years to come.
He meant so much to people of God,
As the path of servant he humbly trod.

He is sleeping now in silent peace,
Where Satan's temptations must cease,
And awaits the day when he can rise
To meet the Host of Heaven in the skies.

He will see his Saviour of whom he spoke,
And know the fruits of wearing the yoke:
He will share Christ's glory where angels sing;
This was the man Elder Curry King.

C. B. Davis, Jr.
Roxboro, N. C.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 139 DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1971 NO. 6

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/71
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

REST BEYOND THE SKIES
(Heb. 4:9)

A few more storms, a few more sighs,
And saints shall rest beyond skies
With Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
And with all the heavenly host.

They'll no more feel the stinging smarts
Of the devil's poisonous darts,
By which he'd drive them to despair,
Eternal death with him to share.

They'll be free from all that annoys,
By grace filled with celestial joys,
And clothed with robes of snowy white,
While surrounded with heavenly light.

Here they are burdened with many cares,
And would avoid the devil's snares,
But in heaven no troubles they'll know,
Being far removed from every foe.

How wonderful to contemplate
The joys of the heavenly state,
To view the Saviour with delight,
When the soul from earth takes its flight.
It will soar to the mansions above,
Where all is done away but love;
Faith and hope we'll no longer need,
For we shall see the promised Seed.

See him in resplendency shine,
And know that happiness divine
In the fullness of it up there,
In that celestial city so fair.

How great it must be to be there,
With no more grief and woe to bear,
To reign with Christ for evermore,
The precious Saviour we adore.

C. W. Vass
409 N. Y. Avenue
Elizabeth City, N. C.

"CANNOT DENY A LOVE FOR THEM"

2768 Clifton Ave., N. W.
Roanoke, Va. 24017

Signs of the Times,
Dear kindred in the Lord:

May I thus address this periodical which has given testimony of people who speak of the Lord's dealings with them, feeling that I am not worthy to address them, but cannot deny a love toward them. The Scriptures speak of an unfeigned love and unfeigned faith, and I feel to see this in the precious Old Baptists that receive the Beloved Son in whom the Father is well pleased.

I view these as knowing a new song — the Redeemed that feel the song of Redemption, with no guile to be found in their mouths. They look to the Lamb standing on Mt. Zion; they, as in 1st Peter 2:21, look to Him. "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." The testimony is that there were some that followed the Lamb whithersoever he went. These evidences bloom as a beautiful rose along the rough pathway of weary travelers: They rest only in Him that left the example. They desire to be good soldiers that follow a dear Captain. These people are ever a target for malicious arrows of such as delight to wound. The Captain knows the way and has, is, and will lead the way. "To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved."

I do not see any other acceptance than through the Son, and I cling to this precious hope that came into my

very heart, because there is none other than the Lamb of God to look to. "Beloved" was a word that fastened deep deeply in my heart and mind about forty-four years ago. About forty-eight years ago, one cold, icy winter day as I stood looking at the beauty of nature: One particular tree became so centered in my view that I lost sight of all else. Suddenly it became something alive, and seemed to move from the field to where I stood. I felt a presence that was so holy and pure, and the beauty, majesty and powerfulness of its demands seemed to consume me. I fled from the spot, for I could not stand before it because I was too polluted. As much as I wanted to be near it, I was cut off by its purity and demands of purity.

It became such a burden to me that I found myself often looking to the end of days from time to time, as the sun set in the western sky, as being my last — and forever gone: I could never be near this that I wanted. Then one day while I tried to care for my little sister, brother and niece, I looked again to the setting sun, and an awful, desperate feeling came over me: "Lord, how poor I am." The word "Beloved" came so suddenly with unexplained joy, and I felt loved, and to love that appearing. I have carried this along these past forty-four years without fully understanding. Do I understand even now? Yet recently "accepted in the Beloved" came so forcibly to mind that I looked up the words; and rest hovered around me several days. I cannot retain this rest, but I am glad it does appear to me from time to time.

There is testimony that in days of old there were a people who searched the Scriptures daily to see whether certain things were so. While we cannot search out this "Life," Jesus draws us in such a manner that causes a searching that is a daily search, — "Give us this day our daily bread."

I hope the year 1971 will be one that brings many evidences to His people everywhere of His gracious care and keeping to them. We desire to see the steps of Him that had no malice, no guile, no reviling, but gave himself for us; by whose stripes we are healed.

The Great Shepherd leadeth.

Humbly,
Catherine A. Houchins

"*SIGNS* STILL PRECIOUS"

Box 294
Salida, Calif. 95368

Dear Elder Spangler:

My time is due to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. I love to read all articles — I feel so at ease while reading them. I have been acquainted with the *Signs* since in my teens, and it is as precious now as it was then: so full of good food to read.

We are having precious meetings here: they overcome me many times, just like a real beautiful garden of beautiful flowers. I sometimes wonder if I have a right to be with them; yet I couldn't live without them. It is more precious than gold to be with them and hear the word of God proclaimed in its fullness. God is the Word and reigns supreme. He is our Master Pilot and needs no help. "No help in self I find, though long I sought it well." Oh, dear Lord, how great thou art!

I feel so unworthy of a seat in the meetings, yet I don't want to miss any. They fill my hungry heart and soul, which the tongue can never taste, yet heart and soul relish. Sometimes I feel to have no "New Life" in me, and it grieves me. Several years ago I felt there was nothing for me: I didn't deserve it, yet it was precious to feel His love. At twenty years old I was given a vision; I was in a heavy burden. When teaching school, I walked among some beautiful trees to my boarding place. I longed to be a tree for they look so peaceful, but it seemed there was no peace for me. I went to my room, and looked at the full moon shining on the trees — all so calm and

peaceful. I was anything but calm, my burden being so heavy. Finally I went into a troubled slumber: I was in total darkness, lost and no way to go; until all at once I saw in a vision, a small place all fenced in, and a beautiful white ray of light shown from above inside the fence. I made my way to it and looked over the fence, — I was still in the darkness where I was, and saw some grain just through the ground, which was so even and pretty. As I looked on it the light became brighter, and a gentle rain in tiny streams came down on the grain; and it sprang up in "New Life"; and the vision was gone — also my burden was gone, I thought, forever; but, alas, it came back. Yet I was free of it for a little while. If I ever received "New Life" it was in that vision, and it stays with me all these years.

I became a member at twenty-two years of age when I for a moment forgot myself. I felt I had deceived the best people on earth, but the tie does bind and cannot be severed, and I do not want it to be severed. The meetings are as a beautiful garden, a garden walled around, chosen and made peculiar ground. We have enjoyed a good meeting at Ceres the fifth Sunday. Four elders were there and eleven deacons, who assisted in the ordination of a deacon. I feel the glory of God was upon us all. Many were there from miles away. We were having low, thick fog but all arrived safely. "God is good."

May God bless you editors in all your efforts to publish the good paper.

A little one in Him I hope,
Mrs. Mabel Lindsey

LEFT BY ONE "GONE HOME"

Many years ago an aged minister gave me the following, saying it had been found on the desk of another minister above 90 years of age, who had just "gone home." One time when Elder Spangler was in my home, he came across it in my Bible and stated he would like to see it published in the *Signs*:

"GETTING READY TO MOVE"

"The owner of the tenement which I have occupied for many years has given me notice that he will furnish but little, or nothing more for repairs and that I should expect to move at any time.

At first, this was not a very welcome notice. The surroundings here are, in many respects, very pleasant and were it not for the evidence of decay, I might consider the old house good enough. But even a light wind causes it to tremble and totter, and all the braces are not sufficient to make it secure, so I am getting ready to move.

It might seem strange to many how quickly one's interest is transferred from the old to the prospective home. For some time I have been avidly gathering all the information I could of the new home and the description of its inhabitants. One who visited it has returned and from him I learn that it is beautiful beyond description. Language breaks down when attempting to tell of what he saw and heard while there, even stating it was unlawful for him to utter them. He says that in order for him to make an investment there, he has suffered the loss of all things he loved here and even rejoices in what so many others call sacrifice and suffering. Another, whose great love for me has been proven by the greatest possible test (sacrificial death), is now there. He has sent me some clusters of the most delicious fruits and after tasting them, all other foods taste insipid.

Two or three times, I have been down by the border of the great river which forms the boundary of that beautiful country and have wished myself to be among the company who were singing praises to the King on the other side. Many of my friends and dear ones are now there. Before leaving here, they spoke of my coming later and I have seen the heavenly smile on their faces

as they passed out of sight.

Sometimes I am asked to make some new investment here, but in every case my answer is, 'I am getting ready to move'." — End.

It is now almost thirty-five years since the above was given to me; I loved it then, I have read it over and over again, and I have loved it more and more as the years have passed; and now, I want to add:

"Going home, going home, I'm just going home;
Quiet like, some still day, I'm just going home."

Mildred V. Dykes
1114 Mt. Hermon Road
Salisbury, Maryland

NOTE OF APPRECIATION

I desire to acknowledge with deep appreciation, the many letters, telephone calls, visits and the expression of Sister Allen in the *Signs,* received concerning my article in the December issue on the 23rd Psalm. Whatever of comfort anyone received, let us all remember that I only put it on paper — the Lord dictated it, I hope.

Mildred V. Dykes

ENJOYS THE *SIGNS*

62 Elm Street
Mill Creek Tr. Park
Wilmington, Delaware 19808

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I see I have let my renewal run past due a bit, therefore I must take care of that because I do not want to place any other burden on the good Editors than those which you already have, neither do I want to be without the good articles contained therein. Many times one article alone is worth the price of a year's subscription, and I hope to be able to have access to your good paper so long as I live in this wicked world of turmoil, sorrow and heartaches, (and especially) so many "Winds of FALSE DOCTRINE." But by the Grace of God I can say with the Apostle Paul, "NONE of these things move me."

I am sending my check in the amount of $10.00, seven of which is for two years' renewal and the remainder to be used as you see fit. Perhaps I can help to get the good paper to some deserving soul, who is not financially able to procure it for himself or herself. Many of the aged who love sound doctrine are not in a position financially to afford it, so if I can help to cheer some old soldier of the cross on his or her journey down the rugged pathway of life by helping to get the *Signs* to them, the glory shall be His.

May God bless our good Editors who are so faithful to their tasks. And may God see fit, after they have passed off the stage of action, to give us others who will stand on the walls of Zion and sound the alarm: that *The Signs of the Times* may continue many years to come in the promulgation of "The Faith which was ONCE delivered to the Saints." And let us pray God that He will send us the "Latter Rain," because we certainly have had a long drouth.

In hope,
Roy S. Thomas

WRITES HER EXPERIENCE

Box 183
Stockdale, Texas 78160

Dear Editors of the *Signs,*
All Writers and Readers:

It has been some time since I have tried to write you, but I have been blessed to read the *Signs* every month. Of late I have been reading the old copies that I have been saving for twenty years or more.

I have never written my experience for publication before. At first I was eager to tell it, but then I found a few dear ones who seemed to feel badly because they felt they did not have much

to tell, so I hesitated on that account. However I always loved to read the experiences of others, so am made willing to share with my dear brethren what has been given me.

I am so thankful for being allowed to live near a church of this faith and order, and for letting me read our papers, and for the happy privilege of associating with the Lord's people and worshipping with them. While my husband was not a member, he was a believer, and we spent many happy hours singing the songs of Zion and talking of the things we both loved so much.

I will be eighty-four years of age on April 6, 1971, and have many things to be thankful for. One thing I must mention: Mt. Olive Church has allowed me to act as her Clerk for nearly fifty years. I feel this is an honor, not as the world honors, but something I could do for the church.

I am renewing my subscription for two years. Farewell, and may our dear Lord bless every one who calls upon his name.

Lela Culpepper

EXPERIENCE OF SISTER CULPEPPER

Dear Household of Faith:

I was born April 6, 1887 of W. L. and Mattie Dykes Hawk near San Marcos, Texas. My parents and grandparents, save one, were Old School Baptists. This did not make me better than others, but I grew up with a natural respect for them, and loved to hear them talk on scriptures from my earliest recollection.

When about grown I began to find fault with them because they were so few and mostly older people, even arguing with my mother and told her once that the Bible might be just a book of fiction like some books I had been reading. How this sin has lingered in my memory and hurt me all the years of my life.

Soon after this I went to live with my uncle and aunt, Elder E. B. Ault's parents. Elder Ault was under conviction then and talked of his trials, etc., quite a bit. Then on the second Sunday in October Elder McAdams came to visit the church in Martindale. I can still see and hear him in memory as he arose in the stand that morning. "The Lord has all power in heaven and earth." These are the words he quoted. I had heard them before, but they had never impressed me so.

At the close of the conference my mother and father went forward to put their letters into the church: they had moved from Mt. Olive in Lavaca County. When they reached the preacher, it seemed the whole back part of the church moved back with me in it, leaving space between them and me. I felt separated from all heavenly things from then on. That night I didn't sleep much, but when I did, I dreamed. Once the devil was after me. I would run and run, and everywhere I went he was right behind me. In the dream I tried to get under the house, and he was there; on top of the house, and there he was beside me. I tried to hit him with an iron rod, and it would just bend before it hit him.

This lost and condemned feeling stayed with me from the second Sunday in October until February 11th. It went to school with me and everywhere: I could not hide from it or get rid of it in any way.

At last I dreamed that I heard a voice say, "Your sins are forgiven." However this brought no relief, except for me to wish it were true, until afternoon when I went to the attic room where we went to read the Bible and *Signs*. Immediately before my eyes were these words, "I slept and dreamed. I awoke for the Lord had sustained me." At once the burden was gone and the most beautiful light came down through the little skylight in the roof, — it seemed to come from Heaven straight into my heart. It was a time for rejoicing: even the birds in the trees played in the rain and acted happy. Later I found this scripture in the 3rd Psalm: "I

slept and dreamed," etc.

All this was followed by a desire to be baptized in the San Marcos River, whose waters looked so good to me. However I had the mistaken idea that I must wait as long as possible. Then circumstances kept me from the meetings until I felt guilty of disobedience, and began to fear that some of my family would be taken from me, to make me willing to obey my Lord who had been so good to me. Finally the opportunity came and I went before the Bethlehem Church at Martindale, Texas, and was received. I was baptized by Elder J. B. Bowden three weeks later. This was an awful long three weeks to me; but such a happy ending. It was April and a wet Norther blew up that morning, which made me feel like it was a sign I had no business in the church and should not be baptized, but it cleared off and by afternoon was warm and sunshiny.

The memory of that day, the dear ones gathered around the water, and dear old Brother Bowden is still fresh and precious to me. I am so thankful that I was brought into the church when I was young and did not have to live with the guilty feeling of disobedience I had every time I went to meeting and left without going before the church. Let me just speak a word to all who are waiting to become fit to unite with the church. Do not wait for fitness: you will always feel more unfit and be farther from it. There is much love and fellowship in the church.

Love to all the household of faith.

Lela Culpepper

MATTHEW 22:14

"Many are called but few are chosen."

Jesus spoke to many by parables. "For the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching *us* (that is the many members of Christ, the Church,) that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world . . ." (Titus 2:11, 12). I believe that God's salvation has appeared to all men, but not in the Spirit of Grace, but is directed only to the generation of Jesus Christ — those that are in Christ Jesus and chosen of the Father before the world began.

According to the Scriptures there are many called but only of the gods of this world, which are many; and further, too, by the traditions of men. "For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets and shall shew great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." (Matthew 24:24) "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." (Colossians 2:8)

The God of heaven is a holy God, and certainly he has called his people with an holy calling at the appointed time, when it has, or will, please Him to manifest his great love to them. A man may call his flock or sheep even when they are quite a distance away, and they that hear know the voice of their master, and will begin their journey home. This is the experience of the Lord's little children, the called of the Lord; the ones to whom Jesus spoke, "Come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." This is just one of the sweet promises that has brought God's little ones to rest in that blessed hope of eternal life. But those that did not really hear the call, began to move, for they were being left behind, only with a mind to go and feast on that natural food. So when they arrive at the feeding place, there is a man at the barn to purchase a few sheep. He chooses the best out of all, for the price is good and precious, but leaves the ugly and undernourished. These are the ones it has not pleased the heavenly Master to raise up and nourish with the sincere milk of the word. "Many are called but few are chosen."

"But ye are a chosen generation, a

royal priesthood, and holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." (1 Peter 2:0) ". . . like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world. The angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the just." (Matthew 13:47-49) Remember how Jesus fed the multitude with five loaves and two fishes, and his disciples gathered up the fragments which were twelve baskets; and after all were filled, how that He departed from them all. And afterward many began to seek him, and when they had found him, he said unto them, you seek me not because you saw the miracles, but because you did eat of the loaves and were filled. (John 6:26) These were typical of the multitude of the world today, following for the natural food, pride and idolatry. Having a form of godliness, but denying the power of God. From such turn away. (2 Timothy 3:5) All these things which are not of God shall perish with the world.

I believe John was baptizing true believers, but when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." (Matthew 3:7, 8) I do not see that John baptized the vipers. My brethren, these generation of vipers were some more of the many called, but not by the spirit of grace; else they would have come bringing the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, and faith.

How great, my brethren, to have that blessed hope of eternal life: a precious hope that Almighty God has laid up in heaven for you from the foundation of the world! We trust through this hope that we have been given a spiritual ear to hear the voice of the Son of God; though we were dead as Saul of Tarsus was, when it pleased God to shine within him that spiritual light, which made him cry out, Who art thou Lord? (One of the few chosen) "The hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live."

Written by a very weak brother, but hope when I am weak, I am strong.

In bonds of sweet fellowship,
Elder C. D. Turner
Rt. 3
Dunn, N. C. 28334

THE DEALINGS OF GOD WITH HIS PEOPLE

Rt. 7, Box 287
Dothan, Ala 36301

Dear Editors of the *Signs:*

I have neglected my renewal to our Grand Old Paper until now so am enclosing renewal for two years.

I shall try in my weak way to express a few thoughts concerning the dealings of God with his people. I recall that when John the Baptist was baptizing in the River Jordan, and many of the Pharisees and Sadducees came to his baptism, he said unto them, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire, whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge

his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Matthew 3:7-12)

The fire that John refers to, is the wrath of God which burns up or consumes all self-righteousness. His saying that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham, manifests the sovereignty of God and the helplessness of the individual.

We read in Isaiah, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counselor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge and showed to him the way of understanding." (Isa. 40:13, 14)

"He sayeth to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." (Romans 9:15, 16)

I am so encumbered with doubts that I am made to know that if it were not for the mercies of God, I would have long since been banished from His presence. All our afflictions and our disappointments are for, or redown to the glory of God. Paul says in the 18th chapter of Romans, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren."

He goes on to say that whom he predestinated, he called, justified and glorified; and that he had spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, should with him also freely give us all things?

He gives us grace. He gives us mercy instead of justice. He gives us forbearance: in fact all our blessings come from his bountiful hand. He gives us hope, and is the author and finisher of our faith. He makes us to know and trust him whom to know is life eternal. He is everything to his beloved. In him all fullness dwells.

If I could (as the arminian says) just put my trust in him and keep it there, it seems I would be more reconciled; but doubts and fears come into my mind and, for the time, crowd out all thoughts of a spiritual nature.

With best wishes to you editors and the household of faith everywhere, I will bring these rambling thoughts to an end.

Sincerely,
Elder J. A. Tew

"GO YE INTO ALL THE WORLD"

"And he said unto them, go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15)

These words were directed from Jesus to the eleven apostles. Notice that this commission or command was given after Jesus had risen from the grave. (Judas had already hanged himself.)

We have a prayer in our heart that God will bless us to rightly divide the word of truth. As the Lord enables us, let us first consider the setting. This commission was different from the first commission that Jesus had given the apostles.

The first commission was limited to the Jews in the flesh. "These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, *Go not into the way of the Gentiles,* and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But *go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."* (Matthew 10:5-6) We may wonder, why did Jesus tell them not to go into the way of the Gentiles? First, let us notice that Jesus was born under the law. He said that he had come not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it.

Under the law, only the Jews enjoyed the ordinances, ceremonies, etc. "Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and

the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever." (Romans 9:4-5) The promises under the *law* did not embrace the Gentiles. The only exception we know of is any who desired to be adopted among the Jews. Notice Exodus 12:48-49. The Gentile or stranger would be under the law as the Jews and he would be circumcised, and then he would be as one that was born in the land. (Notice the 48th verse and you will see that this is adoption.) The Children of Israel in all their generations were commanded to observe the passover. The expression, "No stranger shall eat thereof" has reference to the Gentiles. (See Exodus 12:42-43.)

"And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually." (Exodus 28:29) Notice that Aaron, the first high priest under the law, was commanded to only bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart. The Gentiles were shut out! This is a type of Jesus making intercession for Spiritual Israel, which is composed of both Jews and Gentiles. Verses 15 thru 28 gives the description of the breastplate. We call your attention to the 21st verse which states that the "stones shall be with the names of the Children of Israel, twelve, according to their names —"

To sum it up, we can see that the priests under the law did not minister to the Gentiles. For example, notice this command: "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, speak unto the Children of Israel, saying —" (Leviticus 4:1-2) If you read on, you will see that this is describing the procedure for the sin offering. The expression "speak unto the Children of Israel" is in Leviticus 1:1. In Leviticus 9:3 we read, "And unto the Children of Israel thou shall speak, saying, take ye a kid of the goats for a sin-offering; and a calf and a lamb, both of the first year, without blemish, for a burnt-offering."

The address to the Children of Israel reminds us of the Epistles in the New Testament. How about Ephesians 1:1 for an example: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus." This Epistle of Paul was not to the world in general, but it is directed to the church at Ephesus and also embraces God's people in this day and time. Why? Because Paul stated that this Epistle was also written to the "faithful in Christ Jesus."

Also, the Gentiles were classified as heathen by the Jews. "And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship: that *we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.* (Gal. 2:9) We can see that the primary mission of Paul was to preach to the Gentiles. Remember, the circumcision refers to the Jews. (see Rom. 4:9, Gal. 2:7, Eph. 2:11)

The first commission, which was limited to the natural Jews, was under the law. Remember that all the ceremonies under the law was limited to natural Israel.

The second commission ("Go ye into all the world") embraces both Jews and Gentiles. The apostles were commanded to go and preach, and God would direct the preached word to the hearts of his people.

On the day of Pentecost, the Apostles were filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. (Acts 2:4) Many were amazed at this, but some said the men were full of new wine. Now Peter was filled with the Holy Ghost when he preached, and God prepared the hearts of those to receive the preaching, and they were pricked in their heart. Now, all that heard Peter's preaching were not pricked in their hearts. Some that hear the

preached word in this day and time do not get anything out of the preaching because their hearts have not been prepared to receive it. "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." (Proverbs 16:1)

At this point we must be careful, and trust that God will enable us to enter into these deep treasures. Now, let us ask ourselves this question: Does this second commission only embrace Spiritual Israel? "Go ye into all the world." What world does this have reference to?

Let us examine John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." We believe that this Scripture has reference to God's people. One definition of world is: "A class of persons regarded as a body and distinguished by some characteristic." John 3:16 certainly cannot have reference to the universal world, because there is a people that God does not love, "— Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." (Romans 9:13)

"I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." (John 17:9) The word *world* in this Scripture and the word *world* in John 3:16 cannot mean the same. Why? Do you not believe that Jesus would pray for a people that he loves? Therefore, the *world* in John 17:9 means the universal world. Jesus only prays for his people, and we do not read in the Scriptures that Jesus prays or makes intercession for all of mankind. "And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is in the mind of the spirit, because he maketh *intercession for the saints* according to the will of God." (Romans 8:27)

To sum it up, the *world* in John 3:16 means God's people, and the *world* in John 17:9 means all of mankind.

"Go ye into all the world." If this only means God's people, how were the Apostles to know who were sheep and who were goats? Man looks on the outward appearance, but it is God that looks on the heart. (see 1 Samuel 16:7) If the *world* here only means the "sheep world," why did Jesus say, "he that believeth not shall be damned." Do not we believe that all of God's people shall be saved and not one of them shall be damned? What about the parable of the sower? (Matt. 13:2-23) Some seed fell by the wayside, some in stony places, some among thorns, and the word did not bear fruit in these places. Yet, it did bear fruit in the good ground, and we believe it was prepared by God. (see Proverbs 16:1)

The apostles were commanded (We believe this also embraces the ministers of God in this age.) to preach where God has impressed them to go — and not to limit themselves to the Jews, but to go into all the world, which means both Jews and Gentiles. It is God that gives the increase. "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase." (1 Cor. 3:6)

"Go ye into all the world." We may think of it this way: Beforehand, the Gentiles were shut out, but now the door is open. "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." (Acts 13:46)

As the Lord enables us, let us put the pieces together: The law was given to natural Israel, and Jesus came to fulfill that law. (see Matt. 5:17) "He went unto his own, and his own received him not." (John 1:11) The priests under the Levitical priesthood only offered sacrifices for the children of Israel. The priest bore upon his breastplate the names of the Children of Israel. Jesus, our high priest, bore the sins of his people upon his shoulders. He offered himself as a sacrifice for his people, both Jews and Gentiles. His blood has broken down the middle wall of partition between the Jews and the Gentiles. (Eph. 2:14)

The command that Jesus gave: "Go ye unto all the world," implied that the Gospel was to be preached both to the Jews and the Gentiles. The Gentiles were no longer shut out. The new covenant embraced God's people among both Jews and Gentiles.

God sent Peter to preach to some Gentiles in the house of Cornelius. (read Acts 10:1-48) We will quote verses 44-47: "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word, And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received Holy Ghost as well as we?" We understand this to be the first sermon that was preached to the Gentiles. Notice that the Jews had first received the Holy Ghost. (2nd chap. of Acts) The 45th verse proves that some Jews went with Peter to the house of Cornelius. These Jews were astonished that the Holy Ghost was poured out upon the Gentiles.

This is a broad subject, and we have tried to be brief. We ask the reader to carefully study the Scriptures and see if my views meet the test of the Scriptures.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

PRESERVATION AND PERSEVERANCE

"Preserved in Jesus Christ and called." (Jude 1:1)

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." (Eph. 6:18)

Elder F. P. Branscome, very dear Brother: I wish to make some comments on the two scriptures quoted above. When was the beginning of being preserved? We can not tell. The scriptures says, Our names "were written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Rev. 13:8)

Perseverance belongs to this life, and is a manifestation of the faith that is in the children of God. The saints will continue to persevere until the dissolution of their mortal bodies.

But being preserved in Jesus Christ does not only reach back before the world was, but continues to the end of our pilgrimage, and is the foundation of all our persevering. It is said, "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Peter 1:5) This preservation and keeping are closely joined together; and this is the reason the "Old Ship of Zion" has never been found aground on some dreadful sandbar, but is yet afloat above all the corruptions of this life that we are incident to, and will, ere long, land the last one of her passengers into the everlasting port of eternal peace. Then all of our pressing "toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," will be ended; and then our armour will be laid aside. But we are now "Soldiers of the Cross" and must endure the hardships of war.

What makes faithful soldiers? It is the love they have for their country, or the cause for which they fight. I saw this proven more than forty years ago. So, likewise, if we have love in our hearts for the cause of Christ, we will be good soldiers of Jesus. The love of God in the heart is a living principle and causes such to persevere; and, without this love, all of our zeal will be as sounding brass, or as a tinkling cymbal. So salvation is of the Lord, from first to last, and all the practical godliness that we manifest is a testimony that we are God's children; and it also glorifies God, which is one of the great causes why the church is preserved here on earth: for it is said, "Even every one that is called by my name: for I have

created him for my glory." Again, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

It is a very pleasant thing to be clothed upon with the obedience of Christ. When this is the case we cheerfully wait upon the Lord, and sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light: and this is one of the reasons why we love to go to our meetings. Often when we meet together, our strength is renewed in the Lord; and, then, what we find for our hands to do we do with our might, even "looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." So we endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus.

Paul not only admonished the brethren to pray for one another, but also to pray for him, that he might speak as he ought to speak. It is a great comfort to the church when preachers are blessed with the Spirit of the Lord in preaching; and without the Spirit, though our words may be ever-so-sound, it will have but little weight. When the gospel is preached, it is in much assurance of the Holy Ghost, and with power. Paul said, "For I neither received it of man, and neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." God's ministers are taught by the same power, even to the present time, and will continue to be taught in the same way as long as time shall last.

Paul was an able minister of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. There is a savor of life in the gospel, but a savor of death in the law. By the law is the knowledge of sin. Also, by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified. But justification comes by the law of faith; and this embraces the Gentiles as well as the Jews: for it is said, "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." This "all Israel" is the number that John saw, while on the Isle of Patmos, dressed in white robes down to their feet.

Dear Brother Branscome, may you and I be in that number; for, if so, when we leave time our sorrows will forever flee away.

Yours in hope,
Asa D. Shortt

(The above appeared in *The Message of Truth* of February, 1906, and re-published by request.)

ENJOYS THE COMMUNICATIONS OF THE BRETHREN

33 Hillcrest Ave., N. E.
Roanoke, Va. 24012

Dear Editing Brethren:

Oh how glad I am that God has spared the *Signs of the Times* to His praise, as has been said many, many times by those who read it. It is so much comfort to me for it contains the communications of the saints.

Among those to whom I have loaned my copies are Mr. and Mrs. Herbert C. Dooley of Roanoke, Va., and am sending $4.00 for their yearly subscription.

Thanks be to our merciful Lord for all your efforts who write for the *Signs*, and for the publishing of it, and for the Editorial writings.

With Christian love, I hope,
Mamie Rose D. Ferguson

PAPERS FULL OF TRUTH

Carbon Hill, Ala.

Dear Editors:

We are late in renewing our subscription for the *Signs*. We love the *Signs of the Times* and have been taking it for many years: my father took it as

far back as I can remember. These papers are full of truth and are so needful in these troublesome times in which we are living.

We are both in our seventies, and our health is failing, but we hope to be thankful for these good papers to read. We get much comfort from them and feel to be wonderfully blessed for having the editors to write for us.

May the blessed Lord give you health and strength to continue on. These truths are food for our souls in this world full of sin.

In love we hope to all of you,
Mr. and Mrs. James C. Scott

OUR FATHER'S WILL

1231 Pecan
Channelview, Texas 77530

It is so wide we can't get around it. It is so high we can't climb over it. It reaches beneath the bottomless pit. Where does it leave us poor sinners? We are in this will.

This will demanded justice. Justice was paid by our Lord Jesus Christ. This is a will of mercy, love and peace. God is the giver of every good and perfect gift. This is a will of all power in Heaven and on earth. This will in the past has been perfectly fulfilled. This will is being fulfilled now and shall be fulfilled as long as time lasts on earth. This will shall reach into Eternity. This is a perfect will. It cannot be changed. It cannot be broken. It is so powerful that man can't turn it. It is so gentle and so designed that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose. This will is hid from the wise and prudent and revealed in part to babes. All events, times and places are in this will.

God who rules the times and seasons,
Doubtless for the best of reasons,
Has been pleased to visit Zion
With afflictions sore and trying.
When, O when, will Christ the Savior
Come, His little flock to favor?
When, O when!

Earl W. Hall

LETTERS TO ELDER AND SISTER HUDSON

Rt. 1
Yanceyville, N. C. 27379

Dear Brother and Sister Hudson,

. . . Leona and I and the children were real glad to see you again this spring and especially glad to have you visit in our home again along with Elder and Sister King. In your letter you said something about enjoying the visit with us and also enjoyed the walk across the field on our farm. I feel like the enjoyment that you had while walking in the fields was spent in fellowship with the Spirit. The reason is I have walked many times in the fields that you were speaking of and, if not deceived, I hope in sweet fellowship with the Spirit of the Lord and Savior. There is nothing sweeter.

You also wrote about receiving a strong impression on this last trip that our doctrine is the doctrine of Jesus Christ; That it is the doctrine that the Apostles stood for even in the face of persecution and opposition. The people that stand for the doctrine today certainly face persecution from the world . . .

Brotherly love,
D. O. Chandler, Jr.

Rt. 1
Yanceyville, N. C. 27379

Dear Brother and Sister Hudson:

. . . Each year about this time I prune the few apple trees that we have in our yard. While doing this Monday my thoughts were something like this: How that our keeper has to prune us; in other words, hew us down to keep us from getting too big and boastful.

For the big, boastful looking tree does not always have the best fruit. This pruning is something that has to be done over and over again. I feel like I am not getting my feeling and thought down on paper as sweet as it was to me. After looking back over what I have already written I noticed that I was calling myself one of His by saying our keeper has to prune us.

I must say that I have a precious hope that I am one of his children. I do know that I have to be pruned to keep me down. So after the pruning was done the brush was hauled away to be destroyed. I think of how it seems to hurt when being cut or pruned, but it is for the good of the tree. Thereby in the same way it being good for earthly man. We also have a grape vine that has to be done in the same way. My thoughts were on the Scripture where Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." The branches are of no value without a vine. In fact, without the vine, there is no branch. I know there is a lot here that I cannot bring out in writing. I hope that you can get a little of the feeling that I did from this.

Also after this pruning, then the trees need food to heal and to bear fruit. This being done all by the Husband of the land, or representing the free Grace of God to his people, gives the spiritual food to nourish them back after the pruning. I hope this hasn't been dull and boring to you. I have been tending these few trees and the vine for several years now. Each year my thoughts are in the same manner. This being the first time that I have ever tried to relay my thoughts to anyone else on this.

Brotherly love,
D. O. Chandler, Jr.

Danville, Virginia **June, 1971**

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EDITORIAL

2 TIMOTHY 3:7

"Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

It has been requested that we give our views on the above Scripture, and while we do not know the reason why we are asked our views, we feel to comply, hoping that God, who is the giver of wisdom, will enable us so to do, for the comfort and edification of his children.

In this chapter Paul prophesies of the last days, that there would be perilous times, "For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." Now we quote the foregoing Scripture as it is given in connection with the professing churches in the last days. Such characters as described therein have always been in the world, the world was full of such, and worse, when Paul wrote his epistle, but for such to be found under a garb of religion, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof, was a matter of solemn warning of Paul to Timothy and those who should live in the last days. We feel that the last days are upon us and that they are perilous times, deception is on every hand, and the words of our Lord are being fulfilled when he said, "For false Christs and false prophets shall rise. and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect." — Mark 13:22.

In the days of the apostle such characters were found among the heathen, but such are the present times that all these evil doers practice their seductions under the garb of christians, and in truth they have almost monopolized the name, for do we not see that the truly godly almost fear to be called by that name, while they who can be called legion for numbers would be greatly insulted if they were not recognized as christians of the first rank? These are the evil men and seducers spoken of in verse thirteen, which Paul there says shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. The church is sometimes referred to as a house, as Paul in the preceding chapter, twentieth verse, says, "But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor." The vessels of gold and silver are vessels to honor, they have passed through the furnace and been refined; these vessels of wood and earth are in their natural state and are vessels to dishonor, which set forth the men spoken of in Jude 4: "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." They creep into houses, Paul says; they creep in unawares, Jude says, and Jude also writes to the saints exhorting them because of these men, that the saints should contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto them. Paul also tells Timothy that if a man purge himself (by contending earnestly for the faith) from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every

good work. (2 Tim. 2:21)

We have shown that the house often refers to a church, so does also a woman. Thus there were wise virgins and foolish virgins, so Paul could tell the Corinthians, "For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ," and knowing that the woman was deceived, he continues, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." These seducers were to creep into the house and lead captive silly women, laden with sins. Silly or foolish women set forth the churches in this apostasy of to-day, loaded with sin or error in their departure from and hatred of the truth of the living God. Paul in verse eight compares such men to Jannes and Jambres, who were two of the sorcerers and magicians that withstood Moses when he went before Pharaoh (Exodus 7:11), mimicking the servants of God, but they could not proceed further, for Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. Their deceptions could not be carried beyond that circumstance in which they contended with a man of truth, so Paul would stir up the godly that they contend earnestly for the faith; in doing so the folly of these men and their seductions shall be manifest unto all as was that of the foolish magicians. Paul counsels Timothy to turn aside from such men; in other words to have no fellowship with them. The churches, or women, who are led captive by them he calls silly women, laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, and says they are "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." Not satisfied with the simplicity of the gospel of Jesus Christ, they have, after their own lusts, heaped to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall turn to fables. (2 Timothy, fourth chapter.) So they turned away from the truth to believe a lie. This can be said of the churches mentioned in the New Testament, one by one, as Paul had declared they were led away with divers lusts.

Thus from the foregoing it will be seen of whom our text is spoken; it is of the foolish churches and their teachers. God's children, it is true, are ever learning, but they learn of Jesus. He is the truth and the things they learn about themselves are true, that they are poor, vile, helpless sinners, not able to take a right step or do any good thing. These, being taught of God, come to the knowledge of the truth, that there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved, and one of the evidences that they love him is that they love to hear the truth preached and Jesus' name exalted. Their delight is to learn of him, and there is no place to them so dear as where he has recorded his name. Yes, they are ever learning of Jesus and his love, yet the half has never been told, yet, as they learn, they prove they have come to Jesus and Jesus has come to them.

But let us return to these who are beguiled; they have been led astray by men. Even in the apostles' day the Galatians were led astray, so Paul cried, "O *foolish* Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth?" Who were these that had bewitched them, but men of perverse minds, who would bring them back under the works of the law, and so under its curse, for it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." They would turn the Galatians from being justified by faith to the works of the law for justification, and he tells them that before faith came we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore, saith he, the law was our schoolmaster to bring us (in its teaching) unto Christ. So under the law they were ever learning, but after faith is come (and faith cometh by hearing,

and hearing by the Word of God) we are no longer under a schoolmaster, for such have come to the knowledge of the Son of God. There is no such thing as beginning in the Spirit and being made perfect in the flesh, and faith presents every man perfect in Christ. Thus there was a tendency among the Galatians in that early day to be drawn under the law, which worried the apostle, for he knew and taught that the law made nothing perfect, and only by faith, the gift of God, could any one come to the knowledge of the truth.

We have spoken of the Galatian church as an instance in Paul's day of the evil influence of men creeping in that church to the distress of all who would live godly, but Paul spoke of the last days, therefore we are bound to take this Scripture to ourselves and our own time, and we would pray alway that our God will give us grace that we might be found faithfully preaching the truth as it is in Jesus, standing fast in the faith, defending it against those who have crept in or those many who are without. If there are any of the legalists within, we are to turn away from them, not receiving their testimony nor wishing them Godspeed. Whenever one teaches that there is anything that the creature must do to obtain Christ, or to get a covenant blessing, such an one is trying to establish a condition which shows with all his learning, that he has not come to the knowledge of the truth. Under the power of a God-given faith his children know that the body is dead because of sin, yet strange to tell, these are the only ones who add to that God-given faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For (saith Peter) if these things be in you, and abound, *they make you* that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Such, and such only, come experimentally to the knowledge of the truth. Now the one who is ever learning and never comes to such knowledge is spoken of by Peter in these words: "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." He turns, like a sow, that was washed, to wallow in the mire, and as a dog returneth to his vomit, so the fool returneth to his folly. (Prov. 11:11)

In this brief article we have neither space nor time to trace the history of the churches mentioned in the New Testament, or of the apostate church of Rome, who, during the dark ages, sat as a queen, making the nations of the earth drunk with her fornications, or of the churches that sprang from her in the reformation, proving in time that they were daughters of the mother of harlots. We know that at best they were led by man and carried along with them much of the bigotry and error of the mother of harlots. We rather want to dwell upon the last days, which we think are here, bigotry and persecution have decreased, the beast which was like a leopard (quick to pounce upon its victim) whose feet were like the feet of a bear and his mouth as the mouth of a lion (Rev. 13) has disappeared, but there has another one appeared out of the earth, and he has two horns like a lamb (more gentle), but he speaks as a dragon. It was this dragon that beguiled Eve through his subtilty, and it is he that deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, they are led captive by the devil at his will, yet such is the day we live in that Satan does not appear as a dragon; if he did, men would not be found in his company. No, it is rather as an angel of light, undermining by his subtilty the declared word of our God, making the meritorious life and death of our Lord to be totally unnecessary as a way to heaven. No, saith the devil of the last days, you need not be born again, begin right with a babe and raise it right and when it is old it will not depart from the right way, and when he dies God will have to take him to

heaven. The devil, as an angel of light, is very well satisfied with the wonderful progress of a religion that has a form of godliness, yet denies the power. The devil hates electing love, that is why such truth, revealed from heaven, as election (Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated) is denied and hated all the world over to-day. Yes, these are perilous times, times in which universities, schools and the public press are ready to give the people what they want. The word of God is presented as a myth and solemn truth ridiculed to please the crowd. These are days when study, printing and the making of books are colossal, people are ever learning, but with all their learning and all their schooling put together they cannot make one person "wise unto salvation," nor can all their delusions (and the world is full of them to-day) stop one of God's children from coming to the knowledge of the truth. Blessed be God. All the schooling of the Egyptians could not stop Moses at the right time (God's time) from remembering his brethren, even if they were down in the brick yards, "hated of all men." The multitudes on the plains of Babylon with the *wonderful music,* combined with the threat of a fiery furnace, could not bring the three Hebrew children to their knees, for they had a God-given faith that kept them and sustained them even in the furnace. Now we would not put the blame of this on the multitude, but upon their teachers, who, Peter says, are *willingly ignorant.* (2 Peter 3:5) They are lovers of their ownselves, etc., pleasing themselves, rather than trying to please God, and they certainly do despise the people of God. Leaving the well of salvation, they have swallowed the flood cast out of the dragon's mouth, which the dragon meant to overtake the elect of God, but the earth helped the woman and swallowed the flood. Now if this was only found in the earth and not in the church to-day, there would not be so much need for alarm, but Paul says, "Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." God bless us with faith to be strong in the Lord, giving no quarter to error, having no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but reproving them. James Hervey, the man who stood valiantly contending with John Wesley and his free will doctrine, said his father sent him to college for three years, but God sent him to a poor plowman, and Mr. Hervey learned more in one talk with the powman than in the three years at college. Their wisdom, which is of this world, comes to naught, whenever there is one of God's children entangled by it, the moment God says *"Loose him, and let him go."* With such a God his servants can boldly say,

"Is there a lamb in all thy fold
I would disdain to feed?
Is there a foe before whose face
I'd fear thy cause to plead?"

G. R.

(The above by Elder Ruston was first published in February, 1939.)

NEWS FROM ELDER GRIFFIN

I would like to tell the people of God what my state of health is at this time (April 11th). I am doing reasonably well to have passed through the trying times of being separated from the saints of God around Baltimore, Welsh Tract, and the Eastern Shore, together with the ordeal of moving a thousand miles. I will never live long enough and eternity will be too short for me to render the praise due the Lord God Almighty and His beloved saints for the kindness shown us in the time from last July until the present. It has been more than a match for my dull understanding of divinity as to how that such mercy is shown to such a sinner. Since I am at such a loss of words to give expression to my feelings, I will just say that Lois and I will remember every act of kindness as long as we have our reason.

As to my present condition, it re-

mains the same as far as the seat of my trouble is concerned. The doctor at Darlington, Maryland, has been able to control in a great measure my tendency to black out, although he did not hold forth any promise of mending the damage already done. I am trying to live quietly and slowly, which is hard on anyone to do that has led an active life. I have not quit the ministry at all, even though I am as dependent on the God of grace and providence as I was the first time in the pulpit. As I am given grace and strength I will still be going forth in His great name, although I do not have any expectation of being able to resume my former laborious tasks. I will, as blessed of God, continue to write.

W. D. G.

(Due to the state of his health, Elder Griffin resigned the care of churches in Maryland and Delaware and moved back to Alabama. The brethren will be glad to read the above from him, and hope his health will soon be greatly improved. His new address is Rt. 6, Box 84, Fayette, Alabama 35555. — J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

VITAL UNITY

"And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man." (Genesis 2:23)

"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24:26)

Having been requested to write upon the subject embraced in the above Scripture, we shall endeavor to do so with such ability as the Lord may give us. The subject is vast, sublime and of the greatest importance to the Lord's children, though many of his children have failed to see clearly this vital relationship between Christ and his people, so wonderfully set forth in the Scripture at the head of this article. That lack of sight, however, does not make them less the children of God, nor does it make this point of doctrine less God's eternal truth. The truth of God is an endless chain, so to speak, taking in every point of doctrine, order and practice. Anything, therefore, outside of this chain cannot be connected thereto, nor can anything of the chain be taken from it. It is just as the Lord made it, and will stand as made.

Adam was created and made according to God's purpose and plan, regardless of desire, willingness or objection upon his part. He was "the figure of him that was to come" — Christ. It is perfectly understood that Adam in his creation and formation knew nothing of Christ, hence it was not by choice upon his part that he was the figure of Christ. It should be remembered that the definite article (the) is used in that record of him; not a figure, as one of many, but "the figure." "So God created man in his own image, in the likeness of God created he him; male and female created he them," "and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created." There has been much discussion with reference as to the image of God in which man was created and made, but there seems no room for debate on that subject, as the Scriptures just quoted declare plainly that the union between Adam and Eve was the likeness of God, and in that union, or unity, was Adam, male and female, the likeness of Him that was to come. In their creation they were one, and their name one — "Adam." In formation they were one, male and female, or, in other words, Eve was in Adam; hence one life, making separation between them impossible, either in life or death. Eve being in Adam when the law was given, received that law and was as much accountable to the law as was Adam. When she, therefore, ate of the forbidden fruit she transgressed the law. The unity between Adam and Eve, his wife, was so complete that her sin was his sin, and had not Adam partaken of the fruit personally he would have been responsible for her sin and one with her in the transgression. The

union between Adam and his posterity was such that his sin was their sin, or, in other words, when he transgressed all his children transgressed in him and all were under the same curse.

Adam and Eve were one in creation, one in formation, one in life, one in receiving the law, one in transgression and one in death, hence the figure of Him that was to come. God, the eternal Spirit, had chosen in Christ his people, or bride, unto salvation, before the world began, that they should live with him in glory, rather than in Eden. The choice of God of his people in Christ, thus giving them to Christ in union, to be his bride, made them one. In order that the world be peopled and the choice of God be manifested, the creation of Adam and Eve was necessary. In order that those ordained unto eternal life be saved and become manifestly the sons and daughters of God, sin must enter the world and death by sin. Hence the law was given, temptation came, the law was transgressed, and in consequence the bride, or God's chosen people in Christ, were condemned and the children of wrath, by nature, even as others. These things are all links in that endless chain mentioned already. The unity of Christ and the church (bride) as between Adam and Eve, was so complete, inseparable, that her sin was his sin, though he personally sinned not, and was responsible to the law for her debt. This we have shown in "the figure," that had Adam not partaken of the fruit himself, he would have been responsible for the sin of Eve. The law demanded perfect satisfaction for the transgression. That satisfaction meant perfect obedience to the law, even unto death. Adam transgressed and brought death to his race, or children; Christ was obedient even unto death, the death of the cross, and brought life and immortality to the chosen of God. He was made of a woman and made under the law of sin and death, to redeem them that were under the same law.

In the coming of Christ the love of God was made manifest, yes, love to sinners, not because they were sinners, but because he loved them in Christ before the world began, and his love changed not when they were dead in trespasses and sins. Inasmuch as the children of God were sinners, the law demanded the life of Christ, the husband. Paul, in speaking of the unity of Christ and the church, calls attention to the union of husband and wife, the two being one, then adds, This is a great mystery, but I speak of Christ and the church. We are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. At the appointed time of the Father Jesus came to do the will of him that sent him, and that will was that of all which he had given him he should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day. Therefore because of the unity of Christ and the church, and in obedience to the law, Jesus died upon the cross, paid the debt his bride owed to both law and justice with his own life, or blood, was buried and arose for their justification, and presented them without spot, blemish, wrinkle or any such thing to God the Father.

"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" It was his obligation as the husband of the church, it was the Father's purpose, plan and will. Inasmuch therefore as it was according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, the whole church must answer his question and say, Yes, Christ ought to have suffered and to enter into his glory. The church is the glory of Christ, and in the midst of her he sings praises to God for the gift and for the purpose he purposed in himself before the world was, that through his blood she should be holy and without blame before the Father in love. These glorious matters of redemption were not revealed to Moses, the Israelites and their children, but were secret things known to God in that age of the world. They had the law, and legal things were revealed that they should do all the works of that law, but the redeemed bride has the

glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It was because the old covenant did not have and reveal gospel things that the disciples were fools and slow of heart to believe what the Scriptures declared, in prophecy, of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. The term "fools" means without understanding. After saying these things to them, Jesus began with Moses and opened the Scriptures, which had been hid from the beginning, to their understanding. In this he made darkness light, crooked things straight and rough places smooth.

Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways. How good it is to see the life-standing of the Lord's people in Christ, while in Adam they die. K.

(Editorial by Elder H. C. Ker October 15, 1920.)

ORDINATION OF BROTHER WILLIAM EVERETT TO THE FULL WORK OF THE MINISTRY

December 13, 1970

A Presbytery was formed of the following Elders: Elder D. B. Stokes, Elder C. N. Bunn, Elder Henry Jones, and Elder Curtis Rains, along with several deacons and the many churches represented.

It was moved that the Presbytery go into conference. Conference was opened with praise and prayer by Elder Curtis Rains. Moved and agreed to call Elder D. B. Stokes as Moderator. Moved and agreed to call Nina Pearson as Clerk.

The candidate was presented to the Presbytery by the deacons of Falls Church. The candidate was questioned by the Presbytery. Elder Rains spoke to the candidate and church of the rough path ahead of him, and where his help must come from. Elder Bunn spoke of his feeling of being elated with the candidate, and had no questions — he was satisfied and prayed God would give him strength and provide a way; may God grant his companion and son courage and faith to be with him in all trials.

Elder Henry Jones had no questions, and felt just as close as at the beginning, and was completely satisfied with the candidate. Elder Stokes said he was satisfied with his preaching, and had two questions to ask him: 1. How do you feel concerning the Eternal Predestination of God over all his creation? The candidate replied that he believed in the absolute sovereignty of God. 2. Did predestination ever save a sinner? The candidate replied that predestination never saved anyone: the blood of Jesus Christ is the only thing that saves a sinner. Elder Stokes read from Paul's letter to Timothy of the qualifications of a Bishop. He charged the candidate to preach Jesus; visit the sick and afflicted no matter where they are. Elder Stokes spoke to the candidate's wife of the lonely hours ahead and the problems that will face her, and prayed that God would give her strength to endure: May God bless you both to get on your knees, and go forth in life and serve the church of God.

The Presbytery laid hands on the candidate in prayer, praying that God would give him, his companion and son courage to endure all trials in this life.

It was moved and agreed that the Minutes be read, and it was moved and agreed that the Minutes be received as read. It was moved and agreed that the Minutes be turned over to the Falls Church as a permanent record. The candidate was returned to the Falls Church as an Ordained Elder.

Moved and agreed the Presbytery adjourn.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

OBITUARIES

ELDER JOHN T. EVERETT

Elder John T. Everett departed this life January 21, 1971. He was ninety-one years old.

He joined the Primitive Baptist Church in early life, and lived a consistent member thereafter. He was ordained a minister about 1919, and shortly after his ordination he was called to pastor the Antioch Church, which he served as long as he was able. He also pastored several other churches in the South Arkansas Association. He was the nephew of Elder T. Peterson who was well known among the Old Baptists.

He was married four times, and outlived all of his wives. The writer never knew his first two wives. He married Miss Ada Patterson about 1913, and to this union were born four children: J. W., Bernard, Margarette, and one child that did not survive.

Words cannot express the esteem, love, and fellowship the churches of the associations held for him. He was loved by all that knew him in the church or out. He lived to a ripe old age, and we do not mourn for him as those that have no hope. We feel that he has gone to be with his God whom he loved and adored so much.

THEREFORE, Resolved that a copy of this be recorded in the records of the church; and

a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by the church while in conference.

E. J. Lambert, Moderator
J. M. Proffitt, Clerk

CHARLIE WILLIAM BURGESS

Charlie William Burgess was born May 6, 1903, and died March 30, 1971.

A kinder, better-hearted man I never knew. Deep are the providences of God wherein Charlie Burgess was born into the world, and afterward made separate from the world with the truth revealed in his heart; and wherein he was joined in holy wedlock to his wife, Sister Iva Carter Burgess, who survives him.

His dear companion, at whose request this is written, has much cause for her grief, and this is not forbidden, yet she has cause also to rejoice in the Lord; and the affectionate brothers and sisters have lost an affectionate brother. A very serious loss this is, but since his name from all eternity was written in the Lamb's Book of Life, he was the Lord's before he was yours. Your every effort to save Charlie from the grave brings to view yet another proof that only God can save.

Charlie Burgess told me on his death bed, "Julius, I'm not afraid." And I saw plainly that dear Charlie Burgess was being favored under the bedewing of the Comforter, as when He comes down into the hearts of his children, to transport them across Jordan to that land of pure delight. His suffering was great but only for a short while. To the family and to the precious Sister who is now his widow, and to the hundreds of Primitive Baptists who deeply mourn his loss, I would say:

May He who tempers the wind to the shorn lambs, remove the burden of grief from our hearts, and enable us to say, "The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

The funeral service was conducted by Elder William Holland, assisted by Elder D. V. Spangler and the writer. The Lord sent several other preachers too; yea, and a large congregation of His saints to weep around the grave.

Our sorrow is all because we loved him.

In sadness,
J. L. Bocock

To the above we would like to add that Charlie Burgess was born in Franklin County, Virginia, near Boones Mill, and lived in that vicinity all his life; and his friends were legion. He was a dear friend of ours for more than twenty years and a brother-in-law, having married Sister Wood's sister.

Charlie was deeply taught of the Lord. He loved the church and was always ready to do anything he could for its welfare. He loved to travel among the brethren and attend other meetings. He made lasting friends everywhere he went.

His closest Primitive Baptist meeting was at Little Creek, Franklin County, and he seldom missed a meeting there. There was scarcely a weekend that he and Sister Iva did not attend a meeting somewhere.

His funeral was held at a funeral home in Rocky Mount, Va., and his remains were buried in the Mountain View Burial Park, a short distance from his home.

John D. Wood

EDWARD RALEIGH CARTER

It pleased The Heavenly Master to remove, by death, from our midst our dear brother in Christ, Edward Raleigh Carter, on July 19, 1969.

Brother Carter was born in Scurry County, near Snider, Texas, on October 19, 1890, the son of the late Raleigh and Lou Ella Carter.

The Carters moved to Hunt County near Quinlin, Texas, and there our subject was married to Miss Bertha Williams on February 15, 1928, and to this union one son was born, Oliver Gene.

This little family moved to Dallas, Texas, in August, 1947, where they have made their home to date.

Brother Carter united with the Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, upon confession of faith, and afterward baptism, in the year 1951. He was a faithful member to the end. He loved the church, the doctrine and all they stand for. Could say with the psalmist: "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty God hath shined." To know Brother Carter was to love him. He made his friends welcome in his home, and his love, advice, and good wishes shall ever be a memoir to those near and dear to him.

His sight was impaired and in 1949 it completely left him, leaving his last twenty years in a darkened world, except for the sunshine of a Savior's love and the gentle love and care from his dear ones around him. Other complications arose along his life's path which finally led him to the Veteran's Hospital in Dallas, Texas, where he sweetly went to sleep to awaken on the resurrection morning when all of God's children shall meet to be ever together, where no more pain, sorrow, or disappointment shall ever come to mar the blessedness of that Heavenly Home.

Left to mourn the deceased are his wife, Sister Bertha; his son, Oliver Gene; and his wife's sister, Essie; who stood tirelessly by

the bedside administering all that human hands could afford. There are four grandchildren, Keith, James, Rebecca, and Theressa; one sister, Mrs. Mary Harrill of Quinlan, Texas; and one nephew and one niece.

The funeral was conducted in the Saints Rest church building at 2710 Engle Street, Dallas, Texas, with the Dudley M. Hughes Funeral Directors in charge, by the Pastor, W. W. Taylor. Interment was in the cemetery beside the church building in Cash, Texas.

Written by request of Sister Bartha. One copy to go to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; one for the Church Record.

Pearl Lee

IN MEMORY OF J. GLENMO RICHARDSON

Brother Glenmo Richardson was born February 8, 1914, the son of George T. and Ella Williams Richardson and was taken out of his suffering by death on January 30, 1971.

His immediate kindred to survive him are his wife, Sister Doris Stegall Richardson, two sisters, Mrs. Maria Adams and Mrs. Ruth Burnett. Also two brothers, William Richardson and John Richardson.

Brother Glenmo greatly enjoyed the fellowship of his brethren. Although not physically able to attend the services in his last days he rejoiced in the visits of the church members in his home. We can fully believe his last days were very sweet to his soul and he passed this life giving thanks to the Lord that he had lived to carry out a desire of many years: that of being identified with the militant church. His funeral was conducted by his pastor Elder O. K. Tench and Elder Julian R. Williams at Malmaison Church and he was buried at the family cemetery at Callands, Virginia.

As he bore evidence of being one of God's elect, I believe Brother Richardson's soul is in the paradise of God to await that glorious resurrection day when his body and soul will be reunited and he and all the bride of Christ will be presented to the Father to forever praise Him in eternity.

Written by request of
Malmaison Church while
in conference February 6, 1971
Burnell B. Williams/P. W.

BROTHER D. D. HARBOUR

We, the church at Rosemary, bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father in taking from our midst Brother E. D. Harbour. He was born April 26, 1887, and departed this life December 5, 1970. He was married to Luddie Boaz January 14, 1922. He left to mourn his passing his wife, Sister Luddie Harbour, one daughter, one son, and four grandchildren.

He joined Rosemary Primitive Baptist Church in September 1962, and was true and faithful member. His funeral was conducted by Elder D. B. Handy and he was laid to rest in Cedar Wood Cemetery. We feel that our loss is his gain.

Done by order of conference in session at Rosemary Church, Saturday before the first Sunday in March, 1971.

Elder B. D. Handy, Moderator
Eula Johnson, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

We, the Church at Reedy Prong, desire to write a few lines in memory of our dearly beloved sister, Hazel Hynes Dunn. She was born October 25, 1914, and died December 28, 1970. Making her stay on earth 56 years, 2 months and 3 days.

She joined Reedy Prong Primitive Baptist Church in October, 1944, and was baptized by her Pastor, Elder Lester E. Lee.

In October, 1955, she was chosen Assistant Clerk of the Church, and then Clerk of the Church in October, 1967, and served faithfully until July, 1970, when she had to enter Cape Fear Valley Hospital for surgery. Sister Hazel was a faithful and true member. Not only was she blessed with a wonderful hope, but she was blessed to comfort those in need of a kind word. Her life was adorned with many graces, being humble, and unassuming. She was well established in the doctrine of grace.

She was the daughter of Mrs. Annie West Dunn of Route 2, Dunn and the late John P. Dunn. Survived by her mother, a brother, Thell Dunn and two sisters, Mrs. Leon Stevens, Jr., and Mrs. Lester E. Lee.

Sister Hazel requested a graveside Memorial Service to be conducted by her nephew, Joseph Boyette, who read some of her favorite scriptures and offered prayer. Her great nephew, Richard Boyette read a poem, "Crossing The Bar." In lieu of flowers, the family suggested contributions be made to the Cancer Fund or to the Duncan Shaw Owen, Inter-Faith Chapel at Cape Fear Valley Hospital.

We desire that a copy of this writing be recorded in the church book, a copy be sent to the family, and one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of Reedy Prong Church.

Sister Mary Bryan
Sister Addie Lee
Committee

BROTHER JESSE W. WOODRUFF

Brother Jesse Wade Woodruff, son of the late John J. and Molly Daniels Woodruff, was called home by our Heavenly Father, September 16, 1970, after a long illness. Brother Woodruff was blessed by God to unite with the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church February 8, 1969. He loved the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace and attended his Church as often as was able. He had been in ill health for a long time, and was blessed by God to be reconciled to his trials and tribulations, looking to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for his help. His faith and trust was in Him, and he loved to talk with the brethren about the wonderful way he felt the Lord had dealt with him.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Margaret Jones Woodruff; three brothers, Ennis, Nick D., J. D. Woodruff, all of Rocky Mount, N. C.; three sisters, Mrs. Annie H. Smith, Mrs. J. T. Blanford and Miss Bessie Woodruff, all of Rocky Mount, N. C.

Funeral services were conducted from the chapel of Johnson Funeral Home, by his Pastor Elder D. B. Stokes, where the many flowers and friends gave evidence of the love that was felt for Brother Woodruff.

He will be greatly missed by all of us who loved him, and especially by his devoted wife and family.

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the *Signs of the Times*; one to the family and one for the church as a permanent record.

Done by order of conference November 1970.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

BROTHER GRADY STYLES

Brother Grady Styles, son of Mrs. Martha Wells Styles, was called home by our Heavenly Father August 8, 1970. He was born October 7, 1908, making his stay on earth sixty-two years.

Brother Styles was blessed to unite with the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church on October 6, 1968. He loved the church and enjoyed visiting in the homes of the brethren. Though he was not blessed to unite with the Primitive Baptist Church until late in life, he had been searching for something, not knowing what; and in coming to the Falls Church, he felt his search was over. He was able to attend the church until a few months before his death. We all loved him and he will be missed, but we have a hope that he is resting in the arms of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

He is survived by his mother, Mrs. Martha Wells Styles; his wife, Mrs. Kate Hammond Styles; and one sister, Mrs. Frances Jolly, all of Rocky Mount, N. C.

Graveside services were held by Elder D. B. Stokes from the Battleboro Cemetery, where he awaits the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the *Signs of the Times*, one to the family, and one for the Church as a permanent record.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

ANNIE COMPTON

Sister Annie Compton was born February 4, 1888, and passed from this life in a Lynchburg, Va., hospital February 8, 1971, at the age of eighty-three years. She was the daughter of Ferdinand and Mattie Brumfield; and the widow of George R. Compton, who preceded her in death several years. They made their home at Gretna, Va.

Sister Compton joined Springfield Primitive Baptist Church July 25, 1909, and was a faithful member, always concerned about the welfare of her church; and loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. She went far and near to the meetings and was well known and loved.

She leaves three daughters: Sister Myrtle Shelton and Mrs. Lois Pendergrass, of Gretna, and Mrs. Carrie Brown of Danville, Virginia; also several grandchildren, one sister, Sister Susan Holly, of Danville, and a host of friends.

Her funeral services were held at Springfield Church by her beloved pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and burial was in Gretna Burial Park by the side of her husband. Many beautiful flowers and the large congregation spoke of the high esteem in which she was held.

May the Lord reconcile her family to their great loss, together with Springfield Church where she will be missed. We feel she is resting in the paradise of God until the resurrection of all His saints. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Annie Tosh

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 139 DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1971 NO. 7

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/71
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

WAS A SUBSCRIBER
FOR FIFTY YEARS

Box 11
Meadow Grove, Nebraska 68752

Dear Elder Spangler:

My mother, Mrs. Walter Black, has asked me to write a few lines and send my father's obituary to your good paper for publication if you have space.

Z. I. Jones, mother's father, took the *Signs* for probably 50 years before his death in 1952, and my parents have taken it since somewhere in the '30's. We feel it is one of our family papers and the principles are the ones we try to uphold.

My father would read the *Signs* over and over and there are many pencil marks on the front and on the pages where some passage or article especially touched him. He loved the doctrine of predestination and although very few of his friends understood his religion, the huge attendance at his funeral was a wonderful tribute to the respect and love they had for him. This was my first close experience with death and I never realized how kind people were to one another in a small community. The food, cards, calls and memorials were so touching. Certainly it is evident to us of God's working in people of all walks of life and all denominations for we have lots of different churches here.

Mother is enclosing a check to the paper for you to use as you think best. They subscribed to three different papers and are dividing the memorials equally between them. We feel this would please Dad.

If it be God's will, I hope we meet again in this world. I remember hearing and enjoying you expound the grace and love of God and His Precious Son when in Washington state in 1965, I believe. I also have some recordings of that and other meetings that our dear Brother Ben sent me.

I pray you and your wife are in reasonable health and that you will be given health to carry on. May God's richest blessings be yours.

A sinner,
Lois Cloud

(We acknowledge with thanks the receipt of $50.00 from Mrs. Myrtle Black in memory of her husband, Walter Black, who was a subscriber to the *Signs* for many years.
Editors)

"HOPE TO THE END"

Dear Brethren:

The salvation of the church all originated in the mind of God before the mountains were brought forth, or ever He had formed the earth and the world: — it is this that comforts them in life, supports them in death, and will constitute their "joy unspeakable," which in that City whose Maker and Builder is God, can never be fully experienced, for it is eternal.

The Lord has provided all of our salvation, and He will continue to apply

it to all for all for whom He died; and none of them shall ever know the extent of His blessings for He is determined to share heaven with them, and to inhabit eternity with them. The blessings of God and the things that God has prepared for his people, can never be fully seen or known for they have no end, and are eternal and unending.

The end which God declared from the beginning has reference to time. The end of time shall come on the last day. Peter writes, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

If we possessed all the grace that God has promised to bring us, we would not need to hope for it, "For what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" So when any saint dies his, "flesh shall rest in hope," (Acts 2:26) of the grace that is to be brought unto us when Christ, who is our Life, shall appear.

To be "sober minded" is to know the way home. All therefore who know that Jesus is the Way must be sober.

If any of the saints reach heaven before the last dispensation of the grace of God is "brought unto you" at "the end" (see 1 Peter 1:13) when the Lord shall come to make up His jewels, then, I say, if a single saint was in heaven prior to "the end," then the doctrine of Satan, "Ye shall not surely die" would be so. However, God is true and Satan is a liar. Death is certain and is appointed by Almighty God. The Christian's hope is truly said to save. "For we are saved by hope . . ." However that is experimental only to the saints who are led to hope through sanctification. As the called from death to life, these new creatures are "constrained (forced) by love" to walk the King's highway of holiness; and every man that hath this hope purifieth himself, even as he is pure. Experimentally, hope becomes the power to save when we brush the dew of Jordan's stormy banks, and our nature shrinks back and at best just "casts a wishful eye," but the unfailing faith which God has given to us, is ever profitable to cast anchor in the Rock — thus "we are saved by hope." It is under the sovereign leadership of the Spirit that saints are led in the way of sanctification to hope in the Lord.

No man will ever preach a gospel sermon except he preach to Resurrection of the Dead. It is this the entire church is hoping for; it is this that all the dead in Christ are resting in, and waiting for.

Through faith we understand that the inheritance is reserved for the saints, and it is ready to be revealed to them who are kept (by virtue of the power of the prayers of Christ) through faith unto salvation at the last time — the end of days — not before. This is immensely good. Dear dying brethren, how sweet are your prospects! On the last day your sun will rise to set no more: then you will receive a palm of victory and a crown of glory. You, and you only, ought to rejoice, though, if needs be, you are in heaviness through manifold temptations. You may be poor naturally: you must be poor spiritually; you may be tired in body and mind: you may be sorrowing, but look up, your redemption draweth nigh.

It is Jesus that was, and is, and is to come: that precious Stone that is the same yesterday, today and forever. He is precious in the valley of humiliation; He is precious on the high mount of communion, and unto you that believe, He is precious. Now reader, if you have passed from death unto life, how came it to pass? Did God find you on your knees doing kingdom work? or did He find you in league with Satan, and in love with sin? Yea, He found us in the depths of death and sin, and but for the fact that His grace is omnipotent we would all have resisted it to our own destruction.

All false spirits advocate work for rest which labor cannot give. No evolutionist can see that every living thing

must die, and the dead things cannot produce life. No conditionalist can see that God is a very present help in trouble.

We all need mercy, brethren, for we all have a nature so vile that we will sometimes hum the tunes of this world which are destined for hell and everlasting burnings. To belittle the power of the blood of Christ is a far worse crime than murder. The blood of Christ is title clear to eternal glory. However, the Lord works in His own way and time.

The time to see glory for the saints of God is at the "last time," when time shall be no more; this the Bible truly and properly calls "the end." Until the end comes Satan will continue to advocate that we will not surely die. The servants of Satan desire an office in which to do their good works. From their office they proclaim, "Pea is not here, only the pod; pea shelled out and went home to God." Not so, false, untrue.

Meantime, the servants of Jesus Christ who desire the Spirit (not an office) in which to worship, (1 Timothy 3:1 is a warning) will continue to defend the glorious doctrine of the Resurrection of the dead. The dead in Christ will come forth in the last day, and they are destined to dwell forever and ever where none of the inhabitants shall ever be heard to say, "I am sick," for the days of their mourning ended when the end came.

Now Jesus "humbled himself to behold the things that are in heaven," for none are "like him." But when He comes to bring grace to us, to fit and prepare us to stand before his face, our hope will end, because there is no prayer for more. There is no hope for more than, "Prepare me gracious God to stand before thy face."

The God of Israel and Zion has never needed anything, or lacked anything, or hoped for anything, and is therefore "satisfied."

To awake with His likeness at "the end" is our hope.

In bonds,
J. L. Bocock
P. O. Box 13
Boones Mill, Va. 24065

"THAT AMAZING GRACE"

Rt. 2
Stamford, Texas 79553

Dear Editors:

I see that it is time to renew my subscription, so am sending $7.00 for two years and $3.00 for the Indigent Fund. It is good to read the letters and writings of all brethren and sisters in Christ. May the Lord continue to bless the writers of the *Signs*, and all that are in Christ Jesus.

O what food it is to hear one preach that salvation is of the Lord! That amazing grace! "By grace are ye saved through faith and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God." How sweet to the ear of the hungry soul. "Ye shall know them, by their fruits." May we, I mean the elders, be blessed to continue to feed the flock of God, as written in 1 Peter 5th chapter.

He was exhorting the elders to feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof not by constraint but willingly. Not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. So may it please the Lord to continue to bless his ministers to preach Christ the Saviour of his people. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

Your brother I hope. "Christ in us the hope of glory."

C. L. Ely

"EVERYTHING IS IN HIS HANDS"

Rt. 2
Kenly, N. C. 27542

Dear Brother Spangler and Editors:

For twenty-seven years April 1st the brethren at Cheeches Church have given me a home. I cannot tell you the comfort, joy, and strength the good Lord has blessed this poor sinner with since; nor what the church has meant to me.

The Lord has seen fit to give me a hope — a dear, blessed hope, even though so very small at times it seems I almost have to hope for a hope. It is precious and sweet to me; and is my life, my all.

Many things have been revealed to me, if not deceived; and the grace of God to this poor sinner has led me to search the scriptures. The comfort I find in the experiences of the prophets of old, and the chosen disciples of Christ, as recorded in Holy Writ, have been my rod and staff to comfort me. How wonderfully comforting when we can witness one with the other! This is an unmerited favor, for of myself I can do nothing: I am a dependent creature; but all things are possible with God.

My life has been mixed with joy and afflictions, but God is a just God and everything is in His hands. Oh! if I could bear my cross willingly as Christ did. I am weak and often falter along the way, and stand in need of grace and mercy all the time. Please remember me as you go to the throne of grace.

I enjoy reading the dear *Signs of the Times*. The articles this year have been especially good and comforting. The Editorial Treasures, both new and old, meant so much to me, and came just when I needed it so much. That seems to be the way things happen to me, dear Christian friends — or should I say, the pattern that has been chosen for me? I have never been cast down so low that help from someone or somewhere didn't lift me up. I believe it to be mighty, wonderful working of God. I know I can never thank Him enough, but do try in my feeble way.

Enclosed you will find a check for ten dollars. Renew my subscription and use the balance for the Indigent Fund.

May God bless you to continue to publish the dear paper for the comfort of God's humble poor.

A little sister saved by grace and grace alone, if saved at all.

Mrs. John Edd Pope

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION 1970

As it has pleased the Lord to gather us together in another annual meeting of the Salisbury Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Association, and as it has been the custom to write what is called the Circular Letter, we attempt it with much fear and trembling, praying from our hearts that it may please our God that something may be written fitting and comforting to the saints of God.

We feel that the God of all grace and mercy is pleased from time to time to comfort his little ones here in this wilderness of woe to feel that though the pathway is not always a smooth one, it teaches us every day that we cannot direct our steps. It also teaches us that we are not our own keepers. We feel that it is a blessing from above when our minds are from time to time lifted above this tabernacle of clay and we are blessed to feel that there is the Eternal Power who created all things and for his pleasure, we are told in his holy word, they are and were created. We feel that being gathered here at this time is in accordance with that which our Eternal God knew and predestinated before the beginning of time for we the Old School Baptist believe in the God of knowledge for one of old has written "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isaiah 46:9, 10) We feel that the scriptures were written

for the Lord's chosen people to confirm them in what they have been made to believe by the indwelling of the spirit of our God. We believe that no one has ever learned the things that we feel to have been taught by the teaching of man but by the grace of God we feel to have been made acquainted with what we are by nature, and in meetings like this feel it to be a joy and comfort to be blessed to sing from our hearts praise to him who has made us acquainted with our sinful nature, for we are told in God's holy word that Jesus came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.

We feel it to be a blessing of our eternal God when we are blessed to meet together in meetings like this and exchange the handshake of fellowship and love for one another, being made to feel a love for each other, a love that binds our hearts together like as the poet wrote many years ago.

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

We hope to see and be made to feel that love in this meeting, that we may have a season of rejoicing together; for the Apostle Paul said in Philippians, chapter 4, verse 4: "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say Rejoice."

We feel that there is rejoicing in our hearts from time to time when we are blessed to think upon him (God) and to feel that he is a just God and doeth all things well. We cannot understand God's ways for his ways are past finding out. We do hope, though, that in this meeting we may be given a mind to feast on heavenly things and that it may please our God to bless all the ones that are called on to speak to us that they may be given words of comfort to our thirsty souls. We believe that man cannot make himself thirsty, that too is the work of God but we believe that God creates a thirst in the hearts of his saints here in this life and then gives them water to drink from that well that never runs dry. We read from the words of one of the prophets of old, Isaiah chapter 12, verse 2, "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." We believe that the prophet was speaking of the present day.

We read in the Bible "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven." (St. John 3:27) Therefore believing, as we do, that man cannot preach the Gospel unless he be given from Heaven words to speak and that one cannot hear unless he is given ears to hear, we would pray to our God that in this meeting, the ministers present may be given words fitting to us and that we may be given ears to hear, that we may feast on that Heavenly manna and drink from that well that never runs dry. Amen.

Arthur R. Warren

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT BY SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

We, The Salisbury Association, bow in humble submission to the Holy Will of God in calling from our midst Sisters Mamie Williams and Elizabeth Hall of Salisbury Church, Sister Ida Benson of Little Creek Church and Brother Asa Pilchard of Snow Hill Church; these dear sisters and brothers stood firm in the faith that was delivered to the Saints. They are sadly missed by all.

Elder W. D. Griffin, Moderator
William S. Adkins, Clerk

Written by Frank A. Holland

UPON THIS ROCK
(Matthew 16:13 through 18)

Down through the years, there seems to have been differences of opinion as to what is the ROCK upon which Jesus in this Scripture, declared He would build His church. Some of our people have said it is the rock of revelation; others have believed it was Christ Him-

self, which belief I held; some have held that it was the man to whom Jesus spoke, Peter.

For quite a while now, I have not felt entirely satisfied with any of these interpretations in their entirety, although I felt there was a good deal of truth in all of them. So I went to the Scriptures with a desire to find anything I could which would throw any light on the matter, and especially regarding this man called Peter. As a result, I hope and believe I have been shown something I had not seen clearly before. It is now my belief that this ROCK is the new creature in the man called PETER, as representative of the new man in every born-again object of God's electing grace, that it is, in Paul's words, CHRIST IN YOU THE HOPE OF GLORY.

In order to build a better foundation for my belief, let us go just a bit into the background of this man SIMON who was to be called PETER. As far as I have been able to ascertain, the first encounter this man had with Jesus is recorded in John 1:41 through 42: "He (Andrew) first findeth his own brother SIMON and saith unto him 'We have found the Messias,' which is, being interpreted, the Christ." And he brought him to Jesus and when Jesus beheld him, he said, "Thou art SIMON the son of Jona: thou SHALT BE called CEPHAS, which is by interpretation, a STONE," or rock. The words CEPHAS and PETER are synonomous, Cephas being the Hebrew word for a stone, while Peter comes from the Greek word PETROS, meaning a little rock. It is highly significant that it was not PETER whom Andrew brought to Jesus, it was SIMON; but, said Jesus, "Thou shalt be called CEPHAS" or PETER. Let us bear that in mind as we go along.

When Jesus asked His disciples whom did men say that He, the son of man was, they said, "Some say thou art John the Baptist, some Elias; and others Jeremias or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, but whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him . . . And I say also unto thee that thou art PETER and UPON THIS ROCK I will build my church," etc. Now, the old SIMON had a new name. We read in Isaiah 62:2, "And the gentiles shall see thy righteousness and all kings thy glory AND THOU SHALT BE CALLED BY A *NEW NAME* WHICH THE MOUTH OF THE LORD SHALL NAME." What a beautiful and perfect instance of the new birth is shown here! SIMON was the same old Simon, only now his name is SIMON PETER. The new birth does not change, reform, improve, clean up or make righteous the old man. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again (not reborn), he cannot see the kingdom of God." Also, He says, "That which is born of the FLESH is (not was) flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit."

When the new birth takes place within the heart of a man or woman, he is forevermore two people, two personalities, totally apart one from the other AND THE BATTLE IS ON. It never ends while we live in this world. Never again will that one be satisfied with the old man whom only a while ago he thought was a pretty good fellow. Never again, I believe, will the truly redeemed of the Lord boast of his good works or plead his cause on that foundation. Never again will he consider himself better or superior to the least of God's children. Always he will be longing and striving to be more like his blessed Lord, yet so very aware of the old man whom only the Lord can put in his place.

If ever there was a paradoxical figure, a "Dr. Jekyl and Mr. Hyde," it was this man SIMON PETER. We see PETER trying to defend his Lord by smiting the ear of the high priest's servant with his sword; a little later we see SIMON cursing and swearing, "I know not the man." We see PETER in true sincerity and adoration, declar-

ing that although all men forsake Jesus, yet he would not; just a while later while Jesus agonized ALONE in Gethsemane, SIMON peacefully slept. One moment PETER was bold and fearless, the next SIMON was cringing with fear like a trapped animal. So SIMON DID NOT BECOME PETER! PETER was not a converted and polished Simon and all his life he was deeply aware of the fact that he was two men. It is very heartwarming and significant that he starts his second epistle, his very last letter to all of us, shortly before his death, "SIMON PETER, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that hath obtained like precious faith," etc.

When PETER, adoring his precious Master, declared that though all men forsake Him, yet he would not, Jesus, knowing him so well, said unto him, "SIMON, SIMON (not PETER) Satan hath desired thee that he might sift thee as wheat *but I have prayed for thee* that thy faith fail not." Jesus, who knows the thoughts and intents of every heart, knew that PETER loved Him devotedly, regardless of what the old SIMON said or did, and He was compassionate, loving and tender with him. He knew that PETER went out and wept bitterly after his base denial, and after His resurrection, Jesus's very first special message of love was to that erring one: "Go tell my disciples AND PETER that He goeth before you into Galilee." Those immortal words will ever comfort and sustain the hearts of all who mourn for sin!

On another occasion, when so many turned back from following Jesus, He asked His disciples almost wistfully, "Will ye also go away?" PETER answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go, Thou hast the words of eternal life." I expect he little thought how those very words would be the cry of untold millions down through the ages when burdened with sin and guilt, and no place to go but to Jesus, the Savior of sinners.

Brethren, have you ever known anyone like this man SIMON PETER? I have and I do! The one person I know best in all the world is so much of the time thinking, saying and doing things which cause the new creature in her to grieve and groan. For a long time, I was confounded and perplexed by the verse of Scripture found in 1st John 5:18, "For we know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not." It troubled me because, if this were true as I then interpreted it, I could not possibly be born of God, for I knew that I was and felt I always would be a sinner; yet I felt deep in my heart that the Lord had drawn me to Him with no effort on my part, made me to love Him and had spoken to me the words of eternal life. But the day came when the Lord showed me that the new creature, born of God, did not sin; it was my old self who did the sinning.

So, it seems perfectly clear to me now that this ROCK upon which Christ is building His Church is not Himself alone, not His elect alone, but Him IN His elect, the bridegroom and the bride. Some may and I expect will disagree and some may think it very strange that I did not see it all the time, but God reveals to us what He would have us understand, in His own time and way.

My love to all who love our Great God and who are *"Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,"*

Mildred V. Dykes
1114 Mt. Mermon Road
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

ARTICLE BY THE LATE ELDER F. W. KEENE

"And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." (Genesis 32:24)

The life of Jacob is most interesting and instructive. His pathway, amidst the providence of his God, was a succession of changing scenes, wherein he proved the faithfulness and compassion

of the Lord. The future scenes of our lives are hidden from our view. We know not if the dark or bright shall be our lot; if that wherein our soul's delight be best or not. Today our portion may be in paths of pleasantness, tomorrow the storm may overwhelm us. Says Job, "I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came." (Job 3:26) This was God-sent trouble, else it never could have touched Job.

All the vicissitudes of our lives are in the hands of our God, who apportions to each one according to the good pleasure of his will.

This chapter from which our subject is taken gives us a glimpse of some of the varied scenes which God's providence accomplished in the life of Jacob. Having parted with Laban, his father-in-law, "Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host: and he called the name of the place Mahanian."

This day had a gladsome beginning for Jacob. God's host escorting him on his way. "Are not the angels all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Heb. 1:14) "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him and delivereth them."

Jacob forthwith sends messengers before him unto Esau, his brother, to acquaint him of his coming. "And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, we came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him. Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed."

The day dawned with every encouraging prospect, and now dense clouds are gathering, and before the night enfolds the earth in its dark mantle Jacob is in trouble indeed. He exhausts all his wits contriving for the safety of his family, but in all his troubles he is graciously helped to pour forth his distresses unto the Lord.

"And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saith unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he come and smite me, and the mother with the children. And thou saith, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude."

"Jacob was left alone." His family and all that he has have passed over the brook Jabbok, and now in the darkness of the night there remains the solitary one.

I suppose he felt he could not pass over with the rest of the company, he could not lodge with them that night. In the deep distresses of his soul he chose to be separate from all earthly intercourse.

It is not uncommon to those who fear the Lord to feel that their peculiar case separates them from their former companions, and beneath the chastenings of the Almighty the child of God "sitteth alone, and keepeth silence." (Lam. 3:28) He feels unfit to associate with the family of God.

Isolated by temptations, distresses or guilt from all the kindred, he spends the night in pensive disquietude. "I am like a pelican of the wilderness, I am like an owl of the desert. I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the housetop."

"Jacob was left alone." There was no friendly one to whom he could appeal for help, and like David when in the cave Addullum he could say, "I looked on my right hand and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul."

Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed, his cogitations troubled him. How tossed to and fro was his soul!

What will the morning bring forth? Truly we know not what shall be on the morrow. Will it be dark or bright?

All now looks dark: Esau and four hundred men are coming to meet him. He remembers his brother's threats to kill him. (Gen. 27:41) He remembers how because of Esau's anger he fled from him to Padanaram. His conscience accuses him of his guiltiness in supplanting his brother, the deception he practiced upon his father Isaac, and now he cries out, "Deliver me I pray thee from the hand of my brother Esau: for I fear him." It was night.

"'Twas in the night when troubles came
I sought my God for thee,
But found no refuge in that name
That once supported me."

There was darkness without, of that Jacob was not afraid, for often times in the darkness of the night he had kept watch over his flocks, and sleep departed from his eyes. (Gen. 31:40) But there was a night felt within. His soul was laid in darkness in the deeps. His fears and unbelief, the remembrance of his sins, the accusations of Satan all combined to make this night the hour of darkness to Jacob left alone.

"Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it," (Jer. 30:7) Was Jacob also for a little while left alone by the Lord? Did God hide his face from him? "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment: but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer."

Jacob was left alone, but not for long. In the shades of the night there cometh one that layeth his hands on the distressed solitary one, and or ever he is aware, Jacob is in his grasp, and this one begins to wrestle with him.

"There wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." Is it Esau that has stealthily approached in the darkness that now has Jacob in his grasp? Once he struggled with his brother (Gen. 25:22-23), and Jacob was the stronger. No, it is not Esau, it is the angel of the Lord in human appearance. (Hosea 12:4)

This was not, as some have erroneously taught, the pre-existing manhood of Christ the Son of God. For the manhood of Christ was the seed of the woman, of the seed of Abraham, which when the fullness of the time was come (Gal. 4:4) was conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and she by the power of the Highest overshadowing her was the mother of the manhood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is far better to abide by the clear testimony of the Bible concerning the manhood of Christ then by a perversion of the Scriptures to build up a fanciful theory of an everlasting pre-existing manhood. The angel said unto Mary, "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call his name Jesus." The Virgin Mary was Christ's Mother according to the flesh. "He sucked the breasts of his mother." (Psalm 22:9-10) "When the fulness of the time was come God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law," and this time was, "In those days that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed; and this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria," (Luke 2:1-2) How explicitly stated.

But let us return to the wrestlers. The man took hold of Jacob, then Jacob took hold of him.

We never take hold of God, we never wrestle with the Lord until he takes hold and wrestles with us. We never come to the Lord except he draws us. (John 6:44) We love him, but it is because he first loved us. (John 4:19) We are apprehended of Christ Jesus. (Phil. 3:12) Then we reach forth to apprehend the things which are eternal. We are arrested by the reigning grace of God, and the result of this grace working in us is that we lay hold

on God, on Christ, on eternal life, and by a divine power we wrestle by faith and love, with prayers and tears until the blessedness of Christ is imparted to us.

The Lord wrestles with his people to bring them down in the dust. He overthrows Jacob, and raises him up Israel. He is humbled in the dust, a poor, sinful, unworthy worm, but is so marvelously strengthened by the blessing of God who wrestled with him, that he arises strong in the Lord and the power of his might as "a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth, to thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and to make the hills as chaff." "I was brought low and he helped me."

There are times when the Lord has a controversy with his people. (Hosea 12:2) There are seasons for trial of our faith; he pleads with his people. (Micah 6:1-2) Yes, in various ways the Lord wrestles with his people; by his providence they find themselves in straits, in afflictions and temptations.

The Scriptures afford us records of such wrestlings. Paul had such a wrestling (2 Cor. 12:1-10) Moses also. What a wrestler he was for the tribes of Israel. (Exod. 32)

The Lord wrestled with Job, and as he approached him said, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me." And when Job was abased, and cast to the earth he answered the Lord, "Behold, I am vile: what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth." Again the Lord challenged him, and took hold of him. (Job 40:3-7) And again, Job is prostrated, and he answered the Lord and said, "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? Therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak; I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes."

As the Lord wrestles with his people, and bringeth them low, they are enabled to lay hold upon his promises, to plead with the Lord his own immutability, and the honor of his name. This is a divine miracle that a sinful creature should wrestle with the Lord. A miracle of God's own invincible grace in the heart of a poor sinner.

Draw near and look with sacred eyes at Jeremiah wrestling in prayer with God, "Hast thou utterly rejected Judah? Hath thy soul loathed Zion? Why hast thou smitten us, and there is no healing for us? We look for peace, and there is no good; and for a time of healing, and behold trouble! We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers; for we have sinned against thee. Do not abhor us, for thy name's sake, do not disgrace the throne of thy glory: remember, break not thy covenant with us." (Jer. 14:19-21)

When the Syro-Phenician woman came to Christ in behalf of her daughter, he wrestled with her, and she wrestled with him. First, he answered her not a word, then again he answered, I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. But she still clings yet the more to him, and worshipped him, saying "Lord help me." But Jesus replied, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs." Is she not now cast from him, overthrown, a dog in the dust? But like Jacob she wrestles still, she clings to Jesus still, and her faith is saying, I will not let thee go except thou bless me; and she said, "Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the Master's table." She prevailed, and Jesus blessed her there, and said unto her, "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt, and her daughter was made whole from that very hour." (Matt. 15:22)

"Wrestling prayer can wonders do,
Bring relief in deepest straits;
Prayer can force a passage through
Iron bars and brazen gates."

(To be continued)

Elders W. D. Griffin and Brock, from Fayette, Ala. will preach at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church Friday, July the 9th, at 7:30 p. m.

The annual meeting held the fourth of July each year at Pine Creek Church, five miles east of Floyd Court House, Virginia, just off Rt. 221, will be held Monday, July the 5th, this year. Service to begin at 10:30 a. m.

ALL DAY MEETING
AT SLATE HILL, N. Y.

An all day meeting of Gospel preaching is appointed to be held at the Old School Baptist Meeting House at Slate Hill, N. Y. on the first Saturday in August.

All lovers of gospel preaching are invited. Lunch will be served.

Elder A. J. Slauson

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The one hundred forty-sixth annual session of the *Pigg River District Association* will be held, the Lord willing, in the Franklin County High School Auditorium, Rocky Mount, Virginia, beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in August and two days following — July 30, 31, and August 1, 1971. Sandy Level is the host church.

Those coming from the north on Highway 220, turn right on Route 40, and the school house is on the left about one-half mile. Those coming from the south will turn left on Route 40.

All correspondents and lovers of the truth are invited to attend.

Leonard J. Brammer, Pastor
John D. Wood, Assn. Clerk

WE SHOULD LET OUR LIGHT SHINE BEFORE MEN

Elder F. P. Branscome
Dear Brother:

One of the brethren has requested me to write for the *Messenger of Truth* concerning our people using intoxicating drinks. We should let our light shine before men that others, seeing our good works, should glorify our Father which is in heaven. We should be examples to the flock, not only in refraining from the use of intoxicating drinks, but we should be men of veracity, so much so that our words would not be questioned. When this is the case we glorify our Father which is in heaven. We are commanded to let brotherly love continue. The way to let it continue is to walk orderly before God. I contend that the church loves me as much as I deserve. Whenever we see Jesus in others then we love them. We have no control over this love, for it is involuntary. John said, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!" We are his by birth, and shall also be his by adoption. Adoption has reference to the body.

It is said, "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." The body is not now, manifestly, redeemed. But yet the Spirit that is within us keeps our body under, lest, after we have preached to others, we ourselves should be castaways. The salt then has lost its savor and is fit for nothing, but to be trodden under the feet of men. When we love God we love our brethren also; and why? It is because we see the image of Jesus in them. Why is it our love is set more on some than on others? It is because we see more of Jesus in some than in others.

We should exhort to love and to good works, and not to love in word only but in deed and in truth: for it is said, "Behold, how they love one another!" "Perfect love casteth out fear." "Love is the fulfilling of the law." And this is the way the love is fulfilled in us. Then we are justified from all things which we could not be by the law of Moses. Jesus was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification. Justification came because of the

raising up of Jesus from the dead. So we are interested, not only in the delivering up of Jesus unto death, but in his resurrection as well. Jesus is yet the resurrection, which will continue through time, and this is the reason why we are justified. Justification is the product of God's love being shed abroad and in our heart. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Jesus) : for it is said, "Every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that he (Jesus) is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

Brother Branscome, may the Lord restore you to health again.

Yours in hope,
Asa D. Shortt

(The above appeared in *The Messenger of Truth* of April, 1913, and is published by request.)

UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

The sixty-fifth session of the *Upper Country Line Association* will be held July 17, 18, and 19, 1971, (Saturday, Sunday and Monday the third week-end) with Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church, at the Dan River Church.

Dan River Church is centrally located between Eden, N. C. and Danville, Va. on Highway 700, approximately 12 miles southeast of Eden and 11 miles southwest of Danville, in Rockingham County, N. C.

We cordially invite ministers, brethren and friends of our faith and order to visit with us.

Donald E. Smith, Assn. Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Staunton River Association* is appointed to be held with Mt. Ararat Church July 9, 10, 11, 1971, the second Sunday, Friday and Saturday before.

All travelers should proceed to Danville, Va. and turn on to the Mt. Cross Road off Highway 58. The Meeting House is located on State Road 750 about 6 miles west of Danville.

All of our correspondents and lovers of the truth are urged to meet with us. We especially invite the ministers of our sister associations.

Burnell B. Williams, Assn. Clerk

Danville, Virginia **July, 1971**

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CHANGE OF MEETING TIME

The Pleasant Grove Church, Naches, Washington, has changed their meeting time from the second Sunday in each month, to the fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11:00 a. m. They meet at the home of Sister Daisy Baker.

E. J. Attebery, Pastor
Marguerite Simpson, Clerk
1306 Fairview Ave.
Yakima, Wash. 98901

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND
(To April 1, 1971)

George F. Benson, Del.	$ 3.00
Lois E. Cloud, Neb.	3.00
A Friend, Del.	8.00
D. E. Cole, Tex.	3.00
Pearl Lee, Tex.	1.00

George Carlson, Calif.	1.00
James A. Messick, Md.	8.00
C. L. Ely, Tex.	3.00
Mrs. Mable Welch, Tex.	8.00
Orville R. Beatty, Pa.	1.00
Mrs. Allridge Slaughter, Ala.	3.00
Mrs. Milton Tipton, Ala.	2.00
Roy S. Thomas, Del.	3.00
J. J. Merrill, Ala.	8.00
Mrs. Bettie L. Brown, N. C.	1.00
Mrs. John Edd. Pope, N. C.	3.00
Mrs. Rossie Williams, N. C.	2.00
Mrs. Ethel Wilson, Tex.	2.00
Miss Reidy Pickeral, Va.	50.00

EDITORIAL

CHURCHES AND ASSOCIATIONS

We are about ready to start traveling so that we may attend the Pigg River Association, where we hope to join with the brethren in the worship of our God; and we are thinking of what a blessed privilege it is to want to be with the brethren, and what a privilege it is to be able to be with them. For many years we have had this pleasure, and many have been the enjoyable seasons.

Our thoughts being turned to the subject of associations, we feel to give some of our reflections concerning them. There is no doubt but that the Lord's people have always loved their assemblings. We read in Malachi, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

Those who brought the brethren together in various places in church organizations, as given in the New Testament, were careful that the churches were constituted of believers in the Lord. Their doctrine was the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles; and this doctrine included faith, order and discipline: for all these make up the "doctrine of God our Saviour." These things were "set in order" by the Apostles. By personal visits and epistles, the Apostles instructed the brethren what the doctrine was. When any turned away from these things, they perverted the doctrine; then the Apostles reproved them, and admonished them to continue in the things they had learned, and to mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine; and avoid them. (Romans 16:17) We believe that there was perfect direction of the Spirit in all that was delivered by the writers in the New Testament, so that there has never been need for additional instruction in order to maintain gospel churches. The doctrine is there: If any question of faith should come up, it is there; if any question of order, it is there; if any question of discipline, it is there.

The Apostles of the Lord did not continue to live, but that which they were empowered to deliver to the churches yet lives with us with as much authority as when they personally delivered it. We hear the Apostle Paul saying to Timothy, "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God." And Peter, "Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. Moreover I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance."

Each church was separate and distinct in her organization: her members were bound together in the things of the gospel as an independent body, subject only to the commandments given by their great Head. She was then, and is now to look well to the guidance of the Spirit in all things, as given in the record of their Saviour and the epistles of his Apostles; and which now comprise the New Testament. She is to acknowledge no other authority for anything, but is to maintain these things

faithfully. Jesus instructed his Apostles as follows: "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." There is no authority for leaving off or adding anything whatsoever.

And, while each church was separate in her own organization and government, there was, and is now, an inseparable union between them: They have the same Lord, the same faith, and the same baptism. As it is written in the Acts, "As they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily." As they had the same faith, and "common salvation," they had a deep interest in each other's welfare, and there was much communication between them. We read in the Acts, "We neither received letters out of Judea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren than came shewed or spoke any harm of thee." To the Corinthians Paul wrote that he desired Apollos to come to them with the brethren, and said, "All the brethren greet you." And Paul commended the Thessalonian brethren for their love toward all the brethren of Macedonia. To the Corinthians again he wrote, "Whether any inquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellowhelper concerning you; or our brethren be inquired of, they are the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ." And we have the accounts of the contributions sent for the poor of the flock.

These associations together continued among the churches; and then there was a gradual assuming of certain authority on the part of some who were associated together during and second and succeeding centuries, to the extent that their associations together became legislative as well as judicial bodies. These, it is needless to say, were those who were departed from the faith and rule of the gospel, and corrupted to such a degree that they were no longer churches of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is to be understood, however, that the apostolic churches maintained communication and association together for their mutual comfort and for the worship of God, either by letter or personal visits.

We believe, therefore, that associations of churches together within a conveniently located territory is proper, and that there is nothing wrong with their being thus associated. But care must be had that no association as a body ever assumes any legislative power over the individual churches composing the body: for all the laws or commands to which the churches are subject were long since laid down for them; and care must be had that no association as a body ever assumes any judiciary power over the churches composing the body: for the right and duty to maintain such laws or commands is entirely in the power of the churches themselves.

This is a particular point which all brethren and churches should always bear in mind, for, otherwise, there is a departure from the old order of things. Any body organized as an association of churches is a creature of the churches; and the churches have no right ever to place authority in the association to assume any sort of power over them. If there is a departure in this, the fault is in the brethren composing the churches, for the churches are composed of the brethren. The churches composing the Pigg River Association when it was formed in 1825, made this statement, "This association assumes no legislative jurisdiction over the churches but acts merely as an advisory council. When a church wants its assistance she must make her wishes known either by query or request, and, if not deemed unreasonable, the association will pay respectful attention to it."

It is right, of course, for an association of churches to have a moderator and a clerk: the moderator to preserve the decorum which the association deems necessary and has adopted; and the clerk to record the proceedings of

the body. This is the sole duty of these officers. They are not in any sense superior officers with some kind of authority over brethren, but rather, they are but servants of the brethren in their associated capacity. They have individual rights as any other of the brethren, but no more. We remember an old elder who had been moderator of an association for many years, said, when asked to what he contributed his success as a moderator, and was held in high esteem by the brethren, "I have always let the brethren rule themselves."

An association is not a continuing body. That is, there is no association except when the body is in session. These officers cannot speak for the association: the churches through their messengers do all the speaking.

It is also right, of course, that individual churches (or brethren) consult with each other if they have some difficulty on which they feel to need some counsel. An association of churches may, if asked, give counsel to one of her churches; and, if such church should refuse to heed the counsel in matters affecting the fellowship of brethren, and decides to maintain her own ideas of what is right and wrong to the disturbance of the sister churches, then the association of churches may refuse to recognize such church in order, and discontinue their fellowship and association with that church until such time that she sets herself in order. It is regrettable that this action should ever have to be taken, but it is necessary if such circumstances arise. Certainly all other churches and brethren should recognize and heed any just and proper action taken by a church, or any just and proper action taken by an association of churches. Failure to do this has given rise to those who call themselves Old School or Primitive Baptists, but whose faith and order is different from those whom they have left.

The main purpose of churches meeting together in an associated capacity is for the worship of God in singing, prayer and preaching. It gives opportunity for brethren to meet brethren whom they would seldom if ever see; and it gives opportunity often to hear elders from a distance preach whom we would seldom if ever see or hear. It is good to meet together and learn how our brethren are getting along, and join in the worship of the true and living God.

These are some of the thoughts we had while contemplating our visit with the brethren, and some of the things we feel make for good order. We pass them on to our brethren.

J. D. W.

(The above is re-published from the October, 1953, *Signs*, and continues to express our thoughts on churches and associations.

— J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

SANCTIFICATION

Perhaps no part of the great work of the salvation of Adam sinners is more complex and involves more profound mystery than does the application of the work of grace to the needs of the individual, and the bringing him into the experimental knowledge of its virtues. So numerous and varied and unnatural are these experiences that the expressions employed by the Holy Spirit to describe them are such as could apply only to the work of God, which they are declared to be: "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." "This shall be written for the generation to come; and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord." — Psalms 102:18. "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." It is called a deliverance from the power of darkness, and a translation into the kingdom of God's dear Son: a baptism

into the death of Christ, and a rising to walk in newness of life; being taught of God; writing his law in the hearts of men, and putting it in their mind; making them his sons and daughters. All of these expressions are descriptive of the work of grace as it experimentally affects sinners whom God eternally predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son; whom Christ at the appointed time was made under the law to redeem, and did redeem from all iniquity.

The purpose of God to save, and the work of Christ in redeeming, justifying and atoning for sinners, did not in any way affect the manner of life or conduct of those for whom all this was done. While it indeed was a work of grace, and performed a definite service for all for whom it was wrought; but it was done outside of them, and independent of and entirely detached from any will or choice of their own, or forseen merit or worthiness in themselves considered. It was theirs only by the will and choice of God, the obedience, suffering, death and resurrection of Christ, and was purely a gift of grace, which was yet to be translated into the experience of each heir of the promised salvation.

Thus we see there are three phases of this great work of the salvation of sinners, all of which are by sovereign grace: *First,* the purpose and will of the Father to save, and the settlement of every detail of the plan, even to the choosing and naming the individual beneficiaries in that purpose and will before any creature of God had been given being. *Second,* the work in time of Christ, the Son, in redeeming, justifying, reconciling, adopting and pardoning those chosen by the Father and given to the Son; which he did when he trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him. (Isaiah 63:3) *Third,* the work of the Holy Spirit in revealing in the hearts and translating into the lives of men "the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory" (1 Cor. 2:7), by taking of the things of Christ and showing them unto us. (John 16:15) This last mentioned phase of salvation is experimental, and terminates in the practice of godliness in the fruit of electing love manifested through reigning grace, and is in no sense conditioned upon the merit or performance of the one who receives it. "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of God." (2 Thess. 2:13, 14)

The primary aim in this article is to treat this last mentioned phase of salvation, designated in the sacred word as "sanctification," and as it is also mentioned in the quotation above. Sanctification may be defined as that work of the Holy Spirit in man which conforms him to the image of the Son of God, and from which all acceptable duties naturally flow, and which are but the necessary expressions of that divine principle of love shed abroad in the heart. Sanctification and justification differ in these respects: justification respects the person in a legal sense, is a single act of grace, and terminates in a relative change; sanctification regards him in a physical sense, is a continued work of grace, and terminates in a real change, first, in feelings, habits and actions, and finally of the whole of his being from mortal to immortal and from the glory of the terrestial to the glory of the celestial. The former is by a righteousness without us, the latter by a holiness wrought within us. Justification deprives sin of its damning power, sanctification of its reigning power.

The various expressions in Holy Writ, such as "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever;" "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses

and sins;" "Created in Christ Jesus unto good works;" "Being made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness;" and many kindred expressions are descriptive of that change which is being wrought in man by the grace of the Holy Spirit, to fit him for the service of God, by bringing him into spritual union with Christ. Until this work of the Spirit is begun in him he is the servant of sin and free from righteousness. (Rom. 6:20) But as he is experimentally made free from sin he becomes the servant of righteousness, the servant of God, and has his fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. (Rom. 6:18, 22) Notice the apostle here does not afford us the slightest ground to conclude that the man, who is first the servant of sin, is not the same man who is made free from sin and becomes the servant of God and of righteousness. He is the same man, the man who sinned and whom Christ purchased the freedom of, both soul and body, and sent the Holy Spirit to open the prison doors and set the prisoner free. Jesus says he calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out.

The terms "old man" and "new man," "outer man" and "inner man," as applied to God's children, are descriptive of the mental and physical activities of the Adam man as he is led and influenced by his human nature and life derived from his earthy head, Adam; or by his divine nature and life derived from Christ, his spiritual head. It is not intended to set forth two separate and distinct men, but rather one man with two lives and natures, the activities of which are ever in conflict, and therefore a perpetual warfare is being waged in the person of every child of God. Paul says, "I find a law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." And then cries out, "Oh wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And adds, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." (Rom. 7:23-25)

To make my understanding of this point clear, let me suggest that Christ, during his continuance in this world under the law, was in all things like unto his brethren, the children of God. He united in his person two lives and natures, a human and a divine, which constituted him the Christ, and made him equal with both God and man. He was God before he came into the world, but became man by his incarnation. This was necessary that he might be the Mediator between God and man: he must not only know the things of God as God knows them, but he must also know the things of man as man knows them; his mission lay along this line. He lived in perfect conformity to each of these lives and natures. Every natural act he performed was in perfect obedience to the law of his human nature, and likewise every spiritual act was the fruit of his divine nature. But Christ's human nature was not corrupted by sin, as is the nature of his people, whom he came to redeem, though he came in the likeness of sinful flesh. (Rom. 8:3) So it is with the children of God: they possess a human life and nature which proceeded from Adam, and they possess eternal life and a divine nature as the gift of grace through Christ. Jesus says, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." (John 10:28)

In this human relationship to his brethren and divine relationship to his Father, Christ did all that law and justice required to present his brethren faultless before his Father's glory. In him they were redeemed, justified, sanctified and made clean and holy, yet in themselves, before they were called, were unclean and unholy, both in their lives and conversation. But by powerful reigning grace through sanctification of the Holy Spirit, they are called unto the fellowship of God's Son: that

is, equality in all he has done and inherits. By his Spirit he dwells in them and makes them partake of his divine nature; they are made members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones; are no longer strangers and foreigners, but are fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of faith. They are not only called by grace unto the fellowship of the saints and church on earth, but unto the fellowship of the Son and into spiritual union with him in his holiness, and shall share his grace and glory. In this grace and holiness they are confirmed by God unto the end, so they shall be blameless when their Lord comes again. Their own imperfections and imperfect acts cannot so stain and corrupt the works of grace wrought in them and performed by them under its reigning power as to attach blame to the actor, nor as viewed in fellowship with Christ, from whom the virtue, by which they are confirmed, is derived. (1 Cor. 1:4-9)

Christ gave himself without spot unto God as the redemption price for his brethren. He purchased them and brought them into union with himself. Both their body and spirit are his, not only by creation, but by the Father's gift of both unto him, by his espousal of their whole persons unto himself, and by his redeeming them from death and ransoming them from the grave. (Hosea 13:14) From the spiritual union of Christ with his children all of the joys of salvation flow, and it will finally bring them into the full blaze of God's glory in the heaven of eternal delights; but the joys of salvation make up only a small portion of the experience of the children of God as they travel through this world, in which they are warned by the Savior they shall have tribulation. Hence no treatise on the experimental phase of this subject can be complete unless it takes into consideration that relationship to Christ in which the major portion of their experience is found. This is that relationship which was established when Christ assumed the human nature, was made in all things like unto his brethren and became us under the law. In this relation he became their Elder Brother, and they his brethren: "Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." (Heb. 2:11) This was a physical union and preceded the spiritual union, and paved the way for it to be consummated; for Christ must be made to be sin for us before we could be made the righteousness of God in him. Neither could Christ become the author of eternal salvation to his people until he was made perfect through suffering. (Heb. 5:8, 9) The suffering and death of Christ in our flesh is what made it possible for him to bring us to God. (1 Peter 3:15)

Those who are called unto the fellowship of the Son of God are not only called unto the fellowship of his holiness and joys, but are called also unto the fellowship of his sufferings and death; and as all of his sufferings and his death were in the flesh, so must his children experience in their flesh his sufferings and death, and that, too, before they can share his joys. Jesus, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God; and his children are told if they suffer with him they shall also reign with him. If Christ as the representative of his children could not bring them to God without suffering in their flesh, which he assumed, neither does the Holy Spirit bring them to God experimentally without them experiencing in the flesh the sufferings of the Lord Jesus. With these unions definitely established, the children of God are called upon to "glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." The sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit affects the persons of the saints, both spirit and body, and lays the obligation upon them to glorify God in their bodies and in their spirits, which are God's. (1 Cor. 6:20) This cannot be done except they are led by the Spirit of God; and "as many as

are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." They glorify God in their body when they present their body a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is their reasonable service: and be not conformed to this world. (Rom. 12:1, 2) By punctually attending public worship, by maintaining a becoming course of behavior, both in conversation and in actions, by bestowing freely, cheerfully and generously of time, strength, thought, labor and substance for the cause and honor of God; by enduring with patience hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, and suffering for his name's sake; by filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in their flesh for his body's sake, which is the church. (Col. 1:24) By bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. (2 Cor. 3:10, 11)

As the child of God is led by the Spirit into the performance of these duties and this service, he not only glorifies God in his body, but the life of Christ is also made manifest in his mortal flesh, and he is thereby owned a child of God, and enriched in all utterance and in all knowledge by his grace, and the testimony of Christ is confirmed in him, which causes him to patiently wait for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. 1:5-7) God is glorified in the spirit when the child of God is led by the Spirit to set his affections upon things which are above and not on things on the earth; when he is led to meditate upon the manifold mercies and goodness of God, and joy in God through Christ; when he is brought to the footstool of mercy, and is given faith to resign all to God's will, feeling as did Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him;" when he can lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset him, and run with patience the race set before him, looking to Jesus for every supply of faith and every other grace; when he can count it all joy when he falls into divers temptations; when he can glory in tribulations, and can accent cheerfully the trial of his faith, though it be tried in the fire; and can receive with thanksgiving the spoiling of his goods.

As the child of God is led to glorify God in his body and in his spirit in his varied physical and mental service, all of which is spiritual, because he is led by the Spirit in their performance, he not only becomes experimentally acquainted with the sufferings of Jesus, but also experiences the power of his resurrection. "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in you, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."—2 Cor. 1:5 The sufferings of Christ could abound only in the bodies of his saints, for all his sufferings were in the flesh; and the abounding of the sufferings of Christ in us is what we understand the Savior meant when he said, "Except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood, you have no life in you." The life of Christ is only made manifest in those who are delivered unto death; who bear about the dying of the Lord Jesus in their body. At the very time and place, dear child of God, where you experience the dying of the Lord Jesus you also experience the manifest presence of the life of Jesus. This all transpires in your mortal flesh. No one can experience the victory over death until they first experience death, therefore Jesus brings all of his children in their experience to his cross, and makes them drink of the cup which he drank of, and baptizes them with the baptism with which he was baptized; then by the power of an endless life, which is Christ in them a quickening Spirit, he quickens their mortal bodies and raises them up to walk in the newness of life. This is not done just a single time, this is the daily experience of his children. Paul said, I die daily. When you present your body a living sacrifice, acceptable unto God, the life of Christ is at the same time made manifest in your mortal flesh, for it is only by the life of Christ within you, taking control of your mind and thereby directing the actions of the body, that you would ever present your body as a sacrifice of any

kind, and it is certain that it could not be presented a *living* sacrifice *acceptable unto God,* without the life of Christ both moved you in the service and sanctified the sacrifice. God accepts nothing from any except as they are in Christ: "He hath made us accepted in the beloved." — Eph. 1:6. Out of him there is no acceptance of any person or service. Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." — Gal. 2:20

We are not to understand that the Paul which was crucified with Christ was destroyed. He survived that experience daily, but it was done that the body of sin might be destroyed (not the sinful body), that henceforth he should not serve sin. (Rom. 6:6) It is the "old man," the man in his relation to Adam, who is crucified with Christ, and by virtue of Christ being crucified in the same relation, and Paul's crucifixion being included in the crucifixion of Christ, so also was Paul's living included in Christ's living, for He said, Because I live you shall live also. As certain as it is that the same Christ that was crucified is the Christ who lived afterward, so certain it is the same Paul who was crucified with Christ lives afterward. Not by virtue of the Adam life, which only leads to death, but by virtue of the Christ life being in him, which he has as a grace gift, and which he lives by faith. When the "old man" is crucified with Christ experimentally, the body of sin is destroyed and he is freed from sin: "For he that is dead is freed from sin." — Rom. 6:7

In this experience the child of God drinks of the cup of suffering which Jesus drank of and is baptized with the baptism of death with which he was baptized, and by faith is given to view the sufferings and death of Christ as the destruction of his sins, and he is comforted in the assurance that his warfare is accomplished, his iniquity is pardoned, for he hath received at the Lord's hands double for all his sins. They are led to look upon him whom they have pierced, and believe "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." "If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Both the dying and living of the people of God are experienced in the fellowship and union with Christ. This fellowship and union can never be dissolved. The Spirit of sanctification does not destroy the inbeing of sin in the children of God in this life, but it does take possession of them and frees them from the bondage of sin, and leads them into the experimental knowledge of those things which the Savior endured in his suffering and death for them, and a foretaste of the joys that they are to have through him. It does purge their conscience from dead works to serve the living God; it does call them away from the practice of sin, to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously and godly in this world; it does subdue and restrain the activities of our human nature, but does not destroy it; it does work in the child of God to will and to do of God's good pleasure, even when he cannot find how to perform that which is good; it does lead him in the paths of righteousness for Christ's sake. But it is equally true that when he would do good, evil is present, and the good that he would he does not, and the evil that he would not that he does. And so the conflict goes on in the experience of the children of God throughout this life, as it did with their Elder Brother until the curtain of mortal death was let down and closed the scene.

All the way they have been led has been through the valley where the shadows of death have constantly fallen across their pathway; and it has been a journey of trusting and doubting, of

hope and despair, of courage and fear, of being set on high from their afflictions only to be cast down into the pit of mire where there is no standing. But their Elder Brother, whose right it is to receive the double portion, has preceded them in the conflict with death, has met and conquered death, has run through a troop and leaped over a wall; still in physical and spiritual union with his brethren, the children of God, and having gained the victory he gives it to them. "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." It was through death that Christ destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. (Heb. 2:14, 15)

Christ has brought you, dear child of God, through many conflicts and deliverances by the Holy Spirit, leading you into the experience of Christ's sufferings and death in this life; but when you are brought to experience mortal death, by virtue of the victory which Christ gained, who was representing you, and with whom you are in union, which neither death nor life can dissolve, you also are given the victory through Christ, and you will as certainly be made to experience the passing through death in your body and in your spirit, which are God's, as it is certain that Christ, your Elder Brother, passed through death in his body. "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." — Rom. 6:5 This is the victory which God has given you through Christ, the crowning work of salvation by grace. The Spirit will in the resurrection of the purchased possession complete its work of sanctification by changing our vile bodies and fashioning them like unto Christ's glorious body, clothed with immortality, made incorruptible, swallowed up of life, and made, not a spirit, but spiritual; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

J. R. Hardy
Dallas, Texas

(The above by the late Elder J. R. Hardy is taken from the *Signs* of August, 1939.)

OBITUARIES

SISTER ELMA LOU SIMPSON

Sister Elma Lou Simpson was called from our midst March 20, 1971, at the age of seventy-two years; was born May 12, 1898. She united with Springfield Primitive Baptist Church June 8, 1940, and was a faithful member as long as she was able to attend.

She was the daughter of Joel and Nancy Jane Simpson, who were also members of the Primitive Baptists. She leaves one sister, Mrs. Woodie Barbour, with whom she made her home; and one brother, David Simpson of Gretna, Va., and a host of relatives and friends. She was well known and loved, and always welcomed her church members and friends in her home. She remarked to her sister a few days before, if she could go to Springfield on Sunday she would be satisfied: and the Lord blessed her to be there. She was called home the next Sunday — where we feel she is at rest, to suffer no more pain; and will be raised to join the saints of God to sing praise to Him forever.

Her funeral was held at Springfield Church by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Elder Leonard Brammer. Her body was laid to rest with other members of her family in the Weatherford Cemetery beneath a mound of flowers.

We will miss her. May God reconcile the family and the members of Springfield Church, to say, "Thy will be done."

Annie Tosh

ELDER JOHN T. EVERETT

This meek and humble, upright, God fearing servant of God was born in Dallas County, Arkansas, June 24, 1879. He lived a few months short of 92 years upon this earth, passing away January 21, 1971.

The last several years of his life were spent in the Dallas County Rest Home, in Fordyce, Arkansas.

My wife and I were privileged to visit Brother Everett quite a number of times during his stay in the rest home, and not the first time was he heard to murmur or complain at his lot. He appeared at all times to be perfectly reconciled to the will of God.

The records show that Elder Everett, united with Chapel Hill Church, Dallas County,

Arkansas, in October 1901; that he was ordained April 25, 1925; and was called to serve Chapel Hill Church the following month. He continued in this station, actively, until a few years ago, when the writer was called in connection with him, due to his advanced age, and to the declining state of his health. He also served other churches in his area.

To know him was to love him indeed. He was possessed of many lovely admirable traits of character, both as a man of God and as a citizen of this world.

He was a very sweet, uplifting, firm and soul-warming preacher of the Gospel; and few ministers in my contact, have excelled or equalled him in deep, rich, fervent prayer. He was also an excellent singer of the beautiful hymns of Zion; and his lovely melodious voice will long be remembered, while engaged in that holy avocation. Let Israel's God be praised for such a life and such a gift to the churches; as doubtless he must have been the product of God's sovereign, all-sufficient, reigning grace.

He was married four times; His first two wives only lived a short time; the third wife was the mother of his children, and a member of Chapel Hill Church. His last wife also preceded him in death. He is survived by three children: W. J. of Jackson, Mississippi; Bernard of Denton, Texas; and Mrs. Robert Hartsock, of Montrose, Colorado; also several grandchildren, and a host of nieces, nephews, and friends to mourn his passing.

The writer was called upon to conduct the funeral services, which were held in the Chapel Hill meeting house, January 23, after which the body was laid to rest in the church cemetery nearby.

He will be greatly missed, both in and out of the churches; but we feel that our loss is his eternal gain. May God comfort all who mourn the passing of this noble man. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

(Elder) John Lee Smith

AGNES FLOY (MITCHELL) JONES

Our Heavenly Father saw fit to take our beloved Sister Jones from us December 21, 1970. She was born February 28, 1897, in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and came to Texas in 1901.

She united with Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church, Lawn, Texas, in May, 1954, where she remained a faithful and lovely member until death.

She is survived by three children, two brothers, one sister and seven grandchildren. Her husband, R. J. Jones, and one son preceded her in death. Although we will greatly miss her dear presence, we feel our loss to be her eternal gain; for we believe she is awaiting the resurrection, in which she was a firm believer.

Services were conducted by Elders C. L. Ely and C. M. Haygood. She was laid to rest in Dewey Cemetery, Lawn, Texas.

Written by order of the church.

Elder C. M. Haygood, Mod.
Nola Stewart, Clerk

SISTER BIRDIE STALLINGS

Sister Birdie Stallings was born May 17, 1888, and died January 27, 1971. She was the daughter of the late William Green and Martha Susan Dix. She was married to the late Will W. Stallings. She had no children, but was survived by one sister, Beulah Dix Weatherford, and a number of nieces and nephews.

Sister Stallings was received in to the fellowship of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church December 27, 1957. She attended the services at Dan River Church as often as she could, she enjoyed the singing and the preaching of the unsearchable riches of our God, and the meeting with members and friends. She was taken ill in August of 1967, and spent the rest of her natural life confined to the bed in the Anne Penn Memorial Hospital, Reidsville, N. C., and The Triangle Nursing Home, Durham, N. C.

I always enjoyed being in Aunt Birdie's company for she seemed to enjoy life and what it had to offer. She loved the doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God. In all of her suffering God in His appointed time called her away to await the resurrection of the Saints, and sing His praises forever more.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder David V. Spangler, and interment was in Dan River Church Cemetery.

A nephew and brother in Christ I hope,
Larry Weatherford

EVAN S. HALL

My earthly brother, and I believe also a brother in the Lord, passed away rather suddenly on Monday, March 22, 1971, in Crescent City, California, and was laid to rest there to await the coming of the Redeemer.

He was born December 9, 1885, in Floyd County, Kentucky, the third one of ten children born to the union of Wilburn Hall and Elizabeth Frasure Hall, who were staunch members of the Old Primitive Baptist Church. Our family migrated to northwestern Oregon in 1902, finding one of the Old Baptist Churches in Oregon City, near Portland, with which our parents affiliated, and later with another one fairly close.

Brother Evan, like the rest of us, had but little contact with the Old Baptists from his early years on until well up in years. Twenty

years or more ago, he was given the Light to see their doctrine and worship to be that which the Bible taught, and he became an avid reader of the *Signs* and the Bible and seemed to seek diligently after the TRUTH. There being no Old Baptist Church within hundreds of miles of his home, his preaching was almost entirely from the pages of the *Signs*. He did hear one sermon preached by our older Brother, Elder John Hall, when he visited them and preached in the home.

Then after he passed the four score age mark, he drove alone a hundred miles or more each way from Crescent City, California to Grant's Pass, Oregon to be with a little group of Old Baptists when an Elder would come from California to hold service there. In his letters to me and in conversation, he always held to the Old Baptist Doctrine and although not a member of the visible church, he truly and diligently tried to follow in the footsteps of Christ Jesus, our Lord, in his late years.

Submitted by
Wm. O. Hall

ORIEN PETER MELLOTT

Orien Peter Mellott was born at Pleasant Ridge, Fulton County, Penna. April 17, 1897, the son of David R. and Elizabeth (Mellott) Mellott; and died in the Fulton County Medical Center February 18, 1971, at the age of seventy-three years.

His first wife was Susie Thomas of Leesburg, Va., and to this union was born one daughter, Dixie Sue, who survives, along with two grandsons, John and David Fix. (David was killed in an auto accident since his grandfather's death.) On November 24, 1960 he married Alice Yocum of Huntington, Penna., who also survives, along with one sister Rosa Mellott, of Mt. Union, Penna.; and a number of nieces and nephews.

Brother Mellott united with the Sideling Hill Primitive Baptist Church August 24, 1921, and was baptized by the late Elder H. H. Lefferts. He was a deacon and church clerk for many years, and served well in these capacities.

Brother Mellott had not been well for a number of months, and suffered much for several weeks before his passing, but he was given patience in his suffering, and was made willing and anxious to go at the Lord's time. He was a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God and loved to hear the gospel of his salvation preached. He was an interesting talker on the scriptures and will be greatly missed by those who knew him.

Funeral services were held at Sideling Hill Primitive Baptist Church February 21, 1971, by his pastor, Elder John D. Wood, and interment was in the adjoining cemetery. A large congregation of friends and neighbors were in attendance, and there were many flowers; all of which showed their respect and esteem. He has passed on a little before us, and is now awaiting the coming of the Lord the second time, when he shall be conformed to the image of his Saviour in the resurrection and fitted for eternal life along with all the redeemed of the Lord.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to Sister Mellott and all of his surviving family.

John D. Wood

OTEY G. DALTON

Brother Otey G. Dalton was born August 1, 1894 and departed this life March 1, 1971, in the Altavista Nursing Home, Altavista, Virginia.

Brother Dalton united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church July 22, 1962. He was a faithful member as long as he was able to attend.

He was the son of the late Robert Dalton and Octavia Dalton, and the husband of the late Nannie Vasser Dalton.

He leaves to mourn his passing three sons, Gene, Robert, and Morris Dalton; two daughters, Mrs. Claude Dalton and Mrs. Houston Dudley; two brothers, Noel and Tillman K. Dalton; four sisters, Mrs. John Short, Mrs. Robert Shelton, Mrs. Richard Fitzpatrick, and Mrs. Oscar Pickeral. He also leaves sixteen grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Brother Dalton's funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by his pastor, Elder O. K. Tench. He was laid to rest in the Church Cemetery beneath a lovely mound of flowers to await the coming of our Lord.

Written by
Marvin Brumfield

WALTER W. BLACK

Brother Walter W. Black passed away from this life March 29, 1971. Brother Black was born August 22, 1883 at Scranton, Iowa. He and Miss Myrtle Jones were united in marriage September 16, 1908 by Elder F. M. Wattenberger at Olathe, Colorado.

Having lived in Iowa and Colorado they moved to the Meadow Grove, Nebraska community in 1916. In 1934 he joined the Deer Creek Primitive Baptist Church in Battle Creek which he attended until his death.

Brother Black is survived by his widow, Myrtle; two sons, Rodney W. of Knoxville, Iowa; Glen C. of Meadow Grove; three daughters, Sister Irene Jewett of Pittsburgh, Pa.; Sister Lois E. Cloud of Meadow Grove and Sister Sara R. Cody of Detroit, Mich. Also surviving are 9 grandchildren, four great

grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held at 2:00 p. m., Wednesday at the Tilden Funeral Home in Tilden, Nebraska. Elder Clayton Berkeypile of Minden, Nebraska conducted the services. Burial was in Prospect Hill Cemetery at Norfolk.

The saints of God await the morn of the resurrection to see Jesus and be like Him.

Elder Clayton Berkeypile, Pastor
Deer Creek Primitive Baptist Church
Battle Creek, Nebraska

MEMORIAL OF ELDER W. CURRY KING

By Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church

Elder King was seventy-three years old when he passed away, departing this life October 17, 1970. "His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated." We still weep and mourn his passing.

He began visiting with Greensboro Church in June, 1921, with her pastor Elder O. J. Denny. He was called as assistant pastor in 1927. He served with Elder Denny, in this capacity, filling appointments much of the time by himself until 1932, when the mantle was laid more heavily upon his shoulder. Elder Denny, aging and becoming less able to serve, gave up the church and Elder King was called as her pastor.

As a true servant of God he continued to serve Greensboro Church. We feel his ministry here was a fruitful one. During these years he was blessed to feed the flock, and as an example before them he walked in a beautiful manner, meek as a lamb yet boldly declaring the whole council of God. Many members came home to the church under his ministry here as well as two ministers have been ordained; Elder Kenneth R. Key, and Elder Leonard Key. He was blessed always, it seemed, to be able to say the right thing at the right time. His words of comfort were soothing and he was never too busy or occupied that he was not ready to go when called. He loved the people and had a desire to share with them in their sorrows as well as rejoicing with them.

The church has maintained a stable membership through the years and others would come from far and near to hear him preach. He loved the doctrine of salvation by Grace. He would often say, "I count my life not dear to myself," but was willing to spend and be spent in defense of this doctrine. He not only had a good report within the church but also without. He was able to live and get along with all men. He was loved not only at home but abroad. He was always welcomed and well received in other associations and churches from the east to the west and from the mountains to the sea.

As we speak of the ministry of Elder King, we want to acknowledge also the faithfulness of his loving wife Bronna. Never two people walked closer than they. She answered many calls with him to sick beds and where death had come. Without a word spoken, just their presence when they came together seemed to bring comfort to us. We share with her in her loss and pray God's continued blessings to abide with her.

Now may the same abiding Grace make us submissive that we may press onward, and that it might be said of us when we too depart this life, that our eye was not dim and that our vision was cast toward that eternal city whose builder and maker is God.

Submitted by Elder Kenneth R. Key, as requested by the church in our last conference meeting. Brother Wayne Edwards, Clerk.

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT
LURA MAUD MATHEWS

Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas, feels keenly the loss of one of our members, Sister Lura Maud Mathews, who was born December 7, 1890, and died Monday, February 22, 1971, at the age of eighty years, two months and fifteen days.

She is survived by five sons, five daughters, one brother, thirty grandchildren, fifty-eight great grandchildren, and one great great grandchild, and a great number of friends.

Sister Mathews was a beloved member among the Primitive Baptists for over thirty years and a member of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church since April 30, 1960. She attended her church faithfully until ill health in later years prevented her regular attendance.

Her funeral was conducted at Saints Rest Church on February 25, 1971, by her pastor, Elder Carey C. Morris, and it was attended by a great host of her relatives, friends, neighbors and loved ones who mourn her passing.

Burial was at Parkdale Cemetery in Arlington, Texas, beside the mortal remains of her husband, George W. Mathews, there to await the resurrection day.

We, the members of Saints Rest Church, extend our sympathy to the family of Sister Mathews in their loss, and hereby express our undying respect for her.

BE IT RESOLVED, That one copy of this resolution be sent to the family, one copy to the *Signs of the Times*, and one copy become a permanent part of the church records.

Written by the direction of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church during the regular quarterly conference on March 7, 1971.

Elder Carey C. Morris, Moderator
Deacon Dean G. Connell, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 139 DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1971 NO. 8

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8/71
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"THE VENERABLE HOUSE IN THE VALLEY"

By Mary L. Hellings

The famous Meeting House in Hopewell is the oldest Old School Baptist Church in New Jersey, and figured prominently in events during the Revolutionary War. Every since the church was organized within these walls it has stood firm on the fundamental principles of doctrine and practice of the apostolic church on which it was founded.

Through the life-trials of its history many and varied have been the stirring and momentous events. Time has mellowed the old brick walls; it has had a new slate roof; and a Trust has been established to preserve and care for it. Many of the benches are now vacant when the congregation assembles for meetings. I can well remember the downstair benches were filled when I was a little girl, and used to count the window panes to keep awake during the long sermons.

Now the history of this venerable house is even richer since Colonial lore in the Valley where Elder John Gano, a chaplain in Washington's army during the Revolution, was a member in this church; and John Hart, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, donated the land on which the meeting house was constructed.

Today we stand upon the threshold of another era, and face other forms of turmoil and strife, and a falling away of those seeking a home in the household of faith; still within its walls the old charm is ever present, and time has not changed the long abiding peace that never seems to grow old or commonplace. To some it may seem quaint and old fashioned, to another, a haven of rest within its strong walls.

(The above was published in the *Hopewell Valley News* of July 1, 1971 for the Fourth of July Celebration held around John Hart's monument on Monday, July 5th.)

APPRECIATES HIS HOME WITH THE BRETHREN

11458 Hartley Road
Houston, Texas 77016

Dear Brethren Spangler and Wood:

You will find enclosed check for $10.00 for two years' renewal, and balance for use as you see fit.

I am poor in spirit and do not feel I am gifted to write as some of the brethren and sisters write. They write such wonderful letters. I think at times that I do not know what I would do without the home I have with the Primitive Baptists.

I just attended a wonderful Primitive Baptist meeting at Altus, Oklahoma — Brother C. M. Haygood, Pastor. After the meeting, as I began to tell them all goodby, several of the brethren cautioned me to be careful on the road, as I was four hundred and seventy-five miles back to Houston. The Lord brought me back safely through two awful hail storms about

seventy-five miles apart. I expected most any time for my windshield to be knocked out, or the windows of the car. There was much lightning and rain with the storm. As I kept driving, it seemed there was a presence with me which made me have no fear. Later the Lord did reveal it to me in the 23rd Psalm: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

My love to all the writers and readers of the *Signs*. A little one living with the hope the Lord has given me.

C. L. Berry

ENJOYS READING THE *SIGNS*

902 Maple Ave.
Torrance, Cal. 90503

Dear Editors:

Enclosed find money order for four dollars for another year's subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. I do so much enjoy the good reading each month. My time is growing shorter for I will be 86 in November, and I do not want to miss one copy.

As long as I can remember it came to my mother's home, and was of much comfort to me. It contains the truth written by those to whom the dear Lord has revealed the truth.

I would love to meet the eastern brethren again as I once did at our associations. I have been living with my son and family here for nearly six years. Have met some dear brethren here and enjoy our meetings.

May the blessed Lord give you all health and strength to continue the *Signs of the Times*. It seems that such good reading is needed more now than ever.

Sister Neva Brooks

EXPERIENCE

211 Riverview Street
Rocky Mount, Va.

Dear Editors and Readers of
The Signs of the Times:

I will try to write something of what the Lord has done for me, if He will guide me.

My father and mother were Primitive Baptists, but that did not make me one, if I am one; I hope and pray that I am. My mother died March 5, 1893. Many times do I remember hearing her sing, "Won't that be a happy meeting when we all get there?" Surely it will be a happy meeting if we are blessed to be there. My father died December 3, 1932. (Elder S. O. Plybon — Ed.)

I was eighty-three years old November 27, 1970. I have had five operations, and my finger off besides; but I tell it in the stand and out, that I thank the good Lord that I am able to get around. He is the one to thank.

When I was just a boy, many times did I get down on my knees and beg the good Lord to have mercy on me a poor sinner. I did not beg for justice at all. On the 28th day of August, 1907, I was in the field at work, and I felt all the morning that I was going to die and be forever lost. It got so heavy on me that I got down on my knees and laid my face upon the ground and begged the Lord for mercy. I raised up singing "Amazing Grace." I went to the house thinking that I would tell papa, but I could not tell him at that time. That night I was upstairs lying on my bed, and I heard pretty singing. There were three little angels dazzling over me. They were white and just alike. When they went out I was so happy.

The next morning when I went out of doors, it looked like the leaves and everything were praising the Lord for me; and I was so happy. I had never seen a morning like that before. After that I dreamed that papa and I were

out in the river and the water was so pretty and clear. I looked back at the bank and there was a crowd of people there.

Papa told me at the breakfast table to go to the mill: He would measure the wheat while I hooked the horses to the wagon. I finished eating and went to where papa was measuring the wheat. He said, "Son, why don't you hook up the horses to the wagon?" I went up to him and put my arms around his neck, and said, "Papa, I want you to pray for me." Tears were running down his cheeks, and he said, "Son, I have tried to pray for you many times." He told me not to join any church until I was sure which church I wanted to join. I told him I hadn't believed anything but the Primitive Baptists for several years. That was the appointed time for me to tell him, and I could not tell him until that time.

The 14th day of September, 1907, was meeting time at Lynville Church, and papa announced an "open door" for the reception of members. I did not feel worthy but I went up and offered to the church, for I wanted a home with them. I was received and was baptized the morning of September 15, 1907. When I got to the water, it was so pretty and clear just like I dreamed. Papa and I went into the water; and I looked back at the bank and there was the crowd as I had dreamed seeing it. When papa raised me out of the water, I was so happy. It was communion and feetwashing time there; and it was a happy day for me.

My dear readers, so many times I have tried to pray and didn't feel it went as high as my head; and again sometimes I am made to feel that I did pray. What is prayer? A sincere desire and preparation of the heart: and the good Lord is the only one that can give us a heart to pray.

Not long after I joined the church I felt a burden to preach. My dear wife and I were married December 15, 1909. The burden got heavier and heavier but I did not tell my wife until June 12, 1922. I was cutting wheat and she was binding it. The wind was blowing, and I set my cradle down and said, "We can't do anything but be still and know that He is God." We went to dinner, and when I sat down at the table something happened to me. When I came to myself my family had me lying on the bed, and the heavens were opened to me. I said to my wife, "I have died to the ministry, I have got to preach." She said, "I saw you in a dream or vision preaching before we were married."

Many times I went into the woods, got down on my knees, and said, "Lord, I had rather die than go to the stand." One day I was in the tobacco field by myself. I hope the good Lord was with me, for He made me willing. I said, "Lord, if you will spare me until the second Saturday, I will go and do the best I can with the ability you give me." I got easy then.

When the second Saturday came, at the breakfast table my wife asked, "Are you going to the meeting this morning?" I told her I was going to plow corn. I went to plowing, thinking I would get out of going to meeting. Oh, I felt so unworthy! I said, "O Lord, if I am deceived in this matter, undeceive me." I asked Him to make the burden heavier on me if it was for me to preach the glorious gospel. I got in such a fix I thought I was going to die if I didn't go to the meeting. My wife and I went, and papa was in the stand when we got there. He motioned for me to come to the stand; and I went. He told me to pick out a song and to introduce the services. I did, and found relief. That was July 8, 1922. We sang, "God moves in a mysterious way." I don't remember what I read for a text.

The good Lord gave me a hope, and I wouldn't exchange it for this whole world's goods, if I could. That hope reaches far beyond this unfriendly world. The 40th chapter of Isaiah says, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." Preaching the gospel is to feed the sheep and lambs and com-

fort them. God makes the sheep, and He calls his servants out to feed them. The 40th chapter also says, "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand forever." I believe that the good Lord is the only one that can save a poor sinner. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." I hope I have been born again of that Spirit. Sometimes I am made to believe that I am, but for nothing I could have done to deserve it. The Lord did it all for me. He left nothing undone.

Sometimes I am down in the valley, and when I get there I have to stay there until He raises me out at His own appointed time. How sweet it is when we can feel that Jesus is nigh. When He makes us happy there is nothing that will come up to it.

It has been on my mind for some time to write to the *Signs of the Times,* so I have written of some of the wonderful things I feel the Lord has done for me. If you think them worthy to print you can put them in your paper.

In bonds of love,
Elder Posey Plybon

ENJOYED THREE MEETINGS

Bassett, Va. 24055

Dear Elder Spangler:

If it is the Lord's will I would love to tell you a little of how I enjoyed the wonderful meetings I have been blessed to attend.

At the Martinsville Meeting House Elder Stokes and many other dear ones were there. Elder Ingram was blessed greatly in prayer. The songs were sweet and wonderful to me. Elder Stokes was blessed to preach the truth, as it is in Jesus, and it was food to my poor, hungry soul; and I feel so unworthy of such blessings. These blessings are given to God's chosen people, and I often fear that I am not one, but it is wonderful to be with them and hear them preach, pray and sing.

Then we met the dear ones at Reed Creek Church, and it was good to be there. Then we were at the Riverview Meeting. There were seven Elders there, including Elder Wayne Mitchell, who was wonderfully blessed to preach Jesus the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

I was given the sweet pleasure of meeting with the brethren at these three meetings in April; and I thought that it was too wonderful for me as vile and sinful as I am. Yet I was filled with His great love until I thought, O the great love of God, it is so sacred it fills me to overflowing; and I felt that my sorrows, trials, ups and downs, were nothing to compare with such great love.

Dear Editors of the *Signs of the Times,* please pray for me who am less than the least, if one at all.

Callie Clark

IN MERCY GIVEN

A few minutes ago, as I sat meditating on the goodness of the Lord to me in the years that are past, suddenly an experience of long ago came to my mind with sweet remembrance: It was a cold, grey, sunless day almost immediately after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and our declaration of war. Only three weeks before, my brothers and I had buried our father and just a few months before, our mother. Now I had just come from the train where I had said good-bye to my brother with whom I had lived all our lives and to whom I was deeply devoted. He had been called to war to the same military installation where my older brother died in October, 1918, expecting to be sent overseas almost immediately. As I returned to the house, alone and with an aching heart, I faltered at the steps, feeling I could not go in, but of course, I had no choice. As I entered the house, the awful silence seemed unbearable and I turned on the radio to a station where I knew that from time

to time during the day, some of our grand old hymns were sung. As the sound came on, a voice was beginning to sing the third verse of NEARER MY GOD TO THEE:

> "There let the way appear
> Steps unto heaven;
> *All that thou sendest me*
> *In mercy given.*"

I shall never have words to express what those lines meant to me at that moment, — the healing balm they brought to my sore heart. Deep in my soul, I felt it was the voice, not of the singer, but of the Lord who spoke those words to me. It was just what I needed and He always supplies our *need.* He promises to do this and His promises are, like Himself, immutable. Does anyone, *can* anyone believe it just happened that those words were sung at just that moment? Not the whole world could convince me that it was not the Lord who spoke to me that day, and almost before I knew it, I was singing through my tears, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." In the years that have passed since that day, I have learned, — no, I have been taught, — that each circumstance of life, whether of praise, joy, peace, comfort, benefit resignation to God's will — or pain, trial, conflict, sorrow, loss, even periods of spiritual emptiness, *all* are from the Lord and are *in mercy given.*

It seems that ordinarily we think of our trials as being chastisement. Not always so! Many times these experiences are given to restore our souls, to renew our faith, to bring us to His dear feet begging for His grace, begging that He will send refreshing showers to enliven His garden of love, imploring His indulgence that we be kept close to Him and humble before His people. I have lived a long time and have, I hope, made many observations, one of which is that those of the Lord's people who have suffered most, who have known the deepest sorrow and loss, who have been "down to the sea in ships and done business in great waters," are the very ones in whom the light of God's mercy and grace shines brightest. These have seen "the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep." I have also observed that the very same thing which will harden and embitter the unbeliever will soften, sweeten and make tender the Lord's own.

I am thinking at this moment of our dear Sister Mollie Fooks, who has seen the grave close over the forms of her parents, all her brothers and sisters, her husband and one by one, all of her three children. Yet I think I know of no one in whom the light of the indwelling Spirit shines more brightly. It has seemed that with each trial and loss, her faith has been strengthened, her testimony made clearer. I have known others: a friend who has lost two husbands. At the death of the first, she felt bitter and questioned why the Lord had done that to her. Between then and the time she lost the second, she was brought to see the hand of the Lord in all things, and although she loved him fully as much as the first, she bore her sorrow with resignation, with no question as to the wisdom and goodness of the Lord in taking him. A sister in the church, who, with her little boy, her only son, at death's door, besought the Lord to spare him and as she prayed, the Lord showed her that He was just as gracious in taking the child as in sparing him. Oh, my soul, what a Savior!

Of course, these things seem strange to one to whom the goodness and mercy of the Lord has never been revealed, but to us who have "tasted that the Lord is gracious"; who so many, many times have felt the gentle, tender wooing of the Holy Spirit, know that our God is working ALL THINGS for our eternal good and whether we dwell in the sunshine or in the cloud, ALL THINGS are from Him who loved us unto death, who is now at the right hand of the Father in our behalf and who is COMING AGAIN to "receive us unto Himself, that where He is,

there we may be also." This "earnest of our inheritance" is that which enables us to "press forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." If God has ever looked upon us in mercy, we have that "high calling" and press toward the mark for the prize.

We read in the book of James, "Every good and perfect gift is from above," and so on, but we do not always recognize the dealings of the Lord as good and perfect gifts *at the time.* Many times I have been denied things I thought I wanted and needed, only to be shown, sometimes years later, that the denials of the Lord were also *in mercy given.*

I do not know, none of us know, what lies ahead for us while we stay in this unfriendly and ungodly world, but if only we may be blest to see the Lord as our Shepherd, to believe in our hearts that "our times are in His hands," that all things proceed from Him and are *in mercy given,* then "we shall not fear, though the earth be removed and the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." (Psalm 46:1)

May we be given to follow the Apostle's exhortation "Wherefore, comfort one another with these words."

My love and a deep feeling of kinship to everyone, everywhere, who loves my dear Redeemer, my Savior and my Lord.

Mildred V. Dykes
1114 Mt. Hermon Road
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

ELDER WINFREY PREACHES IN NACHES, WASHINGTON

On Saturday and Sunday, May 29th and 30th, the little Pleasant Grove Church of Primitive Baptists in Naches, Washington, met to hear Elder W. A. Winfrey of Liberal, Kansas, preach forcefully to those gathered there from hundreds of miles distance from points in Washington and Oregon. Visiting Elders seldom come into our State, other than Elder D. V. Spangler who has, in late years, come west to the Pacific Coast to be amongst the few (30 or more) scattered members in Washington and Oregon. His last trip west was in August last year.

Elder Winfrey and wife were visiting in Kalmath Falls, in the extreme southern part of Oregon, and he graciously gave of his time to travel some 400 miles to reach Naches, after being invited to preach there.

Attending the meeting was our dear Elder Ernest Attebery and wife from Hermiston, Oregon. He is physically unable to stand and preach but it was so good to have him with us.

Brother Ben F. Preston of the Dalles, Oregon, a member of the Church in Naches and a Deacon, also gave the little Church, inspired words on the Scriptures as he was blessed to understand them.

The Saturday services were in the home of Sister Josie C. Mitchell, and on Sunday the little group gathered in the home of Sister Daisy Baker. Both these dear Sisters are nearing their 90th year in age and some other members are well up in their 80's. It was most wonderful that the Good Lord directed Elder Winfrey's footsteps to Naches to preach to those gathered there the unsearchable riches of God and of His Love and Power in keeping His little ones in His everlasting arms here and in the world to come when He calls them home.

Wm. O. Hall
Mt. Vernon, Wash.

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION IN 1902

(Written by Elder Asa D. Shortt)

We will address you by way of a Circular Letter, calling your attention to the words, "Let brotherly love continue." (Hebrews 13:1) Love is not only one of the graces of the Spirit, but it is also one of the attributes of

God. Love is the fulfilling of the law, and on love hangs all the law and the prophets. When we love God supremely great, we are sure to love the household of faith, for in it they are inseparately connected. When we fail to let brotherly love continue, it should be a testimony unto us that the love of God is not manifesting itself in our hearts. "Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Why is charity the greatest? There are several reasons, and we will speak of some of them. "Charity shall cover the multitude of sins," and will enable us to love one another freely for Jesus' sake. It also enables us to bear persecution; and when we are reviled, to revile not again; and, also, to open the bowels of our compassion to the poor and needy of the household of faith: it, also, makes us willing in every particular to bear one another's burdens.

Another reason why charity is greater than faith and hope is, because it is the producer of both faith and hope: for all the gifts in the church ere long will fail or pass away except charity, which is the love of God. Charity will not only abide with us here, but, when we quit the stage of action, we shall realize it in full, and then that which is in part will be done away. Love is the mainspring of all our obedience to God, and to one another. When this love is manifested in our walk, brotherly love is sure to continue. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to skirts of his garments."

This is typical of the anointing of Christ and the church. For Jesus was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, and the fellows are every child of grace, or the bride the Lamb's wife. So, in a wonderful sense, the bride and her husband are one. This is why God's children love one another. It would almost be an impossibility for one to hate a member of his mortal body, though it be ever so uncomely. So, in like manner, when the love of God is in our hearts, we love every one that bears the image of Jesus, though their mortal body may be ever so uncomely. When the church meets together in love, they, in a most wonderful sense, are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit. Then none of them are the greatest; and why? When the question was asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Jesus set a little child in the midst of them and said, "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Then we should desire to be humble: for true humbleness is a blessing bestowed upon us by the Lord.

We wish to call your attention to what Jesus said in another place. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." This embraces everything that is commanded in the Scriptures for the children of God to do. One commandment is, "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." If we fail to assemble ourselves together often, it shows that we are in a lamentable condition. Again it is said, "Then they that fear the Lord spake often one to another: and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." There is no better way to do this than to be brought face to face while talking one to another, that we may behold in each other's face the sincerity that the love of God produces, and which sometimes makes a lasting remembrance in our minds. Some have thought that this is that book of remembrance, and we think so too: for it is said, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." One reason why we love to assembly ourselves together is, that we may behold the face of Jesus in the church; and another reason is, we are command-

ed of the Lord to do so. In conclusion we will say, May the love of God abide in your hearts to the glorifying of the name of Jesus.

(Republished by request)

EZEKIEL 34:19

"And as for my flock, they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet; and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet."

Throughout the entire writings of the Prophets of old the children of God are referred to as sheep. What are some of the distinguishing characteristics of sheep which can be compared to the characteristics of God's children? Being humble, easily led to slaughter, and depending upon the protection of the Shepherd, are comparable to each. God's children have been scattered throughout the earth and are depending upon Christ to protect them from their enemies. Christ has not forsaken his people but has led them into places where they can eat and drink of God's Holy Word.

The world has trampled the Doctrine of which the Child of Grace has been made to eat. We could compare the world to a goat which eats of anything which is pleasing to nature. The Word of God is trodden down and rejected. The Sheep of God have to eat that which is rejected by the world. A lamb can survive on a pasture after the cattle have moved on because they could not eat any more of the grass. But the sheep can nibble a bunch of grass down to the roots. God has given his people a mouth with the ability to taste of the word which man cannot receive. God's children are made to seek for that precious Food when there seems to be none.

Christ through his servants has cast the sound of the Gospel Trumpet. When a sinner has heard this sound, he is made to desire more; and this causes him to search the scriptures. When only one note of that sound is heard, what a feast it is. This gives a weak sinner strength and causes him to praise God. He is given a new song and is able to lift his eyes toward the hills of Zion to praise the Eternal Father.

One day the Shepherd shall come to gather his flock and carry them into a pasture which has not been trodden upon by man. Christ promised this when He said, "In My Father's House are many Mansions, If it were not so I would have told you. I go away to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, then surely I will come again and receive you unto myself."

John was blessed to see the revelation of things to come. He saw the Holy City, a new Jerusalem coming down from God out of Heaven, as a bride prepared for the marriage. The Groom is Christ Jesus and I can only hope that I shall be called into that Holy Ceremony.

Through the Blood of Christ, the chosen children of God have been redeemed. Man could not pay the law which the first man Adam disobeyed; because, natural man cannot discern the things which are Spiritual. While John the Baptist was preaching, he knew that one would come after him to baptize with the Holy Ghost and fire.

The flock of God has received that baptism and no one can take one of these little lambs out of that flock nor add one to it. That flock shall be complete and shall be changed into the likeness of Jesus Christ. These have tasted of the flesh and drunk the blood of Christ. When Christ told this to the people following him, they turned and followed no more. Then Christ asked Peter would he also depart. I hope that we can witness with Peter when he said, "To whom shall we go for Thou hast words of eternal life."

Therefore, God has prepared a people to be called the Sons of God. They are as sheep and are scattered throughout the earth. God has not forsaken this people, but will raise them up the last day and clothe them in a Robe of Right-

eousness. Then the fullness of God's Kingdom can be viewed and his praises sung without ceasing.

May God continue to bless us with his rich mercies and our hope of eternal life. "It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God who showeth Mercy."

(Elder) Curtis Rains
Kenly, N. C. 27542

ELDER KEENE'S ARTICLE CONCLUDED

The night is far spent, and the angel and Jacob continue their wrestling. But the Lord will not contend forever, he will bring his dealings with his people to a gracious conclusion.

Our heavenly Father ever has our welfare in view, no matter how severe the discipline. Though he casts us down, and we are laid in the deeps, he will bring us up again from the depths of the seas, and exalt us in due time at his own right hand in heavenly places.

Thus, when the angel of the Lord saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh, and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. Thus as the ascension of the morning was approaching, by a mysterious, divine touch Jacob's thigh is put out of joint. This was a master stroke. Jacob can no longer stand upon his feet, he sinks, he falls in his anguish to the ground.

Did Jacob loosen his hold of the man as he sank prostrate to the earth? No; the man that wrestled with him all night is down with him too, held fast in his embrace.

When we in our troubles could hold up no longer, did we yield to despair? Did our hearts rather cry out, "Other refuge have I none, hangs my helpless soul on thee."

When Jacob was lowest, then he was uppermost; when he was weakest, then he was strongest. Out of weakness he was made strong. This is a divine paradox so often verified in the experience of the saints. There can be no mistake in affirming that a divine power was imparted to Jacob, a poor, sinful creature to wrestle with the man. But surely Jacob is done for, vanquished, he will slacken his hold, for he can rise no more. Will he not now cry out, "Enough, I yield, thou hast gained the mastery?" Not so.

Shall I say that amidst his agonies the poor, prostrate cripple tightened his grip? What a scene is this just before the break of day; wrestling still, though no longer able to stand upon his feet. What tossings to and fro have also been going on in the heart of Jacob.

Before the man began to wrestle with him he was greatly agitated, and his conflicts then taxed all his energies. So Jacob now is engaged in a two-fold conflict. This enquiry also exercises his soul, "Who is this that wrestles with me? The darkness of the night is upon me, and I can not see his face." So the child of God often inquires, "These sharp temptations, adversities and trials that I wrestle with, are they friends or foes?"

The day breaketh. Draw nearer with me, fellow witnesses of this scene. See, one of the wrestlers weepeth. There course the tears down his cheeks. Listen, he maketh supplications. Which one is it that weepeth and is the suppliant? The weeping wrestler is the one, the hollow of whose thigh is out of joint. (Hosea 12:4)

Jacob wept and made supplication. The day breaketh. It was then Jacob obtained his first glimpses of the face of the mighty wrestler, and such glimpses did he have of the one bending over him, that his heart was wholly persuaded it was not a foe, but one whose look was tender mercy toward the fallen one.

When the Lord has brought you low, has it been revealed to thee, as the day breaketh, that he who has afflicted thee, whose providences have prostrated you, is thy gracious Friend, full of tender pity? Jacob wept and made supplica-

tion unto him.

All the dear family of God have their times of weeping. Indeed, to some much of life's pilgrimage is in the vale of tears. A tearless religion is not the religion of Christ, for the Spirit of God so teaches. The elect that in a heart feeling way are made to feel their estrangement from the Holy One of Israel, and they mourn every one for his iniquity. (Ezek. 7:16)

The causes of the tears of the saints are manifold. They weep when in captivity to the enemy. (Psalm 137) And when they tread the homeward pathway they come with weeping and supplications. (Jer. 31:9) Contrite souls even in our own day water their couch with their tears. (Psalm 6:6) Peter wept bitterly. Hezekiah wept sore. There are seasons when the daughter of Zion weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks. (Lam. 1:2) "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Then she sings, and her face is radiant with smiles, for the Lord has forgiven all her sins, he hath scattered her foes, he has lifted up the light of his countenance upon her.

"And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." Jacob might say, Shall I let thee go, and wilt thou leave me a poor, disabled cripple, in the dust?

"Lord, I can not let thee go,
Till a blessing thou bestow;
Do not turn away thy face,
Mine's an urgent, pressing case.
No, I must maintain my hold,
'Tis thy goodness makes me bold;
I can no denial take,
When I plead for Jesus' sake."

"Except thou bless me." Thy blessing shall dry my tears, heal my woes and strengthen me. With thy blessing I will fear no evil, I can face Esau and his four hundred men, "Let them curse, but bless thou." (Psalm 109:28) Leave me not neither forsake me, give me first thy benediction. Thou camest as an adversary, and hast brought me in anguish into the dust of the earth, now, only as a Friend can I let thee go. Thou camest with a frown, now leave thy smile with me. Thou wast angry with me, let thine anger be turned away, and comfort me with thy blessing.

O, dear reader, whatever thou hast, if thou lackest the blessing of the Lord, how destitute thou art!

"And he said unto him, What is thy name?" and he said, "Jacob." This inquiry and Jacob's answer is full of meaning. There was signified in it Jacob's unbrotherly conduct.

Esau in his exceeding bitter cry exclaimed, "Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and behold, now he hath taken away my blessing." (Gen. 27:36)

The Lord is constantly drawing forth from his people the confession of their low estate, and it is not with a trifling tongue they answer the Lord's searching inquiry, but in lowliness of heart they bow at his feet, confessing their name to be Jacob: A worm, (Isaiah 41:4); the chief of sinners, (1 Tim. 1:15); ready to perish, (Deut. 26:5); dust and ashes, (Gen. 18:27).

When Jacob had acknowledged his name, did the angel say, Thou art too unworthy, thou hast been too contemptably mean to have my blessing? O no! In such exceeding riches of grace the Lord deals with the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory, for on them he will make known the riches of his glory, and Jacob was one of such vessels of mercy. "I have loved you, saith the Lord: yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, I hated Esau." Here we have displayed the holy and glorious sovereignty of Jehovah's love.

"And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with man, and hast prevailed." O, this in truth is raising up the poor out of the dust, and lifting up the beggar from the dunghill, to set him among

princes, and to make him inherit the throne of glory. (1 Sam. 2:28) As he spake these words methinks I see the man and Israel arising from the dust. Yes, when the man arose Israel was with him. The everlasting arms lifted up the lame man, and in tender compassion put his thigh in joint again. (Although he ever after had a remembrance of this in the sinew that shrank.)

The Lord bringeth low and lifteth up. How often are believers brought low through oppression, affliction and sorrow; our pride and self-sufficiency have to be so often brought to naught. He brings down our heart with labor; we fall down, and there is none to help. "I was brought low and he helped me." This is ever the experience of the household of God.

"Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel." The Lord gives his people another name, a new name. (Isaiah 62:2) The first name is significant of what we are in our fallen estate, base and sinful, earthy, a name declaring our dishonor, a name upon which reproach and condemnation rest, a name in which we are ashamed and weep before God.

"But thou shalt no more be termed forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married." (Isaiah 62:4) "Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." (Eph. 2:19) "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." (Gal. 4:7)

The Lord pronounced Jacob a prince. This honor have all the saints, for our mighty Savior who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father. "As a prince hast thou power with God and with man, and hast prevailed." This was God given power. Glorious illustrations of this are given in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. "Through faith they subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouth of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

The people of God according to their day, the circumstances they are in, the work to be performed, are endued with power from on high. Even the wonderful privilege of having power with God flows from the gracious power of God. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much, and this spirit of supplication the Lord pours down upon his suppliants. (Zech. 12:10)

Our power with God in prayer at his footstool ever proceeds from the glorious and precious fact that we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. Through him, through the sacrifice and blood, his obedience and eternal excellency we have access, acceptance, favor and power with God, and in triumphant faith we sometimes sing, "We shall be more than conquerors through him that loved us."

"And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, "Wherefore is it that thou doest ask after my name? And he blessed him there."

"Thy name." In what relationship do we stand to each other? How shalt I think of thee when thou art absent, removed from my sight? From the very dawn of the Lord's dealings with his own they begin to ask after his name. How hallowed is his name! and as the name of the Lord is unfolded to them by the Holy Spirit, they reverently affectionately and prayerfully think upon his name; and his wondrous works in creation, his providences, and the gospel of Christ declare to them how near is his name. (Psalm 75:1)

"Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name?" Ay, Lord, thou thyself knowest. So poor, weak and sinful am

I. Is thy name Jesus, art thou my Savior? Is it Redeemer, and hast thou ransomed me from hell? Is thy name Shepherd, Husband, Friend, the Lord our Righteousness, Emmanuel, Incarnate Love? Art thou all this to a poor sinner like me?

And he blessed him there on the field of conflict. He anointed him with it. The dark bitter night is over, and the morning finds Jacob no longer "greatly afraid and distressed," but there he stands in princely majesty, for his name is Israel.

Now he can meet Esau. "And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.

"And as he passed over Peniel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh. Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew which shrank."

Frederick W. Keene

(This article was published in the March, 1926, issue of *The Lone Pilgrim,* and submitted for republication by Elder W. W. Hudson.)

HAS MET ALL OF THE EDITORS

1704 Camp Street
Hattiesburg, Miss. 39401

Dear Editors:

It gives me great pleasure to be able to say that I have met all of the dear editors of the *Signs of the Times,* and heard each of them preach; and, if I know anything about the truth, they preach the same doctrine which I hope to believe.

Am enclosng check for two year's subscription. It is all I get in the way of preaching down here, as I live here with my widowed daughter and I am nearly eighty years old. It is two hundred fifty miles to the Buttahatchie Association, the nearest one to me; and still farther to the Five Mile Creek Association. My membership is at Mt. Zion Church, Birmingham, Ala.

I get in a low mood sometimes; then am made to thank God for all his goodness and mercy to me. I am often ashamed of myself for I don't mean to complain.

My love to each of you and your dear companions. I have met each of them, and spent a night at Elder and Sister Wood's; also at Elder and Sister Lambert's and Elder and Sister Griffin's many times. May the Lord bless you all.

In hope,
Myrtie Foster

PRECIOUS READING

106 Moore Street
Clinton, Ky. 42031

Dear Kindred in the Lord:

It is time to renew my subscription for the *Signs of the Times,* which is the most precious reading I find because it has so many different experiences of the brethren, and the teaching of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Back yonder in the beginning God chose a people in Christ according to His own good pleasure, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began. O this doctrine which comes down as drops of rain! Solomon said, "Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time for the singing of birds is come and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." Isn't it sweet when our old winter is past and we see the beauty of Spring;

then we know that Summer is nigh.

Our church clerk, Brother J. E. Jones, died two years ago, which made us sad for he was much loved by everyone who knew him. He was a faithful soldier of the cross. Please make the change indicated when you publish the next church notices.

I enclose a check for $10.00 for two year's subscription, use the other for yourself.

An unworthy creature,
Elmer Prince

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association convenes, the Lord willing with the church at Lower Town Creek, Edgecombe County, N. C., beginning Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1971, and continuing through Sunday.

The church is located just off Highway 43 between Pinetops, N. C. and Rocky Mount, N. C. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 3
Tarboro, N. C.

TAKING ORDERS FOR BIBLES

Sister Pearl Dudley, a member of Sandy Level Church and a cripple, is taking orders for King James Bibles. One is white, $6.00 each, and a larger one is black, $10.00 each. Both have leatherette backs.

She expects to be at the Pigg River Association to be held in the Franklin County High School, Rocky Mount, Virginia, the last two days in July, and first Sunday in August, and will have samples. She will be glad to talk with anyone interested. Her address is: Mrs. Pearl Dudley, Rt. 1, Box 382, Hardy, Va. 24101. Phone number 721-2541.

ORIGINAL WHITE OAK UNION

The next session of the *Original White Oak Union* is appointed to be held with Stump Sound Church, Onslow County, N. C., fifth Saturday and Sunday in August, 1971. The church is located about one mile East of Holly Ridge, North Carolina.

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and worship with us.

L. H. Southerland, Clerk

MEETINGS TO CONTINUE
ON THE SECOND SUNDAYS

The Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church of Naches, Washington, voted at their last business meeting to continue holding their meetings on the second Sundays in each month, instead of the fourth Sundays as announced last month.

We desire this to be published in the *Signs of the Times* when convenient,

Daisy Baker

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the *Contentnea Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, with North East Church, Onslow County, N. C. the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in August, 1971.

The church is just off Highway 24 between Jacksonville and Swansboro, N. C. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stalling, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 3, Tarboro, N. C.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND
(To June 1, 1971)

Myrtle Black, Neb.	$50.00
Blanche Cox, N. C.	2.00
Allie Neal, Ill.	3.00
C. R. Bird, N. C.	3.00
Less L. Craven, N. C.	5.00
Elder C. N. Bunn, Va.	3.00
Mrs. W. D. Roberts, N. C.	3.00
Lavrenia Biggs, Tenn.	3.00
Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.	2.00
Mrs. R. F. Walker, N. C.	1.00
A. M. Rice, N. C.	1.00
Mrs. J. E. Jones, Colo.	1.00
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Elder W. D. Griffin, Ala.	1.00
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Warnard Locke, Ky.	3.00
Mrs. D. C. Turner, Calif.	1.00
Mary L. Hellings, N. J.	1.60
A. T. McCollum, Can.	3.00

Mrs. S. B. Beasley, N. C.	5.00
Mrs. Ernest Gibson, Ga.	3.00
J. E. Lawrence, Va.	3.00
Ralph Lucas, Va.	2.00
Mrs. Rena Lawrence, Va.	3.00
Marietta Neeman, S. Dak.	6.00

PLEASE NOTE: We find it necessary to charge fifty cents each, postage paid, for extra copies of the *Signs*. This does not include copies lost in the mails, which are supplied free. All copies of the *Signs* are mailed at the same time. If your copy is two or three weeks after the first of the month in arriving, it is not the fault of the publishers. They are mailed before the first of each month.

We always welcome letters and articles from the brethren for publication. Some of the Elders are faithful in remembering that we need their support by their writings and in handling subscriptions; and we wish that more would do the same.

EDITORS

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, with Wilson Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in August, 1971.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 203
Stokes, N. C. 27884

EASTERN UNION

The next session of the *Eastern Union* will convene, if the Lord wills, with the church at Concord on Saturday and fifth Sunday in August, 1971.

All lovers of salvation by the grace of God are invited to come and be with us. A special invitation is extended to our ministering brethren.

Those traveling east will take No. 64 highway to Creswell, N. C., make a right turn and go two blocks, turn right on the Cherry Road about two miles to first church on the right.

N. L. Ambrose, Union Clerk

Danville, Virginia **August, 1971**

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All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances should be mailed to Danville, Virginia, as shown below. All notices of meetings and obituaries should be mailed directly to P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Virginia 22110. Articles for publication may be mailed to either address.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

EDITORIAL

"And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve life." (Genesis 45:4, 5)

"And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." (Genesis 50:19, 20)

Before I write any further there is a matter that must be settled once and

forever. That is this: I do not believe for a moment that what I believe is the standard for orthodoxy, nor do I believe that what any other man, or body, believes is a standard for the same. The only standard that I recognize as being the standard is the written word of God. However, that standard does not give me any authority (nor do I recognize any other man as having that authority) to declare non-fellowship for everybody that differs with me. I have yet to conduct a funeral and say over that corpse, and to the sorrowing relatives, that the dead person before me had gone to hell. Moreover, I have not said, nor do I have the least thought that anybody has the right to say, that everybody that differs with me are of the devil and that they are going to hell. I say these things because I have been accused of believing them because I am in nominal fellowship with these very things.

Several years ago I stopped with an elderly couple who were Methodists by affiliation. I believe that they loved things that were lovely (Col. 4:8), and I enjoyed my visit talking about that righteousness which is by the faith of God. As I got ready to leave the elderly lady laid her arm on mine and said, "You cannot leave until you pray." Instantly there was given me an earnest desire to pray. I fell on my knees at their feet (they were not able to kneel) and if God ever gave me peace of mind in prayer it was at that time. I felt then, and I feel still, that I knelt among saints. In the last forty-five years my little offerings have gone among people of many opinions; my preaching and my speaking in prayer has been heard by thousands upon thousands. I would not be faithful if I told you that my writing and my preaching and my speaking in prayer had been received by all. But I look back now in what I am sure is the evening of my ministry, and I remember in much satisfaction and joy the many precious faces and letters of those that have received it as a savor unto life. Many of them have gone on; many others are lingering on the border of that fair land; even now I feel the drawing near of His glorious feet as He walks in the midst of His vineyard, and that it will not be long until I, too, shall join that train of followers to that city whose Maker and Builder is God. The writer and the speaker, with those spoken and written to, have been poor wayfaring sinners all of the way. We have not been agreed about many things but we have been shown the preciousness of Christ.

The best argument in the world to show that a man is wrong is for him to be intolerant of any views that oppose his own. He may be ever so right and correct in his views; he may go to great lengths in a letter preaching and writing the truth, and yet there not be an iota of gospel in it. That does not mean that he has got to compromise, but it does mean that none of us have a monopoly on being right or wrong.

Now to come to the text. It is a part of the inspired scriptures. No man has a right to explain it. Explaining things means that God did not clarify what was being said. I desire above everything else to expound a text, but I abhor explaining a text. If the Bible, if one text of the Bible, needs my wisdom or the wisdom of any dull mortal to explain what God meant to say, my readers are welcome to all of it. If, I say, God inspired men to write a book that needs me or you to unlock it, it means absolutely nothing to me, for all the books of men need that, and if God's book is like their book, just let me, being of the earth, have earthly books to deal with. In this, I am writing to you. I am not writing to you to call you a fool, nor any other bad name. I am not writing to you to antagonize you, and yet I well know that there is not a shred of compatibility between the natural mind and spiritual things. I am writing to you that know the joyful sound. If you do not know it please do not waste my time and yours in writing sarcasm and wit to me. Let

us say once and for all that the text is concise and to the point and means no more nor no less than what it says. I have heard the text *explained* so that it means that God did not have anything to do with sending Joseph down into Egypt. If putting construction on what God said is permissible, then by all means all men are right in what they believe.

Through God's tender mercy it has been my pleasure to hear the most of the predestinarian ministers. I have never heard any one of them advocate predestination any stronger than God presented it to these brethren of Joseph. Since I have much reason to believe that the humble followers of Jesus Christ are his brethren, I feel an urgent desire to follow in the footsteps of my Joseph and declare that while we, when we do wrong, mean it for evil, God means it for good.

I am not seeking debates. I will not reply to criticism. But I do not have any hesitancy in calling upon one and all to tell me this: In your heaping abuse upon those that believe in the unlimited predestination of God; in your venomous attacks upon those that believe that Paul meant the same thing in Romans 8:28 as Joseph did in the text at the head of this article; in your murder of good language to sustain the time worn theory that God has never purposed evil, I say, you that have employed this kind of reasoning, tell me, in a brotherly manner, just what Joseph had in mind. I am not seeking your apology for God; I am not seeking honor for myself for my sun is fast sinking; I am not asking for your opinion about anything; I do not want your saying that, If what Joseph said is the truth then so on and so on becomes the truth. I do not want any of that. I want you to say that what Joseph said is the truth and then for you to quit belittling those that agree with him.

Agreeable with what I have said, to wit, that "God is his own interpreter, and he will make it plain," and that his interpretation goes before him to the end that He says what He means to say and means just what he says, no more, nor no less, I would say that everything that inspiration tells us transpired in Joseph going down into Egypt was according to God's purpose. Much of this route was done in evil. It was evil in the brethren, it was evil in Potiphar's wife. Not one of those involved in this evil meant to be serving God; not one of them meant to be doing God's will. They were involved in gain for themselves; they were serving divers lusts and only that. They did not have, as an object, the glory of God; they did not realize that they were evil; they did not have any knowledge of the judgments of God. (See Psa. 36:1; Rom. 3:18; 11:33.)

We speak about chains. Chains are to hold together. Will any of my readers forge a chain and purposefully make a weak link in it when we know that it will be for the downfall of our purpose? Dear reader, would you forge a chain with a weak link, knowing that that weakness would thwart the end that you had in view? Now the question is: Would you do that? If you would not do that, why pour out vituperation upon not only your poor and afflicted brethren but upon Joseph as well as our spiritual Joseph (see Matt. 18:7). Our text embraces God doing something.

In correspondence with a lovely elder (one that I have read after all of my reading life, and one that I dearly esteem as a brother in Christ) he said, "After the storm is over and I have looked back over it all, I now think that what the Absolute brethren intended was to advocate the sovereignty of God." He further said, "I grant that God has a right to do with His children, as well as other creatures (especially man), as it pleases Him; that He does not necessarily withhold grace from us because we have sinned but that He might teach us how frail we are; that He might prepare us for trying temptations; that He might pre-

pare us for some greater service in His kingdom." These thoughts I would not find fault with.

However, there is more to God'.s sovereignty than I have seen in much of the writing about it. If He is sovereign then He IS. He can not be sovereign and at the same time desire something different. How sad it is (to nature) that my remembrancer is failing. I find myself confronted with problems that I can not solve nor fathom. If I had known and had the power I would not have been in a predicament like unto that. I cannot see the future, and I can not remember the past. If God is sovereign, he is not like that. If He knew before hand that *any* of His creatures would turn out different than what He made them for, and yet that He went on and made them that way, He is in worse shape than I am, for my failing is because that I did not know any better, but His failure is that He knew better but did not do better. That is a cheap brand of sovereignty.

I have never believed that God is the efficient cause of my sin. However, I do not wish to read nor to hear (not having desire nor time for such things) that God was under any compulsion in the creation of the world; that there was *anything* before that creation much less any thing *of* His creation that made *anything*; that He made *anything* that has failed to serve His purpose. I do not have the least idea that *anything* of the vast creation around me would have been had He not made it. I believe with all my heart that God made man upright for Solomon says that He did, and I do not believe that He was talking legalism when he said so.

The weakest argument that has ever been hurled at our precious people is this: If God did do what you say He did, then God is the cause or author of all the sin that is in the world. The man that advances such an argument is not even a fair debater, because the rules of parliament will not allow a man to charge what he thinks are the consequences of a doctrine unless they are specifically advocated. To my certain knowledge there has been but few among us that have ever hinted that God was the efficient cause of their sin, and to all those that have said it, I say as clearly as I know how to use language, that the Bible and Christian experience does not teach such a monstrosity.

But there is something else as clearly taught as this is, and that is that God does take wicked men and make them serve Him. They are His sword (and that does not need any explanation), and I am sure that He uses His own sword. If I had any hint that He turned His sword over to anybody else for one moment, my hope of immortality would cease with proof of that. God takes the things which he hates (Esau and all of his) and makes those things work for good to His chosen people. I know that God does this, because He said that He did. I know that the intention of men is to destroy Christ. This intention is not any stronger than it was in the brethren of our Joseph, nor was the evil in them any different than it was in his brethren. If there is any proof otherwise it would be more consistent with Christian principles to point this out than it would to criticize my ignorance. The work which was evil in the brethren was used of God for good to Israel. The work of those that crucified our Master was evil but His going to the cross was the greatest blessing that ever came to a poor sinner. Since God sent Joseph down into this Egyptian land using the intended wickedness to get him there, I am sure that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose. The "it" was wicked but God meant it for good.

But the question comes up in my mind: Why write again on this subject? My only reason for doing so is found in what I hope and believe is my Christian experience. The evening shadows are getting longer and longer.

Soon they shall end in that final summons which is death. As I approach this solitude of death I desire once again to know if what I have travelled over this United States and Canada proclaiming will do to rely on as I lie down in death. As I have been writing I have been contemplating the subject and I have been eating His broken body and drinking His shed blood.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

JOHN 12:32

Elder G. Beebe's Son — Dear Sir: — As I am a steady reader of the *Signs*, and find great comfort in perusing its pages, I desire your views at your leisure, on the portion of Scripture found in John 12:32: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." If you, or any associate editor, have in the past written upon the above quoted text, I will buy a copy, and not trespass upon your time.

From an earnest reader and well wisher,

W. W. Harris

REPLY

We do not recall whether the above Scripture has ever been written upon in the *Signs* editorially, and so we will try to comply with the request of our correspondent. Many requests claim our attention, some of which we cannot respond to, either for lack of time, or, as is oftener the case, for lack of understanding of the subject proposed.

We would say first, that we understand that the Savior presented the same truth when he said to Nicodemus, John 3:14, 15, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." Also the Savior refers to the same thing in John 8:28. In the verses following the text, it is written, "This he said, signifying what death he should die." Then "The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth forever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of man?" These are all the Scriptures in which the expression "lifted up" is used, as applied to the crucifixion of the Son of God, and it is worthy of remark, that John is the only one of the disciples who uses this expression, as falling from the Savior's lips. The expression is a forcible one, and it is used as another way of saying that the Son of man must be put to the cruel death of crucifixion. Jesus *must* be put to this manner of death. No other way would satisfy the type of the brazen serpent, as alluded to in John 3:14, 15. The Savior said, "As the brazen serpent was lifted up, so must the Son of man be lifted up." Had Jesus been stoned to death, as was Stephen, or had he been beheaded, as was Paul, or had he suffered any other form of death, it would not have satisfied the type.

The truth is plain that our God had decreed that his Son should die in the form that he did, and had so signified ages before in the type which Moses, his servant, was commanded to prepare for the disobedient Israelites, who had been bitten by the fiery flying serpents, on account of their transgressions, and who needed healing. There is a striking likeness between the type, and the great antitype, in another aspect. The Israelites were bitten by serpents, and a serpent must be raised up for their healing. So Jesus was made sin for us, who were sinners. We could not be healed otherwise. As the Israelites were bitten because of their sins, and so were convinced of sin, of righteousness and of judgment, so are the people of God convicted of their sins, and of the just judgment of God against sin, and then they are made to see that a Redeemer must be found, and then Jesus is revealed as the only name given under heaven, and among men, whereby they must be saved. Serpents had bitten the Israelites, and so a brazen serpent was the emblem of the divine power and

mercy to them, in healing them. Sin has bitten unto death all the people of God, and they are convinced of this, and then Jesus is presented as the one who has been made sin for them. But there is a difference between the type and the antitype.

The brazen serpent was but a piece of brass, *Nehushta,* as it was called in the Hebrew tongue, while our Savior was the real power of God to save, and not a mere emblem. It has seemed to us that there was another reason why the Son of man must die the death of crucifixion as he did. It was a lingering death, and a painful one, and so by it was the wrath of God against sin emphasized, as it could have been in no other way. Thus not only the fact of his death for sin, but also the manner of his death, were both fixed in the eternal mind, before the world began. And so all things before it, were pointing on toward it, and all that it was meant to accomplish, was declared by the mouth of all the holy prophets, and in all the types. There is never any change in the eternal mind; there is but a continued manifestation of it to us in all the ages of time. It is declared again and again, that these things were so, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. How often it is said in the New Testament, "Thus it is written;" and Jesus declared that the Son of man goeth as it was appointed for him.

In the text under consideration, the word "if," which the Savior used, by no means implies any doubt that he shall be lifted up, or crucified. On the contrary, he expressly declared that he ought to have suffered these things, and thus to enter into his glory. And again he declared that it was thus written, and that it behooved him to suffer these things. These things *must* be, else the purpose and word of God shall *not* be fulfilled. Unwittingly the hands of wicked men carried out the will of God. They meant it not so, yet they in their very hatred of Jesus and his word, only fulfilled his eternal purposes of love and mercy toward his people. How wonderful it is, that wicked men only succeed in bringing the purpose of God to pass. The potsherds of the earth may strive with the potsherds of the earth, and nations may rise and fall, but it is only the fulfillment of the word, that he will overturn and overturn, until his will is accomplished.

In the crucifixion of the Savior, the mystery of iniquity, and the mystery of godliness, are set one over against the other, and the mystery of iniquity was made to work out the everlasting decree of God, in the salvation of his people. Thus the purpose of God, the fallen condition of the objects of the love of God, the overruling providence which controls all worlds, and beings, and events, all worked together to fulfill the decree that Jesus should die for the sins of his people. They who crucified the Savior, did not know that they were fulfilling his all-wise design in what they did, but nevertheless they were doing the will of God. Thus the inspired Peter testifies in Acts 4:27, 28, "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Notice they were all gathered together against the Lord, and yet it was (though all unknown to them) to do the very thing that his purpose had before determined. How wonderful that men should fight against God, and yet do but that which he has decreed. How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out.

But perhaps the chief question in the mind of our friend is, What is meant by the expression, "Will draw all men unto me?" We do not suppose that it is here necessary to argue that this text does not teach the doctrine of universal salvation. Were it so, we should find its teaching in direct contradiction of the general tenor of the Scriptures; for the everlasting destruction of the wicked is declared in the word many

times. Still less does this text give any warrant for believing in conditional salvation. Whatever term "all men" embraces, the Savior declares without any reservation, that they shall be drawn to him. There is no condition in the text. It is not said that I will endeavor to draw all men unto me, nor is it said, I will draw them if they will come, but the language is, "I will draw all men unto me." If the words "all men," do mean all the inhabitants of the world, then it is sure that they will all be saved in him, "For whosoever cometh unto him shall in no wise be cast out." But if the words mean this, then the merest glance at the facts would show that they were false, for all men are not now, nor have all men ever been drawn unto him. Only a few were drawn to him in the years immediately following his death and resurrection. The vast majority of mankind then hated and persecuted the doctrine of Christ and his followers; and to-day what do we see? Three-fifths of all the present inhabitants of the world do not even believe nominally in the name of Christ, nor in the God of heaven, who sent him into the world. The followers of all pagan systems of religion embrace fully three-fifths of the race of man. Then if we come to consider those who claim to be christians, we find the Romish church, the Greek church, the Arminian church neither of whom either believe in, or practice vital godliness. They are state churches, and possess a religion of forms, and make no pretensions to demanding an experience of vital godliness as a condition of membership. Here and there one among them shows some acquaintance with true religion, and some personal knowledge of Christ as his Savior; but this is not because it is the teaching of their church, but rather because the light of the gospel has pierced the darkness of blindness and ignorance, and has brought salvation to one here and there.

Then if we consider the Protestant denominations of the day, we find in most of them a passing by, and a complete ignoring of the new birth, and a teaching that all there is of vital religion, is a belief of certain dogmas, and a moral life. This is especially true of the church of England, of the Lutheran church, of the German Reformed church, and of the Campbellites; and in all the rest, one might attend upon their ministry for years, and never hear the new birth alluded to, and if one should come to them with a genuine christian experience, it would be looked upon and tolerated only as a figment of the imagination. Indeed, if we look over the so-called christian world, how few show that their hearts are with Christ, who may in the forms of worship, call upon him. The professions, the lives and the conversation of the majority of religionists, show clearly that they have not been drawn unto Christ. Let any man take the village, or the community in which he may dwell, and think how many he can call up, who show by their lives that Christ is to them all in all. How many, even of those names are upon some church book, show that the god of this world is after all their god. It is an astounding fact, that those who claim that the salvation of Jesus was meant to embrace the whole world, must face the truth that not five per cent of mankind, even in this late day, when the name of Christ has been preached for nearly nineteen centuries, show by their life that they have been really drawn to him.

What shall we make of these facts, if indeed it was the purpose of God to draw all the race of Adam unto him? But the people of God who believe his word concerning election, and that a remnant shall be saved, have no such difficulty to face. As to why our God should have chosen a remnant, we know that he gives no account of his matters to any one. We can only say as the blessed Master did when he rejoiced in spirit, and said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for

so it seemed good in thy sight." We can know no more than this, and we have no right to say any more than this. These things show, if anything can be shown clearly, that the salvation of God never has, and does not now, embrace all mankind. If we believe that our Savior knew whereof he spoke, and that he could utter nothing but truth, then we are driven to believe that these words do not at all teach that all individuals of the human race shall be drawn unto him. We have no question that the meaning of this language is just what is taught in the Scriptures elsewhere in many places. It is that now the middle wall of partition should be broken down by his crucifixion, between Jew and Gentile, and that not only should the Jew partake of the blessings of his salvation, but also the elect of God among the Gentiles, should come to him. "Other sheep have I, which are not of this fold, them also must I bring, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd." We need not multiply quotations. No doubt many will occur to our readers.

Now we will turn for a brief consideration of the drawing itself. What is it to be drawn to Christ, and how does it come to pass? It was a startling statement that the Master made, if considered from any human standpoint. It was a contradiction of all that men could think possible. To what and to whom are men generally drawn? Would we expect to see men coming to the side of a malefactor who had expiated his crimes upon the tree of the shameful cross? Yet Jesus declares just this, and we hear Paul saying afterward, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Christ draws his people by that which is a shame in the eyes of the world, and Paul glories in that which the world counts shameful. He does not then say, If I be exalted to a kingly crown; if I be received and believed on, by the noble and the powerful; if I manifest my power, and at once overthrow my foes; if I can but cause my doctrine to be heard and heeded by the wise, then shall I draw all men unto me. No, he says in substance, If I am put to the shameful death of the Roman cross, if I be lifted up as the derision and scorn of men, if I die and go down into death and the grave, then will I draw all men unto me. Not by pleasing the world, but by offending the world will he draw men unto him. Not by doing what men expected he would do, but by doing what no one could expect of him, should this come to pass. The religion of Christ does not stand in the world, nor is it advantaged by any means that human reason or human desires could suggest. The key of all that makes the kingdom of God precious in the hearts of any of the sons of men, is found in these words, "If I be lifted up." It is by his death that we live. In no other way could men be truly drawn to him. If we are drawn to him at all, it must be as he is, and as our needs require. We need a Savior, and he is a Savior only as he died upon the tree of the cross. Therefore he must die, if we are to have our needs met and answered.

This drawing is purely experimental. The soul comes to feel his need of atonement, and in Jesus he finds his atonement. Thus the cross comes to be the sweetest theme in the poor sinner's heart, that it is possible for him to hear. And like Paul, he also says at last, God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ. He must say this, because here alone is his salvation and his rest. Paul declares to the Galatian churches, that he had set forth Christ evidently crucified among them. This he calls elsewhere holding forth the word of life. Who can express what this means to a guilty and condemned sinner, who sees that as he has sinned so he must die? Such a soul must be drawn to Christ. It needs no exhortation to bring him there. The thirsty need no exhortation to come to the fountain of waters to drink. The fountain of cooling waters itself draws

them. Just so Jesus draws his people. Their need, and his fullness, are the two things needful to draw them; and so out of every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people, his chosen come as doves to their windows. The word of their hearts is fulfilled when they say, "Draw me, and I will run after thee."

(Editorial by Elder Chick, November 1, 1897.)

OBITUARIES

BROTHER LESTER HARDY MANLEY

"Man that is born of woman is of a few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not."

(Job 14:1, 2)

Brother Lester Manley was born in Rockingham County, N. C., where the Lord blessed him to devote his 65 years to his family, brethren, and friends until the death angel called on April 3, 1971, to bear his spirit home on the snowy wings of God's love.

He leaves to mourn, Sister Edna Somers Manley, a precious companion for more than 42 years. A daughter, Mrs. Edmund Seay of Route 5, Reidsville; son, Fred W. (Billy) Manley of Raleigh, N. C.; sisters, Mrs. Jim Kimbro of Route 5, Reidsville; Mrs. Porter Garrison, Sr. of Reidsville; Miss Sue Manley of the home; brothers, Lloyd W. Manley of Route 2, Reidsville, and Lawrence F. Manley of Route 5, Reidsville.

Our brother leaves a host of brethren and friends who feel his heartaches, sorrows and sufferings are over, and now that precious peace abounds in the sleep of death.

The writer worked with him before I knew he was concerned with this blessed truth as it is in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. My heart rejoiced when he offered to the church at Bush Arbor in June, 1960, for I had found him to be a quiet and humble man.

Brother Manley suffered long and hard, yet through a God given faith and hope of Heaven and Immortal Glory his sufferings were made a little easier to bear: feeling that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

His funeral was conducted at a Reidsville Funeral Home by his pastor, Elder Wallis A. Smith, assisted by Elder Donald Smith. His body was laid to rest, that peaceful rest, to await that glorious resurrection in Reidlawn Cemetery, only a short distance from his home on Route 5, Reidsville, N. C.

May the Gracious Lord continue his blessings upon this bereaved family, brethren and friends who feel our loss is his blessed eternal gain. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

Written by Clifton Robertson as requested by Bush Arbor Church. Read and approved in their conference meeting June 12, 1971.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Brother Earl Rudd, Clerk

DEACON ZACK McKINNEY

Deacon Zack McKinney, of the Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church, Rockingham County, N. C., was born April 16, 1886. He was married to Miss Nancy Lee Hall in October, 1906, and to this union were born eleven children. He was the son of Elder B. B. McKinney.

Brother McKinney was received into the New Hope Primitive Batpist Church in 1916, and later moved his membership to the Reidsville Church. He was ordained a deacon of the Reidsville Church in 1952, and filled his office well, manifesting a stability in the truth, a great love for his brethren, and the desire for the welfare of the church of God.

Brother McKinney was a lovable person, well versed in the Scriptures and manifested at all times a desire to talk on the Word of God. He finished his days in a nursing home, and when visited by his pastor, brethren and friends, his face would glow with love that spoke louder than any word he could have said.

In the absence of his pastor, his funeral was conducted by Elder Donald Smith at Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church.

Written by his pastor,

D. V. Spangler

BROTHER AND SISTER GEORGE RUDD

We at Gilliams Church must bow in humble submission to the will of our heavenly Father, as it pleased him to remove from our midst Brother and Sister George Rudd.

Sister Minerva Rudd was born August 19, 1889, and departed this life August 16, 1970. Brother George Rudd was born June 8, 1882, departed this life August 17, 1970. They were united in marriage November, 1905, and were blessed to rear a large family of children. They are as follows: sons, Lee J., Leonard, George D., Walter F., Lacy T., and daughters, Mrs. J. M. Rimmer, Mrs. Nellie Moss and Mrs. Bessie Simons.

Brother Rudd professed a hope in Christ and united with Gilliams Church and was baptized by her pastor, Elder J. W. Gilliam, April 26, 1915. The brethren at Gilliams recognized the gift of Brother Rudd and he was ordained as deacon July, 1922. He was blessed to fill this office well. Sister Rudd was a believer for many years before she united with the church and when it pleased the Lord she asked for a home and was baptized the fourth Sunday in June, 1955.

I was told by friends that it was an inspiration to see Brother and Sister Rudd and children in their earlier years walking to their meeting approximately three miles; being an example of faithfulness and loyalty to their church. He was a firm believer of electing grace, being blessed to walk softly and humbly before his brethren and fellowmen, and trusting in an all wise and merciful God. Indeed it was inspirational and strengthening to me as I visited in their home to hear each of them tell of their travels in life and experiences and faith in God.

There are many things I shall remember them by, but one thing that stands out with me; a few days before Brother Rudd's passing on a Sunday morning, I was on my way to fill an appointment out of state. My wife was in the hospital and I was walking in the valley feeling so cast down, and was impressed to stop and see him. His wife was also in the hospital at that time. He called me to his bedside for prayer and as I was leaving he began to quote from Paul's writing, 2nd Timothy, 4th Chapter, Verse 2, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season: reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine," and I went on my way rejoicing.

The were blessed to live as husband and wife for almost 65 years and maintained their own home and did not have to be separated or placed in a convalescent home. As death come to Sister Rudd and a few hours later Brother Rudd passed, we rejoiced to see once again the mighty hand of God. Their funeral was conducted by Elder Wallis Smith, assisted by Elders W. C. King, E. F. Oakley, and Donald E. Smith. They were laid to rest side by side in Bush Arbor Church Cemetery to await the coming of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to the family, a copy be placed on the church record, a copy sent to *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Written by request of Gilliams Primitive Baptist Church and approved in their conference meeting May 22, 1971.

Elder Wallis A. Smith, Moderator
Freman Somers, Clerk

A FAITHFUL PASTOR

There are so many kinds of sorrow, but we at McCray Church have such sweet sorrow. God has been so good to us, and how sweet the years have been. Because we have been so wonderfully blessed in having the opportunity of a faithful pastor for forty-six years, Elder W. Curry King. We have so many gracious memories and beautiful thoughts to come in our minds when thinking of him, that death does not part.

We feel we have been greatly enriched by his long and useful life among whom he so unselfishly labored. We shall miss his wise counsel and guidance. Yet it is with thanksgiving and praise for his kindness toward us and words of comfort we received from his presence. His willingness to sacrifice himself for his churches won for him much love and respect from it's members and friends, and he was known as a faithful pastor in every church he served. Always reluctant in leaving to visit other churches, however he did occasionally, but prompt in securing someone to fill in for him.

During his many years of pastoral care there were only seven occasions that he was absent from the pulpit other than in his later years, being away one Sunday a year while on a vacation that he and his dear companion so much deserved. Elder and Sister King were gifted to hospitality and their home was always opened with the warmest of welcome to their many friends far and near.

Planning in and around his home was a place many happy hours were spent. He liked seeing things grow and gardening was an enjoyable hobby. He and Sister King found so much joy in sharing their blessings with others that those visiting in their home always left with something in a bag from their garden or some fruit from his much prized orchard. The last task he performed was bringing into the kitchen some vegetables from his garden only a few minutes before his passing. As he often said, "I would like to go with my boots on," and his wishes were granted.

Elder King was an humble man and tenderhearted, grievous when those around him were grieved and rejoiced when they rejoiced. It is those that inspire us that we like being around, and he was endowed with wisdom and forbearance that many would seek his counsel, even in the late hours of night. It was always a labor of love, making you feel glad that you came. So it is the many times we have been given renewed courage by having such a close walk with him, as our pastor. May each of us be given to consider the great example of love, humility and forbearance that he has left behind.

Somewhere during his discourses, he would often speak on the resurrection with a strong belief in the hope that he would one day be raised like his savior, be like him and be satisfied.

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints feeling he is among the children of the Heavenly King. Traveling home to God, in the way the fathers trod, this was among his favorite hymns that was of great inspiration to him. The members and friends of our church loved him dearly and feel we have lost a wonderful servant of God;

but, ever trusting in a power than can raise up others to preach the gospel as he did. He will continue to live in the minds and hearts of our members. As he often said to comfort others, he has fought a good fight and is now reaping the rich reward that was laid up for him. And may we say together, our God is too good to be unkind and whose mercy never faileth. May we also join others who loved him, find comfort in the things he loved and cherished: salvation by grace and the sovereignty of an all wise and gracious God.

So should we feel sad that he is missing the struggles and sorrows of this life or are we comforted in the thought that he is peacefully sleeping awaiting the greater joys of the eternal beyond.

We humbly and gratefully submit this final tribute in sacred memory of our beloved pastor from the faithful few of McCray Church.

Elder Wallis Smith, Pastor
Ruth Jeffreys, Clerk

SISTER PEARL CRAIG COLLIER

Sister Pearl Collier was called from this life on April 3, 1971. She was born in Obion County, Tennessee December 14, 1879. She was preceded in death by her husband, J. B. Collier, ten years ago, and by her son, Sylvester Hassell Collier, three years ago. She is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Ruth Chappel; a son, Woodrow Collier, five grandchildren and fifteen grandchildren. Sister Collier died suddenly at the home of her son, Woodrow Collier, near Martin, Tennessee.

Sister Collier and her husband, J. B. (Bud) Collier, joined Cane Creek Primitive Baptist Church in the year of 1910 and were baptized by Elder Hue Oliver. She was such an humble person. Her talk was always seasoned with Grace in the Love of God. She was a star in her community and loved by everyone who knew her. She manifested a great love for her church, and loved the preaching of the Gospel of God our Saviour.

Brother and Sister Collier's home was always open to their brethren, their friends and neighbors, and certainly a wonderful home to visit. This writer has known their home most of his life. When I was a little boy, I enjoyed going there and hearing Brother and Sister Collier talk of God and Godly things. We have lost a dear Mother in Israel, but it is Heaven's gain. "As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

Sister Collier's funeral was held at Murphy Funeral Home in Martin, Tennessee, by Elder Wayman Chappell, her grandson, and her Pastor, Elder Herbert R. Prince and she was laid to rest in the Collier Cemetery.

Elder H. R. Prince

MRS. LULA L. JOHNSON

Again, our Father in Heaven called a dear sister from our midst. He gives us life and takes it away according to His will. Sister Lula was loved by all who knew her. Her seat is vacant here. No one can ever take her place with us. She was blessed to live a good life span of 87 years in love, faith and prayer; examples so many of us need to follow daily.

She was the daughter of Robert Langley and Lou Norville Langley. In 1907 she became the bride of Ellis Johnson. They were blessed to have a family of two sons and two daughters: Jennis Johnson, Ruth Johnson Morgan, Helen Johnson Forbes, and Ellis Johnson, Jr.

We shared the loss of her husband, her youngest son Ellis, Jr., her oldest son Jennis, and her daughter Helen. All through her sadness she was so brave and humble saying, "It's hard, but God never puts more on us than we can bear."

Survivors are her daughter Ruth J. Morgan, son-in-law Joseph Morgan from Jacksonville, N. C.; daughter-in-law Marie W. Johnson, who loved her deeply; five grandchildren, Mrs. Ann Anderson, Billy Jo Morgan, Mrs. Rose Marie Bell, Mrs. Janice Barbour, Mrs. Brenda Joyce Owens; nine great grandchildren, Lindsey Ann Anderson, Brent Clark Anderson, Alan Bell, Beverly Bell, Melanie Bell, Angela and Rejema Owens, Wright Barbour, Albert Cannon Morgan; two sisters, Mrs. Addie L. Wooten from Fountain, N. C., Mrs. Blanche L. Wooten from Greenville, N. C. and several nieces and nephews who loved her dearly and rendered all that loving hands could do for her. She spoke so highly of her in-laws. In a special way, she always kept an open mind, giving praises for all who so kindly remembered her. It was always a delight to have her in our home and Sister Pearl's, in later years. We miss her more than words can express. We have wonderful memories to behold.

Sister Johnson united with Autrey Creek Primitive Baptist Church the first Sunday in May 1925. She was baptized by her Pastor Elder A. M. Crisp. She loved her church and its doctrine of salvation by the grace of faith. We feel her spirit returned on February 17, 1971 to the one who gave it.

Funeral services were held at the church by Elder A. P. Mewborn whom she loved dearly. She was laid to rest beside her husband in Dilda Cemetery under a mound of beautiful flowers. May God console all who loved her, is our sincere prayer.

Written by request of Autrey Creek Primitive Batpist Church, April 3, 1971. J. B. Coker, Clerk.

Leona W. Manning
Addie L. Wooten

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 139 DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1971 NO. 9

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/71
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

A NOTE FROM ELDER RHODES

P. O. Box 82
Spearsville, La. 71277

Editors and Readers of the
Signs of the Times:

Please find enclosed check for $4.00 to renew my subscription. I have been taking it for a long time, and enjoy it very much, so I want to read it as long as I can.

I would like very much to see you brethren Editors of the very much appreciated and widely distributed paper the **Signs of the Times**, and send my very best regards. Would be glad if you could visit our section of the country any time you can.

May the Lord richly bless the editors and readers, and all lovers of the glorious truth which cannot be downed by the opposers of it. Pray for me a poor sinner.

Elder R. W. Rhodes

(We are informed that it was Sister Robbie Holloway who sent the writings of Elder Rhodes which we published a short time ago. We mistook his granddaughter's name for a grandson. — J. D. W.)

"And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness..." (2 Cor. 12:7-9)

If you will read verses one to six you will note that Paul was lifted into the third heaven (verse 2) or paradise (verse 4) and heard unspeakable words which were not lawful (or possible) to utter. This was a wonderful revelation indeed! He was lifted up so high or was so elevated that he did not know if he were dead or alive. (see verse 2)

Now, Paul was given as a pattern to them that should hereafter believe. (see I Tim. 1:16) We believe that all of God's people are given revelations. It is a revelation for one to know within his heart that he is a wretched, ruined sinner, and that he stands in need of mercy. One must be given a revelation before he can believe in the doctrines of Grace. **(within his heart)** Paul did not learn this doctrine from his parents, nor from the institutions of men, nor thru any research of his own. "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Gal. 1:11-12) In short, one must have the truth revealed. Jesus said, "I thank thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." (Matthew 11:25) Christ is revealed unto his people by the operation of the Holy Ghost.

Let us quote another Scripture upon the subject of revelation. "But as it

is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (1 Cor. 2:9-10) This shows that God has revealed things unto his people that he does not reveal unto the world. This also shows that man by all his efforts, research, learning, etc. cannot find out the wisdom of God. The wisdom of God is foolishness to the world.

In the 7th verse of this text, we notice that Paul is telling us why it was necessary that he be given the thorn in the flesh. (Of course, he did not understand this point when he asked the Lord to remove the thorn in the flesh.) We note that the revelations were wonderful, and glorious. Notice the wording of the text, "Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, . . ." Now, would we be twisting the Scripture around and cause it to mean something else if we said that if Paul had not been given the thorn in the flesh, he would have been exalted above measure, or puffed up? It would probably go to his head, wouldn't it? If it wasn't for the thorn in the flesh, he might think that he was smarter and wiser than his brethren. But God knows what is good for his people. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to those who are the called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28) The thorn in the flesh (doubts and fears, soul afflictions, etc.) was given to bring Paul down. Now, if we are "cut to the pattern," we must be given the thorn in the flesh. Sometimes we think of it this way: The greater the revelation, the more severe trials and afflictions. Also, it is our experience that we receive the sweetest peace and meditations during the darkest hours.

"For this one thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me." Besought means "entreating with urgency, making supplications, asking earnestly for, begging, craving," etc. Notice the setting: Paul was lifted up, and then brought down by the thorn in the flesh. He was in distress, so he asked the Lord to remove the thorn. The meaning is that Paul pleaded with the Lord for this thorn to depart from him. We believe this means that Paul earnestly prayed unto the Lord for this thorn to be removed. We have heard it said that Paul did not pray for this thorn to be removed, but rather that he besought the Lord. We ask the reader to carefully examine the meaning of the word besought, and you will see that it means the same as praying unto the Lord.

Paul pleaded with the Lord three times for this thorn to be removed or to depart from him. God's answer was: "My grace is sufficient for thee." Why did God wait until after the third request to answer Paul? This was a trial of Paul's endurance. Paul did not give up pleading with God after he failed to receive an answer after the first request, nor after the second request. Jesus said: "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." (Luke 18:1) Dear reader, may God bless you to not give up when trials come your way. May God bless you to keep pleading for strength to bear whatever trial or affliction comes your way. Jacob did not give up: when Jacob wrestled with the angel he said: "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." (Genesis 32:26)

Keep in mind that **God did answer Paul's prayer, although it was not in the manner that Paul wanted or desired.** God did not remove the thorn, but he did give Paul the grace and strength to bear it. Do you see the meaning? The grace of God is sufficient for us. It does not make any difference how dark the path may lie ahead, because God will give you the grace to bear the trials that lie ahead.

> "Behind a frowning Providence
> He hides a smiling face"

Paul told why it was necessary for him to have the thorn in the flesh, so let us apply the same to ourselves. Although these heavy trials are hurtful

to the flesh, they are good for our souls. and they teach us to be humble and to be patient with one another. "...we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience," (Rom. 5:3) When tribulations first come our way we certainly do not glory in them, but we plead for them to be removed, do we not? But we learned the fruits of the tribulations because they taught us patience. If we did not have tribulation, then we would not have patience, would we?

God is faithful, and will give His people grace to sustain them in time of need. Even though you may not feel the presence of God, you may rest assured that He is there with you. "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." (Psalm 139:8) As one makes his bed in hell, we think of this as a state of deep darkness when one feels in a measure the wrath of God. "In a little wrath, I hid my face from thee for moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy redeemer." (Isaiah 54:8)

Let us bear in mind that God gave Paul the grace to bear the thorn in the flesh. Now, the thorn in the flesh that Paul endured was not a natural thorn that grows on bushes and trees. This thorn in the flesh is anything that Satan uses to harass the children of God. It may be doubts and fears, trials, tribulations, etc. To sum it up, it is something that brings one down to the footstool of the Mercy of God. If one were lifted up all the time, what need would there be for him to plead for mercy? In this case, he would not because he would not feel the need of mercy.

Let us keep in mind that God knows the needs of His people. He has promised to supply all their needs, and not their wants. (see Romans 8:28 quoted earliar.)

As we read Isaiah 43:2, we note that God promised that you would not be alone during the dark and trying days. He is there with you! "When thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee; and though the rivers roll, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." In connection with this, let us remember that the road to heaven is not an easy path. Although there are many troubles ahead, God is there with you. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." (2 Cor. 4:8-9)

Again, God knows the needs of His people. It takes a heavy trial to teach them patience. God will see that a trial will come your way to teach you patience. "My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." (James 1:23)

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

REPORT OF MEETING

1738 31st Street West
Birmingham, Ala. 35208

Dear Brother Spangler:

Hope you and yours are well and enjoying the joys only those chosen of God know anything about.

We have just attended a three-day meeting, the Buttahatchie Union Meeting. The Lord was gracious and visited us through the persons of his ministers; and we hope that we are thankful for His goodness and mercy to usward. Elder C. M. Haygood and Elder Jerry Evers of the Pleasant Valley Association of Texas; Elder George W. Jones of the South Ouachita Association; Elder H. C. Moon and Elder C. C. Hand of the Five Mile Creek Association; Elder W. D. Griffin, whom you well know; (I am glad he is back in Alabama — sorry that his health does not permit him to exercise as he would desire to;) Elder E. E. McCool, of Buttahatchie Union and Brother Clovis Townley, a licentiate of the South Arkansas Association, all came laden with good news

from a far country, and all were blessed with good delivery, and we, I hope, were blessed with a ear to hear and a heart to understand.

I am enclosing a check for the new subcriber as shown. May the Lord be with you and keep you is our prayer for Christ's sake.

Mrs. R. A. Hocutt

REPORT OF GOOD MEETINGS IN CANADA

Apt. 315, 80 Scott Street
Brampton, Ontario, Canada

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Am enclosing obituary of our dear departed Sister, Mrs. Flossie Hodgins. Am also enclosing copy of a letter written by her to Elder and Sister Edna Turner. Am wondering if you would care to publish this letter, and also republish her experience from the **Signs** of February, 1957.

We felt honored and blessed to have Elder Spangler, his wife and friends with us at our May meeting. And last week end was our June Meeting; and again we were blessed with good preaching from Elder Rhue and Elder Turner from the U. S., as well as from our Canadian speakers. How wonderfully we feel they spoke the same truth. As one has said before, "The sweetness lingers on."

We do appreciate the writings in the **Signs.** May God see fit to continue its publication.

A little sister in a precious hope.

Verna Carscadden

(We will re-publish Sister Hodgins experience in the October issue. — J. D. W.)

LETTER BY THE LATE SISTER FLOSSIE HODGINS

The following letter was written by Mrs. Ellis (Flossie) Hodgins, formerly of 1197 Richmond Street, London, Ontario, to Elder and Mrs. Elmon Turner. Mrs. Hodgins passed away on April 15, 1971. (See obituary this issue)

December 15, 1969

Dear Elder and Sister Turner:

Olive read your most comforting and good letter to me. I did enjoy it. We also read the 71st Psalm and I hope the Lord will bless and keep me in my old age.

I want to tell you of the sweetest experience I had in the hospital. When I found out I had to go to the hospital and had to have an operation, I felt the Lord was putting me there. He sends us our sickness and our trials and He also sends us our blessings, and I felt reconciled that if it was His will, that was what I wanted. Before going to the hospital, I was thinking of my trouble and the Lord showed me where He had taken me out of trials before and He showed me so plainly where he was able to take me through this. What a wonderful God. I felt I would be brought home again and while in the hospital I hadn't dread or fear of the operation. I just seemed to be resting in peace. The night before the operation, I told the girls I was just resting in peace and I felt it was the Peace that passeth understanding. I felt it was.

So the dear Lord has put me there and has taken me home and I am gaining slowly. What a wonderful God we have to trust in! I hope He will make me fit for that Heavenly Home.

I hope you are both real well and may the Lord bless you both.

Much love.
Flossie Hodgins

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44 Durett Grove
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35401

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (I Peter 4:17, 18)

The Scriptures teach that God shall judge his people, but not that He will mark iniquities against them in his divine justice, for this He did to Christ when He laid upon him the iniquities of us all. He suffered the justice of God for the unjust sinners that He might bring us to God. He met and satisfied divine justice so that He might be just and remain just in justifying the ungodly. Jesus Christ is both the judge and the justifier of his people, for He came not into the world to condemn them but to save them from their sins. When they are judged in his experimental dealings with them they are chastened of him that they may not be condemned neither with or by the world. He came to call sinners to repentance and to give to those He called to it the forgiveness of sins. Both are gifts and He never offered them anything. Neither can they have it till He pleases to give it, regardless of how eager they are to receive it. We may at times quote with much complacency, ". . . no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. . ." But when God is severely chastising His children they will most certainly try to get out of his almighty hand and have their own way about the matter; but still to no avail, for Jesus said, "I am the WAY," (not a way), but "the Way, the truth and the life." The Lord is described as having ways, but his ways are not our ways. Experimentally speaking He deals with his people in many ways, but Jesus is the way and only way of life and salvation. There also is only one spiritual or eternal life and one salvation for his people, and Jesus is both and all of each to them.

In speaking of the judgment Paul said, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." This has reference to the experimental dealing of the Lord with his people in this life upon the earth, and by no means has reference to a judgment of them after they are resurrected in Christ's likeness, for in his likeness they most positively will be. Neither does it have reference to any thing outside of Christ's lovingkindness and the multitude of his tender mercy in dealing with them. The same is mentioned in the whole chapter from which the text is quoted: I Peter 4th chapter. Whether it be rebuke, correction, or instruction, it is all beneficial and is accomplished by the spirit of his grace, love and mercy, leading, teaching and guiding them in the paths of righteousness for his name sake. It is through and by the Spirit of Christ that the old man is crucified, the flesh is mortified, and the child of grace is delivered from evil. It is the children of grace possessing two natures after their new births, that are chastened of the Lord; and his chastisement is to teach and correct them, as well as to keep them by his power. "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceful fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby."

It is the Lord's dealing with them in his own judgment for their good and for his glory. Therefore the Scriptures teach for our comfort and consolation, to ". . . think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you. as though some strange thing happen unto you. . ." These fiery trials are more or less common in the experience of all his children; He hath said, "And I will bring the third part through the fire," (not over, or under, or around, but "through the fire"), "and I will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God." All these dealings of the Lord with his people are to separate them from self and the world, and to humble and keep them meek and lowly, wholly dependent upon him for all things pertaining to life and salvation.

Where the scriptures speak of the righteous scarcely being saved has no reference whatsoever to their salvation

being scarce in Christ, for He is their salvation, all of it from start to finish. The scarce part is in their experience. Experimentally they think it is scarce amidst great trials afflictions and the many snares in their experience. Nevertheless, truly they are as secure as Christ himself is, who said, "because I live, ye shall live also," and ". . . . where I am, there ye may be also." Therefore they are as secure as Christ himself is. The Lord separates the sheep from the goats in this life, for He is the good Shepherd of the sheep that never leaves nor forsakes them. He is today upon the throne of his glory with all power in heaven and earth, power over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as the father gave him in the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure. He is upon the throne of David and his kingdom, to order it and to establish it with justice hence forth and forever; the zeal or spirit of the Lord will perform this.

When the Lord says by his life giving spirit in the heart and mind of one and all of his elect of grace. "Come out from among them," (the world) "and be ye separate saith the Lord, and I will receive you, and I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters saith the Lord almighty," they most certainly obey him, for he calls them with a holy and effectual calling. So He separates them from the world, to which they can never return, for they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed at the last day, forever glorified in Jesus likeness. ". . . as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was ONCE offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." He by the one offering forever put away sins, made an end of sins by a perfect atonement, satisfied divine justice, abolished death, rose triumphant over death and hell and ascended at the right hand of the majesty on high to apear in His sweet and glorious presence for every one that He died for; and before God they are in him as perfect and blameless as Jesus, who is their all in all.

Any who deny the perfect, complete and wholesome atonement of Christ in making perfect satisfaction to divine justice for all the sins of all his people, by which they are freely justified by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ, deny both the work of God the Father, and God the son, and God the Holy Ghost. We could not atone or make satisfaction to divine justice for **one sin** should we suffer eternally in an eternal hell. Without the shedding of pure, perfect, and precious blood there is no remission of sins, and we of our selves don't have one drop of pure blood, but are corrupt from head to foot, with no soundness in us, and we can no more change our nature or ways than an Ethiopian can change his skin, or a leopard his spots. The old tree is corrupt and cannot bring forth good fruit; all good fruit is of Christ, and I by nature am the chief of sinners whom Christ came to save, and did and doeth, and will save to the utmost all the Father hath given him. They are predestinated to be conformed to the image of God's own Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. When they awake from death or asleep in Christ they will in that moment see Christ as He is, now glorified, and be like him and ever be with him in glory, In the resurrection of the saints, they will be raised in incorruption, in glory, in power, a spiritual body, in immortality, fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body. This will be when Christ appears the second time without sin unto salvation and makes manifest in completion the glorification of all He died for, and rose again for their justification.

Thanks be unto God who gave us the victory over sin, death and hell through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be all praise, all honor, all glory for ever and ever.

(Elder) John L. Sanders

CANNOT NOW MEET REGULARLY WITH BRETHREN

Newton, Ala. 36352

Dear Elder Spangler:

My subscription is about to expire so please continue it for the check attached. For some fifty years I have received the **Signs** and desire to read it as long as I remain here.

I hope that you and the other editors continue in good health, and especially that Elder Griffin regains his. We have been associated for half a century; and his writings are inspiring.

Elder E. R. Sorrells of Hartford, Ala. recently died after a long illness. He had been pastor of several churches in our association, and lived a wonderful life among our people. Sister Alice preceded him in death several years. They were devoted to each other and had a wonderful family.

Another great loss to us was the passing of Sister Nettie Smith of New Hope Church. It was my privilege to baptize Brother Warren Smith late in life, and he and Sister Nettie were a wonderful example for others in the cause of Christ.

We miss very much Sister Mattie Sorrells who recently passed on. She and I were baptized by Elder H. A. Smith the same day nearly fifty-eight years ago. She meant so much to the church with her husband, Deacon A. E. Sorrels, who died several years ago.

The writer is now seventy-nine years of age and unable to attend church regularly because his dear companion, Ada, is an invalid. She has been so faithful to him during the time he has served ten different churches, and attended associations far and wide, and been in the ministry fifty-three years. Surely we miss the fond association with the Baptists far and wide.

We remember so well our first trip to Virginia thirty-one years ago when we attended the Staunton River Association at Springfield Church, and met so many Elders and others whom we loved . . . We noticed in the June issue of the **Signs** that a son of Sister Ella Richardson had gone to be with the Lord. How well we remember the Richardson family, and also that of her brother with whom we spent the night of the second Sunday in July, 1940; and how royally we were entertained. The Williams family mean much to the Primitive Baptists today. We have been treated far better than we deserve wherever we have gone among the Baptists. As we reach the closing days here below, may all of us be blessed to live closer to the Lord, for in Him we live, move, and have our entire being. Without Him we are nothing.

In closing, pardon me for mentioning an incident in closing a sermon in Martinsville, Va.: A young lady came and said to me, "Brother Collins, I had never seen you before you came to the rostrum to speak, but during your sermon I was made to know that you preached that sermon to me a month before that Sunday morning." Great and marvelous are thy works, and past finding out are thy ways. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." John joins Jeremiah in affirming, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us that we should be called the sons of God."

O may I join each of you in that city where pains are unknown and death never comes. Remember me in your prayers.

(Elder) J. J. Collins

Rt. 1, Box 272E
Jonesboro, La.

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I am sending a letter from a dear sister, Sister Kate Mathews, one who has been with us in the church only a short time.

I have enjoyed the *Signs of the Times* for about thirty years. To me it is the best. May God be with you all.

A brother in Christ, I hope,
E. A. Tyler

THE LETTER

Dear Eldridge and Lois:

It is very hard for me to express my feelings in spiritual matters though I have talked a lot and worried my brothers and sisters in the flesh. I still don't feel like I have said what I wanted to say to any of you. If the Lord will grant, I will try to tell you a little of what goes with me.

Most of the time I seem to be in the wilderness. I feel wretched and guilty about everything. I feel like I have broken the commandments, and do not feel fit to even sit among God's people. I feel that if you knew how wretched I am, you would not want me near you. I have shed more tears over what I am over the past years, and spent many nights trying to reach what you all seem to have. Many times I can only cry, "Abba, Father." So many times I have wanted someone to talk to, and when they were near me, I could never say what I wanted to say.

After I had joined that Baptist Church and saw what a mistake I had made, because I couldn't go along with their man-made worship, I had to ask out, because I hope I believe in an all-powerful God that has made all things for his own purpose; and nothing is that God did not make.

I am vile, I am weak, and there is no good thing in my flesh. I have no confidence in my flesh for I know I am full of sin and always will be as long as I am on this earth. But the few things I glimpse, and my afflictions and trials and temptations, are the reasons for my hope . . .

I wanted for a long time to ask for a home there but never felt fit. When I finally did see that I was going to, I just asked the Lord to lead me. After I finally was aware of myself, I felt that they would not have me; and I wouldn't blame any of you because I hate myself, and can never do or say the things I want to.

A few times I have seemed to sit in heavenly places, and to have my soul fed with manna from above and to be filled, and to drink from that blessed fountain that can quench my thirst. I am poor and weak in spirit and am needy, and so much of the time hunger and thirst after righteousness. I can only hope; and sometime my hope is very slim, as it is today. But I know that if only I was written in the Book of Life will I be God's. But I believe I also know that God is my judge, and I trust in him for he is my refuge in all things. For a long time I just had my Bible to comfort me, for I do not care for things of this world anymore. My mind is continually on spiritual things, so much so that I cannot carry on a conversation. I am a worm of the dust and depend only on the mercy of God. I do not know, and am made many times to fear that I am not one of His; but with such things as I have told you hangs my hope.

During my long years without a home, I would write things that came into my mind about my feelings, which probably do not mean anything to anyone but me; but I poured my heart out on paper and cried much. I have had some precious things come to me which I hope came from God. I believe they did, because I have kept them in my heart all these years, and they have given me much comfort and joy. They have stayed with me and cannot be shaken no matter what anyone may say.

I realize that I haven't shown much fruit of the spirit to you all, and I feel so unfit and unqualified for I seem to see something in all of you that I seem to have missed. Brother Hilton can express my feelings so very well when he speaks of his undone condition; for that is the way I feel. I wish I were more able to express myself but I just can't seem to put it into the right words . . .

This is written from the bottom of my heart, and I hope I haven't worried you. I have already been too much bother to many people.

May God be with you and yours always.

Love always,
Kate (Mathews)

A FEW OF THE SPIRITUAL TRAVELS OF J. J. RHUE

(Written in the Year of 1957)

I was born September 5, 1908, the fifth of nine children born to our parents, Thomas Davis and Moma Prescott Rhue, at Stella, Carteret County, North Carolina. Our parents were honorable and devoted, but poor, hard working people. They did their best to set a good example for their children to follow, always admonished us to keep good company and abstain from the use of strong drink. They did not approve of their children attending dances. We felt then that our parents were much too strict, but we now realize what noble parents we had and that they were only doing their duty toward us children. The longer we live the more we desire to follow in their footsteps.

Our mother and father always took their children with them to church. Waiting for the last preacher to finish his sermon would become very tiresome. When I became old enough, it became my duty and privilege to drive the family car and take them to churches far and near. The comfort and joy they received while visiting in the homes of Old Baptists and attending the churches I could not understand. They were blessed to travel much among the Lord's people.

I seldom ever attended churches of any denomination after I grew up and left home. I had great respect for my parents and did not like to hear anyone criticise the doctrine preached and believed by Old Baptists. However, I did not have any further interest in them, and had a feeling that they would, as many have predicted, soon die out when the older ones had passed away. During these years, I had many serious thoughts concerning my eternal salvation and final destination should death overtake me. I endeavored to live in such a way as not to bring reproach on my parents and family. The determination to be a leader and make something of myself was very strong and a desire to be looked upon as a good fellow was with me.

I became acquainted, in my early manhood, with a young lady who would later become my devoted companion. After marriage, at the age of twenty-three, we pursued a normal and very happy life and were blessed to make a good living by working very hard. We made our home in Hopewell, Virginia, but soon moved back to the farm where I was born and reared. Three years later I became ill with typhoid fever, and for several days it seemed that death hovered over me, and this illness was so severe that I remained unable to work for months. The good Lord certainly must have had a purpose in my staying here, or He would not have raised me from such a low condition. In due time, after having lost almost all my strength, I began to recover. After the extremely high temperature had subsided, my left leg began to give me much trouble and perhaps will as long as I live.

I have wondered why He kept me here. During my illness, I had a deep feeling that it would take a higher power than man to raise me from my helpless condition, and I made many promises, only to be broken later, that I would do better if the Lord would restore me to my former state of health. Serious thoughts entered my mind. I considered heeding the advice of the Arminians and join one of the churches preaching their doctrine; later to withdraw if I became dissatisfied. According to their doctrine, I would thus be safe. Somehow I just could not reach the point where I had enough confidence in them or in myself to do this or make such a step. I felt I would be a hypocrite if I did this and would be lost if I died in this condition. A time had come in my life when I felt to be a complete failure, and I realized that I was in a helpless condition. I was aware, for the first time, that I was in dire need of

help from a heavenly source. We moved to New Bern, N. C. before my complete recovery was experienced. My condition was such that I was forced to leave the farm and seek other work. Then later, in the year of 1936, I secured a position in Winston-Salem. This seemed an opportunity to get ahead and accumulate something and at the same time get away from my depressed condition, that I might in a new environment and under different conditions, meet new acquaintances and somehow start all over again with a new life. Little did I realize that I could not run away from the all-powerful God.

For several months, or possibly a year, I did a pretty good job thinking that I had overcome my past difficulties. We began making big plans for the future, and we proceeded, with the help of a very devoted brother, to build us a home. About this time I was feeling somewhat prosperous and self confident; but lo and behold, little did I realize what troubles and sorrow the future held for this unworthy sinner.

We were now in our new home. The good Lord had blessed us with a fine, healthy son and a good position, seemingly nothing to hinder our future from peace and happiness. Soon I awoke from this blissful state of contentment to find myself a very miserable creature. Even though my work was what some would consider wholesome and pleasant, in contact with many fine people and friends, meeting many new faces daily. In the midst of many people of all classes, but just about the average you meet in a large city, I became the loneliest and the most downcast human being upon the face of the earth. Finding myself under a great burden, we began, my wife and I, attending Old Baptist meetings at churches my brother, Elder Z. L. Rhue, served as pastor, and other churches in that part of North Carolina and over in nearby Virginia. I was seeking and searching for relief that I desired so much but had not found.

As time passed, we visited much among Old Baptists. On many occasions when in the home of these people, whom I had been made to love, I would sit and listen as they told of their trials, and shared their sorrows together, and, to my dismay, I had discovered a people that were traveling and experiencing the same trials and tribulations that I had been traveling through. My feelings I tried to hide and conceal. I did not want anyone to know how little I felt to be, but most of the time I could hardly control myself and would choke up and could not talk. In this condition, I would leave their company in order to be alone and try to shake off my troubles. I tried to stay away from these people, realizing at the same time that I was never satisfied except in their presence. It seemed they were magnetized in some mysterious way and I could not stay away from them. About the only time that I received any relief was hearing the glorious gospel being preached. I still had to learn that I could not run away from this impelling power or force that was leading me in paths that I had not known before. As time passed I became so restless that I felt that I must do something; so in 1939 I told my dear wife that I thought that we could better our condition if we moved back to the farm, a small tract of land my parents had given us soon after our marriage. I told her that I had always wanted to farm and I believed my leg had improved to the extent that I could do the work on the farm without too much handicap. My wife being a very agreeable companion agreed to make the change. We listed our home for sale, resigned my job and moved back to Carteret County, N. C. and the farm.

Little did I realize at the time that I had made a move that would take me back to a place that I had tried to stay away from, Hadnott Creek Primitive Baptist Church where my mother and father were members and I had attended years before as a child. I had a deep abiding feeling for this church, but had tried to keep such feeling from entering my mind. Soon I found in moving I had not left my troubles behind. We attended church regularly and this awful bur-

den became even heavier. I loved these people, but felt too unworthy to ask for a home with them. When trouble came and I was overwhelmed with sorrow, then I would promise the Lord that I would offer to the Church at the next meeting, but when the time arrived and the opportunity came, I found myself in a different frame of mind, and again I had found that my promises were not worth anything in the sight of a sin avenging God. The time had come that I hated my own life. Every way that I turned there was condemnation. I felt that I was not fit to live nor die. I could not stay away from their meetings or the company of Old Baptists, but felt too sinful, weak and unworthy to be in their company.

In January, 1940, our daughter, Agnes, was born. Never in my life had I experienced such shock as when the doctor told me that our baby had no upper lip or roof in her mouth and had a cleft palate. What a horrible sight it was to behold our innocent baby born in this condition! I felt that this thing could not have happened if I had not been such a great sinner. It seemed that the wrath of almighty God had been let loose on me, a hell deserving sinner. I had not only sinned away the day of grace, but I had by my sins brought down His wrath on my beloved child. I was such a condemned sinner before a just and holy God. My cry was, "Lord, have mercy on me a sinner." These were trying hours for her mother and me. It seemed that all hope had faded and that I was sinking deeper by the hour into despair. My inward cry was, "Mercy, mercy, mercy." I became a beggar indeed. I begged the Lord to look down on me in pity and compassion and forgive me of my many sins, and, if it could be His will, to proivde a way and make it possible for our little Agnes to be spared the horrow of having to go through life in her condition. We were informed by our doctor that she probably would never be able to speak an audible word; but the Lord heard my cries. My prayers were answered. Through the providence of one who works all things after the council of His own will, directing the hands of the surgeons, she received surgery when she was five weeks old and again when she was ten years of age, and at last when she was sixteen years of age. The operations were successful. Her speech is now excellent and her mouth and other features are almost normal. A miracle was performed. Agnes is a senior in high school this year, and is president of her class. I want to thank the Lord, if I could for His mercy and grace. He reached down and picked me up when all other help had failed. I had gone to the end of all my human strength. It was, "Lord, save, I perish." During this experience there was a voice that came with power saying, "Fear not, but stand firm for the cause for which I have sent thee."

When the Lord's time came and I was made willing in the day of His power, I was asking the Church for a home with them and was received along with my dear companion, and was baptized on the first Sunday in September, 1946, by Elders Zennie L. Rhue and A. B. Barham in the old mill pond on Hadnott Creek. This is where my father and mother, and my mother's father and mother were laid beneath the liquid grave. There I received much relief and left a burden. This burden to be baptized has never returned, but the most of my time I am in a destitute condition and am still a beggar and pensioner upon His grace. I have many doubts and fears and am made to wonder if I have ever known the Lord in the pardoning of my many sins. If I am not a deceived mortal, I love the brethren and the Church, and, according to Holy Writ, this is one eveidence that we have passed from death unto life. This has been a rough road, but He did not promise His children that they would go through this world, "On flowery beds of ease, while others fought to win the prize and sailed through bloody seas." "I will also leave in your midst an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." If we knew our sufferings were for His name's

sake, it would be much consolation, but we have to go faltering and begging from day to day. Some times our hope is almost gone, then again it is strong enough to live by, and may we be possessed with strength when we come to press a dying pillow, and may the Lord keep and bless His people is my hope. This has not been written for the benefit it might be to others, but for the relief I am still seeking.

Part One comes to a close on this the first day of October, 1957.

Jabez J. Rhue

(Concluded next month)

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION 1971

(Written by Elder D. V. Spangler)

To the Upper Country Line Association in session with Reidsville Church, July 17, 18, and 19, 1971.

Greetings in the Lord:

It has fallen my lot by appointment to write this Circular Letter to the churches composing this association; and also our corresponding associations.

I will refer you to the scripture found in Jeremiah sixth chapter and sixteenth verse. "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein."

It seems proper to the writer that we be reminded from time to time what associations are for; and what they are not for. The word association carries with it the thought of spiritually visiting with each other in the kingdom of our Lord — to meet to worship God, see many lovely ministers, brethren and friends who we do not see often, and re-affirm our hope in His love and mercy.

It seems the poet describes this in the hymn in Loyd's Hymn Book:

"Not to control the church of God,
Or rule, or bind her sons,
But to associate below
With Sion's little ones."

In most associations, those sent from the churches to represent them in the association, are designated as messengers instead of delegates. This is proper, as the churches have not delegated any authority to them to act for them in the internal affairs of the church. Our forefathers saw the danger of intrusion by associations in the internal affairs of churches, and inserted in our Articles of Faith that each church was independent in matters of discipline; as set forth in Article twelve of our Minutes.

In the prophecies and in the gospel there are two sounds that go forth from the servants of the Lord: a note of praise, and a note of warning. The nation of Israel depended on the sound of the trumpet, blown by the priest, to warn them of the approach of an enemy, and to summon them for the day of jubilee or the worship of God. How careful it becomes us to be in these things for if the trumpet gives an uncertain sound, who shall prepare for battle. That which was applicable to the people in the days of Jeremiah, is also good for us today.

The question will be asked, What are the old paths: and the good way? This is a very important question. We cannot call the paths the old paths just because they have been followed probably an hundred or a thousand years.

It appears to me that the old paths have reference to the doctrine, order and ordinances of the Lord's house. Old paths cannot be considered the ones mentioned in our text, except they are in accord with the infallible word of God. It becomes all of us, both ministry, deacons and brethren to continually inquire as to our practice, whether it conforms to the word of God.

Brethren, may we ever keep in mind what a great blessing it is to meet each other as pilgrims here below, and to bow low before a gracious God, realizing what a great blessing it is to have this privilege.

All the paths we have mentioned lead to what the prophet calls, "The good way." This good way is Jesus, who is

called the way, the truth, and the life. This is the good way referred to in the scriptures where it says, "And thine ears shall hear a sound behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when you turn to the right hand, and when you turn to the left."

May we all be on guard not to accept tradition or traditionary practices as a substitute for the word of God; or be lulled into accepting or believing any doctrine or practice because it is called the old path, unless it has a thus saith the Lord.

"O may we ever walk in Him,
And nothing know besides,
Nothing desire, or aught esteem,
But Jesus crucified."

I think the poet had the good way in view in the hymn on page 51 of the Hymn and Tune Book.

"The good old way that leads to God,
Which saints in every age have trod,
Was Christ alone, they saw his day,
And him pursued, the good old way.

The apostles all proclaimed him thus,
Jesus the Lord, or God with us,
Who did by death our ransom pay,
The truth, the life, the good old way.

'Tis true, there's one exceeding broad,
Cast up by men, a dangerous road,
Where thousands to destruction stray,
Who never found the good old way.

Cheer up, believer, courage take;
Why should thy heart with sorrow break
Eternal joys shall soon repay,
The sorrows of the good old way."

It becomes us today to stand in the ways, and inquire for the old paths, (paths supported by the word of God,) and walk therein; and we are told we will find rest for our souls. "There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Prov. 14:12)

DESIRES PRAYERS OF THE BRETHREN

828 Belmont Ave.
Wilson, N. C.

Dear Editors:

Inclosed is a copy of a memorial to my beloved husband, James B. Barron, who passed away October 9, 1970. Would you please publish in the **Signs of the Times.**

My husband loved to read the **Signs** very much, and looked forward to it each month. Needless to say how alone I feel since God took him home to rest from pain and sorrows in this world. I believe with all my heart he was one of God's children: his life was one. To know him was to love him. I prayed that I might live to care for him, and the Lord blessed me to stay by his side lacking two weeks and three days before he passed way.

The Lord has been good to me all the days of my life. I feel so unworthy of anything — just a poor weak sinner wandering in this low ground of sin and sorrow, and hoping when I pass from this life for a blessed place of rest, where there will be no pain or sorrow, no tears or trials.

I am enclosing a check for my sister's subscription and mine, as shown.

I hope you good brethren will have a mind to pray for me when at a throne of grace: I feel the need so much. It is such a lonely life without my husband. O is there anyone like I feel to be. There are times I feel lifted up, but so much of the time low in spirit.

Your sister in a blessed hope of a brighter day.

Patricia P. Barron

(See obituary this issue.)

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 1
Providence, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

If blessed to, I feel I must write concerning my experience. I know I can't write as I would like.

I felt the presence of the Lord with me when a small child; and this caused me to fear. When I was sixteen a voice spoke and said, Read the Bible. I started reading it. While I was in college and walking along the sidewalk, a voice

spoke plainly and said, Dancing isn't worth what you are paying for it. I did not desire to dance any more and stopped.

When I was nineteen I was real sick one night and thought I was going to die; and I promised the Lord if he would spare me, I would take the Bible around and read it to people. I took it everywhere I went for about three years, and would ask the people to let me read to them.

The Lord gave me a good husband. I was married to David Henry Sartin in 1931. I feel the Lord was with me for I started going to the Primitive Baptist Church; and after a while I was received and baptized by Elder Dodd. My husband was good about taking me to the meetings. I felt so alone when I went down into the water, and thought of when Christ went to the cross alone.

After I reached home from the baptizing and standing in the front yard, I was given a love for the church and brethren I had never felt before. I hope I still love them, and always will.

May the dear Lord have mercy on us. It is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. He has been good to me all my life. I know He does all the saving and I do all the sinning. My health is very bad now.

In Christian love,
Mrs. D. H. Sartin

THE EXAMPLE OF FOOT WASHING
(John 13:15)

The example of foot washing,
Giv'n by the Saviour dear,
Is followed by many of the saints
In churches once a year.

'Twas an act of humility,
And of condescension
On the part of the Son of God,
"The high and lofty One

He told his disciples they ought
T' wash one another's feet,
And many of the sons of grace
Do find this service sweet.

It is engaged in with pure joy
By followers of th' Lamb,
Who desire to walk uprightly
Before the great I AM.

But now it is not to be made
Of fellowship a test
Among Old Baptists here below,
Who are a people blest.

Differences there will be here
Until the final day,
But in the mansions of glory
They'll all be done away.

On that great and glorious day,
Saints will their Saviour meet,
They will see the Lord and Master,
Who washed his apostles' feet.

A happy meeting it will be
For all the blood-bought throng,
And they'll ever be with the Lord,
To whom they all belong.

C W. Vass
409 New York Ave.
Eliz. City, N. C.

KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

The two hundred sixth annual session of the **Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association** will be held, the Lord willing, at the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church located in the city of Rocky Mount, North Carolina, the first Sunday in October, Saturday before and Monday following, October 2, 3, and 4, 1971.

The meeting house is located on highway No. 43. Those arriving by way of 301 north or south would leave highway 301 by-pass at junction 43 east. In case of inclement weather the association will meet at Benvenue School also located on highway 43.

We cordially invite ministers, brethren, and friends of our faith and order to visit with us.

Johnny Ray Gardner, Clerk

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **Seven Mile Primitive Baptist Association** will be held, the Lord willing, with Reedy Prong Church; which is located about fifteen miles east of Dunn, N. C. — one mile off of highway 55.

Those traveling from the east will turn right at an association pointer about four miles from Newton Grove, N. C. Those traveling from the west will turn left at the same pointer.

The ministering brethren and brethren, together with all who love the doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God, are invited.

C. D. Turner

ALL-DAY MEETING AT NASSAWANGO

The Lord willing there will be an all-day meeting at **Nassawango Church** near Salisbury, Maryland, the fifth Sunday in August, 1971. Services to begin at 10:30 A. M.

D. V. Spangler, Pastor

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The 1971 session of the **Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association** is appointed to be held with Scotts Church, Friday, Saturday and fourth Sunday in October.

The Meeting House is located about six miles south-west of Wilson, N. C. on hard top rural road. Those coming from west, north or east take Highway 301 south of Wilson, cross Contentnea Creek bridge just below motel section, turn right on hard top road and follow on to the meeting. Those coming from the south on 301 highway turn left at stop lights in Lucama, go about one mile to the intersection, turn left and go about two hundred yards, turn right and follow on to the meeting.

The Saturday and Sunday services will be held in the Lucama School building located on the north-east edge of the town of Lucama.

All lovers of the truth, our correspondents, ministers of our faith and order, and especially ministers of our sister associations are invited.

W. E. Turner, Clerk

SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

The 1971 session of *The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association* will be held, the Lord willing, with the Salisbury Church, corner of Route 50 and Baptist Street, Salisbury, Maryland, on Wednesday and Thursday, October 20 and 21, next.

Anyone coming from the north on Tuesday should contact Brother William Adkins, Mardela, Maryland, Tel. 742-2198, Area Code 301; those coming from the south, please contact Brother Bill Davis, New Church, Virginia, Tel. 824-4421, Area Code 703; or Brother Harry Ward, Snow Hill, Maryland, Tel. 632-1816, Area Code 301. Those coming on Wednesday, proceed directly to the church house.

We cordially invite ministers, brethren and friends who love and seek the truth.

Mildred V. Dykes, Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Smith River Primitive Baptist Association* will be held, the Lord willing, with Mountain View Church, Floyd County, Virginia, beginning Friday before the first Sunday in September and continuing through Sunday. (September 3, 4, and 5, 1971)

Those traveling Highway 221 should turn west on Road 610 at Raye Janney's Esso Service Station, and follow same approximately seven miles to No. 659, which leads to the meeting house.

Our correspondents and other brethren are cordially invited to meet with us.

Amos Hash, Clerk
Ferrum, Va.

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the next session of the *Seven Mile Association* will be held with the church at Reedy Prong Meeting House, Johnston County, N. C., beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in September and continuing through Sunday.

The meeting house is located on County Road 1124 between Highway 50 and 55. Follow Highway 50 east of Benson approximately 8 miles, turn right on County Road 1124 at association sign, and continue to meeting house.

We cordially invite our brethren and friends to meet with us.

Elder W. D. Godwin, Moderator
James Young, Clerk

LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The Lexington-Roxbury Association is appointed to be held at Halcottville, Delaware County, New York, Wednesday and Thursday, September 15 and 16, 1971.

Those coming Tuesday take Denver Road at Kelly Corners to the home of John B. Hewett — Crystal Spring Farm. Those coming Wednesday go directly to the Meeting House at Halcottville.

Brethren and friends are invited.

Elder A. J. Slauson

Danville, Virginia September, 1971

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We always welcome letters and articles from the brethren for publication. Some of the Elders are faithful in remebering that we need their support by their writings and in handling subscriptions; and we wish that more would do the same.

EDITORS

EDITORIAL

FAITHFULNESS

It has been requested that we write upon the above subject, and in doing so, we confess ourselves as too much of the earth, earthy, to be able of ourselves to rise to that height from which we could instruct our brethren in faithfulness. To our sorrow, we find that though we are at times able to rejoice in the love and mercy of a faithful God, yet our recollections often reproach us with many instances of our unfaithfulness, from which recollections we ought to learn, yes, and we do learn, that in us, that is in our flesh, there dwells no good thing. How good it is that "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." Faithfulness is not of man, and never can it proceed from man, it is the direct fruit of God's Holy Spirit, and there is only one way that this faith can be ours. The Scripture saith, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." True faith is only received by divine revelation, it is not the darkened mind of the creature depending upon the veracity of the word of its creator, but it is an illuminated mind confidently depending upon the ability, and walking in the strength of Him who has promised.

Thus faith is not just a blind assent-

ing to the truth, but it is an implicit trust in him who has imparted strength by the word he has spoken to us. Thus David went forth in the strength of the Lord. Not only does faith believe the word spoken, but while it is in lively exercise the recipient feels and knows that all Scripture is given by inspiration, that not one word of our eternal God shall fall to the ground, that his faithfulness is unto all generations, and as he hath established the earth, so it abideth. It is by and in this God-given faith that the soul diligently seeks God, believes his words and walks in his ways, and the more faith is in exercise the more that soul will have confidence in God, and lose confidence in the flesh. For one to walk after the flesh, is to walk after that that pleases not God, for in the flesh we cannot please God. Thus those who are in the flesh, and follow its motions, are without faith, and Paul tells us, "Without faith it is impossible to please God."

Now while God in creation pronounced his work good, yet the work of man, that is, the work of the flesh never was good and never pleased the Lord, and daily we find the flesh profiteth nothing, it is under the curse of sin. Of the word of God Isaiah saith, "It shall accomplish that which I please," and Jesus, the Word made flesh, said, "I do always those things that please him." It is here, we would say, that true faithfulness is found: in Jesus. Paul tells us that "Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over his own house; whose house we are, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

How necessary to examine ourselves, and that often, whether we be in the faith. It is easy to deceive ourselves, and we may deceive others, but we cannot deceive God. Paul says, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your ownselves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin. How clear and cutting such truth is; and how necessary, we say again, for both hearer and speaker to examine themselves and prove themselves. Faithfulness is the keynote of Jesus as a Son, faithfulness should be the keynote of those who profess to be his.

"Let us ask the important question,
(Brethren, be not too secure.)
What it is to be a christian,
How we may our hearts assure.

Vain is all our best devotion,
If on false foundations built;
True religion's more than notion,
Something must be known and felt."

As we are concerned principally with those who profess Christ, we would direct our remarks first to those who are brethren, partakers of a holy calling. "Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." There is not one spark of faith in the soul but what Jesus is the author and finisher of it, and so, while we are in this life Paul says, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Now to live in Christ and Christ to live in us, is not like one sitting in a bus and that bus taking us to our destination, while we may read a newspaper, chat or sleep, but is a daily self-examination in the sight of truth, and struggling hard against sin and unbelief. A taking joyfully the spoiling of our goods and counting it all joy when we fall into divers temptations, is not according to the flesh. When the Lord gives a grain of faith, he will also see that that faith shall be tried. There will be a wicked heart to contend with, a darkened mind, a stubborn will, a hardened conscience, and all this in the one who has vowed to walk softly before the Lord.

We are naturally proud, and the Lord knows how to humble, and he often takes a way we least expect to bring us low. "He that is low need fear no

fall." Yet the lower we are brought faith sees the Lord exalted higher, views him as the chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely. When faith is dormant in the soul we become high-minded, and, as far as spiritual things are concerned, we are asleep. To such Paul says, "Awake to righteousness, and sin not, for some of you have not the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame." At such times our faithlessness will be seen. There will be a winking at sin, an indifference to prayer, to the word of God, to the afflictions of Christ, as manifested in his saints. It is at such times that wars and fightings come, and oh how cruel sometimes brethren can be to brethren. Again this world will not be the enemy it once was to such, and riches will have lost their deceitfulness. However, the Lord will not leave them there if they are his, there is a furnace in Zion, and faith will again enable them, under affliction to confess his hand and know no will but his. It is then that the fullness of faith excludes unbelief, softens, makes a tender conscience, denies ungodliness and enables one to live a godly, righteous and sober life in the present evil world. Faithfulness demands that all who own a Savior's blood shall lay their tongues in the dust, yea, shall be dumb rather than speak evil against those for whom Christ died.

Now, as is often the case with those who speak in God's name, as with the people to whom they minister, we would write upon the necessity of faithfulness in those who are upon the walls of Zion. The word saith, "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful," that is, he must be faithful to his God and the word of his grace. He must be faithful in declaring what he has handled, tasted and felt of the word of life, he must not handle the word of God God deceitfully. He must study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, doing it as he that shall give account unto God. Paul charged Timothy before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth,, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."

This charge was also given to us, and therefore how necessary to examine ourselves whether we be in the faith. There are many who need reproof and rebuke these days, and do we reprove or rebuke them? And is it with all longsuffering and doctrine? All need exhorting that they shall walk worthy of their high calling, not with eye service as men-pleasers, that they shall not copy their conversation after this vain world. A ministry with no rebuke or reproof in it will be very pleasing and satisfying to the flesh, but dishonoring to God. A ministry without exhortation will breed an indifference to the precepts of the gospel. Godly exhortation will not fail to stir up the pure mind of the hearers unless they be reprobate. Where there is a faithful ministry there is generally a faithful people, for it is often "Like priest, like people," and where there is a faithful people, such will pray that their minister shall prove faithful to them. A ministry that denies the doctrine of God in any part is not a faithful ministry. The church of God should always be careful in their judgment of a gift, for the words of an unfaithful elder will eat as doth a canker. A faithful ministry will not overthrow the faith of God's children like Hymenaeus and Philetus who were unfaithful in their teaching concerning the resurrection. An unfaithful ministry is to be blamed for much of the confusion and divisions that have ever crept into the church. Paul tells us, If I seek to please men I should not

be the servant of Christ; and Elihu said, "Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person; neither let me give flattering titles unto man. For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my Maker would soon take me away."

To follow the high calling of an ambassador of God calls for the speaker to be as God's mouth. His testimony must not be with high sounding words of man's wisdom, and only as he divides the precious from the vile, is he God's mouth. There are many, perhaps, today as the Lord declared to Ezekiel: "They come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not." The Lord said he would lay the land most desolate because of their abominations. Surely there is a woe upon those who deal treacherously with God's people. Isaiah tells us, "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." If one speak, let him speak as the oracle of God, and if he minister, let him minister with the ability that God giveth. But we lack wisdom! James saith, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." There is nothing that brings a man to his knees in prayer if he be a servant of God more than a realizing sense of his insufficiency for these things, and the one who wrestles and communes with his God most in private, though he may often mourn an absent God, will find that God will give him a mouth and wisdom, which all his adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist. It is only when one goes forth in the strength of the Lord that he can put to flight the armies of the aliens. Surely we need to cry daily, Lord, make and keep me faithful, faithful to thee and thy word, then I shall be faithful to those that are thine.

G. R.

(The above was by Elder Ruston in September, 1931.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

JOHN 5:4

"For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he he had."

We are requested by a sister living in Texas to give some expression upon the above text, and we feel willing to do the best we can.

By reading the preceding chapter it will be seen that Jesus was performing miracles in Galilee, after which there was a feast of the Jews, and he went up to Jerusalem. He, being a law-abiding Jew, attended the feast days as well as the fast days, though not always, as it seems from careful reading. In fact, he came not to keep the law from a literal standpoint, but in the spirit of it. However, while at the feast at Jerusalem he was found in the temple, and no doubt took part in the feast. We are told that at Jerusalem by the sheep market there was a pool, called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches, and that in them lay a great multitude of impotent folk, blind, halt and withered, waiting for the moving of the water. This to our view sets forth the entire law, through which was the hope of the Jews.Of all the multitude waiting at the pool we have no reason to suppose that one was other than a Jew. Jerusalem was the pride and admiration of that nation, and outside of it little seemed worth while. Their worship was there, the law was read there, the fast days and the feast were there and the pool through which, together with the work of an angel, healing was done. It was there also that the Jews bought

and sold and got gain. Notwithstanding the fact that they made the temple "a den of theives," to them Jerusalem was "the holy city." All things pertaining to the temple worship were according to the commandments of the law, and from that standpoint cannot be criticised, but all those things were mere shadows and soon to pass away.

The term "five porches" seems rather odd, and particularly so if the pool was foursquare, but if round or octagon it could have had more if there be no significance in the number five. The number is full, as are the numbers three and seven so often used in the Scriptures, and may signify the five books of Moses embracing the whole law by which the Israelites were governed and through which they hoped and expected justification before God, and at last eternal life. But no law was given that could give life, if so righteousness would have been by the law. Therefore their hope was not "a good hope through grace," nor could they be justified by the law of Moses. It being all, however, they had, they had nothing else to hope in nor depend upon, hence the multitude of blind, lame, halt and withered were in the five porches of the pool waiting for healing, and some were literaly healed of whatsoever disease they had.

This brings us to consider the ceremonial cleansing of the Jews through the blood of goats and calves offered by the high priest. Such cleansing was only outward, and for one year only, then there was again a remembrance of sins and another offering necessary. This shows that the law in its entirety, represented by the five porches, could never make the comers thereunto perfect; every ordinance showed in itself imperfection.

The angel that went down at a certain season and troubled the water, making healing possible, was not, in our understanding, such as is seen in pictures, with wings, sometimes called without authority, "angelic spirits." According to the Bible definition of the word "angel," it means "a ministering spirit," or one sent to minister. Let us not forget that was an age of miracles, and some men who followed not Jesus had power to cast out devils and do many other wonderful works. We therefore conclude that the angel that troubled the water was a man, a ministering spirit, with peculiar power, no doubt of God, to give the water healing properties or powers, as it were. The term "an angel went down" simply means that he visited the pool at certain seasons, and has not a shadow of significance that he descended from heaven.

It is plain to be seen that all who were in the porches depended upon "instrumentalities" — the water, the angel and their own ability to get into the water when troubled; but there was one man there, a certain man, yet his hope was in the law, or, in other words, expected to assist in his healing by some day getting into the pool when the water was troubled. It matters not how undone one may be, he or she keeps on trying, hoping that some day they will be able to perform that which seems necessary in their salvation, but, as to that man, Jesus must come revealing his power and salvation. To the poor helpless man Jesus appeared and asked him if he would be made whole. The man replied, "Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me." This demonstrates the utter ignorance of that whole nation of the power of the Godhead, gospel blessings and eternal salvation. Not a thought above the law, no hope except in works, no justification except through the deeds of the law. The man did not know Jesus, nor had he the slightest conception of what was about to take place, but Jesus knew him, and was there at the right moment to do the will of God in showing forth his power and his doctrine of election. He did not need the assistance of the angel, the water nor any man to put the object of his love into the pool, but simply "spake and it was done," saying to the man, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." And immediately the man

was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath. Marvelous power, infinite mercy and abounding grace. It was indeed sabbath to him, a rest from all his efforts to be healed, a day of strength in the Lord, able to do the commandments of Jesus, which are not grievous. How wonderful that the blind see, the lame walk, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and that the poor have the gospel preached unto them, and how glad poor sinners are that they are not offended in Jesus, but rather rejoice in his power and eternal Godhead.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear;
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

After the man was healed and took up his bed the Jews found fault with him, saying, "This is the sabbath, it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed." but he said, "He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed and walk." Self-righteous men always find fault with those healed by the Lord for not doing as they do in keeping the sabbath, praying three times a day, giving of all they possess, so they say, fasting and feasting, but they are, after being healed, under another law to God written in the heart and in the mind; no longer have they hope in the pool, nor are they found in the five porches, but rather in the temple of the living God worshiping him in the beauty of holiness, ascribing greatness to his name for their healing and eternal salvation through the blood of the Lamb. Well do they realize that an Angel indeed, God's only Son, his ministering Spirit, came down from heaven to minister and to give his life a ransom for them. The pool at Jerusalem is no more, but a fountain has been opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of spiritual Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness, and in this fountain the lame, the halt, the blind and the dead in sin are washed, healed and made clean every whit.

K.

(The above was by Elder H. C. Ker May 15, 1921.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. FLOSSIE HODGINS

By request, I attempt to write the obituary of our precious sister in the Lord, Mrs. Flossie Hodgins.

She was the widow of Ellis Hodgins, who died in August, 1942. She passed away in her 95th year, April 5, 1971, and her funeral was held by her pastor, Elder George Ruston, in London, Ontario. She joined the Covenanted Baptist Church in 1955 at Poplar Hill, Ontario.

All who knew her loved her dearly and will miss her but those who will miss her most are those near and dear to her by the ties of nature, her three devoted daughters: Olive Hodgins, London, Ontario; Elsie (Mrs. C. K.) Abbott of London; Helen (Mrs. R. J.) Dallard of Windsor, Ontario. She had four grandchildren and one great grandchild.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints." (Psalm 116:15). She was a wonderful mother and friend. After her operation, she would say, "I must not complain, I have felt the Lord's presence."

She lived in London with her daughter, Olive, and she and Olive were always ready to entertain the ministers, their families, and friends. Her walk and conversation proved how much she loved her church and looked forward always to church meetings.

Few were so wonderfully bright and blessed to quote scripture at her age. Her experience before and after being baptized was published in the February *Signs*, 1957.

Written by one who loved her,
(Mrs.) Verna Carscadden
Brampton, Ontario

SISTER EMMA STANFIELD CHANDLER

We must bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father in the calling of our beloved sister in Christ, Sister Emma Stanfield Chandler. Sister Chandler was born March 9, 1896 of her parents, the late Stephen Stanfield and Nettie Baynes Stanfield, and departed this life June 1, 1971.

She was the wife of Brother D. Otis Chandler, Sr.; and unto this union were born five children; Ruby Stephens, Dorothy Harris, Brother D. Otis Chandler, Jr., Wilbur and Joseph (Joe) Chandler.

Sister Chandler possessed a hope in Christ many years, but it was late in life when she united with the church and was baptized into the fellowship. She united with Bush Arbor

Church in 1958. In her community she was known as a kind devoted mother and neighbor.

As we visited her home in her last days, it was indeed inspiring to see the love and care which she received from her family. Everything was done that earthly hands could do. She spoke so sweetly of the years that had passed and how she looked forward for her late pastor to spend nights in her home. We could see the faith of God in action as she was reconciled to her trials and suffering in this life, and even made willing to accept death. Her funeral was conducted by her present pastor, Elder Wallis A. Smith, assisted by Elder E. F. Oakley. Her body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Bush Arbor Church cemetery to await the resurrection morning.

May her family, church, and all that mourn her passing be reconciled with the word of John the Revelator 14:13, "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit that they may rest from their labour; their works do follow them."

Written by request of Bush Arbor Church.

BE IT RESOLVED, that a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times*, one to the family, and one kept for church records.

Read and approved in our church conference July 10, 1971.

Elder Wallis A. Smith, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

SISTER KATE DAMERON MITCHELL

It is with a feeling of inadequacy that I attempt to write a suitable memorial of one of such Spiritual stature of our beloved Sister, Mrs. Kate Dameron Mitchell. I am very conscious of my limitations — my inability to adequately tell of all her virtues, and indeed, her true worth to our church.

"Miss Kate," as she was widely known because of having taught school, was born at Whitmell, Virginia, on July 4, 1880, and died May 21, 1971, at the home of her daughter. Thus her pilgrimage here was almost ninety-one years.

Sister Mitchell's family moved to North Carolina when she was very young, so she spent most of her life in Rockingham County.

She was united in marriage in 1910 to Mr. Robert P. Mitchell, and to this union one daughter and two sons were born. Her husband preceded her in death in 1948, and one son, Joseph Drury Mitchell, died in 1956. She is survived by the daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Mitchell Meador, who so tenderly cared for her the last few years. One son, Robert P. Mitchell, Jr., also survives.

Sister Mitchell was the daughter of the late Elder James S. Dameron, and Sister Kate Roberts Dameron. In addition to being an eminent minister of the gospel, Elder Dameron and his wife were among the pioneers in the field of education in Rockingham and Caswell Counties. They having established the Ruffin Select School in Caswell County in 1867. This school was known to some as The Rock Academy. All members of the family, including "Miss Kate," were teachers.

Sister Mitchell united with Reidsville church in August, 1926, and was baptized by the late Elder O. J. Denny. It is believed that she became church clerk soon after she united with the church. She served very efficiently and faithfully until infirmities of age forced her to become inactive. She, however, remained our clerk emeritus until her death.

Among her greatest gifts was her Spiritual insight. She manifested that she was taught of God, and indeed, was a scholar in the school of Grace. Of the many Spiritual graces with which she was endowed, the virtues of deep compassion and humility were most readily recognized. Her unerring judgment in church matters was duly recognized, and her wisdom in advising could not be questioned. Also, her faithfulness in attending her meetings was commensurate with her great love for her church.

A precious Jewel has been taken from us, and we are deeply conscious of our great loss; but we are comforted in the assurance that her dear Spirit has taken flight to "That Land of Pure Delight" — where the veil has been removed, and she is beholding the glories of her blessed Redeemer.

An impressive and befitting funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler. He used the beautiful Twenty-Third Psalm, which she had requested. Her body was placed beside that of her husband in Reidlawn Cemetery in Reidsville.

Our church wishes to extend to Sister Mitchell's family our sincere condolence.

Written by one who loved her deeply for Christ's sake, and whose memory we shall always cherish.

Mamie P. Aldridge

DEACON JAMES BOLDEN BARRON

In loving memory of my beloved husband, Brother, and Deacon, James Bolden Barron, who fell asleep in Jesus October 9, 1970, after a lingering illness in Wilson Memorial Hospital.

He was 85 years, one month, and thirteen days old. He was the son of the late Joseph Thomas and Farby Elizabeth Stancil Barron being the fifth child of twelve children born to this union. Surviving him are three sisters,

Mrs. Irene Barron Ellis, Mrs. Nannie Josephine Barron Hughes, and Mrs. Mary Thomas Barron Elmore.

Brother Barron was twice married, first to Sudie Elnora Joyner on December 3, 1905. Three children were born to this union, two sons, Joseph Thomas and James Albert, who preceded him in death and a daughter, Nellie Mae Barron Whitley.

His first wife died on October 10, 1931 and he was married the second time to Patricia Althena Pelt on November 11, 1933, who survives him together with his daughter and three grandchildren.

Brother Barron united with the Toisnot Primitive Baptist Church, now Wilson Primitive Baptist Church, in August, 1905, and was baptized by Elder Pleasant Daniel Gold, his pastor. He was ordained to the office of Deacon in August, 1927, and served faithfully for 43 years. He was an active member of his church for 65 years.

In his declining health and last illness all was done that mortal man could do, but his days were fulfilled according to the will of God.

I was confined to the hospital in the intensive care unit during my husband's last illness and was still in the hospital when he passed away. I had prayed day and night to Almighty God that I might live and be given strength to care for him until the end, but it wasn't in God's providence, and that I do not question, for God does all things according to his will. Our daughter was by his side constantly during the last days of her father's illness and death. She was most dutiful to both her father and me and has been a great comfort to me since her father's death, for which I truly thank God for giving us such a loving and considerate daughter.

My husband was a devoted husband, father and friend to his church family and community, and will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, assisted by Elder W. J. Berry. Their words of comfort to his family and large congregation of Brethren and friends were most impressive. Three of his favorite hymns, "Amazing Grace," "Jerusalem My Happy Home," and "Father I Will Rest in Thy Love," were sung and he was laid to rest by the side of his first wife in Maplewood Cemetery under a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the call on the last day, when our Lord returns for his redeemed children and says well done thy good and faithful servant. I feel assured in my heart that he was one of God's little ones.

The Lord was good to me in giving me such a wonderful husband to share 37 years, lacking only one month and two days, of my life. Tho, as much as I loved him and miss him, I would not call him back to this low ground of sin and sorrow and the pain he had to suffer in the flesh. I thank God that his suffering is over and know that surely he is resting in peace with his Lord.

I only hope that when I go it will be well with my soul, and that grace, peace and love will be with me until the end of my days on earth.

Done by order of Conference at Wilson Church Saturday before the second Sunday in November 1970. The Church will send one copy to the *Old Faith Contender*, one to the *Signs of the Times*, one to the family, and one for the church records.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Preston Gay, Clerk

RALPH L. QUINN

We, the church at Sand Hill, N. C., desire to write a few lines in memory of our dearly beloved brother, Ralph L. Quinn. He was born March 30, 1895, and died February 26, 1971.

Brother Quinn united with Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church September 13, 1947, and was a true and faithful member. He greatly enjoyed the fellowship of his brethren, and rejoiced in the visits of the church members in his home. His love and good wishes shall ever be a memoir to those near and dear to him.

His immediate kindren to survive him are, his wife, Sister Mae Quinn; five girls, three boys, and several grandchildren, who stood by him so faithfully until the Lord saw fit to call him home. We believe our loss is his eternal gain.

His funeral was conducted by Elder D. B. Stokes at Sand Hill Church, and he was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

As he bore evidence of being one of God's elect, we believe Brother Quinn's soul is in the paradise of God to await the glorious resurrection day. Written by his niece,

Lois H. Kennedy

BROTHER ALBERT BOLLING

Brother Albert Bolling was born August 17, 1886, and died May 29, 1971. He was a son of J. J. Bolling and Martha George Bolling.

He joined Springfield Primitive Baptist Church October 28, 1970. He was afflicted with a bad stroke, causing him to be unable to attend church. We held some services in his home, but we could not understand very much

he said, though we knew by his expressions that he enjoyed the meetings a lot, and seemed to be in praise to our Lord.

Surviving are his wife, Sister Minerva Doss Bolling, of Chatham, Va.; two foster sons, Junior Bolling, of Gretna, Va., and Percy Fox, of Altavista, Va.; three foster daughters, Mrs. Doris Earls, of Chatham; Mrs. Dorothy Fraser, Brookneal, Va.; and Mrs. Elizabeth Taylor, Norfolk, Va.; two sisters, Mrs. Rosa Motley, Dry Fork, Va., and Mrs. Sallie Brumfield, Gretna, Va.

His funeral was held at the Springfield Church by his pastor, Elder O. K. Tench; and his body was laid away in Gretna Burial Park to await the second coming of our Lord.

L. R. Willis

ANNIE E. TRUITT

Once more we bow in humble submission to the will of our God who was pleased to take from our midst our dear and beloved Sister, Annie E. Truitt, who was born on May 21, 1888, and departed this life on March 27, 1971.

She was the daughter of the late Isaac and Rachel Elizabeth Whaley. Sister Truitt was married twice, her first marriage taking place on February 8, 1915, to Levin White who passed away in the year of 1937; and to this union was born one daughter, Mrs. Maggie Jones, who survives and now living in Laurel, Del. She is also survived by seven grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren.

Sister Truitt was married the second time to Glen Truitt on Jan. 6, 1940, and his departure from this life was in 1945.

Sister Truitt was baptized in May of 1953 by the late Elder Harold M. Bennett, and remained a faithful member of the Little Creek Church until her departure from this life. She attended the meetings as long as her health would permit. Sister Truitt was a strong believer in salvation by grace and even though she spent quite some time in nursing homes, she always enjoyed so much hearing someone mention about the goodness and mercy of the Lord; and by his mercies she said many times her hope was for a better land. The writer visited her many times and always found her praising God for his goodness and kindness toward her.

May it please the Lord to bless all that mourn the loss of this dear one, to feel that their loss is her eternal gain, is the prayer of the writer.

Funeral service was held by the writer in the Little Creek Church meeting house and her body was laid to rest in the Little Creek cemetery.

Elder Arthur R. Warren

SALLIE SHORT COX

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our beloved Sister, Sallie Short Cox, on May 8, 1971, at the age of 83 in Lynchburg General Hospital, Lynchburg, Virginia.

Sister Cox was born February 13, 1888, to the late James and Martha C. Short. She was the wife of the late George T. Cox.

She united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church October 28, 1934, and was faithful to attend as long as a way was provided.

She leaves to mourn her loss one son, Otha Cox, and two daughters, Mrs. Virginia Frazier and Mrs. Edna Love. She also leaves four brothers, Victor, Lundy, John, and Tom Short; four sisters, Sister Annie Hedrick, Sister Jennie Murphy, Sister Ora Adams, and Mrs. Lizzie Adams; sixteen grandchildren and twenty great grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and Mr. James Worley. She was laid to rest under a beautiful mound of flowers in the family cemetery.

Written by,
Marvin Brumfield

MARGARET FLORENCE HASTINGS

We feel that we have lost a very dear friend when it pleased the Lord to take from our midst Miss Margaret Florence Hastings, who was born April 24, 1886; and departed this life March 31, 1971.

She was the daughter of the late Samuel B. and Julia Anna Hastings. She had a B. A. degree — Penn State University and taught school 52 years, 49 of which were in Delmar, Delaware. Miss Hastings lived for many years with her sister, Mrs. Marion Francis, who survives. She, as far as the writer knows, attended the Old School Baptist meetings all of her life. She was not a visible member but we feel she was a believer in salvation by grace; and the writer of this has felt many times, from her walk and the expression on her face at the meetings, that it would have been well to have said Sister Hastings.

May all of us who knew her so well be blessed to feel that she had spent her alloted time here and that the Lord was pleased to take her to a better land where all the sorrows and cares of this world are taken away.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer in the Marvel Funeral Home in Delmar, Del. and her body was laid to rest in the Little Creek Cemetery.

Elder Arthur R. Warren

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 139 DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1971 NO. 10

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** will be held, the Lord willing, with Pittman Grove Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in October, 1971.

The church is located on Highway 222 about three miles east of Kenly, N. C. Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 203,
Stokes, N. C. 27884

HELP ME DEAR LORD

Show me the way through darkness to light
Give me a heart to know wrong from right
Stay by my side and never let me stray
Help me Dear Lord, for my enemies to pray.

I walk alone in this world of woe
Except to my Saviour I have no place to go
When everything seems useless,
And nothing goes right
I feel myself sinking out of sight
I cry, my God, have mercy on me,
Please hear this sinners humble plea.

Dear Allmighty God and Saviour of thine
Wash me and cleanse me and make me divine
Keep me humble through each trying day
That I may not stumble along the way.

I beg in thy name, Hold me in your Hands,
And give me a home in your promised land,
Where joy and peace will reign forever,
And the lust of this world I shall not endeavor.

Evelyn Winstead
Rt. 3, Box 323A
Jacksonville, N. C.

ENJOYS ELDER BEEBE'S WRITINGS

2238 McCurdy Road
Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

Last week I read about 150 pages and scanned the rest of the **Signs Editorials,** Vol. I, which you gave me. I have rejoiced in every page I have read. What a wonderful book! It is a book I will treasure all of my life and will be, I am sure of inestimable value to me. You were so right when you said in your letter that Elder Beebe was an able defender of the truth in the midst of much opposition. What a learned man he was! How scholarly he presents the views of the Old School Baptists substantuating each point with scriptural texts. How ignorant I feel as I read the words of a man who had such a command of the English language and such an insight into the unsearchable riches of the Bible.

In establishing the **Signs** in 1832 he stated in the preface that the publication would be devoted to the Old School cause and would maintain inviolably the ten scriptural sentiments outlined there. This, I feel, he did in his writings to the edification and comfort of its readers. Yet, he did so with humility, dignity and reverence, and we see in his works not a trace of harshness or bitterness. He certainly fought a good fight in the face of such violent opposition.

John Milton, the English poet, said: ". . . a good book is the precious lifeblood of a master spirit, imbalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life." Elder Beebe was truly a master spirit whose inspired writings live on today to comfort the afflicted in Zion.

I am sure, as you mentioned, that you do often think of the Black Rock brethren of long ago as you go to the church each 3rd Sunday. How I would love to visit that church, steeped in the history of our staunch forefathers, who, with God's unfailing support, preserved the truths of the Old School Baptists.

I feel the **Signs** still subscribes to these views as stated in the 1832 pro-

spectus when it was established. We have today able writers who firmly adhere to these sentiments and who are dedicated to carrying on the work begun nearly 140 years ago.

We know, of course, the preeminent and supreme writing is contained in God's holy word — the Bible, which must be exalted above all other writing,

Yet, we are blessed to have writers, both past and present, to uphold steadfastly the doctrine of our faith and bring good news to the lonely and burdened sojourners scattered about our country. May we know, through their inspired writings, that we are not forsaken. "And I will dwell among the children of Israel and I will not forsake my people Israel." (I Kings 6:13) "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them." (Isaiah 31:17)

May God continue to feed the needy through our sweet publication, **The Signs,** and may it always abide by the principles upon which it was founded in 1832. And may His everlasting love shine forth through its pages.

Brother and Sister Wood, thank you again for my books. Please thank your dear friend who gave you **Fragments** to send to me. I have been reading it tonight and have found in Elder Durand's writings beautiful expressions of my own experiences.

My love to you both.

Humbly,
Katie Kilby

ENJOYS THE SIGNS EACH MONTH

Rt. 1,
Rison, Ark.

Dear Editors and Readers of the **Signs:**

I do so much enjoy the good reading each month. I am sending a check for $4.00 for another year. I will be seventy-seven in November and live alone with no one to share the sweet fellowship I have in the Spirit of Jesus. There is great joy in witnessing his great love to others. I miss this so much for I don't live close to those that have the true religion of Jesus Christ: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God."

I know nothing only as the Spirit lets me know; and no man can take it from me. Jesus keeps me in his grace, and nothing can be hard for us as we abide in his grace.He makes our enemies to be at peace with us, and we experience this many times in our walk of life. I feel so unworthy of his mercy and goodness to me.

I enjoy every letter in the **Signs,** especially the ones on experience. They remind me of my own, and no one can take them from us.

May the Lord bless your work continually until He comes.

One of the least,
Edna Whitehead

MY EXPERIENCE BEFORE AND AFTER BEING BAPTIZED

London, Ontario, Canada
November 5, 1956

To My Dear Children and Grandchildren:

About two months before my baptism, in my sleep. I seemed to be standing, and I looked down and saw the words "JESUS IS MY SAVIOUR," in large block letters, very plain, and I thought how wonderful those words were. They would come into my mind so much — "Jesus is my Saviour!" It seemed so wonderful! The thought came that I should tell Elder Ruston the wonderful words I saw — that it was my duty to join the Church and be baptized. This was much on my mind, but I didn't know when. I didn't know then what God's plan was. The words "Why tarry?" would come to me. Wednesday was Mr. Rogers' funeral, and Beckie said she would call for me. On the way she said she received a letter from Minerva McLean, so she stopped the car and read her lovely letter in which she said she intended asking for a Home in the Church, and if received, baptized on

the 1st Sunday (which was the next Sunday — November, 1955) at Poplar Hill.

Oh, I thought, what about me? I didn't know what to do! We went to the funeral and Elder Ruston preached from the 39th Psalm, and his text included the 7th verse — "And, now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in Thee." They just seemed for me, I felt. I went home. I truly had distress of mind. My prayer almost continuously was that the Lord would keep me; make me willing, if it was his will that I should go. On Thursday I knew Elder Ruston was going to Poplar Hill to arrange for the baptism and I looked for them to call. I hoped the Lord would put it in his heart to call, for I thought if he did my prayer was answered, but he didn't call, so I was full of doubts and fears.

On Friday, dear Beckie came up and I told her how I would love to see Elder Ruston, so she phoned him and they said they would be up about 6 P. M. In the meantime, we went out to Elsie's. I wanted to tell her what was on my mind. Elder and Mrs. Ruston came and were with us for supper. I told him I was thinking of coming to the Church and be baptized on Sunday, too, but that I had such doubts and fears. I was so encouraged when he told me he had me on his mind about coming and he wasn't surprised.

That night I spent a sleepless night, begging the Lord to be with me. The cold weather didn't bother me at all. All I asked was that the Lord would be with me, guide and direct me, and give me a calm and peaceful heart. Saturday I was still terribly distressed, sometimes feeling I couldn't go, yet all the time getting my clothes in readiness. I would try to read the Bible, but got no comfort, and I would say so often — What kind of a creature am I? — getting ready to be baptized and in this condition — "Like one, alone, I seemed to be; Oh, was there anyone like me?"

Sunday morning when I awoke it was bright and my troubles and fears were gone. When dressing, those lovely words, "The clouds ye so much dread are filled with mercy and shall break with blessings on your head," were sweet and comforting. I seemed surprised I hadn't a fear or a doubt. "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform." I was glad that my dear children and grandchildren were able to be there, too. I felt a blessing in that. It was truly a time to be remembered as long as I live. I truly feel the Lord was in it all the way through, and I hope I can praise His Holy Name as long as life shall last. Dear Beckie was a great comfort, too.

All the following week I was glad and happy; my mind filled with the wonderful Way — and the baptism, but by the end of the week I began to have fearful doubts that I shouldn't yet have gone and been baptized — that I was all wrong! I didn't know what to do! I knew I had done the wrong thing — thought I was ready, but was not. On Monday night I was alone and started to iron, and in my great distress, I just **said,** "Jesus said He was my Saviour;" and then it came to my mind that it was the evil spirit telling me I was wrong — and my trouble was gone!

I told Beckie that experience, and she wasn't surprised. She said, "If you are a Child of God you are promised those fears and trials." Again, I was filled with rejoicing, but not for long, for it came to my mind that the day I was baptized, as I stood in the water, I seemed to want to get a firm hold of Elder Ruston's hand, and the more I thought of it, the more distressed I became, that I was just depending on my own strength; and Oh, how that has troubled me! I felt I wasn't ready to be baptized! My awful unfitness!

At the May Meetings I took Communion, and I felt I wasn't fit; also at the June Meetings I took Communion, but, Oh, my unfitness! I would pray that the Lord would show me if I was right, and those lovely words, "Jesus is my Saviour," would come up before me and I would think what more do I want, but I felt I hadn't that right love, and I prayed that I might be given that love that He, alone, can give, and the words,

"I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore, with loving kindness have I drawn thee," came to me; and Oh, what comforting words they were.

On Friday night before our own Lobo Meetings (September 1956) I couldn't sleep, praying that the Lord would give me joy in taking Communion, and to give me some token that I should have been baptized. Then, the sweet, comforting words came into my mind that Jesus was left, alone, when he hung on the cross. I can never tell you the comfort I have had since then. What a wonderful Comforter we have!

And how I enjoyed the Lobo Meeting! I just felt I could run and not be weary and walk and not faint. Of all my experiences, I feel this to be the most wonderful! It just seemed to CONFIRM and SETTLE all previous promises. Jesus felt forsaken, and in my great distress, he brought this to my remembrance. The following verse came to me with much sweetness — "In every pang that rends the heart, the Man of Sorrows had a part. He sympathizes with our grief and to the sufferer sends relief." (58th Paraphrase)

MOTHER
(Mrs. Flossie Hodgins)

(See obituary last month)

MATTHEW XIII. 33.

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."

According to Matthew, thirteenth chapter, this parable, and many others, spake Jesus to a great multitude at the seaside, and his disciples asked him why he spoke to them in parables. He answered, and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. I will say at the very beginning that if I have in any measure been instructed into the kingdom of heaven it seems a very small quantity, so little that I just hope I have a part in his kingdom. Now Jesus did not tell his disciples that it was given unto them to explain the mystery of the kingdom of heaven, but to know it, and I believe that God's children, from their earliest recollection, experience things they will never in this life be able to explain to their own satisfaction. For instance, when they come to the church and ask for a home, they cannot tell what they have seen, heard and felt, as they desire, though it is sufficient to the church, being accompanied by the Spirit, for the church is composed of the likeness, as the one offered, and as Elder S. J. Norris said in his lifetime, he hated his own ways, but he loved those who had ways just like his. The apostle said we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away, though now we see as through a glass darkly, but then face to face. So it is, I think, with God's children who are given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. It is in part, or a foretaste, while they live in this tabernacle, but in the world to come they will see Jesus and be like him, which will be the fulness of that which they have here received an earnest of, and the earnest is just like the fulness will be, only it is in a small part here, wherein we hope that we are his and heaven is our home, when we leave this world. I said we, for Paul said there is a crown laid up for me, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me in that day, and not to me only, but to all those who love his appearing.

The parable Jesus spake that "the kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." I think the leaven figures the grace of God, or kingdom, and the woman that hid it in three measures of meal is wisdom. The three measures of meal are a man, composed of three component parts, body, soul and spirit, as Jesus said, Behold, the kingdom of God is within you, and, again, as God has said, I will dwell in them and walk

in them, I will be their God and they shall be my people. The effects of the grace of God in the heart, or inward parts, of his people, crucify the old man with his deeds, daily, and usually keep God's children repenting with godly sorrow, weeping and mourning and in grief because of their sins, which dwell in the mortal flesh. They cannot attain the measure they desire to; though the will be present the ability, or power, is absent. The nature of divine grace is to, and does, humble God's children, and to bring us down and show us what we are by nature and what we must be by grace. It teaches us that in the flesh dwells no good thing, neither can it produce any good thing, nor can it glory in the Lord. Paul said, I delight in the law of God after the inner man, and have no confidence in the flesh. The same as to say, I joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. The law he delighted in after the inner man was the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus that made him free from the law of sin and death. For sin reigned by the law of commandments, which Paul found to be unto death, but much more does grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ.

God's children are not under the law of the old covenant, but the new covenant, the law of grace and love, and it constrains them as a compelling power, though many times they kick against the power with a haughty spirit, in their nature, as the children of Israel did in the days of old, and when they do they will certainly smart under the chastisement of the rod of God's everlasting love, that they may say it is all of grace from first to last, for the grace of God that bringeth salvation (it does not try to bring it.) hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Then can we do one thing without grace? No, a thousand times no. The grace of God teaches us that we cannot, and it also teaches us that we are poor, weak, sinful mortal beings, that it is the Spirit that quickens, the flesh profiteth nothing, that without Christ we are nothing. But by the grace of God we can say with Paul, I am what I am, and that is a sufficient and wonderful supply in all needs, times and places.

We will now consider the hidden leaven. First, Jesus said, My Kingdom is not of this world (natural, visible). Again. The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, neither shall they say, Lo here, or lo there, for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you. Then his kingdom is invisible, and cannot be seen nor heard with the natural eye or ear of man, for except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. It is the work of Sovereignty, by the invisible Spirit of God Almighty; the manifestation thereof is only by divine revelation, and he gives it to whom he will. As Jesus said when he rejoiced in the Spirit, I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight. Again, the apostle said, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit, for the Spirit of God searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

Let me ask the question right here, Who knows the things of the covenant of God's grace, the finished work of salvation by grace, finished, perfect and complete, of God in Christ Jesus our Lord? Let such ones rest, with perfect complacency that they have been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Fear not, little flock, it is

your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. A candle is not lit to be put under a bushel, but to put in a candle-stick to give light to all who are in the house, and Jesus is that true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, the spiritual world, or kingdom. The true Light reveals the corruption and weakness that is in this earthly house or tabernacle of clay. It reveals to the believer that God only can redeem, purchase, call, sanctify, justify and glorify by the blood of Jesus Christ, a perfect sacrifice acceptable and holy, without spot or blemish, whom God has set forth, to be the propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins, that hath passed through the forbearance of God, that he might be just and the justifier of them that believe that he hath imputed their sins to Christ Jesus, and Christ's righteousness to them. The true light gives light to all who are of the household of faith, and it is not hid from them, but from the wise and prudent, or the wisdom of this world, for it is as a garden inclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed to all the earthly wisdom of this world; they are totally blind to the life and godliness that is in Christ.

Jesus said this leaven was hid in the three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened. If this leaven be the grace of God begun in the heart by the eternal Spirit it is a good work. Paul said, Being confident of this very thing, that he who hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ. Wherein this leavening process will gather our sleeping dust, or quicken our mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in us, by which our body, soul and spirit will reunite and be changed from natural to spiritual, and the whole will be leavened. It is a work begun, that will crown God's children in heaven and immortal glory, free from pain and sorrow, ransomed from the grave, its power and sting, to the inheritance reserved for them, incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. No, it fadeth not away. Whereunto they are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, and are preserved in Christ and called and are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise unto the day of the redemption of our vile bodies, when corruptible will put on incorruption, and mortality will put on immortality, and we shall be changed, all being the perfect work of the sovereign, eternal, irresistible, unalterable, unchangeable, all-powerful, all-wise God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our faith, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, who liveth and was dead, and is now alive for evermore. Surely he is our faith and hope, our salvation, and salvation means everything pertaining thereto. As David said, The Lord is all my salvation. He is our peace, our faith, our wisdom, our hope, our righteousness, our justification, our sanctification and redemption, and I believe he gives to his people in this life the measure that seemeth him good and as he wills to, and that is the measure that was given them in Christ before the world was. As before stated in this letter, it is in part, but it is sufficient for them in this life, for God is able to keep them from falling. Yes, to give them far above all they can ask or think, and present them before his throne with exceeding glory.

If any poor mortal ever desired to know the truth in Christ, whom to know is life eternal, I am that one if not deceived. But alas, if I know anything about it it comes in a different way than I would have chosen. First it comes in a way to abase me in my pride, with all my pets that I may nurse and not know it, but am bound to suffer in the same before the Lord delivers, then I can say with David, I will praise the Lord, for he is great in mercy, for he delivered my soul from the lowest pits of hell. O Lord, thou knowest what I need, make me not too poor lest I steal, nor too rich lest I forget thee. Surely Jesus is meek and lowly, and rest to those who labor and are heavy laden. (The ones who are weary are

the ones who appreciate rest.) It is by grace, from first to last, the greatest unmerited favor ever bestowed upon poor unworthy sinners.

The Jews under the old covenant were commanded to eat unleavened bread, which must be a figure of the sacrificed body of Christ, and no doubt but that God's children eat of this sacrifice when they are partaking of the suffering of Christ. Although unleavened bread is not good while eating it, but no doubt it strengthens them and causes them to be bold in the warfare (or in the grace of God at least). If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him. Jesus commanded his disciples to beware of the leaven of the scribes and Pharisees, speaking of the doctrine and commandments of men. The doctrine that is not all of grace is of men. The doctrine that is of grace is of God. So is the kingdom of heaven that is likened unto leaven. It is not something to puff up nature, but it subdues it. For Paul said the kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, and though our outward man perish, yet the inner man is renewed day by day. The apostle said, "Great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." God's children only know of the mysteries in the measure that Christ is made unto them. When I awake in his likeness I shall be satified.

J. L. Sanders

(Republished by request from March, 1938)

FINISHED THE WORK HIS FATHER GAVE HIM

Bassett, Va.

Dear Readers of the Signs of the Times:

I have a mind to write some of my thoughts concerning the cross of Christ.

"For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things." (Phil. 3:18, 19)

I believe Christ was bearing the cross from his birth all the way to his death. Christ came into the world to do his Father's will; and he did just that to perfection. He said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." (John 6:37, 38) "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." (John 3:39)

"Jesus said unto them, my meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." "I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." (Hebrews 10:12-14) "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." (Hebrews 9:24)

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (John 10:27-29)

If a man preaches a doctrine that Jesus left anything for us to do to make his blood effectual, then he preaches a lie; and the death of Christ would be in vain, and the cross of none effect, Jesus Christ has ascended into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us, and he will come again to present us to the Father without blemish.

"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Phil. 3:20, 21.) "And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or some other grain." (1 Cor. 15:37)

"Thou sowest not that body that shall be." This means to me that this vile body will return back to the dust, but God will take this dust and make it into an heavenly body. "But if the spirit of him that raised Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you." (Romans 8:11) "For if the dead rise not, then is Christ not raised: and if Christ be not raised your faith is vain: ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." (1 Cor. 15:16-20)

"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them that are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thes. 4:15-18)

Dear Elder Wood, I have selected the above mostly from the scriptures: and you may do as you see fit with this. I have had different ones to ask me to write for the **Signs.**

James R. Hollandsworth

AFTER A LAPSE OF MORE THAN TWO YEARS I AM IMPRESSED TO WRITE MORE

(Part Two of Elder Jabez J. Rhue's experience)

January 26, 1959. I find myself pondering the same question over and over again that has been with me since before I united with the Old Baptist Church September 5, 1946. For several months after my baptism, I felt relief and rejoiced in the fact that they, so great a people, had seen fit to let me live with them. However, very soon this burden that had been with me long before I was baptized returned, and it was heavier than ever. This burden came with a feeling that the time would come when I, this poor sinner, would have to stand before His people and preach the gospel. Knowing my weakness and sinful condition, it would make me tremble when these feelings would come over me. I would beg the Lord to deliver me from this burden, but it seemed the more that I begged the greater the burden. I tried to reason with God that I was not qualified in the least to perform that which had been laid upon me. It seemed that I would die if relief did not come. If I could be blessed to unite with the Church, I felt it might give me relief and peace of mind. It seemed that the burden to be baptized and to speak to His humble poor, in a sense, were the same, or that I could not separate them. When this burden to be baptized would come the burden to preach would come even stronger. In this condition I vowed that I would never unite with the Church; for, if I did, I would certainly have to make the feeble effort to present myself to the Church and certainly have to relate to them my troubles and tell them what great things the Lord, our Saviour, had done for poor sinners, of whom I felt to be the greatest. During all the dark hours through which I traveled I was continually begging the God of all grace to remove this burden and heavy weight that pressed me down. When I would get so low that it seemed

that I could not live or die, I would promise the Lord that at the next opportunity I would tell the Church my feelings. When the time came and I asked for a home, I could not speak many words, but for some reason and to my relief they received me into their fellowship.

As stated before, the relief from my baptism did not last long even though the burden to be baptized has never returned, and when I think of that day it is a Bethel spot in my life. After my baptism, these impressions to speak came with greater power and more often. With these impressions so strong, I began to beg the Lord to give me evidence that I would know this calling was indeed from Him. I would go to bed at night praying to Him to show me just a sweet glimpse of His loving face, that He might visit me in a dream and make known to me that He would open the way and make it possible. Within myself, I knew that I could do nothing. I could not even tell my good wife who has been so patient and understanding while I have been in trouble. Many times I had tried to open my heart and pour out the truth to her, feeling that if I could only be blessed to tell some one my troubles, it might bring relief. Many times I felt if I could talk with the brethren I would have so much to tell them, but while in their presence I would be shut up and could not tell them my feelings, even if failure to do so meant death. At times when hearing the gospel preached it seemed that I was cast to the very depths of hell as Jonah was when cast into the sea. In this condition, I could witness with the speaker, but there is no relief for me, feeling that the mountains are closing in and will crush me into everlasting destruction where there is no hand to deliver. My cry is, "Lord, will you ever deliver me from this agony?" If I could only exchange my life for that of a dumb beast, or anything else for a moment of rest and peace. I believe I know that God is able to deliver, but will He ever deliver this poor worm of the dust? Today I am made willing to be God's anything, but what tomorrow will bring He only knows. If I could be blessed with power to pray to this God who has all power for grace sufficient to remove everything that is to hinder and bring me low enough and remove all carnality and this poor sinner be enabled to praise His name and give Him all the praise and glory, that I might be given a tongue of utterance that I might tell the Lord's people that their King is yet alive, and alive forevermore.

Oh Lord, would thou bless me just one time to pour out my feelings, and with liberty; and the inspiration to set forth the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Oh Lord, would thou remember thy children everywhere and bring them together in peace and love, remove all malice and strife, visit the poor and afflicted, remember our fathers and mothers in Israel, have mercy on our families and loved ones, cause our children to be God fearing men and women, and if it can be thy will open the windows of heaven, come to our rescue and make us to feel thy presence and direct our steps and keep us as an apple of thine own eye; and make us to lie down in green pastures. Lord, thou hast promised us that thou would not put more on us than we can bear and that thou would be a present help in time of need, make us able to bear all our trials and afflictions. Bring us low enough to feel the need of a Saviour and to call upon thy name. We realize, dear Lord, that the carnal mind is not able to approach Thee unless blessed by Thy divine spirit. Our works are as filthy rags in thy sight. Oh Lord, we feel our weakness and dependence on a higher power. We cannot declare that Salvation is of the Lord until we are brought to the bottom of the valley. Then it is that we are made to cry out and beg for thy mercy. Guide and direct our steps, keep us at the feet of our brethren. And, Oh Lord, when we have finished our course in this life, may we be blessed in that hour of death to depart in peace with Thee and on the

morning of the resurrection be crowned in thy Likeness in that world that shall never end, Amen.

In a dream about a month ago, I received some comfort while in the presence of my father, who was a great defender of the doctrine of salvation by grace and was blessed to testify in His great name to His people. My father passed from this world several years ago, but in my dream there were several of the Lord's people gathered in his presence, and he was conversing with them. He looked directly at me and told them that I would have to preach, and as he spoke a sweet smile appeared on his face which was an assurance that my deliverance would come from heaven. When I awoke, I had been made to feel that the Lord had been with me, and for a few days made satisfied that my calling was of the Lord and in His good time that I would be delivered.

I know that I am too sinful, unworthy and lacking in every respect and am not able to do anything that would be pleasing in His sight unless upheld by His divine power. Somehow, I have an abiding hope that my trust is in one that does all things well, and He is a just and merciful God to do with this poor worm of the dust as He sees fit, and we are not to question His authority. One day my sorrows, afflictions and troubles, I hope will be over and I will be carried to that city and land of rest, whose builder and maker is God, to be with Him and the family of God to sing His praises in a world that has no end. There we will be like Him, and be satisfied. This is my hope.

Soon after the above was written, I was called on to speak and express my feelings and received much relief from my first attempt. In October, 1960, the Church liberated me to preach among our correspondence. In February, 1962, my Church called for a presbytery to meet in March, 1962, to examine me, and if found qualified, to ordain me to the full work of the gospel ministry. Pursuant to the above action the ordination took place as requested by the Church. Since my first attempt, I have been blessed to visit among the brethren in many of the churches in our correspondence and felt sometimes that the dear Lord gave me sweet liberty and at other times felt that I had manifested exactly what I am when not blessed in the spirit, a failure. When I was cold, hungry, poor and without a home, these good people took me in, and they are still my judge, and I hope nothing will ever separate us. If not deceived, the happiest moments of my life is when being blessed to preach the riches of His grace to His believing children and that love flows from one to the other.

I desire the prayers of my brethren.

Jabez J. Rhue
Swansboro, N. C.

DOES NOT WANT TO DO WITHOUT THE SIGNS

14778 Springdale Ave., RFD 3
Middle Field, Ohio 44062

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I see my subscription runs out in October, so please renew it again as I do not want to do without it. It is indeed a blessing that God gives us such spiritual minded men to write to His people of the wonderful works of His grace to His chosen, poor and afflicted people. Paul said that by grace are you saved, not of works lest any man should boast; and that we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. When? It was decreed in the Covenant of Grace before the world was. So we poor worms of the dust were not there to help in any way as far as eternal salvation is concerned. We have not even one iota to do with saving the dead sinner.

The preaching of the gospel is to them that perish foolishness, but to us that are saved, it is the power of God. May we be blessed to give God the glory for the witness within our poor souls, which He has given us by His quickening spirit, and the applying of the

blood of His Son and our Elder Brother and Saviour, Jesus Christ the Lord. I can hardly wait until I can go to the house of the Lord and hear of His goodness to His children; and to read about it in the *Signs*.

May God continue to bless you Editors and writers in your wonderful labors in the vinyard of the Lord.

Here is a check for $10.00 to renew our subscription for one year; use the balance as you see fit, — maybe to send the *Signs* to some hungry souls who cannot afford the price . . . May the Lord richly bless his people everywhere in these wicked times, is our prayer.

Claude and Mary Thomas

ELDER W. W. TAYLOR COMES TO WASHINGTON

Bethel Primitive Baptist Church in Mossy Rock, Washington, whose doors remain closed so much of the time lately because of the illness of its Pastor, Elder Ernest Attebery, Hermiston, Oregon, who is the only ordained Elder in these Northwestern States, opened wide its doors on August 13, 14, 15 for the annual three-day meeting.

The hand of Providence surely was in this matter for we were able to get Elder W. W. Taylor to come from Tinsman, Arkansas to preach for us, even tho he was hard pressed for time to make the trip West after preaching for a week shortly before in Virginia and being in the East, and just days before coming here, he was in Texas.

Then the weather was extremely hot for some time before the meeting dates and on Thursday, the 12th, it cooled down and remained so during the three days, seemingly it being of the Lord that we were spared from meeting in the extreme heat.

Brothers and Sisters of The Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church in Naches, Washington came to worship with us and others from Oregon. We were glad to have Sisters Myrtle Black and Lois Cloud, Mother and Daughter, from Meadow Grove, Nebraska with us. They were visiting in the West at the time. With the visiting brethren and with all our own active membership of seven being able to turn out the last day, over thirty were present, including Elder and Sister Attebery. He was not able to stand and preach. We were glad he was with us all three days.

The little church surely redounded with the many songs we sung and from the forceful preaching of the Gospel of Christ and Him crucified, as Elder Taylor came forth with it. Surely we dwelt in the Tabernacle of the Lord those three days.

On Sunday when the church doors were opened, Brother Philip Coleman asked for a home with us and was accepted. He was baptized that afternoon by Elder Taylor. Thus our membership now stands at eight. We know not what the Lord has in store for us from here forward, but we will strive to keep our little church active and hope that our number will increase, as well as to hope we can meet occasionally in our little building when Brother Ben Preston can come from The Dalles, Oregon, to fill the pulpit, and that we may find some visiting Elder from elsewhere, available to us at times.

Written by Brother William Hall — sent in by

Sister Opal Huntting, Church Clerk

LOVE TO EACH WHO WRITE THEIR FEELINGS

4 Maple Lane
Pennington, N. J. 08534

Dear Editors:

One thing that has made the *Signs* so special to me is a feeling of brotherly love to each who write expressing their feelings and belief. Many I have never seen, but in their writings a sweetness fills all the space between the lines, and a perfect blessedness grace the pages. Here I meet the faithful ones who have searched the Word for

the Saviour's testimonies of the truth, which strengthen me against the trials of life so I may take courage in a renewness of the spirit.

I am blessed to hear our pastor, Elder Arthur R. Warren, once a month, but there seems a long time until that next meeting, so the *Signs* fill in with added food to feed a hungry soul. And, perhaps, most of all the *Signs* give reassuring comfort to me while prophesy is being fulfilled in these troubled times. Times in which the bowels of the earth are being moved, and the multitudes disturbed, revealing evidence of the prophesy that is in the testimonies of Jesus.

Not so long ago you reprinted Elder Leffert's editorial "The Restitution of all things" which has impressed me so much with rereading, revealing in these times such prophesy as is not learned from books, neither is it taught by man, but is the gift of God to whomsoever He leadeth beside the still waters to partake of the Word of life.

May God bless all who continue to write for the *Signs*, bless them with days that may pass in peace, and find them at eventide victorious over all temptation, and giving praise to God who dost govern all things, world without end.

Sister Mary L. Hellings

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To August 1, 1971)

Clarence Cox, Mich.	$3.00
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APPOINTMENTS FOR ELDER JOHN LEE SMITH

Elder John Lee Smith of Spearsville, La., will, the Lord willing, fill the following appointments. He is well known among us, and I hope many will make an effort to hear him.

Monday night, October 25th at Danville P. B. Church.

Tuesday night, October 26th, at Malmaison.

Wednesday night, October 27th, at Weatherford.

Thursday night, October 28th, at Old Bethel.

Friday night, October 29th, at Rocky Mount, Va.

Saturday night, October 30th, at Staunton River Union.

Saturday night, October 30th at River View — 7:30.

Sunday, October 31st, at Upper Country Line Union at Peasantville Church.

Monday night, November 1st, at Dan River.

Tuesday night, November 2nd, at Pleasant Grove.

Wednesday night, November 3rd, at Bush Arbor.

Thursday night, November 4th, at Greensboro Church.

Elder and Sister Smith will depend on someone for conveyance from place to place.

D. V. Spangler

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the **Skewarkey Union** is appointed to be held with the Smithwick Creek Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in October, 1971. Elder E. C. Harrison was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder M. E. Garner, alternate.

The church is located in Martin County, N. C., about 9 miles south of Williamston off of Highway 17 south.

We cordially invite all to come and worship with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Clerk

Danville, Virginia October, 1971

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"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." (Daniel 2:44)

EDITORIAL

WRITING IS COMMANDED

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." (Rev. 14:13)

I suppose the command, **write,** has been violated to a greater degree than any other command given to me by the Spirit. My neglect to obey this command has resulted in more misery, condemnation, and cries for forgiveness than any other of my sins. Every time the command is given, my mind is flooded with a multitude of heavenly and gracious thoughts.All are un-expressed because of my desire that the whole theme be given me before I write a word.

Sometimes it is true that I think I have stored in my memory the entire theme. I prepare to write but all that has been stored is gone!! A new subject comes like a bolt of lightning! I begin to write. I read critically what I have written. I fear that the readers will not understand what I have in mind. I try to re-write, re-examine, and finally throw it in the wastebasket. I meditate again for hours — someone comes in — I quit in disgust — wait for another day — undertake it again, but the same kind of experience over and over, and over and over again. Results? Nothing written worthy of space after wasting hours and days of precious time in idleness!! I grieve. I lament. I pray. I read. I am called away and try to get my mind off of the subject of writing but I feel guilty of having not written every hour I am conscious; — except those precious hours used in talking and preaching of spiritual things.

I have examined this which I have now written. To the waste basket this goes — for I have just poured out to you my woes. A voice says, "Not yet. You must write as you preach. You preach extemporaneously. You must write the words given you without forethought or preparation. The writers of the Bible had changes of thought but kept writing for they had no time to erase and re-compose. The Proverbs were written in this manner: "These six things doth the lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination to him." The writer was aware of only six as he began to write yet there was another shown him while he wrote. This proves that as the Spirit operates the writer, the writer is increased in wisdom and

knowledge. My habit would cause me to re-write with this expression: These seven things doth the Lord hate which are an abomination to Him. "Three things, . . . yea, four" is a common expression in the Proverbs 30:18-33. The Spirit now shows me the value of these expressions: **I must write as I am moved.** I must not wait for a complete revelation of the subject matter with the expectation of briefing it. I cannot command the Spirit at my own convenience. Neither can I write from memory the precious thoughts given me by the Spirit in bygone days.

John had a change of thought while writing the last verse concluding his booke on The Gospel. The first part of the verse was prompted with the thought of the multitude of things which Jesus did. The last part takes into consideration not only what He did, but also, what He is doing now, and the precious promises of what He will do. "And there are also, many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written everyone, I suppose the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen." (John 21:25) Even John must have felt guilty of failing to write more books on the subject: The Gospel of Jesus Christ. It was John who quoted Jesus as saying, ". . . Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am." (John 8:58) By faith of the living redeemer in eternity making His appearance in time inspired an abiding hope in God's chosen for thousands of years before that notable day in Bethlehem. Yes, He was with the Hebrew — the three that were cast into the fire. Even Job was made to know that His redeemer **liveth** hundreds of years before He came as a person born of a woman, brought under the law. Let us quote from the book of Job:

"Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."

(Job 19:23-27)

Why did Job so much desire that his own words be written at that moment? Because he was experiencing **Living Words** that could only come from a **Living Redeemer,** being actuated in Job **that very moment.** And because he wanted these glorious Words, which were eternal, written "NOW" to record something miraculous which he had never before experienced: — to be a reminder to him should he fall again in the slough of despondency and misery. Surely, the Lord Jesus Christ is that Living Redeemer, — Who inspired Job with precious and eternal words which **ARE** true and faithful! Why did Job want these words printed in a book? Surely because these like precious words would be just as precious, powerful, faithful and true, — to all of like experience. He was anxious that this his testimony, might be published in order that others might know that his trust was in **The Redeemer** — not in himself! Oh that we could tell others of God's wondrous works to the children of men! Why did Job want these words graven in the rock forever? Because these living words state an eternal truth. It never has changed. The same message endures forever. Job was so elated of being the possessor of these eternal truths that he desired the people of all times to come, to read, feel; yea, taste, handle, eat, and enjoy every one of them.

Moses' command to the children of Israel was: "Thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gate." (Deut. 6:9) This was relative to the, "Commandments, statutes, and judgment, which the Lord your God commanded to teach you, for to do them, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers giveth you." (Deut. 6:1) If the

Old Covenant demands such publication, surely, the New Covenant should be written; yea even in your own words. When God writes His laws in the hearts of His people; yea, when He energizes them with the **Law of Grace and Truth:** He makes them anxious to confess it with their mouth, write it with their fingers; yea, publish the good tidings of great joy by letter, tract, periodical, radio, and television. We are not willing for the ungodly men to edit and control the publications of such precious writings: therefore, we are decidedly opposed to **Tract Societies.** We are not willing for a mixed multitude composed of many unbelievers to control church missions; therefore, we are decidedly opposed to **Missionary Societies.** We are not opposed to teaching the Bible; but, we are opposed to put our children under the tutorship of those who are neither God-called nor God-qualified to teach the Scriptures. Therefore, we cannot endorse **Sunday School Unions.** Childrens minds are easily impressed: therefore, believers should bring their children up in the nuture and admonition of the Lord. We believe in the distribution of the Bible, but object to unbelievers having supervision over translating, printing, publishing, and distribution of it. The Bible belongs to God's children. The Church is the home for God's children. Do you think it proper for churches to have nothing to do with the printing, editing, publication, and distribution of its own Book?

As I now sit in my library, I pause awhile to gaze at the many books that surround me. I see several commentaries on the Bible, some church histories, many books of sermons, many books on various religious subjects, a few concordances, a collection of hymn books, periodicals, recordings, and Bibles. I pick up one Bible that was given to me by an Old Baptist minister, another that was presented by a minister's widow, — What do I find? They were both published by The American Bible Society; another, the National Bible Press; another, The International Bible Press; Bibles with chain references, added notes and helps by various authors. I look at the hymn books and find that all the hymns we use in our church worship are over one hundred years of age. Most books I have were written before this century began. Only a very few books have been written and published by Old School or Primitive Baptists. Are there no **new tunes** worthy of singing? Has the Lord quit inspiring His people with **fresh living words** coming in rhythm worthy of singing? Are you impressed to write in your own words these fresh invigorating experiences which mean so much to you **now,** Maybe, later when you become so despondent and faithless, these former words will stir up your pure mind by way of remembrance.

When Jesus makes His appearance to you, He is all you need. When He disappears, Oh how you search for something to remove the great doubts! What could be more comfortable and encouraging to you than to read your own words which were written while in companionship with the Eternal Redeemer? Gracious, truthful, and faithful words given to you by the Lord become **your** words for they are given unto you. This redemption is eternal, certain, and sure; but are you always aware of it? Let us read what John says in one of his epistles: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." (I John 5:13) While you know that you believe on the name of the Son of God, John's first epistle will prove that you have eternal life **now.** If you know you have it now, his epistle will prove that it is eternal: nay, it will never end! It proves the security of the believer. John is writing to believers in the name of the Son of God. Are true believers in the Son of God always aware of their firm belief? NO! Sometimes clouds of doubts and fears so flood your soul that you often ask, Do I believe? There comes a faint awareness of belief, — Is this real belief? yea, you pray, "Lord, I believe;

help thou mine unbelief." You again read the epistle that you may believe on the Son of God; yea, praying the Lord will help your unbelief.

If once you have most firmly believed in the name of the Son of God means that you shall each and every moment of your entire life as strongly believe it: then, John's last expression is useless and confusing. Lets read the last expression: ". . . and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." John must have written this while in a glorious state of mind. He knew well the truthfulness of his writing. John boldly said many times:"I know," "We know"; and, "That ye may know." Do we know? Yes, while our conversation is in heaven **we know.** When we fall, we do not know. Show us again, Lord Revive us again. Teach us again for we are so prone to forget. Have we ever been taught of the Lord, John must have been slipping from this state of Supreme spiritual knowledge as he concluded his epistle. Surely he had entertained the thought of how easily it would be for true believers to be tempted and drawn away after idols; else, he would not have written: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen." (I John 5:21) While our conversation is in heaven, we have no thought of idolatry. When Jesus turns His face from us, the devil is ready to tempt and draw away. We need this admonition of John when tempted by the devil. Oh that these words were printed in bold letters where we could see them as the cunning craftiness of Satan begins to take hold of us!

When God made an end of communing with Moses upon Mount Sinai, He gave him, "Two tables of testimony, Tables of stone, written with the finger of God." (Ex. 31:18) I somehow feel that Moses thought while communing with God: I will never forget a word of this: yet, God knew Moses would not keep them in memory. Even though Moses in His anger had thrown down the tables of stone upon which the two tables of testimony had been written, God called him up again: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest." (Exodus 34:1) Even though Moses broke the tables of stone which contained the writing of God's finger, yet he could not damage the finger of God. Even though God's children forgot that God delivered them, to the extent that they made a golden calf to worship, it did not cause God to change one word of His law and testimony. Even though God's chosen people by their bad conduct had such an effect upon Moses that he broke the two tables, it did not in any manner change the wondrous characteristics of God. "And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." (Exodus 34:6-7) How anxious ought we to be to encourage, exhort, admonish, warn, and rebuke in the spirit of meekness with sound words. We should speak them, write them, print them and publish. It is no wonder that so much writing is found in tombs, on rocks; Yea, engraved to be read for generations to come. The Psalmist wrote while in great trouble: So should we that our children and our children's children should know that we experienced the same. David was praying as he wrote: so should we. When David realized his prayers were being answered: he kept writing. When he realized deliverance, he said, **"This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord."** (Psalms 102:18) Read this Psalm. While you experience deliverance, praise Him in your writing. Reading the writing of others is profitable to you when it applies and harmonizes with your state of mind at the time

of reading.

Editing spiritual writing is the most difficult task one ever undertook. Why? Spiritual experiences change so radically and often that unless our souls are in the same spiritual health — both writer and editor — we cannot properly edit. While I am faint-hearted and my soul in distress, I question the boldness of expressions like: "And we **know** that we are of God and the whole world lieth in wickedness. And we **know** that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may **know** Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son, Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." Read 1st John 5:20. My own writings and preaching have contained such bold and authoritative statements of Jesus being: **My** Saviour! **My** redeemer! **My** Shepherd! — and **My** Leader!! While my soul is in distress, I would delete such expressions as being too certain. While feasting upon the manna from Heaven, being in communion with Christ, I would delete expressions of groanings, misery, trouble, doubts, and fears. When my soul is so sick, it requires reading my own words, and hearing my own voice by recording in order for me to believe that my soul had ever experienced such wonderful spiritual health.

I have **Butler's Bible WORK, Select WORKS of Mr. John Bunyan, Huntington's WORKS,** and many other WORKS by spiritual writers. The phase of the quotation in the heading of this article that interests us **now** is the spiritual writings, or **works,** left behind by those who have entered into that Eternal Resting Realm. I now pick up a book entitled, **Newton's Works,** and I find within its pages, **The Olney Hymns.** Many of these hymns are sung often. These glorious thoughts expressed in prose and poetry still inspires God's people today. The works of these spiritual writers **live** in time, yea, hundred's of years after their passing from time. Newton was born July 24, 1725.

Brethren, there are so many thousands of books of religious writings trying to dis-prove Bible truths in circulation now, — that our children are being drawn away, questioning the inspiration of the Bible. Graduates from theological seminaries devote their time in writing books against the predestination of God, the total depravity of man, the new birth, the power of Jesus to save each and every one whom the Father chose in Christ, the effectual call, irrestible grace, preservation and perseverance of God's elect unto a life of eternal bliss beyond this time world. Why do they so write? Because they believe not the truth. The truth is beyond the reasoning, intellect, grasp, wisdom, knowledge and understanding of mortal people who have not been born of the incorruptible Spirit, or seed. Most writers sincerely exalt the power of man, limit the power of God, spread the theory that each and every person has natural ability given him to choose his destiny; yea, even to live righteous lives here without any super-natural help. Brethren, write and publish your testimonies of what the Lord has done for your soul. Write your own bitter and sweet experiences while undergoing the mighty operation of the Holy Spirit. Write of the power and evidence of Jesus Christ's power to save. Write your auto-biography. Write a brief history of the church of your membership. Write the Church Covenant that you endorsed when becoming a member of your local church. Write and publish for the generations to come that your works of writing may be read by your children: that they may know your own belief, trust, hope, and varied evperiences.

I have before me brief histories of Dan River Church and Malmaison Church which have just recently been printed. Elder D. V. Spangler, member and Pastor of Dan River and Elder O. K. Tench, Pastor of Malmaison, as well as those whose labor of love assisted in this venture, are to be commended for this work which will be read with interest by those who follow after.

This **editorial,** MY WORDS, on the necessity of writing, is being published

in **The Signs of the Times,** Incorporated, as belonging to the Primitive or Old School Baptists. As the Lord wills, I shall continue to write for it, as long as it is under the supervision of God-called and qualified ministers. Do not put your writings in the wastebasket. Send them in for consideration to be published!! Amen.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"HOW SHOULD A MAN BE JUST WITH GOD?"

Job ix. 2

New Vernon, N. Y.,
February 4, 1935

Of all the considerations in which fallen man is interested, there are none of greater magnitude than that presented in the above text. Man, as a fallen sinner, cursed by the holy law, and doomed to a perpetual and eternal death by the inflexible justice of the immutable Jehovah, is deeply concerned in the investigation of this momentous subject. With rapid strides the sons of men are hurrying through this mortal state of existence, at the termination of which we are to launch into the everlasting reality of our final destiny. With earnest solicitude for the knowledge of the truth, and with ardent prayer for light from the Sun of Righteousness, whose refulgment beams alone are sufficient to illuminate our depraved, bewildered and perverted understandings, let us seriously enquire into the scriptural ground of a sinner's justification before God.

It would be a reflection on the character of the thrice holy God, to suppose that he would save a sinner in his sins, or without a complete justification, based upon his righteousness commensurate with the utmost demand of law and justice; and as we are by nature destitute of saving faith, and "he that believeth not is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him," the question returns, How should man be just with God? That there is indeed a way the scriptures abundantly demonstrate, and the fact is perhaps universally admitted; but the **how** presents a mystery unto which the angels desire to look, and it can hardly be a matter of surprise that men should entertain various opinions on this sublime subject. Had we access to all the knowledge on this subject of the learned and wise men of this world, it could by no means lead us into the mystery; for the soverign God has hidden these things from the wise and prudent of our race, because so it has seemed good in his sight. But blessed forever be his name, he has revealed it to babes. Therefore, while human wisdom and knowledge utterly fail, divine revelation unlocks the cabinet of the eternal world. The Lion of the tribe of Judah prevails to look upon the book, to open the seals thereof, and by his Holy Spirit to disclose the sacred contents, in which a full development of the way of a sinner's justification before God is made. Leaving all human speculations on the subject, then, to the book of revelation let us apply, and look alone to the holy oracle to settle the point which ever has, and still does, involve the professing world in conflict and disputation, viz: How should man be just with God? Here from the mouth of God may we be informed whether justification or salvation be of God or of men; whether of grace or of works; or jointly of men and of God, or by grace connected with works.

Whether this mongrel system can be sustained by the Bible or not, nothing can be more certain than that it is a very popular doctrine in this our day. That God is the grand or efficient cause of justification, that works are the grand or efficient means, that men are the efficient agents who employ the necessary works or means, and that grace has no more to do in the justification of a sinner than to **help** man perform his part. Under the impression that this is the plan of life and salvation, we see

men setting themselves about the work in great earnest, inventing and trying many projects to move upon God to save sinners, and to induce sinners to consent to be saved, to induce God to lay aside his own, and adopt their plan; we see a number of men engage by agreement to occupy different rooms, but simultaneously to pray for some unregenerated individual on whom they have engaged to bestow their united efforts. Monthly concerts of prayer for specific objects are horns of the same beast; contrivances to prevail on God to do the will of man. Let us not be understood to speak against prayer, or even social prayer meetings, whether monthly, weekly or otherwise; the abomination we wish to detect and expose is that of previously agreeing upon — may we say, an assault upon the throne of God — by covenanting that they will not give the matter up, until the Lord complies with their requests. Now christians are aware from revelation that they know not how to pray as they ought, but the Spirit helpeth their infirmities, and maketh intercession for them with groanings which they cannot utter. Hence as they know not, they cannot agree beforehand how they will pray, or for whom in particular they will supplicate the throne of grace. When God is graciously pleased to pour out upon them the spirit of grace and of supplication, then they open their mouths wide in prayer, and the Spirit indites their petitions, for the Spirit knoweth what is the mind of God, and maketh supplication for such things as God designs to bestow; even as our Lord has informed that they who worship the Father, must worship him in spirit and in truth.

To move upon the unconverted or dead sinner, protracted meetings, anxious benches, and a great variety of other machinery have been brought into requisition, but with as little success as their attempts to induce the Holy One to vary from his fixed purpose of grace and salvation. The entire brood that pass among men for benevolent institutions are birds of the same feather, and all respond to the popular creed before mentioned, viz: God is the cause, works are the means, men are the agents, and grace a name for nothing.

But we digress. We proposed to leave the speculations of men, and come directly to the fountain of truth, the Bible, and there ask, How should man be just with God?

And first, we enquire, is justification of God or of men? Let the Bible answer. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." — Rom. viii.-33. "That he (God) might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." — Rom. iii. 26. "Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called them he also justified." — Rom. viii. 30. Here then our first question is settled forever; it is God that justifieth. "Neither is there salvation in any other." — Acts iv. 12.

We next enquire, Does God justify the sinner by his grace freely, or for and in consideration of their works? To the bible again. "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ." — Rom. iii. 24. See also Titus iii. 7. Can it be possible for any one to be justified freely by the grace of God, and yet in some sense by works after all? What saith the scripture? "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and **not** by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." — Gal. ii. 16. "For if Abraham was justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God.Now to him that worketh (read this, ye workmongers) is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." — Rom. iv. 2, 5. "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us

in Christ Jesus before the world began." — 2 Tim. i. 9. And again, if we could possibly make it appear consistent with scripture that a sinner could be justified by works, his salvation must in that case depend on his evil, not on his good works; for the apostle expressly declares, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." — Titus iii. 5.

But once more we enquire, May not a sinner's justification depend jointly on works and on grace? Let the Bible answer. "And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work." Romans xi. 6.

Seeing, then, that justification is of God and not of men, that it is of grace and not of works, the conclusion is inevitable that all the modern schemes, plan, efforts, labors, &c., of pious or impious men, are abortive and vain, and that the only ground on which we are at liberty to hope for justification with God, is that which wholly excludes works, and is from the foundation to the top-stone exclusively of grace, which is through the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the stupendous plan of grace which provides for the justification of God's elect, Christ and his people are identified in an indissoluble union. He, as their head, representative and surety, has voluntarily pledged himself in the covenant of life and peace, to present them holy and without blame before his throne at the last day. Hence all their responsibility to law and justice devolved on him; all their sins were charged to his account, and all being summed up, were laid on him. Isa. liii. 6. "And he bare them in his own body on the tree. He was delivered up (to law and justice) for their offences, and raised again for their justification." — Rom. iv. 25. "By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified," (or set apart to him.) — Heb. x. 14. Thus, as the representative of his people, and their surety to the law, he was numbered with the transgressors, (Isa. liii. 12.) that is, law and justice viewed him in this relation as the debtor, delinquent or transgressor; for on no other ground could justice smite the Shepherd. Zech. xiii. 7. But standing here in the law room and place of his people, his soul was poured out unto death. Isa. liii. And so having fulfilled the divine law in his life, he bore its tremendous penalty in his death, and having paid the utmost farthing, and completely and eternally canceled all that stood against him, on his people's account, he burst the confines of the tomb, in glorious conquest over sin, death and hell, arose to live forever, and hold the keys of hell and death, and in his resurrection brought life and immortality to light, and by his knowledge justified many, having borne their iniquities. Isa. liii. 11.

Thus in his resurrection from the dead, our Lord revealed himself as the way, (John xiv. 6) and the only way in which it was and is possible for man to be just with God, for he himself is "God with us." — Matt. i. 23. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit. 1 Tim. iii. 16. And inasmuch as he who had become sin for us, or who bore our sin, had cancelled the demands of justice, had risen, and was justified in the spirit, by virtue of his obedience, by his blood and righteousness as his people's representative, his people were justified with him, and in him, and by him, and through him. The relation which he bore to his people rendered it impossible that he should be justified alone; his people were justified with him. Hence, as he is God with them, they are just with him; they were crucified with him; (Gal. ii. 20.) dead with him. (Rom. vi. 8.) And as he promised the church, by the mouth of the prophet, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." (Isa. xxvi. 19,) they are risen with him, and in every nation they that fear God and work righteousness are accepted with him. Acts x. 35. And it is

his will that all that the Father hath given him shall be with him where he is, (John xvii. 24, and he shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied. Isa. liii. 11.

The great question is then answered, and the **only** way that man can be just with God is brought to light in the gospel; for vain is the help of man.

"No blood of birds, nor blood of beasts,
Nor hysop branch, nor sprinkling priest,
Nor running brook, nor flood, nor sea,
Could wash our dismal stain away.

Jesus, my God, thy blood alone
Hath power sufficient to atone;
Thy blood can make me white as snow —
No legal works could cleanse me so."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe February 4, 1835)

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Moon's Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Caswell County, N. C., a presbytery met April 17,1971 at 7:00 p. m. for the examination of Brother Henry Sartin, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of deacon.

The solemnity was begun with hymn 196 Benjamin Lloyd song book and prayer by Elder Haywood W. Wray. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders Kenneth R. Key, Leonard Key, E. F. Oakley, Raymond S. Payne, H. W. Wray, Rufus Brown, Leonard Brammer, Wallis A. Smith and Donald E. Smith.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Kenneth R. Key as Moderator and Elder Donald E. Smith Clerk. Elder Raymond S. Payne was chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Brother B. H. Dixon having been duly appointed by Moon's Creek Church in conference April 17, 1971, spokesman for the church delivered Brother Henry Sartin to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder Raymond Payne using scripture reference 1st. Tim. 3rd chapter. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Rufus Brown. Elder Leonard J. Brammer delivered the charge to the candidate. Scripture reference the Bible as his guide.

The Moderator asked Brother B. H. Dixon if the church approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to Brother Henry Sartin and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained deacon was delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon of the Old School, Primitive Baptist Church at Moon's Creek.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Wallis A. Smith.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

OBITUARIES

W. TOM SMITH

The dear Lord saw fit on May 29, 1971, to call from our midst our precious brother, Tom Smith. He was born September 23, 1891, to the late Mr. and Mrs W. H. Smith in Tarrant County, Texas. He married Ruth Bourland February 5, 1911, in Oklaunion, Texas; and to this union four children were born — three sons and one daughter

Brother Tom united with Little Flock Primitive Baptist Church, Altus, Oklahoma, in 1943. He was ordained to the office of Deacon in May, 1944; and to this office he remained very faithful as long as his health permitted. Brother and Sister Smith's home has been a welcome place for the Old School Baptists all down through their married life. Many of the Old Baptist people and ministers have spent very pleasant hours, days and weeks with these precious saints.

Dear Brother Tom fought a good fight and is now enjoying the paradise of God, waiting the redemption of his body on the resurrec tion morning. Here he received the tilte to heaven — there the full possession.

His dear wife, children, grandchildren, our little church and his friends will greatly miss him, yet we feel our loss is his eternal gain. May we be given to say, "Thy will be done."

Services were conducted by Elders W. W. Taylor and C. M. Haygood. Submitted at the request of his precious wife.

Elder C. M. Haygood

ELDER C. L. COKER

We at Hancock's church are writing a letter of love and respect of Elder C. L. Coker who passed away in February, 1971. Elder Coker was loved much by the members of our church. It is with a sad heart that we try to write this letter, but we would want to bow to the will of our Heavenly Father who worketh all things after the council of

his own will. Elder Coker was loved by many people far and near. We read in the scripture that a minister of God must have a good report within the church and also out of the church. He was blessed by the grace of God to have this. We looked forward each 3rd Saturday night for him to come and be with us and preach the Doctrine of Salvation by the grace of God. He always seemed like a part of our church. He was blessed to comfort the church and this poor sinner in many ways.

We would not want to bring him back to this low ground of sorrow, for we do believe he is gone to a far better place than this world of heartaches, trials and tribulations for God's people. Our hope is that the Lord will take us one day in that city that he has made for his people. His funeral was conducted by Elder A. P. Mewborn with many there who loved him and came to pay their last love and respects in this life. We can only say Lord thy will be done and comfort his wife and children and those who loved him.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this letter be sent to the family, a copy to the **Signs of the Times**, and a copy placed on our church records.

Approved by the church in conference February 20, 1971.

Elder Curtis Rains, Moderator
Nina McLawhorn, Clerk

HAYWOOD TAYLOR

Brother Haywood Taylor was born August 20, 1899 at Farmerville, La., and died November 28, 1970. He was married to Vinnie Scarborough, and both are members of Liberty Hill Church. The funeral services were held at the church on November 29, 1970 at 2:00 P. M. with Elder W. W. Taylor officiating. His body was laid to rest in the Liberty Hill cemetery.

He is survived by his widow Sister Haywood Taylor, Farmerville, La., one son, Lynwood Taylor, Baton Rouge, La., one brother, Cloyce Taylor, Farmerville, La., one sister, Mrs. Myrtle Dumas, Mooringsport, La.; and four grandchildren.

It was my pleasure to have known Brother Taylor for several years. In my talks with him I always found him to be humble, meek and lowly. I do feel like that any time our Great Creator God shows one of the heirs of Grace what he is by nature and at the same time what he hopes to be by that same grace, it is enough to make him humble before God and his friends. I do believe humbleness is one of the most precious fruits of the Spirit. The Lord Jesus certainly did walk in a most humble, meek and lonely walk while he was here on this earth. I am also persuaded to believe that Brother Taylor believed in a God that was, is and shall ever be able to perform all things he promised his heirs of Grace that he would do for them. Our Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is long suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. What this means to me is that our great God is able to give eternal life to every one that he died for. "My sheep hear my voice and they follow me and I give unto them eternal life. They shall never perish. I am come that they may have life and have it more abundantly." I most surely do believe that a child of God when he breathes out his last breath, then his suffering is over once and for all. I do hope Sister Taylor that you will find some comfort in these few words. I hope God has blessed me to write in regard to your request. May the great creator God keep and bless all of his little ones and keep them humble, meek, and lowly while passing through the valley of the shadow of death.

David E. Turner

A MEMORIAL FOR BROTHER STEPHEN ISAAC FOUNTAIN

Our loving heavenly Father was pleased to remove from the stage of action our dear brother "Steve" Fountain, as he was known far and near. He was 81 years, 2 months, 16 days old. The third child of Hosea Nixon and Laura Ann Brown Fountain, he was born February 8, 1890 in Duplin County. His departure from this life came at 6:00 A. M. April 24, 1971 in Duplin General Hospital after a long illness. God blessed him with six sisters and three brothers. Both parents and all his brothers and sisters preceded him in death except four. Those surviving are: Mrs. Sudie Bryan, Mrs. Louzetta Murphy, Mrs. Temple Powell and Louis Fountain.

Brother "Steve" was married to Myrtie Bryan in December, 1915. This union was blessed with one child which died in infancy. His dear afflicted companion passed away April 23, 1966 after a lengthy illness.

His afflictions kept him from living alone at home after her death. He made his home with Mrs. Sudie and John Bryan's family. They all loved him dearly and were always ready to lend a helping hand toward making life happy and comfortable as long as he lived. There were other nieces and nephews who helped during his hospital sickness.

He and his wife loved the doctrine, Salvation By Grace, and manifested a strong faith. They attended church meetings regularly for years, contributing to the church welfare, and were always ready to help those in need. He offered his body before the people at Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church on March 12,

1961. Deacons put it before the church, and he was gladly received by all members present. By request, his name was recorded with the church at Muddy Creek. He was baptized that afternoon by Elder L. L. Yopp at Floyd Pond. Many of the brethren, sisters, and friends were present for the baptism service. He manifested the love and faith of a good brother in his home church and all others as long as health permitted his attending. All during his sickness when his mind was rational his love and interest in doctrine, church, and members continued the theme of his conversation. He enjoyed so much people visiting and talking with him.

His funeral was held at Muddy Creek Church Sunday, April 25, at 3:30 P. M. Elder Harmon Brown conducted it. The large congregation of people present was a manifestation of the love people felt for him.

"We Shall Sleep, But Not Forever," "Robed and Ready" — songs he loved — were sung by those dear to him. His body was laid to rest beside his wife in the Nickie Fountain Family Cemetery. Many beautiful flowers much more than covered his grave.

We miss him so much at church. We know his family misses him most of all. Yet, none of us could wish him back in his condition. We would say, "Sleep on dear Brother Steve, sleep on." May we all be together in that Heavenly Home some day is our humble hope.

I love and cherish his memory and the association I had with him in and outside the church. Written by the request of his sister, Mrs. Sudie Bryan, and John Bryan family.

Arlene Horne Brown
Rt. 1, Box 309
Richlands, N. C. 28574

JAMES LISCOMB BLAIR

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our beloved brother, J. Liscomb Blair, who was born July 28, 1894. He passed away March 10, 1971. He was the son of Robert Young Blair and Louise Oakes Blair. He was first married to Lucy Murphy December 27, 1914; and she departed this life November 6, 1942. To this union were born four daughters and one son: Mrs. Alease B. Carter, Mrs. Nellie B. Colman, Mrs. Ernestine B. Mize, Miss Pattie Blair, and Norman Blair, who died June 4, 1968. There were three granddaughters and one great granddaughter, and three great grandsons.

On November 17, 1945 he married Ocie Brumfield, who survives, along with one sister Irma B. Walker, and six brothers: Wade, Luke, Dewey, Ernest, Robert and Joe Blair.

Brother Liscomb joined Canaan Primitive Baptist Church June 7, 1964, and was baptized by his pastor Elder R. A. May. He was ordained deacon July 5, 1965; which office he served well. He always filled his seat at the meetings, and was loved by all. He will be greatly missed.

His funeral was conducted at Swicegood's Funeral Home by his pastor, Elder R. A. May, and he was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park, Danville, Va. beneath a mound of lovely flowers, to await his Lord's second coming.

May it please God to shower his love on his dear wife and family, and remove all feelings of sorrow and enable them to say Thy will be done, not mine. We feel surely our loss is his eternal gain. Written by a brother in hope.

C. D. Brumfield

SISTER ORA ADAMS

Sister Ora Adams was born April 16, 1884, and departed this life June 27, 1971. She was united in marriage to Brother Edd Adams in December, 1900; who preceded her in death, having passed on October 31, 1958.

To this union were born twelve children — a daughter and three sons have passed on. Four sons and four daughters survive: Hill, Fred, Tom and Rayburn Adams; Mrs. Bertie Lawson, Mrs. Berl Darnell, Mrs. Carl Hoke and Mrs. Marty Block. Surviving also are several grandchildren and great grandchildren; and two sisters, Mrs. Lillie Bazzel and Mrs. Lona Smith; three half-sisters: Mrs. Annie Cook, Mrs. Bessie Cook, and Mrs. Vada Waldrop; one half-brother, Willie Hill,and a host of friends.

She was a member of Zion Church, Mayfield, Ky. She and her husband, Brother Edd Adams, were baptized by Elder O. W. Perkins the first Sunday in June 1954.

She was bedfast for several months from a broken hip. She bore her afflictions and trouble without a murmur. She loved her friends the brethren and sisters, and often asked about them, and expressed a desire to go and be with them. She enjoyed having them in her home as long as she was able. She loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace.

We feel she is much better off since she is through with suffering and afflictions which are common to this low ground of sin and sorrow. So, dear children and friends, let us not mourn as those who have no hope. The Lord is coming again soon to gather his jewels unto himself. What a sweet hope we have that we shall be with him forever more.

Elder Paul Poyner conducted her funeral and she was laid to rest in Bazzel Cemetery to await the glorious resurrecton. The large congregation and beautiful floral offerings denoted the love and respect in which Sister Ora Adams was held.

May the Lord keep and sustain all the

bereaved ones who were devoted to her, and did all they could for her comfort. The writer has known and loved her for over forty-five years.

Written by request.

Trudie Adams

WE MOURN IN THE WILDERNESS

When I read of the voice of one crying in the wilderness, I think of my former Pastor and his journey through this wilderness land.

I believe he was blessed to preach the gospel declaring the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.

I feel I shall long remember that beautiful October morning, 1970. The trees had just begun to shed their leaves.

For some reason I felt to be dwelling at ease; when suddenly I was overshadowed, and my heart was deeply grieved.

The beauty of the morning faded, and the Lord of Heaven only knows how many tears were shed,

When we poor mortals received the information our precious Pastor Elder Curry King was dead.

We knew his health was failing, though it was hard to accept that his life's evening sun was going down.

In his last days it was plain to see that faith, hope, and charity did abundantly abound.

Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. His life on earth was oftimes troubled like the waters from his youthful days.

We believe he died in that peace the Lord gives and he so dearly loved and found momentarily between the rolling waves.

In all things he was given to remember his divine creator and was blessed to preach His sovereignty over all His creation.

Through faith that is counted for righteousness, he was given a sincere obedience in life and conversation.

Brother King was a modest man. His humble character and personality won as much admiration and respect as any man I ever knew.

As minister, farmer and businessman, husband, and father in Israel, the light of the Lord by faith shined through.

The mouth of a righteous man is a well of life. The memory of the just is blessed, and we cherish the memories of him that lingers in our mind.

He was cautious not to offend; his words were fitly spoken, and he treated us with brotherly love and fellowship from a heart so kind.

Just a few days before the death angel called, he spoke so sweetly at our communion table at Bush Arbor, saying for some precious ones this service would be the last.

We believe he felt in his heart that before our next meeting, from this wilderness of sin and sorrow, he would pass.

In the beginning the Lord God said, it is not good that man should be alone; He so graciously brought a precious one into our brother's life.

Sister Brona K. King, his helpmeet for more than 49 years, a lovely sister; a true, humble, and devoted wife.

We rejoiced when he retired from business; and they moved back home to their Green Valley farm.

Where he and his precious companion lived as one and so dearly loved the peace and calm.

Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; their works do follow them. Preacher King, as he was known by so many, leaves a legend.

The youth of this day will be told many things the Lord blessed Preacher King to say and do throughout this region.

I haven't forgotten the darkest hours of my tribulations when I felt my world had come to an end;

The flowers of love he so freely gave that made me feel that even I had a friend.

At his funeral the precious ones he felt to be his sons in the ministry, spoke so sweetly of his life, ascribing all honor and praise to the great I am.

Our brother believed in the sovereign grace of the King of Saints who blessed him to sing the songs of Moses and the Lamb.

That sad day as I left the cemetery, my heart sank within me as I looked upon the huge mound of beautiful flowers.

They covered the grave of my beloved pastor only a few steps from the pulpit where he spent so many precious hours.

I said within me, you have finished your course; now take your peaceful rest, for our heartaches asd sorrows remain.

It was hard to give you up. Yet, we feel our grevious loss is your blessed eternal gain.

We esteemed our brother and pastor most highly in love, and now we are very sad,

As we bow in humble submission and thank the Heavenly Father for the blessings we have had.

In this wilderness land, I fly low and mourn as the dove.

The tears fill my eyes as I try to write this, I hope, in the bonds of Christian love.

Whether we walked in the valley of despair or from the mountain top we wanted to sing;

We would find a heart-felt love and warm welcome from Elder Curry King.

Clifton Robertson
Route 1
Reidsville, N. C.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 139 DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1971 NO. 11

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/71
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

MY FATHER WORKS

There are those times I cannot see
That all is working good for me,
But then I see a shining light
And know that everything is right.

My Father works to do his will,
His every purpose to fulfill.
No man can stay his holy hand
But all must bow at his command.

I cannot see the path ahead,
But by His Spirit I am led:
I've naught to dread or naught to fear:
His Spirit makes his work so clear.

And so I travel on and on
The way my precious Lord has gone,
And when I reach that happy shore,
I'll sing his praise forevermore.

(Jesus is the light of my soul, given by my holy and merciful Father God.)

Ethel Gilland
232 McKenzie Ave., Apt. 4
Panama City, Fla.

EXPERIENCE OF SISTER LONNIE THOMAS

HOW THE LORD HAS LED ME

Dear Bro. Pittman: — At my father's request I will write a part of what I hope has been the dealings of the Lord with me. When I was about grown I went to preaching at Charity. As they were singing the closing hymn I could not keep from shedding tears and thought they were the happiest people I ever saw, and if I just only was as good as they looked to me I would be so glad. I was afraid some one would see me crying. I wondered what they would think of me. So I tried to keep from crying, and have thought many times since why I felt like I did. Yet I went on enjoying the worldly things as we all do until God makes us feel His great power.

The year 1915 I became so troubled I could hardly bear it. I just felt all the time like something dreadful was going to happen. I would lie down at night wondering what it would be. Our little boy Cleo was taken sick Feb. 1916 with pneumonia and was seriously ill for twelve days when it developed into that dreadful disease, meningitis. The doctors said there was no chance for him to get well. One night my friends told me to lie down and get some rest. As I went I thought I would try to pray for my child to get well. And the first thing that came to my mind was, "Lord what have I ever done good to make me fit to call on Thee for anything." I could only ask the Lord if it was His will for him to get well I would be glad and if not I hoped He would give me strength to bear it. So in the night they woke me, as they told me they would do, if they thought he was any worse. I got up and went to his bedside. I looked at him, trusting in the Lord that I might be willing for His will to be done. In a few days the child began to improve, I became very much troubled about his condition as the doctors said he would be afflicted in some way. One day I was trying to get him to talk, as he could talk some before he got sick. I thought his affliction might be that he could not talk. And oh how awful

I thought that would be. My mind was brought back where I first was. I must be submissive to the Lord's will and if it is His will he would talk. And if he was afflicted I was no better than those that did have afflicted children. It wasn't longer than thirty minutes before he could talk some. I felt surely it must be the Lord showing me his great power. The child got well and wasn't afflicted in any way.

I would study over these things and felt that I couldn't praise God enough for His wonderful blessings. I would go to church and I enjoyed hearing the gospel preached better than I ever had before. I would wonder whether I was a child of God, and I would think if I were, surely I would be given more evidence. Time passed on and I tried to lay all this aside. The year 1917, my trouble came again. It came with such force at times I could hardly bear it. I knew nothing to do but to look to the Lord for ease. I felt willing to kneel and pray as I had heard and read of others doing. In my heart my prayer was, "If it is God's will to relieve my burden I would be glad, though if I just could be given evidence that I was a child of God I would be willing to bear all my suffering."

It wasn't long before our baby most two years old was taken sick. She was sick four weeks when it developed into meningitis which caused her death one week later. Oh, how it hurt me to give her up. I would think what a glorious exchange it was to leave this troublesome world and rest in that happy home where pain and sorrow never comes. I was blessed with the pleasure of a feeling sense of my many sins being forgiven the morning of her death. I was so burdened I could hardly bear it. When all at once I was perfectly at ease. I was so happy I could not help but smile, and was afraid some one would see me and not know what to think of me smiling and my child having just died. It wasn't long before that easy, calm, feeling left me. My burden was relieved so much I thought it surely must be the dealings of the Lord. After then I felt I must talk to the church, but I was afraid I was mistaken in the whole matter so I put off joining till first Sunday in July, 1919. I went before the church and told of my hope in Jesus and a part of what I've written, and was relieved of another burden that I don't believe I ever would have been,if I had not taken up the cross. I was baptized in August, 1919, and have rejoiced in trying to serve in this way. Please pray for me and mine. Your unworthy sister in hope.

Ferrum, Va.

Lonnie M. (Rakes) Thomas

(Re-published by request from *Zion's Advocate* of May, 1922. See obituary this issue.)

THE CHOSEN

"Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple." (Psalm 65:4)

If there were no other scriptures in the Holy Bible declaring that salvation is truly of God and not of man, I would be satisfied with this one truth. However the Bible declares this truth from cover to cover; but few can see or understand it.

There are thousands of buildings referred to as "churches", which are only buildings and nothing more.

There is but one church, and that is the church of the living God. This church is not made by the hands of men, but by the eternal God himself. And, Oh, how precious is this church in the sight of our God and his people! This church was purchased by the precious Lamb of God, and is eternal, never to be destroyed.

Only the chosen people of God can enter the door of this church, and Oh, how safe and secure are the little lambs of God when they are brought to the realization that they are part of this church! It is truly joy unspeakable and

full of glory for those who are chosen of Him to share in this glorious truth.

So many today are running to and fro seeking, searching, and ever learning, but never coming to the knowledge of the truth. The few who do know and believe the truth are looked upon as the scum of the earth, and treated as though they were mentally retarded, and are considered to be beyond help by the world.

But let us remember that our precious Lord Jesus was treated in a very shameful manner and was scorned by those who considered themselves to be good. Can we expect the world to favor us when we put forth an effort to exalt our precious Lord? Indeed not! How can we who know the truth be in fellowship with those who deny that the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus forever sealed the redemption of his people? What fellowship does light have with darkness? The two simply do not mix.

I have said many times, and say again, that it is better to stand alone than to follow that which I know to be wrong. That which is wrong has no part with that which is right, and I surely have found that to be true, for I have been left to walk alone as far as this world is concerned, simply because I refuse to bow down to false doctrine.

May my Father God ever give the grace to stand alone, if that is what it takes to walk in His light.

Ethel Gilland,
232 McKenzie Ave., Apt. 4
Panama City, Fla.

ENJOYS READING THE SIGNS

Rt. 4, Box 320
Lenior City, Tenn. 37771

Dear Elder Wood:

It is with pleasure that I will try to write you a few lines this beautiful day. I have enjoyed reading the *Signs* for the past year, and am thankful to be one of your readers. So many good letters from God's loving people and ministers, it fills my soul to sit down and read them. May God bless each one that has a part in it.

You are acquainted with Roy Thomas in Wilmington, Delaware, my dear brother: he has mentioned you so much I feel like I know you also.

I am sending $7.00 for the renewal of the *Signs* for two years.

A sister in Christ, I hope,
Mrs. Ben Fields

CARRYING OUT THE PURPOSES OF GOD

"For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and counsel determined (decreed) before to be done." (Acts 4:27, 28)

Surely we only move and act to carry out the purpose that God has determined to be done; as these people did. We know that Christ was carried before rulers and kings, and treated scornfully — crucified, bled and died. And this scripture tells us they were doing what God had determined that they should do. If people want to call this unjust, and say, If God is this kind of a God they want no part of him, that is between them and their God; and they have said this very thing.

But I know that God does his will and none can hinder. He is the Creator of heaven and earth and all things that be in heaven and earth: and he holds all power in his hands. What he created the people of the earth for, and why he created them, is known only to him — He made them. If he wanted to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor (Romans 9:25) we cannot question him as to why he did it: for he does all things after the counsel of his own will. What is considered evil by man, God brings good out of: and all things work together for good

to them that love God, — like Joseph, when his brethren sold him into Egypt. They hated Joseph and were going to get rid of him; but God had foreordained or predestinated this from the foundation of the world; and it was at the appointed time. They, the brothers, meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. (Exodus 50:20)

In Joseph going down into Egypt he found favor with the king, and was placed just under the king in the affairs of the kingdom. And when the great famine came into the land of Canaan where Joseph's father and brothers lived, the brothers were sent into Egypt to buy food; and they had to go before Joseph to buy the food. Joseph knew his brothers, but they did not know him. One can see how God works these things. God had caused Joseph to have dreams, and these infuriated the brothers. But all this had to come to pass to get the children of Israel down into Egypt, which was long ago prophesied they would go there, and toil under the Egyptians four hundred years; and then they would be brought out. Just look how God works all things — Joseph's father and brothers moved into Egypt to be with Joseph and have food.

Another example is when Pharoah would not let the children of Israel go out of Egypt. The Lord told Moses, I will harden his heart that he will not let them go. Could Pharoah have done anything about this? The Bible plainly says that the Lord hardened it. I had a letter from a lady a week or so ago, and she wrote that Adam and Eve ate the fruit in the garden of their own free will — they did not have to do it. She said the Lord knew they would do it, but he didn't make them do it. Well supposed they had decided not to do it — I suppose they would still be in the garden, and that all of God's plans would have fallen through. But I say they did exactly what the Lord had determined: just as the scripture at the head of this article says, "They were gathered together to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done," that all his purposes from the foundation of the earth to the end of the world should be accomplished.

If He had not wanted them to eat the fruit, and sin enter into the world, why didn't he place the flaming sword around it to start with? This surely would have kept them away from the tree, since he made everything that is or ever will be; and knew man's weakness — that he would do this very thing. I say that his plans were all laid out, and that not one thing would fail, that the saying of God might stand, "Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." (Isaiah 14:24)

When God made man He knew the weakness of man — He made him just as He wanted him. "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him that worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." (Ephesians 1:11) He had the power to make a strong man who would not partake of the forbidden fruit, and the garden of Eden could have been just that — the Garden of Eden or heavenly place. God's creature man did not teach him something he didn't know by partaking of the forbidden fruit; if so God would not be an allwise God.

Let's just say, God's plans were all laid out from the foundation of the world, and man started fulfilling them. A child of God will praise Him for all his wonderful works that He has done under the sun. The Devil is at God's command; and he can only go as far as God allows him to go. All this talk about man being a free moral agent and is turned loose to do as he pleases, I cannot understand. According to most religious teaching, the Lord is kept busy begging people to let him come into their hearts and save them; and then writing and erasing their names in and out of the Lamb's Book of Life: Today their names may be there, but tomorrow they may have back-slid. If death overtakes them in this back-slid condition, they are bound for the place

where all the children of wrath go; so they were not saved in the first place. For if anything is saved, it is forever: if it is lost, it never was saved. Saved carries the meaning: to deliver, to persevere, safeguard, to make safe, to save from danger or destruction. Wherein is God praised in a doctrine that says they are saved today and lost tomorrow? I cannot find any comfort in this.

I believe if I am saved, it will be for eternity; and I can praise God for this. God knew what he was doing when he made man, and his purpose and will was all laid out before the foundation of the world. We have a lot of people who say, This or that would be charging God with sin. What is man to be saying this or that would be charging God with sin? I don't believe it would concern God one bit, if his creature man charged him with sin a million years, since His ways and thoughts are so high above man's ways and thoughts. The mind of man cannot comprehend the ways and thoughts of God: — "As I have thought so shall it come to pass," says God. To me this seals the thing from the beginning to the end. No matter what man charges God with, I see God as the Almighty, Omnipresent, Holy, Righteous, All powerful, All wise God, who reigns over the heavens and earth, and does his will, and none can hinder him. No matter how much man may try to change His will, whatever He does is right and just.

In the case of Jacob and Esau: many people say if he loved one and hated the other, He would be unjust. But this is just what the Bible says. Romans 9:11 tells us, "For the children being not yet born, neither having done good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth. It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God. God forbid." "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." (Romans 9:18) Where is the person that will charge God with anything?

So we are all carrying out our part in this great universe, just as those people were at the heading of this article; and surely we are all doing whatsoever the Lord determined before to be done. I am fully aware that this doctrine is scorned and trampled and looked down on by the world; but this makes little difference to me.

Eunice Dean
11475 S. W. 41 Street
Miami, Fla. 33165

THEY SHALL COME TO HIM

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:37)

Those that were given to Jesus are spoken of as the elect, Children of God, Church of the Living God, Wife of Christ, Body of Christ, etc. The sheep were given to Jesus to be his bride. Notice the ownership. You cannot redeem anything that is not yours. An article, animal, etc. must be yours by ownership before you can redeem it. In other words, you cannot redeem anything that does not belong to you.

When did the father give the people to Jesus? It goes further than just those living during that age. They come to Jesus by faith. As Paul said, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (Heb. 2:9) Paul did not mean that we see Jesus in the flesh, as we see one another face to face today as we visit one another, go to meeting, go to our jobs, etc. Paul meant that we see Jesus by the eye of faith.

The Father gave his people to Jesus even before the foundation of the world. (Eph. 1:4) The Father saw all of them even before they were in existence. "thy book all my members were written,

which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." (Psalm 139:16) As we think of the members of a natural body, this makes us think of the Church of God. The members of a natural body were fashioned even before it was in existence. "We are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones." (Eph. 5:30) Not a bone of Jesus was broken. The beauty of this is that not one of God's people shall be broken off, or utterly cast off. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way, though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." (Psalm 37:24) This means that even though a Child of God may fall for awhile, or fall temporarily, God will uphold him and he will not be finally lost forever from the presence of God. A child of God may fall for a while, but in due time God will bless him with repentance, and the child of God will repent over his sins, and he will mourn over them, and he will pray unto God for guidance.

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." In short, this means they shall believe in Jesus. In due time all of the elect shall come to Jesus or believe in him and not one of them shall fail to come to him. We believe that this text is applicable to God's people in all ages. We see the work of the Holy Ghost, and this is an effectual work. God gives to all natural life, and he gives spiritual life to his elect in due time. The text did not say that all men should come to Jesus, or that they might come if they only trust him, or accept him as their saviour, etc. Some might say, how can they come to Jesus since they do not have the opportunity in that country to hear the gospel or do not have the opportunity to read the Bible, etc. I am glad that God is stronger than weak man. God is able to save his people to the uttermost. "And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him." (Isaiah 59:16) The Lord's hand is not shortened that he cannot save. (Isaiah 5,:1)

God's people do not come to Jesus or believe in him by their own strength. In fact, they cannot come to him, unless they are drawn by the Lord. "No man can come to me, except my father which sent me draw him." (John 6:44) The children of God are not drawn against their will, but they are made willing by the Lord." Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power . . ." (Psalms 110:3) How is one made willing by the Lord? When one sees his lost and ruined condition, and he has come to the end of his own strength, and finds that he is not able to help his own condition, and finds that man cannot help, then his eyes turn away from the perishable things of this earth, and he turns to God and pleads for deliverance, and pleads for mercy. He is made willing to look to the Lord for his needs. He is made willing to go to Jesus. How welcome are the words, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matt. 11:28-30) The poor sinner finds that the yoke of the law is to heavy for him.

The law demands perfection, and gives nothing. There is no mercy in the law. But there is mercy in the Lord. "His mercy endureth forever." (Psalm 107:1) There is rest in Jesus and this is a peaceful rest. "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." (Heb. 4:10) One is in a condition to enter into that rest when his strength of performing the deeds of the law has failed him. It is natural for one to work as long as he is able, but when his strength fails him and he finds that there is nothing he can do to merit the favor of God, then in due time he is blessed to wait upon the Lord for mercy. He waits upon the Lord for guidance, mercy, etc. Then he has entered into that rest because he has ceased from his own works. As long as one feels

that he is able to perform certain conditions in order to merit his own salvation, he has not ceased from his own works, and he has certainly not entered into that rest which is Jesus Christ.

God's people shall come to him in due time. It is not up to us to question God, and wonder if just one would fail to come to him. Jesus said that all shall come to him. Meaning, all must believe in Jesus at that appointed time. Let us not get uneasy about the matter. God will teach all of his people, whether it is directly as in the case of Paul's experience, or whether it is in other ways. The point is that this is God's business, and there is nothing that can hinder him from teaching his people the truth, and it does not take God a certain length of time to teach his people. All of them shall be taught of God.

"Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Several years ago when I did not believe in this doctrine, this thought came to me: "How cruel it would be if someone wanted repentance, if he felt the need of salvation, and would be cast off because he was not in that blessed number." The sweetness of the matter is that if one feels the need of salvation, it is some sweet evidence that he is in that blessed number. Why? Because the Scriptures point out that the wicked have pleasure in unrighteousness, in following after the pleasures of this world, etc. The children of God are the only ones who have the desire to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, and who realized their lost and ruined condition, and pray for deliverance. You pray from your heart, do you not?

When you come to Jesus for mercy, (pray or plead for mercy) Satan may tempt you and tell you your sins are too great, he may tell you that you are a hypocrite, etc., but take courage, because the blood of Jesus washes away all the sins of his elect. May the Lord bless you to look to Jesus for salvation, and rejoice that none that come to Jesus shall be cast off.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

CIRCULAR LETTER LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION 1971

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church of Shokan, Ulster County, New York, being held in the Old School Baptist Meeting House at Halcottsville, Delaware County, New York, September 15 and 16, 1971, sends love, fellowship and greetings to the several churches with which we correspond.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

Each year we thank God that it has been his good pleasure to sustain us in the faith once delivered to the Saints and shield us from the evil that is in the world, so that we might meet again.

We wish to call your attention to the 57th chapter of Isaiah. The 1st verse reads: "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come."

Before the beginning of time God foreknew what was going to come about. God elected himself a people, and knew they would transgress and sin. God predestinated the way of salvation, and all they would need in their journey through time.

At the start God created Adam; then from Adam God brought forth Eve as an helpmeet for Adam. They transgressed and were driven from the garden of Eden. Although God told Adam he must earn his bread by the sweat of his brow and toil, it was God that made it all possible. Evil and jealousy were present when Cain slew Abel; and continued to increase until the time of Noah — when only Noah and his wife,

his sons and their wives were saved of all the inhabitants of the earth. God provided a hiding place in the Ark. This Ark was a hiding place for God's chosen few during the deluge, which was a calamity to the rest of the inhabitants of the earth at that time. A remnant was saved from the destruction to keep the earth populated. It was God's pleasure to do it this way. All things are possible with God and He determined to preserve Noah in this manner. God laid out the master blueprint, and all things come about and take place at the appointed time.

A famine was due to come upon the land of Canaan. Therefore God sent Joseph into the land of Egypt to prepare a hiding place for the children of Israel. Joseph and Israel did not realize it was for their good at the beginning, as there were many trials and tribulations involved. God saw to it that they were placed in the land of Goshen a well watered and sheltered place for flocks. God set a boundary between the Hebrews and the Egyptians, and not one of the plagues ever touched the Hebrew children.

The Israelites sojourned in Egypt for 400 years. The time had come according to God's predetermined will that they should move to the promised land of Canaan. The Israelites would, probably, have been content to stay in the land of Egypt, but God placed a king over Egypt that knew not Joseph. (Exodus 1:8) This king put hardships on the people of Israel to awaken them to their low estate. Exodus 1:12 reads, "But the more they afflicted them the more they multiplied and grew; and they were grieved because of the children of Israael." God had a purpose in all this to make manifest His power and glory.

God raised up Moses for this purpose. God caused the enemy of His people to raise and educate Moses; and Moses grew up in the house of Pharaoh's daughter; but God kept Moses from taking up with the Egyptian religions. God called Moses apart for His glory. God spoke to the prophets through dreams and visions, but to Moses God spoke face to face as a man speaketh unto his friend. (Exodus 33:-11) It was through Moses and the prophets that God made himself manifest until the time appointed for Jesus to come into the world.

The Israelites were unable to keep the law of themselves, and went astray many times. Each time God laid the rod of affliction upon them. Each time the Lord raised up a prophet to lead them out of captivity. The initiative of calling a prophet rests with God. He calls his prophets at the appointed time in his blue print of the way of salvation. Many of the prophets were led to despair at the sins of the Israelites. The prophet's lives were in jeopardy at the hands of Israel, but the Lord always provided a way of escape.

In the 19th chapter of 1st Kings we read of Elijah: "He arose and went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough. Now, O Lord take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers." Elijah was in the depth of despair and waited for the salvation of the Lord. God sent his angel to awaken Elijah, telling him to arise and eat. God furnished the medicine to strengthen Elijah through the cake, representing Jesus, and the water, representing the Word.

Dear brethren, are there not many times when our hope runs low and our faith is sorely tried? It is then the thunders and lightning, the winds of evil and false doctrine arise against us. The poor tempest tossed child of God runs here and there seeking after shelter from the storm. It is then the Lord sends his Comforter, saying, Peace be still, it is I. God has set Satan's bounds and he cannot afflict the children of God beyond the endurance given them by God. God planted his seed in the elect people, and the hand that did the planting will also do the cultivating. The elect plants of God shall not be rooted up.

Precious brethren, the elect of God

have a wonderful hiding place: the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek; a priest that had no beginning or ending of days. This priest, Jesus, came into the world, gave his life for his people, and has gone back to the right hand of God to intercede for his people.

In the Old Testament days the high priest had the names of the tribes of Israel written on the breast plate of his garment. He also had bells and pomegranates on his garment when he was in the holy place.

When Jesus left and went back to the right hand of God, He sent the Comforter to care for the elect People of God. Jesus had the nail prints in his hands and feet, and the spear pierced side to show the price he paid for the sins of his people.

God has provided a hiding place that shall not fail. Isaiah 32:1-3 reads, "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall harken."

"In union with the Lamb,
From condemnation free
The saints from everlasting were
And shall forever be.

In covenant from of old
The sons of God they were;
The feeblest lamb in Jesus' fold
Was blessed in Jesus there."

Hymn 188 Beebe Collection

(Written by Deacon Woodrow W. Bellinger.)

UPPER COUNTRY LINE
UNION MEETING

The *Upper Country Line Union Meeting* will will be held, the Lord willing the 5th Sunday in October with the Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church in Rockingham County, N. C.

The meeting house is located on 704 between Reidsville and Madison, N. C. We welcome the brethren and friends.

Rachel Wray, Asst. Church Clerk

EASTERN UNION

The next session of the *Eastern Union* is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Bethlehem, in Tyrell County, N. C., on Saturday and fifth Sunday in October, 1971. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited; a special invitation is extended to our ministering brethren.

Those traveling east take Highway 64 to Columbia, N. C. to stop light, turn right on 94 about two and one-half miles to first crossroad, turn right at the sign Bethlehem Church, about 200 yards from the highway.

Elder N. J. Ambrose, Union Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND
(To September 1, 1971)

Margaret Phillips, Va.	$ 3.00
N. Hunt, Va.	3.00
Victor D. Borst, Jr., N. Y.	18.00
J. H. Merrill, Tex.	3.00
J. B. Waters, Ala.	3.00
Effie Davis, N. C.	1.00
Elva S. Gentry, Va.	8.00
Helen J. Jones, Calif. in memory of Sister Etta Donlary — Cousin	10.00
Fannie Mae Harper, N. C.	1.00
Mrs. Jane Fagan, N. C.	3.00
Gladys Robinson, N. C.	1.00
L. W. Parker, Ala.	1.00
Mrs. J. V. Pickeral, Va.	3.00
Mrs. Lester W. Mellott, Pa.	3.00
Audrey E. Dyer, Va.	3.00

CLERKS WILL PLEASE NOTE

We find it necessary to insist that those who send in notices of meetings for publication in the SIGNS, must mail them to us at Manassas in time to reach us thirty-five days before the publication date in which the notices are to appear. For example, a notice for the December issue should be in our hands on or before October 25th, which would be thirty-five days before the December issue date; and is the date copy is mailed to our printers each month.

Most meetings are appointed some months in advance, so send your notices in early and we will hold them until the proper time for publication. — J. D. W.

Danville, Virginia November, 1971

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EDITORIAL

SPECIAL NOTICE

We purpose to publish in the December issue some of the early articles by Elder Gilbert Beebe in which he enlarged upon several points of doctrine embraced in his **PROSPECTUS** when he began publishing the **Signs of the Times** in 1832. These are taken from the **First Volume of Editorials** of Elder Beebe, and will fill almost all of the December edition.

We believe these will be most interesting to all of our readers, and will enable them to read in one issue of the paper, those scriptural reasons why Elder Beebe, being blessed of the Lord, opposed contrary teachings and practices which had been urged and promoted upon the Baptists, contrary to the scriptural doctrines and practices which were time honored from the days of Christ and his Apostles.

There was much controversy between the Old and the New School Baptists in those days; but we are not interested in reviving the issues, for we are interested only in the fact that the Old School Baptists in that day, and since, required a "Thus saith the Lord," and consequently a "Hearing of what the Spirit saith unto the churches," for their faith. And further, we are interested in showing that the **Signs of the Times** through the years, has not wandered from the original Prospectus of 1832.

We have been delighted to re-publish the writings of former contributors to our columns through the years, under the heading of **Voices of the Past,** for the express purpose of showing the consistency of the faith adhered to by the editors of the **Signs** throughout the years. We are zealous for these fundamentals, while allowing the brethren to express individual thoughts or interpretations not contrary to them.

There will be extra copies of the December issue available from the **Signs'** office for anyone who may desire them.

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

ISAIAH 46:3, 13

"Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb, and even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you. To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like? They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith; and he maketh it a god: they fall down, yea, they wor-

ship. They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth; from his place shall he not remove: yea, one shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble. Remember this, and shew yourselves men: bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors. Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it. Hearken unto me, ye stouthearted, that are far from righteousness: I will bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory."

When moved by the Spirit of God my petition to you is the same that Paul had towards the church at Thessalonica (I Thes. 5:25), for I am sure that my need is as great as was his. In my writing and preaching, I do not entertain any idea that it is different from that of my brethren. All that are called to service in the kingdom of heaven are first impressed to walk in wisdom's ways, whether it is in serving churches in the various activities, visiting the sick, writing articles. I do not mean by this that all I hear and do, and all that I see, is the result of an impression of the Lord. Far from it, but I do mean that in the service of our Lord, and to His brethren, that we are led of His Spirit to that end.

If we as ministers and writers, as hearers and readers, have any idea in mind other than the glory of God, we ought to be ashamed. Yet, being poor frail sinners, knowing only in part, we, (or I am) frequently running when not sent, writing when not inspired of the Spirit, speaking when not called. This not being able to do as I would; this constant reminder that I do not know the things of the Spirit, causes me to be fearful when I come to the pulpit or to the typewriter. Many times I have left home, and all that was near and dear to me by the ties of nature, and be asked as I drove away: "Who has required this at thy hands." Many times I have had impressions to write on a certain subject or text and write a page and look it over only to throw it in the waste basket.

I would be foolish if I told you that I do not live to preach and that I preach to live; I would be foolish if I told you that I do not enjoy preaching and writing. It is my meat and drink. I have not resented people telling where and what and when and how to preach, nor have I resented it when I have had attempted controls put on me so as to "block" me in. Many times I am sure that brethren had my welfare in mind; at other times, it may have been Shimei cursing me, but if so, I have felt that the Lord sent him. At the same time, I have had to examine my motives and impressions as to whether they were according to knowledge, and have seldom, if ever, come up with a satisfactory answer, yet have had to venture, often in misgivings.

I do not think that I am called an extremist, or, perhaps, a hobby rider, and yet there are certain things that we necessarily say again and again. Even the greatest objectors to repetition are, themselves as guilty as any of using certain phraseology in making up their expressions.

We do not have among us as a religious order of people two ministers with the same gift. However, if there are diversified gifts among us, possessors of these gifts should be (and are) the last to find fault with the other minister's gift. This does not mean that we cannot differ and remain brethren. One of the humblest elders that I ever knew was not what is called an Absolute predestinarian; one of the ablest and most highly respected elders did not believe in the future resurrection of

the body. These two elders are gone these many years (they were each a thousand miles from here), but their living in harmony with their brethren was brotherly. Now with that much said, I leave my preliminaries or foundation and take hold of the text with what I hope the Lord has given me. Since I am writing in my own field and not that of another; since I have, if not mistaken, withdrawn my foot out from my neighbor's (minister) room; since words mean one thing to one and something else to somebody else, I will, as blessed of God, use such terminology and phraseology as befits my understanding of the things found in the text. I would beg you to correct where wrong, but not to murder the King's English, but if you do, please do not waste my time with murderous criticism. I will, perhaps, spend three articles in dispensing with my understanding of the text.

"Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb; and even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you." Sometimes God hails his children (Luke 1:28; Mat. 28:9); sometimes he calls their attention by saying, "Ho, every one that thirsteth" (Isa. 55:1); sometimes he speaks in a hearkening command to them. It is of paramount importance that we notice the manner of address as well as those that are addressed. "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." Here we have the same thing said twice — that God has a people; that these people are his portion; that they are the lot of his (God's) inheritance, and that they are known by the name of Jacob. I would appreciate it if you would turn to this chapter of Deuteronomy (32) and read this statement, to wit, *The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.* If men have bewitched you; if the gods of this world have blinded you; if the cunning devices of false teachers have guided you wrong, then, by all means, remember this declaration of the Lord. *Then let us pursue it.* As far as salvation pertains to Jacob, it is sure. The God of salvation has redeemed Jacob (Isa. 44:23; 48:20; Jer. 31:11). And since Jacob and the Lord's people are used interchangeably with one another, I quote for all unbelievers and skeptics to read the message of the angel to Joseph, to wit, He (Christ Jesus) shall save his people from their sins (Mat. 1:21), and the messages of Paul that he (Christ) has saved his people. (2 Tim. 1:9; Titus 3:5) These are the ones that the text is addressed to, not one less, not one more.

This address is to all of the house of Jacob, but it is not to all the house of Israel. Let us proceed carefully, as the Lord leads us forth. It is to all of one, and to a portion or remnant of the other. I did not say that. *God did say it.* The evening approaches for me; the lengthening shadows tell me in unmistakable language that the time is short, therefore I am not inclined to spend any time in bickering and quibbling over such sacred and superb matters. However, if there is one among my readers that fits into the description above (to wit, one that has been confused by clattering tongues) I am willing to spend and to be spent in sweet communion together in searching for the truth.

These people so searchingly addressed and called to gospel attention, are in God's hands from all eterniity. Providence extends to all times, events, seasons, peoples and things. If that does not go far enough, then let me pharaphrase the statement and say that there is not anything in all the world that the providence of God does not cover in the salvation of his chosen people. The reason for making this statement is because all things are working for the good of God's people. *I did not say that grace caused all things,* nor did I say that grace works simultaneously and in conjunction with providence. I feel

bound to spare no words to make it clearly known that the Bible teaches me that all sin proceeds from the creature and that all salvation proceeds and comes from God. Yet, if I denied the providence of God in salvation, I would deny that there was any good wrought out of the selling of Joseph into Egypt; I would deny that there was any good wrought in the crucifixion of the Saviour; I would deny that tribulations work patience; I would deny that it is good to be afflicted; I would deny that the tribulations of the apostle (with the Corinthians) was for their consolation and salvation (which, by the way, is time salvation); I would deny that our light affliction worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. I am not able to say that the grace of God preserved Paul from his mother's womb, but I am able to say that the providence of God separated him from her womb, and that God's grace called him to the ministry, and I am able to say, yea, delighted to say, that everything pertaining to his life, both natural and spiritual, was in the Lord's hand; even saying that God raised him up to play havoc with the church, for that, even though evil as far as his intentions went, was not any more so than was the work of the brethren of Joseph or the work of Pharoah. If God could (and he did) raise up Pharoah to show his power in doing so; if God could (and he did) send Joseph by the wicked route of his brethren and Potiphar's wife into Egypt; if God could (and he did) bruise his own Son and use wicked men in doing it, and none of these things make God the author of sin (and they do not) where would a poor puny man begin to make him so?

The manifestation of this care over this house and remnant of house begins with the womb. Have you got any place (I want the scriptures) of the need for earlier care than that? To be sure, I find within the lids of the Bible that God does not do anything in time but what he determined to do in eternity. He *was* in one mind, and he *is* still in one mind. As there were not any to change his one mindedness before the world began, also, in the same manner, to the same degree, no more, no less, there are not any now or in the future that will change it. These people were the objects of God's care from all eternity, but it is of the manifest care with which we are dealing. *It was from the womb.* It reaches plenty far back. It reaches all the way back (Job 31:15; Isa. 44:2) I am not uneasy that anybody will be able to destroy what I am saying. The care of God begins with the womb. Put a stake there as you preach and write. It shall never be destroyed nor removed. It reaches as far in the future as one of these people are going. It embraces old age, even hoar hairs; It embraces the work of God's power or providence in the work in the womb, and it runs in a continous line throughout life. It embraces the first work in bringing into being, into bringing *to* the womb and *from* the womb. These thus addressed are subjects of two kingdoms, of two families, of two nations, of two worlds. The work pertaining to their first birth was completely under the power of God in providence; the work pertaining to their second birth has been, and still is (see John 3:8), as well as the living of that life now (Gal. 2:20), all in the hands of Him that works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Phil.2:13; Heb. 13:21)

"To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like?" This applies primarily to the ones addressed. But this address reaches down to now. In order that we know our status before God, let us hope that it is addressed to us. If so, then to whom will you liken Him? Have you anything or anybody in mind? Whom have you in mind to liken him to in creation? Did he alone create? If not, who? If so, what? He is before all things. Have you got one like that? Is it the devil? *Who or what is it?* If you do not have any one like him, then

why be everlastingly bringing him down on a level with his creatures? Men devise and can never bring to completion; men in begetting, and women in conception, can bring to birth, but who can deliver a living child? (Isa. 66:9); men can drive to the brink of destruction (as at the Red sea), but tell me, O thou that readest, whom can you liken the deliverance to? Whom have you on your list that can enable an assembly to walk on dry ground that minutes previously had been a sea? Who is able to raise a storm and make it a calm (Psa. 107)? Have you any one, any one at all, that can bless fire to the providential needs of humanity, and yet keep it from scorching three poor sinners?; that gave us water which will drown people, and yet, under the care of God will save eight people?; that will give a good law, that is broken unto death for the transgressors, and yet that he who gave it will sentence His Son unto death for transgressors?

Who can be made his equal? Have you (the ones addressed in the outset) anyone that is his equal? O I know that we both, writer and reader, have *tried* to palm ourselves and other arms of flesh off as being (not just his equal, but) his superior, but have we or can we? That there are many lords and many gods, is freely admitted; that there are many running that have not been sent, is freely granted; that there are a variety of doctrines, is not denied, but that anyone of them is equal to the God of Israel is denied; that any of those *not sent* is equal to the least one that *is sent,* is denied; that any doctrine is like or equal to the doctrine of God our Saviour is denied.

Everything shows that there is not anything worthy of comparison to the God of our salvation. Who can make a rose? Who can plant a humble lilly in the dark morass of the wilderness and cause it to throw its blossem heavenward? Who can be alike in the darkness and in the light? Yea, who can make darkness light before his offspring? Who can save Israel to the uttermost, both inside Egypt, and bringing them out? Who can make that which one hated into the most delightful company in the world? Who can make one that courted the earth, to turn his back on that earth and walk in the assembly of this God? Who can hate sin, and its consequences, and yet use it for the good of those that he loves? Who has made all things, whether visible or invisible, that is before all that is made, and makes consistency out of the whole? Who is it (to the ones addressed) that saves a poor hell deserving sinner in the merits of his Son, and *with Him* gives that sinner all things?

Have you or you (of those addressed) got anything, or have you got a string on anything, that can do these things? If not, then, if He does not have mercy upon you, and you die in that condition, hell is your doom.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Rushville, Ill., Dec. 21, 1864

Eld. G. Beebe — Dear Sir: — If you have light on the subject, and time to write, and space for publication, please give your views on Gen. iii. 22, especially on the latter part. "And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the gorden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken." Yours faithfully,

Ephraim J. Pemberton

Reply, — Without claiming any extraordinary light on the true figurative import of the words of this text, we will venture to give such views as we have on the subject; hoping they may serve to enlighten those who are anxiously enquiring after the truth; and if nothing more, lead them to a close examination of the scriptures.

We do not understand the account given of the creation of the world, the entrance of sin, the fall of man, and the

early propagation of his seed &c., to have been written as a mere history of events to gratify the prying curiosity of men in the subsequent ages of the world. The book of Genesis is not a record of facts noted as they transpired and so transmitted to posterity, like all profane history; but written by Moses, more than two thousand years after the creation of the world. As Moses wrote by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, we infer not only the sacred truth of what is written, as the testimony of God himself, but also that the sacred import of the record is, like all other parts of divine revelation, the opening of the mouth of God in parables, and the uttering of dark sayings; and all designed to be made plain in due time to the expanding understanding of the children of God by the same spirit which inspired Moses to write.

Instead then of reading it as a mere literal history of events, we regard every line and every word as the inspiration of God himself, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things" which are to be fulfilled in the fullness of the dispensation of times. A clear understanding of these early records will show to the divinely instructed pupil in the school of Christ, a perfect and beautiful cluster of types pointing to Christ, and his salvation of his church and people, in which the two parallel mysteries, godliness and iniquity, are strikingly developed.

Had we the ability, the time and space, we would review the whole record from Gen. 1:1, to the text on which we are now requested to bestow our attention; but we must let it suffice, for the time, to express some thoughts on the expulsion of man from the garden of Eden, and some things therewith connected, and First, God in his triune relation, as Father, Word and Spirit, not as three Gods, but the only true and living God, revealed in creation, providence and grace, created the world by the Word; for, "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God." (Heb. 11:3.) "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." (Heb. 1:2.) Which accounts for the plural form of the pronoun. "Let **us** make man in **our** image." And in our text. "Behold the man has become as one of **us..**" Christ is declared to be the image of the invisible God; and the express image of his person, and the brightness of his glory. (See Col. 1:15. Heb. 1:3.) And Adam, is the figure of him that was to come. (Rom. 5:14.) Man, was not as we understand directly the image of the invisible God; but was made after that image a fac simile, a figure, a type of Christ. "And after **our likeness.**" Not like God in infinity, immortality or deity, but as a figure of the dominion of Christ over all created things, having dominion over the beasts of the field, fowls of the air, fishes of the sea, and every creeping thing &c. Nor do we understand that his created elements or perfections were like the uncreated attributes of his Creator, for then he could not have fallen; but the likeness and image was confined to his being the figure of him that was to come; that is of Christ. Not only as lord over the animal creation; but also, as the head of a posterity which God had created in him; also in his identity with his bride, and finally in all that is recorded of him in the scriptures. He the first Adam, Christ the second Adam. But let us not mistake; for that Adam which was first, was not spiritual, but natural; but afterward that which is spiritual, as seen in the second Adam which is the Lord from heaven. The first Adam was of the earth, earthly, his anti-type, is heavenly; the first was natural, the last spiritual; the first was made a living soul, the second is a quickening Spirit.

Second. The first estate of man, "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the

sight, and good for food; for the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." &c. Here in an earthly Paradise, which is also figurative of the church or Garden of the Lord, man in his primevial rectitude was placed by his creator, surrounded with every comfort for the eye and for the taste, all planted by the Lord God himself, and growing luxurantly without the labor of man; and all prefectly adapted to the condition of man in his original purity; yet man was natural, and the garden natural, and all their surroundings were natural. In this consisted the adaptation; for if the garden, and its trees, its plants and fruits had been spiritual they could neither have been pleasant to his sight nor good for food. As a natural man he could not see, or descern spiritual things; nor could his natural and earthly nature have subsisted on spiritual food. Yet Adam being natural could and did prefigure him that is spiritual; and so also did the garden and trees, plants, rivers &c., being natural prefigure the church and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In this garden was found every tree, and every thing that was pleasant to the sight or good for food, or that could contribute to the support and comfort of man in his then present condition: but of these we propose to notice two trees which are particularly mentioned; and to show what they particularly represented.

1. The tree of life is mentioned, which was in the midst of the garden. This tree was among those of which man had permission to eat freely, and so long as he continued to eat of it, and obeyed the command of God, to touch not, taste not and handle not the tree of knowledge of good and evil, it was to him the tree of life, for without transgression he could not die. The figurative allusion points to the tree of life, of which Christ is the Root and the offffspring, Rev. 22:2, 14, 16; the type being natural, and the anti-type spiritual.

2. The Tree of knowledge of good and evil, being the only tree or thing in the garden that man was forbidden to touch or taste; is appropriately called the tree of knowledge of good and evil: for man without touching or tasting it could not have known evil; any more than we could have known sin except the law had said, "Thou shalt not covet." But in partaking of the fruit of it man became a sinner, and with his transgression death entered, and passed on all the unborn posterity, which being in him, were involved in the transgression, and consequently to the knowledge of evil. This tree, we understand was designed to represent the law of God, the transgression of which brings guilt, condemnation and death to the offenders. In support of this position, we assume, and shall endeavor to show, that the Law of God, answers to this figure beyond all doubt or controversy.

1. It is a tree of knowledge of sin: of evil. "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of Sin is the law." (I Cor. 15:56) "And where there is no law there can be no transgression; for sin is the transgression of the law." Hence it is written, "By the deeds of the law no flesh living shall be justified in the sight of God." In perfect agreement, as we conceive, with this application of the figure, were the circumstances connected with the giving of the law at Sinai. Three days before the descent of the Lord to proclaim his law, he commanded Moses to sanctify the people of Israel, and to admonish them to come not up to touch the mountain on pain of death. "And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death: there shall not a hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned or shot through: whether it be beast or man, it shall not live." (Exodus 19:12, 13.) And after Moses had faithfully given this charge, and the time appointed had come; the Lord called Moses to him, and again sent him down to repeat the solemn warning. "And the Lord said unto Mos-

es, Go down and charge the people, lest they break through unto the Lord, to gaze, and many of them perish. And Moses said unto the Lord, The People cannot come up to mount Sinai; for thou chargest us, saying, Set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it. And the Lord said unto him, Away, get thee down, and thou shalt come up thou, and Aaron with thee; but let not the priests and the people break through to come up unto the Lord, lest he break forth upon them." (Exodus 19:21-24; compared with Heb. 12:18-21.) How remarkable the coincidence, when we compare the charge given to Adam, Gen. 2:17, and the charge as copied above concerning Mt. Sinai. The law of God, as given to Adam, in this figure and as reiterated in its covenant and preceptive form by Moses, clearly shows that no man can approach unto God by the law, for it could not give life, or righteousness should have been by it; but it is the ministration of death. An apostle tells us that the law is not made for a righteous man; and again that the law entered that the offence might abound, and that sin might appear exceeding sinful. So we see that man while in innocence could have no knowledge of evil, and consequently could not by comparing, know good and evil, or good from evil.

Third. We now propose to show that Adam in partaking of the tree of knowledge, as in every other incident recorded of him, was the figure of him that was to come. Eve, who was created in Adam, and a part of himself, bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh, and called **woman** because she was taken out of the man, living in his vitality, and existing in his flesh and bones; bore the same natural relationship to him that the church of God does of spiritual relation and identity to the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven. For we are his, (God's) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. And as Eve was the bride, the wife, of Adam, in this figure, so the church of God which was created in the second Adam, was and is the bride the Lamb's wife, his body, his flesh and his bones. In this presentation of the figure, let us trace the analogy in a few particulars. "For Adam was first formed, then Eve, And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." (I Tim. 2:14, 15.) Was it not even so, in the application of these words to Christ and the church? Might not our apostle here add, as in Eph. 5:32. "This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church?" Certainly Christ in identifying himself with the transgression of the church, was not deceived. Well did he count the cost. Well did he know that in bearing the sins of his people, he must die; and for that very purpose came he into the world, and was made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. Well did he know that to redeem his church unto God he must be made sin for her; that he must bear her sins in his own body, on the tree.

Now hear what Adam said when arraigned in judgment; and imagine his words as uttered prophetically as from the lips of Christ, the second Adam. "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." Some have fancied themselves wise enough to tell us what were the thoughts and design of Adam in using these nineteen words, instead of frankly acknowledging the truth in a single word. Some have concluded that his object was to charge the blame on Eve, or on the Creator himself, for having given him such a wife; but we confess that our line is too short to reach the thoughts and intents of Adam's mind; but whatever they were, we read in them a prophecy of the Husband of the church of God. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." For what purpose were they given him? "This is the will of the Father, that of all that he has given me I should loose nothing." And, "Father I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold

my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." (John 17:24.)

Let us consider the circumstances of Adam's complicity with his wife in the transgression. How stood the case? Did not Adam tell the truth, in saying that God gave him the woman to be with him, as a companion and help meet for him? God had said. "It was not good for man to be alone; I will make him a help meet for him." And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." The design of God that **she should be with him,** as a help meet for him, and that through them to people this world is too apparent to admit of contradiction. And the type with equal clearness, applies to the spiritual Adam, and Jerusalem which is above, and is free and the mother of all the promised seed, designed to people the new heaven and new earth wherein dwells righteousness, Shall we now indulge in vain speculation, and suppose Adam, being not deceived, had refused to follow Eve into the transgression? What then? Eve is involved in sin, she must be driven out of the garden alone, and forbidden to eat of the tree of life; a separation final and everlasting must have followed. Adam in innocence could not go with her, Eve in transgression could not return to Adam.

Suppose again, when the bride elect of Christ, beguiled by the old Serpent had fallen under the curse of the righteous law of God, the heavenly Bridegroom had resolved to let her go? An indissoluble union must then have been broken, a purpose of the immutable God must have failed, and the Bridegroom and the bride, irrecoverably put asunder. Did Adam love his guilty bride? Did Jesus love his fallen and law condemned people? Though Eve could not return to Adam, Adam could go to her; and such was the strength of his love; stronger than death; it was the only alternative. Rather than part, he plunges with her into death, that the union may be perpetuated. And, Hear, O heavens! and give ear, O earth. "God who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he hath loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Thus far then, the figure bears in its application to Christ, and his church. Truly, "He hates putting away."

Once more, — How was Adam involved in the trangression of Eve? Simply by receiving at the hand of his erring wife the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil which we have taken to represent the law, and eating thereof; and by doing this came legally under the penalty of that law, and irrevocably doomed to die on that self same day. And do we not see the application of the figure to our divine Redeemer. He lived and reigned above the law that his people had transgressed; but to carry out the eternal purpose, that, "Where he is, there his church shall be also; he bowed his heavens and came down. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. He was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." At the hands of his church he receives the fruits of the tree, or law, He who knew no sin, is made sin for us: that we may be made the righteousness of God in him. His children being partakers of flesh and blood, he likewise also takes part of the same. His people are transgressors; He is voluntarily numbered with the transgressors; and the iniquities of all his people are laid on him. It pleased the Lord to bruise him. Partaking of the fruit of the law, he dies: but being in this, so far superior to his type, he had power to lay down his life, and power to take it up again. Adam, the first could go no farther than to involve himself in the condem-

nation under which his beguiled and deceived wife had fallen. He could share with her fate, but had no power to redeem or deliver her.

Fourth. We come now to that part of the subject on which our correspondent desired us to write: as stated in Gen. 3:22, which we propose to consider in connection with the two succeeding verses of the same chapter, and

1. We will offer a few thoughts on the import of the declaration of the Lord God in relation to the changed condition of man, in consequence of having eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. "And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." The figure was now complete. Adam, who according to the expressed purpose of his creation, was to be a type, likeness, figure, or image of his maker, — of Christ, of him that was to come, — of "One of us," had now attained to the perfection of that imagery, not only as the first Adam, the head and embodiment of his natural posterity, a perfect figure of the second Adam, who is the head and embodiment of the spiritual seed, in whom also was the life and substance of his bride; but now, in eating of the tree which prefigured the law, Adam, who knew no sin, or evil before, is made sin for her. While in a state of innocency what evil could Adam know, but now in receiving at the hand of his wife the fruit of the tree, — the law, by which is the knowledge of sin, or of evil; the law being the ministration of death, he came to a knowledge of evil; and thus more perfectly the figure of him that was to come. The figure of him who is holy, harmless, separate from sinners: — of him who knew no sin, yet for the sake of his church, became sin, by being made under the law, and by the assumption of all his people; who thus by following his bride in the transgression secured the purpose, for which she was given to him, namely, to be with him. Thus the man, "became as one of us," in that particular; that is, by his knowledge of good and evil; the type of him who should bear his peoples' sins in his own body on the tree.

We cannot perceive that Adam's knowledge of good and evil, made him like his Maker, in any other sense than that of being the figure of him that was to come; in actually coming under the curse and penalty of the law; for even of good and evil his knowledge could not aproach the infinite knowledge of the supreme God. The "One of us," we understand was and is the man who is the fellow of the Lord of Hosts. Zech. 13:7.

2. Man's expulsion from the garden was a consequence resulting from his connection with the tree of knowledge of good and evil. "And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever:" — The evil which Adam knew, in consequence of eating of the tree of knowledge, was a pollution of his nature and the sentence of mortality, — death, "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." This sentence placed Adam and his posterity beyond the reach of the tree of life; as Christ's coming under the law, and bearing the sins of his people involved the necessity of his death, in the same day, or dispensation, in which he was made of a woman, made under the law; and in fulfilment of this figure, "that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate," that is without the gate of Jerusalem; which figuratively signifies the same as did the garden of Eden; and here, perhaps the figure ends; for Adam could not redeem himself or bride. He had no power to rise from the dead, or deliver himself, his bride, or his posterity from the sentence of the law which consigned him to death.

The tree of life in the midst of Eden, which was accessible to man as long as he remained in the garden, to agree with this whole cluster of figures, was natural life; for as long as he remained in innocence, and abstained from the forbidden fruit of the law, the tree of life secured to him that life which he had, and all the comforts adapted to

his condition as an innocent man; so that he required no other, and indeed was not capacitated for the appreciation of spiritual life; that capacity he could not have without being born again; for the scripture declares that that Adam which was first was not spiritual, but natural. And again, "The natural man receiveth not of the things of the spirit." &c. And "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Now the sentence of death being upon Adam and all his race in him, demanded his expulsion from the garden in which was the tree of life. The reader will observe that though the tree of life in the garden represented the natural life which man then possessed, yet it was figurative of the tree of spiritual, immortal, or eternal life which is found only in the midst of the Paradise of God.

3. Prohibited now from the tree of life, and condemned to die, we see man totally divested of all power to put forth his hand to take of the tree of life, to shield himself from the execution of the sentence which had passed on him, and on all mankind in him, and from the hour in which he was driven out of the garden neither he nor any of his race have had power to perpetuate their natural lives one moment beyond the bounds which God has set. The days of man are as the days of an hireling, so that he cannot pass the bounds.

4. But viewing the tree of life, as figurative of that tree of spiritual life of which our Lord Jesus Christ is the root and offspring, we have one of the most clear and positive presentations of the total inability of man to raise himself from a state of condemnation, and death, either by the law or by the gospel.

Not by the law, for he is condemned already by the law, and the wrath of God abides upon him; nor by the gospel, for he is driven out from the garden in which that tree is planted, and the way to it is kept by the cherubim and a flaming sword, which turneth every way; meeting him at every possible point. How utterly hopeless are all the efforts of men to put forth their hand. The cherubim, or spirit of the holy law watches every movement with untiring vigilence, and the flaming sword meets them at every turn. Nothing that the hand of man can perform; no offering that in their hand the sons of men can bring, can gain for them access to the tree of life. Nothing short of the way of holiness; the new and living way which God has consecrated for his people through the flesh of our Redeemer, can open to any man the gates of Salvation. Christ is the "Only and blessed Potentate, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man hath seen, or can see; whom no man can approach unto." He is the Way, and the Truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by him. Nor is there any possible evasion of this truth. "He that hath the Son of God hath life, and he that hath not the Son, hath not life." The way of the tree of life was securely kept. No fowl knoweth it, the vulture's eye has not seen it, nor hath the lion's whelp trodden it.

Fourth. In connection with the foregoing, it may be well to consider the destination of fallen man, as long as he shall remain on the earth. "Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man:" &c. "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast harkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life: thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread; till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." How changed is the condition of man! Expelled from the garden which God had planted and blessed, where every comfort grew spontaneously that he

could possibly need or desire while in a state of innocence; but now having become a sinner, and fallen under the curse of the law which he had violated, the productions of this garden were no longer suited to his condition; and even the outer world, or earth into which he was cast, was unsuited to his condition, until God, for his sake had pronounced a curse upon it. "Cursed is the ground for thy sake." Now doomed to encounter the thorns and thistles, and in sweat and labor, in toil and sorrow was he doomed to seek his subsistance from the earth out of which he was taken, until his wearisome days of labor and sorrow should be accomplished, and then his earthly body should sink back into the bosom of the earth still groaning under the curse which for his sake was laid upon it.

How strikingly in all this, is the present condition of his fallen progeny portrayed! Fallen men doomed, as a righteous judgment of God, to seek, and labor and sweat and toil to procure support and happiness from the earth; and forbidden, and prohibited from putting forth his hands to take of the tree of life. Is it then surprising that the propensities of man are all drawn to the earth. Not only toiling for the support of his earthly body, but also for the comfort of his earthly mind. All his conceptions of a religious nature are also worldly, earthly, sensual and devilish; and as such they are always workmongrel, and in his alienation from the tree of life, he can conceive of no higher order of religion than that which he can attain to by his works; and works too which must perish, and finally be consumed, when the earth and all the works thereof shall be burned up.

Lastly. As Eve, and all the kindreds of the earth are embraced in the earthly Adam, and all die in him, so all the church and seed of Christ are quickened in the second Adam, who is the Lord from heaven. In Romans 5:14, we read that after the similitude of Adam's transgression, he (Adam) is the figure of him that was to come, that he is in the similitude, the figure of Christ, who has now come. "But not as the offence, so also is the free gift, for if through the offence" (not offences, but a single offence) "of one, many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which was by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded to many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift; for the judgment was by one to condemnation; but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence" (or as in the margin, **by one offence**,) "death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ. Therefore as by the offence of one, (or by one offence) "judgment came upon all men to condemnation," (that is upon all the posterity of the one man.) "Even so by the righteousness of one," (or as rendered in the margin, **by one righteousness**,) "the free gift came upon all men," (that is all whom he represented,) "unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous."

Thus in the transgression of the first Adam, whereby he involved all his natural posterity in sin, guilt, condemnation and death, the inspired apostle could see a similitude of redemption and justification to life of all the seed of Christ by his righteousness.

We have extended our reply to our correspondent to a great length; but venture to hope that we have not darkened counsel by words without knowledge. We have felt unwilling to give such views as we have on the single verse proposed, believing that we could make ourself better understood by taking the general range of the whole subject. If our prolixity shall render what we have written dull and uninteresting to some, we hope that some at least may read it with profit and edification.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe December 21, 1864. This is rather lengthy but well worth careful reading — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

MOLLIE T. PILCHARD

Sister Mollie T. Pilchard was born March 12, 1888, and departed this time world December 28, 1971. She married Alonzo W. Pilchard in 1905, and five children survive her.

She joined Pitts Creek Old School or Primitive Baptist Church with her husband in 1919, and was baptized by their pastor, Elder B. F. Coulter. Brother Pilchard became ill and the meeting house was closed for the lack of repair. They took their letters to Snow Hill Church in 1929. Brother Pilchard departed this world in December, 1932, and his funeral was preached by his pastor, Elder H. C. Ker.

Sister Pilchard's funeral was preached by Elder W. D. Griffin and she was laid to rest beside her husband in Goodwill Cemetery near Pocomoke, Md., there to await the glorious resurrection.

Sister Pilchard was well known and loved by all. She was with my mother when I was born; and we have traveled many miles over the years to the various churches in the vicinity. She knew the God she loved, and loved the God she knew. Her first thought was for her church and brethren.

Submitted in loving memory.

Frank A. Holland
Pocomoke, Md.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT
SISTER LUCY CAPPS

It has been the good Lord's will to call from this world our dear sister, Lucy Capps. She was born to Stephen and Susie Grimes March 28, 1889. She was married to William Capps in 1906; and died March 24, 1971. She lived a full, useful life devoted to her family and her church.

She was a member of Spring Green Church for many years, and served as Clerk as long as she was able. In this she followed her daddy's steps, for he was our Clerk for many years as long as he was able. She had a strong faith and hope in her Lord, and she lived her faith all through life, trusting in the Lord and accepting trouble and sorrow as they came. As the will of God was, she had faith to carry on. She was a loving person, and to know her was to love her. We feel that our loss is her gain.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be placed on our church records, a copy sent to the family, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Written by one who loved her, Annie Edmondson.

Done by order of Conference at Spring Green Saturday before the fourth Sunday in April, 1971.

E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Johnny Ray Gardner, Clerk
Sister Annie Edmondson
Committee

MYRTLE BLALOCK DAVIS

It is with a heavy heart that I attempt to write of the passing of my dear devoted wife.

Myrtle was a native of Caswell County, N. C., born January 19, 1907, the sixth of eight children born to Green Malcolm and Ann Frances McKinney Blalock. She leaves as survivors two brothers, J. S. Blalock, Elon College, N. C.; H. J. Blalock, Gibsonville, N. C.; thirteen nieces and nephews, and her husband, the writer of this article of Roxboro, N. C.

At the age of sixteen her family moved to Gibsonville, where she grew into womanhood. She married Walter Chester Petty March 1, 1929, who died May 30, 1937, as the result of an automobile accident.

We were married November 13, 1943. She joined Gilliam Primitive Baptist Church in the late 1930's and was baptized with her mother. Later, after we were married and she came to Person County to make her home, she moved her membership to McCray Church, where she was a loyal and devoted member until death. She was involved in a fatal automobile accident January 14, 1971, which put her in the hospital where she underwent two operations and laid in a serious condition for eighty-four days before passing away April 8; making her stay on earth 64 years, two months and twenty-five days.

Everything that skilled doctors, loving relatives and friends could do, was done for her, but they could not keep her here, for it was the time that her Lord had planned for her to come home. She bore her suffering without complaint. She told me several times that no one knew what she was suffering except her and her Lord, but that it was nothing to compare with what her Saviour suffered.

After one of the most beautiful funerals I ever saw, conducted by her pastor, Elder Wallis Smith, assisted by Elder Kenneth Key, she was laid to rest in the Church Cemetery amidst a profusion of beautiful flowers.

She was blessed with a big heart and a warm and lively personality. To know her was to love her. She was a wonderful cook and housekeeper. Some of the proudest moments of my life with her, was when we had a group of our Old Baptist Friends to share a meal with us. She could set such a beautiful table of well prepared food, and

preside over it with such charm and grace. She dearly loved to entertain the brethren and visit among them, which we were blessed to do from the Blue Ridge of Virginia to the coast of North Carolina — thereby gaining many dear friends.

When we have so much and lose it, our loss is equally as great. I humbly beg the Lord to reconcile us to His will.

A bereaved husband,
N. D. Davis

LEE OTHA GOSS

Brother Lee Otha Goss was born March 1, 1886, and passed away June 20, 1971. He was the son of Elijah and Eliza Jones Goss. He was married to Ethel Hicks Goss, who passed away July 29, 1967. He leaves one sister, Mrs. Maggie Roberts; and nieces and nephews.

Brother Goss joined Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church August 8, 1937, and he and his wife were baptized Sunday morning, September 13, 1937, by Elder D. V. Spangler. He was ordained to the office of Deacon May 14, 1939; and he served the church well and faithfully.

A firm believer in salvation by the grace of God, he was always ready to proclaim the truth of Holy Writ, and that every good and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Light, with whom there is no variableness, neither the shadow of turning. He looked toward that eternal home prepared for the redeemed of the Lord.

His funeral was conducted at Gooch Memorial Church June 22nd by his pastor Elder Donald Smith and his former pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler. He was laid to rest in the church cemetery under a beautiful blanket of flowers.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That we the church have lost a much loved brother and Deacon. We desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, who doeth all things well.

RESOLVED, Second that a copy of this obituary be placed on our church record, a copy sent to Mrs. Roberts, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times*.

Done by order in our Conference Meeting Saturday, June 10, 1971.

Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
Brother O. Y. Clayton, Clerk
Annie C. Gregory, Assistant

SISTER LONNIE M. RAKES THOMAS

In loving memory of Sister Lonnie M. Rakes Thomas. She was the wife of Mr. Joel Thomas, Ferrum, Va., and the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Rakes.

She is survived by her husband; three daughters: Mrs. Alfred Rountree, Norfolk, Va.; Mrs. Beverly Ingram, Henry, Va.; Mrs. Rhett Walker, Mobile, Ala.; one son, H. C. Thomas, Radford, Va.; seven grandchildren, eight great grandchildren and one great great grandchild. Surviving also are two brothers and two sisters.

Sister Thomas was born April 13, 1890, in Franklin County, Va. and was married February 1, 1909. On July 6, 1919 she asked for a home with the Long Branch Primitive Baptist Church, being joyfully received with her sister, Ollie Ingram. They were baptized August 3, 1919, by Elder T. F. West.

She was a gracious and much loved member, who I believe was a mother in Israel. She was not ashamed of the Lord our Saviour nor his precious doctrine; neither are those who believe salvation is completely of the Lord. Many times have I rejoiced while in her presence, and many times have I found comfort at her complete trust and wise counsel. She will be missed by all who loved her, especially by her beloved husband and family, and none will miss her faithful attendance at our meetings more than I. Yet I would say to all that mourn, to weep not for her as for those who have no hope. Her hope is alive and has promised never to leave nor forsake.

She fell asleep January 3, 1971, at home with her faithful companion of more than sixty-one years, after a short but severe illness. Her funeral was at Arrington-Bussey Funeral Home, Rocky, Mt., Va., by Elders Leonard Brammer, William Holland, and the writer. She is now resting in the Rakes Family Cemetery, where she awaits the calling of her blessed Saviour.

Written by one who loved her dearly.

Amos I. Hash

LETITIA "PINKIE" COX

Sister Letitia "Pinkie" Cox's time for departure of this earthly travel came June 5, 1971. She was born October 26, 1873; making her nearly ninety-eight years old. She united with Malmaison Church in December, 1911.

Her husband, Mr. Eddie Cox, died November 25, 1952. She and her husband came to church many years together, and, as many do, had their seat at the same place each time — this being right in front of us children. How well I remember her pretty alto voice ringing out in the singing, and she would whisper to us to help also. Mr. Eddie would so often have his arm behind her on the back of the seat. They showed much affection for

each other, and came together when they could.

Sister Cox wasn't able to come to meetings for many years after going to the nursing home, but liked, when her mind was clear, to talk of her church. She forgot many things past and sometimes did not know friends, but by God's grace never forgot the song "Amazing Grace" or some of the things God wrote in her heart and put in her mind. We can see again His grace being sufficient to the end for his people.

May we, friends, family, and her church members, be made to rejoice rather than mourn in saying, she fought a good fight and kept the faith, and there's a crown of righteousness laid up for her, not only her but all those that love His appearing. We hope to be made reconciled to God's will, as He gives and takes away at his appointed time.

Elder Julian Williams

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It is with a heart of sadness that I attempt to write the respects of our dear Brother and Deacon, Brother Julius W. Stallings.

Brother Stallings was born February 4, 1919, and died July 24, 1971, making his stay on earth 53 years. He joined Tarboro Church November 1, 1964, and was ordained deacon on February 4, 1967. He was blessed to be a faithful member and he meant a lot to our church as a Deacon trying to serve and trusting that God might be his guidance. He was faithful in attending our church, and always ready to give a helping hand at all times. He loved to talk about the great things God had done for him, and how he was blessed as he sojourneyed this life. If you once knew him you could feel for him. He is going to be missed in our church, but we feel that God's will has been done.

Now the church at Tarboro feels that our loss is his eternal gain, and he is resting with our Saviour to await that glorious resurrection.

We resolve that three copies of this respect be made: (1) for the church records, (1) to be sent to his family, and (1) to be sent to the *Signs of the Times.*

Sleep on our dear Brother, we'll miss you day by day. We know there is no other who can ever fill your place.

This done in order of conference at our August meeting, 1971.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

SISTER DELLA PUSEY

Sister Della Pusey was born July 10, 1876, and died October 8, 1969, in the Deerhead State Hospital.

Her nearest survivors are two granddaughters: Mrs. Nancy Reinhart, Portland, Oregon; and Mrs. Emily Cottingham, Snow Hill Road, Salisbury, Md. She was the daughter of George and Mary E. Briddell, and the wife of Alison T. Pusey.

She was baptized June 25, 1905, by the late Elder T. M. Poulson and united with the Nassaongo Church. She was a loveable sister of firm belief in the word of God, and was always faithful to attend the meetings as long as her health permitted.

Funeral services were held at the Holloway Funeral Home by Elder W. D. Griffin, and she was laid to rest in the Parsons Cemetery, to await the coming of the Lord.

Written by
Mollie E. Fooks

SISTER ROSA HARRIS ROBINSON

It is the desire of our church to write the following in memory of Sister Rosa Harris Robinson who was born May 20, 1905, and passed from her earthly existence April 11, 1969. She had been in failing health for many months.

We esteemed Sister Robinson and loved her dearly for she was gracious, gentle and kind, with a warm personality that endeared her to those who knew her. She was an asset to her church, to her family, and to her community.

Sister Rosa loved the doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God, and she united with the church at Hancock's Meeting House in February, 1922, and was a faithful attendant all her life. She loved to meet and mingle with her brethren; and she always met them with a loving smile and a warm handshake; and the brethren were happy to have her in their midst, for her presence added to their pleasure.

Her death has caused us a great loss but we feel that our loss was her eternal gain; and we bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Father who doeth all things after the counsel of His own will. We pray that He will bless and comfort the bereaved family in their loss of a loving and devoted wife and mother.

Sister Rosa's funeral was conducted by her beloved pastor, Elder A. P. Mewborn, in the presence of a host of friends and relatives, and she was laid to rest in the cemetery at Hancock's Church beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

Done by order of Conference while in session June 20, 1971.

Elder Joseph Sawyer, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 139 DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1971 NO. 12

RE-PUBLISHING ELDER GILBERT BEEBE'S EARLY WRITINGS

We are re-publishing in this issue some of the early writings of Elder Gilbert Beebe in which he maintained the scriptural sentiments which were embraced in his **Prospectus** when he began publishing the **Signs of the Times** in 1832. We feel that these will be most interesting to all who are lovers of the truth.

These same principles have been consistently adhered to through the years; and the present editors are fully in accord with them, and have endeavored to maintain them inviolably. We think it well to publish several of these articles in one issue of the **Signs,** that all may compare Elder Beebe's writings with the Scriptures, and with the present standard of the paper, to see that the same doctrine is yet advocated as being the faith once delivered unto the saints.

The following articles are taken from the **First Volume of the Editorials of Elder Gilbert Beebe,** in which he gave the scriptural reasons for maintaining the principles he had announced as being the teaching of the Scriptures. These articles are selected from those published during the years between 1833 and 1837.

The Scriptures alone are infallible, yet it is good to read the writings of those who are blessed with understanding and the ability to write concerning the things revealed therein.

EDITORS

Proposals for publishing a semi-monthly paper, to be called the "Signs of the Times," devoted exclusively to the Baptist cause, maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfections of the Great Jehovah — the Revelation which God has given of himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These Three are One." — I John v. 8.

2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.

3. Eternal, Unconditional Election

4. The Total Depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the Elect only.

6. The Sovereign, Irresistible, and in all cases, Effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in Regenerating and Quickening the Elect of God.

7. The Final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God, by Grace.

8. The Resurrection of the Dead, and Eternal Judgment.

9. That the Church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers — that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God.

10. That there is no connection between Church and State, and as touching the proposition for a marriage between them, the Hon. R. M. Johnson, in his Report on the Sabbath Question, has expressed our faith.

The "Signs of the Times" will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath Schools, &c., &c., making war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of Institutions.

DOCTRINE TO WHICH WE ARE PLEDGED IN OUR PROSPECTUS

New York, N. Y., January 2, 1833.

In our prospectus we are pledged to maintain inviolably the several scriptural sentiments embraced in the respective items which are named. We intend to notice them severally in the order in which they were presented.

The first that comes under consideration is "the Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal

Perfection of the Great Jehovah — the revelation which God has given of himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost." "These three are one." — 1 John v. 8.

That God exists, we need no further demonstration than what is presented to our view in creation and in providence. In the former "the heavens declare his glory, and the firmament showeth forth his handywork." In the latter, "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge."

The well established laws of summer and winter, of seedtime and harvest, the waxing and waning of the moon, the revolutions of the earth and the planets, all proclaim the existence of the Great First Cause of all causes — a supernatural power; and we are taught by divine revelation that that first cause, that supernatural power, is God. But as the existence of God is seldom denied, we will pass on, and with the most profound reverence consider some of his perfections. And first,

God is a Sovereign.

By the term sovereign, as it applies to God, we are not to understand an orbitrary or tyrannical being, but quite the reverse; an all-wise disposer of all events, an independent, self-existent, and omniscient God; one who holds the eternal destiny of his creatures in his own almighty grasp, working all things after the counsel of his own will, even as he has ordained all things for his own glory; and being independent of and superior to all beings in heaven or on earth, has an incontestable right to do his pleasure in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; having a right to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor; to have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will to harden; to reveal his gospel unto "babes and sucklings," and to hide the same from the "wise and prudent;" to love Jacob and to hate Esau, to save his people with an everlasting salvation, and to turn the wicked into hell, with all the nations that forget God.

In view of the sublime doctrine of the divine sovereignty, the inspired writer inquires, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being his counsellor, hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed unto him the way of understanding?" — Isaiah xl. 13, 14. The full display of this attribute of the Deity would require a development of all his perfections, but particularly that of his independence and omnipotence, of which we shall have something to say hereafter. But first we will consider his right to dispose of all events according to the pleasure of his own will. And who is prepared to dispute this right? "Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" "Wo unto him that striveth with his Maker. Let the potsherds strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say unto him that fashioneth it, What maketh thou? or thy work, he hath no hands? Wo unto him that saith unto his father, What begettest thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth?" — Isa. xlv. 9, 10. If then we admit that it was God's sovereign right to create a world, we must acknowledge that it was his right to determine what kind of a world to create, and for what end it should be created, or else we must conclude that he was not absolutely independent; and to form such a conclusion would certainly be a great derogation from his divine perfections. If while we gaze with admiration and delight upon the beauties of creation, we should believe that God was bound by some law or power independent of and superior to himself, to create all things in the exact order in which they are and were created, we could no longer enjoy the delightful reflection that our God is the Most High. We must therefore conclude that it is his sovereign and eternal right to do his pleasure in heaven and on earth, or we must say with the fool, "There is no God." But the more resplendent is the manifestation of the righteousness of God, when we contemplate him in connection with

his independence. "He is before all things, and by him all things consist." Thus, for instance, in imagination, strike from the scale of existence every created object, and what would remain? Nothing but God alone, and inasmuch as he existed before all things, he must have existed independently of all things, and we must deny his immutability, or admit that he continues to be the same independent God now that he was before the highest parts of the habitable world were made. He is self-existent and self-sufficient. He speaks the word and it stands fast, he commands and it is done.

The extent of God's sovereignty is commensurate with his infinity. It is displayed in all his works of creation, providence and grace. In creation serpents as well as doves were made — some men and some angels — all were not made alike, nor for the same end. In providence, we see the beggar raised from the dung-hill to the throne, and the proud monarch hurled from his royal seat down to the most abject state of wretchedness and misery. To some men God has given riches and to others poverty, to one sickness, and to another health. "There were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah," in the time of severe famine, &c. "But unto none of them was Elijah sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was widow."

To make known to the King of Babylon this divine sovereignty, the Lord drove him from his palace and from the society of men, to range with the beasts of the field till seven times were passed over, until in providence he should learn that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, and as a sovereign giveth the kingdoms of this world unto whomsoever he pleaseth. The display of divine sovereignty in the kingdom of grace is most striking. The election of his people in Christ Jesus before the world began, unmoved by any regard to their virtues or good works. "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." — 2 Tim. i. 9. And in further testimony of God's sovereignty we hear an inspired apostle say, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed." — 1 Peter ii. 7, 8. "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? who hath resisted his will? Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?

God is immutable.

"For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore, ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." — Mal. iii. 6. "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him?, and what his soul desireth that he doeth." — Job xxiii. 13. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." — Heb. xiii. 8. "The Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." — James i. 17. Farther testimony to establish the doctrine of God's immutability seems to be quite unnecessary; were we for a moment to suppose God to be a mutable being, like unto ourselves, we might then say with the fool, "There is no God." In giving up the immutability of God we would give up all; for if it could be proved that God ever changed it would prove the forfeiture of his truth. He says, "I change not;" and could his truth fail, his holiness could not remain unimpaired, his wisdom would stand impeached, and his glory forever be eclipsed. Again, if God has changed, or ever should change, that change must be either for the better or for the worse;

if for the better, he was once imperfect, and if for the worse, he is now imperfect. The awful absurdity and blasphemy of the doctrine is enough to make one tremble.

God is Omnipotent.

By the Omnipotence of Jehovah we understand that universal and almighty power which is essential to his being as God, and that his power is an attribute peculiar to himself. This divine perfection of the Godhead was manifested in the creation of the world. He said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And also in providence, as exemplified in the entire history of the children of Israel, in their elevation above all other nations under heaven, in their redemption from Egyptian captivity, in their passage through the Red Sea, in the miraculous manner in which they were fed with manna, and supplied with water, and in the signal victories given them over their enemies. Nor is the manifestation of omnipotent power confined to any particular event, or train of events. It shone in dreadful majesty from Sinai's flaming top, nor with less grandeur from Mount Calvary, when the meridian sun was dressed in sack-cloth, the rocks were rent, the dead were raised, the veil of the temple was rent asunder, and the most holy place exposed to view, while frighted nature, as with a voice of mighty thunder, proclaimed the doctrine of God's omnipotence. If a further illustration or demonstration of the almighty power of God were necessary, we might advert to the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, when "God went up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet."

In the economy of salvation, too, God has made ample display of his omnipotence. The fulfillment of the holy law, the perfect satisfaction rendered to divine justice, the opening of the prison doors to them that were bound, and the emancipation of the prisoners, the conquest of our beloved Lord over death, hell and sin, the destruction of death, and him that had the power of death, which is the devil, the regeneration and quickening of his elect, together with their preservation in grace unto eternal glory, the resurrection of their bodies in the likeness of his own glorious body, and the consummation of their everlasting happines in the world to come. The man must surely be a stranger in Israel who cannot trace the power and Godhead throughout the whole work of salvation, from the foundation to the top stone.

The perfections of God are eternal.

It cannot reasonably be expected of finite beings that they should be able to comprehend the eternity or infinity of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" We are therefore able only to contemplate the divine perfections of Jehovah, as far as they are revealed to us by his word and Spirit, and if through the abundant revelation made we could vie with the brightest prophets and inspired men of God in our conceptions of the Holy One, or with the tongues of men or angels, could set forth our views of God, we would be with them constrained to say, "Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him; but the thunder of his power, who can understand?" That God is a being of infinite and eternal perfection, but few in our age are bold enough, in so many words, to deny. But yet while many will admit this truth in general terms, they will deny it in all its particular bearings on the redemption and salvation of sinners. Many very zealous professors of religion will form in their own imagination a standard of right and wrong, and then say, if God should vary from their standard he would be unequal, unjust or imperfect. But we know of no higher standard of perfection than God himself, hence all that is done or decreed by him is perfect, because it is done or decreed in accordance with his own mind and will, and must there-

fore be compatible with his nature. It cannot be the perogative of creatures of yesterday, whose breath is in their nostrils, to set up a standard of human wisdom by which to scan the perfections of their Maker. If it be admitted then that God is perfect, it needs no more than the admission of his immutability to establish the doctrine of the eternity of his perfections. As far as God has been graciously pleased to reveal himself unto us, we have been constrained to pray that he would conform us to his will, and by his sovereign grace, which is treasured up in Christ Jesus our Lord, conform us to the image of him who is the "brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person." The above brief statement of our views of the "existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah," &c., are sentiments which we hold dear to our heart, and such as we stand solemnly pledged to inviolably maintain in this paper. The doctrine is neither strange nor new to the Baptists of the school of Christ.

In the revelation of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." — 1 John i. 5, 8. On this important point of doctrine our views are happily expressed in the above scripture, quoted from the apostle John, while all human language utterly fails in setting forth the mode of God's existence. We rejoice that the record which he has been pleased to give of himself in the Bible contains all necessary information on the subject; at present we shall for want of room omit giving our views at large on this point; we will only say that we shall cautiously avoid all such doctrines as do either deny or refuse to acknowledge the eternal power and Godhead of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

"This God is the God we adore,
Our faithful, unchangeable friend;
Whose love is as great as his power,
And knows neither measure nor end."

THE ATONEMENT

New Vernon, N. Y., August 28, 1833.

Perhaps among all the rich displays of the adorable Godhead which shine forth with refulgent brightness in the works of creation, providence and grace, none can be found to outshine in splendor, or outweigh in importance, that which develops the purpose and grace of God in causing his sword to awake against the Man that is his Fellow, and which sets forth the atonement made by our Lord Jesus Christ for his people. No human talent can express, nor human wisdom comprehend, the fulness of this delightful doctrine; in the contemplation of which, the rich association of considerations flowing into the mind of the saints, are such as to absorb the mind in wonder and admiration. In our feeble efforts to declare what we have been taught by the Word and Spirit of God on this subject, we know not where to begin, how to pursue, or where to leave off. The atonement has God for its author, Jesus Christ for its victim, or sacrifice, the salvation of the elect of God for its object, eternal truth for its security, and almighty power for its execution. In the atonement all the attributes of Deity are displayed glowing with inexpressible beauty and grandeur.

In the eleventh number of this volume, we gave a summary view of the doctrine of the total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man, in which we traced his history from his primeval rectitude and innocency, through his unhappy fall, and by an application of divine truth showed that he, in his fallen state, is "dead in trespasses and sins," justly condemned by the righteous and inflexible law of God, and under its tremendous curse; without an eye to pity, or an arm to administer relief. There we left him, promising that in the present article we would treat upon the only possible way of salvation, brought to light through the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, which we promised to prove by the scriptures to be special and particular. (See page 280 this

issue.)

Notwithstanding the frequent occurrence of the word atonement in the Old Testament, we find it used but once in the New Testament, viz: Romans v., where it is brought forward by the apostle as the ground of the justification of the church of God, and of reconciliation to God. "But God commended his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." In the light of this scripture we clearly discover that the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ was definite. Definite first, in reference to the purpose of God. The specific objects ascribed to God by the apostle are the commendation of his love toward those who are with himself included in the pronoun **us**, and in connection with this divine exhibition, their justification by his blood, and ultimate salvation through him. Second, the characters for whom the atonement was made are definitely pointed out, viz: they are those who do eventually rejoice in God, through Christ Jesus, and by him receive the atonement.

Third, the vicarious nature of the atonement is definitely expressed in the connection, "Who was delivered for our offences, (agreeing with the prophet Daniel, that Messiah should be cut off, but not for himself,) and raised again for our justification." For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a a righteousness man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commended his love, &c., in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Here we discover that the people for whom Christ was made an offering were sinners, without strength, &c., and as sinners they were condemned and under the sentence of death by the law. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." The irrevokable decree has passed! Heaven and earth should pass away, but not one jot or title of the law should fail until it should be completely fulfilled. But while this was our deplorable situation, "in due time Christ died for us." But how for us? Most certainly in our room. For if he had not borne the curse for us, we certainly must have borne it, and sunk down forever under its weight. We cannot conceive how this substitution can destroy the relation which Christ as a spiritual Head bears to his church, but rather, in our view of the subject, it opens the way to make a fair display of that unity and oneness which has ever existed between them in a spiritual sense. "And he is the head of the body, the church, &c., and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven." "And you, that were some time alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled." — Col. i. 18-21.

When in the contemplation of the atonement and redemption of our Lord Jesus Christ, the "man in Christ" is caught up to the third heaven, and is there made acquainted with those divine mysteries which cannot be expressed by human tongues; and amidst the glorious scenery of that bright world, his eye is fixed on one who was as "A Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," he is led to inquire, "Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth the wine-fat?" "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all," — Isaiah liii.

The design of the atonement was that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself "a peculiar people, zealous of good works." — Titus ii. 14.

The extent of the atonement is **to all the elect.** "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth — who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died," &c. — Rom. viii. 33, 34. "I am the good Shepherd. The good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep." — John x. 11. To all the seed of our Lord. "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied. By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death, and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." — Isaiah liii. 10-12.

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself," &c. — Eph. v. 24-27.

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins should live unto righteousness." — 1 Peter ii. 24. "This is my blood in the New Testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins." — Matt. xxvi. 28. "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."— Gal. ii. 20. By the above, together with many other portions of the word of God, it is evident that God had a specific object in view in the pouring out of the soul of his Son unto death, which special object was the redemption and ultimate salvation of his elect.

The efficacy of the atonement. "By one offering he has forever perfected them that are sanctified." Heb. x. 14. — "Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall (not may) return, and come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." — Isaiah li. 11; xxxf. 10. "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their head; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." And the voice of the Father is heard in Zion proclaiming, "As for thee, also, by the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water." — Zech. ix. 11. "For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." — Rom. v. 10. "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquity." — Isa. liii. 11. "By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." — Heb. ix. 12. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." — Col. i. 14. "Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." — Acts xx. 28. "Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." — Rev. v. 9.

We have not room here to meet and rebut the arguments generally adduced in favor of a general or universal atonement; we shall however resume the subject at our earliest leisure. We intend in our next number to present our views on the doctrine embraced in the sixth item of our prospectus, viz: the sovereign, irresistible, and in all cases effectual work of the Holy Ghost, in quickening the elect of God.

THE NEW BIRTH

New Vernon, N. Y., September 11, 1833.

"Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." — *John*

iii. 3. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." — (John vi. 63.)

Having in our preceding numbers briefly touched upon those subjects which are calculated to show the necessity of a radical change being wrought in those **totally** depraved beings who are, and were, "ordained to eternal life." in order to prepare them for the knowledge, love and enjoyment of spiritual things, we have now to treat upon the sovereign, irresistible, and, in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Ghost in quickening the elect of God.

The absolute necessity of the new-birth is established by the declaration of our Lord Jesus Christ which we have placed at the head of this article. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." "Marvel not (said the Master,) that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." The very laws of our existence, as well as the analogy of the figure of a birth, employed to shew the nature of this radical change, forbids the idea of its being wrought by the subject on whom it is wrought. There is nothing in nature that possesses power of itself to produce any radical change in itself; hence, although man is a changeable being in many respects, yet he remains **man** still. The thoughts of his heart are evil, and that continually; therefore he is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; but even if this were not the case universally in nature, yet it must be admitted that if the elect were their own agents in this spiritual birth, then this work could not possibly bear the least analogy to the natural birth, from which this figure is taken, and in which the child which is born has not the least agency, but is altogether passive. But could the analogy of our Lord's figure (birth,) be preserved, and yet the sinner be an active agent in his own regeneration and quickening, this would be no radical change, nor would it give to him a place among the sons of God; it would constitute him his own son, and of course an heir to the inheritance of his own corrupt, degenerate nature, and to all his estate of sin and misery. It would constitute him his own father, and give him a place in the generation next succeeding; but being begotten by himself he must of necessity be begotten in his own image and likeness, &c. But we find all these arminians absurdities concerning the agency of the creature in regeneration put to silence by the word and testimony of God. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." On this divine authority we ground our evidence that the regeneration and quickening of the elect of God is the work of the Holy Ghost. We will now consider that in the work of quickening the elect of God

The Holy Ghost is Sovereign.

The sovereignty of the Holy Ghost in the regeneration and spiritual birth of the elect is abundantly shown by our Lord in these words: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit." By the figure here employed, the subject is reduced to the capacity of the weakest child of God. Where does the wind blow? where it listeth; and it is even so with the Spirit. If the Holy Ghost has (as many pretend to believe and say) listed or engaged in the quickening, conversion, or regeneration of all mankind, it follows by the immutable truth of God that there it will blow; **i. e.,** be effectual; then it follows that all mankind will assuredly be saved; the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ would then be nullified, inasmuch as sinners uninterested in that atonement can and will be quickened by the Holy Ghost, and the word falsified, which declares that the wicked shall be cast into hell with all the nations that forget God. How shocking would be the consequence; yea, what a terrible tornado would be the result, should the mighty rushing wind list and blow at the same time from every point of the compass; yet not so shocking as the chaotic situation into which the scriptures of truth would be thrown,

if it could be proved that the Holy Ghost was otherwise than sovereign in its operation on the heart, in the new birth, or by proving that he had undertaken the regeneration of all mankind. When the fierce north wind, blowing all before it, bends its course onward to the south, what human means can be employed to change the direction of its course, and cause it to blow from south to north? Surely no rational intelligence can be so stupid as to undertake the task. "The wind bloweth where it listeth." in spite of all the exertions of a **means-using** generation; it is sovereign in its course; none can change it, nor effectually resist it. Who will dare to say that the natural wind is more powerful or more sovereign than the Holy Ghost? The Holy Ghost has listed in the work of quickening all the elect of God. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth," &c. Not all the powers that can be, can alter the course of the divine Spirit from the elect of God to the reprobate part of mankind. As it has listed, so it does, and so it will continue to quicken every one that is born of the Spirit, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Again, the Spirit in this work is sovereign, as it relates to the individual on whom it operates. He speaks the word, and it stands fast; he commands, and it is done. Not as some would blasphemously represent the Spirit, in the attitude of a beggar, or a supplicant before the sinner's heart, wooing, beseeching, and striving to get the sinner's consent and in many, or any cases, getting discouraged and abandoning the the undertaking. Would this be blowing where it listed? Surely not. They can possess no adequate idea of the Spirit, or of its work, who suppose that the number of the quickened shall be in proportion to the amount of means employed by mankind, or that protracted meetings, anxious benches, submission chairs, benevolent religious societies, (so called,) or any other human inventions, can change the sovereign course of the Eternal Spirit from any of those on whom it has listed, or engaged to apply the atoning blood of Jesus experimentally, or add one to the number of those originally "ordained to eternal life." "Predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." If, then, we admit the sovereignty of the work of the Holy Ghost in the new birth, why talk about the use of means to produce it? If it depends on the use of means on our part, then the Holy Ghost ceases to be a sovereign in the work, and all must turn at last upon the pivot of works, and our bible must be forced to read, **It is of him that willeth, and of him that runneth, and not of God that sheweth mercy.** Could any thing be more absurd? Away with these yea and nay systems of the present day, which, like the **Baptist Repository,** will on one page tell us that regeneration is the sovereign work of the Omnipotent God, and anon, insert upon the other that souls may be rescued from a burning hell by the efforts of men and the use of money, but —

The Holy Ghost is Irresistible

Can any thing be more preposterous than to say that the Holy Ghost is God, Omnipotent, &c., and yet that he may be so resisted or opposed in his work, as to fail in the accomplishment of his designs? If so, the term omnipotent has lost its meaning.

By the Spirit's irresistible work, we would not be understood to mean that it works in unison with the feelings and disposition of the human heart; no, "the natural mind is enmity against God," says the apostle; hence all the powers of human nature are arrayed in opposition to the Spirit's work, in vain attempts to resist the Holy Ghost. The strong man armed, keeps the palace until a stronger comes; he then becomes subdued, and his goods are spoiled. Saul's last breath was slaughter against the saints, and persecution against Christ. Paul's first breath was prayer, and submission to the irresistible power by which at mid-day he was brought to the ground. But by the term, we mean that it shall accomplish all

that it has undertaken, and that there is no power in heaven, earth or hell, that can effectually resist the Holy Ghost. For example, while Arminians, Deists and devils, by all their united efforts stand in opposition to the method of God's saving grace, and the work of the adorable Spirit, he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, God will have them in derision. He will still move on his undisturbed purpose and grace; none shall let, none shall hinder; "the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain." That the Spirit is irresistible in this work, we call to witness the experience of (not those **mushroom converts,** of human means,) but all such as have passed from death unto life, and know the Lord Jesus, and the power of his resurrection. The child of God will tell us, I was an enemy to God by wicked works; I was in love with sin, an enemy to holiness; there was no fear of God before my eyes. In short, I was dead in trespasses and sins; but about mid-day, O king, a light shone around me, and I heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Yes, says the poor soul, I was suddenly arrested, an awful trembling shook my frame, I felt myself undone, my sins in all their magnitude rushed in order before my afrighted eyes; loud peals of thunder from Mount Sinai caused me to tremble exceedingly, and quake, while vivid flashes of divine wrath taught me the dreadful reality, I am a sinner. There is a hell, a burning lake; I feel it this moment in my very soul. Whither, O whither shall I flee from the wrath of God? If up to heaven I direct my course, God is there. I dread to meet him. O ye rocks and mountains, shew pity and fall upon me; hide O hide me from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. In this condition, the poor wretch will not require knives or lancets, anxious benches nor arminian task-masters, to persuade him to **"agonize."** We risk nothing when we say that such a soul will testify that the Spirit's work upon the heart is irresistible. The Spirit having thus quickened the man, the vital principle implanted is manifested by a struggle for deliverance, for light, for freedom; but all in vain he prays; the heavens are as brass, the earth is as the dust; his prayers are shut out. He flies to the law, but

> "Justice cries with frowning face,
> This mountain is no hiding place;
> He reads; the promise meets his eye,
> But cannot reach his case."

Thus burdened with guilt, and pressed down with wo, he sinks, despairs and dies. Here let us leave him one moment, (for we cannot help him; his case is desperate; no eye can pity,no arm can relieve him,) while we enquire. Dear reader, if the quickened sinner be thus helpless, thus destitute of power, if he that is made alive by the quickening power of the Holy Ghost, and slain by the law, can do nothing, what canst thou do? What can the poor soul do who has never been quickened, nor made to feel one spark of anything more than totally depraved human nature? Now let us look back, and enquire what has become of that poor soul we left in the valley of death. Behold he is raised from the dead! The same irresistible Spirit which brought Jesus again from the dead, has raised him up. He is a new creature; old things are done away. He is no longer an arminian, no longer a work-monger; he is stripped of his filthy rags; he is clothed, and in his right mind. Lo, he sits at Jesus' feet: his feet are placed upon a rock, his goings are established, and a new song is in his mouth. He no longer sings, Do, do, do, but he sings, It is done, it is finished. "The Lord has taken me out of an horrible pit," &c. But whence this glorious change? He that brought to the birth, gave strength to bring forth. Hence the soul was, and is delivered; the Spirit applied the cleansing blood of the Lamb; and he is washed and made clean; the Spirit gave him eyes, and he saw Jesus; the Spirit gave him faith, and he embraced him as his Savior, his Lord and his God.

The work of the Spirit is, in all cases, effectual.

If this position be not correct, there must be some case or cases where the work of the Spirit has proved ineffectual. We call for such a case to be produced. Where has the Spirit ever wrought ineffectually in any case? Such an example, we bless God, cannot be found; and if there could, it would make all heaven shudder; for the very instant that the Holy Ghost fails to accomplish any thing which it has undertaken to do, that moment he ceases to be God, ceases to be omnipotent, immutable and perfect. If there is any thing which the Holy Ghost cannot effectually perform, we speak with reverence, he cannot be omnipotent. But he was omnipotent once, when he spake the world into existence; hence there must have been a change, and he is no longer immutable. That change must be for the better or for the worse; if for the better, he was once imperfect; for nothing can be perfect if it can admit of improvement; and if by an improvement he is proved once to have been imperfect, then his truth falls prostrate at once; for he has declared that he is the Lord that changeth not. But if the change be for the worse, (since for the better it cannot be,) then it amounts to the same thing. Hence we say that if one single instance can be produced in which it can be established that the Holy Ghost has worked ineffectually in attempting the quickening of a soul, **i. e.,** failed to effect its design, this would make all heaven shudder.

Again, let us admit what has been proved, and what we cannot deny, viz., that it is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; and then if we prove that the Spirit's work has been ineffectual in any one case, the same arguments will also prove the Spirit's work ineffectual in every case; for human nature is in all cases precisely the same; all are on a level as to moral holiness, or unholiness; all are alike depraved and sold under sin; all are alike without strength in themselves. The unavoidable consequence then is, if the Spirit's exertion fails in one case, it fails in all; for the same cause under the same circumstances must invariably produce the same effects. How dreadful then would be the reflection that one poor soul for whom Christ died, and in whose heart the Eternal Spirit had wrought a work of grace, had failed to realize those blessings which was by the Spirit intended, seeing by this awful catastrophe the whole plan of salvation must inevitably fall through, and not a soul be saved. But once more; if it can be established that the work of the Spirit has been effectual in the case of Paul, Peter, James or John, or any other individual, the point is forever established, and we fearlessly bid defiance to all earth and hell to controvert or gainsay our position.

But laying aside all our arguments, and reasoning on the subject, we will be able to establish this point by the positive declaration of the word of God. "For as the Father raised up the dead and quickened them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." — John v. 24. But we enquire, Whom **will** the Son quicken by his Spirit? He has left his will on record in these words, viz: "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am," &c. — John xvii. 24. And in regard to the efficacy of this quickening power, the apostle was confident, and so are we, of this very thing, that he who began the good work will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. And the blessed Master has said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

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We have requests for copies of Elder Beebe's books of *Editorials*; of which there were two published.

Anyone having either or both copies they would dispose of, please write us at P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va. 22110, giving price asked.

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EDITORIAL

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION

In regard to the doctrine of Absolute Predestination, Elder Gilbert Beebe did not coin the phrase, as some have thought, since it was in use many years before his time. He did affirm that this was a true expression of the Bible doctrine on the subject and used it because the controversy continued over whether predestination was limited and conditional, or whether God's government is absolute and all prevailing over all times, worlds and events.

Comparatively few even today admit God's absolute government over all things; but from the writings of the brethren termed Old School, and published on the **Signs of the Times**, from its beginning, it is evident that they held this doctrine to be the expression which differentiated between limited and full predestination; and they would have all to understand where they stood on the question.

"The doctrine of Absolute Predestination, when rightly understood, does not involve the idea of man's acting involuntarily in sin; nor does it exonerate him from accountability," wrote Elder Beebe in an article on the subject which we are re-publishing herein.

Were it not for the limitation of the meaning and application of the word predestination which many hold, no prefix would ever be necessary. A limited or conditional predestination is no predestination at all. When one uses the qualifying prefix in connection with the word, he is at once set apart from others who hold contrary views. It is a matter of conviction in the light of scriptural and experimental teaching with each one of us.

By the grace of God, the **Signs of the Times** will continue to advocate the doctrine of the Scriptures on which it was founded.

J. D. W.

THE OBJECT OF OUR PAPER

New Vernon, N. Y., March 27, 1833.

Our brethren of the Old School of Christ will bear in mind that this humble sheet is devoted to the Baptist cause, as we believe the Baptist cause to be the cause of God, and that its columns are designed to be used as a medium for the circulation of Bible doctrine and general information.

The dear people of God who remain steadfast and unshaken in the apostles' doctrine are at this day greatly scattered through the country, and in many instances where one or more of them are found they are supposed to be the only ones remaining of the same faith and order. Indeed, they are often themselves driven to the conclusion of Elijah: "They have digged down thine

altars and killed thy prophets, and I am left alone, and they seek my life." In their scattered situation it affords them peculiar pleasure to hear from one another. "As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country." — Prov. xxv. 25.

It is certainly good news to the scattered pilgrims to hear of the numbers in different parts of the land who still adhere to the doctrine and practice of the primitive church. In days of old, "they that feared the Lord spake often one to another;" and the exhortation of the apostles is, that we "exhort one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching."

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION

New Vernon, N. Y., March 19, 1834.

We are pleased with the communications of our esteemed brother Trott, on this all-important subject; and we do hope that our readers will faithfully examine all his numbers, comparing them with the infallible standard, the bible, with unbiased minds, open for the reception of truth. These numbers we are fully persuaded will bear examination; and certainly the importance of the subject should be a sufficient incentive to lead us to weigh them in the balance of the sanctuary.

Among others, we doubt not, some well meaning brethren have started at the position assumed by brother T., that the predestination of God extends to the wicked actions of men and devils. But is there not a cause, why they are so fearful? Few, very few of our pulpits have rung with this doctrine for the last ten or fifteen years. Arminians and New School Baptists have and do hate it; while some, who are compelled to acknowledge the truth of it, have thought they were doing God service by suppressing the publication of it; and of that class, not a few who have seemed unconscious of the presumptuous stand which they occupy, while they are virtually attempting to dictate to the all-wise God what portion of his truth will do to publish, and what should be kept back. It is sufficient for us to know that God has revealed this doctrine in the bible; it is our privilege to publish it, and leave the result with him.

This subject evidently involves the consideration of the extent of God's government. If we say that God cannot, without attaching impurity to his nature or motives, govern or overrule the wicked actions of men and devils, we say in substance, that he cannot maintain his holiness unless he resigns his universal government.

The example given by our brother, from the sacred volume, of the overruling providence of God in regard to some, and the express declaration of his foreknowledge and predestination of the wicked actions of others, are in point; nor can they be easily surmounted by those who protest against the universal government of God. The bible is full of testimony on this subject. God has declared the end from the beginning; and he says his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. Prophets and apostles have corroborated this testimony. Balaam was forced to acknowledge that he could not go (though a wicked prophet,) beyond the word (or decree,) of the Lord; and Satan himself, if he could speak truth, would tell us that he could not drown a swine without the permission of God.

But leaving all other witness, we would be perfectly safe in resting the whole subject on three of the scripture references offered in brother Trott's numbers, viz: Acts ii. 23, iv. 27, and the history of Joseph. In the first two passages, in relation to the crucifixion of our Lord by wicked hands, we have an example of the extent of God's government, in perfect harmony with the responsibility of man for his conduct; and in this transaction we have placed before us the grand centre of all human events; this is the most important of all; all others, past, present and to come, stand connected with this. The model then which displays the government of God over the wicked hands

which acted in the murder of the Holy Child Jesus, is suited to every event that ever has or ever can come to pass.

In the case of Joseph, we are taught that notwithstanding the foreknowledge and determinate counsel of God, which bounds the rage and wickedness of all beings that exist, **men and devils act voluntarily in sin, without the least regard to the purpose or decree of God;** of whose purpose or decree they are totally unconscious. Of this truth, what a striking example is given in the case of Joseph's brethren. Read the words of Joseph to them. Gen. 50:20. "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." Thus we see that while men and devils act from wicked motives, with wicked hands, God means it for good; overrules even their wicked acts and murderous designs for his glory, and the good of all such as are the called according to his purpose. Amidst all our trials and conflicts, opposition, be this our consolation:

> "That death and hell can do no more
> Than what our Father please."

"IT IS FINISHED."

Alexandria D. C., February 10, 1837.

When the beloved Son of God hung on the accursed tree, — when his soul was poured out unto death, when frighted rocks were burst asunder, the heavens in sackcloth were veiled, when the rugged bars of death were loosed, and tombs of marble resigned their sleeping tenants, when by the rending of the veil of the temple, the ark,, and cherubims, and mercy seat were all disclosed, while, nerved with malice, Jews and Romans mocked, while racking pains most tormenting smarts were inflicted on that blessed Lamb who bore our sins, when justice drew its flaming sword and vengeance struck the dreadful blow, when hell exulting in her hour of darkness, amidst the awful grandeur of that dreadful scene, the voice of triumph, from the expiring Savior's lips shook the creation to its very centre; stern death, in dreadful terror clad, affrighted, paused and felt the thunder of that voice which in all the power and majesty of the eternal God-head shouted, **"It is finished."**

With due humility and that reverence which becomes the ransomed of the Lord, let us inquire what was finished? From the sacred record of eternal truth we learn that all was finished that the glorious Mediator had began; love was not finished, for the love of God had no beginning. Election and predestination, with all the perfections of Jehovah which shine forth in the economy of salvation were not finished, for these were without beginning, and can never, never end.

But something was certainly finished by the Savior when he in triumph gave the victorious shout; nor has our Lord left this important subject in the dark. "He who runs may read." "He finished transgression, made an end of sin," &c. He himself has declared that he has finished the work that his Father gave him to do. We eagerly inquire, what then was the work that his Father gave him to do? The Son of God responds, I come to do thy will, O God. I am come to do the will of my Father who sent me, and to finish the work. And this is the will of him that sent me, that of all that he has given me I should lose nothing; but should raise them up at the last day. And the Father has given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. A shining messenger from the world of glory came down from heaven to earth, to announce the work that Jesus was to perform, viz: "His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." He finished the redemption of his people agreeably to the prediction of the Psalmist: "The redemption of the soul is precious, and it ceaseth forever."

First. He has finished the redemption of his people, and it ceaseth forever.

Second. He has finished, or made an end of sin as far as relates to those he represented.

Third. He finised the **law** as far as relates to its demands in reference to the election of grace, and the fulfillment of its divine requisitions. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfiill. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but one jot or title of the law shall not pass until all is fulfilled. He is the end of the law for righteousness unto every one that believes.

Fourth. He has finished transgressions; for his blood cleanseth from all sin. He has given himself for his church, that he might redeem it from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.

Fifth. He has finished the curse, having borne our sins in his own body on the tree; and being made a curse for us, as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.

Sixth. He has finished the covenant of works, having blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which were against us, nailing them to the cross.

Seventh. He has finished the work of making sacrifices for sin. "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sin."

Eighth. He has given a finishing stroke to the perfection of his people, for by one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified.

Ninth. He has finished death, having destroyed death and him that had the power of death, which is the devil.

Tenth. He finished the work of his sufferings, being now baptized with that baptism for which he was straitened until it was accomplished. When deep called unto deep, and the billows of divine wrath went over him; deep waters came into his soul.

Eleventh. He finished the complete pattern which he set for his children to walk in. Let no presumptuous wretch dare to attempt to change the pattern of the things in heaven.

Finally, he has completely finished all that was written of him in the law, in the prophets, and in the psalms; and all that was necessary to secure the eternal salvation and justification of his people, and left them to challenge wicked men and devils, to declare, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; It is Christ that died." He was wounded for their transgression; he was bruised for their iniquities, and the chastisement of their peace was upon him; and with his stripes they are healed. He sees the travail of his soul, and is satisfied.

Reflection. Is it finished? Or, is something remaining to be done by the redeemed, in order to secure the blessed objects of the death of Christ? If something remains to be done, whether it be **using means,** or giving our hearts to God, or our money to modern institutions, or sitting on anxious benches, or anything else, much or little, then the work is not finished, and the words of the expiring Lamb of God are contradicted. But be assured, dying reader, whatever relative duties are enjoined on the disciples of Christ, there is among them nothing to be added to the finished work of the Redeemer — nothing to render his redemption efficient, or effectual, or to extend its benefits to any for whom God did not eternally intend it; so far indeed from it, all the good works of the people of God are the immediate result of the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing can be added or taken from the work which Christ finished when he yielded up the ghost and bowed his head unto death. "It ceaseth forever."

Here then the Old School Baptists find a sure foundation to build upon, and hence we preach Christ crucified, and proclaim a finished salvation in his worthy name — a salvation completely suited to the case of the poor, the needy, the halt, the lame and the blind; a salvation suited to the condition of every hungry, starving soul, who by grace is made to feel his wretchedness, and mourn his sins; but by no means suited to the case of the whole, who need no physician. The pharisees of eighteen hundred years ago, rejected this finished work, and from that day to the present it stands rejected, despised,

opposed and slandered by all the workmongers who have flourished in our sinful world. But tell us, reader, how do you view the perfect work and finished salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ, for be assured if you despise this doctrine you are yet in your sins; but if you love the doctrine and can feed on it, you are not far from the kingdom.

TOTAL DEPRAVITY

New Vernon, N. Y., April 24, 1833.

We have proposed to give our readers a more enlarged view of our sentiments, which were briefly presented in our prospectus. The next item in order is, "the total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man."

According to our engagement, we call the attention of our readers to the testimony which first from the word of God, and then from such collateral testimony as we can find existing among the human family, we intend on this occasion to present. The work before us is to prove that man in his fallen state, is totally depraved; and secondly, that he is justly condemned by law of God.

On this important subject mankind appears to be very generally in the dark; and from an ignorance of this subject many errors and extravagances have gained in the world as we shall notice in the conclusion of this article. We cannot expect that the proud heart of man will fall in love with the doctrine about to be presented, as it strikes a death blow at all personal righteousness or human excellence, as a ground for acceptance before the sovereign Judge of quick and dead. Painful as the awful truth may be, it should not be concealed that "Man in his best estate is altogether vanity." But as you are at this time called to contemplate man in his lost, depraved and condemned estate, you would have just cause to accuse us of "handling the word of God deceitfully," and of "giving flattering titles to men," should we fail to present him as he is presented in the record which the God of all truth has given us.

Of the numerous passages of divine truth, which prove that mankind are depraved, we give the following: "God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." — Eccl. vii 29. "Wherefore as by one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." — Rom. v. 12. "Their throat is an open sepulchre, with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips, whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood, destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known; there is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped and the whole world may become guilty before God. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." — Rom. iii. 13-20 and 23. "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint, from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores," &c. — Isa. i. 5, 6. "What is man, that he should be clean? And he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?" — Job xv. 14. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." — Job xiv. 4. "Behold I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." — Psalms li. 5. "Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity; there is none that doeth good. God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." — Psalms liii. 1-3. What then? Are we any better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin. As it is written "There

is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God." — Rom. ii. 9, 11.

"The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies. Their poison is like the poison of a serpent, they are like the deaf adder, that stoppeth her ear; which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely." — Psalms lviii. 3-5. The above are a few of the many passages of holy writ, which prove the total depravity of all mankind in their fallen condition. Here in this volume, according to which God will judge the world, the whole mass of mankind are presented on one general level; *all have sinned;* death has passed upon all; hence there is no class of our race exempt from this state of wretchedness and depravity, *conceived in sin,* estranged from the womb, going astray, and speaking lies, as soon as they are born.

But as we conceive the doctrine of *total* depravity involves as a consequence, *total inability, i. e.* not as natural creatures, to perform natural things, but as depraved beings to perform anything which is good and acceptable in the sight of God. Of man in his alienation from God, it is written, "The thoughts of his heart are evil, and that continually." "He cannot see the kingdom of God." — John iii. 3. "He cannot discern the things of the Spirit." — 1 Cor. ii. 4. "He cannot receive the spirit of truth." — John xiv. 17. "He cannot do good." — Jeremiah viii. 23. "He cannot cease from sin." — 2 Peter ii. 14. "He cannot repent." — Acts v. 31. "Cannot believe (savingly) in Christ." — John vi. 29;-Acts xiii. 41.

Man is not only a depraved and helpless creature, as a fallen sinner, but he is also a condemned criminal, having sinned and come short of the glory of God, as we have shown. And the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness. He is not, as many suppose, (a probationer) in a state of trial, to see whether he will, or will not deserve eventually to be condemned; for the law has already uttered its thundering sentence: "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Nor again, as others have contended, that the sinner as a free moral agent, is endowed with natural ability to repent, believe the gospel and be saved; and, in the words of A. Fuller, "Commanded to believe, on pain of damnation." "For they are condemned already." — Matt. iii. 18. Hence, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." — Rom. ix. 16, 18. That the condemnation of fallen sinners is grounded on strict justice, but few will have the hardihood, in so many words, to deny. If it be admitted that the law of God is "Holy, just and good," and that a just and holy law has said, "The soul that sinneth it shall die;" and that the sovereign Judge has declared that there is none that doeth good, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; the point is established forever.

It does not belong to the discussion of this subject to present a remedy, a way of salvation, or to pursue the popular course even of those of our day who contend for the scriptural doctrine of Total Depravity as strenuously as we do, and after establishing the point by the word and testimony of God, still conclude their subject by exhorting those whom they have proven to be dead in trespasses and in sin, to be up and working for life. No, this does not belong to our statement at all; we have not so been taught. We find the fallen sinner condemned already, and under the wrath of God. The sentence is passed, irrevokably passed; God who cannot lie has said that all have sinned, and that he will turn the wicked into hell with all the nations that forget him.

> Thus the polluted sinner goes,
> Laden with guilt and heavy woes,
> Down to the regions of the dead,
> With endless curses on his head.

Dead in sin, enmity against God, in

love with sin, drinking down iniquity, as the ox drinketh water, raging and blaspheming, condemned and under the curse of a righteous, just and inflexible law, we find the human race. Dreadful as their situation is, here we must leave them.

In a subsequent number we shall treat upon the only possible way of salvation for any of the miserable sons of men, which is brought to light through the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is, as we shall prove by the scriptures, special and particular.

(See page 269 this issue.)

ETERNAL, UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION

New Vernon, N. Y., February 27, 1833.

In the third item of our prospectus, we are pledged to maintain inviolably the doctrine of eternal, unconditional election. Some of our opponents have been kind enough to interpret our prospectus in such a manner as to lay us under the necessity of giving our readers more fully to understand our views. The language in which this article is headed is neither vague nor ambiguous; nor does this subject require a volume to be written, in order to convince the wise what doctrinal ideas we wish to convey. Yet as we have only asserted the sentiment as a matter of faith from which we shall in no case depart, it remains for us to show that the doctrine is scriptural, and in proving it to be so we will give a sufficient reason why we cannot depart from it in conducting this paper. Having already given, in our former numbers, our views of the sovereignty, immutibility, &c., of the great Jehovah, our present work will be to prove that he has absolutely, eternally and unconditionally chosen or elected a portion of mankind unto salvation, through Jesus Christ.

With that class of our readers who take the Bible as the man of their counsel and the standard of their faith, nothing more will be required of us, at this time, than a fair presentment of the word of God. Neither human language nor human wisdom can set forth the doctrine in a more clear or positive light than that which is left by the Holy Ghost, in the sacred pages of the Old and New Testaments.

Let it be understood that our work is only to state the doctrine, and to prove it to be in accordance with, and founded upon the word and testimony of the God of truth; we do not undertake to make the unregenerate understand or love it; for such a work we freely confess ourself inadequate; nor do we consider it any disparagement for us to own that God alone is able to bestow the knowledge and love of truth upon those who possess it not. We shall attempt to show that —

First, God has chosen or elected a people unto eternal life; second, that this election took place in eternity, or before the foundation of the world; and third, that this doctrine is not founded on any conditions existing between the elector and the elected.

First, that God has an elect people, we call to witness the following portions of holy writ, viz:

"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath *chosen.*" — Psalms xxxiii, 12. "And he brought forth his people with joy, and his *chosen* with gladness." — cv. 5. "That I may see the good of thy *chosen,* that I may rejoice in the goodness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance." — cvi. 5. "The beasts of the field shall honor me, the dragons and the owls; because I give waters in the wilderness, *and* rivers in the desert, to give drink to *my people, my chosen.*" — Isa. xliii. 20. "But for the *elect's* sake whom he hath *chosen,*" &c. — Mark xiii. 20. "Go thy way, for he (Saul) is a *chosen* vessel unto me." — Acts ix. 15. "Salute Rufus, *chosen* in the Lord," &c. — Rom. xvi. 13. "But ye are a *chosen generation,* a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the

praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." — 1 Peter ii. 9. "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is the Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and *chosen,* and faithful." — Rev. xvii. 14. "But for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch, that if it were possible they should deceive the very *elect.* And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his *elect,* from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." — Matt. xxiv. 22, 24, 31. "And shall not God avenge *his own elect,* which cry day and night unto him." — Luke, xviii. 7. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of *God's elect?*" — Rom. viii. 33. "Even so then, at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the *election of grace.* What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the *election* hath obtained it and the rest were blinded. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes; but as touching the *election,* they are beloved for the fathers' sakes." — Rom. xi. 5, 7, 28.

Second, the eternity of God's election is set forth in the strongest terms by the apostles, thus, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, wherein *he hath made us,* accepted in the beloved. In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." — Eph. i. 4, 5, 6, 11, also ii. 10. "Peter an apostle, &c., to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithyna, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, &c. — 1 Peter i. 1, 2. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did *predestinate* to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did *predestinate* them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified and whom he justified, them he also glorified." — Rom. viii. 29, 30. "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath, from the beginning, chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth." — 2 Thes. ii. 13. "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, (the beast) whose names are not written in the book of life, of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." — Rev. xiii. 8. These with many like scriptures, plainly demonstrate the eternity of the election of the people of God unto salvation, through Jesus Christ their Lord. Arminians may well tremble to meet the array of scriptures here employed to refute their cavils against eternal election. But we must show that God's election is unconditional, as far as it relates to those elected. The weight of this part of our argument may, for the present, rest upon the three following propositions, viz:

First, the fact that the election took place in eternity, precludes the possibility of its resting on conditions to be performed by the people elected. "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good nor evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth," &c.

Second, there is not the mention of a condition (as resting upon the elect) in the Bible; and if this all important doctrine, which involves our eternal destiny in its weight had been suspended upon conditions to be performed by man, we may assuredly believe that God

would have made known a fact of such awful moment, in his word.

Third, the scripture expressly forbids the idea of conditions, either in regard to election, or salvation in any form whatever. To establish this point we hear the inspired apostle say, "By grace are ye saved through faith, that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast."

Again, if there be conditions in the election of grace, resting on the creature to perform, we would for the moment inquire what are the conditions? Is it works? No, for if it be of works, it is no more grace, otherwise work is no more work." Does the doctrine then require that the sinner shall be willing on his part to be saved? No, it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. But did not the choice of God embrace the best kind of sinners, such as are not so vile, polluted and depraved as the rest of mankind? No, "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief." But did not God choose unto salvation such as would be born of pious parents — parents who would dedicate them by infant or adult sprinkling, and train them up to religion? No, "Though Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, as I live saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter."

"Cursed is man that trusteth in man, or that maketh flesh his arm." But were they elected on condition that they should use what is in the present day denominated "The means of grace," viz: — to give their property to charitable societies, and so fill up the "Lord's treasury?" No, for "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth nothing." "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Now we inquire if election or salvation be conditional, on what condition does it rest? Let the Arminian answer if he can.

But to the everlasting exclusion of all such heart-sickening, God dishonoring, soul-revolting, devil-pleasing delusion, Thus saith the Lord God, whose word endureth forever, "Behold O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves," &c. Thus saith the Lord God, unto these bones, "Behold, I will cause breath to enter in you, and ye shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin and put breath in you and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. And I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea I will be their God, and they shall be my people." — Ezekiel xxxiii., see also Heb. viii, 10, 11, 12. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me from the least to the greatest: for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their iniquities will I remember no more." Here, from the uncorrupted fountain breaks forth a refulgent torrent of light and truth, sweeping away all refuges of lies, and reiterating Jehovah's declarations. "I will, and they shall," while each redeemed soul quickened and made alive by the Holy Ghost, and taught by the Father, joins in the heavenly melody to sing:

"Sons we are through God's election
  Who in Jesus Christ believe;
By eternal destination,
  Sovereign grace we here receive.
Lord, thy mercy
  Does both grace and glory give.

Pause, my soul! adore and wonder!
  Ask, O why such love to me?

Grace has put me in the number,
Of my Savior's family.
Hallelujah!
Thanks, eternal thank to thee.

Since that love had no beginning,
And shall never, never cease;
Keep, O keep me, Lord, from sinning!
Guide me in the way of peace!
Make me walk in
All the paths of holiness.

When that blessed habitation,
Which my God has foreordained;
When in glory's full possession,
I with saints and angels stand;
Free grace only
Shall resound from God's right hand."

PREDESTINATION

The absolute Predestination of all things.

New Vernon, N. Y., February 6, 1833.

On this important part of the doctrine of Christ, we wish to be well understood, as we consider it a fundamental part of the faith of the Gospel. In the absence of this doctrine we can have no confidence in the predictions of the word of God. If the prophets spake and wrote of undetermined events, events concerning which the Holy One himself had not made up his mind, they must have spoken and written with the utmost uncertainty. If it were possible to banish the doctrine of Predestination from the Holy Scriptures, we should not only lose thereby our interest in the ancient predictions of the Old Testament, but we should find it impossible to believe the testimony of the new. What consolation would the exceedingly great and precious promises of the Gospel afford us, if we had reason to believe that God had not yet determined whether they should ever be verified? Again, what confidence could we have in the veracity of God, if it were certain that his promises were made without any determination on his part to perform them? Indeed there could be no certainty of a future state without the predestination of such a state. No heaven, no hell, no resurrection, nor final judgement. Thus we see to what an awful dilemma we should be driven without this doctrine. Predestination is the pre-determination of all events that can possibly come to pass, it involves the doctrine of Divine Sovereignty, and exhibits the wisdom and the power of God; the one presents the plan, the other carries into execution the things decreed. Predestination is the result of the counsel of God's own will, originating with himself alone. "With whom took he counsel, and who instructed &c." In the doctrine of Predestination all the Attributes of Deity shine forth with dreadful majesty. The entire history of mankind is by Predestination established in the view of God, and the final destiny of all things are held in his almighty hand.

"There's not a sparrow nor a worm,
But's found in his decree;
He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be."

We may consider this doctrine first in the economy of salvation, and then in its more general bearings. First God has chosen, or predestined, his people unto salvation, through sanctification of the spirit and a belief of the truth. — 2 Thes. ii. 13. Agreeable to his own sovereign pleasure as expressed in the above text, he has predestined them to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself according to the good pleasure of his will. — Eph. i. 5. He has predestined them unto eternal life. "As thou hast given him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." — John xvii. 2. "And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." — Acts xiii. 48. He has predestinated their calling, conformity to the image of Jesus Christ, their justification and glorification. "For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate them he also called,

and whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified." — Rom. viii. 29, 30. In short, every thing in relation to his people here and hereafter is so firmly established in the decree of God, that no power can prevail against them. "He rideth upon the heavens in their help and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is their refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." — Deut. xxxiii. 26, 7. "Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel; according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought?" — Num. xxiii. 23. "Even the very hairs of your heads are all numbered." — Matt. x. 30, Luke xii. 7.

Predestination is not confined to the adorable purpose of Salvation by Grace, but it has a direct bearing on all things. Not a sparrow can be brought to the ground, nor can the troubled ocean dash her foaming waves one inch beyond the limits of God's decrees.

If any thing was left upon uncertainties, every thing must have been equally uncertain. If the smallest atom in creation were suffered to fly at random in the full sense of the word, God himself not knowing where, or when it would alight, it would prove what cannot be proved, viz: that God is deficient in knowledge. The Omniscience, and the predestination of God, must stand or fall together; they cannot be separated. We are confident that both exist in glorious harmony in the mind of him who has declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. See Isaiah xlvi. 10. **The doctrine of Absolute Predestination, when rightly understood, does not involve the idea of man's acting involuntarily in sin; nor does it exonerate him from accountability;** this may be discovered by noticing the following examples. The crucifixion of Christ, the abduction of Joseph, together with many other circumstances recorded in holy writ. "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." — Acts iv. 27. "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands crucified and slain."—Acts ii. 23.

The brethren of Joseph had no knowledge of the purpose of God when they sold him to go down to Egypt, they meant it for evil, but God ordained it for good. When the Jews persecuted the disciples of our Lord Jesus into strange cities they knew not that God had ordained this very method of sending his missionaries everywhere preaching the word. And amidst the abounding abominations of the present day, it is our consolation to know that God has ordained "The wrath of man shall praise him, the remainder of that wrath he will restrain." — Psalms lxxvi. 10. We need only to understand this precious doctrine, and we shall most assuredly love it. The christian exults in the thought that death and hell can do no more than what our Father please.

We might notice the objections commonly brought against this doctrine, but we shall wait until such objections are presented; and in the mean time earnestly request our brethren to examine the word of God on this important subject. And that the God of all grace may give us light and wisdom from above, that in his light we may see light, is our prayer in Jesus' name, to whom be glory, power and dominion, now and forever, Amen.

PERSONAL REMINISCENCE OF ELDER BEEBE

New Vernon, N. Y., April 30, 1834.

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." PAUL

We are acquainted with an individual whose history we will give in the following words:

He was, like all the race of which he is a member, conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity. He was born in the eastern part of the State of Connecticut. He was a **religionist** from his birth, yet an enemy to God, and a stranger to grace during the first seven years of his natural life; for he was alive before the commandment came. He had at this period been taught to say his prayers, but he had never been taught to pray; he had made some progress in the Westminster Catechism, and in short, as touching the religion of the Pharisees, he excelled many of his equals. It would have terrified him ex ceedingly to have gone to sleep at night without counterbalancing all the sins of the day by a repetition of his forms of worship; but on all occasions when he had "paid his vows, he had peace offerings at home." Up to about this period of life he was led to suppose that as touching the righteousness of the law he was blameless. We cannot describe to our readers the mortification and disappointment of this young lad, when being suddenly arrested by an arrow from the quiver of the Lord, he was summoned to stand at the dreadful bar of divine justice, and give the reason, if any he had, why the tremendous sentence of the law of God should not be executed upon his guilty soul. Great was his consternation when he cast his eager glance around in search of those fancied treasures of personal holiness which he had believed himself to be in possession of. Alas! his stronghold failed him in this very critical moment, he felt he was ruined. But like Edom he said, "I am impoverished, but I will return and build again my waste places." Great were his efforts, his labors, toils and pains to mend again that holy law which he had broken. He would have prayed, but he could no longer view the great, the dreadful God as a being that might be trifled with, or pacified by what he could do. He struggled, but the harder he struggled the deeper he seemed to be involved in a horrible pit, and in miry clay. These exercises continued for many days and weeks. Sometimes he meditated a retreat from this awfully wretched state, but whither could he flee? If on the wings of the morning he should fly to the uttermost sea, God was there, everywhere present, beholding the evil and the good; there could be no retreating from God, before whose flaming eyes all things are naked and open.

At length the day seemed to arrive when the dreadful sentence of the inexorable law of God must be put in execution. Now blackness and darkness and tempests gathered round his frightened soul. Hell yawned before him; justice stood with uplifted arm, and the flaming sword of vengeance was drawn from its scabbard, and brandished over his guilty head. The books were brought. The arch accuser was also there, and what was to him more dreadful still than all, the piercing eye of God brought the black crimes of years to light, and what had been transacted in midnight darkness was now exposed upon the housetop. Chilled thus with horror, and pressed down to death with intense depair, remorse, guilt and keen anguish throbbing in his breast: tell us, dear reader, did he need an anxious bench, or knives, or lancets, to secure his conviction? Or would it have comforted him to have been informed by some Universalist that there was no hell, when the very pains of hell had got hold of him? As well might be told, when writhing on a bed of embers, that there was no heat in fire. The spell of such delusion was now broken. The Spirit had moved upon the face of the great deep of his inmost soul, and although all had been without form and void, yet God had said, Let there be light; and light broke in upon him; and in this light that heart which he had thought was a temple meet for the Holy Ghost to dwell in, was now manifestly the habitation of dragons, and the hold of every unclean and hateful bird. It was thus, when in or about his seventh year, he went to a distant barn, under an im-

pression like that expressed by the poet:

"I can but perish if I go,
I am resolved to try;
For if I stay away, I know
I must forever die."

He fell upon his bended knees, but he could not pray; a rustling leaf, a turning straw, frightened his guilty soul, and chained his speechless tongue; awful apprehensions and fearful forebodings pursued him back to his chamber, when despairing of mercy he threw himself upon a bed to die and meet his fiery doom. Worn out with labor and want of rest, nature sank beneath the load, and he fell into a sleep. Unconscious of what had passed while sleeping, he awoke himself singing these words:

"How glorious is our heavenly King,
Who reigns above the sky;
How shall a child presume to sing
His dreadful majesty?"

He seemed indeed in a new world, his load of guilt and sin were gone, the love of God shed abroad in his heart.

"His tongue broke out in unknown strains,
and sang surprising grace."

At the age of eleven years and four weeks, on the second Sunday in December, 1811, he was permitted to be buried with his precious Lord in Baptism, in the river Thames, in the city of Norwich, Connecticut, by Eld. John Sterry, who has since fallen asleep.

After remaining eight years a member of the Baptist church in Norwich, he removed his relation to the church in the city of New York, then under the pastoral care of that champion of the truth, Eld. Jonathan Van Velsen, who also has fallen asleep. While a member of the Ebenezer Church in New York, the subject of our narrative, when in his twentieth year, was licensed to preach the gospel. The peculiar circumstances of his call to the work of the ministry our present limits will not admit. Let it suffice to say, that being experimentally, he could not help being doctrinally a Predestinarian. For more than fourteen years he has been lisping the name of Jesus with such abilities as the Lord has been pleased to bestow, without any of the polish of Gamaliel's school; and although it has been his privilege to suffer some persecution, yet he has not resisted unto blood, striving against sin. He finds by every day's experience that he is a sinner yet, his nature is still as evil as ever it was. "To will is present with him, but how to perform that which is good, he finds not." He is still the chief of sinners, and if a saint, the least of all.

EDITORS' NOTE

We trust that our brethren have found these writings of Elder Beebe to testify of those things most surely believed among us. He wrote in 1876, "I stand today rooted and grounded in the faith and order on which the whole Baptist denomination in our country stood when I united with them sixty-five years ago. I have found no occasion to depart from either the faith or order of the church of God, as organized on the day of Pentecost."

Elder Beebe was ordained in 1823 to the care of the church of Ramapo, in New York, and three years later accepted the care of the church at New Vernon, New York, and served them fifty years. During that time he lived in Alexandria, Va. for three and one-half years, and served three nearby churches. He returned to New Vernon for their meetings. He published the *Signs of the Times* for forty-nine years, until he died in 1881, and is buried in the New Vernon Cemetery.

EDITORS

Extra copies of this issue are available from our Danville, Va. office.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 140 DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1972 NO. 1

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1/72
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CHRIST IN HUMILIATION
CHRIST IN EXALTATION

"Then He said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken; ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."

(Luke 24:25, 26 and 27)

For a long while now, I have desired to write something on this most wonderful subject, but have felt it was far too great for me even to attempt. This morning, for some reason unknown to me, I feel impelled to.

On October 7, 1956, Elder David Spangler made this statement from the Snow Hill pulpit, "Two great themes compose the Scriptures: the humiliation of Christ and His exaltation." I do not remember another word he said that morning — that statement was a complete sermon to me and it seemed burned as with fire upon my very being as I contemplated the immensity of truth contained therein. I have fed upon it hundreds of times since. Nearly 50 years ago, I attended a Bible class and I recall the teacher's saying, "When you read a chapter or verse in the Bible and fail to see the Lord Jesus Christ, you might just as well have been reading history, for you have missed the entire content." That statement also left its mark and whatever anyone else may think, I believe deep in my heart that God used that Bible class in my tender years to awaken within me an interest and a great desire for knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures and THEIR BLESSED AUTHOR. I have not made anything like the progress I have wished for, but as the years have passed, more and more my great desire has been and is "THAT I MAY KNOW HIM AND THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION AND THE FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SUFFERING, BEING MADE CONFORMABLE UNTO HIS DEATH."

Christ was, in His pre-incarnate state, the ETERNAL SON OF THE ETERNAL GOD — He was and is the eternal I AM. Isaiah tells us in that wonderful 9th chapter of his prophecy, "For unto us a CHILD IS BORN, unto us A SON IS GIVEN." He was before Abraham for He says "Before Abraham WAS, I AM"; a strange expression grammar-wise, but it leaves no room for question as to His eternal existence. He was before Job who exclaimed, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," although it was centuries before the Christ child was manifested. He was before David who said, "The Lord said unto MY LORD, Sit Thou on my right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool." John testifies that Christ was IN but not OF the creation when he says "BY HIM were all things made and WITHOUT HIM was not anything made that was made." In that wonderful 17th Chapter of John, Jesus Himself prayed, "And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self WITH

THE GLORY WHICH I HAD WITH THEE BEFORE THE WORLD WAS." This was His pre-natal glory!

The last of the creation was man "formed of the dust of the earth." Can anyone conceive of anything more frail, more flighty, more undependable, more easily blown about by every movement of wind than dust of which man is made? And mankind has been manifesting the stuff of which he is made from the very beginning! The woman, taken from the side of the man, was of the same material and as a result, she heeded not the Eternal God, but a serpent, A SNAKE if you please, and came under condemnation. Her husband "for his great love wherewith he loved her" went with his eyes wide open with her into degradation. Pages and pages could be written on that wonderful subject but that, specifically is not my subject.

The man and the woman multiplied and their offspring was of the same material as they. But the Eternal Godhead was pleased to elect from among this fallen race, a PEOPLE FOR HIMSELF, just as guilty, just as vile, just as earthy as the very worst of Adam's race. But the wrath of God against sinners must be appeased; sin must be judged and the penalty paid. Moreover, it must be paid by a MAN, since by man came the sin. We are told "He looked and there was none to help" — no one whose body and blood were untainted by sin; "therefore, His own arm brought salvation." And so, the eternal, spotless, holy Son of God OFFERED HIMSELF, was clothed in the likeness of sinful flesh, yet without sin, made Himself OF NO REPUTATION and took upon Him the form of a SERVANT. Think of it, my Brethren, the Creator and owner of the earth and all that is therein, taking upon Himself the form of a servant and making Himself of no reputation for filthy sinners such as you and I — redeem us, cleanse us from all unrighteousness and impute unto us His own righteousness, to the end that He might without shame present us to the Father without spot or blemish.

We go to meeting, we sing of God's great love and sometimes we even read the Scriptures, but I wonder if we even begin to grasp the vast scope of His love and mercy. In this fashion, He was born into the world among the cattle, lived his life among the poor and lowly of the earth. This was the pathway to the awful depth of His humiliation, the King of the Jews crowned, not with honor and glory, no, not yet, but with a crown of thorns, was mocked, scourged and smitten. What unspeakable humiliation, but He bore it without murmur: "He opened not His mouth." But this was not the worst — He must drink the bitter cup, must of necessity be forsaken of His Father, for HE WAS MADE TO BE SIN WHO KNEW NO SIN." When His humiliation was complete, He poured out His life's blood and cried, "It is finished." Yes, it was finished, all the humiliation, all the agony, all the work of redemption; all the sacrifices were finished, for the SUPREME sacrifice was made; no more slain lambs, for the LAMB OF GOD had been slain and all the types fulfilled; no more need for commandments for He had kept them all. Earlier, He had said, "To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world." Now it is finished and He was buried in Joseph's new tomb. Not even a grave of His own to be buried in, BUT He had opened the way for poor sinners to approach the Throne of God.

Now, let us consider what was the result of it all, His exaltation and His restoration to the glory. Paul tells us in Hebrews, "But this MAN after He had offered one sacrifice for sin, SAT DOWN on the right hand of God. HE SAT DOWN, not because He was discouraged by fruitless effort or exhausted by the mighty weight of the sin He had borne, but because He was satisfied with the result of the work He had done, and His father was well pleased. He had "seen the travail of His soul

and was satisfied," for so perfect was the work He had done that not a single soul for whom that precious blood was shed, would ever come under condemnation. He took His seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high because it was His rightful seat as the Redeemer member of the Godhead, the seat that was His BY REASON OF WHAT HE HAD ACCOMPLISHED IN HIS HUMILIATION. He is there today, a GLORIFIED MAN in the glory. He is there in the Person of Great High Priest to ADVOCATE to the Father all those whom He paid such an unspeakable price to redeem.

We are told in Philippians, "He humbled Himself, WHEREFORE, God also hath highly exalted Him and given Him a NAME THAT IS ABOVE EVERY NAME." I believe we are told in the Revelation what this NAME is, that is above every name. In the 16th verse of the 19th chapter, describing the Lord's return to this earth, the Revelator states, "And on His vesture and on His thigh, a NAME written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." This NAME the Almighty Father gave Him and it is His forever; and let me repeat, it is by virtue of what He accomplished in His humiliation that He is entitled to this Name. This exalted KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS will, we believe, one of these days, return to raise the sleeping bodies of the "Dead in Christ" and to catch away those "who are alive and remain," and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Some of our people do not see eye to eye on many of the details of this, His second coming and none of us dare go beyond that which we are told by divine inspiration. Indeed, it is not ours to speculate on things untold; it is ours to heed and obey the solemn admonition: "Watch ye therefore . . . Lest coming suddenly, He find you sleeping." (Mark 13:35 and 36) Precious Brethren, are we WATCHING, or are we SLEEPING? When we get together, is our conversation of heavenly things or things of earth? Are we searching the Scriptures for a glimpse of "His beauteous face"? Are we listening for the sound of His voice, which, in the words of the hymnist, "is so sweet the birds hush their singing"? Are we looking daily and hourly for signs of His coming? Are we, AM I, seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness? Is our, is MY treasure in heaven or on the earth? For "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Brethren, these are potent, solemn and very timely questions. Our Lord Jesus Christ, HIMSELF, tells us in thundering tones "BE YE ALSO READY, FOR IN SUCH AN HOUR AS YE THINK NOT, THE SON OF MAN COMETH." These words He spoke to His disciples and if we are His we are His disciples; and He also spoke them to the multitudes. Undoubtedly, He knew there were those in the multitude who believed on HIS NAME. Otherwise, He would have spoken them to His disciples alone. Likewise, there are, most likely, many around us who believe on HIS NAME though we know not who they are.

I have deviated a little from my original subject, but as I have been writing, it has seemed to be given to me to say the things I have. I do not think it was of satan, for he delights in keeping us sleeping.

Finally, my love to all my kindred in this Exalted KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Mildred V. Dykes
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ENJOYS ELDER BEEBE'S WRITINGS

Rt. 2, Box 134
Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120

Dear Elder Wood:

I am sending my renewal today; use the extra as you see fit. I also want an extra copy of the December issue.

I greatly enjoy Elder Beebe's preaching to me through the *Signs* — or the Lord speaking through this beloved servant, who so long ago saw fit to have this paper published. How wonderful to read these articles by him, who has long since gone to meet his Lord and God. I hope to be an absoluter, and this is all the preaching I hear or read other than the Bible.

Most of the churches around us are fast combining, and most any man is called a servant of God. My dear father-in-law, Elder Lee Spencer, told me several times this would happen, and that most of the people called Baptists would go back to where they came from. Ah, when more people combine they will make war on the saints and persecute them, as Jesus told they would do before his appearance. May God give us grace to stand . . . We will be made willing to endure all things when the Lord leads us, and we will rejoice in the pathway where no vulture has trod. This glorious highway is filled with the Redeemed only. I hope my God has placed me in this highway, and if so, all is well.

I heard Elder Roy Agee say in prayer one time, "O Lord if we are not in the right way, please put us there." It seems this is a constant prayer with me. Elder Wood, I would love to tell you of my travels someday, but since we are not close neighbors, I cannot do this, but I hope we are brethren in the Lord.

I sorely miss my father-in-law: he was so comforting to me, and I have no one to talk to now. May God continue his blessings on you and yours.

Mrs. Lewis (Pauline) Spencer

GIVING AND RECEIVING AT CHRISTMAS

The world celebrates Christ's birthday on Christmas day. They remember him in a worldly way of giving and receiving, decorating and reveling.

We humbly hope that Christ remembers us in all of our unworthiness every day and every hour. We have nothing to give Him, but he has a bountiful supply of love, grace, pity, and spiritual strength and hope, that he bestows on His believing children. God our Father sent his Son down to earth, to die in our stead that we should have everlasting life. What joy we receive when we are born of the Spirit! The joy and love and praise we receive at that time is inexpressible, as we experience a deep settled peace within our being. We cannot praise him enough for his great love and mercy. It is a gift from God.

God revealed to the shepherds in the field that his Son the Saviour of his people, was born in Bethlehem that night, and he also reveals to us at his appointed time that his Son is our Saviour. Like the shepherds, when God shines in our hearts, we are astonished and amazed that He has remembered us in all of our sinful ways and unworthiness, and given us a beautiful hope of heaven — that after this life we shall go to be with him where there is no more sorrow, pain or tears; of which we have much in this low ground of sorrow.

O, may I be one of those to receive the gift of eternal life that He gives to his believing children, the elect chosen in him before the foundation of the world.

Thelma Reece Wilson
126 Wallace Circle,
Portsmouth, Va.

SISTER BOWDEN WRITES OF THEIR ASSOCIATION

Benton, Ky.

Dear Editors:

The churches which compose the Soldier Creek Association of Old School Primitive Baptists of the regular order, held their annual three days meeting at the Soldier Creek Church, Marshall County, Ky., October 8, 9, and 10, 1971. Elder Paul Poyner is the Moderator, and has been for several years. This time the messenger appointed an assistant mod-

erator, Elder Waymond Chapple, a young Elder in the ministry.

Since the close of the meeting, this scripture has been on my mind: "I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." (Psalm 27:13) Surely the goodness of the Lord brought us together and made us sit together in heavenly places, and that place was the Soldier Creek Meeting House. We believe our Lord gave us a hearing ear, and gave the ministers liberty to preach God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit. God calls, the Son redeems, and the Spirit comforts his people.

Jesus went away, but before he went he promised to send the Comforter, and He would take the things of His and shew them to the children: the believing, living children. What a comforting Scripture! — to be able to see the beauty of that land of the living, and the goodness of the Lord there.

After finding comfort in meditating upon the Psalms, then when we come down to our sinful condition, we wonder do we see, do we hear? do we walk about Zion and go round about her, and behold her bulwarks? and as the Psalmist said, will we be blessed to say, "This God is our God forever and ever. He will be our guide even unto death." Knowing our sinfulness, it seems too much to even think that such a wonderful Father would stoop to recognize this sinner. This year marks my 84th birthday, and I am nearing the crossing over the river of death. I can only say, "God's will be done." for he does right, and will reconcile us to every trial even unto death, if it is his will.

The preaching brethren who attended our association were: Elder R. L. Biggs, of the Bordeaux Church, Nashville, Tenn.; Elders Herbert Prince and Swayne Young, of the Memphis Church; Elder Elmer Prince, of the Old Bethel Association, and Elder Waymon Chapple, of the Salem Church, Benton, Illinois, and our own Moderator, Elder Paul Poyner. If this is worth publishing, our folks would be glad to see it in the paper.

Farewell. May the dear old **Signs of the Times** live on to comfort its readers.

A sister, I hope,
Effie Bowden

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION 1971

The rising and falling of nations; the coming into being and the passing away of men; the termination of all that is natural is taking place daily around us: only the Triune God remains constant, the same yesterday, today and forever. In the passing of the years, it comes time for another session of this lovely body, and, as she sits under the auspices of our covenant keeping Father, it behooves us to express our doctrinal sentiments as regards this covenant of grace.

If the writer is blessed to speak for the body, it seems prudent for us to seek some divine testimony in support of that doctrine. To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. (Isaiah 8:20) Any other authority, regardless of its standing among men, is not to be regarded as an authentic witness as regarding the doctrine of God our Saviour.

It seems pertinent at this time to go to the sweet singer in Israel for a foundation text. "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." (Psalm 33:12) We see here the wonders of God's grace in that David had such a clear view of the doctrine of God our Saviour. If it were not for the hordes of false teachers running over the land and country sending forth waves of delusive doctrines, it would not be needful to contend so earnestly and so often that God's people are a chosen people; that they have been blessed in Christ with all spiritual blessings before the world began; that these blessings are made manifest in God blessing them. David did not say that, "Blessed **are** the nations whose God is

the Lord," for God has only one nation. It is true that all nations, even all men, come under the absolute dominion of God, only His nation of people know his Son as the Lord.

As we contemplate the experience of this nation, we are going over ground that is familiar to every child of grace. It was a sad day, even a day of blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet and a voice with words: such words as would cause entreaty that it not be repeated. (Hebrews 12:18, 19) as they came before God on his mountain of justice. They knew, and God acknowledged that they knew aright, that they could not hear and live at that mountain without a daysman between Him and them. This nation is being signally blessed. She must be blessed, yea, this nation is the only one thus blessed. She is blessed not only to know God, but is blessed with a Mediator that stands between God and them. Although God's justice would not let him deviate in declaring death to all transgressors, his divine mercy moves him to declare a coming day in which a prophet would be raised up at His hand, and among them, that they could hear — even delight to hear as the voice of the Good Shepherd; and to eagerly follow it.

What a blessing is this, dear brethren! The justice of God carried out with full measure on Christ, and sinners go free. How our hearts are knit together in holy joy that our God is not only a God of justice, but that he is the God of mercy. Justice would not alleviate our dismay and suffering, because of our inability to hear the words of this Voice as it thundered from Sinai; but mercy steps in with the promise of the coming Saviour that they could hear and live. We could not look upon God in his austerity, but being made flesh and becoming as one of us, we see Him in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. 4:6) Indeed, how blessed is Zion, the nation whose God is the Lord. This nation is the only one blessed with such a blessing. All other nation must appear before God without this blessing.

"The people whom He hath chosen for his own inheritance." The same divine blessing that is on this singular nation, is on each inhabitant of this nation. They were all chosen vessels, and at the time of the choice they were blessed with everything necessary for them to be recipients of this inheritance. The blessing of God must always precede our participating in the good things of this inheritance. Under the law circumcision was the cutting around of the foreskin in all male children, but under grace it is an inward work in the heart, and in the spirit and not in the letter: whose praise is not of men, but of God, (Romans 2:29) and we are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. (Phil. 3:3)

Here is the same auspicious blessing on the inhabitants of this nation as is on the nation as the whole. This is the blessing that identifies one of these that has a part in the inheritance of the Lord. These have all been much more favored than the inhabitants of other nations. God has chosen them as part of this inheritance. Having loved them with an everlasting love, made them manifest among the heirs of this nation by choosing them in the furnace of affliction. This lot of His inheritance were all cast in the lap of wisdom; and God has kept for himself the disposition of the whole. This great blessing is continued on them for all time, until the purchased possession is delivered home to glory. They were chosen and foreknown and predestinated to this glorious deliverance. A man will do all he can to take care of his inheritance, but many times it gets away from him; but the blessing of Jehovah God has gone before for his inheritance. This blessing is in the person of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and his Father God has given into His hands all power and all judgment, and all things to the end that every one chosen, every one that is an inhabitant of this nation, every one that is a member of God's inheritance, will be with Him in glory.

This is my last official act as your

servant. May God bless us with a lively interest in this nation and this in heritance.

Elder W. D. Griffin

CHURCH LETTER TO ASSOCIATION

The Nassaongo Old School or Primitive Baptist Church to the Old School Baptist Association in session with the Salisbury Church October 27 and 28, 1971.

Dear Brethren in the Lord:

Blest be the tie that binds in such a manner of love that we so desire to meet with the brethren and friends as the time and season approaches for the meeting together.

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not." (1 John 3:1)

Our dear pastor was with us the 5th Sunday in August, and three other ministers were with us also, all preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ the Lamb of God, in all its beauty and excellence. It was a delightful meeting, and well attended. It was an unspeakable joy to witness the love and fellowship that was made manifest at this meeting. After the service our hearts were made glad by our sister going before the Church and received for baptism. (Sister Frances Parrish) She was baptized by Elder Spangler that afternoon. She united with Nassaongo Church where her mother had belonged for sixty-four years, and who was a firm believer in the Word of God.

We send as messengers Elder D. V. Spangler and any member who may be present; and send $30.00 to help defray expenses. Our membership is three, with one baptized during the year.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Pastor
Mollie E. Fooks, Clerk

(We note that Sister Fooks is 96 years old. — J. D. W.)

Rt. 3,
Nauvoo, Alabama

Dear Brother Wood:

I am sending the payment for my good papers which I receive each month, and I thank all you good ministers for them. Like the others, I don't want to miss a copy, and am always looking forward for them the first of each month.

I am going on my 87th year, and I am thankful for my eyes that I can still read.

Love to all the household of faith. A lonely pilgrim just waiting on my call.

A sister, I hope,
Kattie McGough

JESUS THE PROPITIATION FOR OUR SINS

602 Mass Ave.
Norfolk, Va. 23508
October 1, 1971

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

Our sincere thanks for the kindness and hospitality shown us during our recent visit in your home. We were reminded of the words of the Psalmist, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." (Psalms 133:1). It was not only good and pleasant but instructive, as well. Our minds were exercised, we trust on heavenly and divine things.

We have discussed at some length the scripture you posed to Elder Prescott. You will recall that it was found in Genesis 3:22 and 23: "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from whence he was taken." Adam then was driven from the garden that he might **not** partake of the fruit of the tree of life.

The tree of life is mentioned in other places in the Scriptures (Genesis 2:9, Revelation 2:7; and 14). It appears to

be a reference to our Saviour himself. In Revelation 22:14, John wrote, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Jesus refers to himself as being the entrance to heaven and immortal glory: "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." (John 10:9)

Now if we refer back to Genesis 3:22, we note that one must eat of the tree of life to have everlasting life. Jesus rather emphatically states in John 6:52, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." In Revelation 22:2 we are told that the tree of life was in the street and on either side of the river which flowed directly from the throne of God. We should also note the mention of the fruit of the tree of life. It "bare twelve manner of fruits and yielded her fruit every month." Twelve tribes composed the entire nation of Israel. Thus twelve types of fruit would be sufficient to feed the entire church of God or the spiritual Israel. We see that it yielded its fruit every month. This is reminiscent of the manna which was supplied the children of Israel in the wilderness. There was only enough for each meal. It was necessary that it be replenished every day. We, like they, need constant spiritual nourishment to sustain the spiritual man.

We have dwelt at some length on the necessity of our eating of the tree of life; yet Adam was driven out of the garden in order that he he might **not** eat it. How do we reconcile this? The answer I think is to be found in the timing. Adam could not eat of the tree of life until Jesus had made propitiation for Adam's sin, and redeemed him. The new man which the Apostle Paul speaks of does indeed become one with God. Jesus said, I in you, you in me, I in the Father and the Father in me. (John 14:20). The new man Adam then has put forth his hand and has eaten of the fruit of the tree of life and has inherited immortal life.

This is the church of the living God, those whom He redeemed with His own life. They are those who were with Him in the realms of eternity before the world began. They are the same ones he prayed for in the Garden. (John 17) They could not partake of the tree of life in their sin and pollution. But in Jesus they have been justified, their sins have been wiped away and they are worthy paticipants in the feast from their Master's table.

We look forward to being reunited with you all in His time. We ask His blessings upon us all.

Yours in hope,
Corrone Bryant

P. S. I join with Corrone in saying that we truly appreciate all that you did for us. We are still rejoicing from the precious meeting in your home and at Mt. Zion.

In bonds of His love,
Joanne

LETTER OF MIDDLEBURG OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH TO ASSOCIATION — 1971

To the Sister Churches of The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, the Middleburg Church sends greetings.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

Each year we greet the brethren with increased zeal and fellowship. Knowing that it is only by the grace of God that we are able to meet again. Man of himself can do nothing to merit esteem or give the creator delight. All his righteousness becomes as filthy rags when viewed by a Holy God.

Each year we see more evidence that man that is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble. (Job 14:1) In this world man has no continuing city. The elect of God travel as pilgrims and strangers in a foreign land.

We are thankful to God for the opportunity to gather at associations. We feel an association is like unto a city.

A city is a place where people of like precious faith abide. Isaiah 33rd chapter 20th verse reads, "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken."

Satan and all his cohorts take great delight in tormenting and trying the elect of God. It is from this and from their love of God, that they come to this city of refuge to feed on the crumbs of mercy from the Master's table. There are strong cords of love that bind the elect together at these meetings, and it reads in Ecclesiastes 4th chapter 12th verse. "A threefold cord is not quickly broken."

Many times the elect of God are in places where there is no place where they can go to a meeting of their faith and order. Psalm 107 verse 4 thru 7 speaks of this, "They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses. And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation." It is because of this that the elect of God travel from south to north, east to west and many thousands of miles for this fellowship and to glean a bit of spiritual food from the preaching. It is here the brethren get renewed hope and are strengthened in the faith once delivered to the saints.

In the 5th chapter of Matthew 14th verse it reads. "Ye are the light of the world." A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. An association cannot be hid. The non-elect in passing by will say one to another, I wonder what that meeting is about. The other, if he knows, will tell him and so the news of an association will travel. Also the brethren will return home to their several abodes and speak of the wonderful meeting at the association. If the Lord blesses the meeting there will radiate from the brethren a warm feeling of fellowship as they tell others of the spiritual joy and hope they received at the meeting.

The brethren, when they speak to each other, speak as fellow citizens of this wonderful city. They all hear and understand in their own tongue, for the word of God is a heart felt message of God to his people. The people of this city speak a language that only they can understand. The people of the world cannot understand it even when they hear it. Psalm 135 verse 17 reads. "They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths."

The elect of God are not at home in this world. They are looking, and have a hope, for a better abode. The new Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. (Galatians 4:26) In this city there will be no old and infirmed nor sick infants. The elect will be like Jesus and will be satisfied. Psalm 17 verse 15.

Zechariah 8th chapter relates a God given vision of the new Jerusalem. The second verse reads, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts; I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury." There is much hope for the elect in this verse for it shows how great the love of God is for his elect people. So great that he gave his only begotten Son to save them from their sins.

The third verse reads, "Thus saith the Lord; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain." The fourth verse reads: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts; There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand." We feel old men represent truth and old women represent mercy. For mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." (Psalm 85:10) We feel the man with his staff indicates authority for all the ages even evermore.

The fifth verse reads: "And the

streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof." We feel this is evidence of the fruit of God's word. The New Jerusalem will not be a dying city but a living and continuing city whose builder and maker is God.

The elect of God are seeking this city and Ezekiel 48th chapter 35th verse reads, "And the name of the city from that day shall be, The Lord is there."

Our pastor is Elder Amasa J. Slauson of Kingston, New York. Meetings during the past year have been held on either the 1st or 5th Sunday of the month, at the home of Woodrow Bellinger, Duanesburg, New York, with no meetings during the winter.

Our membership stands at 3.

Done on behalf of the Middleburg Old School Baptist Church.

Beatrice E. Hocking, Clerk
Written by Woodrow W. Bellinger

GOING TO CHURCH

Why do you go to church? Is it because of social purposes? Is it because of a tradition handed to you by your parents?

Do you go to church to worship God? That being true, then do you believe in God? Where is God and what does he look like? How do you know there is a living God?

To sum it up, there must be something within you that causes you to believe in the only true and living God. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God." (Heb. 11:3) "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the *true* worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for *the Father seeketh such to worship him.* God is a spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:23-24)

Therefore if you really go to church to worship God, there is something within you that gives you this desire. If you really and truly hunger and thirst after righteousness, there is something within you that gives you this spiritual appetite. "Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." (Matt. 5:6)

If you have this desire, you know what the writer meant when he said; "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord." (Psalm 122:1)

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To November 1, 1971)

A. E. Moran, Va.	$ 1.00
John W. Hawley, Va.	3.00
Eva Hollar, N. C.	3.00
Asa Wells, Va.	1.00
Paul Smith, N. C.	3.00
E. W. Faucette, N. C.	2.00
Bertie F. Brown, N. C.	3.00
Opie Thomas, La.	3.00
Mrs. Nettie E. Kenney, Del.	10.00
Fred Clark, Ala.	3.00
Sam Dean, Ala.	5.00
C. B. Carter, Ala.	3.00
J. C. Foster, Ala.	3.00
Bro. Hatcher, Ga.	3.00
Willie Nettles, Ala.	3.00
Annie Kip, N. J.	1.00
Mrs. Verbia Messick, Ala.	3.00
Elder Loyd Wall, Tex.	3.00
Gordon McGee, Ga.	2.00
In Memory of Adelaide Fertney by Daughter Florence V. Fertney, Va.	6.00
M. B. Bailiff, Tex.	10.00
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Mr. Silas Lane, N. C.	1.00
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Miss Olive M. Hodgins, Can.	2.00
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Ruth Lucht, Md.	10.00
M. Sinclair, Can.	3.00
Sam Underwood, N. C.	20.00
Elder R. H. Lyliston, N. C.	2.00

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, with Old Beulah Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1972.

The church is located about six miles from Kenly, N. C. Take Highway 222 west at stoplight in Kenly, and go about one-half mile to crossroads and turn left. The church is at the end of the road.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 203, Stokes, N. C. 27884

EASTERN UNION

The next session of the *Eastern Union* is appointed to be held with the church at Concord in Washington County, N. C. on Saturday and fifth Sunday in January, 1972. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and worship with us. A special invitation is extended to our ministering brethren.

Those traveling east will take 64 Highway to Creswell, N. C., take right turn at East Caroline Bank, go to Main Street, turn left two blocks, turn right on the Cherry Road about two miles to the church.

Elder N. L. Ambrose, Union Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The next session of the *Staunton River Union* is appointed to be held with the Danville Primitive Baptist Church the 5th Sunday in January and Saturday before.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come, and especially the preaching brethren. Leave Highway 41 on Highway 743 and follow signs to meeting house.

R. T. Holley, Church Clerk

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the *Contentnea Union* will be held with Cypress Creek Church, Duplin County, N. C., the fifth Saturday and Sunday in January, 1972.

All lovers of the truth are invited to visit us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

Danville, Virginia January, 1972

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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Dutton, Ontario, Canada

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances should be mailed to Danville, Virginia, as shown below. All notices of meetings and obituaries should be mailed directly to P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Virginia 22110. Articles for publication may be mailed to either address.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

BLACK RIVER UNION

The next session of the *Black River Union* will be held, the Lord willing, with Liberty Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1972. Those traveling from the north on 55 Highway turn left at first traffic light — school house on their left, to 27 Highway, Coats, N. C., go east about 4 miles to second intersection, turn right about 3 miles to church. Those coming via Benson take 27 Highway west, turning left at first intersection about 3 miles to church.

We invite ministering brethren, brethren and friends to be with us.

C. D. Turner

EDITORIAL

The swiftly passing year of 1971 has brought us to again greet our brethren and friends at the beginning of the one hundred and fortieth volume of the **Signs of the Times.** We realize full well that only the will of the Lord in providing comfort and edification for his people, has caused the **Signs** to be continued under all the circumstances that have attended its publication during these many years. When one editor or set of editors was removed, mostly by death, the Lord provided others; and we believe He will do the same in the future.

It has taken the financial support and the contributions of writings by many brethren and friends, to support the paper. These have been provided for in the will of the Lord, so that the gospel has been maintained and the doctrine of God our Saviour fully proclaimed as revealed in the Scriptures and hearts of the Lord's people. Paul wrote the Corinthians, "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." This, we can plainly say, is what makes the difference between those who believe the Scriptures fully as the written word of God, and those who acknowledge them, yet for the most part deny them in practice.

Nobody believes the truth except those who have been quickened from death in trespasses and sins, and brought to the New Birth to see the kingdom of God, — and the solemn and glorious beauties therein. These are the only people that we know of who make mention of an experience of grace, and give their exercises in these things as the reason they now see and believe differently than they once did, and know that salvation is only by the grace of God unto his people; and not in any way by the works of any man to satisfy the judgment pronounced against all men.

This knowledge manifests the difference between the Lord's people and all other people; it is this that causes the one to hold the Bible to be the sole exponent of God's manifest will as revealed in the written word, and specifically those to whom the Spirit takes the things of God and shows unto them. Both the scriptures (the written word) and the things revealed unto individuals are of the same spirit, for holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, as Peter wrote. But on the other hand, all others either deny the Scriptures or believe them half-heartedly, since they substitute much in their doctrines and practices which the Spirit has not revealed. And this, we hold, is contrary to the admonition of Jude when he wrote, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

So if any should inquire why Old School Baptists are different in doctrine and order from other people, this is the reason. It is not just merely by opinions but deep rooted conviction when the Spirit overshadows all carnality and brings light where there was darkness, peace and joy where there was trouble, hope where there was despair, a firm foundation where there was a sinking, and a song of praise where there was no hope. To these things they testify as they give the reason of their hope, telling how great things the Lord has done for them. These things testify of the spiritual birth. Without similar experiences there is no love and fellowship one for the other; and no reason why one should be received into the church.

We had not thought to write in this wise, but rather to greet our readers with a note of thanksgiving to our God for all his past blessings, which we acknowledge have all been by his grace and because of his great love. As we

reminisce we see God's hand in all things both in nature and in grace; and as we think of the future, we are glad we are in the same almighty hands. We have nothing, we are nothing, and never will be or have anything except through His loving kindness to us. Therefore we desire in all things to give Him all the praise, honor and glory.

But for the faith given us we would face the future with considerable fear and alarm in these troublesome times. Yet that faith causes us to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord: — it just speaks with an inward voice, saying, God is yet ruling, and all is well.

May God's ministers be blessed to preach the sovereignty of God over all worlds, times and events, contending for the faith He once delivered to the saints, to the comfort and edification of the brethren, and to the praise, honor and glory of God whose people we are.

The Editors express their appreciation for the support of the brethren and friends in the past, and trust that the Lord will give you the desire and enable you to continue to enjoy reading the paper; and to support the publication by your subscriptions and writings as in the past.

We regret that we have not been able due to lack of space, to publish all the writings we have received, but have undertaken to use our best judgment in the matter, knowing that the brethren enjoy both doctrine and experience. We are always glad to hear from our readers. As they are interested so are we able to keep the paper coming to them regularly.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." (Matt. 9:12)

The occasion on which our Lord spake these words, is stated in the preceding connection. After he had called Matthew, who was a publican, it came to pass that he sat at meat in the house, and behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, "Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?" When Jesus heard *that,* he said unto them, namely, to the Pharisees, "They that be whole need not a physician," &c.

In the figurative language of our Lord, he assumes the character of a Physician, and in that character came to cure those who were diseased and unable to cure themselves, but the Pharisees of that day, like those of our times, supposed that his mission was to them that were whole — to receive the complimentary greetings of the pious, the self-righteous, and those who had never known the exceeding sinfulness of sin, nor felt themselves guilty and helpless sinners against God; and to bestow on them high encomiums for their zeal and piety. As a Physician, they felt no need of him. They were Abraham's seed, and never in bondage to any man, and indignantly spurned the idea of being made free by him. They like their brethren of the present age, no doubt held the doctrine of *Free Agency;* and being totally ignorant of their leprous and diseased condition, gloried in their own conceited righteousness. But our Redeemer informed them that his object in coming into the world, was to seek and to save that which was lost. He had come to display his power and skill, and healing medicines on those who knowing their malady could appreciate them.

"They that be whole need not a physician." Jesus had come down from heaven for the benefit of the needy, and not for any who were able to dispense with his services. It would be a waste to bestow skill, labor and heal-

ing medicines on those who being whole do not need them; but the work of the Savior was not to be wasted, nor misapplied. Having thus reproved their blindness and ignorance of his character, object and work, and thereby justified his course in associating with publicans and sinners, of which they had complained — he bade them "Go, and learn what this meaneth; I will have mercy, and not sacrifice; for I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Although more than eighteen hundred years have elapsed since he gave this task to the scribes and pharisees, and although they have monopolized all the Colleges and Theological Schools which have existed in the world from that day to this, for the purpose of teaching religion as a science to men, they have not to this hour found out the meaning of our Saviour's words.

Not because of any ambiguity or want of clearness in the words; for no language could be more plain, simple and emphatic; but because the words referred to the Mediatorial work of Christ, and therefore involved a spiritual subject, of which no natural man can possess any knowledge. Up to this day, all pharisees, well-worshipers, free agents, workmongers and arminians in general, suppose that Christ came not so much to minister, as to be ministered unto, — to receive gifts, sacrifices, honors and fame, as though his object was to enrich himself. But they did not then understand his character nor his object; neither do they now; for the same description of religionists to this day, prove by their doctrines and their works that although they have been "ever learning, they have never been able to come to a knowledge of the truth." In this their speech betrays them, when they talk of coming to the help of the Lord against the mighty, as though it were the Lord who stands in need of help, instead of his coming to the help of Israel, against the mighty; hence they talk of being co-workers with God, and engaged in the enterprise of converting sinners to God, in order to give Christ a kingdom, or to enlarge his dominions, and add to his triumphs.

Still farther, it is very common for them to represent the Lord as being bankrupt, in every sense of the word; his treasury empty, his power exhausted, and his cause languishing for the want of human aid! The people are called on to contribute funds to replenish his empty treasury, and to aid in *means* and *instrumentalities*, to bring subjects under his government. Dead sinners are gravely told that he has exhausted his resources on them; that he has done all he can for them; and the next move must be made by them, or they will certainly be lost forever. They must *minister to him* something, if it be only to give him their deceitful and desperately wicked hearts, or his work will fail for want of such ministration. They represent him as standing and knocking at the dead sinner's heart for liberty to come in, until his head is filled with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night; but all availing nothing until the sinner can be induced to minister to him, or offer some sacrifice to give efficiency to the Savior's blood and righteousness.

But all this Ashdod jargon would cease forever, if they knew what this meaneth, He will have mercy and not sacrifice. But this is hidden from their eyes. That he will have mercy, on condition that the sinner will approach him by sacrifice or gifts, conditions and terms, they believe; but that he will have mercy and reject all sacrifices, is a matter they have not yet learned. That he has had mercy and not sacrifice, every heaven-born sinner knows; for he has been taught it experimentally by the Spirit. When stripped of all their works, means, and instruments, — when naked and bare, destitute of a particle of righteousness in themselves, guilt stricken, helpless and sinking in their sins, having nothing to offer, and deeply sensible that if they could command the cattle of a thousand hills or ten thousand rivers of oil, the offering

of all would avail them nothing, in their extremity, they learned, that He would have mercy and not sacrifice, — mercy without an equivalent either in works or in gifts.

For I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. If men were truly righteous, they would need no repentance or change; but there are none righteous, as the scriptures positively testify; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Every mouth is stopped, and all the world is guilty before God; but if we were indeed righteous, as the pharisees of ancient and of modern times claim to be, or as they would represent to the unconverted that they must make themselves before they can become recipients of God's saving mercy, they would be beyond the reach of salvation: for Christ came not to call such, and there is salvation in none other than Christ.

This doctrine of God our Savior, while it disconcerts the proud self-righteous pharisee, and boasting arminian, is happily adapted to the case of the lost, the helpless, the guilt-burdened, weary and heavy laden sinner. Here is just such a Physician as he needs to cleanse him of his leprosy. He can speak the words, "I will; be thou clean," and a perfect cure is effected. As a Physician he understands the case of all his suffering dying patients; and he is able to cure them all. And as they are too poor to offer him a fee for his official services, how consoling to learn that he will have no sacrifices; it is without money and without price; without fee or reward. The quickened sinner who knows that he is lost, wretched. and undone, rejoices in him who came, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. This is not calling them to produce repentance, nor to bring him repentance as a condition or means of obtaining his saving grace, but he has repentance to give them, and with it the forgiveness of sins; for he will not be ministered to; but he will minister; because he is exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel and the remission of sins.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, May, 1858.)

OBITUARIES

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT FOR SISTER MALLIE TART

It has pleased our Heavenly Father in His infinite wisdom, love and mercy to remove our dear faithful sister Mallie Tart on October 27, 1970. She was born July 7, 1898, the daughter of the late Johnny Hodges and Dorothy McLamb Hodges, having lived 72 years, 3 months and 20 days.

She was united in holy matrimony to William Bernice Tart December 3, 1916. To this union 15 children were born. He preceded her in death April 30, 1968, and a son Monroe, May 12, 1970. Also 3 children in infancy. She leaves to mourn five daughters and six sons, seventeen grandchildren, three step grandchildren, six great grandchildren, including a great host of friends and relatives.

She joined Liberty Primitive Baptist Church under Elder Lester E. Lee the day it was organized in a grove across the road from where the church now stands the first Sunday in August, 1955. All her life the aged people saw the characteristics of a true Christian in her. We are grateful that we can say our departed sister filled a seat in church every Saturday and Sunday as regular as she possibly could. She was just as faithful to all her family, a kind tender and loving friend to all who knew her. The church at Liberty loved and will miss her, but we hope and feel our loss is our sister's eternal gain. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace and was abiding in hope of being taken on the wings of God's love to that celestial city, eternal in heaven whose builder and maker is God. We rejoice in this because she professed a hope in an all wise all powerful and merciful God. She had a desire to give God all the honor and praise for a finished and complete salvation wrought by the shedding of the blood of his glorious son Jesus Christ, a salvation complete in the mind and purpose of God before the foundation of the world. Stop, think, do we have a right to grieve? — only for her absence.

Her funeral was conducted in Liberty Church by her pastor, Elder C. Dewey Turner, and her grandson Leon Tart. Interment was in the McLamb's Cemetery, Johnston County, N. C. beneath a great mound of beautiful flowers, which represented the many that loved and respected her.

RESOLVED: That a copy of these respects be sent to the *Signs of the Times*, a copy to the family, and one kept for the church record.

Done by order of the church in conference October 31, 1970.

Brother James Young
Sister Dollie Stewart
Sister Lovie Young
Committee

JETHRO R. MILLS

It is with a sad and lonely heart that we attempt to write the obituary of our dear father, Jethro R. Mills. He was born on June 8, 1883, and departed on July 10, 1971. The funeral was conducted on Monday, July 12, by his pastor, Elder A. L. McKinney, assisted by Elders D. B. Stokes, Jr., and M. E. Garner. The throngs of people and flowers were good indications of the feelings of his fellow man.

Daddy was a son of James Allen Mills and Anliza Arnold Mills. On December 20, 1905, he married our wonderful mother, the former Lucy Jane Hardee. Of this union were born eight children, three of whom preceded them in death. The surviving children are J. Elbert Mills, Lyman M. Mills, Wardell H. Mills, Mrs. Gentry S. Porter, and Mrs. Durward G. Hart. Also surviving are eleven grandchildren and seventeen great grandchildren. Our mother passed away January 10, 1970.

On the second Sunday in June, 1910, he with his beloved wife were baptized, she having joined on Saturday, and he on Sunday at Red Banks Church. They were baptized by Elder G. W. Stokes, their pastor. A few years later he became a deacon and remained so until his death. Daddy lived true to his professions. We believe daddy was a true Primitive Baptist if ever there was one. He always filled his place at church and loved to visit his sister churches. His home was always open to all his brethren.

At the time of his death he was the oldest member of Red Banks Church in both age and membership.

Dearest daddy, thou hast left us
And our loss we deeply feel,
But 'tis God who hath bereft us
He can all our sorrows heal.

The golden chain is broken,
A voice we love is stilled,
A place is vacant in our home
Which never can be filled.

He is gone but not forgotten,
Never will his memory fade,
Sweetest thoughts will ever linger
Around the grave where he is laid.

We feel our great loss but know daddy is in a place far better than we who remain behind — the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away.

Written by his saddened and lonely daughters.

Jane M. Hart and Elsie M. Porter

MRS. MOLLIE EDWARDS WILLOUGHBY COBB

Again our Heavenly Father called a dear sister from our midst. She lived a rich, wholesome life. She loved her church and filled her seat as long as she was able to travel. She was wonderfully blessed to have a family and inlaws who loved her dearly, who rendered all that loving hands can do on this earth. She had faithful neighbors and friends who loved her, as she loved them, with an everlasting love.

Sister Mollie was the daughter of James Franklin Edwards and Pattie Mathews Edwards, born November 16, 1884, making her stay here on earth 87 years, 6 months and 8 days.

As a young maiden, she married Benjamin Willoughby. They had one son, W. Curtis Willoughby, who wasn't very old when they lost husband and Daddy by death.

Years later, she became the bride of James Gray Cobb. He had lost his wife leaving five children, Ernest Cobb, Lester Cobb, Mrs. Sarah Cobb Deans, Amos Golde Cobb and Mrs. Mary Cobb Gay. They had success with their families together. To their union, were two sons, James Larry Cobb and Shady Gray Cobb. She faced family deaths humbly: her son, James; her husband, James Gray; Ernest, Lester, and Sarah. Surviving her are Curtis Willoughby, Amos Golde Cobb, Mrs. Mary C. Gay and Shady Cobb; one sister, Mrs. Annie Mae Edwards Peeden; several grandchildren and great grandchildren, also nieces and nephews.

Sister Cobb united with Autrey Creek Church the First Sunday in September 1957. She was baptized by her Pastor, Elder R. B. Denson. That was a happy day for her and all that were present.

She died on June 8, 1971. Her funeral was held at Farmville Funeral Home Chapel by Elders A. P. Mewbern and Joe Sawyer. She was laid to rest under a beautiful mound of flowers in Queen Anne Cemetery, Fountain, N. C. beside her husband. May God bless her family and loved ones is our prayer.

Written by request of Autrey Creek Church the first Sunday in July 1971.

By: Leona Wooten Manning
1003 Burton Street
Rocky Mount, N. C. 27801

Resolved, That three copies be made: 1) For

Autrey Creek Church record, 2) For *Signs of Times*, 3) For the family, Shady and Susy Cobb, Fountain, N. C.

Elder Joe Sawyer, Moderator
Joe B. Coker, Clerk

DEACON
THEODORE MARSHALL MELSON

Brother Theodore M. Melson, highly esteemed member of Flatty Creek Church, passed away May 13, 1971, aged 82. He was the son of John William and Mrs. Adeline Crank Melson and the husband of Sister Lucy Scarborough Melson. Besides his widow, surviving are a daughter, Mrs. Irene Hayman, four grandchildren, four great grandchildren, and a great great grandchild.

Brother Melson joined the church June 22, 1952, and was baptized by the late Elder A. B. Ayers. He attended his meetings regularly as long as his health permitted him to do so, but was unable to attend same for sometime before his decease. He was ordained a deacon in November, 1953, and filled this office in a commendable way. He was a person of an amiable disposition, and to know him was to like him. He was very generous in contributing of his means to the church, his Pastor, and visiting ministers. He delighted in hearing the everlasting gospel preached with power by able ministers of the New Testament, evincing a knowledge of the joyful sound. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." We feel that our departed Brother is now rejoicing in the light of the countenance of the dear Redeemer in that celestial city, where there is nothing to mar his unending joy, in the mansions of glory that Christ went to prepare for the redeemed, His bride. What must it be to be there in that city so fair?

"Where Jesus, Son of man and God,
Triumphant from his wars,
Walks in rich garments, dipped in blood,
And shows his glorious scars."

Brother Melson's funeral was conducted by Elder I. S. Conner, his Pastor, and interment was in West Lawn Cemetery, Elizabeth City, N. C., where the body will repose until the great rising day, when Christ, the righteous Judge, shall come to take his ransomed people home.

Written by order of the church in conference on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in July, 1971. One copy to be sent to the *Signs of the Times*, one to the family, and one retained for the church records.

C. W. Vass

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT
FOR BROTHER
WILLIAM STANLEY LEGGETT, SR.

Whereas, it has pleased our eternal Heavenly Father to call from our midst our beloved brother, Brother William Stanley Leggett, Sr., I in submission to a request of the members composing the Spring Green Primitive Baptist Church, will attempt, the Lord willing, to pen a few expressions in his memory.

Brother Leggett entered this life on January 9, 1890, and was called home on June 11, 1971, thus his sojourn in this life was for 81 years, 5 months, and 2 days. His first marriage was to the late Bertie Roberson Leggett. His second marriage was to Sister Eva Roberson Leggett who survives. He was the son of the late Jesse Augustus and Betty Johnson Leggett. He was a native of Martin County where he spent all of his life.

Brother Leggett united with the Spring Green Church in May, 1951, thus holding membership for approximately 20 years. He manifested much love for the church and was faithful to attend his meetings when his health would permit him to do so. Our dear brother was very feeble during his latter days and his activities were somewhat limited yet he was blessed to endure the same with much patience. He was a faithful husband and father esteeming the welfare of his love ones above that of himself.

Brother Leggett had a love for the doctrine of sovereign grace and possessed a hope in an all wise, powerful, and merciful God. He rejoiced in an abiding hope of being wafted on the wings of God's love and mercy through the atoning blood of his Saviour, Jesus Christ, to that eternal city where all but love is done away.

Surviving are his widow, Sister Eva Roberson Leggett, 1 son, 5 daughters, 18 grandchildren, and 11 great grandchildren. Also surviving are 3 half brothers and 3 half sisters. To the family we extend our heartfelt sympathy and trust that you have and will continue to be comforted by the divine spirit of God is our prayer.

Funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Elder E. C. Harrison. Interment was in the Spring Green Church cemetery beneath an array of beautiful flowers.

RESOLVED, That a copy be placed on the church records, a copy be sent to the family, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of conference the fourth Saturday in June, 1971.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Johnny Ray Gardner, Committee

MRS. LELA A. CALVERT

My mother died December 8, 1968, and her sister was going to send the obituary in, but never did; so she asked why I didn't send in a combination of what was in the county paper and part of a letter Elder J. L. Sanders wrote about her; and Elder Sanders said it would be all right with him. I hope it is not too late to publish in the *Signs of the Times*, as I feel that is what she would want.

"Sister Lela A. Calvert was born in Calhoun County, Ala., January 17, 1896, and died December 8, 1968. She was the daughter of Byron Gossein and Mrs. Emma May Gossein. She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church at Warren, and was the wife of Louie A. Calvert. Surviving her are four sons: Edward, Harrell, Delbert and Howard; and four daughters: Mrs. Sibyl Haynes, Mrs. Meta Mills, Mrs. Jean Briant and Mrs. Jerry Neely; one sister, Mrs. Will Gambill, and one brother, Walter Gossein; twenty-two grandchildren and five great grandchildren. Her funeral was conducted by Elder David Turner in Warren, Arkansas." — County paper.

Here is what Elder Sanders wrote about her. "She, being one of the most true and faithful members of the church, we certainly have a sweet memory of her. We know she went to church services when her physical health did not allow her by any means to do so. I marvelled at her faithfulness the last few times I saw her at the services. The last time I saw the precious sister, feeling her gracious faithfulness to the church and cause of Christ, I felt I may never see her again in this life. Now bless her faithful, true and sweet heart, she has fallen asleep in Christ, and all His exceedingly great and precious promises, to live eternally with Him in Glory. There she will have no more sickness, sorrow, pain, nor grief, but live in eternal Glory in likeness of her blessed Redeemer forever. We have the blessed assurance and consolation that our loss is her eternal gain. We hope when our time comes, we too can fall asleep in that precious faith she so greatly and graciously manifested in word and deed while she was here in this life with us."

Submitted by her daughter

Mrs. Sibyl Haynes

SISTER ZILPHIA C. CREECH

Sister Zilphia C. Creech was born January 25, 1889, in Johnston County, N. C. It pleased the Lord to call her home from much suffering in this life February 21, 1971, making her stay on earth 82 years.

She was married to Joseph H. Creech January 29, 1907, who was a deacon in Creech's Church for thirty-two years prior to his death October 9, 1948.

Sister Creech united with the church at Creech's in July, 1912, and remained a faithful member until her health failed and she was unable to attend; even then her desire to hear preaching was so great that the church members and friends gathered in her home and held services, which she greatly enjoyed. She was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace, and to hear the gospel was food to her soul.

She is survived by five sons: Joseph A. of Selma; W. Grover, of Smithfield; Rodney L., R. Avery and R. Ivey, of Kenly, N. C.; and four daughters: Mrs. Estelle Brantley, Newport News, Va.; Mrs. Nadell Hughes, Raleigh, N. C.; Mrs. Margaret Johnson, Selma, and Mrs. Rosa Mae Pittman, of Wilson, N. C. Also surviving are thirty grandchildren and twenty-six great grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted at Creech's Church by her pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes. Her body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, a token of love in which she was held; there to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour. It is our belief that then she will be raised to see Him as he is, and be like Him. This was her hope.

Her children have lost a wonderful mother, and her church a faithful member; but we bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, feeling our loss is her gain.

May God in his great wisdom comfort all who mourn her passing and reconcile us to His holy will.

Written by Sisters Mavis Pope and Nellie Hocutt.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Jeffrey O. Creech, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT OF SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

In the providence of an all wise God, three of our beloved sisters have been taken from our midst in the past year: Sister Mollie Pilchard, of the Snow Hill Church; Sister Alice Watson, of Salisbury Church; and Sister Annie Truitt, of Little Creek Church. We know by their talk and walk that they trusted in the all wise God and not in their own works.

Our loss is their eternal gain. Let us of the Salisbury Association bow in humble submission to the holy will of God, and say, "Thy will be done, O God."

Elder James Poole, Moderator
Maude Laws, Honorary Clerk
William S. Adkins, Clerk
William Davis, Sr., Asst. Clerk

(Written by Brother Frank Holland.)

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

J. J. WATSON, Pastor

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 10:30 A. M.

V. C. HARTZOG, Pastor

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

A. B. CHUMNEY
D. W. COLLINS, Pastors

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., six miles SE. of Sulligent, Alabama.

C. C. HAND, Pastor
5840 Court O C P
Birmingham, Ala.

MACEDONIA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located one and one-half miles Southwest of Sulligent, Alabama, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M. All lovers of the truth are invited.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
HOUSTON PITTS, Clerk
Steens, Miss.

MT. ZION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each 4th Sunday at 11 A. M. about 10 miles N. W. of Birmingham just off of 78 Highway in Westwood, 2601 Forrestdale Blvd.

H. C. MOON
C. C. HAND, Pastors

OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., 6 miles S. W. of Winfield, Ala.

C. C. HAND, Pastor

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each second Sunday afternoon at 2 P. M., ten miles SW. of Fayette, Alabama.

C. C. HAND
R. W. RHODES, Pastors

ELAM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located two miles North of Goshen, Pike County, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 o'clock.

J. P. MORGAN, Pastor
A. C. CARTER, Clerk
1335 Avalon Lane,
Montgomery 6, Ala.

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.

C. C. HAND
R. W. RHODES, Pastors

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

V. C. HARTZOG, Pastor

WRITES CREEK CHURCH, 5 miles south of Slocomb, Ala., meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

E. B. HUGHES
B. A. ANDERSON
J. A. TEW, Moderators
J. T. COLLINS, Clerk
Slocomb, Ala.

MT. CARMEL CHURCH, Coffee Springs, Alabama, meets each first Sunday 11 A. M.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

PILGRIM REST CHURCH, located five miles north of Fordyce, Arkansas (about ¾ mile off Hy. 167, and located near Barnes Lumber Co.) meets each third Sunday at 10:30.

W. W. HUDSON, JR. Pastor

NAOMI OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, six miles south of McKenzie, Alabama, meets the second Sundays in December, February, April, etc.

ELDER W. C. STANLEY, Pastor
Duncanville, Ala., Rt. 1
E. C. WEAVER, Clerk
Rt. 5, Box 47, Andalusia, Ala.

SHILOH OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, seven miles Northeast of Andalusia, Alabama, meets the second Sundays in July, September, November, etc.

ELDER W. C. STANLEY, Pastor
Duncanville, Ala., Rt. 1

NORA LEE McLEOD, Clerk
Red Level, Ala., Rt. 3

MT. ZION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located 14 miles south of Fayette, Ala., meets each first Sunday at 2 P. M.

W. L. NORRIS, Pastor
1414 8th St., Tuscaloosa, Ala.
EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.

MT. CARMEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located southeast of Millport, Ala., meets second Sunday afternoons at 2 P. M.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.

PLEASANT RIDGE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located at Moores Bridge, Ala., meets each 4th Sunday at 11 A. M.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.

SALEM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located 6 miles south of Gordo, Ala., meets each 4th Sunday at 2 P. M.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.
W. L. NORRIS, Co-Pastor
1414 8th Street
Tuscaloosa, Ala.

MOUNTAIN FORK CHURCH, Madison County, Ala., meets each first and third Sundays at 11:00 A. M.

R. C. SIMMONS
R. H. HALE, Pastors
JAMES COLBERT, Clerk

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

WHITE WATER OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located about one mile northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, meets each fourth Sunday afternoon at 2:30 P. M. The annual Homecoming is still held the first Sunday in July and Saturday before, with services beginning at 10:30.

DAVID E. TURNER, Pastor

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Compton, California, meets each fourth Sunday at the home of L. W. Langwell, 12812 S. Williams Street.

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in the United States), meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is located one mile south of Newark, Delaware, just off of Highway 896.

JAMES POOLE, Pastor

NEW HARMONY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Hiram, Ga., meets every second Sunday at 11 o'clock.

C. C. HAND
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastors
GLENN RAGSDALE, Clerk

PLEASANT VALLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas. Meets with Mrs. Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C. on each second Sunday.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE LOST CREEK CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, meets first Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Kentucky, ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton, on Grayson Highway. Leave U. S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

NEW HOPE CHURCH (better known as Lick Creek) meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Kentucky.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

NEW HOPE CHURCH, Spearsville, La. meets first Sundays and Saturday afternoons before at 3:30.

J. L. SMITH, Pastor
C. C. BARRON, Clerk

CONCORD CHURCH about 12 miles north of Bastrop, La. one-quarter mile west of the Bastrop, La. and Hamburg Road, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

G. W. JONES, Pastor
GENEVA PETTIS, Clerk

GOOD HOPE CHURCH in Arkansas, about one mile north of Oakland, just across the State line, meets each second Sunday at 2:00 P. M.

G. W. JONES, Pastor
INA NEWSOM, Clerk

LIBERTY HILL CHURCH, located six miles northeast of Farmerville, La., ¼ mile east of Farmerville-Marion Highway, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30. Services are also held on each second Sunday at 10:30.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

UNION CHURCH, located near Linville, La., meets each third Sunday at 10:30 and on Saturday afternoon before at 2:30 P. M.

DAVID E. TURNER, Pastor

BETHEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located three miles N. E. of Steens, Miss. on Millport Road, meets third Sunday afternoons at 2 P. M.

H. C. MOON, Pastor
Hanceville, Ala.
EULIE McCOOL, Asst. Pastor
Steens, Miss.

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Baltimore, Maryland, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Street, near Calvert.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on Falls Road about twenty miles north of Baltimore.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

HOPEWELL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Hopewell, N. J., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. All visitors are welcome.

ARTHUR R. WARREN, Pastor
MARY L. HELLINGS, Clerk
4 Maple Lane
Pennington, N. J. 08534

OLIVE AND HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Shokan, N. Y., meets each 2nd Sunday at 2:00 P. M. March through and including November.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
DEACON E. K. ADSIT, Clerk

THE WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Warwick, Orange County, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are held at A. R. Vail's home, 55 Maple Ave., Warwick at 11 A. M.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

THE MIDDLEBURG OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH meets at the home of Deacon Woodrow W. Bellinger, Duanesburg, N. Y. on fifth Sundays when the Lord so wills.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
BEATRICE E. HOCKING, Clerk
419 Toll St., Scotia, N. Y.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, New York City, meets every first and third Sundays at McBurney Branch Y. W. C. A. 215 W. 23rd Street, corner of 7th Ave. (Elevator to 2nd floor.) 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M. All visitors are welcome.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

THE WILSON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Wilson, N. C., meets each second Sunday at 3 P. M., and Saturday evening before at 7:30 P. M. The location is on the corner of Green and Jackson Streets.

D. B. STOKES, Pastor
MRS. BETTIE RICHARDSON, Clerk

FALLS OF TAR RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Rocky Mount, N. C., meets each second Sunday and Saturday before. Quarterly meetings March, June, September and December.

D. B. STOKES, Pastor
NINA PEARSON, Clerk

MOONS CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Providence, N. C. off Route 86, on Park Springs Road, meets each third Sunday morning at 11 A. M.

KENNETH KEY, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday afternoon

before at 2:00 P. M.

C. M. HAGGOOD, Pastor
ANA STEWART, Clerk
Granite, Okla. 73547

BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin, Oregon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes. Address communications to Lloyd Spikes, Elgin, Oregon.

ERNEST ATTEBERY, Pastor
SPENCER BURCH, Clerk

ROCK SPRINGS OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, meets each first Sunday at 10:30. The meeting house is located on highway 222, about one-quarter mile of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets by appointment on 5th Sunday afternoons.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

THE FIRST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH of Memphis, Tenn., meets each Sunday at 10:30 A. M., except the first three weeks in October when we dismiss for associations in the area. The church is located on Andrews Road, one block north of Highway 70 in the Ellendale Community, 7 miles east of Memphis.

H. R. PRINCE, Co-Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis
C. S. YOUNG, Co-Pastor
807 Pope St., Memphis
RICHARD H. CAMPBELL, Clerk

CANE CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and is located nine miles Southwest of Martin, Tennessee. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
ELMER PRINCE, Clerk
Clinton, Ky.

BORDEAUX PREDESTINARIAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Nashville, Tenn., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. The church is located on the old Hydes Ferry Road in Bordeaux, in Nashville. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE WALNUT FORK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Cottage Grove, Tennessee, meets on the second Sunday of each month.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor
R. L. VEAZEY, SR., Clerk

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Sharps Chapel, Tenn., meets at 11 A. M. each second Sunday. We are located about fifteen miles north of Maynardville, Tenn., on Big Valley Road. There is a sign on the main highway showing where to turn.

JOHN WILDER, Moderator
N. E. LAY, Clerk

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, Houston, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before 10:30 A. M. Church is located at 815 Little York Road between Highway 75 and East Texas Freeway 59.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
JIMMY LINDSEY, Clerk
JERRY EVERS, Asst. Clerk

MT. ZION CHURCH, Rt. 2, Box 23, Weslaco, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.; and each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. seven miles West of Weslaco, on highway 83.

JOE L. HAMRICK, Pastor
E. B. AULT, Clerk

SARDIS CHURCH, Amarillo, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 10:30, in the home of E. J. Parsons, 1711 Lincoln Street.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, has moved their meeting place to 3629 8th Avenue. They meet each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Take College Ave. bus to Butler and Ryon; go one block West, then half block North to church.

C. U. LANDERS, Pastor

THE ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST CHURCH, Lawn, Texas, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
MRS. NOLA STEWART, Clerk

AN ARM OF PILGRIM REST CHURCH, meets each second Sunday and Saturday night before at Earth, Texas.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
A. A. CHAMBERS, Clerk

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets on the second and fourth Sundays of each month at 10 A. M., in the meeting house at intersection of Highways 123 and 87. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

GERALD D. SHIPMAN, Pastor
LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk

THE OLD SALEM CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS, four miles South of Teague, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

SAINTS REST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each Sunday at 10:30 A. M., at 2710 Engle Street.

C. C. MORRIS, Pastor
D. G. CONNELL, Clerk

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Winnsboro, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
E. M. REEVES, Clerk

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30.

LLOYD WALL, Pastor
GUY SISK, Clerk

The churches of which Elder E. J. Lambert is pastor meet as follows:

PHARON, meets first Sunday morning and Saturday night before, 5 miles NE Hawkins, Texas.

REHOBETH, meets second Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles N ElDorado, Arkansas.

NEILA RYAN, Clerk
1601 N. Emmett
ElDorado, Arkansas

BETHEL, meets third Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles NE ElDorado, Arkansas.

JEAN H. BURNES, Clerk
606 N. Parkway,
ElDorado, Arkansas

GOOD HOPE, meets fourth Sunday morning and Saturday morning before 7 miles NE Winnsboro, Texas.

GERTRUDE JONES, Clerk
905 Y Drive
Winnsboro, Texas

ANTIOCH CHURCH near Camden, Arkansas, meets each 2nd Sunday at 2 o'clock.

Everyone welcomed.

ELDER E. J. LAMBERT, Pastor
306 Richardson St.
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located on Centreville Road, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia.

ARTHUR L. CARTER, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH meets each fifth Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is near Lucketts, about eight miles north of Leesburg, Va.

L. D. DUKE, Clerk
Charlestown, W. Va.

MT. ZION CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, Virginia. on Route 50, between Washington and Winchester, Virginia.

MRS. RAY HAWLING, Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are aways glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington

meet with us. For information phone Manassas 368-4857.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 8:00 P. M., Fairmont Park, 2023 Tidewater Drive.

C. N. BUNN, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Qualla Road, Chesterfield County, Virginia, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M. Following are directions to the meeting house: South from Richmond at McGuire Circle, take Rt. 360 nine miles to "Longest" Service Station; turn left and go one mile, and turn right on No. 363 one mile to church.

ELDER C. N. BUNN, Pastor
MRS. WM. L. LEE, Clerk
4407 Clairton Rd.
Richmond, Va. 23234

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville, Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday night before, on Bradley Road.

H. W. WRAY, Pastor
R. T. HOLLEY, Clerk

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each first Sunday at 11:00 o'clock. This church is located seven miles west of Gretna, Virginia on 605 one-half mile from Route 40. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
RUTH MATTOX, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Chatham, Va.

BELLVIEW PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday night before at 7:30. This church is located near Cave Springs about four miles from Roanoke, Virginia, one mile from 221. All visitors are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
J. A. SOWDER, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Salem, Va.

SANDY LEVEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each third Sunday afternoon at 2:30. This church is located on Route 635 about 5 miles south from Hardy, Va. 10 miles from Vinton, Va. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each fourth Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday before at 2:00 o'clock. This church is located on highway 623 about two miles from Fairystone Park. All visitors are welcome. No Saturday meetings during winter months.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
CLAUDE R. HOPKINS, Clerk
908 Myrtle Rd.
Martinsville, Va.

BETHEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, of Predestinarian Faith, of Mossyrock, Washington, meets each 3rd Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday before at 2:00 o'clock. For information write the Clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. OPAL HUNTTING, Clerk
Silver Creek, Wash. 98585

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, Naches, Washington, meets at 11:00 A. M. each second Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MARGUERITE SIMPSON, Clerk
1306 Fairview Ave.
Yakima, Wash. 98901

The churches of which Elder D. V. Spangler is pastor meet as follows:

MONTICELLO, on U. S. 29, between Greensboro and Reidsville, N. C. Services first Sundays at 11 o'clock.

REIDSVILLE CHURCH, Lindsay Street, Reidsville, N. C., meets each Second Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

DURHAM CHURCH, Durham, N. C. on Pacific Avenue, west side of town, just off of Highway 501 leading from Durham to Roxboro, N. C. Services every third Sunday at 11:00 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:00 P. M.

DAN RIVER, at Mayfield, N. C. on U. S. Highway 700 leading from Eden, N. C. to Danville, Va., about ten miles from Eden. Services each fourth Sunday at 11:00 A. M. and Saturday evening before at 7:30 P. M.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 140 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1972 NO. 2

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/72
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE LAST SUPPER
(Matt. 26:26-29)

At the last supper, we read that
Jesus took bread and blessed and brake,
And gave it to the disciples,
Who this his body were told to take . . .

"And he took the cup, and gave thanks,
And (then) gave it to them, saying,
Drink ye all of it" — this his blood,
Shed following his betraying.

He also did say, "I will not
Drink henceforth of this fruit of th' vine
Until . . . I drink it new with you
In my Father's kingdom" — NEW WINE.

Somehow, the words quoted last above
Have been sweet to me for many years,
And at one particular time,
They did bring this sinner to tears.

Partaking of the emblems of
The Saviour's body and of his blood
Is a solemn and sacred thing,
Directed by the Son of God.

In remembrance of him, it is
To be done until he comes again,
To take his ransomed people home,
Eternally with him to reign.

What a joyful day it will be
When he comes in the clouds with power,
To judge the world in righteousness,
But we are not to know the hour.

He'll come as a thief in the night,
We are informed in Holy Writ,
"To be glorified in his saints,"
Who for heaven have been made fit.

C. W. Vass
409 New York Avenue
Elizabeth City, N. C.

BIBLE AND SIGNS MUCH COMFORT

1125 E. Main Street
Albemarle, N. C. 28001

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed is a check for $10.00 to renew our subscription for two more years, and use the rest as you see fit.

We have taken the paper several years and have enjoyed it so much — and more so now since we cannot attend church due to my husband's poor health. We enjoy the sermons and experiences of the ministers and brethren and sisters. My husband will be 94 years of age November 14th. His eyesight has grown too dim for him to do any reading. I read the Bible and the **Signs** to him, and we both get a lot of comfort from them.

Trust the Lord will bless you to continue publishing the paper, and may you have the best of health.

In hope,
F. J. and Minnie Roberts

NEWS FROM CHURCH AT HOUSTON

15514 South Brentwood,
Channelview, Texas 77530

Dear Editors:

Through the medium of the Signs of the Times, we here of Shepherd Fold Church, 815 Little York Road, Houston, Texas, would like to invite others of like faith and order, to visit us in that sweet fellowship and brotherly love that can only be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.

This unworthy writer has been a member here at Shepherd Fold over two decades. We have been abundantly blessed with visiting ministers, breth-

ren and friends. Some of these were Elders John D. Wood and wife, E. J. Lambert and wife (editors of the dear old *Signs*) and numerous others.

Elder C. M. Haygood serves as the Pastor, and Elder Jerry A. Evers as the Assistant. We hold our regular meetings the first Sunday and Saturday before every month at 10:30 A. M. We also meet the remaining Sundays for the singing of hymns and preaching by Elder Evers.

Dear ones, I believe we have been brought up through great tribulation, and have been tried in the fiery furnace. Quoting from Isaiah 42:16, "And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not: I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things I will do unto them, and not forsake them."

Dear Editors, I send a copy of the Minutes of the Presbytery of Elder Jerry Evers' ordination. Please print when you have room.

I send $10.00 for two years reneweal of the *Signs*. Use the remainder any way you see fit.

In hope of mercy,
Jimmy Lindsey, Clerk

Tuscaloosa, Ala. 35401

Dear Elder Spangler:

Inclosed is a letter written by Brother Gregory Duren which I am sending for your consideration of publishing in the Signs of the Times.

Brother Gregory is seventeen years of age and a student in high school. He and his mother were recently baptized and received as members of Nazareth Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church near Tuscaloosa, Alabama. He loves, talks, and hears with deep spiritual discernment the true doctrine of our Saviour; together with a deep sense of feeling of his own wretchedness by earthy nature. . .

(Elder) John L. Sanders

Rt. #1, Box 30-A
Buhl, Ala. 35401

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Rom. 8:1)

Certainly there is not a more beautiful or comforting text in the Bible for a poor sinner such as I to write on, or even ponder upon. In Isaiah the fortieth chapter it says, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Our text above perfectly fulfills the scripture of Isaiah. Just look at the part which says, "There is therefore now **no condemnation**. . ." Shouldn't this be comforting to any believer in Christ? It actually pronounces that there is no longer any condemnation to be executed on the child of God, and that he is free from death in hell, while before he was appointed unto death, for all have sinned, and the wages of sin is death. Now through and by the merits of Jesus Christ the Saviour, he has obtained the gift of God, which was a promise before of old, eternal life.

This scripture, (Rom. 8:1), by itself strongly upholds the final preservation of the saints of God, but even better is: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." People ask then, "Why in the world do the Primitive Baptists have preaching and prayers if they believe that the people will be saved anyway?" Well, Isaiah 40:1 and 2, as I have previously quoted, explains that well. It simply says to comfort God's dear children and tell them that Christ has fought and won the fight against sin for them and they do not have the battle to fight themselves. Notice the portion that says, "for she hath received of the **Lord's hand** double for all her sins." Romans 8:3 tells us exactly what this Lord's hand is: "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak

through the flesh, **God sending his own Son** in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." Christ is the Lord's hand that abolished sin and death and brought in an everlasting righteousness. Notice also that it says they have received double, yes, double for **all** their sins. No wonder Paul could say: "For by **one** offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."

Now let's look, if God will, at our subject text again, how that it explains to whom there is now no condemnation. It says that there is no longer any condemnation to those that are **in Christ Jesus**. I think if God will, that it can be explained how these people got **in** Christ. In Ephesians we read this: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us **in him** before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Here it says that God chose his people in Christ **before the foundation of the world.** One may ask, "Well, why in the world did he choose them before they were born?" Some might think it would have been more fair if God had waited to see what kind of person they turned out to be and then choose them on the basis of what they do here in this world. I'm awful sorry if you feel this way about it because this is directly opposite to the way God saw fit for it to be. In Romans 9:11 we read as follows: "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." Here it explains that God elected or chose Jacob before he was born so that his purpose of election might stand, preventing them from being chosen on basis of their works; as it reads: "not of works, but of him that calleth."

The entire remaining part of the ninth chapter of Romans is written to prove that God is righteous and just in the deed of choosing to love one and to hate or harden another person. Take for instance the thirteenth and fourteenth verses which say, "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? **God forbid.**" Then God himself answers the account of his election: "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." Then Paul yeas and amens what God told Moses by saying, "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." In other words Paul says, (the Spirit of God leading him), that the election and salvation of man is not based upon the man's work and freewill, but upon God's work and freewill. That is exactly what Jonah could say, "Salvation is of the Lord," because the Lord is rich in mercy and his mercy saves poor, helpless, dependent sinners. Now I hope it is understood that the way God's people got into Christ is by election.

At last notice the appositive that renames them that are in Christ Jesus. It renames them by saying, "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." The question is: Why do they walk after the Spirit? The answer is only a few verses way: "For as many as are **led** by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." They walk after the spirit because they are led by it which is a mightier power than they or any other being, for, "greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world."

The word "therefore" in our subject text points out that there is a reason closely stated that tells us why there's no longer any condemnation to those in Christ. This word "therefore" is a transitional device pointing to both the verses above and below. It is very needful to notice how the scripture explains the means by which the condemnation of God's dear children was put asunder. It does not say the least thing about what they did for God in order to atone or make up for the bad they had done before. It does not say one thing about

them accepting Christ as their personal saviour in order to enjoy being free from condemnation. But rather it tells us that Christ redeemed us from the curse, being made a curse for us, and that we are debtors to him. The transitional device points to the preceding two verses and the succeeding three verses from where it is found. Paul in much agony caused from his sinful nature cries out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (death signifies condemnation). Then he thanks God through Jesus Christ, for Paul knew that God did all the work of deliverance. Paul goes a little farther into explaining just how Christ has taken away condemnation in Romans 8:2-4. "For the **law of the Spirit of life in Christ** Jesus **hath made me free** from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but but after the Spirit." This last verse actually tells us that we do not obtain righteousness by exercising our faith, but that our righteousness came by Christ who fulfilled it for us.

Gregory Duren

"AN AFFLICTED AND POOR PEOPLE"

Dear Editors, Associate Editors, and Writers of the Signs:

It is a pleasure to renew my subscription for the **Signs.** So find enclosed $5.00 that it may keep me in touch and in line with the Lord's humble poor. As you well know there are a number of scriptures mentioning His people, such as, "I have chosen out of thy midst an afflicted and a poor people, and they shall shew forth my praise." Doctrinally this is true to me. Let me quote Zeph. 3:12, "I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." Again, to me, this is talking about a people that have been tried in the furnace of afflictions, and proved beyond a shadow of doubt that they were the chosen in Christ before the world was; and as the wheel of time moved to this end, it is made manifest. For unto this end they were born, and cannot do otherwise; for God is soverign, doing his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

May His watchcare forever be with Israel wherever they be, for they are a needy people — needy of consolation and comfort of the good things of the Holy Comforter. Blessed are the poor in spirit for their's is the kingdom of heaven."

So my kindred in the Lord, I don't think I would be out of place to ask, if it be the Lord's will to bless all the good writers of the **Signs,** and to keep its pages filled with truth as it was organized for the defense of the truth. I enjoy it beyond words to measure.

Thanks,
(Elder) Wallace Harvey
Rt. 87, Box 126
Shady Springs, W. Va. 25989

"FORSAKE NOT THE ASSEMBLING OF YOURSELVES TOGETHER"

361 Meadowbrook
Baldwin, Mo. 63011

Signs Of The Times
Danville, Virginia

Dear Brother Spangler,

On occasion letters to the *Signs* have indicated that groups of believers, in various parts of the country, have ceased to come together in regular meetings because there was no minister left in the area to speak to them. Or on other occasions regular meetings were postponed or called off because a minister was not able to make his regular appointment because of sickness or some other detainment.

It is, of course, a pleasant expectation that is experienced when we plan to go and hear some able brother preach with inspired words; and this is to be desired. But what of the times when a minister is sick, or when one is taken from us, and there appears to be no one to fill the stand? This seems to be a situation that, in these latter times, is faced by more and more congregations.

We read in the 10th chapter of Hebrews, beginning at verse 24, "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye se that day approaching." This is, as you know, where Paul is exhorting the church to hold fast the faith. And he does not preface it by any qualification that an ordained minister be present before they meet themselves together. Neither should the brethren put this qualification on assembling themselves together in these latter days. Concerning this, we have a very dear promise from the Lord, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

We see by the quotation in Hebrews that we should consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works. The manifestation of how we consider one another is shown in the assembling ourselves together. And we see in I John 4:12, "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." Also in verse 20, "...for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" Then it follows that the assembling ourselves together is, to a great extent, to show our love to one another, and thus is made manifest the love of God: "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Nowhere, that I am aware of, does the Bible indicate that it is necessary for a minister to be present for God to be worshipped, for love to flow from breast to breast, for us to prefer one another, for us to come together with songs of praise and prayers of thanksgiving. In fact, this part is seldom mentioned.

Some of the brethren at the Salem church in Benton, Illinois, tell how the church met regularly, sometimes for many months without anyone to fill the stand. Sometimes there would be only a few to come, sometimes several. They found it desirable to select one of the brothers as moderator for the conducting of necessary business. When it was possible for someone to come by and preach, some visiting minister, it was a thankful occasion. But having a minister was not a qualification for having a regularly scheduled meeting.

In thinking about this, and what the scriptures say about assembling ourselves together, the purpose for it, and the needfulness of it, we should carefully examine our position when we do neglect this assembling. The refreshment of the Spirit is beyond describing, just to see the brethren and to know that they care. And even greater is to realize that the reason they do care and do love, is because that God dwells in them. God is love, and this outpouring of God's love is reflected toward one another.

Sincerely,
(Elder) Wayman G. Chapell

SOME OF THE EXPERIENCE OF THE LATE DEACON W. R. TURNER

I will soon be 76 years old and am afflicted with a complication of diseases so that I don't feel that I will be here much longer. As one of old said, "My days have been few and full of trouble."

I have thought for some time, if it be the Lord's will, to try to write a short article for you to look over and ponder in your minds after I am gone. When I was young I was not much concerned about the church. In my teens I went to school to a Methodist minister. He seemed to be a nice man and taught us to say the Lord's prayer. For a

while when I would become troubled about anything, I thought I had learned to pray and would find myself reciting that prayer. But sometime after that, while lying on my bed, I was troubled about my sinful condition. I do not know whether I was asleep or not but the burden became so great I began to beg the Lord to have mercy on me, and suddenly the most beautiful light I ever saw appeared in the room, and I was happy and rejoiced for awhile. I desired to talk with someone, but it seemed I could not; but I saw in this that the prayer I had learned to recite did not enable me to pray for what I felt so much the need of.

I pondered these things for awhile, but as I grew older these impressions did not seem to bother me so much for several years, but would return from time to time. When I was around 28 years old I was married to Emma V. Houchins Wright by Elder Asa D. Shortt at her home in Floyd County, Virginia. She had three small children by her first marriage, and by our marriage she had four children. We lived near County Line Church, but we were not interested in the meetings very much, and did not go very often. My wife's mother was a good Christian woman, and she thought we ought to go regularly, but we did not have a mind to go. Later the hand of affliction was laid upon us and we were made willing and wanted to go.

One night after that I awoke and heard my wife groaning very piteously. I was alarmed and asked what was the trouble, and she said, "I am going to die." I told her I would get the doctor, but she said, "I am not sick but I am going to die." By that time I could hear her whispering the song, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear." It seemed I knew what was the trouble, and I was made happy and rejoiced; and it was a time of rejoicing with her. She joined the church at County Line September 19, 1920, and was baptized by Elder J. G. L. Hash. I did not tell her or anyone else about my impressions: I had a great desire to go with her but I felt unworthy. I thought at that time I wanted to know I was worthy to be with the church. I suffered much but could not know I was saved. The burden grew worse and worse, and I went many times to the woods trying to find some secret place that I might bow down and beg the Lord to have mercy on me and deliver me from my distressed condition.

I had heard different denominations preach, and I had desired if I ever joined the church I might be brought into the true church; and it seemed to me that the Primitive Baptists were the people who worshipped God in spirit and in truth, and I loved them. I tried out the works of the flesh, and saw it was all a failure. It had been my desire for a long time that the good Lord would keep me and lead and guide me so that I would not be carried about by every wind of doctrine, for there are false teachers, false doctrines and false prophets. The Scriptures warn us of these things. They were here in olden times, and I feel that they are here now.

By the goodness and mercy of our Lord and Master, I hope I have been given some evidence of a hope of heaven and eternal life; and it has been the source of the greatest comfort to me of anything in the world. I joined the church at County Line the 3rd Sunday in November, 1920, and was baptized the 3rd Sunday in April, 1921, by Elder H. V. Cole. It was a day of rejoicing with me, but since then I have had many doubts and fears, sorrows and afflictions; and when I am cast down in my feelings and helpless, I am made to cry unto the Lord for mercy, and He comforts me from time to time. Surely the goodness and mercy of the Lord has followed me all the days of my life . . .

One morning in the fall of 1956 while at Alma's (Mrs. David Shortt) just before I started to get up for breakfast, I dreamed of singing the chorus of the song, "I want to live a Christian here, I want to die rejoicing, I want to know my Saviour's near when soul and body is parting," and it seemed voices joined

me in the singing, and I looked about me and there were many people around me, all looked alike, and we were singing together; and it was wonderful to me.

I desire to be kept humble and at the feet of my brethren. If I am saved, it is by the grace of God, and not by any works of my own hands. May the guiding hand of the Lord and Master ever be with us even unto the end.

(The above was condensed from the writings of Deacon W. R. Turner of the County Line Church, Floyd County, Va. by Brother N. F. Connor and the Editor. See his obituary in this issue of the Signs which has other details of his life. We well remember Brother Turner in our younger days with the brethren in his section of the country. — J. D. W.)

HER VISIT AMONG THE BRETHREN

Chestertown, Md.

Dear Brethren and Sisters:

It's been a long time since I've felt I have anything worthwhile to write to my brethren in the Lord. A dear Brother at the Black Creek Association came to me and mentioned he had not seen any writings in the **Signs** by me for a long time. My reply was that unless the Lord was in it, I had nothing to say worth reading. But this evening I feel differently. This letter is written not to tell you anything new, but to tell you my enjoyment of things so many of you experience daily or weekly and my travels to places many of you have been to many, many times, but places I've only dreamed of and folks I've only dreamed of meeting. Now, at last the Lord has made it possible and I hope I am thankful for traveling mercies as well as the blessing of the love and fellowship only found between those who know and love the Lord, regardless of race, creed, or nationality. Whose very foundation is upon the Rock of Salvation, Jesus Christ. Tonight I feel full to overflowing with the goodness and mercy of my God, and I feel I want to tell about it, not to the world, because the world would not understand, but to those who love the Lord as their Saviour and look to Him for their very existence here on earth.

Right now I am at the Queenstown, Md., bus terminal, with an hour and a half to wait for the bus to Chestertown. Instead of calling any of my children to meet me, I felt I wanted to write you all, right now! So I went to a quiet place, took out my paper and pen and got busy. Today I have been to an all day meeting at Snow Hill and all the way up the Lord blessed me with such sweet meditation that the 75 or 80 mile trip was soon over. I feel I have been tasting just a tiny bit of the graciousness of my God, for me. And it is all **mine**, not someone else's, which I have felt. Each of us present today felt it as our own special gift to them from above, and words aren't made that can tell it to others. One has to experience it personally to know what I mean. It's a taste of the unsearchable riches of God, the unspeakable wisdom, the matchless beauty and the undying eternal love of Jesus for His people everywhere.

I will try to start from the beginning, if I can find it. This being my usual vacation time, I planned to attend Salisbury Association, as I have done for years.As I prepared to go, it seemed the Lord kept telling me to prepare to go farther. For years, I've had a desire to visit the Canada Association, the Upper Country Line Association and the Black Creek Association, but each year, the way did not seem clear, for various reasons. But this time the Lord said a way would be prepared, so I left, not knowing, but trusting in His word. When my family asked where I was going and when I would return, I told them just what I had felt. I said I was going to the Salisbury Association, and if the Lord meant what He said, I would have a way to the Black Creek Association in North Carolina or somewhere down that way, and to look for me when they saw me.

I will tell you a little bit about my travels, then something of the Good News from a Far Country which I heard preached by the gifted servants of God,

all along the way. Elder and Sister Prescott were present at Salisbury, and when he very kindly mentioned he would take me with them as they went, I think he was really surprised when I told him I was all packed and ready to go, for he came back and asked me if I really meant it. I told him I was never more serious in my life. The Lord had provided my way, with no help from me. Just putting it into a dear Brother and Sister's heart to invite one such as I to travel along with them. They had Brother and Sister Stedman Brown with them and they just moved over a notch and made room for me.

We arrived at Brother John Ray Gardner's home at Williamston, N. C. for the night and enjoyed more lovely fellowship and a very restful night. Friday we continued on to the Association at Scott's Church and to say I feasted, puts it mildly. I mean spiritually. The rain became heavy during the afternoon and by nightfall was steady, but whoever heard of rain slowing up the Old Baptists? I was invited to the home of Elder Wayne Mitchell for the night, at Smithfield. After supper we went to Pittmans Grove for evening services. Only a few were present, but we were made to feel wherever two or three were gathered together in His name, He would be there. We heard two messages there and the fellowship was sweet.

The Introductory sermon, on Friday A. M. was preached by Elder Wayne Mitchell, upon the Articles of Faith. It was a sermon we all needed to hear. We read them, but so often do not really think of what they mean. We need to meditate on each article and apply it scripturally, or it is of no importance at all. We all had much to think of when he got through. There was much rain, but only upon the outside, for all was sunshine within and the glory of God shone all around, in the faces of the brethren and sisters present, and I am certain in their hearts also. I know how I felt, and I am sure others felt the same. I am only one poor, hungry child, depending upon the mercy of a loving Father. I spent a restful evening at Elder and Sister Mitchell's. They very kindly invited me to remain over for the remainder of the Association, but the folks I was returning to Snow Hill with, were leaving after lunch on Saturday, and I felt I should return with them. Meeting on Saturday was held in the High School Auditorium and we heard more sweet preaching. My heart thrilled as I looked upon the platform and saw the many young ministers that the Lord has called into His Service. The years are taking their toll of our dearly beloved old pastors and its an evidence of God's keeping His promise never to leave His children without an undershepherd to lead them, as the Lord blesses them. I felt blest to visit again with Elders Turner, Smith, Stokes, Key, Barnes and, oh, so many others that I had never met before including Elder Donald Smith. I hope all the others I met will forgive me for not mentioning their names, but right now, names escape me, although faces are clear.

It was my first visit to North Carolina but, if the Lord wills, it will not be the last. The brothers and sisters are the same wherever you meet them; the fellowship is dear wherever we are blest to meet. No strangers among His people. The preaching is the same sweet doctrine of Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. Not works, lest any man should boast.

I returned to Snow Hill with Sisters Elsie Beauchamp, Maude Truitt and Ethel Holloway. Traveling thru a blinding downpour of rain we arrived back safely in Snow Hill about seven thirty. I know we all felt to thank the Lord for traveling mercies, for He surely brought us all the way. We spent the night with Sister Truitt. There was a meeting at Snow Hill Sunday morning and I was blest to attend and hear Elder Poole preach again. There has been one sad spot in the whole trip. The sudden illness and death of our precious Sister Evelyn Davis, of New Church, Virginia, a member at Snow Hill. Our hearts go out to the family in their loss and grief. Our consolation is that we know she

is at home with Jesus, whom she loved and served so dearly. As we grow older we find that He grows dearer and dearer to us as the days go by. We are made to search deeper and deeper into the blessed truths in the Bible, telling us of the rest we shall have, and the beauties we shall find, in that land where we shall never grow old and be forever with Him. It's such a glorious thought.

I returned home on Monday and I thought I was ready to stop for awhile, but the Lord had still more riches in store for me. I was feasting upon all I had heard, and just could not seem to get down to earth again. So was it strange, when I heard there was to be all day services at Snow Hill on the fifth Sunday and in a home, on Saturday night, that I knew I just had to go again? No, it wasn't strange, but it would have been strange if I had said I didn't want to go! The "informal" meeting in the home of Sister Maude Truitt was precious. We enjoy such gatherings because it is a time for geting better acquainted and the Lord is always present in a felt way. There were present, about nine folks from North Carolina and Kentucky, causing us to feel the Association has been extended another couple of days. We heard Brother Mike Neikirk speak for the first time, and we truly hope it will not be the last time. His subject dealt primarily of Jesus, the Rose of Sharon. It was beautifully expounded and heartily endorsed by both Elder Griffin and Elde r Poole. These dear Brothers spoke also, and we did feel we had an evening filled with tasty tidbits from our Master's table. On Sunday, we gathered at the Church for worship and song in His name. Elder and Sister Griffin had remained in the locality for two weeks after Association and he spoke again this morning. We were sorry Elder Warren felt his health would not permit him to speak today. We were blest to hear a short discourse by Brother Neikirk again and a final message from Elder Poole. Truly a blessed day and a perfectly wonderful way to spend a two week vacation.

I cannot begin to tell anyone how I have feasted at the Master's banquet table, and only those who have felt the sweetness of His presence in their hearts, can fellowship with what I have said. The hymn "Blest Be The Tie That Binds" expresses it in a small way, but no dictionary has ever printed words to express it. The Lord said, "Go and tell no one, what great things hath been done" in each life that He has healed and enriched, but our faces and our walk speak eloquently of the glory of His presence in our lives. Our speech reflects the restraining power of His word, our lives reflect His guidance. No words need be spoken. Even the Evil one can see evidences of the Presence of the Holy Spirit and knows he had to work hard if he is even to make a scratch on the armor which the Lord has clad His children in. Each piece of that armor of righteousness is put on with prayer and sealed forever with God's promises, which can never be broken.

I want to add a few more words before I close. We feel richly blest to have Elder Poole at Welsh Tract, Salisbury and Snow Hill. We prayed and trusted the Lord to fill our great needs here, when Elder Griffin left us, due to ill health. The Lord answered our prayers even beyond anything we ever asked for or could desire. We are so richly blest and I pray he will never be sorry he answered the Lord's call to give up all he had in Georgia: home, friends, work and schools, to come up here to serve us.

My bus is nearly due and I am now ready to go on home filled to overflowing. This hour and a half has passed quickly. It has shown me one thing — we can find a quiet place, even in a busy bus terminal, in the midst of a hurrying world. I've been completely unaware of the activity about me and if I do not stop now, and say, "May God Bless each reader, always," and prepare to meet my bus, I may miss it, after waiting so long for it. The Good News preached by our dear Pastors tells us about the

One who delivered us from darkness into the land of eternal light: The One who stands firm and who can keep us from all the deceit and pressures of the world about us. "My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me." No matter how opposition mounts on every side, still they will follow Him. Why? Because, "I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall pluck them out of my hand." Then again He tells us, regarding His coming again, "Watch, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming" and we start to realize that time has been marching on and cannot be turned back. The only part of life that can really be called living is the time we have spent watching for our Lord's return in the strength of His abiding life. All else is death. And we think of just how long we have lived. I am 67 years old, but I feel I have only **lived** for thirty-two of those years. Life is made up of a great deal of waiting. When we were small we waited to grow up; half grown, we waited to go out on our own, then we wait to get married, then wait for children, and so it goes on. One of the characteristics of life which makes it worth living is this note of waiting. There must be something beyond. Something worth waiting for, otherwise life has no purpose and if Christ and our hope of Eternal life wasn't ours, we would be of all people the most miserable. How does one exist even without Him? I wonder! "It may be today." Certainly the day of awaking will come not through events, but the actual cry, "Behold the Bridegroom! Come out to meet Him!" Paul tells us that when He comes for the Church it will be with a shout, and that shout may be these electrifying words!

Your little Sister in Christ,
Ruth Lucht

LETTER OF THE LATE ELDER H. V. COLE IN 1914

Simpson, Va.

Dear Elder Cockram:

This snowy evening, January 2, 1914, finds me thinking about the great mysteries of His kingdom, and how little I know of the same. I know nothing only in an experimental way as things occur to me; and then it is through a glass darkly.

I am often disturbed and confused in mind in reading from the pen of brethren who express things that they themselves do not believe, if they would consult their own experience. Such expressions as, "There is nothing to be gained or lost by obedience to the commands of God." I feel that I, as a man, have never obeyed Him in any particular. I have viewed Him holy, higher than the heavens, which are unclean in His sight, and that He accepts nothing but perfect obedience; and that must come through His Son. Yet I believe that every one that is born of Him is brought into that perfect obedience in Him, and brought into His freedom from bondage, sin and corruption, and His laws are put in their minds and their whole heart's desire is to do His will and to serve Him only.

I would have no fellowship for one who did not have a heaven born principle in him to do God's will. He knows that it is only in His light he sees light. He finds that he is dead because of sin which is in his flesh, so that when he would do good evil is present. He, like Paul, does not know how to perform. The fleshly man finds that he can only do the work that the Pharisees do, which are filthy rags; and he desires to be clothed upon with his house which is from above.

All the works of vain man stink in his nostrils. He dies daily and bears about in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus, which is the sin that crucified Him; consequently he is crucified with Him. Every child of God knows there is nothing in himself that obeys God. The very imaginations of his heart are evil, and that continually. He knows that he ought to keep the outside of the cup clean, but Pharisees do that; and he,

like them, leaves the inside undone: and that brings him to Christ. He knows that his righteousness must exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, and that they can do anything that he can do. I have even heard of practical godliness. Such a thought causes me to shudder. I feel that it dishonors God. Yet there is a perfect work that God ordained that man should walk in: and that is the work of grace. He is under grace and not under the law for justification; yet he feels that the law is holy but he is vile and unclean; and this brings him to Christ every day, as the only one that can fulfill the law in him. Christ dwells in him to the destruction of the flesh, and the very presence of His Spirit, and a view of His holiness, makes him know that salvation is of Him.

I, for one, know that if I have ever obeyed Him in spirit and in truth, it has been against common reason. The most serious trials since I have had a hope, were when I thought Satan was trying to destroy me; and I said I would not die. To this day I am so mysteriously led that my greatest confirmation is when I think, and even say, I will not go; and yet I go, and much of the time my disappointments are the most confirming. Yet there is a glorious obedience in it, and I am able to feel thankful that the thing I would do, and tried to do, was the thing I did not do.

Brother Cockram, if all this is wrong I have never known the way, and deserve no place among you. I feel that, if not mistaken, I have obeyed many commands in and through Him when I thought the reverse was the proper thing to do. Then why should I say that I have been doing many wonderful works in His name, in clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, visiting the sick and those in prison. I hope I have witnessed these things in preaching the gospel which is the power of God. O how could I say that I was a live man, and when I got to the place of worship all that remained for me to do was to go to clothing the naked, feeding the hungry. Oftentimes I have seen them sick and in prison, poverty stricken, and I had nothing for them. Other times I have gone and was in the wilderness with them, and would find a few fishes and loaves. Then all would be filled, and the fragments would be scattered everywhere, and I would be able to live many days on what was in the baskets.

In conclusion, give me nothing but Christ and Him crucified.

In hope of eternal life,
H. V. Cole

(Copied from the Spiritual Law Counsel by request.

What wonderful memories we have of this lovely, humble servant of God. It was always a pleasure to be with him in the meetings and in the homes, where he was always a welcome visitor. He earnestly contended for the faith, and was of much comfort to the brethren in his uncompromising presentation of the doctrine of God our Saviour. — J. D. W.)

HAS BEEN A MEMBER SIXTY YEARS

Rt. 3., Box 651
Danville, Va. 24541

Dear Brother Spangler:

It being time to renew my subscription to **The Signs of the Times, I** would like to tell you how long I have had my name with the Baptists. It was sixty years on the second Sunday in August of this year at Old Chapel Church in the Pigg River District. I was baptized by Elder J. C. Martin. I have never at any time doubted the doctrine, but have often doubted myself. I am now in my eighty-ninth year. I still love to hear good preaching as much as I ever did, but am not physically able to attend church now like I would love to. I do enjoy reading the good news in the **Signs of the Times,** especially the reprints of the writing of the older people that have been kept through the years and handed down from the past. I do hope that this good work can continue on down through the years, and the **Signs of the Times** will still be printed. If you have a little space you can use

this in the **Signs** and always remember me when you approach the throne of grace.

From one who loves you.

Your unworthy brother,
W. H. Walker

LETTER FROM ONE NEWLY COME INTO FELLOWSHIP

Snow Hill, Maryland

Dearest Brother and Sister Ward:

I missed being at church with you Sunday and hearing about our dear Lord. I felt like I want you to know some of the things that are in my heart tonight as I am sitting here with such sweet thoughts of my dear brothers and sisters of the church.

What sweet joy to meet together in the Lord's house and to feel the love of God all around! The great Almighty God has shown me so much love and sweet fellowship among the Old School Baptist people that I could never thank him enough.

If I could only write all the joys and sweet moments I have with the Lord! How to express such sweet hope is beyond me. Such a low, vile worm of the dust as I am to be brought forth with tender mercy and grace to be shown what it is like to live in Christ and to love Him more than life itself, to look with great joy to life beyond with our dear Savior and Lord, is almost more than this poor sinner can stand.

For Him to help and show and lead us through this wicked world to the Great Beyond! I thank Him for the sweet love and fellowship of all my brothers and sisters and I pray I never do anything to harm or hurt any of them in any way. May I be blessed to live with them and die with them and meet again in the Great Beyond.

I am looking forward to Sunday, and if it's God's will may we meet in His house to hear our dear pastor tell us more about the One we never get tired of hearing about.

With sweet love and fellowship.
Sister Elizabeth Cherrix

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There will be more listed later. Many are still incomplete.

This is a good opportunity for those desiring these bound volumes. Order directly as shown above.

J. D. W.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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EDITORIAL

ISAIAH 46:3, 13

"They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith; and he maketh it a god: they fall down, yea they worship."

I would call it to your attention that holy men of old spake these things as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. This is not by a mere permission; it is not the reckoning of puny men; it is not that the writer thought God was mistaken and substituted his own opinion. This is a bonifide Holy Ghost description of how gods are made and maintained. With all the linguists working with all the ingenuity of men, they could not come up with as vivid a portrayal of the working qualities(or rather, the lack of them) as found here.

Designating denominations will profit us little, but shunning to declare the whole truth will profit us still less. If there is a body of people on the face of the globe that is not most vehement in saying that God does not use force in his dealings with men; that is most persistent in the belief that God can not move until the creature moves; if, I say, there is an order of people that the prophet has not described in this portion of the text, I will get down on my knees and apologize for my assertions. I am sure that it will never bother me.

Gold is the foundation, as well as the current support of all religious bodies save the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is not to say that **the love of it** does not get into that royal and august body, but it is a solemn warning that wherever it does raise its sinister head it is the most disastrous tragedy to her welfare, far surpassing the damage done by all the blood shed by martyrs. Prestige which gold can buy has ruined some worthy causes. There has never been a law against the preaching of the gospel, but its value in the extension of the cause of Jesus Christ into the regions beyond have been seized upon by money-mongers as a means to swell the coffers of church treasuries. This has been hypocrisy, deception, obtaining money under false pretensions, to say nothing of gross disobedience to the commands of the Lord. The command of our Lord does not allow a bag nor a purse nor any kind of receptacle for the holding of our riches. God's Spirit-led children are taught to ask for daily bread, daily supplies, present blessings, but are never taught to ask for an accumulation. He who deserved everlasting punishment for his sins has been freely forgiven and that gift has established him in the faith of God's elect. Our trust is in this God that he will give us as he gave us yesterday — a plentitude of mercies for all time.

Everybody believes in grace. That is, they all say that they do. But the only believer in grace is he or she that has lost their bag. They meant to leave it behind with all of the other trashy belongings that they had put so much stock in. Talk about that the sinner must be willing in order to be saved. That is not the way that I was taught to hitch up a buggy and horse. In those days we put the horse in front, and, it having worked so well in those days, I feel inclined that it is better that way now, therefore, grace comes first, the blessings come first, and after that obedience comes. God's people are brought to the place that all that they have depended on, is not sufficient to save. This is God's work; this is the result of the efficient work of the grace of God. First, we are led to see that the fulness of our bag was not sufficient to lay at his feet as an offering for sin. We will never see this as long as we see him as a God of want and need. But when we see him and then see what we have, there is a leaving behind of our bag.

The god that is made according to our order is the kind of a god that we are the orderer. He is made by standards that are set by us.

Men worship they know not what. But, as it is in all phases of nature, they think that they know, and in this thinkso knowledge they worship what seems to them to be the true God. To them, he is true. How futile it is to cast pearls before swine. All of the touching prayer of Stephen did not soften the heart of the raging Saul; all of the persuasive powers of the eminent Paul did not bring Festus and Agrippa to know Him of whom he spoke. Thus all men worship something, and it is the nature of us all to worship that which we have been contributing to, that to which we are a party to.

All of the keeness of intellect that has come under my observation has been to exalt the God that they knew — definitely, not the God of the Bible. The god they knew, is the god that they can handle; the god that they can outdo; the god that they can fathom out things in which he is non-plussed. The God of Israel, of the Bible, of Christian experience, is not handled as men handle oxen; He is independent of all His creation. He raises up countries and demolishes them; He raises up wicked men to carry out His purposes, **but He does not raise them up to thwart His purposes;** when that purpose is served He removes them out of the way. But this cannot be said about any conditional god; it can not be said about a **made or ordered god.**

The children of God are borne by their God. His action towards them is always effectual. He carries them, he bears them; not only is it as a new born babe, but it is unto hoary hairs. If you have eyes to see, yea, if you have the experience of being borne by the Lord, it is as clear as the noon day sun the difference between a god that can be made from your material (and that to order), and the God that made all things. And if you know both Gods (the one that bears and the one that must be borne) you will readily see that the Old School Baptist church is preaching the gospel of Christ. They are not preaching that God has done his part, and that, for it to be effectual, we must supply the missing factor; they are not preaching that God has done all that he can do, and that he is going to force his creatures to do something that they do not want to do; they are not preaching that he is made according to our mandate and that he is helpless to move until we move him; they are not preaching that they must move him from one part of the world to another, but they are preaching that He, God Almighty, the Holy One in Israel, moves all things by a direct and immediate command. Here is another reason for not casting pearls before swine. The two gods do not have anything in common, and neither do the followers of the two.

Of these two under consideration one moves all things and is not moved by anything save the Spirit-wrought prayers of His Son, either in person, or in the petitions of His brethren;

and all of this is according to His eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ before the world. I am not, dear readers, dealing in fantasy nor imagination nor in conjectures; I am not over polishing nor am I in exaggeration. I am, first, giving a simplified description of the gods of this world according to the inspiration of the holy men of old. Second, I am giving a verbatim description that this world gives of their god. Verily, it is true that our Rock is not as their rock, they themselves being our witnesses. The Bible clearly teaches that this manufactured god can not save; that he can not hear (I Kings 18:26, 29); that he can not **move.** Cry for salvation and your cries will be like the followers of Ahab, they will have no answer; beg for mercy with all of your zeal, ever remembering that he is crowded with petitioners or that he is taking a noon day nap, but you will never get any response from him.

"Remember this, and shew yourselves men: bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors."

The same ones that are addressed earlier are still the subjects of our probe. I would not leave a stone unturned to expose the limitations of this home-made god. If I am called to preach I have as much interest in the house of Jacob and the remnant of the house of Israel as did Isaiah, for I have been sent to that house. Likewise, I have the same desire that I might come unto these deluded ones as did Paul in his ministry. (I Cor. 9) I realize that I will never expose this home-made god to others, but that, if called, I have a divine mission to tell the children of God of a more excellent way. (Acts 8:31; Eph. 3:12)

Those that move their god say that they can keep good thoughts uppermost all the time; that they can remember if they will remember; that they can be neglectful and forget what their god has said. That conditional remembering and forgetting is alright for he or she that **makes things go,** but for he or she that has not found out how to perform that which is good, they know that, while they may forget, that the faithfulness of Him that made all things, the power that bids planets roll or a nation stand still or Satan get behind, will stir them up to remember what has gone before. National Israel will never remember, but the remnant of the house of Israel will remember. Why be so sure? Because this God that moves all before it but is not moved by anything, has said to this house and part of a house, to remember. The preaching that God bids men do is not a conditional gospel — the gospel is not conditional — it is the power of God unto salvation to every believer. Remember this. Remember what? Remember all of the way that you have come, the starvation way, the wilderness way, the way that you did not mark out nor choose; the humility road wherein God humbled you and proved you. You will not forget the selling of Joseph, the crossing of the sea, the raining of manna and partridges, the drinking of your own works as the golden calf is mixed in your drinks. You may forget this for a little while, as Peter did, but God is not unfaithful, and you will have your mind stirred to action again. Each time that your remembrancer is made to work, all of the mighty acts of God will be remembered. Each time it will be vividly portrayed how vain and fickle that you have been and how good that the Lord has been, and there will not be room (God is too great to give honor to another) for you to claim any part in, or to have any praise for yourself in, the many instances of deliverance along the way.

The Bible is the blue print of salvation, but it is not salvation any more than the architect's blueprint is the house. This Book describes God, and is one of the witnesses which a sinner relies on, the other being the engravings in the heart by the Holy Ghost. From the first of Genesis to the last of Revelation it is telling us about the Saviour and the salvation that stems from His work. The work of prophets and ministers is to publish salvation (Rom. 10:-

15), and here the prophet is laying down the most exacting doctrine that has ever been proclaimed, to wit, salvation is of the Lord. There is not any salvation in any other. God said this to the house of Jacob and to the remnant of the house of Israel. Are you in this house? If so, it will stand; if not your house will fall. Isaiah representing the prophets and Peter representing the apostles and ministers, tell us that there is not any salvation save in God our Saviour. Do you remember that? Are you in fellowship with that? If so, your house is the house of God and it will stand forever, all nations (of God's people) shall flow into it, not a cord shall be broken, not a stake removed. If you have become entangled with a yoke that you nor your fathers have been able to bear, I write directly to you to consider what I say, and this you will do if you are one of the ones that are subjects of gospel address. Subjects of gospel address have the same kind and the same degree of power that has wrought all things.

"Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Who is it that has declared? What of Him? What do we know of Him? Go right back through the text. There is not one like Him. There is not one His equal. There is not one with whom He can be compared. He is the one that has carried the house of Jacob and the remnant of the house of Israel; that has done it all all the way from the womb to hoary hairs, all the way and always and all the ways. Only this One has the authority and power and wisdom to declare the end from the beginning. Do you, dear reader, believe that God declared the end from the beginning? If you do believe that then you believe in the eternal fixedness of all things. This is a peculiar expression. It has been fought over and non-fellowship declared over what it embraces for the last three hundred years and when all the havoc has been wrought and all the heartaches have been felt, the doctrine in this declaration remains the same, to wit, God declared the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things not yet done. Declaring a thing is equal to an oath. **"I declare it is true."** Remember that the end is declared from the beginning. We must never confuse predestination with fatalism. God has not fixed the end from the beginning and then left the world to run without His manifest and felt presence. That is why the expression "and from ancient times the things not yet done," because the Lord is directing and guiding and ruling over the universe. One expression carries with it the purpose of God respecting all events, the other shows that He is manifestly governing and directing according to His eternal wisdom and purpose.

It does not matter how bitter my readers are towards God's unlimited predestination, one and all conduct their business and every phase of mortal life exactly like that. As far as their wisdom goes they declare or determine what they are going to do in any given situation, and then, as far as their power goes to execute, they from time to time declare what is going to come as a result of their governing. I am sure that this is true in all men — the bitterest enemies of this God honoring doctrine as well as the humblest believer in it. As He surveys His determination to make a world, declaring from the outset what is coming from the beginning to end, only doing it differently than you and I **could** do it; that is, declared the end **from** the beginning, only He could say anything about this declaration. That is, dear reader, only He could say anything with authority. We hear men curse and swear while in a rage, that they are going to do this or that or the other. What becomes of it? Nothing, because they could not declare the end from the beginning, And, what is so sad, we hear so many dear brethren that are also greatly upset and oftimes in a rage because God has declared the end of His dealing with this world. I am well aware that oftimes they say (see the difference between

them "saying" and God "saying",, that they are not finding fault with what God has said but my interpretation of what God said. For forty years I have contended earnestly that God says what He means and means what He says, and HE HAS SAID THAT HE DECLARED THE END FROM THE BEGINNING AND FROM ANCIENT TIMES THE THINGS THAT ARE NOT YET DONE, and that this declaration gave Him the power and authority to give us another saying. If His declaration of the end from the beginning embraces me with a span of life to that end together with a spiritual mind, we will see about what He said.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

AN APOSTOLIC CHARGE TO THE ELDERS WHOM GOD HAS CALLED TO FEED HIS FLOCK

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood." — (Acts 20:28)

This solemn charge was given in a most impressive manner by the apostle Paul to the Elders of the church at Ephesus, in the last interview he was ever to have with them personally in the flesh, for he knew that they would see his face no more. This was a most solemn and interesting time; when with the inspiration of a true prophet of our God, he foretold them of the sore trials they should be called to encounter after his departure, when grievous wolves should enter in among them, not sparing the flock; and what was still more appalling, of their own selves should men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. And after having faithfully warned and charged them, he closed his valedictory, commending them to God and to the word of his grace, and knelt down and prayed with them all. So affecting was the scene, the Elders all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him; sorrowing most of all that they should see his face no more.

We cannot for a moment believe that this charge is any less applicable to the Elders in the church of Christ today, whom the Holy Ghost has made overseers, than it was to those of the church of Ephesus, or that we have any less occasion to heed the admonitions and accept the charge. None but those whom the Holy Ghost has called, qualified and made overseers, have any commission from God to feed his flock, or church. Men may be qualified in the schools of men to feed the swine, and may, like the prodigal, hire themselves out to citizens of the world for that purpose; but our God has entrusted the feeding of the sheep and lambs which he has purchased with his own blood to none but those who are qualified by the Holy Ghost. It may be well for those of us who hold the office of Elders in the church of the living God to examine this apostolic exhortation, and to examine ourselves and our ministry, and to prayerfully inquire whether we are abiding steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship; for as far as we depart from their doctrine and admonitions, so far do we depart from their fellowship.

The first of all we are charged to take heed unto **ourselves.** This charge was also given to Timothy, 1 Epistle iv. 16: "Take heed unto thyself," and then to the doctrine, and to continue in them; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee. No man is to rush heedlessly and uncalled into the work of the ministry. "And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." — Heb. 5:4. Is it not to be feared that many even of God's children have heedlessly assumed the work unto whom God has given no ministerial or pastoral gift, and involved themselves and their brethren in much trouble and perplexity? But those who have the

most unquestionable evidence that they are called to the work, are to take heed that they obey the high and holy calling, and give themselves wholly to the work, and suffer nothing of worldly profit, pleasure or opposition to keep them from the faithful discharge of the work whereunto the Holy Ghost has called them.

Again, they should take heed that their life and conversation before the world and before the church be such as becometh the gospel of the grace of God. "For a bishop (Elder or pastor) must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, temperate, holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsavers." — Titus 1:7-9. "A bishop then MUST be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, APT TO TEACH." "Not a novice, (or one who has come newly into the faith, see margin,) lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, HE MUST HAVE a good report of them which are without, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." — 1 Tim. 3:2-7. No minister of Christ has a right to be heedless or indifferent in regard to these indispensable qualifications, or careless as to whether his calling, gifts, and deportment are in conformity with these rules.

By a heedless disregard of this solemn charge, a minister may so far forget himself as to attempt to feed the swine, the children of this world, or to bestow his ministerial labors in chaplaincies for armies, navies, legislative assemblies, or to regulate the politics and secular affairs of the world. A due attention to the divine rule will lead the ministers of Christ to "Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness," and in that kingdom they will find the flock of their special and exclusive charge. Not only are the Lord's bishops to take heed unto themselves, but they are commanded also to take heed to all the flock. If the Holy Ghost has made us overseers of the flock or church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood, how great is the responsibility which rests on us? Can we, like Paul, take the people of our charge to record or witness that we are pure of the blood of all men, and that we have not shunned to declare all the counsel of God? Paul did not hold himself responsible for the blood of any but those of the church of God, and in the application of the figure, which he borrowed from the ceremonial dispensation, in which the watchmen whom God commanded to give due warning to the Israelites when their enemies were approaching, or to faithfully warn them when God had said they should die, &c; if they neglected to warn them, and through their neglect an Israelite perished, their blood was required at the watchmen's hands, or they were held responsible to God for the consequence of their heedless neglect. Paul had faithfully warned the brethren, publicly and from house to house, and had kept back nothing that was profitable for them; therefore he was free from any responsibility arising from their failure to be profited by his labors. He was pure from the blood of all men.

Having therefore the apostolic example as well as precept, how important it is that the ministers of Christ should in like manner "feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." The manner in which the ministers of Christ should take heed, is shown by the manner in which Paul had acquitted himself in his work. From the first day he came into Asia, or among these Gentile saints, his manner of life at all seasons and on all occasions had been an open epistle of instruction for all the saints to feed and feast upon. Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears. Not in heedless and vain jesting and trifling levity, as some of us in the present day are too much addicted to; but under all his

many temptations, and the lying in wait of the Jews, watching to find occasions to accuse and harrass him, he was neither allured by flattery nor intimidated by fear of persecution and his indefatigable labors were unremitting in looking up and feeding the church of God, teaching them publicly and from house to house. And as a pastor after God's own heart, he fed the church of God with knowledge and understanding. — Jer. 3:15. Testifying to both Jews and Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Feeding all who were born of incorruptible seed by the word of God, on the sincere milk of the word.

In feeding the Lord's flock, constant care and unremitting heed should be taken that we feed them only such food as the great Shepherd and Bishop has provided. When they ask for bread we are not to give them a stone, or if they ask for an egg to give them a scorpion. Timothy, as we have shown, was admonished not only to take heed unto himself, but also to the doctrine. It will not answer to heedlessly mix up our own vain speculations with the doctrine of Christ. Great care should be taken that we know nothing among the saints save Jesus Christ and him crucified. It is on his flesh they shall feed, and his blood in the New Testament they must drink; and they must live on every word that preceedeth out of the mouth of God.

The old man, or carnal nature of christians, may be fed on doctrines of men, and even on doctrines of devils. Their depraved nature will receive it greedily, and it will inflate and puff them up with pride and vain glory. Their carnal passions may be excited by what is called emotional or sensational preaching, but such food is unwholesome and poisonous to the flock of God, and woe to heedless pastors who teach for doctrine the commandments of men.

The Savior charged his apostles to teach the saints to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them; no more, no less. His laws and ordinances are perfect and complete; they need no amendment, modification or improvement. Take heed unto the doctrine, and remember that Christ has said through the mouth of the apostle, "But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." — Gal 1:8-9.

The great object of the gospel ministry is to feed the church of God; for this purpose all the gifts requisite are supplied to those whom the Holy Ghost has made overseers, according to the measure of the gifts of Christ. "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high he led captivity cative, and gave gifts unto men. And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers," (and what were they given for?) "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." — Eph. 4:8, 11-13. This scripture defines the object and design of all the gifts which Christ received for and gave to the church when he ascended up on high and sat down upon his Mediatorial throne at the right hand of the Majesty on high. These gifts were none of them designed for nor given to the world, but exclusively to the church, which is the body of Christ, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. The Elders, in taking heed to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers should not heedlessly forget that their holy vocation is for the edifying of the body of Christ, to feed the church of God. The Holy Ghost has not made them overseers of the world, nor called them to feed the world. They are not qualified to give life to the dead, but to feed the living. The quickening power belongs

to God, it has never been given to men; but when God by his Spirit has given life to the subjects of his saving power and grace, then let the ministers of Christ take heed that none of them be overlooked or neglected. "Feed my sheep, and feed my lambs," is the command of the great Shepherd and Bishop of Israel.

The solemn charge to **take heed**, implies a constant watchfulness that no part of the flock suffer through our neglect to feed them with the wholesome food of the gospel, rightly dividing the word, and ministering to each his portion in due season. Great care should be observed lest we as Elders, evangelists, pastors or teachers should heedlessly feed the flock on any other food than the provisions which God has abundantly blessed, and with which he will fill his poor.

The necessity of a vigilant watchfulness is suggested by the warning given to the Elders, of grievous wolves and sad apostacies that should distress the flock or church in the last days, when many should depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. The faithful watchman may not sleep at his post.As Paul said to Timothy, so he says also to each of the ministers of the word, "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and good doctrine." (I Tim. 4:6)

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe August 15, 1877)

OBITUARIES

BROTHER BLAYLOCK ROBERTSON

The church deeply feels her loss as our precious ones are called home one by one. Brother Blaylock Robertson was a devoted brother who attended his meetings regularly as long as health permitted, showing much love for the brethren and interest in their welfare.

He departed this world August 27, 1971, having been blessed to prosper in farming and other businesses. During his seventy-six years in this wilderness of sin and sorrow he was given a love for the truth and a heart to joy in our Lord and Savior.

He was blessed with an understanding heart to believe the doctrine of Salvation by Grace many years before uniting with the church at Bush Arbor in July 1958. He was baptized by his Pastor, Elder Curry King, who preceded him to the grave.

Brother Robertson leaves a lovely family who devoted their time and effort for his comfort. His wife, Mrs. Margaret Walker Robertson, three children, Mrs. Frank Shreve of Route #3, Reidsville; Mr. Willard Robertson of Route #6, Reidsville; and Mr. Joe Robertson of the home. He also leaves six children by a previous marriage to Mrs. Florence Hooper Robertson who died July 24, 1929: Mrs. Louise Walker of Route #1, Reidsville; Mrs. Louis King of Route #2, Burlington, N. C.; Albert L. Paul and M. P. Robertson of Route #1, Reidsville, N. C. One sister, Mrs. Luther Hicks of Yanceyville, N. C. He is survived by one brother, Callie Robertson of Burlington, N. C. May the Lord's richest blessings continue upon those precious to him.

His funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor, by his Pastor, Elder Wallace Smith. His body was laid to rest in a family plot in Reidlawn Cemetery in Reidsville, N. C.

The huge mound of beautiful flowers and the large crowd of brethren and friends who attended was evidence of the love and respect the Lord blessed our Brother to gain without, as well as within, the church he loved.

We who are left to mourn, bow in humble submission to the Holy and Righteous will of the Heavenly Father who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, feeling our loss is Brother Robertson's blessed eternal gain.

Written by Clifton Robertson as requested by Bush Arbor Church, read and approved in their conference meeting October 9, 1971.

Elder Wallace Smith, Moderator
Brother Earl Rudd, Clerk

SISTER NANNIE BAKER

Sister Baker was the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Warren. She was born April 16, 1874, passed from this life September 7, 1971, making her stay on earth 97 years, 4 months, 22 days. Sister Baker was united in marriage to the late Lewis Baker and unto this union were born seven children; one daughter, Mrs. Annie Squires, six sons, Willie, Calvin, Ralph, Phillip, Thomas, and Monroe Baker.

Sister Baker united with Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church, May, 1927, and was a faithful and loyal member. In her latter years

she was not able to attend her meetings due to illness, but in the years of bed confinement we did not hear her complain of her condition, but rather we saw faith, love and a sweet hope being manifested within her.

Sister Baker was not blessed with material things as many are today, but we feel she was blessed with things that money could not buy. We do not believe she would have exchanged her hope and belief in God for all this world has to offer. It was a pleasant experience to behold the countenance on her face the last time we met with her and sang her favorite hymn, "Amazing Grace." She will be missed by all who knew her and loved her kind and humble manner.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer of this obituary, assisted by ministers James White and Nathan Byrd. She was laid to rest under a beautiful mound of flowers to await the coming of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. May all those who mourn be reconciled to say, Not my will but thine be done.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times*, one given to the family, and one placed on the church records.

Read and approved in the conference meeting November 13, 1971. Written by Wallis A. Smith.

Wallis A. Smith, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

DEACON WILLIAM R. TURNER

By request I attempt to write the obituary of our beloved and precious deacon, Brother William R. Turner. He was the son of the late Flemon N. and Mary Allen Turner, born July 9, 1880, and died June 14, 1971. His companion, Sister Emma Houchins Wright Turner, and two children preceded him in death. Survivors are, two daughters: Sister Clarence Barton and Mrs. Jewel Nolan; a stepdaughter, Mrs. David Short; a stepson, Moyer Wright; two brothers: Samuel J. Turner and James M. Turner; also eight grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren.

He wrote, "I joined the church at County Line, Floyd County, Va. the third Sunday in November, 1920, and was baptized by Elder H. V. Cole the third Sunday in April, 1921. It was a day of rejoicing with me, but since then I have had many doubts and fears."

He was ordained Deacon in July, 1922. His deep convictions and compassion for the brethren, and his desire to live in peace, endeared him to the church at County Line. When he gave up housekeeping, he spent his time with his two daughters and stepdaughter. He loved to meet the brethren at church and in his home and where he stayed. He attended regularly, and in his last years went on two crutches. The last time he filled his seat at County Line, was the 3rd Sunday in October, 1970. He bore his great afflictions with the patience only the Lord can give.

It was our privilege to meet with him in the good home of Brother and Sister Barton where he spent his last days, to talk, sing, and pray, or any service that would fulfill his desire. June 13, 1971, was the last meeting for us. When we arrived he seemed to be in the last moment of his stay on earth, but he called for three hymns, and helped sing one. He gained a little strength, and we remembered that several years ago he was in a hospital beyond the doctor's help, but the Lord raised him up to stay awhile longer. But the Lord had better things for him this time, where the distresses of this life can never come. Thus ended the life he said was of few days and full of trouble; but the evidences declare he had the spirit of adoption, and will finally witness the redemption of his body which was laid by his companion in County Line Cemetery.

The Church at County Line has lost a dear friend, a faithful deacon and a precious brother. May we thank God for the good gift of this dear brother, and sigh and beg that it may be the will of our Heavenly Father to raise up other good brethren among us. May we be enabled to say and feel, "Thy will, O Lord, not ours be done."

His funeral was conducted June 16, 1971 in the County Line Meeting House by Elders R. A. May, J. R. Hollingsworth, B. O. Thompson, and Licentiate Noel Conner.

N. F. Conner

LUCY HARDEE MILLS

It is with a sad heart that I try to write in memory of our beloved mother, Lucy Hardee Mills. She was born November 26, 1886, to the late James and Rebecca Tyson Hardee in Pitt County, North Carolina, and departed this life on January 10, 1970.

She was united in marriage to Jethro R. Mills, December 5, 1905, who survives. To this union were born two daughters, Mrs. Gentry Porter and Mrs. Durward G. Hart; and three sons, Elbert Mills, Lyman Mills, and Dr. Wardell H. Mills. There are also eleven grandchildren, sixteen great grandchildren and one brother who survives.

Mother was united with the Red Banks Primitive Baptist Church, Pitt County, North Carolina, in June, 1910, along with her husband. She was a faithful member, and was known far and wide among the brethren and friends. She was always ready to do anything she could do for the benefit of her

church, and spent many hours in the service of her brethren. Mother was never happier than for she and Daddy to entertain their many brethren and friends in their home. She was a faithful and devoted mother, both to her family and to her church. All shall miss her greatly, and we believe our loss is her eternal gain. As sick as Mother was for several months before her passing, she was always grateful for the many brethren and friends who visited her. She never ceased to bear her afflictions with utmost patience.

Funeral services were conducted at Wilkerson's Funeral Home, Greenville, North Carolina, conducted by her pastor, Elder Linwood McKinney, assisted by Elder Leslie Coker and Elder Joe Sawyer. She was laid to rest in Greenwood Cemetery. The large and attentive congregation at the services testified of the high esteem in which she was held; and their flowers spoke silently of their love for a friend who has passed away.

May our Savior and Lord give grace that we may be reconciled to our loss and thankful hearts for the gift of such a faithful mother and friend; and enable us to say, Thy will be done.

Mrs. Durward G. Hart

MRS. JULIANN (PLYBON) McGUIRE

Mrs. Juliann (Plybon) McGuire was born in Franklin County, Va., December 26, 1877, to Elder Silas O. and Nancy Mary Plybon. Her mother passed from this life when she was a very young girl; and she had much responsibility since there were five children younger than she. Her father was a minister for a number of years. He remarried in later years.

Aunt Juliann married J. P. McGuire January 23, 1895, at the age of seventeen, and to this union were born eleven children — two of which preceded her in death. She joined the church at the old Robertson School House when her father preached there June 20, 1896. She was baptized the same afternoon by her father, and her membership was at Lynville Church. At the disposal of Lynville Church her membership was moved to Gills Creek Church, where it remained. Her husband passed away October 1, 1942: he was a church member until his death.

Aunt Juliann passed from this life September 9, 1970. She was a wonderful person and a great church lover, and was faithful until she became disabled to go. She often visited me in my home, and sometimes a week at the time. I loved her dearly and have missed her a lot.

I would like for the readers to know a part of her experience which she told me. She asked me to write an obituary and mail to Brother Spangler, and include this in it: I had a vision that I was on top of the highest, prettiest mountain I had ever seen. At the foot of the mountain there was the most beautiful stream of water, clear as crystal. I tried to get down off the mountain, but could not. When I came to, I was kneeling by the stream and was putting clothes on a baby; and the song 256 came to me. I had never heard it sung, but I could repeat it word for word. (This was probably in the Gobel Book — Editor.)

Her funeral was preached at the Lynch Funeral Home September 9, 1970, by Elder Leonard Brammer, and her body was laid to rest by her husband in the family cemetery near her home. She was loved by all who knew her, and will be greatly missed by her children, neighbors and friends, and her many beloved brethren and sisters in the church.

She leaves to mourn her passing, seven boys and two girls, and her grandchildren; one brother and one sister. At her request there was beautiful singing while the grave was being filled. We feel sure she is at rest awaiting to be awakened to live with her Saviour forever.

Written by a niece who loved her dearly, to whom she was like a mother since my mother was called home several years ago. Written by request.

Nancy (Plybon) Haynes

MISS ANNA McLAMB

Sister McLamb was called by our Heavenly Father in his wisdom, love and mercy on January 4, 1971, to rest in silent peace, waiting the resurrection to be called with the saints around God's throne.

She was born to Isham and Martha Moore McLamb March 24, 1891, making her stay with relatives and many friends 79 years and 11 months. She leaves to mourn her passing her brethren in the church, her niece, Martha Hall; her nephew, Leland McLamb, and many friends who loved and highly respected her.

Sister Anna was a firm believer in the Primitive Baptists, and united with Liberty Church in November, 1965. She was baptized by her pastor, Elder Lester E. Lee. She was faithful to attend church when her health permitted, and after that we met at different times for services in her home where there was a spiritual atmosphere, which made it a warm place for Elder C. D. Turner, members and friends. Services were held in the Dunn Rest Home also.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder C. D. Turner, in the Rose Funeral Home, Benson, N. C., and she was laid to rest in the Moore Family Cemetery, Harnett

County, N. C. beneath a mound of beautiful flowers. We loved her and will miss her, but our loss, we believe, is her heavenly gain.

RESOLVED, That a copy be recorded on the church record; a copy sent the *Signs of the Times*, and a copy be sent to the home.

Done by order of the church while in conference February 6, 1971.

Sister Liddie Tart
Sister Lovie Young, Committee

LESSIE B. STANCIL

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to take from us by death, our dear sister, Lessie Stancil, who was born August 22, 1888, the daughter of James B. and Florence Barefoot. She died January 24, 1971. On December 25, 1907, she was married to John W. Stancil, who died January 13, 1954. She leaves to mourn their loss, one daughter, five sons, two brothers, and three sisters.

Sister Stancil was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church over fifty years, and at the time of her death her membership was with Liberty Primitive Baptist Church. She was a faithful member as long as she was able to attend. She was a great believer in salvation by grace, and had that precious hope of a better life beyond the grave; and she praised her God as long as she lived. She was surely one of those dear and wonderful Mothers in Israel. All who knew her loved her. She had a gentle and always cheerful disposition, and was ready to lend a helping hand.

We, the Church at Liberty, feel that our loss is her eternal gain, and that she has fallen asleep in Jesus — from which none ever wake to weep.

Funeral services were held at Bethsaida Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder C. D. Turner, and Mr. I. Clyde Shepherd. Her body was laid to rest beside her husband in the church cemetery, to await the coming of our Lord.

It was agreed in conference February, 1971, that a committee be appointed, and Resolutions of Respect be written, for Sister Lessie B. Stancil: one for the church record, one be sent to the *Signs of the Times*, and one sent to the family.

Committee:
Sister Eva Tadlock
Sister Magdaline Messer
Sister Dolly Stewart

ADA C. COLLINS

The subject of this sketch was born in Barbour County, Alabama, on June 20, 1892, and moved next door to her future husband when she was eleven and a half years old. They were married August 25, 1912, and lived most happily nearly fifty-nine years. She soon had an experience of grace — when angels sang sweet anthems at her bedside, and she was baptized by Elder J. W. Collins, her grandfather by marriage, in 1915.

For fifty-three years she was a devoted wife to her minister husband, and went with him to meetings from Virginia to Daytona Beach, and Raleigh to Nashville, far and wide, while her husband was pastor of ten different churches, some as long as thirty years.

The Master called on July 16, 1971, and she answered just after her seventy-ninth year. Funeral services were conducted at Goodwater Church near our home, by two sons-in-law, Forrest Thomley and B. H. Reeves, Mr. J. T. Peacock, and Elder W. A. Williams; and the writer had to relate her experiences at the casket. Garden Chapel Home, Hartford, was in charge of arrangements.

She is survived by two sons, Norman and Kenneth; two daughters, Maureen and Annie Laurie; and a brother A. C. Campbell, and many other relatives. A vast concourse of relatives and friends attended the funeral. One of her last statements to her husband was, To go to church; and that I am doing although life is so sad as I live alone.

J. J. Collins

LILLIE LONG PARKER

The Lord has been pleased to call Sister Lillie Long Parker home at the age of 73 years, 9 months, and 17 days. The tenth of twelve children of Tom E. Long and Nellie Hollis Long, she was born on December 25, 1897, in Edgewood, Van Zandt County, Texas. She departed from this life the evening of Monday, October 11, 1971, at her home in Dallas, Texas.

Sister Parker was married to Sam H. Parker at Fruitvale, Van Zandt County, Texas, on November 12, 1916. The Parkers lived in Van Zandt County until 1943 when they moved to Dallas, Texas.

On May 3, 1959, Sister Parker was united with Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, where she was a much-loved, faithful and loving member through the remainder of her earthly sojourn. Though weak in body in recent years, she attended church regularly with the loving assistance of her faithful daughter; and it is a blessed memory that she attended the meeting at her church on Sunday, October 10th, the day before her departure from this life.

Sister Parker is survived by her husband, Sam H. Parker of Dallas, Texas; one daugh-

ter, Polly Stanglin of Garland, Texas; one son, Ray Parker of Lewisville, Texas; one granddaughter, Billie R. Parker of Lewisville, Texas; and a host of nieces and nephews, and multitudes of friends.

Sister Parker's funeral was conducted at the Eubank Funeral Home in Canton, Texas, her former pastor Elder W. W. Taylor of Tinsman, Arkansas, officiating by Sister Parker's long-standing request. The songs Rock of Ages and Precious Memories were sung at the funeral in response to her wishes.

Her mortal remains were laid to rest in Haven of Memories Cemetery in Canton, Texas, there to await the morning of the resurrection. May the Lord comfort all that mourn her passing.

Respectfully submitted,
Carey C. Morris

J. W. SELLERS

Brother Jake died November 7, 1971, after a long illness at eighty-two years of age. He was a most faithful member of Ramah Primitive Baptist Church.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. J. Collins and minister D. P. Hughes at Ward-Wilson Funeral Home, Dothan, Alabama, November 10th. Interment was at his beloved church, Ramah.

He is survived by his wife, a sister of Elder Paul Stott of the Mt. Enon Association; two sons, Paul and Russell; a stepson, Ralph Shirling; a brother, H. Sellers; three sisters, Evelyn Martin, Gussie Grice, and Repsie Coplan. Also by seven grandchildren and five great grandchildren, and other relatives. Many attended his funeral.

J. J. Collins

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Sister Mary Etta Byrd departed this life January 15, 1971. She was born August 27, 1887, the daughter of David and Ella Matthews Barns. She was the widow of Mr. Mack S. Byrd: they were blessed with seven children.

She was a faithful member of Bethsaida and Liberty Primitive Baptist Churches for sixty-three years. We feel our loss is her eternal gain, and that we should not weep for her as for those who have no hope.

We loved her, but God loved her best. The church, family and friends will miss Sister Byrd. May God give her family grace to say, "Thy will be done."

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the family, a copy be put on our church record, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order in conference at our February meeting.

Committee:
Sister Bessie Hall
Sister Dorothy Barefoot

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Shepherd Fold Church
Harris County, Texas
May 29, 1971

Pursuant to a call by Shepherd Fold Church for a presbytery to meet on above date for the purpose of the ordination of Brother Jerry Evers to the full work of the Gospel Ministry, the following Elders and Deacons met and organized themselves into a presbytery: Elders C. M. Haygood, W. W. Taylor, John Lee Smith, E. J. Lambert, Malcom Burkhalter, Carey C. Morris and G. D. Shipman; Deacons W. R. McCorkle, Barney Evers, Jimmy Lindsey and Dean G. Connell.

The Presbytery elected Elder C. M. Haygood Moderator and Elder G. D. Shipman Clerk.

Moderator called for candidate, whereupon spokesman Deacon W. R. McCorkle presented Brother Jerry Evers to the Presbytery.

After due examination of Brother Jerry Evers as to deportment, qualifications, and the state of God's gift and calling in him to the Gospel Ministry to the satisfaction of the Presbytery, the Presbytery proceeded with the ordination as follows:

A motion was made and seconded that we continue the ordination.

The Presbytery selected Elder Carey C. Morris to word the prayer, and Elder C. M. Haygood to deliver the charge. The ordination was then conducted by the laying on of hands, and with prayer by Elder Carey C. Morris. The charge was delivered by Elder C. M. Haygood.

The right hand of official fellowship was given by the members of the Presbytery. Elder Jerry Evers was then delivered back to Shepherd Fold Church as a duly ordained minister.

The right hand of fellowship and bidding of God's speed was given him and his wife by members of the Shepherd Fold Church, visiting brethren, sisters and friends.

Minutes of the Presbytery were read and approved, and the Presbytery dissolved in order with prayer by Elder E. J. Lambert.

Elder C. M. Haygood, Moderator
Elder G. D. Shipman, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 140 DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1972 NO. 3

We had 100 extra copies of December, 1971 printed. Supply exhausted. We are having 500 more copies printed. Re-order — 50¢ each postpaid.

WASHING FEET

(John 13:14)

True meekness is a virtue
And there is nothing indiscreet
In kneeling before the brethren
And washing one another's feet.

Jesus set for us this example,
To Him we should entreat
To be blessed with true humility
To wash our brothers' feet.

Of all the desires of a Christian
There is nothing like the mercy seat;
And God knows of our sincerity
When we wash each others' feet.

Jesus knows the hearts of men
Whether honest or deceit,
But nothing shows true humbleness
Like washing a brother's feet.

The world can not understand
What makes our faith complete.
It is Christ our Saviour
Who washed His disciples' feet.

Jesus gives us natural things
And spiritual food to eat;
But He also taught us plainly
To wash each others' feet.

We know that the gateway of Heaven
Is reached through the mercy seat
And if we are among the elect of God,
We'll want to wash our brothers' feet.

As we travel on Life's journey
Full of pride and self conceit;
Let us pray that God will humble us
To wash our brothers' feet.

Reeves O. Smith
Pinetown, N. C. 27865

TROUBLES — THEN REST

Rt. 2,
Smithfield, N. C. 27577

Dear Elder Spangler:

My mind is burdened somewhat to write to the dear *Signs of the Times* some of my thoughts on Thessalonians 1:7. The portion that touches my heart tonight is, "And to you who are troubled rest with us . . ."

Have you not, dear reader, seen trouble in your life? and in your experience, did it not seem that you were surrounded with trouble, trials and tribulations on every hand? O, I think of my own experience in early life, how I feel and hope our God showed me that all my trouble was within myself: my sinful nature which I could not, and have not even to this very day controlled or subdued in any manner, was full of trouble. in other words, dear saints, I caused myself more trouble than anyone else I know. I could see how peaceful the children of God were, and were resting one with another in a like faith and hope in Jesus our Lord.

Many times I would go to the Primitive Baptist Churches in my area, and to me it seemed I was the only one in trouble; and the others were at rest. How I begged for this rest with God's children, for, as I said, I was in trouble on every hand. My thoughts gave me much trouble; my sinful actions and ways gave me much trouble; even the tongue in my mouth gave me much trouble, for of all the members of this sinful worm of the dust, my unruly tongue was, and still is most troublesome.

I could witness with Paul when he was blessed to write, "In me, that is in

my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." I was in so much trouble that I was made to know that my free-will was gone; my self-righteousness was gone, and that my vain pride was stripped away by trouble. I felt to be all alone in this sin cursed world without God and without hope.

I have been made to see, I trust by God's grace, that trouble in one's life is what draws him close to the church, and brings him to desire that glorious Rest within her walls and in the hearts of God's chosen people: redeemed out of trouble, chosen out of the troubles and trials that God sends his people's way because He loves them. It is hard for worldly minded people to understand that if God loves you, he sends trouble your way: it is, my brethren, to make you see and know that salvation is of the Lord, and not of the works of man. I was made to see that I could not deliver myself from troubles, neither could any other man help me. When it pleased God, I trust, to give this poor Hell deserving worm that wonderful rest, I was made to give God the praise; for, "It is the work of God that ye believe on him whom He has sent."

Little children, I have written some of my experience in trouble, now I would like to express my feelings on the portion of the text: "Rest with us."

What a wonderful rest it is when God delivers one out of the troubles of this life, and blessed that little one with a burden to be baptized, the answer of a clear conscience towards God! I do not believe that any one can know the feeling of *Rest with us,* if his conscience is disturbed. The Rest under consideration is the hope that you are one of His, and the faith to believe that Jesus died and arose victorious over all opposition; and that some sweet day you will be bourn on the wings of God's love to that City not made with hands.

This rest meant more to me than all the words the tongues of men and angels could express. This rest or confidence will go with his people throughout the journey of this life. Paul wrote, "Being confident of this very thing, that he that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

How sure the work of God is! and how wonderful it is when we are made to feel within our poor, troubled hearts the text, "And to you who are troubled, rest with us." If you have been in trouble, and have been given this rest in the church, then you can sing with God's people,

> "O land of rest for thee I sigh,
> When will the moment come
> When I can lay my armor by,
> And dwell in peace at home?"

May God bless us to rest in the joy of His Great Salvation, is my prayer.

Elder Wayne Mitchell

JAMES 4:8

SUBJECT: "Draw nigh unto God and he will draw nigh unto you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye doubleminded." (James 4:8)

First, in dealing with this portion of scripture we must remember that Christ said, "Without me you can do nothing." He did not say that without my instruction ye can do nothing, but "without me" — the very substance of Christ, the quickening spirit, faith which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen; and Christ is that faith for whom we hope, and He bare witness of the Father whom no man hath seen.

The answer to this scripture is found in Hebrews 7:19. "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better *hope* did; by the which we *draw nigh* unto God." This perfectly explains that we do not draw nigh unto God through the obedience of the law ("for the law made nothing perfect"), as most people may think. But rather it says that the bringing in of a better *hope* did, whereby we draw nigh to God. One may ask, "What is this hope?" The Scriptures answer positively. The sentence says that the *hope* made *perfect*

that which the law could not. "For by one offering he" (Christ) "forever *perfected* them that are sanctified." Also: "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is *Christ* in you the *hope* of glory." The evidence provided, we must conclude that Christ is the hope by the which we draw nigh unto God. Furthermore, "But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometime were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." (Eph. 2:13.) Also no one can draw nigh unto God until God first draws him: "No man can come" (come here meaning to draw nigh) "unto me except the Father which has sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day."

Now it will be attempted to explain "Cleanse your hands ye sinners." First of all, I would like to ask the readers what in the world has a sinner got in and of himself to cleanse his hands from sin with? "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission," and their own blood cannot do this because they would have to spend eternity in a eternal hell and could never finally then go on to heaven. The answer to this is found in the eight chapter of Romans and the thirteenth verse: "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye *through the Spirit* do *mortify* the deeds of the body," (sin) "ye shall live." The word "mortify" means to deaden or bring in subjection, and here in particular it must mean to deaden because, *"For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh,* God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, *condemned"* (to deaden) "sin in the flesh." (Rom. 8:3.)

Notice the clause underlined in the previous quotation how that it explains that the law could not condemn sin. Therefore we cannot cleanse or mortify sin by the obedience of the law. Christ must do the work and it is by his Spirit that we mortify the deeds of the body, not by works of any kind. And remember we do not have control over the Spirit of God, "for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." The Spirit is a leading power and a moving power: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were *moved* by the Holy Ghost." If it were not for the moving power of the third person of the Godhead there would be no Bible, no prophecy, no religion, and no true and God fearing Christians.

Since it is now understood that a sinner cannot "cleanse" himself from his sins save by *being led* by the Spirit of God, let us go on to "and purify your hearts, ye doubleminded." "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" After the quotation of this scripture we can see why the heart of man needs purifying. But the question is, is it really we that purify the heart, or God? The Scriptures answer positively. "And I will give them *one heart,* and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh." (Ezekiel 11:19.) "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." (Ezekiel 36:26-27.) "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, PURIFYING their HEARTS by faith." (Acts 15:8-9.) Now since the Scriptures plainly declare that God purifies the hearts of men, you ask, "Well, why did the apostle tell us to do it?" You see, all this cleansing and purifying action that goes on inside a sinner that is found by grace, is all part of, "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling for it is God which worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure." We work this salvation out because God works in us. Like Christ said, "I can

of myself do nothing" and "my Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

Gregory Dean Duren

ANOTHER ARTICLE BY THE LATE ELDER H. M. CURRY

"These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." (Acts 17:6)

These words were spoken of Paul and Silas after having preached three Sabbath days in the synagogue at Thessalonica. Paul's preaching was exceeding troublesome. (Acts 16:20) The doctrine of Christ when proclaimed by his chosen ministers is always offensive to the world and its different sects of carnal worshippers. It turns Arminianism upside down. As long as a man's preaching leaves the world right side up, we know that he has not preached the gospel of Christ. A gospel without a stumbling block is a gospel without Christ. Those whose preaching does not turn the world upside down, have never been turned upside down themselves; and those who have not been turned upside down, have never been called by grace; for a call by grace always turns a man upside down. It had this effect on Paul.

The religion of Jesus Christ is contrary to nature. Christ was put to death on the cross. Arminianism teaches that God is the Father of all mankind, and as such deals with all men as his children. They even came face to face with the Lord Jesus Christ with this pernicious doctrine, saying, "We be not born of fornication: we have one Father, even God." (John 8:41) But the Saviour silenced their presumptious blasphemy with the cutting rebuke, "If God were your father, ye would love me." "Ye are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." (John 8:44)

This same generation of Satan is in the world today, under a cloke of carnal religion, denying that they are born of fornication, and claiming one Father, even God. And nothing is more tormenting to them than to point to their true parentage, as did the Saviour. These same teachers of the world hold forth a Saviour who left the shining courts of his Father's glory, and came to this low ground of sin and sorrow, suffered and died the ignomenious death of the cross, to do men's wills; for they say he will save them if they will. But the word of eternal truth turns this upside down, and hurls it back into the bottomless pit of human lies, and declares that he came down from heaven, not even to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him. (John 6:38) Our Saviour was no Arminian; for he came not to do his own will. Neither are his brethren Arminians. For in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren.

These same soothsayers teach that Christ, as an offering for sin, is made to man, and man is moved and coaxed by the Spirit and bride to accept him. They call themselves the bride, and exhort their hearers not to resist the Spirit, for fear it may take its everlasting flight. But the inspiried record turns this upside down and discovers under it Satan, the father of lies, and lets us know that Jesus through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, and by that offering hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Offerings for sin are made to God and to God alone. Christ as an offering for sin is not made to us. They also teach that Christ is held forth in what they call "the general tender of the gospel," and that we must believe in him in order to be saved, and that we believe according to our own free will. But the inspired Scripture, that fatal touchstone of the world's religion, meets this doctrine of infidelity, and turns it upside down: declaring that we "believe according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead." (Ephesians 1:19, 20) When men came to Christ wanting to work the works of God, he told them, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him

whom he hath sent." (John 6:28, 29) They say, we believe according to our own free will. Christ says, We believe accordng to the working of the mighty power of God. They say, It is man's work to believe. Christ says, It is the work of God. Which is right?

These same "tower-builders" teach that all men can come to Christ; but the Saviour said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." — (John 7:44) Here they give the Saviour the lie, and yet pretend to love and obey him. They further teach that it is God's will to have all men come to Christ and be saved, and that it is God's purpose and pleasure to save them if they will but come; "If they will only fall in with the overtures of mercy, and be saved upon the easy and equitable tems of the gospel, before it is finally and everlastingly too late." But the Savior turns this upside down, and reveals their refuge of lies, and tells us that all that the Father giveth him shall come to him. Neither can one that God has given to Christ stay away. God will make them come. Christ says, "Ye will not come unto me;" and, "No man can come." Men will not come, cannot come. And "will not" and "cannot" is a double not, which nothing but the finger of God can untie. With men these things are imposible; but with God all things are possible.

These same "way-makers" teach a broad and easy way which all men can find, because they claim to clearly point it out; and that all men can and may walk therein. They would like to prove that our Saviour lied when he said, "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leads to life, and few there be that find it." I do not dispute their claim to the "broad way," but only deny that it leads to life. For "Broad is the way that leads to death, and many there be that go in thereat." These same "compassers" of sea and land must have a universal religion. Their prayer is that the world may be converted to Christ. They are of the world, and pray for the world. But the Saviour was not of the world, and declared that he prayed not for the world. — (John 17:9) Their prayers are not modeled after Christ's, but after "vain repetitions of the heathen," which Christ commands his disciples not to use. How long have their joint petitions gone up for "every house to become a house of prayer, and every heart a fit temple for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit?" Has this prayer ever been answered? If it should be, could the Scriptures be fulfilled? The fact that this is not answered is evidence that it was never promised, and the asking is proved to be amiss.

Again, these learned Rabbis of modern theology teach that "men are not the sheep of Christ because they believe not." But Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, whose own the sheep are, turns this upside down and exposes their learned ignorance of the true God and his grace, and says, "Ye believe not because ye are not my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." — (John 10:26) Men believe because they are the sheep of Christ; not to make them sheep. In the same way which they call "proclaiming life and salvation," they teach that as many as believe, are ordained to eternal life. But the eternal record destroys this refuge of lies, and reveals the glorious truth of God's predestinating grace, and says, "As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed." — (Acts 13:48.) If you wish to arrive at the truth, always reverse Arminianism. Again, these will-worshiping idolators claim that by their teaching, accompanied by the persuasive influence of the Spirit, men are brought to a knowledge of the truth, and then can be saved by laying hold of offered mercy. But the Scriputres turn this upside down, and tell us that God will have men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. — (1 Tim. 2:4) The Scriptures teach, first, saved, and then a knowledge of the truth. Men teach, first, a knowledge of the truth, and then a probable salvation. They have Sunday Schools, Tract Societies, money

systems, and a hundred other inventions unauthorized by the word of God, to forward this work of teaching what they call the religion of Jesus Christ. But the Scriptures turn this upside down, and show it to be the commandments and traditions of men. "They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest." — (Heb. 8:11) "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me." — (John 6)

This is the teaching that brings men to Christ. It brings all who are taught. Christ says, "Every one that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me." There is no failure here. When a poor sinner is taught of the Lord; when Christ, the true light, is revealed in him, he denies himself and learns to touch not, taste not, handle not. the commandments and traditions of men, because with them they all perish with the using. Again, these "Doctors of Divinity" teach that all men are called by the gospel and the Spirit, and can be saved if they will only yield to the influence of the Spirit, and obey what they call the gospel, and keep the commandments. But our Savior has stopped their mouths again; for he declares that the world cannot receive the Spirit, which he sends to comfort his children. — (John 14:17.) The apostle says, "Who hath saved us, and called us."— (2 Tim. 1:9) Hence we are saved before we are called. If not, why does the word say so? "Sanctified by God the Father, preserved (or saved) in Jesus Christ, and called." — (Jude 1.) But the salvation that men preach is after the call. Then it is plain that their call and salvation are not the call and salvation of our God. Their call is not only before their salvation, but it is immensely broader; for they say that all men are called , and but few saved. But the call of our God is not so. The promise is to all that are called. "For the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off; even as many as the Lord our God shall call." — (Acts 2:39.) This promise is to "as many," not to all. Again, "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." — (1 Cor. 1:26.) Somebody is left out of this call. But why do we reason? for hath not the apostle said, "Whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate;" "and whom he did predestinate, them he also called?" (Rom. 8:29, 30.)

Here we see that the call of our God is limited by his predestination, coupled with his eternal foreknowledge. Thus we see that their doctrine of infidelity is turned upside down by God's own words, and the foundation thereof discovered to be human ingenuity and craftiness, speculation being the chief corner-stone. These same atheistic teachers preach that God begins the work in all men, but carries it on in but few, and that thousands who are awakened and moved by the Spirit, die in their sins, and sink into the torment of an ever burning hell. This is mighty poor grace, and a very unsuccessful and sadly disappointed spirit; but we feel sure that it is neither the grace nor the Spirit of our God; for we are assured in his word that his grace "reigns through righteousness unto everlasting life." (Rom. 5:21.) It **reigns** through righteousness; does not fail through weakness. And when our God begins a good work in a creature, he "performs it until the day of Jesus Christ." — (Phil. 1:6.) And what our God doeth shall stand forever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it. — (Eccl. 3:14.) Thus through the inspired Scriptures every phase of the doctrines of men is turned upside down, and their falsehoods brought to light.

These same master builders of the high places of Molech preach a faith that is the fruit of the creature, and man must exercise it. But Paul preached a faith that God is the author and finisher of; a faith that exercises the

creature; that works by love and purifies the heart; a faith that is the gift of God; a faith that moved Noah to prepare an ark; a faith that threw down the walls of Jericho; a faith which translated Enoch; a faith which subdued kingdoms, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, works righteousness, and overcomes the world. This is not a faith that is the fruit of the creature, and exercised by man; but it is that faith by which we understand the world was framed; the faith of the Son of God.

These same evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, (2 Tim. 3:13), and preach a birth of a spirit which can be produced or prevented by man; a birth without a begetting, without a travail, and brings forth something that can be annihilated, or cease to exist, by the disobedience of the creature, and regain the condition occupied before birth. They call this "being born of God." Now, this is not only contradicted by the word of truth, but there is not a syllable of common sense or reason in it. There are laws of birth, and without these a birth is impossible. First, the existence of life or seed in the parent; second, a begetting; and third, travail, or bringing to light and manifestation the being whose life had its existence in the parent. And this being can never pass back into that state again. The Scriptures inform us that we are born of God. How can this be, except our life was in God, and of of the same nature as God? Before this birth of the Spirit, there must be a begetting; and James informs us that God of his own will begat us. (James 1:18.) And if begotten of the Spirit, we are bound to be born. For God says shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? — (Isa. 66:9.)

These same gainsayers of Korah preach that in infancy we are all the children of God; but when we cross the line of accountability, if we do good God will still love us; and if we disobey, he will hate us, and we will cease to be his children, and become the children of the wicked one. This line of accountability, of which they preach so much, I can never understand, as there is no such thing intimated in the Scriptures of divine truth. But the word of God turns this upside down, and discloses ignorance, as its foundation. These words of eternal truth forever settle the question with all lovers of the truth. "The children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger: as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." — (Rom. 9:11-13.) If this Scripture read in this way, The children being both born, and having crossed the line of accountability, one did good and another evil, that salvation by works might stand, it was said unto her, Jacob I love, but Esau I hate; then the Scriptures would not have to be revised to meet the demands of the present age; neither would the Arminian clergy have to dodge the word, as they do. But our God does not have to wait for the birth of the creature, to fix his choice; but his sovereign, electing love fixes on the object before its birth, before it does good or evil, even before it is in a capacity for doing good or evil. The eternal choice of our God was made not only before the birth of the objects embraced therein, but was made in Christ before the foundation of the world, and sealed by his immutable decree of predestination; and the foundation thereof standeth sure, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his."

Dear kindred in Christ, it is in much weakness that I have tried to notice a few of the most prominent points in which the doctrine of our Savior turns the world upside down. If all the points of difference were noticed and compared, I suppose the world itself would not contain the books that should be written. I fear I have already worried you with unprofitable matter. I am young and ignorant, but I hope that

the grace which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto me, and through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus my Savior, I hope to stand accepted in the Beloved, with all the redeemed family..

Yours in hope,

H. M. Curry

Newfoundland, Ky.

(We copy the above from the January 15, 1884 issue of the Signs. It had escaped our notice when we published other articles by Elder Curry — J. D. W.)

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

Wilson, N. C.

Dear Elder Wood:

Enclosed is a letter from one of the dear sisters of one of the churches I serve. If you think it merits printing in the *Signs,* you may use it.

(Elder) W. E. Turner

Route 5,
Goldsboro, N. C.

Dear Christian Friends:

I read with deep interest the article by Elder Lambert in the October *Signs.* It reminded me of the numerous times I have felt impressed to write to a dear sister or brother: I wanted to say to someone, "I love you for Christ's sake, if not deceived in my experience."

The thought came to me, You cannot single out any one member over another. If you are a child of God, each member is precious and lovely. So, if it pleases God to direct my thoughts, I desire to say to all who compose the household of faith, Love to you from the depth of my heart. I am not worthy to feel this way, but by the grace of God I believe my feelings are true.

My desire also, the Lord willing, is to write about my experience thus far in life. "Thus far the Lord has led me on," I hope. My experience began in my tender years — at the age of fourteen. In May, 1952, I attended our second Saturday meeting at Pittman's Grove. I could not control my emotions and it was a tearful meeting for me. I tried to tell myself that I was overly concerned about my brother who was sick and in the hospital at the time. Brother James Pope saw my condition, and talked to me. It was good to know someone cared; but it took Jesus to reach my case.

Each time after this when the church announced an open door for the reception of members to fellowship, my legs felt as though they would fold under me. I was weak and undone. I stayed in this condition until the second Sunday in November when I was blessed to go home to my friends. During this time I dreamed about Elder Turner baptizing me.

My high school days were not what most teen agers would consider the "good old days." The joys and sorrows that came my way were not what carnal nature desires. There was a time in my life that I thought that keeping my sins from my parents, was all that counted. The knowledge that God knows all abuot me, and seemingly every one else does too, has made a beggar out of me.

At the age of eighteen I married a fine young man, Garlan Vick. The desire for a closer walk with God, plus the desire to find happiness with my husband brought heartache as well as joy. The first few years we did not attend church as often as I did with my parents. This was a disappointment, and I seemed to grow cold and distant. We were getting involved with worldly attractions that to me did not seem fitting for a church member. At one time I told my husband, If this is the way we must go, I'll have to ask for my name to be removed from the church record. He tried to console me, but his words were as a miserable comforter. I felt I must have been mistaken in thinking God had touched my heart. This was a state of being unfit to live, and less fit to die — though I thought death was what I wanted. When in the belly of Hell I cried unto the Lord. My cry was for renewed evidence that I possessed

a hope of eternal life, and to take me away from so much worldly lust. I believe I prayed that my husband could see and believe this doctrine that is so precious to me. And again, I cried, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?

It pleased God to answer my prayers, for I am again blessed to attend church regularly with my husband and precious little family. Praise His Holy Name!

A deep concern came over me for Pittman's Grove Church. I could see our old members and ministers passing on. God showed me He was in charge. We have been wonderfully blessed the last few years, for God has given us two young, precious ministers; and our membership has increased. Our dear Elder Turner is still with us, and we love him dearly.

Many scriptures and hymns come to my mind, but quoting them would be too lengthy. This one is a favorite thought, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

God has been good to us all the days of our lives. I am reminded often that I am a sinner; but I have a lively hope that I am a sinner saved by grace treasured in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world.

In bonds of love,
Dora Ellen Vick

HE IS WITH US ALL THE WAY

"And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." (Genesis 5:24) "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord; and Noah walked with God." (Genesis 6:8, 9)

In hope that this may comfort some of the Lord's poor and afflicted people, I write this experience: This day, and many times, the tasks are too many; the way is too dark. I am weary — I cannot see my way.

And so this day began. When nightfall came, I realized someone lightened the load; Someone lighted the way; Someone made the impossible possible, and I thought of these precious promises.

I do believe as were Enoch and Noah, so are all who find grace in His sight: Could I hope I am one? And I believe that as His children walk along this path called life, Christ Jesus walks along to ease the yoke, and lighten the burden.

And when we stumble and fall, He gently lifts us up; and when death overtakes us, how sweet and simple death seems to be!

"He was not; for God took him." This is my only hope.

Mrs. Allie (Cecil) Neal

LET US COMFORT ONE ANOTHER

Sharps Chapel, Tenn.

Dear Elder Wood and
Brother in the Lord:

Enclosed find check to pay my subscription one year and the extra for you to use as you desire. I am late sending it. My wife and I have been in the hospital: I am out now but my wife is still in the hospital, and may not get any better.

I wonder sometimes why these things are, and our mind goes back to the statement David made when his brothers asked him "Why comest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness?" And David replied, "Is there not a cause?" We feel that David gave a wise answer. I understand that God is the first cause of all causes. No doubt David was sure the few sheep would be well taken care of, for God had given him strength to slay a lion and a bear: they had taken a lamb out of the flock, but David slew them and delivered the lamb out of his mouth. I think David represents Christ the Great Shepherd, for no power on earth will be able to destroy one of them since Christ is the great Deliverer.

Let us go a little farther. What was Goliath representing? I understand he was a type of death, and there was not one in Israel able to conquer or kill this great enemy; but David was made able to meet him in the Valley of Elah, and with one precious stone hit him in the forehead, and he fell on his face to the earth. David ran and stood upon the Philistine and took his sword and slew him.

It is written in Isaiah 25:8 that, "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall be taken away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it."

May we refer you to the statement of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:55-57, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory. The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." If David did signify Christ in this particular case, it was done before the eyes of the people of God. I am looking forward and hoping I will be one of that number to hear that glorious call: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with a voice of the Archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Then let us comfort one another with these words.

May the Lord make you able to continue this great service; and if you should have the opportunity to come this way, we would be glad to have you.

Elder Biggs, Elder Prince and Elder Brock were with us at our association, and we enjoyed them very much. I am enclosing one of our minutes. I thought you might like to see it.

Let us say again, May the Lord be with you. This may be the last letter to you. I am seventy-six years old and can't write very well. If you want to you can print this, and if you don't think it is what it should be, disregard it...

Your in hope of eternal life,
Elder John Wilder

EXPERIENCE

801 Kings Grant Road,
Wilmington, N. C. 28401
November 22, 1971

My Dearest Friends:

If the Lord will bless me, I desire to pen some of my experiences along life's rocky road. It is my desire that it bring praise to our Almighty God, and maybe comfort to some of His little children.

Even as a small child, I believe, I was made to know that there was indeed an all wise and powerful God. Many times I can recall bowing my head and asking His help even over childhood problems. My parents were Primitive Baptists and I attended church with them. My mother later joined Snow Creek Primitive Baptist Church in Stokes County, N. C.

At the age of eighteen I was married to my wonderful companion. We both took jobs and moved to Winston Salem. We both seemed to enjoy the same faith and attended church fairly regularly. I felt to love the many people we met at the different churches, and I believe I had a true desire to be a part of them. During this time I dreamed I asked for a home with a people, and there were no familiar faces in the congregation; neither had I ever seen the preacher. Not knowing that the kind hand of Providence would be moving us, caused me great concern. But everywhere I went the memory of these people and that little church stayed in my mind.

About a year later, November 12, 1968, we moved to Wilmington. How this dream came back to me as we began going around to the many different Primitive Baptist Churches! I somehow felt that the dream would be fulfilled; and how fearful I became. Every new

church I attended the thought would come to me, "Will this be the time I'll be made to offer to the church?" We have made so many dear friends and heard many wonderful sermons in the three years we have lived here. The burden to belong to this people became so great that I felt condemned. O how I felt so unworthy! yet the strong desire still remained. Finally the burdens became so great that I was made to relate some of my feelings in a letter to dear Elder Wayne Mitchell. This was of some comfort; but in doing this I felt I was made to know that deliverance must come from Above. On a Monday morning not long after this I received a call from this dear Elder, and after some hesitation he related to me how he had been shown I would offer to the church: where, and even the text he was given to speak from.

Little did I know that instead of receiving comfort from this, I became very fearful, and even angry toward him for having told me this. How many times I related to friends and to my dear husband, that I would never go near that church. How much I've been made to realize that if we are left alone in our nature, we would utterly destroy ourselves, because we know not what is good for us. I had been to this church once, but my memory of it did not fit with the little church in my dream. My memory of it was that it was a very large, wide meeting house with a high raised pulpit. In my dream the church was small, narrow and white on the inside. On Tuesday night, November 16th, Brother Mitchell was to fill an appointment at this church. I declared I wouldn't go, yet there was a deep feeling to be there. My dear husband came home from work, showered and dressed, and told me we were going to church.

I remarked to him that I did not feel we should; but after much persuasion, I dressed, got the children ready, and we left. When we drove upon the church grounds a most lifted-up, peaceful feeling came over me. We got out of the car and went inside. I was amazed because the building was no way like it was in my memory of my first visit there. Here it was: dear Sand Hill Church revealed to me as the one in my dream. How God moves in mysterious ways his wonders to perform! I was still in no fear until Elder Mitchell arose to speak, and began reading from Isaiah 41:17. How well did I remember that this was the text he had been given in the vision. As the last hymn was started, the thought ran through my mind that this wasn't the time for me: and no sooner than it left my mind, I was handing the song book to my companion and walking up the aisle. The force moving me would have been no greater had there been a rope pulling me. I truly felt like a human sacrifice. I was blest to get out a few words, and was received into the church.

Upon arising on Wednesday morning I was so cast down that I could hardly get breakfast. I told my companion that I felt I had deceived those dear people and I could not be baptized as was set for the following Sunday. He tried to encourage me to no avail; and left for work. O how the tears flowed, and I sank deeper and deeper. Around 10:30 I phoned Elder Mitchell. There was no answer. My thoughts turned to the deacons at Sand Hill, but as hard as I tried I could not remember their names. I even thought of suicide if that was what it would take to keep me from being baptized. When my companion came home from work I was exhausted and pleaded for him to pray for me. At no time during the day was I given to pray for myself. I felt too unworthy to even call upon His name, yet I realized that if I didn't have help from above, I would surely die. He was startled at first but told me that if I didn't feel better he would make an attempt to pray at bedtime. I retired rather early, and he came into the room, knelt by my bedside, and said, "Bear with me." It was the most humble and beautiful prayer I'd ever heard. I truly believe it was answered.

The next day day I felt better and was made to rejoice in a visit from dear Sister Winstead. We, I felt, were blessed to witness together, and I began to see my total depravity; I hadn't of myself deceived anyone. I was made to feel that every detail of my experience was working by His grace according to His predetermined counsel. How beautiful it began to look to me, and what love began to fill my breast! This all wise and all powerful God whom I felt I had known before, had made his power known to me in such force that all I could utter was, "Praise God! Praise God!" The tears of joy flowed freely.

Friday and Saturday mornings found me awaking with such joy in my soul, could I have employed ten thousand tongues it would not have been enough to praise His Holy Name. O how I wanted to go down into that liquid grave! I seemingly could not wait. I truly felt I was able to rejoice in a Saviour's love. Even the dear old hymns I had tried to sing before had a new meaning. Sunday morning finally came; and what a beautiful day! We were blessed to enjoy Brother Mitchell and family in our home on Saturday night, and to attend church at Wilmington Sunday morning; but four o'clock could not come quickly enough.

The weather was cooler but I did not dread it. The sun was shining so beautifully, as if to say God is looking down. As my feet touched the water my mind was carried to the cross, and O how I thought of how our Saviour suffered. That water felt good, and I believe that certain burden was left there.

How unworthy I feel to receive such love. As I looked upon the faces of those dear ones gathered around I felt I shared with them this great love. Looking back, my experiences are beautiful and I am made to feel thankful for the trials and tribulations that brought me to this place. Such a great God, and how much I realize I need Him to keep me. It is my prayer that He guide and keep me at the feet of these dear people, who, by God's grace saw fit to give me a home at Sand Hill Church.

Pray for this unworthy sinner.

Arlene M. Hale

(This was written the day following her baptism — Ed.)

WRITES ABOUT HOW GOOD THE LORD HAS BEEN

Rt. 2,
Elon College, N. C. 27244

Dear Elder Spangler:

If I can put it into words, I would like to write a little about how good the Lord has been to me all the days of my life.

Without his blessing I cannot think a good thought. Unless He blesses me I cannot be thankful, pray or do anything. In my flesh there is no good thing that I can do; but with him I can do all things. I am so glad that I believe in a God that made all things, and knows all things, and controls all things. He created both good and evil. He hates sin but He created it for a purpose. I do and say things that I should not, then I am troubled about it, and therefore reap what I sow.

Sometimes I see myself attempting to fix things my own way, then I am shown that these things are already fixed. Not only are they fixed, they are fixed right because He can do no wrong.

I believe that if He begins a good work in you, He will complete it to the end. I do not have a bright experience as many of my people do, but I would not take anything in this world for it. I have been a widow twenty-six years. My baby was three years old when my husband passed away: and I could not have made it without the good Lord's help. When I joined the church it was a surprise to me. I found myself walking up the aisle of the church — I didn't have anything to tell except I wanted a home with them and to be baptized. They accepted me, and I have never regretted joining. This was thirty

years ago, and if they can tolerate me, I surely want to be with them, because that is all there is in life for me. I hope I shall never cause any trouble among them. When I first joined the church I wondered if I had been deceived and had deceived the church. As the years go by, I feel we grow in grace and love of the church; and I believe that before the end of this world, the Lord will draw his people closer and closer together, — they will love one another more and more as the world gets worse. I love old Pleasant Grove Church, my brothers and sisters and friends. I believe Primitive Baptists preach the truth, but what worries me is, Am I one? I hope so. I think a lot of our pastor and hope we can keep him a long, long time.

I believe the good Lord disciplines his people to make them humble and love Him more. Sometimes I am blessed with troubles and tribulations to the point I don't know what I will do. It seems I will never get over this feeling. All I can say is, Lord help me. That is all the prayer that is needed if we can say it from the heart. He does help me: He is my all in all. There have been a few times I could say that I know my Redeemer lives. O that it could be his will to take my hand and lead me on; but I have to wait.

I have read the Bible and could not get anything from it; at other times I can read it and understand it. Not long ago I was reading it, and I couldn't stop — I got more from it than ever before. I have my downs which seem more than my peaks. I hope I can be made thankful for my troubles...

I enjoy reading the *Signs of the Times*. When at the throne of grace, remember me. From a sister I hope.

Rose S. Page

Swansboro, N. C. 28584
P. O. Box 308

Dear Elder Spangler,

It is time for me to renew my subscription. Enclosed you will find check in the amount of $10. Seven dollars is for two years subscription and the balance for the Indigent Fund. We want to keep it coming. So far as we know, this is the only periodical published that firmly stands and supports the doctrine of the sovereignty of God in all things. We think it is worthy of the support of all those who believe in the writings of its Editors and others who are so ably blessed.

It was good to have the opportunity to hear you preach at the Smith River Association and wish you could have attended ours, the Contentnea. We attended five associations and enjoyed them all. The Smith River, Seven Mile, Kehukee, Contentnea and Black Creek all seem to be blessed to meet in fellowship and in peace and were blessed with good sound preaching. It is good to be with the Lord's people when love and peace is manifested to the extent that you can feel the very presence of our Lord and Saviour in the place.

Since the old year will soon pass and we will be in the new one, we want to send best wishes to all the members of the staff of the *Signs of the Times,* together with their families in wishing for them health and the blessings of the Lord in the years to come. We have been concerned since learning that due to the feeble condition of Elder and sister Ruston, they were not able to attend services. May the God of mercy and grace be with them and give them strength to continue to look to Him from whence cometh all of our help.

Yours in the bond of the Holy Spirit.

Jabez J. Rhue

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"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kindgdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." (Daniel 2:44)

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EDITORIAL

And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. (Revelation xii.:3)

In looking back over the 1961 *Signs* we find a request from Elder Louis Stewart of Missouri, wishing someone would write on the above subject.

With a humble desire to be led aright we will give what is presented to our mind. In Matthew xxiv:3 the disciples asked Jesus three questions, "(1) Tell us, when shall these things be? (2) and what shall be the sign of thy coming, (3) and of the end of the world?" He answered two of them and told them in verses 35 and 36: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." In Revelation God gave to Jesus Christ "to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass." We are also told, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: *for the time is at hand.*"

In Revelation xii. we are given the sight of The Jerusalem Church as a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, (the moon a type of the law) and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. These twelve stars were the twelve apostles; and she travailing in pain to be delivered, at this very time appeared a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns upon his heads. The woman

brought forth a man child *who should rule all nations* with a rod of iron. Here we see the dragon personified by wicked Herod ready to destroy the holy child Jesus who was spoken of in Psalm ii:8, 9, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them *with a rod of iron*; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." The tail of the dragon drew a third part of the stars of that legal heaven where Jesus was born. So completely were the priests and the leaders in the hands of the dragon, that, whatever light was once invested in the priesthood, it was utterly obliterated. Jesus said, "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" The war that took place in that legal heaven was one in which our Lord Jesus overcame, and those who were his, overcame by the blood of the Lamb and by their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death. The woman, or church, fled into the wilderness, and to her was given the wings of a great eagle, i. e., the army and navy of the Roman Empire.

Jesus had said in Matthew xxiv:28, "For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together." This hung over that wicked nation who knew not the day of their visitation, but for a time we find God was long-suffering, not willing that any of those for whom Christ died should perish. They stoned Stephen and slew James, and this dragon took Peter, thinking to please the Jews. One of them was a leader bent on destroying all who believed in Jesus, but we would let him tell his own story in Acts xxii: "About noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest." This holy child Jesus from his throne above stopped Paul, and when his former friends would have slain him, this Lord Jesus used the Roman army to carry him down to Felix the governor, and as it was his intention for Paul to witness for him at Rome, he therefore caused it to be that Paul was carried by ship, that the church might be sustained even in the wilderness of this world.

Those things took place in Palestine, but here in Chapter 13 we find John standing on the sand of the sea — let us therefore consider he was on the isle of Patmos, an island in the Mediterranean Sea. Could he not be once more looking back in mind to the spot from where he had been banished, Rome, the then centre of the world, where so many had sealed their testimony with their blood, where even then this great Red dragon held his sway? The Red dragon sets forth the terrible bloody persecution of the early Christians by their different rulers who were determined to destroy those who professed Christ. The history of the primitive church was written in the blood shed by that Red dragon. For nearly four hundred years the church lived underground, hunted and searched for by their enemies to make a Roman holiday. In Paul's day there were saints and faithful brethren in Rome and his letter is not to the Church of Rome, as many say, but to the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus; the word "church" is mentioned once in the whole of his letter; he mentions in Romans xvi:5 a church that was in the house of a believer. John could not have witnessed the sufferings of his brethren without often in his mind having very sad thoughts of those dear brethren left to suffer such cruelty at the hands of such monsters.

In Daniel vii. we are given a glimpse of four world empires; they are referred to as four great beasts. The fourth is the Roman Empire spoken of in verse 7, "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth:

it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns." In a miraculous way John was given to see a beast different to Pagan Rome, as described by Daniel, for he had a body spotted like a leopard, and feet like a bear and a mouth like a lion. Taking another glance at Daniel's vision, the world empire of Nebuchadnezzar had the head of a lion (setting forth that he was monarch of all); the Greek Empire of Alexander — that beast was like the leopard (setting forth speed and ferociousness); and the beast setting forth the second world empire was like a bear. Thus the beast that rose up before John had a leopard's body and feet of a bear and mouth of a lion, and the dragon (the red dragon) gave him his seat and great authority.

We have said that for centuries the true church of God lived hid away and worshipped often in the Catacombs under Rome, in the caves and dens of the earth, of whom the world was not worthy. In the days of Constantine, at the commencement of the 4th century after Christ, we are told that his mother had espoused the Christian faith and so he became a Lordly Patron, and not a humble penitent of the Christians, showing more the head of the lion and the track of the bear with the cunning stealth of the leopard. He even slew his eldest son on a charge of treason, the truth of which historians say, however, seems doubtful. He was baptized shortly before his death. Later on in that century Constantine's nephew Julian became Emperor and is called the Apostate because he was determined to revive the pagan worship. It is true that the patronage of Constantine brought a relief to the Christians from such bitter persecution. With less persecution the Christians increased and it became a question who would succeed. Theodosius, A. D. 378-395, like Constantine, was a lordly patron of the Christians and was a "fierce opponent and persecutor of the Arians and heretics."

In the year 606 the last Roman Emperor conferred upon the Bishop of Rome the title of Universal Bishop, as it is written, "the dragon gave him his power and his seat, and great authority." Such was the power of this mixture of paganism and Christianity the head of which claimed to be God's vicegerent upon earth. His arrogant claims found support from the kings of the earth who represented the ten horns. The image that the king Nebuchadnezzar saw had ten toes which represented ten kingdoms; the fourth beast's kingdom was to be as strong as iron, but the feet of the image were to be a mixture of iron and clay — Daniel ii:41. The seven heads set forth the universality of his sway, which is another word for "catholic". From the seventh century until now what chequered history we have of this modern Babylon, the cruelty displayed in the public bonfires and the massacres of thousands. The Reformation came, but it is seen, if one inspects the leaders carefully, that intolerance and unscriptural practices did not cease to exist. How many there were who saw what scriptural practice was in believers' baptism. They were then called Anabaptists and tried and condemned to death. Those Protestant churches, so called, came from Rome and, from the words of the text at the head of our article, "the world wondered after the beast."

In the revolution in Italy in 1798 the Head of this vast organization was taken prisoner and was told by Napoleon to care for his flock and leave the management of the world's affairs to others. From then on he considered himself a prisoner in the Vatican. In the last world war Mussolini, a name of infamy and shame, restored to the prisoner the rights that had been taken from him. Now the wound is healed and all the world from the head of the Church of England, the Queen, and heads of States all pay their visits to that man of sin.

Democracy, which stripped kings of their power, which first established on

this continent a written constitution and declared that all men are equal before the law, has given us freedom of speech and freedom of worship. It has given to the common people education so that they can read the Bible for themselves, and can see for themselves that no where in God's word is infant sprinkling called baptism, and can trace that to the pagan Greeks and Romans who sprinkled earth on their fallen dead, when they could not bury them, calling it a committal to the earth.

It is good that there is also history that has not been destroyed which tells that one of the so called great churches, by one vote in the 17th century, went on record with Rome that sprinkling was their mode of baptism. Yes, when the divines met at Westminister in Cromwell's day, twenty-four voted for baptism by immersion, twenty-four voted for sprinkling, and Dr. Lightfoot gave the casting vote.

When one sees around us the golden crosses and mimicry of the priests on every hand the day has come when every means of propaganda is being used towards union of a church which has never confessed shame for the awful massacre of people by Franco in Spain, within living memory, and before that, during the late Middle Ages, the torture and slaughter of untold thousands during the Spanish Inquisition.

G. R.

(Written in 1961 but not published heretofore.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

EZEKIEL 36:25-27

"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."

In the May, 1939, *Signs* sister Addie Chandler asked that we give our views on the above, and more especially the twenty-fifth verse, "about the water cleansing." We also find these same verses, among others, inquired about by sister Joie E. Wood Peters in the September, 1939, *Signs*. We had hoped some one of our associate editors, or a contributing reader, would answer sister Peters, as it strikes us as though her's is a very big order to fill. We can only look to the Lord to enable us to write in a way that will be instructive and comforting to our sisters, as well as other readers, we hope.

First, we shall undertake to deal with the twenty-fifth verse of our text, which reads as follows: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you,and ye shall be clean, from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you." Undoubtedly there was a definite time in the mind and purpose of Almighty God when these things would most certainly take place. We will here quote the verse just preceding our text, as it may shed some light upon WHEN these things would come to pass. It reads, "For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land," and then (at that time) the Lord says he will sprinkle clean water upon them, etc. There is certainly a large field before us here, and all we can hope to do is hint at the fullness of its meaning. From what has gone before in the chapter it is quite evident that national Israel had been taken captive by her enemies and her land was left desolate.

Her enemies were laughing her to scorn, and saying, "Aha, even the ancient high places are our's." Israel was

being derided, humiliated and made light of by them, and referred to as the "residue of the heathen," and "taken up in the lips of talkers" and were an infamy of the people. They had defiled their own land with pollution and idolatry while they dwelt in it, and because of this the Lord "scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries." According to their way and according to their doings the Lord judged them. They profaned the name of the Lord in the land of the heathens among whom they went. There was therefore no reason whatsoever, so far as they were concerned, why the Lord should show kindness towards them, but "Thus saith the Lord God; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for my holy name's sake."

Having left their land which flowed with milk and honey and desecrated all that pertained to God and holiness, they were no longer deserving of his favor, but here is where God has designated to make his goodness and mercy known, for salvation must be by grace, and not of works. He says, "I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes." How was he going to sanctify himself in them? By taking them from among the heathen and by gathering them out of all countries, and bringing them into their own land. This was not all, but being altogether filthy and unclean before a just and holy God, he says, "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you."

The cleansing qualities of natural water are of inestimable value in our every day life and it is almost indispensible in every household for even a short time. Not long ago the bursting of a water main in New York City made it necessary to cut off the water supply from a hospital for two hours, but in the meantime water had to be hauled to the hospital in barrels, the need was so great. Water is very vital to the cleanliness and health of a people. Without it they cannot long survive. But what our text contains is far beyond anything the natural mind can comprehend. We read in John that when one of the soldiers with a spear pierced the side of our Lord "forthwith came there out blood and water." — John xix. 34. Not only is the blood of the Lamb required to atone for the sins of the people, but they need to be washed and cleansed from all of their filthiness before they can be presented to God the Father without spot, wrinkle or any such thing. Thus was opened to the house of David a fountain for sin and for uncleaness. It requires nothing less than the blood and the water from our Savior's side to cleanse the soul of its guilt. Its cleansing power was seen in the type when Israel was commanded to take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood of a lamb and strike it upon the lintel and the two side posts of the doors of their houses when they dwelt in Egypt, and the death angel seeing this passed over and did no harm to a single Israelite, while at the same time striking with death the first born of every Egyptian. God was here sanctified in them before the very eyes of the heathen.

But before Israel was completely delivered from the land of Egypt, or the land of darkness and bondage, she had to pass through the Red Sea — then she could sing the Lord had triumphed gloriously, the horse and its rider hath he cast into the sea, etc. While this was typical, Moses, who represented the law, was not allowed to enter the promised land. This was left for Joshua to do, who was a type of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is written that the law is our schoolmaster unto Christ, and also that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness for every one that believeth. (Rom. x.. 4) It was Joshua who carried Israel across the

river Jordan, which in type separates between the law and the gospel, between the unregenerate and the new creature, and thus water baptism is one of the ordinances of God's house which is necessary to establish and separate the militant church, or body of worshippers who worship God on Spirit and have no confidence in the flesh, from the world. To be properly qualified to receive this ordinance, however, one must first be baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost. Our text declares that it is the Lord himself who will do the work, or who will sprinkle clean water upon them. Water baptism does not purify the flesh, but what the Lord does is done forever, and he has to sprinkle them with *clean* water; not with that water which is contaminated with sin, for Jesus was separate from sinners in this respect, but there could be no question whatever as to the result when the Lord did it: *"And ye shall be clean,"* and that *"from all your filthiness, and from all your idols."*

In other words, those whom Christ presents to his Father are without blemish of any kind. His work is so perfect that none shall be able to lay anything to their charge. God not only begins the work but carries it on to completion by taking away the stony heart and giving a heart of flesh — one that has his law written in it and will love to do his commandments; one that will long, yea, yearn after the true and living God and for the things of his kingdom. He goes on to say he will put his Spirit within them *and cause them to walk in his statutes,* and as a result *they shall keep his judgments and do them.* This beautifully sets forth God's dealings with spiritual Israel in the gospel dispensation in gathering them from every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue, for he shall "say to the north, Give up: and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; forI have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea I have made him." — Isaiah xliii. 6, 7. Such Scriptures do not leave the gate open to conditionalism, or to the creature of himself, to work or not to work. David said, "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest and causeth to approach unto thee, that they may dwell in thy courts." — Psalms lxv. 4. Those whom the Lord hath chosen he works in them both to will and to do of all his good pleasure.

While it is true that national Israel actually experienced at the hand of the Lord manifold evidences of his goodness and mercy towards them during their sojourn in Egypt and their forty years in the wilderness, and especially in the land of Canaan, which literally flowed with milk and honey, all of this was but a dim type of his dealings with true spiritual Israel. Paul says, "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not of the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." — Rom. ii. 28, 29. Again, Paul tells us in Hebrews that the law had only a shadow of the good things to come, "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did: by the which we draw nigh unto God." — Heb. vii. 19. National Israel was a type of spiritual Israel, at the same time we believe they typified more than the gospel church as we know it to-day. The apostle, writing concerning the Gentiles, says, "For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were graffed contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be graffed into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto

them, when I shall take away their sins." — Rom. xi. 24-27.

The time will undoubtedly come when the Lord's people among the Jews will be brought into an experimental knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and then will they acknowledge him as their own true Messiah. When all of God's purposes shall have been fulfilled concerning his people here below, "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power," he will then present his church, complete in every detail, comprising every member (Gentile and Jew) of his mystical body and they shall enter into the joys of their Lord and experience the fullness of that which they have here known only in part, for the apostle tells us, "Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then I shall know even as also I am known." — 1 Cor. xiii. 12. Here we have but a foretaste of that which is beyond, which will be inexpressible and full of glory; beyond the description of mortal power to relate, and the name of the city will be, "The Lord is there." Eternity will be none too long to sound forth his matchless praise.

(Editorial by Elder R. L. Dodson, May, 1940.)

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church, Person County, North Carolina, a presbytery met November 7, 1971, at 2:30 p. m. for the examination of Brother C. B. Davis, Jr. If found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the gospel ministry.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Kenneth R. Key. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders D. V. Spangler, D. B. Stokes, Kenneth R. Key, Leonard Key, Julian Williams, Leonard Brammer, Wallis Smith and Donald E. Smith.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator, and Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk. Elder Leonard J. Brammer was chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Deacon Claude Hall, Sr., having been duly appointed by Shiloh Church as spokeman for the church, delivered Brother C. B. Davis, Jr. to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder Leonard J. Brammer, using scripture reference 1 Tim. 3rd Chapter. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The Ordination Prayer was delivered by Elder Wallis Smith. Elder D. B. Stokes delivered the Charge to the candidate.

The Moderator asked Deacon Claude Hall, Sr., if the church approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to Brother C. B. Davis, Jr. and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained Elder was delivered back to the church as an ordained gospel minister of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Shiloh.

The Minutes, consisting of the work of the presbytery, were read and adopted.

The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Leonard Key.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church, Carroll County, Va., a presbytery met October 30, 1971 at 2:00 p. m. for the examination of Brother William Hale Terry, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of the gospel ministry.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by brother Hale Terry. All Elders and deacons of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders O. K. Tench, P. E. Ingram, Robert Lyliston, R. A. May, William Holland, Roy Agee, J. R. Hollandsworth, Rufus Brown, Odell Thompson, Amos I. Hash, Tom Turner and Donald E. Smith. Deacons: H. C. Brown, A. L. Hudson, Jimmy Holly, W. G. Parsons, S. L. Walker, Brammer Nichols, L. T. Nichols, Tyris Conner, James Young, R. E. Metz, Peter Vest, Lane Carter, Guy Conner, Guy Phillips and G. T. Rakes.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Amos Hash as Moderator, and Donald E. Smith as Clerk. Elder O. K. Tench and William Holland were chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Deacon W. G.

Parsons having been duly appointed by Bell Spur Church in conference October 30, 1971, spokesman for the church delivered brother Hale Terry to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elders O. K. Tench and William Holland using scripture references 1st. Tim. 3rd. Chap. and 1st. Pet. 5th. Chap. The Presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Roy Agee. Elder J. R. Hollandsworth and Robert Lylston delivered the charge to the candidate.

The Moderator asked deacon W. G. Parsons if the church approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to brother Hale Terry and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained Elder was delivered back to the church as an ordained minister of the Old School, Primitive Baptist Church at Bell Spur.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Donald Smith.

Elder Amos I. Hash, Moderator
Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

OBITUARIES

SISTER GOLLIE CHANDLER RUDD

Sister Rudd was born January 4, 1890, in Caswell County, N. C., departed this life Ocober 17, 1971, making her stay in this world some 81 years. Her funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Church by her pastor Elder Wallis A. Smith, assisted by Elder Donald Smith. Her body was laid to rest beside that of her husband in the church cemetery, beneath a mound of beautiful flowers to await the glorious resurrection.

She was a daughter of Elder Y. I. and Martha Vaughn Chandler and the widow of Brother George W. Rudd. She was the mother of nine children, Linnie Aldridge, Lizzie Aldridge, Byrd Smith, Mary Briggs, Bessie Floyd, Louise Smithey, Hazel Ashley, Adelle Anderson, and G. W. Rudd, Jr.

Sister Rudd was married early in life and was blessed to celebrate her fiftieth wedding anniversary. She was loved and respected by all who knew her. In her community she was so affectionately called Miss Gollie. She and her husband asked for a home with Bush Arbor Church at the Saturday meeting in August, 1958, and were baptized on the Sunday morning following. She attended her church regularly until her health began to fail. I, the writer of this article, would like to compliment her children for the love and cooperation that they showed her in her last days on this earth. I would say children weep for your mother, but weep not as those who have no hope, for she had a hope of life eternal. May her family, church, and all that mourn her passing be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father, feeling that she is at rest now.

Written by request of Bush Arbor Church and approved in conference Dec. 11, 1971. A copy is to be sent to the **Signs of the Times**, one to the family, and one placed in the church record. Written by Bro. D. O. Chandler.

Elder Wallace Smith, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

WILLIAM RADER WADE

William Rader Wade departed this life October 21, 1971, at the age of seventy-three years and nearly five months. He was born May 23, 1898, at Yawkey, W. Va., and was the son of the late Elder W. I. Wade and Dora Harless Wade.

Brother Wade lived most of his life in the vicinity of Yawkey and Lincoln County, where he had worked as a well driller.

Brother Wade was a member of the Camp Creek Primitive Baptist Church located in Boone County. He was baptized by Elder V. B. Linn the first Sunday in October, 1968. I well remember the occasion on that beautiful day when the smiles of our God seemed to embrace us in the peace of his grace. "Salvation alone by God's grace" was his theme, and his trust was in the finished work of Christ.

He is survived by eleven children: Mrs. Dora Blane McNeal, Tarlton, Ohio; Mrs. Wynoka White, Tampa, Florida; Mrs. Carma Lynn Griffin, St. Albans, W. Va.; Mr. Whitten Wade, Milton, W. Va.; James, Arthur, Conway, Robert, and David Wade, all of Michigan; Franklin, of Florida; and Garth, of Greenbrier County, W. Va. Also surviving are three sisters: Mrs. Daisey Stephens and Mrs. Helen Stickler, Yawkey, W. Va.; and Mrs. Ruby McClanahan, Poca, W. Va.; Two brothers: Elder Clay Wade, of Yawkey, and Paul, of Ferrelsburg, W. Va.; also by thirty-nine grandchildren and eighteen great grandchildren.

His funeral services were held at the Koontz Funeral Home, Hamlin, W. Va., conducted by the writer on Sunday, October 24, 1971. He was laid to rest in the Sulphur Spring Cemetery at Yawkey, to await the calling of our blessed Saviour.

May the Lord bless and comfort they that mourn. Written by request of the family.

V. B. Linn

RONALD KEITH CHASE

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our beloved brother, Ronald Keith Chase. May we bow in humble submission to the will of our God who doeth all things well.

Ronald Keith Chase was born January 1, 1925, at Hurricane, W. Va., and departed this life August 15, 1971, at his home in Elkins, W. Va. He was the son of Emmett and Fannie (Purdy) Chase, who reside at Hurricane, W. Va. He had been in failing health for the past several years, and was released from the hospital just four days before his death.

Brother Chase was a member of Leading Creek Primitive Baptist Church. He was baptized by Elder V. B. Linn February 14, 1953. At the time the burden came upon him to be baptized, he was living in the vicinity of Baltimore, Maryland, and he traveled the miles back to Leading Creek Church to ask for a home. The chilly waters in that mountain stream on the February day was warmed by the love of God's grace that was felt within. He was a faithful member, and loved to hear the singing and preaching. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace. He attended our church services of Saturday afternoon before his death the next evening. As we closed our singing that day, his request was to sing, "The Day is Past and Gone."

He served as a Trustee of the Leading Creek Church from September 19, 1953, until his death. On several occasions he was appointed a messenger to represent our church to the Tygarts Valley River Association. On occasions he was appointed to write the Circular Letter that was printed in our Minutes.

On November 24, 1951, he was married to the former Sylvia Linn, who survives. In addition to his wife and parents, one son, Terry Keith Chase, survives at home. Also surviving are four brothers and one sister: Willard, Harley, and Elaine Chase, all of Hurricane, W. Va. and Billie Chase, of Cross Lane, W. Va.; and Linda, wife of Charles Riffle, of St. Albans, W. Va.

His funeral services were conducted at the Leading Creek Church, at Montrose, W. Va., by Elder Roy Smith, who spoke words of comfort to the bereaved; assisted by the writer. He was laid to rest in the adjacent cemetery, there to await the calling of our Lord and Saviour.

He will be sorely missed by his family and friends, and by the few remaining members of the Leading Creek church. May the Lord bless and comfort all those who mourn.

Written by request.

V. B. Linn

MRS. LENA FRANCES DAVENPORT

This excellent woman and lovely Saint of God, was born in Upshur County, Texas, August 13, 1878; and passed away January 28, 1971, at the advanced age of 92 years, 5 months, and 15 days.

She and her husband, the late Elder F. C. Davenport, of blessed happy memory, brought up their family on the farm, where everyone had to work long, hard hours to obtain a living; where there was considerable hardship at times; but after all, an excellent place, doubtless, to bring up children.

Sister Davenport, I feel sure, was highly favored of the Lord, being well qualified to fill that priceless place, both of wife and mother; and how well she did that very thing, was best known to her good, kind, faithful husband, and to their loving devoted children.

That she was a mainstay to her husband during their long, happy married life, is too obvious a truth to be questioned by anyone who knew her well. Surely her husband could personally join Solomon in declaring (Prov. 19:14), that "a prudent wife is from the Lord"; and that her children could "arise up, and call her blessed" — (Prov. 31:28).

She was a person of strong convictions; nor could she brook any form of compromise, where the truth of Almighty God was concerned. Her hope truly was in Christ Jesus; and there she rested her all, for time and for eternity; fully believing that He was the *all-sufficient* and *only* Savior of poor vile, wretched sinners.

Many are those who are saddened at her departure; and who will greatly miss her here; but we believe that our loss is her eternal gain.

Her immediate survivors are two sons: Harmon F., Denver, Colorado; James S., Dallas, Texas; and three daughters: Mrs. Hubert T. Faulk; Mrs. Elbert Crow; and Mrs. L. B. Oler, all of El Paso, Texas; one sister: Mrs. William F. Izelle, Fort Worth, Texas; with eleven grandchildren; twenty-seven great grandchildren; and five great great grandchildren.

The funeral services were held in the English Funeral Chapel, Mineola, Texas, Sunday afternoon at two o'clock, January 31, 1971, conducted by Elders E. J. Lambert, W. W. Taylor, and John Lee Smith; following which the body was buried beside her late husband, in the Mt. Pisgah Cemetery a few miles out, to await the great, happy, glorious resurrection day.

May God comfort all who are saddened at her departure.

Written at the request of Cana Church, Wood County, Texas, by her pastor.

(Elder) John Lee Smith

(How well we remember our visit with Elder and Sister Davenport in 1959. J. D. W.)

MAMIE B. FLY

We, the Falls Church, bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father in the calling of our beloved Sister in Jesus Christ, Mamie B. Fly. Sister Fly was born on December 13, 1889, to the late William and Flora Bullock, and died July 25, 1971.

She was the wife of the late Elder Joe Fly, who was well loved and respected in the churches he served.

She is survived by two nieces, Mrs. R. C. Walker of Winston-Salem, Mrs. Mildred Alford of Torrence, California, and one nephew, Godfrey Walker, Jr. of San Pedro, California.

Sister Fly was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace. She attended the churches regularly all her life; and by God's grace she asked for a home on second Saturday in April, 1965, and was baptized the following second Sunday in May.

Sister Fly was one who truly manifested by her walk and conversation the great things the Lord had done for her. She was always thinking of others and helping, not only with kind words, but in many other ways.

I feel that I was highly favored of God to be blessed to know her, and even in my weak way to try to serve her as Pastor. She has been and will be missed by all of us at the Falls Church. Surely we will not be able to view her as we knew her in nature, nor shall we be able to communicate with her as we did while she lived upon earth; yet I feel that as long as God blesses us to live here upon earth, Sister Mamie will live in our minds and even be a part of our life. For those with whom we have been blessed to enjoy such sweet fellowship, will live as long as we live here upon earth, for by God's Grace we are made to be partakers of a hope here, which makes us have a lot in common. When one of those such as Sister Fly passes away, a part of us dies as well.

We do have this hope that someday by God's grace, when Christ shall come again, that we shall experience a change, and we shall see him and be like him in a land where there will be no more death nor sorrow.

Sister Fly's funeral was conducted at Gay-Yost Funeral Home in Rocky Mount, N. C. by Elders D. B. Stokes and William Everett. She was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord.

May God in his infinite wisdom comfort her kindred by nature and her Kinsmen by Grace.

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family; a copy to the *Signs of the Times* and one for the church record.

Conference: November 13, 1971.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Jr., Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

L. L. BAXLEY

Brother Baxley died November 11, 1971, after a short illness, at the age of seventy-five years. He was most devoted to his family, and especially an invalid daughter. He was the son of Elder J. B. Baxley, and the nephew of Elder James Baxley. He dearly loved the Primitive Baptists. He married Mae Griffin, the daughter of Deacon J. W. Griffin of New Hope Church. He was an active civic leader.

Funeral services were conducted at Garden Chapel Funeral Home November 12, by Elders V. C. Hartzog, J. J. Collins and Mr. Jack Drinkwater. Interment was at Wrights Creek Church. Survivors are his wife; two sons, John Lester and Mr. Eugene Baxley; two daughters, Luda Mae Davis and Jacqueline; and two sisters, Lena Sammons and Mary Ogburn. Surviving also are sixteen grandchildren and five great grandchildren, and other relatives.

He will be sadly missed.

J. J. Collins

WILLIAM SAMUEL RAY, SR.

Brother Samuel Ray was born at Schoolfield, Virginia, on July 18, 1913. On May 29, 1971, it pleased God to take our brother from our midst, making his stay on this earth fifty-seven years.

He was the son of the late William Lewis and Naomi Spangler Ray. Most of his life was spent in the Greensboro area. On January 14, 1933, he was married to the former Nancy Schoolfield and to this union were born four children.

Brother Ray offered to the church at Dan River on July 12, 1970, and upon confession of faith was accepted for membership. He was baptized by his pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, July 26, 1970.

Although our brother was a member for only eleven months before his death, he was always a believer of the Primitive Baptist faith. He loved his Lord, the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace, and enjoyed meeting with the brethren of like-precious faith. He was a faithful member and attended meetings regularly long before offering to the church. During his last five years his entire life was planned around the church meetings.

Brother Ray is survived by his wife, Nancy, and four children; Glenn, William, Jerry, and Joan Ray Johnson. There are two sisters and five brothers; Mrs. Meyer Shane, Mrs. James Guzzo, Ivan, W. L., Jr., Herman, and Brothers Jesse and Julian Ray. He had eight grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Funeral services were conducted on May 31, 1971, at the Lambeth-Troxler Chapel by Elders

Kenneth Key, Leonard Key and D. V. Spangler. Interment followed in Lakeview Memorial Gardens.

Brother Ray shall be missed by his family and all who knew and loved him. May God comfort those who mourn his death and reconcile their hearts to the unquestionable mysteries of our Lord.

Written by request of Dan River Church while in conference August 28, 1971.

Bob R. Collie

SISTER FANNIE AKERS

It is with a sad and heavy heart I try to comply with Sister Fannie Akers' request to write her obituary.

She was one of the children of the Heavenly King. God gave her precious faith, love and grace as she tred her pathway here and she lived until His appointed time. He was holding her life in His own hands and He is the One handholder who can never fail. The dear Lord said, "in mercy child come home" because she belonged to Him and He reached down His arm of grace and caused her to ascend where congregations never break up and Sabbaths never end.

When her devoted daughter, Virginia, called and said, "Pearl, Mother has just passed away," I could not wish for her back, I just wanted to sing Doxology 704 — Praise God from whom all blessings flow. I just wanted to give praise to His good and holy name and say, "great is the holy One of Israel." David of old said, "Who is so great a God as our God."

She suffered, yet light our sorrows be to His in dark Gethsemane, who drank the cup with stifled groans, and said, "My Father's will be done."

The memory of her remains alive. She was 84, bright and cheerful, her eyes gleaming and sparkling along with that built-in quick and ready smile. She was just as charming as she was pretty. One could not help but like her the moment they met her.

She was deeply and widely loved by all the Brethren that knew her, and this was mutual. She was especially loved by her dear Pastor and his sweet wife, Nellie, Elder and Mrs. C. N. Bunn and all the members of the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church where her membership has been since 1959. Also by Elder and Sister Cecil Turner and all the members of the Primitive Baptist Church in Roanoke, Va. She was baptized by Elder W. J. May and Brethren and brought her letter to the Roanoke Church 6/6/14 to 1959.

She and I enjoyed talking about the wonderful works of Our God and we were made to sit together in heavenly places talking of His love, singing His praises and speaking of His power.

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us. At times, I could feel the closeness of that love that flows from heart to heart. That was the fixing of the Almighty.

Jesus is the Door to heaven and He paid the price and redeemed her with every drop of his own life's blood. He will never forsake her, she cost Him too much. How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear. 'Tis manna to the hungry soul and to the weary, rest. How precious these things are to us. "Let the Redeemed of the Lord say so."

I read the *Signs of the Times* to her which her attentive daughter, Kathleen, brought to the hospital. Her soul seemed to be longing, thirsting and hungering for that blessed spirit from on high. I feel she was given sweet love and fellowship with God. She knew the righteousness that makes one know that they are unworthy in the presence of a perfect and merciful Savior.

She had the tender loving care of her precious family and we wish to extend to them our heartfelt sympathy in the loss of One so near and dear to their hearts. We pray that God will grant them, who so lovingly and faithfully did everything that loving hands could do and they did it so willingly. Sharing her joys and sorrows together, every blessing God sees they stand in need of to strengthen them in their great loss and may He fill her absence with His presence.

On that great morning she will be robed and ready in His Righteous Robe of love and she will shine forth in all beauty, because Jesus loved her and died for her and all is well with her soul. He is too wise to have made a mistake. The price was too high.

She will rest in love's unbounded sea in that eternal home of happiness on high, which is above in heaven, with all of the Saints of God.

There's a blissful home on high
There she will see face to face
There she will read her title clear with unbeclouded eyes
There she will sing the song of Moses and the Lamb
There the Lord will be her Shepherd and she shall not want.

Submitted by one who loved so very much for Jesus Christ's sake, I hope,

Pearl Fickett

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 140 DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1972 NO. 4

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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MORE EXTRA COPIES OF THE DECEMBER, 1971 SIGNS

Though we had one hundred extra copies of the December, 1971 issue of the Signs, they were soon exhausted. We now have five hundred additional copies for those who desire them. They will be mailed postpaid for fifty cents each.

This is the issue containing many of the early writings of Elder Gilbert Beebe, and we are glad of the great interest manifested in them.

Address orders to The Signs of the Times, Inc., Rt. 1, Box 539, Danville, Va. 24541.

EDITORS

"AND LEST I SHOULD BE EXALTED ABOVE MEASURE"

(2 COR. 12:7)

The Apostle Paul starts the 12th Chapter by relating somewhat of the greatest of his experiences; that of being caught up into paradise, etc. which was sufficient grounds for him to become exceedingly exalted, to the point where he would have certainly extoled and glorified himself beyond measure or due limitation that would be pleasing in the sight of the Lord, thus he was given the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him, as he stated it.

We find that from the beginning, it was not God's purpose that man should be exalted: His followers were called to worship Him among the multitudes of those early times as well as thruout all time in this present world. It was only He, The Almighty God, that was to be exalted. The Levites were told in Nehemiah 9:5 to "Stand up and bless the Lord your God for ever and ever: and blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise." David, in Psalm 99:5 wrote, "Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at His footstool; for He is Holy." In Matthew 23:12, where Jesus was speaking to the multitude and to His disciples, He said, "And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted."

The exalting was to be the work of the Lord; and how well did He speak the truth about Himself for He was never given to exalting Himself, and went among the people humbly and without great fanfare and the usual customs afforded to those of high office when they came amongst their people. He rode into Jerusalem (St. John 12:-14) on the ass' colt and in many other ways showed that He lived an humble life while here on earth. Before His crucifixion (St. John 17th Chapter) when His hour had come, only then did He ask His Holy Father to glorify him, as shown in 1st verse, and again in the 5th verse. "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

Now we have another source from which eminates the exalting belonging to the world and it comes from no other one than old satan himself. He exalted Eve right in the beginning, telling her that when she ate of the forbidden fruit then her eyes would be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil,

thus elating her and lifting her up in her own eyes and opinion. From that time on he has resorted to all kinds of guile and slick-tongue methods to falsely exalt all those he is given power to control. Hard has he worked on many of the Lord's own people and will continue to do so as long as this time world continues. Satan's exaltation seemingly knows no bounds, for he elevated himself to the place where he believed he could persuade Jesus to fall down and worship him, putting forth great effort those forty days in the wilderness. He certainly knew that Jesus was the Son of the Living God, yet his ego knew no bounds.

We only have to look about us and see what Satan's influence has done the world over in the past and at the present time, in exalting poor ignorant people into believing they can educate themselves in the Lord's Spiritual mysteries and go out and save souls, which is taking over and undertaking to do the Lord's work. They now number well up into the hundreds of thousands in the hundreds of different religions, sects, creeds, and so on. How elevated and exalted most of them become, and some attach to their name the title of Reverend, which David, in Psalm 111, wrote, "He sent redemption unto His people; He hath commanded His covenant for ever: HOLY AND REVEREND IS HIS NAME." This is the only time this word is found in the Bible.

I can still hear the words of the poor Minister that Sunday some years ago, in the worldly Church of which I was a member, when he became so enthused in exalting man, which naturally included himself, getting man up higher and higher until finally he was above God, for he said — "WITHOUT MAN GOD IS HELPLESS." Surely it was old satan at work, for such anti-christ thinking and words could stem only from that source. At that time the Lord had shown me I was in the wrong church and those words sank in deep, showing me it was time to "Come ye out from amongst them." I could relate similiar statements from other Ministers suffering from such a malady of exaltation but will not at this time.

Concluding, will state that it was the Lord's will that my wife and I travel some 9,000 miles during September, October and November, spending some time in N. E. Tennessee; and on September 25-26 we attended the two day meeting at the Dan River Church in Virginia, where we heard most wonderful preaching and mingled with the large group there, including Brother and Sister Carter and others we had previously met at Ruffin. N. C., and around that area when we spent short time visiting and attending the churches in Danville, Dan River and Reidsville, N. C. back in January, 1969. We were royally cared for by Elder and Sister Spangler as their guests the night of September 25th. What a treat to be among the Lord's people, even for a short few hours, while on this extended trip that took us on for further visiting in Durham, N. C. and Coral Gables, Florida, with a sidetrip to Key West. We returned home via New Orleans, La., and San Angelo, Texas, and finally visiting in South Idaho. It was not possible to visit other Old Baptist Churches along the route we traveled in the south and in Texas, tho it would have been enjoyed so much. There is nothing better or more desirable for a stranger among the worldly people, than to be amongst the Lord's people who speak his language and knows the God he loves and loves the God he knows. I would have loved to spent half of the nearly three months time we were gone, right amongst the Old Baptist people in the several States we covered.

A sinner saved by Grace, if saved at all.

Wm. O. Hall,
P. O. Box 595,
Mount Vernon, Wash. 98273

LETTER TO SISTER C. C. BARRON

Strong, Arkansas
Route 2, Box 48

Dear Beloved Sister Barron and family,

I hope this finds you all well. We have not had the flu yet. We are getting along very well, as far as I know. I enjoyed your humble, sweet, comforting letter I received last Saturday. We were glad to hear from you.

Dear Sister, my mind seems to be on these precious scriptures, that come to mind this morning. I hope these thoughts are given to me to think on, and write on, by my Saviour and my God, because I know there is nothing good in my flesh. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Romans 8:1) I believe our walk is not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, and the beauty and love we see and feel for one another is not in the flesh but in the Spirit. As you said, we hope to praise the Spirit and not the flesh, because we are made to hate our sinful flesh. Our desire is to walk after the Spirit.

The second Epistle of John to the elect lady and her children seems to be so precious to me, I want to write a few verses. "The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth; for the truth's sake which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us forever, Grace be with you, mercy and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love. I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in the truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father. And now I beseech thee lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we **love one another.**

These are precious words that Elder John spoke unto the elect lady and her children. I believe it is addressed to the whole church of the living God, that has been blessed of the Lord to know the truth, walk in the truth, and love the truth as it is in Jesus. That is why we love one another. It is that precious truth we believe and hear preached by the Lord's true ministers.

We also read the writings of inspired people of God. They were not taught of man, these truths, nor did they receive it of man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul explained so wonderfully in the scriptures about the teachings of God to him, and that it was not of man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. I believe the Lord teaches all of his likewise. We believe Christ is the head of the body, the church of the living God. He is holy and righteous in all his works and ways. He works and none can hinder, and hinders and none can work. "The mighty God, even the Lord hath spoken, and called the earth, from the rising of the sun until the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." (Psalm 50:1, 2) "Thy testimonies are very sure; holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, forever." (Psalm 93:5) These words come to mind; and also a lovely hymn, "Oh how I love Jesus, because He first loved me;" and the hymn

"Jesus lover of my soul
Let me to thy bosom fly
While the raging billows roll,
While the tempest still is high
Hide me oh my Saviour hide,
Till the storm of life is past,
Safe into the haven guide,
Oh, receive my soul at last." etc.

It seemed I could not help but sing and write all this sweet hymn at the same time. It is so true; a song in prayer it has always seemed to me. This has been my comfort in writing this. It is my hope and desire that it will also comfort you.

Your writing has been a comfort to me many times. When I read the part in your letter to me, where you said it was your inward cry, "O, for a closer walk with God," and to pray without ceasing; that you felt at times the Lord hid his face from you, I felt for you as tears began to flow from my eyes. I have also experienced the same things at times. Like you, I have desired to pray without ceasing. My little

prayers seem so poor, if you can call them prayers, with words or groanings that cannot be uttered. A prayer is a sincere desire of the heart I believe the scriptures teach. The Lord knows what is in the mind of the Spirit within us. He lives to make intercessions for us, acording to the will of God.. We feel our God supplies all our needs, but not all our wants.

You know dear Sister, when the Lord was on earth with his disciples, one place in the scriptures he told them to watch and pray, that they enter not into temptation; "What I say to one I say to all, watch and pray."

Some of the Pharisees asked Jesus why his disciples did not fast, as John's disciples did. He answered them, how could they fast as long as the Bridegroom was with them, but the time would come when the Bridegroom would be taken away from them; then they would fast. So I believe as long as we feel the Lord's presence with us, we do not fast or mourn. But when he withdraws his presence from us, we fast and mourn his absence, until his **felt** presence returns to us again. It is like the hymn, "When trouble like a gloomy cloud, has gathered thick, and thundered loud, He near my soul has always stood, his loving kindness, O how good! Often I fell my sinful heart, prone from my Jesus to depart; but though I have him oft forgot, his loving kindness changes not."

My joys in the Lord have been many at times. Also my sorrows and afflictions are many. My desire is that our Lord will keep us humble in him, — as a little child, always looking unto him who is the author and finisher of our faith. He has promised never to leave us, or forsake us. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." We praise the Lord for his loving kindness, and tender mercies toward us. I am unworthy of the least of his blessings.

Dear Sister, I am glad to hear you enjoyed your visitors, that were so sweet and humble, and your "feast of fat things" during the holidays. I know you had good company, they believing the same precious truths as we.

I did not look up in the scriptures about prayer and about the Bridegroom that the Lord said to his disciples. I believe it was more than I mentioned. If I misquoted, or left anything out, or missed the interpretation of any of the scriptures, please look over my mistakes and shortcomings. I realize I know very little concerning spiritual things.

I hope I have not worried you in all this writing. I believe our only desire when we write or talk to one another is, that the Lord will comfort us, with the same comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of the Lord.

Love, a sister I hope
Lula B. Fox

SOMETHING OF OUR TRAVELS

1902 McCutchion St.,
Shreveport, La. 71107

Dear Editors of the Signs:

It is about time to renew my subscription, and I do not want to miss one copy for I get much comfort from the contents of its pages.

If it is God's will, I would like to write a little about God's children and their travels, as I understand it in my heart and mind. I do not know that I am a child of God, but I thank him for a hope.

The children of God travel a mighty rocky road: there is trouble on every side — wars inside and out. The world sees them as a peculiar, weak people who can do nothing for themselves; and right they are about that, for they do not depend upon themselves. They know they are helpless, and they trust in God to give them strength to bear their burdens. He is their refuge in times of trouble and their comfort in times of peace. He is the potter and they are the clay; and He will do with them whatever He may. They know that all things were made for him for his purposes; and He will have mercy on whom He will, and whom He will He harden-

eth.

God's children are weak, needy, hungry and thirsty for food and drink that can come only from their Maker. They hunger and thirst after righteousness; they take up the cross and follow the Lord, for this was a command, and this they do. They have seen themselves as they are in the flesh — nothing, yea, less than nothing; and they know that nothing good dwells in their flesh.

Great heaviness and continual sorrow overshadows them, but through these sufferings they are drawn to God, denying themselves and knowing that all power is of Him, and they can do nothing. Their sins are ever before them: the flesh lusts against the spirit causing continual warfare, and there is fear and trembling through the wilderness. They often feel like hypocrits and deceivers, yet they are true, for they have the earnest of the Spirit; and know that if they are saved, it can't be because of any good works on their part, but must be by the grace of God . . .

They wish to do good, but, like Paul, when they would do good evil is present with them. To will is present, but how to perform that which is good they find not. They delight in the law of God after the inward man, but the other law in their members wars against the law of God, making them cry, "O, wretched man that I am."

Christ was lowly and meek. He suffered many things for his Bride, even the death of the cross. They are partakers of his sufferings; but suffering with him, they shall also reign with him. They wish to be perfect but they know there is no perfection in the flesh, for it is dust and to dust it shall return. "And he said unto them all, if any man will come after me, let him deny himeslf and take up his cross and follow me." (Luke 9:23) This is what they do through sufferings — they take up their cross and follow Christ.

The children of God are ever fearful of offending a child of God; and tremble also when doubts come that their reasons for their hope is not enough evidence . . . The thorn in their flesh keeps them doubtful and fearful, and the messenger of Satan tears them apart, but this is to keep them humble.

It is through much tribulation they enter in; but again this is appointed unto them. Through these they are brought to repentance and become reconciled, and taste the goodness of the Lord and know that he is precious. At his appointed time he sends the Comforter to ease their fears and give them peace, which is so blissful to them. O, how sweet the name of Jesus is to a believer's ear! After the storm comes the sweetest peace: they have tasted bitter things, but His loving kindness is worth all their sufferings; and they have hope that when this journey ends, His love will be with them forever, and they will be with their Lord without sufferings. If in this life only they have hope they would be most miserable.

They know that all things work together for good to those who love the Lord, the called according to His purpose; and they rejoice in their tribulations and sufferings, and are happy they have been to the threshing floor, for this is the reason of their hope. They know that whom the Lord loves he chastens, and that "tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts . . ." The children of God are ever searching and finding fault with themselves, but are happy that God brings the hidden things of darkness to light, and manifests it openly, so that they see and know and repent of their sins.

Christ died for their offences and was raised for their justification; and their debts are paid. They worship God in spirit and in truth: this is the only way they can worship him, for the flesh profits nothing. They are two — they are flesh and in the Spirit; and this is their war. The new man is the Spirit from God, a temple built and fitly framed together to serve the living God. It is a house not made with hands, but built of God. Christ is the chief

corner stone, and from this temple all praise, honor, thanks and glory goes to the most high God. They thank Him for giving them a hope in the glory of God. Happy is the man whom God corrects and gives a hope of the glory of God through Jesus Christ the Lord and Saviour who made the sacrifice for the sins of his Bride, so that she might live with him forever...

They search the Scriptures and are comforted in seeing that all God's children have traveled the same path. God's blessed truth is written in the Scriptures, and are seen through eyes of understanding. They set their affections on things above, for their earthly house is spoiled. They are dead to their sins, and are buried and baptized with Christ. What they once loved they now hate, and they groan within themselves, but they are blessed to trust in God, and are kept by the power of God. Here they have no continuing city, but seek one to come — a city whose builder and make is God; and they hope for the day when all things in Christ will be gathered together, and presented holy and without blame to the most High God, and they will ever be with their Lord.

In bonds of love,
Mrs. Kate Mathews

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 2, Box 137A
Calloway, Va. 24067

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a check to renew our subscription for the **Signs** for two years; and as I am feeling low this morning, I want to send a little of my experience, which was written the night after I joined the church.

Dear brethren and sisters, as I seem to have been living my life over for the past two days, I will try to write some of my feelings. I know that I am just a poor sinner, and I don't deserve any of the things I have that God has given me.

I was raised in a Primitive Baptist home, but that did not have anything to do with my feelings. I went to church when I was small, but it was just some place to go; and I had to go where my mother went. I did not know that some day I would be brought to the place that I looked forward to where I wanted to go the next weekend — to church.

I am not proud of my life. I know I have done things that are wrong; but I am so thankful that the good Lord has brought me down to a place so low that that I fell to my knees, and tried to beg Him to forgive my sins. God showed me that love for the brethren of the Primitive Baptist faith at a funeral. There seemed to be a great light that surrounded them from everyone else. I was made to know that I was out in the dark; and I wanted to be one of them.

That love is something I can't explain except to those who have experienced it. I went for over two years carrying a burden to join the Primitive Baptist Church, — something I had remarked I would never do; but the Lord has his way of making you do the things you did hate, and the things you said you would never do, to love. When they would sing the breaking-up song and shake hands, I wanted to be one of them so badly; but I did not feel I was fit to be with them — and I still wonder sometimes why they took a weak sinner like me.

The 3rd Saturday in October, 1967, my husband and family went to his mother's. We went to the basement, and I was looking at her canned fruit. I saw what I thought was grape wine — I knew they used to make the communion wine for the church. I have never been able to tell anyone my feelings about it. Something came over me, that it wasn't wine. That it was the blood of Christ. I couldn't say anything; I just started up the stairs. My husband knew something was wrong, but did not say anything, for he had carried the burden to join the church longer than I had.

That Saturday night was preaching

time at Bellview Church which I loved; and went all the time. It just seemed there was something different about the little church. I just couldn't wait to get there that night, I was so filled with love. When Brother Brammer announced an open door, I held on to the bench — I wanted to go but just couldn't go ask for a home with these dear people. I will never forget his sermon. It seemed the pulpit was in a glow. If I was just worthy of having a home with them!

After we started home, my husband said, "You came away not satisfied, I know." I couldn't sleep: I cried and begged the Lord to show me the right thing to do. I thought I would be allright by morning. But when I got to church, I had the same feelings. I knew I had to ask for a home with them; and when an open door was announced, the next thing I knew my husband went up, and I followed him. We were received in the most wonderful love and fellowship.

We were baptized the 3rd Sunday in November. If I am not deceived, God was with us that day — his love was surely with us. I wish I could express my feelings for the brothers and sisters who were there that day: you could just feel the love go out from one to another. The water was cold going in, but the warmest feeling came over me as I was coming out, and I was not conscious of even being wet. The love I had for them with outstretched hands as I came out of the water! There is just not anything else like it. I wish I could find words to express how I have felt since being baptized.

I know brothers and sisters, that you understand what I am trying to say. I try to pray for peace, love and fellowship among our people, and to be kept at my brethren's feet; for I am just a poor unworthy sinner.

Love,
Thelma Carter
(Mrs. W. L. Carter)

EXPERIENCE

Dear Sister Beadie,

In answer to your repeated requests, I'm writing what I hope to be my experience of grace and joining the church, trusting God will guide me in the attempt. As you know I was raised in a Missionary home, always present at Sunday School unless illness prevented, and I felt I was doing a good work. I was often begged to join the church by friends, but deep down in my heart, I felt one must have a change and repent before joining any church. I had never been able to feel sorry for my sins, really I didn't think I had many. I was living in my self righteousness and I knew it not.

After I married I attended the Primitive Baptist Church. Not that I cared for the doctrine that was preached there, but a part of my husband's people belonged there, his father being the late Elder Charles Meads.

The first time I realized just how helpless I was and how dependent I was for support from one higher than man, was on Sunday night, May 24, 1925 when I held my first born son in my arms and saw him die, and all I could do was watch. Without God's mercy I could never have stood the mournful days that followed. I felt I could never overcome this great loss of my only child. I often visited his grave, there I'd cry, pray, and beg God to have mercy upon me. Late one evening standing alone at the foot of his grave looking at the sun which was about to set, I said aloud, "Oh, God, why did you ever take him from me?" The answer came: Sin. It seemed a mountain rose between me and the sun representing my sins. Yes, my sins stood before me as a mountain in all their original depth and coloring. I cried, "There is no sorrow like my sorrow." I went mourning in the days that followed for the God of Creation had commanded the light to shine out of darkness in my heart to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. This light

pierced the most vital recess of my soul. I saw the blackness of my inward parts, what I was by nature, what I must be made by grace. My self-righteousness became as filthy rags and I cried, "Oh, Lord, Thou art too holy to behold the blackness of this sinful being whose soul is laid bare before Thy righteous eyes."

I knew justice would demand that I perish in everlasting woe for those sins. I prayed daily that God would have mercy and save me from the pit of eternal darkness that lay before me. Not wanting anyone to know of these things I told no one; and the agony I suffered in the years that followed, those who have traveled through the wilderness of sin only know.

In March, 1937 I was taken very sick and went to Duke Hospital for an operation after which I was sent home to die, as I thought. As I stood in the hospital for the nurse to help dress me I was so weak the sweat ran down and stood on the floor. I realized there must be a renewed strength other than what I possessed for me to make a trip of about 200 miles alone. While the nurse talked I prayed a silent prayer unto a living God and He answered. I did not use the rolling chair the nurse had for me. I walked to the elevator and out to the waiting taxi-cab, made two changes of buses without help and reached home safely.

A few days later I was taken very sick, was unconscious part of the time. I was so weak I couldn't even raise a finger. I saw death's door and it seemed I must enter. I'd go down and feel I could not get another breath, then two arms would appear out of this gray mist, bear me up and I'd breathe again. This is where I feel I passed from death unto life because I was made to love the brethren. I was shown the redeemed of God enclosed in a gold band with crowns upon their heads and staffs in their hands. They comforted me by reading the scripture, singing and speaking words of comfort. The Son of righteousness appeared with healing in His wings. I soared away in the spirit to worlds before unknown. Without any effort on my part I felt that upon me there was bestowed a wonderful gift of light, life, love and happy immortality of the soul. Christ appeared to me the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely. The Redeemer of sinners, He was my Saviour. He was the true and living God who in the beginning of time made the earth and all things therein. In the fulness of His wisdom He created a people on whom to bestow his bountiful light and love, made provision from before the foundation of the world to conform His righteous seed to the image of His Son, Jesus Christ.

When I was better Elder Ayers and some of the church members visited me. All I remember saying was "There is no other way but God's way." Elder Ayers talked beautifully and prayed that I might be healed of my affliction, that I bear witness to these great things I'd passed through.

In all my happiness my only thought was the church and when I was well I'd go tell them of the great things the Lord had done for me. Behold, I had forgotten the teachings of my childhood, my family and friends. No, I could never go to the church that would hurt my people. I must never let anyone know I desired above all things to join the Primitive Baptist. But a city set upon a hill cannot be hid. People began to question me of my hope and desire to join the church of this faith. I lied, only to suffer for it later. Soon I began to doubt my experience as many had spoken of it only as delirium.

On Saturday before the fourth Sunday in July, 1937 I was in church. They were singing hymn 142 and as they were singing, "Come ye to the waters, freely drink and quench your thirst with Zion's sons and daughters," it seemed a light shone around me and the veil of doubt was lifted. I felt I must cry out, "Oh, little children of God, let me travel with you for the veil of doubt has been lifted. I've seen His marvelous light," but I kept silent for I could not join that church. From this time

on I knew no rest for there was a continual warfare within, the Spirit against the flesh. The church was on my mind all the time, I could hear singing, praying and preaching. I'd toss to and fro at night trying to get rid of this burden. Often I'd be awakened it seemed by a bright light shining on my face. I prayed for relief and found it for awhile, for the spirit does not always strive with the man. When the burden returned it was with greater force. In June, 1938 I decided regardless of what my friends thought I'd join, for I could but perish if I went. Just before meeting I had a dream concerning joining the church that distressed me. Not knowing the meaning of it I did not join that meeting but kept attending church trusting I might feast upon the crumbs that fell from the Master's table. My desire became so strong to join the church I'd not trust myself to sit among them in conference, fearing I might give way to my feelings. After each meeting I'd be nervous, upset, wanted to tell my troubles but didn't want anyone to know. I so often desired prayers but was ashamed to ask for them for I knew I wasn't fit for a door mat for God's children. In July, 1940 the sermon Elder Ayers preached so completely wrecked me I stayed away from church a few times only to suffer for it later.

In August, 1941 the joy and comfort of the doctrine of salvation by grace melted me into tears and I asked for prayer that I might be strengthened. Elder Ayers said, "Why not go by the dictates of your own conscience, my friend?" It seemed all fear was removed for a while. I knew the dictates of my conscience were to "go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the Lord has done for you."

There wasn't any meeting in September and I could hardly wait until October to offer myself to the church. On the fourth Saturday morning in October, 1941 I laid out the dress I wanted to be baptized in and went to church feeling so happy it seemed everything was praising God. Elder Jones was a visitor that day and he and Elder Avers preached beautifully the things I'd experienced. I thought, "How glad I will be when the doors of the church are opened." When the time came I found myself without strength to go. I sat as one in a trance, cold and nervous. When I reached home I wept much and said, "Oh, Lord, if indeed I am Thine, why am I thus tossed about?" My faith was weak. I lost confidence in my prayers. Feeling you were indeed one of His, I felt if you prayed for me surely He would supply, so that's when I told you of my desires and asked you to pray if it be God's will I'd be strengthened to go next time. After this I had several beautiful dreams in which you were present. Surely you are one of His to speak words of comfort to the poor and needy in Christ Jesus. It would take too much space to tell all my dreams, I'll tell the last one. You and I were out in a boat and it seemed my feet were overboard and they became chilled. I said, "I can't stand this any longer." You said, "If the water is clear we will go in." I said, "Clear as crystal." As we turned to go ashore we saw a beautiful, big white boat coming. I said , "Do you see that boat? surely it can never come into this shallow water." You said, "If it's in the channel, it can." Just then a man came on deck and started down the ladder and there was no place for him to step but into the water. As he stepped a path appeared under his feet and as he walked the path continued before him over the mud and water. There were flowers blooming on this little narrow path. You asked me if I knew the man. I said, "Yes, it's Mr. Rob Perry and he's going to the Union Meeting."

On November 22, 1941 I was blessed to go before the church at Flatty Creek and tell a little of my feelings, and ask them if they felt they could add another burden to their shoulders; for that was all I felt to be. I was received in full fellowship: the joy of this the children of Zion only know. I was baptized at 3 p. m. the same day, which was a cold, bleak day. As we came up out of the

water you dear people looked beautiful to me. There was a deep stillness which spoke of His boundless love: His very spirit beamed in your faces and attested to your love, the one for the other and for God. Old things had passed away; all things became new. I had received a joy and consolation the world can never give or take away. This joy, comfort and peace within is beyond expression by mortal tongue. I thought, "Oh, is this just a dream? Surely I'll soon be awake for one as sinful as I could never possess such calmness within.

On the third night after my baptism I prayed, "Oh, Lord, Thou knowest my ignorance. Make it plain." After a chilly spell I fell only half asleep it seemed, and from the place in my room where I use to see a light the same two arms that raised me up in my illness in 1937 appeared with an open book across them and I heard a voice as one reading. It began the 18th day of April, 1937 in Duke Hospital and read the interpretation to every dream I'd had pertaining to the church, down to my baptism. I'll tell the interpretation to the last dream. It said, "The muddy water was your past life. When you became chilled and could stand it no longer there was one with you (and that was you) who knew when the harvest is fully ripe it will be gathered, for she said, 'If the water is clear we will go in,' meaning the church. You said, 'Clear as crystal.' The place had been reached where there was nothing to do but stand still and see the salvaton of the Lord. The white boat was the sinner made white by the shedding of Jesus' blood. The channel was God and if you are chosen in Him He will prepare a path before you on which to travel through this muddy world." I awoke and felt I could say, "Praise the Lord, O my soul. All that is within me praise His holy name." With the world, flesh and the devil set in array against me I have been tempted many times and my hope shaken as a reed by the wind but it's never completely left me.

Dear sister, pray that I may endure as a good soldier of the cross and at the end of this life hear Him say, "Child, come home."

Your unworthy sister,
Maud Meads
Route 4
Elizabeth City, N. C.

READS SIGNS FROM FRONT TO BACK

Rt. 2, Box 10,
Star City, Ark. 71667

Dear Editors:

It is about time for me to send in my renewal subscription; use the extra as you see fit.

I always look forward to receiving the **Signs** each month, and reading all the letters, editorials, and Voices of the Past; in fact, from the front to the back, especially if I seem to be given any understanding of what I read. If I have any understanding, it is surely a gift from God, "Who is above all."

In Psalm 46:1, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." Some say, "You just have to go to the Lord in prayer; He will help you if you do your part." But it is my belief that the Lord sends the prayer — if it is true prayer it has to be of the Lord, for we know not what to pray for as we ought. He leads his little ones in that prayer.

My question is; Am I one or not: I feel I need more evidence.

"I seldom find a heart to pray,
So many things step in my way;
Thus filled with doubts, I ask to know:
Come, tell me, is it thus with you?"

In Psalm 46:10, "Be still and know I am God: I will be exalted among the heathens, I will be exalted in the earth." This surely shows God's power over all,and he does not need man's puny help. He gives and He takes away at his own will. Blest be the Lord; His will, not ours, be done

He brings his little ones to the knowledge of the truth at his own time and place, whether they are young or old:

when that time comes, none can stay his hand, or say, "What doest thou?" He leads his children through the dark valleys in trials and tribulations; but it is his presence on the mountain top that fills them with joy, where they feed on the manna from heaven when it is his will. He is all in all, and above all. But I know I am very weak in myself.

"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain."

In Christian bonds, I hope,
Mrs. Havis Donaldson

Dear Brother Spangler:

Following is a very small article I would like for you to put in the **Signs of the Times:**

Love is inward — Charity is the outward expression of love. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." See I John 3:18; James 1:22; 1st Corinthians, Chapter 8.

P.W.A.W.,
Atlanta, Ga.

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STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The next session of the *Staunton River Union Meeting* is appointed to be held with Cane Creek Primitive Baptist Church, on Highway 726, near Ringgold, Pittsylvania County, Virginia, the 5th Sunday in April, 1972, and Saturday before.

All who love the truth are invited to meet with us.

Fannie D. Wiles, Church Clerk

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the *Skewarkey Union* was appointed to be held with the Briary Swamp Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in April, 1972. Elder E. C. Harrison was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder I. S. Conner, alternate.

The meeting house is located about one and one-half miles south of Stokes, N. C., on Highway 33. We cordially invite all to come and worship with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Union Clerk

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, with Aycocks Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in April, 1972.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 203, Stokes, N. C. 27884

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with North Riner Church, Cateret County, N. C. the 5th Sunday in April and Saturday before.

The church is located in Otway, N. C. All lovers of the truth are invited to visit us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

Danville, Virginia April, 1972

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EXTRA COPIES OF THE DECEMBER, 1971 SIGNS

Though we had one hundred extra copies of the December, 1971 issue of the Signs, they were soon exhausted. We now have 500 additional copies for those who desire them. They will be mailed postpaid for fifty cents each.

This is the issue featuring the writings of Elder Beebe in maintaining the doctrine on which the Signs was founded. Much interest has been expressed in this issue: maybe a friend would like to have one.

Address orders to the Signs of the Times, Rt. 1, Box 539, Danville, Va. 24541. — EDITORS

EDITORIAL

MARK 6:56

We have before us a request for an explanation of the Scripture in Mark 6:5, "And he could there do no mighty work, save that he liad hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief." It is here declared that Jesus could do no mighty work in Nazareth. The reason why he could not was because of the unbelief which prevailed among those dwelling in Nazareth.

For a little more confirmation of this hindrance in the way of Jesus, let us turn to the fourth chapter of Luke, where is recorded in more detail this visit of Jesus to the place of his boyhood. Here it is told that Jesus went into the synagogue at Nazareth and read and interpreted a portion of the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah. At this time also, he read the thoughts in the minds of those who heard him. He knew full well they did not believe what he said. He knew, too, that they wondered why he did not perform in Nazareth the same marvelous works which had been reported of him in Capernaum and in other parts. He gave them the reason why he did not do miracles in Nazareth. The reason he gave made the people mad and they were ready to kill him, and attempted to do so by leading him out to the brow of a hill with intent to hurl him over it. His hour had not come however and they could not carry out their purpose, for "he, passing through the midst of them, went his way."

Now, let us examine the reason why Jesus was prevented from making known his wonderful power in Nazareth. He himself said it was because of their unbelief. This is true. We dare not doubt it. But why was it that the people in Nazareth as a general thing did not believe in him, while many in other parts did? This leads us to examine what belief is. Again, let us take Jesus' own words, John 10:26-28: "But ye believed not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep

hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." In order to believe in Jesus as the Christ and as the Son of God, it requires the power of God working in one's soul. In the absence of this quickening power of God, no one can really believe in Jesus Christ. Now, had the people of Nazareth been the sheep of Jesus Christ, they would have believed; they could not have withstood the power of God. Paul in his letter to the Ephesians says plainly that the same power which raised Christ from the dead is the very same power which works in sinners to cause them to believe in Christ. The fact that the people of Nazareth did not believe in Jesus is proof that they were yet in a state of death in sin. In this dead state, they had no power to believe in Christ no matter what wonderful works he might have done there. Therefore, he did no wonderful works there. What would have been the use of his doing them? The evidence that they were not his sheep proves that Jesus was not sent there to work miracles among them.

This is further corroborated by a continued reading of Luke fourth chapter. Christ told the people of Nazareth that in the days of Elijah the prophet there were many widows, but that Elijah was not sent to all the widows, but only to the widow of Sarepta. God picked her out, or elected her, and sent Elijah to her. The widow knew nothing of God's choice of her until Elijah came to her. Also, Christ told the Nazarenes that in the days of Elisha the prophet there were many lepers in Israel, but to none of the lepers was cleansing brought except to Naaman the Syrian. God could just as easily have preserved all the widows from starvation as he did the widow of Sarepta. If God did not do so, there can be but one reason why he did not: and that is, it was not his will to do so. God could as easily have cleansed all the lepers as he did Naaman. If he did not do so, there can be but one reason why he did not. It was not his will to do so. Now, the same reason explains why Jesus could not and did not do many mighty works in Nazareth. The reason was that Jesus was not sent to Nazareth to do those works. It was not God's purpose that he should work there. Had it been the purpose of God for him to perform his wonders there, God would have wrought powers in them by which they would have believed him.

By the "sheep" is meant the elect of God. All those given by the almighty Father to the Son in the covenant of grace before the foundation of the world, are the "sheep." To all who are the elect of God and who were given into the Son's care, that is, to all the sheep, comes in God's time the quickening power of his Holy Spirit by which they pass from a state of unbelief in the Son of God. This power was absent in the case of the Nazarenes, thus it was a proof that few, if any, of the "sheep" were there. For this reason, Jesus could not work there. He was sent only to the sheep, only to those given him of the Father before the world began. Evidently the Nazarenes saw what Jesus meant, because it made them mad and they were ready to kill him, and tried to do so. That which made them mad was his declaration of the fact that he was not sent to all men, but only to some of them; in other words, the doctrine of election angered them, and it will do the same to-day to people who cannot believe it. If you want to call down upon your head the wrath of men, just begin to declare at every opportunity the doctrine of God's discriminating choice of his people in the way of salvation, and you will find all the persecution coming your way, and more of it, than you will care to suffer.

Yet, this glorious principle of doctrine is one of the plainest and most prominent throughout the whole Bible and is the foundation of the hope of every sinner saved by grace. If God had not chosen his people first, certainly they never would have chosen him. Without election, not one would be saved. With election, some are saved. Is it not far better that some be saved

than that all be lost? God is under no obligation to save any.

(The above was an editorial by the late Elder H. H. Lefferts March, 1928)

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

The following is a Circular Letter of the Bethel Association of Tennessee and Kentucky written by the late Elder W. A. Bowden, and printed in their Minutes of 1867. We copy it from *The Gospel News*, edited by the late Elder J. M. Perkins, in the February, 1904, issue of that paper.

We re-publish this because of the clear presentation of the doctrine.

Dear Brethren and Sisters in Christ:

In obedience to the appointment of the Association at its last session I propose, under God, to give you my views on the subject of predestination. I am aware that this subject will require more space than is generally allowed to be published and attached to the Minutes of the Association. But I view it to be of greater importance than any other at the present time, on which I feel a disposition to write. As such I will venture to illustrate this sublime doctrine as God has given me light and understanding, and hope the Association will dispose of this Circular as it believes will be best for God's glory and the good of Zion.

Predestination means preappointment, fixed, determination, and unalterable purpose, and is not applicable to any creature but God, in this sense. God is, in all his attributes, perfection. Nothing in nature, nothing in Providence, nothing in the kingdom of this world or the kingdom of grace, has or ever will occur that will be, or ever has been, either new or old with the Almighty. He has ever been what he is now, for he is of one mind and none can change him. "For the Lord of hosts has purposed; who shall disannul it?" Hence, at the time purposed he made the world and the things therein; and all that were made, "were made by him, and for him; and without him was not anything made that was made." And, "he is before all things." And he made the worlds by the Word of his power; and every creature that inhabits them, according to his eternal purpose and pleasure, for his glory. And all will finally end in the full accomplishment of God's purpose, and the end for which they are and were created. God is wisdom. The wisdom of God appears in his purposes and decrees, around which are therefore called his counsellors. Isaiah 25.:" Thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth."

As all things are of him as the efficient cause, and through him as the wise orderer and disposer of them, so they are to him as the final cause or last end to his own glory. Proverbs 16: "The Lord has made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Romans 11: "For of him, through him, and to him, are all things." In the work of creation God had a purpose: and all the things that are made were not of things that do appear; so he spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast, which was nothing more or less than the bringing into being out of chaos that which eternally existed in the infinite mind or purpose of God. This earth, with the starry heavens and all that they contain, are the development of his predestination, founded on infinite wisdom, governed and controlled by Almighty power, and will end in the full accomplishment of his purpose for which they are and were created; for God is unchangeable in his purpose and decrees. There is a purpose for everything, and a time for that purpose. God has determined all that ever was, is or shall be. All come to pass at the counsel of his will. Ecclestiastes 3: "To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heavens." The predestination of God in the execution of his purposes or counsels, are always carried out and cannot be frustrated. It is not in the power of men or devils to disannul them. All power in heaven and in earth is in his hand; for "by him

are all things created that are in heaven and that are in the earth, visible and invisible; whether they be thrones or dominions, principalities or powers: all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." — (Colossians 1). Whatever devices and counterworkings to the contrary, which may appear to us, they are to no avail, for the counsel of the Lord standeth forever. (Psalm 33:11) "There are many devices in a man's heart, nevertheless the counsel of the Lord shall stand." — (Proverbs 19) The purpose of the Almighty, his counsel, his will, his power, his wisdom and justice, are expressions of him; and with his love and mercy, righteousness and glory, are all inseparably connected, and harmonize in his divine perfection and infinite unchangeability.

Being perfect in wisdom, he declares the end from the beginning, Being Almighty, he says his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. His purposes are within himself. Ephesians 1: "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself." And what is in himself is himself; and he can as soon cease to be as to change his mind or to alter his purpose, for they are eternal. Ephesians 3: "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Jesus Christ our Lord."

Some may say, and many do admit and strongly contend for predestination in the kingdom of Grace and in the salvation of all the chosen of God; but when it comes to the work of nature, or the kingdoms of this world and presence and providence of God in the events of time, they falter, and leave it to chance or circumstances with which we suppose that God has nothing to do. Now we say and feel assured that it is so that although we are not able in our finite minds to find out the depths of the wisdom and knowledge of God, yet he has in his goodness condescended to reveal unto us a sufficiency to cause us to acknowledge that he is a sovereign and will do all his pleasure, both in providence and grace. The immutabillity of the purposes of God cannot be disproved by his providences, which are many and various, unsearchable and past finding out, and may seem to differ from and clash with each other; for all the changes in providence, whether with respect to the world in general or with respect to individuals in particular, are according to his unchangeable will. Job was a remarkable instance of changes in providence, yet he was fully persuaded of the unchangeable will of God in them. "He is in one mind, and who can turn him? And what his soul desireth, even that he doeth, for he performeth the things that are appointed for me; and many such things are with him." — (Job 22)

We wish to be fully understood, and will further illustrate our views on divine providence in this world, for the events are certain for which all things are created, believing that the object which God has in view, or in purpose, when he spake this world into being will be fully consummated. Certain it is, all the works of nature, animate and inanimate, are governed by certain laws or regulations which God saw fit to place over and around his works; that each and every cause, under the same circumstances, which he would suffer or cause to be, should produce an effect similar to the cause which produced it. And there is a concourse of providence which attends all men — all actions, yea, even their words and thoughts, which are all overruled by Providence to answer some end. Proverbs 16: "A man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps." Evil actions themselves, as in the case of Joseph's brethren who sold him into Egypt; God meant it for good, and overruled it to save many people alive. Even Satan himself, the cause of sin and adversary of God, is bound in the eternal purpose of God, and cannot with all his auxiliaries, go beyond the limits of His Almighty power, or frustrate the Lord in any of his counsel. With

God all is order, all is harmony, all directed and certain in the fulfillment of his will, to the accomplishment of his purposes in bringing about the great end for which all things were made, even his eternal glory, whether they are brought about by his immediate agency and power or suffered to be through an opposing influence. But man, poor fallen and depraved man is irreconciled for God to be God; and we, the small dust of the balances, all are unclean things, and all our righteousness is as filthy rags. We all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

Having said enough on the subject of the purpose or predestination of God in the order of the providence and works of nature to satisfy a true believer in Jesus, and according to the Scriptures of divine truth, we now come to speak of the predestination of God in the works of grace and the plan and the scheme of redemption. After the Lord had made this world and set in order all things pertaining thereto he said: "Let us make man." This address was made by Jehovah the Father to the Son and Holy Spirit — the holy trinity in one God, the Creator — his Son the mediator and Holy Spirit the applier. This is the counsel of peace, ordered in all things and sure. So God made man of the dust of the earth — just such a being as he purposed to make — a complete man — and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul. Man was made in the image and likeness of his Creator — that is, he was made good, and very good; he was made upright, clear of sin, or the principle to sin. He bore, in this respect, the moral image of his Maker. And had it been God's purpose to have made him holy, immutable and perfect, he would have done it; but instead thereof he was made subject to vanity — not possessing a divine nature, but with human nature in its upright state, capable of keeping the law that God had given him until the day that he, by disobedience, violated it; and the violation was certain, as the penalty was sure. His Creator was not the cause, but the devil, or serpent — as he was called by Moses — beguiled Eve; lust, which produced sin, was conceived, and it brought forth death, or the transgression of the law, first by our mother, and she gave to Adam, our father and federal representative, and he did eat of the forbidden fruit. "So by the disobedience of one man (and we in him — and in that he represented the whole human family) sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

God was not the cause of Adam sinning; neither is he the author of sin, directly nor indirectly. "But," says the conditionalist and the believer in the doctrine of chance, or he that pretends to believe in conditional predestination, or the predestination and election and final salvation of God's chosen people, and all the rest of creation to be suspended upon contingencies or circumstances, "I cannot see the justice of God in these things, or how he is not the author of sin." Now, we purpose to show how this is, and set it forth so plainly that he that runs may read. God could, if it had been his will or purpose, have made man in a confirmed and immutable state, above and beyond the power of seduction or temptation by the wicked one, as easy as he made him subject thereto; yea, after he made him he could, if it had been according to his counsel and the end for which he was created, prevented the serpent from entering into the garden; and yet he did not do it, which is clear proof that the means to bring about the end were as clearly and surely predestinated and determined as the end itself.

Again, how creatures so good and upright, made in the image and likeness of their Creator, came to sin, which brought death unto all the world, with all our woes, is a matter of solemn thought and worthy of our most prayerful inquiry. To what could their sins and fall be owing? Not to God, for he is not the author of sin, as we have

said before, nor does he tempt us to it; nor to Satan — except as an instrument enticing and deceiving — but to themselves, to their own will; it was their own act and their own deed. God foreknew the sin and fall of Adam, as he foreknew all things that come to pass in the world, wherefore he predestinated the fall of Adam, which never could have taken place had he purposed or determined otherwise. This fell under his decree, as do all things that come to pass. Lamentations 3: "Who is he that saith, And it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" That the fall of Adam was by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God is certain, because the suffering and death of Christ, by which is the redemption of God's people from that sin, and others, was ordained before the foundation of the world, or must have been precarious and uncertain if Adam's fall was not by a like ordination or determination. Acts 2: "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." And 4: "For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." 1st Peter 1: "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you." As Judas sinned freely (the one in betraying, the other in putting Christ to death,) so Adam sinned freely, without force or compulsion. God suffered or permitted Adam to sin and fall — not by bare permission as an idle spectator; the permission was voluntary, wise, holy, powerful and efficacious, according to the unchangeable counsel of his will. Adam, our federal head and representative, in the fall brought himself and all his posterity into a state of death, condemnation and guilt, under the law and under its curse. Jesus Christ, the second Adam, stood surety for (and represented in his federal headship) all that was given him in the everlasting covenant, which was ordered in all things and sure.

And now we come to the predestination and election of God in the plan of salvation and scheme of redemption. The predestination of God's chosen people is according to, and equal with his knowledge. "For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." They, by nature, were no better than those whom he rejected. He chose whom he would out of, and from among all nations, kindreds and tongues; and too, before time began. Wisdom has built her house in eternal purpose: ordained all the instruments; predestinated all the means: mingled her wine, with her oil. All the objects of God's eternal love, with their names written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world, so that no power on earth, or counter working of nature, with all the combination of hell, could frustrate or disannual the purpose or frustrate the end that God had in view, even his eternal glory, and the complete actual salvation and eternal happiness of the Spiritual Israel of God; and we wish to rightly divide the word of truth. The law is truth; the gospel is the truth. The law of morality and law of ceremonies were given of God, and consist in a covenant of works predicated on conditions ordained of God for the government of his rational creatures in this life. The blessings and curses, or penalties, are predicated and made sure, and much of our lifetime happiness depends on a strict obedience thereto. But the law of ceremonies contained in ordinances and diverse offerings are done away in Christ, and never did make the comers thereunto perfect, for they were only the shadow of good things to come. The law of morality is the rule of right — secures the comforts and blessing of this life; and in obedience thereto saves us from the penalties annexed. For remember that the words spoken by angels were steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience receive a just recompense of reward. If it was so under the ceremonial or law dispensation, how shall we escape under the gospel dispensation, if we neglect so great a salvation?

We will now take up the new and everlasting covenant and close our Circular on the illustration and application of the blessings and comforts therein contained to the elect of God. This covenant includes the whole plan of salvation and scheme of redemption. The whole Trinity was engaged in it. It is called new — not in consequence of its age, or time, for with God there is neither age nor time, but in consequence of its manifestation in time, and because of its eternal existence with the Trinity before time. Here, then, is the eternal purpose of God declared, that "I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people," saith God Almighty. They shall no more every man teach his neighbor, saying know the Lord, for they shall all know me, even from the least to the greatest; and I will be merciful to their unrighteousness and their sins and their iniquites I will remember no more. The Judge of the earth will do right, but in our pride and fallen natures we are often finding fault with the Almighty, and in our ignorance sit as judges. David says "Stand still, and know that he is God; and that he does as he pleases in the heavens above and among the armies on earth. He holds the issues of life and death, yea, the keys of hell and death." Hence he says of Pharoah: "For this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." Pharoah stood as a type of the devil;and the Almighty had as much use for him in his sphere and place to bring about the end or purpose determined, as he had for Moses in being an instrument in leading Israel out of the land of bondage. "His ways are not our ways, for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts.

In bringing to view the purpose of God in election, the apostle illustrates it in this way: "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand; not of works but of him that calleth; as it is written, Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated." Will not some one say there is unrighteousness with God? Others say he is unjust — all ought to have a chance. Others say he loved Jacob a little better than he did Esau. But God says he loved Jacob and hated Esau; and I am one who professes to believe God. The apostle makes an inquiry here worthy of our attention. He asked, "Is there unrightousness with God? God forbid: for he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy; and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? What if God, willing to shew his wrath and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory even us whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." God's purpose or predestination and election, as we have said before, is according to his foreknowledge or equal to it. For whom he did foreknow and choose in Christ, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, while his reprobation or rejection of the wicked, or unbeliever, in a state of sin and unbelief, is embraced in the eternal mind, "And for this cause" says the apostle to the Thessalonians, "God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they might all be damned, who believe not the the truth but have pleasure in unrighteousness. But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God has from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth."

The apostle again says to the church at Ephesus and faithful in Christ Jesus:

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." "Elect," says Peter, "according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," "Sanctified," or set apart, says Jude, "by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and called." God has said of the rejected that they should be driven away in their wickedness; that they die in their sins, and where he is they shall not come. He says of his people: "They shall be purified and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." — Daniel. Jesus says: "I thank thee, O Father, God of heaven and earth,that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hath revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight." Jesus says again, and that, too, to that class of professors who believed in a conditional salvation: "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, for I never knew you." Again he says, to the same kind of people: "These shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal." A volume might be written on this subject; and we fear that we have already swelled our Circular to too great a length. We have not taken up and answered the objections that are often waged against the doctrine of predestination by those who opoose it: the limits of the Circular Letter forbade it. This we leave for some future time.

Dear brethren and sisters of Bethel Association, and all Old School Baptists everywhere, hold up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh. How consoling is the doctrine of predestination to those whose full trust is in God. It hides pride from man; excludes the idea of chance; exhalts the grace of God; renders salvation certain; affords believers great consolation. Is it not a comfort and consolation to the church of God to firmly believe that God holds the keys of hell and death; that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose;" that nothing can come up in the political world, or in the religious world, to try the church of God and the faith of his elect, but what is before ordained or predestinated, and that it will work for and result in the glory of God and the good of his people? "Even the wrath of man shall praise him, and the balance he will restrain." The elements, politically and religiously, may gather thick blackness, as they are now doing the three unclean spirit, like frogs, which are the spirits of devils, are now busily engaged in gathering together Gog and Magog. God is suffering wicked men to set at the head of affairs; truth and justice, liberty and peace, are bleeding in the streets. Zion and her watchmen are clad in mourning. The lovers of God and his cause are weeping between the porch and the altar, while the heathen hath defiled the temple of God and the temple of liberty with strangers. The abominations of desolation are standing where once the glorious constitution and beloved ensign of our liberties floated to the breeze of freedom, and was beloved and reverenced by the noble descendants of our patriotic fathers; but, alas! they are gone; and the daughter of Zion, the church of God, the Regular Baptists — for that only, is the true church of Christ, which hears and believes the pure doctrine of Christ, and observes the ordinances instituted by him, in whatsoever place it exists. Then we say that the Zion of God is left at a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, or as a beseiged city; but no weapon formed against her shall prosper, and every tongue that rises in judgement shall be condemned.

Every evolution through which the church has or ever will pass is preappointed and ordained of God for her good. If it is through the flood, it shall not drown her. Every evolution that has or shall take place in the political world until its final over throw is included in the purpose and mind of God, and the means to bring about the end are as sure as the end. So, in conclusion, we rejoice in God our Savior, who will bring off his people more than conquerors through him that loved them. I exhort my brethren in the ministry to be of good cheer; give yourselves to the work of the ministry; feed the church of God, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers; go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. "All power in heaven and in earth, is given into my hands; go ye therefore and teach all nations;" teach them to observe all things whatsoever he has commanded; baptize them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned." We who believe in the doctrine of predestination, election and the final perseverance of the saints, and the call to the work of the ministry have more to encourage us to go and preach the preaching that God bids us than any other class in the world. "Why?" says one. Because we believe in him who has all power in heaven and earth, and that the preaching of the gospel is of God, and that it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes, and that as many as were ordained to eternal life believe; and that all the promises in the gospel are yea and amen to the glory of God; and that we are laborers together with God; that the church is God's husbandry and God's building; and that it is all sure, and our reward is certain. As such we do not run as uncertaintly; neither do we fight as Arminians, as one that beats the air. And you, brethren and sisters, we exhort to love and good works.

May the God of all grace be your Great Head and Moderator, and permit us to meet together in an associated capacity and set in order the things that may be wanting for the glory of God and the mutual peace and comfort of Zion. Farewell.

W. A. Bowden

ORDINATION OF DEACON

On December 18, 1971, at the request of Republican Church, Franklin County, Va., a Presbytery was called to examine Brother Zeb Whitaker for the office of Deacon.

After song and prayer by Elder L. J. Brammer, a motion was made with second and carried, that Elder William Holland moderate the meeting, and Elder Amos Hash act as Clerk.

Deacon J. C. Hubbard was appointed spokesman for the church; Elders O. K. Tench and J. R. Hollandsworth to lead in the questioning; Elder J. L. Bocock to offer the ordination prayer; Elder Cecil Turner to deliver the charge; and Elder Hale Terry to dismiss the solemn service with prayer.

The Presbytery consisted of Elders Cecil Turner, J. L. Bocock, O. K. Tench, J. R. Hollandsworth, L. J. Brammer, Rufus Brown, Hale Terry, William Holland and Amos Hash.

The Deacons present were Leonard Nichols, Lane Carter, Claude Hopkins, W. R. Bernard, George Turner, W. G. Parsons, D. P. Akers, Charlie Stone, John Plunkett, Clay Brown, Charlie Childress, Edwin Dyer, Clifford Prillaman, Posey Lynch, Tommy Lovell, Otho Thomas, J. C. Hubbard and Gray Ingram.

Elder Rufus Brown deliverd the candidate to the Presbytery. Elder O. K. Tench in leading the questioning, used Acts 6:3-5, and 2 Timothy 3:8-14. The questions being answered to the satisfaction of all, a motion was made with second and carried, to proceed with the ordination. With the laying on of hands, Elder J. L. Bocock offered the ordination prayer; and Elder Cecil Turner delivered the charge.

A motion was made with second and carried, that Deacon Zeb Whitaker be delivered back to Republican Church.

Elder Hale dismissed with prayer.

On motion with second and carried that the Minutes be approved as read: A copy to be sent to the *Signs of the Times*, and a copy for the Church Records.

The afore Minutes witnessed and signed.

W. M. Holland, Moderator
Amos I. Hash, Clerk

OBITUARIES

MARY ETTA BRYANT AKERS

Sister Etta Akers was born in Franklin County, Virginia, September 3, 1888, and died in Roanoke County September 13, 1971. She was the daughter of Gustavis and Mary Martin Bryant.

At the age of 19, she married S. Grover Akers. They were blessed to spend 53 happy years together. To this union were born five sons and five daughters. Surviving her in death are: four sons; Chess, Stafford, Woodrow, and Carroll Akers; four daughters; Mrs. Mabel Barbour, Mrs. Violet Layman, Mrs. Mary Plunkett, and Mrs. Louise Hancock; one sister; Mrs. R. E. Akers; nineteen grandchildren; twenty great grandchildren.

Sister Etta was bedfast about seven years and totally blind for two years. She was patient and humble with her suffering. Even though she was blind, she knew people by their voice or handshake.

Her home was open to all, especially to her church kindred. It was a sanctuary to weary travelers. When she and Brother Grover were no longer able to look after their home, their daughter and son-in-law, Mary and John Plunkett, took them into their home and gave them loving care.

Sister Etta asked for a home in Pigg River Church along with her husband, and they were baptized in November, 1921. Both were firm believers in salvation by the grace of God. They both were faithful and loving members. Brother Grover was deacon in Pigg River Church for many years.

I believe that Sister Etta was a mother in Israel for it was manifest by her walk and talk and the love for her God. Many times I have been comforted in her presence and by the letters she wrote me. To know her was to love her. We will miss her sweet face and warm handshake but feel our loss is her eternal gain. May He who is able to do all things comfort the bereaved family and all that love her.

Her funeral was preached at Pigg River Church by her Pastor, Elder William Holland, and Elder Cecil Turner on September 15, 1971. She was laid to rest by her husband in Pigg River Cemetery under a blanket of many beautiful flowers, to await the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Written by request of Mary Plunkett by one who loved her, I hope, for Christ's sake.

Rosalia J. Abshire

JOHN WILLIAM CROWLEY

Deacon John William Crowley, date of birth March 6, 1893. Making his span of life 78 years, seven months and twenty-seven days. Departing this life November 3, 1971.

Our Brother was received into the fellowship of Harmony Primitive Baptist Church on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in June 1921, making his membership with Harmony Church 50 years, four months and a few days. Brother Crowley being ordained a Deacon April 27th, 1935. He served in this office 36 years, 6 months and 6 days. He filled this office well, always active in attending to its duties.

He manifested the marks of our Lord Jesus Christ in his humility and stability in his Church life.

His survivors are his wife, who also is a member at Harmony Church, Sister Lula Crowley of Kennedy, Alabama; one daughter, Gladys McCool of Gordo, Alabama; four sons Horace Crowley and Robert Crowley of Kennedy, Alabama, James Crowley of Birmingham, Alabama, and Loyd Crowley of Selma, Alabama; two sisters, Mrs. Ida Pate and Mrs. Mary Linderman of Birmingham, Alabama; three brothers: Harvey Crowley and Paulie Crowley of Kennedy, Alabama, and Nathan Crowley of Birmingham, Alabama; 20 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Friday, November 5th, at Meadow Branch Church, with burial following in adjoining cemetery. Officiating were Elders Eulie McCool, Claude C. Hand and Albert Brock.

Oh, how we will miss Brother Crowley at Harmony Church, but we do humbly believe our loss is his eternal gain. BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the will of Him that doeth all things well, and

RESOLVED, That a copy of these respects be sent to the *Signs of the Times*, a copy to the family, and one kept for the Church record.

U. R. Taylor

OLA PAYNE COLLINS

Whereas, It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst by death our dear Sister Ola Payne Collins on September 4, 1971, we bow in humble submission to His will. Sister Collins was born in the Whitmell community December 28, 1890, a daughter of the late Le Roy Payne and Lucinda Fallen Payne. She united in marriage to the late Jonnie C. Collins December 27, 1908. She was a good wife and mother. She leaves to mourn her departure, one daughter, Mrs. Bernice Williams, Dry Fork, Va.; four sons, Roy W. Collins, Fayetville, N. C.; Posie A. Collins, High Point, N. C.; Herbert F. Collins, Martinsville, Va. and Lester H. Collins of Dry

Fork, Va. Surviving also are several grand children and one brother, George Payne, Danville, Va.

Sister Collins united with Strawberry Primitive Baptist Church, April 4, 1914. She was faithful to her profession as long as she lived, though she had not attended her meeting for a long time due to ill health. She believed in salvation by grace and grace alone.

Her funeral was conducted in Swicegood Funeral Chapel by Elders R. S. Payne, H. W. Wray and D. V. Spangler. Interment was in Highland Burial Park beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, there to sleep until that beautiful morning when her blessed Saviour returns to call His jewels home.

We, the Church at Strawberry, greatly feel our loss, which is her eternal gain. We extend our sympathy to the family who devotedly cared for their mother in her long illness. May God reconcile them to His will. Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be recorded on our church record, one sent to the family and one to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of Strawberry Church in conference October 3, 1971.

Elder R. S. Payne, Moderator
Josephine N. Dodd, Clerk

JOHN A. CRUSENBERRY

Brother John A. Crusenberry, son of the late James and Caroline Lancaster Crusenberry, departed this life November 2, 1971, at the age of 86 years. Brother Crusenberry was blessed by God to unite with the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church in October 1969. He attended the Falls Church for many years before he asked for a home with the Church. He loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace and wanted to be with the brethren, talking about Jesus and the dealings of the Lord with him. His wife preceded him about six months ago, and he felt the loss deeply. He missed her so much, and his health began to fail fast.

He was a faithful husband, father and church member. He spoke often of wanting to go home to be with his Saviour. We believe he was looking for that day; anxiously awaiting for the call to come home. Brother Crusenbery will be missed by all who knew and loved him. The Church feels a great loss, but the children, and their families will feel the deepest loss.

He is survived by six daughters, Mrs. B. D. Mosley, Mrs. W. W. Eatman, and Mrs. Peggy Murphy all of Rocky Mount; Mrs. F. H. Crickmore and Mrs. W. E. Lewis of Battleboro, and Mrs. John A. Tierney of Elizabeth, N. J.; three sons, George R. Crusenberry and John A. Crusenberry, Jr. of Rocky Mount, and Frank Crusenberry of Kershaw S. C.; 28 grandchildren; 30 great-grandchildren, and five half-sisters, Mrs. Bessie Knight of Black Mountain, Mrs. Lori Weaver, Mrs. Elizabeth Carr, and Mrs. A. L. Ingram, all of Rocky Mount, and Mrs. Mamie Butts of Wilson.

Funeral Services were conducted from the chapel of Johnson Funeral Home by his Pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, where the many flowers and friends gave evidence of the love that was felt for Brother Crusenberry. He was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery, where we believe he is resting in peace waiting for the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Resolved; That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family; a copy to the **Signs of the Times** and one for the church records.

Conference — November, 1971.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS FOR SISTER EFFIE CRUSENBERRY

Sister Effie Crusenberry, 79 years of age, was called home by our Heavenly Father May 21, 1971.

Sister Crusenberry was blessed by God to unite with the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church in October 1931. She was blessed to see her husband and one daughter unite with the Falls Church. She was faithful to the Church and attended the meetings as long as her health permitted. We have seen her come to church when those of us who loved her felt she was not able to be there. Her faith, trust and love of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ were manifested in her walk and conversation. I believe through sufferings, trials, and tribulations, she was looking for the call from Jesus; "Child your Father calls come home." She was firm in her faith and belief in Salvation by Grace, and enjoyed talking with the brethren of what the Lord had done for her. We, the Church and friends who loved her, watched her health decline and suffered along with her and her family. She will be greatly missed, but we believe that she is resting in the Bosom of Jesus.

She leaves to mourn, her husband John A. Crusenberry; six daughters, Mrs. B. D. Mosley, Mrs. W. W. Eatman, and Mrs. Peggy Murphy all of Rocky Mount, N. C.; Mrs. F. H. Crickmore and Mrs. W. E. Lewis of Battleboro, and Mrs. John A. Tierney of Elizabeth, N. J.; three sons, George R. Crusenberry and John A. Crusenberry, Jr. of Rocky Mount and Frank Crusenberry of Kershaw, S. C.; 28 grandchildren; 29 great-grandchildren, and one sister, Mrs. Mary T. Daughtidge of Rocky Mount, N. C.
Mary T. Daughtridge of Rocky Mount, N. C.

Her funeral was conducted at Johnson Fun-

eral Home by her Pastor Elder D. B. Stokes. Burial was in Pineview Cemetery where we believe she is resting in Peace waiting for the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The display of flowers and the many friends attending were in evidence of the love that was felt for Sister Effie Crusenberry.

Resolved; That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family; a copy to the **Signs of the Times** and one for the Church records.

Conference: July 1971.

Elder W. L. Everett, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS FOR
SISTER MINNIE GRIFFIN

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call home our beloved Sister, Minnie Griffin, on February 12, 1970.

Sister Griffin was blessed by God to join the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church June 24, 1967, while she was in the hospital, and was baptized September 10, 1967. Although she united with the church late in life, she had for a long time believed the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace, and loved to talk with the brethren of her love for her Saviour and Friend the Lord Jesus Christ.

She had been in poor health for a long time and was unable to attend the meetings as often as she would have liked to. She was blessed wtih strong faith and I believe she was waiting patiently on the Lord, looking unto Him for all her needs and salvation. She will be missed by all who knew and loved her. Especially her children and family.

She leaves to mourn two sons, C. R. and James W. Griffin, both of Rock Mount, N. C.; five daughters: Mrs. W. L. Medley; Mrs. Marcus Bunn; Mrs. C. L. Pitt; Mrs. E. E. Schultz of Rocky Mount, and Mrs. Archie Thompson of Whitakers; one brother, William K. Daughtridge of Rocky Mount; 18 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren; and seven great-great-grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted from Gay Yost Funeral Home by her Pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, and burial was in Pineview Cemetery, where we believe she is resting in peace, waiting for the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family; a copy to the **Signs of the Times** and one for the Church records.

Conference: May 8, 1971

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

ALICE BEST BLACKMAN

In memory of a very beloved and precious Sister, Alice Best Blackman, the daughter of the late William and Sarah Elizabeth Grantham Best. Born April 28, 1887, and passed from this life on May 22, 1971. She was married to the late Herman Blackman, February 10, 1909. To this union there were no children.

Sister Blackman united with Black River Church, Dunn, N. C. the third Sunday in October 1920, and was baptized by her pastor the late Elder W. G. Turner. She was a devoted member to her church and faithful to the care and upkeep of the church. Also she was faithful in the many duties about her home and always ready to lend a helping hand to those that were sick or in need.

When health permitted Sister Blackman was prompt to attend the services of her Church, manifesting the love of God, and the fellowship for the members of the household of faith. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor Elder C. D. Turner and Elder W. D. Godwin. Her body was laid to rest in the Roselawn Cemetery, Benson, N. C. There to sleep and rest until the great and wonderful morning, the final resurrection, when Jesus shall come to raise her body together with all the saints when she shall awake in the likeness of Jesus, the Son of God, and behold His face in righteousness and be satisfied.

We feel surely this was her very humble hope in Christ, yet she shall be greatly missed by all who knew her and loved her.

We bow in humble submission to the Heavenly Father's will, feeling in our hearts that our loss is her eternal gain.

We resolve that three copies of this memorial be made (1) for the Church records (1) to be sent to her family, and (1) to the *Signs of the Times.*

This done by order of Conference at our October meeting.

Elder C. D. Turner, Moderator
Sister Nettie Turlington, Clerk

MRS. MARY WILLIE PERDUE

Mrs. Mary Willie Perdue was born November 21, 1883, and died November 13, 1971, eight days before her 88th birthday.

She is survived by one son, one daughter, five grandchildren, eleven great grandchildren, and one great great grandchild of whom she was very proud, and a host of other relatives and friends.

She lived a long and useful life — one truly of service for others. She loved her church, Bethel Primitive Baptist near El-Dorado, Arkansas, but did not get to attend as often as she would have liked because of the distance. Elder E. J. Lambert was her pastor.

She looked forward each month for the arrival of the *Signs of the Times,* though she

could not read too well because of cataract surgery. She used a magnifying glass to read the *Signs* and her Bible.

She had a great faith in God, and trusted Him completely. She was buried in Roselawn Cemetery at Little Rock, Arkansas, November 16, 1971.

Sincerely,
Lucille Perdue Nolting
Her daughter

LEE PITTS

By request it becomes my solemn duty to write an obituary of another faithful one that has been called from this dark and dismal shore into that rest that remains for the children of the kingdom. Our dear brother had not been in good health for sometime, and yet his passing brought us much grief. So many of the faithful ones at the little church are being called on.

Our brother was born October 18, 1896, the son of J. N. and Nancy Pitts. In early life he married Miss Isabel Rye, and to this union eight children were born, seven of them, with our dear sister, surviving. These children, Newton, Roy, Junior, Conley, Mrs. Ruby Kennedy, Sister Lucile Palmer, Sister Jocie Fowler. One son (Conley), with the two last named daughters, with our Sister Isabel, all belong to the church. It was our brother's joy that his family were believers in sovereign grace.

Our dear brother joined Macedonia Church on the first Sunday in November, 1931. He was ordained as deacon in his home church on the first Sunday in 1966. He died February 14, 1971, and his funeral was preached by his pastor, Elder Eulie McCool, after which he was laid to rest in the church cemetery there to await the resurrection fo the dead, which doctrine he rejoiced in.

W. D. G.

JESSE PITTS

It is always a pleasure to serve my dear kindred in the Lord, but how sad it is to be called upon to chronicle the death of such a lovely brother as our dear one was to the household of faith. He was the son of the late J. N. and Nancy Pitts, having been born April 2, 1885. He was married three times; first, to Miss Allie Otts, December 29, 1907, and seven children were born to this union, three surviving, viz, Grady, Mrs. Katie Moore Warren, Mrs. Lois McGraw, she died in 1920. Second, to Miss Myrtle Egger, March 17, 1921. To this union three children were born, two surviving, viz, Robert and Oliver. She died in December, 1927. Third, he married Sister Mertie Dodson on March 11, 1928, who survives.

I had just been called to serve Macedonia Church when our dear brother came before the saints declaring how great things the Lord had done for him. He loved the assembly of the saints, and his soul's delight found full joy in the dominion of God over all things. He was baptized on the first Sunday in July, 1937.

Our brother passed away January 5, 1971, and his funeral was preached by Elder H. R. Prince of Memphis, Tennessee. He was buried at Macedonia Church to await the final coming of our blessed Lord when we believe that our dear brother shall see Him as His Redeemer.

W. D. G.

WILLIAM HOUSTON PITTS

Our hearts were made sad at the passing of this our lovely brother. While the pall of sadness is cast over us there is rejoicing among the brotherhood because of the triumphant passing of one that we have loved so deeply and so long.

Our brother was born March 20, 1893, the son of J. N. and Nancy Pitts. He was married to Margie Canterbury on January 16, 1921, and to this union seven children were born, viz, Leon, Lamar, Clarence, Lawrence, Lonnie, Mrs. Grace Morris, Mrs. Laura Otts. Lonnie was killed by a car August 7, 1948, all the others, with Sister Pitts survive.

Brother Pitts served in the first World War, seeing much service in foreign lands. He saw much of God's providence manifested in his life as men died on every side. He joined the church at Macedonia on Saturday before the first Sunday in August, 1925, and was baptized by Elder O. F. Egger. He was ordained as a deacon on Saturday before the first Sunday in September by Elders G. W. Berry and W. D. Griffin. He was elected clerk of the Buttahatchie Association in 1931, and served efficiently with humbleness until his death.

Our brother died at the Lamar County hospital on September 13, 1971, after much suffering. The services were conducted at Macedonia Church by his pastor, Elder Eulie McCool, and former pastor, Elder W. D. Griffin, after which we planted him in the earth to come forth from the grave in the likeness of immortality, a complete conqueror over all enemies through the victory gained by the Lord Jesus Christ.

To us it is sad to lose three excellent brethren who were members of the same Baptist family, but the Lord has removed from our midst that which he had given, and He is to be praised for it all.

W. D. G.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 140 DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1972 NO. 5

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5/72
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE NAME OF THE DEAR REDEEMER

(Isaiah 9:6)

"His name shall be called *Wonderful;*"
It was his wondrous love
To his chos'n people that caused him
To descend from above.

"*Counsellor,*" in the great council
Held in vast eternity,
"In which the scheme of salvation
Was fixed" absolutely.

"*The Mighty God,*" who has all power
In heaven and in earth,
Where he "went about doing good,"
One of eminent worth.

"*The Everlasting Father,*" to
His children here below,
Chos'n from everlasting in him,
Who's eternal life to know.

"*The Prince of Peace,*" he is indeed,
Peace between God and men,
Shedding his precious blood for them
To save them from their sin.

C. W. Vass
409 N. Y. Avenue
Elizabeth City, N. C.

THE PRODIGAL SON

"And he said, A certain man had two sons: and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living." I quote only this much to conserve space: Please read the entire parable, Luke 15:11-32.

This subject has been on my mind intermittantly for a few months, causing a great burden of desire to write upon it, and offer a few thoughts on what I feel is encouched in this wonderful narrative. I have striven to get by without presenting my views, realizing this is a most sacred subject even for angels to tread upon, and I am only a poor dust worm. I know I cannot penetrate or discern the vital living substance and truth that is so mystically sealed and hid in this parable, except I be led by the unerring spirit of God; nor can any other man with the wisdom of this world, understand this or any other scripture. I do not profess to have any infallible light on the subject... but I hope I have not grasped the shadow and missed the substance. I have wrestled in the deep, yea, in the still night watches with this subject. Its first presentation was while bowed in humble pleading before my God in prayer. An humble hope wells up within me that through grace I have something in common with this Prodigal Son.

Dearly beloved: I would love to call your attention to the truth as laid down in the parable; that is, the two sons were both sons of one man (brothers). So far as birth, nature, or natural relationship, or ties of flesh and blood are concerned, they did not differ one whit — what one possessed, so possessed the other. A parable is a figure, a proverb, a dark saying: Jesus used parables to set forth or portray what has always been true. Please read the 7th and 10th verses of this 15th chapter of Luke.

In this particular parable I see two conditions set forth. The eldest, or first born of the two brothers — the one who stayed at home, the good boy, was

only good in his own estimation, in his own carnal blindness, his own self conceit: he had not experienced the treachery of his own heart. He frowned criticism, ridicule and contempt on his erring brother; even refused, in what he thought was his righteous anger, to take part in the feast which was spread for his brother: he with boasting, aired, even before his father's face, his own virtue and goodness, (see verse 29) confessing that he had not at any time transgressed the commandment of his father. Thus painting the poor, deluded, deceived mortal who is trusting in his own goodness, creature obedience, legalism, or law worshipper. His staying home represents to me no depths of experimental travel; (and we have this element about us,) even in the Old Baptist Church; for we have some who evidently feel they have at least just a little something to boast about — just some little element of good in them. Whereas, if they had had the depth of experience of the Prodigal, they would know that they were not even worthy to be called a son.

Notice that it was the younger son who asked for his portion, "the portion that falleth to me." And his father divided unto them (the two) his living. This asking for a portion, signifies a state of unrest — a desire to come into his rightful heritage. But as soon as this was granted, he took his journey into a far country (experimental travel) and there wasted his substance in riotous living. And when he had spent all. there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

Dear prodigal child of Zion's blessed King, do you see any likeness or resemblance of your own travel in this wilderness journey? If you do, I say unto you, Be of good cheer. It is for you, and all like you, that the fatted calf is killed. It is you who are adorned with the ring on your hand after your own strength fails — after your own ability to do something praiseworthy in God's sight fails. It is then He adorns your hand with a ring, a signet, a seal of his everlasting love; an evidence of your oneness in Him, His immutable omnipotence leading you gently by the hand. And from henceforth, all your labor is a labor of love.

"And shoes on your feet." He is your protector, keeper, leader, shielding your torn, bleeding, weary feet. He is leading and directing you in the Way (Christ) unto the end; so that you may tread upon scorpions, or drink the poison of asps or any deadly thing, unharmed.

"The best robe upon you." The imputed righteousness of Christ.

> "How far this heavenly robe excells
> What earthly princes wear!
> Nor can the tongue of angels tell
> How bright the colors are."

This best robe supplants our own righteousness, which is but filthy rags, and hides all our hideous deformity of sin.

Humbly and conscientiously presented.

H. J. Bird

(This was written April 6, 1950, by the late Elder H. J. Bird. Submitted by his wife for publication)

PSALM 23

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

In reading the 23rd Psalm we find that in many places it speaks of what the Lord has done for us; but I have yet to find the first place where we did anything for God. It seems to me that the field is well covered with what God has done for us. I don't know of

anything more a poor sinner needs than is mentioned in this Psalm.

For sometime my mind has been directed to the fourth verse: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death." What valley and what death is he speaking of? To me it is the valley we were living in when we were dead in sin, and knew not God, or our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ. We are still living in the same world, confronted with the same temptations. Nothing has changed in the world around us. It does not say we are going to die in that valley — it says we are in the shadow of death.

"I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." (John 17:15) The difference in us, (if I dare add myself in this,) is that after we have received the knowledge of the truth, we hate sin: and find ourselves still in sin.

"For the good that I would do, I do not; but the evil which I would not do, I do." (Romans 7:19) We find ourselves caught up in the things of the world, sin included. That is when we thank God the rod is applied: it is the rod of chastisement.

"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Jesus was the sacrifice that was finished on the cross. Now we endure the chastisement, which is the fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries. Our adversaries are our sins.

"When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace, all-sufficient shall be thy supply;
The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine."

"And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons. For what son whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of Spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceful fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Hebrews 12:5-11)

This chastening fits us for the house of the Lord, as is spoken of in I Kings 6:7: "And the house, which was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building." But remember, dear child of God, **thy staff** is our hope, and our hope is our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. As long as we are in this time world, we will have this blessed staff to lean on, to walk with us and keep us from the evil of the world.

When that great day comes and Jesus comes to gather his jewels home, there will be a place for every one of God's children: there will not be an empty space, nor one standing outside because there is not a place for him. It is a perfect work.

No wonder David could say, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want ... and thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

In bonds of love and fellowship,
a brother, I hope,
Frank A. Holland,
Pocomoke, Md. 21851

EXPERIENCE

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

For several months I have desired to write some of my experience and hope in Jesus Christ, and the wonderful things I feel our Lord has done for me. It seems each time I made the attempt there was always a stumbling block in my way. I realize that only in the Holy Spirit I can write of the love, grace and mercy, and power of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

I felt even as a small child there was a higher power than which man could do. From what source this power came, I did not know. As long as I can remember, my dear precious mother has been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church; and as a child I would hear her speak of God and his saving Grace — but who was this almighty God, and what control did he have over me or my life? I was about the age of seven, when one day I accidentally did something my mother had said she would punish me for, if I did it. If I knew my mother, she would keep her word!

I felt so distressed and burdened, I found myself on my knees in the cornfield behind our house, trying to pray to this God I had heard my mother speak so much about. I begged Him to make mother understand that I had not intended to provoke her intentionally, and that I might be spared the punishment. I went to the house and told mother what I had done. She didn't even scold me, neither did she mention the punishment she had promised me. Not until I grew up and departed from home, did I relate this experience to my mother of having gone on my knees to ask God for help. From that day in my early years I felt I knew there was a true and living God, as I felt he made his power known in my prayer that day.

Since that day in my early childhood my life has been full of trials and troubles and afflictions. It seemed that most of my childhood years I was a very unhealthy child. At the age of eighteen a downfall came into my life, and I felt it would destroy me. It seemed that my life had surely come to an end. I wish not to relate the extent of this experience, as I have no desire to offend a soul on earth; neither do I have any ill feelings toward anyone. Once again I found myself in the need of the mercy of God, and I became a beggar. The song, "Where no one stands alone," became so dear to me. I tried to pray, but my pain and sorrow still remained the same. I had dreams at night that would awake me crying sometimes.

One morning my father came in my room and sat down on my bed, and asked me if I would like to tell him what I had dreamed that caused me to cry out in my sleep. At this time my precious father had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for several years, and had been liberated as a minister. I knew he wanted to comfort me but I was unable to relate much of my feelings to him. Anyway, I asked him why I had to go on suffering the way I was. I had even thought of trying to make an attempt on my life; but God holds life and death in his hands, and it wasn't mine to take. My father told me that God knew all about my troubles, and He knew my every need; and He promised to supply our need. During our conversation it came to me that I had been asking for what I wanted, but God was giving me the love and mercy I needed to stay alive. By nature I had been selfish. I wasn't willing to suffer. In just a few moments I was made to know the suffering was for my good, though it didn't seem good at the time, I was in such despair.

At the age of twenty-one I was married to a man whom I love very dearly. Our union has been blessed with two beautiful, darling children, a daughter and a son. Our son was about six weeks old when I became seriously ill. The doctors told me I would be an invalid within two years. I was so troubled over this, I felt I couldn't live with the thought of being crippled at such a young age. They thought I had rheumatoid arthritis. I began to pray, and the

more I begged I realized I was helpless before God. I didn't have the power to pray. I was lying on my bed one night and Elder Lonnie Yopp came to my mind. I have great respect for him and a love that I felt was given to me by a higher power than man. The next morning I wrote a letter to him, telling him how sick I was, and desired that he pray for me, if he could bow for someone as unworthy as I felt to be. He was unable to come to visit me, as we were living in Albany, Georgia at the time. About a week later I was sleeping and I heard him praying for me. When I awoke the next morning the pain wasn't nearly so bad when I tried to move around. I felt better for almost a month, then one day I hit bottom again. I became so sick with ulcers in my intestines and lost much blood constantly, that the doctors thought I had cancer. At that time the military hospital didn't have the proper medical care I needed in Albany.

My husband being a Marine, we were transferred to Camp Lejeune, N. C. about twenty-five miles from my parents' home. I was under close observation and an out-patient at the hospital for three years and my illness was controlled to a point with the proper medication. On October 24, 1964 I was admitted to the hospital for a blood transfusion and medication for the flu; after three days I became so sick it seemed my life was slipping away. My father came to visit me and I told him if he could just say a word of prayer for me, I would be all right. In the meantime my mind began to come and go, and part of the time I didn't even know what my own name was. I was given forms of dope to fight peritonitis which had set in; and the most dangerous infection. I became addicted to the dope also with everything the doctor could do. My intestines perforated and emergency surgery was performed on Sunday morning, November 16, 1964. The doctors and hospital staff didn't expect me to live, or even come out of surgery alive. I was taken to the intensive care for how long, I do not know, as I had lost all track of time.

One of my experiences in this ward came when it seemed I could no longer live in this condition. I could feel my life slipping away and my very life's blood drained out of me. The room began to get so dark I called to the nurse to tell her I was dying. Before she got to my bed the whole room lighted up in the most beautiful light. When she got to my bed I told her everything was going to be all right. For a few days I began to improve and was moved down to the ward I had been admitted to. Little did I know that a lot more suffering was in store for me. The muscles in my throat collapsed and I couldn't swallow. Between the dope and my weakness my nerves collapsed. I was fed by a tube through my nose to my stomach, and given blood transfusions for several weeks. A colored nurse's aid was so sweet and kind to me, and seemed to be concerned for me. She would tell me I had better pray for my soul and get myself right with God. I told her I didn't know how to start. If I was right with God, He would have to come to me as I did not have the power to go to him. I did not have the power to take his precious name between my sinful lips. I was brought almost unto death, yet I couldn't even ask for His mercy. The next day after I had talked with the colored lady, I went into a coma. I don't know how long I was like that, but when I regained consciousness I was praying the 23rd Psalm — I was praying the verse where it says, "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." Those were very precious moments to me, as I felt my God had not forsaken me.

One experience I had during this period of suffering still gives me such joy when I am blessed to feel the reality of it. According to the doctors,

my heart stopped beating for a short period of time and my mind was taken away from the things of this world. I saw the world on fire and the agony of this was more than I could face, because my sins had caused this destruction. Everywhere I looked were flames of fire, and I could see no way out. The flames never touched me because Jesus reached down and took my hand and lifted me above the world. Our Saviour Jesus Christ was holding me up and I could look down and see the filth and corruption and false idols that I had been a part of and associated with in this world. I believe I saw the very filth I am by nature, and what I must be by the grace of God, if I be one he shed his blood for. After being shown the corruption of this earth, Jesus stretched his arm upward, and I saw the most beautiful light. It seemed a ray of that light was reaching toward us, and somehow I know that was God's way — the way to eternal life. Jesus started to depart from me after showing me this light, and I asked if I could go with him. The answer he gave me, and I quote, "You still have some more suffering to do." At this moment it was fixed from all eternity that the doctors be given the power to make my heart beat again. When I was able to speak, I asked them why they brought me back. I had never felt such a joy or inner peace before, and I had no desire to return to this world of sin and sorrow. There were a few minutes that I was not afraid to die; but that feeling didn't last very long.

Not many nights after that I had a dream I was being tried in a court of law for a crime by nature I knew I had not committed. No matter how hard I tried to prove myself innocent, I was proven guilty and was sentenced to death. I was taken away for my sentence to be carried out, when someone took my hand and helped me to escape. Not knowing how I got there, I was placed on a hill that seemed to be brighter than any light I've seen with my natural eyes. I looked and at the bottom of the hill all around it I could see people coming after me from every direction, and they were coming just as far as I could see. They were wearing red and white robes, and each of them had a flaming torch. No matter how hard they tried to climb the hill, they could never reach me. Each time they fell back down. I had to cry out, "My God my sins are ever before me, but thou art able to wash them whiter than snow. Have mercy on me, O God. My sins are so many, and without thy saving grace, hell shall be my home. Lift me up, O Lord, that I may sing praise to thy glorious name that you hold the power of life and death in your almighty hands." At this time I was made willing to be God's anything.

After this experience it seemed I awoke to a new day, a day as I had never seen before. My mind was clear. I was given a new hope for recovery: I looked out the window and I have never seen such beautiful trees. They had been there all the time but it was as if I was seeing them for the first time. They were moving gently with the breeze, and it was raining lightly. The birds were bathing, and it seemed every living thing I looked at was praising God. I wanted to shout with joy, My God how truly great thou art. I was in for a speedy recovery from seventy-one and one half pounds to ninety-three pounds in a matter of about three weeks. I was released from the hospital on December 18, 1964 with strict doctor's orders and supervision. Slowly I gained strength enough to keep house and do the cooking, and that is still just the extent of my physical health.

Months and years have passed and I have been on the operating table several times since then, and a patient for other causes too, but I believe God gave me the faith to believe he would go with me all the way. The pain after surgery bothers me most, but I haven't known a lot of pain with most of the operations. I know God has been so merciful to me. If not for his saving

grace I wouldn't be here tonight writing of this wonderful God.

Since 1964 my precious husband has been to Vietnam twice. I grieve because of our separation, also I was afraid he might get hurt; but somehow I felt God would return him to me alive. I believe the same God is protecting them on the battlefield that watches over them as babes when they are in bed asleep at night.

Our marriage has been rough and rocky, and sometimes it seems it couldn't survive the test, but God looked down on us in love and compassion and we are still together. I feel I can truly say we love each other more now than we have ever before.

In April, 1971 my husband went away again for six months on a Mediterranean cruise. I felt so alone and more than ever I needed the guiding hand of God. I felt so downcast I couldn't sleep at night, and became very exhausted. I would sit up in bed and read the Bible, but that didn't seem to help much. I started going to church quite regularly with my two children. Also I started going with my precious brother different places to hear Elder D. B. Stokes preach. It seemed he was so blessed to explain and preach some of the things in the Bible that I was so deeply concerned about. Sometimes I felt my heart would come through my chest, it would beat so hard, yet I couldn't open my mouth to relate my feelings to anyone. I started going everywhere I thought I might hear an Old Baptist preacher preach. At the same time I was feeling frightened, as I had said many times I would never join the Primitive Baptist Church; and the harder I ran and the more I tried to conceal, the closer I came to them.

One Sunday I decided to stay home and not go any place to church. Before the day was half gone I was so miserable I didn't feel I could stay at home the rest of the day. I called my sister Christine and asked if I might go visit with her and her family, if they were going to be home that afternoon. She has been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for several years. She told me to come on down and that she was preparing dinner for two elders that were to preach at Cypress Creek Church that night, and I could give her a hand in preparing the food. I first said, no. I just didn't want an Old Baptist minister to see what I was feeling in my troubled breast. It seemed a force stronger than I was making me go. I had never met either of these precious elders, and I felt I would be out of place. I felt I just didn't fit any place.

I went, and helped my sister all I could to prepare the food. It seemed they arrived just as we were about to finish the last minute things. They came in, and I tried to move into the background as they so lovingly spoke to everyone. The love and fellowship I saw manifested that evening was a beautiful treasure to behold. They both were so humble when they came around to speak to me and my sister introduced us, a feeling was placed upon me I shall never forget. When Elder Mitchell shook hands with me, there was this special feeling telling me he would be some special part in my life. My legs became so weak I felt for a moment I might faint. My sister got them seated at the table and Elder Mitchell was called upon to say table grace — the prayer was so beautiful, and the expression on his face seemed to hold me spellbound. It seemed I could see the very light of God's love shining on his face. I wanted to find a place where I could look upon this beautiful light I saw on his face, but I didn't want anyone to see me.

That night I went to church to hear them preach, and I really enjoyed both of them. I felt God surely came down and preached through them. It seemed that God ordained from all eternity that Elder Mitchell was sent to Cypress Creek Church that night to comfort me and feed my hungry soul. He preached the love and power and grace of God; and what we are by nature, and what we must be by the grace of God. He

told my feelings through and through. It seemed he knew more about me and my sinful ways, than I even knew about myself.

Much to my shame I had a habit of swearing among my many other sins. I became ashamed of this language, and told myself I was going to quit. I did all within my power, but it seemed every day I got worse. I even promised God that if he would forgive me for that day, the next day I would do better. I couldn't keep my promise. The next day was always worse than the day before. I was brought low enough to know I have no power of my own. If I quit speaking those bad words, the help would have to come from almighty God. I felt so guilty of my sinful ways, I felt I would die if I couldn't get relief. It seemed my tears were forever flowing, and they didn't stop until I was brought low enough to go on my knees and beg God to have mercy on me a sinner; and bridle my tongue. I believe God heard my prayer, as I have had no desire since that day to swear or use those words that became such a habit with me. Thanks be unto God, none have come from my lips since that day. I do find that I am constantly being tempted by the Devil, but my prayer is that God will keep me in the strait and narrow way.

Evelyn Brown Winstead
Jacksonville, N. C.

(Concluded next month.)

HEBREWS 13:20, 21

44 Durrett Grove
Tuscaloosa, Ala. 34501

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the everlasting covenant; make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." (Hebrews 13:20-21)

In this, 13th. chapter of Hebrews, from which the two verses above is quoted, the Apostle gave good advice, exhortation and commandments to the children of God; and indeed it covers much ground, and is both sweet, good and commendable, to read, meditate upon, and to take heed unto those things written there-in.

The Lord willing, it is our mind to write upon the two verses above quoted; and in particular the will of God as given in the text; in which the Apostle expresses his desire and prayer, that the God of peace would make these saints perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in them that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ.

The will of God which the Apostle here has reference to is the revealed will of God in Jesus Christ. And it is the revealed will of God in Jesus Christ we desire to write upon. God does not have two wills, but that portion of his will revealed in Christ, is that portion of his will he is pleased to reveal to his people in Christ Jesus. As the scripture teaches, "The secret things belong to God, and the revealed things 'belong' to his people." That is, the things God reveals to them are given to them by the divine revelation of God in Christ Jesus. But though God reveals his will to them, the Apostle knew and was careful to note that God must make them perfect in every good work to do his will; working in them that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Crist.

The revealed will of God in Christ is like David expressed his commandments: "Exceeding broad," or covers much ground. And I think if a child of grace was blessed by the Spirit of Christ to do all, he would still feel to be an unprofitable servant, yet a thankful one, having done only that which he or she was blessed by the spirit of Christ to do.

It is easier for a child of grace to see, feel and understand that the command-

ments are fulfilled in them rather than by them; but to them as children of God, his commandments are spiritual and are obeyed spiritually by them which God spiritually commands by working in them that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ. Paul well knew, and it is an error to teach otherwise, that those poor saints, or no others, could do the revealed will of God other than for God to make them perfect to do his will, working in them that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ. This is the way, and only way, God commands his children to obey him or to do his revealed will. They cannot obey God until God commands them personally; otherwise if they acted at all, they would be acting without a command, and therefore would not be obeying God, but their own notions. Remember, God's commandments to his children are personal to them in the spirit of Christ, and not broadcast to them in the letter.

It is very doubtful that any true child of grace ever felt that he or she had been blessed to do all the revealed will of God in Christ; and I don't think it is his revealed will that they should so feel that they had done so; but rather it is revealed that it is his will that they feel to be poor, needy, helpless creatures, wholly dependent for both spiritual and natural things. Jesus in teaching his disciples the manner of prayer, said, "When ye pray, say: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." This is the revealed will of God Jesus taught his disciples to pray for to be done in earth, which evidently means for his will to be done in his people. And evidently it is done in them and by them whom God works in, "both to will and to do of his own good pleasure." And this is the will and way of which Paul desired of God: that he would make the saints of God perfect to do his will by working in them that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ.

Anything that is made perfect to do an act of performance means there could be nothing to hinder its act or action; otherwise any thing whatsoever that could hinder its act of performance would prove it was made perfect so to act. According to the testimony of many of the children of God, they have desired to be baptized in obedience to Christ long before they were blessed of their Lord and Saviour to do so. As long as one is left in the state with only a desire without power to perform, they cannot perform that they desire. In such case, as long as they are left to reason in themselves about the matter their decision will that long be **no;** but when the Lord's time comes, it will be **yes.** Thus in many things we desire, it seems sincerely, to act in a good and acceptable manner, yet have not the ability to carry out our desire.. It was in David's heart to build a house unto the Lord, but God said, "No," his son would build a house unto him. But I think the Lord both gave and commended the desire of David as good, and surely it was of God that he had the desire. Paul desired to do many things he could not, at least presently, do. So he well knew by experience of the Lord's teaching, that the children of God could not do the revealed will of God, unless and until God made them perfect to do his will by working in them that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ.

We may, and no doubt do at times sincerely desire a closer and fuller manifest fellowship with the saints, with every barrier in our heart and elsewhere removed, and it be filled with perfect love and the benevolence of Almighty God, yet something hinders the accomplishment of our desire. The barrier may be in one or both parties — the lack of perfection. Likewise, we may desire to do all that the Apostle exorted and admonished the saints to do in the thirteenth chapter of Hebrews, from which our text is found, yet the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the

blood of the everlasting covenant, must make us perfect to do his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, for it to be accomplished. Some may think and even say that this teaching denies every ounce of the admonation and exhortation of the scripture, but if any think the exhortation and admonation of the scripture can be rightly done in any other way other than the way Paul desired and described in our text, that God would do for those poor saints of Christ, then let them challenge Paul on it.

The Apostle didn't mean by his teaching in the text that by the perfection of those saints, that their performance is self perfect, for their soundest and most sincere devotions are very imperfect; yet that which God works in them to do is perfectly performed in the measure that God is well pleased with through Jesus Christ. They are said to be poor in spirit, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, but they are blessed of the Lord to so be, and to be so with a pure heart in God's sight through Jesus Christ. They feel to be, and are, poor in all the fruits of the spirit, and these feelings are because of the true work of God, working in them that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ. The spirit of love, meekness, kindness, and humility is nothing less than the fruits of the spirit of Christ in them, working in them that which is well pleasing in God's sight, through Jesus Christ. This makes the most perfect ones of them to feel the most imperfect, less than the least, and maybe just an imposter. Though they feel their infirmities and wretchedness is so great and that they are but a dog that they should eat bread at the King's table, it only proves that the effectual working of the grace, love and mercy of God in them makes them so feel to be, and that it is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ. But those that feel and think themselves to be something important within themselves, when they are nothing, are deceived. Those that think they can do something in order to get God to do, are in that sense heretics; thinking God is dependent on man for his own glory, and that man is independent of God. We don't mean to scorn, at least other than our own self, but in faithfulness we say there are many antichrist and heretics in the world, foaming out of their own shame, deceiving and being deceived: denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, in the name, and name only, of Christ. But the Lord's people manifest a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, which is in the Lord's sight of great price; and is none other than the work of the spirit of God in them, through Jesus Christ.

Jesus said, "The Son of man is not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;" not to call at them, but to call them to it. His calling is holy and effectual, and repentance is as much the gift and work of God as eternal life is; for Jesus is exalted a Prince and a Savior to give repentance to Israel, and to give the forgiveness of sin to them. He makes them sorry with a godly sorrow for their sins by beginning a good work of grace in their heart and mind, and performing it until the day of Jesus Christ. All of this is because of the good work of God, working in them to do his will and good pleasure, through Jesus Christ.

God's spiritual commandments to his children are personal, just as all their salvation in Christ is to each of them a personal gift and favor. He loves them personally, their very person in Christ; and works in them personally by his spirit of grace which enables and blesses them to bear the fruit of the divine nature of Christ in them; which are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, etc., some thirty, some sixty, some an hundred fold. The sum and substance is, that it is the Father that doeth the work in them to do his will, which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ.

The effect and manifestation of this work of God was both inwardly and

outwardly manifested by the dear Mary, the sister of Lazareth, when she sat at the feet of Jesus and heard his words gladly: the effect of this good work of God in her heart and mind caused her to love and choose that good part, which, Jesus said, "shall not be taken from her." Likewise, the dear woman who stood behind Jesus weeping, and began to wash his feet with her tears and dry them with the hair of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with precious ointment, is an outstanding manifestation of the great love, grace and mercy of God bestowed upon and wrought in her, through Jesus Christ; of whom Jesus said, "her sins which are many are forgiven her, for she loveth much." Also, the man that was a Gadarene, out of whom Jesus cast out many unclean spirits, was seen sitting at the feet of Jesus, "clothed and in his right mind." This, too, is a wonderful manifestation of the power and love of God, and the fruits of it manifest in, through and by this poor Gadarene; he was clothed with the spirit and fruits of righteousness, goodness, meekness, kindness, gentleness, thankfulness and praise; with the sweet spirit and mind of Christ Jesus.

Paul said, "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the spirit, if any bowels and mercies; fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves — Let this mind be in you, which also was in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. 2) We have quoted this beautiful and sacred scripture, which is a portion of the revealed will of God in Christ Jesus to his dear and precious children; and I am sure they all love the most wonderful and gracious spirit described in those precious words; but no doubt, they deeply feel to fall far short of possessing such good spirit in them as are described in those precious and sweet words. And no doubt, it is good that we in sincerity do so feel. For, let it be known that they who sincerely indeed and in truth feel to be the poorest of the poor, as precious saints, are indeed rich, being heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ in his eternal kingdom. And may we further know, that all our experimental spiritual blessings are because, "The God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant," has wrought all these good works in us to do his will, "work-in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; To whom be glory for ever and ever." (Hebrews 13)

It is in the foregoing manner we have tried to set forth, in a measure, the truth and true teaching of the text heading this writing, and we hope it to be of some comfort and benefit to at least some of God's dear children that may read its contents. Jesus said, . . . " whosoever doeth the will of my Father, the same is my sister, my mother and my brother; Not in order to be, but because they are, and because it is so. So, farewell.

John L. Sanders

P. O. Box 927,
Princeton, W. Va.

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They are standing on the old landmarks that our fathers stood for.

May the Lord bless all to carry on many more years.

In humble hope,
Mrs. S. J. Priddy

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All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

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"These things I write unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." — I Timothy 3:14-16

EDITORIAL

"Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying;" (Isaiah 46:3, 13)

Will this declaration stand the test when laid parallel with the written word of God? Does the Bible teach that God did declare, purpose, determine, predestinate the end from the beginning? How much of what takes place from the beginning to the end was in the declaration? I dare not take the name of my blessed Lord in vain that way. To my shame, I have profaned His glorious name times without number, but I do hope that I have not done so while standing in the pulpit and while writing to you. I did not ask that question because that there was a shadow of a doubt in my mind that there was one thing, *one little thing*, not included in this declaration, but I asked it for those that have, from time immemorial, been cavilling over the extent of God's predestination, or, since I desire to stay with the text, his declaration of the end from the beginning.

But wait a moment! No one has denied that God foreknew all things, and that His foreknowledge enabled Him to declare the end from the beginning. If there is a difference in the extent of His foreknowledge and predestination, then that of His foreknowledge which surpasses His predestination, is based on the action of someone other than Himself. If His declaration is only of foreseen events, and He is not the predestinator of those events, who is the predestinator of them? If God could declare them, they had to be certain from *some* standpoint; pray tell me from whose standpoint. I assert it, and stand unequivocally and unreservedly on it, that an uncertainty can not be foreknown. God just could not foreknow something that was not to be.

Let me digress, in order to illustrate. One of my fathers in the ministry used to tell me that if a surveyor started the least bit off it would make but little apparent difference at the beginning, but fifty miles away from the starting point that a big difference would be noted. This is true from a theological standpoint. Let somebody become dissatisfied with the ancient landmarks which our fathers have set, they will start out to re-survey the land lines. There will not be **much** wrong to begin with, and invariably you will hear many that do not know where the line is, begin to say, "I see such a little difference that I feel like we should not fret over the little matter." This dissatisfaction over the land line about predestination started about 1885. **There was not much difference.** Everybody believed in the absolute foreknowledge of God, why, therefore, contend for absolute predestination? For forty years I have watched that **little** difference grow by leaps and bounds. Now it is said that God has not predestinated anything of events, but that He has **decreed** them. And it is being palmed off on people that God has not had anything to do with events; that His predestination has only to do with the salvation of His people; and now it is common to say that God did not absolutely foreknow all things. At one time it was freely said that God predestinated all the good things but not anything bad, but some fast thinking produced a new thought, because it was readily seen that the predestination of all good things would be the death knell of conditional time salvation, so now you never hear anything more about the predestination of all good. Tomorrow it will never be said that God declared the end from the beginning.

Men would not have declared a thing that they did not desire. Why impugn the veracity of the Holy One? He must have been well pleased with matters from the ending back to the beginning, or else He would have changed it and then declared it. Only in this way could He say what He did say. Only in having a knowledge of the end from the beginning could God say anything with assurance and truthfulness. He could never foreknow an uncertainty; if

there had been one thing that was not in His declaration, He would not have been in any condition to say **anything,** much less to have said that, "my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

I join with these that declare that the predestination of God has only to do with the salvation of God's elect, but that is as far as we go together, for the salvation of God's elect takes in every thing whether visible or invisible, thrones, dominions, principalities, powers; they were all created by him and for hom. Supose we inquire? Why did He create all things, seeing that He did not desire all things? Who will answer? Will the house of Jacob call in question His Maker? Will the remnant of the house of Israel, the remnant according to the election of grace, will they deny what their Saviour said? Will one like unto a lost and then found Jacob or John Newton or John and Nancy Doe call in question their precious Lord? Not when they are in their right mind, but it behoves us to remember that we are all in possesion of two natures; that in one we are all sin and uncleaness, in the other we are all righteousness. In His divine purpose God did not make anything that He did not have a purpose for that thing. O what a large train of followers could be had, if we would just become a little lax towards what God has made; if we would not insist so strongly that God made the wicked for the day of evil; if we would just say a wee bit that God has been disappointed in what is between the beginning and the end. But (you say to me), My dear elder you are absolving man of all blame. And my answer is that I have been a target of my closest brethren because that I insist that man is to blame for his sin; that we do not have any reason whatever (that is, scriptural reason) to look any further for the origin of sin than that, "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." That is as much a part of the declaration of the end from the beginning as any other part or event of the whole, and, whether it's my closest yoke fellow or whoever else that it may be, they shall find my pen and tongue turned in fury on this or any other fine spun theory advanced.

I am living in hope of better things to come. Daily and momentarily I am expecting two things.To me, one of them is as sure as the other. If the first is not true, I do not have any assurance that I will live in glory. One of these momentous events is that the Lord is coming again. I am not waiting on the Comforter to come; He has, as I humbly hope and believe, visited me many times, but I am waiting on the return of my Lord. You can assail all you please but I speak the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that He is coming. I have been communing with the church of the living God since I was a mere lad of a boy, and I believe that I engaged in these solemn meetings with the thought in mind that I was doing it until He came again. I believe that I had the presence of the Comforter all the while, comforting, strengthening, edifying, but I did not have the presence of the Jesus that died for me. There are two outstanding witnesses to HIS glorious return. Other witnesses have come, O yes, they are legion, but they have not robbed this poor sinner of the keen anticipation of seeing my Jesus come again. God's people have always been looking for better things, for a new day, for new earth and new heavens. Abraham looked for the day of Christ; those in the Christian race are now looking unto Jesus; (who said that they are looking in vain?). It does seem that inspiration drew us a glorious picture. For a long time he had dwelt among them, but after His resurrection (whose resurrection? in what body did He come from the dead?) He tarried but days, and then what do we find?

If any of my readers do not believe in the resurrection of the body of the man that was born of Mary, I am indeed sorry for them. Peter's denial of his Lord was mild compared with your's. After his resurrection He held

what can well be called His last meeting while on earth. The most of people look back on respect to the last meeting with a loved one. Do you? I am just as sure that this Jesus was the one spoken of by prophets and angels; that Mary carried in her womb; that went to the rugged tree; that lay in Joseph's new tomb; that came out of it. I **am sure of this.** I would never convict a man of a crime if there was a reasonable doubt of his guilt, and I would not be less faithful in heavenly things — I would never preach a Man that had proven an imposter. It is not for you to know the times or (not and) the seasons (everything is on time, but everything is not in season), which the Father hath put in His own power, but ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. (Acts 1:7, 8) As stated above I know but little, yet I know in part, if I am one of these witnesses, but here is my guide; here is my Counsellor. (Psa. 48:14; Isa. 9:6) This God which I would extol with all my animated powers, is not learning, is not being astonished, has not ever been disappointed, has not been thwarted. All that devils, unregenerates, angels, saints, or the world, none, none at all, have brought one dot of change in what God declared in our text, and in the one quoted above.

This great declaration of truth is made manifest in the lives of the humblest children of God. Well, out with it, What is this great truth? "And when he had spoken of these things, **while they beheld,** he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight." If I have not forgotten my parts of speech, the word, "when" is an adverb of time. It means what it says; it tells us when the act of raising was brought about. I seriously doubt that any of my readers would deny what Luke has recorded, to wit, that Jesus was taken up. I may be trite, and I may be insistent, but I would like to ask again, If this Jesus is the same that was born of the virgin and hung on the tree? If not, God, and Luke writing under inspiration, have certainly been imposed upon, for if this is not the same Jesus in each of these cases, then, by all means, I think that I have a right to ask again and again, who this Jesus is? and when and **where** did the one that came from the tomb go to?

Pause my soul and wonder and adore. Your God has declared the end from the beginning. It is true that you know but little, but your God knows all things, and knows them because that He has purposed them. If I am not mistaken (and I am not) every word is established by at least two witnesses, and here is the first witness. Remember that He came to bear witness to the truth. It is not any problem nor mystery as I write. Come closer, draw up a comfortable seat; let us watch and listen. Two men dressed in white apparel are visiting with the church that Jesus has just left. Here is the declaring of ancient things; here is the love of God being manifest; here are the judgments of God being unfolded. Isaiah sang hundreds of years before this that the body, dead body of Christ should rise (Isa. 26:19), and although that was anciently declared, it is now presently new. It is not any wonder that we desire to rest in the assurance that He was at the beginning, but also that He is with us now expounding to our astonished ears that the end is as certain at this time as it was in the annuls of eternity. I am not that way. I write to those that are like unto this sinner. But I am intrigued at the thought that there are those that are not like unto me. Undoubtedly, they know everything that they desire to know. They know that they are born again and thus know where the wind comes from and where it is returning to; they know the bones do grow of her that is with child, and thus they understand the works of God; they know where God is, and they can find Him at their will; they know how to perform that which is good, and thus they do not

have any plague of the heart to assail them. If I am called to feed sheep, then I say, without hesitancy, that for me and my house we will, as blessed of God, trust in Him that "declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done."

And as we travel on in what the apostles believed, we will take literally what the prophet said. They said, "Ye men of Gallilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven (remember that question, I will find a use for it later)? this same Jesus, which is taken **up** from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Now let us introduce an unimpeachable witness to His ascension into heaven. Again, here is a witness being stoned to death for his stedfastness in the faith; here is a man's death bed statement; here is one being moved by the Holy Ghost to write. What did he say? He also was gazing heavenward; he also had an interest in things above, certainly not on the earth with missles flying around him. He saw something, and it could not have been seen had it not been there. It had gone there for him to see; too, it has gone there for you to see, and not only you but also those that truly love His second appearing, even the whole house of Jacob and the remnant of the house of Israel.

These disciples were gazing heavenward because their loved one had left them — had gone that way. Their interest was our interest today as they leave us — we gaze heavenward. They did not understand; they were keenly interested, but it was mysterious. What a blessedness as heaven visited them and gave them the assurance that this was not the last. The devil had done what he could; the sufferings of death had done what it could; the grave had done all it could, but He had openly triumphed over all opposition and now had returned to the same place that He came from. These two men in white gave assurance that He was coming again. This assurance comes from one that is not surrounded with limitations as I am. If you have a mind to linger in familiar spots; if something has delighted you, then by all means remember the scene that has been enacted before your eyes of faith.

There is another scene that I desire to bring to your attention. As they left that scene of His ascension they went everywhere telling it. They had the news indelibly engraved in their hearts that He had ascended. It was a common doctrine; it was believed and continued in. Now back to Stephen as he was stoned to death. With the doctrine of His glorious ascension ringing in his ears and deeply imbedded in his heart, he lifted his eyes to heaven. He knew where help lay; he knew the blessed abode of his Saviour. Who did he see in heaven? He saw the same Jesus that the disciples saw go away. Now, dear brethren, if there is more than one Jesus I would like to know about it; if Mary had twins I would like information about it. Away with such a thought. May it perish with having been suggested regardless of who has the audacity to say that He did not enter heaven. Very well. We have Him on earth; we have him leaving the earth; we have the two men (God, the Father, God, the Holy Ghost) telling us where He has gone, and giving us the good news that the same Jesus that went away will come again. I pity anybody that will deny that.

Yes, I am daily and momentarily looking and expecting two things. One is being called away from these thorny and rocky shores. I do not have any premonition about the time. I do not know how long or how soon that will be, but I am looking forward with holy ecstacy to seeing my Saviour. The second is like unto it, that I could be living when it takes place, but if not, it will not deter His coming. All things in time must be before He comes. All of the events that were in the declaration of the end from the beginning must be.

These things being declared gives Him (God) the power to say, "my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleas-

ure." If He has declared the end from the beginning, then, by all means, His counsel shall stand and He will do all His pleasure. If He himself has not predestinated all that He declared, then (there being one before Him) He can not send the good news of the gospel to us because it would not be good news to declare that **something** has predestinated something; for, mark my words well, if something was before Him, then that something is independent of what came later.

But He has declared the end from the beginning. While in the act (remember this act of God, this declaring of God, of declaration he was saying what would be the result. This declaration gave Him the right to say. He would not have the right any other way. He could not say anything about what would **stand** unless He was able to say or declare what would **be.** The counsel standing, He **can** do all His pleasure; if the counsel does not stand (and it can not without His declaration of the end from the beginning) He will not be able to do His pleasure.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

Georgetown, Texas, Jan. 10, 1860

Dear Sir: — Will you do a subscriber the favor to give your views, through the **Signs of the Times,** on Matthew x. 34-36. I have had much meditation on the subject, and shall be very much pleased to hear from you on it. A compliance with this request, at your earliest convenience, will much oblige your Baptist brother.

A. H. Chalmers

Reply. — The text proposed for consideration reads thus: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance with his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household."

The carnal Israelites in regard to the predictions in the Old Testament, of the coming of the Messiah, and of his character and work, had, from the letter of the word, inferred that he was coming to set up a temporal kingdom — to restore Israel to her national independence, and to preside literally on the throne of David, forever, and by his power and majesty would awe the hostile nations to peace, or destroy them them as independent nations, and consecrate their gain unto himself, for the enlargement of his own dominion. When they read that his name should be called the Prince of Peace, &c., they seemed naturally to infer that the peace which he should command, was such as they had enjoyed under the old covenant when the Lord delivered them from the sword, the pestilence and the famine, that is that it should be of a temporal nature. But when he explained this matter to the disciples, they were astonished; and, although instructed by him on the subject, were very slow to comprehend the precise meaning of his words. At one time they asked him if at that time he intended to restore the kingdom to Israel, and at still a later period they said, "But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel," that is from the Roman government.

It is very true that Jesus Christ is, in a spiritual sense, the Prince of Peace, and that the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth, even forever — Isa. ix. 7. And that he is the peace-maker and giver to his people. Having come to redeem them from the curse and dominion of the law, to satisfy the claims of Eternal Justice on their behalf, to carry their sorrows, bear the chastisement of their peace, that with his stripes they should be healed. He has made peace by the blood of his cross. That is, he has made reconciliation or

atonement for them, and he has broke down the wall of partition which was between the Jews and Gentiles. Of twain to make one new man, and so making peace.

Also, in an experimental sense, all subjects of his saving power and grace, when they receive the atonement, experimentally, do have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ — Rom. v. 1. And truly great peace have they that love his law, and nothing shall offend them.

But in the sense of the text on which our views are called for, he did not come to send peace on earth; but his coming was unavoidably to have an opposite effect. The work which he came to do would certainly draw out against him the most virulent opposition and persecution. He came to judge and to make war; and with his bow and his crown to ride forth conquering and to conquer. But as his kingdom is not of this world, neither himself nor his subjects were to use carnal weapons in their warfare. For our weapons are not carnal, but spiritual, and mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds. No war was made by him upon the persons or the property of the enemies of his cause and kingdom; but instead of rendering to them evil for evil, when he was reviled he reviled not again; and he taught his disciples by his precepts and by his example to love their enemies, to do good, or act kindly towards those who should persecute and spitefully use them. This doctrine he exemplified when on the cross; he prayed for his murderers, saying, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.

Still his coming was designed to send a sword, or to send divisions upon earth; and such division as should develope the awful depravity of the human heart, and expose its enmity against God. "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth." He had not come to new-model earthly governments, not to interfere with secular affairs of the kingdoms of this world, nor to authorize any of his subjects to usurp authority or vice-gerency over the political institutions of this world. He had not come to decide the rights of Caesar to demand tribute from the citizens of his provinces, nor to regulate the relations of earthly thrones and powers one to another so as to place them upon more amicable terms with each other; nor to give directions or models for human governments, so as to avoid the contentions and strife of conflicting nations. Neither had he come to change the arrangements of heaven, or so modify the providential government of heaven, as to suit it to the taste and feelings of the children of this world. He had not come to reconcile the world or the devil to his cause or kingdom, to his doctrine or the institutions of his spiritual kingdom. Neither his doctrine, nor his examples, were calculated to please or satisfy the carnal sons of men, but rather to irritate and draw them out into opposition.

"I am not come to send peace; but a sword." Not such a sword, however, as earthly warriors use: for he admonished his disciples that those who used that kind of sword should perish by it. But the sword which they were to use is "The Sword of the Lord." It is described as a very sharp sword, and having two edges, so as to cut both ways; and it is mighty, through Christ, in putting to flight the armies of the aliens. This sword cannot be obtained from the armory which produced those **rifles** for which Mr. Beecher and others took up contributions in the Puritanic churches of New England and Brooklyn, a short time since; for we are informed that it proceeds out of the mouth of him on whose head were many crowns, and on whose vesture and thigh was written, King of kings, and Lord of lords; whose name is called, THE WORD OF GOD. This sword was considered indispensable by the inspired apostle, when he admonished the saints, saying, "And, above all things, taking the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God." **Above all things.** Whatever else we may lack, we cannot do without this sword. As David said of

the sword which he found in the House of God, we may also say in truth, "There is no other sword like it."

In the immediate sense of the text, we presume that our Lord used the word sword, figuratively, to signify that his coming to earth, and his work, and the commission which he would give to his servants should occasion great and violent opposition, contention and separations among men. As he himself encountered the wrath of wicked men and devils, so his followers should endure the same. — These things had been done to him, in the green tree, and should be repeated on his disciples in the dry tree. The opposition which he encountered was not unexpected. He knew full well, and told his disciples before hand, that he should be delivered into the hands of the wicked, and of what they would do to him. And "Truly against the holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, were gathered together both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the men of Israel and the Gentiles, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done," and as Peter charged on the Jews, "Him," Jesus, "being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."

So also did he fully understand to what extent his children should be persecuted, harrassed and opposed by the dragon, the beasts, and the false prophets, and all that they should endure from the world, the flesh and the devil. He came not to prevent this, but to be the occasion of its development.

"For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother," &c. Not that christianity, or the spirit of Christ in his people, will make children less dutiful, obedient or affectionate to their parents, by any means; for that is not the case, as we see by the admonitions which are given by the apostles, to children to honor and obey their parents, servants their masters, and subjects their superiors in authority.

And the inspired writer portrays the most unchristian character to be one who is **without natural affections.** — How then does his coming set a man at variance with his father, &c.? The version of this given (Luke xiii. 52, 53,) may serve to illustrate, viz: "For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided — two against three and three against two: the father shall be divided against his son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against the daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. See also Micah viii. 6. From these passages we learn that families will be divided by the discriminating grace of God, in calling some of them to a knowledge and love of the truth, and leaving others in their enmity to oppose them. — In this application, we have very many examples where those who are born of God and taught by the Spirit, have to encounter the opposition of fathers, mothers, and near and dear kindred in the flesh; and in some instances, according to the word, some have literally delivered up their own children to be put to death for their faith in and fidelity to Christ; but great has been their reward in heaven. Whether by the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law anything allegorical or figurative is intended, we will not presume to decide; but of this we are certain; that families have often been divided, and have become embittered against those of their number who, for the sake of truth, have renounced their traditions. "And a man's foes, shall they be of his own household?" Not only in this division and alienation of families; but every child of God has more or less experience of this last expression in his own person — the flesh warring against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh. The world, with its alluring vanities, Satan with his temptations — but more than either of them, does the Christian stand in fear of himself. O, says he, my carnal, wicked nature, my wretched, wandering mind; the pride of my heart

and my proneness to depart from the precepts of the Lord, are foes of my own household; more potent, more subtle and mischievous than all others combined. O wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

In connection with this subject we probably ought to offer a remark on Luke xiv. 26. "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. This passage, of course, cannot mean that we are literally to hate those of our kindred whom God has commanded us to love and honor. But we are to lothe that corrupt depraved nature of which we are born of the flesh. Our love to God will center only in that which is pure and holy; and that love which only cleaves to the earth and earthly things cannot qualify us to be disciples of Jesus. We hate fallen, polluted, depraved human nature in our nearest and dearest relations, even as we hate it in ourselves: not in a manner that would lessen our filial affection and kindest regard for them, as parents or husbands, wives or children. When we learn what it is to hate our own lives, from a deep-felt senses of our human depravity, we shall the better understand in what sense we must hate those who are our flesh and our blood. To be a disciple of Jesus, we must love him supremely, and be ready to forsake all, however near or dear, by the ties of affinity or consanguinity, and to make any other sacrifice if it be necessary to follow him. We should be ready to part with every fleshly gratification, and prefer Jerusalem above our chief joys. We cannot serve two masters: we cannot serve God and mammon. If we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption; but if we, through the Spirit, mortify the deeds of the flesh, we shall live: and if we sow to the Spirit, we shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

To our "Baptist brother" we will say, according to your request we have given such views as we have on the subject of your inquiry. If they shall, under the blessing of God, serve to elucidate the subject to your mind, or to edify others, we will have occasion to be humble, and to give thanks to God. Should any others have a more clear light on the subject, we hope they will let it shine.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe June 1, 1860.)

MINUTES OF PRESBYTERY

On Saturday before the first Sunday in February, 1972 the Mill Branch Church met in conference and agreed that we ask that Brother Amos Williams be set apart for the full work of the office of Deacon; and the ordination service was set for Sunday morning at 10 o'clock.

On Sunday morning, February 6, 1972, the Mill Branch Church met and conference was opened with hymn and prayer by Elder Wayne Mitchell. The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Wayne Mitchell, Moderator, and Sister Estelle Joyner Cockrell, Clerk. Ministers and deacons present were invited to seats with us in the ordination service, from the Black Creek, Contentnea and Skewarkey.

The Moderator called for the candidate, who was presented by Deacon James Pope, and seated in front of the ministers, Elder Wayne Mitchell, Elder Kenneth Windham and Elder Curtis Rains. The Presbytery was satisfied with the qualifications of the candidate and administered the laying on of hands with prayer. Elder Mitchell delivered the charge. The ordained Deacon was delivered back to the church as a Deacon of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Mill Branch; and the right hand of fellowship was extended to him.

The minutes of the work of the Presbytery were read and adopted. A copy of which is to be recorded in the Church Book, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Conference adjourned, and dismissed by the Moderator.

Elder Wayne Mitchell, Moderator
Sister Estelle Joyner Cockrell, Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, Pittsylvania County, Va., a presbytery met January 8, 1972 at Springfield for the examination of Brother Denver Simpson, if found qualified in accordance with

the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the Gospel Ministry.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder C. B. Davis. All Elders and Deacons of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Elders present were C. B. Davis, L. J. Brammer, Rufus R. Brown, William Holland, O. K. Tench, Leonard Key, Donald Smith, Julian Williams and J. L. Bocock. The clerk failed to get the names of the many Deacon brethren present.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder O. K. Tench Moderator and J. L. Bocock Clerk. Elders L. J. Brammer and Julian Williams were chosen to examine the candidate. Deacon Lewis Willis having been duly appointed by the church in conference was church spokesman. Elder R. R. Brown delivered the candidate to the presbytery.

Examination was made by Elders Brammer and Williams using 1st Timothy chapter 3. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder William Holland. Elder C. B. Davis delivered the charge to the candidate.

The Moderator asked the Spokesman if the church approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to Brother Denver Simpson and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained Minister was delivered back to the church as an ordained Elder of the Old School, Primitive Baptist Church.

The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Brother Raymond Goad.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Elder J. L. Bocock, Clerk

OBITUARIES

ELDER C. L. COKER

It is with a heavy heart and wet eyes, as I try to write of the passing of our dearly loved Pastor, Elder C. L. Coker.

Elder Coker was born April 29, 1910 and passed away February 13, 1971. Funeral services were held Monday, February 15, 1971, from Lower Town Creek Primitive Baptist Church. Elder A. P. Mewborn officiated, and burial was in Greenwood Cemetery in Tarboro, N. C.

Surviving are his wife, Mrs. Catherine Forbes Coker of Mcclesfield; a daughter, Mrs. Brooks (Peggy) Drake of Pinetops; a stepdaughter, Mrs. Jane Rose of Richmond, Va.; a son, Charles Earl Coker of Pinetops; three brothers, his twin brother W. Linwood of Tarboro; John Henry of Tarboro, and Joe Bennett of Fountain; four sisters, Mrs. Bessie Walston of Macclesfield, Mrs. Basil Hathaway and Mrs. Nancy Earp of Tarboro; and seven grandchildren.

He joined the church at Lower Town Creek in December, 1948. The first time he stood to speak was in June, 1953. He was ordained in November, 1953, and was made assistant pastor of Lower Town Creek in December, 1953. He became full pastor in April, 1956; and later became pastor of Williams, Sparta and Otters Creek Churches.

In material things he was not wealthy; but in love and personality he was a millionaire. He was never too busy to speak to you; and he had a personality that a lot of people would like to have. He was well spoken of, and was liked by people who never were inside of a Primitive Baptist Church. There was the largest crowd at his funeral of any I have ever seen; with the most flowers I have ever seen. I have heard him say, "I love everybody." This I believe.

He preached more funerals than anyone I know: some were Primitive Baptists and some were not. But I believe that the best one he ever preached, was his own. He is now where there is no more trouble, no more pain, no more worry. Our loss is his eternal gain. We thank God for loaning us a pastor like him.

Written by request of Otter Creek Primitive Baptist Church, by J. C. Edwards.

Elder Joe Sawyer, Pastor
Joe B. Coker, Clerk

ARNOLD G. PATTERSON

Brother Arnold G. Patterson of Monroe, La. was born Dec. 6, 1911. He was the son of the late Deacon John Patterson and wife, Sister Josie Patterson. Early in life Brother Patterson was blessed with an experience of grace and received a hope in Christ and became a member of Liberty Hill Church, where his membership remained until his death which occured Sept. 18, 1971.

Brother Patterson is survived by his wife, his mother, one son and one daughter, one stepson, two stepdaughters, six brothers, three sisters, three grandchildren, and one stepgrandchild, together with many other relatives and friends.

The funeral service was conducted at Liberty Hill Church by the writer and well attended by the Brethren and friends, after which his body was laid to rest in the Liberty Hill Cemetery beneath a mound of lovely flowers to await the resurrection whereupon we hope to meet him in the glorified image of the

Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

May God bless the bereaved family with the spirit of reconciliation, faith and courage, as well as a guiding hand to carry them on through life. I, too, along with the family feel a deep personal loss, having known Brother Patterson for more than 30 years, and had worked along beside him, as well as being associated with him in a church capacity.

The Lord gives and the Lord taketh away, Blessed be the name of the Lord. May we all look beyond this vail of tears and press onward to that notable day when all of God's children shall meet around the great white throne and join in eternal praise to our God, where death pain or sorrow never comes. Amen.

W. W. Taylor

DEACON M. E. MUSGROVE

I've run quite tardy in writing this noble brother's obituary. I trust his family will forgive me.

Brother Musgrove was born in Mississippi, January 15, 1886. When he was quite young his father moved to the vicinity of Forest Hill, Louisiana. There, he grew to manhood, married, and later moved to, or near, the city of Bastrop, Louisiana, in 1927, or '28, I believe it was. For a goodly number of years he had owned a home in Bastrop, where his latter days were spent.

This lovely man was 85 years, 7 months, and 27 days old when he passed away. The departure date was September 12, 1971.

To say that he is sadly missed by his dear devoted family, and by many fond members and friends, is as truthful a manner in which case could be stated.

Surviving him, first in order, is his good, faithful, lifelong companion, Sister Catherine Musgrove. There are five sons: J. M., W. D., Jake, George and Thomas; also two daughters: Mrs. Pearline Mardis, and Mrs. Geneva Pettis, all of Bastrop; with forty-six grandchildren; and sixty-six great grandchildren.

Then there are two brothers: Fuzell Musgrove, Forest Hill, Louisiana; and Julian F. Musgrove, Springhill, Louisiana; also, five sisters: Mrs. Dora Davenport; Mrs. Julia Barksdell; and Mrs. Lula Perry; all of Forest Hill, Louisiana; Mrs. Ruth Wilkerson, Gloster, Mississippi; and Mrs. Dela Chancey, Alexandria, Louisiana.

This brother had been in the old Baptist Church, at first near his former residence, near Forest Hill, Louisiana, later transferring by letter to Concord Church, near Bastrop, Louisiana, for better than fifty years; and in it all, fifteen years of which he served as Deacon, I find no blotch or smear on his character. Truly he must have been one of God's meek and humble, faithful and upright saints.

One thing I know, and the memory is sweet — in all my association with him, in the church (Concord being the first church to call me, and which I served for upwards of twenty years); in his home, many, many times; and wherever we were thrown together — I always found him the same plain, kind unassuming brother; and truly I can say to the praise of the mercies of God, that I considered him one of my warmest personal friends.

I have the warmest personal regard for his dear family, who loved him, and were so ardently devoted to him, as he was the same by them. Five members of this family, the two daughters, and three daughters-in-law, I was blessed to baptize.

The funeral services were conducted at Concord Meeting House by Elders David E. Turner, George W. Jones, and John Lee Smith. Burial was in Concord Cemetery.

The Lord greatly bless his blessed loved ones, and all who are saddened at the keen loss of this blessed heir of God and joint-heir of Jesus Christ; fully believing that our timely loss is his eternal gain.

Written by request,

John Lee Smith

BROTHER TOM SMOTHERS

Another of our dear number has been removed from our church militant — which leaves us sad, but our sorrow is tempered by the assurance that Brother Tom Smothers has been translated into the Church Eternal.

Brothers Smothers was born on June 14, 1899 and answered the summon to come into the Paradise of God in August, 1971. He was a widely known tobacco warehouseman, farmer and civic leader; and was especially known for his benevolences. He was a friend to all who went to him for help — generously contributing not only to a number of churches, but to any worthy cause. He will be remembered with much appreciation for the liberal contributions he made to our Upper Country Line Association. This, he did for years, long before he became a member of our Reidsville church. He truly had a heart of gold.

Brother Smothers believed in salvation by grace, and expressed a desire to unite with our church in Reidsville, but he felt his unworthiness so keenly, he could not feel to offer. It was after he became ill in Tift General Hospital, in Tifton, Georgia, that he felt compelled to ask for a home among our people. It was with the humble sincerity of a child, yet with the overwhelming desire of a full-grown saint of God that he made known to

Margaret, his dear wife, and to others this longing to be numbered with the Lord's people. This urgent request was made known to our church, and, of course, the church gladly complied with his request. Although Brother Smothers was never able to be baptized into the militant church, we deeply feel that he was baptized by God's Holy Spirit into the Church Eternal.

An impressive funeral was held in Reidsville church — the church Brother Tom loved. Elder Kenneth Key was blessed to speak beautifully in prayer, after which his pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler spoke feelingly of the love our brother expressed for the church. He also spoke very appropriately of his hope of the Great Beyond. And to his dear wife and others who were dear to him, he spoke very comfortingly.

I feel impelled to speak of the voices which mingled to sing of our Lord's "Amazing Grace." The beauty of it must be akin to the glorious melodies that descend from the Climes of Heaven. Mere words cannot express its beauty!

Brother Smothers is survived by his dear wife, who is one of our most beloved members. He is also survived by two daughters, several sisters and two brothers.

Our church, Brother Tom's family and a host of friends have missed him, and will continue to miss him. Only God can reconcile us to His unerring providences.

May God's grace be with each member of his family in a manifest way.

Mamie P. Aldridge

NETTIE ABBOTT EVANS

Sister Nettie Abbott Evans was born August 20, 1893, and passed away November, 1971, in Roman Eagle Memorial Home.

She was first married to C. A. Abbott, who died in 1938; and later married G. T. Evans, who died in 1963. She is survived by three daughters, three sons, one brother, three stepchildren, ten grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

It is with a feeling of sadness and thankfulness that I attempt to write this resolution of respect of our departed sister. We are sad when we think of missing her presence, and at the loss of another of our dear members; yet feel thankful that God was gracious to take her out of her suffering here. She was bedridden for about two years. We could not wish her back, but desire that God might reconcile all those who mourn, to His will.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Elder R. F. Kidd, Jr., at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church where she had been a member since she was eighteen years of age. Burial was in the family cemetery at Spring Garden, Va.

Peggy Wells

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT FOR SISTER MARY WILLIE PERDUE

Sister Mary Willie Perdue, Little Rock, Arkansas, passed away November 13, 1971. She was born in November of 1885, and had been a member of Bethel Church, Union County, Arkansas since August 20, 1921.

RESOLVED, That a copy be placed on the church records, one copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and that one copy be sent to her daughter, Mrs. Lucille Perdue Nolting, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Written by order of the church in regular conference December 18, 1971.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Moderator
Mrs. Jean Burns, Clerk

BROTHER JOSEPH B. HOLIDIA

Whereas it has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our dearly beloved and highly esteemed Brother Joseph B. Holidia who was born June 13, 1884, and died November 20, 1971, we desire to be submissive to the will of an almighty God.

Brother Holidia was married to the late Sister Ethel V. Holidia. The family consisted of two boys and one girl with another child dying in infancy at the age of two months. He was a good husband and father devoted to his family.

Brother Holidia united with the church at Bethlehem the third Sunday in June, 1918. He has served the church many years as church clerk and deacon. He loved the church and delighted in assembling together with the brethren to tell the great things the Lord had done for him. Brother Holidia enjoyed going to Associations and attended church regularly until he became unable the last few months of his life.

Brother Holidia lived a life in evidence of the hope he had in Jesus. A host of relatives, brethren and friends attended his funeral, filling the meeting house, with some unable to get inside. His pastor, Elder Joe Sawyer, conducted the funeral assisted by Elder Noah L. Ambrose and he was laid to rest in the church cemetery with many beautiful flowers laid upon the grave.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, First, that the church at Bethlehem has lost a dear member and deacon, but our loss has been his eternal gain, therefore we bow in humble

submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, who doeth all things well.

Second, That we extend to the family in their bereavement our sympathy and may the Lord reconcile and comfort them.

Third, That a copy of this obituary be sent to *Zion's Landmark* for publication, a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, a copy placed on our church record, and a copy sent to the family.

Done by order of Conference on Saturday before the second Sunday in December, 1971.

Elder Joe Sawyer, Moderator
Bro. C. C. Reynolds, Church Clerk
Bro. C. C. Reynolds, Committee

TRAVIS A. SMITH

Brother Smith, aged ninety, died January 6, 1972, after a short illness at his home near Graceville, Florida. Funeral services were conducted by Elder H. H. Collins, assisted by Elders J. J. Collins and J. J. Watson January 8th at Bethlehem Church. Interment was in the church cemetery.

He is surivived by a son, David; a daughter, Mrs. Vessie Loyd; a half-brother Homer; a half-sister, Mrs. Ozie McNeal; seven grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren. He spent his life in Geneva County, Alabama; and was a firm believer in salvation by grace.

J. J. Collins

JOHN HOLLEY

Brother John Holley died November 29, 1971 after a short illness in a Geneva Hospital; with funeral services at Corner Creek Church, Hacoda, Alabama, with Elder J. J. Collins officiating. Interment was in the adjoining cemetery.

He was the son of Elder Whitsom Holley, whose funeral was conducted many years ago by the writer. He is survived by his wife; three daughters: Mrs. Hoyt Beckham, Brewton; Mrs. Talmadge Grimes, Fairhope, and Mrs. Waree Johnson, Samson; one son: Chief Petty Officer Phillip D. Holley, California. Also surviving are two sisters: Mrs. Homer Yates and Mrs. Elmer Cumbie, Panama City, Fla.; two brothers: Dan Holley, Vernon, Fla. and Homer Holley, Selma; eleven grandchildren and four great grandchildren. He was seventy-two years of age.

J. J. Collins

ELBERT HALL

Brother Hall, aged seventy-one, died in a Dothan Hospital December 22, 1971, after a short illness. Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. J. Collins and Mr. Robert Kirkland at Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church, Malvern, Alabama, December 24, 1971. Interment was in the adjoining cemetery.

He was an excellent student of the writer the second year he taught; and was a close friend ever after. His mother was a most faithful member of Bethlehem Church.

He is survived by his wife; two sons: Charles E. Hall and Clyde Hall; three daughters: Mrs. Gladys Collins, Mrs. Tiny Speaks, and Mrs. Willie Dell Bynum; two brothers, Frank and Andrew; four sisters: Mrs. Sarah Fulford, Mrs. Ester Ward, Mrs. Ella Jane Sanders, and Mrs. A. Newman; nineteen grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

J. J. Collins

ELDER JOHNNY JOYNER

I will try to write a few lines in sweet memory of our devoted pastor, Elder Johnny Joyner, who passed away October 31, 1971. I think he would have been eighty-three his next birthday. He is survived by his precious companion and five children: Sister Estelle Cockrel, Mrs. Mattie Ruth Barnes, Meade, Fred and Marvin, all of Rocky Mount, N. C. He had several grandchildren and several great grandchildren.

Brother Joyner served our church, Rocky Swamp, for nearly eighteen years. He was faithful and devoted to his God and church. We miss him, and still can't realize he is gone. He and Sister Joyner and Sister Estelle would have dinner with us sometimes, and we always enjoyed having them and others who were with them at times.

When he became unable to drive his car, his son or son-in-law would bring him; and sometimes Brother George Williford would bring him. It is with much sadness I have attempted to write these lines, but I wanted to write in his memory, for we all loved and respected him so much. If you see fit to print this I will appreciate it.

A faithful soldier has gone to rest,
To be with the One he loved best.
He didn't dread to die, I'd heard him say,
Just dreaded ever getting to that day.
He was devoted, kind and true:

Brother Joyner, we all loved you.

May God bless his family,

Mrs. J. L. Smith
Littleton, N. C.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 140 DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1972 NO. 6

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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SOLICITIOUS FOR OTHERS

Rt. 4,
Winfield, Ala. 35594

Dear Editors:

I see my subscription will be out in February, so I am enclosing check for $24.00, to renew for one year . . . Use for the two following names for one year . . . Use the other $12.00 as you need it in sending the paper to those who can't pay for it.

I enjoy reading all the good letters that you ministers and other brothers and sisters write. I wish everyone who loves the doctrine that the **Signs** teaches, could have the opportunity to read it each month.

Your sister in hope,
Mrs. M. L. Lucas

ROMANS 8:28-39

TEXT: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

First of all I would like to quote the reason why the ones considered in our text love God: "We love God because he first loved us." (I John 4:19) While in a state of unregeneracy we were enemies to God and hated God: "The carnal mind is enmity against God." (Romans 8:7) Yet, "But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)" (Eph. 2:4, 5) Henceforth we can see that our love did not cause God's love or kindness to be shed upon us but contrariwise vice versa. Also, "Herein is love, **not that we loved God,** but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (I John 4:10)

Now since God loves this people who love him, certainly God is going to manifest it in some sense to them. And being that He does love them with "an everlasting love" He certainly is going to preserve them both in providence and in grace; and how does he do it? By working "all things together for good to them that love" him. His expressedly "everlasting love" must, if everlasting have no end, and therefore God who is the greatest is going to be for those he loves all the time; and it can be further said, "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him **freely** give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died." (Romans 8:31-34)

Moreover take notice to the appositive that renames those that love God: "the called according to" whose purpose? their own? no, "his purpose," that is, God's purpose. He did not call them according to their own belief or acceptance of Christ nor "according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (II Tim. 1:9) Many people say that God calls you by the preaching of a minister

or what they call the gospel. (The gospel is not the preaching but the great being that is preached.) But here it says, "who are the called" — past tense. In other words God has already "called" them — how? "according to his own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ before the world began." Now where people get mixed up in the idea of the gospel call, is when they think that the gospel is the vocal explanation of salvation. But the Bible teaches that both the gospel and Christ are the power of God. (See I Cor. 1:23 and Romans 1:16) The two are used in the same sense and in very similar contexts (read carefully). Therefore the gospel is "Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God," and so it is written: "our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality" (the calling, election in Christ before time, inheritance, love, everlasting life, predestinated conformity to Christ, etc.) "to light" (made manifest that we are partakers of the preceding) "through the gospel," (not through the preaching of the gospel).

TEXT: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."

Here of course it begins to explain the procedure of how God works all things for the good of his people. Here again many people "wrest the scriptures to their own destruction" by saying that God looked with his omniscient eye down through the ages to come before the world began and saw that this sinner would believe on him, and that one over there would repent, and that upon this basis is God's foreknowledge. I believe that the scriptures teach the opposite of this heresy. Paul says in Romans 11:2 that, "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew." Then he tells us how the Israelites had persecuted the prophets of old and how Elias prayed to God against Israel. "But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have **reserved to myself** seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal." No, God did not cast his people away whom he did foreknow but "reserved" them to himself; and therefore it is written, "Even so at this present time also there is a **remnant** according to the **election of grace.**" Now can you see how the foreknowledge and the election of God is the same thing? And to prove that God did not look down through time and choose or foreknow them on the basis of what they would do, or, in other words, their works, notice this: "remnant according to grace. And if by grace, then it is **no more of works.**" (Romans 11:5, 6) The next question is when did the foreknowledge or election by grace take place? "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen" (or elected by grace) "us in him **before the foundation of the world.**" Why then did God choose us before we were born, before we had done any good or evil and before the foundation of the world? So "that the **purpose of God according to election** might stand, **not of works** but of him that calleth." (Romans 9:11) So now we see the election or foreknowledge of God used as a device to prevent a person from being saved on the basis of what they do here in this time world. Yes, God is determined to **always** work things in an opposite way than the carnal mind of man will convey.

Now Paul tells us that those that God foreknew or elected "he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." In other words, back before God created the earth he predestinated, fixed or decreed the events to come in such a manner that those whom he loved would be made like unto his only begotten Son, Jesus. What a wonderful person to be conformed to! One that **always obeys** his Father. What? You mean that we, that is, God's people are to **always** obey Him? Yes. God fixed or predestinated it that way. Just as your birth in the flesh conforms you to Adam your earthly fath-

er, the birth of the Spirit (see St. John 3) conforms you to God your heavenly father, and Christ, his Son, your heavenly husband. Well then, how is it that we are always obedient; is it that we always do the right things and maintain good works with perfection? No! "For as by **one man's** disobedience many were made sinners, so by the **obedience of one** shall many be made righteous." (Romans 5:19) In other words just as much as all of Adam's generation were made sinners by his one transgression, so also it is by Christ's obedience that all his generation were made righteous. Not by each person's obedience but by Christ's, and this obedience or righteousness is imputed or granted to the people without works on their part. See Romans 4:6. "...strangers, . . . **Elect** according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, **unto obedience** and **sprinkling of the blood OF** Jesus Christ." (I Peter 1:1, 2) This scripture does not say that we were elected unto our obedience and sprinkling of the blood but elected unto that **of,** meaning belonging to, Christ. Now since we know that Christ's obedience is given to his children then it would be charging Christ with disobedience to say that his children were disobedient. There is another sense in which the spiritual birth or conformity to Christ makes us obedient. "If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law." (Galatians 5:18) Being that all that are born of the spirit are led of the Spirit, and where there is no law there is no sin or transgression (Romans 4:15) we must conclude that in this sense a child of God cannot sin (I John 3:9) Not that the child of God cannot transgress the law of God, which is, thou shalt not kill, steal, etc., but that he is no longer under it and cannot be condemned by this law.

Think not that I mean you can do evil because good is going to come, as some slanderously reported Paul to teach. (Romans 3:8) "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God had before ordained that we should walk in them." It did not say that we were created in our self unto good works but **in Christ Jesus.** You'll have to give God the praise for he did the work and we are **his** workmanship, not ours. By it being God's work it excludes boasting on our part. (See Eph. 2:8-10) Furthermore to affirm the steadfastness of our works it says that he ordained or decreed it to be so. So then the good works that we posses as heirs of the kingdom are not to influence God to have mercy upon us, but the works are the manifestation that God has already had mercy upon us. Amen. Therefore say I again unto you, think not that I teach to do evil that good may come, for I teach, by the grace of God in me, the restraining and preserving grace of God that draws his dear elect away from evil to do good for this is what they are created in Christ to do. I do not want it to appear that I am saying that the elect do not do wrong after their conformity to Christ, but as long as God is supplying them with his almighty grace they will do good for God worketh both to will and to do of his good pleasure and the elect must be made perfect by **God's own working in them** to do His Will. (See Phil. 2:13 and Heb. 13:20-21) The elect of God are not self-sufficient after their conformity to Christ, but their sufficiency is of God. (II Cor. 3:5) If they could do the will of God at their own disposal after spiritual birth then why do they need Christ for an intercessor and mediator?

Now the part that says, "that he might be the firstborn among many brethren," simply means that God gave his Son the preeminence of being the firstborn from the dead or to be the first to be resurrected from the dead in a glorified spiritual body. (Colossians 1:18) Now being that Christ is the first to have a spiritual body there is a second sense in which we will be conformed to his image for we will be resurrected in his likeness. (I John 3:2)

TEXT: "Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and

whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

"Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called" (past tense) as it has been previously explained, and surely "the gifts and **calling** of God are without **repentance.**" (Romans 11:29) No, God will not repent or change his mind about the salvation of his people, for it is by grace. See Psalms 89:34-35, Malachi 3:6. If God was to change or nullify his covenant with his Son and people the sons of Jacob or children of promise would be consumed with unquenchable fire "for our God is a consuming fire." (Heb. 12:29) Hebrews 6:17-20 proves however that God will not break his promise that we may have "strong consolation."

And whom he called, them he also justified." How did God justify them? By faith. Oh well, yes, I know that God justified them by faith but what about the scripture in James that says Abraham was justified by works when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Let us look a moment at this scripture. "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." (James 2:20-24) First let us consider the terrible strain Abraham was put in when God commanded him to offer up Isaac. You know how that God had promised that he would establish the everlasting covenant with Isaac and with **Isaac's seed** (Genesis 17:19 and 21:12). The promise of the seed of Isaac's surely meant a lot to Abraham too for he knew that the seed was Christ which was to be his Savior (Galatians 3:16). Now after that God did all this promising to Abraham he then goes and tells Abraham to slay his young lad upon an altar for a burnt offering. Can you see what a spot this put poor Abraham in? I'm willing to say that no man would be able of himself to do this deed in such circumstances. Well, how was he able to not withhold Isaac? "By **faith** Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac." (Hebrews 11:17) Furthermore it says, "Seest thou how **faith wrought** with his works." (not how Abraham wrought the works) "and by works was faith made perfect?" This scripture does not teach that you may produce works in order to have or get faith, but that faith produces works, and the good works of a man prove that he has real unfeigned faith. Much more God was still the one doing the justifying, even in Abraham's case because faith is a gift of God and God had to supply Abraham with it in order that he could offer his son Isaac. Amen. It says that he "justified" (past tense) them. This past tense use of justification has strict reference to God's choice of his people in Christ before the foundation of the world that they should be holy and without blame before **himself** in love, for to be holy and without blame surely means justified. (Ephesians 1:4) He chose us in Christ before the world began so that in the ages to come Christ would be our justification and redemption. We are justified by Christ's shed blood in the sense that his blood has satisfied divine justice for our transgressions, blotting them out as a thick cloud, making us as though we had never sinned. (Romans 5:9) Christ is also mentioned as the justifier of them which believe; in Romans 3:26. I will conclude this portion by mentioning that Christ Jesus is the faith of God's elect for Christ is the gift of God to his people (My Father **gave** them **me,**" (St. John 10:29) just as faith is (Eph. 2:8). Christ or faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen for it is Christ we hope and diligently seek for, and he is the manifest evidence of the Father God whom no man hath seen (Heb. 11:1).

"And whom he justified, them he also glorified." Being that the church was elected in Christ, he became their representative in every point. And as the church is called the body of Christ (Colossians 1:24), so also was Christ's natural, fleshly body a figure or representative of the church for whom he died. (See Ephesians 5:25). Now as we see the natural fleshly body of Christ crucified, buried and resurrected **glorified,** so also we see the church, of which his body is the figure of in a spiritual representative sense, crucified, buried and resurrected without spot and without blemish. Therefore Paul says, "I am crucified **with** Christ," (Gal. 2:20) meaning that the works of his flesh, the body of sin was destroyed through Christ's death (note carefully Col. 2:11-12). And as sure as they are glorified in Jesus' resurrection they shall be raised glorified in the bodily resurrection. (I Cor. 15th)

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" Being that God was so much for us that he foreknew us, predestinated us, called us, justified us, and glorified us in the express person, his Son Christ, then who can be against us as to make our salvation of none effect, for there is no power but of God and the powers that be are ordained of God. (Romans 13:1) So then even the other powers (devils, kings, rulers, etc.) which are ordained of God can only be for us too, because it says God is for us.

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" The question is not how is God going to give all things pertaining to life and godliness to his people but how shall he **not,** being that he did not withhold his own Son (even as Abraham, the figure) but delivered him up from the dead in a glorified person that we might also be glorified in his Son.

"Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercesion for us." Now can you see how that there is no charge to be committed to us since Christ suffered, bled, died and rose again for our jusitfication, and that we have received **double** at the hand of the Lord Jesus for all our sins? (See Isaiah 40:2) And much more, is right now on the right hand of God making intercessions, yes, beseeching the Father for our welfare and salvation. What more can a saint ask for? Can he add anything to it?

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Not only are we killed by evil men as martyrs and with their tongues of persecution, but we as heirs of the kingdom "die daily." (I Cor. 15:31). Even as our Brother Paul had to die his death to sin and to his own self-righteousness daily, so do we that may live and reign in righteousness unto and by our Lord Jesus Christ. Even in all things is there any thing that can in any wise make us fall from the grace of God or be separated from his love? "Nay, in all these things we are **more than conquerors"** — how? "through him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood." For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, **nor things present, nor things to come,** Nor height, nor depth, **nor any other creature,** shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which **is in Christ Jesus** our Lord." God the Father swore by himself that he would no longer remember the sins of his people in the everlasting covenant. Heb. 6:13 and 8:12) And furthermore to prove that he would strictly not remember the sins he said, "If his (Christ's) "Children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not commandments; Then will I visit their transgressions with the rod," (rod of

love, mercy, compassion, comfort: (see Psalms 23:4) "and their iniquity with stripes." (Whippings, chastenings or corrections; not eternal punishment nor death). "Nevertheless my **loving kind ness** will I not utterly take from him," (Christ) "nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips." (Psalms 89:30-34) Yea, in all these things there still remains no possible way for the saints of God to fall from their estate as being the heirs of the kingdom of Christ, because they "are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (I Peter 1:5)

Gregory Dean Duren
Rt. 1, Box 30-A
Buhl, Ala. 35446

HAS ENJOYED THE SIGNS

Rt. 2, Box 48,
Strong, Ark. 71756

Dear Editors:

Enclosed you will find check for $7.00 for renewal of my subscription to the *Signs*. I haven't missed a copy since a friend sent in a subscription for me six or eight years ago.

I remember the first *Signs* I ever read was left at our house by a relative. Then early in 1930 I would read the experiences of grace of some of the dear ones that brought tears to my eyes. A few years before a subscription was sent for me, some friends gave me some old issues, and while reading one of them with tears streaming from my eyes, these words came to me, Ye little flock whom Jesus feeds.

I believe I have been fed from reading the *Signs*, as well as while hearing the gospel preached three or four times a a month; and also by the still small voice at times, and when reading the Bible.

Mrs. Lula B. Fox

EXPERIENCE

(Concluded from last month)

After hearing Elder Mitchell that night at Cypress Creek, I went several other places from time to time where he was to preach, and each time it seemed he was preaching my experience. I couldn't hold back the tears, "O, is there anyone like me!" I had heard him speak four times and his preaching was the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God, when I had a dream that he baptized me. I became more fearful, as I had said time and time again that I would never join the Primitive Baptist Church. Again it seemed the farther I ran and the harder I tried to conceal my feelings, the closer I was brought to the church. One Sunday at New Bay Church I found myself relating some of my experience to Elder Mitchell. When I realized what I was doing, I became so frightened I tried to get out and go home; but that was fixed too. My car was blocked in all around, and I couldn't leave.

One night after I had the dream that he baptized me, I had become so troubled, the dream was all I could think about. I retired for the night, but there was no sleep. I was pondering over this dream, and telling myself there was nothing to it, when all natural things were removed from my mind, and a pond of water was placed before me. It was so beautiful, peaceful and calm. I was standing by the water's edge, and Elder Mitchell came to me and took my hand and led me into the water. When we turned me around I could see the beautiful saints of God standing around the water's edge. He raised his hand above my head and said, "I baptize Sister Evelyn Winstead." The vision was over. I had suffered so much and was such a sinsick soul, I had reached the condition that nothing on this earth that money could buy, meant anything to me. I knew if the Son of God didn't shed his life's blood for me when he was nailed to the cross, and my name was not written in the Lamb's Book

of Life, I was surely doomed for Hell. When I was shown this vision, my hope in Jesus Christ was so revived I somehow felt there was a joy waiting for me far greater than anything this world has to offer. I saw Elder Mitchell about a week later at a church, and felt I had to relate my feeling to him, and I desired that he baptize me, if he could go into the water with one as unworthy as I felt to be, if God ever saw fit to bring me before his humble poor to ask for a home with them.

About a week and a half after I had told Elder Mitchell the way I felt, he had an appointment at New Bay Church. It was on a Tuesday night, July 20, 1971, I was so troubled I felt I couldn't go on in this condition; yet I thought I would not go that night. A force that I had no control over kept pulling me there. When I arrived I could hardly see these lovely people for the tears in my eyes. I felt I would give anything in the world to be a part of them, and share this love I saw shining on their faces; yet I didn't see how they could ever fellowship me. I felt like the little stray kitten looked, that had his little paws on my door, trying to get in where the other cats were being fed; I immediately got out of my chair and got some food for the kitten. He ate as if he were just about starved. I saw myself in that kitten, and had to shed tears. I felt so alone it seemed I had been on the outside looking in the most of my life. Yet if Jesus Christ didn't open the door for me, I could not enter or be fed. And Jesus says that if we come any other way than through him, we come as a thief and a robber. O, How I tried to pray for God's guidance, that he would direct my foot steps! I was still sitting in my car with my precious children with tears dripping off my chin, when Elder Mitchell came over to the car and said these words to me, "Don't cry, dear sister,it is all in the hands of the Lord." I felt some comfort from these words, yet I didn't know the will of God. I felt these dear people could see how near nothing I am and could not fellowship me. Finally I went in with my two children and took a seat about half way in the back of the church. A few songs were sung and the church service started. Elder Mitchell was called on to preach, but I didn't hear many words he said. It seemed the only voice I could hear was one inside me saying, Lord have mercy on me. At the end of the preaching service, our precious Elder Stokes announced an open door of the church, but only as a custom, as I believe we all know if God has ever come into our heart only He can open the door.

When they started singing, "Father, I stretch my hand to thee, No other help I know," the next thing I knew I was down the aisle, and Elder Stokes was there with outstretched arms. The next thing I remember, I was being given the right hand of fellowship. Another dear sister was received that night also, by a sister church. These were some precious moments for me, and I felt better for a little while, but it didn't last long. By the time I had returned home I became so frightened I felt I had deceived those dear people, and myself, and had tried to deceive God: though I believe He knows the intent of my heart. I let my children inside the house and went straight to the church again. I had every intention of telling them I had deceived them, and it was all a mistake. When I got there the lights were out and every one was gone. I was still being shown how weak I am by nature and how Satan will tempt me, until God says "Get thee behind me Satan." I was to be baptized the next afternoon at 6 P. M., and I wondered how I could ever go through with it. I went to bed so deeply troubled I felt I couldn't live in this condition, when Brother Mitchell's voice came to me again with the same words, "It's all in the hand of the Lord," and I heard him singing the second verse of hymn number 470 in the Lloyd Hymn Book. I went to sleep and rested quite peacefully that night. Wednesday morning was like one of the days I spoke of earlier in 1964 when I had been so close to death. It was raining lightly and the

trees were bowing so gently and it seemed everything I could see alive was praising God. I was made to rejoice most of the day, but just a little while before the hour came for me to be baptized, fear started coming over me again. By the time I got there and the service started, I was trembling so much my precious Mother put her arms around me to steady me. While Elder Mitchell and Elder Stokes were leading me into the water, I became so weak I felt as if I were going to die. Elder Mitchell began the ceremony and all natural things were removed from my mind, and it seemed I was viewing the very saints of God standing on the banks of that pond. When Elder Mitchell and Elder Stokes laid me in the liquid grave, I believe I did die and was lifted up with a new life. I have never been able to find words to express the joy and happiness and inner peace I felt as I was lifted up from that liquid grave. All distress and doubt and fear was gone, and for me it was a heaven here on earth for a little while. The joy was so great I didn't feel anything could make me feel different. About two days later, late in the evening I wrote Brother Mitchell a letter, telling him how wonderful I felt, and how I was lifted up to rejoice in a Saviour's love. I wanted to thank him for being a part of and sharing the most happy moments of my life; realizing it was fixed to be that way for all eternity; and giving God all the praise and honor and glory. Through the love and grace of God, he so humbly and willingly shared and was a part of this poor sinner's experience of a heavenly delight. Just a short while after I had finished the letter, a very depressing downcast feeling came over me, and not even knowing what was troubling me, the tears were running down my cheeks. The hymn came to my mind and I started to sing, "Am I a soldier of the cross, a follower of the lamb." Again Brother Mitchell's words came back to me, and I heard his voice so clearly, "It is all in the hands of the Lord." I was lifted up again, and for four months most of the time I was on cloud nine, and rejoicing in those heavenly things.

The first communion I took part in, I felt so unworthy and so humble; as I still do. The moments were so sacred and sweet to me, I felt I wanted to wash every member's feet and would have gladly done so; but I felt so unworthy I didn't know how I could ever bear for anyone to get down to my feet to wash them. The love and joy I felt in this communion is beyond words to express.

After I had been baptized, I wrote to my beloved husband, telling him of this new life and new happiness I had received. I would be so happy when he came home to share it with me. I received a letter from him, and he said that if that is what I wanted, he was happy for me, but he hoped some day my bed of roses didn't turn into a bed of thorns. All I could give him for an answer was, if I know anything about it at all, we always get the thorns before we do the roses. Life for God's children, I feel, is compared to a rose. It is full of ups and downs, and God gives his children the grace they need to bear the cross. My husband came home in October and went with me several places to church; and within two weeks it seemed we were strangers to each other. I had tried to prepare him to understand this new life of mine, and how much it meant to me. The harder I tried to make him understand, the more anger he showed. Again I was brought down and shown my weakness. I didn't have the power to make him understand: I was made to know only God could make him understand this change in my life. He didn't know much about the Primitive Baptist Church and said he didn't understand what they preached; furthermore he didn't think he would ever want to join the Primitive Baptist Church. The subject of the church was so tense here at home, he asked me not to speak of it, or of my precious brothers and sisters I loved so much. My burdens be-

came so heavy, I felt I was living in the bottom pit of Hell. I went around daily trying to pray every minute. I begged God for guidance, and if it could only be his will, to give my precious husband a heart of understanding. I didn't dare ask that he believe as I hope I have been made to believe. I could only hope he could understand the love I feel for these dear people. I didn't see much change in him at first, but somehow I was lifted up and each time he would become outraged, it seemed my faith in Jesus Christ became stronger. It got to the point I had to tell him if he asked me to give up the church, I would have to give him up. What I hope I have received was not of man, neither can man take it from me.

Before I was made willing to offer to the church, I was made willing for Jesus Christ and the church to come before all else. My husband told me one night that he never intended to go anyplace again where Elder Mitchell was to preach. After he had made this statement, the following Sunday he went with me to attend the service. Almost afraid to go inside of the house, my every thought and prayer was, "Lord help us." As I try to write of this, the tears of pure joy still run down my cheeks. When Brother Mitchell started to pray I felt he was praying for me and my precious husband. The sermon was so beautifully fitting. I believe it was prepared from all eternity to reach my husband that day. After the meeting was over, I saw my husband go to Brother Mitchell and take hold of his hand and put his other arm around his neck. Knowing how my husband had felt before, I knew a higher power was directing him other than what I or anyone else on this earth could do. I believe if ever my heart shouted for joy, it did at that moment. I still didn't dare ask him how he enjoyed the service. After we had left the church to go to Sister Arlene Hale's home, my precious husband reached over and took hold of my hand. When I looked at him tears were running down his cheeks. I told him that I felt Brother Mitchell was praying for us. He then said, "It surely was a beautiful sermon too." That day we shared the most precious moments together our marriage has ever known. We were both made to rejoice in a Saviour's love. In the past five weeks I have seen a great change in him, and I believe the Lord is working in his heart. He seems anxious to go with me to church now, and seems to enjoy much of it. I have never tried to persuade him to go, but to do as his mind and heart leads him. I believe there has never been a heart too hard for the Lord to soften, and I feel thankful for the great change I have seen in him. Sometimes I feel like shouting, "My God, how great thou art!"

Since I have had a home with the Old Baptists my mind dwells mostly on spiritual things. Instead of the songs of the world, I find myself trying to sing the songs of Zion. I realize I am a sinner every day of my life, and sometimes I begin to doubt what I hope is my experience of grace. Sometimes I get so low and downcast over my trials and afflictions, doubt seems to almost overshadow me; then it seems my precious Saviour appears to me on the cross, and his precious words to me are, "If you reign with me you must suffer with me." When I am blessed to feel this, I hope I am made thankful for my every heartache and affliction. My heart crys out, "Keep me humble and at the feet of the precious saints, that I may never offend one of them. Keep me, O Lord, that I may spend the rest of my days in praise to thee."

Everything I have said about my dear husband has been in great love, and if not deceived, I believe he will be brought before God's humble poor, asking a home with them. I believe when God begins a work in one's heart, he will bring him at his own appointed time, and he will confess that salvation is by the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. What I have seen in him recently is what I mentioned earlier about the new love we

have and share with each other.

I realize I have mentioned Elder Mitchell's name several times in this writing. I do not wish to apologize for this, because he was shown to me in a dream and a vision, and I believe it was ordained that through him that God revealed to me what I am by nature, and what I must be by the grace of God. I have no desire to offend any of you precious Elders, or anyone else, for I hope I have been made to love you all for Christ's sake. Elder Mitchell and Elder Stokes are a part of an experience that is so precious to this poor sinner. I hope I have not said anything that is not in keeping with the doctrine of the old Primitive Baptists. I desire the prayers of all you dear saints.

A sister in Christ, I hope
Evelyn Brown Winstead
Rt. 3, Box 323A
Jacksonville, N. C. 28540

PHILIPPIANS 4:13

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Notice that Paul was not depending on his own efforts or strength of the flesh. His eyes were turned upward far away from the works of the creature. As David said, "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I." (Psalm 61:2) "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help." (Psalm 121:1)

Paul realized that God would show him the way and would direct him where he went. The key to the text is "God which strengtheneth me." God gives his people grace in time of need.

We know that Satan is going about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. (see I Peter 5:8) Also we read that the false ministers are transformed as angels of light. (see 2 Cor. 11:13-15)

How easy it is for those that sit in Moses seat to make conditions out of exhortations contained in the Scriptures. If one is troubled by doubts and fears, the law worker will say that your faith is weak. — "work a little harder and soon your doubts and fears will fade away. It is up to you to trust in the name of the Lord." The poor sinner says: "I need a Saviour who will come all the way to me, not one who is begging me to meet him half way."

The workmonger says, "It is up to you to believe." Dear one, are you plagued by unbelief? "Lord I believe, help thou mine unbelief." (Mark 9:24)

Paul admonished the Ephesian brethren to put on the whole armour of God. (Eph. 6:11) Paul did not tell them that they had the ability of the flesh to put on the armour of God. We see the hand of God on both sides. God inspired Paul to exhort the brethren. God gave the Ephesian brethren the strength to put on the armour of God.

Jesus said, "- - - without me you can do nothing." (John 15:5) One may say, "I just cannot put on the armour of God." It is true that you cannot put on the armour of God of yourself. But you can do this through the Lord. Remember it is written, "I can do all things through Christ which strengthen me."

Why did the writer exhort the brethren to put on the whole armour of God? The evil day was before them. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty thru God to the pulling down of strongholds." (2 Cor. 10:4) It is only through the grace of God that we can stand against the fiery darts of the wicked. (see Eph. 6:16)

God will be with you through all the heavy trials. You do not travel on your own strength, but we go in the strength of the Lord. "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer: my God, my strength, in whom I will trust: my buckler and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower." (Psalms 18:2)

We may have bad habits that we desire to be changed, such as the minister's manner in the pulpit. If we depend on our own ability to correct this, I am afraid that we will continue to have the bad habits. But the Lord is able to correct the situation. If we have the

sincere desire within our heart to change the bad habit, then may we pray unto the Lord for strength, and enable us to use good habits instead of bad. Remember that God is able to enable us to do all things. Do not we walk on our natural legs which God gave us? God gives us the strength to walk naturally.

Let us be careful as we attempt to meditate upon these beautiful truths. We know that Satan is very cunning and subtle. He will try to bring forth one truth to upset another.

We have used this natural illustration for a point to show that we could not walk naturally unless God gave us the strength to do so. Most all mankind enjoy this natural blessing.

It is a different situation in a Spiritual light. God does not give mankind the ability to do that which is good in the sight of God. Our nature is to take bitter for sweet, walk after the course of this world, run after evil, etc. "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Rom. 3:10-12)

Therefore, we cannot walk (of our own strength) in the footsteps of Jesus when we decide to get good and ready. God teaches His people to depend upon him. As David said, "For thou hast delivered my soul from death: *wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling,* that I may walk before God in the light of the living?" (Psalms 56:13) David realized that he would fall unless God kept him. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." (Psalms 37:23-24)

God gives his elect the grace to walk a Godly walk. Satan may tempt one to hide his weakness, faults, sins, etc. behind the predestination of God. May the Lord enable us to look to him for guidance. Let us not fear the frown nor scorn of men. May the Lord give us a single eye to the glory of His Holy Name.

Remember it is only through Christ that we can do all things. God gives his people grace in time of need.

May God bless the truth and pardon the error.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

ENJOYS THE SIGNS

789 E. Paxton Street,
Danville, Va. 24541

Dear Brother Spangler:

Enclosed is check for $10.00 for the *Signs* two years — use the balance for the Indigent Fund.

I enjoy the writings so much that I do not want to miss a single copy, though I am a little late with my renewal.

I do not get to attend the meetings as often as I did before my health failed; so I get much joy from the sermons and experiences of those of like precious faith. Our Lord has been so good to me, yet I do not feel worthy of his goodness and love toward me; yet I would not exchange my small hope for all the riches of this world. I feel He leads me with his hand, and has answered prayer in my behalf so wonderfully. Praise be to His holy name!

I enjoyed your sermons at Dan River in February and at Malmaison the first Saturday in March. It is so good to hear the good news of our Lord and Saviour expounded.

My prayer is that our Lord and Saviour will bless you editors with health and grace to continue to preach and expound the scriptures of the sovereign God, and the doctrine of sovereign grace of our Saviour, who has all power both in heaven and earth.

A little sister in hope,
Lillian H. Holt

A SOURCE OF SWEET MEDITATION

Atlantic, Va. 23303

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am enclosing a check to renew my subscription for two years; and the balance to be used as you see fit.

I do not want my subscription to expire, as I look forward each month to this dear paper. It is impossible to express what I feel as I read the sweet writings of God's humble poor. His people are a needy people, and my prayer is that the Lord will sustain its publication on and on.

Many times it has served as a source of sweet meditation, and I felt my longing spirit has been fed. I would like someday to be able to write my experience, as I have a desire to; but whether I will or not I cannot tell. At times I cannot even talk about it.

When given a mind to pray, please remember me, as I am very low at times; but thank the good Lord, at others I feel singularly blessed.

A little sister in hope,
Dixie Davis

LOVES THE DOCTRINE

Rt. 1, Box 517,
Bluefield, W. Va.

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing a check for $5.00 to renew the *Signs* for a year, and a couple of copies of the December, 1971, issue containing the writings of Elder Gilbert Beebe. I would like to have these to keep or give to others who are interested in the truth.

I have been receiving the *Signs* since 1927, and I dearly love this paper, and am satisfied you editors are blessed to print the truth in harmony with the Word of God, if indeed the Lord has taught this unworthy one the truth.

May He continue his blessings with you, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

In bonds of love,
(Elder) L. B. Hylton

(Yes, we have more of the December, 1971, issue of the *Signs* containing the writings of Elder Gilbert Beebe. They will be mailed postpaid for fifty cents each. — Editors)

EXPRESSING HER FEELINGS

Rt. 3, Box 314,
Eden, N. C. 27288

Dear Elder and Sister Spangler,
and Brethren in Fatih:

I started to write you while you were visiting your daughter in Florida after the holidays, but on reading it over . . . I decided not to mail it. I was hoping for your health and much needed rest in my letter, and that is about all the sense it made to me.

But at this time I would like to try in my feeble way, to express what I hope God has meant to me. Sometimes I go to church, and the elders are so blessed to speak I feel like I could just reach up and touch the hem of His garment — and then it is all gone, and it is back out to the cold world and all the troubles it contains.

One week before the Christmas Holidays, Reuben found out he had diabetes. The doctor told us he could never cure it, but control was the word. Some people are blinded by it, and this was our fear. Dimness of vision came right away. How I tried to pray to God that he would not be permanently blinded! Sometimes we know not what we ask for; but if it is God's will, let it be — only if it is God's will; if not give me strength to bear it. Our prayers were answered: his vision came back enough so he could once more request his favorite hymn, "Children of the Heavenly King," and he could read the words. No words can express how I felt when he said, "I can see the words in the Hymn Book." Daily papers did not seem to matter, but the Hymn Book seemed most important to him.

We love our people, and we love the doctrine Saved by Grace, and that not our ourselves. I know that but for the grace of God I am lost. I cannot forsee what He has prepared for me. I do not question this, because He has led me to believe that He will go with me to the end.

I would like to express how I feel about Christmas since I have not mentioned it in this letter. I can't remember when I believed that December 25th should be celebrated as Christ's birthday. Man does not know what day or what month Jesus was born. The fact that Jesus Christ was born, is a wonderful thing, and, to me, for me to be given to believe that He was born, and died on Calvary's cross for our sins — for those that are called according to His purpose, is a glorious experience.

I remember the second Sunday, December 13, 1970, you spoke from Romans 8:28, 32 and 39. I know the date because I try to record each scripture you quote, and the date; but this one date stayed with me, and I love to dwell on it, and hope I might be numbered in the said ones that are called. "For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." "He spared not his own Son but delivered him up for us all; how shall he not with him also freely give us all things." "Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

I know I have been scattering and hard to follow. It is hard for me to understand myself sometimes, for "What I am 'tis hard to know."

We love you and Sister Spangler dearly, and wish for you much health and happiness in the years to come. Come to see us when you have a mind to.

In bonds of love,
Sister Beatrice French

LOVES THE BRETHREN AND THE SIGNS

Rt. 5,
Reidsville, N. C.

Dear Brother Wood:

I have never had the pleasure of meeting you in person, but feel I have met you in the spirit through the *Signs of the Times*. It is a wonderful paper and I always look forward to getting it each month. I feel that you and Brother Spangler have done a wonderful job in getting the *Signs* to the dear children of God and loved ones everywhere. Many dear ones are not blessed to go to church due to ill health. I feel so thankful to the good Lord that I am able to go to meetings every Sunday — it is my meat and drink. And I thank the Lord that I have one son who goes with us to church, and I believe he believes in salvation by grace alone.

I seldom get an opportunity to talk with Brother Spangler, but he has been blessed from on high to preach so many good sermons to me, and I hope many more. If I could just be blessed from on high, to feel like I believe he felt the second Sunday in February, I would be so happy. I love my pastor, Brother Donald Smith. I feel that the Lord carried me home with a stronger power from above than any man has, to Pleasant Grove Church, the third Sunday in April, 1968; and I was baptized the third Sunday in May. I have never regretted it, for it is so wonderful to be with God's wonderful family. They could live without me, but I just couldn't live without them. It is all I crave in this world, and a sweet home in heaven when I die.

It is sad to see the old soldiers of the cross leaving us, but we have some wonderful young ministers. All of God's children love to see Brother Spangler, and it just looks good to see him come to our associations, unions and churches. I know that I love him and Sister Spangler, and always enjoy hearing him

sing. If he outlives me, I want him to help in my funeral. I want to tell him how much we love him in the sweet fellowship of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ...

I hope I love all of God's people everywhere, and I pray I shall go home to heaven when I die. I hope I am one of His little ones.

In love,
Sister Rena Smith

BLACK RIVER UNION

The next session of the *Black River Union* will be held, the Lord willing, with Black River Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in July, 1972. The church is located on the east side of Dunn, N. C., on the east side and near I 95 Highway, in a large oak grove.

All lovers of the truth are cordially invited.

C. D. Turner

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To April 1, 1972)

Mrs. Vivian Hardy, N. C.	$ 1.00
Mr. and Mrs. A. B. Jones, Tex.	3.00
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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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EDITORIAL

"THE TREE OF THE CROSS"

We find in the New Testament the cross of Christ referred to as the TREE at least five times, and one of those references is taken from the Old Testament, which says, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Jesus became a curse for us, hanging upon the tree of the cross. Thus the cross meant suffering "a living sacrifice." "See from his head, his hands, his feet, sorrow and love flow mingled down." Jesus, the Lamb of God, offered himself as an offering acceptable unto God, which was his reasonable service. Throughout all the Scripture, Jesus was set forth as the Lamb slain, yet man un-

derstood not. The disciples and apostles of Jesus were no better, they would never have known had it not been revealed to them. After Jesus had suffered on the cross, been buried and rose from the dead, "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to SUFFER and to rise from the dead the third day."

Thus the tree of the cross stands out through all time as the place where Jesus took our curse away, becoming a curse for us; took away the handwriting of ordinances which were against us, nailing them to his cross, meaning thereby that he himself suffered for all our disobedience. He learned obedience by the things which he suffered. So it is truly said, By his death we live, and through his blood, shed at the cross, we are absolved from sin's tremendous curse and shame. The law accuses and condemns, but the apostle tells us "the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ." Thus the law, by its teaching and its threatenings, drives us to the tree of the cross. How wonderful this is as we consider the word of truth which declares that in the beginning, when man was first created, God said unto man, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Our first parent partook of that tree, and through his disobedience to God's command death passed upon him and his offspring. His offspring all died in him, therefore it is written, "For as by one man's (Adam's) disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one (Christ) shall many be made righteous."

Partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil meant death, but partaking of the tree of the cross means life and peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. We speak of looking to the cross, when we mean looking to Him who hung upon it, to his suffering and death. They ate of the first tree and died, we eat of this tree and live. Jesus himself said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." Thus from the cross, or suffering of Christ, springs the life and health of all God's people. It was there that his body was broken for them, and by virtue of his obedience unto death he of God is made unto us wisdom righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

Thus to eat his body and to drink his blood is to be partakers of the fruit of this tree. From the cross springs peace and righteousness, peace through the blood of the everlasting covenant and righteousness that covers us and hides our shame ever from view. Very different is this robe which Christ hath wrought from that which Adam would fain have covered himself with. It is written, " And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked: and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons." These did not cover them when God spoke, for Adam said, "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." He could not hide from God, yet God has hid his people in Christ, the cleft of the rock, and it is by the obedience of one (Christ) many are made righteous. It is this righteousness of Christ that exalteth A NATION, so that they are a holy nation, a peculiar people, etc.

Now we have been speaking of the cross of Christ, of what he suffered for us, the Just for the unjust, but it was our intention when commencing this article to write of the cross of the Lord's people, for they also are partakers of the sufferings of Christ. Let us first emphasize the fact that though we suffer with him each bearing a

cross, yet our cross is not to expiate sin as his was. He stood alone, trod the wine press alone, and of the people there was none with him, when he made his soul an offering for sin, but there is a fellowship with him in the cross, for only broken-hearted sinners can fellowship a broken-hearted Lord. He learned obedience by the things which he suffered, but we, in the cross laid at our door, learn of Jesus, who is so vitally one with us that he is our obedience. God thus uses afflictions, which are a cross to us, to show us what Christ has wrought on the tree of the cross for us. There is no way we can learn or know of the peaceable fruits of righteousness but God's way, for such fruits grow on no other tree but the cross, yet we do well to consider that the cross of itself can do nothing. Many people are hardened when passing through trials and afflictions. Jesus said, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" and God, who gives the cup, must sanctify it to us, or there will be no real gain.

Here we would say that the same Spirit that was in Christ, spoken of as the eternal Spirit, must be in every member of Christ's mystical body. Many men have sinned the sin David did, and never have been exercised thereby. David, through the indwelling of God's spirit, was greatly chastened, in which chastisement he mortified the deeds of the body. While he was passing through the trial it was very grevious, yet afterwards it yielded the fruit, the peaceable fruits of righteousness, as he was exercised thereby. There is no way one can learn in God's school but by the cross, and it is well for us when we know whatever cross lies at our door, cometh from the Lord. We have often asked ourselves when we have been supplicating the eternal God to bless us, that we might be a blessing to his dear people, or as we often feel to call them, his poor and afflicted people, Do you know what you are asking for? You are asking a heavier cross, more and perhaps, more bitter trials, a felt absence of the God you love, so that you also shall cry, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me," to be deserted by your brethren, and God-forsaken too? It is here we fellowship our Lord, as the Spirit of God stirs up our nest, and it was through such a strange and varied course that the Lord led Jacob, and there was no strange god with him. One says,

"Lord, what is this? I trembling cried,
Wilt thou pursue thy worm to death?
'Tis in this way, the Lord replied:
I answer prayer for grace and faith."

The proud, he is able to abase, but he does it often as a friend, as a father doeth to a son or daughter in whom he delighteth. If it be his holy will to send heavy afflictions, hard for the flesh to understand, yet he is guided by tender mercy, and is full of pity, and often he will take away the affliction when we have learned the lesson well. Whatever be his will, it is best for us, for our affections would be set ever on things of the earth, we seldom would even look up unless we had a cross. Lord, reconcile us to the cross. The things which the flesh found pleasure in are now painful, and through the sanctifying work of the Spirit we glory in the cross of Christ, and esteem the reproaches of Israel better than all the treasures of Egypt. How often we live to bless the Lord for afflictions and trials, for in them we experience the sweetness of a Saviour's name, the preciousness of his presence, and have our hearts and affections set upon things above. One does pity poor souls whose portion seems to be fully in this present world, who tread under foot that which is priced above rubies, and are content with the husks which the swine do eat, who mind earthly things. Yes, one feels to pity such, but they are satisfied and so were we until the Lord experimentally chose us in the furnace of affliction, and now we glory in tribulations, "knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed: because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy

Ghost, which is given unto us." When Hezekiah had the sentence of death in himself, it was then he turned his face to the wall and wept sore. When deliverance came, he said, "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me,and make me to live."

Thus to-day let us bless the Lord for the tree of the cross, where we learn patience and are made to know a Father's love. A daily cross makes us thankful for the small mercies, makes us have more frequent longing for God's "WELL DONE," than for the approval of our fellow-men. A daily cross will cause this world to appear as a bauble when compared with our heavenly home, especially if the Lord has taken our earthly props and comforts away. Trials in body and mind and circumstances, sanctified by the Spirit, will make us long for the consummation of our blessed hope, when we shall see Jesus as he is and be like him for ever and ever.

(The above was by Elder Ruston in August, 1935.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

Not only to give us an instance of the mighty power and constant faithfulness of the God of the Hebrews, in the deliverance of his confiding people from the decrees of kings, from the violence of fire, from the mouths of lions, and from the jaws of death, were the records made, in the book of the prophet Daniel, which have excited the admiration of the saints in all subsequent ages, but, as we conceive, they were also intended to set forth in metaphor, the important doctrine of the vital union of Christ and his Church, and to prefigure what was in the counsel and purpose of God to be more fully developed in the fulness of the dispensation of times.

In replying to the enquiry of our dear brother Montgomery, we might say much in regard to the personal history of the three Hebrew children who were cast into the excessively heated furnace by order of Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon, and draw from their faith and confidence in God, and their fidelity under the most trying circumstances, lessons of great importance to the tried family of God, in all after ages. The inspired writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, in the eleventh chapter, refers to this display of God's power and providence, as a example of the invincible power of the faith of God's elect, and classes it among numerous other signal displays of what God hath wrought in days of old, in the defence of his own cause and people.

But we propose briefly to trace in this article, what we regard as the figurative import of the subject, and submit such views as we have to the superior judgment of brother Montgomery, and of all who may read.

These three Hebrews or Jews, we regard as emblematic of the election of grace, under three dispensations of time, namely, from Adam to Moses, from Moses to the coming of Christ, and from the advent of Christ, or the setting up of his kingdom, throughout the gospel dispensation to the end of the world. While Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon, may represent the Man of sin, the son of perdition, or rather the spirit which rules and presides over the kingdom of darkness, Babylon, the dominion of this king, with its numerous provinces, is used in Revelation as figurative of anti-Christ, as seated on the scarlet colored beast. At least Babylon will truly represent a place of captivity and bondage to the people of God who are Jews spiritually and whose circumcision is not outward in the flesh, but in the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God. For if ye be Christ's then are ye Abra-

ham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Compare this application of the figure under consideration, with what is signified by the three illustrious patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as embodying all the chosen people of God; or what Moses saw displayed in the bush which was, like the three Hebrews, enveloped in the fiery element and yet not consumed, because the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob dwelt with them in the burning bush, as the form of the fourth dwelt with the Hebrews in the burning fiery furnace. These, with many other striking figures of the Old Testament, exhibit what has ever been witnessed, in all ages of the world, namely, that God has chosen his people in a furnace of affliction, and that he is present always with them in all their afflictions to preserve and to deliver them.

In the New Testament we have also substantially the same presentation in the vision which Peter saw of the sheet which contained the variety of four-footed beasts and creeping things, which God had cleansed, and which in that case were used to signify to Peter that God had a redeemed cleansed people in all the kingdoms and in all the tribes of earth. And as this sheet was at first let down from heaven with all of its contents, so the provisions of grace and salvation contained all the elect of God, before any manifestation was ever made to men on earth, and, as the sheet was three times displayed, so the three dispensations of time signified have witnessed the revelations of the Bride, the Lamb's wife coming down from God out of heaven and being manifested on the earth, as Christ's kingdom which is not of this world, and which was prepared for the saints before the foundation of the world. And after the third manifestation of the sheet with the same cleansed contents, it was also received together up into heaven, nothing having been added nor aught diminished from what the sheet actually contained when first let down, so we may learn that all the church of God was chosen and sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and ultimately, in the fulness of the dispensation of times, all called with an holy calling, not according to their works but according to his own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began; and being all saved and called, and brought experimentally into the faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, all are ultimately received up into heaven, as the place of their origin.

The manner in which God's people are subjected to the fiery trials which Peter says are for the trial of their faith, is well illustrated in the case of the three Hebrews. Their religion and their faith essentially differ from the religion and faith of the world, and their God is quite as distinct from the Gods of this world. And while all others can accommodate themselves and their religion to suit the times and fashions of the world, God's people have always been, now are, and forever will be a peculiar people. They shall dwell alone, (religiously) and shall not be reckoned with the nations. Because they are the sons of God, the world knows them not; for the world knew not their divine Lord and Master.

Yet unknown though they are by the world, all the religion of the world is originated, planned and designed so as to oppose them. In the getting up of old Nebuchadnezzar's religious excitement, we trace the very elements of the religious excitements which now prevail in modern anti-Christ. First a god, composed of gold, is set up and dedicated, its splendor and cost are well calculated to fascinate the worshipers of Mammon, and secure the adoration of the lovers of the precious metal, who bow down before it, and ascribe to it a power to control the destiny of men, as gold and silver are deified by will-worshipers at the present time, who ascribe to such corruptible things the power of securing the salvation of the world. Then to make the golden idol still more

popular with the deluded sons of men, every possible appeal is made to their carnal senses. The princes and the nobility, the aristocracy and the rulers of darkness of this world, are called together to lend their aid and influence to the magnificence of the golden deity. All manner of musical instruments which have charms for human or carnal ears, are put in requisition to lend attractions to the scene; and for all those for whom neither image nor the music have sufficient power to charm, the burning fiery furnace is prepared in order to awe into submission all who have conscientious scruples, and a death warrant is prepared for all dissenters, and the object is the extermination from the earth of all who will not worship the beast or its image. How well our arminian neighbors have copied the type presented in our text, will be seen by observing the basis of modern idolatry to be gold, or its equivalent. Money is called for and collected for the professed and undisguised object of saving souls from everlasting perdition. The image assumes the imposing form, of a Mission Society, a Tract or Bible Society, or a combination of all these humanly invented societies as so many heads or horns to the image. The great men of this world, the rich, the learned and the popular are courted, and the most magnificent and costly temples are built, and decorated with all that can charm the carnal eye. Worldly honor, fame, and pecuniary emoluments are offered; and then if the coronet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery and dulcimer, are deemed too antiquated for the progressive age, the more modern instruments of organs, bells, fiddles, and such other instruments as are used at the circus and theatre for attracting the admiration of the thoughtless and the vain are added.

But with all the attractions of gaudy temples, golden idols, popular and fashionable devotees, musical instruments, foppish preachers and man-pleasing preaching, modern anti-Christ cannot well do without a large quantity of terror. The furnace must be heated, and the dissenter admonished of his doom if he still refuses to comply with the terms of peace. Fall down and worship the image, and you shall be carressed; but refuse to do so at your peril. Fire and brimstone is lavishly dealt out by modern wire-pullers, and every appeal is made to terrify into compliance the timid and weak; but where these threats of future wrath fail to intimidate, the rulers of the darkness of this world in rage command that their furnace be heated at least seven times hotter than it is wont to be heated, and the mightiest energies of all the Babylonish agents are commissioned to cast the Hebrews, or those who trust in the living God, into the midst of the burning furnace. To let loose their slanders, reproaches, persecutions, ridicule, and proscription upon all who question the real deity of their golden idols.

But thus far all the engines of destruction prepared by the powers of darkness for the extinction of the church of God have failed, utterly failed, because God is in the midst of his Zion. Therefore she shall not be moved, her God will help her, and that right early. He is in the midst of his little flock, and where two or three, as in the case of the Hebrews, are gathered together in Christ's name, though it be in the midst of a burning fiery furnace, there is he also in their midst, as he was in the midst of the three Hebrews in their fiery trial.

Before we close, we will remark that the king of Babylon is never to be trusted; his edicts commanding his subjects throughout the provinces of his vast empire to worship the God of the Jews, betrayed the same ignorance and murderous propensity, as that commanding them to worship his image. All that the monarchs or governments of the earth are required to do for the church of God, is to let her alone. The God whom we serve is able to sustain his own cause, and to deliver his children out of the hand of the kings and

potentates of the earth who shall dare to molest them.

How this heathen king knew that the form of the fourth whom he saw was like the Son of God, we shall not attempt to explain; only that he was made to see and confess that there was a power there displayed far beyond that any being inferior to the Son of God could display, and like Balaam, he was obliged to speak the words which God put in his mouth.

One word more. These men of God are seen by their persecutors walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt. This has astonished the enemies of God's people in all ages; the bush is all on fire, but is not consumed. The fire of opposition rages, and its wrathful flames envelope the saints, but still they walk on at large; the cords by which they were bound hand and foot are burnt off, but they have no hurt, their hair is not singed, nor has the smell of fire attached to them. Their enemies are consumed, but they are delivered and promoted, and show in the sequel of their trial, what all the saints of God must witness, that all things do work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

(Editoral by Elder Gilbert Beebe July 15, 1858)

OBITUARIES

ELDER C. LESLIE COKER

Inasmuch as it has pleased Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, to remove from us our fellow minister, our pastor, our brother, and friend and, at the orders of the Contentnea Association of which he was a member, loved and respected, I attempt to write a memorial of him. I am fully aware of my inability, yet I am hopefully aware of the power of God, and believe with our departed brother that He does all things well.

Elder C. Leslie Coker was born April 29, 1910 to Godly parents, Charles Leslie and Sally Sessoms Coker. His parents were very inspirational to Elder Coker, especially his mother. Oftimes as he would relate to us his experience of Grace, he would tell how her love, chastisement, and advice helped to face and to better understand his condition, as the knowledge of his own sins was revealed to him, and it also strengthened his hope of Salvation by the Grace of God.

Being convicted of sin and given a hope of eternal life through Grace, as God revealed His mercy to him, "Les," offered to, and was received in Lower Town Creek Church in December, 1948. He was ordained deacon by his brethren, who saw a gift in him, and although he served well in this capacity, the church saw another gift and calling in him; at their invitation he began to exercise his gift in the Ministry at his home church. He was soon liberated to preach wherever he felt to be called and in November, 1953, his church called a presbytery who examined his gift and ordained him to the full work of the Gospel Ministry.

Elder Coker was called by his church as an assistant to the Pastor in December, 1953 and chosen Pastor in April, 1956. At the time of his passing, he was Pastor of Lower Town Creek, Old Sparta, Autrey Creek, and Williams Churches. He also served for a time as Pastor of Great Swamp Church at Greenville, N. C. His gift was profitable to the churches — he baptized, married, and served in all phases of the Gospel numerous brethren. He conducted more funerals than any other Minister in his section during the time of his Gospel Ministry. His gift was definitely that of a Pastor and although he traveled many miles as he visited the sick and shut in, a very special talent of his, he did most of his going near his home. He was blessed with the time and desire to visit the brethren, especially those who could not attend the meetings, and this he did, mostly among the Contentnea, the Black Creek, and the Kehukee Associations. He was well loved by those brethren, as well as others in North Carolina and Virginia that on occasion he would visit.

He married Mattie Ruth Brown on December 14, 1929, and to this union were born two children — C. Earl Coker of Pinetops, N. C., who married Jackie Burgess; and Peggy Ruth Coker, who married Brooks Drake. These children, together with seven grandchildren, survive him to mourn their loss.

Sister Coker was called home in March, 1960 and in November, 1960, he married Cathrine Bridges Forbes. Both wives served with him graciously in his ministerial career, and Cathrine survives him and, together with all of us who loved him, sustains a great loss. He also leaves to miss him greatly four sisters: Bessie C. Walston of Macclesfield, Nancy C. Earp of Tarboro, Ellie C. Gallop of Rocky Mount, and Cathrine C. Hathaway, of Tarboro; three brothers: W. L. Coker, his twin, of Tarboro, J. B. Coker of Fountain, and J. H. Coker of Tarboro.

Elder Coker lived to see two of his brothers, John and Joe, ordained to the office of

deacon and one of his sisters, Nancy, baptized in the church he loved and served so well.

Elder Coker, like "Joshua" tells us, was called to go the "way of all the earth" February 13, 1971. Truly a servant of "Israel's God" and His wonderful church has fallen. But we, because of the precious, beautiful promises of God to His servants, do not mourn his passing as we would for one who had no hope. The churches he served lost a good pastor, his association and correspondence lost a good minister, his fellow yolk servants lost a fellow servant who was eager to serve with and for them whenever he could.

His funeral was conducted by the writer, who loved him and loved to serve with him, in Lower Town Creek Church and was attended by a large gathering of ministers, brethren, and friends. His body was taken to the family cemetery in Tarboro, N. C. to await the coming of the Lord, whose very presence will reunite the children of the Heavenly King in the royal courts of Glory in the glorious land of no parting, no farewell, no pain, no trouble, where all but love is done away with in that precious celestial city, the glory land that shall continue forever and ever, whose builder and maker is God, eternal in the heavens.

I desire to close this effort by using a favorite phrase of his, "Our loss is his eternal gain," and to him I say, as he said so many times to me and others, "Be seeing you — I hope."

Written by order of Contentnea Association as she sat in regular conference, Friday before second Sunday in October, 1971.

Prayerfully submitted,
A. P. Mewborn

SISTER EVELYN B. DAVIS

Sister Evelyn Bailey Davis was born May 21, 1911 in Horntown, Va., and died October 24, 1971 in P. G. Hospital, Salisbury, Md. She was the daughter of the late Julius and Drucilla Bailey.

Surviving are her husband, W. A. Davis, Sr.; three children: W. A. Davis, Jr., Mrs. Richard S. Adkins and Lawrence B. Davis; eleven grandchildren; a brother, Nevitte Bailey; and two sisters, Mrs. Spencer Justice and Mrs. Everett Miles.

I ask for divine guidance in writing of one so precious. Words are hard to find to describe one so beautiful in the faith. Sister Davis truly walked the path of the Primitive Baptists. God endowed her with many gifts: he gave her a lovely voice which she used to raise the hymns in Snow Hill Church; he gave her a gracious heart which she used to welcome and care for her brethren in her home; he gave her tenderness, love, compassion and understanding — it would be easy to go on and on. But all who knew her know what I am trying to say.

The greatest tribute she left in her memory, was her love for the Lord. She was raised in a Missionary Baptist Church, but the Lord revealed the truth to her, and she asked for a home with the Primitive Baptist Church at Snow Hill, Maryland. She was baptized in May, 1955. She was quick to say how good God had been to her and her family, and she never tired of praising His name.

Our hearts still ache and our tears still flow because of the void she has left us with; but we know God makes no mistakes. It was time for her to follow the Master's footsteps into the grave. If ever death was tender, it was to her. We were with her to the end, and there was never a tear on her face: it was as though it was all right, and things were as they should be. She had told me so many times she was not afraid of death: if only she could help her family not to mourn her. Little did she know the sweet thoughts she left us with. We find ourselves saying, "Thank you, God, for letting us have one of your jewels to love a little while on earth."

It is hard to stop writing about one I loved so deeply; yet this isn't meant to glorify her. It is to the honor and glory of God. He made her what she was, and he gave us the treasured memories to store in our hearts forever. We just wanted to praise Him for including us into her life. She was just another one of those little blessings that gives us a hope that God does care.

Her funeral was held in Snow Hill Church Wednesday, October 27, 1971. It was conducted by Elder James Poole, Elder W. D. Griffin, and Elder Arthur Warren. She was buried in Nelson's Cemetery near New Church, Va.

A devoted daughter-in-law,
Audrey Davis

SISTER MAUDE HODGES

Sister Charlotte Maude Ferguson Hodges was born August 31, 1883, the daughter of the late Brother James L. Ferguson and Sister Charlotte Blankenship Ferguson, in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. She was more than eighty-eight years old at the time of her death March 26, 1972, at Roanoke, Virginia.

She was the widow of the late Brother Allen D. Hodges. She is survived by two daughters: Mrs. Myrtis Palmer, Roanoke, Va. and Mrs. Charlotte Spangler, Winchester, Va.; one brother: Abner Ferguson; and the following sisters: Mrs. W. S. English, Mrs. W. E. Myers, Mrs. W. L. David, and Mrs. J. T. Huffmond. Also surviving are five grandchildren, eight great grandchildren, and two great great

grandchildren.

Sister Hodges' funeral was conducted in Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Cecil Turner and Elder Posie Plybon. For many years Elder Plybon was pastor at Fairfield Church. Burial was in Evergreen Cemetery. There were many beautiful flowers. Her children and grandchildren expressed that they were well pleased with the funeral.

Her daughter Myrtis was present at the time of Sister Hodges' death, and said that her mother went easy and didn't even move — she just breathed out her last breath. Her daughters and family put forth much kind effort to make her comfortable, and furnished her material needs as she became older and weaker; and they expressed their gladness that there was much love in their home.

We often heard Sister Hodges say, "I love my church; I believe I love them for Christ's sake." She would not want any of us to glorify her. She firmly wanted the glory and praise and honor to be where it should be: on her Shepherd and Husband, her Lord and Saviour, the one anchor of that sweet little hope that she often referred to. Sister Hodges united with Fairfield Primitive Baptist Church in 1918, and was baptized by Elder J. F. Goode. Elder S. O. Plybon was also present. Later she came by letter to the Roanoke Church where her companion joined before he died in 1950.

During the time she was shut in, the visits of Elder and Sister Turner, Elder Plybon, and many others pleased and cheered her much. She would often tell us when we visited her, "I want God's will to be done, and I want to be submissive to His will. She verily delighted in hearing the gospel preached, and in reading articles written to God's praise. She was often found studying the Scriptures when she was able to sit up. O how happy she was to hear the singing of sweet hymns to her Saviour's praise! One of her favorites was "Jerusalem, my happy home."

May God have mercy on us who are left behind. May He bless us to live and die in His fear and love.

Sister Mamie Rose Delp Ferguson

SISTER ROSA BOSWELL

We at Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church must bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, as it has pleased him to remove from our midst, Sister Rosa Boswell. She was born in Caswell County to her parents, the late Francis and Elizabeth Scott Boswell, on June 10, 1885 and passed from this life January 27, 1972, making her stay here on earth 86 years, 7 months and 17 days.

Sister Boswell was first united in marriage to Mr. Claude Holt. Unto this union was born one daughter Mrs. Claudia Holt Rimmer and after the passing of Mr. Holt she later was married to the late Mr. J. T. Boswell. Sister Boswell grew older and began to lose her eyesight, yet she attended the meetings and while attending these meetings it seemed her love for the church grow stronger until she became burdened to be baptized; yet with some reluctance due to her blindness, but on the second Sunday of July, 1959 she united with the church and was baptized the following second Sunday. As we gathered at the water it was a wonderful sight to behold as she was led into the water and placed in a chair. Our late pastor, Elder W. C. King, officiated the service, assisted by the late Elder J. Harvey Smith and there was much rejoicing.

As the years passed we could see age taking its toll with Sister Boswell but we could see that unfailing faith and the grace of God being bestowed upon her, which brings to our attention the words of Paul, 2nd Corinthians, Chapter 4, Verse 16, "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."

It was a great inspiration to all who knew and visited her to see her bearing her afflictions so patiently. I shall remember the last visit with Sister Boswell before she became critically ill. How sweetly she talked of her love for the church and what it has meant to her and tell some of her experiences and how the Lord had blessed her.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer of this obituary. She was laid to rest in Bush Arbor Church Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the coming of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

May those that mourn be comforted with Paul's writings, 1st Thess., Chapter 4, Verse 13, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope."

BE IT RESOLVED, A copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times*, one given to the family, and one placed on the church records.

Written by Wallis A. Smith

Read and approved in our conference meeting on March 11, 1972.

Wallis A. Smith, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

JOSEPH DANIEL OAKLEY

Brother Joseph Daniel Oakley was born in Caswell County June 6, 1890. The Lord saw fit to call him from our midst January 10, 1972, making his stay on earth 81 years, 7 months and 4 days. He was married to Mrs. Ethel Kimbro Oakley, and to this union were born five daughters: Mrs. Effie Petty, Mrs.

Vera Robinson, Mrs. Audrey Hammond, Mrs. Ruth Trueblood and Mrs. Mary Smith; three sons: Kendal Oakley, Roy Oakley and Robert Oakley; two sisters Mrs. Rose Blalock and Mrs. Mary Blalock; four half sisters: Mrs. Minnie King, Mrs. Maggie Massey, Sister Nellie Dabbs and Mrs. Nannie Dabbs; one half brother: Walter Oakley; 26 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren.

Brother Oakley was received into the fellowship of Bush Arbor Church and baptized the second Sunday in August 1949. He was blessed to walk softly among his brethren, ascribing all glory and honor to God our Saviour Jesus Christ. He bore his afflictions patiently waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

He attended the services of his church regularly until his health prevented him. It was my pleasure to have been associated with him very closely. He often quoted the scripture where Christ spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle and anoined the eyes of the blind man and commanded him to go wash in the pool of Siloam and was healed. He was operated on for a cataract in his waning years and his natural sight was never recovered sufficiently to read but he had faith to believe the Lord could make him whole.

His funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Church by his pastor Elder Wallis Smith assisted by Mr. Stanley Hartman. He was laid to rest in the Union Ridge Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He will be missed by all who knew him. Let us weep not as those who have no hope.

Written by one who loved him, T. Isaac Rice.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Deacon Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

JOHN DAVID THOMPSON

Brother John David Thompson was born June 9, 1885, near Grapevine, Texas, to the late W. M. and Emily Thompson. Our dear Heavenly Father saw fit to call him from our midst October 23, 1971, at the age of 86 years.

He came to Vernon, Texas with an uncle at the age of 18 to do farm work. He has lived in this area most of the time since then.

On September 30, 1906 he was united in marriage to Miss Martha Bourland, daughter of the late Elder Billy Bourland, at Vernon, Texas. To this union were born five children. Three sons and two daughters. Two sons preceded him in death.

Brother Thompson, together with his dear companion, united with Little Flock Church, Altus, Oklahoma, just a few years ago. However, he had been an attender and friend for many years. A man of few words, by which to express himself, but the kindness, meekness and love he manifested spoke louder than any words. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by the grace of our God.

Though our little church, his dear family and friends shall miss him very much, we trust we are submissive to the will of our great God, who does all things well. We feel our loss is Brother Thompson's eternal gain.

Services were conducted by Elder W. W. Taylor, together with the writer. His body was laid to rest in the "East View Memorial Park," Vernon, Texas, to await the coming of our Blessed Redeemer.

Submitted by the request of his precious companion.

Written in much love,
C. M. Haygood

IN MEMORIAM

Douglas Bell was born July 19, 1909; son of T. O. and Josephine Walston Bell. He was a native and lifelong resident of Palestine, Texas. Brother Bell was married to Adell Bush on July 28, 1930.

He united with Pilgrim Primitive Baptist Church in June, 1947, being baptized by Elder P. E. Weisinger. He was ordained as Deacon in June, 1964, and served the church faithfully in that capacity until his death on January 26, 1972.

We loved Brother Bell dearly and will miss him very much, but we feel that God loved him more for He took him home after many, many hours of suffering which he bore patiently with the help of his God.

Funeral services were held for Brother Bell in Hassell and Foster Chapel in Palestine, Texas on January 27, 1972, and he was laid to rest in the Bell Cemetery with a large host of friends paying their last respects; Elder U. V. Wallace and Mr. James Duncan officiating.

Surviving Brother Bell besides his faithful wife are three sisters and one brother: Mrs. Lonie Bell Miller, Mrs. Inez Bell Rawls, Mrs. Norma Bell Moore and Lyman Bell.

Clerk of Pilgrim Church
Palestine, Texas

J. M. "ALECK" DAVIS

Brother Davis was born July 4, 1889, to John Wesley and Nannie Mills Davis of Rockingham County, North Carolina. He departed this life September 23, 1971.

He is survived by his wife Lucy Hershman Davis, and one brother, James Robert Davis, of Mayfield, N. C.

God in His infinite mercy, turned our dear brother from the things of the world, in the early thirties, by revealing to him his sinful

and lost condition before a Holy God, and granting him repentance and forgiveness of his sins by the operation of the Holy Spirit.

The writer well remembers being sent for, to visit our brother in the hospital, when he had been at the door of death, as many believed, for many days. When I was leaving, he said, "I do not know whether I will live or die, but whatever the Lord's will is will be all right. If I do live, life will be different with me to what it has been."

A few months later he presented himself before the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, stating that God in His mercy had wrought a gracious work in his heart, and desired a home in the church.

He was baptized on the fourth Sunday in August, 1934 by the writer, and from that day forward, having put his hand to the plow, he never looked back. The delight of his heart was to hear the gospel preached, mingle with God's people, and lend a helping hand to his church, neighbors and friends.

About eight years ago, he had to have one leg amputated, and from then until he passed away, he used crutches, but it never interferred with his church attendance. Many will remember his entrance by the side door into the meeting house, taking the same seat reserved for him, and often asking for the hymn, "Come We that Love the Lord."

In his passing his family, church and community, have lost a Godly, loyal and faithful follower of our Lord; whose memory we will continue to cherish.

Funeral services were held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church Sunday, September 26, 1971, by Elders D. V. Spangler, Wallace Smith, Donald Smith and Haywood Wray. After which his body was laid to rest, to await the coming of the Lord.

Written by his Pastor,
D. V. Spangler

BROTHER OLIVER JUDSON WRAY

"O death where is thy sting, O grave where is thy victory." Our hearts are saddened by the loss of our brother, who departed so peaceably January 9, 1972. He greeted his brethren by name and attended their services from the mountains to the seashore.

Understanding is a wellspring of life unto him that hath it. We believe our brother was nourished in the good Doctrine, having tasted that the Lord is gracious to his people and with loving kindness has he drawn them.

The writer was informed by a brother who attended him during a lengthy illness, that Brother Wray was blessed with patience in tribulation, manifesting gratitude for every act of kindness he received with praise to the glorious name of God.

He was born in Rockingham County, North Carolina, May 17, 1894, and spent most of his 77 years as farmer and carpenter by trade. By faith given in Christ he was a member of the Primitive Baptists for more than forty years, having moved his membership to the Church at Bush Arbor in December, 1960.

He leaves to mourn their loss, six sons by his first marriage to Sister Mary Smith Wray, whom death called October 27, 1955, Elder Burch Wray of Cedar Grove, North Carolina, Wilmor W. and Elder Haywood Wray of Reidsville, North Carolina, O. J., Jr. and Elder Hugh Wray of Greensboro, North Carolina and Louis G. Wray of McLeansville, North Carolina. He leaves also one sister, Sister Myrtle Hall of Reidsville, North Carolina, with whom he made his home after the departure of his second wife, Sister Minnie McKinney Wray, February 17, 1965. To this union were born eight stepchildren, Sister Beulah Rudd, Mrs. Eva Smith and Mrs. Pauline Minor, Virgil, Raleigh, Malloy, Luther and Hassel McKinney.

Our Brothers' funeral was conducted at the church at Wolf Island by his Pastor Elder Wallace Smith assisted by Elder Kenneth Key. His body was laid to rest from his labor to await that glorious Resurrection, under a mound of beautiful flowers in the church cemetery.

May the Lord comfort those left to mourn and bless us to accept our loss as his eternal gain.

Written by Clifton Robertson as requested by the Church at Bush Arbor.

Read and approved by members of Bush Arbor Church at the regular conference held March 11, 1972.

Elder Wallis A. Smith, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

BROTHER WILLIE ADAMS

In memory of Brother Willie Adams who was born January 11, 1894, and died January 26, 1972. He joined Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, Gretna, Va., April 23, 1967. His poor health caused him to be unable to attend church very often. In talking with him, I feel sure he believed in God's power, and His wonderful love and mercy for us.

Surviving are his wife, Bertha Swain Adams; six sons; four daughters; three brothers and five sisters; also eighteen grandchildren and sixteen great grandchildren.

His funeral was held at West End Church of Christ by Mr. John Bowles and Mr. J. W. Tuck, and he was buried in the family cemetery, to await the second coming of our Lord.

L. R. Willis

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 140 DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1972 NO. 7

An all day service is appointed to be held at Pine Creek Church, Floyd County, Virginia, on July 4th, 1972, beginning at 10:30 A. M. The church is located about five miles east of Floyd Court House, just off U. S. Highway 221.

The services have been largely attended in years past by both ministers and members and friends.

An invitation is extended to all interested to attend.

D. V. Spangler

SECURE IN THE ARK

The Scriptures, given by Almighty God to His people for their learning and comfort, seem to convey one grand purpose — to reveal Himself to His creation in the person and work of His Son and our Redeemer, The Lord Jesus Christ. The transfigured face of Christ, His nail-pierced hands and feet, His bleeding side, are etched on every page, His exalted Name inscribed on every line. Tucked away where only the spiritually enlightened can discern Him, He is pictured in almost innumerable types, shadows and figures from the first of Genesis to the last of Malachi and is revealed in human flesh from the first of Matthew to the end of The Revelation. Through both the Old and New Testaments, He stands, a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, or King of Kings and Lord of Lords, always the Redeemer, Saviour and Lord of His people. One of the clearest and most beautiful types of Him as Saviour is seen in the ark which God bade Noah to build according to the specific instructions He gave him.

On an evening some years ago during a very severe hurricane, I was alone, in utter darkness and without heat, the electric and telephone lines having been impaired by the storm. As the tempest roared and rain fell in torrents, beating mercilessly against the windows and roof of my little house, I felt isolated, cut off from the rest of the world and a little fearful. Suddenly, an indescribable sense of complete security such as I have only very seldom experienced, descended upon me, enveloped me as a cloud and infused my entire being with a great warmth. As I drank in the sheer enjoyment and peace of that hour, my mind was directed to the aforementioned ark as a place of protection and security — "an hiding place, a covert from the storm and the shadow of a great rock in a weary land": the ark, a clear type of Christ, our refuge from the raging storms of life and from the judgment of God upon sin. While I meditated on these things, warm and wholly unafraid, I saw some things that night in the darkness that I had not seen by day. Recently, my mind has seemed to be directed again to this beautiful subject and I have had a desire to write whatever, if anything, I might be given to say.

All Bible readers know the terrible state of affairs which existed on the earth just prior to the flood. Sin had entered the world, had corrupted mankind and polluted the beautiful universe which God had created. Wickedness and violence prevailed. Man was living in utter carnality, altogether unmindful of God and His hatred of sin. We are told the imaginations, the desires and purposes of man were "only evil continually." Over in the New Testament we read "They were eating and drink-

ing, marrying and giving in marriage and KNEW NOT UNTIL THE FLOOD CAME AND SWEPT THEM ALL AWAY." What a vivid description of this present-day world! How long before God will send judgment?

The record states that God saw it all and "it grieved Him at His heart" and He determined to destroy man and all the corruption from the face of the earth, but we find one little statement here that speaks volumes: "BUT NOAH FOUND GRACE IN THE EYES OF THE LORD." Only Noah and his house, of all mankind found grace in God's sight. Here we see THE DIVINE CHOICE which runs as a golden thread throughout the Scriptures and it is most enlightening to discover that here, for the very first time in the Bible, the word GRACE appears. We had seen Him in creation, we had seen Him in sacrificial offering, we had seen Him in majesty and power, but here we see Him in love, mercy and grace. How utterly fitting it is to find the word GRACE for the first time in this beautiful type of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the gospel according to John we read "The law was given by Moses, BUT GRACE AND TRUTH CAME BY JESUS CHRIST." His unlimited power and majesty are marvelous and even thrilling to meditate upon, but it could not save a sinner such as I. It took His great love, mercy and grace to bring salvation. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts," writes the prophet Zachariah.

God chose Noah and informed him of His purpose to destroy man, with all the pollution, by way of a flood, but to save him, Noah, alive AND ALL HIS HOUSE, or family. It is significant that although God purged the earth, He did not destroy it in its entirety, neither His entire creation. "He cannot deny Himself," 2nd Timothy 2:13.

So God commanded Noah to build an ark, a ship or place of perfect safety from the deluge, or judgment which He determined to send upon the ungodly. Complete instructions were given to Noah as to the material and construction of the ark. As I understand the reading, it was to be made of gopher wood, 450 feet in length, 45 feet in height and 75 feet in breadth and was to be PITCHED WITHIN AND WITHOUT WITH PITCH. I am not a student of Greek and Hebrew, but from one who has studied these ancient languages, I understand the word translated PITCH is exactly the same as the word translated ATONEMENT. So the ark was to be insulated inside and outside with the atoning blood which flowed from the side of our Lord on Calvary's cross. This stupendous feature alone was sufficient to insure the safety of all within the ark, but there was more: God, Himself, was in that ark as it was tossed about by the tempest. The record in Genesis 7:1 states "And the Lord said unto Noah, COME, thou and all thy house into the ark." He did not tell Noah to GO into the ark, but to COME, indicating that He, God, would be in it to guide it and to direct its course and to make sure it reached its predetermined destination. He did not leave Noah to pilot the ship and it was no accident or mere occurence that the ark came to rest upon the mountains of Ararat, which I understand means HOLY GROUND. Looking beyond the type to its fulfillment, Paul tells us "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself" and after He had poured out judgment upon sin through the agony and death of His Son, He received Him at His right hand in glory — HOLY GROUND. What a depth and wealth of truth is portrayed in this beautiful type!

There was only one door in the ark and when Noah and all his house were secure within, God closed the door and "shut him in." Jesus said "I am the door; by ME if any man enter in, he shall be saved." Only one door to God's salvation, no other way in or out and we are told in The Revelation "He openeth and no man shutteth; He shutteth and no man openeth." God did not leave Noah to shut himself in, no in-

deed, He does not save us in Christ, then leave us to secure our own safety when the storm comes, but makes it certain by His own providential care. The record does not indicate how large the door was and we will never know in this life who or how many will be saved in Christ, but it is certain that all for whom salvation was provided will be safe in Him. Not a drop of Jesus's blood was spilled or shed in vain, but it was sufficiently plenteous to atone for every one of God's elect. The door was set in the side of the ark and it was from the side of Jesus that the atoning blood and cleansing water flowed.

Another beautiful feature of the ark was the ONE WINDOW which was to be set in a space or cubit ABOVE, setting forth the fact that all spiritual light must come from above and not from around us. To my mind, it also indicates that the Lord's people are to have their eyes and affections set upon heavenly things, not worldly, be it people or possessions. The great Apostle tells us "For our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; also "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth." How pitiful it is to see anyone professing the name of Christ so enamoured with the empty charms of this sin riddled world that they have no desire to leave it and to be with Christ! Paul, speaking of himself says "Having a desire to depart and to be with Christ"; also "But now they desire a BETTER COUNTRY, THAT IS AN HEAVENLY." Deep in my heart, I feel, as one of my ancestors expressed, I am thankful I was born to die, and I am looking forward with keen anticipation to the time when I shall no longer "see Him through a glass darkly, but then face to face." Oh, the very thought of it, face to face with my Saviour in sinless perfection which we can never attain unto in this body of sin, to see with my eyes undimmed with clouds or afflictions, my Lord in all His beauty and holiness!

Back to the ark: it was to be constructed of gopher wood, a desert growth, comparatively indestructible. Again looking beyond our type, our Lord was "a root out of dry ground" says Isaiah, having no human father, and although He was scourged, smitten and finally crucified, His flesh did not see corruption and "not a bone of Him was broken."

The ark was designed in every detail by God Himself, but a human being must construct it. The body of Christ was designed and prepared by God Himself — "A body hast Thou prepared me" said Christ, but a human mother must bring it into manifestation because sin entered the world by man and the penalty must be paid by a MAN, THE MAN-GOD, the GOD-MAN.

God provided the ark and secured the safety of its occupants BEFORE He sent the flood, seven days before, I believe. They were SECURE IN THE ARK and thus they were not exposed to the waters of judgment. The Scriptures assure us that our Blessed Redeemer will come again to raise the dead in Christ and catch away those of His own who live and remain BEFORE He sends the awful and final judgments upon this world as described in The Revelation and we will not have to go through the condemnation for we will be already SECURE IN THE ARK. The flood fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights. After the baptism of Jesus, He was led of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil forty days and nights. How perfectly Jesus in human manifestation fulfills the promises of God in type!

Many more lovely features of the ark could be brought out which forcast the humanity of our Lord and His salvation, but space is limited and enough has been shown to assure us that every one of the Lord's elect are just as secure today as we will ever be in heaven, because, and I quote from a very lovely hymn:

"We have an anchor that keeps the soul
Steadfast and sure while the billows roll;
Fastened to the ROCK which cannot move,
Grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love."

Paul, in those precious closing verses of the 8th chapter of his letter to the Roman church, assures us "Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, NOR ANY OTHER CREATURE, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." The "nor any other creature," to me represents those foes within our human natures, so we are secure WITHOUT AND WITHIN from the devestating onslaughts of satan. All the mighty power, all the vast wealth of this great universe could never afford such security as this. Neither could the accumulated wealth of this world, did we possess it all, afford the joy and peace that is ours when blest to feel in our very heart of hearts that He keeps us by day and by night; that no trial can beset us outside of His will concerning us; that whatever our lot in this world may be, whatever lies before us here, He stands by to sustain and comfort us through it and that "we shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever." When so blest to meditate upon and to rejoice in these precious assurances, we thankfully join our voices with the hymnist:

"With joy lift up your heads
YE HIGHLY FAVORED FEW
When through the earth destruction spreads
For what can injure you?"

What, indeed, can injure us? Can flood, or fire, or tempest, or even earthquake? No, no, for we are SECURE IN THE ARK and when our days in this world shall have known their number, we shall come to rest with our Saviour, ON HOLY GROUND.

May it please our Blessed Saviour to supply us with faith each day, hour and moment while we inhabit this foreign land, to look up through the window ABOVE which is in Christ our ark, toward our eternal home where He is, even as Daniel when in captivity in an heathen land, looked through the window of his room in the king's palace, open toward Jerusalem, his home.

Mildred V. Dykes
1114 Mt. Hermon Road
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

EXPERIENCE

807 Pope Street
Memphis, Tenn. 38112

Dear Editors, Kindred in Christ:

. . . Recently we have been questioned by some and lightly reprimanded for not writing to the paper lately. I told them I had written many times but did not send, fearing they were not worthy of space. It is peculiar too, for when we are among our brothers and sisters, we are anxious to tell these sweet or bitter experiences, and hear others tell some of theirs; and there is much rejoicing as each tells of a lesson learned in them. There is such sweet fellowship and communion in the feeling that we are of those "taught of God."

But to send them in for publication makes me fear. Never-the-less I am submitting the following experience for your judgment. I question many times as to their source — are they truly of the Spirit of God? or is it possible that some emotional trick of our carnal mind deceives us. But there seems absolutely no doubt at the time as to the source.

I believe I know what it is to go down into Egypt.

"Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin: that walk to go into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt! Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion . . . For the Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose: therefore have I

cried concerning this." (Isaiah 30th chapter)

The prophet told them that, "Their strength is to sit still." Then wrote, "Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever."

This trusting in the strength of Egypt (or the flesh) is like a wall built with untempered mortar that will not hold. But, Oh, how we do labor and toil to build a wall while in Egypt! We say, "It is the Lord, It is of the Lord." And in one sense it is, but not in the way we imagine. Our hands and our carnal mind, which seem to dominate us while in this place, are busy; and we say, "It is beautiful" — this shaky wall, buldging at every seam with filthy works of man.

"Write . . . that this is a rebellious people . . . which say, Prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits: Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us."

One might say, Oh horrible thought; but I believe in substance this is what His children do when they go down into Egypt, (though they may not be fully aware of it.) Now whether we are led there for our teaching and to learn knowledge, or go voluntarily, as water seeks its level, I don't know, but I rather think they are led there, or sent. And I do not say this, looking for an excuse for my sins.

When we have toiled and labored, and are pretty well near exhaustion, we look, and the wall begins to crumble and break in pieces, and becomes utterly worthless; and we are confused. Then a dear one came along preaching Christ Jesus, the Holy One — the one whom we in the darkness of Egypt, wished to set at naught, and work with our own hands. What is this one crying? "All flesh is grass, and the works thereof are as nothing." "Stand still and see the salvation of God." "Your strength is to sit still and know that I am God." "For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and confiedence shall be your strength." (Isaiah 30:15) Oh, the beauty of it!

I went home worried, feeling like an alien: something had been wrong with my conversation for quite awhile. I felt guilty — like a wayward child. Then I would think of the sweet words of the preaching of Jesus crucified. I went to sleep troubled.

I awoke next morning at three o'clock rather suddenly, thinking of the preaching the night before. "How sweet the name of Jesus is!" A dreadful feeling came over me: I felt so unclean, filthy; and I was crushed . . . I tried to put it out of my mind, but it stayed there.

Finally I arose and went into the living room, so as not to disturb my husband. I got the Bible and Concordance and found the word in the 30th chapter of Isaiah, and began reading from the first verse. Every word seemed to burn right into my heart and soul as with fire; and it seemed I had a perfect understanding. I was so filled with something that I could not resist the urge to get a pen and try to write it down. It seemed almost like a command. I sat there three hours meditating on these words.

I felt the Lord had done it; and there was peace in it for me. I hope that the eighteenth verse applies to me and all, if there is another in the world like me: "And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the Lord is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him . . . he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee. And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, . . . thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left."

Now here is the beauty to me of the twenty-second verse: When He brings you out of captivity, then will you abhor all your idols, all the graven images, all the filth and works of your own hands, and you will cast them away as a menstrous cloth; and you somehow feel clean again, and *Zion is such a lovely place.* Oh how I wish you could dwell there!

I used to say, Never again will I do thus and so; but how vain are such words. I am so sad and sorry for those I love to have to endure my ugly ways and my vain, foolish talk. And I do pray with all the praying power given me, to quieten and cause to cease this rebellious, restless spirit within me at times: let me take knowledge of God and learn the truth, that, "In quietness and confidence there is strength." Let me sanctify the Lord in my heart, the Holy One, and fear the God of Jacob.

May the following verse also apply to me, "They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine."

Oh, I felt so clean and washed, and a mist cleared from my eyes, and I felt Elder Lambert's words burning inside me; and I too felt to cry out, "Oh that my words (or this experience) were written, and printed in a book graven with an iron pen, and lead in the rock," to be read by others long after I am gone. But I realize I cannot put into words the feeling, the spirit that caused me to feel as shaken as a reed in the wind: a trembling and a joy, guilt and shame, yet at the same time I felt I was given wisdom. It is indescribeable, and I thank God for the experience, and for the mercy in it.

Mrs. Lucile Young

"IN HIS LIGHT WE SEE OUR CORRUPT SELF"

Boones Mill, Va. 24065

Dear Brethren:

When the Truth is preached, the Gospel puts a vast difference between the precious and the vile: and this the vile cannot bear. The preached Word has a note of assurance that Jesus belongs to those who have been "translated into the kingdom of his dear Son."

Nowhere does the Bible or Christian experience give any preacher license or liberty to have friendship for the world. In the 92nd Psalm we read of those who are "planted in the house of the Lord." Every God sent minister will take pains to feed these plants — elsewhere called sheep and lambs. (see John 21) The church has never grown in numbers as the result of the labors of any of God's servants: Only the revelation of Jesus Christ can build the church.

When the Lord imparts Life and Light in the soul, the Light gives knowledge of God's glory (character), and in His Light we see our own vile and corrupt self. This causes fear, labor, burden, grief, shame and sorrow over sin. The sinner strives to "get right." There is no power on earth that can stop the light from shining as it teaches (as never man taught) how black, evil and sinful we are. This draws the soul into fellowship with the doctrine that "all flesh is as grass." And while the Son thus shines, we wither, and all of our supposed goodness fades as we sink down beneath God's righteous frown; and, like Saul of Tarsus, we try to keep the law — and fall.

At God's time He hears our cry, and Jesus calls, does not invite, but commands, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Then and not until then, is the sinner astonished and amazed to find that the law he thought so necessary to keep, has all been fulfilled; and that all salvation is free — and all by the grace of God.

This lesson can never be learned from any fellow creature or by any earthly means. From among the many who are thus saved and called, and taught by the Comforter to believe that Jesus is the Christ, this same Spirit directs the feet

of a chosen few to the visible Church. Here, and here alone, is the judgment seat of Jesus Christ, where we must appear to stand or fall by the judgment of the Church.

It is forbidden for any minister to do his preaching apart from the judgment of the Church. All sound doctrine is directly opposed to any confederacy with Egypt, or leaning on the broken staff of the flesh or inventions of the flesh.

New born children of God who do not attend the services of the visible church, are many. These are not saved from the delusions of Satan by preachers, but by an experience of redemption. All of them are "kept by the power of God." They are not left to the snares of the Devil, for they are "preserved in Jesus Christ and called." All of God's children, in or out of the visible church, are under His divine control. There can be nothing to hinder the Almighty God who orders all of their ways both in providence and in grace.

If the question is asked, From whence comes their help and comfort? we know the answer. All their help comes from the heart of Almighty Jesus Christ. He counts their sighs, puts their tears in His bottle, and when their spirits are overwhelmed within them, He knows their path, and regulates the time and measure of their trials — and everything that is necessary for their present support and seasonable deliverance, with the same absolute accuracy as He weighted the mountains in scales, and hills in a balance, and meted out the heavens with a span. All saints are under His management, even to the hairs of their head.

Satan trembles to see a saint at the throne of grace, but delights to see them look for comfort from the inventions of men. Millions suppose they have been cured via the radio, and therefore worship the cure. The saints of God do not worship their cure, but worship the Healer. Their Healer does not have fellowship for anything He has not washed in His precious blood.

In bonds,
Elder J. L. Bocock

THANKFUL FOR HAVING THE TRUTH REVEALED

Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120
Rt. 2, Box 134,

Signs of the Times:

Thank you for the extra copy of the December issue which I requested. I cannot express the joy that filled my heart for these precious articles. The comfort is so sweet to find that more than a hundred years ago, God raised up a man and gave him a mind to publish this blessed truth, that is so hated by many kindred in the flesh — and to my amazement, by some professed members of the Baptist Churches.

Lord God, would you permit such a vile sinner to bow in your Holy presence, and give thanks to thy holy name for revealing this great truth to me, long, long ago. O dear Lord and God, may I sing praises to thy precious name forever. . . For thou art worthy alone to have all the praise, honor and glory, for thou hast made all things for thy self, and without thee was not anything made. . . Lord thou hast made men and women and placed them upon this earth, to give thee praise. Thou hast made me, a sinner, to call upon thy great name. Thou wilt be with us in all places and wilt not forsake us. All our steps come from thee: we cannot breathe one breath beyond thy great decree. O lead us through all the troubles thou hast ordained for us to walk in. Blessed Redeemer, remember us when thou cometh into thy kingdom, and take me to be with you where there are no more tears to be shed, no more sorrows to go through: where we can sweetly sing praises to thy name in eternity. Amen.

A little sister,
Mrs. Pauline Spencer

THE CITY THAT JOHN SAW
(Revelation 21)

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

Reading through the 1898 year copies of the *Signs* has afforded me much pleasure as well as enlightenment on several scriptures heretofore not seen; the one above, particularly. You have carried many writings of those inspired Elders of the past century which are wonderful to read, but the writings of many brethren scattered over the U. S. A., appearing in these issues, has served to more firmly show me how the Old Baptists have held strictly to the Apostolic doctrine at all times, and how they have never changed their manner of worship, while so many of the worldly churches, during my lifetime, have changed or modified their articles of faith, their form of worship, to cope with changing times; and even in late years, constructing their church buildings in such modern shapes and designs that many are hardly recognizable as a church building.

The several installments of Elder S. H. Durand's writings on "The City That John Saw," appearing in the early months of 1898 *Signs,* are most enlightening to me, in that they clearly bring out that this city is, and has been for ages, existant in this time world. I had been of the opinion that it was to be seen at, or near the time of the second coming of Christ. Elder Durand wrote, — "She is now shown to John, *and to all that have eyes to see,* as that Bride adorned for her husband, in all her spotless glory, as the Perfection of Beauty. Being therefore the Bride, the Lamb's wife, we must of necessity discard the tradition that this city is the special and eternal abode of God, which we think of as heaven. It is his dwelling place only as his church is the dwelling place where he dwells in his people, and walks in them." (2 Cor. 6:18).

In Elder Durand's writing on the measuring of that city by the angel using the reed, he brought out that the measurements shown, when applied literally to our standard of measuring, would mean the city could not be seen from a place on earth, not even from the highest mountain, even with a telescope, on account of the rotundity (curve) of the earth's surface. In our measurement it would be fifteen hundred miles in length, breadth and height. Yet John saw this city in it's entirety through the eyes of the Holy Spirit, as given him to see it. He further wrote, "From such a great and high mountain, how wonderful would such a city appear, hanging in space, or rather appearing in the midst of the glorious, unsearchable heavens, which are not dark, dead space, but glowing and pulsating with the life-giving power of God."

Now then this city that John saw, was representative of the "Church Of The Living God." and thus all his little ones would be within it's confines. When we consider the immense size of it, then can we not well reckon with the possible number of it's inhabitants? We find in Genesis 13:16, "And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth; so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered." In Hebrews 11:12, we find the Lord's people are, "As many as the stars of the skies in multitude, and as the sand which is by the seashore, innumerable." Again in Hebrews 12:22, they are, "An innumerable company of angels." Lastly, in Revelation, "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all the nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands."

Do we not see that the size, or number, of the city's inhabitants is comparable to the immense size of the city that John saw. It would seem that God, in his infinite wisdom and for purpose known only to him, shows us that man was never to know the exact number of his elect. We can see that he showed

us, through the Revelation shown to John, this city would ever be capable of containing "That innumerable host" to be brought into it, and all will be able to see him in his splendor and glory as members of his Church in which he dwells and walks. Surely this city is a most glorious and wonderful place to abide in; and there is no power that can remove us from it.

Touching a few more of the things meaning much to me, which Elder Durand so clearly sets forth: —

1. "The reed used by the Angel in measuring the City, is the word of God by which the Angel, or Spirit of Christ, measures all spiritual things."

2. "The wall which the Angel measured, by our standards would be two-hundred and fifty feet high, is Jesus, who is the defense, the salvation and glory of his people. John wrote, The measurement of the wall was according to the measure of a man, that is of the Angel."

3. ". . . And the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it." These are not earthly kings as we know them but are those who say — 'Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests and we shall reign on the earth.' — verse 10."

4. "The river written of is that Spiritual river of the water of life which reaches every child of God and is made glad by it."

5. "The street of pure gold and as clear as crystal, is the peculiar characteristic of the revelations of truth to the faith of God's people, definite and unmistakable."

6. "The tree of life bearing twelve manner of fruits, is to give those in this city, essential sustinence and comfort. It's fruit is their food, as the water of the river is to satisfy their thirst, and its leaves are medicine for them, showing that the inhabitants of the city to be yet in their mortal state. Only those who are in the one way, only those who walk in Jesus, can eat of it's blessed fruit, and receive the benefit of it's healing leaves."

7. ". . . And on either side of the river, represents the former ages and dispensations, and the other side would be the gospel dispensation."

8. "The inhabitants of this city, like those of earthly cities, do not go into houses for rest, and then out on, or into, the street for business and pleasure. They are ever in the street, There, in Jesus, is their rest and safe abode. He is their shelter and dwelling place, their holy temple where they are found continually. This is one of the wonders of this wonderful street which reaches to every dweller in this immense city, and every inhabitant is at all times in the street."

9. "The twelve manner of fruits does not represent different kinds of fruit, but the different manner of the twelve apostles in presenting the same truth to the Church of God."

10. "The leaves for the healing of the nations, are to signify the sweet words of Jesus, spoken either by himself when in the flesh, or by his Spirit through the apostles and the prophets."

What a contrast we see between this city that John saw coming down from God out of heaven and any one of our great earthly cities of the past, present or in time to come. Those of the Lord's elect who dwell in one of the large earthly cities, dwell in a city within a city, as-it-were. They see all about them, the terrible works of sinful man in all kinds of crime and ungodliness, and today, it is not safe to travel on their streets, day or night. As dwellers of that immense city of God, they are safe and find great comfort in knowing their time is comparatively short until they will be leaving this earthly city to dwell permanently in God's celestial city, where all is peaceful and there is no changing day or night: just one endless day in the presence of the KING OF KINGS with that innumerable company of Angels, clothed in white robes, and with palms in their hands which John saw. What a mysterious and wonderful

thing to think upon, — this holy city, the new Jerusalem, wherein dwelleth righteousness!

Now when we think upon it at length and try to get a mental picture of what took place back there before the annals of time when God chose that *innumerable company,* we can see that God, in his all-wise being, viewed the whole number of human-kind that would be upon this earthly realm, from Adam on to the last one to be brought into it: billions in number known only to Him. We would reason that his choosing, or election of that innumerable company of his Angels, was not by any lottery method as the world uses in many instances to select a certain group, and neither was it by any hit-and-miss system, but it was with infallible accuracy and not by guess work, but according to his divine plan. It is not for mankind to see or understand what his mind was, or how he made that choice or election. It is written, "Who can know the mind of the Lord?"

And, too, we must remember that when he covenanted with his Holy Son, and gave all this innumerable company of Angels to him, who would give eternal life to all of them, not losing one of them, he knew every one of them by name, everyone of that innumerable host which John saw; and likewise the Son was to know, *and did know each and every one by name,* for it is written in John 10:3, *"And he calleth his own sheep by name."* O how we become dazzled and stymied with amazement when we try to pierce, or look within, the great wall of mystery which surrounds such amazing works of the Lord God Almighty!

Concluding, will say that at times I have great hope that I'm one of those that dwell within the confines of that immense city; and again my hope fades and it seems that I'm without it's walls, not within them. Dark days overshadow me and I feel too unworthy to even think upon such a wonderful city wherein God dwells with his chosen ones. When hope revives and travel is resumed, the road seems rough, leading at times through swamps of despair and on into the desert, ever being shadowed by satan and his angels. I'm mindful then of the words of the old song, which speaks the mind of the hymnist, likewise a traveler in the way:

> "Dark and thorny is the desert,
> Thru which pilgrims make their way;
> But beyond the veil of sorrow,
> Lies the realms of endless day."

I would ask that anyone having a mind to do so, remember this poor lonely traveler in a land of sorrow, when at the Throne of Grace.

Unworthily,
Wm. O. Hall,
P. O. Box 595,
Mount Vernon, Wash. 98273

ISAIAH 1:3

Box 357,
Elgin, Oregon 97287

Dear Elder and Sister Spangler:

Many times we have written you in our minds, but have yet to write one word on paper. Still we desire to write a few lines, trusting that we are motivated by the Holy Spirit, and not of self.

Isaiah 1:3 reads: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

The preceding verses of this chapter are given over to the description of the low estate of man; and we can but marvel that by His sweet grace, he has elected some of the sons of Adam to eternal life. Our minds have been arrested by the sweetness of the word *come,* not as an invitation to all of Adam's posterity, but as a commandment to those who were created in Christ Jesus from before the foundation of the world. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according

to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Timothy 1:9)

Matthew 11:28 qualifies those to whom the commandment *come* is given, for this verse states, "Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Therefore, those who do not feel the burden of sin are incapable of hearing the command *come*.

Paul wrote in his epistle to the Phillipians, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." We cannot but believe that the "reason together" of our text, is embraced in this verse, for by his grace we can view Christ as the only bridge across that great chasm that separates the poor, mercy begging sinner from the Holy of Holies, our eternal Father. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." (John 10:27)

"And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing: and I will receive you." (2 Corinthians 6:16, 17)

Now touching that portion of our text, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow," doesn't this embrace God's eternal plan of salvation, which necessitated the giving of blood by his only begotten Son, who declared his work finished when hanging on the Cross of Calvary, declaring that of all the Father had given him he would lose nothing, but gather it up at the last day.

In much love,
Lloyd and Florence Spikes

Rt. 1,
Hazelegrun, Ala. 35750

Signs of the Times:

I am enclosing $7.00 for which please send me your paper. I intend to write a few lines which you may publish if you see fit.

I am sixty-eight years old and live about one hundred miles from an established church, with no way to go; and all around me (as the weather is warming up,) all I hear is labor groans and labor pains as she is giving birth to her children, so that the Lord will love her more.

When I was young, in this country we had the Flint River Association with more than a dozen churches; but modern times has softened their doctrine, and they could not swallow the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things. And today not a church is established in the true kingdom. All have been spewed out. I witnessed an argument between one of her departed elders and three arminians. They were arguing, accept Christ as your personal Saviour. He was arguing, Christ *had* to accept you: both as untrue as can be.

My mind is running to a scripture that reads, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." This shows that the chosen people of God in their lustful condition deserve to be destroyed; but God being immutable in all his attributes, perfect and unchangeable, had created them, given them, accepted them in the beloved Christ himself, so that God himself will not cast out or destroy one of the Elect, for they belong to his Son. As his Bride they are spirit of his spirit, the same as Eve was bone of Adam's bone, and there is no way to dissolve the relationship. If one member of that family failed to be with Him in glory, He would not have a complete bride; and God would be an imperfect God.

The swine feeders are working day and night feeding their herd, and, if you think about it, they have a hard job: they deserve all the money they

get. They have to furnish all the feed softened up so their herd will accept it. While the sheep are fed from a bountiful storehouse, and drink from a ever flowing fountain from the throne of God.

A. M. Campbell

SIGNS A BLESSING TO HER

1217 Dinwiddie Ave.,
Richmond, Va. 23229

Dear Elder Spangler:

Please continue sending the *Signs* another year, and use the remaining as you see proper. If you have copies of the January issue available, I would appreciate a copy.

To me the *Signs* is one of the blessings the dear Lord has given me. I have tried many times to tell some of the blessings I hope He has surely bestowed upon this poor one, and my efforts have been so poor and incomplete that I began to question if I had received a blessing at all. But there is one thing I do not question; and it is that there is one God of heaven and earth: that He is King, Ruler and Almighty; that He spoke the world into existance; that He sent his only Son into the world; that He gave his Son a people; that his Son has saved every one from their sins that the Father gave him; that when time is no more every one the Father gave the Son shall see Him, be like Him and be satisfied.

I do not understand many things, nor can I explain many things I hope to believe. But if in deed and in truth the dear Lord has blessed me, He will not forsake me. His promises are sure — they will not change, they will not fail. I love to be with those who hope to love the dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

I hope you and Sister Spangler are well, and that it may please the dear Lord to continue his blessings on you.

With love and hope,
Reidy Pickral

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Pigg River Association* is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with Basham Church, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, August 4, 5 and 6, 1972. Please note that the meetings all three days will be held in the Cave Spring High School Building. This is the same school building that the association was held in in 1968.

Those coming from the south on Route 220 will turn left on Route 419, which is the old Starkey Road, and pass the new Tanglewood Shopping Center now under construction about 1.3 miles, then turn left about 1.3 miles to the Cave Spring High School Building.

We cordially invite our correspondents and other brethren to meet with us.

Marion C. Sumner, Church Clerk
John D. Wood, Assn. Clerk

UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

The Sixty-sixth Session of the *Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association* will be held with Gilliams Church as the host church, but the meeting will be held at Bush Arbor Church the third week-end July 15th, 16th, and 17th, Saturday, Sunday and Monday, 1972.

Bush Arbor Church is located approximately 2 miles northwest of Anderson School, and one mile south of Jericho just off of Highway number 62. The church may be seen from 62 Highway, Caswell County, N. C.

We extend a cordial invitation to our correspondence, ministers, brethren and friends of our faith and order.

Donald E. Smith, Assn. Clerk

UPPER COUNTRY LINE
UNION MEETING

The *Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Union Meeting* will be held, the Lord willing, the fifth Sunday, July 30, 1972, with Big Meadows Church. Big Meadows Church is located approximately 15 miles south of Graham, Highway 87, and 10 miles north of Pittsboro, Highway 87, in Chatham County, N. C.

We cordially invite our correspondence, ministers, brethren and friends of our faith and order.

Donlad E. Smith, Assn. Clerk

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the *Skewarkey Union* will be held with Falls of Tar River Church, Rocky Mount, N. C., the 5th Saturday and Sunday in July, 1972.

We invite our brethren and friends to meet with us.

Joseph A. Leggett
Stokes, N. C.

ALL DAY MEETING AT SLATE HILL, N. Y.

An all day meeting of Gospel preaching is appointed to be held at the Old School Baptist Meeting House at Slate Hill, N. Y. on the first Saturday in August, which is August 5th, 1972.

All lovers of the truth are invited. Lunch will be served.

Elder A. J. Slauson

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, with Sandy Grove Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in July.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 203, Stokes, N. C. 27884

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The one hundred thirty-first session of the *Staunton River Association* will convene, the Lord willing, with Canaan Church located on Highway 844, in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, Friday before the second Sunday in July, 1972. (July 7, 8, and 9)

All who plan to attend should preceed to Danville, Va. and follow Highway 29 to Highway 41. Proceed on 41 about fifteen miles to Highway 355. Signs will then direct you to the church. We greatly desire the presence of all lovers of the truth for this association.

Burnell B. Williams, Assn. Clerk

REQUEST

Sister Rena C. Smith, Rt. 5, Reidsville, N. C. 27320, is desirous of obtaining a copy of the Zion's Landmark of about 1897 or 1898, in which the exeperience of her uncle, Walter Cobb, was printed. Her's has been lost and she would appreciate it if someone could find a copy for her. — Editor

Danville, Virginia **July, 1972**

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All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances should be mailed to Danville, Virginia, as shown below. All notices of meetings and obituaries should be mailed directly to P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Virginia 22110. Articles for publication may be mailed to either address.

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EDITORIAL

THE GREAT SERMON OF SERMONS

(Matthew, fifth sixth, and seventh chapters)

My Bible has been before me for a long time opened at the 5th chapter of Matthew. My fervent prayer has been, Lord, make these words real and alive to me! I am not satisfied with the natural meaning of these simple statements, as they appear in this material Bible, — I want to experience hearing these words accompanied by divine revelation in my soul. I want to feel their power in my life. I pray that you empty my mind of all that is carnal and past: — yea, fill it with living words of Eternal Life! Carry me back in Spirit to the time and place where these words were spoken upon the mountain to your disciples. I have been patiently praying and waiting amidst impatience and despair. Lord, reveal.

Jesus speaks peace to my soul as He reveals to me things I have never seen before, You do not know what you are asking. You don't need to be led back to the place and time to experience this. These things are spiritual and eternal. That was a natural mountain in the place where I sojourned for a little season in time. I have raised you up out of the slough of despondency and have carried you upon the spiritual mountain of Zion. Our conversation is in heaven. I am the great Teacher who teaches My teachers to teach. I have ordained you to write and publicly proclaim that which I reveal unto you. *My* sayings are appropriately written in *red.* It took *my blood* to clothe the naked law with the color of hope. It took *my* righteousness to over-arch the pathway of your life with the splendor of the heavenly *bow. MY* grace and truth converts duties to privileges. I set my commandments as *gems* in your soul. I move your heart gently, calmly, and slowly in the way of peace and understanding.

You have thought of the kingdom of heaven as something that you would never enter until after your life on earth is over. Your carnality causes you to so reason. You are no different from others in your carnal ideas. I want to show you this Kingdom is not of this world but it *is now* being experienced by *my* brethren. I, the Son of Man and of God, am King of this Kingdom. *My* Father gave *me* this kingdom. I intercede for it *now.* My Father, Jehovah, has no rival. There is none beside Him. He does according to His will and works all things after His counsel. The devil, Satan, is *my* rival, *my* enemy, and *my* evil. I am Father of the subjects of *my* kingdom; Satan is father of the subjects of his kingdom. Satan's subjects shall ever be willing to do his will. Satan hinders you as he hindered Paul. *My* Father is faithful to His promise that I shall overcome to the extent of destroying Satan and all of his works. Every time I appear to you, Satan flees. When I disappear, Satan enters. Satan torments and confuses. I comfort, encourage, and soothe you with peace that passes understanding. It is for your good that I disappear for a season; else, you would not know from whence comes your salvation. I deliver you, or save you, many times from the pitfalls of Satan.

You are resting awhile in this heavenly conversation in seclusion. Your question, Why speak to me of *them*? — you speak of others when you say, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for *theirs* is the kingdom of heaven." I, Jesus, say to you: It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. Preach the Word. Out yonder among the multitudes are many of my people who greatly desire to hear proclaimed these words of mine which I have received of My Father. I was telling these few disciples who sat in a circle around me that those who possessed these god-given characteristics among the mulitudes we had left, were in this kingdom, even though they were not present with us. They were children of the kingdom. They were sheep among the goats who would follow *my* under-shepherds. I am the chief shepherd and

teacher. I instruct you how to teach my people by speaking and writing. I will be with you in your attempts to preach and write; My spirit shall guide you in all truth and take of mine and show it to you while you are speaking and writing.

I show you a chain of precious gems in the beatitudes. Each is connected with another, and the last is connected with the first. This forms a ring of brilliant divine jewels of the subjects of my kingdom. Each and every subject of grace makes manifest each and every one of these jewels. These are as chains of gold about the neck and rows of jewels on the right cheek. I am the CENTER. When I am in the midst of just a few forming this circle, each right cheek is toward *me* .Where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am in the center. My first words after baptism and the temptations as recorded in the Bible were, Repent, for the kingdom *is* at hand. I chose natural fishers and ordered them to be fishers of men. The gospel net will catch men who are blessed with divine characteristics. You cannot see your gems and jewels that I have adorned you with; but your brethren can. You can see their gracious adornments that I bestow upon them; but they cannot. People who are self-centered have their fill of self-gratification. They are full of self-praise and boasting. They are rich in spirit according to their own estimation. It is an agonizing experience to be emptied of selfishness, pride, and worldliness; yet the naked law is designed for this purpose. The law is a school-master to bring you unto *me*. When you *come,* you are empty and desolate. When you are full, you have need of nothing. You come to me empty. I pour into your fainted and empty soul enough to sustain you *now*. *The* soothing oil of grace lifts your bowed down head as I pronounce the blessing of being poor in spirit. You are being rewarded by the revelation that all such are members of the Kingdom. You are being filled with the riches of amazing grace. It does not mean that you are poor in material things. Material things have lost their brilliance and enticements to those who have been emptied of the love of self and the satisfaction of carnality. Your interest is in the kingdom of heaven. You have just been weaned from the breasts of natural consolations. Kingdoms of this world can no longer suffice to satisfy your desires. Tribulations have worked patience in you and has resulted in humility. No philosopher has listed humility as a virtue. Being poor in spirit is not a condition of life, it is the temper and state of the mind. It does not denote circumstances, but inward character.

Your soul mourns because you are poor in spirit. I comfort you with the blessings of my promise to wipe away the tears of humility, repentance, and love. Self-love, pride, and covetousness, have their tears which cause carnal mourning; but, until you are emptied of them, I cannot comfort you. The grace that lies at the foundation of every other, is to depend upon *Me* for all things. You must feel so dependent upon Me that you realize that without me you can do nothing. You mourn because your vain confidence is broken up, and your presumptous self-righteousness is cast aside, your vain life with its thousands of violations of the holy law floods your mind! I comfort you by revealing to you that I took the slashing and piercing of the sword of divine justice in your stead. *My* spirit makes you free from guilt.

Meekness is the opposite of all that is arrogant, forward, and self-asserting. The meek will not demand his rights, but will suffer wrongdoing at the hands of enemies rather than to retaliate. You do not demand your rights but you inherit them as my gift to you. Yea, you inherit the earth as my reward which is a result of your meekness. A soft answer is mighty to turn away wrath. Satan cannot stand meekness; he will flee from it. Meekness is humility in the midst of persecutions. I prove to you that the quiet might of gentleness puts

the arrogant to flight. Patience and submission is more powerful to subdue your persecutors than the attempt to affirm your rights by words or force. I teach you to pray to God for reconciliation to your lot, rather than to retaliate against your persecutors by grevious words and actions. Grevious words stir up anger: I teach you to be quiet and do your own business. Nothing necessary for you shall be taken away by your enemies. All you need of earthly things, you shall have as an inheritance. Natural bread for your body as well as spiritual bread for your soul, keep your soul and body from famishing. You can eat but one meal at a time, wear only one suit, occupy only one place, take one step, speak one word, have one thought, and do one thing; if you are enabled to do this, What more do you need for this moment? You need not store up food, clothing, money, real estate, and other earthly treasures in order to survive this day: I know what you need; I will supply your every need. The mighty shall be brought down by *my* Father. This kingdom which is not of this world shall finally subdue all the worldly kingdoms. Kings of worldly kingdoms are arrogant, forward, and self-asserting. I, Jesus, am meek and lowly, yet the Heavenly Kingdom is built and ruled over by *me*. My subjects are poor in spirit, they mourn when I am absent, meek, hunger and thirst for righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, and are peacemakers; yet, they esteem *me* as their prophet, priest, and king! The subjects of *my* kingdom overcome the world because I dwell in them: yea, I am in their midst.

My people hunger and thirst after righteousness. I sprinkle your parched lips with living waters now and then. I sup with you on the wine of the kingdom. Your soul is sprinkled with the water of life. You sometimes wade and swim in the Holy Waters for a moment. You look forward to passing from time into eternity for the fulness of satisfaction of never thirsting. You hunger and thirst after righteousness when you are made to know that you have none of your own, — nor any means to purchase it. I purchased it for you. I give it to you as you have need of it. I am the bread of Eternal Life. I am your righteousness. *My* doctrine is your bread for your soul. I give you water springing up into everlasting life. I have set you apart to especially favor you with *my* righteousness. I have sanctified you unto a most-holy climax.

"Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy." It is not that you obtain mercy by virtue of your mercifulness, but rather your mercifulness is the stamp that I have given you as proof that you are an inheritor of free forgiveness. I stamped your heart, mind, and soul with the divine favor freely given you of mercy. Your reaction is that you are merciful to others as I have forgiven you. "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." You cannot purify your own heart. When I purify it, you detest even the best of your own righteousness. You then converse with God in prayer through *me*. As I reveal the Father to you, you see Him. I prepare you to see Him. You can only stand short glimses of Him. Be patient. When you awake in His likeness, you shall see Him as He *is*. I am eternal. You are not in time when you see *me*. I raise you up into the eternal *NOW*. You have experienced being lifted up beyond the timely realm. I have shown you things unlawful to utter in time. I sympathize with your cast-down feeling when you re-enter the timely realm. You grieve because you cannot call to remembrance the things you saw and heard. This brief moment in eternity causes you to pray for its fulness.

I have divinely favored you with the gift of peace. It is so stamped upon your heart that you hate confusion, trouble, disturbances, debates, and wars. When you attempt to negotiate peace, you are ready to sacrifice anything and everything that could be considered as personal opinions, worldly, or sensual.

You cannot sacrifice the gifts and graces of the Spirit, because they are yours. God is the only one who can take them away! Peace be unto you.

"Blessed *are* they which *are* persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs *is* the kingdom of heaven." The first beatitude is tied unto the eighth beatitude with the words, "For theirs is the kingdom of heaven." These eight jewels signify the eight characteristics of each and every one of this kingdom. Your enemies shall persecute you because you are poor in spirit, and mourn, hunger and thirst for righteousness. They will revile you because you are meek and lowly. They will scorn you because you take persecutions without retaliation, forgive without being even asked, and do everything you can to live peaceable with all men. They even call you cowards because you do not fight for your *rights*. This sermon on the mountain is as fresh and beautiful today, as when my lips first parted to utter it to my disciples. These sayings of truth shall ever shine as the most precious jewels in the hearts of *my* people. *My* people rebel at the reasoning that the Bible is obsolete. Those who say that this sermon only belonged to *my* disciples who were with me at that time know not the truth. I make it fresh to you *now*. These words *live* for they are *WORDS OF TRUTH*.

I, E. J. Lambert, do testify that the words afore-written are my feeble attempts to express extemporaneously a very small portion of revelations that I have experienced while sitting at this typewriter. They have come with such authority that I did not hesitate expressing them as though Jesus was speaking. I am so finite that I only skimmed the surface of this conversation in heaven. I make no claim that it is infallible. Cast a mantle of charity over the many mistakes. I trust that while you read this article that it inspires you to again read the Sermon on the Mount as recorded in Matthew. May Jesus open unto you the scriptures of eternal truth. We pray God to enable us to write further upon this Sermon. This we will do, if God permit.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Palmetto, Tenn.,
June 7, 1869

Brother Beebe: — If it is not too much trouble, please give your views on Romans ix. 11-13, and thereby oblige your sister in the Lord, if a sister at all.

Sarah J. Oneal

Reply. — The words on which we are requested to write are as follows: "(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth,) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."

The great theme of the apostle, in vindication and illustration of which he used the words proposed for consideration was the Righteousness of God, of which his Hebrew kindred after the flesh were so profoundly ignorant as to excite his passionate sympathy as a man; for he says, They being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have thereby repudiated the righteousness of God.

The righteousness of God, especially as it is demonstrated in his absolute sovereignty in the election, redemption, and everlasting salvation of his people, has never been palatable to the depraved taste of men in their fallen state; for the carnal mind is enmity against God, and they have a much more exalted appreciation of their own fancied righteousness than they have of the righteousness of God. In vindication of the supreme sovereignty of God, Paul did

not attempt to apologize for God, or to soften down what God has said upon the subject, in order to make it seem less objectionable to carnal reason. Knowing perfectly well what would be the caviling and blasphemy of men, he could even anticipate their very words, which have been reiterated thousands of times since he foretold, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? "Such outbreaking blasphemy fully and fearfully demonstrates that they esteem their own righeousness as far superior to that of God, while they would arraign him at the bar of their carnal judgment and condemn his government, inconsiderate of who, and what they are ; "things formed saying to him that formed them, Why hast thou formed me thus?" They are ignorant of God's righteousness, nor can they ever understand it but by immediate revelation. Should they be humbled under his mighty hand, and reconciled to him, by the death of his Son, then will they with all the sanctified, gaze, admire and adore and praise him, and with humble reverences confess that, as the heavens are higher than the earth, even so God's ways and thoughts transcend our ways and thoughts.

The righteousness of the sovereignty of God appears to the enlightened child of grace, in all his works of creation, providence and grace; for it is right that he shall work all things after the counsel of his own will. This must be right unless it can be made to appear that he is bound to work all things after the counsel of some other will. How blindly infatuated must he be who fancies himself capable of suggesting an improvement upon the will or works of the supreme God. A more sublime subject than this, of the righteous sovereignty of God, has never been contemplated by men or angels. Go back with us, in thought, into the ancients of eternity, strike from existence all created beings and things, and what would remain? Only the self-existent, independent and eternal God. There being none with whom to take counsel, was it possible that he should consult any but his own will in creating all beings and worlds that he has called forth into being? Being alone, and having the power and the wisdom, was it his right to create all things? If so, can we deny just such worlds and things as were in accordance with the counsel of his will? We are told that "For his pleasure all things are and were created." Was it right or wrong that he should work all things after the counsel of his own will? If it was right, then he is a rightful Sovereign. But if we say it was wrong, what law has he violated, and who shall call him to account? "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, to form one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?"

> "Shall the vile race of flesh and blood
> Contend with their Creator, God?
> Shall mortal man presume to be
> More holy, wise, or just than he?"

If the righteousness of God's sovereignty shines in such resplendence in creating all things. If it be admitted that God had a sovereign and unquestionable right to make all beings and things just as seemed right to him, then let every mouth be sealed in silence that would complain because men were not angels, and angels were not Gods.

Waving for this time, for lack of time and space, a discussion of the righteous sovereignty of the Supreme Ruler of the universe, in his works of providence, we will come to the subject more immediately embraced in the scriptures on which our views are solicited. The rightousness of God's sovereignty cannot shine with less resplendence in the economy of grace, than it shines in creation and providences.

In the purpose of God according to election, the discrimination set forth by the apostle in our context, in the family of Abraham, between the children of the flesh, and the children of promise, and between the twin sons of Isaac, clearly shows the sovereignty of God

in election, and rejection or reprobation. "For the children" (namely, Jacob and Esau) "being not yet born," (that is, they were not born when God told Rebecca that) "the elder of them should serve the younger." God's decision therefore was not influenced either by the good or bad works of the children, but upon his own unbiased decree. "That the purpose of God according to election might stand." If we admit then that God had a purpose in the matter, and that his purpose was not influenced by the good or bad works of either the elected or the rejected, we cannot avoid the inevitable conclusion that God's purpose was a sovereign purpose. But here arises the enmity of the carnal mind of man. If God had rested the destiny of these two children on the purpose of their own will, arminians would have been satisfied; but in resting his decision on the counsel of his own will, they rage and blaspheme.

In this part of our text, marked by parenthesis, as explanatory of the doctrine of Divine Sovereignty, the decree of God fixing the irrevocable destiny of Jacob and Esau before they were born, or had done good or evil, was, and is a purpose of God according to election, and therefore a divinely established exemplification, or illustration of God's sovereign and immutable purpose in the election of his people in Christ Jesus, irrespective of their works, as influencing his choice of them.

2. As the purpose of God controling the birthright privileges of Jacob and Esau was according to election, even so God's purpose which he purposed in himself before the world began, controls the election of grace, otherwise the case referred to could not be according to election.

3. The irrevocability of the purpose of God in assigning to Jacob and Esau respectively their place and position in the family of Isaac, was cited to illustrate the inflexible perpetuity of the purpose of God in the election of his people to salvation in our Lord Jesus Christ. "That the purpose of God according to election **might stand.**" God has provided against any or all opposing powers or influences, so that his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. He is in one mind, and none can turn him; his purpose of election therefore must and will stand.

4. It is also infallibly provided as to how God's purpose in the election of his people shall stand, both negatively and positively. Negatively, "not of works." Neither the willing of Isaac, nor the vigorous running of Esau could shake or disturb the standing of God's purpose concerning them; and as the infallible standing of his purpose in their case is "according to election," so the election of grace shall stand uneffected by the will or works of men. "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God that sheweth mercy."

In the affirmative, it is positively asserted that the purpose of God in election **stands,** and its unshaken standing is "of him that calleth." "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." — Chapter 8: 29, 30. All is of him that calleth, their predestination to be conformed to the image of the Son of God, their justification, and ultimate glory, is of him "who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." — 2 Tim. 1:9. That which was done before the world began, could not have been induced by anything done by us after the world began. Then let earth rebel, and hell despair, the purpose of God in and according to election stands firmly as stands the throne and government of the eternal God, nor can the gates of hell prevail against it.

In farther confirmation the apostle repeats what is written of what God has said in Malachi 1. It is addressed to

Jacob, as the type of his elect people. "I have loved you, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and I laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the Lord hath indignation forever?" Here the discriminating love of God to his children or Israel is strikingly contrasted with his hatred to the persistent workmongrel Edomites, or children of Esau, at which they murmur, and complain that they are impoverished, but not disinclined to build up the works which God abhors and which he will ultimately and forever throw down.

In answering the request of sister Oneal, it has not been our aim to palliate or apologize for the Supreme Potentate of the Universe, nor dare we. God will vindicate the righteousness of his eternal sovereignty, and crush beneath his wrath all opposing powers. His secret is with them that fear him, and to them he will show his covenant. They who love this doctrine and rejoice that the Lord absolutely reigns, have the unmistakable evidence that God has chosen them to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. He has reconciled them to himself, (not become reconciled to them; for there is no change in him) and being reconciled to him, he cannot be exalted too high, nor invested with too much power and majesty to suit them. The doctrine that exalts their God and Savior and abases the creature, feeds and feasts their spiritual appetites; and their most exalted theme is to exclaim with all the heaven-born saints, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord, God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe July 15, 1869)

OBITUARIES

BROTHER ROY P. MAXEY

Brother Roy Price Maxey, son of the late Robert William and Roberta Whorley Maxey, was born in Bedford County on November 26, 1907 and passed away March 25, 1972. He was married on October 20, 1927 to the former Florence Dudley. He was a Veteran of World War Two, serving in both the European and Pacific areas.

He is survived by his wife, Sister Florence D. Maxey of 1301 Pechin Ave. S. E. Roanoke, Va., one daughter, Mrs. Elnora M. Paitsel, Vinton, Va., one granddaughter, Miss Melissa Paitsel, Vinton, Va., two sisters, Mrs. R. L. Witt, Huddleston, Va., Mrs. I. R. Hubbard, Moneta, Va., one brother, Mr. J. M. Maxey, Vinton, Va.

When I received the request from Sister Florence to prepare this memorial, I believe in a measure I felt as Peter did when Jesus turned and looked upon him. He went out and wept bitterly. I, too, wept bitterly because I felt my unworthiness and inability for such a task. However, since this is her desire, by the grace of God, I will do the best I can.

Brother Roy joined the Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church June 18, 1950 and was baptized July 16, 1950 by the late Elder Landon Harris. He was ordained a Deacon on January 5, 1957.

Brother Roy was severly afflicted and spent over two years in the Veterans Hospital in Salem, Va. He was so tenderly cared for by Sister Florence, his daughter and her family and the staff at the hospital. They all ministered to his every need, sparing nothing in the way of personal sacrifice that would contribute to his comfort and well being.

There were so many times when we would in our weakness, wonder why he had to be so afflicted. But now I feel it might have been to show us that death can be so beautiful. His love for his Church and his brethren was such that his home was always open to his brethren and their comforts. He loved to hear salvation by grace so proclaimed that it caused him to travel far and near to hear the gospel preached. He was an example I feel, of a true child of God, in his meekness, quietness, patience and understanding, that he was so blessed to walk quietly and in humbleness among his brethren, always having the welfare and the care of his Church upmost in his heart. My husband and I feel our life is richer by far, for having known such a lovely brother and friend.

His funeral service was conducted at Roanoke Church on March 27, 1972 by his beloved pastor, Elder Cecil E. Turner, who spoke so comforting from the First Psalm of David, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." After which Brother Roy's body was laid to rest in Mountain View Cemetery, Vinton, Va., under a beautiful mound of flowers. There to await the morning of the resurrection when he will be brought forth to forever dwell with his precious Lord and Master.

May the kind Heavenly Father now be with his lovely family left behind and still lead them by his grace and mercy and comfort them with the Holy Presence that can be felt in the heart.

Written by a little unworthy sister,
Mrs. H. C. (Rlee) Houchins

SISTER RUTH KIRK NORRIS

Sister Ruth Kirk Norris, of 1414 8th Street, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, was born December 1, 1906, and passed away November 22, 1971, at Druid City Hospital. She first joined Enon Primitive Baptist Church, Itawa County, Alabama, in 1914, and moved her membership to Nazareth Primitive Baptist Church, Tuscaloosa, County, in 1951.

This dear sister is survived by her husband, Elder W. L. Norris; two daughters; Mrs. James Wallace, Tuscaloosa, and Mrs. W. H. Smith, of Rogersville, Alabama; two grandchildren; one sister, and two brothers.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer at Memorial Chapel, with burial in Memorial Gardens, beneath a blanket of beautiful flowers.

Our sister was a devoted mother and truly a Minister's companion, with much love for her church. She was loved by all who knew her. Her expressions of great joy with gentle voice will be missed much in her church. We mourn with her loved ones over the loss of such a dear sister, but we have reason to believe that our loss is her eternal gain, as she died as she lived, Trusting in God. Salvation by God's grace was her theme.

Written by the request of her family.

Elder H. C. Moon

MOTTIE FRANCES STANCIL ELMORE

Mottie Frances Stancil Elmore was born August 16, 1895, and was called from this life November 13, 1971, making her stay on earth seventy-six years. She was the daughter of the late Jessie Grant Creech and Endie Hare Creech, of Johnston County, N. C. She was married to the late Wade Stancil, and to them were born five children, of whom four are yet living.

She is survived by two daughters: Mrs. Joyce Backus, of Newport News, Va., and Mrs. Christine Pfoffenback, of Minneapolis, Minn.; two sons, John Elden Stancil, of Hopewell, Va., and Willie Cleo Stancil, of the U. S. Navy, San Diego, Calif.; one sister, Minnie Spencer, of Petersburg, Va.; fourteen grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

She united with Creech's Primitive Baptist Church in 1912, and was a member for fifty-nine years: until God called her home. She loved the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God. She was not able to attend the church meetings as she wished, due to her staying around with her children most of the time, and depended upon someone elso to bring her to the meetings. She often spoke of the love she had for her church and fellow members.

Her funeral was held at Gould Funeral Home, Hopewell, Va., by her pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, Jr., and Mr. Kennedy Smart. She was laid to rest in the Appamatox Cemetery, Hopewell, to await the coming of the Lord.

Written by Sister Mollie Hocutt and Mary Creech. Conference March 25, 1972.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Mod.
Jeffrey O. Creech, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT
DEACON ARNOLD F. PEPPER

Paran Primitive Baptist Church of Hawkins, Texas, was shocked at the sudden death of another precious member and deacon, Arnold F. Pepper. He was born August 27, 1903, and died March 4, 1972, being 69 years of age. He is survived by his widow, Lillie Grace Pepper; five daughters: Norma Force, Della Clary, Dorothy Horton, Patsy Kallon, and Janice Dye; two step-sons: Walter L. and James P. Wheeler; three brothers: A. N., A. C. and A. V. Pepper; two sisters: Mary Willis and Sue Chastain; seventeen grandchildren; eight great grandchildren, and numerous other relatives and friends.

Brother Pepper was blessed with sterling characteristics which resulted in his orderly walk as an excellent citizen, husband, father, and friend; as well as to enable him to be a devoted and faithful member and deacon of the church. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace through Jesus Christ. He especially believed that a godly walk should adorn the profession of all church members. He did not want to do anything that would bring reproach upon the church which he esteemed so highly, by any carelessness in his deportment.

Paran Church mourns with the bereaved family, praying that God will reconcile us to His will, and cause us to be content with our lot in this matter. We shall miss Brother Pepper greatly, yet we trust that our loss is his eternal gain. May we cherish his memory!

This Resolution of Respect read and adopted by Paran Church in regular conference this first day of April, 1972, ordering copies given to the family, filed with our records, and published in the *Signs of the Times* .

Elder E. J. Lambert, Moderator
Opal Burgin, Church Clerk

ELDER L. H. STEPHENSON

The flight of time has brought us to face the sad reality and solemnity of the passing from time to eternity of our esteemed brother in the faith and ministry, Elder L. H. Stephenson, who peacefully fell asleep in Jesus on September 20, 1971, at the age of 85.

He was born June 17, 1886, in Johnston County, N. C. where he spent his life.

He was thrice married, first to Callie A. Johnson, July, 1907. Upon her death, his second marriage was to Alice C. Lassiter, January, 1912, who preceded him to the grave. Lola S. Peele became his third wife April, 1927. She, too, preceded him in death.

The following children were born to each marriage. To Callie A. Johnson, his first wife, was born one daughter, Ava, who died in her early forties. To his second wife, Alice C. Lassiter, were born two sons, Donnie, Route 1, Willow Springs, North Carolina; Nimrod, Route 1, Garner, North Carolina; and three daughters, Ethel Briley, Alexandria, Virginia; Edne Dupree, Route 1, Angier, North Carolina; and Dorothy, who died in infancy. To his third wife, Lola S. Peele, were born two daughters, Lola S. Delbridge, Goldsboro, North Carolina, and Catherine S. Painter, Altavista, Virginia.

Elder Sephenson united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Rehoboth, Johnston County, North Carolina, in August, 1903, and was baptized by Elder Jim Johnston. He began Preaching in the year 1910, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry in August, 1914.

For many years he served churches in Johnston County and Nash County. His preaching was sound and true in doctrine and experience. Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to his family, the church, and his friends.

May our benediction for him be: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." (Ps. 17:16)

Done by order of Conference, October 2, 1971, at Scotts Church, Wilson County, North Carolina. Written by Elder W. E. Turner.

W. E. Turner, Moderator

ELDER C. L. COKER

We, The Church of Otters Creek, have again been called to bow in submission to the will of God in the passing of our beloved Pastor, Elder C. L. Coker. On April 29, 1910 he and his twin brother, Linwood, were born. He had two more brothers and four sisters. Their parents were Mr. and Mrs. C. L. Coker. On December 25, 1931 he and Ruth Brown were married. They had two children and seven grandchildren.

On December 12, 1948 Elder Coker asked for a home in Lower Town Creek Church and he was gladly received. In 1959 his wife asked for a home in Lower Town Creek Church and was a faithful member as long as she was able to go. She passed away in 1960. In 1953 he was ordained for the Pastor of Lower Town Creek Church. He was soon called to serve Otters Creek Church, Old Sparta Church, Williams Church and he did serve Greenville Church for a while. The Lord only knew how hard it was with us to have to part from him. He was so faithful to us. He would come when he was not able to come. We, the Church of Otters Creek, have not only lost a precious pastor but a dear one in Israel, one whom all of us loved and appreciated a lot, but we have to be reconciled to God's will. His will shall be done.

There is so much to be thankful for in having such a beautiful example of Christian life laid down before us. We should all remember to thank God for His goodness and mercy shown to us, blessing us with such a good Pastor as Elder Coker. He preached Salvation by the grace of God and stood firm in that doctrine which is only given by our precious Savior, Jesus Christ. Elder C. L. Coker was a firm believer in Salvation by free grace and grace alone. His mind was ever with his Churches, his brethren, sisters and his many friends. We have lost a wonderful servant of God, but ever trusting in God who has the power to raise up others to preach His everlasting Gospel as Elder Coker did. He manifested his life by an orderly walk and Godly conversation. Jesus said ye shall know them by their fruits. God is the only one able to cause humanity to walk the life this dear servant walked. He was very thoughtful of those that were afflicted and could not go to their meetings, but he did not forget them. He was so true in visiting them. He was married the second time to Mrs. Katherine Forbes who survives. He was blessed with two good wives who did everything they could for his pleasure. He was a good husband and a good father to all of his family.

Funeral services were held February 15, 1971 by Elder A. P. Mewborn at his home church, Lower Town Creek. Burial was in Greenwood cemetery in Tarboro, N. C.

We extend our sympathy to all of his loved ones. We know their feelings of losing such a good husband and father as he was, but the Lord is able to reconcile us. We know God's will shall be done. We shall not question why he was called to his eternal home because God knows best when to call his loved ones to that eternal rest.

Elder Coker was ordained into the full work of the ministry in nineteen hundred fifty-three. He served four churches regularly, and visited his sister churches a lot. He was called on for more funerals than any Servant of God I have ever known. He is missed greatly. He married 138 couples, baptized 75 and preached 1,000 funerals. All of us loved him but God loved him best.

Written by one who highly esteemed him.

Addie L. Wooten

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It has been God's will to take from us our dear sister, Emma Ann Dew. She was born November 2, 1886, and died January 25, 1972; making her stay on earth eighty-five years.

Sister Dew joined Tarboro Church September 4, 1965, by letter from Falls Church. She was a faithful member, and was kind and gentle and always ready to offer her help to the needy all her life. She was blessed to have a good family, who are loved by all. To know Sister Dew was to love her.

We, the Church at Tarboro, feel that our loss is her eternal gain: we feel that she is at rest with our Saviour: therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be placed in our church records; one sent her children; and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church at her February meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Mod.
John H. Coker, Clerk

SISTER MILDRED SMITH

It pleased the Lord to call Sister Mildred Smith home from much suffering, on November 1, 1969. She was married to Cleven F. Smith February 2, 1910; and to this union were born nine children.

Sister Smith united with the church at North East years back. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and the gospel was food to her. She was a faithful member and attended when her health permitted. We at North East Church loved her, but feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

May God in his great wisdom comfort the family and all others who mourn her passing; and reconcile them to his holy will.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder L. L. Yopp and Mr. Gordon Byum and she was laid to rest in Memorial Park, Jacksonville, N. C. There were many beautiful flowers sent by friends. Written by Sister Effie Morton, Assistant Clerk.

Brother Sammons, Clerk

LENA DIX MCKINNEY

Sister Lena Dix McKinney, wife of the late Elder Samuel M. McKinney, was born March 4, 1885 and died October 28, 1971, having lived eighty-six years in the Mayfield community of Rockingham County, North Carolina.

She was married November 19, 1905 to Samuel M. McKinney, Sister McKinney is survived by six daughters and one son; Mrs. Muriel Strader, Mrs. Irene Setliff, Mrs. Connie Page, Mrs. Kathleen Haskins of Route 2, Ruffin, North Carolina, Mrs. Mossie Walsh and Mrs. Viola Hill of Danville, Virginia and Grover C. McKinney of Eden, North Carolina, fifteen gradchildren and eighteen great grandchildren.

Sister McKinney united with the church February 24, 1929 and was faithful to attend meetings when physically able.

Funeral services were held October 31, 1971 by Elder D. V. Spangler and she was buried in the church cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

We feel our sister could witness with the poet when he said:

"Trials must and will befall,
But with humble faith to see
Love inscribed upon them all,
This is happiness to me.

Trials make the promise sweet,
Trials give new life to prayer,
Trials bring me to his feet,
Lay me low and keep me there."

Harold D. Weatherford

SISTER EMMA CONGLETON

Sister Emma Congleton was called home from much suffering January 16, 1972. When she was born is unknown. She was married to Brother Woody Congleton, and to this union there were no children.

She joined the church at North East in 1944, and was a good and faithful member as long as she was able to attend. We at North East Church feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Robert Lyliston, and she was laid to rest in the New-

bern Cemetery. There were many flowers which showed the esteem in which she was held. Written by Sister Effie Morton, Assistant Clerk.

Elder Robert Lyliston, Mod.
Brother Louis Sammons, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It is the desire of Tarboro Church, that I attempt to write the respects of our dear Sister Alma Gooch Ethridge. Those who were blessed to know her, feel that it is much that could be written. I trust God will give me a mind to write just a portion of it.

Sister Ethridge was born October 19, 1878, and died February 25, 1972, making her stay on earth 93 years. She was blessed to raise a family of eight children, who survive her death. For many years she was blessed to have a home in the Primitive Baptist churches. Sister Alma showed much love to her children and church, and was faithful as long as her health would permit. In her last days, she was blessed to have a family that cared and waited on her during her sickness. Sister Ethridge was a firm believer in "Salvation by the Grace of God." She was always ready to tell of His mercy and love, and how she trusted in Him for guidance. Her life was filled with trials and trouble, but she looked to her God to protect her. He would give her the strength she needed, although things would get mighty dark at times. She always wore a bright smile to cover up her troubled times.

She is survived by the following children: Mrs. M. Clark, of Greenville; Mrs. Daisy Pendergrift, of Pine Level; Mrs. Matta L. Johnson, of Rocky Mount; Mrs. Callie Carter, of Tarboro; Mrs. Grace Gurganus, of Wilson; Mrs. Alma Carpenter, of Wilson; Mrs. Sallie Howard, of Kinston; and Lee Gooch, of Tarboro.

Sister Alma's funeral was preached by the 93 years she lived, but the respects of her body were in our church at Tarboro, with a house full of relatives and friends. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes and Elder S. R. Boykin. Her body was laid to rest under a blanket of flowers in a near by cemetery.

Therefore be it resolved: (1) That our loss is her eternal gain, (2) That we send our sympathy to her family, and trust they will follow the path she has left behind, (3) That three copies of this resolution be made, one to be sent to the family, one to be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and one to be placed in the church records.

This done by order of conference at our March meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

MARY ELIZABETH VIA SMITH

We bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father in the calling of our beloved sister in Christ. Sister Smith was born April 1, 1887, the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. W. D. Via, of Stuart, Virginia. She was called home January 10, 1972, in Morehead Memorial Hospital, Eden N. C. at the age of eighty-four years, from a stroke suffered two weeks previous to the heart attack from which she passed away.

Sister Smith was united in marriage to Mr. Charlie Paris Smith of Elamisville, Va. November 11, 1912, at Stuart, Va. by the late Elder S. A. Thompson. To this union was born one son, Howard Kelley Smith, who died at the age of four months.

Sister Smith joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Spray, N. C. September 3, 1921, and was baptized by the late Elder J. A. Ward. She was a faithful member until trouble came into the church, when she withdrew, and was received at Dan River Church on confession of faith. She was a lovely and faithful member and attended her meetings until she fell in her home and suffered a broken hip, and was unable to attend any more. She was a beloved member of the Primitive Baptists for more than fifty-one years.

It was indeed a pleasure to visit in her home. Her husband was a very kind and a wonderful person, and enjoyed the church people as much as she, and enjoyed her pastor's talk on the Scriptures, Elder D. V. Spangler. May God who does all things right, comfort him in his lonely hours of sorrow, and bless him always.

The writer and her husband visited in the home many times, and enjoyed listening to her speak of her wonderful Saviour's blessings she had received all the days of her life. She was a lovely neighbor and friend. To know her was to love her. The writer does not have words to express how much she loved her, and misses her. The last visit Elder Spangler made with her, she asked him to speak on the Resurrection.

In the absence of her pastor, her funeral was conducted by Elder Haywood Wray and Mr. John R. Still in the Fair Funeral Home Chapel, and she was laid to rest in Lawson Cemetery, to await the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour.

She is survived by her husband, Mr. C. P. Smith, and one niece, Mrs. Randolph Joyce of Fieldale, Va. May all who knew and loved her be blessed to feel that she had spent her allotted time, and that the Lord was pleased to take her to a better home, where the sorrows and cares of this world are taken away.

Written at the request of Dan River Church while in conference February 26, 1972. Her memory is very dear to me.

Lessie W. Tilley

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 140 DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1972 NO. 8

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8/72
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ENJOYED ELD. BOWDEN'S CIRCULAR LETTER

P.O. Box 551
Monticello, Ark. 71655

Dear Elder Spangler:

Am sending $5.00 to renew my subscription another year. I want you to know I get much comfort and consolation out of reading the wonderful letters of experiences and sermons of the precious little children in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Dear brother, it seems at times I just can't bear the loneliness that befalls me. The longing to be face to face with my Lord and Master! I am much comforted when I am enabled to pick up the *Signs* and read of some precious brother or sister who has had a similar experience. I want you to know that I especially enjoyed the Circular Letter written by the late Elder W. R. Bowden, which was printed in their Minutes of 1867, and republished in the Signs. It appears to be quite clear that Elder Bowden was chosen by, and a true instrument by the grace of Almighty God, for the teaching of His Unerring Truths.

If I have received an understanding of the Holy Scriptures, especially that of predestination by the determinate will and counsel of Almighty God, I can see by Elder Bowden's writings that the same power that caused him to write nearly an hundred years before my time, must be the same one and the same power that causes me to understand as I do. For by reading his writings I was made to rejoice and am comforted.

What is an experience? It is wisdom gained by observing, doing, or living through things. An experience of grace can only be obtained by the will and purpose of the Holy Spirit that dwelleth in you; and that not of yourself, but of God. How wonderful it is to be able to communicate and fellowship with the dear ones of like faith, concerning the common salvation made known to us by the everlasting mercy of a covenant God. Especially when we deserve the wrath of God Almighty. We must therefore praise that one who was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

My dear brother, what wonderous love is this? How can it be that one such as I am could indeed have a hope of that eternal bliss in the heavenly abode, when I rightly and justly deserve God's wrath. But, oh, that precious and wonderous good news that did and does declare healing for the sick, a balm for the wounded, a just foundation for the weak, and forgiveness of our sins—and so much more.

Ah, if it were possible for me to comprehend just a small portion of that matchless glory of our risen Saviour. How I pray and desire that the Holy Spirit would reveal himself to me, and relieve me of many doubts and fears, and the weakness and sins which so easily beset me.

The longer I stay in this low ground or world of sin and sorrow, the more I am made to desire a closer

walk and greater communion with my Lord and Master. How I pray that He will have mercy and compassion on me, and bless me with a moment of communion with him, and enable me to serve him in this life; that he may grant me wisdom and understanding, and enable me to praise, honor and glorify his matchless name.

I know that He shall receive the glory in all things, but it is sweet indeed to know that communion with him. I often wonder if I have ever known that true power in my life. I pray that I have, and that it may be pleasing to Almighty God to have mercy on this unworthy and poor sinner. But I do not even feel worthy to beg him for his goodness.

David B. Lawson

APPRECIATION

807 Pope Street,
Memphis, Tenn. 38112

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

I was thinking of you while addressing the envelope—thinking of the patience, love and work it must take from all of you in getting out the paper; but went right on stamping and sealing the envelope. And when I finished, I thought, What a thing to do—just send something we wish published in the paper and no word of any kind with it. Isn't it strange? I imagine most all of us think often of our appreciation for the effort on everyone's part in the paper coming to our homes each month, but don't take the time to say the words.

I dearly love reading the experience people have along in their lives, that teach them, purges them, stirs, and then settles them. We are wounded, then healed; killed and made alive; lifted to the heights and then brought low in the dust. I used to think of the things I would read as being done just once: when we were made alive or quickened, but I believe our experiences go on over and over again. I was talking recently with someone about being given a strong consolation: those who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before them. I used to think that after being enabled to lay hold of this hope, we shouldn't doubt; but I believe our sins are shown to us from time to time so plainly that we are made to seek a place of refuge in God's mercy; and it seems our hope is not lively, and we feel that even it may be gone. Then God in his mercy again enables us to lay hold of it. Peter said, "He hath begotten us again unto a lively hope."

I tried to write the obituary plainly so you could read it. We are very few in number here, but wish you would be coming our way again.

In bonds of hope and love,
Lucille Young

THEY ENJOY THE SIGNS

508 C Street, N.W.
Grants Pass, Ore. 97526

Signs of the Times:

I am enclosing check for $12.00 for two years subscription to the *Signs,* and $5.00 for the Indigent Fund.

I surely enjoy the *Signs,* as they are so handy to read in bed, and are so full of good reading. This is the sixteenth year I have had the paper. I am now eighty-four, and I remember my father was a subscriber when I was young. Let me say thanks to the Editorial Staff and all other contributors.

Respectfully,
Andy D. Hall

P.S. My wife sends along some of her thoughts and comments:

I send this note to tell you how much I love the *Signs of the Times.* We do enjoy reading it. It brings us sweet comfort when we are blue and undone. Reading an article often brings the sunshine in our home. I love God but I am so weak and unworthy, and pray for a closer walk with Him.

I am eighty-three and failing in health, and it won't be long until I

cross the valley of death, and sleep in peace; and dwell with God's chosen people who have gone on before. I love the doctrine of God our Saviour.

Love,
May Hall

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2 CORINTHIONS 5:18,19

"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." (2 Cor. 5:18-19)

The theme of this subject is Jesus Christ who redemned his people from the curse of the law. He has presented his people spotless before God.

It is plain that "all things are of God." He has created all things for his pleasure. "For *by him were all things created,* that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: *all things were created by him,* and for him: And *he is before all things, and by him all things consist.* (Colossians 1:16-17) We read that "God has created the wicked for the day of evil." (Proverbs 16:4)

Do you not believe that God controls all things? "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are numbered." (Matt. 10:29-10)

"All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28) Since all things are of God, then he certainly has a purpose in using or controlling them for the good of his people. Notice that the Scripture said all things and not some or most things. These "all things" include both good and evil.

Let us take the case of Joseph. This is a good example of how God used evil things for the good of his people. Joseph told his brethren: "As for you, you meant it for evil, God meant it for good." All of the evil that was brought upon Joseph was used as a means for the good of the Children of Israel. This is a hard doctrine, but God controls all things, and he is the only one who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean. "I have purposed it, I will also do it." (Isaiah 46:11)

"Who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ." The meaning of this is that the perfect law of God was offended, and offended justice demanded death. "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." (Gal. 3:10) Curse means death. "...without shedding of blood is no remission." (Heb. 9:22) The justice of God demands that sin will not go unpunished. Who suffered the punishment for the people of God? The answer is Jesus. Peter said, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." (1 Peter 2:24) Jesus bore the sins of his people on the cross. "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." (Isaiah 53:5) He was treated as though he was a sinner. It softens one to think of the spotless lamb of God dying in the room and stead of the sheep.

Jesus is the good shepherd and he gives his life for the sheep. He knows his sheep and he loves them. (See John 10:14-15)

Jesus is the mediator between God and man. He has brought them together by peace. "Having made peace through the blood of the cross." (see Col. 1:20)

Jesus as man could die. But as God he could not die. That is why it was

necessary for Jesus to assume human flesh. "Forasmuch then as the children as partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." (Heb. 2:14-16)

"Hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation." This is the work of the Holy Ghost, the third person in the trinity. (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost)

Now, as God enables us, let us comment on the 19th verse of this text. "To wit, that God was in Christ." As one looks at Jesus when he was upon this earth, he sees God. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." (John 14:9) Jesus is God manifest in the flesh.

Let us think of the words of Paul: "...feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." (Acts 20:28) One may wonder, how did God die, and bleed for his people? We answer, Paul did not mean this has reference to God the Father. This means God the son in the face of Jesus Christ.

It is a hard matter to attempt to separate the three-in-one God. There are not three separate Gods but simply the Three-in-one God.

We read in one place: "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one..." (John 17:23) So, we see the close relationship in the Godhead, and between Christ and the Church. "Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one..." (Hebrews 2:11) Jesus has sanctified his people, and his people who benefit by this sanctification, are all one. We think of it this way: "Christ is the head of the church." There is a close relationship between the head and the body. The body is the church. So Christ is the head and the church is the body.

"Reconciling the world unto himself." We must be careful in explaining what is meant by the word "World". The truth must be rightly divided. The text did not say that God tried to reconcile the world. But it was done! It was not left up to the creature to do the rest of this work of reconciling. This is the work of God, and I am glad that He finished the work. "For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness..." (1 Romans 9:28)

God either reconciled the "World" unto himself or else he failed to do so. The people who are reconciled to God shall be saved. This world in the text means the sheep world or the saved world, or the children of God.

The word "world" in the Bible does not mean the same thing everytime we read it. We have to examine what is under consideration, and what is the subject matter. Let us use this for an example: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) Now, the word world in this text means God's people. These are the ones that God loves and the same ones that Jesus died for.

In the above examples, the word "world" means the children of God. Let us notice the prayer of Jesus. "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." (John 17:9) Dear one, do you not believe that Jesus would pray for those that he loved? So, the word "world" in John 17:9 and John 3:16 has two different meanings. The "world in John 17:9 means all of mankind. Jesus did not pray for all of the human race. He prayed for those that God had given him. "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." It did not say that all of mankind should be saved. Jesus did not fail to save his people from their sins. He has redeemed his

people, and he did not fail to perform this mission. "He shall not fail nor be discouraged." (Isaiah 42:4)

We see a sweet connection between the subject of Jesus praying for his people and his making intercession for them. No where do we read that Jesus is making intercession for all of the human race. We do read that he ever lives to make intercession for the saints. (see Hebrews 7:25, Romans 8:27) We think of the 17th chapter of John as an intercessory prayer. It is very sweet and precious when in a measure we feel what Jesus did when he prayed such a wonderful prayer.

"Not imputing their trespasses unto them." The word "impute" means charge to or put on account. God did not charge the sins of the sheep to them. Someone has to pay the debt. Who? The sheep have become indebted to justice. In fact, all of mankind have become indebted to justice. Justice demands death for this broken law. This death is an eternal separation between God and man. "The wages of sin is death." It will take the wicked eternity in hell to satisfy justice. If it were not for the love and mercy of Almighty God, the doom of all mankind would be eternal hell.

The good Shepherd has discharged this debt by dying for the sheep. "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the rightousness of God." (2 Cor. 5:21) This is the substitute offering of the innocent lamb of God who died for the guilty. Jesus has washed away their sins and they stand holy and perfect in him. If it were not for the mercy of God, our doom would be everlasting destruction from the presence of God forever.

"Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will no impute sin." (Rom. 4:8) God's people are a blessed people. You are blessed because God took your sins and charged them to his dear son, Jesus. The sins were imputed to Jesus. Only the sins of the sheep were imputed to Jesus. Therefore, the sins of the wicked are imputed to them, and they shall pay for this debt. They shall receive their wages and this is death. (see Romans 6:23)

"Hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." We have mentioned that this is the work of the Holy Ghost. So this must come by revelation. I am glad that God did not leave this in the hands of man. "But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart." (2 Cor. 3:15) God changes the hearts of his people, and they all shall know him.

This is not passed on from one generation to another. It is impossible for man to teach others to know the Lord. It is one thing to know something about God, and another thing to know him. "...I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." (Hebrews 8:10-11) Let us examine this Scripture carefully. One expression says "they shall not teach every man his neighbor to know the Lord". In other words, leave this off because this is the work of God. But man worries if God is able to perform his work. So man wants to try to help the Lord. God does not need any help. The Scripture ends up saying "they shall all know me from the least unto the greatest." This shows the power of God, and that God is able to teach his people.

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of Truth whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." (John 14:16-17) Notice that the world does not re-

ceive the Spirit of truth. The children of God receive the Spirit of truth, and it shall teach them. All shall know him because the Spirit of truth teaches the people of God. Notice the sweet connection between this point and the 8th chapter of Hebrews.

"And all they children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." (Isaiah 54:13) You are taught by the spirit of God. This is the still small voice which you hear in your heart.

This text is applicable to all the saints of God. There shall come a time in their life when they feel the need of a savior. If you feel the need of Jesus, something must be wrong with your own refuge. One must feel the need of a savior before he will be blessed with the sweetness of this salvation.

It is the work of God to show you your sins. It is not pleasant, is it? It causes you to blush before your God and your head is bowed low, is it not? We read: "Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations." (Ezekiel 36:2)

It does not make any difference how great the sinner is or how hard the heart is. But if one is a child of God, he shall be brought down at the appointed time. "See now that I, even I, am he, and ther is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand." (Deut. 32:39) The pride of man must be killed and this is the work of God. How hurtful it is to be wounded by the Spirit of God! One is wounded in order to bring him down low. We read: "Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord." (Obadiah 1:4)

In your experience the law shows you the weakness of the flesh and in due time you are taught your helpless condition and that there is one who loves and saves you forever. You are taught in due time that you are a ruined, wretched sinner in the hands of a perfect God. We think of this as the terrors of the law. There is not any mercy in the law. "He that despised Moses law died without mercy under two or three witnesses." (Heb. 10:28)

God does finish a work that he begins. Maybe some of you have been made to doubt and fear. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. 1:6) This means that surely as God begins a work in one He will complete it at the appointed time.

First, one is taught his sinful condition, and then he finds that something in him begs for deliverance. One of the thievers on the cross was taught his sinful condition, and faith was given him that Jesus is the Christ, and is his Savior. The dying thief begged: "Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." (Luke 23:42) How sweet were the welcome words of Jesus: "To day shalt thou be with me in paradise." (Luke 23:43)

God's people are taught in the school of experience. "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." 1Gal. 1:11-12) This is applicable to God's people through out all ages. God teaches his people by revelation today as he did during Paul's time.

It may be that some of you are begging for deliverance; and it may seem your case is hopeless. Let us remember that God never forsakes his people. These trials teach you patience, do they not?

In due time the Holy Ghost shows you the word of reconciliation. This is the application of the blood of Jesus. "And, *having made peace through the blood of his cross,* by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in

earth, or things in heaven." (Col. 1:20) This is a sweet peace that is felt in your soul. The blood of Jesus speaks better things than the blood of Abel. (see Heb. 12:24) The blood of Abel cried vengeance, but the blood of Jesus speaks peace and pardon to the conscience of one.

This is a sweet deliverance, is it not? "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us unto the kingdom of his dear son." (Col. 1:13) This is something that gives you a sweet hope of eteernal life and gives you fresh courage to press on in this wilderness way.

May the Lord bless what is written in honor and praise and glory to His Holy Name. may God bless the truth and pardon the error.

W.W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

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123 Pecan,
Channelview, Texas 77530

Dear Brethren:

We send greetings to the Editors and supporters of the Signs. Above all, we thank God for preserving a remnant that stands firm on the Rock that the gates of Hell shall not prevail against.

Please send six copies of the December, 1971, issue of the Signs. It is worthy of sharing with dear friends.

I am sending a copy of a letter I wrote to my brother on the subject of Hope. Use it any way you see fit.

We have been blessed beyond measure at meetings in the southwestern U.S.A. May the Lord continue to bless us all as needs demand.

In hope of eternal life,
Earl W. Hall

THE LETTER

Dear Lane,

I hope that this will find all fine. This leaves all OK here except Susan. She has a cold. We enjoyed our vacation in N.C. Glad to see all the folks. We had a good trip home. The mountains were pretty. It was just 36 miles farther that way.

I enjoyed the Bible discussion we had. A good discussion like we had, is profitable. I don't believe that we had any argument at all. If I said anything that hurt your feelings, please forgive me. I don't want to do that. I do feel that some good has already come from our discussion. I have thought about it and read about it in the Bible. All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose. We were talking about the salvation of the children of God. You used the word assurance, and I used the word hope. Now let us see how these words are used in the Bible. The word assurance is used 7 times in the Bible. Deuteronomy 28;66, "And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life." Verse 64 says that they will serve other gods, even wood and stone. Isaiah 32:17, "And the works of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and *assurance* for ever." Acts 17:31, "Because he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given *assurance* unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." Here all men are assured that Jesus will judge the world and he was raised from the dead. Colossians 2:2, "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love and unto all riches of the full *assurance* of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God and of the Father, and of Christ" . Verse 1 says, "For I would that ye know what great conflict I have for you." It was Paul's desire that they have a full assurance of understanding. 1 Thessalonians 1:5, "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much *assurance;* as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake." Here the gospel came in much assurance and power. Heb-

rews 10:22, "let us draw near with a true heart in *full assurance of faith,* having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." This verse speaks of a full assurance of faith. Faith comes from God. We don't walk by sight, we walk by faith. That that is not of faith is sin. Hebrews 6:11, "And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the *full assurance of hope* unto the end." Here Paul desired that every one there have a full assurance of *hope.* Now these 7 places are the only places in the Bible where the word assurance is used.

What about the word Hope? Hope is used 127 times in the Bible. I won't comment on each time it is used. This brings us to a very good question. What does the word hope mean? I am not talking about a foolish desire. Any sane person that knows anything about the Bible would say, I hope that I don't go to hell, and at the same time act like the devil and show no sorrow because of sin. This is not the hope I want to talk about. I will give one reference to that now and pass on. Job 8:13; "So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish."

Now we want to speak of the hope of the child of God that has been born again. There is only one hope for us and that is Jesus. Colossians 1:27, "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is *Christ in you, the hope of glory:* Now let us go to the Broadman Hymnal, hymn no. 96 and the Baptist Hymnal, hymn no. 283, verse no. 1, "My hope is built on nothing less, than Jesus' blood and righteousness. Hebrews 6:19, "Which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." Verse 20, "Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." 1 Peter 1:3, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a *lively hope* by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." This shows a lively hope. Jesus is the way, the truth and the life, and also our hope. Verse 4, "To an *inheritance* incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." Now here is a sure thing that fadeth not away and it is an inheritance. We inherit this because we are sons and daughters. Who are they? Verse 5, "Who are kept by the power of God through faith *unto salvation* ready to be revealed in the last time." The children of God are kept by the power of God and no man can pluck any out of His hand. Romans 8:24, "For we are saved by *hope* : for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for." Verse 25, "But if we *hope* for that we see not then do we with patience wait for it." Now this is what we believe or know by faith, as the song in the hymn book says, "He lives within our heart." From time to time we feel the Holy Spirit. We have a foretaste of heaven. We have not yet come into full possession of salvation. As long as we live on earth we will suffer. How can one suffer and be fully saved? Yet we have hope, we have fed on the crumbs from the Master's table. Our cup has run over, yet we haven't fully entered into salvation as it is in heaven. Let me say here and be understood; all that have or ever will feed on the crumbs from the Master's table here in this life will be brought into their full salvation in heaven for ever and ever.

Now we have come to this question: how do we come into possession of this *hope?* I have heard some say, to give your "heart to God". Let us see what kind of heart a person has before he is born again. Jeremiah 17:9, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" This kind of heart doesn't seem like a suitable gift to God. A heart in this condition won't

improve by itself. Ezekiel 36:26-27, "A new heart also will I give you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgements, and do them." The stony heart and heart of flesh are spoken of here. The stony or hard heart here is something hard to change. Did you ever see a stone change its shape or form by itself? A stone is always moved or changed by the forces around it. As in the case of nature, wind, rain, heat, cold, gravity, etc. change and move th estone. It is the nature of a sinner with stony heart to continue in its old path until the presence of God starts taking away the stony heart. Remember, The Lord takes away the stony heart and will give you an heart of *flesh*. We want to think of the heart of *flesh* for a moment, or the new heart. It is a new feeling to the old man. The word flesh is what we want to see. John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:14, "And the Word was made *flesh,* and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth." Now this speaks of Jesus dwelling among the people there when Jesus had a body of flesh. When the stony heart is removed and a heart of flesh is put within you, Jesus dwells within you in a spiritual way. Again as the hymn says, "He lives within our heart."John 3:8, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and wither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the spirit."

All that we have written about flesh and stone, it can't be found by X-ray. We can't see with the eye where it comes from. We can feel the effect of it. A man is like a windmill. The spirit comes like the wind. You can't see it or see where it comes from or where it goes. The spirit causes the man to move; so is everyone that is born of the spirit. The wind caused the windmill to turn. Did you ever see a windmill make the wind to blow? Did you ever see a dead person hunger, seek or find anything? A person that is dead in tresspasses and sin, or one not born again, doesn't hunger and thirst after righteousness. One must have spiritual life before it can have a spiritual appetite. Here is something that is sure to come to pass: Psalm 110:3, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou has the dew of thy youth." There has never been a day that the Lord didn't have all power. The day His power is revealed to His children, they are made willing people. Philippians 1:6, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Now who has first begun this work, man or Christ? The Bible says Christ began the good work in you and will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

Now what do you hear the most talk about, *man accepting Christ,* or *Christ accepting and saving man?* 1 Corrinthians 1:2, "And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know." We have spoken of these things recorded in the Bible and believed by faith. The Bible speaks of the believer being saved. Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Ephesians 1:4, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Now none of the ones not chosen will truly seek God. All the chosen will come to God. John 6:37, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." All

that were given Christ will come to him, and none will be cast out. How do they come to Christ and by what power do they come, man's strength or God's strength? Man's will or God's will? John 6:44, "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me *draw* him; and I will raise him up at the last day." It seems that there is no place to stop. I hope that this will explain more clearly what I tried to speak of while visiting with you dear people. May God richly bless, lead, guide, guard and direct you. I will close with this verse. Titus 1:1, "In hope of eternal life which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

Earl W. Hall

AFFLICTIONS—AN INSTRUMENT OF TEN STRINGS"

"And it came to pass that when the Jews which dwelt by them came, they said unto us ten times: From all places whence ye shall return unto us they will be upon you." (Nehemiah 4:12)

There is a song which begins, "Zion afflicted wave upon wave," and so seems to be the case at times in the lives of God's children. I have wondered at this, and in the midst of hard afflictions I could not refrain from the desperate question, "Why Lord, Why?"

And it seemed the Lord, ever merciful, not willing that I should perish in my rebellion, directed me time after time to the 4th chapter of Nehemiah. As I pondered this chapter wondering what it contained for me, slowly I began to see, I trust, the great troubles and hindrances caused by the enemies of God to the building up of the Heavenly Jerusalem, for by every way in which His children walk toward Zion these enemies are upon them, their chief weapons being unbelief, doubts and fears.

At the beginning of this chapter, the wall began to be built in much weakness, at the last the builders are armed with weapons and strengthened. At the first there is much crying aloud to God concerning their enemies; later, encouraging one another..."Be ye not afraid of them; remember the Lord." At the first the enemies' attacks are successful; at the last, their counsel was brought to nought. And finally we see lookouts on the wall ready to sound the alarm and faith saying, "Our God shall fight for us."

These significant differences came about after the bulders were told not once, but *ten times* that is, they were thoroughly instructed in the craftiness, subtlety, strategy and weapons of their enemies. When these things were known the builders were on guard. They learned to use the weapons and armor provided for them; and above all they put away fear and took comfort in utmost confidence in the Lord, their God.

The Lord has also sent word to His people: His prophets, His Son, His dear saints of old who have lived among the enemies of God, have told it. But how many times must His little children be told? How many skirmishes with satan will suffice to instruct them in his manifold weapons and the strategy of his surprise attacks? How many troubles and how many deliverances must be effected until their faith in the keeping power of God in His loving watch-care over His people, is established unto His praise, honor and glory?

"Because all these men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now *ten times,* and have not hearkened to my voice." (Numb. 14:22). Though these awful words were unto the destruction of the unbelieving, to their children these provings and temptings were made remembrances of the Lord's long suffering mercy, of His utter worthiness to have all power over their lives.

"Behold the devil shall cast some of you in prison, that ye may be tried, and ye shall have tribulation *ten days:* be thou faithful unto death and I will give you a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10). When satan casts a child of God into a prison of unbelief, the afflicting rod of the Lord must answer doubts and fears, until faith breaks his bonds and inherits the promise.

And so these afflictions in the hand of God become His rod of instruction, and it is only by the grace and love of Almighty God, the gentle persuasions of His blessed Son, and the sweet influences of that Holy Teacher, that these same afflictions then become an instrument of *ten*

strings, (Psalms 33, 92, 144) for the Lord will have praise from His people, not dishonor. By them we sing a new song unto our God of praise and thanksgiving, because we have learned of the enemies of the Lord, (Psalm 92), and He has brought their counsel to nought. (Neh. 4:15, Psalm 33:10) Where once their lies caused us to cry, "Can the Lord furnish a table in the wilderness?" (Psalm 33:18, 19)

When once we cried, "Lord, Thou art cruel to me," (Job 30:21), we can sing with Job, "I know that thou canst do everything..." (Job 42:2). And though delivernace is much to be desired, we find it not in the strength of natural helps or possessions, (Psalm 33:16, 17), but we can sing with David:

"I will sing a new song unto thee, O God: upon a psaltery and an instrument of *ten strings* will I sing praises unto thee. It is he that giveth salvation unto kings (and paupers) who delivereth David (his people) from the hurtful sword." (Psalm 144:9, 10)

But David continues to pray, not to be rid of troubles, but to be delivered from the enemies, "whose mouth speaketh vanity and their right hand of falsehood." And he sets forth the blessings which will come about upon being rid of these scorners and liars against a Holy God. (Verses 12, 13, 14)

I believe those of God's children who have been rescued from satan, the world, and the flesh from their lies and unbelief, who stand armed and watchful even as Nehemiah and the builders, ever praying, to their God against these enemies, will find these same blessings, and more: that the Lord's mercy will be upon them according as they hope in Him, (Psalm 33:22). "For according to your faith be it unto you." (Matthew 9:29). "And they will sing with David in loud voice." "Happy is that people that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord."

Kelsey Swain

Dear Editors:

The above article was written by one of my members of Shepherd Fold Church, Houston, Texas; Sister Kelsey Swain. She is the daughter of the late Sister Buena Wright, who was wondrously taught of the goodness and greatness of our God. The Dear Savior saw fit to call her from our midst a few years back. Oh, how it grieved our poor soul, she was so precious to us. Sister Swain was not a member at the time of her mother's death, but in due time the Dear Lord lead her to us. She has been brought through some very deep waters and great trials and tribulations, only to strengthen her faith in her God.

We wanted to share this article with the readers of *The Signs of the Times.* May the Dear Lord continue to bless you dear editors with your work.

In bonds of love,
C. M. Haygood

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The 1972 session of the South Ouachita (Wash-i-taw) Association convenes with Liberty Hill Church, located six and one-half miles northeast of Farmerville, La., comencing Friday before the 4th Sunday in September, 1972. Lovers of the truth are welcome.

Eugene Patterson, Clerk
203 Line St.
Farmerville, La.

CHANGE OF MEETING PLACE OF PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Pleasant Valley Primitive Baptist Association was appointed to be held with Pilgrim Rest Church, Lawn, Texas, but please note that it has been changed to the Shepherd Fold Church, 815 Little York Road, Houston, Texas, to begin on Friday before the third Sunday in August—August 18, 19, and 20, 1972, at 10:30 A.M.

Our correspondents and brethren are cordially invited to meet with us.

Jimmy Lindsey, Asst. Clerk

ELDER GEORGE RUSTON PASSES AWAY

Just as we had finished this edition of the *Signs* July 12th, we were informed by Elder Stuart McCall that Elder Ruston had passed away. We know that the brethren and friends will be saddened with us when they hear this news. He was a beloved Associate Editor of the *Signs* for many years.

We will have a suitable obituary later

J. D. W.

Danville, Virginia **August, 1972**

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POLICY OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

We would remind our readers that the Signs of the Times, Inc., is owned by the Old School or Primitive Baptists, and is operated by a Board of Trustees. We, as Editor and Managing Editor, have the responsibility of sending forth the paper as representative of the doctrine and practice of the Old School Baptists, as set forth in the Word of God, and maintained by the Signs since its beginning.

A great responsibility rests upon the shoulders of the Editors in managing, editing and sending forth among the thousands of Old School or Primitive Baptists members and friends.

Your Editors feel very deeply their responsibility in sending out the paper each month: to contend for sound doctrine and practice, and to guard its pages from strife and confusion.

We want to extend our appreciation to all who have contributed articles for the paper; and to make it clear to our readers that the various interpretations placed upon scriptures, is not necessarily the views of the Editors.

The Signs of the Times since its beginning, has contended for the doctrine of God's *Foreknowledge of all things;* His *Predestination of all things; Eternal personal election;* the *Effectual Call of all the elect by the Holy Spirit;* the *New Birth; Justification of the elcct by the blood of Christ;* and this justification received by each one of them by faith; the *Imputed Righeousness* of Christ's Righteoueness to the elect as their righteousness; *Preservation in Christ* through God's electing love; *Perseverance* through grace unto eternal glory; the *Intercession of Christ* at the right hand of the Father for his chosen people, based upon the merit of His redemption of them by His blood and His imputed Righteousness; *the THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD;Personal Second Coming of Christ* for His people and their

final *Glorification;* and the *Final Judgment of the Ungodly* in the end of the world.

We expect all writings, whether doctrinal or experimental, to conform to these principles of doctrine; and reserve the right to edit or refuse an article that does not conform to these principles.

Finally, brethren feel free to write and express yourselves so long as you are in agreement with the above principles of truth, which are as a chain with no weak links.

Sometimes we read articles in some papers who profess to contend for the doctrine of Free Grace, written by some who hold to Arminian principles. The particular article may be true, but unless it conforms with all the principles of election and predestination, it is deceptive, deceiving and worthless to God's humble poor. As long as a person is identified with those who preach creature righteousness, or works for salvation, he is a party to all the false doctrine and practice they hold, and is not entitled to space in a paper that contends for the doctrine set forth in this article.

Brethren, we desire an interest in your prayers that we may be found faithful in the things of our God.

EDITORS

EDITORIAL

ISAIAH 46:3,13

"Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it. Hearken unto Me, ye stouthearted, that are far from righteousness: I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory."

In the counsel of the Lord standing, and in the doing of his pleasure, there is one event that stands out. All of the declaration is a part of a glorious whole, and deleting and expunging from the Bible will be left to those not in the salutation used in these articles. All the matters of time, including men, things, events, places, etc., are in this declaration. Nothing can be added to it, nothing can be removed from it. But did you notice the center of the counsel? Did you see the most important action in Him doing all His pleasure? There have many momentous events of the history of the church, both under the legal dispensation and the gospel age. But the center and core of it all was the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Those not addressed in the text will preach the river of God's love as being a broad stream, provided, of course, that creatures send in their tributaries to keep increasing the depth of God's love and to cause it to flow and embrace more lands and people; they will touch on the purposes of God in an abstract way, but if you endorse them as preaching that God purposed all things, you have indeed stepped on tender toes. This kind of doctrine, yea, this kind of declaration does not have any absolute (unconditional) promise of the center object coming to pass. The central theme of the gospel is the Lord Jesus Christ; if no Christ, no salvation, and if no salvation the declaration stands as an empty and useless promise.

This calling of the ravenous bird is a type of something precious to those addressed. I will leave the type for those interested in the reading of Jewish history and deal with the antitype, which, to me, is no more, nor no less than the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners. As we think of the word *ravenous* it seems that it is something repulsive. That would be something that was gluttonous and that seems to be foreign to His loveliness. In the New Century Dictionary we have a careful examination made as to the meaning of the word, to wit, Intensely eager for gratification and desire; to sieze as

spoil or prey, In the Hebrew language the word means exactly what it says in the English.

Every kind of kingdom has a king. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. (Dan. 2:44) Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shall break them with a rod of iron; thou shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.' (Psalm 2:8,9) It would seem that this is enough to establish the ravenous powers of this bird. Now to know something of the bird itself. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings, so the Lord did lead him, and there was no strange god with him. (Deut. 32:II,12) I call special attention to this scripture. It has the whole doctrine of our text in it. The key words are the little ones *as* and so, and vitally connected with them is the whole gospel of grace. It is a ravenous bird that is called , and there is not a bird mentioned in the Bible that personifies Him with whom we have to do as does the eagle. For instance, unless we think that Solomon is teaching a lesson in nature, we find that it was too wonderful for him to understand the way of an eagle in the air: and unless we look on God as having declared *short* the end from the beginning, we will know that God deals with those enemies of His as doth an eagle from the air. There is not a condition in the history of an eagle from the laying of an egg to the first flight. The parents are the progenitors of all eaglets; the eaglets did not in any shape form or fashion have anything to do with being hatched. And I desire to leave stakes as I preach and write. Let us put one at this place in our expounding of the text. One ,it is not a removable stake. This is a stake that is as it is. In the same way that this bird takes care of its young, in the same way does God take care of Jacob. If there were any preachers or writers that could get one condition for these eaglets to perform, then there would be that many for Jacob to perform in order to get God to lead him. If there were any helpers to the eagle in her feeding and guarding and helping to fly, however many she would have, God has that many in leading Jacob. *As* the eagle does in caring for her own, *so* does God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; and thus inspiration placed this bird as a weak counterpart or shadow or type of the dear Saviour of sinners.

It is a man that executes this counsel. It is as old as the declaration of the end from the beginning; yea, it is a part of it all. Let us ever remember that this counsel and the Executive of it, is of paramount importance. Predestination nor election or any other tenet of faith is not the main thing. The counsel is the main thing; the Executive is of equal importance. Even the apostle, with all his honoring the covenant of redemption and the counsel of God, did not say that I am determined to know nothing among you save Absolute predestination, but he did say that I am determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified. To me, this is the ultimate object and subject and comfort of the gospel testimony. To dwell on one subject is to say that I am not exercised in all the gospel; to have strict arrogant dogmas and expound them to where we are acting God and supplying our own straight edge to the sending of everybody to hell but those ascribing to our vain theories is begging the gospel, not expounding it. I believe with all my heart that a rigid declaration of God's predestination would not have satisfied those that desired to see Jesus,

nor do I believe that it would have satisfied the Ethiopian . (Acts 8) But I do believe that the presentation of Jesus to them as the Surety or the Man that executes this counsel, will comfort the weak as well as the strong.

God made a promise to our father Abraham. If we are what we sometimes hope, we are a part of that promise, being children and heirs of God . (Heb. 6:13, 20, Acts 3:25; Gal. 4:28) As there is not one shred or iota of haphazard doctrine in God's declaration of the end from the beginning, just so, there is not anything of the sort in what He said by the pen of the Hebrew writer. He swore to this promise. All of the promises of God under legalism were based on the obedience of men. God put that system away because of its utter failure, and instituted a brand new way of dealing with sinners. Today, while banqueting under the banner of the New Covenant, all of the promises of God are. based on the obedience of another, even the Lord Jesus Christ. I am unable to see how that it can be done from a scriptural standpoint, to claim that this promise is left to the will of the creature. In fact, it can not be scripturally done. Here is this counsel again, and it is pictured in the New Testament as it is in the Old; there is not to be any change whatever, for it is immutable. If it is immutable, we have a strong consolation; if it is immutable, it is the old covenant with a new name, and thus we have not got anything any better to preach than was preached to our brethren under the law. All that they were able to do did not satisfy that law, nor did it give them peace of mind. It seems contrary to human reasoning, to say nothing at all about divine mercy, for anyone to preach old things in a new dress when those brethren labored all the way to Pentecost and came in desperation with, "Men and brethren, what shall we do? "and they were told what to do, and that do was predicated upon that unconditional promise (Acts 2:37, 39)

The pouring out of the Spirit is the true awakening, the true and only efficient reason for anyone ever fleeing for refuge. This is the convenant or counsel in action. Remember that this Man is the executive of this counsel. He is from a far country. He came from heaven but He came to earth. In the name of our most holy God, what did he come for? Did He come to do the will of men? If so, let us preach just that, no more, no less. If He did not come for that, but did come to do the will of Him that sent Him, then, by the grace of God, let us preach that, no more, no less. The executive of any will is under the laws of the respective states to do the will of the testator. If God gives us grace, let us preach at least as a good a will of God as men make, but may this poor writer blush at such a silly suggestion—let us, by the grace of God, preach a much better counsel or will or covenant than men preach in nature. This coming from a far country has puzzled the natural minds of men. They say, How can God become flesh? How can this God be both man and God? How can a virgin's womb be fertilized and she conceive without knowing a man? These questions all ways and always show us conclusively that we that are in close (to nature) can never know where the far country is nor how that one gets from it to us.

Once again I call to your attention the difference between fatalism and predestination. If I did not know any more than to charge upon the dear brethren that preach an absolute God, that they are fatalists, methinks I would at least keep my name out of the public's eye. Fatalism is not the work of God. It was in the imagination of ancient stoically-minded philosophers. They had two sources from which everything came, and if, according to their judgment, something did not fit into either category, then, so they said, it came from Fate. Neither the God of evil

nor the God of good had anything to do with it. Our God had a purpose in all that takes place from the morning of creation until the end of time. He predestinated all this; He declared all of this; He swore to all of this. If He did not predestinate all of it, then, by all means, His declaration of it all is as worthless as is our national currency; if He did not predestinate all of it, then that which He did predestinate, and that which He did declare, and that which He did swear to, becomes the same kind of testimony as the gods many and the lords many. Concerning all that He has said, He says, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it. God has not spoken and left Fate to operate; God has spoken and He will bring it to pass; God has purposed it, I will also do it. I do not want any man's explanation of this. The Holy Ghost has spoken, and it is clear and explicit. The Saviour told us that the Holy Ghost would come and that He would take the things of Christ and show them unto us. If we are what we hope, we have heard from Him and have been taught of Him and that which we have received from Him, we, by the grace of God, go preaching.

Now will you do me the favor to re-read the whole text? Three times the Lord addresses specifically to the house of Jacob and the remnant of the house of Israel for a reckoning from them. In the fifth and eighth and twelvth verses they are called upon to present their case. How often that this challenge is issued to those that would make a mockery of the doctrine of God our Saviour. There is not room for two doctrines; God will not give glory to another. If it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, etc., (Joshua 24:15); if you are stouthearted hearken unto me, etc.; then will I confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee (Job 40:7,14) Read all of these references to find out what God calls for from those that would set up an arm of flesh.

Here is the source of righteousness and what is done with it. I am reasonably sure that when under the influence of God's Spirit it is not intended; but so often Peter gets to wielding an arm of flesh, and any effort to put forward our righteousness will be rebuked. We can not handle the Spirit (Eccl.8:8); faith is not an act of the creature, for it is the gift of God, the fruit of the Spirit (did you ever read where the Saviour commanded anybody to have faith?); we do not handle nor put on love, for it is handled in us (Eph. 2:8;Gal. 5:22; Rom. 5:5;I John 4:19) Righteousness comes only from God. The righteousness of the saints is of the Lord; they do not handle it; it handles them; they do not embrace the promises of God in order to get the promises, but they do so because they have them; they do not do good unto all men in order to be good nor do they do them in order to get a blessing, but because they have it.

Joseph's brethren did not have any inkling of what great need would arise in their life. They did not have the adoration and praise of God in view when they sold their brother. They had no more respect to the will of God than I did for twenty years of my life. I intended, as did they to do my will, and had we been left to ourselves there would not have been any salvation. Isn't salvation wonderful? God had it in His mind in eternity, and gave us time that He might make it manifest; that He might bring it near to needy sinners, and that He might bring them to it. As I write, I see no other arm and I hear no other voice than the lovely Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. "Come near unto me." Salvation is ever near; it can not be far off, for the God of salvation, the God of all grace is always at hand. He was at the sea; He was in the fiery furnace; He was in the den of lion's; He was near when Israel hungered and thirsted; He was with

Jacob in the wilderness; He was accompanying Saul in his persecuting rage, and He is with us and near us and within us now, provided, of course, we are of those embraced in the salutation.

This salvation is not the tarrying kind. It does not wait for us to act in order for it to hasten; no, no, it hastens first and deals with us with long-suffering afterwards. God is not sitting at a balance to see if we deserve a blessing or salvation. He sat at a balance in eternity and found us wanting. He did not find any help in the vastnesses of mankind therefore He laid help on One mighty to save; and through Him, blessed us with all spiritual blessings. If there had been one trifle left out of His declaration, then oftimes the salvation would have tarried because Satan would have invented new measures to hinder.

This salvation is not moved about, re-located, swapped, transferred, or been in the hands of sinners at any time. It is placed in Zion, placed where the needy are, made applicable to their state and present welfare according to the riches of His grace in glory, It is lovely when we have a place for everything, and everything is in its place. If we have been thus blessed, it is because of the inwrought likeness of our Father: He has a place for everything, and He places everything in place, including His salvation for Zion or Israel His glory. He had in place before we needed it, and gives it to us in time.

—W.D.G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"And ye will not come to me that ye might have life.'—Most cheerfully we make the attempt to gratify the wish of our esteemed correspondent by offering to him and our readers generally, such views as we have on the text proposed for consideration.

Our Lord wa in discussion with the Jews who professed a sacred regard for the scriptures of the Old Testament, and for all the requisitions of the law which was given to their fathers; but they rejected Christ as the true Messiah which was to come. They had charged him with a desecration of their Sabbath day. Christ asserted his power not only to heal the sick, but also to raise the dead, and judge the world, and claimed that his honor and glory was identical with that of his Father, so that he that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father, for he and his Father are one. He also referred them to the testimony that his father bore of him, and to the testimony of John, and the works which he wrought, and fianlly to the scriptures on which they professed to rely as the infallible truth of God, and in the preceding verse, he said to the Jews, "Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they that testify of me." "And ye will not come unto me that ye might have life."

From this scripture and its connection, as well as from all other parts of the scriptures, we are clearly taught that no external evidence presented to the natural intellect of man, can possibly make men savingly acquainted with our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Son of God, and the only Savior of lost helpless sinners. These Jews were exalted to heaven in regard to their opportunities, and, as he had frequently reminded them, they had been more highly favored in regard to external evidence than any other nation or people undror heaven. To them pertained the giving of the law, to them the scriptures were given; to them all the prophets had been sent; to them John the Baptist had come in the spirit and the power of Elijah. To their shepherds, the angelic messengers had brought down from heaven the news of his wonderful birth in Bethlehem, to them he had personally come in the flesh, in precise agreement with all the predictions of their prophets, and in harmony with all

the types and shadows of their law. In their hearing he had spoken as never man spake, preached as never man preached, in their presence he had healed the sick, cast out devils, raised the dead, and performed many wonderful works, but with all this mighty array of testimony before their eyes, they could not regard him in his true character, as the fountain and source of life and immortaility, or they would come to him for life, instead of seeking to be justified by their own works. And if these Jews with all the testimony which was presented to their natural understanding were still destitute of saving faith in him; how preposerous to suppose that Gentile sinners, with more limited opportunities, should become more savingly acquainted with him, as the True God, and eternal Life, without a special revelation of him to them as such, by the Father, "No man knoweth the Son but the Father, and he to whom the Father will reveal him."

These Jews, as we see, were as destitute of *will* as they were of power to come to Jesus for life, for they neither possessed the ability or disposition to look to him for life and salvation. As to their will, they thought they had eternal life secured to them in the scriptures, inasmuch as they understood the scriptures to signify that salvation was of the Jews, and like all arminians of every other age, their will was enlisted in the vain hope of being justified by the deeds of the law, and to inherit eternal life as a consideration for works of righteousness which they had done, or intended to do. Therefore they had no disposition, inclination, desire or will, to look to him, or come to him that they might have life.

Another evidence that they had not the will was, they did not believe that he had power to give eternal life to any of the children of men; for they did not believe on him as the Son of God. And furthermore, they saw no necessity of coming to him for life, as he had just told them, they thought they had eternal life in the scriptures. They had mistaken that temporal life, which was promised to the children of Israel on condition of their obedience to the law, for eternal life; and claimed that they were Abraham's children, and never in bondage, and hence they spurned the idea of being made free. The reason why they had not the will to come to him for life, is very clearly stated in the thirty-seventh and thirty-eighth verses of this chapter. Speaking of the Father who had sent him, and who had borne witness of him, he said to them, "Ye have not heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you, for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not." They could have no will to come to Jesus, as the only Savior, unless God worked in them, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

We are aware that many are taught that sinners, in a state of unregeneracy, are only deficient in their inclination, and that if by moral suasion their natural minds could be convinced by argument or otherwise that it would be to their interest to come to Christ, their wills would yield, and there would be no other impediment in their way. Allowing this theory to be true, there would be no need of a Christ to save a sinner at all. Every intelligent being knows that the human will of man is accessable to the power of man; and if nothing more were required than a change of will, the selfishness of man may be successfully appealed to by the eloquence of revivalists, and their carnal will enlisted to be happy here and hereafter, and if this were all the difficulty, the work would then be done. But this idea conflicts not only with the scriptures, but also with the experience of every quickened sinner. Every subject of grace will testify that when their blind eyes were opened to discover their sinful state, they were not only willing but would have given worlds, if they possessed them, to see

a way possible for them to be saved without a sacrifice of the justice and truth of God. This is what filled them with deep despair, not that they were unwilling to be saved; but that there were impediments in the way which none but God was able to remove. They knew that they could not be saved in their sins, and they knew not how they could be saved from their sins. Nor could this difficulty be removed from them, until Christ was revealed to them as their Savior. They then felt, they knew, and they confessed, that their salvation was wholly of the Lord, from first to last, that it was not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God who sheweth mercy. But to settle this point eternally, Christ has declared, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." John vi: 44

The caviling of arminians, that the Father draws every one of the human family, is silenced by the declaration that Christ will raise up at the last day all that are drawn by the Father to him. And in the thirty-seventh verse of this same chapter he says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." This settles the matter effectually and forever. The emphatic testimony of Christ himself is an end of all controversy with all who fear God. We cannot honor the Father except we honor the Son, and certainly cannot honor the Son if we believe not his testimony on this, as well as on all other subjects.

That all unregenerated men are destitute of a will to come to Christ that they might have life, is certain from the testimony of the scriptures, especially from the words of the Savior himself, and the reason why they are destitute of the will, is because his word abideth not in them; and the reason why his word abideth not in them is, because they are not, "Born again, not of a corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, *BY THE WORD OF GOD THAT LIVETH AND ABIDETH FOREVER.*" 1 Pet. i:23. And, "Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God." 1 John iii: 9. Of his own will begat he us, with the word of his power." &c. James i: 18. The testimony is not that of *our own* will begat he us, by the word of *our* power. But it is just as our Blessed Redeemer has said: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." John vi. 63. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." John v. 21.

Here we have, in this last passage, an illustration of the manner in which the Son of God quickeneth whom he will. How does the Father raise the dead? Does he wait until the dead are willing to come to him for life? Does he proclaim to the slumbering tenents of the graves, that if they are willing he will raise them and quicken, or give them life? Certainly not, "The Lord shall descendfrom heaven with a shout," (not with a proposition, a proffer or an invitation, but) "With the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. 1 Thess. iv: 16. "We shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised." &c. 1 Cor. xv: 51, 52. "Even so," or exactly so, precisely so, "the Son quickeneth whom he will." Will-worshippers, free-agents, and all arminians, in whom the word of life does not abide, may, with the Jews, rage and blaspheme, but helpless sinners saved by grace, will exclaim in the fulness of their enraptured spirit, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are all thy ways, thou king of saints." "We give the ethanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come,

because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and has reigned." Rev. xv. 3, & xi. 17.

"O had he not pitied the state we were in,
Our bosoms his love ne'er had felt:
We all would have lived, would have died too, in sin,
And sunk with the load of our guilt.

What was there in us that could merit esteem,
Or give the Creator delight?
"It was even so, Father," we ever must sing,
Because it seemed good in thy sight.

It was all of his grace we were brought to obey,
While others were suffered to go,
The road which by nature we chose as our way,
Which leads to the regions of wo.

Then give all the glory to his holy name,
To him all the glory belongs;
Be yours the high joy still to sound forth his fame
And crown him in each of your songs."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe June 1, 1855)

OBITUARIES

ELDER JOHNNY JOYNER

Elder Johnny Joyner, one of the most highly esteemed Ministers of the Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association, passed to his eternal rest October 31, 1971, at the age of 82 years. He was born June 22, 1889, the son of Madison and Ella Beland Joyner. He was laid to rest in the family cemetery at his home place in Nash County near Rocky Mount, N. C.

Surviving him are his wife, Mrs. Fannie Davis Joyner, and five children, three sons, William Fred, Meedy B., and Willie Marvin, two daughters, Mrs. Mattie Ruth J. Barnes and Mrs. Estelle J. Cockrell, all of Rocky Mount, N. C. He is also survived by several grandchildren and great grandchildren, together with two sisters, Mrs. Emma J. Taylor and Mrs. Lillie J. Darden, both of Wilson, N. C., one brother, Wiley Joyner of Rocky Mount, N. C., one half sister, Mrs. Vessie V. Pridgen, one half brother, Charlie Viverette, both of Rocky Mount, N. C. One child, a son, John Vertis, died in childhood.

In May 1915, Elder Joyner united with Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by Elder Meedy B. Williford. In December, 1918, he was liberated to speak in his home Church and correspondence, and was chosen church treasurer, 1922. He was ordained to the full work of the ministry March, 1939, by a Presbytery composed of Elder A. B. Denson and Elder J. D. Fly. He was chosen Church Clerk 1945. At the time of his death he was Pastor of Mill Branch and Rocky Swamp churches.

A more dedicated service was never rendered to the Church, his family and community than was rendered by Elder Johnny Joyner. He was truly led by faith to see beyond times dark and gloomy shadows into the dawning light of eternal day, for he often said when preaching, "I expect to see Jesus." He would refer to himself as the "Little preacher."

Being gentle in manner, orderly in his walk, Godly in conversation, he was distinguished from worldly ways. His life displayed the indestructible evidence of his having been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of the dear son of God. A fitting benediction for Elder Joyner would be, "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God whom I shall see for myself." Job 19:27

Written at the request of his daughter, Mrs. Estelle Cockrell.

Elder W. E. Turner

BESSIE FERGUSON LEWIS

Having been appointed by Dan River Church to write an obituary of Bessie Ferguson Lewis, of which church she was a member, though feeling incapable of the task, I will endeavor to write a few lines in memory of Sister Lewis. Surely an obituary of the beautiful life of this dear Sister is indellibly stamped in the memory of all who knew her—one of meekness, humility, love and kindness. The following scripture applies to Sister Bessie so well: "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; they rest from their labors and their works do follow them."

Sister Lewis was born in Rockingham County near Ruffin, N. C. on November 10, 1883, the daughter of William Henry and Elizabeth Dix Ferguson. She was married on December 9, 1908, to Jeremiah (Jerry) Lewis, who preceded her in death on April 13, 1968. Sister Lewis peacefully fell asleep August 11, 1971, in Danville Memorial Hospital, Danville, Virginia, at the ripe age of 87 years and 9 months. Her survivors include seven children as follows: William Herbert, James P., Jeremiah, Jr., and Jacob Lewis, Mrs. Virginia Spires, Mrs.

Jessie Mae Carter and Mrs. Ruby Dillon. (Two sons, John Herman and George W., preceded her in death). Also surviving her are twenty-four grandchildren and thirteen great-grandchildren, and a foster sister, Mrs. Rose Gray, Huntsville, Alabama.

Sister Lewis united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on Saturday night before the 4th Sunday in August, 1958, and was baptized the following day by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler. In the last few years of her life, she was very feeble, her hearing much impaired; but these afflictions failed to keep her from attending the church she loved so well. With the help of her faithful daughters, leaning on them for support, she filled her seat and feasted on the heavenly manna delivered by her pastor and others.

Sister Lewis made her home in Cascade, Virginia, for 57 years. The kind expressions of sympathy by her many friends, neighbors, Brethern and Sisters attested to the love and esteem in which she was held. Funeral services for our precious Sister were conducted at Dan River Church by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, assisted by Elder Wallace Smith, and her body laid to rest in Danville Memorial Gardens by the side of her husband to await the coming of her blessed Lord, who will raise that body fashioned like His own glorious body. Then she will hear, sing and shout praises to the One she loved and trusted while journeying in this low ground of sin and sorrow.

To her bereaved children I would say, "Though looking through tears, visualize mother not as dead, but as peacefully sleeping, thank God for what her life meant to you, and may He grant each of you sweet rest with her when your course in this world is finished."

This is the humble prayer of one who loved her.

Respectfully submitted:
Eva Eggleton

MRS. NORA J. CANADY

It has pleased the Lord to remove from our midst Sister Nora J. Canady. "The Lord givith and the Lord taketh away, Blessed be his holy name." May the God of all grace bless all who morn her passing.

Sister Canady was born September 7, 1878—died February 27, 1972, making her stay on earth 93 years. In 1898 she was united in marriage to Will Isaac Canady. To this union eleven children were born. Her husband preceded her in death in 1929. Also four of the children preceded her in death. Sister Canady is survived by seven children, thirteen grandchildren, and twenty-nine great grandchildren.

Sister Canady united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in the summer of 1930 and was baptized by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler. She was a faithful member for about 42 years. Sister Canady believed in the sovereignty of God—Salvation by the grace of God. Although she was unable to attend church for some time before her death, she was asking about the meetings and especially her pastor, Elder Spangler. The writer believes that Sister Canady could truly say with the Apostle Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness; which the Lord the righteous judge, shall give me at that day, and not for me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." To know her was to love her.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder's D. V. Spangler and Donald Smith at Wolf Island Primitive Baptist Church. She was laid to rest beside her husband in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour.

Written by Allen Carroll as requested by Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in Conference April 22, 1972.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Brother W. C. Vipperman, Clerk

SISTER IDA LIGHT CRUISE

Sister Ida Light Cruise was born November 28, 1889, and died March 26, 1972, making her stay on earth 82 yrs., 2 months and 26 days. She was married to Jim Cruise in 1905, and to this union were born two daughters and three sons. The daughters Elva and Katheryn and husband preceeded her to the grave several years ago. Her survivors are sons Mr. Coy Cruise, Bassett, Va.; Mr. Orion Cruise, Reedsville, Va.; Mr. Aaron Cruise, Raleigh, N. C.; sisters: Mrs. Joe S. Handy, Reidsville, N. C.; Mrs. Zola

Greenwood and Mrs. Clemence Walton of Amelia, Va., also seven grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Sister Cruise was a member of Green Hill Primitive Baptist Church in Patrick County for a number of years and later moved her membership to Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, Ruffin, N. C. by letter. She remained a faithful member of this Church until death, attending the services when able which is evidence she believed the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone.

Funeral services were held in the Moody Funeral Home Chapel at Stuart, Va. Tuesday March 28, 1972, at 2:00 P.M. by Elder Cecil Turner. Interment was in the Light Family Cemetery near Stuart, Va., to await the glorious resurrection of the saints of God, of which we feel she was one by the fruit she bore. We loved her dearly and enjoyed her visits in our home and mixing and mingling at the church services.

Written by order of the Church at Dan River while in conference April 22nd, 1972.

Carl & Nannie Vipperman

NOPPIE P. MELTON

It is with a sad and aching heart that I write about my lovely sister and Saint of God, Noppie P. Melton.

She was born in the state of Kentucky on December 18, 1884, and passed away on April 22, 1972, making her stay on earth 87 years, four months and four days.

She passed away in Clovis, New Mexico, and was the sixth child of the eleven children of Elder Isaac R. and Sabina J. Greathouse. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church the 29th day of February, 1948, at Muleshoe, Texas, and was baptized by Elder J. B. Hardy. She then moved her letter to Elder Amos A. Deskin's church in Napa, California, where it still remains. She was a faithful member and a strong believer in salvation by Grace and Grace alone. Her first marriage was not a success.

She studied music and became a fine coloratura soprano singer. She could sing to C above high C. She gave many concerts in Chicago, Illinois, and was known as the beautiful "Nightingale Voice of New Mexico."

She married Arnold L. Melton, who was a bookkeeper for the Drake and also the Blackstone Hotels in Chicago. He was accidentally drowned in 1939. She then moved to California where she taught music for several years. She never remarried and never had any children.

Memorial services were conducted by Elder C. V. Venable in the Primitive Baptist Church, Clovis, New Mexico. She was buried in Portales, New Mexico, by the side of our father and mother to await the great glorious resurrection day.

C. H. Greathouse

MRS. SIDDIE COX

Mrs. Siddie Cox of Paris, Michigan, died January 14, 1972 in the Henry County Nursing Home. She was born August 19, 1878, in Henry County, and was a daughter of the late Rufus and Salina Hill Hicks. She was united in marriage to Isaac Cox August 9, 1895, who preceded her in death February 21, 1936. She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church at Walnut Grove.

She leaves two daughters, Mrs. Lillie Scott, of Route 2, Paris, and Mrs. Helen Weaver of Detroit; three sons, Lawson Cox, Clarence Cox and Keith Lee Cox, all of Detroit; a sister, Mrs. Annie Jackson of Memphis. Also ten grandchildren, five great grandchildren, and thirteen great great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held August 19 at Ridgeway Morticians, with Mr. R. Biggs officiating. Burial was in the Walker Cemetery. (From newspaper account of her passing.)

MEMORIAL
ADDIE RUDD OAKLEY AND
E. HUGH OAKLEY

I was asked to write Mama's obituary on her passing, but for some reason known only by God, I couldn't. Since then I have had sweet memories of my childhood I would like to write.

From as far back as I can remember she spoke of the love she had for the Primitive Baptists and their preaching. She loved to sing their songs. She would call me in from play many times to help her sing. One I remember so well is, "While sorrows encompass me round." And another, "Jesus my all to heaven is gone." She proved in her life that she feared God and loved his people. In those days she would be cooking meals for the

family and singing, and tears would be flowing down her face. I didn't know then she was praising her God.

She joined McCray Primitive Baptist Church in October, 1950; and later moved her membership to Prospect Hill Church. God called her home February 20, 1967 at seventy years of age.

I remember Papa and Mama talking, and he would say he believed in an all wise God. He loved preaching that gave God all glory and praise in saving His people.

He went before the church the fourth Sunday in May, 1950 and asked for a home. With tears running down, he told how he had been stripped of all he had, and how he stood before God naked, with nothing to hide himself. There was not a dry eye in the building. Elder Curry King, Elder W. B. Stadler and Elder Harvey Smith were present. He was received with open arms.

On the way home the same evening, he was talking with Mama and rejoicing—talking about his coming baptism, when he stopped the car on the side of the road and passed away a few minutes later. He was fifty-eight years of age.

I miss them still, but I wouldn't if I could, call them from their rest. How sweet it is to fall asleep in Jesus!

Their daughter,
Hallie Oakley Griswald

BROTHER GEORGE WASHINGTON

Brother George Washington departed this life January 19, 1972, while in the Beckley V. A. Hospital. He was seventy-eight years of age. He united with the Hopewell Church, Charleston, W. Va. September 8, 1945, and was baptized by the late Elder Harvey Bird.

Brother Washington was a firm believer in the sovereignty of almighty God, believing in salvation by grace and not by the works of man. He was faithful in attendance and a credit to the church.

He is survived by four children: Mrs. Martha Francisco of Tyler Mountain; John H. and Robert B. also of Tyler Mountain; and James D. of Charleston, W. Va. Also by one brother, Clarence of Campbell's Creek; and a host of friends.

His funeral services were held at the Hopewell Church, Tyler Mountain Road, Charleston, W. Va. conducted by the pastor, Elder J. C. Hammond, on Friday, January 21, 1972; and he was laid to rest in the Washington Cemetery to await the calling of the Lord.

May we all humbly submit to the will of Almighty God, and may the Lord be with all those who mourn their loss, for our loss is his eternal gain.

J. C. Hammond, Moderator
J. J. Bird, Clerk

DEACON CADMUS A. PATTERSON

The subject of this notice was the son of the late W. L. and Amy Everett Patterson. He was born at Holly Springs, Arkansas, October 15, 1900; and passed away in a Little Rock hospital, January 3, 1972; at the age of 71 years 2 months, and 19 days.

To know this dear humble saint of God was to love him indeed; and the longer one knew him in that sweet, humble intimacy, that, if not altogether mistaken, was the blessed experience of the writer—was but to realize an ever increasing enlargement of that warm,brotherly attachment. I trust it was a mutual matter between us, for which I desire to render unfeigned thanks to our great, wise, beneficiet God. May His amazing, unmerited love to poor vile sinners have the praise for it all.

He was baptized into the fellowship of Chapel Hill Chruch, a few miles from his home, in August 1959; was ordained a deacon in July 1968; by a presbytery composed of Elders Lloyd Wall and John Lee Smith; with seven brother deacons assisting in the ordination; and for several years was chosen active moderator of the South Arkansas Association, due to the feeble health of the late Elder John T. Everett, who had served a goodly number of years as the regular moderator.

We will miss Brother "Cad" more than we have power with tongue or pen to express. I have no semblance of doubt, that he, through the sovereign grace of God, was truly one of the Lord's blessed noble men; meek and humble, firm and resolute, yet kind and tenderhearted; he ever evinced, in a considerable measure, that blessed spirit that was so fully and beautifully characterized in the life of the divine Master.

He is survived by his noble, faithful, lifelong companion, Sister Mildred (McDonald) Patterson, Holly Springs,

Arkansas; by their five children, two sons, and three daughters: W. L. Patterson, Texarkana, Arkansas; Grayham Patterson, Traskwood, Arkansas; Mrs. James Ridgell, Hazen, Arkansas; Mrs. C. A. Small, Russellville, Arkansas; and Miss Myrtice Patterson, of Little Rock; one half-brother, Allen Miller, Columbia, Louisiana; one sister, Mrs. Faye Proctor, Holly Springs, Arkansas; eleven grandchildren; with a host of other relatives, friends and members, who are deeply saddened at the loss of this useful, upright man and citizen.

His precious wife and their children will, of course, more keenly feel this great loss than others; but dear loved ones, one and all, may we be given to believe that this, our timely loss, will issue in his eternal gain. Funeral services were conducted at the Benton Funeral Home, Fordyce, Arkansas; by Elders Lloyd Wall and John Lee Smith, January 5, 1972. Burial was in the Holly Springs Cemetery.

May God comfort his bereaved family, together with all who truly mourn the passing of this noble man.

Written at the request of Sister Patterson by her pastor.

(Elder) John Lee Smith

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT OF LENIE ROY LUPER

WHEREAS,God in his infinite wisdom and power has seen fit to call from our midst our beloved Brother, Lenie Roy Luper on September 4, 1971. He united with the Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church when the conference was opened at the water, and was baptized with his companion, who had united with the church the Saturday before, in September, 1964. He lived to be seventy-nine years old.

We, the church at Mill Branch, have sustained a great loss, of which he was a faithful member. He loved his home church, and sister churches and friends. He was a devoted husband, father and friend to all.

He is survived by one son, three daughters, and one brother. His companion passed from this world in November, 1965.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder Johnnie Joyner, and he was laid to rest in the Mill Branch Cemetery in Nash County, N.C.

BE IT RESOLVED,That we, the church at Mill Branch, be submissive to the will of God, and pray that Jesus will comfort and bless each one of us. And that a copy of this Resolution be sent ot the family, one recorded on the church book, and one sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Written by the request of Mill Branch Church in conference Saturday before the 1st Sunday in February, 1972.

Elder Wayne Mitchell, Moderator
Sister Estelle Joyner Cockrell, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT OF ELDER JOHNNIE JOYNER

WHEREAS,God in his infinite wisdom and power has seen fit to call from our midst our beloved Pastor, Elder Johnnie Joyner, on October 31, 1971:

We, the church at Mill Branch, have sustained a great loss for he was a faithful member, Pastor, Clerk and Treasurer; and he was pastor also of the Rocky Swamp Primitive Baptist Church. He will be missed among the sister churches, unions and associations which he was faithful to attend when he was able. He lived to be eighty-two years old. He was a devoted husband, a good father, and a friend to all. He loved his home church and his ministering brethren.

His funeral was conducted by Elder W.E. Turner and Elder Henry Jones, and he was laid to rest in the family cemetery in Nash County.

He is survived by his companion, Fannie Davis Joyner; three sons and two daughters; two sisters and one brother; one half-sister and one half-brother.

BE IT RESOLVED,That we, the church at Mill Branch, be submissive to the will of God, and pray that Jesus will comfort and bless each one of us. And that a copy of this Resolution be sent to the family, one recorded in the church book, and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by the request of Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in January, 1972.

Read and approved by the church in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in February, 1972.

Elder Wayne Mitchell, Moderator
Sister Estelle Joyner Cockrell, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 140 DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1972 NO. 9

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/72
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

EXPERIENCE OF THE LATE ELDER S. O. PLYBON

Rocky Mount, Va.

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood:

A brother sent me a copy of the June, 1905 *Landmark* with my father's experience in it. Will you please print it in the *Signs of the Times?*

He was born December 11, 1850 and died December 3, 1932. He was a Primitive Baptist minister fifty-four years.

In bonds of love,
Posey L. Plybon

Elders Gold and Lester:

I have been requested to write my experience. I will try to tell in a short way what I hope the Lord has done for me.

In my youthful days my father and mother were both members of the Primitive Baptists, and would tell me there was a place of eternal punishment for the wicked, and there was eternal rest for the good people. I thought that since I had never sworn an oath and never was allowed to hunt and fish on Sunday, I was better than boys that did such things. My father died when I was fourteen years old, and it seemed he died so happy. I wanted to die happy too. I told him I would try to meet him in heaven.

One day mother sent me to the mill, and while I was riding along thinking of my condition, I saw myself a poor sinner. With tears in my eyes, I cried, "Lord have mercy on me a lost sinner." I went on to the mill; and the miller asked me what was the matter. I told him nothing. When I got home, mother said, "Silas, are you sick?" I told her I was not, and she said that I looked very bad. I could not talk for crying.

I went on this way for about thirteen months. Sometimes I would go to the barn and try to pray, but it seemed that I got worse all the time, and I wished I had never been born into this troublesome world. There was a Methodist meeting about five miles away and I went to it. I thought I would see if I could get a word of comfort; but when I got there, the thought came to me that if I went into the house, I would go to crying. I did not want anyone to know anything about it. The preacher stood in the door and preached, but not a word for me. I went back the next day and took the back seat, and promised myself I would not shed a tear. They sang "Come ye sinner poor and needy, weak and wounded, sick and sore. Jesus stands ready to save you, full of pity, love and power."

I wept, brethren and sisters, for I could not see how He could save me—I was the vilest of the vile. I went home and sat down at the table. Mother asked, "Silas what kind of a meeting did you have?" I said, "Right smart meeting, I reckon." And she wanted to know how many mourners were there, and I said, "Five I reckon." "Who were they?" I could not eat, and got up and went into the house, picked up the Bible and sat down to read. My little brother and sisters came in: Mother called and told them to come out of there. I thought that mother knew how mean and sinful I was, and did not want them to come in where I was. I thought she would not countenance me; and what will I do? I went to the barn and got down on my knees and tried to pray; but I still grew worse and worse.

Thursday morning I went to the meeting again, and at intermission I went out and sat down by the house. My aunt came and took me by the hand, and told me I would be sick if I did not eat something. She gave me a piece of cake with honey on it. I dropped it and went to the spring. Then I went back to the house, went in and sat down. No one was in there. This was August 16, 1866. I remember two men coming in and talked with me. The next thing I remember, I was on my feet praising the Lord. I thought I would never see any more trouble, and felt I loved all of Adam's posterity. Mother would ask me if I wanted to join the church. I would tell her that I was afraid I was not fit to join the church. I would go to hear the Baptists, and would think, O, if I was just fit to be with them. I thought it would be a sin to offer myself to that good people.

In about two years I joined the Methodist Church, but was not satisfied there. On Saturday before the fourth Sunday in May, 1876, I went to Lynville and offered to the church, and was received and baptized by Elder Zechariah Angel. On the 23rd of September, 1878 I made the attempt to preach; and have been trying ever since.

I desire the prayers of all the people of God.

S. O. Plybon

ATTENDED THE STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION AGAIN

It was a pleasure indeed to attend this association again, and meet so many young ministers and others at Canaan Church near Danville, Va. But how sad to think of those who were at Gretna in 1940, who had gone home to be with the Lord. Among whom were Elders W. R. Dodd, R. Lester Dodson, John W. Gilliam, D. P. and J. P. Helms, Randolph Perdue, J. W. Wyatt, J. G. L. Hash, S. L. Moran J. F. Stegall, Alva Stanfield and countless other true soldiers of the cross...

After we had spoken on Sunday morning, two brethren mentioned how we were dressed thirty-two years ago, and the text used then. We were at the Danville Church twenty-five years ago, and again at Weatherford Church at the associations, and remember how well we were treated at all places. Sweet fellowship means so much in our travels here below.

Elder Spangler preached so well on the duties of ministers and deacons on Saturday; and so did Elder John Lee Smith on the new birth, and the writer talked on the Heavenly Messengers. We were glad to hear again Elders Kenneth and Leonard Key, Amos Hash, L. J. Brammer, Elder Garner, and many others preaching salvation by grace. What a glorious theme!

We were glad to be with the Williams family with whom we spent the night thirty-two years ago, and especially Elder Williams and several other young ministers. Well do we remember Deacon Williams and his good wife, with Sister Richardson, who have gone home. We missed Brother Burnell Williams, and trust he is well now. We were glad to see his companion whom we saw first as a child at her father's home in North Carolina where we were with Elder John Gilliam.

May peace, unity and love abound in Zion.

J. J. Collins

THE RESURRECTION

P. O. Box 13
Boones Mill, Va.
24065

Dear Brethren:

"Hold fast the form of sound words," is always timely admonition.

The Apostle Peter said, "David is not ascended unto the heavens." These holy words are true, and nothing so shamefully mocks the suffering Christ and those who suffer with Him, as those who fail to hold fast the form of these sound words. Those who would pervert the Scriptures always try to substitute their own words for sound words. The non-resurrection preacher generally will try to substitute the word "body" for the word David, and to imply that the body was not the real "David", but that the real David was and is a spirit whose being and identity was and is separate and distinct from the body that was both "dead and buried" and is now somewhere else, while the body is in the

sepulchre. The Scriptures no where give a minister authority to do such a thing. Therefore all such preaching is a failure and false testimony.

David said, "My flesh shall rest in hope." In hope of what? According to false spirits there is nothing left to hope for! David had a "good hope through grace," and in that hope his flesh is resting, even as all others who die in the Lord: for, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." (Psalm 116:15)

Let us ask David concerning that for which he is resting in hope: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." (Psalm 17:15) A deceiver will tell us that the pronoun "me" and "I" in this text have for their antecedent an immortal, invisible, bodiless, partless spirit. But each and every genuine servant of Jesus Christ will agree that David was really a visible, tangible, organic man of flesh and bones; and that such a man died and was buried, and, as Peter hath said, "hath not ascended into the heavens."

According to a deceiver the very man David who said, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness," will never awake with the likeness of Christ; for, say they, we have never dying souls." How it grieves me to hear any man who calls himself a Primitive Baptist, repudiate and mock the precious doctrine of the resurrection of the dead; and so tread upon the hearts and hopes of poor, dying sinners, whose only hope rests upon God's promise to raise us up again at the last day.

I am glad that there are not enough hirelings on earth, to rob a faith-keeping Paul of his crown which he said the Lord would give him at the last day.

When Jesus arose from the dead, all of Jesus arose from the dead. The devils deny the words of weeping Mary: "He is risen."

The carnal mind loves to hear that it shall see no corruption, but is immortal and is going immediately to heaven when its house of flesh and bones falls into a state of dissolution. Thus the devil and his servants seek to overthrow the doctrine of the resurrection, and replace it with an untruth that would be no more than an occupant of a house going out of it, and vacating it. Such an unholy and untrue position inevitably ties its advocates to their truth defying mother in Rome.

The relationship of the saints to the Lord is a flesh and bone relationship; and it is contrary to both reason and revelation, to suppose when we die that we will not return to the dust, as God hath said. It is contrary to scriptures and all revelation, to believe and teach, or to suppose that the dead will come forth out of their graves until the Son of man comes the second time to "receive" His people unto himself.

It is without reason that Jesus is going to come the second time, to say, "Come ye blessed of my Father and inherit the kingdom," if they have for more than six thousand years been going up to God's throne as fast as their flesh and hearts did fail.

I marvel that mortals, standing in the face with death, can mock and scoff at the only door of hope, which is Jesus who has promised His children a home in glory at the last time.

Of all the false doctrines Satan ever introduced there is none worse than the Sadduceical heresy, "ye shall not surely die."

Brethren, God has set the time of my death. My hope is to be sheltered under His atoning blood when the trump shall sound, and "there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

In bonds,
J. L. Bocock

Keeling, Va. 24566

WONDERFUL MEMORIES

My thoughts and memory of Mattie B. Williams will be shared with the reader, the facts here being remembered or told to me by her through the years.

Mama was impressed at a young age to have much love and respect for the Primitive Baptists, so, as a young girl, she told of going to parties or dances to feel condemned later, feeling it is not right to enjoy vanity of this world, if hoping to be one of His.

This love for the Lord's people grew to the extent she coud never consider marrying anyone that was opposed to this belief, which embraced through her entire life, a fallen, helpless, and sinful creature trusting in an all wise, powerful and merciful Lord for their deliverance and salvation.

She and J. Floyd Williams were married in April, 1914, and united with Malmaison Church in August the same year. They saw many happy days going to church and rearing seven children, but some sad and trying times. The oldest child died at eighteen months of age, but through the grief she was given faith to see this child as one of the Lord's chosen.

Mama was very faithful to her family and they always came first if need be, but I felt her first love was to God and His people. O how many Baptists she did care for through the years,—near twenty-one night at an association.

As my parents cared for his mother and father in their latter years, going was sometimes impossible for Mama as Grandmother was bedridden here for eight years. This confinement, as it came, she accepted, not to complain but nursed until the end came. Daddy died just six years after his mother, so their years of going unburdened together were few.

The grief of this was very hard to endure but she accepted as in accordance with the will of God.

She expressed so often, though, her many blessings, some of these she stated as being living to see three of her children, a daughter-in-law and a granddaughter unite with a church she believed to uphold the truth as advocated by the teachings of the Bible.

Her health began to fail but she never failed to want to go to church and went many times unable.

This I must relate before closing. Several months before she had to stop attending church, I began trying to speak publicly, my discourse she would readily endorse, which helped my feelings somewhat. One day while in bed, she told of her dream, many years before, how she saw one of her sons called an Elder. While not knowing if meaningful or which one, she said she told no one until I began to speak. These things together with all the shown dealings of God with His people keep His people ever trusting in His grace being sufficient to the end.

Nearly the last Sunday she lived she called me to her bed as I was leaving, and said she knew she would never go again, but kissed my hand saying you go on and may God reconcile me to His will.

Such faith, love, and devotion I don't think will be surpassed, but only hope to be kept as she was until called, as she, to that haven of rest for the weary. There to know the house is full, the family complete, none to be called away or want to ever leave this perfect satisfaction.

Hoping to be embraced in the same faith as she.

Elder Julian Williams

UPPER COUNTRY LINE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION CIRCULAR LETTER

Dear brethren, sisters, and kind friends: we of Gilliams Primitive Baptist Church cordially extend greetings and a hearty welcome to each of you, and especially our visiting brethren with which we correspond. We come to this the sixty-sixth sitting of the Upper Country Line Association with thanksgiving unto an all wise and merciful God, who has kept us by his mercy and grace that we may have this opportunity to associate once again in sweet love and fellowship one with another.

We look forward from year to year for these sweet meetings that our hope might be renewed within us, and to sing the songs of Zion and to hear the Gospel preached. May the God of Isarel be our keeper in such a way that we can feel his presence, that brethren might be brought to the feet of brethren to esteem our brethren better than ourselves and to look over one another for good and not evil, and then we could truly witness with the Psalmist David, Psalm, 133, Verse 1-2, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is

like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments."

It is indeed a blessing to meet together with brethren who have traveled great distances to be with us, to renew old acquaintances and to fellowship in the Lord.

There are those who have passed from our midst since our last association, but their memories still linger. We also realize there are some of us gathered for this sitting who will not be gathered for another but we know that God is just in all his ways. Isaiah 55, Verse 9. "For as the heavens are higher then the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." We know as this meeting comes to a close we shall take the parting hand, may God give us faith and strength to trust in him, the author and finisher of our faith. May he leave a little handful of purpose along the way that we may be comforted and reassured of the hope of Heaven and Immortal Glory. When we come to this journey's end may we have a peaceful moment in which to die and witness with the Apostle Paul, 1st Corinthians, Chapter 15, Verse 55. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" May it be our happy lot to be among those who shall hear the voice of our blessed Saviour saying, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Where we may dwell in that city who's builder and maker is God and where congregations shall never break up, and we will never again take the parting hand.

Submitted by Wallis A. Smith
Elder D. V. Spangler,
Moderator
Donald E. Smith, Clerk

ENJOYED EDITORIAL

4 Maple Lane
Pennington, N. J.
08534

Dear Brother Lambert:

I cannot recall an editorial written with such expressive splendor on the divine wonder of the nine Beatitudes than the one by you in the July *Signs of the Times.* May God enable you to write further upon this great Sermon of Sermons. It meant so much to me! By the spirit of the Lord may you be enlightened to expound more of this great sermon, so that one, such as I, may be privileged to read more of God's gracious goodness.

I cherish the sweet memory when you were to our Association at Hopewell Church, and spoke so wonderfully to our comfort and edification on the scripture.

May an awareness of the Lord's divine presence linger beside you, to cheer you, and strengthen you, and His love comfort you when everyday problems press upon you and take your thoughts away from the beautiful things in the scripture.

In bonds of Christian love,
Sister Mary Hellings.

AN AVID READER
At
101 YEARS

Redlands, Calif. 92373
324 1/2 Myrtle St.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed is my check for $7.00 for another 2 years subscription to *The Signs of the Times.*

My Mother, Mrs. Louisa Whited, lives with me now. She celebrated her 101st Birthday on February 18th and is still an avid reader of The Times, and continues to receive great spiritual blessings from the numerous letters and sermons it contains.

She subscribed to The Times for many years, and her father, E. M. Miller was a subscriber many years before her. He also contributed some letters to The Times, which were published, the last one in 1923, which also was the year when his days were accomplished and at the age of 85 years his Lord and Saviour called him home.

So for 3 generations and over 75 years our family has been blessed by The Times and we extend to you our gratitude for a

job well done, and pray the Lord will continue to bless your faithful effort in spreading his word to all the world.

As you might suspect, Mother has the distinction of being the oldest living member of her church, The Union Primative Baptist Church, Sharps Chapel, Tenn.

Yours sincerely,
Roba Whited

SUBSTITUTIONARY LIFE AND DEATH OF CHRIST

I wish I could present this subject in a way and manner that would give honor to God and edification to you, but find I feel so insufficient to do so. At times this subject and those related to it, burn in my heart and mind so greatly that I wish I had a voice of a trumpet to proclaim it; and yet find the mouth too small to express what I hope I see.

First, we believe that **all** of our righteousness is imputed or "charged" to our account by the **obedience of Christ** —not our **obedience.** Second, we believe our sin and death by sin is by the imputation of Adam's disobedience; and not by our disobedience. "For as by **one man's** (Adam's) disobedience many were made sinners, so by the **obedience of one** (Christ) shall many be made righteous." (Romans 5:19)

Now, as I see the scripture, **two** person's acts are charged to other people's account. Adam's sin is charged to **all** that are in his loins at the time he transgressed; and the righteousness of the law is charged to the account of **all** that are in Christ when He obeyed the law. You need to read the whole context found in Romans 5:11-21 to better understand all that is taught on this subject.

The Apostle writing to the Corinthians again brought to light information of this subject, saying, "For since by **man** (Adam) came death, by **man** (Christ) came also the resurrection of the dead. For as (in the same sense) **in Adam** all die, even so **in Christ** shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. 15: 21-23)

In other words, every one in Adam seminally died in him when he transgressed and died spiritually. We refer to this as Adam standing as the Federal Head of his race, and all those in him are represented by him, so that whatever **he did** is said to also be charged to his offspring. This is also reasonable. The whole race of man was genetically and materially in him when he fell. Recall that after he was expelled from Eden, the Scripture says that "God created man, in the likeness of God made He him." (Gen. 5:1) But the horrible story in the next verse rests upon us all: "Adam...begat a son in **his own likeness** (fallen as he), **after his image** (marred)..." (verse 2)

There is mankind—all of us, as offsprings of a corrupt nature. What does this include? Well, some things are: We are **born in Adam corrupt—totally corrupt:** Spiritually "dead in trespasses and sins." (Eph. 1:2, 3) Read it if you will.

How great is that condition? Well, before the flood, "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only **evil continually** ." (Gen. 6:5) Did the flood experience purify Adam's race? No, it didn't change it in the very least; for **after** the flood, "the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in His heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the **imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth** . . ." (Gen. 8:21)

Has it improved over the years with civilization's development? Nope, it is still as corrupt as ever. David, a man after God's own heart wrote, in explanation of his sin when he had committed adultry and murder, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Psalm 51:5) David was not charging his mother with whoredom, nor was he implying that marriage is evil. He was strictly speaking of the inherited corruption of nature of which we are all partakers by conception and birth. This is clear by what he wrote seven chapters later: "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies." (Psalm 58:3)

Dear ones, this is one of the reasons predestination and election is absolutely

necessary in any understanding of the truth. If this be the condition of us from birth, we certainly can't save ourselves, nor help God to save us. He must find the way to do it, and it must be a way by which He himself will do it.

Before I even touch on the subject of predestination and election, read what all is said by the Holy Spirit about us, and you will then see why these subjects **ought to be preached** upon; and you will also understand why they are neglected:

"There is **none** righteous, no, not one: There is **none** that understandeth, there is **none** that seeketh after God. They are **all** gone out of the way, they are together become **unprofitable:** there is **none that doeth good,** no not one. . ." (Rom. 3:10-12)

"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him . . ." Now if he is not drawn he cannot come. If he is drawn, what happens? "And I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:44) Again Christ said, "Therefore said I unto you, that **no man can come to me, except it were given unto him of my Father."** (John 6:65) This is a far cry from what you hear in modern churches. They exhort you to come to Jesus, when Jesus said you can't. They tell you to seek Jesus, when Jesus says, "Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come." (John 6:34) If fact, Christ even tells us why people cannot understand. He said, "Why do ye not understand my speech?" Even because ye cannot hear my words." (John 8:43) Yet, while he speaks this of **some,** of **others** he says in the same chapter: "He that is of God **heareth God's words** ." and then adds of the former, "Ye therefore hear them not **because ye are not of God** ." (John 8:47)

Can you not see that man by nature is in a horrible helpless state, which he got from Adam by being **in Adam;** and dying in Adam? So much so Paul wrote of man in his natural or carnal mind, saying, "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it **is not subject to the law of God** , neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh **cannot please God** ." (Romans 8:7-8) If you could "accept Christ" to get salvation, you would please Him in the flesh to get the Spirit; and that isn't possible. He has to **give you the Spirit first** ; see? He writes also, saying "But the natural man (unregenerated person) receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they (spiritual things) are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14)

So you see, a lost man can't come to Christ; can't understand spiritual things; can't accept Christ, (the Bible nowhere teaches that at all;) can't hear Him; can't please Him, etc. He is desperately in the need of a Deliverer—not a "helper"!

Elder Stanley C. Phillips

(Concluded next month)

EXPERIENCE

Kenly, N. C. 27542
Route 1, Box 321

Dear Children of God,

I want to write a few words of my experience. In 1918 I was burdened about joining the church. The burden was more than I could bear. I found myself asking the Lord to help me, show me what to do, and make me willing to go, if it was his will. Then the next second Saturday, I was made willing to go, but didn't feel worthy to make the sacred step. When they sang, "Children of the Heavenly King", I found myself going up and asking for a home. I heard my father-in-law say let her come.

The following Sunday morning I was baptized. Everything was so beautiful. While we were going to the water, the sun was shining so bright and I felt so happy.

After all this I felt that something was missing. I could not understand the preaching, as the rest did; and I felt so sad all this time. For six years I continued to have this feeling. I wrote a note asking for my name. As I was writing my name, something said, "Trust the Lord with all thy heart". I dropped the note in the fire, thinking I would write it again; but I never did.

After the six years had passed, I stopped going to church. It seemed that everything I said was wrong. I felt no one

cared for me any more; but I knew they did. It seemed to me everybody would be better off without me. Then evil thoughts began to come and trouble me, but "thank the good Lord", he did not let me speak them. My health got so bad, I could not work, and I felt like I was going to die.

Twelve years later, I was in my garden and heard my name called. I looked around, but I didn't see anyone. The voice was so soft and sweet. I thought, "Is the good Lord calling me and did it mean that he had forgiven me, so I could go back to church and be with my brothers and sisters again". I went to the house feeling so low and forsaken. Something within me said, "Oh Lord, what am I to feel like this?" A voice said, "A dear Child of God". As I heard this voice in a vision, I saw dear Elder George Boswell's face. He looked so tired, but yet so faithful. I felt like I must hear him preach again. But I never did for the next time I heard of him, he had passed away. So often in his preaching he would say, "Dear children of God". Just once my thoughts were, "Who was he speaking too? Am I a Child of God?"

Elder E. L. Cobb was the pastor the next time I went to church. This was the first time I had seen him. When he got up to preach, he said this twice, "Someone has been redeemed." "I had a dream last night, that I had to hurry to the water. When I got there, no one was there. Someone had already been baptized and now redeemed." When I met him and started to shake his hand my mind went blank. It seemed that I fell at his feet and thanked God for what he had done for me through this preacher. I don't remember what I said. I guess he thought I was very foolish.

From then on, I would get a few crumbs when I heard preaching. It is a joy to read these words in the scripture. I ask a question. If we are children of God, why do we have to suffer so much? The words came to me like this:

Grace without charity is vain. Faith without charity is vain. Hope without charity is vain. What is charity? Love, experience, enduring long suffering.

I still feel unworthy to be with you all. I love you all for Christ sake, I hope. I seem to be the least of all, if indeed I am one of God's little ones. Read Romans Chapters 10 through 11. This is just a little of my experience. The Hymn No. 338 is sweet to me. These words come to me often; "Wait Ye Upon The Lord".

Mrs. Peoria Barnes
Route 1
Kenley, N. C.

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 5 Box 84
Jacksonville, N. C.
28540

Dear Editors:

I am impressed to write a little of my experience. I have had a name among the Primitive Baptists for years. My husband and I were baptized together on a cold day, but the water was so warm. We have had lots of trials and troubles since then, but I trust it was for our good and for Christ's sake.

I have a wonderful husband, and three children who are so good to us; but I realize they can't come to my rescue when in the need of mercy: only the hand of God can do that. I have been afflicted for years, but am still able to go to church most of the time and hear His great name proclaimed.

My mother and father were both members of the Primitive Baptists when I came to the church. I felt they would not have me I felt so unworthy; but I was begging a home with them. I looked and saw my father stepping over the seats to get to me, and his love seemed more than ever before. I could not tell much but they gave me a home with them, and I hope I will never give them any trouble.

A short time after that I lost my voice, and I could not talk for a time. During this time my husband was ordained a deacon. I felt that I had deceived the church and my husband. During the time I could not talk, I went begging for mercy, and the good Lord came to my rescue. A gentle voice spoke to me in a dream, "My own arm has brought salvation," and I saw my enemies fall to the ground. I awoke singing, "Jesus lover of my soul." I was

so happy that I could talk again, and I wanted everybody to know just how I felt, and how happy I was. No one on earth knows what I suffered during the time; only God knows.

I am still trying in my weak way to beg God for his mercies which I feel the need of all the time. I dreamed I had to make bread for the communion, and a voice spoke saying, "No oil," and it appeared that the bread was made and ready for communion. I felt so unworthy, and often feel that I am deceiving every one of God's little ones; but I have no other place to go.

I hope you will remember me and my family in your prayers. May God bless every one of his little ones.

An unworthy sister,
Mrs. E. D. Morton

A LETTER INADVERTENTLY PUBLISHED

In our July issue we published a letter from Mr. A. M. Campbell, in which he mentioned some departures from the faith of the Flint River Association. We regret publishing the letter since it has long been our policy not to publish letters referring directly to matters suggesting departures, etc. of churches or associations.

We know nothing of the matters stated in the letter, and are glad to publish a statement of the Abstract of Principles of the Flint River Association, prepared by Elder R. H. Hale, which show the doctrine maintained by them.

We trust that our publishing of the Abstract of Principles and our sincere regret of having published the letter, will serve to undo what harm may have been done.

John D. Wood

ABSTRACT OF PRINCIPLES OF THE FLINT RIVER ASSOCIATION

We believe that God chose in Christ before the foundation of the world, and from the beginning, a certain, definite and personal number of souls to salvation, and those souls to be redeemed by Jesus Christ, and called with a Holy calling, not according to their works but according to God's own purpose and grace given them in Christ Jesus before the world began.

We believe that all the elect of God will be sanctified by the Spirit, and in the first works of sanctification, faith is produced and these chosen ones do believe with all their hearts in the Lord Jesus.

We believe that the first work of sanctification is the quickening of the dead sinners, "and you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sin". This quickening of the dead sinner is according strictly to the rich mercy and great love of God toward his people.

We believe that a man must be born again and that God uses His Spirit as the agent in quickening the dead—For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them—and He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Hence, Sanctification of the spirit embodies a full and complete birth from above. He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born (not being born) of God. Sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth go hand in hand as well so as all other aspects which render the vessels of mercy as set apart and made holy and meet for the Master's use.

We further believe that those chosen ones are foreknown and predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. They are predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ and they obtain the inheritance being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will. Also, to the praise of the glory of His grace wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved.

We believe that God is omniscient, and that His knowledge is so comprehensive he knew all persons, events, and things even before the world was. And, this means that every occurence and all one does has been decreed by God and could not be otherwise. It is indisputable that God knows all ahead of time, that God ordains all...But, this does not mean that man is void of choice and will in every matter. Grace makes us willing in the day of His power and grace makes us will to choose rather to suffer affliction with the children of God than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season.

We believe that whether we are willing to choose to, or unwilling and choose not to, those things we do are the things that God's hand and counsel has determined before to be done. Paul said when I would do good, evil is present with me—so then if I do that I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Here are the two wills and the two choices defined, but whatever Paul did it was in harmony with that that is determined or predestinated, and so does every other man.

We also believe in the third article of the London Confession of Faith which states, "We believe that God hath decreed himself from all eternity by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will freely and unchangeably all things whatsoever comes to pass; yet so as thereby, HE IS NEITHER THE AUTHOR OF SIN: NOR HATH HE FELLOWSHIP WITH ANY THEREIN," etc.

We believe in irresistible grace, effectual calling, justification by imputed righteousness, security of all the saints of God. Also, the resurrection of the dead from the grave (that hole in the ground) and general judgment, eternal life and everlasting punishment, election and probation, vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory and vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.

In conclusion, let me say that it is amazing that some would desire occasion knowing that we here in the Flint River Association are set for the defense of these things. But this is not the first time that those that preach the truth have been examined. Paul was the object of an examination in his time. Paul said, my answer to them that do examine me is this (1st Cor. 9:3,4,5,—read). He also said (2nd Cor. 11:12,13,14,15) But what I do, That I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

We would not shun reproach, for we are instructed to be happy when reproached for the name of Christ. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you.

Things we most surely believe among us.

Elder Robert H. hale
Rt. 1, Elora, Tenn.

ORDINATION OF DEACONS CHESTNUT CHURCH ROCKY MOUNT, VA. MAY 15, 1972

In response to a request of this church, a presbytery was called to look into the qualifications of Brother S. L. Young and Brother J. O. Tyrell for the office of deacons and to ordain if found qualified.

Elder C. E. Turner, the Pastor, was selected for Moderator and Elder P. E. Ingram, Clerk. Deacon Tom Turner was chosen to be spokesman for Chestnut Church.

Ministers composing the presbytery were Elders Posey Plybon, Posie Ingram, C. E. Turner, Wm. Holland, J. L. Bocock, Rufas Brown, J. L. Brammer, and W. H. Terry.

Deacons Claude Hopkins, Geo. Turner, Gray Ingram, G. T. Houston, James Holley, Oliver Powell, Claude Johnson, Posey Lynch, Tommie Lovell, Arthur Potter, Jno. Plunkett, Lane Carter, Bobby Bernard, Chester Hagood, L. C. Aker, and Tom Turner.

Elders L. J. Brammer and Hale Terry led the questioning using Scriptural reference from 3rd Chapter, 1st Timothy and Acts 6th chapter. All questions were answered in an acceptable way. Hands were then laid on the candidates while Elder William Holland offered prayer. Elder J. L. Bocock gave an impressive Charge. Brothers Young and Tyree were then turned back to the Church as duly ordained Deacons.

Minutes were read and approved.

Signed
Elder Cecil E. Turner, Moderator
Elder P. E. Ingram, Clerk

KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Two Hundred and Seventh annual session of the **Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association** will convene, the Lord willing, with the church at Flat Swamp, Pitt County, N. C., the first Sunday in October, Saturday before, and Monday following, 1972.

On Saturday and Sunday the services will be held in the auditorium of the Robersonville Elementary School located on Highway 64. On Monday the services will be held in the Flat Swamp meeting house located about 2 miles west of Robersonville on Highway No. 1159.

We cordially invite ministers, brethren, and friends of our faith and order to visit with us.

Johnny Ray Gardner, Clerk

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **Seven Mile Primitive Baptist Association** is appointed to be held with Black River Church, the Lord willing, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 15, 16, and 17, 1972.

The Black River Church is located immediately east of I-95 highway, east edge of Dunn, N. C., between I-95 and 55 highways.

We cordially invite our correspondence, ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

James G. Young, Clerk

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **Contentnea Association** is to be held, the Lord willing, with Beth-el Church, Pamlico County, N. C., to begin Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1972. The church is located in Grantsboro, N. C.

Services will be held at the church on Friday, and at Anderson's Elementary School on Saturday and Sunday, in Bayboro, N. C. about four miles from the church.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings Jr., Clerk

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** will be held, the Lord willing, at Mill Branch Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in October.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 744,
Bennetsville, S. C.
29512

UPPER COUNTRY LINE UNION

The **Upper Country Line Union Meeting** will be held, the Lord willing, the fifth Sunday, October 29, 1972, with Bush Arbor Church. this church is located approximately seventeen miles north of Burlington, N. C., just off of Highway number 62, ten miles south of Yanceyville, N. C. The meeting house can be seen from Highway 62.

We invite our brethren and friends of our faith and order.

Earl S. Rudd, Church Clerk

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with Meadow Church, Green County, N. C. the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in October.

The church is located just off the highway between Farmville and Wilson, N. C. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr. Clerk
Rt. 4, Box 195
Tarboro, N. C.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOKS

We have placed an order for an edition of the Durand and Lester Hymn and Tune Books, in the shape notes. And are promised delivery about the first of September.

The prices will be: $3.95 each plus State Sales Tax, delivered. And one dozen Books: $43.95 plus State Sales Tax, delivered.

Send orders to: Elder Donald E. Smith, Route 7, Box 488A, Burlington, North Carolina 27215: or to P. G. Lester, Jr., 2246 Memorial Ave. SW, Roanoke, Virginia 24015.

ORIGINAL SOUTH ARKANSAS ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association** will be held, the Lord willing, with Bethel Church, beginning on Friday before the 3rd Sunday in September, 1972.

The church is located about 2 miles north of Bearden, Arkansas, on the Hopeville Road. Inquire at Bearden for directions.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Ross Watson, Clerk
Rt. 1, Box 178,
Tinsman, Ark.
71767

SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

The *Salisbury Association* will meet, the Lord willing, October 18th and 19th, 1972, with the Forest Grove Church near Parsonsburg, Md., about six miles from Salisbury. Take Rt. 50 east, and turn right at the Forest Grove Road for a short distance.

Anyone coming Tuesday can go to the home of Louis Holloway, Rt. 350 about six miles from Salisbury; or call 742-1013.

We hope many lovers of the truth including the ministering brethren will be with us.

Ethel Holloway, Church Clerk
218 Shad Point Road,
Salisbury, Md. 21801

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The *Smith River Association* will convene,

the Lord willing, with Knob Church, located on Highway 798 in Henry County, Virginia, Friday before the 1st Sunday in September, 1972 (September 1, 2, and 3).

All attending from a distance should either follow Highway 220 or 40 to Highway 605, and follow 605 to 798, which leads to the church.

We would love to meet the friends of our Blessed Lord there.

Amos Hash, Assn. Clerk

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The ninety-sixth Annual Session of the *Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association* is appointed to be held with the church at Creech's Meeting House, Johnston County, N.C., to commence on Friday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1972, and continue through Sunday.

Creech's Meeting House is located just off 42 Highway, about one quarter mile east of the junction of 42 and 39 Highways. A sign is placed on 42 Highway directing to the meeting house.

The Saturday and Sunday services will be held in the North Johnson High School Building, located on 301 Highway between Kenly, N.C. and Micro, N.C. The building is conspicuously situated near enough the highway to be readily located.

We invite our brethren ministers and friends to meet with us.

W.E Turner, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To July 1, 1972)

Mrs. Doris Hamilton, Va.	$1.00
Mrs. N. A. Pace, La.	3.00
Essie Oglesby, Tex.	3.00
James T. Lindsey, Tex.	6.00
Mrs. W. J. Johnson, Tex.	3.00
Mrs. M. E. Womble, N. C.	3.00
A. C. Carter, Ala.	1.00
John W. Payne, N. C.	3.00
Woodrow and Edith Brooks, N. C.	3.00
Milton D. Houston, N. C.	3.00
Mrs. Frank Thornton, Va.	3.00
John Franklin Lax, Tenn.	3.00
Mrs. James F. Thompson, N. C.	6.00
Mr. and Mrs. Jackie Ferguson, Va.	2.00
Mrs. Rachel Green, W. Va.	1.00
Mrs. Louis Cherrix, Del.	3.00
Martha M. Thompson, Tex.	3.00
C. H. Greathouse, Ore.	5.00
Lila Mae Flemister, Ark.	3.00
W. A. Davis, Va.	3.00
Mrs. A. V. Krewatch, Md.	8.00
Wm. B. Gaskill, Va.	2.00
Junius Allison, N. C.	1.00
J. L. Pascall, N. C.	3.00
Fannie Davis, Wash.	5.00
By Callie Clark in Memory of her mother Mrs. J. M. Brammer of Va.	40.00
Mrs. Addie Seymore, Ark.	1.00
Timothy Dale Eaton, Miss.	1.00
Mrs. Emery Yohams, Can.	3.00
Mrs. Ela Watson, Ga.	2.00
Mrs. O. A. Rudd, N. C.	2.00
Mrs. R. M. Lester, Va.	3.00
Mrs. C. J. Clark, N. C.	1.00
Mrs. Harold May, Ala.	3.00

PLEASE NOTE

We had expected to have the Obituary of Elder Ruston for this issue. It is now in preparation and we hope to have it for the October issue.

We will all greatly miss Elder Ruston from our Editorial pages. A few years ago he desired to resign due to his health, but he permitted us to publish re-runs of his Editorials at his regular times, and we feel that many of our readers enjoyed reading them: many reading them for the first time. — EDITORS

Danville, Virginia September, 1972

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

EDITORIAL

HEBREWS 4:14

"Let us hold fast our profession."

Paul here is addressing Hebrew brethren, who, like himself, were partakers of a heavenly calling, he was not, as some would think, addressing the Jewish people indiscriminately. The meaning of the name Hebrew is a "passer over," and those he was addressing has passed over from the legal order to the gospel dispensation, for they had, like Paul himself, been called by grace. To such, this exhortation is written, that they might be encouraged to walk worthy of a holy vocation to which they were called. They were like their Gentile brethren, an afflicted and persecuted people, for Paul tells them in chapter ten, "Call to remembrance the former days, in which after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great flight of afflictions; partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock, both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance." Surely these were very precious brethren who had walked in love and sweet fellowship with Paul, to whom he is blessed of God to write of the deep and wonderful truth concerning the person and priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ. He also makes frequent reference to those of the legal covenant, reminding his brethren of the many that fell in the wilderness because of unbelief, and bids them take heed lest there be in any of them an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

The chapter from which our text is taken begins with the exhortation, "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it," and in verse eleven he says, "Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." Such exhortations were necessary then, and we feel they are very necessary now, not for the world who are dead in trespasses and sins, but to the household of faith. Some might say that these brethren addressed by Paul, being partakers of a holy calling, and having been illuminated, as Paul himself was, with a light from heaven, would not need such admonitions, seeing that they were gracious persons and according to their profession and the doctrine they had received, they were saved with an everlasting salvation. But we would say here that the admonitions and exhortations are of the Lord and necessary for our instruction in righteousness, neither are these admonitions and exhortations grievous to the new man, for they are his life.

Paul says, "Let us fear," but some might say, What have they to fear? We would answer, They are the very ones that do fear, but theirs is not a slavish fear of wrath to come, nor is it through an underestimating of God's power, but it is a loving regard to God's word possessed by one who has by faith embraced Christ, who is made unto such, wisdom; and this

fear is the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom, and where it is the soul will be well schooled in self-examination to see if they be in the faith. It is good for us that this eminent apostle links himself with the brethren, saying, "Let us fear," and again, "Let us hold fast." There is danger, great danger, he could have said, For "let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" He knew of the perilous times that would soon come upon them, when many would deny the faith, being in love with this present world. To the elders at Ephesus he said in his parting address, Acts 20: 28-31, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."

He was constantly warning them against false teachers and their heinous doctrines, not because he had a bad spirit, but because he loved them, having the welfare of the brethren at heart, shedding tears of sorrow for them, knowing what mischief would be done and the distress and ruin that would result. It is worthy of our notice that Paul admonishes the elders to take heed unto themselves, and it is evident from what he afterwards says that much if not all their trouble would come from false teachers which he rightly calls wolves. What a solemn responsibility rests upon those in authority in the church. They are spoken of as overseers or stewards who shall give an account unto God, who has also placed them there. Ezekiel was told that if he warned not the people, then their blood should be required at his hand; if he warned them and they regarded not his warning, then he was clear of their blood.

Paul quitted himself as a faithful steward, and could say that he was pure from the blood of all men, and when at his journey's end, said "I have kept the faith." He had suffered stripes above measure in prison more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times he received forty stripes save one. Thrice was he beaten with rods, once he was stoned, thrice he suffered shipwreck, he was a night and a day in the deep. In journeyings often, in perils of water, in perils of robbers, in perils by his own countrymen, in perils of the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren. In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides these things that were without, that which also came upon him daily, the care of all the churches. It is this blessed man who was enabled by God's grace to endure the trials and afflictions enumerated above, that says, "Let us hold fast our profession." He was hated of the scribes and Pharisees, so were they, and so are we, if we be of the faith, we are told, the world will love its own.

From the Scriptures, we know that many who at first heard the word gladly were disposed to cling to the law, to be circumcised or to keep certain days holy, some had professed to have begun in spirit and being bewitched by false teachers they had been moved from their steadfastness in the faith and were now trying to be made perfect in the flesh. Others, taking advantage of what they called their freedom from the requirements of the law (which was fulfilled in Christ), became servants of their own lusts, and by their loose way of living brought much reproach upon the cause they had professed to espouse. Those who sought perfection in the flesh were blind to the grand truth that the flesh was conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity, only made of the dust of the ground and is nothing but sin, that our sins were imputed to Christ, and by God's grace Christ's righteousness is imputed to those who believe on his name. We bear in our body the marks of the dying of our Lord Jesus and with all of our striving and "holding fast" our profession we in ourselves never get above a lump of sin and wretchedness, and while we decrease in our own sight and estimation, our beloved Lord is magnified in our eyes, and we are

glad to be nothing that Christ might be all in all. Those who would view liberty in Christ as a license to sin have never rightly seen the *"wounds of Christ,"* surely if they had grief would be theirs. The wormwood and the gall of bitter sorrow for sin has not been tasted sufficiently or they could not look on sin lightly. *God hates sin.* It was sin that crucified Christ, and who that has felt its sting and seen its baneful effect but hates it, too, and who has witnessed Jesus "a spectacle of woe" and then can wink at sin?

We do not expect to find steadfastness in Pharisees, nor in antinomains, but we do believe that those who have heard the voice of him who raiseth the dead and possesses the Holy Spirit will show somewhat of the fruit and effect of that Spirit in their lives. One of the fruits of the Spirit is faith, and it is only by faith we can rightly "hold fast." God promised Abraham, and he in turn staggered not at the promise through unbelief, but was strong in the faith, which just means he was strong *in the strength* that God gave to him. If God gives a grain of faith (and a grain is so strong it will move mountains) that grain of faith will prove itself to be God-given by what it will enable one to endure. Consider the trials of the worthies mentioned in chapter eleven, all that they suffered, and they suffered much, and all that they did, and they did many wonderful things, it was all by faith which was *not of themselves,* it is the gift of God.

We purposely mentioned much of Paul's trials and sufferings, and we would say here that he was no cast-iron man able to be stoned without flinching, when he had just a thorn in the flesh he could not help himself, or he would never have prayed. We say this seriously, for we have had a thorn with which we have struggled, and struggled in vain. Those who think they can move the thorn are like Peter, who said, I will go to prison and to death and not deny thee. Peter learned also what a terrible thorn was the flesh and found with Paul that God's grace through faith, was his sufficiency. Nothing short of this God-given faith will enable us to "hold fast" our profession, and here we would desire to dwell upon our text a little more, the Lord enabling us. Let us consider Paul and the thorn in the flesh, and God's reply to his thrice repeated prayer, he said, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Paul goes on to declare, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ might rest upon me for when I am weak, then am I strong." Here, then, is the kernel of the matter, and in this our profession lies: when I am weak (and I am always so, but do not always realize it) Christ is my strength. When to all appearances I am dead Christ is my life, and when I feel to be foolish and vain he is my wisdom. When I feel to be all unrighteousness he is my righteousness, when I am foul with sin he is my sanctification, and when I, who have hoped that I belong to God, find myself in chains of guilt, like a slave sold under sin, then he is my redemption, for is he not of God made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption?

The three Hebrews of old held fast their profession, even against all the king could do. In the flesh they were weaker than the most mighty men that were in the king's army, yet those men, mighty as they were, were slain by the flames of the fire, while the Hebrews were preserved. A profession is an open declaration or confession of one's sentiments or belief. The worthies of old confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth, they *declared plainly* that they seek a country, a better country, that is, a heavenly. Thus a christian profession should be a plain declaration of what Christ is to us, his doctrine and the order of his house and the ordinances that he has instituted for us to observe, all of which are inculcated in his written word. The man of God must *by faith* contend earnestly for the *faith* once delivered (by Christ himself) unto the saints; there must be no slackness, it is his life. One will say, But there is slackness, and much of it, slackness in doctrine, and with many of us our walk and conversation is not always that which becomes saints. What we know to be due unto our God is done grudgingly as though we were prompted with the thought that if God wanted us to do so and so he would make us do it. Such an attitude is not according to faith, for faith worketh by love and it produces a willing

service. The writer does not have one stone to throw, it is one of the crosses of his life that he cannot do the things that he would. The good he would he does not and the evil he would not that he does, and if he has any place at all it is expressed by the poet,

"A guilty, weak and helpless worm,
On thy kind arms I fall."

And though the experience that brings one to such a low place is killing to the flesh, yet for us it is safe, the arms of omnipotence are underneath all such, and the power of God rests upon them and it is out of such weakness they are made strong. In that humble mind they gladly take the spoiling of their goods and in the promised grace that is given to such they do hold fast, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against them. To such the gospel is good news, God's servants highly esteemed, and the love and fellowship of saints greatly prized.

Beloved brethren, let us hold fast our profession, for he is faithful that calleth us, who also will do it, and let us run the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, that we might be kept from stumbling upon the dark mountains, but rather finish our course with joy. God grant us faith to trust him in providence and grace, for he is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind.

G. R.

(We had planned to include a re-run editorial by Elder Ruston before learning of his passing. This was copied from the June, 1932 issue.)

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

ROMANS 9:21-23.

"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory."

It would be difficult indeed to use a figure of speech that would more definitely, clearly and more fully set forth God's sovereign power over and his unquestioned right to do with his own as seemeth good unto him, than that which the apostle, moved by the Holy Ghost, has employed in this instance. It is also worthy of note he did not speak of the soil, but rather of the clay. The soil is that part of the earth which produces a natural growth, such as wood, hay and stubble, all of which is perishable. This may well represent the fruit of the flesh, concerning which this same apostle has emphatically declared that there is no good thing in it, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." In the great city of New York, it is no longer permissible under the law to build wooden structures, experience having taught the wisdom of using nondestructible materials, such as steel, stone, brick, etc. It requires clay to make good brick, which first has to be tempered with water and then subjected to the fiery furnace, and thus it is fitted for the purpose which the architect and builder hath determined it should fill.

It appears to us that there are two great workmanships of God: First, there is the natural creation, and concerning this it is written, "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is the Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with man's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to ll life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of *one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth* , and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." We read in another of the apostle's epistles that "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit," also, "The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven." According to the

flesh, *all* , embracing every race, creed and color, whether bond or free, are vile and corrupt, and there is none good, no, not one, for by nature we are all children of wrath, even as others. We are told in Romans 8:20, that "The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." We read further that "In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor."

In making the first Adam, or earthen vessel, we have no reason to doubt but that God made him as he would have him to be, and since we are but Adam multiplied, the same must be equally true of us. What shall we say to these things? "Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Is not this natural, or earthen vessel, the one which God hath made unto dishonor? And, "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," will he not be glorified in all of his works? He hath decreed that no flesh shall glory in his presence, and while our beloved apostle who wrote this very epistle was made to wish himself accursed from Christ, for his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh, yet, when he was made to realize the infiniteness of God's plan of salvation and his purpose in cutting off some of the Jews and grafting in the Gentiles, we hear him exclaiming, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." He then saw that God's plan was not confined to one race, the Jews, but that it involved every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue, and thus he was qualified to become the apostle of the Gentiles. He was made to know that Israel, "to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever," availeth nothing save by the grace of God.

Notwithstanding his own natural relationship, being a Hebrew of the Hebrews, and as touching the law, blameless, nevertheless he persecuted the church of God, and said that he was "not meet to be celled an apostle." He continued, however, by saying, "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Wonderful beyond expression, it seems to us, that "God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Of a glorious truth, he has made "known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." How well did the prophet Isaiah express the true condition of affairs concerning the Lord's people when he said, "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities. But now, O lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we are all the work of thy hand."—Isaiah 64:6-8.

There is no work in all the world that can begin to compare with that which God hath wrought, in taking "of the same lump," from which all humanity sprang, which was marred in the hand of the potter, and making it "again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it." We understand that the word of the Lord "came to Jeremiah" and commanded him to go down to the potter's house, or the Lord's house, to see what we have just referred to, after which he said, "Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are

ye in mine hand, O house of Israel." Only true spiritual Israel see and understand these blessed things. If we are among that highly favored group, it is because "we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." This is the second great workmanship of which we spoke earlier, and these are "the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." They were "afore prepared unto glory," or chosen in him before the foundation of the world. While God is most certainly the Creator of all mankind, he is not the heavenly Father of any but his own spiritual children. The record is, "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."

We know this is a hard doctrine and that the world cannot receive it, but the doctrine of God's electing love and of his choice not being dependent in any way whatsoever upon the creature, is definitely and undeniably set forth in the following case: "But when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." The human creature was no different in the apostle's day than he is to-day, and in anticipation of his fault-finding, the apostle continued by asking, "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God?" The answer was, "God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharoah, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Not long ago, we were asked if we believed a just God would save some and condemn others? Our reply was, As we stand only in our earthly head, Adam, God could not be just and save a single, solitary soul, and that if any are saved it is because of his mercy manifested through, or in the person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

When one sees himself a justly condemned sinner before the holy God, he questions how God can be just and justify the ungodly, and never can he understand how this can be until Jesus is revealed in him the hope of glory. When he is enabled, by faith, to behold the workmanship of God as it was created in Christ Jesus, and to see that he was made sponsor, or head over all things to the church, which is his body, and that he finished in every jot and tittle the work which was given him to do, he then is assured that God cannot, and will not condemn any for whom Christ suffered and died.

Unquestionably, the doctrine of election is the most hated of all of God's blessed truths. At the same time it is practiced constantly, almost every waking hour of the day by the very one who condemns it in God, for the very moment one arises and begins his preparation for the day, he must need make choice, perhaps, of the suit he will wear, where he will go and what he will do, etc., and the housewife must make choice of the food which shall be partaken of, as well as other plans for the day. It is true that these things cannot be exercised in the fullest sense of the word by creatures of time, for they of necessity are subject to environment and circumstances, but such cannot at all be said of God, for he is an *absolute Sovereign,* with all that is implied by it. He doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or need say, What doest thou? Concerning Israel, it was said, "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed

you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharoh king of Egypt."

We have already seen something of his purpose in raising up Pharoah, and truly God's name was declared throughout the whole earth because of his victory over all enemies, and his destruction even of him that had the power of death. The history of national Israel will stand as a witness throughout all time as God's choice of them as a people, of his great love for them, separate and apart from all other peoples, as shown by his watchcare over them while they were in bondage, and at all other times, even though they were undeserving often of the least of his mercies. God had a purpose in their going down into Egypt and, therefore, meant for good all the evil that Joseph's brethren intended against him, and at last he brought them up by a high and mighty hand and they sang the song, saying, "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." The great treasure which they came up out of Egypt with was the experience in their very hearts and souls that God was their God, that he had kept them when their hearts fainted within them, that he had preserved them despite all that had opposed, and at last had led them forth more than victorious conquerors. It was the dealings of the Lord with them which they were to tell their children, and their children's children, generation after generation. It was truly said, "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy before thee; and shall say, Destroy them. Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heaven shall drop down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places."—Deut. 33:26-29

Israel then was but a type of Israel now, and if we are not greatly deceived, there is still a people in the world today, amidst all the strife and confusion, who are being kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. The Scriptures were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope, and when we are made to realize how great is God's faithfulness towards his people, even though they oft forget his lovingkindnesses, our soul takes courage from the Lord, and we can believe and plead his holy word. Then to him, and him alone, do we complain, being assured that we shall not seek his face in vain. It is comforting to feel that all things are in the hands of our God, that he hath fixed the bounds of the wicked, beyond which they cannot go, and that he works in his people both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. Jesus said to his disciples, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should reamin: that whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he may give it you." If the branch is ever given to bear fruit to the honor of God, it is because of the life of the vine in the branch, and, therefore, it has not whereof to boast in and of itself. Jesus also said, "A good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bringeth forth good fruit." Therefore, "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit." As the clay is passive in the potter's hands, so are we without strength or ability to perform one good thing only as God works in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight. If then, he makes of us a vessel that will shew forth his praise, all the glory belongs to him, and to him alone.

We have written the foregoing at the request of brother W. T. Winfrey, of Kingman, Kansas.

R.L.D.

(The above was by Elder Dodson in May, 1936)

MINUTES OF PRESBYTERY

County Line Church
Floyd County, Floyd, Va.
July 15, 1972

In response to an invitation of this Church a presbytery assembled to look into the qualifications of Deacon Noel F. Conner for the office of Elder and to ordain if found qualified.

Ministers from the Smith River Association were Elders B. O. Thompson, J. T. Turner, Roy Agee and Hale Terry. Those from Pigg River Association were Elders C. E. Turner, O. K. Tench, Rufus Brown, R. A. May, Julius Bocock, and P. E. Ingram. From the Stanton River Association were Elders Raymond Payne and W. R. Saunders. Elder A. P. Mewbern was in attendance from the Contentnea Association.

Deacons in attendance were L. T. Nichols, Reggie Metz, Otho Thomas and George H. Turner.

Elder R. A. May was selected to officiate as Moderator and P. E. Ingram, Clerk. Elder B. O. Thompson was selected to be spokesman for the Church. Elder O. K. Tench on request offered prayer for Divine Guidance. Elders C. E. Turner and Hale Terry led in questioning, Elder Turner referring to the qualifications of a Minister as found in 1st Timothy, chapter three. All questions asked the Spokesman and Deacon Conner were answered in a most satisfying manner, and the Presbytery proceeded to the Laying on of Hands while Elder Roy Agee offered the Ordination Prayer. Elder Mewbern then delivered Elder Conner a most impressive Charge.

Elder Conner was then delivered back to County Line Church as a duly ordained Elder. Minutes were read and approved.

R. A. May, Moderator
P. E. Ingram, Clerk.

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, Pittsylvania County, Va., a presbytery met March 25, 1972 at 2:00 p.m. for the examination of brother Raymond Goad, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, to ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of the gospel ministry.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Donald E. Smith. All Elders and deacons of our faith and order constituted the presbytery. Elders present were as follows: D. V. Spangler, Wallis Smith, Raymond S. Payne, L. J. Brammer, P. E. Ingram, C. B. Davis, Jr., William Holland, R. A. May, Denver Simpson, H. W. Wray, Rufus Brown, Julian Williams, O. K. Tench and Donald Smith.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder O. K. Tench as Moderator and Donald E. Smith as Clerk. Elder D. V. Spangler and Raymond Payne were chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Deacon T. K. Dalton having been duly appointed by the church in their January conference 1972, delivered brother Raymond Goad to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elders D. V. Spangler and Raymond Payne. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder L. J. Brammer. Elder Wallis A. Smith delivered the charge to the Candidate.

The Moderator asked deacon T. K. Dalton if the church approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to Elder Raymond Goad and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained Elder was delivered back to the church as an ordained gospel minister of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Weatherford.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder C. B. Davis, Jr.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of McCrary Primitive Baptist Church Alamance County, N. C., a presbytery met April 16, 1972 at 2:30 p.m. for the examination of brother Julius Allison, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, ordained the above mentioned to the full work of the office of deacon.

The solemnity was begun with song and prayer by Elder Leonard Key, hymn 169 Hymn and Tune Book. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders Kenneth R. Key, D. V. Spangler, Denver Simpson, C. B. Davis, Jr., H. W. Wray, Leonard Key, Wallis Smith and Donald Smith.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Wallis Smith as Moderator and Elder Donald Smith as Clerk. Elder H. W. Wray and Denver Simpson were chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Deacon J. S. Blalock having been duly appointed by McCray Church in conference spokesman for the church, delivered brother Julius Allison to the presbytery. Examination was made by

Elders H. W. Wray and Denver Simpson. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Kenneth Key. Elder D. V. Spangler delivered the charge to the candidate.

The Moderator asked deacon J. S. Blalock if the church approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to brother Julius Allison and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained deacon was delivered back to the church at McCray of the Old School, Primitive Baptist Church.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder C. B. Davis, Jr.

Elder Wallis A. Smith, Moderator
Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

OBITUARIES

NOAH T. FREEMAN

Brother Noah T. Freeman of San Antonio, Texas, passed away April 11, 1972. He was born May 17, 1882 in Ellis County, Texas, the son of W. M. Freeman and Clara Ende Freeman. He was a member of Mt. Union Church, Greenville, Texas, and a lover of Predestinarian Primitive Baptists doctrine, and faithfully attended as long as he was able.

We feel to say that our loss is his eternal gain. The spirit that he was born of certainly went back to God from whence it came, and his body to the dust from whence it came, to wait the final resurrection when Christ shall come the second time without sin unto salvation, to gather his jewels and take them home.

Survivors include one son: H. C. Freeman of Odessa, Texas; two daughters: Mrs. Alava Holden of Eastland, Texas, and Mrs. Lous Walters of San Antonio, Texas; one brother: R. W. Freeman, Three Rivers, Texas; two sisters, Mrs. Ruth Lewis of Houston, Texas, and Mrs. Joe Haag, Sacramento, California. Also surviving are seven grandchildren, twelve great grandchildren, several great great grandchildren, and other relatives.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer.

Loyd Wall

SAMUEL THOMAS JOHNSON

Brother Samuel Thomas Johnson of Celeste, Texas, passed away May 20, 1972, at Greenville, Texas. He was born September 27, 1886, in Patrick, Texas, the son of John Thomas Johnson and Jennie Rosana Morehead Johnson, and was married to Bessie Dora Bobo.

Brother Johnson was one among the most humble brothers we have ever met, and we believe that the humblest is one of the greatest enemies Satan has. The question was asked the Saviour who was the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 18:1,4. "And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

We hope to say in the Spirit with Job, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." To those that are left behind: weep not as those who have no hope, for Brother Johnson had a precious hope.

Survivors are: one son, Samuel Johnson of Garland; three daughters, Mrs. Lena Hollis, of Bower; Mrs. Wanda Jean Young of Mesquite, and Mrs. Estell King of Celeste; eleven grandchildren and seven great granchildren.

He was a member of Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, Greenville, Texas. Services were conducted by the writer.

Loyd Wall

SISTER JOSIE SAMMONS

Sister Josie was born September 30, 1887, and departed from us March 17, 1972. She was the wife of Brother John S. Sammons. She had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church since August 1917. Having been a member at North East Church for many years, we all loved her.

For the past few years her health had been bad, but until a short while before she died she would go to the House of Worship to feed on the blessed word of God. She was devoted to her Church, and a bright, and morning star. Her place cannot be taken. There is a empty seat.

Sister Josie's funeral was conducted at North East Church by her Pastor Elder Robert Lyliston, Elders J. T. Prescott and J. J. Rhue assisted.

She lived with her son and his wife, Brother Lewis Sammons. They were devoted to her. She had two daughters Esther and Gladys, and a son Garland, deceased, eleven grandchildren and ten great grandchildren.

May God be with them, and comfort them in the loss of their Mother, and our Sister in Christ. She is at rest now I believe with all

my heart, and may God protect her loved ones is our prayer.

Muriel Lee Marshburn

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Mrs. Georgia E. Hill

Again, Our Father in Heaven called a dear sister, Georgia E. Hill, from our midst. He gives us life and takes it away according to his will. She was loved dearly by all who knew her.

She was the daughter of the late Moore and Eliza Wood, born April 12, 1887 and died March 31, 1972 making her stay on earth eighty-four years, eleven months and nineteen days.

Sister Hill united with Hickory Grove Primitive Baptist Church in October 1923 by experience and baptism. Her death leaves the church a vacant seat which can never be filled.

She lived a faithful member forty-nine years and was appointed clerk in November 1962. The services by her can be praised highly. Our sister leaves a host of brethren, sisters, and many friends, who feel her heartaches, sorrows and sufferings are over and now that precious peace abounds in the sleep of death.

Sister Hill was first married to Zeb Eldridge, December 1913, who passed away March 1924. To this union were born two sons, Norman and Zeb; two daughters, Mrs. Louise Naylor and Sister Azalee Lee.

Her second marriage was to Ralph Hill who passed away in 1944. To this union were three sons born, Sherwood, Roy Mack and Billy. Two step daughters also survive, Mrs. Rachel Tart and Mrs. Mary Lou Darden. Other survivors are one sister, Mrs. Hattie Wood Denning, ten grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted at Hickory Grove Church by her Pastor, Elder W. D. Godwin, Elders C. D. Turner, Wayne Mitchell and Mr. Ray Yarborough. She was laid to rest in the Eldridge Family Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

Be it Resolved,—First: That the church at Hickory Grove has lost a dear member. Our loss has been her Eternal gain; therefore, we bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father who doeth all things well. Second: That we extend to the family in their bereavement our sympathy and may the Lord reconcile and comfort them. Third: That a copy of this be sent to The Signs of The Times for publication, a copy placed on our church record and a copy sent to the family.

Committees:
Velma Wood
Kathaleen McLamb
Gertrude Royal

MRS. BESSIE BRITT

Sister Bessie Nash Britt, age 74 departed this life at a nursing home in El Dorado, Arkansas on March 22, 1972. Sister Britt, like her dear companion, Elder Britt, was most precious to me and surely to all who knew her. I shall never forget her kind, meek, gentle and humble words she would speak even while in much suffering. The faith that our great creator God gave to her and also to Elder Britt was sufficient to enable them to live their lives in this world and also to die by. We feel that not only Brother and Sister Britt loved the truth, we feel like and hope to understand all of God's humble children love the truth, because God first love them.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer. Her body was laid to rest in the cemetary by Smyrna Church. "For our conversation is in heaven: from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Phil. 3:20-21)

David E. Turner

ELDER CHARLES B. BRITT

Elder Charles Bryan Britt, Age 74, departed this life at a nursing home in El Dorado, Arkansas on August 22, 1971. He was survived by his widow, Sister Bessie Britt, who passed away on March 22, 1972. Their children are: Three sons, Raymond M. Britt, Calmath Falls, Ore., Bryce M. Britt, El Dorado and Charles B. Britt, Jr., Carrollton, Tex.; a daughter, Miss Ruth Britt, El Dorado; a sister, Mrs. Lillie Clay, El Dorado and two grandchildren.

I have known Elder Britt for the past 20 years and I learned to love him very much for the truth's sake. We all miss him so much, especially Smyrna Church. An humble spirit, which was shown by both Elder and Sister Britt, is good evidence that they were children of God. He was good to visit and preach to the Brethren in the isolated places and in their homes. In addition to the above he was very free hearted which was appreciated by the Brethren.

It is my deep felt sense of understanding that his precious and humble servant of God will hear these words at the final resurrection: "Come ye blessed of my Father and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

The funeral services were conducted by the writer and his body laid to rest in the cemetary by the church to await the glorious resurrection.

David E. Turner

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT FOR SISTER FANNIE CHERRY

The Good Lord has called a dear Sister from our church and we miss her so much. She was born in Martin County, N.C., to Stephen L. and Susan Grimes March, 1895, and passed away December 27, 1972, at the hospital in Robersonville.

She was married to Ernest Forbes. He died in 1920 leaving her to raise 2 boys, Charles of Robersonville, and Joseph Forbes of Springfield, Virginia. She then married Daniel Cherry.

She joined the church at Spring Green and loved her church. She was a useful member as long as she was able to go. She was afflicted, but bore it with patience always trusting in the Lord to do his will, not hers. She enjoyed having her church members and loving friends visit in her home.

Her funeral was conducted at Biggs Chapel at Robersonville by her pastor, Elder E. C. Harrison. Her body was laid to rest in the Martin Memorial Gardens near Everetts, North Carolina. Written by a cousin who loved her very much.

Done by order of conference Saturday before the fourth Sunday in March, 1972.

Elder E.C. Harrison, Moderator.
Sister Annie Edmondson, Committee

SISTER ANNIL RAYNOR BRYAN

In loving remembrence of our dear sister in Christ, Sister Annil Raynor Bryan, who was born Feb. 14, 1892 and died Feb. 6. 1972.

She was married to Brother Wright Bryan; and on May 4, 1961 they both united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Sand Hill. Sister Bryan believed the doctrine of salvation by grace. Her funeral was preached by her pastor Elder Curtiss Raines and Elder D.B. Stokes at Sand Hill Church, and she was laid to rest in the Cedar Fork Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers. She left to mourn two sons, Vernie and Harrell Bryan. Also one daughter, Sister Lila Andrews and eight grandchildren and five great grandchildren. One brother, Riley Raynor and two sisters, Mary Edwards and Cary Batts.

We feel surely she had a humble hope in Christ, and she shall be greatly missed by all who knew her and loved her. We bow in humble submission to the Heavenly Father and we feel in our hearts that our loss is her eternal gain.

We resolve that three copies of this memorial be made, one for the churches records, one to be sent to the family and one to the Signs of the Times. This done by order in rememberence at our March meeting.

Elder Curtis Raines, moderator
Brantley Kennedy, clerk

ELDER ERNEST F. OAKLEY

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst Elder Ernest Francis Oakley who was a member and an ordained minister of Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church, Caswell County, North Carolina. He was born in Caswell County, March 31, 1903, the son of David Oakeley and Ida Squires Oakley.

Elder Oakley professed a hope in Jesus Christ and was baptized in the year 1938 by our late pastor Elder W. C. King, and was ordained into the ministry in the year of 1944.

Survivors in addition to his mother, include his wife Mrs. Emma Oliver Oakley, three daughters, Mrs. Doris Cheek, Mrs. Celia Spoon, Mrs. Frances Woody, three sons; Ernest B., Reid N., and James L. Oakley. There are many things we have to remember him by. I feel the Lord blessed him with a humble walk among his brethren. He greeted his brethren with a kind and friendly smile and he was one that never critized his brethren.

Elder Oakley was a firm believer in the doctrine of electing grace; not only did he believe in the promises of God but he lived a peaceful and humble life as a farmer and in doing so, provided well for his family. He was told of his condition some few years before passing and advised to undergo surgery but trusting the faith of God and having a firm hope, he was willing to leave it in the hands of a just God.

We understand since his passing that his last days were spent visiting some of the aged and shut in members and friends. I have been told by some how much it meant to them, and what a comfort it was to them. I personally feel a loss. I miss the little conversations we had in his work shop. I miss sharing the services together at Bush Aabor. After the passing of Elder W. C. King there was a pastor to be called at Bush Arbor. Elder Oakley told me he felt I should be the one chosen because, as he put it, I am getting old and won't be around much longer and I would like you as a pastor; and no one will ever know what his words of encouragement meant to me.

He departed this life February 12, 1972, and his funeral was conducted by the writer of this article, assisted by Elder Donald Smith. His body was laid to rest in Bush Arbor church cemetery under a beautiful mound of flowers. May God's richest blessings rest with his wife and family and all that mourn his passing.

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their

labours; and their works do follow them." (Rev. 14:13)

That a copy of this be sent the family; one to the Signs of the Times for publication; and one kept for church records. Written by request of Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church. Approved and read in our conference meeting on Saturday, May 13, 1972.

Wallis A. Smith, Moderator.
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

SISTER AUDRA COX

With sad hearts we of the Memphis Church bow to the soverign will of God in calling home April 8, 1972, a dear sister, Audra Cox, daughter of Joe M. and Nealy Newman, formerly of Ripley, Tenn. She was married to James Edward Cox November 3, 1928; and to this union were born a son and a daughter: Joe M. Cox and Mrs. Joe Cullum, of Memphis—whose love and devotion to their mother was lovely to behold.

Sister Cox united with the Primitive Baptist Church in Memphis and was baptized in September, 1938, by the late Elder R. M. Brown. She will be sadly missed by all who knew her as a friend and a sister in the church. She was active in love, and enjoyed talking of the things she believed in the Spirit.

I would like to mention this: while building a large glassed in patio on their house, she would say, "I'll fill it with Baptists some day." and a few years later while building a new church here, the pulpit stand was moved into this patio, and the whole fellowship and many friends met and enjoyed each Sunday's service as conveniently as if in the church building—even holding our Annual August Meeting there. All took food for the two days and held services morning and afternoon. It was a pleasant meeting, and gave her much pleasure, as well as all of us.

She was in very ill health for many years, and was blessed with love of a kind and most patient husband who never faltered in doing everything possible for her comfort and pleasure. The last years of suffering being in the out of hospitals, made her perfectly reconciled to leaving this world. She often said, "I'm ready to go."

Besides her husband and children, she leaves to mourn her passing two brothers: Gladston Newman, Stanton, Tenn., and J. M. Newman, Memphis; three sisters: Mrs. S. C. Forsyth, Ripley, Tenn; Mrs. E. I. McCullar, Dallas Tex.; and Dorothy Newman, Nashville, Tenn. and many other relatives and friends.

May the God of all blessings and comfort be with the family, supplying their every need, drawing them closer to Him by the cords of his love. Written by request.

Lucille Young and Carrie Campbell

JUNIUS JAMES WEAVER

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove a faithful and highly esteemed Brother, Junius Weaver, from our fold on December 20, 1971. He was born December 7, 1893, the son of the late Brother Young Theoffus (Offie) and Sister Anna Jones Weaver. Having lived little over 78 years. He was married to Sister Lillie Johnson, and she preceded him in death July 17, 1949, and a daughter Mrs. Mary Brown on Dec. 25, 1960.

To this union six sons and three daughters werw born. Edward of Coats; Mrs. Maude Parker; H.T.; Coolidge Weaver of Dunn, N.C.; Mrs. Betty Sue Wilkins of Enka, N.C.; Granville and William of Benson, N.C. A brother, Sebbie Weaver of Ue-Gala, Florida and sister, Mrs. Flonnie Wood of Coats, N.C. Also thirty -three grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren.

Brother Weaver on November 17, 1961 married the daughter of the late Charles and Katie Tyler Cates, Minnie Cates Frazier. having a step family of four daughters, Mrs. Mable Johnson, Mrs. Lizzie Horton, Mrs. Ila Moore, Mrs. Effie Clayton. Nineteen grandchildren, 35 great grandchildren. He was blessed to have two good companions that stood faithfully by in all sicknesses and aflictions.

Brother Weaver was a strong believer in Salvation by Grace, and joined Bethesaida Primitive Baptist Church while in a hospital in 1954, and moved his membership to Liberty Church in April 3, 1966. Brother Weaver was in church each Saturday and Sunday when health permitted.

His funeral was conducted in Liberty Church by Elders C.D. Turner and W.D. Godwin, then laid to rest in the Tart family cemetery, Harnett County, N.C., beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, to wait until the resurrection to be called with the saints around God's throne where there will be no sorrows, heart aches, or tears. He will be missed by many, but we feel our loss is his eternal gain. May we all be reconciled to our holy and merciful God that makes no mistakes.

In our January conference a committee was appointed and the resolutions to be written, one for church record, one for family, and one to be sent to The Signs of the Times for publication.

Committee: Bro. James Young
Sister Lovie Young

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 140 DANVILLE, VA, OCTOBER, 1972 NO. 10

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS
10/72
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

NOT ONLY WITH HER BUT AHEAD, LEADING.

Dearly Beloved:

I was sitting on my porch this afternoon watching one of the most violent thunder storms I have seen in years, blasting in its fury seemingly to split and break to bits the entire universe. The power and majesty of our God completely overwhelmed me.

My mind went back to my childhood when my mother sat on her porch and talked with me of His great power and dominion over all things, and told me not to be afraid it was all in God's plan, and always some good came from ev-everything He did. A calm and peace completely enveloped me. Many things that I did not understand in years past came clearly to my mind.

Life has held many ups and downs for me. There have been many dark and dreary spots. There were times when the storm clouds gathered thick and fast, but always there was a silver lining to show through at His appointed time, both naturally and spiritually. He was not only with me, He was ahead of me leading me by His precious hand, helping me over the rough spots.

I have lived past my three score years and ten and I know this body is fast wearing out, yet I am sure no one has enjoyed life more than I have, and still do, but oh how different are the things I love now than I did at one time in my life.

I love my family and I know they love me, but it is with a different love we adore our Maker and His family. Visiting with His little ones and having them in my home, is one of the greatest privileges I have ever had. The things of this time world, the gold and the glitter do not appeal to me as they once did. I am waiting now for His still small voice to call me, and see Him reach out for me as I cross the chilly waters of death, if I be one of the chosen race.

The storm is over now, and the sun is peeping out from behind the clouds. If we did not have the storms we could not appreciate the quietness and clear shining. Isn't that the way with our spiritual life?

My sodden fields from previous rains are filled with water again. Why should I complain and to whom should I complain? He has promised never to forsake His own. That is my only hope.

May I be ever thankful for both the storms and the clear shining.

In love and fellowship,
Maude H. Pruitt
Snow Hill, Md. 21863

PASSING OF ELDER JOHN WILDER

Rt. 1,
Sharps Chapel, Tenn. 37866

Dear Elder Wood:

I feel like I have known you for a long time by your writings in the *Signs,* and your correspondence with Elder John Wilder, who was our Moderator for years in the Powells Valley Primitive

Baptist Association. The last letter he wrote you was published in the *Signs;* and he said it might be the last letter he would write you; and it was so.

He passed away May 6, 1972. Sister Wilder was very ill at the time of his death, and passed away June 7, 1972..

We loved him so much it was hard to give him up. We are in much sorrow but we believe it was the purpose of Almighty God, and we would be reconciled to His will.

I am sending you some material that we would like to have published in the *Signs*. . . .

Love to all,

N. E. Lay, Clerk
Powells Valley Assn.

(See obituary this issue)

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE PIGG RIVER DISTRICT PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

My Dear Brethren:

As we come to this the one hundred forty-seventh session of the Association held with the Basham Church, we do hope and pray that the Lord will be in our midst, that we may have an association of love and peace, and can feel the visitation of the Holy Spirit.

As I think back over the past hundred and forty-seven years, how that God has blessed us and given us strength to continue as an association, and, if not deceived, blessed me to be a very small part of it, I hope I am thankful for our correspondents in the past, and hope that many of them will be with us again.

If I know what a Circular Letter is, I feel that it should show in some way what this association stands for; and I feel the Intrductory Sermon should be the same, if the Lord should bless us to that end.

I would call your attention to Isaiah 45:18, the last line of that verse: "I am the Lord and there is none else." I feel this is the doctrine our association was founded upon. Here we see in these few words, the very principle of the power and the sovereignty of God.

I hope that our ministers and those that visit with us, will ever be able to declare this truth. Our belief is that God in his mercy has called us with an holy calling, and that He has put his Word in us: which is Jesus formed in in us the hope of glory. If that Word dwells in us, we will believe in the sovereignty of God. No man can testify to or of the predestinated purpose and the choice of God, unless he has been wrought upon by the same. We may speak of the predestinated purpose, or of His sovereignty every other word that we speak, that may not mean that we believe it: we may shout it from the housetops, but that does not prove anything.

For us to believe this, that is, the doctrine of God our Saviour, it must be given to us as manna from heaven: it must be rooted and grounded in us. Men may say we are soft; they may say we are not orthodox, but if God has given it to us, no man can take it away; and it matters not what they say.

I believe God is the same as he was when he spoke to Moses at the bush, "I AM hath sent thee." God hated sin then, and he hates it now.

I do not believe we can see our vile and wretched condition, and not hate sin. I do not believe we can believe in the complete sovereignty of God, and not hate ourselves and our ways. We will not justify ourselves in our sins, but will want to render all praise to God, and acknowledge our sins and confess our guilt: and say, "God is holy, and I am undone."

There are not enough schools or institutions to teach men the sovereignty of God; but He has taught his children their weakness, and His power.

I have only hinted at these things, but a hint to the wise is sufficient. I have expressed in a small way what I believe, and what I feel the principles of the doctrine of God our Saviour are, and what the Pigg River Association stands for.

May God in his mercy lead, guide and keep us, is my prayer.

Your brother, I trust, in bonds,
Leonard J. Brammer

LOOKS FORWARD TO COMING OF SIGNS

Princeton, W. Va.

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

My mind is with you much of late, so I feel to make the attempt to write you a few lines, hoping that you both are as well as usual. My health is right good for my age of eighty-five my next birthday.

Many and varied have been the scenes along the way, but often I can look back and say as one of old, "Surely goodness and mercy has followed me all the days of my life."

I always look forward to the coming of the *Signs of the Times* each month. I especially enjoyed Elder H. V. Cole's letter in the February issue. It was so much like him. I cherish his memory, for I grew up, so to speak, under his hat brim. When I was a small child I would think of having to die; then I would think that as long as Elder Cole lived I would be safe. He was a wonderful person.

I made a short visit in Maryland to visit my sister, but did not call you, feeling you would be away attending a meeting. I hope to see you at the Pigg River Association in August.

May the Lord still bless your endeavors with editing the *Signs of the Times*. It has weathered many storms in the past; and with the changing of worldly things as they are, my hope is that He will uphold you Editors as in the past. He never changes.

With deep love and fellowship, I hope to be one of you.

Mrs. S. J. Priddy

(Sister Wood and I have many pleasant memories of visiting Elder and Sister Priddy a good many years ago, and overnight with her two or three years ago. The love and fellowship of the brethren is sweet as long as we live. — J. D. W.

(Concluded from page 199 last month)

IN CHRIST

Now, here is what is done **in Christ.** We have considered the race of Adam of which we **all** are partakers. Now let us consider the **Race of Christ** of which Believers only, the Elect, the Chosen, the Called, are partakers. "As in **Adam all die;** so in **Christ shall all be made alive.**" In other words, all that are in Christ shall (determinate statement) be made alive. Everyone of them! Now, Who is in Christ, and how did they get there? That you can see is a very important question, and all of our faith and hope rest upon the truth of this answer: for the answer is **in Christ.**

First, consider the sense of which I am writing by seeing Heb. 7:9,10. The principle is this: "And as I may so say, Levi also (the great grandson of Abraham) who receiveth tithes, payed tithes **in Abraham.** For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him."

Just as the race of Adam was in Adam when he sinned, and it is on account that they sinned and therefore suffer death too; so Levi being yet in Abraham's loins paid tithes when Abraham paid tithes, even though he nor **yet** his father were born. We say that Abraham stood as the **Federal** and **Representative Head** of his offspring; see? Now, nail that down and hold on to it, for it is in **this same sense** we now write of the **Race of Christ.**

This Race of Christ got into Christ by God's design. In fact **before** the foundation of the world, the Father and Son held a council which is called the "Counsel of Peace" when Zechariah is prophesying of Christ and his rule and glory. (Zech. 6:13) At that time (if we say "time",) a Covenant of Peace was made whereby Christ agreed to be a "Covenant of the people for a light of the Gentiles." (Isa. 42:5-8)

It was in this covenant that the peo-

ple of God entered **into** Christ. "According as he **hath chosen us in Him** (Christ) before the foundation of the world." (Eph. 1:4) and predestinated us "to be conformed to the image of Christ." (Rom. 8:29) Predestinated to be called to salvation; predestinated to be justified, and to be glorified: (Rom. 8:29, 30) and predestinated to an inheritance. (Eph. 1:5, 6 and 11) Now one does not **work** for an inheritance. He gets it by being in the loins of his father, or in another's heart! He inherits **freely** an inheritance.

Now, the Scriptures tell us that **"As many as were ordained** to Eternal Life believed" the Apostles. (Acts 13:48) So then all believers are such because they were first **Ordained of God,** and this **in Christ.**

Now while all the above is extremely important, yet I wish you would particularly consider what I now write, and I hope I can make it clear and as precious as I find it to my own soul.

The whole elect Race of Christ was "chosen in Him before the foundation of the world." (Eph. 1:4) Isaiah spoke by Holy Ghost inspiration about that race in Isaiah 66:6-9. Please follow the passage closely: "A voice of noise from the city (when Christ was born), a voice from the temple (when he was circumcised the eighth day), a voice of the Lord that rendereth recompense to his enemies (judgement). Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child(Christ), Who hath heard such a thing? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in **one day?** or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children."

This is speaking, I believe, of the birth of Christ in Zion the Church, and the whole family of God on earth **in Him.** A WHOLE NATION, those IN CHRIST were born in ONE DAY, and ONCE, and without LABOR, (works) but by GRACE. They are **in** their Head and Representative Christ. When He was born in Bethlehem, the Church was born **in** Him. Notice what the High Priest said of Christ . . . "Know ye nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." "And this spake he not of himself: but being High Priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that also He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad." John 11:50-52).

This we believe with all our heart, if we know it at all; and that is that when Christ died for His people He **then saved** everyone of them. They are not "saved" when they believe, or when they repent, or when they are baptized in water, but they were saved WHEN CHRIST DIED, and this we believe exclusive of all other denominations we know of; and we believe that this only can explain what is meant by such phrases as "saved by His blood"; "saved us from our sins"; "washed us in His blood"; "cleansed us from all unrighteousness"; "died for our sins"; "died for us"; "laid down His life for us"; etc. Either He did or He didn't; either He succeeded, or He failed; either we were saved, or we are doomed! See what I mean?

We believe that **"by the obedience** of one", Christ, "many be made Righteous". "For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted (imputed) unto him for righteousness. Now to him that **worketh** is the reward **not** reckoned of grace, but of debt." (Rom. 4:4). Now if it is of works or debt, the "wages of sin is death", therefore those that are working for salvation, or by their efforts trying to indebt God to them, are working for condemnation and death. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that **justifieth the ungodly** (the ungodly, **not** self-righteous people), his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute (charge to his acount) sin. (Rom. 4:5-8).

This righteousness is "Christ's Righteousness" imputed **to** those **IN** Him, His elect. This righteousness we have is by His obedience, as already shown.

So let us look at this "obedience". Whatever Christ did is charged (imputed) to the acount of those **in** Him; so whatever He did, they did. He is the HEAD of the Church, it is his BODY, and His work is **for Her.**

Just as when He was born, they were federally or representatively born also; so too, when he was circumcised on the eighth day,they were circumcised. He was circumcised to fulfill the requirements of the law, Luke 2:21, and the Apostle Paul writes "And ye are **complete in Him,** (now, beloved, you can't improve on anything complete, and in this passage they are said to be ALREADY completed) which is the head of all principality and power: In Whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ . ." See, when He was circumcised, the whole church was circumcised; and for this reason the Holy Spirit in time will individually circumcise each one of those representatively circumcised IN Christ. (Col. 2:11) (see: Rom. 2:28-29 for Holy Spirit circumcision.)

Now also notice, that "being dead in your sins and the uncircumscion of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses . . ." (Col. 2:13).

Notice, that when He was circumcised they were too, and when He was quickened in the resurrection, they representatively are said to be quickened **with him,** and it was **then** that their "trespasses were forgiven". Remember His words on the Cross? "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." As an Arminian years ago, I thought He was speaking of those screaming "crucify him, crucify him." I hope I know better now. Even then I wondered if they were all saved, or if not, did His Father answer His prayer. It is worth considering now too! He said "No man taketh my life," and, "I lay it down of myself". He said, "I lay down my life for **the sheep." (Not** everybody) (John 10:11) On the cross "He gave up the ghost", they didn't take it from Him, so it was the **sins of the elect** that killed Him, for He died for our sins," and "gave His life for us," etc. So when He prayed, "Father forgive them," He was praying for the elect and chosen: those **in** Him when He died. "My Father heareth me always," is great consolation to believers. He said "I pray **not** for the world, but for those thou hast **given** me out of the world, for they were thine, and Thou gavest them me." (John 17:11)

So consider this for it is extremely important: When did he forgive His people of their sins? When they believe? No, long, long before this! This is the reason we have hope of forgiveness when we sin, for we have an advocated "with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous" who intercedes for us day and night.

But, and of comfort to believers outside the local churches, **His obedience** is imputed to us, as if we obeyed: and this includes his baptism. Do you desire baptism? Which do you prefer, baptism, or the outward sign or symbol of baptism . . . in water? Which is most important, the sign, or the real thing? To you who cannot enter the church and desire it, and to you outside the church waiting for the Lord to add you . . . is is **of him too.** Consider this:

When Christ was baptized, the whole church of all ages was **in** Him, and they were also baptized representatively! Recall what he said to John the Baptist: "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to **fulfill all righteousness."** Christ, by virtue of His Sonship and sinless conception, was already "righteous". In fact, He is the **only** truly Righteous One. But it is "Righteousness" sinners need, and it is **for** those **in Him** that he was baptized. In the same passages in Colossians where we quoted circumcision **in him,** we also read this: "Buried WITH HIM in baptism, wherein also YE ARE RISEN with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead." (Col.

2:12.) It is for this reason that they were also "baptized **into** His death."

Notice THREE baptisms in reference in Romans 6:3-5. First, "Know ye not, that so many of us as WERE baptized **into** Jesus Christ" . . . (being **chosen in Him and immersed IN HIM**; Second, **"were baptized into His death"** . . . (Consider how great this is: They were baptized into His death, so that **when** He died, they died, representatively. He died for their sins, their sins being **in** His body and nailed to the tree. When God looked upon His dying Son He saw the sinful elect nation **in** Him. When He now looks upon them, He sees them through the shed blood of Christ. All of this is past tense, already completed, finished, accomplished! Nothing can be taken from it, unless Christ can go to the cross again and suffer less than He did! Nothing can be added to it, unless He undertook to die again! Third, "Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism (water) into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we **also should walk in newness of life."** (Rom. 6:4.)

Water baptism is the symbolic sign of our former baptism **in** Christ and **in** His death. It does not "put away the filth of the flesh," but is an answer of a good conscience towards God. But, that baptism which is in fulfillment of righteousness, is Christ's Baptism, and that righteousness we have by **His** obedience is **His righteousness** . . . not ours!

As we see it, Christ undertook to fulfill the law for us, and in doing so, He fulfilled the moral law in our stead because we could not fulfill it. He obeyed it FULLY, and worked out a righteousness which HE gives by imputation (not, impartation) to those **in** Him by election. This obedience INCLUDES EVERY SINGLE THING THAT THEY NEED FOR LIFE AND SALVATION, RIGTHEOUSNESS, SANCTIFICATION, AND REDEMPTION . . . ALL OF IT. You need NOTHING ELSE. But, what of your sins? They are what worry you most. He gave you HIS righteousness; and took YOUR SINS. He exchanged them with you. He took your place, and died the death you deserved, bearing them in Him. And by loving grace and mercy, gave you His righteousness instead!

Elder Stanley C. Phillips
Rt. 2, Box 136-A
Quitman, Miss. 39355

THE BRETHREN ARE SADDENED BECAUSE OF ELDER RUSTON'S PASSING

80 Scott Street, Apt. 315
Brampton, Ontario, Canada

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

Am not writing this for publication, but you can do what you like with this letter. My hand seems to tremble as I start this letter, maybe from the heat and humidity, or again it may be partly to tell you of the funeral of our beloved Pastor, dear Elder Ruston, whom you all knew.

We trust you are being blessed with good preaching. We feel you Editors have been a wonderful blessing to us in Canada, visiting us when able to come. At times the *Signs* seems the only sermons we hear by reading and enjoying the experiences of those of precious faith.

We had to journey to the church about 140 miles through pouring rain, both going and coming home, when we attended Elder Ruston's funeral. It rained while the service was on but stopped for the burial, so we could go to the grave in the cemetery by the church; where we heard a lovely prayer by Elder Stuart McCall. It just seemed that Elder Ruston had his prayers answered: to know that two ministers were ordained here in Canada. We felt they conducted the funeral so well, and the Lord gave them strength and power to speak in His name.

Sister Ruston is still in the hospital, (now in a nursing home-Ed.) and one of her daughters, Ellen, stayed with her during the services. Our thoughts are

with her and her dear ones. We cannot grieve, or shouldn't, as we were blessed to have a loving pastor with us, and would not want to see him suffer any longer; as he longed to go.

Elder Alex McCall started the services with a lovely prayer, the Elder Stuart McCall requested we sing Paraphrase 58, "When high the heavenly temple stands, the house of God not made with hands," etc. He spoke from first three verses of the 1st Psalm . . . He quoted the hymn, "Father what e'er of earthly bliss," and said Elder Ruston had quoted it lately.

Elder Stuart McCall read the 23rd Psalm, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. . . . He said we have lost a mighty oak in the community as well as the church. (The above is condensed from Sister Carscadden's letter. Ed.)

We had a lovely June meeting. We regretted that Elder Spangler was unable to attend. We felt the June meeting and ordination of Elder Sturat McCall were carried out the way our dear pastor would want it. We were blessed to have Elders Wm. Turner and J. T. Prescott from the U. S. with us. We had such sweet preaching and felt the services were appropriate for the ordination . . .

We are so few here in Canada, please pray for the McCall brothers and our church.

The January *Signs* of this year seemed so good to me: "Christ in Humiliation. Christ in Exhaltation". Seemed to me that I was going through a state of humiliation, and reading the article made me feel how our dear Saviour was humiliated and humbled, and yet without sin. How I have longed to write these dear ones who have been a comfort in their writings when I have no one to talk to—or should I say that: we always have our Lord and feel we are not alone. The article written by Thelma Wilson on "Giving and Receiving at Christmas" expressed my feelings. How our hearts are knit together in holy joy that we have a God of love and mercy! Elder Wood I enjoyed your Editorial and could keep on naming many articles enjoyed in the January *Signs* and the following *Signs* each month. It seems sad that I cannot write Elder Ruston and tell him how much I enjoyed his Editorial written in August, 1935: "The Tree of the Cross."

After learning of his death I read in Revelation 14:13, "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." And these words were quoted at the service.

This year I had my first trip to the west coast and enjoyed the scenery and trip very much, but while there is wasn't possible to be among the Old Baptists, and that is always my delight.

Am so thankful to you editors and all whose writings I read in the *Signs*. I feel I do not know how to pray as I ought. "Lord teach me to pray." Please remember me in your prayers. I am so happy that I have heard all the editors of the *Signs* preach. May God continue to bless you all.

In bonds of love and fellowship.

From a little sister,
Verna Carscadden

(We appreciate your letter Sister Carscadden and hope to have more on the Ordination later. — J. D. W.)

SEVEN THOUSAND IN ISRAEL

The great prophet Elijah, in the days after he had slain the prophets of Baal and when he was being sought by Jezebel, who had vowed to slay him, complained unto God, "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, *even* I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." (I Kings, 19:14-18)

Sometimes my faith gets very low

and I start wondering if God knows what is going on in the world. It's some comfort in those times to read again what God told Elijah, for it's an understatement to say that He knew more about it than Elijah knew. God said, "Yet I have left *me* seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him."

I used to think of how wonderful it must have been for those upright people who wouldn't bow before Baal, but I was very sure that I would have been one of those who had run all the way after him and was lost world without end. I didn't know what to think when I noticed, in the next chapter, that the king of Israel numbered all the children of Israel and that there were seven thousand. If I could have, I would have thought that the Bible had a bad error in it, but it's plainly written that the king numbered "all the people, *even* all the children of Israel, being seven thousand."

God said that He had left Him seven thousand in Israel, and seven thousand was all of Israel. It seems to me that God didn't charge those people's sins against them. He loved them and was very merciful unto them.

But I like more to think of this as applying to spiritual Israel. Not one shall be lost. God has left Him every one chosen unto eternal life. David said (Psalm 32), "Blessed *is* the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity . . ." Although God's chosen people would sometimes forsake Him, He never forsakes them. He changes not. God again and again was merciful unto physical Israel, winning their wars for them. But the warfare of spiritual Israel was perfectly accomplished once and for all time when the Lord died on the cross and returned unto Heaven. God said by Isaiah, ". . . her warfare is accomplished, . . . her iniquity is pardoned." And Paul wrote: "Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again . . . ."

Elijah's complaint was based upon how things appeared to him, but God, in His infinite wisdom and mercy, saw differently.

A little one in Christ, I hope
Ann Folmer
P. O. Box 148
Fort Deposit, Ala. 36032

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 1,
Reidsville, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

I would like to write something about what I hope the Lord has done for me. I don't have evidence like most of the dear brethren have, and that makes me have doubts and fears. Sometimes I feel I am nothing but a hypocrite, but I think back and I wouldn't take the whole world and everything in it for what I hope I have.

At one time I felt I was not like anybody else: I was different from anyone. I would be asleep and it seemed someone would wake me up, and say, "You are going to die," and I would say, "Lord I know it." Then it would say, "Now where are you going?" And I was made to answer that I did not know. I was made to know that there was nothing in the world I could do to help myself to go to heaven. I could say nothing but, "Lord have mercy on me.

I have had things happen to me from time to time since I was married, that I hope the Lord has showed me. I have always loved the old Primitive Baptists and I wanted to join the church, but I couldn't. I had a sweet girl to get hurt real badly in a tractor wreck in which her back was broken in two places. I tried to ask the Lord to make her well again, and that I would try and ask for a home with the Primitive Baptists. Well, she got well, but I tried to put it off, but I had to go. And when I was baptized, I believe that was the happiest day of my life. I love everyone of them, and I hope they love me.

I lost my husband in 1966. How good

the Lord has been to me, but I almost went crazy. It seemed I had nothing I was holding on to but just a little string. I have been real sick since I lost my husband, but I believe the Lord has been with me all the way. I get so lonely sometimes I feel I am less than nothing. Sometimes I enjoy nothing much, not even going to hear preaching. But I feel we must have these things, for otherwise we would not think about God and his great love and kindnesses.

I have nine children whom I love very much, but I hope I have learned not to trust in them, nor anyone else, but rather to trust in God. But we cannot do this until we are brought low when troubles, sickness and death comes along, and then we cry unto our blessed Saviour for mercy.

I cannot write as I would like, so will close.

A sister in Christ I hope,
Ola Paschal

A TRANSCRIPTION FROM A TAPE RECORDING OF A SERMON PREACHED AT EKFRID, ONTARIO, ON SUNDAY, MAY 24, 1970, BY ELDER GEORGE RUSTON PRECEDING THE ORDINANCE OF BELIEVER'S BAPTISM.

I would like to talk for a short time on this wonderful occasion, and the hymn that we first sang has suggested a subject to me in the 2nd of Philippians and the first and second verses:

"If there is therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind."

That first hymn that we sang is written on that particular scripture. And when I think of the wonderful way in which this person Paul, or Saul, was turned to be Paul the Apostle, I have only to mention the fact that the Son of God became King when he rose from the dead and he was able to overcome every foe, by speaking to them; His word said, "Saul, Saul why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." Now, no doubt, the Word of God and things that he saw around him, pricked his conscience. He had seen Stephen being stoned to death, and praying for those who were stoning him, which was an astonishing thing and must have affected him and made him wonder after all. And there are so many things that take place in our lives that cause us an exercise of wondering. We do not pass through this world without some evidence of where we belong. If we belong to God, you may be sure that God has that purpose and right to turn us around and give us a desire for those things that are according to godliness.

My parents read the Bible with us and I hope you are the same, even though they are taking the Bible out of the schools; I hope you in your families have your children read the scripture, for you will find certain scriptures that are beautiful. The first Psalm was the first one that I learned. "Blessed is the man . . ." But as a child, as I was growing up, I would think that I was that blessed man, and so I should not walk in the paths of the ungodly or stand in the way of sinners. As we went to church there would be a group of men on Sunday morning standing over by the stile, where the people walked through the fields, and they'd laugh sometimes when we went by them, as much as to say, "There are those old fools going to church", and I just thought that they were the ones that were in the first Psalm, "Walking in the counsel of the ungodly, standing in the way of sinners, sitting in the seat of the scornful." Some would be sitting in the saloons and looking through the window when we went on Sunday night; and that went on for years until it was shown to me that the blessed man was the Lord Jesus Christ, that He was the one the prophets spake of, He was the one who created all things, He was the

Word made flesh, as it says, and dwelt among us.

I am humbled when I associate with you and feel that He dwells in this poor sinner standing before you, and yet I have loved his name; I have felt the sweetness of that name above every name. I have sometimes sung the hymn "How sweet the name of Jesus Sounds", and I have thought of John Newton who was a slave trader, and how the Lord spoke to him, and from that day he was a different man, and Oh! when the Lord speaks to a person! "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sins; wherein in time past ye walked", but this change that came from above brought a complete change in the mind of the Apostle Paul. He had been brought up in the law, so he thought everything that the Jews taught regarding their ritual was all right. They couldn't see beyond the seven golden candlesticks, something more beautiful, with the Son of Man standing in the midst of the seven churches. They could not see those things; he could not see these things, neither did he see that this lamb of which John the Baptist said, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world"; that this lamb was Jesus Christ; Jesus who was brought up in Nazareth, a city of ill-repute you might say, who was born at the right time. Oh! the wonder of God; we are told in the Word of God, "The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord."

How wonderful it is true in regard to Christian experience and in regard to the way in which God brings it to pass. Just as wonderfully in our own experience as in the experience when Jesus Christ came into the world. What? say you. Yes, one that told that Jesus was to come to Bethlehem. "Thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be in Israel, a ruler whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." And, to bring this about, Augustus, the Emperor, commanded that the world be taxed; and as the world was to be taxed, the people had to come down to the villages and cities where they were born, to be taxed, and Joseph had to bring Mary all the way down from Nazareth to Bethlehem, 64 miles, on an ass—what a terrible thing! How terrible! Just so terrible that you and I should wonder at the love and the kindness of Almighty God in giving us this Redeemer over and above all the plans and schemes of men.

Yes, and you remember when he was born in Bethlehem, there wasn't any room in the inn for him and they laid him with the beasts of the stall; and some men came. People say they came from different directions; the Bible tells us they came from the East. And they had been led by a heavenly light. I do not think they were astrologers. I think they were shown a light from above. Jesus is the bright and the morning star, and that light led them; led them over to where the young child lay. And when they came, you remember, to Jerusalem, they enquired; and Herod was troubled and all Jerusalem with him. The most wicked Emperor that ever reigned in Palestine was this Herod. And, you know, when they came, Herod enquired of the leaders of the Jews where Jesus, or Christ, was to come from, and he was told from Bethlehem; and so he said to these men, "You go down and find out where he is and I'll come and worship him;" meaning that he was coming to slay him. Oh, the wickedness of men! But, you know, this blessed man who had come into the world couldn't be slain by Herod. Though he slew every child in the vicinity for miles around, he couldn't slay this one. This one had to come and live and bear our sins in his own body. Think of it; and, if you have the love to Him, it's because you've felt your sins were laid upon him, and he bore your sins in his body on the tree.

And now, my dear ones, this blessed person that came, who was the Word of God and who inspired the Prophets of old to testify of Him beforehand, of His

sufferings and of the glory that should follow, had said that He would sit upon the throne of his father David and He would rule, for He must reign until all his enemies were made his footstool: "And the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Thus, when Jesus Christ rose from the dead, he ascended on high and led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men even unto the rebellious; a gift to Paul, Saul of Tarsus, that he should speak to the glory of Emmanuel,

"That he should tell to sinners round,
What a dear Savior he had found;
And point to his redeeming blood,
And say, "Behold the way to God."

This is the way I long have sought,
And mourned because I found it not;
My grief and burden long has been,
Because I could not cease from sin."

But the Lord brings us into such a state and condition that we are made to come and lean upon Him, and to cry unto Him and ask Him to say to my soul, "I am thy salvation"; Ask Him to so appear unto us that our burden of sin shall be taken away by a word from on high. This king shall reign,—and it is a point that I would like to bring forth: His Word that he gave to his Apostles. They went and were to preach that Word. I do not think that they had any right to do anything contrary to what the Word said.

I mentioned a few moments ago about "the lot is cast into the lap," and we find that because Judas had been taken, Peter had them cast lots to put somebody else in Judas' place. I do not think that that was according to the Lord's command; it was Peter that did that, and men have done things from that day to this; and Matthias who was chosen was never heard of after that. God had a man to fill the place of that wretch Judas —it was Saul of Tarsus, Saul who was to be the twelfth Apostle, the Apostle to the Gentiles. God had a way of bringing him which man couldn't bring about by casting lots; and yet so fully was God's purpose completed that when Paul was going to carry to prison and to death those that believed in the name of Christ, he experienced, "At noonday, O King, I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" and I said,, "Who art thou Lord?" and he said "I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest." Oh! What a come down! How he must have come right down and didn't know where to hide. Have you been there? Have you been made to say like the dear hymn-writer:

"Hide me, O my Savior, hide,
Till the storm of life be past;
Safe into the haven guide;
O receive my soul at last."

These things, my friends, of which I am speaking, are better than anything in this world. Nothing in this world can take their place. If the Lord begins a work in your heart, if He begins to teach you what you are, and show you what He is, that He is a helper of the helpless, bless His name; and you'll bless His name from day to day and throughout eternity.

"If there be therefore any consolation in Christ" What does this mean? Any comfort, any satisfaction. Have you ever had anything happen to you that has come to you and has lifted you right out of the ditch and put your feet on the rock? Has He done with you as it says in the Psalm, "I waited patiently (enduringly) for the Lord and He inclined His ear unto me and heard me cry. He brought me up out of a horrible pit"? And you know I think of little children as we have here this morning. Once in London, Sister McGugan was too sick to go to meeting, and she lay abed, and her daughter took her little girl to meeting; and when she came back home, Sister McGugan said, "What was Elder Ruston's text today?" "Well", said she, "I don't know that I could tell you just where it is, but he spoke about a man being down in a pit of miry clay and when he tried to pull one foot out, the other one sunk in deeper." "Oh", the old lady said "I know what that is, That's a Psalm, "I waited patiently for

the Lord and He inclined unto me and heard my cry." Tell me these children do not listen; and who can tell but what something that George Ruston said long ago has come back to somebody else somewhere. Oh, the grace of God, the mercy of God, the commanding power of this King who sits upon the throne and who shall reign till all his enemies are made his footstool. This King, he is the one who brings the comfort of love; for God is love. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth . . .": and we believe according to the mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead. It is not the act of the creature, it is an act of the Creator to make a believer, and He all-embracing love. "Who loved me and gave himself for me." Just think about that. "Love". So, "If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit"; I wouldn't miss that out.

(Concluded next month)

"That which ye have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." (1 John 1:3, 4)

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union Meeting will be held at Weatherford Church the 5th Sunday in October and Saturday before. October 28 and 29, 1972.

L. H. Doss, Clerk

EASTERN UNION

The Eastern Union will be held, the Lord willing, with Bethlehem Church in Tyrell County, N. C. on Saturday and fifth Sunday in October, 1972. All lovers of the truth are invited to attend, with a special invitation to our ministering brethren.

Those traveling east will take No. 64 Highway to Columbia, N. C. to stop light, turn right on 94 about two and one-half miles to first cross-road, turn right about 200 yards to the church.

N. L. Ambrose, Union Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To August 1, 1972)

Mrs. Ruth Greer, Ala.	$ 2.00
Thomas S. Martin, Va.	13.00
Katherine Jones, La.	3.00
H. P. Conner, Va.	3.00
Mr. Thompson, Va.	2.00
Thomas Nickols, Va.	3.00
John E. Apple, N.C.	3.00
Mrs. Nannie Varnier, Va.	1.00
Wilson A. Shortt, Va.	3.00
C. W. Vass, N.C.	3.00
E. C. Scearce, Va.	3.00
Billy Poindexter, Va.	3.00
Mrs. Emery Yohans, Conn.	3.00
Clara Cumbo, Va.	3.00
Mrs. William Holland, Calif.	1.00
Willie Dunn, Tex.	1.00
Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.	2.00
J. J. Davis, Ark.	3.00
Rosa Page, N.C.	5.00
J. J. Prescott, N.C.	1.00
Loy P. Rogers, Ark.	7.00
Blanche Brown, Wash.	3.00
William Sparks, Ohio	3.00
Mrs. Willie Davis, N.C.	1.00
Mrs. G. F. Pruitt, N.C.	3.00
Mrs. Robert Stotts, N.C.	3.00
Ben Preston, Ore.	11.00
Mrs. C. R. Welch, N.C.	3.00
Milton M. Absher, N.C.	100.00
Robert L. Cobb, Tex.	3.00
Bessie Alumbaugh, Mo.	1.00
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Mrs. Charles Craven, N.C.	3.00
Mrs. Juanita Law, N.C.	3.00
Mary Bell Stough, Ore.	3.00
Faye Hogg, Ark.	3.00

SOLDIERS CREEK ASSOCIATION

The 1972 session of the *Soldiers Creek Association* will be held, the Lord willing, with the Salem Primitive Baptist Church, Benton, Ill., on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 6, 7, 8, 1972.

Salem Church is located about three miles east of town on Duquoin Street. Benton, Ill. is located on I-57, about sixty miles north of Cario, Ill.

All lovers of the truth are invited. Anyone who needs directions call Wm. E. Vantrease, 408 S Commercial Street, Benton, Ill. 62812. Telephone 435-3576.

Wayman Chapell, Mod.
Wm. E. Vantrease, Clerk
James Cunningham, Asst. Clerk

Danville, Virginia **October, 1972**

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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Danville, Va. 24541

OUR APPRECIATION OF ELDER RUSTON

In the recent passing of Elder George Ruston of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, the Old School Baptists of Canada and America have lost a minister greatly blessed of God to His glory and the comfort and edification of His humble poor.

The Editors, Associate Editors and readers of the *Signs of the Times* will miss his editorials; and the churches and friends his ministry. The last few years he had not been physically able to prepare his editorials, but in the republishing of his writings of years ago, they have been as the dew of Hermon to our readers. Many of the present readers did not read his writings when originally published.

His stability and steadfastness in the doctrine and practice of the Old School Baptist Church was a great blessing to the cause of truth. Yet with his steadfastness he manifested the humility that so becomes those who contend for the faith.

The writer remembers his first meeting with our dear brother in 1934 at the Virginia Corresponding Meeting in Northern Virginia. Elder Ruston announced the hymn,

> "Lord let me see thy beautious face,
> It yields a heaven below;
> And angels round the throne will say,
> 'Tis all the heaven they know."

and spoke from the text," What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us." (Romans 8:31)

The writer announced the hymn,

> 'Tis my happiness below
> Not to live without the cross,
> But the Savior's power to know
> Sanctifying every loss."

and spoke from Exodus 14:22, "And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground."

Thus began a sweet fellowship that continued throughout his life. As I look back over the years with fond remembrance of the many times we were blessed to associate with each other, both in the churches and his lovely home, my heart is filled with a warmth inexpressable. No minister that we have known, was blessed with a more devoted companion in the ministry than our dear brother.

The fifth week-end in July we visited with Sister Ruston, and found to our joy that God had given her reconciling grace in her loss.

May God in his great mercy bless his family and all who mourn his passing, with grace to bow in humble submission to His will.

D. V. Spangler

ELDER GEORGE RUSTON

"And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." The preceding prophecy of Jeremiah was eminently fulfilled in the exercise and labours of our beloved pastor, Elder George Ruston, of Dutton, Ontario, Canada, who passed away in the St. Thomas-Elgin General Hospital on Wednesday, July 12, 1972. He was in his 89th. year.

Elder Ruston was born the 15th. child of 17 children to Joseph and Martha Ruston of Rowley Regis, Worcestershire, England. His father was a Strict Baptist Minister.

While a resident of England, Elder Ruston was employed at Doulton's Pottery Works where he showed a gift in ornamentation and sculpture. He attended art classes at the West Bromwich School of Art and later won scolarships to the Royal College of Art in London, England, from which he graduated with honours. After teaching art in Leeds, he emigrated to New York City where he was a sculptor for an architectural company until he accepted the pastorate in the Catskill Mountains in 1917.

Elder Ruston's ministerial life began in 1915 when he was licensed to preach by the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church of New York City. He was ordained to the full work of the ministry by that Church in October of 1916. During the following year, he accepted a call to be pastor of a group of Churches in the heart of the Catskill Mountains which later became known as the Lexington-Roxbury Association. During this period, he was appointed as an Associated Editor of the "*Signs of the Times.*"

In 1919, he filled the first of many appointments to the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada at the request of the then pastor Elder John Slauson. Following the death of Elder Slauson, he accepted a call by the Church here in Canada after great exercise of mind. The decision to come finally became more and more imminent as both he and his companion beheld the hand of the Lord in changing his field of ministry.

From August, 1929, until his passing in July, 1972, he served faithfully, eminently and with dignity the several branches of our Church in Canada, namely Lobo, Dunwich, Duart, Ekfrid, London and Toronto.

He is survived by his wife, Esther Aston, two daughters, Mrs. Claude (Rhoda) Smith of Willowdale, and Mrs. John (Ellen) Loaring of Winsdor; one son, Dr. F. G. Ruston of Nipissing, 12 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchilden. He was predeceased by two sons, John in 1941, and Henry in 1969.

"A gift is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it; whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth." (Prov. 17:8) This was true of Elder Ruston both in natural as well as spiritual endeavors. He was gifted in speaking, faithful in visiting the sick, diligent in writing and corresponding, punctual and dedicated in filling his appointments; instant in season and out of season, condescending to men of low estate and always astutely observant of the hand of God making itself manifest in natural as well as spiritual things. His greatest joy seemed to be in giving to others. All who knew him cannot but generously exclaim, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant. . . (Matt. 25:21)

His beautiful tenor voice will always be missed among us. Often as he and his faithful companion led the singing at our meetings, the words of Psalm 150 seemed to be fulfilled. "Praise him with the sound of the trumpet; Praise him with the psaltery and harp. . . Praise him with stringed instruments and organs. . . Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord."

That he was highly esteemed and greatly loved was clearly evident from the large concourse of brethren, sisters, relatives, and friends that assembled both at the Beill Funeral Home in Dutton and the Dunwich Church where the funeral was conducted by Elders

D. A. McColl and J. S. McColl at 2 p. m. on Saturday, July 15. Interment was in the family plot in the adjoining McKillop Cemetery to await the second coming of Christ — that One whom he so dearly loved to praise.

Out of profound respect for him and yet in humble submission to the Will of God, the following resolution of respect was passed unanimously by the Church in Canada on Saturday, September 2, at the Lobo Quarterly Meeting with the request that one copy of it be sent to the family, one to the *Signs of the Times* and one to be recorded in the church book.

BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada record with the deepest regret the passing of our most able Pastor, Elder George Ruston, who with his beloved companion served our Church in such an outstanding way over the past forty-three years.

Respectfully submitted,
Elder D. A. McColl
Elder J. S. McColl

EDITORIAL

"Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2 Cor. 4:14-18)

Recent changes in my life have made this part of Holy Writ of special concern to me. I would beg for a glimpse of God in the face of Jesus Christ that I might come before you once again and give you my thoughts concerning the beauty that is unfolded to us as the written word of God. Whatever we do or say or think is to be to the glory of God. All other chatter is low and base and will come to no good end. As I have stood on the side line and seen the end of everything that is seen (by eyes of nature), I have been made to see the utter fallacy in extolling the powers of dull mortality.

If, in reading the Bible, we have the veil over us we will not see anything but death. The law being our schoolmaster, it veiled us so that we can not see any further than this. With this blinder on us, we will see the law send men to the death chamber, but we will never see the pardon of our sins through the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ. This will hold true with all scripture; we will not be able to see *any* of the gospel of peace until the Comforter takes the things of Christ (takes THE SCRIPTURES) and shows them unto us. Realizing this vital truth I do not write to make brethren understand the scriptures as I hope to have been taught. There is not any doubt but that one, and maybe both, are wrong, but if so, the Lord will make that known at the right time. (Phil. 3:15)

Rightly understood, the scriptures are their own interpreter. They do not contradict; the contradiction will always be found in men, but never in the Lord. I do not mean by this that there is not a line of separation drawn between law and gospel; that the law preaches death, but that the gospel preaches life. Let us not forget, however, that the finding of compatibility between the law and gospel will never come by reading the Bible as good literature. It will only come when the Holy Ghost, which is the Comforter, brings us to its vast riches for instruction.

To me the central theme in the gospel is the resurrection of the dead. To me, if there be no resurrection, there can not be any gospel. I am sure that I have one outstanding witness to this great truth.

If there is a truth taught in the Bible, surely it is the resurrection of the bodies of God's children. These Corinthians had the spirit of faith, and it taught them, and as a result of that teaching they knew that "he which raised up the Lord Jesus would also raise them up." I do not know how that language could be any plainer stated than that. Remember that this is known by the spirit of faith, for what is not of faith is sin. Let us ask again, What is it that we know by this spirit of faith? If it is not that "he which raised up the Lord Jesus Christ would raise us up", what is he saying? If he *is not* meaning that, then he is saying something that he does not mean. But since he says that, I hope that no one will think hard of me if I contend that he said exactly what he meant to say.

With all of the inspired account of the resurrection of the body of Jesus Christ, I do not think that I have a reader that would deny it. Yet, I realize that I may have. If so, you have signed your own death warrant. But what is beyond me is for us to read such a scripture as is embraced in the text and then deny the bodily resurrection of the saints. I can not understand this. He that raised up one has promised to raise up the other. Does that not mean what it says? If it does not, please tell your ignorant brother what it does mean? I am sure, dear brethren, that if Christ has been raised from the dead, those that have fallen asleep in Christ will be raised. If Christ has not risen, then those that are fallen asleep have perished. If there be no resurrection of the dead there are two men that felt and does feel that we will perish in death (See I Cor. 15:12 through 18) and remember, as you read, that this poor sinner, together with Paul, feels that if there is no resurrection of the dead that perishing is the only alternative.

The people of God are the richest people that have ever been known. These riches have nothing to do with bank accounts and real estate (we are not looking at the things which can be seen). The Creator made all things for himself, and without him not anything was made. This is another portion of scripture that unbelief not only questions, but, in many instances, vehemently denies it being the truth. I can not help this unbelief, although it saddens me. That which glorifies God, glorifies us in God in the glorious Personage of Christ. We are, if we are, heirs of God and joint heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ.. Everything has been delivered into the hands of our blessed Saviour. All things in Christ belong to the family of God, and all creation is for our sake. These "all things" being for our sake, they bring about praise and thanksgiving to God. We do not bring this about by actions of our own, but it is through grace that this thanksgiving is made manifest.

"Lord, how delightful 'tis to see
A whole assembly worship thee.
At once they sing, at once they pray,
They hear of heaven, and learn the way."

No sinner has ever walked in the light as He is the light without God being glorified. Just as surely as poor sinners "let their light shine" just that sure is God going to get the glory (Mat. 5:16) Your account is in heaven (Col. 3:3; I Pet. I:4); everything there is yours, and everything on earth is yours, including all called ministers, the world, life, death, things present, things to come, all are yours. O, how grand and glorious these possessions are embellished with the gift of belonging to Christ, and topped out with the superb knowledge that He is God's. (I Cor. 3:21-23)

"For which cause we faint not." To get at the essence or kernel of the gospel, let us ask: What is the cause of our fainting not? First, it is the soul refreshing doctrine that he which raised up Jesus is under oath to also raise us up, and in the doing of that all things have been given to us. With all of the resources of God given us how shall he not with him give us all things. It is freely acknowledged that if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are miserable. We will all come to see and

experience the rasing of this mortal body, but to give us assurance in such an ordeal as that, we have One that, while we experience the perishing of the outward man; while we see and *feel* the rasing of this house of clay, we have the assurance that the inward man is renewed day by day, and that all things, including the power of the resurrection, is pledged to the resurrection of our bodies. Isn't that a lovely doctrine. While we do not have any hope in Christ in this life, we are renewed in the inward man day by day. It is not any wonder that we have been told of God coming with recompence and saving the fearful hearted children of God. (Isa. 35:4)

"Our light afflictions." They are not what justice would demand; they are what mercy gives. We have light afflictions to teach us our helplessness; to teach us how frail that we are; to correct us; to prepare us for some greater service in the kingdom of heaven. Anything given us for our good undoubtedly is a light matter, even though none of it seems at the time to be good but rather grievous. These light afflictions are not worthy to be compared to the weight of what is to come. Even though poor sinners sometimes are left to nature and fall victim to Satan's cunning suggestion to where they ask, Why, dear Father, must I pass through this vale of sorrow; yet our light affictions are in mercy sent. These afflictions may come in sundry ways. They are spoken of as afflictions of the gospel, and belong in a special way to ministers, and in a general way to one and all. They are sent according to God's time and way. In the same way that the owner of the oxen says, "Take my yoke upon you," so does he say, "Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God.." Regardless of how they come or what they are, under the directing love of Christ they are afflictions, and not punishment.

"They endure but for a moment." Ah, afflicted saint draw near. Here is indeed a boon from heaven. If justice drew her sword it would be eternal death, but the afflictions are light, and the duration is but for a moment. Here indeed is a lovely pasture of green verdure; here is a scene heaven sent to the afflicted and poor people of God. Across the vista of the years it seems that I hear the lowing of the oxen, and the bleating of the sheep, and, while the years have taken a heavy toll on bodily powers, my impression and desire is still towards the scattered flock, telling them of God's greatness in salvation.

Although these afflictions are light, and endure but for a moment, they are momentous in our life. As afflictions they seem severe, as a gift from God, they are sweet messengers from our Saviour, and

"If God is mine, then present things,
And things to come are mine;
Yes, Christ, his word, and spirit, too,
And glory all divine.

If he is mine, then from his love,
He every trouble sends;
All things are working for my good,
And bliss his rod attends."

And when this accompanying power of the Spirit is with us, we recognize that in all these things we are more than conquerers through him that loved us unto death, even the death of the cross. If we were only conquers over death and hell and the grave, where would the good come in? We are more than conquerers, (not through our efforts, but) through our blessed Lord. Thus, while in the beginning we thought all of it was against us, when we had endured for a moment (the shortness of this experience); when Joseph was manifest to us as being alive, we rejoiced greatly at what lay before us.

It is the nature of men to arraign God before a tribunal of their finite minds. Let me illustrate: Several years ago I was preaching at a place where much opposition had been brought against God's universal power or sovereignty or predestination. I presented what I am presenting to you, to wit, that all things work together for good to them that love God. At the noon hour a young man

came to me in a very ugly frame of mind, charging that I had preached an untruth. I asked him what I had said that was wrong. He replied that I had said that if a drunken driver had run into his family that morning that it would be for his good. I gently as I could told him that he was mistaken; that I did not say it. He was much confused by my reply, telling me that he thought I had said that. My reply to him is the same reply that I would make today to all that object (not to what I say, but) to what Paul said (Romans 8:28) I told him that it was limited to those that love God and that I did not say that he loved God. His reply was not complimentary.

Paul tells us here again that these tribuations, afflictions, sufferings, are working for us. In his pointing out to us these three things in our life, they each mean nearly the same thing, never meaning what is termed good, but that all of them mean the sorrows that accompany the child of God.

While the affliction is light (when we deserved death), and endures but for a moment (when we deserved eternal banishment), yet it is doing wonderful things for us. This afflicted state is all for us; each anxious moment is in God's hand for our good. All of it is working for our ultimate good; every stormy wind and boisterous wave is sweeping us from every mooring on time's dull and dismal shore and momentarily bringing us nearer home. All things are in the hands of Christ. He can not build without that power, much less can he sustain the building without it. All things (tribulations ,afflictions, sufferings) are working for us. O God remove fear of men from my heart that I sound forth the clarion word of truth that our God takes that which seems to be against us (and often that which he hates; and that which, in nature, we dread) and makes it work for us an eternal weight of glory. It does not just even out things; it does not leave us as well off as we were to begin. No, not that. The very thing that was light and that endured but for a moment works continually for us an eternal weight of glory.

As this weight of glory is wrought in us, it causes an adjustment in what we are looking for. A young lady was stricken down where I worked. She begged the doctor to cure her. She felt that she had too much to live for. He was not able to arrest the disease. She became a living skeleton. Just before she died she begged the Lord to let her die, saying that I have not got anything to live for. Here is my text unfolded for you. I count her experience (affliction) the most profound exposition of all things working for our weight of eternal glory. At first we are much exercised about these afflictions, thinking, as did Jacob, that they are all against us. As the building is erected for the placing of the capstone in place, our viewpoint changes. What a blessing, what a lovely work, what a lovely God to make Himself known unto us in Christ.

Dear brethren, let us not turn back; let us go on to perfection; let us run the race set before us, and these things we will do, if the Lord wills. In this race, we shall have our looking changed. Perhaps, being babes, we needed much nurturing to change our look from what we could see to things that we can not see. The work has been costly in suffering for our dear Saviour, but it has been freely bestowed upon us the afflicted ones of God. We are not looking at the things which can be seen (for we might well ask, what are they?), but we are looking at the things that can not be seen as yet, but which are being brought by this sovereign work of God to a further glory until glory. (2 Cor. 3:18)

W.D.G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Harford Co., Maryland,
February 13, 1860.

Dear Brother Beebe: — Having to

write you on business, I will also drop a few lines through your columns to the saints scattered abroad — to your numerous readers. I have been a reader of your valuable paper for a number of years and have derived much comfort and edification thereby. I have been somewhat of a careful observer of the communications and of the various subjects treated on, as the different branches of the same glorious doctrine, Salvation by grace; and I have observed in the communications of all the saints scattered abroad, whose communications have appeared, a oneness of sentiment, — all contending for the same faith which was once delivered to the saints. In years past, it was with me a wonder and astonishment, how so many, living so remote from each other, could all write the same things, — all see eye to eye, in regard to the glorious truths of the gospel, — all relate very much the same in regard to their trials, difficulties, doubts and fears, — and all receiving food and comfort of the same kind and in the same way, and from the same source; and all at the same time standing aloof from all the traditions and commandments of men, having no fellowship or sympathy for any doctrine except that of Christ; and him crucified. I say these things have been to me a matter of surprise; but I hope and trust that I have been taught to know something of the mystery. David says, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him."

I will state what I understand to be the cause of the oneness of sentiment and union of heart and fellowship of the saints. Our God is the same unchanging and inimitable High Priest of our profession, in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. He was, as we are informed, set up from everlasting, as the embodiment of the church, which was chosen and blessed in time, by the Father, before the foundation of the world. His members were given him. He says to the Father: "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." Their visible creation in the earthly Adam, their fall in him, and their redemption by our Lord Jesus Christ, was fully known to him who hath declared the end from the beginning; saying my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. The first Adam is the figure of him which was to come, — of the second Adam which is the Lord from Heaven. As in the first Adam, all die, so in Christ, the second Adam, shall all be made alive. And so it is written the first man, Adam, was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. But the first Adam was not spiritual, but natural; consequently he represented not a spiritual, but a natural posterity. But the second Adam represents a spiritual seed or generation. The first Adam followed his bride into the transgression, which seems to pre-figure Christ, who was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death — was made of woman; made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. — The prophet Isaiah says, "Behold, the Lord God shall come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." This work he performed when he magnified with honor the law, and when he made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness. With his stripes all his people are healed. He having satisfied the law on their behalf, has justified them from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses.

Again: He is brought to view as a Quickening Spirit. "And this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. — 1 John v. 11. Peter says: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of the Lord which liveth and abideth forever. — 1 Peter, i. 3. Hence we understand that all the saints are born of God, and this birth manifests them as sons and heirs of God, and joint heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ. Heirs of that inheritance which

is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. All his people hear the voice of the Son of God, and live. When he utters his voice, the North gives up, and the South keeps not back; his sons are brought from afar, and his daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one of them, for he has created them for his glory. His people are and shall be all taught of the Lord. By him they are taught the exceeding sinfulness of sin; their own weakness and entire dependence on God, and that, of themselves they can do nothing.

I have taken a considerable round, in trying to show the cause of the oneness, love and fellowship of the children of God. How can two walk together, except they are agreed? There can be no real fellowship where there is no evidences of the work of the Spirit, for nothing short of that can produce fellowship. Men may speak with the eloquence of angels, and yet fail to make an impression on the mind of the Lord's people; their language fails to give evidence that they have been wtih Jesus; while another with half the words, will draw out that fellowship at once. The Lord's people being all born of the same One Spirit, are brought in by the same door. Marvel not at this, ye that despise the truth, for "No man," says Jesus, "can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day." As they are all brought in at the same door, so are they all heirs of the same inheritance. There is a vital relationship subsisting in the family; all are alike members of the one body — branches of the same true Vine. Jesus says, I am the Vine; ye are the branches. All are alike dependent on him who is the Head over all things to his church. All boasting is excluded from this family, and, with one voice, they all exclaim, Not by works of righteousness which we have done; but of his mercy he hath saved us. Hence there is this union — this binding tie which can be found no where else. The love of God is shed abroad in their hearts, and abides within them. And we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. All feed on the same precious gospel; and, being taught of God, they can all distinguish between truth and error. They try the spirits, whether they be of God.

O, the glorious plan of salvation, and the safety and happiness of all who are interested therein, who are made to hear his voice, to rest upon his promise, and to have no confidence in the flesh.

But I must bring my scribble to a close. I have now written more than I expected to when I commenced. Brother Beebe, this is the first I have ever written for publication. I desire you to examine it closely, and if you see anything in this letter that is calculated to lead any of the sheep or lambs of Christ astray, don't publish it. I send it the more cheerfully, knowing that it must pass the scrutiny of better judgment than mine, before the public will read it.

Now may the good will of him that dwelt in the bush, sustain you in your labors, and may you enjoy much of his presence in your declining years.

Yours in hope of eternal life.

WILLIAM GRAFTON.

We recognize in the above letter of our recently ordained Elder Grafton, the true Shibboleth, and welcome him to our columns. May the Lord make him valient for the truth, both in the pulpit, and with his pen. — G. Beebe

(The above was by Elder Wm. Grafton. It was his first writing for publication. When we read it recently we felt it was a clear statement of the way the Lord deals with his people.

Elder Grafton was pastor of Rock Springs, Warren and Hartford Churches in Maryland and Pennsylvania for about forty years and was greatly beloved of the brethren. — J. D. W.)

CIRCULAR LETTER BY THE LATE ELDER JOHN WILDER

1948

CIRCULAR LETTER

To the Ministers and Messengers of the Powell's Valley Association. Greetings in the Lord: As it has fallen to my lot to write a Circular

Letter for the Minutes of the Powell's Valley Association, I will try to perform that service if the Lord will guide me in spirit and in truth.

The scripture that I will try to use is "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." May I ask you is there anything that was not finished in these six days? I maintain that everything was fixed and finished by the one hand of the Supreme. I believe that every event which transpires in the daily experience of the children of God, or the wicked is but a link in the chain of events which, when manifested, will only reach to a definite or predestinated end. In His infinite wisdom He saw it all completed and finished, and each moment is a manifestation of what was in his work; we could not think that God has ever failed to secure the perfect accomplishment of his own design or purpose in anything that he has ever done.

The entrance of sin in the world was a finished work with the Lord, and every sin his people will commit was amply provided for with him. The wicked is the Lord's sword, and was asleep until the fixed time of God. They positively predicted from the days of Abel in what God spake to the prophets, and by what was signified by all the offerings which were made under the dispensation, according to the prophecy the sword awoke at his appointed time, and the Shepherd was smitten. It is a comforting thought to realize that God has set the bounds of our habitation on the earth, and death, hell and all things are naked before him, and destruction uncovered to his all seeing eye, and yet unlimited by his power and wisdom.

In the beginning of his way he bound up the waters in his thick clouds and gave to the sea his decree that the waters should not pass his commandments. He has left nothing to the vagary of chance, when he sets his throne above the heavens was it to be a place of no power? In controlling the destiny of all things in heaven, and in earth and hell we have evidence that everything was definitely fixed by him. For about six thousand years the sun, moon and stars have with exactness filled their respective orbits, and without the variation of a second of time from their creation, made their revolutions in obedience to the decree of the Creator. Was it by chance that the heavens declared the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handi-work? No, nothing is by chance, the invisible things of earth did not come into this world by chance.

There are many things we would like to mention, but for fear we are covering too much space we will come to a close. It is very hard to express just what you believe on a few sheets of paper. I have done the best I know how, and will conclude by saying, "if God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on until I return to my Father's house, thou shalt be the Lord my God." Yours in hope of eternal life.

(Elder) JOHN WILDER
(Published by request)

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Mt. Arat Primitive Baptist Church, Pittsylvania County, Va., a presbytery met at 4:30 p.m. June 17, 1972 at Mt. Arat Church for the examination of brother George Powell, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of deacon.

The solemnity was begun with song hymn 131 Primitive Baptist Hymn Book and prayer by Elder Julian Williams. All Elders and Deacons of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Elders present were as follows: Raymond Payne, H. W. Wray, Wallis Smith, Raymond Goad, P. E. Ingram, Julian Williams and Donald E. Smith.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder H. W. Wray as Moderator and Elder Donald E. Smith as Clerk. Elders P. E. Ingram and Raymond Goad were chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Deacon Clarence Stegall having been duly appointed by Mt. Arat Church, spokesman for the church delivered brother George Powell to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elders P. E. Ingram and Raymond Goad. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Raymond Payne. Elder Wallis A. Smith delivered the charge to the candidate. Scripture reference Acts 6:1-4.

The Moderator asked Deacon Clarence Stegall if the church approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to brother George Powell and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained deacon was delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon of the Old School, Primitive Baptist Church at Mt. Arat.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Raymond Goad.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

The 5th Sunday in April, 1972, Cane Creek Church called for a Presbytery to meet June 24th to look into the qualifications of Brother

W. Randall Saunders for the work of the ministry, if found qualified.

Elder R. S. Payne was elected to serve as Moderator and Elder P. E. Ingram as Clerk; Elders O. K. Tench and Rufus Brown to ask questions, together with others: Elder Raymond Goad to deliver the ordination prayer, and Elder R. A. May to deliver the charge.

Ministers present from Pigg River Association were Elders R. A. May, P. E. Ingram, O. K. Tench and Rufus Brown: from Staunton River Association were Elders R. S. Payne, Denver Simpson and Raymond Goad.

Deacons were Tillman Dalton, P. L. Holly, George Powell, Andrew Gibson, Louis Willis, Guy Willis, M. H. Pickeral, Jamie Cooper, Chester Hagood, R. C. May, Clay Brown, Henry Sartin, C. W.. Strader and N. F. Conner.

Elder Simpson delivered the candidate to the Presbytery. Tillman Dalton was selected spokesman for the church.

Elder Tench read from the 3rd chapter of 1st Timothy and 3rd chapter of Ecclesiastes as to the qualifications and duties of a Bishop. Brother Brown questioned, reading from the language of Jesus. All questions were answered in a favorable way, with no objections.

Laying on of hands followed with the Ordination Prayer. Elder R. A. May delivered an impressive charge, reading from Timothy.

The work of the Presbytery being completed, Brother W. Randell Saunders an ordained Elder was delivered back to the church.

Minutes were read and approved. The Presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Denver Simpson.

R. S. Payne, Mod.
P. E. Ingram, Clerk

OBITUARIES

ELDER JOHN WILDER
and
SISTER FLORENCE WILDER

Our beloved and esteemed brother in gospel bonds was called from this life on May 26, 1972.

Elder Wilder was ordained to the work of the ministry in 1928, at Hances Creek Church in Kentucky, where he had earlier been received for membership. He was chosen Moderator of the Powell Valley Association in upper East Tennessee on July 15, 1945, serving until his death. He and his wife, Sister Florence Wilder, joined Union Primitive Baptist Church by relationship on April 5, 1950.

Elder Wilder was blessed to faithfully and ably serve Union Church at Sharps Chapel, Mountain Creek Church at Lone Mountain, and Friendship Church at Morristown, Tenn., as Pastor for many years.

His devoted wife was critically ill at the time of his death, and passed away June 7, 1972. Elder and Sister Wilder are survived by two daughteres, Mrs. Betty Jean Hightower, Sharps Chapel, Tenn.; Mrs. Alene Mize, Loyal, Ky.; one son, Edward Wilder, Pineville, Ky.; five grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted for Elder Wilder by Elder D. R. Cabbage and Elder R. L. Biggs on May 29th at Union Primitive Baptist Church.

Sister Wilder was buried June 9th. The funeral service at Union Church was conducted by Elder D. R. Cabbage.

Elder Wilder's last sermon was preached on May 14th at Union Church; using as text the 23rd Psalm.

He and his wife will be sadly missed. "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

Written by request. Elder R. L. Biggs

MARTHA ELEANOR VIA SIGMON

Sister Martha Eleanor Via Sigmon was born February 1, 1868, in Franklin Co. Long Branch, Virginia, and departed this life October 29, 1971. Making her stay in this world 103 years and almost nine month.

She was a daughter of Elder Wiley A. Via and Elizabeth Janney Via. She was married to Robert N. Sigmon October 3, 1889. She united with Pigg River Primitive Baptist Church, August 1895, and was baptized by her father, Elder W. A. Via, making her a member of that church over 76 years. She loved the church and was a firm believer in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace.

She moved with her family from Franklin County, Ferrum, Va., to Roanoke, Va. November 1919, where she lived until her death. She was in declining health for several years, but all of her children were so faithful and good to wait on her keeping her in her own home until about a week before her death, when her doctor advised them to take her to the hospital where she peacefully fell asleep. "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, From which none ever wake to weep." She always liked to sing the old songs as long as she was able, and when she couldn't sing she liked to hear them sung.

Her funeral was preached by her pastor, Elder William Holland, and Elder Cecil Turner at Oakley's Chapel, Roanoke, Va. Her body was laid to rest by her husband in Evergreen Cemetery, Roanoke.

She is survived by two sons: Willie C. and Delma B. Sigmon of Roanoke and five daughters: May E. Brogan, Washington, D. C., Vera V. Mullins, Blanche Montgomery, Gladys S. Love and Irma R. Knowles, all of Roanoke; one brother, Rufus Lemon Via, Boones Mill, Va.; three sisters, Kitty Slone, Roanoke, Addie Vest and Jessie Minnix, Salem, Va.; thirteen grandchildren, 38 great-grandchildren and 16 great-great-grandchildren.

Written by Sister Jessie Minnix

Resolved to send a copy to *The Signs of the Times*, one to the family and one put on the church record. Conference: April 2, 1972.

Elder W. M. Holland, Mod.
W. W. Abshire, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT
SISTER ANNIE DUNN

Sister Annie Dunn was born September 1st, 1875. God called her home June 9th, 1972. She lived to be 96 years 9 months and 8 days. She was married to Brother John Dunn, March 31st, 1893, who preceded her in death 49 years. Sister Dunn is survived by one son, Thell Dunn of Fayetteville, N. C., and two daughters, Mrs. Lester E. (Sister Kay Belle) Lee of Route 5, Dunn, N. C., and Mrs. Leon (Martha) Stevens, Jr. of Smithfield, N. C., one brother, Matt West of Tampa, Fla. 13 grandchildren, 23 great-grandchildren, and 3 great-great-grandchildren, and a host of other relatives and dear friends.

Sister Dunn united with the Church at Reedy Prong the fourth Saturday in July, 1911, and was baptized by her Pastor Elder W. M. Monsees. She lived a useful life and was a faithful member, always attending her Church Meetings as long as she was able. Sister Dunn was blessed with good health most of her life. At times, her family thought she should see a doctor, but her answer was, my faith is in a higher power.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Curtis Rains and Elder W. D. Godwin. Her body was laid to rest in Reedy Prong Church Cemetery awaiting the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who shall call the sleeping dead to arise from the silent tomb made like unto his glorious body, where sickness, suffering, death, and separation will be no more.

First, be it resolved, that the Church at Reedy Prong bow in humble submission to God who doeth all things well, and that our deepest sympathy be extended to her family who so loyally and lovingly administered to her every need. May they find the Grace of God sufficient for them in the days to come, ever looking to God for comfort and strength.

Second, That a copy of this be sent to the family and one to be recorded in the Church Book, and a copy sent to the *Signs of The Times* for publication.

Done by order of Church in Conference on Saturday before 4th Sunday in July, 1972.

Sister Mary Bryan
Sister Thelma Blackman
Sister Thelma Smith

OBIE LEE SORRELLS

Brother Sorrells died peacefully at home after a severe heart attack, just after visiting his sick mother on February 15, 1972, at the age of fifty-eight years. He was a model citizen, and lived a devoted life to his family and parents.

He is survived by his wife, Paulene; four sons: Roy Lee, Foy B., James and Edward; four daughters: Jean, Nellie Ruth, Sarah and Edna Sue; his parents, Frank and wife, and one brother, Otis; all firm believers in salvation by grace.

Funeral services were conducted at Tabernacle Church near his home on February 16th by Elder J. J. Collins and Minister J. T. Peacock. Garden Chapel Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements. Interment was in the Tabernacle Cemetery. J. J. Collins

BURMAN T. HOLLANDSWORTH

It is with much love and affection that I remember this brother. Burman T. Hollandsworth was born June 29, 1901, and passed away April 24, 1972. He was the son of Sherman A. and Margaret Spence Hollandsworth, who preceeded him in death.

Surviving are his wife, Sister Ocie Phillips Hollandsworth; one son, Vernon Hollandsworth; five daughters: Mrs. Vance Duncan, Mrs. Sonny Gunter, Mrs. David Haynes, Mrs. Gene Funkhouser, and Mrs. Glen Boyd; three brothers: Clive Hollandsworth, Major Hollandsworth, Martin Hollandsworth; five sisters, Mrs. Vettie Harris, Mrs. Necie Cox, Mrs. Arnold Phillips, Mrs. Gilbert Duncan and Mrs. Lawrence Gardner; and seven grandchildren.

Brother Burman was a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church early in life in 1923, and lived a faithful life devoted to his church and family. He lived to see two of his daughters unite with the church: Sister (Lena) Mrs. Vance Duncan and Sister (Lora) Mrs. Sonny Gunter.

One day he told me that he reckoned all his children believed like he did; and they have manifested just that by the way they have come to church. We at Union Church miss him, but we would not ask that anything the all wise God has done, be undone; so we bow in humble submission to His will. His humble servant is at rest from all his cares, and we hope to meet him some day where we can rightly sing praise to one who has done it for us.

His funeral was preached at Old Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church April 26, 1972, by Elder B. O. Thompson and Elder Julius Bocock. Burial was in the Hollandsworth Cemetery.

Written by request of Union Primitive Baptist Church in conference, by his nephew, Willard Cox.

Elder Hale Terry, Mod.
Willard Cox, Clerk

ELLA MARTIN LILLARD

Sister Lillard was born on June 17, 1877, and died on January 23, 1972, making her stay on earth almost 95 years. She was married to Mr. O. F. Lillard who preceded her in death around 28 years. This union was blessed with seven lovely children, three sons and four daughters. Sister Lillard was survived by one brother, George Martin ,one son and four daughters.She asked for a home with the people of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on April 14, 1963, and was gladly received into the fellowship of the church. She was baptized the fourth Sunday in May, 1963, by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler. Sister Lillard was a faithful attender of meetings, never missing except when sickness or other causes beyond her control prevented her from doing so. Her lovely daughter and sister in Christ (Irene) most always saw to it that she had means of transportation to go to and from church.

This writer having known her around 50 years and being an infrequent visitor in her home cannot recall when she displayed anything but a pleasing smile, that seemed to say in effect, all is well. After her baptism, to see her at church service, her facial expressions seemed to tell more than a volume of words could, of the blessings of joys that were hers to receive. To see her at church would sometimes bring to mind two scriptures: which say in part: a city set upon a hill cannot be hid, and also be content with what you have. In her later years when she was unable to get around, she enjoyed reliving the songs of Zion and sermons on her tape recorder. She had a plentiful supply of tapes she liked so well. Sermons which the main theme of them was Jesus Christ and Him Crucified. I am the resurrection and the life. Without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sins, as taught in the first book of the Bible. When God clothed Adam and Eve with skins, portrayed the coming of Christ, His death on the cross, the pouring out of His blood, the piercing of His side for son and uncleanness. God works after the counsel of His own will and none can stay His hand. She never seemed to tire of hearing men preach on the above subjects, or hearing them on her recorder. In my association with her I firmly believe they were part of her life, she could accept nothing less.

The morning of her death, she was preparing to attend her meeting at Dan River. She was suddenly taken sick and was rushed to the hospital, but was dead upon arrival. Her sudden death was a shock and cause of mourning to the family, her host of friends, and Brethren and Sisters of like Precious Faith. I have heard Elder W. C. King make the remark, he would hate to live in a world where the passing of a loved one didn't touch the hearts of the loved ones left behind. Yet we must ask ourselves the question, why mourn when God's Will is done? I believe that I speak for the membership of Dan River when I say our loss is her eternal gain. I, for one, believe she had a living hope of a part of that better and upper kingdom that is to come. In the absence of her pastor, her funeral was conducted by Elder Haywood Wray assisted by Elder Donald Smith. Her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery, to await the second coming of her Lord and Master Jesus Christ, who will at some time unknown to mortal man, come to call His bride, present her to the Father, without spot or blemish or any such thing. Then will His people be conformed to the image of His dear Son, be like Him and be satisfied. The beautiful floral offering showed in some measure the esteem and respect held for her by the family, friends, and membership of Dan River Church.

Submitted by request of the membership of Dan River Church in conference May 27, 1972. We request a copy be sent to the family, *Signs of the Times*, and spread on the church records.

Respectfully submitted by
James Carter

SISTER MAGGIE P. BARHAM

It has pleased our God to call our Sister, Maggie Pierce Barham from the flock at Pittmans Grave Primitive Baptist Church. She was a faithful, loving, humble and precious servant of our most high God. She stood firm for the doctrine of Election, Salvation by Grace, and the Absolute Predestination of all Things. She was blessed to hold fast to that which was good, having a wonderful experience of grace. Her countenance, walk and talk in life was to praise God from whom all blessings flow.

She was a member of Pittmans Grove many years, many times having to walk to meetings on the 2nd Saturday and Sunday of each month.

Sister Maggie was born December 8, 1885, and God in his mercy and loving kindness called her home March 13, 1972. Her funeral was conducted at Pittmans Grave Church by Elder W. E. Turner, Elder Curtis Rains and Elder Wayne Mitchell to a large and attentive congregation of brethren and friends.

We, the Church at Pittmans Grove, bow in humble submission to our Father's will. We close by repeating the oft heard words, "To know her was to love her."

By order of conference of Pittmans Grove Church the 2nd Saturday in April, 1972.

Elder Wayne Mitchell

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 140 DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1972 NO. 11

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
11/72
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

JUDGMENT

The end of time is coming soon,
That's what our Lord doth say,
And for those that He has chosen
'Twill be a glorious day.

For all the other people
Who have made their heaven here,
When their deeds are put before them,
There'll be frustration and great fear.

They followed the path of Satan,
The world was their delight;
They heeded not their conscience,
There was no wrong or right.

They gloried in their own self works,
And feared not God above,
Now they have to face the judgment
Without a Savior's love.

Those who look for His coming,
Joyously await the day,
When they can join their Savior;
For this, they watch and pray.

For all the Saints of Jesus
That He called to be on high,
The second death hath no power
And they will never die.

They'll be caught up in Glory
To be with God above,
To worship, praise, and adore Him,
And to know a Savior's love.

Reeves O. Smith
Route 1, Box 176A
Pinetown, North Carolina 27810

WORD FROM ELDER R. W. RHODES

Spearsville, La.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I am enclosing my check to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. I am a little late, but I sincerely want to renew. I am older than I was when I began to take the dear old paper.

I would like so much to see and be with you brethren again, but I am quite feeble of late. I hope you all are doing well in health and otherwise. May the dear Lord bless all of you.

Your brother in hope,
R. W. Rhodes

EXPERIENCE FROM AN EARLY AGE

Eagle Point, Oregon

Dear Brother Spangler:

Enclosed is a check for $10.00 for the *Signs* two years with the balance to be used as you personally see need for it.

I would like to share with you some of my experience. When I was seven years old I had a dream: It seemed there was a big house, and it was full of people; and there came a knock at the door — and it was "My Lord". He called me to him. No one else seemed to know Jesus was there. Jesus said, "Mary Bell, the devil, Satan is in the basement of this house: if you love me and want to come with me, he must go." I said, "Yes, Lord, I'll get rid of him. I love you and want to go with you." I thought I would have no trouble to "cast him out".

So I went down and flatly told him to get out. He just stood there smiling at

me; and I said, "I told you to get out." And he burst out laughing at me in my face. I started crying, and ran up to where Jesus stood, and told him the devil wouldn't leave, but that I loved Him and wanted to go with Him. Jesus slowly shook his head and said, "Satan must go." So I went a second time: "Satan, get out! I want to go with Jesus, and Jesus said that before I can go, you must leave. So, get out!" I pleaded; I cried; I tried any and everything I could — even bribery, but he would not leave, and he laughed a terrible laugh.

I went back to where Jesus stood, and said, "Jesus, he won't leave, but I want to go with you, for I love you." But Jesus turned slowly as to go away and leave me. I tried to reach and hold on to his garment, which was white as snow, crying, "Jesus don't leave me, I want to go with you." I awoke from this dream crying." And it haunted and tormented me until over twenty-five years later it pleased the Lord, praise God, to reveal the meaning of this dream to me.

My heart, mind, and soul were sick and troubled. My mother-in-law, Dora Bell Stough, is a Primitive Baptist. I love and respect her dearly. Until her son and I were married, I had never heard of the Primitive Baptists; and when I learned what they believed, my saying that I was against it, would be putting it mildly, for I had eyes but could not see, I had ears but could not hear; but I was a tormented soul — I had no rest and could not sleep, for it seemed as I would drift off to sleep I felt the presence of death and I knew it was death at my door. I felt it was coming "out of myself" — some evil unseen force was drawing me. I would cry out for Jafus (my husband) to help me. This went on for how many nights I cannot say, until I was afraid to go to bed and had to have a light on like a little child.

Then one night this evil and terrible force was stronger than it had ever been. I was numb and half paralized all over, and I knew I was losing the battle. I could not make my husband hear me, but he sensed something and grabbed hold of me, shaking me. Oh what a night! Finally I told him in a whisper that I was dying and asked him to pray for me. Then suddenly the dream I had as a child came to me: I could not get the devil out, I could do nothing on my own, but He, my Lord, could. And the Primitive Baptist doctrine was revealed to me; and I prayed. Oh, glory to God! When I was brought to see that dreadful night, how unfit, how unworthy, how unclean, so vile and prone to sin: how as a filthy rag I was. My little world was turned upside down, inside out, and it was terrible, shocking blow.

Elder Spangler, it pleased my Lord to reveal to me how helpless I was — and still am: how that I could do nothing on my own. Only He, Jesus, can cast out satan. Oh, how I love the doctrine of Grace, and His love, and Predestination. He did it all. If I am one of His, and I hope and pray that I am, then He cleansed me from the beginning. Pray for me. Pray for "Sweet Hope", she's a little flock in Grants Pass, Oregon. Her pastor is Elder G. E. Griffin, who comes from Bakersfield, Calif. to nourish us.

Remember and pray for "Sweet Hope" and her brethren.

A sister in hope,
Mary Belle Stough

SERMON BY ELDER GEORGE RUSTON

(Concluded from October

Jesus Christ came and, being the Son of God, he became the Son of Man; he was born of the Virgin Mary; he lived until he was 30 years of age and then entered into his ministry. He fulfilled that work that he came to do until on the cross he cried, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost; and told his disciples they were to tarry in Jerusalem until they be endued with power from on high. And they were met in an upper

being shut, and suddenly there was a rushing mighty wind that filled the house; and they spake with tongues. I think there the tongue was divided. room for fear of the Jews, the door The tongue that had only been to the Jews now goes both ways, Jew and Gentile, cloven tongues, and these men spake as the Spirit gave them utterence. Our brother referred to that in his prayer — and the Holy Spirit is the quickening spirit — "you hath he quickened"; he carries the Word of God. And this Holy Ghost is the one that has changed every individual; he changed Saul of Tarsus, and if you are changed, it's the Lord God, the Holy Ghost, who has done that changing in you; who has brought you to comprehend what you are by nature and given you to know what you are by grace, — the grace of God, "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast, for we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained" for you and me. Purpose, — God had a purpose, a purpose long before you came into the world; He knew what your wrong doing would be and Jesus was charged with that; charged with the wrong doing, and hung upon the cross. The Spirit of God will show you he hung for you, if you're one of His; and this, then, is not your choice — "Ye have not chosen me", Jesus said, "but I have chosen you"; and it being God's choice, it's the same workmanship, it's the same Spirit. When you hear a person telling how he feels and what a poor sinner he is, you'll love him right away because you have the same feeling. You're being led by the same Spirit. You're confessing the same condition, being unworthy — unworthy of His mercies, and you're longing for the same power to be demonstrated in you that was demonstrated in Saul of Tarsus when God turned him around from being a persecutor to being a preacher.

I've talked long enough; I did not intend to talk as long as this, but this goes on, "Fulfill ye my joy". Paul would have them continue in this lovely way, one towards another. And, you know, if you were to go into the history of the Philippian church, you would find that there was a mixture there. There was a seller of purple of the city of Thyatira; there was a girl that was going around and doing certain things and getting money for certain characters, and there were the soldiers in the prison, the one who put Paul and Silas in bonds, and these believers were brought together by the power of God and they became a church, the members of which loved one another. You know, Paul went down by the river, where prayer was wont to be made, and here was Lydia, she was down there with another lady, and the truth entered her heart and she said, "If you have found me faithful, come to my house," and she had them go there. Here was a mixture — there is a mixture always in a church of God; it doesn't matter where you go. I remember when I first found the church in New York City there were people there who were educated and very prominent, and then there were people who were poor. You know it's remarkable how God brings a person from here and there. He leads them by the Spirit and they become brothers and sisters and they love the truth. In that church in New York there were three Negroes at least and they were just as lovely as the white people — this religion of Jesus Christ does not stop at the colour of the skin.

Just a day or two ago I had a magazine come to my place that mentioned a thing that I'll refer to now. George Washington was with his army fighting to deliver the American Colonies from the shackles of Britain and some of the men in his army wanted to be baptized, and a minister, who afterwards became pastor of the Hopewell Church (from which Elder Vaughn used to come here), was baptizing these soldiers, and General Washington saw him baptizing. He said, "I have never been baptized according to the Scripture; I

want to be baptized." And he was baptized there. That's history in the Church Book in Hopewell, New Jersey — it came out in the Signs of the Times several years ago, but that was different from today — he didn't tell his experi ence to the church, he was just baptized. Although he was to become the President of the United States, he hadn't come to the place where he was fit to be baptized properly. He had a number of things that he could have confessed to the Church, if he had come before the Church; and therefore there were those that didn't fellowship Washington as a Baptist although he was baptized. Lincoln's father and mother were Baptists. And we read those things, and realize we must be brought down to be as little children and humbled to ask a name with the church, or we are not fit. They have to come down, and as it were, show that they are through with the world. They have been killed to the world and then they are buried, to come up out of the water to live in fellowship of the saints. What a blessed thing it is.

THE NECESSITY OF REVELATION

Rt. 1, Box 727,
Quitman, Texas 75783

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I notice it is time to renew my subscription to the paper that we love so much; and the one that stands for the doctrine that our fore-fathers stood for: and the one we believe stands for the truth in Christ Jesus. The world knows nothing about it for it has not been revealed to them: and if the Lord does not reveal and show it to them, they will never know anything about it. Jesus said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so to seemed good in thy sight." (Matthew 11:25-26)

I am sending $10.00 for two years renewal, with the balance for the Indigent Fund.

In bonds of love,
E. M. Reeves

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 2,
Fremont, N. C. 27830

Dear Elder Spangler:

For some reason my mind has been arrested to write the dear old *Signs of the Times* about a scripture found in Romans 7:24-25: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."

We find that the word "wretched" means, deeply afflicted, or dejected, distressed, miserable, despicable, or very poor in quality or ability. My precious readers, what kind of a man would describe himself as wretched? If not deceived, this writer and hell deserving sinner has found himself deeply afflicted. I am not speaking of the afflictions of nature, such as any natural disease, but rather am speaking of the deeper afflictions of sin, and how it rages in my flesh deeply. The poet wonderfully described the disease called sin:

"The worst of all diseases
Is light compared with sin:
On every part it seizes
But rages most within."

Sin is a disease a person does not know he has until God himself reveals it to him. Unregenerated men today see themselves as "able to stand but liable to fall," but when God shows him how wretched he is, he is made to know with David, "I was born in sin, and in sin did my mother conceive me." A man that God has taught, knows that he has been a miserable sinner all his life. To our nature this relevation is not very pleasant. It causes us to mourn, to weep, to cry, to beg, and strips us of all our vain pride and self-

esteem; and makes us to know that we are nothing, and that there is nothing good that we can do to improve our wretched condition. We find ourselves helpless and depraved in the worst way. We find ourselves dejected or separated from the rest of the human race; for we often ask, "O is there anyone like me?" We feel to be the worst of all. Being wretched, to say the least, makes the one distressed to be upset even to the point that you cannot bear your own self. If not deceived, I have been even to the point that I had no desire to live to see another day in this world of sorrow.

You will find that to be wretched makes a little child miserable. He cannot find rest, he becomes nervous, he cannot sleep well, and is not satisfied with anything; but mostly he is not satisfied with himself. At this point the sinner finds himself despicable, and that meaning that he is not worthy of anything and deserves the worst kind of punishment for his wretched condition. He finds nothing good about himself, and learns that he is totally depraved in all his works, ways and thoughts. A wretched sinner has no qualities about himself that he can lean on, and has no ability to extradite himself from this condition.

To our nature this is a terrible condition. But little Child of God, here is where you are made to know that you need something done for you that you cannot do for yourself. You are lost and without hope until Jesus relieves your heart from this heavy burden. He then makes you to know that only Jesus can deliver a poor hell deserving sinner from the body of this death. When given a mind you say as the Apostle Paul, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord," and are made to believe in an independent God, one that saves you by his grace, not of your choice or decision.

You then appreciate the doctrine of Electing Love and Predestination of all things, and in an all wise, merciful God and that through Jesus you have a sweet hope that he has delivered you from the body of this death.

Have you been so low and cast down under the burden of sin, to say, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" At this point it has become entirely a personal feeling with you; you are not concerned with your father, mother, sister, brother or friend, but it is you in the body of this death. It is an individual case, and you are the one that is wretched, lost and condemned. But, O, the sweet hope that Jesus has done it all for me — that He has reached my case, that he has heard my cry; and hope that Jesus has delivered you (me) from the body of this death.

What a wonderful hope to sinners that they are numbered with the Elect of God — chosen to salvation by God the Father before the foundation of the world. And you hope to some day see Him, be like Him, and be satisfied. God has done it all for me if I am one of his. All that I have done is to sin against his Holy Name all the days of my life, and come short of his glory.

I desire to praise God from whom all blessings flow, for giving me a hope that Jesus has delivered me from this death. When sin is finished it brings forth death. I have not the power to praise God for this wonderful hope.

I will close by quoting the poet who wrote:

"Lord when I count thy mercies o'er
They strike me with surprise;
Not all the sand that spread the shore
To equal numbers rise."

We cannot begin to count the mercies of God towards his people — they are innumerable. I covet your prayers. And may God bless us to see our wretched state, and feel his delivering hand, is my prayer.

In bonds of love,
Elder Wayne Mitchell

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the

Middletown and Andes Church, at Clovesville, N.Y., in 1925 to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and churches with which we correspond, sends greetings.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—It being our custom to address you by Circular Letter, it is our mind to write upon the subject of "The Eternal Vital Unity of Christ and his Church," a theme full of comfort to believers, yet deep in the mystery of godliness. Like all other truth, to be rightly understood it must be taught by the Holy Spirit, and whatever is of the Spirit's teaching will be in accord with the word of God. Our first parent, Adam, is a figure of him that was to come, and it is written, "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners," and the sin of our first parent plunged the whole of his posterity into degradation and death. "Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," for they were all in Adam's loins when he received the law, and Eve herself was bone to his bone and flesh of his flesh. We were not children in Adam, but our life was in him, and in that sense we were vitally united to him in the beginning, and as a consequence we are under his condemnation. To-day, as men and women we are Adam multiplied, and sin, sickness, pain and death are evidence enough to a believer that the natural man is vitally united to our first and natural parent, Adam. Whatever man may attain in wealth, wisdom and honor, at his best state he is altogether vanity, and if he is in honor and understandeth not, he is like the beasts that perish.

"Were I possessor of the earth,
And called the stars my own,
Without thy graces and thyself,
I were a wretch undone."

As we have before stated, Adam is a figure of him that was to come, and as the first Adam possessed the life of the earthly family in himself, so the last Adam possessed the life of his heavenly family in himself from eternity. Let this be rightly understood, for some of our enemies like to pervert the way of truth by declaring that we believe that we were actually children in Christ from eternity. We therefore desire to declare plainly that the family of God were not individual children in him any more than we were children in Adam when God made him of the dust of the earth; rather, our life, the life of the election of grace, was in their glorious Head from eternity, and we believe that every member of this eternal generation, which is also called "the generation of the righteous," was sure to appear upon earth in time and all were known unto God when as children they were not. "My substance," or body, says Christ, "was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." This vital unity of Christ and the church is a vital matter affecting and permeating the whole of the doctrine of God, by virtue of which God has not beheld iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel. In the annals of eternity,

Christ was appointed to redeem,
All that the Father loved in him."

The Father saw them in his Son and loved them there, and his purpose was that the children should be partakers of flesh and blood, and that his Son should take part of the same, and his word declares, "The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." Again it is written, "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Of all the election of grace there was none righteous, no, not one. Jesus Christ the

Righteous undertook the work of redemption, and Job declares, "The righteous also shall hold on his way." Isaiah also declares, "He shall not fail, nor be discouraged," and so vitally united are his children with him that their sin is by imputation his, their sorrow is his sorrow, so that as they travail in pain and express their feeling it is the testimony of Jesus. David said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" It was the testimony of Jesus. He, the righteous one, bore them and carried them all the days of old. The Spirit of Christ which was in them testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. It was the apostle Paul's desire to know the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, for therein the vital unity would be manifest, even in this mortal flesh. Thus Jesus lived in them and walked in them, and when he was crucified,

> "With him, his members on the tree,
> Fulfilled the law's demands;
> 'Tis I in them, and they in me,
> For thus the union stands."

They walk the furnace together, are crucified together, are quickened together, are raised together and dwell together in heavenly places, and as the water of a fountain can only rise to the level of the fountain from whence it flows, so eternal life coming from our eternal Head will bring every member of his mystical body to his blest presence, where there will be joy and rejoicing for evermore.

In conclusion, we repudiate the idea advanced by some who claim to be Old School Baptists that we are not vitally united to Christ until born again, which is the same as saying that we were not united to Adam until born into this world. The stone is as old as the rock from which it is hewn. None of Adam's seed by virtue of their unity to him can truthfully, in an unregenerated state, call God their Father. Hence the necessity of a new birth, for "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." To be heavenly, there is but one way, and that is, being born from above, and if we are born of an incorruptible seed God is our Father and we are his sons and daughters; holy, for his seed remains in us and so vitally united are we to his beloved Son that

> "Our breaches of the law are his,
> And his obedience our."

GEORGE RUSTON, Moderator
AMASA J. SLAUSON, Clerk

(This was a Circular Letter written by Elder Ruston in 1925. We had selected this before learning of his death. The importance of the subject prompts its re-publication.)

ELDERS SPANGLER AND SMITH COME WEST

Elder John Lee Smith and Sister Smith traveled from Spearsville, La., to be with the Bethel Primitive Baptist Church in Mossy Rock, Washington, August 18, 19, 20th where he and Elder Ben S. Preston, of The Dalles, Oregon, preached. Sister Elva Spikes and Brother Wesley Bond came from Elgin, Oregon, and several members came from the Pleasant Grove Church in Naches, Washington. Sister Taylor of Portland, Oregon, was ill and couldn't attend, this being the first meeting at Mossy Rock she has missed for years.

Then Friday and Saturday Elder Spangler and party were with us. It was good to have him and Sister Spangler, Sister Mildred Graham, their daughter, of Wirtz, Va., and Brother and Sister E. F. Hastings, Parsonsburg, Md., with us for the two days. They left Saturday afternoon on return trip home, having left late in July to attend Church services in Ontario, Canada, and on west to Elgin, Oregon, to be with the Big Springs Church the first week-end in August and to be at the Naches, Wash., Church the second week-end; and finally with us at Mossy Rock the third week-end. Between meetings they spent time in visiting Sister Graham's daughter in Port Angeles, Wash.,

and spent one evening and night in Mount Vernon, Wash. In addition to his preaching, Elder Spangler conducted the ordination of Brother Ben S. Preston to the office of an Elder, at the Naches Church meeting and saw two Sisters come into the Church. Then at Mossy Rock, he and Elder Preston baptised them Saturday after we took part in the ordination of Brother Wm. O. Hall as a Deacon. The two Sisters baptised were Sister Alma Coate and Sister Frances Bowman.

On Sunday, the last day of our meeting, Brother Fred Simpson asked for a home with the Naches Church, and Brother Frank Allen asked for a home with the Mossy Rock Church. They were accepted and duly baptised that afternoon by Elder Smith and Preston.

Thus ended these most wonderful events in our little Churches out west. It was the first ordination of an Elder and a Deacon for some time, and the adding of three members to the Naches Church and one to the Mossy Rock Church, was good to behold.

We feel that we were wonderfully blest at the hands of our Lord and Master in the sending of Elder John Lee Smith out west and to bring Elder Spangler out our way again. They and Elder Preston surely preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ in all it's purity and essence to the edification and strengthening of the Lord's people hereabouts; and to the honor and glory of our King of Kings and Lord of all. Dear Elder Attebery and Sister Attebery were with us, but due to his physical weakness, he could not partake in the preaching.

Sister Opal Huntting
Church Clerk.

Danville, Virginia **November, 1972**

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REMEMBERING ELDER RUSTON

We were much saddened when Elder Stuart McCall called and told us that Elder George Ruston had passed away. Though his passing was not unexpected, it made us to realize that we had lost a faithful servant of God, and a brother with whom we had walked for many years in love and fellowship. He, together with Sister Ruston, was of much encouragement and help in our work on the *Signs of the Times*.

Elder Ruston's writings were blessed to the comfort of many hundreds of the Lord's people over the years. He wrote with great plainness concerning the doctrine of God our Saviour, and of his rich experiences of God's grace and love.

He finished his course in high esteem of his brethren, and is now at rest until the Saviour comes again to raise the dead in Christ, and conform them to His glorious image. He firmly believed and preached that as the children of God bore the image of the earthly, they should also bear the image of the heavenly, and that this mortal should put on immortality.

May his family and his brethren be given grace to know that the Lord does all things well; and grace to be thankful for the many years of our pilgrimage together.

John D. Wood

EDITORIAL

ACCOUNT OF TRIP NORTH AND NORTHWEST

On July 28th Brother and Sister Elmer Hastings of Parsonsburg, Md., Mildred Graham, our daughter, and my wife and I left for a visit among the Covenanted Baptist Brethren of Canada, and some churches in the northwest United States.

We arrived at the home of Elder Alex McColl, London, Ontario, Canada, Saturday afternoon; and after spending a pleasant night with this lovely family, attended services at Dunwich Church on Sunday. This is the nearest meeting house to the home of our deceased Elder Ruston. My first visit to Canada was to a meeting held at this place in 1937. Though I have visited many meetings in Canada, I had attended only one Yearly Meeting at this place since 1937.

Here I met with many whom I have been visiting with in the meetings for over thirty years. Many precious memories flooded my heart as I mused on the years that are past. Among those in attendance were two of Elder and Sister Ruston's children. How we did miss our dear Elder; yet we would not mourn as for those who have no hope.

We visited Sister Ruston who is in a rest home, on Saturday afternoon. Her bright face and reconciliation to her loss through sustaining grace, was a comfort to us.

God, in his abounding providence and grace, has raised up two young ministers, Elders Alex and Stewart McColl, to fill the needs of the people as ministers of the gospel. Our heart was filled with joy and thankfulness, to behold the hand of the Lord in this. "And the name of the place shall be called Jehovah-Jireh."—The Lord will provide.

Following the meeting at Dunwich, we traveled to Oregon, arriving at the home of Deacon and Sister Lloyd Spikes Friday afternoon. A pleasant and comforting week-end was spent in their home. On Sunday services were held in the home by Deacon Ben Preston and the writer. One thing stands out in our mind about this meeting. As we began singing the first hymn, two of those present began weeping for joy; and this picture remains in our mind, because these precious ones seldom have services.

On Sunday afternoon, after leaving Brother Spikes' for our granddaughter's home at Port Angeles, Washington, our car broke down near Pendleton, Oregon. The heat was almost unbearable at 108 degrees. The car was pulled into Pendleton; and the next

morning while waiting the repairs on the car, a salesman for the automobile company approached me as I waited in the display room, and inquired about our trip. When I told him I planned to stop by to see an Elder Attebery near Hermiston, Oregon, who was a Primitive Baptist minister, he invited me into his office, saying he wanted to talk with me. I wondered what he might have in mind to talk about. The first thing he said was, I want to know what Primitive Baptists believe. For about an hour or more I believe God did bless me to tell him what we believe as a people. He stated that he was a member of the First Baptist Church of Hermiston.

If I have ever found an inquirer after truth, it was this man. He had no disposition to argue, but solely to inquire. He admitted that the free will system was a vicious circle that had no beginning or ending. As I meditated about this, I wondered if the car breaking down was an accident. And as I mused, the fire burned.

We arrived at our granddaughter's home, Mrs. Wally Harrison, at Port Angeles Monday night; and visited the family several days. They have two children who are the grandchildren of our daughter Mildred, and our great grandchildren. It was good to see and visit with them for a number of days.

The second Sunday and Saturday afternoon before, we visited with the Pleasant Grove Church, at Naches, Washington. The meeting was held in a Grange Hall, as the church does not have a meeting house, and the services are usually held in their homes. What a wonderful thing it was to see the beaming faces of those whom we have been meeting with from time to time for nine years! I felt overwhelmed.

After the services Saturday afternoon, the church called for a Presbytery to ordain Deacon Ben F. Prestin to the full work of the gospel ministry, if found qualified. An account of this ordination will be found in the *Signs*. The church was filled with rejoicing that God had raised up among them a minister to go in and out among them. It was a day of thankfulness with me, as I had the privilege of baptising Brother Preston four years ago; and helped ordain him as deacon two years ago.

The minister who had formerly served them both in doctrine and order, Elder Ernest J. Attebery, has become too weak physically to carry on the work. He is esteemed highly for his faithfulness in the cause; and I was delighted that he could take part in the ordination.

On Friday before the third Sunday we met with the church at Mossy Rock. This was their yearly three-day meeting. They have a good, comfortable meeting house, built a few years ago. Here we met Elder and Sister John Lee Smith, of Spearsville, La., who had been invited for the three days meeting. They made the trip by bus, which, no doubt, was a tiring trip.

On Friday afternoon of the meeting, the church called for the ordination of Brother Wm. O. Hall, (who often writes very acceptably for the *Signs*,) to the office of Deacon. As I had baptized Brother Hall, it made it more delightful that I could see him placed among them as their Deacon; and especially as they did not have one.

At the Saturday meeting, two sisters presented themselves before the church for membership: one coming from the Episcopal Church and the other from the Catholic. They were baptized by Elder Ben Preston and the writer that afternoon.

We left for home after the Saturday afternoon baptizing; and we learned that two more were received and baptized by Elders John Lee Smith and Ben Preston on Sunday. One was Fred Simpson of Yakima, Washington, and the other a Brother Allen.

May God continue to bless all we were associated with.

D. V. Spangler

EDITORIAL

THE GREAT SERMON OF SERMONS

(Part 2)

Jesus Christ's sermon on the mountain to His disciples could well be called: *Jesus' Inaugural Address.* Before Christ came, the chosen people of God, Israel, for hundreds of years, had considered the legislative wisdom of men as divine. Manly strength, manly justice, manly truth, and manly courage had all been considered as *divine.* This preaching of Christ shed a new light from Heaven and, until then unheard of, a new heroism. This is what we call the new order, to wit, meekness, endurance, long-suffering, and the passive strength of martyrdom. Christ does not say, Honor to the wise, but, "Blessed are the meek". The beatitudes which we have covered in the first part of this treatise, teach us that the only pure, true, and lasting blessedness for us is what we are in God's sight in His relation to His power over our souls. We learn that it is not in anything outward that commends us to God. We learn that it is not in the gratification of our desires, passions, or Coveteousness that commends us to God. Our pride, ambitions, and love of pleasure drives us away from that which is Godly. It is not what we have, but *what we are in God's sight that counts:* IF WE COULD BE BLESSED to wait patiently in the Lord, — and wait upon HIM! We find some of the most extraordinary virtues of faith in silent endurance that hides under the shadow of great afflctions. These ultimately result in the fruit of faith.

Heretofore The Kingdom of Israel had said and written much concerning duties, obligations, and demands required by the law of the children of God. Nothing had been proclaimed for hundreds of years before Christ came which could be of any comfort to those under the law. This is the time, Jesus is the person, His apostles compose the cabinet, the mountain is the place, the Gospel — or good news, is the subject for this *inaugural address* in initiating the KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

As has been shown, Jesus first points out peculiar characteristics which grace the citizens of this kingdom which are among the multitudes. He refers to them in the third person. He reveals to His cabinet that even among the multitudes there are many who qualify for the Kingdom of Heaven. The term used in referring to them is: "Blessed are they." Some have interpreted this as meaning, "Happy is that one." The religious idea conveyed is: "Happy in the enjoyments of the blessings of God." The 10th verse of Matthew 5 contains the last quotation of Jesus concerning *them*: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for *theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*" This proves that those who are ready to enter into the kingdom are driven into it by persecution. So, when one comes into the kingdom, or church, he cannot claim any credit for making the right decision. They are drawn by the love of God and are driven by the enemy.

"Blessed are *ye,* when men shall revile *you,* and persecute *you,* and shall say all manner of evil against *you* falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is *your* reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." This was really the first statement which directly was addressed to the Apostles. These were the first statements which directly concerned the Apostles. Prior to this, Jesus had said, *THEY*: now, He says, *Ye.* There are three distinct ways in which our Lord characterizes persecutions: Men reproach us in word, they persecute us in act, and they impute evil unto us by saying all manner of evil against us falsely for His name's sake. We suffer from the unkind word. We know what it is for stories to pass round and round for even we have been too prone to take them upon our lips and pass them forward! We are all anxious about our

character, but if we live close to Christ men will carge us with all kinds of evil. They will charge us with wrong motives, mis-represent our actions, and circulate malicious stories about us. If they called Him Beelzebub, they will call us the same.

The definition of *persecution* is, "A pursuing, the active opposition which Christians meet from their enemies." This definition was learned from a scriptural dictionary. I recall the characteristics of persecution is said to be threefold: mental, verbal, and actual or open. More persecutions have been mental in my case, than any other, because the wrong fleshly spirit in me rises so often against the opposing spirit which, I trust, is godly. I know what it is to wrestle against principalities and spirit that enter my own mind. This mental persecution has given me so much trouble that it is my lot to be forever praying the Lord for deliverance. These devilish spirits succeed in agonizing me until I become so weak and frustrated. God does not see fit to rid me of them; but comes to my rescue in answer to my prayers by convincing me that His grace is sufficient for me. He makes me to know for a glorious fleeting moment that, "When I am weak, then am I strong in the Lord." Verbal persecutions have been abundant and varied. The enemies of Christianity have said all manner of evil by slanderously reporting Jesus Christ and His disciples and making false accusations and spreading rumors. Even brethren are guilty of persecuting each other by uncharitable censures, harsh words, and talebearing for the purpose of hurting the influence of others. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose." (Rom. 8:28)

All of our persecutions are assigned to us for the purpose of further perfecting us for the Master's use. I needed every particle of persecution that I have suffered. I may have heretofore complained of being persecuted. Now, I rejoice and thank God for every bit of it. Should the world have never persecuted me, I would not have fled to the Church, or Kingdom of Heaven, for refuge! It takes these persecutions to wean us from the world. They are required to keep us humble and to esteem our brethren higher than ourselves. When we are *drawn* by the cords of God's wondrous love, and are *pushed* by persecution into the kingdom, then we are rewarded with rejoicing and exceeding gladness. This is a great reward in Heaven. The swords of our enemies are used by the God of Heaven and earth to unite suffering, persecuted saints who have like experiences, into local folds which we term as churches.

"GREAT IS YOUR REWARD IN HEAVEN" is an expression in the first part of the discourse, which must have been good news to these Apostles. Jesus says much about rewards. Those who do not understand the truth are quick to affirm that one obtains as his hire, or pay, such as he merits by his own works upon volition of his own will. Religionists other than of the Christian religion have charged that Christianity is a doctrine of selfishness, that it bids us do good in order to get something. There are many instances to prove that Jesus severely criticized good acts being done for selfish motives. He says in this great sermon, "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise, ye have *no reward* of your Father which is in Heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, *They have their reward.* But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: that thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall *reward* thee openly: And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they

may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, *They have their reward.* But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall *reward* thee openly." (Matt. 6:1-6) Yes, Jesus emphasizes *rewards.* God's rewarding is of *grace.* Rewards gained through selfish motives are of men, not of God.

We cannot naturally understand the conflicting ideas that we derive by natural reasoning of the fact that Jesus makes it plain that the motive of all action must be the love of others, and not thought of self; Yet, He talks of great reward in well doing. What can we say about this to bring about harmony of idea? First, we must agree with the idea that the best of man's righteousness is as filthy rags in God's sight. Should He deal justly with us according to that which we naturally merit, we would all be cut off without remedy. Secondly, let us admit that all righteousness that satisfies justice to our heavenly Father must be imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ. Next, we must admit that, "We can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us." So then, we can do righteousness through Christ which is in us. As John says, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, then he that is in the world." (1 John 4:4)

What a difference between seeking the approval of God, and seeking the approval of man. Paul said that though he bestowed all his goods to feed the poor, and had not charity, it would profit him nothing. I have heard it proclaimed that if a person would give a tenth to the church that the Lord would reward him fourfold. They say, "Just try it, you will come out with at least four times as much money as you had before." The Scriptures affirm that the *love of money* is the root of *all* evil. This kind of proposition would entice those who love money to make such an investment. If the love of money is the root of all evil, then this idea would be an evil one. Is it not a shame to claim that by our doing good acts God is in debt to us? Dear trembling one, Don't you feel so indebted to God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, that should your whole life be devoted to Him, you would not pay one bit of this debt? Should we keep all of His commandments, (and every one of us fall very short of it) we would be forced to exclaim that we have been but *unprofitable servants.* The born-again child of God must say, Every reward is of *grace,* not of *debt.*

The subject of *rewards* according to the teachings of Jesus is very revealing. The spiritual ideal of character is that of infinity: perfect in itself, boundless, limitless, etc. No man can feel self righteous or meritorious when brought into contact with infinity. We must say, "All we, like sheep, have gone astray." Read Luke 13:1-6, and you will find the thought that should God deal justly with us, we would all be cut off from among the living. Read the parable of the labourers in the vineyard in Matthew, chapter twenty, and you will get the idea that rewards are given whether earned or not. We must conclude that the blessings of the kingdom are really divine gifts to His people who fall far short from earning them. Some of these spiritual gifts are: eternal life, Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost, Godly love, Humility, sincerity, courage, power, peace, remission of sins, repentence, faith, hope, contentment, reconciliation, desires toward godliness, etc. Gratitude and joy takes the place of Pharisaical self-righteousness. The rewards of God are not material things but spiritual: however, He has promised to provide what we actually need of material things. We are not to be anxious concerning *our* natural needs, because He knows and will provide what *we* need. God does not promise accumulation of wealth in worldly goods. He does provide necessary food and clothing to sustain us. The use of God-given talents in a godly

manner increases the talents. To make one's life fuller and richer is the purpose of the rewards of the kingdom. Suffering, being persecuted, chastened, sorely oppressed, cast down, and many other tribulations, are blessings in disguise which are necessary: fitting us for a richer, fuller, spiritual life. We rejoice and are exceeding glad; yes, we thank God for these unpleasant experiences that has made us stronger in the faith in Jesus Christ. It is through the fiery furnace of affliction that we enter into the joys of the INNER LIFE.

"Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for *great is your reward in heaven;* for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." John quotes Jesus as saying: "These things I have spoken unto you, that in ME ye might have *peace.* In the world ye shall have *tribulations*: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33). The peace that the Lord's afflicted experience here, is certainly rest for the persecuted souls. This covenant of peace is ratified when we are baptized by His authority. It is experienced when we are made willing to follow Him in all things, and do His commandments. We further want to covenant with those of like precious faith by putting our case before the church. What a joy it is to have our marriage to Christ ratified in baptism; and have our marriage with the church ratified by being received by the church in covenant relationship. Communion with Christ and with His people is the most sought after by those who have suffered under the yoke of the law, coveteousness, worldliness, and yokes too numerous to mention. The church does not propose any proselyting by enticement, yet, she welcomes with outstretched arms of fellowship, and will gladly receive into her embrace those who have been burdened and bound with so many yokes of bondage.

Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls, for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matt. 11:28-30) What a reward for your soul! Resting in the love of Jesus is great reward for labouring and heavy laden souls. What a covenant to offer! You are to lay off all these crushing heavy yokes and put on such light yoke. You are to rid yourself of heavy burdens and be under a light one. You are to quit dealing with unsolvable mysteries and learn of the meek and lowly Jesus. What greater rewards could be offered to a broken-hearted sensible sinner than this? No greater good news has ever been proclaimed than this, GREAT IS YOUR REWARD IN HEAVEN.

Jesus says, Take *my* yoke. Throw off these others. Throw off the yoke of pride, the yoke of coveteousness, the yoke of sensuality, the yoke of worldliness. Throw off other yokes, such as ambitions and self-indulgence. Take on that yoke of devotedness to learning of how meek and lowly I am. Yes, take on my yoke which turns duties into privileges, and joyfully cultivate all that is beautiful, good, and holy. A meek and lowly mind will rest in the simple word of Christ, in the wisdom and love of the Father, and cannot be disquited by that which for the present baffles the understanding. If the mind of Christ be in you first, you will take the yoke through love. You will be anxious to do His commandments.

We were in communion services Sunday partaking of the bread and cup, and quietly meditating upon the meaning of it, when the silence was broken by a dear brother, who could hold himself no longer, exclaimed, "What wondrous love is this! that Jesus' body was broken for poor Hell-deserving sinners! To think that He shed His precious blood for us! That He washed His disciples feet! that He said, If I then your Lord and Master have washed your feet; Ye ought to wash one another's feet." He went on by saying, "Such great love that He bestowed upon us, HOW CAN WE FAIL TO KEEP HIS

COMMANDMENTS." This man was weeping and could say no more. We went ahead into the feetwashing which was a very lovely love-feast. None of us could forget what Brother Barney Evers said. It inspired me to such extent that I know that he was feasting in God's love. May the Lord add to the church daily such as should be saved with His blessings of the kingdom.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Margarettsville, N. Y.
Jan. 27, 1864.

Dear Brother Beebe:—Having a few leisure moments, and something of a desire to write a few thoughts for publication in the "Signs of the Times," if you should think proper to give them a place in your columns among the epistles of love. The Apostle Peter uses the expressions to the strangers scattered abroad throughout Pontus, Galatia, Capadocia, Asia and Bithynia, grace, mercy and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ; elect according to the foreknowledge of God through santification of the spirit; who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, which is reserved in heaven for them that are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

While we reflect for a few moments upon the language of scripture and the greatness of that being who spoke a world into existence, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, and it obeyed him, and who holds the seven stars in his own right hand. We are lost in wonder and are led to inquire why we should know anything of the character of Jehovah. And with one of old we exclaim, "what is man, that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that shouldst visit him."

We understand from the Word of God that no man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever he will reveal him. And it is very evident to the understanding mind that as Jesus is the Husband, and head over all things to the Church, and that in him all fulness dwells, that he is the revelator or the one that reveals the hidden mysteries to the children of God; and the Saviour rejoiced to know that the wise and prudent man could not find out the ways of God, but it pleased him to reveal them unto babes And the language of the Savior to his disciples was, "Blessed art thou, for flesh and blood has not revealed this unto you, but my Father which is in heaven." As the apostle wrote this epistle, which does not seem to be confined particularly to one place or locality of the Zion of God, but is termed a general epistle, which would seem to imply that there was no partiality in his letter of love, which no doubt was calculated to edify and comfort the scattered family of God.

As the apostle had been taught that the Lord was no respector of persons, but in every nation he that feared the Lord and worked righteousness was accepted with him. We might use the term "strangers scattered abroad," as spoken of by the apostle, as bringing to view the every nation, kindred, tongue, and people out of which the Lord has redeemed his people. That wherever the quickening spirit of grace in the work of regeneration has opened the eyes of the understanding in bringing a sinner out of nature's darkness into God's marvelous light, and to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus; there the Word of God will have its desired effect.

We are often at a loss to know the meaning of different passages of scripture that come into the mind, and were it not that scripture is the inter-

preter of scripture, (as it is said in the Word of God that all scripture is given by inspiration, and is profitable to reprove and correct the children of God in things of righteousness as they are journeying through this wilderness world, to bring to view the government and solemnities of Zion and her sure foundation, which is on the rock of ages,) they would still be in doubt as to the reality of which, especially the religion of Jesus Christ. As he is the only name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved, it is a source of great consolation to realize that Jesus has said, "Because I live ye shall live," also, while a day of darkness seems to be lowering upon the minds of the children of God, O may we realize that the Lord alone is our refuge and the only safe hiding place — a covert from the storm and tempest of anti-Christ: he is as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, and as rivers of water in a dry place.

Abundant testimony is given the children of God that no weapon formed against Zion shall prosper, and every tongue that rises in judgment the Lord will contemn. Then may we cast all our cares on him, as he is the author and finisher of the faith of all his elect. May we, who have witnessed a good profession before many witnesses, adorn the doctrine of God our Savior by well ordered lives and godly conversation, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace, and try to edify and comfort each other in this day of darkness. As there have been many able communications in the "Signs of the Times" the year that has passed away, some of the old soldiers of the cross have written interestingly on the subject of the two witnesses being slain, and the revealing of the man of sin with the effectual downfall of Babylon, whose sway seems to be broad at present, sweeping as it were over the entire land, reeking her vengeance upon the true church of God.

It is evidently plain from the Word of God that Gog and Magog are gathering their strength together to battle against the great day of God Almighty. But amidst all the heavy burdens that they bind on men's shoulders, (which the scriptures inform us are grievous to be borne, which they will not touch with their finger,) the Lord will own and bless his people, and his language will be, "Come thou blessed of the Lord: inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." While to the opposite, "Depart from me, I never knew you:" the storm of impending wrath of the Almighty will sweep them away at a breath. All their works, their willing and runnings that they have seemed to enjoy in their religion of the flesh, (as it might be properly called,) will prove their own destruction.

But the blessed company of the saints of the most high around his dazzling throne in that world of glory, "Not unto us, not unto us," will be their song, but to thy name be the glory. Then how needful it is that the watchmen should give the trumpet the certain sound that the inhabitants of Zion may have on the whole armor to withstand the enemy with all his fiery darts, and to fight manfully for the faith once delivered to the saints, who are built upon the foundation of the apostle and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone; and may you, Brother Beebe, be spared to comfort the children of God in this dark day, is the prayer of your unworthy brother, if one at all.

John D. Hubbell

(The above was by Elder John D. Hubbell in 1864, who lived from 1836 to 1905. He was a minister for over forty years and was well known among the churches. He was pastor of the churches of the Roxboro Association in New York for eighteen years.

We enjoyed his writing and pass them on to the brethren. —J. D. W.)

RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH

(By the late Elder H. H. Lefferts)

My Dear Brother in Gospel Bonds:

You asked me to write you my views on 2nd Timothy 2:15: "Study to shew

thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

I confess I should like very much to grant your request, but feel very lacking in wisdom how to preach the gospel, for I know so little about it myself. After over forty-four years in this work, I know less than I ever did about it. At least, that is the way I feel. All I can do is to offer you some suggestions on this subject. Please do not conclude anything from what I write, that I am laying down rules for others to follow. I cannot do that. I believe that when the Holy Spirit calls a man to the service of the gospel, that same Spirit will so work in that man's heart and soul qualifying him for the work which the Spirit calls him unto.

Elsewhere in writing Timothy, Paul exhorts him to "give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine." This is good advice for us today. What should be read? I take it, he means for Timothy to read the scriptures that he may be familiar with them, that where he may lack in understanding he may "hold fast the form of sound words." I heard Elder P. D. Gold say that he read the scriptures through once a year so as to keep them fresh in his mind. Elder F. W. Keene was an almost constant reader of the scriptures, as were Elders Chick, Durand, and others. If a carpenter must be familiar with the tools and rules of his trade, if a doctor must constantly keep himself abreast of progress in medicine and in the treatment of disease, if a lawyer must be a habitual reader of the law to keep himself up with the ever new and broadening interpretations of the laws of the courts, how much more should a minister of Jesus Christ be a constant student of the scriptures, laying them up in his mind, meditating on them in his heart! A gospel minister must know the scriptures. He can never know them too well or too thoroughly. Each time he goes to the Bible, he finds something there he never saw before, no matter how often he may have read it.

The one central Person in all scripture from Genesis to Revelation is the Lord Jesus Christ. All scripture focus on him. Never is the scripture rightly divided unless it is seen in its relation to Jesus Christ, His Person and work. Whatever text a minister may take unless he preaches Christ from that text, he has not rightly set it forth. As I said in the beginning of this, I am not laying down rules for others to follow. I am merely offering my viewpoint of this matter as I have come to see it in my own ministry of over forty-four years. You may not agree with me, but I cannot but set it forth as I see it. For myself, I am never satisfied with any text from which I have ever tried to speak, unless I am given to see its bearing on Jesus Christ. And this means God also, for Christ is the eternal Son of God, and all that may be known of God is revealed through the Person and work of Christ by the Revelator who is the Holy Spirit. The whole three-one God is concerned in this matter of declaring the Truth. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." (Rev. 19:10) These days, we hear much about preaching prophecy. and the carnal minds of many unbelievers who know nothing of the grace of God, are all agog with interest as to what the Bible teaches regarding things to come on this earth. Many prophets there are, self-styled, who claim to be able, from the Bible, to foretell things that are to come to pass. In all this, there is very little at all of Jesus Christ. To prophesy doesn't mean merely to fortell future happenings, it means to tell out, to tell forth, what is in the text. In telling out, or telling forth a text, it is to bring out what is in it; and in bringing out of the passage what it teaches, Christ is invariably preached. If not, the gospel is not preached. For He is the sum and substance of the gospel.

The word is rightly divided when its harmony and consistency is set forth throughout all the Word in its various

parts. It is not rightly divided when one part of the scripture is set over in opposition to some other part.

In Paul's first epistle to Timothy, chap. 4, v. 13, after reminding Timothy of the importance of reading the scriptures, he next tells him to attend to exhortation and to doctrine. The importance of doctrinal preaching cannot be over-estimated. *That doesn't mean to simply set forth one element of the doctrine, such as predestination, but to set forth the "whole counsel of God".* To set forth each principle of the faith of God's elect without distorting one out of proportion to the others. A workman would indeed be ashamed of his handiwork, who in making a wheel, should make some spokes longer than others. Such a wheel would not be practicable, its vehicle would be wobbly. All the spokes must be of the same length, radiating from the same center. So with the doctrine. *To emphasize one principle at the expense of others equally important, is not good workmanship. It results in hobbyizing.* The center is the Person and the attributes of God. From this Center, radiate the principles of predestination, foreknowledge, election, effectual calling, the final perseverance of the saints, etc. All these focus and find their eternal satisfaction in Jesus Christ, who is the eternal Circumference of it all.

Lastly, there is the great importance of exhortation, the great value of life and walk consistent with the doctrine. I cannot understand how any real preacher can say there is no room in the gospel for the precepts. If not, I myself know nothing of the gospel. I don't believe the Spirit of God ever called a sinner out of darkness into God's marvellous light, and then forsook that sinner to do as he pleases and to live as he lists. "How can they that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" We know none of us are sufficient of these things in our own strength, but our sufficiency is of God. His work is perfect. Where God begins His work in any individual, there is a carrying on of that work to the day of Jesus Christ which is the day of the future resurrection of the saved of God unto eternal glory.

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on ernal life." (I Tim. 6:17-19) Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works." (Heb. 10:24) "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works." (2 Tim. 3:8) In every one of Paul's letters, we see the Holy Spirit directed him to write according to this steadfast rule: *first, laying down the doctrine; and secondly, building up on that doctrinal foundation the exhortation to love and good works as being the necessary fruits of a gospel state and condition.* For instance, the epistle to the Romans is made up of 11 chapters of doctrinal teaching followed by five chapters of gospel precepts which are the practical outcome of the doctrine rightly believed and followed. In Corinthians, the line is not so clearly drawn between doctrine and precept for the reason that throughout these letters to the church at Corinth he intermingles doctrine with practical godiness. In Galations, we have four chapters of doctrine followed by two of exhortation flowing out of the teaching. And so we might examine all the letters not only of Paul, but of Peter, John and James, with the same result. *In the face of this, how can any true believer evade the fact that a right faith calls for a right walk?* God has as much as truly foreordained His people unto good works in which they are to walk, as He has their justification to life by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. "Who-

so looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." (Jas. 1:25) And what shall we say to the words of Jesus Himself if we discard the precepts from the gospel? "Every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended and the floods came and the winds blew and beat upon the house, and it fell: and great was the fall thereof." Shall we then be so foolish as to try to divorce the doctrine from the godliness which proves the faith in the lives of those who hold it fast? Let us not try to separate that which God has joined together! A gospel sermon which does not embrace the precepts of the gospel is not the gospel that Paul preached, nor has such an emasculated gospel any place in the "faith once delivered to the saints."

Godliness which is the fruit of the faith of God's elect, is the product of God through the Spirit in His people, causing them to will and to do after His good pleasure. Godliness is not brought about by means of bodily exercise which profiteth little, but through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit who makes the bodies of His people His holy temple, constituting even our mortal bodies the members of Christ. Where there is a genuine work of regeneration, there will be a love of the Truth and a desire to be found in obedience to it. Even though our unregenerate flesh is still with us, the enemy in our own house, over against this is the holy desire and inclination to do the will of God. And after all, the real life of the child of God is the life he lives in his heart in the sight of God.

As I said in the beginning, I am laying down no rules for anybody to follow in preaching. I should be the last one on earth to do this, for I know so little about it myself; and my own service all these years has been so full of defects. Yet I do desire to attain unto that which I know I have not yet attained unto. With the help of God, I press forward unto it.

Leaving this for the present to your examination and judgment, I am I believe

Your brother in the grace of Christ,

Horace H. Lefferts

(Re-published by request)

ORDINATION OF ELDER BEN F. PRESTON

Answering the call of the Predestinarian Baptist Church of Naches, Washington, called Pleasant Grove, this 8th day of August, 1972, a Presbytery was organized composed of Elder Ernest J. Attebery of Pleasant Grove Church, Naches, Wash., Elder David W. Spangler of Dan River Church, Danville, Va., and Deacon Lloyd C. Spikes of Big Spring Church, Elgin, Oregon, for the purpose of inquiring into the qualifications of Deacon Ben F. Preston for the work of the gospel ministry.

After due examination, the Presbytery being satisfied as to his qualifications, he was duly set apart to the work of the ministry by the laying on of hands, prayer and a Charge as to the duties of this office.

We hereby recommend Elder Ben F. Preston to the Lord's people wherever God may cast his lot.

D. V. Spangler, Mod.
Lloyd Spikes, Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of the Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, Mossy Rock, Washington, August 19, 1972, a presbytery was called for the purpose of ordaining Brother Wm. O. Hall, to the full work of the office of deacon, if found worthy and qualified.

Elder John Lee Smith, Spearsville, La., was chosen as Moderator and Elder D. V. Spangler to give the charge. Other Elders present were Elder Ernest Attebery, Hermiston, Oregon and Elder Ben S. Preston, The Dalles, Oregon.

After the presbytery found the candidate, in their judgement, to be worthy and qualified, prayer was delivered by Elder Smith and then the laying on of hands followed by the delivering of the charge by Elder Spangler, after which Brother Hall was delivered back to the Church as an ordained Deacon and the right hand of fellowship given by the Church and others present.

Sister Opal Huntting,
Church Clerk

OBITUARIES

ELDER CHARLIE NORMAN BUNN

Though my vocabulary is inadequate to pen my feelings for one I loved and esteemed most highly, I attempt to write briefly of Elder C. Norman Bunn.

Elder Bunn was a native of Nash County, North Carolina, born September 12, 1910 to Charlie Marcus and Johnnie Woodruff Bunn. He was married to the former Nellie Gray Williams on February 7, 1937.

In his early married life he and his wife moved to Richmond, Virginia where, according to the providence of God, they earned their livelihood. Elder Bunn was employed as a foreman in a woodwork mill at the time of his death, having for years been a carpenter by trade or employed as a millworker. He was quite a craftsman with wood and his experiences had taught him to recognize the various woods and how to handle them. His home is left with much of his beautiful handiwork for his wife to treasure.

Though Richmond, Virginia was his home, when he found himself under such conviction as only God brings His little ones, he found comfort and consolation in coming back to his native North Carolina to be with God's people of his natural acquaintance and enjoy a spiritual communion with them. On the third weekend in June, 1942, he was blessed to unite with the church at Upper Town Creek (Wilson County, North Carolina) where he enjoyed membership for thirteen years and four months. It was with Upper Town Creek that he experienced his call to the ministry. The church granted him liberation the third Saturday in September, 1942 to preach wherever he was called on. For over seven years the churches enjoyed his gift in this capacity. On the third Sunday in March, 1950 he was ordained to the full work of the ministry by Elders J. C. Smith (his pastor), C. L. Robbins, and Johnnie Joyner. His gift proved to be a profitable one and he was highly esteemed among the brethren.

Elder Bunn was called to pastor his first church at Pleasant Hill (Edgecomb County, North Carolina) on January 5, 1953, succeeding Elder A. B. Denson, a minister he esteemed highly and the minister who had performed the marriage ceremony that united him and his wife in holy bonds of matrimony. On the third Saturday in October, 1955 Elder Bunn asked for a letter at Upper Town Creek Church to move his membership to Pleasant Hill. He was received in full fellowship at Pleasant Hill one week later, the fourth Saturday in October, 1955. He continued to serve Pleasant Hill as pastor until his death, May 4, 1972. He also pastored the churches at Richmond and Norfolk, Virginia, and for a period, Healthy Plains Church (Wilson County, North Carolina).

We at Pleasant Hill loved him, not better than anyone else perhaps, but with a selfish love that he was ours. His home being in Richmond made it necessary for him to journey to Rocky Mount each fourth weekend to serve us. We recall how he came here by train each Saturday morning before the fourth Sunday, and someone would meet him. He was always pre-engaged to spend the fourth Saturday night with one of the brethren or friends in this immediate area. Out of that was the beginning of a fourth Saturday night prayer meeting that was always held in the home of the brother, sister, or friend with whom he was spending the night. His wife always drove down on fourth Saturday night after her work-week ended to be with him and they went back to Richmond together on Sunday. The morning train schedule was eventually changed, making it necessary for him to drive down on Saturday morning, and his wife come on the train Saturday night. He would meet her at the train and the two return home together on Sunday. This continued until his health failed him. It was not advisable for him to travel alone, so he finally gave up coming to Pleasant Hill on Saturday, but would wait and come with his wife on Saturday night or Sunday morning to fill his appointment in the pulpit on fourth Sunday morning.

The writer was given a special love for him, as it was Elder Bunn who God gave me to confide in and receive counsel from when my burdens were such that I didn't understand what was going on. I felt I had no one to turn to and surely no one would understand when I would tell what I was going through. Elder Bunn always seemed to understand and so many times would give explanations that would comfort this poor sinners heart.

His preaching ofttimes impressed me to tears. It took the words given him to melt my cold and stony heart. I recall how he told of his impressions to preach even before he united with the church. The dealings of God with him made him fear he would have to stand and declare His riches. He would beg God to use one of his brothers rather than him, because his brother had more education and was a better man. He preached to us how miserable he was trying to run from God's command. He told us he went north and he went south and wherever he went God was there with the same command. He told how he was not made willing to attempt to preach to God's people until he saw his Mother's lips turning white moments after breath left her body. At that time God warned again, "go feed My sheep" and he was made willing to say, "Lord, I'll try".

Elder Bunn traveled much among God's people as long as his health permitted it. His travels were mostly to the north of his native North Carolina, but he was found quite frequently to the south also. When his health was such that he could he was constantly visiting the brethren, friends, and shut-ins in any area that he might stop. We all looked forward to his appearances. Several years before his death, a heart condition weakened him and his energies prohibited his constantly going and visiting as he had in the past. His keen interest in others was still there and he was sure to inquire about them and send messages of love and his hope that the Lord would be with them.

He was not a wealthy man, but lived comfortable, as the average man of this day does. He was always asking the church to forget him so far as money was concerned and to remember those less fortunate instead. The church, not willing to ignore him to that extent would give him money, though in small amounts. We all knew he ofttimes placed his gift among those less fortunate. He wanted to help those who were aged and ailing meet their medical expenses. It was a practice of his to remind the church from time to time to remember those who were desperately in need of help.

Elder and Mrs. Bunn were not blessed with children of their own, but just everybody's children were found loving Elder Bunn. He always devoted much of his time winning the love of youngsters wherever he went. Elder A. P. Mewborn was aware of this too and as an Elder who took part in the funeral service, he concluded his remarks with the reading of the following poem that seemed fitting for our beloved Elder Bunn.

"I think ofttimes as the night draws nigh,
Of an old house on the hill,
Of a yard all wide, and blossom starred,
Where the children played at will.

"And when the night at last came down,
Rushing the merry din,
Norman would look around, and ask,
'Are all the children in?'

"Tis many and many years since then,
And the old house on the hill,
No longer echoes to childish feet,
And the yard is still, so still,

"But I see it all as the shadows creep,
And though many the years have been,
Since then, I can still hear Norman ask,
'Are all the children in?'

"I wonder if, when the shadows fall,
On the last short earthly day,
When we say goodbye to the world outside,
All tired with our childish play,

"When we meet the lover of boys and girls,
Who died to save them from sin,
Will we hear him ask, as Norman did,
'Are all the children in'?"

With much concern for his churches, Elder Bunn made it abundantly clear that he could leave Pleasant Hill in death with more satisfaction knowing Elder Henry Jones was there, a minister he loved and felt to be indoctrinated by the power of God. A minister that come up under him and he felt a desire to be fatherly to him in his journeys and call to the ministry.

Elder Bunn leaves a host of people to mourn his passing and yet rejoice for him that there is a place to end all his pain and sorrow, weakness and afflictions. In addition to those in the church, Elder Bunn leaves the following survivors: His wife, Nellie Williams Bunn, who we at Pleasant Hill love and esteem as a sister in Christ, three brothers, David Bunn of Jacksonville, North Carolina (who died July 12, 1972), George R. and R. Marcus Bunn of Rocky Mount, North Carolina, Mrs. Pearl B. Denson of Vienna, Virginia, Mrs. Sallie B. Chaffin of Richmond, Virginia, and Mrs. Mary Ella B. Sutton of Red Oak, North Carolina, and a host of friends.

Elder Bunn's funeral service was conducted by Elders Henry C. Jones and A. P. Mewborn which was according to his request. Pallbearers Raymond W. Edwards, J. Carroll Williams, George E. Williford, Walter F. Owens, M. D. Simmons, Sr., and W. C. Adams, Sr. carried his body to his gravesite in Pineview Cemetery in Rocky Mount, North Carolina to await the second coming of Christ, and we have reasons to hope that he will hear the Father call him home where God's elect family will know nothing but eternal perfection in Him.

We hope to bow in humble submission to God's will and pray that He will keep us all, that one day we might be around God's throne with Elder Bunn and all of the saints to sing ceaseless and undivided praises to a never ending God.

Written by one who loved him and misses his presence, but gets much comfort realizing the rest he came in possession of is far greater than anything this world holds for us.

J. Carroll Williams

Read and received in conference at Pleasant Hill Church August 6, 1972

Resolved: A copy be placed on the church records, one sent to *The Signs of the Times* for publication and a copy be sent to the family.

Elder Henry C. Jones, Moderator
J. Carroll Williams, Clerk

JOHN ALVA SMITH

It is with a sad and heavy heart I attempt to write the obituary of Brother and Deacon John Alva Smith. I did not know Bro. Smith but a few years but from our first meeting at North Creek Primitive Baptist Church I felt I had found a true friend and brother in the hope given us by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

John Alva Smith was born July 3, 1904 and died Saturday, Apr. 8, 1972. He was the son of John William Smith and Bessie Potter Smith. Surviving are three brothers and three sisters: Clemon W., Justus G. and Reeves O. Smith; Vera S. Waters, Sanna S. Paul and Nelva S. Ricciardelli.

In December, 1925, he married Jessie Proctor Smith who survives. To this union were born the following children: Wilma S. Thompson, William Alva Smith, Johnnie Marvin Smith and Daniel Malachi Smith.

Bro. Smith joined North Creek Primitive Baptist Church on confession of faith Monday night following First Sunday in October 1942. He was well established in the Primitive Baptist faith, was ordained a deacon and served the church well and faithfully until his death. His funeral was conducted at North Creek Primitive Baptist Church by his pastor, Eld. J. T. Prescott assisted by Eld. D. B. Stokes.

He is greatly missed by the members of the church and a host of friends as well as by the family. While his passing seems untimely to the carnal mind, we are sure he believed that "all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, who are called according to his purpose." May this faith be given to all of us who remain.

Written by order of conference at North Creek Primitive Baptist Church Saturday before the second Sunday in June, 1972.

Written by A. F. Rowe, Deacon.
J. T. Prescott, Moderator
Reeves Smith, Church Clerk

ALICE WILLIAMS WILLIFORD

Alice Williams Williford was born March 6, 1898 in Wilson County, North Carolina to Godly parents, James T. and Sarah Barnes Williams, and departed this life on March 10, 1972 making her stay here 74 years and 4 days.

On September 10, 1919 she was married to C. Roy Williford and lived most of her life in a rural community near her birthplace. She was a devoted wife and mother. Her husband's health not being good, she was always by his side to lighten his burdens. For a few years they farmed and later operated a general merchandise store in a rural community in Edgecombe County, North Carolina. In either endeavor, she was always working by her husbands side striving to make life more pleasant for him. She was always content with a simple life, finding the christian home she strived for the most rewarding part of living.

She was of a loving nature and very tenderhearted. Everybody's troubles became her troubles at heart. Her family (and her husband's family) was always something special to her and she wanted to share their joys and their sorrows.

In October, 1931 she was blessed to unite with the church at Upper Town Creek (Wilson County, North Carolina), a church she had long loved and as a child had been carried there by her parents who also held membership there. She loved the brethren and was found taking her seat at Upper Town Creek on the third weekends unless providentially hindered. She wasn't one who traveled far away to meetings as some do, but found contentment to visit the brethren nearby and being with her family on Sunday afternoons. We enjoyed going to her home when she prepared to have the brethren and friends from church. Her expressed love for each one made them feel welcome in her home and she wanted to treat them all to the best she had.

She was taken sick on the night of her birthday and was carried to a Rocky Mount, North Carolina hospital. Her condition was so critical she was transferred to Memorial Hospital in Chapel Hill, North Carolina where she received the very best medical attention skilled physicians could offer. We believed as she believed, she had lived her alloted days here in this world and God called her home four days later.

Left to mourn her passing in addition to her husband, are two sons, Roy T. Williford of Clarkton, North Carolina, and C. Elmo Williford of Route 1, Elm City, North Carolina; one daughter, Mrs. Inez Crutchfield of Winston Salem, North Carolina; seven grandchildren, three great-grandchildren; three brothers, B. D. Williams of Rocky Mount, North Carolina, Tommy Daniel Williams of Pinetops, North Carolina, and Lawrence E. Williamse of Wilson, North Carolina; three sisters, Mrs. Frank Owens of Elm City, North Carolina, Mrs. John Moseley of Macclesfield, North Carolina, and Mrs. Mary Barnes of Rocky Mount, North Carolina.

Her funeral was conducted at Johnson Fuentral Home in Rocky Mount, North Carolina by Elders M. E. Garner (her pastor) and Henry C. Jones. A tremendous gathering of loved ones followed her body to the family plot in Cedar Grove Cemetery, Elm City, North Carolina where her body was laid to rest to await the second coming of Christ. We have

a beautiful hope that she will arise to awake in the likeness of our Saviour being one of the Saints of God to know nothing but a perfect bliss eternally in heaven.

Written at the request of the family by a nephew who loved her and considered it a Godly privilege to be able to call her "Aunt Alice".

J. Carroll Williams

SISTER THOMAS J. GILLISPIE

Sister Gillispie was born in Floyd County, Va. January 5, 1891, and died April 10, 1972. She was the daughter of Richard and Lucrecia Nolen. She was first married to George Smith March 7, 1907, and to this union three children were born: John A. Smith, Lottye Gaye Smith Currens and Cleo Violet Smith Sutton. She later married Thomas J. Gillispie on January 19, 1924, who died April 7, 1949; and to this union the following were born: Thomas J. Gillispie, Earl Gillispie and Robert Nolen Gillispie. All children survive except Earl, Thomas and Lottye. Surviving also are fourteen grand children and ten great grandchildren.

Sister Gillispie united with County Line Primitive Baptist Church, Floyd County, Va. the 4th Sunday in May, 1912, and was baptized by Elder H. V. Cole. She moved to Maryland January 19, 1924, and placed her letter with the Black Rock Church the same year.

Sister Gillispie was deeply experienced in the things of the Spirit and sound in the faith of God's elect. She loved the church and was always at her meetings when not providentially hindered. She is greatly missed in our meetings.

Her funeral was conducted at the Black Rock Church April 14th by the pastor, Elder John D. Wood, and she was laid to rest beside her husband in the church cemetery, to await the glorious resurrection.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to all who mourn her passing.

John D. Wood

SISTER REBECCA G. HILLMAN

Sister Hillman was born June 8, 1890 and passed away August 29, 1972 at the age of 82 at the home of her daughter in Quakertown, Pennsylvania. She was the widow of Wilfred L. Hillman. Born in Philadelphia, Pa. she was a daughter of the late William and Laura (Sherlock) Dumbell.

She was baptised June 4, 1916 by the late Elder Charles W. Vaughn, then pastor of the Old School Baptist Church of Hopewell at the age of 26. While she never lived in the community, she was a devoted and remarkable sister. Space does not permit the mention of her achievements. We feel to say that our loss Baptist Meeting House, and conducted by her is her eternal gain.

Funeral services were held in the Old School pastor Elder Arthur R. Warren. Interment was in the Highland Cemetery, Hopewell, N.J. It was a beautiful service with many floral pieces surrounding the casket at the foot of the pulpit.

She is survived by one daughter, Mildred, wife of John Kemmerer of Quakertown, Pa. One grandson, John Kemmerer, Jr., four great grand children, two sisters and a brother.

May God bless and comfort here loved ones is our prayer.

Sister Mary Hellings, Church Clerk

DAVID A. BILBREY

Brother Bilbrey was born January 19, 1880, in Overton County, Tenn., and passed away May 20, 1972, at Altus, Oklahoma, at the age of 92 years and 3 months.

He married Miss Bessie Mae Copeland September 10, 1905. He and family moved to Oklahoma in 1907, and made Olustee, Oklahoma their home for several years.

When he was past eighty-four years old he came before Little Flock Church, Altus, Oklahoma, relating his experience, and stating he wanted to follow his Lord in baptism. He was baptized September 26, 1964. He told me he had a great change to come over him many years ago. He started coming to church regularly, and brought his clothes several times for the purpose of being baptized, but his feeling of unworthiness held him back. He carried this feeling to his grave. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace through the Lord and Saviour. As long as his health permitted he was very faithful to fill his seat at church. We feel we have sustained a great loss; but we truly believe our loss is Brother Bilbrey's eternal gain.

Those surviving are his precious companion, two sons, five daughters, eighteen grandchildren and twenty-eight great grandchildren; together with many friends.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer. His body was laid to rest in the Victory Cemetery, to await the coming of the great resurrection morning.

Written in love,
C. M. Haygood

ROSIE ROBBIE BOYD

Sister Boyd was born to the late Mr. and

Mrs. S. H. Houk October 9, 1897, in Greenville, Texas. It please the Lord to call her from our midst June 2, 1972. He doeth all things well; bless His Holy Name.

She moved to Oklahoma Territory in 1905 with her parents. She was united in marriage to Alfred J. Boyd at Snyder, Oklahoma, October 6, 1917. Three children were born to this union. Mr. Boyd and one child preceded her in death. (Her only son, to whom she was very near and dear, dropped dead with a heart attack the day after she was buried.) As we look back we can surely say, "God works in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform."

Sister Boyd asked for a home with Little Flock Church, Altus, Oklahoma, September 14, 1958, and was baptized October 12, 1958. Surely she was a soldier of the cross; being somewhat handicapped with a serious heart condition, she never complained, but was always thinking of others. To know her was to love her: so wonderfully blessed with a meek, humble, kind and quiet spirit. I thank God for blessing me with such a faithful and dedicated member, and permitting me to have the pleasure of knowing her for the past twelve years. Surely, surely we have lost a Mother in Israel, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer, and her body was laid to rest in the Snyder, Oklahoma, Cemetery, to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour.

Written as requested by her daughter, Mrs. Ethel Marie Burba.

Her pastor,
C. M. Haygood

DEACON CHARLES EDGAR EADES

With sadness I attempt to write concerning our dear brother. He was born November 22, 1886 in Johnson County, near Grantsburg, Ill. He was the son of the late Miles and Safronia Eades, and was the last member of that family — three brothers, one sister and one-half sister preceded him in death.

Edd, as he was known by his friends, lived most of his life in Johnson County on a farm near Needmore, Ill. He was married to Nellie Rose May 17, 1917, and to this union seven children were born: Ona Hazel, of Grantsburg, Orpha Pollard of Peoria, Geneva Huffman of Grantsburg, Harlie E. of Peoria, James E. of Hoyleton, and Charles E. Jr. of Peoria: Elbert E. preceded him in death. Surviving also are 12 grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren. His wife died in 1968.

He was always ready to give a helping hand to his friends. He was a devoted husband. In 1942 he professed a hope and united with Rock Springs Primitive Baptist Church. He was a faithful member and deacon, trusting in an all wise, eternal God, and ever looking to his Creator for help. He was always ready to give the reason of his hope, and continually spoke of the greatness and goodness of our Lord. Though his work on earth is finished, his memory will not be forgotten. He is asleep in Jesus awaiting the resurrection morning.

Brother Eades was ordained Deacon July 31, 1960, at Rock Springs Church by Elders Paul Poyner, O. W. Perkins, J. N. Darnell and Wade Chandler. Written by a friend.

Joseph J. Trigg,
Simpson, Ill.

SISTER ROSA MARTIN

New Hope Church, Rockingham County, N. C. is saddened by the death of Sister Rosa Martin, who lived near Stoneville, N.C.

She united with New Hope Church while Elder T. A. Stanfield was pastor, living then in the church community. She was unable to attend meeting regularly during her last years due to poor health. My visits in her home hold dear memories to me when some would go see her, and sometimes have preaching for her, and singing, or talk of the goodness and mercy of our God.

Her husband, J. J. Martin, preceded her in death less than a year. They were blessed to raise a family of three daughters and one son: Sister Annie Oakley, Mildred Wood, Linda Williams, and Brother Jimmy Martin.

New Hope Church bows in submission to our God in removing our sister from among us; and we extend our sympathy to her family. We miss her, but would not call her back to earth: her sufferings are over, and we feel she is at rest.

Her funeral was held at Matrimony Primitive Baptist Church by Elders Thornton Manley, Castle and Stowe. The tribute of flowers and many things said bear evidence of how highly she was esteemed among the Baptists and those who knew her. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

The church desires a copy of this Obituary be given her family, one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and one be spread on our church records.

Done by order of our church while in conference, June meeting, 1972.

Elder D. A. O'Bryant, Mod.
Sister Louise Cobb, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 140 DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1972 NO. 12

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12/72
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ON FAITH, HOPE, AND CHARITY
(I Cor. 13:13)

"FAITH'S the substance of things hoped for,
The evidence of things not seen;"
'Tis said that it worketh by love,
And on the Lord, the faithful lean.

By faith we know the worlds were made
By God's almighty word, we read,
Faith toward Christ, who is the Word
That was made flesh, the promised Seed.

(By faith) "we know that we have passed
From death unto life, because we
Love the brethren" (in Christ Jesus),
"Christ in you, the hope of glory."

"Hope is the anchor of the soul,"
A "good hope through grace," as professed,
And how good 'tis when we are with
The presence of the Saviour blessed.

He's "that blessed hope" we look for,
Object of our love and esteem;
In that sweet home beyond the skies,
O how his countenance will beam!

We read that we are saved by hope,
Which is named in my theme above,
Along with faith and charity,
The latter of which is called love.

Charity's the greatest of these,
We are informed in Holy Writ,
And they all work together here,
These three graces of the Spirit.

But in the heaven of heavens,
All but love will be done away,
While love will abide with the saints
In all that everlasting day.

C. W. Vass
409 N. Y. Avenue
Elizabeth City, N. C.

ELDER TURNER
EXPRESSES HIS APPRECIATION

Rt. 3, Box 100
Bassett, Va. 24055

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

I would appreciate your publishing this note of thanks and my appreciation to the brethren and friends that I met while attending the South Ouachita and the Sulphur Fork Associations. And also to the brethren at home for the kindness shown my wife while I was away.

I especially want to express my deep feeling toward the ministers that attended these associations; and also to those in whose homes I visited. It was very inspiring to me to be blessed to share the love and fellowship with you dear brethren.

I do not know whether I will be given to meet with you again on this earth, but I hope to meet you in heaven.

I would like to extend to one and all an invitation to visit with us, if God will enable you.

Yours in fellowship,
(Elder) Cecil E. Turner

"BUT THE OTHER . . ."

"The thieves also, which were crucified with Him, cast the same in His teeth." (Matthew 27:44)

"And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left." (Mark 15:27)

"And there were also two other, malefactors, led with him to put to death And when they were come to the place, which is called calvary, there they cruc-

ified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left." (Luke 23:32-33)

(I might comment here that I've heard this word used often times in reading "malefactors as being "male-factors." Whichever it is, it still means the same thing. They were condemned criminals.)

Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raimant, and cast lots. And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God. And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself. And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS." (Luke 23:34-38)

I think it is important to note two things at the very beginning. One is, this is one of the few incidents recorded in all four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. There are many events that occurred during the ministry of the Lord that will be found in one or two or three of the Gospels, but it is rare to find something recorded in all four. Obviously the Spirit of God would have us take due note of an incident that it is found in all four books. The other is the superscription that is written above him, "This is the king of the Jews." It is recorded somewhat different in the other gospels where it is written, but if you will observe it was written in all three languages, the Greek, which was the common language (really they spoke the Aramaic), the Latin, which was the Roman language, and the Hebrew, which was the language of Jewish scholars. So from the base to the highest, the superscription was there for them to read, acknowledging that "This was the King of the Jews." You will recall that the Pharisees came to Pilot and said, "Write not that He is the King of the Jews, but that he sayeth that He is the King of the Jews." Do you recall what Pilot said at that time? "What I have written, I have written,"and he would not change it.

Three crosses — And all of us know somewhat about them, but I seriously question that any of us have dug very deeply into the meaning of them. I am not trying to over-do sign language or bring something from the Scriptures that is not taught there. It was no accident that Jesus was crucified between two thieves. You see in the Book of Mark where it was the fulfilling of the scripture in the 53rd Chapter of Isaiah, "He was numbered with the transgressors." Unless you have a very weak mind and cannot understand the obvious, it will BE obvious. God had His prophet write 700 years in advance that Jesus would be numbered with the Transgressors, so we must reach one of several conclusions: Either God and the prophet were speculating about it, or they had absolute knowledge about it, or it was nothing but historical data to be discarded after his writing. I perfer to believe that it was the second proposition: God had a perfect knowledge about it because God designed it. The Old Testament prophecies were the mind of God revealed in advance. They were not speculations, nor notions, nor guesses. They were the revealing of that which God had purposed to take place in the future. Should any of these prophecies fail, to that extent God would fail in His infinite wisdom.

We find the Lord being escorted through the streets by the Roman Legions bearing His own cross to the point that He fell under the burden of it. When He fell they found a man named Simon, a Cyrenian, who bore the cross the rest of the way for Him. We might note also that unanimously public opinion was against the Savior. He was at His lowest point in His earthly journey. As we read, the people, the rulers, and the soldiers were deriding and mocking Him. We read, also, in the Book of Matthew, that the two thieves "cast the same in His teeth." They hurled these accusations at Him, "If you're the Christ,

save yourself and us." I wonder if we can see anything there in that scene in that day some 2000 years ago? Wicked and brutal men, and the Holy Lamb of God, hanging between two thieves, common, base, condemned criminals. They were marauders, they were desperadors, they were the refuses of humanity, they were the dredges of society, the scum of the earth. Very few people were crucified, only the vilest of the human race. When they hung on the cross, they were a testimony to all who saw that there was no redeeming qualities in their life. If there was one thing the Romans were noted for (besides their great legal system) it was their compassion. A lot of people think they were cruel people, and they were in many ways, but they went to the fullest extent to give man the benefit of the doubt — for that day and time at least.

When these two thieves hung on the cross, they visibly showed that they were worthless. They had no longer any place in society and the sooner they were dead, the better off society would be. Now that is a hard thing to say about anyone, but that is the conclusion of the people, of the rulers, and of whatever tribunal sat over them. They deserved to die. I don't know what their background was, because the Bible doesn't say, but it must have been terrible. They could have been born in a fine family. They could have been born in the sorriest of conditions, but we know absolutely that environment does not mold a character. It might influence it, but it doesn't mold it. And it doesn't originate character. Men have come out of lowly estates and risen to the highest of places and positions in this earth. But these men, for what they were, took the low road. They plundered, they pillaged, they robbed, they stole. They were violators of God's law. They were violators of the Roman law, and they were violators of every form of law. They were the finest examples of transgressors that could be hung on the cross at that time. And between the two of them hung a Man who had done nothing amiss — the Man, Christ Jesus.

Can you imagine the shame? If there is one thing criminals are noted for today, it is screaming and carrying on when they get "hung" with what they call a "bum rap." They may have broken fifty laws every day of their life, but let them get convicted for something they didn't do and they'll scream and holler until they're out of breath. These men obviously did not dare make any pretense of denying their guilt. The Savior, though, was innocent. Neither did He attempt to exonerate Himself. And this is an important aspect of this. The question was raised to the Lord; "If you're the Christ, save yourself." "If you have the power that is attributed to you, come down off the cross." And we might say, as has been said before, had He come down off the cross it would have been the most agonizing thing for you and me that I can think of. The cross was the focal point of all God's eternal plan to take people like you and me, who are no better than these two thieves, and exonerate us, justify us, and sanctify us to the presence of God. To me, the day the Lord hung those hours on the cross was the pivotal point in all history in the human race. It was at that point that God enacted all of His eternal mind for sinners. But here, in addition to the work that the Lord was performing, God began a work in one of the thieves. Here are soldiers at the feet of the cross gambling away His robe. Here are the rulers of the highest form of religion known to man at that time mocking and accusing him of every vile thing they could, and the base crowd walked by wagging their heads. They despised Him. They esteemed Him not. He was lowly and meek. In their opinion He was no better then the thieves, as far as they were concerned. In fact I would imagine, based on their previous conduct, that had they been given an opportunity to release one of the three, the Saviour would have been the last. The reason I say that is that they set Barabbas free rather than the Lord. It should teach us something about human nature. I wonder how many of us have thought, "If I had been there I would have stood

by His side and to the death I would have said, 'This Man's innocent, and I'll hang in His place'." But nothing like that took place. Peter boasted of such things as that and he was the first to deny Him. John even, as close as he was to the Savior, stood by with out even raising a murmur concerning His death. And yet, as I have said, The God of all Glory rules over this scene. We are about to see great upheavals in nature, great phenomena taking place and we're about to see something even greater happening among the thieves. There were only two — and I think it well that we recognize that, also. How many times were only two - and I think it well that we recognize that, also. How many times have we seen in the Bible the race of man divided into two's? We start at the very beginning of the Book. In Genesis we find Cain and Abel — one going the way as the scriptures say, "of Cain," and the other going the way of righteousness. A division at the very out set of the human race. Cain was a man marked. Abel was a man called. You can go to Isaac and Ishmael. You can go to Jacob and Esau. You can go throughout the scriptures and find such divisions as we have here. And if I'm not mistaken, these two thieves will appropriately depict all humanity. One on the right hand and one on the left hand. And you will keep in mind that it had been a very few hours previous that the Lord had said that when the Son of Man came into His kingdom, and all His holy angels with Him, that He would gather all nations, one at His right hand, the sheep, and the goats on His left hand. He would divide into two camps the human race, and in His death we see a representation of that division taking place. Two camps of people.

If you'll recall in the beginning of the Lord's life — how was He born? Among the beast of the field. And now we come to His death and how does He leave the world? Among the refuse of humanity. He came into the world without fame, without notoriety, without anything, and He died the same way, in a common place and in the commonest of ways — among thieves.

Reading then Luke 23:39, "And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us."

You man not gather anything from what he said, and really what he is saying is not so important as the kind of statement. These two thieves had but a few hours left to live. They were at the threshold of eternity. One of them, in his dying hour, as he is approaching the eternal Creator of all things, goes out in death continuing to cast aspersions at Christ. And if it teaches me anything, it teaches me that man left to himself cannot be better than this. The thief is hanging in the same place, at the same time with the One who is to redeem sinners, and he cannot see it. he cannot behold it. He is not capable of recognizing that this is the Christ, the Son of the living God. In all his agony he continues to blaspheme. This ought to be a lesson to you, that but for the grace of God, you could do nothing else. We live in much more favorable circumstances than this poor thief did. He was in the very presence of the Savior, tho, and could not see Him. He only recognized Him as a man that CLAIMED something, not that He could do anything. "If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us." He knew nothing about the prophesy, the purpose of salvation, or the plan of God and to the very end he was a man bent on ridicule. He lived a hard life. He waged a rotten battle, and he died a hard, impenitent sinner. And that ought to have some impact on us. Man left to himself has a hard heart and would be no better than the thief. This man only portrays nature as it really is. "If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us." What does he want? He wants down off that cross, more than anything else. can you blame him? I'd want down off there, too. How painful and agonizing it must have been even for this hard man.

And then we read these three words in the next verse, and they are as full of grace as any part of God's Word ever was. (vs. 39), **But the other...**". Those three words divide these two men into two opposite camps. "But the other...". How

I pray to God that I might be like "The other." "But the other.." distinguishes him. Now to my notion — and I think searching the Word would prove this — he knew nothing about the salvation of God to this point. His life was spent like his friend in crime. They were two thieves, common in birth, common in life, and common in death. But now there is one distinction made between them, and we can come to only one conclusion about it. It must be God who made them to differ. They had nothing to cause them to be different at this point in life — but they are. Isn't this somewhat of what we learned as we read through the Book of Ruth? The two sisters-in-law, Ruth and Orpha, common in life, common in background, having all things common, but the time came when one went one way, and one went the other. To what do we owe that activity? We'd have to confess that it must be God's drawing one and leaving the other to her own life.

(Vs. 39) "The other answering, rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?"

What had come over this man that hadn't come over the other? Some miraculous unknown moving in his soul has stirred him to criticize his former compatriot saying, "Look, don't you fear God in this matter? Doesn't it stir you, seeing we're in the same condemnation? Dost thou not fear God?" Many a time probably they had plundered together, robbed, and brutalized. They did whatever they could to gain to their satisfaction. Their only motive in life was the gratification of their own lusts. And yet at this time, in their last hour, this one individual who is just as vile as the other, recognizes some principle which alters him — and we have to say he's altered because God opened his understanding to see things that he didn't open the other one to see. "Seeing thou art in the same condemnation, and we indeed justly." This may not be a good case of repentance as you would like for someone to manifest, but he confesses one thing here, "I've gotten what I had coming, I deserve it. And we indeed justly." We're hanging on this cross because we deserve to hang here. We're justly hanging here. But as he says, "This man has done nothing amiss." It's a marvelous testimony in the Scripture that everyone that had anything to do with the Savior confessed His innocence. When Pilot judged Him, he said, "I find no fault in Him." The wife of Pilot said, "Don't have anything to do with this just man." Judas even came back and said, "I've betrayed innocent blood." The thief here said, "We indeed justly, but this man hath done nothing amiss." The centurion later on comes to the conclusion that truly this was the Son of God. In every category, we find someone recognizing the innocence of the Lamb, that He was not a criminal, that His dying was something unique; but this man recognized, as you and I, if we are God's people, that we deserve anything we have coming to us. There's not an individual that out of an honest heart would not confess, "I deserve the damnation of the hell prepared for the devil and his angels." If I burned eternally I'd have to say, "Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." I could not plead, "Lord, I've been better than someone else." I couldn't cry out, "God, look at this one and that one." I've never been a Hitler, nor a Stalin, or a John Dillenger. Does it make any difference? If we've offended against the holiness of God, we've ETERNALLY offended, and it would take an eternity to repay that debt that we owe Him.

Look now at the middle cross. Jesus was in a poor place to manifest His true character to this individual. As I said, the public opinion was planted against Him. He was in His hour of shame — naked, marred as no man has ever been marred, spit upon, a crown of thorns upon His head. No doubt the blood was pouring down His face, and soon the spear was to be in His side. Nails were in His hands and in His feet. He looked like anything but a Redeemer. He looked like anything

but a conquering King. He looked like anything but the Messiah. Who could have looked upon the Savior on the cross at that time and from natural reasons said, "This is my Redeemer."? You couldn't. Neither could the first thief who spoke. We have to conclude that if we have any intelligence that the only way this man could say what he said about Christ, was that he saw something that the natural eye cannot see and natural understanding cannot perceive. And this is the way the Lord's people have always come. It hasn't been from any outward testimony or any visible or tangible appearances but it's been by something inward that stirs and moves us to say, "He's my Lord, and He's my redeemer." We've never seen Him in His glory and His power except by faith, and this is the only way this destitute robber could have said what he did.

We know the story. We know the results. We know the promise the Savior made. But I want to point out several things here which probably you know very well, already, but we need to re-affirm them. Two thieves — one left to himself, "But the other" acknowledges the deity of the savior; and we conclude that he'll be in Heaven. We gather from the incident here that glory will be his home. Now if we were to sum up everything we know from the Bible about this man, on what would we base his advent into the world of glory? Commonly told today, and the way I was raised, is to be a good little boy and grow up to be a good man and God will look upon me in tenderness and compassion and save me in Heaven because I was good. If we took all of the activity of this thief's life, can we find one good thing? We know what kind of man he was based upon the end results. He was crucified as a man with no redeeming qualities. Could we say this man merited salvation based on his conduct? Could we begin to believe that he would be in Heaven because he led an exemplary life? Or could we say that he deserves something from the hand of God? If this thief can go to Heaven on *no* previous conduct pleasing to God, then certainly there's hope for the rest of us. We have to think about his afterlife. What did he have to offer *after* he'd been enlightened? He had no moral service before his enlightenment, and as near as we can see he died in a few hours. He had nothing afterwards. He did not come down off the cross and receive a person's hand, and make a confession and acknowledge Jesus as his personal Savior and join the church and be baptized and live a good moral life, and tithe, and visit, and do all the other things that seem to be duty for so many. All he did was hang on the cross and the Lord promised and assured him companionship in paradise.

You say this is an isolated example. How many examples do we need? One is enough for me. Did the Lord have to tell us something twice? If the thief, with nothing in his past, nothing in his present, and nothing in his future by way of good deeds, works, conduct, and keeping laws and other vows, can reach the world of paradise, then it entertains a hope for us in any form of life we might be found in. It will leave all of us without excuse in saying, "I'm not fit." If there ever was an unfit individual it was this thief. If there ever was a man destitute of *anything* to stand before God it was this thief. Oh, can you say, "I'm just as bad as he was." Well, bless your soul, that is a joy indeed — because that's one of the greatest knowledges you could ever have; to see yourself as bad as he. That might sound strange to the ears of some. You mean to say you'd *want* to be as bad as he? No, but I'd want to know that before God I'm no better than he. I'd want to know that I have nothing more to offer. The Apostle John lived longer than any of the Apostles. But I would venture to say that he did not do one thing in all of his life, before or after knowing the Lord, that brought him one foot closer to the gates of mercy than this thief did. Because the

gates of mercy are open wide for sinners redeemed by the Blood of the Savior. And by no other course can they come. It makes no difference whether he is a thief on the cross, or Mary Magdelene, or the woman taken in adultery, or the man out of whom the legions of devils were cast, or the blind beggar, or the great, intelligent Paul, captured in his heart on the road to Demascus, or whoever he might be. They all come the same way, and that's by the Grace and the Mercy of God, who has loved them with an everlasting love. This man lived and died a monument to God's mercy to sinners.

You say, "Well, that's just one case." Well, that's enough. There was only one virgin birth, and that was sufficient. There was only one death of Christ and that was sufficient.

(vs. 41) "And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

(vs. 42) And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."

That, to me is a very touching question, or statement, or request. It may have had a tone of question in it, "Will you remember me?" I don't see any dogmatism in it at all. I see a simple statement made by a soul calmed in the worst of distresses. What distress could we ever have more than this? We speak of the Savior hanging on the tree. This thief also hung — a nail in either hand, a nail thru his feet, on a cross, and in his request there was no plea for mercy, for grace, for restitution, for deliverence, or freedom, or an extended life, or for anything else except that the Savior would be in rememberance of him when He came into His Kingdom. Could we ask for anything more? Dare we ask for anything more? Lord, remember me. Oh, that's all I want when my Savior goes before His Father. Lord, remember me. If I can be remembered at the Throne of God, it will be more than anything I could have in this life. You let my position perish, my health deteriorate, and my hopes of everything in this world flee away. If I had the assurance this thief had that day, I'd feel to be more blessed than any human that ever lived. To know, as the Savior said, that he would be remembered and not only remembered, but that he would find himself with Him when He came into His Kingdom. The rememberance of the Savior before the Father's Throne is more precious than anything you'll ever have.

You say, "O, I want more assurance. I want more knowledge. I want more hope. I want more faith." The thief didn't dare ask for any such thing as that. All he wanted was an Advocate with the Father. That was his only plea, "When you go before your Father, when you come into Your Kingdom, you're the King of Kings. Remember me. Drop my name there. Could we ask for more? Could we think of more? When He opens His book and says, "I and the children that Thou has given me" — could we dare think of anything more. Drop MY name in that place. Mention me to Your Heavenly father, because I want to be remembered before the throne of the Holy One which inhabits eternity. Here he hung. He didn't ask to have the nails removed. He didn't ask for deliverance, or life, or anything else. Just remember him. I like the hymn we sing, "O Lord remember me." Could we ask for more? Could we think of more?

I feel we also, must approach that place in life that the thief approached. The nails meant nothing. The agony and the shame meant nothing. As we see him asking for rememberance we know that soon his friends and family will forget him and the sooner the better is the way they figure it. Who wants to remember this thief. Good riddance out of the family. He was the black sheep. He never was any account. Society won't remember him, and I might tell you they won't remember you very long. You be assured of this — that none but the very intimate and closest of your family will remember you very long. I can't even remember the names of people that use to be close to me, that have gone on. I wish that I could, and I

am ashamed that I am that way. But it is human nature. This thief was not going to be remembered in this world. He left no monuments. He left no good testimony. They might remember him over in some city as that bad character who came through here and plundered and took their possessions. But he wasn't asking that his name be cleared. He didn't want on the books here that this man died with Jesus. He cared nothing for that. The crowds didn't mean anything to him at this time. He was concerned about what was going to take place later. He realized that he was starting into the sinking jaws of eternity and soon he must stand before the God Who created him, and brought him into existence. And he sees in the one hanging there with him the only way out — God's way. This is where God brings us; to the door of death; to the end of ourselves; nailed to a worldly cross, and *only one hope left.* Only one. The only avenue that would ever lead him safely to a better shore was he who hung beside him.

Our only refuge is at the Mercy Seat. O, Lord remember me. Is that your cry and plea? Do you long for the Lord to remember you? If you don't, if you can't say in your heart that you want the Lord to remember you, then all I can say is that you're no better than the other thief — the first one that spoke. How can you be any better? It makes no difference how many good deeds you've done, what position you hold. You either are or you aren't remembered before the Father. I certainly pity one who does not care whether or not Jesus would remember him when he comes into His Kingdom. The quickened thief isn't asking for life or anything else. We might point this out also; this was before the darkness set in. This was before the centurion said, "Truly, this is the Son of God." This was before the earthquake and the thunder and the lightenings. This was before all of the upheavals of nature which gave credence to the testimony of Jesus in this life. All of this took place with this thief without a word of encouragement from anyone else. No preacher stood there on the ground and said, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." All had fled. There was no one there pleading with the thief, "In your dying hour won't you trust Jesus for your salvation." No one slipped him a tract and said, "If you'll read this it will explain to you how to be saved." This man learned it without any agency. He learned it without any wisdom of men being offered, and none was available. What he learned, he learned there thru an avenue that only God and one who is taught can know anything about — and he learned it under the worst possible cicumstances.

Does not that fill your soul with some degree of hope. If God can teach him under these circumstances, surely He can teach you and me. Lord, remember me. He recognized him as Lord. Jesus said unto him, (vs. 43) "Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." It's not important for us to know what paradise was, or what it is, or what it consisted of. If Jesus is there it is a lovely place to be. I don't care if paradise is over the earth, under it, beyond it, around the sun or moon, or at some distant place in the universe. If I can be with the Savior when I leave this world, if I can feel in my soul with the sweet words the Lord said to that thief, "Verily, I say unto the, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise" — *WITH ME* — not off some place waiting; no purgatory, no time of testing, no sleeping or slumbering in the grave somewhere until the ressurrection morning, but the scripture the Apostle so wonderfully related to us, "To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord." When this poor wretch died he was with the Savior.

You know, this could have left a problem if the thief had died first, couldn't it. Supposing in all of this grief, suffering, and agony, the Lord had not yet gone to paradise? Where would the thief be? What would he do until the Lord got there? It ought to once again establish in our minds that "to *every* thing there is a purpose and a time for

everything under the sun. There is a time to be born, and there is a time to die." And this man died at the *right* time. It's even a thing of great wonder and amazement for us when we consider that they came around to break the legs of all three. The reason they broke the legs was that the next day was a holy day and they couldn't leave them on the cross at that time. So they broke their legs to expedite their death. They came around and found that Jesus had already died. It wasn't but a few moments before that in His groaning and agony, He had cried out to the Father, "It is finished," and He gave up the ghost. He went on to paradise, and there He awaited the thief. I have no hestitation in telling you that I believe the Lord awaited him with whatever anxiousness a Holy God can await. With all the love that He had for any of His Sheep. The thief was received and embraced with the same holy joy that John, Peter, Paul, and all the rest would ever be received with. It makes no difference today whether you are like the thief or like one of the Apostles. When you pass from this life, if in your soul God had blessed you to cry out, Lord, remember me," He waits for you at the right hand of the Father. What a paradise it will be then. To be free — to be down from the cross (the suffering due us). The Lord has now hung there that we might not hang. He died that we might not die, and He suffered that we could be redeemed, and when we approach the presence of God, unsullied, untainted, without spot, wrinkle or blemish, we can claim, no more than the thief claimed, because we are no better. Our reception will be based on Christ remembering us. How long will He remember us? Forever. Will he ever forget us; No, He'll never leave us, nor forsake, us, nor forget us, for He had loved us with an everlasting love — everlasting — without beginning and without ending. If He has loved us for so long, then certainly He must have purpose to redeem us, else He wouldn't have loved us. And we know there'll be no difference for those He didn't love. There were two — two camps, two representations, two thieves just alike. Just as the sword of judgment divides one group, the sword of mercy protects the other.

One thief died in his sins. The other died with the promise of the Savior, secure and safe. Could we dare say then that one was better than the other? Did he have a better line of breeding somewhere back? He didn't prove it in his life, did he? This is a sorry time for his goodness to come out. In fact, I don't hear him claiming goodness. All he does is confess his wickedness, acknowledge his place, and see the blessed Redeemer. Do you see Him with the eye of faith? I hope I can be blessed to look up into the eternal glories of God and see there at the right hand of God, He who died for sinners. O, how I long to be remembered. I don't care if you all forget me. I wish you wouldn't, but it is not important. You can't save me. You can't do anything for me in eternity. When I reach that time to die I'll cross over either in the strength of Jesus, or I'll go naked and destitute. O, I dread that day for I have not yet learned to be submissive to the powers of death. My only hope then, my only plea, and I trust yours, too, is, "Lord remember me." When I go down into the valley of the shadow of death, "Lord remember me." When I pass through the chilly waters, remember me, and when I come out on the other side, Lord, please then remember me. I don't know the way. It is a lonely and a dark, and a terrifying road — one that I have no taste for. But when it comes, please remember me. Until then, may we, as members of His Church on earth, gather often at His Table and take His Cup of the New Testament in His Blood, and follow His Words, "THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME." I know if I'm His, He'll remember me. Will I remember Him?

Elder James I. Poole

"DESIRING A SOLITARY PLACE"

"And in the morining, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." (Mark 1:35)

Jesus went to a solitary place where he could be alone and commune with God the Father.

Does this Scripture have any meaning to you, dear reader? Have there not been times when you desired to go to a solitary place and pray to your God? You desire to pour out your heart to God. This is one who does care for you, and he knows your needs. "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." (1 Peter 5:7) Even though the way appears dark and you cannot feel the presence of God, there is an Almighty God who loves you and He sees you, though you may not feel his presence. "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there." (Psalm 139:8) When you are lifted up and made to sit together in heavenly places, surely God is there with you. In fact, God lifted you up by his Power! "If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." This means that no matter how low you sink in your feelings, and experience being cast down, and no matter how dark the path is for you, God is there with you--even though you cannot feel his presence. You desire the manifest presence of God, do you not? When you are lifted up into heavenly places, you are blessed with the manifest presence of God. But, when you make your bed in hell, God has hid his presence from you. Job experienced this. "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him:" (Job 23:8-9) Notice that God hid himself on the right hand and Job could not see him. May this beautiful thought sink into our heart: Job could not see nor feel the presence of God, yet he was there with Job!

In your low state of feeling, you find that you have fellowship for David, and know what he was talking about when he mentioned about being in the horrible pit. This was not a natural pit. The devil's doom is everlasting destruction from the presence of God, and his desire is to get as much company as he can! Satan is always harassing the children of God. I am so glad to know that the old devil can go just as far as God allows him and not any further. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed, we are perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." (2 Cor. 4:8-9) The devil would love to drive you to despair. "Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." (Rev. 12:12)

You find that friends nor loved ones cannot help you, but there is something in you which tells you there is one who can help you. Therefore you go to a solitary place and attempt to pray to your God in a secret place. At times when you pray, you find that your heart feels so cold and it appears to you that God will not listen to you, and he seems to be so far away. But there is something within you that tells you to not give up so easily. Therefore you keep pleading and praying unto God to remember you and to show his sweet and tender mercy to you. After much pleading with God, there was a warm feeling that filled your heart, and you could not help but shed tears of joy. It is wonderful to know that this God, who is the King of Glory, knows each and every member of his kingdom. No wonder the writer said: "from the rising of the sun until the going down of the same the Lord's name is to be praised." (Psalm 113:3)

Bastrop, La. 71220
W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.

PLEASE NOTE:

The third Sunday in September someone handed either my wife or me seven dollars to renew their subscription. This was at Durham, N. C. I have lost the name, and will appreciate it if the one who paid this will write us.

D.V.S.

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EDITORIAL

This issue completes the one hundred fortieth volume of the *Signs of the Times*. We have no doubt that the Lord had sustained its publication to His praise and honor, and to the comfort and edification of many of His people over the land. It had been a means of communication for a widely scattered people, learning how their brethren were getting along in different parts of the country.

By God's grace the principles of the doctrine of God our Saviour have been maintained and brought out clearly. This has been not only because they are true, but because of the departure from them by many who bore the name of Baptist in the early 1800's and before. The Old School brethren could not conscientiously forsake the things so dear to them - the things which they had been taught of the Lord in being brought out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God.

No editor or writer had ever claimed any credit to himself for his part in maintaining the paper, for each has been made to know that his course has been ordered of the Lord; and it has been to the Lord's praise that each has directed his thoughts and expressions.

As to the future we must say that we do not know the mind of the Lord, but we are confident that His will will be done, not only concerning the *Signs of the Times* but in all things else, for

He is Sovereign over all times, worlds and events. The people of the world are in a great turmoil, but God is not disturbed, and will bring all of it to His desired end: all to His own praise, honor and glory; and for the manifesting of His love and longsuffering towards His people. We are confident that all is for His glory in bringing His people surely and safely into those things He has prepared for them. He directs all things to this end. Those who have been taught of the Lord know that this is shown from the beginning to the ending of the Scriptures.

The Scriptures are the only authentic record of many things: being given at the Lord's hand. By them we know that God was the creator of the heaven and the earth, while all other accounts are merely the opinions of men. By them we know that God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul, while all other accounts are the opinions of men. And so it is with many other things believed by those not born of God's Spirit. Faith is a fruit of the Spirit of which God's children are born, and faith is necessary for the understanding and belief of God's Word. Without it the Scriptures would be as meaningless to them as to the unregenerated.

"Faith is the brightest evidence
Of things beyond our sight;
Breaks thro' the clouds of flesh and sense,
And dwells in heavenly light.

It sets time past in present view,
Brings distant prospects home,
Of things a thousand years ago,
Or thousand years to come.

By faith we know the worlds were made
By God's almighty word:
Abra'm, to unknown countries led,
By faith obeyed the Lord.

He sought a city fair and high,
Built by th' eternal hands;
And faith assures us, though we die,
That heavenly building stands."

Watts

By Faith we say, We believe all things written in the Scriptures. Note that it is written in 1st Corinthians, second chapter, "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God."

This means that without the revelation of God by his Spirit in a man, who by nature has only the spirit of man, he cannot know the things of God; but he who is born of the Spirit knows the things of God. This alone brings about the difference between un-belief and belief by the inhabitants of the earth: and this difference is brought about solely by the work of the Spirit.

While the Scriptures give only a partial history of men, they do give a complete account of God's revelation of his dealings with his own chosen people, whom he chose in his Son before the world began. This is a reliable account since God gave it through those inspired by him. He has given us in their writings all he would have us to know of his power, sovereignty, love, mercy and longsuffering. He also confirms these things by the same powerful Spirit in the hearts of his people when he quickens them and brings them to the birth of the Spirit, so that they have the same witness within themselves testifying that the Scriptures are true. God enabled his servants to set these things in order, and He has not authorized any man to take away from or add to the things he has revealed. Though this is blatantly done by those who teach for doctrine the commandments of men, without regard for the admonition to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," or the observing of all things which the Savior commanded.

How satisfying it is to know that God's grace is sufficient for us! and that He takes care of all things for us while

we live in this world. And how amazing it is to know that all the Godhead is engaged in everything necessary to bring his beloved children safely home. He gives us hope of eternal life while we live, and brings us into the reality and fulness of all we hope for when all is completed. His children are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise while they live, and this is nothing less than an earnest or foretaste of their inheritance until their redemption — the redemption of the purchased possession. (see Ephesians 1:13-14) This really means that heaven begins here below, — a joyful experience, and is that which enables us to "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:14)

What is the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus? It is nothing less than we shall be conformed to the image of Jesus. It was to this image that God predestinated those whom He foreknew. We are pressing toward it each moment we live, for we shall each in our own time come to the end of our mortal life, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it, and our body return to the dust from which it came. But God has prepared much more for his Redeemed, for we are assured that as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly; and that this mortal shall put on immortality. All of this shall be accomplished in the resurrection. "We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

Death is necessary, for there can be no resurrection except first there is death. Paul wrote, ". . . even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. "When we are conformed to the image of Jesus in the resurrection, we will be fitted for heaven and immortal glory, to give all praise, honor and glory to the God of our salvation. There can be no question but that death is one of the all things that God has made beautiful, as we read in the third chapter of Ecclesiastes.

When all things have been accomplished in us and for us, it will then be that death is swallowed up in victory.

As we come to the end of another year, do we not realize that the Lord has been with us in all that we have experienced? in our trials and sorrows, as well as in our joys and pleasant seasons of rejoicing in the hope of things which are ahead for us?

We appreciate the kindness of the brethren and friends who have sustained the *Signs* during the year, by their writings, subscriptions and encouragement. We need all of these as the Lord puts them in the hearts of the brethren.

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

Pro. 18:16; I Tim. 4; 13, 16

"A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men." (Proverbs 18:16.)

"Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." (1 Timothy 4:13,16)

When it comes to the solving of what seems to be riddles of my readers, I have never made any calim as having ability to do so. Yet, if I have been brought into the kingdom, there is a mandate most binding on me. The substance of it is that I am commanded to let my light shine. I am told that men do not put a light under a bushel, and if the wisdom of this world does not do so, we are given assurance that the Lord does not

do that. Let us ever remember that the commands of the Lord are given to those able to perform. Grace is given for each time of need, and at no time is the need greater than when the Lord commands obedience.

I have before me a request from a young brother that is speaking in public that I write something of encouragement to the young that are impressed with preaching. I would much rather that he gave me permission to use his name, but he does not want to do that. His reason for remaining anonymous is easily understood. That is, it is easily understood if we have had an experience like unto his. He tells me that the advice is plentiful; that the people are deeply concerned about what he and other like him should do. He says, "If all the advice was the same it would not be confusing, but that one says one thing, and another, that has been preaching as long as the first one, will tell me something else." Again, I do not feel equal to the task. I would to God that I have grace to expound the truth. I know that these matters are sacred, that they are of the utmost importance to the people of God. I beg of you to cast the mantle of charity over what I offer. If, in your estimation I am wrong, please tell me in a brotherly manner, but if not in that manner, do not bother.

That people, even people that show great sagacity for scriptural arguments, have perverted and subverted and wrested the scriptures to the hurt of themselves, I do not feel free to charge anyone of our day, only to quote the scriptures (Gal. 1:7; 2 Tim. 2:14; 2 Pet. 3:16). The warning of these writers about these things are as binding as they were on them.

Setting one class of scriptures against another is the surest way of establishing ourselves as knowing nothing as we ought. If I take what Matthew says to bombast and offset what John said, that is a gross departure from any "Thus saith the Lord." Double minded writers will disturb the little children of God, as will those with a double tongue. Some one comes to the young brother under consideration and tells him that he need not be concerned about the effectiveness of his preaching, for his gift will make room for him. That is true as far as that aspect of preaching is concerned. Anyone that has ever read Jeremiah's experience will know that as being ministerial experience. But another elder, as lovely as the other, as experienced as the other, will tell him the same things that Paul has told Timothy and Titus. Without an understanding, without an explanation (in the same sense that the eunuch needed instruction), he will not understand.

Let us look at something else along this line. So much has been said about ministers teaching the truth. I have heard the most abrupt declarations that there was not one thing said about ministers teaching. Perhaps this has been induced by the work of those that know not the school to which all the objects of grace must come. I do not find that anyone has been delegated to teach people to know God. But is it safe, is it scriptural to say, since God had not authorized anyone to teach people to become children of God, that he has not called and authorized *anyone* to teach *anything?* In order to settle the matter with a few words, let me agree with that statement. Now since we are agreed that God has not called and qualified ministers to teach anything to anybody, let me kindly ask what are we to do with all of the commandments to ministers about teaching?

It has been the practice for a long time to ordain men to preach. Surely none would challenge the practice, seeing all of the many references to ordinations and presbyteries. As far as I know, it has always been the parctice to appoint an elder to give the new minister a charge. From what elder in the Bible would we get a pattern for this sacred charge? Not from Peter, not from James, not from John, not from any of them, save the apostle Paul. All of these apostles spoke of things that Paul did not touch, showing that the work of each one had been designated by the Founder of the

church. No one in his right mind would think of throwing out the testimony of these eminent servants of God. Can we throw out what Paul has given to Timothy and Titus? Can we set aside his charge to them? Can we dispense with the giving of a charge at ordinations?

I seriously doubt that any young brother who has been exercised about preaching, that when it became known somebody did not begin to belittle his gift; that some older elders did not turn the cold shoulder to him; that they did not at times hold a limp hand to him when they got caught and had to shake hands with him. I do not doubt this because I have experienced it. I have stood silently by and seen boys still with the dew of youth on their lips as they were spurned by jealous elders. I have felt that; I have sunk down in the valley under the unfriendly actions of those that should have known that when god calls a man to preach, that the gift bestowed upon that man will cause his feet to be set in a large room in spite of all the opposition that the flesh and Satan and the world can bring (Psa. 31:8); that the gift of prayer, the gift of repentance, the gift of interest in the church, will make room for the reception of that man. These gifts were bestowed upon Paul and there was room for him in the church.

I fought with hands uplifted high against the impression to preach. I rambled over a goodly portion of these United State seeking relief. If rest is found in running, I did not find it; if relief is found in fighting and resisting the impression, I did not find it. Some of the elders told me one thing and others told me something else. What agony and frustration this brought to me. I do not have to imagine what the feelings of my young querist are, for I experienced them. And I was not blessed with seeking grace as is our brother. I bore things in silence because I had been led to believe that novices should under no circumstances question the integrity of the aged. Some of the brethren told me to stay away from the pulpit as long as I could; that the first time was the undoing of a man. At that time I would swallow anything that was called predestination, and, although I did not know what I was going to do, I accepted it that fleeing was my fate; that seeking relief in going forward, following my impression, was looked upon as being the mind of one that was seeking the office of a bishop. The time arrived when I could not live nor die, although it seemed I would die if I did not preach, and if I tried it seemed I would choke to death. As I believe that in some manner my Saviour endured the pangs of hell for me; so also, I believe that I know the hell that there is in fighting the impression to preach. To add to my misery, my ordination was opposed by some, saying that a man should never be oradined until a church called for his ordination. In the midst of all this sorrow, an aged sister, who had been a sincere disciple of others, had a dream, and in that dream she was blessed with a change of mind about my ordination. In my files today is the letter she wrote to me in which she dwelt much on my gift and that I need not worry about the opposition; that it would all be removed, and that the gift which the Lord had bestowed upon me would make all the room in the kingdom that I would ever need.

Today I have not changed, nor do I desire a change, about the gift of young brethren making room for them. It is more evidence of being called to preach when the opposition is bitter than it is when everybody is extolling the youth among us. There would not be any triumphs of sovereign grace if there was not opposition. Paul tells us about his opposition by saying that it was working for his consolation as well as that of the churches. (2 Cor. 1:1, 6) The impression to preach the gospel has not lessened; I would go to every destitute place if I was physically able. This I can not do — in fact, my state of health is such that I would not court the pastoring of any church, for I know that I can not give them the attention that a pastor need give.

But I believe that, if I have the gift of the gospel ministry, a door will be opened to me; that the gift will make room for me. I would urge upon our young brother, as well as my older yoke fellows, that it will be useless for you to make room for your gift. That attitude will never prosper, but all the opposition that hell can bring will not keep prosperity out of the room that the gift makes for you.

In the Providence of God, I have been called to a goodly number of churches. I have not anything but pleasure in my heart as I go back in retrospection over the ground. Pleasure that they sought me; pleasure to think that my gift made room for me; pleasure to think that I did not have to use the proverbial crow-bar to prize into a single church. Too, I take pleasure in my tribulations, glorying in them that the name of my Lord and Saviour be glorified. To this care I would commend our young brother, assuring him that his gift will prosper, that room will be made for him, that in that room will be great men before whom he shall testify to the grace of God.

But the Lord has called our brother. The Lord called Timothy and Titus. What is the difference between them and him? Were they circumscribed by circumstances that are not with our brother, and others like him? If Paul wrote to them that they know how to behave themselves in the church of God, what is our relationship with that writing today? Or did they have rules to go by, but those rules have been discarded for us? If so, when were they discarded? By whom? And by what authority? Am I authorized to tell this young man that he just as well read the almanac as the scriptures for the good that it will do him? If I am wrong in my interpretation of these things; if I am giving our brother advice that is not orthodox, I do hope that I am given a scriptural reason for being wrong instead of a lambast.

His gift is working; it is making room for the recipient. What must be my concern about him and his gift? Did Paul instruct one way for Timothy and Titus and leave us without a compass? And without fear, without reservation, without apologizing for it, without quibbling, I tell you now that we are under the same rules and the same charge that they were. Until I find somebody in the Bible that is instructed to stay away from the pulpit as long as they can; that a man studying is a sign of weakness and softness; that taking heed to themselves is the doctrine of Arminians; that there is not a salvation in this taking heed to the doctrine to themselves, I will advise with this young brother, and all those thus interested, to do exactly as the apostle has enjoined upon Timothy.

In conclusion, I have desired a place for everything, and everything in its place. I would beg God for grace to serve him acceptably for I think that I know that none are able to serve, or take heed to himself, or take heed unto the doctrine until given grace; that the only salvation for this life or that which is to come, is by the grace of God. (Eph. 2:8; Heb. 12:28) It is by grace that we are called to preach; it is by grace that a gift of the ministry is bestowed upon us; it is by grace that this gift makes room for the recipient; it is by grace that we desire to give full proof of our ministry; it is by grace that we seek to make our calling and election sure; it is by grace that older ministers desire to look after and help the younger brethren, for, "By grace are ye saved."

To this young brother, and to my brethren in general, let us lay aside the theorizing of all that would change the inspired writings of the apostles, whether it would be to belittle salvation by grace, or to belittle a godly walk and conversation. Let us, as given grace, preach the eternal purpose of God in all things; let us contend earnestly for, and strive to maintain good works.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

Dallas, Texas, August 9, 1939

Mr. and Mrs. Lewis McFeeters,
Halfway, Missouri

Dear Brother and Sister in Christ:

We heard from you at the meeting at Kingman the 5th Sunday in July, and I thought I would write you as soon as I returned home, but have been so busy since arriving that I have not found the time to do so, and now I am just snatching a little time, as I do not see much idle time for me for some time in the future.

We all appreciated your letter, Sister Tena, and I want to commend the practice you have followed ever since you have lived away from the church; you have not failed, I think a single time to remember the meeting time of the church, and let us hear from you. This is the commendable course for Primitive Baptists to follow and the beautiful part of it all is, you did not do it because you felt you were required to do so, but because your love for the church was such that you felt you desired to do so. I feel that I must say to you that the entire church holds both of you in high esteem, and deeply appreciates your continued manifest interest in the church. I still remember you in my petitions before the throne of God's grace; and giving Him thanks on your behalf that your faith and hope still abide in the truth as you have been taught of His Word and in your experience by the Spirit of truth. May He confirm you to the end in that faithfulness and devotion to truth.

I read with interest your questions sent personally to me in your letter to Sister Cates and I felt from the statement you gave of your understanding of the point of doctrine you inquired about of me, that you already had a very clear and definite understanding of the truth of it as taught in God's Word. You are Scripturally correct when you affirm that the great God of the universe controls all cratures and events just as it pleases Him, and neither has to ask help or permission of any of His creatures. It is written, "I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isa. 46:9-10) And so He will do all His pleasure. Read Isa. 14: 24-27: Psa. 115: 8; 135: 6: Daniel 4: 35, read the entire 4th chapter; it is the revelation of God's purpose upon a wicked king who did not know the Lord, but boasted of his own greatness and ability, as many of those do in this age who have only heard of Him, but do not know Him nor His mighty wisdom and power: in the 35th verse is the confession of this king after he had experienced the mighty power of Israel's God. Read it; he talks just like a "Hard-shell." See also Rom. 9:16-22; Ephe. 1:11.

God's will and purpose must necessarily be associated with every thing that has being and with every event that transpires in his entire universe. If God is the great ruler of the universe as He declares He is, He must rule with infinite wisdom; and any wisdom which would attempt to govern without a purpose would not be worthy the name of wisdom, but would be sheer foolishness. I cannot conceive of God, in whom we live and move and have our being, and who upholds all things by the word of His power, suffering anything to exist and continue to exert an influence in the realm of His dominion, which he had no purpose whatsoever in; neither can there by an intelligent reason offered why he should do so: It just does not make sense. Because we cannot understand all of the purposes of God is not a sufficient excuse for us to conclude there are things which He admits into the world which he had no purpose in. The very fact that he is God, and is over all, is ample proof that He can eliminate that which will not serve any purpose of His; therefore what he retains He must have a purpose to fulfill

in doing so or he would not retain it. Surely no believer in God would assume for one instant that any being could exist for one moment without God; since, it is only from Him we have our being. The trouble is an element has crept in among the Old School Baptists who are tainted with Arminianism and manism, and are not willing for God to be God. They try to argue with those who beleive in a sovereign God who works all things after the counsel of His own will into thinking their belief will make God the "Author of Sin;" a pet phrase they have coined to deceive and drive God's children into accepting their semi-Arminian theory that God controls His part of the world, and that man manages the balance; But the belief in an almighty God who governs all things for the purposes of His own glory does not involve any such consequences.

The Bible is teeming with instances where God exalted His own glory and revealed the riches of His goodness toward his people through the actions of wicked men, acting under the impulses of their own wicked designs; but in every instance God's will and purposes was accomplished. Christ was taken by wicked hands, and crucified and slain; yet "He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." (Acts 2:23.) While the Jews were trying to carry out their own wicked design against Christ; it was under the directing hand of God's providence that they were "gathered together for to do whatsoever God's hand and God's counsel determined before to be done." (Acts 4:27-28.) "Man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directs his steps." (Prov. 16:9.) While the Jews were suffered to carry out their wicked purpose to kill the Saviour; it was permitted only because God had a holy and gracious purpose in His death, as well as in the manner in which He must be brought to his death. Every incident connected with this wonderful event was but the fulfillment of the holy purpose of god, and yet the sin of those who crucified Christ cannot by any stretch of the imagination or twist of language or logic, be attributed to any other than the men who plotted His death, and by wicked hands perpetrated the crime. When God leads men by His Spirit, their purposes are holy purposes, and he accomplished His Purposes in them in allowing or causing them to fulfill their purposes; but when he directs their steps by His providences, their wicked hearts may have devised their own way to do wickedly; but their steps are so hedged that they cannot exceed the purpose of God to do more nor less.

If there is wickedness associated with any event, we know it is to be charged to man's heart; for it is "Deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;" and God being supremely good, nothing but good can spring from Him. People who pose as teachers in Israel who have not learned this lesson yet, are blind and unsafe to follow, for they will surely fall into the ditch. This subject is too extensive and too wonderful to treat in a short letter. Spend lots of your spare time in reading your Bible, it is full of valuable and most precious promises and golden truths. Do you read "*The Signs of the Times,*" published at Middletown, New York? It is the best Old School Baptist paper now published. It has never varied from the old land marks. I am going to write to the publisher to send you a copy, if you are not getting it; I think you would enjoy it and it will be helpful and conforting to you in your isolated location.

I suppose you have received a letter form Sister Cates before this telling you of our good meeting in July. Brother William Winfrey came to the church and gave a good reason of his hope in Christ and I baptized him Sunday morning. Our meetings with the little church are seemingly a long distance apart, but we have had some sweet seasons, but we always miss the absent ones and wish they could be with us to enjoy the heavenly feasts with us. I am serving four other churches besides the one at Kingman, and am kept very busy. Mrs. Hardy has not been feeling well, but is better, I am in my usual health. We both

send fervent Christian love and very best wishes for health and happiness.

Yours in humble hope,
(Elder) J. R. Hardy

ELDER DURAND TO THE PREACHING BRETHREN

Is it repetition you are trying to avoid? You do not want to preach the same thing over and over again? You want to have something new every time you speak or write or talk with the dear saints, do you? Some new field of thought and feeling to explore? You would like to have a constant variety, and to be known as a man of varied and unfailing mental and spiritual resources, and not have to go over the same ground time after time.

Well, this is all natural ambition; all fleshly pride and vanity. Having gone down to the garden once to see the fruits of the valley, and to see whether the vine flourishes and the pomegranates budded, does that suffice you, that you must walk in some other direction the next day? Do you not want to go into the same garden again and again? Do you not again and again want to smell the same sweet perfume of the same roses, and taste the same fruits? Yesterday's walk and yesterday's enjoyment of fruit and flower will not satisfy you today. The mornings are ever alike, but it is not yesterday morning but this morning that we are enjoying now. It is not a repetition but a new morning.

We are thinking, speaking, preaching upon the same subject of salvation by grace today that our minds were occupied with yesterday, but we do not repeat the words of yesterday. We express today the thoughts and feelings of today in the words of today. We go over the same ground, but it is new to us today. We breathe the sweet atmosphere today that we breathed yesterday, but it is not a repetition of yesterday's breathing, it is the life and breathing of today.

It is in this sense that the things of Jesus are always new, while at the same time they are old, "things new and old." When the preacher is alive to spiritual things, he may have the same subject he spoke of exhaustingly yesterday, and yet to the hearer who is hungry for the word he will bring forth out of that subject things blessedly new and fresh. If the subject of yesterday, even the same text of Scripture, is brought to his mind with power, he will not appear either to himself or his spiritual hearers as repeating the thoughts or words of yesterday's sermon.

It is a vain, carnal mind that moves a minister of the gospel to seek after a variety in preaching, and try to study out some new gospel theme, and new forms of illustration. When the heart is full of the heavenly subject there will come suitable words and suitable illustrations, and the heart of the speaker will be turned to the heart of the hearer, and will be opened to his understanding and comfort. But it will not be to the praise and glory of the preacher, but to the praise and glory of God. It must and shall be known by both preacher and hearer that "we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of men."

How greatly tried I have been because of my limited understanding of scriptural things, and because I fail to find new fields of thought, but must go over and over the same old ground. But whenever I am given a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and my heart is warmed with his love and filled with praise for his grace and mercy, then I am not seeking for some new line of thought, but all the blessed fullness of the gospel is in the words nearest at hand. The simplest words, with which I have always been familiar, will open up in such new and wonderful ways as fill my soul with admiration and astonishment. A few words of Scripture, at such a time, will come to my mind in such a way as to show fountains of living water springing up into everlasting life; gardens of nuts and fruits and flowers; "fountains of gardens," mountains of holiness; all the

power and riches and beauty of the gospel. We might as well seek variety in the sunshine, or in the starlit sky at night, as to seek variety in the gospel. It is in itself infinite variety, having in itself all that is necessary to supply every kind of need among all the family of God.

Sometimes one is tried because he cannot see in his mind any capacity for variety in prayer. That is when he is thinking of his prayer as a piece of work, and wants it to be such as shall do him credit. When he feels his great need; when he is at the end of the earth and his heart is overwhelmed; when he sees himself as nothing but a poor, blind, vile, wretched sinner, deserving only God's wrath; then he does not seek variety of thought or expression in prayer. At such a time the prayer of the poor publican has variety enough to answer his requirements: "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." Then David's prayer answers his need: "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I." But at such a tme if these words, or others like them, had not been furnished him, he could only pray "with groanings which cannot be uttered." Why call it repetition when we say the same words in prayer? Do we not need the same mercies every morning and every evening? And is it not because of this same need constantly that the Lord's mercies are "new every morning," and fresh every evening? We may have the same words fixed in our minds as a form of prayer, and many a time it may seem to us that our prayer is but a form. But when our needs are freshly felt, and our desires are strong and urgent for the mercy and grace of god, then the words are filled with the throbbing power of life, and our prayer is not a mere form, but is a present cry unto the Lord.

Silas H. Durand

(From pages 165-166 of *Fragments*, by Silas H. Durand. Re-published by request)

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, at Sand Hill Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in December, 1972.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 744,
Bennettsville, S. C. 29512

OBITUARIES

ELDER RAMER LEE BIGGS

"The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that he planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing, to show that the Lord is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him. (Psa. 92:12, 15)

Our dear brother, a prince and a great man in Israel, has fallen! After several months of dire affliction Elder Ramer L. Biggs was called from the walks of this life to rest in the Lord. He was born August 2, 1891, and died September 6, 1972, making him 81 years, 1 month, and 4 days old. He leaves his companion, our sister in Christ, Minnie Lee, one daughter, Miss Lavenia Biggs, three sons, to wit, Kenneth, Joseph, and Lytle, all of Nashville, Tenn., fourteen grandchildren, and two great grandchildren, and one sister, Mrs. R. D. Steiner, of Binghampton, New York.

Our brother was born and went to school in Sumner County, and then lived the most of his life in Nashville. He was a veteran of the First World War, and chaplain of the Disabled Veterans. He worked for many years at the Werthan Bag Company of Nashville.

I was intimately acquainted with our dear brother. I feel sure that he was faithful in all the duties and obligations of this life, but his superb qualities were manifested in the kingdom of heaven. But few ministers lived the life of faithfulness to the cause of our blessed Lord as did he. I know full well that our lovely brother would hold up his hand to halt me from saying anything that would be derogatory to the work of divine grace, and this I would not do, but I would point to the effectual workings of that grace in our brother. He bore good fruit, and good fruit in the children of God is the result of grace; thus I would preach and write the glorious doctrine of grace in this obituary of our brother. This grace caused him to forsake everything for the gospel of Christ. I feel sure that but few elders among us have travelled as many miles by bus and other public transportation in serving his brethren as did Elder Biggs. May God be praised for such an unspeakable gift (2 Cor. 9:7, 15).

His funeral was held at the Buena Vista Funeral Home in Bordeaux, (Nashville) Tennessee on Friday, September 8, 1972. There

were nine of his yoke-fellows in the ministry present, to wit, Elders H. C. Moon, Elmer Prince, H. R. Prince, J. N. Darnall, Richard Campbell, Swayne Young, Paul Poyner, A. H. Brock, and W. D. Griffin. All of them had a part in the service, Elder J. N. Darnall speaking in prayer at the funeral home, Elder W. D. Griffin preaching the funeral discourse, Elder A. H. Brock speaking briefly at the grave and Elder Swayne Young speaking in prayer.

Our dear brother was married to Miss Minnie Lee Atwood on June 7, 1919. He was baptized September 16, 1923, and was ordained September 8, 1929. He was the pastor of four churches, some of which, at this time, do not see where supplies are coming from.

As we are blessed with an unction from above let us thank and adore our Heavenly Father for the gift of our lovely brother, for his devotion to his family, his country, his brethren. While we are left bowed in sorrow, it is not for him, but for us that are still separated from home by the ties of the earth, yet knowing that shortly, we, too, shall be called away. In the meantime may we be reconciled to await on the Lord who shall come with power and great glory to call His people from the graves, changing us that remain alive, and taking us into that haven of rest where we shall ever be with the Lord.

W.D.G.

MRS KATE N. ALSTON

My mother, Mrs. Kate Norris Alston, passed peacefully away on August 16, 1972, after eight years of ever-deepening affliction. Born Feb. 6, 1876, of godly parents, her life on earth was more than 96 years. She was third of ten children born to her parents, Y. C. and Fannie Jo Lloyd Norris. Elder Benjamin Lloyd, who compiled Lloyd's Hymn Book, was her grandfather. She was married in 1897 to N. Charles Alston, who preceded her in death in 1929. A son, N. C. Alston, and daughter, Mrs. Florence A. Gibson, survive. Her younger son, A. Douglas Alston, died in 1952. Surviving also are a brother and sister: Zach C. Norris, Glenwood, Arkansas, and Mrs. Naomi N. Hoey, Key West, Fla. Seven grandchildren survive, including Mrs. Katie Kilby, who is a member of Dan River Church.

As she was called by grace in early youth, we may record God's mercy to her throughout a long life. Concerned about her sins when she was eight years of age, blessed with hope of salvation at thirteen, His favor was ever toward her. She might truly say:

"God of my childhood and my youth,
The guide of all my days,
I have declared thy heavenly truth
And told thy wondrous ways."
(Hymn 680, Lloyd's)

She became a member of East Atlanta Primitive Baptist Church in 1930 and changed her membership to New Harmony Church, Hiram, Ga. in 1957, where she was a member until her death.

God's holy name was to her as ointment poured forth and, by His grace, she was ever enabled to bear without murmuring all the dispensations of her life. We feel she is with the Lord, more blessed than we are able to know. Her earthly tabernacle dissolved, she has an "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

From her journal:

"I was reading some hymns concerning death and the resurrection and for a little while a beautiful vision was given me of the death of His saints, their departure from this valley of earthly life. Death to me became a glorious thing and much to be desired. There was no dread of death; it was a beautiful going-away from a place of sin and trouble to a place where we can praise, honor and glorify His holy, righteous name throughout all ages to come. Then so soon I was back in the flesh with all its fears and weaknesses. Yet I'll never forget the beauty and glory I saw in death for a little time when I saw and felt that it is altogether wrong to grieve for our loved ones in the Lord when they are released from this earth; rather, we should rejoice, as the angels do, at the death of His saints. O, may I be one of these for whom there should be rejoicing and not grief and may we all say, "Thy will be done. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

From a letter to her sister several years ago:

"You spoke of growing in grace and knowledge of the truth. When this scripture first came to my mind, I thought that as the years passed, I'd read more, meditate more, hear more preaching and spiritual conversation, remember more scripture and thereby be blessed to grow in these things. But now these years in which I expected to grow in grace and knowledge are behind me and I think seriously of the growth I *have not* made. Thirty years ago I was much more apt in remembering and quoting scripture, was given much more to reading and meditation, seemed more *alive* to spiritual things; so I conclude that if I've grown at all, it must be backward and downward, not upward and outward. If there's growth in me, it has been to become a little stronger, a little more established, a bit more rooted and grounded in the truth. So, instead of growing fine leaves and developing lovely flowers, I've grown more *roots*. The top has

withered and the bulb formed under the ground where man cannot see, but known to God. "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer." (Ps. 19:14)

From her notes:

"David said Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. A staff represents strength, something to lean on, to uphold us. We can readily see how His staff comforts us, but the rod signifies a flogging — affliction and sorrow; yet David said both comforted him. It is difficult to see good in affliction but afterward, when He removes his hand from before our faces, we see the blessing. The rod is, as Paul said, grievous to be borne at the present; yet afterward we are enabled to see that we profit by suffering, our dross (flesh) to consume and our gold (spirit) to refine."

"From a letter she wrote to a friend who had lost his mother: "You cannot grieve as those who had no hope, for she died in the Lord. In mercy He took her out of this wicked and cruel world, and now she can never know sorrow, pain and doubt again for she is at eternal rest with her Saviour. She is filled with such peace and joy as we cannot know until and unless we are so blessed ourselves as to be accounted in that number who were chosen in Him before the world was. "The Word of the Lord endureth forever." Herein we live, knowing He is all our strength, our help in trouble, our life itself. So, dear friend, look up from whence all help cometh and trust Him who is able to save to the uttermost. You will miss her for some time to come but God, who is merciful, will temper the wind to the shorn lamb and soften the blow with His love and His grace. And there will be the voice which will say, "This is the way, walk ye in it", until her loss will be to you a sweet reminder of His power and glory over all the earth and especially toward His chosen people."

Possessed of a gentle and quiet spirit, her meditation was upon the beauty and mystery of God's law. She was taught of Him from whence cometh all help and she looked *up* to the Shepherd whose power is over all true believers, the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. Many, many times, as if in prayer and until her strength was almost gone, she quoted this stanza from Gadsby's Hymn #1083:

"Whate'er thy sacred will ordains,
O give me strength to bear.
And let me know my Father reigns
And trust His tender care."

She read a great deal and, near the last, when she was too weak to hold her Bible, she read from a small book of the Psalms which Mildred, one of her granddaughters, had brought her. I am sure she felt, with David, both the cries for help and the deep thanksgiving and praise unto the Lord.

May there be an "afterward of peace" to us who loved her. I have felt the presence of the Lord in this sorrow. To consider her glorified state now compared with the bed of affliction upon which she has lain these last years of her natural life brings to me once more the surpassing knowledge that God is merciful. But though He cause grief, yet will he have compassion, according to the multitude of his mercies. (Lam. 3:32) For her, all weariness and trials are past, all fear and conflict removed, all tears forever dried. For her, the eternal day has arisen; she has gone to be forever with the Saviour who justified and redeemed her.

Her funeral was conducted at Ward's Glenwood Chapel, by Elder James F. Poole, whom she loved. The service was to the glory of God and the comfort of our hearts. There was a sense of benediction. She was laid to rest beside her husband in the Gibson cemetery to await the call of her Saviour.

By her daughter,

Florence A. Gibson (Mrs. E. W.)

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT FOR SISTER MATTIE LEGGETT JENKINS

Whereas in his infinite wisdom and in accord to his sovereign will our God did call from our midst our beloved sister, Sister Mattie Leggett Jenkins, we the members composing the Skewarkey Primitive Baptist Church, and we trust a portion of the church of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, desire to bow in humble submission.

Sister Jenkins was born in Martin County September 27, 1884, the daughter of the late Sylvester and Annie Crisp Leggett. She was the widow of the late Brother George C. Jenkins to whom she was married in 1902 and who preceded her in death in 1950. She departed this life on July 5, 1972, thus her sojourn upon this earth was for 87 years, 9 months, and 8 days.

Sister Jenkins was blessed to unite with the Primitive Baptist faith in April, 1917, and was received into the fellowship of our little flock in 1960, thus she held membership among the Primitive Baptist for a period of 55 years.

It was the writer's privilege to spend many hours in the presence of this dear sister over the years. To be blessed to observe the manifestation of the love of God within her heart and soul as she was so ably blessed to express in her conversation and everyday walk in life, was indeed an inspiration to the writer and her brothers and sisters. Comforting to us who

are left was the evidence of that new birth within her heart for it was truly evident that bestowed upon her was a gift of devoted faithfulness to her God, her brethren and sisters, and her church. She expressed a firm belief in salvation by grace, and was blessed to rejoice in the doctrine of election and redemption of God's children through the love and mercy of a sovereign God, excluding the will and works of man's hands in attaining salvation.

Surviving are one daughter, Mrs. Christine Crawford of Stantonsburg, four grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren, and one sister. To the family we extend our heartfelt sympathy in your moments of sorrow and trust you might receive comfort from God's love and divine promises.

Her funeral was conducted in the Skewarkey Meeting House by Elder E. C. Harrison and Elder Wayne Mitchell. Interment was in the Woodlawn Cemetery.

RESOLVED: That a copy be placed on the church record, a copy be sent to the family, and the *"Signs of the Times"* for publication. Done by order of conference the second Saturday in July, 1972.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Johnny Ray Gardner
Committee

SISTER LUCY G. JONES

Sister Lucy Gerard Jones, age 88, died at the home of her son, Clifton Jones, at 6142 Newark Avenue, Norfolk, Virginia, Friday night at 6:30 o'clock, April 28, 1972.

Sister Jones was born on Beaufort County, January 15, 1884, daughter of the late William Bennett and Ann Cratch Gerard. She was the widow of Leonard Clifton Jones who died October 4, 1943. She was a member of the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church which she joined on Sept. 17, 1955 and was a native of Blounts Creek. She had been making her home in Norfolk for the past three years.

Sister Jones is survived by four sons, Lester, Jones, Alvon G. Jones, Clifton Jones and Charles C. Jones, all of Norfolk, Virginia; three daughters, Mrs. Lela Johnson of Williamson, N. C., Mrs. Lillian Gregory of Virginia Beach, Virginia and Mrs. Audrey Mullen of Indianapolis, Indiana; 19 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren; three halfbrothers, W. G. Gerard, Sr. of this city, Earlis Gerard of Rocky Mount, N. C., and George Gerard of Blounts Creek, N. C.; one sister, Mrs. Corcas Cratch of Blounts Creek, N. C.; three halfsisters, Mrs. Appie Jefferson of Bath, N. C., Mrs. Ethel Wilson of Rt. 3, City, and Mrs. Nell Gaskill of Exmore, Va.

Funeral services were held at the chapel of the Paul Funeral home on Sunday at 4:00 P. M., April 30, 1972, conducted by Elders: Wayne Mitchell and B. D. Handy. Burial was in Oakdale Cemetery. Her grandsons served as pallbearers.

I want to say to her devoted family, a light was removed from their home, a Mother of Israel has fallen. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints; the Lord's portion is His people.

The good Lord found her as He did Jacob of Old in a desert land, a waste howling wilderness, led her about and instructed her and kept her as the Apple of His eye and she will sing the song of redeeming love unto her God who hath called her by His power, saved her by His grace.

She believed in Salvation by the sovereign grace of God. Her relationship with God has already been settled, ordered and sure. No matter what may come or what may go, she will live in heaven with her Lord as a member of His family, having been chosen, loved, redeemed, called and justified, and her spirit is sweetly resting in the Arms of Jesus and on that great and notable day of the Lord, God Himself will come and robe her in His pure white robe like His Son wore, then she will be robed and ready and she will be like Him and be satisfied, (but not until then, we are not robed and ready to our satisfaction in this life). Peace and love will reign and she will see her blessed Jesus "and reign with Him above and from the flowing fountain, drink everlasting love".

Sister Jones rejoiced in sound doctrine and sweet fellowship of the household of faith. She was very faithful to attend her church meetings.

Judging from her talk, walk, acts, thoughts and deeds, Jesus was her beginning and end, first, last and All in All. David of Old said, "I have nothing else beside Thee." This shows the love and providence that the Almighty God displays in His working all things together for good to them that love Him, and are called according to His purpose.

When Sister Jones was no longer able to take care of herself, she made her home with Clifton Jones, her son, his wife, Velma, and daughter, Judy. They were devoted to her and most dutiful. They loved each other dearly and were by her side during her last illness. She was strickened in Judy's arms and died in the arms of her son, Clifton.

All the loving hands of the famliy could minister was done but they could not stay the hand of the heavenly Father who doeth all things well after the Counsel of His own will. He never makes a mistake and His mercy endureth forever. The foundation of God standeth sure. The Lord knows them that are His.

I have truly tried to thank God for Velma, her daughter-in-law, and her feelings towards

this dear Mother in Israel and also for giving her such a kind and considerate daughter-in-law. All of her family seemed to love her and Judy, her granddaughter, in particular, who took her death so hard.

We do know the dearest and nearest, the truest and noblest pass from out of our sight, one by one, and our homes are desolate and our hearts are sad with sadness for which earth has no cure but it is only a little while and the parting will be over, and the meeting will begin. O! the joyful awakening to an immortal life.

May the good Lord comfort and sustain all of her loved ones and especially her sorrowing granddaughter, Judy, in their loss of one so near and dear to their hearts.

Done by order of Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church June 17, 1972, Conference, also by request of her family.

Written by one who loved her, and I shall miss her in my heart.

Pearl Fickett

DEACON ELMER BURL PEELE

It is with sadness of heart that I attempt to write this obituary of our beloved Deacon, Elmer Burl Peele, who departed this life May 5, 1972.

Brother Peele was born May 25, 1909, in Martin County, Williamston Township, the son of the late William Stanley and Lula Jones Peele.

He was married to Blanch Peele in 1932, who survives. He was baptized into fellowship of Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church third Sunday in June, 1958, by Elder A. B. Ayers. He was chosen Deacon in 1959, and chosen clerk in 1962. He was chosen clerk of the Skewarkee Union in 1962, and served until his death. He also served on several committees of the Kehukee Association.

Brother Peele was a farmer and was devoted to his family including his stepmother, Sister Ella R. Peele, who passed away February 18, 1972. He was always ready to serve his brethren and neighbors. His deliberations and conversation was with much patience and humbleness of spirit.

We the church feel a great loss and extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family.

Surviving besides his wife are three daughters: Mrs. Jean Holliday, Williamston, N. C., Mrs. Doris Twine, Wilmington, N. C., and Mrs. Kennedy Ward, New Bern, N. C.; one sister, Mrs. Eula Mae Rawls, Williamston, N. C.; two half-brothers, William Stanley Peele and John E. Peele, Williamston, N. C.

Funeral services were held Sunday at Biggs Funeral Chapel by Elders E. C. Harrison and M. E. Garner.

Mr. Biggs stated that was the largest crowd to have ever assembled at his chapel.

Burial was in Martin Memorial Gardens.

Done by order of Conference Saturday before the third Sunday in May 1972.

Elder E. C. Harrison
Theresa R. Ayers, Clerk
E. C. Harrison, Committee

BROTHER SILAS LANE

On June 30, 1972 it was pleasing in the sight of God to call Brother Silas Lane, at the age of 65, from this which is natural to that which is eternal. Our hearts have been greatly saddened by Brother Silas' departure from this life because of the love and fellowship we were blessed to enjoy. However, we realize that our sadness is his happiness for his labor is finished in this world; and with great confidence we feel that though his Natural body was laid in the grave his Spirit is resting in Jesus Christ awaiting the day wherein Christ shall gather His people together.

Brother Silas confessed a hope in Christ on the second Sunday in December, 1969, and was received by Pittman Grove Church. The following Sunday his wife was received and they were baptized together. He felt that he had been brought to realize that he was nothing without the Grace of God. Brother Silas was faithful in attending church and went with me to Oak Forest many times. He loved to tell how merciful God had been to him and he remained a faithful witness unto the end.

Everyone who knew Brother Lane loved him and he was well received wherever he went. As we felt a love for him, God loved him with an everlasting love. How God has richly blessed His people and has promised never to leave nor forsake them.

Brother Silas was born in Wayne County and was married to Emma Lame. May God continue to comfort his beloved wife and our dear Sister in Christ and his family. Life without him shall be lonely but God is able to reconcile us to every dispensation of His Holy Will. When blessed in the Spirit of God, we look away from this world and desire to go unto our Heavenly Father to be free of sin. For in this world we shall have tribulation but Christ said, "be of good cheer for I have overcome the world."

Again may God supply every need to Brother Lane's family and draw all of us closer to Him by His Cords of Love.

Written upon request in Conference at Pittman Grove Church, Kenly, N. C.

Elder Curtis R. Rains

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141 DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1973 NO. 1

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1/73
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

WORD FROM ELDER SLAUSON

Halcottville, N.Y. 12438

Very Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

Just a few lines to let you know to send my *Signs* to Halcottville, New York, as I sold my house in Kingston last May, and am living with my son in Halcottville. As you know I am in my 90th year, so I couldn't manage my rooming house very well. I had cataracts on both eyes, and have had it removed from one, but am blind in the other. But I am well, with a good appetite, and sleep well, and can take long walks, and can attend some of my appointments; thanks to God. I feel so thankful to God, to be as well as I am at my age; and able to "fight the good fight of faith."

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." How true and wonderful! Words fail me to tell how wonderfully good the Lord has been to this poor, sinful worm of the dust. "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" (Psalm 116:12)

With much love,
Brother Amasa J. Slauson

SISTER KILBY TO
ELDER AND SISTER POOLE

Stone Mountain, Ga.

Dear Peggy and Jim,
(Elder and Sister James Poole)

Tonight I have been reading Pink's "Attributes of God" and also several chapters of Scripture cited in Pink's book. His writings seem to be in full accord with the Scriptures. He (Pink) portrays God as a majestical, all powerful, supreme Being — one to be revered, to be feared, and to be ever exalted. Not merely in lip service, as is done by multitudes, for as Pink says, many will readily agree that God is "great in wisdom, wonderous in power, yet full of mercy..." — *these attributes of God are assumed " common knowledge" — but, oh how far from a true knowledge of God are these words unless they have been applied to our very souls.*

God cannot be understood by our intellect. He is beyond finite comprehension. He is discerned spiritually and can be known only to those He makes Himself known.

When we contemplate God and His Word, we are filled with amazement, with awe. We know He is eternal — from everlasting unto everlasting — the woes of this life will soon pass away, but God is forever!! Why then should we find ourselves so tightly up in the cares of this world? What is really important in life? What should our thoughts be?

Pink, in his foreword, says, "A spiritual and saving knowledge of God is the greatest need of every human creature." We are admonished, "Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee." (Job 22:21)

If we were enabled to read, to study, to reflect all the days of our lives upon the excellency of our almighty God, we could never begin to really approach an

understanding of His magnificence — nor to adore Him as we ought. Yet, in all, I believe we should earnestly strive, as he blesses us to do so, "to acquaint" ourselves with Him, to keep our faith uppermost in our minds — and most of all to know that all else matters little — except the saving power, the perfections and the grace of our God.

This world is reserved for destruction, for fire against the day of judgement and perdition of ungodly men. Let us not then be ignorant of this one thing. Let us look for and haste unto the coming of God and the promise of new heavens and a new earth. Let us acquaint ourselves with Him and be at peace. Let us look upon the daily worries, the world's confusion and distraught state as the fulfilling of His Divine purpose — with all things in His Hand. For we know he reigneth supreme over all events, all creatures and all things. Let us be at peace. Let us acquaint ourselves with Him. Let us be still and know He is God.

These thoughts have pressed upon my mind this weekend. We took Russ yesterday to Georgia South Western to begin his college studies. I felt forlorn at leaving him, knowing he now steps into a new phase of life. He leaves us, and his life at home under our counsel is virtually ended. As I looked back over his 17½ years with us, questions flowed into my mind; will my son hold fast to the values of right and wrong? Will he adhere to the teachings I have tried to instill in him? Does he know the tenets of our faith and will he ever cling to them? Did I, his mother, train him in the way I would have him go? Will he walk with humility? Will he succumb to temptations and evil doings? Did I take the time to know him and love him?

I do not know the answers to my questions. I only know all the days of his life are in God's Hands. I pray God will touch his heart, reveal Himself unto him and keep him always in the straight and narrow way.

I love you both so dearly. Remember us here and love us always. Truly we are lonely pilgrims here on earth. We reach out to our brethren — for only they understand. And that is why I reach out to you.

May God keep you and shed His grace upon you.

Katie Kilby

Rt. 5, Box 104
Bassett, Va. 24055

Dear Elder Wood:

...I have had many of the readers ask me where does the Spirit of God in man go at the time of death. Some are greatly confused about this matter.

I have selected from the Scriptures different men of God on the subject ..."Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." If we are given faith to study the Word of God, and if the Holy Ghost takes the things of Jesus and shows them unto us, then these things can be understood...

Yours in sweet fellowship,
J. R. Hollandsworth

Where does the inner man go at the time of the death of the body? According to 1 Corinthians, 15th chapter, the body is the only thing that goes to the grave, and only thing that will be changed in the resurrection. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest." (Ecc. 9:10) "Then shall the dust return unto God who gave it." (Ecc. 12:7)

We will call on Peter as a witness on the subject: "Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus hath showed me." (2 Peter 1:13,14) This was the new man Peter talking: he that believed Jesus is the Christ; this is the man that shall never die. This is the Spirit that Paul tells about in Romans 8:11, "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead dwell in

you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." This is the Spirit that goes back to God that gave it.

Let us use Stephen as a witness. "And they stoned Stephen, calling on God, and saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit." (Acts 7:59) We will call on Jesus also to testify on the subject, "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, Father into thy hands I commend my spirit; and having said thus, He gave up the ghost." (Luke 23 :46)

Nothing is buried but the body; nothing is changed but the body, The spirit is partaker of flesh and blood, not just the flesh but also the blood. "He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence; and precious shall their blood be in his sight." (Psalms 72:14)

We will call on Paul and find out what he says about this. "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. (Phil. 1:23,24) This is none other than the new man Paul talking about resting from his labors until the resurrection of the body, then God will with the same Spirit quicken his mortal body. Our bodies will not be raised and changed, but changed and then be raised like unto His glorious body. I know that God fills heaven and earth. We do not bury any part of God; if we did then God would be dying by degrees: then who would raise the dead.

God has dominion over all things, and in all things, and in every place, but God is not in all things. God is not in a reprobate, God is not in an unregenerated person.

"And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? and white robes were given everyone of them; and it was said unto them that they should rest for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." (Rev. 6:8-10)

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." (John 5:28-29)

I understand that the dead in Christ shall rise first, this is the resurrection of the generation of Jesus Christ, which is the church; then there will be a resurrection of the generation of vipers, and the joy of the generation of Jesus Christ will be everlasting, and the punishment of the generation of vipers will also be everlasting.

Elder J. R. Hollandsworth

SOLDIER CREEK ASSOCIATION

Rt. 1
Benton, Ky. 42025

Dear Editors:

The Soldier Creek Association of Old School Baptists held its 128th session in October, 1972. The visiting ministers were Elder H. Prince of the Memphis Church; Elder E. Prince of the Cane Creek Church in Tenn.; Elder R. Campbell of the Memphis Church, and Elder W. D. Griffin of the Hopewell Association in Alabama; in addition to our Moderator, Elder P. Poyner and Assistant Moderator, Elder Wayman Chappel.

All of these elders preached an all-wise, merciful God who controls the heavens and the earth; who gave his Beloved Son to the cross for the sake of the elect. By the infinite mercy of our God, peace and fellowship abounded among the congregation. We are few in number, but as long as our God enables us, we will stand and be counted for His truth and doctrine. We are not able to do this if left to our own ways and thoughts.

Enclosed you will find a resolution of Respect for Elder R. L. Biggs, which you

may publish; and a donation to the *Signs* which you may use as you wish. Elder Biggs was a true and faithful friend to the Soldier Creek Association.

In love and fellowship:

Roy L. Locke
Soldier Creek Association

ENMITY

Enmity and the curse pronounced upon the devil are the first threads in the garment of God's promises wherein Christ is revealed (from faith to faith) in the writings of Moses.

These words, "And I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed," are spoken to and promised to satan, who is a creature separate from grace and the election of grace by a vast gulf.

Now our fathers "embraced" this promise, but did not receive this promise, for it was pronounced as a promise to satan and his seed. Our fathers by faith did see the promise afar off, across the vast gulf wherein it was revealed to faith (but promised to satan) that Christ would stomp the head of satan so hard that it would bruise His heel. Hence, it pleased the Lord on behalf of the church chosen to everlasting life, to "bruise Him."

The saints of God hate sin and satan only because our Lord said, "I will put enmity," and has done so unaided. Only Jesus can break up this friendship we have for sin by our depraved nature. This comes to pass in the experience of every new born child of God when the Lord God, who is the Author and Fountain of every blessing, fulfills the promise made to satan and his seed, and therefore not received by the fathers, who left us a pure communion, together with a godly heritage; but the promise made to satan is embraced by faith in the breast of the household of faith, who in time past all walked according to the course of this world in friendship with the world, the flesh and the devil. "I will put enmity."

This God given enmity comes by the way of the sanctifying influence of the indwelling Spirit of God. Therefore the good behavior so necessary to gospel order and decency, is never the result of conditions met by mortals; but is only the result and fruit of the work of God who only has power to save.

Therefore in the promise pronounced on the creature satan, faith in the saints who did not receive that promise but "embraced it afar off, and were persuaded of them. . .," all died in faith, which seeing that the "seed of a woman" would bruise the serpent's head, therefore called Eve the "mother of all living," seeing that she would only be the mother of all dying, except for the fact that Jesus was "born of a woman."

In bonds,
J. L. Bocock
P. O. Box 13
Boones Mill, Va. 24065

CIRCULAR LETTER OF SALISBURY ASSOCIATION 1972

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord:

We greet you thru this Circular Letter in the name of the Lamb of God.

We, the attendants of the meetings of God's people in the churches of the Salisbury Association, feel to be greatly blessed. We have no dissention, nor is there any who would attempt to carry off disciples with strange doctrines. We feel to have a purpose in our coming together from time to time. We feast on the fellowship and love of the brethren. When God further blesses us with the Gospel, it is truly a time of rejoicing.

As it seems to be a general practice to submit some scriptural thought in circular letters, I shall submit a few borrowed thoughts for a servant from days gone by, He wrote on the *perseverance of God's saints.* The following lines are taken in part from the Circular Letter of the Philadelphia Association, written in 1791, by Elder William VanHorn:

"We exclude, in the consideration of this subject, all false professors of religion of every description, whatever may be their attainments, as in the grace of knowledge, talents or tongues, and

power of working miracles, who, nevertheless, are and continue destitute of the working grace of God. Hence, those who have made a fair show in religion for a time, as the foolish virgins, Matthew 25. The branches who were in the true vine, either by profession only, or in relation to Abraham, John 15. Those who in a sense may have tasted of the good word of God, as the stony-ground hearers, Matthew 13; or, as Herod, who heard John gladly, Matthew 6:20. Those who may have embraced the doctrine of the gospel, frequently styled "The Faith" in the New Testament, Acts 24:24, 1 Timothy 1:21, 2 Timothy 3:8, as Hymeneous and Alexander, who in time made shipwreck thereof, I Timothy 1:20. Those who have been enlightened, and had the gift of prophecy, as Balaam, I Cor. 13:2; or who had the gift of tongues — power to work miracles, and as such tasted of the powers of the world to come, or of the gospel dispensation, as Judas, Hebrews 6:5 — all such we exclude: of all such there is not sufficient evidence that any of them were renewed by the grace of God, but of many of them, the fullest testimony that they were not. We therefore cannot plead their perseverance of grace, which they never had; nor can any such instances of defection, with any propriety, be produced as objections of the doctrines of the final perseverance on the saints. We assert that those only will persevere in the way of eternal life, and attain unto it, in whom the regenerating grace of God has or will take place." This fact is proved by the everlasting grace of God to His people; by the covennant of grace, ordered in all things and sure; redemption by Christ Jesus; the charge He has taken of his people; the promises of the gospel; the perfections of God, His immutability, justice, power, wisdom, faithfulness and truth, all engage to bring the heirs of grace, through perseverance therein, to glory. The doctrine of the perseverance of the saints in grace, is not the doctrine of perseverance in wickedness — is not a licentious doctrine. "How shall they who are dead in sin, live any longer therein?" (Romans 6:1, 2)

It is evident from these lines our churches in days gone by, held firmly to the doctrine of perseverance. While the subject of perseverance is often contended for today, we must never lose sight of the vital companion truth that the preserved will persevere in the righteousness of Christ. None but those who finally endure to the end, will be able to stand blameless before God. How will we endure? By being born again, kept by the power of God, and by God working in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

It is our sincere desire that the family of God continue to hold fast to sound doctrine, that they may never be ashamed of the faith once delivered to the saints, and that true association will prevail.

Submitted for the consideration of God's people.

Elder James F. Poole

ACCOUNT OF THE CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

603 W. Wilson Street
Farmville, N. C. 27828

Dear Sister Emma Brake,

The association is over, we had a beautiful meeting but there was an air of sadness hovering over us because of the absence of you and other precious saints of God, who were providentially hindered from being with us. I know we can only hint, but Loraine and I both missed you so tremendously that we will endeavor, as best we can to describe the meeting to you.

First may we say that there was a peaceful mood that existed among the brethren the entire time of the meeting and our people seeemed to be more of one accord than I have seen them in a long time. On Friday morning we met in the church, "Bethel" at Grantsboro, the attendance was unusually large for

Friday, and the small building could not hold the people. They had a stand built, but it began to rain and it certainly caused me to be concerned. Then the Lord had the people from the Free Will Baptist Church next door, offer us the privilege of using their building. It is much larger and still we filled it and used chairs in the isles in all available spaces. We were grateful to the F.W.B. people for the use of their building. It was comfortable, dry, and we could stay together. There were twenty-one ministers present Friday, nine visitors and twelve from the Contentnea. All active Contentnea ministers were present except Elder Stokes and he told me he had to work on Friday.

The Introductory Sermon was preached by Elder J. T. Prescott, who called on Elder O. V. Allen, the alternate, to open the meeting with hymn and prayer. I felt that he was blessed to pray, after which Elder Prescott was blessed to preach a beautiful sermon, which set forth those things most surely believed among us. He was followed by Elder O. V. Allen who spoke briefly, and we were dismissed for lunch, by Elder Sam Jones, pastor of Bethel Church. Elder J. J. Rhue returned thanks at the table, and we enjoyed an excellent and plentiful lunch.

After lunch, the association met again in the F.W. Baptist Church building and the meeting was called to order by Elder W. W. Stallings, Jr., the clerk of the association. As you know, the clerk is the only officer of the association that carries over from year to year. Then I was chosen Moderator for the 19th consecutive year. I know that I have no special ability to serve in this capacity, and I am sure that my brethren are aware of this, but they are kind and the Lord is able to perform that which pleases Him. Then Elder Stallings was re-chosen clerk and he called to assist him again Brother Carroll Williams. These brethren are blessed to do such a beautiful job. They work so well together and are most concerned about and very good to their afflicted moderator. The usual committees were chosen, and the conference proceeded with the regular business in an orderly manner.

Elder David Spangler opened the conference with hymn and prayer and he was blessed to speak in prayer the sincere desires of the hearts of our people. Cypress Creek and Stump Sound Churches presented petitionary letters to join the association. The letters were read and both churches unanimously received by the voting messengers. The moderator extended the right hand of fellowship to their messengers and welcomed them in the association. Upon request of some of the brethren, Elder W. D. Godwin of Seven Mile Association and Elder J. R. Hollandsworth of Pigg River were sent to the church to preach for those who did not wish to stay in the conference meeting. The next session of the Contentnea Association, God willing, will meet with North East Church, who chose Elder Bob Lyliston to preach the introductory sermon, and Elder J. J. Rhue as alternate. The minutes were then read, approved, and ordered printed and the conference closed in order by the Moderator until Saturday morning at 10:30.

Saturday morning, meeting was opened by Elder Henry Jones, His prayer was very sincere and touching. He was followed by Elder Rufus Brown of Pigg River, Elder David Spangler of Upper Country Line. Elder David preached from the "Last words of David" about a day without clouds, and his sermon presented such a beautiful unclouded "Day" that I could nearly long to see that day now. Brother Willard Cox spoke next, he is a liberated gift from Union Church in the Virginia Mountains. Then Elder S. R. Boykin of the Black Creek. This concluded the morning session and we dismissed for the noon hour.

What a beautiful table we had. The brethren really rallied around "Bethel" and it was a wondreful meal, no scarcity of anything. Dear sister, it is a beautiful sight to see the people of God eating

together and expressing without words the wonderful fellowship that God has given them for each other.

Some of the young brethren gathered back in the auditorium early to sing, and it was beautiful. I told the people that we could expect to hear no sweeter music on this side of Heaven. We had no new visiting Elders and Saturday P. M. we used our preachers, each spoke briefly, and were blessed to adhere strictly to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. What a beautiful sound, "the Gospel," the love of God abounding among His people. They were called on and responded in the following order: Elders W. W. Stallings, Bob Lylison, Sam Jones J. J. Rhue and W. T. Brown. We had such a wonderful meeting today, it was good to hear from our own people. Dismissed until Sunday A. M.

Sunday, the auditorium was filled. This is such a beautiful sight, it is truly "indescribable and full of Glory" to observe them as they waited for the preaching services to begin. I attempted in my weak way, and yet in the best way I knew to open the meeting. Then Elder Hale Terry of Smith River and Elder W. W. Taylor of Sulphur Fork spoke. Both were blessed to exalt the name of God in a wonderful way. Then the noon hour, and again a lot of food, fed the large crowd and plenty left, nothing lacking, and the people seemed to enjoy themselves tremendously. Again they gathered early in the house for singing.

Elder Bill Everett from the Kehukee was first to speak after lunch, followed by Elders W. B. Barnes of the Black Creek; Kenneth Key, Upper Country Line; and Elder I. S. Connor, Kehukee Association. I then called on the assistant clerk, Brother Carroll Williams, who stated that he had so much enjoyed the three days and thanked the brethren for allowing him to be a part of the wonderful meeting. Then Elder W. W. Stallings, our precious clerk, who made some beautiful remarks about the meeting. I then closed in our usual manner, trying to thank God, the brethren at Bethel, the ministers, the congregation, the Clerk and assistant Clerk, the committees, the scoutmaster and his wonderful scouts, the people at the FWB Church and the good friends of the Church, and all who contributed to this memorable meeting. We then dismissed, hoping to meet them and you at North East Church next year.

Sister Brake, this is how we saw our association this year. We hope this description does not bore you, as we know we fall so far short of really telling of the beauty that was there. We missed you, we love you, and we pray that God will restore your health so that you can visit us soon.

Love,
Ap and Loraine
(Elder A. P. Mewborn)

HAD GOOD ASSOCIATION

1901 19th Avenue East
Tusacaloosa, Ala. 35401

Dear Editors:

...since we are so elated and rejoicing still from the good meeting we attended, we try to tell you about that.

The Five Mile Creek Association of Alabama has just gone through her one hundred and fifth session in peace, love and harmony one with another. The Lord was gracious, and His ministers came laden with the gospel and were given to declare it with power, — giving God all the honor and glory.

Elder W. D. Griffin of the Hopewell Association, Elder E. E. McCool of the Buttahatche Association, and Elder Lloyd Wall of the Sulphur Fork Association of East Texas were with us: along with other visitors, whom we appreciated very much. Also Elder H. C. Moon and Elder C. E. Hand of our body were with us.

How are each of you and your companions? Hope the Lord had been gracious to you and blessed you with natural things sufficient for you need, as well as spiritual things.

May the giver of every good and perfect gift keep you in the shadow of His wing, and visit you with his mercies and grace.

When you are given to petition the throne of grace, remember me.

An unworthy sister, if one at all,
Mrs. R. A. Hocutt

ENJOYS ELDER J. R. HARDY'S WRITINGS

Rt. 3, Box 206
Seymour, Mo. 65746

Dear Editors:

My subscription expires next month, so please renew for one year and use the balance for the Indigent Fund.

I enjoyed reading the republishing of Elder Joel Hardy's writing at the request of Elder Winfrey of Kingman, Kansas. Elder Hardy was pastor of Pleasant Valley Church many years, and was the most humble pastor I ever listened to. He baptized me in 1919. I have letters which he wrote me which are real sermons, and I treasure them anew every time I read them. I have not been there to church since I last heard from him in 1937; but I do have the *Signs of the Times.*

I am enclosing one letter of his which, if you would like to publish it, I am sure the brethren would enjoy it as much as I have over the years.

Yours in hope,
Mrs. Christene McFeeters

(See *Voices of the Past* December, 1972

HOW SOON WE FORGET!

Rt. 2, Box 188
Littleton, N. C. 27850

Dear Editors:

As I sit here this hot and dry day, I can look around me and see so many things for which I should be thankful, but I still find myself trying to ask for more. It has been several weeks since we had a rain, and our crops look like they are failing. I hope I believe God works all things after the counsel of His own will, but we poor creatures can't help but beg. When our prayers are answered, O how soon we forget! As long as everything is going like we think we want, we fail to remember where our help comes from.

I would like to say a few words about our meeting at Rocky Swamp the second Sunday in August, 1972. We were blessed to have a beautiful day, and the precious truth preached by our pastor, Elder M. E. Garner. He was wonderfully blessed that day. We had a nice crowd; and I would like to say how thankful I was to have all our children and their families there once more. They all belong to other denominations, but I know they all respect my feelings. My precious companion and I visited their church one night when they had a revival. I don't mean any disrespect, but O, how thankful I hope I am that I don't have to listen to that kind of expression all the time.

We visited Williams Church the third Sunday in August, 1972, and heard the precious truth proclaimed by their pastor, Elder Jones. They also had a visiting Elder Goad from near Danville, Va. My husband and I enjoyed being there so much; and were glad to meet new friends from Virginia. I hope we are all brothers and sisters in Christ. I feel they all are, but it is myself I doubt.

I will finish these few lines I started some days ago. Since then we have been wonderfully blessed with a good rain. I don't know how to be thankful, but God knows my heart. Everything looks so fresh and green. I did not mean to let my subscription run out, but like many other things, I was neglectful.

Do with this as you see fit. I close with love to all.

Sincerely, a little sister,
Mrs. J. L. Smith

CONTENTION UNION

The next session of the *Contention Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, with Otter's Creek Church, Edgecombe County, N. C., the fifth Saturday and Sunday in December, 1972.

The church is located between Crisp, N. C., and Fountain, N. C., just off Highway 258.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr. ,Clerk
Rt. 4, Box 195
Tarboro, N. C.

Danville, Virginia **January, 1973**

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All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances should be mailed to Danville, Virginia, as shown below. All notices of meetings and obituaries should be mailed directly to P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Virginia 22110. Articles for publication may be mailed to either address.

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All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power. (Psalms 145:10-11)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To November 1, 1972)

Elder D. B. Handy, Va.	$ 3.00
L. B. Hill, N. C.	3.00
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Elder W. C. King, N. C.	1.00
Stedman Brown, N. C.	2.00
C. P. Smith, N. C.	1.00
Mrs. Christena McFeeters, Md.	1.00
Eld. Arthur R. Warren, Md.	3.00
Mr. & Mrs. Elmer Hastings, Md.	6.00
W. L. Everett, N. C.	3.00
Mrs. C. E. Aldridge, N. C.	3.00
Mrs. W. H. Beacham, N. C.	1.00
In memory of Elder G. R. Ruston from Ebenezer Baptist Church & Congregation, New York	25.00
Mrs. Lottie Gardner, Colo.	1.00
Mrs. W. G. Thompson, Can.	3.00
Mrs. I. J. Bowles, N. C.	3.00
Mrs. J. C. Walker, Tex.	3.00
Albert Fooks, Md.	1.00

EDITORIAL

Another year has swiftly passed since we greeted our brethren last January. And now another year and another volume of the *Signs of the Times* is beginning to unfold. What the continuation of God's purposes will bring, we do not know; but we are assured that His will shall continue to be done in all things, and that His grace will be sufficient for each one of us.

How good it is to be enabled to look back over the past year — and a goodly number of years with many of us, and to feel as David wrote in the 143rd Psalm: "I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands. I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land."

No doubt many problems have confronted us: things which have concerned us deeply. Yet, in looking back, we have found that His grace was sufficient for all our needs; and that we have been kept continually in prayer that we might be reconciled to whatever the Lord's will was. He promised not to leave us but to be with us unto the end of the world. So, finding that His grace was sufficient for us, we were often enabled to stand still and see His salvation.

Our concerns are of many varieties, but chiefly of the weakness of our flesh in our inability to do the things we would do, and in finding that we do the things we would not. But these things are good for us, for without them we exhibit no signs of our weaknesses and needs, either to ourselves or to the brethren; but in them the Lord knows how, and does bring us to remember the days of old, and to meditate upon the wonderful way in which the Lord has led us in bringing us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

While we muse on these things, do we not often experience with David, in the 30th Psalm, "I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me. I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, even from good; and my sorrow was stirred. My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue, Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am."

Only with these experiences are we brought to, "Stretch forth our hands unto God, and to thirst after Him, as a thirsty land." which nothing but grace can satisfy; so, nothing satisfies us but the renewing of the evidences of the Lord's mercies.

During the past year many of our brethren and friends have passed from this world, for the Lord has taken them. This year of 1973 will find many more quitting the walks of this life. These things remind us how frail we are; and that, by God's grace, we too, "Press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Last year in our Greeting, we wrote in part as follows: (and we know of no better way to express our feelings, so quote it again.)

"It has taken the financial support and the contributions of writings by many brethren and friends, to support the paper. These have been provided for in the will of the Lord, so that the gospel has been maintained and the doctrine of God our Saviour fully proclaimed as revealed in the Scriptures and hearts of the Lord's people. Paul wrote the Corinthians, "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." This, we can plainly say, is what makes the difference between those who believe the Scriptures fully as the written word of God, and those who acknowledge them, yet for the most part deny them in practice.

"Nobody believes the truth except those who have been quickened from death in trespasses and sins, and brought to the New Birth to see the kingdom of God, — and the solemn and glorious beauties therein. These are the only people that we know who make mention of an experience of grace, and give their exercises in these things as the reason they now see and believe differently than they once did, and know that salvation is only by the grace of God unto his people; and not in any way by the works of any man to satisfy the judgment pronounced against all men.

"This knowledge manifests the difference between the Lord's people and all other people; it is this that causes the one to hold the Bible to be the sole exponent of God's manifest will as revealed in the written word, and specifically those to whom the Spirit takes the things of God and shows unto them. Both the scriptures (the written word) and the things revealed unto individuals are of the same spirit, for holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, as Peter wrote. But on the other hand, all others either deny the Scriptures or believe them half-heartedly, since they substitute much in their doctrines and practices which the Spirit has not revealed. And this, we hold, is contrary to the admonition of Jude when he wrote, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the

saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

"So if any should inquire why Old School Baptists are different in doctrine and order from other people, this is the reason. It is not just merely by opinions but deep rooted conviction when the Spirit overshadows all carnality and brings light where there was darkness, peace and joy where there was trouble, hope where there was despair, a firm foundation where there was a sinking, and a song of praise where there was no hope. To these things they testify as they give the reason of their hope, telling how great things the Lord has done for them. These things testify of the spiritual birth. Without similar experiences there is no love and fellowship one for the other; and no reason why one should be received into the church.

"We had not thought to write in this wise, but rather to greet our readers with a note of thanksgiving to our God for all his past blessings, which we acknowledge have all been by his grace and because of his great love. As we reminisce we see God's hand in all things both in nature and in grace; and as we think of the future, we are glad we are in the same almighty hands. We have nothing, we are nothing, and never will be or have anything except through His loving kindness to us. Therefore we desire in all things to give Him all the praise, honor and glory.

"But for the faith given us we would face the future with considerable fear and alarm in these troublesome times. Yet that faith causes us to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord: — it just speaks with an inward voice, saying, God is yet ruling, and all is well.

"May God's ministers be blessed to preach the sovereignty of God over all worlds, times and events, contending for the faith He once delivered to the saints, to the praise, honor and glory of God whose people we are."

Your Editors express their appreciation for the support the brethren and friends have given the *Signs;* and pray that the Lord will continue to give you the desire, and enable all to continue to enjoy reading its columns, and to support its publication.

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Hudson, N. Y.
July 3, 1860

Esteemed Eld. Beebe:

The following letter, which you see is from Brother Greenwood of Ohio, was sent by him in the German language to the brethren in Albany, N. Y. Brother Wicks and Mr. Thorn and Sister Thorn were at my house when we received it from the brethren at Albany, and they, as well as myself and wife, thought we had better translate it and request you to publish it in the *Signs.*

Dear Elder, we are well at present, and feel to rejoice in the doctrine which you preach, and hold forth in the *Signs;* but we regret that we cannot be present to hear the proclamation of the glorious news of the gospel. We are thankful, also, that our temporal wants are supplied by our gracious Lord, &c.

We both hope to hear from you and from our brethren and sisters at Middletown and vicinity, soon; and we send to you and them our christian love and fellowship, and remain yours, in the best of bonds,

J. George Bender.

Copy of Brother B. Greenwood's Letter to the German Brethren in Albany, N. Y.

Cincinnati, April 22, 1860.

Dearly Beloved Brother Schachtel:

—Grace, love and peace be with you and all the brethren, Amen. I have just read in the *Signs of the Times,* that the German brethren and sisters at Albany

have been arrested by the Lord, and have found the pearl of the free grace of God in Christ Jesus. My joy was beyond a pen's description. Glory to God in the highest, was the language of my heart. Yes, praise, thanks and honor be unto our God forever and ever, that he had plucked us, poor sinners, as brands from the burning, and showed us the ocean of his love towards us—that he hath called us to life in Christ, when we were dead; that we who were blind, he hath made to see; we were deaf, and he made us hear. He who only is holy, hath pitied us poor sinners; we in whom there was nothing good by nature, praise to Jehovah, he hath made known to us the way of life, and revealed to us him whom our soul loveth, as our one (and no other) Bridegroom of his church. The High and Lofty One, the glorified One who was rich, and for our sakes became poor, that we, by his poverty, may be made rich. Jesus Christ the Lord, is his name He is the Lord of all Lords, and the King of all kings. He hath loved us with an everlasting love, and he hath carried us, and still carries us, in his love and in his pity. He is the Lamb of God which was slain from the foundation of the world. He took on him our sins. O, how the rich one took our poverty to make us rich! He hath borne our sins in his own body on the tree; has destroyed sin for his own people, and delivered them from the power of darkness; he obtained the victory and triumphed when he died on the cross, and cried, "It is finished!" He was delivered for our offenses, and raised again from the dead for our justification. **His name is The Lord our Righteousness. He will not give his glory** to another, nor his praise to graven images.

Brethren and sisters, we are nothing: Jesus Christ is all in all. He is our Lord and our God. In him are we members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. He loved his own even unto the end-unto death. He gave himself for them—that he **wanted to get?; No. He gave himself for them because they were his. So says the** Lord. "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word." **Thus has the Lord rescued his sheep, as their Good Shepherd. He has redeemed** them and bought them with his own precious blood. O, what everlasting love! Sink in the dust, O sinners, and worship only him. Here is light and glory; how it shines in the redemption of his church. Here the poor sinner stammers, exults, rejoices, trembling and worshipping, saying Grace! Grace! Grace! Where sin hath reigned, grace has much more reigned. The Lord hath wrought a mighty work in us rebels. "O, the depth of his wisdom."—Rom. ix.

And now, beloved, know ye that I also am a poor pilgrim. I emigrated to this country in 1854. As such an one, I was **baptized on profession of my faith in 1853, at Weener, Ostfriesland, and** joined the little band which were, a short time before, excluded from Onken's* church, for the faith's sake. This little band was cast out and persecuted by almost all men, because they confessed that they were not redeemed by works, but by grace. O, beloved, I know very well your present situation, and I pray that God may give you strength, in the inward man, that you may be able to resist the enemy of truth, whether he assails you in the garb of a friend or as a false christian, known as Anti-Christ. For thus saith the Lord, "Fear not, little flock for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." The Lord knoweth them that are his. Look to him alone. He is true, and all his work is perfect, and by him we are saved with an everlasting salvation; and to him be glory, Amen.

In Germany I became very poor; many a time did not we, my wife and child have the necessary bread; but the Lord did help us again, and ordered it so that we could come to America. He did not use brethren or friends to the truth, to do this, but enemies to the truth, even atheists, were used by him for the purpose. This taught me that men and devils are subject to his decrees, and have to obey him who holds all power in heaven and in earth. And although we

had to leave our only child there for some time, and suffered many afflictions, yet the Lord did make everything glorious. When I came to this country I sought for the children of God, but found none until after three years; then I found some who were born of God. Unspeakably great was my joy, although I could not understand more than half the brethren said, as they were all English; but the Spirit gave the witness to our spirits that we are the children of God. One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism; this was plainly seen. Yea, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in you all. These are called *Primitive or Old School Baptist.* I found in them the church of the living God, and with Ruth could I say to them, Thy God shall be my God, and thy people my people. I told the church what the Lord had done for my soul, and was received and have a place among them unworthy as I am; and I went in and out among them, to the house of worship. Consider, brethren, the wonders of the Lord; it pleased him to give me, ignorant me, mouth and wisdom to stammer the name of Jesus Christ and him crucified in the English tongue, and since 1858 I have attempted to preach the wonderful works of God; not with words of man's wisdom; for such I have none; and furthermore, God has not called such, for he had made their wisdom foolishness. Formerly I was at Clover, in Clermont county, Ohio; afterwards at Lynchburgh, Highland Co., Ohio, where my family now are. I intend now to move to Cincinnati. I came here this week and found employment as tailor. I thought of getting a place as cutter; but for the present have to make up work for the store. This morning I thought I would visit my German brethren here, but failed in doing so. With but few of them I am acquainted; but the dear brethren are bound up in the system of righteousness by works, as missions, Bible societies, Sunday schools, &c. I do not doubt that when the trumpet shall be blown, of the free grace of God in Jesus Christ, that the hirelings will fall. The sheep will hear the voice of the good Shepherd and will follow him.

Now beloved brethren, pray for me; I have tried until the present to preach, although it has been very broken English; but the brethren like to hear me; so I have rejoiced with them in the consolations of the gospel. And all at once I hear that in the German tongue the words of grace sound forth. Yes, verily when the Lord makes his voice to be heard, the north must give up, and the south cannot keep back; his children shall come from the east and west, and from a far country, and with one accord cry, not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name give the glory. So let us now, beloved, walk worthy of our calling. We are saved by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works lest any man should boast; for we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus, unto good works. "Who hath saved us, and called us, with a holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. This same God is around about his people, as the mountains were round about Jerusalem. The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory give you the spirit of grace, and of wisdom and of revelation, in the knowledge of him, that ye may know what is the hope of your calling.—Eph. i. 17,23. "Till we all come into that inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.—1 Peter i.

I am your brother in Christ,

Bernard Greenwood

*This Onken is a modern missionary.

We found the above letter by Elder Greenwood very interesting and feel to pass it on to the brethren, since it shows the travels of one of the Lord's servants.

There is an excellent account of Elder Greenwood in the "Biographical History of Primitive or Old School Baptist Ministers." And Elder Greenwood's book entitled, "The Dealings of God with a Laborer, or the Experiences of Bernard Greenwood," is most interesting, if one can find a copy to read.

Elder Greenwood was born in Germany in 1827, and died in Wilson, N. C. in 1893, where he had moved in 1880.

J. D. W

ORDINATION OF BROTHER JAMES STEWART McCOLL

THE PARTICULAR COVENANTED BAPTIST CHURCH IN CANADA Meeting at Ekfrid, Ontario, June 24 and 25, 1972.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:—

This is to certify that JAMES STEWART McCOLL, a member of this Church, was ordained to the full work of the Gospel Ministry on June 25, 1972. The proceedings of the council ordaining him were as per the copy of the minutes below.

THE PARTICULAR COVENANTED BAPTIST CHURCH IN CANADA Deacon Eldon Gilbert, Church Clerk—Elder George Ruston, Pastor

The minutes of the council called by the Church at Ekfrid, Ontario, for the purpose of examining Licentiate James Stewart McColl with a view to ordaining him to the full work of the Gospel Ministry.

(At the Quarterly Meeting of the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada at Dunwich, Ontario on Saturday, May 13, 1972, at a business meeting presided over by Elder George Ruston, Pastor, a motion was passed unanimously calling for the assembly of a council to examine Licentiate James Stewart McColl as a candidate to be ordained to the full work of the Gospel Ministry at the Quarterly Meeting at Ekfrid on Sunday, June 25, 1972.)

The council was formed at a business meeting of the Church at Ekfrid on Saturday, June 24 at 4:30 p.m.

In the absence of Elder Ruston, Elder D. A. McColl was chosen Moderator and Deacon Eldon Gilbert was chosen Clerk.

The Moderator invited all Elders and members of sister churches of our Faith and Order to act with the council and they responded as follows:—

Elder W. E. Turner, Scott's Primitive Baptist Church, North Carolina, U.S.A.;
Elder J. T. Prescott, Hadnot Creek Primitive Baptist Church, North Carolina, U.S.A.;
Deacon Tom Williams, Flat Swamp Primitive Baptist Church, North Carolina, U.S.A.;
Deacon Victor Borst, Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, New York City, U.S.A.;
Sister Gertrude Secor, Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, New York City, U.S.A.;
Sister Ruth Dubois, Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, Shokan, New York, U.S.A.

An opportunity was given to examine the candidate, and it was moved and seconded and passed unanimously that the council proceed with the ordination on Sunday, June 25, 1972 at 10:00 a.m.

The Church came together at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, June 25, 1972, and the Order of the Ordination Service was as follows:—

—Prayer by Elder D. A. McColl,
—Singing — Psalm 121,
—Review of the proceedings of the council to date by the Moderator, Elder D. A. McColl,
—Ordination Sermon by Elder J. T. Prescott — Proverbs XVI.1, 1. Timothy V,24,25 and Revelation XX.12,
—Relation of his experience as a subject of Grace and his exercises respecting the work of the Ministry by Licentiate J. Stewart McColl,
—The candidate then knelt and Ordination was imposed by the laying on of hands by the ministers present, Elder W. E. Turner giving the Ordination Prayer,
—A solemn and impressive charge was then delivered by Elder Turner,
—As the candidate arose, the Moderator, on behalf of the churches, gave the right hand of fellowship to Brother J. Stewart McColl.
—The 100th Psalm was then announced and sung and the service closed with the benediction by Elder J. Stewart McColl.

Moderator—Elder D. Alex McColl
Council Clerk—Deacon Eldon Gilbert

OBITUARIES

MRS. IDA DORRIS RAY

The world of unrighteousness remembers the exploits of its citizenry, but the righteous nation remembers the mighty works of its Maker. Come tarry with me for a while as I speak of the wonders of His love in blessing the militant kingdom with such a lovely sister in Christ.

Our loved one was born June 3, 1890, the daughter of Elder William and Bettie Dorris. She died January 12, 1972. She was married to Mr. Robert Bruce Ray on October 9, 1910. To this union were born twelve children. All of them survive her except an infant daughter, and Bruce, her youngest. Those that survive her are five sons, to wit, Winston, De Witt, Jesse, Fred, and Frank; five daughters, to wit, Mrs. Louella Green, Mrs. Celeste Dowdle, Mrs. Bettie Pennington, Mrs. Bobbie Grace, Aldridge, and Ida Mae Belk; one sister, Mrs. Ruth Blalock. Mr. Ray was killed in a tornado many years ago. I think that I am safe in saying that all ten of her remaining children are subscribers to the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists, as well as her sister. She left twenty seven grandchildren, and several great-grand children.

She became a member of Zion church on Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in June, 1921,

and was baptized by the late Elder E. Z. McCool. She later became a charter member in Bethel church, near Steens, Mississippi.

How glad I am that she would have stopped me from any eulogy of her life, but how glad that I am that through the grace of God I can say that her life was an open book, testifying to the grace and love and mercy of our God. Her life was a life of suffering and sorrow, often suffering in body, and often going with a bowed head in godly resignation to the will of her God in carrying her through deep and trying waters. I do not write of her own works, but language limitations forbid me to withhold praises to whom all praise is due. Her life was a life of humble and faithful service to her God, her church, and her friends. More than once she was called upon to turn her back on her own flesh that she might win the approval of her Lord and Master. Surely she was blessed to count all as loss that she might win Christ.

Bethel Church has lost a lovely member, her children have lost a devoted mother, but she has gained the shoreless land of eternal bliss in her spirit there to await the glorious resurrection of these bodies, a doctrine that she counted as the zenith of her hope. Let us, dear brethren, and you the lovely and devoted children, not sorrow as those that do not have hope, but rather to go forward sowing and reaping in an introspective examination as to whether we are in the faith, and resting in the finished work of Christ.

She was buried by the side of her husband near her home church. Her funeral services were conducted by her former pastors, Elder H. C. Moon and W. D. Griffin, her present pastor being unable to attend because of a prior funeral.

W.D.G.

ROBERT BRUCE RAY

The youngest son of the above was born December 4, 1931, and died March 8, 1972. Bruce was afflicted nearly all of his life, but he had a keen perception of things pertaining to God and the church. He was never the same after the death of his mother, as her death necessitated his living among his brothers and sisters. He could not adjust to so great a change. While his death was tragic, it did not darken our belief in his hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, and how delightful it would be to my often shattered hope could I feel about my eternal welfare as I feel about his. He loved the brethren and love is of God.

His funeral was conducted by the same two elders that conducted his mother's, that being the desire of the remaining brothers and sisters. May our Heavenly Father reconcile us to His holy will.

W.D.G.

ELLA ROGERSON PEELE

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write the obituary of my beloved sister, a mother in Israel, who departed this life on February 18, 1972.

Ella Rogerson Peele was born December 21, 1891, in Martin County, Bear Grass Township, the daughter of the late Eason and Bell Harrison Rogerson. She was married to William Stanley Peele in 1917. He died in 1943.

Sister Peele was baptized into the fellowship of Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church, third Sunday in September, 1941, by Elder B. S. Cowin. She had been a loyal and faithful member these many years. Our dear sister's love and devotion to her family, her friends and her brethren and sisters was truly manifest in her meek and humble life of services to them.

Surviving are two sons, William Stanley Peele, Jr. and John Eason Peele; one stepson, Elmer B. Peele and one stepdaughter, Mrs. Charlie Rawls.

Funeral services were held by her pastor, Elder E. C. Harrison. Burial was in Jones Family cemetery near her home.

Done by order of conference Saturday before the third Sunday in March, 1972.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Elmer B. Peele, Clerk
Theresa R. Ayers, Committee

GLINDORE MOBLEY WHITEHURST

Almighty God in his infinite wisdom and tender mercies was pleased to call another of our dear sisters from this life March 15, 1972: Sister Glindore Mobley Whitehurst who was born in Martin County Sept. 29, 1881. She was the daughter of the late Dave and Jean Clark Mobley and was married to Deacon R. L. Whitehurst in 1911.

She lived in Bear Grass and Cross Roads Communities most of her life, moving to Williamston in 1960, after the death of her husband.

She was baptized into the fellowship of the Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church the third Sunday in July, 1912.

Sister Whitehurst was very humble and meek in spirit, always concerned for the welfare of others rather than self, having lost two of her sons, and being afflicted. For many years she bore her grief, and afflictions with patience and strong faith in a Saviour's love. Always ready to give thanks, praise, and honor

to a glorified Savior.

Surviving are two sons, James Station Whitehurst, Williamston, N. C., and C. B. Whitehurst, Goldsboro, N. C., and two daughters, Mrs. Milford Holliday, Williamston, N. C., and Mrs. Calvin Warren, Williamston, N. C., 21 grandchildren, and 2 great-grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted at Biggs Funeral Chapel by Elder E. C. Harrison and Mr. David Pope. Burial was in the Woodlawn Cemetery in Williamston, N. C.

Order a copy to the family, one for the Church record, and one for publication.

Done by the Church in conference Saturday before the third Sunday in May, 1972.

E. G. Harrison, Committee

SISTER LUCY S. HOUSE

Whereas it has pleased the Heavenly Father to remove from our midst by his gracious will and infinite wisdom, a dearly beloved sister and mother, we write with a saddened heart.

Sister Lucy S. House was born November 30, 1891, and died February 18, 1972. She was married to David R. House who preceded her in death several years. To this union were born two sons: David R. House, Jr. of Greenville, N. C., and William A. House, of Stokes, N. C.; also one daughter, Mrs. Elsie House Wynne of Stokes, N. C. Left to mourn also are three sisters: Miss Elizabeth Simmons and Mrs. Pearl Crandell, of Greenville, N. C. and Mrs. Hellen Norris, of Goldsboro, N. C.; two brothers: Ruffus Simmons of Bethel, N. C. and Hubert Simmons, of Stokes, N. C., and several grandchildren and other relatives.

Sister House united with the church at Briery Swamp, Stokes County, N. C. Saturday before the second Sunday in July, 1922, and was baptized by Elder B. S. Cowan the following Sunday. She was always a faithful member, attending the church regularly as long as health permitted. She was blessed always by the presence of God in her heart, to demonstrate the love she had for her church, her brethren and the doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God.

Her funeral was held at the Wilkerson Funeral Chapel, Greenville, N. C., by Elder W. C. Harrison of Williamston, N.C. She was laid to rest under a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the resurrection of the saints of God on that final day.

Done by order of the conference the second Saturday in March, 1972.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the family, a copy for publication, and a copy entered in our church records.

Elder S. R .Boykin, Mod.
Sister Ada M. Leggett
Bro. Joseph A. Leggett, Committee

WILLIAM MANNING MOORE

On September 12, 1971, Brother William Manning Moore was called home, as we who loved him believe. He was attending the Communion meeting at Rutledge Primitive Baptist Church and was as well as usual. He helped in their business meeting before lunch, ate lunch, and was taken at noon. He died a few minutes later, en route to the hospital.

He joined the Ivy Creek Primitive Baptist Church the first Saturday in July, 1952 and was baptised by Elder E. D. Gafford the next day. The Church ordained him as a Deacon the first Sunday in March, 1954.

He was born in Crenshaw County, Alabama, September 27, 1894, to William James and Florence Robertson Moore.

He was married to Miss Georgia Lake Morgan September 26, 1920, who together with seven children survive him, James H. of Laporte, Texas; M. Lamar of Andalusia, Alabama; Dr. W. Glenn of Carrollton, Georgia; Lister H. of Montgomery, Alabama; Mrs. Helton L. (Nell) Fowler of Troy, Alabama; Mrs. J. David (Betty) Peterman of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania; Dr. Morgan J. of Andalusia, Alabama; one brother, E. H. Moore of Luverne, Alabama; 16 grandchildren, one great-grandchild.

Funeral services were held at Turner's Funeral Chapel, Luverne, Alabama with Elders Sam Dean, J. P. Morgan, and James W. Johnson officiating. Interment was in Emmaus Cemetery, Luverne, Alabama.

He will be sorely missed by his family and friends and by the few remaining members of the Ivy Creek Church. May the Lord bless and comfort all those who miss him.

Sister Jennie Stringer,
Clerk of Ivy Creek Church

BELVA O. GUILLIAM

With sad hearts Elder Cecil Turner and the writer, and a large congregation of sorrowing brethren and friends, met at Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church Saturday, September 16, 1972, for the funeral of Sister Guilliams, age 82.

I hope this brief but true account of a mother in Israel may serve to remind us all of what lovely friends we have had to journey with us. Friends we could look up to, and not down on: "Little children" who know that Jesus has not failed in anything He set out to do.

The word preached does not succeed until it is believed. Sister Belva Guilliams believed

the report. She believed because the same God who brought Paul down to feel he was the chief of sinners, also taught her. "Sinners can say, and only they, how precious is the Saviour." The Lord moreover caused her to feel most at home with the saints in light where the "fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above."

Sister Gilliams leaves nine children and above fifty grandchildren and great grandchildren to mourn her passing. They all loved her dearly, and she certainly did love them: a well konwn fact. Yes, and she loved Jesus who was to her the end of every prophecy, the beauty of every promise, the song of her lips, the uppermost desire of her heart, and the haven of her tempest tossed soul.

Our sorrow is all because we loved her as we do feel the Jesus was, and is, the Fountain from whence she received (by grace through faith) strength to live as she did — a Christian Lady.

Written in sadness by one of the many who loved her dearly.

Elder J. L. Bocock

SISTER LENA WHITE

God in his infinite wisdom and mercy, has called from this world of toil and trouble Sister Lena Butcher White; whom we dearly loved.

Sister White was born April 20, 1893, and departed this life August 3, 1972. She was the daughter of the late John and Martha Evans Butcher. In 1935 she married Charles Thomas White, who passed away in 1948.

Sister White was faithful to attend her church, and blessed to attend her meetings almost to the end, although she had to depend upon someone for transportation. She had many bodily afflictions, and her pastor, in speaking of her, said, "She never had a lot of the material things that most of us take for granted." Yet her faith failed not. She told me once when I visited her in the hospital, that she was not afraid to die; and asked us to pray that the Lord would take her. We tried to petition God that He might reconcile her to His will, whatever it might be.

In all of life's trials she never lost her witty way. Our children loved her visits in our home, because they knew she would entertain them.

She is survived by one sister, Mrs. Annie B. Barker, and a number of nieces and nephews. Her marriage union was not blessed with children, but I have not known anyone more tenderly cared for by relatives. Every one of her nieces and nephews attended her funeral, except one who was in the mid-west at that time. We feel that this was a great tribute of respect ot her.

Her funeral was held at Malmason Primitive Baptist Church where she had been a member for many years. Conducting the service were her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Mr. Charlie Shelton. Interment was in the Butcher Family Cemetery. We trust by God's grace she has laid an armour by to dwell with Christ at home.

Written by one who loved her, I hope, for Christ's sake.

Peggy Wells

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

The Soldier Creek Association feels a great void has been placed in our midst by the passing of Elder R. L. Biggs, of the Bordeaux Church, formerly of the West Tennessee Association. In the words of one of our brethren, "He meant so much to so many people." Elder Biggs traveled among the churches of Soldier Creek Association for many years, preaching Salvation by Grace and Christ crucified. Surely, he was a soldier of the cross and a most able minister of God. Elder Biggs will be sorely missed by the Soldier Creek people. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family of Elder Biggs.

Therefore, Be it resolved, That we bow in humble submission to the Divine Will of our Heavenly Father who gives us spiritual life and in the fulness of time, gathers His saints unto Himself.

Resolved, That a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, a copy placed in the Association record and a copy sent to his family.

Done by the order of the Soldier Creek Association in session on the second Saturday in October, 1972.

Committee:
Elder W. D. Griffin
Elder Wayman Chappel, Asst. Moderator
Bro. Roy L. Locke, Asst. Clerk

SISTER LELIA BELLE EDWARDS

Inasmuch as it has been the will of our Heavenly Father to remove from us our dearly beloved sister, Lelia Belle Edwards, we bow in humble submission to His will. Our dear sister in Christ was born February 8, 1893, and deported this life May 23, 1972. She was a daughter of the late Crede M. and Sarah Bird. Her decline had been gradual since the passing of her husband, Brother Alfred O. Edwards.

Surviving are four sons, Woodrow, Clay and

Ray, of Hurricane, W. Va., and Kermit of St. Albans, W. Va.; five daughters, Mrs. Rosetta Thornton, Nitro, W. Va.; Mrs. Audrey Purdy, Poca, W. Va.; Mrs. Reba Bird, Rock Cave, W. Va.; Mrs. Beulah Bird, Hurricane; and Mrs. Doris Kelly, Shady Springs, W. Va. Also twenty-eight grand children and thirty-six great grandchildren.

In early life Sister Edwards was brought under conviction for sin. So deep was her conviction and travail of soul, and so mercifully was hope given her when peace was spoken, that she thought she was alone in the world, and that no one else believed as she did; though she was reared by Primitive Baptist parents. She united with Providence Church June 26, 1920. She was faithful in all things to the church, always filling her seat when not providentially hindered. She confessed to be a pilgrim and a stranger on the earth, "For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a city whose builder and maker is God; wherefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city." We feel that our loss is her eternal gain. To know her was to love her.

THEREFORE, Be it resolved that a copy of this be placed on our church records, and a copy be sent to the family and to the *Signs of the Times*.

Done by order of the Providence Church in conference June 24, 1972.

Elder W. P. O'Neal, Mod.
W. L. Burnside, Clerk
Willard Bird, Asst. Clerk

SISTER ADA M. THOMPSON

The Church at Thompsons Grove, Roanoke County, Virginia, in conference Saturday November 4, 1972:

Our beloved sister passed away after living a long and useful life of eigthy years. We often heard her talk of the greatness of God, his loving kindness and sweet mercy. She was firm in the doctrine of the power and wisdom of Almighty God, and the total depravity of man.

We, the Church at Thompsons Grove, looked on her as a good sister, and a mother in Israel. She was faithful to her church, filling her seat as long as she was able to go, and always ready to help in any way she could financially.

She bore her afflictions with much patience, never complaining or murmuring. She had the best of care, her family being very devoted to her. All was done for that loving hands could do, until we believe the Lord said "Come".

RESOLVED, That we humbly bow to the will of our gracious Heavenly Father, and

RESOLVED, That we extend our heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family; and that a copy of this Resolution be spread in the church book, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference.

Elder J. L. Bocock, Mod.
Nelson Reed, Clerk

BROTHER SAM H. WORLEY

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst Brother Sam H. Worley, at the age of 93. He died after a long illness in Medical Care Center in Lynchburg, Virginia, on August 4, 1972.

Brother Worley was born in Pittsylvania County on March 6, 1879, a son of the late James Worley and Phaba Owen Worley. He is survived by his wife, Sister Sarah Hammock Worley; nine sons, Wilford, Dave, James, Sam, Douglas, and Oscar Lee Worley, all of Gretna, Robert Price Worley of Montvale Clay Worley of Lynchburg and Charlie Worley of Alexandria; four daughters, Mrs. Frances Dove and Mrs. Gladys Light of Roanoke, Mrs. Roberta Brumfield and Mrs. Annie Dalton of Gretna; also 88 grandchildren and a large number of great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.

Brother Worley also is survived by two brothers, Edgar Worley of Olan, West Virginia and Brother Mack Worley of Danville, Va.

He united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on May 28, 1950 and was baptized on the same day.

His funeral was held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by his beloved pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and was laid to rest in the family Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

Written by Marvin Brumfield as requested by Weatherford Primitive Church.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. H. Doss, Clerk

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

J. J. WATSON, Pastor

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each

first Sunday, 10:30 A. M.

V. C. HARTZOG, Pastor

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

A. B. CHUMNEY
D. W. COLLINS, Pastors

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., six miles SE. of Sulligent, Alabama.

C. C. HAND, Pastor
5840 Court O C P
Birmingham, Ala.

MACEDONIA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located one and one-half miles Southwest of Sulligent, Alabama, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M. All lovers of the truth are invited.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
HOUSTON PITTS, Clerk
Steens, Miss.

MT. ZION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each 4th Sunday at 11 A. M. about 10 miles N. W. of Birmingham just off of 78 Highway in Westwood, 2601 Forrestdale Blvd.

H. C. MOON
C. C. HAND, Pastors

OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., 6 miles S. W. of Winfield, Ala.

C. C. HAND, Pastor

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each second Sunday afternoon at 2 P. M., ten miles SW. of Fayette, Alabama.

C. C. HAND
R. W. RHODES, Pastors

ELAM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located two miles North of Goshen, Pike County, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 o'clock.

J. P. MORGAN, Pastor
A. C. CARTER, Clerk
1335 Avalon Lane,
Montgomery 6, Ala.

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.

C. C. HAND
R. W. RHODES, Pastors

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

V. C. HARTZOG, Pastor

WRITES CREEK CHURCH, 5 miles south of Slocomb, Ala., meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

E. B. HUGHES
B. A. ANDERSON
J. A. TEW, Moderators
J. T. COLLINS, Clerk
Slocomb, Ala.

MT. CARMEL CHURCH, Coffee Springs, Alabama, meets each first Sunday 11 A. M.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

PILGRIM REST CHURCH, located five miles north of Fordyce, Arkansas (about ¾ mile off Hy. 167, and located near Barnes Lumber Co.) meets each third Sunday at 10:30.

W. W. HUDSON, JR. Pastor

NAOMI OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, six miles south of McKenzie, Alabama, meets the second Sundays in December, February, April, etc.

ELDER W. C. STANLEY, Pastor
Duncanville, Ala., Rt. 1
E. C. WEAVER, Clerk
Rt. 5, Box 47, Andalusia, Ala.

SHILOH OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, seven miles Northeast of Andalusia, Alabama, meets the second Sundays in July, September, November, etc.

ELDER W. C. STANLEY, Pastor
Duncanville, Ala., Rt. 1
NORA LEE McLEOD, Clerk
Red Level, Ala., Rt. 3

MT. ZION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located 14 miles south of Fayette, Ala., meets each first Sunday at 2 P. M.

W. L. NORRIS, Pastor
1414 8th St., Tuscaloosa, Ala.
EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.

MT. CARMEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located southeast of Millport, Ala., meets second Sunday afternoons at 2 P. M.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.

PLEASANT RIDGE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located at Moores Bridge, Ala., meets each 4th Sunday at 11 A. M.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.

SALEM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located 6 miles south of Gordo, Ala., meets each 4th Sunday at 2 P. M.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.
W. L. NORRIS, Co-Pastor
1414 8th Street
Tuscaloosa, Ala.

MOUNTAIN FORK CHURCH, Madison County, Ala., meets each first and third Sundays at 11:00 A. M.

R. C. SIMMONS
R. H. HALE, Pastors
JAMES COLBERT, Clerk

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

WHITE WATER OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located about one mile northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, meets each fourth Sunday afternoon at 2:30 P. M. The annual Homecoming is still held the first Sunday in July and Saturday before, with services beginning at 10:30.

DAVID E. TURNER, Pastor

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Compton, California, meets each fourth Sunday at the home of L. W. Langwell, 12812 S. Williams Street.

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in the United States), meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is located one mile south of Newark, Delaware, just off of Highway 896.

JAMES POOLE, Pastor

NEW HARMONY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Hiram, Ga., meets every second Sunday at 11 o'clock.

C. C. HAND
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastors
GLENN RAGSDALE, Clerk

The SALEM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Benton, Ill. meets each 4th Sunday at 10:30 A. M. Communion time is the 4th Sunday in May.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

ELDER WAYMON CHAPELL, Mod.
WILLIAM VANTREASE, Clerk
JAMES CUNNINGHAM, Asst. Clerk
5921 W. Park Ave.
St. Louis, Mo. 63110

PLEASANT VALLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas. Meets with Mrs. Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C. on each second Sunday.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE LOST CREEK CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, meets first Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Kentucky, ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton, on Grayson Highway. Leave U. S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

NEW HOPE CHURCH (better known as Lick Creek) meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Kentucky.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

NEW HOPE CHURCH, Spearsville, La. meets first Sundays and Saturday afternoons before at 3:30.

J. L. SMITH, Pastor
C. C. BARRON, Clerk

CONCORD CHURCH about 12 miles north of Bastrop, La. one-quarter mile west of the Bastrop, La. and Hamburg Road, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

G. W. JONES, Pastor
GENEVA PETTIS, Clerk

GOOD HOPE CHURCH in Arkansas, about one mile north of Oakland, just across the State line, meets each second Sunday at 2:00 P. M.

G. W. JONES, Pastor
INA NEWSOM, Clerk

LIBERTY HILL CHURCH, located six miles northeast of Farmerville, La., ¼ mile east of Farmerville-Marion Highway, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30. Services are also held on each second Sunday at 10:30.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

UNION CHURCH, located near Linville, La., meets each third Sunday at 10:30 and on Saturday afternoon before at 2:30 P. M.

DAVID E. TURNER, Pastor

BETHEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located three miles N. E. of Steens, Miss. on Millport Road, meets third Sunday afternoons at 2 P. M.

H. C. MOON, Pastor
Hanceville, Ala.
EULIE McCOOL, Asst. Pastor
Steens, Miss.

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Baltimore, Maryland, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Street, near Calvert.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on Falls Road about twenty miles north of Baltimore.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

HOPEWELL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Hopewell, N. J., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. All visitors are welcome.

ARTHUR R. WARREN, Pastor
MARY L. HELLINGS, Clerk
4 Maple Lane
Pennington, N. J. 08534

OLIVE AND HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Shokan, N. Y., meets each 2nd Sunday at 2:00 P. M. March through and including November.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
DEACON E. K. ADSIT, Clerk

THE WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Warwick, Orange County, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are held at A. R. Vail's home, 55 Maple Ave., Warwick at 11 A. M.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

THE MIDDLEBURG OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH meets at the home of Deacon Woodrow W. Bellinger, Duanesburg, N. Y. on fifth Sundays when the Lord so wills.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
BEATRICE E. HOCKING, Clerk
419 Toll St., Scotia, N. Y.

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, New York City, meets every first and third Sundays at McBurney Branch Y. W. C. A. 215 W. 23rd Street, corner of 7th Ave. (Elevator to 2nd floor.) 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M. All visitors are welcome.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

THE WILSON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Wilson, N. C., meets each second Sunday at 3 P. M., and Saturday evening before at 7:30 P. M. The location is on the corner of Green and Jackson Streets.

D. B. STOKES, Pastor
PRESTON GAY, Clerk
P. O. Box 117, Black Creek, N. C.

FALLS OF TAR RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Rocky Mount, N. C., meets each second Sunday and Saturday before. Quarterly meetings March, June, September and December.

D. B. STOKES, Pastor
NINA PEARSON, Clerk

MOONS CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Providence, N. C. off Route 86, on Park Springs Road, meets each third Sunday morning at 11 A. M.

KENNETH KEY, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each fourth

Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:00 P. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
ANA STEWART, Clerk
Granite, Okla. 73547

BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin, Oregon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes. Address communications to Lloyd Spikes, Elgin, Oregon.

ERNEST ATTEBERY, Pastor
SPENCER BURCH, Clerk

ROCK SPRINGS OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, meets each first Sunday at 10:30. The meeting house is located on highway 222, about one-quarter mile of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets by appointment on 5th Sunday afternoons.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

THE FIRST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH of Memphis, Tenn., meets each Sunday at 10:30 A. M., except the first three weeks in October when we dismiss for associations in the area. The church is located on Andrews Road, one block north of Highway 70 in the Ellendale Community, 7 miles east of Memphis.

H. R. PRINCE, Co-Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis
C. S. YOUNG, Co-Pastor
807 Pope St., Memphis
RICHARD H. CAMPBELL, Clerk

CANE CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and is located nine miles Southwest of Martin, Tennessee. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
ELMER PRINCE, Clerk
Clinton, Ky.

BORDEAUX PREDESTINARIAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Nashville, Tenn., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. The church is located on the old Hydes Ferry Road in Bordeaux, in Nashville. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE WALNUT FORK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Cottage Grove, Tennessee, meets on the second Sunday of each month.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor
R. L. VEAZEY, SR., Clerk

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Sharps Chapel, Tenn., meets at 11 A. M. each second Sunday. We are located about fifteen miles north of Maynardville, Tenn., on Big Valley Road. There is a sign on the main highway showing where to turn.

JOHN WILDER, Moderator
N. E. LAY, Clerk

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, Houston, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before 10:30 A. M. Church is located at 815 Little York Road between Highway 75 and East Texas Freeway 59.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
JIMMY LINDSEY, Clerk
JERRY EVERS, Asst. Clerk

MT. ZION CHURCH, Rt. 2, Box 23, Weslaco, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.; and each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. seven miles West of Weslaco, on highway 83.

JOE L. HAMRICK, Pastor
E. B. AULT, Clerk

SARDIS CHURCH, Amarillo, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 10:30, in the home of E. J. Parsons, 1711 Lincoln Street.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, has moved their meeting place to 3629 8th Avenue. They meet each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Take College Ave. bus to Butler and Ryon; go one block West, then half block North to church.

C. U. LANDERS, Pastor

THE ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST CHURCH, Lawn, Texas, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
MRS. NOLA STEWART, Clerk

AN ARM OF PILGRIM REST CHURCH, meets each second Sunday and Saturday night before at Earth, Texas.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
A. A. CHAMBERS, Clerk

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets on the second and fourth Sundays of each month at 10 A. M., in the meeting house at intersection of Highways 123 and 87. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

GERALD D. SHIPMAN, Pastor
LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk

THE OLD SALEM CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS, four miles South of Teague, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

SAINTS REST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each Sunday at 10:30 A. M., at 2710 Engle Street.

C. C. MORRIS, Pastor
D. G. CONNELL, Clerk

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Winnsboro, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
E. M. REEVES, Clerk

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30.

LLOYD WALL, Pastor
GUY SISK, Clerk

The churches of which Elder E. J. Lambert is pastor meet as follows:

PHARON, meets first Sunday morning and Saturday night before, 5 miles NE Hawkins, Texas.

REHOBETH, meets second Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles N ElDorado, Arkansas.

NEILA RYAN, Clerk
1601 N. Emmett
ElDorado, Arkansas

BETHEL, meets third Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles NE ElDorado, Arkansas.

JEAN H. BURNES, Clerk
606 N. Parkway,
ElDorado, Arkansas

GOOD HOPE, meets fourth Sunday morning and Saturday morning before 7 miles NE Winnsboro, Texas.

GERTRUDE JONES, Clerk
905 Y Drive
Winnsboro, Texas

ANTIOCH CHURCH near Camden, Arkansas, meets each 2nd Sunday at 2 o'clock.

Everyone welcomed.

ELDER E. J. LAMBERT, Pastor
306 Richardson St.
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located on Centreville Road, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia.

ARTHUR L. CARTER, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH meets each fifth Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is near Lucketts, about eight miles north of Leesburg, Va.

L. D. DUKE, Clerk
Charlestown, W. Va.

MT. ZION CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, Virginia. on Route 50, between Washington and Winchester, Virginia.

MRS. RAY HAWLING, Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are aways glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington

meet with us. For information phone Manassas 368-4857.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 8:00 P. M., Fairmont Park, 2023 Tidewater Drive.

WILLIAM L. EVERETT, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Qualla Road, Chesterfield County, Virginia, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M. Following are directions to the meeting house: South from Richmond at McGuire Circle, take Rt. 360 nine miles to "Longest" Service Station; turn left and go one mile, and turn right on No. 363 one mile to church.

ELDER D. L. SIMPSON, Pastor
MRS. WM. LEE, Clerk
4407 Clairton Rd.
Richmond, Va. 23234

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville, Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday night before, on Bradley Road.

H. W. WRAY, Pastor
R. T. HOLLEY, Clerk

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each first Sunday at 11:00 o'clock. This church is located seven miles west of Gretna, Virginia on 605 one-half mile from Route 40. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
RUTH MATTOX, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Chatham, Va.

BELLVIEW PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday night before at 7:30. This church is located near Cave Springs about four miles from Roanoke, Virginia, one mile from 221. All visitors are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
J. A. SOWDER, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Salem, Va.

SANDY LEVEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each third Sunday afternoon at 2:30. This church is located on Route 635 about 5 miles south from Hardy, Va. 10 miles from Vinton, Va. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each fourth Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday before at 2:00 o'clock. This church is located on highway 623 about two miles from Fairystone Park. All visitors are welcome. No Saturday meetings during winter months.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
CLAUDE R. HOPKINS, Clerk
908 Myrtle Rd.
Martinsville, Va.

BETHEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, of Predestinarian Faith, of Mossyrock, Washington, meets each 3rd Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday before at 2:00 o'clock. For information write the Clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. OPAL HUNTTING, Clerk
Silver Creek, Wash. 98585

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, Naches, Washington, meets at 11:00 A. M. each second Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MARGUERITE SIMPSON, Clerk
1306 Fairview Ave.
Yakima, Wash. 98901

The churches of which Elder D. V. Spangler is pastor meet as follows:

MONTICELLO, on U. S. 29, between Greensboro and Reidsville, N. C. Services first Sundays at 11 o'clock.

REIDSVILLE CHURCH, Lindsay Street, Reidsville, N. C., meets each Second Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

DURHAM CHURCH, Durham, N. C. on Pacific Avenue, west side of town, just off of Highway 501 leading from Durham to Roxboro, N. C. Services every third Sunday at 11:00 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:00 P. M.

DAN RIVER, at Mayfield, N. C. on U. S. Highway 700 leading from Eden, N. C. to Danville, Va., about ten miles from Eden. Services each fourth Sunday at 11:00 A. M. and Saturday evening before at 7:30 P. M.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1973 NO. 2

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/73
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE WONDER OF HIS LOVE

The wonder of my Father's love
Is flowing in my soul:
He's ever ruling from above
As endless ages roll.

He ever works his holy will,
Whatever it may be,
His every purpose to fulfill,
For greater than all is He.

Through Christ my Lord his mercy flows
Unto those who believe.
His every child my Father knows:
His blessings they receive.

Not one of His can ever stray
Beyond his searching hand,
For He is watching night and day:
He's ever in command.

Ethel Glass Gilland
Panama City, Fla.

ARE YOU FALLEN FROM GRACE?

Beloved, it is felt of necessity to consider and discuss the opposition some hold against the truth saying that the grace of God is conditional on the obedience of man, and that it is possible for a man to "fall from grace;" by the phrase "fall from grace" the opposers imply the theory if a man does not exercise diligently his abilities to choose and do good services toward God, then God will remove his grace and spiritual blessings from such a man.

First, in defying this hideous opposition, note the word "grace," which is unmerited favor, free mercy, undeserved love and compassion. The very word "grace" cancels the supposition that works are prerequisite or antecedent to salvation. Grace is defined as being unmerited because "we are saved by grace and not of works" or merit "lest any man should boast;" grace is defined as free because we are "justified freely by his grace;" grace is defined as undeserved because "God commended his love (or grace) toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." As God saith, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion," and not on just anyone who will obey Him of their own will for "it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." For one to work means one is under a conditional covenant, whereas "grace" sets forth an immutable and stedfast covenant. My Beloved, "we are not under the law, but under grace," if so be we are redeemed from the curse and condemnation of the law. If obedience is prerequisite and antecedent to grace and salvation, then why was Saul of Tarsus, a most traditionally zealous, disobedient, rebelling Pharisee, included in God's calling by grace? Contrariwise to all human conception, grace is antecedent to faith, hope, and charity, and most of all obedience; as Paul says, "we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations," while otherwise they would have still been foolish and disobedient. (Titus 3:3-5)

In considering the remainder of this opposition against the Gospel it must be plainly understood what people generally mean when they say a person

has "fallen from grace." They generally imply such a one loses possession of spiritual blessings and access to the salvation of himself, all because of negligence and failure to the service of God on his part, and such a one may be restored to grace again by repentance and by proving himself serviceable to God again. If God will, we shall shortly see what Paul meant when he said, "ye are fallen from grace" and his application of the phrase will be compared and contrasted with the former application, to prove the common application to be inconsistent with the Scriptures.

If men could "fall from grace" in the aspect of the common application, they could fall to a state no lower than his corrupt sinful, unrestrained nature, where grace first found him! To say men can "fall from grace" (assuming the common application throughout this portion of the discussion) is to say that men may commit worse crimes while under the influence of grace then they can while in a state of nature—crimes so great God is obligated to de-promote one of his subjects back to the low estate of his unregenerate nature, where grace first found him! Can sin super-rule and reign over grace, or is it really true that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." (Rom. 5:21) If one can commit such crimes while influenced by divine grace, then after all, God's subjects are not "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time;" and after all, God is not "able to keep them from falling, and to present them faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." If God is liable to de-promote us when he finds fault with us, then how can we "be confident that he which hath begun a good work in us will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" Christ did not tell the six churches in Asis, which he had somewhat against, he would de-promote them and remove his grace from them; but rather, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent." Could we say God will desire to correct those who, if possible, had "fallen from grace" or had been evicted from the love of God? And being that grace is love, then how can Apostle Paul of a truth say that neither things present nor the things to come, or literally nothing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, if men can "fall from grace?

"Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." And justification is free by grace, through the redemption in Christ, as has been previously stated. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died." etc. Can anything condemn us as the redeemed of the Lord? "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." Could it be said "we are more than conquerors" through Christ if sin rose up so great in our lives that it simply conquered us and caused us to "fall from grace?" Furthermore, if the conditions of men could change the mind of God and his purposed decrees of mercy and wrath, then God is made a liar, for he says, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." But it is not so, and we cannot "fall from grace" or lose possession of the promise, because "God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." Moreover, one cannot "fall from grace," neither can the covenant confirmed before of God in Christ be nullified, for God says "your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand." All of Adam's family have made a covenant with death in hell, "for all have sinned," and "the wages of sin is death." The covenant with death shall not stand, but the covenant God made in Christ when he chose his people in him, shall stand forever and all the elect shall be saved!

Now, if God be pleased, we shall see what Paul meant when he wrote to the

Galatians, "ye are fallen from grace." Most of all it is necessary to understand Paul's application of the phrase, and to know he did not use it as men use the phrase today.

In discussing this, remember how Paul does constantly rebuke and reprove the Galatians for having been bewitched and removed to another's teachings, which was not the Gospel, but false teachers had perverted the Gospel, teaching that men had to keep the law in order to be saved, which law neither our fathers nor we are able to bear. These seducers were really no different to the freewillers of today, who also teach works to be prerequisite to salvation. Somehow these seducers had bewitched the Galatians into looking to their own works for the answer to their justification, rather than looking to Christ for the answer. Therefore Paul exhorts them emphatically, saying, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." Paul is here explaining how the works of the law are not of faith, and how Christ can mean simply nothing to anyone who looks to his works, such as circumcision, for justification. "For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law;" which is to say that the law demands perfect obedience, and one cannot receive justification on the basis of the law because of this perfect demand. Therefore one who teaches another to be circumcised must not stop there if he is teaching the Law of Moses, "for it is written, cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."

This statement of Paul's makes us to reason that the false teachers put more stress on being circumcised without putting equal emphasis on the other commandments, which teaching would have been illegal even if it was taught before Christ nullified the Mosaic Law. Heretofore in our study, Beloved, can it be gathered that Paul has been exhorting and rebuking the Galatians for having begun in the Spirit, but getting side-tracked by the flesh; and so Paul reaches a climactical point in his rebuking and reproof by writing, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." The sentence "ye are fallen from grace" is applicable only to the "whosoever of you are justified by the law." WHAT! You mean to tell me this statement of Paul's sets up the fact that men can be justified by the law? No: that's the point, for Paul had already previously said, "no man is justified by the law in the sight of God." But Paul was not in Gal. 5:4 directly speaking of the matter of justification from God's viewpoint, but from the viewpoint of those Galatians who judged themselves to be justified by the law. They had not been literally justified by the law, but only in their own minds, just as the Israelites did not literally limit God, but in their own minds. Likewise neither had they literally fallen from grace as men generally use the phrase, but had done so in their minds by so forgetting that grace and no longer looking to the source of that grace, Christ, for their justification.

Paul did not mean the Galatians' election, calling, justification, redemption, sanctification, etc. had been nullified when he said, "Christ is become of no effect unto you," because these blessings were given them in Christ before the foundation of the world (Gal. 3:17; !! Tim. 1:9). Instead the blessings of Christ had been made of no effect in their minds. To paraphrase it, Paul was saying in this verse four, "Christ no longer means anything to you Galatians who perceive you are justified by the works of the law. Christ is no longer precious in your eyes as being your judge and justifier, for you are blinded by the passions of your flesh in seeking to establish your own righteousness and means of justification that you may have the glory of your salvation, robbing Christ of the glory that is due him. You have forsaken the salvation that comes

free and have desired to earn it, which is impossible, and therefore have you fallen or condescended in your comprehension of salvation from the highest quality rank of salvation, grace salvation, to the lowest rank of salvation, works salvation.

Had these Galatians literally "fallen from grace," or had God left them destitute and forsaken beause of their backsliding, then Paul would have never written, nor would he have again attempted to visit those Galatians, for Paul both knew and wrote, "it is impossible for those who were once enlighted, and have tasted of the heavenly gift (Spirit) etc., if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance." This verse of scripture annihilates the theory of freewill which sets forth the idea that those who fall away can be renewed to repentance and restored. Holy Writ proclaims it *impossible* to renew fallen ones to repentance. Therefore we hold that it is impossible for one to fall away (literally) because God's will is that Christ "should lose nothing, but raise it up at the last day." Paul also knew if they did fall away they would "crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame, which would in turn prove that God was not "able to keep them from falling." Then Christ would be made an open shame for having not "perfected forever them that are sanctified" the first time, which would, if true, prove him to be less than God. If some did fall away it is either because Christ was slack in doing his job or else he was unable to do it. Freewill people can choose between the two, but I will confirm that in all this we must say there is no falling away of the saints. Praise God; it is his work from start to finish!

I will conclude by saying if you began as the Galatians did — in the Spirit — and believed at the start that our justification is freely by grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, but later someone bewitched you and you again became persuaded that there was something you had to do to be justified, then I've got news for you: "Ye are fallen from grace" in the way Paul applied it. Only from your veiwpoint are you fallen, not from God's, because it is from your viewpoint that you are justified by the law, not God's. I've got more news for you, for if you indeed began in the Spirit, then God will not let you continue in this state, for "he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. 1:6) Amen to the glory of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

Gregory Dean Duren
Rt. 1, Box 30A
Buhl, Ala. 35446

(Brother Duren also wrote as follows: "I am now a high school graduate and eighteen years old. I have volunteered for six years service in the U. S. Air Force. My active duty will begin December 20, 1972, and I will be stationed in Biloxi, Miss. Shortly after basic training is completed, about the first of March, I will have a thirty-five weeks course in electronics at Keesler Tech. School."

We pray the Lord will continue to be with Brother Duren and give him grace for whatever the Lord has in purpose for him. We enjoy his writings, feeling he is taught of the Lord, and hope he will write again soon. — J. D. W.)

WORD FROM SISTER BAKER

Rt. 1, Box 10,
Naches, Washington 98937

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

In Malachi 3:16 we find, "And they that feared the Lord spake often one to another. . ." which we delight to do, but, being human, we often neglect. This season of the year, Christmas, serves a good purpose in reminding us to greet one another. Though Primitive Baptists are widely separated by distance, our love is the same for each one no matter how far away they are. This is a love that goes far beyond anything in this world, because it is the eternal gift of God.

I am glad that Elder Spangler and sister Huntting wrote such good articles about our meetings here this summer. And I am so thankful I was privileged to attend the meetings.

I hope your health is good, and you will have a pleasant Christmas with your family.

I never cease to be amazed that I am so blessed as to know the truth as it is in Christ, I hope. God bless you both.

Humbly, in love,
Daisy Baker

(We were glad to hear from Sister Baker and to know she is well and able to be around, and to do most of her housework at the age of 91. — J. D. W.)

ENJOYS THE SIGNS

Rt. 2, Box 646,
Bassett, Va. 24055

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Dear brethren in our blessed Lord, I hope I am one even if the least of all in the Covenant of Grace. I enjoy reading the dear *Signs of the Times* so much. The Editorials and all who write, and the Voices of the Past, are food for my hungry soul. When it pleases the Lord to give me an understanding heart, they are like crumbs of His love and mercy. The Psalms of David are so sweet to read. David was greatly blessed to pray, and Psalms 124 and 130 are wonderful to me.

Elder Lambert's and Elder Wood's editorials, and Elder Beebe's writings are heavenly food to me. Elder Wood's editorial at the "Beginning of Another Volume," and Elder Lambert's editorial, "Wings of Salvation," in January, 1969, were greatly enjoyed, and I have read and re-read them.

Dear Editors, I am sending a money-order for $40.00 to help with the *Signs of the Times,* in memory of our dear Mother, Mrs. J. M. Brammer, who passed away February 19, 1965. She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for over sixty years, and loved to read the *Signs.* She said shortly before passing away, "Farewell vain world, I am going home." She always filled her seat unless she had real sickness in her home.

I am sending a copy of my experience, which was given me, I hope, in the mercy of the Lord. I would like for you to print in the *Signs* if you feel it is worthy of the space.

May the blessed Lord give you dear brethren and sisters a heart and mind to pray for me a poor worm of the dust, in hope of God's mercy.

Your least sister,
Callie Clark

EXPERIENCE

It has been on my mind for some time to write a part of the things I hope the Lord has done for me, a poor, needy sinner. I feel my weakness to make the attempt, but something seems to press me to write, for blessed are the things He has done for me.

When I was a child about nine years old, I began to be in trouble. After I went to bed, I would lie on my face trying to pray to God to take care of me. I feared that something would happen to me before morning. I felt to be the worst child in our family. I shed many tears over this, but I did not want anyone to see me crying. When I was about fifteen years old, in the year of 1919, I wondered what would happen to me. I had a fear that made me tremble. I saw myself a vile sinner in the sight of a just and holy God. I seemed to be looking right through me, and beholding nothing but sin and corruption. I read my Bible, but it only condemned me. I tried to pray, Lord, save, or I perish. Something seemed to say, There was a time you might have been forgiven, but now it is too late. Oh the awful misery in my breast. My sins rolled up before me like mountains. Everything I did or said was sin. It seemed that God was frowning on me. I feared He would crush me through the earth; I feared to try to pray, and it seemed I must die in my sins. Oh how I begged Him for mercy, but it seemed there was no mercy for such a one as I. I plainly saw that I was lost, ruined, and undone, not fit to die, and not fit to live, without God, and without hope in the world. The heavy burden for sin was condemning me. I was

weighted down so that my very breathings were, O Lord, if it can be thy will, be merciful to me, and forgive my many sins. I felt He was too good to pity or to hear my cry. I thought I would go and ask my dear mother to pray for me; maybe the Lord would hear her in my behalf. Then something would seem to say, You don't want your mother to know what a sinner you are. In the Bible I read of the sweet promises of the Lord to His children, but they were not for one like me.

After some time I went to visit Mama, and before I knew it, I was telling her my troubles. I looked and she was crying. I thought, I wish I had not told her, for I had made her unhappy. But she said, "I have tried to pray for you." I felt better for a while, but the burden returned. I felt I could not live longer, and if I died with this heavy burden for sin, hell would be my doom. *I learned* that "Vain is the help of man." None could reach my case, but the Lord, and I felt He was angry with me.

Dear children of God, if you have had these troubles in your breast, you can witness with this poor sinner. I went to church, and the dear saints looked so good and happy, and I felt so sinful, not fit to be in their company. At one time I stood by the communion ring looking at the dear saints, and they looked as pure as angels in heaven. It was the most beautiful sight I had ever seen. The tears ran down my face. I thought, Oh, if I could but be with them! It seemed I could hear the Lord gathering His dear children home, and I was left alone, and in sorrow. In my sorrow I went again to my Bible. I opened it and my eyes fell on the words, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God; believe also in Me; in My Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there may ye be also." Oh how sweet those words were to me! It seemed the Lord had spoken them directly to me. My troubles were gone. I was rejoicing in my Lord's tender love. I longed to praise His holy name. I had a great desire to live a life which was well-pleasing in His sight. But the more I tried to live right, the more I seemed to sin. One day I was meditating over these things, when it was made so plain to me that all our righteousness is as filthy rags, for it is by grace we are saved. I rejoiced in that blessed truth. I was burdened then to know in some way, if He had forgiven my sin. The word came into my mind, "Father glorify thy Son that thy Son may also glorify thee." Then it seemed that I viewed Jesus between heaven and earth bleeding and dying for His children. In some way I hope I was among them. I was singing,

"What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul.
When I was sinking down, beneath God's righteous frown,
Christ laid aside His crown, for my soul."

A calm feeling came over me, and I was rejoicing in Jesus my Savior. These words came to me: "It is finished." I felt that the Lord spoke those words to me. I cannot tell of the blessed comfort I then enjoyed. I wanted to praise Him the remnant of my days. Everything seemed to be praising Him. I longed to go to the church and tell it to them. I had a great desire to follow Him in baptism, but it was not long before doubts and fears came. I feared I had just imagined these things; yet I hope He did say, "It is finished." Oh how I tried to pour out my troubles to the Lord! When I met the dear saints, I wanted to be with them, but I was so unworthy.

One morning at a baptism, old Brother S. D. Koger kneeled down to pray, and oh how I did want him to pray for me. He asked me if I wanted to talk. I said, "I love you folks, and long to be baptised, but I am unworthy." He said, "It is those who feel to be unworthy

that we want". I went to the church many times with the longing to be with them whom I had been made to love so dearly, yet thought it would be wrong for one so vile to ask a home with them. I dreamed of Elder Koger baptising me, and as I came out of the water, I was singing, "Oh sing to me of heaven, when I am called to die," but when I awoke it was only a dream, but it was sweet to me somehow. The scripture came to me: "Take my yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls, for My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." I tried in my weak way to beg the Lord to lead me in the right way, and if it should be His will to give me grace to suffer for His sake.

I dreamed of going to church with my sister, and saw Jesus standing dressed in a white robe down to His feet. A gold band was on His head, upon which was written, "The holy Child, Jesus." He looked at me with a loving smile, and said, "I died for you upon the cross." Oh those words were sweet to me! How unworthy I felt that one so vile should be beloved so. I went before the church, still feeling unworthy, and told a part of what I have written, and to my surprise they received me, and I was baptised the third Sunday morning in July, 1922.

I then felt satisfied, for I felt I had gone home to the ones I loved so dearly. I thought I would go on in peace, but I was mistaken, for it was not long before doubts and fears arose, and I thought I had deceived the church. Oh I am a little child, I know not how to go out or come in. Wilt thou give me understanding, and lead me for thy name's sake, and be pleased to keep me at the feet of the little children in humility. The older I get, the more unworthy I feel of the sweet fellowship of the saints. Oh wretched sinner that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I know that without redeeming grace I am forever lost. I know by experience that there is nothing good that I can do. When I would do good, evil is present. I feel unworthy of the notice of the Lord, but I have nowhere else to go. Thou only hast the words of eternal life. In Him only is my hope. I am often begging that He reveal His love once more, and recently these words gave me much comfort:

"Fear not I am with thee, oh be not dismayed,
For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid,
I'll strengthen thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by thy righteous, omnipotent hand."

I sang those words, and those following, different than ever before. I hope I was made to rejoice in that great love of God, in so much, that I felt if He should see fit to call me to die then, all would be well. I said, O Lord, it is enough. I cannot praise Him enough. He is my Hope, my Strength, my All. I know that He is love to stoop so low to save one so vile, and put a new song in my mouth, and ever to comfort a poor worm of the dust. I just cannot find the words to tell of it.

About two years ago, I was in so much trouble, and felt that He had forsaken me. I tried to beg for mercy. I cried, O Lord, if I am lost, why am I suffering so? A still small voice said, "For Jesus' sake, you are suffering." I cried, "O Lord, never let my sufferings be less." I fell asleep rejoicing in His tender love and free goodness. He is ever watching over His children. He loves them with an everlasting love. He does not forsake them. My only fear at times, is that I am not among that number.

Brother and Sister Turner, for some cause my mind is to hand this I have written to you. I feel that I should not take up the precious time of God's children, yet they are the ones I long to be with, and hear them talk of Jesus. I tried to lay it aside and not write, but my burden was so heavy, I was made to cry for His spirit of prayer, that He might guide me, and make me submissive to Him.

O Lord, make us look to thee, from whence all our help comes, and let us

love one another for thy name's sake.

Please pray for me, one of the least,

Callie Clark,
Bassett, Va.

SIGNS RECOMMENDED
TO THOSE INTERESTED

P. O. Box 308
Swansboro, N.C. 28584

Dear Elder Spangler:

I am enclosing my check for one renewal and two new subscriptions, and $1.00 for the Indigent Fund by one of the subscribers, as shown.

We appreciated your presence at our association. We had expected Elder Wood, but he could not make it. Hope you will be given a mind to visit again in our area.

It is my intention to recommend the *Signs* to Old Baptists and others who manifest an interest in the doctrine it contends for. It is the periodical published by our people, and stands firm as it has for more than one hundred and forty years, for the truth as I have been made to believe it. It is certainly needful for the cause: had it not been the Lord would not have sustained it through so many years. It deserves the support of every Old Baptist throughout the country who loves the doctrine of the predestination of God in all things.

May the good Lord be pleased to bless others to continue publishing the good news in the years to come, when the present writers are called to their eternal home.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

(Elder) J. J. Rhue

ELDER BIGGS WAS HER PASTOR

St. Charles. Ky. 42463

Dear Brother Wood:

I want to write a little concerning our late dear pastor. We miss him so much. Elder Biggs has been our councelor — one we could go to for advice, and we seem so lost without him.

We will meet, hoping that the Lord will send us another pastor; for He is the only one we have to look to.

Hope you and sister Wood are well. I am ninety years old, and am able to be up, for which I praise the Lord.

Much love and fellowship,

Mrs. W. B. McGregor

Elder R. L. Biggs, our beloved pastor, passed away at the age of eighty-one. He had a long, rugged road to travel. He was called to the ministry in early life, but thought he could not go and ran away from it; but the good Lord brought him back and showed him that the way of man was not in himself to direct. He traveled many hundreds of miles with many disappointments in life, but the Lord held him up; and he gave the Lord all the praise.

A dear sister told me she heard him preach at a little church down in the country when he was a young man. And while he was preaching a wonderful sermon, a light shined around his head like a rainbow dimly; and the people looked one to the other. The Sister was Cyntha Brown, long passed away.

He was called to our church, Old Lick Creek, July 3, 1949; and he was faithful to the calling. He had to travel nearly a hundred miles, but he was faithful through all kinds of weather.

We are such a little church, and left without a pastor; but the good Lord had always kept us. And I want to praise the Lord, not man.

Mrs. W. B. McGregor

(See obituary December issue)

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 3, Box 295
Eden, N. C.

Dear Elder Lyliston:

I cannot tell you what a joy it was to me when Elder Spangler gave me your letter. I had thought of you many times during the week before I was baptized, and afterwards. I had a desire to write to you but I felt so little that I could not bring myself to do so. Elder Spangler gave me your letter last night at our regular fourth Saturday night meeting. It

was a sweet meeting for me in many ways. Brother and Sister Spangler were back from a long trip. I had not seen them since the Sunday I was baptized. Your letter and being blessed to see them again, made me feel that the Lord was yet being merciful to this poor sinner.

I would have been overjoyed to have seen you at my baptizing, but the Lord had not purposed it to be that way. Even so, it gives me pleasure to know that you would have come had you known about it.

You wrote of your many doubts and fears, and I am glad that you did. I must confess that I spend much of my time in doubts and fears. Long before I was made to ask for a home in the church, I was fearful that I was deceived, and in joining the church, would deceive the people that I so dearly love. It seemed to me that I must remain on the outside of the church, and just look in. But, at the same time, I felt that even that was more than I deserved.

On the second Sunday at Reidsville Church my beloved pastor spoke about the leper who said to Jesus that if he would, he could make him clean. Brother Spangler quoted the scripture, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." Never have I felt such a desire to be clean as I felt that day, and never have I felt so sinful. At the close of the meeting, I felt that I would join, but I could not move when an open door of the church was announced. My grandmother expected me to go that day. She said I was trembling like a leaf. That experience was repeated several times, and each time I could not go.

On the Sunday evening that I joined, I heard my pastor ask Brother Wallis Smith if he thought it would be alright to open the doors of the churches. It is difficult to tell you how I felt. I didn't want them to do it, because I knew that I had to go if he did. As we stood to sing, the thought came to me that it would be just like the other times, and I wouldn't go. But it was different: I could not wait. I had to go. During the week before I was baptized, I read the experience in an old issue of the *Signs of the Times* , in which a dear brother, who has undoubtedly been laid to rest before now, said when he wanted to go, he couldn't, and when he didn't want to, he had to. I rejoiced so much in that article.

In your letter you wrote that you didn't even know my name, and that probably I did not remember you. Well I have found that you don't have to know a person's name to feel a spiritual love for him. As for remembering you, my dear brother, I knew you the minute you walked up to the stand. One third Sunday at Pleasant Grove Church I was blessed to hear you preach. If my memory is correct, you spoke from the 9th chapter of Mark on the words of the father of the boy who had a dumb spirit: "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." If not deceived these words cut me to the heart. That sermon has stayed with me ever since. You related much of my experience, and I remember thinking how beautiful it was.

When I found that you were to preach on Saturady night of the association, I felt a great desire to be there. After the afternoon services, my grandfather was tired and wanted to go home. He has been in poor health since October. So I went home; but I just had to come back. I can't tell you how much your sermon meant to me. As you preached, I believe I felt the very power of God in my heart. That night before going to bed, I fell down on my knees and tried to beg God to lead me home to the church if I was truly one of His. I believe my prayer was answered, and the Lord sent you to me at lunch time on Sunday to give me the assurance that I longed for.

Ever since I was baptized I have wanted to write to you and relieve my mind of these things, but I could not. I feel certain that the Lord had a purpose in that, as He does in all things.

Thank you for writing to me, Brother Lyliston. Your letter came to me when my spirits were very low and I had to again look to the Lord for grace and mercy. As you wrote, I hope our paths will cross again. If you are ever planning

to visit one of the churches in our association, please let me know ahead of time, if you can. I hope to visit among the people of your association some day, if the Lord would bless me to.

May the Lord bless and keep you in His loving care, and when you have a mind to pray, you might remember me, if the Lord would bless you to.

Your sinful sister,
Mary M. Lee

LOVE THE SIGNS

Carbon Hill, Ala. 35549

Dear Editors:

We are a little late in renewing for the *Signs of the Times.* We love the paper so much, and are so thankful for all you Editors. We feel it is a blessing to the Lord's people to have the opportunity of reading such sound doctrine the *Signs* stands for; and all the experiences of the Lord's dear people while here in this life. Not while the world stands will He cease leading and feeding all His children; and much of it comes through the *Signs.* This is why we enjoy and love reading it each month.

May the blessed Lord spare you and give you health to continue publishing this dear paper.

Humbly submitted in love,
J. C. and Lillian Scott

ATTENDS THE ASSOCIATIONS

Tarboro N.C.

To the Signs:

Enclosed check is for renewal of the *Signs* for two years, and $3.00 for the Indigent Fund.

I get much pleasure in reading the *Signs.* May our good Lord bless you dear Editors and others that write to our comfort. The Lord has blessed me this year, as he has in the several years gone by, to go to many associations. I miss so many who have been true soldiers of the cross: they are gone but not forgotten.

I was glad to see Elder and Sister Wood at the Pigg River Association. What a blessing it is just to get a glimpse of the ones you love for Christ's sake. I have been to the Seven Mile Association the last week-end, and they had a very good meeting. I hope to go to four more, if it is His will.

May God bless us to meet again. Pray for me when at the throne of grace.

Your brother in Christ, I hope,
Lee Gooch

REALIZES HIS NEED EVERY DAY

Rt. 4, Box 313
ElDorado, Ark.

Dear Editors:

I enjoy the *Signs of the Times.* Have been reading this wonderful, God-given paper many years. My mother was taking it when I was a little boy — Martha Ballard Murphy: and I have been subscribing for many years. Please renew my subscription two years; use the other as you see fit.

It seems God in Heaven makes the *Signs of the Times* better and sweeter to me as the months and years go by. How thankful to Almighty God for leading and enlightening me this way. This wonderful experience and feeling can not come from man or self. I am a poor, unworthy sinner traveling in this low ground of sin and sorrow, begging God every day to direct my steps and control my tongue.

I have had the privilege of having Elder Spangler and wife in my home, and hope it will be God's will to have them again. Elder E. J. Lambert is our pastor at Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church at ElDorado, Arkansas. We are few in number, but where two or three are gathered together in God's name, He is there also.

May God in heaven just and holy, all wise and all powerful, who made everything what was made, lead, guide and direct the Editors to continue this wonderful paper on until Jesus Christ the saviour of all the elect of God, comes again. He is soon coming: what a wonderful day that will be to all He died

for. Children of the Heavenly King, what my weak prayer to God is, Am I one? I am sinful, weak, and one that needs God's guidance every minute of my life.

I love every one that believes this doctrine. Do as you see fit with this.

Unworthy,
Fred Ballard Murphy

THE LORD WORKS IN A MYSTERIOUS WAY

Box 74,
Red Lodge, Montana 59068

Dear Ones of Like Precious Faith:

It is renewal time for me for the *Signs of the Times,* so am enclosing check for renewal for two years, with the balance for the Indigent Fund.

It was the year 1905 that I first became acquainted with the *Signs.* I lived in the state of Missouri then, and we moved to another farm that year. Some one who had lived in that house left quite a large number of issues of the *Signs.* I was thirteen years of age, the youngest of seven children. My father had passed away when I was about one year old. He was known as a most faithful minister of the Primitive Baptist Faith in those parts. I am speaking of Elder John B. Copeland of Slater-Saline County, Missouri.

In July of 1908 I came to Red Lodge, Montana to live with Mrs. Nannie V. Copeland McMahon, a sister of my father. She was subscriber of the *Signs of the Times* as well as the *Messenger of Peace;* edited then by Elder Walter Cash of St. Joseph, Missouri; but is now out of print. I have lots of issues of it so often read them. To my knowledge there is not even one Primitive Baptist Church in the State of Montana.

I hope I have not annoyed you with some of my experiences. I am thoroughly convinced that there are lots of good people in Montana.

I am also sure the Lord works in a mysterious way His wonders to perform. May the good Lord bless and keep you.

Yours in Christian love,
Martha L. Logan

DOES NOT HEAR BAPTIST PREACHING

2050 Greenway Blvd.
Wichita, Kansas 67213

Dear Editors:

I would like to subscribe for the *Signs of the Times.* I am seventy-six years old and do not hear Baptist preaching anymore. I am not a member of the Old School Baptists.

I surely believe there will be a resurrection of the dead, both the just and unjust, but only the righteous who are born of God shall be raised to life everlasting, and the ungodly to the resurrection of damnation. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians in the 15th chapter, said that if you do not believe in the resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen, and our preaching is in vain and our faith is vain. Paul says a lot more about the resurrection, but I will not go into it further.

All I know is that I am a sinner, and my works are as filthy rags. I feel as a lost sheep in the forest — all mixed up. I still believe we are saved by grace and not by works. Would appreciate it if one of the editors or others would write me sometime, and maybe I could sleep better. I have heard Elder Lambert preach and enjoyed him. In believing predestination, you have to believe in the resurrection of the dead; or am I wrong.

From a sinner in trouble,
Fred C. Winfrey

ENJOYED A LOVELY DAY

1721 S. Seales Street
Reidsville, N. C. 27320

Dear Brother and Sister Spangler:

I have had sweet meditations of the lovely day we were blessed to enjoy last Sunday, and my soul has soared high

above the vain and transitory things of earth.

It seemed that our hearts were warmed and attuned to God's Holy Spirit as we listened to the glorious gospel you were given to preach to us of Jesus. "The Captain of our salvation." You vividly brought to view how it became God to send His own Son to take our place in the judgment, that we might be free from condemnation; and ultimately be carried to the climes of glory to forever sing His blessed praise. What wonderous love that he would condescend to dwell in the hearts of sinners by nature, but whose hearts have been made clean by His precious blood, and made partakers of His glory.

Much more could be said of the lovely message you brought us, but I have not words to express it. The blessed Spirit of God continued in our midst, if not deceived, as the little band of His saints gathered in our little humble home. As I told you, I did not feel worthy for them to come, but rejoiced that they felt to come. Words fail me as I try to tell of the lovely day, but how can mere words fully define the things of the Spirit world? I felt that we were all so safely ensconced in the arms of our Saviour, that all the power of earth could never harm nor pluck us from Him. My dear Brother and Sister, is this not a most blessed place to be!

I only meant to renew my subscription to the *Signs*, but could not refrain from trying to express how much I enjoyed the whole day. May God continue to give us the season of rejoicing as we travel this meandering pathway toward our longed for Home above.

With sweet fellowship and love,
Mamie P. Aldridge

CORRECTION

Please note that in the article by Elder J. R. Hollandsworth in the January issue the quotation of Ecclesiastes 12:7, should read "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."—J.D.W.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

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CELEBRATING FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

In honor of the fiftieth wedding anniversary of Elder and Mrs. W. D. Griffin, their children extend an invitation to the brethren and friends to meet with them in commemorating the occasion between the hours of two and four o'clock Sunday, March the fourth, 1973, at their home on Highway 18 about half-way between Fayette and Vernon, Alabama. (Rt. 6, Box 84, Fayette, Ala. 35555)

Danville, Virginia February, 1973

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL
2 Kings 6:1-7

"And the sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, behold now, the place where we dwell with thee is too strait for us. Let us go, we pray thee, unto Jordan, and take thence every man a beam, and let us make us a place there, where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye. And one said, Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy servants. And he answered, I will go. So he went with them. And when they came to Jordan, they cut down wood. But as one was felling a beam, the axe head fell into the water: and he cried, and said, Alas, Master; for it was borrowed; And the man of God said, Where fell it? And he showed him the place, And he cut down a stick and cast it in thither; and the iron did swim. Therefore said he, Take it up to thee. And he put out his hand, and took it." (2 Kings 6:1-7)

Back through the years I have heard this subject tossed around among the Old School Baptists. I have joined in the discussions, and have, as I too often have done, accepted the general version of the matter, to wit, that these sons of the prophets were false brethren among the children of Israel; that they had gone along with Israel in a nominal way until the travel became strait for them; that they could do rather well until the strict rigid doctrine became repulsive to them, and that they desired a way of their own. Usually, John was quoted to bolster this thought when he said, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." (I John 2:19) Some would go so far as to bring in the seven women that took hold of one man, saying, "We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." (Isa. 4:1) Others would bring up the case of those that went back, and walked no more with the Saviour because of His sound doctrine (John 6:65,66). It is derogatory to the honor and glory of our heavenly Master for us to be copy cats, or to be parrot like; to let others do our reading, to nod our approval without thinking and searching and studying for ourselves. My policy, in writing and speaking, had been to not say or write anything that could be refuted by gainsayers. I have not been able to live up to this policy, but I still think that it is a good rule when the dear aged mother in Israel (in Texas) requested that I write on this subject the first thing that come into my mind was this: What more can I say than has been said throughout the years? How could I ever bring up anything new about the subject. As I have said many times I came up under an old timey minister of the gospel. He has told me many things of struggles in the ministry. One time he

told me that when he was requested to write or preach on a subject that it alarmed him because that he did not know as he felt that he should to be able to comply with the request. But he said that usually, after the request, that he was given a desire to comply with the request, and this led him into an examination of the text. This has been my lot in a great measure. It was that way with this request. I desired to be correct in what I presented about it. I have spent sometime in meditation, and I trust in prayer, and in searching.

To begin with, the application that I had always heard and accepted did not ring true with what I found in the scriptures of truth. Then I did have *something* to wrestle with; I did have much casting about in my mind as to how that I might make an excuse for not complying with the request. That did not work, and thus I am before you once more in my weakness to comply with the request of our dear sister as best I can. I told her, when she handed me the requests (for there were others, which I will, as God blesses me, get to) that I was not able to write on the deep matters of God's kingdom, and she said, "I know that, but I also know that God can bless you to do so." As long as my brethren know that, and as long as the Lord teaches me that, you will bear with me if I do not follow the usual line of thinking about the text.

First, let me say that there is not a word of condemnation in the history of Israel about the son of the prophets. If this could be construed as condemnatory of them, it is the only time that it has been shown by inspiration. Furthermore, there is not an objection nor a rebuke to them for their request, but rather, an agreement of Elisha that it was the thing to do, and he went and helped them in the work of building this new place of dwelling.

But it is said unto me, They found the place of dwelling with Israel too strait, and this shows dissatisfaction with the ways that the Lord was leading Israel, and with the things that the prophets prophesied of and about. How do you know that his was their mind? Have you associated the same thought with those that have desired to build a new house of worship? Have you thought the same thing with all of the people of God that have enlarged their house or added something to their present house that they might be more comfortable?

If this was the primary thought that the sons of the prophets had, to wit, that the way of Elisha and his house were too rigid, too hard, too much discipline, too much doctrine, it would seem to me that they would have used the word straight. Sixty nine times this word is used in the Bible to set forth right, uprightness, haste, suddenly, straightway to go straight, and other meanings that would be repulsive to one that *any* way would do as well as the one that we are doing. But the place (not way) wherein they were dwelling was too strait. The place wherein they were dwelling was too strait for comfort, and the intention and object of the sons of the prophets was for the establishment of a better place, definitely, not way.

It was Elisha that they went to for his consent in building this new dwelling place. The mantle of Elijah was given to Elisha. Elijah cast his mantle upon Elisha, and he, in turn, took up the mantle of Elijah. Let us remember that the name Elijah means in the Hebrew language *my God is Jah (Jehovah), or God Himself.* Elisha pled with Elijah that a double portion of his spirit be upon him. His reply was that if he saw him when he was removed from his presence that it would be so, but if not, it would not be so. As they were traveling and talking there appeared a chariot of fire and parted them asunder and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. As he went up his mantle fell from him and Elisha took it up. (2 Kings 2). I do hope that none of my readers would call Elisha indiscreet or unsound as a prophet. I do hope that we are all able to see the beauty in the prophetic gift of Elijah falling on Elisha, for the whole object in this episode in the history of Israel, and the life of both Elijah and Elisha, is the glory of God. It is not that

we are in Elijah or in Paul, but it is that we are in Christ Jesus; that this being in Him is not the performance, or lack of, in Elijah or Paul, but that it is to the praise of His grace. This portion of scripture is in what Paul had in mind when he said, the things that were written aforetime were written for our learning that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. Now this writing about the sons of the prophets coming to Elisha is given to us that we might have this hope. Is it in the sons of the prophets or in Elisha? It is true that this is a part of the whole and it takes each part to make up the whole, but the glory is in the iron swimming, not in them being found in a strait.

Elisha means in the Hebrew language *God is Saviour.* This is beautiful to me; this brings my dear Saviour closer; Elijah (God) had to pass away, and his passing away gave room for the coming of Elisha (God as Saviour), for the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Let look back and view all of the miracles that Elijah performed, and let us look back at all of the wonderful things that Elisha performed. In the time of Christ many believed when miracles were performed, and this miracle was given for the same purpose to confirm and settle and ground our brethren who would not have been made perfect without our day. (Heb. II:40)

Again let us remember that Elisha means *God is Saviour.* The sons of prophets went to him in type as the children of the kingdom came to the Saviour in anti-type. The children of the kingdom were in a bind, in a bad strait. They asked Him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? They were certainly in a strait place (not way, not in a sect too strait, not having a doctrine preached to them that was too strait); the perservation of their natural lives looked difficult for the wind and the waves were rising high, threatening to engulf them in destruction. (Mat. 8; Mark 4; Luke 8) Now look back at the text. The sons of the prophets came to Elisha. They did not come as arrogant self-willers; they did not come as Pharisees making sport, but they came as humble as were the disciples in the raging storm. To one the storm was holding them in a strait or difficult predicament; to the other the place wherein they dwelt was too strait or difficult. As to what caused this strait, we are not told. The Jewish historian tells us that it was because of an overflow of population in the Jewish nation or economy. This we do not know. It would be folly, since we do not know, to say that it was this or that or the other, and especially is this true, when we see that the text is not given to bring the sons of the prophets into the limelight, but that the whole is given for the exaltation of Elisha (Christ). Persons are never to be eulogized or lauded; the sons of the prophets are not being rebuked nor praised here; this doctrine or that doctrine is not being criticised nor praised. The primary aim was to perform a miracle. Elijah had performed many as the prophet in Israel, and now his mantle or gift has fallen on Elisha and he, too, is to perform a miracle. In each case, when our Saviour performed miracles there was a setting arranged for it. It was true in this case.

Elisha gave a command for them to go build aplace in which to dwell (not to found a new doctrine or a new denomination or do away with the oracles which the Lord had delivered to Israel, or to change any of the order that God had instituted for the benefit of his people Israel). The mind that the sons of the prophets had was given the approval of the prophet. Then they asked him to go with them. He agreed to go, and he did go. TO THINK THAT I HAD ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT THESE SONS OF THE PROPHETS WERE FALSE BRETHREN! Really that thought made Elisha just as weak in doctrine as were the sons. He not only encouraged them, but he went with them. He went with them and they (signifying that Elisha helped to build the place, not helped to change the doctrine, or to make a new way) begin to cut down wood. While Elisha prefigures Christ, yet he did not know all things, or, as the type of Christ,

he did know, but asked questions as though he did not know in order to teach them a lesson. Be that as it may, while they were working to build a place in which to dwell, one of them had an axe to fly off from the handle. He cried out in dismay. The Bible does not say, but it strongly implies that this cry was in anguish. Who am I to say what prompted the cry? Have I got any authority to say that he was in anguish because that he could not help any further in changing the *way* of doctrine? Please refer me to chapter and verse that I have any such right. And if you have any such right to make the case up against these sons of the prophets, please give me chapter and verse for your authority. This anxiety was caused by concern at being unable to continue to build the *place*, and because that he had borrowed the axe. This is where I used to think that it surely was condemning the sons. This one had borrowed an axe, and anything borrowed is a sign of weak doctrine. If so, then Elisha had already proven himself the weakest one in Israel because he had authorized a poor indebted woman to borrow vessels so that she could sell oil and get out of debt. If we are going to condemn the sons of the prophets we must find something besides a borrowed axe to do it with.

His cry was unto Elisha. It was a three fold cry of anguish. Why do I say that? Because this is a number of brethren under the law, and yet all doing common work for the mutual good of Israel. Their object was a good one—at least it had the approval of the man who meant God the Saviour. This son could not work any further in the work. The axe was a borrowed axe. They were all poor and no doubt he did not feel able to pay for it or replace it. He cried out to Elisha, as I humble trust I have cried out many times for help or relief from One greater than Elisha. I hope that I am thankful that He had come to my rescue many, many times, giving me relief and comforting me in my gloom and anguish. And I am so glad that I have been blessed to find this One that is greater than Elisha in the text. This is the time of love, when I find my blessed Redeemer, and am able to sing,

> Sometimes I read my Bible,
> And 'tis a sealed book;
> Sometimes I find a blessing
> Wher'er therein I look,

and so it has been in my efforts to comply with our sister's request. I feel that my Lord has come and I am glad.

Where it fell? Ah, yes pilgrim, the God of our salvation always has your welfare in mind. From day to day He is perfecting that which concerns you. He cut a stick. I do not know what the stick represents, nor neither do you. Cutting a stick was a simple thing—simple, like spitting in clay and poulticing an eye; simple like having a man go wash seven times in the pool of Siloam; simple like using water to make wine; simple like stretching out a rod over the sea. The simple stick was thrown into the water at the place where the axe fell, and the iron did swim. The son did not scamper out to get it. It does not say, but if you remember all of the miracles of God our Saviour were followed by much joy and thanksgiving, and I am sure that he that had been in anguish was now filled with awe and admiration and adoration. Elisha said to him, "Take it up to thee. And he put out his hand and took it."

I feel sure that when we have been disconsolate, our minds have gone to this event of the iron swimming, and renewed courage was given us that nothing is too hard for the Lord. This event was cast into the lap, and our God disposed of it to His name's honor and glory. The glory and the lesson was not in the sons of the prophets desiring to build a new place to dwell in, but the Elisha, who as a type of our blessed Saviour, made the iron swim,

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ATONEMENT AND REDEMPTION

The simple word *atonement*, or at-one-ment, signifies reconciliation,

agreement, or restoration to favor, and when applied in a gospel sense, has reference to the meditorial sacrifice of the Son of God, by which his people are reconciled unto God. That mediatorial work or sacrifice involved his suffering for them the penalty of the law which they had transgressed, bearing the curse which was due to their transgressions, putting away their sins by sacrifice of himself; being delivered up for their offences and raised again from the dead for their justification.

Redemption, signifies the buying back of that which has become legally involved and is held by another in captivity. For instance, a flock of sheep which has gone astray from the premises of their owner, and committed trespass on another, may be legally held by him who has sustained the injury, until the owner of the sheep shall come forward, prove property, pay the legal charges and take them away. This is called redemption, or buying back the flock or property which belonged to him who redeems, before the trespass was committed. In this the payment of the damages is the atonement or reconciliation, for it satisfies the party who held the legal claim upon the flock, and the price paid for the satisfaction, or reconciliation, redeems or buys them back. So that the atonement and the redemption of the sheep are one and the same thing; they cannot be separated. None but the owner of the sheep has the right to redeem them in the case. If he fails to redeem them, and they are sold to some other person for the damages they have done, they are not redeemed at all, because they are not bought back, or restored to the former owner, but pass into the possession of a new owner. The redemption of the people of God is thus described, see Isa. liii, 6. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way and the Lord hath laid on him (Christ) the iniquity of us all." That is, the whole demand of the law and justice of God, was demanded of that Shepherd whose own the sheep were, and who says, "I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. John x, 11, 12. If Christ had not been the owner of the flock before they strayed, or went into captivity, justice could not have demanded satisfaction at his hands—the Lord would not have laid their iniquity upon him, nor commanded, saying "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the Shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn my hand upon the little ones." Zech. xiii,7. Nor could Christ have claimed the right to redeem them on any other ground. He was the Shepherd whose own the sheep were, and he plead and sustained his prior claim to, and right of property in them, saying, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine, and all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them" And this glory he says he had with the Father before the world was. See John xviii, 5,7, and 10. Therefore he could in coming into the world to redeem them, confidently refer to the records of eternity: "Lo! I come, in the volume of thy book." (The book in which all his members are written, Psa. cxxxix, 16.) "It is written of me; to do thy will, O God." Heb. x, 7, "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." John vi, 39. These scriptures define very clearly the extent of redemption by Jesus Christ, and the principle of relationship and proprietorship on which that redemption is based. In this redemption, he asked not or prayed not for the world, but for them which his Father had given him out of the world. And this was the full extent of the will of the Father, according to which God worketh all things, that Jesus should redeem and save his people from their sins, and raise up again at the last day all that the Father gave him before the world was; and therefore it was that the Lord laid on him the iniquity of *us* all. That is all of *us* who like sheep have gone astray.

And he has accordingly, "surely borne *our* griefs, and carried our sorrows: "He was wounded for *our* transgressions, bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement our peace" (or atonement) "was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." Isa. iii, 4,5. And because "It pleased the Lord to bruise" and to "put him to grief." He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied" "By his knowledge" shall he "justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities." Isa. iii, 10, 11. And we know precisely what will satisfy him; for he has graciously told us. "I pray not for the world, but I pray for them which thou hast given me out of the world." "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory,"&c. John xvii, 9,24. This is his will, and the Father has pledged his veracity that he shall be satisfied. Nor is this any less the will of the Father than it is the will of the son; for, "This is the Father's will which has sent me that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

Thus we are instructed in regard to the nature and extent of the atonement and redemption which is in Christ Jesus. That it extends to all that the Father gave him, and to no others. That it embraces all that seed which Jesus should see when his soul was made an offering for sin, and which seed shall serve him, and be accounted to him for a generation, according to Psa. xxii, 30. But it extends to no other seed or people but that "Chosen generation, royal priesthood, holy nation, and peculiar people which shall show forth his praises." 1 Peter ii,9.

The atonement or reconciliation is just as extensive as the redemption, and the eternal salvation from sin, death and hell, is just as extensive in its application and its saving benefits as the atonement and redemption, and it can extend no further. All the murmuring, fault-finding and blasphemies of the children of men cannot extend it any further, nor remove one of Zion's stakes, nor break one of her cords.

After all the opposition manifested by the world to the definite extent of the atonement, there is not an individual on earth, that really desires to be embraced in it but those who are made willing in the day of our Redeemer's power. All others prefer to rely on their own fancied free will, free agency and use of means, and to rely upon a *chance* system, which would give a chance to everybody, but in reality save nobody. God's redeemed people themselves were all of them opposed to his method of salvation until they were brought to an experimental knowledge of their guilty, lost and helpless condition, then they found it to be exactly suited to their case. And then being taught of God, they could not be satisfied with any uncertain, indefintie or chance system. Knowing their own total helplessness, they bless and adore God for that covenant which is well ordered and sure; for it is all their hope, and all their salvation.

Such a system of redemption as the arminians contend for, if they could have it, would do them no good; for it would save nobody, and they are therefore just as well off in their present delusion on the subject, as they would be with a *chance* redemption, offered grace, and conditional salvation, while they are totally depraved, and dead in trespasses and sins. They are at war with God's plan of salvation, and it is impossible for them to be saved in any other. There we must leave them to perish forever in their delusion, unless they, by a divine power, over which they nor we have any control, shall bring them to know their need of a whole Savior, a sure redemption, and to rejoice in a perfect atonement and reconciliation to God and to his way of saving poor lost and helpless sinners.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe June 1, 1858)

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I am sending you a copy of a letter I wrote to

brother Winfrey while he was sick in the hospital at Salina, Kansas. He was a member of a church which I am serving at Kingman, Kansas. The family desired that it be published in the issue of the *SIGNS* in which his obituary appears. It is submitted to your judgment and disposal. You will note it was written to Brother Winfrey personally, without any thought of it being submitted for publication.

Dallas, Texas, Feb. 22, 1938.

DEAR BROTHER WINFREY:—I am writing you today, as I am shut in, waiting for a nice snow to melt off, which the bright sunshine is changing to water very rapidly. Thus it is with all time things, regardless of how beautiful or otherwise desirable, they belong to the order of things which are ever changing; nothing within the reach or power of man to possess here below of which he can say, Now I have a permanent possession; this is my very own. Before he is hardly aware, it waxes old and is ready to decay and must pass out from before him. Our fondest ties of friendship and the most cherished objects of our affections last, as it were, but for a day, until we come to the parting of the ways; and if we possessed it all, with no more power than we have to establish its permanency, we would still be poor indeed, and with the wise man could say, All is vanity and vexation of spirit. But when we find within us a longing for something that is permanent, something that is fixed and can never be moved; something that will never disappoint our hopes nor make shipwreck of our faith, we must look not at the things that are seen, "for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

In this experience we find ourselves in company with that great cloud of witnesses of whom the apostle said, They looked for a city which hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God. They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth, and that they desired a better country, that is an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city. How delightful it is to be in the company of such people, and to have the mind absorbed in the contemplation of that inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away. The passing and changing events of time can effect no change in this glorious inheritance; and to know that it is not provided nor secured to us by the patience of our toil, nor by the skill of our labor; neither is it bestowed on the grounds of service, nor as a reward for merit, but by an immutable will Jehovah bequeathed it and reserved it in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. If we hope for this enduring inheritance, though we do not see it, yet do we with patience wait for it, knowing that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Brother Winfrey, I find myself sometimes actually longing for that house and that inheritance. We are given a foretaste of our inheritance, called "the earnest of our inheritance,' which is intended to in some measure satisfy our desires until the redemption of the purchased possession; that is, until He takes his purchased possession home to glory. With some of us it will not be long now to wait, but our consolation and assurance is that God changes not: whether in youth or in old age the same unchanging God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. David said, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me." The shadows of death have many times fallen across our pathway, as we came this far on our journey toward the country we seek; in fact, our path was routed through a land of death and decay. The great wonder often is how we have reached the place on our journey that we have without being utterly destroyed;

but after all of our wondering we must come to the solution which David gave for his safety; "Thou art with me." If he is with us, then we, too, can brave every danger without fear, and can say with the poet,

> " 'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
> And grace will lead me home."

This is our hope and consolation, that our God changes not, and irrespective of our diversity of thoughts and unstableness of purpose, he is the same unchanging God and his years fail not. How glad we should be, and I hope are, that our safety here and hereafter does not depend in any measure upon our faithfulness. But hear the assuring promise: "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips." Our waywardness does not in the least affect his faithfulness for he has sworn unto our Spiritual David, saying, "Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations." How wonderful to have these precious truths brought understandingly to our hearts, so we can grasp the significance of the meaning of these precious assurances, for it is written, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." It is only in His light that we see light, and when the light of life is revealed in us, when God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; by that divine light the veil of the law is taken away from our face and our heart is turned to the Lord and we, by faith, see the new covenant glories, which is the glory of the Lord, and the apostle says, "Are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

How wonderful is all of this mysterious yet overwhelmingly fascinating working of Israel's God. It binds our every thought in such admiration that, like Mary, we desire only to sit at the feet of our Lord and hear his gracious words. And how our ears catch and our souls absorb every word of promise that describes the case of a poor trembling sinner, the poor insolvent who has a load of debts but nothing with which he can pay; only can come as a beggar at mercy's door, and if he should be turned away from here, like the disciples of Christ, he must stand in blank ignorance as to his next move, and ask, To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. But thanks to our gracious High Priest, for none who came inquiring have ever been sent empty away; for it is he who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all they diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies, who satisfieth thy mouth with good things, so that thy youth is renewed like the eagles.

The mighty works of God in saving and leading his children out of the dungeon of sin and crowning them who are only worthy of death with immortal glory, swell our hearts with wonder and admiration to look upon them, and to get a glimpse here and there of his transcendent beauty and glory as revealed in them. But with what subduing humility, and astonishment indescribable are we filled when we are given to hope that we are a part of this wonderful plan. If it is so, all things, whether life or death, whether visible or invisible, are engaged to work for our good; even the moments of time are hastening us on to the possession of our eternal home, where in the full blaze of the glory of our God and Savior we shall swim in the ocean of his love, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. I know, dear brother Winfrey, your affections are there, because your treasure is there. And I

pray that God may sustain you with an unfaltering trust in his unchanging faithfulness, and support you by his all-sufficient grace until he chooses to call you hence, and that he may make you as faithful in your devotions to him in death as you have been in your life. This I feel he will do, for his promise is, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Again, Blessed are they that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. Blessed is the man that trusts in the Lord, and whose hope that Lord is. And whom the Lord has blessed they shall be blessed.

I shall hope soon to hear that you are very much improved. Sister Winfrey, if you can find time, let us hear often, if no more than a card just to say how he is getting along, for we are anxious to know of his progress.

With fervent christian love and fellowship in the gospel of Christ, in which Mrs. Hardy joins me, I am, I hope, your humble servant for Jesus' sake,

J. R. HARDY

(What a comforting letter Elder Hardy wrote to Brother Winfrey! In these things we are sustained day by day, for God gives us grace sufficient for all our needs every day.

Brother Winfrey passed away shortly after receiving this letter. We re-publish this because all these things are common with each subject of grace. — J. D. W.)

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT OF SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

It has pleased our gracious and all wise God to remove from our midst a beloved Sister, Evelyn Davis, of the Snow Hill Church, well known and beloved by all. No doubt in our minds she was a child of God. Our loss is her eternal gain.

Let us of the Salisbury Association bow in humble submission to the will of God, and say, "Thy will be done, O God."

Written by Brother Frank Holland.

Elder Arthur Warren, Mod.
Maude T. Laws, Hon. Clerk
William S. Adkins, Clerk
William A. Davis, Asst. Clerk

MEMORIAL

ELDER C. N. BUNN

Almighty God let your tongue be the pen as an attempt is made to write in memory of our pastor Elder C. N. Bunn who was so dearly loved by the members and friends of the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder Bunn accepted the pastoral care of our church on Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in March 1961 by saying, "That he could not come to us as a leader, but the Lord willing he would come as a follower and do the best he could to serve us." We believe the Lord God sent him to us and by God's grace he was blessed to faithfully serve us until he was called to paradise, the place of the glorified saints on May 24, 1972.

Brother Bunn believed and preached that there is living omniptant, "I AM THAT I AM," who did predestinate his children to be conformed to the image of his precious son, Jesus Christ, and that there is laid up for them a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give unto all them that love his appearing.

Elder Bunn's experiences or reasons for his hope were rich indeed and those blessed to hear him relate them would know that all was well, because their minds were taken from the vain and perishable things of this earth and centered on the heavenly and divine things of God.

His funeral service was conducted by those that were dear to him, Elder A. P. Mewborn and Elder Henry Jones. His body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in the Pineview Cemetery, Rocky Mount, N. C. to await the morning of the resurrection when his Lord will say to him, "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

May God in his kind and tender mercy reconcile us to our loss and may his richest blessings rest with Nellie his beloved wife, whom we dearly love, and all who mourn his passing is our prayer.

Written by one who loved him,
Ruby Coward

OBITUARIES

ELDER WILLIAM L. NORRIS

I have been elected by the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Association, while in session at Harmony Church on Sunday, October 15, 1972, to write the obituary of Elder William L. Norris. So I will try in my weak way to do the best I can.

I feel we, the Hopewell Association, have lost a Dear and affection friend, Pastor and

Moderator. I feel our loss is heaven's gain. He believed in Salvation by Grace and by Grace alone. He had no confidence in the flesh.

He was born in 1888, which made his stay on earth 84 years. He was married to the former Ruth Kirk for 48 years. She preceded him in death nine months and six days. His earthly journey ended on August 28, 1972.

His body was laid to rest in Memorial Chapel Gardens, following the funeral services at the Chapel in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Officiating at the services were Elder Claud Hand and Elder E. E. McCool.

Elder Norris was ordained to preach the unsearchable riches of God in 1956. He Pastored churches throughout the Hopewell Association. He was Moderator until failing health wouldn't permit.

He leaves to mourn his passing, his two daughters, Mrs. James Wallace of Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and Mrs. William Smith of Rogersville, Alabama. Survivors also include two grandchildren.

I say to the bereaved family; Weep not as those who have no hope. I feel that Elder Norris is resting in the Paradise of God, awaiting the second coming of our Lord and Saviour. Elder and Sister Norris spent the last three declining years of their lives in the Glen Haven Rest Home in Northport, Alabama.

Submitted in Love,
Bruce H. Sullivan

BROTHER RUSSELL BOAZ

Brother Russell Boaz was born August 3, 1895, and passed from this life August 9, 1972, at the age of seventy-seven. He was the son of the late George W. and Lucy M. Boaz. His wife was Mary E. Boaz, who passed away September 20, 1963. He spent his entire life in the Dry Fork Community in Virginia.

He joined Old Mountain Primitive Baptist Church in October, 1963, and was a faithful member and always there to fill his seat. We all at the church will miss him. But the Lord knows best.

He leaves one daughter, Mrs. Barbara Bryant, of Gretna, Va. and one sister, Mrs. George Payne of Danville, Va.; also two grandchildren.

His funeral was conducted at Wrenn-Yeatts Chapel by his former pastor, Elder Wallis Smith, and he was laid to rest in the Boaz Cemetery, to await the resurrection day.

The church desires a copy of this obituary to be sent to the family, one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and one for the church records.

Done by order of the church.

Elder H. W. Wray, Mo.d.
Doris Hamilton, Clerk

A MEMORIAL TO A PRECIOUS DEACON

As the natural leaves quietly fall to the ground leaving only the memories of their past behind, which speaks of the beauty and service of their lives; so to was with Deacon Barney Taylor Green who faithfully served out his life and quietly fell asleep Oct. 15, 1971, having been born Jan. 16, 1888.

Like the tender buds of the tree leaves he grew into maturity of manhood and was united in marriage with Miss Desser Henson in Dec. 1907.

Brother Green soon established himself as a good citizen of Wood County, Texas, farming for a living. He and his good wife reared two fine sons, one of which preceeded him in death.

After having received a hope in Christ he united with Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church in 1915. In 1927 Brother Green was ordained a deacon and faithfully served his church as deacon until his death, being a member fifty-six years and a deacon forty-two years.

Bro. Green became ill while dressing to attend his home association and after two weeks in the hospital he quietly passed away, leaving to mourn his passign his wife, Sister Desser Green, one son, two sisters, and two grandchildren and three great grandchildren, together with the membership of Hopewell Church and many friends. His funeral was held in the funeral chapel in Winnsboro, Texas, by his pastor assisted by Elder Loyd Wall, after which his body was laid to rest beneath a mound of beautiful flowers in the Hopewell cemetery.

May God bless Sister Green and family, together with all the bereaved. Amen.

Written by his pastor,
W. W. Taylor.

MRS. HERBERT MILLER

Elizabeth Hudson Miller was born November 20, 1901, and lived her entire life in Union Parish, La. She was united in marriage with Herbert Miller on December 23, 1920. She and Bro. Miller soon established themselves as good citizens of their community, being good neighbors and friends to all who knew them. Their home soon became known as a place of welcome to all the Old School Baptists who came to visit them.

In the Fall of 1932 Sister Miller came before Liberty Hill Church, relating an experience of grace and asking a home with the Old Baptist. She was received and was baptized by the pastor, Elder R. W. Rhodes.

Sister "Dibb", as she was known by all her friends, loved her church, the doctrine of salvation by grace, and all the brethren. She left

marks along her pathway that give evidence of one who had passed from death unto life. Her faithfulness to her church never failed right down to her death, which occured January 30, 1972, after a brief illness.

We feel most surely that she was called to a better home, leaving to mourn her passing: her dear husband, Bro. Herbert Miller, one son, Hudson Lee Miller, one daughter, Mrs. Jackie McBryde, also 3 brothers and 3 sisters, a number of nieces and nephews, one of which is one of our beloved ministers, Elder W. W. Hudson, Jr. Likewise she is greatly missed by the membership of Liberty Hill Church and our brethren in general.

One of her greatest joys was entertaining the brethren, always ready to be of service to them in any way she could. The writer's personal feelings is: I have lost a wonderful friend as well as a dear sister in the church.

Her funeral was conducted in the Liberty Hill meeting house by the writer, assisted by Elder D. E. Turner, after which her body was laid to rest in the Liberty Hill Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, to await the resurrection morning, at which time we feel that she will come forth in the likeness of the Lord's character, and in his glory to forever be with the Lord. Amen.

May God bless Brother Miller and all who mourn her passing, giving us the spirit of reconciliation unto our God, and enabling us to look unto Him for all things now and forever more. Amen.

Written by one who held her in high esteme and respect,

Elder W. W. Taylor

JULIA AYERS JOHNSON

Sister Julia Ayers Johnson, age 91, died at her home at Hurt, Virginia, November 27, 1972. She was born in Franklin County, Va., March 1, 1881, the daughter of the late Samuel Ayers and Mary Dillon Ayers.

She was married to the late John W. Johnson, and is survived by three sons: Clarence and Frank of Hurt, and Curtis of Beckley, W. Va.; four daughters: Mrs. Mabel McKinney, Roanoke, Mrs. Bernard Trent, of Hurt; Mrs. G. K. Worsham, Richmond, and Mrs. Jack Phares, of Kansas City, Mo. Also by three sisters: Mrs. Rosa Harrison, Logan, W. Va.; Mrs. Gennie Thurman, Redwood, Va., and Mrs. Annie Chitwood of Glade Hill; twenty-one grandchildren and thirty-three great grandchildren.

Sister Johnson was faithful to attend her church, Springfield at Gretna, Va. She was received by letter October 13, 1951. She had been unable to attend for several years due to bad health.

Funeral services were held from Springfield Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Mr. Ronald Davidson. Burial was in the Gretna Burial Park.

May the Lord reconcile all who mourn, and say, Thy will be done.

Written by,
Annie Tosh

ANNIE FRANCES MEADOWS

Sister Annie Frances Meadows, age sixty five, was called from us to her eternal home on December 14, 1972. She passed away at the hospital in New Bern, N.C. Sister Meadows illness began about three months before her departure. All was done for her that doctors, family and friends could do. We cannot question the will of God who loved her so much that He called her, we feel, to be with Him in paradise. We believe that our loss is her eternal gain. Sister Meadows professed a hope in the Lord and was baptized many years ago by Elder T. H. Edwards. She presented her Church and was received into our fellowship Church and was received into our fellowshpi about two years before she was called from this world of sin and sorrow. The sorrow that has come to us is deeply felt and only the Lord can fill the void and reconcile us to heaven's will. Through her afflictions she was given faith to look beyond this vale of tears to a better place, a city beyond the grave whose builder and maker is God. The weekend she spent at her home before her last visit to the hospital, she requested that her brethren come after the services at our church, and sing, pray and speak in her Saviour's name. In her weakening condition her first request was that, we sing, "Jesus though art the sinners friend", She endeavored to help us for the last time to sing her favorite hymn. The writer was blessed to visit her shortly before she passed away and her expression was that the Lord would take care of the situation and it would be alright. We cannot wish our dear sister back to suffer her afflictions that she bore with so much patience. "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed by the name of the Lord."

Sister Meadows funeral was conducted by Elders J. T. Prescott, J. J. Rhue and Mr. King.

May the Lord comfort and reconcile each of us, including her family and friends, to His holy will, is our prayer.

Surviving are: one daughter, Mrs. Phyllis Dunn of Newport News, Va.: one son, J. D. Meadows, Swansboro, N.C.: four sisters, Mrs. Cora Kittrell of Stella, Mrs. Lorenzo Meadows of Swansboro, Mrs. Lillian Henderson, Mrs.

Lillie Bordeaux, both of Jacksonville: four brothers, Ransom and Navi Morton of Jacksonville, Kadi Morton of Stella, and Noah Morton of Richmond, Va.: 8 grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Ordered in conference December 14, 1972, by Hadnot Creek Primitive Baptist Church that this memorial be prepared and one copy be placed on our Church Record, a copy sent to the family and one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Elder J. J. Rhue, Moderator
Sister Vilma G. Rhue, Clerk

SISTER ADA METZ THOMPSON

Sister Ada Metz Thompson passed away October 24, 1972, after much affliction. She was born May 16, 1892, making her stay on earth eighty years. She was the daughter of the late John M. Metz and Laura A. Mills Metz.

Sister Thompson was blessed to unite with the Primitive Baptist faith at Pine Forest Church, Floyd County, Va., and was baptized the third Sunday in October, 1921. I was told that while she was burdened join the church, she laid her head on the table and cried, and begged the Lord not to let her go to the church if it was not His will. On August 16, 1952, Sister Thompson was granted a letter of dismission from Pine Forest in the Smith River Association, and she was received by the letter at Thompson Grove Church on September 6, 1952, in the Pigg River Association, where she was faithful until death.

She leaves to mourn her passing, one brother, Reggie E. Metz, of Bent Mountain, Va.; two sisters, Mrs. Ottie M. Barr, Baltimore, Md. and Mrs. Ola M. Smith, Roanoke, Va. Also several nieces and nephews, and a host of friends.

Her funeral was held at Okey's Chapel, Roanoke, by Elder William Holland, Elder B. O. Thompson, and the writer. She was laid to rest in Sherwood Cemetery, Roanoke, beneath a lovely mound of flowers, to await the second coming of the Lord. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and the resurrection of the body. God's children will be satisfied when they awake in His likeness and see Him as He is. Written by request.

Leonard J. Brammer

SISTER MINNIE CREECH SPENCER

Sister Minnie Creech Spencer was born in 1900, and passed away May 18, 1972, in Petersburg General Hospital following an extended illness. She was the widow of the late James Rufus Spencer; and a native of Johnston County, N. C., but had been a resident of Virginia since 1922.

Her funeral was conducted in the Chapel of Gould Funeral Home, Hopewell, Va. by her pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes. Burial was in Blandford Cemetery, Petersburg, Va.

Surviving are four daughters: Mrs. Marie Neace, Mrs. Irene Wynn, Mrs. Charlotte Cheely, and Mrs. Margie Beasley, all of Colonial Heights, Va.; and eleven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Sister Spencer united with Creech's Primitive Baptist Church, Kenly, N. C. in October, 1967, and was faithful to attend services as often as she could. We are sad when we think of missing her presence and the loss of another dear member, but feel our loss to be her eternal gain.

May God bless the church and her bereaved family with a spirit of reconciliation, faith and courage to remember that, The Lord gives and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Done by order of conference June 24, 1972 by Sisters Nellie Hocutt and Mavis P. Pope.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Mod.
Jeffrey O. Creech, Clerk

BROTHER WALTER HOWELL

By order of the conference of Pittman's Grove Primitive Baptist Church, it becomes my duty to write the obituary of our precious Brother Walter Howell. He was born December 11, 1898, and passed from this vale of tears May 25, 1972. He is survived by his wife, Sister Evelyn Evans Howell; one daughter, Mrs. Mary Ann Millard; three granddaughters and one great grandson.

Brother Howell was a firm believer in the doctrine of Electing grace and the predestination of all things. I do not know of one more faithful to the dear church at Pittman's Grove, always filling his seat with true humbleness of a child of grace. Brother Howell did not talk much, and he did not have to, for just to behold the mark of love on his countenance, was inspiring to all. We loved him; but we bow in humble submission to the will of Israel's God who does all things well — who has never made a mistake; and we feel that Brother Howell is in the Land of Rest.

His funeral was preached at Pittman's Grove Church May 27, 1972, by Elder Curtis Rains and Elder Wayne Mitchell to an overflowing congregation of friends and brethren.

In conference July 8, 1972. Written by one of the least of all.

Elder Wayne Mitchell, Mod.
Brother Lee Pope, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141 DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1973 NO. 3

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3/73
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

NO DISCHARGE

Great God, before thy throne
Thy waiting people bow;
O make their cause thine own
Grant their petitions now.

Consider their sad plight,
With trials overborne;
Bid them no longer fight,
All battle-scarred and worn.

They weary are, and faint,
They long for rest and peace;
Note each afflicted saint,
And grant him quick release.

A voice from heaven sounds:
"Refuse not him who speaks;"
The Word with strength abounds
To him who for it seeks.

Have we forgotten quite
The chastening of the Lord,
And will ye do despite
To his reproving word?

Consider Jesus, who
Such contradiction bore;
Let that your faith renew,
And strength to you restore.

Your striving against sin,
And your resistance made,
To blood have not yet been;
Why then so soon dismayed?

Consider those of old,
Who untold sufferings bore
And count, as you are told,
"Them happy which endure."

Clarice E. Durand

(This paraphrase was submitted by her daughter, Sister Mildred Gordy. Sister Durand was the widow of Elder Silas H. Durand.—J.D.W.)

SAD AT THE PASSING
OF ELDER RUSTON

Duanesburg, New York 12056

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood;

Since the time is near to renew the subscription to the *Signs of the Times* I felt I should write a note.

We are few in number up here in the northeast, but I feel they that are left, still stand firm in the faith once delivered to the Saints of God. Our pastor, Elder Slauson, though well along in years, still has a keen mind on scriptual matters. God, thru his infinite mercy, has strengthened him to speak ably at our meetings.

We felt sad at the passing of Elder Ruston for he served the churches in this area for many years. We looked forward to his returning from Canada to our associations. We felt the loss of Sister Elnora Sickler very much for she was deeply rooted in the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

The Lord blessed me to attend two associations this year. The Upper Country Line and the Salisbury associations. As I met with the brethren from all parts of the country I thought of Isaiah 43rd chapter 6th verse. "I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; " The brethren came from all over, but they all spoke in accord.

God has, thru his determinate counsel

and foreknowledge, a people in every kindred tribe and tongue. Isaiah was endowed with the gift of prophecy and was instructed of God to prophesy of God's wrath against Israel. And also of the glorious salvation of the elect of God, who were to be cleansed and redeemed of their sins by the shed blood of the Lamb Christ Jesus. He is referred to in Isaiah 42nd chapter 1st verse as "My Servant." We read "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect in whom my soul delighteth? I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles." God speaks through the prophet Isaiah of all the wonderful things in store for the elect. How king's loins will be loosed to make this possible. (Isaiah 45 — 1) Isaiah tells of the folly of trusting in idols and the failing of all these false doctrines. Then after the elect of God have found they can put no trust in false doctrine, Isaiah 51st chapter 1st verse reads. "Harken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." Thus God is showing the elect what they are spiritually and what they are by nature. The elect of God bear two personalities. One that is of the man Adam and the other of the spiritual. In the 52nd chapter 1st verse read." Awake, awake put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." The elect can no longer enjoy the things of this world that he once did.

Here in the 53rd chapter we see the climax of God's way of salvation. The first verse reads. "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" It is only the Lord's people who are given eyes and ears to hear and understand these things. To the world of the nonelect the Lord's death on the cross was just an unusual incident.

We feel that the Lord's people, no matter where they come from, will know each other. For when they start to speak their conversation will bear that true and certain sound.

These are some thoughts that came to mind. I hope you will pardon any error for I feel to be the least of all, and it is only by the grace of God that I am what I am.

Enclosed $5.00 to renew my subscription for a year and $1.00 for the Indigent Fund.

With hope and trust in God,
Woodrow W. Bellinger

"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." (Ephesians 6:11)

These words of the Apostle Paul have been in my mind of late and I feel exercised to the point of writing something on them, knowing well that if this desire is of myself and the Lord has no part in it, nothing worthwhile will come of it.

Upon searching out the origin of this word armour and how it fits into the teachings and admonition of the Apostle, we must keep in mind that it's sole purpose was to protect the Lord's people against the wiles of the Devil. In it's spiritual application, it is that protective power of God, given to His elect, without which they would be unable to stand against the Devil's wiles. The Apostle had undoubtedly observed the Roman soldiers and men of valor wearing the armour made by man, to protect them against their enemy in battle, and he envisioned that the Lord's people likewise were constantly engaged against Satan, an enemy; thus He provided armour for them, which the Apostle admonished them to put on and wear, not just a part of it, but THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD. Those who are to engage an enemy in battle in this world, in the past and in these days, were known as Soldiers and it was timely that this title was given in olden times to the Lord's people who were destined to be engaged constantly against the Devil. Thus the title of Soldiers was used by those of olden times, and others down

thru the annals of time; and by the Hymnists inspired to write sacred songs.

We find the word armour does not apply only to God's protective power, but it also applies to Satan's dominion over man, it being the strong and powerful lusts of sin, ignorance, etc., which are the armour he used to keep his power and dominion in the hearts of men. St. Luke 11:22 brings this out, showing when the Lord takes over, "He taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divided his spoils." We find that the word armour was widely used by the Apostle, it's salient use being against the Devil's wiles, and it being such graces, and spiritual weapons as are for the defense of the soul, and whereby we may be enabled to combat with our spiritual enemies. In Romans 13:12 he wrote, "...Let us therfore cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light." Again in 2 Cor. 6-7 he referred to it as "The Armour of Righteousness."

The Apostle brought out further who the real enemy was that the Lord's people are always to be engaged against. In Ephesians 6:12, we find, "For we wrestle not against flesh, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of his world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." This armour must, therefore, be used to combat Satan's power or standing as a principality, a ruler of darkness of this world, etc. Principalities are, we find, a royal state or those having dominion over many people, so the word applies both to Satan and to earthly powers. The Apostle, in Titus 3:1, told him to admonish and exhort the Church, "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates," etc. This was timely counsel to the Lord's people in those days and for all time yet to come to pass. How many do we see today who claim to be Christians and some with big titles in Churches, in the front ranks of demonstrators, or linked up with groups who violently oppose the Laws of our various branches of Government? Are not they, and all others so engaged, under the direct power and dominion of Satan? The Apostle then continued in verses 13-18, naming the various parts of which the WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD consists, "having your loins girt about with truth and having the breastplate of righteousness," etc. What a wonderful aromour this is in it's complete assemblage, and it is freely given to those Soldiers, —the Lord's chosen people, all cut and fitted to their spiritual being, and which will never cease to be effective against the wiles of the Devil.

Now to enumerate or list all the wiles of Satan, would take much space. Much has been written about them in the Scriptures and by many in writings and in songs thru out the ages past, thus the Lord's people can readily place most all them. I find in the bound volume of lettters written some 200 years ago by John Newton, born in London in 1725 who became a "Soldier of the Cross," leaving many inspiring letters and poems and preached sermons behind him when he departed this world, a very wonderful letter treating on the wiles of Satan's devices, which he termed "Satan's principal devices," saying,"Satan is a hard taskmaster, when he interferes in the performance of our spiritual duties." Some several lines were written on each of the salient devices, which is set forth only in title, viz; 1. To hide from the Lord's people, the Lord's designs in permitting him thus to rage. 2. To make them utter impatient speeches, which do but aggravate their distress. 3. To persuade them that all they feel and tremble at, arises immediately from their own hearts. 4. To drive them from the throne of grace. 5. (adding something from another letter) Satan's violent temptations when he is permitted to come in as a flood, and to overpower the apparent exercise of every grace by a torrent of blasphemies and evil imaginations.

It is seen that the Apostle admonished the Lord's people to not only put on this WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD, but to wear it constantly, all the time, for Satan never ceases in his tireless efforts to weaken and conquer, if possible, all the

Lord's people. Now when something is worn constantly, particularly bright shiny armour, it will become dull in appearance. Thus this armour we have in mind needs shining, and thru the medium of prayer, we find this is done. The words written long ago are fitting:—

"Restraining prayer, we cease to fight;
Prayer makes the Christian's armour bright."

It is worthy of note to read I Samuel 38—40, and find that Saul armed David with his armour (made by man), which David cast off before facing the Philistine giant with his sling and five stones. This shows, I believe, that the armour of God was David's sufficiency and likewise the sufficiency of all the Lord's people in combatting enemies both naturally and spiritually.

Concluding, will refer to Ephesians 6:12, —that part "Against spiritual wickedness in high places." Mankind dwells here on earth, so the "high places" mentioned are here on earth. I believe they are the places of great renown, the glory of the multitudes ruled or swayed by false doctrines which is in truth and effect, spiritual wickedness. To mention but few of the known number of them, we have in Rome, the Vatican from which comes unbelievable claims of their divine right to be God's Church on earth; the Pope's taking the place of Jesus Christ on earth, the supreme judge of heaven and earth, the judge of all, being judged by no one: God himself on earth. Such claim was made by a high-up official of theirs in Chicago in recent years and has never been renounced. Also we have Mecca, the so-called Holy city of the Moslem-Mohammedism—Islamic million's faith. Mohammed was born there, and by his own appointment, was their divine prophet, second only to their God Allah. He brought about their Bible, the Koran. In Salt Lake City, Utah we have the stronghold-high place of the Latter Day Saints' millions. Their President in 1962, as carried in the news media, said their church is the kingdom of the Lord set up to endure forever and never to be dethroned or given to another, etc. One could go on and on naming many others of millions upon millions of followers after false leaders abroad and in this country, and having untold millions of dollars at their command and great holdings of church properties, which would properly come within the category the Apostle had in mind. Undoubtedly there are many of the Lord's elect amongst them, to be brought out of such darkness at the Lord's own appointed time.

One who hopes and prays that he has put on the WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD, continually wear it on through his journey through this vile, wicked and sinful world, warding off Satan's fiery darts, and standing against his vile deviced to the very end, when Satan will be banished forever to his eternal abode of darkness; and the Lord will gather his Jewels unto Him in that blissful eternal home.

Wm. O. Hall
P. O. Box 595
Mount Vernon, Wash. 98273

REJOICE WITH JOY UNSPEAKABLE

A225 Emerson Street
Winona, Miss. 38967

Dear Elder Spangler:

Dear brother in the Lord and our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ. Christian greetings to you and all others of like precious faith, who sometimes were afar off but now are made nigh by the shed blood and righteousness of our blessed Lord and Redeemer. We who not only were in darkness but darkness itself, alienated and separated from God by a rebellious nature, and the enmity of our heart and mind.

We then who by sad experience are made to know the depravity of a deceitful heart and darkened mind, then through a God given faith are made to rejoice both in the person and the finished work of the second person in the Holy Trinity, who bore our sins in his own body on the tree. And as these and all other divine principles of spiritual truth are revealed to us, it makes us

rejoice with joy unspeakable as we, in a measure, are filled with His glory. Yes this same Jesus who manifestly was made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, shall continue to shine brilliantly in the gospel heaven until this present world shall be no more. It is by the Spirit of our God and the constraining love of Christ that enables his called and qualified servants to preach the glad tidings of the blessed gospel, to feed His sheep and His lambs, and declare the whole counsel of God: that salvation from regeneration to glorification is of the Lord — to whom belongs the power, the honor and the glory both now and evermore.

May God continue to bless you, Brother Spangler, with the other editors, to continue to send forth our good paper, the *Signs of the Times*, for many years to come. May God continue to lead, guide and direct and protect His people to their journey's end in this present evil world. Brethren, pray for me.

In humble hope,
Elder Lavis Stewart

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44 Durrett Grove
Tuscaloosa, Ala. 35401

Dear Brother Spangler:

Enclosed is an article I have written for publication in the *Signs of the Times*, providing you deem it worthy, and you think it will be of any comfort and edification to the dear people of Christ's kingdom. I know that I have suffered great trials and afflictions day by day in this life. My age and absence of a clear mind is very sensitive to me; and my spelling is also bad.

At times I feel like that I just can't make it any further; but there is this article and one or two more that I desire to write before my health declines to where I can't do so.

I have for years felt like I would like to write, that which I truly hope has been the Lord's dealing with me. And to, I would like, the Lord willing, to write my understanding directly on the nature of the new birth. But that, as all the scripture, especially the fundamental doctrine of our Lord, to me is a mystery which is hard to be understood; and more so, to explain.

I am enclosing personal check for $10.00 which you may use as you see fit, or as you please.

Our Brother Gregory Duren is joining the Air Force, and I will surely miss him.

With all love and best wishes to you and Elder Wood. Grace, mercy and peace be with you both, in your publication, and in all your labor of love in the Lord.

(Elder) John L. Sanders

THE RESURRECTION

"Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the Trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (1 Cor. 15:51,52)

It is my desire to write some of my understanding of the scriptural teaching of the resurrection of Christ and His people. It is my understanding from the scriptures, and I hope by divine revelation to me, that Christ Jesus was the first to rise from the dead, the first-fruit unto God of the resurrection, the first-fruit of them that slept, the first begotten from the dead: that this same Jesus was crucified and put to death in the flesh, was buried and lay in the grave three days and nights, and then arose from the grave abolishing death, and destroyed him who had the power of death, which is the Devil, and arose victorious and triumpant over death and hell. And after being seen forty days by many witnesses, ascended into heaven at the right hand of the Majesty on high: there to, and does, appear in person glorified for all his people who are redeemed by his precious blood, out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people under heaven.

It is worthy to note that the Apostle

used the word "shall" five times in the two verses of scripture quoted above. And we are sure that no other portion of scripture is to be found that teaches otherwise than that heading this writing. And we note that the Apostle himself was in hope of the resurrection and change himself, and all the elect of God for whom Christ died for their sins, and arose for their justification, and was graciously endued with the Holy Ghost to declare faithfully and truthfully the resurrection of the dead. The Apostle had already been quickened and given spiritual life, and lived by the faith of the Son of God, being delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's love, mercy, grace and truth, but still was in hope of the resurrection of all the saints of God in Christ Jesus.

This is proved by his saying, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." And, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Also, "If the dead rise not, let us eat and drink (take your fill of fleshly desires) for tomorrow we die," and there would be no more of us. But it is taught in the above scriptures that we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

It seems clear to me that the trumpet will sound at the second personal appearing of Christ; for it is written, "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we (including Paul and I hope me) which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (spirit), and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Ever be with the Lord seems long enough, doesn't it? This is declared to take place in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye — as quick as the lightning shineth from one part of heaven unto the other. This is a mystery just as the Apostle said it was; but surely the Sovereign God, who made the lightning as well as the twinkling of the eye, can by his almighty power act in the resurrection of the dead, and change in the living, as quickly as these.

Furthermore, there is no time in death: those that have been dead or asleep in Christ (counting time with the living) a thousand years, it is but a moment or twinkling of an eye with them. Christ lay in Joseph's new tomb three days, as he said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again." And that he did! "Come, "said the angel, "see the place where the Lord lay. He is not here, He is risen."

Christ Jesus is both God and man? He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit and raised from death. It is written, "A body hast thou prepared me, O God." Not a body for me, but a body hast thou prepared me; and God raised Him from the dead, glorified in the very presence of God the Father.

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like Him: for we shall see Him as he is." If we did not appear in His likeness at His appearing, then we could not see him as he is in his glory. But we shall be raised in glory, in His glorious likeness. None shall see Christ in the beauty of His glorious person except those in His perfection of Beauty.

I feel I have the right to say concerning His people, that they will not only be raised and taken to glory, but will be raised in glory. They will be in His glorious likeness immediately, as quick as lightning at Christ's appearing. "So also is the resurrection of the dead (the saints that are asleep in Christ,) it is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural

body (so was Jesus) ; it is raised a spiritual body. The twinkling of an eye is so quick it doesn't obscure in the least an object the eye is seeing; but the second and personal appearing of Christ Jesus, and the appearing of his people in his likeness, will not only be that quick, but will be the most glorious double appearing that has ever been seen or heard of.

"For our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Philp. 3:20,21) This is said to be our vile body changed and fashioned like unto His glorious body. Our vile body, doesn't seem to be speaking of the church, for the church is called the body of Christ, and his people members of his body in particular; and God has set each member in the body, church or kingdom as it pleased him. Of course, each member or person will be changed, which is called our vile body, or each individual's vile body, for they personally will awake with Christ Jesus' likeness. "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: when I awake in thy likeness, I shall be satisfied." The resurrection is a personal thing with all the saints of God, just as their salvation is personal with them. Paul said, "From henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me in that day; and not to me only but to all them that love his appearing." Why? Because he loves me (individually) and gave himself for me.

It is awful how greatly Jesus suffered for sinners. I have often said that if we wished to see how greatly Jesus hated sin, look at Jesus on the cross — and to see how greatly Jesus loved his people, look at Jesus on the cross, bearing the curse and wrath of God for wretched sinners. He died for their sins in their stead, and rose again for their justification. And being justified freely by his grace, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. These God predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son; and it behooved Christ, by whom are all things and for whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering. They are predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ; and if children then heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Of this they have an earnest in this life. We not only adopt a body of a child, but the child which has a body: and God's people are adopted children by Jesus Christ.

Some claim some part of the Adam sinner is born over again by the new birth, and some part is adopted. That is not God's doing but man's imagination. The new birth is from above of the divine nature of the spirit of God, of an incorruptible seed by the living Word of God. Christ is our life and resurrection. We live here by the faith of the Son of God. All are the children of God by faith, and that faith is of and in Jesus Christ. Christ is said to be in us the hope of glory. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory: see him as he is and be like him; and ever be with him.

It is the poor, afflicted child of grace, who has received two births of diverse natures, who has warfare between the two natures. Neither of these natures is the child, but the child has them both. It is this child that is admonished to put off the old man and put on the new man. "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, lonsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another. . ." as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us. It is this poor and unworthy child, now in warfare, trials and tribulations, that will in person finally and eternally be perfectly and completely delivered from such bondage of corruption, and be changed into the likeness and image and liberty of Jesus and his glory.

"For this corruptible must put on (be changed to) incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So

when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? (Jesus tasted it). O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, (Jesus atoned for it) and the strength of sin is the law. (Jesus fulfilled it). But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Be it so, O Lord Jesus. I know that I am very imperfect in wisdom, knowledge and understanding. If some of the brethren see where I have erred from the truth, I will appreciate their kind and tender correction.

(Elder) John L. Sanders

CALLED WITH AN HOLY CALLING"

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel!" (2 Tim. 1:9—10)

As the Lord blesses us, may we meditate upon the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ. What did Paul mean by saying "Who hath saved us?" When did this take place? Notice that God did the saving, and man did not have any part in the matter. God did the saving in the person of Jesus Christ. (See Col. 1:15) The death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and intercession of Jesus Christ are what is necessary for the salvation of sinners. This was made manifest when Jesus came upon this earth in the flesh, and at the appointed time when he died in the room and stead for his people.

We believe that the salvation of God's people has always been secure in the mind and purpose of God. God saw all of his people even before the foundation of the world. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son." (Rom. 8:29) God knew his people before this world was in existence. In this sense, "who hath saved us," means that the salvation of God's people has always been secure in Jesus Christ. Someone might say we are speculating, but let us consider this Scripture: "That which hath been is now, and that which is to be hath already been, and God requireth that which is past." (Ecc. 3:15) Notice this expression: "That which is to be hath already been." When this world was created, it was yet to come when mankind would die by the fall, and this death would pass upon all men in Adam, and then later on in the years to come Jesus would come upon this earth, keep the law and fulfill it, and then die for his people to satisfy the just demands of the law. All this has already been in the mind and purpose of almighty God. There is no new thing under the sun, so God has already seen all of this from the beginning. (see Ecc. 1:9)

"Called us with an holy calling." God has called his people from the beginning to be his own. "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:" (2 Thess. 2:13) This is an holy calling. Jesus has made you holy by washing away your sins in his blood. No man shall see the Lord without holiness. (see Heb. 12:14) "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an *holy nation*, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:" (1 Peter 2:9) the righteousness of Jesus has made his people holy. "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride

adorneth herself with her jewels." (Isaiah 61:10)

"Not according to our works." This salvation is not according to the works of man. If it were, then man would have that much to brag about and boast and pat himself on the back, and in turn man would be praising himself for his own good works. The Scripture says that God will not give his glory to another. Therefore all honor and praise and glory belong to God.

The purpose of God was that salvation would not be by the works of man, but that it would be by Grace. As we think of grace, we think of a free gift. If we earn something, then someone is indebted to pay us what we earn. If salvation were conditional, God would be indebted to give this to those that kept the conditions. Following this reasoning, salvation would not be by grace, but it would be by debt. (see Rom. 4:4) If that reasoning be true, then creature praise would be heard in heaven, and men would not within their hearts appreciate the works, suffering, etc. of Jesus. We are glad that this is not true. Jesus came to those that were sick, lame, and felt the need of a redeemer. Jesus is the saviour of siners. From time to time, do you not praise God from your heart for his wonderful works to you? We read in the Scriptures that the heavenly host shall render praises unto God for this mercy that endureth for ever. "And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." (Rev. 7:10) Notice the praises of the angels: "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beast and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands: Saying with a loud voice, worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." (Rev. 5:11-12)

This salvation was given to the sheep before the world began. "Which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." This salvation is by Jesus. "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." (1 Cor. 2:2) "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts. 4:12) This shows that all the works were done by Jesus. "...I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (John 17:4) The works were finished by Jesus. As Jesus hung upon the cross and before he gave up the ghost, he said, "It is finished." the poet said: "It is finished, it is finished, Christ has borne the heavy load." "For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness... " (Rom. 9:28) God finishes a work that he began. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. 1:6)

God determined the salvation of his people before the world began. "In whom we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." (Eph. 1:11)

"But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ." This salvation was made manifest to you at the appointed time, was it not? This salvation is made manifest in due time to all of the elect of God. This is made possible by the work of the Holy Ghost. "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26) "He shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you." (John 16:15)

You cannot sing the sweet songs of the redeemed until you know something about your lost and ruined condition. You cannot sing "Amazing Grace" from your heart until you know how miserable it is to be lost.

"Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see"

Since this salvation is made manifest by the appearing of Jesus within one, it

gives us more evidence that it is a heart felt matter. Salvation is a good sound to a poor broken hearted sinner. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." (Psalm 89:15) It is joyful within the heart, and it causes one to praise the Lord for his mercy that endureth for ever. "From the rising of the sun, until the going down of the same the Lord's name is to be praised." (Psalm 113:3) "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." (Eph. 5:19) Heart felt religion is wonderful! Your eyes are turned upward to the Lord, and your heart leaps within you, as you praise the Lord from your heart. "As the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." (Psalm 42:1) There is an earnest seeking after the Lord. Sometimes we cannot find him, as Job experienced; "Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!" (Job 23:3) It causes us sorrow when we cannot meditate upon Spiritual things any time we desire to. This causes us to pray unto the Lord to bless us to meditate upon Spiritual things. Since we know something about the weakness of the flesh, we yearn for a closer walk with God. "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I." (Psalms 61:2)

"Who hath abolished death." Jesus has abolished this death for his elect only. This eternal death or eternal separation between God and man faced all of mankind. But, Jesus redeemed his people from the curse of the law. Therefore, he has abolished death for his people, and they shall receive the gift of God, which is eternal life. "For sin shall not have dominion over you: For you are not under the law, but under grace." (Rom. 6:14) "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." (Heb. 2:14) "Who delivered us from so great a death, and doeth deliver: and in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us." (2 Cor. 1:10) This has reference to Jesus who delivered his people from the curse or this death which the world will suffer for ever.

The gospel is the power of God to give salvation to his people. (Rom. 1:16) God gives Spiritual life to his elect. "For in him we live, and move, and have our being, as certain also of your own poets have said, for we are also his offspring." (Acts 17:28) "...The gift of God is eternal life..." (Rom. 6:23) It is only thru the mercy of Jesus that we shall live for ever.

These deep mysteries concerning the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, that God gives salvation to all of his people, and that God is able to keep them by his mighty power, etc., are revealed to the saints in due time. "How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." (Eph. 3:3-5) We realize this last Scripture leads to a deep, beautiful subject, but we quoted it to bring out the point that at the appointed time God reveals the deep mysteries to his saints which it pleased him to withhold to himself for a period of time. Remember, the secret things belong to the Lord, but the revealed things belong to his people. (see Duet. 29:29)

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

HE DOESN'T NEED HELP

243 Baker Street
Warren, Ark. 71671

Dear Editors of the Signs:

My subscription is out and I don't want to miss a single copy, so am enclosing $10.00 for which please renew my subscription for another two years.

It is indeed a blessing that God gives us such spiritual minded men to write to

His people of the wonderful works of His grace to His chosen, poor and afflicted people. Paul said, "By grace are ye saved, ...not of works lest any man should boast." And that we are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works. When? It was decreed in the Covenant of Grace before the world was. So we poor worms of the dust were not there to help in any way, as far as eternal salvation is concerned. And when man was formed of the dust, He didn't have him there to help, as he didn't need his help; and doesn't yet require man's help in any way.

The preaching of the gospel is foolishness to those that perish, but to the elect it is the power of God. May we be blessed to give God the glory for the witness within our poor souls, which He has given us by his quickening Spirit, and the applying of the blood of His Son, our Elder Brother and Saviour Jesus Christ the Lord. All that Jesus shed his blood for to redeem, are prepared for heaven and immortal glory.

I have felt at times that He would be just should I have to suffer all the tribulations that Job did. Yet I quake to think that I should have to suffer as he did. It is impossible that one of the redeemed saints should be cast into hell. The hymn, "Show pity Lord" by Watts, page 155 in Lloyd's Hymn Book, is the confession of one whose eyes have been opened and brought under conviction of sin. One must have such feelings or there would be no conviction at all. It is expressed in remembrance of that feeling of just condemnation; but never can it have an application to one who has experienced the pardon of sin, and has a hope of eternal life. "Wherein they greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations, that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honor, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." It is in this sense the expression may properly be used. If otherwise it would belie our hope; which cannot be, since, "For by one offering He has perfected forever them that are sanctified."

In gospel bonds.

A sister I hope,
Mrs. Charlie Harrod

Rt. 7
Carthage, Miss. 39051

Dear Editors:

I send greeting to the *Signs of the Times* and want to renew my subscription.

I am seventy-eight years old, and hope to be able to read this good paper as long as I live. I thank God for preserving a remnant that stands firm on the Rock that the gates of hell shall not prevail against.

I hope that it may be pleasing to the Almighty God to have mercy on this unworthy and poor sinner.

I beg your prayers.

Doxie Edwards

LOVES THE PRECIOUS PAPER

3116 Maurice Avenue
Richmond, Va. 23224

Dear Brother Spangler:

I enclose $15.00 to pay for the *Signs of the Times* for two shut in sisters. They are two lovely sisters and they would like to have the paper. I would like to share my paper with them but we live quite a distance apart, and it is quite hard to get it to them. Use the remainder as you see fit.

I love the precious paper and look forward to it coming every month — it has so much food for my hungry soul.

I am now nearing my 82nd birthday. I know I have not much longer to stay here. I used to dread death, but now I do not dread it. I feel the Lord has spared me so many years here. My heart and mind are on heavenly things. I love the Lord and pray He loves me. My mind is on a heavenly home, if I be blessed of God to be one of his little ones. When you go to the throne of grace, remember me.

Your sister in hope of eternal life.

Sincerely,
Nannie E. Varnier

Danville, Virginia March, 1973

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BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, at Scott's Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in April, 1973.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 744,
Bennettsville, S. C. 29512

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To January 1, 1973)

A Friend, Ore.	$ 8.00
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OBSERVING FIFTIETH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

The children of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Lambeth wish to extend an invitation to the brethren and friends, to meet with them in the observance of their parent's fiftieth wedding anniversary, on Sunday, March 18, 1973, between the hours of two and five o'clock, at the Monticello Club House on Hycone Road, about one mile east of Monticello Church. No gifts please.

EDITORIAL

ISAIAH 31

How forgetful that poor sinners are. This forgetfulness has followed them all the historical scenes of their life. Yet, as handicapped as they have been by this besetting sin, they refuse to acknowledge it all of the way. Instead, they are always reminding the Lord of their good intentions and dependable qualities.

If the Lord wills, let us pray. O Lord our heavenly Father, we beg thee to teach us how frail that we are; to understand that there is not any stability within us as far as our flesh is concerned; to understand that even though thy mercies and thy deliverances were but yesterday, that soon, soon, we have forgotten them; to know that we must be shown again and again the miracles that have been displayed in our lives, and O Lord, even though it is by fire, by the heating of the furnace, save us; but in mercy consume our evil works. Amen.

The deliverance of our fathers out of Egypt was most spectacular; that deliverance was altogether by the power of God. God sent Joseph into the land of Egypt. This land was darkness. There is not any indication that there was any light or knowledge there concerning God. Joseph was not sent by men. They, as far as their part in his abduction and being sold into Egypt, did not have any intention of it coming out as it did. They did not, in their feelings, have any sin to be saved from. Their intention was *his* destruction, not *their* salvation. They did not volunteer to go down later. Until each of my readers have experienced (in nature) starvation, I do not want even an echo or reverberation of an echo, that they could have helped going down into Egypt. *I do not want to hear of that.* After getting down there, and after Pharoah had grown indifferent toward Israel to the extent of enslaving them in bondage, I do not think that any reference to the ability of Israel to get of themselves would be wholesome doctrine; I do not think, yea, I know, that it would not be becoming to sound doctrine. I freely acknowledge that I know but little, and I am sometimes afraid about that little, but I want to know, yea, sometimes, I do know, the doctrine of God's saving grace, even to the extent that I am not afraid of *it*, nor to contend *for* it, nor for gainsayers to deny it; therefore, if I have a reader that feels unable to take a step, or to say a word, or to do a thing because of an indwelling of sin, then I write for your comfort and edification. If on the other hand, I have a reader that *is* able to save himself in any aspect of the Christian walk, I call on you to gird yourself and speak right out to us, always with this reservation, that you find us a character in Holy Writ that leaves us evidence of being able to do that.

The time came when the oppression of Pharoah became unbearable. This was then a time of prayer, a time of crying out to the Lord for mercy, a time of begging Him to undertake for them and to deliver them out of bondage. This petition did not set in when the designs of Joseph's brethren was being executed; it did not come up before God when the fatness of Egypt was being enjoyed in plentitude. Perhaps there is as much talk today about prayer as ever there was in the world, but those that are talking about the need of it are not doing any of it. The pleasures of Egypt are being indulged in without a qualm of conscience; the fill of sin is being taken by everyone on every side; the consequences of sin and the goodness of God are two things that are not being sought by these. There is today, as there was in that terrible day, prayer ascending up to God. They were not talking about the need for prayer; *they were praying.* They were not saying that people needed to pray more; they were praying constantly. O dear saints, what pleasure it gives me to declare to you that God heard the prayer of these praying characters, and that He likewise hears every prayer of His praying people today.

When the people of God have needed a leader, he raised up that leader. When His people needed the afflictions of the rod; when they have needed, according to His judgment, the chastening which corrects and teaches; when the Moabitish washpot (Psa. 60:8) is to be used for the cleansing of the walk, for the separation of the precious from the vile, for the purging of him or her that have become wise above what is written, it is given to them. Such a leader was Moses, and methinks that I will not have one disputant about this being the exclusive work of God. The raising up of Pharoah was God's work, and it was for this reason alone, to wit, That God shows His power, and that His name be declared throughout all the earth. God has been apologized for by those whose breath came from the same source that the raising up of Pharoah did, but I am sure that His work and name was not besmirched by His work, nor His name's honor and glory enhanced by the apology. Pharoah was wicked, and the wicked are the sword of the Lord, and Israel's God has a perfect right to lift up His own sword, has He not? If not, why

not? Men may keep keepsakes and heirlooms, but when that which God made a thing for has been accomplished then God is through with it, and He destroys it. That has been declared down the ages and will continue to be declared; if not, then that which God raised Pharoah up for will not be accomplished. The rod of God's anger will be raised up whether it is Pharoah or the Assyrian or the Chaldeans or Herod or Pilate or the present day persecutors, and when they have been used as His sword they will be destroyed.

Behold, who will, the wisdom and the love of God as made manifest in the travel of Israel into Egypt. How my heart is made to leap for joy when such is laid down before us for our rest and relaxation in the green pastures and beside the deep and smooth streams of everlasting love. Moses, the needed leader, is raised up and nurtured by Egypt (but not of Egypt) for the salvation of Israel and the destruction of this cruel nation. Sometimes I hear people speak of God's injustice in doing things. I have heard it said that it would be unjust for God to predestinate all things and then punish those that did evil; I have heard it said that it would be unjust for God to hate one and love the other, seeing that all were guilty; I have heard God arraigned on every hand by those that would not have Him reign over them, but each time I hear it, by whomever it is, I am reminded that God is going to say to that self-sovereign, Who art thou that repliest against God (Dan 4:35; Rom. 9:20). The Lord raised up Moses and placed Him in the court of Pharoah to educate him and prepare him for the work before him. How wonderful that both were raised up to fill their sphere and state of action; one to the approval of God, the other to be destroyed in the sea.

I do hope that my readers are cognizant of the illustrious matters before us; that we are beholding the work of God in our salvation; that we are traveling together in the unfolding of the text. If there is a finger in all Christendom that can point out one thing that a man or set of men has done to bring this wonderful work about, I would like for it to be raised now. I am getting too far in the evening; the shadows are lengthening too far for me to trifle with such sacred and divine and eternal things in a flippant manner. If men have played or can play any part in being brought out of Egypt (darkness) I need and want to know it. Especially, since we are coming to the climax of this deliverance, I would like to see the man that would even mention a name other than that of God that had anything to do with the salvation or deliverance of the children of Israel at the Red Sea. Furthermore, I would press upon the children of God not to look to idols for salvation; that they not only remember that every last one of the children of Israel were delivered *across* this sea, and that every last one of the Egyptians were destroyed *in* it.

Now to notice that text a little more particularly. All that I have written has been unfolding of the text without saying a thing about the letter of it. Here is the nation of Israel. Here is the monument to His saving grace. Here is the one way that God delivers Israel. This way is not only the one way; it is the only way. All of this salvation is of God. Not withstanding this wonderful deliverance, as soon as the Assyrian army encamps round about them, they flee to Egypt for help. Ah, how we assail one another for an imagined weakness. Look at our brethren back there. O the times that the Lord refreshed the memory of Israel about His high and outstretched arm that delivered them at the Sea; and yet they forgot it. How we poor sinners do forget His many mercies and blessings and benefits to us. Not withstanding all his rehearsing His deliverance of them out of the snare in Egypt, they forgot it again and again. This time is not an exception. Having forgotten the Arm that delivered them, they turned back to Egypt for help. What a spectacle. What a momument to the weakness of poor sinners. So many I have heard tell a wonderful experience in being delivered in their first experience, only to soon

forget it; how often have I heard those dear children of God sing

Amazing grace how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see,

and yet, instead of saying grace has brought me safe thus far and grace will lead me home, they now are saying that it is by my works that I acceptance gain with Him. There is not any difference in the plight of the Israelites in this situation and those of today that feel some portion of salvation is in their hands.

All of the Egyptians were men, even as weak as those that were destroyed at the Sea. They depended on horses, and this is always disastrous to those that depend on them (Psa. 33:17;147:10; Hos. 1:7); they that ride on horses, and those they would help, must both fall before the fiery indignation that awaits them in Zion, for they will always find the furnace highly heated in Jerusalem for the consumption of any that would depend on Egypt. The Lord hath spoken clearly and with power, that salvation is of the Lord, and when Israel practices vanity by going down to Egypt for help, He will be in their midst as the lion roaring over its prey. As the shepherds of natural sheep will not move the lion in its attack on their flock, just so, in the same manner, in the same degree, will God not spare those shepherds that speak for Israel in the hour when he comes in the fire of His Spirit in their consumption. (Heb. 12:29)

As birds flying, so will the Lord defend Jerusalem; defending also he will deliver it; and passing over he will preserve it. How wonderful is this deliverance to poor sinners. As the eagle builds her nest on the highest crag, and then flies concealed in the ethereal atmosphere above ready to suddenly descend in her fury, just so will the Lord sit highly enthroned round about Jerusalem, to defend Israel and to expose and lay waste by intense burning in the heated furnace in Jerusalem, all her enemies. In the midst of this fiery ordeal for the enemies, God speaks with a still small voice, and yet in power to Israel, to return unto him from whom the children of Israel have deeply revolted. This is just before a great conflagration is to be felt in Zion and Jerusalem. The day is at hand when all the lying vanities of Egypt are to be laid aside; when all the idols and arms of flesh are to be cast from Israel. The Lord is coming upon the children of Israel in fiery vengeance upon all that would make golden calves and dance around them; upon all that would go to Egypt and it has such a devastating experience to them that pass over to their stronghold, and their princes shall be afraid of the ensign, saith the Lord, whose fire is in Zion, and furnace in Jerusalem.

Let us remember that Zion and Jerusalem are the same city. Zion was a higher part of the city in a south-western direction, but they were referred to as the same city. The children of God have not come to Sinai the mountain of fire that destroyed, but they have come to Mount Zion, and unto the fire of salvation. They that reside here have been chosen to this end. Moab, the wash pot of the Lord; Assyria the rod of the anger of the Lord against all idols and isms and theories; the consuming fire of this furnace, all, all is here for the cleansing and purifying of the elect of God. The trial of this fire is destructive, but not the children of God themselves. Their works are all destroyed, but they themselves are saved as by fire.

All of the saints have experienced this trial by fire. The trial was not desirable to the flesh, but Job that was passing through the trial, recognized where it was coming from. The saddest part of it all was that even his wife did not know about what was taking place. The trial was indeed intense so much so that he lost her companionship, but it only consumed that which was to be blamed in him. The sadness of the trial was such that he lost the felt companionship with his God, but, while he lost sight of Him, he received a valuable lesson in it all. He was blessed to trust Him and was going to be gold without any alloy or spot

or blemish or any such thing. What a blessing it is to know that even though the fire is grievous, that it is purifying and separating the precious from the vile.

Our beloved brother wrote us a lovely epistle in which he enjoined on us not to be misled about the fiery trial which is to try us. It is a fiery trial which tries those that dwell in Jerusalem; none are exempt from this trial (I Pet. 4:12); and another of our dear brethren declared that *every* man's work shall be made manifest; that the day (that is, the day of that work) shall declare it, *because* it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try *every* man's work of what sort it is. This fire is in Zion or Jerusalem or in the heaving bosom of *every* child of God. It does not go out by night nor by day; it remains constantly burning and bringing to naught and nonentity every principle and doctrine and thought and deed that would prove derogatory to that salvation which was treasured in Christ before the world began, and was made manifest by the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. This fire destroys Egyptian bondage and Assyrian cruelty and saves poor sinners by consuming their works and removing the ashes out of the way, and giving them beauty instead. (Isa. 61:3)

Written by request of an aged sister in Texas.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

SOWING IN TEARS.

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy."—Psalm 126:5

But to whom does this sweet promise apply? Who is it that sows in tears? No one in nature. We would think it very strange to see a man weeping while engaged in sowing grain in a well-cultivated field. His tears and work would contradict each other. His work declares a confidence in the ground and in the seed, and an assurance that a rich harvest will reward him for his trouble, while his tears express a lack of any such confidence and assurance. The sowing of seed is a cheery, pleasant work, full of bright hopes and joyful anticipations. The husbandman does this work in full confidence as to the result. His ground has been thoroughly prepared, his seed is good, he has chosen the proper season, and he has no reason to doubt that he will in due time reap a satisfactory harvest. In this work, therfore, he has no cause to weep. In nature seed-time is not time for tears.

The natural man, in doing those works by which he expects to gain the favor of God and obtain an entrance into heaven, cannot be said to sow in tears. The field is his own heart, and he regards it as good soil, which he is able to prepare in a suitable manner. In it he plants and sows the best of seed, as he regards it, and expects with the utmost confidence that his labor will be abundantly rewarded. He sees no more cause for weeping than a man who is sowing wheat in a rich, mellow soil, on a clear, beautiful day.

If one who owned a small piece of land, which was all his dependence, would find it failing from year to year to respond to his labors, yielding less and less, until finally it ceased to produce anything; and if again he should go forth with all his remaining seed, which he feared had lost all its virtue, and should scatter it with all his remaining strength upon the soil that had proven worthless before, making this last feeble effort with scarce a shadow of hope, even against hope, because he sees no other possible chance of preserving life; we should expect to find that man sowing in tears.

So when one who has been working the field of his own heart with satisfactory results hitherto, begins to notice a failure in the returns, begins to realize the blighting effects of sin, and finds that he has no remedy for that deadly blight, from that time he begins to sow in tears. The field grows worse in his view, until he finds it entirely barren of all that is

good, but fearfully and increasingly fruitful of all that is evil. It seems a terribly hopeless field to work in, but it is all he has, and he cannot get away from it. He cannot but still try and try, and hope against hope that he may yet succeed in finding some good spot, some little valuable soil, that may yield at least one good thing. If only one good prayer, if even one sigh or groan, that he could know was from a pure desire, could be brought forth, there would be some relief. But sin is in everything, in every cry, in every breath; and even the best of seed seems to become bad when it comes into his hand. If he tries to sow any part of the word of God, the very words seem to lose their pure and holy character as they fall into that field, and to be only the letter which killeth; to mean nothing when there but to manifest the hyprocrisy and worthlessness of that deceitful heart and utterly corrupt nature. Here is one that sows in tears.

What an unspeakable blessing it is for one to be taught the corrupt and barren nature of this field, although in learning this solemn and important lesson he is reduced to such a wretched condition, and brought to the borders of death. What a blessed thing it is to be forced to scatter the last handful of seed upon what he now sadly believes to be a thoroughly unfruitful soil. Every effort to do some good thing in the sight of a holy God, every effort to cleanse ourselves from evil, and to make some atonement for sin, every sigh and groan because all such efforts fail, every cry for mercy, is well compared to sowing, but it is sowing in tears. But every poor sinner who thus sows in tears shall reap in joy. Here is the mystery of salvation, the miracle of grace, the wonder of redemption. Here is the soul-surprising experience of a new heart. The old, worthless, barren field is in the background now, and here is the field which the Lord hath blessed. Upon the new heart the Lord has written his law of love. Here is every plant that is desirable, every fruit that is good. All our desires, all our sighs and prayers, like good seed, seem to have fallen upon good ground here that we knew not of, and to have brought forth abundantly. Nothing is lacking of all that we longed for. We find everything in Jesus. Work has ceased. There is no need for work. Nothing is left to be desired when we have Jesus. Our works only discovered our helplessness and inability; his works have secured everything—eternal deliverance from sin, salvation from all vileness, redemption from death and the grave, and every grace and blessing, with all the purity and joy and glory of heaven. In Jesus we have a soul-satisfying taste of love, and joy, and peace, and meekness, and goodness, and gentleness, and faith, and longsuffering, and all the fragrant and delicious fruit of the Spirit.

It is because Jesus went forth under the law weeping, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, bearing precious seed, and came again in the gospel, bringing his sheaves with him, that they who sow in tears shall reap in joy. He did the work which enables them to reap a rich and blessed harvest. The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in him, which is infinitely better than would have been what once they hoped for, to have it fulfilled by them. He works in them that which is well-pleasing in his sight. In no other way could there ever be anything within a sinful man that would please a holy God. We are therefore made to realize how wonderfully good and glorious are his works, and how precious also are his thoughts concerning us, and how great is the sum of them. This fills our hearts with that sweetest of all feelings, praise to his great and lovely and most excellent name.

We do not make a harvest ours by reaping it. It must be ours, or we would have no right to reap it. Reaping is entering upon the enjoyment of it. When the rich harvest fields of the gospel are opened to our astonished view within our own poor hearts, we learn that this precious harvest of life everlasting, with all its infinite blessings which we now begin to reap in joy, was ours before we knew of it in Jesus Christ; and through the fellowship of his sufferings, who

went forth weeping, bearing precious seed, we enter into the joy of our Lord.

Silas H. Durand

Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., Aug. 23, 1886

ZECHARIAH 14:6,7

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: but it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light."

By request of our esteemed brother, F.K. Cooper, of Washington County, Pennsylvania, we submit such thoughts as we have on this portion of the prophetic testimony of Jesus; and in this, as in every expression of our sentiments on the subject of salvation, we wish ever to be found in harmony with the inspired Scriptures. No views, however ably presented, can be correct unless sustained by that infallible standard; and every sentiment which rests upon the firm foundation of the written word of the Lord must with that word endure forever.

"And it shall come to pass." This positive assertion of a future event could never have been used by any other authority but that of our God, who declares the end from the beginning. Without the immutable purpose of infinite wisdom and power there would be no certainty of anything in the future: therefore the denial of the absolute and supreme predestination of God, including all the events in time and the fulfillment of his eternal purpose, involves the rejection of all prophetic revelation. Indeed it is only in the positive certainty of the determinate counsel of the will of God that the final salvation of the redeemed saints is assured in Christ Jesus. In every declaration of prophecy, from the sentence of the law given to Adam in the garden of Eden to the close of the inspired record, the infallible assurance of divine truth is recorded, as in this text, in the strongest form of absolute predestination. Nowhere has God spoken of his purpose as dependent upon contingencies or affected by the will or action of any creature or being outside of himself. The pride of carnal reason has applied to the sovereignty of God the contradictory term of "permissive decrees," but no authority can be found in the Scriptures for any such limitation of the infinite will of God. His word is spirit and life, and his power is sufficient for the accomplishment of all that he has declared shall come to pass, whether it be the disobedience of Adam, by which sin entered into the word, or the righteousness of Jesus Christ, in which his saints are justified. God is holy, just and good in all his works; not less in the condemnation of the guilty than in the justification of the saints through the righteousness of their perfect Redeemer. In all the counsel of his will nothing is uncertain; therefore he can with truth declare, " It shall come to pass."

"In that day." To an attentive reader, even with a natural mind, there must be manifest in the letter of the Scriptures definite certainty in the record, including not only the actual performance of all that God declares, but the very exact moment when each event shall come to pass. The land of Canaan was given to Abraham by the unalterable truth of God four hundred years before his descendants were brought into possession of it. And they were just as certainly appointed to suffer Egyptian bondage as they were assured of that goodly heritage. The reason given to Abram for the delay was that the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full.—Gen. 15:16. Carnal reason cannot understand how this wickedness was included in the divine purpose; but God has left it on record to confound the wisdom of man and to show his absolute sovereignty over the wickedness of the vilest sinners. Then his people may well rest in the assurance of his word, knowing that no power of iniquity can move beyond the limit set by the hand of their almighty Redeemer, who "hath determined the times before appointed." It was not possible that the great event declared in this prophecy should come

to pass before that day which was specified, nor yet could it be postponed beyond that day. Such a day never was before that time, nor can it ever again be in the same sense; yet in the experience of the saints that day is still revealed to each of them individually.

"*The light shall not be clear nor dark.*" "The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached." The preaching of John did not proclaim the gospel kingdom as set up in its visible organization. He declared only that it was at hand. In this he was indeed "a burning and a shining light" as compared with all the prophets by whom God has before spoken unto the fathers. As the messenger whom our Lord sent before his face, John was a highly favored servant, and well might he rejoice in the glorious announcement given him to proclaim; yet he did not enter into the organized church of Christ in gospel light and liberty, since he was slain in the prison by Herod before our Lord was crucified. Until Jesus nailed to his cross the handwriting of ordinances, the law and the night of Judiasm still obscured the light of the testimony of salvation by the blood of the everlasting covenant in Christ. There was no living light in that old legal covenant. It could only show sin as exceeding sinful, and make manifest the perfect justice of the divine sentence under which the whole world was already condemned. "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgression, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made."—Gal. iii. 19. In the interval between the preaching of John the Baptist and the establishment of the gospel dispensation by the Holy Ghost filling the apostles on the day of Pentecost, there was a period which was neither the clear shining of the light of gospel liberty, nor yet the darkness of the legal night, with its bondage and shadows. There was, indeed, light which was superior to the reflected moonbeams of the Mosaic dispensation; yet even the most favored disciples could not by that light see clearly the eternal power and God-head of the Lord Jesus. This was shown by the request of Philip.—John 14:8. The faith of the Son of God had led the disciples to forsake all and follow Jesus; yet they could not see him as the only manifestation of God until he was made known to them in his glory by the Spirit of truth, after his resurrection. It was light that made manifest to them the great grace which was in the Lord Jesus; yet they did not understand his triumphant power over sin and death in that day.

The particular time referred to is described in the preceding context as the day when the feet of the Lord shall stand upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and that mount shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley. As that mount stood between the Gentiles and the entrance into the literal city of Jerusalem in the type, so the truth and justice of God forbade any sinner to hope in the salvation of God. No created arm had power to cleave that mountain as described in the text, nor could any other but the power of God so cleave the mount of divine perfection which bars against the sinner the entrance of the true Jerusalem (the possession, habitation, or vision of peace). Here is the strong consolation of the gospel as contained in this portion of prophetic testimony. The feet of our redeeming Lord did stand upon the mount of Olives which was before Jerusalem, and that mount was cleft by his power so that a very great valley was formed, protected on either hand by the perfections of God; and in this way of truth and justice the ransomed of the Lord enter the gates of the holy city where the presence of God is their everlasting light and joy. The very truth and justice which cut off the sinner from all hope of entering into this holy habitation, under the feet of our Redeemer afford assurance and protection to the trembling sinner who hears the voice of Jesus speaking peace through his own most precious blood.

"*But it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord.*" The repetition of this positive form of assurance presents

the certainty with which it is settled in the eternal purpose of that God who moved the prophet to record this wonderful truth. The term "one day" does not signify any measure of natural time, since Peter says, "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."—2 Peter 3:8. The important assertion here presented is that this day is "known to the Lord." This includes the comforting truth that nothing contrary to his eternal purpose of love and grace can be developed in that day. Here the faith of the Son of God finds a sweet and consoling rest for all those whose trust is the name of the Lord. Since even the hour and the power of darkness is included in the knowledge and supreme decree of our God, it is clear that the assertion of Paul included all the saints when he says, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."—Rom. 8:28. Darkness may overshadow the day as the legal night is shrouded in gloom when the moon of Jewish types is turned into blood; but though the sun of revealed truth be darkened by the clouds which are the pavilion of our God, and the dreadful tempests attending him strike terror to our natural reason, by faith all who are led by the Spirit of God are enabled to rest in the sweet knowledge that "He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep."

Nothing can come to pass without the knowledge and purpose of God; therefore they who are kept by his power have nothing to fear. Even this day of indefinable gloom is "known to the Lord." In the revelation of his gracious purpose of love and mercy this day is just as essential as any other incident in the great system of divine providence whereby Christ Jesus is exalted with the right hand or power of God as a "Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance unto Israel and forgiveness of sins." This is a point of truth which the saints cannot afford to forget. Our most bitter trials are given by the same love which God commends to us in the gift of his Son to die for us. It is this truth which enables the saints of glory in tribulations. How sweet to feel and know that all our times are in his hand, and every day of trial is "known to the Lord."

"*Not day nor night.*" As the legal night terminated with the preaching of John in the wilderness of Judea, the good tidings which he proclaimed were not included in the night of Judaism; and from his time until the resurrection of Jesus there was neither day nor night in the manifestation of the revelation of salvation. This is the only sense in which we can understand this expression. Certainly there can be no time when the knowledge to his people that this prophetic declaration is recorded. Literally this was the case in the time to which we have understood it to apply; and in the experience of the subjects of grace such a day is found. The light of legal requirements is shrouded in the darkness of hopeless condemnation, and the day is not yet revealed in them in " the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Dark as is this season, it is appropriately designated as a day; for it manifests what was never seen in any other light; that is, the justice of divine condemnation in cutting off all hope from the conscious sinner, who feels that this darkness is his everlasting portion. Then the glad tidings of salvation by grace is too great and joyful for the poor sinner to claim as coming to him. This is experimentally a day which is "not day nor night."

"*But it shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light.*" The repetition of the assertion that "It shall come to pass" would appear to natural reason to be unnecessary. So the wise and prudent of the world are made to expose their own folly in criticizing the divine record. But to the tried saints for whose benefit all Scripture is given, this emphatic repetition of the sure and certain fulfillment of this predestinated purpose of God is full of the marrow and fatness of comfort and consolation. When the tempter suggests that this

bewildering gloom which hides the Sun from their sight, is but the beginning of the night of utter despair which is just ready to swallow them up, then they know the need of the strong consolation which God had given in these assuring expressions. In nature, with the evening time comes darkness; so it is very consistent with reason to expect that even the dim light now seen will be withdrawn at evening time; but in the case of this day of which the prophet is speaking, the order of nature is reversed, and the light shall be manifest at evening time. This wonderful display of divine power was fulfilled in the day of the preaching of John. Instead of sinking into the darkness of night, the day was swallowed up in the infinite light of the Sun of righteousness; so that while John was "a burning and a shining light." yet his light could add nothing to the divine radiance of the true Light which illumined the gospel heaven. Hence Jesus says, "Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth; but I receive not testimony from man." "But I have greater witness than that of John; for the works which the Father has given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape."—John 5 :36,37.

As the light of natural day can receive no aid from artificial lamps, so the light which emanates from the throne of God and the Lamb is not increased by any efforts of his creatures. The saints ever find the light of their Savior's countenance when it is with them "at evening time." So long as they are enjoying light and prosperity they do not feel their need of him; but when darkness overshadows them and they cannot see their way, then it is that they need the light. In this evening time of their experience, they sweetly realize the value of this precious provision of grace by which light is given at evening time. When thick clouds darken the way of the bewildered pilgrims, and they feel that they are just losing all the light by which they have been guided, it is evening time with them. Reason says the night has come upon them and they are lost in the darkness; but they are now just where the glorious Sun of righteousness shall certainly shine upon them, making the darkness itself to glow with heavenly radiance as they see in his light that the darkness was but the shadow of the blessings in reserve for them. All the rich stores of exceeding great and precious promises which God has given them in the Scriptures are confined to the afflicted and poor people; and he hears the prayer of the destitute. Then to every saint it is indeed true that "At evening time it shall be light."

(Editorial by Elder William Beebe December 1, 1886.)

SOME INTERESTING HISTORY

2118 St. Johns Ave.
Jacksonville, Fla. 32204

Elder David V. Spangler and
Elder John D. Wood
Editors

Dear Editors:

I hope you will not think this is an unusual request. Sarah Lord was the only daughter of William Lord, a Primitive Baptist minister who was active in Georgia in the years following 1787. Sarah Lord was named for her mother. He came from Broad Creek Church on the eastern Shore of Maryland, now Sussex County, Delaware, and was a founder of Myrtle Springs Primitive Baptist Church, near Toomsboro, Ga., in 1812. The church is still in existence and in possession of the original records dating from 1812. Sarah Lord was a deaf-mute, a condition that we now know is due, in the majority of cases, to diseases of the inner ear following scarlet fever, measles, or even influenza. After William Lord's death in 1825, according to old court records, there was an occasional dispute among relatives about the handling of her estate, and her role in life must not have been a happy one. These — the afflicted — were those of whom Christ most often spoke, because

he fully understood the nature of their lives. Though Sarah Lord has been dead more than a hundred years, thought of these ancient griefs has often destressed me and this has led to writing these simple memorial lines in her remembrance. I hope that you can see fit to print them.

My great-great-grandfather, James M. Lord, was moderator of the Myrtle Springs church at the time of the Civil War. He moved to Alabama and my grandfather, Yancey Jackson Lord, was a well-known farmer a few miles north of Cottonwood. I believe this part of Alabama has as heavy a concentration of Primitive Baptists as any part of the nation, and I am speaking of Slocomb, where I was born in 1903 and according to your Church Notices has three Primitive Baptist churches, Malvern, just a mile from the farms operated by my mother's people, the Merritts, Ozark, Cottonwood, McKenzie, Andalusia, Coffee Springs, Goshen, and other communities in this section.

I am a retired newspaperman and magazine editor in the business field and now have some time to devote to these matters in which I have always been interested. I think the Primitive Baptists represent, as near as it could be represented in these times, the original church of Christ. They follow the same ritual, such as the laying on of hands, found among the Anabaptists, the Waldenses, the Albigeois, the Bogomils and the Paulicians. This isn't just chance, though renowned scholars claim that no connection can be proved. Facts speak for themselves, however, despite the lack of documents which were burned for just this reason. I am going to France December 11 to visit the Albigensian regions, and have been studying French for the past five or six years in Jacksonville University here with this in mind. You can see that my interest is sincere and of long standing. I had the honor of a small exchange of correspondence some years ago with Elder George Ruston before his death.

I hope you will receive this letter in the spirit in which it is written, and will accept the attached contribution to the Indigent Fund in memory of Sarah Lord.

Sincerely, with all best wishes,
David. B. Lord

GIVES THEIR SIGNS TO OTHERS

Rt. 1, Box 127A
Riner, Va. 24149

Signs of the Times:

Enclosed is check for $5.00 for one year renewal, and balance for the Indigent Fund.

We enjoy the *Signs* so much, and give them to others to read. We enjoyed Elder Lambert's writing on "Meek" in the November, 1972, paper. O yes, what wonderous love is this! that His blood was shed for His precious sinners. We feel so unworthy but hope that He died on the cross for us. O Lord, give us more spiritual understanding, and guide us, for without Him we can do nothing. For we are saved by grace through faith not of ourselves lest any man should boast — it is the gift of God.

Unworthly, Brother and Sister
Asa and Beulah Wells

ENJOYS THE WRITINGS OF THE BRETHREN

14778 Springfield Ave, Rt. 3
Middle Field, Ohio 44062

Signs of the Times:

Dearly beloved of the Lord, Editors, writers and the readers of the messages of God's chosen in Christ before the world was, Greetings in the name of the Lord.

I desire to salute you with a holy kiss in the name of my redeemer, Jesus Christ the Lord of Glory. My soul doth praise and magnify my Lord for giving unto us unworthy sinners such able writers as write for the *Signs of the Times*. I miss the writings of the able writer, Elder Ruston, who has passed on to his reward. Elder Griffin, write on.

May God be praised for giving us able ministers to preach and write the truth, who stand upon the solid rock, Christ the sure foundation. We feel like shouting when we read such wonderful messages, and hear them preached, as they have been the past few months. Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Write on Elders Spangler, Lambert, Wood, and all who so vividly defend God's truth. Elder Beebe's messages are so wonderful. I have never met any of your writers, but my brother Roy S. Thomas of Wilmington, Delaware, has often spoken of you.

My dear wife passed on to her reward on August 12, 1972. She was in failing health for five years. Two months before she died she said when too sick to even walk or recognize her children and sister at times, "Lord, I will praise thee until I die." She loved the gospel so much. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church in 1930 in east Tennessee. I joined the same church in 1908 when a mere lad of ten years; and God's grace is sweeter as the years go by.

Yes Brother Griffin there is no other arm, no other voice except the voice of the Lamb of God, who is mighty to save. May God richly bless his people. Pray for me, a sinner saved by grace.

I see my subscription has run out. Here is $10.00 for one year and the balance for the Indigent Fund.

In Christian love,
H. Claude Thomas

ATTENDED SEVERAL ASSOCIATIONS

Hartford, Ala.

Dear Elder Wood:

I missed seeing you in 1972 but hope that you and your companion are well: may the Lord bless you and yours in all things.

I think perhaps I was blessed to visit more churches than ever before in one year, and rejoiced to be with the people of the Lord. I was so glad to attend the Staunton River Association in Virginia, and meet again so many ministers of former years, and several younger preachers; and hear some of them expound the glorious news of Zion. We also attended the Ebenezer, Conecuh, Claybank, and Western Associations, and heard many wonderful sermons at each. May peace, love and fellowship abound everywhere in our ranks. We hope to be blessed to attend the Upper Country Line Association in North Carolina this year, where we first went in 1940.

Yours in sweet fellowship,
J. J. Collins

OBITUARIES

ELDER W. L. NORRIS

Elder W. L. Norris was born April 18, 1888, and died August 28, 1972, in Tuscalooso, Alabama. He was married to Sister Ruth Kirk in 1925, and to this union were born two daughters: Mrs. Mary Ruth Smith, Rogersville, Ala., and Mrs. Esther Wallace, Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Our dear brother joined Nazareth Primitive Baptist Church in 1953, and was ordained to the ministry in 1957. He served well several churches in the Hopewell Association, as well as many visits to other churches and associations.

He was the son of Elder Sammie Norris and grandson of Elder John Norris, who served Nazareth Church fifty years.

Our dearly beloved brother will be greatly missed in the churches as well as in the family and neighborhood, as he lived a worthy life to all. The weather was never too bad for Brother Norris to attend his church, as God permitted. He was a strong and faithful believer in the sovereign grace of God. His walk and talk proved this. I do not know of a more worthy yoke brother in the ministry to write about.

He also leaves two grandchildren, James L. and Ruth Smith, Rogersville, Alabama.

His funeral was conducted by the writer at his previous request in Mayes Memorial Chapel, Tuscaloosa, and interment was in Memorial Cemetery, Tuscaloosa.

Written by request of the family.

Elder H. C. Moon,
Hancevill, Ala.

SISTER SUSIE EVERETT ROBERSON

It is with sad hearts that we attempt to write the obituary of our beloved sister, Susie Everett Roberson. She was born December 22, 1898, to the late Lawrence and Olivia James Everett of Robersonville, N. C., and died November 5, 1972, in a Goldsboro hospital where she had been a patient since July.

On December 24, 1929, she was married to Ira F. Andrews. He died July 9, 1952. On December 24, 1957, she married Lee Roberson, who survives. Sunday, June 4, 1972, she united with the church at Flat Swamp, and was baptized that afternoon by Elder J. T. Prescott and Elder E. C. Harrison. Her husband joined at the water and was baptized with her. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by the sovereign grace of God. We can say that she kept the faith, and there is laid up for her a crown of righteousness.

She leaves to mourn her passing besides her husband, a foster son, James Lowell Everett, of Windsor; two brothers, Eli and Reuben Everett, both of Robersonville; one sister, Mrs. Carrie Williams, of Robersonville; and two grandchildren.

The church extends her deepest sympathy and love to her husband and family, and pray that God's richest blessings may rest on them. "The Lord giveth and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

Funeral services were held from the Primitive Baptist Church in Robersonville by her pastor, Elder J. T. Prescott and her nephew, Elder Billy Everett. She was laid to rest in the Robersonville Cemetery in the presence of her many friends and relatives, to await the resurrection morning, when Jesus will call, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Done by order of Conference Saturday before the first Sunday in December, 1972.

Elder J. T. Prescott, Mod.
Hassell Allen, Clerk
Reuben Everett
Louise Everett
Mary Jenkins
Committee

MRS. NELLIE J. REEVES

Sister Reeves, an outstanding member of Pilgrims Rest Church, Dothan, Ala., died after a lingering illness on November 24, 1972. She was a leading citizen of Houston County, active in community and church affairs. She reared a noble family, including Minister B. H. Reeves, and three daughters who are teachers: Mrs. Jesse Palmer, Mrs. Lillian Hughes, and Mrs. Douglas Carter, all of Dothan, Ala. Surviving also are, one sister, Mrs. Lizzie Warrick; nine grandchildren and two great grandchildren, and many other relatives. Her husband died about thirteen years ago. She was most devoted to her children.

Funeral services were conducted at her beloved Pilgrims Rest Church by Elder J. J. Collins and Minister J. Hollan Dykees on November 26, 1972; with interment in the adjoining cemetery.

J. J. Collins

FRANK VAUGHN

The writer attended his funeral on January 14, 1973 at Providence Church, Geneva, Ala., where he was born eighty-seven years ago, and was a class-mate the first day the Geneva County High School was established September 28, 1908, in Hartford, Ala. We were close friends and associates from then on until his death.

A vast concourse of relatives and friends were present at his beloved Church.

also

ALVIE GILLEY

Brother Gilley died in a Dothan Hospital on December 18, 1972, at the age of eighty-four. He leaves a wife and many relatives to mourn his passing.

He was a member of Goodwater Church, where funeral services were conducted by the writer and Minister J. T. Peacock; with interment in the adjoining cemetery, on December 20, 1972. He was a resident of this section his entire life, and lived a quiet and peaceful life.

also

MRS. NANCY RYLES

Mrs. Ryles died August 1, 1972 at the age of eighty-eight, after an illness of several months. She was the widow of Henry Ryles and is survived by two sons, Cody and Ted, and three daughters, Mrs. Nell Fillingrin, Mrs. Bertie Lue Fillingrin, and Mrs. Maggie Langford, all of Hartford, Ala. Surviving also are twelve grandchildren, one of whom, Dr. Tim Ryles, is a leading educator of Georgia.

She loved the cause of Christ and lived a devoted life to her family, community and church. Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. J. Collins and Minister Roy Griggs of Montgomery, at Garden Chapel Funeral Home on August 2, 1972; with interment in Goodwater Cemetery, Wicksburg, Alabama.

J. J. Collins

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141 **DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1973** **NO. 4**

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4/73
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

WOULDST THOU?

Within the portals of my heart
Dear Lord, I'll welcome thee,
To search its contents at thy will
While evil spirits flee.

I would not hide a single thought
Or wish, dear Lord, from you,
But always leave the door ajar,
That thou may enter through.

Wouldst Thou erase the sin therein
And tarry for awhile;
Or linger near that I may see
The shadow of a smile:

To hear that still small voice within
Speak joy and peace to me,
And calm this troubled heart of mine
Until Thy face I see.

Fannie Padrick
207 South 3rd Street
Wilmington, N. C.

(Sister Padrick is in her eighties, and was baptized about sixty years ago by her Pastor, Elder J. C. Hooks, then Moderator of the Bleck Creek Association.)

SERMON BY
ELDER JAMES F. POOLE
AT SNOW HILL CHURCH
SNOW HILL, MARYLAND
DECEMBER, 1972

16 And the fame thereof was heard in Pharoah's house, saying, Joseph's brethren are come: and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants.

17 And Pharoah said unto Joseph, Say unto thy brethren this do ye; lade your beasts and go, get you unto the land of Canaan;

18 And take your father and your households, and come unto me: and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat of the fat of the land.

19 Now thou art commanded, this do ye; take you wagons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father, and come.

20 Also regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours.

21 And the children of Israel did so: and Joseph gave them wagons, according to the commandment of Pharoah, and gave them provisions for the way.

22 To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment.

23 And to his father he sent after this manner; ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she asses laden with corn and bread and meat for his father by the way.

24 So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said unto them. See that ye fall not out by the way.

25 And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father.

26 And told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not.

27 And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived:

28 And Israel said, It is enough: Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and

see him before I die.

Genesis 45: 16-28

Jacob had been grieving for many years over the supposed death of his son. Joseph's ten brothers, who sold him, have had lingering in their hearts the knowledge that they were guilty of selling their brother. The youngest brother, Benjamin, was, of course, innocent; nevertheless, he was a brother and a part of the family of Israel. Joseph is now governor of all of the land of Egypt, the mightiest empire in the world at that time.

As I pointed out last Lord's Day, Joseph rose to that position through no apparent effort of his own. Everything Joseph did prospered because the Lord was pleased to care for him and to protect him.

Out of the rest of the verses I have read to you this morning I would like to extract several thoughts to draw a common parallel. The illustrations of the Old Testament portray the lessons of the New Testament. Joseph is a beautiful illustration and type of Jesus Christ our Lord. Many times I might not make my thoughts clear because my words will interchange from Joseph to Christ and back and forth without explanation. If I do so, I hope you will recognize that I am drawing an illustration out of the Old Testament history to portray a New Testament lesson.

If Joseph is a type of Christ, and I believe he is, we could dwell many a day upon the beauty and the glory of the illustration. Our Lord and our Savior portrayed in one like Joseph, whose very life was miraculous. Joseph was the next to the last child born of his mother. He had only one full brother, the rest being half brothers from handmaids and from Leah, the other wife of Jacob.

Joseph was a man who had absolutely no malice in his heart. It is hard to conceive of someone like that today, isn't it? As it has been pointed out many times, you and I are frail characters. It is easy to hold a grudge; it is easy to say, "I'll forgive, but I will never forget." But the Lord has not only forgiven His people, He said He would cast their sins from them as far as the East is from the West. I don't know how far that is, but it's farther than you or I will ever travel, for you can head East as far as you want to go and West is still behind you. Or you can go West and the same is true. And that is how far our sins are from us. And He said to be remembered no more. God does not remember our sins. I cannot comprehend that. Can you? That a God who knows all things is capable of not remembering my sins!

Joseph put aside the crimes of his brothers. All of them were behind him and he now is concerned about their welfare. I cannot comprehend that either. How that our Lord and Savior can only be concerned with the welfare of His people! Now, I am concerned about the welfare of my family; I am concerned about the welfare of friends, and I am concerned about the welfare of our church and our church friends. And my concern extends out a fair distance. But I am not capable—as some in this world are—of being a welfare agent for every human being. I know my limitations and I know my government's limitations. I am not interested in the welfare of all human beings. I am interested in the welfare of those as far as I can reach. And I think this is a part of Joseph's character here.

While he was governor of all of the land and controlled the food, the wealth, and all things, he really was not concerned except to the point that he was going to do the job assigned him by Pharaoh. But when his brethren came, there was true concern which extended beyond the temporal and beyond the circumstances of that day and reached into the very heart of Joseph, for his concern now was for the entire family and their whole well being that they might truly enjoy happiness, contentment and unity together.

There is one thing above all else that stands out here: Joseph recognized the *need of all of the family remaining together.* Do you know what this means? It is not good for Jacob to stay in Canaan and for some of the brothers to come to Egypt and they be scattered all

over the face of the Mediterranean. The mind of Jeseph is for *all* of the family to be brought together. I think it a profitable situation when all of the family of God are brought together. A unity, a oneness, a companionship then exists that they cannot have when they are scattered across the face of the globe. *And we are one in Christ.*

Now reading in verse 20: One of the first admonitions Joseph gives to his brothers is: *"Regard not your stuff."* I like that expression "stuff." That account, and all of the other things that go with it. It's just stuff — that's the best you can say for it. Canaan's land was often a type of Heaven, but Canaan's land was never sanctified and Canaan's land was always plagued with Canaanites, idolators and wicked workers. You can just about say that anything you have gathered out of Canaan isn't fit to carry off to a family reunion!

And so Joseph's first admonition to his brothers is that when you come to dwell with me, forget about your stuff. All that you have accumulated you can leave behind. You don't need it. It won't do you a bit of good where you are going.

I would say that about God's people being gathered into the family reunion of the Church here on earth. You can leave your stuff behind. All of your family's religious notions; all of your good works, all of your ideal, all of your good intentions—all these things you can leave behind like Joseph's brethren left behind all that they had accumulated—all of their practices and all of the things of Canaan's land. They are now going to dwell with Joseph. "Leave all behind and come with me because I have something better for you."

Can you imagine the Lord, when he summons His people, saying, bring all that Babylonion stuff with you? No, no! Leave it all behind. Come with me, for I have something better for you, something more marvelous, something grander, something *free*, something you have not accumulated. If we could bring to the church or to the presence of Christ things we have "dug out" or earned, then everything we have would not be by the grace of our brother Joseph, would it?

When we come before Him all of the stuff is laid behind. I can look back and see that at one time I was not quite willing to leave everything behind. I thought I ought to take just a few things along with me in case the church did not act like I thought it should act, I could introduce some of those fine things I had bought out in Canaan's land and improve the lot of the people. And it has taken me a lot of years to realize, even to the extent that I do now, that all of that paraphernalia and stuff that I had gathered in Canaan's land would not do me a bit of good— and it would do the church nothing but harm.

Leave your stuff behind. When you come to Joseph, you do not need all that "gobbledegook" you have. Every provision will be made for you. All your needs will be met from the least to the greatest.

I recall that the Savior Himself said: "Take no thought for these things for your heavenly Father knoweth you have need of them." As one precious sister who is no longer with us said, "He knows our needs before we need them." That stuck in my mind and I think it will stick with me as long as I live.

He knows my needs before I need them and Joseph knew the needs of the brethren before they needed them. The brethren had no notion what they needed. They did not know the weather conditions in Egypt; they did not know what the cultivating conditions were. Joseph just said, "leave it behind." God has kept His kingdom in good order through Joseph His son all these years, and you won't need any of the *stuff* that you have accumulated.

The second thing I would like to point out is in Verse 21: *"And gave them provision for the way."*

He put them on a journey. He dispatched instructions to them. He told them to go home and gather up their families, and come back to me. And for

this journey he gave them provision for the way...not provisions for the rest of their lives, but enough for the journey. He doesn't give them any surplus for if they had surplus they would lean to that and *not* to Joseph where it came from.

This is the message that God tells His precious saints here in this world. He provides for the journey, but He doesn't give them any surplus, no abundance. Don't we see a beautiful illustration of that later when the offsprings of this family journey for 40 years in the wilderness? Did He give them any surplus when he fed them? He gave them only provisions for the way. And I think that points to the *one way.*

There is but one way and you know very well what it is: Jesus Christ, our Lord is the way and He provides all that is necessary in order that one might *be* in that way. Nothing else is needed. You don't have to provide for yourself in this journey. If God summons His people out of this world, if He blesses them to say, "Joseph is alive and I am going to him," there will be provisions made.

I think basically the provision is the faith of God's elect. The just shall live by faith. I know there are some here who'll say "Oh, I wish I could live by faith." Brothers and sisters, I will tell you that I wish I could too. But, I am going to tell you something and I am not saying it boastfully. If I live in Christ at all, I do live by faith. It may be little faith; it may be as a grain of mustard seed, as the Lord described it, but if I am in Him, I live by faith. "The just *shall* (not may) live by faith."

You cannot live in Him other than by faith, and *that* is provision for *the way.* It might be a dark way, but you will still have provisions. It might be a dreary way, an uphill way, but he will still provide for you. It might be by the way of thieves and robbers who'll take all your goods; it might be a way of many hindrances, but He will still provide even if it takes unseen angels to protect you from harm, known and unknown alike. The Scripture says He gave them provision for the way.

Verse 22: "To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment."

I wonder if that's there just to fill up space? You can't wear Canaanite garments in the presence of Joseph. Did you know that? There needs to be a change of raiment. The filthy righteousness of this world won't do in the presence of the Savior, and you can lay aside all of your works and deeds and all of your supposed righteous works and pretended finery, because if you ever go with Him, you'll have a change of raiment.

I want to emphasize one thing. In coming to the Church of the Living God, when you draw the illustration down to our local focal point, we need a change of raiment. We need to put on the new man in baptism and put off the old, the Canaanite, and visibly and vitally become identified with Joseph.

And when the brothers of Joseph got a change of raiment, it was different from any raiment they had ever seen in Canaan's land. And the Canaanites knew it was different. Any old Canaanite barbarian could look at them and say "Those fellows have something that we don't have." It might be better or worse in their estimation, but they could tell it was not a garment that came from their land. There was something different and I cannot conceive that Joseph would give them something inferior to what the Canaanites had. When they put on their raiment, they were identified and they were acknowledged as belonging in a sense to Joseph. They were under subjection to him. They were not under a force or a constraint—but out of *necessity* (they really did not *have* a choice, did they?)

It teaches us that even in the common illustration of the brothers that man's supposed "free will" is blasted under the very normal circumstances of life. I enjoy talking with these defenders of free will. One question I asked a person one time is: "Just how free is your

will?" He said, "It is as free as it can be." I said, "Can you do anything you want to?" He replied, "Yes, I can." "Is your will limited in any way?" I asked. "No," he answered, "not at all." "Then fly like a bird!" I said. He got mad and said, "You are absurd." I said, "Yes, I am, and so are you." And I *was* absurd and so was he.

It is absurd to believe that you are free. We're not free to live any longer than our lives are determined to be. We are not free to travel any farther than God has suffered us to travel. I know a few years ago many people said, "Man will never go to the moon. God did not intend for people to be on the moon." It seems to me that he intended for them to be there. They went, didn't they? There are no limitations to the power of God nor to the purpose of God and His people. He can endow us with all of the wisdom that we have conceived possible and you can be sure of this one thing: the circumstances God puts us in limits our freedom to His will. *You are free to perform the will of God!*

Returning to verse 22: He gave them each a change of raiment, but we see a difference here. Eleven brothers—10 are half brothers. They all had their father alike, but had several different mothers. To Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of raiment. To the others he just gave a change of raiment.

I wonder why he made distinctions here. We really have three categories of people that Joseph is dealing with: Jacob, his father; his ten brothers (which are half brothers); and one full brother, Benjamin—and he deals with each one differently. Yet, the end result is the same. The purpose is to bring them each one, to Him. And I thought in my mind Jacob is the Old Man--not the Old Man of the flesh, but he's the old one from afar back. The ten brothers are his comtemporaries, and Benjamin is the younger, the one who came after Joseph. And it almost perfectly blends in with the illustration of the Old Testament saints: the Jews, who were those that despised and sold our Savior; and then Benjamin, his full brother, which is the Church of the Living God which followed after, and to the church has been given more than the Old Testament saints or the Jews either ever had.

The Old Testament saints lived in shadows. They lived in types. The Jew brethren for the most part were "deny-ers." But to Benjamin, the full brother, more has been given. To him was given 300 pieces of silver—ten times over the price that was paid to betray our Lord and Savior, showing the estimation that the Lord has of His people above that which they had for Him.

Judas sold him out for a cheap price. The Lord gave a great sum to His people on top of that, five changes of raiment. Now in the Scriptures when you come to five, you come to grace.

Every change of raiment he had spoke to him that Joseph had bestowed grace to him. Whenever Benjamin changed clothes, he had to think of Joseph. Whenever he spent a piece of silver he had to think of Joseph. Whatever he had and wherever he went he had to think of Joseph, for he was completely subservient to the grace that Joseph bestowed upon him.

He gave them another admonition in the 24th verse. "*And he said unto them, See that ye fall not out by the way.*"

We sometimes have the tendency to think that the Bible is all doctrine, or that the Bible is all just testimony of grace. The Bible is full of warnings, admonitions and exhortations and these ought to be spoken on as much as the Bible speaks on them. "See that ye fall not out by the way." Those final three words "by the way"—we might add, by which way? I go back then to the 13th Chapter of Matthew where all of the parables are and I think "What a vast storehouse of teaching that is to me!" By the wayside. The seed that fell by the wayside. It never became profitable and it never brought forth fruit unto the one that was the bestower or the caster.

"See that ye fall not out by the way." You must stay *in the way*, not *out of the way*. The Lord's people must continually *be in the way*. Now I will say that you

will never be in the way and stay there but for the grace of God, and yet you are instructed to see that you fall not out by the way. You can't stop off like Demas did because you love this world. You can't linger and turn back like Mark did. You don't have the opportunity to sit down and rest, but you press forward to the mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus; and you know that you are living and walking a journey that reaches to heaven. You cannot stop by the way anywhere. Don't fall out, he said, keep going until you get to Jacob and then turn around and keep going until you come back to me. There is no stopping.

The brothers came to their dear father. They told him Joseph is yet alive. These must have been sweet words on their lips to say "Our brother is still alive, he whom we thought dead is truly alive and he is governor over all of the land of Egypt." And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them *not.*

In all of this incident — their second trip, their coming back, and the unanimous statement from the brothers to their father that Joseph is yet alive—what did it do for Jacob? It caused him to faint in heart! Did it make him believe? It said he believed them not. And as much as anywhere in the Bible this teaches me that you and I can go out to the four corners of this world and tell people of the words of Joseph (Jesus) and no matter how close to him they might be, no matter how much they would like to believe, they cannot believe based on our naked testimony. *All* of the words of the brethren did not cause Jacob to believe. No, instead, it caused his heart to faint within him! That in itself would be sufficient to cause me to disavow any missionary system, and I have no criticism of those who favor such a system. But I cannot go, nor could I support such a cause, because I can see here these exuberant and enthused brethren who had just come from the hand of Joseph to their father—and *still* Jacob would not, could not, believe. Joseph was dead as far as he was concerned.

Dear brethren, it takes something more than a testimony of man, even of dear friends and dear kinsmen to change the heart of one who is to approach to Joseph. Do you know what it takes? It takes evidence. Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. We have to have substance. It might not have to be a tangible or a visible substance, but an evidence or a substance of some sort to cause one to believe. The Lord must reveal His hand in the matter before you and I can believe and in this case it is so beautiful I hardly see how we can escape the conclusion: The brethren told Jacob all the words that Joseph had told unto them and when he saw the *wagons* which Joseph had sent to carry them, the spirit of Jacob, their father, revived.

The words did not change his mind. But when he saw the wagons, his heart revived. What was it about seeing the wagons that revived his heart? I imagine Jacob had seen many ox carts and wagons in his day. But he had never seen wagons like this. This was a host of wagons — enough to carry 70 people or so. Pharaoh would not have given to Joseph anything but the best to carry his father and his family into his presence.

Take the wagons—three times over it is mentioned—here come the wagons rolling into the front yard and they rush in to tell their father about it, and the brothers don't see any belief in his face. But when he steps out onto the porch and sees the wagons his heart revives. It truly must have been a time of joy to him! This has to be the evidence that all the words his sons had told him are the truth. "The wagons of grace have rolled up into my yard to transport me to the one I love, the one I have been longing for, the one I hoped that someday I would see again." And Jacob's heart revived because he saw the wagons!

God sends wagons to us. They might come in one form or another or different shapes, but you can be assured of this. When the time comes for us to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, we will see the wagons and our hearts will revive and what will we say? We will say as Jacob

said: "It is enough. I need nothing else. I have all I need." The words of the brethren are wonderful words, but these evidences, these wagons mean more to me because I know they are real. I can see them. They are a substance. They are vital and they mean more to me than anything else because one with authority sent them to me. Oh, glory to God that he has given us transportation to bring us into his presence.

The spirit of Jacob their father revived. And Israel said, It is enough. Jacob was his natural name; Israel was his spiritual name. He took his journey.

I want to read verses 3 and 4 of the next chapter to you. In the visions of the night, this is what takes place. "And he said, I *am* God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes."

He said, Fear not, you need not worry. Go on down into Egypt and I will go with you. The Lord had promised that. He says, I will be with you even unto the end. To the end and unto all ages He'll be with His people. Fear not to go down into Egypt. "I will provide for you and I will take care of you. Here are the wagons I have given to Joseph to give to you." They are the evidences and I might say to the dear friends in the congregation, you have seen enough evidences in the times you have been among God's people, and in the privacy of your own meditations to know whether or not the Lord had dealt thusly with you.

Jacob sees the opportunity. The Lord has opened it up. Here are the wagons. "It's all I need," says Jacob, "and I am going to get into one of them until the Lord stops me. I am going to go." And God says, fear not to go down into Egypt, for I am going to go with you all the way. I am going to make a great nation out of you and I will surely bring thee up again.

Jacob is going to die there in Egypt. You and I are going to die down here in Egypt, also. For Egypt is a type of this world. But he says, I'll surely bring you up again and Joseph will put his hands over your eyes. You'll be blessed to know that it is going to be all right. You'll be blessed to know that I am going to be with you and if I am there you need nothing else. You leave Canaan for awhile and follow me and I will transport you to higher things, to greater things than you have ever imagined, for I will make you a great nation.

When He said He would be with me that suits me. You might fall by the wayside. I might fall, too, but for the grace of God. But if He is with me, I will not fall. If I go to Egypt, He will be there. David said if I make my bed in hell He will be there. If I ascend to the heights, wherever I go, He's there. But think of this: "And Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes." Joseph will bless you to see, and *only* Joseph, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is sufficient for sinners, and *that* and that alone will ever transport us safely to the presence of our God. May God keep you.

(Prepared for publication by Sister Katie Kilby, Lake Jackson, Georgia.)

THE RICH MAN

Dear Brethren:

Lacking faith, which betakes its owner to trust in grace and mercy alone, all who profess to faith, but have no faith, will be rich and not poor. All with a spiritual light into their own heart and soul, will surely find: "God be merciful to me a sinner."

The plea, "God be merciful to me a sinner," is far better than the lie: "All these things I have kept from my youth up, . . ." Such is the language of the deceiver: for, "if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, for in many things we offend all." (1 John 1:8-10; James 3:2, 3) Yea, the rich man pleads his own righteousness, in contract to the saints who say, "What is men that he should be clean? and he that is born of a

woman that he should be righteous? (Job 15:14-16; and 4:18-19)

Being unlike a saint whose flesh lusteth against the Spirit so that he cannot do the things that he would, the man who is a rich deceiver will feel justified by the righteousness which, upon trial, will prove to be as filthy rags. Each and every notion in a rich man arises from his indwelling sin and darkness of mind, and they all presume to enter into judgement with God.

When the Lord assumed flesh He became poor, being made like unto His brethren *in all points.* He therefore owns no rich children, "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit . . ." (see Isiah 57:15)

Now God's humble poor are all poor by reason of their affliction. God's promise to leave in Zion an afflicted and poor people, forever excludes the rich man; and lends strength and beauty to the truth of Luke 1:53, "He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away." Therefore I declare that all who are saved are poor mourners in Zion, weary with a sense of sin: their every hope and desire is centered in Jesus, who "was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification."

Those who have hope in Christ are troubled on every side, and are ever subject to sin by their daily words, daily deeds, and daily thoughts: There is lust in our sight of those things delightful to our flesh, and, through total depravity, there is evil in our anger at our own failures whenever we strive to overcome our wounds and dangers — which is not in our power. We strive to hide our sin but we can never root it out.

False professors think that by care and diligence they can renew their own strength, and so rely on self to perform salvation; and being vainly puffed up, and not divinely instructed, they claim to resist the devil and abolish sin; and their doctrine is to the praise of human help and industry, — and they all feel rich. Rich because they know not the necessity of grace to put off the wretched government of death and darkness; rich because none need to ask for anything, if everything lays within the grasp of man's free will.

The poor child of God believes on God, and worships God in God's own Spirit, wherein He saves and calls whom He pleases according to His own eternal will, which nothing can resist. Saints do not resemble vessels of riches, or vessels of good works; but vessels of mercy. To God alone it belongs to do all things as He wills; and He wills to have mercy on His children. And while doing His will, God's power meets with no difficulties, for nothing can hinder Him by whom are all things.

To take the trees of Lebanon and form them into a chariot overlaid with love, is a thing which requires Almighty Power; which immutable power breaks in pieces that which is earthly, and transforms it through the grace of regeneration into an habitation of God. To such as are thus new-born, is given eyes to see that grace comes not from the works of its possessor, but by the eternal will of its giver. God abiding and leading us by an unalterable Love to the eternal haven, teaches as never man taught, that we are poor, naked, helpless sinners; and that the power of sustaining the combat with every foe, and obtaining the victory over every

foe, is all in Jesus Christ — Himself being both Shepherd and Lord of His flock.

The love and healings and good deeds done by Jesus for the rich and wicked people during His ministry in the days of His flesh, did not save them. Nothing but the blood of the Lamb can remove guilt; and the blood of Jesus Christ was only shed for the election of grace. When, therefore, Jesus touched the ear of a wicked man and healed it, it did by no means save the wicked man. And when we read that Jesus "beholding" the rich man "loved him" it does not mean the rich man was saved from sin, but it does mean that Jesus is Holy, and a life of hatred is a life of sin. So Jesus fulfilled the law; and the summary of the law is, "Thou shalt love."

Brethren, the divine justice that Jesus satisfied while in the "form of a servant" will see every rich man in hell, and all of the poor in spirit in eternal glory. My dearest friends are the followers of Jesus Christ whose Spirit led Him, and now leads His children, to abound in love toward all men to the end He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God. So while Jesus worked no ill to His neighbor, as "love is the fulfilling of the law", it does not alter the fact: "The rich he hath sent empty away." (Luke 1:53)

In gospel bonds,
J. L. Bocock

EXPERIENCE

Ward Road
Snow Hill, Maryland 21863

Dearly Beloved Brothers
and Sisters in Christ:

How can you put on paper the Greatness of our Almighty God! Dare I really think that the Almighty God, the Ruler of Heaven and Earth, the Maker of all things, would look upon someone as sinful as I? Yet, what would my life be like if I couldn't hope that he has? I have spent many a sleepless night afraid that my emotions have gotten away from me; and then I will spend sleepless hours of such peace and joy that I know my Lord is the only One that has made it possible.

"Praise God from Whom all blessings flow...." How beautiful and precious these words are to me.

What my Lord has done for me might not seem like anything to a stranger, but a dear brother or sister will surely know.

When I belonged to a Baptist Church during my lifetime, and heard only words preached, how I lived in fear of going to hell. Try as I would to live the kind of life they preached I had to, I just couldn't do it and I was so afraid. I stopped going to church all together, because I would come home so upset and unhappy and afraid. It seemed to me that I was the most sinful person on this earth. My sins seemed to grow more and more and I went down to the very pit of hell. My nerves went to pieces and I was so full of misery. I tried to pray but with the thought in my mind that anyone as powerful as the Almighty God wouldn't even listen to my feeble prayers.

One day while at work in a business we had at the time, I went upstairs where our bedrooms were and entered one and closed the door. I fell on my knees at the side of the bed so full of anguish, and tried to pray. I could only cry out, "God have mercy on me." I stayed there for a while and wept, crying out in distress over and over, "God have mercy on me and show me what to do." After a while a calmness came over me and I went back to work. Like the sinner I am, I didn't give my Lord the credit for this calmness until a long time after.

Shortly after this we closed our business because of my health. We moved away from the place we were living, and I settled down and begin to enjoy life again.

I thought I needed to go back to church, so I did, and for a short while I thought I had found what I had wanted in life. Soon the same unhappy, upset, worried feelings came back. Something was missing and I did't know what and it really frightened me. I soon stopped going and thought to myself, "I'm going

to hell anyway, and I can do so by myself without them telling me so every Sunday."

One day in the early spring of the same year we moved, Brother Jim Ward called me and asked if I would like to go pick some strawberries to put in the freezer. It was early in the morning and such a beautiful day — one that I'll never forget.

While picking berries we began to talk of church and I told Brother Jim how I felt like I was searching for something but couldn't find it, and how unhappy I was when I went to church. Brother Jim told me about an experience he had with the Lord. Oh, our Lord does work in such wonderous ways! How I thought about what he had told me, and what a peaceful calm feeling I had when thinking about it.

I wanted to see Brother Jim and talk to him or have him talk to me, but I couldn't bring myself to call him or visit him.

My Lord did all this in His own way and time. Brother Jim and I had many wonderful talks after this while picking fruit of some kind or other. Then I began to wonder, why had God done so much for him and nothing for me? Oh, how little faith we have! I didn't know my sweet Saviour was working on me then. Praise His Holy Name!!

Then came December and both children had the mumps and we had a very cold winter with lots of snow. Our little girl soon got over the mumps, but the older one had a very hard time. While she was still ill we had a fire. The barn caught fire and sparks were falling on the house (which was covered with snow), so the firemen told us to move out. We did, and of course, the cold and moving about delayed our daughter's getting well. My step-father was very ill at the time and in January my father-in-law became very ill and died in February. In May my mother-in-law died — so went the spring. It came about that we had to move and when we did, it was in a house of Brother Jim's on his farm. Now I know to give thanks to my dear sweet, precious Saviour for all this.

I became drawn to Brother Jim and Sister Margie and I didn't know why. I knew it was more than relationship or friendship. It was something a lot deeper and I couldn't understand it but didn't question it.

When visiting them as I so often did, I would see the *Signs* there and would pick it up and look at it but never read it. This book became like a magnet to me. I would pick it up every time I was there. Finally I asked if I might take it home to read. Of course, they both said yes. I read it from cover to cover and I thought how blessed these people are to have God looking after them and helping them. Why, Why, can't He help me?

Brother Jim and Sister Margie asked me several times to go to church with them, and I would always try to change the subject. One day my daughter and I were visiting them and she asked my daughter to go to church with her, but didn't ask me. Something stirred inside of me, and I asked where services were to be held. Brother Jim spoke up and told me where, and who would be preaching; and I told them I thought I would like to go.

After returning to the house I asked myself, now why did I do that? Oh, how I wished I hadn't told them I wanted to go. All night I would wake up and worry why, why, did I want to go and make myself unhappy again? But I went, thanks to my Saviour! Dear Elder Griffin was preaching and what beautiful words came from his mouth. Never had I heard anything like this all the years I had been to church. I could hardly wait until the next service. Shortly after I started going they had the Association. If there was anyone there that enjoyed hearing one beautiful sermon after another any more than I did, then the Lord had blessed them indeed.

To be saved through faith! This verse, Ephesians 2:8, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God"..., has meant so very much to me. Not to have to work to be saved. Oh how sweet!

Praise God for this word of comfort, and Oh, so many, many more.

I began to think of being a part of the Church. I wanted to be with these dear saints so long as I lived. I was afraid to ask, afraid of being shut out because I knew I was unworthy to be in the same room with them. I prayed to God to show me if I could belong to His people.

One Sunday during services my heart was so on fire and open to God's Word, I thought it would jump out of my body. It felt like a huge hand was squeezing my heart and I began to cry and tremble. I couldn't finish the song we were singing. I just sat down. One of the sisters asked me if I had anything to say to the Church, and all I could say was, "I don't know."

During the week I was so full of joy, but still afraid to ask for a home with the Church. The next meeting I went to was at one of the dear sister's homes, I felt so burdened I could only tremble and cry. Elder Griffin had just started to speak and two of the sisters sitting close to me knew what was wrong with me and urged me to go ahead. I found myself up and walking and kneeling at Elder Griffin's side. I remember telling him that God had accepted me and would he ask the dear ones if they would. I trembled with fear that I was so unworthy and that God would stop me from getting in the Church with His Saints. When Brother Harry Ward spoke up to make the motion, I cried out with joy, "Thank you, God!!" How wonderful to be accepted! I thought God was showing me that I was His. Oh, what a good and forgiving Master we have.

The morning Sister Dixie Davis and I were baptized the Lord was surely there with us. When I came up out of the pool and saw the faces of the Brothers and Sisters, they seemed to be a part of Heaven. Surely we are shown small bits of what Heaven must and will be like. Elder Griffin preached one of the most beautiful sermons that morning I have ever heard. He preached about a winding stairway to Heaven. He said, "You dear Sisters have started up that stairway and He will guide you all the way. How my soul did soar at these words!

My Lord stayed with me so long before he turned away and let me see what the old way without Him was like. At those times my soul cries out to Him, and when He pays me a visit when I'm all alone it is so sweet and precious I can hardly stand it. Praise the Almighty God for loving me and showing me the way up that winding stairway to Heaven.

The Lord saw fit to have Elder Griffin return to Alabama. We missed them so very much, but He takes care of His people in His own way.

Now we are blessed to have Elder Poole and Sister Peggy and their family in our midst, and I hope we are as thankful as we should be. They have been with us a little over a year, and speaking for myself, they are so precious, and if God sees fit to remove them today, I thank Him from the bottom of my heart for letting me know and love them this long. They have become very dear to us and we should thank God every day for sending someone so blessed to speak as our dear Pastor can. Praise God, loved ones, for all the blessings He sends our way. Think of me in your prayers and may God bless and keep us all until we can be with Him forever and ever.

An unworthy but Grateful Sinner,
Sister Lib Cherrix

P. O. Box 9134
Springfield, W. Va. 25309

Dear Brethren:

I see by this issue that my subscription is out, so am sending Money order for one year: use the remainder as you see fit.

I was sorry to hear of Elder Ruston's passing, but the High God knows what is best. May God reconcile Sister Ruston and bless her both naturally and spiritually. I enjoyed his writing very much; and also the editors and other associates.

I will soon be seventy-six years old. May the Lord bless you to keep up the good work, blessing both you and yours.

From one in hope of eternal life by the shed blood of the Lord Jesus.

(Elder) John J. Smith

EXPERIENCE

3347 Tutwiler
Memphis, Tenn. 38122

Dear Editors and Household of Faith:

My heart and mind this morning is to talk with you about the wonderfulness of our God, and His teachings and care for his children while we travel through the low ground of sorrow which God spoke into existance many years ago.

All is too great for such as I to undertake to write about, yet I hope I have been give eyes to see and ears to hear of the wonderful works of God, with the understanding which He alone gives. We read that these things are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes; and except we become as a little child we cannot see the kingdom of God. But having received these things, how can we fail to lay hold of the hope that is set before us. This was the easiest thing to do, and the sweetest experience I ever felt; but it seemed to be forgotten for a while. I was about eleven years old: then for about five years I was light hearted and enjoyed the things of this life. My friends began to join their churches at a protracted meeting, and I went once to the mourner's bench, feeling so weak and undone: and came away feeling worse. They wanted me to come into their church, and it sounded so foolish to me, for my heart seemed as stone; and from then on my world was different. I continued to go among them for awhile, but finally I could go no longer — and had no where to go.

I would go with my parents to the Primitive Baptist Church, but could not understand them. My way seemed to be sinking down without hope and without God in this world. The experience of viewing the creation so beautifully was gone from me; and I found myself thinking I was a dumb brute and would die, and that be all. Then the thought came that would mean I would never see heaven and immortal glory — then I was faintly hoping for God's mercy. One dark, gloomy morning my mother and brother were ill, and my brother finally died. I was going out to milk two or three cows, and as I shut the door behind me, I felt to turn and pick up my burden to wrestle with it as I went. But, O my soul, it was not there; and the presence of my Saviour was with me, smiling down upon me with healing in His wings. My heart was overflowing with love, and I sweetly remembered the first experience I had about five years earlier. Without a doubt in my mind, all was love, joy and praises to my God; and this sweetness of assurance stayed with me about two weeks.

I have always felt to say I didn't realize I had mentioned it to anyone, but a Primitive Baptist preacher came to the town, and my mother and I went to hear him: and how plain and sweet his sermon was. I was so thrilled, and felt to be clothed and in my right mind. I thought life would be so pleasant and easy to bear now, but little did I know of the trials along life's way, and the weakness of my old flesh. Many trials and tribulations have been passed through. One time I was so cast down and my way hedged in for so long, I felt I would die: for I could not even pray, or have a good thought. One day it seemed I was told to go pray. I thought, Well I will go try, that is all anyone can do, but there was resentment in my heart. But when I got to the place to try and closed the door, something seemed to say: "God could strike you dead." And I could not get out of there quickly enough. I still remained in that condition for days or weeks.

One day while all around me was dark and cloudy in my soul, just like you have seen the sun break through a broken place in the clouds, Jesus seemed to appear, and my heart leaped for joy, and my soul was filled and lifted up above this world of suffering. I felt what it must have been with Jonah when he was cast into the water of the great sea: he cried, "I will pay that which I have vowed, Salvation is of the Lord," and he

was vomited out on the shore. I feel surely that is what we all cry when we go down into the deep. Elder Griffin wrote an article several years ago on, "They that go down to the sea in ships, and do business in great waters." It was a wonderful article and I would love to look it up and read it again. There was another series of articles that filled the whole year's publications which were so wonderful.

Just so today, there is wonderful reading in the *Signs of the Times.* I am glad the print is so clear, as I hope to be able to read it as long as I live. People from afar we have never met, telling the same sweet truths, strengthen our hope that it is of the Lord. I have been blessed for a year or two with a great feeling of peace, hope and love. We can never know what awaits us to bear, but nothing can molest until times appointed; and if such come to us, it will be for our good: for all things work together for our good, if we are God's children and love Him.

You will find enclosed a check for $10.00 for two years renewal. Use the remainder as you see fit.

Yours in sweet hope,
Mrs. Carrie Campbell

REMEMBERING FORMER DAYS

Haines, Oregon 97833

Elder D. V. Spangler and other
Editors of the Signs:

I see that my subscription has expired with this January issue. Enclosed find a check to cover two years and a little over for good measure. Another year has come and gone, and we are now starting out on 1973. As we change the dates on our letters and other things, I drop back, in memory to other years. Back to the old meetings at Big Springs Church at Elgin, Oregon (which now has only five members). To the Old Church at Touchet, Washington, and the Sister Church at Weiser, Idaho. (Both of these mentioned churches are now closed). I have pictures of the group, from Touchet, who would stop by our home on their way to Weiser. Often the back yard was full, as well as the hay mow and every place that would bed down a traveler, was full. But what fellowship there was there. With old Elder Mayfield, and Barnes, and others, as well as my father, C. W. Bond.

I read, in the *Signs* of the Association meetings there. They are much larger than we were ever able to have. There just are not that many people here. But in those old days we did the best we could and there were few missing when the roll was called. Now the roll has been called, Up Yonder, and all of these people have answered this call, until I can count on the fingers of one hand, the ones who even remembered those meetings.

Then I move in Memory up to a closer date, another group, another place, and I see the times that you have been with us, In Oregon, and Washington. Our ranks are growing thin, But the same old doctrine is still preached as with the first group. Our Elder Ben Preston, of Pleasant Grove Church, at Naches, Washington, has taken the place of our Elder Attebery, who is too infirm, physically, to carry the burden, any longer. Ben brings him to the various meetings and he enjoys meeting with his old friends.

Our memberships are still stable. We gained four among the Naches and Mossy Rock Churches, during the last year, and I believe that we have lost only one, Brother Casey, of Naches, a few weeks ago. But I wonder what this next year will do to them. When I look around and see the 90 and 85s and down to my age of 70, as one of the youngest, I wonder how many will be with us, in January 1974.

You see more Old Baptist faces, every time that you meet with them, than exist in the three states of Oregon, Washington and Idaho. And it is interesting to read of there being 21, or more, ministers at the Association. We feel fortunate to have that many listeners, and are fortunate to have one minister.

I hear from Brother and Sister Carter,

once in awhile. They keep me filled in on the rest of you. My trip back there in 1969, is well remembered. But I am glad to be back out here where I "love my fellow man the best, when he is scattered, some."

May the God, who rules all things, keep and care for you, for many more years, is my wish.

Your brother in hope
Charles W. Bond

EXPERIENCE OF RONNIE HOWARD WRITTEN FOR HIM BY HIS GRANDFATHER

Pink Hill, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler:

Hope you can find room to print the following experiences.

The experience of Ronnie Howard will have to be written by asking him questions, and judging him by the fruit he bears. An apple or peach tree cannot talk, but we know it is an apple or peach. This little boy has been loving the children of God, which is the church of the true and living God, for five or more years, he says. Also, he said that Jesus called him to come and follow Him. Jesus became flesh and blood and dwelt among men. This Word gives life and is the Light of men. Therefore the one it shines in is changed from natural darkness to the marvelous light of God.

On the memorable night when Elder Mitchell finished his message and announced that the door of the church were open, Sister Whol went forward; and Ronnie said, "I could not stay away any longer." This was on Tuesday night, and the baptizing was put off until Sunday afternoon. It seemed I could hardly wait, and when the time came I was over-joyed again, for my Mama came forward at the water and was received by the church, and was baptized. Oh, it just seemed that heaven had come down to greet Sister Whol, Mama and myself. We were baptized by Elders Stokes and Mitchell. We were carried beneath the waves, which would be significant of our Saviour's burial and resurrection.

I truly love the doctrine of Salvation by Grace, and grace alone; which would be the same words spoken unto me to follow Jesus. I dearly love hymn No. 4 in Lloyd's Hymn Book; "As on the cross my saviour died." It seemed that I could see him with my spiritual eye: hanging, bleeding and dying for me. Who could help but loving such a God? This same Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, who said, "none can come unto the Father but by me."

I do thank the Lord from the depth of my heart that He does love little children, for He said in his word, "Except ye become as a little child, you cannot enter the kingdom."

Now I have told you all how glorified and how high I had been lifted up; but then after a few days, old Satan stepped in and tried to devour me, as he tried to devour the little baby Jesus, who was born in Bethlehem and laid in a manger. This old Satan tried to make me believe that I had deceived everybody, and that I was no more than the ashes off of a cigarette tip: that I just as well throw all this experience of Christ away. You are not fit for such a place, I said to myself. But Grand-daddy read to me about the Apostle Paul, who felt to be less that the least of all saints. It was this grace given which strengthened my hope, for ye are saved not of works but by grace. If you will read Acts, chapter three, you will know about me.

I will soon be eighteen years old. I have to sit in a wheelchair. My Mama and Daddy have to feed me, and lift me in and out of my chair or car. But thanks to God of heaven that my mind is very good. I would be glad for anyone who reads this to pray for me. Also, write or come to see me. I am Ronnie Howard, and live in Pollocksville, N. C.

I would be glad to hear from anyone who loves the lame and afflicted, for I love the people I think are the children of God.

I am Ronnie's Grandfather. What you have read is the truth or I am badly deceived.

Oscar Howard
Pink Hill, N. C.

11458 Hartley Road
Houston, Tex. 7701

Dear Editors and the
Readers of the Signs:

Enclosed you will find a check for $10.00 for two years renewal, and the balance as you may see fit.

I feel at times that the *Signs of the Times* is the last crumb of bread that I have in this wide world. I know I am not gifted to write as others do. I have been thinking of Peter 1:2-9, that we should show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. And I often ask myself who it was that called me out of darkness into his marvelous light. I certainly don't believe it was my sinful self.

Another scripture, James 4:41, I will mention, "Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." I believe that if we were a people worshipping the things of the world, we probably would take pictures of our meeting houses showing what a fine building we had, and try to get the picture printed on the front page of the newspaper.

My time is passing on for I am now at the age of seventy-four, and it will not be long until I will be laid in the dust, and there I will await the second coming of our Lord and Master.

My love goes to all the dear readers and writers of the *Signs*.

C. L. Berry

HAS READ THE SIGNS
LONG TIME

P. O. Box 294
Salida, Cal. 95368

Dear Editors of the True
Signs of the Times:

O how I love to read it! Have read it since my young days, and I am near eighty-three. My parents used to subscribe for it, and they are now gone from this world of grief.

I enjoyed so much the article by Eld. Bernard Greenwood. It was heart-felt, as was the editorial. I could just picture all the dear ones in the associations in this issue. It was precious food to read.

I was at two associations last year. All was peaceful, which was a joy to the heart. My mind is on the church nearly all the time. I read and write a lot — and always have. I read other Baptist papers along with my Bible, the Book of All Books. I read it in my teens, and it never grows old,—always new. Our Lord is a wonderful teacher. I find Him most fit for me, and find myself most unfit for Him. I do love His Word. He is The Word, both sure and steadfast. I never tire hearing the true gospel preached in its fullness.

My subscription is die in February, so now I will send you an amount to help edit it. May God bless all of you. In sweet hope — and hope is sweet.

Mrs. Mabel Lindsey

A COMFORTING MEETING

1302 Walnut Street
Benton, Ky. 42025

Editors of our Family Paper:

Fine enclosed check for another year's subscription.

The last day of the old year 1972 a very comforting meeting was held with Zion Church in Mayfield, Ky. The Elders present and bringing messages of truth, were Albert Brock of Fayette, Alabama; Waymon Chappel of Memphis, Tenn.; Elmer Prince and Paul Poyner of Clinton and Murray, Ky.

We feel the Lord still gathers his children together and makes them sit in heavenly places in Christ, desiring to know nothing but Christ Jesus; and how we hope He is our Saviour, Redeemer and all in all. We believe we have been taught of this Lord, for we could not learn the Truth unless we had the Teacher to teach us.

Our hope is as we linger on here in this old world of turmoil and strife, that our Lord will continue to be gracious, and gather us together as he sees fit, and feed us at His will, with Truth, and give us peace in Him. Not that we deserve this, for we know we are sinners, but have hope we are in the Elect Family chosen

in Christ before the foundation of the world.

I remain a sinner and hope saved by Grace.

Effie Bowden

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To February 1, 1973)

Mr. Sherman F. Buchner, Okla.	$ 1.00
Mrs. Shirley Charlie Gardner, N.C.	1.00
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CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the Contentnea Union is to be held, the Lord willing, with Muddy Creek Church, Dalphin County, N. C. the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in April.

Those going south get on Highway 11 to Pink Hill, from Pink Hill to Beulaville on Highway 41, go through Beulaville on 41, and about three miles turn left on hard road. The church will be located on that road on the right.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. E. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

Danville, Virginia April, 1973

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do. (1 Timothy 1:2-4)

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto

you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. (Jude 1:3)

EDITORIAL

ARTICLES OF FAITH

In my observations regarding Articles of Faith, I would first make it very clear that the Scriptures are the only Divine Rule of Faith and Practice of the Church of God. Articles of faith are used to set forth to others what our understanding is concerning certain passages of scripture, as a support and defense of the doctrine we hold. Most religious bodies have some in method of presenting their beliefs to others, and their reasons for that belief. Some are founded in the Word of God, others are the imaginations of men, or professed revelations from God. Those who set forth articles of faith without acknowledging that the Word of God is the authority for their articles, are not worthy of recognition.

The question will be asked, How long have we had Articles of Faith? referring to Baptist Articles. According to history the first Confession of Faith denominated Baptist, was published in Switzerland in 1527. And in 1689 the ministers and messengers of above one hundred churches in England and Wales met in London for the purpose of writing their Confession of Faith, known as the London Confession of Faith. In their Prologue they asserted themselves as "denying Arminianism."

The first Baptist churches established in America embraced this confession of faith. There were at that time no Missionary or Old School Baptists — all were known as Baptists. It appears that all Protestant confessions of faith are either Calvinistic, Semi-arminian, or Arminian. Most of the earlier confessions of the Protestant churches, including the Westminister Confession adopted in 1643, embraced the doctrines of Election, Predestination, Effectual Calling, Justification by Faith, the Perseverance of the Called unto Eternal Glory, the Preservation of the Saints, and all related principle doctrines of Grace.

Most denominations have long since abandoned the preaching of the cardinal doctrines of Grace. And though there are certain expressions in the London Confession that we may not understand or agree with, the doctrines of Eternal Unconditional Election, Predestination, The Fall of Man (and all mankind involved in the Fall), the Trinity of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the Effectual Call, Justification by Faith, Sanctification of the Elect, the Final Glorification and the Resurrection of the Dead, as included in the London Confession, are in our present Articles of Faith; and we hold them dear. As Old School Baptists these principles of truth are, as they should be, important, and are preached in every Gospel Sermon.

If our Articles of Faith are not founded in the Word of God, they are worthless; but since they are founded there, they should be expounded and defended as an exposition of the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace Alone.

I wonder how many of our people are familiar with the Articles of Faith as set forth in our Associational Minutes and Church Records. Read them and compare them with the inspired Word of God, that we may be ready to give the reason of the Hope within us — not only from an experimental standpoint, but also in defense of God's Truth, as set forth in our Confessions of Faith with Scriptural References in an abbreviated way.

D. V. Spangler

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

SEEING AND NOT SEEING

"And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard

these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."—John ix. 39-41.

Dear Brethren:—If you will permit, I will try to suggest a few thoughts upon the above words for the readers of the *Signs*. Like every one of the words of inspiration, they are valuable, and contain lessons for our profit to-day. It seems to be a part and parcel of poor, feeble, human nature to look at things in parts, and to regard the Bible in the same way. We are apt to get certain ideas (even those which may be true) in our minds, and fasten our gaze upon them, to the overshadowing of other equally important things; and so we are apt to have our minds and hearts drawn to one class of texts, or to passages which specially bear upon some one principle of doctrine, and to pass by other portions of the word lightly, which present other principles of equally important truth. This should be guarded against, as far as we are able. I have seen some people who were impatient, and thought time was wasted, and who were even disposed to call in question the soundness of a man, if he did not all the time preach or write about election, predestination, and salvation by grace, and did devote a part of his time to preaching or writing about the multiplied obligations of Christians to God, to each other, and in all their relations among men in the world.

I do not find fault with those dear brethren whose gift leads them to speak or write oftener about some one theme than about another; but, on the other hand, let them also remember that other gifts and other themes are equally important and profitable to some one, if not to themselves. I think that every text and every theme in the bible is for our learning. There are lessons in them all, from the first verse of Genesis to the last verse of Revelation. I may differ from a brother's views of a text, or I may think that he has unwittingly perverted it; but I dare not say that his text was unprofitable, or that it was not for profit that it was given him to use. If what he says or what he does not say sets me to examining the text, that is the profit God meant for me in that discourse. And so I will try to suggest a few thoughts upon this Scripture, believing that it is intended, as all the Bible is, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

Almost all the discourses of our Savior grew out of certain circumstances which had occured, or were replies to things done or said by others; and if we would at any time know the real drift and bearing of his words we must know the circumstances and ascertain the thoughts, ideas and words of those to whom he spoke. This is the only safe way of interpreting anybody's words; and it is very manifest that the same words spoken under different circumstances may bear a great diversity of meaning.

In the words of Jesus under consideration it is therefore very needful that we know the occasion of their utterance, and to whom they were spoken. The occasion was this. Jesus had in a wonderful way healed one who was born blind. It became a notable case. The disciples, before the healing was performed, had questioned much as to why he had been born blind. Afterward the man's neighbors noticed him, and inquired after the manner of his healing; and in response he testified of Jesus, and told the manner of his healing. Soon they brought him to the Pharisees, and their miserable formality and hypocritical ritualism at once became apparent. Instead of praising the infinite power and goodness apparent in this work of the Savior, they begin to question and quibble because this had been done on the Sabbath day. They said, "This man is not of God; because he keepeth not the Sabbath day." But others said, "Can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?" It is wonderful to read along through this chapter and trace the workings of the carnal mind, which is enmity to God, in these self-righteous Jews. Their enmity was so bitter against the very name of Jesus that nothing

could change it or keep it in check; and because this blind man would continue to bear testimony of Jesus they cast him out of the synagogue, that, is, they excluded him from all his rights and privileges as a Jewish citizen.

That a miracle had been wrought by the Lord they did not and could not deny, but he had done this work on the Sabbath day; and because the poor blind man could not testify against the man that had done him so much good they were ready to destroy him also. They did not find fault with the works of the Lord, but they hated his doctrine. He made light of their traditions. He trampled upon their multiplied forms and ceremonies. He stripped the mask from their religion, and showed them up in their true colors. He taught that neither birth nor rituals nor outward morals could avail anything when the heart was filled with pride. he proclaimed to them that they were but whited sepulchres. No wonder that they hated him, even as they hated all goodness and truth and genuineness of every kind. Hypocrites and formalists themselves, they loved their kind, Because it was no better than themselves; but incarnate goodness and truth they hated, because it constantly stripped the covering from their sin, How little Jesus thought of forms! how much of what was genuine and real! Let us all, brethren, have a care, lest we be satisfied with mere forms—forms of worship, forms of speech, forms of doctrine. When any church becomes wedded to forms it is at once a petrified church, and there can be no more growth; and then right on the heels of formalism comes Phariseeism, and then persecution.

But God appoints and overrules all the persecutions of his people to their spiritual good. In this case the healed man might have been satisfied to remain where he was, still a communicant among those who had no experience in common with his, and where there could have been no real joy of fellowship; but when he began to tell his experience, and to ascribe all the glory to Jesus, they at once demurred, and a division was apparent at once. There was a difference the very moment this man was healed, nay, there had been a difference ever since he was born. Now he begins to just tell how it has been with him, and how things are with him now, and at once it is seen that the story is irksome and hateful to them. It is irksome and hateful not because he had been blind and is now healed, but because Jesus had healed him, and he would persist in saying so. They hated Jesus, and now they hated this man to whom Jesus had done such great things. It is so today. Let any man rise up among the popular orders of the day and begin to tell an experience that is all of grace, and keep on telling it, and never deviate from it. and in every case he will soon find himself hated and cast out of their chuches.

But God works good for his people in such ways. He worked good for this man. No sooner was he cast out of the synagogue than Jesus found him, and revealed himself to him as the Son of God, and spake comfortingly to him. There had been great things done for him in the flesh, and besides God had given him an honest spirit, so that he would not lie for fear or favor of men; and now to his honest heart Jesus comes, after he has been tried awhile, with further revelations of himself, his grace, and his love. This is the invariable rule in every case. To him that hath shall be given. He that has the grace of God in his heart shall find more grace as he has need and as he can receive it. When forsaken of those who have been to him as a father or mother, the Lord will take him up. This man was turned out of the earthly, formal system of worship, but in this he lost nothing; and immediately Jesus finds him, and leads him up into higher truths and feeds him in greener pastures and by stiller waters. He already knew the work of Jesus, but the Lord now reveals to him his person. "Dost thou belive on the Son of God?" "Who is he?" "I am he." When importuned to tell his enemies who and what he was, he always pointed to his works; but he grants a boon to a poor, humble blind

man, which he had denied to doctors and lawyers. Other men may see his works and cavil at them, but to the humble inquirer he reveals himself. With such he freely communes. If therefore any one, the poorest, the vilest of all, wants to know Jesus, to such an one he says, "I am he."

Now, out of all this narrative preceding Jesus says to the healed blind man, "For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind." Here the word "judgment" signifies "a sentence; an award; an administration; decree." Jesus came into the world to execute these two things. On the one hand to give sight to those who see not; and on the other to take it away from those who have it. So in chapter five Jesus said again, "The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son." To the same import were the inspired words of Simeon, "This child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." This was Jesus' work in the world; it is still his work. All that he said or did tended to this end. He divided all men and all things; he does so still. He did not in his ministry make men other than they were, but he revealed them. In the ministry of the world of Jesus he does the same to-day. There is never a preaching of Christ anywhere to-day where Jesus does not still come forth as a judge; and the thoughts of many hearts are still revealed. Men are either saying "Amen," or "This is hard doctrine; who can hear it?" Men who did not know that they were believers in the Bible, gospel sense, find it out by this holding forth of Christ; and men who think that all is right with them, hate the doctrine because it tells them that they are all wrong. It is still true that for judgment Jesus came into the world, and for judgment he abides here in his word and ordinances. He passes sentence, he issues decrees, he declares awards still. He reveals what men are; he shows them their true place in the sight of God.

But solemn and awful as these words were, they were like healing balm to the soul of this blind man. He had been blind in regard to his natural vision, and Jesus had given him sight. He had made no pretensions to any understanding, such as could be gained at the feet of the doctors of the law. In this respect he was blind also. There was no room for boasting in him, either naturally or spiritually; and now Jesus preaches good gospel news to him. "I am come that they which see not might see." If anybody is blind, halt, maimed, poor, sick, hungry or thirsty, to that man I am sent. I come to seek and to save that which was lost. All these expressions present the same truth. Jesus is the Friend and Savior of those who humbly confess their sins before him. He not only saves them if they come to him, but he seeks and saves them. What need of an anxious-bench or of an altar if this be true? All such things imply a distrust of the power, love, and all-sufficiency of Jesus. Jesus seemed to say to this blind man, "This which I have done for you is not a strange work for me. You need not think strange of it. This is what I came to do, and this is what I shall continue to do."

But there is also another part to Jesus' work: "That they which see might be made blind." It is manifest that Jesus does not speak of natural blindness. It is evident from what follows that the Pharisees did not so understand him; and neither did he mean that in any case he would destroy the power to descern spiritual things. This need not be argued, for none will claim this. I have no doubt this sentence belongs to the living experience of his chosen one, as well as the first expression. All men suppose themselves capable of seeing spiritual as well as natural things. Paul said, "I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came sin revived, and I died." It is just as though he had said, "I could see without the law once; but when the commandment came sin revived, and I became blind." That is, he came to realize that he was dead, or blind. The same word that afterward comforts now condemns. The glad

gospel news at first only causes trouble instead of joy. Such ones are beginning to find out that they are ignorant and blind; and they humbly confess it.

One who is now a dear sister in the church said to me that there was a time a few months before when, if she came to the meeting and heard the preaching, every word seemed as a word of cursing, and she was by it hopelessly cut off; but there came a time one day when "every word seemed a word of blessing." So Jesus, the same Jesus, is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel. Thus this poor blind man was taught that in Jesus Christ the lowliest is exalted while the lofty must be made as lowly as he. Here is the one common brotherhood of the saints.

The Pharisees heard these words, and said unto him, "Are we blind also?" Blind as they were naturally, and blinded also by hate and passion, yet they could perceive in his words that for them there was promised no blessing in his coming. They could not confess that they were blind, for they did not believe it; and if they said that they were not blind, he would say, Why concern yourselves about me then? If ye have no need of me, why be troubled because I go to those who have need? So they propose the question, "Are we blind also?" No doubt they hoped, as they often did, to catch him in his answer; and Jesus answered them in bold words of accusation and condemnation. "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth." For some time I understood these words as though they had read in this way: "If ye realized and confessed that ye were blind, ye should have no sin; that is, it would be evident from this that God had granted you repentance and forgiveness. But now ye say, We see; that is, you do not confess your sin; therefore it is evident that ye are unrepentant and unforgiven." Of late however this has seemed to me a forced construction of these words, however true all these sentiments may be in themselves. I have come to think that these words mean the same thing as the words of Jesus recorded in the fifteenth chapter of John. "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin." "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause."

Read also the whole connection, where it will be seen that Jesus exhibits to view the natural enemity of the human heart to God. I now understand the words of Jesus in the text thus: If ye were blind, that is, if ye had not both seen and heard my words and works, ye would not have been chargeable with this sin of wilful rejection of me; but seeing these things, and rejecting them, and hating me, the sin of your hearts and your stubborn rebellion against God and unreconciliation to his will are plainly manifest. But now, after all this, ye say, We see; that is, they claimed to know the things of God, and therefore that they needed no instruction, but rather could instruct others. Now if all this be so, if indeed ye do see and know divine things, it is evident that your rejection of me and my words is from deliberate hatred to God and rebellion against him. They were in rebellion against God in reality before, yet they claimed to be the friends of God, but their rejection of him in the healing of this blind man showed plainly the bitter enmity of their hearts. Their sin remained in them. It was an evil heart of unbelief, of rebellion and hatred. If the time, however, should ever come when one of them should begin to bewail his blindness, then he would no longer hate Jesus or his Father, and he no longer would have that sin.

Now just a closing word. The comfort of all this is for the poor blind ones who confess their need. Their sin does not remain. They no longer hate, but love, Jesus and his word; and their chiefest comfort is that they may love God. If you confess your blindness, you do honor and love God.

As ever, your brother in hope,

F. A. Chick

(The above was by Elder F. A. Chick July 22, 1887)

SPECIAL REQUEST

We received the following from one of our subscribers and correspondents: "Dear Brother: I don't want to complain but I do wish that the writers of Obituaries would not be so lengthy as to take so much space in the Signs. HUNDREDS of the subscribers are not the least interested in these, save the names and addresses, and pertinent information. We are all human, and loved ones are dear to us, but Jesus should be more dear than everything else."

Others have expressed about the same as above, and we have several times requested that the brethren be mindful of the length of the obituaries they write. It is difficult for us to edit them so as to make them shorter and not take up too much space.

About 250 words will require a little more than half a column, and would be acceptable for most accounts of those who have passed on. We sometimes have thirty or more obituaries waiting for insertion due to the length of some of them.

Keep this in mind when you are called on to write an obituary. If you type them please double space for our convenience.

EDITORS

OBITUARIES

ELDER JOSHUA CALEB HAMMOND

It is with sadness that after a long period of mourning within, that I will attempt to write a brief sketch to serve as an obituary for our beloved brother and Father in Israel, Elder Joshua Caleb Hammond.

His departure from this life came after 90 years and 11 months in his pilgrimage here below. Only a few weeks of serious illness preceeded his death which occurred on July 14, 1972, in McMillen Hospital at Charleston, West Virginia.

Elder Joshua C. Hammond was born August 15, 1891, in Jackson County, West Virginia. He was the son of Andrew Hammond and Perlina Rhodes Hammond. On January 4, 1903 he was united in marriage to Minerva Page Hammond who preceeded him in death on November 8, 1949. To this union were born eight children. Surviving are three sons; Zeland L. Hammond and Howard Hammond of Charleston, W. Va., and Leonard Hammond of Dunbar, W. Vir. Three daughters; Mrs. Dessie Walfinbarger of St. Albans, W. Va., Mrs. Bessie Sigmon of Glasgow, W. Va., and Miss Elizabeth Hammond of Cincinnati, Ohio; two foster daughters; Mrs. Mary Maddox of Charleston, W. Va., and Mrs. Elma Halstead of Frame, W. Va., 39 grandchildren; 75 great grandchildren, and 6 great, great, grandchildren. Two sons, Alvin D. and Delbert A., preceeded him in death.

Elder Hammond received a sweet hope in the mercy of God early in life. His preaching reflected his deep convictions in the sovereignty of our God. He joined the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church and served as a faithful member until his death. He was appointed clerk of the Hopewell Church on May 2, 1925 and served in that capacity until 1941. He was liberated to the Gospel Pulpit on July 2, 1927, and ordained to the full work of the ministry on December 5, 1931, which work he faithfully followed until the summons came that called him home. He was installed as the pastor of the Hopewell Church on May 31, 1941, and served as a faithful under-shepherd for 31 years, until his death.

Elder Hammond served as clerk of the Pocatalico Association for more than 10 years, and as moderator for 37 years. He was held in great esteem by Primitive Baptists far and near, and in the year of 1950 he was appointed to serve as moderator for the Tygart's Valley River Association during the illness of Elder J. S. Murphy.

The many duties he performed are too numerous to record accurately. Surely his labors in the service of God were labors of love as he traveled over the rough roads through heat and cold, storm and sunshine, not for hire, or man's reward, but for the love of God and his blessed children. He fulfilled the command, "Feed my Sheep", and "Feed my Lambs", as he spoke his convictions to the satisfaction of the Children of God, giving all praise, honor and glory to the God of all grace.

To know him was to love him, and he was known for his firm, steadfast adherance to the doctrine and disciple of the church that was founded upon the precepts, examples and admonitions as set forth in the Bible. Few were more familiar with the scripture than he. In my humble opinion, Elder Hammond was the last of the line of Old Baptists of his era.

In the last several years he made his home with his son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Zeland Hammond in Charleston, W. Va., where he was cared for tenderly.

The funeral service was held at the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church on July 16, 1972, by Elder R. H. Pennington and Elder V. B. Linn. A large crowd of people as-

sembled to pay their final tribute of respect. He was laid to rest in the Page Cemetery on Kelley's Creek to await the resurrection, to which his faith looked.

Although we believe for him to die is gain, he will be sorely missed, not only by the 126 surviving members of his family, and his many brethren far and near; but by many friends and neighbors. May the Lord of all grace comfort all those who mourn the passing of our precious brother.

(Elder) V. B. Linn

ELDER HOWARD D. MURPHY

Elder Howard Dennison Murphy, son of Deacon Burr G. Murphy and Olive (Phillips) Murphy, departed this life at 11:50 A.M. August 20, 1972. He had been in failing health for the past few years, but still it came as a shock when he was called away.

He was born February 28, 1923, making his stay in this life forty-nine years, five months and twenty-three days. On May 17, 1947 he was married to Mary McNiel Murphy who survives. Also surviving are three daughters, Dianna and Brenda at home, and Mrs. Charles Likens of Germany: three sons, Billy and David at home, and Howard Junior serving with the United States Navy: also two grandchildren. Three brothers preceded him in death.

Elder Murphy was veteran of World War Two, serving in the U. S. Navy aboard the U.S.S. Bunker Hill.

He joined the Primitive Baptist Leading Creek Church June 20, 1959, and was baptized by Elder V. B. Lynn. He first spoke in public by request of the church on June 19, 1960; and was ordained to the full work of the ministry August 29, 1964. He last spoke in public July 16, 1972, at which time, in his weak and frail voice, he spoke comfortingly of his convictions.

Funeral services were held at Leading Creek Church, Montrose, W. Va. on August 24, 1972, conducted by Elder V. B. Lynn. He was laid to rest in the adjacent cemetery, to await the coming of our Lord.

Written by request of the family.

(Elder) V. B. Linn

ELNORA WINCHELL SICKLER

Sister Elnora Winchell Sickler was born December 5, 1893 at Shokan, N. Y., and died October 20, 1972. She was the daughter of Orville and Eva L. Winchell. Her husband was George Sickler, who died some years ago. She is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Coralie Buel, and four grandchildren. Also by a brother, Harry Winchell, Kingston, N. Y., and a sister, Mrs. Lelah Hill of California.

Sister Sickler died suddenly. She suffered for many years with diabetes and a heart condition. Her sister was visiting her when she dropped dead shortly after having breakfast.

She had lived at Prattsville on her daughter's farm for many years. Her great grandfather Winchell built the O. S. Baptist Church at Shokan, N. Y. and she united there in June, 1927. She was baptized by Elder George Ruston who was then her pastor.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder A. J. Slauson, and she was laid to rest at Shokan, N. Y. She greatly loved the church and her brethren, and was firm in her belief in the doctrine of God our Saviour. She loved to visit among the brethren, and especially the assocations.

May the Lord give grace to those who mourn her passing that they may be reconciled in their loss.

John D. Wood

GEORGE VIRGIL ADKINS

As it pleased God to take from our midst our very dear friend, George Virgil Adkins, on January 15, 1973, after having spent eighty-four years on these mortal shores, we bow in humble submission to the will of our eternal God, believing that He has an appointed time for all things.

He was the son of the late George W. and Martha Phillips Adkins and was married to Mary (Mamie) Staton who passed away in 1965. To this union was born one son Jeff Staton Adkins who passed away in the year of 1963. Surviving are one sister, Mrs. Ethel Ratliff of Morven, N. C. There are also one nephew and three nieces who survive.

He was a man well liked by many, and was associated with the W. E. Sheppard Wholesale Grocery Co. for many years. However, his health not being very good, he spent his last few years in the Eastern Shore State Hospital where he passed away.

He was not a member of the Old School Baptist Church but attended the meetings as long as his health would permit. It is our prayer that all who knew him so well may be blessed with a mind to have no doubt but that our departed friend has gone to a better land, where all the tears and sorrows of this life will be wiped away.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Hill-Baker-Bounds Funeral Home and his body was laid to rest in the Parsons Cemetery, on Jan. 18, 1973.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

IN MEMORY OF SISTER MYRTIE FOSTER

I beg the grace of God as I write in memory of one very near and dear to me, Sister Myrtie Foster, who passed from this life January 19, 1972. She was born in Pickins County, Alabama, March 25, 1882, to Brother Joe Awtry and wife, Sister Permelia Sanders Awtry. In 1912 she was married to Mr. Mack Foster, who preceded her in death several years. They lived and reared their family of one daughter and three sons: Mrs. Helen Cash, with whom she was making her home in Hattisburg, Miss. and whose hands administered to her mother with tenderest care; Monroe Foster, Tupelo, Miss., Adolph Foster, New Orleans, La.; her youngest son Awtry, and his wife, who preceded her in death about a month. Her children can call her *Blessed*, as she died as she lived, trusting in God.

After the death of her husband she lived in Birmingham, Ala. for a short time, taking care of her mother. While there she joined Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church in June, 1952, and was baptized by her pastor, Elder W. D. Griffin, where she remained a faithful member. Besides her children she leaves three brothers, Hubert, George and Elder Henry Awtry; three sisters, Sisters Florence Pate, Ella Shoemaker and Effie Cowart, all members of the same church.

She suffered much pain, not being well for several years, but bore it with much patience, trusting that God would one day remove her from all pain that was appointed to her in this time world, and would waft her spirit to Paradise with Him, where all is peace and rest.

She spent much time with me while attending meetings and associations in many states. We often talked of the wonderful mercy of God in permitting us to enjoy these last sweet years together. Our communion together will never be forgotten, as we often talked of the cords of love which bound us together insomuch that we felt to be sisters in the flesh, and a blessed hope that we were made sisters in the great handiwork of God.

A more serene and gentle sister ever lived among us. God blessed me with her companionship and encouragement in the many miles we traveled to hear the joyful dew-drippings of Jesus and His love, and in hunting Primitive Baptist history, and looking up old churches, ministers and members.

Her funeral was conducted by her former pastor, Elder W. D. Griffin, and her present pastor, Elder H. C. Moon. She was laid to rest beside her husband in Artesia, Miss. beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, but not one as beautiful as her life.

May God give us to say, "Thy will be done."

In hope of eternal life,

Maggie L. Hayes,
Vernon, Ala.

BROTHER HARVEY EDWARDS

God called one of his little ones home October 23, 1972.

Elders Henry Jones and Joe Sawyer officiated. The funeral was held at Joyner's Funeral Home in Wilson, North Carolina. Burial was in Cedar Grove Cemetery at Elm City, North Carolina.

Surviving are his wife, Mrs. Carolyn Baker Edwards; a daughter, Mrs. John Pitt of Pinetops; a son Harvey Roy Edwards of Pinetops; and three brothers, Jimmy, George and Bernice Edwards. One grandchild.

One of Brother Edwards desires was to go to Otter's Creek and worship with the brethren. As I sat beside his bed and listened to him talk, I can tell all of you that didn't know him, he did not unite with the Church just to have his name put on the book. He believed in God and he loved every one of you. John 15-17 "Christ said, This I command you. To love one another." If we be what we hope to be we have no choice. The choice is not ours. For it is written THY WILL BE DONE IN EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN. His will, will be carried out.

Brother Edwards suffered a lot. He was a very sick man. Yet I don't feel I have seen anyone that wanted to be Baptized anymore than he did. We thank God for giving him the strength to walk into and out of the water. I can see him now as he came out of the water. He looked at the sisters and brothers that were singing as if to say thank you. As I was helping him put on his clothes, he said, Everyone needed to go through that water. He knew he had something. Brethren it was a hope. Something that can only be given by God. Its something we would not part with and those that don't have it wouldn't give you anything for it.

I believe with all my heart that brother Edwards was a child of God and now waits his call to enter into heaven. No more aches, no more sorrows. May his soul rest in peace.

I do wish to thank the family for the nice letter they wrote to the Church. As the letter was read it brought tears to a lot of eyes. The letter alone would lead me to believe Brother Edwards was a child of God.

Written by the request of Otter's Creek Primitive Baptist Church.

Written By Brother J. C. Edwards
Elder Joe Sawyer, Moderator
Joe B. Coker, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141 **DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1973** **NO. 5**

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5/73
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ABRAHAM'S SERVANT

By
ELDER STEWART McCOLL

"Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without?" (Gen. 24:31)

These are the wonderful words of Laban to the humble and obedient servant of Abraham when he arrived in Mesopotamia seeking a bride for his master's son Isaac. What joy they must have brought to this weary sojourner after such a long journey! What joy they bring today to the weary traveller desiring a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God!

At Abraham's bidding, the dutiful servant set off from the land of the Canaanites among whom they dwelt, for the homeland and kindred of his master Abraham to take a wife for his son Isaac. The mission was awesome, to say the least, being a long journey to an unknown country, seeking a damsel whom he knew not in a place he knew not where. Only Abraham's assurance that a kind Providence would superintend his journey and direct him to the chosen bride, enabled him to leave with any degree of confidence.

Since all the goods of his master were in his hand, the servant chose some men and ten camels to accompany him. In addition he selected a golden earring and two bracelets as gifts for the bride. Resolutely he set off for Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor, where he made his camels kneel by a well of water at the time of the evening, even the time that women go out to draw water.

Scarcely had he stopped at the well, when a young damsel named Rebekah came from the city to draw water, offered him drink, gave to the camels also and invited him to her father's household. She was the daughter of Bethuel, the grandson of Haran, Abraham's elder brother. A kind Providence indeed, had guided this humble servant in fulfilling his mission as he was quick to acknowledge in saying, "...the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren."

In a moment, Laban, Rebekah's brother, ran to meet him at the well and said, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without?"

Rebekah, after hearing the mission of her servant, unhesitatingly voiced her willingness to go with him to Abraham's household as Isaac's bride.

The account of the servant's journey is wonderful even in a literal way as it underlines his devotion to his master Abraham, his dependence upon an unerring Providence, his recognition of the bride in answer to prayer and his welcome into an unknown household in a far country. Even more wonderful is it, however, when viewed spiritually since it typifies the journey of a child of grace searching and longing resolutely for the Household of Faith. The likeness is remarkable in detail as we shall soon discover.

Abraham sent *his* servant unto *his* country and to *his* kindred just as God the Father directs *His* children to look "for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (Hebrews 11:10) The bond between the servant and Abraham was sealed with an oath, while the servant placed his hand under Abraham's thigh (a custom yet extant in some eastern countries). This oath signifies for us the covenant which Moses exhorted the Israelites to enter into with God that He might establish them as a people unto himself. (Deut. 29:12-13) In addition it typifies the fact that "God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath." (Heb. 6:17) An unbreakable seal is therefore established between God and His people.

The journey of the servant was superintended by an angel of God being sent before him as an angel was directed later to keep the Children of Israel in the way, to touch Elijah, to commune with Zechariah, to release Peter from prison and generally to prosper the way of His people in mercy and in truth.

Ten camels were used to carry the servant and his party of men across the desert. How fitting! The camel is the ship of the desert suited in every way to its work and its environment. Its hoofs are broad and hornlike in the sand, its stomach is lined with numerous cells to store water, its hump is a reservoir of food, its pinched nostrils can be closed to shut out the sandstorm and its rubbery lips are able to grub the thorniest plants. Not only is it adapted to its environment but found useful in every conceivable way. It provides milk, meat, transportation and hair for weaving. Even the camel's excrement, when dried, is used for fuel.

Upon careful examination a striking similarity becomes evident between the camels (ten in number) carrying the humble servant across the wearisome desert and the law (ten commandments) serving as our schoolmaster unto Christ. As the camel is adapted to its environment, so the law is designed for its specific purpose; as the camel is useful in every conceivable way, so the law provides every instrument necessary to purge our sins; as the camels knelt by the well so the law must bow before Christ; as the camels were given water from the well, so Christ satisfied the law to a jot and tittle; as the camels were released from labour having been given straw and provender in Rebekah's home, so the law must rest once faith has come for "after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." (Gal. 3:25)

It is very significant that the search for Isaac's bride came to a climax at a well. Isaac, being a clear type of Christ as the perfect sacrifice, stands out among the Patriarchs as the man of the well; Abraham being the man of the altar, and Jacob the man of the tent. Indeed Isaac dwelt by the well Lahairoi meaning the well dedicated to the Living One who seeth me. In addition, his name is connected with the well at Esek meaning contention, the well at Sitnah meaning enmity and the well at Rehoboth meaning roominess or freedom. These he redug after the Philistines had closed them up following his father Abraham's death. Abraham had dug the wells originally. How clearly they reveal to us spiritually the contention that exists in us between the flesh and the spirit, the enmity between God and man in our natural state and then the freedom from bondage which comes when Christ gives us a drink of living water. The particular well by which the servant stopped at eventide, just outside the city of Nahor, beautifully typifies Christ as the source of that living water.

Our experience under the law occurs in dry places similar to the natural desert across which the servant had to go. Frequently we are in darkness . . . even gross darkness . . . in which no light appears to guide our path. We seem alone, without the camp, seeking refuge from an indulgent God. It all

serves to bring us to our knees in prayer for:

> "Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
> The falling of a tear;
> The upward glancing of an eye,
> When none but God is near."

How wonderfully significant, then, is the servant's arrival at the well, after a long journey, seeking the bride, at the time of the evening, without the city in an attitude of prayer.

His prayer was God given, "O Lord God of my master Abraham . . . let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; . . . (Gen. 24:12-14)

His prayer was answered, for before he had done speaking, Rebekah came out . . . hastened . . . and offered him drink and his camels also. No wonder the servant bowed down his head and worshipped the Lord.

Mesopotamia means the land between rivers spiritually signifying the promised land which in type was given of God to Abraham when He said, "Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates." (Gen. 15:18) The city of Nahor means breathing hard to remind us of the expression in Psalm 42:1, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.", or in Psalm 119:131, "I opend my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments." How clearly the account describes the condition of the weary sinner at this point in his travels.

Even the names of Rebekah's kindred are highly significant. Bethuel meaning abode of God plainly portrays the Household of Faith. Milcah being interpreted counsellor, indelibly refers to the One prophesied in Isaiah who was to be called, "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6) Laban means white telling us that, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." (Rev. 7:14) Without doubt, Abraham's servant was led to the house of his master's brethren, giving him a foretaste of that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. (2 Cor. 5:1)

To this house he must come to find Rebekah, the bride of Isaac, a lovely type of the Church of Christ. Like the mystical bride she typifies, Rebekah, too, was "very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her." (Gen. 24:16) She "went down" to the place where the water was, "filled her pitcher", "hasted" to draw it, "drew" for the camels also, and "ran" and told those of her mother's house the things concerning the servant. Her joy was evident in the manner in which she served. Even greater joy is evident in the Church when someone comes to ask a name with it. Common it is to see the members "run" to tell others in the household the good news. The pitchers are full . . . haste is made . . . as Rebekah clearly portrays.

At this juncture the servant's demeanor was certainly becoming and we can but feel to fellowship him fully as he cried in humility, "is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in?" (Gen. 24:23) This reminds us of others in the scripture who groaned like the humble publican, "God, be merciful to me a sinner," or Peter, "Lord, save me", or the Leper, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." God has promised his people that he will not despise the prayer of the destitute. Of some comfort are the words of another servant who after bringing in the poor, the maimed, the halt and the blind at God's command said, "Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room." (Luke 14:22) Nevertheless, to every poor sinner the anxiety persists . . . the cry remains . . . am I one of His or no? and "is there room?"

Not only did Rebekah reassure the servant of her household's provision of

straw and provender for his camels, but ran to tell her kindred the wonderful events which took place at the well. What is even more remarkable is that when asked later by the servant whether she would return with him to be Isaac's wife, she said unhesitatingly, "*I will go.*" (Gen. 24:58) How we are made willing in the day of His power!

Laban appears at this time to reassure the servant by saying, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without?" What a joyous greeting! What a monumental blessing! Especially if it comes from the Church —but more especially if it comes from Christ. The word "come" in itself is all sufficient if from Him. How frequently it is used in the scripture! For example God said to Noah, "*Come* thou and all thy house into the ark . . .", Jesus said to Zacchaeus in the sycamore tree, "*Come* down," and to Lazarus in the tomb, "*Come* forth," and some day He will say to all that wait for His appearing "*Come,* ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matt. 25:34) Only at this juncture will the word "come" reach its full significance.

The joy of the servant at this moment, having been given all the comforts of Rebekah's household, must have been unspeakable for truly he had been greatly blessed. No wonder he exclaimed, ". . . the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." His joy can only be compared to those who, after waiting patiently without the camp, have been brought into the Church and await in hope the promise of better things to come.

Now the servant's camels were ungirded to show that he was no longer under the law, but under grace. His feet, too, must be washed to remind us that:

> "Th'appointed time rolls on apace
> Not to propose but to call by grace:
> To change the heart, renew the will,
> And turn their feet to Zion's hill."

Then meat was set before him to eat signifying that he was now ready and anxious for the doctrine as well as the sincere milk of the word. Christ was now his portion as clearly declared in John 6:56, "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him."

One more task the servant determined to do before he could enter into the full fellowship of the household. Graciously and humbly he declared, "I will not eat until I have told mine errand." With these words he began to relate how he was Abraham's servant; how the Lord had blessed his master with great substance . . . even a son in his old age; how Abraham had made him swear to seek a bride for his son Isaac in the house of his father's kindred; how an angel had been sent with him to prosper his way; how his prayer had been answered; how he had found the bride and how he had been led to the house of his master's brethren. A BEAUTIFUL EXPERIENCE!! Every word an exclamation to His praise. It is little wonder that Laban and Bethuel could simply declare, "The thing proceedeth from the Lord . . ." How we love to hear those to-day who must "tell their errand" to the Church before entering into the full fellowship of the observance of the Lord's Supper.

It seems very fitting that God in his infinite wisdom would show us this example of a humble servant being led to the Household of Faith especially so early in the pages of the Old Testament. His servitude clearly reveals to us our relationship to the law while we are in bondage to it under the elements of this world, until Christ sends forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts whereby we cry ABBA! FATHER! as declared in Galatians 4:7, "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." Abraham's servant was elevated from his servitude to the full freedom of sonship in the house of his master's brethren. That a similar unmerited favour may be your portion and mine, spiritually, is our humble

prayer in Christ Jesus, Amen!

Elder Stewart McColl
R. R. #4, Appin,
Ontario, Canada.
NOL-1AO

AWAITS THE COMING OF THE SIGNS

722 S. Alvarado, Street,
Los Angeles, Cal. 90057

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood:

Am sending $10.00 for my *Signs* to be extended as far as it will go. It seems I am paid up to March, 1973. I read them twice and rush them to a brother and sister. So I just casually see the date of the time due. I always read them the first night.

It is encouraging to see articles from the young brother. Every so often I hear of members and occasionally elders that leave the church in which they have been in fellowship for years. Paul says in 2 Timothy 3:3, 4 "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." He is not talking about so-called religionists, as they have never endured sound doctrine. A lot who profess do not believe in Predestination to the fullest. It can't be too strong, as some say, to suit me. Whatever we believe has no effect on the Lord, as He is unchangeable, and will not give his glory to another.

At breakfast this morning I opened my Bible to Ezekiel, chapter 47 and started on the 48th, only reading about six verses. I have wondered about Manasses supplanting Dan in Revelation, seventh chapter. In Ezekiel 48:1-6 it mentions Dan, Manasseh and Ephrim in the portions to the seven tribes. I once wrote Elder Ruston, and he wrote some of it, but finally said that it remained one of the mysteries of God. There is much in the Bible when I read it, that has no meaning to me. I understand nothing unless the Holy Ghost opens my understanding. If you or anyone have any light on it, I would appreciate seeing something written on it in the *Signs*.

Always waiting to receive my *Signs*.

A brother I trust, but a poor mortal
Harry T. Vories

ISOLATED FROM THE BRETHREN, THE SIGNS IS COMFORT AND JOY

A225 Emerson Street,
Winona, Miss. 38967

Dear Elder Spangler:

It is again time to make my little contribution to our family paper, the *Signs of the Times*. It is indeed with a thankful heart, if not deceived, that I am able to do this. I am isolated and separated many miles from my brethren and sisters in the Lord, so the *Signs* is indeed a comfort and joy to me, who am the least of the household of faith, if indeed I am one at all.

The Apostle Paul says, "By the grace of God I am what I am" — to which I say Amen; for it is the grace of God that makes the difference between the believer and the unbeliever--between the saint and sinner: between those who have a lively hope and those who are dead in trespasses and sins; between those who are afar off and those who are made nigh by the Blood of Jesus Christ. Yes, it is the grace of God that makes the difference between those who have the Spirit of our God and Jesus Christ, and those who are without God and hope in the world.

There is a great gulf that separates the dead from the living, and that gulf is the grace and love of God. Paul the Apostle, who was moved by the Holy Ghost, says of God that He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. This is a hard saying, who can hear it? that is, Who can understand it? No one can understand it until he is taught of the

Lord.

May the giver of every good and perfect gift continue to lead, guide, guard, direct and protect his little flock through the remainder of this sinful world, so prays this unprofitable servant for Jesus' sake. Amen. Brethren pray for me.

Yours in gospel bonds,
Elder Louis Stewart

A JOY AND COMFORT

843 Glendale Ave.,
South Charleston, W.Va. 25303

Dear Brother Wood:

Once again it is time to renew my subscription to my favorite periodical, the *Signs*. What a joy and comfort it has been to me during the years!

Many times I have prayed for an answer to something that was troubling me, and a copy of the *Signs* would come and I would read where a dear brother had written an answer to my prayer — of course I know it was performed by the hand of God. I believe He uses some of his children to comfort the others. I read in the January issue where a sister mentioned about how soon we forget the blessings we receive from our Lord. How true!

We would thank Him for inspiring the brethren to write and publish the *Signs* down through the years — always holding to the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. So many of God's people would never hear the Gospel if they didn't receive this dear old paper. May He ever bless and inspire you to continue publishing it.

Enclosed is a check for another year's subscription, the remainder to be used as needed. Give Sister Wood my love.

A sister, I hope,
Mrs. Lester Haning

NEVERTHELESS GOD'S WORK IS PERFECT

807 Pope Street,
Memphis, Tenn. 38112

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

If I don't say anything other than that the November and December, 1972, issues of the *Signs* were the best reading I ever read, and that I regret being late in sending my renewal, it will at least be the truth; and if I just tried to write of spiritual things with a carnal mind, it would be of no value. But for some reason my mind has been on the carnality of man.

"The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope." I know there are differences of opinions as to what the Creature is, but I feel to know that "I" in my carnal flesh am altogether vain. An yet I have been given hope, and this carnal person has been subjected by or in that hope — not made better, for I still suffer because on my carnal inclinations, and rebellion at times because they can't have sway. Subjection, when it comes in love, is easy and lovely; and the subjection to these things which are contrary to my flesh, is precious with reconciliation, and I feel so thankful to God that I am in this way. But when this subjection comes in the form of chastisement, and hindering a way I feel is good, it is hard to bear.

Nevertheless God's work is perfect, and there is a reason man was made subject to vanity — and we have to say, "So be it." But I believe I hunger and thirst after righteousness with all my heart; and sometimes Christ's sermon on the Mount comforts me. The verses beginning with the word BLESSED, I have read through many times: But in my Bible the whole sermon is on heavy slick paper, with floral colored designs. One night I decided to read the whole Sermon, and when I reached the last verse, where "Jesus ended these sayings", for some reason I was so shaken

with fear that tears streamed from my eyes, and I honestly felt that I was barred from everything He said. I too was astonished at His words, and I felt I had just grasped at these truths and had a faint *head knowledge* of them. I was alone, and sat there a long while in this dreadful state of mind, fearful that after all these years of believing and hoping and rejoicing, feeling the Lord had been mindful of me in much mercy, I surely was mistaken in it all, and that it had sprung from the imagination of my natural mind.

Suddenly a question came to my mind, "Could this be the fear that God said He would put upon his people?" Like, "The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom." I felt some relief, and comfort seemed to drop from somewhere and distill into my being: precious thoughts like, "The secret of the Lord is with those that fear Him." This fear was so real, yet it now seemed a reverential fear and awe, love mixed. And I remember it today in the same way. I *must* believe these experiences come from God and are his dealings with his children, if I have hope.

If they are the imaginations of a carnal mind, I have no hope. For all these things link together from the time I first felt the quickening love by the Spirit, which was so sweet to my soul.

I had no idea of writing what I have when I started a few lines to send my renewal. I am sending enough for two years and a little extra. I hope the Lord will be gracious to you and make the task of getting the paper out easy.

Mrs. James E. (Lucille) Young

MATTHEW 25:1-13

"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: But go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." (Matthew 25:113.)

Jesus spoke the above and the entire 25th chapter of Matthew in parables. A parable is spoken in figurative language and never the real thing of which it is a figure. All scripture is given by divine inspiration, including the parable; but a parable or a narrative is in that sense different to the plain written word. No man by the natural mind can receive nor understand any part of scripture given except by divine inspiration, and neither can he receive nor understand the parables Jesus spoke while here upon earth. And he spoke several in comparison of the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven is both called the kingdom of God and the kingdom of God's dear Son. All these refer to a spiritual kingdom of which a man must be born of the Spirit before he can either see or enter into the kingdom.

In the parable given above, this is the beginning of the manifestation of the kingdom of God's grace given in Christ; as is spoken of in Daniel 2:44, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."

Also that spoken of in Isaiah 9:6-7, which we may mention later.

Notice all ten of the virgins slumbered and slept right on until midnight, for it was at midnight when the cry was made, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh." Until now there was no discovery of any difference in the ten, for all were virgins; all equally virgins. Midnight is a dividing between two days, the ending of one day and the beginning and manifestation of the kingdom or gospel dispensation. The one that made the cry, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him" no doubt was John the Baptist. John came preaching in the wilderness; "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," and, "To make ready a people prepared for the Lord." All the virgins heard the audible voice of John. This is proven by many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to be baptized of him in the river of Jordan. But what five of the virgins did not have was oil in their lamps. This is the first manifestation of any difference between the ten virgins. The oil in the vessels of the five wise was all that made that difference. The oil made them wise, just as grace makes his people wise unto salvation. The wise, being vessels of mercy, have an entrance by grace through faith into the kingdom of heaven with the bridegroom. But the door is shut against law worshipers. Though they say, "Lord, Lord, open to us," yet, his reply is, "I know you not." Jesus said, "Many shall say unto me in that day, (the gospel of the kingdom of heaven day), "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." This, as said above, is the gospel of the new and everlasting covenant day, given of God in Christ Jesus, who is not only our Lord, but our almighty, eternal and everlasting Saviour, who shall save his people from their sins with an everlasting salvation.

As for the DOOR, Jesus said, "I am the door of the sheep, by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved." Not be saved later on, but saved presently and that eternally. May we further say, the five wise virgins that were ready and went in with him (the bridegroom), were ready because Jesus made them ready and kept them ready; and they went in to the marriage, (the kingdom of heaven), with the bridegroom — both with him and by him.

We wish now to consider the third parable Jesus spoke in this 25th chapter of Matthew, beginning at the 31st verse. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand but the goats on the left." For briefness we will not quote more of the parable; others may read it for themselves. I wish to first state that this parable has no reference to the resurrection, neither of the just nor the unjust. Jesus still has reference to the gospel day, as described in the first parable; and the likeness of separating the sheep from the goats in the gospel dispensation; and has no reference to a final twenty-four hour day as in time, nor a general resurrection. After Jesus rose from the dead, before he ascended to the right hand of the Majesty on high, he told his disciples, "All power in heaven and earth is given into my hands; Go, ye into all the world (all nations) and preach the gospel unto every creature, he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned."

Therefore, in that sense the believer is already saved and the unbeliever is already damned. Jesus is NOW upon the throne of his glory, the throne of his kingdom, with all power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him. And this he did, is doing and will continue to do. He also has all power in heaven and earth and rules all nations with a rod of

iron; and his people with loving kindness and tender mercy. The king's (all kings) heart is in his hand as the river of water, he turneth it wheresoever he will. The apostles of the Lamb and all his true ministers in all the gospel dispensation are his angels; they were and are with him and he with them even unto the end of the world or the end of time. The parable has no reference to all nations that have been or will be, being gathered at one place, at one time (as we count time), before Jesus to be separated, sheep from goats, but rather it has reference to the gospel dispensation and this separation continually takes place. Neither does the parable refer to every individual human being; for the parable shows that it has only reference to righteous possessors and religious professors (who are not possessors). Jesus is no such finite being as man, nor as man imagines. For man is prone to think that God is just as stupid as he himself is. Man is such a finite being that he has to have objects close to his eyes before he can see them, then he can't discern very much about what he sees; not even his own self. God is infinite, eternal. He declared the end from the beginning. He filleth not only space, but eternity; He himself is Eternity. All things that ever have been or ever will be are naked and open before him, neither is there any thing new or old with him. "It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers."

In God's eternal mind, will and purpose he separated his sheep from the goats when as yet there was none of them manifest. And all nations present, past or future are open eternally before his face. In time he manifestly separates the elect (vessels of his mercy) from the non-elect (vessels of wrath); and commands the elect by the grace of his spirit of love to be separate. When he commands things to BE, they BE. So it is God that calls his elect with a holy calling. Jesus calls his own sheep by name (new name), they hear his voice (know his voice), He goes before them (already has done it) and he is still before them and they before his face and he is with them and they with him. The lambs are in his bosom. He keeps them as the apple of his eye. It is always, "come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you," yes you, "before the foundation of the world." "Fear not little flock, it is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

The conversation that takes place between the Saviour and his sheep (who are always set on his right hand of favors) is constantly being repeated between him and them; He is continually expressing his love to them, ("Thou are all fair my love, there is no spot in thee.") Also, they are continually confessing their sins and nothingness to him. It is not an audible voice, but, small still and sweet voice, wherein he talks to them; Likewise, he blesses her by the same spirit of communication to himself. This is verified in the Song of Solomon. But it is in his wrath he deals with the wicked; they are under his JUST wrath and curse. He speaks to them just as he did the wicked that crucified the Lord of Glory, "Saying, Awake, O sword against my shepherd, the man that is my fellow, smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered and I will turn my hand upon the little ones." How sweet it is to know and believe the truth, "JESUS, the way, truth and life."

Jesus says of the goats, "And these shall go away" (not immediately in hell) "in everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal." Jesus is not here, teaching that the righteous will immediately enter into heaven and immortal glory; for he does not have reference to heaven and immortal glory in the parable; but he is teaching the same which he had already spoken in verse 34, the same parable, which reads "Then shall the king say to them on his right hand, come, ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." This is the kingdom of God's grace which was given us in Christ Jesus; and

of his fullness have all we received, grace for grace; grace in time for grace that was given us in Christ Jesus before the world was. "Fear not, little flock, it is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Jesus also obtained eternal redemption for them; likewise, the inheritance is eternal. They receive an earnest of it here and will receive the fullness in glory. This they will be made meet (a meetness) for in the glorious resurrection: to see Jesus as he is and ever be with him in glory.

The 41st verse reads, "Then shall the king say unto them on his left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Satan was cast out of heaven (Jewish heaven) into the earth and his angels were cast out with him; but neither Satan, nor his angels were ever in the kingdom of God's grace, nor ever will be. All Satan can do is to cast out of his mouth a great flood (of his false doctrine and lies) that he may cause the woman that is clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet, to be carried away with his lies; but God who is her refuge, shield and hiding place, causes the earth to help the woman, and swallow up the flood the dragon casts out of his mouth. Jesus said, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven (Jewish heaven)." There was war in that heaven: "Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven." "They overcame Satan and his angels, by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony." Do we not know when Jesus redeemed his people unto God, out of every nation, tongue and people, that they were then before his face, ever before him? "He shall see of the travail of his soul, he shall see his seed, and shall be satisfied." Mark 13th Chapter reads, "Then shall he send his angels, (ministers) and shall gather his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost parts of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven." As has been said, these angels are all his true ministers in all ages of the gospel dispensation. He first sent forth fishermen to fish them, then huntsmen to hunt them out of the caves and dens of the earth, where the Lord God had driven them. The sweet part is, "they shall be mine in that day, (gospel day) when I make up my jewels, saith the Lord; and I will spare them as a father spares his own son that serveth him."

The parables I have been writing on have no reference to the personal appearing of Jesus Christ, when he shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation. No, not by any means does it refer to his second personal appearing. For then shall his people be raised in his glorious likeness, to see him as he is and so ever be with the Lord. There will be no goats on that scene. The separating of the sheep from the goats, as demonstrated by the parables, was clearly manifest when John was baptizing in the river of Jordan, "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our Father: For I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: (don't forget that) therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire." (Matthew 3:5-10).

This saying and action of John speaks for itself to those that have eyes to see and a heart to understand the spiritual teaching of divine things of the kingdom of God. Those Pharisees and Sadducees could hear from an outward ear the audible words John spoke to them, but to see and understand the spiritual teaching of him, they could not. That's just the way it is concerning the parables

Jesus spoke. I've heard ministers sing off these parables from the letter of the word to their congregation, when neither they nor the minister knew anything of the true spiritual teaching of our Lord in the parables. Had the members known the true teaching of Jesus, they would at least have later tried to correct him as a brother, beloved in the Lord. Such may need to go to Jonah's school and they will if God sends them. Do we slumber and sleep as do others, or, are we children of the day (gospel day)? If so, let us walk as children of the light (Jesus) not of the night or darkenss." "For they shall run and not be weary, walk and not faint."

Read the second and several chapters of The Acts to again see how God manifestly separated the elect from the non-elect, sheep from the goats. There were at least people out of seventeen nations under heaven present on the day of Pentecost and at least some of them heard Peter and other apostles speak in their own tongue wherein they were born. May we note that here the apostles preached the gospel to many nations, as Jesus had formerly told them to do so. About three thousand souls (sheep) were baptized, for the remission of sin; not in order to get remission but because they had already received it. But I think most all the goats get mad, being cut to the heart by the WORD the apostles preached. I'm sure many goats don't like to hear Christ preached in this gospel day. Some have said that it wasn't Jesus that showed these wonders on the day of Pentecost, that it was the Holy Ghost, that the Holy Ghost ruled in the kingdom (how pitiful a King without a kingdom and a kingdom without a GREAT KING). I wouldn't dare to try to separate Jesus from the Holy Ghost, seeing they are one in the essence of divine nature. Peter said, "Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, HE hath shed forth this, ye now see and hear." Isaiah 9:6-7 said, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders: and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the Increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal (Spirit) of the Lord of hosts will perform this."

Glory to God, the most High, Peace and good will to his dear and precious children.

John L. Sanders
44 Dumett Grove
Tuscaloosa, Ala. 35401

FOUGHT THE BELIEF AS LONG AS HE COULD

P. O. Box 19152
Tampa, Fla. 33616

Dear Elder Spangler:

My dear brother, may I say it is time for me to renew my subscription; and I just want to say a few words to tell you how delighted I was to talk with you two years ago. How I would love to be able to visit in your section of the country, but I have no idea I will ever have that pleasure. I will be eighty-five years old March 18th, and my wife is also eighty-five and has been sick for three years.

So you see I am tied down in two ways. I haven't been able to leave her and go to church in the last two years. But thank the good Lord, that by you and others of the *Signs of the Times* I can get some pleasure out of what I believe, and have believed it as far back as I can remember.

My father was an Elder, and one of the elders in the Chipola Association about one hundred years ago, in Jackson and Calhoun Counties in the western part of Florida, and most of his children were members of the church, but several of his sons did as I: fought the belief

as long as we could.

My hope and prayers are that you and others will continue the wonderful work of the *Signs of the Times* for all of us poor sinners.

May the good Lord continue to bless you and yours.

Love,
Andrew J. Beauchamp

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But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing. (1 Pet. 3:-15-17)

EDITORIAL

I CORINTHIANS 4:6, 7

"And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another. For who maketh thee to differ? and

what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"

If these questions could be spoken or sent from my pen into the heart of men everywhere, it would terminate in the ending of a lot of self praise. This I can not do, and the fact that self-praise has not ended is definite evidence that there are many people who are glorying when they have not received.

"Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." (Isa. 32:1) Does this imply that some of the time you and I are to rule in judgment? Will any of my dear brethren say that? If the prince (Paul) is to rule in judgment, I would kindly (and I hope brotherly) ask, What have I, as a servant of God, got that I did not receive? If any thing, what is it? If not anything, then by what right would I say that I have brought about a state or condition in the kingdom of heaven that I did not receive? Not long since I read in a paper an article by a regular contributor to that paper in which he said, May our Lord ever give grace sufficient to move His children forward; for we will never get anywhere standing still. The first part of that prayer is lovely, The second part of it is self contradictory to the first part. The first part is an acknowledgement of helplessness, of genuine need, of having received from the Lord of the spirit of prayer. The second part is a statement that we can get somewhere even if we do not have the first part answered.

"Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causeth to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple." (Psa. 65:4) Jacob is said to be the lot of God's inheritance (Deut. 32:9), and the Lord has corroborated that testimony time and again (Isa. 41:8, 9,; 43:10; 44:i, 2); He chose His people in Christ before the foundation of the world (Eph. I:4); He tells His disciples that they have not chosen Him, but that He had chosen them (John 15:-16); His people are referred to as having been elected before the foundation of the world (Isa. 65:9, 22; Mark 13:27; I Pet. 1:2; Rom. 9-11; Psa. 139:16; Isa. 34:16, 17; Rev. 13:8; 17:8). It would be a pitiful sight to hear a man say that this choice or election is based on anything that the creature can do. Yet, as pitiful as it is, I have heard many men say so. Surely there is not a member of any branch or faction of our people that say that. If they do, I will show to that man or woman in their own original church and associational minutes that they did not at one time believe that. This work is by gift. God gave them to the Son in eternity and he gives us him (not to Him) in our experience. This is by grace that this two fold gift is given. It is not by works of righteousness which we have accomplished.

Dearly beloved readers, this is the soul comforting doctrine of election. Not only has it been the foundation of the gospel as it has been preached by the prophets and apostles and by our blessed Saviour, as well as by every minister since His and the apostles day. It is still the essence of the great truth of the gospel; that which was comforting to our fathers in the ancient day, is our comfort today. The gospel has not had an iota of change. It is true that some have changed that once broke the communion bread with us, and they feel that they are to be commended for the things that they have accomplished. But let us, *as given grace,* be satisfied with the goodness of the house of the Lord. Our belief and our enjoyment of that belief, and our walking in that belief and doctrine, is not by the volition of our will. It is by the gift of God. From time immemorial we have said by tongue and pen that the natural mind did not receive nor understand spiritual things, and the reason being given was because that they are spiritually discerned. It has been one of the main

tenets of the faith (doctrine) of our people that we were all alike in nature; that any entrance into spiritual things was by the work of God in us. These spiritual works and blessings come not from the earth; they come not by the works of the flesh or natural mind. Men do not have them in order to have them, anymore than a baby cries in order to be a baby. Men do righteousness because they are righteous, not in order to be righteous. Each and every lovely thing or thought that a man or a woman has done in this life, is of the Spirit of the Lord. These things do not have a law against them. It seems that these things are worthy of being looked into in detail.

Much persecution has been cast into the lives of God's humble poor by saying that we do not believe in all of the good things of the Spirit. I have not understood my brethren to advocate this as a body, but if I am mistaken, and this is the doctrine that my brethren mean to advocate, then by all means excuse me for I will not travel with such a thought. I do not have any fellowship for such a thought as saying that the fruit of the Spirit and the work of the flesh are of equal importance, and that He approves of and is well pleased with both of them. What a well ordered garden it is that brings forth love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance and what a blessed state that little plant in this lovely garden is in when it is able to show the working in them of God's Spirit that which is well pleasing in His sight. I would not associate nature with a single one of these fruits. I do not believe that it can produce these fruits nor do I believe that this nature can hinder them. I will not dwell on all of them singularly, but I will notice some of them rather closely.

In eternity God loved us, and this love was made manifest unto us and in us. God made it manifest. We did not make our love manifest to Him, but we did make manifest to Him our hatred of Him. His loving us, caused us to love Him. Did we receive this as a gift from Him? Who would fling such a thought as us earning it into the face of the beloved apostle (I John 4:19)? The world is full of men and women that claim to have reversed the order of John's teaching about this, and that they loved God, and then He loved them. It is a serious thing to think that our dear brethren are falling into such a trap as that. Love is a fruit of the Spirit, therefore it is one spiritual blessing that was given us in Christ before the world was, and it was given by God, and given at the precise moment of our being chosen in Him, and given according as He chose us. If the choice was sure and effective, the gift of blessings will be effective. If not, I answer to one and all that would tell me that I can love or leave it alone, that the election is built on just as much sand as is this.

Faith is a fruit of the Spirit; it is a gift of God. If all of my brethren were to tell me that I could have faith; that I could have faith in order to have faith; that I could exercise that faith, then I must say that we have not been to the same school nor the same teacher. Faith being one of the lovely fruits of the Spirit, one of the lovely things of Christ, one of the gifts of God to His people, I must declare for the mutual comfort and edification of the poor and afflicted children of God that having been blessed with these blessings of a spiritual nature that they will receive them all in time. If not, I have just as little evidence of, and confidence in, the election as I do the blessings of Spiritual significance. If God had made ever so many arrangements for us in eternity to receive these blessings or gifts and had left them dependent on this poor sinner not one would have been received. This faith was given us in Christ and made manifest by the coming of the Comforter who takes them from Christ and gives or shows them unto us. Only by the working of this Comforter in us will we receive the gifts that we were blessed with at the time, and from the

same source, as was promised us at that time.

What have we received from the Lord? We have received the grand and glorious election to salvation. This election was not by works. God was not moved by anything outside His own divine will and purpose in electing or choosing us to this salvation. We that were elected receive it as a gift from God the Father. God loved us from all eternity. If any of my readers know when eternity had its beginning, they, at that time, knew how long that God has loved His people. He has hated Esau as long as He has loved Jacob. We have not received hatred from Him, but, if we are His, we have received love. This love and hatred were not because of conduct. Their names were written in God's eternal Book when as yet there was not any of them. (Psa. 139:16) I am indeed sorrowful towards any deluded sinner that would claim *that this was based on something that we did not receive from the Lord.* If we did receive it according to the election, according to Him that calls, why do we act so arrogant as to say that we did not receive it, and why do we hold in utter contempt our dear brethren that preach *and act* as though they do receive it from Him? God did not love us nor choose us because of our righteousness. We have not received this eternal love as a reward for our merits. We received it because He loved us, and gave Himself for us. Would a poor recipient of such mercy act as though he did not receive it? Would he or she act and preach and write that we received it because of our works?

How did we receive this work of God's election? How did we come into possession of it? Did God do this in eternity and pitch it at us and say, Catch it if you can, for I have done my part in it? Is that the way that we have received this knowledge? If it is not, then how can we act as though we did not receive it from Him? If it is by grace and love and mercy that we have received it, it does seem that we will act and write and preach and believe that it is by these precious and glorious things. This knowledge comes about by the effectual workings of God's Holy and divine Spirit. This knowledge was revealed in mercy to the malefactor on the cross. How did he receive it? Ah, poor sinner that has robbed, or rather that has attempted, to rob God of His glory, how was the joyful news of your deliverance given to you? Was it because of merit on your part? Ah, never, Oh no, not that, My God, My God, deliver us from such blasphemy. If the acknowledgement of this thief has not been brought from our lips, as it was brought from his lips, then we have not received the gift of eternal life. We are sinners; we are guilty; we do not have a single plea to make to God, even though we have received it from God. The difference between the two malefactors was made by the love of God. It was not made because the thief was worthy. The reception of it was not received as though he did deserve it. John did not receive it by efforts of his own, but he did receive it because God loved Him and chose him unto salvation. Oh, how we frail creatures make manifest the depth of our fall when we dare lift our voices and pens to support such a far fetched theory as that we receive the impartation of this knowledge because of our merits. The modern preaching of their so-called gospel as a means to born dead alien sinners into the kingdom of heaven would fall as a useless means to bring John into a knowledge of Jesus, but his leaping in his mother's womb shows conclusively that he had been born of the Spirit before the mentioning of the name of the Jesus.

Paul was the apostle, the minister to the Gentiles. For this the gospel day, he is our pattern as to how that one receives the knowledge of God's election. We receive him as the New Testament pattern as to how it comes about. What tragic results come about when the pattern is left out in any preaching or writing. Surely the recipient of a gift would know the manner in which it was

made known. What religious manipulations are made in advocating that we are Christians and followers of Jesus Christ; that we hold to what He has given us in the Scriptures, and yet we are acting as though we did not receive it from Him; even acting as though our receipt of it would not have been had we not decided for it to be. As people profess godliness, and yet deny the power thereof; as people claim to be believers in God, and yet do not believe Him on oath, just so, no more, no less, do they believe the eminent Apostle to the Gentiles, the pattern for the way aliens are brought to a knowledge of the electing love of God. I assure you, dear readers, that Paul certified or attested to the way and manner in which he received the impartation of the knowledge of God's election of sinners of Adam's race to salvation. "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man, for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." "When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood," etc. (Gal. I) This teaching of Paul concerning how that he received this knowledge was received by every church that he preachd it to. He told us about it; he preached and wrote it everywhere, and it was joyously received by them all. They received it as a gift from God. They acted as they believed; to wit, Everything is a gift of God pertaining to the religion of His Son, and we have received it from Him.

There is a highly rated belief in the world that we receive the impartation of the knowledge of this electing love by the preaching of the gospel. If so, the Corinthians would have said that they received it that way, and they would have acted as though they did receive it that way. The experiences of both Peter and Cornelius as to how this gift is received is outstanding and convincing to the lovers of the truth — to those that have received all things pertaining to life and godliness. To others, it has not been received, *but there has been a lot of demonstration that it has been received from and by Him.* Peter received a great gift and superb teaching. Cornelius received a great gift and superb teaching. If, in this lesson, a man, even if a professed recipient of God's mercy, can open the Bible and show one scintilla of proof that either man received this knowledge because of any learning or merit in himself, I will not write and preach anymore in defense of us receiving all things from the Lord. Cornelius feared God before that Peter arrived; he was a devout man before Peter arrived; he gave much alms to the people (The dictionary tells us that the giving of alms was to the poor, a charitable offering, charitable deeds. The Hebrew for *alms* is that it was kind deeds and acts), before he ever heard the gospel; he prayed to God alway, even before Peter left home. It is not said that he prayed *at* God, but that he prayed *to* God. Let this be noted carefully. There is a difference, and I think it is a legitimate question to ask, Who made the difference? From whence did they receive it? This was a believing household. If the jailer's household were believers, then why not Cornelius's house? The marks of a child of God were clear as the noon day's sun; the tree having been made good was known by the fruit it bore; therefore, Peter's preaching did not make him a child of God, but it did teach him whatsoever things had been commanded to be taught a child. Peter was wrought upon by divine power in the same miraculous way, and they both received great learning and great good from the Lord. They both received it, and acted that way.

God willing, the subject will be pursued.

W.D.G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

Water Valley, Miss.
June 28, 1887

Dear Elder Beebe:

.. . What does the apostle mean, "He was made sin for us."? Was it by imputation, or was it because he was made of a woman? What law was it under which he was made? Please answer this in your editorial . . .

E. A. Meaders, Sr.

CHRIST MADE SIN.

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." —2 Cor. 5:21.

In reply to Elder E. A. Meaders, Sr., of Mississippi, on page 189, we submit the following as our limited understanding of the subject presented in his inquiry; not that we presume to be capable of instructing our venerable and highly esteemed brother, but that our views may be tested by the infallible standard of inspired Scripture. All that endures this trial is truth; all else is false, however it may be cherished by the wisest and best of men.

The expression cited by our brother in his first question is a very common phrase; and while it is in substance authorized by the text quoted above, we have not found it in that form in the apostolic writings. It is unquestionably true that only through that principle of unity with his people by which their sin is his, could he bear their sins in his own body on the tree. — 1 Peter 2:24. By no law either natural or revealed could the sin of the guilty be imputed to the innocent. Even though there had been found a sinless angel willing to die for the sin of Adam, without life unity with the sinner infinite justice could not accept such a substitute. The holy law demands the life of the transgressor. Any proposition to substitute something else for that life must be regarded as an attempt to bribe divine justice. Then, even if the sinner might be delivered from suffering the penalty of the law upon the ground that a substitute had borne the punishment for him, it would leave the guilt of sin still abiding upon him. He would not be free from the sin, although released from suffering its punishment. Nor could the sufferer assume the guilt of the sinner. But in the text this is just the wonderful mystery of salvation which is declared by the inspired record. Christ, the sinless and holy, bore the sins of all his people in his own body on the tree.

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin." From the preceding context it is clear that it is God who hath made Christ to be sin for us. This agrees with all the testimony of revelation on this important point of truth; and it is also the ground of hope in the experience of all who are led by the Spirit to know the truth of salvation by grace through the atonement which is in Christ Jesus. In this wonderful truth is involved the whole system of redemption; both in its manifestation to lost sinners and in its complete fulfillment in the glorification of Christ Jesus as exalted at the right hand of God, "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." — Eph. 1:21-23. It is not in his eternal Godhead that he is exalted; for as God he is infinite in all the perfection and glory of his own self-existence, and can receive no additional exaltation; nor yet is it in his humiliation as the Son of man

that he is thus exalted, for in that character, while foxes and birds were provided for, the dear Redeemer had no where to lay his head. But in his identity with his body, the church, including all who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, he was brought low, even to the depths of condemnation and death, and raised again by the glory of the Father. In his death all his members for whom he died were dead with him. Since in himself as the Holy One of Israel he was without sin, as such death could have no power against him. Yet he alone could save his people from their sins by the sacrifice of himself. In order that he might be qualified for this work He must be made sin. This was done by his being identified with his body, the church. It was not a new design after sin had been developed in the world that Christ should be made sin for us. He was from the beginning chosen of God to bear the iniquities of all whom he justifies. They are his seed, his portion, and his own peculiar people. — Pslam 22-36; Isa. 55:10-12; 1 Peter 2:9.

It is exclusively on the grounds of this unity with his people as their very life that he could bear their sins. When after his resurrection he opened the understanding of his disciples that they might understand the Scriptures, he said to them, "Thus it is written, and THUS IT BEHOOVED CHRIST TO SUFFER, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." — Luke 2:-4; 46, 47. This wonderful truth can never be received or known without the same gracious work of Jesus in each saint which was so essential for those favored disciples. Even the clear statement of it by inspired servants of the Lord can no more manifest it to the natural man than the testimony of others could satisfy the disciples of the resurrection of Jesus. This is seen in every case where the proclamation of divine truth is joyful gospel to some who hear, while to others it is but the empty sound of words abstractly true, but without vital power. This difference is often witnessed even between those who are alike subjects of divine grace. Hence it is very important that all should continually remember that it is only by grace they are saved from delusions and error, as well as from all sin. This consideration will enable the strong to bear the infirmity of the weak, and lead everyone to be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility. — 1 Peter 5:6. Any knowledge which exalts its recipient in his own estimation is of the world, and is opposed to that wisdom which descendeth from above, which is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." — James 3: 17, 18. It is very essential to our own comfort and peace that we examine ourselves by the divine standard whether we be in the faith in every sentiment we hold; for all must be either approved or condemned by that inspired record.

In his unity with his body, the church of his redeemed people, the condemnation of all law which rested upon any of them fell upon Christ, since "the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." As justice could admit of no arbitrary transfer of iniquity, it necessarily must be that he is one with his people in the sight of that law which condemns them. This was beautifully expressed in the first Adam. When Eve was made, Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." Notice he does not say this *was*, or this *shall be*, but "This *is now*." This is essential to a correct understanding of the figure. Eve was under no law but

that which she received in Adam; and being still acknowledged and identified in him when being deceived she was in the transgression, it is evident that in unity with her, Adam was involved under the condemnation which rested upon Eve, although he had not as yet eaten himself of the forbidden tree. If he had not transgressed, can we not see that his bone and flesh was already dead? Now here is the figure of him that was to come, and the likeness of God in which man was made. It was after the transgression that the Lord God said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us," &c.; the likeness was then complete, and he is "the figure" of Christ.

It is a common error to speak of every married couple as a figure of Christ and the church; but the inspired apostle specifies particularly "the similitude of ADAM'S TRANSGRESSION, who is THE FIGURE of him that was to come." In some legal marriages among men there is a more striking figure of Satan and his synagogue than of Christ and the church. In his life unity with his wife Adam stands alone as *"the figure"* which was never duplicated. When Eve had sinned death had already passed upon that much of Adam; so when his people, the elect members of his body, the church, had become involved in sin, their life was the only satisfaction which could be accepted by the infinite justice of God. Therefore, it is not any remedy devised after sin had come into the world that made Christ to be sin for us. He in himself is indeed holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; yet in his unity with his children, who are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same. — Heb. 2:14. It is only as identified with his people that he could be made under the law. In that relationship he is not only under all law to which they are accountable, but with them he is under condemnation for their sins.

While we are sure that there is no law in earth or heaven which can demand of one member of the body of Christ anything which Jesus has not rendered, it seems to our view that the particular law referred to in the text is that law whose penalty is death, under which all the world is guilty before God. The giving of the Sinai law made neither Jew nor Gentile any more sinful than they were without it. Yet it was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made. — Gal. 3:19. As there were some of the chosen vessels of mercy held under bondage to that law which was given by Moses (John 1:17), it was needful to their deliverance that Christ Jesus should be sent forth as the Son of God made of a woman, made under that law, to redeem them that were under the law, that they should no longer be under that schoolmaster. The one offering of himself without spot to God thus delivered all his people from all condemnation, whether under the Sinai law or among the Gentiles. While the whole race of man was under death in Adam, those among the Jews were under still further demands from the law given by Moses. Hence, it was needful that they should be redeemed from the law also; and this was completed in the perfect work of Jesus. He took that handwriting of ordinances out of the way, nailing it to the cross. This was needful for the benefit of his people also who were among the Gentiles, since while that legal dispensation yet existed there could be no salvation revealed outside that nation to whom that covenant was given. Hence, when our Lord sent forth his chosen twelve apostles to preach before he was crucified, he bade them, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the

house of Israel." — Matt 10:5, 6. So also the seventy were limited to "every city and place whither he himself would come;" which was only to the same "lost sheep." — Luke 10: 1; Matt. 15:24. But after he had broken down that middle wall of partition by fulfilling its every jot and tittle, he then sent them forth with the commission, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." — Mark 16:15.

In finishing the work of saving his people from their sins he fulfilled every demand of infinite justice which was against them, whether written in the law given to Adam in the garden or in the Sinai law, or in any revelation of the righteousness of God. He came under the deepest requirement which could rest upon one of his chosen people. He paid their whole debt, and thus redeemed them from death, and ransomed them from the power of the grave. The purpose of God in all the work and suffering of the dear Redeemer is clearly stated in the text.

"That we might be made the righteousness of God in him." In the experience of the saints it is not often that the tempter will question the fact of the suffering and death of Christ; but he would rather rob them of their joy in believing by the suggestion that their conscious sinfulness forbids their hope in his salvation. The text shows conclusively that the very object of all the humiliation and suffering of Christ is that we, poor, vile sinners, might be made in him the righteousness of God which justifies us in his sight. That this is sufficient none can question; but they are sometimes ready to perish in despair in view of the very infinite display of such amazing grace to such worthless worms. The more earnestly they realize this great grace the more they will tremble with humble joy in their trust in the salvation which is alone in Christ Jesus.

In the hope that what is written may bear witness to our venerable brother of our sincere wish to comply with his request, we submit it to his riper judgment. The truth will bear examination; nothing else is worth a thought. We feel sure that those who remember Elder Meaders' visit to the eastern associations and to Canada, in 1857, will be glad to hear from him, and to know that even in old age he is a living illustration of "Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing; to shew that the Lord is upright; he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him." — Psalm 92:13-15.

(Editorial by Elder William L. Beebe, August 15, 1887.)

OBITUARIES

J. FRANK TUCKER

Brother Tucker died February 1, 1973 after a long illness, at the age of eighty-seven years. His family lived in the Ramah Community near Cottonwood, Alabama, since the foundation of the church there about a century ago. They were firm believers in salvation by grace, and supporters of the Primitive Baptist Church.

He is survived by two brothers, John N. and Lewis J. of Dothan, Alabama; and a sister, Mrs. Tom Herndon of Abbeville, Alabama, and many relatives and friends. He was a railway man.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. J. Collins and minister John Payne at Union Hill Church, February 2nd, with Ward-Wilson in charge. Interment was in Ramah Cemetery.

and

SARAH ANN TEW

Sister Tew, the devoted wife of Elder J. A. Tew for more than sixty years, died in a Dothan Hospital February 27, 1973, after a long illness. She was a member of Wrights Creek Primitive Baptist Church, of which her husband was pastor, and was connected with the Primitive Baptists for many years and active in her church. She had lived in the Malvern Community for seventy-six years.

She was the daughter of Deacon John Bessole and wife. She is survived by two sons, Arthur and Grady, and five daughters: Mrs. Lelia Nave, Mrs. Mamie Morris, Mrs. Willa

Mae Johnson, Mrs. Clara Flowers and Mrs. Ruth Shivey; also a sister, Mrs. Mae Hudson, and twenty-four grandchildren, and a host of friends.

Her husband has been an active Primitive Baptist minister for many years, and the writer of many articles for the *Signs of the Times*.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders Early B. Hughes, B. A. Anderson and J. J. Collins at Bethlehem Church, Malvern, Ala. March 1, 1973. Interment was in the adjoining cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

J. J. Collins

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It is with a sad heart that I feel so unworthy to attempt to write this respect to a member, whom I feel was a saint of God.

I feel it has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove our dear Sister Lossie Brown from our midst to a more perfect place than this sinful world. Her trials and tribulations have ended and all is well in the house of our Lord.

Sister Brown died December 3, 1972, after living ninety years on earth. She was born March 31, 1882, to a well known family in Edgecombe County. She was blessed to unite with Tarboro Church on the first Sunday in August, 1929, along with her husband, Brother Clay Brown. Sister Brown was a very faithful member all those years, and she will be missed in our church, as she loved to entertain the visitors to our church. She was of great help in preparing for our unions and yearly meetings. These things we will never forget.

I was blessed to visit Sister Brown on many occasions, and when I would leave I always felt to be lifted up by her talking. I felt her advice to be that of a Mother and she never advised me to do or say anything wrong.

Sister Brown was blessed to have four daughters: Mrs. Mary Cox, Mrs. Ethel Willett, Mrs. Mildred Bedone, and Mrs. Frances Lawerence; and one son, Bennie D. Brown. They were blessed to have a loving mother, who appreciated their kindness so much.

Her funeral was preached by Elder D. B. Stokes and Elder S. R. Boykin at Tarboro Church. Her body was laid to rest in Greenwood Cemetery, Tarboro, N. C.

It is by request that the church had this respect written. Therefore we resolve: (1) that three copies be made; one to be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, one to be sent to the family, and one to be kept for church records. (2) We the members of Tarboro Church feel our loss is her eternal gain, and she is at rest with our Saviour. (3) That God will reconcile her family to His will, and we feel it was His will to call her. May He comfort you, as he has promised that the Comforter will come.

This done by order at our January conference of 1973.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to take from our midst, dear Sister Martha Andrews, whom we loved so very much.

Sister Andrews was born October 20, 1887, and died December 14, 1972, making her stay on earth 86 years. She was blessed to attend Tarboro Church many years before God saw fit for her to ask for a home with us. She joined our church in September, 1971. Sister Andrews was never baptized by water, but we feel she was baptized by the holy spirit many years before she asked for a home at Tarboro Church.

In her last years Sister Martha was a bed patient, although she was blessed to have a dear daughter-in-law that saw to it that she was well cared for. She was a patient that never complained and was always praising her God during her afflictions. Sister Andrews was always glad to see her pastor and friends who came to visit her. She was a firm believer of Salvation by the Grace of God.

Therefore we resolve: First, We the Church feel that our loss is her eternal gain, and that she is resting with our dear Saviour. Second, We send our sincere sympathy to her family. Third, Three copies of this respect be made: one to be published in the *Signs of the Times*, one to be sent to the family, one to be used for church records.

This done by order of our January conference.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

GUSTAVE M. STEWART AND CORA T. STEWART

In loving memory of my father and mother I will attempt to write a sketch of their lives.

My father, Gustave M. Stewart was born in Harnett County, N.C. near the small town of Coats, the son of William I. and Kizady Stewart on July 2, 1872. My mother, Cora Turlington Stewart, whose parents were Devereaux and Betty Stewart Turlington, was born in Harnett County, N.C. February 2, 1879. They were married November 25, 1900, and lived together almost fifty-nine years, celebrating their fiftieth anniversary in 1950. They were

the parents of seven children, four daughters and three sons. Two daughters and one son died in infancy, another son passed away in 1934 at the age of twenty-one years.

Papa united with Gift Primitive Baptist church, which was located in the town of Coats, N.C., Saturday before the third Sunday in April, 1912, and was baptized by the pastor, Elder J. T. Coats, the following day. He was ordained deacon the third Sunday in July, 1920. This office he faithfully filled as long as he was physically able. He was very faithful to his church, to visit the sick and afflicted and take care of visiting ministers, brethren and sisters who visited the church. He traveled many miles to convey the visiting ministers from one church to another.

Papa was wonderfully blest with good health until he was past eighty years of age when he suffered an heart attack in March of 1954, from then on he was in poor health and very limited in his activities. He suffered the fatal attack on March 5, 1959, and lived only a few hours, being eighty-six years eight months and three days old.

His funeral was conducted from the home by Elder W. E. Turner, assisted by Elder E. C. Jones and Elder C. D. Turner and his body was interred in the City Cemetery in Coats, N.C. Surviving, were his wife, two daughters: Vara Stewart Hardee of Raleigh, N.C. Brookie Stewart of the home; one son, T. D. Stewart, of Route 3, Dunn, N.C., together with two small granddaughters.

My mother united with Gift Primitive Baptist church the third Saturday in September, 1918, and was baptized the next day by the pastor, who was also her uncle, Elder J. T. Coats. She was faithful to attend her church services and helped entertain and care for many ministers and visitors who came to our home.

Mama suffered a stroke in December, 1959, from which she never fully recovered but did recover sufficiently that she could attend to some of her duties, and was able part of the time to attend her church services. Five years later she suffered another stroke with complications and was mostly confined to her room afterwards. A good part of the last two years of her life was spent in hospitals seeking relief from a rare glandular disease, which required Cobalt treatments. She was relieved to some extent but was left in a very weakened condition. She was hospitalized the last three weeks of her life in Rex Hospital, Raleigh, N. C., and quietly passed away July 3, 1972, being ninety-three years, five months and one day old. She bore her affliction with much patience and was an inspiration to all who visited her.

Her funeral was conducted from the home by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler of Danville, Va. assisted by Elder C. B. Davis of Roxboro, N.C.; and her body laid to rest in the family plot in Coats Cemetery, beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

Having lost her last son in 1966, the only ones surviving are two daughters, Vara Stewart Hardee of Raleigh, N.C. and Brookie Stewart of the home, together with two granddaughters and two great grandchildren.

At the time of their deaths they were both members of the Primitive Baptist church in Durham, N.C.

Written by their daughter
Brookie Stewart

NOLIE WORLEY GREGORY

On December 5, 1972, it pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst Sister Nolie Worley Gregory. She was 75 years of age. Sister Gregory died in Liberty House Nursing Home, Roanoke, Virginia.

She was the widow of Daniel W. Gregory and the daughter of George A. Worley and Jennie Dalton Worley. Nine children were born to this union. They are as follows: Five sons, Earl W. Gregory of California, Md., Daniel W. Gregory, Jr., of Radford, Va., Nelvin W. Gregory of Jackson, Miss., Charlie R. Gregory of Hurt, Va. and Norman C. Gregory of Roanoke, Va.; Four daughters, Mrs. Ruby G. Adkins of Hurt, Va., Mrs. L. C. Sydnor of Lynchburg, Va., Mrs. Clifton R. Scott and Mrs. Clifford B. Robertson of Vinton, Va.; also thirty-one grand children.

Sister Gregory united with Weatherford Primitive Church in 1937 and attended her church as long as her health permitted. May we all be reconciled to the Will of our Heavenly Father.

Her funeral was conducted at Finch and Finch Funeral Chapel, Altavista, Virginia by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and Elder Leonard J. Brammer. Her body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers at the Worley Family Cemetery.

Written by:
Marvin Brumfield

SISTER BERTHA FOSTER HODGES

We, the members of Pleasant Grove Church, Caswell County, North Carolina, mourn the loss of a loving member, Sister Bertha Foster Hodges. She was born November 18, 1893. She was married to the late Johnie E. Hodges December 19, 1915.

On the first Saturday night in August, 1968, after services at Pleasant Grove church, she asked for a home in the church. She was baptized the following third Sunday morning by

our Pastor, Elder Donald Smith. She often expressed her love for all of us, and wanted to meet with us every chance she could. She manifested this love in many ways.

Sister Hodges told me she was not so concerned about things of this world, but hoped her treasures were laid up in Heaven. She was faithful to attend her church meetings as long as she was able.

She passed away December 22, 1972 in a Burlington, N.C. hospital. Funeral servcies were held at Pleasant Grove church, on Christmas eve, by her Pastor, Elder Donald Smith, whom she loved so well, and Elder Leonard Key. Her body was laid to rest in Prospect Methodist church cemetery, near Yanceyville, N.C., beside her husband.

Sister Hodges is survived by twelve children, eight daughters and four sons, who cared for her so tenderly all thru the years, and especially her last days. We miss her at Pleasant Grove so much, but we try to bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Father, who takes his loved ones home at his own appointed time.

The church desires a copy of this obituary to be sent to the family, one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and one for the church records.

Written by Sister Nellie Hodges, as requested by the church.

Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
Robert Walker, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT SISTER LUCY WHITE JOHNSON

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints." Though our beloved Sister was called from our midst to that rest which is eternal on December 16, 1972, our hearts leap with joy at the comforting thought that he had removed from our presence one of his beloved saints in whom he had implanted his divine spirit of love within her breast, giving her a precious hope in the redeeming blood of his beloved son, Jesus Christ. It was the writer's blessed privilege to spend many hours in the presence of this dear Sister over a period of approximately twenty-five years. Fond memories linger within my mind of the many hours we were blessed to enjoy in the homes of one another as well as the many, many times we were blessed to attend the meetings together at the various meeting houses. Our beloved Sister by the grace of God was indeed an inspiration to this poor worm of the dust and we received much comfort in our conversations from time to time as our dear Sister expressed a firm belief in salvation by grace, rejoicing in the doctrine of election and redemption of God's little children through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ because of that great love and mercy of a sovereign God excluding the will and work's of man's hands in attaining salvation. She was a member of Spring Green Primitive Baptist Church for approximately forty-five years.

Sister Johnson entered this life on August 13, 1894, the widow of the late Rufus McDonald (Don) Johnson and the daughter of the late Elder King White and Linda Taylor White. Thus her sojourn upon this earth was for 78 years, 4 months, and 3 days.

Surviving are one son, Don E. Johnson, two daughters, Mrs. Hazel McKeel and Mrs. Mary Ann Burroughs, four grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren. To the family we extend our heartfelt sympathy in your moments of sorrow but trust you might receive comfort from God's love and divine promises.

Her funeral was conducted in the Spring Green Primitive Baptist Church by Brother Johnny Ray Gardner and Elder E. C. Harrison. Interment was in the Spring Green Church Cemetery.

Resolved, That a copy be placed on the church record, a copy sent to the family, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Written at the request of our deceased sister and the members composing the Spring Green Church.

Done by order of conference the fourth Saturday in January, 1973.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Johnny Ray Gardner, Committee

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT FOR BROTHER JAMES THEODORE LEE

It has pleased God to call from our midst our beloved brother, James Theodore Lee. He was born March 15, 1912, and died August 22, 1972. He united with Mingo Primitive Baptist Church at a called meeting at the Veterans Hospital, Fayetteville, N.C. Sunday July 19, 1970, and was baptized after he came home from the hospital.

Brother Lee manifested great love for the Church and was faithful to attend when his health and strength would permit. He frequently had a seizure of the heart and sometimes rushed to the hospital for treatment. He was a firm believer in election, predestination, and salvation by the grace of God — of whom is all our righteousness. He was a good citizen and a good provider for his family.

Those who survive Brother Lee are his wife, a son, a daughter, two brothers and three sisters. We, the church at Mingo, feel a great loss, and extend our heart felt sympathy to the family.

Funeral services were held at West's Funeral Chapel by Elder W. D. Godwin, assisted by Ministers C. W. Kirby and Nathan Hanchey. His body was laid to rest in the family cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to await that great day when those in the graves shall come forth. We have a good hope Brother Lee shall be in that number that shall come forth unto life everlasting, be like Jesus and be satisfied.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be placed in our Church Records, a copy sent to the family and to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the Church in conference Saturday before the second Sunday in November, 1972.

Elder W. D. Godwin, Mod.
Sister K. Belle Lee, Clerk
Elder W. D. Godwin,
Committee

BROTHER JOE OWENS

On December 20, 1972, Brother Joe Owens was called home, at the age of eighty-seven. Funeral service was at Farmville Funeral Home, Farmville, N.C., conducted by Elder Joe Sawyer. Burial was at Queen Ann Cemetery.

Surviving are two daughters: Mrs. Heber Tyson and Mrs. Edward Morris; three sons: Eddie, Willie and Curtis Owens; four sisters: Mrs. Ida Cobb, Mrs. Lena Cobb, Mrs. Edgar Webb and Mrs. Annie Norman; two brothers: Henry and J. B. Owens; six grandchildren; eight great grandchildren, and four great great grandchildren.

I have known Brother Owens all my life, and never expect to know a finer man than he was. He believed in God with all his heart, and trusted him seven days a week. Brethren, you know Sunday religion will not stand.

Brother Owens was married to the late Sister Callie Edwards Owens. He stopped farming to take care of her in her last days. I believe this to be an act of God: to me, this was one of His little lambs looking after the other. I pray that God will bless Brother Owens children for making this possible, and will bless the daughter-in-law who looked after them in the home.

He always had time to speak to you and shake your hand. He was an humble man. I feel that Matthew 5:16, fits Brother Owens, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." He was a member of Otters Creek Primitive Baptist Church for many years, and attended the meetings as long as he was able. He loved the brothers and sisters.

Knowing Brother Owens as we did, we know we are not able to put in words how we felt about him. I believe with all my heart that he is now waiting for God to take him to that beautiful land; to the place of no more worry, no heart aches, no pain and no sorrow.

Written at the request of Otters Creek Church. Four copies to be made for the following: one for the church record; one for the family; one for the *Signs of the Times*, and one for the *Landmark*. Written by Sister Briley, Sister Brown and Brother Edwards.

Elder Joe Sawyers, Mod.
Joe B. Coker, Clerk

ELDER PAUL E. WEISINGER

Elder Paul E. Weisinger of Grapeland, Texas, was born July 29, 1882, the son of Ruben Weisinger and Mrs. Martha Williams Weisinger. He died October 8, 1972, in a Palestine, Texas, hospital. Funeral services were held October 9, 1972, in the First Baptist Church, Grapeland, Texas, with Elder U. V. Wallace and Elder Lynwood Jacobs officiating. Burial was in the Murdock Cemetery. Grandsons were pall bearers.

He leaves to mourn their loss his wife, Sister Vera Weisinger; four sons, five daughters, one step-son, four step-daughters, fifty grandchildren, eighty-eight great grandchildren, and seven great great grandchildren.

We don't know the exact date Brother Weisinger joined the church but we know he was a young man. He was ordained January 1, 1925, and was chosen Moderator of the Union Association in October, 1927. He had not missed an association meeting until October, 1972, during which meeting he died on Sunday. Brother Weisinger was a strong believer in the predestination of all things, and salvation by grace a gift of God. He was kind and considerate, and left us an example unto the flock. Wife and I have made many trips with him and Sister Weisinger to Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas. We will miss him but cannot forget him.

I believe he could truthfully say with the Apostle Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only but unto all them also that love his appearing."

To the family the apostle says, "Sorrow not, even as others who have no hope."

Written by request of Sister Weisinger.

C. U. Landers

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141 **DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1973** **NO. 6**

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/73
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

EXPERIENCE

3016 Summer St.
Shreveport, La. 71109

Dear Elder and Sister Wall:

We have talked and thought so much about the good meeting and sweet visit in your home, and regretted so much that we were unable to return on Sunday . . . We hope to be at our next meeting. We hope that Sister Fowler is better and every one else is too. Brother Gould is improving slowly — they hope to be able to go to meeting next time . . .

I don't know if anyone ever gets in shape or condition that I do at times. I know that I am nothing, and know nothing as I ought; but, if I am not deceived, I do love the truth and love God's humble people everywhere. There is no comfort in this "do it yourslf". or "just accept God" religions for me. I tried that work system for years when I was a child with the Missionaries. At the age of thirteen one night while I was asleep, I saw this natural world on fire — the worst fire I ever saw, and in the sky I saw Jesus gathering His people up in the Heavens with Him. I was looking out of the window, hoping and wanting to be carried up too: I was talking, expressing my fears and hope all at the same time, fearing I would be left behind, and yet hoping I would be taken.

My mother awakened me by shaking me and telling me to get back into bed, and asked what I was mumbling about. I couldn't say one word. I laid back down but couldn't go back to sleep. Dear ones, I still don't know if I will be carried up into the Heaven of rest to ever be with Jesus and His saints. I have never forgotten this experience, nor one I had when I was even younger — about eight years old. I do not know how many days and nights this lasted. I only know it lasted or went on for a long time. I couldn't eat without it making me sick. My mother would make me eat, then I would slip outside and lie down some place, or hide under the bed, and at night I could not sleep, for this ugly, big black mountain was always before me, and a bright, beautiful white light shining from behind it. I worked so hard to get to that beautiful light: I could not move that ugly mountain, and I could not go around it no matter how hard I tried. I knew I was going to die I was so sick. I wanted to reach that light for I seemed to know that it would save me, but the ugly mountain was killing me.

One night after many days and nights, relief came and I slept peacefully. The ugly black mountain was gone from my sight, and there was peace and rejoicing in my heart. It was a miracle and I know I had nothing to do with it. All my life I tried to be a good child. My sisters, brothers and others would tell me that the devil would get me if I wasn't a good girl. Well, if I know anything at all, I was taught of the Lord to fear Him who has power to destroy both body and soul in hell; and to know that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom — not the wisdom of this world.

I still fear and tremble, for it is a fearful thing, to fall into the hands of the Lord: He teaches us what we are, and shows us to ourselves the sinners we are, and how unfit and unable to help ourselves; and then shows us His power, love, mercy, grace and truth. No wonder the Apostle said, "I can do all things through Jesus Christ who strengtheneth me." Yes, beloved ones, it is all God's perfect work and ways, manifesting His power, love, wisdom, grace and strength and mercy towards His little children. For such love bestowed upon poor, hell deserving worms of the dust, we cannot find words to describe, nor words to praise Him as we ought.

Sin is condemned in the flesh, and sin is mixed with all we do. We long and desire to be free of sin and to be with our Saviour God who has done all things for us: We rest in His finished work, and rejoice in our Saviour God. Our little hope is the anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast. We hope for that we cannot see, yet long for. Whether I be one in that vast number, He knows, for "The foundation standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knows them that are his." I firmly believe He teaches his children and calls them by name, and a stranger they will not follow. Such wisdom and knowledge is not learned anywhere but in the school of grace. He said if any lack for wisdom, let him ask of God, who freely giveth and upbraideth not.

Dearly beloved saints, I do not know why I was impressed to write and express some of my experiences and feelings. I only know I felt strongly to pen this, and humbly hope I was led of the Lord. All praise belongs to Him who only doeth wonderous and glorious things for, to and in the subjects of his love and mercy: His children. I hope I am one, though the least of all.

Pray for us and visit us when you can. Much love. Your humble brother and sister in Jesus we hope.

Copal and Robert Miles

DESIRES TO RE-READ THE SIGNS

Rt. 2, Box 318,
Bassett, Va. 24055

Dear Brethren:

I enclose check to pay for two year's subscription to the *Signs of the Times.* I ask you to please, if possible, include the January, 1973 copy, as I would like to keep the names and addresses of our Primitive Baptist Churches in the different sections of the U.S.A.; also I want to keep the letter of Brother Bernard Greenwood's written April 22, 1860.

A sister lets me read her *Signs* but I decided to subscribe for it so I could keep the older copies to re-read. I am eighty years of age — was baptized in August, 1915, in Patrick County, Virginia, near where I was born and reared. There have been trials along the way, but I have never doubted Election, and Predestination of all things, which helps me to bear the sadness and sorrows, along with the occasional glimpses of light which are given me. Praise the Lord!

A sister in faith and hope,
Mrs. D. M. (Lucy T.) Stone

PSALM 23:4

Dear Editors and Readers of the Signs:-

It is with a deep sense of humbleness that I begin this article, and asking the Lord to enlighten me and remove all thought of self or feeling ability to myself, to write words worthy of the attention of His followers, unless He directs my thoughts. Without His enlightenment and guidance, such as I write of myself will be but dross.

Now this rather short Psalm stresses David's confidence in God's grace, and has, I believe, been memorized by many of those of our faith as well as by many of other faiths. Altho I have read it many times in the past, it was only recently that this 4th verse rather got hold of me, so-to-speak, and was given much thought and meditation. David's

mention of "Walking thru the valley of the shadow of death" seemed to call for much thought and many things come to mind that had never heretofore been seen.

First, the word valley as generally used, denotes an area more or less lying between hills or mountains when somewhat limited as to size, but when the lower area stretches over a great expanse, it loses the name of valley, as in great expanses of desert land, or large areas of swamp land such as the Everglades in Florida. I believe it in order to say that scripturally, the word "Valley" is figurative of man's dwelling place on this earth, down in, or on, the very lowest areas, while God's Holy Realm is, and has always been, far above in that Celestial City that no man can reach while in his natural state. This is significant, in that we see that no habitation possibilities were set up by "The Creator of the Universe," other than here on earth, regardless of what we may hear about man being able to establish himself and live on the Moon, etc.

While thinking upon man's habitation being in the lowlands, my mind turned to the very highest areas, or the great expanse of high mountains found over the world, which seem to me to be symbolic of God's Majestic Power and Dominion. Man can survive but a very short time at their highest elevation, and his habitation really ceases far down below. We find that the higher areas, the hills and mountains were highly favored by our Lord God in olden days, as settings for many great events recorded in the scriptures. Genesis, chapter 22, tells of the Lord showing Abraham the mountain upon which he was to take Isaac to be a burnt offering; which was reached in three days travel. Some distance upon this mountain the event occurred and the Ram miraculously appeared, horns entangled in the vines or bushes; thus Isaac was spared, etc. Abraham named it the "Mountain Of The Lord, Jehovah Jireh". Luke 4:1-7, records that during the forty days the devil tried to tempt Jesus into worshipping him, he took Jesus up into a high mountain, but Jesus' resistance was no less up there. Also Moses, (Deut. 9:9-13) as directed by the Lord, went upon a mountain of some height to receive the tables (tablets) of stone and was up there forty days and nights, neither eating or drinking water. Further, in Isaiah 2:2, we find, "And it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountains of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains," etc. Finally, the greatest sermon ever preached on earth was when Jesus went up into a mountain, and there preached (taught) to His disciples. Many more references could be given along this line.

Coming to the word "shadow", I see there are two shadows, each different when we view them in a spiritual sense. The greater one is that of the Lord's power, it being a protection to His followers and is mentioned many times in the scriptures. The other, or lesser one, is that of Satan who casts it over his subjects to mislead and confuse them, inducing as many as possible to come under his power and dominion; even trying to snare the Lord's own elect little ones. God only allows him to go so far, and no further. One definition of the word shadow is, "It is the representation which anything makes of itself," and it is in this light that I see Satan casting himself, as-it-were, between the great shining Light coming down from God, and those whom he designs to ensnare, or those already under his power and dominion. It seems that he surely used this means of working his deceitful wiles on Eve, for he darkened her mind and for the moment shut off her reasoning, to the end she went against God's directive, eating of the forbidden fruit and induced Adam to do likewise.

When we look further into what occurred high on the mountain when Satan had Jesus up there, and made that great offer. — "And the devil, taking Him up into an high mountain, showed

unto Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time," and telling Him he would give Him all the glory of them, and all this power, etc., if Jesus would worship him; whereupon Jesus said to him, "Get thee behind me Satan," etc. This would strongly infer that Satan had, in his great effort, confronted Jeesus to the point where He, Jesus, was somewhat hindered in seeing, whereupon Jesus said, "Get thee behind me Satan". Could it not have been that Satan cast more than a shadow, as-it-were, in his frenzied effort? We must not forget that he has great power; being god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4) and the existing conflict on mankind is terrible and awful, he having many subtle devices and cunning wiles. "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light". (2 Cor. 11:14) In just what form Satan was in, when present with Jesus, is impossible to determine. And, too, just how, or in what way or manner did he take Jesus upon the mountain. Verse 9, after his failure to tempt Jesus, "And he brought Him to Jerusalem, and set Him on a pinnacle of the temple", etc. Was Jesus in the bodily form of the "Son of Man" as is inferred in verse I of Luke 4th Chapter, "And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness". And verse 2, "Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days He did eat nothing and when they were ended, he afterward hungered." If so, what a mysterious and marvelous event it was, for Satan to convey Him from the high mountain to Jerusalem and set him on top of, or somewhere near the very top of the pinnacle?

David mentioned the word death, identifying the valley he went thru as being one where the shadow of death prevailed over it. I'm inclined to believe he meant the "spiritual death" and not the natural death, for he said, "I will fear no evil" which infers that surely he went thru a fearful area where Satan held forth, working his iniquitous ways under the shadow he cast over and about it, shutting all thereabouts off from God's Holy Light, excepting His chosen remnant who can never be shut off from His all-seeing eye and Light, by Satan or his workers, unless and if it be God's will that He remove Himself from them for a moment of time. David said, "For thou art with me" which tells us that God did not leave him to the wiles of Satan when he was down in the lowlands of despair, and neither will He desert or leave any of his little ones in Satan's wicked domain while they travel thru it here on earth. David surely had been down in Satan's low valley, that is, such a dismal darkness as is the place of the dead, or so gross and palpable darkness, that by its horrors and damps, may take away men's spirits and even their lives, —the natural lives of those not within God's select, chosen ones. Many have, in ages past, and in these present times, lost their lives in "Hell Holes" and "Dens of Vice" found the world over where Satan and his angels hold forth, which the Lord's people fear and avoid.

Concluding, will say that these are only a few of the thoughts that come to me. Much more could be written, but I do not want to take too much space in the *SIGNS* for there are many others capable of writing so much better and enlightening articles than I, a poor helpless one who would easily fall prey to Satan's guiles and evil designs, were it not for that assurance felt by David, which I also feel, — "I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me."

In hope of eternal life,
Wm. O. Hall
P.O. Box 595
Mount Vernon, Wash. 98273

REJOICED WHEN THEY UNITED WITH CHURCH

Rt. 2, Box 233,
Martinsville, Va. 24112

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am enclosing $5.00 for subscription to the *Signs,* with the balance for the Indigent Fund. I feel thankful for getting the wonderful *Signs.*

I have just been reading the March issue and the writing of H. Claude Thomas, telling joining the church at the age of ten years. Which brings to my mind my granddaughter, age thirteen, Phyllis Gunter, joining the church at Martinsville the 3rd Sunday in April, 1972. The 3rd Sunday in September, 1971, her mother, our daughter, joined at Martinsville. I thought I was happy then, but when Phyllis was baptized the 2nd Sunday in May, 1972, our oldest daughter, Frances Mason, along with brother and sister Plaster, joined at the water and were baptized the same day.

I was so lifted up I thought I could have no more doubts and fears. But that lasted only for a season. My sister-in-law, Clare P. Jones, joined at Chestnut Church the same day, having her membership at Martinsville Church. I have had membership at Martinsville since 1949. All that I have mentioned were baptized by our beloved pastor, Elder Cecil Turner.

I will tell you a little of my experience, or hope it to be. One night many years ago I dreamed that Brother and Sister Turner were visiting us, and there came a storm; and they had left and the storm was over. Everything seemed to be washed away, and I was left sitting on a large rock with water all around — seeing no one or anything. Another dream or vision was so plain: Jesus came down in a cloud near me and spoke the words, that time would be no more. These things, I hope to be spiritual, are just as clear and plain to me now as they were then.

This daughter that I mentioned, Lois P. Genther, is a widow at age thirty-five, with three sweet girls, the oldest being Phyllis. We have six children and they are all good to us, and are well respected. I feel that the Lord of heaven has blessed me. If you think this is worth printing in the *Signs,* you may do so; if not just throw it away.

An unworthy sister by grace,
Julia Potter

HAS THE 100th BIRTHDAY ISSUE OF THE SIGNS

Rt. 1,
Loganville, Ga. 30249

Dear Editors:

My date line is not clear but I am sending subscription for another year, with the balance for the Indigent Fund.

I have a number of the *Signs of the Times* that were mailed to my dear Daddy many years ago. One that stands out: Volume 100, September, 1932. Published each month by J. E. Beebe and Co., Middletown, N. Y. Elder H. H. Lefferts, Editor; Associate Editors Elder R. Lester Dodson, Elder George Ruston and Elder Charles W. Vaughn.

In this issue is an article concerning the 100th Birthday of the *Signs.* The first publication was August 8, 1832.

May our dear Lord richly bless you in health — in all that means your continuing to send out the dear old paper, to those awaiting the truth contained therein. Sincerely.

The least if one of the fold,
Ela Watson

WE HAVE TO WAIT UPON THE LORD

33 Hillcrest Avenue, N.E.,
Roanoke, Va. 24012

Dear Precious Brother and Sister Wood:

In our weakness we are glad to have the Lord to depend on. The Scriptures tell us, Cursed is the man that leaneth upon the arm of the flesh. It is my nature to depend on my own short arm, or the unpredictable help of those around me; but when the Children of Israel got to the Red Sea with the Egyptians behind them, they were in a

very helpless and fearful position by nature. As you both know, it was the Lord who took them through, and destroyed their enemies.

If we are spared even in nature, it is by the same divine power: and how much more so, if we poor, depraved creatures are saved from Hell. Yes, you know how sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear.

About three weeks before Sister Susie (Carter) passed away, I read your most recent Editorial to her. I had not read it before going to see her, so it was a pleasant surprise to me also. Sister Susie sat and listened to it like a hungry little sparrow eating a few cake crumbs. It was in that Editorial that you expressed that we find, from time to time, how good it is to wait upon the Lord!

It was very seldom that I found the time to read to Sister Susie. When I would do good, evil was more present. But one Sunday morning before going to church, (and it wasn't long before she died,) I went by the Nursing Home and read Elder Mewborn's account of the association. That account was a homecoming on one of Israel's little camp grounds, and was like a little bouquet of Summer given to her. How well you knew that your precious sister's affections were on Jesus Christ, and His precious bride, the Church. For her and many others of like precious faith, their suffering is finished. May God keep us comforted in that they are now safe in His love.

I have thought of you two several times since your sister's funeral. I felt that I would rather write to you than send a sympathy card.

What the unseen future hours, days and months hold for the two of you, and me and everyone whose hope is in Jesus Christ — not any of us know the future, only that which it has pleased the Lord to reveal. And thus we are back to the poor Christian's theme: *We have to wait upon the Lord.*

The two of you answer our letters when you come to our associations, and when you put forth your efforts and sacrifices on behalf of the *Signs of the Times.* Extra writing would be quite a burden, so I don't expect you to answer my letter. I have received a card and note of appreciation from Viola. She was with us at Roanoke Church the first Sunday.

With Christian love, I hope,
Sister Mamie Rose Ferguson

Elgin, Oregon 97827

Dear Elder Spangler:

It is again time to renew our subscription to the *Signs,* so please find enclosed an amount to cover the next two years.

This morning while reading the *Signs* our mind was so led while reading a letter from Elder J. R. Hollandsworth, that we feel a desire to express some of the thoughts we had concerning this scripture.

"And when he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true. dost thou not avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" (Rev. 6:9-10)

Down through the ages many saints of God have suffered corporeal death, and have became martyrs for the cause of Christ; and time was when we felt that it was of these who were under consideration in this scripture.

In the Garden of Eden was the tree of life (Christ our Lord) where God placed Cherubims, and a flaming sword to keep the way of the tree of life. Those whom God hath chosen and are drawn by his love, to approach the Tree of Life, must be *slain* to the love of sin, and cut asunder and come under the flame that burns away all dross. Yes, dear Elder, the things we once loved we now hate, and the things we once hated we now love.

And where, dear one, do we find these? Under the Áltar. It was on the

sacrificial altar that the Lamb was *slain,* and his blood ran down for the preservation of the saints of God. And there is not one for whom He died that was not under the altar; and no power on this earth can place one under the altar for whom He did not give his life.

Therefore, I do not feel the blood referred to in this scripture as "our blood" to be the blood of any natural man, but rather the blood of Christ; for if he is *our* Lord and *our* Saviour, we can use the possessive pronoun *our* in reference to the blood of the Lamb of God.

It was this blood that cleansed, ransomed and redeemed. Whom? those that were and are under the altar. And may it please God to place us there.

Give our love to all the brethren.

In much love,
Lloyd and Florence Spikes

ALL HE HAS IS HOPE

2050 Greenway Blvd.,
Wichita, Kansas 67213

Elders of the Signs

Dear Brother Wood:

They say you know a tree by the fruit it bears: you Elders surely bear large and sweet fruits to my way of thinking.

I have received so many letters from dear brothers that I cannot answer all of them. I want to thank one and all for writing me. The twenty-eighth day of March I will be seventy-seven, and my health is not good. The doctor says I have angina, which is fat in the blood.

We are told that one must be born again to be a child of God. How do we know when we are born the second time? I am not sure, but I do know that when I was a child ten or twelve years old, I would say that God did not know everything; and at that time I was not afraid of the Lord, and was free of mind and had no sins. Then one Sunday at church I was making light of the Elder while he was preaching, when, all at once, something hit me, and I ran out of the building crying. My mother came out after me and said for me to go to the carriage and wait until the services were over. I did not know what to do — it seemed that part of me wanted to go back in, and part of me did not. Mother said for me to make up my mind and do as I felt like doing. I stood outside for a few minutes and then went back in for the rest of the meeting.

From that time on one part of me wants to do good, and the other part won't let me do the things I would love to do, and I do not bear any good fruits. I only hope that Christ died for my sins and that I am in the first resurrection, and that at His coming I will hear the Lord's voice and will be resurrected with the other children of God.

I wish one of you elders could come and see me this summer. Let me know before hand and I will try to be at home. The only thing left for me is Hope.

From a sinner in trouble,
Fred C. Winfrey

Boones Mill, Va. 24065

"Draw nigh unto God and He will draw nigh unto you. Cleanse your hands ye sinners, and purify your hearts ye doubleminded." (James 4:8)

Dear Brethren:

Thy Hymn "Nearer my God to Thee," is Jacob's experience which recorded in Genesis 28th chapter. After the Lord revealed himself to Jacob then Jacob was nearer to God in his thoughts. This is the only way a sinner ever has, or ever will, draw nigh unto God, for He has from the beginning been our dwelling place.

"Cleanse your hands" and "Purify your hearts" intend the same thing; and since this is God's work only, "Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?" (Prov. 20:9) And since, according to promise, the Lord is faithful to cleanse His people in a Trinity way as appears from the shedding of His blood, and the power

of it, from the sanctifying and almighty influence of His leading Spirit; and from the answers to the prayers of the saints that God would create in them clean hearts, and wash them thoroughly from their iniquity. (See Psalm 51)

Now, since this is the truth, that man is depraved and incapable to cleanse himself from sin, it will be asked, *To what purpose are such exhortations as James 4:8?*

We answer: To convince men that they stand in need of being washed and cleansed of which all are naturally ignorant. Also to bring to remembrance our inability to cleanse ourselves: which the Jews thought to have washed themselves by the blood of bulls and goats; which are rejected of God. And they in spite of all their legal doings, are yet called upon to wash and make clean; and so this preaching from heaven is profitable to point saints to the only way of cleansing, and so to the fountain of Christ's blood and the cross James preached while contending for the faith. Faith lives upon the riches and righteousness of its Author and Finisher Jesus Christ; and knows it would be a failure without His prayers.

That which depends upon another, is faith. And God given faith will look to none but Jesus. Real faith lacks for strength, and hungers for righteousness and wisdom according to its every confession. Therefore genuine faith receives its obedience from Another whose obedience is finished.

False religion will worship the obedience of man, which is of the flesh. And there are millions who are, "Pure in their own eyes, and yet not washed from their filthiness." (Prov. 30:12)

James 4:8 serves to remind those who know the Lord, that notwithstanding the fact that saints have been born again, we yet stand in need of cleansing until this corruptible shall be put on incorruption. Then our song shall be unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His precious blood.

To the household of faith it is revealed that all washing and ablution from sin, is from above, "and cometh down from the Father of lights . . ." As for me, my only hope of ever being washed from my sins, depends upon Jesus who revealed Himself to me about the close of the Second World War. And when He put me down I was drawn nigh to Jesus, and I know He is the Head of His house — a great wonder in Heaven.

In bonds,
J. L. Bocock

BROTHER HOLLANDSWORTH RECOVERING

Rt. 4, Box 104,
Bassett, Va. 24055

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

I want to thank the many brethren sisters and friends for the cards and gifts and phone calls local and from North Carolina and Georgia. I am sorry that so many that visited me in the hospital and in my home, were turned away because I was not able to receive them; but I hope that they all understand.

I was operated on for gall stones February 5th, and was in the hospital fifteen days. And after I came home my tension was so high I thought I would not get well, but the Lord was not ready to take me. I am much better now, and am trying to serve the churches and enjoying liberty most of the time. I know that the Lord is the one to be thanked above all, for He is the God of all comfort; and He that made me keeps me alive, and will until my time comes that He has allotted me.

Elder Wood, will you please publish this in the *Signs*. I would appreciate it very much.

Yours on sweet fellowship,
(Elder) J. R. Hollandsworth

EXPERIENCE

Roanoke, Va. 24017

Elder L. J. Brammer

Dear Brother in Christ:

I felt I would try to write you some of the way the Lord has led me, that you might know some of the reasons I ask your thought on Thes. 5:23 yesterday. I did not come to Union with a question but felt after hearing you preach and the expressions you made concerning the Resurrection, the mentioned scripture came to mind again, and it relates in some way to how I believe the Lord has led me. Sometimes it troubles me because I am, in thought, so far from the first things that the Lord manifests to me while I am trying to speak. That is, to enter into the first sinking down and raising up.

When I was a lad of seven, one night I looked up in the Western sky and beheld the moon that appeared about one quarter, which is not unusual for children to be looking at and wondering about the stars and the many bodys in the sky that are not visible in the daytime. At that time I had no fear of darkness and hardly knew anything of trouble, except maybe a stone bruise on my foot; and especially knew nothing of sin. But as I viewed the quarter moon it appeared a full moon, which was a wonder to me; then it appeared a smiling face and I felt a great calmness over me that I have not been able to describe or know the fulness of. I say sometimes it was a feeling that *all* is well. From then on I had a fear of darkness that I did not look up much, and a knowledge of sin in my members, that increased as the years passed for a little over eight years. Before the eight years were up the burden of eternal death weighted me down day and night, and I could in no way set that burden aside, though I cried day and night, God be merciful to me a sinner, and when I could live no longer, and had wept because of my sins until there were no more tears. And in that last night our family physician was called and the family, as many as could bare to look, stood by, and I was brought to the end of all strength in an earthly way, and I was so impressed that I had sinned so greatly that the Holiness of God forbade that I could be saved; and I was assured that the moment I died my soul would drop into the furnace of hell. I was reconciled to my just lot because His Holiness demanded the just punishment for those that die without hope, and I felt to say, "O Lord not my will but thine be done." And there I fell asleep not knowing but what I had departed this life into the place prepared for the Devil and his angels.

This was well after midnight on August 13, 1928, and I had the whole family and our family physician in an uproar. The whole eight years had not been as that night, but as if the knowledge of sin in me raised and lowered as the tide, and as I have said it increased and I could not, even at an early age rest but a short while without the terrible knowledge of my great sins being present. Sleep had departed from me and whether I dropped into natural sleep or fainted I still do not know but I was assured the moment I closed my eyes I would die and go immediately to hell, and was willing for His will to be done even though hell was my forever habitation.

I awoke early in the morning following with a calmness I had not known for eight years, and slipped quietly out of the house without awakening my family; and if any poor soul ever had reason to kiss the Son, I did, because if any poor soul was ever set free I enjoyed that liberty. Not only me but all I could behold was in praise to God with me, and I just sat in the grass and marveled at the love of God, and I was assured that nothing stood between me and my Saviour, and if my life was taken I would be forever in his presence and behold his face in righteousness. There was a change because that one that had no hope and was assured in all truth hell was my home, now, if I be taken, I would see the smile of his face. Never have I felt that burden so great since. How long the state of earthly

bliss lasted I do not know now but soon I found a warfare that has not come to an end yet. The fulness of the grace of God will be manifest when we see Him as he is.

When this took place, it was noticed by my family and the children I went to school with, and if the state I first felt had remained I would have joined with those that say the old man is now suited for heaven, but I trust he gave me ears to hear the glorious gospel of His Son who is perfect, and a desire to see him and be like him.

Now I believe we are given the Spirit of adoption after we are born again. Now I do not feel and it is according to my experience, that anything returns to the dust as it was except that which was first taken from the dust. John saw the souls of them that were slain for the word of God and for the testimony they held. (Rev. 6:9-10-11.) In my meditations, that altar was the promise, the promise under which the children of God of old were kept by the power of God until the fullness of time should come, etc.— those that had died in the faith; but when the work of redemption was completed (finished) they were given white robes and to rest yet for a little season (not time). And also we notice that they are still protected and in communication, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled. Though his people have rested under the promise that Jesus would (Him will ye hear in all things) come, and the white robes are evidence recorded, that Salvation in Him is complete.

Brother Brammer, by experience, I am a sojourner in this world living upon the grace of God, and not very wise; but to me, there is no rest except in His work, and no peace except that He giveth. To me, it does not lessen his love for his people nor the greatness of his work, to say that the body returns to the dust as it was, and Spirit to God who gave it. The Spirit is of God and needed nothing therefore returns immediately to God who gave it. Unknown to me I was born in sin, and by the mercy of God the law became my master, and by trying to fulfill it I found I was a servant of the devil. Jesus in His great work of redemption, (unknown to me, and indeed all I could seem to know at first was that I was blind.) He redeemed me, and sin was condemned in the flesh. And there is the often word, who will deliver me from the body of this death. Farewell,

Your least servant,
Noel F. Conner

CONCERNING THE CHURCH

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1:1) Genesis 1:26 says, "All things were made by Him and without him was not anything made." According to Ephesians 1:4, the man was chosen in Him before the foundation of the world—so that would be before man was made; also he predesinated us unto the adoption of children.

All of this was done before Adam was made; so man is clear out of the arrangements of establishing the Church of God. Adam and Eve were made, and commanded to be fruitful and multiply. In this I say that the Church of God was planted in Adam, because he has a people in all kindreds and nations . . . Jesus refers to His Body as having many members which make up the church, and they all came through Adam naturally.

When one is born in this world, he is just born of the flesh; for, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit." When we are only born of the flesh that is all we know anything about, and the things of the world are our first love, our first husband, or first heaven.

The Word spoken of in the text, was born of a woman, and became flesh and dwelt among us. He was conceived in his mother in a bodily shape by the Holy Ghost. He was born into this world man

and God; and he says that it behooved him to come, bleed and die for those that his Father gave him out of the World: that none should be lost but the son of perdition. He lived here thirty and three years, and gave his life for His children that the scriptures might be fulfilled, and gave his life for His children that they might have life, and have it more abundantly. He had the power to lay down his life and power to take it up again .

The Adam family is still helpless, and I believe that Cain and Abel are true figures of the true and the false. Cain would be the type that has never been born again: the Lord rejected his offering, and accepted Abel's. The Word that came to be flesh and dwelt among men, came baptizing with the Holy Ghost, which puts His Spirit in them, and they are born of the Spirit. So, that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goest: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Adam the first man is of the earth earthly; Jesus the second man is the Lord from heaven.

When a person is born of the Spirit, his blind eyes are opened, and his deaf ears unstopped: his first love is gone — his first heaven is passed away. He has received a hope in the Lord Jesus Christ and he has entered into his "second heaven," and behold all things have become new. Now he can eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man, which proves that he is spiritually alive. This agrees with the Apostle Paul when he said that he was kept a prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ—which means we are kept from doing the things that the lust of the flesh and the pride of the eyes would lead us into.

This new birth makes us love the Lord who gave his life for us — it makes us want to follow Him down into the liquid grave and be baptized as he was. It makes us love our brothers and sisters. It just makes a new person out of us. We are fed on the spiritual food that Christ commanded Peter to feed His sheep and lambs. This Word spoken of in the text, is the vine and those that have been made alive by His Spirit, are the branches. They had to be chosen in Him, because the branch comes up with the vine. So those that were born of Adam and made alive by Jesus Christ, compose His Body, the true and living Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, and is in the world today.

These bodies of ours are terrestial bodies which must die and go back to dust from which they came. 1 Corinthians 51:38 says that God gives it a body as it pleases Him. It is sown a natural body and raised a spiritual body . . . These are celestial bodies and are ready to be said unto, "come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." This is the risen, glorified Church of God.

Written by a poor worm of the dust.

Oscar Howard
Pink Hill, N. C.

ENJOYS READING WRITINGS IN THE SIGNS

1902 McCutcheon
Shrevesport, La. 71108

Dear Editors of the Signs:

It is time for me to renew my subscription. I do so much enjoy the writings of comfort and love from those who have God's laws in their hearts and minds, and are saved by grace and not by works, lest they should boast. It is free — a free gift from God, given to those chosen in Christ in the beginning, who were His, are His, and will always be His, for nothing or no one can pluck them out of His hands: for by the shedding of His own precious blood Christ has redeemed them. He paid the debt that saved them from their sins, and there remains no more price for sin.

There are those who are under the

law and whatsoever the law saith, it saith to those under the law, who depend of their good works to save them; but we know that all our righteousness is as filthy rags. I know well that in my flesh dwells no good thing. Paul says, "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets." (Romans 3:21) It says also, "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." (Romans 4:28) There are those who depend on God to work all things after the counsel of His own will. These are those Christ prayed for, not for the world but for those the Father gave Him. They depend on Jesus, for He is given judgement over all things in heaven and earth. Jesus was the only one without spot worthy to open the way — righteousness is of the Lord and He is the righteousness of His elect who were chosen in Him in the beginning.

I surely enjoyed reading Gregory Duren's article. He is enlightened, if I understand, and God has blessed him to write so that even I seem to understand his meaning.

I also enjoyed Elder Hardy's letter to a brother. My eyes filled with tears as I read it. Every word seemed to me to spell love, love, love. And God is love. O thank God for giving me eyes to read this book of love. I try sometimes to write, but when I read what I write it doesn't sound good, and I never feel it is fit to send in. Anyway I know that if it is not in accord with Old Baptists you will not print it; and I wouldn't want you to.

I believe our teacher is God, and through experience we learn. God's will be done, not ours.

A little sister in hope,
Kate Mathews

HAS TRAVELED A ROCKY ROAD

Rt. 1, Box 223B
Exmore, Va. 23350

Dear Brother Spangler:

I have wanted to write for a long time, but it seems my mind becomes blank whenever I start, so I leave it off. Since I know there is no good thing in me, I make no excuse for my negligence in renewing my subscription when it was due.

I have been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for forty-two years, and every one of the same faith, whether far or near, I love dearly. I have a wonderful experience and I have traveled a rocky road, but Jesus has traveled every step of the way with me, or I would have perished along the way. It is so beautiful and sweet to me that I can't tell it — it is locked in the secret recesses of my heart, between my Saviour and I.

God is truth, and whenever I hear the truth preached so ably as I have been blessed to hear, I can't keep back the tears: for it seems that I am at the foot of the cross with my precious Saviour, feeling the anguish and shame he bore for me. I ask myself why He had to suffer for so vile a sinner as I; then the answer comes, If He had not borne the pain then I would not have the blessed assurance that I am His and He is mine. What a sweet assurance! it is more precious than gold, silver or precious stones.

I am enclosing $4.00 for my renewal. I hope I will be more aware next time, if I am still around. But twilight is stealing — it used to be over the sea but now it is closing in ever nearer. I feel a faith and peace serene.

Looking forward to seeing you the 5th Sunday in April. May the good Lord bless and keep you both. Give Sister Spangler my love.

In hope of a better home beyond the skies. Remember me in your prayers.

Sister Nell Gaskill

BEEN READING SIGNS LONG TIME

Charleston, W. Va. 25320
Legg Star Route, Box 354

Dear Editors:

I am a little late in sending check for the *Signs of the Times* renewal. I love the paper so much, and am so thankful for all the editors, for I love the doctrine the *Signs* stands for. I have been reading the paper ever since I was old enough to read. My dear father and mother took the paper, and I have some of several years back.

I ayways would go to the meetings with my father at every opportunity. I do not get to attend meetings very often as I am getting up in age and my husband is not a believer, which makes it very hard for me. Sometimes I don't understand it and get very low, but then I know it is the dear Lord's will. I get much comfort and feel I am blessed in reading the dear *Signs* containing the experiences of the brothers and sisters. I look forward each month for its coming.

May the Lord bless and keep you in His loving care. When you have a mind to pray please remember me, if the Lord blesses you.

Your sister in Christ, I hope,
Lurecy S. McCutcheon

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The next session of the*Pigg River Association* will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Camp Branch, Henry County, Virginia, beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in August, 1973. (August 3, 4 and 5)

Camp Branch Church is located in Henry County, Virginia: leaving Rt. 220 at Martinsville, Va., go 8 miles east on Rt. 108 to Rt. 657. From the north turn left off Rt. 220 on Rt. 619 and go to Rt. 890, turn right and go to Rt. 657 on Leatherwood or Dyer's Store Road. The meeting house is just around the curve.

Our correspondents and other brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Sister Nancy Haynes, Clerk
Elder Rufus Brown, Mod.

MINUTES OF PRESBYTERY

On Saturday before the first Sunday in February, 1973, the Mill Branch Church met in conference and agreed that we ask that Brother Leon Griffin be set apart to the office of Deacon; and the ordination service was set for Sunday morning at 10:30.

On Sunday morning February 4, 1973 the church met, and conference was opened with hymn and prayer by Elder Wayne Mitchell. The Presbytery was organized by electing Eld. Wayne Mitchell, Moderator, Sister Estelle Joyner Cockrell, Clerk. Ministers and deacons present were invited to seats with us in the service, from Black Creek, Contentnea and Skewarkey.

The Moderator called for the candidate, who was presented by Deacon Amos Williams and seated in front of the ministers: Elders Wayne Mitchell, Harvey Holland and Kenneth Windham. Elder Windham read First Timoty, 3rd chapter; Elder Holland spoke generally on the duties of a deacon; and Elder Mitchell read scriptures and delivered the charge.

The Presbytery being satisfied with the qualifications of the candidate, administered the laying on of hands with prayer.

The ordained Deacon was delivered back to the church as a deacon of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Mill Branch, and the right hand of fellowship was extended to him.

A copy of this is to be recorded in the Church Book, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Conference adjourned, and dismissed by the moderator.

Elder Wayne Mitchell, Mod.
Estelle Joyner Cockrell, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To April 1, 1973)

Jean Burns, Ark.	$ 1.00
Mrs. Lester Haning, W. Va.	2.00
Mrs. Ruth Chopell, Tenn.	3.00
C. Wesley Bond, Ore.	1.00
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STRICT BAPTIST LITERATURE

Sermons by J. C. Philpot, long out of print, are being re-published. Also sermons and writings by other Strict Baptist Ministers. We are glad to announce such good literature can again be supplied. Write for complete list and prices.

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FOURTH OF JULY MEETING

The regular Fourth of July services will be held at Pine Creek Church, Floyd County, Virginia.

The Meeting House is located just off U. S. Route 221, leading from Floyd to Roanoke, Virginia. Those going by way of Floyd Courthouse, turn off 221 to the left about five miles from Floyd at an old store building. Those from the east turn right at the store building, and the Meeting House is about one-half mile. Services to begin at 10 A. M.

For a number of years an all-day service has been held at Pine Creek Church on the Fourth of July, attended by a number of ministers and a large gathering of members and friends.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

D. V. Spangler

Danville, Virginia **June, 1973**

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Danville, Va. 24541

EDITORIAL

I CORINTHIANS 4:6,7

"And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another, for who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"

Why did the apostle say that he had transferred to himself and Apollos in a figure these lofty things? It seems that neither one of them had indulged in such fanciful thinking as this, to wit, that they had received anything save that which came from the Lord. A man with a history like this man could never

say anything else than that he had received all from the Lord. He could never say that it was by his achievement that he was different from other Jews. I kindly ask that we carefully examine his status before the brethren and before the Lord. He did not know Christ; he did not know how to do the work that is required of a child of God; he did not know how to perform that which is good; he did do the things that he did not desire to do; he did not do the things that he desired to do; he was the chief of sinners at the time of all his history in the time state; he did not know anything as he ought; he was constantly being brought into captivity to the law of sin which was in his members; he did not have anything good dwelling in his flesh; he was the least of all saints; he was not meet (sufficient) to be an apostle; he was the least of the apostles. It is not his intention, either by word or precept or example, to say that any gift or talent or reception of it, is from his efforts. Wouldn't the apostle be a poor specimen to lay down such a claim as that? Wouldn't he be the weakest excuse for saying that our merits are the cause of what we receive? I am well aware that some will say, What dry technical matter the elder is dealing with. Yes, that is true, but only if we feel that we have received something from a source other than the Lord. How do you feel? That is the important question. Have you been thinking of your merits when gifts are dispensed? If so, the apostle is specially transferring the doctrinal thesis to himself. Why does he do that? Because the Voice of Inspiration is looking down the vista of time and is viewing the tendency of men to think too highly of men, to think of themselves as having received these things by their own worthiness and ability. He has set himself forward as not being worthy of the least of the gifts that the Lord has bestowed upon them, much less to have wrought them out by his skill.

After giving us all of the ways in which he is not fit, not able to attain unto the high calling of God, he then tells us so clearly and fully and explicitly how that these things are given to him. He is telling us that it was by the grace and calling of God that changed his life from that of an ignorant persecutor to that of a humble recipient of God's mercies; that he has not received anything save what the Lord has given. Could any forbid his clear language that he was what he was by the grace of God? Did he misrepresent the experience of God's children when he declared that he was what he was by the grace of God. Or is that when the pattern was cut it was cut wrong? In his writing to the Corinthians, he tells them (and us, or does he?) that he was what he was by the grace of God. Was this true? If it was true with him, what relationship is there between the apostle and us. We must ever remember that he is presenting himself as an example so that men will not think more of one another than they ought. Too, the apostle tells the Ephesians that they are presently saved by grace. Then this is not a weak grace; it is not a grace that the sinner can use or not use according to his feelings; it is saving grace among the Ephesians.

What I am reaching after is to know whether the grace that saved them at Ephesus was the same kind of grace that made Paul what he was at the time of his writing to the Corinthians. If so, then how fitting that the Holy Spirit inspired him to call attention to men that they not think more of themselves than they ought. He is the perfect example of one that is made different by the grace of God; he is a perfect example of one that has not received anything save that which the Lord gave. If a man is what he is by the grace of God, everything that he receives is something that he would not have had but for the grace of God. If a whole church is saved by the grace of God, then all that they get in the kingdom of heaven will be a gift from God to them. To the brethren at Rome he said, Even so then *at this present time* also there is a rem-

nant according to the election of grace. And if by grace (in the present time), then is no more of works (in this present time): otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works (in this present time), then is it no more of grace (in this present time): otherwise work is no more work (in this present time). I am unable to see how that any of the Corinthians or Romans or Ephesians could ever say that they had received anything except from the Lord's hand. For them to have thought so certainly would have been thinking too highly of men.

Our blessed Lord was thankful that His Father had hid things from the wise and prudent and had revealed them unto babes. O, do you really mean to say that these babes had to earn the things given to them? Would you say that? Now turn back to the apostle. He was thankful to God at all times on behalf of his brethren. Why was he grateful? For what was he grateful? He was thankful for the grace of God which was given them in Christ Jesus. This is the source from whence we receive our blessings. Surely our heavenly Father would not have loved us in such a manner as to sacrifice His Son to die for us, and yet treasure and lay up in Him an inferior grace that would not save us in the hour of need. If the throne of grace is that weak, what would be the use of praying to it, or coming to it for help in the hour of need?

"Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men." (Psa. 31:19) This goodness was laid up for us, and wrought for us. O my soul why art thou cast down? The Lord has laid up and wrought all of the goodness and mercy that you will ever need in this vale. It is not any wonder that Paul thanked God for His grace which was given to his brethren. What did this grace do for them? Did it give them some of the things that they received? And did they have to earn the others? If language means anything (and it does) then by all means this grace enriched them in everything. If this grace did enrich them in everything (and it did) what did they ever receive except that which God gave and which His grace enriched to their benefit? Remember, dear reader, that it enriched them in everything. Remember the language of our text, to wit, that the example used did not permit the thinking of more than we ought of any man. *Who* hath made thee to differ? Please tell me, other than Christ, who has made you to differ. *What* have you got that you did not receive? Please, let us have the truth of the matter. What have we got that we did not receive? If thou didst receive it, *why* do you glory as though you didst not receive it?

Yes, I know the usual argument just here. It is being said that I am making Paul say that grace enriches us to use profane language, to drink intoxicating beverages, to frequent places of ill repute and all other vices. You do not believe any such a thing, dear brethren. You know that for nearly fifty years my pen has assailed such a blasphemous doctrine. The Lord has wrought all of our works in us, but he is not talking about any other works than Paul is referring to when he tells us what the fruits of the Spirit are. These fruits come from His work, definitely not ours. Every one of them is wrought in us by His grace, and this is the most enrichening work, the most satisfying, the most enjoyable work that has ever been given to a poor sinner; and when it is thus wrought, he or she will say that we have received it all from the Lord. This grace will enable us to talk right, for there is not a word in our tongue but what the Lord knows it and His grace will discover to us at the proper time rich utterances, and give us such a measure of knowledge that we will break out in singing and say, "I know that my redeemer liveth." This grace, even this grace to live by, will be exactly like it was in the day the testimony of

Christ was confirmed in us. Was ever anything so beautiful, so lovely, so confirming? Paul has prayed for us all in every place that this grace be given us, and that it be as effectual as it was in the first movement of it in our lives when Christ said unto us, "Thy sins are all forgiven." This confirmed our hope; this testimony was effectual in weaning us from thinking too highly of any man; of thinking that we get anything save as a gift from above. (James I:16,-17) And this first reception of the things of Christ are to be continued as was the first confirmation of His testimony to us to the end that we do not come behind in any gift. If there has been anything found in the Bible better than this, I have not found it. If there is anything needed except these gifts of grace I have not found it in the Bible, nor have I ever heard of one that experienced it. If any one claims to have achieved anything by an effort of their own, I hereby declare most emphatically that the same gift from above gives that same thing.

Once more I call your attention to our election. The sun is getting too low; the shadows are lengthening out too far for me to tamper with salvation. Tomorrow will find many of us gone the way of the earth, and one day, ere long, the poor sinful writer will fall to rise no more in this life. Please deal with me in a tender manner; please deal with me in my weakness. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according *as* he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." (Eph. 1:3,4) If God did choose us in Christ before the world was founded, then *as* he chose us, he, also, blessed us with all spiritual blessings. I never finished the ninth grade (I regret this) but I am not afraid to say that in the same manner, at the same time, and according as he did the first, so also, did he do the second; that as much certainty as there was in the one, that equally so, no more, no less, as much in the other. If I do not get the blessings that I am blessed with in Christ, I see just as much likelihood that I will not get the ultimate of my election in Christ. I am sure that no grammarian, no linguist, no composer of sentences will destroy my meaning and use of the little word *as* as used in this passage. God did choose His people in Christ, and at that time He did bless them with all spiritual blessings. The man or woman that is able to find a flaw or lack in the blessings being received by the objects for which they were designed, will, at that time, and with the same arguments and the same Scriptures that he uses, find a flaw and failure in the election of God. According to Paul's writing by inspiration, which is my text at this time, the brethren at Ephesus, and those that the other epistles were written to, will receive these spiritual blessings in time, and that they will not have any other spiritual blessings in time.

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things." (Rom. 8:32) As I write, it is the holiday season. I have already heard parents threaten their offspring with the time worn threat, If you are not a better child, I will not get you anything for the holiday. If I could follow them a few days after the holidays I could find some that take the gift away because of bad conduct. This is called in modern vernacular as Indian giving. This kind of giving from God to His people is not found in the New Testament. God's word is forever settled in heaven (Psa. 119:89). How sweet this is to my poor lamenting and troubled heart; how it buoys up my drooping spirit. His word is settled in the region *of sublime bliss and glory where the evil passion of men will never change it, where the religious fanaticism will never add to it. If His word had been settled in many minds of any on earth how long, dear tried soul, would it have been before it was unsettled? Since it

is settled in heaven before the sons of men trod the shores of Galilee, how shall He not with him freely give us all things. It is not, *how can He give us all things*; it is not that way, but it is, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things? Will any of my readers answer the question? Will you say that he can not, or that He will not? The language simply means that since He did not spare His own Son, but did deliver Him up for us all, that He will, having entered into covenant to do so, give us all things. (2 Sam. 23:5) All of these things belong to the people of God. We would not have gotten one thing, had not God spared His Son, but having delivered Him for us all, He likewise bought and paid for all of the things of the kingdom, and, since that He can not deny Himself, He will not, nor He can not, deny us one of these gifts. Our Father knows the things that we need, and He gives them to us (Mat. 6:8; 7:-11). Our Father will not withhold any thing from these that walk uprightly (Psa. 84:11). He has given us all things, and they are promised and incorporated into the whole of the covenant before the world was founded; and Paul tells us about this twice (Eph. I:3,4). "Let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." (I Cor. 3:21,23)

I am not dealing with a bi-sected or an isolated portion of Scripture. The text carries us all over the Bible. If given grace and a spirit of understanding the subject grows and grows, and I do hope the contemplation of so vast a fulness as is this, lifts up the down cast eyes and causes the heart to leap and skip in holy ecstasy, and the pace of the tattered and gnarled feet to step a little faster towards that which is so sweet. These are they that have experienced the receiving of grace, the receiving of a kingdom that cannot be moved (Heb. 12:28; 13:9), and, having received grace, they rejoice in the same and give glory and honor to Him that lives and abides forever. Their faith will not be in traditions and formalities and customs and rites; and, praise God, they will not be thinking more highly of one another than they ought. As I write my eyes are lifted heavenward to the everlasting and inexhaustible love of God for poor sinners; I am carried backwards forty-nine years ago this week (December, 1972) to a time when my resources gave out. I write from experience, not from hearsay, not from observation. I came to the end of my own strength. I played my record out. I had absolutely nothing left that could be brought into the presense of God as an offering for atonement. I feel to hope that I lost my life (that is, I lost it as a quality worthwhile), but that He, the one that reduces all His children to poverty, gave me another life in the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ, and I do hope that since then, I, too, have not counted my life dear unto me, but that as much as has been given me, I have been ready to preach and write and get up at midnight to speak and to talk to poor troubled hearts and minds. And, when I am carried back in retrospection to that illustrious day of deliverance, I am blessed to sing,

"Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me,"

And as I look back and come to the present, I continue to sing,

"'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far and grace will lead me home."

God willing, more later.

WDG

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

VIRTUAL UNION VS. ACTUAL UNION

We have read some very labored articles which have been written against the doctrine of eternal, vital union of our Lord Jesus Christ and his mystical body, the Church, in which the writers

have attempted to draw a line between what they call a virtual eternal, and an actual eternal union, admitting the former, but denying the latter. Some of the less descerning of the saints have become perplexed, and we have been frequently called on to define the difference.

Before attempting to do so, we will remark, that every expression of Bible truth by which the Church of the living God, which is the ground and pillar of the truth, is or over has been distinguished from the world or anti-christ has been assailed in the same sly and insidious manner. Predestination, election, special redemption, regeneration, final preservation of the saints in grace to glory, the resurrection of the dead, and ultimate glory of the heirs of salvation, have shared the same fate. Read to the arminian, "Whom he (God) did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son," &c. "Having predestinated us to the adoption of children," &c. "Him being delivered up, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Ah, says he, I believe in predestination; but not in absolute predestination! Well let us see: What kind of predestination can that be which is not *absolute?* Something like this. The Lord had a design, a purpose or a will to do certain things if men or devils would allow him to do so; but nothing in reality made certain by the counsel or predestination of God. This is in reality a flat denial of predestination in toto, yet it is what predestination must be if it be not absolute.

We believe in election. O, yes, says the self-conceited freewiller, certainly, I believe election; but not eternal sovereign, personal election. But that God chose to save all who would comply with certain terms, perform certain conditions and makes use of certain means. A man must be lamentably stupid who cannot perceive that this is a full denial of election altogether. Special redemption, yes, says Andrew Fuller, and all his motley echoes, we believe it is *special* in its design and in its effect, but general in its nature, and so general that all sinners, if they are so disposed can avail themselves of its full benefit. Thus professing to believe it to be *special,* deny its specialty, and rest its efficacy on the will of the creature, and thereby disallow the saving virtue of the blood of Christ. Regeneration. With one voice all the work-mongrel tribes of the earth agree the sinner must be born again. But at the same time deny that the new birth brings forth anything that the sinner did not possess before the birth; no seminal pre-existence of the life which the birth brings forth — no begetting by the heavenly parents, but a mere change of purpose and pursuit, a new-modeling of the carnal mind, and a new formation of the old man. Perhaps this may be a *virtual,* but not *actual* regeneration. All who are this *virtually* born again, if such a thing could be, would present a race of fatherless children — bastards and not sons. Perseverance is admitted, if they may be allowed to supply the condition, *if they hold out faithful, &c.* Anything that will strip the crown from the head of Christ, and crown the sinner as his own savior, they seem very willing to admit. The resurrection is only admitted with such qualifications as either, *it is past already,* or that it does not mean what the scriptures affirm, that "He that raised up Jesus from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwells in you."

We come now to our subject, and will enquire, What is meant by Eternal Vital Union?

2. Does such a Union exist? And if so,
3. Is it Actual or Virtual?

By the term eternal we mean that which was before all time. The word *vital* means life, and union is oneness — identity as a unit.

What kind of life does God give to his people; is it eternal, or is it only time-life? John says, this is the record that God hath given us eternal life. 1 John v; and Jesus says, "I give to them *eternal*

life." Many other express declarations of scripture prove that the life given to the children of God is eternal, and consequently did as fully exist before they individually and experimentally received it, as afterwards. If it did not exist before it was implanted in us or communicated to us by the new birth, then why is it called eternal? The eternity of it is attested by the declaration that it was with the Father and was manifested. (I John I.) This life is hid in God, those who receive it, receive it by being begotten of his own will, and born of God. Not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. This vitality then is eternal vitality or eternal life which was with God, the Father, before it was manifested. Having then settled by scripture testimony the two points, namely, the life and *its eternal character*, we come to the word *union* in its connection with the terms *eternal, vital.*

2. Did such an union exist? It seems almost like insulting the intelligence of the reader to ask, was this life a plurality, was it legions, or was it one life as it was with the Father before all worlds? Was it more than a unit, when given to us in Christ Jesus according as we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world? If it was more than one life perhaps some one can tell us how many lives it was, but if it was one and the self-same life as it originated in God the Father and is hid in him, if it was but one and the same life as given to us in Christ Jesus before the world began, then the controversy on the subject of eternal vital union may cease, for one of the two propositions must be admitted or the Bible rejected. To deny that a vital union or a union of spiritual vitality did so exist in eternity before all time, is rank infidelity, for God has so declared it. This life was and is, and forever shall continue to be that which makes us one with Christ, as Christ is one with the Father, and that Christ and the Church are thus identified in, is positively asserted by Christ himself. He is in them, and they are in him. He also is in the Father, and the Father is in him, and so completely, so that he that hath seen him, hath seen the Father also. And we ask, who has ever seen the Son, who hath not seen the Church also, seeing that he is in the Church, and the Church is in Him. He is the head, the Church is his body; and does a head and its body make more than one man or person? "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ." 1 Cor. xii, 12. Then Christ the head and his Church with all her legitimate members, being many in membership, are but one unit in life or vitality. Christ says, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." If it be admitted that Christ is truly the life of the Church, the true God and eternal life, then that same life which unites him to the Church as his body, unites his body, the Church, to him as her head. If it be admitted that Christ is now to-day the head of the Church, will they presume to say that he was not the head of his Church yesterday? Dare any one deny the announcement of the Holy Ghost. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and forever. Of course, when we speak of Christ in his oneness with the headship of the Church as his body, we speak of him in his mediatorial character as the Son of God, and so revealed with power.

3. Is this union of oneness of life in Jesus Christ *actual* or only *virtual?* As neither of these words are used in the inspired writings in connection with the union of Christ and the Church, we must depend upon our lexicons for their signification; Webster's Dictionary is the recognized standard of our language in the principal colleges of our country. His definition is—*Actual*: 1. real or effective, or that exists truly and absolutely; 2. exist-in act; real; in opposition to speculative.

Virtually: In efficacy or effect only; by means of some other influence, or the instrumentality of something else.

According therefore to the established and acknowledged laws of our language, those who hold the doctrine of eternal, actual, vital union, believe that the life of the Church of God is one life and that it really, effectively, truly and absolutely did exist in eternity before the world began, in a sense opposite to that of mere speculation.

While those who deny that it was *actual,* deny that it was *real,* or that it existed *truly* and *absolutely,* in a sense opposed to that which is only *speculative.* And those who deny that this union was actual before the world began, but admit that it was *virtually* existing in eternity, deny that it was *really, truly or absolutely* so, but in efficacy or effect only; and that efficacy or effect could only be developed or produced by the *means* or *instrumentality* of something else.

Now which of these positions, if either, do the scriptures and the teaching of the spirit in our experience establish? To us it is very clear that if this union of the life of the Church in Jesus Christ existed in him before the world began, it was more than a speculation — that it was a reality. If it was not then a reality, a fact, what is there in the communication of that eternal life to us experimentally in the new birth, that can make the life what it was not before we were made to feel its power? But one will say, the word *actual* signifies an *act* or *action.* This Webster admits in a secondary sense, not in its primary signification. Well, be it so; are we not told that the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord? Does not the giving a thing imply an act or an action? Certainly it does. Well, when was the act or action of giving us eternal life in Jesus Christ performed? We are told that God hath blessed us with *all* spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. Is eternal life a spiritual blessing? It certainly is not a mere temporal blessing, then it was actually given us in him before the foundation of the world. God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. The *gift,* not *gifts* of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord. It is given us in him and through him it is in due time communicated to all the members of his body when they pass from death unto life, are born again, and brought into the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God. If the work of the Spirit in the new birth is the action which makes this union actual, then we set aside the reality of grace given us in Christ before the world began, and instead of the *gift* of God is eternal life, we should read it the *gifts of God,* there are as many distinct gifts as there are members in the body. And as the relationship of *nearest of kin* could not exist in *reality* before the life union existed, the consequence must be that when the Lord Jesus died for his members on the cross, we, who now live upon the earth, were not really, truly and absolutely so united with and related to him, as to allow us any part or lot in the atonement.

Much confusion prevails where brethren confound this *vital union* with our individual experience of it when brought into it. The union, spiritually, was as perfect before we were brought experimentally into the enjoyment of it, as it is now, or ever will be. But in our earthly, carnal, sinful nature we had no union with Christ, but were children of wrath even as others; nay, we were dead in sins and enmity against God, and enemies to him by wicked works. But although the holy law of God cursed us in the earthly Adam; yet for the great love wherewith he loved us in Christ Jesus, even when we were in ourselves, that is in our earthly nature, dead in sins, he hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us together and made us sit together in the heavenly places in him; and thus by grace are we saved through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which

God hath before ordained that we should walk therein.

We all know that our earthly nature is estranged from God; and in it we are strangers and foreigners, requiring to be redeemed from the earth, called by grace, quickened by the spirit and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. This gift of God, which is eternal life, was not given us in the earthly Adam, neither was our earthly carnal and corrupt nature given to us in Christ. The first Adam is of the earth, earthy, and as is the earthy, such also are they that are earthy. But it was given us in the Son of God, who is the Lord from heaven; as is the heavenly, such also are they that are heavenly. Our natural birth developes us in the one life in which we were created in the earthly Adam, and a spiritual, new and heavenly birth developes or makes manifest in us, experimentally that one life which was hid in God, and which is now made manifest by the appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.

In conclusion, we do not regard either the words *actual* or *virtual* as necessary, or they would have been supplied in the divine volume. But when men deny the reality of this eternal, vital union or oneness of life and say it is only *virtual*, or that it is not so in fact or in truth, we are compelled to resist them, and contend that is an eternal reality.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, March 1, 1860)

OBITUARIES

DESSIE MAE LAMBERT

As we continue to advance in life, there are few things more keenly felt than the departure, one by one, of dear and esteemed brethren; and at each departure is a loud, personal, and repeated warning to us that we too shall soon be numbered with them, although this does not remove our grief that in this world we shall see their face and hear their voice no more.

On November 4, 1911 it pleased God to send this precious one into the home of Leander and Emmaline Williams. She was married to Elder E. J. Lambert November 17, 1934. Sister Lambert asked for a home with the Primitive Baptist Church of Cedar Hill near Amity, Arkansas, received and was baptized by Elder Lambert in 1935. After moving to Winnsboro in 1949, she asked that her membership be moved to Good Hope Church near Winnsboro where she remained as active member until her death.

Sister Lambert departed this life on January 4, 1973 in her home at 306 Richardson Street, Winnsboro, Texas. She leaves to mourn her death, her husband Elder Lambert of Winnsboro; one son, Charles Lambert of Hot Springs, Arkansas; one sister, Florence Boggs of Camden, Arkansas; several nieces and nephews along with a host of friends.

Her sudden death came as a shock to her beloved husband and many friends, but not so to her all wise God for He knew before the foundation of the world the exact moment he would call her from the walks of this life.

Sister Lambert was a true and most faithful companion to her husband for over 38 years and was so much a part of the cause for which he has been called. Very few people realize the added sacrifices that God called ministers' wives have to endure. They find it necessary in most cases to travel many miles, to be away from home on most week ends. The ups and downs that are prevalent in the lives of a minister are also prevalent in theirs. But oh, how faithful they are in understanding that the life of a minister is not his own but belongs to the dear people of God. Sister Lambert fully realized this, and the welfare of her husband was her constant concern. She was a true servant of the church and had a fervent love for the brethren often entertaining great numbers in their home.

Our great loss is her eternal gain for God in his word sets a special value on the death of the righteous. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of the saints." "The memory of the just is blessed." They are as a sweet odor ascending to heaven. They are removed in kindest affection. They are described as "not dead but sleeping." They are also classed by the blessed Spirit as "the dead in Christ." John in his vision saw the saints, "dead in Christ." clad in white raiment with palms in their hands, and crowns of glory on their heads.

Sister Lambert's remains were laid to rest at Good Hope Cemetery six miles east of Winnsboro to await the appointment of God when "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Her funeral was conducted by the writer, along with Elders John Lee Smith, W. W. Taylor, C. M. Haygood, Lloyd Wall, and C.

M. Morris.

Joe L. Hamrick

Be it resolved, at Good Hope Church on Sunday March 25th, that the obituary of Sister Dessie Mae Lambert be written by Elder Joe L. Hamrick. That a copy be sent to the family, a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and a copy recorded in our church book.

Elder Lambert, Moderator
Sister Gertrude Jones, Clerk

DEACON CLAUDE TIPP HALL

The subject of this sketch, Deacon Claude Tipp Hall, of Person County, N. C. was born May 13, 1890, and departed this life October 1, 1972. He was the son of Joseph H. and Ninnie Jones Hall, and grandson of Elder Andrew N. Hall.

He was united in marriage to Miss Addie Jones October 14, 1915. He is survived by his widow and five children: Madeline Eaker, Huldah Berryhill, Nancy Hall, and John L. and C. T. Hall, Jr.

Brother Hall was received into Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church, Person County, N. C. in July, 1910; and was ordained Deacon in July, 1918. He served as Assistant Clerk of the Lower Country Line Association from 1919 to 1929.

He operated a very large farm, and filled a number of responsible positions with the Federal Government in relation to agriculture.

It was my privilege to have a close acquaintance with dear Brother Hall, whom I loved very much. He was of a gentle disposition, yet firm in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. To him the doctrine of Absolute Predestination of all things was as much a part of the doctrine of Election as any other cardinal priniciple of doctrine. Yet he manifested a charitable attitude toward those who did not see as he did.

The family, church and community have suffered a great loss, but our brother has left evidence that he died in the triumph of a living faith; and our loss is his eternal gain.

The writer walked sweetly in the gospel with our dear brother over forty years, and was privileged to baptize all his living brothers and his son, C. T., Jr., while supplying at Shiloh Church. Little did I think when we parted on the fourth Sunday in September, that I would see him no more here below.

May the lovely spirit manifested in our brother abide with his family, and may God bless his dear widow and family with reconciliation to His Holy will. His funeral was conducted by Elder C. B. Davis, Jr., and the writer. Interment was in the Shiloh Church Cemetery.

D. V. Spangler

BROTHER MERILL SHOCKLEY

Brother Shockley was born December 27, 1875 and departed this life January 24, 1973.

Born to John H. Shockley and Sarah Elizabeth Dickerson Shockley, he married Sarah Lizzie Fooks. To this union nine children were born, two having passed away and seven survive. Two sisters also survive, as well as many grandchildren.

Brother Shockley was baptized October 26, 1924, by Elder J. C. Mellott, and united with the membership of Nassaongo Church the same day, and remained a faithful and loving member until his death. Some time afterwards he was appointed a deacon and filled that capacity well.

About two years ago he become ill because of age and other infirmities, and went to stay with a daughter and later transferred to the Frederick Memorial Hospital where he passed away.

The funeral service was held at the Holloway Funeral Home in Salisbury, Md., by his present pastor, Elder James F. Poole. Burial was at Wicomico Memorial Park Cemetery.

His presence will be missed among the churches. He was loved and greatly respected. We bow to the wise act of our Holy God, who gave him life and then called him home.

Written by Sister Mollie Fooks at the request of the family and by direction of the church.

Elder James F. Poole

BROTHER WILLIAM L. CASEY

Brother Will Casey was born near Pyatt, Arkansas, on September 21, 1893. He died October 23, 1972 in Crescent Convalescent Home in Yakima, Wash. at the age of 79. He and Ader Price were married in 1913. They moved to Yakima County with their family in 1936. He owned and operated a fruit ranch on Summitview Extension and Cowiche until he retired in 1958.

Brother Casey was shown the truth in Christ at an early age and when he learned where the Primitive Baptists were meeting, he and Sister Casey came and asked for a home in Pleasant Grove Church. They were baptized by Elder Ernest Attebury in July, 1964. Brother Casey was strong in his belief in salvation by Grace and never missed a meeting when he was able to attend church.

Survivors, besides his wife, are two sons, Ulis of Cowiche, Wash., and Ewell of Tieton, Wash.; four daughters, Mrs. Ruth Smith of Spokane, Mrs. Retha Bogle of Yakima, Mrs. Joy Witherell of Tieton and Mrs. Dorothy Jo Iverson of Seattle, and four sisters, also 15 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren.

We of the Pleasant Grove Church miss

Brother Casey, but grieve not as those who have no hope.

Daisy A. Baker

JAMES P. SCEARCE

By request I will try to write an obituary of James P. Scearce. He was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, November 24, 1888. At the time of his death May 28, 1972, he was past eighty-three years old.

He was the son of Thomas and Betty Green Scearce, and lived in the Mount Cross Community for twenty-five years. He was never married.

He joined the Mount Ararat Primitive Baptist Church August 18, 1968, and faithfully filled his place in the church until his death. Written by

S. A. Clark

BERTHA BRINSON WHALEY

Sister Whaley, age 79, departed this life September 6, 1972.

She united with Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church in Duplin County, N. C. June 8, 1958. She was faithful to attend her church and meetings almost until the end. She manifested an humble hope in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We feel in our hearts that our loss is her eternal gain.

Surviving are two daughters: Thelma Southerland and Martha Dixon; also one grandson. They were very faithful in taking their mother to church as long as she lived.

Her funeral was conducted at Sand Hill Church by her pastor, Elder Curtiss Rains and Elder D. B. Stokes, and she was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

Done by order of conference Saturday before the second Sunday in December, 1972.

Elder Curtiss Rains, Mod.
Brother Brantley Kennedy, Clerk

RUBELL TRIPP PILGREEN

Sadly we write of the death of our beloved sister, Rubell Tripp Pilgreen, who departed this life May 16, 1972, at the age of sixty-five. She was the daughter of Luther and Lucreta Stokes Tripp, and was the widow of Zeb Pilgreen. Her funeral was conducted by Elder Joseph L. Sawyer and Elder A. P. Mewborn at Wilkersons' Funeral Chapel, Greenville, N. C., and she was laid to rest at Winterville, N. C.

She is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Sadie Lou Braxton of the home; a son, W. L. Pilgreen of near Greenville; two sisters, Mrs. Jack Tripp, Fountain, N. C. and Mrs. Willie Gray, Greenville, N. C.; one brother, Horace Tripp, Greenville; and by seven grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

Sister Rubell was a gracious woman, gentle, kind and compassionate. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and united with Hancocks Primitive Baptist Church in March, 1928, and was a faithful member until her death. She had been in failing health for many years, but was always at her church meetings unless providentially hindered. She loved her church and loved to mingle with her brethren. It gave her great pleasure to be in their midst and to hear the gospel proclaimed. Her faith was evidenced by her walk in life.

The church has suffered a great loss, but feel that our loss has been her eternal gain. We extend heartfelt sympathy to her family.

Done by order of conference in regular session February 17, 1973.

Elder Kenneth Windham, Mod.
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

LONNIE J. STOCKS

It is with a sad heart that we write of the passing of our esteemed brother, Lonnie J. Stocks, who was born June 7, 1891 in Ayden Township, Pitt County, N. C. He departed this life June 17, 1972, at the age of eighty-one years. He was the son of Benjamin and Josephene Simmons Stocks. He was married to Rosa Harrell September 17, 1924, who survives. In addition to his wife he is survived by two sons, Elbert Lee Stocks, Tarboro, N. C., and Benjamin Harrell Stocks, of the home; and four grandchildren.

Funeral services were held June 19, 1972 at Farmer's Funeral Chapel in Ayden by Elder A. P. Mewborn and Elder Joseph L. Sawyer, and he was laid to rest in the Ayden Cemetery.

Brother Stocks was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and by a confession of faith united with Hancocks Church several years ago. He was ordained a deacon in May, 1941. He was a faithful member and deacon who loved his church, and attended regularly as long as health would permit. Brother Lonnie was a man of quiet dignity, a man of honor and integrity: one whose walk in life was worthy of emulation. The members of Hancocks Primitive Baptist Church feel a great loss, and extend their heart felt sympathy to the family.

Done by order of Conference in regular session February 17, 1972. Written by A. F. Rowe and Nina B. McLawhorn.

Elder Kenneth Windham, Mod.
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141 **DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1973** **NO. 7**

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/73
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

4 Maple Lane,
Pennington, N. J. 08534

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

It was such a joy to see you once again at the Primitive Baptist Home Trustee meeting, and reminded I had not written anything just lately for the *Signs*.

Most of my beautiful spiritual experiences have come to me while among the herbs and flowers, so I will relate one by comparison with the Coriander plant and it's seed.

The manna of Old Testament times fell at night in the wilderness journey and was found under the dew in the morning as the sun rose. It was white and round like a Coriander seed. Moses compared the manna to its seed. Much spiritual meaning is alive in this little round white seed, for white is suggestive of spiritual purity, and its roundness gives evidence that eternal life has no ending. But something more comes to me with much sweetness; the fresh seed and foliage of the plant is unpleasant to smell, but, strange as it may seem, the ripe seed is fragrant and becoming even more fragrant with age. How liken are my days to that of the Coriander seed, when through seasons of unpleasant experiences I have come little by little, precept upon precept, to glimpse the spiritual fruits of life. And it is not until now have I became aware all the unpleasantness has passed away, and a wondrous fragrance is in its stead, growing ever sweeter as I experience or perceive it all about me. I quote: "When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee." (Proverbs 2:10-11) So I have been blessed in faith by the gospel word, and strengthened from time to time with needed understanding to where I can say I have been made to rejoice in these fruitful seasons.

Love—Sister Mary L. Hellings

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 1, Box 297
Purlear, N. C. 28665

Dear Editors:

The Lord willing I will try to write something of my experience. I am in my 88th year and cannot remember much about spelling or writing. I have feared the Lord as far back as I can remember. I dreamed one night of singing, "Oh the Glory Gates are ever open wide to welcome me home." When I came to myself I was yet singing, and it was a wonderful day. Everything seemed to be praising God. The leaves on the trees — everything was praising Him. But doubts and fears came soon afterwards.

Elder Isaac Jones came to the church where my parents and I attended, and he preached so wonderfully that I wanted to praise God from whom all blessings flow. When I got home from church I opened my Bible and as I was reading a power came down on me and shook me, and a still, small voice said,

Fear not little one, this is thine and all will be well with thee in the end.

My husband did not see as I did. I wanted to join the church and be baptizd. I dreamed I was baptized and I could hear the water sloshing. Then I dreamed I was sitting in a little room all alone, and I looked at myself and had on a beautiful robe of many colors. A small, still voice said he is carnal and you are a subject of grace.

One summer it was dry and the crops failed. I was praying if it could be the Lord's will to make a way for us to live. I dreamed a little soldier dressed in uniform stood by our cook stove, and then went to our mail box, stooped over it and made the sweetest music I ever heard. Then he went out through the house, and was gone. From that day on the meal box wasn't empty. My son Dean came home from school with the flu and had a high fever. It was so high he felt he could not live. He was praying, and so was I. I saw a vision of a banner up in the air above our house, and it was made known to me that it was a banner of love and mercy to overshadow Dean and me. When I came to myself I laid my hand on his face and the fever was gone.

. . . A preacher by the name of Carter came to our home church and preached so wonderfully. I couldn't stay away any longer and I was telling them a little of my experience and was baptized the next day. I left something there I haven't had since. I was traveling in His love and mercy over a month, and not a wave came over my peaceful breast. But in this sinful flesh we can't have that sweet Spirit all the time, and I have had my troubles, sorrows, and fears. My husband professed a hope in Christ, but never joined the church. He went to the meetings with me.

A sister in Christ I hope,
Mrs. Charles (Lessie) Craven

"THE OLD MAN AND THE NEW MAN"

And now, as I take my pen to write upon the subject embraced in your question, I only wish to kindly and candidly express my views, with some of the reasons for them, and I trust what I may say will hurt the feelings of no brother or sister, even if they feel compelled to differ with me.

First, you ask me what I understand by the terms "old man" and "new man." These terms occur but twice in the New Testament. In both cases they are the language of Paul. In Ephesians 4:22-24 he says, "That ye put off concerning the former conversation, the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lust, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," Here he says to his brethren at Ephesus, that the teaching of Christ is that they should put off the one and put on the other. In Colossians 3:9, 10, he says, "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the "old man" with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him." Here he declares that his brethren have already put off the one and put on the other, and upon this fact bases some admonition to the conduct of his brethren.

First, I desire to call attention to this one consideration, viz; that the "new man" is not addressed and told to put off the "old man", neither is the "old man" addressed and told to put on the "new man". But Paul is addressing his brethren, saints at Ephesus and at Colosse, just as I am now addressing you, Brother Tompson, and the readers of the Monitor. And he says to the believing men and women that they should do this, or have done this, viz.; have put off the "old man" and have put on the new. Here, if I may so speak, are three men intended of two. But indeed the expression, "old man" and "new man" are simply figurative expressions, for the two opposing principles which every believer finds dwelling in his own heart and mind, waging ceaseless warfare

there. We are not to suppose for a moment that the apostle means that we are to understand by these terms two full developed men, with soul, body and spirit in each, and both dwelling in us, you and I, who constitute a third distinct man or women.

It seems to me that anyone who has the slightest acquaintance with the use of figures of speech would see at a glance that the apostle had no such meaning as this. Neither does he mean by the "old man" the body nor by "new man" the soul. When told to put off the "old man" he does not mean that we shall commit suicide. In Romans 7:23, we read, by the pen of this same apostle, "But I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members." Here we have Paul speaking of the two men, but under the terms, "Law of my members" and "law of my mind." Notice again, here is Paul the speaker, and in Paul are the two laws, or the "old man" and the "new man". The figure of speech has changed, but the idea presented is the same. In Galatians 5:17, Paul says, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Here he calls the "old man" the flesh and the "new man" the Spirit. And here again, notice that he says these are contrary the one to the other, so that "ye" believers cannot do the things ye would.

All the way along he addresses men and women, and tells them that in them are two opposing and enduring forces, the one of which they are to put off, and the other to put on. Sometimes this "new man" is called "the hidden man of the heart." But by whatever name they are called, Paul always means the same thing. On the one side he means that tendency to evil which grace makes manifest in every child of God; and on the other he means that disposition to serve God, which grace implants in every heaven born soul (child). The one he calls "the flesh" the other "the Spirit," The one, "the law of the members," the other "the law of the mind." The one is the "old man" the other the "new man." The disposition to evil he is told to put off, the tendency to serve God, he is told to put on. The putting off and the putting on of both have respect to the outward life, the daily conduct. It is as though Paul, or you, or I, or anyone should say to the children of God, you have two natures within you; one is the old nature, prone to sin, the other is a new nature, which you received in the new birth, and it hates sin, and cleaves to that which is right. Now, brethren, do not act out the old nature, but act the new. Fight against evil, and strive that your life may be clothed with obedience. Put off the filthy rags in which you have been clothed (in nature) and put on the spotless fruit of the Spirit. Put off malice, anger, wrath, blasphemy, filthy speech, etc., and put on love, joy, peace, meekness, gentleness, obedience, etc. The former belongs to the "old man", the latter to the "new man".

I do not think any christian (child of grace) need go outside of his own daily life to find what all these things mean. And every narration of christian (child of grace) experience tells the simple truth about all these things. No one ever heard a child of God say, "my old man," or my "new man," felt, said, or did so and so. But always I felt, saw, heard, or acted so and so. We all say when we are telling the simple story of our experience, I saw myself a great sinner; I could do nothing to save myself, I grew worse and worse, and at last Jesus was revealed to me as my Saviour." We never say, "my old man," or "my new man," felt all these things, but I myself. When in Romans 7: Paul says, "I sin", straightway he says, "Yet not I, but sin that dwelleth in me." It is I, and yet not I, and yet it is I all the time. And so, on the other hand, when Paul says, "I labored more abundantly than they all." Immediately he corrects himself and says, "Yet not

I, but the grace of God which was with me." His language appeals to all our feelings on both sides. I do not know that a volume would make it all any plainer. I labor, but yet I must be humble, for it is not I that labor, it is the grace of God. How humbling this is! In one place Paul speaks of the Spirit crying, "Abba, Father." In another place he speaks of the Spirit by which we cry, "Abba, Father." Now, both are most blessedly true. The Spirit cries Abba, Father, but it is, after all Our cry. We are not left out.

I have introduced these texts for the purpose of showing the terms, "old man" or "new man" do not shut out the believer, but that in every child of God is found the warfare caused by these two men, or laws, or principles. It matters not by what name they are called; I do not understand that the "old man" is the "Adamic man", but a law or principal in the Adamic man. And the "new man" is also a law or principle in the same Adamic man. The old man is not redeemed, and neither is the new, but the Adamic man is redeemed from the dominion of the "old man" and to the dominion of the "new man." The old man is not born again, and neither is the new man. But the Adamic man is born again. And the new birth is when this new man comes in and abides, to go out no more forever. The old man is sin and death, the new man is life and righteousness. *From* the one we are redeemed, and *to* the other we are redeemed. Neither the old or the new man are redeemed, (but the Adam sinner is). The one needs it not and the other is that from which we are redeemed. The new man is entirely a new man, and his origin is of God. He is a new man so far as we are concerned, but he is older than the hills. This new man is the law of truth and holiness, and they are eternal. But we receive this in our hearts when born from above, and so it is new to us. With us that which is natural is first, and then that which is spiritual. But in reality the spiritual world is first, only we do not see or enter it until we are born again, or born from above. No greater mistake was ever made than when the two terms, "old man" or "new man" were supposed to present two literal whole men in a literal sense. Out of this grew all that absured theory, but I have never got a clear conception of the theory in my head, and my heart rejects it at once.

Again you ask "Who is the new creature?" "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature," etc. "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." What you have written about in your letter seems to me more satisfactory than anything that I can write. I certainly think the subject of the new creature, is the "new creature." Of the "new creature" Paul says, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." The Apostle says here WE are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, etc. If therefore, we are created in Christ, WE must certainly be "new creatures" in Christ. I did not know that it was claimed that any other being than a renewed, quickened sinner was called the "new creature." There is a text in the eighth chapter of Romans which seems to me to bear upon the same matter. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." Mark, it is in US. Now, he goes right on to talk about the name— "creature," Saying, "For the earnest expectation of the creature" (the same new creature, the man in Christ Jesus) "waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God," and so in the verses that follow all along in these verses in Romans, 8th. Chapter. The new creature is indeed meant; but it is the "new creature" which we ourselves become as the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. We are never called new creatures, except as we possess the Spirit of Christ, and the Spirit of Jesus is not

called a new creature, except as it is one of the sinners, where it dwells. Indeed, the term "creature" could not belong to an eternal Spirit or being of any sort. But it may well belong to us who have begun to be.

Naturally and spiritually the sense in which the man in Christ is a new creature is seen as we glance further on in the text: "Old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." A wondrous change has taken place with him, He is not the same (mannered) man he was before in many ways. And to be born again and renewed in the spirit of his mind is all that will avail him. Circumcision or keeping the law availeth nothing. Rejecting circumstances avail nothing either. To become a new creature is the essential thing; and to be a new creature is the result of the work of God in us. All is done for the sinner, all is done in the sinner. There is no "new creature" but the saved sinner. What a wonderful contrast between the "old creature" and the "new creature."

(The foregoing article was written by Elder F. A. Chick, and was published in the Primitive Monitor, February 15, 1890. Copied by Elder John L. Sanders.)

TRYING THE SPIRITS

P. O. Box 551
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Little Children and Brethren:

In Christ Jesus our Lord, not by the works of the flesh, or by the will of man, but by the loving kindness, mercy and grace of the almighty, all wise and ever loving God; yet whose word is sharper than a two-edged sword: who is Lord of Lords and King of Kings. To Him be all honor, praise and glory throughout all ages.

I have received letters from some of God's humble poor, requesting that I write my views on the subject of "Trying the spirits to see whether they be of God."

It is not possible that this poor, weak sinner of himself, is able to write words of comfort to the dear, precious ones, or myself. Thus you may know that I am wholly and completely dependent upon the Lord Jesus Christ for all my needs. Without Him I am nothing, even less than nothing. If I am blessed that I write a few words of mutual comfort both to you and me, then all the praise, honor and glory belongs to Him from whence the blessing comes.

Let us begin with 1 John 4:1-3, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit the confesseth that Jesus Christ if come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of anti-christ, whereof you have heard that it should come; and even now is already in the world."

Who has the right? and how will we try the spirits? That right belongs to every little child of God who has been drawn out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light by the grace of Almighty God, through His only begotten Son Jesus; and given understanding by Him to separate truth from error. The Apostle declared that the true believer in Christ has a two-fold seal: 1. That we, if so be that I am one, are of the truth; and 2. That God abideth in us. But it is not to be supposed that all this would remain unimpugned from without, however clearly it might be to the Spirit within. At the same time we are not easily moved from the foundation of truth wherein we stand.

But if any attempt is made to persuade us from the faith, we are to apply a very searching test. I dare say that since the human race began, there have been two separate classes of men: Those who are taught of the Spirit of Christ; and those who remain in the spirit of error. Even at the time the

Apostle John wrote this letter, many false prophets had gone out into the world and were teaching false doctrines: which were not acceptable by those whom God chose in Christ Jesus before the world began. And know ye this, little children, that anti-christs are increasing in great numbers day by day, and would deceive the very elect if it were possible.

It is a great blessing that the Apostle John took the occasion from this fact, to administer a caution to the true believers not to give ready acceptance to any doctrine without submitting it to a test, both exclusive and inclusive, which would serve the churches for all time. The Lord Jesus Christ himself repelled objectors by statements of infinite dignity and power. One assertion He made and maintained, was that He was the Son of God and the King of men. And this was a charge on which He was crucified. For the first part of the assertion He was condemned by the Sanhedrin, as if he were against Moses. For the second, He was charged by the Roman power as if He were the rival of Caesar.

But on six or no fewer lines did He suggest on which the proof of His teaching might be tried: 1. His character, John 8:46; 2. His work, John 14:-10-11; 3. Prophecy, Luke 24:37; 4. Testimony, John 8:17-18; 5. His Resurrection, John 2:19; 6. The promise of the Holy Ghost, Acts 1:4.

Let us take note that the scriptures are of no private interpretation: neither can I single out two or three verses or phrases of the Scriptures, and expect to get a full understanding of them within themselves. The scriptures interpret themselves by one passage bearing witness of others, or proof of others. All the holy scriptures are by the inspiration of God the Father, for the purpose of showing forth His decree, will, and power. And no man may at any time have the right to question God on any point; for God is all and in all, according to his will, grace and mercy. Herein has the true believer power to try the spirits whether they be of God. We are admonished to try the spirits and also the test to apply to them through all time.

A study of the scriptures will disclose teachings of great vividness and power concerning the false prophets: the point of their beginning, the mission for which they are sent, and the extent of their power. The Apostle views their action as part of anti-christ which has been foretold, and which had already made appearance in the world, and which would be fought against and overcome.

We remember the warning God gave to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, concerning the fruits they should and should not eat. He told them that they could eat of all the fruits of the garden except the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; and if they ate of that fruit they would surely die. But there was that old serpent, a true anti-christ by action, who persuaded Eve that she would not surely die, as God had told them. We could point out other illustrations, such as: Christ and the tempter; the tempter and the individual; Christ and the world; Error and Truth, and others. The Apostle shows us that it is the business of antichrist to deny the truth. We have a record from the Prophets and Apostles concerning great lies that have been told, such as: Jesus is not the Son of God; and the serpent to Eve, "thou shalt not surely die." A lie is an untruth, and cannot have fellowship with truth, no matter who tells it, or for what reason it is told.

It is an unspeakable mercy that the indwelling Spirit of Christ in us, by virtue of His unction, light, and might, has an inward and effective guard against the heresies of all ages, and the surest prevention against the snares of infidelity and seductions of false philosophies and doctrines. May we be confirmed in the truth by the pure and holy Spirit.

May God bless the truth and pardon errors. If possible pray for this poor,

weak and unworthy lump of clay, that he may be kept by the grace and mercy of Almighty God, in the way of truth as it is in His precious Son, our Lord and Saviour.

Yours in sweet hope,
David B. Lawson

EXPERIENCE OF SISTER MARGUERITE RETA CAMPBELL

October 19, 1970

I always enjoyed going to church. All of the other little girls in school talked about Sunday School and said their prayers. I told Mother about this and said I think I will say a prayer just for fun. She said, "Oh, you must mean what you say." and I have been saying them ever since, but not for fun.

When I was in high school in Strathroy my Mother had to go to the hospital with heart trouble. When I went to see her I would do nothing but cry. Mother was in the hospital for six weeks, then came home and seemed to improve so I thought, but again went to bed at home for the winter. The next spring she was sitting up in bed when she keeled over. I felt as if the earth had gone from under my feet.

My older brother said, "Well she is gone now and we can't do anything about it but we must think of our own lives now." I have often thought of that since. It seemed to weigh on my mind as we, my sister Florence and I, were inexperienced in keeping house for my Father, all my brothers and one sister.

Time went on and one night I had a dream. I thought my Mother was away up on high with three gold strings twined around and my older brother and older sister and I had a hold of them. A few years later I dreamt I saw many angels of so many colors flying above me. It was a beautiful sight.

When my father would bring the minister home over night I would be afraid I would miss hearing them talk of their experience, and then we would kneel down at our chairs while the minister prayed. Afterwards I would think I will lead a better life but it would only last a week or so.

A few years later I was working at a place and I couldn't sleep, so naturally I wasn't able to do my duty. The words came to me, "When through the deep waters I call thee to go the rivers of woe shall not thee overthrow for I will be with thee thy troubles to bless and sanctify to thee thy deepest distress."

In 1924, I married my late husband Wesley and we were so happy together. I would go with him to his church and he to mine.

One and one-half years later our first child, a boy, was born. We thought he was so lovely but in four days he started hemorrhaging in so many places. I learned later that the specialist who examined him told our own doctor he would never live. At this time the words came, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away."

Our boy seemed to have so many troubles until he was seven. When he was four and one-half years old he had his appendix out. While waiting for two hours instead of one while he was in the operating room I was praying that he would be better when words came, "Thy faith hath made thee whole." I looked and looked for that in the Bible but couldn't find it. He is a kind son now helping me do the little business I have, not saying that my two daughters and other son are not kind to me. They are just as kind.

Wesley and I, along with the children, enjoyed going to the meetings. One year at Dunwich, Elder Westbrook spoke on, "Come unto me all ye heavy laden and I will give you rest." I thought it wonderful. He was to be in London the following Tuesday evening. We went to hear him but I got nothing from his sermon. I much admired him as a man and speaker in the pulpit and in our home. I would often think about staying in church but didn't and was sorry afterward.

In November of 1941 as I was going

to the hospital for a minor operation, this rang in my ears, "Let not your heart be troubled neither yet it be afraid." After the operation I took pleurisy and pneumonia at which time I thought I will ask to join the church, but I recovered and when the time came I would go out as before.

Time went on and I was busy with our family eager for them to get educations. On October 8, 1956 I took a stroke. While in the hospital the fourteenth chapter of John seemed in my mind so often, especially "that where I am ye may be also." It is a wonderful chapter all through.

One morning as we were dressing I said, this is running through my head, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Wes, whose heart was failing, had to go to the hospital a number of times for oxygen. I would pray that he would be good enough to come home but the last time he was taken by ambulance it seemed to come to me that it would be the last time he would go through that door. The following week I prayed that he would return but couldn't help finishing off with "But thy will be done." He seemed better during the days that followed. We saw him different nights and Mildred, living in London, saw him every day but one week later, he passed away (October 1959). At the funeral Elder Ruston spoke along the above theme. I missed him a great deal but was pleased to have my family and the new baby (granddaughter) that arrived two weeks later.

Then one morning perhaps a year later this scripture came to me, "A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench till he sends forth judgment unto victory." St. Matthew 12:20.

Back in 1956 when I had the stroke, I had time to think of my many wrongdoings but the fourteenth chapter of John, which is lovely throughout, seemed to be on my mind. While in hospital, Elder and Mrs. Ruston came to visit me and sang, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear," and it was so lovely to me. The minister often mentioned coming into the church but I just couldn't tell him the way I felt; and besides, I felt it wasn't the time.

I missed putting this in before but in 1958, I asked Wes, "Did he think of joining the church?" He said, "No, there is nothing in me." I thought I must be imagining things if there wasn't anything in him there must be nothing in me. At the quarterly meeting I had the minister and some ladies home. On Monday, I listened to every word, and at dismissal I started out but felt I must stay in. I told my experience and they took me in.

As my eldest son, Donald, was being married the first Saturday in October, the first Sunday in November suited me for the baptism. Of course I worried the whole two months. The Saturday night before baptism, Sister Flossie Hodgins came out with words of comfort for me. I felt as if I could never sleep for thinking about the next day and was reading the Bible when I came to, "Get thee behind me Satan for thou art an offense to me." I shut the Book and had a good night's sleep.

In the morning while combing my hair the 103rd Psalm ran through my mind. "Bless the Lord O my soul and forget not all his benefits." It seemed quite calm, going to church, and the minister quoted that in his sermon. I seemed quite at ease and satisfied that I did the right thing for a few months but have since wondered if I was a fit subject for the church or if I deceived them; and always felt so unworthy to be there.

I had often talked to Sister Rogers in London by phone and she said when you can't sleep, sing a hymn. I started "How firm a foundation," and when I came to the 3rd verse which runs, "What more can I say than to you I have said," I was impressed and thought

of the many times I had sung that before without being impressed. My father always asked us to sing that when we were at home around the piano on a Sunday evening. I went right to sleep afterwards.

I must have been on a mountain then, for now in the last year or so I feel down in the valley, as if the Lord has forgotten me. In the spring I took a cold in my head and cannot hear the minister but still I go hoping to hear. I take dizzy spells and am afraid of falling but really hope my mind stays clear and I be able to wait on myself as long as possible. My daughter-in-law, Lorna, brings in a good dinner every noon for which I am thankful.

If I live for a few years, I may add to this.

The Lord said, "You have not chosen me but I have chosen you," has always been sweet to me. The words of this verse express my feelings much of the time:

"Tis a point I long to know
(Often it causes anxious thought),
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

Mrs. Reta Campbell

(See obituary this issue)

ROMANS 4:2-4

"For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." (Romans 4:2-4)

"Abraham believed God." He had the witness within, because one cannot believe without a witness. Abraham was blessed with the faith to believe God. "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (Heb. 11:8-10) Please keep in mind that Abraham was blessed with the faith within his heart.

"It was counted unto him for righteousness." If you will run the reference, you will see it says: "It was accounted unto him for righteousness," and "it was imputed unto him for righteousness." (James 2:23, Gal. 3:6) The righteousness of God was imputed to Abraham or put on his account. In connection with this, let us consider these words of Paul: "If he hath wronged thee, or owed thee ought, put that on mine account." (Philemon 18) Notice that Paul requested Philemon to charge him for any of Onesimus's debts. Please keep in mind that the sins of God's people were charged to Jesus. Divine Justice was looking to Jesus to answer for the sins of his bride. "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. 5:21)

Jesus has washed away the sins of his people and he clothes them with the garments of salvation. I think of this as the debt paid in double. (see Isaiah 40:1 and also Ezekiel 36:25-29)

Jesus puts or places his righteousness on his people. "I will greatly rejoice the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decked himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." (Isaiah 61:10) The blood of Jesus has washed away all the sins of his sheep.

"Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." Paul was a Pharisee and the son of a Pharisee and he was familiar with all the details of the law.

The law was conditional, and there were just natural blessings promised under it. Please keep in mind there was

not any eternal life promised under the law. To sum up what was promised under the law, briefly it is this: "If you will obey my laws and keep my statutes, then I will bless your land. Your crops will flourish, your flocks will increase . . . But if you disobey, I will curse your land." (see Deut. 28:1-22) Old sayings we hear today were gotten from the curses of this law. If the rain comes in an area, one person may not get any rain on his land, while his neighbors have gotten plenty of rain. Someone might say, "You must not be living right, or otherwise you would have gotten some rain."

If one works for his reward, he earns it, and it rightfully belongs to him. The other person is indebted to pay him for the contract of his labors. We trust we can see the setting. If salvation was conditional, then man would have a just cause or reason to brag and "pat himself on the back" for earning this salvation. We trust we can see satan at work in attempting to rob God of the praise that belongs unto him. If Salvation was conditional, then creature praise would be heard in heaven, and the name of God would not be glorified. Who is it that will gladly drink up the works doctrine? The person who feels that he is capable of helping the Lord, the person who feels himself able to perform good works, able to meet certain conditions in order to make his salvation certain, and is the person who naturally desires credit for his works in performing the conditions. The strong man will eat up that doctrine of the works system, because it builds up his ego. It makes him feel good to help the Lord, and it makes him feel good to receive credit for all his works. This man naturally desires to glory in himself. This reminds me of a parable that Jesus spoke: "And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess." (Luke 18:9-12) Actually this Pharisee was boasting, and glorying in the things that he had done. He was certainly trusting in himself that he was righteous. His prayer was similar to the world as it is today. Let us examine this matter a little further. Do you see any evidence that the Pharisee praised God? Do you see evidence that the Pharisee praised himself? Did he feel the need for mercy?

Is it true that the works system gives the glory to man? The strong man will drink this up. But, what about the poor one who finds that he is not capable of performing the conditions? The poor broken hearted sinner will not find any food from the doctrine of the works system. He will go to meeting hungry and come back hungry. Dear reader, do you have any confidence in a God who is pleading for men to let him save them? Do you desire a God who is able to meet your case? Do you find that you do not have the ability to perform any conditions at all? Do you find that you are not able to help the Lord, and that you desire a God who is able to save you to the uttermost? You do not have confidence in a God who is pleading with man to just take the first step, but you want one to come down to you and meet your case. "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms . . ." (Deut. 33:27)

What causes one to feel his depraved condition? Why did he feel his inability? Why is he sick of sin? Why does he desire a closer walk with God? What caused the change in him? "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the

flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." (Eph. 2:1-3) You find a new principle within you, which is an heavenly principle, and the change is in the heart. "They think it strange that you run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you." (1 Peter 4:4)

Dear reader, do you know anything about the condition of the poor man? Do you have fellowship with him? "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." (Zeph. 3:12) Please notice that these afflicted and poor people will not fail to trust in the name of the Lord. They shall trust him. What causes them to trust the Lord? We have to admit there must be something within one that causes him to trust in a higher power. Where did it come from? It certainly did not come from the nature of man. It is the indwelling spirit of God that causes one to trust in the name of the Lord.

The world by wisdom knew not God. The research and efforts of man cannot make the change in one. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." (Jer. 13:23) This shows that the nature of man is not to do good. I like to compare the nature of man similar to the nature of a hog. We may wash a pig, put a blue ribbon on him, etc.; but that will not change his nature. "—The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." (2 Peter 2:22)

It is God that makes the change in one. "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace. But when a stronger than he shall come upon him and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." (Luke 11:22) Briefly, we believe the strong man represents man by nature, and the stronger represents the Spirit of God that dwells within the Children of God.

Let us remember that salvation is of God. We read that salvation is of the Lord, therefore if one desires to break it down into time and eternal, he must not forget that salvation is of the Lord. If *time* salvation is conditional, then man would have the right to praise himself, because his works would have earned the blessings he receives in time. Therefore God would be indebted to man to pay him the blessings that he earned. Man's reward (blessings) would be by debt. Notice the text: "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." Following this line of reasoning, who would man praise for the blessings he receives? He would not praise God because God would be indebted to pay him the reward.

This line of reasoning or doctrine is not backed up by the Scriptures, and cannot stand up to the test. Where did this doctrine come from? What is the beginning and what is the purpose of it? The motive is to give man credit for works and to rob God of the praise that rightfully belongs to him. To sum it up, we can see the work of satan in attempting to rob God of the praise that belongs unto him. "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." (Isaiah 43:21) The children of God shall praise the name of God. God seeks his people to worship him and this people are the only ones who praise the name of the Lord. "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: *for the Father seeketh such to worship him.*" (John 4:23)

All of the blessings of God's people have been stored up in Jesus Christ before the world began. "Who hath blessed us with all Spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." (Eph. 1:3) It is not left up to man to earn these blessings by his works. Man does not have the ability to do anything to merit the favor of God. "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Romans 3:12) Man can do nothing by himself. The Lord directs the steps of the righteous. "The steps of a good man are

ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." (Psalms 37:23-24)

We believe that the "reward" (Rom. 4:4) represents salvation, and this takes care of eternal life as well as blessings here in time. This reward is by grace. "And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." (Rom. 11:6) This shows that grace and works are not mixed together.

Salvation is a free gift by God. "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 6:23) This is a gift that is bestowed upon you. It is yours because God has given it to you. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3)

"The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust, my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower." (Psalms 18:2) Notice that the writer used the expression: "my salvation." It is his salvation by ownership because God has given it to him. Please notice that this is in connection with the text because the reward is not by debt, but it is by grace. The reward or salvation is not earned by works, but it is a free gift by the grace of God.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
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HAS ALL POWER IN HEAVEN AND EARTH

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Dear Editors of the Signs:

I see that with the April issue my subscription expires, so am sending $10.00 for two years and the rest to the Indigent Fund.

May I say a few words, the Lord willing and directing my thoughts, on the 28th chapter of Matthew, 18th through the 20th verses. Jesus spake unto the disciples, "Saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all thing whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

You notice here that Jesus told them to baptize *them* (the elect, the chosen) and not the nations of all men, but the sheep. This meaning *them* is in St. John chapter 10, 24th through the 30 verses. The Jews wanted to know, saying, "How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly." Jesus answered, "I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believed not, because ye are not of my sheep (the chosen *them*) as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life . . ."

Then in St. John, 17th chapter, Jesus speaks to them: "As thou hast given him power over all flesh (all nations — go thee therefore and teach all nations) that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." Not to all nations of mankind, but to the elect — the sheep. John 10:11 Christ said, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." And He spoke of other sheep I have which are not of this fold: not of the Jews only but also of the Gentiles, *them* I must also bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd. Notice that He says, they shall. He did not say if you will, like Arminianism teaches. They teach it is God's will to have all men come to Christ and be saved — and He will save them if they will but come.

Jesus said, "I pray for *them;* I

pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me: and I am glorified in them. I have given them thy word, and the world hath hated them because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. In Revelation 5:9, we read, ". . . For thou was slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation . . ." "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them . . ." Not all nations of people. Paul writing to Titus said, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men (all nations), teaching us . . ." — the elect *them*. He gave himself for us, that He might redeem us, the sheep, from all iniquity; and purify unto himself a peculiar people. The *us* are the chosen people, they are *them*.

In Jeremiah 32:37-40 we read, "Behold I will gather them out of all countries whither I have driven them in my anger and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: and I will give them one heart, and one way . . . and I will make an everlasting covenant with them . . ."

Here at my small store and station, I have quite a few who challenge me on the elect or chosen, saying that God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. But who is it that believeth? Jesus told them. "This is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Paul wrote in Acts 13:48 . . . "and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." These are the only ones that will believe, and give God and the Saviour all glory and praise in heaven and earth. "He that believeth is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already." And Jesus said, "Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

With love to all the saints: grace be to you and peace from God Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ. May the Lord give us grace and strength to resist the enemy of the truth which come in sheep's clothing.

Elder C. L. Ely

THE MONTHS SEEM LONG

902 Maple Avenue,
Torrance, Calif. 90500

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is Money-order for $4.00 to renew my subscription to the *Signs* for another year.

All the good writings, especially the Editorials, mean so much to me. The months seem long waiting for the next issue. I read and re-read each one many times, and the old ones of years ago give me much comfort. I am in my eighty-eighth year and spend much of my time reading. I hope I am given a deeper understanding and can say my later years have been my best; which I have only God to thank for.

May God bless you dear editors and all who write the truth it contains as long as there is one of us to enjoy the *Signs of the Times* in this world of trouble.

I thank you all,
Sister Neva Brooks

DOES NOT WANT TO MISS A COPY

3256 East 49th Street,
Cleveland, Ohio 44127

Dear Brother Editors:

I see that it is time to renew for my paper. It is such a joy to get it, for it is all the good preaching I get. O how I do praise the good Lord for you Editors who stand for the truth.

I do not want to miss a single copy as I am just about a shut-in. I will be seventy-eight years old in May. I love the *Signs of the Times* — I have read them many years. They are next to my Bible with me. I am looking for a home not made with hands eternal in the

heaven.

I am sending $10.00 to renew for two years; use the balance as you see fit. May the good Lord uphold you editors, Brother Wood and Brother Spangler. Yours in hope of eternal life when my race is run in this life.

Mrs. A. M. Smith, Sr.

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, at Wilson Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in July, 1973.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 744,
Bennettsville, S. C. 28512

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The next session of the *Staunton River Union Meeting* is appointed to be held with Mt. Ararat Church, the 5th Sunday in July, 1973, and Saturday before.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Elder H. W. Wray, Mod.
Doris Hamilton, Clerk

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Pigg River Association* will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Camp Branch, Henry County, Virginia, beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in August, 1973, and continuing through Sunday, August 5, 1973. (August 3, 4, & 5)

Camp Branch Church is located in Henry County, Virginia: leaving Rt. 220 at Martinsville, Va., go 8 miles east on Rt. 108 to Rt. 657. From the north turn left off Rt. 220 on Rt. 619 and go to Rt. 890, turn right and go to Rt. 657 on Leatherwood or Dyer's Store Road. The meeting house is just around the curve.

Our Correspondents and other brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Elder Rufus Brown, Mod.
Sister Nancy Haynes, Clerk
John D. Wood, Assn. Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The *Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association* is to be held, the Lord willing, with Strawberry Church, located on Highway 750 in Pittsylvania County, Va. July 6, 7 and 8, 1973.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. A special invitation to the elders.

R. S. Payne, Mod.
R. T. Holley, Clerk

CHANGE OF MEETING TIME

Brother C. H. Greathouse of Grants Pass, Oregon, writes that the church there now holds their meetings on the first and third Sundays; and that a three days meeting will be held July 27, 28, and 29th. They invite the brethren to meet with them.

UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

The sixty-seventh session of the *Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association* will be held with Lick Fork Church the third week-end July 14, 15 and 16th, 1973. Services beginning Saturday the 14th at 11:00 a.m.

Lick Fork Church is located along the extreme east boundary of Caswell and Rockinghom Counties, N. C., midway between Ruffin and Highway No. 158. Watch for association pointer on Highway 158 about 8 miles east of Reidsville and 12 miles west of Yanceyville. Lick Fork Church is located in Rockingham County, N. C.

We extend to ministers, brethren and friends of faith and order, a cordial invitation.

Donald E. Smith, Assn. Clerk

HASSELL'S CHURCH HISTORY NOW ON THE PRESS

We are pleased to announce that this outstanding *History* written by Elders C. B. and Sylvester Hassell over a nine-year period is now being printed. God willing, orders can be shipped on June 15th or soon thereafter.

History of the Church of God from Creation to 1885 has been out of print for several years. We are happy to make this standard work available again. The printing and binding will be improved over the last printing. In fact the type will be slightly larger than the first edition in 1886 making the book easier to read. We are including photographs of the two Elder Hassells and adding biographies of several pages of Elder Sylvester Hassell and Mrs. M. M. Hassell.

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Dr. George W. Paschall, Professor of Greek at Wake Forest College fifty years ago and himself a prominent historian, wrote in 1924 in a letter to Elder Sylvester Hassell:

". . . I am writing this to tell you how much I was impressed with the excellence of the 'Church History' by your father and you . . . In my view your book is the very best piece of historical work ever done in North Carolina. It will be a monument to you both through all time . . ."

Your order will be appreciated.

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Danville, Virginia **July, 1973**

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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"The elder unto the elect lady and children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth; for the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever. Grace be with you, mercy and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love. I rejoice greatly that I have found of thy children walking in the truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father. And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another. And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it." *(2 John 1-6)*

EDITORIAL

I CORINTHIANS 1:6-7

"And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another, for who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"

The historian Josephus tells us that wickedness was rampant in the time of Christ's coming. Moses tells us that God saw the greatness of the wickedness of man when He sent the flood. Paul tells us that we were in nature dead in trespasses and in sin. How sad it is to relate that men were the only ones of God's creation that sinned unto death, but what a sad picture it is to find that he is the only creature to boast of his skill to become acceptable to God again. Are we in that numerous assembly of men that claim this? If so, we are thinking too highly of ourselves; the figure of himself and Apollos that Paul transferred to usward, has not been received. To those that the text applies to, they do not think too highly of one another. They have learned, as Paul had learned, that it was not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showed mercy.

If God had left man in the day of his sinning, where would he be, yea, where would you and I be? If we know where we would be, the figure has reached us —we will never think too highly of any man; we have the grace of God, and the gift of grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, and it has abounded unto us — we have received it. (Rom. 6:15) Seeing that the man died, of necessity it follows that had God not moved towards that man that he, you and I, would still be dead in sin. Seeing that this is true, what have we got that we did not receive? If God had left the covenant of grace in the wickedness of Noah's day, what would be the status of the world today? What is more important, what would our status before Him be? Then, dear reader, what have we got to glory in? What have we got that we did not receive? Seeing that the wickedness of man was so rampant in the time of the Saviour's coming the first time, what would have been the result had He not made that illustrious descension to earth? Where would you and I be now? Would we have ever received *anything* from Him? Seeing that this is true, what have we got that we would have had if Christ had not come? Then is it not true that all we have is the result of Christ coming? If not, why not? And now to come to you and me who were dead in sin. What would have been the result if God had not made us alive in Christ Jesus? Being dead, we did not contribute anything, anything at all, to our life in the Lord. If so, we have something in which to glory, and it was useless for Paul to set himself and Apollos before the brethren in a figure that they not think too much of one another. Paul did not have anything to bring as a factor in his own behalf, or that of the cause of Jesus Christ, after his experience on the Damascus road. Thinking of that experience, he brings it before the brethren as an example. Now if Paul was dead in sin, and God acted upon and in him that he be different than he once was, what did he have that he did not receive?

Sometimes, it would seem that we place Paul above Peter as an apostle. I dare not do this. I dare not think so highly of a minister as to think he has been a contributing factor in his usefulness. Paul said, We are able ministers of the New Testament, not because of qualifications of our own, not because we contributed part of the ability, not because that we received something by our works, but our sufficiency is of God, who makes us able ministers. When Paul used the little word *us* he included himself and Peter in it, if we have been called to the ministry, he

included you and me, and we received this sufficiency as a gift from Him, and if we have received it, our testimony will be most peculiar before one and all. It will be the same testimony of Joseph and Daniel and Jeremiah. (Gen. 41:16; Jer. 10:23; Dan. 2:30)

Paul and Peter were in sweet fellowship one with another. Paul and Peter were by nature Pharisees. They each received the measure allotted to them when they were blessed in Christ with all the spiritual blessings. Sometimes it is said that all of us were blessed alike. We were, in that we were blessed in Christ, but not in the same measure. God giveth not the Spirit in measure to Christ, but He does give it in measure to us. This faith is given to all by measure, but the word itself shows that the gift is limited to the measure. Every man is dealt this measure, and he is commanded not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think. (Romans 12:3). We will not boast of things beyond our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God distributed to us, a measure to reach unto you, etc. (2 Cor. 10:13, 14) Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. (Eph. 4:7) How lovely when this measure is dispensed to us. It will make us bold but humble; it will make us courageous, but cautious; it will make us count the cost, and yet hold back nothing when the travel gets hard; it will make us covet the better gifts but will keep us from coveting our brother's gift.

This precious giver of all things to usward according to the measure of the gift of Christ, gives to some, apostles; to some, prophets; to some, this gift and the other, all by measure, but all from the Spirit. In this well ordered way, both Paul and Peter were given their respective field of labor. Paul's measure was such that he did not go back to the law at any time in his preaching and his writing. His measure was so magnanimous that he did not ever indulge in any denial or backsliding from the Lord. While the measure of faith and grace was great, he did not think too much of himself or any other man. On the other hand, Peter's measure of faith and grace was like unto mine, (if, indeed, I have any) so that he often was impetuous and unbelieving. In this we are to see that he thought too highly of himself on the night of the crucificaxion; and also when the question came up about preaching to Cornelious. In the case of Paul going to Jeresalem he did not know the things that would befall him, and yet he went, not counting the cost, not putting his life in the balance with the joys of those to whom he was sent and the sweetness of faithful stewardship. On the other hand, Peter, like this writer, was cowardly and afraid of what others would say. But when that which is a gift of God was received he stood up in the face of the same mob that he had cowered before, and called them wicked men. Thus we see the amazing sufficiency in the hour of need of the two men. In this hour when all things were supplied from above they did not esteem their brethren higher than they ought to, nor exalt themselves above measure.

They preached together, and they preached the same glorious doctrine. We have seen several times that Paul has told us that all of our help is from above; that all things needed are provided in Christ. Now let us examine the testimony of Peter and see if they agree. He tells us, "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according to his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." (2nd Peter 1:2, 4) If the elect vessels of mercy get this, will they need anything else? If so, who can find out what it is? Certainly,

if they need and get something other than these things it will not be by gift, nor by promise, nor by the Lord. Furthermore, if the elect get something else it will not be something that pertains to life and godliness. If they get something besides this, what is it that they get? If they need and get something other than that which pertains to life and godliness, will it be for the glory of God? It will not be, unless it is in His giving what they get to them ground into powder and put in their drinking water. If so, that would be for life and godliness, for verily, a child of God could not get any sustenance from drinking the powder of a golden calf, for they must have pure and living water flowing out from the throne of God, and if it takes becoming thirsty because of a powdered drink, they will soon be ready to confess what Jonah confessed in the belly of hell, and certainly methinks that it would be as much hell to drink powdered water as it would be to lie in a fish's belly. Thus, if we get to thinking too much of ourselves, the Lord has a rod that He assigned unto us as a covenant blessing and it is administered also for our life and for the teaching and correcting of us in godliness. (Psalm 89)

But let sometbody else speak for a moment. So many people, even lovely saints of God, will bring forward Peter's calling us to diligence and to the adding together of the things of the Spirit. That is lovely to talk about; it is lovely to write about in relationship with the things that have made us a different people; that have been received as gifts from above. Addition is the simpliest form of things that pertain to working sums. A little pupil will take hold of addition much quicker than it will the other simple things of mathematics, and especially is this true in the field of the religion of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We must certainly acknowledge that diligence is an important thing in a well ordered life. A person that is not diligent could never hope to accomplish much either in a natural or spiritual life. As our subject pertains to spiritual gifts, it becomes clear where this diligence comes from. There is much diligence in the earth, and I would encourage that pursuit in the field of scholastic learning. However, Paul lost his diligence in persecuting the church, and Peter lost his wavering when the Lord had dealt with them, but the diligence that Peter is writing about was the fruit of the Spirit in them growing in rich and abundant clusters. It was by the gift of diligence that the adding was done, for, while Paul's brethren had received all from the Lord, yet it did not make them careless in their life.

It is hard to tell which is the most belittling to the grace and mercy and love of God, to say that we have something that we get from the flesh and the world, or to say that it does not make any difference how we live. The text forbids that dear readers. This is a people that are different. They are not like the unregenerate or dead; they are living people of God; they have been born again, not by a corruptible seed, but by an incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. This birth is something you have received from the word of God, and it lives in this poor sinner; it abides there as long as he or she is in the world. This work having been consumated, everything is now different. In the first birth, this man or woman lived on earthly things; they desired and relished them; they did not know nor care for anything else. But now a new life has been given them, and this life has its supplies from God. It is a life that lives on things that come from its source. They can not long survive without things from the heavenly country.

If they are blessed with a season of faith it causes them to love and desire and hold to the things that this faith brings to light to them. They reach for it, as the tiny twig of a branch reaches up after the light above; they take hold and they add the virtue that is given them by touch (Luke 6:19; 8:46) to the faith which is always the prerequis-

ite to acceptable service to the Lord. This adding to faith of these lovely things (Phil. 4:8) is worthy of speaking and writing about each time the saints come together. There is not a gift that means any more to the child of God than this gift. Wherever it is found there is an acknowledgement from each poor sinner that nothing short of the mercy of God could have given it to them. I do hope that we will all be able to see the harmony and consistency in what Peter has said to us. God having given us all things pertaining to life and godliness, it is the most orderly and lovely thing for him to give the charge he did, Besides this, that is, in addition to the having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust, add to your faith virtue and the other lovely gifts. He then sums this charge up by saying, If these things be in you (by gift) and abound (by gift) they make you (by gift) that you are not barren or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The grace that was given the Corinthians enriched them in all things. Child of God here is your rest; here is your peace; here are your good works, and they identify you among the saints of God. This rich gift does such a wonderful work for you that you do not come behind in any gift. Have you ever heard of anything as precious as that? Do you say that you have not received it? I do not believe that I have a reader that would say that. It has made the difference between dead works and the well ordered walk and talk of a child of God. This grace made manifest in the life of a child of God will make them sing and shout and praise the Lord.

These blessings that pertain to life and godliness will make you acknowledge him in all your ways as a child of grace. It will make you count and appreciate your blessings; it will make you careful in your walk and talk. It will make you rejoice in God your Saviour, and will be in you as a balancing and guiding light in your life. They will make you fruitful in every good word and work. Peter did not say, and I do not say that you receive the things of the Spirit by your works; that you make these things abound. He did not say that, and I do not say that, but he said, and I say, that if they are in you and abound that it makes you fruitful.

Salvation is of the Lord .

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Paint Rock, Ark., April 3, 1861.

Dear Brother:—I address you to-night for the first time, for the purpose of asking for your views on Matt. viii. 11, 12.

The Old Baptists here are well pleased with the *Signs of the Times*, so far as I have heard. May the Lord enable you to continue to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, is the prayer of your unworthy brother. LOVETT LEE.

REPLY. — *The text proposed reads thus: "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."*

These words appear to have been spoken by our Lord soon after he had come down from the mountain where he had preached the sermon on the mount. Having finished the instructions to his disciples, and descended from the mountain, a great multitude of people thronged around him, and in their presence he touched and healed a filthy leper. And when he was entered into Capernaum, an officer of the Roman army came and besought him in behalf of a servant of his who was sick of the palsy and grievously tormented, and Jesus also healed the centurion's servant. This display of miracles very naturally excited the jealousy of the Jews, who regarded the touching of a leprous person as a violation of their laws, and the favoring of a Roman centurion as little if any less defiling. But when he

had positively declared that he had not found so great faith in Israel, or among the Jews, as this centurion manifested, the surprise and astonishment of the self-conceited pharisees must have been raised to the highest degree. And yet he had something more to tell them — that many shall come from the east and west, even of publicans and harlots, as he had elsewhere declared, and shall sit down with the patriarchs and prophets, and these self-righteous pharisees be cast out. Publicans and harlots, redeemed and washed in Jesus' blood, and clothed in his spotless righteousness, shall be qualified to participate in the spiritual privilges of the gospel kingdom; while children of the kingdom, or those who legally occupied that position, should be cast out. As the Canaanites were cast out of the promised land, to make room for the heirs of the promise which God had before made to Abraham, so the carnal Israelites should be severed from Abraham, the true olive tree, for the grafting in of the Gentiles.

In the sermon on the mount, Christ had declared, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom." The kingdom in its gospel organization is spiritual, and human righteousness is insufficient to qualify any one to enter it, therefore Jesus has declared most positively that except a man be born again, born of the water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into it. No legal righteousness can exceed the righteousness of scribes and pharisees; but the righteousness of God, which is by the faith of the Son of God, does exceed. And Christ, who knew no sin, was made sin for us, (his people,) that we should be made the righteousness of God in him. This will do; with this even publicans and harlots are cleansed and made holy; and unto them is Christ made wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption. And this is his name whereby he shall be called — The Lord our Righteousness. Men are fatally mistaken when they presume that their works of righteousness or obedience to the law will justify them before God; for, By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God. Justifying righteousness is not of the law. If a law had been given that could give life, righteousness should be by the law; but that no man is justified by the deeds or works of the law is evident, from the fact that, The just shall live by faith. Hence, Paul, who understood precisely the difference between the righteousness of men and the righteousness of God, could cheerfully forego everything else, that he might be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

Christ could and did declare beforehand that many of those shall come from the east and west, and, as in another text he adds, and from the north and south, from every point of the compass, and as its members, clothed with the garment of his salvation, covered with the robe of his righteousness, they shall enter his kingdom, come with songs and everlasting joy to his Zion, and inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. There in his kingdom shall they sit down with Abraham, having the faith, not the flesh, of Abraham. If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. The children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are recognized for the seed. These are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John the Baptist told the scribes and pharisees to think not to say they had Abraham to their father; that plea was sufficient to admit them to a standing with carnal Israelites under the law, but now the axe is laid at the root of the trees, and every fruitless tree is cut down; and all the trees are barren until they are first made good trees, and then the fruit will be good, for a

good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, nor can an evil tree bring forth good fruit. But God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham.

The carnal Israelites were in the kingdom, as it existed under the ceremonial law, in the types. But that dispensation is abolished, and they as children of the kingdom in that sense are cast out, as was the rich man, in the parable, while Lazarus is now in the bosom of Abraham, and a great gulf is fixed between them. Gentile sinners redeemed from all the tribes of the earth are gathered into communion with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and the carnal seed are cast out into outer darkness. The kingdom of Christ is illuminated internally. The Lord God and the Lamb are the light of it. But without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. With these the carnal workmongers are associated, and of their doom they shall partake. The light which is in them, of which they boast, is darkness, and it is outer darkness — and how great is that darkness! Darkness signifies death, the opposite of life. In the Word, which was made flesh, is life, and the life is the light of men. The opposite of that life and light is outer darkness, and in it shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Weeping, when it proceeds from contrition, shows a godly sorrow, working repentance which is unto life, and needeth not to be repented of. But the sorrow of the world worketh death. The first shows the work and yields the fruits of the spirit; but the latter is accompanied by wrath, violence, and gnashing of teeth. Unreconciliation to God, opposition to holiness, and implacable enmity to the truth and to all who hold and love the truth.

As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; so we see the declaration not only bears upon the carnal Israelites, but extends to all who are of the works of the law, or rather all who are seeking for justification by obedience to the precepts of the law; and to commend themselves to the divine favor by their own works — they are all of them in outer darkness, and have not light to see that salvation is by grace alone. Not of works, lest any man should boast. Not by works of righteousness which we have done; but of his mercy he hath saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. But the very darkness which hides these things from the eyes of the wise and prudent, they call light, while all the things of the Spirit are unto them foolishness, and they call it darkness. Such was the wretched condition of all men by nature, and those who are now translated from the power of darkness into God's marvellous light were by nature children of wrath even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he hath loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. It surely is no less than the works of God himself. "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in your hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

"Then give all the glory to his holy name;
To him all the glory belongs; [fame,
Be yours the high theme still to sound forth his
And crown him in each of your songs."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe May 15, 1861)

APRIL 7, 1973
WILSON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH
Wilson, N. C.

ORDINATION OF
BRO. BRUCE JONES AS A DEACON

By request of the Wilson Primitive Baptist Church, a Presbytery was called, for the purpose of ordaining Bro. Bruce Jones as a Deacon for the Wilson Primitive Baptist Church. Conference was called to order with song, and prayer by Elder W. L. Everett. The following Elders were called; Elder D. B. Stokes; Elder Wayne Mitchell; and Elder W. L. Everett: Deacons: Bro. M. D. Simmons, Sr.; Bro. George Pearson; Bro. Johnny Ray Gardner, and Bro. Gordan Smith.

Moved and agreed to call Elder Stokes as moderator.

Moved and agreed to call Sister Nina Pearson as Clerk.

Bro. Jones was presented to the Presbytery by Bro. Preston Gay, Deacon of Wilson Primitive Baptist Church.

The Presbytery was given the opportunity to question the candidate and the Church: Elder Everett asked the Church if the candidate was involved in any activity that would reflect on the Church. The Church had complete confidence in the Brother. Elder Everett told Bro. Jones that there would be very little spoken here, that he would remember. Your capacity as a Deacon will be a hard road; you will come to circumstances that you will be required to make decisions, remember to let your conscious determine your judgment. To his wife; There are going to be times you will not be able to understand. Stand by him, comfort and give him all the help you can. May the Lord Bless you both.

Elder Mitchell: The office of a Deacon is an humble office. He must be able to rule the Church and his own house as well. A Deacon's duty is to visit the sick; be interested in the welfare of Wilson Primitive Baptist Church. Be a right arm to your Pastor, and stand firm for the Doctrine and Faith that was once delivered to the Saints. The office of a Deacon is a calling of God. Sister Jones visit with him and make people welcome. May God Bless you both.

Elder Stokes: As your Pastor I feel that the Lord has given you a gift to take care of the business of this Church. Always keep your own home in order. Do not judge quickly. Listen to all things, and hold fast to that which is good. Do not be ashamed to pray. Search by Prayer the will of God. Take the word of the Bible as your guide. Remember you can only speak for this Church. Make decisions prayerfully. Think and meditate. To the Church: Do not tie this Brother's hands. The Lord has taken care of this place and will continue to bless this Church. To His wife: Walk with him: there will be burdens and joy. Serve the Church in bonds of Christian Love and fellowship. Do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Presbytery laid hands on the candidate in Prayer.

The Brother was returned to the Wilson Primitive Baptist Church as an ordained Deacon.

Moved and agreed the minutes stand approved as read.

Moved and agreed the minutes be turned over to the Wilson Primitive Baptist Church.

Moved and agreed the Presbytery be adjourned.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

OBITUARIES

LULA FLORENCE (COLTRANE) SNYDER

It is with much sadness that we write of the passing from this life of our beloved Sister who was a member of Camp Branch Church for several years before her illness and death. Sister Lula Florence (Coltrane) Snyder was born January 11, 1885, in Randolph County, N. C. to Shubal Gardner Coltrane and Sarah Haseltine (Lanning) Coltrane.

Sister Lula was married to Bunyan Linville Snyder May 17, 1905. To this union four children were born, three boys and one girl. Two of the boys and her husband preceded her in death. Brother Snyder passed from this life February 26, 1965. They both, along with their daughter, joined Camp Branch Church by experience on June 6, 1959, and they were baptized July 25, 1959 by Elder Rufus Brown. This baptizing is one long to be remembered by some of us who were there. There were six baptized in the little creek near Brothr Snyder's home. This was a beautiful sight to behold. All six of them joined Camp Branch Church.

Sister Snyder had been bedfast for a number of years and lived in the home with her daughter, Sister Geraldine Beeson. Our Heavenly Father called her home on May 21, 1972.

Survivors include one son, Richard Snyder, one daughter, Geraldine Beeson, one sister, Eva (Coltrane) Taylor, and several grandchildren, nieces and nephews, and a host of friends. She was a faithful member to her church and attended regularly until her stroke and illness from which she could not walk. She was loved by all of us, but we do feel that our loss is her eternal gain, and that she has gone to her grave to await the coming of our Lord, when He shall gather his jewels to meet Him around our Father's throne in that heavenly home on high. Sadly missed and loved by all who knew her.

Eld. Rufus Brown, Mod.
Nancy Haynes, Clerk

MRS. RENA WORLEY MOORE

Sister Rena Worley Moore, age 98, departed this life on Sept. 24, 1972. She was born Feb. 3, 1874, and was the daughter of Charley and Laura Worley. She was married to J. W. Moore who died July 6, 1941. He was the son of David and Angline Moore. Sister Moore was a member of Concord Primitive Baptist Church, and was a lifelong resident of Morehouse Parish, La. Survivors include a son, Leon Moore of Memphis, Tenn.; four daughters, Mrs. J. W. Westbrook, Mrs. Olevia Day and Mrs. Maylor Harrison, all of Bastrop, La. and Mrs. Thelma Carpenter of Monroe, La.; 18

grandchildren, 41 great grand-children and 7 great, great-grandchildren.

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. I had known Sister Moore for over 20 years and must have carried her to Concord for 10 years or longer. My experience was that to even be in her presence seemed to some how, some way strengthen my very existence. She was one who lived and loved her church. She went to church as long as her natural body was able. She loved the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Yes, I believe that she was one of them that was chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. The evidence of her walk gave me that belief.

Services were conducted by the writer, and her body was laid to rest in the Causey Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

David E. Turner

DEACON ALBERT CALVIN BROOKS

Brother Albert Calvin Brooks departed this life September 30, 1972. He was born April 11, 1912, in Franklin County, Virginia, to the late Elder Joe Brooks and Effie Cundiff Brooks. He was married to Dotsie Holland December 23, 1934, and to this union one son was born.

Surviving are his wife, Sister Dotsie Brooks, and son, Carlton, and one grandson, Michael Brooks; also by his step-mother, Sister Jimmie David Brooks, four sisters, five half-sisters, and five half-brothers.

He united with Bethel Primitive Baptist Church the first Sunday in June, 1940; and was ordained to the office of Deacon July 3, 1948, and served in the fear of God until death. Brother Brooks believed that God is a sovereign Lord who does His will in all things in heaven and earth or hell.

We realize that Brother Brooks lived out all the days that God appointed him. Time has come to the end with our brother, for there is no knowledge or understanding in the grave. His dust will remain until it pleases God to quicken it and fashion it like unto his own glorious body, with the rest of the saints in the resurrection, when God shall gather his jewels home to forever praise His holy name.

The funeral was conducted by his pastor, James R. Hollandsworth and Elder Leonard Brammer. Burial was in Franklin Memorial Park. Written by

James R. Hollandsworth

ALICE B. CHAMBERS

It is indeed with a sad heart that I attempt to record a tribute of respect to my Dear Sister, Sister Alice B. Chambers.

Sister Alice was born April 6, 1897, and God in his Mercy and Loving Kindness called her home March 2, 1973, making her stay on earth 75 years. She was the daughter of Lucious A. and Nancy Meadows Bullock and was the widow of W. T. Chambers, Sr. To this union, seven children were born, the oldest one passed away when just a year old. Other survivors are: Clarence, Woody, Jr., Garland Louis, John William, Mrs. Lola C. Russell and Mrs. Cyrina C. Howerton.

She offered to Gooch Memorial Church at the water on Sunday morning, July 11, 1948, and was baptized the same day with her husband by Elder Lester Dodson in absence of the pastor, Elder David Spangler. She was a faithful, loving, humble and precious servant of our most High God. She stood firm for the doctrine of election, salvation by grace, and the absolute predestination of all things. She was blessed to hold fast to that which was good, her countenance, walk and talk in life was to praise God from whom all blessings flow. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be his Holy Name.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Donald Smith, at Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church. Her body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Oxford to await the second coming of her Lord and Master Jesus Christ, who in sometime unknown to man, will come to call his bride, present her to the Father without spot or blemish or any such thing. Then will his people be conformed to the image of his Dear Son, be like him and be satisfied. The beautiful floral offering showed in some measure the esteem and respect felt for her by the family, friends and membership of Gooch Memorial Church.

May the Good Lord reconcile her dear children to his will.

Written by her sister at the request of the membership of Gooch Memorial Church in conference March 10, 1973.

Submitted in Love,
Nancy B. Allen

DEACON THOMAS W. TURNER

Brother Turner was born to George K. and Pricie Turner April 22, 1888. He passed away October 14, 1972.

He was married to Miss Susie Nunn December 18, 1912, and to this union were born six children — four sons and two daughters, all still survive. Sister Susie passed away August 19, 1945. Brother Turner was again married to Miss Grady Hagood September 11, 1946, who also survives.

Our beloved brother united with Chestnut Church, Franklin County, Va. June 11, 1921, and was ordained deacon September 8, 1951. It

can be truly said that Brother Turner served his church faithfully. But few times during his long membership did he fail to fill his place as member and deacon. He was kind, gentle, patient, and humble; and more could be said.

Both wives were members of Chestnut Church: the late Sister Susie and his widow, Sister Grady.

Now may we bow to God's will in removing Brother Turner from our midst. We feel that he is at peace with his Lord.

Written at the request of the family by his unworthy pastor.

C. E. Turner

NETTIE PASCHAL

Sister Nettie Haney Paschal was born Sept. 4, 1895 to the late Alben T. and Salley Haney and died March 4, 1973. Making her stay in this troublesome world 78 years and 6 months.

She was married to Charlie Paschal and had nine children, four of which survive her. One daughter, Mrs. Aubrey Loftis, three sons, Melvin, Willard, and Francis Paschal. Five sisters, Mrs. Gertie Pascal, Mrs. Evelyn Chilton, Mrs. Dora Moore, Mrs. Ollie Brande, and Mrs. Edna McCubbian, four brothers, Robertson, Alvin, Pete, and Jack Haney, twenty-five grandchildren, thirty-two great grandchildren, and one great great-grandchild.

Sister Paschal joined Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church about thirty-five years ago, where her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Donald Smith and W. J. Berry on Tuesday, March 6, 1973.

Sister Paschal was a true and faithful member of her church and was always ready to give God the praise for the hope and grace she felt she had. She lost her mother and three sons in one year's time. Though her heart was sad she was quick to tell anyone that her God never forsakes nor leaves His little ones alone. She felt that his Love and Mercy had carried her through this and many, many other troubles over her 78 years.

If it is God's will we hope that those with sad hearts shall be given to know that all things are right with our God. Written by Sister Nannie Page.

Elder Donald Smith, Mod.
Dobert F. Walker, Clerk
Pleasant Grove Primitive
Baptist Church

SISTER MARGUERITE (RETA) CAMPBELL

Sister Reta Campbell, age 81, died at Strathmere Lodge, Strathroy, Ontario, August 27, 1972.

Sister Campbell was born in 1891 in Lobo Township and was raised in Caradoc Township, both in Middlesex County, the county where she lived all of her life. She was the daughter of the late Archibald Fletcher and Flora C. (McNeil) Fletcher. She had three sisters and five brothers. One brother, Hector, survives.

Sister Reta married John Wesley Campbell of Lobo Township, Middlesex County in 1924. He died in October 1959. Two sons, Donald and Keith, live at Ilderton. Two daughters, Mrs. Karl (Marion) Tallman, Wiberfore, Ontario and Mrs. Ian (Mildred) Davidson of London, Ontario, also survive. Sister Campbell had seven granddaughters and five grandsons.

Sister Reta Campbell resided on the family farm with her son, Keith, and his wife and family until eight months before her death. At that time she moved to Strathmere Lodge, Strathroy.

Sister Campbell joined the Covenant Baptist Church of Canada at the Poplar Hill Church in Lobo Township in 1958.

She was a humble and valued member of the Church. She and her husband Wesley were respected and honourable members of the community. Their home was always open to the Baptist members and friends. They were always attentive to "assembling themselves together" where prayer was wont to be made.

Sister Campbell left on record, for her children and grandchildren, her most wonderful experience, in providence and grace. The Elders who conducted her funeral service were privileged to be able to read her life's journey. After reading the above, the one who was charged with preaching the funeral sermon was impressed with and spoke from scripture found in Jeremiah Chapter 31 vs 3; "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee".

Funeral services were conducted at Denning Brothers Funeral Home, Strathroy, August 29, by Elders Stewart and Alex McColl. Interment was in Ivan Cemetery.

A large company of friends attended the service.

Sister Campbell is greatly missed by her family, her church and her community. We that remain take comfort from I Thess. IV which is paraphrased to be sung as follows:

"Take comfort, Christians, when your friends
in Jesus fall asleep;
Their better being never ends;
why then defected weep?
Why inconsolable, as those
to whom no hope is given
Death is the messenger of peace,
and calls the soul to heaven."

Elder D. A. McColl
Elder J. S. McColl

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141 DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1973 NO. 8

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS
8/73
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ENJOYED BROTHER DUREN'S WRITINGS

Collinsville, Va. 24078

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

I too have enjoyed reading Brother Duren's writing in the February, 1973 issue of the *Signs* — a soldier of the cross rightly dividing the word of truth. Surely those taught of the Lord, can never fall from grace and be forever lost, as some contend.

Brother Duren made it very plain that we are not justified by the law of Moses; but by faith in Jesus Christ. He did not write in fear of man, but in power, and of love, and of a sound mind. We read in Psalm 110:30, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." And in Romans 11:29, we read, "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

We are not saved by the works of the flesh, but in and through the blood of Christ saved by grace given us in Christ before the world began. God works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure by His Spirit, and it is our desire to render all praise, honor and glory for his love and mercy towards us.

May His grace and the communion of the Holy Spirit remain with us forever.

Yours in fellowship,
Mrs. Harry D. (Mattie) Underwood

GIVEN A STRONG CONSOLATION

807 Pope Street,
Memphis, Tenn. 38112

Dear Elder Griffin:

I'm addressing you, having read your article in the March *Signs,* along with Elder Hudson's, and all the rest, and enjoyed them.

I am sending some letters for your consideration — if they can mean to the readers of the *Signs* what they have to me, there will be given them a strong consolation to again lay hold of the Hope that was given them from above. I hope that is not saying or claiming too much.

As I look over the way behind me — the ups and downs, trials, sorrows, the still waters and green pastures, if I can but feel that the hand of the Saviour of sinners has been guiding me along, keeping me by his love and power, I feel such a flow of peace and serenity that I can actually rejoice, and count all the sufferings and trials as naught, not worthy to be compared to the blessings of His love. If there was any way I could stay in this frame of mind, I most surely would.

You can tell by these letters which are in answer to one from me, what frame of mind I was in when I wrote them. And their response was exactly what I believed, and needed. There are times when these things are so dear, and I'm convinced that I am one that has been quickened by the Spirit: born of it, move by it, and alive: which I consider the work of God. I know the election is past and the God of all wisdom knows all his works from the beginning. The foundation of God stands sure, having this seal: the Lord knows them that are

his. I am neither in, or out of the kingdom of God. I don't think that is fatalism — there is a purpose involved: wisdom hath builded her house, hewn out her seven pillars, mingled her wine, etc. This all tells me that its all been done by the One who is able to bring all things to pass exactly as He purposed.

There is a scripture in Rev. 21:5-6, where John was being told and shown some things too wonderful for me: "And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of water of life freely."

Now isn't that beautiful to think upon? It's a restful place: love swells my soul, tears sting my eyes, and Oh the praise I would render unto Him, if I but knew how. But sometimes I lose sight of these beautiful truths: I find in me a dull, wayward mind. I would cast it from me if I could, for I hate it. I seem to be looking through different eyes: I look about and see churches going down: two or three members in places, and some are not peaceful. I so wish it were different. But Why? If I believe what has preceeded this, why do these doubts and fears concerning the Church and her welfare distress me? I guess it is as Clover said, "Satan in our flesh."

I know I am viewing the militant church, and I do know that the weakness is in me. And I feel to be the neediest creature among God's children, if I am indeed one. I pray with all the praying power that's given me, to be kept at the feet of all fellow worshippers. I feel amazement at times that one so prone to sin as I, has been kept thus far; and I know that if I have been kept from *one* error, it has been by the power other than me. For our thoughts and our mind are as prone to sin as the water to flow down hill.

I am thankful for a people who confess being sinners such as I: yet believe in an all wise, covenant keeping God, who from all eternity purposed, decreed, and predestinated a people, and will take care of them *here,* lead them about, even through the fire, instructing them, and house everyone of them in heaven and immortal glory one day.

If I have written this for any reason other than glory of God, I hope you will have a mind to toss it in the waste basket.

Clover Wall and Asineth Jones are dear ones, and many more who live near them. The truth is, all are dear ones who believe in salvation by the shed blood of Jesus the Christ: a Sovereign who rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

Recently I read something that sent me to the encyclopedia. I found the name "Dort", and I was amazed to learn that in 1618-19 there were one hundred fifty-four formal sessions held to determine which was sound Apostolic doctrine: the Calvanist view, or the Arminians. And these canons of the Synod of Dort April 23, 1619, are a reaffirmation of the Calvanist doctrine.

And what seemed so good about it was, the five points brought out were first, Divine Predestination; second, Death of Christ, limited atonement; third, Corruption of man; fourth, Irresistible Grace; fifth, Perseverence of the Saints. Aren't these exactly the basis of our belief today? I felt so glad to read this. You may smile at my ignorance, you having known this a long while. The man Arminius began to teach what, I suppose, led into Universalism.

Dear Elders and Brothers, you who decide what should be good for the readers of the *Signs,* please look over me, and if at any time I write things you "question", cast it away. Don't let it take up space that could be better filled.

I wish we could see you all face to face Elder Wood and Elder Spangler. We do see Elder Griffin and Elder Lambert occasionally. May God continue

to bless us all in his love and mercy.

A weak one,
Lucille Young

COMFORTING LETTER TO SISTER YOUNG

Rt. 3,
Martin, Tenn.

Dear Lucille and Edd (Young):

Received your good letter; and you asked a lot of questions which I can't answer. But I can tell you what I believe.

It looks like the true believers have hit bottom — or that is what the world believes, and looks on with scorn. But hasn't it always been this way?

When Christ was here doing many miracles, they sought to kill him; and did when the time came, according to the will of God. It has always been that way, His will is being fulfilled to a jot and tittle. If the true worshippers get smaller in number, and the churches fewer and fewer, never the less God stills reigns supreme, and there will always be, as long as this world stands, people who love one another; for that is Christ's promise before He left here: that He and God the Father will come and make their abode with you. I in you, you in me, and as *one* in the Spirit: and that is love shed abroad in our hearts.

Christ gave a new commandment to his people before his crucifixion, that you love one another as I have loved you. This is a great blessing that the world can't understand. We are here in the flesh in this world, and in it is sorrow, and everything contrary to the Spirit — a war that will go on as long as we live here. But thanks be to God who has overcome for us, and purposed a place for us in the world to come.

Aren't you glad you live in this age, where you can meet in heavenly places and worship in spirit and in truth, forgetting the trials and troubles, and not be killed in the flesh for doing so. In every nook and corner God's people dwell in this sin cursed world, and when He comes in to dwell with them, there is peace and joy beyond compare. Let the world scoff — let them hate, it is the old Devil in the flesh, but I know God has a purpose in all things. He rules all things. He is all love and power.

What sorrow Peter had when the Devil entered into him! He wept bitterly, as we do when we stray and enjoy the world haven. We have to suffer, but how we glory when we realize it is for *our good* and *God's glory*. He does everything that is good for us, and makes us to have no confidence in the flesh, and to worship a true and living God who understands all our way: supplies our needs and forgives all our sins.

Edd, Raymond and I are in company with you — we are not volunteers; but if the time ever comes, which may never, we will ask for a heavenly home here. I hope you will, Edd. It would be nice for you and Lucille. I do feel like an outsider sometimes; and other times I feel its best never to ask for a home; and think I never will. God knows how frail I am, and maybe He has revealed it to me, for I know it too. I hope and pray I never do or say anything to hurt the church, and I will defend it with all my power, but I know what the world would say, "Why don't you join the church and help out," etc. In fact it has been said to me. I told Ruth we would do all we could, and she said that every little bit helped . . .

We went to Boaz Chapel today. Brother Prince loves to tell the story, and he did real well. Annie Botts and I were talking about Swayne — how he could say so much in a short time there at Cane Creek. I never heard the beautiful truth preached so plainly, and Annie thought so too. I wish we could hear him more . . .

Come to Cane Creek the week-end. We have had the flu, and someone said Ruth Chapel was taking it. It will be hard on her if she isn't able to go to Cane Creek this meeting. The Veaseys from Walnut Fork Church were at Boaz

Chapel — they are doing good. Levenia Biggs goes back to work soon, after having surgery.

Hope to see you Sunday.

Love,
Clover and Raymond Wall

ANOTHER LETTER TO SISTER YOUNG

Dear Lucille and Edd (Young):

I was glad indeed to get your letter, and how I would like to write you in a way of comfort. I can say of a truth, if I know anything, the words you were given to pen, are the things I daily go through.

Oh, I can't *know* the way. I almost give up when I have searched my soul and self inside and out, and haven't found anything but corruption from the crown of my head to the sole of my feet — no soundness in me. And as you said, I have no right to call the great I AM in question, for, to me, if justice was applied I long would have been where mercy never comes.

But I am made to believe all things are in God's hands, and he knows the hearts of all men; and none but His children can truthfully say that Christ is the Son of God. And many times this is said in anguish of soul, because of their sins. No wonder we are tossed about: sometimes up, sometimes down.

Lucille, have you ever been (and I am sure you have,) made to feel as Peter when Christ looked at him after the cock crew? It must have been crushing: he wept bitterly. At times there is an appearing of something while down in the valley of doubts and fears, so low. I think, if the Lord should call and I be chilled in death, can I say, All is well? No, not of myself; but as you said, I do believe He is the only way, the truth, the life and the resurrection. It is all one eternal now with Christ.

So it is not at all strange to hear you say — though it is to the flesh, can we say, "My Lord and my God unless we behold the nail prints in his hands"? I believe all things are written in the book for the benefit of God's children. Are not these the ways by which you *must travel* to find the meaning sometimes? to find that the Lord is in front leading and guiding you in the Truth — in paths you've not trod, making rough places plain and crooked ways straight.

I have heard Elder Biggs say so many things I can't forget. While listening to his discourses he would look me in the eye, seeming to know I was nothing, and less than nothing and altogether vanity. He was so richly blessed to point you to the Lamb of God, and declare the goodness of God, saying, "Could a child be more secure than to be clothed and in his right mind? He was a precious gift from the Father of Lights. As you say, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Surely His children have to travel in this world by faith — not by sight.

I believe it was faith that caused those chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, when Christ told them things they had ministered unto him, clothing, feeding, visiting, giving him drink; and they answered as all heaven born children, "Lord when did we these things?" "As much as ye did it to one of the least of these little ones, ye did it unto me." All these things were fixed back in eternity. God purposed, elected and chose his people in the furnace of affliction, and if the afflictions are not some of the things you wrote to me, tell me what they can be. We are here where storm after storm arises — we are carried down in the depths with sea weeds wrapped around us. Then our works are consumed. So what else can you cry, only salvation is of the Lord? You feel forsaken, yet He is so close, though you can't know it then: and the works of the flesh is all I can do, and it brings me down in misery and woe.

I find out that the things I most desire, are not the best for me. But how do we find out these things? if it is not through sufferings. Isn't it through suffering that you believe in God, and

Him only. Not only to believe but to suffer for His name's sake . . .

At Sister Carnes' the night you and Richard were there, I kept thinking after you left, "O why did I have to talk as I did. I am so ignorant it would have been much better if I had just sat and listened. But, Lucille, the things I tried in my weakness to speak of, are what I live in from day to day. Yet, after expressing myself, I often feel I am deceived, and deceive the brethren. But I will have to say there is a love for them over which I have no control. My hope is that God will keep me at your feet, and never let me hurt you; and I know I have to be kept. Was so glad to hear from Lavenia and all the others you spoke of; and I also appreciate the poem you sent. . .

You all are so richly blessed to meet every Sunday — it is so sweet to meet. Oh the goodness and mercy of our Lord can't be described by puny man. My hope is that it is His will to tarry with me while I am here on the battle-field so rugged: that by Him I can say of a truth, "The Lord was in this place," and be made to realize that His promises are sure, though in this world you shall have tribulations, "But be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." If I could only know that what I have suffered was for His sake. I am here by the will of God, and in Him I believe I live, move, and have my being; so all is pleasing in His sight. If I am one of His, I beg Him to keep me in his mercy. If I glory, I have to glory in the Lord, for His glory doesn't belong to graven images.

If you can, I beg you to remember me, one that is vile and sinful. Will say again that the things you wrote, I am glad you felt like writing them to me.

In bonds of love and sweet fellowship,

Asineth Jones

(In reading the above letters, the following verses by Newton came to mind—J.D.W.)

"Tis a point I long to know;
Oft it causes anxious thought;
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?

If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse
Who have never heard his name.

Could my heart so hard remain,
Prayer a task and burden prove,
Every trifle give me pain,
If I knew a Saviour's love?

When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark, and vain, and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?

If I pray, or hear, or read,
Sin is mixed with all I do:
You that love the Lord indeed,
Tell me, is it thus with you?

Yet I mourn my stubborn will;
Find my sin a grief and thrall:
Should I grieve for what I feel,
If I did not love at all?

Could I joy his saints to meet,
Choose the ways I once abhorred,
Find, at times, the promise sweet,
If I did not love the Lord?

Lord, decide the doubtful case;
Thou who art thy peoples Sun,
Shine upon thy work of grace,
If it be indeed begun.

Let me love thee more and more,
If I love at all, I pray:
If I have not loved before,
Help me to begin today."

NEWTON

SENDS LETTER WRITTEN IN 1948

602 Mass. Avenue
Norfolk, Va. 23508

Dear Elder Wood:

I hope this finds both you and Sister Wood in good health. It has been too long since we have seen you. I think the last time we talked was by phone in July. The Lord willing, we hope to be at Rock Springs the 1st week-end in September.

I have enclosed some letters from a fourteen year old boy. They were writtn almost twenty-five years ago, shortly after he was blessed to come before the church asking for a home. The boy who penned these precious words was a

stranger to me because I didn't know him until he was twenty-five years of age. Yes, the young brother who wrote those things that were close to his heart, is my husband, Corrone. I did not know such writings existed until January of this year, when Elder Liliston, who was visiting our home, said that he had read Corrone's experience in Zion's Landmark, a 1948 issue. Yesterday I received a copy of that letter from Corrone's mother.

I thought perhaps you would be interested in publishing it or a part of it, in the *Signs*. To me it is a rare thing for one so young to be able to express himself so beautifully. It might be said that I am prejudiced because he is my husband, but I would have thought it beautiful from anyone that young. Not all the education in the world could have taught that boy to write and what to say.

If he was "taught" at all, it was given to him by the School Master in the School of Grace. There are many who have known Corrone all his life who might want to read it again, as well as those who have known him only a few months.

I hope you do not think me presumptious in sending these to you.

The Lord bless you; and we hope to see you in September.

Yours in hope,
Joanne

A LETTER FROM A YOUNG MEMBER

October 25, 1948

Dear Mr. Gold:

You will find herein a letter written to me by one who is, perhaps the youngest member of our church. He is just 14 years of age, and just recently joined our folks at the Flat Swamp church. As a general rule I am not a great believer in publishing personal letters. But in this particular case, I really believe it would be of value to your Landmark. A large number of our folks have asked me to let you have it to publish if you care to do so. So I have talked with his parents concerning the matter, and have their consent to send it to you. It, of course, will need some corrections. You, therefore, may look over it and should you care to publish all, or part of it, then I believe it will be deeply appreciated by our folks. Everyone who knows him is completely in love with him.

Yours truly,
A. C. Owens

Williamston, N. C.

Dear Brother Owens:

I received your most welcome letter a few days ago, and have been wanting to write you ever since. We went to Pleasant Hill today and ate dinner with Brother and Sister Edwards. I really enjoyed going there and hope to go again. I wanted to hear Elder Berry preach, but he couldn't come. I did, however, hear Elder Weaver. Oh, how the Lord does bless his people. How good and how blessed it is for us to partake of his riches through his servants of which I hope to be one if it is His will. For I do desire to pour out to the hungry and thirsty the goodness and mercy that the dear Lord has shown me. How I like to meditate over these things, the unsearchable riches of God, only open to a few and they can see only a small part of it, as much as the Lord desires them to see.

I like to feel His presence so close to me, just as I am feeling His presence now as I try to write a few words that are not of men but of God. Oh, I hope I am thankful to the Lord for being so kind and good to me. I sometimes want to shout and sing praises to His name. I often hear the brethren speak of things that they liked in the years gone by, but since they have been a witness to God's grace and mercy they no longer like the things of the world, but now they enjoy the spiritual things of God.

I am so thankful to the Lord God

Almighty that I do not like the things of the world. I have never liked her things, but have always loved the brethern and sisters of the Old Baptist Church, for I feel as though He has brought me down to know that I am a sinner and chief among them, says Paul. How wonderful it is to know that eternal life is not bought or sold, but is a free gift of God, given to all those who ask for it with fear and trembling, and the ones who have been hewed down are the only ones who will ask for it and receive it.

How wonderful it is to me to have a hope in Him. The kind of hope that makes me put my trust in Him. I really feel that the Lord has increased my knowledge of Him. For He has shown me many wonders. And while I am quite young—only fourteen years of age —I feel as though He has taught me very much indeed, but the more He teaches me the more I want to know, and the more I am ashamed of myself, and the poorer and lower I feel.

Sometimes I don't feel like going to see the Lord's people, because I feel to be unworthy. But then again I like to be with them, because I hope that I am one of them and that they are my people. How blessed it is for us to have that hope, the kind of hope that gives us the feeling that we are some of His little flock that were chosen by Him before the foundation of the world. Satan knows full well that he can't get even one of us, though he makes all kinds of false promises. Satan is always at hand, no matter how good we try to be, even when we are in the presence of the Lord, he is at hand though we don't know it.

Aren't we all so glad that God is not the kind of spirit that tempts us, but instead is full of loving kindness. He is one that takes us from the pits of hell and lifts us up into His marvelous glory. He is never in a hurry, yet He is never late. He is one that does His own work at His appointed time. How good it is to know that God is just, kind, merciful and one who doesn't need the advice of men. For if God says you are one of His children, He will hew you down so you will know that you are a sinner and then He will reveal His love to you. Hence, you can't have religion today and lose it tomorrow.

If the religion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ever gets hold of you, it will never turn you loose. I like to think of the time when Jesus said, "I come not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance," because the righteous are the ones who have been born again and have been taught of the Holy Spirit. They are the ones who have been brought down and have gone through the valley of the shadow of death. They are the ones who know no other help except that which comes from God, they are the ones who would die if God would withdraw himself from them, they are the ones who try to praise Him and thank Him for what He has done for them.

Yes, those are the ones for whom God sacrificed His Son, they are the ones whom Jesus came to save. Therefore, I hope that I may be blessed to praise, honor and love Him all the days of my life, and on that Judgement day that I may also be on His right hand with his sheep. And this is my prayer. For Christ's sake, Amen.

Corrone Bryant
Williamston, N.C.

P. O. Box 3423
Panama City, Fla. 3423

My dear Brothers:

I'm sure that you do not understand my persistence in sending written material to you, and neither do I, but for some reason known only to our God, I am led of his Spirit to do so.

According to all natural evidence I am subject to be going to my eternal home at any time. The doctors seem to have come to that conclusion. However, I am not in the least discouraged, nor am I worried. I know in whose hands

my life is resting; and to depart from this body is eternal gain — where there is no more suffering or pain. My one desire is to honor and glorify my Heavenly Father through Jesus my precious and beloved Saviour. He has been made to be all things for me and unto me, and I trust in Him with all my heart and soul.

May God bless you,
Ethel Gilland

The following is one of the writings referred to:

After a visitation from the most high God, a man finds that it truly is not in himself to direct his footsteps. It is then that we learn for sure that we are not "free-agents", and are wholly dependent upon a higher power to lead, guide, protect, and keep us.

Before this visitation a man goes about boasting that he is self-sufficient, and is wrapped up in his own self-righteousness importance. His attitude toward others plainly speaks of his puffed up condition, as he tells others in his actions that they are not as good and deserving as he is.

But, lo and behold, what a difference it makes when we come face to face with the fact that we are not all-sufficient at all, but are entirely dependent upon the most high God. It is then that we learn that our lives *do not* belong to us, and that we are no more than a lump of clay in the Potter's hand. It is then that we learn that without Him we can do nothing; and find that we must look to him for every breath we breathe. Then we forsake that puffed-up attitude of self-importance, and live at the feet of our precious Lord Jesus, and cry daily to our holy and righteous Father for our every need, and know that it is not in us to direct our footsteps.

How small and dependent we feel, knowing that every footstep we take is directed by the most high God; and that His Spirit and power is forever flowing through Jesus Christ our Lord, who has been made to be all things for us and unto us. I believe that Jesus is my righteousness, my holiness, my sanctification, and because of Him I have my Father's every good and perfect gift of love, grace, and mercy. When He died and arose and ascended into heaven, He forever sealed our eternal salvation. This I believe with all my heart.

Ethel Gilland

THE GREATEST BLESSING: A HOPE

Dear Elder Wood:

Finding that my time is out for the *Signs,* I am renewing. I don't feel that I could do without the *Signs of the Times* while I can read. It was in my father's home ever since I can remember, and mine, for I grew to love it when I was young; and to listen to father talk of the goodness of our God.

I married in 1908 and had many trials and disappointments, but blessings all along the way. The greatest blessing was a hope He has given me that He was leading me. I feel so little I wonder if He has ever looked on me, yet if I know myself, I am made to want to worship Him in spirit and truth: as it is written, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

It is written, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

Enclosed is my check for two years — the rest is for you.

In fellowship,
Mrs. W. B. McGregor

OBSERVES 99th ANNIVERSARY

Hartford, Ala.
May 29, 1973

Bethlehem Church, Malvern, Alabama, observed the 99th year of its existence on the second Sunday in May at

the time of its annual communion, which has been kept by this church for almost a century. The charter members were Elder W. T. Bell and wife, Sarah, Isaac Stewart and wife, Rebecca, (who were relatives of the writer) Nicholas Edmondson, and Elsey Bond. The Presbytery was composed of Elders Jesse Tomlin, J. W. Parker, and Amborose Pellum, on April 26, 1874, in Dale County, Ala. Soon after its organization the church was moved to its present site on Newton's Creek in the new County of Geneva, where one of the largest cemeteries in this section exists. It is most beautiful, and contains the remains of Elders J. N. Purvis, W. J. Harrison, and W. H. Smith, with countless other faithful believers in Christ such as the families of S. H. Tew, John J. Collins, Colwells, Stewarts, Bonds, Halls, Underwoods, Barbers, Bedsoles, Harrisons, Swanns, Carrolls, Daltons, Vinsons, Mitchells, Barnes, Rice, Hartzogs, Trawicks, and countless others.

Among the pastors have been, Elders W. T. Bell, J. W. Parker, Isaac Stewart, J. W. Collins, E. D. Ivery, J. N. Purvis, H. A. Smith, W. J. Hartzog, F. A. Collins, J. J. Smith, J. A. Tew, W. J. Harrison, C. C. Hornsby, and J. J. Collins who has served in all about thirty years, and has been in the ministry fifty-five years, and is ably assisted by Elders D. W. and Henry H. Collins, distant relatives of his.

Among the Clerks have been, Isaac Stewart, Jesse Carroll, H. S. Everett, J. J. Hall, Dr. C. C. Dalton, E. C. Purvis, B. M. Joyner, W. W. Givens, F. Belcher, W. T. Swann, J. N. Underwood, M. A. Barber, O. H. Tew, H. C. Harrison, H. T. Collins, J. T. Collins, P. J. Hartzog and Charles T. Collins.

This church has been a haven of rest for true believers in Christ since pioneer days, and holds its regular service each second Sunday at 10:20, when all are invited to attend.

Among those members who have kept the torch of faith alive in this church for ninety-nine years have been E. C. Purvis, Jesse Carroll, Jasper Barnes, M. A. Barber, S. H. Tew, J. A. Mitchell, J. W. Bledsole, H. T. Collins, W. T. Swann, J. A. Tew, J. T. Collins, R. C. Collins, J. J. Hall, W. J. Harrison, J. N. Purvis, J. N. Underwood and many more.

Among the ministers present last Sunday for the annual communion were Elders Eugene Taylor, A. B. Chumney, J. J. Watson, Henry H. Collins and the Pastor.

May this church be blessed to carry on in the faith of our Lord and Paul until Jesus comes again with all His holy angels.

J. J. Collins

ENJOYS READING *THE SIGNS*

Rt. 1, Box 318,
Eustace, Texas 75124

Dear Editors:

Please renew my subscription for four years, and use the balance as you see fit.

I enjoy reading the *Signs,* and especially the *Voices of the Past.* It seems that the dear ones of yesteryear were blessed to give their accounts of happenings in this world. The eloquence of the language, the terminology and presentation strengthens our hope that there is and was, and is to be, divinely inspired writers and speakers here among us.

I use the term "us" loosely, as I fear that such as I could not be worthy to count himself among the saints. The subject also strengthens our hope that God is an unchanging and ever living God, and that His power exceeds all other power. Men have tried and are trying, and some claim they have succeeded, but they cannot equal let alone exceed the Power of God.

Yours in Christian faith and hope,

B. J. McLaughlin

EXPERIENCE OF
MRS. MARY SURRATT,
MAX MEADOWS, VA.

Dear Brother:

I have been reading your good paper for sometime, handed to me by a brother who takes it; and while I read from those scattered over the land and sea, I love to ponder in my heart the greatness of their God, and the helplessness of themselves. For truly I do believe that God is Almighty, and I am a fallen helpless creature. But I hope I have learned in the same school of grace, the bitterness of their sorrows, and their comforts and joys, and that I understand their tears; yet I have been pressed on every side for an answer to these things that I hope I have received.

I am told that we get our belief from childhood; but not so with me. As my thoughts go back to my childhood, I remember as I traveled along to Sunday School with my sister. Our names were hung on the wall of the Cradle Roll at birth, and at the age of three passed on to a member of the Sunday School; and at twelve sprinkled into membership of the church. Death seemed so certain I worked for a home in heaven in mission band and Epworth League, and every branch connected with the church. I worked, and played my part, I will say, from posing as an angel of mercy carrying fruits and flowers to the sick, down to a beggar filling "dime books" in my father's place of business. So I feel I can say of a truth that it wasn't the way I was brought up that made me an Old Baptist believer.

Then on the other hand those nearest and dearest to me by the ties of nature, who have never seen the shortness of their own arm of flesh, (except this one sweet sister I mentioned, who has fallen asleep, — we could converse and agree,) but the other brothers and sisters in this large family, tell me that I am an Old Baptist because my husband is: that he talked me into believing this strange doctrine. But while it was from him in my early married life, that I heard there was a church of this faith and order, it was I who tried to teach and show him time and again just how unjust this God of heaven would be to have a chosen family; and it was to prove to him that my God loved everybody, and sent his Son to die for everyone who would accept Him. For the first time I began reading the Bible; but as I searched and pondered over, "Thus saith the Lord," for days and months and years, mystery after mystery loomed up before me. While the holy law heaped curses on my head, it also demanded an answer, Who art thou that repliest against God? And in the midst of all these mysteries, I saw plainly that heaven wasn't gained by works, but it was a gift bestowed on a helpless little flock by the Father. Thus I saw all the works of mine own arm of flesh as filthy rags not acceptable in His sight.

As I read and pondered in my heart this little flock, the church, the gospel by which they were fed; of Jesus their wonderful Saviour of sinners who prayed for them, and not for the world, — from here on I saw my Creator in a new light. He was no longer weak and depending on the acts of a big devil, or the help of almighty man; but He was the creator of heaven and earth and everything therein, whose great wisdom covered the whole universe. And so, with this complete turning around in making that last which was first, and first that which was last, I locked this secret up; and it was as fire in my bones. I did not turn to mother or to my husband, but mourned within. So I feel that I can say truthfully that I never received this belief from my husband, neither did it come by father or mother.

While I live in the flesh I don't expect to be free from sin, for there is none good but God; neither maketh He any man to sin, for the flesh is carried off of its own lust unto death. The warfare goes on within me, — the flesh

warring against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, is the greatest tribulation I know, because it strikes closer home than any other trouble or trial. So I have to say that the perfect cloak of God's grace and electing predestination will hang gracefully as a cloak over this crooked body of mine.

I have been blessed to go and enjoy many feasts of the gospel table, all praise being given to whom they were due. This past fall I went back to the old Meeting House I had seen in vision, and my heart was made sad, for there on the ground lay the old brown walls I had loved so well to meet within. As I passed on to the near neighbor house where the meeting was held, I could not hold back the tears that flowed; but in that meeting with those favored few, and many brethren and sisters from elsewhere, I saw them filled to overflowing. Here to me again was the church whose maker and builder is God, that can never be removed.

I only meant to mention the paper. My excuse is that sometimes it seems I get a little peep into this great storehouse of love and there I see so much stored away in Wisdom's way for those who both love and fear God, and it just seems so simple and easy that I long for the talent of an hundredfold to lay it out before all who profess a hope in this same Jesus; and then humbly ask those who differ with me, Do we really disagree or am I just misunderstood?

Now who is able to separate us from the love of God? I feel I can truthfully say Amen to the testimony of Paul, That father and mother, sisters or brothers, houses and lands, trials and persecutions, etc. cannot; and I am glad. For to take from me these blessed truths would be taking away my comfort by day and my song in the night, my hope, my salvation, my all.

To the helpless may I say, Remember me. Truly I need the prayers of those I love.

(The above was handed to us by Sister Surrat's daughter, Mrs. Dewey C. Dean, of Alexandria, Va. who attends our meetings. Sister Surratt died in May, 1959, and her husband died in May, 1963, and they were buried in Little Vine Church Cemetery. Elder Secrease conducted the services. We enjoyed reading this experience, and felt the brethren and sisters would also.

How true, as stated in her experience, "I plainly saw that heaven wasn't gained by works, but it was a gift bestowed on a helpless little flock by the Father." — J. D. W.)

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the **Staunton River Union** is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with Strawberry Church the 5th Sunday in September, 1973, and Saturday before.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Elder R. S. Payne, Moderator
Josephine N. Dodd, Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSSOCIATION

The Smith River Association is to convene with Charity Church, Patrick County, Virginia, the Lord willing. The Church is located on Rt. 40 about 18 miles west of Ferrum, Virginia, and about 5 miles east of Woolwine, Virginia.

We would love to meet with some of the saints there on Friday, Saturday and 1st Sunday in September, 1973. (August 31, September 1 and 2, 1973)

Amos I. Hash, Clerk

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the *Contentnea Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, with Hancock's Church, Pitt County, N. C., the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in July. The church is located near Ayden, N. C.

All lovers of the truth are invited to visit with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Seven Mile Primitive Baptist Association*, the Lord willing, will be held with the Church at Hickory Grove, Johnston County, N. C., beginning on Friday at 11 o'clock and continuing Saturday and Sunday, (September 14, 15 and 16)

Hickory Grove Meeting House is located approximately seven miles east of Benson on Highway 50.

Eld. W. D. Godwin, Mod.
James Young, Clerk

PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Pleasant Valley Association* is appointed to be held in the Community Building at Stockdale, Texas, August 17, 18, and 19, 1973, where we hope to meet our brothers and sisters of the same faith and order.

A hearty welcome is extended to all who would like to enjoy this meeting with us. Elder C. M. Haygood is our beloved Moderator, and Elder G. D. Shipman, Clerk, and Brother Jimmy Lindsey, Asst. Clerk.

Lela Culpepper, Clerk Mount
Olive Church, Stockdale, Texas.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND
(To June 1, 1973)

Raymond May, Va.	$ 3.00
Mabel Ellis, Va.	3.00
Mr. Andrew Agee, Va.	3.00
Mrs. J. T. Flippen, Gift in memory of parents, Elder & Mrs. J. P. Helms, Va.	18.00
Julia Ada, Md.	3.00
Mrs. Allridge Slaughter, Ala.	3.00
Mrs. Vercie Bolejack, Va.	1.00
Miss Cathrine Houchins, Va.	3.00
Elder Stewart, Miss.	2.00
Oscar L. Moyers, Tenn.	1.00
Mrs. A. M. Smith, Sr., Ohio	3.00
F. J. Cain, La.	2.00
Mrs. Algy Foshee, La.	1.00
Clarence Cox, Mich.	3.00
In memory of Mrs. Ida Ray and brother Bruce Ray from Children, Miss.	13.00
A friend, N.C.	3.00
C. S. Parsons, Ohio	1.00
Mrs. Charles Craven, N.C.	5.00
Mr. & Mrs. S. T. Walker, Va.	3.00
Mrs. Robert Lawson, Ark.	1.00
Mr. & Mrs. C. F. Stewart, N.C.	3.00
Mrs. S. J. Priddy, W. Va.	1.00
Mrs. Tom Rakes, Va.	10.00
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Mrs. J. C. Turner, Ky.	1.00
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Kathleen Martin, Va.	1.00
Mrs. James F. Thompson, N.C.	6.00

Danville, Virginia **August, 1973**

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EDITORIAL

HEBREWS 10:35

"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward."

As we are reminded that it is time for us once more to address the household of faith, we are conscious of our inability to command the spirit, or even of ourselves, to speak one word in season to those that be weary. It is an act of divine mercy if one shall comfort another, and when the occasion arises that one must write, the thoughts are ever present, "What am I that I should presume to give my opinion or attempt to write to God's dear saints?" Perhaps it was this feeling under which Gideon labored, when the angel of the Lord appeared unto him and sat under

the oak which was in Ophrah, as Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress to hide it from the Midianites. The angel said unto him, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor." Let us consider Gideon's reply. He said, "Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? but now the Lord has forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites."

It is evident that Gideon mourned an absent God, feared the common enemy, and the only way to obtain food, that which sustained him at that time, was to hide away behind the winepress, so fearful was he of the Midianites. Let us continue with this blessed man for a while. It is written, "And the Lord looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee? And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house."

It is evident from the above that Gideon had little confidence in the flesh, and the subsequent experience through which he was made to pass taught him also to cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of. Gideon was stripped of all false confidence and his only hope was the presence of the Lord in accord with the words He had before spoken unto him. Thus it is, we hope, with us, we have foes without and foes within, and we at times would hide behind the winepress which Jesus trod, to get our morsel of sustenance for fear of the enemy. It was there where the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon. He has appeared to us, and all the confidence that is worth while, that is true and not false, is wrought in us by Jesus, the angel of the Lord.

There is much false confidence in man and it is not a pleasant thing to be stripped; the Lord has a place where he strips each of us, if we be what we profess to be. We do not know, either, what we need, but we believe the Lord knows, it is very mortifying to the flesh when the Lord takes us into the stripping-room. Humbling grace not only teaches us to look to Christ, but to trust in him, also, and to come to Christ one must be killed to self and self-confidence, and often when we seem to have attained unto this the Angel of the Lord shows us greater abominations, so that we despair of self and self-confidence. It is God's teaching when one learns that it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes. Peter, full of self-confidence, could say, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. How humble Peter was under the teaching of his God. He went out and wept bitterly. His self-confidence left him before the knowing eye of the maid. Just as it is God that humbles, so it is he only can lift us up, David said, "For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy works; I will triumph in the works of thy hands."

It is the Lord who is the confidence of all the ends of the earth and all of them that are afar off upon the sea, and it is his love and mercy manifest in us that is our joy and gives us confidence in him. Thus when persecuting Saul was changed to praying Paul such was the blessing and favor showered upon him from above that he did not even consult with the brethren of Jerusalem, but such was his confidence in the Lord that he went about preaching him whom he once destroyed. Sometimes this confidence is manifest in a person who is made to know he has passed from death unto life because they love the brethren. Others find their afflictions are those of the saints of God. Some are enabled to-day to endure a great fight of afflictions, partly being made a gaz-

ingstock both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly while they became companions of them that were so used. Paul in Philippians tells that many of the brethren in the Lord waxed confident by his bonds and were much more bold to speak the word without fear. Thus by a diversity of operations the brethren are given confidence in the Lord, and such a confidence have they in him that they know that he who hath begun a good work in them will continue it until the day of Jesus Christ.

Yet at times there are those who creep in unawares, to which condemnation they were before of old ordained, teaching a duty religion, some effort of the creature, instead of a continued work of the Creator. Where such a doctrine is listened to and believed there is a casting away of their confidence, for creature attainment will carry with it creature glorifying, and Paul says, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." He had confidence only in Christ Jesus the Lord. Job was sorely tried, his house destroyed, his cattle stolen, his children dead, and, last of all, he was afflicted with boils. In the dust he mourned an absent God, searched for him forward, backward, and to the right hand, but could not find him, yet such was his confidence that he declares, "He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

Just as Job was tried, each of us will have our portion, for if we are to walk with Jesus it will be in the furnace of affliction, and we shall ever prove that the mount of danger is the place where we shall see surprising grace. It is often in trials that we learn what wretches we are and how very little real religion we have when put to the test. It is at such times that Satan will harass and tempt us to despair. His efforts are always directed to undermine our confidence in the Lord. We remember very well an occasion, some years ago, when after a season of joy in believing, we felt forsaken of our God, and in our distress it seemed that ours was a stony ground hearer's experience. We experienced nothing but condemnation. Day and night his hand was heavy upon us. What with Satan's temptation and a heart of unbelief we had almost come to the place where Peter said, "I know him not." Our former confidence was gone and we believed Satan's lie rather than what our living, loving Lord had spoken to us. The day came when by a word from on high our confidence was renewed, for he said, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Then our mountain was strong and we thought we should never question his love and mercy towards us again. Paul has been putting the brethren in mind of their fellowship with him and those of like precious faith, and says, "Cast not away therefore your confidence." They could not cast away that which they had not, and they would learn, even as Paul himself had learned, that it is only the grace of God that enables us to hold fast this confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

The grace of God is an enabling grace, and the faith of God's elect is an overwhelming faith, and it is in and through these blessed and heavenly gifts that the righteous does hold on his way. Paul says this confidence hath great recompense of reward. Each evidence of God's love and mercy is a sweet foretaste of what heaven hereafter will be, and the rougher the way the sweeter is the rest that remains for the people of God. It is true that there seems little account of what heaven will be, but we are confident that when He shall appear we shall be like him, and what a recompence of reward it will be to see him as he is, and be like him. It was in the confidence of faith that Paul said, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh

for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." His whole ministry was a plain declaration of the truth that was revealed to him and of which he was confident, and in his concluding testimony he said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." We have loved his appearing in the past, for it is in his appearing that our confidence abounds. May he grant us grace to stand fast and hold our confidence even unto the end.

(Editorial by the late Elder George Ruston, December, 1929)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

I PETER 3:18-20

In our last number, brother J. W. Livingston calls for our views on I Peter, 3:18, 20:

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit:

"By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

"Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water."

In our attempt to comply with the request of our brother, to give our views on this text, which has puzzled those of more light and understanding than we possess, we hope we may not be left to darken counsel by words without knowledge, or to embarrass, instead of edifying those who honestly enquire after the truth. We frankly confess that the latter part of this text has been very dark and obscure to our mind, and what we shall present on the subject is only to be regarded as *our views*, until at least the reader shall find them sustained by the testimony of the scriptures.

In the context, the apostle has been treating upon the new and spiritual birth, which is of incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever; in distinction from that birth which is of corruptible seed, or of the flesh, which (like grass) is corruptible, and the glory of which is as the flower of the grass, which must also perish, or fall away. The subject of this new birth, like the living and ever abiding word from which it preceeds, must live and abide forever; and those who are so born, as new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, (that is, of the word of God which liveth and abideth forever,) as it is congenial with the production of the new birth which is by the same word. Having drawn the line between the distinct elements of which the christian, in his present state, is composed; the one of the flesh, which is grass, corruptible, mortal, and perishable, the other, of incorruptible seed by the word of God, and, therefore, incorruptible and abiding, he goes on to show that in our earthly and fleshly standing, the relationship in the flesh is not annulled, nor changed by our new birth; the production of the corruptible and that of the incorruptible seed, are brought into personal identity, for the time being, but still in opposition to each other, insomuch that the spirit wars against the flesh and the flesh against the spirit; or, the corruptible against the incorruptible, until the grass shall wither, and the flower thereof shall pass away. Having defined this subject in the most lucid manner, Peter proceeds to show some of the obligations which are binding on christians in their personal relations to each other and to mankind, in the flesh, as well as what is enjoined on them as children of the spiritual and

immortal birth. In their spiritual identity they are "A chosen generation,"—to show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. In their flesh, they are admonished to have their conversation honest among the Gentiles, and to submit to every ordinance (or constitutional law) of man, for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the king, as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers. Honor all men, love the brotherhood, Fear God. Honor the King. "Servants," that is, christian servants, for Peter as an apostle, has nothing to do with any but christians, "be subject to your masters, with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward." The same as christians in their fleshly relations are bound by the laws of Christ to be loyal to kings and governors, or to whatever form of constitutional government they may be placed in the providence of God, to let every soul be subject to the higher power. "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands," and in all our fleshly relations, to observe the same rules and authorities, which would be binding on us if we were not christians. And as this fidelity is enjoined on all christians, not only to the good and gentle, who may have dominion over them, but also to the froward; the apostle admits that a faithful obedience to these laws of Christ, will, beyond all doubt, subject them sometimes to suffer unjustly from the dominion of tyrants, still he says it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well-doing, than for evil-doing, and then adds the words of our text, giving us a pattern and example in the person of our divine Lord and Master.

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust." He would not call on his children to suffer unjustly from the froward and tyrannical, who may have a brief authority over them, if he had not himself suffered the just for the unjust. The will of God was so, that Christ should suffer, though holy and harmless, and separate from sinners; although no guile was found in his mouth. He did not object to drink the bitter cup, which was pressed to his holy lips, saying that he had violated no law, transgressed no rule that was binding on him, but recognizing his Father's will in the matter, he said, when pressed with the unutterable agony, "If it is possible, let this cup pass, nevertheless not my will, but thy will be done." Learn then, ye suffering christians, to bear with patience so far as men are concerned, and when reviled, revile not again. Christ suffered for sins,—not for sins which he had committed, for he knew no sin. Holy, pure, spotless and immaculate, in every respect, he was emphatically just, but he suffered for the sins of the unjust. He was crucified by wicked hands, of those whose wicked hearts were full of violence. But who were they? The Jews and Romans! The men of Israel and the Gentiles were the immediate agents in the bloody tragedy on Calvary!

"But knotty whips and jagged thorns
In vain do I accuse;
In vain I blame the Roman bands
And the more spiteful Jews —
'Twere you, my sins, my cruel sins,
His chief tormentors were;
Each of my crimes became a nail,
And unbelief the spear."

The sufferings of Christ were vicarious. He suffered the just for the unjust. The Lord has laid on him the iniquities of all his people. He was delivered for our offences, and was raised from the dead for our justification. And he has himself said, "I lay down my life for the sheep." The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. The sufferer was personally just, but those for whom he suffered were legally unjust. He was as a lamb without spot or blemish; but those for whom he bore the penalty of the divine law, were guilty sinners, and by nature, children of wrath, even as others; and the object or design of his sufferings was that *he might bring us to God.* "All we, like

sheep, have gone astray, we have turned every one to his way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." There was no other way to bring us to God, or to reclaim us from our wanderings, but by redemption; and none but Jesus had the right of redemption, he being the nearest of kin; and none but Jesus had the ability to redeem us to God, for there is salvation in none other. It was not possible that the blood of bulls or heifers could purge us from our sins, and in our sins we could not see God. The design then of the atonement was special, definite and exclusively for his people. The iniquities which were laid on him he has put away by the sacrifice of himself; he bore them in his own body on the tree; and by one offering he has perfected them that are sancified.

"Being put to death in the flesh." The second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven, was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, that he, by the grace of God, might taste death for every one for whom he was delivered up. The Word which was with God, and which was God, in whom was life, (that life which is the light of men,) was made flesh, and dwelt among us. This flesh was indispensable for the work of redemption. He took not on him the nature of angels, for in the nature of angels he could not taste the death for men. For men in the flesh, he was to die, and to represent them in the flesh in which they were sinners, he must be made flesh, and stand before the law in the likeness of sinful flesh. He was, therefore, made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem us from under the law. Bear in mind the theme of the apostle in the connection of our text, *the flesh and the spirit,* the incorruptible and the corruptible seeds,—the flesh which is grass, and the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. The Word of God, which is the fountain of our spiritual life, the Lord from heaven, &c., to represent us in the flesh and die the just for the unjust, must be made flesh, or take on him a fleshly body that could suffer and die, in which to be put to death. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death; that is, the devil, and deliver them who through death were all their life time subject to bondage." *He was put to death in the flesh,* not in the spirit which liveth and abideth forever, for that aside from his flesh was immortal and could not die; and hence his assumption of flesh, that he might taste death, or be put to death in the flesh. By the term flesh, in regard to what Christ took him for the purpose of suffering, we understand, according to Christ's own explanation, to be, That which is born of the flesh; namely, the seed of Abraham, or that which his children are partakers of; soul, body, and all that Adam was, when Man became a living soul. Before he took on him a body in which to suffer, and a soul which was poured out to death, or which was made an offering for sin, Isa. 53:10, he was the Lord in heaven, and the anointed Mediator, in whom all the Church of God was chosen, and in whom God had blessed them with all spiritual blessings, before the foundation of the world. But for the suffering of death he took the same nature on him, in which his people had sinned, a body in which he bore our sins, a soul that was exceedingly sorrowful even unto death, and a spirit which could be troubled, could groan, and which he committed to his Father, when he yielded up the ghost on the cross. His whole person, including soul, body and spirit, was just, holy and pure. The holy thing which was conceived in the womb of the virgin, and born of her, was unblemished, undefiled, spotless and pure, although he was made sin for us, or in other words, all the sins of his people were laid upon him, and he was legally held responsible for them, and did suffer the full weight and penalty of the law to the complete satisfaction of Eternal

Justice, for them, the same as though they had been committed personally by him; for the Lord had laid them on him, and he was able to put them away by the sacrifice of himself. It was in his being found in fashion as a man in the flesh that the law could recognize him as the legal representative of his people in their flesh, in which they had sinned, and in the flesh to put him to death. The importance of the doctrine of the incarnation is most vital, for John testifies that, "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God; and this is that spirit of anti-Christ, whereof ye have heard that it should come: and even now already is it in the world." God was manifest in the flesh. All fulness dwelt in him. All the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily; and all the fulness of his Church also dwelt in him, and is complete in him who is the head of all principality and power. The spirit of Immortality, the power of an endless life by which he is made a priest forever after the order of Melchesidec, was in him, as the life which was with the Father and was manifested, 1 John 1:1, 2. And which God hath given to us in him, 1 John 5:11, 12. He was put to death in the flesh.

"But quickened by the spirit." By what spirit was he quickened? By the spirit of life and immortality which was made flesh and dwelt among us. That spirit which is the fountain and source of regeneration of which Peter is treating in connection with our text, and which he distinguishes from all flesh which is grass, which is corruptible, which can die or which is mortal. His flesh qualified him to die; but his flesh, in itself, aside from the indwelling, the Eternal Spirit, through which he offered himself without spot to God, had no power to rise from the dead. It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit," &c. His simply dying in the flesh, did not of itself demonstrate his divinity: for All flesh is grass, all die, all flesh is subject to death; but the power of his resurrection, shows that Christ was in that flesh; and being quickened by the Spirit, justifies the character which he assumed, and proves that he is the Son of God, and the complete Savior of his people. The spirit which raised him up from the dead is not only a life producing spirit, but it is life itself. Thus Paul, in discriminating between the flesh and the spirit, says, "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead, because of sin: but, *the spirit is life,* because of righteousness: But if the spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you." Rom. 8:10, 11. Thus clearly identifying the spirit that quickened the crucified body of Christ, and which dwells in us by regeneration now, and which shall ultimately resurrect the mortal bodies of all who are born of that incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. In this flesh, like grass, even Jesus could bleed and die—pour out his soul, yield up his spirit, and slumber with the dead; but in the Eternal Spirit of life and immortality, he had power to take up his life again, and destroy death, and swallow up death in victory. His crucified body was raised up from the dead, by this quickening spirit, and by this quickening spirit, in regeneration, all the saints are born of incorruptible seed by the Word of God, and by this self same spirit the mortal bodies shall finally be clothed in immortality,—and be fashioned and made like unto his raised and glorified body. "For whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the First born among many brethren." The spirit which brought again from the dead the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, is the same spirit that now dwells in all who are born of God, by which they are sealed until the day of redemption, to-wit: the redemption of our body. And

it is called the spirit of the Lord God, which is upon him, by which he is anointed to preach glad tidings to the meek, &c., Isa. 61:1, and that *"By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison."* The spirits in prison were those unto whom Christ was anointed to preach good tidings, whose prison doors he came to open, and whom he came to deliver out of their prison houses. If they were not prisoners, they would not need deliverance. They were prisoners, yet they were prisoners of hope, Zech. 9:12. As Paul says, "In hope of Eternal life which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." They were captives, sold under sin; lawful captives, but Christ has led their captivity captive, and received gifts for men. In one general view, all whom Christ came to redeem, were prisoners, and his ministry to them all is by the same spirit of the Lord God, by which he was raised up from the dead, and his preaching or proclamation of deliverance to them, is by that spirit; whether we understand it as applicable to his personal manifestations in their individual experience respectively, or through the prophets, apostles, evangelists, teachers and pastors, or by what ever gifts the saints are edified; for, there are different gifts, but all by the same spirit, and that is the spirit of Christ. The prophets sought diligently to know what, or what manner of time the spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it spake of his sufferings and of the glory that should follow. This spirit is that with which the apostles were endowed from above, and which came upon them in a mighty rushing wind from heaven on the day of Pentecost. And, in short, if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

"These spirits which were in prison, were sometime disobedient." And in all time until called by grace, of every redeemed child, it may be said there has been a time in which they lived in disobedience to God, and on opposition to this spirit of life, of truth, of holiness,—and the apostle refers to an instance, in the days of Noah, when the ark was a preparing. The spirit of Christ was then in Noah, who, by it, was a preacher of righteousness; but his preaching by that spirit was resisted by the antedeluvians, and Stephen charged the Jews, "Ye do always resist the Spirit: as your fathers did so do ye." &c. And all who oppose the truth as it is in Jesus, do also in like manner resist the spirit. We do not, of course, mean that God, the Holy Ghost, attempts to operate on their hearts, and they successfully resist and prevent him. Such a sentiment would represent the sinner as being stronger than God. But the spirit of Christ as it exists in all the saints is opposed by the flesh which wareth against it, and by the world which cannot receive it, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. Christ came and preached to you, dear brother, and to you, dear sister, when your spirit was in prison; when arrested in your mad career of sin and folly, quickened and made sensible that you was a guilty sinner against a holy God; when you, as a prisoner, was under arrest, and brought before the awful bar of Justice; when you was compelled to plead guilty to every charge; when your sins were set before you, and Justice with uplifted sword demanded satisfaction, and your mouth was stopped, and you stood guilty before God—were you not bound hand and foot, so that with your hand you could do nothing to expiate your guilt, and with your feet you could not run away from or escape the avenger of blood? Strong chains of darkness bound you in your cell, and you could not open the prison door. Were you not then a spirit in prison, until the anointed Jesus came and preached peace and salvation, life and liberty to your captive spirit?

And are there not seasons with old christians when they find themselves shut up as with hewn stones, so that they cannot come forth, and the prison none can open until Jesus by this spirit comes to preach to you?

He went by this spirit and preached

unto the spirits in prison, when he entered the dark domains of death, when he dwelt among the dead. This was loud preaching to them; it told them that he had bowed his heavens and come down, that he had descended to the lowest parts of the earth; that the iron gates were opened to him, and that he had come to destroy death and the grave, and to deliver them who were all their lifetime subject to bondage through fear of death. When he arose, he opened the doors of death, and destroyed the power of the grave. And as he arose as the first-fruits of them that slept, he gave the assurance that he would also quicken from the dead, and in due time raise up and glorify the redeemed bodies of all his saints who sleep in the dust of the earth.

To illustrate this bearing of our subject, the apostle uses the figure of the ark, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved. This he calls a figure; and, as a figure, sets forth the doctrine of salvation through or by grace. As Noah and his family were preserved from the destroying waters of the deluge in the ark, so Christ and all the spiritual family are saved from wrath, in the church of God. And as, while the ark was being prepared, some were disobedient; so while God is gathering into his church the heirs of immortality, some are disobedient, and some who are called by grace are conscious that they were of that number.

The like figure, whereunto baptism doth also now save us.—Just as the temporal deliverance of Noah and his family in the ark was a figure of salvation by grace, so is also christian baptism a like figure, signifying the same thing. Baptism cannot save us from the curse of the law, or the blood of Christ might have been spared; neither can it put away the filth of the flesh, which is grass, but it is the answer of a good conscious toward God. It is in answer to an eternal principle implanted in us by an incorruptible seed; it shows our willing subjection and allegiance to Jesus Christ, and our joyful espousal of his cause, and open profession of his name. And at the same time sets forth the doctrine of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, and of our being buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, we also are to walk in newness of life.

Brother Livingston, we have made rather a long article of this, but if any thing herein written shall be of service to you, or to any of the readers, we shall have cause to be thankful to God. May you and they carefully and prayerfully compare our views with the infallible standard of truth, and endorse our views only so far as they are clearly sustained by the scriptures of truth.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe July 15, 1861.)

Mark 16:17-18

Brother Beebe: — Will you give your views on the last words which our Savior spake before his ascension, namely: "And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not harm them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

F. Brendell.

Hamilton Co., Iowa, March 10, 1859.

REPLY.

In the early ministry of the apostles of the Lamb, and of the primitive disciples of our risen Lord, all these signs did literally follow them that believed, for it is added in the closing verse of the same chapter, "And they went forth and preached, everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."

Many instances are recorded of miracles performed by them in the name of the Lord Jesus, such as healing the sick, casting out devils; and we have an instance of the deadly viper which

lit on Paul's hand, and which he shook off into the fire, to the utter astonishment of the heathen with whom his lot was providentially cast, and all these signs were performed in confirmation of the word of the Lord. To prove by ocular demonstration the reality of the exaltation of the Son of God, and his divine omnipotence, external evidence was thus given, and such as confounded and stopped the mouths of infidel philosophers, but having thus by the most supernatural testimonies established the certainty of the resurrection and exaltation of our Divine Redeemer, ocular demonstrations were to cease, and the saints in all subsequent ages were to live by faith upon the Son of God, and not to walk by sight. If these ocular demonstrations were to be continued, the natural judgments of men might be convinced without any radical change of heart, as many were in those days of miracles. *But our knowledge of God, of spiritual and divine things, is not by informing or convincing our natural senses of seeing, hearing, feeling, &c., but by special revelation of the Spirit to the faith of the children of God.* The carnal Jews, whose religion was the service of a worldly sanctuary, and whose ordinances were carnal, relied on signs, desired signs, required signs, and the learned Greeks who sought after wisdom, were in their carnal state, incapable of appreciating any other evidence, for except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit. But the children of God shall all be taught by the Lord. The Spirit, the Holy Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth, is the teacher of the saints. He, said Jesus, shall take of the things of mine, and shall shew them unto you. They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them even unto the greatest, saith the Lord.

Miraculous displays of the divine power are not now made to the natural understanding of natural men, as in the apostles' day; but we do not hold that the day of miracles is passed. The work of salvation by grace is as miraculous now as it ever was. The work is superhuman, supernatural, and in it the naked arm of God is as visible to the faith of God's children at one time as another. The ministry of the gospel, in a spiritual sense, is as healing to the sick, and quickening to the dead now, as formerly. Not that preaching in itself ever quickened or healed any one, but these signs follow in all those whom God has quickened by his Spirit. It is the power and wisdom of God. In his name devils are now displaced, cast out, and believers in Christ are secured from the rage of wicked men and devils. The old serpent, and all his brood of vipers, are in this day, in a spiritual sense trodden upon by the saints, and all their venom is rendered harmless to God's people by and through the matchless name of our ascended Lord.

G. Beebe

(Middletown, N.Y., May 15, 1859)

OBITUARIES

NANNIE M. NUCKOLS

Once more the Lord has called from our midst a dear mother and sister in Israel, Nannie M. Nuckols, Feb. 5, 1973, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. W. R. Dodd.

She was born in Pittsylvania County, Va., Oct. 19, 1871, the daughter of the late William S. and Labinda N. Myers. On Nov. 14, 1905 she married the late James Lee Nuckols. She is survived by two daughters, Mrs. W. R. Dodd, Dry Fork, Va., Mrs. H. B. Williams, Penhook, Va. Four grandchildren, four great grandchildren: one brother, W. M. Myers, Halifax, Va., and one sister, Mrs. Posie M. Boaze, Danville, Va.

Mother was a good wife, mother and neighbor. She had a way and word for every situation that arose. She was a believer of the Primitive Baptist Doctrine from childhood but did not offer to the church until in her 98th year. She attended associations and church meetings far and near as long as health permitted. She fell and hurt her back on Monday after attending the Staunton River Association convening with the church at Weatherford July, 1959. Her last meeting in attendance at Strawberry Church was the first Sunday

preceeding above mentioned association.

She requested a church meeting at our home July 16, 1969, as she wanted to offer to the church; which was done. She related an experience of grace satisfactory to the church and was given the right hand of fellowship. She remarked that day that, "she did not know why she had been rebellious so long."

The baptizing was the following Wednesday in Sandy River. She was taken into the water in a chair by Brother Posie Holley and Elder Wallis Smith who helped Elder R. S. Payne with the baptizing. It was a beautiful picture. I have not words to describe it.

This was her last trip out of doors. She was bedfast for over three years, and the last three months fed like a baby.

Mother was patient during her long confinement. She would make the remark at different times, "101 years is a long time to stay in this sinful world." As she could not see or hear she'd quote scripture, often giving the interpretation; and sing the songs of Zion. The one I'd hear more often was "On Jordans stormy banks I stand," etc. After she could not speak to be understood I'd hear her humming the same sweet spiritual songs in the dark hours of the night, no doubt in sweet communion with her God. The last complete understandable statement I heard her make was, "I wonder what my pastor's text is today, there's preaching at Strawberry, Caanan, and Malmaison today. "This was a week day but as she could not see or hear natural things time was blank with her. This showed us that her mind was centered on Divine and Heavenly things, not worldly trifles. She was strong in the faith of her God and ready to defend that doctrine unto the end.

Mother wrote her funeral arrangements in February 1960, which was held in Townes Memorial Chapel, Danville, Va., by Elder R. S. Payne, her pastor. She requested the reading of the 23 and 103 Psalm. Read the enclosed song and prayer by the preacher. Her son-in-law Elder W. R. Dodd was living then. We wonder if she ever visioned surviving him, and, over ten years. I asked Elder Payne to speak further as he was led, which was comforting and fitting, after which the following song was read and prayer.

There are six stanzas of the song so will give only the first and last to save space.

"Death is no more a frightful foe;
Since I with Christ shall reign.
With joy I leave this world of woe,
For me to die is gain.

Fain would my raptured soul depart,
No longer here remain,
But dwell, dear Jesus where thou art,
For me to die is gain."

Interment was in Highland Burial Park, Danville, Va., beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, there to await the coming of her Saviour to call his jewels home.

Written by request of Strawberry Church, March 4, 1973.

Elder R. S. Payne, Moderator
Josephine N. Dodd, Clerk

C. W. VASS

It becomes my painful responsibility to comply with the wishes of our church to record the passing of our dear, devoted, and faithful brother and deacon. I am trusting God will enable me to do this in honor of him who was so intelligent in rightly dividing the word of truth.

C. W. Vass was the son of Henry F. and Mary Beamer Vass. He was born in Carroll County, Va., May 25, 1890, and was called home at the age of more than eighty-two years.

He was married twice, first to Miss Lois E. Moore, and secondly to Sister Catherine Meads Cartwright. To the first union were born two children: one son, Milton Beamer and one daughter, Francis Marie. Lois preceded him to the grave by twenty-one years. Brother Vass and Sister Cartwright were married September 12, 1958, and God blessed them with fourteen devoted years together.

He was a man of profound knowledge who believed in a complete and finished work of God: one God sovereign and eternal; one who purposed all things for his children before the foundation of the world. He was well known for his excellent penmanship and written articles, including scriptural poetry. He constantly looked for good, not evil in his brethren. He said he was tired of the often confusion in churches: For whom Jesus suffered, he will take care of without any help from man. Brother Vass was what I would consider a dialectic on church matters and the scriptures, constantly examining them for their value.

During his youth, he clerked in a general store, and later taught school. Throughout this time he was greatly disturbed about his soul's welfare. His pilgrim's journey was long, and filled with many experiences of Grace, beginning at the age of ten years. He often spoke to me of the time and place he felt the presence of the "precious Lord." With tearful eyes we shared often the joy in these memories. I and many others will greatly miss his sweet counseling on the true doctrine: salvation by the Grace of God; the predestinated powers that be that do not make God the author of confusion, but peace and love. Bro. Vass was a man of love and a true defender of the doctrine. He was not devious but steadfast and immovable. He loved to give the reason for his hope, because he felt hope was the manifestation of God's power.

At the age of twenty he gave up rural life for the city. The change of place did not make any change in his religious concerns. He continued often in great despair, and at the age of twenty-two he had a dream which was a pleasurable experience, in which the Saviour placed around him a long robe which had previously been dipped in something. Beginning with this experience and until death, he loved to talk about the robe. He felt this robe represented the robe of righteousness. He longed for the day that Jesus would wrap it around him in reality. His dream gave him much happiness until he became ill, an illness which caused him to become greatly depressed. He stated that many transgression arose causing him to fear he would never see trouble enough concerning his sins. However, Jesus completes his work in His time and for His purpose, and the things that seemed to be against him, God worked together for His good and glory.

On Saturday before the first Sunday in August, 1931, Brother Vass received the acknowledgement from God for which he had longed: "Loose him and let him go." He went before the church at New Fellowship and was received, and remained there until he moved to Portsmouth, Va. In January, 1947 the Norfolk Church received him on confession of faith, and later ordained him a deacon.

While living in Portsmouth he worked in the Navy Yard in a clerical capacity as a bookkeeper: working there until his retirement.

After he married Sister Catherine he made his home in Elizabeth City, N.C., and he brought his letter and joined at Flatty Creek, serving as deacon until his death.

His funeral was conducted at Twiford's Funeral Chapel by Elder J. T. Prescott, with Elder I. S. Conner assisting. The services were appropriate and comforting to all. Brother Johnny R. Gardner, whom Brother Vass loved dearly, directed an inspiring service at Oak Grove Cemetery in Portsmouth, Va.; and it was there he was laid to rest among the beautiful flowers. I believe his favorite hymn, "O may I worthy prove to see the saints in full prosperity: to see the bride, the glittering bride, close sitting by the Saviour's side," expresses his final reward.

To have known him gives me faith to believe he is occupying his "humble seat beneath his Redeemer's feet." Submitted by

Beadie L. Meads

POKIE G. GEORGE

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to take from this vain world of sin and sorrow, our Dearly Beloved Sister Pokie George. She was born in Franklin County, Va., February 27, 1882 and departed this life on April 19, 1973 have lasting memories in my mind.
at Lynchburg General-Marshall Lodge Hospital, making her stay on this earth 91 years. She was the daughter of George W. and Catherine A. Pearson Gregory.

Sister Pokie was a retired schoolteacher and a very lovely person, always putting others ahead of herself, and was a firm believer of Salvation by the Grace of God. She united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on May 31, 1913 and was faithful to attend the Church as long as her health permitted, and was very mindful of the welfare of Weatherford Church. She will be greatly missed by the members of the Church, her many friends and her family.

Sister Pokie was first married to the late William S. Simpson and to this union three children were born: one son, Wyatt J. Simpson of Springhill, La., and two daughters, Mrs. C. T. Worley and Mrs. Lloyd Lakes both of Lynchburg, Va., also, seven grandchildren and fifteen great-grandchildren. After the death of Mr. Simpson, she then married the late William A. George. Sister George was given all the care that human hands could have done for her during a long illness.

Her funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church at 2:00 P. M. on Saturday, April 21, 1973 by Elders Denver Simpson and Raymond Goad. Her body was laid to rest in the Church Cemetery to await the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

May we all be reconciled to the Will of God and be made to feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by—

Marvin Brumfield, as requested by Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church.

DEACON O. M. BENNETT

It is with knowledge of my weakness and inability that I comply with the request of the Church, to write a few thoughts of the sweet memories of our dear and precious Brother Bennett. I want to thank God for giving unto us this dear old servant, who has shared the burdens and the great responsibility in serving his brethren in the office work of a Deacon; which office he filled for fifty-two or three years, and was faithful in the obligations and duties of a deacon.

He was always ready to spend and be spent for the good and comfort of his brethren. He loved his brethren dearly, and enjoyed church services greatly, and was always there unless providentially hindered. He missed but few of the meetings until the last few years of his life, when his health became poor and he was unable to attend for three or four years. During these years I visited him in his home several times, and the moments I spent with him

Brother Bennett was born in Stokes County, N. C. September 25, 1878, and passed away May 1, 1973, making his stay here in this life 94 years 7 months and 5 days. He and Dora Francis Pulliam were married February 28, 1904, and to this union were born 4 sons and 2 daughters. In Brother and Sister Bennett's early life they united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Piney Grove in Stokes County; and a few years later they moved from Stokes to Guilford County near Hillsdale Meeting House. They then come to the Hillsdale Church with letters from Piney Grove, and were heartily received at the July meeting in 1920; and remained faithful members as long as they lived.

Sister Bennett preceded Brother Bennett in death on June 20, 1954. Brother Bennett spent many lonely hours after he was left to look out and care for himself, but the good Lord gave him strength and courage to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. He spent much time in reading the Bible and other religious literature—he possessed great knowledge of things pertaining to the church and the Kingdom of God's dear Son.

The members of Hillsdale Church have greatly missed these two God given servants; but we humbly bow in submission to the great and holy will of our blessed God. We desire to thank the great God for the gift of His dear Son, together with these two dear ones that have gone on, and left us behind. We could not wish them back, but just say, Sleep on dear Brother and Sister Bennett until our Saviour descends from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall be awakened in His likeness. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. There our voices shall ring out in praise to the great King, saying, Worthy art thou Lord God allmighty, because thou hast redeemed us unto God out of every nation, kindred and tongue, and made us kings and priests unto our God. There we will be heirs of God and joint-heirs with our Saviour.

Written at request of the Church,
D. A. O'Bryant

POSIE R. HARRIS

As I undertake to do what I am asked to do—to write the obituary of our beloved brother Posie R. Harris, I feel so unqualified to do so. God called him from among us November 18, 1972. He was born January 11, 1892. One had only to meet and be with our brother to be drawn to him and his companion. How many times have I been in their home to be met by both of them with a warm hand-clasp, and a smile of welcome. Their home radiated their love of their church, their pastor, their children, neighbors and friends.

We know that God is all wise and never has or will ever make a mistake, so our brother's departure was perfectly timed, leaving us with hearts overflowing in sorrow that we shall no more enjoy our brother's campany among us. The church desires to extend her sympathy to Sister Harris and each of their children. We know you all miss your loved one; we do too, yet would not, if we could, call him back to this sinful world. He has finished his course and is at rest. We desire to bow in submission to God's will that our brother leave us. His walk was soft, slow to speak when needs be, and quick to esteem others better than self. We feel some qualities he possessed were not only God honoring but commendable among Old School Baptists. Some of his children's pastors visited him in his home and in the hospital several times, each with tolerance to respect each other in their beliefs . . .

He and wife were blessed with a family of children who showed their care for their parents, and seeing to their needs. Brother Harris offered to the church in August, 1960, and he and his wife were baptized the same day with another sister. Sister Harris offered in July, then he came before the church relating the dealings of the Lord with him. They were baptized by Elder Jesse C. Paschal, the pastor then.

His family are as follows: Sister Etta Harris, Reidsville, N.C. Sons are: Bro. Godfrey Harris, Eden; Clarence and Leonard, Reidsville; Arnold, Eden; and Dubra Harris, Ridgeway, Va. Daughters are: Mrs. Gaynelle Paschal, Mrs. Shirley Williams and Mrs. Julia Somers, Reidsville; Mrs. Pearl Hundley, Eden; Mrs. Catherine Cox, Burlington; and Mrs. May Connor, Martinsville, Va. Surviving also are, one brother, G. C. Harris, Eden, and one sister, Mrs. Ada Turner, West Virginia; 32 grandchildren and 31 great grandchildren.

The funeral was held at his church November 21, 1972, by his pastor, Elder D. A. O'Bryant, assisted by Elder Thornton Manley and Mr. Harold Townsend. He was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

We at New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Rockingham County, N.C., desire a copy of this obituary be given the family, one spread on our church minutes, and one be sent the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by request of the church while in conference January meeting, 1973. Written by Sister Louise Cobb, Clerk.

Eld. D. A. O'Bryant, Mod.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141 **DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1973** **NO. 9**

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/73
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ENJOYED A GOOD ASSOCIATION

Route 7, Box 488A
Burlington, N. C. 27215

Dear Elder Wood:

Enclosed is the Circular Letter for *The Upper Country Line Association* for the session 1973, will you please print this for us in the *Signs* and make any correction necessary. It has been with much pleasure that I have been associated with you in a very small way with the *Signs*. I am most appreciative for the labours of you and your lovely wife. It is my prayer that sister Wood is feeling better. I feel God visited us with His presence during our association. At the close of the meeting two came forward and united with the church.

If there should ever be a time that I could be of any service to you I would be glad to be your servant. I wish to thank you again for the reminder of the notice of our association. I am hoping to see you at the Pigg River Association. I received some subscriptions and re-newals and Indigent Fund for the *Signs of the Times*.

Yours in sweet fellowship,
Donald E. Smith

CIRCULAR LETTER
UPPER COUNTRY LINE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION
JULY 14, 15 AND 16th, 1973

To our correspondence, brethren and friends we extend greetings and welcome to each of you in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to this the sixty-seventh session of the Upper Country Line Baptist Association being held with the Lick Fork Church.

It is our hope that we may approach this session in deed and truth in the great and adorable name of Jesus and of His fellowship, desiring the blessings of spiritual fruits that comfort and strengthen our souls.

May we find the promise true that He has given saying, where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I will be in the midst also. We would desire to give thanks unto our merciful heavenly Father, who has drawn us unto His Son and been given to feast in heavenly places. We give thanks for the evidence of His abiding love and grace that has enabled this great people to meet together as brethren.

As each day fully comes may we feel to say, they were all with one accord in one place. May the truth and word of God have liberty and all the labours and deeds be to the praise and honor of our heavenly Father. May the truth be upheld in love and peace, according to our Saviour, that it fall not in the street because of the will of man.

May the grace of our Lord be with us now and in the days to come, keeping us in the path of righteousness, for His name sake, that we might maintain these blessings.

Submitted by Haywood W. Wray,
Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

PEACEFUL, QUIET ASSOCIATION

Dry Fork, Va.

Dear Elder Wood:

Enclosed is the notice of the meeting time of our Union, which please publish as soon as possible.

We had a peaceful, quiet association, (The Staunton River) a blessing from the Lord. From five to nine Elders preached each day.

I pray the same to be with each of your meetings, and both of you be blest with health to attend.

Yours in hope,
Josephene N. Dodd

SERMON BY ELDER JAMES POOLE RECORDED IN DAN RIVER CHURCH, VIRGINIA, JULY 14, 1972

I know that those of you who came to hear another brother are disappointed, but I'm certainly not disappointed that I had the privilege of coming here to be with you in fellowship with the Lord's people who gather here as often as the Lord would bring us together. It is always a bright and precious time in our lives when we can come here to Dan River Primitive Baptist Church to meet with those of like precious faith, and I hope that our coming together this evening will be profitable as we trust it has been in times gone by.

I notice often in association minutes the various speakers have beside their names the texts they took. Occasionally they write beside a name, "no special text". Sometimes I wonder if they never had a text or if their case was like mine this evening: they had so many texts they couldn't single out any particular one to put in the minutes.

If the Lord might so direct, I wish to speak out of all four of the first four books of the New Testament — out of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John — on a subject I feel I know little about; but what I know gives me great feeling and comfort. I want to read initially out of the book of Luke in the 10th chapter a part of the scripture I know that you know very well, and yet I wonder how much we really know about it.

38. Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.
39. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.
40. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.
41. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:
42. But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

(Luke 10:38-42)

I wish I knew how to begin speaking on this. I wish I knew what would be the best order to approach the subject — much too vast, too deep, too beautiful for us to fully gain an insight on it this meeting. We have here the same story in another setting that we find throughout the New Testament—something coming to pass, a certain woman, a certain village, something definite, nothing ambiguous about the lesson at all. It is a family setting. Mary and Martha and, of course, their brother Lazarus that we find in the book of John; and I might point out that in every case where they are referred to in the scriptures, and it is often, that Martha is always named first, except in one occasion and that's in the book of John in the 12th chapter. Martha seems to be the older sister, and she seems to be the wiser head; and apparently from the air she manifests, she was the one who was busy about the technicalities of life. If we might say so, she was busy about the techni-

calities of the service she rendered to the Lord, and were it not for one text in the Bible, I would be inclined to think that Martha knew nothing about the sweet hope of eternal life. But I read in the 11th chapter of the gospel of John that the Lord loved Mary and her sister and Lazarus, so I have to conclude from that, the love of the Lord being everlasting and being of purpose, she is included in the number of his chosen ones. Martha gives me no personal reason to entertain anything by way of hope for her, but the Lord does. She is typical of all of the adherence to the "works system". Her religion is doing; here religion is acting out something; she is more concerned with the pots and the pans and the meal to be served—the fishes and the loaves, the appearance of the table, the decor, the window dressing, and all the other—than she is in the being in the presence of his Majesty, the King of Kings. We see in Martha everything that one should be on society's level.

In Mary we find almost the opposite. She doesn't seem to be overly concerned about entertaining, about putting on airs, about acting out the part of the good hostess, or any of these things. She is concerned about being at Jesus' feet. I hope that you and I are equally concerned.

I was thinking today while we were riding to this meeting how I wish I could feel what Mary must have felt — not to be physically but spiritually close to the Lord: to be in such communion with our blessed Lord that all of the other affairs of life would disappear from the mind. Mary indeed was a blessed woman. And when Martha raised an issue about it—she said "my sister has left me, and I have all of the responsibilities to take care of. I have all the duties and the chores that are necessary to entertain you properly." And our Lord, as if in a tone of compassion says, "Martha, Martha thou art careful and troubled." Such are we so often: troubled. The Lord in his word teaches us, "to be careful for nothing." Let not your hearts be troubled," and yet she was the very example of the things our Lord instructs us not to be — careful and troubled about many things; and were we to embark upon the subject of things, we could cover a great deal of territory that our Lord covered in his life about the things of this earth: the illustration of the man who built barns and accumulated wealth, and the Lord came to him in the night and said " . . . Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" I wish that you might take some consideration about things—things, plural.

Martha was careful and troubled about many things, and our Lord says but one thing is needful. I think I could almost take the liberty in the English language to change the wording here without changing the meaning when He says "but one things is needful." I think I could say, "*only* one thing is needful." There's not but one "needful" order on the agenda of life and He says, "Mary has chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her." Whatever it was Mary had, Martha didn't have; and yet they both were loved by the Lord.

It would be easy to dismiss the subject and say that Mary was what she was by the grace of God, and Martha lacked what Mary had because the Lord wasn't pleased to dispense to her what she had. It's the truth. But, I don't think it would be a satisfactory answer to this lesson, and it has aroused my mind to some extent lately exactly what and why Mary chose the way she did. You and I are not left to ourselves in the matter of our spiritual affairs. We know that. A man's heart might devise a lot of things, but the scripture says the Lord directs his steps; and I'm glad it's so. I don't know your position on it; I think I do. I'm thankful to leave my time in His hands as David said, "All my times are in his hands."

But we have here two sisters, chil-

dren of the same womb, probably the same environment, many things similar; but they are just as different as day and night. And yet, they have one thing in common, and that is the Lord loves them both. And I cannot see where He loved one more than the other. I do not believe that the scripture warrants a teaching of degrees of the Lord's love. But what is there about Martha that moves her to the many things, and what is there about Mary that moves her to the feet of Jesus? I think every one of you probably ask that same question in some way or another in your own experience, whatever it might be.

I look out on the faces of the Lord's people every time I stand before them, and I see some whose tears flow down their cheeks at the very mention of the name of Jesus, and there is a feeling in my heart for those people. I think how I wish I could have that tender feeling. How I long to be one who could be brokenhearted over the name of my Redeemer. I see one like Mary in the scriptures who can lay everything else aside and bow at His feet, to take the very crumbs that might fall from His lips and feast upon them as if they were the greatest morsels that she'd ever known. I think of how I'd long to be that way—so much of my life is spent in waste, and I suspect probably a great deal of yours is also.

As I said, I had given some thought to this subject, and I imagine many of you have. You might be able to pass on a great deal more light on it than myself; but as I began to think on it in the last several days and on other occasions months gone by, I find that Mary wasn't alone in the Bible by name. I discovered, to begin with, that there were five Marys in the New Testament, and each of them was unique: Mary, the mother of Jesus; she had a sister named Mary; there was Mary Magdalene, out of whom was cast seven devils; the sister of Martha; and then there was Mary the mother of Mark. There may have been more, but at least there were five Marys. As I began to look at them, I find that each one of them had her respective place before the Lord; but this one captured my attention as none of the others could because I found something in her that so resembled the experience that I have had, and I think many of you have had, that I feel a closeness to this woman.

These two women (Martha and Mary) have a common background, and if you had the time to go through the scriptures you might find countless illustrations just like this. You would find Jacob and Essau, a common background in different pursuits. You would find Issac and Ishmael, common backgrounds and different pursuits. You would find even in the family of faith, Abraham and Lot coming together so far and then parting company — one going one way and one going the other. And yet both alike loved of the Lord.

As I have spoken to our congregations in Maryland at length on the subject of the book of Ruth, there was Ruth and Orpah, both Moabitish damsels, one stays home to worship her heathen gods and the other goes to the land of promise, there to worship the true and the living God. And down through the scriptures, we find a common fleshly tie and yet a division just as much as if a sword had passed through that family and took one one way and one the other way.

Now, I hope you might bear with me for a few moments, because I hope that in reading some scripture, I might bring to your mind, the Lord willing, something of why these girls were so alike and yet so different. I would like to start out in the book of John, the 11th chapter. (Verses 1 and 2)

> *1. Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.*
> *2. (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)*

Now mark this well. There can be

no question that Mary, the sister of Martha and the sister of Lazarus, is the one identified by John as she who anointed the Lord of glory in the city of Bethany. I might read verse 5 to you while I am in this chapter:

(5. Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. In John the 12th chapter, (and all I want to read these for, as I say, is to put these together. And if this is not preaching, maybe it will be instruction. Maybe it will be of some benefit to you.) (verses 1-5)

1. Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead,

2. There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

3. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

4. Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him,

5. Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

Without further reading there, I'd like to turn to the book of Matthew, the 26th chapter (verses 6-12)

6. Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,

7. There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointemnt, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat.

8. But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste?

9. For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.

10. When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me.

11. For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always.

12. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial.

Now in the book of Mark in the 14th chapter, you'll notice these verses are almost identical texts. (verses 3-6)

3. And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head.

4. And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made?

5. For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her.

6. And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.

We have thus far read in three books of the four gospels, and it is worthy of note that each of these accounts differ, and yet this is what makes the scriptures beautiful. They differ, and yet they are exactly the same. Only one names Mary. Two of them refers to it as spikenard: Mark and John. Three texts, when we read in the book of Luke, refer to the box as an alabaster box. All four of the gospels refer to it as ointment. And the point I think most worthy of note is that all four refer to this as a supper—three of them being, "sitting at meat." All four of them refer to a man at the house named Simon.

Although, as I say, the texts differ, there is too much harmony for us to say they are different circumstances or different scenes at different locales at different times. Two of the texts refer to the anointing as being the pouring out of the oil or ointment on his head. The one in the book of John refers to it as being anointing his feet; and then when we come to the fourth one, I wish us to look at it in some detail.

In the book of Luke, I think we can begin to put all of the four gospels to-

gether and learn something about what we initially look for—the differences between Mary and Martha. Now, if you might bear with me a minute or two more, I'll read in the book of Luke the 7th chapter beginning with the 36th verse. (ending with verse 40.)

36. And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

37. And, behold a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment.

38. And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

39. Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.

40. And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

Now, as I have pointed out the similarity in these four settings, I think any fair-minded person would say the burden of proof is in favor of all four gospels referring to the same incident. They may not, but I believe they do, and I believe it very strongly. I don't think we would have different setting with entirely consistent, harmonious, and similar circumstances. As I said, two of them refer to anointing of his feet; two of them as pouring the ointment on his head. At any rate the anointment there reminds me so much of the anointing of the high priests in the Old Testament in the book of Leviticus, when the order of priesthood began, and as it is referred to in the 110th Psalm, as it was poured upon their heads and ran down to their beards and down the skirt to the lower parts of their garments. It was an anointing or a covering with oil signifying something of the spirit with which they were endowed. And this woman, in doing this, the Lord said, did it toward His burial, toward His death, and He said that she wrought a good work upon Him. We know beyond a shadow of a doubt that the woman's name in one text was Mary; and we know also that in two places besides the book of John it said it was at Bethany; as I have said it was at supper—it was at meat—and the man's house in every occasion was a man named Simon; and in two places Simon was called a leper—Simon the leper. Matthew and Mark both refer to him as a leper, and something that almost makes me fear to remark on it, in John, the Simon there was the father of Judas. It may be coincidence, but I don't believe it is; one Simon mentioned in each of the settings. One Simon here, and if they are the same, Simon the father of Judas was a leper. And certainly I would say his physical leprosy was no more than the moral leprosy of his son. But at any rate, that's for someone to speculate upon.

But, the circumstances in all of these are so similiar, I think we can say with some degree of safety that the Mary who anointed the feet of Jesus and the Mary who is the sister of Martha, at one time was known as a common "street walker". If we understood the wording well enough, he said that if Jesus knew what kind of woman this was He wouldn't let her touch him, because she is a sinner. And I think the construction of the sentence here is such that she was an unchaste woman. She was a woman who had taken the low road in life, a woman who had debased herself publicly to such an extent that when she burst into that home that everyone there knew that she was unclean—that she was a "street walker" a no good, a tramp, a nothing. And yet there was something urging this woman when she discovered that Jesus was in

the house. She went in without invitation; she went in without a bid; she went into a house of a Pharisee, and furthermore into the house of a leper. Because there was an urgency within her that she anoint the Lord, that she weep over His feet with tears, that she pour out there the experession of her soul in this outward act. I consider here that it is a lesson of the highest magnitude in the depths of sin that one can be in and still approach the presence of our Lord. And I might say this for any of this congregation this evening that feel they are too bad a sinner or at too distant a point from the Lord of Glory to approach His presence or be numbered with His people, let this Mary be a lesson to you. She was a vile sinner, and everyone in the community knew how vile she was by instinct and by practice, and yet it was such that the Lord received her and received that of her hand that she had, and even though Simon said "Lord, you ought not to have anything to do with her," the Lord received her gladly.

But the lesson here that the Lord gives to Simon when he says "Master, say on," is one which really identifies the difference between these two parties. (Luke, chapter 7 verses 41-44 . . .)

41. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

42. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him the most?

43. Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him. Thou has rightly judged.

44. And he turned to the woman and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? . . .

I think that this carries a great deal for us. He asks Simon what he really sees. Simon had already decided in his mind what he had seen. He said "Now, if he Lord knew, He wouldn't have anything to do with her." He (the Lord) said, "Simon, do you really see this woman? Seest thou this woman? What do you see in her?" I'll tell you what the Lord's people have seen down through the years. When one comes from any degree of sin, it makes no difference whether they were an overt sinner as this woman was or one who could only cry within themselves, "unclean, unclean" and had never really done any outward acts of atrocities or crimes, as far as the law of the land was concerned. They see in them one that the Lord has loved, and they love them also. I can look across any congregation of old Baptists anywhere in the world, and when I can see the expressions on their faces under the sound of the gospel that they love the Lord of grace, there's a feeling in my soul of love for them; and I think I can answer the question the Lord gave there, "Seest thou this woman?" I don't see them then as a sinner. I see them as those whom the Lord has cleansed. I see them as those who have been brought nigh unto the Lord of glory Himself, and I see someone that I wish I were like. I see someone there that I feel will someday rejoice in a beautiful world of glory with the Lord Himself; and when I look at them, it makes me doubt about myself. Because I feel to be inferior to all of those, such as this woman, and all the Lord would point me to look at. "Seest thou this woman?"

44. I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.

45. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

46. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

47. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

48. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

49. And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?

50. And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace. (Luke 7:44-50)

This brings us back now to our initial text: Martha and Mary. If our assumptions are correct, Martha has spent the bulk of her days in what we would today call Armenian service to the Lord. And yet, she was loved of the Lord; and this has really caused me to look upon those on the outside in a great deal different manner than I have previously. If the Lord can love them, it is not my business to condemn them. I will condemn to the end any rotten, false doctrine, but there's not any need in our condemning the Lord's people who have not yet been brought to a place where the Lord can say to them, "But one thing is needful, and you have chosen that good part"; and when I look at the illustration that the Lord gave to Simon at that time when, being a leper and when criticizing this woman for her crimes, the Lord said:

Here are two people. One of them was indebted to this man five hundred pence and the other fifty. There is a difference of ten fold there, and yet neither one of them had anything to pay with. Does it really make any difference how much in debt one is if he doesn't have anything to pay with? if he has absolutely nothing to pay off? He's in debt, and he cannot get out. One owed 500 and the other 50, and yet it is said this creditor frankly forgave both debtors; freely forgave them. It doesn't even say so much as if they came and begged for mercy or clemency or asked for any favor. It just happened that frankly he forgave them. He wiped out and did away with the debt, and to me it is very illustrative of the Lord of glory wiping out your debt and my debt without our asking. We had nothing to pay with. How we got in debt is not a matter of this subject, but the fact that we are in debt and cannot pay is a matter of great importance to us. But frankly He forgave them, freely wiped out the debt.

Up until now I used to think that the Lord here was drawing a comparison between Simon, the leper, and the woman who washed His feet. I cannot accept that view this evening, though as I begin to investigate the text, because I find here that He begins to tell him that there are degrees of love in the hearts of the Lord's people. I want to be cautious in saying that; I don't want you to think there are degrees of the Lord's love. But the Lord does give to men a measure of faith as it pleases Him. There are some whose eyes are wider open than others, and there are some who seem to love more than others. According to this lesson, the one who was forgiven 500 of her indebtedness had a great deal more feeling for the one who forgave her than the one who had been forgiven the 50 amount. And when I look back at Simon, I don't see that he had been forgiven anything. I don't see that his attitude had changed. I don't see that he entered into the the picture at all. I see, rather, the Lord is taking two cases and showing Simon, the leper, something about the matter of love which he knew nothing about. Simon didn't change his mind. He manifests no remorse, no conviction, no repentance, no change on the matter. The Lord illustrates to him two individuals who had been freely forgiven, and one had greater feeling than the other.

This brings me right back to the 10th chapter of Luke. When we take the two together, we know one of them was Mary; I conclude the other was Martha. Martha was in debt to the degree of 50. Mary was in debt to the degree of 500, and the Lord freely forgave them both. The Lord loved them both, according to the scripture, and the results of the magnitude of forgiveness toward Mary caused to develop within her a feeling unlike that which was in Martha. Martha loved; and Martha cared; and Martha knew a great deal, as we find in the

11th chapter of John; but Martha was not brought to the feet of the Lord as Mary was. And I conclude that it had pleased the Lord for Mary to traverse further in sin than it pleased Him to allow Martha to go. They both came, as I said, from the same background. They both experienced the same normal things, and yet one was wayward and the other was not. When the time came that the Lord manifested Himself to them, the one could not feel as much as the other did. In Mary's life, there was nothing there that we can see except total gratitude for her redemption. All she could think about was being near her Saviour, even to the point of intruding into a man's home when he was having supper; and we find in the 12th chapter of John, after Lazarus had been raised, when the supper was made, Martha is still serving. And all of Martha's life she'll probably go on serving.

It brings me to this conclusion: I am and you are what we are by the grace of God. If I had been brought to a shallow understanding of the scriptures and a minimal amount of love toward my Saviour manifestly, and you had expounded or fathomed or researched the depths of God's truth and were at His feet constantly; I say the Lord did it, and to Him be the praise. I have no criticism, no fault, of that one who has been brought closer, as John was, to the breast of the Saviour—he whom Jesus loved, and he who loved Jesus. And we recognize we love Him because He first loved us, but what a blessing it is to realize that whether we are Mary or whether we are Martha, we are what we are by the grace of God; and though there might have been degrees of our sins—maybe we had succumbed to more temptations than another—the consolation is the Lord loves us alike.

You might be sitting here tonight feeling to be the chief of sinners. Another here might not feel nearly so wicked. The Lord looks upon you with the same intensity of favor as he does any wretch who ever was redeemed by grace. There are no variations; there are no degrees with God. The degrees are in our lives, which manifests the consistency of the Saviour molding and fashioning all His family alike. And if our understanding of this is true, we find another contrast — two families, Martha and Mary in one family, and there are degrees of love. One loves more than the other. One is busy about serving, and the other one cannot stand to be anywhere but at the feet of Jesus. And we find another family—Simon the leper and Simon's son, Judas. Simon was a leper. Simon was unclean, and yet he entertained the Lord. And while he was entertaining Him, his son had intensified his wickedness to the point he was out trying to sell the Lord for 30 pieces of silver. There are degrees in the families of the apostates as well as degrees in the family of the Lord, and it makes no difference which family one is in, he is what he is by the purpose and design of Almighty God—will be no better and will be no worse than it pleases our Heavenly Father—and I'm thankful it's that way. I hope you are.

What a joy it must have been to Martha to know that the Lord was coming to her home; and she probably did enjoy it. But do you think she enjoyed what Mary did? Mary didn't get out the "welcome wagon" and wave the banners as Martha did. The thing she looked forward to was the communion with her Saviour. And I trust and hope that all of us who have been led to a feeling of hope and trust in our Lord for salvation in that great day, to some degree or another, feel like Mary did. Lord I'm a sinner; I'm unclean; and if I must burst into Simon's house to be at your feet, that's where I want to be.

I'd say this without any hesitation, the way I feel right now: If I were outside this place, and I knew that the gospel service was being conducted; and you had bolts on the door, and I felt as hungry as Mary did, I'd come through a window or up through one of these vents—I'd get in here somehow that I

might have some affiliation with the presence of my Lord. It means something to God's people. They cannot stay away from it. They cannot avoid the companionship and the fellowship of the Lord's disciples and his people, any more than Mary could stay away from the Lord when he was in a house she was not bidden to. She wanted to be where he was, and, brothers and sisters, God's people today are no different. They want to be where their Saviour is; they want to be at His feet; they want to worship Him; they want to bow there, and if necessary, to wash His feet with their tears—to look upon His feet would be sufficient. I need not see His face; I need not see the print in His hands; I need not see the scar in His side. If I can bow at His feet, I believe the Lord of glory would teach me something of what the prophet said: "How beautiful upon the mountain are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings." Although the apostle has that changed somewhat in the 10th chapter of Romans (verse 15) " . . . how beautiful are the feet of them . . . " When the prophet Isaiah said it was Him, one alone, who brought the gospel to us, Jesus the Lord of glory and when he entered into that home—when Jesus went into the house of Simon—although he went there at his bidding, He had a message, and He had a purpose far greater than you and I could comprehend; and it was there that he might meet Mary. It was there that he might be anointed by her; and it was there this poor sinner might find something, a communion with her Lord and hear the sweet testimony, "Thy faith has saved thee. Go in peace." And then we might ask: "Oh Lord, where did she receive such faith?" The same place all God's people have received it. One thing is needful, not a great deal of things, but "one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her."

If I wanted to just be an out and out absoluter this evening, and I'm "kinda" inclined that way anyway. I'd say she chose what she had to. She took what nature dictated. The Lord gave her a nature to taste the graciousness of the Saviour, and when our nature has so been constructed by the power of the spirit of God, infusing his Son into us and radiating the sweet hope of glory there, we'll choose the needful part. You need not worry about making the wrong choice. You need not worry about worlds being sent between you—the world of glory and the world of doom—and choosing the wrong course. The Lord will design your direction for you, and so make it and so bring it about that you'll choose the needful thing and rejoice in it until the day when the Lord would carry you to the grave.

May God keep us as Mary, at his feet and rejoice to know that whatever our debt, He frankly forgives and to the extent He forgave is the extent of our love. And to whom much is given, much is required.

I'd bid you to think if you feel to be a great sinner like Mary, then your forgiveness is much, and your responsibilities are great. And I would hope that the Lord would guide you to affiliate with his people in a visible way.

EXPERIENCE

Atlantic, Virginia

Dear Editors of the "Signs":

It is with fear and trembling I take pen in hand to try to write my experience. It has been requested of me and I have wanted to be able to do so for a long time. It is my sincere desire that what I write may be in accordance with the truth, as contained in the Scriptures, and written in the hearts of all that are His. Knowing my own feebleness and being ever made aware of my inability to perform anything good — that is, by nature — I write nevertheless; for I am made thankful for this experience, which has given me a reason to hope. It is peculiarly mine and it is all I have, or could want.

I was raised from childhood in the

Methodist Church by devoted parents whom I love in the flesh, and was reasonably happy with my own ability to look after my spiritual welfare until about eighteen years of age, when I became very disillusioned with myself and life in general. It was about this time that I was blessed, I believe, to marry into the Davis family, my husband being Lawrence B. Davis, the youngest son of Evelyn and W. A. Davis, Sr., both members of Snow Hill Primitive Baptist Church (Mrs. Davis being now deceased.) She was a dear, sweet person, whom I felt it a privilege and a blessing to be so closely associated with, and also all the other dear members of our family. I can truthfully say that they have never treated me with anything but kindness and certainly this is a great blessing from a loving Father, to have such a wonderful husband and family.

After my marriage I would occasionally attend services at Snow Hill and other Primitive Baptist Churches and I was impressed, at that time, with the differences, if not the Truth, from what I had previously been associated with. And I must confess that I felt drawn to these "Peculiar" people from the start. I was, at this point, very confused and found myself constantly searching the Scriptures, as if by reading with an open mind (I kept telling myself) I could ascertain what the truth of the matter was. I was particularly impressed with the ninth chapter of Romans, which I read and re-read and could do nothing with. I tried to obtain help from my former associates but grew, nonetheless, steadily worse. I was allowed to wander about in this confused and dreadful state for about ten years, in the which I dabbled about in all sorts of sin and the lewd things of this world.

During this period I became extremely dissatisfied with myself and even considered taking my own life — so low had I sunk. Even during this terrible period, I was given re-assurance, through a dream, that Someone other than myself was in control of all affairs of life, and I was given to believe that if He had, indeed, begun a good work in me He would continue it to the end. Some may scoff at visions or dreams, but my experience is precious to me and I am thankful for it.

Having come to the end of my own strength, I was given to ask for a home in the visible Church at Snow Hill in December, 1970. It would be impossible to express what I felt at that time, except to say that I believe I was made willing in the day of His power to take a step that, until the moment before, I had not even considered. Those beautiful people received me, unworthy tho I was, and am, and I was baptized on Feb. 28, 1971.

Since that time things have not all been uphill. Traveling in this time-world has never been easy for any of His children, nor were they ever meant to be. The trials and sorrows keep us low and teach us where our dependence is, but I have had an inner peace which I never dreamed possible, and joy unspeakable at times is mine. When left to myself, I am capable of anything and even wonder at times, if I have not deceived the Church and myself — so sinful is my nature. However, I believe I love these dear ones and enjoy a fellowship with them which the world cannot understand. When I am given to think that Jesus died for such a one as I, that this is possible, it is too wonderful for me to comprehend, and my heart is melted in thankfulness.

When blessed with the spirit of prayer, remember me and may the cloak of charity cover all errors. If this is not fit to print, I'll understand.

A little Sister in Hope,
(Mrs.) Dixie Davis

Rt. 2, Box 134.
Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120

Dear Editors:

After tossing and turning in the night, I looked and it was midnight,

and something seemed to say, "Write", and I said what shall I write?" I arose and started writing, under the command of my God, I hope.

This voice said, "Write, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. There is no God beside me. I am the cure for a sin-sick soul. I am God and I change not, the bright and morning star. I hold the keys of death and hell: I do my will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay my hand. I know my sheep and they follow me, and another they will not follow into a strange doctrine. My soldiers of the cross are all dressed in uniform, and they give me honor and praise as their Captain, and they shall have no other God before me. I bring them to the still water and they drink, and never thirst again. I go before them in all their troubles, and bless them in all their trials along the rugged journey.

My sheep and my lambs are carried about in my arms and I will not let them stray afar, because there are wolves on the outside, waiting to capture one for himself. I have shown you a wolf in sheep's clothing, and you know what they will do, and are seeing it manifested before your eyes.

These are some of the thoughts that were presented to my mind to write. Yes, I had a dream of a wolf in sheep's clothing and saw it manifested; and still see the results of the dream. The dear old servant that baptized me fought them, and I am proud to say that I have done the same. I am not ashamed of what God has revealed to me. My journey has been rough, but it all has grounded me stronger and deeper in the faith that was once delivered to the saints. I believe the old servant that stooped so low to baptize me, would be glad to know that I have been blessed with grace to fight a good fight. I have been so alone in my fight, but God said, "I will not leave myself without a witness." Which means that he does not need ten, or two, here on this earth; but one will be sufficient for the day.

I have been made to hate the pride of the flesh. I seem to love the old meeting houses more and more. Years ago I read where barns were used for meeting houses; and they preached the doctrine in homes. I love the book of Elder Wilson Thompson, and have one. O what sermons are recorded therein! they are feasts to me. He stood firm in the faith I believe. I also love Pilgrim's Progress, and the *Signs of the Times* are dear to me. They feed my hungry soul from time to time.

I was blessed to attend the 4th of July meeting at old Pine Creek Church and heard the services. Some were strong on the foundation that stands sure and solid as a rock: the absolute predestination of all things.

The blessed Lord called my companion home this past February, leaving me alone. He was a firm believer in absolute predestination of all things. My home is lonesome, but I am only going through what God has predestinated for me, and I feel God's presence here; and blessed be the Comforter that He sends. Could we ask for anything more than what He sends? We are often cast down but not destroyed; cast aside as a heathen for the truth's sake, yet all these things are appointed for us, to make us grow deeper in the faith that was once delivered to the saints of old. We are no better than the saints of old to bear the cross. If we are made to stand in these last days when so many are falling away from the truth, then we are alone and shall suffer persecution; which is fulfilling the Scriptures this very day. "But when you see all these things coming to pass, look up for your redemption draweth near."

I remain a helpless sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

Mrs. Pauline Spencer

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the *Contentnea Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, with Stump

Sound Church, Onslow County, N. C., the fifth Saturday and Sunday in September, 1973.

The meeting house is about one mile off Highway 17, between Jacksonville and Wilmington. Turn off 17 at Holly Ridge, N. C. to left coming from Jacksonville, and go to first hard road, turn left on dead end road to the church.

All lovers of the truth are invited.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

PLEASE NOTE

Sister Pearl Dudley desires the Elders, brethren and friends to meet at her house for a get together and singing the second Sunday afternoon in September, from two until six p.m. Her address is Rt. 1, Box 382, Hardy, Virginia on Highway 678.

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, at Creeches Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in September, 1973.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 744,
Bennettsville, S.C. 29512

NOTICE

Elders J. Roy Agee and D. V. Spangler will fill an appointment at Pine Creek Church, near Floyd, Va. September the 16th., third Sunday in September at three o'clock P. M.

NOTICE

Elder D. V. Spangler will fill the regular appointment at Bellview Church near Roanoke, Va., the third Sunday in September at 11:00 A. M. and Elder Leonard Brammer will fill the regular appointment at Durham Primitive Baptist Church, Durham, N. C. the same day and same hour.

ORIGINAL SOUTH ARKANSAS ASSOCIATION

The 1973 session of the *Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association* is due to convene with Pilgrim Rest Church, located six miles north of Fordyce, Arkansas. Leave Hy. 167 on Hy. 273 and go one-half mile west to Barnes Sawmill. (The church is located near the Sawmill.) The meeting begins Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1973, and continuing through Sunday. Lovers of the truth are welcome.

Brother Ross Watson, Clerk
Tinsman, Arkansas

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The 1973 session of the *South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association* is due to convene with Bethel Church, located six miles north of El Dorado, Arkansas on Hy. 167, ½ mile west, commencing on Friday before the fourth Sunday in Sept. 1973. Lovers of the truth are welcome.

Brother Eugene Patterson, Clerk
203 Line Street
Farmerville, La.

THE KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

The two hundred eighth session of the *Kehukee Association* is to convene, the Lord willing, with the church at Bear Grass, Martin County, N. C. the first Sunday in October, 1973, Saturday before and Monday following.

Those coming from the north travel U.S. 13 and U.S. 17 to Williamston, N. C., take U.S. 17 for one mile, turn right on 1001 to church. Coming from the south travel U.S. 17 to 1001 intersection one mile south of Williamston, turn left on 1001 to church. Coming from the east and west travel U.S. 64 to Williamston, take U.S. 17 south for one mile to 1001, turn right on 1001 to church.

We extend to our correspondence, brethren who are of the same faith and order who are in peace with us, and friends, a cordial invitation to meet with us.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Mod.
Elder M. E. Garner, Clerk
Deacon Joseph Leggett, Asst. Clerk

Dear Elder Wood:

I personally extend to you and your wife an invitation to come to our association. If I am not deceived, I have been made to love you not as a man, but for the doctrine you preach and stand for. May God continue to lead you on in that way which leads to eternal and everlasting life that the Lord has in store for them that love him. Please, if possible, arrange to come and be with us.

With love to you and Sister Wood.

Elder M. E. Garner

Danville, Virginia September, 1973

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EDITORIAL

"Ye can discern the face of the sky; but ye cannot discern the signs of the times." (Matthew 16:3)

To discern the "signs of the times" means to be aware to what a succession of events point; and to which they will enventually lead: this is the sum of accumulative evidences.

In this article we refer only to things which are commonly called spiritual: for under this heading many foreboding events are accumulating, which can only lead to further, and, if possible, wider departure from the primitive simplicity of the gospel.

As we begin to consider the subject, it is necessary to recognize that there are in fact just two kinds of churches abroad in the world: One follows the gospel doctrine and order, as declared in the beginning by the Lord and his Apostles, (and which still exists, since God said he would not leave himself without a witness); the other is after that which the apostle described as "another gospel"; against which he solemnly warned and admonished the brethren. Under this heading we cannot but include all other religions, since they are likewise opposed to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

First. The Doctrine of the Gospel:

The gospel preached by the Apostles was, of course, identical with the teaching of Jesus. And of it Saul said he was not ashamed, "For it is the power of God unto salvation unto all who believe . . ." The Gospel has its clearly defined teaching, and is the declaration of the fulfillment by Jesus Christ of all things spoken by the prophets. So, when Jesus said to the Jews, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me," he sealed forever any other interpretation of them; or that there was any other reason for their preservation.

When Jesus clearly stated that his purpose in coming into the world was to save his people from their sins, it

is evident that He himself was *the way* his Father had provided for the redemption and salvation of His people. And it is apparent that those whom he called brethren, *believed all things which He preached and taught* after they were brought into the full understanding of what he taught; and it should be evident that none can properly be called Christian who believe otherwise than what he taught.

His Apostles taught no other things than those Jesus delivered unto them; and the churches were set in order and established upon these things. In spite of all the intervening years, and all the attempts of unbelieving men to rid His doctrine from the face of the earth by declaring that parts of it are inconsistent with the nature and being of God, there are yet those who believe and hold the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, without admixing the commandments of men. They believe and hold to these things because God has not ceased to call men out of darkness into his marvelous light; nor ceased to shine in their hearts, to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; nor ceased to bring all his own to the spiritual birth, and seal them with the holy spirit of promise — the earnest of their inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.

God is no way dependent upon the voluntary zeal and work of men for the promoting, or the continuing of his church in the world. As the Triune God: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, he does all the work: the choosing, the redeeming, and the calling: He does everything for the bringing of his beloved people unto glory. He has ordained all things to this end, and for his own glory: whether men, times, or events, so that all things are accomplishing his determined purpose. God has set up his Kingdom in the world, and it shall not be destroyed, or left to other people; but shall stand forever, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.

So, it is plainly taught in the Scriptures that God *loved His people, and chose them in His Son before the world began.* He sent His Son into the world to redeem all these from their sins: He died for their offenses, and rose again for their justification. All of these compose the Church of God: as individuals they are saved and called, not according to their works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ before the world began. God has his own way in bringing each one of them into the knowledge and comfort of his love and mercy, so that it is declared that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. God has, of course, given gifts unto men, qualifying them to preach his gospel, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for edifying the body of Christ; but certainly not to go outside of the election of grace, and undertake to add to the redeemed family.

The above things make up the sum and substance of The Gospel; but there is

Second, Another Gospel:

Herein lies what we presently have in mind concerning the "signs of the times." Any other gospel — any other teaching, must be considered counterfeit; and, being so, has many similarities of the Gospel. It speaks of grace. of mercy, of being born again, of Christ the Redeemer, etc. But the emphasis is always upon the will of men being able to accept or reject what is called an *offered salvation* to everybody; which makes everything in the way of salvation dependent upon men, whether they will or will not accept and believe to the savings of their souls. This leaves the sacrifice of Jesus questionable both to its application and effectiveness. And, if true, would destroy the eternal choice or election of God; and, if true, would destroy the whole purpose of God in sending his Son into the world; and would prove that Jesus failed to do what his Father sent him

to do.

Such teaching is well called another gospel, since it is contrary to what Jesus and the Apostles left on record in the Scriptures. If God is unable to do his will, he ceases to be God. *We thank Him that this can never be.* But, if he is, it would confirm the recent pronouncement that, "God is dead"; and we really agree that the God which many have been preaching all these years, is dead. For many have preached and believed that he does not control all things, and that he has stiff competition in the Devil; and is even subject to men's wills as to whether he can save them, or not. It is true, there were those who would not come to him; but they were pronounced as being of their father the Devil, and not of those unto whom Jesus came as a Saviour.

Now, some more of the signs of the times: When I was a boy going to the schools of such teachers, it was freely asserted that if the churches could get enough money and men, (which they expected without question,) they would be able to Christianize the world, the whole world, save the heathen, etc.: Then wars would cease between men and nations, and there would be a sense of brotherhood among men. That was more than sixty years ago: The whole scheme is a failure. Men do not seem to learn that human nature cannot be purged of its failure by the urging of other things which are of the same nature; or that a profession of religion of sorts means there is a real change in heart. Even the quickened subjects of grace do not experience a change in their "old man," except as the Spirit subdues and controls him; and they are made to hate the things of their flesh, expecting someday to put on immortality. Paul knew what a wretched man he was in his flesh, and desired to be delivered "from the body of this death."

How many hundreds of years this work of men has been going on, I do not know; but it is certain that it has been based upon nothing more solid than mortal men. Paul wrote Timothy: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of these that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God: Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: From such turn away." Also he wrote, "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."

This is a serious indictment; but the signs of the times all along have proved how right he was; and more: "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition: Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thes. 2:3-12)

The signs of the times today show

that men know their designs have failed; but, being nothing daunted, they now move to take a new start: to "back up," join forces, and use every available means — natural, that is. With individual church organizations giving up their long cherished freedom, joining with every conceivable and diversified doctrine, to form a mighty phalanx, reputedly to fight sin and the Devil, and save those within its clutches; to fight what must be a losing battle, since all the redeemed of the Lord have been taken care of by the eternal love of God, who deals with his people directly through his Spirit; and sends his servants to feed and comfort them, and perform those ordinances which he has established in his church, for as long as the church is in the world.

These are some of the signs of the times religiously. They seem good, we suppose, to everyone except those who do not name the name of Jesus, (and some of those are joining in,) and except those who have learned that the Lord made a new covenant, which he has applied in their hearts, in which it is said, "I will put my laws in their mind. and write them in their hearts: and I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." And likewise those who believe with Peter, "For the promise is unto you, and unto your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

Those who are so taught will not join in such things to which the signs of the times point. Those who have felt the power and grace of God in bringing them into the knowledge and joy of salvation, know that an empty profession cannot bring salvation; and that the mere act of being baptized is not regeneration; and that none of the other so called sacraments as commonly administered and adjudged, bring about that which is solely the work of the Spirit of God, in revealing and applying what the election of grace has accomplished.

The signs of the times are not encouraging to us, but they do serve to make us glad that we know that all things are still under the control and disposition of our God, who said unto his Son Jesus Christ, "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

There is a great multitude of people who, ". . . cannot discern the signs of the times."

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE JUDGMENT

The Scriptures assure us that God will judge the world in righteousness at the last day, by that Man whom he hath appointed. Paul testifies that that judgment shall be according to his gospel.

By the term judgment, in a scriptural sense, and when used in reference to God's judgment, we are not to understand a court of investigation, for the purpose of ascertaining the guilt or innocence of those who are to be judged. A trial, according to law, examination of witnesses, and an investigation of circumstances, is indispensable before a finite court, in order to convict the guilty or justify the innocent. But God, the Judge of all, is infinite. All things are naked and open to his omnipotent eye, so that he needs not to be informed of the state and condition, prospect or destiny of any of his creatures. The ungodly are condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on them. Judgment has already come upon them to condemnation, and under that condemnation they are even now held, under chains of darkness, reserved unto the day of judgment, (not to be tried,) but to be punished for the guilt of which they are already convicted. This guilt has been found upon all the posterity

of Adam; all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; and, as evidence of this, death has passed upon all men. Even the subjects of grace and salvation were by nature children of wrath, even as others. There is nothing in their nature or practice, as the children of the earthly Adam, to distinguish them from the rest of the fallen family of mankind. The judgment of the last day, as we have said, shall be according to Paul's gospel; and as we read the gospel preached by Paul, we understand that God, from the beginning, has chosen his people unto salvation, through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth. This choice, Paul says, was anterior to the foundation of the world. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." ——Eph. i. 3, 4. The salvation to which God has chosen his people is from sin and wrath, and the accomplishment of it is by their full, free, perfect and eternal redemption, which is in Christ Jesus, in whom they are chosen. Having predestinated us into the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. (Eph. i. 5-7.) By virtue of this election, wherein God hath chosen his people to salvation, a ransom was provided, and they are redeemed from sin and wrath, and made acceptable unto God in the Beloved, in whom they have redemption, and they are freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." — Rom. viii. 1. This is as the waters of Noah unto the Lord: for as he has sworn that the waters of Noah shall no more go over the earth, so has he sworn that he will no more be wroth with his people, nor rebuke them; for the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but his kindness shall not depart from them, neither shall the covenant of his peace be removed, saith the Lord that has mercy on them. (Isaiah liv. 9, 10.)

The sins of God's people were open, going beforehand to judgment. They were carefully reckoned up, and in all their magnitude of number and turpitude, they were all laid upon him who was made sin for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. In laying upon him the iniquities of us all, (that is all whose sins he bore in his own body on the cross,) their sins necessarily went beforehand to judgment. Also, in an experimental sense, when the sinner is quickened and made sensible of his lost and helpless condition, his sins are set in order before him, and he sees, feels and acknowledges his guilt, and the dreadful sentence of the law of God in his condemnation; not until the precious Savior is revealed to him, and an evidence that he has canceled the law's demands on his behalf, can he see how God's justice can be sustained in his damnation. But in the revelation of Christ, he is enabled to say, "Surely he hath born our griefs and carried our sorrows; he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." The saints of God are already judged, condemned and executed in their Head and legal representative. They are crucified with Christ. (Gal. ii. 2.) Baptized unto Jesus Christ, baptized unto his death, buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. (Rom. vi. 3, 4.) They are redeemed, justified and cleansed by the washing of regen-

eration, and shall never again come into condemnation, for they are passed from death unto life. Their sins can never be brought in judgment against them again, neither in time nor in eternity, for God has promised to remember them no more. As a thick cloud he has blotted them out. They have therefore nothing to fear in regard to a judgment to come. This matter is forever settled from the following considerations:

First. Their judgment has already past, as we have shown by the foregoing arguments and testimony.

Second. Sin is a transgression of the law, and where there is no law there is no transgression; and the saints are no more under the law, but under grace. The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Third: The church is the mystical body of him who is the Judge, by whom the world is to be judged in righteousness at the last day; and in that body, the church, Christ will preside in the final judgment, and all his members will perfectly acquiesce.

Fourth. Their sins are covered by the expiatory sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, and God has made a solemn and everlasing covenant with them, that he will remember their sins and iniquities no more.

Fifth. Because as soon as Christ the Judge shall appear, they shall see him as he is, and shall be like him. He is himself their Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption. No examination will be required to demonstrate the perfection of their righteousness, for Christ as their righteousness cannot be impeached. Their maker is their Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name, and their Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall he be called. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.

The judgment of the last day, therefore, so far as the saints are concerned, is but the execution of what we are assured in Paul's gospel shall be accomplished. The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and the saints shall be caught up, shall meet their Savior in the air, and so shall they be forever with the Lord. The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, for the Lord knoweth them that are his. Here, then, let your faith rest upon the promise which God, that cannot lie, made before the world began. The judgment of the ungodly, so far as we understand the testimony, will not rest upon disclosures then and there made, but it will embrace the execution of the decision already made; for, as we have proved, they are already tried, found guilty, and they are condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on them.

We might greatly extend our remarks upon this subject, and shall, probably, at some future time, if spared, show how many portions of Scripture, which relate to the present organization and government of the church of God, have been misapplied, and used as though they had been spoken in reference to the final judgment of the last day. The Lord shall judge his people. He does now judge them. His judgment-seat is in Zion, and all his disciples are amenable to that judgment-seat for every idle word, and for every vain and foolish thought. But they are judged under the law of the kingdom of Christ, and not by that law which is the administration of death. If they forsake the law of Christ, under which they are brought, and keep not his commandments, he will visit their sins with a rod, and their transgressions with stripes; but his loving-kindness he will not take utterly away, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. The saints are dead to the law, by the body of Christ, and are quickened together with Christ, raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places; and they

are married unto him that is risen from the dead, that they may bring forth fruit unto God.

One great, though somewhat common mistake, which has tended to involve the subject, much to the depression of the children of God, has been in supposing that Christ will not occupy his judgment-seat until he shall come in the last day to raise the dead and judge the world. But divine revelation assures us that "The Lord is our Lawgiver; the Lord is our King; he will save us." — Isaiah xxxiii. 22. As Judge, his decisions are as final now as they shall be when he shall present his spotless bride before the throne of his Father, and turn the wicked into Hell, with all the nations that forget God.

Carnal professors, and graceless legalists, may require the terrors and thunder of Mt. Sinai, and the fearful apprehension of a judgment to come, to whip them into an unwilling subjection to what they call holiness, piety and religion; their highest motives being selfish, the hope of heaven and the fear of hell; but those whom the Son has made free, have received not the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The mind and Spirit of Christ is in them, holiness is their element; they love God, love holiness, and hate sin.

"Immortal principles forbid
The sons of God to sin."

They are born of God, and his seed abides within them, and they cannot sin, because they are born of God; and the sin which is in their flesh, they loathe and hate; for it is at war with the Spirit of life which is within them, and it makes them groan, being burdened, and long and sigh for the day when mortality shall be swallowed up of life, and they delivered from the body of this death.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe June 15, 1856. We are glad to re-publish it, for the truth it contains should put many at ease who have been concerned about the Judgment. — J. D. W.)

(The above Editorial and Voices of the Past are re-published at the request of one of our correspondents. They are taken from the July, 1966 issue of the *Signs*.

Since we hold that these things are sound in doctrine, we are glad to republish them. — J.D.W.)

Franklin, Ind.
May 6, 1875

ELD. BEEBE — DEAR BROTHER:— I am seated for the purpose of trying to pen a few thoughts on the following scripture, recorded in Isa. ii. 2: "And it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it."

The last days here alluded to undoubtedly refer to the time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, when young men are to prophesy, and old men are to dream dreams, when the Lord shows wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; the time when he demonstrates by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of his people, who the true Israelites are, the ancient rite of circumcision in the flesh gives place to that of the heart.

Jerusalem was built on Mt. Moriah, beautiful for situation; and especially in the time of Solomon's reign was the pride of the Jews, and the wonder and admiration of the whole earth. The Jews would point to Zion, saying, Walk about, and go round her; tell the towers thereof, mark well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to generations following. But as this city is typical, and our text is prophetic, let us try to understand the true meaning. The Jewish world or service terminated when the vail of the temple was rent in twain. The former days were past, and the latter days are now come; and notwithstanding the Jews, as the peculiarly blessed people of God, and

Jerusalem, the place where his name had dwelt, still God in the last day's will exalt his house still higher, even in the top of the mountains, above all national or human government, even of the Jews, to whom laws had been given by their Creator. But it was temporal, shadowy and typical, and had served its purpose; and based on it is a structure erected that reaches to heaven. The ancients tried to build a tower to heaven, but the Lord confounded their language, and a Babel was by them built.

Often since do workmongers strive to unite to build a passage to heaven; but meet with no better success than their ancient brethren. This right God has reserved to himself, and will confound intruders wherever found, in christian or in heathen lands. But the hour cometh when neither in the mountains of Samaria, nor yet at Jerusalem, shall the true worshippers worship the Father. It is not the locality that gives it validity, but the spirit, and the truth required the divine service; hence those that worship in spirit and in truth, must be in the spirit and know the truth. Such service we must not expect from the natural man, whose mind is carnal and enmity against God, not subject to his law, neither indeed can be; and the scriptures show that Jews as well as Gentiles are by nature the children of wrath, that all have inherited a fallen, degenerate nature, being the children of one whose disobedience brought sin and death into the world. Sin and death has blighted, marred and spoiled all this degenerate family, so that pangs and sorrow, lamentations and woes are poured out upon them from the cup of wrath. The conscience-smitten sinner, whether in civilized or in heathen lands, is ever trying to hush the voice of his accusing conscience by offerings. This is true among barbarians, as well as among the civilized.

Early in the history of our race Cain and Abel were engaged in presenting offerings; although the former presented an offering, yet he did not present a sacrifice; but the latter not only presented an offering, but also a sacrifice, a victim of blood, which showed his faith in the Lamb of God. So in all the long line of our race, the thing that discriminates between the true worshiper and he that worships only in form, is the one makes a sacrifice, while the other only presents a gift. It is difficult to find one so debased and sunken in sin, but he is glorying in some good quality he imagines he possesses; he thanks God that he is not as other men, whom he thinks to be worse than himself, looking to his better qualities as on offering to the Most High, and upon which he tries to trust. While it is true that all are under the law and its curse, yet none but those who are taught of the Lord know the spiritual import of the law. Paul said, I was alive without the law; but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. For the first time he had a discovery of its breadth, height and depth, extending as it did to every act and thought, bringing to his memory every sin, all things that ever he did.

As he had before been, like all other legalists, living by obedience to the law, thinking its demands were only such as he could perform, being ignorant of its real intent and meaning, but now having an understanding of its true or spiritual import, he sinks, despairs and dies to all hope of acceptance by works which he has done, which now looks to him no better than filthy rags. Thus despoiled of all the rich legal apparel, and made to loathe it as the filthy dunghill, the heavy laden sinner laments his condition, feeling that woe is me, for I am undone; I am a man of unclean lips, and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips. He has learned that the law of God is just and holy, but he is carnal, sold under sin, and justly condemned; so that if his soul is sent to hell, God's righteous law approves it well; but he pleads, "Yet save a trembling sinner, Lord, whose hope still hovering round thy word." Jesus

said, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." The word *men* here is supplied by the translators. No doubt the same idea is here presented as is found in the language of the Savior elsewhere, when he says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me; and this is the Father's will that hath sent me, that of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

In Revelation John says of Christ, that he has redeemed us to God by his blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth. Here is the Church of the living God, established not upon the overthrow of the law, which man could not keep, but in its fulfillment by Jesus Christ, the head of the body, even on the top of an honored and fulfilled law. And all nations shall flow unto it; the people redeemed by Jesus out of every nation. If we look on this as a natural sequence, it would be an anamoly, for all natural objects, drawn by the centre of gravity, tend downward; if hard or solid substances they tumble, if liquids they flow, but all are drawn to the earth. All things akin to the earth have an affinity for the earth, and are attracted thereto. Among this class is the first man, Adam, of the earth, and earthy, and all his long line of posterity. The magnet will draw certain metals that have an affinity for it upward, downward or horizontaly, to a limited extent, but cannot draw them from the earth; for unsupported, it will itself fall to the earth, being earthy.

But Jesus says, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Here is a magnet possessing rare properties and of great magnitude, but like other magnets, will draw none that have not an affinity for him. Where shall we look for those who have this affinity? Not to the children of Adam, as such, but to those born of the Spirit, born again, having the Spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead dwelling in them. "A well of water, springing up into everlasting life"—an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and enters into that within the vail, whither the forerunner has for us entered; having his love in their hearts, which leads to God again. Thus we realize that there is an affinity, and not only so, but the hard heart is made soft, and we are melted like wax, ready to flow; now where shall we flow? To that which has the strongest affinity for us. We realize that we are in a strait; we are drawn to the earth, being earthy, and are, we hope, drawn to heaven, having a desire for that which is heavenly. But, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But we feel that we are drawn, and we cry to the Lord to increase our faith and draw us, and we will run (or follow) after him. Thus melted, we lose all our cohesive strength, we become weak, we cannot stand, much less walk, helpless and entirely dependent on that which draws, as to whither we flow. "Thus saith the Lord, To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word." And again, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and he that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me."

Then Jesus is the great magnet that draws us to him, having by near ties of kindred made our sins his own, and by one offering forever perfected them that are sanctified; and by virtue of the same relationship, his righteousness and the Holy Spirit, with its sanctifying power, becomes ours, thus producing a unity of sentiment, that makes us one with him; so that our affinity or love for him draws us to him. Hence we flow upward to where his church is, even to heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

We have been made to rejoice in the

Lord of late for his manifest tokens of love to us at Bethel. Since last November there have eighteen joined our church; sixteen by experience and two by relation; two in November, nine in March, and seven in May, all giving very satisfactory evidence of a work of grace; some remarkably clear and pointed, and most of them date their experience back for years. Not only this, but many others are deeply affected; indeed the church and all who attend seem to be solemn and greatly wrought upon. We hope the Lord has begun a good work among us, and will carry it on. Our dear brother, D. Bartley, was with us at each of those meetings; we feel confident the Lord sent him to us with a message comforting and consoling; for the angels, or gospel ministers, are in the right hand of God, and he says, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature; directing them to their field of labor by the guidance of his Spirit.

May the Lord still bless us, and add to the church such as he calls by his grace, and leads to the acknowledging of the truth; and not only us, but may he bless his saints wherever located, is my prayer.

Your unworthy brother,
Elder P. K. BARR.

(We believe the brethren will read the above with much interest, for great truths are plainly set forth.—J.D.W.)

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church — Guilford County, North Carolina, a presbytery met May 19, 1973, at 7:00 P. M. for the examination of Brother Wayne Edwards, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the discretion of their judgement, to ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of deacon.

The solemnity began with song 9 from Hymn and Tune Book and prayer by Elder Haywood Wray. All elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders Kenneth Key, Leonard Key, Haywood Wray and Donald Smith.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Kenneth Key as Moderator and Elder Donald Smith as Clerk. Elder Haywood Wray was chosen to examine the candidate. Deacon Tommy Batts, who had been appointed spokesman for the church, delivered Brother Wayne Edwards to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder Haywood Wray using scripture reference 1st Timothy 3rd Chapter. The presbytery, being satisfied with the examination, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Leonard Key. Elder Haywood Wray delivered the charge to the candidate using scripture reference 6th Chapter Acts.

The Moderator asked Brother Tommy Batts if the church approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to Brother Wayne Edwards and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The Brother was delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Greensboro.

The minutes of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Kenneth Key.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Elder Donald Smith, Clerk

OBITUARIES

THOMAS JEFFERSON FLEMING

Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church in regular monthly conference March 31, 1973, at Cash, Texas, requested that I write a memorial to Brother Thomas Jefferson Fleming; familiarly called "Jeff". He began his earthly pilgrimage December 7, 1888, in Collin County, Texas; and his appointed time to leave this world came February 12, 1973, at Hawkins, Texas. He married his wife Myrtle in 1911; who survives. They reared a large family — twelve or thirteen children. They celebrated their 62nd wedding anniversary in December, 1962.

Brother Fleming made his living for himself and family by tilling the soil. As a result this family learned the dignity of work. They showed their respect for him the day of the funeral; as well as did his many friends and neighbors.

Brother Fleming's walk was a walk of circumspection — calm and heavenly. He never appeared frustrated or fanitical, although he had many bruises, ups and downs, short crops, low prices, droughts and floods. I believe he was well acquainted with Matthew 12:20: "A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench till he send forth judgement unto victory." His victory was swallowed up in the manner he departed this life, and the way he was graced before all who knew him.

He had been a member of the Primitive faith many years before he was baptized into the church on June 5, 1971, by Elder Lloyd

Wall. Elder Wall at the funeral paid tribute to Brother Fleming's faith and belief.

He was laid to rest to await the Great Trumpeter, in the Smyrna Cemetery in Rains County, Texas.

Guy Sisk, Church Clerk.

NANNIE SUSIE CARTER

Nannie Susie Carter was born July 27, 1892 in Franklin County, Virginia, the daughter of Jerman W. and Martha Franklin Carter. She died January 29, 1973 at the age of eighty-one.

Surviving are the following brother and sisters: Fletcher G. Carter, Mrs. Charles W. Dyer, Mrs. John D. Wood, Mrs. George E. Sisler, Mrs. Charlie Burgess, Mrs. John R. Deveraux, and Miss Viola Carter.

Susie united with the church at Roanoke, Virginia, in October, 1916, and was baptized by Elder J. C. Hurst, along with four others. She loved to assemble with the brethren in the meetings, and rejoiced in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. At every opportunity she was with us in attending associations and other meetings far and near, and had many friends among the brethren.

The last three years of her life she was confined in a nursing home, but never lost interest in the meetings, always inquiring about them. She would say that she longed to hear preaching one more time. She always enjoyed the brethren and friends when they visited her and spoke of their hope of eternal life through the grace and mercy of God.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder C. E. Turner and Elder J. L. Bocock at Oakey's Funeral Home in Roanoke, and was laid to rest in Sherwood Memorial Park, Salem, Va. to await the coming of the Lord, when she shall be conformed to His image in the resurrection, be like Him and to praise Him forever, receiving the end of her faith, even salvation.

Written by two who loved her, a sister and brother-in-law,

John D. and Virginia Wood

SISTER BIRDIE LAWSON

Our Heavenly Father in His infinite wisdom and mercy has seen fit to remove our beloved sister Birdie Lawson from the walks of this life, from this low ground of sin and sorrow, and placed her in that peaceful rest until He sees fit to come and gather his jewels who have been redeemed in the Saviour's blood.

Sister Birdie Adams Lawson was born in October, 1901, to the late Edd and Ora Adams, and was called to her eternal home April 28, 1973; making her stay here 71 years and 6 months. She was married to Lynn Lawson in August, 1924, who preceded her in death December 30, 1960. To this union were born four children, who are left to mourn her passing: Mrs. Joe (Wanda) Williford, Mrs. Joe Edd (Linda) Emerson, Ted and Merritt Lawson, all of Murray and near Murray, Ky. She leaves 9 grandchildren and 1 great grandchild; also three brothers: Hill, Fred and Tom Adams; three sisters: Mrs. Berl Darnell, Mrs. Carl Hoke and Mrs. Marty Bloc — one sister and four brothers have already passed on.

She was a member of Zion Church, Mayfield, Ky. Eld. O. W. Perkins baptized her in August, 1960. The church has lost a faithful and loving member, and the children a precious and devoted mother, and the neighbors a kind friend. Sister Lawson believed in salvation by grace and the God who has all power in heaven and on earth. I don't believe she was ever absent from Zion Church services after becoming a member there, and had attended long before. She loved the cause and always ready to help support it, not only in her own church but everywhere she met with Primitive Baptists. She had her own conveyance and always saw that her pastor and his wife, and friends and members had a way to go with her.

The brethren and sisters always had a warm welcome to visit her in her home, and it was a blessed pleasure for her to have them. This was her whole life and joy. She was blessed to be able to go to church and assemble with them until the very last. She was stricken with a heart attack on Saturday morning, April 28th, and passed away at 12:20 the same day.

Eld. Paul Poyner said the last words of respect amid a host of relatives and friends, and her body was laid to rest in Murray Memory Garden beside her husband, beneath a beautiful floral offering, to await the second coming of her Lord and Master, to be called from the sleeping dust to that Eternal City whose maker and builder is God.

The writer knew her many years, and loved her very dearly. Her passing has left a void that can never be filled — she is missed more than words can ever express. May the Lord keep and sustain all the bereaved ones; but dear children and friends, let us not mourn as those who have no hope. Christ is coming again — this time to gather his children unto himself. What a sweet hope we have that we shall be with Him forevermore.

We humbly bow to the will of a Sovereign and Merciful God, believing our great loss is her eternal gain.

The members of Zion Church agree that Sister Trudie Adams write a Resolution of Respect for our beloved Sister Birdie Lawson, and that a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times*, one for the Church record, and one to the family.

Elder Paul Poyner, Mod.
Sister Trudie Adams, Church Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141 DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1973 NO. 10

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 10/73 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

A PRAYER

Rt. 2,
Star City, Ark. 71667

Dear Editors:

Greetings to all of God's little ones, whether I am one or not. I am enclosing $5.00 for renewal, and use the other for Indigent Fund.

One night after retiring I felt impressed to write some of my thoughts. As I could not sleep, I got up and wrote a few lines, but I know they may not be worth much:

Lord help me if I be thine; my precious Saviour look down upon me from thy heavenly place above: let thy light shine around me, and keep me near the circle of thy love. If so it is thy will to gently guide me along life's rugged path as I go,—as I travel through this maze of sorrow, be Thou near wherever I may go.

Teach me, Lord, to be more humble, that is my plea. O Lord forgive and make me walk more patiently in this life that I live. Guide, guard, and direct me, O Lord, that is my plea.

If one at all I know that my help must come from thee. I am so helpless when left to my self. I pray for your guidance in all that I may do. If it be thy will, remember me, O Lord I pray to you.

I know I do not have much light on these precious truths. Which makes me often wonder if I have ever been taught anything in the school of grace. It is all in God's hands.

I enjoyed Brother Gregory Duren's writing. I hope he will write more, if he is given a mind to do so. May the good Lord be with us all.

A sinner in need of mercy,
Mrs. Havis Donaldson

THINGS WHICH ARE SPIRITUALLY DISCERNED ONLY

The blind and ignorant cannot see or understand the gifts and calling of our eternal Father; and neither can they be expected to understand, for these are spiritually discerned. Neither can any man know our Lord Jesus Christ except He be revealed by our Father. Also no man can come unto our Lord Jesus Christ except our Father draw him.

I have learned this precious truth by experience and revelation: and no man had anything to do with the experience. Therefore I surely know that the salvation of God's people is in no wise dependent upon a preacher or any other human source or effort. The world today is holding the theory that a child chooses a father instead of the father choosing a child, — or a lost man chooses a Saviour. This is a ridiculous doctrine to the child who knows the difference.

I have been ridiculed and rejected by religious people; but that does not bother me any more, for I know from whence my salvation comes. It is not from any source except the eternal God who holds all life and death in his holy

hand. Many have turned their backs on me and considered me out of reach. But the precious truth which lives within me, far out-weighs the trouble, grief and sorrow I have known. Our precious Saviour promised that it is through much tribulation and sorrow that we enter the kingdom. In order to enjoy a kingdom there must be a King, that knowledge is worth more by far than any wealth this world affords.

Ethel Gilland
Panama City, Fla.

PREDESTINATION

Our preacher said one morning that the word *predestination* doesn't need any adjective before it. I hadn't heard at that time of "limited" predestination, but now I understand why we say that we believe in "the absolute" predestination "of all things."

I've seen children take dominoes and stand them on end, one after another, and then thump one and watch all of them in a chain reaction tumble over. That game always causes me to think of predestination. But instead of children setting up dominoes, there is the Three-In-One God Who made, Who set up, Who established all things. He didn't leave anything for man to make, for the Scriptures say, "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." All things were made in God's mind before "time" commenced. It's written (Gen. 2:1), "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." Paul also wrote (Heb. 4:3-4), ". . . the works were finished from the foundation of the world."

When children set up the dominoes, they don't care which particular domino goes where, and they sometimes don't know when they start playing whether they will put the dominoes in a line or in a circle or in some other form, but they decide that as they go. But God is All-Wise. He knew everything before He created anything; and, being All-Powerful, He made all things according to His Own will and for His Own pleasure. (See Rev. 4:11) Moreover, the entire creation surely is perfectly ordered. Where there is lack of order, there is confusion, and Paul wrote (I Cor. 15:-33), "For God is not *the author* of confusion . . . ." Each thing is in the place at any time where God determined before time that it should be, and each event in all its detail occurs exactly as before determined by God that it should occur. God made all things, set them up in order before "time" commenced; and this is what I see when children set up the dominoes. Events come to pass, each in its time, as before appointed; and this is what I see when the dominoes in turn fall over.

However, in watching that game, I've seen one or more of the dominoes fail sometimes to fall over, abruptly stopping the reaction. When that happened, the children expressed some mild disappointment and started over. It seems to me, although I don't know, that failures of that sort should be inherent in a system of "limited" predestination. That God is the first and the last, the beginning and the ending, is written in the Scriptures. God administered the "thump" to His creation which started time, and God shall stop time, for an angel shall stand upon the sea and upon the earth and lift up his hand to heaven and swear by Him that lives forever that there shall be time no longer. (See Rev. 10:5-6 and Daniel, Chap. 12) Understanding that God is the beginning and the ending, are we to imagine, then, that He has nothing to do with the interim or with any portions of it or people in it? If everything in the interim were not perfectly predetermined, should not God find the "chain reaction," which He started, broken unto chaos by man? What would —if man had his will—come of all the "shall's" of the Scriptures? But the interim belongs entirely to God, and He does His will not only in the army of heaven but also at all times among the inhabitants of the earth.

I understand that people who don't believe in absolute predestination sometimes ask believers how they get around admitting, as a logical conclusion, that God is the cause of all the wickedness in the world. To me that question is understandable, intelligent. But I think it comes from people embedded in the greatest of all relativity problems, people whose measurements, whose estimates, of all things are relative to the workings of the natural mind and the things of the natural world. But God is absolutely immeasurable. We can never measure the infinite, eternal God, the Creator, by the created, finite, puny human mind. But it's good to bear in our little minds (Isaiah 55:8-9): "For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

It simply doesn't make any difference at all what conclusions we think are logical, reasonable, intelligent, rational. A revelation of the blessed Lord can crumble a whole world of rationalizations.

God is perfect and whatever He does is perfect, however it seems to us. We can't measure God or judge Him. We find in the Bible (Isaiah 45:7), "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." God is the Creator of all things. He creates what appears to our eyes and seems to our minds to be evil, to be confusion, but things are not evil in God's eyes and mind in that; even what we call wickedness was made by All-Wise God for His Own good pleasure. God is not only righteous but He is Righteousness, and I disbelieve that any evil or any confusion can be in, or come of, Righteousness.

I believe also that God made Adam and Eve certain to fall, but I don't belive that God must therefore bear the responsibility for the transgression. To me that is worse than foolishness, and anyone who imagines it must be submerged in that relativity problem, for Almighty God is not obligated, not bound, ever to do anything, and, moreover, surely it was a "transgression" only in natural language, for the will of God cannot be transgressed.

But why did God make Satan and why did He make Adam and Eve certain to fall? He made Satan and everything else for His pleasure. I don't understand how the fall of Adam and Eve, or anything else, fits into the order of things because I don't understand what things have been ordered, and I don't think that I shall ever in this world understand these things, for no person has ever been the Lord's counsellor or directed Him.

Of all people, however, there are some — peculiar and afflicted — who are God's *elect*, and these were created (Isaiah 43:21) to show forth His praise. Paul wrote that they were afore prepared, were predestinated, unto glory. (See Romans 9:23 and 8:29-30) Jesus said to the mother of James and John, " . . . to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but *it shall be given to them for whom it* is prepared of my Father." Not even the Lord ever invited anyone to heaven, for the ones to have eternal life were created unto glory before the foundation of the world. And I believe that the fall of Adam and Eve and the law of Moses and everything recorded in the Old Testament was and is for the instruction and general good of the elect. Paul wrote (Galatians 3:24), "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."

It's clear in the Scriptures that not all people are elect, and God only knows whom He chose unto eternal life. Jesus said to some of the Jews, "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." It's also written (Daniel 12:10), "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried: but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand." (These are *shall's* and not *may's*). And the Lord said that they that have done

evil shall come forth unto the resurrection of damnation. (John 5:29)

I've heard people say that it's "not fair" for God to make people come forth unto the resurrection of damnation. They are mired in that relativity problem; and they don't like the ninth chapter of Romans. But I remember that when I was young, I made things out of clay, and nobody ever told me that it was not fair for me to keep some of the things I made and to tear up others. I guess that it never entered anyone's mind. But people complain about what God does.

A little one in Christ, I hope.
Ann Folmer
P. O. Box 148
Fort Deposit, Alabama 36032

"GOD IS NOT MOCKED"

"Be not deceived; Gor is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." (Gal. 6:7-9)

There are not any conditions about this text, just as there are not any conditions in any text under this Gospel dispensation. (The law was conditional. We are not under the law, but under Grace.) Man may attempt to make conditions by twisting the Scriptures around to suit the flesh. Law and Grace just will not mix together.

The thought that comes to mind is that God knows everything, God is everywhere, and there is no place where one can go to escape the presence of God. What a great difference between being man fearing and God fearing! Which one are we? We may appear unto men to be a religious person, but what does our walk show in the sight of God? We may profess to be an humble person, but are we humble within our hearts? We may profess to show much love, and appear before men to be a person with love, but does that love spring forth from our hearts? We may fool people, but we cannot fool God! "And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and *they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness."* (Ezekiel 33:31) We may read much about love, and hear men tell us about love, and we may talk about love; but we cannot love others unless that love springs forth from our hearts. "—Ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." (1 Thess. 4:9) "We love him, because he first loved us." (1 John 4:19) Since God is love, then God must shine his love within our hearts before we can love God. Now, if we love God, then we cannot help but love others. How can we love God whom we cannot see and hate our brother whom we can see? "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can we love God whom he hath not seen?" (1 John 4:20) If we hate our brother, then love is not in our hearts. If we hate our brother, then we are not sowing love. If we hate our brother, then we sow to the flesh, and what will we reap? ("He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption.") If we love our brother, then we sow love, and we reap love." "—with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." (Matt. 7:2)

"But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for *God loveth a cheerful giver."* (2 Cor. 9:6-7) Are we free hearted? Do we help others in need? "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to

the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." (James 2:15-17) Do we sow bountifully? Does this not tie in with the text? In a nutshell, we reap what we sow .

"He that soweth to his flesh." This means those who only think of themselves and self comes first in their walk and daily living. Therefore this means those who soweth to his flesh. Do we have the welfare of others or are we only concerned about our own welfare? Did Jesus have the welfare of others when he left the Father of Glory, and came upon this earth? He counted not his life dear, but he gave his life for his bride. Why did Jesus do this? It is because of the love that he had for you. Doesn't this make your heart tender to think of the love that Jesus had for you? Do you feel worthy of this love? "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." (1 John 3:16)

"He that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Who are the ones that sow to the Spirit? These are the people that are blessed and directed by God to sow to the Spirit. It is the Spirit of God that blesses you to sow to the Spirit, and man does not have any part in the matter. Since it is God who blesses you to sow to the Spirit, and you reap life everlasting, then where is your praise? Do you praise your flesh or do you praise God? Since you reap love and you reap a wonderful peace of mind with your soul and with God; you sing praises within your heart to God. We find that we cannot praise God enough upon this earth. But we thank God for this sweet hope that when time will be no more, that we may be blessed to praise God to the fullest.

"In due season we shall reap, if we faint not." What a wonderful promise to poor strangers! This makes me think of the song: "I am a stranger here below, and what I am tis hard to know, I am so vile, so prone to sin, I fear that I'm not born again." Dark clouds and heavy trials may come your way, but this is all to try your faith. "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." (Job 24:10) "I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." (Isaiah 48:10) God gives you sufficient grace to bear your present trials. What a faithful God we have! "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." (Isaiah 40:30-31)

May the Lord bless you to "cast all your care upon him; for he careth for you." (1 Peter 5:7) May you be blessed to wait upon the Lord for all your needs. Finally, may the Lord bless you to sow to the Spirit and remember this saying: "For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

W. W .Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION—1973

Dear Brethren:

Since the God of all grace has loved us from eternity with an everlasting love, and has manifested this by making us new creatures in Christ Jesus, may we, even here in this association, give unto Him the glory due His Name.

It was God that began the good work in us, and as sure as He has begun it, so surely will He complete it — in His own way and time. Our God is for us, and this is our consolation under all circumstances.

We shall soon pass through Jordan to the blissful shores of our heavenly Canaan. Our leader Jesus has taken possession of that inheritance for us: He has gone to come again for us. This should cheer us to the lot of our inheritance in this vale of tears, assured that

He will lead us on safely until we enter into that rest where none of the inhabitants will say, "I am sick." Then the days of our mourning will be ended.

It is this we are hoping for; it is this we are waiting for; it is the anticipation of this that sometimes causes us to rejoice. How delightful it is to the mind of a believer, to think that this inheritance is infallibly secured to all the family of God. Brethren, how bright are your prospects: Your Sun is rising to set no more. Soon you will receive a palm of victory and a crown of glory.

You ought to rejoice, though now, if need be, ye are in manifold temptations. You may be poor, you may be tried in body and mind, you may be sorrowing, but look up, your redemption draweth nigh.

"A few more rolling suns at most
Will land us safe on Canaan's coast:
Where we shall sing the song of grace,
And see our glorious Hiding-Place."

In bonds,
J. L. Bocock

EXPERIENCE

3433 Jae Valley Road, S.E.
Roanoke, Va. 24014

Dear Editors:

I want to write some things about my experience. I dream so much of being in old buildings.

I dreamed of walking in a big building, and there was a large crowd of people on both sides. I looked to the right and saw Elder J. P. Helms preaching and singing, and I went over and sat down. It was the sweetest place I ever saw. I told my husband that I had such a burden on my mind, and I wanted to go to the Primitive Baptist Church at Little Creek. The second time I went we stood up to sing and it seemed a big lump came out of my throat. I don't know how to tell how I felt, but it seemed my burdens were gone.

In 1962 I was baptized at Pigg River Church, and the whole world seemed brighter. I enjoy the meetings so much. My husband passed away in September, 1972, and I get so lonely; but I know it was his time to go. Only faith, hope, and prayers help along the rough road. It came into my mind one night when I was so blue: the voice said, "If God is with you, who can be against you."

Love. A sister in hope,
Reva W. Abshire

COMFORTING TO THOSE WHO HAVE HOPE

Rocky Mount, N. C.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

It is time to renew my subscription. I enjoy reading the writings that God blesses his saints to write. They are such a comfort to those who have a hope in the Lord.

I was glad to visit the Staunton River Association, and meet with those I believe the Lord has called to follow Him.

May the Lord bless you dear Editors in the future as He has in the past; also those who are blessed with grace to write those truths of the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. My hope is for a better home beyond the skies.

Inclosed is $5.00 for one year's renewal, with the extra for the Indigent Fund.

In bonds of sweet fellowship.

A little sister I hope,
Fannie Mae Harper

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 2, Box 10
Star City, Ark. 71667

Dear Editors:

I have been impressed to write some thoughts on experience, but I know my efforts in writing are very poor.

God's word is, "My doctrine (teaching) shall drop as the rain . . ." It does not mean that it may drop ,or could drop if we will let it. It is positive with

no conditions. If one is truly taught of God, it is a blessing — it is a blessed experience if we have an understanding at all. The Scriptures teach, *to wait upon the Lord.* No man is due any glory, for all praise belongs to our sovereign God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will.

I never seem to have any doubt of what I hope to believe, but when left to myself, my fear is, Have I had a true experience, or any hope of His saving grace. The past few months I have experienced a very dark and lonely season, which has caused me much concern. In crossing this dark and lonely valley, it seems that I may have some consolation and hope of reaching the mountain on the other side. There, God willing, may I find a ray of sunshine — a little light to guide me in the right way: God's way. But am I His or am I not? If I have been made to know anything at all, I was not taught by man.

It is my hope that the good Lord will be gracious and sustain me as I travel along life's way, and make me more humble, and give me a measure of understanding of the blessed truth: if my name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. I beg the Lord to reconcile me to my lot here on earth, and enable me to run with patience the race that is predestinated for me; and give me strength to endure suffering as in Romans 7:18, "For I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do."

If not kept by God's saving grace, faith lives and labors under heavy loads. If I know anything at all, it is a guiding light through the dark hours for God's little ones, whether I be one or not.

"I need precious Jesus
For I am full of sin;
My soul is dark and guilty:
My heart is dead within.

I need thee precious Jesus
For I am very poor:
A stranger and a pilgrim,
I have no earthly store."

May the good Lord be gracious to his little ones wherever they are, to give them assurance in their hours of need: to make them to lie down in green pastures, that we may have a taste of things to come in the land of eternal rest, when time is no more — no more toils, sorrows and afflictions. The Lord has surely appointed our walk here below, including all of our joys and sorrows. Our prayer is that He will supply our needed grace to await our appointed time, and to fight the good fight of faith, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. This is my hope if I have any understanding at all.

"When thou my righteous Judge shall come,
To fetch thy ransomed people home,
Shall I among them stand?
Shall such a worthless worm as I
Who sometimes am afraid to die,
Be found at thy right hand?"

God's little ones are exhorted to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and to follow after none save Jesus Christ our Lord: praying for guidance along life's way. May we be given gracious seasons, if it is His will, to wait upon Him and be reconciled unto our lot as we travel on. "Thy will be done, not ours."

One of the least if one at all, I need your prayers.
Sister Veola Donaldson

THE NAPKIN — IN A PLACE BY ITSELF

P. O. Box 1250
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

Dear Editors of the *Signs*,

"And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself." (John 20:7)

As I have had several requests to give a view on the above Scripture, I shall attemept to do so through the medium of our paper.

Having never read or heard a view concerning this matter, I have no way

of knowing how far or near from the truth of the matter I am, except as I feel satisfied that it is in harmony with the general tenor of Bible doctrine. The reader, of course, can and will determine for himself if the view suits his comprehension of the Word.

The first eighteen verses of this chapter deals with the early morning events of the first day of the week: the morning of our Lord's resurrection and subsequent manifestation to Mary Magdalene in the vicinity of the empty tomb. No event, Biblical or historical, before or since has ever been attacked and disputed by Anti-Christs as has been the triumph of our Lord over the unseen enemies of God's people. These unseen enemies are death, the grave, and Satan. And the resurrection of our Lord represents His triumph over these enemies. Christ made fourteen known appearances to attest to His coming forth from the bonds of death. Eleven of these were before He returned to Glory in the clouds. The last three were to Stephen at his martyrdom, Paul on the Demascus road, and lastly to John on the Isle of Patmos. Who, then, but the blinded fool would defy such proofs?

God's people today, however, care nothing for dry doctrinal proofs of what took place that great morning of the Resurrection. They love the testimony of the Bible relating to it. But a greater proof exists for them. Stirring in their breast is the sure evidence of a risen Saviour. Christ in them! Born from above they live and breathe their own proof of the Living Son. He reigns in them and is their only lasting proof.

From the beggar on the dung hill to the prince on his throne, those who, like Matthew, heard the Master say, "Follow me", know He lives and reigns. They may not be able to tell it without the tears choking their words, but they know. May we ever be blessed to praise Him if He has made known to us some little glimpse of Heavenly things and has blessed us to agree with Paul by saying, "That I may know Him, and the Power of His Resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death; If by any means I might attain unto the Resurrection of the dead." (Phil. 3:10-11)

Our text truly offers us a point for serious consideration. Why was the napkin that was about the Lord's head not in the place one would have expected it to be? Why was it wrapped together in a place by itself? To begin with, the Disciples must have been amazed at the tomb in every respect. First, the guards has been instructed to make the tomb, "as sure as you can," Second, Matthew 28:1-2 tells us that there was a great earthquake as it began to dawn that morning. Third, for reasons the Scriptures do not say, all this commotion brought no other guards to the tomb than the present watch which fell down as dead men.

Upon gazing into that awesome sepulcher the now perplexed Peter and John see the graveclothes, but the body of our precious Lord is not to be found. Not knowing the Scripture that He was to rise from the dead (John 20-9) their consternation must have been great indeed. Truly miraculous things had taken place since our Lord was laid in the tomb.

From the orderly appearance of the linen wrappings it was obvious that grave robbers had not stolen the body. That the Lord was securely wrapped for burial cannot be questioned. All four Gospel accounts tell of Joseph taking His body, WRAPPING it and LAYING Him in his own tomb. Further, it would be a miracle nearly as great as the Resurrection itself to remove the grave wraps from the body of Jesus, to remove Him and then rewrap the bindings around thin air. The Gospel account is careful to maintain the orderliness of the wraps which contained our Redeemer for three days and three nights.

Yet, this is what the Disciples found. The Lord had risen! He was gone from the tomb. There were no signs of a struggle or a tearing away the death garment. Simply, our Lord rose up out of

the clothes as well as rising up from the tomb. In His now Glorious state nothing material might bind Him. Unlike Lazarus, who "Came forth bound hand and foot with graveclothes," He needed not any to say to Him, "Loose Him, and let Him go." (John 11:44)

Note well, also, that when Lazarus came forth he not only was BOUND with graveclothes, the Scripture states further, "And his face was bound about with a napkin." Apparently the binding of the head and that of the body were separate in that day.

Look carefully at the words again in the text concerning the napkin which is the head garment, " . . . but wrapped together in a place by itself." Still wrapped together, but apart from the graveclothes. Why would the Spirit of Inspiration have us observe the separation of the two grave articles? Only Scripture can answer Scripture and this lesson can be no exception.

This is not the first time our Lord was found wrapped in garments foreign to Him. Blessed thought it is that the Eternal Son of God became the Son of Man and was born of the Virgin and wrapped in swaddling clothes. As there was no room for them in the inn they were loaned the use of a stable. The Glory of God shone about Shepherds who came to view this Infant. Yes, though He was rich He became poor, even the poverty of a borrowed birthplace. Upon entering this world Christ was wrapped. Upon departing this world He was wrapped and laid in a borrowed tomb.

Little is known of Jesus of Nazareth until at the age of 30 years He came preaching, "The Kingdom of God is at hand." Some three and one half years later He uttered His last words," It is finished," and bowed His head and gave up the ghost. Note well that His last physical act in this world was the bowing of His Head.

A bloody and thorn-pierced head it was. Out of its eyes had poured tears of grief. (John 11:35) From its mouth came words man had never heard before. (John 7:46) Its ears had heard the groans of the multitudes, the prayers of the Saints, and the cursings of the mobs. But of all things the Scriptures relate about that bowed head, nothing is as precious as the words, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." (Luke 9:58)

Can we then believe in the light of these words that our Lord would in death accept a resting place for His Head, especially in the tomb, which is the final depository for sinful flesh (our Lord's excepted)? I would rather feel that the sweet truth is that our Saviour's Head could *not* rest until, "After having offered one sacrifice for sin forever, He SAT DOWN on the right hand of God." (Heb. 10:12)

In conclusion, it would appear that the napkin was deliberately put in a place by itself to show all who have eyes to see that even death itself provided not a place for the Son of Man to lay His Head, thus telling us He must come forth from the gloomy tomb and ascend to the Father from whence He came. Yes, the Lord always gave, never taking. He could not take so much as a small place in death to lay His head. Lay aside the napkin! The King of Glory will not rest His Head until He enters the everlasting gates.

There may be other and better meanings in this passage. If so, please excuse this writer, as I prefer our Lord to be seen All Glorious than my views be approved.

James F. Poole

"WITHOUT ME YE CAN DO NOTHING"

I have often heard people say, The Lord helps those who help themselves. I would like to say in all sincerity that the Lord helps those who cannot help themselves.

Our Lord Jesus Christ has said that without him we can do nothing. And again the scriptures tell us that in Him we move and have our being. We are

told that we are only clay in the potter's hand. Surely clay can only move at the potter's hand and will.

Many people boast of having a free-will, but when it comes to being sick or dying, they beg Almighty God to do something. If it is true that they have a free-will of their own, why don't they just tell Him they don't want these things to be, and go on their merry way?

I know I do not have a free-will of my own, but that my life is in God's great hand to do with as He will. Do those who boast of free-will claim that they can stay the hand of death, or tell almighty God when or where sickness or death should be? If they had a free-will of their own, they never would be sick or never would die. So why don't they just admit that they are helpless creatures in the hand of the great almighty God? Could they understand and admit this, they would stop their boasting and see themselves for what they really are: just poor worms of the dust who are dependent upon the mercies of a sovereign God.

Our God is the potter who has power over the clay, to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. I see no place for the clay to be self-sufficient.

Ethel Gilland
Panama City. Fla.

The following is an excerpt from the Circular Letter of the Tygart's Valley Old School Baptist Association of 1894, written by Brother John P. Thompson. The letter is quite lengthy and contains considerable history of the Baptists, as well as the doctrine.

The Old School Bible Baptists do not claim to be Protestants; they did not derive their existence from that source nor from any creed or system originated and taught by uninspired men, but from the Eternal Word. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." "He was in the world and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not," therefore the world knoweth us not, for it knew Him not. (John, 1st chapter) From this Word and His apostles and prophets, He himself being the chief cornerstone, our doctrine and church is founded. We did not receive our doctrine from men, neither are we taught it by men but by revelation of Jesus Christ, who declared himself that, "No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." God and Christ are known only by and to each other. They dwell mutually in the secrecy of their own glorious, eternal and invisible personality, and no man (there is no exception to this *no man*) knows either except through their mutual revelation; and this revelation is through faith, which is the gift of God, a fruit of His spirit. If Christ saves men if they will, what is plainer than that He came to do men's will? But He says "I came down from heaven not to do mine own will but the will of Him that sent me; and this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day."

Christ himself was not a free moral agent, he did not come upon that principle; He came not to do his own will but came as one sent of the Father to execute the will of the Eternal Jehovah. The Saviour said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3) Is there any harmony between this expression and the doctrine of free will? Does not the one essentially down the other? Does not the fact that this birth is a necessity, prove most conclusively that all the powers and capacity of the natural man are wholly inadequate to bring him to God? Does it not absolutely cut off every shadow of a possibility of salvation through the combined powers of men, angels and devils? A Christian is a child of promise — just as much a child of promise as Isaac was. "We brethren

as Isaac was, are the children of promise." (Galatians 4:28) A child of promise is a child especially promised which could not possibly come into existence upon natural principles. Isaac was by promise, he was not born after the flesh; his birth was absolutely impossible from that source. So the Christian comes by the promise of the Father and is born of the Spirit, because the flesh cannot produce it. If a man should preach that Isaac was born after his own will, or even through the procreative power of his parents, men would at once reject it as false. A man would be at once apprehended as insane if he were to preach that any man is born after his own will. It is just as unreasonable to preach that men are born again after their own will; or even through means of any kind. The man who has not been born again has no more existence as a Christian than the generations yet unborn have as citizens of this world. It is just as impossible and unreasonable for a man to come into the kingdom of God through the power of his own will as for a man who shall be born a hundred or a thousand years hence, to determine where, when and under what circumstances he will be born, or whether he will be born at all, or not.

The doctrine of free will is contradicted by every principle of salvation as taught in the Bible, and exemplified in the experience of them that are saved; it is contradicted by many direct quotations of scripture. "It is not of him that willeth," (Romans 9:16) "Not of blood, not of the will of the flesh, not of the will of man." (John 1:13) Salvation is always ascribed to the will of God. There is a willingness that accompanies the experience of the saints, but it is given them by God, the fruit of His spirit: God is himself working in them to will and to do of his own good pleasure. All mankind while in the state of nature, are Arminians; that is they believe salvation from the effect or death of sin depends on their own freewill, and therefore they cannot believe in the Bible doctrine of absolute sovereignty of God's predestination, calling and election of all His chosen people. But to the believer in Christ, the sovereignty of God, in the dispensation of His grace, shines throughout both the Old and New Testament Scriptures, and throughout the history of the human race in every case of true conversion. It was shown in the salvation of the extortionate publican Zaccheus, the adultrous woman of Samaria, the thief on the cross, and the blood thristy Pharisee Saul of Tarsus, and every other sinner whom Jesus came to save from their sins. This doctrine of the Bible is perfectly consistent with Christian experience and all other scriptural proof, with all the sweet promises of the gospel to every hungry, thirsty, sin-sick soul.

Every impenitent sinner is an Arminian; he walks about the world as comfortable as possible, thinking it all depends upon himself, and that some time he will repent and, as Arminians preach, go to heaven, —it may be just at the eleventh hour. But the doctrine of election teaches that he is absolutely in God's hands to be saved or damned, as God wills; and if ever he is quickened by God's spirit to believe and feel this truth, he will cry to God for mercy; and find it. Election hurts no one, it finds all men sinners, justly under God's wrath and condemnation. Election is the greatest possible and imaginable encouragement to seeking, because it declares that every sinner who has been made to feel the need of a saviour, and longs for God's holy salvation, is already alive from the death of sin, because he has been quickened by God's spirit, redeemed by God the Son, and elected by God the Father before the foundation of the world to eternal life; and, not withstanding the opposition of the world, the flesh and the devil, his everlasting salvation and glory is just as sure as that an unchanging and almighty God sits upon his throne, and consequently he is encouraged to give up in despair his struggle with his

spiritual enemies. All the Old Testament Scriptures are one type of prophecy, which finds and will find its full accomplishment in Jesus Christ, as He told his disciples both before and after the resurrection, "Think not," said He in his Sermon on the Mount, "I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am come not to destroy but to fulfill."

The golden vein of Messianic prophecy runs through the Old Testament scriptures and gives them a divine unity, and the New Testament with the same unity describes the fulfillment of these prophesies in Jesus of Nazareth. He is the only key in the universe that fits this infinitively complicated lock of the Messianic prophecy. God's chosen people, Israel, were a typical, figurative people, chosen in Adam, whom God called out of Ur of the Chaldees, one of the idolatrous nations of the world. All Bible readers know God's promise to Abraham, and that from him through his son, Isaac, who was a child of promise, and through Isaac's son Jacob, who was a twin brother of Esau and born after him; "But when Rebecca their mother, had conceived by one," as Paul says, "even by our father Isaac, for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger. As it was written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." (Romans 9:10-13) And through Jacob and his twelve sons sprang all God's chosen people, Israel. Nationally, they were a peculiar people, different from other people in the world. Moses, their leader, who being a servant and prophet of God and type of Christ, in his charge before his death, says, 'For thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God: The Lord thy God has chosen thee to be a special people unto himself above all people that are upon the face of the earth; The Lord did not set his love upon you nor choose you because you were more in number than any people, for ye were the fewest of all people, but because the Lord loved you; and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you out of the house bondsmen, from the hand of Pharoah, king of Egypt."

God's chosen people have been the fewest in number of all people in all ages of the world; and the Old Bible Baptists are today the fewest in number of any other people, and just as their brethren in Christ have been in ages before, they are hated and persecuted for the truth's sake by the world, and all other religious sects of every denomination and name; and why? Because all others teach and preach what every man in the world in a state of nature, who has not been born from above, believes; that it is just left with himself and to his own will whether he will be saved or not; while the Old Baptist teach and preach just what the Bible does and what they know to be true, having realized the truth of it in their own experience: that God has an elect people of the sons and daughters of Adam's race who, in the ever--lasting covenant of grace, were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and that their spiritual, immortal, eternal life was hid with Christ in God from all eternity, and that having sinned in Adam, their federal head, naturally they came into the world in a state of sin, condemnation and death, and are so corrupted, polluted and defiled by sin they have no power, will or inclination to reform themselves into newness of life, or to reinstate themselves into the favor of a just and holy God. But God being unlimited in power, infinite in wisdom, perfect in holiness, justice, mercy and truth, declaring the end from the beginning, saying, "My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure," had already prepared a ransom and made it known to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden before drivin them out, in the promised seed of

the woman, that should bruise the serpent's head: who was none other than our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who is the seed of the woman, and his elect children are his seed, while Satan could only bruise the heel of Christ, the seed of the serpent who is old Satan, the devil, etc, (Revelation 12) and his angels, and the non-elect wicked race of Adam who die in their sins without repentence, (the term seed being understood not in a physical, but in a spiritual sense;) and while Satan and his seed may annoy and bruise the heel of Christ, or church of Christ, Christ is to bruise the head of Satan and finally overcome by destroying him that had the power of death. (Hebrews, Romans and I John.)

(To be continued)

PERFECT HARMONY

Dear Brethren:

The design and intent of this article will be to prove by the Scriptures that there is perfect harmony between the doctrine of Predestination and Obedience.

The Lord said, "Arise, and go unto Damascus, and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do." (Acts 22:10)

In these words of Jesus spoken to Paul, and their fulfillment in Damascus, we have the doctrine of predestination, command, and obedience all blended in beautiful harmony.

God had appointed what Paul was to do. Ananias was to tell Paul about it, and Paul was to do it. God appointed the obedience and Ananias filled his place in God's purpose in delivering the exhortation, and Paul obeyed in doing the things that were appointed for him to do. All this, because, ". . . we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10)

Therefore, brethren, it is the truth that God's children are, ". . . predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." (Ephesians 1:11)

Now since no man or devil is able to defeat that purpose wherein God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, we ask, Does God have a purpose in his children's obedience? The answer I say, is *Yes*. Certainly so. And He will bring about and use everything He pleases to cause that obedience. Moreover, He will cause all the obedience He desires. If not, Why? And if we desire more obedience than God desires, then whose desire is best? Ours or God's?

When saints see men walking in good works they know that God has before ordained that walk, according to Ephesians 2:10. The Bible is full of God's wisdom, purpose, love, power, goodness, and mercy, and is a record of His wonderful works to the children of men. His grace changes every precept into a promise, and the Spirit of grace changes every promise into a prayer.

God has a purpose in His servants, and in their instructions and exhortations to His people, and that purpose must be accomplished in them. Paul said, "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (I Cor. 1:21) According to this text it is God who does the saving or delivering from the things from which they need to be delivered, and He thus saves as sovereignly and effectually as He saves from sin and death.

Those — all those, who desire to limit the predestination of all things, do really want to divide the government and management of this world between God and Satan. It is only the evil presumption of wicked men and devils that undertake to stake off God's dominion, and set His bounds; and then turn the rest over to the destiny of the government of Satan, and the power of Satan and wicked men and devils.

Brehren, Jesus rules all things, and I believe my Lord has appointed our time to die, and has appointed every-

thing necessary to keep us alive until that time; and everything necessary to take us away when that time comes.

When saints are called upon to bury a loved one, they yet obey "love one another" by yet having a love for God's gifts in Christ after He takes them away; therefore the bond shall never break.

Only the genuine ministers of Jesus Christ can publish true and exalted sayings concerning the free and sufficient grace of God.

In bonds,
J. L. Bocock,
P. O. Box 13,
Boones Mill, Va. 24065

GOD EVER LIVES AND REIGNS

Rt. 2,
Sugligent, Ala. 35586

Dear Editors:

I see that our subscription has expired, so I am sending a check for two years renewal — use the balance as you see fit.

My wife and I both enjoy reading the *Signs*. There is great comfort at times to sit down and read of the experiences of others who have traveled the same path that we hope we have been made to travel for Christ's sake. It is our hope that we were buried with Christ; and inasmuch as He has risen also, our hope has risen. We sometimes speak of our hope as being little, but is as big as Christ, for it is in Christ.

We thank God that, through His love for His people, He determined in His eternal counsel to sacrifice His only begotten Son that the yoke of the law was broken, which we or our fathers were able to bear. There is unfailing evidence even in these trying times that He ever lives and reigns in the heart and mind of His people. When we are made to sit together in heavenly places, and to know that He is God and besides Him there is no other. There is none like Him: He is a consuming fire, consuming all other kingdoms, when we are given to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth. When we are made to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, we are made to know that Christ is our salvation, and that there is salvation in no other — and without Him there is no hope.

May God bless each of you to continue in the Faith, and that He may bless the publishing of the *Signs*, to the end that His little children may be comforted.

A little brother in hope of eternal life in Christ Jesus.

Lamar Pitts

ENJOYED THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

Rt. 4, Box 682,
Bassett, Va. 24066

Dear Elder Spangler:

I see my subscription will be up with the next issue, so am sending check to renew one year and the balance to be used as you wish. I had thought to renew at the Association this week, but we were with Brother and Sister Barton and did not want them to have to wait on us. My companion was not able to go to the meeting on Friday, so she tried to rest up on Friday, and on Saturday she was ready to make the trip, and enjoyed it as well as I did. I was afraid on Friday we would not get to go at all, and I laid awake trying to pray that we could be able, and I feel the blessed Saviour answered my prayer once more.

Several of the Elders were blessed to tell my experience better than I could myself. The blessed hope found in the 24th and 25th verses of the 8th chapter of Romans, as well as other places, and 133rd Psalm, 1st verse, were in evidence all through the services Saturday and Sunday. I enjoyed it and felt better by hearing it, also my companion and all that I heard mention it, felt the same way about the service all the way through.

I wish I could find the answer to

where so many get the name of Reverend. I have found one place, the 9th verse of the 111th Psalm, and this pertains to God: "holy and reverend is his name."

. . . If you feel to, please pray for us poor sinners that the Lord will forgive us and lead us in the strait and narrow way, that we may follow Him closer day by day. Your brother in Christ I hope, but if one, I feel I am one of the least.

T. A. Perdue

SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

The 1973 session of the *Salisbury Association* will be held, the Lord willing, October 24th and 25th, with the Indiantown Church near Powellville, Maryland, on Route 354.

Anyone arriving Tuesday go to the home of William S. Adkins on Route 50, Mardella, or call 742-2198. Or call Elder Arthur Warren, Berlin 82-641-1826. All those coming Wednesday go directly to the meeting house on Route 354.

We invite all ministers and brethren of our faith and in order in their home associations, to be with us.

William S. Adkins, Church Clerk
Rt. 50,
Mardella, Md. 21837

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The ninety-seventh Annual Session of the *Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association* is appointed to be held with the church at Pittman's Grove Meeting House, Johnston County, North Carolina, to commence on Friday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1973, and continue through Sunday. Pittman's Grove Meeting House is located on highway 222 between Kenly and Fremont about two miles out of Kenly.

The Saturday and Sunday services will be held in the North Johnston High School building, located on Highway 301 between Kenly, North Carolina, and Micro, North Carolina. It will be the same location as last year. Our invitation is cordially extended to all who are impressed to meet with us.

W. E. Turner

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Contentnea Association* is to be held with the church at North East, Onslow County, N. C. to begin on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1973.

The church is located as follows: go south on 258 Highway to Jacksonville, turn left on 17 Highway about two miles, and turn right on Road 1406. The church is a few miles on left. Meeting on Saturday and Sunday will be held in White Oak High School near the church.

All lovers of the truth are invited to visit with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr. Assn. Clerk
Rt. 4, Box 195,
Tarboro, N. C.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To August 1, 1973)

Mrs. R .E. Moore, N. C.	$ 1.00
B. J. McLaughlin, Tex.	11.00
Eld. Louis Stewart, Miss.	2.00
G. M. Lackey, N. C.	3.00
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Mrs. Virginia Bennett, Md.	10.00

Danville, Virginia October, 1973

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ORDINATION CHARGE DELIVERED BY ELDER D. V. SPANGLER TO ELDER DONALD E. SMITH AT BUSH ARBOR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH CASWELL COUNTY, N. C.

June 12, 1966

I feel very sensibly the solemnity of the occasion,—How to speak to our dear brother and to you whom he will serve.

There are two things in a minister's life that are necessary if he is to be a blessing to the Church of God. These two are Humility and Stability. Humility without stability in the life of a minister, is of little benefit to the church of God. Likewise stability without humility proves of little worth to those to whom he preaches. The man who preaches to the people of God is wonderfully blessed, if he is endowed with the spirit of both humility and stability.

It is indeed a solemn matter to stand before dying men and women, to preach the gospel of the Son of God. According to the Scriptures no man has ever taken this honor unto himself as a matter of choice, as a vocation of life. This is clearly presented in relation to the priesthood of Aaron, as a type of the gospel ministry. "No man taketh this honor unto himself but he that is called of God, as was Aaron."

A minister of God is an ambassador from heaven. There have been many ambassadors sent from one country to another, to bear tidings and represent their own government, but there has never been one like the ambassador sent to preach the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ: He is called, qualified and sent by God himself.

The titles of a minister of the gospel in the scriptures are listed under the names of Pastors, Bishops or Elders. Either of these are scriptural titles of the gospel minister. Many in our land today use the title of "Reverend". This word is not the scriptural title of a gospel minister. It is found only one time in the scriptures in Psalm 111:9, "Holy and reverend is His name," having reference to God alone. No man has a right to use this title.

As an Ambassador, this is a treasure in an earthen vessel, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of men. Last fall while speaking at the Black Creek Association, I looked at this dear brother and felt he had a wonderful part in the matter, though I had not been blessed to hear him at that time. I count it a great blessing and a pleasure to stand before you, my dear Brother, to charge you to preach the Word,—and that Word is the living God: the Word that was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father.

You will have obstacles. At times you will be brought very low before the

Lord, and question your call to the ministry. Much wrestling of soul will be your lot, — not that you do not desire to preach the gospel, but with your own infirmities, and your inability to preach as you would. The scripture declares that if a man desires the office of a Bishop, he desires a good work. And I tell you this afternoon that those who are called will have a desire to preach the gospel. The wresting and rebellion comes from the feeling of inability to preach the gospel. The desire for this work lies deeply in the soul: to lift high the name of Jesus among His people; and I say to you my dear Brother Donald, I humbly hope you will never have a desire to please men, for the very moment you desire to please men, you cease to be the servant of God. If you stand up before men with a man-pleasing spirit, or to please any certain person in the congregation, you then cease at that time the manifestation of the servant of the Lord. The same thing is true if you desire to displease man.

A minister is the overseer of the flock of God. He is not a servant of the church, as it is sometimes presented, but a servant of God to the church. That is the way the Scripture presents the matter. He is accountable to his church for his conduct as a member, and unto God in his ministry.

Elder P. G. Lester said many years ago, that a church could not tell a minister what to preach, but the church could tell him what he could not preach to them.

The apostle exhorts the ministers to take heed to all the flock of God over the which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers, to feed the flock of God which is among you: not for filthy lucre's sake, but of a ready mind.

And Paul's direction to the church of God was to remember them that have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God. Someone will ask the question, "What is meant by the expression, having the rule over you?" It falls upon the shoulders of a minister to see that the word of God is carried out in the order of the house of God. The end of their conversation is, Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever. When you find a minister who is preaching Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever, you will find one preaching the gospel.

I will now speak to those of you whom our brother will serve: Hold up his hands. He needs your prayers, and will need your support in many ways the world will never know about.

My brother, the devil will be on hand to harass you in your pilgrimage. May God keep you humble. The devil will flee from an humble person, as he has no place there. When God gives us humility among ourselves, we are as little children, at His feet. When we are left to ourselves, we are proud and continually battle with the flesh.

To those to whom he will preach: it is your duty to hold up his hands. Many times he will be called to funerals — he will have to drop his work whatever it is. It is the duty of those who call for him, to see that he does not go at his own expense. Brethren I am speaking plainly. I believe the God of all grace can and will inspire the hearts of his people to do these things unto those who are called. His hands should not be tied in his going forth to preach the gospel. This duty rests upon the shoulders of the church.

The charge is to preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season: reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. May God bless you with that requirement of His word: to have a good name among them that are outside the fold, as well as those within.

You will have enemies round about you seeking your entrapment, if you preach the unadulterated Word of God. But, by the grace of God, may you stand boldly upon the watch-walls of Zion and preach a sovereign God to the people of God. And may God bless you, my dear brother, to that end.

(Taken from a tape recording)

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

ADOPTION

BROTHER BEEBE:—If it is not asking too much, I would like very much to have you give your views in full on the subject of adoption.

Your truly,

PRESLEY NAY,

Adoption, literally, is to take the child of one family into the family of another, and bestow on him all the privileges of a son. Adoption, in a gospel sense, is not applicable to that which is born of God, for that which is born of God is a son by birth, and needs no adoption to make it a son or an heir.

That which is to be adopted is called a *purchased possession;* it is redeemd from the tribes and kindreds of the earth; it was under the law, involved in guilt, captive, sold under sin, born of the flesh, a child of Adam, and by nature a child of wrath. The subjects of adoption are chosen, elected and redeemed from every tribe of mankind, that they might receive the adoption of children; and to that adoption they are and were predestinated, according to the good pleasure of God. The new birth is not the adoption; for that life which is brought forth in the new birth, is that eternal life which was with the Father, and was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; it is not taken from any other family, for it was with the Father, and was manifest in unbroken vital relationship with God from everlasting. It is no more an adopted child than Christ is; for the body and head must be in the same relation to God. But God's people, in their relation to the earthly Adam, did belong to another family, and that they might receive the adoption of children, they required to be redeemed from among men; redeemed from under the law which, as children of the flesh or of the earthly Adam, they had transgressed, that they might receive the adoption of children.

When God's chosen people are born of the Spirit, that Spirit or eternal life which is born of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever, is the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry Abba, Father; and by it the purchased or redeemed possession are sealed unto the day of redemption, or unto the day when their redemption shall be fully and finally consummated in the resurrection wherein God shall, by that Spirit, quicken their mortal bodies, and change them from the condition of vile bodies, and fashion them according to his (Christ's) glorious body. The spirit of adoption is born (not adopted) of God, and the saints receive it when they are born again. The apostle says to the Gentile believers, "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." —Eph. 2:13, 14.

This redemption is complete, so far as the ransom or liquidation of all demands of law and justice are considered; but redemption secures the deliverance of the captives into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. The redemption effected by Christ not only contemplated the release of the redeemed captives from condemnation and wrath, but they are redeemed to God, and must be presented to God without spot or blemish, in spiritual, immortal bodies, fully conformed to the image of their risen and glorified Redeemer. The purchased possession, as we have already said, have, in their new birth, received the spirit of adoption, which is the earnest, the certain pledge of their future inheritance; but the adoption secured is yet to be realized; but not until these corruptibles shall have put on incorruption, and these mortals shall have put on immortality. Then will the purchased possession receive their adoption, and re-

ceive their inheritance which is reserved in heaven for all such as are begotten to this lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

The scriptures assure us that "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." And John says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him." — 1 John 3:2. The new man, that is born of God, is now and always was a son of God in Christ, who is his life; but it doth not yet appear what we shall be, when we shall put on immortality, in the adoption to which we are predestinated; for that is in the future. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and cannot inherit the kingdom; for neither by birth or adoption doth it stand in the relation of sons or heirs of God, only as they are sealed to that sonship; for if they did, they could and would now inherit that kingdom; but being predesinated of God to that adoption, they shall be delivered from all that is of the earth earthly, and in their adoption bear the image of the heavenly. Now our flesh and blood are corruptible and mortal, but in the adoption, *this* mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption. Paul says, For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die; but if our flesh were born of immortal seed it could not die; or if by adoption our flesh were already adopted as heirs of God, it could not die: it is not yet put into that immortal state, but it is sealed to that adoption. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

Is it possible that any christian can believe that his fleshly nature is now led by the Spirit of God? How very different was the case of Paul, whose flesh constantly warred against his spirit, and caused him to feel wretched in a body of death. But he looked for a deliverance in the adoption which he hoped for, and for which he patiently waited. 'For," said he, "ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit (of adoption which we have received) itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children: and if children, then heirs: heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ· if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." The sonship of the new man, which is born of God, is already manifest by the witness above named; but the manifestation of the sons of God in the creature, which is now waiting for manifestation by adoption, is yet to come. "For the creature was made subject to vanity· not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope; because the creature itself shall be (is not yet, but shall be) delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now; and not only they, but ourselves also, which have (by the new birth) the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves do groan within ourselves, WAITING FOR THE ADOPTION, *to wit,* the redemption of our body."—Rom. 8:14-23. If there is a passage in the holy scriptures that speaks of the adoption to which the chosen and redeemed people of God are predestinated as being already accomplished, we have failed to find it; and if such a passage could be found. we would be unable to explain how Paul and all the saints on earth could groan within themselves, waiting for something that had already taken place.

We may fail to make this subject clear to others, but to us, the apostle's argument and illustration is remarkably lucid and conclusive. The adoption he

explains to be the redemption of our body, by which the creature shall be delivered, and we also who have received the first fruits of the Spirit, *shall be* delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. If our earthly nature is not now corruptible, how can it be mortal and subject to death? If they are born of the Spirit, and are spirit, how can they groan within themselves, waiting for the adoption? What is to be adopted, if that in us which is born of the flesh is already a child of God by a spiritual birth? What change are we, who groan in this mortal tabernacle, looking and waiting for, if our flesh and blood are alreadyy born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God that liveth and abideth forever? Can that die, or ever see corruption, which is born of incorruptible seed? If so, what assurance can we have of an immortal state beyond the grave?

We hold that by that Spirit which we receive from God in our new birth, our mortal bodies which were born of the flesh, which sinned in Adam, and were redeemed by Christ, are sealed unto the day of redemption, *to wit*, the adoption or redemption of our body. And that Spirit by which we are sealed is the spirit of promise; and on that spirit of promise our faith rests in hope of a glorious resurrection and a blessed immortality beyond the grave. It is not that new man, or eternal life which is and always was immortal, that is to be changed from corruption to incorruption, or from mortal to immortal, or from natural to spiritual in the resurrection; but it is this vile body. This corruptible which was born of corruptible seed, and not that which is born again of incorruptible seed, that is to put on incorruption and immortality in the resurrection. It is that body which is sown in corruption that shall be raised in incorruption, and that body which is sown a mortal body that shall be raised an immortal body. That which is born of God, of incorruptible and immortal seed, cannot be "sown a natural body, and raised a spiritual body," or sown in dishonor, or in corruption; for it is of an incorruptible seed that liveth and abideth forever. It is not sown in death, for it cannot die· nor is it that which shall be raised from the dead, as it cannot be dead, for it is eternal life, and it is the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead; and if that Spirit be in us, by it we are sealed to the day of redemption, and he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit of which we are so sealed, and which dwelleth in us from the hour of our spiritual birth.

Brother Nay desired us to give our views *in full* on this vitally important subject; but if we should write volumes, we do not know that we could make our views or our faith on the subject any more clear. We claim no infallibility, nor do we wish any brother to accept of our views any further than they find themselves sustained by the scriptures of truth.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, June 15, 1875)

OBITUARIES

ELDER DURWOOD BRADLEY

Elder Durwood H. Bradley was born May 17, 1889 in Drew Co., Arkansas, and passed away June 13, 1973 at his home in Lubbock, Texas, at the age of eighty-four years. He moved to Lubbock from Fort Worth, Texas, in 1925. He was married to Evelyn Richter June 28, 1941, in Clovis, New Mexico. He was baptized by Elder C. M. Haygood at Earth, Texas, September 10, 1961, and ordained into the full work of the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ August 22, 1964.

To begin to write this obituary of Elder Bradley is a very difficult task. His belief was so deeply seated in an all-wise God that one would never doubt that his faith and hope had given him something beautiful to meditate upon, and in his later days it (if possible) became stronger. He would often phone fellow yokefellows in the ministry and his brethren from his sick-bed, and talk of his wonderful Maker, and only his frail, natural, body weakness would force him to hang up the phone and rest, but even then his wife said that he would smile and say, "What a wonderful

God to give me these precious people to visit with."

His church attendance was continued even when his condition would keep most at home. But with the help of his beloved and faithful wife, he attended and worshipped as only a child of God could or would; rejoicing every moment with his eyes which sometimes sparkled with joy and sometimes would fill with tears when he heard the words from the minister's mouth, telling about the great love of God, and His saving grace toward His saints. He never tired, in a spiritual way, of hearing of the plan, or sometimes he called it a great blueprint, of salvation which a God Who cannot lie promised and set forth in the holy writ.

Elder Bradley was blessed with a goodly income in natural things, and was there at his church's associations to see that everything was done that he could help with. But above all, he had a wonderful income of spiritual things which came from God's bank, and the fullness thereof, which He gives to all believers, and yet the balance is never lowered one iota. When he preached, it was in complete humbleness, and he knew where his gift came from, and made sure that all who heard him never doubted his belief of same. I have never heard this man say anything bad about anyone, even though he had no use for the doctrine of works or limited predestination advocators. He said that God looks at the inner man — we look at the outer man.

O the beauty of a preacher who preaches the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ, without a man-offending or a man-afearing spirit, and prays forgiveness of his own sins as well as the sins of others — Elder Bradley was such a preacher.

The church in which his funeral was held was selected by him before he became bedfast; also the songs were chosen by him. His wife carried out his wishes as he had outlined them. The attendance at the church was overflowing, which showed the respect of his neighbors, friends, and business associates. His funeral was conducted by the writer, who, along with others, will miss him so much, but who knows he must be sitting at the right hand of God if fruits are any evidence of the called according to His purpose. He ran a good race and fought a good fight, and we thank God for His letting us have him for a little season. We feel that our lives were greatly benefitted by his presence, and we rejoice at having known him and sat with him and worshipped with him. May we praise God unendingly for His kindness. Elder Bradley's spirit has gone back to God who gave it, and his body to dust from whence it came.

This is written by request of his faithful and dear wife who was his ever-present companion, not only in health but in sickness — she said he had been sick for twenty-four years. She, too, is to be commended. May the God of all blessings and love comfort her and be her strength in her hour of suffering and need, and her light in her hour of darkness.

W. A. Winfrey

(To the above I would add that Elder Bradley requested a short time before he died that I send him some tapes of sermons by our brethren; which I did. He called twice and we had long conversations in which he expressed his love for the doctrine contained in the sermons, and the doctrine advocated in the *Signs of the Times*.

It was with sadness that we learned of his passing when Mrs. Bradley called and said that he had passed away. I felt a christian love for him, and had desired that I might meet him, and converse further concerning the things we both loved so well. But it was not to be, and he is now passed from his long affliction, and is at rest.—J.D.W.)

ELDER PETE C. TURNER

Elder Pete C. Turner of Bassett, Va., was born April 4, 1887, to J. W. Turner and Susan Anne Adams Turner. He died August 6, 1973, in the Martinsville General Hospital. His funeral was conducted at his home church by J. R. Hollandsworth, Elder C. E. Turner and Elder Leonard Brammer, Wednesday at 2:00 p.m. August 8, 1973. Elder Turner was married to Lula Spencer January 24, 1909. Father of 9 children, 5 boys and 4 girls. He united with the Riverview Primitive Baptist Church in the year of 1925. He was liberated to preach in December 1926, and ordained in the early thirties. Elder Turner was pastor of Jacks Creek in Patrick Co. and assistant pastor of River Side Church for a while.

Elder Turner was noted for his hospitality and kindness to all that he had any dealing with. There was a large congregation present for his funeral. Elder Turner was a firm believer that all of our salvation for time and eternity is of the Lord, and Jesus Christ being the foundation and the chief corner stone as well as the Head of the church.

Elder Turner will be greatly missed at home and at the church. By reason of his afflictions he was made willing to go home. Elder Turner told me that there was nothing better for him in this world, but he was expecting, or that he felt there was rest for him in the world above, and I have no doubt about his destiny, I feel that his troubles are over forever.

Many other good things could be said about Elder Turner, but it would be nothing new to the ones that knew him.

Written by his pastor J. R. Hollandsworth.

J. R. Hollandsworth

MARY ANN SMITH

Mary Ann Smith, who resided in Hawkins, Texas passed away April 15, 1973 at Mineola General Hospital, at the age of almost 92 years. She was born June 25, 1881 in Sulphur Springs, Texas, She was a long time member of Paran Primitive Baptist Church. Surviving are 2 sons: William A. Smith of Tyler, Texas and O. C. Smith of Quitman, Texas; also 2 daughters: Mrs. Hugh Minshew of Hawkins, Texas and Mrs. L. D. Gibbons of Dallas. Also surviving are 8 grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren, and 3 great-great-grandchildren, and a host of other relatives and friends.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder E. J. Lambert, her pastor, in the chapel of Malcolm Stone Funeral Home, Gadewater, Texas. Interment was beside her husband's body in Perrin Cemetery.

We wish to append a *Note of Appreciation* which was presented to Sister Annie Smith just after her 91st birthday by order of the church in regular conference July 1, 1972, which read in part: "You have been brought to death's door, SISTER SMITH, but your soul's *hand of faith* reached forth and touched the HEM of the *Garment of Jesus*. You were made whole. May we say to you as Jesus said to the woman, 'Thy faith hath made thee whole'. Your smiles, kind words, gracious deeds, devotion, and faithfulness to attend church meetings, have made you to be dear and precious to us. Sister Annie, the Lord has so inspired us with your gracious living that we know that riches, honor, and worldly power is *not* that which will bring us happiness. Your submission to God's will and your contentment with your lot inspires us to press on toward the mark for the prize . . . We thank God for you. We value your love, fellowship, and communion more than gold or silver" . . . (34 affixed their signatures to the above note.)

God grant us to be reconciled to His will, is our prayer.

This done by order of Paran Primitive Baptist Church, Hawkins, Texas.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Pastor

JOHN WILLIAM FAULK

Paran Primitive Baptist Church of Hawkins, Texas, wishes to bow in humble submission to God, from whom we received the gift of Brother Faulk's life, to walk with us as a devoted and faithful member for many years; in taking him from our midst to his eternal home. Brother Faulk was born in Upshur County, Texas, March 6, 1889, passed away March 30, 1973 at the age of 84 years and 24 days. He was survived by one son, Loyd Faulk, Ft. Worth; one brother, Phillip Faulk, Marshall, Texas and two sisters: Mrs. J. D. Smith of Pittsburg, Texas and Mrs. Otis Bauman of Gilmer. Other survivors include one grandchild and many other relatives and friends. He resided in Gilmer at the time of his death.

His funeral was conducted at Paran Church where he was a member. He was buried beside the body of his wife in Smith Cemetery, adjacent to Paran Church property. Elder E. J. Lambert, his pastor, officiating at the funeral services with many people in attendance. He was a brother of the late Hubert Travis Faulk who also was a member of Paran Church, as well as Houston H. Faulk who preceded him. His funeral was the tenth anniversary of the death of another brother, Ezra. The Faulks were believers and defenders of the truth, honest in their convictions and dealings, devoted to their families and friends, loved by the church and highly respected as good citizens in the community. Their wise counsel, good advice, and devotion will linger in the memories of Paran Church for years to come. The Church does not attempt to praise them, but rather to praise the HEAD of the Church, JESUS CHRIST, for them.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Pastor

DEACON W. VERNEST COBB

1909——————1972

The *dash* between the above dates represent the life-span allotted by our Lord to Vernest in this world. He ordained that Vernest become the son of Deacon R. H. and Ella Wilson Cobb March 27, 1909. God joined together in love-union Vernest and Novell Jones which was ratified by marriage ceremony Sept. 30, 1930. He was born again of the Holy Ghost. After some time under the bondage of the law Vernest was joined in love-union, spiritually, to Jesus Christ which was ratified by baptism on September 9, and entered into covenant relationship with Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, Winnsboro, Texas. The brethren unanimously received him, ratifying their belief that the Lord had added him to the church. He was chosen by the church as deacon and was ordained to this work on Sept. 12, 1965. He was devotedly engaged in the upkeep of the meeting house and grounds and the general welfare of the members and pastor of Hopewell Church. He died Sept. 22, 1972 having lived over 63 years. He was, "A devout man, one that feared God with all his

house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always." (Acts 10:2)

Among the survivors are: his widow, Novell; his sister, Annie Mae McElyea. Both are members of Hopewell Church. His funeral was conducted Sept. 24th and his mortal body was buried in Hopewell Cemetery to await the final victory.

His funeral was conducted by his former and latter pastors, Elders E. J. Lambert and W. W. Taylor. The writer used Acts 10:1-4 as especially being applicable to Deacon W. V. Cobb, in tribute of respect at his funeral. The words of an angel to Cornelius were emphasized: "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a MEMORIAL before God." (See Acts 10:4) Much of his time was devoted to reading the Bible, discussing the Scriptures, prayer and meditation, and striving for peace among brethren. We thank God for having known him! You will find inscribed on his tombstone words which he especially marked in his Bible: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Humbly submitted,

E. J. Lambert

MRS ANNIE MAE McELYEA

Mrs. Annie Mae McElyea of Rt. 4, Winnsorbo, Texas, was born July 4, 1905 in Wood County Texas, to Deacon R. H. and Ella Wilson Cobb. She was married to C. C. McElyea April 2, 1927, who preceded her in death Dec. 22, 1962. Sister Annie Mae died suddenly at her home in Pleasant Grove Community May 21, 1973. Her life span was over 67 years. She became a member of Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church of Christ in September, 1961. She is survived by two sons: Bobby Jean McElyea of Garland, Texas and Billy Pat McElyea of Houston; and five grandchildren, and other relatives and friends. Her funeral was conducted by Elder Joe L. Hamrick and the writer in McCrary-Edwards-Cain Funeral Chapel, Winnsboro. Burial was in Hopewell Cemetery beside the body of her husband.

It is with a sad heart that the writer records the death of the last one of the children of the late Deacon Robert Cobb. This family was blessed by God to wield a great influence in the community of Hopewell Church. Sister Annie Mae was of the old school of thought that the position of *Housewife* is the greatest position a woman could hold. She was happy devoting her full time in being a good wife to her husband and a good mother to her children. She was happiest in her late years when her children would come and go with her to Hopewell. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of Salvation by grace through the merits of Jesus Christ, faithful to attend church meetings, and fervent in her love for the brethren.

May God reconcile us to His will and make us content with our lot in this matter,—though we miss her fellowship and devotion so very greatly.

Humbly submitted,
Elder E. J. Lambert

SISTER BERTA RAY PORTERFIELD
and
CLAUDE A. PORTERFIELD

The McCray Primitive Baptist Church has sustained a great loss due to the passing of Sister Berta Ray Porterfield and Claude A. Porterfield. They departed this life August 24, 1972.

Sister Porterfield was born October 24, 1899 and had been a member of McCray Church since 1941. Mr. Porterfield was born January 14, 1899 and had attended this church since childhood, his father Brother Andrew G. Porterfield being a deacon for many years.

In their lives they were so closely knitted together and in their death they were not divided.

Their faithfulness and their support to their church was done in humbleness and meekness.

May these children feel that their loss is their mother and father's eternal gain. The obituary that you are about to read has been written by a grandson of the deceased, William L. Durham.

Elder Wallis A. Smith

On the warm summer evening of the twenty-fourth day of August, 1972 two of our number met their deaths suddenly and sweetly as they treaded their way down a familiar road to a house on a distant hill which they called "home." The two were one in life and one in death. They had shared almost all of their lives together and so they shared death at a place on the road in a community which meant all the world to them. They did not die on strange ground or in a faraway place, but in a place they each loved dearly and a place to which they had devoted almost all of their life. They lived a full and beautiful life together sharing the heartaches and sorrows along with the heartwarming spendor of life. They created and nurtured a handsome family of children instilling in each one's heart that quality of humble grace and human compassion with which their cups ran over throughout their life.

They lived each day by a rigid creed of hard back-bending work and unyielding allegiance and faithfulness to their God. They lived a quiet, clean docile way which with each passing year echoed more loudly throughout McCray from that house on the hill as a ringing testimonial to their way of life. They indeed knew

the peace of having fulfilled their destinies according to God's grand plan. Not once were they ever known to have anything but unyielding respect and love for each other. They seemed to thrive on their love for each other and were sustained by their mutual love and respect for their loved ones and their closeness to God.

Their faithful concern for all with whom they came into contact was awe-inspiring. They seemed to gain an exhiliarating sense of pleasure from "doing" for those whom they loved.

They each lived some seventy two years upon this earth and saw the world around them change completely several times over — but still they remained themselves to everyone who knew them — never trying to be anything or anybody but just themselves. As a result of their love for each other a family of great proportions came into being to surround them always with little children over and over again. Each new little child was made to feel that he was the "first" and that there was no other in the world quite like him in their eyes. Each child, grandchild and great grandchild always felt that they were "number one" with them. They were indeed.

There is much sadness and emptiness now that they are gone. They are sorely missed by all who shared their lives on this good Earth. But as time passes the peace and understanding which so prevailed in their two lives slowly fills that empty void and many wonderfully thrilling memories flood into mind and heart to bring tears of joy to the eye — joy in the fact that they lived such a full great life together and joy in their bitter sweet death together as one in love and one in the arms of their beloved God forever and ever.

May God grant that just a *little* of them live on in us forever.

William L. Durham

The service was held at McCray Primitive Baptist Church on August 26, 1972 and they were buried in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

HANNAH D. BRITTINGHAM

In as much as it pleased God to take from our midst our dear and beloved sister Hannah D. Brittingham, we bow in humble submission to the will of our eternal God. Sister Brittingham was born on July 27, 1878, and was taken away from these mortal shores on May 19, 1973. She was the daughter of the late Thomas and Julia Hearne.

Sister Brittignham was married on December 6, 1899, to Minos Smiley Brittingham who departed this life in 1943. To this union were born three children who survive; Reese A. Brittingham and Irma L. Messick of near Delmar, Deleware. Also a daughter of Mrs. Doris H. Simon of Dearborn, Mich. There are also nine grandchildren and sixteen great grandchildren who survive.

Sister Brittingham had attended the meetings of the Old School Baptist all her life and late in her life here asked for a home in the Little Creek Church and was baptized by the writer on May 11, 1968. She was a very dear Sister and attended the meetings as long as her health would permit. She seemed to enjoy so very much when we would visit her, and the writer remembers so very well when she would say "I'm glad to see you." Words like that will linger in the minds of those who knew her and loved her so dearly.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Marvel Short Funeral Home in Delmar, Delaware, and her body was laid to rest in the Line United Methodist Cemetery on the Line road a few miles from Delmar, May it please the Lord to reconcile all the family and the many who knew and loved our dear Sister so well, to feel that our loss is her eternal gain, is the prayer of the writer.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

SISTER RHODA KELLEY

Our Heavenly Father in his infinite Mercy, called our beloved Sister Rhoda Kelley from our midst April 2, 1973. She was born to the late Joe and Zellie Griffin December 28, 1889, in Alabama.

She was united in marriage to Mack Kelley November 8, 1913, at Lawn, Texas. To this union one daughter was born. She united with Pilgrim Rest Church in September, 1921, where her membership remained until her death. She was surely a firm believer in salvation by grace through our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and was truly a very faithful and dedicated member of her church, attending regularly as long as her health permitted her to do so.

Fond memories flood my soul as I reminisce years gone by, of the tender loving care shown us while visiting in her home many, many times. To know her was to love her. If we know anything, surely we believe she was ready and waiting for the Master to call her from this low ground of sin and sorrow. We humbly believe our loss to be her eternal gain, and she is now sweetly resting in Him.

Services were conducted by the writer, and she was laid to rest in the Dewey Cemetery, Lawn, Texas, to await the second coming of Christ.

Submitted by order of Pilgrim Rest Church.

C. M. Haygood

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141 DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1973 NO. 11

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 11/73 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

A THANKFUL SPIRIT

One Autumn day while standing beneath an aged Sycamore tree near the Old School Baptist Meeting House in Hopewell, N. J., the sun was warm across my shoulders; it brightened the crisp brown leaves now gathering close about the John Hart monument; and the wide spreading branches framed a view for me to see drifting fair weather clouds in an open stretch of sky.

A peaceful spirit has long lived beneath these spreading boughs where, now with each passing breeze, the little heaps of gathered leaves stir a precious incense of praise on the Autumn air, as if to pay tribute to a few faithful trustees, who through their concerning effort to care for this place, with an established trust fund, are fulfilling a true American spirit to hold on to the only privately cared for historic house of worship of our forefathers, and their burial place in this area.

Another endeavor of credible interest, which the Meeting House is fortunate to have close by, is the Hopewell House Square. With such an improvement joining the burial ground, there is a protective atmosphere surrounding this cherished landmark in the Valley. Such a development is an encouraging sign of a better community; a sign of brothers living their ideals to help brighten the American way of life with a newness of beauty and strength that will broaden each tomorrow with a zeal of finer living.

The warmth of the mid-day sunshine has given way to a November haze spreading over the Valley as the shadows lengthen; the stray Sycamore leaves have fallen asleep beside the monument; but the spark of a thankful spirit will continue to burn in the smothering haze, like a precious incense lingering into the twilight hour of prayer.

Mary L. Hellngs

Conclusion of the excerpts from the Tygart's Valley Association circular letter of 1894 by John P. Thompson.

And so according to the prediction of all God's prophets for Moses, or even from the patriarchs and fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who by faith saw his day, the law of Moses and all the prophets from Samuel down to Malachi testified of Him and his coming; and the inspired Apostle Paul says in speaking to his Galatian brethren who were by nature Gentiles and owed no allegiance to the law of Moses, but were under the law of sin and death and by nature children of wrath, even as others, He said: "Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world." So you see they were even then children according to the election of grace. But when the fullness of time was come God sent forth His Son into the world made of a woman made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons, and because ye are sons God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, "Abba, Father." Even that did not

make them sons, because they were sons from everlasting life: they had been from the time they were quickened and made alive by the Spirit of Christ. Matthew, one of the inspired evangelists, says the angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph in a dream saying: "Thou son of David fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost, and she shall bring forth a son and thou shalt call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins." No conditions about it; if they will, or if they will do so and so, He will save them: no contingencies, no buts: He shall.

Brethren has He done it? has He accomplished the great work? Did He tell the truth when on the cross with his last expiring breath, He cried out, "It is finished"? Did he make an end of sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness for all his elect people? Is the record true or shall we cavil and say it was finished so far as Jesus was concerned in the salvation of His people, but it depends on certain contingencies and conditions, that men and women have to repent, believe and obey, as well as to accept the offered grace? O my soul, come not thou into the secret chambers of their rebellion, but bow meekly at the feet of Jesus and humbly receive the testimony of the Son when He declares, "I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me; and this is the Father's will that sent me, that of all which he has given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up at the last day." And again, "No man knoweth who the Son is but the Father, and who the Father is but the Son and he to whom the Son will reveal him." (Luke 10:22) Then again, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." And again in John 15: "These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, you know it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world the world would love its own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; if they have persecuted me they will also persecute you, if they have kept my sayings they will keep yours also."

Brethren, can we not receive the testimony of the Son? Not until the Spirit shall take of the things of his and show them unto us. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our Spirit that we are the children of God, and if children then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him that we may be also glorified together. What, then, shall we say to these things? If God be for us who can be against us? The richest gift heaven has to bestow was bestowed on his beloved bride, the Lamb's wife. Jesus who died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; who was delivered for our offenses and rose again for our justification. Thus the whole redeemed family, the whole election of grace, for whom He shed his precious blood on the cross; not one more nor one less, not one of which will be left behind, but stand in their glorious head free from sin and condemnation. Glorious state, made known to the heirs of promise when God reveals his Son in them, the hope of glory; when they are enabled to believe according to the working of God's mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when He raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in that heavenly place, far above all principalities and power and might and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this world but in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet and gave him to be head over all things to the church, the elect members which compose his body, which is the fullness of him which filleth all in all.

The inspired Apostle in the 15th chapter of first Corinthians, which is as it were a summary of all Christian hope of eternal life and a glorious im-

mortality beyond the grave, says: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." In regard to the all who die in Adam there are but two positions possible. First, that all the human family die in Him; and, second, that all the saints of God die in Him. So far as the fact of dying in Adam is concerned the first proposition is true—all the human family die in Him· and if the first be true then the second is necessarily true, for the saints are a part of the family of Adam, and what is true of the whole is true of every part of the whole. Now to arrive at the truth of what is taught here it remains only to determine which of these positions is embraced in the text. The Apostle has under consideration here the resurrection of the just and their final deliverance from corruption and death. He is treating of the resurrection of the saints in their order. He modifies his expression, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," in the next sentence by saying, "Every man in his own order, Christ the first fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming." Here he stops short. Not a word is said about any except Christ and them that are his. This clearly sets a limit to the word "all", as all that are Christ's die in Adam, so all that are Christ's shall be made alive in Him. But suppose "all" does mean all the human family, which is true as a fact, but not necessarily true from this text. This argues nothing for the Arminian or Universalists, as there are none made alive in Christ but them that are His. As in Adam all them that are in Adam die, even so in Christ shall all who are in Him be made alive. Even then, if the first "all" does mean the whole human family there is nothing in the wording of the text which teaches that the same "all" who die in Adam are made alive in Christ. This must be proven, if it can be, from some other source.

The death of the saints in Adam is their inheritance from him. "By one man sin entered into the world and death by sin; so death passed upon all men for all have sinned." The dissolution of this mortality is only the consummation of that death which has already passed upon us. We are not simply under the sentence of death awaiting the execution, but death itself has already passed upon us in reality. There is no power of will, not moral reform, no religious conjuring, no medical skill that can deliver us from death. Death seems to be a necessity both in nature and grace; not that God was under necessity to so arrange, but that it seemed good in His sight to have it so. Is it a mere interloper that God would not have here? Is it not a provision of His own will for carrying out his own design in creation? Death is a necessity in the vegetable kingdom, "For except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (John 12: 24) This is a specific statement setting forth the principle of reproduction in the vegetable world; everything that lives is an evidence that something died. The Apostle in treating on the resurrection of the dead brought to his argument this universal fact in nature, "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." The Saviour in speaking of his own death and the glory that should follow, used the same fact in an illustration in the words, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." Death precedes quickening in the vegetable kingdom and is essential to it. The same mysterious principle in a deeper and more hidden manner extends into the animal kingdom and even reaches the kingdom of grace.

The Saviour opened the door and gave a glimpse of this mysterious chamber when He said, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." He applied the universal principle of reproduction in the vegetable kingdom to himself; He here gives us to understand that the process of reproduction exemplified in plant life, was in some way wrapped up in Him, and the principle of his

death and our redemption by his blood, is in some way illustrated by the death and quickening of a grain of wheat. Now this same saying may with propriety and truthfulness be transferred to Adam, for he is the figure of Christ. Except Adam had died he would have abided alone and the world never would have been peopled through him. Adam begat no children until death passed upon him the sentence, "Dying, thou shalt die." This is strange indeed, but what is not strange when properly thought upon, its being strange is no evidence against its truthfulenss; truth is always stronger than fiction, sure enough; The process cannot be explained, the reason cannot be given, yet it is true. Death plays too stupendous a part in the affairs of this world, both in the physical and moral spheres, and shines too brightly in the everlasting covenant, to be a mere interloper in God's universe. Faith looks upon it as a provision of infinite wisdom, a gracious providence ordained by the Creator to fulfill his own eternal purpose, both in creation and grace. The whole process of Christian experience is a struggle between life and death, sin and holiness, corruption and incorruption, and the whole summing up of Christian hope is that we shall one day be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Even so in Christ shall all be made alive. The "all" referred to here are clearly they that are Christ's: The whole election of Grace including all those whom the inspired Paul speaks of in the 11th chapter of Hebrews from righteous Able down to the coming of Christ, of whom the world was not worthy, and these all having obtained a good report through faith, died not having receive the promise. God having provided some better thing for us that they without us should not be made perfect. The resurrection of the saints, as here brought to view, is in Christ; this resurrection is but the triumphant consummation of something long gone before: it is the harvest of grace sown in Christ before the foundation of the world; it is the design for far off events to which the whole creation moves. Death in Adam, life in Christ, is the fundamental idea of the New Testament scriptures, the golden text of the gospel of grace, the master key to all Christian experience. In treating upon the same theme the same inspired writer has recorded, "As by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Men are made righteous in Christ upon exactly the same conditions upon which they were made sinners by the disobedience of Adam. Adam's sin and disobedience reached us by virtue of our vital relationship to him, upon no other condition could we possibly have been made sinners by his disobedience, if we had not been in him, virtually in him, of the same life with him, then his disobedience would not, could not have reached us at all; upon exactly the same condition the obedience of Jesus reaches his people and makes them righteous. When the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, he took upon himself the seed of Abraham, the election of grace; they were made members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. In his incarnation, by virtue of the grace and life that were given them in him according as they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before God in love, He was the Ark of God's covenant, and when he struggled with temptation, when he suffered for their sins, when he died upn the cross, when he descended into hell, they were safely housed in him and brought safely through it all, they paid tithes to him, became dead to the law by his body, reconciled to God by him, and shall be saved from wrath as one with him, by virtue of this one-ness of life, this vital relationship to him, his perfect obedience, his suffering of death and triumphant resurrection all are accounted unto them, and reaches them most effectually; and shall make them all right-

eous.

As to the certainty of the saints being made alive in Christ at the last day there can be no reason to doubt, their being made alive is just as certain as their death in Adam; who can question the certainty of death? Is it not this certainty that strikes terror to the heart of all living? Are there any conditions between death and us upon which death can be bought or stayed? There is no way of escape. According to the inspired record of eternal truth there is no reason to doubt the certainty of life in Christ, inasmuch as we have born the image of the earthly we shall also bear the image of the heavenly: the one is just as certain as the other, Jesus himself said, "I came down from heaven not to do mine own will but the will of Him that sent me; and this is the Father's will that sent me, that of all he has given me I should lose nothing but raise it up at the last day." It is not the will of the heavenly Father that any of these little ones who fall asleep in Christ shall perish, all our sins have been put away by him and He has redeemed us unto God by his blood, by the one offering he has perfected us forever, we are dead and our life is hid with Christ in God, and when Christ who is our life shall appear we shall appear with him in glory. He hath loved us with an everlasting love, He hath chosen us unto salvation, He hath appointed us unto glory, He hath ordained us into eternal life, He hath predestinated us to be conformed to the image of his Son. He hath laid down his life for us, we are reconciled to God by his blood, we are washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God our destiny is indissolubly linked with the destiny of Jesus. How can this incomprehensible work of grace fail? Faith embraces it all and rests in this finished work of our Redeemer, and looks forward with joy and gladness to the consummation of it all. The resurrection of the dead is the crowning result of the work of Christ and God's purpose of salvation; then shall be brought to pass the saying, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: death will be swallowed up in victory." (Hosea 13: and First Corinthians 15)

How great the grace, how rich the inheritance, how ineffable the glory of His inheritance in the saints, how close the union, what an eternal mystery is revealed, Christ in us the hope of glory, redeemed from all iniquity by his precious blood which cleanseth us from all sin: Well might Moses when enabled by faith to behold Christ and his church the spiritual Israel of which natural Israel under him was the chosen type, exclaim, "Happy art thou, O Israel, who is like unto thee: O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency, and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places."

Now, dear brethren, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us be patient and hope to the end, for the time is at hand, let us walk worthy of our high calling with all lowliness and meekness, forbearing one another in love. There is one body and one spirit even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in you all. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God, therefore the world knoweth us not because it knew Him not, it doth not appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. (I John) O, that the good Lord, if it be his will, may visit his people with the Spirit of grace and supplication, all that bitterness may be removed from among all the children of His kingdom, that love which is the fulfilling of the law of Christ and from which flows the peace, joy, communion and fellowship of the saints; and may good works adorn the

house of God that we all may speak the same things and be comforted together. Peace be to the brethren and love with faith from God, the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ — grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

"FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD"

ST. JOHN 3:16

Dear Editors and Readers of the *Signs*:

While in the hospital in Seattle, and later while recouperating from Lymphedema of left leg which renders me inactive physically, I have had considerable time to read and meditate on several Scriptures, as well as to wonder why this physical affliction was visited upon me, etc. If it is the Lord's will, I shall write my thoughts on the words of Jesus in St. John 3:16 — "For God so loved THE WORLD, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosover believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

As to some of the thoughts that ran thru my mind after the heavy surgery for removal of the Cancer-Tumor July 2nd, I felt sure this affliction was for a purpose and according to the will of the Lord, and realized that He could afflict, and likewise He could heal and I was soon to feel His assurance that I would recover. There was never a feeling of resentment over this affliction, and, as time passed, I was given to look upon it as being purposed by the Lord for reasons known only to Him; and that what he purposes to come upon one of His little ones (and I hope I'm one of them) is for their good, and I feel that time will bring such to pass, moreso than that which has already been experienced. After much deep thought I was made to feel that I should be glad and rejoice that it His will that I was thus afflicted, and not unlike Jesus (if I may be so bold as to feel thusly) when He spoke words of thanks in St. Luke 10:21 — "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in Spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these thinges from the wise and the prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father; FOR SO IT SEEMED GOOD IN THY SIGHT". How consoling it is to be of a thankful mind, feeling that what seems good in the sight of the Lord, we must be thankful for rather than to feel He has worked against us, as-it-were.

Now to THE WORLD that Jesus spoke of. The unregenerate multitudes of the past and present who know not the mind of Christ, have seized upon these words as positive proof that God loved the whole world of humankind from beginning to end, and have gone out to bring all mankind to Christ and will keep on so doing until time ceases. They are the "WISE AND THE PRUDENT" referred to. Philpot in a sermon July 6, 1841, on this very Scripture, and particularly as to the WISE, said — "It is God's glory to pour contempt upon human wisdom, and to bring it to naught, to take the wise in their own craftiness, to lay low in the dust all that man idolizes, etc". The WISE undoubtedly were those of the past, the present and in time yet to come, WHO ARE RELIGIOUSLY WISE, and not wordly wise. The PRUDENT, says Philpot, "Does not like any sort of profession which in any way interferes with his worldly prospects, a character somewhat different from the WISE." etc.

As I am given to see it, THE WORLD which Jesus referred to , was that SPIRITUAL WORLD, separate and distinct from the NATURAL WORLD, which the All-wise God foerknew and foresaw way back there when it was His purpose and pleasure to bring both these worlds into being in His infinite mind; and He wrote all the names of those in THE SPIRITUAL WORLD in the Lamb's Book Of Life, which He told St. John of in Revelation 3:5. Those of the other world, over which the Beast, and the Dragon which gave power to the Beast rules, are the multitudes told of in Revelation 13:8 — " . . . WHOSE

NAMES ARE NOT WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAMB SLAIN FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD." While it is not stated that those names NOT written the Lamb's Book Of Life, were written in another Book, it makes no difference, for the mind of the All-wise God, is sufficient to contain them from first to last.

Further, as to this SPIRITUAL WORLD, we find that some could question it's existence by reading St. John 5:19 — "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Jesus was telling His disciples they were not of the world, —this *time world,* therefore they belonged in another world, which could not be any other but this SPIRITUAL WORLD. And His saying, "I have chosen you out of the world," to me, means it was the fulfillment of God's first election, and He, Jesus, was merely bringing them out from amongst those of the NATURAL WORLD where they were temporarily sojourning until God's appointed time came when Jesus would manifest Himself to them. Notice that He said, — "YE ARE NOT OF THE WORLD" and it means that they were never in it but were in that SPIRITUAL WORLD into which God placed them before writing their names in the Lamb's Book Of Life. We find in 2 Corinthians 5:19 that Paul wrote "To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself" etc. The Scriptures have never established that God had any intention or desire toward reconciling the world of all mankind to Himself, but only those He chose before the foundation of this time world was laid. Let us turn to 2 Corinthians 5:18, the verse just preceding the one quoted where Paul wrote:—"And all things are of God who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ." To reconcile means "To restore to favor."

It does not seem to be expedient to write at length on this text Scripture, for all those taught of the Lord, and not by man, who diligently search the Scriptures, find that many, very many, clearly show Jesus did not infer that His Father God loved the whole world of mankind, for He would not have prayed as He did as recorded in 17th Chapter of St. John. Read it carefully again, please.

A bit more about the WISE, religiously so, and their present day frantic efforts, sparing neither time nor money. Let us look at their "Key 73" cooperative venture launched late last year with some 150 denominations participating. Their "kick-off" publicity last December carried nationally in the press, said it was "The biggest cooperative venture in modern times TO TRY to strengthen the commitment of this generation to Christ." There was to be broadcasting specials, continent-wide distribution of Scripture, youth celebrations, touring companies of christian artists, etc, etc. Hence the film production of "JESUS CHRIST, THE SUPERSTAR" being shown in theatres and I believe on television. Millions will see this vain, and I say putrid attempt to portray our Lord Jesus, thru the natural acting of puny, depraved mankind. Postors in many places (stores) depict Christ in a business suit, tapered hair and trimmed beard and the slogan, "Jesus: The Man with a Plan." Also the use of Auto Bumper Stickers, reading "Read the Bible: It'll scare the H-ll out of you"; and another one,—"Honk if you know Jesus." More such activities could be told of, but this is enough. No truer words could have been written than those of one of the world's great religious leaders last June, tho he did not realize he and his son's great movement fell in the category, or within the scope he had in mind. I agree, wholeheartedly with him. He wrote, "Every bit of God's perfection man's hand ever touched, it would seem, he has besmirched, spoiled and polluted". How true, How True! Do not the things just cited show the awful pollution of God's Holy Word and the awful besmirching of His Holy Son's Spiritual character and

work? Shall we not say (pray) "Lord, forgive them for they know not what they do"?

Concluding, will say that on September 7, a few days ahead, I'll pass into my 78th year of life and it is my hope that I will be blessed to continue on for some years, to spend considerable time amongst the Lord's people, if it is His will. His people, His Church, are those I love and find great pleasure in being amongst for they are ONE GLORIOUS BODY, as the inspired writer of the following verses places them .

CHRIST AND THE CHURCH OF GOD

"Would you the Church of God survey,—
It's beauty, strength and harmony?
Then Christ Emanual see;
Where all perfections in Him meet,
There is the Church of God complete
The sum of all is He.

Christ is the precious cornerstone
Which all His Church is built upon,
Nor can it ever fall.
The prophets and apostles, too,
Other foundations never knew
Than Jesus, Lord of all.

'Ere Angels fell, or time had birth
Or God to being spake the earth;
In Christ the head, the sants were chose,
ONE GLORIOUS BODY TO COMPOSE."

In hope of eternal life thru the Grace and Mercy of God, tho a most unworthy being.

Wm. O. Hall
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"NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH"

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"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away: and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." (Rev. 21: 1, 2.)

The first heaven and the first earth, which John said had passed away, evidently was the legal or Jewish heaven, the old Jerusalem, and all that was earthy which pertained to their works and manner of worship, sacrifices and offerings, etc., under or according to the ceremonial law of Moses' worship. This all passed away, being completely abolished, destroyed, burned up in the destruction of the old Jerusalem. The old covenant being abolished by Jesus, who brought in a new heaven and a new earth, with a new law, new covenant ordered in all things and sure, spiritually speaking, wherein dwelleth righteousness, Christ and his people; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away: and there was no more sea. This sea, evidently has reference to the "molten sea made for the Jewish temple." (See, 1 Kings 7:23-26; 2 Kings 16:17; 25:13-16; 2 Chr. 4:2, 4, 29, and 6, 15; Jer. 27:19.) It contained two thousand baths, according to the scripture, and it rested upon twelve molten oxens, three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the west, and three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east. (I Kings 7:25, 26.) This evidently is the sea John had reference to being no more, which evidently was destroyed with the complete destruction of every thing pertaining to the Jewish temple and all legal, but earthy works of the old Jerusalem and their ceremonial law worship.

Therefore, John saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away: and there was no more sea. "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Thus, John gave a more full description of the new heaven which he by divine revelation saw, verifying the fact that this holy city, new Jerusalem's origin, as the all and in all of his people was from God, and descended from God out of heaven; whose builder and maker is God, in Christ Jesus; and was according to God's eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began; and whose kingdom is an

everlasting kingdom, and of his dominion there shall be no end. Peter speaking of the passing away and the total destruction of the first heaven and the first earth, said, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief (not to his children) in the night· in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervant heat, the earth also and the WORKS THAT ARE THEREIN, shall be burned up." (2 Peter 3:10) "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Peter 3:13) Wherein dwelleth Chirst, who is the Lord our righteousenss, the righteousness of his saints. Paul, also speaking of this new heaven, the new Jerusalem and city of the living God, says, "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor to blackness and darkness, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more." (Heb. 12: 18, 19.) "But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect ,and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." (Heb. 12: 22, 23, 24.)

We wish to notice, and trust the reader will do the same, that Peter said, "Nevertheless, we look for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness." John said, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth," and also, John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Paul said, "But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels." (Peter 3: 13; Rev. 21: 1, 2; Heb. 12: 22.)

Jesus, in taking away the old, made all things new: new heaven, new Jerusalem, new covenant, new and living way, new creation — created in Christ Jesus. If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature: old things are passed away, and behold all things have become new; he himself, spiritually speaking, has become new; even his sins are new to him; and especially, grace, mercy, love and truth. These sing a new song, they praise a new born King. They are therefore no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are builded upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord; In whom ye are also builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. They are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that they should shew forth the praise of him who hath called them out of darkness, unto his marvelous light.

Dearly beloved, the apostle adds, "We beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, (to the world) that ye abstain from fleshly lust, which war against the soul, having your conversation honest among the gentiles, (unbelievers) that whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil doers, that beholding your chaste conversation, coupled with fear, that they may be ashamed, that falsly accuse you, in the day of visitation." (see I Peter:2)

While the destruction of the old Jerusalem and the old world, are things in the far past, yet things that were written of aforetime, were written for our learning and admonition, just as it was declared by Jesus unto the apostles and by the prophets before them. Malachi, before the coming of Christ, prophesied, of the awful destruction of the old Jerusalem and of the wicked; saying, "For behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven: and all the proud,

yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch; But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings: and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." (Mal. 4:1, 2) Jesus in giving instruction and warning to his disciples of the coming destruction of the old Jerusalem, said, "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Matt. 24:34, 35; Mark 13:30, 31; Luke 21:32, 33) Jesus, to me, was speaking of the same heaven and earth passing away, that John in Rev. 21:1, and in Peter 3:10, was speaking of; else, what other heaven and earth could it be? It has been said that the generation, (Matt. 24:34), that Jesus was speaking of, was the generation of Jesus Christ; well, no doubt there were some of his people that were to remain until the destruction of old Jerusalem· but please, when will the generation of Jesus Christ pass away? Jesus, to me was speaking of that present generation, some of them then present, standing there, including some of his disciples, would not pass from this life before the fulfilment of his instruction and warning concerning the destruction of that Jerusalem. The canon of the New Testatment, no doubt was finished before the destruction of Jerusalem, and some of the apostles were living at that time, otherwise Jesus' instruction and warning of it would have been of no avail, with the exception for them to warn other saints and the churches, which they most faithfully did. Jesus said, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." (Matt. 24:14) Jesus had reference to the end of the ceremonial law dispensation. For indeed, the apostles did preach the gospel to all nations, and I think finished writing the New Testament, before the destruction of the old Jerusalem and all of its ceremonial law worship; As they did of the Acts of the apostles, in the book of Acts.

But, now back to the new heaven and the new Jerusalem: and this we will do, if the Lord permit. "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for even in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy, and I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying." (Isaiah 65:17, 18, 19) (Don't let the above saying of crying or weeping trouble the already troubled child of Grace, for it is speaking directly of the spiritual joys of new Jerusalem; they indeed come to it with weeping, but also with everlasting joy upon their head: they joy in their spiritual head, Christ, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.) The angel, Jesus, said to John, "Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal: And had a wall great and high, and twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels. . . . On the east three gates; on the south three gates; on the north three gates; on the west three gates. . . . And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring

their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither worketh abomination, or a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." (Rev. 21:9-13 and 21-27) David said, "Out of Zion the perfection of beauty God hath shined," and, "When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory."

We are to understand that the book of Revelation is practically all written in figurative language. I have quoted these selective verses of Chapter 21, which directly speaks of the new heaven, the new Jerusalem, Zion, the city of the living God; and it is only by faith of divine revelation that we can even get a glimpse of these glorious mysteries, the mysteries of the kingdom of God; and as Jesus said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom." After the new birth, the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, we grow in grace and knowledge of the spiritual truth of the gospel; but it is to be remembered, we can only see in part and know in part in this life; we see as through a glass darkly; receive as it were a glimpse, a little here and a little there.

It would be very lengthy, if we were able to comment on the verses quoted above, but would like to notice just a little of the revealed truth in a few of the verses. We are to notice that the glory of God and the Lamb is the light of the city; that it has no need of the sun or moon to light it; the midday sun would be no good to the poor child of grace in giving any light to them of that spiritual kingdom; but God the Father and the Lamb are the light and the temple of that great city of God· and we must worship in that TEMPLE — Father and the Son, the light and the temple. And they that are saved, shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth, new earth, (kings and priest unto God) do bring their glory and honour unto it; and the gates of it shall not be shut by day, for there shall be no night there. The twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gates was of one pearl; and at the gates twelve angels; and there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

I think the twelve angels, are the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and the twelve pearls, all being of one pearl, represent the Lamb; and his gifts to the apostles, who guard the entrance of the gates. Man may get into the local church without a legal passport, but never will any get into the city of God, without the true fruits of the spirit of Christ: for He is the way, the truth and the life, and the door of the sheep; and it is by him they enter into the sheepfold. The apostles in all their writings demanded to bring forth fruits meet for repentance; and their gifts, which were of God, set the commandments in their writings, and they are thereby upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of (spiritual) Israel. The walls of the city are great and exceedingly high, so that none can go over, nor under, nor around it; it must be faced; or run from it.

I realize these are very poor and unfinished comments, but I am tired, my mind has become dull, and likely my writing any further at present would be without edification, if indeed any of it has been. We should read the apostle's writing to see if it bears witness with our experience, and if we have a glimse of the true light of that spiritual city and kingdom of the living and true God. And remember, we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen; for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things not seen are eternal. It is the true Spirit of Christ that gives life, light and liberty to the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty; each one being a mansion

in their Father's house.

John L. Sanders
44 Durrett Grove
Tuscaloosa, Ala. 35401

OUR SPIRITUAL JOSEPH

P. O. Box 13,
Boones Mill, Va. 24065

Dear Brethren:

The child Joseph was a son by special providence rather than according to the free course of ordinary generation. His birth removed the reproach of his mother, and was a guarantee of life to her, for she was barren, and said to her beloved Jacob, "Give me children or else I die." The figure is thus that the birth of Jesus was by special providence. The church was barren, (1) His birth forever removed our reproach, and (2) brought unto us the blessings of the Covenant of everlasting life — a tremendous double at the Lord's hand for poor sinners.

Joseph was born about the time of the end of Jacob's service to Laban for Rachel, which was fourteen years; however, Jacob served yet another seven, making the length of time our Lord was about His Father's business.

We have no account of Joseph until he was seventeen. This also points to Jesus who at a time began to be about His Father's business, of which little is said, and little is known until He entered His revealed ministry at the age of thirty.

Joseph possessed inherent virtues which rendered him superior to any of his brethren. There seems to have been nothing in him of an evil tendency, but, to the contrary, he possessed a character so simple and honest and pure, that he could not allow evil doings of himself, nor could he keep the evil doings of his brethren from his father. It seems that his father held him in special regard above any of his brethren.

No doubt Israel saw in him evidence of a special destiny, a child to the hour born, a son for a purpose given. It is said that Israel loved Joseph more than all his children because he was the son of his old age; but this must have been secondary, because Benjamin was younger than Joseph, and was left motherless in his father's hand. However Jacob (Israel) loved Joseph supremely, and made him a coat of many colors, or pieces; and for his being thus loved, his brethren hated him and could not speak peaceably unto him.

It is said of the enemies of Jesus that they hated him without cause; and so Joseph's brethren hated him. Joseph was a dreamer of dreams and told them to his brethren, for which they hated him the more. Their hatred became intense — even so was Jesus hated by his brethren.

In Joseph's dreams the future was revealed, and so salvation is according to the predestination and sovereignty of God; yet humility and worship are revealed. The world today despises dreams and specially those who dream dreams: and fulfillment of Joseph's dreams would be prevented if possible.

Joseph's brethren hated him for the reason the world hates Jesus, because "We will not have this man Christ Jesus to reign over us."

Men do not object to dreamers of the flesh, but that God should cause men to dream, and thus reveal the future, they are not ready to admit. Joseph's brethren saw nothing in him to indicate that they should bow down to him. Besides it was in their nature to hate as much as it was in Joseph to dream, showing that it is as much impossible for men to love as it is for the wicked to have withheld from Him the violence of their wicked hands. So, the wicked shall do wickedly, and the righteous shall hold on his way. Without both neither would signify anything.

Joseph, the Old Testament shadow of Jesus Christ, reminds of the parable where men employed to keep the vineyard, slew the servants of the householder: and when he sent his son, they said, "This is the heir, come let us kill him." The Father of all our mercies sent his Son unto His brethren; and while we were yet enemies, Christ died

for the ungodly.

So, in the aggregate or total, the noble part played by Joseph was no more necessary than the part his brethren played in the fulfillment of the predestination of God in the furtherance of good to His people. This is best understood by those who can see that Joseph's dreams did not make him an Hebrew, and his brethren's evil deeds *did not* make them Egyptians — for Jacob and his sons were vessels of mercy, and the single qualification of a vessel of mercy is to receive out of the fulness of Jesus Christ.

In bonds,
J. L. Bocock

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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EDITORIAL

The following is copied from the January 1, 1859, issue of the *Signs*:

"The same leading sentiments which we published, and to which we pledged our paper twenty-six years ago, are still nailed to our mast-head. We have found no occasion to either change or alter them. They are as follows:

The *Signs of the Times* — Devoted to the Old School Baptist cause — maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfections of the Great Jehovah, — the revelation which he has made of himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, that these Three are One.—I John v. 8.

2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.

3. Eternal and Unconditional Election.

4. The Total Depravity and Just Condemnation of Fallen Man.

5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

6. The Sovereign, Irresistable, and, in all

cases, effectual work of the Holy Ghost in Quickening and Regenerating the sons of God.

7. The Final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God by Grace.

8. The Resurrection of the Dead, and Eternal Judgment.

9. The Church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers — that to her is given able Ministers of the New Testament — that the Scriptures are the only infallible Rule of Faith and Practice to the Saints of God.

10. The *Signs of the Times* will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath School Unions, &c., &c., waging war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of Institutions.

With this plain statement of our sentiments, we issued our first proposals for this paper in the fall of 1831; and if at any time or under any circumstances, we have swerved from these leading sentiments, we are not conscious of it. Certainly it has never been our intention to do so. We then believed that the first and sixth articles fully involved the doctrine of the Eternal Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ, and implied his Mediatorial identity as the Head over all things to his Church, and the Eternal, vital union of Christ and his seed, which are a "Chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, and a Peculiar People. A Seed that shall serve him, and be counted to him for a Generation, and a people which he has carried and borne all the days of old."

Such are still our views; and to their defense we pledge such ability as the Lord may graciously bestow upon us."

Gilbert Beebe

The above have ever been the leading sentiments on which the *Signs of the Times* was founded; and they have been reiterated during the years as being the unchanging principles held by all the editors of the paper.

We have thought much of the grace and purpose of God that has enabled the *Signs* to continue all through the years on these principles. We know that it is the Lord who reveals the truth of these principles to His people, causing them to love these things dearly, having the witness within that they are Scriptural truths. They know, of course, that these things do not seem right to unregenerated people, for they oppose, often quite vigorously, the thought that all things are of God, and according to His will and purpose.

The only way anyone is given to believe and rejoice in the doctrine of God our Saviour, is to be taught of Him. And being taught of Him to know the truth, is full evidence of being chosen in Christ before the world began; for otherwise there is no quickening and no revelation — no knowledge that the carnal mind is enmity against God, and not subject to his laws, for these can only be discerned spiritualy. To be born and taught of the Spirit is therefore necessary.

The principles held by the *Signs* cannot be disputed when placed side by side with the scriptures: With the scriptures they must stand or fall, for there is no other criteria. With the scriptures all doctrine must agree, or be counted false.

It should be well known, of course, that, "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death," according to Proverbs 14:12.

It is our fervant prayer that the *Signs of the Times* may continue on and on, according to the will of God, that the editors and writers who come after us, may be blessed of the Lord to be as careful as we have tried to be, not to allow anything to be carried in the *Signs* that would be in any way contrary to the scriptures; of which we believe the above principles to be fully in accord. It is the endeavor of the editor to screen any expressions which are sometimes inadvertently used by writers or speakers which were not intended, and which do not express the thoughts intended.

We would urge our brethren to write for publication when they have a mind to, for the readers of the *Signs* look forward to reading the experiences of the brethren and sisters, and their comments on portions of the Word of God. Our work is easier when we have plenty of copy on hand.

In the best of bonds.
J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

MATTEW 20:22

They said unto him, we are able. (See also Ex. 19:8).

Indeed and in truth they did not know what they asked. Israel did not know what they were saying when they said that they would do the things in the law, because later they had Moses to go up and receive the law, saying to the contrary of what they earlier had agreed to; one time they could do all of it, the next time they could not hear it and live. What poor frail worms of the dust we are. How unable we are to do what we say we will do; or if we do have to do what we say, we find out that indeed we did not weigh the matter carefully when we made our agreement.

When we first are drawn to the cross and its dying victim; when we first see the kingdom of heaven; when we are first brought into the lovely fellowship of the saints, we do not know our weakness, we do not know how cruel bearing the cross can be, we do not know that we are still a traveler with unclean lips and that we dwell in the midst of a people that are that way. Being in our early love, and having been made free from sin and the consequences of it, we are likely to think of it all as being an easy road with compatible companions, and we would think nothing of taking His cross as our cross, His drink as our drink, His baptism as our baptism. How sad the day was when clouds covered the horizon, when that which we counted as a joy becomes a burden that we are *not able* to bear, and yet must bear it; when we are brought face to face with the cup of sorrow, knowing that it must be drained and yet realizing that we are *not able* to do so; when we are brought into the fellowship of His sufferings, being made comformable unto His death, being buried in a baptism that only a King could endure and survive, we find that, even though we said that we could pass through it, we find that we are *not able* to pass through it alone.

Our petition becomes the cry of the feeble, of the poor, of one whose strength has become as water poured out upon the ground, as one whose sinews have shrunk (Gen. 32:32), as one whose groanings can not be uttered. We find that we are *not able* to suffer without complaining. When the sun is shining we are strong predestinarians, being glib of tongue in talking about that God sends all trouble out of love for us, but let the sun go into eclipse and then you listen at the complaint. In the last nearly fifty years I have met many, many lovely people, strong in the faith, well grounded and settled in the deep things of God, but I have crossed the path of these same people when they were laboring in darkness and low on a sick bed, the body wracked in pain, and they they cry out, "Why has He dealt thus with me? What is it that I have done that He has laid me low?" Ah, how my mind picks up this sad refrain, for it is mine. I feel it so sadly that I am *not able* to suffer with Him without complaining at my lot, and measuring my wisdom with His.

I am *not able,* when misunderstood, without wanting to button hole my fellow associates that I might explain and thus remove any danger of being ostracised. If I *was able,* I would be able to keep all fingers of scorn from being pointed at me; if I *was able* to use good simple language to those that know but little in the letter of things, and language filled with beautiful similes and metaphors clothed in rhetorical sublimity to the learned, then I *would be able* to be understood at all times; but I am *not able* to do this because I have my own vocabulary and I am not at home when I try to conform to yours, thus I am often misunderstood, and misunderstanding has caused more sorrow than any other condition that we come into. I do not want to be misunderstood and thus I am *not able* to bear it without wanting to give my opinion anew (Job 32:10,17), so that the misunderstanding will pass away.

While I am *not able* to bear any por-

tion of suffering without complaining and explaining, I do hope that my case has some resemblance of the prophet Jeremiah's lamentations. So often my cry is, "Will the Lord cast off forever? and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? doth his promise fail forevermore?" Ah, yes, I complain, and my spirit is overwhelmed in me (Psalm 77); I lament with Jeremiah. I abhor my desire for ease in Zion; I am ashamed of my weak trust. I flee when no man pursues. Ah, yes, I build a strong case for myself and hold with bitter complaint the dealings of God with me. I get myself washed in snow water, and down he plunges me into the ditch again (Job 9); I make a good argument, like Job did, about my complaints, I get a good case built to justify my complaints and my explanation of how things came to be as they are, and then, wonders of wonders, the Lord reverses my complaint and my explanations and comes with great power and glory into my stricken soul, as He did with both Job and Jeremiah. (Job 19 and 23; Lam. 3) Thus with Job and David and Jeremiah I am *not able* to refrain from explanation so that I escape the chastening rod, but when He brings me to the state of reconciliation that comes with the mind of Christ in me, I *am able* to endure for His dear sake.

It is the saddest hour when I feel forsaken and alone. I am *not able* to bear an isolated condition. Ah, how sad when I walk alone, and how gladsome is my outlook and my countenance when He walks with me: for you see two are so much better than one. (Eccl. 4) As the shadows lengthen I am daily in communion with David, I beg and plead that I not be forsaken as my strength fails, as the years build up around me (Psa. 71:9), and how my heart is enlarged, and how pleasant my lines become, as I am assured that He will never leave me nor forsake me. (2 Cor. 6:11; Psa. 16:6; Heb. 13:5) Ah, I am exalted on eagle's wings as I am reminded of His mercy and His care, and I am *not able* to refrain my soul from taking flight into the height and depth and length and breadth of the love of God, that even though His children forsake His law, and walk not in His judgments, and break His statutes, and keep not His commandments; and even though He visits them with the rod and with stripes, nevertheless His loving kindness and His faithfulness will not be removed, nor fail. (Psalm 89)

But then I am amazed that while He has not forsaken me, that the least trifle comes up and I forget and forsake some feeble little lamb of the fold. He never leaves, never forsakes; His love and patience and kindness continues in winter and in summer; He is never too busy, never away, never slumbering, never indifferent, always hearing my feeble cry for relief. He remembered under the burden of Calvary. He remembered when He cried, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." He remembered His sorrowing brethern the first thing when He arose from the grave, but I am *not able* to watch one hour: I forsake the assemblying of the saints for a trifling pleasure of Egypt; I forsake some sick room because it is so hot; I refrain from going to the relief of some poor tempted, begging soul because I am not feeling up to par.

I am *not able* to wait on Him to bring to pass His vengeance in those that would destroy His kingdom and the peace and fellowship of those that compose its inhabitants. I get impatient, and in a hurry; I want to see (and with shamefacedness say) that He gets revenge for my fancied wrongs, and I seek for ways in which I can play along with the molder instead of being the clay. I am *not able* to sit at His feet and leave it all to Him. I want to have something to say, as did impetuous Peter, about how the kingdom and its subjects perform. (John 21:22) However, He *is able* to subdue all things unto Himself, including this poor sinner, and my lisping tongue would harp melodies unto Him that He has not left the tethering of

my tongue unto me that am *unable* to do it (Jas. 3:8); that He has not left me to cure my own impediment of speech, which we all were *unable* to do. (Mark 7:32,37) We were *unable* to call Him Father and Saviour because of blindness and the ravages of death on our every faculty, but He has cured us of the ravages of the disease wherein we *are able* through His amazing grace to drink of His cup (not hanging on the tree where justice would demand that we hang) with Him in His own kingdom, enduring with the Head the suffering left behind for the body. (Col. 1:24) How precious it is that He hanged on the tree where we were *not able* to hang, and drink the cup to the last drop in suffering for sin, which we were *not able* to drink and live; and then extends His cup to us and with us in the kingdom of heaven, drinking and communing together for His sake.

Thus, dearly beloved in the Lord, seeing that we are possessed with two natures that are so contrary one to the other, that we *can not* do as we would; seeing that we, if children of God, have the will to do good but have not found how, and are *not able* to perform that which is good, may it be the Lord's good pleasure to work mightily in us by His Holy Spirit whereby we *are able* to perform every good word and work to the praise and honor and glory of His grace.

In the midst of my *lack of ability* I would beg the Lord that He give me the *ability* to be agreeable with those that are disagreeable; to concede that there may be truth in what others say; to never say a word in my defence when I am misunderstood; to keep calm and quiet when under fire; to forgive before being asked to; to give me the ability not to pay any attention to unkind remarks or written slurs; to not seek enthronement at the expense of dethronement of others; to not engage in needless arguments that might cause estrangement; to not be conformed to the world; but, by grace, to be transformed into an acceptable minister of better things; to resist the devil; to flee from temptation; to get enjoyment and sweetness out of bitterness, light in darkness, riches out of poverty; to set forth Jesus Christ and Him crucified as the way, the truth, the life; to finally die in peace with God and just men, and to live with Him in glory.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Brother Beebe: — I am well pleased with the *Signs of the Times*, and I am not willing to give them up. You may consider me a lifetime subscriber, or so long as I can get the means to pay for them, and they continue to contain the truth of the gospel. Brother Beebe, I wish you would write a discourse on the last chapter of Luke, and twenty-sixth verse: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"

A. R. Dorris
Webster Co., Kentucky
Aug. 1, 1862

REPLY

Saints and angels may well be amazed at the idea of the blessed Christ of God appearing in the character of a sufferer, and it is not surprising that the two disciples with whom he was conversing when he uttered the words above written, recoiled at the thought that wicked men had been permitted to crucify their Lord and Master. Like all others of the disciples they could only understand the profound mystery, so far as it was opened by revelation to their comprehension. They knew that they had loved him dearly, that they had trusted in him as the Messiah that was to come, and they verily believed that he was the long looked for Deliverer that was to redeem Israel: but how much he was to suffer in the accomplishment of that work, they did not realize. They had witnessed his arrest, his trial, his conviction on false testimony, they had probably followed him, perhaps afar off, to the place of execution. Saw his writhing agony on the cross, heard his bitter groans, and heard him cry,

My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken me? Ah! well they knew that he was crucified, dead and buried: but that he was indeed risen again from the dead, they did not know. True, they had been astonished at a report of some women who were early at the sepulchre, who averred that he had risen. But how could they rejoice in a risen Jesus, until as such he manifested himself to them? So it still continues to be with the disciples of Jesus down to the present day, for now we know only in part, we see only as through a glass darkened: but the blessed prospect looms up before us, that as soon as that which is in part shall be done away, we shall see even as we are seen, and know even as we are known. But our brother desires us to discourse on the text. "O fools, and slow in heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"

We do not understand the Redeemer to call his disciples fools by way of reproach, or as implying impatience with their infirmities, but to chide their despondency, and dispel their doubtings. A fool is simply a person who is destitute of understanding, and this was their case on that occasion: for if they had comprehended the matter, if they had known that thus it behoved him to suffer and to rise again from the dead on the third day, that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name to Jews and Gentiles, and that this dreadful suffering was now accomplished, that sin and death and hell, were vanquished, that the church of God was now redeemed from all iniquity, that now his mediatorial glory was about to break forth in heavenly radiance, instead of desponding they would have rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

And slow of heart to believe. The apostle says, "With the heart man *believeth unto righteousness.*" That is, in regard to spiritual things. Carnal, or nominal professors of religion may believe their respective creeds, with their heads, with their carnal minds, and with their natural powers, as evidence is presented, and they may be quick to believe, for they are under no restraint. We see them eager to drink in delusion that suits their carnal lust and hurriedly they embrace the doctrine of men, because they love it, and because it requires no grace, no teaching of the Holy Spirit to instruct them. But the children of God can only lay hold of the evidences on which their belief in Christ is predicated, by faith; and their faith is not of themselves, it is the gift of God. And it is the work of the Spirit of truth to present the evidences of eternal things to their faith, and they are such fools they can only believe and understand what they are taught of God by his Spirit: for they have not a particle of wit or wisdom only what is treasured up for them in him who of God is made unto them wisdom, for in him is hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. They feel and confess that they are slow to believe all that the prophets have written. They were not without confidence in the prophets of the Lord, and undoubtedly believed some of the things which the prophets had written, but they were slow or tardy in believing *all.*

We do not suppose the two disciples disbelieved or doubted what the prophets had written in predicting the coming of One who should redeem Israel, for they referred to that promise, as one bound to their hearts. And although they might confidently believe many things thus written in the Old Testament, their understanding of the scriptures was so limited, that they were slow to believe it all. But what the prophets have written is one undivided and unbroken testimony, beautiful and glorious in its harmony and identity. Hence Jesus fully understanding their deficiency, applied the proper and only corrective. He began at Moses, that is, with the five books of Moses, with which the Old Testament begins, and beginning also with all the prophets, he expounded to them in all the scriptures

the things concerning himself. So we perceive, fools, though these dear disciples were, as also all his disciples still are, (for if any man would know anything he must first become a fool, that he may be wise,) yet they lacked no wisdom or knowledge that Jesus did not possess. When we consider the amount of instruction contained in the discourse of Jesus, embracing all that Moses and the prophets had written, concerning himself, together with all that was contained in the other scriptures, on the same subject, all comprised in his discourse to them, is it any wonder that their hearts were inflamed, and burned within them, while he talked with them by the way, and opened to them the scriptures?

These scriptures had not only predicted his advent to the world, but they had also testified beforehand his sufferings, and the glory that should follow. The prophets themselves did not understand all the glory of their prophecy. There were some things sealed up from their understanding, as Peter says they sought diligently what or what manner of time the spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

We come now to the appeal which Christ made to the disciples.

Ought not Christ to have suffered these things? On no such grounds as could justify Pilate in passing the sentence of death upon him, for he had acknowledged that he found no cause of death in him, nor ought he to have suffered in any sense that could justify the Jews and Romans to conspire against him. He was holy, harmless and separate from sinners. He had done no injury to any man, but to the contrary, he had healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, given sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, he had fed the hungery, and ministered comfort to the afflicted: he had raised the dead, and cast out devils. Was there anything in this to justify their malice? He had invaded no rights claimed by earthly monarchs or potentates, he had paid tribute and custom according to their laws, and taught his disciples to imitate his example. Then why ought he to suffer these things? His enemies watched him diligently, and constantly lay in wait to find some cause of complaint that they might accuse him, but all in vain, for it cost them large money to suborn witnesses to testify falsely against him, that they might procure his arrest, and sentence for his death.

But although he was holy, innocent and pure, though there was no guile found in his mouth, although the Eternal Father from the skies had proclaimed that he was his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased, still we are, from Christ's own words, assured that there was a necessity for him to suffer these things, for in the forty-sixth verse of the same chapter he said unto them, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." As it was written thus in the scriptures, and the scriptures containing the important record were written by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, it is very evident that the grounds on which it behoved Christ to suffer were to be found in the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and that his being finally delivered up to these sufferings was in fulfillment of what God's hand and counsel had before determined should be done.

By a careful comparison of what was written aforetime, with the testimony of the New Testament, and the record of the fulfillment of what was written, we learn that the necessity of Christ's sufferings were indispensable for the redemption and salvation of his people. In pursuance of the purpose and grace of God, which he purposed in himself before the world began, Christ was set up, or given to be the Head over all things to his church, which is his body and the fulness of him that filleth all in all. Such was the relationship be-

tween Christ, in his mediatorial Headship over his body, the church, that all demands of the law and justice of God upon the church, were assumed by him, and it was upon this, and on no other ground that we can conceive of that it behoved him to suffer these things. That people whom the Father gave him, in their earthly nature, have all sinned, and were all by nature children of wrath, even as others. But God who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with him. Thus we perceive that the astonishing display of mercy and grace in the redemption of his people, proceeded from the great love wherewith God had loved them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world: and that love was so great, so strong, and so immutable, that our apostacy in Adam, and our being dead in sins, did not change or abate it. For God hath commended his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died. Truly, this love is stronger than death.

But in contemplating the unavoidable necessity of Christ's sufferings, we must take into consideration the principles of law and justice which were involved, for in this lies much of the mystery of our salvation, how God could be just and the justifier of them that believe in Jesus. No mortal wisdom could suggest a plan that would secure the salvation of sinners, without infringing the justice of God. The law would not admit of the substitution of an innocent sufferer for the transgressions of the guilty, unless there were some just and righteous ground of responsibility involved on the part of the sufferer. Husbands are, in law, responsible for the debts contracted by their wives, parents or children, &c., but in criminal cases these relations will not hold the innocent responsible. There must then be found a relationship still more near.

We know of no law that will exempt the *head* from responsibility for the *acts of the body, or members of the body.* On this principle then, we conclude the law could justly look to Christ as Head and Surety for his body, the church. And certain it is that, "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all." Surely, he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all. He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearer, is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation: for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death: because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him: he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many: for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors· and he bear the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

The foregoing testimony from the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah illustrates the subject better than volumes of uninspired comments, showing upon what principle it was just for the dear Redeemer to suffer, the just for the un-

just, that he might bring us to God. As a Shepherd he laid down his life for his sheep. For as they were his sheep before they had transgressed, justice demanded the ransom at his hands. He so stood related to, and identified with his flock, that all their sins were laid on him, and he was numbered with the transgressors. And the extent of his atonement is forever settled. "For the transgression of my people (saith God) was he stricken." And by his stripes we are healed. The ground then on which he "ought to suffer," was not that we as transgressors had any claim on him for any thing good or bad, that we had done, or intended to do, but it was as these scriptures clearly show, by the grace of God, and not the will or works of men, that he tasted death for God's people. Himself bearing our sins in his own body. Thus it *behoved* or became Christ to suffer. "For it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Heb. 2. 10. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."—Heb. 10. 14. His sufferings were indispensable, not only for bringing many sons unto glory, but also to prepare his entrance into the glory that was to follow. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"

We presume the glory into which Christ was to enter, was the glory of his mediatorial triumph over death, hell and sin, in the perfect redemption of his people, the organization of his kingdom, the ascension to his throne in Zion, and that revenue of praise which must redound to his great name to everlasting. It is true he had a glory with the Father, before the world began, and as we understand, the glory of eternal deity was his in common with the Father, from everlasting, but his endurance of sufferings were not required to precede his possession of that glory. John says, "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." And the saints of every age have a revelation of this, when God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness shines in their hearts, to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ. For he is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person.

The glory of which he speaks in our text, we conclude must be that of which he spake in his address to the Father.—John 17; 22-24. A glory the Father gave him, and which he has given to his people. It must, we think, refer especially to his Mediatorial glory, and that particularly which he has secured by the accomplishment of all the work which the Father gave him to do. The glorious triumph of the Son of God over all enemies, his deathless victory over all opposing powers, was to be followed by his resurrection from the dead, his ascension up on high, his leading captivity captive, and the reception of his kingdom, his coronation, and his throne, will all be comprised in that glory which he was to enter. Before the organization of his kingdom in her gospel beauty, the subjects required to be redeemed from their captivity, and their redemption could only be effected by his sufferings, hence we are told that he for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down on the right hand of the majesty on high.

Thus in the majesty on high he has entered the glory which he had with the Father before the world began. While the things which he had to suffer intervened between him and the consummation of his glory, he was found in fashion as a man, took on him the form of a servant, learned obedience, and became obedient, even unto death. But the joy was then before him, and he passed through the deeps of deep waters, without faltering, and, like Jacob, when serving Laban for Rachel, the anticipated bride made the years of servitude seem as but a few days. So the blessed Savior anticipated the glory that

was to follow his sufferings. High seated now upon his imperial throne, his people are not only redeemed from the curse of domination of the law, and the lawful captives thus delivered, the Spirit of immortality is sent down in his name to quicken and call all the trophies of his triumph, and his people are made willing in the day of his power. Vested now with all the power of heaven and earth, he gives repentance unto Israel and remission of sins. Repentance and remission are now preached in his name, and his arm is made bare for salvation, and his arm shall rule for him: behold his reward is with him and his work before him. He gathers now his sheep with his arm, and carries them in his bosom, and they shall all know experimentally, when he opens the eyes of their understanding what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to his mighty power.

In view of all this, ye trembling saints, as ye wade through the bitter waters of affliction, consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your mind. He has laid up in heaven for you a crown of unfading glory, and you are called to know the fellowship of his sufferings, and to be conformed to his death. Look steadfastly then to the mark of the prize of your high calling, and press on. Your suffering days will soon be ended, your sighing and sorrowing soon shall cease, and God will wipe away all your tears. If it behooved Christ to suffer first, and then to enter his glory, shall we complain of the sufferings of the present time, when so well we know that our light afflictions which are but for a moment, do work for us far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory!

"His way was much harder and rougher than thine,
Did Christ your Lord suffer, and wilt thou repine!"

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe September 1, 1862.)

OBITUARIES

ANNIE L. HELMS

Sister Annie Law Dyer Helms was born in Franklin County, Virginia, June 30, 1884, and departed this life June 22, 1973, in the 88th year of her age. She was the daughter of Deacon Tilman Law and Alice Akers Law.

Sister Helms united with the church July 22, 1950, and was a member of Rocky Mount Church. She was twice married, first to Elder George Dyer with whom she lived happily for many years until he died. She was again married to Elder J. P. Helms and shared with him his sorrows and joys, cares and comforts until he died.

As for her husbands, we say without fear of successful contradiction that the conduct of each but revealed the character of each, and through them the will of God is done in the furtherance of good to His people and the destruction of their enemies.

How sweet is the savor of the annointing that makes precious in our hearts the memory of Sister Annie. How enduring the substance of such virtue as was reflected in her life and character! How divinely glorious the grace of our God which made her thus, as by the grace of God she was truly what she was.

While she desired to live, she was not afraid to die, knowing in whom she believed and Jesus in Whom she trusted all through the years of her pilgrimage. When her time came, then without a struggle she passed into that blessed sleep which the Lord gives to His beloved as gently, calmly and sweetly as a little child upon its mother's breast. How solemn the silence, how awe inspiring the scene, how triumphant the transition, how serenely beautiful the ending of such a life, how gracious the ripening up of such a character, the gathering in of such a mother in Israel.

The life of this sterling, faithful woman was so indicative of divine ordination that much more might be said truly in her memory, but we must commend her to the vigilent watch care, the unfailing preservation and keeping of Him who raiseth the dead and the sorely bereaved who are left behind to the consideration of the Lord who gave and the Lord who hath taken away.

After divine services by Elder Cecil Turner and Elder J. L. Bocack, her remains were buried in the well kept yard at Basham Church.

She now rests in Christ even as while she lived on earth she was saved by grace.

Submitted, in sadness, by two among many that loved her dearly,

Cora & Nathan Hunt

ALEINE B. BROWN

At the May Quarterly meeting of the Wilmington Primitive Baptist Church, I was ap-

pointed to write the obituary of Sister Aleine B. Brown.

She was born October 29, 1895 and passed away April 29, 1973. Surviving are her husband Thomas Lester Brown, three sons, Alan Lester, and Thomas Preston of Wilmington, N. C., and Joseph Duncan of Hampton, Va. Also five grand children, and six great grand children.

Sister Aleine and Brother Lester joined the Church at Wilmington together in February 1922 and were Baptised by Elder Christopher Hooks. She was a strong and faithful believer in the Sovereign Grace of God. All of us loved her deeply but know that she is at rest and peace with our heavenly Father who always knows what is best.

Graveside services were held in Oakdale Cemetery by Elder Wayne Mitchell on May 1st 1973, with a host of brethren, relatives and friends attending.

Written in love, and with a feeling of humbleness, by her sister in law.

Aline B. Grant

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

By the grace of God, I will attempt to write a Resolution of Respect of our dear Sister Mary Madra.

Sister Madra joined our church the first Sunday in June, 1969. She was blessed to be a faithful member until her death June 10, 1973. She was born September 18, 1901, and lived on this earth seventy-one years.

To know Sister Madra was to love her, as she always carried a smile, and was forever praising her God. She was a great believer in Salvation by Grace, and a great supporter of our church. Even on her death bed she was concerned over the welfare of the church. We all loved Sister Madra, but we realized it was God's will to call her.

THEREFORE, We Resolve: First, we the Church feel that our loss is her eternal gain. Second, we send our sincere sympathy to her husband and family. Third, that three copies of this be made: one for the *Signs of the Times*, for publication, one be sent to the family, and one for our Church records.

This done by order of Conference at our July, 1973, meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Mod.
John H. Coker, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

By the request of Tarboro Church I will attempt to write a few words of respect for our dear Sister Martha "Pat" Andrews.

Sister Andrews was born in 1902 and died August 4th, 1973, making her stay on earth 71 years.

To know Sister Pat was to love her. She was blessed to come into our church on July 6, 1968. She loved her church and was blessed to be a faithful member as long as she was able to come. She will always be remembered for her beautiful singing. Sleep on Pat, we feel you are at rest. We know you had your trials, but you did your best.

We resolve that three copies of this resolution be made: one to be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, one to be sent to the family, and one to be placed in our church records.

We, the Church of Tarboro, send our sincere sympathy to her family, and feel our loss is her eternal gain.

This done by order of conference at our August meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

IN MEMORY OF BROTHER CLAUDE S. OAKLEY

Death means to separate, but not from the love of God. When a precious one is called from our midst, many hearts are saddened, yet, we mourn not as those who have no hope, for our hope reaches beyond the silent tomb.

Brother Oakley was not weak in that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit. He was a quiet man, of few words, though they were fittingly spoken. His God-given knowledge of the Blessed Truth as it is in our Lord and Saviour, was most inspiring.

He was born in Caswell County, North Carolina, July 13, 1898, and departed this world of trial and troubles on July 6, 1973. He spent his allotted time of almost 75 years within a few miles of the Church at Bush Arbor where he united in September 1951 and attended faithfully as long as his health permitted.

Our Brother was twice married, first to Sister Roberts Page Oakley. This union was blessed with four lovely children: three daughters, Mrs. Frances Heath, Hampton, Virginia, Mrs. Betty Lou Page, Route No. 2, Elon College, N.C., Sister Margaret Burton, Burlington, N.C. and one son, Mr. James Oakley of Sutherlin, Virginia.

After the death of his first wife in June, 1959, he was later married to Sister Ruth Blaylock Clayton Oakley. This union was brief due to her death in 1962. Though he was lonely, our Brother was submissive to God's Holy Will, and was most appreciative of the love and tender care of his children.

Brother Oakley's funeral was conducted by his Pastor Elder Wallis Smith, assisted by Elder Donald Smith, at Bush Arbor, the place

he loved and spent many hours of labor helping to maintain.

He was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a huge mound of beautiful flowers, a symbol of love and esteem.

We believe he is now resting from his labors and waiting the coming of his Lord to be brought forth and changed like unto his own glorious body and be satisfied forever.

May the Love of God abide with this bereaved family and comfort them, along with the many Brethren and friends who are saddened.

Written by Clifton Robertson as requested by Bush Arbor Church, and read and approved in their conference meeting September 8, 1973.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Brother Earl Rudd, Clerk

DEACON CALLIE ELWOOD STALLINGS

On October 23, 1884, Callie E. Stallings was born to Meedy A. and Ellie Proctor Stallings. Married Minnie Spicer on January 3, 1906 and celebrated with her sixty-three anniversaries. He was called from this earthly home on June 18, 1973 making his stay in this world 88 years, 7 months, and 26 days.

Brother and Sister Stallings were blessed with six children, four of who were left to mourn his passing. Three daughters, Mrs. Ellie Barnes, and Mrs. Rosa P. Landen of Rocky Mount, N.C. and Sister Myrtle Pridgen of Sharpsburg, N.C.; one son, Richard Stallings of Alexandria, Va.; twelve grandchildren and fifteen great grandchildren. Two other daughters who preceded him in death were Miss Lillie Pearl Stallings and Mrs. Minnie V. Bone.

Brother Stallings united with the church at Pleasant Hill, near Rocky Mount, N.C., on August 27, 1927, was ordained deacon on August 26, 1951 by Elders A. B. Denson, J. B. Roberts, and J. C. Smith, and served the church faithfully as long as his health permitted. He always had the interest of the church at heart — ready to serve wherever and whenever duty called him. The brethren were very dear to him and he was often expressing the love he felt for them.

Brother Stallings was found filling his seat at Pleasant Hill unless providentially hindered, and it was a distinct pleasure of his to visit the sister churches of our correspondence.

His funeral was conducted at Johnson Funeral Home, Rocky Mount, N.C. by his beloved pastor, Elder Henry C. Jones assisted by Elder D. B. Stokes. He was laid to rest by the body of his companion in Pineview Cemetery to await the final calling.

We at Pleasant Hill miss him and expect to continue to miss him, but we feel he is at rest and our loss is his eternal gain that he would not wish to exchange.

Written at the request of conference July 21, 1973, by one who loved him.

J. Carroll Williams

Read and received in conference August 25, 1973. Agreed that a copy be placed on the church records, one copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and a copy be sent to the family.

Elder Henry C. Jones, Moderator
J. Carroll Williams, Clerk

WILLIAM MAC MERCER

Oak Grove Church in our regular conference meeting requested me to write a Memorial to our dearly beloved Clerk and Brother in Christ, William Mac Mercer, for publication in the *Signs*.

Brother Mac's earthly life began October 7, 1903, and it pleased God to take him from our midst August 10, 1973, at the home of his brother, Elder Hilton Mercer, Jonesboro, La.

Brother Mac, as all who knew him called him, lived in the home of Elder Hilton Mercer and family, who loved him dearly, as did we all who knew him. He was very humble and faithful to the end. He was devoted to his church and a lover of the truth. He was always humble and a peace-maker, and we will all miss him very much. He was a wonderful gift to our church, but God has an appointed time for all things: "A time to be born, and a time to die." And it was the will of Almighty God to take him from this weary world. It is our loss but his gain, and for God's glory.

We bow our heads in humble prayer that God will strengthen his loved ones, and reconcile them to the will of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will. Brother Mac's body rested at Edmond's Funeral Home in Jonesboro until 1:30 p.m. August 12, 1973, then was removed to the Oak Grove Primitive Baptist Church in Chestnut, La., where funeral services were conducted by Elder Wellman Maise and Elder David Godwin, who both spoke comfortably to the family.

Brother Mac was survived by two brothers, Elder Hilton Mercer (one of our pastors) and Homer Mercer, West Monroe, La.; four sisters, Mrs. Maggie Brown, Quitman, La., Mrs. Artie Burnett, Alberquerque, New Mexico, Mrs. Devie Narred, Jonesboro, and Mrs. Ethel Byrie, Beaumont, Texas and a number of nieces and nephews and a host of friends. He was laid to rest in the Springfield Cemetery near Jonesboro beneath a mound of lovely flowers, to await the second coming of our Lord of Lords and King of Kings.

Written by request of Oak Grove Church by

Mrs. Kate Mathews

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141 DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1973 NO. 12

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS
12/73
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"I KNOW, OH LORD, THAT THY JUDGMENTS ARE RIGHT AND THAT THOU, IN FAITHFULNESS HAST AFFLICTED ME". PSALMS 119:75

The question has often been asked, even by Christians at times, "Why are the Lord's people afflicted? Why do they have to suffer? There was a time many years ago when I asked it too. I believe the answer is found in the verse quoted above and unless I am totally deceived, the Lord spoke to me this morning just before dawn through this precious verse. So many, many times in the past years, He has spoken to me and comforted my troubled heart through some portion of His holy, inspired Word. How true and meaningful are Paul's words that the Scriptures were written for our learning "that through patience and comfort of the Scriptures ye might have hope." I firmly believe the word "hope" here signifies assurance, expectation, anticipation. What basis would we have for hope, had we no assurance upon which to rest it?

I have never said very much about my experience of long ago because, although it is lovely to hear and read about how the Lord brought His people to Him, it is fully as lovely to hear how He KEEPS them, how He leads them and instructs them along the way, how He shows them His guiding hand and protecting care in even the most minute details of their life. It is just as sweet to experience His KEEPING power as His SAVING power.

As I have stated before, I have never been given much to doubting, but certainly this is no credit to me and the Lord does know I do not say it in a boastful spirit. It simply has not been, so far, the Lord's way of leading me and every case is individual, according to His wisdom and our need. But I believe I have suffered just as much through long, dreary periods of spiritual emptiness, periods when I am unable to pray, when I get little, if anything, from the precious Word of God; periods when there is no joy, no heartfelt praise although I long for it; periods when I can witness with Solomon: "By night, on my bed, I sought Him whom my soul loveth; I sought Him, but I found Him not." I have been in such a state for several months now, a most miserable state! So many, many times, especially in the past few weeks, I have cried, almost in desperation, Lord, speak to me, I beg Thee, speak even one word to my sore heart; but there seemed to be no answer. Recently, two of my brethren whom I love so dearly, have been going through a tragic, heartbreaking experience and my heart has bled for them. Many have been my cries to the Lord in their behalf. This morning before getting up, as I agonized for them and for my own pitiful condition, suddenly the words came to me with great conviction "THOU, IN FAITHFULNESS, HAST AFFLICTED ME". That was the word I needed and almost immediately I was made to rejoice and to praise Him for counting me worthy of affliction at His hand. The tears flowed as they can

flow only where for so long there have been no tears. Only those who have gone through these experiences can truly understand.

After the flood has passed, I began to analyze the text: how it is that IN FAITHFULNESS He afflicts us, and my mind was led to the subject of God's predestination. Unbelievers would think it strange, even scoff at the thought that God, instead of blessing us with what they consider good things, would IN FAITHFULNESS afflict us, but I believe these afflictions to be a part of the fulfilling of God's eternal purpose concerning us and it is not in anger, but in love that He afflicts those whom through eternity He purposed to save.

I believe the Scriptures teach that the purpose of God in predestination is two-fold: first, predestinating us "unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ according to the good pleasure of His will." In other words, by redemption through the death and resurrection of Christ, we are made to be God's very own children, both legally and by the relationship of blood. Second, that these adopted children should be "conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren." In this light, we must ask ourselves the very potent question, HOW and in WHAT PROCESS are we to be conformed to the image of Christ? The answer has to be THROUGH MUCH TRIBULATION and THE MIGHTY WORKING OF GOD'S POWER. Some, perhaps many, may disagree with me, but I firmly believe that a part of the conforming is taking place right here in this world THROUGH MUCH TRIBULATION. A part of it awaits the consummation of our adoption, to wit: the redemption of the body. We could not be to the image of our suffering Saviour even in the slightest degree conformed did we not know something of "the fellowship of His suffering"; we could never know even a little of the awful weight of the sin He bore did we not know something of "the exceeding sinfulness of sin;" we could never know even a little of the agony He suffered on Calvary in being forsaken of His Father did we not know the awful desolation of having, at times, His blessed face and the sweet comfort of His presence hidden from us for a while. Earlier in this chapter the Psalmist declared, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept Thy word,, The Lord had been FAITHFUL in afflicting him. It is in the fiery furnace that our dross is consumed, our gold refined. Throughout the Scriptures we find instances where the Lord afflicted His people because of "His great love wherewith He loved them." When we are blest to see His hand in afflicting us, we recognize it as corrective, not punitive; and I cannot believe there is any bitternesss or rebellion in the hearts of God's own children when He afflicts us, when we are afflicted, we "cry unto the Lord in our distress AND HE HEARS US." When so blest, we are drawn closer to Him and love Him more, and experience by experience, we are, in some small measure, being conformed to His image. Thus it is that IN FAITHFULNESS to us and in FAITHFULNESS to His purpose in predestination, it is good that He afflicts us. Paul so beautifully stated MOST GLADLY, THEREFORE, WILL I RATHER GLORY IN MY INFIRMITIES." Why? "THAT THE POWER OF CHRIST MAY REST UPON ME," This, then, is the answer, and I believe it is the testimony of every heaven-born child, yet because our flesh is so weak, we have to wait on the Lord each time before we are able to glory in OUR infirmities.

In conclusion, my prayer is that the Lord will continue to afflict me and all His people, and as we look up to Him for deliverance, may we behold the face, not of our judge, but the face of our dear Redeemer, our Saviour and our Lord.

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THE TWO BIRTHS AND WHAT THEY ACCOMPLISH

Nicodemus came to Jesus acknowledging Him as a teacher come from God. His faith was founded upon the miracles he had seen Jesus perform. Jesus tells him emphatically that faith in Him as a worker of miracles, is not sufficient. What he needs is justifying faith, a saving grace wrought in the soul by God: a radical change of heart, a creative act of God, a birth from above. Without this a man cannot see the kingdom of God, nor enter into the kingdom of God.

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh." We were born of the flesh when we entered this world. By this birth we are sinful and corrupt. Each of us is obliged to say with David, "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."

In the flesh there dwells no good thing. The motions of the flesh are for self, not for God. The nature of the workings of the flesh are for evil, not for righteousness; the affections of the flesh are for the things of the earth, not for the things of heaven; the purposes of the flesh are to realize temporal, not eternal values. The flesh is enmity against God. It always was, is now, and forever will be opposed to Him and His ways. There is no way to improve it. What it is now, it always will be, only in intensified degree.

"That which is born of the spirit is spirit." We must have a new life. It is to no avail that we put forth effort to change the fleshly nature. We must have a new nature, with new affections, new principles, new purposes. Those that are in the flesh cannot please God. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Birth is the beginning of life, and we must have a heavenly life coming from God. We must become another being in order even to be able to see or understand the nature of the kingdom of heaven.

The second birth is not wrought by our own will, nor by any power or wisdom we have. It is a birth, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of men, but of God." By His blessed Spirit, God works in us this mysterious new creation, and sets us going on the way that leads to eternal happiness with Him. "God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son, that whosover believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The flesh, being enmity against God, is not subject to His laws, neither indeed can be." (Romans 8:7). Paul tells us that, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

God before the world was, wrote our names in the Lamb's Book of Life, and because of his great love for us, gave His only begotten Son to die for us, as the ransom price, that we might be the beneficiary of eternal life. Therefore, we are constrained with Paul, "Giving thanks unto the Father, which has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins."

Elder J. A. Tew

IS THERE NOT A CAUSE?

Why are so many people leaving the farm today and going to the city?

There may not be a famine in the whole land, but no doubt there is one in the house of the one that is hunting a place wherein he and his household may eat bread. Can this distress be working good? We weak creatures of course can not see far enough in the future to know what will be the outcome. It looks bad to us, nevertheless, we cannot dispute that all things work together for good to them that love God,

to them who are the called according to His purpose.

Some three thousand years ago a certain man of Bethlehem-Judah, named Elimelech, his wife, Naomi, and two sons were forced to leave their land and go down into the land of Moab. Let us see if this hard travel down there for food worked good. While there the two sons found themselves wives, this making six in the family. As it comes to all men, Elimelech and sons, Mahlon and Chilion, died leaving the three women alone.

Naomi, no doubt going through with so much trouble, began to think of home, and learning there was plenty of food there she told her two daughters-in-law she must leave them and go home. Both of the girls at first thought they must go, but Naomi said, "I have no more sons for you, and according to nature I am alone in this world, go return to your people." It pleased Orpah to do so, kissing her mother-in-law, she returned to her people. This is the case today with some after a big revival. The road is just too long and tiresome and they return to their people. "Let them all be confused and turn back that hate Zion" (Psa. 129:5).

Ruth clave to Naomi and said, "Entreat me not to leave thee or to return from following after thee, for where thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people and thy God my God." If Orphah knew there was a God she did not mention it. You can plainly see there is a difference between her and Ruth. Is there not a cause?

Naomi, seeing Ruth had faith and was steadfastly mindful to go, left off speaking to her. When they arrived at their journey's end it was the beginning of barley harvest there. No doubt there is a beginning of barley harvest with every child of God when they get to their journey's end. Was there a cause for Ruth coming here?

In this land was a near kinsman of Elimelech's by the name of Boaz, a very wealthy man who was of the tribe of Judah. Let us see about Ruth's faith. She said to Naomi, Let me now go into the field and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. What caused her to have faith to say, I shall find grace? Do you suppose it could be this: Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things?

Ruth humbly asked Boaz to let her glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves. Are not God's little ones doing this today? I believe they are contented to get a few handfuls that fall of purpose today, just as was she. It can be seen already that she has found grace, for Boaz asked her not to go to another field, but stay fast by his maidens. Was it love at first sight? David said, "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest part of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." I believe there was some jealousness in Boaz. It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you (Gal. 4:18). The lord of the harvest has commanded that the young men not touch the damsel (The gates of hell shall not prevail against thee), but that she should have drink when she became thirsty. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled.

Never have I found in the Bible a more beautiful picture of Christ and His bride, than Naomi, Boaz and Ruth. Just watch Naomi all along. Is she not a figure of the church under the legal dispensation? Her husband is dead and she never has another husband. But Ruth's husband, being dead, she finds favor in the sight of Boaz, which represents the church under the care of Christ in the grace dispensation. Is not the church under the law dispensation, the mother-in-law of the bride of today. The law is our schoolmaster (to bring us) to Christ. Isn't this what Naomi was for

Ruth? It seems that Ruth dwelt with her mother-in-law till the end of the barley harvest. So did the church.

Boaz, knowing how faithful Ruth had been to her mother-in-law, and in leaving her people to live with people she had not known, said unto her, "The Lord recompense thy work and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel under whose wings thou art come to trust." How comforting this was to the mourning damsel.

At mealtime Boaz bade her come hither and eat of the bread and dip her morsel into the vinegar. Here is the receiving of all things, the good and the bad, from the same hand. Just think what she ate. It was not dough which she had to cook, as it was already cooked ready to be eaten. Have you ever had eat half cooked bread? My experience is that I had to spit it out, because it is not satisfying to eat half cooked meals. But what satisfaction it is when you are permitted to dine at the table of the Lord, when the meal is already prepared before you are seated at the table. Although she was sitting in the midst of the reapers, it was Boaz himself that handed her the parched corn. She ate and was sufficed, and thus it is true with every child of God when they sit at the spiritual table and hear and receive the unsearchable riches of their Redeemer proclaimed.

When Ruth returned home and the two had eaten, Naomi tells Ruth that Boaz is going to separate the grain from the chaff, and instructs her what to do. She does not halt between two opinions, wondering what to do, but goes straight way and does what her mother-in-law has told her to do. We find her at the feet of Boaz just as Mary was found at the feet of Jesus. Where is the church found? She is found at the feet of her husband. It was at the midnight hour when Boaz found her humbled and ready to be at his feet. It was the turning point; it was at the ending of the law reign and the beginning of the gospel day, the reign of grace. The light has shined even though it is midnight's dark, and it has come with light giving in her poor heart. "The light shined in darkness, and darkness did not comprehend." I am sure that nature's darkness was all around them, but she is not a child of darkness anymore, but a child of light, for she understood what Boaz is saying to her. Who art thou? I am Ruth thine handmaid. She continued asking and He continued answering. She realized her nakedness and she realized his role as the coverer of it. "Spread thy skirt over me for thou art a near kinsman." I believe that every child of God, when the light shines in their heart, desires the robe of righteousness be cast around them to cover their nakedness, their shame. We hear it said to Jerusalem, "Now when I passed by thee and looked upon thee behold thy time was the time of love and I spread my skirt over thee and covered thy nakedness, yea, I sware unto thee and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine." (Ezek. 16:8) Is this not the case with the character we have under consideration?

Let us notice Boaz does not send Ruth away with empty hands, but gives her six measures of barley. With this she goes back to her mother-in-law; there must have been a great change in her, for Naomi asked, "Who art thou my daughter?" She bade the damsel sit still until thou know how the matter will fall, for the man will not be at rest until he has finished the thing THIS DAY. Poor Rachel had to wait until her time came, but Jacob loved her so much he did not rest until the last thing was done in order for her to be his bride. When Christ was here on earth He did not stop until all was fulfilled for His bride.

Boaz told the nearer kinsman that Naomi was going to sell their brother's land and asked him if he would redeem it. The kinsman first told him that he would, but Boaz soon put him to the test, when he told him, In the day he bought the land of Naomi he would have to take Ruth to raise the name of

the dead upon his inheritance. He immediately said, "No, I can not redeem it for myself lest I mar mine inheritance." Do you know any one today that feels like he would mar his inheritance by going to the true church? The nearer kinsman must have been like these characters, to wit, Now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children, and lo, we bring into bondage our sons and daughters to be servants, and some of our daughters are brought into bondage already, neither is it in our power to redeem them, for other men have our lands and vineyards. (Neh, 5:5) He seemed to be willing to take Naomi and the land, but he stopped when Ruth was presented. We all know a lot of people now that will not mar their pride by going to the gospel church. This was the excuse he had for not redeeming Ruth. Is there not a cause?

He was not the one to redeem her, There is not any doubt but that he had the price of dogs, but he had not the price for the Pearl in the field. At least we well know the pearl meant nothing to him, so he was willing to give Boaz the right to redeem her, and confirmed it in the presence of the law by pulling off his shoe and giving it to Boaz, which was the custom in those days. These are spiritual things and the carnal mind would not discern the worth of the pearl. Boaz, being blessed of God, was a very wealthy and wise man. He had the price, and now the right, to purchase the field and the pearl in it, as he has fulfilled all requirements.

He has already given her six measures of barley. Now he is going to give her the seventh by taking her to wife and giving her a home as a place of rest from all her labor, just as the Good Samaritan did for the man that fell among thieves and robbers. No doubt she steps forth as a bride adorned for her husband, and can say, He carried me to the banquetting house and his banner over me was love. Those that feel they have been carried to the banquetting house under the banner of love can know how the heart of this damsel rejoiced in this hour,

> Oh, that I could praise my King,
> To satisfy my mind;
> Some of his glories I could sing,
> But yea, I am too blind.

Here is the woman John saw appear in heaven clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. Isn't it a wonder that the Moabitish damsel appeared in the house of Boaz in the time of law worship? Did she just happen to get there? Was there not a cause? We well know that she could say with David, "He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings." Who did this for her? It was the one that hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. I believe the pure gospel was made known to Ruth in these measures of barley Boaz gave her. We find there was a son born to them whose name was Obed (Obed begat Jesse, Jesse begat David and down to Christ). Boaz being of the tribe of Judah, we can see that this prophecy is true, to wit, There shall come a star out of Jacob and shall smite the corners (or princes) of Moab and destroy the children of Sheth. (Num. 24:17) Did Boaz smite the corners of Moab? It seems to me that he did when he got the choicest flower of their land.

Although the neighbor women knew that Ruth had borne the child, yet it seems that they thought it belonged to Naomi, which, in one sense did, for as the church under the legal dispensation was of a barren age, it could not be left without an heir. So far as some can see today, every one belongs all the time to the law, though they be born in this

gospel day. No doubt Naomi took the child and embraced it, for salvation had come to her house. Why was Ruth brought by her mother-in-law to the land of Judah, and why did Boaz take her to wife? Is there not a cause? It was that the purpose of God according to election night stand, would be my answer. There was a purpose in Pharoah's doing what he did, and the Lord said that He raised him up for that purpose that His name might be declared throughout all the earth.

Now let us look at the numbers in the family. There were six of the law family in the land of Moab (six working days). Boaz completed the seven working ones, which brought to Ruth the rest or Sabbath. What does Mahlon, Boaz, and the other kinsman, together with Moab, represent? Mahlon was the law Ruth was serving. After he was dead to her (without her consent), Boaz represents the spiritual husband under the gospel dispensation. The kinsman is the natural, worldly one who would greedily take the right of inheritance, but he could not do it because it belonged to Boaz (Christ).

We find in Psalms 108:9 that Moab is the Lord's wash pot. We know the natural use of a wash pot. It holds the uncleanness when the garments are seethed in it. The last place that Israel dwelt before going into Canaan was in Moab's land. While they were there some of them got so wicked that the Lord commanded that they be put to death. This being done, the uncleanness, in a figure, was left in the land of Moab. Then we find that only Naomi and Ruth (the church) were permitted to leave Moab's land and enter into Canaan. The other members of the family, or that which was natural, were left in the land of Moab, which served as God's wash pot. Orpah did not die. She was left there alive, and is still living today, but can not live in the house with Ruth.

If there is one crumb in this that would feed a child of God, it is God's work, but fearing that it is only my work and imagination, I fear for it to go unto the judgment of God's children, who are to try the spirits as to whether they are of God.

If I have an experience of grace that has awakened me to God's truth this is the way it came. It is a great consolation to me, whatever it is.

Your little sister,
(Mrs.) Maggie Lee (Davis) Hayes,
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ROMANS 8:28

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Rom. 8:28)

We pray that God will bless us to meditate upon these beautiful riches and to rightly divide the word of truth. Who are those that love God? We read, "We love him, because he first loved us." (1 John 4:19) The wicked do not love God, but they love this world and have pleasure in unrighteousness.

God's people love him because he first loved them. (See I John 4:19) We can see that this love shall be returned to God. He has loved his people with an everlasting love. "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." (Jer. 31:3) "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." (Rom. 9:13)

In short, those that love God are the chosen, the elect, the Church of God, the body of Christ, etc. The writer said that "all things work together for good to them that love God." These all things mean a lot. It did not say some things, or just the good things, etc. It did not say that these all things were good or pleasant to the children of God. These evil things are grievous, are they not? Job said, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?—" (Job 2:10) These trials and afflictions are hurtful to the flesh, but they all work together for good to the Children of God. "Now no chastening for the

present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceful fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Heb. 12:11) It is written, "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." (Job 23:10) The silver must be burned when it is tried in the furnace, but this is necessary in order for the dross to be separated from the silver. This is a type of God's people who are tried in the furnace of afflictions. "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver, I have chosen thee in the furnace of afflictions." (Isaiah 48:10) It is hurtful to have this pride burned, is it not? This mystery of it is that this pride keeps coming back. Do you not mourn over your sins, shortcomings, faults, etc. and do you yearn for a closer walk with God? "For the good that I would, I do not: But the evil which I would not, that I do. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death." (Rom. 7:19,24)

By reading the experiences and travels of other saints in the Scriptures, we find and see that all events worked together for the good to them; and for all the saints in the years to come. Paul said that he was given as a pattern to them that should hereafter believe. (1 Tim. 1:16) Therefore the life of Paul worked together not only for his personal good, but it also worked together for the good of the Brethren in his age, and for the good of those in the ages to come.

It was wrong to persecute the Christians and to have them put in prison. Saul even held the clothes of those who stoned Stephen to death, consenting to his death.

Paul was an educated man, and he was familiar with all the details of the law. He was a Pharisee and the son of a Pharisee. We understand that he could speak many languages. So, man taught him these languages, law of Moses, etc. But, man could not teach Paul the doctrine of Jesus Christ. "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of men, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Gal. 1:11-12) God is not changeable, so he still teaches his people by revelation today, as he taught Paul during those days.

We will not go into detail concerning Paul's conversation, but we notice that the Christians were fearful of Paul, because they knew that he had letters of authority to have them put in prisons. God told Ananias: "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." (Acts 9:15) I am glad that Paul's experience is left on record in the Scriptures, because it shows that God taught him by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit. Now, let us not look for the same experience as Paul: we experience the same things, but in a different manner and different way.

If we understood the truth and rejoice in it, it is not because we got old enough to understand it, or got intelligent enough to understand it, etc. The wisdom of God cannot be found out by man by all of his research, efforts, learning, etc. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Rom. 11:33) The wisdom of God is foolishness with the world: It is hidden from the world. If this wisdom had been revealed to them they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory. (I Cor. 2:7-8)

God makes his people wise, or in other words, he gives them wisdom. "But of him are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." (I Cor. 1:30) This wisdom is hidden from the wise of this world, and revealed unto babes. (Matt. 11:25) This wisdom is revealed to the children of God.

The brethren during Paul's age rejoiced that he preached the faith which once he destroyed. (Gal. 1:23) This caused them to glorify God! This gave the Christians comfort and encouragement. They needed the grace of God,

because many were put in prisons, tortured, beheaded, put in lion's dens, burned at stakes, etc. This God was with them; and he is the same God today. "For I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." (Malachi 3:6)

God gave Paul special wisdom to write these deep things. Peter said: "As our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." (2 Peter 3:15-16)

Peter's denial of Jesus was wrong, and it grieved him at his heart, and he went and wept bitterly. We do not find any evidence in the Scriptures that Peter or any other saint tried to hide their weakness, faults, sins, etc. behind the predestination of God. Yet, this worked together for Peter's good and it is also good for all who read and understand the Scriptures.

Peter had to be taught the important lesson that he was not his own keeper, and he could not keep himself by his own strength. He told Jesus: "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee, likewise also said all the disciples." (Matt. 26:35) We know that the word "if" can change a lot. In fact, history would be changed if so and so had not happened. If Peter said, "Jesus, I will not forsake you if you will just give me grace to go with you," etc., then the account of Peter's experience would be different. Peter did not say this. He was putting "I" in the matter. So he had to be tried some more. Jesus said: "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." (Luke 22:31-32) When Peter was sifted, all he thought about was his own self, and therefore denied Jesus.

After Peter was converted from this error of thinking that he could keep himself, he was blessed to write this important truth. "Who are kept by the power of God—" (I Peter 1:5) The power of God is the only thing that can keep us. Again, the denial of Jesus was grievous to Peter, but it has worked together for the good of God's people.

David was a man after God's own heart, yet we wonder as we read of the wickedness he committed. Someone with just a head knowledge of this doctrine may try to excuse his sins, wickedness, etc. and say that his shortcomings are not as bad as some of the saints. This reminds me of this Scripture: "They eat up the sin of my people, and they set their heart on their iniquity." (Hosea 4:8) Do we not hear the same during this day? Someone might say, "I am not a member, and look at what Brother or Sister So and So does. Why, they are just hypocrites, etc." If we have an evil eye and search for faults, we would not have any trouble finding it, because flesh is flesh; and we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. It is good to watch over others for good and not for evil. We all have faults, but we do not have the same type of faults. Who am I to make light of one who is weak in a point that I am strong? After all, I may be weak i na point that he is strong.

As we consider the life of David, all the events did work together for his good, and also for the children of God. He said, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray: But now I have kept thy word." (Psalm 119:67) This is applicable to the experiences of all of God's people. We may go astray even in our thoughts. We go astray when we tend to worship some idol, instead of worshipping God. We may make idolatry of the things of this world, our natural jobs, our children, our husbands, wives, etc. We make idolatry of anything that we tend to worship. So, idols do not always mean some natural image that people fall down and worship. "Their land also is full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own

fingers have made." (Isaiah 2:8) We tend to worship idolatry when we worship the "great things" we can do. In that sense, we are worshipping ourselves. We call your attention to the parable between the publican and the Pharisee. The Pharisee was actually bragging that he was not as other men. So he was placing himself above others.

It touches us as we read of how David prayed in the 51st chapter of Psalms. We read that he pleaded for God to keep his feet from falling. He certainly desired a closer walk with God. "—lead me to the rock that is higher than I." (Psalm 61:2)

All of the evil things that Job suffered worked together for his good. The Scriptures speak of the patience of Job. His possessions were taken from him, his children suffered death, he was stricken from his head to his feet with boils, and his dear companion turned against him, and said: "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God, and die." (Job 2:9) Once when he was mighty low, Job said: "My breath is strange to my wife—" (Job 19:17) Even though he was sorely perplexed, yet he was not in despair. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed, we are perplexed, but not in despair." (2 Cor. 4:8) In the midst of all his troubles, Job was given the faith to say; "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." (Job 19:25) Even though he was given the patience, yet we do detect that Job resorted to pity, and especially when he wished that he had not even been born. (Job 3:3) Let us not go into that, but consider the fact that God blessed Job with patience, and that Job did not curse God for all this evil that was brought upon him.

When we are feeling low, let us consider the afflictions of Job, and praise God for the patience that was given Job, and pray that God will give us this patience. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17)

All of the events, both good and evil, worked together for the good of Joseph. His brethren in the flesh were jealous of him, and some desired to kill him. They sold him as a slave to some Ishmaelites. Potiphar's wife told a grave *untruth* and had Joseph cast into prison. We wonder how Joseph felt during the years he was in prison. He had not done anything to deserve being there. He may have felt that the Lord had turned against him.

To be brief, we know that the time came later that Joseph was placed as governor of the land; (second in command to Pharaoh.) As we explain Joseph's experience, we know that all events were necessary in the chain of predestination. They all linked together. God told Abraham many years before: "And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their's, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years." (Genesis 15:13) Therefore, we can see it was necessary for Joseph to be raised up second in command to Pharaoh. During the seven years of famine, Jacob and his brethren came to live in Egypt. It was after Joseph and Pharaoh died that the children of Israel suffered bondage by the Egyptians.

Let us keep in mind that all of the events in Joseph's life worked together for his good and also for God's people. The deliverance from the bondage was a special joy and consolation to the children of Israel. Therefore we can see that all the bondage during these 400 years worked together for the good of God's people. This was a wonderful deliverance that has been preached in the pulpits for many years. The power of God was shown in this deliverance! "For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them." (Psalm 44:3)

The children of Israel did not do any-

thing to aid or assist in their deliverance. Rather they were commanded to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. God caused the waters of the Red Sea to part, and the children of Israel walked through the Red Sea on dry land. The Egyptians followed them, but God caused the chariot wheels to drive heavy. (Exodus 14:23-25) After Israel got on the other side, God caused the waters to come back together and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them were destroyed. (Exodus 14:17-28)

As we think of this wonderful deliverance, we think of the deliverance from death to life, from the power of darkness unto the kingdom of His dear Son, etc. Time and space would not permit us to branch out unto this beautiful field, but let us keep in mind that "all things work together for good to them that love God."

Let us briefly consider the three Hebrew children when they were cast into the burning fiery furnace. They were given the faith and courage not to bow and worship the image that the king had set up. They were given the courage that Peter was not given. If Peter had been given the grace that these three were given, then Peter would not have denied Jesus. These three were willing to die rather than fall down and worship this golden image. Let us keep in mind these two points: (1) The three Hebrew children did not know *if* God would deliver them, and (2) God was able to deliver them from this furnace. "*If it be so,* our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. *But if not,* be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." (Daniel 3:17-18)

These three were given courage to die for the Lord rather than worship a false God. This Scripture gives us courage to know that God delivered these three! This same God rules today and forever more. These three were cast into the burning fiery furnace, but they were not alone. God was with them! "I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the son of God." (Daniel 3:25)

God is with you even if you are lifted up or cast down low. He is with you in heavy trials, even though you cannot feel his presence. "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." (Psalm 139:9) One is lifted up when he ascends into heaven. One is brought very low into darkness when he makes his bed in hell. This gives us courage and comfort to know that God is able to deliver us from daily trials, and those in the future. There is nothing too hard for God. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." (Isaiah 43:2)

We know that many other incidents could be mentioned, as this text covers a large territory, but let us close with a short account of Jesus. Jesus was a poor man, and he went about doing good, yet he was despised for no cause: they hated him without cause. It was for envy that the chief priests had Jesus brought before Pilate, and demanded to have him crucified. Jesus suffered at the hands of the soldiers, and he suffered greatly as he hung upon the cross. The wrath of God the Father was poured out upon Jesus. It was necessary that Jesus die in the room and stead of his people. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." (Gal. 3:13) "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." (I Peter 2:24)

All of this suffering worked together for the good of all of God's people. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chas-

tisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." (Isaiah 53:5) "He shall save his people from their sins." (Matt. 1:2)

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

DESIRES RIGHT UNDERSTANDING

2232 Memorial Ave., S.W.,
Roanoke, Va. 24015

Dear Signs of the Times:

The *Signs* has been coming to me since 1933, and has become as "someone" I would miss very much if I did not receive it. I first thought I would only notify you of my change of address as enclosed in this letter, but, while trying to get my work done, scriptures kept coming to mind and I wanted to talk with someone: seemingly it meant to try to write some about these thoughts. To get these expressions composed into readable sense, is too much for me. So why do I try?

Words like these, which I do not find in the scripture at the moment, "The Lord cometh in all His glory," have been with me so much of late: and almost it seems a hand reaches forth bidding me to come. Where? But mainly, "In all His glory" is the most impressive. In the first chapter of Job, 22nd verse, "In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly," and I being so foolish, fear I might charge Him or someone foolishly. I would not do that knowingly nor unknowingly.

So very much I do not understand rightly, and it is so necessary to have that right understanding. In Luke 24:33 the last part, " . . . and while He opened to us the scriptures." and the 45th verse, "Then opened he their understanding that they might understand the scriptures." Wonderful indeed! We read, we listen, and what do we understand? We need to receive teaching "as" a little child. Do we feel to be little children? I am little it is true.

The 4th chapter of Matthew, especially the 6th and 7th verses is worthy of everyone's attention, because in the 7th verse a great lesson is given — one that walked in the very teaching of His own answer to the quoting of scripture, as the tempter quoted. The answer gives me so much comfort and relief, because He answered with the Spirit that knoweth His own Father. "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Jesus with all power could do all things, but chose to abide in the work he had to do; and we are to follow Him in humbleness. His humility in all his walk and teaching, was to minister unto, not to be ministered to.

When I was a small child, Papa at night by a bright fireplace read the Bible aloud to us children, while Mama listened. The red letters were fearful things to me, for she said they were the words of the Lord. My oldest brother, Chester, would show me the pictures in the Bible of those who were stoned, and of those who would cry for the rocks and hills to cover or hide them from the wrath to come. None was ever scorned as Jesus was, nor suffered as He did. Yet, loving His people, gave, or as Chester said, laid down his life for them, and never opened his mouth to reply against such scorn. I wanted to "follow" this Jesus. To this day, I wonder do I know him aright? I often feel to be so in the dark.

In Psalm 89:7 is that which is worthy of much thought among all of us: "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him." That reverence toward Him is something we want to always give unto Him. It praises Him.

I want to mention a dream or vision, because I do not know whether I was asleep. In July, 1971, a car ran into the back of the car I was a passenger in, sitting on the back seat. Our car was a total loss. I was in a state of some shock for some time. When I arrived home I went to bed trying to relax and rest. I heard a voice in distress, grief,

sorrow, and suffering, saying, "My God! My God!" So clear was this that I turned over and tried to get up, only to see a light so bright it seemed to penetrate the great darkness below it. I must say that it was the darkest dark that I ever beheld. Two men, one older than the other and both white headed, stood with bowed heads in the light but standing in the darkness. They seemed to understand the cry of distress; and it so impressed me. As if in answer to that cry, a voice said, "My son! My son!" and these two men lifted their heads in great joy, and the older one's face shown with such understanding and knowledge of it all, it so embraced them.

To this day I marvel at the glory of that light, and their understanding of it — their evident knowledge of a perfect work. I saw nothing to worship in them, but that which they understood was so above anyone on earth, it was that which is in heaven — or so it appeared to me. I stand so far away from that which is perfect, yet I am allowed to view that which is of perfection, and feel sure is in the face of our Saviour Jesus.

Please cast the mantle of charity over me: as I said, I am unable to write as I would like.

Humbly
Catherine A. Houchins

THEY ENJOY READING THE SIGNS

1962 McAttcheon
Shrevesport, La. 71108

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

When you have space will you please publish the obituary of Brother Mac Mercer in the Signs.

We all enjoy reading the *Signs* at our church, and it is comforting to us. May God keep you sending out the paper as you have for many years.

I was given one of the *Signs of the Times* dated in 1927, and it was the same comforting reading that is sent out today. I cannot tell that there is any change except the faded pages and back cover from many years of reading.

$12.00 was left over after flowers contribution, so it was requested that it go to the *Signs* Indigent Fund, and I am sending it.

May God keep you all sending out the paper as from years back.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. Kate Mathews

EXPERIENCE

1473 Kefauver,
Roanoke, Va. 24014

Dear Brethren:

I hope my experience is worthy to be printed in the *Signs*. I feel that the Lord shed his light in my heart in 1948.

I had begun to ponder over my sins, and to wonder if the Lord would forgive me. I asked my mother about it, and she said, Surely He would. One night Sister Daisy Akers was here and she was talking with my Mother about the lost going to Hell. I was thinking about that, so I went into another room and begged God for mercy. When I came out I was just as miserable as when I went in. I tried to quit sinning, but the more I tried the deeper in sin I went. At night I could not sleep — I was afraid to turn the light out at night, afraid I would perish before morning.

I went on this way for a long time, and then one day I read in the Bible that the unpardonable sin would never be forgiven. I was sure that I had, or someday would commit it, and I was more miserable than ever.

This went on several years. They held the Assocation in Roanoke in 1964 and I went, and I believe the Lord removed my burden of guilt. I joined the church at Weatherford August 24, 1964, and was baptized the same day by my Pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, assisted by my brother, Linwood J. Dove, as I have been in a wheel chair all my life. I have sinned many times since, but the burden I carried has never returned.

A sister I hope,
Iris Dove

Rt. 4, Box 320,
Lenoir City, Tenn. 37771

Dear Elder Wood:

Greetings to one and all who have a part in publishing the *Signs of the Times*. It is a wonderful magazine to have to read. There are such good messages from so many able ministers, who are called of God. It fills our souls to sit down and read every one of them.

Thank the Lord for men who know the truth and are not afraid to preach or write it. The deeper they get in the Word of God, the more I love it.

It is time to renew my subscription, so here is a check for two more years. May God bless and keep us, is my prayer.

A sister in Christ I hope,
Mrs. Ben Fields

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To October 1, 1973)

Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Pitts, Ala.	$ 1.00
Mrs. R. L. Turner, Va.	6.00
Mrs. Estella Jones, Va.	3.00
Mrs. W. C. Light, Va.	1.00
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Wm. E. Vantrease	10.00
Jesse Adams, Ky.	20.00

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, at Pittman's Grove Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in December, 1973.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 744,
Bennettsville, S.C. 29515

END OF ANOTHER VOLUME

With this issue of the *Signs*, we bring to a close another volume, and acknowledge the goodness of the Lord in sustaining the paper these one hundred and forty-one years. We believe all has been to His praise in maintaining the faith once delivered to the saints; and at the same time comforting to His people scattered as strangers in a strange land.

The future of the *Signs*, like the past, is in safe hands, for the Lord is yet mindful of his people, and will provide all their need.

We would praise the Lord first of all for his sustaining grace in the publication of the *Signs*, and for his gift of brethren and friends who faithfully supported it during the past years.

As blessed of the Lord we hope to continue sending the paper to you each month. — EDITORS

HASSELL'S CHURCH HISTORY

Hassell's Church Histories are now available from the Signs of the Times office, Rt. 1, Box 539, Danville, Virginia, Zip number 24541. This is the new printing. The price is $6.85.

Danville, Virginia December, 1973

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All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances should be mailed to Danville, Virginia, as shown below. All notices of meetings and obituaries should be mailed directly to P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Virginia 22110. Articles for publication may be mailed to either address.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

NOTE FOR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

We expect to publish the CHURCH NOTICES as usual in the January issue. Some changes have been sent to us during the year, but there are other changes in names of Pastors, discontinued meetings, etc. which we are aware should be made, but we cannot make them without receiving word from Clerks or other brethren.

If you have a change of any kind which should be made, we must receive it not later than December 10, 1973, and it must be mailed to P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va. 22110.

This is urgent, so take care of it as soon as you read this notice. — Editor

EDITORIAL

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

FIFTEENTH CHAPTER OF FIRST CORINTHIANS

In writing on this important subject, I know that God must guide my pen if I present to you that which is to the glory of God, and the edification of his people. I hope to be able to present scriptural proof in support of whatever I write; yet I know there will be many mysteries not understood until we cross the river of death, and are brought to the full fruition of our hope.

There was a period of several years when the writer wan confused about the subject of the Resurrection, and was fearful of preaching on the subject, because many things pertaining to the subject were very unclear.

While reading in the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians, the fourteenth verse, which reads as follows, "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." I humbly hope God settled my mind in many ways concerning this important subject. Since that day I have held a more charitable attitude toward those who do not see as I do. I have thanked God many times for the comfort He brought to my poor troubled heart when this verse was brought to light.

It appears that every scripture in the New Testament can be united in some way with the fifteenth chapter of Corinthians.

I would like, the Lord willing, to take up the subject in the following way:

1st. The gospel preached unto the Corinthians, here set forth, had already been preached unto them.

2nd. Proof of Christ's resurrection.

3rd. Our hope of being raised from the dead tied to the resurrection of Christ.

4th. By man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

5th. Christ the first fruits.

6th. Christ shall reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet.

7th. The difference in our bodies in death, and when raised from the grave.

8th. We shall not all sleep: the mystery of how quickly a change takes place.

9th. The victory.

In the beginning of this chapter Paul says, "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand." Showing that whatever the apostle has reference to in the word "Moreover" is an extension of the same truth that had already been set forth unto them. Also they had received and accepted it. It is here made clear that no new doctrine is to be set forth. Paul makes it very clear that the blessed truth set forth here had been received by him — how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures: and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures: Here are traced out three things, that He died, that He was buried, and that He rose again: attaching the same importance to each.

As further proof of his resurrection, we are told that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once. After that he was seen of James: then all the Apostles. At last of all he was seen of Paul also. What abundant proof of the resurrection of the body of Jesus from the grave.

These are not the only proofs of the resurrection of the body of Jesus from the grave. In John 20:20, "He showed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord." In Luke 24:39, Jesus said to his disciples, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet." What a wonderful way for our Lord here, not just to tell his disciples to behold his hands and his feet, but in some wonderful way to make bare to them his precious hands and feet; which had been pierced for them.

My dear readers has our dear Saviour in some special way, ever shown you his hands that were nailed to the cross for you? and his feet? those hands that were often weary, that were carried so willingly to meet those who would nail them to the cross. Does it appear that you were graven in the palms of these hands: that every movement to Calvary, was but another manifestation of his great love for you? No doubt, these disciples as they were shown the hands and feet of Jesus, could join with the poet, and say:

"All hail, my risen Lord
Triumphant Saviour now,
Sin, death, and hell, with one accord
Before thy footstool bow.
One day amidst the place
Where my dear God hath been,
Is sweeter than ten thousand days
Of pleasurable sin."

All the hope of the people of God of all ages, is tied to the resurrection of the body of Jesus: that body that God prepared him; the body that carried all the sins of the church of God in it; the body that was raised for our justification, to free us from God's holy wrath. If the grave could have held our Lord's body, which was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification, then all our preaching would be in vain, our faith in vain, and we would be false witnesses of God yet in our sins; and they who are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished. Thank God that He showed them his hands, his side, and his feet: and ate fish in their presence, and told his disciples to handle him, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept." Paul here likens the resurrected body of Christ to the first fruits of the crop. In Leviticus 23:10-11, the children of Israel are commanded to bring the first fruits of their harvest to the priest, and he was to wave it before the Lord as a promise of a crop to follow. Even so, when the body of our Lord was raised from the grave, as the firstfruits of his people, it was a pro-

mise that the crop, or all those represented in him, will be raised in like manner.

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive, but every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming." In comparing our body with the body of Jesus, let us remember that the body of Jesus saw no corruption, but our body will return to dust; yet this does not change the fact that Jesus was the firstfruits. In Psalm 16:-10, in reference to Jesus we read, "For thou wilt not leave my soul in Hell (Christ's agony on the cross) neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."

It is no wonder that our Lord said to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life," when Martha was grieving over the death of her brother Lazarus. Jesus said unto her, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, (here is where spiritual life is given) and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believeth thou this?" The first verse affirms that though a man is dead in sin, yet through believing in Jesus, he lives spiritually. The second affirmation is that those who have been made alive spiritually, shall never die, but fall asleep in Christ. Paul mentions that if Christ be not raised from the dead, then they who are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished.

Sleep is referred to as embracing three conditions in the scriptures. Death is referred to as a sleep when Lazarus was raised from the dead, after being dead four days. The body can be referred to as asleep when it lies in the grave destitute of life. When news was brought to Jesus of Lazarus' death, he said, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep." The disciples told Jesus that if Lazarus was sleeping, he was doing well. "Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead." On another occasion Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, approached Jesus, informing him that his daughter was dead, but if Jesus would come he could raise her from the dead. When Jesus approached the place where the damsel lay, and saw the weeping of the people, He said unto them, "Why make ye this ado, and weep? The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth."

Another condition of sleep: In the eleventh chapter of first Corinthians we read, "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep, (inert, careless, and indifferent)." So we find a Bible record of three conditions of sleep: As the dead body of the saints sleeping in the dust as described in Daniel 12:2, an unconscious state of slumber as Jairus' daughter; and a careless, or indifferent state among God's people.

Death for a believer is described in various ways in the scripture. In 1st Thessalonians 4:13,14 we read, "But I would not have you ignorant, Brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." In 1st Corinthians 15th chapter, those described as sleeping in Jesus, are said to perish, if Christ be not risen.

Paul speaks in Philippians 1:23, "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ: which is far better." Peter describes the same thing in 2 Peter 1:14, "Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as the Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me."

(From time to time the theory has been advanced that the souls of the Lord's people, sleep in the grave after death. These have been referred to as "soul-sleepers." In the days of John Gill, those holding this idea were called Cata-Baptists. I have never found this doctrine in any Article of Faith of Primitive Baptists that I have read.)

In 1 Thessalonians 4:14, we read that those who sleep in Christ will God bring with him when he comes for his people; and in the 15th verse, "For this

we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep."

I now move on to the description of the wonderful change that will take place with the people of God in the resurrection.

In 1st Corinthians 14:35, we read, "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" In verses 36, 37 and 38, we read, "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." The expression, "Thou fool" shows that the subject of the resurection of the body, is no new question. The Apostle likens the resurrection to the sowing of grain, and that every seed brings forth of its kind. We cannot sow corn and expect wheat. When we sow a grain of wheat, and it springs out of the earth, we would not recognize it as the seed we sowed, but God giveth to every seed his own body. It is the same grain, but its form has been changed; and God giveth to it its own body.

In 1 Peter 1:23, we read, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." This change is further described as being sown in corruption, and raised in incorruption: sown in dishonor, raised in glory. It is sown in weakness and raised in power: It is sown a natural body, and raised a spiritual body. Here the difference is shown between the body sown, and the body raised. The Apostle plainly tells us there is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. According to God's word, the body sown will not be raised and changed into a spiritual body, but is raised a spiritual body. None of us have ever seen a spiritual body; but that is the kind of body God will raise in the resurrection. No where do we find that they will be raised, and changed.

In our earthly pilgrimage here, we are of the earth earthy. We bear the image of the first man, who was earthy; but believers are promised that, as we have born the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. What a wonderful anticipation and longing for poor sinners: To bear the image of Jesus. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like him: for we shall see Him as he is." "But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." God has revealed these things to his people, spiritual men.

"Now this I say, Brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." The apostle uses the word Brethren three times in this chapter, showing the close unity and relationship he holds with them: as his relationship in Christ. He uses it in the first verse, "Moreover, brethren." In the last verse his expression is, "Therefore my beloved brethren", showing that because of the things set forth in this chapter, the relationship is so strong in his heart that he says, "Beloved brethren." This close tie is presented in the 50th verse, showing that flesh and blood does not inherit the kingdom of God, neither does corruption inherit incorruption. We might look at this from two angles: First, that none enter the kingdom because of any earthly tie or nationality.

Second, the fact that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God is further expounded in the scriptures: neither does corruption inherit in corruption. Five times in the Word we find the expression, "Flesh and blood." (Matthew 16:17; 1st Cor. 15:50; Gal. 1:16; Ephesians 6:12, and Hebrews 2:4) All except Hebrews 2:4 refer to our mortal life, or natural life, or body, and the wisdom or knowledge we have of

earthly things. This is continued by the expression, "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." The definition of the words Corruptible and Corruption refers to decay, decomposition and putrefaction. In 2 Corinthians 5:2-4 we read, "For we know that if the earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened, not for that we would be unclothed but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."

If we should attempt to show that the expression, Sown a mortal, raised in immortality; sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body, as being separate bodies, then we must discard the expression, "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. When we further inquire as to how we will be, we must abide in the expression of Jesus while conversing with the Sadducees in Mark 12:24,25, "And Jesus answering said unto them, do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God? For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels which are in heaven." It is true that Moses and Elias, when they appeared with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, were known by them, yet it was a revelation, as neither Peter, James or John had ever seen either of them, yet they did actually appear to them.

In bringing this article to a close, I would offer this brief summary of the things contained in it.

1st. Whatever Paul set forth to the Corinthians, was a doctrine already preached to them.

2nd. All the hope of believers being raised from the dead to immortality and endless joy, is tied to the resurrection of Jesus.

3rd. The resurrection of Jesus' body, as the first fruits of them that slept, was an assurance that their bodies would also be raised from the dead as the crop that was to follow in like manner: His resurrection.

4th. That the bodies of the people of God would not be raised and changed, nor raised a mortal or corrupt body, but would be sown a natural body, and raised a spiritual body; sown in corruption: raised in incorruption.

5th. That there will be a future resurrection of the dead, both the just and unjust, as recorded in John 5:28,29, "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

I have dwelt mostly in this article on the resurrection of God's people, with no desire to evade the truth, that all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and come forth: the wicked to everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord; yet our deep concern is in enjoying those things that God has prepared for them that love Him. Paul warned the brethren of those who would preach that the resurrection is past already, as taught by Hymeneus and Philetus in 2 Timothy 2:18.

Cast the mantle of charity over this article, and may God bless it to someone.

D. V. Spangler

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

New Vernon, N. Y., Nov. 1, 1846.

"BROTHER BEEBE: There are three or four designing men in Middle Tennessee, who have created considerable excitement on the subject of a non-resurrection. They have charged the Richland Association with denying the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead.

"I have been a member of this association for the last eighteen years, and I know that it believes the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and of a general judgment. It denies the resurrection of flesh and blood, and contends for the resurrection of Jesus Christ and all his saints, spiritual, in his likeness, as John says. —1 John iii. 2. I send you a copy of faith in all the leading principles of the gospel, as they present an abstract of our principles.

GEORGE R. HOGE."

It has been and still is our desire, so far as possible, to avoid unprofitable agitation of subjects which in our judgment have a strong tendency to excite discussion than to edify, comfort and instruct the people of God. And although we consider the resurrection of the dead inferior in importance to no part of the gospel of God our Savior, we have feared that the manner in which some brethren have seemed disposed to discuss it, is calculated to gender strife and discord, rather than to result in peace of Zion and the glory of God.

The letter of Elder Hoge which will be found above, states that the Richland Association of Tennessee has been misrepresented on the subject, and asks the privilege of explaining the real sentiments of that association. He has also sent us a copy of the minutes of the association, containing an "abstract" of their doctrinal sentiments, in which they say, item 10: "We believe in the resurrection of the dead, and general judgment." This expression undefined, we presume would be satisfactory; but as brother Hoge adds, "She denies the resurrection of the flesh and blood," we conclude that the most of our readers will consider such denial as equivalent to a denial of the resurrection altogether, and a justification of those who have so charged that association. We will not attempt to define what is intended by their profession of faith in the resurrection, nor of their repudiation of its application to flesh and blood; or what our brethren of Richland believe will be raised up at the last day; whether soul, body or spirit. If they only intend to say that all the relationship between the saints and Adam, or human nature, ceases with the death of these mortal bodies, and that the resurrection shall bring them forth as a production of the quickening Spirit of God, in the same manner that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, we see no cause for controversy; for such we presume to be the general view held by Old School Baptists on the subject. But if such be their intention, we think they have not been sufficiently clear in defining their position.

By the reference made to 1 John iii. 2, we are inclined to believe our brethren hold with us that the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord Jesus Christ is an exemplification of the manner and nature of the final resurrection of the bodies of the saints. In his resurrection he became the first fruits of them that slept, consequently the certain pledge that all his people shall in like manner be raised up in that hour in which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life eternal, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation.

Many idle and vain speculations have been resorted to by multitudes at sundry times, in attempting a philosophical solution of the resurrection of the dead, but all philosophy must forever fail when applied to the things of the Spirit of God; as we Old School Baptists hold the things of the Spirit to be known only by revelation, not by science; rules therefore which will apply to natural things cannot apply to spiritual things. To us it seems quite inexpedient to say that flesh and blood will not arise, as many would be led from the expression to suppose that the identity of the bodies of the saints in the resurrection was denied; which must be equivalent to a denial of the resurrection altogether.

For if the bodies of the saints are raised from the dead at all, there must necessarily be a preservation of identity; and if the bodies of the saints are not to be raised up, what is to be raised? Not the soul, or spiritual man, for that cannot die, cannot be committed to the grave; and in the resurrection, all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth to the resurrection of life eternal, or of damnation. There can be no two ways of understanding Romans viii. 11. But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you. The term mortal cannot apply to our spiritual life, as that is in no sense mortal, nor can it apply to any other part of us than that which came under the sentence, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

Some have said that flesh and blood shall not arise, but flesh and bones shall arise; and this view they have attempted to sustain, first, because it is written that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." — 1 Corinthians xv. 50; and second, because that Jesus had shed all his blood when he was crucified, and it is supposed that his risen body contained no blood. These two, we presume, are the strongest arguments used by the advocates of the theory. But let us examine them. Does Paul say that flesh and blood shall not be raised up? or that they shall not after the resurrection inherit the kingdom of God? By no means. Let us be remembered Paul speaks in the present tense, cannot; and for the same reason that corruption cannot inherit corruption. The kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom, and our flesh and blood in their present state, and relation to Adam, and to the law, are corrupt, depraved, diseased, mortal and natural. But in the text our brother has referred to, (1 John iii. 2,) we are assured that when Christ shall appear, we shall be like him, &c.; and Paul in the text quoted, (Rom. viii. 11,) has told us how: "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies." If then we can know how Christ's body, in which he suffered death, was raised up, we shall also know how our mortal bodies shall arise. And of his resurrection we can trace a few very important particulars. And first, we observe, though he was put to death in the flesh, he was quickened in the spirit. When put to death in the flesh, we understand that his relation to the law, which he assumed by being made of a woman, was finished. He died as the Son of man; as the Son of David; as the issue of Judah; being put to death in the flesh; but he was quickened by the Spirit, or begotten from the dead, so that in his resurrection his body arose from the dead as the immediate production of the Spirit, and was thus declared to be the Son of God with power. "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee," is applied to the resurrection of his body from the dead, and not to his birth of the Virgin Mary. So to be like him, the same quickening Spirit that now dwells in the saints, by which they were regenerated, and which raised from the dead the crucified body of Jesus, shall also, that is, in like manner, quicken our mortal bodies. In which quickening the saints shall arise, so far as relates to the bodies, in a new relationship. As in the resurrection of Christ his risen body stood no longer related to the fleshly stock of Abraham, Judah or David, so in the resurrection, the saints shall be released from all relationship to those who are now their kindred after the flesh; not to be known in the resurrection as Gentiles or Jews, as male or female, as married or ar given in marriage, as parents or as children, but simply as the sons of God. The notion of some that parents are waiting now in heaven to embrace their children, husbands, wives, &c., is altogether unwarranted by the faith and testimony of the gospel. The immediate relationship which we stand into each other here belongs only to our time

state; but all that relationship must be dissolved. We shall be begotten from the dead immediately by the Spirit, as independently of our present carnal relationship as though we had never sustained such relation to Adam. In the resurrection of Christ the identity of the body was preserved. "I am he that was dead, and am alive," &c. That Jesus whom John saw in his risen and glorified body was the same that had been dead. The identity must have been preserved to fulfill the scriptures. His flesh should not see corruption; and what he had given as a sign of his Messiahship. Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up; the sign also of the prophet Jonah must have failed if the same body which suffered on the cross had not arisen from the dead. His Godhead did not die, nor could his soul cease to exist. His Mediatorial Headship of his church could not expire. But it was that wherein he was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, &c., and that which died arose from the dead. So when the saints are called hence their spiritual life which they received in regeneration does not die; their quickened souls do not die; but their bodies, even their mortal bodies, die; and those same bodies shall arise in like manner as the identical body of our Lord Jesus Christ which had been crucified did arise, bearing the prints of the nails and the place of the spear. A further definition of the identity to us seems superfluous. To talk of the particles of the flesh, the composition of the bones, to philosophize upon the subject, is as extravagant as to attempt to harmonize natural philosophy with any other part of divine revelation. We admit that all the blood was drained from the veins of the body of Jesus; but that is no evidence that his risen body contained no blood; for the fact is quite as apparent that all the life of Jesus was taken from his body, and who will argue that his risen body contained no life. Such vain speculations serve only to gender strife and contention, and to divert the mind from a spiritual to a carnal train of thinking.

While thus we contend that the identity of the bodies of the saints shall be preserved, even as we have proved that the identity of Christ's body was preserved, we also hold, and firmly believe, that the change which the apostle speaks of in 1 Cor. XV. shall also be gloriously realized by all the saints. The body in its present state is mortal, or subject to disease and death, but it shall be perfectly freed in the resurrection from mortality; this will be a glorious change, but this is not all; the body in its time state is weak, it is sown in weakness, but it shall be raised in power. Now it is corrupt, but it shall be raised in an incorruptible state, and death shall be swallowed up in victory. It is now in a state of dishonor, but it shall be robed in immortal honor; it is now a natural, earthly, Adamic body; but in the resurrection it shall be a spiritual, heavenly body, standing in the same relation to Christ as it now stands to the old Adam. That law which remands our bodies to the dust has dominion over our mortal bodies so long as they remain this side of the resurrection of the dead, but when they shall be raised up from their graves they shall be free from the power and dominion of that law. For the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

We have much more to say upon the interesting subject when opportunity shall serve. We have offered the above remarks, not to provoke controversy, but because there are, as we have strong reasons to fear, many dear brethren whom we love in the Lord, who seem to indulge a sort of speculating spirit on the subject; we desire not to kill or wound them, but if possible to admonish them in the spirit of the gospel.

With regard to those passages on which brother Hoge has desired our views, we will, so far as ability is given us, attend to his request soon.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, November 1, 1846)

OBITUARIES

DEACON SAMUEL ARNETT SLAUGHTER

Deacon Samuel Arnett Slaughter of Danville, Va. died March 9, 1973. He was born in Pittsylvania County, Va. May 9, 1895, a son of the late John and Annie Haley Slaughter. He married the former Elise Davis, who survives.

He leaves two sons, Paul and Posey Slaughter of Danville; three daughters, Mrs. Naomi Clark, Danville; Mrs. Marion Mitchell, Norfolk, and Nora Winn of Danville; two sisters, Mrs. Hollis Lumpkins of Danville, and Mrs. Mary Winn of Danville; sixteen grandchildren and twenty-four great grandchildren.

Brother Slaughter joined Mt. Ararat Church in July, 1931 and was ordained a Deacon June 23, 1946. He was blessed to fill this office well. His love for the church was great. He was indeed loved by this church and by all who knew him. We have heard him say many times, "I know that all the church will go to heaven, but will I be in that number?" And many times we have heard him tell of his hope of being in that number that will be raised to everlasting life.

We believe Brother Slaughter is now resting in peace, waiting the time of the resurrection to be carried home to glory.

His funeral was conducted by the writer and Elder Wallace Smith.

Read and adopted by the church in conference September 15, 1973.

Written at the request of the church at Mount Ararat.

Elder H. W. Wray

BROTHER MORMAN H. PICKREL

In sadness I attempt to write an obituary of our beloved Brother and Deacon, Morman H. Pickrel, who was born February 1, 1903 and died August 22, 1973, making his stay on earth seventy years.

He joined Springfield Church June 11, 1939, and was ordained deacon October 7, 1967. He was faithful to the Church and performed his duties well. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace, having no confidence in the flesh and believing the Lord has fixed all things.

He leaves to mourn their loss, his wife Sister Della Pickrel, six daughters: Mrs. Alease Creasy, Chatham, Va.; Mrs. Rebecca Turner, Gretna, Va.; Mrs. Margaret Mayhew, Gretna; Mrs. Jean Ware, Providence, N. C.; Mrs. Joyce Brumfield, Gretna; and Mrs. Libby Dale Hedrick, Richmond, Va. Also two brothers and six sisters, and seventeen grandchlidren.

His funeral was held at Springfield Church by his pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, assisted by Elder Denver Simpson. His body was laid away beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Gretna Burial Park, to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour. Written by

L. R. Willis

JOHN H. SIMPSON

Dear Elder Wood:

I am enclosing the obituary of John H. Simpson, and a few of the facts I have gotten from his wife, Margaret. He was born to John Wesley Simpson and the former Martha Susan Key, in Surrey, Mo. and died September 13, 1973. He was married to Margaurite Callar July 4, 1916, and they joined the Primitive Baptist Church the same year. They reared six sons and six daughters, two of whom are deceased.

Humbly,
Mildred Simpson, Church Clerk.

The followig was taken from a newspaper account:

"John H. Simpson, 86, of 1306 S. 18th Avenue, Yakima, Wash., died Thursday in a Yakima nursing home. Mr. Simpson was born in Surry, Mo., and had farmed in the Sunnyside area.

Survivors include his wife, Mrs. Marguerite Simpson of Yakima; six daughters: Mrs. Vera Pingel of Canby, Calif.; Mrs. Rosie Herrman of Grandview; Mrs. Martha Cole of Portland; Mrs. Mary Ellen Smith of Bellingham; Mrs. Verna Coleman of Richland and Mrs. Naomi Lindsey of Buckley; and four sons: Dennie of Outlook; Ervin of Ravensdale, Vernon of Yakima and Leonard of Sumner."

SISTER ELIZA LEWIS VANTREASE

According to the appointed time our Heavenly Father called Sister Eliza Lewis Vantrease to her heavenly home on April 5, 1973. She had spent more than 91 years in this tabernacle of clay, and was blessed early in life to desire and be led to find a home with brothers and sisters of a "peculiar faith" that was like her own. She became a member of the Old Rector Primitive Baptist Church, Hamilton County, Illinois in 1898. She was a loyal and faithfcl member until she became the last surviving member. In 1956 she brought her membership to the Old Salem Primitive Baptist Church in Benton, Illinois — whose members now mourn her passing.

Sister Vantrease was the widow of George E. Vantrease. They had three sons and one daughter. Surviving are one son, Wm. E. Vantrease; seven grandchildren, eighteen great grandchildren, and ten great great grandchil-

dren.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders Wayman Chapell and H. R. Prince. At the request of the family a notice is written and submitted to the *Signs of the Times.*

Wayman G. Chapell, Mod.
Wm. E. Vantrease, Clerk
James Cunningham, Asst. Clerk.

IN MEMORY OF

SISTER BESSIE BELL JEFFERSON

By request from the Members of Otter's Creek Primitive Baptist Church, I will attempt to write the obituary of Sister Bessie Jefferson, as we all called her at Church.

Sister Bessie was born in Pitt County on May 31, 1888, to the late Bennett William Bell and Fannie Harris Bell.

It was in the year of 1907 that she was married to Joseph E. Jefferson in Pitt County on the twenty-seventh day of February near Fountain. She was married in the presence of her Mother and Father, Mr. and Mrs. Bennett William Bell by Elder A. M. Crisp, who was Pastor of Otter's Creek Primitive Baptist Church at that time.

It was in the month of June, 1925 that the Lord called Sister Bessie to the Church at Otter's Creek to ask for a home. She was baptized by Elder A. M. Crisp along with two other members, Sister Anlize Spain and Brother Ed Smith.

Elder A. M. Crisp also preached her Father's funeral. Sister Bessie lost her husband, Joseph E. Jefferson. He was taken from her the month of November, 1930. They were only married for twenty-three years, but I feel that the Good Lord blessed Sister Bessie. She was a Widow for forty-three years. They had born unto them nine fine children, five boys and four girls, whom she loved so dearly, and they loved her. She had thirty Grandchildren and forty-two Great Grandchildren. Sister Bessie had it rough, but she had the faith to believe in a God who would take care of her. She had three sons to go to the Army back in World War II. She had one son who was held a German prisoner for two or three years, but she had a prayer in her heart, the kind that God always answers.

It was on the eleventh day of May, 1973 when God called Sister Bessie home. I feel that she heard that voice that says, "Come Dear Children, Your Father calls, come Home." I would like to say to all her family who was so dear to her, to grieve not over Mother. She fought a good fight and the battle is over. Deep down in my heart, I feel that she is at rest in the bosom of her Heavenly Father. May we all feel that our loss is her Eternal gain. Her funeral service was held at Otter's Creek Primitive Baptist Church by her Pastor, Elder Joe Sawyer. She was laid to rest in the cemetery at Fountain beneath a mound of beautiful flowers to await the resurrection Morning.

Resolved that a copy of this obituary be sent to the Family, one put in Church Records, one to the *Zions Landmark* and one to the *Signs of the Times.*

Done by order of the Church in Conference the first Saturday in June, 1973.

Written by a brother who loved her, I hope,
Joe B. Coker
Elder Joe Sawyer, Moderator
Joe B. Coker, Clerk

EVA GILLIAM MATKINS

We bow in humble submission to the will of our heavenly father, who has called from our midst a dear sister in Christ, Sister Eva Gilliam Matkins. She was born November 27, 1884, and passed from this life, December 19, 1972, making her stay here on earth 88 years, 22 days.

Sister Matkins was the daughter of the late Professor John Wesley Gilliam and Mary Jane Leath Gilliam. She was the wife of the late Robert Lee Matkins who preceded her in death 26 years. Unto this union were born five children, John Lee Matkins, Mrs. E. Floyd Brooks, Mrs. Leon Gilliam, Mrs. Merritt Hudson and Mrs. Pauline Smith.

Young in life Sister Matkins united with Gilliams Primitive Baptist Church and was baptised by the late Elder F. L. Oakley in the year 1905, and was a faithful and loyal member as much as health permitted, being at the time of her death a member of the church 67 years.

Sister Matkins spent her last years in the home of her daughter, Sister Bessie Gilliam who was blessed with patience and tender loving care, to administer everything earthly hands could do for her comfort in this life.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Wallis A. Smith at Gilliam's Church, and her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery underneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the coming of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

May those that mourn be comforted by the Grace of Almighty God.

It is our custom to send a copy to the *Signs of the Times* and a copy be given to the family and by request a copy to be sent to *The Zions Landmark.*

By order of Gilliam Primitive Baptist Church,

Wallis A. Smith, Moderator
Freeman Somers, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 142 DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1974 NO. 1

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 1/74 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CIRCULAR LETTER OF SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

As the time has come for us to meet together in another meeting of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, and as it has been the custom to write what is called the Circular Letter, we begin with much fear and trembling. It is our humble prayer that it may please God to give us a mind to write to the comfort of the brethren that have been given minds to come and assemble together at this time.

Fear and trembling has been mentioned, and we believe that every child of God, the chosen ones of God's mercy when they are brought down from their lofty looks, that which the human nature of man desires, they have much fear and trembling. We read in the Bible, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, the beginning of wisdom". Now fear, trembling, knowledge, and wisdom has been mentioned, all of which takes place not by the works of man but by the work of God in the heart of man; the heart of man being the dwelling place of our God. If it were by the works of man, would not men be glorying in his own strength? But we read in God's Holy word where the Apostle Paul said, When you glory, glory in the Lord, he was speaking to the Church of Corinth. We believe that no man has ever walked the high way of holiness only as he has been led by the mighty power of God, and we further believe that only his (God's) chosen ones have or ever will walk there.

We believe that God knew the end from the beginning and that all things are taking place just as he (God) before decreed or ordained them. We are mindful of the Holy Word as found in Isaiah 46:10 "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Therefore, believing the Bible was written to confirm in our minds that which we have been taught: that God is the God of knowledge as Hannah said in first Samuel. "God is the God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed." We feel that when the actions of this old mortal body are weighed in the balance of justice, we are found wanting.

That is, we have been blessed to see our sinful nature, and to cry out to God for mercy. Do we not often think of the poor publican who said, "Lord be merciful to me a sinner," and to feel the need of such ourselves? We read that the Pharisee stood afar off and thanked God that he was not like other men even the publican. Do we as Old School Baptist not feel many times in this life that it is much better to have a desire to be as good as some one else, rather than to feel better? We feel that it is a blessing from above that we have been shown the depravity of our nature, for it is then and then only, that one seeks the Lord as a place of refuge. We read in Psalms 51,3 "For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me." We, the Old School Baptists, feel it one of the greatest blessings ever

bestowed upon mankind to see what we are by nature and to know full well that only by the grace of God we will ever reach the Heavenly Portals of Bliss that awaits God's elect. Yes as Peter said, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. (1 Peter 1:2) The Old School Baptists believe that God loved his elect before the beginning of time, and, knowing that Adam would fall, fixed a way to redeem his chosen generation; and we hope to be a part of that number.

We read in Hebrews Chapter 9 verse 22, that without the shedding of blood there is no remission. Thus do we not at times get a little glimpse of the love that our blessed Saviour had for his chosen ones; to come in this world and bleed and die for them. We would say again that we hope to be a part of that number. As we journey here, we know full well by experience that the journey is not always a pleasant one; but then we feel that God has a purpose in that also for the inspired poet has written.

"Then why, my soul, complain and fear?
The crown of glory see!
The more I toil and suffer here,
The sweeter rest will be."

We feel to have learned by experience that we have to travel through many trials and tribulations in this life; but the Apostle Paul has said "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28) Now we notice that the Apostle did not say for good but "together for good," that is, as we see it, the bitter must go along with the sweet. Now we would not have the bitter if we could have our own way according to our nature, but when we are led through the many storms of this life and are blessed to see the mighty hand of God in the matter, then we feel to say many times that we have been blessed to see that God's ways are not our ways; and that his ways are right and just. We feel that the latter part of the verse is setting forth a broad field of thought for it does not mention the whole world but just to them "who are the called according to his purpose." Therefore, We Old School Baptist feel that Jesus did not come in this world to redeem the whole world but just the ones that were chosen in him before the world and all things therein were created. We feel to thank God for what He has been pleased to give us to understand, for the understanding is better than all the riches of this world.

May it pleased God to be with our visiting ministers that they may be blessed to speak comforting words to us at this meeting, is our humble prayer. Amen.

Arthur R. Warren

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT OF THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

Our Heavenly Father, if it be in accordance with Thy Holy Will, give us grace to be in humble submission to thy will in removing from our midst three of our dearly beloved members: Sister Hannah Brittingham of Little Creek Church; Deacon Merrill Shockley of Nassaongo Church; and Deacon Willie (Bill) Davis of Snow Hill Church.

These dear departed ones stood strong in the faith, always ready to stand up for Salvation by the sovereign Grace of God, and not by the works of the creature. It was a pleasure to be numbered with saints like these. Our loss is their eternal gain.

Thy will be done, O God.

Elder Arthur Warren, Mod.
Maude T. Laws, Hon. Clerk
William S. Adkins, Clerk
Willie A. Davis, Jr., Asst. Clerk
Written by Frank A. Holland

THE NATION WHOSE GOD IS THE LORD

Dear Readers of the Signs:

I want to write about the sovereign

power of God.

"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance. The Lord looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth." (Psalm 33:12-14)

As I quoted above, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord." We see in Genesis 25:22,23, "And the children struggled together within her; and she (Rebekah) said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the Lord. And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger."

Jacob was called one nation, and Esau was called another nation. To me Jacob is of the generation of Jesus Christ, and Esau is of the rejected generation. Each generation is a different nation of people. God loved Jacob, and God hated Esau before either of them were born, that the purpose of God according to election might stand: not of works but of him that calleth.

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people: that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." (1 Peter 3:9) This generation is all one people — all brethren and one nation. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us into the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." (Ephesians 1:4-6)

We see that this generation was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and made accepted in the beloved; the other generation was rejected, and stands today a generation of vipers. "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance. The Lord looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. From his place of habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth. He is of one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the things that are appointed for me: and many such things are with him." (Job 23:12-14) Job was one that believed God was telling the truth when he said, "I will do all my pleasure" — not if men will let me, but *I will do it.*

"When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them: I the Lord of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." (Isaiah 41:17-18) It is the pleasure of the Lord to comfort his people, and to save them from their sins. And it is true that we all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. (2 Cor. 5:10)

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." (Gal. 6:7-8)

We can see that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. We with the flesh do sow to the flesh, but with the Spirit we sow to the Spirit. The old man shall die, the new man shall live forever; for he that believeth in Christ shall never die. God cannot look on sin with the least degree of allowance in the sense of it not being given account of. "But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall

speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." (Matt. 12:36-37)

I believe that Christ atoned for every sin his people would commit, and justified them by his blood; so every sin we commit God will put it in our hearts to confess from the first to the last. The day of judgment with all that Christ died for will be in time before we draw our last breath — so our sins go before to judgment in time, and there will be no sin to answer for in the resurrection when we arise from the grave.

"For I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thes. 4:13-18) We will not stand with the wicked to be judged, for every sin that we commit will be gone on before unto judgment. Our mortal shall put on immortality in the resurrection, and come out of the tomb shouting praise to the Lamb of God; for He is worthy to receive all glory and honor — He hath redeemed us unto himself out of every nation and kindred and tongue.

I hope some one may receive some comfort in reading what I have written.

(Elder) J. R. Hollandsworth
Bassett, Va.

EXPERIENCE

2505 Shenandoah Ave.
Durham, N.C. 27704

Dear Brother Spangler:

Enclosed is check for $7.00 for two years renewal to the *Signs* due in July.

. . . We are thankful that God in His wisdom directs the Editors and writers of the *Signs* to write for the comfort of God's humble and afflicted people. I have just finished reading most of the Editorials in the November issue. My first recollection of the *Signs* was in my grandfather Young's home in my childhood. There were many mysteries which cause me to search the Scriptures. I was convicted of what a sinner I was under the sound of Elder Isaac Jones' preaching, and went mourning and groping in darkness until my late teens, when Christ Jesus appeared and spoke peace to my burdened soul. "Today thy parting soul shall be with me in Paradise." He has lifted me out of depression many times, and has never cast this poor, weak worm finally away. The hope those words gave me is still my comfort.

I hope, if not deceived, I have been blessed to see His glory a few times. "What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss, to bear the dreadful curse for my soul." This was a favorite hymn my earthly father sang many times on Sunday mornings as he was preparing to attend services.

May God in his rich mercy keep us all pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Faye phoned me tonight that Richard is flying home tonight, and she is to meet him at the airport. His tour of duty in the Marines is over. So we can rejoice with her and for both of them.

Remember us when at the throne of grace. I am so weak I can't seem to express what I feel of the many thoughts that go racing through my mind. We still hope we will be blessed to attend services at Durham, though we have not been strong enough to travel to the other churches. We hope to

see you there.

In Christian hope and love,
Ester W. Whitefield

Rt. 3, Box 224X,
Kitty Hawk, N.C. 27949

Dear Editors of the Signs:

And servants of the most high God through Jesus Christ and the working of the Holy Spirit in you, . . . made manifest through your being enabled to adhere to the very truth as it is in Christ Jesus, the head of the church of the true and living God. All existence and its every function always was, and is and ever will be wholly dependent upon Him, whether or not they are aware of it.

Precious ones, that is the nature of God and Lord and Holy Spirit, in whom I feel to hope is my trust. I am brought to remember an experience when I was about fifteen years of age, when I stood in the yard of our place of abode: As far as I could see upward and both to the left and to the right, there came toward me a solid rolling wave like unquenchable fire that was devouring every earthly thing in its path. There I stood alone in horror, without the presence or help of any earthly creature. But just as I began to feel the great heat from that wave or wall of fire, I was delivered from its clutches and carried to a safe place, with a feeling of the most wonderful coolness that seemed to reach the very marrow of my bones.

Now at that time I was not given to realize the full significance of what had taken place with me: I only felt a great relief in having been rescued from the path of that awful fire; and the awareness that no man was the means of my escape. But many years afterward there came a series of experiences, which I feel to hope brought me to more clearly understand the true significance of that earlier experience. As it was in the first experience, every experience, which I feel and hope are of merciful grace, has brought me ever more firmly in the belief and feeling that the greatness of God is of such inconceivable magnitude, that even a thought on some small portion of His greatness, leads me to see the insignificance and total helplessness of all mankind of themselves.

Oh dear ones, I know that of my fleshly self I could not be worthy to even think upon one so great as He is; but I somehow feel to hope that there could be a worthiness for me in Jesus Christ. For Christ is all things to The Church, in that He is her Head, her Mind, her Leader and Guide, her Strength and Sustainer in every trial and tribulation, every temptation and sickness and health,—in any and all situations whatsoever she may come to face while she sojourns in this troublesome time world. Christ is the Winner of her every battle. The Church is no less safe than God is upon his throne: for where two or three are gathered together in His name, He who cannot lie, said that He would be in their midst. May we be mindful that when just one of His children is in His presence, there are the two referred to. I am mindful of the poets writings:

"When earth against my soul engage
And fiery darts be hurled,
Then I can smile at Satan's rage
And face a frowning world."

Dear Editors and Elders, and all who read this who feel a precious hope in their breasts, and feel to trust in the God of perfect and unqualified sovereignty over all His creation, I would not leave the impression that I attempt to convert or change anyone to my way or understanding. For if anyone has any portion of knowledge of the reality of God and his ways, it is sure and certain that he did not receive it of men, but it was by the revelation of Jesus Christ unto him. For though an Elder in his discourse says something that one listener then believes and rejoices in, that Elder did not make that hearer believe or rejoice; for whatsover is to any degree in a godly way, manner or nature, is of, by and from the Three-one God.

I feel to desire that, if it be God's will,

I be kept ever mindful that whatsoever of the Holy truth I am aware of, I received it from Him only; and that it so pleased Him to reveal it unto this poor, unworthy worm. For of one thing, I feel very sure, I have never done even one thing of myself to merit one favor or notice from the Lord. May I be kept in such a way as to refrain from acting or speaking as if I had not received it from on high — as though I myself had reached out and acquired it of myself, or from any other man.

Dear Editors, at the start of this writing, I had intended to do no more than to say I was enclosing my remittance for two more years for the dear *Signs of the Times*. But I find that with all my planning, purposes and intents, events must still come to pass in their perfect order as foreordained and predestinated to be by the great God and Creator of all things. I heard and Elder express it this way:

"As I observe the things that be, and realize they did not come in another manner, time or place, than they did come, this is an evidence to me that they could not have come in any other manner than just as they did come." And so it is my feeling that whatsover was the mind and purpose of the Creator from the foundation of the world, concerning his creation of all time and things, there could never exist even the remotest possibility of any event transpiring contrary to that exact way, time and manner as He so created them all for, and to be, and to do.

I hope and trust I am by the grace of a merciful God, your brother in Christ.

Troy G. Shepard

EXPERIENCE

232-D Falkirk Ct.
Braemar Lane,
Kalamazoo, Mich. 49007

Dear Elder Spangler:

Sister Campbell of Memphis, Tenn., did not give me the price of the *Signs of the Times* subscription. Please write me the price . . .

I am a staunch Primitive Baptist and was baptized into the church by the late Elder O. W. Perkins, of Mayfield, Ky. I can truly say that if I have ever had an experience of grace, or have been taught of God, Elder Perkins preached my experience the first time I heard him.

I truly believe if one has been blessed with a second birth, it will cause him to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. And I believe that the world will hate you for you are not of the world, but are a new creature in Christ Jesus. It is not until then that one can go home to his friends and tell them what great things the Lord has done for him. Jesus said, "Ye must be born again," and it is not of anything that we have done, or can do, for it is of the Father's good will and pleasure. If God works the will and the do in you, it surely will show in your walk and talk.

"By grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Each day I am made to feel more and more the richness, freedom, and sovereignty of God's grace. From the ocean without bottom or shore flows every stream of mercy to the church of the living God, on their way to the Kingdom of Glory, from the treasury and storehouse of divine grace.

This grace has been, and is applied to quicken, to uphold, to support, to lead and comfort every subject of the entire "election of grace" on their way to the city, where they shall one day appear "to the praise of the glory of His grace." I rejoice to believe that it was by this glorious and reigning grace that I, even I, a vile, ungodly sinner, was enabled to hear the voice of the Son of God. I shall never forget when the Lord found me, and lifted me out of that horrible pit of sin, placed my feet upon a rock, which was Jesus Christ my blessed Saviour, put a new song in my mouth, even praises unto His great and holy name. He even led me about and instructed me in righteousness. I found

the wealth and preciousness of Jesus, the Pearl of great price. Blessed promises were revealed to me, and sweet news of the way of salvation, embracing sinners such as I. I was filled to overflowing with love and gratitude, while tears of joy streamed down my face. How dearly did my poor soul and heart love the blessed King of Zion!

This was the most wonderful meeting I ever attended — just my Lord and I. Truly I was a new person, "old things had passed away and all things had become new." My heart and soul burst forth in praises unto God, singing, "Amazing grace (how sweet the sound!) that saved a wretch like me; I once was lost but now am found, was blind but now I see." Indeed His grace is amazing.

I truly believe that God knew everyone of his children from the beginning of time, "Chose them in his Son before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before Him in love." I truly believe that every one of them will follow him. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. A stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers."

I humbly hope and trust that I am included in that number that hear His voice and follow him. But, if I am turned away, I beleive He is still just, and a righteous God. If I am sent to Hell, I'll have to say, "His righteous law approves it well."

Elder Spangler, please let me hear from you. Thank you.

In hope of the saving grace of God.
Mary M. Pearson

SENDS WRITINGS BY HIS FATHER

P. O. Box 113
Haines, Oregon 97833

Signs of the Times,
Danville, Va.

Dear Editors:

As I read the old paper, with its many letters and communications, covering the many years, I am so much more convinced that, "God rules the inhabitants of the earth and the armies of Heaven. And none can stay His hand nor say: What doest Thou."

The more that I mix with the religions of the world, the more I know that "By grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves. It is a gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2:8-10)

I grew up in an Old Baptist home. My parents never tried to teach us the Bible. And only by their example was I taught. I can get nothing out of these "Bible Schools", or "Bible teachings". I believe that we have light, as it is given to us to understand the scriptures. If we have not received the light we cannot understand those things. We may read the words written there but, if our ears are not tuned to the writings and our eyes given the power to see the lessons written there, we had just as well be reading "Red Riding Hood" or any of the other fairy tales, written by man.

I am nearing, what to my people, is the end of the trail, or at least a switching to a different trail. My father C. W. Bond left this world in 1964. Mother left in 1954. He at the age of 77 and she at 88.

A few days ago I was handed a writing, started by him, just before his death. Found in his tablet by mother, after his death, and a notation of her own written on the bottom of the sheet. I submit it to you for publication, should you see fit to publish it.

Charles W. Bond, Jr.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." (Rev: 14-13)

This scripture has been on my mind much of late, with interesting leadings to other scriptures setting forth conso-

lations for the saints of God. If it may be according to the will of our God to give me light to explain some of these things as I have seen them, to His name be all the praise.

I am now an old man, can look back on more than 50 years of ministerial services; and with the end of my pilgrimage near, I view life with all of its pleasures, promises and disappointments very different in many ways from what I did as I came along. Youth is full of hope and bright promises, death while ever to be expected and dreaded seems far off, and we shudder at the thought of it.

Elder C. W. Bond

(This was found in his tablet after he was gone, unfinished as so many things he had started were, as we view it naturally, yet we know that he had finished his course, and was "ready to be offered up."
Signed: Martha Bond)

"THANKFUL FOR HIS LOVING KINDNESS"

209 Taylor Road,
Collinsville, Va. 24078

Dear Elder Wood:

Hope this may find you and Sister Wood well and that she is greatly improved from her illness.

I have received the November issue of the *Signs of the Times* and enjoyed the writings very much. Elder Sanders on the New Heaven and New Earth was very good. I had read that chapter a few days before to my husband, telling him I would be glad to hear from someone from that chapter, Rev. 21.

I am thankful to God for his loving kindness shown. I have received much comfort in reading from Hebrews of late. My mind has been on the 12th chapter and 9th verse, and will quote it: "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" "But ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to on innumerable company of angels. To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." so reads the 22nd, 23rd and 24th verses of the same chapter.

Paul's writings to the Ephesians, chapter 2, is very comforting to His loved ones. I believe this quickening takes place here in time, as it does after death; also His glory and honor to God as it did after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, for his great love for us. (Hebrews 8:10 and 29 to 34) I believe this relates to his spiritual kingdom of believers in Christ Jesus.

I heard a man speaking over the television a few days ago. He did have some good points, but finally drowned himself in saying that God wanted people to be saved, but they would not let him; and they should get busy and do something about it before it was too late. I call this blasphemy against God, for it is not in accordance with the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, found in Isaiah's writings 45:9,10; also John's writings 6:37 to 44; also Paul's writings Hebrews 8:10. We read in the 5th chapter of John: "He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent him." To me these are false teachers and false witnesses that are against the Lord God of heaven and earth. Those that do honor Him honoreth both the Father and the Son, and are the true witnesses of our Lord and Saviour through the blood of the everlasting covenant.

Brother Wood, Harry was baptized the 4th Sunday in October: something he had wanted to do thirty years ago. We read to wait patiently on the Lord, which I feel he did. I am very glad and thankful for it. I believe He will verify all of his promises. (We are always glad to hear of the Lord's people uniting with

the church.—J.D.W.)

Your in sweet fellowship,
Mrs. Harry D. Underwood

"IMMANUEL"

Dear Brethren:

The name "Immanuel" means, "God with us." (Matthew 1:23) As God and man in one glorious Person we see in "Immanuel" the grandest expression of the infinite wisdom of God.

The Lord is called "wise" because He is wisdom itself. Wisdom, infinite wisdom, can never be wiser, and never be less wise. If any addition could be made to God's wisdom, it was not infinite wisdom before such addition. If any subtraction could be made from it, it would cease to be infinite. God is unchangeably, infinitely, eternally wise.

Godliness is full of mysteries, but "God with us: Immanuel," is its "great mystery." (I Timothy 3:16) Immanuel, God's Son and Mary's spotless firstborn: God and Man in one most glorious Christ. Here is wisdom showing its divinity indeed, for in the person of Immanuel, Wisdom did to the utmost doing the greatest thing Wisdom could do,—He gave himself for us.

As Immanuel could "increase in wisdom" the mystery of His person can never be understood by mortals. The design and intent of this article is to remind new-born readers of the *Signs* how sinners are justified and sanctified as is shown in Holy Writ, and are moreover put in the possession of eternal life so that death cannot be the legal end of any child of God.

The Lord in the Bible is that "apple tree among the trees of the wood" *down here;* that "tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God" *above.*

As Jesus Christ is the *source* of wisdom, so He is the subject of wisdom.

It was, to speak humanly, to meet our feeble capacity, the great problem to be solved: how God's perfections could all be honored; how the integrity of His truth could be supported; the rights of divine justice be maintained; the holiness of God's nature be displayed and his mercy be extended to poor sinners; His grace reach poverty stricken, guilty sinners; and the river of His love flow in an eternal stream of delight to rebel man. The only wise God our Saviour undertook this mighty work and engaged in covenant to reconcile the jarring interest of the Holy with the salvation of sinners, to lower all the mountains, to raise all the valleys, to remove all the difficulties out of the way of mercy and truth meeting together, and righteousness and peace kissing each other.

And He most gloriously did this, and finished the work when His heart's blood gushed from his riven side, when the dying cry was heard in heaven, *"It is finished."* to the glory of God; and heard in earth to the comfort of miserable sinners. On the third day, truth did indeed spring out of the earth, and righteousness looked down from heaven.

As grace saves *causatively,* Immanuel saves *meritoriously,* and sends His Spirit to save *powerfully* through faith *experimentally.*

As in Eden there was the tree of life whose fruit would impart an unchangeable position to the person who ate of it: for if Adam and Eve had stretched forth their hand and eaten of its fruit, they would have lived forever in the misery and guilt in which they were. Amazing therefore is the rich mercy of God who turned them out of the garden, for He knew His purpose of love and His salvation to them, and towards millions of their posterity: So, instead of their being fixed as immortal and in an unchangeable position of misery and guilt, they were to be brought out of the horrible pit and have their feet put upon a Rock at God's time, and in God's way; and have a song put in their mouth.

If Eden's tree of life gave immortality, how much more the gospel tree of life: Jesus. If eating of the tree of life in Eden would have fixed Adam in immortal wretchedness, much more are any who have laid hold of Christ the

true life, fixed in immutable blessedness.

Immortality in a condemned state would have been the result of eating of the tree of life in Eden; and immortality in a justified state, immortality in a state of peace with God, is the result of reaching forth the hand of faith and laying hold of Jesus the tree of life.

The gift of God is eternal life. All who have this gift have passed from death unto life. Wouldn't it be an unlawful thing to put a criminal to death if he had been fully pardoned? And wouldn't it be illegal to sue a man and put him in prison for failing to pay his debts if his Friend had paid it all? And wouldn't it be unlawful for a man to die under the weight of sins that Jesus has suffered for?

Now when "Immanuel" was born of the woman Mary, he was made under the law, and by his perfect obedience He became a tree of legal life for us, and title clear to eternal glory. But He is also a spiritual tree, for as He is our justification, He is also our sanctification, saying, "I am the vine, ye are the branches, he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." So, a soul who by precious faith enters into a state of justification, also is raised to a position of service, and shall take his yoke to serve in newness of life, which is the gift of God, the Holy Spirit. This is not a "drop," but, "A well of water springing up into everlasting life."

When the blood of Christ purges the conscience by faith, that soul lays hold on the dear Redeemer in union that is felt, and self is denied and God is praised. He is every saint's *Surety*, therefore they legally live; their *Vine*, and so they graciously live. And, He is their *fulness of bliss*, so shall they all gloriously live in that great day when Love's redeeming work is done, and we shall awake to see the Provider and the provisions of that City where no shadow shall fall. Then we shall be able as we ought, to "bless the Lord, Oh my soul, and all that is within me, bless His Holy Name."

Brethren, we by nature would be afraid of the outcome if we had to enter a hospital, not to mention our having to die and be buried: Yet, as for all our Lord's appointed ways, our faith, though little, approves it well. This is because:

> "Immanuel to love is Jesus to know
> And constitutes our bliss below;
> Christ to know is Immanuel to love,
> And constitutes our bliss above."

Meantime, nothing can injure any who are, "preserved in Jesus Christ and called," to an unspeakably glorious, eternal, God honoring, soul satisfying life that is now ready, and "ready to be revealed at the last time." Therefore at times we anticipate the day when the dear Lord's voice shall call us from the shores of time, when we have compassed the mount long enough.

In bonds,
J. L. Bocock
P. O. Box 13
Boones Mill, Va. 24065

MANY CRIED UNTO THE LORD

P. O. Box 751,
Macclenny, Fla. 32063

Dear Editors and
Household of Faith:

I would like to write what was in my mind when I read Psalm 130:1, "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord."

How many in Bible times cried unto the Lord out of the depths? If any ever cry unto the Lord really with a true cry, is it not out of the depths? Do any ever truly cry unto the Lord only out of the depths? I know what it is to cry unto the Lord out of the depths. Was it not out of the depths that the thief on the cross cried when he said, "Lord, when thou comest into thy kingdom remember me." One with his record at the door of death, would he not

cry out of the depths for the Lord's mercy? Do not all of God's little children cry out of the depths many, many times for God's help and saving grace? How sweet and good, and how kind the Lord gave the thief an answer: "Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Not tomorrow or a month, but today.

The thief on the other side could not call out of the depths for help, for he did no know it was the Lord. He said, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." But the one receiving the promise said to him, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou are in the same condemnation?" But by some reason and purpose known only to God, only one of the men knew the Lord; the same as it is today and always: none know God except those to whom He reveals himself. Jesus said that none come unto him except the Father draw them, and that he would in no wise cast them out. We feel the two thieves represent the elect and the non-elect, for we are told in the Bible that whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. And such cry unto God out of the depths, for they know God, and their faith is all in God day and night; and such, like Jonah, have been turned about from the way they were trying to travel, and God is leading them. They have learned in God's school of grace: "Not my will but thine be done," and are crying out of the depths in prayer and supplication for God to undertake for them. They have learned, as Jonah, that they are not their own keepers, and that "Salvation is of the Lord."

Paul cried out of the depths, so did Peter, John, Daniel, Solomon, David, and many, many others. God of heaven and earth and all that is therein, holds the wind in his hand—even the wind and sea obey him. We need to cry, "Lord help," every moment of our short lives, "Undertake for us; prepare us for heaven that we shall be with thee, and be like thee; that we may rest in a Father's love, and be without blame in love.

Oh how much fear and trembling I have: I am in need of so much grace to stand before this Holy God and not utterly fall and become a cast away. We are told that all things work together for good to those who love God, who are called according to His purpose. The question arises in my case, Do I really love God or do I just think I do. Surely I feel that I love the brethren, those of like precious faith. John said that we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. . . .

"The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, for it is spiritually discerned." So to love God we must have the Spirit of Christ in us. O grant us grace that we may love thee more, and serve thee better.

I wrote of my experience in the *Signs of the Times in* 1960. How I have gone through the valley of the shadow of death, and brought down. We cry unto the Lord when we feel low down, and are in need of his strength in our troubles and sicknesses, and our burdens are heavy in this world of sin and sorrow.

A little sister, I hope,
Mrs. Letcher Smith

HASSELL'S CHURCH HISTORY

Hassell's Church Histories are now available from the Signs of the Times office, Rt. 1, Box 539, Danville, Virginia, Zip number 24541. This is a new printing. The price is $6.85..

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(To November 1, 1973)

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The cost of printing the Signs of the Times has been increased more than one hundred dollars per month; or 20%.

We do not believe that any periodical has ever had more loyal support from their readers than the Signs of the Times; so we do not want to increase our supscription price again, as so many have contributed to the Indigent Fund, and in other ways. We appreciate this very much, and hope the brethren and friends will continue to remember this when renewing their subscriptions.

Also, have you thought to remember the Signs of the Times in your will?

— EDITORS

Danville, Virginia January, 1974

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

". . . For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." (2 Cor. 4:5-7)

EDITORIAL

With this issue we begin the 142nd volume of the *Signs of the Times*. Elder Gilbert Beebe began the publication in 1832. The age of the paper means but little, and we have nothing to boast about; but rather are thankful that the Lord has seen fit to sustain His truth in the columns of the paper, so that His

name is exalted above every name, and his people confirmed in the doctrine of God our Savior.

The *Signs* has never tried to be of great influence among the people in general, since people in general have no interest in its doctrine; but rather to uphold the Truth in the midst of much false teaching of men. The Lord's people know that the truth is a matter of revelation from the Lord, and it so differs from the popular conception of Christian doctrine, that nothing of the truth can be known and believed but by the singular experience of being born of the Spirit. By this they know that it is the work of God that they believe differently than they once did. Solomon wrote in the 16th chapter of Proverbs that, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." But the Lord's people know who makes them to differ from another, and that they have nothing but what they have received through the mercies of God.

To those who are thus taught, the *Signs* is desired and anxiously awaited each month: for the writings of the brethren find a ready response in their inward parts as their pure minds are stirred up, (2 Peter 3:3) for all are taught the Truth by the Spirit of God.

We often publish an abstract of the principles which the *Signs* maintains, (see the November, 1973 issue), and they should be compared with the teaching of the Scriptures. God caused these truths to be recorded in His written Word, and written in the hearts of those with whom He made a new covenant. And this is the only source of all that God is pleased to reveal of himself. So that if anything is taught by anyone which is not Scriptural, it is evidently a doctrine of men. The doctrine which Jesus and his Apostles preached, is what the *Signs* is earnestly devoted to maintain as enabled of the Lord.

We know that the Lord minutely prescribed how He should be worshipped as is recorded in the Old Testament,—which things were all shadows of better things to come. When the fulness of time was come, and He of whom Moses and all the prophets wrote, made his appearance, He said, " . . . the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him." This means that the formalities and rituals of those things which the former worship portrayed, were now fulfilled by the appearance of Jesus Christ and his doing the will of his Father; so that the worship of God should now be in the spirit and truth of former things. For the children of God were, "now delivered from the law, that being dead wherein they were held: that they should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." And it is written, " . . . the scripture hath concluded all under sin, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith is come we are no longer under a schoolmaster."

There is nothing more certain than the salvation of the Lord's people. Their Father chose them in his Son before the foundation of the world, and provided all things for their redemption. Paul wrote to the Ephesians, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."

When the Apostle wrote, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus

Christ," he assures his brethren at Philippi, and the brethren everywhere, that their redemption is in the hands of God all the way from beginning to end, and is therefore certain.

These are some of the things the readers of the *Signs* find each month, along with the many other things taught in the scriptures which they love, and hold to be the source of all things pertaining to the revealed will of God. We do not know how many believe these thing, but the Lord knows them that are his.

We had intended this to be a greeting to the brethren and friends at the beginning of the New Year, and another volume of the *Signs*. But having written as we have, we would remind all of us that as we have been kept by the power of God, and provided with everything we have ever had, both in nature and grace according to the will of our Father, so we yet have the promise of the Saviour, ". . . and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." With this realization, we are kept from day to day, knowing that this world is not our home, but we "have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."

Has it occurred to you, that those who do not have a hope, have no anchor sure and steadfast — no evidence of God's grace and mercy. We say again that we are glad that Paul wrote that in spite of all opposition, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."

We thank the brethren and friends for their support given us in publishing the *Signs*. We, of course, continue to need the writings upon scriptural subjects which we can publish, and the accounts of the experiences which many enjoy reading. We know that the Lord will continue to enable the brethren and friends to write as long as he has further use of the paper among the brethren. We appreciate all of our subscribers, and the contributions to the Indigent Fund; and we hope the brethren and friends will be mindful that we all need the grace of God in continuing to bring the *Signs* to them regularly.

J.D.W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

WHERE IS THE CHURCH?

New Vernon, N.Y., June 15, 1845.

An inspired writer has said, "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters." None who are born of God and taught by his Spirit can doubt that this figure is intended to describe the condition as well as the superior excellence of the church above the daughters. She is called the "Love, Dove, and Undefiled" of her Beloved. The figure of a *lily* not only describes the modest beauty of the church, but shows, according to the instructions of our Lord, that her exceeding glory, although surpassing that of the regal splendor of Solomon, is not the result of her own labor. She toils not to procure it, she spins nothing that would answer for warp or for woof; her life is derived from an invisible Root, and her head is bowed under the genial rays of the sun. But she is not only like the lily as that flower stands gracefully in the field, or among other beautiful flowers, but she is like the lily among thorns. How truly does the church of Christ answer to the figure in all its fullness of illustration! God has chosen her in a furnace of affliction, and she has ever, in her militant state, been among the rude briars and thorns. The earth, groaning under the curse of the righteous Creator, is destined to produce thorns and thistles, and while this world remains the temporary abode of the church she must encounter them. One of her most prominent sons prayed no less than three times that the thorn might be removed, but was referred to the sufficiency of the grace of God to sustain him and bear him through all the buffeting of Satan. To those who have discernment in spir-

itual things how admirably does the church contrast with that by which she is surrounded. All that the lily is of itself is merely grass of the field which today is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, but God has so clothed her as to challenge comparison with the most exalted glory of the earth. All flesh is as grass, and all goodliness thereof (that is produced by human power, or the flesh, for all that is born of the flesh, whether physical or mental, is flesh) is as the flower of the grass; the grass withereth, the flower thereof fadeth away, but the Word of the Lord abideth forever. While the flower thereof, that is, the goodliness of the flesh, or grass, may adorn the meadow, but, in common with the grass with which it is connected, it cannot survive the dissolution of the flesh, or grass; but God so clothes it (the church) in the garments of salvation as to secure the glory as an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and cannot fade away.

"Defiled and loathsome as we are,
He makes us white and calls us fair,
Adorns us with that heavenly dress,
His graces, and his righteousness."

Consequently the church is enabled through grace to sing, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God, for he hath clothed me with the robe of righteousness; as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. (Isa. xli. 10.) She "is all glorious within, her clothing is of wrought gold, she shall be brought unto the King in garments of fine needlework." (Psalms xlv. 13.) All human beauty and creature excellency, compared with the church of the living God, which is the ground and pillar of the truth, is but as thorns. Zion is pronounced in the language of inspiration *the perfection of beauty;* it cannot, therefore, be improved. Earth has no colors, nor has creation charms to lend which would not obscure her beauty. And although her peculiar excellency appears not to the eyes of an adulterous generation, for except a man be born again he cannot see her, because the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned; still all her attractions are clearly apprehended by those unto whom the Spirit of God reveals her. To them she appears as the New Jerusalem, descending from God out of heaven adorned as a bride for her husband. She looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.

Understanding these to be some of the general characteristics of the church of God, may we not inquire, Where may she be found at this day? We cannot consistently believe that Christ has no church on earth at the present day; and if he has a church now upon earth she must bear the lineaments which are drawn in the New Testament. We shall not find her at the corners of the streets, in harlots' attire, seeking for lovers; from her lips will not be heard the silly boast, "I have peace offerings with me, this day have I paid my vows." (Prov. vii. 14.) She cannot be recognized in any other dress than the garments of salvation which her Lord has given her. The daughters spoken of Isa. 3:16-26, with their haughty carriage, stretched forth necks, wanton eyes, and mincing walk, making a tinkling with their feet, with their cauls, and their round-tires like the moon, their chains, and bracelets, and the mufflers, the bonnets, and the ornaments, and the head-bands, and the tablets, and the ear-rings, and the rings, and nose jewels, changeable suits of apparel, mantles, and wimples, and crisping pins, glasses, fine linen, hoods, and veils, are only the thorns by which the lily of the valley is surrounded. "There are threescore queens and fourscore concubines and virgins without number; my dove, my undefiled is but one, she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice of her that bear her."—(Cant. vi. 8 & 9.)

In order to demonstrate the existence of the church of Christ on earth at the

present day, we must find a community of saints corresponding to the primitive pattern, of eighteen hundred years ago —a people whose only beauty consists in the comeliness which Christ has put upon them—a people saved by the Lord who is the shield of their help and the sword of their excellency, and whose enemies are found liars unto them—(Deut. 33:29)—A people dwelling alone and not reckoning among the nations, with no governmental patronage from the powers of the world,—a kingdom that is not of this world, nor visible to the world, because they are the sons of God; the world knoweth them not because it knew him not—A poor and afflicted people trusting in the name of the Lord —a persecuted people; for if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus he shall suffer persecution. Their names shall be cast out of men, and they shall be hated of all men for Christ's name sake. They are regarded as the offscouring of all things, accused and slandered in like manner as their divine Lord and Master was; for if these things were done in the green tree they shall be repeated in the dry; if they called the Master of the house Beelzebub they will also call them of his household so.

These are only some of the outlines of the church of Christ. She is also characterized by her *"one Lord, one faith, and one baptism."* Her faith is as radically different from that of every other professing people on earth as are her Lord and her baptism. Of her faith Jesus is the Author and Finisher; but that of all other religious bodies either originates with themselves or is derived from the doctrines, traditions, and instructions of men. But blessed is she, for flesh and blood hath not revealed these things to her, but her heavenly Father has taught her by his Holy Spirit. She is the opposite of all other sects in regard to her food, her appetite, and the source from which all her supplies are received. Others can and do eat their own bread and wear their own apparel; but she must eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus. Nothing short of the true Bread which came down from heaven, that kind which Moses never gave, can satisfy her; but her neighbors, or the thorns among which she is situated, do not see why the bread that Moses gave is not good enough.

Christ's church is a peculiar people, in all respects essentially different from the religionists of this world. She comprises a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation, and shows forth the praises of him who hath called her out of darkness and translated her into the kingdom of his dear Son. The doctrine which her faith takes hold of is that which cannot possibly suit any body else under heaven, And if there be any who have not passed from death unto life, who fancy that they can understand and love the doctrine by which the church of God is distinguished, they are deluded. As none knoweth the things of a man but the spirit of a man that is in him, (for the spirit of man being taken from any man but a dead and unconscious corpse remains,) neither knoweth any man the things of the Spirit but the Spirit. And unless we be born of the Spirit, and that Spirit abide in us, we are as dead to all spiritual things, as the human body is to natural life after the animal spirit has departed. It is, therefore, quite as practicable to teach the tenants of the tombs the English grammar, or any science, as to teach the things of the Spirit of God to unregenerate men.

The church of God will be found in possession of doctrine which cannot be taught by every or any man to his neighbor, saying, Know the Lord; it cannot be taught nor learned in Sabbath schools, or what are called theological schools; nor can it be derived from reading the Bible, or hearing it expounded, even if Paul himself were the expounder, for the natural man cannot receive it; it is spiritually discerned. Every organized body of professors of religion who hold a doctrine which they can teach their unregenerate fellow-men is a branch of anti-christ; and the nature and attainableness of their faith

proves that they have not the faith of God's elect, and that their faith stands in the wisdom of men, and not in the power of God. See 1 Cor. 2:5. The primitive church acknowledged Christ as the only spiritual King, the true and only Potentate, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light which no man can attain unto. That church cannot now be identified where Christ is not so regarded; nor is he so regarded by any church, sect, or people who hold that there is spiritual life anywhere else, or that the light in which he dwelleth can be approached. To approach is to make some advance towards the object; but this no man can do, as the members of the church of Christ know right well. The true chuch now, as in her primitive days, depends on God to raise up, qualify, send forth, and sustain the ministers of the gospel. Those who heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, are not the church of Christ. To him who ascended up on high, who led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, they look for all the gifts which the church can need,—to him who reigns, being exalted a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins, and to him alone they look to bring sinners to repentance and to cause the redeemed of the Lord to return with singing to Zion with everlasting joy upon their heads. To him who opened the doors of death, and rose triumphantly from the grave, who conquered sin and hell, they look for support, comfort, deliverance and victory.

Finally, the church of our Redeemer is *the circumcision who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.*

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe June 15, 1845)

OBITUARIES

MEMORIAL TO

ELDER WILLIAM T. BROWN

In sadness we attempt to comply with request that we write a brief summary of the life and labours of one that we loved, Elder William T. Brown. He was born in Onslow County, N.C., Aug. 5, 1885, and called from this life at Onslow Memorial Hospital Jan. 5, 1973. He was married to Lula Caroline Allen in the year 1904, and to this union were born two daughters, Sister Pearl Edna Sandlin, Verona, N.C., Mrs. Mollie Rebecca Batts, Greenville, N.C.; one son, Carl Stuart Brown, Pollocksville, N.C.

The writer knew Elder Brown for many years. He together with his companion visited in the home of our parents long before he began preaching. Our information is that he received a hope in Christ and united with the Church at Old Sparta in the early thirties. He was ordanied to the full work of the ministry several years later. He resided in Edgecomb County when he united with the Church but later moved his membership by letter to the New Bay Church at Verona, N.C. after moving to Onslow County. New Bay Church soon called Elder Brown as Pastor and he served this Church until his departure from this life.

Elder Brown experienced many hardships during his sojourn here. His mother was taken when a small child. His early life was, as he put it, a rough one. In later years while grow ing up and in his manhood he was a fisherman by trade and was forced to face many storms of the sea. On one occasion while he with two others were clamming in Bogue Sound, a bolt of ligthning struck and killed one of his friends at his side. In telling his experience he would never fail to mention that he was made to know that had it not been for the grace and providence of God, he would not have survived.

In conversation with this brother one would soon detect that he was typical of many of his vocation in years past, in that he was plain spoken and strong in his convictions, and was not easily swayed or turned from what he felt to be right. In this man when blessed by the spirit, it was wonderful to observe the contrast between the natural and the spiritual. When the Lord would come to him in power you would see his countenance light up, and then he was as bold as a lion and as meek as a lamb. We cannot think of a more fitting memorial than when we say, We believe he was called by Divine grace and ordained to preach the gospel, and was a firm believer in the sovereignty and predestination of God in all things.

One we all loved has been called from us but we cannot wish him back, but would say, Sleep on brother and take your rest, we hope to meet you where associations never break up and sabbaths never end.

His funeral was conducted by Elders D. B. Stokes and J. T. Prescott at New Bay Church

among his brethren and friends.

Written by Elder J. J. Rhue, by order of The Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association while in conference October 12, 1973. It was further ordered that copies of this notice be placed on the Association minutes, a copy be sent to the family and a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Elder A. P. Mewbern, Moderator
Elder W. W. Stallings, Clerk
Deacon J. Carroll Williams, Asst. Clerk.

ELDER OWEN JEWELL CROKER

Elder Owen Jewell Croker was born in Hiram, Paulding County, Georgia, February 28, 1905, and passed away June 17, 1973. He was the son of the late William E. and Alice Kate Moon Croker. He was married April 15, 1926, to Miss Audie Mae Finch, who survives. Also surviving are two sons, Dr. Franklin R. Croker, Mableton, Ga., William Neil Croker, Lagrange, Ga., five daughters, Mrs. J. R. Clay, Rockmart, Ga., Mrs. R. J. Netzinger, Powder Springs, Ga., Mrs. Loran Crowe, Dallas, Ga., Mrs. Eddie Augilar, El. Salvador, C. A., Mrs. James Morrison, Atlanta, Ga., one brother, John Quinton Croker, Hiram, Ga., two sisters, Mrs. Myrtice Rakestraw, Hiram, Ga., Mrs. G. E. Ragsdale, Mableton, Ga., and 24 grandchildren.

At the age of sixteen he joined the Navy and while serving his country aboard ship in the Pacific, he was made to see his lost condition before a just God. He was granted a glorious deliverance and from that time no sacrifice was too great for him to be able to meet with those of like precious faith. He was ready always to give a reason for the hope that was within him.

He joined New Harmony Primitive Baptist Church May 22, 1926, and was baptised by the late Elder J. C. Hewatt. He was ordained to the Ministry, June 13, 1943, and served as pastor of New Harmony Church as long as his health permitted.

Although our hearts are sad, we do not question God's will. Our dear one was so afflicted and we feel that God, in his mercy, has called a faithful servant home. He, so often, quoted a portion of Daniel 4, Verse 35, "and He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what does't thou?" This, our dear brother believed with all his heart.

Funeral services were conducted June 20, 1973 from New Harmony Church by Elder W. D. Griffin and Elder Curtis Fuller. He was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the call of our blessed Lord, whom he loved and served.

Written by request of New Harmony Church.

Mrs. G. E. Ragsdale, Sister

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

J. J. WATSON, Pastor

NEW HOPE · PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 10:30 A. M.

V. C. HARTZOG, Pastor

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

A. B. CHUMNEY
D. W. COLLINS, Pastors

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., six miles SE. of Sulligent, Alabama.

C. C. HAND, Pastor
5840 Court O C P
Birmingham, Ala.

MACEDONIA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located one and one-half miles Southwest of Sulligent, Alabama, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M. All lovers of the truth are invited.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
HOUSTON PITTS, Clerk
Steens, Miss.

MT. ZION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each 4th Sunday at 11 A. M. about 10 miles N. W. of Birmingham just off of 78 Highway in Westwood, 2601 Forrestdale Blvd.

H. C. MOON
C. C. HAND, Pastors

OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., 6 miles S. W. of Winfield, Ala.

C. C. HAND, Pastor

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each second Sunday afternoon at 2 P. M., ten miles SW. of Fayette, Alabama.

C. C. HAND, Pastor

ELAM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located two miles North of Goshen, Pike County, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 o'clock.

J. P. MORGAN, Pastor
A. C. CARTER, Clerk
1335 Avalon Lane,
Montgomery 6, Ala.

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.

C. C. HAND, Pastor

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

V. C. HARTZOG, Pastor

WRITES CREEK CHURCH, 5 miles south of Slocomb, Ala., meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

E. B. HUGHES
B. A. ANDERSON
J. A. TEW, Moderators
J. T. COLLINS, Clerk
Slocomb, Ala.

MT. CARMEL CHURCH, Coffee Springs, Alabama, meets each first Sunday 11 A. M.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

PILGRIM REST CHURCH, located six miles north of Fordyce, Arkansas (leave Hy. 167 on Hy. 273—church is located about ¾ mile from Hy. 167) meets each third Sunday at 10:30 and on Saturday before at 7:30 p.m.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

NAOMI OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, six miles south of McKenzie, Alabama, meets the second Sundays in December, February, April, etc.

ELDER W. C. STANLEY, Pastor
Duncanville, Ala., Rt. 1
E. C. WEAVER, Clerk
Rt. 5, Box 47, Andalusia, Ala.

SHILOH OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, seven miles Northeast of Andalusia, Alabama, meets the second Sundays in July, September, November, etc.

ELDER W. C. STANLEY, Pastor
Duncanville, Ala., Rt. 1
NORA LEE McLEOD, Clerk
Red Level, Ala., Rt. 3

MT. CARMEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located southeast of Millport, Ala., meets second Sunday afternoons at 2 P. M.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.

MT. ZION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located 14 miles south of Fayette, Ala., meets each first Sunday at 2 P. M.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.

PLEASANT RIDGE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located at Moores Bridge, Ala., meets each 4th Sunday at 11 A. M.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.

SALEM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located 6 miles south of Gordo, Ala., meets each 4th Sunday at 2 P. M.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.
W. T. POSEY, Clerk
Northport, Ala.

MOUNTAIN FORK CHURCH, Madison County, Ala., meets each first and third Sundays at 11:00 A. M.

R. C. SIMMONS
R. H. HALE, Pastors
JAMES COLBERT, Clerk

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

WHITE WATER OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located about one mile northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, meets on first Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m. The annual meeting meets at 10 a.m. on Satuday before the first Sunday in August and con-

tinues through Sunday.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
JOE REAVES, Clerk

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Compton, California, meets each fourth Sunday at the home of L. W. Langwell, 12812 S. Williams Street.

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in the United States), meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is located one mile south of Newark, Delaware, just off of Highway 896.

JAMES POOLE, Pastor

NEW HARMONY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Hiram, Ga., meets every second Sunday at 11 o'clock.

C. C. HAND
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastors
GLENN RAGSDALE, Clerk

The SALEM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Benton, Ill. meets each 4th Sunday at 10:30 A. M. Communion time is the 4th Sunday in May.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

ELDER WAYMON CHAPELL, Mod.
WILLIAM VANTREASE, Clerk
JAMES CUNNINGHAM, Asst. Clerk
5921 W. Park Ave.
St. Louis, Mo. 63110

PLEASANT VALLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas. Meets with Mrs. Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C. on each second Sunday.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE LOST CREEK CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, meets first Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Kentucky, ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton, on Grayson Highway. Leave U. S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

NEW HOPE CHURCH (better known as Lick Creek) meets every third Sunday and **Saturday before at 11 A. M., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Kentucky.**

NEW HOPE CHURCH, Spearsville, La. meets first Sundays and Saturday afternoons before at 3:30.

J. L. SMITH, Pastor
C. C. BARRON, Clerk

CONCORD CHURCH about 12 miles north of Bastrop, La. one-quarter mile west of the Bastrop, La. and Hamburg Road, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

G. W. JONES, Pastor
GENEVA PETTIS, Clerk

GOOD HOPE CHURCH in Arkansas, about one mile north of Oakland, just across the State line, meets each second Sunday at 2:00 P. M.

G. W. JONES, Pastor
INA NEWSOM, Clerk

LIBERTY HILL CHURCH, located six miles northeast of Farmerville, La., ¼ mile east of Farmerville-Marion Highway, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30. Services are also held on each second Sunday at 10:30.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

UNION CHURCH, located near Linville, La., meets each third Sunday at 10:30 and on Saturday afternoon before at 2:30 P. M.

DAVID E. TURNER, Pastor

BETHEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located three miles N. E. of Steens, Miss. on Millport Road, meets third Sunday afternoons at 2 P. M.

H. C. MOON, Pastor
Hanceville, Ala.
EULIE McCOOL, Asst. Pastor
Steens, Miss.

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Baltimore, Maryland, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Street, near Calvert.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on

Falls Road about twenty miles north of Baltimore.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

HOPEWELL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Hopewell, N. J., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. All visitors are welcome.

ARTHUR R. WARREN, Pastor
MARY L. HELLINGS, Clerk
4 Maple Lane
Pennington, N. J. 08534

OLIVE AND HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Shokan, N. Y., meets each 2nd Sunday at 2:00 P. M. March through and including November.

DEACON E. K. ADSIT, Clerk

THE WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Warwick, Orange County, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are held at A. R. Vail's home, 55 Maple Ave., Warwick at 11 A. M.

THE MIDDLEBURG OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH meets at the home of Deacon Woodrow W. Bellinger, Duanesburg, N. Y. on fifth Sundays when the Lord so wills.

BEATRICE E. HOCKING, Clerk
419 Toll St., Scotia, N. Y.

THE WILSON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Wilson, N. C., meets each second Sunday at 3 P. M., and Saturday evening before at 7:30 P. M. The location is on the corner of Green and Jackson Streets.

D. B. STOKES, Pastor
PRESTON GAY, Clerk
P. O. Box 117, Black Creek, N. C.

FALLS OF TAR RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Rocky Mount, N. C., meets each second Sunday and Saturday before. Quarterly meetings March, June, September and December.

D. B. STOKES, Pastor
NINA PEARSON, Clerk

MOONS CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Providence, N. C. off Route 86, on Park Springs Road, meets each third Sunday morning at 11 A. M.

KENNETH KEY, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:00 P. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
ANA STEWART, Clerk
Granite, Okla. 73547

BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin, Oregon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes. Address communications to Lloyd Spikes, Elgin, Oregon.

ERNEST ATTEBERY, Pastor
SPENCER BURCH, Clerk

ROCK SPRINGS OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, meets each first Sunday at 10:30. The meeting house is located on highway 222, about one-quarter mile of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets by appointment on 5th Sunday afternoons.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

THE FIRST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH of Memphis, Tenn., meets each Sunday at 10:30 A. M., except the first three weeks in October when we dismiss for associations in the area. The church is located on Andrews Road, one block north of Highway 70 in the Ellendale Community, 7 miles east of Memphis.

H. R. PRINCE, Co-Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis
C. S. YOUNG, Co-Pastor
807 Pope St., Memphis
RICHARD H. CAMPBELL, Clerk

CANE CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and is located nine miles Southwest of Martin, Tennessee. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
ELMER PRINCE, Clerk
Clinton, Ky.

BORDEAUX PREDESTINARIAN PRIMI-

TIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Nashville, Tenn., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. The church is located on the old Hydes Ferry Road in Bordeaux, in Nashville. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

THE WALNUT FORK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Cottage Grove, Tennessee, meets on the second Sunday of each month.

R. L. VEAZEY, SR., Clerk

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Sharps Chapel, Tenn., meets at 11 A. M. each second Sunday. We are located about fifteen miles north of Maynardville, Tenn., on Big Valley Road. There is a sign on the main highway showing where to turn.

N. E. LAY, Clerk

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, 815 Little York Road, Houston, Texas, meets the first Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a.m. for its regular monthly meeting and business conference; and each Sunday at 10:30 a.m. for regular meetings.

ELDER C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
ELDER JERRY A. EVERS, Asst. Pastor
JIMMY LINDSEY, Clerk
SISTER ROBBIE HOLLOWAY, Asst. Clerk

MT. ZION CHURCH, Rt. 2, B x 23, Weslaco, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.; and each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. seven miles West of Weslaco, on highway 83.

GERALD SHIPMAN, Pastor
E. B. AULT, Clerk

SARDIS CHURCH, Amarillo, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 10:30, in the home of E. J. Parsons, 1711 Lincoln Street.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, has moved their meeting place to 3629 8th Avenue. They meet each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Take College Ave. bus to Butler and Ryon; go one block West, then half block North to church.

C. U. LANDERS, Pastor

THE ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST CHURCH, Lawn, Texas, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
MRS. NOLA STEWART, Clerk

AN ARM OF PILGRIM REST CHURCH, meets each second Sunday and Saturday night before at Earth, Texas.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
A. A. CHAMBERS, Clerk

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets on the second and fourth Sundays of each month at 10 A. M., in the meeting house at intersection of Highways 123 and 87. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

GERALD D. SHIPMAN, Pastor
LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk

THE OLD SALEM CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS, four miles South of Teague, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

SAINTS REST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each Sunday at 10:30 A. M., at 2710 Engle Street.

C. C. MORRIS, Pastor
D. G. CONNELL, Clerk

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Winnsboro, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
E. M. REEVES, Clerk

The Churches of which Elder Lloyd Wall is Pastor meet as follows:

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each first Sunday at 11:00 a.m., and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30 p.m. Cash, Texas near Greenville, Texas.

GUY SISK, Clerk

FELLOWSHIP CHURCH, meets each ser-

C. E. CAMP, Clerk

ond Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a. m. near East Mt. out of Gladwater, Texas.

PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a.m. Bro. Paul Daniel, Asst. Pastor. Located on Hwy. 67 West of Texarkana, Texas about 28 miles.

W. B. BURKHALTER, Clerk

PROVIDENCE CHURCH, meets third Sunday afternoons and Saturday afternoons before at 2:00 p.m.

PLEASANT HOPE CHURCH, meets on the fourth Sunday and Saturday morning before at 10:30 a.m. 8 miles So. of Atlanta, Texas off F. M. 251.

H. S. HILL, Clerk

The churches of which Elder E. J. Lambert is pastor meet as follows:

PHARON, meets first Sunday morning and Saturday night before, 5 miles NE Hawkins, Texas.

REHOBETH, meets second Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles N ElDorado, Arkansas.

NEILA RYAN, Clerk
1601 N. Emmett
ElDorado, Arkansas

BETHEL, meets third Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles NE ElDorado, Arkansas.

JEAN H. BURNES, Clerk
606 N. Parkway,
ElDorado, Arkansas

GOOD HOPE, meets fourth Sunday morning and Saturday morning before 7 miles NE Winnsboro, Texas.

GERTRUDE JONES, Clerk
905 Y Drive
Winnsboro, Texas

ANTIOCH CHURCH near Camden, Arkansas, meets each 2nd Sunday at 2 o'clock.

Everyone welcomed.

ELDER E. J. LAMBERT, Pastor
306 Richardson St.
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

The following churches compose the Original Powell's Valley Primitive Baptist Association:

UNION, Union County, Tenn. meets 11 A. M. on the second Sunday following the second Friday each month.

ODRA DAVIS, Moderator

MOUNTAIN CREEK, Claiborne County, Tenn. meets 11 A. M. on the Sunday following the third Friday each month.

D. R. CABBAGE, Moderator

DODSON'S CREEK, (Formerly Powder Spring Gap) Union County, Tenn. meets 11 A. M. on Sunday following the first Friday each month.

ODRA DAVIS, Moderator

FRIENDSHIP, Jefferson County, Tenn. meets 11 A. M. on the Sunday following the fourth Friday each month.

D. R. CABBAGE, Moderator

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located on Centreville Road, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia.

ARTHUR L. CARTER, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH meets each fifth Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is near Lucketts, about eight miles north of Leesburg, Va.

L. D. DUKE, Clerk
Charlestown, W. Va.

MT. ZION CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, Virginia. on Route 50, between Washington and Winchester, Virginia.

MRS. RAY HAWLING, Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are aways glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Manassas 368-4857.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at

11 A. M. and Saturday before at 8:00 P. M., Fairmont Park, 2023 Tidewater Drive.

WILLIAM L. EVERETT, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Qualla Road, Chesterfield County, Virginia, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M. Following are directions to the meeting house: South from Richmond at McGuire Circle, take Rt. 360 nine miles to "Longest" Service Station; turn left and go one mile, and turn right on No. 363 one mile to church.

ELDER D. L. SIMPSON, Pastor
MRS. WM. LEE, Clerk
4407 Clairton Rd.
Richmond, Va. 23234

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville, Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday night before, on State Road No. 1515 near Hughes Memorial School.

H. W. WRAY, Pastor
R. T. HOLLEY, Clerk

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each first Sunday at 11:00 o'clock. This church is located seven miles west of Gretna, Virginia on 605 one-half mile from Route 40. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
RUTH MATTOX, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Chatham, Va.

BELLVIEW PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday night before at 7:30. This church is located near Cave Springs about four miles from Roanoke, Virginia, one mile from 221. All visitors are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
J. A. SOWDER, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Salem, Va.

SANDY LEVEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each third Sunday afternoon at 2:30. This church is located on Route 635 about 5 miles south from Hardy, Va. 10 miles from Vinton, Va. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each fourth Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday before at 2:00 o'clock. This church is located on highway 623 about two miles from Fairystone Park. All visitors are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
CLAUDE R. HOPKINS, Clerk
908 Myrtle Rd.
Martinsville, Va.

BETHEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, of Predestinarian Faith, of Mossyrock, Washington, meets each 3rd Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday before at 2:00 o'clock. For information write the Clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. OPAL HUNTTING, Clerk
Silver Creek, Wash. 98585

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, Naches, Washington, meets at 11:00 A. M. each second Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the clerk.

E. J. ATTERBERY, Pastor
MILDRED A. SIMPSON, Clerk
Rt. 8, Box 506
Yakima, Wash. 98902

The churches of which Elder D. V. Spangler is pastor meet as follows:

MONTICELLO, on U. S. 29, between Greensboro and Reidsville, N. C. Services first Sundays at 11 o'clock.

REIDSVILLE CHURCH, Lindsay Street, Reidsville, N. C., meets each Second Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

DURHAM CHURCH, Durham, N. C. on Pacific Avenue, west side of town, just off of Highway 501 leading from Durham to Roxboro, N. C. Services every third Sunday at 11:00 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:00 P. M.

DAN RIVER, at Mayfield, N. C. on U. S. Highway 700 leading from Eden, N. C. to Danville, Va., about ten miles from Eden. Services each fourth Sunday at 11:00 A. M. and Saturday evening before at 7:30 P. M.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 142 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1974 NO. 2

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS
2/74
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

BOW IN THE CLOUD

I have been reading the *Signs* for several years, and I have had a desire to write some of my thoughts on the Scripture, but I know full well if the Holy Spirit doesn't guide my thoughts and my pen, and it is left to this poor sinner, I will have nothing that will be of any interest to the dear family of God.

I have been going among the Old Baptist for over fifty years. I love and rejoice in the doctrine of God our Saviour.

I love to read God's Word and His promises to His people. He made a covenant with Noah after the flood. "God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him saying, And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth." (Gen. 9:8-11)

God gave Noah a token of the covenant which He made. "And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it SHALL come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I *will look upon it,* that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth." (Gen. 9:12-16)

What a wonderful promise that was, and it stands just as firm today as it did when God spake to Noah. God told the Prophet Jeremiah that He would make a new covenant with the House of Israel and with the House of Judah. The Writer of Hebrews also tells us about this New Covenant. " . . . Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:" (Heb. 8:8) This new covenant was not according to the covenant that He made with their Fathers when He took them by the hand to lead them out of the Land of Egypt. The New Covenant was established upon better promises. This New Covenant was made with the House of Israel (Spiritual Israel). "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: And I *will* be to them a God, and they *shall* be to me a people:" (Heb. 8:10). This New Covenant is telling His people today "They shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all *shall* know me, from the least to the greatest." (Heb. 8:11)

This New Covenant is made of WILLS and SHALLS, and full of Mercy and Grace, for it says, "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. 8:12)

Harry Ward
214 Bay Street
Snow Hill, Maryland 21863

EXPRESSES HIS APPRECIATION

R.F.D. 1, Box 351,
Westminister, Md. 21157

Dear Elder Wood:

I am enclosing $10.00 for two years subscription to the *Signs,* and for the Indigent Fund. My eyes are failing and I have trouble reading, but manage to get a little comfort from it; and I miss it greatly.

To those I have known and visited over the years, I want to tell you how much I miss going among you. I am 83 years old now and not able to drive anymore. I have a nice home with my daughter, who takes good care of me.

The Old Baptists have been good to us. I go with Elder and Sister Wood to visit Brother and Sister Miller on the way to the meetings on Sunday at Rock Springs and Black Rock, and other visits on the first Sundays. We have meetings at the Baltimore Church on the 3rd Sundays and have good attendance and good meetings.

I feel so sinful that my hope seems to be very small, but it is still a hope; and God has promised never to leave or forsake us. I hope I am one of His predestinated children. I feel that God has been so good to me all this journey of trials and tribulations through. I have been a member of the Baltimore Church over 50 years, and have heard many wonderful sermons there and elsewhere. My wife and I had many wonderful trips with Elder and Sister Wood, and Elder and Sister Griffin, as far north as Canada and Maine, and down south to Alabama.

I feel that I know this doctrine is the only God honoring doctrine in the world, for it gives God all the praise; for salvation is all of His grace.

To all who have been so kind to us over the years, may God bless you and keep you in his love. In hope of life eternal after this life.

Your little brother in hope,
Quincy A. Gladding

ACCOUNT OF MEETING IN MAINE

218 Shad Point Road
Salisbury, Md. 21801

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

All week our hearts have been so full of joy and thankfulness to the Lord of mercy we felt we must share it. Last weekend we attended a meeting in Maine, the first they have had in four years. We had never attended a meeting where we felt the presence of the Lord more, or more love pouring from heart to heart. Elder D. B. Stokes, his wife and son, Brother Houston and wife and Elbert Robbings were there from North Carolina; Brother Corrone Bryant, his wife and sons from Norfolk, Va.; Brother and Sister Charlie Reynolds, Brother and Sister Elmer Hastings, Sister Maude Truitt, Ethel Townsend, Laurence and I, from the Salisbury Association, were there.

Sister Ruth Clark and daughter and her husband opened their home, and I feel their hearts, to us for the meeting. They did everything possible for our natural comfort, and the good Lord blessed us with spiritual food to the comfort of our hungry souls.

It had been so long since the little band there had had preaching, I tried to pray that the Lord would bless Elder Stokes to preach the gospel, and I felt my prayers had been answered. When you looked at the faces as they listened, from dear Brother Merrigold, who is ninety-seven, to the young ones, you could not but feel they were being blessed from above.

Since Laurence came to the church we have been so blessed to visit many dear ones both North and South and hear the many gifts the Lord has blessed our Elders with. If only I could praise His dear name as I would like. When I say thoughtless and foolish things, then remember how good the giver of all good gifts has been, I'm so ashamed.

We know how many years gone by that you visited those dear ones in Maine, and felt we wanted you and all the children of God to know they are still faithful and rejoicing in the Lord; and were once more blessed to meet together and have the Word preached to them.

Hoping to have a visit from you soon.

In love and sweet fellowship,
Laurence and Ethel Holloway

(We were glad to hear of the visit of the brethren and sisters with the dear ones in Maine. For several years while we lived in Baltimore, Sister Wood and I enjoyed meeting with these brethren and sisters at their associations. They were a lovely band of brethren, sound in the faith, and enjoyed the visits of the brethren from a distance. Among the others who were frequent visitors with them were: Elder Dodson, Elder Bellows, Elder E. C. Jones, Elder Vaughn, Elder Warren, Brother and Sister Quincy A. Gladding, and others. Elder Bellows and Elder Warren have served as their pastors.—J.D.W.)

Rt. 1, Box 223B,
Exmore, Va. 23350

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am enclosing my renewal to the *Signs* for another year; and it being Thanksgiving, it is well that we reflect on our blessings both natural and spiritual which come from God's bountiful hand.

I know that the one true and living God supremely rules both in Heaven and Earth; but it is insufficient for me unless I have experienced that he rules me. I may be acquainted with the law of Moses, which kills, yet I must be acquainted with the grace of Jesus Christ in order to live in hope of a better life with Christ our Lord. . . . Happy is the one who has suffered — he has found life. I have been a miserable sufferer most of my life, and I am glad, for through my many trials and temptations He has always reached down his hand for me. He has given me laughter to give and happiness to know, as well as frights and fears and sicknesses, to make me know his love. In Him there is no variableness or shadow of turning.

May the God of all blessings bless each of you, and keep you always in his love. I send greetings in the Lord to Sister Spangler, Brother and Sister Wood, and you.

In bonds of love,
Nell Gaskill

SERMON BY ELDER JAMES POOLE RECORDED AT DAN RIVER CHURCH, VIRGINIA, NOV. 23, 1972

It is my desire that our Heavenly Father might bless us this evening in a spirit of worship and praise to His Holy Name. I wish to read out of the Book of Mark, the 10th Chapter, verses 46-52.

"And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thow that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way."

I wish I knew where to begin in this. I see a blind man. The blind man knows he is blind. One would be a fool who said that a person blind didn't know that he was blind. There were other blind people in that day; probably, very many. Eye diseases were common then. However, this blind man was destined to be confronted with Him who was the healer of blind people. Apparently, he (Bartimaeus) plied his trade of begging outside the city of Jericho. How long he was blind, the Scriptures do not say. If he was blind from birth, I cannot tell; or if he was reconciled to his blindness, I don't know. He must have not been completely satisfied with it when he saw an opportunity for his sight to be restored.

Blindness, like deafness, like leprosy, like palsy, and like all other diseases in the Bible warrant a spiritual interpretation. The Lord spoke of those who had eyes to see and could not see; but now we are looking at one who did not have eyes to see and yet he saw, which brings to mind the scripture in the Book of Isaiah where the prophet says, "I am found of them that sought me not". What they found they were not looking for.

Bartimaeus is by no means an unusual character. I see me when I see Bartimaeus.I don't think I'm unusual; I see you, and I don't think you are unusual. All of us are descendants of the same pair, Adam and Eve. All of us are naturally afflicted with the same spiritual disease that has afflicted the human race since the first pair. We are blind apart from Grace.

He sat by the highway side begging. There was not much else he could do, was there? Have you ever known anyone who was blind physically? In the city where we live, I go to the post office, and there is a woman who sits there, and her employment is to sell chewing gum, cigarettes, newspapers, etc. She is completely blind. She has been trained to do certain things, and she can feel a one-dollar bill or a five-dollar bill and distinguish its denomination. There are many things she can do. Blind people can overcome a lot of things, and they can rise to great heights, and even in many areas surpass people with sight. But there is one thing they cannot do. They cannot see. Despite all of their attainments and all of their achievements that are contrary to their blindness, they still cannot focus their eyes upon any object and discern its identity. Apart from becoming healed, they will be blind and remain blind.

As children, we used to play games in which we would blindfold ourselves, turn each other around, and it's really a lost feeling to be blinded, even for a few minutes, isn't it? How sad that human beings, if ever confronted with their spiritual blindness do not believe they are blind, and yet they are so blind that they cannot see one single thing that is of any lasting or eternal value. He can see trees, or cars, or houses. He can see many things with the natural eyes, but all the human race, until attended to with the eye salve of Grace will be exactly like Bartimaeus. They are nothing better than beggars at the outskirts of a wicked city, and blindness will be their lot unless Divine intervention arises.

What took place when Bartimaeus sat there begging and our Lord and His group came by? The Scripture said that when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out. Though blind, he could hear.

We see in the Scriptures where the Lord opens the blinded eye. On one occasion He uses one method; on another occasion, He uses another. But at each instance it is the miraculous power of the Saviour that opens the blinded eye; but He did not open all blind eyes any more than He raised all dead people or any more than He healed all the sick, But as the Scriptures so often point out, *certain* individuals were called out to be the objects and the monuments of the power of the Saviour to demonstrate His coming from His Father to do His Holy will. As I think of you and I in that respect, I cannot see that we differ from

any of the human race other than if we are saved by Grace. We are, as Bartimaeus was, objects and monuments of the singular, selective, and determinate Grace of God, that no flesh should glory in His presence, that all boasting would be laid aside, and that all vainness would be removed. That we would full well recognize what we have and what we are, is as much a Divine miracle as the opening of the eyes of our brother, Bartimaeus.

What made him cry out? Other blinded folk, no doubt, lined the same path, but they were not stirred. "Jesus of Nazareth", he cries out. Something stirs and moves him, and he uses an expression that transcends human knowledge by saying, "Jesus, thou Son of David". That expression isn't used too often in the New Testament. Bartimaeus knew something other blind folk didn't know. He not only knew he was blind, but he knew that passing by was the Messiah, the Son of God, the Apostle and High Priest of God's calling, He who was sent to deliver God's people safely into the presence of God. Bartimaeus doesn't address Him as "Master" or "Rabbi" or "Lord", but "Jesus, thou Son of David". He owns Him as being the One and the Only One who came to save the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel. He has but one plea. Is it yours? You ought to ask yourself that question often. Is your plea the same as that of blind Bartimaeus? "Mercy, mercy, Lord; Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." He had no claim upon divine healing. There was nothing about this wretched character along the roadside that could commend him to the Son of David any more than there is anything in your charactor to commend you to God. Salvation or deliverance or sight or being brought out of the darkness into marvelous, glorious light of the kingdom of God's Dear Son comes not by merit. This man full well realized something, and someone had to teach him that if he ever received his sight, mercy had to be the way.

Brethren, if you see anything spiritually, mercy brought you your sight. His plea was singular. He wasn't tainted with the missionary enterprize, was he? All he could think about was his own condition. If the blind lead the blind, where are they going? To the ditch! Isn't that what the Scripture says? Was Bartimaeus in a position to be screaming and crying out for someone else? Did he say, "Lord, save those poor wretches over in Jericho who are blind?" Bartimaeus was concerned about mercy for himself. Bartimaeus only had one thing in mind at this time, and that was the Son of David was there and he needed mercy. He didn't have all the elaborate and grand thoughts of the "do gooders" and the work mongers in this world. He was concerned about his own state, and I am convinced that's where your concern is, primarily, isn't it? "Lord let me see."

And Jesus stood still! Yes, Jesus stood still! Do you suppose or could you imagine that this man had such a powerful, moving cry or plea that it could stop Jesus in His journey? I don't think so. There was a lot of "rabble" up and down the road after Him. They climbed trees to get a glimpse of Him; they thronged Him for fishes and loaves. They went with Him everywhere He was, to see what would take place next, and were carried away with the movement. If I'm not deceived in the matter, that which arrested the attention of our Lord was the acknowledgement from Bartimaeus that He was the Son of David. I hope God will bless you to think upon that somewhat. This was the Son of David. And Jesus stood still at that cry and commanded him to be called.

If you'll notice, Jesus didn't call him Himself. He sent someone else after him. Jesus sent an ambassador to him. The ambassador goes to him and says, "Be of good comfort; rise. He calleth thee." Probably beyond his fondest expectations when he heard those words, he thought, "Can it be true that He has really called me?"

Now, in all of this thus far I hope that you see some little part of the gos-

pel picture that the Lord's people have always loved, and that is that God calls us in our blindness, and when He calls no doubt it seems as if it must be as we were those who dreamed. "Could it be possible that the Lord could look on me with favor?" Brethren, I don't know how you feel; but even though I might stand before you and profess to be a gospel preacher, I cannot see how God could elect one like me. I know its by mercy. I know it's by divine prerogative, and yet at the same time it never ceases to amaze me and cause me to marvel to think that out of my family, I am the only one who walks this way. Why? Five children came out of the same womb. Four of them hate what I love. You explain that and you come up with an answer and come and tell me. If you can ever find it, I want to know something about it. Though I believe it, though I know it's taught in God's Word, it is a mystery so great that I have to stand in awe and amazement every time I think about it: that God is the God of choice, that He'll take a Bartimaeus here, and He'll take one there, and pass the others by, and say "It's not your right to complain." All I can say is, "Praise His Name." Praise His Name if I'm one of them. Glory to the Highest if I feel that the Grace of God and His mercy has been bestowed upon me. What more could I do than to lift my eyes to heaven and look to the Throne of God and extol His Glory and exclaim His virtues all the days of my life that I might be in that number. Don't you know it must have been an amazing thing to Bartimaeus? All the days of his life, many a person must have passed him, dropped a penny, or whatever they had, in his cup; but none of them ever called him to do for him what was going to happen now thru the power of God. I'll tell you this, many a person can come to your rescue in many a thing in this life, but they can't do for your soul what Jesus does when He calls you.

Do you feel called? Brethren, I do. I hope I feel called. I feel something. I feel inside my soul the glories of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, to make me really thankful. I feel in my soul I can groan sighs and pleasures to the Lord that I can be counted worthy to have some glimmer of hope beyond this world because I could say with the Apostle, "I'm a wretched person", and a wreck of humanity and blinder than Bartimaeus ever was. And if He doesn't call me, if He doesn't arrest me, if He doesn't lift me up, I have no hope. "Be of good comfort; rise. He calleth thee."

"And he casting away his garment rose and came to Jesus." Bartimaeus could not have had much (Materially). As a blind man, he couldn't work. I imagine the best he had was rags. In those days kings didn't live as well as paupers do today. But there was something about the call and something about the knowledge he had of Jesus, the Son of David, that stirred Bartimaeus to rise up, and before he approached Him, to cast aside his garments. Do you know what that reminds me of? The poor wretched sinner when he comes before the Lord at His summons throws away the old garments of former religion, the old garments of former professions, the old garments of former associations, the old garments of former ways and habits, and acknowledges he is about to be clothed in a new robe and in a new identity, and that he is about to be washed in waters that will identify him from this day forward with Jesus the Son of David. He doesn't have any need any longer for this garment. He doesn't know where the next one will come from, but I believe he portrays to us what God's people feel when they hear the summons: "Come. Be of good comfort, the Master is calling you." Then you are ready to lay the garments of this life aside and find a robe, find a covering that He'll provide that satifies beyond any expectations you could ever dream in this world. And he cast away his garment as if he couldn't be rid of it quickly enough. You need not try to tell yourself or anyone else when the Lord of Glory is revealed to His people, they

can't get rid of their idols fast enough; they can't get rid of their filthy garments fast enough; and every idol that they have within their bosoms they say, "Lord, bless me to tear it from my breast. Be rid of it. Strip me. Bring me before You with nothing. Let me stand in Your presence as a poor blind beggar. All I have on my lips is a plea for mercy, and somehow, Lord, you've heard that plea. And now that old garment won't do me any longer. I can't stand in Your presence in that. Whatever you have for me will be all right."

Jesus answering, said unto him, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" Do you feel that when the Lord whispered sweet peace in your ear, He asked you a question something like that? "What wilt thou that I do for you?" I can't answer for you. Your longings and your inclinations might have been somewhat different from mine, but I can tell you one thing without any hesitation that I felt and still feel today: "Lord, I'll tell you one thing you can do for me. Help me to hate sin. Bless me to despise myself. Bless me with an enlarged view of Your Holiness. Give me a glimpse of Heavenly things. Let me taste the Waters that flow from Thy pure stream. Let me rejoice in Thy good comfort. I'd be glad to lose my eyes, naturally, if I could see spiritually. Open the eyes of my understanding."

"Bartimaeus, what is it that you would have me do for you?"

"Lord, my request is simple. Let me see,—that I might receive my sight." Naturally, the pressing feeling in the heart of Bartimaeus was to have his sight restored.

What about the spiritual Bartimaeuses? What is pressing in our hearts? Were the Lord to come to us this day and say, "What wilt thou? What is your request?"

It is a great comfort when the Lord brings His people down to where the question comes to the soul, "What do we want of the Saviour?" To be able to say, "Lord, give me sight. Let me see." What do you suppose the first thing was that Bartimaeus saw when the Lord gave him sight? The blind man said, "Lord, that I might receive my sight", and Jesus said unto him, "Go thy way. Thy faith hath made thee whole". And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus away.

The Lord showed him the way. He said, "Go thy way." What way is that? I don't know, but he followed Him in His way, and I don't find a rebuke there. Bartimaeus had his eyes opened.

Probably for a few hours, or maybe a day or two, there was a little stir around town:

"Jesus of Nazareth came through, and He opened the eyes of a blind man."

"Is that so? Well, what do you know about that."

"Well, that won't last long. They told me he had an incurable disease, and he'll soon be back out here begging again."

"He followed off with him, you say?"

"Yes, he followed off with Him."

Oh, brethren, all sorts of remarks are made when God's people have their eyes opened:

"They went off in some other way. They'll soon be back. They'll find out that it's not profitable. That dying movement won't do them."

Let me tell you one thing, we never heard of Bartimaeus ever going back. Jericho was a cursed city, and he not only left the outskirts of the city, but I believe that he followed his Lord as long as the Lord allowed him. God's people today, when they have their eyes opened and He says, "Go thy way", they find out that the only way to go is in the way of following Jesus. Lord, that where you are, there may I be also. Let me walk with you. Let me breathe with You: Let me lie down in my bed at night with You; and let me rise in the morning with You; let me see You.

I wonder what it is like to really see our Saviour. The Apostles walked with Him for over three years, and didn't really see Him until after He was gone. I've never seen Him, yet in minds eye, when blessed with little glimpses, it

brings tears to my natural eyes and joy unspeakable and full of glory. When I can see somewhat of the Man, Christ Jesus, the Son of David, whom God has sent to this world to gather together people like you and me, and bless us to throw aside the garments of this life, to identify with Him and see Him and walk with Him. I say what beautiful visions these are.

Have you seen Him? Have you been blessed with that sight? You may say, "Oh, I hope I have." That's about the most I can say, but I'll have to say that I've seen something; something more beautiful, something more lasting than anything I have ever seen in this world. And I'm not going to part with it, the Lord being my helper. It's something we can cling to. And though we might lose our natural sight in time to come, we'll have this in the soul. I might encourage those who as yet have not, like Bartimaeus, cast aside their garments, to weigh that. If the Lord bids you come, then why hang on to those old beggar's garments. The Kings Palace is a home for beggars; but first the old garment must be cast aside and the Robe of Christ's Righteousness be put on. Has Our Lord called and clothed you? If so, rejoice.

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232 D Falkirk Court
Braemar Lane,
Kalamazoo, Mich. 49007

Dear Elder Spangler:

Thanks for your letter and the *Signs*, which I enjoyed immensely. I have believed that dear, sweet doctrine ever since the Lord taught it to me. I can truly say with the Apostle Paul that "I didn't learn it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." I have been blessed with a very vivid experience of grace: if ever I meet you I will tell you about it. It seems there are very few who believe this great doctrine, but the Lord says, that He has not called you because you were the most of all people, but because you are the fewest, and because He loved them. It seems that the Lord has never done his work through great numbers of people, but has always chosen the few to perform his miracles.

It was Gideon to whom the Lord said, "Let the people who are fearful and afraid return to their places." Some Old Baptists are fearful to stand for the absolute sovereignty of God: they fear criticism and the losing of their popularity of the world — so they return from fighting the battle. Some bow down to drink of the things of the world and lose sight of the God that bought them. The Lord says, "Many are called but few are chosen." I truly believe that few have been chosen to fight the battle for the whole truth of our blessed Lord. And I pray that you who have been blessed to be called among the few, will not be discouraged, for the promise is unto you. I pray that you stand erect with your eyes turned toward heaven as you drink of the water of life, and not bow down on your knees to drink of the beggarly things of this sin cursed world. When we lose sight of our God, we are filled with fear of the things of the world instead of the fear of God.

Our blessed Lord says, "Fear not little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." If he had said big flock, the world would have had it on us; but the promise has on all occasions been to the few. He says, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

We need not look for the presence of the Spirit of our blessed Lord to be in every wind that blows, nor every quaking of the earth, or every fire that is kindled by men. Elijah looked for the Lord in the wind that blew and shook the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks, but the Lord was not in the wind. Elijah said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and

I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away. And He said go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire, a still small voice." (1 Kings 19:10-11)

So we do not look for the blessed Lord in these great winds of doctrine which shake the earth of the ungodly, neither the fire and hell which they make so much fuss about. Our God works within the inward part of our life and soul by a still small voice, which none hear but he to whom He speaks. In all generations God will reserve unto himself a chosen few that will not bow the knee to drink of the idolatrous things of the world.

I am sure everything is fulfilling the purpose that the Lord made it for, so that our God is not, and never will be disappointed in anything, for he declared the end from the beginning, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

Brother Spangler, please find enclosed $7.00 for two years subscription to the Signs. Forgive me for not writing sooner. I have been ill. May the grace of God be with you all the days of your life, is the sincere prayer of one whose hope is in the Lord.

Your in the sweet hope of life eternal.

Mary M. Pearson

DESIRES INFORMATION

422 8th Avenue, N.W.,
Decatur, Ala. 35601

Signs of the Times:

Would you please send the *Signs of the Times* to my new address. My old address was in East Point, Oregon; and my new address is 422 8th Avenue, N. W., Decatur, Ala. 35601.

If there is someone who could enlighten me on the 24th chapter and 19th verse of Matthew, "And woe unto them that are with child, and give suck in those days. But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter or on the Sabbath day. For there shall be great tribulations such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time. No or ever shall be."

I enjoy the *Signs of the Times* very much. I am 75 years of age, and cannot hear very good. So most of my hearing the Word preached is from the *Signs*. I do not live near my church, and not often do I get to go to church.

A little sister in hope,
Dora Stough

(If anyone sees any more than the great tribulations and sorrows in the above, please write Sister Stough.—Editors)

1822 Foxwood Road
Houston, Texas 77008

Elder John D. Wood
Signs of the Times

Dear Brother in Christ:

I have requested that someone give their views through the SIGNS of their belief on the napkin and the linen clothes in the empty tomb. There was no reply through your paper, because as I was informed, the paper had already gone to press before my letter was received.

I feel so strongly that Jesus left the napkin in the empty tomb to represent the Israelites in their Promised Land, and the linen clothes represent the great multitude. I believe that the Lord revealed this to me even though I do not claim to be a writer, or a prophet. I am just an old woman (91 years of age) that gets a lot of pleasure from reading the Bible. I have no hard feelings toward any Sister or Brother writing their views. I just wanted to give my view, the Lord willing.

I discussed this subject with our Pas-

tor, and he told me that he believed just as I do. Thank God for that.

I believe the Lord left the napkin and the linen clothes in the grave to say who He died for. I am sending Scripture references in both the Old and New Testament to prove why I write. "Nothing in my hand I bring; simply to the cross I cling"—no prophet, but only a hope in the Lord, God.

I am sending this to Bro. Wood because I love his messages in the SIGNS, and to see if it meets his approval. I am the same Mrs. J. F. Rich of Willis, Texas that sent a donation of $16.00. I have moved to Houston to live with my daughter at the above address since the death of my dear husband in March. I would like to have you send a year's subscription to my brother:

Mr. and Mrs. M. S. Welch
405 North 7th Street
Crockett, Texas 75835

Yes, Christ did break down the middle wall of partition by his death. Eph. 2:11-21. But, he did not promise that the Gentiles would have a part in the Promised Land. The Lord had already given it to the Israelites. John 14:1-3 tells us not to let our hearts be troubled, but that there are many mansions in the Father's house. He has gone to prepare a place for us, and He will come again to receive us unto Himself. I believe He means here to include the Gentiles which gives us hope.

I believe the following scriptures prove that there is a separation to support my views:

Revelation 7:3-4 "Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their forehead. And I heard the number of them which were sealed, and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel." Revelation 7:9 "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands."

Romans 9:27 "Isaiah also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved." Romans 11:4-5 "But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace."

Isaiah 10:21 "The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God." Isaiah 60:21 "Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified." Isaiah 61:9 "And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed." Amos 9:8 "Behold, the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from all the face of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the Lord."

Jeremiah 23:3 "And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase." Jeremiah 32:37 "Behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely." Psalm 147:2 "The Lord doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel."

Ezekiel 34:13 "And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country." Isaiah 65:9 "And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my

servants shall dwell there." Joel 3:1, 20 "For, behold in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations . . . But Judah shall dwell forever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation."

Revelation 7:4 speaks of the number being sealed of all the tribes of the children of Israel being an hundred and forty and four thousand. These were the Israelites I believe that are represented by the napkin, and the multitude spoken of in Rev. 7:9 represent the Gentiles in the linen clothes.

I hold no ill will toward anyone who believes differently than I, but I will appreciate hearing the opinions of other readers of the SIGNS.

I am sure I have wearied you with this lengthy letter, but I thank you for your patience.

Your Sister in Hope,
Mrs. J. F. (Mollie) Rich

LETTER TO ELDER HUDSON

Route 2, Box 48
Strong, Ark.

Dear Brother Hudson:

It is with fear and trembling that I attempt to write to you. I am so weak and poor in writing or talking, and am so helpless, and dependent upon my Lord, to write anything of any interest to you or any one. I hope the Lord will guide my pen, to write on some things that have been on my mind since the Eagle Lake meeting last Saturday. It was a wonderful, sweet meeting, a day long to be remembered. After hearing you tell some of the brethren that you felt to be in darkness, and that you wanted the other ministers to go on with the preaching, I wanted to write to you, because I feel that I know what you have been going thru, since I have been thru long periods of darkness a great portion of the time.

I believe all the Lord's little children suffer the afflictions of the gospel. We read in 2 Timothy, "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me, but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God." In Romans it is written: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." His people, like Moses, are made willing to suffer the afflictions of the righteous, rather than to enjoy sin for a season. The body is dead because of sin. The spirit is life because of righteousness. "Little children, greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." I am made to hate sin and the pleasures of this world. I once loved those things, but I now hate them with great hatred; and also my own life.

Spiritual things are my meat and drink. Where your heart is, there your treasure is also. I love to be with His people and feast upon that heavenly manna that comes down from the Father of lights. Dear Brother, if it wasn't for those spiritual things which are above, then I would feel I had nothing to live for; except my family.

The wonderful preaching by God's called ministers that I have been blessed to hear from time to time, is so strengthening and comforting to my little hope. Paul said: "When I am weak, then am I strong. I can do all things thru Christ that strengtheneth me." Without him we can do nothing. He has to work the will and the do. I cannot even think a good thought when left to self. I have no control over my seasons of darkness, nor the seasons of light that come and go as my Lord sees fit. It is comforting to know that the Lord works all things after the council of his own will and good pleasure, and none can stay his hand. There have been times when I was in a state of darkness, doubts and fears. I have hoped against hope that I even had a hope. How glorious it was when our Lord lifts us up out of that sad state and gives us the spirit of comfort: his word of peace. A while back when I was in a low state, I

dropped off to sleep sitting in a chair, when these words come to me: "The Lord is my light and my salvation." These sweet words that the Lord puts in us are so comforting to his little ones, who feel to be the chief of sinners.

In bonds of love,
Mrs. Lula B. Fox

P. O. Box 6,
Shokan, N. Y. 12481

Dear Elder Wood:

I am sending you this Memorial for Elder Amasa J. Slauson, our pastor since 1946, which is twenty-seven years —serving our churches over a quarter of a century, preaching the truth with power unto salvation by the Holy Spirit and grace and mercy.

Hope this finds you well and still walking in the strength of the Lord. Would appreciate a copy of the Signs *with* the Memorial.

Our love and prayers to you and all of like precious faith.

In the hope that is precious,
Deacon Edward K. Adsit
Church Clerk

(See Memorial this issue.)

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(To December 1, 1973)

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James C. Kelley of 346 Huntington Drive, Slidell, Louisiana, 70458, desires to know if there is a Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church near his home; or if there are any members or friends living near his address. He would be glad to hear either by letter or phone.

"HIS LOVE TAKES CARE OF ME."

My Father knows that which is best
Whatever it may be;
And in this truth I sweetly rest:
His love takes care of me.
Through Jesus Christ my great high-priest,
My Father works his will;
And though I am his very least,
I know he loves me still.

In Him there is no dark of night,
But only endless day:
I'm ever walking in His sight
I cannot lose my way.
My life is in His holy hand,
In Him I am secure:
All things are at his great command,
He is steadfast and sure.

My holy and righteous Father in heaven, I know that of myself I could never merit thy great love and mercy; but, my Father, there is One in thy presence who has been made to be all things for me, and unto me: His precious name is Jesus my beloved Lord and Saviour.

Ethel Gilland
Panama City, Fla.

Danville, Virginia February, 1974

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

EDITORIAL

"I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me. Come my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages. Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth; there will I give thee my loves. The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved. (SS 7:10-13)

Methinks that I shall never tire in speaking and writing about the divine relationship that exists between Christ and His chosen people. With all of the ties known in this time state there is not anything known among the children of men as lovely as that of the nuptial relationship between a man and a woman. Modernism has lost sight of the sanctity of matrimony, but it is a sign of its decay, not a sign of the decay of holiness before the Lord. That holy state of matrimony was given and approved by Him with whom we all will have to do, either as His children, or His enemies. How blessed is that people that knew the beauty of this happy state in time, and have been so highly favored of God that they also knew Christ as their spiritual Husband.

In the state of matrimony which God appointed, the wife owns as much of the common property as does the husband. Before the nuptials are said the husband to be will call his farm or field as *his*, but after the ceremony is said she has every right to say *our* fields. She may have been reared in abject poverty, but, marrying a millionaire, she will be a joint sharer in that million. Such reasoning does not do justice to the holy ecstasy of a poor fallen woman that is brought into divine relationship as the bride of the Prince of Peace.

As this bride breaks forth in ascribing glory and honor to her state, she is talking the doctrine of God's saving grace. Her statement has all the doctrine that the church of Christ is preaching. He loves her. His manner of love is everlasting. It is not based on futurity of the sinner's action. God has not said, If you will love me, I will love you. He has said that we (His people) love Him because He first loved us. The unbeliever says that if we will love God He will love us. God says, I have loved thee with an everlasting love (Jer. 31:3), and I am sure that this reaches back into all the time of God. If one can tell me how old God is, I will tell you how long that God has loved His chosen people. God is writing to them in time, and His use of the word "therefore" is a death-knell to all brands of a conditional love. He loves us in time to the same degree that He loved us in eternity, and proves it to us by drawing us with loving kindness. Thus, in a time unexpected, He draws us to Him in holy allurement and betrothal and marriage and pledges us a

joint relationship with Him for time and eternity. Thus, dear humble child of God, we are blessed to look into the eyes of our Redeemer God and say, "I am my beloved's, and His desire is toward me."

Job tells us thousands of years ago that God has a desire towards the work of His hands. To you I write: If a child of God, for your comfort; if a gainsayer, to stop your cavelling. This was the way it was fifteen hundred years before Christ came into the world; this was the doctrine on which the relationship between Christ (in type) and His church or bride existed about a thousand years before He came in the flesh; in the last book in the Bible (about four hundred years before Christ came), God reiterates His statements to Job and to Jacob (Israel), and while He was with that bride while in His flesh, His desire was always to His people, and I am not ashamed, but, rather delighted, to tell you that any doctrine promulgated in this time state by any creature that would talk to you about a conditional love for dead alienated sinners to use and exercise in order to get God to love them, is not the truth.

What a miracle has been performed. At the first she said unto Him, "Look not upon me, because I am black," now she says, "I am my beloved's and His desire is towards me." How precious. How my heart is made to leap for joy that although she sold herself into bondage by transgression and was thrust into a wilderness of sin, yet, that He went after her. He went after Jacob; He crossed the sea to reach the lunatic; He went to the blind boy; He went to the well to meet the woman; He visited Saul; He went down into the wilderness to bring this chosen bride out; He went to the cross for her; He went to the grave for her, but why go on? The doctrine of grace gets more beautiful and more precious. He starts all of the activities that saves a sinner; He makes all of the moves to bring her into holy relationship with Himself. In good society (it seems that not much of that kind remains) the man always goes to the girl. In religion (that is in the pure and undefiled kind) the Man always approaches the maid, not the maid the Man. It is not that it is too wonderful the way of a woman with a man, but it is too wonderful the way of a Man with a maid. (Pro. 30:19)

Christ loved us while we were dead in sin. If He had waited on us to approach Him He would have waited for a bride a long time. I leave it to unbelievers to say how long. But He did not thus wait. I leave it for believers to praise His high and lofty name for that. He loved her and quickened her into life, cleansing her (experimentally), dressing her and presenting her unto Himself a chaste virgin and they were living in holy wedlock at the time of our text, and it being a part of the Bible written aforetime for our benefit, I am sure that they are now engaged in lovely union.

Now the Husband talks. Has He talked with you? Has He gently whispered in the midst of your doubts and fears that I love you, and will fight your battles, heal your foul backslidings, and bring you off more than conquerors through my love? Yes, yes, dear reader, He has thus addressed you. In the morning, when the dew of youth is on His lips, He walks in His garden saying, "My people shall be willing in the day of my power," and thus you leave what you are doing and go with Him into the field. You may have sat with Luke with a scalpel in your hand; you may have sat with Matthew in the custom house; you may have been at sea in fishing clothes and a net in your hand; you may have been on the road to persecute the saints of God, but when He called you, there was a laying down of the physician's robe, the pen of the scribe of the tax gatherer, the fisherman's rig, the role of persecutor, and an humble following of the Lord.

Let us go into the field. Note, dear brethren, that He had the field. They did not buy the field together, He paying half and her half. She did not pay a farthing; He paid it all. Ruth did not contribute anything to the field of Boaz,

nor to the bountiful harvest in it. He bought it at a great price, and bought it for Ruth, and had it ready for her in her hour of need. This is the nucleus of the doctrine of Old Baptists. It doesn't matter who they are, there is not a people that can claim the doctrine of grace save our people. Everybody else tells you that you will have in the kingdom of God's dear Son according to what you do about it. But that is not God's way. Even before we sinned, yea, before the world Jesus Christ was set up (Pro. 8:23). Everything a sinner was going to need in time was in Him, and every blessing set in Him, and was pledged to sinners. These blessings would reach each and every case. No trial unprovided for, no work unprovided for, no need unprovided for, no sickness but that what would be needed to cure it, was provided in Christ.

This field, this garden, this city, this country belongs to the Lord and to His people. It is His by work, by purchase, by death, by gift from His Father; it is ours by gift, by grace, by love, by mercy. Everything in it belongs to us in this way. It is worth exploration; it is enticing; it is exhilarating to him or her that has travelled much in the dark, that has known much of hot searing desert travel, that has often felt to be on a wilderness road. To go into a well kept field, a field that another has kept, calls for awe inspiring adoration, and especially is this true when the companion of the keeper of the field is one that has not kept their fields. (S.S. I:6)

As the children of Israel had drinking and eating places set for them by Him that sent them on that route, as the timber was placed together in floats (rafts) and floated upwards to the building place, as the table of the Lord is spread where hungry children are, even so in this lovely field of the Lord, there are villages for lodging. As this bride travels she has need of refreshing seasons wherein water and bread are found for sustenance. The husband plants these villages (churches) for resting, for watering, for feeding of the old and footsore, for the application of ointment (gospel) to the wounded and wearied, for the tender care of the little ones. (S.S. I:8)

How glad we are that One with a learned tongue was given to us, and that He is ever able to give a word, a fitly spoken word, to him or her that is weary. (Isa. 50:4) It is morning by morning, day in and day out, night in and night out. The night watches are so long and weary. At the first watch, soon after having been delivered from the reigning power of sin, watching is not so tedious, but as His appearance is delayed, as the monsters prowl and shadowy and delusive spectres make their appearances, the watching gets more tiresome, and, after being filled with sorrow (Luke 22:45), and have a multitude of watchings (2 Cor. 11:27), they get so burdensome. What joy as dawn begins to come, and weeping begins to cease (Psa. 30:5). The long night of sorrow is over, the watchings through the lattice work of the soul (S.S. 3:9) have come to an end, the rising of the Sun of righteousness is at hand (Mal. 4:2), the day dawns. As the Husband, the Day Star of her soul, kisses her and comforts her from the agony of the long night watches, she is ready to go early out into the garden of the Lord. They now watch together; gone are the long watches, gone are the nightmares of the soul when trembling on the ledge not knowing whether they are to live or die. His interest is her interest. His vineyards are her concern. Her love has been stirred by the appearing of her Beloved. Thanksgiving floods her heart and mind and soul as she contemplates the vineyards, knowing that she has not had any hand in planting them. She watches with Him the coming up of the little vines, the small plantings which He has planted for the furnishing of wine on the lees for those that needed a spiritual cordial. Ah, poor sinner, what is it that causes you to follow Him early in the morning? It may seem strange, but I say unto you that it is because you are worn out. If it

seems strange, look back to your long watches, look back to your tossings to and fro, look back as you watched in vain for the dawning, look back dear child when you were laboring in the long law night. The morning has come at last, and with it the Voice of your beloved, Let us go forth into the field, or, come unto me you that have labored through the law night, and I will give you rest in my shaded and watered field of grace. You may be called to preach; you may be a deacon in the house of God; you may be a little one that mercy has given you a place at the feet of saints; you may still be getting crumbs beside the Shepherd's tent, but how ever much that He sends forth as a maiden in the harvest field (Ruth 2:8: Pro. 9:3) to do, it will be the most restful days of your life. There are not any burdens under laboring in this field. All of it is a labor of love; all of it is restful to the soul.

The law night was fraught with slinking creatures spying out your liberty; leeks and onions filled the night with their stink to your tender nostrils, but the Saviour says, Let us get up early to see the vineyards that I have planted for you; let us see if the plantings of my hand, the trees of righteousness which is of me (Isa. 61:3) are flourishing; let us see if the tender grape appears; let us see if Caleb and Joshua had a delusive dream about the rich clusters that they said were in Canaan (Num. 13:23); let us see if the pomegranates of that goodly land are now transplanted in spiritual Canaan and are settled and grounded and growing in this field of ours; let us see if the pomegranate is budding that we might have its sweet smelling fragrance to perfume our bed (S.S. 3:5,7). His promise, after all of these sovereign "lets" are brought forth, is that He will give her His loves. All of His plantings shall perfume the church of God, the bride of the Lord Jesus Christ. The lily and the rose, the plant of renown, the pomegranate, the aromatic scent of tall and stately cedars, together with the budding and flowering of every planting of His right hand, yea all of His love shall be displayed in that field and she shall sing,

> " 'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
> And grace will lead me home,"

and in this hidden and enclosed field and garden and pasture she will be led by the word going forth out of His mouth to her in a beckoning directive that shall enable her to go in and out and find the sweet smell of the mandrakes (love apples) for her enjoyment, and how wonderfully gifted is this people, this church of the living God. The building which Solomon erected unto the Lord had entrances on each side and they were not closed day or night. There is not anything at all that is as inviting as the doors or gates into the church of the living God. Even as a poor sinner enters he or she is faced with the most lovely declaration of welcome that they have ever heard, to wit, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Ah, my soul, look up, for your redemption draweth nigh and our salvation is nearer than when we first believed (Luke 21:38; Rom. 13:11). You will find inside this gate all that your poor soul has ever desired. All, all is ready and waiting for your Adored Lover to speak the word calling you home. This field, this garden, this pasture, this church home was prepared for you before you get there. In the midst of this city in the middle of the street of it you will find a river of pure crystal clear water flowing out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, and the Tree of Life will be there with fruits being yielded at all times. It is true that offences will come, but placed before you will be the gospel declaration that not anything shall ever be able to separate you from the love of God which is in your Lover and Husband, the Lord Jesus Christ, and from His divine hand you shall evermore be fed on that which was laid up for you before the world begin, and wrought out for you in time

(Psa. 31:19), and you shall be preserved from all apprehension of destruction by being hid in the pavilion of love.

W.D.G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

REMARKS ON EPHESIANS 2:5

Brother Beebe: Will you give your views on Ephesians 2:5. "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. (By grace ye are saved.)"

Isaac Briscoe

REPLY.

Alexandria, D.C., February 15, 1839.

In reply to our brother, we will say, Such as we have, we will give; and certainly nothing more can reasonably be required at our hands. We understand the apostle in this epistle to a Gentile church, and with them, to all the faithful in Christ Jesus, to be laboring to show that all spiritual blessings result to us from the fixed purpose and determinate decrees of God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; and flowing to the heirs of promise in precise accordance with the doctrine of election—According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. And having in the first chapter brought to view the firm, immutable and everlasting basis of our hope for life and salvation, dwells, in the immediate connection of our text, on the quickening power of God, in reference to the execution of his eternal and unfrustrable design in the salvation of his people. In the passage presented for consideration, the saints are spoken of as being quickened together with Christ, and saved by grace. We presume the following considerations are fairly involved in the subject before us, viz:

First. The life which the saints had in Christ before they fell in Adam. That the saints had any personal individual existence other than that which was given them in Christ, we shall not contend; but that they existed as the spiritual body of which Christ is the Head, is as clearly proven in the scriptures, as is the existence of Christ as Head of his body; and that the body of Christ was created in Christ, as that Eve was created in Adam; and that they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and in him were predestinated to all that they were by Jehovah destined to be, either in time or eternity, is fully implied in the first chapter of this epistle. The omniscient eye could, and did see the substance of Christ, lying in embyo; and in his book all his members were written, when as yet there was none of them. Psa. cxxxix. 16. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. John 1:4. Do we inquire, What life was in him, who was with God, and who was God? The apostle answers: "Your life is hid with Christ in God." "When he who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Col. 3:3, 4. In perfect harmony with this sentiment, is the expression of the psalmist. "He that dwelleth in the *secret place* of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Psa. 91:1: The place where God has hidden the life of his people, must be a secret place, and under the shadow or protection of the Almighty; and that such is the place of the saints' security, see Deut. 33:27. "The Eternal God is thy refuge," &c. And that such has ever been the spiritual habitation of the saints, see Psa. 90:1, 2. "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations; before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world; even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God," &c. As we apprehend no danger of these premises being disputed by Old School brethren, for brevity's sake we pass.

Second. The cause and nature of alienation, death, &c. In the preceding part of the chapter from which we have our text, the apostle connects our death with our existence in an earthly Adam, or

under the law, as transgressors thereof; dead, he says, in trespasses and sins. He has elsewhere informed us that sin is a transgression of the law; but where there is no law there is no transgression. Hence this death has reference to our law state; and consequently to our relation to an earthly Adam. Now if we were to speak of the first great cause of all causes, we would say with the psalmist, (11:3) "Thou turnest men to destruction, and sayest, Return, ye children of men." Or in the language of the apostle, (Rom. 8:20) "For the creature was made subject to vanity; not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." But when speaking as to the procuring cause, on the part of man, we conceive that our alienation from God, and total depravity, and death in sins, is attributable to the introduction of sin into the world. In Romans 5:17, the apostle tells us, that by one man's offence, death reigned by one, &c. And again in this epistle, (4:18) this apostle attributes our alienation from the life of God, to that ignorance which is, to us, in consequence of our depravity by sin. Hence he very justly denominates it a death in trespasses and sins. The nature of our alienation is properly compared to a state of captivity "All we like sheep have gone astray." Isa. 53:6, 1 Peter 2:25. The law under which we were created in Adam required of us perfect and perpetual obedience; and said in a voice of thunder, The soul that sinneth, it shall die. We had all sinned and come short of his glory; hence we fell under the condemning sentence of the law, became lawful captives, were by the law cast into the prison of death, and there held in chains of darkness, without hope, and without God in the world; and, as the apostle here tells us, "That at this time we were without Christ, (or life—for Christ is our life) being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, (Gentiles literally,) and condemned sinners, in the spiritual view of the subject, and strangers to the covenants of promise."

The covenants of promise made with Abraham, were figurative of the provisions of grace locked up in the cabinet of the divine mind, for the heirs of salvation; and in our degradation we were utter strangers to that provision, and equally so to any other way of life and salvation. Notwithstanding our captivity, darkness, bondage, guilt and death, we are not to suppose that what was treasured up in Christ for us, had undergone any change; God is immutable; and Jude assures us that the saints which were sanctified by God the Father, were preserved in Christ Jesus. Jude 1, And Paul has named them as the "reserved ones;" (Rom. 11:4) and our text, as we propose to show, forbids the notion that God's love towards us could be abated by any thing which we could do. "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it."—Songs 8:7. Nor can all the substance of poor, lost, sinful mortals buy it; it is sovereign, discriminating, eternal, immutable, and invincible. Could we admit that in our fall in Adam, we fell out of Christ, or that the vital relationship of his children to him was dissolved, in relation to that life which was given us in him, and secured for us in him before all worlds, we should despair of salvation by him; for the lawful captive must be *lawfully* delivered; and by virtue of the eternal indissoluble union; the right of redemption was vested in Christ; and on this principle he came into the world, and was made under the law, (not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it) to redeem them that were under the law. In this relationship he could, and did as truly represent us, in the obedience which he rendered to the divine law, as Adam had represented us in his first transgression of divine authority; hence, says the apostle, "Therefore as by the offence of one, judgement came upon all men unto condemnation, even so (or exactly so) by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life; for, as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."—Rom. 5:18, 19.

In the foregoing, we have expressed our views of the life we had in Christ from everlasting, of our fallen state, and alienation in our earthly Adam, our captivity, bondage, &c., and also the way of life through the obedience and death of Christ; but our text says, we are "quickened together with Christ." Apart from him we must have been, had the pre-existing bond been severed; and apart from him there was no way possible for us to be quickened. Our natural head, Adam, was made a *living soul;* but our spiritual representative was made a *Quickening Spirit.* He quickeneth whomsoever he will. Together with him. How sweet! how heavenly the language! Together with him, we had life before the world began. Together with him, we are in due time quickened and raised from the dead. Together with Christ, are we sons of God, and heirs of immortal glory, and so completely together, or united, that when he died for us all, then were we all dead; dead to the law by the body of Christ; all our accumulated guilt was laid on him; bearing for us all the dreadful curse of the law, billows of divine wrath overwhelming his soul, and baptized him deep in death; but soon the bands of death gave way, soon the auspicious morning dawned, which gave ample demonstration of his complete victory over sin, death and hell, while the radiant flame of his refulgent glory brought life and immortality to light, for all the members of his mystical body.

In the resurrection of Christ, the prophecy of Isaiah (26:19.) was fulfilled. "Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Having thus in him suffered the vengeance of the law, been crucified together with him, "Blessed by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance (not to a purchased possession) incorruptible, and undefiled, (notwithstanding our fall in Adam) and that fadeth not away; reserved (not newly procured) in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation."—See 1 Peter 1:3-5. Hence we see in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, the all-sufficiency of his atonement, complete satisfaction rendered to law and divine justice, the prison doors are unbarred, the jubilee trumpet is blown, liberty is proclaimed to captives, the prisoners are brought up out of their prison houses; and as he bursts forth from the confines of the tomb, his ransomed church is seen emerging from the dead, while from the old heaven, now dissolving with fervent heat, the shout is heard, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in."—Psa. 24:7-9. When God went up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.—Psa. 47:5. How full of consolation is the contemplation of the union of Christ and the church.

"One in the tomb, one when he rose,
One when he triumph'd o'er his foes,
One when in heav'n he took his seat,
While seraphs sung all hell's defeat."

Lastly. That this astonishing work was done for us when we were dead in sins, is worthy of special attention. Before we were dead, we needed no such work as quickening, or the resurrection of our blessed Lord for us, as the whole need not a physician. "But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." — Rom. 5: 8, 9. And again. This great work being performed for us when we were dead in sins, shows that it could not possibly rest on any merit, work or will of ours; therefore the apostle adds the words, "By grace ye are saved;" and afterwards declares that it is not of works, lest any man should boast; but that we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which

God had before ordained that we should walk in them.

In conclusion, be it ours to reflect with wonder, joy and gratitude to God, on the revelation of a way of life and salvation so completely adapted to our ruined condition, and so admirably calculated to abase the proud man in the dust before God. Not unto us, not unto us, O God, but to thy name give all the glory. Amen.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, February 15, 1839.)

OBITUARIES

MEMORIAL TO ELDER AMASA J. SLAUSON

These words of the apostle Paul we feel to be applicable to the life of Elder Amasa J. Slauson; when he said in 2 Tim. 4:7-8,

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of Righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that Love His appearing."

It hath pleased Almighty God to take from our midst by death on Nov. 24, 1973, our beloved Pastor, Elder A. J. Slauson of Halcottsville, New York, who was 90 years old on May 3, 1973.

The funeral service was held Tuesday, Nov. 27, 1973 at 1 p.m. at the Old School Baptist meeting house in Halcottsville, N.Y., with Elder Arthur R. Warren of Berlin, Maryland, officiating; burial in the Margaretsville cemetery.

Elder Slauson was born May 3, 1883 in Vega, New York, the son of Seely R. & Rozyline Ballard Slauson. He married Cynthia Morse April 29, 1903; and she died on May 28, 1930. He married Elizabeth Secor Nov. 4, 1931. She died June 20, 1965.

Elder Slauson was a member of the Old School Baptist's for 61 years. He was ordained an Elder in 1946 and had served the churches in Shokan, Warwick, New York City, and Duanesburg, being active until recently.

Surviving are a son, Howard Slauson of Halcottsville; two daughters, Mrs. Howard (Lena) Greene of Denver and Mrs. Edwin (Grace) Kittle of Bath, New York; 8 grandchildren and 12 great grand children. Mrs. Dorothy Benson of Virginia is a foster daughter.

Therefore, be it resolved, first that we desire to be submissive to our God, Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who worketh all things according to His Own Will.

We of the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church and sister churches have sustained a great loss, never the less, not our will, O God, be done for our loss is his eternal gain gone as we say to be forever with the Lord, which is far better.

Secondly, we wish to extend our heart felt sympathy to the bereaved family, praying that the Lord, by His Holy Spirit will comfort them.

A copy to be sent to each of the family's and a copy to the *Signs of the Times.*

Deacon Edward K. Adsit
Church Clerk

EMMA FLY BRAKE

It has pleased the dear Lord to take by death our beloved Sister Harriet Emma Fly Brake. She was born January 16, 1891, and died August 22, 1973, making her stay on earth 82 years, 7 months and 6 days.

She was the daughter of the late Elder William Henry and Sister Harriet Ella Thomas Fly of Edgecombe County, North Carolina. She was married to Joseph Luther Brake, and to this union were born four boys and two girls. Surviving are Robert Earl, J. Sam, Thomas Luther all of Route 2, Rocky Mount, North Carolina; Mrs. Mable Brake Davis, and Mrs. Emma Jean Brake Edge of Rocky Mount, North Carolina, who were left with 17 grandchildren, 10 great grandchildren and a host of relatives and friends to mourn her passing. The eldest son, C. Edward Brake, preceeded his mother in death by only five days.

Sister Brake joined Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church May 25, 1913 and was a devoted member. We miss her more than words can express.

Her funeral was conducted on Friday, August 24th at 3:00 p.m. from Gay Yost Funeral Home in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, by her beloved pastor, Elder Henry C. Jones who spoke words of comfort to the family and a huge crowd who came to pay their last respects to a wonderful Sister and friend. Her body was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery beneath a beautfiul mound of flowers.

Sister Brake was devoted to her church and many friends, a devoted wife, mother and neighbor. She was always ready to quietly lend a helping hand when and where she felt she could. To know her was to love her. She was loved by the Baptist far and near and all who met with her.

There is much that could be said. "Blessed are they that die in the Lord, they cease from their labors and their works do follow them." The works of Sister Brake was the evidence of the saving Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

No credit to the works of poor feeble puny man.

While it grieves us to give her up, we desire to bow humbly before God and be reconciled to His will. We extend our deepest sympathy to the family and trust God will comfort them in their bereavement.

RESOLVED, that a copy of this obituary be sent to the family, one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and one recorded on the church records.

Done by order of conference at Pleasant Hill Church on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1973.

Fannie Mae Harper

WILLIAM ASHLEY EVERETT

At the request of his dear wife, Sister Louise, and the Flat Swamp Church, I endeavor, God being my guide, to write a few lines in memory of our brother in Christ, friend and loved one, William Ashley Everett, better known as Brother Bill.

Brother Bill was born January 14, 1899, in Robersonville, N.C., the son of the late James B. and Sallie Barnhill Everett. He died in the Robersonville Township Hospital October 28, 1973, following about a week of critical illness. He was married to Louise Taylor June 6, 1923.

He and his wife united with the church at Flat Swamp the first Sunday in July, 1971, and were baptized by Elder J. T. Prescott and Elder E. C. Harrison. In all the years it was my privilege to know him, I never heard him complain or speak unkind words of anyone. I cannot think of another whom I will miss any more than Brother Bill. He was a faithful church member, a loyal companion, a devoted father and a good neighbor. He will be sadly missed by his church, as well as his family, relatives and friends.

Left to mourn his departure besides his wife, are two daughters, Mrs. Elizabeth E. Bailey of Raleigh, and Mrs. Mary Louise White of Windsor; two sons, William T. Everett of Raleigh, and Maurice Everett of Stokes; three sisters, Mrs. Penny Baker of Robersonville, Mrs. Marie Powell of Parmele, and Mrs. Sally Mae Warren of Robersonville; and five grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Monday afternoon in the Biggs Funeral Chapel by his pastor, Elder J. T. Prescott and Elder E. C. Harrison. He was laid to rest in the Martin Memorial Gardens under a large arrangement of beautiful flowers, in the presence of his relatives and friends.

The Flat Swamp Church extends to the family her heartfelt sympathy and desire that the good Lord reconcile them to His will, for we feel that our loss is his eternal gain. We desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father who does all things well; and I desire to extend my deepest sympathy to his family.

Done by order of the church at Flat Swamp in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in November, 1973.

Elder J. T. Prescott, Mod.
Hassel Allen, Clerk
Mary J. Jenkins, Committee

OLIVE CARR FLOYD

Sister Olive Carr Floyd was born August 26, 1870, the daughter of Thomas Jefferson Carr and Nancy Catherine Bell Carr.

She was married to Fred Floyd, December 1, 1889, at Old Grandpier Primitive Baptist church by Elder Richard Fulkerson.

Three children were born to this union, the first child dying in infancy. The surviving are: Maud Church, Harrisburg, Ill., and Clara Averill, Golconda, Ill. A granddaughter, Jewel (Robbs) Brumback, Vienna, Va.; grandson, Fred Larue Robbs, West Allis, Wis.; five great - grandchildren, Carolyn (Brumback) Slothouber, Manassas, Va.; Ruth (Brumback) Hatcher, Independence, Mo.; Erlene (Brumback) Schmidt, Bangkok, Thailand; Kenneth Brumback, Herndon, Va., and Dallas Brumback, Sterling, Va. Also surviving are:

Thirteen great-great-grandchildren: Steven, Danny and Sharon Hatcher; Louis, Linda, Douglas and Susan Slothouber; Terry and Sherri Brumback; Chris, Keith and Kevin Brumback, and David Hall Schmidt.

Eight nieces and nephews: Cecil Carr, Abilene, Kan.; Stanley Carr, Des Moines, Ia.; Loyd Carr, Herrin, Ill.; Millege and Garland Fulkerson, Harrisburg, Ill.; Neva F. Gidcumb, Carrier Mills, R.F.D., and Lela F. Roblin and Vida F. Wagner, Pontiac, Mich.

Her parents, three brothers, William Hodge, Chester Alonzo, Elmer Eugene, and a sister, Stella Mable, have preceded her in death, as well as her husband, whose passing was in 1947.

She passed away, August 10th, 1973, at her home north of Golconda, Ill. The funeral was at Old Grandpier Church, where she was a member, conducted by Paul Kerley. Pallbearers were: Frank Gidcomb, Millege Fulkerson, Garland Fulkerson, Cletus Brumback, Elden Hatcher and Larue Robbs. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Dear is the spot where Christians sleep,
And sweet the strains their spirits pour;
O, why should we in anguish weep?
They are not lost, but gone before.

Secure from every mortal care,
By sin and sorrow vexed no more;

Eternal happiness they share,
Who are not lost, but gone before.

To Zion's peaceful courts above,
In faith triumphant may we soar,
Embracing in the arms of love
The friends not lost, but gone before.

To Jordon's bank, whene'er we come,
And hear the swelling waters roar,
Jesus, convey us safely home,
To friends not lost, but gone before.

Submitted by Clara Averill (daughter)

ODA IRENE WISENBAKER

Oda Irene Wisenbaker was born March 20, 1887 in Marble Falls, Texas; and passed from this life October 4, 1973.

She was a charter member in constituting the Shepherd Fold Church at 1419 Shepherd Street June 22, 1947, which is now located at 815 Little York, Houston, Texas. She came in by letter and was elected Assistant Clerk at that meeting; and Clerk at the next. She served that office faithfully through January 2, 1965.

Her home at 2134 Bertrand was always open to the kindred in Christ. She was loved by all, and was deemed by those who knew her as one of Zion's landmarks.

Her funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder C. M. Haygood and Elder Jerry A. Evers.

Elder C. M. Haygood, Mod.
Jimmy Lindsay, Clerk

DEACON HAM COX

Brother Ham Cox was born March 17, 1917, and passed from this life August 26, 1973, at the age of fifty-six years and five months. He united with the church in 1948. The loving remembrance of him in his brethren and family's hearts will live for many years.

He was married to the former Lessie Quesenberry, and to this union were born six children. His survivors are: his widow, Sister Lessie Quesenberry Cox; four daughters, Mrs. William A. Hylton, Mrs. John A. Arnold, Mrs. James A. Wright, and Mrs. Arlyess Cruise; two sons, Danile L. Cox and Harold H. Cox; his mother, Sister Necie Cox; five sisters, Mrs. Nettie Duncan, Mrs. Dorcie Semones,Mrs. Mable Carey, Sister French Hogan, and Sister Mary Marshall; and two brothers, Brother Jack W. Cox and Herbert Cox.

His funeral was held at Old Salem Church, conducted by our former pastor, Elder B. O. Thompson, and our present pastor, Elder Hale Terry. He was laid to rest in Cox Cemetery in Indian Valley, Va. to await the coming of the Lord.

We cannot but feel that our loss is his eternal gain. He was loved by those who knew him. I believe Brother Ham would be the first to say that he was what he was by the Grace of God, and that God deserves all the praise all the time.

He will be missed at Union Church where he served as Deacon, and at various churches and associations where he often attended. His home was a place where everyone was welcome. One could feel the brotherly love that flowed from heart to heart and breast to breast, while at Brother Ham's house.

His love for the church and the doctrines of Salvation by Grace was evident in his actions and conversations.

Written at the request of Union Primitive Baptist Church, with one copy for Church records, one for the family, and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Elder Hale Terry, Mod.
Larry Hollandsworth, Clerk

ZACKARY DAUGHTRIDGE

God in his infinite Wisdom; Love and Mercy called our Brother home December 13, 1972; having lived here on this earth 89 years. Bro. Daughtridge united with the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church the second week end in July, 1970. He was blessed by God to fill his seat at the Church every meeting until the December meeting, 1972. We will miss seeing him come in quietly and take his seat. He was loved and respected by all who knew him.

A life long resident of Rocky Mount, he was the son of the late Wiley Caswell and Laura Lancaster Daughtridge. He is survived by one daughter, Miss Helen G. Daughtridge; a brother, Lee T. Daughtridge of Raleigh, N.C.

We extend to the family our deepest sympahty and pray God will give them comfort. We feel Bro. Daughtridge is resting in the arms of Jesus, where there is no more sorrow, heartache and pain; waiting for the Second coming of our Lord.

His funeral was conducted from the Chapel of Gay-Yost Funeral Home by his pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes and Mr. Ronald Higdon. Burial was in Pineview Cemetery.

RESOLVED: That one copy of these resolutions be sent to the family; one to the *Signs of the Times* and one for the Church records.

Conference: February 1973.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

ELDER C. L. ROBBINS

Elder Charles Lawrence Robbins was called home by our Heavenly Father December 19, 1972, having lived in this cruel world 92 years. He united with the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church, second week end in April 1913. He had moved his membership, but came back to the Falls Church in June 1971. He was not able to attend Church but very little after this, but was always glad to see the brethren and talk with them. He was dearly loved and respected by all who knew him. Elder Robbins served as Pastor of Lawrence and Mount Zion Church's for a number of years. He gave of his time and love to the cause of Salvation by Grace, in which he believed. He loved this and his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and manifested this in his daily life, trusting in an all powerful God: One that does all things for His Children. Elder Robbins will be missed by all who knew him, but his family will feel the loss far more than any one else. He is survived by his wife: Mrs. Kate Williams Robbins; three daughters, Mrs. Mary Ruth Burgess; Mrs. Angalene Spain and Mrs. Geraldine Hill all of Rocky Mount, N.C.; one son Charles Lawrence Robbins, Jr. of Martinsville, Va.; a sister, Mrs. Kate Pittman of Rocky Mount; 17 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren.

His funeral was conducted from the Chapel of Gay-Yost Funeral Home by Elders D. B. Stokes and J. B. Williams. Burial was in Pineview Cemetery where we believe our dear Brother is resting in the arms of Jesus waiting for the second coming of our Lord.

RESOLVED: That one copy of these resolutions be sent to the family; one to the *Signs of the Times* and one for the church records.

Conference: February 1972.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

MRS. MARTHA GRIFFIN BRADLEY

God in his infinite wisdom and mercy called home our beloved Sister Martha G. Bradley (affectionately known as Sister Pattie Bradley) on February 3, 1973, making her stay on earth 94 years. Sister Bradley united with the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church the second week end in February, 1923. She was a member almost 50 years. She was blessed by God to have keen and alert mind; always able to talk about the goodness and mercy of God toward her. The wonderful and beautiful way she spoke of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and her love for the brethren, was an inspiration to all that visited with her. She manifested her love of God in every walk of life, giving all Praise, Power and Glory to our Lord. Sister Bradley loved the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace, believing in Jesus Christ the Saviour of sinners; his birth, death and resurrection. I believe she was looking forward to being with Jesus; to see Him; be like Him and to be satisfied. God in his wisdom and love gave her some beautiful experiences, which she loved to talk about. To know her was to love her, and to me she was a mother in Israel. Sister Bradley was a kind and loving mother to her children and a blessing to those of us that loved her in the bonds of the Holy Spirit.

She leaves to mourn her: three sons, George W. Bradley; James H. Bradley of Rocky Mount, N.C. and Russell T. Bradley of Tarboro Highway; seven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. We desire to express our deepest sympathy to her family and Pray God will give them comfort in their hour of need.

Her funeral was conducted from the Chapel of Gay-Yost Funeral Home by her Pastor Elder D. B. Stokes. She was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Resolved: One copy of these resolutions be sent to the family; one to the *Signs of the Times* and one for the Church records.

Conference: February 1973.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

BROTHER EARL PICKREL

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst our beloved Brother Earl N. Pickrel, born October 9, 1909 and died September 30, 1973. Brother Earl joined Springfield Church July 1, 1951. He was faithful to the Church and filled his place most every meeting as long as he lived. He was a firm believer in election and Salvation by Grace, believing it was all fixed in the mind and purpose of God from before time was. Springfield Church bows in humble submission to the Just and Holy will of our Lord knowing that He doeth all things well.

Brother Earl leaves to mourn his loss, his wife and three sons, Ellerson Pickrel, Lynchburg, Va., Wayne Pickrel, Monroe, Georgia, Benny Pickrel, Danville, Va.; four brothers and five sisters, six grandchildren.

His funeral was held at Springfield Church by his Pastor Elder O. K. Tench and his body laid away in Gretna Burial Park to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour.

Written by L. R. Willis

ADA S. RICE

It is with a feeling of unworthiness that I attempt to comply with the request of Bush Arbor Church to write an obituary for my dear mother and sister in hope of eternal life. She was born October 8, 1880 and departed this life September 9, 1973, making her stay on earth 92 years, 11 months and 1 day. She was born to Sidney Thomas and Martha Oakley Simmons, and was granddaughter of Elder F. L. Oakley. She was married to John Thomas Rice, December 25, 1907, who preceded her to the grave some 36 yers. To this union were born four daughters: Mrs. Olive Aldridge, Miss Emily Jane Rice (deceased), Mrs. Bertha Webster and Mrs. Ruth Bason. Four sons: T. Isaac, Joseph W., Alvis David (deceased) and Dewey H. Rice, one sister, Mrs. Nettie Rudd and one half sister, Mrs. Bessie Rudd, 17 grandchildren and 22 great grandchildren.

She was received into the fellowship of Bush Arbor Church the second Saturday in December, 1913 and was baptized the next day by the late Elder B. F. McKinney. In relating part of her experience she saw the Lord appear before her in the form of a man and beheld Him as the chiefest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely. She found much comfort in reading the scriptures, even quoting many of them correctly when her mind was so impaired that she hardly any remembrance.

She passed away like falling asleep and suffered so little I felt that it was an answer to our dear pastor's prayers, that we be given a peaceful moment in which to die. As the pangs of death paled her face I felt she would also rise again as Lazarus did to be with our Saviour and see Him face to face and be forever satisfied.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Wallis Smith her pastor, assisted by Elder Donald Smith. Her body was laid to rest in the Bush Arbor Cemetery, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to wait the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

BE IT RESOLVED, one copy to be placed on the church records, one copy sent to *The Signs of the Times* for publication, and one copy sent to the family.

Read and approved in church conference Nov. 10, 1973.

Written by T. Isaac Rice
Deacon Earl S. Rudd, Clerk
Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator

CHARLES ELLIOTT HELLINGS

Charles Elliott Hellings, son of the late Augustus Myers and Olivia Norris (Tyndall) Hellings fell asleep in Jesus November 4, 1973 at his home in Pennington, New Jersey at the age of 74 years. He was born March 20, 1889, and lived most of his life on the old Tyndall Homestead in Ewing, a few miles from Pennington.

He was baptised September 4, 1963, at a very beautiful sunset service by Elder Arthur R. Warren, pastor of the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church. Visiting at the time was Elder John Lee Smith who took the stand when we returned to the Meeting House.

He was made deacon July 5, 1964 and later became a trustee, secretary and treasurer of the Church, and a trustee of the Old School Baptist Cemetery; and a trustee of the Primitive Baptist Home.

From generations back there were members in the Hopewell Church. His grandfather Tyndall was chosen deacon in 1864, and Brother Charles was chosen deacon just one hundred years later in 1964. His mother was a member 64 years.

He is survived by three sisters, Hannah Lurent and Sister Mary Hellings at home, and Lydia West Hellings, Spokane, Washington.

Brother Charles was a devoted and faithful deacon, and the words of our Saviour were his stay in life. He was a person of unusual integrity, and well grounded in the faith of God's word. He was good and kind to everyone, never speaking ill of anyone, and his sudden death has left a very real empty place in the Church, not just because he was the only male member left, but because it seems to span the beginning and the end 1715-1973 of a precious way of life for another Baptist Church.

Services were conducted by his beloved pastor Elder Arthur R. Warren with comforting words to those of like precious faith.

The God of hope and peace always seemed to enable him to give comfort and strength to sustain me in my doubts and fears. May God's merciful blessings rest sweetly upon his soul and take him unto glory.

Interment was in the family plot of the Ewing Church Cemetery.

May the God of our hope give us to feel our loss is his eternal gain, and we may continue to follow in his footsteps, and walk in the light of God's glory to everlasting rest.

Written by his sister, Mary

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 142 **DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1974** **NO. 3**

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3/74
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

JOHN 6:44

No man can come to me, except the father which sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. (St. John 6:44)

I was asked to write something for the *Signs of the Times* some years ago by the late Elder George Ruston, and also by an Elder that many of you know that read the paper. I have had a great desire today to write something to someone's comfort; and how well I know that I will not be able to do so if it is not God's will; for I have believed for many years that all comfort comes from above. I would like to go back to years of my life when I was in my teens and then to the present time in a brief way before I write about the scripture as stated above.

I have attended the Old School Baptist meetings ever since I was a very small boy. My father and mother were not members of any Church but carried my brother and me to the Indiantown Old School Church, which is my home Church now, located in the village of Powelsville, Md. We went in those days riding in a horse drawn vehicle, so whoever may read this will know that I am in my latter years. I lived then and still do near a Methodist Church and in the early days of my life went there and sang in the choir. I must say that I never believed the doctrine that was preached then and I do not now. I have said many times that I believe I went then just to be with the young people that I grew up with. I married one of the ministers daughters that preached there. We did not go there very long after we were married and she went with me to the Old School Baptist meetings; and thanks be to God I baptized her a few years ago.

There could be said a lot more about my life here, but there is a lot that I would be ashamed to tell. Dear reader have you been there? I believe I can say with the Apostle Paul, "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." (Romans 7:19) I have said many times that I would not do this or that but found myself doing just what I had said I would not, which made me feel to say with the Publican of old, "Lord be merciful to me a sinner." Have you been there? I believe that if you have ever, as Peter said, tasted that the Lord is gracious, you have.

As I said before, if God is not willing I am sure that I will not write a little of my feelings of the Scripture stated in the beginning of this letter. It is one of the most absurd statements that I have ever heard, (and you hear it said by those who are of other faiths) that God wants you to do something and you will not do it. I believe that the Eternal God who created all things, knew everything that has ever taken place or will ever take place, before man was made from the dust of the ground; yes, He understands our thoughts afar off, as we read in the 139th Psalm. We also read in the Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 15 and verse 18, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning

of the world." To me, dear brethren of like faith, not one has ever or will ever come to Jesus only by the drawing cords of love that God had for his chosen ones before the world was made. I like so very much the words of Jesus when he said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (St. Matthew 11:28) The labouring comes first when one has been shown just what he is by nature and made to understand what the Psalmest meant when he said, "Behold I was shapen in iniquity: and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Psalms 51:5)

It is indeed a great blessing to know that we are all sinners, and only by the grace of God will any of us ever get to that land of rest that awaits God's chosen people. No one has or ever will come to Jesus except by the drawing cords of love that God had for them from before the beginning of time. I do not know that I am one of them but I do hope that I am. I have never been able to get any farther than hope, for the Bible says, "We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (Romans 8:24-25) I have often thought of the disciples who walked with our blessed Saviour, when he told them that one of them would betray him, they began to say, "Lord is it I?" (Matthew 26-22) If the disciples did not know who was to betray Jesus, then I contend that none of us know just how we stand, but hoping for that we see not.

There are so many things that we cannot understand, or at least I do not feel to understand, but thanks be to God that I believe I have been given to see my sinful nature, and many times am made to mourn for my weakness in the flesh. The Apostle Paul said, "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." (I Corinthians 2:3) The Apostle Paul did not know any thing about fear and trembling until he had been shown; neither has any one else until, as the poet wrote;

"When the Lord appears in view,
Old things cease, and all is new:
Love divine o'er flows the soul,
And love doth every sin control.

If this is published, I want you of like faith who may read it, to know that there is a love that binds our hearts together though it may be that I have never seen you in the flesh. I feel I have seen you in the spirit; and may it please God to bless us to feel that brotherly love that joins our hearts together though we may be miles apart in the flesh.

In Bonds Of Love And Fellowship,

Arthur R. Warren
Rt. 1, Box 36
Berlin, Md. 21811

LOVES TO ASSEMBLE WITH THE BRETHREN

1201 Plantation St.
Victoria, Tex. 7790

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am enclosing check to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. What a comfort and pleasure to read it: I truly look forward to its arrival each month.

I hope I have a thankful heart to be able to read and write, though not very good. If I know my heart I believe in Salvation by Grace and Predestination of all things. Salvation is the gift of God, not by our works. I am a member of Mt. Olive Church, Stockdale, Texas, and Elder Gerald D. Shipman is our beloved pastor. I am now living with my youngest daughter, Mrs. Lynn Loyd and family in Victoria, but I feel my first love for the churches in Arkansas and Louisiana. I was baptized by Elder E. J. Lambert in 1948 into membership at New Hope Church, near Hope, Arkansas. I have never regretted it in the least, but feel grateful the dear members have let me follow after them. I feel to be the very least.

It is my greatest pleasure to meet with the dear believing children of God, and hear our dear God called and qual-

ified ministers proclaim he blessed gospel of truth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I have long been acquainted with all ministers on South Ouachita Association. How I trust I dearly love them for the blessed truth's sake. I am now 88 years old November, 1973. And I trust it is with grateful thanks and praise to Almighty God for His goodness and mercy to me. I hope, if it is God's will, to visit the churches in Arkansas and Louisiana in 1974; and also Elder Loyd Wall's church in East Texas. O the love I have for God's believing children and the joy of assembling with them! I can't express it. God is my hope, my salvation, my all.

With much fear and trembling, a little Sister in hope.

Mrs. W. G. Shackleford

Yanceyville, N.C.

Dear Elder Spangler,

Sometime back in the summer Mary and I had supper with Elder and Mrs. Julian Williams and family and then went to Malmaison to services. Before leaving their home I suggested to Miss Joyce Williams that she write her experience for the *Signs of the Times*, that a number of people, some being quite young as she was, would like to read her travels. Several weeks later I received the enclosed letter of her experience. I obtained her permission and the permission of her parents to send this to the *Signs*. I am enclosing a typed copy and also a Xerox copy for authenticity for your consideration.

We hope you and Mrs. Spangler will have a nice quiet Christmas season and the continued blessings of God during the new year.

Come to see us.

Sincerely,
J. Burch Blaylock

EXPERIENCE

Box 65,
Keeling, Va. 24566

Dear Mr. Blalock,

You asked me to write my experience for the *Signs*. I have given your request much thought. I fear that I can not, but yet have a desire to write something to you.

I don't even know if I have had an experience. If I have, it included no dreams, visions or oral words. Although I had attended church with my parents since infancy, I had not really listened to the preaching until sometime during the fall or winter after my fourteenth birthday. As I began to listen to the different ministers, I realized that I had not experienced the feelings they described, but I began to hope that I yet would. As time passed, past sins came back to my mind and brought a feeling of guilt and shame. It seemed that I had already believed (I don't know when I first believed it) that God had saved His people from their sins, that Jesus Christ had paid the price of their redemption, but the question that plagued my thoughts for about a week was what about me? I did not doubt the salvation of God's people but questioned was I among them. I don't remember when this question stopped bothering me either. However, I do remember that I began to think of joining the Church. I felt that it would be such a joy and blessing to call the people I loved so dearly, Brother and Sister. The Fourth Sunday in May, 1969 a couple was baptized at Dan River Church. As Elder Spangler spoke of taking up the cross and following Jesus, I so longed to join the Church. Somehow, my father understood. That afternoon, Daddy asked me if I desired to join the church, and said that he hoped I would ask Malmaison Church for a home sometime. All that week I thought of asking for a home at Malmaison the First Saturday night. I wondered what I would say, but I could not plan anything to say or do. I felt that when the time came, I would know what to do and say.

First Saturday night, Elder Tench asked me if I wanted a home with the Church. I could not join then. I spent

a miserable night, feeling that I had refused the very opportunity I had longed for. The next day, in the afternoon after we had sung following lunch, the song service, which I rejoiced in greatly, was closed with songs and prayer. I could not take that opportunity either. I felt that I could not leave without joining the church, yet it was too late. I walked to the front where Daddy was sitting after service was over. He asked me if I was ready to go home. I shook my head. He then asked me if I wanted to talk to the church, and after I nodded, he called Elder Tench. All I could say to the members who were left there was that I hoped I loved them and that I thought I did. They received me.

The joy and peace I felt then and at bedtime for about three nights thereafter was so precious to me. On preceding nights, I had gone to bed to toss and turn, trying to pray and desiring a home with the church. Those few nights after first Sunday in June, I went to bed feeling so calm and peaceful.

This probably doesn't mean anything to anyone but me. If you can no longer feel Fellowship for one with no more evidence, I will understand. Sometimes, the evidence seems so small but at other times, I feel it is sufficient. I know that if I am a child of God all things are working together for my good. I hope that I am. Sometimes, I have felt a love so strong for my brethren, but often I feel so cold and hard-hearted. My mind seems to remain on natural things most of the time. However, the Lord has been so good to me and blessed me with the love and fellowship of His dear people. I hope that I may always live among them in peace and love. I pray that the Lord will keep me at the feet of my brethren, for only He can humble the proud heart.

A little Sister I hope,
Joyce Williams

EXPERIENCE AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY OF THE LATE ELDER S. L. MORAN, FLOYD COUNTY, VA.

I have had a desire to leave something with my people in regard to the Doctrine that I have contended for from a child.

I had serious thoughts about things of God, and I was made to know without a doubt there was a God in Heaven, and that he loved me and that I loved him. And I felt that love filled my soul, and if I had to throw that away it would leave me with nothing.

I was very young but that stayed with me. I grew up as other boys and as wild as any of them, but when I did wrong it would hurt me and I would say I would not do that anymore. I would find myself going on in the same way, and continued to make the same promises but never able to keep them. I went on in this way until I was a grown man. I thought I could live a different life, but the more I promised the worse I got. I thought I could do better but found I was a failure.

After my first wife died, I felt she was saved, and I had a feeling I wanted to be prepared to meet her. I got down on my knees and tried to pray, and of all the wretches that ever made the attempt, I was the worst, and said in my mind that I would never attempt such a thing again.

I went on in my wild way until I married again, and I felt the Lord had given me a help-mate. Everything seemed to be getting along well with me until suddenly a change took place in my life. One night after going to bed, sometime during the night I was brought up before the Great God of all the earth. He was taking the Righteous on the right and the Sinners on the left. I was wondering what would be my doom. When I was brought up, I thought I would make some plea, but before I could speak I was taken on the left, and then I knew I was a lost sinner, justly condemned before a just God; and if all the world had told me there was a chance for me, it would not have done any good. My life had been so wrong and sinful, I knew there was no hope for such a sinner as I. And from that

time on for months and years I went begging for mercy. I would go in the mountains to try to find peace of soul. I had to give up all for lost and thought I would not try any more, but I was still begging in my mind. I felt I must try one time more. I went to the lowest place I could find and fell on my face and put my mouth in the dirt and all I could say was, "God be merciful to me a condemned Sinner." And when I got up everything was new and that burden of sin and condemnation was gone. I felt to be in a new world, and made to praise God from whom all blessings flow. I thought I would go to the house and tell my wife, but I did not. I was afraid I was mistaken.

I went on sometime wondering what all of this meant. I had never heard any preaching for I had not attended any church, for I was not interested in church matters, and I had no thought of where the church was. I thought anywhere they claimed to worship was the Church.

There came a time I felt I wanted a home among God's people. I went to the Methodist to find a home. I went with full intention of joining them. But, lo, when the preacher began his sermon everything he said was against my hope. When he got through he left me without any hope. I went home and felt then I would not go to church anymore, but I soon got restless, and it came in my mind to go to Laurel Creek Church and see what Elder Cole would say. I went and when he began preaching, in the place of condemning me, he told my troubles better than I could. And when he got through I knew he had told the truth; and I did not have to look for the church anymore. Since that time I have not searched for the church. I have no doubt where the church is and no desire to find any other.

I went on for a year or two going to hear the Baptist preach. The more I heard the more I loved them. I did not feel I would ever join the church. But there came a time something took place with me very unexpected to me. The 4th Sunday in November, 1910, I told my wife that morning, I was going to Laurel Creek Church to hear Elder's Cole and J. J. Spangler preach. She said, "If you are going to join the church I want to go with you." I said, "If that is all you are going for, don't worry I have no thought of that, and I don't guess I ever will; and I know, not today." I went to church and both preachers preached. Elder Cole gave invitation for members and when they began singing to dismiss, something took hold of me with such power it caused me to tremble. I said, "I am not going," but getting up and starting to the pulpit still saying, "I am not going." But went on and began telling what I felt the Lord had done for me. They received me, and I rejoiced.

Then came a question in my soul, "What kind of a man have you been?" I answered that question, "Very bad." Then, "What have you done? Can you do any better?" And I said, "No." "You know you will have to be turned out of the church, they will not keep you in the church." I went home with a greater burden than I have ever been able to tell in words.

Elder Cole asked when I wanted to be baptized. I replied, "I don't know." He said, "that is unfinished business." I went on until the next meeting which was the 4th Sunday in December, 1910 and yet I had no desire to be baptized. But on the night of the same month, if I have been called to preach it was the 25th of that month. I went under a great burden since joining the church and had no thought of preaching until during the night. I saw a cloud come over me. I felt it was the power of God and a weight was so powerful it was pressing my life out; and a voice spoke out of that cloud and said, "Take up thy cross and follow me." I said, "Is it to Pray?" And the power got harder. I said, "Is it to preach?" The weight was lifted off me and I sat up in bed, and I felt a power over me that I never will be able to tell. I commenced speaking. I felt to know that it was the power of

God. I had no doubt at that time, and I commenced speaking with as much assurance as I ever have since;and I said, "I will go wherever I am sent for the God of Heaven has called me." I did not have any doubt at that time, but when I came to my self I knew that was impossible. I told my wife not to tell of what I have said for I can't do that. I felt I would not go to church the January meeting. I still had no feeling to be baptized. I thought they would think strange of me for not saying anything about being baptized.

I had some work to do that day and started out to get some help. I was stopped on the way and this Scripture came into my heart, "He that forsaketh not father, mother, house and land, wife and children for my name's sake is not worthy of me. Take up thy cross and follow me." That turned me around and I went back to the house. My wife said, "I thought you were going to haul hay." And I said, "No, I am going to church." I went and after the meeting was over, invitation for members was given. Henry Board came forth and gave a good reason of his hope and was received. He said, "I want to tell a dream I had. I was baptized in a pretty pond of water and there were two fishes one on each side of me, and I loved them." Elder Cole said, "When do you want to be baptized?" And he said, "This evening." I felt I was bound to be baptized with him. I said, "Brother Cole, I want to be baptized tomorrow." And Brother Board was willing to wait until the next day.

The next day it was raining. I thought there was not any reason in going out on such a day, but fixing all the time to go. When we got to the place they were coming out of the house to go to the pond. Elder Cole had told me to tell my wife to bring her clothes and be baptized with us. I told her and she said she couldn't do that. I said, "He told me to tell you and that is all I will say." My wife went and was received. Elder Cole took me in and baptized me first, then took brother Henry Board, and then my wife. Brother Board said, "I see my two fishes and I love them."

That was the happiest day I have ever seen fulfilled and there was not a thing that stood against me. I felt I was in a new world.

I thought all my troubles were over, but in this I was sadly mistaken. I had to go down, so much so that I felt I had deceived the Church. I felt I had to go to the church and tell them I was mistaken, but before the next meeting, I was more satisfied when Paul's writing came in my mind so sweetly, "There is a thorn given me in the flesh to buffet me lest I become exalted above measure. I besought the Lord thrice that it might be removed from me. The Lord said, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

That was my case. When that came in my heart I had read the Bible but very little, but I knew that was Scripture. I went to the house and opened the Bible and it opened at that place without turning a leaf. That gave me great consolation.

After that my burden became the same as it did that night when the Lord said, "Take up thy cross and follow me." The same voice said, "You have lied to God." I awoke my wife crying aloud. She asked me what was the matter. I told her I had lied to God, and it was more than I could stand. I went on wondering what to do.

Sometime after that I had a trip to make. I had to go in the mountains, and as I was walking along thinking of my troubles, it came in my mind that all I had seen was in the night. Maybe it was only a dream. That same voice came in my heart and soul, "You have lied to God." I fell on my face and made a promise to God if he would let me live if I was ever called on, I would go. I thought that would let me off for I was not going to tell anyone; but it was not long until I told a brother and asked him not to tell anyone. It was not long after that, Elder Sumner came to our house. We were talking over many things, and the first thing I knew, I was telling him; but told him it was

impossible for me to ever preach.

I went to Pine Forest Church. Brother Sumner asked me to go home with him. I went that night. He asked me if my impression was with me as much as it had been, and I told him not as much as it had been. We went back to the church the next day and he told me he was going to call on me. It shocked me so I could hardly speak. Then I remembered the vow I had taken and said, "If it doesn't make any difference with you, don't call on me, it will embarrass me for I just can't go." I will never be able to tell the feeling that went in my heart and soul. I could not stay in the house. I walked below the church and stood for a few minutes, and if I know my heart, I asked the Lord to take my life for it was more than I could bear. It was not because I did not want to preach, I would have given anything if I could but I knew I could not. I thought I would go to the woods and try to ask the Lord to let this cup pass, but I was unable to even bow. A voice seemed to say, "You fool, why stand you here!"

I went back to the house. Elder Sumner was in prayer. I slipped in the house and got in behind someone. Elder Sumner saw me and said, "You just as well come on up here, you will have to anyway." I went and stood on the steps of the stand. I spoke a few words, but in the place of getting relief, I felt I had brought disgrace on my people; but the worst was, I had disgraced the Church. When I got home, I told my wife she could be getting things in shape for I was not going to stay in this country, and I certainly meant every word at that time. The next Sunday was the 4th Sunday, which was Laurel Creek meeting. Elder Cole hearing I had gotten up at Pine Forest, asked me in the stand. It seemed I had no resistance and went on and that was still worse than the first.

My wife and I started to Brother Board's to spend Saturday night. As we went I told her that was the last time I would ever go; and I verily thought I was telling the truth. That night at Brother Board's, something took place with me, I will never forget. After retiring, I will never know if I was asleep or awake, but let that be as it may. All at once I was in a strange country and I wanted to go home. I came out to go home, but I found myself in a wilderness. I could see a narrow path. I would follow that path until it would come to a solid wall. I would have to turn back and try another path it seemed. I continued trying and felt I would have to give up, then I saw a narrow path leading up a hill. I knew I would have to go that way. And when I got to the top of that hill, I looked across a Beautiful Valley and saw a passenger train, and I was glad for I knew I would be able to get home. When I got to the train the first thing I knew I was in a buggy with a young man, and I will never be able to tell the sweetness I felt in that ride. But it soon came to an end. All at once we came to a wide river and there was a covered bridge. When we got to the bridge, a shutter came down and cut us off. The young man was gone and I was left alone. I wondered what to do. I walked around the end of the bridge and looked at the river. It looked deep but I knew I had to go that way. I dreaded it but it was not as deep as I expected it to be. Then I got in the same road, it was a plain old road. When I got in this road, I looked ahead of me and I saw an old-like woman walking ahead of me. She had on an old-time slat bonnet like my mother used to wear. I thought if I could catch up with her she could tell me of my troubles. But when I caught up with her, I began telling her my troubles. She began kissing her hand and laid it on my cheek, showing the love she had for me.

When I came to myself, I never doubted she was the Church, for the church had shown me all the kindness I could ask of them. That vision caused me to go, and I went to some church every week-end, but felt to have no liberty to preach; until I got to the place I lost all hope of ever being able to preach. I feel

the Lord gave me endurance and I feel that it was his time.

I went to Old Pine Creek Church. As I went around the cemetery, a Scripture came in my mind. It was sweet to me. I was not in the habit of reading a text. Elder Cole passed by me and dropped the Bible in my lap. I turned to the text that was on my mind. I read it and then began talking I felt with another tongue, for it was altogether different to me. I looked over that crowd of folks and they all looked good to me. I spoke for around 30 or 35 minutes and felt satisfied the Lord turned me loose and I would go and preach the rest of my time just like I did then. Only I would preach longer.

That was the first Sunday. The next Sunday there was meeting at Old Salem Church. That was the longest week I thought I had ever seen, but when Saturday came I went. But not to preach. I knew there would be more people there on Sunday, so I refused on Saturday. There was an old Brother said to me, "Go with me to my nephew's." And I said, "Alright." That night after retiring, whether asleep or awake I cannot tell, but I was in a room and the man that kept that room had to keep everything just right in that room. I used to dance and I thought I had not tried to dance for a long time. I began dancing over the floor, and the man that kept the room began whipping me with fire. It came around my waist and began taking my breath. I looked back over my shoulder to see who it was whipping me. I saw no one but I was picked up like a feather, and there was liquid fire in front of me and I was thrown in that fire and consumed. And a voice came into me, "God is a consuming Fire." I wondered what that meant.

When I got to the Church that morning, I found out what that meant, for instead of preaching, if I ever opened my mouth I never knew it. I sat down crying, longing to get out of that church and never to be there any more. When I was leaving I was bidding every thing goodby. But before I got out of sight of the church something took place with me. This sentence of Scripture came into my mind with sweetness, "We rejoice therefore in tribulations, knowing tribulations works patience, patience experience and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, for the love of God is shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost which is given us." So I was made to rejoice and shed tears of joy. I was made glad the Lord had shut my mouth and taught me some sense.

The next Sunday was the third Sunday and I went to Pine Forest. And I went in the fear of the Lord, and he gave me liberty to speak; and I have been going ever since. I know I am about through for if I live until February 22, 1959, I'll be 82 years old. And I can't expect many more years. The Lord has been wonderfully good to me and my Brethren and Friends have showed me all the kindness I could wish for. They are bound to see something in me that I can't see in myself, for I see nothing in my vile flesh that is good.

I hope I have not set forth anything in this writing to give myself any honor, for if I have been shown anything, it is the rotteness of my nature. It makes no difference how much the Lord has shown me I still see nothing good in my flesh.

There was a period of time in my ministry that the sweetness of the Gospel seemed to be completely taken from me. I felt I would have to give it up, but in that time I had a dream. I was traveling a road that was muddy and I was so worried on my journey. I felt I had gone as far as I could go and had given up. Then I viewed a road in front of me that was so beautiful, I can't describe it. When I had put my feet in that road, I felt as light as a feather. I began leaping and jumping and quoting one Psalm after another in praises to God, and I wondered how long that would last. When I awoke I told my wife I had been seeing something wonderful to me. And from that time on for a few years I had sweet liberty continually for

a while, baptizing six or eight. Then I could see what that beautiful road meant.

The longer I live the more of my vileness I see in the flesh. And I can say of a truth, "In my flesh dwelleth no good thing."

S. L. Moran

(Elder Moran is well remembered among the Baptists of Virginia. He united with Laurel Creek Church, Floyd County, Va., and later united by letter with the Salem Church (Head of the River) in the same county. He served as Moderator of the Smith River Association from 1932 until his death in 1960. He was ordained in 1916 and served five churches during his ministry.

The above was written by Elder Moran December 30, 1958, and we are glad to publish it in his memory.—J.D.W.)

LETTER TO ELDER HUDSON

Rt. 2, Box 48
Strong, Ark.

Dear Brother and Sister Hudson,

Thank you very much for your good letter. Many thoughts have run in my mind since receiving it. This thought came to me while reading it: "Be ye steadfast unmovable." "My strength is made perfect in weakness." (the weak in faith, and sickly and sleepy.) One surely needs the prayers of the strong in faith. I had thought on that scripture in 1 Corinthians about the weak and sickly, and feared that I might be classed as those.

I agree with you that we have many like that in this day and time, as it was in the days of the Apostle's ministry. I believe we are all harrassed by satan, but the Lord gives us more evidence, more strength, more courage, signs, and wonders to keep us. As you said, unless the Lord is our keeper, we would fall by the wayside and into the snares of the devil. The Lord is the only power that is able to hold them up, and keep them from falling. He is also able to increase their courage and enable them to suffer and endure what ever trials, tribulations, persecutions that the Lord wills for them to suffer. He gives them to be faithful even unto death. I believe Stephen was given strong faith in the Lord.

Many thoughts that Paul said concerning the weak came to my mind. Romans 14:1-2: "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things. Another, who is weak, eateth herbs." Romans 15:1: "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." I do believe the little children of God go through a carnal stage when they have need of the milk of the word.

As the Lord blessed the Apostles to preach the whole council of God, I believe that God blesses the Old Baptist Ministers to preach the whole council of God. I hope I will continue to believe that same precious gospel that has been preached from the beginning of time, all down through the ages, until the present time, as long as I live in this old world of sin and sorrow.

I believe the true gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that he blesses his servants to preach, reaches all of them in what ever circumstances they are in. They are all fed from the weakest unto the strongest. The Lord measures out the gift of faith to each one, as it pleases him. He is the giver of every good and perfect gift. We are all dependent upon the God of all grace. "Other refuge have I none, hangs my helpless soul on thee."

May the Lord continue to bless you to feed this poor, hungering, thirsty little flock.

In hope of eternal life,
Mrs. Lula B. Fox

"THE CHILDREN WILL BE LIKE HIM"

Rt. 1, Box 127A,
Riner, Va. 24149

Dear Brother Spangler:

We were so pleased to have you and Sister Spangler September 15th at Valley View. You preached on Hebrews 11 —faith. The word was certainly proclaimed, and also by Brother Roy Agee. The songs they sang were so beautiful I could not sing, but just listened. Your voice was a sweet melody.

On Sunday our dear pastor, Elder Odell Thompson, and Elders Raymond Goad and Roy Agee were at the communion. His word was proclaimed again, and it never gets old.

I lost my last brother in May (Charlie Altizer). He wanted to join at Valley View and be baptized by Brother Roy. Brother Roy, my husband and I had the pleasure to see him own the name of Christ, and confess his sins, and say he had been a great sinner. How wonderful it was to see him praise the Lord. He would tell the nurses and friends of his experience, and he seemed so happy. He said he was going home — over there is the church, before he passed away.

O, if we could praise Him more: He knows we are dust. If we are His children we will see Him and be like him. This will be wonderful and glorious, and we will be satisfied forever.

Am sending $10.00 for renewal of *Signs,* the rest to be used there. Hope you will contnue to print the gospel, as it is so comforting to many, many saints.

Yours in His love,
Sister and Brother Wells

ACTS 17:24-25

"God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;" (Acts 17:24-25)

We realize there are different angles of thought pertaining to these Scriptures, but we wish to present the thought that God does not need any thing; and He certainly does not need any help from weak man. Notice the expression, "as though he needed any thing." This reminds us of this Scripture: "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof." (Psalms 50:12)

The text states that God gives to all life. God breathed the breath of life unto Adam and man became a living soul. God has created all things, and God is the giver of all life. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." (Col. 1:16-17) In reading and believing this Scripture, we know that God is the creator of all things.

God is the supreme being and He is the eternal God. There is nothing that is co-equal with God. God created the devil. "—his hand hath formed the crooked serpent." (Job 26:13) God did not have to explain to man why He created the devil. "I form the light and create darkness: I make peace and create evil, I the Lord do all these things." (Isaiah 45:7) "Great is the mystery of godliness." (1 Tim. 3:16) We know exactly what it has pleased God to reveal to us. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever." (Deut. 29:29) It is God's business just why it pleases him not to reveal certain things to his people. Jesus said, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." (Acts 1-17)

Many times we may be guilty of trying to reason out with natural understanding the Scriptures that are unclear to us. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Proverbs 14:-12) ". . . for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." (Luke 16:15)

Let us keep this thought in mind: God is a jealous God, and he will not give his glory to another. If God should share the glory that rightly belongs unto him, then he would be dividing it with another, and in turn he would be giving his glory to another. But the Scripture says that God will not give his glory to another. (See Isaiah 42:8)

God is a lawgiver, and he is a just God, an holy God, and he loves righteousness and hates evil. God is the only one who can overrule evil for good; He is able to bring good out of what appears to be evil. In order to present our thoughts to the reader, we call your attention to this Scripture: "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." (Gen. 50:20) The brethren of Joseph meant evil against him, but it was the secret purpose of God for Joseph to go unto Egypt and to be raised up as governor of the land, and to bring his brethren there during this time of famine when they had corn in Egypt. Bible readers know the history of the travels of the children of Israel in Egypt and the afflictions that were put upon them. God told Abraham before Isaac was born: "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall affict them four hundred years." (Genesis 15:14) It is wonderful to meditate upon the marvelous works of God.

Let us not get away from the main thought that God does not need any help. It pleases God to show his power in a few. It also has pleased God to choose a few people out of fallen mankind. God does not have to explain to anyone just why it has pleased him to only choose a few. ". . . There is a remnant according to the election of grace." (Rom. 11:5) We know that we hear the world saying that it would be cruel for God not to give everyone a chance to be saved. Such a saying as this springs from Satan. God does not have to explain to anyone the purpose he had when he created the devil. I am glad to know that God has all power. ". . . There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." (Rom. 13:1) Satan had to have permission from God to afflict Job. Who made Satan and gave him the power he does have? Let us remember that God is holy and good. ". . . the Lord is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him." (Psalms 92:15)

God gave Job the grace to bear the afflictions that were put upon him. Job was given the strength and the grace to have the patience he was blessed with. We read of the patience of Job. (see James 5:11)

God works in a mystreious way. As the Lord blesses us, let us go a little further with the thought that God does not need any help, and come to the thought of the work of convicting sinners and teaching his people. May the Lord bless us to hold to the truth and turn neither to the left nor to the right. First, God is the first cause of all causes, and he does not limit himself by leaving it up to man to carry out his purpose. Dear reader, please think of this carefully before reading any further. If God should limit himself by leaving it up to man to spread the gospel to all the world, and to convict sinners, to spiritually educate his people, etc., then God would be disappointed in man's failure to carry out his purpose. Jesus would be discouraged and dissatisfied if just one that he died for should miss going to heaven. But "He shall not fail nor be discouraged." (Isaiah 32:4) "He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." (Isaiah 53:11) *"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me."* "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of *all which he hath given me I should lose nothing,* but should raise it up again at the last day." (John 6:37-39) Keep in mind that all of the elect shall be saved, and not one shall be lost.

This reminds me of the dragon in the 12th chapter of Revelation that spewed out the flood after the woman. This is

the devil spewing out the flood of false doctrine after the church of God. The world just drinks up this false doctrine, but it does not hurt the church, and it never will. Jesus said, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. 16:18) All the assaults of satan and the powers of hell cannot hurt the church of God. "My father which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of the father's hand." (John 10:29) What comfort it is to know that God is able to keep his people, and they shall be kept by the power of God: Notice these words of Peter: "Who are kept by the power of God . . ." (1 Peter 1:5) Jesus told Peter: "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." (Luke 22:31-32) Peter was converted from this error of feeling that he could keep himself by his own power. If God does not keep us, we would all fall by the wayside. I trust we realize our enemies are too strong for us. (see Psalms 18:7)

It is true that God uses man as a way to carry out some purposes; As God sent the prophet to speak unto David, and this was a way to let David know how he had sinned against God. (See 2 Samuel 12) But let us be careful in thinking about this point. God did not use man as an instrument, or means or a way to convict Peter of this sin of denying Jesus. God did not use man as a means or instrument or way to convict Paul, as the Scriptures state that God did this directly by his Spirit. "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Gal. 1:11-12) Briefly, Paul received the knowledge of the truth by the direct operation of the Holy Ghost.

At this point, we will quote from Eld. Beebe: "It has been reported by some, and believed by others, that we discard altogether the idea of God's using means or instruments for the accomplishment of his divine purposes. This charge is gratuitous and untrue. Although we do most positively deny the supposed power or efficacy of humanly invented means to facilitate the salvation of lost sinners, in the manner the doctrine is preached, believed and acted upon at the present day, we most freely admit, and firmly believe, that the all-wise and glorious God has appointed instruments by which he will accomplish his adorable purposes." (pg. 328, Vol. 1 of his "Editorials.")

After the close of Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, this remark was made: "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37) What caused their hearts to be pricked? One may say that Peter's sermon was the means or instrument that caused their hearts to be pricked. As the Lord blesses us, let us carefully consider the matter: Now, does preaching cause one's heart to be pricked, or does preaching cause one to be converted? Before we attempt to comment, let us consider another sermon, and notice how this sermon was received: At the close of Stephen's sermon, we read: "When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart . . ." (Acts 7:54) Notice the difference in the reception of these two sermons. This is proof to show that one's heart is not pricked by the preaching, and neither does preaching cause one to be converted. Again, some were pricked in their hearts during Peter's sermon, and the people were cut to the heart during Stephen's sermon. Why, or what caused the difference in the reception of the two sermons?

Preaching will not have any effect unless the Spirit of the Lord applies it to the heart. "The preparations of the heart in man, and answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." (Proverbs 16:1) It is the work of the Spirit to apply the

preached word to the hearts of those that receive it. In other words, the preached word will not profit one at all unless the Spirit of God applies it to the heart. "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: *but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.*" (Hebrews 4:2)

In connection with this, consider the parable of the sower. (read Luke 8:5-15, Mt. 13:3-23; Mk. 4:3-20) Notice that the seed which was sown by the way side, upon a rock, and among thorns did not bear any fruit. The seed that was sown in those places did not profit them at all. Yet the seed that was sown in good ground did bring forth fruit. This ground was good because it was prepared to receive the seed. The preached word profits those who are prepared to receive it. "But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience." (Luke 8:15)

What is the purpose of preaching? Jesus said, "feed my Lambs . . . feed my sheep." (John 21:15-16) The point I am trying to make is this: God does not have to use man as a means, or instrument to convict sinners. This is done by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit. Man thinks that he can help the Lord, but our God does not need any help, and I am glad to know that God did not leave this work up to man.

It is satan who is stiring up the doctrine that God depends upon man as a means or instrument to carry out his purpose. Our God is able to execute his counsel. ". . . My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isaiah 46:10)

Why does satan stir up the false doctrines? The motive is to rob God of the glory that is due his holy name. The doctrines of grace advocate an Almighty God and a weak little man, and this doctrine renders all the honor and praise and glory unto the great name of God. There will not be any creature praise heard in heaven. We know that we are sinners saved only by the mercy and grace of God, and have been made to sing praises within our hearts for this Great Salvation. Salvation is by the grace of God!

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, at Sandy Grove Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in March, 1974.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 744,
Bennettsville, S.C. 29512

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the Contentnea Union is to be held, the Lord willing, with Upper Town Creek Church, Wilson County, N.C. the fifth Saturday and Sunday in March, 1974.

All lovers of the truth are invited to visit us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union Meeting will be held with Danville Primitive Baptist Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in March, 1974, the Lord willing.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Eld. H. W. Wray, Mod.
R. T. Holley, Church Clerk

Danville, Virginia March, 1974

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EDITORIAL

ONE MEDIATOR

"But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." (Hebrews 8:6)

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." (I Timothy 2:5)

The subject of the mediatorship of Jesus is deep and sublime. It involves the grace and mercy of God towards those who have sinned against him, who, consequently, deserve only the judgment and wrath of God. The coming of Jesus into the world was plainly an act of mercy on the part of the Father. For Jesus becoming the Savior and Redeemer of God's people, and the mediator between Him and these people, was certainly initiated by the Father. The condition of men was such that they could not in any way begin negotiations with God; so, if God had not been pleased to take note of them in mercy, they should have always remained in their state of condemnation and death.

In this writing we are to consider the fact that Jesus is the Mediator — the one Mediator between God and man; and that he is the *mediator of a better covenant.*

The meaning of the word "mediator" is: One who is a go-between; one who acts with the purpose of bringing agreement between persons at odds; etc. This has its usefulness in many walks of life, such as, between employers and employees; or between friends who have

had a misunderstanding. But the most wonderful and far reaching sense of mediatorship is Christ Jesus between God and God's sinning people.

It is easy to understand that a successful mediator must necessarily be qualified to meet both sides on equality with them; and he must be thoroughly acquainted with the situation on both sides. How eminently qualified was Jesus! He was *one with the Father;* and, being incarnate, he was *one with the people.* "I and my Father are one." (John 10:30) ". . . in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconcilation for the sins of the people." (Hebrews 2:17)

It is evident, since Jesus said that he came to do the will of him that sent him, that everything Jesus came to do — and which he did — was the thought of his Father. In this there was, of course, perfect oneness of purpose and accomplishment, for Jesus and his Father are one. "I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." (John 17:4)

To mediate between God and God's people necessitated the achievement of everything which was in the purpose of his coming into the world. Sending his Son into the world indicated not only God's willingness to be a party in the matter, but also his determination that it should be done.

There was a great gulf between God and his people. They had broken God's law, und were under its penalty. This meant that they were alienated from God, shut up in their prison; and, as far as they themselves were concerned, must remain there. For of themselves they had nothing to bargain with, nothing with which to claim leniency — they were miserable, guilty, and their condition was helpless and hopeless. God's judgments are inflexible, demanding complete satisfaction; and there was not one among all their number who could make satisfaction, for all were under the same condemnation.

Was there no one to pity? Was there no one who cared?

Yes, there was One who had pity; and cared! Behold, at his time, God caused it to be proclaimed: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."

But there was much involved in his saving his people from their sins: He must take upon himself the likeness of sinful flesh, (without sin, of course) that he should be capable of obeying the offended law. He must of himself have something to offer, for without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sins. So he must suffer, he must die, in order to make satisfaction in the nature of his people who had sinned.

The manifestation of God's love towards his people, in that he willed that they should be redeemed, and in that he himself provided the only one who could satisfy the rigid demands of the law, even his own Son, is a most sublime subject for the contemplation and comfort of His people. That Jesus came into the world is not just merely a matter of dogmatic opinion: It is an historical fact. It is not a cunningly devised fable: the disciples were eyewitnesses of his majesty; and each subsequent disciple has the things of Jesus confirmed in his heart. How surely it is established in Christian experience that there is no other way of redemption and salvation.

We are told that Christ is the mediator of *a better covenant* — a new testament, which has positive declarations of mercy and grace towards those with whom it is made. This differs greatly from the former covenant. The former bestowed blessings upon the performances of men. But the record is that men failed in all of their obligations. The better covenant brought to full view the grace which had its moments of view in Biblical history; but it was not until "in these last days" that God was pleased to speak to us by his Son, rather than as he had formerly by the prophets.

The first, (or old) covenant served

its purpose of bringing all the works of men into their proper light, and showed the utter inability of men to comply with its requirements. This brought the full force of judgment upon all. (Yet we must be reminded that this judgment of condemnation is not applied to any in this life except those with whom the *better covenant* is made. Then it is with each as it was with the Apostle, "When the commandment came, sin revived and I died." But none shall escape this condemnation, though with many it will be in that day when there will be a separating of those whom the "sheep" and the "goats" typify.)

This experiencing of "the commandment coming, and sin reviving", is in preparation for the manifesting and applying of the new and better covenant, when Jesus, as the mediator of that covenant, speaks, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

It is apparent that this new covenant is the gracious work of God to those with whom it is made; and that it entirely supercedes the old. Not that the old is merely discarded in favor of the new, but that the new is given because the eternal will of the Father was that the sins of *his people* should be atoned for by his own Son. Only Jesus, as the one efficacious sacrifice, could satisfy the demands of the law. Thus He, first of all, fulfilled the law perfectly, not just merely destroyed it, by meeting the requirements of perfect obedience to it for each whom the Father gave him; and whom he fully represented. Justice demanded this obedience, and could not be satisfied otherwise.

Jesus accomplished in his coming into the world all that was necessary to completely redeem all of God's elect from all their sins. He was everything for them. He overcame death by his resurrection, and is declared to be the Son of God with power. He glorified the Father on earth in his perfect accomplishment of his mission to earth, and is received back at the right hand of the Father in heaven, to appear in the presence of God for us. He is glorified with the same glory he had before his advent into the world, and in this perfection he makes intercession for us. This means that when one is brought under conviction through the operation of the Spirit of God, and justice demands condemnation and death, the blessed Saviour intercedes for him. He makes the sinner's cause, his cause. He presents the righteousness and atonement which he wrought for each of his brethren, as having made satisfaction for each. In this way He makes application of that which he wrought for them by his death, since it is a portion of his work as a priest after the order of Melchisedec to make intercession for them.

When a transgressor is brought before the courts of our land, he is represented by counsel; who may present evidence in favor of his client, plead for mercy, or take other actions. But he himself cannot satisfy the law on behalf of his client; and he is powerless to prevent the execution of the judgment of the court. But the condemned sinner has One who is far superior to this counsel; one who pleads no extenuating circumstances for his client, nor asks for mercy. Rather, he interposes: "I represented this man when I was made sin, and when I died the just for the unjust I suffered his penalty. I made complete satisfaction for all charges against him. And having done this, I conquered death by arising from it, showing that the man is completely justified." What a counselor! What a mediator!

He speaks directly with his Father, who is the offended one. He knows the infirmities and needs of his brethren; and having already made complete satisfaction for all demands against them; and as the Mediator of the new covenant which the Father has made, and which was secured by His conforming to all necessary demands to secure the new covenant provisions, Jesus presents all these things in behalf of the elect children; and their sins are remembered against them no more. The Father is

satisfied, and the sinner is fully justified before him.

Now we are to consider Jesus as the *One Mediator* between God and man. This precludes any other, either between God and us, or between our Mediator and us, because Jesus himself alone is between God and man. Who could be a better Mediator than he who has met all demands and completely satisfied the offended Father?

We think that it is the eternal truth that Jesus, as our Saviour, had one great and important work to do. He was to present all the elect "holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight." (Colossians 1:22) To this end he lived, and died, and arose from the dead. We are on safe ground when we state that Jesus never lost interest in his assignment, nor in any way lapsed in its performance. We conclude, therefore, that he needs not any to remind him, or any to undertake to influence him, be they mother, priests, saints living or dead, ministers, or any one else. How well the redeemed know that even their worship must be in Spirit and in truth, and that they are dependent upon the grace and mercy of God for all things; and that God works in them both to will and to do of his pleasure. They know that even freedom in prayer is not at their own command. So, what influence could those who need grace have upon the giver of all grace?

How wonderful it is to have one in heaven to represent us as our Intercessor, as our Mediator, as our Advocate with the Father! And especially since we know that we need him at all times. "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." (Hebrews 4:14) There is a coming boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. It is unto *the throne of grace!* We cannot go directly unto God of ourselves: It is through Jesus — for his name's sake, for we have nothing of our own to plead. How important, therefore, to every member of the elect family, that they have Him who was once on earth, but now exalted, the man Christ Jesus, as their Mediator, their one and only Mediator, between them and their God.

We have no desire to be critical of anyone's faith, or system of religion. What we do desire, however, is that we may through grace contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; and to present, as we are enabled, to all interested parties, this faith honestly and plainly, that the name of our God might be praised, and His little ones comforted and built up in the most holy faith. We dare not to enlarge beyond revelation; that would be foolhardy. And we dare not refrain from speaking what we hope we have been taught, for that would be contrary to our calling, if we have one. We dare not go beyond our firm convictions in these matters, to follow others. We hope it is with us, as with the Apostle Paul, "For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed." (Romans 15:18)

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus."

J. D. W.

(Republished by request)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

WHERE IS THE CHURCH?

New Vernon, N.Y., June 15, 1845.

An inspired writer has said, "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters." None who are born of God and taught by his Spirit can doubt that this figure is intended to describe the condition as well as the superior excellence of the church above the daughters. She is called the "Love, Dove, and Undefiled" of her Beloved. The figure of a *lily* not only describes the modest beauty of the church, but shows, according to the instructions of our Lord, that her exceeding glory, although surpassing that

of the regal splendor of Solomon, is not the result of her own labor. She toils not to procure it, she spins nothing that would answer for warp or for woof; her life is derived from an invisible Root, and her head is bowed under the genial rays of the sun. But she is not only like the lily as that flower stands gracefully in the field, or among other beautiful flowers, but she is like the lily among thorns. How truly does the church of Christ answer to the figure in all its fullness of illustration! God has chosen her in a furnace of affliction, and she has ever, in her militant state, been among the rude briars and thorns. The earth, groaning under the curse of the righteous Creator, is destined to produce thorns and thistles, and while this world remains the temporary abode of the church she must encounter them. One of her most prominent sons prayed no less than three times that the thorn might be removed, but was referred to the sufficiency of the grace of God to sustain him and bear him through all the buffeting of Satan. To those who have discernment in spiritual things how admirably does the church contrast with that by which she is surrounded. All that the lily is of itself is merely grass of the field which today is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, but God has so clothed her as to challenge comparison with the most exalted glory of the earth. All flesh is as grass, and all goodliness thereof (that is produced by human power, or the flesh, for all that is born of the flesh, whether physical or mental, is flesh) is as the flower of the grass; the grass withereth, the flower thereof fadeth away, but the Word of the Lord abideth forever. While the flower thereof, that is, the goodliness of the flesh, or grass, may adorn the meadow, but, in common with the grass with which it is connected, it cannot survive the dissolution of the flesh, or grass; but God so clothes it (the church) in the garments of salvation as to secure the glory as an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and cannot fade away.

"Defiled and loathsome as we are,
He makes us white and calls us fair,
Adorns us with that heavenly dress,
His graces, and his righteousness."

Consequently the church is enabled through grace to sing, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God, for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness; as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. (Isa. xli. 10.) She "is all glorious within, her clothing is of wrought gold, she shall be brought unto the King in garments of fine needle-work." (Psalms xlv. 13.) All human beauty and creature excellency, compared with the church of the living God, which is the ground and pillar of the truth, is but as thorns. Zion is pronounced in the language of inspiration *the perfection of beauty;* it cannot, therefore be improved. Earth has no colors, nor has creation charms to lend which would not obscure her beauty. And although her peculiar excellency appears not to the eyes of an adulterous generation, for except a man be born again he cannot see her, because the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned; still all her attractions are clearly apprehended by those unto whom the Spirit of God reveals her. To them she appears as the New Jerusalem, descending from God out of heaven adorned as a bride for her husband. She looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.

Understanding these to be some of the general characteristics of the church of God, may we not inquire, Where may she be found at this day? We cannot consistently believe that Christ has no church on earth at the present day; and if he has a church now upon earth she must bear the lineaments which are drawn in the New Testament. We shall not find her at the corners of the streets, in harlots' attire, seeking for

lovers; from her lips will not be heard the silly boast, "I have peace offerings with me, this day have I paid my vows." (Prov. vii. 14.) She cannot be recognized in any other dress than the garments of salvation which her Lord has given her. The daughters spoken of, Isa. 3:16-26, with their haughty carriage, stretched forth necks, wanton eyes, and mincing walk, making a tinkling with their feet, with their cauls, and their round-tires like the moon, their chains, and bracelets, and the mufflers, the bonnets, and the ornaments, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the ear-rings, and the rings, and nose jewels, changeable suits of apparel, mantles, and wimples, and crisping pins, glasses, fine linen, hoods, and veils, are only the thorns by which the lily of the valley is surrounded. "There are threescore queens and fourscore concubines and virgins without number; my dove, my undefiled is but one, she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bear her."—(Cant. vi. 8 & 9.)

In order to demonstrate the existence of the church of Christ on earth at the present day, we must find a community of saints corresponding to the primitive pattern, of eighteen hundred years ago —a people whose only beauty consists in the comeliness which Christ has put upon them—a people saved by the Lord who is the shield of their help and the sword of their excellency, and whose enemies are found liars unto them—(Deut. 33:29)—A people dwelling alone and not reckoned among the nations, with no governmental patronage from the powers of the world—a kingdom that is not of this world, nor visible to the world, because they are the sons of God; the world knoweth them not because it knew him not— A poor and afflicted people trusting in the name of the Lord—a persecuted people; for if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus he shall suffer persecution. Their names shall be cast out of men, and they shall be hated of all men for Christ's name sake. They are regarded as the offscouring of all things, accused and slandered in like manner as their divine Lord and Master was; for if these things were done in the green tree they shall be repeated in the dry; if they called the Master of the house Beelzebub they will also call them of his household so.

These are only some of the outlines of the church of Christ. She is also characterized by her *"one Lord, one faith, and one baptism."* Her faith is as radically different from that of every other professing people on earth as are her Lord and her baptism. Of her faith Jesus is the Author and Finisher; but that of all other religious bodies either originates with themselves or is derived from the doctrines, traditions, and instructions of men. But blessed is she, for flesh and blood hath not revealed these things to her, but her heavenly Father has taught her by his Holy Spirit. She is the opposite of all other sects in regard to her food, her appetite, and the source from which all her supplies are received. Others can and do eat their own bread and wear their own apparel; but she must eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus. Nothing short of the true Bread which came down from heaven, that kind which Moses never gave, can satisfy her; but her neighbors, or the thorns among which she is situated, do not see why the bread that Moses gave is not good enough.

Christ's church is a peculiar people, in all respects essentially different from the religionists of this world. She comprises a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation, and shows forth the praises of him who hath called her out of darkness and translated her into the kingdom of his dear Son. The doctrine which her faith takes hold of is that which cannot possibly suit any body else under heaven. And if there be any who have not passed from death unto life, who fancy that they can understand and love the doctrine by which the church of God is distinguished, they are deluded. As none knoweth the things of a man but the spirit of a man that is in him, (for the spirit of man being taken from any man but a dead and uncon-

scious corpse remains,) neither knoweth any man the things of the Spirit but the Spirit. And unless we be born of the Spirit, and that Spirit abide in us, we are as dead to all spiritual things, as the human body is to natural life after the animal spirit has departed. It is, therefore, quite as practicable to teach the tenants of the tombs the English grammar, or any science, as to teach the things of the Spirit of God to unregenerate men.

The church of God will be found in possession of doctrine which cannot be taught by every or any man to his neighbor, saying, Know the Lord; it cannot be taught nor learned in Sabbath schools, or what are called theological schools; nor can it be derived from reading the bible, or hearing it expounded, for the natural man cannot receive it; it is spiritually discerned. Every organized body of professors of religion who hold a doctrine which they can teach their unregenerate fellow-men is a branch of anti-christ; and the nature and attainableness of their faith proves that they have not the faith of God's elect, and that their faith stands in the wisdom of men, and not in the power of God. See I Cor. 2:5. The primitive church acknowledged Christ as the only spiritual King, the true and only Potentate, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light which no man can attain unto. That church cannot now be identified where Christ is not so regarded; nor is he so regarded by any church, sect, or people who hold that there is spiritual life anywhere else, or that the light in which he dwelleth can be approached. To approach is to make some advance towards the object; but this no man can do, as the members of the church of Christ know right well. The true church now, as in her primitive days, depends on God to raise up, qualify, send forth, and sustain the ministers of the gospel. Those who heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, are not the church of Christ. To him who ascended up on high, who led captivity captive and received gifts for men, they look for all the gifts which the church can need,—to him who reigns, being exalted a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins, and to him alone they look to bring sinners to repentance and to cause the redeemed of the Lord to return with singing to Zion with everlasting joy upon their heads. To him who opened the doors of death, and rose triumphantly from the grave, who conquered sin and hell, they look for support, comfort, deliverance and victory.

Finally, the church of our Redeemer is *the circumcision who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.*

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, June 15, 1845)

MINUTES OF PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to a request of the Muddy Creek Church, Duplin County, N.C., made in their regular conference Saturday, May 26, 1973, a presbytery was convened on Sunday, May 27, 1973, for the purpose of examination and ordination of Brother Norman Brown to the high and noble office of deacon.

The presbytery was composed of the following brethren: Elders S. P. Jones, D. B. Stokes, and W. L. Everett; Deacons Lloyd Kennedy, Oliver Fountain, Stedman Brown, Clayton Brown, Norman Jenkins and John Houston.

The presbytery was opened by singing Hymn 285 in Lloyd's Collection and prayer by Elder Jones. Elder W. L. Everett was chosen Moderator and Brother Corrone Bryant, Clerk. The candidate and his companion were delivered to the presbytery by the deacons of the church.

The members of the presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, proceded to deliver the charge led by Elder Stokes, after which the laying on of hands was administered. Brother Brown was then returned to the church as an ordained deacon of the Old School Baptist Order. He was then given the right hand of fellowship by the church and others present.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were then read and adopted. The presbytery was then dismissed with the singing of Hymn 300 in Lloyd's Collection and prayer by Elder Stokes.

W. L. Everett, Moderator
Corrone Bryant, Clerk

OBITUARIES

PEARL T. FICKETT

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church has lost a pearl of great value in the recent death of Sister Pearl T. Fickett. While she was not a member of the Norfolk church, no one could have been more faithful in attendance nor concerned with the welfare of the members of the church than Sister Pearl. Her walk and conversation gave ample evidence of a strong and abiding inner conviction and she was a shining and worthy example for us to follow. Her hope and trust were never stronger nor more abundant than in the months before her death. She was aware that her death was imminent yet she approached it calmly and with great dignity. Her courage and determination was an inspiration to all of us in the months that she suffered before she was freed by death to inherit that kingdom prepared for her and all those who await His glorious appearing.

Sister Pearl was born on November 29, 1897 in Franklin County, Virginia. She was the daughter of John Wesley and Mattie Elizabeth Jamison Turner who was a member of the Primitive Baptist Order in the Pigg Association. Sister Pearl united with Camp Branch Primitive Baptist Church in Pigg River Association as a young lady and was a faithful member throughout the remainder of her life.

In 1916, Sister Pearl came to Norfolk to work. She worked for the telephone company and later for the City of Norfolk from which she retired in 1968. She was married to Robert L. Fickett and their home was a haven of rest for the Old School Baptists as long as they were able to prepare for them. She is survived by her husband, Brother Robert, who was blessed to ask for a home in the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church in August, 1973. We had longed hoped he would be enabled to come to the church while Sister Pearl was with us, but we would not question the reason nor way of our Heavenly Father. She is also survived by several sisters among whom is her baby sister, Alice Hatcher, who is a member of our church.

The members at Norfolk feel a great loss in the death of our beloved Sister Pearl. We are extremly thankful for her life and our long and valuable association with her. We bow in humble submission to the will of our Merciful Father who does all things well and look forward to that second coming and glorious awakening when we all shall be united with Him to sing ceaseless and undivided praises in that world which has no end.

Sister Pearl departed this life on June 18, 1973. Her funeral was conducted by Elders William L. Everett, B. D. Handy, A. P. Mewborn, and I. S. Connor. She was then taken to her home church and laid to rest in Camp Branch Cemetery.

Done by order of conference Saturday before the third Sunday in September, 1973.

Corrone E. Bryant
William L. Everett, Moderator
Ruby Coward, Clerk

(Sister Wood and I were present at the home with Sister Fickett during the Pigg River Association held at Camp Branch Church, Franklin County, Va. in August 1935, when she united with the church and was baptized the next morning by Elder J. P. Helms.

Since the above obituary was written, Brother Fickett has also passed away.—J.D.W.)

IN MEMORY OF CARRIE BAGGETT JONES

Born August 21, 1886. Residing in Dunn, N. C. her full life. Her father was the late William Wright Philips, her mother was the late Rowena Temple Philips, both were members of Black River Church of Dunn, North Carolina.

She was married to Marion Payton Baggett in 1906. To this union was born, Margaret Louise Baggett, Charles Edwin Baggett, Marion Gray Baggett. Their father died December 1928.

Sister Carrie united with Black River Church the third Saturday in October 1908. Her daughter Margaret, was six months old when her mother joined the church. Sister Carrie's husband joined at the water, and both were baptized together. They were firm believer's in the doctrine Salvation by the grace of God, filling the many duties of their church, and their family.

In 1931 she married A. W. Jones, who preceded her in death 18 years. She was the oldest member of Black River Church.

In many of her late years she was fondly known as "Ma Jones." She was a loving mother and a faithful wife, and all who knew her loved her.

She passed from this earthly life, July 23, 1973, making her stay here near 87 years. In her afflictions she waited patiently for her Lord, the God of Heaven to call her from this world, into the sweet and restful kingdom. She is survived by one daughter, Sister Margaret Baggett, who is also a member of Black River Church.

Sister Carrie's funeral was conducted at Black River Church, by her pastor, Elder C. D. Turner, assisted by Elder W. D. Godwin. Her body was laid to rest in Greenwood Cemetery at Dunn, N.C. under a beautiful mound of flowers, there to await the coming of the Lord Jesus, when the trumpet shall sound and

the graves shall open, then her body shall be raised with the great host of God's Saints. The elect family who shall be in the likeness of Jesus and be satisfied in the restful and everlasting kingdom. The following is a psalm, written by her daughter Margaret.

HOMAGE TO MY MOTHER

This Psalm I sing, this Posy I see
Are thoughts and words, footprints of Thee,
That help me through another day
To see this life in your kind way.

The way of a Lady with a heart of Love
The Soul of an Angel, the Touch of the Dove.
With fingers so nimble - each task to enjoy -
For others your thoughts did ever employ.

My thanks to God for a few years of splendor
To know such a creature my heart I did render.
No words can I think of in Homage to pay,
But memories will guard me and this will I say,

"GOD BLESSED AND KEPT YOU WHILE HERE ON THIS EARTH, THERE'S NO ONE YOUR EQUAL — EXCEPT SPIRITUAL BIRTH - AND, IF IN HEAVEN I AM TO BE - YOU'RE STILL THE GREATEST MOTHER TO ME."

Done in order of Conference

Elder C. D. Turner, Moderator
Sister Nettie Turlington, Clerk

MEMORIAL TO LULA P. ("MA") SHIELDS

Sister Lula P. Shields was born February 11, 1884, and was called to be with her Lord and Saviour on November 28, 1972 making her stay here almost 89 years.

She asked for a home with the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church by presenting a letter from the Primitive Baptist Church in Roanoke, Virginia on May 21, 1916 just 8 years after the church in Norfolk, Virginia was organized. For 56 years some who attended meetings at the Norfolk Church could not help but love her and call her "MA" because, that is what she was to them. She greeted all who entered the meeting house with the sweetest smile of welcome, and outstretched arms of love, and one could not help but feel at home, and among friends.

November 30, 1972 the writer attended "MA" Shield's funeral and as I listened to the beautiful words of comfort and sure promises of our God that fell from the lips of Elder W. L. Everett and Elder A. P. Mewborn, I was made again to know for a surety, that, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints, and that it is far better to be with Jesus than to be in this world which is full of sin, sorrows, disappointments, trials and tribulations. Trials and tribulations Sister Shields had all the days of her life and like all God's little ones, most of the time she felt was spent groping in darkness. However, I believe she was being led all the way, for Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice and they follow me and another they will not follow."

Now to her sister, Sister Gladys Carter and any who is grieved at her being called home, may it please God to bless them with the peace that Jesus gives, for it removes all nature and turns the heart and thoughts to heavenly and divine things and makes one to know God is too wise to err.

Submitted in love,
Ruby E. Coward

ERICK R. TEDDER

Our dear brother in the faith of Jesus Christ, Erick R. Tedder, fell peacefully asleep in Jesus Friday, June 29, 1973, at the age of 82 years, after a lingering illness of several months.

He united with Old Beulah Primitive Baptist Church, Johnston County, N.C., the 3rd Sunday in August, 1944; and was baptized the same day by his pastor, Elder W. E. Turner.

He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Nancy Barnes Tedder, and five sons and five daughters by a former marriage.

Brother Tedder was a very faithful member and was never absent from his meetings except in case of illness. He was faithful to his family and was a good neighbor. We shall miss him and his quiet manner, but we feel it is far better to depart and be with Christ. His funeral was conducted by Elders Wayne Mitchell, Harvey Holland and Curtis Raines. Interment was in the church cemetery.

Written by

Elder W. E. Turner

ELDER W. T. BROWN

Elder W. T. Brown was born August 5, 1885, and passed away January 7, 1973. His funeral was preached in the New Bay Primitive Baptist Church, of which he was Pastor, conducted by Elder Oliver Allen of Verona, N.C., Elder J. T. Prescott of Swansboro, N.C. and Elder D. B. Stokes of Jacksonville, North Carolina.

Elder Brown had been a member of the New Bay Primitive Baptist Church for many years. He was laid to rest in Hicks Run Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection. Elder Brown is greatly missed by the members of the church, a host of friends, as well as his family.

He is survived by two daughters: Mrs. Pearl Sandlin of Verona, N.C., Mrs. Mollie Batts of Greenville, N.C. and one son, Carl S. Brown of Pollocksville, N.C.; eleven grandchildren, and

seventeen great grandchildren, and two great great grandchildren.

In all of our sorrow, we confess that our loss is surely his eternal gain. God is too great to be unjust, too good to be unkind, to wise to make a mistake, and too righteous and merciful to change.

May he continue in mercy to keep us and lead us in life's uneven journey until that day when our page of life's book is turned. We beg it be in sweet submission to the greatness of God in His eternal wisdom, in all things both visible and invisible in time and eternity.

This letter is submitted in love according to order of Conference the first Sunday of September, 1973, agreeing that a copy be given to the family, a copy to the *Signs of the Times*, and a copy given to the New Bay Primitive Baptist Church to be placed in the church record.

His daughter,
Sister Pearl Sandlin

BEULAH GASKINS WILLIS

In memory of my dear wife, Beulah Gaskins Willis, born July 20, 1905. She was the daughter of the late W. L. Gaskins and Magie Thomason Gaskins.

We were married on the 22nd day of July, 1923, which made her 18 years of age. To this union were born three children: Charlie M. Willis, Jr., near the home; Mrs. Ruby Carawan of New Bern, N.C.; and Mrs. Stella Burroughs, near the home.

She had an operation in 1943. Two days later she had a stroke caused by a blood clot which laid on her brain. She never did get well, although she did improve to the point that she could do most of the housework and cook with one hand.

We joined Bethel Primitive Baptist Church the second Sunday of September of 1956. The same day we were both baptised by our pastor, Elder Carl Edwards.

She broke her hip the last day of September in 1968. From that time on she was confined to a wheelchair. She never complained. When asked how she was she would answer, "fine". She loved her church. Even though confined to a wheelchair, she attended church regularly until about 3 months prior to her death.

With all our ups and downs we lived together 50 years and 24 days.

She left 13 grandchildren; 4 grandsons, 9 granddaughters, and many friends. She was loved by all.

Her funeral was held in Bethel Church which she loved so much. The services were conducted by her Pastor, Elder Sam Jones and Elder Jake Prescott. Her remains were laid away in the church cemetery to wait until the Lord speaks to come forth.

I am very lonely, although I could not ask for her to be returned to me to go through the suffering she once went through. I am sure my loss is her eternal gain.

Written by her sad and lonely husband, the best I can write with weeping eyes.

C. M. Willis

A MEMORIAL TO A PRECIOUS DEACON

Our Heavenly Father in his infinite wisdom and mercy has seen fit to remove our beloved brother, Deacon Daylan Evans from the walks of life, from this low ground of sorrow, and gave him that peaceful rest until he sees fit to come and gather his jewels who have been redeemed in the Saviour's blood.

Brother Daylan asked for a home at Wilson Primitive Baptist Church June 1963, his wife uniting the next day and they were baptised together. Soon after the church realized the gift of a deacon and he was ordained along with this writer in August 1964. He loved his church and the brethren and always looked forward to having the church clean at meeting time. He was a very humble man and his walk and conversation with his many friends will be long remembered.

Brother Daylan was born October 26, 1915 and married Louisa Lamm December 25, 1936. The Lord blessed them with one son and two daughters who survive along with his wife and several brothers and sisters.

At close of our regular conference March 10, 1973 brother Laylan asked to speak to the church, he arose declaring the goodness of our Heavenly Father and the unsearchable riches of his grace. I believe he felt the presence of his Master for about ten minutes and became ill and passed away soon there after. We all miss him very much.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor Elder D. B. Stokes before a beautiful mound of flowers and friends at Wilson Primitive Baptist Church and laid to rest in Evergreen Memorial Gardens.

Preston Gay, Clerk

MARY W. ROBBINS

Sister Mary Robbins was born in 1881 and was a longtime resident of Nash County, N.C.

She united with the Fall's Church in April of 1924. Sister Robbins was a faithful member of the Fall's Church and in regular attendance until the last year of her life, at which time she was bed-ridden. She was a faithful believer in the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace, and always enjoyed talking about the hope of eternal

life beyond this world of trouble and sorrow. We at the Falls Church will miss her, but trust that we as well as her family may be resigned to the will of a merciful God, and that we, as well as her family, may be resolved that the God of all mercy knows what is best for his people.

Funeral services were conducted from Gay-Yost Funeral Chapel by her Pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, and she was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery in hope of eternal life.

Surviving are three sons: E. B. Robbins of the home, Willard S. of Rocky Mount, and W. E. of Wilson; five daughters, Minnie Robbins of the home, L. T. Daughtridge of Raleigh, Mrs. Nolia E. McSwan of Charlotte, Mrs. W. Y. Pryer, Jr. of Greensboro, and Mrs. Iris Lesner of Norfolk, Va.

Conference August 10, 1973.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

ENNIS (NAT) WOODRUFF

Ennis Woodruff was born April 3, 1894 and the Lord called him home June 19, 1972, making his stay here on earth 78 years. He was the son of the late John J. and Mollie Taylor Woodruff of Nash County, N.C. Bro. Woodruff united with the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church second week end in November 1970. He was not well and spent most of his remaining years at the Veterans Hospital, Durham, N.C. He was unable to attend his Church but enjoyed so much the brethren visiting him. He loved the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace; never tiring of hearing and talking about our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He always wanted to hear of the meeting and how the brethren were getting along.

He is survived by three sisters: Miss Bessie Woodruff; Mrs. H. A. Smith; and Mrs. J. T. Blanford; two brothers, N. D. Woodruff and Jack Woodruff. Brother Woodruff's funeral was conducted from the Chapel of Johnson Funeral Home by his Pastor Elder D. B. Stokes and W. L. Everett. He was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery where we feel he is in the arms of Jesus waiting for the second coming of our Lord.

Resolved: That one copy of these resolutions be given to the family; one to the *Signs of the Times*, and one for the Church records.

Conference: February 1973

D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

BROTHER TOM GRAHAM

Tom H. Graham was born near Lone Oak in Hunt County, Texas on March 19, 1903, the son of Frank F. and Mattie Hoover Graham. He passed on from his journey on earth at the Methodist Hospital in Dallas, July 14, 1973, aged 70 years, 3 months, and 24 days.

He was married to Alice Williams, January 17, 1921. To this union were born 3 children, William B. and Aubrey L. Graham, and Doris Graham Rivard. Brother Graham and his wife united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Dallas September 19, 1952, the two being baptized together by Elder W. W. Taylor. He had been in the grocery business in Dallas for 20 years before his illness of several months.

A short while before he died he awakened from a coma and began to speak these words: "I didn't know it could be so sweet to die. The Lord has been so good to me, oh, if I could only praise him more and more!" He passed on in perfect peace having the Spirit itself beareth witness with his spirit that he was a child of God. He loved his church and the doctrine and proved it by his regular attendance.

We, the ones left behind, if we be of like precious faith should not grieve after our kindred in Christ. For Christ has said concerning these loved ones: "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." This world is not their home, they are only passing through to a far better home beyond the veil where there will be no more sins, trials, tribulations, and sorrows but will be like Jesus Christ and will be satisfied.

Funeral services were conducted at Saints' Rest Church in Dallas in the presence of the family and a large number of friends by Elder C. M. Morris and the writer. The body was laid to rest in the Simmons Cemetery at Cash, Texas. May the goodness of God extend comfort and resignation unto those who mourn.

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 142 DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1974 NO. 4

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4/74
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THANKFUL FOR ALL HIS BLESSINGS

Box #48
Duanesburg, New York 12056

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood:

The year has swiftly passed and we find ourselves at the close of another segment of time as measured by man, and on the threshold of a new year.

We are thankful for all that the Lord has blessed us with during the past year, both temporal and spiritual. We were thankful to be able to attend the Upper Country Line and the Salisbury associations again this year. It was wonderful to meet the brethren and hear the preaching from God's rich storehouse of spiritual blessings.

The Lord provided a way for us to have meetings at the various churches in our area. Also Elder Stewart McColl of Canada was able to be with us the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in September. It was wonderful to see the spiritual love and fellowship expressed at this meeting. Surely the North gave up, and the South kept not back. (Isaiah 43rd chapter 6th verse.)

We were sad at the loss of our pastor Elder Amasa J. Slauson on November 24th, but we are thankful for the years of his faithfully proclaiming the glorious gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that he gave.

In the 1st chapter of Job 9th verse we read, "Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for naught?" Naught in the dictionary means nothing. Job was a very wealthy person and Satan was trying to say that it was because of this that Job feared the Lord.

This is like what we see in the world today. We have all these salvation salesmen traveling to and fro saying if you don't do this or that you will be lost forever. The Bible doesn't say that.

The only reason most of the world, except for the elect of God, go to church is so they can get to heaven, they think. In other words they are not serving God for nothing. They are trying to work their way to heaven.

Not so with the elect children of God. They serve God with love. They love to gather at meetings and tell of the wonderful experiences of God's grace and mercy that they have encountered in their earthly travels. They talk of their trials and count them as dross compared with God's salvation for the poor sinsick sinners they feel to be. They would rather have one crumb from the Master's table then all the promises this world has to offer. God says "I will and they shall."

The elect have an inheritance reserved in heaven, and no one can steal it away. If you have an inheritance it is because there is a relationship. This relationship was made before time began, when God elected Himself a people.

God has placed a hedge about his people and, although Satan is allowed to buffet them, his bounds have been set. As in Job's case, Satan cannot, though try as he may, take their life. After things get bad enough God pro-

vides a way of escape.

If you go to men for counsel you will find only controversy, disillusionment and despair. Each will tell you what to do to be saved, but in the end all will fall in the ditch.

This is not so when the Lord appears with healing in his wings, then there is submission, faith and courage. For it is the Lord working in the elect making it possible for them to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do his good pleasure. (Philippians 2nd chapted verses 12 and 13). It is not until the Lord starts a good work in the elect that they realize the condition they are in.

The children of God serve Him because of the love of God instilled in them. This is the evidence of the love of God in action. Another word for this is charity. "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." (1st Corinthians 13th chapter 13th verse.) This brings us to the 4th chapter of Ecclesiastes, 12th verse. "And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken."

We are thankful that we were able to meet with the brethren during the past year and hope the Lord will provide a way for us to meet again. Am enclosing money order to renew my subscription to the *Signs* for another two years.

With hope and trust in God,
Woodrow W. Bellinger

"YET NOT ALONE"

2723 Main Street,
Vernon, Texas 76384

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am so thankful to be receiving the *Signs*. I have had quite a stay in the hospital, and took several numbers with me. Words can't describe the joy and comfort of my being blessed and privileged to read the Editorials and letters of those dear ones so gifted, inspired and blessed to know the truth as it is in Christ our Lord and Saviour, enabling poor sinners like me to joy in a blessed hope that I have been given a taste of His mercy and goodness toward me.

I live alone, my husband passed away three years ago, and I am 84 years old. Yet I am not alone, if not deceived I have been made to feel the Comforter near me, though unworthy I be. God is not slack concerning his promises. And many times I cry aloud, "What wondrous love is this, O my soul," a love that never dies, and far better felt than told.

Blessed are they that hear his voice, and He knows every one of them, and they follow him. What a blessed assurance! O that I be given to sing his worthy praise my remaining days. And may you dear Editors be blessed to continue publishing and writing as given you from above, to the joy of those blessed to know the truth as it is in our Lord and Saviour.

I only meant to write a few lines and enclose a money-order for two years renewal, with the rest for the Indigent Fund. I haven't been able to attend church for some time; and I long to see and be with the dear brothers and sisters. Elder Haygood is our pastor, and though he and his wife drive a long distance to Altus, Oklahoma, to the Little Flock Church, they come out of their way to visit me; and I look forward to their coming every 5th Sunday.

In Christian love and hope,
Mrs. David Thompson

RE-READS THE SIGNS MANY TIMES

230 Marilee Row,
Grants Pass, Oregon 97526

Signs of the Times,

Dear Elder Wood:

I am enclosing my check for $14.00 for two more years. It was due in August, 1973. I have been sending my re-

newal in August every year for twenty-five years. I failed this time on account of my eyes as I am now past ninety, but my eyes are better now due to some chiropractic treatments.

My daughter was up and spent Christmas with us, and wants the *Signs* to be continued to her: Mrs. Lucile (or Theo. N.) Lukits, 736 So. Citrus Avenue, Los Angeles, Calif. 90036.

I see the *Signs of the Times* dates back to 1832, making the paper 142 years old. I have a book of the Minutes of the old Hiland Church of Kentucky. It is 162 years old, established March 17, 1812. This book is still in perfect shape. The writing is all in pen and ink, and is still readable. My grandmother and her two sisters joined that church in 1842 or 1843. I gave the book to my granddaughter here, and she said that she would keep it as long as she lives, then pass it on to someone who would take care of it.

I read every word in the *Signs* as soon as I get it, and have given a lot of them away. I re-read them many times, and I certainly do enjoy the wonderful writings of all you gifted writers. I especially enjoy Elder Gilbert Beebe's writings, some dating back to 1846. I would love to see some more of Elder H. M. Curry's writings. I heard him preach at Lebanon, Ohio, as far back as 1902. He was one of the greatest preachers I ever heard preach the word of God. My father, Elder I. R. Greathouse preached, and wrote for the *Signs* for over 50 years.

You published a little piece for me a few years ago, and I got letters from all over the United States asking if I was any kin to Elder Greathouse. I still correspond with some of these people.

Bye now. Love and best wishes, and may the good Lord spare you to continue putting out the best paper on earth for many more years.

Your brother in Jesus I hope,
C. H. Greathouse

(We too would like to see some more of Elder Curry's writings re-published. If any one has one or more which we have not published we would be glad to receive them for publication. —EDITORS)

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43 Northern Blvd.
Staten Island, N. Y.

Dear Editors:

The January, 1974 issue of THE TIMES has just arrived, and our attention was attracted to the notice of the increase in cost of publishing, which is startling.

In view of the above, a check in the sum of One Hundred Dollars ($100.00) is enclosed herewith as a donation to the General Operating Fund.

This is a small contribution, comparatively speaking, but we hope that it will further the publication of the very wonderful magazine, THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which has become an important part of our family reading over the years.

May the Good Lord continue to bless the editors, and others who may be involved in the various phases of the publication, and may it continue to carry the GOOD NEWS to its many subscribers, and others who may read it.

Very Sincerely Yours,

Annie Blanche Midgett
(Mrs. S. L. Midgett)

"FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD"
(John 3:16)

P. O. Box 13,
Boones Mill, Va. 24065

Dear Brethren:

The design and intent of this article will be to show by the Scriptures that it is a capital truth that the application of redemption extends no further than to God's elect. (Psalm 111:9) Also, to mention the fact that those who are reprobates are the perpetual enemies of God. And, that the wrath of God abides on them. (John 3:36)

All for whom Christ gave himself a ransom are actually rescued from the dominion of satan, are brought to per-

fect liberty and can never be thrust into an eternal prison in order to satisfy for those debts which Christ paid to the uttermost farthing. This we must certainly maintain unless we would have Christ's payment go for nothing.

There are as many lords and gods in this world as there are idols. And, these idols spring from the imagination of carnal minds which cannot understand that a God loves all and every human in creation and has mercy for everyone the same, could never be the judge of anybody, and would, therefore, come short in being just. (see Romans 9:18)

But our God is just. He has not set all and everyone free from the dominion of Satan, therefore many are and do remain, "the children of disobedience" in whom that impure spirit worketh. (Ephesians 2:2) and who are forever held captive at his will in the snare of the devil. These shall suffer for their own guilt. (Rev. 20:10-15) Therefore Christ did not give himself a ransom for their guilt. He will have unbelievers condemned. (John 3:36)

To be a believer, or to know the truth, or to acknowledge it, is not a privilege at all, but is a blessing which belongs only to the election of grace. (2 Thess 3:2; Titus 1:1) It is extremely wicked and sinful to think or to say that there is an incomplete, or unresolved, or ineffectual will in God. (Psalm 115:3)

And the unholy lie on the tongue of liars which claim He obtained no more than a possibility for sinners to be saved, is blasphemy, for it falsely teaches that our thirsting after God and our desires after salvation, might be ineffectual, and so we could neither be sure of being heard (I John 5:14) nor have any hope which maketh not ashamed. (Romans 9:33; 10-11) We must then contend that Christ gave himself a ransom for all the elect, of whatever nation and condition, and it is the will of God that they all be saved. (Romans 8:28)

The purpose of God in his sending "redemption to his people" when he "gave his only begotten Son," was not to save the entire human family, but, "whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." So what John 3:16 says, *is even as Christ explains in the following verses,* Christ gives life to sheep and not to goats. (John 10:27-28) Hence the Holy Ghost prosecuting the holy discourse which contains John 3:16, goes on and restrains the word "world" to those the Father gave him. (John 10:29-30) The term "world", generally in the common way of speaking, denotes any large body or multitude of people, and John 12:19 is written to furnish the man of God with heavenly proof of this fact.

The elect of God considered in themselves *before effectual calling,* are a part of the world lying in wickedness. (Eph. 2:1-2)

Nothing can illustrate the glory of God in the redemption of His bride to any who have not been saved and called with an "holy calling." (2 Tim. 1:9-10)

Those God saves and calls are made "new creatures" by new birth, and of such is the "household of faith" which so far as numbers, are at all times the *less* yet the *best* part of the world. Brethren, the Bible is written in perfect English. In English language there is the "synecdoche". And a synecdoche is a figure of speech by which a part is put for the whole. Example: "The factory employed an hundred hands." Here "hands" is a synecdoche for the *whole people* who work in the factory.

The saints being the excellent of the earth, and the light of the world, the just, a holy nation, purchased and washed in the new covenant blood—salt of the earth—what is more suitable, than that Wisdom should by a synecdoche in John 3:15 signify the *better* part as the *greater* part? The greater part only because God that dwells in you is infinitely greater than he that is in the world. It is therefore not without its emphasis, and yields useful instruction, when we hear the collective body of the elect designated by the name of "the world". For example: When Paul says that, "God was in Christ reconciling the

world to himself," he immediately subjoins this with, "not imputing their trespassing unto them." (2 Cor. 5:19) This is to teach us that reconciliation and non-imputation are of equal extent. Hence mercy belongs only to "vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory." For Daniel declares those blessed to whom God "imputeth not iniquity." (see Psalm 3:2) Christ is called "the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

But like the goat on which the iniquity of the children of Israel was laid, He taketh them away by taking them upon himself, by satisfying for them as if they were his own, and by taking them away from his people as to their guilt, by justification, and as to their dominion by sanctification. (see I Peter 2:24)

So therefore salvation can extend no further than to the elect of grace because, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven . . . " So, dear brethren, any and every fruit of the Spirit precedes *final perseverance.* (Phil. 1:6) Sinners are saved "by grace through faith." (Eph. 2:8) Faith is one feature of every new-born child of God: "And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." (I John 5:4)

Whenever faith is given from God to the salvation of the soul, (Ephesians 2:8) life is set against death, pardon and peace are revealed with everlasting love which draws us nigh unto the Fountain of every blessing, and all happiness with delight and joy. Then our former heart-idolatry is cause for our shame, and we never saw the world so vain and evil as it now appears: and we have no desire to return to our native country, for now we "desire a better country, that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called *their* God: for he hath prepared for *them* a city."

In bonds,
J. L. Bocack

ELDER CURRY'S VISIT IN TEXAS IN 1901

Early last spring my mind became strangely impressed to visit Texas, but it was not until the middle of June that the way was opened for me to go. On my way I stopped some weeks in the western portions of the state of Kentucky and Tennessee. It is in this region that the contentions over predestination and conditionalism have recently divided the Baptists. My appointments were made among those churches that remained in the ancient faith and order, refusing to follow the cunningly devised fables of certain men. I had heard and read many hard things of these people, but my visit among them disclosed the following facts: Their ministers seem to be humble, god-fearing men, walking in meekness in the commandments Jesus. They are not boasters, not heady, not high minded, but on the contrary they are grave, sober minded men, meek and lowly in heart, speaking the truth in love. As far as I was enabled to observe, they rule well their own house, and have a good report of them that are without. The members also bear the scriptural marks of the church of God. The women are modest, grave and sedate, chaste, keepers at home, and the men provide for their households honestly in the sight of all men. They all seem to be of one mind, living in peace, and striving together for the faith of the gospel. I felt while among them that I was indeed with the Lord's portion.

This remnant that is left is not as much in the minority as some people would make believe. A brother in Texas who attended the Fulton Convention went out to one of Elder Perkins' churches on Saturday, and that brother says there were more Baptists at Elder Perkins' Conference meeting on Saturday than there were at the National Convention.

From Tennessee I went to Arkansas. I visited four or five churches in that state, and found them walking in the faith and order of the gospel.

My first appointment in Texas was at Big Spring Church, in the eastern part of the state. This is a large church,

with a pastor who believes and loves the truth. My second appointment was at Mt. Vernon. Several hundred people met me here, the church has a membership of one hundred and thirty, and has the pastorial care of Elder H. B. Jones. There was a schism in this church a few years ago, about twenty members declared against the doctrine of Predestination and all those that believe it. These were hopelessly in the minority, so they were excluded from the church. The leaders of them have about all united with the Missionary Baptists. There is no ground between predestinarian Baptists and Arminianism for a new denomination, or a compromising body, to stand.

From Mt. Vernon I pursued my journey on toward central Texas, filling appointments by the way. Everywhere I was greeted by good congregations, frequently very large ones, of wholesoul lovers of the truth. I attended the New Harmony Association, in central Texas. The place selected to hold this about forty miles from Brownwood. My party reached the place on Thursday evening, after an all-day drive from Brownwood. We found several hundred people there pitching their camps. On account of the sparse population here, it is the custom of all to camp on the grounds during these meetings. Indeed, these people seem to be just as much at home on the road or in camp as they are in their own houses. After selecting our places and striking camp, we partook heartily of a well relished supper in true camp style, and then assembled under the arbor and listened to a wholesome gospel sermon. Service being ended, all repaired to their beds, for all were weary, many having driven one hundred and fifty miles, and had been on the road four or five days. Our slumbers were soon disturbed by the howling of wolves about the camp: not wolves in sheep's clothing, but real wolves, wolves in their own dress without any attempt at disguise, they were attracted not by the scent of religious lucre, but by the scent of the beef that had been butchered for the occasion. New comers were arriving all night and all through the forenoon of the next day. Aged women sixty, seventy, and even eighty years of age, had driven long distances, having been on the road many days, and had camped by the wayside at night, to reach this meeting, many aged men had done likewise, many of them who were readers of the *Signs of the Times* had long known me, but had never expected to see me. These aged pilgrims took me by the hand, and with tears in their eyes and thankfulness in their hearts, welcomed me in the name of the Lord. As I was received by these godly people, I thought of Abraham, the friend of God, of old Anna serving God night and day, of Simeon waiting for the consolation of Israel, of Lydia, whose heart the Lord had opened, of Phebe, the servant of the church, and of many others of the cloud of witnesses with which we are compassed.

The meeting was formally opened on Friday morning by the Introductory Sermon. The sermon was preached by Elder Wood, a godly man who is fervent in the Spirit. In his discourse he said that he could not preach conditional time salvation, because it falls short of his case. The preaching on Friday was acceptable, and the day was spent in the fear and service of the Lord. After the service on Friday night, a number came forward and related the Lord's dealings with them, and were heartily received into the fellowship of the saints. Saturday afternoon was the time set for the baptism. At the time appointed a large crowd repaired to the beautiful Colorado River nearby, to witness the ordinance. As the people were gathering there in that wilderness place, a panorama of Bible scenes passed before me: John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and baptizing in Jordan, Christ, the Lamb of God, coming to be baptized, the Christ coming up out of the water, the heavens opening and the Spirit descending upon Him. But instead of John on this occasion, it was some of his faithful brethren perpetuat-

ing the same ancient doctrine and order, instead of Christ coming to be baptized, it was a company of His humble followers, his little children, whom He had given grace and faith to follow Him. Instead of immaginary scenes of two thousand years ago, it was a real occurrence before mine own eyes. I know that heaven must have been opened in the heart and consciences of those baptized, for I could see heaven in their faces, and felt it in my own unworthy heart. So Saturday passed away with much to praise God for.

Sunday came, which proved to be the last and great day of the feast. Elder J. C. Sikes was appointed to speak on Sunday morning. This man has suffered more persecution for the truth's sake than any other in Texas. He and I camped together during the meeting. All Saturday night he was pressed in spirit, and he wrestled with the Lord in prayers and strong supplications. If ever I prayed for another in all my life, I prayed for this poor man, who had by this time become a precious brother to me. Sunday morning as all were seated under the arbor while Brother Sikes was pleading with the Lord in prayer, and my whole being was engaged for him that the Lord would open a door of utterances to him, that he might preach the wonderful works of God, I felt in my heart that the Lord had liberated him to speak the gospel that day. I felt his liberation as plainly as I ever felt anything in my life. I waited in joyful expectation for him to speak. I felt the sermon coming before a word was spoken, as one feels the grateful rain approaching before even a drop has fallen. (The coming event surely cast its shadow before.) My feelings were not disappointed. The Lord filled Brother Sikes with the everlasting gospel. It came not only in gentle showers but in torrents, carrying all with it. The windows of heaven were opened, and the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and everything seemed to me to be flooded with the glorious gospel of the Son of God. Few times if ever in my life have I been blessed with a more glorious hearing. It was a time that will long be remembered with me. May God preserve and sustain this dear minister of his gospel, and may God's people love and minister to him for the truth's sake. I feel that all that I have is his, because he ministered unto me most wonderfully spiritual things.

After Elder Sikes, Elder Harris, an aged and beloved man, spoke. He spoke fervently of the love of God, and spoke the truth in love and meekness. His words were lovely and profitable to me. I met many ministers whose names I have not mentioned, but with whom I feel a union of soul. May God bless them all, and lead them in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

There were sharp contentions in some localities in Texas over Conditional Time Salvation, but the great majority of Baptists there will not accept that theory. Resolutions are being passed in some localities against the doctrines of Salvation wholly by Grace. Novices and strikers are risen up against the ancient order and doctrine of the church, who speak evil of the way of truth, but as the test comes these men are disappointed sorely to find themselves in the minority, when they naturally expected and coveted the majority.

My tour in Texas is fraught with many sweet remembrances, because it was attended by so many mercies. God gave me favor in the eyes of his people there, and their fellowship and many kindnesses strengthened and encouraged me.

H. M. Curry

THE VOICE SAID, LOOK UP

Rt. 2,
Ferrum, Va. 24088

Signs of the Times,
Dear Brethren:

My husband, Dee M. Radford was operated on for cancer on his neck sometime in October, 1973, and has taken thirty-five cobalt treatments, and hasn't

recovered as yet. God only knows what we have been through. He has been so merciful to us.

During the night of February 8th, the night it snowed, I went to bed so cast down, calling on the Lord for mercy. Sometime during the night I heard a still small voice saying, Look up. I shed many tears of joy, and was made to glory in the Lord through this affliction.

I just wanted to share it with you of like precious faith.

Yours in sweet fellowship,
Hattie Radford

(We were glad to share your joy, Sister Radford: Isn't it wonderful to know that the Lord's grace is sufficient for us in all our trials?—J.D.W.)

MATTHEW 24:19-21

We find that Elder Beebe replied to the question that Sister Stough inquired of in the February issue.

His reply was as follows:

Although we have no special light upon the subject beyond the plain import of the words in which the subject is expressed by our Lord, we still have some view or apprehension of their design and meaning. Indeed we have never had any doubt that they were spoken by our Lord to solemnly impress the mind of his disciples with the importance of the admonition given them in this chapter, in regard to what should be their course when they should see the signs of the near approach of the impending judgments of God which, before the passing away of some who were then present, should take place.

The disciples in this chapter had asked Jesus privately to tell them when these things (namely, the destruction of the buildings of the temple, and the tempest of wrath should be poured out upon that Jerusalem which had killed the prophets, and stoned them that had been sent unto them, and whose approaching overthrow was to be far less tolerable than was the destruction of Tyre and Sidon, Sodom or Gomorrah,) should be. In answer to their inquiries, our Savior informed them that it should be during the then present generation, and that it would be sudden, even as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth unto the west. But to the saints signs should precede it, which he charged them to watch and heed; and the more fully to impress this charge upon them, and the importance of their rapid flight from the devoted place of destruction, he charged them, saying, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand,) then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains. Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house: neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes." The haste in which they were to fly from the ruin would make it more difficult for those described in the text, as any impediment causing unavoidable delay would be exceedingly hazardous, so that those who were not in a condition to fly speedily might be involved in the ruin. Those having burdens to bear that they could not leave behind, would experience the woe pronounced in our text.

They were also to pray that their flight should not be in the winter, or on the sabbath day; for then should be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world, nor should ever again be. The infatuated Jews, with all their abominable wickedness, were exceeding tenacious for the observance of their perversion of the sabbath day; and should their flight occur on that day, it might prove an impediment to the flight of the disciples from the place of ruin to a place of safety.

We submit the foregoing remarks to the consideration of brother Varnes, and to our readers generally.

"WHAT WONDROUS LOVE IS THIS!"

Rt. 3, Box 295,
Eden, N. C.
December 16, 1973

Dear Brother and Sister Spangler:

This is a time of giving and receiving, and yet I wonder how many people are blessed to give and to receive in the true spirit of love. Christmas is a day which man has instituted. Just as the burnt offerings of the Bible were not required by our Lord, (Psalm 40:6) so also is this day that the world believes is the day of Christ's birth. When one looks around at the commercialization of this supposedly holy-day, it is very obvious that it is one of the institutions of man.

It warms my heart when I am blessed to view the brethren, and realize that the Lord still has a people here who are from time to time blessed to give and to receive in His Spirit. The Lord must intervene in both cases: He blesses the giver with the spirit of giving, and He also blesses the receiver with the spirit of receiving. The Scriptures tell us that it is better to give than to receive, and yet I feel that I have received far more from the love and the fellowship at the hand of a gracious and merciful God, than I have ever given, or could give. This great debt of love which I owe causes me to say with the poet, "What wondrous love is this?"

It is my desire that the Lord would bless this simple card and my small gift, as a token of my love for the two of you.

Brother Spangler, as a child I always looked forward to your coming by and shaking hands with me when I came to church with my grandparents. But then, in my early teens I began to feel so sinful that I desired for you to just pass me by — because I felt that surely I would contaminate anything I touched. I struggled for years with only the hope that someday I might be given a hope in the Lord Jesus Chrst. Even now I often fear that I'm deceived and that I have no right to the fellowship I've enjoyed. But the small hope I have is more precious to me than anything else in this world, and I only desire to live at peace with the church while I sojourn here, in such a way as to never bring reproach upon her or cause any strife among the members.

I wish I could find words to tell the two of you of the love I have in my heart for you. As time passes I continue to think of the day when I'll have to go off to school. It grieves my heart to think of being away from the church even for a short time. I hope the Lord will grant me grace to live through it. I desire to live with the church and die there. It is my chief desire that the Lord would bless me to continue in this way until the end, and that He might then receive me at last.

May the Lord bless you both and keep you in His loving care, and may you continue to shine as monuments of God's love and mercy. If it be the will of God, please remember this poor worm of the dust when endowed with the spirit of prayer.

In bonds of most holy love,
Mary Lee

(This may seem too late to be published, but this kind of love knows no seasons. — J.D.W)

SORROWS AND JOYS

Rt. 6, Box 1,
Fayette, Ala. 35555

Dear Editors:

The year now ending has been one of mixtures of joy and sorrow for me — mostly sorrow, but the few moments of joy far surpass or out-weigh the long travel in darkness, groping about in the dark for some familiar object. But it seems that everything we touch is strange and unfamiliar, leaving us more befuddled than ever.

I do not know why it pleased God to leave us so completely in the dark for so long a time. Nevertheless His ways are far above our ways; and there

is no doubt in my mind that all things are as they are by His firm decree; and will work together for good to those who love Him, to those who are His chosen according to His purpose. When we are tried in the furnace as silver, many times we feel we will perish: the going is so rough and destitute of all we feel to be hoping or looking for. Yet we cannot give up the faint hope that He will return again soon, and bring light and food for our poor sin-tossed souls.

Many times the past year I have been so overtaken with home-sickness, it seemed I had lost every care or desire to continue on. How I longed to be carried out of this world of sin and woe! And yet I was shown that God, and only God, held the keys of life and death in His hands: and regardless of what I would do or think, I would go at the appointed time, place and way that God had fixed.

Prior to this last thought it seemed that death was all I could think of. But then I began to become more reconciled to my lot as it was. This was not long before our Association began to convene. I seemed to get a crumb here and another there, until it seemed surely my cup was filled to overflowing during the time our home Association was in session.

I believe that when we have been tried as silver in the furnace, when all dross is burned away, it is nothing more nor less than seeing Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour in His felt presence. Then the sorrows of by-gone days are not worthy to be compared to the joy we feel in our souls at His coming again.

May God give us grace to continue on until our allotted time comes, and give us a peaceful hour in which to take our departure, ever looking to Him for our sustenance, both now and forever. Amen.

Hallie Taylor

PS: I am enclosing check for two years subscription to the *Signs* to U. R. Taylor, Rt. 6, Box 1, Fayette, Ala.

Rt. 1
Martin, Tenn. 38237

Dear Editors:

May it be the will of the Father to give you strength as you continue the *Signs*. I hope I am one of that number the Father gave his Son before the world began. His dying testimony was, "It is finished." I believe he did just that. Christ said, ". . . I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me, and this is the Father's which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day."

What can be more comforting to the poor sinner? Though while we are in this troublesome world, we can only see through the glass darkly, it is worth more than ten thousand worlds like this one.

I look forward to the coming of the *Signs*. I am acquainted with Elder Griffin, and have heard Elder Spangler one time.

I am enclosing check to renew the *Signs* for two years, with the remainder used as you see fit.

A little sister I hope,
Asenath Jones

Rt. 2,
Elon College, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I have just finished reading the *Signs of the Times*. The articles written by my brothers and sisters are an inspiration to me, and I like to read them. Someday, if it is the good Lord's will, maybe I can write as they do. It must be His will for us to do anything right, even our thoughts.

I get so worried sometimes that all I can say is, "Lord help me." But that is enough if it comes from the heart. The Lord is good to me, and has been all the days of my life. I feel so bad sometimes about complaining about my little troubles here, and call on the Lord

to help me. If I should live a thousand years, my troubles would be nothing compared to what my Lord suffered on the cross. I hope He suffered and died for me; and sometimes I feel He did.

The Bible says that we know we have passed from death to life because we love the brethren. I hope I do love them, because this is the only real thing in the world to me. It is my desire that I will never cause my church any trouble.

If it could be the Lord's will to lead me on and to make me to understand; if it could be his will for him to be first in my thoughts all the days of my life. Does not the Bible say that except we hate our father, mother, brother, sister, wife, children, and, yes, ourselves, we are not worthy of Him. My quotation may be incorrect, but I believe it means that He must be first in our thoughts.

If you have the time, would you give me your views on the verses which say that, if your right eye offends thee, pluck it out; or thy right hand offends thee, cut it off. I realize you are very busy.

It is so good to receive the *Signs* for I enjoy it very much. Hope you and family are well. I hope to get to meeting next Sunday, if the Lord is willing. Am sending a little money for the Indigent Fund.

A sister in Christ I hope
Mrs. Rosa S. Page

LOOKS FORWARD TO RECEIVING THE SIGNS

Rt. 2,
Carbon Hill, Ala. 35549

Dear Editors:

We are enclosing our renewal for the *Signs* . . .

The *Signs of the Times* is our much loved paper, and we look forward to receive it each month. The editorials and sermons from far and near seem to strengthen our feeble hearts and minds, giving us fresh courage to press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God.

I feel we should send a few lines along with our remittance. What a wonderful blessing it is to believe and to honor our God, thanking Him for all of this, for there is nothing like reading a good, sound Old Baptist paper. It astounds us to see the wisdom, knowledge, and depth of the articles. Man alone is not capable of writing such without God gives it to him: therefore it feeds our hungry souls. We pray that God will continue to give you Editors health and strength to continue the paper to us.

In bonds of love in Christ,
James C. and Lillian Scott

THEY MISS THEIR DEACON

1902 McCutcheon,
Shrevesport, La. 71108

Dear Editors of the Signs:

It is time to renew my subscription, so I am sending check for $10.00 for one year's renewal. Use the other for the Indigent Fund in memory of Brother E. A. Tyler, one of our beloved deacons, who passed away in October, 1973.

Brother Tyler received much comfort in reading the *Signs,* especially since he was ill so much of the time, suffering from a heart ailment and asthma attacks, and not always able to attend our meetings.

We miss him very much, and our hearts go out to his dear wife, Lois, and his children, for they miss him so much. May God strengthen them and comfort us all.

We always felt that Brother Tyler was with us in spirit even when he was unable to be with us in body. He was a lover of the truth — a strong believer in predestination.

I just felt like writing a little about Brother Tyler as my thoughts are often of him and his family.

A little sister in hope,
Kate Mathews

OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH CLOSED FOR MONTHLY MEETINGS

With the death of Brother Charles E. Hellings, who was the last male member and deacon of the church, the Old School Baptist Meeting House in Hopewell, New Jersey is being closed for its regular service on the first Sunday of each month.

The history of this Church is long and rich in Historic lore. Brother Charles was very dedicated to the principles for which it was founded, and was looking forward to the 1976 Centennial Celebration.

The trustees will continue their faithful service in the preservation of this Historic House, where our founding fathers stood firm in their faith here which they had chosen for their new home of freedom to worship and live.

Sister Mary Hellings

NOTICE OF MEETING

The Maine Old School Baptist Churches will, the Lord willing, hold an all-day meeting the 3rd Sunday in May, at the home of James and Ruth Sevon, daughter of Sister Ruth Clark of the Whitefield Old School Baptist Church.

The Savon home is in Jefferson, Maine, Route 213 on the Damariscotta Lake Road. Route 213 branches off from Route 215, which is taken at a junction in Newcastle Village. Business Route 1 leads from Route 1 into Newcastle Village.

Elder D. B. Stokes of Jacksonville, N. C. is expected to atttend the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all who may be able to attend.

If more instructions are needed, write to Mrs. Ruth Clark, Box 245, Newcastle, Maine.

Mrs. Ruth Clark

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To February 1, 1974)

Thomas S. Martin S. Martin, Va.	$ 18.00
Guy H. Hundley, Va.	7.00
Mrs. E. J. Sutherland, Va.	3.00
Mrs. P. D. Akers, Va.	5.00
Eric Rodgers, Ala.	6.00
Lola Moon Howard, Ky.	1.00
Miss Francis Wrinn, Can.	3.00
A Friend, Va.	1.00
H. D. Jacks, N.C.	1.00
Hugh Barron, La.	1.00
Mrs. Arless Hiatt, Va.	3.00
Mrs. Ramer Biggs, Tenn.	10.00
Mrs. S. L. Midgett, N.Y.	100.00
Elder J. T. Turner, Va.	1.00
Bertha Evans, Va.	2.00
Mrs. Lillian Faulkner, Miss.	1.00
Mrs. M. L. Lucas, Ala.	12.00
Luther Martin, Va.	5.00
John Franklin Lax, Tenn.	6.00
Ivey Oakley, N.C.	3.00
J. A. Davison, Ala.	3.00
Mr. C. C. Johnson, Miss.	3.00
Mrs. J. E. Jones, Tenn.	3.00
Olive Hodgins, Can.	3.00
Jack Lindsey, Ariz.	1.00
Mrs. Ollie B. Tucker, Ala.	3.00
Janie Fanning, Ala.	3.00
Mrs. M. B. Underwood, Ala.	2.00
Erma Caldwell, W. Va.	3.00
Mary Walker, N.C.	1.00
Allen Carroll, N.C.	3.00
N. H. Akers, Va.	1.00
Davis Mordecai, Ala.	3.00
L. E. Thornton, W. Va.	3.00
Mary Patterson, Va.	8.95
Mrs. Rosa Page, N.C.	5.00
Duncan McCall, Can.	3.00
Mr. & Mrs. J. R. Helms, Va.	10.00
Mary Hathaway, Fla.	3.00
Mrs. Arthur Sweeney, W. Va.	1.00
Mildred Gordy, Mich.	10.00
N. R. Kelly, Va.	3.00
Brady Lee, Fla.	1.00
Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.	2.00
Mrs. John Vinyard, Tenn.	1.00
Elsie Harrell, Ark.	3.00
Mrs. A. W. Hatcher, Va.	3.00
Mrs. Mabel Lindsey, Calif.	1.00
Mrs. David Thompson, Tex.	3.00
Elder G. E. Dearman, Miss.	3.00
Mrs. Nelson Wheat, Ala.	1.00
Mrs. Amie Benson, N.C.	3.00
In Memory of E. A. Tyler, by Mrs. Kate Mathews, La.	6.00
Mrs. S. J. Priddy, W. Va.	1.00
R. E. Davis, N.C.	1.00

Danville, Virginia April, 1974

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

"For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

For the scripture saith unto Pharoah, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and on whom he will he hardeneth."

Romans 9:15-18

EDITORIAL

LUKE 15:1-7

"Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him, and the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. And he spake this parable unto them, saying, What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you; that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentence."

Over the last nearly fifty years many subjects have been discussed among the saints of God. I am glad to say that except in a few instances I have agreed with the general thoughts about the Bible. In none that I recall have hot words been exchanged in our conversations. Some of the time I did not agree nor disagree. I did not have any settled convictions about the subject under investigation. I could often, and did, tell them that their views sounded plausible but that I was not able to subscribe to them, although I did not have anything better to put in their place. This subject, together with others, has been like unto that. I would hear it expounded one way, and it seemed like trying a prisoner in court. I would think, well it must be that way for it sounds good. Soon I would hear it from another quarter by as lovely a brother as the first, and he had entirely another version of it. I knew that I was not in any condition to write on the subject or to attempt preaching on it. A man without convictions does not have any right to his opinion—in fact, he does not have any.

Recently, out of a blue bolt of sky lit beauty, it came flooding into my mind that this had to do with the Gentiles. Frankly, I was elated, because I

had been asked about it from time to time and had been without any comment, except to say that I did not have a settled mind in regard to it.

In nearly all public preaching in the Bible there were mixed congregations. Usually, they were some believers and some unbelievers; some that came because of hunger and thirst, and some to gainsay. This occasion was not any exception. The subject at the end of the preceding chapter was fraught with interest to the publicans and sinners, they desired to know and feel the savoriness of this salt. The motive of the Pharisees and scribes was entirely different. The desire of the first was to be taught; the desire of the second was to trap the Teacher and get Him into a snare whereby He would ridicule Himself. Clearly, it is seen where all the jeers and sneers and scathing insinuations and unclean innuendos come from upon the dear Man and His humble train of followers. It would seem that at first He paid attention to their murmur before He did the desire of poor sinners to hear Him. But that is not true. No doubt they thought so, but the people of God were given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven even if they were spoken in parables, and they understood the goodness of God towards poor sinners, while the wrath of the Pharisees and scribes was intensified.

"What man of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?" If these had understood the significance of what His question implied, their chagrin would have been multiplied over and over. It is necessary to note that they were in the wilderness, and He left them in it. True, the wandering lost sheep was also in the wilderness, but the wilderness were not the same. One was dense, but they that were in it did not know it; the other was dense, and the one in it knew that he was in it, and knew that it was dense. Both were sinners; one knew it, the other did not. If the ninety and nine had known that they were in the wilderness, they could as they thought, have gotten out. The lone sheep was in the wilderness and knew that it could not get out. The condition of the ninety and nine was the condition of all of us while in nature. The condition of the lone sheep is the condition of us all when we were conscious of having strayed away.

The Jews as a nation were chosen to show forth God's care for His chosen people. No nation has ever been so signally blessed in natural resources as had Israel. The Lord had given them so many rich tokens of His care for them. He fed them; He fought their battles; He gave them favor after favor. It would seem that they would walk humbly in His presence forevermore, after being so graciously dealt with in the famine caused by drought. It would seem that they could never forget His sovereign and universal deliverance out of the land of the enemy at the Red Sea. When God called them to Sinai and they fled in consternation at the sound of His threatening voice, they persuaded Moses to go for them, and God had mercy and received him as an emissary from them, although they had grumbled and complained and questioned His every act toward them. Even though the Lord acknowledged that they could not hear Him and live because of their sin, yet His mercy was extended in promise that He would raise them up a prophet from among themselves, and they would hear Him. Every prophet that He called from among them, the Spirit of Christ in them testified that He would come among them. They told in the most minute detail His manner of coming, and yet not one of them as National Israel believed in Him when He arrived as their Prophet.

This unbelief was accompanied by the most sarcastic arrogancy that has ever been known. There was a bicker and a murmur and a constant arraignment of God before their tribunal of so called justice, because their sins brought down upon them the consequences of their

sins. During all of these four thousand years God's care and mercy did not diminish. There were no overtures made toward the people that never had been a people unto Him. Even though they (the Jews) insulted Him to His face, and treated Him like a common criminal, yet He continued in mercy to take care of them.

The promise of God embraced the Gentiles. "I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved, and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of God." (Rom. 9:25-26) "What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness." What shall be said of this? What a strange statement, what a mysterious phenomenon, what a blessing to the Gentile nation. Paul asks, Wherefore? Why this? Then he answers, "Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law." (Rom. 9:30-32) The Jews did not stumble that they fall, but through their fall salvation is come to the Gentiles. (Rom. II:II)

Their fall was manifested in their self esteem. In their eyes they had not whereof to repent; they had not done any wrong, because to them they had carried out the law of God. That law had said, Thou shalt have no other gods before me, and, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. These ninety and nine sheep called Jesus a breaker of these two laws, as well as His breaking the law of the Sabbath. This is, to them, the main reason for their kind of justice. They thought themselves just because of their zeal in carrying out the law of God.

The law of God condemned having any god other than the God of Israel. The law of God condemned the taking of His name in vain. The law of God condemned doing any labor on Sunday. All of these the Jews charged the Saviour with violating. This charge of guiltiness by the Jews gave impetuous to their wicked nature, and whetted them into rejection and crucifixion of the Saviour, and into their feud with Him over His guilt and their self righteous justness. All of this was in God's mercy towards the Genitles. Men may carp about how hard such a doctrine is, but the truth of the matter is that mercy and justice were both carried out—justice against Christ because of His agreement with the covenant of grace, and mercy for the Gentiles. Our natural mind, being as contrary to God's way of doing things as was that mind in the Jews, we are prone, as human beings, as natural men and women, ready to charge and arraign God before our tribunal of justice for such a hard way of doing things. But suppose, even as some say it should have been, that the sheep had all wandered into the mountains and were lost as the one? Where in the world would the Gentiles come in? What would have become of them? *What would have become of you?*

The good news of the gospel of the grace of God as it concerns us Gentiles is this, to wit, God had set His love on Israel as a special people. The continuation of that love was dependent on them. That is the covenant made with them. The mandates of that law applied to them. It was not given to anyone else; no other people were under it. Every penalty for violation was against them; every blessing for obedience was their's exclusively. This law they agreed to as a rule of conduct. Did it work? It did not. Strange as it may seem, their violations increased, and as they increased their arrogancy, obstinacy and self-righteousness increased. God had according to the covenant that He had made with them, held His hands outstretched to them all of the law day. Had they given heed? Had they received the prophets which God sent them? Did they bless, or crucify Him that came as the Lord? The answer is obvious to

every student of the Bible. This despotic attitude of theirs continued even after our Saviour left them and went after the one lost sheep. They had seen His miracles; they had witnessed that He lived and died as their prophets had predicted; they still flouted all this proof, and, when many attended the preaching of the word, it was to continue the jeers and sneers on the apostles that had been heaped on the Saviour. (I John 3:3; John 15:18-19)

"Then (the time had come. This adverb is one of time) Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasing life, *we turn to the Gentiles,* for so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth; and when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." (Acts 13:46-18)

As the ninety and nine were left in their self righteousness, even so was the elder brother left out of the glorious meeting when the poor sinful prodigal arrived at home, and the rich man was left to die in his riches and go to hell, and as the Pharisee supposedly prayed (but in truth informed God of his own justness), and then the publican prayed and went down to his house justified; even so will justification come to every Gentile represented by the lost sheep, even every one chosen unto eternal life.

Somtimes I am asked, Did God not know what the men of Shinar were building until He came down? Did Jesus not know what things His two followers were talking about? Did Christ have to hunt for the lost sheep? (Gen. 11:5; Luke 24:17-19) My answer is, yes, to all such calling of God in question. It is not anything short of unbelief to ask such questions. As the Man Christ Jesus He did not have ability to work apart from His Father, and as the same Man He did not have eminence, and as the same Man He had hurts and anxieties, thus I am not backwards nor reluctant to say that it was necessary for Him to hunt for the Gentile sheep. Let me hasten to add that in their experience and in their relationship to the covenant of grace that He found every one of them. Too, I want to urge that all sheep knew such a little amount about redeeming love that our God speaks in language that little sheep understand. Do you need that kind of talking to, or are you qualified (just) to be left in your satisfaction?

He found this sheep, which means, experimentally, that each of them were lost. He finds them all in a lost and ruined condition. As it is with every heir of eternal life, they were indeed in a waste howling wilderness, and in a desert land. (Deut. 32:10) They would not have gotten out had the Saviour not hunted and found them. (Luke 19:10)

I must urge upon you that you keep in mind His leaving the ninety and nine. Remember where He left them. Remember the self righteousness of them. Now look in amazement at His treatment of the lost sheep. We too were sinners, but when He finds us there is not a proposition made to us, to the lost sheep. It seems that I would be ashamed to go into the pulpit and preach Jesus, and come down before the congregation (and in the presence of God) and make a proposition to my hearers. He did not question this sheep nor make an "iffy" proposition to it. And that is not all. Wonder of wonders, that is not all! He did not remonstrate or repudiate or rebuke the sheep. Ah, how favored are our people by our Lord and Master! He held no consultation to ask if they would. That is Old Baptist doctrine all the way. That is good news to a lost and ruined sinner; it is as salt rubbed into a sore of ninety and nine just persons.

He picked it up and put it on His shoulders. Has there ever been any doctrine as good as this? He put it on His shoulders. Let us remember who this Man is. He has been born unto us; He

has been given to us. Aren't you glad that the government was laid on His shoulders? Aren't you glad that it will never end? (Dan. 2:44; Mat. 6:18) Aren't you glad that the peace of God's people is in His hand? Aren't you glad and happy that He orders it and establishes it with judgment and with justice henceforth and forever? And isn't it the best of news that (not my zeal, not your zeal, but) the zeal of the Lord will perform this? And I always want to know as much as I can about the integrity and veracity of one that makes me a promise. I am a poor lost and ruined Gentile sinner and I need a saving Man to take care of me. He is that Man. His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. He is all of this to every sinner of the covenant of grace, both Jew and Greek. This is He that left the ninety and nine in the wilderness and went after the one sheep. This is He, dear tried pilgrim, that has made your cause as His, even though it entailed Him going by way of the cross to find you.

When the sheep was found He laid it on the same shoulders that the whole government of the kingdom of God and heaven was resting on. He had all the power (and still has it all) that was engaged in governing, and engaged in saving His Gentile people. Will He make it?

He did not take the lost sheep back to the ninety and nine. Do not come at me that He did, for He did not. In the first place they did not care for Him because He received and ate with sinners. Not caring for Him nor His associates, there would not have been a welcome awaiting either. What did He do? Where did He turn? Not to the just ninety and nine, but to His friends and neighbors. Who were His friends? They were these, Jews and Gentiles, that He had befriended. They had received Him not because they had Abraham to their father, not because that they were Gentiles, not because of blood, not because of fleshly ties, not by the will of man, but by the will of God which had been exemplified in giving them life in the new birth. As they loved Him because He first loved them, even so, exactly in the same way, they were His friends because He was first a friend to them. Equally so with His neighbors; at first they had resented Him coming into their country, but He was the Good neighbor and by His goodness in being their neighbor, they are His. He calls His people together to rejoice with Him. Why? Because He has found His lost sheep; He has found the Gentile church.

In the same way, no more, no other way, not any less, He is calling His friends and neighbors together today to rejoice with Him each time that He brings one of them into His fold. In conclusion, will you please note that no mention is ever made of the ninety and nine again? They were left by Jesus in the wilderness, and what God (and Jesus was God) does it is done forever. As the nation, National Israel, you will never see them visited by Jesus anymore, but you will see in the Bible, and you will see in the deliberations of God's people, and you will see in His visits among His friends and neighbors, both Jews and Gentiles, and this work will be such a strange work, and presented in such a parabolical manner, that all of them will be Jews inwardly, and Gentiles outwardly.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

FALLEN ANGELS.

Alexandria, D. C.

Our attention has been called to the subject of the "angels which kept not their first estate," &c., by brother Gaines, of Kentucky, who desires our views on Jude 6, and 2 Peter 2:4. It is rather a thankless undertaking to set forth our views upon a subject on which we must necessarily come in collision with the long established opinions and deep-rooted traditions of others, among

whom are to be found some friends for whose opinions and feelings we entertain sentiments of the greatest regard. When called upon, as in the present case, however, we feel bound to set before our readers such views as we have.

The celebrity of Milton's views, as given in his "Paradise Lost," has become almost universal. As few men of our age are found able to compete with that distinguished poet in eloquence of style or language, few have ventured the risk of their own popularity by offering a different view of the subject from that which he has given, while at the same time a child may easily detect and expose the fallacy of his reasonings concerning the angels. We have not been able to see, with Milton and others, either beauty or scriptural authority for the notion that the angels here spoken of were ever residents of that heaven above, where the saints are ultimately to rest, nor that they had an existence prior to that date in which God created the heavens and the earth, and all the hosts of them—to believe that they were once associated with those holy angels that sang the joyful anthems to the shepherds in Judea; nor to believe that in their creation they were created for or capacitated to enjoy the immediate presence of their Maker, or that he designed them for any other purpose than that which is and shall be fully accomplished in their case, to us seems to conflict seriously with divine revelation.

Can we rationally suppose that the place originally provided for one description of beings shall ultimately be occupied by another so essentially different, without relinquishing the doctrine of the immutability of God. Or, if the saints are finally to occupy a place originally designed for the devil and his angels, how can it be said in truth that the heavely kingdom was prepared for the saints *before the foundation of the world,* when, according to Milton, it was not known that the place would be vacated until the world was founded, and the decree of bringing his Only Begotten into the world, and that all the angels should worship him? Again, would not the saints feel sad in prospect of being placed where angels could not stay? If a higher order of beings, holy, happy, and in a place where temptation and sin could not enter, and such beings as could have no predisposition to sin, did fall from that estate, and were cast over the battlements of glory, would not the poor lambs of Jesus, who have all their lifetime been tormented with temptation and struggling against inbred corruptions, have great cause to fear that they also might fall from the height of glory and sink at last among the damned? But lest we be tedious, we will leave the negative part of our subject, and give our opinion of the angels.

By the angels that kept not their first estate, we understand the children of the devil. Satan is called an angel, and sometimes transforms himself into an angel of light; and as far as we have been able to discover from revelation all the names by which he is known in the scriptures are applicable to his seed. Hence Satan is called "The old serpent, which is the devil and Satan," (Rev. 20:2;) his children are also called "a generaton of vipers,"—Matt. 3:7; also 23:33. So also is Satan called an angel, and in Rev. 12:7, his children are also thus denominated: "There was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought, and *his angels.*"

The term *angel* also signifies *messenger,* and hence every emissary of Satan employed to disseminate heresy, to oppose the gospel of Christ, to afflict and persecute the children of God, are properly denominated *his angels.* It can be by no means difficult to perceive that the dragon and his angels, mentioned in Rev. 12, are designed to show the powers of darkness in array against the cause and church of Christ. Michael, the only archangel spoken of in the bible, is none other than Christ; his angels are those who are denominated "The

remnant of her (the church's) seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." —Rev. 12:17. Admitting then, as we are compelled to do, that the disciples of Christ, in this case, are his angels, it is perfectly plain that the opposite angels are those unto whom Christ said, "Ye are of your father, the devil."—John 8:44.

These two descriptions of angels, in our opinion, include the whole human family; the chosen generation, or that seed which Jesus saw when he poured out his soul unto death; a seed that should serve him, and that should be counted to him for a generation; these constitute the one family, and are all in time born of a spiritual birth, by the Holy Ghost, and when discipled in the ranks of the followers of the Lamb, are known as his angels, keeping the commandments of God, and having the testimony of Jesus Christ. In the other division are found all who are without, such as dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. Rev. 22:15. These are called the seed of the serpent, (Gen. 3:15,) a generation of vipers, &c.; and these are known as the dragon's angels. The angels spoken of by Peter and Jude, we understand to be such as were found in the family of national Israel, and were there known as false prophets, children of Belial, &c. Their *first estate*, confining the idea to those angels, was intermixed with the people of God under the legal covenant; here they had an habitation in Abraham's house, claiming him to their father, as when they came to John's baptism, (Matt. 3) and as they asserted and Christ admitted. John 8:33-44. Both Peter and Jude, in the connection of our subject, are found exhorting their brethren to beware of false teachers, which admonition they enforce by the example of these angels; and then, going still further back, they mention the destruction of the old world, and the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, &c., the judgment of which our Lord had said was more tolerable than that which awaited Jerusalem and the other cities of Judea.

We shall be understood to believe that the first estate and *their own habitation* of these angels was in the worldly sanctuary under the ceremonial law. Here they had rights in common with the rest of Abraham's carnal seed, of which they were not dispossessed until the breaking up of that dispensation. The manner of their leaving their own habitation and losing their first estate is very clearly illustrated in Rev. 12. It had long been foretold that the day would dawn on Israel, when the children of God should, in a clearer light, discern between those who served God and those that served him not; at length the voice of one crying in the wilderness is heard, the morning star sheds forth a glimmering light; the day-spring from on high visits the benighted Jews. The people that sat in darkness discovered a light; and our Lord says, that which maketh manifest is light. To their great amazement, There appeared a great wonder in heaven—a woman clothed with the sun, elevated above the moon, &c., by which we understand the church of Christ, emerging from Judaism, and brought, by John's preaching and baptism, to view in her connection with Christ, into whose name John baptized them, and thus raised above that orb ordained to rule the night dispensation of the old covenant, whose borrowed rays were given through prophecy, types and figures, pointed forward to the day of our Lord Jesus. Above this moon the church was discovered in her connection with Christ her Sun, and eventually the Head of the church, or woman crowned with a crown of twelve stars. The church now looking forth as the morning. Cant. 6:10.

According to the similitude of the morning, from the appearing of John, who was the day star, or harbinger of the rising Sun, the light must increase; and as the light became more clear, other objects were also discovered. The seed of the woman is born, Christ appears in the flesh as the promised Mes-

siah, or as the archangel Michael; the Prince that standeth for the children of thy people. Dan. 12:1. The same light that revealed the Redeemer coming out of Zion to turn away ungodliness from Jacob, made manifest the dragon, as first personated by Herod, standing before the woman, for to devour the child as soon as it should be born. "And there was war in heaven." Not in the world of glory above, nor in the gospel church, but in that heaven where these things appeared, viz: Israel. Christ is now born, has taken his place at the head of his little flock at Jordan, where he was recognized by John and his disciples, as their head and ruler, their leader and king, by the descent of the Spirit like a dove, and the voice of the Father, who from his awful throne and majesty proclaims, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Immediately after this revelation of the Son of God, Christ was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil; and on this occasion the war broke out. Michael, the archangel, contended with the devil; the dispute was then, and has continued ever since to be, about the body of Moses, *i. e.*, the law. Here the great Captain of salvation leads on to battle, followed by his angels; the dragon also marshals his troops. "And the dragon fought, and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." In view of this glorious triumph Jesus said to his disciples, when they returned and said, "Lord, even devils are subject to us through thy name:" "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Nevertheless, rejoice not that devils are made subject to you, (or are cast down,) but rather that your names are written in heaven; that you were not included in the number of the vanquished." Here then is where the angels that sinned left their own habitation and their first estate. "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony," &c.

In anticipation of this glorious victory, the prophet cries, "Awake, awake! put on thy strength, O Zion! Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the daughters of the uncircumcised and the unclean." Isa. 52:1. "Therefore, rejoice ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Wo to the inhabitants of the earth and sea; for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."—Rev. 12:12. The vanquished legions of the old serpent are cast down, and are held under chains of darkness, unto the judgment of the great day. All the angels of Satan are thus bound in chains of darkness, and Jesus rejoiced in spirit that it was so, saying, "I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Nor can all the Infant Schools, Sabbath or Theological Schools, Mission, Tract or even Bible Societies, with all their machinery, break asunder these everlasting fetters of ignorance of spiritual things, to which the devil and his angels are doomed; nor can all the preaching, praying or exhortations, anxious benches or protracted meetings, conducted by men or angels, ever make one of these fallen angels wise unto salvation; they are chained, and in fetters of darkness they must remain for ever. Those angels particularly alluded to by Peter and Jude, were in a special manner chained in darkness concerning the true Messiah, the spirituality of his kingdom, and particularly in regard to the ful-

fillment of those predictions of the destruction of Jerusalem, of their consequent judgment at that time, and of all those signs which should indicate the near approach of the judgment of that great and terrible day.

From all these considerations, let the saints throughout all subsequent time be admonished. The destruction of these false teachers and prophets among the Jews, as also the destruction of the old world, the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, were all presented by these faithful apostles as examples of what should be developed in the last days, when perilous times should come; when false teachers should come among the saints, bringing in damnable heresies and doctrines of devils, when they should turn away from the truth, and be turned unto fables; (tracts, ficticious stories, dairymen's daughters, and the like,) and when they with feigned words, (professing great reverence for God, and extravagant love for souls, &c.,) shall make merchandise of the saints; but the apostle adds, "Their judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."

"But oh! their end, their dreadful end,
Thy sanctuary taught me so;
On slippery rocks I see them stand,
And fiery billows roll below."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, January 15, 1840)

BETHLEHEM CHURCH CENTENNIAL

Malvern, Alabama

This church was founded in April, 1874, with Elder Billy Bell and wife, Isaac Stewart and wife, Elsey Bond and Nicholas Edmondson as charter members, and Elder Bell as pastor.

This church has been an outstanding Primitive Baptist Church for a century, and on each second Sunday in May for a long time, the members have observed the Communion Service, instituted by our Lord on the night before his crucifixion when his blood was shed for the cleansing of His sheep out of every race, kindred and tongue. It has become a memorable day at Bethlehem; and may it continue until Jesus comes with all his holy angels.

Since the church will be 100 years old in April, all are invited to attend this anniversary on Sunday, April 14, 1974.

J. J. Collins

(NOTE: The above is part of the notice sent by Elder J. J. Collins the present pastor of Bethlehem Church. For the names of their pastors and many of the names of the brethren who have been members there, and other information see the December, 1970, issue of the *Signs*. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

FRED ALTON CONNER, SR.

A member of the Primitive Baptist Church which meets at Thompsons Grove, died and entered into eternal rest September 16, 1973. He became a regular hearer of the truth so that he appeared to others to be a partaker of grace, when as yet he knew only the form of godliness. In due time however he became seriously ill, and it pleased God to put his hand to work, and a discriminating line was drawn by the Master Teacher between natural and experimental knowledge, and what seemed to be a dying bed was made the place where this precious brother was favored with a sacred view of the love and sufferings of Christ while he heard the hymn, "Come thou fount of every blessing," sung in nobler, sweeter strains than humans can produce.

During the spell of sickness the ordinance of baptism was laid on this happy believer's mind, so his recovery his illness was certain, and his baptism took place on time in the same sweet Spirit in which he adorned his profession for the rest of his life — a living example of how those professing godliness should behave themselves in the house of God.

Brother Conner is survived by his widow, Sister Fannie Ethel Blankenship Conner. They were joined in holy marriage November 16, 1932, and to sweeten the blessing, three devoted sons, three loving daughters, and twelve grandchildren survive.

The writer visited often in the good home of Brother Fred Conner, where Brother Conner in his last sick days lingered in the loving hands of his faithful companion and his children. I know and am glad to report that this dear brother was aided in every manner that this world can provide: from the loving hands of a good home, to physicians and friends, until the Lord loosed him and bade him, "Come."

The truth is that Brother Fred Conner was the subject of some fears, but he never lost the sweetness of the blessing which made him "accepted in the beloved," and this all through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and through the righteousness which was imputed to him through the washing of regeneration.

The manner in which Brother Conner loved

his home, and gathered about him his loving companion and children, and brethren and friends, savored of Divine cleansing. No doubt he desired to remain with them, yet he was not afraid to die because he knew Jesus in whom he trusted.

At the request of Sister Fannie Conner this is submitted in blessed memory of our precious brother, with much love and sympathy.

J. L. Bocock

BROTHER BUD AND SISTER GENEVA TART

We of Liberty Primitive Baptist Church bow in humble submission of a great loss of Brother Bud and Sister Geneva Francis Moore Tart. They passed this scene of life in August; he on the 11th and she on the 27th of 1973.

Brother Tart was born November 9, 1886, his parents were Bud Tart and Emily Jane Bayles Tart. Sister Tart was born March 24, 1886, her parents were Bradly and Harrett Jackson Moore. He lived 86 years 9 months and 2 days. She lived 87 years 5 months and 5 days.

They united in marriage September 5, 1909, and they were blessed with a respectable family of two sons and three daughters; Jack Tart of Dunn, N.C.; Lindsey Tart and Mrs. Frances Matthews of Coats, N.C.; Mrs. Pearl Lumney and Mrs. Juanita Harris of Raleigh, N.C. Also seven grandchildren and seven great grandchildren. His sister Mrs. Emma Stewart of Fugway-Varina, N.C.

The relatives and friends, along with the church, will sadly miss them. They were good neighbors and willing to lend a helping hand in need.

They joined Liberty Church in July, 1965. They were very faithful in the church for several years before they joined, and continued so as long as health permitted. This couple was loved and highly respected by those who knew them. Brother Tart for years even before he joined, proved his qualifications for church duties. The first Sunday in August, 1967, he was ordained deacon, and served well. The ministers performed this ceremony his pastor then Elder Lester E. Lee and Elder Dewey Turner.

Their funerals were conducted by their pastor Elder C. D. Turner and Paster Ralph Byrd at Cromartie and Pearsall Funeral Chapel. Their bodies were laid to rest in the Devotional Gardens under a mound of beautiful flowers, until the resurrection, to live with the Saints around God's throne, where there will be no sad farewell, and be like Jesus and be satisfied forever.

In September conference a committee was appointed to write these respects.

Copies to be sent as follows: One for the family, one for the church record, and one for *The Signs of the Times* for publication.

Brother J. H. Barefoot
Brother James Young
Sister Lovie Young
Committee

J. T. COLLINS

Brother Collins died in Chipley, Florida, hospital January 4, 1974, after a long illness, at the age of ninety-one. He was born in Geneva County, Alabama, and served as Justice of the Peace, and most active in civic affairs. He was the son of Bill Collins, a pioneer lawyer of Alabama.

In early life he married Pearl Rice who was a member of Bethlehem Church for many years, while Uncle Tom was a true believer in Christ. He is survived by one daughter, Elizabeth, and seven sons: V. J., John D., C. M., T. D., Delphus, Mack, and Tom Alex, who served as his pall bearers.

His funeral was conducted at Bethlehem Primitive Church January 6, 1974, with Elder F. A. Collins officiating. Interment was in the church cemetery beside his lovely Pearl. A vast concourse attended his funeral. Truly a wonderful man was Uncle Tom.

J. J. Collins

JOHN R. BUTLER

Brother Butler died in a Dothan, Alabama, hospital July 30, 1973, after a long illness. He was a Baptist and a native of Thomasville, Georgia, but had lived in Dothan sometime. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Frances S. Butler, three sons: James R., Gary Lynn and John W.; four daughters: Mrs. Grace Butler, Twyler Kaye, Deloris M. and Delilah J.; three sisters: Bessie Stewart, Rebecca Tucker and Elizabeth Nesmith; also five grandchildren. He was fifty-two years of age.

Funeral services were conducted in Ward-Wilson Funeral Home, with burial in Goodwater Cemetery, Wicksburg, Alabama, by Elder J. J. Collins and Minister Amos Neswith on August 1, 1973.

J. J. Collins

also

W. C. WILLIAMS

Brother Williams was born in Dale County, Alabama, and was a close friend of the writer his entire life. The date of his birth was February 3, 1891, and his parents were A. W. Williams and wife, pioneer citizens of the Wiregrass of Alabama. He was a deacon in the Baptist Church.

He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth, one son, Durell of Michigan, and six daughters: Loraine Hatcher, Bernice Snell, Agnes Smith, Juanita Beard, Johnie Smith and Bessie Shiver; three sisters: Emma Strength, Lillie Mae Gilley and Callie Williams. Also by fourteen grandchildren, sixteen great grandchildren and one great great grandchild; and many other relatives.

He was an active citizen of the Wicksburg area for eighty-two years, and died in Dothan hospital November 10, 1973. Funeral services were held in Pilgrims Home Church November 12th, and interment was at Goodwater Cemetery with Elder J. J. Collins and Minister Roy Herring in charge.

J. J. Collins

IN MEMORIAM

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, Dan River Primitive Baptist Church at Ruffin, N.C., hold sacred the memory of our dearly beloved brothers and sisters in the faith who have departed this unfriendly, sin cursed world into that heavenly New Jerusalem not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, where they will need no light from the sun or moon, for the Lamb is the light of that city.

We miss them very much especially in our Church services, but we believe by their daily walk and talk our loss is their eternal gain. Therefore we bow in humble submission to His divine will, and feel we should not grieve for them as for those who have no hope.

BE IT RESOLVED, That the names of those deceased be listed in this Memorial, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times*, and a copy on our Church records.

Received

5-7-1965. Brother John Hughes, died Feb. 19th, 1973

2-25-1933 Sister Lela Walker, died Feb. 23rd 1973

6-24-1939 Sister Lora Brannon, died March 17th, 1973

6-26-1932 Brother Hampton Adams, died May 7th, 1973

6- 1918 Brother A. M. Rice, died Aug. 24th 1973

3-22-1969 Sister Mary Spangler, died Nov. 25th, 1973

1955 or 1956 Brother Arch Spangler, died Dec. 20th, 1973

Written by request.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Mod.
W. C. Vipperman, Clerk

IDA S. TURNER

Sister Ida Stone Turner, a native of Franklin County, Virginia, was born to the late James A. and Nancy Elizabeth Hollandsworth Stone. She passed away January 1, 1974.

Surviving are her widower, Elder J. Thomas Turner, five daughters and three sons: Mrs. Eva Hill, Mrs. Clara Bryant and Miss Ester Turner all of Bassett; Mrs. Lula Fulcher, West End, N.C. and Mrs. Lillie Doyle of Martinsville, Va.; Lancaster Turner of Axton, Elmead Turner and Tommy G. Turner of Bassett. Surviving also are two sisters: Mrs. Lula Woody of Bassett and Mrs. Sadie Angle of Henry, Va., five brothers: Jesse Stone, Ernest Stone and Areunah Stone, of Henry, Posey Stone of Bluefield, W. Va. and Albert Stone of Stanleytown; nineteen grandchildren and seventeen great grandchildren.

She was a member of the Knob Primitive Baptist Church.

Funeral services were held at the Collins Funeral Chapel in Collinsville, by Elders P. E. Ingram, Cecil Turner and Leonard Brammer, and burial was in Roselawn Cemetery.

SISTER LILLIE CLAY

Sister Lillie Britt Clay (affectionately known as Mamma Lillie) departed this life on Oct. 20, 1973 at the age of 84 years. She was born in Union County, Arkansas on Sept. 29, 1899, and was the daughter of Rufus M. and Emma Mcgraw Britt. She united with Rehobeth Church in 1942.

Survivors include six daughters, Mrs. L. J. Hines, Mrs. J. D. Hicks, and Mrs. Frank Prothro, all of El Dorado, Mrs. Bruce Oliver, Gladsden, Ala., Mrs. Willie Sample, El Paso, Tex. and Mrs. Nelson DeNoon, Andrews, Tex., 11 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren.

I do believe that there is no better evidence on the earth of being a child of God in Spirit and in truth, than for one to love and hold in high esteem the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. He told his humble children on occasion: "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free, and you shall be free indeed." Sister Clay loved the truth and held to it above all things. The Lord himself declares to his people that he is the way, the truth and the life. I have had the great joy and pleasure of knowing her for about 25 years. She was, in my understanding a wonderful mother and certainly left behind a most precious family. I believe when ever a little humble child of God breathes out his last breath here in time, then all of his sufferings are over for ever. At that time the spirit goes back to God the Father who gave it and the body back to dust to sleep until the general resurrection.

Funeral services were held by the writer and assisted by Mr. David Prothro, (grandson of the deceased) and her body was laid to rest at Rest Haven Memorial Gardens to await the glorious resurrection.

Elder David Turner

DEACON JOHN WILLIAM McALISTER

Brother John William McAlister was born January 5, 1882, and died August 5, 1973. Making his pilgrimage in this life 91 years.

He is survived by his wife, Sister Agness Moore McAlister; five daughters: Sister Anna Marshall, Mrs. Thurman Young, Mrs. Forest Drennon, Mrs. Harvey Hopkins, and Mrs. Rachel Smith; three sons: Carl, Herman, and Knox McAlister; one sister: Mrs. Annie Jeans; two brothers: Robert and George McAlister; 32 grandchildren and 37 great-grandchildren.

Brother McAlister was added to the Lord's Church in the year 1909. Elders Bill Hunter and Kenneth Stevens had preached to an ingathered crowd on the front porch, at the home of Brother J. E. Sisco. Afterwards, Elder Jessie Towry gave the invitation and Brother McAlister came forward and related his experience of Grace. He was then baptized by Elder Jessie Towry and received into the fellowship of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church of Christ, in the Fisk community, Madison County Alabama.

He was later ordained a deacon of this church, to which he remained faithful to this church and to his office, and to the cause of Christ in this world. He was a loving father in Israel and a devout follower of the lowly Lamb of God. Before he began to build, he first sat down and counted the cost, he layed the foundation, he had the sufficiency, and by the Grace of God he finished it.

He was highly esteemed among the saints, and respected by all who knew him. And no man could rightfully say that Brother McAlister began to build, and was not able to finish. No one could say that he ever sent an ambassage, and desired conditions of peace. His hands were put to the plow, he never looked back. The life in Christ that he lived for 64 years, manifested him to be fit for the Kingdom of God. He will be sorely missed by all the children of the kingdom that knew him. For to know him was to love him.

His funeral was conducted by Elders R. H. Hale and R. O. Simmons at the Ralston Chapel in Fayetteville, Tennessee, in the presence of a large crowd of brethren and sisters, and relatives and friends. His body was laid to rest in the Pleasant Grove Cemetery, located directly in front of the little church that he served so many years, there to await the call of his Master to come forth and experience ineffable glory, the sure mercies of David, never no more to return to corruption.

Written in much love,
R. H. Hale

HENRY TALTON JOHNSON

We bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father in the calling of our beloved brother in Christ. Brother Henry Johnson was born August 22, 1928, the son of Wesley and Annie Johnson. Brother Johnson was united in marriage to Magdaline Morgan February 14, 1953. To this union two daughters were born, Mrs. Becky Adams and Janet Johnson of the home. Other survivors are his mother, Mrs. Annie Johnson, three brothers, Alton R. Johnson, J. W. Johnson, George P. Johnson, five sisters, Ila J. Barefoot, Eula J. Thornburg, Ramona J. Weatherley, Shirley J. Johnson and Eva J. Ivey.

Brother Johnson united with the church at Hickory Grove the third Saturday in March, 1972. He passed away June 1, 1973. He was in declining health almost four years.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder W. D. Godwin, his uncle, Minister Wade Massengill, and Minister Michael Whitley. He was laid to rest in the Johnson Cemetery to await the glorious appearing of our Lord and Savior. The many beautiful flowers and friends gave evidence of the love that was felt for Brother Johnson.

Resolved, that a copy of this be sent to the *Signs of the Times*, one to the family, and one for the Church as a permanent record.

Committee:
Leacy Beasley
J. Luby Royal
Gertrude Royal

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 142 **DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1974** **NO. 5**

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5/74
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

EXPERIENCE

"Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me." (Psalm 139:5)

Have you ever been asked to tell or write your experience? Can you really and truly do it? I have been asked to do this by some of the household of faith. However, I am made to wonder if anyone can bring out these deep secrets of his soul, in connection with his hopes, his doubts, his fears or his faith.

These are the reasons I never answered such requests. I trust my efforts at this time will not seem vain or boring to the reader, and somewhere through it all, you will find praise and thanksgiving to a merciful, gracious God from this poor, sinful, undeserving creature.

I believe I have been comforted at times, by listening to or reading the portions of experience that the brethren and sisters are enabled to tell, but I also believe no one has ever told it all; not even poor old Job, whose long suffering and patience through his life's great experiences, were written in the Scriptures for our learning. The chastisement, followed by grace and mercy, was not just a book in the Bible, but his life time of being up and down, in hope and out again as he walked the steps ordained by a God who loved him before Job knew him.

Once I asked a minister, who had just finished preaching a discourse on the sufferings of our Lord, with such clarity you could almost feel the whip and the thorns, When did the Saviour's sufferings begin. His answer was, "At the time of his birth," meaning of course, his whole life, from Herod's search till the end on the cross.

To me this is the path of experience of his children in this world; from the cradle to the grave. Can anyone of you who have hope, looking back, disconnect any event of your life from the experience that led to that hope?

Joseph was only a young Hebrew lad, envied by his brethren because he found favor with their father. We read an inspired account of the high lights of his life, that touched eventually all the lives of the Israelites, who followed him; but did you ever meditate upon the awful, fearful, personal experiences, as well as his life as a child of God, of that young lad into and through old age? He *lived* that life day by day until his death, and so do we all.

My dear ones, can you count the sleepless nights, the tears, the begging for a crumb or just a small sign? Have you looked around in the congregation and longed for the sign in your forehead, that shined so beautifully from the countenances around you?

Your tongue, does it betray you so that your heart is broken over the things you say? I resolve over and over again, never to say this or do that, but my resolutions fail and burst like bubbles.

Weakness, that is the word I must remember in speaking of my own experience, for I have been taught over

and over, that that is what I am: a poor, weak and lost sinner, unworthy of his love and lost in sin, without him.

As a little girl, I can remember hurrying to finish the tasks that my mother gave me, so I could sit on the floor at the feet of the ministers and other brethren, who visited us, and listen to them talk with my father on the Scriptures. I dreaded to be rushed off to bed and cut off from these wonderful conversations. I try to thank my God for this upbringing in the home of his faithful.

I was emotional, and dreaded at church for the minister to touch my heart enough to make my cry. (Ah! how I long for those tears when I am cut off, and oh so cold). I was ashamed for the other young folks to see me act like that.

Most of my friends were of another faith. I longed to be like them and take part in their activities, yet when allowed to do so I always had a guilty feeling afterward. I was kept from uniting with them through these years, and hope to have profited, at least in my feelings, at the feet of the dear saints in and out of my parents home.

When I was a young married woman, to my shame, something began tearing me apart. The very foundation of my life seemed to crumble. All at once I knew I was lost unless I got busy. I seemed shut off from life itself as I had known it. I felt I was losing my mind, for no one I questioned knew what to do, for I did not know what to ask. I searched through the lovely Bible my grandparents gave me as a graduation gift and all I found was condemnation.

The evangelist at a revival near by, seemed to be reaching my case. Even so, I was undone and torn with indecision, because this was so foreign to my upbringing. Finally at the waters edge I gave up to the admonition, that all you have to do is about face and repent and you would be saved; just change your life.

Ah, my dear ones, have you tasted that bitter experience, "out of the frying pan into the fire?"

I started, as I thought, about "my Father's business". I plunged into works without faith almost day and night. The Arminian way of life led me to work and study to please the flesh, and for the praise of man. I do not recall during these "short" months of darkness, that I ever worried about my spiritual life. I neglected my duties as wife and mother and home maker, to attain the offices they were glad to give me. I was too busy, to worry about God and salvation.

Can you believe that a beautiful pair of new shoes, that were too small, was one of the means I trust was in the purpose of God, to stop my mad struggle to help him win souls? I have seldom suffered more in one day's time. It brings to mind the sands of the sea, the hairs of the head, the fall of a sparrow, and maybe a poor trembling worm of the dust, like me, in the mind and purpose of God. On this special day in my life, I believe I was made to look at that room of women, very fashionably attired, who were met to help the Lord in the salvation of sinners, and say with Solomon in Eccl., "Vanity of vanities." That was my last day as an Arminian, if my prayers, hope and faith are not vain. That very night I packaged my literature, my resignation to their auxiliaries, and a letter of request that my name be taken from their membership. This sounds easy to do, but it cut me off from my closest friends in the flesh.

Then my trials in the furnace of afflictions began in reality. No sinner can fall lower than I was carried. I still searched in the flesh for help. I sought here and sought there to no avail. The Old Baptists, I have been told, stood by and knew my plight. I feel those dear saints prayed on my behalf. Their own experience taught them of my suffering, but like Job of old the relief I sought I found not; sackcloth and ashes, tears and begging seemed to be my lot.

Dear ones, if you have toiled in this wilderness with me, you are as tired as I was of wandering and suffering. Some-

thing causes you to realize you are famished; as alone and helpless in your filthy pollution as the new born babe found in the field.

I longed to go back to the old church I had spurned, but was ashamed. Nevertheless, my husband and I went on a Saturday morning, the first ones there. Soon the old minister, near the end of his journey in this world with God's people, walked up the hill. He was my grandfather, Elder W. K. Smith. He sat on the top stoop just above us, to rest.

He had never mentioned my travels in that strange land to me, but now after hearing of my withdrawal, he laid his hand on my shoulder and said, "Ruby, I want to commend you for the step you have taken. It did my old heart good."

Then I poured out my fears of the God, that I knew only in wrath at that time. How I had gone too far, beyond forgiveness, traveling in my own righteousness and strength. I think from that day to this, one of the dearest passages in the Scriptures, were his next words, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

Since then I have had to be taught from whence cometh my strength; that my righteousness is as filthy rags. I hope to have been made to wait upon the Lord and to stand still and see his salvation. I know that I die daily and have to be revived to eat and drink of his sustenance.

Even with doubts and misgivings, I have a dwelling place among his own in this world, and hope for the better one in the last time. I am still in the wilderness and desert, but even there are found oases, mountain tops, peace and love among the fears and weaknesses of this life.

We are not promised heaven in this world, but trials and persecutions, else are we bastards and not sons.

I said at the beginning, it is impossible for me to tell of the travail of my soul in relation to my Saviour. If indeed he is my Saviour, the communications have been locked in my heart, and I do not have the key. I know about the secret closets, the Bethel spots, the fulfillment of love, hope and prayer. He has shown me *his* suffering for *my* shame and sin.

By experience, I have been shown that without Him I can do nothing, but with Him I can do all things. Once I was ashamed of my tears, but now, how I do pray for a broken and contrite heart. I long to be kept at the feet of his loved ones and that they will not be ashamed of me.

God has been merciful and gracious to this poor and undeserving sinner all the days of my life.

"Experience worketh hope, and hope maketh me not ashamed."

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Spearsville, La. 71277

THE DOOR BY WHICH CHRIST ENTERED

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber; but he that entereth by the door is the Shepherd of the sheep.: (John 10:1,2)

Christ repeated the "verily" the second time to the blind Pharisees who said they could see. The false christs and false prophets and preachers who deceive the people by self-works and self-will, put on a cloak of pretension, and by it deceive the hearts of the simple. By deceptive and feigned humility they gain the confidence and often the money of their followers. In this they rob God of the glory, and try to take the glory to themselves. They are forever climbing up some other way, and trying to get others to do the same, and telling them that tomorrow may be too late. They leave the impression that if they don't follow them they are not in order, while they claim to be preaching the truth.

These depend on their works and their money, and that of others; they by-pass the door, they rise high on the outer wall, but they do not enter by the

door. Why? because such are not His sheep. They look big, they act big, dressing in sheep's clothing. They cannot enter by the door, and cannot come to the light to make their deeds known. They claim ten percent of wages, saying they need it for the Lord.

Now, our Lord does not need the help of men, because He said that if he were hungry, he would not tell them. All things are his to dispose of as He sees fit: He does not have to ask why or what, but just speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast.

The prophets of old prophesied of the coming of Christ or the Messiah, and that He would redeem his bride. John was sent as "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." (Matthew 3:3)

We would think of John as the porter, because in the text it says, "To him the porter openeth." John said, "I am not that Christ." As it was prophesied of Christ, it was also prophesied of John's coming. No other one had been sent before any of the others who had come before Christ, because He said all that came before him were thieves — they were not the door. They being not the door, John could not go before them. But John said of Christ that He must increase, but I must decrease. I believe John knew that Christ's kingdom would be everlasting, but that he himself would live awhile and then die.

John came preaching in the wilderness, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. John took no glory for himself, but said that there standeth one among you whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose. Now at this time, as was ordained before of God, Christ came, and John said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" The prophets all through the Bible had said that Christ would come, and this was the door by which he would come: the door of prophesy. He came through the pattern his Father set for him, because He said, "I came not to do mine own will but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing . . ."

We see that he entered as the Chief Shepherd and fulfilled all that the prophets wrote of him and pointed out the way by which the Messiah should come, and enter upon his visible reign: his tribe, his works and miracles, the rejection of him by the Jews, and his title of a Nazarene, all pointed out as a door by which He should enter into his visible kingdom.

Now this Shepherd has come in at the door and the sheep hear him. He is not a hireling who would leave the sheep when the wolf comes, but as a shepherd of his sheep he has gone before them because they are his property. The sheep that go in at this door are his that he has called. He calls them by name and leads them out, and they go in and out and find pasture. As they go in, they go out of the world, so to speak, they are delivered from the law of carnal commandments and from the law of works of the flesh, into the law of liberty of the Church of God on earth.

As they go in at this door, the sheep have nothing to boast of only in the Lord, because He said, "I am the door." Thank the Lord! As it was in the day of Noah the Lord shut them in: and He opens and none can shut, and shuts and none can open. As has been said so many times before, Christ is the Way — He is the only entrance to the kingdom. "By me if any man enter in, he shall go in and out and find pasture."

Christ as the door came and entered by the Father's will, and fulfilled every jot and title of the law. He fulfilled every page of the volume — none were left blank. "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God." (Heb. 10:7) Now this door is different from all others that ever came before him, or will come after him. All that are blessed to enter in by this door will sometime be enabled to see Him for themselves, and join in that blood washed throng, and praise him forever who is the door of salvation to the Church.

The blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean could not take away sin, for if this could have, Christ would not have had to suffer, but since these sacrifices could not take away sin, the door must be opened: the door must come and make the way of salvation. "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me." The door must be opened and Christ must enter the door of suffering, the door of death, the door of evil mockery, and hang on the cross, to be made a curse for us: to be spit upon and beaten with cords. He who knew no sin was made sin for us.

Think of it my brethren and friends in the Lord, there would have been no life had it not been for this door. This door opened so wide that all of the Church went in with him, from the hinder sea to the former sea. They suffered with him, they died with him, they were baptized with him, and raised with him. ". . . the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin."

There will not be one hoof left behind, not one poor child who is helpless and cannot help himself. This door was opened for them. When he said it is finished, when the soldier pierced his side, the door was being opened for sin and uncleanness, the door and gateway to Heaven for poor sinners was opened. There is no way for men to open this door, and they cannot shut it. I think of Peter, how the chains fell off of him, and the gate opened of its own accord.

It makes no difference how or what we think, there is no other way, other than Christ the door. Oh how I want to praise Him for what He has done for poor sinners. I hope sometime to praise him in the fullness, and to fall at his feet and crown him Lord of All.

Eld. Leonard J. Brammer,
Rt. 3, Box 269
Martinsville, Va. 24112

A BELIEVER SINCE A CHILD

843 Glendale Ave.,
S Charlestown, W. Va. 25303

Dear Brother Wood:

Received my March issue and noticed that my subscription had expired, so am sending a check for another year, the remainder to be used as needed.

I feel in my heart that the Old Baptists are the most blessed people in the world, being made able by the Holy Spirit to believe in this true doctrine. Since a child I have believed in an Absolute and Sovereign God that predestinated all things and events.

How else could it be, when the scripture says He made *all* things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil, and that He works all things after the counsel of his own will. Another scripture says that *all* things work together for good to them that love the Lord. There are so many scriptures that prove it to be this way.

This is why I love the *Signs of the Times*, for the Editors have always contended for this doctrine. May the Lord always bless and inspire them to continue writing these sweet truths.

When at the throne of grace please remember to pray for me a poor sinner. Give Sister Wood my love.

A little sister I hope,
Mrs. Lester (Verta) Haning

LOVES THE SIGNS

531 Jenks Blvd.,
Kalamazoo, Mich. 49007

Dear Elder Spangler:

I have a great desire to let you know how dearly I love the dear old *Signs*. I am glad there are some here yet who are not afraid to declare the whole counsel of God. A falling away has come and some will not endure sound doctrine. I have heard it said that if preaching predestination divides the Baptists, then it would be best not to preach it. I don't see how the gospel can be preach-

ed and leave it out. God's children cannot be established in grace and leave out predestination: you could not preach Jesus. God is absolute in all his ways. He said "I am the Lord and change not" — He declared the end from the beginning, saying, "My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure," and, "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." "He is the same yesterday, today and forever."

He further states that He has chosen us before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

All these things: the blessing his people in Christ, the choosing them in Christ, and the adopting them in Christ, were all done to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the Beloved. He perfected his people in the Spirit, and with the one offering he perfected forever them that were sanctified. And one of the ancient writers said, "O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." And, "The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord." I am telling you that Jesus is Lord of Lords and King of Kings. Without him we can do nothing, but with him we can all things perform.

Elder Spangler, I am enclosing a dollar for the Fund, and thanks for listening to me. May God abundantly bless you with his rich grace, is the sincere prayer of one whose hope is in the Lord.

Mary M. Pearson

THE TWO WOMEN IN REVELATION

I hope I will be guided by the Spirit of God to write some of the thoughts I have been thinking concerning Revelation 18:3, 4:

"For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundances of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and ye receive not of her plagues."

This "her" is the woman described in Revelation 17:5: "And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

"And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither, I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters." (Rev. 17:1) This woman is the spirit of Antichrist, and the many waters are many people. I do not claim to understand all about the kings that gave their power unto the beast: the main thing is that the Lamb overcame them. "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." (Rev. 17:14-15) This whore is the spirit of antichrist that should come into the world: this spirit is upon all unbelievers, and many of the chosen people of God are yet among her.

When the voice said, "Come out of her my people," it was not said unto them to *come,* but *come out* of her my people. This call comes from heaven and will come unto every one that Christ died for, and this call will always have its effect.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." (John 5:25) This voice will reach every heir of promise. This word imparts eternal life to his people in regeneration, which is called being born again. After

regeneration the preached word, which is the gospel, is also a call to bring some of his people out from her. I believe that God will call some of his people while they are living their last moments on earth: although they may have their names on some church book among "her" this will not hinder the call of God when he calls, Come out of her.

This Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth, is the same Harlot that is mentioned in the seventh chapter of Proverbs: "And behold there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtile of heart. (She is loud and stubborn, her feet abide not in her house: now she is without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner.) So she caught him, and kissed him, and with impudent face said unto him, I have peace offerings with me, this day have I payed my vows. Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and have found thee. I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt." (Proverbs 7:10-16) I will not quote the whole chapter, the reader may read for himself.

We see this going on in every town, deceivers waiting to delude someone to follow them. The last two verses of this chapter read: "For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death." Many of those for whom Christ died, may follow this woman to a certain point, but that voice that John heard, will say unto them, Come out of her my people. It may be their last moments on earth but it will never be too late.

I see another woman mentioned in Revelation, chapter 12. This woman is the church of God. "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth and pained to be delivered." (Rev. 12:1-2)

To me the sun means the righteousness of God, the moon is the law, for we are not under the law but under grace. The crown of twelve stars makes me think of the doctrine that the twelve apostles preached. "And being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered." I believe that Christ, which is the hope of glory, must be born in every one that Christ died for, and there is pain and suffering in being born again, and in this deliverance there is great joy because a man child is born, which is Christ the Son of God. The virgin Mary was not alone in this birth — the woman which is the church has a part in this, as much so as we have a part in the resurrection of the dead.

"And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he said unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God." (Rev. 5-9)

These are the ones to whom the voice said, Come out of her my people, which is the church of Christ. We will be changed and then raised: we will awake with his likeness, we will not stand on the earth, but we will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, to be forever with the Lord. Not one of the above stood on the earth with the wicked to be judged with the wicked, neither did they stand on the earth: they will awake in the grave with the likeness of Christ, and caught up to meet the Lord in the aid, and be forever with the Lord.

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."

None of the ones mentioned among the dead that stood on the earth were saved: they had not Christ in them — they were dead, still under the curse of the law. He that hath Christ, hath life, and he that hath not Christ, hath not life. I hope I have presented this according to the Bible .

(Elder) J. R. Hollandsworth
Rt. 4, Box 479,
Bassett, Va. 24055

LET US NOT 'FROWN' AT OUR HARDSHIPS

Winston Salem, N. C.
December, 1973

My dear Elder Brother and Sister Spangler:

May your lives from day to day ever be filled with Love, Joy and Happiness. "And the greatest of these is love." But let us not "frown" when we are called to endure hardships, for we know our many conflicts, trials and cares, along with sufferings too, assures us by His blessed Word, that these are blessings too. "For our God chasteneth them He loves," and thus our love for him is increased manifold, and helps us keep His first and great commandment to us: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and our neighbors as ourselves."

Our God has kept us safe thus far, and He will surely lead us home. His promises were never known to fail. His precious promise is that He would never leave nor forsake us. May we ever feel his presence near us, and may we never forget the precious sacrifice He made, as we view him on the cross for our redemption.

May we never forget God's love for us — how He sent his only begotten Son, and Jesus so willingly came down to do the will of his Father, giving himself a ransom for all his Father gave him. He assures us that He has lost nothing — not one of them. What a glorious and precious Saviour! Words fail us when we try to express the wonders of His love. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

These are a few of my thoughts and feelings of what He has done for me. May your hearts be filled with gladness for all the many blessings of God's love toward you, as we say farewell to the Old Year, 1973, and welcome the coming of the New Year. And whatever He may have in store for us, may we say with thankful hearts, "Thy will be done," I was thinking of you while "Sitting in my old wheel chair." (Sister Austin has been much confined to her wheel chair for several years.—Editor) I love you both truly and sincerely.

Gertrude Adkins Austin

COMFORT DURING ILLNESS

Rt. 1, Box 96
Glade Hill, Va. 24092

Dear Brother Spangler:

Brother and Sister Spangler it seems that my life is as a dream. I have always enjoyed attending church so very much. Before my health went down, it seemed the week-ends were so far apart. I was blessed to find food for hunger the natural things of life could not provide. If not deceived, I enjoyed the precious brethren expounding the wonder of God's gracious promises to his saints.

My earnest desire, I trust, is to be

humble, made submissive to God's will. I realize the Lord is my only helper. So much of my time I find myself begging, or I may say uttering, Oh Lord! give me strength to press on, if it be your will.

Your and Sister Spangler's visit was so strengthening to me, and dear Posie also. Just to see you dear ones pass my home — I look forward to just a wave from you, unworthy though I feel. Some of the precious Elders were in our home the First Saturday night. Words cannot express how I enjoyed hearing them express their views on the Scriptures.

Brother Spangler, although my health is poor, I feel the Lord has richly blessed me in so many ways. I feel to know that He has made me reconciled thus far. Paul writing in 2nd Corinthians 4:17 said, "For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," etc.

Dear ones if given a mind, remember us in your prayers. Come to see us again. We love you both we trust for Christ's sake.

Mrs. Posey (Elsie) Poindexter

PSALM 127

Rt. 2, Box 10,
Star City, Ark. 71667

Dear Editors:

I know it is time to renew my subscription and I don't want to be late. I enclose $5.00, with the extra for the Indigent Fund.

Some thoughts come to my mind in Psalm 127: "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." This only can be God's work in Spirit and in Truth. It is too much for my weak and unlearned mind to fully comprehend these things. Only as God wills can I pen a few thoughts that come to mind.

According to God's word, this is the spiritual house, the House of the Lord, built on the Rock a sure and solid foundation. His work is a perfect work. I truly believe the Lord builds the house, and also that He keeps it. It is his handiwork, and it is done right and at the right time and place. He has all power in heaven and in earth, and none can say, Why doeth thou. He keeps the spiritual city and all therein: there is no mention of man's work. It is by God's will and purpose and His saving grace. Who but God could do these things? His little ones should be mindful of these things, for all the praise and glory are his.

If I have any understanding at all, I hope to believe that God's little ones are taught of his Holy Spirit — a God given spiritual conviction, not just a head knowledge. One must have this conviction within his own heart, giving him a degree of light in God's Word. His spiritual house is a gift that cannot be bought with gold. God is the giver of all gifts and He deserves all the praise. He gives strength to bear all the natural burdens in this old world. All of his little ones will praise Him in due season, for it is stated that, "His mercy endureth forever."

As long as this world stands He has promised not to leave himself without a witness. The Bible is being fulfilled at a rapid pace, and all in His given time. He is our hope and our all in all. He is merciful and often sees fit to bring his little ones out of the valley of darkness and into his marvelous light, and causes them to sing praises to His name as they stumble along, gathering a few crumbs as they travel. I believe one has to travel in this dark valley to ever appreciate the light when they get a glimpse now and then, and rejoice in His love. God's little ones live a life of joy and sorrow, for they are not promised a bed of roses.

All things, trials, afflictions, tribulations and sufferings are working for their good, though they may be grievous to this old flesh in nature. He has power to build and power to sustain the building at his own will and time. When the Lord in mercy visits the little ones,

he causes them to lie down in green pastures, beside the still waters.—It is blessed rest. May we all be kept mindful of the need of the Holy Spirit to guide and instruct us on our way. He brings peace in times of trouble, and when the dark clouds gather.

He watches over his flock, for he is the Good Shepherd and the Lord of Lords. He deserves all the praise and glory, for His will is done, not ours.

A sinner in hope of mercy,
Mrs. Havis (Viola) Donaldson

BROTHER HALL UNDERGOES TREATMENT

Bellevue, Washington

Dear Brother Vories:—

Today's mail forwarded on to us here, brought many letters but only one from those most close and dear to my heart,—the Lord's elect and chosen ones, YOU. It comes at a time most needed on my part for the days have for some time been so dreary and cheerless, almost as tho I was deep down in the valley of despair. I have received some encouragement and comfort from talking on the phone to a dear Church Brother and a new-like Sister not a member of our own little Church, but one of those who loves the Old Baptist Doctrine. They are the only two Old Baptists I know of in this great metropolis of Seattle and it's environs. The others nearest live in Olympia, our State Capitol to the south and one other Sister just south of that City. I talk to these two in Seattle quite often. My physical condition has prevented us from making a call in their homes, but we plan on seeing the Sister before long. The dear little Brother is totally incapacitated due to severe Emphysema and can drive his car but little on short necessary trips.

In the recent months while very much incapacitated from this Cancer illness and spending many sleepless (and painful) hours both night and day, it happens that there was a real "upsurge" of my love for the Lord's people, everyone, everywhere. There was a burning desire within my poor heart to be out amongst them again. It was THE DESIRE OF MY SOUL, so-to-speak, and I was led to pray, many, many times to the Good Lord that He would see me thru this illness, to regain my strength and physical being sufficient to allow me to travel and be amongst them in this area and distant places too. It now seems that it could be His Holy Will that this will be so and I'm "spurred" on daily by the thought of being amongst them: and what an inspiration it is. I seem to have come to that place where the Good Lord has shown me just how dear and precious are His elect little ones. Heretofore, altho I have loved them dearly, yet they never seemed so much like precious Jewels, so perfectly prepared and polished and ready for their final call to come unto Him, unto that eternal City to dwell with Him forever and forever. Sometimes, I feel too unworthy and unfit to be amongst them and I search my heart and soul for more evidence that the Lord has "wrought upon me" to where I can compare my poor being anywhere near like them. Then I get some assurance of being fit to fellowship with them, but have to admit that if I am one of the Lord's elect, than I am the very least and unworthy one.

During these dark times, the good people of our little Churches have been good to write to me, telling of their interest in my recovery and of their prayers in my behalf. How good of them to think of me and to take time to write. Lots of our close friends also have sent cards and notes of encouragement and my relatives far and near also have written often and some have called on the phone. All this helps me along. (After giving some particulars concerning his treatments, he continued) Likely when shots are complete, I'll start regaining my appetite and strength and recuperating generally from effects of the Cobalt, and in a couple of weeks time will be back and going quite strong with

my fishing and driving around the countryside if our gas supply doesn't get too low. If all goes well like I anticipate and hope for, we will drive to Mossy Rock for our April monthly meeting over the week-end and then go to Naches (near Yakima) for their May meeting. Time will tell what will happen and I can only hope and pray all will be well and no more Cancer trouble for years to come, if ever again.

Now to your letter. I follow right along with you in your remarks about the Will of the Lord and my reconciling myself to it, tho being afflicted as I have been. I believe I can truthfully say that my FAITH in Him hasn't wavered one iota, and regardless of my suffering, which naturally is not my will, I have prayed and prayed regularly, "Not my will, O Lord, but Thine be done."

I enjoyed your words about that great and final event called DEATH. I think upon it a lot and even seem to get a mental picture of it,—that is quite consoling in that it accompanies a strong feeling that the Lord is right there with me. I have even gotten a dim preview or mind's eye view of the great event of the coming of the Lord riding on the cloud at the end of this time world and of the Saints rising from their earthly graves, etc. I thank the Good Lord for visiting upon me thusly a slight "look-see in my mind's eye" of that great event. It is something impossible to describe.

All for now other than to thank you so much for your kindness in writing this poor unworthy being. It was good of you and it has helped me so much.

May the all-powerful and gracious Lord abide with you and guide and uphold your every footstep during these terrible times when it seems that Old Satan is running rampant the world over, until such time that God will stop him. How good it is to know that God will not let him molest His little ones. Without this feeling of security, I doubt if I would want to stir out on the Hiways or go into one of our Cities, day or night. People are turning into Devils everywhere and in our city of Seattle (and elsewhere) there are rapings, muggings, robberies, hold-ups on streets, robberies of offices, stores, and a bank robbery most every day. I can't but feel we are definitely in the very last days of this old time world.

In Christian bonds and love. I hope.
Wm. O. Hall

A NOTE FROM ELDER STEWART'S DAUGHTER

225 Emerson Street,
Wonona, Miss.

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am writing for my father, Elder Louis Stewart. He wanted me to write you about his illness.

He had a heart attack on February 22, 1974, and had pneumonia shortly after going to the hospital. He was a very sick man, and it looked like for awhile he wouldn't make it. He came home from the hospital last Sunday (the 17th), but is still confined to bed, and not feeling well at all at present. He is having trouble with his kidneys and the doctor says he cannot stand surgery, so his pain is very intense.

He wanted me to write about his sickness and let you know this was the reason he hasn't written. Would you please write a short article in your paper and let all his friends know. Please ask them to pray for him and Mama. We feel that many prayers have gone up in his behalf.

May God continue to bless all of you.

With much love,
Sister Nell Chriswell

(Though we have never met Elder Stewart, we feel to know him through his consistent support of the *Signs* through the years. His regular contributions to our Indigent Fund have been much appreciated, and we have enjoyed his notes and writings to us.

How good it is to know that Brother Stewart, and all of us are in the hands of our God, and that His grace is sufficient for all our need. Our prayer is that God's will be done in

all things, and if it is His will we know He is able to restore Brother Stewart's health that he might continue to contend earnestly for the faith among the brethren and friends. May God give us grace to run our race with patience and to ever look unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith.

We know that a note from the brethren and friends would be appreciated by Elder Stewart. —EDITORS)

PLEASE NOTE

Elder W. E. Turner of Wilson, N.C., is expected to attend the semi-annual communion of the Durham Primitive Baptist Church, Durham, N.C. the third Sunday in May.

D. V. Spangler, Pastor

NOTE: Brother and Sister Cisco Barron of Spearsville, La., mentioned in a letter that Elder R. W. Rhodes, whom many of the brethren know, is in a nursing home and that his health is fairly good, though his hearing is bad and he keeps an aggravating condition he calls a cold. He doesn't go into the stand often, but seems to have a sweet, unusual gift in prayer, usually sitting on the front seat since he is very feeble. His children see that he gets to the meetings.

He would be glad to hear from any of the brethren and friends. His address is, Pinecrest Manor Nursing Home, Bernice, La. Zip Code 71222.—EDITOR

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

A Presbytery met February 23, 1974 at the request of the Union Primitive Baptist Church, Indian Valley, Virginia at 1:00 p.m. for the examination of Brother Larry Hollandsworth for the office of a Deacon.

The solemnity began by song and prayer by Elder Leonard Key. Then a Presbytery was formed as follows: Elder B. O. Thompson and Elder Rufus Brown to question the candidate and Elder Leonard Key to delivery the charge, Elder Roy Agee ordianation prayer.

Elder B. O. Thompson led in questioning the candiate from first Timothy, third chapter, eight through the thirteenth verse, followed by Elder Rufus Brown and the Presbytery. All questions were answered satisfactorily. Then proceeded by laying on of hands of the Presbytery as follows: Elders B. O. Thompson, Hale Terry, Rufus Brown, Leonard Key, and Roy Agee, Deacons Leonard Nichols, Asa Wells, and Brammer Nichols.

Elder Leonard Key delivered an impressive charge. Then Elder Rufus Brown made a motion that Brother Larry Hollandsworth be delivered back to Union Church as an ordained Deacon to go where the Lord sends him and be recognized in that name. Dismissed by Elder Rufus Brown.

Elder Hale Terry, Moderator
Williard Cox, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND
(To March 1, 1974)

Herman Buckner, Okla.	$ 3.00
Mary Lee, N.C.	5.00
M. S. Thomas, Va.	100.00
Eld. Griffin, Ala.	2.00
Ray Spencer, Va.	3.00
Mrs. Alma Wheeler, Can.	4.00
Jesse C. Pridgen, N.C.	3.00
Neta Edwards, N.C.	3.00
William Holloway, Md.	10.00
Floyd Taylor, Can.	1.00
Lona Herndon, Va.	3.00
Mrs. Doc Hughes, Ga.	1.00
Coley Strader, N.C.	3.00
Ella Cline, Ohio	3.00
Mrs. J. I. Andrews, N.C.	10.00
Mary Hellings, N.J.	2.90
Prince Snow, Ga.	3.00
C. F. Stallings, N.C.	3.00
Clara Averill, Ill.	4.25
A. B. Jones, Tex.	3.00
Mrs. David Blackwell, Ind.	3.00
Wm. O. Hall, Wash.	1.00
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Jerry Evers, Tex.	3.00
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Dewitt Ray, Miss.	3.00
H. C. Thomas, Ohio	3.00
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Mrs. Ruth Clark, Me.	1.00
Mrs. Pauline Spencer, Va.	3.00
Jimmy Lindsey, Tex.	3.00
Mrs. R. Mathews, Ark.	1.00
Mrs. Havis Donaldson, Ark.	1.00

Danville, Virginia May, 1974

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

"OUGHT NOT CHRIST TO HAVE SUFFERED THESE THINGS?"

"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."

(Luke 24:25-27)

How impossible for anyone to really understand and believe what the prophets spoke unless his understanding is opened, though he may be well aquainted with their words. (see Luke 24:45)

When Jesus said unto the Jews, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me," he was showing them how wrong they were in their understanding of the scriptures; for, instead of their finding in them eternal life by external forms, ceremonies, and works, which they thought was the value of those writings, the prophets were in truth testifying of the coming and the work of Him who was then in their midst, and then speaking unto them. He sharply rebuked them, "Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?"

The two brethren, in the connection of our text, were not yet brought to know the purpose and magnitude of the mission of Christ in his coming into the world; and they were greatly saddened that the chief priests and the rulers had delivered him, (whom they thought would be the deliverer of Israel from their Roman bondage,) to be condemned to death, and had crucified him. Their great anticipation was blasted, and it was quite enough to make them of sad countenance as they walked and talked of the things which had just come to pass. Early that morning certain women of their company had gone to the sepulchre and reported that they did not find the body of Jesus, but saw a vision of angels who said that he is alive. And others had given the same report.

It was because of these things, they told the stranger who had joined them in the way, that they were sad. These two did not recognize the stranger, for "their eyes were holden;" yet their hearts "burned within them" as he talked with them; and as he rebuked them, saying, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all

the scriptures the things concerning himself." It was a little later that day that their eyes were opened as he blessed and broke bread while they were eating, and they knew who it was that had spoken to them in the way.

"Ought not" indicates an obligation, or the necessity of Christ coming into the world, and suffering, and entering into his glory. "He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." Ought not presents the necessity not merely of his fulfilling all the prophesies concerning himself, but more specifically to fulfill his Father's will in preparing a body for his incarnation and sending him into the world, that, after accomplishing the suffering for the redemption of those chosen by the Father (the church), he should enter into the same glory he had with his Father before the world began. (And the amazing part is that he takes all the redeemed with him, having fully reconciled them unto his Father.)

"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour." (John 12:27) As we remember the sinner's lost condition, and know that he does not deserve even the notice of his offended God, we understand full well that the necessity of his coming "unto this hour," arose not from any obligation to the sinner, not because of the sinner's coaction, but rather alone from the love of God so freely shown in his mercy. Truly the subject matter of the whole Bible is the portrayal of what God has done for his chosen people; and is expressed by Jesus, "Ye have not chosen me but I have chosen you," and by John, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propituation for our sins."

In order for us to understand the "first-cause" of Christ's coming to suffer, faith makes us to look at things before the world began, as related in the word of God. If one is blessed with faith, which is the fruit of the Spirit of which he is born again, he comprehends all the works of God from their decree in eternity to their completion. To him

"Faith is the brightest evedince
Of things beyond our sight;
Breaks through the clouds of flesh and sense,
And dwells in heavenly light.

It sets time past in present view,
Brings distant prospects home,
Of things a thousand years ago,
Or thousand years to come.

By faith we know the worlds were made
By God's almighty hand:
Abra'm, to unknown countries led,
By faith obeyed the Lord.

He sought a city fair and high,
Built by the eternal hands;
And faith assures us, though we die,
That heavenly building stands."

— Watts

From the pronouncement of God unto the serpent just after the fall, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel," to the coming of Christ, his ascension and promise of his second coming, we have a perfect unveiling of all things of which God is pleased to give an account concerning his Son and what he should accomplish in the world — sometimes in types and shadows, and sometimes plainly in him who was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," as he came to "this hour". These things all manifest the love of God and his mercy and grace from the beginning; and at the same time show that the redemption of God's people is not of themselves, but is certain because of the atonement made by his Son. The work of God and the work of his Son is in perfect accord in all things.

All who concede that the Scriptures are the revealed word of God, but are skeptical of the doctrine, should read his word; for this is where this truth is found. There can be no other interpretation than this when the plainly correlative Scriptures are brought together, presenting a complete narration of Jesus Christ and his work on earth. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."

We must look, however, to the things preceding the actual accomplishment of what Christ did, in order to find the

reason why he ought to have suffered. The conception of any action is always older than the action itself — there cannot be one without the other. Should we look only at the life and work of Christ after he came into the world, we would overlook so much that is inseparable from all that was necessary in the salvation of the Lord's people: for the coming of Christ for the salvation of his people was not just an after provision to meet unforseen conditions. His coming was in the decree of God, who had the entire matter incorporated in an eternal purpose.

Prerequisite to the sending of his Son into the world there was, first of all, the *love of God towards his people,* and the *choice of them in his Son* "when as yet there was none of them;" then the *creation of the world* and *forming man of the dust* of the earth; then the *transgression* of His command *which brought condemnation and death* to all men: thus manifesting the need of *redemption of those previously chosen in his Son;* then the giving of the law which made *sin exceedingly sinful;* then the *preview of the coming mercy of God* in the institution of sacrificial worship; and the *many promises of God* unto his people made "at sundry times and in divers manners;" then the *incarnation of his Son* in a body prepared of the Father *for the suffering of death* — the only way *God provided for the redemption* of his chosen ones.

This is a brief outline of the foundation on which the coming of Christ and his work of redemption rested. It is easy to recognize then the importance of viewing the whole matter from the beginning to the ending, in order to understand why Christ ought to have suffered, and to enter into his glory. These things all evidence the love of God and his mercy and grace from the very beginning, and at the same time show that redemption is not of the people themselves, but is made sure and certain unto the beloved of God by the atonement of Christ; and that the work of God and the work of his Son is in perfect accord in all things.

It is right therefore for us to feel that Christ ought to have suffered and then to have entered into his glory; yet it involves the most solemn thoughts and feelings we may ever have — that God should give his only begotten Son to suffer for such sinners as we are.

The subject involves much more than Christ being just a substitute for sinners in his death; as is so often expressed. A substitute for a guilty person could never clear him of guilt. We know of no time or circumstance in law in which a substitute could pay the supreme penalty for another; yet is it true that Christ died the just for the unjust: so we must understand the relationship of the Saviour and those he saved.

We are informed in the Scriptures that God's people were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world — they therefore had their spiritual existance in Him then, their life being hid with Christ in God. "This is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." Jesus said, "Thine they were and thou gavest them me." God's people (the church) being in Christ before the world began, had a close, vital relationship with him and with the Father: so close that God has been their dwelling place in all generations: from everlasting to everlasting; (Psalm 90:1,2) so close that the church had eternal life in Christ before the world was brought into existance. It was this close, vital and *continual* standing of the church in Christ that brought about his subsequent coming into the world for the purpose of redeeming his people who were fallen — it being his sole right to redeem them since they were his own.

This actual existance of the spiritual life of the church in Christ is not to be forgotten, while we are noticing that the earthly nature of the individual members had no existance until they were created in Adam with a natural life which was mortal: that is, subject to sin against God. Sin they did, and fell under the curse of the law which God

gave them. Thus the children of God (chosen before in Christ) are born of the flesh and nature of Adam, and know nothing of their spiritual, eternal life which was hidden with Christ in God, until it is manifested in them when they are called of God, quickened and born of the Spirit: it is then that the whole matter of their choice (election) in Christ, their fall, and their redemption, is so wonderfully made known to them.

When we read, "For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression," (I Timothy 2:13, 14) and, "The rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh . . . ," we have presented the oneness of Adam and his wife, Eve; and when we are informed by the Apostle in his epistle to the Ephesians that we, "Are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church," we have presented the oneness of Christ and his church. It is plainly stated that Adam was not deceived, but the woman was; yet Adam went into the transgression with her; and there was no separation there. Was it not because she was bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh?

Again, since we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones; and since our life is hidden with Christ in God, it was for the same reason, in the purpose of God, that Christ was made sin for us who knew no sin, dying the just for the unjust; and so there is no separation there. In Adam the chosen in Christ fell with all others, but the Father sent his Son to partake of their flesh and blood, in order that he should suffer for them in their flesh, bearing their sins in his own body on the Cross. It was this vital oneness, not only in his partaking of their flesh and blood, but in their lives being hidden with Christ in God, that gives answer to his asking, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"

All that Christ did when he came into the world was for the benefit of his people: to clearly manifest that there were a people of the genealogy of Adam who were nevertheless beloved of God before the world began — before they had their natural existance — and for whose redemption his Father sent him into the world, (they being alienated from God by reason of their transgressions against Him,) in order that, as a part of the whole continuing will of God, they in their persons should receive the spirit of their adoption as children of God, the hope and assurance of eternal life, being sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

The New Testament which Christ gave, which was but dimly seen before his coming to give the perfect light of the doctrine of God our Saviour, manifested that those before loved of the Father should be adopted from their earthly family, purified and made fit to be the sons of God: their death swallowed up in victory, their bodies redeemed from corruption to bear the image of the heavenly; and when their mortality shall have put on immortality, they shall be in actual possession of the eternal life given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. Then will be the fulfillment of the redemption of the purchased possession.

Yes, Christ ought to have suffered and enter into his glory, because He came to do his Father's will.

We have just hinted at some of the wonderful things contained in this subject, but we hope sufficiently to stir up the pure minds of those who read it.

(This was written some years ago)

J.D.W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

I Peter 4:4-7; Genesis 6:5-7

We have always regarded the passages proposed for consideration, among the most obscure and hidden parts of the scriptures and what we now venture to write upon the subject is humbly submitted to the consideration of Brother Benedict, and our readers generally, with much hesitation and trembling. Brethren will read our remarks carefully, and compare them with the infallible standard of truth, and wherein they may find our views at fault, kindly point out to us the more excellent way, and their faithful words shall not break our bones, but be an excellent oil.

In the first passage proposed, the apostle, after having spoken of the two distinct elements personally identified in the christian, namely, the flesh and the spirit, and having drawn the line between them according to the doctrine of Christ, that that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit, proceeds to enforce the exhortations with which all the apostolic writings abound, to mortify the deeds of the flesh and crucify the old man with his lusts, and put on the new man which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. These exhortations are urged in our text and its connection from the consideration that Christ has suffered for us in the flesh, that we are crucified with him, that the body is dead because of sin, that we are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God, and although dead with Christ, nevertheless we live; yet not we, but Christ liveth in us, and the life which we now live in the flesh, we live by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved us, and given himself for us; see Gal. 2:20, "Forasmuch then as Christ has suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God." He then particularizes the manner in which those saints had formerly wrought the will of the Gentiles, in the abominations which now characterize the ungodly.—"Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess." &c.

When the saints are called by grace, and become followers of God, as dear children, the world thinks it strange that they should thus renounce and turn away from their idolatrous and fleshly pursuits, their doctrines and commandments, and become a circumcision which worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.The world has instituted so great a variety of worldly religions, so carnal, so popular, so agreeable to every fleshly passions, and so pleasant to every fleshly palate, that they can see no necessity for singularity, or for embracing an unfashionable kind of religion.—They are offended that their splendid delusions should be rejected, exposed, and forsaken; and therefore they speak evil of the saints. For if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution; they shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for Christ's sake. But they are amenable to him who is ready to judge the quick and the dead. They are held strictly accountable to him, and whosoever shall offend one of them, shall find that it were better for him, that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck and he cast into the midst of the sea. By the *quick* and the *dead* are meant the living and the dead. It applies to quickened sinners, for God shall judge his people; and it also applies to sinners, who are dead in sins, for God shall judge the world in righteousness at the last day, by that man whom he hath appointed. And to christians it applies, both in regard to the inward and the outward man, the body that is dead by reason of sin; and the spirit which is life because of righteousness, see Rom. 8:10.

We come now to the sixth verse, on

which Brother Benedict desired us to dwell more particularly, it reads thus.—

"For, for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit."

There must always of necessity be a cause for the production of an effect, a cause is therefore stated for the preaching of the gospel, namely that they, unto whom it was preached might be judged according to men in the flesh. Here we find the cause in the purpose of God and not in the resolutions of mission boards, nor in the wisdom, power or contributions of men. It was, and is preached to answer the precise end for which God designed it, and the accomplishment of that object it cannot fail to secure. But, it was preached also to them that are dead. If we understand this declaration to mean, those of former ages, under the old dispensations, it was true; for the gospel was preached, in types, and set forth in shadows of good things to come, from the days of Abel, in the firstling of the flock, the unblemished lamb which he offered in sacrifice to God, and by Noah, in the building of the ark, and the souls which were saved, as by water, in a figure of like signification to that of baptism, under the gospel dispensation; and those unto whom it was so preached are literally dead. And they are judged according to men who are now in the flesh, unto whom it is preached, but who have no ear to hear, heart to love, receive or understand it.

Thus when Abel preached, Cain was wroth and slew him, thus showing his carnal or fleshly propensity, the latent enmity of his carnal mind was roused, and the murderous lusts of the flesh broke forth. Men now in the flesh answer to their type, "Wo unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain!"—When Noah, who was a preacher of righteousness was engaged in building the Ark, he was resisted, mocked, and ridiculed by those unto whom he presented the figure of salvation; so, under the present dispensation, Stephen testified of men in the flesh, As their fathers did, so did they always resist the Holy Ghost. Not that they could, or ever did hinder the accomplishment of the Spirit's work; but they opposed, and contended against it.

But all these references and illustrations seem to be designed to enforce the admonition and exhortation to the saints, who are called on to crucify the old man, with its affections and lusts, and to arm themselves with that mind, which the adorable Redeemer evinced when he suffered in the flesh, for us, that he might bring us unto God. If we are subjects of the new and heavenly birth, we have in our carnal, corrupt and depraved nature, all the elements of men in the flesh. Our fleshly minds, are the same in all respects, as the carnal minds of other men, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; and so far as they are concerned, they are judged according to men in the flesh. To Christians it was said, "If ye sow to the flesh, ye shall of the flesh reap corruption," for the fleshly soil is incapable of yielding any other crop. Paul is very clear on this point in the eighth chapter to the Romans, "Therefore brethren," says he, "we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh, for if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." The two natures which struggle in every saint on earth, are opposite each to the other; the contrast is presented under the names by which they are designated, as flesh and spirit, old man, and new man, outward man, and inner man, corruption, and incorruption, mortal, and immortal, death and life, sin and holiness, &c., and each is traced in scripture to its seminal or progenitive origin. That which is called flesh, is of the earth, earthy; was made of the dust of the earth, subsists on the productions of the earth, cleaves to the earth, and is destined to return to the earth; it is earthly, sensual and devilish, and all its productions are according to their cor-

rupt source.

The new, spiritual, inner man, is born of God, its life is hid with Christ in God, and only appears when Christ who is our life appears; it is heavenly and can only subsist on heavenly food, on him who is the true Bread. Eating the flesh, and drinking the blood of him who came down from heaven; nor can it subsist on any other food. It is a life which we live in the flesh, but it is not the flesh, nor is it of the flesh. It is eternal life, it is immortality, and it shall never perish. It is born of God, and cannot sin, because it is born of God. It is born of the spirit, and therefore it is spirit. And when this earthly house of our tabernacle shall be dissolved and fall, the spiritual, immortal, eternal life shall survive; it cannot die. The dust in dissolution shall go back to its original element. And when that judgment which came upon all men unto condemnation, and which has passed upon us, as judged according to men in the flesh, shall have been executed, a glorious resurrection of the bodies of all the saints awaits them. That spiritual, divine and heavenly life, which we now have in Christ, shall quicken, animate, and stamp immortality upon our rising bodies, so that though now judged according to men in the flesh, though now imprisoned, and held fast for the time being, in the bondage of corruption, so that we have to cry out, "O, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" we can, through grace triumphing over the flesh, with the apostle add, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with my mind, (the spiritual heaven-born man,) I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh, the law of sin." Thus while in our flesh, we are judged according to men in the flesh, we live according to God in the spirit. After God, this new man has his creation in righteousness, and true holiness; created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we shall walk in them. According to God; that is, according to his purpose, design, and spiritual sustinance afforded, we live. And as our immortal life is an emanation from God, it aspires to holiness, purity, and Godliness; above all things, desiring to show forth his praises and to glorify God in our bodies and in our spirits which are his.

In regard to the text, Gen. 6:5-7, we have neither time nor space to treat largely upon the subject. God saw that the wickedness of man was great upon the earth, and expressed his determination to destroy both man and beast, by a deluge of water. The manner of making this announcement, was in language calculated to impress our minds with a sense of that abhorrence with which God regards the transgressions and sins of the sons of men, as sin is the very opposite to holiness. But we cannot understand the terms, *repented him,* and *grieved* in the text, in the ordinary acceptation of the words, or as when used in relation to finite beings. Repentance, when applied to God, cannot mean a change either in his nature, or any of his attributes or perfections; for we are expressly informed, that with him there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning. He is of one mind and none can turn him, and he has himself declared, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed." Nor are we at liberty to construe the term grief, in this case, so as to imply that God is a being of excitable passions, such as we possess. The most brutish darkness ever charged on sinful man, was in that they had supposed that God was such an one as we are; or in likening or comparing him with ourselves. His ways are not our ways, neither are his thoughts like our thoughts; for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways and thoughts higher than ours. Any interpretation given to any portion of the scriptures, which conflicts with any other portion must be wrong, for the scriptures are in perfect harmony. We, being finite, and consequently limited in our understanding, may fail to comprehend many portions, and perhaps all the inspired writings of the Bible; but that does not

prove a defect in the scriptures, but weakness and inability on our part.

In this passage, and in what is said in the book of the prophet Jonah, of God's dealings with Ninevah, we understand that nothing more is intended than to show a change of providential dealings with men. God had borne long with the abominations of the old world, and as Peter has said, "Once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah." God had manifested a long forbearance toward them; but their iniquities were now full, and according to the holy standard of all God's administrations, namely the counsel of his own will, according to which he worketh all things, the time had come for him to make known his wrath upon the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and he, in vindication of his own holiness, displayed his righteous displeasure against their abominations, unstopped the bottles of heaven, and poured down on them the deluge, and swept them from the earth on which he had permitted them so long to dwell; and, at the same time made provision for the salvation of his chosen servant Noah, and his family, as embraced in covenant provisions of mercy; and hence it is said, "And Noah found grace, in the eyes of the Lord."

The whole figurative import of the subject, embracing the wickedness of men, the justice and mercy of God, is to set forth in a figure, the sublime and glorious doctrine of Salvation by grace, and by grace alone. For God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. There was no redeeming quality. Not one thought, not one imagination, not a work, at that, or at any other time, but were evil, and evil continually. Upon the ground of human merit none could be saved. Grace, and grace alone could reach the case of man; but all did not find grace, neither did all desire grace. It is probable that the ante-deluvians hated the doctrine of grace then as bitterly as all the arminians of the present generation now do. But Noah found grace, because God had grace in store for him, and that grace secured him and his family in the covenant of salvation, from the waters of the flood.

From the plain import of our figure, let us then understand that a day of retribution awaits the ungodly world; when God, whose mercies have hitherto been showered down upon the just and upon the unjust, will be withheld; when death and hell shall deliver up their dead; when He will judge the world in righteousness, and turn the wicked into hell with all the nations that know not God, when only the subjects of his grace, embraced in the covenant of life and peace, embraced in the rainbow that encircles the throne of God and the Lamb, shall be brought into the Ark, and therein lifted above the earth and finally lodged in the Mount of Jehovah's holiness, where there are pleasures forevermore. May it be our privilege through abounding grace to the chief of sinners, to sing the song of the redeemed in that great day, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, February 1, 1855)

OBITUARIES

CATHERINE MARY MacKENZIE

Catherine Mary MacKenzie, wife of Joe MacKenzie, died in the Lloydminister City Hospital February 9, 1974 at the age of 76 years, 5 months and 15 days. Born Catherine Duffus, daughter of John Duffus and Mary Bullis, pioneer residents of Thamisville, Kent County, Ontario. She attended public and high school in that district. She proved an apt pupil and graduated at the age of 15 years. She then started to study music. At the age of 17 years she and other members of the family moved to Winnipeg, Manitoba, and then to Vancouver, British Columbia.

On account of illness in the family she had to give up her music lessons and teach school, which she taught for forty years. During the Summer and Christmas vacations she traveled extensively attending Old School Baptist Associations and church meetings. Many years ago while attending an association in New York, the Good Shepherd acted so wonderfully within her heart that she asked for a home with

them. She was received and baptized by the late Elder Dodson.

We came to know each other through the columns of the *Signs of the Times*. We had so much in common about God's plan of salvation and other matters, we decided to get married. She read an old Family Bible every day, and sometimes she would get me to read a chapter. I also would occasionally read her some of my favorite old letters written by Elders who are now asleep in the dust.

There are no Old School Baptist elders in this Province, so I had a Presbyterian minister conduct the service. I told him she was a member of the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, and that I wanted him to read out of Ephesians, which he did. I also suggested they sing, "The Lord's my Shepherd," and, "On Jordan's Stormy Banks I Stand." She had the countenance of a saint in death, like she had in life.

Her remains were laid to rest in Lloydminister City Cemetery, there to await that great day that is known to God alone. Six kind neighbors acted as pallbearers.

Sister Catherine had many relatives in the flesh — how many in the Spirit I do not know. "After this I beheld, and, lo a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands."

If any Old School Baptist who knew her, wish to write me a note, my address is

Joe MacKinsey,
Marshall, Saskatchewan,
Canada

LESLIE DANIELS DUKE

Brother Leslie Daniels Duke of Charles Town, W. Va. died December 15, 1973 at his home. He was born in Bakerton, W. Va. March 29, 1889, and was the son of Robert M. and Mary McGarry Duke. He was united in marriage to Mabel Newton, who died November 17, 1971. To this union three children were born: Mrs. Catherine Enright, Silver Spring, Md., Mrs. Margaret Ochi, Rockville, Maryland, and Robert N. Duke, Charles Town, W. Va.

Brother Duke was a retired farmer, and had been employed by the Standard Lime and Cement Company from 1927 to 1956. He lived on a farm at Bakerton before moving to Charles Town in 1948.

He united with the New Valley Old School Baptist Church near Leesburg, Va. October 6, 1946 and was baptized by Elder H. H. Lefferts October 16th. He, along with the late Brother C. R. Hollandsworth, was ordained a deacon on Saturday, March 31, 1950. Brother Duke served as Clerk of New Valley Church for a number of years until his death. He served the church well in both capacities, being a consistant attender of the meetings until he was incapacitated about five years before his death.

Funeral services were held at the Melvin T. Strider Colonial Funeral Home, Charles Town, by his pastor, Elder John D. Wood, and burial was beside his wife in the Edge Hill Cemetery, to await the second coming of the Lord, when his hope assured him that he would be conformed to the image of his Saviour at the resurrection of the dead.

John D. Wood

VIOLA B. HORNE

It has pleased our gracious God to remove from our midst a dear one, Sister Viola Horne. The church at Cypress Creek feel our loss is her eternal gain. She was afflicted with a terminal illness which she was blessed to bear with the most patience and humility. Her funeral was conducted at Cypress Creek church by her pastor, Elder Harmon Brown and Elder D. B. Stokes. She was laid to rest in the family cemetery under a mound of beautiful flowers.

Sister Viola was born October 7, 1915 and died December 25, 1973. She was married to the late Jethro Horne, and to this union were born four sons and one daughter; namely; J. B. and MacAurther Horne of Willard, N.C., Earl and Danny Horne of Teachey, N.C. and Mrs. Edna Carlson of Fayetteville, N.C.

Sister Viola was faithful to attend church as often as she could. She was received by the church October 16, 1953 and was baptized by Elder Eddie Humphrey.

May the Lord comfort and reconcile all that mourn her passing.

Ordered in conference February 9, 1974 by Cypress Creek church that this obituary be written and one copy be placed in our Church Records, a copy be sent to the family, and one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Elder Harmon Brown, Moderator
Sister Velma Horne, Clerk

MINNIE MORAN

In loving remembrance of a dear sister in Christ, Minnie Moran, who was born May 7, 1903 and died May 10, 1973. She was married to Elmer Moran March 20, 1921. They were blessed to live together fifty-two years. They united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Salem on October 20, 1957.

It is with sadness that we attempt to write

but it is the request of her husband who has missed her more than anyone can tell. We all went to many good meetings together and are made sad when we think of missing her presence and the loss of a dear member. She was in bad health for several years and was blessed with love of a kind and patient husband who did everything he could for her comfort and pleasure.

Written by request of her husband.

Grace Sowers
Mamie Walton

ROBERT LESLIE FICKETT

Robert Leslie Fickett was born June 26, 1884 in Chicago, Illinois, the son of George Warren and Nellie Maria Fickett. Very little is known of Robert's early life, and there are no known survivors in his immediate family. He served several years as an engineer of the U. S. Marines during World War I, and after. Near the end of his service, he met and married Pearl Turner.

It was shortly after his release from military service that he and Pearl traveled west to California. This was during the depression of 1930, when it was so difficult to obtain work. The following interesting account was told by Robert to his brother-in-law, Brother Andrew Hatcher of Suffolk, Virginia.

He said they had an old car which ran rather slow. When they reached the mid-west and the cattle country they found the country dry for lack of rain. They stopped to talk with the owner of a large cattle ranch. This farmer told Robert there had been no rain for a long time, nor enough wind to turn the windmills to draw up drinking water for his cattle, that unless they should have either wind or rain very soon his cattle would die. Robert asked him if he had prayed for rain. They told him they did not know how to pray. Robert told him that if he could not pray for rain that he would. When he had finished they heard a squeaking sound and one of the men said the wind-mill was beginning to turn. The wind continued to increase until the pumps had filled the watering tanks. The sky became cloudy, and it began to rain.

Robert and Pearl continued on their way west until they reached California. When they were within a few miles of the unemployment agency the car ran out of gasoline. Robert said he had only thirty cents. They were hungry, and he was undecided whether to use this for food or for gasoline. He finally decided to use it for gasoline, which enabled them to reach the employment agency. But there was a long line of men waiting at the office, and he could see men leaving by another door without being hired. The man asked what kind of work he could do, and when he told him, he said, "I believe we can use a man like you." Pearl also began to work for the telephone company.

Brother Robert said he would not tell this experience to just anyone, as they would not believe him. "But" said Brother Hatcher, "I believed him, because one could not look in his face and doubt it."

From the above account it is evident that Brother Robert was a true believer in God and His sovereign power over His creation. However, he was very quiet and slow to unburden himself to many, which caused some to question whether he had any definite spiritual convictions. On one occasion while my wife and I were visiting them, he told a story of a certain man who came before the beautiful pearly gate, supposedly the entrance into Heaven. Robert said this man felt unworthy to even stand before that beautiful gate, but looking to one side, he saw a small opening into a little garden, and he slipped around to that entrance. As he said this, tears came to his eyes, and I said to myself, Ah yes! I know who you are talking about! Robert was a deep thinking man, a quiet man of wisdom and unusual understanding. His observations of world conditions and the workings of human society always revealed his understanding of human nature and grace. Over the years he had the same desire as his wife, Sister Pearl to convey the older sisters and brethren to their meetings anywhere, even though he usually remained in the background, not revealing his own desire to be baptised. In his last days he was confined to the Naval Hospital in Portsmouth. His dear wife was also treated there. After her death he gained a little strength and told Brother B. D. Handy of his desire to attend the next meeting at Norfolk Church. He was favored to do so and was baptized by the pastor, Elder Wm. Everetts, assisted by Brother Handy, September 8, 1973. After his baptism, while talking with some of us he said, "I have wanted to do this for many years. This is the happiest day of my life!"

Following his baptism he became more feeble, and fell, breaking his hip. He soon developed pneumonia and very shortly, another of God's precious "no-bodies" quietly slipped through that little side entrance into the Garden of peace and rest, to be with his Lord and Redeemer.

Written by request.

W. J. Berry

(See the obituary of his wife, Pearl Fickett in the *Signs of the Times* for March, 1974.)

ALICE MAE (WOOTEN) ABRAMS

It is with a mixture of joys and sorrows, that we attempt to write an epic of memorial for our beloved sister, Alice Mae (Wooten) Abrams. We are indeed sad at her death, but we rejoice that she had a beautiful hope in the mercy of God. Sister Alice Mae was born January 6, 1911, and after a final brief illness expired October 31, 1973. Her funeral was conducted at Autrey's Creek Primitive Church on November 2, 1973, by her pastor, Elder Joseph Sawyer, and Elder A. P. Mewborn. The numerous friends, relatives, and brethren, bearing many beautiful floral designs, gave evidence of the precious love she shared with so many people. Her nephews served as pallbearers, and the other ministers present served as honorary pall bearers. She is survived by her husband, Richard: her son, Maynard, his wife, Evelyn; grandsons, Daniel and William; five brothers, Curtis, Luther, W. Walter, Johnny, of Macclesfield, and Woodrow of Tarboro, N.C..

From our earliest memory of her, even when she lived in the home of her precious parents, Allen B. and Elizabeth S. Wooten, she was concerned about the people she loved, and this gift never left her. She was reared in a God fearing home, both her parents being a member of Autrey's Creek Church, and she always showed respect and love for the Lord's people.

On June 23, 1932 she married a local boy, Richard Abrams, and it was a beautiful marriage, surely only those "Whom God hath joined together" could share such a wonderful life for 41 years. They did not need to tell people of their love, for it showed continually in the good life they were blessed to share.

Alice Mae was not a very healthy girl, but she was not a complainer, and the first fear of death came to this lovely couple as she gave birth to their darling son, Maynard. Her doctor and Richard did all for her that nature could provide, but it seemed that she would surely die. The Bible teaches us that for this cause "shall a woman go down in the valleys of the shadows", and the shadows were indeed dark for this little family. But Richard was taught to pray, He like all of the Lord's people, pray only "when necessity is laid upon them", and as he prayed, God spoke to him, made his faith and hope strong that she would live, and she did. The balance of their shared life this family were blessed to show thanksgiving to the Holy Master for the precious gift of life.

Richard united with Autrey's Creek Church third Sunday night in September, 1969, and as his pastor called me, he was filled with joy for Richard and Alice Mae had indeed been faithful to the church for many years. But even as he told me of his joining, I was overwhelmed with a mixture of joys and sorrows, for I had a dream that when Richard was baptised, our precious sister would come to my arms asking for a home with the Lord's people. Now I knew my dream was not real, for I had a funeral scheduled for the time of baptism. But our Lord works and none can hinder, for the funeral was completed, and I arrived at the water just as Elder Coker finished his opening prayer. He then requested that I announce an "open door", and I cannot describe the wonderful joy I felt as our sister came to me with outstretched arms, she was received by the church, and as Elder Coker baptised them, it was so beautiful that it renewed the hope of many who were blessed to behold that sweet moment.

Her time of membership with the church was short, but was such a joy to her, for it gave a feeling of belonging to the Lord's people, and it made her a willing servant. Her experiences with the church were beautiful and on the day when she was struck with the disease of her death, she attended the Black Creek Association, and was blessed to rejoice as ministers were blessed to bring news from her Heavenly Father's home. Again Richard was made to pray, as did her pastor, and many others who loved her so much, but this was God's time to call her away from the sufferings of all the earth, and to call her home. We shall always miss her welcoming smile, warm and firm handshake, as she greeted the Lord's people, but David hath declared, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints", and "Lord, when I behold thee in righteous, and awake in Thy likness, I'll be satisfied". So we cannot wish her back, but long to join her in the beauties of that "Morn without clouds."

Written by two who loved her and hope to share God's wonderful love with her.

Bettie C. Albritton
A. P. Mewborn

Written at the request of Authey's Creek Church as she sat in regular conference.

Elder Kenneth Windham, Mod.
Deacon J. B. Coker, Clerk

DEACON C. W. VASS

Dear Editors and Believers of the TRUTH in Christ Jesus,

For some while I have desired to attempt to pen down a few lines to you as fond memory lingers within my breast of our beloved and highly esteemed brother, Deacon C. W. Vass, who was called from our midst a little more than a year ago. I trust to have expressed the sincere feelings of our Brother when extending

heartfelt greetings to you and all among God's creation who are lovers of the doctrine of salvation by grace; those who have been delivered from any hope of being able to work out their own salvation with the efforts of their sin-polluted heart and hands, but rather a people who feel to have experienced the artful work of God's grace within their very being revealing unto them their depraved condition in nature, thus creating within the depths of their heart a precious hope anchored within nothing more or less than the atoning blood of Jesus Christ; the elect family of God, those chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. These were the people our beloved Brother had a yearning to meet and converse with, those of like precious faith.

Though I feel to be somewhat weary and worn at the close of the day I am impressed to undertake these few lines. As I ponder over the many years of acquaintance with our dear Brother and am given to visualize the footsteps wherein our brother was blessed to tread, and the manner with which he was given to tread therein, I cannot help but feel that I speak at this moment in behalf of a host of believers in Christ who had the privilege to share in sweet moments of fellowship, whether many or few, with this one in his travels and sojourns upon this earth. Our Brother was privileged to travel quite extensively among the Old School Baptist from Canada to Florida, covering many states of our nation westward as well as north to south. To have never stood in the pulpit I know of no one more widely known among Old School Baptists, and I venture to say I knew of no one more highly esteemed among true believers. Our brother was not loved for his walk in nature but rather for that evidence of the implantation of the holy spirit within his breast, thus enabling him to esteem others better than self, giving him a sincere desire for unity and peace among brethren, and utmost instilling within a godly conversation wherewith he was so ably blessed to ascribe praise and honor to his redeemer.

Though our Brother never ministered to the Saints of God from the pulpit, many of you will recall that bestowed upon him was the gift of poetry. Brother Vass was impressed from time to time to attempt to pen lines of verse to share with his brethren during moments of visitation when opportunity seemed to be prevalent. No doubt he himself received a great deal of inspiration in those moments for I feel he was amazed at the thoughts that penetrated his heart, for surely only such could be a gift from God and thus it brought comfort to his poor fainting spirit of a sweet hope that he had truly been born again of the spirit of God. Many of his writings of poetry have been printed in the "Signs" and "Zion's Landmark" through-out the years. I do feel Brother Vass was blessed to write words that were a comfort to God's little children made so by the applications of the Holy Spirit within the hearts of the readers, thus a gift was bestowed upon him somewhat of a peculiar nature to be found among Old School Baptist. Placed in my hands several months ago by his beloved widow, Sister Catherine C. Vass, are several of his inspired writings which were never sent to you for publication. I am enclosing one of his poetic writings to be printed along with these remarks. I trust to mail the others to you periodically.

Written in behalf of all believers who shared sweet bonds of love and fellowship with this one; a member and deacon of Flatty Creek Primitive Baptist Church and the Kehukee Association and I feel a Brother in Christ to the redeemed family of God. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

One who loved and esteemed him dear,

Johnny Ray Gardner
Williamston, N. C. 27892

THE CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST
(Matt. 27:35) (Heb. 12:2)

The Saviour to the cross was nailed,
And He endured the same;
His enduring the cross much availed,
Though He despised the shame.

The Roman soldier spilled His blood
When he did pierce His side,
Yet, He shed His own precious blood,
When on the cross He died.

For His own life He did lay down,
When with a kiss betrayed;
By an apostle of no renown,
For a goodly price payed.

Christ's the only Mediator,
Between our God and men,
The Daysman and the Creator,
Who saved His own from sin.

Dressed in the robe of righteousness,
The King of saints to see;
They'll behold His gloriousness,
To vast eternity.

To what more could they now aspire
Beyond this vale of tears?
And what more could they then desire
When He for them appears?

O may I have a part with them
"Who fill the heavenly train?"
And in the New Jerusalem,
With Christ for ever reign.

C. W. Vass

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 142 DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1974 NO. 6

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/74
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE CROSS OF CHRIST

It is with the deepest reverence and a serious question in my mind as to the propriety of my action that I attempt to put in writing a bit of my meditations on this most solemn and sacred of all subjects, THE CROSS OF CHRIST. A few years ago, our dear Brother Bill Davis, now gone to be with the Lord, said he wished I might sometime write something on the Cross of Christ. I did not ask him just what he had in mind, but as I recall our conversation, I believe I have some idea, and if the editors consider what I may write to be worth the space in our paper, I should like to dedicate it in loving memory of Brother Bill and his wife, our beloved Sister Evelyn.

As I meditate on this most wondrous subject, the Cross of Christ, I am not thinking of the wooden crossbeams which our dear Redeemer wearily dragged up Calvary's hill, but rather of the cross under which He was born into this world, which cross He bore throughout His pilgrimage here, culminating finally in His crucifixion, resurrection and ascention to the right hand of the Majesty on high. I've heard it said from the pulpit that the childhood of Jesus was no different from that of any other child; that until He reached "the age of accountability", He did not even know He was a peculiar or special child. I do not believe a word of it! I cannot recall any instance in the Scriptures where He ever laughed or engaged in any form of merriment. I do not recall His ever participating in worldly pleasures or pursuits which other children employ. I believe that from earliest childhood He lived in the shadow of the awful and glorious cross for which He became incarnate. I believe He knew He was born into the world that He might be "made to be sin", to bear sin's awful penalty and to die under its awful curse. While yet a child, when He tarried in the temple and His parents on the way home missed Him and went to look for Him, He asked them "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Jesus knew His Father's business and His business was to expiate sin and to redeem a chosen race for Himself. His parents, even His mother to whom the angel had revealed His identity "understood not the saying which He spake unto them", but He understood!

Every cross has two beams, one pointing in one direction, the other in exactly the opposite. So it was with the Cross of Christ, and again, I am not referring to the wooden cross of Calvary. The wooden cross on which our dear Redeemer shed His holy blood was but the outward manifestation of the inner cross which all His life existed within His soul and which motivated His every mood, word and deed. One beam of this cross pointed to Calvary with all its shame, degradation and suffering; and even worse than that was the knowledge that He must be "made to be sin", that detestable thing which He despised and hated with all the intensity of His holy nature. There He hung, the Son of God

between two criminals, a spectacle for the most vicious and vile of human beings to behold, to ridicule, to mock, to spit upon and to dare Him to come down from the cross. As His holy nature writhed in anguish under the awful blackness of the sin He bore, He cried out in desperation "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me". I do not think the "cup" was the physical suffering He endured or even so much the shame and reproach which fell upon Him, but rather He prayed to be delivered from the revolting, loathsome sin He bore. But He knew this could not be and instantly He submitted Himself to His Father's will. No human being has ever been or ever will be required to endure such an agonizing ordeal, though we might be crucified, beheaded or burned at the stake as some of the disciples and apostles were. Even the non-elect, though they suffer the tortures of hell, will bear only the consequences of their own sin; but the Man Christ Jesus was sinless, undefiled, no guile found in His mouth "YET THE LORD LAID ON HIM THE INIQUITY OF US ALL". But I think the very depths of His agony came when, forsaken and deserted by those who had loved and followed Him, the very ones for whom He was suffering, He must also be forsaken by His Father. HE MUST TREAD THE WINEPRESS ALONE! It was then He cried out in bitter anguish of soul "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" This was His darkest hour; this was the hour of which He spoke as recorded in John 18:37 "To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world."

This was the hour when Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled: "He shall see the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied." All these things our blessed Lord knew lay ahead for Him as He climbed the arid hills of Judea and trod the sandy shores of Gallilee, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief", as He went about comforting those who mourned, assuring the poor in spirit that theirs was the kingdom of heaven, giving food and drink to those who hungered and thirsted after righteousness. All these things He fully realized He must suffer, and knowing to its very utmost the awful cost, He paid it without a murmur "FOR THE JOY THAT WAS SET BEFORE HIM." This joy is the key that unlocks the great mystery and the wondrous spendor of the Cross of Christ. THE JOY THAT WAS SET BEFORE HIM! Let us for a moment consider this joy: first of all and paramount in His every act was His great joy in executing His Father's will in every detail. This was the delight of His soul. "Lo, I come to do Thy will, Oh God" He declared, and again "I delight to do Thy will, Oh God." This was His primary joy. This was fulfilling the eternal covenant between the persons of the Godhead, that the Son be bruised, rejected of men, forsaken of the Father and later received up into glory. This was the joy of a warfare accomplished, a battle won, a bride redeemed from the bondage of an holy law which she, being unholy, could not keep. He would fulfill and keep that law in her stead. He would deliver her not only from the penalty of sin but also from the dominion of sin, and finally from the presence of sin. He would clothe her in His own righteousness so that He could look upon her in all her beauty and tell her tenderly "Thou art all fair, My Love; there is no spot in thee." He would be satisfied with her and she would be satisfied with Him. Having accomplished all these things, having finished the work His Father gave Him to do, having glorified His Father on the earth, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, literally took His seat, His rightful seat as the Redeemer member of the Godhead. He sat down because He was satisfied with His own work and the Father was well pleased. There He is today to appear in the presence of God to vindicate her whom He had redeemed at so great a cost. Oh, the joy that was set before Him! I believe that even in His darkest moment He was acutely aware of the glory which

would be revealed in His people because of the awful price He paid. These two extremes constituted His cross and He freely endured the one that He might fully obtain the other.

Beloved in the Lord, if we are His, if we are even in the slightest degree being conformed to His image, we, too, have a cross to bear. To be sure, our cross is not comparable to His, but I do believe, yes, I know, the new creation in us which is "Christ in you the hope of glory," grieves and groans because we fall so short of being what we long to be. Indeed sometimes we "sigh from this body of sin to be free, which hinders our joy and communion with Thee," as the hymnist expresses it. But how blessed is the assurance that although we are so unrighteous in ourselves, His righteousness is fully and freely ours. These two extremes constitute our own cross and we will carry this cross until the blest moment when the Lord calls us home where we shall forevermore be free from the presence of sin. May we all be blest, with the Cross of Christ in our view, to press forward in deep gratitude, devotion and praise to Him, who with Himself, freely gives us all things.

Mildred V. Dykes
1114 Mt. Hermon Road
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

A LETTER BY ELDER CURRY

Starhill, Ala., May 16, 1899

Dear Brethren:—I send you a letter for publication, written by brother Curry, to sister Fannie Jenkins. I think it wholesome food for those that are spiritual, and worthy of all consideration of the saints of the most high God.

Yours in hope,

J. E. Fincher.

Pleasant Plains, Ill., July 16, 1898

Mrs. Fannie Jenkins — My Dear Sister:—Your very kind letter came to hand duly. Allow me to thank you most sincerely for affording me such pleasure. You and brother Jenkins, together with others in your country, have been on my mind so often. I have lived a good part of my time in the spirit with you all down there, both in your joys and sorrows, and still feel joined in soul to the faithful in Christ, in your community. Your report of the languishing condition of Zion, pains me, but when I remember that it was said of Jesus, "He shall see of the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied," then I am satisfied. Christ is undoubtedly satisfied with the condition of things in his kingdom; if not, would he not make the necessary changes required to bring about the satisfactory condition of affairs? Has he not all power both in heaven and in earth? All things are yours, saith the holy word of God, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

"What more can he say
Than to you he hath said,
Ye who unto Jesus
For refuge have fled?"

"All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." God has ordained that the faith of his people be tried; he has also ordained those very things that are to try it. In the days of Elijah, they digged down the altars and killed the prophets, and so they do now. This discouraged Elijah, and so it discourages us. But is God discouraged at it? Nay, verily. He has reared an altar that none can dig down. This altar is in the heart, an altar of his own raising, and at which he alone presides; an altar which is his own peculiar care, and which wicked hands can never touch. He has also anointed a prophet which none can kill. Jesus, the risen Savior, is that prophet. He is far above all principality and power, and every name that is named, and he has said, "As I live, ye shall live also." Elijah was discouraged, but what did God say to him? "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." O yes, the election of

grace. It is the election of grace that saves the church, that saves the individual, that raises the despairing, and cheers the desolate. Elijah, although a prophet of God, was ignorant of God's way of doing things, ignorant of the true condition of things around him. He thought that he was left alone, but he was in the midst of God's reserve. So, my dear sister, you in your loneliness and deep concern for Zion, may be in the midst of God's reserve, a hidden number, whom God has reserved to himself. In the days of the apostles there were those who said they were Jews, who were not, but did lie. So it is now, for there is nothing new; that which hath been is now, says the inspired record. May God reconcile us to his will, and subdue us unto himself. . . .

Give my love to brother Jenkins, and say to him that he has a half interest in this poor letter, and a warm place in the writer's heart. Remember me to all the faithful ones. Tell them I am still a stranger in this world, trying as God gives the ability to proclaim salvation by sovereign grace. Write again to me.

Yours to serve in the gospel of Christ,

H. M. Curry

FROM ELDER ALEX McCOLL

In the summer of 1973 I had a most memorable experience. I had the opportunity to visit with the brethren and friends of the Baptist Churches of our faith and order in North Carolina. Without a doubt this trip will remain a beautiful chapter in my book of memory.

After prayerful consideration, my wife and I found it necessary that I would take our two younger children with me, while she would remain at home with our two older children. Our good God of Providence cared for us all and we were safely united as a family again.

Why was the experience such a lovely one for me? There are many reasons, but only a few can be mentioned:

The hospitality and kindness of the Lord's people to me and mine, the opportunity to feel and experience, "The tie that binds our hearts in Christian love," the realization again that the Lord's people are taught in the "school of Christ:" the high privilege and joy in believing in a crucified Christ, the wonderful experience of going in the service of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the great joy of seeing the Holy Scriptures opened up to the account of "our Jesus the friend of sinners."

If memory serves accurately, I visited ten different churches and spoke eleven times. The very scriptures that I trust were given me, tell of our total depravity, of the work of our Lord Jesus Christ and of the glory that shall be revealed in us. With humility I would suggest that you read the following scriptures:

Psalm 130:30. "If thou Lord shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?" We surely believe that it is a wonderful thing that a man realizes that if God should charge all of our iniquities against us, not one of us could stand to enter into the New Jerusalem, for all have come short of the glory of God. But we are given to see Jesus that one man who hath perfect blessedness, who walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly nor stood in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seat of the scornful, but his delight was in the law of the Lord: and in his law did he meditate day and night. Jesus was the only man found without sin, and no guile was found in his mouth.

As it says in Isaiah 53:5, 6, "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned everyone to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Here we are given to see Jesus who was without sin of his own, charged and held accountable for all of our sins.

How blessed we are!

Psalm 16:2, 3: "O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not to thee, but to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is my delight."

Here in this "golden psalm of David" we see Jesus telling that his death, burial and resurrection were for his people. His kindness in paying the great debt was indeed to men. The saints in the earth are set apart by God the Father in election, their sins are expiated by the blood of Christ in redemption, they are sanctified by the Spirit of God in effectual vocation. They are scattered up and down in the earth, and yet His love, grace, goodness, and kindness reaches them in the present state of things, notwithstanding all of their imperfections in themselves and their despicableness in the eyes of others. They are in high esteem by Christ and are made kings and priests unto God by Christ. Christ's delight was with these sons of men before the world was.

How blessed we are!

Songs of Soloman 2:13: "Arise my love, my fair one and come away." Here we see the Lord's people being called by Christ out of nature's darkness into His most marvelous light. As Paul says in 2 Timothy 1:9, "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

Here we see our dear Jesus calling his people away from the temporal pleasures and dangers, to dwell in him, to take the spoiling of their goods joyfully, and finally to their eternal rest with Him.

Note he says, "my fair one." In Songs of Soloman 4:7 Christ is also speaking to his people when he says, "Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee." How inexpressably wonderful it is that His people are fair in His eyes, and he is not ashamed to call them brethren, and confess them before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.

The iniquities of the Lord's people are imputed unto Him, and His righteousness is imputed unto them.

How blessed we are!

I Corinthians 6:19, 20. "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." What a beautiful truth and what a solemn exhortation! "Love so amazing, so divine demands our life, our soul, our all."

Note we are to glorify God in our body and in our spirit. We should read His word, assemble ourselves together, sing the songs of Zion, submit to believer's baptism, partake in the ordinances of communion, show kindness to one another for Jonathan's sake, etc. for then I believe we do glorify him in the body. How pleasant it is to be in the service of the King!

How blessed we are!

I Peter 1:3-5. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." Is it not a wonderful privilege to praise him because of the lively hope, (which is an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast,) which He has given us that he finished the work for us on the cross, that it is the work of God that we believe on him whom he hath sent, and that one day we shall see Him, be like Him, and be satisfied.

As children of the heavenly king we should sweetly sing our Maker's praise as we journey to Zion's hill.

How blessed we are!

I Corinthians 14:10. "Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue."

This scripture "got hold of me" for about two days, and has remained ever a sweet morsel in my memory. I remem-

ber being in sweet meditation out under a grove of trees, feeling little of the burden of the Lord's work as our Lord Jesus felt as "the government is upon his shoulders."

Think of the beautiful scriptures which have *five words*. I will mention only a few which are precious to me. I hope you will be given to think of many more: "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth." "Salvation is of the Lord." "By grace ye are saved." "Underneath are the everlasting arms." "If God be for us — Who can be against us?"

Think of the words with *five letters*: Enoch, Moses, David, Hosea, Peter, Jesus, and Mercy. Cross, Blood, Water, Grace, Truth.

Are not the scriptures beautiful when they are opened up to us?

How blessed we are!

Romans 8:31: "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

What are these things? Are they not as outlined in Romans 8:28-30? All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." His FOREKNOWLEDGE, his PREDESTINATION, his CALLING, his JUSTIFYING, his GLORIFYING.

The above angers the natural mind, but those who are given an understanding (which is a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ) can say to these things, "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

"How firm a foundation
Ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith
In his excellent word?"

Isaiah 12:3. "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." The bucket is faith, which is the gift of God, the water is grace which we receive "and grace for grace." The wells of salvation are in the Father (the fountain of living waters), the Son (the fountain in the garden and the well of living water), in the Spirit (well of living water). "If such the sweetness of the streams, what must the fountain be?"

The above scripture in Isaiah 12:3 is a prophecy and promise to the Lord's people, I believe also it is their prayer much of the time.

How blessed we are!

Hebrews 13:1. "Let brotherly love continue." This love is the love of our Elder Brother, the Lord Jesus Christ. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13) This love Abraham saw by faith in Genesis 22:14 when he called the name of that place "Jehovahjireh", which means, "The Lord will provide." Will provide what? Why, of course the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. This love we feel with Paul when he said in Galatians 2:20, "And the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me." "Let brotherly love continue," is a promise and prophecy to the Lord's people inasmuch as his love will continue in them as long as his saints are in the earth, and it will continue in the perfect state of heaven when they are perfected even as He is perfect. It is also a prayer of the Lord's people that His love will continue in them and among them. How empty our visiting, our preaching, etc. would be without the brotherly love of our elder Brother.

May that brotherly love continue in us and among us so that we may have joy in assembling together and in visiting with those of like precious faith in our neighboring countries.

Genesis 24:31. "And he said, Come in thou blessed of the Lord, wherefore standest thou without? for I have prepared the house and room for the camels." Here we find Laban running out to the man at the well, the eldest servant of Abraham's house. "Come in thou blessed of the Lord, wherefore standest thou without?" I say unto you, dear reader, if you feel to be an old sinner, if you feel to be unworthy of the least of God's notice, if you feel you are lost without Christ, if you feel you have some little evidence that Christ shed his

precious blood for you, if you feel that you love the truth, if you feel that you love to be with the Lord's people, come in and embrace these beautiful truths. Come to your friends in the church and tell them your desire, bring your tithes into the storehouse and tell your best friends what great things the Lord hath done for you whereof you are glad. Is it not a great pleasure to mingle with those of like precious faith?

How blessed we are!

2 Corinthians 9:15. "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." Often during our trip I wondered, Why me? Why are all these benefits of providence and grace bestowed upon me, and upon those who feel as I do much of the time? Why is it that there is so much love manifest even among strangers in the flesh? Why are such individuals and groups of people here and there spread up and down and across our continent, of one mind, one faith, one hope and one charity? Why are such of one mind in wanting the Lord Jesus Christ to have the pre-eminence in all things? to have his name exalted, to have their desire fulfilled that they will see Him, be like Him and be satisfied?

The answer to the above questions seemed to be answered in this scripture in 2 Cor. 9:15, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." This unspeakable gift is the gift of the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was the eternal word that John said was made flesh and dwelt among us; yet no man unless he is born again can come to know Him whom to know is life eternal. Because of the gift of the Lord all things we have and enjoy are made for us, indeed they must be provided for us. "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men," said the multitude of the heavenly host at the birth of our Lord.

I believe, as well, as we feel thankfulness unto God for the unspeakable gift of his dear Son, we feel a sweet foretaste of our heavenly home. There we shall join with the great multitude which John said no man can number of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues, and stand before the throne and before the Lamb clothed with white robes, and palms of victory in our hands, and cry with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

"And when we are there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We shall have no less days to sing his praise
Than when we first begun."

I have written at much greater length than I intended. I would exhort that your read the scriptures and be in prayer, and take every opportunity to visit among those of like precious faith, whether they live near or far. If you have been called to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, preach Christ and him crucified, and go at every opportunity whenever and wherever the Lord makes way for you.

Many, many thanks to all of you who showed kindness unto me and mine for Jonathan's sake. May we ever continue to say, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift," both now and eternally, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Pray for me and mine.

In sweet fellowship,
Elder D. Alex McColl

TO SIGNS READERS

Dear Readers:

Naturally the future is dark and is uncertain. The daily papers are full of disquieting news. Natural man can understand natural things, and so natural papers are a tremendous industry.

A paper that does not deal in natural news can only be understood and received by those highly favored few who walk in the Spirit. There are at this present time a few who know that the hearts of all men are in the Lord's hands, and that all events are under his divine control. Sweet mercy enables such people at times to leave all their cares in His hands, knowing that what He does is ever best.

People whose souls are drawn out to the Lord, and who hunger and thirst for heavenly things, are extremely scarce, and can best be described as "few". To that few there is a promise: "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass, and as the days so shall thy strength be."

May these words, because they are the everlasting truth, set you at ease in every condition, and enable you to bear all that Satan and all his children can say or do against you. May the Lord continue to bless you from time to time with liberty of mind to think on mercies past and the many great and precious promises, and find in them abundant matter for comfort and for prayer.

Salvation is a mighty and a majestic work. Majesty must effect it, by which I mean it must be done by Almighty God. Man can no more put a finger to it than a baby has power to create itself. May we all remember well the dear Lord Jesus, and thus trace all of our help to its proper source. Ezekiel saw dry bones that he could not make live, and they could not make themselves live —only the Spirit of Life from God can make alive.

Sometimes I feel like Manoah's wife, "The Lord would not have showed us these things if He meant to destroy us." You know, dear ones, He has helped in every need so far, and I desire while life or breath remain to bear witness to the faithfulness and loving kindness of God, and have a good hope through grace that when this life is over, I shall be with Him in heaven.

"Till then I would thy love proclaim
With every fleeting breath,
And dying, lay in Thy dear arms,
The Antidote of death."

Dear readers, if the Lord has been pleased to set an hedge about you and me, then all of our doubts and fears, our unbelief and sinfulness, and old Satan himself, cannot break the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love: Ten thousands suns are not bright enough to compare with Jesus.

You know, dear brethren, that those who love the Lord will die in the Lord. Now I know that the "flesh" in God's children "lusteth against the spirit," and that they even bear about with them something which deserves the dreadful name of a "body of death," but the Spirit of God must, by the spirit of adoption, set these things right in the breast of even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

May every good and perfect gift be multiplied among you.

In gospel bonds,
J. L. Bocock
Boones Mill, Va.

THE SIGNS IS PRECIOUS TO BROTHER BLACK

29 Elysian Street,
St. Thomas, Ontario, Canada

Dear Elder Spangler:

It is my hope and prayer that you and Sister Spangler are both enjoying the blessing of good health, and that you are given strength to continue the work of publishing our family paper, *The Signs,* for many years to come.

Now that I am alone and in a very lovely home for the older people of the District, the *Signs* is even more precious to me, as I am unable to go regularly to the meetings, and in the winter months depend on visits from my friends and letters received.

This morning while waiting for the new *Signs* to come, I was looking over some old letters. One in particular was from Elder R. Lester Dodson in 1945 on the death of my oldest son in Italy during the war: his son was there at the same time. You and Elder Griffin were Associate Editors at the time. Other letters from Elder S. H. Durand were dated from 1914 to 1917. He baptized me in 1915. Others of more recent date from Elders J. D. Wood, W. W. Taylor, and Arnold H. Bellows who was my wife's uncle.

I can remember the very words spoken to me many years ago by the visiting Elders who came to our home. Elder

Chick, then Editor of the *Signs,* and Elder Vail and Elder Eubanks, who once preached on the first five verses of the 42nd Psalm — a very beautiful text. The 23rd Psalm has always been a great comfort to me and to millions of others in this world of sin and darkness.

I hope I am not tiring you writing as I have, as this was not my intention when I started. I wanted to tell you and Elder Wood how much I enjoyed the *Signs* this winter when I have been unable to go out: especially the December issue with your Editorial and Elder Gilbert Beebe's of 1846. Also the January issue starting the Volume 142 by Elder Wood, as he has done for many years. I hope that he and Sister Wood are still blessed with good health to carry on the heavy duties entrusted to his care in getting out the *Signs.*

The Editor's Notice in the January issue drew my attention, and enclosed is a postal money order for $100.00 in memory of my dear wife, whose Obituary you published in January, 1971. I am in my 88th year, and if not deceived or deceiving, I am still in hope of God's mercy and love through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. So many of the letters tell my experience better than I could myself.

With love and fellowship in the Truth.

J. W. Black

BROTHER GILBERT TO BROTHER GLADDING

R. R. #7
St. Thomas, Ontario
N5P-312

Mr. Quincy Gladding,
Westminister, Md. 21157

Dear Brother Gladding:

I read your letter in the *Signs of the Times* and felt to try to write you a line. It's good to hear of those whom we have known over the years, and to hear of their welfare and travel.

I remember the first time I met you and Sister Gladding. I believe it was at the Southampton Meeting House. I came into the yard: you gave me a cup of cold water; and no doubt you have given me a cup of cold water spiritually as we have met since that time over the years, —or a word fitly spoken.

How quickly the years have passed. I see you are 83 years old, and I am passed 69. We have been blessed to meet at the different places you mentioned. It always seemed when I went with Elder and Sister Ruston, that everything fell into place and the way was made open for me to go. I miss Elder Ruston very much. How wonderful it was that before his time to go, two young elders were raised up in this place. My mind goes to the Pharaphrase, "And thus revolving years brought round, that season due, that happy time, which all His wishes crowned."

Sister Ruston, at last report, was better than she had been for some time. She is in the Bobier Nursing Home in Dutton. Her son, Dr. Frank Ruston's wife is a first cousin of mine, and they keep me informed. I get to see her but not as often as I would like as I haven't been well off and on since last September. I have so many colds, and at my age I do not come back like I used to.

You spoke of your hope being small. I too feel the same way about mine, yet hope is the "anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." As you say, salvation is all of grace. Elder Ruston used to quote, "I have done nothing to merit esteem or cause my creator delight." Isn't it true!

I must close, and may this find you well. I have been a member here over 30 years, and feel to say it has been the best part of my journey through the wilderness of this world, and too, I like to think of all the wonderful people I have met through these years.

Deacon Duncan McColl is in Victoria Hospital, London, Ontario, and not very

well.

Your brother in a precious hope
Eldon Gilbert

THE HOUSE NOT MADE WITH HANDS

Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120

Signs of the Times:

I was awakened around 3 a.m. this morning with this song on my mind:

"There is a house not made with hands,
Eternal and on high,
And here my spirit waiting stands,
Till God shall bid it fly."

My mind was carried back to Long Branch Church, and as this song was sung at the closing of the Saturday meeting, I believe many hearts were tuned to this lovely hymn. It was one of the most sacred times I ever witnessed, and the singing was beyond describing.

Have you thought lately on this house not made with hands? it is beyond description. "'Tis He by his almighty grace, that forms thee fit for heaven." No man or woman on this earth can form a person fit for heaven. If we could do this, I would start on myself immediately. It is God that does this wonderful work, and it is all by grace. We walk by faith and not by sight who live upon His word. So as our minds are placed upon this house not made with hands, we see this building started below in a poor sinner's heart, and finally fitted for that home on high.

No sinner has ever been sent back empty that has come pleading for mercy. What a wonderful building this is! no one can describe it. Unless we are born again we cannot see this kingdom or this building not made with hands. I cannot describe what I saw at this meeting, but it is written in my heart by God's finger, and no person can erase it, and I would not take all the world for what I saw. This is the food that I love.

A helpless sinner,
Mrs. Pauline Spencer

HOPEWELL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST MEETING HOUSE AND CEMETERY PROTECTED BY TRUST FUND

Motivated by a real concern of the last members and trustees to preserve the Old School Baptist Meeting House and Cemetery in the center of Hopewell, a TRUST has been formed for its preservation.

Founded in 1715 the Church received its charter from King George Third of England. Two centuries and a half later with only one active member left, the "Old School Baptist Church Historical Trust" is being put into effect to preserve both the Meeting House and Cemetery.

The graves in this very old cemetery, enclosed by its wrought iron fence along the main street, show weather-worn stones of Revolutionary war soldiers, of first families who settled in Hopewell, and the monument of John Hart, a Signer of the Declaration of Independence.

Two of the original members of the Trustee Board, now deceased, were Charles E. Hellings and Lester S. Van Dyke, who with the other Trustees devoted much time and thought to the preservation of this historic landmark in Hopewell, when they could foresee a time coming when there would not be any church members.

Trustees now on the Board are:—James R. Arrington, Samuel K. Hunt, J. Russell Riley, David L. Smith, Ruth A. Blackwell, and Mary L. Hellings, the last active Church Member to see the carefully formulated Trust, set up by Mr. Smith, now being put into effect.

Mary L. Hellings

ELECTION

The carnal mind rejects and despises the doctrine of election. It is natural to say that it would be unjust for God not to give everybody an equal chance to be saved. "It would be discrimination!" "God is no respecter of persons." (Acts 10:34) The saying is that it would not

be fair not to give everybody the opportunity to make the decision to either accept or reject Jesus Christ as his personal Savior. The Scripture is quoted that God is no respecter of persons, and actually means that God has a people in every kindred, nation, and tongue. God has a people among both Jews and Gentiles.

As the Lord blesses us, let us first consider the thinking of carnal man. Just who is man to attempt to charge God with injustice? "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" (Romans 9:20-21)

Who is man to attempt to bring God down to the level of weak, puny man? Man thinks as a man, and understands as a man. God made man to be the highest form of creature upon this earth. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and *subdue it*: and *have dominion over* the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over *every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*" (Gen. 1:27-28) Let us not forget the fact that God is the creator, and we are the creature. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." (Col. 1:16-17) God makes us and shapes us in the way that is well pleasing to him. "Then I went down to the potter's house, and behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, O House of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord, Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel." (Jer. 18:3-6)

The wisdom of God established this world. God is all wise. God has known all things from the beginning. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." (Acts 15:18)

God declared the end from the beginning. (Isaiah 46:10) Therefore God has a purpose in all things. He does not need to learn anything because he has seen all things from the beginning. "There is no new thing under the sun." (Eccl. 1:9)

"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things." (I Cor. 13:-11) On this earth we pass through the stage of childhood into adulthood. Our thinking has been as a child and then as an adult. But that is as far as man goes upon this earth. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." (Romans 8:7)

Man goes to school to learn earthly subjects. One increases his natural wisdom by going to school. But there is not an institution where one can get Spiritual wisdom. This wisdom comes from God. "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is *made unto us wisdom,* and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." (I Cor. 1:30) "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (I Cor. 2:9-10) Jesus said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." (Matt. 11:25)

Without the Spirit of God, the knowledge of Spiritual things that man has

is just outward. "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." (2 Peter 2:20-22) "And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for *with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.*" (Ezekiel 33:31) "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." (Jer. 13:23) The above Scriptures prove that man by all of his efforts, work, learning, research, etc. just *cannot change his nature.*

Through all of the external learning, man may have a good head knowledge, but he still thinks and understands as a man, and cannot think as God does. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:8-9) Therefore it is but natural for one to bring God down to the level of man in his thinking. There is no searching of the understanding of God. (see Isaiah 40:-28)

As the Lord blesses us, let us consider the nature of man: The nature of man is to run after evil. "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Psalms 14:2-3) "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Rom. 3:10-12)

It is natural for man to make clean the outward part and appear righteous unto man, and hide his wickedness. This shows the carnal nature of man. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleaness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto man, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." (Matt. 23:-27-28)

The nature of man is to do evil. (Jer. 13:23) There must be something done for him to cause him to do good in the sight of God. Since man cannot change himself, then God does this work by his Spirit. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were *by nature* the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. (by grace ye are saved)." (Eph. 2:1-5) Notice the expression, "by nature". By nature there is no difference between the sheep and the goats,—the children of God and the children of wrath.

"I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou are the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented—" (Jer. 31:-

18-19) This Scripture shows that God must turn one before he can repent. Repentance is a gift from God. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." (Acts 5:31) (see James 1:17 for proof that every good gift and every perfect gift comes from God.)

Let us come to this point: Since the nature of man is to reject God, to choose evil rather than good, our case is hopeless unless a higher power takes hold of us. If it were not for the mercy of God, our end would be everlasting destruction from the presence of God. But God through his grace and mercy, saw fit to choose his people and let the others perish in their sins. The love of God just passed them by. Why? It is not for us to question. That is God's business. We are people and cannot understand the ways of God, and we do not have the wisdom to understand God. "(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth.) It was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." (Rom. 9:11-15)

God chose those He loved out of mankind to make up the bride of Christ. Jesus said, "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain . . . " (John 15:16)

In closing, we wish to thank Almighty God for blessing us to see the doctrine of election so plainly. I came from another denomination and then believed the matter was left to man to either accept or reject God. But now the doctrine of election is my meat and drink. I do believe it is the doctrine of God that comes down from heaven and is revealed to his people. "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself." (Eph. 1:9) "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." (Deut. 32:2)

Do you desire evidence that you are included in that blessed number that God has chosen? The children of God have the desire to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. Do you desire to do that which is right in the sight of God? " . . . for to will is present with me . . . " (Rom. 7:18) Paul is saying that he had the desire in his heart to do that which was acceptable in the sight of God. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." (Psalms 37:23-24) If you have the desire in your heart to do that which is good then it is sweet evidence that God has placed that desire in you.

The wicked have pleasure in unrighteousness. (see 2 Thess. 2:12) They do not have the desire to do that which is acceptable in the sight of God. Therefore they do not mourn over their sins, because they do not have the tender heart that the children of God have.

The children of God are an afflicted people. The wicked do not know anything about the troubles of the children of God. (see Psalm 73:3-5) " . . . I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." (Isaiah 48:10) This shows the travels of the children of God. " . . . In the world ye shall have tribulation . . . " (John 16:33) "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3:12)

Dear reader, have you traveled this path?

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Fredrick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

ISAIAH 40:1-2

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her Sins."

I would like to write a little to the house hold of faith, as I feel to see it from the scripture as stated above, and it is my humble prayer that the God of all grace and mercy will direct my mind to do so, for I hope to well understand that no one has ever written anything to the comfort of God's little children only as God has directed their mind, for all comfort comes from our Heavenly Father. I do not believe there has ever been a gospel sermon preached, that has not been preached for someone, but we believe also that the one to whom it is preached has been given a hearing ear or it would mean nothing, for there is a natural ear, and a spiritual ear. We read in the Bible where the Apostle Paul wrote, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him-: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1st Corinthians 2:14)

We read in the first chapter of Hebrews that our fathers of old were spoken to by the prophets, and we also read in the second epistle general of Peter Chapter 1 verse 21, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Now may we, if God willing, think for a little while about the first verse of the scripture above where it reads, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." It is well to notice the words used when we read the Bible, for here we find the words *my people,* which set forth a possession. Yes, God's chosen people were his before the world was: chosen in Christ, he (Christ) being the chief conner stone, and also foundation of that building not made with hands. Man has no part, as many in this world believe, in the building of the Church of the living God. We are just poor unworthy creatures, wholly dependent upon the grace and mercy of our Eternal God.

Now may we, if God willing, go on with what the prophet said in the second verse. "Speak ye comfortable to Jerusalem." The Jerusalem spoken of here, as I understand, is the same as was spoken of by John on the Isle of Patmos, when he said, "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." (Revelation 21:1) The word her in this scripture denotes the bride of the Lamb, the chosen ones of his mercy, and again not by any thing that we have ever, or ever will do. I have felt for a long time that it is a great blessing from above that we have been given to see the depravity of our nature, and to well understand that only by the grace of God will any one ever reach the heavenly portals of bliss that await God's chosen people. Believing that God's work was a finished work, in the sense of his (God's) decreed plan before the word was, for all things that have ever taken place or will ever take place.

Yes, her warfare is accomplished, and her iniquity is pardoned. Now all this took place before the world was made, but the salvation of the saints of God was not finished until Jesus, the only begotten son of God, came in this world, and suffered, bled and died for the sins of his chosen ones. We read in St. John chapter 19, verse 30, "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." We read in Hebrews chapter 10, verse 14 "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." This means, to my mind, that not one of those whose names are written on the Lamb's book of life will ever be lost. I hope that I am one of them. It seems to me that the prophet Isaiah set forth the thought that none of them would be lost when he wrote the words, as found in Isaiah chaper 33,

verse 20, "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken." Now dear ones of like faith, do we not hope that we are one of the stakes spoken of? Yes dear ones, the scripture reads that she (the bride of the Lamb) hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

We believe that Jesus bore in his body the sins of all his chosen ones. What a great blessing when we are blessed with a mind to behold just a little now and then of the great love Jesus had for his elect, as Peter said, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God." Now one may be able to explain spiritual things by using natural things but they do not mix.

If it be God's will, may we think for a moment about someone that has committed a crime and been put in prison, and later on pardoned of the crime. He is still guilty, and that guilt will stay with him. Now may we think of ourselves, how guilty we are of many things that we have done, and the desire of the flesh. Even though perhaps we have never done many things that our natural minds have desired, I feel we are just as guilty in the sight of God as if we had done the things that our minds desired. Now when our blessed Lord came in this world and bled and died for the sins of his chosen ones, he bore in his body all the sins of his chosen ones, he freed them of every thing and therefore they received double for all their sins. Do we not as we journey here in this wilderness of woe hope that the blood that Jesus shed here for his elect, was shed for us that we may be at rest when we leave this world.

The poet wrote."

Then why, soul, complain and fear
The crown of glory see!
The more I toil and suffer here, ..
The sweeter rest will be.

Arthur R. Warren
Rt. 1, Box 36
Berlin, Md. 21811

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union will be held, the Lord willing, at Old Beulah Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in June, 1974.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 744,
Bennettsville, S.C.

NOTICE OF MEETINGS IN JUNE

The Maine Old School Baptist Churches will also, the Lord willing, hold meetings the 4th weekend in June, (Saturday and Sunday) 1974, at the home of James and Ruth Sevon, daughter of Sister Ruth Clark of the Whitefield Old School Baptist Church.

The Savon home is in Jefferson, Maine, Route 213 on the Damariscotta Lake Road. Route 213 branches off from Route 215, which is taken at a junction in Newcastle Village. Follow Business Route 1 leading from Route 1 into Newcastle Village.

Elder Curtis Rains is expected to attend this meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all who may be able to attend.

If more instructions are needed, write Mrs. Ruth Clark, Box 245, Newcastle, Maine. 04553

Mrs. Ruth Clark

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene its one hundred thirty-third session at the Danville Church, the second Sunday and Friday and Saturday before July 12, 13 and 14th.

From all directions visitors should follow Highway 29 to the intersection with Highways 41 in Danville, Virginia, and travel about one and one-half miles of No. 41 to directional signs to the church, which is located on State Road 1515.

We welcome all lovers of the doctrine as set forth by the Primitive or Old School Baptists.

Burnell B. Williams, Assn. Clerk

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(to April 1, 1974)

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Danville, Va. June, 1974

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Esther P. Ruston, Can.	25.00
F. G. Ruston, Can.	8.00
Mr. and Mrs. Harry Ward, Md.	6.00
John Pace, Sr.	1.00
Corrone Bryant, Va.	3.00
Mary Herdon, Ark.	6.00
W. E. Clayton, N.C.	1.00
Bust Knox, Wash.	3.00
Mrs. Annah Lowe, Md.	1.00
Mrs. Flora Berry, N.C.	3.00
Mrs. Dixie Davis, Va.	13.00
J. S. Campbell, Tenn.	1.00
Mrs. Patricia Barron, N.C.	2.00
Miss F. V. Fertney, Va.	6.00
Alice Johnson	3.00
L. D. McCumbers, W. Va.	1.00
Mrs. Myrtle Black, Nebr.	3.00
Mrs. C. W. Gilies, Va.	7.00

EDITORIAL

When Jude wrote to those that are sanctified by God the Father and preserved in Christ Jesus, and called, desiring that mercy, peace and love be multiplied unto them, he was well aware that there was much being advocated by men as the doctrine of God our Saviour, which was in fact only "turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

When any deny in whole or in part the doctrine of God and His Son Jesus Christ, they are denying both God and His Son.

Jude and all other writers of the New Testament were given to know the truth, and were very much concerned that only those things taught by Jesus, and referred to by Paul to Titus as the "doctrine of God our Saviour," should be contended for in the churches.

Jude therefore wrote, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." "Earnestly contending for the faith once delivered," has a deep and abiding significance.

How beautiful is the expression "the common salvation" to all those who have been brought into the love and fellowship of the Lord's people, when they find in visiting churches of the same faith and order, that the Spirit has taught each one of them that salvation

is of the Lord, and they can talk freely of their reason of a hope, and say "Amen" to the conversation and preaching they hear.

Jude found it necessary, saying that it was needful to exhort the brethren that they contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. He meant: contend only for that faith. Since the same things that caused Jude to write the brethren, still exists in the world, it is necessary for those who know the truth to still contend earnestly for the faith once delivered.

Jesus was the Rock on which the church was built, and He taught the doctrine in its completeness. And he gave unto his disciples the keys of the kingdom of heaven and they knew the Truth, so that when the churches were gathered together they were founded on what Jesus taught. Anything not according to the teaching of Jesus was "bound", that is, not the doctrine of the church, and only things in accord with the doctrine of Jesus were "loosed", that is, the doctrine of the church.

So often there were men who "crept in unawares" (ordained unto this condemnation,) ungodly men who taught for doctrine the commandments of men, turning, as Jude wrote, "the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

It was of these "spirits" that John wrote, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God, for many false prophets are gone out into the world." (1 John 4:1)

Paul wrote to the Galatians of these same spirits, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another, but there be some that trouble you and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." etc. (Galatians 1:6-8)

Peter in his second epistle wrote, "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through coveteousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not." (Peter also wrote many other things in this second chapter concerning these false prophets.)

Paul wrote to Timothy, " . . . but shun profane and vain babblings, for it will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of which is Hymeneus and Philetus: who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his, And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." (2 Timothy 2:16-19)

And to Titus Paul wrote, "But speak thou the things that become sound doctrine," etc. And to Timothy. "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." To Timothy again, "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God. *the pillar and ground of the truth.*" (1 Timothy 14, 15)

It is evident therefore, since the church is the pillar and ground of the truth, that the doctrine of the "apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord," is the only doctrine or teaching that is proper in the church of our Lord and Saviour. And we are assured by the Apostle in 1 Corinthians 3:10, 11, that,

"according to the grace of God which is given me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

From these, and many more references, it is seen that the Apostles had only one thing to preach, which was Jesus Christ and Him crucified and all that Jesus taught them, confirming them in the Spirit.

We are convinced that *every gospel preacher* is made mindful of these things, and are concerned that they preach no other doctrine. Paul wrote to Timothy (2 Timothy 2:6) that the husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits. How true this is: he must first know the truth before he can contend for it. Again, how often Paul's admonition is also a part of their experience: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

But as there were those in the days of the Apostles who brought in "damnable heresies", and taught for doctrine the commandments of men, so has it been from their day until ours. It was because of these things that Jude admonished the brethren to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." The exhortation is just as needful today.

We are not so much concerned as to what men believe and trust in personally, but when the name of Jesus is given as the authority for much contrary doctrine, then we are concerned. And when we remember that the church is the pillar and ground of the truth, then we would make it known that there is often a great difference between some things advocated as the gospel, and the things which the Scriptures teach, and the church is established upon.

We know that to the natural way of thinking, there are many things contrary to the gospel which seem plausible and right, but those whom God has quickened and brought out of darkness into His marvelous light, know what it was to be enmity against God and not subject to His laws, neither indeed could they be. But, when one is born of the water and the Spirit and has entered into the Kingdom of God, all enmity is taken away, and the mind of Christ is given. Then there is rejoicing in all things which God has revealed of His way of dealing in mercy with those that He loved from the foundation of the world, and provided himself the only way His justice could be satisfied, and His people justified.

These are all-important things which God has provided in the experience of his people. They know that they could not quicken themselves when dead in trespasses and sins, nor take away the enmity of their carnality against the laws of God. But how they love their God who has done so much for them! All their hope rests upon Him and his mercy. These all know the truth, and the truth has made them free, and strangers to the household of faith they will not follow.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

LUKE 21:24; ROMANS 11:25

Although deeply conscious of our inability to give a full and satisfactory solution of the subject proposed, we will not withhold from our readers such views as we have. The passages proposed read thus, "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."

The part of the subject more particu-

larly to be considered is, "the fullness of the Gentiles," &c. We presume that the two passages relate to the same things. The first is in the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and was spoken in connection with solemn predictions of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jews. The other is spoken by Paul in connection with his admonition to the Gentile church, in which he uses the figure of the true olive tree, as representing Abraham and his seed, and the wild olive as representing Gentiles. The natural branches, which represent the natural or fleshly children of Abraham, were broken off, and Gentiles of the wild olive are grafted into the true olive tree. In Luke 21:24, our Lord predicted this breaking off of the natural branches, and intimates also the purpose of God in regard to the gathering in of the Gentiles. And in the same connection, verse 32, told them that that generation should not pass away until these things should be fulfilled. That is, as we understand, some that were then living of that generation should live to witness the truth of his prediction, the destruction of the temple, and of Jerusalem, and the scattering of the Jews, and also the Son of man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory; and in verse 31, "When ye shall see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is at hand."

All these signs, or many of them, had been developed when Paul wrote his epistle to the Romans. On the day of Pentecost, Christ appeared in a cloud, with power and great glory; and immediately thereafter the gospel was preached unto the Gentiles, and Paul was himself especially commissioned to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and the church at Rome was among those Gentiles who should be taken from the wild olive, and grafted into the true olive. Hence Paul was a faithful witness of the fulfillment of the Savior's words.

As the natural branches of the true olive, or natural descendants of Abraham according to the flesh, the carnal Jews had been hitherto recognized under the old covenant dispensation, and were partakers of all the privileges of the family tree, which distinguished them nationally and ceremonially from the Gentiles, until the middle wall of partition was thrown down, their temple-worship and daily sacrifices abolished, and they, as a nation, scattered to the four winds of heaven, and intermingled with the Gentile nations of the earth. Then they were broken off from the true olive, and the Gentile converts to the christian faith were brought in. From that time, "he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."—Rom. 2:28, 29. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. 3:29.

From what we have presented, it will be seen that Abraham, whom God has made the father of the faithful, in the figure, is brought to view by Paul, as the good olive tree, and the natural, fleshly children of Abraham are the natural branches of that tree, which were broken off. This is according to Rom. 9:6-8, "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel which are of Israel: neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Thus we see that the children of the flesh, as natural branches of Abraham, are broken off, and the children of the promise are grafted in from among the Gentiles. As in the allegory, Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond maid, and the other by a free woman. He that was of the bond woman was born after the flesh, perfectly according to nature. But he that was born of the free woman, was by the special promise of God, and every way con-

trary to nature. But the son which was born after the flesh and according to the common laws of nature, was cast out, or broken off, because he could not be heir with the child of promise. Now, says Paul, the children of the promise are counted for the seed; consequently, they which are the children of the flesh, are not the children of God. The same apostle says to the Gentile saints in the churches of Galatia, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." "So then brethren, we are not children of the bond woman, but of the free."—Gal. 4:28-31.

We will now pass to consider that part of our subject named in Luke, "Until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled;" and in Romans, "Until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in."

As the first of these expressions relates to times, and the other to seed, we will consider them separately, and in their order. We have shown that God had a people among the Gentiles which were to be brought in; which must come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God, with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the natural children cast out; so for every purpose of God there is an appointed time for its fulfillment. When Isaac, the promised seed and heir of Abraham, was to supersede Ishmael in Abraham's family, this is the word of promise: "At this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son."—Rom. 9:9. That promise could not be fulfilled before its time. The impatience of Sarah and Abraham, no more than their efforts, could hasten the fulfillment of the promise. Neither could the time of the bringing in of the Gentiles be anticipated. The law and the prophets must continue until John; and the sceptre must remain with Judah, and the lawgiver between his feet, until Shiloh came. But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, &c. This gathering of the Gentiles must be preceded by the coming of Christ; for it was unto him the gathering of the people should be. He should gather them with his arm, and carry them in his bosom. He should say unto "the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory."

When Christ sent out the seventy, the time for bringing in the Gentiles was at hand, but was not yet fully come; for the natural branches were not yet broken off; the middle wall of partition was not yet thrown down; the handwriting of ordinances were not yet blotted out; the enmity, even the law of commandments, which were against the Gentiles, was not yet nailed to his cross; therefore, the seventy were forbidden to go in the way of the Gentiles, but to go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And when the commission was given to the apostles to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, they were instructed to tarry in Jerusalem until they were indued with power from on high. But when the day of Pentecost was fully come, that power for which they had been commanded to wait, came down from heaven upon them like a mighty rushing wind; and immediately they were heard in all the languages common on earth, preaching the gospel to every creature; and they of the nations of the earth did testify that they heard, in their mother tongue in which they were born, the wonderful works of God. Here commenced the times of the Gentiles; and these times must continue until all the children of promise among the Gentiles shall be gathered into the kingdom of God. "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he had purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to

the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." —Eph. 1:9-11. The times then of the Gentiles to be fulfilled, extends to the end of the world, and to the accomplishment of his purpose and grace in their complete ingathering into the kingdom of our Lord.

The fullness in the other text has reference to the people—the children of God which are ordained unto salvation among the Gentiles. The children of promise of all nations and kindreds on the earth. "For [said Peter] the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off; even as many as the Lord our God shall call." This fullness is past the power of human computation; a company which no man can number, redeemed out of every tribe and kindred under heaven, and sealed with the seal of God. The fullness of them cannot be diminished—they must all be brought in; and the text implies that they shall all be gathered, for if but one should be left out, the fullness would not be complete. It is the will of the Father, that of all that he has given to Christ he shall lose nothing. And it is the will of Christ, that all that the Father has given him shall be with him where he is, that they may behold his glory. No less than the fullness will satisfy the Father or the Son; the fullness of him that filleth all in all; the fullness of his body, over which he presides in all things, as their Head. The fullness of his body, of course, includes all the spiritual seed, both Jews and Gentiles. That portion of them which are called from the Gentiles, were referred to by our Lord when he said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: [the Jewish fold,] them also I must bring, . . . and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd."

The apostle shows that in this display of the sovereign goodness of God, boasting is altogether excluded. Of this he would not have the Gentile converts ignorant: that blindness, in part, has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in, lest we should be wise in our own conceits. The blindness of the Jews led them to reject the Messiah, and they could not enter into the gospel rest because of unbelief; for as none but those who are born of God can possess that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit and the gift of God, so neither can any enter into his rest without that faith. All unbelievers are in a state of blindness, and are cut off; for without faith it is impossible to please God. This blindness was manifested by the Jews when Paul addressed them in these words: "Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation unto the ends of the earth."—Acts 13:40, 41, 46, 47. And again, "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Elias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it."—Acts 28:25-28.

Thus we see that it was the purpose of God to withhold the light of the truth from the Jews, and execute on them the judgments long foretold, and in the meantime to send the gospel to the Gentiles. Therefore the Gentiles have not whereof to boast; but they have

great cause to be humble. We do not stand by our wisdom, or on the ground of any creature excellency in which we excel the Jews. Only so far as we are subjects of God's distinguishing grace are we in possession of the faith of God's elect, and grafted in the true olive; and such of the Jews as continue not in unbelief shall also be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. And all his chosen and redeemed people, both Jews and Gentiles, shall be finally brought in; and so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, "There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

Some have entertained the sentiment that after the Gentiles have been called by grace, and brought into the kingdom of Christ, the Jews are to be restored to their nationality, rebuild Jerusalem, re-establish the temple service, &c.; but we shall not attempt in this article to discuss the subject. We will only say, that we are unable to find anything in the Scriptures to sustain that option. As the old covenant dispensation has passed away and is forever abolished, all the Jews who are brought in must be brought in in the same way, under the same covenant, and with the same circumcision as the Gentiles. The gospel and not the law, is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; unto the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.

Middletown, N.Y., November 1. 1856.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe.)

OBITUARIES

ROBERT LEE ROBERSON

The hearts of many and especially Flat Swamp Church were saddened February 17, 1974 by the passing of Brother Robert Lee Roberson, better known as Brother Lee.

As a special request of his niece and a move by Flat Swamp Church, I will attempt to write this obituary.

Brother Lee was born in Stokes, Pitt County, N. C., December 22, 1890, the son of Jim and Amanda Ross Roberson, making his stay on earth 83 years, one month and twenty-six days. He was married to Susie Everett Andrews on December 24, 1957, and she preceded him in death on November 5, 1972. He is survived by one half-brother, Linwood Roberson of Rocky Mount, N.C., and four half sisters, Mrs. Tesa Allen of Greenville, N.C., and Mrs. Lela Everett, Mrs. Callie James and Mrs. Fannie Barnhill, all of Stokes, two neices and three nephews.

Brother Lee united with Flat Swamp Church first Sunday in June, 1972 along with his wife. They were baptised by their pastor Sunday afternoon in Rogers Pond. He was very attentive to his church and was always willing to share what he had with his church and his pastor. He spent the last sixteen months of his life in Edgecomb Acres Nursing Home, but through the love of Brother Lee Gooch and his wife and members of Flat Swamp, he was blessed to attend his church most of the meetings.

I was blessed to visit Brother Lee very often and though he was in declining health, he never complained of his condition and always expressed his appreciation for what everyone did for him. He often spoke of how much he had to be thankful for and what a blessing the home was for he had a comfortable place to stay and someone to wait on him.

His funeral was held in Biggs Funeral Home on Tuesday, February 19, by his pastor, Elder J. T. Prescott. His body was laid to rest in Robersonville Cemetery.

We of Flat Swamp Church extend to the family our deepest sympathy. We too mourn his passing, but may we be made submissive to God's will to have Brother Lee sleep that restful sleep until the morning of the resurrection.

Done by order of Flat Swamp Church in conference, Saturday before first Sunday in March, 1973.

Elder J. T. Prescott, Moderator
Hassell Allen, Clerk
Hassell Allen, Committee

BROTHER JOHN ERNEST MADDOCK

Brother John Ernest Maddock, age 91, died at St. Mary's Hospital, London, Ontario on Thursday, May 3, 1973. He had resided at Marian Villa Convalescent Home for some years.

Brother Maddock, the son of the late John and Mary Maddock, was born in Brooke Township, Ontario in February 1882. He was the husband of the late Marie Maddock. He is survived by one brother Russell of Alberta in Western Canada and several nieces and nephews in Alberta and here in Ontario.

He joined the Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada in the late 1940's at Poplar Hill. He was baptised by Elder George Ruston. Brother

Maddock returned to Alberta after his baptism and resided there until 1964 when he returned to Ontario.

Brother Maddock was a quiet, humble man with a deep abiding faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I believe he was much comforted by John's words in I John 3 vs 14, "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death."

Brother Maddock's funeral was conducted at the Harper Funeral Home in Watford, Ontario on May 5, 1973. Interment was in Alvinston Cemetery.

Resolved that a copy be sent to the *Signs* for publication and a copy be entered in our church records.

Pastors—Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada.

(Elder) J. S. McColl
(Elder) D. A. McColl

SISTER CATHERINE MAY JOHNSTON

Sister Catherine (Katie) May Johnston, age 90, died at St. Mary's Hospital, London, Ontario on May 17, 1973.

Sister Johnston was born at Highgate, Ontario in 1882. She was the daughter of the late Richard and Isabelle Johnston and stepdaughter of Nancy Johnston.

Sister Katie lived all of her life in the area of Ontario where the Covenanted Baptist Church meeting houses are located. She joined the Church many years ago and was a humble, faithful, and respected member until her death. Sister Katie was blessed with two close friends, Miss Jean Campbell and Mrs. Donelda Smith who were both very kind to her, in her last years, in looking after her business affairs and personal needs.

Sister Katie was given to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. She often used to say as in Timothy 2, vs 10, "Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity". Sister Katie loved the brethren dearly and was always among them when she was able. Sister Katie was deeply concerned about the cause of truth in our country and left a bequest for the upkeep of the church properties.

Funeral services were conducted for Sister Katie at the Needham Memorial Chapel in London on May 19, 1973 by Elders Stewart and Alex McColl. Interment was in Mount Pleasant Cemetery.

Resolved that a copy be sent to the *Signs* for publication and a copy be entered in our church records.

Pastors—Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada.

(Elder) J. S. McColl
(Elder) D. A. McColl

OBITUARY OF GLADYS H. DALTON

With much sadness and grief in my heart, the Dear Lord willing, I will endeavor to write a few words in memory of one whom I loved most dearly, not only me, but I believe she was loved by all who knew her.

My beloved mother and your sister and friend was born in Pittsylvania County on November 15, 1912, a daughter of the late Arthur and Molly Johnson Hines. She was married to H. Russell Dalton on December 27, 1929, and to this union four daughters were born: Mrs. Lavona Simpson, Mrs. Patsy Barker, Mrs. Gail Chism and the writer, Mrs. Phyllis Goad, who all survive her. She also leaves one brother, Emmett Hines; three sisters, Mrs. Madeline Huffman, Mrs. Thelma McBride, and Mrs. Iva Shelton; also, six grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

When the Dear Lord revealed himself to my dear mother and she was so burdened and felt she had to talk with someone, she came to visit me, and we were sitting alone under the tree in our yard and she told me she wanted to go home to her friends and tell them what great things the Lord had done for her, and in my poor way I replied to her, "If anyone is good enough I think you are." I didn't understand then as I hope I do now, but even then I thought she was such a good woman. That happened on Friday and she offered to the church at a baptizing on Sunday, June 22, 1958, and was received into the sweet fellowship of Weatherford Church and was baptized the same day by her beloved pastor, Elder O. K. Tench. She was always faithful to attend her meetings and loved the church and the Songs of Zion. My mother made it her job to help clean the church before every meeting and was always interested in the welfare of Old Weatherford. She always prepared meals to help serve the visitors.

She was a good wife, mother, and neighbor and she always put other people ahead of herself. She cared for many sick people and people who were less fortunate than she, and acted as a mother to several children who lost their parents.

When she was stricken with an incurable disease, she told her family she was no better to have cancer than anyone else, and she felt it was all in the hands of the Lord. She suffered long but bore her afflictions with patience and always enjoyed visits from the brethren and friends and her dear Pastor.

I believe Mama was made reconciled to her illness and death because she told us on sev-

eral occasions, if the Lord saw fit to take her she was ready to go, but said she knew she could not die before her appointed time. She felt her departure at hand and I feel she was, "ready to be offered and has fought a good fight and has finished her course and has kept the faith and henceforth there is laid up for her a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give her at that day, not to her only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." She was taken from this world of sin and sorrow on December 8, 1973.

Her funeral was held on December 10, 1973 at 2:00 p.m. at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by her dear Pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and her body was laid to rest beneath an array of beautiful flowers in the Dalton Family Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The sweet memory of her remains alive as she was always smiling and singing the Songs of Zion when she was busy about the chores around the house, garden, and while working with her flowers which she loved so much. I feel we have been highly favored of God to have been blessed with a wonderful mother, wife, sister, and friend. She is greatly missed, most of all by her dear companion and her family, but may we all that mourn our loss be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father who doeth all things well and never makes a mistake, for it is he that giveth and he that taketh away.

Written by her daughter who misses her so much.

Phyllis Goad

MEMORIAL TO ELDER
WILLIAM T. BROWN

In sadness we attempt to comply with request that we write a brief summary of the life and labours of one that we loved, Elder William T. Brown. He was born in Onslow County, N.C. August 5, 1885 and called from this life at Onslow Memorial Hospital January 5, 1973. He was married to Lula Caroline Allen in 1904 and to this union were born two daughters, Sister Pearl Edna Sandlin, Verona, N.C., Mrs. Mollie Rebecca Batts, Greenville, N.C.; one son, Carl Stuart Brown, Pollocksville, N.C.

The writer knew Elder Brown for many years. He together with his companion visited in the home of our parents long before he began preaching. Our information is that he received a hope in Christ and united with the Church at Old Sparta in the early thirties. He was ordained to the full work of the ministry several years later. He resided in Edgecomb County when he united with the Church but later moved his membership by letter to the New Bay Church at Verona, N.C. after moving to Onslow County. New Bay Church soon called Elder Brown as Pastor and he served this Church until his departure from this life.

Elder Brown experienced many hardships during his sojourn here. His mother was taken when he was a small child. His early life was, as he put it, a rough one. In later years while growing up and in his manhood he was a fisherman by trade, and was forced to face many storms of the sea. On one occasion while with two others clamming in Bogue Sound, a bolt of lightning struck and killed one of his friends at his side. In telling his experience he would never fail to mention that he was made to know that had it not been for the grace and providence of God he would not have survived.

In conversation with this brother one would soon detect that he was typical of many of his vocation in years past, in that he was plain spoken and strong in his convictions, and was not easily swayed or turned from what he felt to be right. In this man, when blessed by the spirit, it was wonderful to observe the contrast between the natural and the spiritual when the Lord would come to him in power, and you would see his countenance light up, and then he was as bold as a lion and as meek as a lamb. We cannot think of a more fitting memorial than when we say, we believe he was called by divine grace and ordained to preach the gospel. He was a firm believer in the sovereignty and predestination of God in all things.

One we all loved has been called from us but we cannot wish him back, but would say, Sleep on brother and take your rest, we hope to meet you where assocations never break up and sabbath never ends.

His funeral was conducted by Elders D. B. Stokes and J. T. Prescott at New Bay Church among his brethren and friends.

Written by Elder J. J. Rhue by order of The Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association while in conference October 12, 1973. It was further ordered that copies of this notice be placed in the association minutes, a copy be sent to the family and a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Elder A. P. Mewbern, Moderator
Elder W. W. Stallings, Clerk
Deacon J. Carroll Williams, Asst. Clerk.

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not.

(1 John 3:1)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 142 **DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1974** **NO. 7**

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/74
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

FROM SISTER McGREGOR AT 92

St. Charles, Ky. 42453

Dear Elder Wood:

I want to renew my subscription for another year. It is a great pleasure to me, for I don't get to go to church often. Our building has been torn up by vandals until we could not have preaching this last winter: New Hope, or better known as Lick Creek, in the Old Highland Association. There have been as many as twelve churches in that association, but this is the last one. The building has been rebuilt several times, and has stood there many years, and we do hope to re-build. We are waiting on the good Lord to lead us, and if the church has served its time and has to go down, we know there is a time and purpose in all things.

We hope He will reconcile us and lead us on the rest of our short road we have to travel, to His purpose and glory. Elder Darnell preached sometimes for us after Elder Biggs passed away, but his health is very bad and we don't think he will be able to come any more.

Time is slipping away, it seems faster than when I was young, but that wonderful, great hand is still holding all things: which is a great comfort to believe, (Sister McGregor will be 92 the 5th of June - Editor), and a great love for His people, and the truth which no man knows only as given him. "No man can come unto me ecexpt my Father which sent me, draw him."

Mrs. W. B. McGregor

ANOTHER GOSPEL

Rt. 2, Box 78A,
Strong, Ark.

Dear Editors:

Enclosed you will find check for $7.00 for renewal to the *Signs* for two more years.

I always look forward to its arrival and I love to read the precious and beloved truths that is published therein. I would like to see and read a sermon published from Matthew 24th chapter and 2 Thessalonians, 2nd chapter. It seems to me that many of these scriptures in Matthew 24 that Jesus spoke, and the Apostle Paul wrote about in 2 Thessalonians, are being fulfilled daily, if I am not deceived in what I see, hear and read about. Jesus spoke of the wars and rumors of wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, nations against nations, kingdoms against kingdoms, false christs, false prophets, evil men and seducers waxing worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. We read in 2 Thessalonians, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition."

I believe we are seeing daily more and more of that man of sin and his wickedness, falsehood and lies, "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: even him, whose coming is after the working of

Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness and unrighteousness in them that perish: because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved."

I believe the true gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is being published and preached by the Lord's called and chosen ministers in his spirtual kingdom he set up in the hearts of his children — Christ in you the hope of glory. It is *another gospel* that is being preached that is false — the doctrines and commandments of men.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Mrs. Lula B. Fox

EXTRACTS FROM WRITINGS OF SISTER MARY PARKER

The name of Sister Mary Parker was quite familiar to the readers of the *Signs of the Times* in the later half of the 1800s, and to many more who read "Reminiscences and Letters", a collection of her writings published by Elder Silas H. Durand in 1891, and a previous "Collection of Gems".

For many years she was an invalid. The following is quoted from Elder Durand, describing her condition:

"As I meditated one day upon her condition, her bodily sufferings and her spiritual peace, the favor of the Lord to her in thus displaying the riches of His grace, and the peculiar power of her writings to comfort the afflicted and poor people of God, I wished she might write something now concerning her past life. It seemed to me almost impossible that she should be able to do so, when I remembered that she can neither stand nor lie down, can occupy but one position, and that not a restful one, and that often pain renders here unconscious, or partly so, for hours and even days together."

In June, 1891, Elder Durand wrote Sister Parker as follows: "As I sit here thinking of you and the book we contemplate publishing, a thought occurs to me which I will suggest to you. I wish you to write a little in the form of reminiscences. Begin some day when you are feeling well enough, and trace up your life, outwardly and inwardly, from your earliest remembrance. Do not write long at a time. If any scripture is on your mind with power at any time as you write, mention it: write your feelings about it, then go back again and bring up the story. Tell from your present remembrance the feelings when disease was binding you, and the way in which the Lord has at times brought into your soul, sweet and humble submission under His mighty hand, and tender resignation to His will. You can be engaged upon this as strength will permit for the next two months. Do not spend any time or anxiety in planning the article, or in thinking what it will be. Just write a little every day, when able, if only ten lines. Do not pass over anything that comes back in your memory, because you may have spoken of it in some letter . . . As you trace along the history of the past it is not necessary that all connecting circumstances should be given. When you remember any particularly dark period, place yourself there for a little while, and give expression to the sorrow and dark forebodings; and the same when your heart was resting in sweet content, or filled with songs of praise and thanksgiving."

Elder Durand wrote in reference to the above, "I was truly gratified and not a little surprised at the result of this suggestion, as I am sure the dear friends who read it will be. Seldom have I ever read anything more deeply interesting and touching than these reminiscences. We offer this book with the assurance that it will be of abiding interest and value to the spiritual reader."

We purpose to publish extracts from Sister Parker's writings which show some of her severe trials in nature, and the grace and mercy of the Lord which sustained her in this life for nearly 47 years. She died in June, 1895.

REMINISCENCES OF MARY PARKER

In the year 1848, in the mild month of September, when the air is balmy, and the golden sunlight falls in soft mellow shadows over the great, wide earth, in a pleasant country home, amid the green picturesque hills of Southern Ohio, I was born. I am the youngest of nine children and almost like "one born out of due season," my eldest brother and sister having reached maturity before my birth. The marriage of my sister, who is now a widow, living in Iowa, is the very first of my childish recollections. I was then between three and four years old, and after the marriage rites had been said by the Presbyterian minister, who officiated, my sister took me on her lap and my father bade me sing the hymn beginning: "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord." When I finished I was heartily applauded, especially by the minister, which was very pleasing to my childish vanity. My father, Elder John Parker, was born in Loudoun County, Virginia; my mother in Lambertville, New Jersey. Both united with the Old School Baptist Church at the same time, and both were buried with the Saviour in the watery grave at the same time by Elder Thomas Harper. When my dear father was raised up out of the water, his soul was so filled with the same glory that I think "shone round about Paul," that he began at once to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, and for some time he stood upon the banks of the flowing stream, uttering such ascriptions of praise, telling of the goodness and love of God with such ability as to astonish all who listened to him, and Elder Harper very emphatically declared he knew he had baptized a preacher. That his prophecy came true, my father's whole after-life, which was spent in so ably defending the truth, certainly went to prove. He never at all craved or sought notoriety, therefore his rare gifts and abilities were little known outside his personal, special charges. He was strongly attached and devoted to the four churches of which he had charge, and these churches would, as Paul says, "almost have plucked out their very eyes" for him, so deeply did they love him. I am told that he would often hold a large congregation two hours as if spellbound, when every eye would be wet with tears, and the tears would drop like rain down his own cheeks. Oh, what a noble calling, to be called of the Lord "to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ," to publish peace, to bring the gospel of good tidings to the poor, to say unto them that mourn in Zion, "Thy God reigneth!"

What a strange, a wonderful thing is this human life of ours! The apostle says, "What is life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." But, as the sturdy oak, even though it casts its beautiful leaves, yet has its substance in it, and will again come forth in its beauty in spring-time, so the soul, if the divine substance be in it, will come forth in the spring-time of eternal life in never-fading beauty and fragrance, and shine in resplendent glory, when clothed in the likeness of its Redeemer, in the world of never-ending bliss. Sometimes my poor, maimed life looks so narrow, so purposeless, so useless in every way, that, like Job, I think, "better is the day of my death than the day of my birth." I wonder that I am left here a useless cumberer of the ground. Then I am carried back to my childhood, my infancy, when I was a sickly, delicate babe in my mother's arms, who thought each day the feeble spark of life would go out. All along my strangely afflicted life, the love, the power, the tender care of the dear covenant-keeping God has been round about me, sweetly, securely encircling me like a golden ring that has neither beginning nor ending, and even my poor life seems wonderful, oh, very wonderful! and in it there seems to flow much beauty and sweetness from that boundless, inexhaustible river, the "streams whereof shall make glad the

city of our God."

A very dear brother in Christ knocks gently at my door and desires me to unlock the closed chambers of the buried past; to lay open before the reader the shut book of the happy days of yore. But how greatly I hesitate at the thought of opening the cherished volume in whose sacred pages are so many turned-down leaves, so many pages marked by tears, and the wrung-out anguish of a sorely-tried heart. As I sit here alone in my sick room, amid the silence, the hush and quiet that pervades the house when the dear ones go to their place of worship, when there falls upon the ear the sound of no human voice, when no human foot-fall is heard and no sound save the moaning of the house dog, disturbs the silence, then do my thoughts go back to the past, when my tiny bark of life sailed on a smooth summer sea, with no ripple, or wave or bounding billow to mar or stir its sweet, calm beauty. Wholly buried in thoughts of the golden happy past there comes across memory's green fields the poem:

"I am dreaming of the loved ones
Of the happy days of yore,
Of the joys that I have tasted,
Joys which I shall know no more.

"I have seen the fairest flowers
Blasted by the snows of fate,
Brightest hopes all torn and scattered,
Hearts once glad made desolate."

Oh, the sweet memories that awaken within me, the touching, tender influences that cluster around me as I go back in memory to the old home and the old life! Home! What sweet music is wafted back from the buried past, arousing all the most tender emotions of the soul at the mention of this one cherished word, "Home." It is like running the fingers gently and swiftly over the keys of some instrument of music whose chords send forth soft, delicious strains of melody, which permeate the whole being, touch each secret heart-spring, and vibrate through each hidden recess and chamber of the soul. How oft in memory we go back to our happy childhood, where no dark cloud hung over the smooth surface of our sea of life. But when we have reached maturity, oh, how dark are the clouds! how tempestuous the billows that come over our sunshiny sea! Here we see tears, sorrows, bereavements; a time when footsteps fall softly and all around speak in low whispers, when there is the muffled sound of the closing of coffin-lids, the shutting out of sight of the dearest of all faces; the folding away forever of tired, kind hands. Soon there follows the broken household, the going out from the dear home of our childhood, and all our early, youthful joys are numbered with the past.

The dear home of my childhood was a home of quiet peace. The union of our parents was one of true affection, where heart is joined to heart. The blessed, sanctifying love of God shed the golden glory of its light upon the sacred shrine of their home, and prevented dissentions from coming within its quiet precincts. I think my mother was the most patient woman I ever knew. My father, when speaking of her, often said he was reminded of the words in Proverbs xxxi; II: "The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil." Paul says of the women, "Let them be keepers at home. My father being almost all of the time absent preaching the blessed gospel, our dear mother was truly "a keeper at home," guiding her house, caring for her children and making home the dearest spot on earth for father when he came back weary with travel and hungry for the kindly ministrations and the soothing influences that the dear wife and mother shed about the sacred shrine of home.

Home and mother! What depth of meaning lies in just these two short words. What tender, soothing influences cluster around, and sweet memories and emotions arise at the mention of these words. Like twin sisters they are so closely allied, they so tenderly blend and run together, that we can scarce recall to mind the one without the memory of the other coming up. Certainly there can be no perfect or pleasant home

without a mother's presence, our light and love. And I firmly believe that this is the place where the all-wise Creator meant women to shine; the one great purpose for which she was created. No woman can bring within the sacred walls of home too much good sense, learning or culture. Indeed more intellect and wisdom are needed in guiding a household, in training the children to put their shoulders properly to the great revolving wheel of life, than in any other sphere, for in this lies the real basis of the future welfare of our country. Think not, dear reader, if you are a wife and mother, intellectual, educated, cultured, that you have buried your brilliant talents, but bring them to bear in making your home one that reaches to the highest standard of excellence in training the minds left to your keeping; and not only will your children arise and call you blessed, but the world at large will be the richer because of your having lived. Oh! I know, my dear sisters, that you, upon whose shoulders fall the care, the burdens of home, the grave and sacred responsibilities of wife and mother, often have great struggles and sorrows. Your footsteps often become weary, your hearts heavy, and you almost lose sight of the fact that yours is a most exalted position, and that a halo of beauty rests upon the life of her who is the centre of home—the wife and mother. In all the trials of life you who are a dear wife and mother should lift up your "eyes unto the hills from whence cometh your help." The pitying eye of your Heavenly Father is ever on you. He knows the mother hath sorrows, and He is a gracious burden bearer, who says "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him;" "Those who seek Him early shall find Him," and "None are sent empty away." No one more needs the strength of His dear everlasting arm, none need more to rest under His sheltering wing than the mother of children, the mistress of home. Oh! the blessedness of His love as it sheds its softening, refining influences over godly homes, making them an earthly Eden, where the father and mother and their children sit down and quietly rest as under the shadow of the branches of a wide-spreading tree.

As I pause here for a little time, I am startled to see how far I have drifted from the pages of the past, which I promised to lay open before the reader. Pardon the digression, and we will try to take up the broken thread where we left off.

At the time when my life began to drift along with the current and events of this world, the older members of the family had gone out from the home-roof to take their places in the great battle of life, and to establish homes of their own. My two younger brothers and myself were left in the dear home, under its moral and religious influences. I loved my two brothers almost to idolatry, and they in turn petted and were exceedingly kind to me; the older one especially looked after me through all my childhood and early girlhood with untiring zeal and affection.

When I went skipping over the hills to the district school, this kind brother helped me over the foot-logs, up the steep hills, and was my protector and friend in all my childish troubles. Even at this early stage of my life the disease that now holds me so in thrall would at times shyly show itself, like some dangerous reptile lying in wait in the path of its helpless victim, awaiting a favorable time to seize upon and devour its prey. My flesh would at times bloat, and great sores would appear about my neck and on my person. If I ran rapidly at play, or ascended any upward incline, my heart would beat so wildly respiration would for a time almost cease, and my very tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth. My teachers would often remark that I was so very pale during the afternoon, and the woman who did my mother's washing and heavy work often said she believed I was dropsical. Oh! if I only could have

gone to my parents then and impressed them with the seriousness of my condition, how much suffering I might have escaped; but, alas! I was too young to myself comprehend my condition, and when I thought of it at all, in my childish ignorance, I really supposed all the human family had such symptoms. A few years after this time one of my married brothers had a little girl three years old to take general dropsy, and, after lying one whole year in her cradle, helpless as a great heavy log, suffering untold agony, she quietly passed away during the hot month of August. My father's youngest sister was delicate in health all her life, and soon after she had blossomed into a beautiful woman, married, and in one year died of dropsy. After I became twelve or thirteen years of age the symptoms of disease for a time disappeared, and my future lay before me full of beauty, and glowing with youthful hopes and dreams. Our parents were very hospitable, my father widely and favorably known, and the dear old home was much of the time filled with dear pleasant friends from a distance, or young people from Logan, the nearest town, a thriving county-seat situated on the Hocking River, in the centre of the Hocking Valley, and girt about on either side by beautiful, picturesque hills. My older brother was a lover of, and a favorite in society, and it was his social influence that drew the young people to our pleasant country home. I did not so much enjoy the society of the young and gay as I did that of the sober, middle-aged Christians who came to see my parents and to talk of the goodness of God, and tell of the wonderful Nazarene. Oh! how I did love even then to hear about Jesus, the Jesus that in future years was to become my life, my strength, my hope, my *all.* I think I always believed in the existence of God, and knew that he had all power; but oh! not then, not at that early day, had the hidden spring of the soul been touched, the flood-gates opened and the King in his beauty and glory and holiness come in. I can scarcely remember when, in my childish way, I did not try to pray, but if it was prayer, it was usually that the Lord might spare my father and mother to me, and that I might be an obedient, loving child, not to my Heavenly Parent, but to my natural parents. But, as I in memory go back to those happy days in early youth, I think I can plainly trace the working of the Father's dear hand, can see that there was a drawing of his love, the encircling of his almighty care, and oh! how my heart swells within me with gratitude and love when I see how, as I trust, he snatched me as a brand from the burning. To whom do I owe to-day the deep, great thankfulness that, as I open the pages of my past, none of the midnight darkness is there, no pages all blotted and marred by the blackness of crime? Surely myself, "prone to sin as the sparks are to fly upward," cannot claim any credit; and to none is the praise due save to Him who never slumbers nor sleeps, and whose all-seeing "eye is ever over the righteous, and His ear is open unto their cry."

True, in looking over the past, I see where often and often my wayward feet have gone far astray. There are many things that fill me with self-loathing, great remorse and deep regret; but oh! I am so glad, so thankful to the Lord that the darkness of outbroken sin, the blackness of actual crime, does not appear on the pages of my past.

But if it had followed that crime had been stamped upon my life-pages, and I wore about with me the mark of Cain; if, like King David, I would confess and be sorry for the sin, would not I find an advocate with the Father through the love and intercession of His dear Son? David, the "sweet singer in Israel," fervently prayed not only to be cleansed from the sin of having been a vile seducer, but also humbly begged to be cleansed from murder; for he well knew that the innocent blood of poor Uriah lay upon his soul. Oh! the depth of the love that will reach down to the

very deepest depths of crime and sin, and rescue its victim, removing the filthy garments, clothing them in "linen clean and white," whose spotless purity has been bought at so precious a price as the shedding of the innocent blood of God's only Son; for without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sin.

(Continued next month)

EXPERIENCE

I was born August 28, 1897, and was the oldest of my Mother's five children — all boys. Mother died when I was nine years of age, the baby was one year old. I had very little schooling after mother's death. I was brought up to attend the Missionary Baptist services. The minister farmed for a living, and rode horseback to the services. Most of the congregation were farmers and went to services in wagons, and some on horseback. I never heard of a collection being made for the minister in those days. The women wore dresses extending downward to their shoes, and when they were seated, they would cover their shoes with their long extended dress.

After mother's death I would secretly go out at night and pray: I felt from a very young age that I would have to preach. These feelings would come in my mind occasionally until I was 22 years of age, at which time I was led to try to do so. I was baptized at the age of 12 by the Missionary minister. During World War One I joined the army and served most of my time at Camp Lewis, Washington. When discharged I went to Texas, Taylor County, near Abilene. A heavy weight or burden came upon me which it seemed would crush my very life. I would go out at night on the ranch among the mesquite trees where I was boarding, and prayed earnestly for the burden to be removed. One night while praying the weight immediately was removed, and I felt to be as light as a feather floating in the air. I saw no light nor heard a voice, but was at perfect ease.

After the above a burden came in my heart and mind, that I would have to preach. My mind led me to talk with preacher Riddle of Abilene, a Missionary minister. He made an appointment with the congregation where he served for me to speak, which I did at the time set. I could remember going to the stand, but could not remember a word I said. A brother in the flesh, when I asked, told me that I closed my eyes and talked 15 or 20 minutes. One that was present told a friend, who in turn told me, "That I wasn't a Missionary, but a Primitive Baptist. I replied that I would give him to understand that I was not a "hardshell"; which I wasn't at that time.

Afterwards preacher Riddle advised me to go back to my home church in Alabama, and after the church heard me speak a few times, likely they would make arrangements for me to go to a Seminary for better learning. This I did, and after speaking several times at my home church, they ordained me, and I went to their Seminary. After a very short time at the school, I became very dissatisfied, and would go out at night and beg the Lord to let me leave the school. Realizing I was unlearned, I would ask of the Lord in my prayers, if it were His will, to give me a small group of people out in the country for me to minister unto. This came to pass according to what was in my mind when asking for it, but instead of one I was given two groups. (Many such experiences from the first cause me to believe that it was of the Lord.) I had talked for the two little bands in Tuscaloosa County, and occasionally at my home church for around three years.

I was single and spent all my time possible reading the Scriptures when off my job. (I was a molder by trade.) I would read the Scriptures late at night, and go out and pray before retiring. One night I had gone out to the garage and kneeled to pray: and my very thoughts were sealed, and my tongue cleaved to my mouth. All I could think of, was that I could not think.

During the occasion I thought of how I had asked others to come up to be prayed for, and now I couldn't pray for myself. This brought me into great distress of mind. I cancelled an appointment at a community building close to where I was boarding. After a very few days, one evening the sun was hid over the mountain, I walked nearly 200 yards from the dwelling near a bluff, and was standing with my head bowed: immediately a light like the noonday sun shined in my very being, or heart and mind, with the sweetest music accompanying it, and scriptures as a stream poured through my heart and mind. The leaves, trees, rocks and mountains, together with all creation in a perfect silence, bowed in praise to the Creator of all things. Tears streamed from my eyes, while my heart and mind joined in with the sweet music with joy and gladness, and all sorrow and sighing fled away. The Lord promised to wipe all tears from their eyes, — many do not have tears of that kind.

How long this vision lasted I cannot say. It came as quickly as lightning, yet it gradually became dimmer and dimmer, and silently passed away. As far as I know, I continually stood in the same position, with my head bowed throughout the vision, but still I could see up and all around me while it lasted. (The kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation, for behold the kingdom of God is within you, Jesus said.)

A first cousin, and a very dear friend of mine, had many times gone with me to my services, and many times he told me he had utmost confidence in my sincerity, but that he didn't believe a word I said, spiritually speaking. After the vision he was the first one I thought of and as soon as possible I told him of the things I had experienced. He invited me to go with him to Liberty Primitive Baptist Church near Gordo, Alabama, their next meeting, which I did.

The second time I was at their service I offered myself for baptism and church membership. In relating my experience to the church and large congregation, it seemed like a little heaven below as tears streamed from many eyes. After one year or so, I went back to Abilene, Texas, in Taylor County, where I had previously been with the Missionaries, but now not to be with them — well not quite. There had been a division or divisions among the Primitive Baptists in Texas, of which I knew nothing, but had thought that those who professed to be Primitive Baptists were all the same in their doctrine and belief. Which I found later was not true, to my sorrow. There were those who taught two salvations and limited predestination: if you were obedient and did good, then the Lord would bless you for it, etc. The scriptures teach directly the opposite. It teaches that the Lord blesses His people *to do, and not for doing*. I wasn't established in the wholesome doctrine of God our Saviour, and could not too well understand their differences. As providence would have it, the first ones I came in contact with were those that taught two salvations, limited predestination, and to do good to obtain a blessing — an extra salvation, which made two.

These were the only types of Primitive Baptists I met at this time in Taylor County, after which I went to Levelland, Texas, west of Lubbock. After working there on a new railroad for a few weeks, I went back to Lubbock and worked with a building contractor. One Sunday I walked out to the Lawn, which was in the center of the business district, there I met a very neat looking young man whose name was Durwood Bradley, an attorney at law, and immediately we made ourselves acquainted with each other, and a scriptural conversation began between us. After we had talked for some time Brother Bradley asked me to go with him to the house where he was boarding. (We both were single) He was well read and instructed in the scriptures, understanding the fundamental points of doctrine far beyond me, yet I was very attentive in hearing him talk.

He gave me some copies of the *Signs of the Times to* read, and a pamphlet entitled *Feast of Fat Things*. He told me there was a Primitive Baptist Church there in the suburbs of Lubbock and that he would take me to their next meeting on Sunday, but he told me that the ministers didn't preach in the spirits power, he didn't think as they did back east.

At the set time we went as planned, and in process of time I agreed to go home with one of the ministers to gather his cotton while he ran the Roebinder in cutting his feed stuff. We ate dinner at preacher Abb Coins that day before leaving for preacher Ausmus' home. I had laid my overcoat across the bed while we had dinner and talked awhile before leaving. I had the copies of the *Signs of the Times* and the pamphlet Brother Bradley had let me have, in my inside overcoat pocket, and one of the ministers saw them, and took them out of the pocket. They between themselves made slight remarks about the *Signs*. After we left for preacher Ausmus' home, he and preacher Denton were speaking of the *Signs*, and one said that it was a dangerous paper for Primitive Baptists to have in their homes. At this saying, I became angry, mostly because of the respect I had for Brother Bradley, who had loaned me the pamphlets. I said to them, Brethren, Brother Bradley loaned me the pamphlets to read, and I had no intention of bothering anyone with them. But one of you took them out of my pocket. And I criticized them before every one, and now if you will allow me, I will keep them locked in my suitcase and read them at my leisure. That was the end of the conversation.

After reading some of the Magazines, I thought that if others cannot understand this writing better than I can, then I don't see how the reading would hurt anyone, for I honestly could not understand the writing.

Those Baptists had several churches on the Plains, West Texas, and Brother Ausmus would take me to one of them most every Sunday, and I began to more closely notice the things they were preaching concerning their two salvations, limited predestination, and do good, obey and go to meetings, and the Lord would bless you for it. I became convinced in my own heart and mind, that there was nothing good about me nor my acts. One day I was crawling on my knees gathering cotton, and my sins would rise up in my heart and mind like mountains. I was crying very bitterly over my wretched condition, and gathering cotton with all my might. Suddenly a voice said, "For his name shall be called the Lord our righteousness," and Jesus appeared high in the elements. I was looking down just as I was when the vision appeared to me in Alabama, but I clearly heard the voice and saw Jesus in the vision, (not as glorified, but as man, and I knew it was Jesus.)

Before this last vision, while I was grieving over my sins, I would think of the vision I experienced back in Alabama, and how the church received me for baptism and membership, and wondering, if indeed it was of the Lord, why had all this come upon me, but thinking of that did not relieve my present grief over my wretched condition.

I believe with much assurance that in this second vision, there was given me the key of the divine knowledge of the revealed truth, to see and understand the truth of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. When I went to the house that evening, I could read and understand the writing in the *Signs of the Times* which Brother Bradley had loaned me, while just a short time before I could not understand much of the writings. Furthermore, from that very evening Brother Ausmus and I could not agree on the teaching of the scriptures. But I will hasten to say, that he and wife and children were as fine people as I have ever known or ever expect to know in this world of sorrow.

After this I went with Brother Aus-

mus one more time to their meeting. There were several elderly ministers and a large congregation. When time came for preaching services, they would have a young man and myself to go forward. This was much to my surprise, and I was to be first. Prayer was offered, and I arose to speak. It appeared to me after I had spoken a few minutes, that every head in the house was bowed. I only noticed one sitting erect, looking directly at me, and tears very visible were streaming down his cheeks. This person was Brother Durwood Bradley, of Lubbock, Teyas. I have experienced many mysteries in my ministry and this was in my very young days, not even liberated to speak in public by the church, but I hope God liberated me that time to speak to at least one of his dear people. This I speak in all meekness with thanksgiving. Brother Bradley went with me to Brother Ausmus' for dinner after the services. After dinner I asked Brother Bradley for us to walk around, and, we being alone, I began to tell him of the vision, and he immediately said, " I have already seen it manifested." This was the last time I saw Brother Durwood Bradley, but have read of him in the *Signs,* and with much interest noticed his gifts as a donor to the *Signs of the Times.*

After this experience, I felt indeed to be a wayfaring pilgrim in this world, not knowing where the Lord's true people and church were, if indeed there was a true church anywhere on earth. I would think of the things Brother Bradley had told me of the people back east and of my home church in Alabama, and then I would think of the twelve Apostles, and wish I could see one of them, thinking that if I could he would instruct me more perfectly in the right way. Then I would think how wonderful I felt the Lord had been to me, and that He could take care of me and direct me in the right way of peace and rest. I would pray for the Lord to show me where his true people were, and assembled to worship.

I went back to Abilene in Taylor County, and in talking with a brother who lived in Abilene he told me there were two groups of Primitive Baptists which met at separate times in the same building, and since I had met some of the one group, he told me some of the names of the other. Two of which were Brother Joe Griffin and Sister Tillie Griffin, husband and wife. I went to their home, and, as I remember, a preacher Shipman was there. Here I felt and believed, and do till yet, that I had met some of the Lord's true enlightened people, who were indeed children of light,—of the day, not of night nor of darkness, who also walked as children of the light and knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ. How sweet it was to be with and communicate with those dear people, especially after going through the dark and dreadful seasons I had experienced. Yet I firmly believe that it was all of the Lord and for my good and His glory, not only for my present good and instruction, but for the life and travel which I was to face and go through the remaining days of my life in this world. (Please read Deut. 32:9-13) This tells much of my experience far better than I can tell it.

After being with Brother Joe Griffin's people for awhile, and knowing that another group of people called Primitive Baptists was meeting in the same house, I went to their services one Sunday. While the minister was admonishing the people along the line of not forsaking the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some was, he began pointing from one side of the assembly to the other, saying, "You could have stayed at home." "You could have stayed at home." This he repeated several times, with the people sitting in front of him, looking at him. I first thought, how could the poor helpless people be in two places at the same time? when I knew they were sitting there in front of the minister. It came to my mind that if what he was saying is true, then he too could have stayed at home, and likewise all the

ministers, including the congregation, and including the apostles and prophets, and even Jesus could have all stayed at home. Then the scriptures came into my mind, "The fool has said in his heart, there is no God." Thus the dear Lord preached to me one of the most gracious and comforting sermons that I ever heard, or ever expect to hear while in this world. While I was sitting facing the minister, he was denying the very existance of the Supreme Being — God Almighty.

Sometime after this I came back to Alabama, and finally moved my membership from Liberty Church to Nazareth Church, located in Tuscaloosa County. A year or so before this I was married to Miss Lara Bell Kelley, to which union two children were born, a son and a daughter. I had been liberated by Liberty Church to speak in public, and shortly after becoming a member with Nazareth, I was ordained as a minister of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, to preach the gospel whereever the Holy Spirit directed, and His kind providence provided. The church called me assistant pastor to Elder Samuel J. Norris, whom I came up under as a child with his father, until his death. After his death the church called me to be their pastor, I being nearly 33 years of age. (I had married at the age of 31 to the one named above whose age was 16.) I have been retained as pastor of said church ever since, with the exception of 5 years which Elder Wilson Brock and Elder George W. Berry, both of Fayette, Alabama, served the church. When Elder Berry passed away, I returned to Alabama from California, and have been retained pastor up to the present. Should I live till August 28, 1974, I will be 77 years of age.

The dear Lord has brought me through many great trials and afflictions to the present. I have desired above all things to be honest, truthful and faithful to my calling of God: greatly desiring to preach Christ crucified, risen and glorified at the right hand of the Majesty on high, as an all-sufficient, complete and almighty Saviour of his people, from the beginning to the finishing of their salvation and glorification: and shunning not to declare the whole counsel of God before all men. I felt in my younger days at times, that the mighty power of the Spirit was in my preaching, to own and to bless both me and the hearers, witnessing tears streaming from many eyes. This I seldom see now. The majority of the people seem not to relish preaching as in times past.

John L. Sanders,
44 Durrett Grove
Tuscaloosa, Ala. 35401

AN EXPLANATION

Box 82,
Farmerville, La. 71241

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is check for $10.00 for two years subscription to the *Signs of the Times*, and the balance for the Indigent Fund.

In reading Elder Gilbert Beebe's "Voices of the Past" in the April issue, please check page 91 and explain what he meant by Cant. 6:10. I can't find any book or books that start with Cant. in the Bible. I have either overlooked it or it is a misprint.

Please explain and I will appreciate it. Thanks.

June Hudson

(Cant. 6:10 has reference to the Song of Solomon. Cant. is the abbreviation of Canticles, which some of the old Bibles used in reference to The Song of Solomon. The heading was sometimes *Canticles or Song of Solomon*. Evidently Elder Beebe preferred to use Canticles in his writings, and his Bible probably used the double heading.—EDITORS)

NOTICE OF MEETING AT PINE CREEK CHURCH

The Annual Meeting of the Primitive Baptist at Pine Creek Church, Floyd County, Virginia, will be held as usual on the Fourth of July, beginning at 10 a.m. This is the Annual Meeting enjoyed by many in years past, at one of the oldest churches in Floyd County.

Directions: From Floyd Courthouse go east on U.S. Route 221, about five miles, and turn left at an old storehouse on the left at a cross road. Going west from Roanoke, turn right at the same place off of Route 221, about one-half mile to the church.

An all-day meeting is expected, and the public is invited.

D. V. Spangler

PLEASE NOTE: Elder D. B. Stokes of Jacksonville, N.C., is expected at a guest minister at the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, Mayfield, N.C., the fourth Sunday and Saturday before in July.

D. V. Spangler, Pastor

THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Pigg River Association is appointed, the Lord willing, to meet with the Gill's Creek Church August 2, 3, and 4, 1974.

The Meeting House is located about 12 miles east of Rocky Mount, Va. on State Road No. 834. Those coming from the south turn right off U.S. 220 at Rocky Mount, Va. on State Route 40 to Redwood, Va., turn left on Route 655 to 834, turn left on 834 and follow to the meeting house.

Those coming from Gretna, Va. follow State Route 40 to Union Hall, Va., about one and one-half miles west of Union Hall turn right on 834 and follow to meeting house. Watch for signs.

Our correspondents, brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

John D. Wood, Clerk

CONTENNTNEA UNION

The next session of the *Contentnea Union* is to be held, the good Lord willing, with New Bay Church June 29 and 30th.

The church is located in Onslow County, off Highway 17 between Jacksonville, N.C. and Wilmington, N.C. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 4, Box 195,
Tarboro, N.C. 27886

UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the sixty-eighth session of the *Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association* convenes with Pleasantville Church, Rockingham County, N. C., Saturday, Sunday and Monday, July 20, 21, and 22, 1974. Services beginning at 11 A.M. on Saturday.

Pleasantville Church is located on Highway 704 between Reidsville and Highway 220, Rockingham County, N. C. From Reidsville take Highway 87 west to Highway 704 via Wentworth about 7 miles on right. From Highway 220 east about 5 miles on left.

We cordially invite ministers, brethren and friends of like precious faith and order to join with us in this service.

Danald E. Smith, Assn. Clerk

SPECIAL REQUEST: A large number of the *Signs* are being returned to us because of changes of address and failure to notify us. If we do not have your *full address*, please give it to us immediately, or your paper will be returned to us at double the cost of a short time ago. — EDITORS

THE ALL DAY MEETING AT SLATE HILL, N. Y. is appointed to be held Saturday, August 3rd. Brethren and friends are invited to attend.

GOD'S GREAT LOVE

When God's great love is manifest
  In a repenting sinner's heart,
He is lifted up from earthly cares
  And from evil would depart.

This little bit of Heaven
  That this great love has shown,
Makes us love the brethren
  And desire Christ for our own.

But soon these moments vanish,
  And evil creeps back in
To show our carnal weakness
  That we are still in sin.

This great love that God has shown
  To give His only Son,
For our sins to die for us
  Only He could atone.

How could so perfect a Savior
  Love vile sinners so?
To bow His head on Calvary's cross
  And through such torment go.

I know I cannot follow Christ,
  Except He bid me come
To take His yoke upon me,
  Then from this I will not turn.

I believe I love the brethren
  In a Christ like way,
Because I like to be with them
  And talk of that Great Day,

When Christ shall come to call us home
To be with Him above,
To know peace and tranquility
And be perfected in His love.

Reeves O. Smith, Sr.
Rt. 1, Box 176A
Pinetown, N.C. 27865

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

ISAIAH 49:24-26

"Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered? But thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children, and I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine: and all flesh shall know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob."

Quite often I read that Dr. John Gill was the ablest preacher since Paul's day. I have no desire to detract from his name among our people, but I find

but little, if anything, to console in his dissertations about the historical aspects of the travel of Israel. The literal incidents of those wars and bickerings of Israel does not interest me only that I am constantly seeking at a throne of grace for the enlightening of the Holy Spirit so that I might glean among the spiritual aspects of those natural things.

As it is with the most, if not all, old scriptures, I feel sure that they were written for our learning; that they have a lesson for us today. In so many of the things of Old Testament lives we would not find anything that would cause us to do the things that they carried out, but when these things are examined under the microscope of truth we will find ourselves living through spiritual experiences that become a counterpart of their lives. Quite often I am reminded that this is spiritualizing the scriptures. Sure it is. How right that is. I have an alternative to spiritualizing. If I do not spiritualize, I must give it to you in the raw of natural reasoning. If I am not able to find Christ in Joseph's journey to Egypt, I must then write you an epistle about a natural famine coming and that we need somebody to build bins and barns, somebody to conserve energy and man power and natural corn and wheat. If I am not mistaken in my calling, and who I am called to minister to, I am sent to a poor and feeble nation that, at times, is not concerned about something for the body but rather food and shelter and clothing for the soul and spirit. Thus, as blessed of God, I will continue from the pulpit and by way of written page to seek the sweet kernels that are hid in the nuts that are in the garden of the Lord.

Fifty years ago, if I am not mistaken, I was taught how mighty that the law was in the life of a child of grace. Today, that law is just as mighty to those that are brought under the fearful and condemnatory mandates of it. Worldly literature fails to bring a night to our attention that is as filled with awe inspiring power as was the night on Sinai. It is not any small wonder that Moses trembled; it ceases to be amazing that the touching of the mountain by a beast brought swife retribution. In those days the enemies of God's electing love were as vicious against the recipients of that love as they are to day. That is their cry set as part of our text. This law that held these poor sinners captive was twofold mighty. In the first place, it was the law of God as handed down by Him by His servant Moses. The law itself contended with them every step of the way; the menacing shadow of death met them at every turn; the inexorable, the rigid, the demanding penalty of their sin had them in its grasp at every turn.

Let us ever remember that God does not look on sin with any degree of mercy or compromise; He does not pass by the guilty; He does not have favorites to which He grants immunity from their foul deeds. If I thought, or could be convinced that God did not exact strict observance to each and every commandment, at that time the beauty of salvation by grace would lose much of its lustre and beauty and sweetness. This rigid strictness and the exactness of God toward the least fracture of these laws brought Israel into troubles. Their neighbors did not know the law of God, but they knew their law. The law of God and the law of the enemies of Israel were somewhat similiar. Also, let it be remembered that the law which the Israel of God are now under and the law which all other people are under, are similar. You ask me in what way. It seems that we, in our preaching and writing have concluded everybody except the Old Baptist under the law of God as carried down from Sinai by Moses. If we could find in the divine record where every nation was gathered to Sinai to receive the law of God, I could readily accept that, but since I am sure that no one came there except Israel, I am also sure that the worldly institutions of religion are not under the law of God as brought down from Sinai by Moses. But isn't that what Old

Baptists preach? Is it not true that the ministers say the world is preaching law and the Old Baptist are preaching grace? Yes, that is true, but the law which the world is preaching is not the law of God. It is a mixture of God's law and a version of His law which is a concoction of the natural mind of designing men. The law of God did not have the least intimation that eternal life could be had by obedience to it. The only thing that it promised was eating the good of the land. This law did not give eternal life; a man could not get justification by it (Acts 13:39). These enemies of Israel in type, as well as all of his enemies in anti-type, have remade and rehashed the law of God, and they are all under a law unto themselves. They are all guilty of religious plagiarism for they have stolen the law of God and made it into one to suit their own notions (Rom. 2:14).

As we look at what is transpiring in this awesome episode in the history of Israel, God is lifting up in typical promise a standard for the deliverance of His afflicted people. This Standard *is* the standard of Zion. The Spirit lifts Him up in every invasion by the enemy; the Lord God ever contends against the enemy that contends with feeble Zion (Isa.. 59:19-21). It is true that no man knoweth the Lord Jesus Christ save he and she that it is revealed to, and yet, there is much to lead us to think of the ungodly as having some kind of knowledge of God. For instance, the most heinously wicked kings conversed with God and He with them; the devils in the time of Christ not only recognized Him but knew that an appointed time for their destruction awaited them (Mat. 8:29). Thus, the strong powers that had the children of Israel in captivity had some kind of knowledge that the interest of God in these Israelites spelled doom for them. They knew enough to know that these captives were lawfully in their possession. Their contention to keep them in captivity was based on justice, for they were lawful captives. They were guilty of transgression. Their lamentation was a legal one; it was based wholly on law. Not only law had them bound, but law contended about it; it did not feel to give them up.

As we look in amazement as a greater than Moses is looking forth through the intricate latticework of the maze of laws, our souls are lifted out of gloom and out of prison, and we hear our Contender declaring to the lawfulness of the law as exemplified in these captors of Israel, Yes, even the lawful captives of the mighty, and the legal prey of the terrible shall be delivered. Ah, my weary child of grace, Behold thy salvation cometh. The Lord is at hand. His law must be fulfilled, and it is fulfilled even in the scene before us. It has captured the guilty; it has brought them into captivity; it has contended with the Israelites and won the contention in each case.

Every enemy that contends against the children of God will be vanquished. This deliverance will not ever come by the children. How incompatible to a poor sinner that has fallen under the penalty of condemnation to tell them that they can deliver themselves. They are deeply involved in captivity, and to tell them that have fallen or failed, that in their failure they can rectify their sin, is to torment instead of comfort. They tried to measure arms against what Moses brought down from Sinai, but it was more than a match for them. They had not been able to hear and obey the first law given them in the morning before being marred in the hands of the Potter, and they had not been able to obey the law given them at Sinai. This is self evident. If they had been able, their ability would have manifested itself by them keeping the first law in the garden and all of the laws delivered to them in the mountain. People are constantly writing me from over the country that they could have kept the first law as well as consequent laws, but they do not have any proof. They tell me what seems to them to be the truth; they tell me what they think could have been, but there they all come

up against a stone wall, for, instead of having evidence to prove that Adam and Israel could have stood, all of the evidence is against them, for they did not stand. The law was so exacting, the devil was so strong, they were not able. The contention of Moses, the contention of those that contended against them, was more than a match for them.

I wonder when we are stripped of our self righteousness could any of Israel say, I would have been a match for the law given me, I would have been able to resist the slinking influence and contention of Satan. I am a poor wayfaring pilgrim, with every faculty daily growing weaker, yet I do hope still blessed with boldness to face every false way. I wonder could any one say that where my father Adam failed I could have complied. My God, what audacity for a sinner, *a fallen sinner,* to blespheme like that. I wonder could any poor sinner that has the weakness of himself, the wily contention of Satan, the affluence of the world with its divers temptations thrown around him, could say that, while we all come short of the glory of God, it was not necessary, for if I had been there with the golden opportunity to serve my Maker, I could have measured up to it. If this is the truth, then God's promise was useless. If any one of us could have successfully contended for our salvation, we did not need Christ. If today, or any time from the morning until now late in the evening, any could have, or yet could successfully contend against our contenders, God sent His precious Son by way of the cross when the ones that He sent Him to, did not need Him at all. His suffering was in vain; Paul's determination was in vain. If poor sinners could contend with and win the argument or contention, what need did we have of somebody to contend with them that contended with us? I repeat, If we could have met Satan's and the world's and the flesh's contention, a lot of useless work and suffering was indulged in, and Paul had a determination that this scandalous and ridiculous doctrine that I am raising my objection to, would have made it unnecessary to write to the church at Corinth or anywhere else (I Cor. 2:2).

The text grows, and as it grows it spreads out over the whole panorama of the traval of God's humble poor. This One that is to contend with all that contends against us, is seen not only as a fountain flowing to the former and the hinder sea, but as the warrior that once embattled where confused noise was rampant, but is now our Challenger of every contention against us. In the noise it was by blood, and now it is by fire (Isa. 9:5; Heb. 12:29). In each and every conflict the battle has been won, but the recipient of the victory has not fought and won the battle, but He that contends with all of them that contend against God's little children. This fight, as we look backwards, is fought by another, and it is fought through great distress for a whoring and ungrateful recipient. Our minds are inflamed with rapture and holy ecstasy that before we ever needed a grain of wheat, even while we were rolling in our wealth and revelling in our boasted pomp and spender, that God, even our God, was going before laying up bread, and laying up chastening for these that would have been our contention even unto death and starvation. As I contemplate the gift of grace whereby a sinful wretch such as I, am blessed with crumbs of this laid up bread (Psa. 31:19), my mind is carried out in silent thanksgiving that poor sinners had such a heavenly Benefactor in Joseph. At every turn there were contenders against Israel. Disputing, murmuring, disrupting, conspiring, bearing false witness, forgetting, any of which would have ended in Israel's ruin. But just to think that God told Abram about the impending journey into Egypt, but that great blessings would accompany them and that his ancestors would be brought out (Gen. 15:13). Disputants arose in Israel, and their cunning and contention was suffered all of the way; at every

turn, even before the need for the journey, all along the journey, and at every turn everything seemed to be against Israel.

Dear reader, who turned all of this to glory for Israel? The contention of Jacob did not, the contention of the brethren did not, the falsity of Potiphar's wife did not. Why? Tell me, what would have become of God's promise had God not contended against those that contended against Israel? Ah, yes, it is agreed that these were all guilty, and had Joseph contended with all of the eye-for-an-eye and tooth-for-a-tooth contenders with their weapons, that all of them would have perished. God contended with them, God contended with them in such a way that their intentions and their contentions were not only swept aside, but were made subservient to Him that every last one of them was fed while there, and every last one of them was carried out. If there is a better doctrine than that I have not met up with it.

Before the time of their departure out of Egypt, and before any contention against them leaving, God raised up Pharoah, and God raised up Moses. The raising up (or making to stand) of Pharoah was God's work. What a lamentable condition a man is in when he tries to explain away this raising up of this king. I am so glad that He does not need me to tell His people what He means; that He has not called poor puny men to apologize for Him. Those that feel an inclination to help Him out of the dilemmas that he inadvertently gets into, are some of the worst contenders that God's people have to contend with, but He also contends against them. Before the manifestation of raising up Pharoah for what he did to the children of Israel, God raised up Moses. The power of God raised both men up. The motivation of Pharoah was an evil heart; the motivation of Moses as a habit of life was prompted by the love of God in his heart. The scheme is well laid; the overthrow of Pharoah's contention is well planned. God raised up (made to stand) Moses, and placed him in Pharoah's household. He was placed there by the power and wisdom of God that he might learn how to gain the ways of that kingdom; that he might learn to out maneuver Pharoah; that through and because of God's mercy, all of Egypt that was contending for the destruction of Israel, that the same kind of destruction would be vented against the contenders.

I am not as sure as I desire, of my relationship with God, but I am sure about the children of God. At the sea I find a full and complete culmination of God's contending against them that contend with the children of God. Every last one of those that were contended against were saved. Ah, what glory attends this lovely way; truly it is that by such things as are found here, that men live by them (Isa. 38:16). Here is the doctrine that saves and exalts the lowly; this is the doctrine that brings down the exalted and makes them live among the lowly; this is the doctrine that made slaves and masters wash each other's feet; this is the only doctrine that save an infant of days or a man a hundred years old (Isa. 65:20), here is the doctrine that brought infants in their mother's arm, and octogenarians leaning on their son's arm. Lastly, here is the doctrine that destroys every sin, every Egyptian (darkness), every enemy, every contender against the family of God.

There are four things that are never satisfied. They never say, It is enough; they never quit contending against the children of God. Those are grave things in our experience; they are always, in our experience, against us. These things are the grave, the barren womb, the earth that is not filled with water, and the fire that sayeth not, It is enough. First, the barren womb (the womb restrained), what sorrow it is not to be able to bring forth praise and honor and glory to His precious name. As a woman feels to be a failure that can not bear children, even so, the children of God feel to be a failure that are not

able to bring forth good fruit. How dreadful it is to have no rain and no dropping of the doctrine of grace in our souls, in these earthern vessels. How we long for moisture to come from Mount Hermon, falling gently, being absorbed, satiating the whole of our being (Jer. 31:25). How fearful it is as fire is kindled in our heaving bosom, and all our possessions are consumed, and we are barely escaped; and how distressing as we continue to feel the consuming fire of God's wrath against us. We are made to cry, O Lord how long wilt thou close thy ears to our cry? But sure and certain He will answer in the person of His Son, to wit, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes." He is answering our help from our sins, and is saying that although they must be consumed, that I will give you beauty for these ashes, which is saying that I will take away these ashes which are a reminder of your sins, and you shall enjoy the beauty of your holiness which stems from me to you (Isa. 61:3).

Graves are receiving the loved ones of God. We must all meet death (which, with Jacob, seems to be against us, ever threatening, ever yawning before us); we must all lose to the grave. Shall I stop there? If it is victor; if it is to be in the ascendency here or here after; if it is to have the preeminance over that which Christ, the great Contender, has saved, then, yes, by all means, let me lay my hand over my mouth and you never hear my voice, and let me lay aside my pen, for I am out of anything to write or preach. But it isn't true.

They that oppress thee; they that contend with thee, shall, sooner or later to us, but timely with God, meet up with Him that contends with them that contend against the poor and afflicted people of God. The saints shall here know the Contender and shall praise Him both here and in heaven. Those that contend against us, and are never blessed to meet Christ in this life, shall one day bow their knee to Him, and confess with their tongues that He is God, and they will never have Christ the lovely Contender contend against the second death for them.

W.D.G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"DENYING THE LORD THAT BOUGHT THEM."

2 Peter 2:1

Our views on this scripture are called for by sister "E.B." as will be seen in the postscript of her letter on page 21 of this number. The principle difficulty complained of in understanding the subject, is involved in the words, *The Lord that bought them*, applied to those who in verse 3, are subjects of judgment and damnation. By reference to our remarks on the 6th verse of this chapter, in our last number, the reader will discover that we hold those characters to be the angels which kept not their first estate. The text on which we are now to remark reads thus—"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction."

This epistle was addressed to the Hebrew brethren, such as had been scattered abroad by the persecution; this will appear by reference to the introduction of the first epistle; as also from his allusion to their having been addressed on the same subject, of the second coming of Christ, by our beloved brother Paul. See Chap. iii. 15. We will now proceed to notice the text—But there were false prophets also among the people, viz: among the people of Israel, to which nationally or according to the flesh, these brethren, as well as the false teachers belonged. This fact re-

quiring for its confirmation nothing more than a reference to the Old Testament history of Israel, in almost every page of which these *sinning angels,* false prophets, sons of Belial, &c., were detected. Hence, from this palpable fact that in all ages of Israel the people were infested with false prophets, so now when Jesus was ascended, and before he should be revealed in the utter destruction of Jerusalem, these Jewish converts to the christian faith, might, with certainty expect to be troubled with false teachers from the same quarter, viz: from among the Jews. In confirmation of our view of this subject we refer the reader to the solemn admonition of our Lord, to his disciples before he ascended. He told them He was going away, but would shortly return to them with power and great glory, and that some of them should live to witness the fulfillment of this promise; but they begged him to tell them when these things should be, and what would be the sign of his coming and of the end of the world? (i.e. that world). To which enquiries Jesus answered and said—"Take heed that no man deceive you; for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." Matt. xxiv. 3-5. Again in same Chap. ver. 11. "And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many;" again verses 23-27. "Then if any shall say unto you, Lo here is Christ, or lo there, believe it not. For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold I have told you: For as the lightening cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." The testimony of our Lord in the concluding part of the 24th Chap. of Matt. and the instructions contained in the parables in the 25th Chap., settles the point in regard to who these false prophets and false teachers were, and from whence they were. He calls them his own servants, wicked servants, slothful servants, &c., also by the parable of the virgins, they are clearly presented as being of the stock of Abraham after the flesh, and were then, and soon should be found among his nominal disciples.

Our readers will perceive that Peter was now addressing the scattered saints, under these very circumstances, and impressing on them these admonitions of his, and of our Lord. There shall be false teachers among you; who are now waiting the fulfillment of your Lord's predictions; you who are not to see death until these things are fulfilled; until your Lord shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on the Jews, in the destruction of Jerusalem, and to be admired by all who love his appearing. These false teachers should bring in damnable heresies; saying I am Christ, and lo here is Christ, and lo there; and "Since the fathers have fallen asleep, all things remain as they were, and where is the promise of his coming?" These were damnable heresies, and even amounted to denying the Lord that bought them. For they could not set themselves or any thing else up as Christ, without denying the true Christ; and such heresy is damnable, because if Christ be rejected or denied, in his absence there is nothing can save from damnation. Hence could they, or could our modern false christs who set themselves up as intercessors, revival makers, &c., establish their doctrines, it would make the damnation of all who trust in Christ alone inevitable.

But the main question with our sister is: "How can it be said that the Lord bought those teachers, whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not and their damnation slumbereth not?" We have shown that these false prophets alluded to by Peter, were members of the national family of Israel, and on this account were called servants, foolish virgins; wicked and slothful servants, &c., it therefore remains for us

to show how the Lord bought them. And first we take the ground that it was not in the redemption purchase, by which his elect are redeemed from damnation, or their damnation would slumber; nor are they redeemed from all iniquity, see Titus ii. 14, or they would not continue in the iniquitous course of promulgating damnable heresies, nor from wrath and the curse of the law, or their judgement, which dooms them to flaming fire, and utter destruction, would at least linger, But the question returns, How then were they bought? We answer, in that redemption purchase, by which the whole family of national Israel were delivered from the house of bondage in Egypt, and elevated to a distinction above all other nations then under heaven. Their redemption from Egypt is often referred to as being highly figurative of the redemption purchase which Christ has with his own blood, made of his own church from sin, death and hell, from the demands, wrath and curse of the law of God, and which secures to them all the benefits of Christ's mediatorial office. But while they in their distinct character as a nation were typical of the true and heavenly Jerusalem, they were only the Jerusalem which *then was,* and which was in bondage with her children, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. That judgment that lingered not, and that damnation that slumbereth not, may well be called *swift destruction;* and this as far as related to a temporal display of their judgment, &c., was most dreadfully realized by those false prophets, when the sign was descried of the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. Their destruction was swift, like the vivid flash that leaping from the east shineth even unto the remote west, without allowing time for those who were upon the housetop to come down, to take anything out of the house, nor such as were in the field to return to their houses. Behold, said Jesus, I have told you before! "As the days of Noah were, so shall the coming of the Son of man be; for as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, and marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." In this awful calamity those false teachers might consider this distress as brought by themselves, as abundant warning had been given unto one and all to watch; yet setting aside all these admonitions of Christ and His apostles, they were swept away by these overflowing judgments.

Under the influence of the Spirit of God the apostle Peter very well knew, that while these vile perverters of the truth of God were drawing away many from their steadfastness, that these impending judgments were gathering thick; and although they may count it pleasure to riot in the day time, and in the full light of all those admonitions which began to be spoken by Christ, and were confirmed and reiterated by those that heard him; and although they may be willingly and criminally ignorant of God's manner of computing time, (Chap. iii. 5.) and say, Where is the promise of his coming? verse 4; still the apostle knew and testified, The day of the Lord would come as a thief in the night, in which those old Jewish heavens should pass away with a great noise, &c. Nevertheless the apostle and many of the primitive saints, according to his promise, looked for (and finally realized) a new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth Righteousness, or wherein Christ should dwell.

From all the above-named considerations, Peter warned the saints, seeing they looked for such things, to improve from the circumstances in which they were placed; and we at this late age may also derive from these examples instruction in righteousness, to beware of false teachers, to watch and be sober; for we who have been by divine grace admitted into that heaven, wherein Jesus dwell-

eth, which the apostles looked for, how much more does it become us to consider what manner of persons we ought to be, in all holy conversation and godliness.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe in 1840)

HAS EXPERIENCED WITH THE WRITERS

P.O. Box 162,
Randolph, Ohio 44265

Dear Editors of the Signs:

And to those who are blest to write for the *Signs*, for I have experienced with them. They are so much help to those who have been cut off from the church and the shut-ins. Blessed are they that thirst after righteousness and for the true word of God. This is my own way of putting this.

May God continue to bless you and the writers to fill the *Signs*. As before, my wife and I love to read the experiences that others are blest to write. We want to thank all connected with the publication of the *Signs*.

Here is ten dollars for two years subscription — do as you wish with the balance.

May God bless you and your families.

Alpha and Mary Sears

ORDERED IN ALL THINGS, AND SURE

Meadows of Dan, Va.

To the Signs of the Times,
Dear Saints and Pilgrims:

I greet you in the name of our blessed Redeemer, who are in union with the Lamb and from condemnation free: these are the ones that were from everlasting, and, praise God, shall forever be. These are the ones that were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and called here in time to come forth with a new song in their mouths, praising their dying and risen Saviour. These are the sons in the covenant of old, ordered in all things and sure.

The steps of God's little lambs and sheep are ordered in this world, and they will not, and cannot, walk one step contrary to this covenant. The feeblest little lamb is doing what God has fixed for it to do, as it was blest in Jesus there. The earth's columns will bow but this covenant will not break, because the Lord ordered it before the foundation of the world. The wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.

So with joy lift up your heads, because the destruction that has been ordered to spread through this earth, cannot injure you. This is called absolute predestination of all things, by those who are born of the Spirit. When the storms and tempests rise, your hope in Jesus never dies: here the weary rest from their fleshly works: rest in hope, knowing that God has done all things well. Jesus has paid the debt and cancelled it by His blood, your sins are blotted out nevermore to be remembered.

He that is climbing up some other way, is a thief and a robber. Are you sowing to the flesh? If so, you are resting on your own works, and shall reap corruption.

Now Christ conducts us through a wilderness and will bring us safe to heaven. All Hail! the risen Saviour stands with the lilies of the field in his bleeding hands. My question is, Am I one of his lilies, or am I not? If I am, no beast of the forest will devour me, because on lilies they cannot feed. Solomon and all his glory was never arrayed as one of these. So I bow, and try to sing praises to, I hope, my risen Redeemer — feeling yet to be such a sinner, but trying to ask God to remember me.

Your sister in Christ Jesus
Mrs. Pauline Spencer

ORDINATION OF DEACON

On March 9, 1974 at the request of North Creek Primitive Baptist Church of Route 2, Belhaven, North Carolina, a presbytery was called to examine Brother Earna Marslender for the office of Deacon.

After singing hymn number 353 in Lloyds Hymn Book and prayer by Elder M. E. Garner, motion was made with second and agreement that Elder J. T. Prescott sit as moderator and Brother Reeves Smith to serve as clerk.

Deacon A. F. Rowe was chosen spokesman for the church, Elder E. C. Harrison to question the candidate and Elder J. T. Prescott to deliver the charge.

Ministers comprising the presbytery were Elders J. T. Prescott, M. E. Garner, Henry Jones and E. C. Harrison.

Deacons present were Thomas Williams, Vernon Jenkins, A. F. Rowe and Reeves Smith.

Deacon Rowe presented the candidate to the presbytery and his answers to the questions satisfied the presbytery. Elder J. T. Prescott delivered the charge to the candidate using for authority 1st Timothy 3rd Chapter.

With the laying on of hands, Elder Henry Jones began the ordination prayer with each of the other ministers following.

Deacon Earna Marslender was then presented back to the Church a duly ordained Deacon.

A motion was made with second and approval that minutes be approved as read: a copy to be sent to the *Signs of the Times*, a copy for the Church records and a copy for Deacon Earna Marslender.

Elder J. T. Prescott, Moderator
Reeves Smith, Clerk

ORDINATION OF DEACON

April 7, 1974

In compliance with a request of Union Primitive Baptist Church while in conference March 3, 1974, a presbytery was called for the purpose of an examination into the qualifications of Brother Silas Payne for the office of Deacon.

The presbytery was organized with the election of officers as follows: Elder R. S. Payne, Moderator, Burnell B. Williams, Clerk, Elder N. F. Conner was chosen to have prayer before further proceedings begun. Upon motion and second, Brother Tillman Dalton was appointed as spokesman for the church. Brother Dalton presented the candidate to the presbytery for ordination. Scripture reference of the qualifications for the office of deacon was made from 1st. Timothy, 3rd Chapter by Elder R. A. May. After further questioning of the candidate by Elder J. R. Williams, the ordination continued with the laying on of hands and an ordination prayer by Elder Raymond Goad. The Charge was given by Elder Leonard Brammer.

The work of the presbytery was accepted by the Church spokesman. Upon motion and second, the presbytery delivered Brother Payne back to the Church an ordained deacon.

Minutes were read and approved. On motion, the presbytery was adjourned.

Elder R. S. Payne, Mod.
Burnell B. Williams, Clerk

The following ministers were present for the ordination: Elders R. S. Payne, Leonard Brammer, R. A. May, J. R. Williams, Raymond Goad and N. F. Conner.

The following deacons were present for the ordination: Brethren George Turner, P. L. Holley, Claude Hopkins, Richard Stegall, Clarence Stegall, R. T. Holley, Andrew Gibson, Robert Blair, George Powell, L. R. Willis, G. T. Willis, Tillman Dalton, Wyatt Simpson and B. B. Williams.

OBITUARIES

THOMAS A. STOWE

Our Heavenly Father by his infinite wisdom saw fit on March 4, 1974 to call our beloved Brother Thomas A. Stowe from this walk of life, at the age of 89. We firmly believe our loss to be his his eternal gain.

He was united in marriage to Miss Verna J. Whitehead August 25, 1909. To this union 5 children were born: two sons and three daughters. All of whom survive, together with 8 grandchildren and ten great grandchildren. His wife preceeded him in death.

Brother Stowe united with the Primitive Baptist Church in 1919. His membership had been with Shepherd Fold Church, Houston, Texas, for several years before his death. He remained a very faithful and dedicated member as long as his health permitted. His three daughters are also members of the same band, therefore we feel this a two fold loss to them. We shall never forget the loving care they rendered unto their dear father in his last years. Thank God for them.

His funeral services were conducted by Elders Jerry Evers and C. M. Haygood, and his body was laid to rest in Whitehead Cemetery, Grapeland, Texas, to await the second coming of Christ our Saviour.

Written by order of Shepherd Fold Church.

Humbly submitted,
C. M. Haygood.

VIOLA DALTON WORLEY

As requested by Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing, I will try to write a few words in memory of our Dear Sister Viola Dalton Worley. It pleased our Heavenly Father to call her from our midst on February 14, 1974, at the age of 66. She died at her home in Roanoke, Virginia. She was received into the fellowship of Weatherford Church on September 28, 1952 and was baptized the same day by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench.

Sister Viola was born in Pittsylvania County and was the daughter of the late Harvey Dalton and Sally Barbour Dalton. She was the widow of the late Tilton Worley. Survivors are three daughters, Mrs. Clarice Foutz, Mrs. Janette Tomilinson, and Mrs. Harriett Overstreet. One sister, Mrs. Thelma Showalter, one brother, Ollie Dalton and five grandchildren.

Sister Viola was a faithful member of Weatherford Church, always filling her seat. She was always concerned about the welfare of her Church. We will all miss her, but most of all, she will be missed by the family and her friends in Roanoke, Virginia. I feel our loss is her eternal gain and may we all be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father who does all things well and never makes a mistake.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench at Oakey's Funeral Home in Roanoke, Virginia. Her body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Cedar Lawn Cemetery.

Written by Marvin Brumfield.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. H. Doss, Clerk

SISTER MARTHA CRADDOCK

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst by death our dearly beloved and highly esteemed Sister Martha Craddock. Sister Craddock united with the Church at Concord April meeting 1948 and was baptized the May meeting by her pastor, Elder S. Gray, and remained a faithful member until her health failed her.

She was born December 1, 1896 and died November 29, 1973, her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder N. L. Ambrose, assisted by Elder E. C. Harrison on her birthday December 1st, at the home of her sister Mittie Skittletharpe, and her body laid to rest under a beautiful mound of flowers to wait the Resurrection morning at which time we feel she will be raised from the dead and be with her Heavenly Father and praise him in an endless Eternity.

Though we miss her very much, we feel our loss is her eternal gain. Therefore, be it resolved that we desire to bow before him who knows best in all things and doeth all things well. And be it further resolved that a copy of these resolutions be spread on our church records a copy sent to the bereaved family, a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* and *Zions Landmark* for publication.

Submitted by one who loved her.

Elder N. L. Ambrose

SISTER NELLIE MELVIN

We, the church at Rosemary, bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, in taking from our midst Sister Nellie Melvin. She was born in 1894 and departed this life August 25, 1973, making her stay on earth 79 years.

She joined the Rosemary Primitive Baptist Church in August, 1953, and was a true and faithful member. She left to mourn her passing one daughter, Mrs. James Bennington, and three grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder B. D. Handy and Mr. Clyde Wheeler, and she was laid to rest in Cedar Wood Cemetery. We humbly bow in submission to His holy will.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, one to the family and one spread on our church book.

Done by order of conference assembled this first Sunday in March, 1974.

Eld. D. B. Handy, Mod.
Eula Johnson, Clerk

ZEBULON RUFUS GAY

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call home, away from all the sufferings and troubles of nature, our beloved Brother, Deacon, and friend, Zebulon Rufus Gay. He was born October 26, 1882, and expired November 20, 1973, thus making his earthly existance 91 years, one month, and six days. His birth was in Pitt County, N.C., of God fearing parents, John William and Alice Owens Gay, and he lived his entire life in the community in which he was born. He married Sister Bessie Brooks, daughter of John W. and Susan Elizabeth Brooks, January 30, 1926, the wedding was performed by Elder E. L. Cobb of Wilson, N. C. Certainly the merging of these two wonderful families by this marriage, is a part of "What God hath joined together." Brother Zeb joined Autrey's Creek Primitive Baptist Church in June, 1908, and his bride was a member of Red Banks. Both of them retained their original

membership until their death. They loved dearly, attended regularly, and actively supported both churches, and loved to visit the brethren, and to have the brethren to visit them. Sister Bessie preceeded him in death on July 28, 1965. Soon after Brother Zeb united with the church, his brethren called and ordained him to the office of deacon, and he served well in this capacity as long as his health permitted. At the time of his passing, he was probably the oldest and among the best loved deacons of his day. He loved and attended the correspondence of his church, Union, and Association. His church chose him messenger to the Association first in 1908, and without interruption he was able to attend each annual session through the year 1973.

They had no children of their own, but both of them dearly loved children, and were never too busy to stop what they were doing, to cater to children. Surely the nieces and nephews, the children of the neighborhood, join the children of the church, who, together with the writer of this epic, rise up to call them blessed. "Honor thy Father and thy Mother, that thy days may be long upon the earth which the Lord thy God giveth thee," is the first commandment with promise, and surely he claims this one and so many others of God's promises to His children. This was evidenced in his life as he was blessed of God to go about doing good. He loved, strongly advocated, and was blessed and willing to defend the doctrines he believed so strongly, Salvation by Grace, and Grace alone. His rich experience of Grace that gave beautiful evidence to strengthen his hope, was indeed wonderful to behold. His faith in Jesus gave him a supply of inner strength that caused many to behold him in amazement. Paul teaches us to "Be quiet, to do our own business, and to work with our own hands," and certainly this gift was exercised in the life of Brother Zeb in a wonderful way.

But now he has departed this life, and our hope rests in the resurrection of the dead. "Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord, yea, henceforth sayeth the spirit, they do rest from their labors, and their works do follow them," writes John; and although we can never see Brothre Zeb again in this world, we look hopefully to a new and better day, and long to join him in Heaven's court in glory, there to sing ceaseless and undivided praise to our Triune God, in God's Kingdom that shall never end.

Brother Zeb suffered tremendously in his last years, but never lacked for anything that nature could provide. Sister Bessie, as long as she was able, cared for him in a wonderful way. His nieces and nephews, his neighbors and friends, were precious and helped all they could. At the death of Sister Bessie, her darling sister, Helen Brooks, began to care for him, and stayed by in life and even in death, and with loving patience administered the comforts of life to him in such a wonderful way, that I feel that all who loved him join me in expressing our heartfelt thanks to her; and would say with our Master, "Well done thy good and faithful servant."

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder Joseph Sawyer, and A. P. Mewborn, in the presence of his family, friends, and brethren, and his body handed back to the dust from whence it came, beside his precious companion, to await the "Morn of God," even a morning without clouds.

Written at the request of Autrey's Creek Church by one who loved him.

A. P. Mewborn

Done by order of conference, on Saturday before the first Sunday in December, 1973.

Elder Kenneth Windham, Moderator
Deacon J. B. Coker, Clerk

D. L. CUNNINGHAM

It has been the will of our Heavenly Father on June 15, 1973, to call to his eternal rest our dear father, D. L. Cunningham at the age of 82. Daddy was born at Souwilpa, Alabama, October 13, 1890 to T. B. and Clara Cunningham. He married Willie Mae Odom in April, 1915. She preceded him in death 47 years. He never remarried. He leaves to mourn his passing five children, one son and four daughters; J. D. Cunningham, Mrs. Clara Jane Carpenter, Mrs. Verna Mae Maddox, Mrs. Arthella Singley, and Mrs. Opal McElhaney. Daddy was a loving and devoted father. He had many friends as was evidenced by the lovely floral offerings. and the large attendance at his funeral.

He was laid rest in the Advent cemetery near Souwilpa, Alabama, on June 17, 1973. His funeral was preached by Elder W. C. Stanley. He was a firm believer of the Primitive Baptist doctrine. He took the *Signs Of The Times* for many years and got much comfort and pleasure in reading them. In sadness we wish to bow in humble submission to God's Holy Will ever looking to Him for mercy and guidance.

By his son,
J. D. Cunningham

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 142 DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1974 NO. 8

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8/74
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

LETTER FROM ELDER RICHARD CAMPBELL

2761 Cochese Cove,
Memphis, Tenn. 38118

Dear Elder Wood:

Please find enclosed check for the renewal of my subscription to the *Signs* for two years, and the balance to be used as needed.

I enjoy reading the paper very much, and keep all issues to reread as I have time and desire to read the experiences of those that have been led in the same paths that I have. The experiences are so beautiful to me, because through them all run the same lines of truth that I hope I have been taught.

David said, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places. Yea, I have a goodly heritage." This is the precious hope that burns in the breast of every heaven born soul, if indeed my travels have been the dealings of God with an unworthy sinner. I see the sin and corruption that is this old natural man, yet there is within the heart something that began years ago, that continues to cause me to hope that I am one upon whom the Lord has looked in His infinite love and mercy. I am made to know daily that, "Except the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh in vain." All of the watching and caring that the individual can do, will avail nothing, because these things are so high we can't attain unto them. They are not given unto man for his handling of them. They have ever been and will always remain in the hands of God, and He alone bestows them upon his children.

(After mentioning a planned trip, Brother Campbell continued as follows:) These thing are in the hands of God, and are sure and certain. If it is His will all the forces on earth cannot keep it from coming to pass, and if it is not His will, all of my planning and wishing, will avail nothing. If I believe anything, I believe this to be true, and it is a most precious and comforting feeling to me to believe it. I know the frailties of this old man—how changeable and irresponsible he is. I am glad it does not depend upon me for execution.

May God continue to bless the Editors of the *Signs,* to publish the paper as He has since it was first published. It has been a blessing indeed to all who believe in salvation by the sovereign grace of Almighty God for time and eternity. I believe that it contends for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and, if not deceived, it contends for the doctrine upon which I base my hope for heaven and immortal glory.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

1231 Pecan,
Channelview, Texas 77530

Dear Brethren:

May these few lines find you blessed with the peace and love of God. I enclose check for two more years of the

grand old paper.

We were blessed to attend the Pleasant Valley, South Ouachita, Bear Creek, Kehukee and Buttahatchie Associations last year. It brought unmeasurable joy to meet the brethren in peace and love.

The Lord willing, the Pleasant Valley Association will be held with Shepherd Fold Church, 815 Little York Road, Houston, Texas, August 16, 17, 18, 1974. Elder C. M. Haygood is Moderator and Elder G. O. Shipman is Clerk. All believers of salvation by grace are welcome.

Enclose you will find a few lines I wrote concerning Philippians 2:13,14. Use it if you see fit .

Earl W. Hall

PHILIPPIANS 2:12-13

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Philippians 2:12-13)

We call your attention to the first part of verse 12, "as ye have always obeyed." Here the apostle Paul is addressing the Philippian brethren as "my beloved" and further states "as ye have always obeyed" they obeyed in His absence. Could it be that they had perfect obedience and never did any wrong? Were they better than Paul?

Let us wait a moment before the answer. We will look at Paul's experience. "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me: but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." (Romans 7:18-19) This shows the weakness of the flesh.

1 John 1:8: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Now we have shown the negative side of the subject or weakness of flesh, carnal, depraved man by nature. We want to see the positive side now.

1 John 3:9: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." This is speaking of the born again child of God, or Christ living in the heart of His children. Our hope is "Christ born in you the hope of glory." No this portion of man does not sin.

Let us return to Paul's experience. Romans 7:20: "Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." The child of God has a sinful nature and a spiritual nature. One does sin and one does not sin. Where is the source of all this goodness? Hear what Paul said about this. 1 Corinthians 15:10: "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain: but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Paul was blessed to labor more abundantly than they all. He credits all praise to the grace of God.

Now back to the subject, "as ye have always obeyed." When God applies this in your heart you will obey also. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

We will now view the words of Jesus. John 10:27: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." Philippians 2:12-13: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." God does work in his people, and this salvation is worked as long as they live. Now this is salvation by grace. What about the man's own salvation or natural comforts that we did once trust in; the entertainment of the world, self righteousness, worldly possessions, false religion, all the iffs and buts, meet God half-way, make the first move, sal-

vation workers, or any other thing that the natural man can think up. They must all be worked out, not figured out. They must all be worked out with fear and trembling. When you see one with fear and trembling, the confidence of self is nearly gone. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Now hear this; all this working out, is with fear and trembling. God working in and man's salvation,—man's filthy rags (removed) worked out. It is done how? To the will of God and to do of his good pleasure. It is like working molasses out of cane. The head is removed and seed saved for future planting, the leaves or fodder is removed. The stalk is cut down and carried to the mill. The stalk is crushed in the mill and the juice saved. The juice is put in a pan and a certain amount of heat is applied. The impurities come to the top of the pan and are removed. The sweet molasses is then put in a storage container. Remember all the working out. All those things were necessary to sustain natural life, the seed, fodder, stalk, pulp and the impurities. The sweetness comes at the end. God's children are worked out, refined by the grace of God and the sweetness shall be heaven and its glory.

Earl W .Hall
1231 Pecan
Channelview, Texas 77530

Box 354,
Legg Star Route,
Charleston, W. Va.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am enclosing check for renewing my subscription, use the balance for the Indigent Fund.

I look forward to the coming of the *Signs* each month, and I am thankful to be able to read it since my eyes aren't good due to surgery. I thank the good Lord for what he has blessed me with. I believe in salvation by grace, and absolute predestination. I am a member of Providence Church, Putnam County, W. Va., and have been for many years. I have loved the doctrine of the dear old church ever since I was a little girl. I don't get to go to meetings very often now, but every meeting day I can see in my mind the dear brothers and sisters, and feel I can hear them singing the dear hymns of Zion, and I grieve because I cannot be there. But the dear Lord has a purpose in that too.

I was baptized by the late Elder Harvey Bird. Elder John J. Smith is my brother in the flesh and also in Christ I hope. I used to walk to church with him every chance I got, when I was a young girl. I am now 81 years old and not very well.

Your sister in Christ, I hope
Lurecy S. McCutcheon

THE LOVE OF GOD SHED ABROAD

117 Bon Air Road,
Baltimore, Md. 21225

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

"And hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." (Romans 5:5)

I have been impressed for some time now to try to write some of my feelings on the above subject. The thought has been in my mind ever since reading the heart-warming article that Sister Mary Lee wrote in the April *Signs*.

Surely she has seen some of the great amount of love I have been blessed by a most merciful God to enjoy. In the past year and a half I have seen so much love and fellowship between the dear saints of God, that it is hard to believe I could be blessed to be counted as one of them.

It is indeed hard to understand that one so full of fear and doubt could be enabled to participate in an exchange of love and fellowship. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variable-

ness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17) In my feelings love is the most perfect gift. "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God. and God in him." (I John 4:16) "We love him, because he first loved us." (I John 4:19)

The love that God indites in our hearts is shed abroad both toward God and his Son, and towards all that walk godly in this present world. This love knows no bounds or no seasons. It is evident at all times of the year, and in all parts of the country.

I have been blessed in these few short months, to go among the Old Baptists in at least five states and several different associations. Not only have I found the same faith and same baptism, and the same God, but the same love that is shed abroad in the hearts and countenances of all God's elect.

It is my chief desire that I be blessed to continue to enjoy the love and fellowship of the saints of God. Life itself would have little meaning if I could not look forward to the meetings and visits of the brethren and friends. It is my prayer that my hope, although small, might not fade away—that God in His mercy would uphold me by His power, and enable me to run the race set before me with patience, ever looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of every Christian's faith.

May the God of all grace continue to be merciful to both of you, and enable you to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints as you have so wonderfully done in the past.

When blessed with a spirit of prayer remember

Barnabus Brammer

WORD OF BROTHER WM. O. HALL'S PASSING

508 NW C Street
Grant Pass, Oregon 97526

Dear Elder Spangler:

Just a few brief remarks along life's way. I am past 86 years old and my wife is nearly 86, so we are not too long for this world. However I am in very good health, but my wife May is not.

My four sisters and five brothers have all departed this life, therefore I am looking forward in hope of joining them in a better world to come.

I am enclosing check for $40.00. Please extend my subscription for two years to the good old *Signs of the Times;* and the balance is for the Indigent Fund in memory of my parents and sisters and brothers.

Yours in bonds of love,
Andy D. Hall

LETTER FROM SISTER HALL

Dear Ones:

I now write with a sad heart, and tell you that my brother-in-law, William O. Hall, passed away May 9, 1974. He was a good faithful man. He loved his God and seemed to walk hand in hand with him. My husband, Andy Hall, is the last of his family. He is 86 and a true believer in God.

My husband and I do hope we are among God's chosen ones, that we may have a closer walk with Him, and will joyfully pass out of this world and go to be with the loved ones that have gone on before. My parents and brothers and sisters have gone where there will be no more suffering or heartaches, just sleep in God's tender care. Praise his sweet name.

May Hall

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789 E. Paxton Street
Danville, Va. 24541

Dear Elder Spangler:

I am sending money to renew my subscription to the *Signs*. It means so much to me—all the wonderful sermons setting forth the truth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: and all the beautiful experiences of our Brothers and Sisters.

As you already know, I once belong-

ed to another denomination, but I was never happy there. Though I feel I first knew my Lord and Saviour in my early teens. Often you told me that I was just a Primitive Baptist, and when the Lord was ready He would bring me home to them.

I would attend my church regularly, but I did not receive the spiritual food my heart craved. I was only fed when I attended the Primitive Baptist Church. One Sunday in May, 1952, I came home from my church and felt I was alone in the world. My Bible became a closed book to me. This particular Sunday I came home and opened my Bible at random, as I had not gotten any food at the meeting. When I opened my Bible, my eyes fell on the 55th chapter of Isaiah. I read the whole chapter and felt the Lord was with me, and was telling me to come out from among them. So the first Sunday in June I asked for a home at Malmaison, though I felt too unworthy to ask for a home with such wonderful people. However, they accepted me with much love and rejoicing.

I have had poor health for four years now, and three operations in the last eleven months. I feel I am being tried as Job was, but am blessed with faith and try to be patient and bear my suffering meekly and humbly, for my God has said He would never put more on me than I would have grace to bear, nor would He ever leave or farsake me. I have found much comfort in that. I do miss the meetings so very much, and the fellowship with the saints.

I am enclosing $10.00 to renew my subscription two years, and the rest for the Indigent Fund. I did not mean to make this so long, but have wanted for a long time to tell you my experience.

I am enclosing a note written by my departed mother in 1963. I found it when cleaning house before entering the hospital May 7th, for surgery on my foot again. If you can find a place to print it in the *Signs,* I would be most grateful.

May God continue to bless you dear Editors with health and strength to continue to expound the Scriptures of our Lord and Saviour. May He give each of you every good and perfect gift and keep you under the shadow of his wing, and visit you with his grace and mercy. When you are at the throne of grace, please remember me. Your little sister in hope of etenal life.

Lillian H. Holt

THE NOTE FROM SISTER HOLT'S MOTHER

Mach 11, 1961

Dear Lil:

I have a sweet dream I want to tell you about, though I feel unworthy to tell this. I was ironing, and I looked out the door and saw a little bird sitting on a limb, and he said to me, "Come sit with me," and I said that I can't climb a tree; and he flew away. I began to cry, and he came back again, and said again, "Come sit with me, and I began to cry again. He flew down and took me in his arms, and we flew away.

Now Lil, I feel too unworthy to put this on paper, but I felt I wanted to tell you, for I feel sure it was the Lord talking to me.

This took place two years ago today: March 14, 1961.

An unworthy sister,
Sallie B. Hall

Rt. 2, Box 143
Hurricane, W. Va. 25526

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

Hope you both are enjoying good health. We are very well but not able to visit you in your church, for we would love to visit in your meetings. We are going to church some, but not as much as we would like for we can't drive any more. We have to depend on our children to take us, and they have to work and can't take us as often as they would like to.

We are sending you a check of $25.00

for the Indigent Fund.

Love and sweet fellowship.

Mose and Lizzie Johnson

REMINISCENCES OF MARY PARKER

(Continued)

The churches for which my father labored were all, save the one near our home situated in different counties, and could not at that time be reached by rail. When not in school I was sometimes allowed to accompany father to an appointment. Sometimes he would relate some interesting adventure or scene through which he had passed; again we would both be silent, enjoying the lovely scenes of nature as we drove over hills, across streams and passed through towns, and saw pretty farm-houses. On these occasions I formed some pleasant, lasting friendships and acquaintances, and visited in some lovely, delightful homes.

At one of father's charges we were always invited to the home of a wealthy sister, who was a widow. She was exceedingly eccentric, and so irritable and cross in her manner that she could neither keep a servant nor a companion with her any length of time, and being childless she was nearly always living alone in her large, beautiful home. She wore a wig, and was always richly attired, but she neither evinced any taste or an eye to the harmony of colors in her personal appearance, nor in her rich and elegant household furnishings. Though my father was decidedly her favorite preacher, she would scold him terribly; all the while, however, giving him the easiest chair, the choicest fruit and wine, and her most delicate, delicious viands, of which she seemed to have an abundant store. She took quite a fancy to me from our first meeting, and really begged my parents to allow her to adopt me. She gave me some costly presents, but they, like all her actions and belongings, were marked with her eccentricity. In her final will she made me one of her heirs, but I was so unfortunate as never to receive the portion left for me. That I am not among the number of the fortunate in temporal things the many dark waves of adversity that have swept their bitter surges over me, has certainly proven. But, thanks be unto the Giver of all good, no bitter wave that has swept across the surface of my stormy sea has been so dark, no storm-cloud has brought such blackness over the clearness of my sky, but that through it the rays of the sun could break, and that underneath it might be seen the bright gleams of the "silver lining." Oh! the love of God, that has interlined and encircled my entire life like a "silver" or a "gold lining" indeed. How wonderful it all seems, and how strange that our blessed Lord, like we read of the love of Boaz for Ruth, should have loved and cared for us, and shielded our tender footsteps, even when we thought we were strangers to him. Are we not filled with wonder, as was Ruth, why we should find such favor from our dear Lord when we believed we were afar off from Him, strangers in a strange land? Oh! at the thought of such sweet, soul-saving, soul-cheering love, does not the heart swell with emotion, and does not the "soul" mount up with wings as eagles?" "We are made to run and not be weary, to walk and not faint." And do we not feel to exclaim with the Psalmist: "Bless the Lord, Oh, my soul; and all that is within me bless His holy name."

About the time of the transition of my happy childhood into my early girlhood the late terrible war broke out. Who can look back to that time, when the very foundation of this happy, prosperous nation shook as with the thundering of a mighty volcano, when the "Goddess of Liberty" drew her mantle of midnight darkness about her, her eyes a fountain of tears, and when she, "like Rachel, was made to weep for her children, and would not be comforted," without having all the heart stirred to

its very depths? Truly that was a time of our dear nation's darkest hour in history, when it seemed that father was against son, brother against brother; or relationship between twin sisters or brothers, was broken in twain, and the golden bowl containing love, crushed to atoms. Out from the mansions and the homes of culture and wealth, as well as from the rude log cabins, went the dear, noble men of our nation to lay their lives a willing sacrifice upon the altar of what each soul believed to be the right of liberty. In those terrible days, North or South, East or West, scarce one home could be found whose hearth-stone was not saddened, or threshold darkened by the shadow of death, or out from under whose roof some loved one had not gone, never more to return. As one brings up the memory of those awful times, how we ought to thank the blessed Lord that He has, through His infinite mercy, goodness and love, once more given our nation peace.

From among our family group, two brothers joined a company being formed at Mt. Sterling, Ohio. One was young and afflicted with heart disease, and before he was in the army one year he was discharged. The other one, who left a young, beautiful wife and sweet little boy, was out five years. He was a Lieutenant, and lost his dear, precious, noble life at the terrible battle of Mission Ridge. His beautiful young wife and the dear little boy became very dear to us all, and although she made her father's house her home, she and the child spent all or part of each summer with us in our dear home amid the beautiful green hills. The years 1865 and 1866 were eventful ones in my journey of life, for it was on one calm summer evening of the first year, after a season of great mental darkness, struggle and doubt, that I trust the "mists were all rolled away" from my soul, the barriers of sin were removed and the pardoning mercy and love of Jesus flowed like a peaceful river into my soul. Father and mother and the younger brother, with the little errand boy, had retired. My older brother and my sister-in-law were sitting on the long veranda playing on the concertina and clarionet, and accompanying the instruments with their voices. I sat apart, feeling that the burden of my soul was too heavy to bear. The moon had risen in great beauty, and its calm rays flooded the place where I sat. Hastily arising I went to the orchard and knelt down under the shadow of a dark, spreading tree to try to pour out the burden of my soul to God, when a peace and calmness filled my whole being, a flood of golden glory seemed to envelope me that no words of mine can describe. The joy was *unspeakable* and full of glory, and only those can know of its sweetness who have felt its power, for the Apostle says it is *"unspeakable"*. Soon after this another lady, one who was spiritually minded, the daughter of the late Dr. Taylor, of S——, came to visit us, and with her I had much pleasant spiritual intercourse. Our home was filled with company nearly all that summer, a number of both gentlemen and ladies came from a distance, and a great many young people came out from Logan from time to time. This made our household duties quite heavy, and, with no efficient help to be found, my mother and I were often overworked. During the latter part of the summer the disease to which I am now a helpless prey, again showed itself. One morning, one of my limbs pained me as I went about my duties, and the trouble increased as the morning advanced. I drew off my shoe and hose, and just above the ankle found a bright red spot which seemed like burning fire. By nightfall these bright spots were to the knee, and I soon had a hard chill with high temperature and difficult respiration. Next day father took me to our family physician. He at once seemed puzzled, said he was not prepared to treat the case, and advised my father to have me examined by the doctors in Logan. But they seemed as much lost as the country physician, and said it was a very interesting as well as a peculiar case. Oh! if they only

had known and could have then given me a remedy to eradicate rather than just cover up the disease, so that like fire it should again break forth with renewed fury, undermining the most precious boon allotted to mortals, that of health, what a blessing it would have been. But just here comes the thought that had it been the will of my Heavenly Father to give me this boon, He was *able* to have given it. Was it to bring me to know the dear Saviour better—to bring me into this close, precious fellowship with Him, through the fellowship of suffering, that He withheld the healing remedy from me? So often during that time and all along my pathway, did I most fervently pray to be brought nearer and nearer to Him, "even though it be a cross that raiseth me." Most truly did I feel to say,

"Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to Thee."

Also, so often was the breathing of my very soul expressed in lines like this:

"Oh! for a closer walk with God
A calm and heavenly frame,
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb."

We have all heard the story of the man who was going backward on the brink of a mighty, yawning abyss, and who, all unknown to himself, would have soon gone reeling into its awful depths, down the dizzy height, had not a friend, who beheld him from the other side, struck him a blow which threw his body reeling the other way. So I believe the kind hand of Providence sometimes, all unknown and unseen by us, strikes us a blow which, though it wounds and hurts, yet is given through infinite love, to save us and sanctify us unto Himself. Better by far is it to have one hour of sweet communion with the Father, through the intercession of Jesus, His dear Son, than a whole lifetime of earthly pleasure, if it be to the exclusion of heavenly joys. Richer by far do I deem myself, and infinitely more favored, to have dear Jesus for my friend, to be allowed to seek Him in prayer, to believe on Him and to come so near that we can almost touch the hem of His garment, with His dear presence sanctifying every pain, every loss, every heartache, and the fleeing away of each darling earthly hope; better by far to me is all this than would be health, wealth, the most ecstatic earthly bliss, which must vanish away as the dew of the morning, without the felt presence and love of my ever-blessed Saviour and Redeemer, who is the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

At the time when my terrible disease manifested itself in the inflammation and swelling of my limbs, I was confined to my room five weeks. Those weeks were filled with great unrest and disquiet, and I imagined myself quite a martyr for having been shut in so long. I was never quite my healthy. buoyant self again. Some months after this my mother had unexpected company and dispatched me to the barn *in* great haste to get fresh eggs. Over one of the stables was a hay-mow, filled to the joists with sweet-scented hay. Into this I climbed, filled my apron with the freshly-laid eggs and started to descend to the barn-floor, when my feet slipped and I went reeling down into an anteroom of the stable, whose stalls were occupied with sadde and farm horses. I thought I had broken my back, and lay helpless quite a while, but finally went to the house and, strange to say, said nothing about the severity of my fall, nor told them of the pain I was enduring. That night, however, I suffered so that I could not remain in my room, and went down to the sitting-room, where I spent the night in great pain. From that time until this, I have not known what it is to exist without bodily pain. I went from home to school soon after this and suffered greatly, had no appetite, and when I did take food or drink would almost instantly have to throw it up. Most physicians think the sore or growth began in the stomach at this time and was the result of my fall. In the year 1866, on the fifth day of December, I was led into the watery

grave by a visiting minister, and buried with my dear Saviour in baptism, and taken into the fellowship of Scott's Creek Church. It was a most beautiful day. The night before we had a heavy rain-fall with vivid thunderings and lightning, but on this late December morning the sun rose clear against the azure sky. As we drove to the baptismal waters I thought, as I gazed upon the great vault of heaven, it reminded me of a vast deep blue sea, with here and there a white, fleecy cloud looking so like a white sail upon the smooth surface of the ocean. Oh! the sweet memory of that peaceful Sabbath day of the soul when I was baptized, and the sweet fragrance of the spices and frankincense and myrrh flowed like holy incense into the peaceful chambers of my soul, and I was carried on the wings of His love, above all temptation, sorrow and pain.

"And I could not believe
That I ever should grieve,
That I should suffer again."

But, alas! how little we understand ourselves; how vain to think we can take one step without the help of Him who so truly says, "without Me ye can do nothing." How soon I found my frail bark moving on the Sea of Galillee amid a fierce black storm, whose raging waves and billows, seemed to engulf me until, like Peter, I cried, "Lord save," and the dear beloved voice again came floating over the stormy sea: "It is I; be not afraid." Oh, the strength that comes to us when Jesus speaks! the rest, the calmness we feel when we know that "He walketh upon the sea," and that with His own dear hand He will stay the mad waves. O blessed, blessed Jesus, dear Saviour of my soul, "let me hide myself in Thee!" "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I," there to abide and bathe forever in the eternal love of God.

O, Time! how great are thy ravages, how strong is thine arm, how sure and unceasing are the strokes of thy sickle as it is thrust into the rich harvests of home, and every individual life! If only thy destroying hand could have been staid, if thy foot-prints had never entered the sacred precincts of my dear happy home, then would all its joys, its tender pleasant associations have clustered about me still. But no hearts are so loving and true, no lives so noble and useful, no home so sacred and dear but that thou wilt thrust into them all the keen blade of thy destroying hand and bring the glory of all transitory things down to dust and ashes. "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust," should be graven upon thy breast, should be the motto of thy destructive mission.

In a very short time after I confessed my Saviour before the world, in our dear old home changes began to come thick and fast. My youngest brother was absent at school, and my older brother, who had so long carried on the farm, and who was the life of our home, became restless and dissatisfied, and purchased a dry goods store in Ewing, a small village not far from our country home, and went out from us, leaving a great vacancy, casting a dark shadow over my life. He did not marry until the following spring, and on coming home every Saturday night many were the expressions of unchanged affection for his sister, and fervently did he assure me that his wife's love would make no change in his affections for the dear ones in the old home; but that it did, and that the cares of his own family, and the steps of time together have almost obliterated his affection, the fact that only once since I have been shut within the confines of four walls have I seen his face, certainly shows. But such are the heart-rendings, the sad scenes, the vicissitudes of this transitory life. How good to have a "good hope through grace," a hope whose bright beacon-light points away beyond the fleeting things of this world to an eternal home where love never dies or grows cold, where we will listen no more for the coming of dear feet, look no more for the missing face, listen not again for the familiar voice, but where, in the full, sweet enjoyment of that infinite love "whose fullness filleth all in all," we

shall bask forever in the smiles of him in "whose presence there is fullness of joy; at whose right hand there are pleasures forever more."

(Continued next month)

AN INVITATION

An invitation to all friends, relatives, and members of the Church to come to Pearl Dudley's home on Rt. 1, Box 382, Hardy, Va. 24101. Phone 721-2541, for singing and get together on Sunday August 11th, from 2 until 6 p.m.

PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The Pleasant Valley Association will be held with Shepherd Fold Church, 815 Little York Road, Houston, Texas, August 16, 17, and 18, 1974.

All believers of Salvation by Grace are welcome.

Elder C. M. Haygood, Mod.
Elder G. O. Shipman, Clerk

SEVEN MILE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Seven Mile Primitive Baptist Association*, the Lord willing, is appointed to meet with the church at Mingo on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 13, 14, and 15, 1974.

The meeting house is located 5miles south of Dunn, N. C. off 421 highway. Turn east off 421 highway at State Road 1005, continue one-half mile to the meeting house.

We cordially invite ministering brethren and friends of like precious faith to meet with us,

Eld. W. D. Godwin, Mod.
James G. Yound, Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Smith River Association is appointed to convene with Bell Spur Church, located in Carroll County, Va., Friday, Saturday and 1st Sunday in September, 1974, the Lord willing.

The church is located just off Blue Ridge Parkway. Turn under Parkway very short distanct from Mile Post 184.

May we look forward to meeting with many of the saints there?

Amos I. Hash

ORIGINAL SOUTH ARKANSAS ASSOCIATION

The *Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association* will convene on Friday morning before the 3rd Sunday in September, 1974, with the Whitewater Church near Tinsman, Arkansas, in the Watson community.

Those coming from north or south will come into Tinsman on Highway 274. Anyone there can direct you to the church.

We are always glad to have visitors either at our Association or any of our churches.

Ross Watson, Clerk

HIS WAYS

I asked for grace to lift me high,
Above the world's depressing cares;
God sent me sorrows—with a sigh
I said, "He has not heard my prayers."

I asked for light, that I might see
My path along life's thorny road;
But clouds and darkness shadowed me
When I expected light from God.

I asked for peace, that I might rest
To think my sacred duties o'er,
When, lo such horrors filled my breast
As I had never felt before.

"And, oh," I cried, "can this be prayer
Whose plaints the steadfast mountains move?
Can this be heaven's prevailing care?
And, O my God, is this thy love?

But soon I found that sorrow worn
As Duty's garment, strength supplies,
And out of darkness meekly borne
Unto the righteous, light doth rise.

And soon I found that fears which stirred
My startled soul God's will to do,
On me more lasting peace conferred
Than in life's calm I ever knew.

Then, Lord, in thy mysterious ways
Lead my dependent spirit on,
And whensoe'er it kneels and prays,
Teach it to say, "Thy will be done."

Let it one thought, one hope, one prayer,
Thine image seek, thy glory see;
Let every other wish and care
Be left confidingly to thee.

(Submitted)

(From an old volume—author unknown)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP

DISTRIBUTE

THE SIGNS

(To June 1, 1974)

A Friend, Conn.	$25.00
J. E. Lawrence, Va.	3.00
Mrs. Arthur Fuller, Ark.	3.00
Mrs. Rosie Spicer, Ala.	1.00
Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.	2.00
Alto Golden, Ala.	1.00
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R. F. D. 1, Box 539 **Beechwood Lane**
Danville, Va. 24541

NAME OF INDIGENT FUND CHANGED

Our readers will note that the name of the INDIGENT FUND has been changed to CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP DISTRIBUTE THE SIGNS. The fund continues for the same purpose as before, but we like the new heading better.

We are always glad to receive the writings of brethren and friends on scriptural and experimental subjects which are suitable to publish in the *Signs*. We hope our Elders and brethren and sisters will be mindful of this, and will write for publication. — EDITORS

EDITORIAL

TWO ELDERS ADDED TO OUR LIST OF ASSOCIATE EDITORS

By request of the Trustees and Editors of the *Signs*, we are pleased to announce that Elder D. Alex McColl and Elder J. Stewart McColl have agreed to serve as Associate Editors of the *Signs of the Times*. These brethren live in Canada and are pastors of the churches Elder George Ruston served for many years. They have visited among the brethren in the States, where their preaching and fellowship has been enjoyed and well received.

We welcome these brethren to our staff on the *Signs*, and pray that the Lord will bless them to write Editorials, etc., to the praise of our Lord and Saviour and to the comfort and edification of the brethren and all believers of the truth.

The gift of preaching and writing is of the Lord, and we feel that our readers will join us in welcoming them, praying that they may be blessed to contend for the doctrine of God our Saviour, which has been upheld for more than one hundred and forty years in the columns of the *Signs*.

Their names and addresses are added to our masthead for the convenience of the brethren.

In the best of bonds,
David V. Spangler,
John D. Wood
Editors

COPIED FROM THE JANUARY, 1958 SIGNS:

WE ARE STILL STANDING ON THE SAME PRINCIPLES

The principles on which the Signs of the Times was founded in 1832 have been reiterated many times during the past 125 years: both by their re-statement as first listed, and by their being the very substance of every scriptural doctrine which has been maintained.

As we begin a new volume we want to reassure our readers that we are not the least bit inclined to deviate from them. We believe these principles are statement of the fundamentals on which all truth is founded; and that they briefly state our own understanding of the teachings of the Scriptures, as well as mention some institutions which teach doctrines which are decidedly un-scriptural.

Why sinners are saved (because God loved them); who are the saved (those chosen or elected of God); how they are saved (by the atonement of Christ); and how they are brought to the knowledge of the truth (by the work of the Spirit in their hearts), are things which God has made known in his word. They are unchangeable things — truths of God; and, while men may teach otherwise, or believe otherwise, they have not, nor cannot, annul in any sense the things of God.

We greatly prefer not to be, ". . . tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." *(Ephesians 4:14)*

J. D. W.

The following is copied from the January 1, 1859 issue of the Signs, written by Elder Gilbert Beebe:

"The same leading sentiments which we published, and to which we pledged our paper twenty-six years ago, are still nailed to our mast-head. We have found no occasion to either change or alter them. They are as follows:

The Signs of the Times—Devoted to the Old School Baptist cause—maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfections of the Great Jehovah,—the revelation which he has made of himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, that these Three are One.—I John v. 8.

2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.

3. Eternal and Unconditional Election.

4. The Total Depravity and Just Condemnation of Fallen Man.

5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

6. The Sovereign, Irresistable, and, in all

cases, effectual work of the Holy Ghost in Quickening and Regenerating the sons of God.

7. The Final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God by Grace.

8. The Resurrection of the Dead, and Eternal Judgment.

9. The Church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers—that to her is given able Ministers of the New Testament —that the Schiptures are the only infallible Rule of Faith and Practice to the Saints of God.

10. *The Signs of the Times* will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath School Unions, &c., &c., waging war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of Institutions.

With this plain statement of our sentiments, we issued our first proposals for this paper in the fall of 1831; and if at any time or under any circumstances, we have swerved from these leading sentiments, we are not conscious of it. Certainly it has never been our intention to do so. We then believed that the first and sixth articles fully involved the doctrine of the Eternal Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ, and implied his Mediatorial identity as the Head over all things to his Church, and the Eternal, vital union of Christ and his seed, which are a "Chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, and a Peculiar People. A seed that shall serve him, and be counted to him for a Generation, and a people which he has carried and borne all the days of old."

Such are still our views; and to their defense we pledge such ability as the Lord may graciously bestow on us."

EDITORIAL
Ephesians 5:25,33

"Hubands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."

"If any man teach otherwise than this, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting (sick) about questions and strifes of words," etc. (I Tim. 6:3,4.) The text quoted above gives all instructions as to the behaviour of husband and wife towards each other, and it is based on the fact that this was the way that the Husband of the bride the Lamb's wife had (and has) for her. If we are not blessed of God to take the whole text as outlined above, both in our attitude toward our wife and husband, and the doctrine that declares His everlasting regard for His bride, then we are left to get all of the comfort available out of teaching otherwise.

First, this is exclusive in whom it is addressed to—no one has a part in it save the children of God; it is inclusive, in that it includes them all, both as to their conduct towards each other, as well as to the rebuke and comfort that is in this glorious writing; and it is conclusive, that is, it is clear and concise and thorough, making it clear that no intruder has any part in these blessings of grace.

Our father in the morning of time loved his wife. The creation and the formation of each of them was exclusively the work of God. Present in the midst of this creative work was God and His creatures. No other god was present, either in assisting or in an advisory capacity. It was God that saw the need and then made Adam a helpmeet. This suggesting, nor this forming of Eve, was not predicated on any of the creatures. It was God's mercy bestowed in the very outset, and in

every so called tragic circumstances from them until now, it has been the mercy of God unfolding to His people. Pity that man or women that is not acquainted with the care of the living Husband for His people, and that are out promulgating the false theory that man is in any sense his own Saviour. The two frail subjects found it out right early, and four thousand years later another poor frail vessel found it out (Acts 4:12), and this care of the Husband for His bride has not diminished today, for the saints of God are yet lifting their broken and jarred voices in praise to Him as their Saviour.

What divine foresight is displayed in Adam being given as a figure of Him that was to come. Have we anyone that dares to suggest that Adam or Eve had any part in foreseeing or arranging the need for this phenominal occurence? Have we any one that would suggest that Adam, being a figure of Him that was to come, was the result of Adam's aptitude for handling his affairs? Have we got anyone that would suggest that this coming about was shared by Adam in desiring praise to his Maker, with Him in His purpose to get praise for Himself in the creation? If in any sense of the word Adam's goodness, aptitude, ingenuity, helped in any degree to bring his being a figure of Him that was to come, then I say with earnestness, with kindness, with brotherly love, but with awe before my God, that men and women will eternally harp praises to Adam and Christ for their part in saving them.

If I passed by lightly the relationship that must exist between natural husbands and wives, that tendency will lead me to deal in a light manner with the gospel of the grace of God. The husband is the head of the wife; he is the saviour of his wife as Christ is the Saviour of His bride. That is the order enacted in the morning of creation. Adam did not decide that he needed a helpmeet; he did not come to his Maker and ask to be put to sleep; he did not suggest that she be made from one of his ribs. To write and preach like that would certainly be the writing and preaching of silly women (churches). I want to emphasize that the relationship ordered between them was not the suggestion and work of either one of them. This came about through God, and through God alone (Rom. 11:36). Expounding this text may strike someone wrong, but it is not what I am writing that strikes them wrong but it is what God has said. The woman is of the man, not the man of the woman; the man was not created for the woman, but the woman for the man. She was not in need, but he was in need. It is not that the woman arranged and supplied his need, but it is that God supplied his need. This arrangement still stands; this order is still in force, it never having been abrogated by Him that put it into force. All of the lib movements among women will never erase this order from the Creator's arrangement.

It doesn't matter how much mistreatment that men practice on their helpmeet, it will not get them anywhere. They may try to reverse the order by making her a slave, but their attempts at reversal will end in failure before God; as will the attempt of the woman at reversal of God's order. This heavenly order places the man in an obligatory position to be the husband of one wife, to be her head and her saviour or provider. He is to go ahead; he is to watch for her welfare; he is to love her, not to be a duty bound husband, but to love her, she being of him, of his flesh, and of his bones. God inserted into this divine order a directive that was also further figurative of the way in which Christ would love His bride. No man has ever hated his own flesh. Let us, dear readers, remember that we are treating on heavenly principles, on the divine relationship that exist between every heavenly union that will ever exist between a man and his bride. She is of his flesh and bones, yea, they are not twain, but they are one flesh, and no man ever yet hated his own flesh.

It is not that he is of her bones and

her flesh, but it is that she is of him, of his bones and his flesh. She, in her flesh, is as much to him as his hand or his foot, and if they are living in holy matrimony, he will treat her flesh as he treats his flesh in his own body. I do hope, and would, when blessed of God, pray to that end, that my readers see what I am trying to lay hold upon. There is not anything in the realm of nature that is as beautiful as matrimony. In the very outset, our Creator arranged it for our benefit while in this life on the shores of time. I desire that you notice the order; he is her head; he is her saviour; he is her husband. The order in regard to her is that she is his helpmeet; she is to be subject to him in everything; where he is to love her, she is to reverence him. Objections will be raised by the rebellious to God's order; they will object to be subject to him in everything. That objection is one of the greatest contributing factors in our distress as a nation, and the objection to this heavenly order has brought more distress among the Primitive Baptists than anything else in our midst. This subjection that the wife was placed under to her husband was not any more rigid and demanding than was the order to the husband that he love her. Have you thought how rigid and strict the order was to him? He is to love her as Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it. If this divine relationship is viewed in the perspective which such a sacred matter would seem to demand, his loving her with as strong a love as Christ had for His bride, and she having the same reverence for him that the bride of Christ has for her Husband, it will be such a mutual relationship as will bring about vying with one another to please.

Now I have no hesitancy in quoting and writing on this relationship between husbands and wives. It will not be a pleasant condition when a minister is frowned upon because that he treats on things that the eight men treated on (Eccl. II:2—the New Testament writers). However, as it was with Paul, even so, it will be with us. We will have in mind the great and sublime mystery of Christ and the church. If diligent men of God, we will enjoy our brethren (or better, as John was, our children) walking in the truth, but the nearest and dearest object in every God-called minister, is to present every man perfect in Jesus Christ (Col. I:28); to preach the gospel of the grace of God; to preach Christ and Him crucified, as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Thus, with that ability that the Lord is pleased to give, I present to you the Lord Jesus Christ, the Husband of his bride, his people.

The fundamental sweetness in the gospel of the grace of God is the theme of Christ having given Himself for the church: for His chosen people. Yet, the wisdom of this world has never known it, and will never be able to find it out. In fact, this world is in such a lamentable condition as pertaining to the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ that it is not trying to find it out. It does not know anything about Him, and how could it be thought that it would be seeking to know the love of God. It is not to be doubted but that one here and there among (that is by membership, by association) the organizations of religious forces in the world knows something about the love of God, but save for the church of the living God there isn't an organization on earth that knows anything about the love of God. This may seem uncalled harsh to say, but every reader is aware that every religious body in the world except the church of Jesus Christ has the love of God backwards. Despite the fact that the mills of ecclesiastical learning are grinding out their thousands each year to teach what is purported to be the love of God, they are all, as bodies, teaching that if dead sinners will love God that He will in turn love them. This is not true. If the ministers of Jesus Christ beat about the bush about this false promise so as not to offend the tender-footed, they are partakers of this evil system. The dogmatism of every relig-

ious organization in the world save the true church is that sinners have got to love God first. If they do not do this, they will die and go to hell. And I say for one and all to hear and to read and to know that this is not the truth. Here is the truth, here is love, not that we loved God, but that God loved us.

I have said again and again, and say once more, that when we love something, or someone, we will be found seeking ways to serve that which we love. Lip service will not satisfy us if we love a thing or person. We will be found doing all that we can to pay homage and adoration to a hobby or a wife or a husband. In the case of poor earthly husbands and wives, we often realize how poor and how fragil, and how far that it seems our being a husband or a wife falls short; but as I present or preach or write the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ, I present Him as having no lack, no short comings, no deficiencies, in loving His bride. He loved her in eternity with an everlasting love. This is really and truly first love. This is a satisfying doctrine; it is a satisfying love. He loved us before we had an existence as fallen sinners. God works in all His dealings with His people by appointment. He always appoints before hand and works according to appointment. The appointment always embraces the need of His own, and all of the things or means that God uses to bring it about and the getting of it to the needy sinner at the proper time. Husbands and wives (the godly kind) would do this, but how often we are not able, but how delightful it is that I have a precious hope that He has taught me my deficiency as well as His efficiency.

He loved His bride and gave Himself for her. He loved her while she was dead in sin; He loved her although fallen in sin; He loved her although down in degradation in the wilderness; He loved her although she was across the sea from Him. His loving her moved Him to give Himself for her, to go down into the wilderness and bring her out, to quicken her into life eternal, to cross the sea to her side, putting her in her right mind, breaking the chains that bound her, dressing her and sending her to her friends. He did all this for her; this was the preliminary step for her sanctification and cleansing. Here we see Him working before the espousal. We see Him going before she even knows Him, or cares for a betrothal or an espousal. The fountain of cleansing had to be opened before the cleansing. The process of getting her ready for presentation to Himself was all His work. He loved her, and gave Himself for her that he might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word. His love set her apart. Objections may roll in that this sanctification means more than setting apart, more than election. But it does not. It means to set apart. In fact, the root word and its derivatives always means that,—no more, no less. Thus He gave Hemself for her that He might set her apart and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word. All of these blessings follow in sequence; they are in succession from only one source, the Lord Jesus Christ the Lover and Husband of His chosen people. He loved the church; He gave Himself for the church; He set it apart; He cleansed it; He wrought this miracle with the washing of water by the word. (See John 15:3)

This work in its entirety is His own work. The presentation of her to Himself must be all His work. In the earth we parents furnish the trousseau, and the father presents his daughter in marriage, but this is not the way with Christ and His bride. He furnishes everything, and presents her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that she be holy and without blemish. And His love continues unabated. He woos her with the kisses of His love. He acknowledges the perfection of His work by assuring her that there is not any spot in her; that she is the fairest among women (S. S. I:8;4:7), and how

lovely and how delightful it is as she is brought under the threshold of His house, and what saving graces fall from His lips as He says, "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is lovely." (S. S. 3:14)

No man has ever yet hated His own flesh. Dear reader, may God give you this cordial for the balance of your journey. This Man has not, and cannot, and will not, ever hate His own bride. Instead of that, He nourishes and cherishes it. He does both. Mark it well. It is not needful to mark it at all. He will bring it daily fresh from the supply storehouse. I do hope that the Lord will bless my poor thoughts to your good and His glory, and give you to know that there is not any root pig or starve in this land that flows with milk and honey. He that nourishes you cherishes you. He does both; He does both at the same time. He loves, and those that He loves, He feeds.

In the abounding of this cherishing and nourishing by the Husband, His sovereignty also abounds that He is watching and waiting. He is not waiting for us, but He is waiting *on* us. As a mother lifts the head of a hardheaded son to feed him some nourishing broth, just so, in a perfect way, does our blessed Husband raise our hard and rebellious head and pours in life sustaining nourishment, and purges our hard and stony heart and gives an insight into the love of God for sinners.

Yes, we will grow negligent and lukewarm; we will become wan and sickly, but we will not need the apothecaries' art for the potion (2 Chron. 16:14), nor will we be bothered by the ointment nor the dead flies that comes from the nutrients of such apothecaries (Eccl. 10:1); but we will be fed or nourished by Him who feeds us His flesh and His blood; and this will purge us of our negligence, and cure us of our wan condition, and put the bloom of His youth, and the vigor that flows from the womb of the morning on our cheek and in our step. (Psa. 110:3)

By this cherishing and nourishing, we will live and move and have our being (standing) in our Husband today, and evermore. By such care as this the church, the people of God, continues today and evermore. The beauty that is ours through Him will remain. The infirmities that come with our earthly husbands and wives will not be known, for the earth and its beauties shall fade but the nourishment furnished the bride of the Lord Jesus Christ purifies and renews and keeps, and as His countenance shines upon her, she remains fair as the moon, clear as the sun (S.S. 6:10), and the tongue of her learned Husband (Isa. 50:4) is as the breaking forth of a new morning upon her; she remains healthy and is filled with longing for Him and His vineyards, and is satisfied to sit down in the noonday with the assembly of her associates. (Ruth 2:14; Mal. 3:16; Psa. 122:1; Mat. 14:19).

W.D.G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

REMARKS ON MATTHEW 13:44-46.

Sister Peck, of Catskill, N.Y., has desired our views of the parables of the treasure hid in a field, and of the merchantman seeking goodly pearls, &c., presented in this portion of the divine testimony. Unwilling as we are to withhold from any of God's dear children such views of the Scriptures as we have, we feel more hesitation in writing on the parables generally, than on those positive and emphatic declarations of the word which declare the truth, which parables are intended to illustrate. Parables or figures may bear some analogy to other subjects than those which were primarily set forth by them; and it is sometimes difficult for us, with our limited understanding, to tell with certainty the precise design, or application intended by our Lord in the use of them.

The two parables now under consideration, both have reference to the Kingdom of heaven; thus far we are certain, for it is so written; and therefore, cannot, without violence to the truth, be applied to the world, or to the children of men indiscriminately. For the same Jesus, who spake them, has said: "My kingdom is not of the world, but it is," stated in both these parables, "of heaven." It is neither of the world nor visible to the world; for, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see it." This kingdom of heaven, Jesus says, was prepared for those who are and shall be found at the King's right hand, from the foundation of the world, and was revealed by the angel of the Lord Jesus to John, as coming down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride for her husband. And Jesus testifies that it is a kingdom which he has received of his Father, and which he has appointed to his disciples; and farther, that it is their Father's good pleasure that the *little flock* of Jesus, shall inherit it. In the words of God it is declared to be an everlasting kingdom, and a dominion that shall not end. And all the saints are taught by the word and by the spirit to confess unto God, "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen." In its gospel organization or manifestation, in this world, it is a kingdom which the God of heaven has set up. A tabernacle which God hath pitched, and not men; and can in this respect be easily distinguished from all the religious organizations on earth which are set up by the wisdom or works of men; its maker and builder is God.

If we would be instructed by the parable, we must not forget that it is the kingdom of heaven, and not the kingdom of Satan, or anti-Christ, *that it is like treasure hid in a field, &c.*, and that there must be a sense in which this kingdom is *like* treasure which is so hidden. Our object is now to enquire after that likness, or resemblance. If the earthly nature of the saints constituted this kingdom, we could not see how it could be hidden; but we are expressly informed that flesh and blood doth not inherit it; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption; it must, therefore, be a spiritual kingdom, which none but they who are born again, of an incorruptible seed; not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, can enter, or inherit. That which is born of the spirit is spirit, and this kingdom embraces the spirit of just men made perfect, by their vital union with the king, and their interest in his atoning blood and justifying righteousness; and so far as they walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit, there is no condemnation to them; they are holy and without blame before God in love; made acceptable in the Beloved. Three questions are now presented:

1. What field is this treasure hidden in?

2. How is it hidden, and for what purpose? And

3. From whom is it hidden?

First. In a field. A field, in the common acceptation of the word, is a certain quantity, a specific portion of the surface of the earth that is set apart, and enclosed by the proprietor for the purpose of sowing seed, and from that seed producing by development, a harvest. The specific quantity of this field, is indicated in the parable in the same chapter of the leaven, as *three measures;* a measured quantity, so much, and no more. The field being a portion of the earth, may well signify the chosen, redeemed and purchased members of the human family, chosen from among men. Redeemed out of every kindred and tribe of mankind. Bought with a price. Sanctified, set apart, or enclosed, by the Spirit's sealing operations. Or, in other words, embracing the mortal bodies, of all the saints, which are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise; and predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son God; that he may be the first born among many brethren. Which bodies shall accordingly be changed at their

resurrection, and fashioned, and made like the glorious, risen body of our Lord Jesus, who is the first begotten from the dead, and the first fruits of them that slept, and in whose resurrection all the saints are begotten to a lively hope, to an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that cannot fade away; being reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God, &c.

Second. How, and for what purpose is this immortal treasure hidden in the people of God whom he hath chosen from among men? To hide, is to conceal, according to the illustration in the parable of the leaven, which was hidden in three measures of meal; and which is to work secretly but effectually in the measured quantity of meal, until the measured mass shall become perfectly assimulated to the nature and quality of the leaven which was hidden in it. The leaven hidden in the meal, thus signifying the same as the treasure hidden in the field. The three measures, having reference to the people of God, under the three dispensations; patriarchal, legal and gospel. The holy seed from heaven, being the germ, or the entire kingdom of heaven in the germ, is the treasure, hidden in the elect of God out of Adam's race, as the leaven was hid in the measures of meal, or as the mustard seed, which had in it the tree which should be developed, expanded, and made manifest. But first, the seed must be cast in the earth, Christ, who, in his Mediatorial character, as the Son of God and Head of the Church, is the embodiment of this seed. (And that seed is Christ.) Christ said, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth alone," and thus applied the figure to himself as dying for our offences and rising for our justification, and securing the full harvest of what the seed should develope. The life of the Church is hid with Christ in God; and God was in Christ, reconciling, or subduing all things to himself; and the angel, or spirit of Christ, was in and with his people, from the days of Abel, and he carried them and bare them all the days of old. And still in this third measure of the meal, we have the same treasure in earthen vessels, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory; and it is so that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

Third. From whom is it hidden? From the wise and prudent; from the learned and great of the world, and from all natural men? God hath hidden it effectually from them, because so it seemed good in his sight. And the same God, and for the same reason or purpose has revealed it to babes, that no man should glory in the flesh, but that he that glorieth shall glory in the Lord. Except a man be born again, whatever may be the amount of his wisdom, learning, or of his work of willing or of doing, he cannot see the kingdom of God, for it cometh not by observation; it is hidden in the field, and shall be there concealed from human scrutiny until God shall make it manifest.

The which, when a man hath found, he hideth. Who is the man that hath found this treasure in the field? It cannot be those men from whom God hath hidden these things, unless men have power to thwart, or make void the purpose of God, and that they cannot do, unless they are wiser and stronger than he. Men in nature who cannot see the kingdom, would make a sorry work of searching for what they cannot see. And we are told in the Scriptures, that neither the kingdom, nor any of the things of the spirit of God can be seen by any man who is not a subject of the new birth. The natural man, or unregenerated man, however wise, and prudent, receiveth not the things of the spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

This then, settles that matter; that it cannot possibly be a natural man, that findeth the hidden treasure in the field; and if he could find it, all his possessions will not sell in any market, for a price sufficient to purchase the field in which the treasure is concealed. This field cannot be bought with cor-

ruptible things, as silver and gold; nothing short of the precious blood of Christ, is an equivalent for this field. It was the Man Christ Jesus who came down from heaven to seek and to save that which was lost. The Man which is my fellow, or equal, saith the Lord of hosts. He is not only the Mighty God of heaven and of earth, but he sustains equally the character of the Man of God's right hand. The Man whom God has made strong for himself. The Man that shall be and is a hiding place from the wind, and covert from the tempest, &c.; and the Man by whom God will judge the world in righteousness at the last day. This Man of God's right hand, was made flesh and dwelt among us. Was manifested in the flesh, seen of angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory. He took the responsible work upon himself, saying, I will both seek my flock, and find them out. He possessed in his own right an interest, a treasure in the field, which he came to look after, to seek to find and to redeem. And he found Jacob, in a waste howling wilderness, and he is successful in his researches. He knows where to look, and with his omniscient eye he has the power to see. All things are naked and open to the eye of him with whom we have to do. And the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.

But, sister Peck will enquire, Did the Man Christ Jesus sell all that he had and buy the field in which this treasure was hidden?

We reply, So it appears to us. We must remember the language is figurative, it is a parable. Jesus was rich; but for our sake became poor. The glory which he had with the Father before the world began, was exceedingly rich and valuable; but all was laid aside; and the form of a servant put on. A babe is born in Bethlehem; he reclines in a manger; there is no room for him in the inn. The foxes have holes to burrow in, the birds have nests, adapted to their comfort and convenience, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. But is all this humiliation and poverty enough to buy the field? Eternal Justice demands an infinitely greater price. His life, his blood, the Shepherd pays. Himself he gives, for nothing less could buy the field; and the field must be bought, that is, redeemed. Now, we ask, Has this field ever been bought by any other man than the Man which is the fellow of the Lord of hosts, whose name is The God of the whole Earth? And did it not cost him all that he was and all he had? "He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people," &c. If we are right in understanding the field to be the chosen vessels of God's election from the tribes of the earth, and the kingdom of heaven, as that which was hidden in them; then we must regard the final resurrection of the bodies of all the saints, changed to the fashion, purity and immortality of Christ's glorious body, inevitable and certain, as the redemption of the purchased possession. The Lord Jesus did not sell all that he had to buy life for the Church; for that life he himself is; but he gave his life for them. Hence Paul says to the saints, "Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are his." And to the Elders the charge is given, "Feed the flock of God which he hath purchased with his own blood." He findeth the treasure in the field, he hideth it, and for joy thereof goeth and buyeth the field. The treasure was hidden before, it still is hidden, it is in the secret place of the Most High, under the shadow of the Almighty. Hidden with Christ in God, in the safe Hiding Place, the Pavilion of God.

And for joy thereof goeth and buyeth the field. "Who for the joy which was set before him, endured the cross, and dispised the shame." Ought not Christ to suffer these things, and then enter into his glory. His life which he gave he was able to take again, as his re-

surrection has proved; and although he came forth to this work, *weeping,* he returns to his Father in glory rejoicing, bearing his sheaves with him. That spiritual, immortal and divine life which he gives, he had no occasion to buy, it was in him secure; but the vessels in which this treasure should be developed, were members of the fallen family of the earthly Adam; and the demands of the law which they in that earthly nature had transgressed, had to be met and cancelled, and the amount required was all that he had. Not one jot tittle less than Jesus Christ could pay the price; or be received as an equivalent for the purchased possession.

We have dwelt so lengthy on this parable, that we have very little space in which to express our views on the parable of the merchantman, and the goodly pearl. But we will briefly remark, that we understand this parable to be substantially the same as the one which we have considered, with some change in the figures used. As Christ is the King, and all that constitutes the kingdom of heaven, is in him, and called by his name; some suppose that he as embodying the whole Church, and especially in his connection with her, is called the Kingdom of Heaven, and is, in the sense intended, like a merchantman, seeking goodly pearls. But very unlike a merchantman offering to dispose of pearls, or to sell merchandise for a profit. All that he has advertised for sale is, Milk and Wine, garments, eye salve, &c. And all these are bestowed without money and without price; freely, graciously and unconditionally, not to the rich, but to the poor, the needy, and to those who have no money.

But as the preceding parable shows, he was seeking goodly pearls, or a treasure which was hidden. The subjects of his grace which were invaluable in his estimation, like the hidden treasure in the field, or the precious pearl in the unfathomed deeps, was to be sought by him and found. Therefore, from his radiant courts on high, he bowed his heavens and came down to seek and save that which was lost. Nor did he miss his object; the treasure he found, the field he purchased, the pearl, and the casket in which it was concealed he secured. This was a pearl of great price. All the gold of Ophir could not buy it. All the treasures of this world, all the works and merits, could not make up the amount. To estimate the price demanded by Eternal Justice demanded for this pearl, think of the cross, the spear, the nails—think of the agony, the sweat—think of the scorging, buffeting, the pain, the grief, the dying groans, the rending rocks, the opening graves, the darkened skies, the rending veil, and quaking earth. And such was the price. Justice could not take one farthing less. His holy soul was poured out unto death. His marred, pierced, but unblemished body sinks in death upon the cruel cross, and his spirit is committed to his Father in heaven. Justice sums up what is the exact amount. This, but nothing less could buy the pearl which Jesus came to seek and save. Now resounds the loud anthem!

"His work forever is complete;
Forever undisturb'd his seat;
Myriads of angels round him fly,
And sing his well gain'd victory."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe June 1, 1859)

PAUL'S UNSPEAKABLE VISION.

Reply to brother Isaac Wright, on 2 Cor. xii. 2-4, "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, or whether out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth) such a one caught up the third heaven. And I knew such a man, how that he was caught into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."

To brother Wright's first question we answer, Most undoubtedly Paul spake of what he himself had experienced, for in the connection he was speaking of his labors, trials and persecutions which he had personally experienced; and then leaving that part of his

experience, he says, I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. Secondly, as the things heard and seen were unspeakable, and such as no man can tell or make known to another, Paul could not have known the man, had he not been the very one who saw the vision.

Second. "What is the third heaven?" We have understood the first heaven to refer to the legal dispensation, wherein God's people were held under the law. The second, or new heaven, to be the church of God under the gospel dispensation. And the third, which is also called the paradise of God, to be the immediate presence of God, as realized by the spirits of just men made perfect, as shall be fully realized by all the saints in the final consummation of their happiness in immortal glory. Into this holy, happy and paradistical state, Paul was taken in his rapturous vision.

Third. "And what is the paradise to which he was caught?" Answer: It was heaven, which is not confined to any special locality, but where such visions of the unveiled glory of God are enjoyed as makes a saint perfectly unconscious, while in the enjoyment of being in the body which is so full of infirmities as to make one groan, being burdened. Such was the perfect ecstasy and transport of the apostle at the time, that he seems to have lost sight of earth and all earthly things, and so supremely blessed, that more than fourteen years of subsequent turmoil and buffeting of Satan, and the painful thorn in his flesh, had not obliterated the remembrance from his mind.

In our measure, we believe that all the saints by faith are sometimes enabled to enter within the vail, and partake of the joys of the world to come; and when these precious seasons are enjoyed, they are absent from the body and present with the Lord. We never do enjoy those heavenly seasons when we are taking thought for the body, or worrying over the selfish question, whether we are saints or not. All that we leave with God; it is enough that we enjoy his presence, and bask in the smiles of our God. This is paradise.

Fourth. "What law would have been violated by uttering the things seen and heard in the paradise of God?" It is said in the text that he heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful (or as it is rendered in the margin, *not possible*) for a man to utter. The things which, by the laws of human language, are unutterable by man, are by the law that governs and limits our language, unlawful for man to utter. We understand Paul to say that the words heard were beyond the power of human tongues to express. Thus he also speaks of the "unspeakable gift of God, in the gift of his dear Son;" because no human speech can fully express the amazing greatness of the gift. The limitation of our language forbids that human speech shall fully express the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ.

Fifth. "Was it unlawful in Paul's day to confess that Jesus was the Christ?" We know of no legitimate law that forbids it. The Jews agreed among themselves that any Jew who confessed Christ should be cast out of the synagogue; and the hight priests did straitly charge the apostles that they should not teach in his name. But Paul certainly did not allude to any such laws, for in the face of them all he shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God.

The manner of Paul's speaking of himself in the *third person,* would lead one to suppose that he was speaking of some other person than himself; but when we observe that he had been speaking of what he was and had been in the flesh, and of what he might glory in the flesh, as a Hebrew, an Israelite, as of the seed of Abraham, after the flesh, now he comes to speak of what he was in Christ and what he had experienced in his inner man, and the distinction between the old man and the new, that when in his vision he could not tell whether he was in the body or out of the body. Of such a one, as he knew in Christ, he says, I will glory;

yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities. How often the apostle speaks of himself as the embodiment of two distinct *persons,* men or natures, the one in Christ, and the other in the flesh: "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved me and given himself for me."—Gal. ii. 20. "For I know that in *me,* that is in my flesh, (the old man, the outer man, the natural of fleshly man) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law: that when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man."—Rom. vii. 18-22.

So in speaking of his heavenly vision, of the transcendent glory of the third heaven, the paradise of God, he speaks of a man in Christ, and says, Of such a one will I glory; yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities. As a man in Christ, or as a member of Christ, he is a new man, created after God (not after Adam) in righteousness and true holiness—has no infirmities in that new man, but in the old fleshly nature he groaned, being burdened, and cried, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

But Paul was reminded of his connection with the flesh by a piercing thorn, not in his spirit, but in his flesh, and the messenger of Satan to buffet him. This was given him, lest he should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations. The same Paul who as a man went up to the third heaven, even to the paradise of God, and lost all consciousness, for the time, of a fleshly body, who entered, in spirit, within the vail, this same Paul, in his flesh, in pinned down to the earth by a thorn, by the buffeting of the messenger of Satan.

We do not suppose that Paul was more aspiring in his disposition than others, but we are assured that he needed all the weights that were put upon him to keep him humble, and from glorying in the flesh. Had he been permitted to remain forever in his happy state, and unconscious of the sin that still dwelt in his flesh, and insensible to his infirmities, he would have lived too high to be of any use to any of the tried, tempted and afflicted children of God. Our dear Redeemer suffered in the flesh for us, and became familiar with the feelings of our infirmities, that he might know how to succour them that are tempted: yea, he was tempted in all points as his children are, and yet without sin. And Paul must needs also bear in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus, and have fellowship with his sufferings, and be conformed to his death. And it is equally needful for all the family of God to suffer with him in the flesh, that they may be also glorified together. Especially those who are to be pre-eminently useful in the house of God in comforting the saints, like Peter, must pass through Satan's sieve, or like Paul, encounter the buffetings of Satan's messengers.

The Lord measures to his children with exactness all the transporting joys that they can bear, and will not allow them to be exalted beyond that precise limitation; and so also all the counterbalances that are necessary are provided in weight and measure in time, duration and deliverance, according to the wisdom of our God. None of these trials, conflicts or afflictions are, for the present, joyous, but grievous, but they afterwards yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness in them. We may pray, as did the apostle, that God may remove the thorn from our flesh, and like him repeat our prayer; but God will cause us in the endurance of our thorns and buffetings to know the all-sufficiency of his grace, and to know it as we could not know and appreciate it if we had no trials, temptations

or buffetings.

(Elder Gilbert Beebe, March 15, 1875)

OBITUARIES

ELISHA COLEMAN SCEARCE

Elisha Coleman Scearce of Rt. 1, Dry Fork, Va. died Oct. 27, 1973 at the home of his sister, Mrs. Myrtle Michaels in Danville, Va.

Bro. Scearce was a native of Pittsylvania County and was born December 29, 1888. He was the son of the late James David and Mary Beck Scearce. Most of his life was spent in the Whitmell Community where he was engaged in farming before retiring eight years ago. Surviving are one brother and seven sisters.

Funeral services were conducted at the Old Mountain Primitive Baptist Church by Elders Haywood Wray, Wallis Smith and Raymond Payne. Interment was in the family cemetery at the home place at Whitmell.

Bro. Scearce joined Old Mountain Primitive Baptist Church September 9, 1956. He was a devoted member and attended his meetings regularly, even though he was crippled with arthritis. We miss him very much and his calling for his favorite hymn, "God Moves in a Mysterious Way."

We are a witness to his manifestation of a Godly walk, as a brother and a child of God. The fruit of the Holy Spirit was evident in him, the Love of God and Faith shining forth unto the end. We believe our Heavenly Father called his Spirit unto himself to rest, until the Great and Glorious day of His coming, of which we long and wait in Hope.

Written by request of Old Mountain Church while in conference March meeting 1974.

Read and approved by the Church in May meeting.

H. W. Wray

BROTHER WILLIAM HENRY EVERETT

It is with sad hearts, yet loving memory, that we try to express the sorrow which we feel in the loss of a dear brother in Christ, William Henry Everett.

Brother Will was born July 25, 1888, son of the late William Henry and Molly Purvis Everett of Martin County, Hamilton Township, and died February 27, 1974 in the Veterans Hospital in Salem, Va., where he had been a patient for about three weeks. He leaves to mourn his passing his wife, Mrs. Virginia McDaniel Everett; two sisters, Mrs. Reba Barnhill of Bethel, N.C. and Mrs. Selma Meadows of Hamilton, N.C.

He was received into the fellowship of the church several years ago and was baptised by the late Elder W. E. Grimes. He loved his brethren and his church. After moving to Covington, Va., he was not able to attend his meetings but a few times a year, but he always wrote us before each first weekend, saying how much he wished he could be with us and to give his love to all the members and his pastor.

Funeral services were conducted at the Biggs Funeral Home in Robersonville, N.C., on Saturday, March 2, 1974, at 2 o'clock, by his pastor, Elder J. T. Prescott, assisted by Elder E. C. Harrison and Curtis Tyler of Bethel, N.C. His body was laid to rest in the Robersonville Cemetery to await the call of his Heavenly Father in that great and final day.

We, the members of Flat Swamp Church, realize that out loss is his eternal gain, and may God's richest blessings rest upon his dear companion that she may say: "The Lord giveth and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord," and may we all bow in humble submission to God who doeth all things well.

We, the writers of this, will miss him so very much. His telephone calls, his most interesting letters that he wrote so faithfully and having him and his wife visit us in our home will always be cherished by us.

Done by order of Conference Saturday before the first Sunday in April, 1974.

Elder J. T. Prescott, Moderator
Hassel Allen, Clerk
Mary Jenkins
Vernon Jenkins, Committee

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 142 DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1974 NO. 9

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/74
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ELDER STEWART IS IMPROVED

A225 Emerson Street,
Winona, Miss. 38967

Dear Brethren:

Will you spare me space in our family paper, the *Signs of the Times,* to let the brethren know about my state of health. At the present time my health is improved, to where my doctor says an operation will not be necessary for at least six months, and that it might not be needed at all. However, my heart is weak so I cannot travel very far at the present time.

Dear Brethren, it is so wonderful and has made me rejoice in spirit by your visits, letters and phone calls. May God continue to bless you all.

There is so much in my heart and mind that I desire to write, but because of physical weakness I am unable to do so at this time. So, if not asking too much, remember my when you pray.

In affliction but in humble hope—in binds of spiritual love.

Elder Louis Stewart

ELDER J. J. COLLINS PASSES

Rt. 2, Box 143
Newton, Ala. 36352

Dear Elder Spangler:

Elder J. J. Collins of Route 2, Box 117, Newton, Alabama, age 82 years and 4 months, passed from this earthly world to a heavenly clime to be ever with the blessed Redeemer of the elect, on March 15, 1974. Elder Collins preached the unsearchable riches of God for more than sixty years, far and near.

He was my older brother in the flesh, and I trust I am his brother in Christ. Please send the remainder of his subscription to the *Signs* to my address, and I am sending a check of $7.00 to extend the subscription two more years.

Pray for me, I trust a joint heir in Christ.

Deacon Chas. T. Collins

CANA CHURCH IN TEXAS

Quitman, Texas 75783

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am enclosing a check to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times,* since my subscription is almost out.

I look forward to the time for my paper to come. Our little church at Cana is still trying to carry on. Our faithful pastor, Elder John Lee Smith, is still able to meet with us once each month. We are very few in number but the Lord blesses us with a very good attendance. Our meeting in July is our communion meeting time—3rd Sunday and Saturday before.

Cana Church was organized October 30, 1915—fifty-nine years ago next October. I united with the church that day, and am the only surviving charter member. I was baptized Sunday morning October 31st, together with my husband, his mother, and his grandmother. We

were baptized by Elder R. E. White who was chosen moderator to serve the church, which he did until his death in 1930. Elder S. C. Davenport was called to serve the church after the death of Elder White, and he served until he became disabled, when Elder W. W. Taylor was called as co-pastor with him. After the death of Elder Davenport, Elder Taylor continued as pastor until Saints Rest Church called for his release so that he could serve them full time. We then called Elder John Lee Smith, who is still with us, a much loved and highly esteemed man of God, we think.

I realize I have but a short time left here in this troublesome world, as I passed my 85th birthday this past April, but I am not complaining—I have had a good life even though it has been an uphill climb. My husband passed away 43 years ago this past May; but I feel that God has led me through many rough places and I am trusting Him to carry me on to the end of my journey here.

A sister saved by grace if saved at all,

Buena White

ENJOYS THE REMINISCENCES OF MARY PARKER

Dear Brothers Spangler and Wood:

Since mailing my July issue to a brother and sister, I have been thinking a lot of the *Reminiscences of Sister Mary Parker* which Elder Durand asked her to write. It seems that there is a book of her writings, and if not, you have published two issues of the *Signs* with her writings; so I would like to have the July and August issues for myself . . . Like Elder Durand, I was amazed how the Lord blest her to give her strength to write such wonderful things in her weakened condition, all to the praise of His great name.

No doubht you have received word of the passing of Brother Wm. O. Hall of Mt. Vernon, Washington. His widow sent me a short letter with the card from the Funeral Home. It said that his funeral was preached by a minister named Rorobaugh at a Funeral Chapel May 13, 1974. Brother Hall lived 175 miles from his church. The church has lost a valued member and deacon, and I deeply miss his spiritual writings to me, and in the *Signs*. I was glad to get the issue early, and it was a good one.

In brotherly love and fellowship, I trust

Harry T. Vories

(We judge that Sister Parker's books would be difficult to find, but we will continue to publish more of her writings. We are glad that many are enjoying them.

We regret to learn of the passing of Brother Hall, and hope to receive a suitable obituary for publication.—EDITORS)

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

Dear Brethren:

Some have asked me my views on Luke 16:10 which reads as follows:

"There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day."

This rich man represents the Jew in the flesh, or those who depend on their own works—Pharisees.

There was a certain beggar . . . "this represents God's humble poor, the Gentile sinner despised by the Jew, but laid at his gate full of sores: representing his uncleanness. The rich man after death in hell beholds the happy condition of Lazarus, and implores help. He appeals to Abraham, whom he calls "father". Abraham tells him there is no help—that there is an impassable gulf between the two. Then the rich man appeals for warning help for his brethren, but is told that no further help beyond what they already have shall be provided: that if they will not hear Moses and the prophets, neither would they hear though one rose from the dead.

The lesson being that one who never has felt the killing sentence of the law,

or has never died unto Moses, never hears the voice of Jesus. But all who are convinced of their own transgressions under the law, also believe in Jesus whom God hath raised up from the dead.

The sanctification of the poor beggar was not in being free from pollution, but in being plagued with it—in being dead to it in the sense he did not delight in it, but abhored it, especially in himself.

One must be made alive and be given light to see and feel the power of sin unto death in its reign under and by the law, before in spirit he can know the pardon, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Saints of God all live by faith and all die in faith.

They are all poor beggars because faith is the substance of things "hoped for" and is never the substance of what we have in our possession. And faith while we are living or dying, is not the evidence of things we see, but is instead the evidence of "things not seen."

If indeed the Arminian theory, which comes from the ancient counsel of the ungodly in Genesis 3:4, etc, were true then the great Apostle would not have advocated the fact that the trump shall sound. Until it does sound I declare there will never be a single saint that is satisfied. Hence, faith is the substance of things "hoped for." And I for one do not believe the children of God walk by sight either in their lifetime, or in their dying time. Those who walk by faith do not walk by sight. And in their death they are not divided from faith, hope, and charity.

In bonds,
J. L. Bocock
P.O. Box 13,
Boones Mill, Va. 24065

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117 Bon Air Road,
Baltimore, Md. 21225

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28)

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

It is with fear and trembling and a heartfelt feeling of being inadequate, that I attempt to write my feelings on this subject. The uppermost reason for writing is that I have heard it expressed that there are those who believe that all *good* things work together for their good, but find it hard to believe that *all* things, both good and bad, are included.

Inasmuch as the ways of God are past finding out, and that the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, I find it impossible to believe that a poor mortal man even knows what is good for him.

Surely Joseph's brethren meant it for evil when they sold him into Egyptian bondage; and no doubt Joseph at that time also thought the same. Nevertheless in the purpose of God there was a reason for Joseph being sold, and it was for good to His people.

Some may wonder how Paul's earlier life worked for the good of those who are the called according to God's purpose. Let us consider for a moment the anguish and suffering Paul must have felt when he said he was not worthy to be called an apostle because he had persecuted the church of Jesus Christ. Also he said, that in nothing am I behind the chiefest Apostle, though I be nothing. Paul knew that the abundance of the revelations that were given him would exalt him above measure, were he not buffeted as it were by a thorn in the flesh. For that reason he said, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." All of these things both good (revelations, knowledge, etc) and those which seemed to be bad (shipwrecked, perils, stripes, etc.) worked together for good to him, as well as all those who were taught by him.

I doubt that any who may read this, can by careful thought search out *any* phase or happening of their lives and not

see a purpose for it, or at least realize a purpose known only to God. I myself have endured much pain, heartache, and loneliness that surely I did not know how I could overcome it, and at the same time saw no reason for it. But now, a few years later, if not deceived in my very hope, I can see clearly a reason for it all, and I thank God that He counted me worthy to suffer for him.

God's people were not to expect only good and a life of ease, but were told that they would be a poor and afflicted people. Although we suffer with Christ in this present world, we shall reign with him in eternity. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

Our Lord was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification, because God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. "Therefore we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulations worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope: and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

Our Elder Brother suffered, bled and died, and was raised again for *us*. Surely, my brethren, all things work together for good to them that love God. Whatever God may employ to bring one through this life, if he is a subject of grace, it will work for his good, and will bring him home to God: " home for which we sigh."

Even at this time there are many things that trouble me, one of which makes me feel as if I am a stumbling block to my brethren, and makes me feel as though they would be better off without me, and indeed they might. But alas my very chiefest desire is that, somehow by the grace of God, I might be enabled to walk in love and peace with the church. If that be according to His will, it will be for my good; and I hope He will enable me to give him all the honor, praise and glory. His will be done.

In bonds of love,
Barnabus J. Brammer

REJOICES IN THE SOVEREIGN GOD

P.O. Box 253
Wheelersburg, Ohio 45694

Signs of the Times:

I am late in renewing for this good book. When it was due I thought I would not need it any more, for I was in bed sick with an old injury in my back, and I slipped and injured it over, and I thought I would never walk again. I will soon be 84, and I thank the Lord that I am up now and can walk some and am still improving. Although my eyes are growing dim, I can read a little while at a time, and see to type with one finger.

So I am enclosing $10.00 for another year, and a little to help with your expenses. I am not able anymore to attend any of our churches, but am able to type, so I desire a favor from you, that you publish that any of the brethren who have been brought to the knowledge that God is the God of the heaven and all things that are on this earth, and has ordained and predestinated everything that our eyes have seen, ears have heard, our hands have felt, our nose has smelled, hearts have felt, and minds have thought of: - that if any are confused over this doctrine, I would like to hear from them. This is not for a debate, but is only for the sake of the doctrine of salvation by grace, and it alone. About ten years ago the Signs published a similar request, and I got 15 or 20 replies, and all but a few were on my line of thought and belief. Some said it was a pretty dangerous doctrine to go so far with it. I had but one answer for them: If any can think of anything that is now going on in this earth, that God did not

know of, tell me what it is. I take it that God is the potter, and everything else is clay in his hands.

May God bless all of you good writers, and all that enjoy reading their writings. I am a seeker and striver for nothing but the naked truth, and I thank God that he revealed the great mystery of salvation to me some sixty-two years ago. I am almost to the end of this life, and I will soon cross on over. May God bless all who love the truth, is my prayer.

Charles S. Parsons

REMINISCENCES OF MARY PARKER

(Continued)

How often, while writing this brief glimpse out of the pages of the past, as memory brings up one beloved scene, event, or face after another, do I pause, and wonder and weep. And again I am made to exclaim, what a strange, what a wondrous thing is human life! How changeful its scenes, how fitful and varied are its vicissitudes; what an intermingling and blending it is of clouds and sunlight, of joy and sorrow, of unrest and of quiet. Now there comes a day full of sunshine, of beautiful shadows, of bright dreams, of glad hopes, and we say life is so full of beauty, of love, of gladness. "Our lines are fallen in pleasant places." The sound of sweet music floats about as the perfume of fragrant flowers. There is a sound of familiar footsteps, the sight of beloved faces, the sound of voices most dear, the fervent clasp of loving hands, while over all is the soothing influence of peace.

But rudely does the hand of circumstance let fall the dark curtain of adversity, of care and trouble, and the beautiful picture of quiet, peace and happiness gives place to one of darkness and sorrow, and the picture which a moment ago was so bright, so peaceful, so dear, lives only in the past, or is a bright vision over which we tenderly, lovingly linger only in our day and nightly dreams. Our dear Lord says in His holy word: "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." I often wonder if in every, or any individual life, this scriptural truth has been brought to bear as strikingly as it has been in mine. As powerless, as helpless have I been on the great ocean of life to row my bark in the one smooth, fair line pictured out of the vivid ambitious imaginations of my youth, as would be a ship in mid-ocean without helm or wind or wave. But the all-wise, omnipotent Father further says: "I will bring the blind by a way they know not; I will lead them in paths they had not known." Surely by His dear, unseen hand has He led my blind feet in the paths that He, through infinite and divine wisdom, ordained was for my good and for the honor and glory of His dear name. And we are well assured that His way is right, and that "He is too wise to err, too good to be unkind." How well it is for us that the future is veiled in mystery, and that we know nothing of what it has in store for us. Just as the period in my life of which I now write, could I have looked away into the deep, dark labyrinth of the future, and have seen how much of pain and human suffering and woe lay in my pathway, I would have sunk down in despair, and my soul would have grown dizzy and faint with the sight. But as it is, "Sufficient unto the day has been the evil thereof;" and truly amid the most trying scenes have I been made to realize, "as thy days, so shall thy strength be." In this do we not only see the mercy and goodness of God made manifest to poor finite creatures, but also see the great wisdom and power of Omnipotence in His foreknowledge of all things, and see how infinite and great it rises far above the most profound knowledge of finite man. The most brilliant scholar, the most learned men of science, must own that they do not know what an hour, or day, or a moment may bring forth. The wisest, most successful man of medicine, can neither

stay the hand of death when it calls for its victim, nor breathe one spark of breath into the lifeless body. Neither can the strongest person, intellectually or physically, give life to the tiniest insect that inhabits the earth. Where, then, is the boasted wisdom and strength of the mightiest of finite creatures? As the flower of the field it passeth away. If, then, they be powerless to save the body from death and decay, how much less can man do anything toward saving his soul, towards giving eternal life? Ah! we are poor creatures, and "man at his best estate is altogether vanity."

From my window near where my sick couch stands, looking westward upon a green, sunny slope overlooking the village and from whose tower, I am told, a vast stretch of undulating country may be seen, which carries the eye away to the distant blue hills in Southern Ohio, stands a beautiful mansion. It is the summer home of the Hon. ———— who was an American Minister to foreign countries a number of terms. He is now slowly, surely dying of cancer of the cheek and tongue. How I pity him, and how very, very poor I think he is amid the spendor of his home and all his wealth and title, and personal belongings. Poor indeed, "without hope and without God in the world." During his entire life haughty and lofty in bearing, ignoring all his early acquaintances and associations, professing no religion, attending no religious services, denying the existence of God. Now that he is brought as low as the lowest vassal, will he call upon God to have mercy upon his poor soul? Not unless his heart first be touched by the finger of God's love, and the hard, stony heart become one of flesh. The Psalmist says, "the wicked are not troubled as other men, therefore they have no bands in death." With no love for, or belief in the blessed Saviour of sinners, the unregenerate go down to everlasting punishment with no fear or care of what the consequences may be. Truly is it said, they *have* no *bands* in their death; and they are not troubled as those who feel their insufficiency and inability to save themselves.

But I have been drifting again away beyond my subject. At the time of which I was about to write, when changes began to come within the hitherto happy circle of our home, it was my father's fervent desire to send me away to school so that the desire that I had for learning, and of which my father and brothers so heartily approved, might be gratified. But my dear mother, who depended so largely upon me for companionship during my father's almost entire absence from home, could not think of it. She would give way to an outburst of weeping every time the subject was alluded to. So, deeply as I regretted giving up such a bright vision of future joy, I expressed my determination to remain at home. That this was the path marked out for me by Him who "works in a mysterious way His wonders to perform," succeeding events soon proved. At this time a maiden lady, who wished to avail herself of the church privileges which being an inmate of our home would give her, asked leave of my parents to come and assist with the duties of the house and make our house her home. Soon after she came I was called to the sick bed of a sister-in-law, who was dying of consumption. Poor, dear woman, what a state of mind she was in, with four helpless little ones, one of them a babe only three months old, knowing she must soon leave them motherless in a cold world. Oh, how deep was her grief! What was sadder still the dear woman had never felt the power and love and pardoning mercy of Jesus, yet I felt encouraged as she spoke of feeling herself to be such a sinner, for I told her it was to such the Saviour's promise was given, and I knew that never did He begin a work of grace in the heart but that He performed it to the day of Jesus Christ. Just before her last few days on earth were spent, she sent for father to come and pray with her, and during prayer she said she thought she felt the love of Jesus flow into her poor soul, and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding,

removed the fear of death, and caused her to enter the dark valley and shadow of death comforted by the rod and staff of the dear, tender Shepherd. While I was at this dear sister's bed-side trying to minister to her, and to the little ones, a message came that my mother was very ill, and that I was wanted at home at once. Oh, how sick grew my heart at the thought that dear mother was ill, maybe dying! How I regretted having left her even for the duty that seemed to call me where I had been beside the sick sister. When I arrived home, I went at once to the room where mother lay, her patient face white as death, her voice too weak to speak any word of welcome. She had fallen the day before on the walk and had broken her thigh. What days and nights of suffering she endured, stretched upon a frame for ten weeks without being moved, no pen can tell, and how trying to me were the experiences of those dark days none can know save those who have been placed in like circumstances.

Within three weeks after this time the poor sick sister-in-law passed to the eternal shore, and two of the little ones, bad with whooping cough, were placed under my care. During the whole of that year, from 4 o'clock in the morning until often 11 and 12 at night did I have to labor to care for the sick, and perform the numerous duties that lay upon me. During the first year my suffering mother was as helpless as an infant, and from that time on, till, after four years of terrible suffering, she was taken home, as we hope and trust, to be forever with the Lord, she was an habitual invalid, and never able to walk. Just before these events occurred a heavy snow fell which lay on the earth, making the carriage roads as smooth as glass, and it being customary in country places for families to go in parties, spending the entire day, we had a continuous houseful of company, which was pleasant, yet made my duties very heavy. Unable to procure any help, as the farmers were well-to-do and did not wish their girls to hire out, all the labor and care fell upon my young, inexperienced shoulders, except the little aid rendered me by the little maiden lady who lived with us; and if my suffering mother needed attention, day or night, no one could minister to her needs but my own now experienced hands. The good-natured doctor, who for three months came every day from Logan, would often pityingly say: "Mary, this is too much for you, it is just killing you;" and sometimes his anger would show itself with great vehemence because he thought I had many unnecessary weights. I had; but as I now look back to that time, how little judgment and really good sense did I exercise. If the roast was not properly done, if the loaves of bread did not come forth from the great brick oven creamy of crust and white as snowflakes, I was miserable. The tables and kitchen utensils, the muslin curtains, the rooms, all must be kept "just so," or I felt disgraced, all the while ignoring the low, warning voice that came to me in throbbing brow, in aching of arms, in the weary limbs, in the nervous, sleepless nights, telling me, if only I would have heeded, that I was trampling on and desecrating the most precious of all earthly gifts to mortal man—that of health.

At this time I also had great inward struggles and mental trials. I had but recently, as I firmly hoped, started out on the wonderful spiritual journey which leads to the portals of eternal day. I was a mere infant; and because I could not at once come into the full stature of a full-grown person in Christ, I thought I was running the race not at all. As our dear Master and Leader, after he was baptized of John in the river of Jordan, and had received such satisfying evidence of the Father's presence and approval, the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove descending upon His head, while "there came a voice from heaven saying, this is My well-beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," was taken to the wilderness where he was tempted of Satan forty days, I often wonder if all His followers do not have

to be in a measure tempted and tried in the same manner. At any rate at this time I was taken into a wilderness through whose dense darkness it did not seem one ray from the Sun of Righteousness could ever penetrate, and look on this side or on that, hideous wild beasts were ready to devour me. It seemed to me that the dear Saviour was more severe in His denunciations of the hypocrite and the Pharisee than any other class of sinners, and oh! how greatly did I fear that in having united with the church I had become, if not a Pharisee, a hypocrite; and I firmly resolved for the time being that I would go to the church and frankly tell them I was no Christian, and unfit to be with them. But ere an opportunity was offered for my doing so, the heavy clouds were somewhat lifted, a ray of sunshine penetrated and relieved the sombre gloom, and instead of begging of the dear ones to be removed from among their number, the language of my soul was truly, "Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee, for where thou goest will I go, thy people shall be my people, thy God my God." How sweet, how blessed is the privilege to be admitted into the fellowship and the sweet enjoyments of the Church where there is "kept the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," to come unto Mount Zion the city of our King, which hath sure foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Oh, this is certainly the sweetest, dearest privilege given to the children of light as they sojourn here in this wilderness of sorrow and woe. If it be so sweet, so grand, so delightful to come within the lower courts, what then must it be to enter the Jerusalem above, where all is perfect purity, love, joy and peace, and where angels' voices unite in singing songs of never-ending praise, and where the one dear theme of all purified souls will be praise and honor and glory to God and the Lamb, world without end?

In the month of June, following the winter in which such marked changes took place in the dear old home, my brother, of whose coming marriage I have spoken, and who was now engaged in mercantile business, brought to our home to spend a week his city bride. She was an English lady, tall, and stately with a decidedly queenly bearing. I had been determined not to trouble myself to even like her, for I felt so grieved because she had taken my brother from our home; but she was so amiable and kind, and so patient with my resentment, that she threw coals of fire on my head. I despised myself much more than I had meant to dislike her, so without trying at all, which is the best way after all, I fell to liking her very much.

(Continued next month)

ROMANS 8:29-30

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among the brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Rom. 8:29-30)

This text covers a lot of ground, and we may think of it as the foundation of our belief. We hear many say a "hard-shell" usually gets his text in the 8th chapter of Romans. This is just a saying, because all Scripture is sound, and it is profitable for doctrine. Some Scriptures are our favorites because they fit our experience better. What will be my favorite will not be that of another. We have a good example in natural food. We all do not have the same type of favorite dish. This example may go for preaching, as there are diversities of gifts. All do not preach the same. Preaching is similar to different dishes of food. All of the gospel preaching is good, even though one may prefer one type better than another, because it fits his experience better. *Let us praise God for these gifts.* (see Eph 4:7-13)

"For whom he did foreknow." The 28th verse states that the "whom" in this verse refers to those that love God

and who are the called according to the purpose of God. God knew his people from the beginning. "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth." (2 Thess. 2:13)

"That the purpose of God according to election might stand." (Rom. 9:11) The purpose of God will stand for ever. God knew this before the beginning of time. "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Tim. 1:9) I love the expression, "according to his own purpose and grace."

Let us not try to separate foreknowledge from predestination. God did not predestinate anything without foreknowledge. If the separation is possible, then it is beyond this writer. It is written, "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Heb. 4:12) We read that God's people are elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. (I Peter 1:2)

There is some sweet beauty in foreknowledge. The fact is that God knows all of his people. Jesus said, "I know my sheep, and am known of mine." (John 10:14) Therefore, Jesus gave his life for all of his sheep (see the 11th verse), and all of them shall be housed in heaven and immortal glory. "He shall not fail nor be discouraged . . ." (Isaiah 42:4) "He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied . . ." (Isaiah 53:11)

God predestinated those whom he foreknew to be conformed to the image of his Son. God determined this from the beginning, and all events shall take place exactly as God has purposed that it shall be. ". . . my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isaiah 46:10) God knew his people beforehand, and even before they were in existence. ". . . in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." (Psalm 139:16) God saw all of his people even before they were in existence. He knew the fall of man, and provided redemption from this fall. The remedy was provided before the fall took place. The remedy was in the foreknowledge of God. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye hath taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." (Acts 2:23)

"Conformed to the image of his Son." The walk, conversation and travels of the children of God show there is a difference between them and the world. "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." (Matt. 5:14) John said, "It doeth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (I John 3:2) John did not know, and it behooves us not to try to speculate as to how God's people shall look in the resurrection. The beauty of it is that we shall be like him. "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." (Phil. 3:21) Jesus is the head of the body or church. The sheep shall have the image of the shepherd. "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." (I Cor. 15:49)

"That he might be the firstborn among many brethren." This means Jesus, who is the only begotten Son of God. God's people are predestinated unto the adoption of children. Jesus is the first fruits of them that slept.

God not only predestinated his people, but he also called them. This is an holy calling. God's people are spoken of as an holy nation. (I Peter 2:9) "Who hath saved us and called us with an *holy calling*, not according to our works, but

according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began." (2 Tim. 1:9) This call is made holy through the blood of the lamb. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." (Heb. 12:14)

The sheep, who are the elect, know the voice of the shepherd, who is Jesus Christ. The hearts of the sheep are tuned to know the voice of Jesus. They can distinguish between the voice of Jesus and between the voices of strangers. "For if the trumpet give an *uncertain sound,* who shall prepare himself to the battle?" (I Cor. 14:8) The sheep will know when something is wrong with the sound, and when it is uncertain.

"And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice, and a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." (John 10:4-5)

God's people shall hear him when he calls. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." (John 10:27) God gives his elect an ear to hear when he calls. This is a special call and it is felt within the heart. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound . . ." (Psalm 89:15) Their hearts are tuned to hear and know that this gospel sound is joyful. It is joyful to hear news from a far country. It is comforting to the weary pilgrims who seek an heavenly country that is eternal, and that the things of this life shall be passed away. This is the city of God that John spoke of and it gives us consolation to see it through the eye of faith. "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." (Rev. 21:2)

"Them he also justified." The justification of God's people is in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We cannot justify ourselves by any of our efforts, our tears, grieving, etc. Justice demanded perfection, and since the law was broken, justice demanded that the consequences of the broken law be meted out. Justice demands death for this broken law. ". . . Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." (Gal. 3:10) "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." (James 2:10)

Jesus satisfied justice by bearing the sins of his elect. ". . . He shall save his people from their sins." (Matt. 1:21) "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree . . " (I Peter 2:24) There were offerings in all the sacrifices in the old Testament. These sacrifices were a type of Jesus. Blood was shed, and without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins.

How would justice accept the fact that Jesus died for his people? Just anybody could not do this. There must be ownership in the matter. The sins of the elect became those of Jesus. Now, let us be careful, because Jesus is the spotless lamb of God, and there was no sin, nor guilt found in him. How did the sins of the elect become the sins of Jesus? By imputation. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. 5:21 "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." (Rom. 4:8) The word "impute" means to charge, put on account, etc. The sins of the elect were not charged to them. God did not impute or charge the elect with their sins, but they have always been charged or imputed to Jesus. There is a beautiful picture as we view the intercession of Jesus. Before he made his advent into this world, it was as though he was telling Divine Justice: "I will pay the debt." God is not slack concerning his promises. God sent Jesus to satisfy divine justice. God is an holy God, and his justice will not be trampled upon. In our natural laws we see that justice has been trampled upon many times. Some suffer the penalty of the broken laws, and others "get by" because they are "some body" or know somebody, etc. God was looking through

the blood of the lamb when he said: "Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee." (Song of Solomon 4:7)

"For he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one . . ." (Heb. 2:11) Notice this close relationship. Jesus sanctified his people, and his people who receive the benefits of this sanctification are one with Jesus. "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." (Eph. 5:30) His people are the body of Christ! ". . . I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." (John 14:20) The gates of hell cannot prevail against the church of God. "My Father which gave them me is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them from my Father's hand." (John 10:29)

Not a bone of Jesus was broken. The beauty of this is that not one of those that God has chosen shall be cut off or broken off. (see Eph. 5:30) His people are members of his bones, and not a bone of Jesus was broken when he hung upon the cross. The soldiers broke the bones of the two thieves, but they did not break Jesus' bones because he was dead already. What a strong consolation! All of God's people shall be there with him for ever and ever. We receive a foretaste of it here, but we shall receive the fulness in our eternal home. God has justified his people, and no one can bring any charge against the elect. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." (Rom. 8:33)

"Whom he justified, them he also glorified." God glorified his people in the face of Jesus Christ. They shine as lights in the world. "Ye are the light of the world . . ." (Matt. 5:14) "Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you." (I Peter 4:4) The bodies are not glorified here upon this earth. ". . . Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven . . ." (I Cor. 15:50) These bodies shall be glorified when time shall be no more. These bodies that are sown in corruption shall be raised in incorruption. These bodies that are sown in weakness shall be raised in power. "It is sown a natural body, it shall be raised a Spiritual body." Upon this earth we are looking as through a glass darkly. Then we shall see him as he is when these bodies are glorified. Jesus' body was glorified when he rose from the grave. Our bodies will be glorified in like manner. "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." (Rom. 8:11)

Let us keep in mind that God did all of these things, and he did not leave anything undone. Everything that is necessary for the salvation of the elect has been performed by Jesus Christ.

May we render all honor and praise and glory unto his holy name.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
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THE WATERED LILIES

The Master stood in His garden,
Among the lilies fair,
Which His own right hand had planted,
And trained with tend'rest care.

He looked at their snowy blossoms,
And marked with observant eye
That the flowers were sadly drooping,
For their leaves were parched and dry.

"My lilies need to be watered,"
The Heavenly Master said;
"Wherein shall I draw it for them,
And raise each drooping head?"

Close to his feet on the pathway,
Empty, and frail, and small,
An earthen vessel was lying,
Which seemed no use at all;

But the Master saw, and raised it
From the dust in which it lay,
And smiled, as He gently whispered,
"This shall do My work today:"

"It is but an earthen vessel,
But it lay so close to Me;
It is small, but it is empty—
That is all it needs to be."

So to the fountain He took it,

And filled it full to the brim;
How glad was the earthen vessel
To be of some use to Him!

He poured forth the living water
Over His lilies fair,
Until the vessel was empty,
And again He filled it there.

He watered the drooping lilies
Until they revived again;
And the Master saw with pleasure
That His labor had not been vain.

His own hand had drawn the water
Which refreshed the thirsty flowers;
But He used the earthen vessel
To convey the living showers.

And to itself it whispered,
As He laid it aside once more,
"Still will I lie in His pathway,
Just where I did before.

"Close would I keep to the Master,
Empty would I remain,
And perhaps some day He may use me
To water His flowers again."

Submitted
Author Unknown

"Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." (1 Timothy 3:16)

See pages 210 and 211 for Contributions and Associational Notices.

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EDITORIAL

"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning to the end." (Genesis 3:15-18)

This was spoken by James unto those who were gathered in Jerusalem to consider the question of whether circumcision should be required of the Gentile brethren, as some advocated. He reminded them of the words of the prophets, and knowing that what they had written were continually coming to pass, he was bold to say that all the works of God were known to him from the beginning to the end.

To those who are taught of the Lord,

and know his sovereign power, this is no idle statement, for this expresses their deep and abiding faith. They believe that all things written by Moses and the prophets and the writers of the New Testament, are accounts of the works of God in creation, and make known all that God is pleased to reveal of his will and purpose concerning his people while in this world, and in that which is to come. This faith looks both forward and backward.

Through faith, of which Jesus is the author and finisher, the Lord's people understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, and that God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. This faith is contrary to the theories of those who do not believe the Biblical account of the creation, and the formation of man of the dust by the immediate hand of God.

James had reference to the eternal will and purpose which God purposed in himself before he caused any of his works to materialize: which means that the beginning was not at the creation of the heaven and the earth, but all of his works, or will, or purpose was comprehended in its fulness, so that all things that have been, or shall be, from beginning to end, were fully detailed in that purpose, and have required no change. God had a purpose in the end that required all things from the beginning to be perfectly fulfilled, each thing or event in itself, so that all causes and effects were leading perfectly to His determined end.

In the knowledge of these things, mere mortals, though they be children of God chosen by Him, stand in amazement and wonderment and acknowledge that God's thoughts are not their thoughts, neither are their ways His ways, for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are His ways higher than their ways, and his thoughts than their thoughts, so that the words of His mouth cannot return unto him void, but accomplish that which He pleases, and prosper in all things whereto He sends it. (see Isaiah 55:8-11)

Those to whom these things have been revealed by the teaching of the Spirit, see the handiwork of God in choosing his people in His Son before the world began, and giving Him to come into the world for the purpose of redeeming them from their sins and iniquities. For there is no question but that the works of God included the entrance of sin in the world, and death by sin, and that those chosen by God were to be among the children of Adam, and thus partakers of the same condemnation of all Adam's posterity. The subtility of the serpent and his deceiving of Eve, was not outside the purpose of God, else those whom the Father sent his Son into the world to redeem by the sacrifice of himself, would have needed no redemption, and such is unthinkable, since known unto God were all his works from the beginning to the end.

....When God commanded Adam (and Eve with him), saying, "Of every tree in the garden thou mayest freely eat: but the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," the serpent began his nefarious career, and told Eve in effect, that God did not know what he was talking about. Eve was deceived, and gave to Adam of the forbidden fruit, and thus began the woes included in "dying" the death in trespasses and sins. And also began the unfolding of God's eternal will in providing for the redemption of all His people from the consequences of their transgression in Adam. (The first part of Genesis should be consulted concerning these things, and the pronouncement against the serpent.)

"And the Lord God said unto the serpent, because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field: upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it

shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

This enmity has shown up in a multitude of ways since that time. The seed of the serpent is the Devil and his angels, and the seed of the woman is Christ and those the Father gave him. The enmity continued in the sense of bruising the heel of the seed of the woman, which appeared in many trials and temptations of Jesus and his people, and while Jesus was crucified, being made sin for his people, it was not possible to do more than figuratively bruise his heel, for Jesus arose from the dead a conqueror over everything that sin and transgressions brought upon his people.

On the other hand, when Christ arose from the tomb, it is evidence that he had bruised the head of the serpent, and overcome all his infernal schemes against Jesus and his people, even as he had been restricted to do nothing against the Lord's people beyond the "thus far shalt thou go," in the purpose of God.

We see in this the first promise of the Redeemer and Saviour of those for whom Jesus bruised the head of the serpent, and that He fully overcame everything that was against them. "He was delivered for their offences and rose again for their justification."

It is evident that the will of God is fulfilled in all these things, and that the works were finished from the foundation of the world. (see Heb. 4:3)

This is a brief reply to the request of Sister Viola Carter of Laurel, Miss.

J. D. W.

SPECIAL REQUEST:

A good many of the *Signs* are being returned to us because of change of address and failure to notify us. If we do not have your full address, please send it to us immediately, or your paper will be returned to us at double the cost of a short time ago,—EDITORS

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, convened with the church at Kingwood, N.J., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 31st, and June 1st and 2nd, 1899, to the several churches of which she is composed, sends greeting.

Dear Brethren:—According to a long established custom, and also in agreement with our own desires, we again would seek to call your attention at this our annual session, to some of those things which are profitable for us to consider, and which we believe make for the comfort and peace of Zion. In these annual letters from us to you, we do not seek to write as though we had any authority over you, but as brethren met together to convey your messages each to the other, and to worship God. We are not masters, but brethren each of the other. We are together by your appointment, and for the purposes which you have defined. It is not ours to act as though we were more than messengers to carry your messages each to the others. But while together, we have engaged in the worship of God, and that you may know something of how our minds and hearts have been occupied while together, we send you this letter.

Probably in past years all, or nearly all of the principles of truth, which are dear to you and to us, have been presented in this manner for your consideration at different times; yet we do not feel like ceasing to write for this reason. Should this be a reasonable excuse for ceasing to write Circular Letters, it would be an equally reasonable excuse for ceasing to preach the word, or to write it in any other way. Of some things we cannot be reminded too often. The great principles of faith upon which the hope of the believer rests, the travail of the believer as he is led into the truth, and away from all else, and the admonitions concerning a becoming walk in the house of God, are at all times im-

portant to be considered; and these things we are persuaded are always of interest to those of like precious faith. In these things rests the ground of all christian fellowship. And to help this fellowship, and cause it to abound, is the object of declaring our faith each to the other. While it should always be understood that the Bible alone is to be accepted as the revealed standard of truth, and no one is to set up any other standard, yet it is needful that where men of diverse minds all claim that they receive the Scriptures as their rule of faith, there should be statements made of what we understand the Scriptures to teach. Therefore we present in preaching, and writing, and in what are called Articles of Faith, the understanding which we have of the Scriptures. This is needful, because none in these days can know what another believes if he simply says, I believe the teachings of the Bible. Nearly all men will say this, but yet how wide is the difference between men after all. To define their faith, we doubt not, was one of the objects of those who introduced the custom of writing Circular Letters from associations to the churches. And to define our faith is as needful for us to-day, as it was for them.

One of the subjects about which the Scriptures say much, is that of fellowship; that fellowship which is in Christ, and of God. We feel to call your attention to a few thoughts concerning this great matter now. The word is easily defined. Its prime significance is that of equality. Therefore the prophet was inspired to declare these words, concerning the God of heaven, and the Redeemer of men, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." This man, Christ Jesus, is here called the fellow of God, or the equal. To this agrees the words of the apostle, who says concerning him, "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." And if this could be said of the relation between the Son and the Father, in the great work of the redemption of the people of God, it surely must be true that believers are the equal of each other. All are redeemed in the same way, from equal sin and guilt, and are heirs to an equal inheritance. There can be no true fellowship between those who are not equals. Those who have true fellowship with each other are all brethren. But how wonderful it is that the apostle should declare that our fellowship is not only with each other, but also with the Father, and with the Lord Jesus Christ. He came into oneness with his people as a man, and they are now sons of God, through his sonship, and so have this glorious fellowship with God. While fellowship, in a certain and limited sense, belongs to men in their human relations to each other; in its supreme sense, it is found only in that relationship which exists in the kingdom of God. The contrast between that which is of the earth, even at its best, and that which is of heaven, is infinite. The one is but for time, the other is for eternity. The one is with men who die, the other is with God who hath immortality and eternal life. The one is based upon selfish motives, the other is based upon that love which is pure and unselfish. The one is natural, the other is spiritual. The one is full of anxiety and carefulness, the other is free, and full of joy. The one would demand much from those who are embraced in our regard, the other bestows all, and asks no reward, save the joy of bestowal. The origin of the one is the earthly nature, which is fallen and sold under sin, the other is of God in Christ, and is full of all holiness and good fruits.

This fellowship is not a form, but a reality. The reality must of course make itself manifest by some form of speech or some habit of life, but still it is deeper than any form. It exists not so much in the outward appearance as in the life within, it is an emotion of the heart. It, however, when felt in the heart, will fill all the life with its force and meaning.

It is of God, but it shows itself in the mortal body. By word and by deed it will be known, but yet there may be deeds and words which are but vain, and hollow mockery. Therefore we say that this fellowship is not so much outward form, as it is a real feeling in the heart. We do not thus seek to limit it to the feeling of the heart, but to contend that it must be in the heart first, and then flow out to all who are embraced in it, in a thousand streams of blessings. That religion which is of the world says and feels nothing of this fellowship. It is selfish, and is based upon selfish principles. When it boasts of its great interest in the salvation of souls, and of its efforts in that direction, its object in it all is to wear a crown with many stars, in the other world. Self-exaltation is the root and fruit of it all. There can be no knowledge of fellowship for others in all this. In this religion, self is the sun of the universe, and all the universe must revolve around it. Believers are on the other hand given a principle of pure love to God, and to the blessed Savior, and to all who bear the image of the Redeemer, and while they, too, have a selfish nature, yet they hate it, and contend against it, and possess another nature which loves God and all that are his. In this is true fellowship, such as the world cannot conceive of, such as they who possess it, once did not know of. This fellowship has its existence among the people of God, out of a oneness of experience. They possess one life, and live in the same kingdom, and eat and grow upon the same things, and have the same hope, and rejoice in the same salvation, They all confess themselves sinners, and all feel to be justly condemned, and all unite in ascribing all praise, and honor, and glory, to God. That this fellowship is based upon a oneness of experience is shown by John, when he said to his brethren, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; . . . declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." This all is but another way of saying that this fellowship is based upon a common experience. For what is experience in this life, but the tasting, seeing and handling of the things of this life? So the apostle would say to his brethren, that he had known the things of the Spirit, just as clearly, and by as intimate an acquaintance, as we know natural things; the one experience was as real as the other. And so he would write the things which he knew, that they who knew the same things might have fellowship with him.

This fellowship does not arise out of a belief in a mere theory of doctrine. It is not based upon a mere sentiment. We have all known those who believed election, and predestination, and affectual calling, and in the perfect atonement of Christ, as a sentiment or theory, toward whom our hearts would not go out in fellowship, because we could not find the sweet savor of experience, and its consequent love and life in it. There will be a belief in and an understanding of doctrine when the young believer is weaned from the breast. But before this there is that which begets this true fellowship in the heart. But this fellowship does seek expression, and our God has directed the manner of its expression. The manner of its expression is found in the doctrine and order of the house of God. The mind and will and affection of a child exists before there can be any teaching of the child in expressing that mind, will and affection. But these things being in the heart, the child needs proper teaching, in order that what is in the heart may be properly expressed. Certain forms of words and action among men are agreed upon as a proper expression of certain emotions. The child is taught in these forms of expression that it may also make itself understood among men. So the Lord has given his children a proper mode of expressing the fellowship which is in their hearts, which has been begotten there by his own Spirit. And this ap-

pointed way is, as said before, in the doctrine and order of the house of God. In baptism, in the supper, in prayer, in preaching of the word, in all confession of him as the Savior, is found in this expression which God has appointed that his name may be honored, and that they may have fellowship one with another. This lesson may be but partly learned, while yet the sum and substance of the whole truth is in the heart. We speak at best with a stammering tongue, and with faltering speech, and we live with footsteps equally halting and weak.

This fellowship is not brought about by any act of the human will. Those who know it by experience, have not deliberated concerning the matter, and said as a result, it is best that I have fellowship with believers, and therefore I will have fellowship with them. This fellowship can be felt only where God has wrought in the heart the same things, and made it to well up in streams of love, as a living fountain wells up by the very law of its being, from the heart of the earth. We cannot will ourselves into fellowship with another, and when it is once felt, we cannot will it away. It is also true as a matter of experience, that where it is not felt no one desires it, and where it is felt no one can desire to put it away. If then any man desires this fellowship to dwell in his heart as a thing that to him seems most precious, it is sure that he already feels it. How can one desire that which he knows nothing about? And if he knows anything about this fellowship, it is by its indwelling in his own heart.

How shall this fellowship be maintained among believers? Rather how shall this fellowship be realized, instead of maintained? It, in common with all the graces of the Spirit, does not cease to dwell in the heart where it is once implanted, but sometimes it is hidden and obscured. The flesh gets in the way, and hinders the joy of it, as it does at times all our other joys. How shall we, who trust that we have this blessing, dwell continuously in the experience or enjoyment of it? We see brethren fall out many times. They are really one in the spirit, but at times they do not realize it, and refuse to believe it. Strife arises out of the lusts which dwell in our members, and sorrow is felt instead of the peace once known. How is this to be avoided? How are we to walk together as the members of one body? These are important things. And we shall confess them to be so, when we are made to deplore confusion, and strife, and every evil work. We know that when ill will, envy, enmity and strife for the mastery dwell in the heart, the joy of this fellowship is sore broken. It cannot then be said, in our hearts, how good and pleasant is our dwelling together in unity. How shall we thus dwell together in the blessings of this fellowship? We know of but one way of securing these happy results: the peace and joy of this fellowship can be maintained only as we are found walking in all the order and ordinances of the house of God; there must be a confession of the truth with the mouth, one to another; there must be an abiding in the truth, as it has been revealed to us. How can two walk together except they be agreed? This does not mean that all shall understand all the doctrine of the Bible equally; some are weak, while some are strong, but there must be no opposition to the truth, though there may be a great failure to understand it. To this fellowship they who are weak in the faith must be received, as well as those who are strong in the faith, but not to doubtful disputations. There must also be an orderly life before men. No cheat, no liar, no drunkard, no gambler, no one who loves pleasure more than he loves God, no one who forsakes the assembling of himself together with his brethren, no profane person, no slanderer, no back-biter, no one who loves and believes a lie, can ever enter into this fellowship, nor be retained in it, should he once have gained it. Such an one may have his name on the church book, but this does not matter. Even though it be so, he does not experience

this fellowship of which we speak; he cannot experience it. It also helps maintain the joy of this fellowship, and calls it into lively exercise, when brethren meet often together, to speak of the glory of God, and of the peace of his children. Who of the brethren do not know that at these very assembles, which are called associations, our faith, hope and love, have been strengthened, and that we have parted with a deeper assurance of this fellowship with God's children, than we had before? It is then good indeed to meet often together. A manifestation of love to God, and to his people also, is one of the things which helps much to maintain this fellowship unbroken among brethren. Loving not in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth, is that which builds us up in this grace, more than all things else. We do hold, even now, in our minds and hearts, those brethren and sisters who have departed from us, who, while they lived were loving toward their brethren, and toward all that is of God. It is not the most eloquent preacher, nor the deepest reasoner, nor the one who may understand deep mysteries, nor him who has taken a forward part in the things which pertain to the kingdom of our Lord, that we love most, but him rather who himself loved much, though he may not have had a tongue to speak, nor a mind to reason, and the gift of eloquence may have been denied him, and he may have done no great work, and may not have been careful and troubled about the things of the church, as much as some others. In his humbleness, meekness, quietness and steadfastness to the truth, we could see the marks of Christ, and our fellowship abounded toward him, and still abounds.

Brethren, we leave these things for your consideration; may God bless you in the reading of them.

F. A. Chick, Moderator
Elijah Leigh, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP DISTRIBUTE THE SIGNS
(To July 1, 1974)

Lillian Holt, Va.	$ 3.00
Mrs. Harold May, Ala.	3.00
Mrs. John E. Pope, N.C.	3.00
Helen Jones, Calif.	10.00
Mr. & Mrs. Lewis Johnson, W. Va.	25.00
Elder Richard Campbell, Tenn.	8.00
Mrs. Clara Cumbo, Va.	3.00
Elder John Sanders, Ala.	1.00
W. T. Warren, N.C.	3.00
Robert Cobb, N.C.	3.00
Mrs. R. M. Lester, Va.	3.00
Irvin Slaughter, N.C.	1.00
Cecil Gayne, Ark.	1.00
Ann E. Schan, Ill.	1.00
J. D. Cunningham, Ala.	6.00
Lillian Becker, N.Y.	1.00
A. B. Arrington, N.C.	3.00
Elder Ira Conner, Va.	3.00
Mrs. J. A. Harris, N.C.	1.00
C. S. Parson, Ohio	3.00
Andy Hall, Ore., In memory of his parents, sisters & brothers	33.00
Willie Dunn, Tex.	1.00
Pearl Dudley, Va.	3.00
Earl Satterfield, N.C.	8.00
M. L. Hollingsworth, Miss.	1.00
M. M. Richardson, Miss.	3.00
Eldon Gilbert, Can.	3.00
A. O. Beene, Tex.	3.00
Warnard Locke, Ky.	3.00
Mrs. Ruth Clark, Me.	2.00

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the South Ouchita Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Union Church, located three miles northwest of Haile, Louisiana, and about five miles southeast of Marion, Louisiana, commencing on Friday before the 4th Sunday in September, 1974. (September 20, 21, 22)

Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

C. C. Barron, Clerk

KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The two hundred and ninth session of the Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association convenes, the Lord willing, with Rocky Swamp Church, in Halifax County, N. C. the first Sunday and Saturday before and Monday following, on October 5, 6, and 7, 1974.

Services will be held at the Academy High School on Saturday and Sunday, located three

blocks west of U. S. Highway 301, in the Town of Whitakers, Nash County, N. C.

On Monday services will be at Rocky Swamp Church, Halifax County, N. C. Directions to church: Those coming from the south and west travel I 95 to the intersection of Highway 561, turn left (west) to the first cross road (Heathsville), turn right and go one mile to church. Coming from the north and west, travel I 95 to the intersection of Highway 501, turn right (west) go to first cross road (Heathsville), turn right go one mile to church.

We cordially invite all ministers, brethren and friends of the same faith who are in order and peace at home, to come and visit with us.

Marvin E. Garner, Clerk

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The ninety-eighth session of the Black Creek Association is appointed to be held with the church at Scotts, Wilson County, N. C., beginning on Friday, October 25th, 1974. It continues through Sunday, October 27th.

Scotts Meeting House is located approximately seven miles from Wilson, southwest. Those coming from the south on 301 highway, turn left at stop lights in Lucama, go approximately one mile to dead end road, turn left for about three hundred feet, turn right and follow to church.

Those coming from north, east or west, come to Wilson, take Highway 301 south, cross Contentnea Creek bridge just below the motel section, turn right on black top road and follow to the church.

The Saturday and Sunday services will be held in the Lucama High School auditorium in the town of Lucama. The school building is located in the north edge of Lucama.

We cordially invite our ministering brethren, and all who love the truth.

W. E. Turner, Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

At the request of old Beulah Church, Johnston County, N. C., made in their regular conference Saturday, June 15, 1974, a presbytery was convened on Sunday June 16, 1974, for the purpose of examination and ordination of Brother Harold Pittman to the office of Deacon.

The Presbytery was composed of the following brethren: Elders Rufus Brown, Curtis Rains and W. E. Turner. Deacons Cleveland Coleman, J. P. Pittman and H. W. Phillips.

The service was opened by singing Hymn 361, and prayer by Elder W. E. Turner. Elder Turner was chosen Moderator, and Sister Agnes Bedford, Clerk. The candidate and his wife were delivered to the Presbytery by the deacons of the church.

The members of the Presbytery being satisfied with the examination, administered the laying on of hands and prayer. Elder Rains read the qualifications of a deacon, and the charge was delivered by Elder W. E. Turner.

Brother Pittman was then returned to the church an ordained deacon.

Sister Agnes Bedford, Clerk
Elder W. E. Turner, Mod.

THE SALISBURY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The *Salisbury Old School Baptist Association* will be held with the Little Creek Church near Delmar, Del., on October 23 and 24, 1974.

Those coming on Tuesday traveling on Rt. 13, turn on Whitesville Road about three miles north of Delmar, Del., and go about two and one-half miles, stop at residence of Albert Krewatch on left just before getting to the meeting house on the right. Telephone (302) 875-5543. Those coming on Wednesday go directly to meeting house.

We extend an invitation to those of our faith and order, and also to our many friends, to be with us.

Bertha White, Clerk
Pattie Krewatch, Asst. Clerk

UPPER COUNTRY LINE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION CIRCULAR LETTER 1974

To the Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association, to those with whom we correspond, and friends. We would not overlook our friends who have worked tirelessly in making this setting possible. We count you as Isaiah described, as pleasant stones on our borders who are waiting for the call to come into His garden.

As we approach the Sixty-Eighth session of the Upper Country Line Association, my thoughts are carried to Solomon who asked who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? We believe this is the church leaning upon Christ, Jesus the Lord. Who or what else do we have to lean upon in this gloomy, dark, wicked

and evil day when it seems that we can't live, and, as Paul said, dying yet living. I believe I could speak for all: oh! with what joy and gladness we leave all behind, our vocations of life and homes, to be drawn out of the wilderness of this world to be gathered into the garden of the Lord of like precious faith and order, to praise God for His tender mercies toward the children of men.

S.O.S. 8:11 "Solomon had a vineyard at Baalhamon; he let out the vineyard unto the keepers; every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand pieces of silver." Baalhamon denotes the scared places of Mount Hermon or is a place on its slopes. We thank God of every remembrance of His blessings upon this Association for being the Keeper of this association, and all things. For, "except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: ecxept the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." We hope that this session will be as a place and as a slope upon the mount of God. We see her as a cottage in a vineyard and as a lodge in a garden as a besieged city round about us. "Except the Lord of hosts had left a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah." We think of Elder Alex McColl from the far north and Elder W. W. Taylor from the deep south along with all our visiting ministers from the cross sections of the country, when Solomon said "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, the garden is the Lord's, blow upon my garden, the wind is the spirit of the Lord, that the spices thereof may flow out. May God bless them with spirits power to bring a thousand pieces of silver for the fruit, which is praise to God for the deliverances of the Lord's people. The offering in Mount Moriah, deliverance from the den of lions, opening of the red sea, the sun to stand still in the midst of heaven, supplying of the cruse and barrel, from the belly of the whale and for the reliverance of every one of us to this present time when the Syrophenician woman cried, "Lord help me," which He did not fail her.

May God gather us once again as one in Christ wearing the ornament of Charity, for Charity never faileth. Let my beloved come into His garden and eat His pleasant fruits as a garden within a garden. Amen. To be approved or rejected I submit the above.

Yours in sweet fellowship,
Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

LETTER TO THE LATE SISTER PEARL FICKETT

Boones Mill, Va. 24065

Dear Sister Pearl:

Although I feel grieved to hear you are ill, because, as you know, I love you dearly, I trust the Lord has mercifully preserved me from impatience and from murmuring, and that in the midst of all the pleadings of flesh and blood, there is That within us that seems to say without and reserve or exception, "Not my will, but Thine be done."

It is a comfortable consideration that He with whom we have to do, our great High Priest, who once put away our sins by the sacrifice of Himself, and now forever appears in the presence of God for us, is not only possessed of sovereign authority and infinite power, but wears our very nature, and feels and exercises in the highest degree those tendernesses and commiserations, which I conceive are essential to humanity in its perfect state.

His bowels were moved before His arm was exerted: He condescended to mingle tears with mourners, and He wept over distresses which He purposed to relieve. He is still the same in his exalted state: compassions dwell within His heart.

In a way inconceivable to us, but consistent with His supreme dignity and perfection of happiness and glory, He feels for his people. The most tender mother would sit insensible to the cries

and wants of her infant before Jesus Christ our Lord would be an unconcerned spectator of his suffering children: No, with the eye and ear and heart of a Fiend, He attends to their sorrows, He counts their sighs, puts their tears in his bottle, and when our spirits are overwhelmed within us, He knows our path, and adjusts the time, the measure of our trials, and everything that is necessary for our present support and seasonable deliverance, with the same unerring wisdom and accurancy as He weighed the mountains in scales, and hills in a balance, and meted out the heavens with a span.

There is a double even in this; Not only does He have a benevolent sympathy, but an experimental sympathy as well. He knows our sorrows, not merely as He knows all things, but as One who has been in our situation, and who, though without sin himself, endured when here upon earth, inexpressibly more for us than He will ever lay upon us.

He has sanctified poverty, pain, disgrace, temptation and death by passing through these states, and in whatever states his people are they yet have fellowship for him and with him in their sufferings. And He will never leave nor forsake—Of what then shall we be afraid? Of what shall we complain? seeing all our concerns are written upon his heart, and their management even to the very hairs of our head, are under his care and providence. He pities us more than we can ourselves, and has engaged his Almighty Power to sustain us and to relieve us.

He will put his silver into the fire to purify it, but He sits by the furnace as a Refiner to direct the process, and to secure the end He has in view, so that we may neither suffer too much or suffer in vain.

With much love to you and all the dear saints with whom you abide, and know in sweet fellowship.

I beg to remain your sinful servant,

In Gospel bonds,
Julius Bocock

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The *Staunton River Union Meeting* will be held, the Lord willing, at Cane Creek Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in September, the 28th and 29th, 1974. The church is on Highway 726 near Ringgold, Va.

All who love the truth are invited to meet with us.

Mamie D. Wiles, Church Clerk
Eld. R. S. Payne, Mod.

OBITUARIES

WILLIE A. DAVIS, SR.

Brother W. A. Davis, Sr., was born October 12, 1906, in New Church, Va., and died August 25, 1973. He was the son of the late Lawrence B. Davis and Annie Bunting Davis. His wife, Evelyn B. Davis, preceded him in death in 1971. He is survived by two sons: W. A. Davis, Jr.; Lawrence B. Davis; and one daughter, Linda D. Adkins; and eleven grandchildren. Brother Davis was a great grandson of the late Elder Thomas Poulson, first pastor of the Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church.

Brother Davis went before Snow Hill Church in May 1962, by the waters edge at Shumaker Pond in Salisbury. He was blessed to utter a beautiful tribute to His God feeling to be a needy sinner and begged to be counted among the Old Baptist. He was tenderly received into the church and was led into the water of baptism by his beloved pastors, Elder D. V. Spangler and Elder W. D. Griffin. He was appointed a deacon of Snow Hill Church and he did love it and served it well until the day he died.

By no means are we attempting to praise man, but Brother Davis had been blessed to be firm and steadfast in the doctrine of an eternal God, who gave His Son as the only means of salvation, he never hesitated to speak boldly of this truth. He was given a love for his brethren and his pastor. He had a strong desire to search the scriptures and was blessed with an understanding mind of them.

His funeral was conducted in Snow Hill Church August 28, by Elders James Poole, D. V. Spangler, and Arthur Warren. He was buried beside his beloved wife in Nelson Cemetery, New Church, Va.

Written in love by
Dixie & Audrey Davis

SISTER ELLEN DIXON POPE

On February 12, 1974, Pittman's Grove Church of the Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association lost one of its most faithful and dedicated members in the person of Sister Ellen Dixon Pope, who passed away after an

extended illness.

She was born September 6, 1896, the daughter of William J. and Sally H. Dixon of Johnston County, N.C. On November 14, 1914 she was married to Lee Pope of Kenly, N.C. To this union were born three sons and one daughter: James, George and Leland all of Kenly, N.C., and Mrs. Annie Lee Phillips, of Bailey, N.C.; all of whom, with their father, survive. Sister Pope united with Pittman's Grove Church May 12, 1929, and was baptized the same day by her pastor, Elder E. L. Cobb. Her funeral was conducted in Pittman's Grove Church by her pastor, Elder W. E. Turner, assisted by Elder Curtin Rains and Elder Harvey Holland. She was laid to rest in the Pope Family Cemetery near the home, to await the second coming of Jesus, and when the trumpet shall sound and the dead in Christ shall rise first, we have every reason to believe she will be amongst that number, and can say with the Psalmist, "As for me, I will behold they face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." (Psalm 17:15)

Sister Pope will be missed not only by her family, but by the host of friends and the church.

Done by order of Conference April 13, 1974, and written by

W. E. Turner

GERTIE ELLEN JOHNSON

Hickory Grove Primitive Baptist Church has been made sad by the passing of a beloved sister, Gertie Ellen Johnson, who passed away December 5, 1973, at her home on Route Two, Dunn, North Carolina. She was born May 4, 1892 to the late Mr. and Mrs. Primroe Johnson Benson, North Carolina and was married to Raymon Larry Johnson in January 1915.

Sister Gertie joined Hickory Grove Primitive Baptist Church along with her husband in June 1930. She loved her church and was a faithful and devoted member as long as she was able to attend. Her husband preceded her in death 11 years.

Our sister leaves to mourn their loss, one daughter, Mrs. Geraldine Murphy. Also six grandchildren and one great grandchild.

A grave side service was held at the Johnson Family Cemetery December 7, 1973 by her pastor, Elder W. D. Godwin officiating. May God fill the emptiness in the lives of the bereaved family and friends with a manifestation of His tender love and mercy.

Now be it resolved that we express our deepest sympathy to the bereaved family, and be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution of love and respect be sent to the family, a copy to the *Signs of the Times*, and a copy placed on our church records.

Committee:
Sister Leacy Beasley
Sister Velma Wood
Sister Gertrude Royal

MRS. MARGIE M. AGEE

It is, indeed, with a sad heart I attempt to write a memoir of Margie Martin Agee, daughter of the late Hatcher and Dillie Clower Martin. Margie was born July 10, 1914, and passed from this life April 9, 1974. She became the bride of James Leroy Agee December 25, 1935.

She is survived by her husband, Elder James Leroy Agee, two sons: Donald Lee Agee, Christiansburg, Va., and Larry James Agee, Greensboro, N.C., one brother, Dorris Martin, Check, Va., and three grandchildren. Preceding her in death were four brothers: Graden, Irvin, Alonzo and Otley Martin, and one sister, Alma Martin.

Margie was a devoted wife and mother who walked humbly, through faith, in the footsteps of her Lord. Her love for the church was plainly manifisted in her never tiring efforts to entertain the church people and friends in her home. The love of God begets love and fellowship for the saints of God. How do we come into possession of this love? By the grace and mercy of a merciful God. Paul is a true witness of this fact, I Cor. 15:10, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

Only those to whom it is given to know something of the great love and mercy of our God and Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ, know anything about their unworthiness. Margie often spoke of her feeling of unworthiness.

Her's was a long drawn out illness. She bore her suffering patiently. She said, "When she was put on the operating table for major surgery, she did not want to think of herself. She was blessed to repeat over and over in her thoughts:

"There is a fountain, filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains"

I shall long remember this dear friend as I travel this journey of life. May it please God to reconcile us to His will, and enable us to realize, in part at least, the sweetness I feel assured she fully realized in the latter part of the precious hymn under consideration, and reads as follows:

"E'er since by faith, I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,

Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be 'till I die.

Then in a nobler, sweeter song,
I'll sing thy power to save,
When this poor, lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave."

I loved this hymn before Margie had this sweet experience concerning it. Now it is one of the most precious songs I know.

Funeral services were conducted by her request, by Elders D. V. Spangler and Raymond Goad, at Salem Church, Floyd County, Va. Interment was in Rest Vale Cemetery, adjoining the church grounds.

May God bless and reconcile her dear husband who has shared her joys and sorrows these many years, and graciously remember her sons and their families.

Submitted in love, by request of her husband.

Gaye A. (Mrs. B. O.) Thompson

EDDIE BOWLING COZART

It has pleased our gracious God to remove from our midst a dear one, Brother Eddie Bowling Cozart. J. H. Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church feel our loss is his eternal gain. He was afflicted a long time, but seemed to enjoy his meeting when he was able to attend. He seemed to walk humbly and softly before his dear Savior. David said in his writing, "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." (Psalms 34:18)

Brother Eddie was born December 24, 1894 and died April 21, 1974, son of the late Brodie Cozart and Aldene Tablock Cozart of Granville County. He was married May 12, 1919 to Nora Cash. To this union were born two daughters, Mrs. Estelle Tilley, Stem, N. C. and Mrs. Ethel Cook, Oxford, N. C., three grandchildren and two great grandchildren. He was received by the church Sunday, April 21, 1957 and was baptized Sunday morning May 12, 1957 by Elder Harvey Smith.

May the Good Lord comfort and reconcile all that mourn his passing. David said, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." (Psalms 116:15)

Ordered in conference May 11, 1974 by J. H. Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church, Stem, N. C. that this obituary be written and one copy be placed in our church records, a copy sent to the family and a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Humbly,
Nancy B. Allen
Annie C. Gregory, Clerk

MRS. LAUANNA S. HELMS

By the grace of God and with much sadness, I will attempt to write the obituary of my dear mother, Lauanna S. Helms. She was born December 10, 1879, and departed this life December 23, 1973, making her stay on this earth 96 years. She was the daughter of Charles and Lucinda Wood McAlexander.

She was twice married: first to Tyler Thomas, and this union was blessed with three sons: M. S. Thomas, Montvale, Va., E. J. Thomas, Callaway, Va., and O. L. Thomas, deceased.

After the death of her first husband, she was married to Thomas F. Helms. This union was blessed with four children: Mrs. Ella Jamison, Callaway, Va., Mrs. Elizabeth Kozak, Holiday, Fla., Elis Helms, deceased, and Farner Helms, deceased, ten grandchildren, including Mrs. Bevelyne Prillaman whom she raised from childhood, 23 great grandchildren, and seven great great grandchildren.

She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Longbranch when she was 27 years old, and was baptized by Elder Asa Short. She was a member of the church for nearly 70 years. Mama loved the dear old Primitive Baptist Church and always looked forward to attending as long as she was able.

I can speak for all of her children, that we

miss Mama so much, but we feel she is at rest, and our loss is her eternal gain.

After services by Elder Amos Hash, her pastor, at Arrington-Bussy Funeral Home, her body was laid to rest in the Helms Family Cemetery.

Submitted in sadness by her daughter,

Ella Helms Jamison

SISTER LAURA WOODY GILBERT

Sister Laure Woody Gilbert was born March 8, 1881 and died May 6, 1974 at the age of 93 years, in a Durham, N. C. nursing home. She was a resident of Penhook, Va. and was born in Pittsylvania County. She was a daughter of the late Benjamine W. and Mary Parcell Ashworth.

She was a member of Springfield Primitive Bapitst Church, which she joined October 9, 1949.

She was first married to Captain Ralph Woody, who died in 1908. She later married Samuel Isaac Gilbert, who died in 1966. She is survived by a son, Gordon R. Woody, of Durham, N. C., six daughters: Miss Vivian Woody, Charlotte, N. C., Mrs. Dale McMannis, Cleveland, Ohio, Mrs. Ivan Linthicum, Martinsville, Va., Mrs. Claude B. Williams, Chatham, Va., and Mrs. Clarence S. Hunt, Altavista, Va., and twelve grandchildren and twenty-seven great grandchildren.

Sister Gilbert was a lovely person: her meat and drink was to talk of the love of God and His mercies. She frequently visited in my home, and we spent the day talking of better things. She loved her church and was always present when able to come. She loved her children, and spoke of all of them being so good to her, and did so much for her.

Her funeral was held at Springfield Church, conducted by her beloved pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, assisted by Elder D. L. Simpson. Interment was in the family cemetery at Liberty Christian Church near Penhook, Va. She was laid to rest beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, to await the resurrection when the saints will be caught up in the air to ever be with their Lord. We miss her but feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Annie Tosh

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Time has come when we the church at Tarboro, wish to bow in humble submission of the passing of Brother Bill Cox. Brother Bill was blessed to be a member of our church for only a short time, but to know him was to love him. This writer will never forget the day he came before the church, as he was as humble as a tiny baby. He was large in size but in the spirit he was made small. "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Matt: 5-6.

For the short period Brother Bill was a member of our church he was made humble and he seemed to love to be with us. He was faithful in attending his church and other churches around. We the Church at Tarboro miss his appearance, but we feel he is resting with his Saviour.

Therefore we resolve:

First—That our loss is his eternal gain, and we trust God will bless his wife, Sister Mary, to carry on. We trust he is resting in peace where trials, tribulations and pain is no more.

Second—That we pray God will comfort his family and they will have a great number of sweet memories to call upon.

Third—That three copies of this respect be made: one for the church, one for the family, one to be published in the *Signs of the Times.*

This done by order of our conference at our April meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 142 **DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1974** **NO. 10**

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10/74
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

NOT BY READING, BUT BY REVELATION

Rt. 1, Box 415E
Swansboro, N.C. 28584

Dear Elder Spangler,

You will find enclosed check in the amount of $7.00 to be applied to a two year subscription to the *Signs of the Times* for Perry G. Horne, Rt. 1, Box 249, Richlands, N.C. 28574.

In our humble opinion, it would be good if every Old Baptist believer could have *The Signs* coming into his home, especially those who believe and subscribe to the principles contended for by the editors and writers in its columns: Which is, "Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause." We realize that reading the truth does not make a beliver, since this has to come by revelation, and this is necessary also for the writer when he is blessed to expound the scriptures and comfort the Lord's people. We have found that those who are blessed to write the truth use the scriptures to support the doctrine of our Lord and Saviour.

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. for there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." (Romans 13:1.) Those who have been made to believe this doctrine, which is the bedrock of and embraces salvation by grace and *all things* that God purposed that would come to pass, do not preach that God is the author of sin, but to the contrary feel their exceeding sinfulness before a just and holy God who works all things according to His own will. They realize they cannot walk alone in this wicked world but are dependent upon Him through life and in death. One that believes God is controlling all things has a desire to walk in the footsteps of our Saviour, but have no confidence in their flesh or their ability to perform the first thing that would honor our God, except His spirit leads them. I am not aware of any Old Baptists who believe or preach a doctrine that because God in His wisdom predestinated the wicked for the day of evil, is responsible in the least degree for our sinful condition. The Lord's people are sinners and have been shown their vile and wretched condition, and are condemned. This makes one beg for mercy when this experience comes. When delivered we are made to love our brethren of like precious faith, and above all it makes us love our Saviour who died for us. If anybody does not have the right to criticize another for what he believes, it is he who believes this glorious doctrine. Often I am made to ask myself where would I be, were it not for the mercy and grace of God extended to this poor unworthy sinner? God only knows. There is one thing that I do believe, that I would be without hope of salvation in that world to come.

May I say, these people who are an afflicted and poor people in this world, are the most blessed creatures, because they have a hope in one that saved His people from their sins, and will in the consummation of all things present them

to the Father in that robe without blemish, white as driven snow.

If I did not believe that He controls all things and that there was just one thing running at random, then my hope would be weakened to the point that the thing that He did not control, would destroy me. What a great consolation when we feel that the Lord is able, and has promised to never leave nor forsake those He died for. This hope renews our strength. It enables us to press on and upward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ the Lord.

In a sweet meeting yesterday at Sandhill Church we were blessed to be with and hear preach Elders Dewey Turner and Curtis Raines. After the service a dear brother ask the question, "Do you think if all our hymn books were destroyed there would be anyone in this day who would be able to compose such hymns as we are blessed with." Our answer, "Very doubtful: but we do believe the Lord is able even in this day to inspire men to that which would praise Him!

May we be blessed to look over each other for good and esteem our brother better than ourselves.

In bonds of love,
J. J. Rhue

Star Route,
Radford, Va. 24141

Dear Elder Spangler:

Hope this finds you and yours well. Mother remains about the same,—not doing too well.

While going through my papers the other night, I came across some old Minutes of the New River Association, and I wish you would print this Circular Letter in the *Signs*, which was written by Elder Branscome in 1899, if it meets your approval.

Love from a brother,
Willard Cox

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Elder F. P. Branscome.)

The New River Primitive Baptist Association in session with the church at Greasy Creek, Floyd Co. Va., September 8th, 9th and 10th, 1899, to the churches composing the same, sends Christian greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD: Since our last address another year is passed, and again we are permitted to send to you another epistle of love and fellowship. The Lord, in his wisdom and providential care, continues to favor us through all the changes allotted to us pilgrims and sojourners upon the earth; and, again, we are privileged to meet and mingle together in the worship of our God, and to hear from all the churches. Many have been added to the churches, and peace and fellowship abounds which constrains us to praise and thank the Lord. But some of our brethren and sisters have come to the end of their earthly pilgrimage, and have gone to their never ending home which is beyond and above, where their joys are unspeakable and full of glory. And, although we miss them, we can praise the Lord for the blessed hope that we have, that, when our course is finished, we shall be like them in partaking of those heavenly joys of which we have had a fore taste.

The preceeding year has been one of peace among the churches of our Associations, and her ministers have been, and are now, with one accord, preaching the word and "speaking the truth in love." In this they are proved to be of the faithful in Christ Jesus. Paul says, to them, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, an anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one

another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." And, again, "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ hath also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor."

It is certainly good that we should walk by the above rule; and, while trying thus to walk, each should pray, as David did, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." If we are in a state of mind to thus pray, we will love holiness and hate evil (sin); we will be kind and tender-hearted, and our walk and conversation will lend to others the fragrance of a sweet smelling savor. Paul says, "Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Such have the true wisdom of which James speaks. He says, "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." —James 3:17, 18.

The epistle, in which the above quotation is found, shows to us that the faith, which reigns in the hearts of God's children, will manifest itself in their outward life. This faith which works by love and purifies the heart overcomes the world, and is that by which the just shall live. Faith is a fruit of the Spirit; and, therefore, is the gift of God. Only such as have this faith are in possession of true wisdom. True wisdom is "first pure," because it is from a pure source—"from above." The truly wise man will "show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom." He cannot boast of good works, because this wisdom keeps constantly before him how great is the mercy which has saved him. The pureness of this wisdom prevents him from becoming puffed up with pride, vanity and boasting. It produces in its possessor peacefulness and gentleness, because it shows him to himself, with all the vileness of his corrupt nature. He knows that from God all his salvation must come, and without Christ he is nothing and can do nothing. How great is the contrast between this wisdom, which is from above, and that wisdom which is from beneath! The one is pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits; but the other is "earthly, sensual and develish," and is "full of bitter envying and strife." The peace of God, which passes understanding, dwells in the heart of the truly wise, which causes him, in the outward life, to lead a peaceable and quiet life. A proud man is not easily entreated, because he cannot bear opposition; and if you tell him he is wrong he gets mad and seeks revenge. But true wisdom is full of mercy and good fruits, and if a possessor of this wisdom should receive a real injury from another, he cannot harbor revenge in his heart; but he is soon led to pity the sinner, and can pray for him. The proof that one has obtained mercy is that he himself is merciful; and, if one is a proof that he shall re- and, if one is merciful it is a proof that he shall receive or obtain mercy. Our merciful Redeemer said, "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." And this same Jesus, in the same sermon, said, as he taught his disciples after what manner they should pray, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

The meeting of our Association has been harmonious, and has been to our waiting souls one of comfort and edification, which we desire to keep in remembrance. And now, in the language of Peter we feel to say: "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one for another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing, knowing that ye are thereunto called that ye should inherit a blessing." And, "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the

God of love and peace shall be with you."

Isaac Webb, Moderator.

J. C. Hall, Clerk.

P. G. Lester, As't Clerk.

REMINISCENCES OF MARY PARKER

(Continued)

Two miles from our home, down the lovely green valley of Honey Creek lived my young cousin, Lou C———, she was an only daughter, beautiful, exceedingly intelligent, but much petted and indulged, and very proud. During this one eventful year she had lost a devoted mother, become a happy bride, and, before the end of a twelve-month, was a mother—and a corpse. From early youth this sweet girl and I had been companions, but since my mother had become helpless I had not once made her a visit; and in her new-found happiness she sought gayer associations, more congenial associates than she could now find in her strangely altered cousin. One mid-summer day while preparing the noon-day meal for the hired men at work in the golden harvest, a neighbor called to me from the road and told me Cousin Lou was dangerously ill. As soon as the dinner work was finished, I donned my riding habit and hastily saddling my youngest brother's riding pony, galloped down to my cousin's home. When I entered her room she raised up and threw out her arms, saying: "Oh, Mary, for one week I have prayed that you might come!" Her innocent babe lay beside her, but not once during my stay did she mention or notice it, but began at once to tell me that she was going to die, and that she was without hope and without God. Never in my life did I witness such sorrow of soul, such self condemnation, such contrition for sin, such a hungering and thirsting after the living waters and living bread. Her young husband, who sat beside her, said, "Oh, Lou, do quiet yourself, you are crazy." She then firmly told him and the nurse to leave the room as she wished to be alone with me. Just then a glimmer of sunlight cast a bright ray across the room, and she told the nurse to close it out, saying "it just seems to me it is the light of Christ trying to get to me, but my dreadful sins shut it out and the sunlight mocks me." Alone with her she begged me to pray for her and to talk to her about Jesus. "Oh," she cried, "my wasted, vain and useless life, if only I could live it over and use the many precious moments spent in folly in reading God's word and learning of Him; but it is too late, too late!" In vain I strove to soothe her, in vain did I tell her of the thief on the cross, of the maniac among the tombs, and that Jesus came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentence; it seemed to do no good. How very true that none but "Jesus can do helpless sinners good." Much as she wanted me to remain, and difficult as it was to leave her in this state, my duty called me home.

Oh! the darkness that filled my soul as I rode homeward, a darkness that seemed to obscure the light of the natural sun and make the midsummer evening seem like one of wintry darkness. The next morning brought the news that the dear young life had ebbed away at 12 that night, and had I not learned before that she died happy, when I looked upon the still form as it lay in the coffin, clad in her silken bridal robe, her beautiful up-turned face so gloriously happy with the radiant smile that left its impress upon the marble features, I should certainly have felt that she had been with Jesus, and sweetly learned the beautiful lesson of His mercy and love, and felt it applied to her stricken soul ere she passed beyond the mystic tide. Her nurse told me that about three hours before she died she broke forth into singing, and though in health she had no gift to sing, she sang one hymn after another; then began to praise her Saviour and continued blessing and praising Him until the mortal put on immortality, and she was

clothed upon with her house which is from heaven. Oh, the wonders of such love! the matchless beauty and power of such all-saving, sin-cleansing grace! the glorious fountain here opened to the house of David for sin and uncleanness! None who are sick, none who feel the need of this great Physician, this healing balm in Gilead, no matter how black their garments, how vile their sins, how sick their soul, need fear of being turned away, but to all such the dear voice of Jesus says. "Your sins are all forgiven, come unto Me and I will give you rest." Without money and without price we can at this great fountain source find the riches of eternal life, the blessed gift of God which comes to us through our Lord Jesus Christ. How sweet to feel the refining, healing influence of this love flooding and encircling our entire life, infusing it with warmth and light, so like the glad, golden sunlight that fills the whole earth, and which broadens and stretches away, enveloping us in its glory even to the shore of eternity in the blessed home above.

"My dear Heavenly Father,

"I thank Thee for friends Thou did'st give me,
Whose kindness oft softened my care;
I thought they never would leave me,
All lonely and desolate here.

"My frail gourds they quickly did wither,
I was left to the chilling wind's blast,
When Thy pitiful voice said 'come hither,
'My wings over thee I will cast.' "

The love of my parents and my affection for them was to me as the comforting shadow of a beautiful vine under which I rested, but which was removed before I reached the noonday of womanhood. I knew that in some future time they would be taken away, and that, if I survived them, I would be left alone in the cold world, but I would try to lay aside the thought, or when it would abide with me I would comfort myself with the scriptural promise, "When my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." I had given up all youthful dreams, had willingly sacrificed upon the altar of duty towards my parents and home all other earthly reliances. My dear Heavenly Friend knew all that it had cost me, all I had suffered and lost, and He alone knew how very "like breaking one's teeth with gravel stones," it was to me at times. But His love and grace sustained and upheld me through it all, and I believed He would give me strength in every future trial. After three years of family affliction in which was crowded much care and toil for me, one sunshiny day in March my dear father started to make a tour of his appointments, intending to visit the three charges and be absent over three Sundays. The roads were very bad and he was forced to cross the country twenty-five miles on horseback before reaching a railroad. He was very corpulent, weighing at this time about three hundred pounds. He reached New Holland on Friday evening, intending to stay at my eldest brother's all night, then go to Waterloo next morning, where he was to preach at 11 a.m.. Sometime during the night he woke my brother and wife and they found him delirious, and very ill. Medical men say he had a lesion of the brain which induced paralysis. A protracted illness followed, of typhoid-pneumonia, from which he arose a mere shadow of his former self, and he never again recovered his strength of body or vigor of mind. Since my mother became helpless, up to this time, I had not once left her a day or night, but now that she could be left in the care of my brother and little nephew and a hired woman, I felt it my duty to go to my father; for who can nurse or care for one sick and in danger so well as one who is actuated by true affection? The touch of no hand is so cooling, so soft, so gentle; the sound of no voice so quieting as that of one who we know really cares for us, and who is dear to us. I was told that he would not recognize me, but he did, and the physician said he seemed to grow quieter when he became aware of my presence. From this time, and until his death, eight years afterward, my strong, dear father, on whom we had all so often leaned, became as a child,

and clung to me with all of a child's persistent affection.

Another year full of care and perplexity with my now gradually failing health. Then in March of that year, one evening after a snow-storm, when great banks of white, fleecy, gold-tinged clouds lay in the West, beneath which the sun was sinking out of sight, *Death,* entered our home and took our dear mother. Oh, the sadness of that dark hour! Did you ever think, dear reader, what a depth of sorrow and loss and suffering hovers around the one little word "gone"? Yes, mother was gone! Gone out from the dear threshold of the home of which she had always been the central figure; from which she would always be missed; *gone,* never to return! Oh, the awful hush and solemnity that falls upon the home at such an hour!

How vividly the picture of that sorrowful time comes before me now, causing the heart to swell and tears to flow from my eyes. But these sad scenes are a part of this life. Sooner or later they come to all homes, and to every individual. But who ever feels prepared to meet the sadness and the heart-ache of such a scene and hour? If the kind hand of Providence did not soothe, or if Time did not soften such keen grief, many of us would never be able to rise above its blighting influence. But it is said that "earth has no sorrows that Heaven cannot heal." The Christian at least can find a balm in Gilead, a dear physician in Christ Jesus, the strength of whose everlasting love and arm is able to uphold under every trial and to soothe every heart-ache. How great the favor to be allowed to lie down in green pastures, to be led beside still waters, to rest and hide under the shadow of the sheltering wing of the Almighty, when all earthly hopes and reliances are taken from us! "Truly when my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up."

At the time of my mother's death, my father was very feeble in health, my little nephew also lay very sick with lung fever. The physician said my pulse was exceedingly rapid, yet I kept about, waiting on the sick, and trying to look after the duties of the house. But the next morning after mother's death, when I attempted to rise, I took a hard chill, and for seven weeks I seemed to hover between life and death. Two physicians attended me, and one of them was with me most of the time. As I could not receive proper attention in our now lonely home, my dear aunt and uncle, who lived near Logan, kindly took me to their home, where I was near the doctor, and where I received every attention and kindness that loving hands could bestow. Although I was permitted to once more get about the house and to go back to my afflicted parent, who so needed my affectionate care, from that day until now I have been the victim of a most painful chronic malady. My home no longer seemed the place of quiet happiness and peaceful content which it had once been. My youngest brother, who had charge of the farm, did not like farming, and poor father could not bear to go into the room where was mother's vacant chair, and the couch upon which her afflicted body had so long lain. Everything reminded him of her, yet she was gone; gone never to return. Never again could he see the dear face, he said, until the resurrection morn, when, at the sounding of the last trumpet, the dead in Christ should arise in glory. Then he felt sweetly assured they would meet again to part no more. Does it not seem that our dearest Lord has left nothing undone that would tend to make us supremely happy, when we cross to the unseen shore to join the multitude who walk with Jesus in robes of spotless white, and who sing the song that none but the redeemed can ever learn or sing? Oh, the joy, the unalloyed bliss that awaits the poor suffering, trembling child of God. Why should not the hands that hang down be uplifted, the feeble knees be strengthened and the eyes be turned "unto the hills, whence cometh our help"?

In November, nine months after my mother was laid to rest, with the grass

and flowers now green and blooming over her grave, the farm had been disposed of, and we were ready to move to this village, eighty miles northwest. If the reader has ever gone out from the home of his childhood where every nook and corner had become familiar, and endeared by some tender association, where every tree and shrub that grew upon the sacred spot seemed like some speaking, loving soul; if the dear home seemed a part of self, a part of your very life, and to leave it seemed like the severing of heart from heart, then you will know how I felt when I stood for the last time upon the threshold, and my eyes lingered lovingly, tenderly over the scenes so familiar, beautiful and dear. But just here is another turned-down leaf, one among the many I have had to pass over, leaving them to rest amid the ruins of the buried past. But the memory of this home, like the forms and faces of the departed, will often "visit us in dreams,"

"And glide across our memories
Like shadows over streams."

Soon after we became settled here the father of the two little nephews who had been four years under my care, married again, and took them away to his home in the extreme north-western part of Ohio. Another year passed, then my youngest brother went out from us. Although I did not allow myself to become so rebellious about the marriage of my last brother as I did when the brother now living in Logan married, yet it gave me a dreadful heartache; and when, after I witnessed the marriage ceremony performed in the Presbyterian meeting-house in this village and saw him with his bride take the train on their wedding tour, and then wended my way back to our home with none but father and myself left, I felt broken in spirit, and many were the tears I shed, as I set about arranging and putting away his things.

But time, though by one hand it cuts down our dear earthly hopes and reliances and takes away many an idol, with the other hand it softens every blow, and in a measure soothes and heals each aching wound. So as the days and years glided onward, I became accustomed to the sad changes in our household, as did also my dear father. We two were very happy. He wished to visit all the churches of his former charge, and on his tours I nearly always accompanied him. We also visited the far West, and at one time made a lengthy visit in Kentucky. Poor, dear father often remarked he would have no worldly trouble now if only I could get well. But though I had the benefit of travel, of change of scene and of all the various schools of medicine, yet disease, like the unseen worm at the roots of plants, still pressed on me with its blight and heart-sickening results. True I kept about, and when at home performed my household duties, which I greatly enjoyed, never at any time being so happy as when my rooms were in neatness and order and I was preparing delicate, tempting food to place upon a nicely arranged table for father and other dear ones to enjoy. But every few weeks I would have a severe hemorrhage of the stomach, always throwing up two or three pints of coagulated blood. These attacks were always preceded by bloating and swelling of the body, and sometimes of the face and lower limbs. I was under first one physicians's care then another, and hundreds of dollars were expended, all to no purpose.

Eight years of almost uninterrupted sunshine and domestic happiness and peace, and then all the happiness of an earthly nature that I believe Providence ordained should be mine, went out of my sorely stricken life, like the going out of a lamp on a night of thick darkness, leaving nothing but midnight gloom. All that winter father had been unusually feeble, and neither of us had been outside the village. At night he would be very delirious, and I had to be near him, watching him as I would a little child, and all this but drew the cord which bound child to parent more close-

ly about my heart. On Thursday before the last Saturday in April, 1877, he expressed a wish to attend a yearly meeting held by our people near Good Hope, twelve miles from here, and asked me to arrange to accompany him. On Saturday morning, we went down to Washington Court House on the cars, then took a carriage and drove across the country to a place of meeting. It was a glorious spring day, the golden sunlight flooding the earth, the fields covered with delicate verdue, while the singing of birds and the sweet scent of blossoms filled the air. But gloom, like a funeral pall, lay upon my soul, and cast a shadow over the perfect picture of rural beauty that opened like a grand panorama on every side, and a voice as of one weeping seemed to fill the air. So heavily did this, which I now believe to have been a presentment of coming affliction, weigh upon me at times, that I would cover my eyes and ears and strive to rid myself of such awful gloom. I mentioned my mental condition to father, and he said he, too, felt a great depression of spirit. Yet he conversed near all of the way, relating many interesting incidents connected with his early ministry. When we arrived at the place of worship we were met by the smiling faces of cousin Robert Yeoman and wife, and as other dear ones gave us the hand of welcome I felt very happy, and felt that it was indeed pleasant for brethren "to dwell together in unity." The friends insisted on my father speaking awhile, and he did so, taking for his subject, "Blessed is the people who know the joyful sound," but had spoken but a few moments when there was a rush of blood to the head, and in broken sentences he asked to be excused, and immediately passed out of the house. Soon he motioned for me to follow him. Finding him very ill we hastily got him in a carriage and I drove rapidly to my cousin's beautiful home, where he received every kindness, and the best medical aid that could be found. Three physicians were brought, and consulted together, but all their efforts, and all my tender nursing availed nothing. His course here on earth was finished. He had fought the good fight, had kept the faith, and now the dear Master called him to inherit the kingdom prepared for him. Oh! the sanctity that pervaded his death-chamber. All lips seemed closed, everyone's breath hushed, as we stood about that dying couch, and watched the dear life go out so sweetly, so calmly, just like going to sleep on the dear Saviour's bosom. Just as the sun rose in radiant glory and beauty in the eastern horizon his spirit took its flight to that home above, which has no need of the light of the sun, "for the Lord God and the Lamb are the light thereof."

(Continued next month)

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION CIRCULAR LETTER 1974

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord who compose the Pigg River Association:

This being the 149th sitting of our association, I realize it as I attempt to write this letter. O for a thankful heart that it has pleased our Heavenly Father by his love, tender mercy and grace, which was given in Christ Jesus our Lord before the world began, and who has kept us in his own way through the fiery trials of life until this present time. He has kept all his people throughout all ages, and will forever keep them and never let them go. Such sweet promises, together with the precious witness within, I feel is worth more than anything this world has ever had to offer.

To be called into the fellowship of the saints is a greater blessing than any human tongue can ever tell. For to be called unto fellowship of the saints, we have fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ. Then we will be found walking in the light and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. Being kept by Him who has called us in him, is to be in the light in whom there is no darkness at all. How wonderful it is

to meet with the Saints in light from time to time, and to feel that true love which comes only from the Father of light, in whom there is no darkness or shadow of turning. The keeper of them that are kept, is the Lord. They are kept by grace through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed at the last time. There is a course that is set before all of God's little ones, and they will finish their course by faith, which is in our Lord Jesus Christ, since He giveth them everything they need.

By this God given faith their hearts are knit together in love: so, being knit together, one will not be there before the other. Jesus said four times in the 6th chapter of St. John, that he would raise them up at the *last day*. When King Jesus makes his visible appearance on this earth again, every eye shall see him, every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that He is God of all. Being the Saviour of the Church, and since He has been with them here in time in Spirit and power, He will take them to be with him in glory, for He will raise them at the last day.

As I close, I confess that I have hardly hinted at what a wonderful Saviour we have.

In fellowship with all God's dear saints, I hope.

W. M. Holland

IS BLESSED TO ATTEND THE MEETINGS

1021 Griffith
Dallas, Tex. 75208

Signs of the Times:

Enclosed find check for seven dollars for two years renewal. I enjoy our paper very much and don't want to be without it. My husband has been gone one year July 14th. It has been a very lonely and difficult year for me, but my trust is in God: without Him I couldn't have made it this far. My health is very poor, but I know all things work together for good to those who love the Lord, and I know he promised not to put more on us than we are able to bear.

I have been very fortunate in getting to attend our meetings, as a dear couple, Brother and Sister Boyd, come by after me every Sunday. I was privileged to attend the two-day annual meeting at Mt. Zion, near Cash, Texas, the first week end in June. Elder McCool and Elder Paul Daniels were visiting ministers, and Elder Loyd Wall the pastor. All were blessed to preach the unsearchable riches of the Almighty God . . .

May the Lord bless and keep all the Editors, and give them health and strength to carry on the good work they are doing.

In Christian love,
Mrs. T. H. (Alice) Graham

P.O. Box 225
Donaldson, Ark. 71914

Dear Editor:

Enclosed you will find an article that the family of Joseph B. Witherington would like to have published in your paper.

The family is large and scattered in many directions, and we neglected to have the obituary sent to you when he passed away July 13, 1973. He was a subscriber to the *Sign of the Times* for as many years as I can remember.

The article enclosed is an English assignment that my sixteen year old daughter wrote as she remembered her grandpa. We would like to have it published as a memorial to him.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Arnold Sandage

(see page 238)

EXPERIENCE

302 E. Lawson St.
Hahira, Georgia 31632
July 15, 1974

Dear Brethren of the *Signs*,

Having noted that my subscription

expires next month, I herein enclose a check for $4.00 to cover another year's subscription.

I must say a word concerning the enjoyment I have derived from the magazine. I first encountered mention of it in Hassell's history of the Church and other works of equal or greater age. I supposed the publication to have been extinct or to have fallen into unsound hands unworthy of its founder and original supporters. To my great surprise and pleasure I found from the Pastor of my church that it was still being published and still stood on its original platform to the letter. I consider any human effort that has maintained one belief or system of beliefs uncorrupted for nearly a century and a half, to have labored in the cause of truth, to have been blessed in that labor by a God in whom there is "neither variance nor shadow of turning."

I greatly delight in reading the experiences and views of those whom I am compelled to believe are God's people both of today and of years past, as they appear in the pages of the *Signs*. I seem to spend much of my time in a depressed state and I am comforted to read accounts by others who also share my doubts and fears concerning practically everything. To read of those who have already been through what I now experience and now praise God for the wisdom learned under the shadow of death, is a great encouragement to me. Unfortunately, as soon as the sting of one of God's loving strokes departs, I am beset by an indifference to the things of religion wherein I totally disregard whatever lessons I learned while under the faithful affliction of God.

Of all the experiences I have seen recorded in the pages of the magazine during this year's subscription, the one which I delighted in most was the piece which happened in last March's issue by Miss Joyce Williams. I was greatly heartened by it since I am also a young person. I will be nineteen tommorrow. It seems that (in this section at least) the Lord has not seen fit in his great wisdom to add many young people to his visible kingdom. I use the term "Young people" in a purely chronological sense, since every child of Grace is just that, a child. At any rate I greatly enjoy hearing of young Primitive Baptists since, as I often look about the meeting houses at the aged faces of old Fathers and Mothers in Israel, Satan suggests to me that I have only been added to the Church to watch its final dissolution as the old people pass on to their reward. Of course this observation has been made time and again by all those kind and generous people who have been doing us the favor of composing our funeral address for the last century and a half. Thank God we have the promise that the gates of Hell shall not prevail against the Israel of God.

Yours in hope,

John Crowley

NOTICE OF MEETING

The Maine Old School Baptist Churches will, the Lord willing, hold an all-day meeting the 4th Sunday and Saturday night before in October, at the home of James and Ruth Seven, daughter of Sister Ruth Clark of the Whitefield Old School Baptist Church.

The Sevon home is in Jefferson, Maine, Route 213 on the Damariscotta Lake Road. Route 213 branches off from Route 215, which is taken at a junction in Newcasle Village. Business Route 1 leads from Route 1 into Newcastle Village.

Elder D. B. Stokes of Jacksonville, N. C. is expected to attend the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all who may be able to attend.

If more instructions are needed, write to Mrs. Ruth Clark, Box 245, Newcastle, Maine.

Mrs. Ruth Clark

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Contentnea Association is to be held, the Lord willing, with Cypress Creek Church, in Dalphin County, N. C., to begin Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1974.

To be held at the church on Friday, and on Saturday and Sunday in the Richland School, just off Highway 258, in Richland, N. C.

All lovers of the truth are invited to visit with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Assn. Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP DISTRIBUTE THE SIGNS

(To August 1, 1974)

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Danville, Va. October, 1974

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

EDITORIAL

ONE MEDIATOR

"But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." (Hebrews 8:6)

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." (I Timothy 2:5)

The subject of the mediatorship of Jesus is deep and sublime. It involves the grace and mercy of God towards those who have sinned against him, who, consequently, deserve only the judgment

and wrath of God. The coming of Jesus into the world was plainly an act of mercy on the part of the Father. For Jesus becoming the Saviour and Redeemer of God's people, and the mediator between Him and these people, was certainly initiated by the Father. The condition of men was such that they could not in any way begin negotiations with God; so, if God had not been pleased to take note of them in mercy, they should have always remained in their state of condemnation and death.

In this writing we are to consider the fact that Jesus is the Mediator — the *one Mediator* between God and man; and that he is the *mediator of a better covenant.*

The meaning of the word "mediator" is: One who is a go-between; one who acts with the purpose of bringing agreement between persons at odds; etc. This has its usefulness in many walks of life, such as, between employers and employees; or between friends who have had a misunderstanding. But the most wonderful and far reaching sense of mediatorship is Christ Jesus between God and God's sinning people.

It is easy to understand that a successful mediator must necessarily be qualified to meet both sides on equality with them; and he must be thoroughly acquainted with the situation on both sides. How eminently qualified was Jesus! He was *one with the Father;* and, being incarnate, he was *one with the people.* "I and my Father are one." (John 10:30) ". . . in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." (Hebrews 2:17)

It is evident, since Jesus said that he came to do the will of him that sent him, that everything Jesus came to do — and which he did — was the thought of his Father. In this there was perfect oneness of purpose and accomplishment, for Jesus and his Father are one. "I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." (John 17:4)

To mediate between God and God's people necessitated the achievement of everything which was in the purpose of his coming into the world. Sending his Son into the world indicated not only God's willingness to be a party in the matter, but also his determination that it should be done.

There was a great gulf between God and his people. They had broken God's law, and were under its penalty. This meant that they were alienated from God, shut up in their prison; and, as far as they themselves were concerned, must remain there. For of themselves they had nothing to bargain with, nothing with which to claim leniency — they were miserably guilty, and their condition was helpless and hopeless. God's judgments are inflexible, demanding complete satisfaction; and there was not one among all their number who could make satisfaction, for all were under the same condemnation.

Was there no one to pity? Was there no one who cared?

Yes, there was One who had pity; and cared! Behold, at his time, God caused it to be proclaimed: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."

But there was much involved in his saving his people from their sins: He must take upon himself the likeness of sinful flesh, (without sin) that he should be capable of obeying the offended law. He must of himself have something to offer, for without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sins. So he must suffer, he must die, in order to make satisfaction in the nature of his people who had sinned.

The manifestation of God's love towards his people, in that he willed that they should be redeemed, and in that he himself provided the only one who could satisfy the rigid demands of the law, even his own Son, is a most sublime subject for the contemplation and comfort of His people. That Jesus came into

the world is not just merely a matter of dogmatic opinion: It is an historical fact. It is not a cunningly devised fable: the disciples were eyewitnesses of his majesty; and each subsequent disciple has the things of Jesus confirmed in his heart. How surely it is established in Christian experience that there is no other way of redemption and salvation.

We are told that Christ is the mediator of a *better covenant* — a new testament, which has positive declarations of mercy and grace towards those with whom it is made. This differs greatly from the former covenant. The former bestowed blessings upon the performances of men. But the record is that men failed in all of their obligations. The better covenant brought to full view the grace which had its moments of view in Biblical history; but it was not until "in these last days" that God was pleased to speak to us by his Son, rather than as he had formerly by the prophets.

The first, (or old) covenant served its purpose of bringing all the works of men into their proper light, and showed the utter inability o fmen to comply with its requirements. This brought the full force of judgment upon all. (Yet we must be reminded that this judgment of condemnation is not applied to any in this life except those with whom the *better covenant* is made. Then it is with each as it was with the Apostle, "When the commandment came, sin revived and I died." But none shall escape this condemnation, though with many it will be in that day when there will be a separation of those whom the "sheep" and the "goats" typify.)

This experiencing of "the commandment coming, and sin reviving", is in preparation for the manifesting and applying of the new and better covenant, when Jesus, as the mediator of that covenant, speaks, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

It is apparent that this new covenant is the gracious work of God to those with whom it is made; and that it entirely supersedes the old. Not that the old is merely discarded in favor of the new, but that the new is given because the eternal will of the Father was that the sins of *his people* should be atoned for by his own Son. Only Jesus, as the one efficacious sacrifice, could satisfy the demands of the law. Thus He, first of all, fulfilled the law perfectly, not just merely destroyed it, by meeting the requirements of perfect obedience to it for each whom the Father gave him; and whom he fully represented. Justice demanded this obedience, and could not be satisfied otherwise.

Jesus accomplished in his coming into the world all that was necessary to completely redeem all of God's elect from all their sins. He was everything for them. He overcame death by his resurrection, and is declared to be the Son of God with power. He glorified the Father on earth in his perfect accomplishment of his mission to earth, and is received back at the right hand of the Father in heaven, to appear in the presence of God for us. He is glorified with the same glory he had before his advent into the world, and in this perfection he makes intercession for us. This means that when one is brought under conviction through the operation of the Spirit of God, and justice demands condemnation and death, the blessed Saviour intercedes for him. He makes the sinner's cause, his cause. He presents the righteousness and atonement which he wrought for each of his brethren, as having made satisfaction for each. In this way He makes application of that which he wrought for them by his death, since it is a portion of his work as a priest after the order of Melchisedec to make intercession for them.

When a transgressor is brought before the courts of our land, he is represented by counsel; who may present evidence in favor of his client, plead for mercy, or take other actions. But he himself cannot satisfy the law on behalf of his client; and he is powerless to prevent the execution of the judgment of the court. But the condemned sinner has One who is far superior to

this counsel; one who pleads no extenuating circumstances for his client, nor asks for mercy. Rather, he interposes: "I represented this man when I was made sin, and when I died the just for the unjust I suffered his penalty. I made complete satisfaction for all charges against him. And having done this, I conquered death by arising from it, showing that the man is completely justified." What a counselor! What a mediator!

He speaks directly with his Father, who is the offended one. He knows the infirmities and needs of his brethren; and having already made complete satisfaction for all demands against them; and as the Mediator of the new covenant which the Father has made, and which was secured by His conforming to all necessary demands to secure the new covenant provisions, Jesus presents all these things in behalf of the elect children; and their sins are remembered against them no more. The Father is satisfied, and the sinner is fully justified before him.

Now we are to consider Jesus as the *One Mediator* between God and man. This precludes any other, either between God and us, or between our Mediator and us, because Jesus himself alone is between God and man. Who could be a better Mediator than he who has met all demands and completely satisfied the offended Father?

It is the eternal truth that Jesus, as our Saviour, had one great and important work to do. He was to present all the elect "holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight." (Collosians 1:22) To this end he lived, and died, and arose from the dead. We are on safe ground when we state that Jesus never lost interest in his assignment, nor on any way lapsed in its performance. We conclude, therefore, that he needs not any to remind him, or any to undertake to influence him, be they mother, priest, saints living or dead, ministers, or any one else. How well the redeemed know that even their worship must be in Spirit and in truth, and that they are dependent upon the grace and mercy of God for all things; and that God works in them both to will and to do of his pleasure. They know that even freedom in prayer is not at their own command. So, what influence could those who need grace have upon the giver of all grace ?

How wonderful it is to have one in heaven to represent us as our Intercessor, as our Mediator, as our Advocate with the Father! And especially since we know that we need him at all times. "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." (Hebrews 4:14 There is a coming boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. It is unto *the throne of grace!* We cannot go directly unto God of ourselves: It is through Jesus — for his name's sake. for we have nothing of our own to plead. How important, therefore, to every member of the elect family, that they have Him who was once on earth, but now exalted, the man Christ Jesus, as their Mediator, their one and only Mediator, between them and their God.

We have no desire to be critical of anyone's faith, or system of religion. What we do desire, however, is that we *may through grace* contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; and to present, as we are enabled, to all interested parties, this faith honestly and plainly, that the name of our God might be praised, and His little ones comforted and built up in the most holy faith. We dare not to enlarge beyond revelation; that would be foolhardy. And we dare not refrain from speaking what we hope we have been taught, for that would be contrary to our calling, if we have one. We dare not go beyond our firm convictions in these matters, to follow others. We hope it is with us, as with the Apostle Paul, "For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed." (Romans 15:18)

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Jesus Christ."

J. D. W.

(A re-print)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE ATONEMENT

Elder G. Beebe & Son — Dear Brethren:—While reading and thinking over some portions of the scriptures this afternoon, I was led especially to consider the striking account of the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, Abiram and On, recorded in Numbers 16, together with the narrative of their terrible punishment, and especially of the staying of the plague, recorded in the last five verses of the chapter. I felt like calling attention to the theme embraced in these last five verses, especially, as my mind had been led by them, to contemplate the atonement with some sweetness of view. The basis of all the mercy and grace that we receive is the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore everything that bears upon this subject, or serves to illustrate it, must be looked upon as of importance to be understood.

In the account recorded, in the chapter I have named, we see a remarkable instance of the value and efficacy of the atonement, recorded in type or shadow. As recorded in the first part of the chapter, Korah and others had rebelled against God's appointment of Moses to be the leader of Israel, and of Aaron to be the high priest. The earth had opened and swallowed up Korah and his family, and fire had gone out from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty who held the brazen censers. Moses had been commanded to make the brazen censers into a covering for the altar, since, having been offered to the Lord, they were now holy unto him. But the rebellion of the people was not yet checked. So stubborn is the heart of man, that neither judgments nor mercies have power to move it. And so they charged upon Moses and Aaron that they had killed the people of the Lord. They still refused to recognize the hand of God. And God said unto Moses, "Get you up from among the congregation, that I may consume them, as in a moment." But they fell on their faces, and entreated for the people. Then Aaron, as Moses directed, took the censer, and put fire in it from off the altar of burnt offering, and put on incense, and made an atonement for the people; and he stood between the dead and living, and the plague was stayed. This is the part which I wish to especially notice.

There is no question that the priesthood of Aaron was a type of the priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ. As a priest, Aaron was to come before God with the blood of the atonement, which had been shed according to the divine pattern, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, in the most holy place, thus making satisfaction for the sins of the people. So Jesus has entered into the heavens for us, bearing his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Now turn to Leviticus 16:11, and read, "And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself; and he shall take a censer, full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil; and he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat, that is upon the testimony, that he die not. And he shall take of the blood, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward, and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times."

Two things are to be seen here; first, that the *incense was to be offered with the blood of the atonement.* Both were

to be brought into the most holy place at once; both were to be offered at once. And second, not only could not the high priest enter without blood, lest he die, but also he must bring the incense, to cover the mercy seat, that he die not. So our great High Priest must enter into heaven for us, with his own blood; and not only with his blood, but with the sweet savor of his precious person and his perfect life. Turn to Exodus 30, last five verses, for a description of the incense. It was made of most precious materials, and was pronounced most holy, and "holy for the Lord." Thus, that Jesus should be holy, harmless and undefiled, and separate from sinners, was as necessary as it was that he should die for us. Thus he was a perfect sacrifice. And not only so, but thus he could be a perfcet High Priest, a spotless Intercessor, who needed not to be purified, as did the high priests of Aaronic descent. And as Jesus makes his constant intercession for us, he brings both the precious incense, with its sweet savor, and the blood; and here is our only hope of pardon and life.

But returning to the staying of the plague by Aaron, we must not forget that both the incense and the atonement are also connected here. In verse 47th it is said, "He put on incense, and made atonement for the people." The atonement literally means, *"the bringing to God"* or *"the reconcilement"* of the people. The word "atone," according to Webster, literally signifies, "at-one;" and this expressed precisely its bible meaning. Israel here had departed from God, and were in rebellion against God; they were not *at-one* with him. He had said that they should be destroyed; but now a proper sacrifice, according to the ceremonial law, had been made, and they were *at-one* again. Both the blood and the incense were presented before God, and divine justice was satisfied. Now, with this holy incense, Aaron "stood between the dead and living, and the plague was stayed." Here is a striking type of the only ground of safety from death that the believer has. Let us briefly trace the type. All Israel had sinned, and all alike deserved to die; so believers are by nature children of wrath, even as others. The atonement made by Aaron, the high priest, was all that could save the life of any; so the atonement of our great High Priest is all that saves any of us from destruction. The atonement of Aaron was effectual in staying the plague; so is the atonement of Jesus sufficient and effectual. Aaron stood between the living and the dead with the smoking incense; so does Jesus stand, with his atonement, between his chosen people and the rest of mankind, and not one of his living saints shall die. Death cannot pass that eternal barrier of Jessus' blood and righteousness. How safe are his people with such an atonement, such an Intercessor!

I cannot forbear, in this place, calling attention to a mistake into which some brethren have inadvertently fallen in regard to this matter. I have heard it said that we, as gospel ministers, stand to-day, as Aaron did, between the living and the dead, bearing the incense of the word of truth. I hope, my brethren, that we stand AMONG the living, and NOT BETWEEN the living and the dead. No one has ever or could ever stand *between* the living and the dead, but him to whom is given all power in heaven and in earth. I do not suppose that any brother has used the above expression, understanding what it involves, but perhaps because others had used it, and he had not examined the matter.

Having thus written a few thoughts upon the immediate text, I wish to follow the leading of my mind out into the subject of the atonement, and to call attention to some things connected with it. If it be true that to atone means to make "at-one," or to cause to be "at-one," then to talk about an ineffectual atonement is an absurdity. We are either "at-one" with God, or we are not. To say that we are atoned for, and yet may never be one with God, is a contradiction.. If we are atoned for, we are at-

one with God. To say that I am atoned for, and yet I am not at-one with God, is as absurd as it would be to say that I am here and there at the same time, or that I am alive and dead in the same sense at the same time. Again, if this be the right meaning of the atonement, it is equally absurd to speak of a partial or incomplete atonement. If I am at-one with God, I am not partially away from him. Jesus gave himself, that he might bring us to God, or make us "at-one" with him. If I am brought only half-way to God, it is no more true that I am "at-one" with him than it was before. We are still as completely two as ever. If there remains the slightest condition for me to fulfill, to bridge over the gap between me and God, until I do bridge that gap we are not one, or "at-one," in any sense of the word. If Jesus, then, died to atone for me, I am wholly at-one with God, and irrevocably so, or else his life and death (I speak with reverence, I trust) were most miserable failures. But the atonement is perfect, it is complete, or else there is no certain meaning in types, no force in language, that can be relied upon.

When the great day of yearly atonement, under the old covenant, had come, and the prescribed sacrifice had been made, was anything lacking to free the people from all sin under that ceremonial law? Is there any intimation that a single condition remained for the Jew to fulfill, in order to receive the benefit of that atonement? We shall search in vain for any intimation that anything was lacking to make the offering complete, or to secure its blessings to the people. That sacrifice perfectly atoned for the sins of the people for that one year. Ceremonially, there remained nothing between them and God; they were "at-one" with him. So, in Hebrews, it is said, "He hath by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified." What a glorious assurance! Who now can lay anything to the charge of God's elect, since Christ has died? Again, who can deny that this typical atonement was limited in its application as to persons? None but Israel, God's chosen people, were benefited thereby. It was intended for none else. The substance can be no larger than the shadow; therefore only the chosen vessels of mercy are benefited by the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I have often had occasions to wonder at and to admire the harmony that exists between every part of the divine plan of redemption with every other part. If we understand the atonement aright, we cannot be far wrong in anything else. So, in harmony with this limited and effectual atonement is found the doctrine of election, predestination, effectual calling, final perserverance and future glory of the saints.

I have been looking up to-day, in connection with the atonement, two important words connected with it, viz., propitiation and reconciliation. They are from two widely different Latin words. The first literally signifies, "to conciliate; to appease wrath." Reconciliation is from a root which signifies literally, "to call back; to bring into harmony." The original Greek words from which they are translated, are also essentially different in their meaning. The difference is this: the word translated propitiation, relates to God's dealing with sin, and the satisfaction rendered to divine justice for sin. The word translated reconciliation signifies "to change," and is applied to the change wrought in man by which he is said to be reconciled to God. The difference may be expressed thus: "God is propitiated; man is reconciled." God is never said to be reconciled; man is never said to be propitiated.

I will mention some texts in which the word propitiation occurs. Hebrews 2:17: "Wherefore, in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation (more properly propitiation) for the sins of the people." Notice, Christ makes propitiation for the sins of the people. The original Greek word is the same

as that translated propitiation in the texts which follow. Rom. 3:25: "Whom God hath set forth to be (literally foreordained to be) a propitiation through faith in his blood," &c. Christ is the propitiation; that is, he is the satisfaction rendered to divine justice, through which sin is put away and his people justified. I John 2:2: "And he is the propitiation for our sins." In the former text it is said, "God foreordained him TO BE;" and in this text it is said that "HE IS the propitiation for our sins." It is not said that he offers to be, or that he wants to be, but simply that he is the propitiation. A propitiation is a full satisfaction rendered. If full satisfaction is rendered, then there can no longer be any difference, and the "atonement" is complete. I John 4:10: "He loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins."

These are all the texts in which the word propitiation occurs. In them all, Christ is set forth as the propitiation for sins. Here is the atonement complete and perfect. In this propitiation all legal obstacles to the redemption of the church are removed. Here the law is at once fulfilled and magnified, and made to appear truly honorable. Here justice is fully satisfied. After this there can be no claim alleged against the church. The spiritual Aaron, standing with his own blood and righteousness between the living and the dead, forever stays the plague of divine judgment and wrath, and secures the eternal safety of his people. This is what Christ, as our propitiation, secures to us beyond a possibility of failure.

But now another great work remains to be done: a work different from the propitiation, and yet based upon it. How often is it charged upon the doctrine of effectual and finished salvation in Christ that it lets men go on in sin, takes them to heaven in their sins, &c. This comes from ignoring that other essential part of redemption, viz., reconciliation. There is not only an atonement, a propitiation, for man; there is also a reconciliation. Sin is put away by the atonement, propitiation is the satisfaction rendered to God for sin, but reconciliation is the turning about of God's people to love him and to seek his service. I repeat, God is never said to be reconciled, but man is always the subject of his work. I wish to call attention to some texts in which the word occurs. And first, our reconciliation is always said to be by Jesus Christ; he is the only way in which any of us can come near to God. Rom. 5:10: "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved through him." Here our reconciliation is distinctly based upon the atonement. And in the eleventh verse Paul says, "We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement," or reconciliation. Thus we have received it, that is, have experimentally been made acquainted with the ground of our acceptance with God, and rejoice therein. See also 2 Cor. 5:18, 19: "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed (literally, 'hath put in us') to us the word of reconciliation." This fully explains what Paul means in the next verse, when he says, "We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." It is by ceasing to trust in anything and in everything for acceptance with God, but the Lamb and his blood. Now when Jesus, who came not to do his own will, but the will of the Father who sent him, is formed in the heart the hope of glory, and the child sweetly apprehends the truth that Jesus died for him, and washed away all his sins, there springs up joy, gratitude and love, which constrain him to lovingly exclaim, "Lord, here am I; do with me as thou wilt." And this is the experience of reconciliation in the heart. At this time he begins to learn and to understand the truth that God has loved him with an everlasting love,

and therefore has now sweetly drawn him to himself with loving-kindness. The atonement is not an abstract truth to him now, but it is living bread from heaven to his soul. By it he is lifted up from the horrible pit where sin had plunged him, and his despair is changed to rejoicing. Instead of feeling that he can live in sin, because he is saved, he finds that he is saved in order that he may glorify God in his body and spirit. There is now in him a continual desire to present his body, soul and spirit, which God has purchased, unto God, as his reasonable and delightful service. He realizes the grand truth contained in the words, "This people have I formed for myself: they shall show forth my praise;" and the constant prayer of his heart is, "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me." What a glorious theme does the atonement open to our view! Sin put away, and men reconciled to God! Death stayed in mid career, and life and heaven and immortality secured to the people of God!

I fell like closing with the words of the apostle, "O the depth of the riches both of the knowledge and wisdom of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out. For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of him and through him and to him are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen."

As ever, your brother in hope,

F. A. CHICK.

Reisterstown, Md., Feb. 4, 1879.

EXPERIENCE

217 Bastrop Drive,
Monroe, La. 71201

Dear Elder Spangler:

For several months I have had a desire to write of my experiences. My hope is that my desire is of the Lord and not of a carnal mind, knowing that if it is not of the Lord it is absolutely worthless to me and to whoever may read it. Knowing also that I do not know how to express myself clearly, I greatly fear someone will be misled. Therefore if you find anything that might mislead or not be of the truth in Christ please cast this in the trash.

I was delivered into this sinfilled world forty-seven years ago to Missionary Baptist parents and was raised in their church. I was happy in it and my attendance record was such that the older members praised me. They also had praise for me because I could quote scripture; not knowing that I had no idea what any of it meant. At a very early age I "accepted Christ" as my personal savior and was baptized into the church. Many of my school friends laughed and chided me, but that only served to make me determined to be better than they. I thought I was as good as the best and better than the rest.

Still, in the back of my mind or deep inside, I was not satisfied. Many times I asked myself the question, "How can I be saved just by asking God to save me?" Truthfully I did not feel to be saved in the least, but continued going to church and trying to act like a christian was supposed to act.

At the age of seventeen I joined the navy and went to war. That was the beginning of the end insofar as the church was concerned. I seldom attended services while I was in the navy, and when I returned home I could not truly get interested again even though I tried for a while. When my father died I "rededicated" my life to Christ, but quickly broke every promise I made to Him and soon lost all interest in church.

A short time later I met the wonderful woman who was to become my life companion. I don't believe I had ever heard of Primitive Baptists, and certainly knew nothing of their doctrine until I came to know my wife and her parents. My wife is not a member, but surely a believer. We attended meetings with her parents occasionally but I was

not blessed to "hear" the gospel preached by Elder J. L. Smith and Elder R. W. Rhodes. However I did love those Old Baptists. I do not believe I have ever met one I did not love and they always showed a love for me.

There was a long period of time however that we did not attend meetings except on rare occasions such as District Meetings and Associations. On my part I think I went more to meet with those dear Old Baptists than for any other reason, because I still was not able to understand one word of their doctrine. All of this took place over a period of more than twenty years, and still I had not tasted the grace of God.

I do not know when I became aware of my sinful condition. It seemed to come on me gradually. I had tried reading the Bible, but received nothing from it. When I turned to it again I did receive something. CONDEMNATION! Everything I read in the Holy Word seemed to condemn me and show me what a low, vile, wretched sinner I am. I immediately started trying to do something that would justify me in the sight of God. The harder I tried the deeper I sank in the miry clay of self-righteousness. I tried to pray but the words got no further than the end of my tongue. I was doomed to hell. I had fallen from grace and there was no more chance for me. I would surely die and be cast into the everlasting fires of hell. What could this poor, wretched sinner do? I asked myself this question many times before I found the answer. Elder George Jones told me straight to my face, from the pulpit, there was nothing I could do; it had already been done. He preached to me that day and I do believe that was the first sermon I had ever heard. It was an astonishing revelation. During the coming month I read the Bible every free moment, and waited impatiently for the next meeting. The Lord again opened my ears and heart to hear the words of gospel as delivered by Elder David Turner. It seemed so marvelous to me that I could so suddenly understand, at least in part, what the precious brethren did preach. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out."

I had never witnessed the Holy Communion and foot washing ceremonies. My first experience of this sacred rite was one that I shall never forget; one that I find impossible to describe as to what I felt inside. The tears that flowed and the love that flowed from heart to heart filled this poor sinner to overflowing.

I then and there cried unto the Lord, that if it was his will, to make me a part of this. I wanted no longer to be on the outside looking in. Two months later, when the door of the church was opened for membership, I rushed into the arms of Elders Turner and Jones and tearfully begged for a home with them. I could not hold my head up and look into the faces of all those lovely saints while I tried to tell them a very small portion of my experience with the God of all grace and mercy. And it seemed to me, at that very moment, that all of my sins and my filthy self-righteousness was washed away in the precious blood of the Lamb. I cannot say that with any degree of confidence, but it is my hope; a hope that is so small at times that it seems non-evistent, yet I would not trade it for ten thousand worlds.

Those dear Children of God saw fit to give this poor sinner a home with them and that same day I was buried with my beloved Savior in the watery grave. As I came up from the water each one that stood on the bank of that lake had the appearance of an angel to me. I can never remember that beautiful day without a few tears.

I did live on the mountain for a spell; but as a dear sister told me that same day, where the mountain is there is also the valley. It seems that I spend much of my time in the valley, looking upward for the crumbs that fall from the Father's Holy Table. And when I am given one of those precious crumbs I am made to sing praises to His Holy name; even

waking in the middle of the night with a new song in my heart.

I do feel that God has richly blessed me and I hope to seek knowledge and wisdom of Him. The *Signs of the Times* has been much comfort and consolation to me because it preaches the gospel of Election, Predestination, and Salvation by the grace of God which I hope that I believe. May it be the will of the Heavenly Father to continue this good work is my prayer.

Please forgive me for taking so much of your time and please cast a mantle of charity over my many mistakes. I ask for your prayers when at the throne of grace.

Written by an unworthy brother, if one at all.

Clifford Wilbanks

OBITUARIES

SISTER LILLIE MAE ONEAL

On October 21, 1973 the Lord saw fit to take from our midst our dear Sister, Lillie Mae Cutchin Oneal. She was born July 15, 1897 to John and Alice Braddy Cutchin. She was married to Edward Oneal, and to this union was born one son: Edward Oneal, of Speed, N.C.

She joined the church at Mt. Zion the second Sunday in August, 1949. She was our oldest member, and one of the most faithful members any church could ever have. For years she fixed dinner at her home for everyone that attended church. She said that fixing for her church folks was one of her greatest pleasures.

The church mourns their loss, and misses her so very much. She leaves, besides her husband and son, one sister, Mrs. Bertha Lane, of Scotland Neck, N.C., and two half-sisters, Mrs. Norma Bryant of Whitakers, N.C., and Mrs. Nettie Keen, of Tarboro, N.C., to mourn her passing.

She was laid to rest in a Tarboro, N.C. cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord.

Done by order of Conference, May, 1974.

Eld. B. D. Handy, Mod.
Mary M. Ward, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

To Sister Lucille Young and Family of Ed. Young.

Dear Sister and Family:

We, the members and friends of Salem Church, Benton, Ill. write this letter with a sad and heavy heart, knowing we won't be able to meet anymore with our dear brother and friend in Christ, Ed. Young.

It was with a sad heart we received the news of the passing of Brother Ed. Young, of Memphis, Tenn., on the fourth Sunday in April, 1974.

It will always be most in our minds of the times we have been permitted to visit the Memphis Church, and being greeted first by Brother Ed. We will also miss him being at our church, and other churches. We do solemnly believe he was one of God's Children, even though he was not in the visible church.

Though we will miss him greatly we would not want him back in this life of sorrow, trials, and tribulations. Our loss is his eternal gain. We give all praise to Almighty God for the privilege of knowing him even for a short time. We are submissive to His Holy Will, saying, "Thy will, not ours be done."

This Resolution was decided on in Conference by members of Salem Church on the fourth Sunday of April, 1974. RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to the family, and one entered on our church records.

Eld. Wayman Chapell, Mod.
Wm. Vantriese, Clerk
James Cunningham, Asst. Clerk

FANNIE C. MATTOX

Sister Fannie Compton Mattox was called home May 18, 1974, after an extended illness, and the last six weeks were spent in a hospital and medical center.

She was born August 12, 1891 to James Martin and Mollie Adkins Compton Martin in Pittsylvania County, Va. She was married to Harry Moorman Mattox December 25, 1917. She leaves to mourn her passing, her husband and three daughters: Mrs. Elizabeth Thompson and Mrs. Helen Talbott of Danville, Va., and Mrs. Patsy Bolling of Gretna, Va.; one son, Harry Moorman Mattox, Jr. preceded her in death February 1, 1915. Her heart was still bleeding for this son after all these years. She loved her children and spoke of them often. They did all that kind and loving hands seemingly could do for Mother until death.

Sister Mattox joined Union Church June 17, 1922, and was always faithful to attend her meetings as long as she was able. She loved to help with the meetings by fixing lunch and the communion bread. Her labors of love for the ministers and brethren and friends in her home, I will never forget. I would try to tell her she was not able to do this work, but it

was her meat and drink, and she did it is long as she was able to stand up.

Her work on earth is done and a crown of glory she has won. Our prayers go out for Brother Mattox, who has been so near to me, also the children that they may be given renewed strength to care for Dad's every need in nature: we are sure the Lord will care for his Spiritual needs.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, the writer, at Scott's Funeral Home in Chatham, and her body was laid to rest in Hillcrest Memorial Gardnes, Chatham, Va. to wait the second coming of our Lrod: then her hope will be complete for she shall see Him as He is, be like Him and be satisfied.

I feel she fought a good fight and she kept the faith, and if this be so, there is a crown of righteousness laid up for her, and not only her but all of the household of faith.

Written by request.

Leonard J. Brammer

LELIA DALTON

It has pleased the Lord to call from our midst Sister Lelia Mae Beck Dalton. She passed away in Lewis-Gale Hospital, Roanoke, Va. July 2, 1974, making her stay on earth 72 years. She leaves to mourn her passing, her devoted husband, Tillman K. Dalton, two sons, Kile Dalton of Levelland, Texas, Gary Dalton of Troutville, Va., four daughters: Mrs. J. R. (Elizabeth) Chisom, Mrs. Rebecca Reynolds, both of Roanoke, Va., Mrs. Don (Martha) Wright, Troutville, Va. and Mrs. Howard (Rachel) Stump, Bent Mountain, Va. Also brothers: C. B. Beck, Greenbay, Va. and Dave Beck, Crewe, Va., one sister, Mrs. C. L. Gibbs, Burkeville, Va., 18 grandchildren and 7 great grandchildren.

Sister Dalton married Tillman K. Dalton March 10, 1923, and the Lord gave them a long, happy life together. She joined the church in Roanoke, Va. January 7, 1934, and was given a letter to go to Weatherford Church February 4, 1951. She was a faithful member. She attended when she could, and did what she could for the church. The doors of her home were open for the ministers, brethren, sisters and friends, and she was willing and glad to fix the meal when they would come. She would keep her lips sealed rather than say something bad about her brethren: I have seen her just smile instead. I feel she was gifted in this.

Although our hearts are saddened and our eyes dimmed with tears, along with her husband and children, we feel our loss is her eternal gain. She bore her afflictions with patience, because she had a good hope that some day her suffering would be over, and we feel it is over with her. We visited her while she was suffering, and she always had a smile.

Her funeral was conducted at her home church, Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, assisted by Elder Leonard J. Brammer and Haywood Wray, and she was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord.

We believe she will come into full possession of what she hoped for here on earth. Our prayer is that the Lord will give Brother Dalton grace to bear his bereavement, together with her children and her church and friends who loved her.

Written by request.

Leonard J. Brammer

In loving remenbrance of my Grandpa, Joseph B. Witherington, of Donaldson, Ark. He passed away on July 13, 1973, and was eighty-nine years and eleven months old.

GRAMPA

On July 13, 1973 my grandfather died. He was eighty-nine years old. He had a good life; and when he died his children (including my mother) felt no real sorrow. They knew he was ready to leave this world. He strongly believed that heaven would be his home.

Grampa always laughed. Up until a year before his death he walked around three miles a day, kept a big, flourishing garden and went to church every Sunday. He always said life had been good to him.

When someone asked him how he managed to live so long he would say, "I've got someone lookin' over my shoulder to take care of me." His sincere belief in God has taught me many things. If one trusts in God and tries to live a good life he is blessed. My Grampa was proof of this.

If anything went wrong Grampa would say not to fret, but let God handle it.

Grampa lived through two World Wars, the Depression, the births of twelve children and the deaths of two of them, and the deaths of three wives, but he still laughed, and his belief in God never faltered. He went through many trials and tribulations but he was never down. He got strong when the going got rough.

The last time Grampa came to church (just three weeks before his death) I could hear him singing (in a crackled but strong voice) one of his favorite songs.

"Bliss comes through sore temptations and conflicts by the way. Remember Blessed Jesus and don't forget to pray."

MOLLIE W. MALONE

Sister Mollie W. Malone, born 1871, died June 9, 1974, making her stay on earth 103 years and four months. She was married to Charlie Lewis Malone January 12, 1893. To this union was born 2 sons, C. H. Malone, Jr. and Frank J. Malone (deceased), 2 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Sister Malone lived 47 years with her son Frank and Hallie Malone. Her husband, Mr. Malone, passed away in their early married life. After breaking her hip, she lived about 8 years in Taylor's Rest Home and about 8 months in Braswell Home in Graham, N.C., where she resided at her passing.

She lived a sweet, quiet, lovely life with friends and Church. Her first thought was for the welfare of her church. She never failed asking about it when the brethren would visit her. Another pearl has slipped away, but our loss is her gain.

This writer knew her in early childhood and remembers a lovely God fearing person that never changed with the times, she only grew more humble.

Sister Malone united with Prospect Hill Primitive Baptist Church the third Saturday in March, 1903, and was baptized the third Sunday.

Her funeral was held at Walker Funeral Home in Mebane, N.C. by Elder Donald Smith and laid to rest in Lynches Creek Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery.

If she could have had a song sung, this I believe would be the theme:

OM HOW SWEET TO DIE.

Farewell vain world, I'm going home,
My Savior bids me come.
Sweet Angels beckon from on high,
Oh how sweet to die.
I'll praise my Savior while I've breath,
I'll praise Him after death
I'll praise His matchless name on high,
Oh how sweet to die.

Written by one who knew and loved her.

Hallie O. Griswold

Read and approved at Prospect Hill Primitive Baptist Church meeting, June 23, 1974.

Resolved: That one copy be given to the family, one to the *Signs of the Times*, and one for the Church Records.

Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
Hallie O. Griswold, Clerk

STEVEN MACK WORLEY

It pleased our Heavenly Father to remove Brother Mack Worley from our midst on February 23, 1974 at the age of 88 years. He was born on April 30, 1886 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. He was the son of the late Jim Worley and Rebecca Owen Worley. He was first married to Nannie Dalton and after her death he married Rosa Short Gibson.

Brother Worley is survived by one foster son, Brother Wyatt Simpson of Danville, Virgina, and one brother, Edgar Worley of West Virginia. He was received into the fellowship of Weatherford Church on August 23, 1927 and was a faithful member as long as his health permitted. I feel our loss is his eternal gain, and may we all be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father.

His funeral was conducted by his dear Pastor, Elder O. K. Tench at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church and his body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in the Family Cemetery.

Written by Marvin Brumfield.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. H. Doss, Clerk

NOVELLA TRILL JACKSON

Death has claimed another member from our midst, Sister Novella Tripp Jackson, daughter of William L. and Mary Smith Tripp. She was born July 7, 1917 and died October 26, 1973 after many months of declining health. It is sad to part with those we love, be we bow in humble submission to God who doeth all things after the counsel of his own will. Sister Jackson was a lovely person, with a winning personality. Her sunny disposition won for her many friends.

On a confession of faith, she united with Hancocks Church, and was a faithful mem-

ber until death, but was unable to attend very often. She lived too far from church to be a regular attendant. She loved her brethren, and it gave her great joy when she could meet with them.

Her funeral was preached by her pastor, Elder Joseph L. Sawyer, and she was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, in the presence of a host of relatives and friends.

Done by order of conference while in regular session.

Eld. Joseph L. Sawyer, Mod.
Nina B. McLawhorn, Church Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It is with a sad heart that we, the church at Tarboro, N. C., write a respect for our dear sister, Dolly Hill.

Sister Hill was born November, 1894 and died June, 1974 making her stay on earth 80 years.

For many years she attended our church before asking for a home with us on September 4, 1972. She came with humbleness and love in her heart, and to know her was to love her. She was always praising her God and seemed to enjoy the preaching of the brethren. She was faithful to our Church before and after her joining, and was a believer of Salvation by Grace. Although our hearts were made sad at God's calling her we feel God's will has been done.

Therefore we resolve: 1. That God will bless her family to continue on in her foot steps, as we send sincere sympathy. 2. That three copies of this resolution be made: one for the church record; one to be sent to the family; one to be sent to the*Signs of Times* for publication.

This done by order of our July meeting, 1974.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

FRANK J. CAIN

Brother Frank J. Cain of Bastrop, La. departed this life on March 19, 1974 at the age of 95 years. Brother Cain united with Concord Promitive Baptist Church on July, 1949. Survivors include two sons, Woodrow Cain of Bastrop, and J. Herman Cain, Bossier City, La.; one daughter, Mrs. Lucille Wilbanks of Monroe, La.; three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

It was my pleasure to have known Bro. Frank Cain about 23 years, and had several visits with him. During my visits with him, we usually discussed the Bible. He was always humble and meek in my presence. He must have been one of the little humble sheep that the Lord had reference to: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (John 10:27-29) "Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves, we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture." (Psalm 100:3) Brother Frank spoke of this great God, who is a great King above all gods. (Psalm 95:3)

I do believe one of the greatest evidence or witnesses of being a child of God on this earth, is to live the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. All suffering, of heart aches, trials, tribuations, and persecutions was over with Bro. Frank when God took his last breath, and I believe he is in perfect peace with his Heavenly Father, and I hope mine.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer and assisted by Elder J. L. Smith and Elder George Jones. His body was laid to rest in the Causey Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

Elder David W. Turner

Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: To God the only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen (Romans 16:25-27)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 142 **DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1974** **NO. 11**

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/74
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

NEWS OF PASSING OF SISTER McLAUGHLIN

Signs of the Times
Danville, Virginia

Dear Editors:

It is with heavy heart that I bring to you a message of the passing away of our dear and sweet devoted mother, Sister Kate McLaughlin of Hopewell Church in Winnsboro, Texas. It is only with the help from, and the love for Almighty God that makes it possible to bear. She was loved by all who knew her, and she truly endeavored to love all mankind.

Mother was blessed with good eyesight and read and enjoyed the *Signs* very much. We were blessed to attend church together up until three months before her passing on January 24, 1974 at my home. The knowledge that she truly lived in the hope of salvation by an all wise, all powerful, and ever loving God, is the only cause we have to rejoice that she has crossed over Jordan to await the sound of the trumpet.

As I am the only survivor of like faith and that reads the *Signs,* I know that she would want you to send her's to someone whom you know that is not otherwise able to afford it. I have only recently renewed my own subscription and the Lord willing, will be able to continue to receive it.

Keep up the good work of publishing the *Signs,* and may the Lord bless and keep you all.

Your unworthy brother in hope,

B. J. McLaughlin
Rt. 1, Box 318
Eustace, Tex. 75124

NOW TREASURES EACH COPY

Rt. 1, Box 284
Castor, La. 71016

Signs of the Times,

Dear Elder Wood and Elder Spangler:

Enclosed is my check for $10.00 to renew my subscription for two years, use the balance as you see fit. I thank you for sending July and August issues even though my subscription had expired.

Back about 1898-1900 I learned to read from the "Atlanta Constitution" and from "McCall's Magazine," of which mother got three copies yearly. I cut out and pasted in a scrap book many items or illustrations, from the "Funny section" of the "Constitution" or from some publication, but the *Signs of the Times* were inviolable. My father treasured each copy carefully. Later, during my late teens, as I began reading the *Signs,* I wondered what anyone wanted with that pack of foolishness—especially my father, who in other matters was realistic, with "both feet on the ground," and was not entirely uneducated, having completed the course offered at the old Mt. Lebanon Academy.

This reminiscence is merely a background for saying that today I enjoy, yea treasure with love, each copy of the *Signs,* I hope with love of the truth.

You are doing a great work.

Katherine H. Jones

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-11

"If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels of mercy: Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory: but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the NAME of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. 2:1-11)

I have in mind at present to try to write upon the three last verses quoted above, which I re-quote, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a NAME which is above every name: that at the NAME of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father. (Phil. 9,10,-11)

The word "should" as given in the verses quoted, is given in other scriptures "shall". In Isaiah 45:23, it is written, "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall sware." Romans 14:11 reads, "For it is written, As I live saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God."

First, the apostle mentioned the meekness, humbleness and obedience of Jesus, even unto the cursed death of the cross, He having done that which none other ever had done, nor could do, nor would dare to do if he could, all of which was connected with, and gave perfect right in the sight of God, his Father, in raising Jesus from the dead, and highly exalting him, giving him a NAME that is above every name, and that unto Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of the Father. Oh, how we would thank thee, even thee, Father Lord of heaven and earth, for the gift of Him whom thou hast given a NAME that is above every name.

Jesus was made poor, made of a woman, made under the law, made sin, was hated and despised without cause, and counted the filth and off-scouring of all things by wicked men (and we are no better than they by nature.) He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, and went a mourner all the days of his life in the flesh. (Read Isaiah 53rd chapter for further true testimony of Jesus' afflictions and death, and for what purpose God had in all of it. May the Lord help us to believe it from the heart and confess it with the tongue.) After having one through with all He did from the babe in the manger to his sweating as it were great drops of blood in Gethsemane in fervent prayer to his Father, he obediently went with the mob for a mock trial, and to be evily intreated at the hands of wicked men, who by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, they crucified the Lord of Glory, whom God raised from the dead, for it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

But before that could be done, Jesus must drink the last dreg from the bitter cup: he must bear the full wrath of God's divine justice for transgressors,

and make perfect reconcilation to God for all the sins of all His people. Therefore, as a perfect Lamb without spot, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, must be put to death in the most horrible and shameful manner: they mocked and spit upon him, put a crown of thorns on his head, blindfolded him and smote him with a rod, then laid the cross upon him and led him away to crucify him. There they nailed him to the cross, hanging him between heaven and earth. And did many other things as recorded in the Scriptures, and He finally cried with a loud voice, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

The great light He had made refused to shine upon the awful scene for the space of about three hours — and darkness prevailed. Jesus said, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." And, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost." Afterward they pierced his side with a spear, and forthwith came blood and water. All of these things were prophesied and written by the prophets long before. His body was taken from the cross, wrapped in fine linen and laid in Joseph's new tomb. He himself had said, "As Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in heart of the earth."

Jesus had not only raised the dead, proving his divinity, and healed all manner of sickness, He declared that he was the resurrection and the life. He raised Lazareth back to natural life, and the maid that had died, who when Jesus said, "Maid arise," her spirit came again and straightway she sat up. Her spirit that came again was the spirit of natural life, which all natural people have in this life, but it declared that His people have received not the spirit which is of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that they may know the things that are freely given them of God. Just where the Maid's spirit was, I know not, with the exception I know it was in the power of God: as was Lazareth's while he was in the grave. Jesus was both God and Man. and when he said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," He surely did not have reference to his divinity. If he was in heaven while on earth, I am sure his death on the cross, nor his time in the narrow tomb, had no power over his divinity, by whom the worlds were made, for by him all things were created, whether thrones, dominions, principalities or powers, things visible or invisible, things present or things to come: all were created by Him and for Him, He is before all things, and by him all things consist.

When Jesus said to the thief with him on the cross, "Verily I say unto thee, this day thou shall be with me in paradise." then he most surely and truly was with Jesus in Paradise that very day. As Paul was caught up to the third heaven into Paradise and John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day seeing all the great mysteries which were revealed to him, then I am sure the poor thief could be with Jesus in Paradise. While Jesus was upon the earth in the flesh, even while in the grave, He was one with the Father in divinity. He was one with the Father in two manners: He was one with the Father as a complete living and dying sacrifice, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, and He was one with the Father in divinity. He said, I and my Father are one, and his people are not only one with Jesus, but are in Jesus, as He said, I in you and you in me, and I in the Father. Again Jesus said, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for their angel (Jesus) doth always behold the face of their Father which is in heaven."

Some may ask, and well they may, How then could Jesus as the Son of God, be one person in two divers natures? This is a good but very deep question, and I think such a mystery of godliness that we cannot fully understand, and much less explain. But He was and is both God and Man, He was

both a child and a Son when he was made and born of a woman. He was both the Root and Offspring of David, the bright and morning Star. And also His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, upon the throne of David and His kingdom to order it and to establish it with judgement and justice from henceforth and forever: and of the increase of his kingdom there shall be no end. Though He was a root come up out of dry ground, with no form nor comeliness nor beauty that any should desire him, and his visage was more marred than that of any man, Yet he was still Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, and is the King of Glory, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the God of the whole earth, upholding all things by the Word of his power. And it is said, ". . . those that are with him, are called, and chosen, and faithful."

He could only be, and was, put to death in the flesh, but was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. The scriptures teach that the first man Adam is of the earth earthy, and the second Adam is the Lord from heaven, a quickening spirit — a life giving Sprit. The first is, (since the transgression,) conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity, and come forth from their mother's womb speaking lies, they being sons and daughters of the first man Adam. But Jesus being made of a virgin, conceived of the Holy Ghost, God is his Father even in the sense of earthy nature. Therefore he is indeed and in truth one person in two diverse natures. But now, being put to death in the flesh, and resurrected in glory, He is thereby in perfect union in the divine nature.

They that have been born again, born of God, born of incorruptible seed by the Word of God, have been brought into spiritual union experimently with both God the Father and God the Son,— they likewise are one person in two diverse natures. While they are sons of God manifestly in the divine nature, they are also sons of Adam in the earthy nature. The earthy nature is not changed by the new birth, but it is constrained, overcome, crucified, mortified, and dies daily. And though one person in two natures, he dies to the one and lives to the other. So also will His people's earthy nature be changed, resurrected and glorified. Isn't that plain enough, and simple with simplicity? Yet a mystery of mysteries.

Jesus came into the world to save his people, to save sinners, to redeem them to God by his own life, death and resurrection. And it was necessary for him to be both God and Man — as Man the lowest of the low, and as God the highest of the high, with all power in heaven and in earth, and all deep places. He laid his life down, He poured out his soul unto death, and arose triumphantly over death and hell, destroying him who had the power of death, which is the devil. He, as the Triune King, is given a NAME that is above ever name: that at the NAME of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father. He not only redeemed his people from all iniquity, but he calls them with a holy calling and purifies them unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Paul said, "Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it ,because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." (I Cor. 3:11-13)

This is describing His experimental dealing with his people in this life. Jesus said to one of the churches, "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten, be zealous therefore, and repent." In speaking of the foundation, If any man fall upon this stone, it will break him to pieces,

but whosoever this Stone shall fall upon, it shall ground him to powder. John said to the people that there stands one among you whom you know not, and of whose shoes I am not worthy to bear, I indeed baptize with water unto repentence, but He shall baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire: Whose fan is in his hands and He will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather the wheat into the garner, but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire. But, "Unto them that fear my NAME (reverence his name) will the Son of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings." Let us not think that we can bar any of God's dear and precious children for whom he shed his precious blood, and went into the lowest pits of hell in their stead, and then ascended to the right hand of the Majesty on high, to appear in the presence of God for them, with a NAME above every name.

Jesus learned obedience by the things he suffered, so will his children learn obedience. Suffering is necessary. We surely all suffer over our own infirmities, and many suffer unjustly from others. The apostles suffered from evil treatment from enemies of the truth, and rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for Jesus' sake. Jesus told them that they would suffer and be evilly treated, persecuted and put to death in whatever manner they should die, for his NAME'S sake. The Lord's people have suffered, being persecuted and hated by the ungodly in both the old dispensation and in the gospel dispensation: mostly by antichrist who have the same manner of spirit the Pharisees and Sadducees had who crucified Jesus, and many of his disciples they killed, and have persecuted and put to death many, many of the saints since to Apostle's day. This spirit has been greatly restrained in recent years, and in the providence of God civil liberty is had in our land and many other places. But only God knows how long this will be granted, for the Spirit speaks expressly, and the signs of the times manifest, that perilous times lay ahead for the people of Christ's kingdom from the same source, and from among themselves.

It is needful in this day, as in the apostle's day, for the gospel to be preached by the called and qualified gifts. God has given the ministry for correction, instruction and edifying of the church, the body of Christ. God has greatly exalted Jesus and given him a NAME that is above every name, that at the NAME of Jesus, every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father.

We believe all scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and the only rule for true faith and practice for the church of Jesus Christ. May the eternal God give us grace, love and power to live and die in this faith.

John L. Sanders

ENJOYS READING SIGNS AT 92

230 Marlee Row,
Grants Pass, Oregon 97526

Dear Brother Wood:

I have been aiming to write to you for a long time and thanking you for the nice letter you wrote me about my book, "Ranch Life in the Old West." It put it in the album of fine letters written from men and women of all walks of life, who read my book. So thank you again.

I have been praying for our Heavenly Father to let us live until the 11th of September, which is our 67th anniversary. I will be 92 my next birthday, and wife is 85 past, and we are both real well for our age.

I just read in the August *Signs* the account of W. O. Hall's passing away. I have enjoyed many letters in the *Signs* written by him. His brother Andy Hall lived here in Grants Pass, and was past 86. He passed away last Tuesday or Wednesday, and was buried today, September 5th.

Brother Wood, I certainly do love to

read our dear old *Sgins of the Times.* My eyes are pretty bad but I can still see to read with the help of the magnifying glass, and I thank the good Lord every day for the wonderful blessings all my life. I know He has watched over us both all of our lives. Goodby now.

Love and best wishes, write again sometime.

Your brother in a sweet hope,
C. H. Greathouse

REMINISCENCES OF MARY PARKER (Continued)

Again in my soul arose the agonizing cry, "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust." Where is there in this transitory life that we may safely love and trust, since Time will take it all from our grasp? "As the flower of the field it vanisheth away;" and, after all, everything in this life is but dust. O, the dumb agony that filled my soul in this sad hour! Like one who had received a hard blow, I felt, though I made no outcry, uttered no word of complaint. When my mother was taken away, in sorrow I could lean on my father; I did not feel alone. But now, every earthly prop was gone, the last binding tie broken. I had no one to share my sorrow with, no one to condole with, no one to offer me the sympathy I craved. It seems the pen of the most gifted writer would fail in the attempt to describe the terrible agony that seemed to bruise and break every tendril of my heart, as I stood by that open grave and saw the dear form of my only earthly protector lowered into its dark, narrow resting-place, never again to look upon it, never more to hear the dear voice, listen for the beloved footstep or hear a tender, loving word; to turn away, realizing that I was ALONE. Oh, it was heart-rending indeed! Looking about me, how wide, and broad and fair was this world, but it held no sunshine for me. Large as it was there seemed no vacancy, no longer any place for me; no one needed me; nobody wanted me. We have heard it said that we all have many fair weather friends, who, like the swallows and sparrows, only come to us when the soft south winds blow, and when the summer-time of prosperity is with us. But there are birds that come to us with their beautiful plumage and their glad songs in the winter time, and those we prize most and hold most dear. So it is in this life; we prosper, when we move in the higher walks of life, and we sail upon undisturbed seas, then it is that the world will flatter, will praise us and honor us; but when enveloped in the dark clouds of adversity, then it is indeed that we find the friendship of the world but a poor thing; and then, too, do we learn to prize those who are willing in our adversity to lend us a helping hand, and to perform the part of a real Samaritan to us. Such a friend did I find in my dear youngest brother, who, with his dear young wife, opened their house to me. Such a friend, also, would my dear uncle, Albert Parker, have been, had he lived. But he was called away five months after father was taken. Next to my own dear father and mother did I love him and his amiable, affectionate wife; and when we parted the day after father's burial, it was with the understanding that I was to come to them in their home, back among the loved and familiiar scenes of my childhood, so soon as I could arrange my affairs.

When, after the funeral, the friends had all returned to their homes, the painful task of going back to our dear home, which was *home* to me no longer, and opening its closed blinds and doors, awaited me. *Alone* I went back, opened the little gate and unlocked the door out of which, only a few weeks before, father and I together had gone, he smiling upon me, and complimenting me upon what he in his parental devotion deemed my good personal appearance. The familiar sitting-room looked tidy and as if it were ready for its usual

occupants. Side by side were father's large easy chair and my own light rocker. But it was when I went to his sleeping apartment that the pent-up anguish in my heart burst all bounds, and *alone* in what had once been home, dear, dear home, I gave way to my uncontrollable grief. There stood his couch with the covering just as he had left it, the pillow still bearing the indentation made in its downy softness by the dear head, while scattered here and there were his discarded garments and his bathing things. No one can know the deep anguish of such moments, save those who have also drank from the same bitter cup of sorrow, draining its heart-piercing contents to the very dregs. But here again is one of the "turned-down leaves" upon which we may merely glance. But let us shut these pages ever so closely, in memory's book every tear dimmed sentence is written with indelible ink and cannot be blotted out.

By September, everything I had to do here was settled and arranged. There was nothing to keep me here. Although the few really intimate friends I had were exceedingly affectionate and kind to me, yet I felt that no one indeed, no one would specially miss me; and, oh! it made my heart sad. Dear as I had been to my father, tenderly as he had clung to me, carefully, affectionately and tenderly as I had been nurtured and loved from early youth, how void seemed my life, how sad was my aching, almost breaking heart. Oh! when I now see sensitive, tender-hearted little children, cradled in the lap of tenderness and love, when no rude wind is allowed to blow upon them, when no words are spoken but those of kindness and approval, when their every wish is anticipated and cared for, and their very life is lined inside and out, as was the infant basket that held the child Moses, with the environments of pure affection, I almost shudder for the future of that child, lest the rude hand of sorrow overtake it, and all its bright hopes be destroyed and the tendrils of its heart be broken by the cold and pitiless winds of adversity and bereavement.

Dear father's death occured May 24, 1877; and one bright balmy morning in the beginning of the month of September, I was ready to take the train for Logan. I said that no one cared to have me go, but in my brother's home was a dear little three-year-old household pet, who was the one only bright spot left amid the ruins of my youthful joys. She would throw her little arms about me when I was alone in my room shedding the tears I could not suppress, and say, "Evie loves you, Aunt Mollie, please do not cry," and her little arms lingered lovingly about me, as I was about to leave, and her sobs and tears made my sore heart feel that at least her dear little heart held a place for one even so deserted as I. "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." "I will not leave you comfortless," saith the Saviour. How very sure are all His blessed promises, how forcibly have they been brought to pass in the storms that have swept their huge avalanches over my poor soul. Under the darkest of midnight clouds has the sun of righteousness ever shone, illuminating my pathway in the darkest hours and enabling me to lift up my voice out of the depths and cry unto the Saviour and to say, "Thou who hast shown me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth." Yes, out of the deepest depths of human suffering and woe, whither we have followed the footsteps of our Divine Redeemer, His tender, loving hand leads us into the sunlight of His redeeming love, unto the portals of eternal Day; into the happy land of peace. Peter says: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, after that ye have suffered awhile, strengthen, establish, settle you." Oh, it is a wonderful way, the journey on which the poor little child of God starts out, that leads through great tribulation up to the Mount Zion on high, the fair city of our King, where He sits in resplendent glo-

ry on the great white throne, while all about are the white-robed throng who have gone up through this same thorny way, this "way which they knew not, this path which they had not known," but who now stand before the throne, crying "Holy! Holy is the Lamb!" As I now sit here, though helpless upon a bed of pain, but with the sunshine of His love all about me, the shadow of this wonderful trust in Him, casting its golden light around my life, I now can look back to the dark hour of which I speak and see that the hand of love, pitiful, and very tender, was then leading me, and "that after that I had *suffered* awhile, His grace would strengthen, stablish, settle me." Not in a moment "can patience have her perfect work," but "*tribulation* must *work* it." Hence "these light afflictions," saith the apostle, "*work* for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

But to return to my subject; I took the early eastbound train for Logan, travelling for the first time in my life any distance alone, and without my father. When I reached the depot in Logan I was met by my dear uncle and the cheery face of Dr. Little, our old family physician, both of whom greeted me with pleasant words of welcome. I was not long in being driven to my uncle's home, where I was kindly welcomed by my aunt and the dear little ones. My dear uncle treated me with much tenderness; and once, as I stood apart from the family on the veranda, thinking of my dear father, he laid his hand gently on my head and said: "dear child, you look so lonely." Three weeks passed by, then we were all called around the bed of that dear uncle to find his spirit already flown. He had been ailing a few days, but kept about the house, and about an hour before he died said he was so much better he thought if we would all retire to our rooms he could rest. A little while and auntie's voice called out in great alarm, and when the three children and his step-daughter and I reached his room he was lying on the bed *still* in the embrace of death. Thus in a few short months did I stand and see the coffin-lid close for ever upon the features of two earthly friends I held so dear.

My dear aunt was completely broken down at the great shock, and I strove as much as possible to spare her all care and mental and physical effort. I therefore looked after all telegrams, many of the burial appointments, and, as there was quite a houseful of relatives and friends staying in the house, I took it upon myself to superintend the household affairs. This and my heavy sorrow proved too much for me, and the next day after the burial of my uncle I took one of my severe attacks. The family thought I was very near death, as did also the physician, as he afterwards told me. When I began to recover, my aunt told me the children were in constant terror lest another death take place in the family, and when I told her it was my intention to return to New Holland, I at once felt it accorded with her wishes. In a few days, though so weak I scarce could walk, I prepared for my journey, my physician all the while telling me it was a very dangerous undertaking, and assuring me if I did go his wife should accompany me to Lancaster, which she did, kindly assisting me in changing cars, and seeing me comfortably seated in the railway coach and under the kind conductor's charge ere she left me. Oh! how sad and desolate was my heart as the train sped onward, bearing me back to the only place I could call home, yet to whose shelter I had no real claim. Surely if any class of persons need kind words, it is the homeless orphans. To one thus bereft how soothing would be a welcoming smile, a word of welcome, or the assurance that somewhere in this wide world there is a home whose door is open to you, and loving, generous hearts willing and anxious to share the sweet influences and comforts of home with you. But the prospect of taking a confirmed invalid into one's home is not very cheering; and to perform such a self-sacrificing deed of charity and

kindness willingly, one would have to be actuated by a strong sense of duty, strengthened and upheld by both human and divine love.

When I came back to New Holland it was with the hope that I might engage in business of some kind; not that I specially needed to labor, for my income was then sufficient to supply all needs; but I knew I would be better content, and would not then feel burdensome to any one. A lady occupied rooms in a business building belonging to our estate and carried on millinery. I was deeply attached to her, and she offered me a partnership with her providing my health improved. But I grew worse, and by winter was so weak and emaciated I could scarcely walk about. The physicians here advised and urged me to go to a hospital. I wrote to our family physician at Logan, who procured admittance for me in St. Francis' Hospital at Columbus, Ohio. My brother who resides in Logan was here looking after business of my father's estate, and he kindly accompanied me to Columbus, placing me in charge of Dr. Laving, President of Sterling Medical College, and the Sister Superior of St. Frances' Hospital. All the leading physicians belonging to the faculty examined me, and all agreed that the leading trouble was an ulcer in the stomach, and said it could be felt, by drawing the hand across the organ, very perceptibly. They gave me the same remedies the doctor at home had given me, with the same trying results. I think every dose of medicine I took, as well as food and drinks, were in a short time thrown up, and they finally said it was no use. It was a most interesting case they said, but it seemed evident to them I was better off without any treatment. Oh! how greatly disappointed did I feel. During my brief stay there I felt that I had crowded into my strange and changeful life almost the experience of years. It was during the holidays, very cold, and the building was full of sick people to overflowing. It was impossible to secure a room to myself, so I was placed in a ward containing five cots, and in which were four sick ladies beside myself. In one cot lay a lady who seemed very ill, but whose pale face looked very interesting and intelligent. She held out her thin hand to me and smiling said, "I am so glad you are to occupy this ward." Near the door stood a cot, from which low, piteous moans were issuing, while every now and then in sad undertones, with a strong, foreign accent, came a cry, "Oh, Lord, let me die!" This patient I learned was a very young lady, whose husband had died while they were crossing the ocean. She reached New York homeless, friendless and penniless, soon fell ill and was taken to the "Home of the Friendless" in Cleveland. There she was found by one of the medical faculty here and brought to St. Francis'. She would eat nothing, talk to no one (though greatly petted by the doctors) and day and night, over and over, she would cry, "Lord, let me die." How we all pitied her, and we strove to soothe her, but our every word and act was repulsed. If one of us would attempt to smooth the raven hair or touch the soft cheek, she would turn away like a peevish child.

(Continued next month)

WRITES HER FEELINGS

Dear Brother Spangler:

I feel this morning to write some of my feelings. I feel so blue and alone most of the time, and don't enjoy preaching like I would like to, but I can listen to the tapes and am made to realize how good the Lord has been to me all the days of the sixty-four years I have lived in this world.

These are serious and perilous days, but sometimes when I am alone, I feel so happy and thankful, I hope, for all the blessings He has bestowed upon me since I have been a member of the church, and was baptized. I'll never forget that day, and wish many times that I could be blessed to feel to be as

little as I felt that day. At this writing I feel that I love everyone of God's children everywhere, and if I have aught against anyone, I don't know about it. I believe if you love God you love all of his people. God has so wonderfully blessed us with all we eat and wear, and I hope He has prepared a home for me in heaven. He spoke to me thirty-eight years ago in the Reidsville Hospital, and told me to fear not, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. No wonder we love all of God's people everywhere, and strive for peace.

We need His mercy more than all the things of the world. I love all of you in all the churches. Brother Spangler pray for us all, and come to see us.

Love,
Sister Rena Smith of
Pleasant Grove Church

THEIR ROCK NOT OUR ROCK

"For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges." (Deut. 32:31)

This scripture is thousands of years old, and yet it is still just as applicable today as it was when first written. This is true of all Scripture however, because the truth and the wisdom of the inspired Word of God is ageless. God is unchangeable and so is his word, it is the same today, yesterday and forever. Man is also the same as he was after the fall of Adam: he is corrupt, and if there is any good in man it is by the grace of God that there is. It is because God has shown mercy upon him, and has placed something within him that not all men possess, — and that is the Holy Spirit.

The above scripture is recorded in the song that the Lord told Moses to write unto the children of Israel just before Moses was to go up onto the mountain and die. God is referring in the song to Jeshurun and ones who forsook God who made them, and lightly esteemed the Rock of their salvation. Then, still referring to these individuals, he states the text, "For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges."

Can this same scripture not be quoted today regarding the religions of the world around us? Their rock is not as our Rock, and they will be the first to acknowledge it to be the truth. According to their own testimony, they walk without any fear at all, and by their lighthearted, carefree manner of their worship services, it is evident that their rock is not as our Rock, They believe that their God has done all he can do, or is willing to do, to save the inhabitants of the world; and now the decision, the power, and the final results of the whole work is in their hands: they can accept it and live eternally in heaven, or they can reject it and dwell forever in the fiery pits of hell.

In reality, what is the difference in this doctrine and the belief in the god of those people in Moses' day? They made a replica of four footed beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air, and fell down and worshipped them. They cut down a tree, used it to cook their food, warm themselves, and then of the ashes they made a graven image, and fell down and worshipped it, praying, Deliver us for thou art our god." (see Isaiah 44th chapter) It is sheer nonsense, and yet it seems that the same thing is happening all over the world today among people who are considered intelligent individuals. The people of olden times worshipped images which had eyes but could not see, and feet but could not walk — they had to be carried wherever they went. The image itself had no power at all, and the point is that the people could determine among themselves the power, wisdom and characteristics the image was supposed to possess, according to what the people wanted. If things went well, it was their god's pleasure in their actions, if not, it was punishment for something they did wrong, or something they failed to do.

The masses today believe in a God that is just as subservant to their wishes

as the inaminate objects of stone, ash, or what have you, that their fathers worshipped. Man has not really changed with all the technical and cultural advances made by the human race since the foundation of the world. They will tell you that they believe in the biblical account of the creation, the theory of an omnipotent being who is all wise, and then tell you that the supreme being cannot save a single individual unless that person will let him. I have difficulty understanding how intelligent (wisdom of the world) people can honestly believe this, but they are constantly affirming it on the radios, from the pulpits, and whenever given an opportunity and someone will listen. Therefore, their own judgment is that their rock is not as our Rock.

Many times I get low in spirit, and I am made to wonder if the things that I hope to believe, are really the truth of the God of heaven and earth, or am I just building on the sand something that will not stand the test of time. With all of the testimony that I hear constantly from the world, is it possible that I could be deceived in the matter, and the religions of the world are actually the truth? They have the majority, they have the evidence if it is actually observed by the natural eye, and their doctrine is appealing to the natural mind. It causes me deep concern sometimes, and I believe that but for the grace of God I would be overwhelmed by it all.

Thanks be unto God these seasons pass, and we again believe in the true and living God, who has promised that he will never leave nor forsake his children. If indeed one has the Holy Spirit dwelling within him, then all things are for their sake and work together for their good. This is a very contrasting relationship to the one between the gods of this world and their worshippers. The one is sure and steadfast and under the complete control of a sovereign Creator, who works all things after the counsel of his own will, and if we are what we hope to be, He is our Rock. The gods of this world are powerless, lifeless, and in reality, are only the extension of the vain conceit of those who worship them.

The song in which this scripture is found, begins with, "Give ear, O ye heavens and I will speak: and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth." This is a God of power who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. This is the one that is designated as Our Rock. He is considered, feared and reverenced as such today by those He has saved and called with a holy calling. If he calls and the heavens stand up, will not puny man do the same? Will they not give ear and hear if spoken to by such a God? I believe that they will, and I do not believe that they will ever be found contending that they are in any way responsible for being called into or kept in the way that they are traveling.

"My doctrine shall drop as the rain my speech shall distill as the dew. As the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the shower upon the grass." This is a most beautiful text to one as he is made to remember the sovereign work of grace in God's making known unto him the beauties of his doctrine. As the earth is dry and cold with no moisture, so was his heart. As the earth has no power of its own to bring down the rain, or to cause the dew to form upon it, so is the natural man. But suddenly, mysteriously there is the moisture, or spirit in the case of the natural man, and suddenly he is alive. Just as the rain causes the earth to bring forth bud, green leaves and fruit, so does the Spirit cause man to come alive unto Godly things, and yield fruit in the form of praise unto God their Heavenly Father.

"Because I will publish the name of the Lord: Ascribe ye greatness unto our God." This is now the heartfelt song of the new heaven born soul. Now their whole desire is to publish the news of this miracle in their life, and ascribe greatness unto the God of their salvation. There is such sweetness and freedom in their soul, and they feel that surely others can see and feel it too. They learn though that this is just for

them. Others can only receive it in the same way they did — by the sovereign grace of Almighty God. They are made to know that they are not acting, but rather being acted upon by a power other than their own, and one that is independent of any efforts on their part.

This seems to have been the experience of Moses, in that he was called at a time and place that we have no record that he was concerned with God and godly things. He knew the way of those around him in the same way that we observe those around us today. And, although we cannot know that we are children of God, we can say that their rock is not our Rock, they themselves being judges.

"He is the Rock, his way is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." Is not this the Rock that we worship today? If I have any understanding of what I believe, and what the Primitive Baptists contend for today, that is exactly the same Rock that Moses was writing about. It is the only foundation upon which a hope is based of heaven and immortal glory, because of the frailty of the man of flesh, and the changeableness of his nature.

Down through the ages of time God in his own infinite wisdom and power, according to my understanding of the scriptures, has in his own time revealed himself unto his own, and called them from nature's darkness into his marvelous light. Also I know of no case on record where he ever let one stray back into that state of darkness and complete lack of understanding of Him, as he was in before He appeared unto them. This is because, "He is the Rock and all his ways are judgment." And He never changes his mind or reverses that judgment. Man can change his prior judgment upon receiving additional evidence concerning the thing upon which he passed judgment. God had infinite wisdom, and changes not because all of that knowledge is behind every judgment that He makes, and He is too wise to err.

It seems to me that were it otherwise there could be no peace or comfort, and none could have the blessed assurance of a heavenly abode, if things could change because of some future unknown development — something that was not anticipated by the great I AM. I see him as a supreme being incapable of making a mistake. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." In this Isaiah was expressing the same sentiment as Moses did when he said, "He is the Rock, his work is perfect, for all His ways are judgment." They are both stating that all things are brought to pass according to God's own will and purpose, and because of his judgment of the whole situation respecing those events. They are not just random coincidences but a perfectly planned sequence of events.

The world says that their rock desires that they send the gospel into all the world and save as many as they can. This requires seminaries, boards, money, volunteers, and a good sound promotional program to accomplish, and they acknowledge that they are falling far short of the goal. When God commands his servants to go, he goes. On one occasion the Angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought his servants out, and told them, "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." Where the word of a king is, there is power. And this is just as true today as it has ever been. Christ told Peter after his resurrection, "When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkest whither thou wouldest, but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands and another shall gird thee and carry thee whither thou wouldest not." This is saying that they will go, not because everything is made easy, but rather in spite of all the obstacles that may be in their way. If there is one of God's little ones that is to receive His word, such as Cornelius, the commandment will go forth, and a way will be made for it

to be accomplished, and all the praise and honor will be unto God. This will be true in the heart of the newly manifested child and in the heart and soul of the servant. It will be as the servant of Abraham who was sent to seek a wife for Isaac. It will all be the sovereign work of God, and will accomplish the desired results, because, "His work is perfect."

Many times as we behold the world around us, we are made to wonder why we are so different from the majority of the people that we come in contact with. Why is it that what is so sweet and precious to us, should be so hated by the world? Then as we read the scriptures, we find that it has ever been so. In John 6:66, Christ told his disciples, "Verily, verily I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles but because ye did eat of the loaves and are filled." The same is true today: the world in general follows after the various religions because they are appealing to the natural senses of man, and fulfill their vain conceited sense of self-importance, and need to belong. Later Christ told them, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you they are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you that believe not. Therefore I said unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." It says from that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him. The truth has ever been the thing that separates the Children of God from the children of the world, whether we like it or not. It was true in Christ's days upon the earth; and it is true today. Only those who have been born of the Spirit of God can witness to the truth of God. The others cannot because they do not know anything about it: as the Apostle Paul wrote, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." And, "No man speaking by the Spirit calleth Jesus accursed."

God told Moses, "Now write this song for you, and teach it to the Children of Israel: put it in their mouth that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel." This is, therefore, the witness that God placed on record for all future generations of the children of Israel, as a remembrance of the Rock of their salvation. It does not leave them to guess as to the attributes of the Rock of Moses, and it also spells out the fallacy of the new gods that are newly come up. We have the same evidence among us today, for God has not left himself without a witness, and when blessed with the wisdom of the Spirit of God, as we hope to have been a few times in our life, we have felt that we would say, "For their rock is not our Rock." It is a grand and glorious feeling to be so lifted up that, for the moment, it seems that you can say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," not just that there is a God, but that he is *my God, my Rock, my Strength, my Fortress, and my Deliverer.* At such times as this, it seems that it would be sin not to confess this in view of the strong impression. At other times you fear to claim these precious truths as yours.

May God bless the above to the comfort and edification of his children. May He grant you the wisdom to recognize, understand, and rejoice in the Truth, and the compassion to overlook the error, and forgive the writer. If not deceived, my prayer is that all has been done in love for the truth, and for those who love and believe the truth. Just as surely as the truth separates the children of God from the world, it binds their hearts and souls together with a force stronger than any of the ties of nature. The love that they have for these things, is the sweetest of God's gifts to the children of men. It is greater than the faith and hope that accompany it.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell
2761 Cochese Cove,
Memphis, Tenn. 38118

PEACE

"Peace, I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you . . ." (John 14, 27)

The world does not know anything about the peace of God which flows within the hearts of the children of God. This is a sweet peace within our souls. It causes us to rejoice and sing praises unto the Lord for this sweet peace.

At times we may take this peace for granted, and do not really appreciate the peace of God. God knows what we need, and He has promised to supply our need. We may need heavy trials in order to really appreciate the sweet peace of God. Therefore God sends trials, tribulations, afflictions, clouds, darkness of mind, etc. in our path, and we find that we are in "heaviness through manifold temptations." (I Peter 1:6 Notice the expression "if *need be.*" It may be necessary in the wise counsel of God, that we go through seasons of "heaviness through manifold temptation." It may be necessary that we go through dark seasons of being down in the valley: read Isaiah 43:2.

Jesus said, ". . . I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." (Matthew 28:20) We may not always feel His presence, but He is there with us.

God may withdraw his *manifest presence* from us. "Cast me not away from thy presence." (Psalm 51:11. See Jeremiah 52:3 and 2 Kings 24:20) It does not mean that God has completely withdrawn himself from us, for He has promised never to leave us.

"If I ascend up unto heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." (Psalm 139:8) When we are lifted up with the manifest presence of God, we feel it within our souls, and during these bright seasons, it causes us to sing and make melody within our hearts, and praise God for his goodness. Praise God for his mercy!

What is meant: "If I make my bed in hell, thou art there"? To me, this shows the dark seasons of the children of God: God has withdrawn his manifest presence from us, and we feel the coldness within our hearts. We may wonder: Has Grace touched my heart? We may question God with such expressions as these: Will the Lord cast off forever? Will He be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? Doth his promise fail forevermore? Hath He forgotten to be gracious? Hath He in anger shut up his tender mercies?" (Psalm 77:7, 9)

Have you felt to be forsaken of God? If so, then you know something about how Jesus felt when he cried out upon the cross: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46)

If your pathway is trials, afflictions, and tribulations, then this is some sweet evidence that you have fellowship with the suffering of Jesus. "That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and the *fellowship of his sufferings,* being made comfortable unto his death." (Philippians 3:10) "It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we sufer, we shall also reign with him, if we deny him, he also will deny us." (2 Timothy 2:11, 12)

When are you blessed with the sweetest peace you have known?—Please examine your experience. Do you not find that you are blessed with this sweet peace during the midst of heavy trials? If you did not have the heavy trials then you would not know anything about that wonderful, sweet peace.

As it is written, "We glory in tribulations." (Romans 5:3) Why do we glory in them? It is because we are blessed with a great felt sense of the presence of God during these heavy trials. Then you say, "O Lord, give me trials, afflictions, etc., but please bless me with thy presence." As the poet said, "No matter how dark the path may lie ahead, one touch of the Master's hand, and I am ready to go." When God blesses us with his presence — Manifest Presence, then we are ready to go with him through trials, tribulations, afflictions, etc. "If thy presence go not with me, carry us up not hence." (Exodus

33:15 and see Isaiah 43:2)

In closing, let us remember that there is no place where we can go to escape the presence of God. We may not always feel the manifest presence of God, but he is there with us. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? (Psalm 139:7)

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick Street,
Bastrop, La. 71220

"A TABLE PREPARED IN A WEARY LAND"

1319 S St. Andrews,
Dothan, Ala. 36301

Dear Editors:

Just a few words to express my appreciation for the *Signs of the Times.* When I receive it each month, it seems it is like a table prepared for me in a weary land, and in the presence of my enemies.

I hope and pray that you will continue to be blessed to carry on for many years to come, and that the *Signs of the Times* will continue to be sent out to those who hunger and thirst after these things.

I am sending two obituaries to be published. I am late in getting these in, but now enclose them for Elder J. J. Collins and Elder J. J. Watson, both Elders in our Association. . .

Humbly,
Elder D. W. Collins

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2 SAMUEL 23:5

"Although my house be not so with God: yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." (2 Samuel 23:5)

This scripture has been on my mind for some time; and why, I do not know. David was in his last days when he wrote these words and could see by the eye of faith that all things were ordered and sure by his God; and I hope mine. We know that the salvation of God is to His elect people; and when we are made to cry out as Jonah did, we say that Salvation is of the Lord, that salvation is in no other than God himself. This is my hope, and this is all that I have: looking unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith.

James said that without faith it is impossible to please God. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. As many as were ordained to eternal life believe in the God of all grace, for it is the work of God that we believe in Him whom the Father sent into this world, not to try to save sinners, but *did do it.* This is all done for us, and not by us. We live in hope of eternal life, and as David said, "This is all my salvation and all my desire." We believe that God gives us the desire to seek after Him, and we are made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus and worship God in Spirit and in Truth, we are made to love our brethren. Where love is, there is peace, and God is the God of peace. Peace is what we desire the most with our brethren. May the God of all Grace keep us in peace one with another. I believe that God declared from the beginning every event that has and will take place here in this time world. We read in the third chapter of Ecclesiastes, the first verse: "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." It is good to read the entire chapter. We are bound to know that God is a God of purpose. We know that Adam fell: this being true it was according to the puropse of God.

In the second chapter of Genesis we read: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the hosts of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made: and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made." God's work is a finished work. He sent his Son into this world to save that which was lost, all according to God's purpose; and Je-

sus finished the work his Father sent him to do. When Jesus cried, "It is finished," don't we know that from the beginning of time to the present, it has been a perfect work, and will continue as long as this world stands.

I am glad that we don't have anything to do in order for God to do something for us. We are helpless beings here in this world, depending on the God of all grace for everything, both natural and spiritual. I do believe that we grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, but I believe we will never get *grown* in it while here in this world. "This is all my salvation and all my desire."

When we come to the end of our journey here in this world, we shall receive the inheritance laid up in heaven for us, which is incorruptable and undefiled and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us. This is my prayer; and may each and every one of God's elect rejoice in the heavenly gifts that are given them. May God bless all the Editors of the *Signs*.

Elder Herbert R. Prince
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DO YOU LOVE THE LORD?

Say, tell me do you love the Lord?
And do you feast upon His word?
Is Christ the one your hope's fixed on?
Is He your strength? Is He your song?

If you would like to know of me —
Just how I am, or what I be:
I am a sinner, vile and mean,
I'm all unholy, all unclean.

I'm so unworthy, so defiled,
Unworthy to be called God's child.
My life at times seems quite in vain:
'Tis then I fear: *Not Born Again.*

Yet, gracious God, I would be free,
Would live eternally with thee.
O tell me I am thine, dear Lord:
Then I can feast upon thy word.

Then I can run the rugged road,
That leads to home, sweet home and God:
The home of pure immortal bliss —
How far that home transcendeth this!

That home, my brother, shall, I trust,
Be yours and mine, with all the just:
Then praise, immortal praise be given
For matchless grace, sweet hope of heaven.

(Long meter tunes)

Elder John Lee Smith,
Rt. 2, Box 59A
Spearsville, La. 71277

The Editors and all readers of the Signs would appreciate it if our Elders and other Brethren and sisters, would submit their writings on scriptural subjects and experiences for publication. The readers of the Signs like to know how others get along through their writings.

Danville, Va. November, 1974

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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PRAYER

Our thoughts are often upon the subject of Prayer, and while thinking of some requests to write on the subject, our attention was called to an article on the same subject, written by the late Elder George L. Weaver, in 1929, and upon reading it, decided that it would make good reading again for our brethren, so we are publishing it instead of attempting to write ourself:—J.D.W.

"Lord teach us to pray." — (Luke 11:1)

There is no subject more misunderstood or abused than prayer. It is a hard matter for us to give a correct answer or definition of that which is called prayer. In almost all gatherings of men and women, whether it be club, lodge, school or prayer-meeting, they have a form of prayer, but the true prayer I have under consideration cannot be learned, comes not by education, neither is it handed down from sire to son, not a form of sayings, not a form of repetitions of the Scriptures to be heard of men for their much speaking. It does not emanate from the flesh. It is not of the world. Who is it then that in reality prays? I answer, None but those who have been led beside the still waters and have been made to lie down in green pastures; they who have been born again, not of a corruptible but of an incorruptible seed, kept by the power of God. They are the ones that pray. Unto them the Lord hearkens and hears; his ear is open to their cries and he knows their needs long before they ask of him.

The great Redeemer in the mountain, with his chosen disciples around him, gives us an example of prayer: "But thou (addressing his chosen), when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly." What a lesson is taught here. Here is a figure portraying great depths for the edifying of his chosen people. Notice, we enter into our closet, all the outside world is closed around us. When we have shut our door to all the works of the flesh and the world, all natural light is shut out. We are in darkness. Yes, darkness that can be felt. The natural eye cannot see, the natural ear cannot hear. Many of the Lord's servants know of this solemn place and from the heart can breathe a prayer illuminated only by the Spirit of the great Jehovah, in this manner: O. dear Lord, just once more may I be given strength and an understanding in thy mysteries. Unworthy as I am, O God, be merciful to me. In spirit and in truth may I approach the throne of grace, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

The poor publican was surely in his closet and his door was shut when he smote on his breast, feeling unworthy to look toward heaven, and asked God to "be merciful to me a sinner." Here is a prayer that was more justified than the other of the boasting Pharisee. He prayed with himself, the prayer of the world to-day, I am better than they. While the publican prayed to God in humility, he went down to his house justified rather than the other. Only from the heart can we address our prayers to our Father which art in heaven. The kingdom of God must be in us before we can address our petition to him, for he is a Spirit and seeketh such to worship as worship him in spirit and in truth. Not with our hands, not by our works, nor the deeds of the law, only by his Spirit. He knows our needs before we ask him. He shows us our weakness and inability to even think on his name. Prayer is an offering up to God for things needful. Not our wants, for we, like children, often want things that would be our ruination. He knows our needs and will supply them through Christ. Christ himself, the great example of his elect, taught us to pray and how to pray: "Thy will be done in earth (in us) as it is in heaven."

In our prayers we adore him, confess him, plead with him, give thanks to him for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins. Prayer is the outpouring of a broken and contrite heart, the inward cry of a wounded child that knows there is salvation in no other name but Jesus, the reflection of grace in our hearts, Christ in us the hope of glory. As it is written, My Father's house is a house of prayer, the ground and pillar of truth, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone. All the prophets and apostles prayed, Jesus the great example fell on his face and prayed to his Father, "If it is possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done." This life of the Lord's people is a life of prayer. Hardly a moment of their life is spent without breathing a prayer, for his mercy is so great it endureth forever. Often we hear our brethren say, I cannot pray, I am too unworthy; I am so vile, so prone to sin, I cannot pray, and all the time there is in their hearts the groanings that cannot be uttered, the secret prayer of the righteous. Prayer is the balm that heals the broken-hearted, the good Samaritan that came where he was, bound up his wounds and took care of him, the still small voice to the heavy laden. Oh how sacred is prayer, the redeemed of the Lord can come to the throne of grace, led into the banqueting-house under the banner of love, and led in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. May we be kept humble and at his feet, clothed and in our right mind. Pray without ceasing that we may be kept faithful.

"Prayer is the saint's sincere desire,
Unuttered or expressed;
The motion of a hidden fire,
That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.

Prayer is the christian's vital breath,
The christian's native air,
The watchword at the gate of death;
He enters heaven with prayer."

The above thoughts on prayer are submitted to the *Signs* for publication, if deemed worthy a place in our paper.

George L. Weaver

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

REPLY TO BROTHER JAMES E. HARDING

The scripture on which we are requested to give our views, is a portion of what is usually called Christ's sermon on the mount, which sermon, if we may so call it, was addressed exclusively to his disiples. Great multitudes, we are informed, had been attracted by the fame of the miracles which Christ had wrought throughout

the land, and probably from curiosity and a desire to witness his astonishing works, many pressed around him, while the halt, the blind, the deaf and the leprous were assembled in hope of being cured, and some of the crowd were eager to find something whereof they might accuse him. Compared with the number which were assembled, his disciples were but few. If our Lord had been led by the policy of men, we would suppose he would have availed himself of so good an opportunity to render himself popular, by gratifying their inquisitive curiosity to seek after signs. But God's ways and thoughts transcend the ways and thoughts of men, as the heavens are higher than the earth, and we are informed that he purposely avoided the crowd. "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him; and he opened his mouth and taught them." All the instructions given by him, therefore, at this time and place, were given exclusively to his disciples.

First, a rich cluster of blessings were pronounced upon them who bore the characteristic marks of discipleship to him. Let it never be forgotten that they who are truly the disciples of Jesus are "poor in spirit, to whom belong the kingdom of heaven." "They are the mourners, who shall be comforted." "They are the meek, who shall inherit the earth." "They do hunger and thirst after righteousness, and shall be filled." "They are the merciful, and they shall obtain mercy." "They are the pure in heart, and they shall see God." "They are peace-makers, and shall be called the children of God." They are a people who are at times reviled of men, and persecuted, and against whom all manner of evil is said falsely for Jesus' sake, whose privilege it is to rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is their reward in heaven. They are the salt of the earth, and the light of the world.

Such are the characteristics of the dear disciples of the meek and lowly Lamb of God. Do we possess them? Are we truly poor in spirit? Do we mourn on account of the vileness of our own carnal and depraved nature, and over the abominations of the earth? Or de we mourn when the sacred presence of our Lord is for a season withdrawn, or when the ways of Zion mourn? Are we the meek, humble, submissive and lowly in our spirit, and in our walk and conversation? Are we hungering and thirsting after righteousness? Are we merciful, and ready to forgive those who tresspass against us, as we are to ask and desire that God may forgive us our trespasses? What character do we bear as peacemakers? Are we endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace? The dear disciples of the Prince of Peace, to whom this whole "sermon on the mount" is addressed, are admonished to be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves. "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which causes divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them." "Blessed are the pure in heart." Hearts which are sprinkled from an evil conscience, shall see and be in communion with God. Then, O then, if we be persecuted for righteousness' sake, if men revile us, and persecute, and say all manner of evil against us falsely for Jesus' sake, we shall have cause indeed to rejoice and be exceeding glad. But if, as the salt of the earth, we have lost our savor, we are thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

These warning notes are given by our Lord to his disciples by way of solemn admonition. The disciples of Jesus are salt; but even salt may become so filthy as to render it worthless, and unfit for use; and the dear disciples of Jesus may become so polluted by contact with the world, or by departure from the laws of Christ, as to lose their usefulness

in the house of God. Paul kept his body under, lest he, while preaching to others, should himself become a cast away, or like the salt when its savor is gone, only fit to be cast out, from the fellowship of the saints, and to be disrespected and trodden under foot of men. To impress more effectually this solemn admonition on his disciples, many of whom were to labor in the gospel ministry, our Lord told them to think not that he had come to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfill; and until every jot and tittle of the law under which they then were, was fulfilled, they were to be subject to its letter, and when he should nail its ordinances to his cross, and redeem them from its dominion, and bring them under law to himself, even then the righteousness of the law should be fulfilled in them who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit (See Rom. 81.)

Proceeding with his instructions to his disciples, he told them how the letter of the law had been regarded by Israel after the flesh, who walked after the flesh, and never knew any thing of the spirituality of the divine law. They had said, Thou shalt not kill, and whosover shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment, &c. Now he had not come to give them license to kill, and to destroy one another, but to magnify and honor the law, and to fulfill its righteousness in his people, thus: "I say unto you, (you my disciples) That whosoever is angry with his brother, without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosover shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of *hell fire*. Of hell fire, in the sense in which these words are used in James 3:6, and in Matt. 8:9, meaning darkness, confusion, disorder and distress.

In the application of these solemn admonitions and instructions, the words on which brother Harding desires our views are used. "Therefore," or from these considerations, namely, first, that by virtue of the blessings of God, and by a new and heavenly birth of the Spirit, those heavenly principles which are given in the first twelve verses of this chapter, are implanted in your hearts, as infallible evidences that ye are the blessed of the Lord, and disciples of the dear Redeemer, and secondly, that the righteousness of the law in its spiritually as magnified and fulfilled in you by Christ, far exceeding the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, by which you are made meet to be partakers with the saints in light, and to occupy a place in the gospel kingdom which was then soon to be set up, and to be in fellowship with the orderly children of the kingdom. From these considerations, "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remember that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way: first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." To these two verses brother Harding calls our special attention, and desires to be informed particularly of the gift, the altar, and who may offer upon it.

Allusion is evilently made to the altar of the Hebrews under the Levitical priesthood, which prefigured the altar whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. They only who served the tabernacle, the priests and Levites of the Levitical priesthood, had a right to eat of the gifts which were under the law. That was a typical altar, and they who had a right to it were a typical people, prefiguring the royal priesthood which was after the order of Melchisedec, and not by the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. The altar under the law was the consecrated place on which all the gifts which were required of the carnal Israelites were brought, and there by the consecrated priest were offered in sacrifice to the Lord. None but the people of the twelve tribes whose names were engraved upon the breastplate of the high priest, had a right to offer any gift or sacrifice upon that altar: all Gentiles were excluded. But

even the circumcised Hebrews, under certain circumstances, were excluded also from that privilege. If the Hebrew had any uncleanness upon him, if leprous, or defiled, he must be suspended from that privilege until ceremonially cleansed from his defilement; and when pronounced clean by the high priest, then he might and must come and bring and offer his gift.

This ceremonial law regarding the order to be observed, we are told had a shadow of things to come, and not the very image of the things which they prefigured; could never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect. This shadow, if correctly traced, will lead to the substance signified as casting the shadow. The substance is found in the spiritual tabernacle which God has pitched and not man. In the house of God, in his holy temple at Jerusalem, that is in the church of Christ in her gospel organization. None of the uncircumcised or of the unclean are permitted to approach this sacred consecrated altar of the Lord. All who are Jews only outwardly are excluded. None but those who are Jews inwardly, whose circumcision is of the heart, in the spirit, and whose praise is not of men but of God; these are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Only they who are of the spiritual circumcision, who have been buried with Christ by baptism into his death, and raised up from the dead to walk in newness of life, who have come into the fellowship of the church of God by the door, as did the primitive saints on the day of penticost, and who continue steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, have any part or lot in the altar on which the saints are to present their gifts and offerings unto God.

The altar in the type was made of twelve stones, to represent the twelve tribes of Israel, and these tribes represented the church of the living God. These altars were to be composed of stones just as God had formed and fashioned them. "Thou shalt not build it of hewn stone; for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it." The church of God is not to be shaped and fashioned by the arts and inventions of men. Every effort of men to improve her beauty is a pollution. On this altar the gifts and offerings of the saints are to be offered.—Rev. 5:8; Mal. 3:3, 4, 10.

The gifts to be presented in the house of God are anti-typical of the tithes and offerings which were required under the law. We are to present our bodies and spirits a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto the Lord, which is our reasonable service. Whatever gift we may be endowed with for the edification of the church of God, is to be brought to this altar, and cannot be acceptable to God if offered on any other altar.—See Isa. 65:3, 4.

The altar sanctifieth the gift. To illustrate—Baptism, if administered by one, whatever his religious profession may be, if not at the time of administering the ordinance sustained by the fellowship of the church of Christ, is like the offerings under the law which were made on altars of brick, invalid and void. Whatever may be the ability or orthodoxy of a preacher, if he stands not in, and sustained by the church of Christ, as a candle is held up and sustained by the candlestick, is in disorder, and cannot be recognized by the disciples of Christ without disobedience to the laws of Christ. God has set the members in the body, the church, as it has pleased him, and to every one of the members a gift, or manifestation of the Spirit is given, to profit with all; that is with all the church. "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers."—Eph. 4, 8, 11. On what altars were these gifts to be offered? We are told they were for the perfecting of the

saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Then they belong exclusively to the church of God, and in the church they are all to be offered. By whom are they to be offered? By all unto whom they are given; for the saints, or members of the body of Christ, are all made priests and kings unto God, as "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people."

"Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar," or to the church; *thou*, brother Harding, or any other brother or sister, whatever that gift may be, whether it be a lamb, a kid, pigeons or doves, or any of the diversified gifts which these typical offerings included. "And there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift, before the altar, (or church) and go thy way; first to be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." "For obedience is better than sacrifice, and to harken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubborness is as iniquity."—1 Sam. 15, 22, 23.

Our Lord in these instructions, as we understand them, makes it the first business of his disciples to see that harmony, peace and union be maintained among his people in the church. At the beginning, they were all of one mind and of one heart, and this unity of the spirit should be kept in the bond of peace. If a convert shall come to the church to offer himself for membership, and a brother objects, or is not satisfied, it is important that he leave there his offering, and first take gospel steps for a perfect reconciliation, and then come in in sweet fellowship. If in the church there be a brother whose gift is that of social prayer, or exhortation, if aware that a brother is grieved with, or has aught against him, how can his gift be acceptable or edifying, if he shows a disposition to disregard the feelings of his brother? Or if it be a deacon, or a pastor, who will trample on the feelings of a brother or sister, such a course will be in violation of this command of the King of Zion, and of the apostolic injunction to "make straight paths for our feet, that that which is lame be not turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed." We are charged not to be heady or high-minded in the church of God. but to condescend to those even of low degree. If a pastor or a deacon, or any other member in the church feels ever so confident that he is right, and his offended brother is wrong, that does not justify him in neglecting to take the required steps for a reconciliation. To urge immediate attention and obedience to this precept, the Savior adds, "Agree with thine adversary quickly while thou art in the way with him." That is while the matter of disagreement is between thee and thy offended brother, before a second or third step of labor be taken; for then it must be submitted to the judgment of others; for if the adversary shall lay the matter before the church, and the church shall find that you have neglected to move for a reconciliation, the church, which is the judge in this case, shall deliver thee to the officer, (the discipline) and thou shalt be cast into prison. If the fellowship of the church be withdrawn from a disorderly member, his liberty is taken from him, and he is held as a prisoner under the discipline of the church of God, until the last farthing shall be paid. He cannot be restored to liberty and fellowship until he shall make full satisfaction to the whole church.

Of what we intend in this article to say, this is the sum: First, the text is given as a solemn admonition to the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ. Second, the disciples of Christ are known by the characteristic marks given in the first twelve verses of the chapter. Third, the altar on which the gifts are to be offered is the church of Christ. Fourth, the gifts which they are to bring to the church are such as God has given them for the perfecting of the saints, and edification of the body of Christ. Fifth, those who may offer upon that altar are the orderly disciples who belong to the royal priesthood. Sixth, they

who may not offer upon that altar includes all those who are not of the royal priesthood, and all such of the disciples as know that their brother or brethren have aught against them, at least until they have taken gospel steps for a reconciliation.

In conclusion of this already lengthy article, we wish to call attention to the solemn admonitions and instructions of our Lord to his disciples on this same subject, contained in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, especially the 6th, 8th, 9th and 10th verses. "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."—Gal. 6:16.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, October 1, 1871)

OBITUARIES

ROSILLA B. ALLEN

Mrs. Rosilla B. Allen, widow of Roscoe P. Allen, 82, of Bauneg Beg Road in North Berwick, Maine, went to be with her Lord on Sunday, March 3, 1974, following a short illness at the H. D. Goodall Hospital in Sanford, Maine. She was born in Sanford, Maine, May 1, 1891, daughter of Charles I. and Mira Belle Ford Libby. She was baptized into the fellowship of the Oak Woods Old School Baptist Church of North Berwick, October 21, 1947, by Elder R. Lester Dodson. She was the sole survivor of that church.

Funeral services were held March 6. 1974, at 3 p.m. at Heald Funeral Home, Springvale, with Robert M. Smith, pastor of the Sanford First Baptist Church officiating. Interment was at the Oakdale Cemetery in Sanford, Maine.

Mrs. Allen is survived by a daughter, Miss Bernice M. Allen of North Berwick and several cousins.

It was my precious privilege to knew Mrs. Allen for a short time. Yet, in that short time her testimony of God's bountiful love proved a blessing to me and to other travelers to her home in Maine. Though far from an active Old School Baptist meeting, Mrs. Allen never faltered from the faith of Jesus Christ. His kind providence remained a great part of her life. She recalled for us her visits among Old School Baptists in North Carolina several years ago. Though only a memory, these experiences remained with her, giving her faith and courage to persevere until called to be with her precious Saviour.

Consider her steadfast faith even though she was the last member of the Old School Baptists in her area of Maine. Beebe collection, Hymn 640 expresses what must have been her feelings in the knowledge of the decline of the Old School Baptists in her area.

"O, let my trembling soul be still,
While darkness veils the sky,
And wait thy wise, thy holy will,
Wrapt yet in mystery;
I cannot, Lord, thy purpose see,
But all is well, since rul'd by thee.

Thus, trusting in thy love, I tread
The path of duty on;
What though some cherish'd joys are fled,
Some flatt'ring dreams are gone,
Yet purer, brighter joys remain.
Why should my spirit then complain?"

As another Old School Baptist Meetinghouse closed for the last time, one of the dear saints of God removed from terrestrial care to Heavenly joy. No longer does Mrs. Allen long for a fulfillment of God's promises to her—she is present with Him who preserved her naturally and spiritually as a living testimony of His marvellous works in the lives of mortals. Mrs. Allen was a true Sister to God's Children.

Respectfully submitted,

Biography by Miss Bernice Allen, her daughter. Comments by Elbert Robbins, one who cherishes her memory.

BROTHER JAMES WARREN MILES

Brother James Warren Miles was born in Caswell County, North Carolina, September 6, 1910. Departed this life May 30, 1974. Making his stay on earth 63 years, 8 months and 26 days. His funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Church June 1st at 2 p.m. by Elders Wallis and Donald Smith. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the glorious resurrection when the Saints will be caught up in the air to ever be with their Lord.

He was the son of Lucian and Bertha Stanfield Miles. He is survived by his wife Sister Mary Walker Miles, one brother and five sisters.

Brother Miles, as we all knew him in the church and community, was called Jim or Brother Jim. He asked for a home with Bush Arbor Church at the Upper Country Line Association in 1973. It was at the close of the Monday session, as the congregation was singing the closing song, he went forth in a run up into the stand. As I write this I can still in my mind and heart see and feel the happiness that was with him, not only him but all that was there. After being accepted into the

church, Amazing Grace was sung while the right hand of fellowship was extended. He was singing with everyone else. I feel the Spirit was with us all there that morning. Brother Jim was baptized by his Pastor the second Sunday in August of 1973. He wasn't blessed to be in the fellowship of the Church but for a short while before being called out of this world. He attended his church as often as his health would permit, along with his companion. He was a good neighbor always willing to help others in their need. Even in his younger days he had a great respect and a love for the Primitive Baptist people. He carried his Mother and Daddy to meetings. In my boyhood days I can remember seeing him with his parents at different meetings. He was always ready to help carry the equipment and the material for the Association. On one occasion when all the equipment had been put back in its place, Brother Herndon and I thanked him for helping out. He shed many tears that afternoon, from that day on I felt closer to Jim feeling that he was a Brother in the Spirit.

His last few days of natural life was spent in the hospital, where he was cared for, and all that could be done to comfort him was done. His companion said that he looked more content his last day or two than he had ever before. The last words of understanding that he said was, "I am going to be with my Lord." I can't think of any more comforting way to leave this time world. To his companion and sisters and brother of the flesh along with all that mourn his passing weep; but weep not as those that have no Hope. For this dear Brother had a lively hope of life eternal.

May we all be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father. Feeling that truly our Brother has gone to be with his Lord.

Written by request of Bush Arbor Church.

Humbly Submitted,
D. O. Chandler, Jr.

RUFUS E. DORON
NETTIE DORON

Rt. 1, Box 29,
Farmington, Ky. 42040

Dear Elder Spangler:

For some time I have tried to write you to discontinue my father's paper. He read and enjoyed the *Signs of the Times* since back in the 1920's. He spoke of it so often, how he enjoyed it and believed the truths it set forth. He looked forward to receiving the *Signs* each month. He was never a member of any of our visible churches, but I often heard him say that he hoped he belonged to that church which Christ added to daily such as should be saved. He believed in salvation by grace and grace alone.

He enjoyed talking on the scripture more than any other subject, and was a constant reader of the Bible.

He, Rufus E. Doron, was born September 10, 1879, and passed from this life August 30, 1973. He lived to be almost 94 years old. My mother, Nettie Doron, was left to mourn his death, but only for a few months, for God in his infinite wisdom and mercy called her from this life July 19, 1974. She was born May 17, 1882, making her 92 years and 2 months old. In her late years she also was made to believe in a God that has all power both on earth and in heaven: she read her Bible and enjoyed it until she couldn't see.

They passed their 71st anniversary together, living in the same yard in which my father was born. They leave two children to mourn their passing: Trudie Adams and Henry Doron, both of Murray, Ky., Route 1. One son passed away in 1970.

They are asleep in the hands of a merciful God, awaiting the glorious resurrection.

I spent the last seven years in their home, trying to comfort and administer to their needs. But it seemed all the time they were doing more for me that I could do for them until the last two years. They had many friends, and it seemed everybody loved them dearly. I hope I am thankful, in a godly way, that I could be with them, and keep them in their home until they were called from the world.

Elder Paul Payner said the last words of respect over each body, which were very comforting to the family.

Written by their daughter

Trudy Adams

"Go to now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil," (James 4:13-16)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 142 **DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1974** **NO. 12**

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12/74
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

HIS WORDS ARE TRUE

The following was written by Elder Louis Stewart, Winona, Miss. to his sister on the passing of her husband:

You and your husband lived together these many years. Many joys and sorrows you have shared. But God has called him from you, and you feel forsaken and alone. But Jesus knows all about your sorrows, tears, an groans. May you be blessed to look to Him, the poor sinner's friend, who has promised to be with His people from the beginning to the end. He knows about our troubles and trials, and our sorrows too. He will never forsake His people — His words are true. Listen to the word of inspiriation written by Holy Men of old: They are more precious than silver and gold.

Man that is born of woman, his days are but few. He soon passes away like the morning dew. God has given life: He has ordained death, and this applies to all things that has mortal breath. Before the godly man can live, he must die — be reduced to dust and ashes, and silently lie until the Resurrection morning, when the dead shall arise and ascend with Jesus above the upper sky. They shall forever sing the song of Moses and the Lamb: the great eternal God, the great I Am. They shall be forever with Jesus, their Heavenly Friend. And their praise and joy shall have no end. Yes, praise and joy shall fill their place by spiritual Israel, saved by grace.

THE LORD'S PEOPLE SAVED BY GRACE ALONE

209 Taylor Road,
Collinsville, Va. 24078

Dear Elder Wood:

It is with great pleasure I write these few lines, trusting in the Lord to direct my mind and thoughts.

We read in the 127th Psalm, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."

The writings in the *Signs* seem to be getting better. Your Editorial was strengthening, and also Elder Chick's in *Voices of the Past.* He made it very plain that we cannot be alive and dead at the same time, or we cannot be blind and see at the same time. Anyone who believes and preaches that he can of himself do something to save himself, or others, for the kingdom of heaven, is preaching unsound doctrine, therefore sinning against God, and does not believe alone in the atoning blood of Christ.

Christ did not offer himself to the people, but to God for his people; and God accepted his offering, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

The Apostle Paul was a Gospel minister, for he believed in the wills and shalls of God, not in lords many and gods many, for there is but one true and living God. "For though there be many that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be lords

many and gods many, but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." (1 Cor. 8:5, 6)

In 2 Cor. 6:16, 17, 18 we read, "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you. And I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

Paul was not loved in preaching sound doctrine, by saying "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man, For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Galatians 1:11, 12) Paul contended for the faith that was once delivered to the saints.

Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 1:7, 8. 9. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner; but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God: who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." And he wrote in the 4th chapter, 3rd and 4th verses, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears: And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

We hear it regularly that people are getting saved by protracted meetings, because they accepted Christ as their personal Saviour, and yet believe they are saved by their own good works they have done. To me, they are only accepting a false Christ: it is by their fruits ye shall know them.

In Matthew 24:24, we read Christ's own words, "For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Some believe in part works and part grace. We believe it is all by the grace of God, — by His love and mercy we are saved through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, who died for our sins and rose for our justification, and ascended back to the Father, and makes intercession for us. When we are brought to the end of our strength under the law, Jesus is revealed as our Saviour.

Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, for his gifts now, and for the gift of eternal life.

Give my love to Sister Wood.

Yours in union and communion of the Holy Spirit.

Mattie Underwood

A PURE LANGUAGE

Route 4, Box 157
Quitman, Ms. 39355

Dear Brother Spangler,

It has been a great comfort to me to read the many and various articles from the household of faith which seems to give me hope that my Teacher is the same as those elsewhere and of the distant past. It is a confirmation of faith, I suppose, which is extremely edifying.

God's promise to Israel through Zephaniah was "For then I will turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." He manifestly declared them to be "a poor and afflicted people" and declared positively "they SHALL trust in the name of the Lord" (3:9, 12).

A "pure" language most certainly can not be a language conceived in the carnal

mind of man which is "enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, so then they that are in the flesh can not please God (Rom. 8:7, 8). Therefore this language must by necessity be spiritual rather than natural. It is a language of pure grace.

Imagine such language as "accept Christ as your Saviour". As noble as it appears to many, how pure is it? It is based upon a concept of Pelagian religion that says God sent His only begotten Son as a sacrifice offered to sinners for them to accept or reject. Now a sacrifice is an act of supreme worship. The offering of God's own Son then is the greatest act of sacrifice possible. Then can one in a experience of grace actually believe that God bowed His Holy knee before a vile and corrupt creature and made a sacrifice of His Son for their acceptance? What blasphemy is this! Yes, it IS true that "He made His soul an offering for sin" . . . but to whom? By the Eternal Spirit He was offered without spot or blemish UNTO GOD . . . certainly not to man.

I do not merely "play on words". It is through "language" that one communicates ideas, and this communication must be clear if one is to hear something as it is meant. The English language prior to the rise of modern Arminianism was clear in its grammatical usuage of the words, "accept, reject" and "offer and give". To illustrate: If I GAVE you something, it by necessity was RECEIVED; if I OFFERED you something, the option was yours to ACCEPT OR REJECT it. In the Scriptures and in the experience of the children of grace, Christ is never "offered" to the sinner, but rather "given". They never accept Him, but rather receive Him.

He was made an offering for sin, in behalf of those chosen and represented IN Him, unto God. We would then know that God "accepted" Him as such a sacrifice, rather than "received Him" in that relationship. All His people were representatively IN Him when He was sacrificed as an offering, for they were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world that they should be holy and without blame before Him in love (Eph. 1:2-5). So the Scriptures records that "He hath MADE us ACCEPTED in the Beloved." If we were made "accepted in the beloved" not only were we made acceptable, but also the Beloved was "accepted". In relationship of the Sonship of Christ, of course, He was "received". "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit," and thus He was received of the Father.

Since all our "righteousness is as filthy rags" in God's sight, then any creature works can not be seen as being expressed as a "pure language". But the covenant promise was that God would TURN TO THEM A PURE LANGUAGE. God is the one that gives this language.

Can we not hear the cry of an afflicted soul, "Have mercy on me a sinner"? Is "mercy" not a pure langauge of grace? Since it is "godly sorrow that worketh repentance" and this repentance is "granted unto the Gentiles" by God's own work in the soul by the Holy Spirit, it is no more of man, nor of man's work. He has "wrought all our works in us" and therefore mercy is a pure language, and that of God's sovereign grace. He said: "I will have MERCY upon whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion upon whom I will have compassion." So the poor and afflicted can find a source of hope springing up within their breast when any token of mercy is granted to them.

Many times a child of grace will ponder how unsearchable is the riches of His grace bestowed upon such worms of the earth. I marvel often when I see an act of His mercy sanctified to my understanding which benefits me and those who have no hope together. Ten lepers were healed, one had this mercy tendered to his heart by grace so as to praise the Saviour. Long seasons of drought in nature hurt both the just and the unjust alike. Then, because of

His mercy and sovereign will, He sent rain upon the earth. The elect says: "Thank you, Lord," while the unjust never consider that God's mercy has benefited them in the least. So then, God's infinite mercy, is a pure language when spoken of by the faithful in Christ Jesus.

Grace itself is another such word. Once I spoke of grace, and exhorted sinners to come to Christ and get some! I hope my God has mercifully taught me that His grace was amazing. But even then, my friends sang the song of Amazing Grace with gusto. There seemed to be little difference in our understanding. But at last, God taught me His grace was SOVEREIGN, and right there the line of understanding between me and others was drawn.

As Jonathan Edwards in his Narrative of Supporting Conversion recorded in our school's American Literature book said: "Sovereignty is what I love to ascribe to my God, but formerly it was not so." Few, if any, students know what he meant. Teachers can't explain the expression and go on without comment, but ah, how my soul witnesses with that sweet expression of my own heart's experience!

Wisdom is another such word in the language of grace. Infinite wisdom! No mistakes, no ignorance, no emergency kit to patch up an unexpected fall of man. Indeed, my heart marvels at God's expression to Adam, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." I once said that only Adam had a free-will. I think I now know better than that. God did not say: "IF thou eatest", but "IN THE DAY THOU EATEST"! What a statement! It implies clearly that "Adam, you are going to eat, and you are going to die" and the eternal decree of God was such that Adam's course was set even before he was ever formed by his Maker for Christ is the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world". What folly to speak of "ifs" in regard to the decrees of God. Christ is "made unto us WISDOM, and righteousness, and sanctification" and therefore He is Wisdom, and perfect as the Eternal Word of God, and hence the purest of languages to a child of hope.

Our people are often despised as ignorant people because of their love for this language. As an education specialist in the wisdom of this world . . . which is foolishness . . . I can declare boldly by experience that I never discovered one single spiritual truth through my many years of public education. Truth, in this pure language is ONLY by revelation. I hope that it has been "turned to me" by God's grace, and hope it to be of edification to the children of God who find themselves to be an "afflicted and poor people."

In hope,
Stanley C. Phillips

REMINISCENSES OF MARY PARKER

(Continued)

If one would see suffering and distress in every form, until it would almost appear that the world was but a mass of suffering humanity, one must go to a place like this. All night long and all through the day from the various wards would issue the moans and cries of the sick and suffering. The Sisters of Charity, notwithstanding the basis of their life-work is to enlarge the Catholic Church, are doing a grand work for suffering humanity. They pick up friendless children, clothe, feed and educate them. They will take men and women from the vilest habits out of the ditches, cleanse their vile bodies, clothe, feed and cure them. The most beautiful and fairest woman I ever saw was the sweet, noble, youthful soul who had charge of the ward I was in, assisted by an older lady called Sister Polly. I learned that she was a titled lady belonging to a noble, aristocratic Catholic family in the old country, who, until she "took the veil," had never made her toilet without the assistance of a maid. She said her father kept seventy-five servants, and all her vast income

she now expends on the charitable institutions of the Catholic Church. The beautiful nun of whom I spoke, was called "Sister Hildagard." Of her former history I learned nothing, but the beauty and purity of her face, the sweetness of her lovely life, which hung about her as the perfume of some rare flower, I can never forget. All day long and until nine o'clock at night these beautiful, refined ladies went up and down the long corridors, in and out of the wards, waiting on the sick, and with their own pretty hands mopping the floors and performing the most menial services for the sick. My heart went out to the beautiful Hildegard, whose angelic face seemed like sunshine in the wards; and though she treated me with much tenderness, always calling me "dear Mary," yet if through my impulsive love I would throw my arms about her and try to caress her, she would gently shake her head, and say "I love you, dear Mary, but I dare not kiss you." We had three regular meals a day, with a delicate lunch at 10 A.M. and 3 P. M., thus taking nourishment five times each day. Before each meal and at lunch-time "Sister Hildegard" would pray aloud in the corridor, repeating always what is called the Lord's prayer, in which all Catholic patients would join, rapidly counting their beads; then they would address a fervent petition to the Holy Virgin, asking of her the pardon of their sins.

One Sunday the Catholic patients said to me I ought to go to the chapel that afternoon, as the infant Jesus would be seen in the manger for the last time. I asked Sister Polly if I might go, when she looked at me surprisedly and said, "Will you really go?" When I assured her it was my wish to do so, she told me she would come for me when the bell rang. When first I entered the hospital, I noticed the outer doors were all barred after us; my trunk was taken from me and also my purse. The sisters wore the long black garments of cloth with a veil of the same, reaching to the waist and confined about the temples, under which was a band of snow-white linen. The patients all wore loose, ill-fitting garments with great loose slippers and coarse hose, while each one wore upon the head the inevitable little white cap. All my pride stood in arms against being rigged out myself in such horrid style, and strongly did I beg to be saved the horror at least of donning the funny-looking cap. Now I felt alternately amused and horrified at the thought of having my friends visit me here, if I must be dressed up in a style like that. When the chapel-bell rang I heard the patter of Sister Polly's tiny feet; and when I asked her if I could not get my shawl and bonnet, she hastily threw a red-striped patient's shawl about me and bade me follow her. Through the long corridor she led the way, then down a grand hall-way into the chapel. The altar was hung with rich tapestry, and a great many wax-tapers were burning, bringing into bold relief the highly wrought lace designs. At one end of the altar was a mock-manger, with a wreath of jets burning in a half-circle under which lay a large doll, which they called the child Jesus. My feelings cannot be told! Soon the grand organ began to chant; when in came the priest dressed in a long, white, elaborately embroidered robe, while four prettily dressed little boys, followed closely, jingling tiny silver bells. I asked Sister Hildegard if she would not have my Bible brought to me from my trunk. She said she would speak to the Sister Superior. Days passed by and I did not see my beloved Bible; then I asked the Sister if I could not have my own Bible would she please loan me a Catholic Bible. She seemed embarrased, and made some incoherent reply. No mirrors were allowed to come into the wards. For this I felt truly thankful; for if at any time the Sisters would command me to put on the funny, ridiculous gear worn by the established patients, I never would have had the courage to look at the reflection of the comic figure I was sure to cut.

After the physicians had prescribed

for me, and the Sisters told them I did not retain anything I swallowed, they left off prescribing altogether; and when, after a time, I spoke to President Laving, he told me I was free to do as I liked, or return to my friends if I preferred, as I would do better without treatment. The Sisters, especially Sister Hildegard and the ladies in my ward, begged me to remain; but I did not think the blessing of God would rest upon me where I could not read His word. About the middle of January I prepared to leave the prison-like walls of St. Francis. Sister Hildegard said she would order a cab for me, but I waited until the middle of the afternoon before the cab drew up to the gate. The patients all crowded around me, many of them shedding tears and pressing me with little tokens of remembrance. Sister Hildegard took my arm and hand in hand we went down the walk to the curb-stone where the cab stood waiting. Tears filled her clear, lovely eyes and she pressed me to her in a long embrace, though, as before, she refused to allow any further demonstrations.

It was a long, cold drive to the depot; and when I found myself alone amid a vast throng of strangers, alone in that splendid capital city, the sun was fast sinking in the western horizon, and I knew not what to do or whither to turn. Learning that I could not reach New Holland before noon the next day, and finding a train would soon be due that would take me to Logan without change by eight that night, I resolved on the latter course. Not very many persons entered the coach I took, and nearly all of those left it when it reached the City of Lancaster. Drawing my wraps and thick veil about me I gave myself up to reflection. How strange seemed the scenes through which I had passed. I always felt that God had a purpose in all His dealings with His children; was I indeed His child? And since He says in His word, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," why, and for what purpose had He led me to St. Francis, among a people of a different religion, and mostly of different nationality? His blessing to heal my disease had not followed me, for I was coming away as ill as when I went, and with a heart sick with disappointment. Just as I was leaving the hospital, a sweet-faced aged Catholic lady called to me, and as she came up gave me an affectionate farewell, and said: "You are so genteel, and we all love you and have been praying for your conversion ever since you came." Her words impressed me with a feeling that I had been surrounded with great danger, and that the gracious hand of my heavenly Father had delivered me through His dear infinite love, as He did Daniel when in the lion's den, or as He did the three Hebrew children. Those people were exceedingly kind to me; indeed more so than to the other patients; and possessed as I am naturally with a very strong sense of gratitude, I almost shudder to think into what deep wrong I might unconsciously have been led, had not the unseen hand of my dear Saviour delivered and saved me. Surely I can say:

> "He near my soul has always stood,
> His loving kindness, oh! how good."

Oh, the matchless goodness of his wondrous, encircling love! "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem," so has His dear love and protecting care seemed to follow me whithersoever I have gone; and though alone in the world, no father, no mother, the Lord has taken me up, and He is our God forever; He will be our guide even unto death. Oh! that I may praise him now and forever more!

It was long after night-fall when I left the railway coach at the depot in Logan, and among the jostling, hurrying crowd I saw no familiar face, heard no welcoming voice. Taking a cab I was not long in being driven through the lighted streets to my brother's residence. My brother was absent, but his wife and their three little children gave me a warm reception, which greatly sooth-

ed my aching heart. The next morning as I went to the window and looked out over the great snow-capped hills as they sloped back from the river banks, their towering heights glistening amid the golden glory of the rising sun, the dear familiar scenes brought up many memories of the past, awoke many tender emotions within me; and over my tempest-tossed soul, I trust, there fell something of that restful peace, which we are told "passeth all understanding." The steady flow and the roar and music of the ceaseless river, as it wound its graceful curves in and out among the hills, reminded me of that "River, the streams whereof shall make glad the City of our God." And the thought came to me, that away across the ebb and flow of the tide of that wondrous river of Eternal life, is the sweet Home of the Soul; and upon that shining strand, clothed in white are, I believe and trust, the redeemed and glorified spirits of my dear parents with all the blood-washed throng walking forever with Jesus, the great Saviour and Redeemer of our souls. As I stood at the window looking out upon the familiar scenes, my thoughts went out across the bridge of this natural river, over the snow-covered hills, where only a little way was the dear home of my childhood. But homeless though I was, to its sheltering wing I could no longer turn; for its dear hearth-stone was deserted and silent, its once happy household broken; no dear father's arms were there, held out to receive me; no dear mother's welcoming smile and voice to bid me come; no brother's hurrying feet to meet me; all those joys belong to the "long ago;" strangers now own the once sacred spot, strange faces, strange voices, strange footsteps alone resound within those walls.

While making my toilet that morning, I looked in a mirror for the first time since I left New Holland for St. Francis' Hospital. I believe I had half expected to see perched upon my head the inevitable prim little invalid's cap, and I smiled as I beheld the same pale face with absolutely no traces of wrinkled age, for I felt as if years had elapsed since I entered those prison-like walls; and I really felt a degree of satisfaction when I found the brown hair was still unmixed with grey. How dear, pious little Sister Polly would shake her head and stamp her pretty little feet were she to see me thus giving away to the weakness of such sinful vanity. But Sister Hildegard, dear beautiful maiden; I guess she would forgive, for I doubt very much if she could resist the temptation of looking into a mirror herself, were it placed before her.

I had been in Logan but a few days, when my brother, who had been absent some time, returned. He said he thought I would be better satisfied to remain in Logan, at least for some length of time, than to return to New Holland. A few days afterward he told me that Mr. Howson, Clerk of the Common Pleas Court, was in need of some one to copy manuscripts for him, and that he offered me the place did I choose to accept it. As he offered to send all the work to my room, thus saving me from the disagreeable publicity of going to an office, I gladly accepted. My brother and his wife offered me a pleasant room on the second floor of their house, and I was to assist about the household duties between writing hours. I got along nicely with my work, but soon had a severe hemmorage which prostrated me for two weeks; but rallying from this I again resumed my duties, and before I was again and finally stricken down, the snow had disappeared from off the hills, and from my window I could see their delicate green covering over which the sun cast its warmth and glow; the spring birds were sweetly singing, and the dear little children coming in from their refreshing rambles, would bring me great, fragrant clusters of sweet early blossoms. The goodness and tender mercy of God, seemed to be wafted on the mild spring breezes, to show itself in each fragrant bloom and bursting bud, in the glad

song of the birds, and all his beautiful handiwork seemed to show forth his praise; and at times there would come over my bereaved suffering soul a great wave of thankfulness and peace, and I would feel some respite from my great sorrow, on account of the loss of parents and home. Yet disease still gnawed away at my youthful vitality, and like some dangerous, venemous reptile, lay concealed in my pathway only awaiting a favorable time to wind its sickening coils about me, thus securing me as a constant victim. One morning after a night of great suffering with only a few moments of troubled sleep, when I attempted to stand on my feet, I was seized with the most excruciating pain. Again and again, after lying awhile, I attempted to rise but could not, and before mid-day my bad vomiting came on, and I begged my sister-in-law to call our old family physician. I had had a number of such attacks before, but my dear father had until during the last three, always been with me, and stayed by me. Oh, how I now missed him; how much I felt the need of his presence. For nearly four months during that ecxeedingly hot season was I confined to that room, and nearly all of the time to my couch. How often, when lying down in that pretty but very warm room, would I think for a time that I heard the familiar and beloved footstep of dear father on the walk below, and I would feel my being all aglow with gladness, ere would come to me the sad realization that he was gone and I would no more hear the sound of his coming feet, no more listen to his familiar voice.

The wife of the Clerk of the Court became a devoted friend to me as I lay there, as did also Sister Martha Vanatta, who lived near, and a number of the ladies. I was fortunate to secure the services of a dear mother in Israel as nurse, and could I still have her motherly love and care, it would be the dearest earthly boon I could possess. A lovely lady of wealth and high social standing, who was an aunt to my brother's wife, was also exceedingly kind to me, and often would the soothing, cooling touch of her soft, white hand quiet me when all else would fail. As the pleasant faces of those dear friends are brought before me as I write, with what tender yearnings do my affections again go out to them, and to feel once more the pressure of their hand, to hear the sound of their voices, would be an inexpressible joy to me. My people there are Presbyterians; and their minister, whom they introduced as Mr. Hart, came frequently to see me, and his kind, fatherly manner, his conversation, his prayers, were really a comfort to me; and never, while time and memory last, will I forget this kind gentleman's attentions to me. When at times I would murmur some word of thanks, he would say, "No, no, I loved your father; besides, I too am a father; and maybe my daughters will one day be sick and orphaned, then the Lord will raise some one up to comfort them." The Methodist minister at New Holland, who lived next door to my brother there, together with his wife, had also been very kind after my father's death; and while I lay sick at Logan, the wife paid me a visit which was very cheering, and thus while I was pressed sorely with affliction and sorrow, yet did the blessed Lord, on the other hand, strew my pathway on every side with choice blessings, and underneath it all were his dear, everlasting arms, and over all was the shadow of his sheltering wing, and the beautiful sunshine of his undying, unchangeable love. Oh, that I may praise him now and forevermore, for his goodness and tender care.

(Continued next month)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP DISTRIBUTE THE SIGNS
(To October 1, 1974)

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PLEASE NOTE

The Whitfield Old School Baptist Church at Kings Mills, Maine, has been given a one room school house by a friend who purchased it, which is to be used as a meeting house. However the building is in need of considerable repairs and cannot be used until these repairs are made. At present their meetings are held in the homes.

The membership, as well as the congregation, is small, and they will need assistance in buying materials, etc. The labor will be supplied locally by those interested. Several of the brethren have visited them two or three times this year, and report good meetings.

While the *Signs* does not make it a practice of mentioning these things, there are good signs of reviving of this church, and we feel that this notice would not be out of place.

Should any of the brethren and friends feel to contribute to this cause, they may send it to Mrs. Ruth Clark, Academy Hill, New Castle, Maine. 04553

J. D. W.

Danville, Va. December, 1974

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R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

COMPLETION OF ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-TWO YEARS OF PUBLICATION

As we come to the end of another volume of the *Signs of the Times*, and the end of the year 1974, we reflect on the grace of God that has sustained both the *Signs* and all of us from day to day. We trust that we are all blessed as was Samuel, to realize that it is the Lord who has helped us: he proclaimed, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

Those who have been taught of the Lord to know his sovereignty and his

purpose in all things, cannot feel otherwise than that the Lord has sustained their lives all their days; and also the publication of the *Signs of the Times* during these many years. So often we read and remember the writing of Solomon in Ecclesiastes, third chapter. The first two verses read, "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted." It is well to read the whole chapter time and again, and to ponder over the eleventh verse, "He hath made everything beautiful in his time; also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end."

We believe the *Signs* has been sustained of the Lord, because He has a people whom he would nourish and comfort in this manner, giving them a means of communication with each other for their mutual edification; and that the truth be published abroad, and errors and false doctrine exposed. For our part, we are glad we love the things the *Signs* boldly stands for, and it is a delight, when we are enabled, to send out such things to our brethren. We do not expect our publication to be appealing to those who have not been quickened and brought to the knowledge of the truth. But we are glad, "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and he alone does the quickening which brings them out of vain traditions into the love of the truth.

The name Old School Baptists was applied to those who stood firm upon Bible doctrine, and the *Signs of the Times* had its beginning in 1832, when there was of necessity a division among the Baptists, resulting in publication of the principles which the church had always maintained, until there were those who found that the "bed was too short to stretch upon, and the covering narrower than they could wrap themselves in," and therefore their doctrine was made to conform to their notions. The doctrinal sentiments of the *Signs* is identical with Old School Baptist doctrine, and Old School Baptist doctrine is Bible doctrine.

These are some of our thoughts as the 142nd volume comes to a close. And we would have all to know that the Editors and all concerned with the publication of the *Signs,* stand firmly on the original principles on which the paper was founded, and endeavor to publish only that which is God honoring — contending for the faith once delivered to the saints: knowing that these things are comforting and edifying to the redeemed family of God.

We humbly acknowledge our entire dependence upon God; and pray according to His will, that we may be sustained in the work, and that the *Signs* may continue in the hands of those who shall follow us, in the same blessed truth.

Everyone is concerned because of the many disturbances that are abroad in the world, in low and in high places, and the man of sin is being revealed, and Satan is having his day; but the God of heaven and earth is not disturbed, for He has everything under control, and everything is working together to accomplish His eternal purpose. This assurance that the children of God have, causes them to "stand still" even in the midst of their troubles, and see the salvation of the Lord: Their God has promised never to leave or forsake them. When the Apostle wrote, "If in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable," is was of great comfort to him and the brethren. So are all the promises of the Lord of great comfort to all His people.

The brethren and friends from many parts of the country have supported the *Signs* by their subscription, etc; and their continued support is necessary. New subscribers are necessary to fill the ranks of those who have finished their course; and we appreciate the fact that many of our brethren in the ministry and others, make mention of the *Signs* to their congregations, and often send new and re-newal subscrip-

tions; which we would like others to do also. These things, together with the writings of the brethren and friends, help to make our labors easier. We especially desire that their writings be submitted for publication, and we will publish all that are in line with gospel truth.

May our brethren be given the spirit of prayer for each other, and thanksgiving for the mercies and longsuffering of our God which He has ever had for his people.

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; PRAY YE THEREFORE THE LORD OF THE HARVEST, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest." (Matt. 9, vs 37-38)

Last evening the words came into my mind "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest". This scripture was in my mind this morning and I spoke from it, feeling liberty and joy. Truly I felt the scripture was fulfilled in Deut. 25, vs 4, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn" — Truly God doth care for his oxen (God's humble servants) as he gives them joy in His word as they labour in His ministry. After coming home from service and feeling the Lord's people were comforted and His name exalted the scripture has still been in my mind with much sweetness and I hope it is of the Lord that I am of the mind to set down on paper the thoughts that I have had, dear reader.

During the week my mind was heavy and I now believe the Lord was preparing the ground of my heart for such a scripture. We have buried several of our dearest ones, others are infirm and we are indeed concerned. But as in Isaiah 17, vs 6-8 we are given to realize that a remnant shall be left compared to gleaning grapes, and a few berries on an olive tree who shall look to the Lord and not to idols.

"Yet gleaning grapes shall be left in it, as the shaking of an olive tree, two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four or five in the outmost fruitful branches thereof saith the Lord God of Israel. At that day shall a man look to his Maker and his eyes shall have respect to the Holy One of Israel. And he shall not look to the altars, the work of his hands, neither shall respect that which his fingers have made, either the groves or the images." So we press on, finding the labour a labour of love, thanks be unto God for it.

The scripture in the heading as found in Matt. 9, vs 37-38 was spoken by the "Lord of the harvest" when he saw the multitudes and he was moved with compassion on them because they fainted and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd. Note he said the above unto his disciples. He spoke to them about the lost sheep of Israel, the grapes, the few berries in the uppermost bough and in the outmost fruitful branches. He told them to pray to the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth labourers into the harvest. This certainly shows that the Lord is concerned with the welfare of his chosen people. This prayer was answered in part in the ministry that was soon to be obvious as there were added unto the church daily such as should be saved.

As was mentioned eariler it was particularly the portion "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest" that arrested my attention and I will therefore confine my remarks to my meditations on that portion.

To-morrow "Thanksgiving Day", the second Monday in October is observed as a national holiday in Canada. I believe in the United States, Congress in 1941 set Thanksgiving Day as the fourth Thursday in November. According to the New Book of Knowledge the first Thanksgiving festival was held at Plymouth, Massachusetts, in October 1621. The bitter winter of 1620 was over and

hunger and sickness had carried away half of the band of about 100 settlers. Seeds were planted in the spring and a bountiful harvest was brought into the barns in the fall. Because of the people's good fortune in having a good harvest and health and peace with the Indians, the Pilgrims decreed a holiday on which all might "after a special manner, rejoice together".

In 1789 George Washington proclaimed November 26 a day of Thanksgiving, "to be devoted by the people of these states to the service of that great and glorious Being who is the beneficient author of all that was, that is or that will be, that we may then all unite in rendering unto him our sincere and humble thanks for his kind care and protection of the people of this country". How far people have strayed from the above intent! Tonight I heard over the radio that a survey was taken recently in the country from whence the Pilgrims came and only twenty-nine percent of the people surveyed indeed believed there was a God at all. Apparently in 1963 thirty-eight percent believed there was a God, in a similar survey. Perhaps I have spent too much time mentioning the above but I did it purposely that our minds might be impressed with the solemnity of the nearness of the second coming of Christ "the Lord of the harvest". Today there is a falling away, a form of Godliness but a denying of the power thereof, men are lovers of pleasures and of themselves more than lovers of God.

In Gen. 8, vs 22, God promised "While the earth remaineth, *seedtime and harvest,* and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease". God also said that for a token of the covenant that he made for perpetual generations he would set his bow (rainbow) in the cloud and that it should be for a token of the covenant between him and the earth. We ought therefore to be mindful of the wonderful blessings that we enjoy at the hand of Providence. Is it not wonderful to feel that "His left hand is under our head" and that he is blessing us with bountiful provisions on every hand in the lands in which we are privileged to live and raise our families? Surely even in this sense we ought to pray unto "the Lord of the harvest" and give thanks unto "the Lord of the harvest" daily.

We do however, know that we shall not always continue here as we spend our lives as a tale that is told, as a vapour that shall vanish away and the place that knows us will know us no more. We do also know that in 2 Peter 3, vs 10-11 it reads "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness." We do believe these things by faith, which is the gift of God. Also by faith we do look according to His promise for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness and are given to hope to receive the end of that faith even the salvation of our souls.

Having then been quickened by His holy spirit, you who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God who is rich in mercy, for his *great love* wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindnes toward us through Christ

Jesus." How beautifully Paul expresses our experience in Eph. 2 as is outlined above.

Having a hope, then, that we have been called out of nature's darkness into His most marvellous light, we hope that His right hand (at which there are pleasures for evermore) doth embrace us and that it is the work of God that we believe on Him whom He hath sent. "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest" takes on a wonderful meaning. In Ps. 116, vs 12-13 it reads "What shall I render unto the Lord, for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord." David felt he loved the Lord because the Lord heard his voice and his supplications. He felt the Lord condescended to incline His ear unto him as he prayed "O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul". He saw that the Lord was merciful, that he himself was as a "brand plucked from the fire" and he prayed the prayer of the publican "Lord be merciful to me a sinner". He saw that the Lord alone was righteous and that our sins are imputed unto Him and His righteousness is imputed unto us. It is said of Abraham in Gen. 15, vs 6 "And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness". David saw that the Lord was gracious, as in Eph. 2, vs 8-10 "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." David was so overcome in his feelings that the "Lord of the harvest" was the Word that was made flesh, that He was the one that was a lamb slain from the foundation of the world for him, that the overwhelming desire was to render something unto the Lord for all His benefits toward him. Firstly, David said "I will take the cup of salvation" (or the cup of thanksgiving). As was the custom at a feast the master of the feast took the cup after the feast and gave thanks. I believe sometimes we feel to give thanks unto "the Lord of the harvest" as our cup overflows feeling that goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our life and we shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever. The Lord is our light and our salvation whom shall we fear the Lord is the strength of our life; of whom shall we be afraid? I believe in these moments of thanksgiving we have fortastes of our heavenly home where we shall sing the song of the redeemed and praise Him for eternity. Secondly, David said "I will call upon the name of the Lord" or pray unto the Lord of the harvest. I believe we cannot truly pray unless He gives us "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest". "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord: but the prayer of the upright is his delight" as in Proverbs 15, vs 8.

Who is the Lord of the harvest and what is the harvest? There are many scriptures that will clarify the meaning but only a few will be cited.

In Rev. 14, vs 14-20 we are given to see the answers to the above questions. Please read these verses carefully. John looked and beheld a white cloud and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man having on his head a golden crown and in his hand a sharp sickle. And he that sat on the cloud thrust his sickle *on* the earth and the earth was reaped. Here we see the Lord Jesus Christ "the Lord of the harvest" as described in Rev. 1, vs 13 "one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot and girt about the paps with a golden girdle." Also ye find Him described in Daniel 7, vs 13-14 "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

In Acts 1, vs 11 we read that the two men in white apparel said "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven". In Heb. 9, vs 28 it reads "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation". In the parable of the wheat and the tares Jesus said "And in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn." Also in the explanation of the parable in Matt. 13 Jesus explains that the harvest is the end of the world, the reapers are the angels, the tares are the children of the wicked one, the field is the world and the good seed are the children of the kingdom and He that sowed the good seed is the Son of man. In Matt. 24, vs 30-31 it reads "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory and he shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet and they shall gather his elect from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other". Further in Matt. 25, vs 31-33 it reads "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand but the goats on the left". Further in Matt. 24, vs 40-42, 44 "Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken and the other left. Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." In I Thess. 4, vs 16-17 it reads "For the Lord *himself* shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." In I Cor. 15, vs 51-53 it reads "Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed; For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality". As we have born the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. As David said in Ps. 17, vs 15 "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness". As outlined above we see Rev. 14, vs 16 fulfilled "And he that sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle *on* the earth; and the earth was reaped". In Rev. 20, vs 5-6 we read "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

In Rev. 14, vs 17-19 we read of the lot of the wicked, "Another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar which had power over fire: and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, "Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle *into* the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God." In Rev. 19 we find a description of

the Lord Jesus Christ as he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood and his name is called "the word of God" and out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords". In Rev. 20 we find that the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works and death and hell were cast into the lake of fire (this is the second death — an eternal death) and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. In John 5, vs 25 and 28-29 we read "Verily verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming and now is, when the dead (in trespasses and in sins) shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation". We find that "the Lord of the harvest" knows his own and takes them as wheat into his barn. He also knows all of the wicked, which are as tares and they are gathered together in bundles and suffer eternally.

Now I trust we see who "the Lord of the harvest' is and what the harvest means. The sickle is the word of God which not only cuts down but gathers together. The Lord's people are cut down (judged here) and are gathered together, sometimes in twos and threes, sometimes in greater numbers with those of like precious faith and will all be gathered together for eternity when He comes again and says "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world". They shall dwell in His Father's house where there are many mansions. The sickle again is the word of God which gathers together in bundles the tares ready for the burning, as it reads in Matt. 25, vs 41 "Depart from me, ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels".

Pray ye, therefore the Lord of the harvest! As in II Thess. 3 "Finally, brethren pray for us that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith. But the Lord is faithful who shall establish you, and keep you from evil. And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, and that ye both do and will do the things which we command you. And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ". Those that give thanks unto the Lord of the harvest for sweet evidences of his mercy, his grace and many benefits and do call upon Him as long as they live will praise the Lord of the harvest in the house of God not made with hands eternal in the heavens.

Most of us are familiar with John Newton's "Amazing Grace" but not many are familiar with several verses of the hymn which are not regularly sung. In them we find a sweet experience of grace, a sweet evidence, if we can truly sing them from the heart that "the Lord of the harvest" will one day come and take us home to be with Him.

"In evil long I took delight,
Unawed by shame or fear;
Till a new object met my sight,
And stopped my wild career.

I saw one hanging on a tree,
In agonies and blood;
Who fixed his languid eyes on me
As near His cross I stood.

Sure, never till my latest breath,
Can I forget that look;
It seemed to charge me with His death
Though not a word He spoke.

My conscience felt and owned the guilt,
And plunged me in despair;
I saw my sins His blood had shed,
And helped to nail Him there.

Alas, I knew not what I did
But all my tears were vain;

Where could my trembling soul be hid,
For I the Lord had slain!

A second look He gave that said,
I freely all forgive!
This blood is for thy ransom paid,
I died that thou mayest live."

— Newton

Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest!

(Elder) D. Alex McColl

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

PSALM 23

Brother William W. Hutson, of Switzerland Co., Ind., writes us, saying, "Brother Beebe — Please preach a short sermon to us on the twenty-third Psalm."

The theme of the sweet singer in Israel, as expressed in this most precious psalm, is full of vital interest and substantial comfort to all the children of the most high God, especially when by the same Spirit that made his tongue the pen of a ready writer, they can rise from their groveling in the dust, and reach the exalted notes of the heavenly song, and with transporting joy sing with the spirit and understanding, making melody in their heart unto the Lord.

But we fear that we shall fail especially in a *short* sermon, to express what little we know of the spirit and consolation of the subject. This psalm is so beautifully descriptive of the experience of the saints when exalted in the spirit of their mind, that the most we can say with the hope of profiting our readers, is simply to call their attention to it.

"The Lord is my Shepherd." The office and work of a shepherd is to take the care and oversight of a flock of sheep or other animals committed to their trust, to feed, protect, and look to their welfare; and the term is used figuratively both in the Old and New Testaments. And there are many kinds of shepherds spoken of as descriptive of good and bad shepherds, as applied to religious characters assuming to have the care of the people of God. Our Savior speaks of some who hold the position only as hirelings, who care not for the sheep and serve only for pay; these are unreliable for protecting the sheep, for when they see the wolf coming they flee, and allow the wolf to catch and scatter the sheep. The prophet Isaiah describes some as blind watchmen who are ignorant, and calls them dumb dogs that cannot bark, to sound an alarm when danger approaches, — sleepy dogs, lying down, loving slumber, and greedy dogs which can never have enough; and he says of them, They are shepherds that cannot understand. But there is one trait in which this kind all agree. "They all look to their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter." And indulging in their drunken revelry, they are always predicting better times in the not far off future. "Tomorrow, say they, shall be as this day, and much more abundant." They are always anticipating a millennium near at hand. — Read Isa. 56:9-12. Indeed we read of various kinds of shepherds; some howling, some idle, and some who instead of feeding the flock, feed themselves on the fatlings, and leave the poor of the flock to perish; and of some who pollute the water of which the sheep are to drink, with their feet, making it unwholesome and sickening. All these peculiar traits of character may be found even at this day among those who profess to take the oversight of the flock of Christ; but we do not propose to make the application at this time.

We know that much of the comfort, security and welfare of a flock of sheep depend on the faithful care and providence of a shepherd. God's people are called sheep, and he has provided undershepherds, whom the Holy Ghost has made overseers, to feed the flock of God which he has purchased with his own blood. These are under a solemn charge to feed the lambs and feed the sheep,

and to take the oversight of them, not for filthy lucre, or selfish motives, but of a ready mind. But even those whom the Holy Ghost has made overseers do not always secure the prosperity, comfort and safety of the flock. The apostle Paul knew that, after his departing, grievious wolves would enter in among the Lord's shepherds, not sparing the flock; and even of their own selves (the Lord's shepherds) men should arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. — Acts 20:28-30. The most careful, vigilant and faithful shepherds feel in their hearts to say, Who is sufficient for these things? They desire earnestly to feed the hungry, bleating flock, even when their own souls are empty, barren and cold; but all their supplies must come from above. They feel themselves less than the least of all saints, and servants of Christ, and for his sake, servants of the church.

From all these considerations we see how insecure the sheep and lambs of Christ would be if they had no better protection than the undershepherds. Highly as they are commanded to esteem them for their work's sake, they must look beyond the watchmen to find him whom their soul loveth. But when we can say with the psalmist, "The Lord is my Shepherd," we may safely with him add, "I shall not want." The Man who is the FELLOW of the Lord of hosts is God's Shepherd, against whom the sword awoke, and who was smitten for the redemption of his sheep. He is the Shepherd of Israel, who led Jacob as a flock, who dwells between the cherubim, whose strength is displayed in our salvation. — Psalm 80:1, 2. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye are healed. For ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." — 1 Peter 2:24, 25. This Shepherd and Bishop says, "I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." And again, "I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine." — John 10:11, 14. This Shepherd, our text declares, is the LORD, The Jehovah, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. He possesses all the attributes and perfections of the eternal Godhead, and with all the power of heaven and earth in his hands, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him.

Some of the essential qualifications of a good shepherd are stated in John 10. He is interested in the flock of his charge. His own the sheep are; and his interest in them is so great that he laid down his life for them. It is highly important that a shepherd should know his own sheep, else some might stray away and get lost, and others not his own might be gathered by mistake in their stead. Jesus not only knows them which have already heard his voice and followed him, and are become familiar with his voice, but he also knows equally well those other sheep which also he must bring to his fold. It is important also that a good shepherd should know the wants and necessities of his sheep. Jesus is easily touched with the feeling of the infirmities of his people, and knows how to succor them when they are tempted. A shepherd to be perfectly reliable needs to have ample supplies of pasturage and provender, and a suitable place of comfort and security to fold them in winter, and shelter them from the storm. And also to have power to protect them from wolves, bears and lions, and from all their deadly enemies. All this our Shepherd has, and he says, "I give to them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." — John 10:27, 28.

Having dwelt thus far upon the office and work of a shepherd, and the unreliability of all other shepherds, compared with Jesus, the good Shepherd, we will let the sweet singer of Israel tell, in the subsequent verses of the psalm, how far the Lord, as our Shepherd, has removed his sheep from any

ability to suffer from want.

"He Maketh me to lie down in green pastures." We can imagine nothing better suited to the taste, or better adapted to the health and comfort of sheep, than luxuriant pasturage, fresh, and green. Sometimes sheep have to forage in sterile fields, where they must labor hard to collect a bare subsistence, and perhaps expose themselves to savage beasts of prey in search of food. But when in that condition they become scattered, as sheep without a good shepherd. But the gospel fields into which the saints are brought are verdant, and rich with all that is pleasing to their taste, and suited to their healthful growth. Here it is worthy of remark, our Lord is not like "the howling shepherds," who say to their flocks, "Only be faithful, and you shall have all the religion you live for: work hard, and eat what you have earned." But, "He maketh me to lie down;" that is, to rest, being abundantly supplied. We never knew a flock of sheep to lie down in a green pasture while suffering with hunger. It is natural to sheep when in a rich pasture to eat all they desire first, and then lie down and chew the cud. And it is in this way our Shepherd maketh his sheep to lie down; he fills their souls with the rich provisions of the gospel to overflowing, and then they lie down, or securely rest, in the blessed goodness and grace of the chief Shepherd and Bishop of their souls.

But sheep, even in a rich and verdant pasture, require drink as well as food. This, with every other necessity of the sheep, is anticipateed by the good Shep herd. "He leadeth me beside the still waters." He does not drive them, even when they are thirsty; for, "He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice." — John 10:2, 3. He leads none but *his own* sheep; nor does he ever require them to go anywhere that he has not himself been. "For the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water." — Rev. 7:17. However poor and perishing they may be, even when their tongue cleaveth to the roof of their mouth with thirst, so that they cannot articulate their prayer with their voice, he says, "I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." — Isa. 41:17, 18. "There (in Jerusalem) the glorious Lord shall be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams," &c. — Isa. 33:21. This water is clear as crystal, and it proceedeth out of the throne of God and the Lamb; it is the pure water of life. — Rev. 22:1. None but the sheep of Christ ever thirsted for it; and therefore, every one that thirsteth are called by name, and led into it. The waters to which the sheep of the pasture of Christ are led, are not turbulent and muddy, but placid and tranquil and still.

"He restoreth my soul." The psalmist, like all the children of God, was conscious of soul-wanderings, like silly sheep. "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." — Isa. 53:6. "For ye are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." — 1 Peter 2:25. Christ has restored, redeemed, brought back and reclaimed his people, by bearing their sins in his own body on the tree. Yet after our redemption and heavenly calling, how prone we have found ourselves to wander from the footsteps of the flock. How often has our good Shepherd left the ninety-nine in the fold and looked us up, and brought us back to the fold; thus in an experimental sense he hath restored our soul. By wandering we had lost our way, and never could have returned had he not himself searched and sought out those who had strayed in the dark and cloudy day. Truly he has not only restored, but he restoreth — the restora-

tion is constantly going on. Blessed Shepherd, so careful of his flock.

"He leadeth me in paths of righteousness." The way of unrighteousness is broad, and the gate is wide that leadeth to destruction; but the way of life is called a path, because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. — Matt. 7:13, 14. It is a path that no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen; the lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it. — Job 26:7, 8. "It shall be called, The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for these: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." — Isa. 35:8. Our God has promised, saying, "And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked ways straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." — Isa. 42:16. The ways of wisdom are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. But there is no peace to the wicked, saith your God. The way of peace no man in an unregenerate state has ever known; yet by the matchless grace of God the redeemed and quickened saints are led in the paths of righteousness, as in ways they had not, and which they never could have found or walked in if they were not led by their Shepherd, as he led Joseph.

The paths of righteousness include all the laws and ordinances of the house of God in which the saints are commanded to walk, but in none of which have we ever walked one step only as our precious Shepherd has led us. And this he has done for his name's sake; not for or in consideration of any work or merit of ours. "Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you; be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel." — Ezek. 36:31, 32. With what heartfelt gratitude then should we contemplate the self-moving goodness of our God, who for his own glory has displayed the riches of his grace in our salvation, and redeemed us from our own ways, and brought us to his fold, and made us meet to be partakers with the saints in light, and having rescued us from the power of darkness, now leads us in the ways of righteousness for his name's sake.

There is also another sense in which the sons of God are led in paths of righteousness *for his name's sake.* As children they have an inherent interest in the name of their Father; and as the wife has an interest in the name of her husband, so the name of the Lord is a tower of strength to all who are born of God and married to Christ. The name of the father or husband is held responsible for the support and protection of the children or the wife.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me." Though *I walk*; not have walked, or may hereafter walk, for it is in the present tense. The psalmist was, at the time he wrote and sang this cheerful song, in the valley of the shadow of death. This valley lies all the way along from the time we enter it by a new and spiritual birth, until we pass beyond the substance that casts the shadow. From the time the children of light enter this valley, their faith looks forward to a more perfect state, a state of perfect day, where "rests no shadow, falls no stain," where the blazing light of the refulgent glory of God will be seen without a veil between. Now, while in the valley we see but in part and know but in part, because the perfect radiance of that light is intercepted by death, as an intervening substance between us and the supreme brightness of that glory which is to be revealed to us after death, the last enemy shall be destroyed. Till then, death as a substance between us and the perfection of immortal light,

will cast its shadow upon us; but when these mortals shall put on immortality, death shall be vanquished and swallowed up of life, and no more intercept the light or cast a shadow upon us. In our present state we are walking in the valley, and the gloomy shade of mortality veils and obscures the brightness beyond the grave, but we need not fear; the shadow cannot hurt us, for our Shepherd *is* with us.

We are aware that this figure is frequently applied to death itself, as though the psalmist was looking forward to the dissolution of his mortal body, and spake of death as a shadow, rather than as a substance; but had that been his meaning, would he not have said, When I shall walk through, &c., then *thou wilt be with me?* But how different his language: *Though I walk through,* thou *art* with me. Literally a shadow can be cast in no other way. Yonder in the distance shines the sun in the heavens, but between us and the sun there are intervening clouds; they cast their shadow on us because beyond them the light is more refulgent than on this side of the obscuring clouds; but in being finally raised up above the clouds, the shadow of the clouds will be left behind us, for they can cast no shadow unless they are between us and the light. Neither the shadow of death nor death itself can separate our Shepherd from us. Neither death, nor life, things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor angels, nor things present, nor any creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, for that love is in Christ, and Christ is in us the hope of Glory; hence he is with us, and we shall not want; we need not fear.

"Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." The ancient shepherds, we are told, used a rod and a staff. Every sheep and lamb belonging to his charge passed under the shepherd's rod into the sheep fold, that it might be known that every one of them was provided for, and none but his own sheep. And surely every child of God must pass under the rod of our Shepherd; for "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Thus our passing under the rod proves that the Lord is our Shepherd, and we shall not want. The shepherd's staff was probably used in defending the flock from their enemies; they are a comfort to all the flock of our blessed Shepherd.

"Thou preparest a table before me, in the presence of mine enemies." Here the figure is changed, from sheep in a verdant pasture, by still waters, amply provided for, and perfectly secure from want and danger, to a family of children in their father's house, with a table prepared with a rich supply of all they require for food or comfort. They sit down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit is sweet to their taste; he brings them to his banqueting house, and his banner over them is love. This feast of fat things full of marrow, and of wines on the lees, well refined, the Lord has not only provided, but he has also prepared. Not only the precious passover lamb, roast with fire, but he has prepared the exact amount of bitter herbs necessary to be eaten with it. He has abundantly blessed the provisions of his house, and satisfies his poor with bread. This table is furnished with all the dainties of the gospel: the bread that came down from heaven, and the pure water of life, clear as crystal, which flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb. Yea, he gives his flesh as meat indeed, and his blood as drink indeed. And all this rich provision is furnished to the poor and needy without money and without price. This table he has prepared before his people in the presence of their enemies. They have enemies within as well as without. The corruptions of their own depraved earthly nature, which would prefer to eat their own bread and wear their own apparel, would resist the wholesome doctrine of Christ, and rather be filled with the husks which swine do eat. Doubts, fears, darkness and unbelief are present, even when with our mind we serve the law of God, and feed

at his table. And while our enemies which are without oppose, revile and persecute, they are made to witness with envy the spreading of the table for the support and comfort of God's people.

"Thou anointed my head with oil." As the precious ointment was poured on the head of Aaron, that ran down upon the beard, and went down to the skirts of his garments, so the Spirit of the Lord God is upon the head of the body, the church, and descends from the head, down the beard, and to all parts of the church; so that they have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things, and the anointing which they have received from him abideth in them, and they have no need that any man teach them, but as the same anointing teacheth them of all things, &c. — 1 John 2:20, 27. Our limited capacity at present, like little cups, soon overflow with the "oil of gladness," with which our glorious Head is anointed above his fellows. Our overflowing joy runs out from saint to saint, and from heart to heart, and its rich perfume fills the whole church of the living God, and gives the blessed assurance to all who are thus anointed that the goodness and mercy of God shall follow them all the days of their life, and that they shall dwell in the house or church of the Lord forever. There are sacred and powerful attractions for all the people of God in the house of the Lord, which is his church; there the table of the Lord is prepared, there the wholesome food and rich dainties of the gospel are spread, and all the provisions are abundantly blessd. There the whole family and household of our God are gathered to the feast, and there the King of glory presides at the head of the table. Thither the tribes of the Lord go up. There the joyful songs of the redeemed are heard, and

"There our best friends and kindred dwell,
There God our Savior reigns.
There would we find a lasting rest,
While others go and come;
No more a stranger or a guest,
But like a child at home."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, June 15, 1877)

DEACON ARZIE CLIFTON

In sadness, I attempt to comply with the request that I write a few lines in memory of a dear brother, Deacon Arzie Clifton.

He was born October 4, 1910. He was married on September 16, 1938 to Vada Handy who preceded him in death. To this union were born two daughters; Mrs. Shelby Jean Cockran, Newport News, Va., and Mrs. Linda Gail Hayden, Stoneville, N. C.; and one son, David M. Clifton, Stoneville, N. C.

A few months before his death, he married Sister Ilene H. Terry who survives. Also surviving: Three grandchildren; five sisters, Mrs. Posey Cassell, Mrs. Noel Cassell, Mrs. Harley Wood, Mrs. Oscar Boyd and Mrs. Reva Green; two brothers, Willie and Raymond Clifton.

Brother Arzie was warmly received into the fellowship of Dan River Church on Saturday before 4th Sunday in July 1950 and, together with his wife, was baptized the next day by Elder N. B. Gilbert.

Brother Arzie was a sincere and faithful member and the church, recognizing the gift of a deacon, soon called for his ordination. He served the church well as long as health permitted. He willingly shared his earthly possessions with the church and I feel to say that in a Spiritual sense he gave his all, never doubting the principles of the Primitive Baptist Faith and was a firm believer in Salvation by the Grace of God and Grace alone. He believed in a finished salvation and knew that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, but trusted in the God of all Grace to lead and direct him in this uneven journey here in time.

Death came suddenly, by heart attack, on November 11, 1973.

His funeral was conducted at his home church by Elders Amos Hash and Bennie Clifton. Burial was in the family cemetery to await that summons: "Child, your Father calls, come home."

Done by order of the church in conference.

Edrie Clifton

LILLAR BYRD TORT

Sister Lillar Tort was called from this scene of action on June 13, 1974. The Lord blessed Brother and Sister Lamb B. Byrd and Sarah Honeycut Byrd with a daughter, Lillar, on January 10, 1889. She lived 83 years, 5 months and 3 days.

She married William Bud Tart May 25, 1906. They were blessed with 5 daughters and 6 sons, all lived to be grown. Her husband pre-

ceeded her in death October 10, 1963, as did one daughter and three sons.

Sister Tort leaves to mourn four daughters: Veda Grimes, Manilla Grimes, Thelma Jones, all of Coats, N. C., and Murdell McLamb of Dunn, N. C.; three sons: Walter Mack, Jarvice of Dunn, N. C., and Leroy Tort of Sanford, N. C.; 36 grandchildren, 47 great grandchildren and 4 great great grandchildren; 2 sisters, Liddie Tart and Sallie Ennis, both of Benson, N. C. — along with Liberty Church and a host of friends.

Sister Tort and her husband joined Bethsaida Primitive Baptist Church Saturday before the first Sunday in July, 1925. In August the first Sunday, 1955, they united with Liberty Church, the day it was organized. She, as well as he, was much concerned in organizing the church, and getting the building built. They were very faithful as long as health permitted.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder C. D. Turner and Bob King, at Rose's Funeral Chapel. She was laid beside her husband at Banner's Chapel Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

She was strong in the faith, believing in the Sovereign Grace of God, which is the fruit of the Spirit. Your battle was hard, you did your best. Sleep on until the Saviour calls his own to be with him, be like him and be satisfied forever more.

In July conference was held, and it was agreed a committee be appointed, and three Resolutions be written: one for the Church; one for the family, and one be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Sister Lillie Tart
Sister Lovie Young
Brother James G. Young
Committee

IN MEMORIAM

NORBORNE HENRY AKERS
1892-1974

A memorial to Brother Norborne Henry Akers, son of Norborne Kansas Akers and Mary Ellen (Heckman) Akers. He was born July 9, 1892 and finished his course on this earth June 6, 1974. On January 10, 1921 he married Mabel Blankenship and to this union were born six (6) children — Sons: Forrest and Gene — Daughters: Helen, Betty Judy and Linda — who survive him. Also surviving him are three brothers and four sisters. Brother Norb, as we called him, joined Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church on November 5, 1933 and was baptized the same day by Elder J. F. Stegall. Brother Norb, who had deep convictions, was a devout believer in Salvation by Grace. He loved his Lord and Brethren, although he was badly afflicted the last few years of his life and could not attend his Church. He loved to talk about what the Lord had done for him, giving Him all the Praise and Glory. His wife and children stood by, doing all that tender hands could do in this life. His funeral was held at John M. Oakey Funeral Home by Elder O. K. Tench and Marvin Gennings. He was laid to rest in the Blue Ridge Memorial Gardens among a mound of flowers to await the second coming of our Lord. Then we shall see His face and Praise Him as we should. May God reconcile his dear ones and give them Grace to understand.

Written by one with a sad heart by request of his Dear Wife.

Pearl Akers Law

BLANCHE M. PEET

As it pleased the Lord to take from our midst our beloved Sister, of like faith, who was born on December 14, 1889, and departed this life on June 20, 1974, having spent 84 years on these mortal shores, we bow in humble submission to the will of our eternal God, believing that he (God) has an appointed time for all things.

Sister Peet was the daughter of the late Orin and Melissia Craft Slauson. She was married in the year of 1910 to James Peet who departed this life in the year of 1967, and to this union was born one son Victor Peet, who survives and resides in Miami, Florida; also one grand-daughter survives.

Sister Peet was a member of the first Old School Baptist Church of the Lexington-Roxbury Association and was baptized on October 10, 1909 by her uncle the late Elder John B. Slauson, the pastor of the Church at that time.

Sister Peet spent the most of her life at Halcott Center, N. Y. where she and her husband operated a tourist home where the writer has spent many nights, for they gave up their home to the visiting Elders and friends who went to the Lexington-Roxbury Asscoiation. Sister Peet was a faithful member of her Church, and the writer feels that memories of her will linger in the minds of all who knew her, and met together with her to listen to the preaching of salvation by grace. Sister Peet spent her last few years of her life with her son in Florida, and passed away in the Coral Gables Nursing Home.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer in the meeting house at Halcottsville, New York, and her body was laid to rest beside her husband in a cemetery not too far from their home.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

ELDER J. J. COLLINS

It is with deep sorrow and a grief burdened heart that I attempt to write this obituary of our beloved pastor, Elder James Joshua Collins. Elder J. J. Collins died March 15, 1974 in Southeast Ala. General Hospital at Dothan, Alabama. He was born in Geneva County on November 14, 1891, the son of John L. and Alma Stewart Collins. Elder Collins had preached the unsearchable riches of Christ in the churches of this area for more than fifty-five years. He had spoken in Churches from Baltimore, Maryland to Daytona Beach, Florida, and from Raleigh, North Carolina to Nashville, Tennessee.

Funeral services were conducted on Saturday, March 16, 1974 at Goodwater Chucrh, by Mr. B. H. Reeves, Mr. Forrest Thomley, his sons-in-law; and Elder Williams, Primitive Baptist minister. His grandsons served as pall bearers. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Pearl Peacock Collins, two daughters, Mrs. Maureen Thomley, Wicksburg, Mrs. Annie Laurie Reeves, Dothan; two sons, Norman A. Collins, Slocomb, and Forrest Kenneth Collins, Dothan; two brothers, Charles T. Collins, Wicksburg, and John F. Collins, Dothan; a sister, Mrs. Jewel Reeves, Dothan; 18 grandchildren, 11 greatgrandchilden, and 5 step children.

We are witness to his gentleness, his humility, and his love of his fellowman. Truly, it can be said that he loved everyone, even his enemies, if he had any. His faith in God was strong and bright unto the end. His love of Jesus, love of prayer, and loving concern for the church was evident to everyone. We feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

We trust that God, who doeth all things well, will comfort his family as only He alone can comfort. May we, the church, bow in humble submission to God's will and we pray that we will be kept in the love of Christ to walk in like manner, after the manner of our dear departed, ever praising God and ever looking to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. Surely, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Ordered in conference September 8, 1974, by Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church, Malvern, Ala., that this be written, and one copy be placed in our church records, a copy be sent to the family, a copy to *The Signs of the Times*, for publication.

Humbly,
Deacon Charles T. Collins, Clerk
Elder D. W. Collins, Moderator

ELDER JAMES JOSEPH WATSON

Elder James Joseph Watson was born December 27, 1920. He was married to Katie Dell Wiggins, August 27, 1938. One son, James Earl Watson, was born to them. Elder Watson left his wife, son and seven grandchildren to mourn the loss of a loving husband, father and grandfather. He is also survived by two brothers, Elder Ivey Watson and Walter Watson; two sisters, Mrs. Melissa McCardle and Mrs. Elmeady McCardle; and several nieces and nephews, with a host of friends and neighbors, who will all miss him very much.

Elder Watson united with Ramah Church, August 15, 1953, and was baptized by Elder J. J. Collins. On July 15, 1960, he was ordained as an Elder by Elders A. B. Chumney, J. P. Morgan, and Oscar Bell. He served as pastor of several churches in Southeast Alabama and Northwest Florida and was moderator of The Western Primitive Baptist Association during the last few years of his earthly life. He was blessed when he went in the stand to be lifted up in the spirit and speak so wonderfully of Jesus and the heavenly kingdom. We feel that now he has been blessed to be lifted up to be in the presence of God and to walk with Him forevermore.

Elder Watson passed away on May 14, 1974. His earthly body was laid to rest in Ramah Cemetery on May 17, 1974. Funeral service was held in Ramah Church by his beloved brothers, Elders W. S. Barefoot, J. P. Morgan, and D. W. Collins.

Approved by Ramah Church while in conference on September 15, 1974, and requested that one copy of this be given to the family, one copy to Ramah Church and one copy sent to *The Signs of the Times* for publication.

Elder D. W. Collins, Moderator
Sister Vivian McCall, Clerk

ALTON R. SHOLAR

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst a dear one, Brother Alton R. Scholar. He was received by Cypress Creek church June 13, 1971, and baptized by Elder Harmon Brown and Brother C. M. Brown. Brother Sholar was afflicted with a terminal illness, but he atttended church as often as he could. His appearance was one of meekness and humbleness. He was blessed with patience to bear the pain to which he was subjected. We, the church, feel our loss is his eternal gain. We will say, "Sleep on dear brother until the morn of the Resurrection when we all hope to awake in His likeness."

Brother Scholar was born February 14th, 1910 and died April 29th, 1974. He leaves to mourn his passing his dear wife, Beatrice, and six loving children; namely; Dennie M., Dalton D., Donnie W., and Mrs. Esther S. Dixon

of Wallace, N. C., Mrs. Allie S. Cavenaugh of Teachey, N. C., Lonnie W. Sholar of Serf City, N. C., and five grandchildren.

His funeral was preached at the graveside in the family cemetery by his pastor, Elder Harmon Brown, assisted by Elder D. B. Stokes. He was laid to rest under a mound of beautiful flowers among a host of friends and relatives.

Done by order of conference held August 10, 1974, that this obituary be written and a copy be put in the church records, a copy be sent to the family and one to *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Committee
Elder Harmon Brown
Velma H. Horne, Ck.

NETTIE MAE WORSLEY

Sister Nettie Mae united with the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church from her Hospital Room in December, 1971 and was called Home by our Heavenly Father in March 1974 at the age of 75. She had been in poor health for some time, but by God's Grace she was able to attend church in a wheel chair up until a few weeks before her death. She loved to talk with the brethren about her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and believed in Salvation by Grace. We all loved her dearly and miss her so much, but we feel our loss is her eternal gain. We pray our Heavenly Father will reconcile us and her family to his Will. May His name be praised.

Siter Nettie Mae was raised and lived all her life in Edgecombe County, N. C. and West Edgecombe community. She was a retired school teacher and the widow of the late Gaston E. Worsley.

She is survived by one sister, Miss Rosa Worsley; one brother, David Worsley; two nieces, one grand niece and one grand nephew.

Funeral sevices were conducted from Gay-Yost Funeral Home Chapel by her pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, assisted by Elder W. L. Everett. Burial was in Pineview Cemetery where we believe she is resting in the arms of Jesus, awaiting the Second Coming of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ.

Resolved: That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family, a copy to the *Signs of the Times* and a copy for our church record.

Conference: July, 1974

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

JOSEPH K. HARPER

Brother Joseph K. Harper, a beloved member of the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church since May 1970, was called home by our Heavenly Father on January 18, 1974.

Brother Harper and his wife were blessed by God to be baptized together, and they were devoted to the Church, and believed in an all wise, Gracious God; Jesus Christ and Salvation by Grace.

In all his affliction, trials and tribulations, Brother Harper always had a smile and quick hand shake for every one. We all loved him, and will miss him so very much; we feel that our loss is his eternal gain. How we all long to be with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to be like Him and be satisfied. That is where we feel Brother Harper is now. He was a life long resident and farmer from Nash County, and the son of the late George N. and Eva Watson Harper. He is survived by his wife, Ruth Tolston Harper, of Rocky Mount, N. C.; one daughter, Mrs. Julia Mae Tingen of Walkertown, N. C.; one son, Joseph Ray Harper of Wilson, N. C.; eight grandchildren; one brother, G. Earl Harper of Rocky Mount, N. C.

His funeral was conducted from Johnson Funeral Home, by his pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes. He was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery; to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Resolved: A copy of these resolutions be sent to the family, one to the *Signs of the Times*, and one for Church records.

Conference: July, 1974

Elder D. B. Stokes; Moderator
Nina Pearson; Clerk

Rt. 4,
Clairmont Ave.
Wheelersburg, Ohio

To the Signs of the Times:

Just a little note since I am late with my subscription. I have been taking the *Signs* since the Depression was over — about thirty years.

I am thankful the *Signs* has been continued, for this is my doctrine. It is what I believe. I like all the orthodox Baptist, but there are others who do not hold the doctrine. Please don't foget an old believer in the true doctrine of the Lord.

William Sparks

(The above was written on his 78th birthday. He began work in the coal mines at the age of ten. — Editor)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143 **DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1975** **NO. 1**

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

REMINISCENCES OF MARY PARKER

(continued)

One bright morning toward the last of May, when the air was balmy and pure, when came into my sick room the fragrance of sweet-scented honeysuckle and bright blooming roses, and there flitted past my window every now and then a tiny, gold-crested humming-bird, my brother came to the door and said that in the parlor below was an old friend who wished very much to see me. I did not recognize him as he entered my room, but my brother introduced him as Colonel O. L. Jackson, of New Castle, Pennsylvania. How very surprised and pleased I was. In early youth, in the golden days, at the dear old home, this young man had been a frequent and welcome visitor. When the war broke out he got up a company in Logan, and as captain of the company entered the war. He was wounded in the head, and lay hovering between life and death for a long time, but finally rallying (though he will never cease to suffer from the wound), he resumed his station and office, which was then that of Colonel of his regiment. From the time he entered the army until this bright morning in May we had not met, as he had, at the close of the war, become a successful lawyer in his native town of New Castle, Pa. He was now on a short visit to Logan, amid the familiar scenes and places, to renew old acquaintances, and to recreate after long and steady application to his profession. Every day during his stay he came around from his hotel and spent a little while in my sick room, and very pleasant were the moments, and quickly did time pass as we talked over the old days and associations. Then the leave-taking came, and I watched this handsome, intellectual friend go out from my presence and my life, most probably forever. Thus do the paths of human friends in this social life, cross and recross each other. Sincere and pleasant friendships are formed to continue for awhile, then some day, somewhere the golden chain is broken, and we see their faces no more. Yet to me there is something very enjoyable, beautiful and ennobling about true, unselfish friendship. When thinking of it, there is always brought to my mind the friendship that existed between David, the "sweet singer of Israel," and Jonathan, the son of David's bitter enemy, King Saul. How sincerely and deeply did David mourn the death of Jonathan; and it was then that he declared the love of his brother Jonathan was "wonderful, passing the love of women."

Five miles west of Logan is the plain Baptist meetinghouse, near which flow the clear waters of the creek where the sacred ordinance of baptism is administered. In this plain structure, with its uncarpeted aisles and uncushioned seats, for thirty-seven years my dear departed father fearlessly and boldly, "declared the whole counsel of God," and proclaimed the glorious news of the gospel,

which is "good tidings of great joy," and, indeed, "good news to the poor." But here Time has also placed his destructive hand, as he has everywhere in the past, as he will in all future ages. The form that now fills that pulpit and stands as a watchman upon Zion's walls, is not that of my beloved father; my mother's seat is filled by another; all, all is changed, save the blessed gospel. That, oh, thanks be unto our God! cannot, will never change; and we are sweetly assured that life, nor death, nor principalities, nor powers, nor any other creature shall separate us from the love of our living, glorious Redeemer; and that nothing, not even the powers of Satan, shall pluck one of the least of his little ones out of his hand. Oh! the security, the restfulness to be found by those who, like the gentle, humble Moabitish maiden, Ruth, have come to trust, and to rest under the wings of the Almighty.

During the month of July, when the scorching rays of the mid-summer sun beat pitilessly upon us, making my pretty little room, with its sides facing the east and west, seem almost like a heated furnace, my youngest brother and wife and little daughter, with whom I now find a permanent home, paid me an unexpected visit. How it cheered and gladdened me, and how fervently did my heart go out in love to them. They were only going to remain over one day and night, and I thought if I could only go back to New Holland with them I would get well. I urged them to carry me down stairs to see if I could not then feel able to undertake the journey. I was now so thin in flesh, that one person could carry me without fatigue. With an arm round each of my brothers, they attempted to carry me down stairs, but before we reached the stairway, I became so faint and ill that they were obliged to take me back to my tiresome couch. Sad indeed was my heart as I saw those loved ones from my window enter the coach to be driven to the depot. When the hot days began to give place to pleasanter weather, and there came at last the breezy days of September, I began to slowly improve, and as my strength came back my anxiety to return to New Holland increased. Slowly, day after day, I got my belongings together, little by little, and packed in my trunk. While I lay in bed the dropsical swelling all left my body, but now that I began to move about, it returned again. One gloomy looking morning, about the middle of September, I was ready for my contemplated journey.

A few neighbors gathered in to say, "good-bye." My brother drove me to the depot in an easy carriage. My dear young niece, Cora, accompanied me, from whom I was very loath to part. How this dear, winsome child did twine herself about my heart, and she seemed to return my affection with all the warmth of her fresh young life. When we reached the depot we found it one living mass of moving humanity. So many persons entered the train for Columbus, where the state fair was being held, that it was with difficulty my brother found me a seat beside a lady of our acquaintance. My physician was on the train going to Columbus, and when we reached Lancaster, he assisted me to the ladies' parlor, told the agent to see me on the Cincinnati train, and engaged for me a lunch before he again boarded his own train. I now found myself weak, ill and alone. But from the agent and the person who kept the refreshment stand, I received every kind attention; and when my train came up, they placed me under the conductor's care, who seated me and arranged my shawls and pillows. Very sad were my reflections as the train sped onward, moving me away from my childhood friends and scenes, I felt assured, for ever, back to the only place I could call home, yet which alas! was not home. Like poor Rosey, the feeble, friendless and forlorn creature whose plaintive cry so went to all hearts in St. Francis Hospital, I longed, I hoped, yes, and I tried to pray, too, that I might die; and the most soothing hope and thought that came to me on that dreary, weary jour-

ney was that I might soon die and be laid to rest. But oh! how mysterious and incomprehensible are the dealings of Divine Providence. Not yet was it His will to call me. Little by little in the furnace of affliction did He see fit to let the dross slowly burn off and to try me, as I trust, that I might come forth as gold, purified and fit for the Master's use. Oh! if I could but think and believe that notwithstanding all my sinfulness, my utter insignificance before Him, He is preparing me for His glorious Kingdom above, and that in that great day when He comes to make up His jewels, I shall be found among them; if I, like poor afflicted Job, could say at all times in the midst of *my* great trial, "When thou hast tried me I shall come forth as gold," and with assurance say and feel, "I know that my Redeemer liveth;" then could I indeed "be still, and know that He is God," and bowing submissively to His will in all things, say "Thy will, dearest Lord, not mine, be done." What a victory I would then have, and how patiently could I "wait all the days of my appointed time, till my change came."

I reached New Holland the same day on which I left Logan, weary and ill indeed, but glad to be back, and so glad to see the dear familiar faces of my youngest brother and wife, and my little pet niece, whose animated, childish chatter and smiles of welcome made glad my weary, homesick heart. After resting here a few days, accompanied by one of my cousins, I again took the train to go to Washington, thence to Good Hope, where the Indian Creek Association was held. This proved to be the last time I was (as it now appears) ever to meet with the people of my faith and order, in a public assembly and a church capacity. In the railway coach, in which we rode as far as Washington, there were very few travelers, but when we took the south-bound train for Good Hope, the coaches all seemed to be crowded. There was much animated conversion going on, and as I caught now and then portions of it, I knew I was in company with my own spiritual kindred, though I saw no faces that I knew. Just across the aisle, sat two sweet-faced ladies, towards whom I felt singularly drawn. Try as I would, I could not wholly withdraw my gaze from at least one face, which to me seemed quite charming. Reader, do you believe in personal magnetism? I do. When I left the train and entered the large, commodious carriage sent by my cousin, Robert Yeoman, to meet friends going to his house, I was greatly pleased to see the lady of whom I spoke become one of the party also. During the ride I had no opportunity to address or approach her, but when we reached Cousin Robert's she was introduced to me as Sister Jennie Shambaugh, of Xenia, Ohio. How my heart bounded with pleasurable emotions. She was one of my loved and valued correspondents. When I told her that I quite fell in love with her in the train, not dreaming who she was, she told me she had experienced the same pleasurable emotions regarding myself. I was here joined by Mattie Derr, a dear sister whose acquaintance I had formed when at Logan.

Only six months had elapsed since I, with other sorrowing friends, had followed the funeral bier of my dear father out from this beautiful home, twelve miles across the beautiful stretch of country to its final resting place in the lovely burial grounds at New Holland. My uncle, Albert Parker, was one of the number then, but now he too was sleeping the sleep "from which none ever wake to weep." Only a year previous to this, another brother, the late Elder Joseph Parker, died in this same place. Thus in quick succession did my father and his brothers pass away, for before the coming of another year still another brother, the last of the family save one, was carried to the grave. Notwithstanding the sad associations connected with the place, and the sorrow I felt when I entered the room which had been the place of my father's death-bed scene, I became exceedingly happy. Here I met for the first and last time

our late dear Elder Danks, of Cincinnati; Elder Harvey Wright, of Indiana, and Elder R. M. Thomas, of Missouri. Especially did I enjoy the preaching and conversation of Elder Danks. The one sermon which I heard him preach was from the text, "And this God is our God forever; He will be our guide *even* unto death." It was particularly edifying and comforting to me, and many have been the delicious morsels that I have partaken of as I have gone back, from time to time, and gathered up baskets full of fragments. At this association I met some of the sweetest, dearest sisters whose minds seemed lifted above the petty vanities of this life, and who were as truly refined and cultured as any that it has ever been my privilege to meet. It seemed a heaven below, and I felt that it certainly was a foretaste of joys of that sinless clime, "Where congregations ne'er break up." This delightful, heavenly assembly, however, must break up, sad farewells must be said, partings must take place. But in yonder blessed abode, no parting ever comes, no tears are shed, the song of praise is not hushed and love flows on and on from heart to heart and from the great Fountain Source in an unbroken stream of unending joy and unalloyed bliss. "Behold," says the Psalmist, "how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Sweetly, oh, very sweetly, do we realize the truth of this beautiful Psalm, when we meet with those who "know the joyful sound," who speak the language of one's soul, who "have no confidence in the flesh," but who give all the glory to our King. One of the evidences that we have passed from death unto life saith the Apostle, is that "we love the brethren." Surely each heaven-born, awakened soul, no matter how feeble his hope, can, when mingling with those who give evidence of having been with Jesus and learned of him, lay hold of this evidence, and thereby experience a revival of the hope which to us seems so small, but which is "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast."

On Sunday evening when the glorious sun was sinking in the west, and all nature seemed to feel that rare hush and serene peacefulness we sometimes experience after a Sabbath day of worship, and of unclouded brightness, with heartfelt sorrow I took leave of my dear kindred in Christ; and accompanied by my cousin, Charles Parker, and Sister Mattie Derr, went over to the village of Good Hope, a mile distant, to spend the night. When in the quiet of my sleeping-room that night, all my bereavements and my lonliness came afresh to mind, and the sorrow pent up in my heart burst forth, and the exalted tension of my over-strained nerves also gave way, leaving me ill, weak and almost strengthless. I thought of each dear happy-looking face from which I had parted, and wondered if among all those smiling, seemingly happy beings, there was one whose heart was so sad, so bereaved, so homesick as mine. All seemed to be ready with eager happy feet to turn homeward. I had no home to which to go; and again the cry arose from the great gulf of my sorrow that I might die, for I felt at least the earth would not murmur or receive me grudgingly. Yet to no one, at least into no human ear did I pour my grief; and I had not yet learned to go boldly to the throne of grace with the trustfulness of a little child, as I believe I have since learned to do; neither had I yet felt in all its sweet fulness, that the dear Lord does, indeed, take us up into his everlasting arms, and comfort us, "as one whom his mother comforteth." I was so prostrated the next day that I had to be carried to the train. I had no dropsical symptoms then, but looked ill and emaciated, and my presence in the coach created quite a commotion among the passengers, so that the conductor had to enquire into the nature of my ailment, in order to restore quiet, as it seemed some one started the story that I was a yellow fever victim from the South. When we reached Washington, we found we were half an hour late, and our train was gone. We entered a carriage and

were driven to a hotel, and here my condition excited quite as much alarm as it did on the cars. The occupants all left the parlor, and the landlord called my cousin out to inquire the cause of my sickness, for here, too, the idea had gone over the building that a yellow fever patient had come from New Orleans. This was during the terrible epidemic reign of that fatal fever in the South. The landlord very politely apologized afterwards, but I began to conclude if I was becoming such an object of fear to my fellow beings, I should certainly keep in the background from henceforth. When we reached New Holland it was quite late in the night; the air was balmy, the sky clear, the full moon shed its radiance upon us, whilst myriads of stars studded the blue vault of heaven. My dear, good brother was at the depot waiting; and when he told me he had been disturbed because of my non-appearance at an earlier hour, and said that he no longer felt satisfied when I was absent, my heart was filled with a great, deep thankfulness. Oh, what a soothing balm to me were his kind words and deeds. Kind words! what a depth of meaning they express! What delicious fragrance often flows into the dark recesses of the soul at the utterance of just *one* kind word!

"Only listen—they are speaking, spirit voices sweet and low,
Sweet as perfumed breath of summer, gentle as the streamlet's flow;
When an unkind look is given, when an angry word is said,
Hark! they whisper, patience, pardon, bend the knee and bow the head."

How wide is the difference between unkind words and kind ones. Whilst "a soft answer turneth away wrath," and a kind look and word falls like a soothing balm into a stricken heart, soothing its sorrows, healing its wounds, one angry look and word carries into the hearts, often, the poison of reptiles, and rankles there to show itself in every evil passion. It is only when the love of Christ is *in* the heart, when "Charity which forgiveth all things," controls us, that such evil seed sown does not bring forth the same evil fruit. But even Christians, though they do forgive, cannot forget; and often the keen anguish that is felt when one has received some unkind word or thrust, will be brought back by memory's undying efforts, and again and again be felt long after its has been spoken. Kind words cost us nothing, and very often prove to be "bread cast upon the waters," to return to us after many days. I would that we could all more carefully cultivate and use them. "Life at best is but a vapor that soon vanisheth away," and how much better we would all feel if we could go down to the grave with the consciousness that the heart of no fellow being has been wounded or made to ache by any unkind word spoken by us. Let us, then, strive to utter:

"Little words of kindness,
Little deeds of love;
'Twill make our home an Eden
Like to that above."

(Concluded next month)

GENESIS 9:13

For quite some time the hymn #87 in the Durand Hymn and Tune Book has been on my mind. It not only has been a comfort but has from time to time stirred up my mind to look into scripture. The other evening I sat down to write to see if I might be given to put into writing some of the thoughts that were on my mind and too, out of curiosity, to see what was there. The first verse:

(1) "When in the cloud, with colors fair,
I see the ancient bow appear,
Its beauteous form and lovely rays,
Awake my soul to love and praise."

On thinking on the ancient bow, it comes to mind that the Almighty God is spoken of in Daniel 7:13 as "the Ancient of days." Also Colossians 1:17 says "he is before all things, and by him all things consist" and Colossians 2:9 says "for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." And John 1:1 says "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God." In Proverbs

8:22 we find the same truth as we read, "the Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old," and "then I was by him . . . and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." (Prov. 8:31-32) So we see the Trinity — God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. These three are one and, "for whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Rom. 8:29-30)

The late Elder Bellows, in my early days in the church, on one occasion was the visiting minister at the Lobo quarterly meeting at Popular Hill. He spoke on the rainbow from Genesis 9:13, "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth." I remember how he spoke of the colors: — the gold as righteousness. Jesus is spoken of as the Lord our righteousness. The red as the blood of the everlasting covenant. The blue as the heavenly blue and he referred to the priests when under the law were to wear garments of blue.

The bow in the cloud brings to mind, the cloud spoken of in Exodus 14:19-20 that went before the Israelites and then removed and went behind them or between the Israelites and the Egyptians but it gave light to the Israelites and separated them all night.

It also brings to mind a time on the way home from Ekfid June quarterly meeting. It was toward night and a terrible storm came up with high winds. As I crossed the river and came up to the top of the hill where the road takes a slight turn, a rainbow burst forth in front of me — the end being on the road in front of me. I remember it was very bright in all its glorious colors. All had been so black and dark before. The hymn by Cowper came to mind:

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head."

I attempted to drive the car into the light but it stayed ahead of me for two or three miles — then kept fading. I had my two young nephews with me. The thought came to me that man cannot attain unto this covenant, he had nothing to do with it. But by God's grace it embraces his chosen people, chosen in him from before the foundation of the world or time began. Each time I see the bow in the cloud I feel it does "Awake my soul to love and praise."

(2) "It tells me now how firm the base,
The oath, the promise, and the grace,
Which God of old, ere time begun,
To Zion swear, in Christ his Son."

Genesis 22:17-18 speaks of the oath and the promise confirmed unto Abraham and his seed spoken of as the "two immutable things" that "we might have a strong consolation; who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." (Hebrews 6:18-19)

(3) "Dejected saint, dismiss thy fears,
Still round the throne the bow appears,
Portending peace and mercy free,
And full salvation now to thee."

This brings to mind Paraphrase 42 (John 14:1-7) in our Psalm book:

Let not your heart with anxious thoughts
be troubled or dismayed;
But trust in Providence divine,
and trust my gracious aid.

I to my Father's house return;
there num'rous mansions stand,
And glory manifold abounds
through all the happy land.

I go your entrance to secure,
and your abode prepare;
Regions unknown are safe to you,
When I, your friend, am there.

Then shall I come, when ages close,
to take you home with me;
There we shall meet to part no more,
and shall together be.

I am the way, the truth, the life:
no son of human race,
But such as I conduct and guide,
shall see my Father's face.

In Revelation 4:3 John saw "a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald." And before the throne a sea of glass. I remember asking Elder Ruston one time what the sea of glass represented. If I remember it reflected the walk or past. This brings to mind Revelation 1:8 "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." The sea of glass is spoken of in the temple worship.

(4) "It points thy soul to Jesus now;
Vindictive wrath once smote his brow,
That on thy guilty soul and mine,
No storms should beat of wrath divine.

(5) Sweet sign, that God remembers now
To guilty man his ancient vow;
But sweeter far by faith to see
A covenant God, all love to thee."

It seems here to show or speak of the two covenants, the old under the law whereby if one failed in one of the commandments, he was guilty of all. The soul that sinneth it shall die. And the new covenant as spoken of in Hebrews 8:10 — "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people;" and in Hebrews 8:12 "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

(6) "Here when thy fears begin to rise,
And hope in disappointment dies,
This covenant bow thy fears shall quell.
'Twas made for thee, in all things well."

Elder Bellows once said of the bow in the cloud, that the arrow had been taken away. Can I say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?" (1st Cor. 15:55)

I feel to fellowship the words of Newton;

"Weak is the effort of my heart,
And cold my warmest thought,
But when I see Thee as Thou art,
I'll praise Thee as I ought,
'Till then I would Thy love proclaim,
With every fleeting breath,
And may the music of Thy name,
Refresh my soul in death."

Humbly,

Eldon Gilbert
RR 7
St. Thomas, Ontario
Canada

PSALM ONE

Boones Mills, Va. 24065

Dear Brethren:

The rules of our living which are contained in the law of the Lord, are the precepts of the gospel.

The children of God are such sinful beings that the very nature of all of them is vile. Yet these same sinners delight in the law of the Lord. (See first Psalm)

Then it will be asked how it is that people who cannot cease from sin, do delight in the law of the Lord? To which we reply:

When a sinner is born again he becomes a new creature, and "all things become new." as grace turns every precept into a promise; and the Spirit of grace turns every promise into a prayer. Therefore our delight in the law of the Lord all spring from the fact that the Friend of sinners has fulfilled it, and through His perfect obedience and the channel of His precious blood, free Salvation comes hand in hand with justice and mercy: The just acts of God our Saviour are the mercy of His people. What Jesus does is just, and what Jesus did in behalf of His people is their mercy. As what He did is done forever, then mercy cannot cease.

The mercy of God is so large and free that the Lord says, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." God says, "Let him take of the water of life freely." "Freely" means, no duties, no works performed, no conditions to be met, nothing at all of ours can deserve it, or procure it. It is all

free and is without price.

It is the business of those who sit in the seat of the scornful, to scorn and oppose these things.

In bonds,
J. L. Bocock

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409 Sandra Street,
Conroe, Texas 77301

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Please renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times,* as it will soon be out and I do not want to miss one copy.

I thank God for you brethren who do a lot of work to send out the *Signs* each month. To read the wonderful writings, often gives me courage to press on forward. It seems that so much of my time here is spent in doubts, fears and tremblings.

In bonds of love,
Mrs. James E. Shover

ROMANS 12:1

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1)

This is one of the sweetest scriptures that is to be found in the Bible, because it is a deep and moving expression of the love that the apostle Paul had for the brethren at Rome. I believe that it is typical of the love every heaven born soul has for a brother after he has been quickened by the Holy Spirit, and experienced the kinship that flows out of the heart when they meet. It seems that the Apostle is remembering the way in which the child of the flesh is changed from darkness into light; and knowing the weakness of the flesh, he is admonishing them to continue in those things whereunto they have been called. He is beseeching them to lay aside the pleasures of the world and consecrate themselves unto God, which is the only reasonable course, seeing that they have been set apart by the mercy of God, and called with a holy calling.

The religion of the world would take this text and begin to threaten, conjole, plead, and suggest that the Apostle is instructing them what they must do in order to keep themselves in the grace of God. They would say that God has done his part, and this is what they must do in order to entitle them to a dwelling place in heaven. In view of the experience of the Apostle Paul, and all the writings that he left on record as inspired by the Spirit, there is no such doctrine to be found in the Bible. In fact, the doctrines of the world, the arminian or works doctrine, are not to be found in the Bible. They are just the vain imaginations in the minds of people who read the Bible.

There are also those who feel that this is a dangerous text, because it could be interpreted as leading to works as a means to an end. Evidently the Apostle Paul was not afraid of this, as much of his writings are in the form of admonitions unto the brethren of the early churches. The Apostle knew that but for the grace of God through the revelation of the Holy Ghost, all would misunderstand, but he trusted that as surely as God had sent him, the same would cause his way to prosper. The above scripture is just as true and just as much the inspiration of God through the Apostle as when he was given to write it. "But by the grace of God I am what I am." Each is to the glory of the God of heaven and earth, and each is for the edification of the church. They are given for the comfort of the poor and afflicted lambs of God as they sojourn in this vail of tears. It takes various texts to comfort and feed them as they experience the dealing of the Lord with them in times of trials and sorrow, as well as times of peace and harmony.

"All scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly fur-

nished unto all good works." This seems to say that just as God pronounced all the works in the creation to be good and very good, all the scriptures are inspired, and all of them are good. None are to be omitted or slighted because they seem to teach something that is contrary to, or not in harmony with the teachings that are in the rest of them. They are all alike profitable to the children of God, and are for their comfort, for the stirring up of their pure minds, and, yes, for their instruction in righteousness. This is what the Apostle Paul wrote unto Timothy whom he referred to as, "My own son in the faith." Surely the apostle would not write anything to him that would not be profitable. If the apostle did not refrain from so teaching and instructing Timothy, why should it not be as boldly declared today. We believe, as much as in us is, that it takes the same grace and mercy for one to rightly divide the word of truth today as it did then; but at the same time, the children of God in this day and age have the same authority to declare those things as the Apostle did. The only authority for dividing of the word of truth, is the spirit of inspiration which God gives to his own in all ages.

I realize that in the past there have been those who would take the scriptures out of context and wreck havoc in the churches. These are spoken of by Jude, and they have ever been and probably will continue. It seems that as a result of this being done, the tendency is to leave those texts alone and refrain from expounding them. Because they have caused trouble when used out of context, does not mean that the scripture is controversial, or in any way disruptive to the orderly, peaceful and harmonious worship of God by the saints when gathered in the spirit of love for the truth and for one another. If a text is not used because it can be misunderstood by those who have not the Spirit, then none could be used, because, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishnes to him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned."

The whole theme of the above text, as declared by the Apostle, is the humble, unassuming love that he had for the children of God at Rome, and his concern for their well being. He is not telling them from superior wisdom which he possesses, that they do not have, but rather humbly beseeching them by the mercies of God, that they present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God. To my understanding he is sincerely, soberly and fearfully beseeching them that as they have been saved and called with a holy calling, their lives are no longer their own: they have been bought with a price, and they belong to the church of the living God. They belong to it mind, soul and body, and all else should come after the household of faith in their heart. It should be first, not by commandment, but because of the love that they have for the truth, and all else is not to be compared to the glories of this kingdom. He tells them that this is their reasonable service, which, to me, means that just as Christ laid down his life for the church literally, so should they lay down their's figuratively, and forsaking all else, be subject unto the church. This is not done very much today, but that does not lessen the need for it being done. It seems that too many attend church very irregularly, and have no feeling of neglect. It is not for God's sake; to add glory unto His kingdom, or for the world's sake that they should take notice. It is for the tried and fainting children of God as they travel this pilgrimage of tears. It is to lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees, to encourage the faint hearted, and comfort the weary soul that is cast down. They can get so low that just to behold the brethren pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, is beautiful to behold, and strengthening to the lonely traveller.

Admonitions are never given in strife,

or in a proud and boastful manner as one exercising authority over another. Admonition is true love in action, and is the humblest and sweetest display of love and concern that one can show to another. It is not saying, Now I know what you should be doing, because I have tried it, and it works. Rather, it is saying, Brother, I know the weakness of the flesh and the temptations to which the flesh is so susceptible, and the way in which the natural mind wars against the spirit. I know the struggles that ensue, but, our hope is that we have been called from nature's darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God, and I beseech you, therefore, brethren, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God. Knowing the imperfections of the flesh, let us strive, by the mercy of God, to show forth that calling in our walk and conversation. Can any who have experienced the quickening of the Spirit desire any less for themselves and their brethren.

I believe that the same applies to all the admonitions and exhortations contained in the scriptures. They were inspired by the Holy Ghost, and are in love, and are for the comfort, correction, reproof and doctrine of the children of God. I am afraid that many times when one is given to speak on these points of doctrine, some will forget everything else that the speaker has believed and contended for all his life, and judge him weak. This is sad because he is being criticized for a love for the church, and his concern for her welfare. Some will say that one is weak in the faith to be concerned for the welfare of Zion, as though he did not believe that God could take care of it. The cause of concern is that he cannot be at ease with things as they are, and there is something within that won't let him fail to pour out his heartfelt desire, for what he feels to be for the good of all the household of faith.

All will do anything that they can to prevent the suffering of a child or a loved one. They will put forth every effort to provide for those they love, and to give them as much as they can of the comforts of this life. They will do everything that they can to avoid suffering, unpleasantness, or to warn one of unexpected dangers in this life. All of these things are good, and are all done because of love for the individuals involved. Should not the children of God have the same love and be even more concerned for the welfare of Zion. Some will pray for the welfare of their family and loved ones, and then say it is in indication of a lack of faith to be concerned with the welfare of the church. James 3:16 says, "Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessings and cursings. My brethren, these things ought not to be so." It seems that this scripture expresses the sentiment of some. The same one will strive unceasingly to take care of his families' needs, but say, "Sit back, God will take care of the church." Brethren, God will and does take care of both situations, regardless of what man may do or not do, but the evidence is that the Apostle Paul was very much concerned because of his love for the church, and desire for them to show their faith by their actions. James was of the same opinion.

Solomon writes in Eccl. 11:5, "As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all." Solomon who was given wisdom above any of the kings of Israel, is stating that the natural man knows not the works of God, which are far above the knowledge of the finite mind of man: and are reserved unto God. They will accomplish His will and purpose, and man never understand them. He continues in the 6th verse, "In the morning sow thy seed and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." Man cannot know the work that God doeth, and cannot know the end of something from the beginning as God does.

Man only walks by faith and do that which he believes to be the best, and trust that it is of God working in him the will and the do to His honor and glory. The point is Solomon says, sow thy seed and withhold not thy hand, knowing not the results; but as God has dealt to every saint the gift, let them use it to the glory of God, and to the comfort and edification of the church. The Lord said unto David, "Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart. Nevertheless thou shalt not build the house." The fact that the desire was in the heart of David did not get the house built, but the desire was the fruit of the love that was there, which was God's gift unto David in the first place; and it was well in the sight of God. Not that works develop faith, but rather are the fruits of faith. As James said, "Yea a man may say thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works and I will shew thee my faith by my works." They will both be present, or neither. The one is the visible display of the other.

It seems that the writers of the early church had a postive attitude regarding the faith of the elect of God and its outward manifestation in their walk and conversation. They were not hesitant to admonish or exhort the brethren, or to encourage those who gave evidence of an inward work of grace in the heart. If they did not avoid doing this, then where did the precedent to refrain from doing as the apostle did originate. Is it a back lash from the time when the church was divided over the issue of man's free will, and the fact that those who believed this claimed they could do as they determined and be rewarded or damned as a consequence. I cannot see that the subject under consideration is in any way or manner involved in this issue, but it seems that some feel that they are. The world claims they are independent of the power of God, and can choose to submit to Him or resist as they please. The subject under consideration is to and concerning only those who have been chosen, quickened, called and born into the kingdom of God, and who acknowledge that everything they are is by the grace of God. These are the only ones that the scriptures are to, and the fact that the children of the world quote them and preach another doctrine, as Paul says, "Let them be accursed;" but this does not cause the scriptures to be cortroversial in any sense.

The question is, if God is love and love is his gift to his children, which is the greater evidence of the true church? to encourage all who show forth evidence of the same work in their heart that we hope to have experienced in ours; or to sit in stony silence and see what happens. According to what the Apostle Paul and others wrote, what would have been their response to such evidence? Brethren if we are what we hope to be, and are indeed the children of God, we have the same God given reason to admonish, exhort and encourage as the Apostles did, which is the Spirit of God in the heart.

This is not written in the spirit of strife or as a confident source of information on the above subject, but rather as a fearful earnest questioning of the reasons for the seemingly extreme differences in the practices of the early churches and the church today. It is in the manner of the Apostle Paul's exhortation to the Corinthian brethren, "Examine yourselves: whether ye be in the faith: prove your own selves." Consider the things that are written in the scriptures of the walk, talk and order of the early church and compare it with the church today. It seems that they did not fear to speak their mind on these points. Paul wrote to Timothy, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear: but of power and of love, and of a sound mind." God's gifts to his children in this day and age are the same as they have ever been: they are still given the spirit of power, love and a sound mind. God qualifies his childen for the things whereunto he sends them,

and He leads them every step of the way. He does not leave them to fend for themselves or to see just what they will do. And it seems that, in view of this fact, it is better to be found doing everything that you can, trusting that God is in the matter, than to be found doing nothing for fear He is not.

I realize the weakness of the flesh, the pride that man is subject to, and the vain imaginations of the carnal mind. I realize the extremes to which a man will go in his quest for riches, fame and earthly pleasures, but brethren my prayer is that I am writing to a people who have been called away from such foolishness. The only hope that we have of heaven and immortal glory, is in what we believe Christ has done for us. All else is vanity and vexation of spirit, as recorded by Solomon. If Christ has saved us and called us with a holy calling He will also lead us in the path of righteousness for his name's sake, keep us from falling, and present us unto God in spotless splendor when time is no more. This is our hope as we travel in this low ground of sin and sorrow, looking for and awaiting that blessed event. If we have these common hopes and desires, and believe that they are the experiences of God's chosen people, how can one feel that anything but their love for the church would cause another to beseech them to walk worthy of this blessed calling, and to present their bodies a living sacrifice; being not conformed to this world, with all its pomp and show, but being transformed by the renewing of their minds. How can one who has been graciously blessed feel that these are anything but good, wholesome words of doctrine, and are for the comfort and edification of the church, which is the body of Christ while in this time world.

The Apostle Paul wrote regarding the gifts that Christ gave unto men when he ascended on high, saying they were for the perfecting of the saints, "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledege of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Till then we have this treasure in earthen vessels which are weak and very imperfect at the best; but the desire is there by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, to see the manifestation of the work of grace in their brethren. This is good and profitable unto the church here in this world, because it strengthens the trembling lambs, and is, as Paul says, by the mercies of God, and is for their peace and comfort.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell,
Memphis, Tenn.

ELDER W. L. EVERETT IS RECOVERING

Elder W. L. Everett of 704 Oakland Avenue, Rocky Mount, N. C., who suffered a severe heart attack the latter part of October, is recovering and able to be at home. He desires to express his appreciation to the brethren and friends for the many cards and messages received from them.

We are all glad to learn of his recovering, and hope, the Lord willing, he will soon be able to be out again.

— EDITORS

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EDITORIAL

Again we are come to the beginning of a New Year, and a new volume of the *Signs of the Times* — the 143rd. We feel thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, for our many blessings both natural and spiritual; and for the evidences of the grace of our God in using the *Signs* to the comfort and edification of His people in many places. Knowing from whence all these blessings come, we would praise God and lift up his name above every name, for His unspeakable gifts.

Did we not realize that the hand of the Lord has sustained the paper through all the years, we would be unmindful of the purpose of God in all things. And did we not have evidence that the Lord continues to manifest the truth to his elect, and comforts them in the doctrine of God our Saviour as they read the articles on scriptural subjects, and the experiences of the brethren, we should feel that the Lord's purpose in the *Signs* is about complete. So we are glad when we receive letters from our readers expressing their joy and comfort in receiving the paper. We can understand the joy of those who are isolated from the brethren, living too far away from their meetings to be able to attend them, or maybe too feeble to travel. Isn't it true that the Lord provides for his own according to his will and purpose.

There has never been a time in all the years the *Signs* has been published, that its writers have not contended earnestly for the sovereignty of God over all times, worlds, and events. They have affirmed that the Lord's people are those who were chosen in Christ before the world began, and that He sends his Spirit into their hearts manifesting that

they are his children, and that their salvation is secured to them by the redeeming and atoning blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that it is all of His Grace from beginning to end.

We publish again the following by Elder Gilbert Beebe taken from the Signs of January 1, 1859, to remind us of what the Scriptures teach:

"The same leading sentiments which we published, and to which we pledged our paper twenty-six years ago, are still nailed to our mast-head. We have found no occasion to either change or alter them. They are as follows:

The Signs of the Times—Devoted to the Old School Baptist cause — maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfections of the Great Jehovah,—the revelation which he has made of himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, that these Three are One.—1 John v. 8.
2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.
3. Eternal and Unconditional Election.
4. The Total Depravity and Just Condemnation of Fallen Man.
5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.
6. The Sovereign, Irresistble, and, in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Ghost in Quickening and Regenerating the sons of God.
7. The Final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God by Grace.
8. The resurrection of the Dead, and Eternal Judgment.
9. The Church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers—that to her is given able Ministers of the New Testament —that the Scriptures are the only infallible Rule of Faith and Practice to the Saints of God.
10. *The Signs of the Times* will be decidedly opposed to the Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath School Unions, &c., &c., waging war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of Institutions.

With this plain statement of our sentiments, we issued our first proposals for this paper in the fall of 1831; and if at any time or under any circumstances, we have swerved from these leading sentiments, we are not conscious of it. Certainly it has never been our intention to do so. We then believed that the first and sixth articles fully involved the doctrine of the Eternal Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ, and implied his Mediatorial identity as the Head over all things to his Church, and the Eternal, vital union of Christ and his seed, which are a "Chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, and a Peculiar People. A seed that shall serve him, and be counted to him for a Generation, and a people which he has carried and borne all the days of old."

Such are still our views; and to their defense we pledge such ability as the Lord may graciously bestow on us."

The brethren and friends are supporting the publication of the *Signs* by their subscriptions, their donations and their writings, and we hope they will continue. It makes our work lighter to have sufficient copy on hand as we need it.

In these troubled times, may we never forget that the Lord is yet reigning, and that his will and purpose is not disturbed. His church is built upon the Rock and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."

J.D.W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

BE PITIFUL; BE COURTEOUS.

These instructions are given to the saints in a preceptive form, as binding on them by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, for whatsover the apostles have bound on earth is also bound in heaven; we cannot therefore disregard or disobey these injunctions, without transgressing the law of Christ. This admonition is applied to the saints in their social relation to each other, as fellow-members of the one body over which the Son of God presides as the Head. While here in the flesh we cannot fail to find in each other something to pity and deplore. But while pity and forbearance are felt for others, every saint will find in his own walk and conversation something also requiring sympathy, forbearance and pity from his fellow-sufferers.

Although some have held and contended that all the elements of our nature are killed, by the new birth, to the love of sin, and are converted to the love of holiness, the admonitions in the

word addressed to the saints, to be pitiful and courteous toward each other, and warning them against biting and devouring one another, seem clearly to imply that there are still in our fleshly natures elements which are yet unsubdued by the new birth, and which require a vigilant and constant watchfulness, that our affections, as well as lusts, should be denied and crucified. If our natures were really changed from a love of sin to a love of holiness, we would not be plagued with vain, foolish and wicked thoughts; we would have no covetous lusting or desire for things that do not belong to us; no pride, envy, hatred or malice to excite the pity and forbearance of our brethren. Our tongue would require no bridlebit to hold it in subjection; our passions of anger, and wrath, and resentment, and retaliation, would be quiet as lambs. But says one, I truly feel these corruptions in my fleshly nature, and often fear, because I find them unkilled in me, that I have not really experienced the new birth; but still there is a change, a wonderful change with me, for I do, notwithsanding all my carnal depravity, really love the things which I once hated, and hate and loathe many things which I once loved.

This is true in the experience of all who are born of God, but this is not so from any change in your earthly nature; it is a fruit that your carnal nature never did produce. It is the fruit of the spirit which you received in the new birth; and it wars against your flesh, and against all your fleshly elements and passions, striving to hold them down, and to keep them in subjection to the spirit of your mind. The love of God which is bestowed upon you, and shed abroad in your heart, is a fruit of the spirit that is born, not of the flesh, but born of God. If there were not two antagonistic natures within us, there could be no warfare. The word of God assures us that nothing that is born of God can commit sin; and that all that is born of the flesh is depraved and sinful, and therefore lusts against the spirit which God has implanted within us. If we were only governed by the spirit which we received of God in the new birth, we would not need the sympathy and pity of our brethren. When like the apostle, who could find nothing good in his flesh, we are brought into captivity to the law of sin which is still alive in our members, like him, we groan, being burdened, and cry out, in his language, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" In the body of the flesh all is death; for if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness. So in every christian the warfare is between life in Christ, and death in the flesh; between corruption in their carnal nature, and incorruption in their spiritual life.

Involved in such a conflict between flesh and spirit, between the old man and the new man, how often are christians distressed with doubts and fears arising from the unslain infidelity of their carnal mind, which is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

In their straits they feel the need of the forbearance of their brethren; and the Lord, who knows well what are the feelings of their infirmities, has enjoined on them to "Be of one mind, having compassion one of another; [to] love as brethren, [to] be pitiful and courteous." The law of Christ, which God has written in their heart, commands the strong among them to bear the infirmities of the weak, and to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Instructions are given by the apostle for the observance of the precepts, to be of one mind, compassionate, pitiful and courteous one to another in the house of God, and is is highly important that the rules given should be strictly adhered to. Negatively, the apostle says, "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing." Alas for us! with such a resentful nature as every child of God has in his fleshly nature, how hard it

is for them to restrain the spirit of retaliation, when they feel that they have been injured by their brethren. David, the man of God, said if it had been an enemy, he could have borne it; and we, as Christians, find that the most painful wounds we feel are those which we receive in the house of our friends. And the law of carnal commandments calls for an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, and a foot for a foot; and our resentful nature is strongly inclined to exact all this as evenhanded justice from a brother that has offended us.

But although the law, which knew no mercy, demanded all this, how different are the rules given by our Lord to his disciples. "But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosover shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also."—Matt. 5:39. Obedience to this precept is very crossing to our fleshly passions; yet how vitally important. How can we follow him who once suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God, if we in violation of his special command render evil for evil? Had Christ our Lord dealt in that manner with us, what must have been our doom? We are commanded to put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of our mind; and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor, for ye are members one of another. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.—Eph. 4:22-25, 31, 32. "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise, blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing."

How frequently do the children of God wonder why they cannot inherit, or enjoy the inheritance of the blessings of comfort, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Let them search if there be not hidden in their tent, or house of their earthly tabernacle, some "cursed thing," of gold, or silver, or Babylonish garment, (see Josh. 7:21); or if not, if there be not concealed in their heart something of resentment, railing, or of guile, malice, envy, hatred, and evil speaking. Yea, make a thorough, diligent search, for the natural heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; search then as with a lighted candle, if there be not in some hidden chamber or dark recess an unforgiving spirit, breathing slaughter and retaliation against a brother for whom Christ died. And remember the words of Jesus, "For if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."—Matthew 6:15. "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses."—Mark 11:25, 26. "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, *if ye from your hearts* forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." — Matt. 18:3.

The admonition of Peter, to attend to the things enjoined, is urged, that our prayers be not hindered (1 Peter 8:7); and we are told by our Lord in what manner they may be hindered. And if we would inherit and feast upon the blessing, let us remember that it cannot be enjoyed by the children of God while they cherish hardness against one another. "For he that will love life, and see good days." Who is there among the saints that does not desire to enjoy the life of the spirit, and who among them that does not long for good days, such as they enjoyed when the candle of the Lord shined in and around them? Well, if such be our desire, let us refrain from the things which hinder our prayers, disturb our peace, break our fellowship, and dishonor our profession. Our flesh is cor-

rupt, and must be denied; for if we sow to it, we shall from it reap corruption; but if we through the spirit mortify the deeds of the flesh, we shall enjoy life, and see good days; but in order to enjoy this, let the saint "refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile; let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." As we are taught by the scriptures referred to above, even the prayers of the saints are hindered, if they do not forgive and love one another.

But, says one, while smarting under sharp reproach or injury received from a brother, my reputation is assailed, my good name is impugned, and I must have satisfaction, I must have redress. But what redress? Must it be an eye for an eye? Be careful, and render not evil for evil. "Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye." This is the pathway marked out by our glorious Leader. He never suffered for anything but righteousness, for there was no unrighteousness in him. He indeed suffered in his flesh, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God, and we are admonished to arm ourselves with the same mind. And, Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion, as he was compassionate. Love one another, as he has loved us, and given himself for us. Be pitiful, as he was pitiful to us. Be courteous, for he was courteous; and when he was reviled, he reviled not again."

Peter, in his epistles, as well as all the apostles of Christ, has dwelt largely on the sacred obligation of all who name the name of Jesus, and profess to be his disciples, to depart from all evil; and the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, (all classes of men,) teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. Although it is true, that if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution; still, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye: for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part (who reproach the saints) he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer." John says, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." — 1 John 3:15. And the same apostle also says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." And again, "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. Therefore Peter says, "Let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf." "Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls unto him, as unto a faithful Creator."

To suffer according to the will of God, as God has revealed his will concerning our sufferings, is to suffer patiently whatever of reproach or persecution may be heaped on us for righteousness' sake, without attempting to retaliate by returning evil for evil or railing for railing. Jesus has said to his disciples, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is you reward in heaven." — Matt. 5:11, 12. Truly, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." Vengeance belongeth to God, not to us. We are taught to pray for them "which despiteflly use and persecute us." As Jesus on the cross prayed, saying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what

they do." And as Stephen, when suffering martyrdom, prayed for those who were stoning him to death; upon his knees he cried with a loud voice, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." These were his last words, for "when he had said this, he fell asleep." — Acts 7:60.

May it be our privilege to fall asleep with a like invocation for all who have done us wrong. And while we continue in the flesh may our adorning be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible; even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. But the end of all things (terrestrial) is at hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And above all things, (let Christians) have fervent charity among themselves, for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. "Be pitiful; be courteous."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, July 1, 1879)

ORDINATION OF DEACON

Pursuant to a request by the First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis, Tennessee, a presbytery was organized for the purpose of examining Brother H. R. Toney, and upon finding him qualified, ordaining him to the office of deacon of the Memphis Church.

Presbytery was formed of the ministers and deacons present. Elder Paul Poyner was elected Moderator, and Elder R. H. Campbell Clerk of the Presbytery.

Elder G. W. Jones opened the service with song and prayer. Deacon J. W. Brown was appointed spokesman for the candidate, and presented Brother Toney to the Presbytery for examinations.

The Presbytery, being unanimously satisfied with the response to questions relative to doctrine and practice, proceeded to lay hands upon the candidate as prayer was offered by Elder W. G. Chapell. Elders H. R. Prince and C. S. Young participated in delivering the charge.

The Presbytery then gave the right hand of fellowship to the new deacon in love, and praying that God will lead and direct him in all of his way. Realizing the trials that he will face, may he be given the strength to endure, the patience and understanding to strive for the peace and harmony of the church as long as he lives.

Brother Toney was then returned to the church as duly ordained deacon of our faith and order, and recommended to all churches which are in fellowship with the First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis.

Elder Paul Poyner, Mod.
Elder R. H. Campbell, Clerk

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

J. J. WATSON, Pastor

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 10:30 A. M.

V. C. HARTZOG, Pastor

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

A. B. CHUMNEY
D. W. COLLINS, Pastors

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., six miles SE. of Sulligent, Alabama.

C. C. HAND, Pastor
5840 Court O C P
Birmingham, Ala.

The churches of which Elder E. E. McCool is pastor meet as follows:

MACEDONIA, Sulligent, Ala. meets 1st Sundays at 11 o'clock.

MT. ZION, 16 miles south of Fayette, Ala. on highway 159, meets 1st Sundays at 2 P.M.

SALEM, 6 miles south of Gordo, Ala. meets 2nd Sundays at 11 o'clock.

MT. CARMEL, 14 miles north of Reform, Ala. on highway 17, meets 2nd Sundays at 2 P.M.

ZION, 7 miles north of Gordo, Ala. on highway 159, meets 3rd Sundays at 11 o'clock.

BETHEL, 4 miles west of Fernbank, Ala. meets 3rd Sundays at 2 P. M.

PLEASANT RIDGE, Moores Bridge, Ala. meets 4th Sundays at 11 o'clock.

E. E. McCOOL, Pastor
Rt. 1, Box 279
Steens, Miss. 39766

MT. ZION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each 4th Sunday at 11 A. M. about 10 miles N. W. of Birmingham just off of 78 Highway in Westwood, 2601 Forrestdale Blvd.

H. C. MOON
C. C. HAND, Pastors

OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., 6 miles S. W. of Winfield, Ala.

C. C. HAND, Pastor

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each second Sunday afternoon at 2 P. M., ten miles SW. of Fayette, Alabama.

C. C. HAND, Pastor

ELAM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located two miles North of Goshen, Pike County, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 o'clock.

J. P. MORGAN, Pastor
A. C. CARTER, Clerk
1335 Avalon Lane,
Montgomery 6, Ala.

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.

C. C. HAND, Pastor

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

V. C. HARTZOG, Pastor

WRITES CREEK CHURCH, 5 miles south of Slocomb, Ala., meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

E. B. HUGHES
B. A. ANDERSON
J. A. TEW, Moderators
J. T. COLLINS, Clerk
Slocomb, Ala.

MT. CARMEL CHURCH, Coffee Springs, Alabama, meets each first Sunday 11 A. M.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

PILGRIM REST CHURCH, located six miles north of Fordyce, Arkansas (leave Hy. 167 on Hy. 273—church is located about ¾ mile from Hy. 167) meets each third Sunday at 10:30 and on Saturday before at 7:30 p.m.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

NAOMI OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, six miles south of McKenzie, Alabama, meets the second Sundays in December, February, April, etc.

ELDER W. C. STANLEY, Pastor
Duncanville, Ala., Rt. 1
E. C. WEAVER, Clerk
Rt. 5, Box 47, Andalusia, Ala.

SHILOH OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, seven miles Northeast of Andalusia, Alabama, meets the second Sundays in July, September, November, etc.

ELDER W. C. STANLEY, Pastor
Duncanville, Ala., Rt. 1
NORA LEE McLEOD, Clerk
Red Level, Ala., Rt. 3

MOUNTAIN FORK CHURCH, Madison County, Ala., meets each first and third Sundays at 11:00 A. M.

R. C. SIMMONS
R. H. HALE, Pastors
JAMES COLBERT, Clerk

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

WHITE WATER OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located about one mile northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, meets on first Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m. The annual meeting meets at 10 a.m. on Satuday before the first Sunday in August and continues through Sunday.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
JOE REAVES, Clerk

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Compton, California, meets each fourth Sunday at the home of L. W. Langwell, 12812 S. Williams Street.

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in the United States), meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is located one mile south of Newark, Delaware, just off of Highway 896.

JAMES POOLE, Pastor

NEW HARMONY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Hiram, Ga., meets every second Sunday at 11 o'clock.

C. C. HAND
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastors
GLENN RAGSDALE, Clerk

The SALEM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Benton, Ill. meets each 4th Sunday at 10:30 A. M. Communion time is the 4th Sunday in May.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

ELDER WAYMON CHAPELL, Mod.
WILLIAM VANTREASE, Clerk
JAMES CUNNINGHAM, Asst. Clerk
5921 W. Park Ave.
St. Louis, Mo. 63110

PLEASANT VALLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas. Meets with Mrs. Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C. on each second Sunday.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE LOST CREEK CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, meets first Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Kentucky, ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton, on Grayson Highway. Leave U. S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

NEW HOPE CHURCH (better known as Lick Creek) meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Kentucky.

NEW HOPE CHURCH, Spearsville, La. meets first Sundays and Saturday afternoons before at 3:30.

J. L. SMITH, Pastor
C. C. BARRON, Clerk

CONCORD CHURCH about 12 miles north of Bastrop, La. one-quarter mile west of the Bastrop, La. and Hamburg Road, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

G. W. JONES, Pastor
GENEVA PETTIS, Clerk

GOOD HOPE CHURCH in Arkansas, about one mile north of Oakland, just across the State line, meets each second Sunday at 2:00 P. M.

G. W. JONES, Pastor
INA NEWSOM, Clerk

LIBERTY HILL CHURCH, located six miles northeast of Farmerville, La., ¼ mile east of Farmerville-Marion Highway, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30. Services are also held on each second Sunday at 10:30.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

UNION CHURCH, located near Linville, La., meets each third Sunday at 10:30 and on Saturday afternoon before at 2:30 P. M.

DAVID E. TURNER, Pastor

BETHEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located three miles N. E. of Steens, Miss. on Millport Road, meets third Sunday afternoons at 2 P. M.

H. C. MOON, Pastor
Hanceville, Ala.
EULIE McCOOL, Asst. Pastor
Steens, Miss.

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Baltimore, Maryland, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Street, near Calvert.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on Falls Road about twenty miles north of Baltimore.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

OLIVE AND HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Shokan, N. Y., meets each 2nd Sunday at 2:00 P. M. March through and including November.

DEACON E. K. ADSIT, Clerk

THE WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Warwick, Orange County, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are held at A. R. Vail's home, 55 Maple Ave., Warwick at 11 A. M.

THE MIDDLEBURG OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH meets at the home of Deacon Woodrow W. Bellinger, Duanesburg, N. Y. on fifth Sundays when the Lord so wills.

BEATRICE E. HOCKING, Clerk
419 Toll St., Scotia, N. Y.

THE WILSON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Wilson, N. C., meets each second Sunday at 3 P. M., and Saturday evening before at 7:30 P. M. The location is on the corner of Green and Jackson Streets.

D. B. STOKES, Pastor
PRESTON GAY, Clerk
P. O. Box 117, Black Creek, N. C.

FALLS OF TAR RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Rocky Mount, N. C., meets each second Sunday and Saturday before. Quarterly meetings March, June, September and December.

D. B. STOKES, Pastor
NINA PEARSON, Clerk

MOONS CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Providence, N. C. off Route 86, on Park Springs Road, meets each third Sunday morning at 11 A. M.

KENNETH KEY, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:00 P. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
ANA STEWART, Clerk
Granite, Okla. 73547

BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin, Oregon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes. Address communications to Lloyd Spikes, Elgin, Oregon.

ERNEST ATTEBERY, Pastor
SPENCER BURCH, Clerk

ROCK SPRINGS OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, meets each first Sunday at 10:30. The meeting house is located on highway 222, about one-quarter mile of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets by appointment on 5th Sunday afternoons.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

THE FIRST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH of Memphis, Tenn., meets each Sunday at 10:30 A. M., except the first three weeks in October when we dismiss for associations in the area. The church is located on Andrews Road, one block north of Highway 70 in the Ellendale Community, 7 miles east of Memphis.

H. R. PRINCE, Co-Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis
C. S. YOUNG, Co-Pastor
807 Pope St., Memphis
RICHARD H. CAMPBELL, Clerk

CANE CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and is located nine miles Southwest of Martin, Tennessee. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
ELMER PRINCE, Clerk
Clinton, Ky.

BORDEAUX PREDESTINARIAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Nashville, Tenn., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. The church is located on the old Hydes Ferry Road in Bordeaux, in Nashville. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

THE WALNUT FORK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Cottage Grove, Tennessee, meets on the second Sunday of each month.

R. L. VEAZEY, SR., Clerk

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Sharps Chapel, Tenn., meets at 11 A. M. each second Sunday. We are located about fifteen miles north of Maymardville, Tenn., on Big

Valley Road. There is a sign on the main highway showing where to turn.

N. E. LAY, Clerk

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, 815 Little York Road, Houston, Texas, meets the first Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a.m. for its regular monthly meeting and business conference; and each Sunday at 10:30 a.m. for regular meetings.

ELDER C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
ELDER JERRY A. EVERS, Asst. Pastor
JIMMY LINDSEY, Clerk
SISTER ROBBIE HOLLOWAY, Asst. Clerk

MT. ZION CHURCH, Rt. 2, Box 23, Weslaco, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.; and each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. seven miles West of Weslaco, on highway 83.

GERALD SHIPMAN, Pastor
E. B. AULT, Clerk

SARDIS CHURCH, Amarillo, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 10:30, in the home of E. J. Parsons, 1711 Lincoln Street.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, has moved their meeting place to 3629 8th Avenue. They meet each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Take College Ave. bus to Butler and Ryon; go one block West, then half block North to church.

C. U. LANDERS, Pastor

THE ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST CHURCH, Lawn, Texas, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
MRS. NOLA STEWART, Clerk

AN ARM OF PILGRIM REST CHURCH, meets each second Sunday and Saturday night before at Earth, Texas.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
A. A. CHAMBERS, Clerk

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets on the second and fourth Sundays of each month at 10 A. M., in the meeting house at intersection of Highways 123 and 87. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

GERALD D. SHIPMAN, Pastor
LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk

THE OLD SALEM CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS, four miles South of Teague, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

SAINTS REST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each Sunday at 10:30 A. M., at 2710 Engle Street.

C. C. MORRIS, Pastor
D. G. CONNELL, Clerk

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Winnsboro, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
E. M. REEVES, Clerk

The Churches of which Elder Lloyd Wall is Pastor meet as follows:

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each first Sunday at 11:00 a.m., and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30 p.m. Cash, Texas near Greenville, Texas.

GUY SISK, Clerk

FELLOWSHIP CHURCH, meets each serond Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a. m. near East Mt. out of Gladwater, Texas.

C. E. CAMP, Clerk

PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a.m. Bro. Paul Daniel, Asst. Pastor. Located on Hwy. 67 West of Texarkana, Texas about 28 miles.

W. B. BURKHALTER, Clerk

PROVIDENCE CHURCH, meets third Sunday afternoons and Saturday afternoons before at 2:00 p.m.

PLEASANT HOPE CHURCH, meets on the fourth Sunday and Saturday morning before at 10:30 a.m. 8 miles So. of Atlanta, Texas off F. M. 251.

H. S. HILL, Clerk

The churches of which Elder E. J. Lambert is pastor meet as follows:

PHARON, meets first Sunday morning and Saturday night before, 5 miles NE Hawkins, Texas.

REHOBETH, meets second Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles N ElDorado, Arkansas.

NEILA RYAN, Clerk
1601 N. Emmett
ElDorado, Arkansas

BETHEL, meets third Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles NE ElDorado, Arkansas.

JEAN H. BURNES, Clerk
606 N. Parkway,
ElDorado, Arkansas

GOOD HOPE, meets fourth Sunday morning and Saturday morning before 7 miles NE Winnsboro, Texas.

GERTRUDE JONES, Clerk
905 Y Drive
Winnsboro, Texas

ANTIOCH CHURCH near Camden, Arkansas, meets each 2nd Sunday at 2 o'clock.

Everyone welcomed.

ELDER E. J. LAMBERT, Pastor
306 Richardson St.
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

The following churches compose the Original Powell's Valley Primitive Baptist Association:

UNION, Union County, Tenn. meets 11 A. M. on the Sunday following the second Friday each month.

ODRA DAVIS, Moderator

MOUNTAIN CREEK, Claiborne County, Tenn. meets 11 A. M. on the Sunday following the third Friday each month.

D. R. CABBAGE, Moderator

DODSON'S CREEK, (Formerly Powder Spring Gap) Union County, Tenn. meets 11 A. M. on Sunday following the first Friday each month.

ODRA DAVIS, Moderator

FRIENDSHIP, Jefferson County, Tenn. meets 11 A. M. on the Sunday following the fourth Friday each month.

D. R. CABBAGE, Moderator

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located on Centreville Road, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia.

ARTHUR L. CARTER, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH meets each fifth Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is near Lucketts, about eight miles north of Leesburg, Va.

MRS. ROBERT DUKE, Clerk
Charlestown, W. Va.

MT. ZION CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, Virginia. on Route 50, between Washington and Winchester, Virginia.

MRS. RAY HAWLING, Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are aways glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Manassas 368-4857.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 8:00 P. M., Fairmont Park, 2023 Tidewater Drive.

WILLIAM L. EVERETT, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Qualla Road, Chesterfield County, Virginia, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M. Following are directions to the meeting house: South from Richmond at McGuire Circle, take Rt. 360 nine miles to "Longest" Service Station; turn left and go one mile, and turn right on No. 363 one mile to church.

ELDER D. L. SIMPSON, Pastor
MRS. WM. LEE, Clerk
4407 Clairton Rd.
Richmond, Va. 23234

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville, Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday night before, on State Road No. 1515 near Hughes Memorial School.

H. W. WRAY, Pastor
R. T. HOLLEY, Clerk

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each first Sunday at 11:00 o'clock. This church is located seven miles west of Gretna, Virginia on 605 one-half mile from Route 40. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
RUTH MATTOX, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Chatham, Va.

BELLVIEW PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday night before at 7:30. This church is located near Cave Springs about four miles from Roanoke, Virginia, one mile from 221. All visitors are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
J. A. SOWDER, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Salem, Va.

SANDY LEVEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each third Sunday afternoon at 2:30. This church is located on Route 635 about 5 miles south from Hardy, Va. 10 miles from Vinton, Va. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each fourth Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday before at 2:00 o'clock. This church is located on highway 623 about two miles from Fairystone Park. All visitors are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
CLAUDE R. HOPKINS, Clerk
908 Myrtle Rd.
Martinsville, Va.

BETHEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, of Predestinarian Faith, of Mossyrock, Washington, meets each 3rd Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday before at 2:00 o'clock. For information write the Clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. OPAL HUNTTING, Clerk
Silver Creek, Wash. 98585

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, Naches, Washington, meets at 11:00 A. M. each second Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the clerk.

BEN PRESTON, Pastor
The Dalles, Oregon
MILDRED A. SIMPSON, Clerk
Rt. 8, Box 506
Yakima, Wash. 98902

The churches of which Elder D. V. Spangler is pastor meet as follows:

MONTICELLO, on U. S. 29, between Greensboro and Reidsville, N. C. Services first Sundays at 11 o'clock.

REIDSVILLE CHURCH, Lindsay Street, Reidsville, N. C., meets each Second Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

DURHAM CHURCH, Durham, N. C. on Pacific Avenue, west side of town, just off of Highway 501 leading from Durham to Roxboro, N. C. Services every third Sunday at 11:00 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:00 P. M.

DAN RIVER, at Mayfield, N. C. on U. S. Highway 700 leading from Eden, N. C. to Danville, Va., about ten miles from Eden. Services each fourth Sunday at 11:00 A. M. and Saturday evening before at 7:30 P. M.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1975 NO. 2

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

REMINISCENCES OF MARY PARKER

(Concluded)

I now became permanently settled in the home of my youngest brother. I had used every available means to restore my health, only to fail.

I had striven in various ways to settle myself in business so that I might live and set up a home for myself independent of my relatives; for of all dreaded calamities the thought of being dependent for a home, a burden and in the way, was the most terrible. But I had failed in that as well as all else, and like Job, I could bitterly say, "That which I feared has come upon me." My disease now laid hold upon me with redoubled force, and with the most destructive results, undermining both strength of body and mind. I became afraid of myself, afraid that in some frenzied moment of temporary madness I might end it all, by taking my own life. Oh! those dark days of sorrow, when darkness and mid-night gloom settled down upon me, so that I dreaded the natural light of day. The sunlight mocked me; the songs of birds sank into my heart like death-knells; nature no longer held a charm for me; and no ray from the Sun of Righteousness seemed to penetrate the mid-night darkness. Intense as was my bodily pain, far more unbearable was the mental anguish that bore down upon me with its crushing weight. Nor was this mental state without its causes. I was the victim of a deep and bitter wrong; and like the Psalmist David, "It was mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who did eat bread at my table, who turned the heel against me." It was not enough that I, who had been so tenderly nurtured in a home whose rule was the law of human kindness, should now be homeless; it was not enough that I had lost father and mother and health; I had yet to endure the bitterness of knowing that one, whom I had so dearly loved and trusted, had become false, was my enemy, whose bitter rage left no stone unturned whereby they might do me an injury. "But thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." "Vengeance is mine; I will repay saith the Lord." I have lived to see my enemy's evil devices for the destruction of another thwarted, and returned upon themselves; and can sweetly say that, "many are the afflictions of the righteous, but out of them all the Lord delivereth them." Truly when my father and my mother did forsake me, then the blessed Lord took me up. "Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." "The Lord *is* thy Keeper." "The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil." "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth, and even forever more." What blessed promises, and how sure, coming from the God who changeth not, and who neither slumbers nor sleeps. Truly they who trust in Him "shall be as Mount Zion which cannot be removed, but

abideth forever." "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth even forever." Then what have those who are in Christ, who have put in Him all their trust, to fear? Not even Satan, with all his numerous host, hath power to injure one hair of our heads. "When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the *night* watches. Because thou hast been my help therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice." — Psalm lxiii: 6, 7. Oh! how sweet, after the fierce, black storms that have swept over my soul, when I sank down, down amid the waves of the mighty deep, that out of the depths my cry went unto the Lord, that He heard my voice, and that now I can lift up mine eyes "unto the hills from whence cometh my help," and that under the shadow of His dear sheltering wings I am now made to rejoice, while peace flows like a river into my soul, filling every avenue with the pure crystal waters from the river of God's love. Oh! this wondrous, unfailing river, which flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb. No wave, not even a ripple of sorrow or woe, shall ever disturb its pure crystal surface, and none but the redeemed and purified shall walk upon its shining banks. But "they that have gone up through much tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," shall drink forever from this pure, living stream.

Not very long after I became settled here the father of my brother's wife, who was a widower, living two miles in the country alone with his unmarried son, became very ill, and sister Lottie was called there to nurse him. My brother's business was then such that he was absent all of the time, and what to do I did not know. I engaged an elderly woman to stay with me who had nothing whatever to do but prepare her own meals, as days would elapse without my being able to take any nourishment but milk, yet her charges were so exorbitant and my funds now becoming so low, I could not long retain her. The pastor of the M. E. Church, coming in with the doctor one morning, heard me relating my sad story, and kindly offered to send one of his daughters to stay with me at nights. And thus I dragged along my wretched existence until New Years, when death ended the suffering of my sister's father, and I had the comfort once more of her society. The dropsy had now become one of my permanent symptoms; and though I continued to go about most of the time and assist some about the work, my person and limbs were swollen out of all proportions. One year passed in much this way. Then about the middle of the second winter I took a hard chill followed by high fever, delerium and entire unconsciousness. For sometime, though they said my eyes were wide open and staring, I could see nothing at all, and would call sister Lottie when she was right by me. Soon my left limb became one coninuous blister. The blister broke, and large quantities of water oozed out, leaving the flesh raw for month after month. The odor was so bad no one could stay near me. Finally the limbs healed so I could walk a little on crutches, but for about six months before I quit walking I would fall backward every time I tried to get up, and often when standing quite still I would suddenly lose my balance and fall heavily backwards to the floor. Sometimes I would be seized with hard cramps in the whole length of the limbs, until knots would form along the leaders. All the while I suffered more than tongue can tell. Well do I remember the last time I walked. I felt a chill coming on in the morning, and as it was warm weather, and there was no fire in any of the rooms but the kitchen, I determined to go there. Attempting to get up from my couch I fell backward. Calling the hired girl, I asked her to assist me to arise; she did so, kindly helping me to a seat near the fire. It was not long until I became unconscious, and I sat there in the kitchen all day long, conscious of nothing

save the awful burning and pains in my limbs. As night came on my sister and the girl came to help me back to my room. At every step it seemed as though sharppointed needles were piercing my feet and limbs, gradually, day by day, the flesh burst open, leaving great furrows. The flesh on the toes of the left foot fell off, leaving the foot a hideous mass. After a time the flesh again grew on the toes; but they were badly deformed, and soon again burst, and have ever since been a mass of ulcers. A greater part of all this while I labored under great darkness and depression of mind, longing for death above all things. The pain in my limbs and body was so great it were vain to attempt to describe it; I just sat on the bed or in the chair and cried most of the time. Gradually I grew worse, and day by day did my strength slip away, together with all hope of ever being any better in health. But as all my earthly hopes and reliances left me, one by one, and I watched the flight of earthly joys, experienced the spoiling of my earthly idols, there gradually stole over my broken spirits the calm, sweet influences of heavenly resignation The promised blessing of the Holy Comforter came into the chambers of my soul, and grace, amazing soul-sustaining, *saving* grace, gave me something of the "oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;" stripped of all earthly props, deprived of those earthly blessings which are so pleasant, and are so anxiously sought after, my dearest Lord and Saviour, threw round about me, even me, who am less than the least of all, His dear, everlasting arms. "He strengthened me upon my bed of languishing; He made all my bed in my sickness," and has truly, during all this wonderful pathway of almost unparalled suffering and trial, caused "patience to have her perfect work." Patience has been a gift to me, just the same as has His wondrous grace. "Tribulation," says Paul, "worketh patience." Men and women come to see me from almost everywhere. They look with pity and wonder upon my indescribable suffering. They say they know not how I endure it They give *me* credit for having great patience; all the while I know no great credit is due me. It is not through any power of mine that I sit here from day to day with a serene countenance, a greater part of the time "clothed and in my right mind," quietly and uncomplainingly enduring what no *human* being *could* endure *alone*. But it is all due to "Christ who dwelleth in me, the hope of glory," and because "I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me."

It was not very long after the utter breaking down of my health until my financial horizon began to darken. Notwithstanding the large sums paid to physicians, and nurses and other heavy expenses, I had kept within the bounds of my income. But soon a gentleman to whom I had loaned money failed; I had no security, so I lost both interest and principal. In less than a year a relative by marriage petitioned in court for a partition of the real estate, the rents from which the other heirs had agreed should be mine during my life. Attorneys were employed, and the whole affair put beyond the help or protestation of the other heirs before I had any knowledge of it. This was a severe blow to me; for those who wished to thus deprive me of what was, by verbal agreement, my right, were neither sick nor destitute. But the same sustaining power held me up, and He who causeth the lilies to grow, who feedeth the ravens and careth for the sparrows, has sweetly verified His blessed promise to care for me; and forcibly indeed have I realized that He never leaves nor forsakes those who trust in Him, and who cast on Him their cares.

Oh, what a safe resting place, what a calm, sweet retreat, have I found beneath the shadow of His sheltering wing! Stripped of all hopes of earthly joys, deprived of almost every source of earthly help and trust, I have had no source to which to look save "unto

the hills from whence cometh my help;" and truly "my help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth." Daily, hourly, does He shed the golden sunshine of His love and care about me. He causes blessings to flow into my darkened life like distilling dew, refreshing my drooping, weary soul and filling my heart with thanksgiving and praise. In the gift of a fragrant flower, in the offering of some choice article of food, and above all, in the love and fellowship manifested to me by my dear spiritual kindred throughout the land, I am enabled to see the marks of His dear hand, and to return thanksgiving and honor and praise and adoration to his wondrous, matchless name. Then, too, the kindness of the dear little family under whose roof I am placed, through all these years of such intense pain, in having borne with me, and in sharing with me the comforts of their pretty little home, has aroused within me emotions of deepest gratitude and love, not only to them, but also to the Great Giver of all good. The kindness and attentions of the people of this village have also been very cheering to me. From the beginning of my journey of life until now the love and watchcare of my beloved Saviour has been thrown about me; and with assurance I feel to say, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want;" and whether I be low in the valley of humiliation, sinking under the weight of affliction and sorrow, or upon the mountain top, viewing with rapture the glories and beauties of the fair land of Promise, my times are in His hand; and it is always the same dear Friend, constant and true, who leadeth me. Oh! to be led by the hand of such a wise and loving Father; to be encircled by His wondrous love; to be saved by the gift and power of His grace; what more could I wish for?

I am now about to close the open volume from which I have allowed the reader to read some of the pages of my past. Some of its turned-down pages, sealed with a woman's tears, in which are youthful hopes, and dreams and aspirations, have been left undisturbed and untouched; for even myself, when I came to those places, have felt to move softly, like one walking over the graves of the sacred dead. It will not be long now until this life, to all who now tread the earth, will be ended, and the places that know us now will soon know us no more forever.

"Swift as a weaver's shuttle speed our years;"
Nor would I stop their flight;
"No, hasten and bear me to that golden shore,
Where eyes shall cease weeping and hearts break no more."

How anxiously do I look forward to the coming of our Lord — to the blessed time when the very same dear, compassionate, loving Jesus, whom the disciples said, ascended into heaven, and who, the angels said, "would come again," and who himself said, "where I am there ye shall be also," will, with His own dear voice, call me home to the sinless land, to be with Him and all the redeemed family for evermore. Here we often yearn for the society of the saints, for the companionship of those we hold most dear, when our longing cannot be gratified, because an insurmountable space lies between and separates us; but on yonder shore there will be no intervening space, nor anything to interrupt or mar the sweet fellowship of kindred souls, Oh, may we all, by the power of His grace, by the indwelling and guidance of His Holy Spirit, be made meet to dwell with Him and all the Israel of God in glory. This truly is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

"Holy Spirit, guide and guard me,
Train me for the realms above;
There to share the endless glory,
Purchased by redeeming love.

Let not worldly joys ensnare us,
Empty, fleeting, false and vain;
Point me to that blissful region,
Where eternal blessings reign.

Where no more shall care or sorrow,
Prey upon my anxious breast,
Where's no light and no to-morrow,
But one changeless sceene of rest.

Holy Spirit, hover near me,
Til this life of death is done;

Then in Christian triumph bear me
To the Almighty, Three in One."

MARY PARKER

New Holland, O., May 11, 1891

(Having followed Sister Parker to the end of her Reminiscences, we will give in the March issue the account of her last days as written by Elder Benton Jenkins.)

THE YEARS PASS SWIFTLY

11458 Hartley Road,
Houston, Texas 77106

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a check for $10.00 for two year's renewal — use balance as you see fit. It seems that the past two years have gone by as a little dream.

I noted in the last *Signs* that two brethren wrote on how short life is. Yes, it seems it is too short for us to be talking about. I refer myself to Job 14:2: "He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not."

I can't do without the *Signs*, and look upon it as next to the Bible. I think that at times the Bible is the plainest book on earth for the ones it was written for, I often think of what Paul was preaching when he wrote to the Romans: "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit."

I know that God has not given me the wisdom to write wonderful letters as some of the brothers and sisters; but I will try to write on a scripture the way I believe it. Daniel 3:25: "He answered and said, Lo I see four men loose walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." I believe these three men who were placed in the fiery furnace, had nothing to fear, for they knew their God was with them. I also believe there have been a number of God's people in fiery furnaces — such as narrow escapes in life, and they realize their God has been with them. I know from my own experience. I have had several narrow escapes to where it might have been death or being crippled. Then I would realize that God was watching over me.

When we see these miracles, we wonder why it was this way. And if it is a mystery to us, we might well ask another question such as, Why the alligators did not get Moses when he was a small baby, placed on a raft on the river. Here I believe there was an eye from heaven watching over this baby.

My love to all the readers and writers of the *Signs*, and may the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ be with you all.

C. L. Berry

MANY UPS AND DOWNS

Rt. 1, Box 518,
Salem, Va.

Dear Friends:

Many years have passed since a previous incident occured, and some moments of joy and sorrow. I sometimes feel that I have been blessed all the days of my life, and among my memories is the respect and kindness you people have shown my "Baby" and me. I heard one of my sons talking sometime ago of the good old days when we were at home; and of the company we always had. He said one Sunday there were eighteen to eat dinner with us. If she had more company than she was expecting, it took only a moment to open up a few more cans. I heard her say at the end of the canning season that she had over five hundred put up. I don't think that anyone could have enjoyed her company more than she did.

When my health got bad I quit farming and did masonry, carpenter and other work, and when I got so I could not look after the stock, I had to sell them. Soon after World War 2, the last of our children were married and left us; and soon after this my "Baby" was sick for more than two months.

After many ups and downs, I got back in the valley again, and it seemed

that the bottomless pit was my doom. When I closed my eyes during the day or at night, I could see that awful fire. I was weak for want of sleep but tried to keep going. One night I had a dream similar to a previous one, and when I could get no farther, a voice said, "Look back." And when I did, the awful fire faded out, and a light appeared on the other side of me and there was that valley again, but transformed into a most beautiful place which cannot be told. I saw nothing above the timber line — just that dark valley transformed into light from above, to look back to.

Sometime later my "Baby" (wife) was sick again for three months, and did not want to go to the hospital as the doctor attending her wanted. Another doctor attended her many trips, and she finally agreed to go to the hospital. She came back home no better. Our home doctor attended her again, and after many xrays and specialists, she said, "Don't send me back to the hospital. Let me die at home." After awhile she finally got up again.

Written by a Follower, who was born March 30, 1890.

Moses Connor

(We remember well being in their home many times while pastor of Little Hope Church close by where they lived. It was a good place to visit. He had a saw mill close by the road to Little Hope Church, and on Saturdays he had a grist mill which he would close down, and come to the Saturday afternoon meetings, and after the meeting would start grinding again. We have not forgotten his and Sister Connor's love for the brethren and the meetings. — J.D.W.)

ROMANS 10:14, 15

Route 4, Box 21A
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

Dear Elder Hudson and family:

We hope that the Lord is continuing to bless you and family with good health and some sweet manifestation of his love and mercy.

You asked me to write you my views upon the following scriptures:

"How then shall they call upon him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things."
(Romans 10:14, 15)

I don't recall that my mind has ever been given to meditate upon these verses of scriptures, but the Lord willing, may the Spirit guide my mind and pen to write something upon them; and if so, you can be the judge as to its value.

Jesus, before his death and resurrection, had previously sent his disciples to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. "These twelve Jesus sent forth and commanded them saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into every city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. 10:5, 6.) Now let us take a look at the Gentiles before this time. "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." (Eph. 2:12.) How can these Gentiles, or the Jews who have now been broken off because of unbelief, "call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?" First, how does a man become qualified to preach the gospel of Christ? Is it by going to some man made seminary to learn from the teachings of men? No, but he must be called of God, be qualified of God, and sent of God before he can preach the true gospel in spirit and in truth. The Apostle Paul was

called and sent to preach the gospel. "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an Apostle." (Rom. 1:1.) He also says, "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but preach the gospel." (I Cor. 1:17.) Was this gospel that Paul was called unto and sent to preach, taught him by man in a seminary? Or was it revealed to him from above? "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Gal. 1:11, 12.) Does this not hold true today? A man must be called of God, qualified and sent of God before he can preach the true gospel of Jesus Christ in spirit and in truth: "for how can they preach except they be sent?"

When Jesus appeared unto his disciples after his resurrection, he said unto them, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 15:15, 16.) Notice the importance of believing. It doesn't say he that is not baptized shall be damned, "but he that believeth not shall be damned." Go ye into all the world, both Jews and Gentiles, rich and poor, wherever in God's providence you are called to go, and preach the gospel, the unsearchable riches of Christ: and this is the reason why God's chosen among the Gentlies have been given the sweet privilege of having the gospel preached to them. "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." (Eph. 2:13.)

"And how shall they hear without a preacher?" Now there is no hearing the word explained without preaching, for explaining the word is preaching. Through preaching we hear of Christ, of his blood, of his rigteousness, his mercy, his love, the redemption of his people, their perseverance, sanctification, and future glorification. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (I Cor. 1:21.) We all surely know that before a man can spiritually hear and believe, the Holy Spirit must first prepare the heart and ear, enabling him to hear, believe, and rejoice in the good news of the gospel. They must be drawn from their natural state dead in trespasses and sins, and quickened to divine life: given faith to believe the true gospel for "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:17.) The Lord commanded Peter saying, "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep."

"And how shall they believe upon him whom they have not heard?" Let us not deny that the Holy Spirit can work faith in the heart of a person who has never heard the word through preaching, and cause this person to call upon the name of the Lord: But the usual way is by working faith in them through preaching to believe and know God by hearing, *as spoken of in this scripture.* How do we believe, for instance, that George Washington was the first president of the United States? We believe that he was because of the report we have heard of him receiving into our natural minds and hearts through natural faith. We must be given spiritual life in our hearts to hear and believe spiritual things through spiritual faith. So to the Gentiles and Jews whose ears have been circumcised to hear and whose hearts have been circumcised to receive through the power of the Holy Spirit, will be given faith through preaching to believe upon God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. Faith is a gift of God and God gives faith usually through the preaching of the word by his called and qualified ministers. We cannot of ourselves produce one grain of faith, but it is a gift from God. "For by grace are ye saved through faith and that not of ourselves, it is a gift of God." (Eph. 2:8.) The preaching or call by God's ministers may be outwardly heard by many who are not chosen, who have not been given faith through preaching to receive the precious benefits of the gospel and rejoice

in them. "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith that heard it." (Heb. 2:2.) Can we not say then according to scriptures, that there is no hearing of Christ and salvation by him explained without preaching of the gospel as this is the usual way of hearing of God and Christ? God calls those that he has set apart for this particular work, sending them forth among his people to preach the good news and glad tidings of good things, giving hearers faith to believe and know God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. Let us always remember that whosoever is given faith to believe is born of God. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." (1 John 5:1.) What a wonderful mercy it is indeed that God's people are taught by the Holy Spirit to know God and Jesus Christ, for it is life eternal. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he hast sent." (John 17:3.)

"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?" It is impossible for one to call upon God in spirit and truth until after being born of the Spirit. "For God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24.) Before being born of the spirit we possess no living spiritual faith. "But without faith it is impossible to please him: "For he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. 11:6.) Now in reviewing the whole of verse 14, can we not say that there must be faith which is a gift of God before we can call upon the Lord? So before faith, there must be hearing; before hearing, there must be preaching; and in order for preaching, one must be called, set apart for this work qualified by the Holy Spirit and sent of God.

"As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." This is referring to the ministers of the gospel who are sent of God to preach the true gospel. Their preaching, accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit informs the hearers who have been given ears to hear, that instead of the punishment they deserved, Christ has paid the full price, in their behalf, for all their sins. Such an act of grace is found in the gospel of grace and mercy. If we have been made to feel our native misery, helplessness, and sinfulness, and our needy, naked, destitute condition has been made manifest to our conscience: how wonderful it is when we are given to hear the gospel come as a message of pure mercy from heaven, without money or price. When the Holy Spirit is pleased to apply the preached gospel to the sinners' heart, it will do something for him that nothing else could do. It gives him a precious hope, and personal interest in the blood and obedience of the Son of God, and brings salvation in all its fulness and blessedness into his heart. It is an inward, divine feeling which none but the people of God know anything about. This is when the preaching of the gospel comes to them *not in word only but in power*. The gospel draws God's people together, into the same household to feed upon the gospel which is Christ, the bread of life. It is life to the inward, spiritual part of man, the kingdom of God that is within you. Jesus said, "I am that bread of life:" "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever." (John 6:48, 51.) We must have spiritual life to desire spiritual food. Jesus said: "In me ye might have peace." This is the gospel peace when God's people are "raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." (Eph. 2:6.) The messengers or ministers of this doctrine are welcomed and esteemed by those who are given to hear it. How beautiful are the feet of them who bring glad tidings of good things, because it is designed to heal

the broken hearted, to deliver the captives, give sight to the blind, unstop the ears of the deaf, and "To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." (Luke 1:79.) To preach a Saviour so exactly suited to their circumstances causes God's people to have strong emotions of gratitude that God has sent the minister their way, and should they not say, how beautiful are the feet that brought you in their midst? Amen.

Elder Hudson, so many thoughts came into my mind while attempting to write upon these two verses of scripture that I hardly knew which thought to write on. Please forgive me if what is written is confusing, but give God the glory for anything that might be of any comfort to you.

An unworthy brother in hope of mercy,

(Elder) Joe L. Hamrick

THE MERCY OF GOD — SALVATION IN JESUS' BLOOD

God is Omnipotent, Omniscent, and Omnipresent, Almighty in power, Perfect in holiness, Equal in all his attributes: a God of right, a God of might; Righteous, Just, Holy, Merciful. His Justice is compatible with, or equal to his mercy; or to paraphrase it another way, his Mercy is compatible with, or harmonizes with, or does not in any wise violate, conflict with, or refute his Justice. Hence the apostle declares, "He will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy. He will have compassion on whom he will have compassion; and whom he will he hardeneth," and not because of any foreseen good or evil in the creature. For all we (the creature) like the sheep have gone astray; we had turned every man to his own way, and we hid, as it were, our faces from him, etc. And again, "For that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." "So death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." The children not yet born (manifested) having done neither good nor evil, it is declared, the elder shall serve the younger. "Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated, that the purpose of God according to election might stand." (Romans 9:11-14)

All, all, predicated upon the premise of, "because it seemed good in his sight." And all because it is compatible with His most holy, sovereign will. The sin and total depravity of all men is firmly established in the Scriptures. Therefore then no man in his own right, can by any thought, desire, or deed, merit the mercy of God; but, rather to the contrary, every fallen soul by sinning, merits everlasting shame. So if the justly deserved merit of the creature was meeted out in the strict vengeance, wrath, and justice of God without mercy, eternal ruin would be the just lot of every man.

If this doleful plight of all mankind were not true, then the doctrine of salvation by grace would be made void, and grace would be made of none effect. I well remember the place in my experience where I felt, tasted, realized, and acknowledged the Justice of God in my condemnation. In that dark hour it was beyond me to comprehend how that God could retain his justice, and yet pardon a vile, ungodly wretch such as I. I had long, weary months and years of suffering before I hope at long last I tasted pardon, peace, and full remission of sin in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ the Son of God. He who is called also the Son of Man by reason of His condescension, verily is God Incarnate, which by interpretation is God manifest in the flesh. I hope by faith, in the fullness of God's time, I was given to see that my condescending Lord, in his life, death, resurrection, ascension and glorification, made full, complete and ample atonement and justification in behalf of all the vessels of mercy, afore prepared (in the will and determinate counsel of God) unto glory.

Here in Gethsemane and the cross of Calvary, where vengeance strove and gripped and grappled hard with love, (see hymn No. 415 in Beebe's collection), I say it was in this conflict in His awful suffering, that the sins of all the chosen race were struck by the vengeance of God in the death of His Son, in the blood which flowed from the pierced side of Jesus, as the fountain which was opened in Jerusalem for sin and uncleanliness, half of which flowed toward the former sea (back to Adam the first man), and half toward the hinder sea, on down to the last chosen son or daughter of Adam's sinful race: in summer and winter it shall be. Here the vengeance of God was appeased: the wrath of God was satisfied, and the justice of God was vindicated. Here justice and mercy met together and kissed each other. Atonement was made for the sins of His chosen people — and their sins blotted out to be remembered no more forever.

If there was the slightest ability of the creature by taking thought, to elevate himself toward God, or if by good deeds, good tempers or good frames, one could work himself into the favor of God, then salvation would re reckoned of debt and not of grace. But thanks to thy name, thou blessed and only Potentate, Lord of Lords and King of Kings

"The whole is of God, to the praise of His grace,
Salvation reaches the vilest of all the sinful race.
My hope is thy blood and righteousness;
My glorious robe, my wedding dress." Amen

In hope of mercy through the blood and righteousness of Jesus.

H. J. Bird

(Submitted by Sister Bird. Elder Bird died in 1968)

"EXAMINE YOURSELVES"

A225 Emerson Street
Winona, Miss. 38967

Dear Elder Spangler:

Paul the Apostle of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ has said, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (2 Cor. 13:5).

This admonition, like all other New Testament writers, is given to the household of faith, and not to a people who have not faith. As the inspired writer was moved by the Holy Spirit to thus write these things to the Corinthian brethren, and as they were needful for God's dear people in apostolic times, so they are good for the church in our time. And no doubt when the Lord's chosen people are exercised by God given faith, they examine themselves, both doctrinally and experimentally: and, as faith is not always in lively exercise, and dark clouds of death and fears, and hardness of heart and unbelief arise, arise in us, then we like the poet are made to say, " 'Tis a point I long to know; oft it causes anxious thought: do I love the Lord or no, am I his or am I not."

It is at these times in our sad experience, that we can best witness with the Apostle, who says, "I know in me (that is in my flesh) dwells no good thing." It was by grace that Paul was enabled to say these things, so is everyone who is brought from the darkness of nature, into the life and light of God's saving grace. As distressing as these dark seasons are to the children of God, they are needful and profitable to His People, to make them see what they are by earthly nature, and what they (not can be or might be) must be in Christ. This is according to divine teaching. All men by nature are both dead and blind to the law of Christ; But God has said by the prophet Isaiah concerning spiritual Israel, "I will bring the blind by a way they know not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things

straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." (Isaiah 42:16) Jesus says, "I am the way the truth and the light, and these paths are the precious promises of God as they are taught in the scriptures of eternal truth. How sweet and precious are these promises when they are spiritually applied!

Our blessed Saviour has said that the kingdom cometh not by observation, but the kingdom of God is in you. Also the Apostle Peter as he was moved by the Spirit of Christ, says, "Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity." For, says the inspired writer of these things, "if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 1:5-8) The substance of these divine principles is Jesus Christ who is formed in you the hope of glory: for there must of necessity first be an inward work of grace in the heart of man before there is an outward work performed in faith and righteousness by the godly man. Also it is written, "I will put my laws into their minds and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." (Hebrews 8:10)

Bless us, O Lord, to examine ourselves to see wherein our strength lies. In hope of God's mercies.

Elder Louis Stewart

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2 CORINTHIANS 5:1

Dear readers of the *Signs of the Times;*

I have a desire to write some of my views on second Corinthians, the fifth chapter. I do not believe that this has anything to do with the resurrection of the dead.

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissovled, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." (2 Cor. 5:1)

The spirit of man is this house which is carnal, the tabernacle is the body of flesh, it does not say if the body were dissolved, neither the tabernacle, but the house of the tabernacle were dissolved, which is the carnal spirit of man. The building of God is the Spirit of immortality, and when we are clothed with the Spirit of immortality, then the spirit which is carnal is dissolved, being swallowed up of life. We experience these things in time.

"For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." (not in heaven, but from heaven:) "If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."

We know that there have been times in our lives that we were carnal minded, speaking things that we ought not, and evil thoughts which grieve us in the Spirit. We know that we are clothed with the house of this tabernacle when this is the case. When we are praising God, and all evil thoughts are gone, then we are clothed with our house from heaven, not only in heaven above, but in a heavenly place on this earth here below.

"To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." (Isaiah 61-63) This garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, to me, is being clothed with our house from heaven, then the house of this tabernacle is dissolved for that time being. "When sin is finished it brings forth death."

I believe in the resurrection of the

dead as much as any one, but this scripture is not referring to this subject. Read 1 Cor. 15th chapter for most of the details of the resurrection; and many other passages of scriptures, in the Old and New Testaments speak of the resurrection of the dead. I hope that I have written the truth briefly on the above scriptures.

J. R. Hollandsworth
Rt. 5, Box 104
Bassett, Va. 24055

ATTENDED PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

Rt. 2, Box 188
Littleton, N. C. 27850

Dear Brother Spangler:

I will try to write a few lines tonight. I know my subscription is past due, so please give me credit for $7.00, and use the rest as you see fit.

My husband and I visited the Pigg River Association in August. It was the first time we had been there, and we really enjoyed what time we spent with you. Everyone was so nice and friendly, and we felt so at home. We spent the night with Brother Clyde Johnson and wife. They were so very kind to us, — we will never forget them.

Brother Spangler, our little church celebrated her 200th birthday a few weeks ago. We were host to the Kehukee Association on its 209th session October 5, 6, and 7. We were blessed with beautiful weather, and with having the gospel preached by such able ministers. We had Elder Holland, Elder Agee, and Brother Carter from up your way. They all preached so very good, and we were glad to have them visit us. I think we had about 20 ministers, but I did not get all their names.

On Monday we were blessed to have Elders Wallis Smith, W. W. Taylor, Wm. E. Turner, C. D. Turner, S. R. Boykin, W. D. Godwin, and our pastor, Elder M. E. Garner. It was so wonderful to have them visit our little church. May God bless them all.

I just felt that I wanted to write you. We hope and pray to be able to visit again some day. With love to everyone.

A little one, I hope,
Mrs. J. L. Smith

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

HEBREWS 5:11, 14

"Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

As I come before you to look into the lesson being taught, I freely and I trust meekly, confess my shortcomings and lack of understanding in regard to temporal and transient things, spiritual and eternal things. If I have been translated out of the race in which a sinner runs for the things of the earth into the race of the witnesses of God's saving grace, I would beg that He make me single eyed that I not be looking to the wisdom of any man, but looking unto Jesus the author and the finisher of the faith of God's elect. I desire to love my fellow travellers, my yokefellows in the ministry, but I do not think that this given faith enables nor demands that I look to any man for guidance in divine things. These short comings, and this great lack of understanding, often brings me to wit's end, for I am not sure what is of faith, and what is of mine or some other man's wisdom. I confess this freely and without reservation, and yet I boldly say that the faith of God's elect as given to His people, does not leave the perfecting of that faith to me nor to any of my brethren. Too, I firmly believe that this faith is of the sort that saves and makes whole and does not fail (Luke 7:50; Mat. 9:22; Luke 22:32), for it is the gift of God; it is a fruit of the Spirit (Eph. 2:8; Gal. 5:22), and all salvation, and all fulness, and all being made whole, and all increase of faith comes from above (Isa. 43:11; 45:21, 22; Acts 4:12; John 1:16; Luke 5:31, 32; Col. 2:19; Luke 17:5).

As I go forth, I hope that it is because I am led forth in the right way. (Psa. 107:7) I realize that I am treading on controversial matters, and I am not, nor will I, enter into controversy for the sake of controversy. I also realize that perhaps I will venture into paths that may seem new to you, and if you do not understand me, I will, as blessed of God, humbly hear and answer your queries, but I will not pay any attention to your allegorical and hypothetical analysis of what I write.

First, I kindly ask you to go back and read the chapter down to the text that I have placed at the head of this article. Please notice that the writer had much to say about Melchisedec, who was none other than the Son of God. The determination that he had when writing to the body at Corinth is still with him, and how lamentable when any servant of the most high God has other things to write and preach. The things of God are hard to be uttered (not because they are hard in themselves, but) because of the weakness of the hearers. It was this way when the Saviour was preaching; it was that way when Paul was preaching and writing, and it is that way in our day. The writer is not out to extol the lack in those that he writes to, nor is he out to tell them that they are capable of improving their lot. If this had been his desire, he certainly would have been desirous of saying much about their ability. But he knew better than that. He knew that he, together with all of the children of God, did not have any ability save by the grace of God (John 15:4; Rom. 14:23; I Cor. 15:10; Heb. 11:6). He knew that the tree had to be made good; that the husbandman had to tend and cultivate and water and work effectually in it in order for it to produce. In no sense of the word could he pay any homage and adoration for such helpless creatures. But with Him there is everything they need, the writer had much to say. In one of his memorable farewells to his brethren he talks of (not what they can do to perpetuate their church, but) what the Lord is able to do for them. "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace (not the written nor spoken word, but the *logos* word, the Word that was made flesh), which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified (set a part)." (Acts 20:32).

I do hope that each of us remembers clearly with what hesitancy we approached the things of the kingdom of heaven in the early beginnings of our Christian experience. We knew (and if of God, still know) how little we knew of the things of God. Having just been found, being in need of instruction instead of instructing, we hesitated to express ourselves; having just come up out of the wilderness, we felt that it would be presumptious for us to handle the things of such a lovely kingdom before such a knowledgeable people. However, there is also sometimes found those that have not been taught to know their frailness and their lack. As the writer leads them into the things of the covenant of grace, into the new covenant which the writer stresses all the way, that they are under, he sets them right, ever pointing out the difference between the old, which was removed, and the new, which is established in the hearts and minds and souls of those that were bewitched by the alluring things found in the old.

Speaking harshly to struggling sinners being brought from under the law is not preaching the gospel; telling them that if they had good sense they would not believe such matters, is an automatic denial of the first and last principle of the doctrine of grace. Yet, the contending for the doctrine in love, does not give us the authority to refrain from sharp rebukes to those that would belittle or nullify the covenant of grace. Speaking smooth things in the gospel field is forbidden; passing by the giving of the gospel warnings, seeking to please men, all show that we are not servants of Christ. The minister who is the only pattern of ministers, in giving the inspired instructions to ministers, tells them that we are to rebuke sharply those that oppose themselves that they be sound in the faith. (Titus 1:13) If these rebukes are not pointed out in our charges to our present day ministers it is because that we have ushered in another gospel, which is not the gospel at all; it means that we have become wise above what has been written for our instruction.

We oftimes make fun of our friends because they tell people to prepare to

meet God. I am not afraid, nor am I ashamed to preach no more nor no less than what Amos was inspired to write more than two thousand years ago, to wit, "Prepare to meet thy God O Israel." (Amos 4:12) If we think that salvation is by our efforts; if we think that it is procured by deeds of ours; or if we think that God will get tired out by warning us of our evil deeds, then I tell you frankly, just as God spoke it by the prophet, it is high time for you to prepare to meet God. This was the import of Paul's letter to the Galatians; it was a warning to them of impending doom to the joys of their salvation because of their departure from the truth, and from the grace which they first professed to believe. This rebuke was the substance of what had been given to Israel in type. I do hope that we do not forget that each type always has a counterpart in the New Testament; that there is an anti-type for every type.

If we are New Testament ministers, we are called unto that according to the dispensation of God which was given unto us for the fulfilling the word (the logos word, definitely not the written or spoken word), and this word, which is The Word, *the only word,* that a minister is to preach (2 Tim. 4:2), and which Paul preached, and which I would preach, is to every man, warning and teaching them that they may be presented as being prefect in him. (Col. 1:28) That is what Paul is doing in the above text. This kind of preaching and writing is the work of the ministry. It is for the perfecting and teaching of the saints. A minister must be apt to teach among the saints. (Eph. 4:12, 13; 2 Tim. 2:24)

This work is the work of Wisdom, our mother. There is a lot of criticism (and perhaps justly) of women having too few or too many children, but Wisdom is justified of all of hers. She sees after every one of them. She gives to all, and upbraideth not. She not only is justified of her children (Mat. 11:19), but Her children bless her, and Her husband praises her. (Pro. 31:28) She looks well to her household. In our text we see this good treatment exemplified. While they ought to have been teachers, they needed teaching. Let us elaborate a little here. If the system that they had been under was true; if the doing of so much work gave such understanding, *then* they should have been teachers; if Israel, by receiving from God the oracles, could gain favors from God, then, by all this, they had need to prepare themselves to meet God; if salvation is predicated on complying with the old covenant, *then,* by all means, these Hebrew brethren should have been teachers. But not so. It does not come that way. They are in need of rebuke by this writer, as he also rebuked the Galatians by reminding them of their need for Wisdom's further teaching. He is further pointing out to them that they need milk. The reason that Inspiration mentions milk and honey for the diet of the children is because no man can produce either by his works. If you have a notion that any one of Adam's offspring can do so, you have my permission to try. But the sincere milk of the word is the gift of Wisdom, the Mother, the Dietitian, the Nutritionist, to Her children. This is Her work. She administers this to her children by her maidens. (Ruth 2:8, 22; Pro. 9:3) She administers the sincere milk of the word for growth in her children. This is not their decision, but it is hers. Even in earthly things, the natural way is that they feed their children that they may grow. This feeding is not in vain among Her children. As they grow, Her wisdom that formulated the first diet of the milk of the word for that growth, changes it from milk to strong meat at her discretion. I do hope, dear brethren, that none of you are endeavoring to take over the work of our Mother in raising her children from being a babe to being a man of full age. As Her husband and Her children rise up in praise to Her, may it be our Father's holy will that we feed and thrive on her formula and thus grow in grace and in a knowledge of the truth.

As the Good Shepherd, as our Mother Wisdom, feeds us on the solid matter, even on the strong meats of the gospel, there will be a day in and a day out taking in of these good provisions. She will bless them (Psa. 132:-15) to our use, and will bless us to use them, to take them as we take our yoke, sit at the table prepared for us. This taking and using these things which our Mother prepares for us, and prepares us for their reception, will cause development in the children. It is the most unique development that has ever been known. For every step of growth in this grace and wisdom and development, there will be an equal growth of fear that they are not what they should be. It produces exactly the opposite of what natural growth does. In that growth there is a continued boldness in going forth in that nature; not so in this growth, for the more he or she grows and develops in spiritual growth there is a greater hesitancy to claim that there is any growth, a greater fear, a reluctance more and more to claim any part of it.

Yet, this growth being in the Lord, it gives a coming without wavering, a faith that cannot be denied, a boldness to face any enemy, taking from him and her that is enjoying the health of well nourished children, any dread or fear of the consequences of growth into manhood. This development being from Wisdom and the feeding which she administers to them, causes them to put away childish things, to know that it is not theirs to administer the things of the kingdom of heaven, but that we have all growth, and all other things of the kingdom, as coming down from Wisdom to usward.

As we in the natural realm of existence, had five senses, and as our natural mother gave unto us that which developed these senses, even much more does our Mother Wisdom develop our spiritual senses to where that which concerns us is more and more being perfected from above. (Psa. 138:8) In these natural senses we may be deprived of many of them, even to the extent that we do not have any recognition of any of them. But this is not true where Wisdom feeds us that which is necessary to seeing, and hearing, and smelling, and tasting, and feeling the things of the kingdom of heaven. When drinking milk, not being skillful in the word (not work) of righteousness, we oftimes would even join a citizen to feed swine, but when Wisdom gave us strong meat our *feeling* went to our Father's house of plenty; when drinking milk, we might well leave our first love and again imbibe the unwholesome doctrine of receiving the Spirit by the deeds of the law. (Gal. 3:2, 3)

Do you remember when your sight of Him was through the lattice work of the window of your soul? If you can go back with me to those days in which you sought to see Him and the glimse was so dim that you felt that He was not for you, then you are on your way to heaven, and you will walk softly in the presence of your Mother Wisdom and her other children. Ah, how Mary's sense of sight was increased; Ah, how the two that walked towards Emmaus had their sense of seeing cleared (Luke 24:30, 31; John 20:16) and had their eyes opened. Oh, that this poor beggar might have his sense of seeing exercised by the strong meat of the gospel that I might be as the certain Greeks, desiring to see Jesus. And I tell you without fear of any justifiable remonstrance that the strong meat will be given you by our mother until your sense of seeing will be developed to where you will cry as did Mary, ,"Master" (John 20:16), and as did Thomas, "My Lord, and my God." (John 20:28) Are you afraid that your hearing is imagination? If so, cheer up. Not only does He open the deaf ears, but He gives the ear of hearing what the Spirit says to the churches. If language means anything (and it does, for God always employed good language in inspiring men to write) it is a sad picture, a sad day when we have either left our first love, or never was acquainted with Him, to

say that the gift and sense of hearing has been left in the hands of babes, for mark my words well, as long as we are claiming credit for salvation of any kind, we are drinking milk and we are thus unskillful — we do not know the difference between good and evil. Ah, yes, little one, you feel your dull hearing; and my heart rejoices that maybe I have had my sense of hearing made so sensitive that I know that when you say that, that you and I both are recipients of strong things which moves us in taking the gift of Wisdom as our gift to the end that we know good and evil — that neither one of us desires the evil that is found when we are unskillful, which always says, Unto us is given the gift of increasing the uses of our spiritual senses. This strong meat will follow us in this life as administered by Wisdom, and we shall one day hear and rise and live with Him in glory.

Ah, yes, the sense of smelling will increase as Wisdom gives us strength. We, while unskillful in the word of righteousness could, like the Galatians, or like the Hebrews, go to the stink of dead works, or, if like those that went away from the Saviour's preaching, leave and follow the gathering place of every foul beast of the earth, but if we ever got to where we have our sense of smell changed and we smell the fragrance of the dressed child (church), and the rising of the sweet smelling myrrh and incense, and the perfume of the Lily of the valley we will know the difference between good and evil, and will prove them both, and hold to one and shun the other.

Ah, do you remember when you were, as the bee, from flower to flower, trying this elixir and that, and not knowing which was truth and which was false, which was good and which was evil? And when all of the tastes had proven to you that they all were potent with death and blindness, and evil smelling and loathsome things of degradation, and your soul cried unto the Lord that you might be given to see and hear Zion sing; that you might be given a crumb of Bread to taste and a Plant of renown to perufme your bed? If you remember this sad hour you are my brother and my sister; and if there has been an hour or a moment when you could say from the depth of your soul, to Him that comes quickly, "Even so Lord come," then I feel to hope that all of our senses are being exercised towards a better country, even to heaven and immortal glory.

In conclusion, dear reader, if these things are ours; if our Mother has fed us on living food, on living Bread (which is meat and drink indeed) we have been separated from the world in our feelings. Oh, yes, we are often dejected in our feelings and cry out against ourselves when, as a matter of fact, it is a growth in grace, it is a weaning more and more from the things of time, teaching us more and more to have less confidence in ourselves, and to trust Him forevermore. This change of our feelings from running after evil things (false doctrines and idols) has been, it is today, and it will be every tomorrow still to come, in the hand of our Mother and she will keep us feeling after and running to Him in every hour of need. As a little one, we feel after Her and Her Husband. (Acts 17:24, 27)

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Bainbridge, N. Y., Jan. 3, 1881.

DEAR BROTHER: — As I have never asked your views upon any portion of scriptures, will you please indulge me this once and give your views on Genesis iii. 22-24, particularly the twenty-second verse, and oblige one that would know nothing save the truth as it is in Jesus. It has been on my mind much, and I have no light on the subject. I hope you are enjoying a happy New Year, and may it be the Lord's will to spare you and to sustain you in wielding the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, is the prayer of your unworthy brother,

JEROME BUNDY.

REPLY

We cannot in truth say that we have no views on the subject presented in the text on which our brother desires us to write, but whether the publication of our views will prove edifying to our readers, or be considered speculative and unprofitable, we cannot tell. We do not feel satisfied that we have a right to withhold such views as we have when called upon by brethren to express them. We do not exact or desire any to indorse or receive our views any further than they shall find them sustained by, and in harmony with the inspired scriptures of divine truth. We are deeply sensible of our liability to err, and therefore desire that our readers may closely, calmly, and honestly scrutinize whatever we publish as our views, and always bear in mind that all scriptural instruction must come from him who teaches as never man taught. The text reads thus:

"And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever; therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden, cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

"And the Lord God said." With sacred reverence and godly fear it becomes us to accept the words which come to us from the mouth of the Lord God, at the utterance of whose voice the heavens and earth, with all created things sprang into being. With profound silence and submission, it becomes us to bid every doubt of its truth depart. All that is contained in the sacred scriptures demands our most prayerful consideration, and it is infidelity to dispute what God has spoken to the fathers by the prophets, or to us in these last days, by his Son. But when any portion of the sacred testimony is thus presented, it seems to call for more than ordinary consideration. Were it not a matter of the most vital importance to us, we cannot think we would be reminded that the words proceeded immediately from the mouth of the Lord God. The most sacred names which God has appropriated to himself, are applicable to none but himself. He is the Lord, having unbounded dominion over all things in heaven and earth, holding the destiny of all beings, all events and all worlds in his almighty grasp, and as God, the supreme Author of our being, upholder of all things, preserver of our lives, and giver of every perfect gift, possessing in himself all the infinte perfections or attributes of his most holy being, and he is the only object of worship, adoration or unlimited trust and confidence.

With this expressive and doubt-silencing introduction, "And the Lord God said," his words are recorded, "Behold." The Lord God commands those to whom the mandate comes, to behold! To note well, duly astonished at the weighty import of a wonderful event, in which man is humbled, and expelled from the Eden in which he dwelt, and debarred forever from all human ability to put forth his hand and take and eat of the tree of life. Cherubim and a flaming sword meet all the vain efforts of sinful man at every point. The same unchangeable God whose potent words called all things into existence, now utters the irrevocable sentence, which drives apostate man from Eden; forbids that he shall have power in himself, by willing or doing, to extend his hand to help himself to the tree of life or to do anything whereby he can gain admittance to the tree of life, or to its virtue to secure to himself everlasting life. The awful reality of the utter inability of man to secure to himself a blessed state of immortality by anything that he can do, we think is clearly taught in the personal experience of every heaven-born subject of the saving grace of God. When first arrested by a divine

power and dragged forth, like Adam, from our hiding among the trees of the garden, and stripped of our fig leaf covering in which we had vainly sought to hide our nakedness and shame from the searching eye of God, how persistently did we try to find some way of access to the tree of life, but at every attempt we were met by the angel of the divine presence in his holy law, and the flaming sword, repelling and keeping us back until we were thoroughly convinced of the wretchedness of our helpless and hopeless condition. The cherubim and flaming sword still keeps the way of the tree of life; man's hand and arm are still impotent, and nothing short of the almighty arm of God, made bare for our salvation, can meet the flaming sword, or can minister to any of the sons of men the right to the tree of life. And notwithstanding all the boasted power of free agency, free will, and human ability claimed by the infatuated children of men, none but the Savior of the poor lost sinners can unbar the gates of death, and bring life and immortality to light through the gospel. But still a greater wonder opens to our sight, while we obey the voice of God, "Behold." In deep amazement we inquire, How, or in what sense is the transgression and expulsion of Adam, like one of the *"us,"* in the knowledge of good and evil?

In order to an understanding of this mystery, it is necessary to inquire after the meaning of the plural personal pronoun *us*. We are forbidden to believe there is a plurality of Gods. "Hear, O Israel. The Lord our God is one Lord." — Deut. vi. 4; Mark xii. 29. "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus." — 1 Tim. ii. 5. "Now a mediator is not a mediator of one ,but God is one." — Gal. iii. 20" "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." — 1 John v. 7. "Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there it no God. — Isa. xliv. 6. "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God besides me." "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited; I am the Lord, and there is none else." "And there is no God else besides me; a just God and Savior; there is none beside me." "For I am God and there is none else." "I am God and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me." — Isa. xlv. 5. 6, 18, 21, 22, and Isa. xlvi. 9. These scriptures, we beeive, fully establish the often repeated declaration of God himself that there is but one God, that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, are but the one only living and true God. Yet the plural form of the pronoun US is used in giving us an account of the creation of the heavens and the earth; not to express or imply that there was more than one God, but in the beginning, when God created the heavens and earth and all that in them is, the Word which was with God, and which was God, was, in his Mediatorial Sonship, with God in all that was made or executed, for he is, not only in his eternal Godhead, but also as the Son of God, identified, and identical with the Father, for he is before all things, and by him all things consist. He is both God and the *begottten Son* of God, full of grace and truth. He is both God and with God. — John i. 1-2. This "Only begotten Son of God" is the same that in the beginning was with God, and was God, and was, in the fullness of time, sent into the world, made flesh, made of a woman, made under the law, "made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death," who was delivered for our offenses and raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, and forever lives to make intercession for his redeemed people. He is God, in the most full and unlimited sense of the word, and as such is declared by the Father, for, "unto the

Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever." — Psa. xlv. 6-7; Heb. i. 8. But not another God distinct from the Father; for as we have seen, God himself declares, There is no other God. The Father is in him, and he is in the Father, and he and the Father are one. He that hath seen the Son, in his divine fullness hath seen the Father also. Truly hath the inspired apostle written, "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, believed on in the world, received up into glory." — 1 Tim. iii. 16. It was not one distinct equal third part of God, that was manifested in the flesh, "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." — Col. ii. 9. God is not divided. The Father, and the Holy Ghost in all the fullness of eternal perfection dwells in him. As the only begotten Son of God, he is not only one and identical in the God head with the Father but he is also one with his body the church. "The head of the church is Christ." Without this head, the church as the body of Christ could not exist, as no body can live in the absence of its head. "And the head of Christ is God." — 1 Cor. xi. 3. So Christ, if it were possible to separate him from his supreme Godhead, would cease to be a Savior, for he has said to the Jews, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." — John v. 19.

Now, that Christ as the only begotten Son, and mediatorial head of the church, was in the beginning with God is, as we think, fully proved by the direct testimony of the scriptures. "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature; for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist: and he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell." — Col. i. 15-19. In perfect consonance with his direct testimony are the words, Heb i. 1-8, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom he made the worlds; who, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the First-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." Here, let us observe, both the eternal Godhead of Christ, and his mediatorial subservance to the will of the Father, are clearly set forth; as God his throne stands forever and ever, while as a Son, he learned obedience to the will of the Father. Now, both as God, and as the Mediatorial head of the body, the church, he is manifestly both the Word that was with God, and the Word that was God. And this, to our mind, explains the use of the words, Let *us* make man. We are informed, Gen. i. 1, that, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," and in Heb. i. 2, that God made the worlds

by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, and in John i. 1-3, that all things that was made, were made by him, whose name is called "The Word of God," — Rev. xx. 13. By the Word, which in the beginning was with God, and which was God. In whom was that Life which was and is the true Light of men. Here then, we infer, is the ground on which the plural form of the pronoun *us* is used. God made the worlds by his Son, who in the beginning was the embodiment of the Life and Light of all those who were chosen and blessed in him before the foundation of the world.

Now, to return to the inquiry of brother Bundy, "Behold the man (the earthy Adam) has become as one of *us*." Not in purity, infinity or in glory, for he had sinned, and death had passed upon him and all his undeveloped posterity, but in the one particular named, "to know good and evil." He had eaten of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. In this "Adam was the figure of him that was to come." and his following his bride in the transgression, prefigured, foreshadowed and typified the mediatorial work of him by whom and for whom all things were made, who is before all things, and by whom all things consist. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, we take to be emblematic of the law which Adam transgressed; that law was holy, just and good, and by it also is the knowlege of sin, or evil. By eating the fruit of the law, a knowledge of the purity of God is given, and also of the exceeding sinfuless of sin. While man continued in innocence he knew not the terrors of the law, but when the woman was beguiled and deceived and in the transgression, she could not return to the state which Adam was in, and from which she had fallen, and, the woman which God had given to be with him, must have been forever separated from him, and the purpose of God in that gift thwarted, if Adam, who was not deceived, had not followed her, and from her hand received the fruit of the tree. Admitting Adam to be the figure of Christ, and Eve of the church, which is the body, flesh and bone, of Christ, figuratively speaking, the man in following the woman, and taking her transgression on himself, was, if we rightly understand the figure, *like*, or emblematic of the Son of God, the Mediator and Savior of his people, coming under the law to redeem them that were under the law. Jesus was not deceived, nor was it by accident that he was made sin for us who knew no sin, and became the sin bearing sacrifice, in the redemption of the church, who, after the similitude of Adam, could say as Adam said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." — Gen. iii. 12. Thus, if we rightly understand the figure, Adam in receiving the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil at the hand of his wife, completed the similitude, and became the perfected figure of him that was to come, and so like one of the *us*, named in the text.

Adam could prefigure Christ thus far, in coming under the law and assuming all its penalty, but he could go no further; here the figure ends, for Adam could not redeem, wash, purify or cleanse himself or bride from the guilt and pollution of sin. And now the interdiction is irrevocably announced, "And now lest he (man) put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live forever; therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man, and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden, cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

Here is already set forth the total inability of mankind to put forth their hand to take of the tree of life, or to even the fearful consequence of sin. Adam is the figure of him that was to come, not only in coming under the law, and in learning its penalty, but in his progenitive headship, as the em-

bodiment of all his earthly posterity, he was figurative of the second Adam, who is the Lord from heaven, as the life and righteousness of all his spiritual seed which were chosen in him before the foundation of the world; but of this we will not now write. May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, and enlighten the eyes of our understanding that we may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and may he preserve us from error, for his name's sake.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe January 3, 1881)

ORDINATION OF DEACONS

Pursuant to the request of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, Pittsylvania County, Va., a Presbytery met October 12, 1974 to look into the qualifications of Brethren W. C. Hamlett and H. C. Dalton, as Deacons, and if found qualified to ordain them to the full work of a Deacon.

The Presbytery was formed by choosing Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator, and Elder J. L. Bocock, Clerk. The Presbytery was composed of the following Elders and Deacons: Denver Simpson, Noel Conner, R. L. Goad, L. J. Brammer, C. B. Davis, Raymond Payne, Julian Williams, Clay Brown, Wyatt Simpson, A. C. Gibson, George Powell, Silas Payne, Richard Stegall, Burnell Williams, L. R. Willis and Clarence Stegall.

The deliberations were begun with praise and prayer by Elder Noel Conner, and after the questioning, the Presbytery being well satisfied, proceeded with the laying on of hands on motion, second, and unanimous vote. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Raymond Payne. Elder Julian Williams delivered a very impressive charge.

On motion and unanimous vote Deacons W. C. Hamlett and Homie Dalton were delivered back to the church as duly ordained Deacons of our faith and order. It is our belief and hope that these dear brethren will finish their course with joy, and thus hold out to the end as good and faithful servants of Almighty God.

These deliberations were dismissed by prayer.

Elder O. K. Tench, Mod.
Elder J. L. Bocock, Clerk

OBITUARIES

EMMA E. BEACH

Our dear and beloved Sister of like faith, Emma E. Beach, was born June 14, 1906, and departed this life on May 4, 1974. Even though we miss our dear Sister very much, we feel to say with Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Sister Beach was the daughter of the late Ichabod Hamilton and Georgianna Evans. She was married in November of 1924 to Nolan Beach, and to this union there were no children. She is survived by one brother, Dewey Evans, of Mardela Springs, Md., and one sister, Minnie Gambrell, who resides in the John B. Parsons home in Salisbury, Md. There are several nephews and nieces that survive.

Sister Emma was baptized July 11, 1948 by the late Elder Harold M. Bennett, and her membership was and remained with the Rewastico Church until her death. The writer conversed with her many times and always found her a strong believer in salvation by grace, and always found her expressing her belief that God predestinated all things before the beginning of time. The writer visited her many times in the hospital, for she was there several times, and she always seemed to be reconciled to her lot here in this life. We miss her very much but also feel that God has an appointed time for all things, and it is the prayer of the writer that those who survive of the family, and all who knew her so well, may be blessed to feel that their loss is her eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Ullrich Funeral Home in Sharptown, Md., and her body was laid to rest in the cemetery in Mardela Springs, Md.

Arthur R. Warren

WILLIAM DALLEN POTTER

On May 11, 1974, God in His Wonderful Mercy called out of nature's dark troubles, into the marvelous light of Paradise, this son, William Dallen Potter. Brother Potter was born February 28, 1895, in Pamlico County, N. C. to Cason and Caroline Voliva Potter, thus making his stay of earthly existence, 79 years, 2 months and 11 days. On December 21, 1919, he married Emma Mae Sawyer, and born to this union were 5 children.

His early life was spent in eastern North Carolina, he loved the waters of the earth and lived much of his life on it. He was a fisherman by trade, and he and his family knew poverty, and hardship as did many families of his day.

He was a sinner and knew it and lived many years convicted of sin without hope. He felt himself a failure, in business and in life and went many years with his head bowed down feeling he had no real friend in this world or in heaven. But God who gave him this tremendous feeling of guilt also brought sweet deliverances to him in due season. He gave him a sweet hope in His Mercy, and caused him to go home to his friends saying, "How Great Things God had done for him." He was received into full fellowship of the Bethlehem Church at Columbia, N. C. and was baptized by Elder A. L. McKinney. Then for a season he felt he really knew the joys of the Lord.

September 15, 1962 brother Dallen moved his membership to the church at Norfolk, Va. Most of his family lived in this area and until his death he was blessed to enjoy the sweet fellowship of God with the brethren at Norfolk, and was blessed to visit many of the churches in Virginia and North Carolina He was firmly established in his belief, in the Gospel of the Kingdom, salvation by Grace and Grace alone, the eternal election of God and the glorious resurrection of the dead. He had no patience with any doctrine that did not always praise the name of God and abase man, and despised with a passion the doctrine of "self works."

He leaves to mourn his passing the brethren of Norfolk Church, many other brethren in the Lord's earthly Kingdom, as well as his precious family. These consist of his wife, Sister Emma Potter: three sons, Cameron L., Marvin Ray, and William D. Potter, Jr.; two daughters, Sister Ruby P. Coward, and Sister Edna P. Mears: eleven grandchildren and five great grandchildren. All of these precious heirs of his body live in the Norfolk, Virginia area. He is also survived by his darling sister, our sister Sudie P. Flynn of Newport News, Va. He lived to see his wife, his two daughters and a precious granddaughter, sister Jean Whitehurst, as members of the church he loved so much.

Brother Potter never knew the riches of this world, and such that he had, especially in his last years, were given to him by those who loved him, even the suit he was buried in was a gift from a precious daughter-in-law, Vashti B. Potter, and we believe that he is now clothed by one who loves him, even the Lord Jesus Christ, and he will be wearing this beautiful robe of righteousness when he is awakened to the "Joys of the Lord." The faith that God gave was a beautiful thing to behold, as we would observe him in the worship services that he loved so much, we could know his hope was strong and that someday, across that great divide on the other side of death's cold waters, he would bask in the sunlight of God's eternal love forever.

Oftimes as we would hear him sing, we felt the happiness that caused his face to glow as he sang, "How Firm a Foundation, Rock of Ages, and Love Divine." And as he would tell of his experiences of Grace, was best summed up by David when he wrote, "Lord when I behold thee in righteousness and wake in thy likeness, I'll be satisfied."

His funeral was conducted by Elder W. L. Everett his pastor, and A. P. Mewborn, and his body handed back to the earth in Rosewood Cemetery, Virginia Beach, Virginia to await the glorious resurrection. This is most beautifully described by Ezekiel: "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out your graves."

Written at the request of the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder A. P. Mewborn

BROTHER ALVIS LAWRENCE HANEY

It is with a very deep sense of loss I endeavor to write the passing of our dear Brother, Alvis Lawrence Haney. May the Heavenly Father bless us, the church at New Hope Primitive Baptist Meetinghouse, Rockingham County, N. C. to bow in humble submission to His holy will. We are so saddened to know we will no more see Brother Haney's humble face in our midst.

On the morning of August 15, 1974 Brother Haney was found by his son, Charles, sitting in his rocking chair in his home, peacefully sleeping in eternal rest. He appeared so relaxed and peaceful, he was called to, as to awaken.

We feel sure our precious brother will be awakened by the voice of his Saviour on the morning of the Resurrection — a voice he has already heard. Elder Thornton Manly spoke so beatutifully of Brother Haney's experience of hearing the call of his blessed Lord, the call that hastens His little ones to Come, Yes, come and acknowledge a merciful God that saved a thief on the cross. Brother Haney had a wonderful experience concerning the thief on the cross, that was promised to be remembered in paradise. Many times I've had a glimpse of his smiling face at the mention of the thief at the right hand of Jesus by his pastor, Elder D. A. O'Bryant.

Brother Haney is survived by one daughter, Cora Haney Griffin, South Hill, Va.; two sons, Carlton, of Virginia, and Charles of Reidsville, N. C.; five sisters: Gertrude H. Paschal, Ollie H. Brands, Evelyn H. Chilton, Edna H.

McCubbin and Dora H. Moore; three brothers, R. C., C. A., and R. F. Haney, a faithful deacon in our church.

Written as requested in our conference meeting the first Saturday in September, 1974 by Fannie Sue Ware.

Read and approved before our church Sunday, October 6, 1974, and permission was given to send a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Eld. D. A. O'Bryant, Mod.
Sister Louise Cobb, Clerk

BROTHER DANIEL CLAYTON

Malmaison Church has, according to the purpose of an all-wise God, seen a loving and faithful member of our Church taken home to glory, to that upper and better kingdom, where the saints of God will never taste death, pain, sickness or sorrow; but shall forever see Jesus as He is, and be satisfied.

Brother Daniel Clayton passed from this life August 24, 1974 at the age of 75 years. He was the son of John and Lucy Henderson Clayton. His survivors include his wife, Carolina Swanson Clayton; three sons and three daughters; one brother and one sister. His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Mr. Charlie Shelton. Burial was at the Newton Family Cemetery, Hurdle Mills, N. C.

Brother Clayton expressed to the writer a beautiful experience of how he was given to know that he was a weak sinner, but God a merciful Saviour. He spoke boldly of his hope in Christ, yet showed an humbleness and fearfulness as he spoke of his love for the church. We feel the church was greatly blessed to have fellowship with him for the short time he was a member.

May the abiding love, grace, and mercy of God be with his family and with those of us who remain, to the extent that we can believe he is resting in a Saviour's love eternally.

Humbly submitted,
Burnell P. Williams

GUY T. WILLIS

In sadness and heartache I attempt to write a few words in memory of my brother, Guy T. Willis. He was born February 11, 1912, and died August 6, 1974. He joined Springfield Primitive Baptist Church September 28, 1952, and was ordained Deacon October 7, 1967. He was faithful to the church, and performed his duties well. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace, having no confidence in the arm of man. He and I spent many hours talking of the goodness and love and mercy of our God, and the many things we could feel He had done for us. I know we will miss him very much, yet knowing our wonderful God never makes a mistake.

He leaves to mourn their loss, his wife, Sister Una Willis, one son, Virgil, and one grandson; three brothers, Martin, of Danville, Va., Tillman and Louis, of Gretna, Va.; four sisters, Mrs. Rebecca Mayhew and Mrs. Ludemer Mayhew, both of Hurt, Va., Mrs. Bessie Worsham and Mrs. Ethel Worsham, of Altavista, Va.

His funeral was conducted at the Springfield Church by his Pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, who spoke many comforting words.

His body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Gretna Burial Park, to await the second coming of our Lord.

Louis R. Willis

IN MEMORIAM

Be it resolved that we, the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church at Ruffin, N. C. hold sacred the memory of our dear beloved brethren and sisters in the faith that was once delivered to the saints, who have departed this life of sin and sorrow into the New Jerusalem, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens where no sickness or sorrow will ever enter.

1st. We miss them so much in our Church services, but we believe our loss is their eternal gain.

2nd. We bow in humble submission to His divine will who makes no mistakes, and feel we should not grieve for them as for those who have no hope.

Be it further RESOLVED, that the names of those deceased be listed in the Memoriam, a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* and copied on our Church record.

Deceased

Brother A. M. Rice, August 24, 1973.
Sister Mary Spangler, November 25, 1973.
Brother Arch Spangler, December 20, 1973.
Brother Robert Davis, January 27, 1974.

Done by order of the Church.

By: W. C. Vipperman, Church Clerk.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143 DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1975 NO. 3

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ELDER H. M. CURRY IN 1880

Hopewell, Ky.
December 7, 1880

Dear Brother Beebe:

Since God by his kind providence put into my hands some copies of the *Signs*, I am resolved to write you. Although I feel sharply my unworthiness and utter weakness, I trust that I have been brought by sovereign grace to know the Lord.

I am yet quite young, but have read with intense interest the word of God, and have found it so different from what I have always been taught from the pulpit, that I have been greatly perplexed. All the preaching I ever heard was so different from my feelings and the scriptures, that I sometimes believed that all was heresy, and that God's church was not represented here; but when my own weakness and sinfulness were brought to view, how dare I denounce those wise and good men as heretics? When I dared assert my faith I was derided and called a heretic, and informed that of all heresies, both ancient and modern, none such had ever made its appearance. Thus things went on for years, until I received your excellent paper, and there I found the same precious faith so ably set forth and so earnestly contended for, that I exclaimed within myself, God has a people, and I have found them. Since then I have received some numbers of your paper, which came laden with choice dainties and rich luxuries to a hungry soul. I am going to subscribe to your paper as soon as I can, for I love the doctrine it advocates and the people it represents, although we have neither here.

Do with this as you think best, and I will send you something more some day, for I want to help swell the anthem of salvation by grace, and grace alone.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

H. M. Curry

(We were glad when Sister Wood discovered the above by Elder Curry in the January, 1881, *Signs*, for it gives account of his early life when brought into the knowledge of the truth, which led to his writing the wonderful articles which appeared some years later in the *Signs*; and re-published a few years ago.

Should anyone know of other articles or letters written by Elder Curry, which we have not published, we would like to receive them. — J. D. W.)

NO PATIENCE WITHOUT TRIBULATION

704 Oakland Avenue
Rocky Mount, N. C. 27801
January 1, 1975

Dearly Beloved of the Lord:

How marvelous to be enabled by God's grace to be among the land of the living, and further enabled to say "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." To merely acknowledge the

sovereignty of God is quite different from being completely aware of His sovereignty. Wise men down through the ages have been made aware of this fact, as Benjamin Franklin is quoted as having said, "I have lived Sir, a long time, and the longer I live the more convincing proof I see of this truth — that God governs in the affairs of men."

Having been blessed by our Heavenly Father to rise from the bed of sickness, I feel that I among all men am most richly blessed. For if not deceived, our Lord does indeed govern the affairs of men; this very truth being made abundantly clear as I was blessed to "be still and know that God is God." Who would have ever thought that a mortal man, so weak and helpless as I, would say with tears swelling in his eyes, "Thank God for this heart attack?"

The beloved Apostle Paul wrote ". . . knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience, hope: . . ." was well aware of our human nature, and how difficult, if not impossible, to achieve patience, without tribulation. How pleasant it would be if we were able to acquire patience without the tribulation. But if we are honest with ourselves, we must admit that this is not the case.

Oh, my dear brethren, I do desire that I could place into words the wonderful feeling that engrossed my very being, as I was removed from Intensive Coronary Care, into a private room, which had a window to look out, and view God's wonderful world.

Yes, I had been walking in this world with 20-20 vision and completely blind. I saw the same things I had seen every day, but never seeing them at all. Oh, what a different vantage point to view God's creation.

As I viewed the changing colors of the leaves, and people scurring about; I thought how many times I had met those I love, and never really told them I loved them. Never really taking the time to share one another's joy or sorrow.

Oh Lord, I cried how long will I have to stay down, before I can live again with all those I hold dear? How long, Oh Lord, how long? And almost instantly these words began to stream into my mind, and I called for a pen and paper, and with a God given thankful heart, He blessed me to write:

Grant me patience, Lord to bear
  Each daily trial and daily care,
That when my senses fail to see
  That each event is teaching me;
That Thou art God who knows what's best
  Has promised grace to stand each test.

Then when again my frame forgets
  Thy goodness which sustains me yet,
Oh, may I cry for patience still;
  That Thou knowest best, and pray Thy will.
Dear Jesus in Thy loving care
  Remove all doubt that Thou art there.

Each day of life, oh Lord I face
  May patience come endowed with grace,
May I not forget Thy care
  And be reminded that Thou art there.
Then as my days grow shorter in number
  May Thy grace I still remember.

Yes, tribulation does work patience, and patience hope. And hope swelling within a poor sinner's breast by God's grace, will keep us pressing toward the mark for the prize.

Surely it is a miracle that even in the throes of adversity, we can cry for joy, and be content with whatever God brings into our lives. This perhaps is why the Apostle Paul could say . . . "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Yes, my dear ones, it is indeed true that trouble and perplexity drives us to prayer, and prayer drives away trouble and perplexity. In the beginning we find God and in the end we find the promises of God in Jesus our Saviour.

How wonderful it is to have felt the very presence of our Lord, and remained on earth to tell of his saving power, and preserving love. May each of you, who perhaps even now are walking in ". . . the valley of the shadow of death. . ." feel that same presence and be given fresh courage.

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds you so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head."

May the new year be a year of rich blessings and renewed hope.

In bonds of love,
Elder W. L. Everett

HAS BEEN BLESSED IN READING THE SIGNS

315, 80 Scott Street,
Brampton, Ontario, Canada
December 31, 1974

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is Money Order for $10.00 to renew my subscription for two years: use balance as you like . . . I would not want to miss a single copy. Through the year I have wanted to write to let you know how much I have been blessed and privileged reading the *Signs*. So often I feel my judgement is being taken away from me.

I am reminded of an article written by Thelma Wilson in the January *Signs*, '72. I have read it to a few people: "So many in the world celebrate Christ's birthday on Christmas Day in a worldy way of giving, receiving, decorating and reveling." We humbly hope that Christ remembers us in all our unworthiness every day, and every hour. We have nothing to give Him, but He has a bountiful supply of love, grace, pity, and spiritual strength and hope, that He bestows on his believing children. And may we be among those to receive the gift of eternal life. Ephesians 1:6, 7: "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."

So many questions in my mind have been answered in the *Signs*.

Sometime ago I corresponded with Mrs. Underwood and mislaid her address and was pleased to read her letter in the December *Signs*; and will hope to write her again. Surely the "spirit is willing but the flesh is weak."

Elder Wood, I enjoyed your Editorials, and as you said, "We need the grace of God in continuing to bring the *Signs* regularly to you." Elder Hudson's writings are precious to me. So often all I can say is, "Lord help me." I enjoyed Mrs. Barron's experience. So often I have been shown that without Him I can do nothing, but with Him I can do all things. "And the rough ways shall be made smooth."

I am 76 years of age, and find that my memory isn't good. I feel I want to read again this year's *Signs*. The Editorials written some years ago, as well as "Voices of the Past," have been enjoyed.

It was a pleasure to meet Sister Mildred Dykes last year in Canada, and how much I enjoyed the "Cross of Christ" in the June *Signs*. Letters like Elder Bocock's are comforting; and Mary Parker's "Reminiscenses" she surely was blessed in her weakened condition to proclaim the love of God. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning to the end."

After reading Elder Griffin's Editorial of November, 1973, I felt I must write. At the time it seemed all the way through just what I needed sent from the Lord. I felt in the depths. He described my feelings so well. "I am not able." So often I have wanted to write Elder Lambert: his writings were always enjoyed. I could mention others.

How we would love to know more of our faith in Brampton and Toronto, both large cities in Canada.

God has blessed me to attend our Quarterly Meetings again this year in Canada. In June I felt it was almost impossible to attend; but I know it was all of the Lord, I was able to attend. I felt to rejoice, Elder Spangler, when you said you wanted us in Canada to feel the *Signs* belonged to us as much as to you folks in the U.S.. I felt so

thankful to see you and Mrs. Spangler and the Turners, and hear you ministers again. We feel we are greatly blessed to have two good ministers here in Canada, and, as I have said to them, it seems like a little bit of heaven to hear good preaching, and be with friends of our faith.

In May of this year we had Elder Griffin; in September we had Elder Donald Smith; and in October Elder Prescott to bring us good tidings. God was good to bless them in their preaching, and we enjoyed visiting with the dear ones who came with them.

May the Lord make it posible to continue the *Signs,* and richly bless the Editors, writers and readers.

Yours in sweet fellowship; but feel unworthy.

Verna Carscadden

ALL BLESSED WITH FREEDOM TO WORSHIP

Rt. 2, Box 64,
Weslaco, Texas 78596

Dear Editors:

Am enclosing check for $10.00 for one year's renewal of my subscription, and the remainder for Contributions.

This is Thanksgiving Day, and I am so thankful to the Lord for the Freedom we have had in this blessed country of ours. I have been reading the *Signs* for over 72 years. I was 86 April 29, 1974, and still able to work about sixteen hours a day getting out orders to doctors and Health Food Stores.

I dreamed years ago we would some day have to hide out in dens and caves to worship the Lord but, thanks be to the Lord, that day has not yet come. We are thankful to the Lord that He has blessed us with a little church this far south, just five miles from Mexico. We have been hoping that the Lord would send some of his little ones down here to be with us. Weslaco, our town here, is about fifty-five years old with over fifteen thousand people now; and still growing. Towns down here in the Rio Grande Valey are just four to ten miles apart, and thousands of people come down here in mobile homes from the north, to spend the winter. We tell them that ducks and geese know when to come south.

My memory goes back years ago to horse and buggy days, when an Old Baptist minister got upset so badly that he put his family in a wagon and left his church and neighbors and traveled three days getting away from the Old Baptists. Late the third evening he passed a house upon a small hill, and he told his wife and children he was going up there to see if they would let them camp there in the pasture by the watertank. The owner said, Yes, and we are to have a meeting here at our home tonight, and hope you all can come and be with us. He came back and told his wife about it, and she asked, Are you going? And he replied, Well we are all strangers and we do not know what kind of people they are; so let us go. The crowd came and the preacher that was to come did not show up. Finally the owner of the ranch asked the stranger if he would offer prayer. He got down on his knees, and the Lord blessed him with a wonderful prayer. They sang some songs, and then they asked the stranger to talk some. The Lord blessed him to preach to the same kind of people he had run off from, and they were all so glad and happy that he was with them. The next morning he told his wife, I am going back —, we cannot run away from the Lord.

Some wonderful things take place in our lives which the Lord has a mysterious way to bring to pass. Years ago I baptized a sister, and when I dipped her in the water, I felt she would some day be my wife; and sure enough we got married. So thanks to the Lord for all His mercies and kindness to this poor unworthy sinner. Remember me in your prayers.

E. B. Ault

(Elder Ault is owner and operator of the Ault Bee Farms in Weslaco, Tex. Some years

ago we enjoyed a visit with Elder and Sister Ault, and found them busy with their health products. — J.D.W.)

Rt. 3
Chestertown, Md. 21620

Signs of the Times

Dear Brothers in Christ:

It has been a long time since I sent anything to you for printing, for the many beloved readers to read. I have not felt I had anything to say that was worth printing, and I would rather read the testimonies and experiences of others as we travel along this great Highway of Life. But I have recently had a dream that has left me feeling very humble, yet with a feeling of wonder at the way our Lord comes to us in the night.

Before I relate this dream, I feel I should place myself on the mercy of the beloved Editors and readers, because I feel I have been blessed with a Holy Presence and I hope each of you will understand I do not ever want to say or do anything that will take away from the glory of Jesus Christ, our blessed Saviour. Each one of the editors except the Elder McColls in Canada, know me and, I hope, love me for Christ's sake. Many hundreds of the readers know and, I hope, love me for the same reason. Not for my sake, but Christ's sake. Each one of you know I am not one to pretend or to look for praise. Most of you know how the Lord has kept me, helped me raise a large family, most of whom love the Lord. Most of you know that all through those long, hard years, the Lord was with me, even though I knew it not. He kept me, guided me, led me, and in all ways has sustained me. As I've grown older, I realize more than ever, without Him I am nothing and can do nothing. This is my reference before each of you, as to the truth of this letter. I am writing it just as the dream appeared to me two weeks ago. May the Lord be with me as I write, to state it correctly. I had gone to bed and to sleep. I was not overly tired. I had had a good day raking and burning leaves, etc., and was satisfied with my day. My mind was at rest and no worries bothered me. I want to make that clear. I was filled with thanks to God for giving me such a fine day and a beautiful evening of music and messages over my radio station. The announcer had prayer and scripture reading before he went off the air, and it was sort of a benediction to the whole day. I fell asleep.

As the dream began, I seemed to be in a bed, no special place . . . just in bed. There was a turmoil in my abdomen, not pain, but a sort of stretching and pulling of the intestines. I thought, "I wonder if I did too much in the yard today," and was going to have trouble with my back. I was in no pain, but seemed to feel a numbness in my side and one leg in my dream. I thought I had better get up before I got so I couldn't move. I sensed other presences, but saw no one. It was dark, but I said, "Someone turn on a light." As I got out of bed, sitting on the side, two "beings" seemed to appear. (I use the words "sensed" and "appeared" because that's the way it was.) One on each side and seem to take my arms, although I felt nothing. I started, alone, to wander around. Where I was seemed to be amid ruins and desolation of all kinds. Half walls, open spaces, and all seemed to be in a foreign land, such as one sees in literature sent out showing refugees and ruined buildings. I walked, coming to a long hallway. As I looked to my left, I saw many, many figures standing in crowds, dressed in dark, shapeless clothing. Just waiting . . . for what, I do not know. I turned to the right and came to a part where it seemed only derelict men were. The same two "beings" seemed to appear again and I sensed they said to me, "You should not be here alone," and again took my arm. But one of the men, with a leering smile, led me forward and said, "I would not be alone because he would be with me. Another

said with a grin, "Yes, we will look after her." I stood and gazed around. Ahead, on my left, in the distance, I saw a long, shed-like open building with a large, long vat or tub of steaming liquid, and I saw a figure place a man upon a long slideboard-like affair and immerse him in the liquid. I heard no sound whatever. Another of the same kind of tub or vat was on my right and I watched as another figure immersed another man. As he was raised up upon the board, he appeared to be asleep. I saw another figure slink along a low wall that was between me and the area where more men were. He seemed to remind me of a rat, racing along the wall to escape whatever he knew was to be his lot. Next, I felt no surprise or horror at what I saw, only a desire to get away and find more peaceful surroundings. I turned, and wondered if there was any way out. I saw a high wall with a door. I opened the door and saw a narrow stairway of stone steps that led up. I thought, "they go up, not down." And as I hesitated, a voice in the darkness behind me said, "Ruth". I turned and saw a figure — tall and clad in, it seemed to be, golden tights, from head to foot. Deep, dark-set eye sockets, and he seemed to shine in the darkness. He held out his arm and said, "Come." I did not *feel* his touch, but I sensed it and we seemed to be carried out and away at once into glorious sunlight and over beautiful meadows. As we went, the same two beings joined us and I sang, "Praise the Lord" with a hoarse voice at first. Then as I repeated it over and over, the beings joined me, singing, "Praise the Lord, Praise the Lord" and my voice cleared as I sang. I awoke and I *did* praise the Lord at the wonder of it all.

I wished that I had a "Daniel" to interpret for me, I'm sure it has a meaning. I've dwelt upon the wonder and beauty of it many times since. The answer, in part, was shown to me a few nights ago. I was listening to my favorite radio station, WRBS in Baltimore. It was a very beautiful program of music and message from scripture, and I had put aside my fancy work and leaned back in my easy chair to give it all my attention, with my eyes closed to keep out any distraction. The speaker was using the Psalms as the basis for his program and music. The hymns and scripture were upon giving thanks, and somewhere along the way a scripture and music were used upon the beauties of heaven and how wonderful it would be one day to be with Jesus up there. I followed along and in my mind I pictured heaven in all its glory and, dear Brothers and Sisters, I want to tell you it seemed so beautiful!! Then suddenly it seemed to me I was returned to the ending of my dream and I felt to be above *here,* and viewing Over There! Do you see what I mean? Oh, I hope so! I was given the thought "We are only visitors here, waiting for a passport over there." And the words came to me, I believe they are in "Abide With Me." "Change and decay all around I see, O Thou who changeth not, abide with me."

Dear ones, I see how the Lord has shown me as I pass through this world of change and decay (as I seemed to do that night) that His angels will watch over me and one day, I shall be carried Home to be with Jesus, Praise His Holy Name.

I am sure you all know me well enough to know that I am not given to seeing visions or vain imaginings and such. Dreams have always been dreams to me, and no more. I am sure the Lord was in this because it was so unusual and seemed to be of a spiritual nature; then had a sequence that made it clearer.

I was blessed to attend the Salisbury Association, held with the Little Creek Church this year. It was so sweet to once more be among the brethren from far and near and hear good sound doctrine preached. The Bible as it is, and preached as the Lord inspired each minister speak. We missed Elder Spangler very much, but understand why he could not be present with us. We trust

his daughter is now out of danger. We know she is in the care of one of the very best physicians that could be had.

I am still blessed to get to Welsh Tract each second Sunday and the Lord always blesses me with a way to get there. If not some of my children, then some of the grandchildren are available. The Lord never leaves us standing waiting. We all feel so wonderfully blessed to have Elder James Poole as our pastor and we love him and Sister Peggy very much for Christ's sake; and also for their own sake. He is blessed to preach the truth in all its beauty, as the Lord enables him to see it. We are a small group, but we are told "wherever two or three are gathered in my name, there I will be in their midst" and I am sure He is with us, else why would the congregation come so far to hear preaching? They are hungry and thirsty, that's why! They may not *know* they are believers, but I do not think they would come so far if they weren't believing in what they hoped they would hear. Some day the Lord will open their ears and eyes and penetrate their cold hearts with the truth. The ones that truly believe know that I speak the truth. Some day I feel He will add to our number, but until then, we continue to gather together in His Precious Name.

May He bless each and every one of the editors and families to carry on the work of the *Signs of the Times*. Its preaching for me between meeting days.

Your little Sister
In love to all
Ruth Lucht

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT OF SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

Written by Deacon Frank Holland

"Asleep in Jesus: Blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep"

I think of these words when I remember these dear sisters that have been removed from our midst: Sister Eva Brittingham, Little Creek Church; Sister Emma Beach, Rewastico, Church; and Sister Betty Bedsworth, Salisbury Church.

By the will of our Heavenly Father we are sure they departed this time world with the hope of Heaven and eternal Glory in their breast, given them by our Heavenly Father.

Thy will be done, O God.

Eld. Arthur Warren, Mod.
Maude T. Laws, Hon. Clerk
William S. Adkins, Clerk
Willie A. Davis, Jr., Asst. Clerk

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION 1974

Written by Elder James F. Poole

By request of the Salisbury Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association I submit these few brief lines for consideration.

Brothers and Sisters there is nothing as important in all of life as Christ in us, the hope of Glory. If we are not brought to His light, we must remain in darkness. To be translated into His Kingdom, brings inward joy that cannot be found elsewhere. Free grace is the divine means of bringing elected sinners to salvation — and that through faith. Faith is the gift of God. God is the only giver of eternal life. Hence, we find ourselves as God's children, believers in what is termed the Doctrines of Grace.

The following from Hart most feelingly express our views:

"Believers own they are but blind;
They know themselves unwise;
But wisdom in the Lord they find,
Who opens all their eyes.

Unrighteous are they all, when tried;
But God himself declares
In Jesus they are justified;
His righteousness is theirs.

That we're unholy needs no proof;
We sorely feel the fall;
But Christ has holiness enough
To sanctify us all.

Exposed by sin to God's just wrath,
We look to Christ and view

Redemption in His blood by faith,
And full redemption too.

Some this, some that, good virtue teach,
To rectify the soul,
But we first after Jesus reach,
And richly grasp the whole.

To Jesus joined, we all that's good
From Him, our Head, derive;
We eat His flesh, and drink His Blood,
And by and in Him live."

MESSAGE OF HOPE

Dear Brethren:

"Sometimes a light surprises
The Christian while he sings . . ."

The spirit of joy in the air is being stirred and diffuses a righteous virtue among all Christians as Christmas time draws near. The significance of the aged old custom of gift giving to honor the Christ child still dwells within a believer as a living spirit of light, and makes itself manifested in our walk and talk and the way we live.

Perhaps no one recorded thing held more meaning when the Christ child was born, than the light that shone 'round about Him, for it reflected the glory of God's salvation.

With the coming of this wonderful message of hope, God made His presence felt in the hearts of His people, and they were made glad in that day. It gave peace to their troubled souls, and they went on their way rejoicing, as they treasured up the sweetness of the spoken word.

Then, with time, came the profound art of the age in printing, by which the divine word of Christ's Nativity was brought to countless numbers of people all around the world. Precious words of truth were to be found in a book of books, the Holy Bible! It was like a golden urn filled with all manner of hidden manna, and words of wisdom to guide man, from which he has been able to record his own gifted thoughts in literature, and music, and the arts.

Then another message of hope arose when one born with a precious gift could experience, in its sublime conception, a coming forth in due season and express himself before men of like precious faith. Then, and not until then, could he see among all things on earth God's glory revealed, even where signs of virtue were partly concealed in the spiritual realm of dreams; even though this is one of the most symbolic types we have with us today, that testify of the word, "Great is the mystery of Godliness" in which man realizes he has no power to join the earthly with the heavenly, so that down through the ages he can only rejoice in the divine Message of Hope to live by.

Sister Mary Hellings
Four Maple Lane
Pennington, N. J. 08534

ACCOUNT OF SISTER MARY PARKER'S LAST DAYS

By Elder Benton Jenkins

On Monday, June 17, 1895, at 9:40 P. M., at the age of 46 years, 9 months and 14 days, our beloved sister, Mary Parker, ended her weary warfare here, was released from her suffering and entered into everlasting rest and bliss.

. . . When the end came it found her anxious and ready to go. The immediate cause of her death was a cancerous tumor. She underwent an operation for the same at a hospital in Philadelphia last August, which was successfully removed, but it shortly afterwards returned, and developed rapidly. On September 5th she was taken to the home of our noble, generous and self-sacrificing sister, Mrs. M. M. Rounsavell, at Warwick, N. Y., who had visited and cared for her at the home of her brother, Mr. John Parker, New Holland, Ohio, and later was brought by her to the hospital, and finally to her comfortable home in Warwick, arriving there on September 5th, where all that loving hearts and willing hands could do was done to make her last days as comfortable and pleasant as possible.

As the end approached, the sufferings of the loved one were very great, but were borne with that quiet submission to the will of God which had characterized her through all the weary and painful years of her sufferings. Her cheerfulness and trust in her God and Saviour throughout all the years of her suffering was truly sublime and wonderful, and proved how wonderful is the grace of God in supporting His children under the most trying circumstances. With the Psalmist she could say, "My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever."

On the morning of the last day Sister Rounsavell said to her, "Do you know that you are dying?" Sister Mary replied, "Do you think so?" Sister Rounsavell replied, "Yes, Mary." Sister Mary then clasped her hands and exclaimed, "I'm so thankful!" As cold water was given her to slake her intense thirst she would say, "I shall soon drink at the everlasting fountain." As no opiates had been administered to her since she came east, her mind was strong and clear until about thirty minutes before the end came, when to all appearances she sank into an unconscious state, which continued until her ransomed spirit took its flight to the God who gave it.

Funeral services were held at the Old School Baptist Meeting House in Warwick on Wednesday P. M., which were conducted by Elders Silas H. Durand and Benton Jenkins. Elder William L. Beebe being on a visit to Canada. At 4 o'clock P. M. of the same day Sister Rounsavell started with the mortal remains of the loved one, expecting to arrive with them at New Holland, Ohio, at 6 o'clock P. M. the following day, where another funeral service was appointed at 10:30 A. M. on Friday, and the body consigned to its last earthly resting place, by the side of her beloved father and mother, Elder John Parker and wife, and amid the scenes of her early childhood and riper years.

Benton Jenkins

WATER CAME OUT ABUNDANTLY

Box #48
Duanesburg, New York 12056

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood;

The evening we were together, Brother Wood, at a Sister's home near Delmar, Delaware, during the Salisbury Association, you asked me why I had not written to the *Signs*.

I have been in a barren state for some time, and man of himself cannot get "blood out of a stone." It is recorded in Numbers 20th chapter verses 10 and 11 that Moses lifted up his hand and with his rod smote the rock twice, and water came out abundantly. I feel that this was no ordinary rock. This rock, I feel, was the Lord Jesus Christ and was symbolic of the living water (the word of truth) which flows from our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to his elect people. You notice it reads water came out abundantly. The word of God is inexhaustible and is sufficient for all the congregation (elect people of God). So therefore one cannot write of himself. It must come from God for it to have any value spiritually.

The Lord has a hand in all things. It was by his good pleasure that He created the heaven and the earth. We read this in Genesis chapter 1, verse 1. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." This gives me comfort for it was the Lord's doing not man's. Everything is in the Lord's hand and of his own doing. In Isaiah 45th chapter, 7th verse, He says "I form light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." You will observe God says I form light. You form something you already have. I believe the light always was. God creates the darkness for a purpose. In St. John chapter 1, verse 5, we read, "And the light shineth in darkness: and the darkness comprehended it not." Peace also has always been, but God created evil for a purpose. Satan and evil are the sword of the Lord.

We see the hand of the Lord in many ways. It was the Lord's doing, that, before the beginning of time, He elected Himself a people. In Romans chapter 8, verse 33, we read, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." In Isaiah 59th chapter, 1st verse reads, "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear." As we look back over our travels in this life we can see many times when, except for the Grace and Mercy of God, we would have perished.

Preaching of the true word of God is scarce in our area. There is almost a famine and when brethren meet the conversation ends with, When can we have another meeting? The word is precious and makes us think of 1st Samuel 3rd chapter, 1st verse, "And the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli. And the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision." We read in association minutes and church history of many landmarks and wonderful works of God in this area. This makes us feel very humble when we think of the Brethren that have gone on before and the truth they held dear.

Our Salvation is in the Lord's hand and He amply provided for it before time began. Not one of the elect will be left out. Isaiah 40th chapter, verses 30 and 31, are comforting. "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

We thank the Lord for sending Elders Arthur R. Warren, Alex and Stewart McColl to our meetings last year.

We were sad that Elder Warren was called home. We will miss his fellowship, hearty handshake and remark, "My, I'm glad to see you."

Our hope and trust is in God and we pray that He will not remove the truth from our land.

Woodrow W. Bellinger

STANDS FOR WHAT HE BELIEVES

P. O. Box 9134
Springhill, W. Va. 25308

Dear Brethren:

You will please find enclosed a money order for one year — the remainder to be used as you see fit.

I enjoy the *Signs* very much, because it stands for what I believe. In reading the Editorials and other wonderful writings my mind is refreshed on some things that I have forgotten; and some I had not thought of. O what a wonderful Saviour the children of God have! A Saviour that did not come to this low ground of sin and sorrow, to get to be a Saviour. But He came because he was the Saviour of sinners: He came down where they were, to do for them what they could not do for themselves. There was no way given whereby they could be saved except by the birth, sacrifice and glorious resurrection and ascension of the blessed and holy Jesus. He saved them without the loss of one — He saved all that the Father gave him in eternity, before the world was. When he cried, "It is finished," the salvation of His children was completed.

May it be the will of the God of all grace to bless you Editors to keep up the good work, and the writers for the *Signs* to continue to write.

John J. Smith, Sr.

THE TWO BIRTHS

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3)

"My kingdom is not of this world," said Jesus. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God," said the Apostle, "neither doth corruption in-

herit incorruption." Man in his earthy nature cannot inherit divine things, for he is of the earth earthy. Jesus said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." "For that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit."

This describes the nature of each birth: the first is of the flesh, and is flesh; the second is of the Spirit, and is spirit. The same person receives each birth; and after the second birth, the same person has been born of two natures, and thereby possesses two natures: one of the earth and is earthy; one of the divine nature is divine, heavenly, eternal. Man by the first birth is adapted to the earth and earthly things, and has no part in divine things in or by his earthy nature; man by the new or spiritual birth is adapted to divine, spiritual and heavenly things — which is separate and apart from earthy things.

Man by the nature of the second birth, sees and enters into the kingdom of God, and is heir to its blessings which are spiritual. He therefore not only sees the kingdom of God, but enters into the kingdom which Jesus said, Is not of this world; and which the Apostle said, flesh and blood cannot inherit. Man by the new birth has eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand spiritual and divine things: He not only sees, hears and understands spiritually, but he feels, tastes, smells, diserns and rejoices in the divine favors of the kingdom of Christ — which is not of this world. He walks, talks and confesses from the heart, and rejoices in the paths of righteousness; and hates evil and iniquity. He abhors and hates the sins and all works of his earthy and corrupt nature; and cannot rejoice in iniquity: he dies daily to his earthy nature because of sin which is condemned in the flesh. He is not two persons, but is called, and indeed is, the new man, and the old man. The old man perishes, while the new or inner man is renewed day by day. He is a new man in the divine nature — which is to say, a new man or a new creature in Christ; but in Adam, which is to say in his earthy nature, he is the old man of the flesh by his first birth; and is flesh. There is not the least union nor agreement between the two natures, for, "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

The above does not have direct reference to our subject, but rather describes the differences between true and idol worship — children of the promise and children of the flesh; but still there is no more union, communion or fellowship between the new nature, man or creature, and the old man, earthy nature of the children of God than there is between the true worshipers and idol worshipers which the Apostle is describing above. There is a complete cross between the two natures of a child of God who has been born again — having no union, communion or fellow ship whatsoever. The old man, which means earthy nature and is earthy in all of its living or dying faculties, is crucified, mortified, and must die daily, for a child of grace to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. The renewing of the new inner man which is of the divine nature, is that which causes and enables a child of grace to deny himself, (meaning himself in the old fleshly, earthy nature) and take up the cross by which he is crucified, to live, walk, talk and act spiritually. Yet he sees by the effectual working of the Spirit and power of God in him, that he is a poor, helpless and wretched sinner, entirely unworhty of the least divine favor from the hand of a merciful, holy and righteous God

our Saviour. He feels to be poor and needy, seeking the water of life and can find none; he hungers and thirsts after righteousness, but can find none; he cries or groans deeply from his poor heart: "God be merciful to me a poor sinner."

Then he remembers the saying of the Apostle Paul: "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." Then he can sing from the heart in the Spirit, "Amazing Grace! how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me." And, "Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee." And also, no doubt, "I am so vile so prone to sin, I fear that I'm not born again."

Our main thought and purpose in writing upon the two births and the nature thereof, is to try to prove by the Spirit of truth, that it is the same person who receives each birth — the birth of the flesh, and also the birth of the Spirit; and between these natures there is no union, agreement nor fellowship. And that the first nature, including the person thereof, is adapted to the things of the earth, — natural and perishable things; and by which the child of grace cannot inherit the kingdom of Christ — which is not of this world. By the second birth, the birth of the Spirit, the same person is born of the divine nature, which is adapted to, and is of the very nature of Christ's kingdom, which is not of this world. By this birth they are children of the kingdom and its King our Lord Jesus Christ; are heirs of that kingdom, and joint heirs with its king: and therefore and thereby they have no fellowship with unfruitful workers of darkness. It is just as impossible to unite the two natures of a child of grace, as it is to unite light and darkness, truth and error, or the kingdom of Christ with this present evil world.

When Jesus separates the sheep from the goats by this divine nature, it is as perfect a separation as when He divided the light from the darkness in the morning of the world. Man may unite these which God has separated, just as easy as he can the sheep and the goats which God has separated. When He by the almighty power of his Spirit says to his people in their heart and mind, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord," regardless to how hard it is on them in their earthy nature, how much they suffer, how much they complain, rebel and die, they come, they obey. And though they still have that hateful, rebellious nature, He makes them hate that too, taking them up out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and sets their feet upon the Rock, establishes their going, puts a new song in their mouths, even praise to His Holy and Worthy Name.

May God bless the truth to the comfort of His children; and pardon error for his name's sake.

John L. Sanders
44 Duarett Grove,
Tuscaloosa, Ala. 35401

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, at Sand Hill Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in March, 1975.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman,
Box 744,
Bennettsville, S. C. 29512

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The *Staunton River Union* Meeting will convene, the Lord willing, with Weatherford Church the 5th Sunday in March and Saturday before.

L. H. Doss, Clerk Weatherford Church

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the *Contentnea Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, with North River Church, Cataret County, N. C. the fifth Sunday in March, 1975.

All lovers of the truth are invited to visit us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

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NOTICE OF MEETING

The Maine Old School Baptist Churches will, the Lord willing, hold an all-day meeting the 5th Sunday and Saturday night before in March, at the home of James and Ruth Sevon, daughter of Sister Ruth Clark of the Whitefield Old School Baptist Church.

The Sevon home is in Jefferson, Maine, Route 213 on the Damariscotta Lake Road. Route 213 branches off from Route 214, which is taken at a junction in Newcastle Village. Business Route 1 leads from Route 1 into Newcastle Village.

Elder J. T. Prescott of Swansboro, N. C. is expected to attend the meeting.. A cordial invitation is extended to all who may be able to attend. If more instructions are needed, write to Mrs. Ruth Clark, Clerk, Box 245, Newcastle, Maine.

Danville, Va. March, 1975

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EDITORIAL

"BEHOLD MY HANDS"

"Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing." (John 20:27)

"Behold my hands . . ." are the words of Christ to a dutiful yet doubting Thomas. Love, empathy, rebuke, compassion embraced in the words of the King to melt the heart of the beholder. One expression was sufficient to accomplish the change. In complete surrender,

Thomas cried, "My Lord and my God."

When Lazarus died, the disciples warned Jesus not to go into Judea lest he be stoned by the Jews for they sought to kill him. At this time Thomas professed a faithfulness unto death by exhorting his fellow disciples thus, "Let us also go, that we may die with him." (John 11:16) However when Jesus comforted the disciples in John 14:1-6, by informing them that He must go to his Father's house to prepare a place for them, the same Thomas was less certain and exclaimed, "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" (John 14:5)

Following the crucifixion of Christ, the faith of Thomas seemed to be dissolved completely for he discredited outrightly the report of the other disciples concerning the resurrection of Jesus, and declared, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, . . . and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." (John 20:25) At this time the doubts of Thomas loomed to overwhelming proportion . . . abundantly sufficient to destroy him. What a clear reflection of the Thomas in each of us! Yet a comforting reminder to know that others as well as ourselves must be stripped of all self-confidence and self-righteousness and made to rely completely on Him.

Renewed strength came to Thomas a few days later; however, when Jesus appeared to the united disciples and said to him . . . "Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and *behold my hands;* . . . be not faithless, but believing." (John 20:27) The unbelieving finger of Thomas was satisfied. His doubts acquiesced to adoration and praise. How he must have rejoiced in having been given such assurance!

Subsequent references to Thomas in scripture reveal further evidence of the renewal of his faith and sustained presence among the disciples. He is listed among them at the sea of Tiberias when the draught of great fishes made the nets nigh unto overflowing. (John 21:1) He abode with them in the upper room where they "continued with one accord in prayer and supplication." (Acts 1:13-14) His name is inscribed in the holy city, the new Jerusalem for as revealed to John, "The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of twelve apostles of the Lamb." (Rev. 21:14) By the one expression of Christ . . . BEHOLD MY HANDS . . . Thomas was sealed unto the day of redemption.

Frequently in my own life the hands of various relatives and friends have arrested my attention. Well do I recall, when a small boy, the closed and stiffened fingers of an aged uncle who had spent his youth in the bush hewing timber. His hands seemed to denote labour. Then there were the hands of a close neighbor which personified kindness for he was a good samaritan in the community. The loving hands of a teacher who showed compassion . . . the deft hands of a sculptor . . . the skilled hands of a surgeon. Hands have a way of revealing character and expressing themselves on their own. But the hands which Thomas saw were unique. They denoted labour, personified kindness, showed compassion, possessed skill and worked deftly. Yet they were bleeding hands . . . hands which had wrought an incomprehensible work . . . the loving work of redeeming His people.

Hands in the scripture are used symbolically in many ways. The hand of Moses stretched out over the sea denoted power. Elisha poured water on the hands of Elijah to signify he would serve him. Pilate washed his hands publicly before the crucifixion of Christ to denote his innocence of the crime. Abram lifted up his hand unto God as an oath in declaring to the king of Sodom that he would take nothing from him after the slaughter of Chedorlaomer. Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people and blessed them. Sheba raised his hand in defiance against the King, even against David. David set the Lord always at his right hand for defense. Stephen was set aside to the full work of the ministry by the laying on of

hands. Christ declared through David in Psalm 141:2 "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice." Indeed His hands were solemn evidence of that living sacrifice. Succinctly Watts summed it up in saying:

"See from his head, *his hands*, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down,
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown.'

The hands of Christ have revealed themselves in the scriptures in many ways on many occasions. Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, made a great feast. While he tasted the wine, he commanded his attendants to bring the golden and silver vessels which had been taken out of the temple in Jerusalem in order that his princes, wives and concubines might drink from them. They drank steadily and praised the gods of brass, iron, wood, stone, silver and gold. The heart of this king had not been humbled even though he had witnessed his father Nebuchadnezzar dethroned and driven from men to live with the beasts of the field.

In the same hour the fingers of a man's hand wrote near the candlestick on the plaster of the wall MENE, MENE, TEKEL UPHARSIN which Daniel later interpreted to mean:

"God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it."

"Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting."

"Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." (Daniel 5:26-28)

Immediately Belshazzar's countenance fell, his thoughts troubled him, he quivered in fear . . . in the same night he was slain and Darius the Mede took the kingdom. A man's hand had pronounced judgment with authority.

This same hand touched Daniel when he was by the river Hiddekel in mourning over the state of Israel. When he lifted up his eyes, behold a certain man clothed in linen appeared unto him. Immediately, he lost his strength and fell into a deep sleep with his face toward the ground. Straightway a hand touched him and set him upon his knees and upon the palms of his hands. A voice similar to the voice of a multitude spoke to him saying, "Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days; for yet the vision is for many days." (Dan. 10:14) Immediately Daniel set his face toward the ground and became dumb. This time a hand of prophecy had revealed itself. Later the hand touched Daniel again that his mouth might be opened and that his strength might be regained.

Elijah implored God to send rain. And it came to pass that as his servant went the seventh time to look, behold a little cloud arose out of the sea, like a man's hand. Soon the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. The hand of providence was there to provide.

When Christ came to Bethsaida, they brought a blind man and implored Him to touch him. "And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought. And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking." (Mark 8:23-24) Later Christ placed his hands again upon his eyes and he saw every man clearly.

Simon's wife's mother felt the same healing power in these hands when she lay sick of a fever. For Jesus came to her and lifted her up by the hands. Immediately the fever left and she ministered unto those in the household. Now the incarnate hands of Christ had come to heal.

In Revelation, John saw the Son of Man in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks and when he saw him, fell at his feet as dead. Immediately Christ laid his right hand upon him and commanded him to write the things he had seen, the things which are and the things which shall be hereafter. Now the hand of that glorious body sitting at the right hand of the Majesty on

High had raised a mortal to write the secrets of time.

The hands of Christ were human hands; they walked the earthly trail, felt heat and cold, gripped plane and saw, handled food, held children close. But look again . . . for they were also divine. They held and still hold a power man cannot know; give sight to the blind, unstop the ears of the deaf, pass through closed doors, move mountains, dwell in the presence of God. What a mystery! Such hands — unrefutable evidence of the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

"For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand." (Ps. 95:7) Indeed our times are in his hand even the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind. Also the deep places of the earth are held by him and the heart of a king is at his disposal.

With these same hands Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it and gave it to the disciples saying, "Take, eat; this is my body." (Matt. 26:26) To John in Revelation, Christ appeared holding seven stars in his right hand which are the angels of the seven churches. Later he proved the only one worthy to take the book from the right hand of the one who sat upon the throne and to loose the seals thereof.

When he comes again a sharp sickle will be in his hand to reap the harvest; balances to judge the nations and a fan to throughly purge his floor. But his people receive comfort from the words of Isaiah which read, "Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God." (Is. 62:3) When we contemplate the power of his hands and the efficacy of his work it is little wonder that we fellowship David who said, "Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." (Ps. 31:5)

Isaiah felt the security of the hand of God when he said ". . . in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me . . ." (Is. 49:2) Of a like mind was David in saying ". . . and thy right hand hath holden me up." (Ps. 18:35) But his people especially realize his love when he declares unto them ". . . I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands . . ." (Is. 49:16) Because of the nail prints in his hands, his people wave palm branches of victory in their hands for this is he "who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance." (Is. 40:12)

The same hands are ever present with his people today. Sometimes they seem to be set in anger against them, sometimes heavily upon them . . . but always to their ultimate benefit. We know that none can stay these hands for they are all powerful. We know that none can pluck his people out of these hands. We know that at his right hand there are pleasures forever more. We know that his people receive double at his hand for all their sins.

The same hands that were nailed to the cross that his people might have life and have it more abundantly are constantly our stay . . . his left hand under our head and his right hand embracing us. One touch of these hands upon our shoulder accompanied by the words "Arise, O ye of little faith," or "Be still and know that I am God" is sufficient to make us willing in the day of his power and thankful to fall before him as Thomas did crying, "My Lord and my God."

Humbly,
Stewart McColl

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Weedmore, Pa., July 6, 1879.

DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER BEEBE —

If one so unworthy may be allowed thus to address you: — To-day, while

reading the SIGNS for July first, my heart was so drawn out in love to the dear people of God scattered through this unfriendly world, I was constrained I trust from heartfelt love, to take up my pen, and tell them how my heart has been made to rejoice in reading their rich communications. Your last editorial, "Be Pitiful, be Courteous," I think all we who name the name of Christ should ponder well, for it was rich. I do not know how I could do without our dear paper; I feel that I would rather curtail the necessaries of life than to do without it. I meet with some Baptists who say, These religious papers should be put down. I cannot see how those who profess to love the people of God can say so. It is written, "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord harkened, and heard it: and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." O what a blessed thought! When we are not able to express the emotions of our hearts, he knows our thoughts. How are we to hear from the dear people of God in these low grounds of sorrow, but through this medium? I believe it is among the greatest enjoyments with which the people of God are blessed while journeying here below, to converse with and hear from each other. It is said, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I think sometimes that I should despair, if it were not for these blessed words.

Dear Elder, has the world that love for God's people? If it is not asking too much, I would be glad to hear from you on that point. It has caused me much trouble, for fear my love may not be the right kind. I know you can speak a word of comfort to those who are cast down.

I must stop, for my writing looks so poor and imperfect that I am ashamed of it; still I felt a strong impulse to write, and let you know how welcome your paper is. Now, dear aged brother, may the God of all comfort be with you, and support and uphold you under all the sore trials which you have to encounter, and I know they are many. And if it be his will, may he spare you yet many years, for there is no one that can fill your place. I do firmly believe that the dear Lord has raised you up and sustained you these many years for the very position you fill; and when it is his will to call you to pass through the valley and shadow of death, may his presence be with you there, is the prayer of one who feels to be much less than the least, if one at all.

Do with this as you see proper, and all will be right.

J. F. VARNS.

IS MINE THE RIGHT KIND OF LOVE?

Reply to Brother J. F. Varns.

God's people, above all other people, are exceedingly jealous of themselves; and as they have no confidence in the flesh, they are fearful of being misled by the deceitfulness of sin which still dwells in their fleshly nature. Hence there are times with them when their anxious inquiry is, "Do I love the Lord with the love which is peculiar to his own dear people, and on which it is safe for me to rely as evidence of having passed from death unto life?"

"We know that there is a passion of our earthly nature which is called love, and which is common to all the human family; and christians fear at times that their affectionate regard for those whom they esteem as the people of God is only of that kind which is natural and common to all our race. Satan, ever ready to tempt the sons of God to distrust the love of God which is shed abroad in their hearts, says, Doth Job serve for naught? is not my love and service carnal, selfish, and of the earth, earthly? But God has graciously provided some characteristic marks in his

word by which, when applied by the Spirit, the saints may determine whether they possess the love of God or not. John calls upon the sons of God to "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed." It is *bestowed* on the saints by God the Father, through Jesus Christ our Lord. It comes from God, not through the earthly Adam, but through Jesus Christ; and is developed in us, not by a fleshly birth, but by being born of the Spirit. "We love God, because he first loved us." This love is the same in its nature when *bestowed,* as it was in God before we received it; and therefore all who possess it will love the things which are loved and approved of God, and hate the things he hates.

God loves his people in Christ with an everlasting love, and therefore the saints will also love them also with a pure heart fervently. "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." — 1 John v. 2-4.

Again, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." — 1 John iii. 14-18. If we love him that begat, we shall love them who are begotten of him; and if we truly love them, it will be manifested in deeds and truth, not in mere words of profession. Jesus our Lord has said, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." — John xiii. 34, 35.

If then we truly love God and our brethren, the commands of God will not be grievous or irksome, but pleasant and delightful. Not always pleasant to the flesh, for the flesh must be denied, mortified and crucified; but to the *new man,* which is born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, the yoke of Christ is easy and his burden is light, when the love of God rules in our heart. The love of God, of truth, and of the peculiar government of Christ, is by the new birth implanted in all the children of God; but the enmity of the flesh still remains in our fleshly members which are on the earth, to oppose the reign of Christ, and will remain as long as we continue in the flesh, or until God shall change our vile body, and fashion it like the glorious risen body of our dear Redeemer. The love of God in his children is fraternal, unselfish and generous; it comes from God, and rises gratefully to him again.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe in reply to Brother Varns.)

JOHN 6:44, 45

"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."
(John 6:44-45)

There is a prayer in our heart that God will bless us to meditate upon the beauty that is contained in the text. There is not a fleshly motive involved, but solely for the motive that the Holy Name of the Lord may be praised. All

the honor, praise, and glory belongs unto the Lord.

"No man can come to me." If there was no exception to this general statement, then none would be saved, and eternal destruction would face all of mankind. "As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Rom. 3:10-12) Man by nature does not even have the desire to seek after God. By nature, man has pleasure in unrighteousness, has pleasure in the things of this world. ". . . If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (1 John 2:15) (see also 2 Thess. 2:12)

"But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." (John 10:26) Only the sheep do believe from the heart because God has taught them. "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost." (2 Cor. 4:3)

It is impossible for natural man to come to Jesus. "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." (John 5:40) Man will not come or believe in Jesus until grace has touched his heart. ". . . For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him." (John 6:64)

We believe the expression "come to me" means believe in Jesus, look and pray to him for mercy, depend upon him for strength, all your needs, guidance, etc. You come to Jesus or believe in Jesus by the eye of faith. There must be a witness within before you can believe. The witness is Christ within you the hope of Glory. The expression "come to me" does not mean meet one another in the flesh as we meet one another as we dwell upon this earth.

There were many during Christ's time that did not believe in him. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." (John 1:11) The ones that believed in Jesus were no more intelligent than the others. There was no difference by nature. "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and *were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."* (Eph. 2:2-3) The difference is that God chose many and left the others out. This is the business of God, and it behooves us as mortal man to not attempt to meddle into God's business. " . . . Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." (Rom. 9:14-15)

The ones that come to Jesus or believe in Jesus have been drawn by the Father. *"Except the Father which hath sent me draw him."* Someone might say, "You mean to tell me that God draws some against their will?" We answer that God's people will be made willing at the appointed time to believe in Jesus. They believe because the witness is within and they rejoice in Jesus. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound . . ." (Psalms 89:15) "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." (Psalms 110:3) Why is this sound joyful? You are blessed to know it. In order to know it, you must experience something about just why and how this sound is joyful. We think of this as the gospel sound. This is good news from a far country. This is news that a poor, undone sinner longs for, and he rejoices in hearing it. Notice the sweet welcome of Jesus, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your soul. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (Matt. 11:28-30) These words are sweet to those that know something about the yoke of the law. This yoke

of the law is heavy and hard to carry. The poor one realizes that the law demands everything and gives nothing. There is not any mercy in the law. "He that despised Moses's law died without mercy under two or three witnesses." (Heb. 10:28) The law demands perfection. It is a perfect law, and it is good and holy. The weakness is the flesh trying to keep the law. "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." (James 2:10)

How miserable it is for one to keep trying to keep the law, and the harder he works, the deeper he sinks. "I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing . . ." (Psalms 69:2) The gospel is good news to one who is weary and heavy laden from the yoke of the law. Salvation is free, and how sweet is the sound.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

The Father draws all of the elect in due time. This shows the power of God, and God did not leave this up to man to teach others to know the Lord. ". . . They shall be all taught of God . . ." (John 6:45) God does the teaching to his people. ". . . *I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts . . .*" (Heb. 8:10) ". . . *I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.*" (Heb. 10:16)

Please meditate carefully upon these two Scriptures, as they give proof that true religion is of the heart. Religion is felt within. It is heart-felt! God's people believe from the heart. Therefore a head knowledge will not stand the fiery trials that God's people have to pass through. One with only a head religion reminds me of these that receive the seed or the word of the Lord into stony places. "But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." (Matt. 13:20-21) Notice carefully that the stony hearers do not have root in themselves. God's people are rooted in Jesus Christ. "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love." (Eph. 3:17)

In the parable of the sower, we note that only the seed that was sown in the good ground brought forth fruit. We believe this good ground represents the elect who have been prepared by God to receive the preached word with an understanding heart. "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." (Proverbs 16:1)

It is the work of the Holy Ghost to teach the elect. The Holy Ghost dwells in the hearts of God's people in this day and time. "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; *whom the world cannot receive,* because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." (John 14:16-17) The spirit of truth is what teaches you, and you shall be taught. The comforter or Holy Ghost did not come until after Jesus departed. "If I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you . . ." (John 16:7)

A natural teacher may know the subject well and explain it to the class well, but everyone may not understand it. It is not the teacher's fault, because the student did not have the intelligence to understand or may not have his mind on the class. Now, God gives his people the intelligence or wisdom to understand his teaching. "I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say." (1 Cor. 10:15) "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." (1 Cor. 1:30) God has made you wise in spiritual things by revealing them unto you. "But God hath revealed them unto us by his

spirit: for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (1 Cor. 2:10)

Paul received this doctrine by revelation, and all of God's people receive this doctrine by revelation — God reveals himself to his people in this day and time. God does not change. Fashion, science, medicine, etc. change, but the religion of God does not change. The truth is the truth, and there is no twisting it around. "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." (Malachi 3:6)

Why does this doctrine seem to be plain to us, and in the flesh it seems that just anybody could see it that way? We should be thankful to the Lord for this sweet revelation, and thank him for this wisdom to see the doctrine so clearly. This preaching of the cross is foolish to the world. It is foolish because they have not been revealed the beauty of this preaching. "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." (1 Cor. 1:18) "We believe according to the working of his mighty power." (Eph. 1:19)

"I will raise him up at the last day." In order to be raised up, then first one must be down. We believe this has reference to the resurrection of the body. These bodies may lie in the grave for many years, and go back to the dust, but God is able to raise the bodies and fashion them like unto the glorious body of Jesus Christ. "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." (Psalms 17:15)

We believe that the glorious day will come in the future when the bodies of the saints shall be raised up with spiritual bodies like unto Jesus. "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a Spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a Spiritual body." (1 Cor. 15:44)

The promise of God will stand, and God is not slack concerning his promises. (see 2 Peter 3:9) Take courage dear ones, and wait patiently for the Lord.

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thess. 4:16-18)

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

OBITUARIES

DANIEL OWEN WALKER

The Lord has seen fit to call another from our church roll, Brother Daniel O. Walker, October 15, 1974. He was born In Franklin County, Virginia, January 12, 1919, a son of the late John M. and Geneva A. Walker.

On October 28, 1915 he married Garnett Doss, who survives, also two sons, Daniel E. Walker of Martinsville, Va., and Richard A. Walker of Sutherlin, Virginia; two daughters: Mrs. Celia Redd of Orlando, Fla. and Mrs. Cindy Thompson of Martinsville; four brothers: Sherman H. Walker of Durham, N. C., Billy Walker of Martinsville, and J. Hardin and Jack M. Walker both of Rocky Mount, Va.; six sisters: Mesdames Lora Doss, Rachel Jefferson, Nancy Lea and Jane Carter, all of Danville, Va., and Esther Dillon and Matilda Amos, both of Rocky Mount, Va.

Brother Walker was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace. He was a quiet man of few words. His favorite hymn was, "Amazing Grace."

May the Lord comfort the family and loved ones, and we be blessed to say, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh."

The funeral was held in Barker Funeral Home by Elders R. S. Payne, P. L. Plybon and O. K. Tench, with interment in the Doss Family Cemetery at Museville, Va.

BE IT RESOLVED, that a copy of this obituary be sent the family, one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and one put on our church record.

Done by order of Strawberry Church December 1, 1974. Read and approved by the church January 5, 1975.

Elder R. S. Payne, Mod.
Josephine N. Dodd, Clerk

LULA H. BARROW

Sister Lula Hill Barrow, an Edgecombe County native, was received into Pleasant Hill Church June 25, 1949. She was faithful to quietly fill her seat each meeting unless providently hindered. Her humble manner and the unworthy feeling she always expressed is an indication to us that she is one of His saints.

Born April 23, 1905 she travelled her alloted course for 69 years. On October 15, 1974 she was called from this world of woes. Her funeral was conducted at Johnson Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder Henry Jones assisted by Mr. Everette Marion. She left to mourn her passing one son, Wiley E. Barrow and one daughter, Mrs. Charles L. Walston of Rocky Mount, N. C., four grandchildren, one great grandchild, one sister and one brother.

Her body was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery to await the second coming of Christ, at which time she had a sweet hope He would call her to abide in His heavenly tabernacle.

Done by order of conference, Pleasant Hill Church, Saturday, November 23, 1974.

RESOLVED, that a copy of this obituary be placed on the church records, one sent to the family, and one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

J. Carroll Williams, Clerk

SISTER NECIE COX

Sister Necie was born in Floyd Conuty, Va. February 10, 1898, daughter of Sherman A. and Margaret Hollandsworth. She was the widow of Luther Cox, who died in 1938, and was a widow for some thirty-six years. She united with the church in 1926. She passed from this life November 6, 1974. Her journey here in this world was seventy-six years, eight months and twenty-six days.

She is survived by five daughters: Sister Nettie Duncan, Sister Dorcie Semones, Sister Mable Carey, Sister French Hogan and Sister Mary Marshal. Two sons: Brother Jack W. Cox and Herbert Cox. Four sisters: Mrs Vettie Harris, Mrs. Mazie Phillips, Mrs. Evelyn Duncan and Mrs. Blanche Gardner. Two brothers: Brother Clive Hollandsworth and Brother Martin Hollandsworth; twenty-seven grandchildren and twenty-two great grandchildren.

Even though her life was filled with many trials and tribulations, she never lost the faith. Her warm smile and tender loving kindness will long be remembered by those who loved her. It can rightly be said that she was truly a mother in Israel.

Sister Necie's home was one in which you could feel the warmth of brotherly love around you.

She believed in salvation by grace and loved to hear it preached, and the creature works left out. Her faithful attendance at Union Church and various other meeting places was proof of her love for this doctrine, and to be assembled with God's humble poor.

I feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder B. O. Thompson, our former pastor and Elder Hale Terry, our present pastor. She was laid to rest under a beautiful mound of flowers in Cox Cemetery, Indian Valley, Va. to await the glorious resurrection, when all the redeemed shall forever be with the Lord.

Elder Hale Terry, Moderator
Larry Hollandsworth, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our dear Brother Frank Lynch. He was born November 23, 1893 and died September 25, 1974, making his stay on earth 80 years. Brother Frank was blessed to join our church, along with his wife, on July 7, 1968, and was a faithful member until his death. He seemed to love the brethren, and to know him was to love him. He always carried a smile and it was a great pleasure to have him among us. He was a believer of salvation by grace and he realized that God had all power and without him we can do nothing. He felt that God was a merciful God.

In this respect we the church at Tarboro resolve:

1. That we send our sincere sympathy to the family, for we feel our loss is his eternal gain. We feel he is resting in peace with God, where all trials and tribulations have ended.

2. That three copies of this respect be made: one for the family; one for the church records; and one be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

This done in order of our November meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst, Sister Nan Hathaway. She was blessed to live on earth for 85 years. Sister Nan was always a believer of salvation by grace, and God blessed her to unite with our church on May 7, 1972. She was a faithful member and attended church every chance she could. She always said it gave her strength to come to church, for she enjoyed

seeing the members and friends which made her forget her pains. To know Sister Hathaway was to love her. She was always praising God for his blessings and thanking him for his goodness and mercy.

Therefore we the church at Tarboro resolve:
1. That we send our sincere sympathy to the family, for we feel she is resting with God awaiting the resurrection. We feel our loss is her eternal gain.
2. That three copies of this respect be made: one for the family; one for the church records; and one to be published in the *Signs of the Times.*

This done by order of our December meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

SISTER CALLIE WILSON

It has pleased the Lord to call from our midst Sister Callie Wilson. She was born January 22, 1891 and passed away October 7, 1974 at Pine Haven Rest Home in Henderson, N. C. after many months of declining health, making her stay on earth 83 years.

She was the daughter of the late T. M. and Rebecca Slaughter Arrington. She united with Gooch Memorial Church August 14, 1960, and was baptized Sunday, September 11, 1960. She was married December 27, 1914 to Charlie J. Wilson, who survives; also, one son, William A. Wilson; two sisters, Miss Pattie Arrington, Mrs. Rassie A. Wilson; one brother, Robert G. Arrington, all of Oxford.

It is sad to part with those we love. May we bow in humble submission to God who doeth all things after the counsel of his own will. Sister Callie was a humble and lovely person with a winning personality. Her sunny disposition won for her many friends. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be his Holy Name. David says, "Blessed in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Her funeral was conducted at G. T. Eakes Funeral Home at 2:30 Wednesday, October 9, 1974 by Elder Donald Smith and Mr. Harvey Beeler. She was laid to rest at Banks Methodist Church.

Ordained in conference November 9, 1974.

Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
Annie C. Gregory, Church Clerk

Humbly Submitted,
Nancy B. Allen

ZENA MONTGOMERY DENNY

At the request of Hillsdale Primitive Baptist Church, I will endeavor to write a few words as a memorial to Zena Montgomery Denny, a beloved friend and sister in Christ, I hope.

Sister Denny was called from her earthly home on November 5, 1974. Funeral services were held at Hillsdale Primitive Baptist Church with Elders D. A. O'Bryant and Thornton Manley officiating. Interment followed in the church cemetery. Surviving are three sisters, Mrs. Janie Oliver, Mrs. Gladys Houston, Mrs. Vera Simson, and one brother, Ambrose Montgometry, all of Greensboro, North Carolina.

She was born to Ferre Wingate and Maude Powell Montgomery in Rockingham County, September 28, 1903. She was united in marriage February 4, 1923 to Deacon Jacob M. Denny who preceded her in death approximately five months.

Sister Denny was baptized into the fellowship of Hillsdale Church in December, 1927 by her pastor, Elder George Trent. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. She loved her Church and expressed her love for all the saints of true Israel, whether she knew them or not. She rejoced in the fellowship of those who had voiced their belief in the same doctrine and felt she had been given a divine hope by Almighty God.

The last day of her earthly life was spent in our home and she expressed her belief that God was able to care for her and He would do so according to His will and purpose. Many times during visits with us she spoke of the many blessings God had bestowed upon her during her lifetime and she hoped she had been thankful for them.

The Church and her many friends will miss her deeply, but very humbly, we hope to be forever submissive to the will of our Heavenly Father in all things, for we know He doeth all things well.

We cannot help but feel as with the saints of old, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning," and that Sister Denny has been blessed to enter into that joy that shall never cease.

Written by a friend,

Mary C. Knight

Done by order of Conference on Saturday before the second Sunday in November, 1974.

Elder D. A. O'Bryant, Moderator
Florence B. Knight, Clerk

LETHEA ANN BEENE

We bow in humble submission to the will of our God, who saw fit on October 20, 1974 to call our precious Sister Lethea Ann Beene to her eternal rest. She was born April 19, 1886 at Percilla, Texas. She married at the young age of fourteen, and to this union five children were born. Her husband died in 1914. She married the late Elder W. O. Beene in

1925. Two children were born to this union.

Sister Beene united with the Old School Primitive Baptist Church July 3, 1909 at Dickens Prarie, Texas. In later years she moved her membership to Shepherd Fold Church, Houston, Texas, when the church was constituted there. She was the last charter member. A precious sister of over 65 years suffered many trials in this time world, which we rather feel strengthened her faith in the amazing grace of her God. Though we are separated from her, we feel she is sweetly resting in the love of her God. Our fond hope is to meet beyond the silent tomb.

She leaves to mourn her passing three daughters, three sons, 15 grandchildren, 8 great grandchildren, and a host of other relatives and friends. She was laid to rest near Teague, Texas to await the call of the Saviour, "Come ye blessed of my Father."

Humbly submitted by request of Shepherd Fold Church.

C. M. Haygood

SEPTEMBER 22, 1974

PLEASANT HILL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

ORDINATION OF BROTHER ALVIN LANCASTER AS DEACON OF PLEASANT HILL PRIMITIVE CHURCH

A Presbytery was called composed of Elder Henry C. Jones; Elder D. B. Stokes and Elder J. T. Prescott: with the following Deacons; Bro. Clyde Pridgen; Bro. George Pearson; Bro. W. E. Lupton; Bro. Amos Williams; Bro. John Williams; Bro. Rufus Jackson and Bro. M. D. Simmons, Sr.

Moved and agreed for the Presbytery to go into conference. Moved and agreed for Elder Henry C. Jones to act as Moderator. Moved and agreed for Elder Prescott to open conference with song and prayer. Moved and agreed to call Sister Nina Pearson as Clerk.

Bro. Alvin Lancaster and wife were presented to the Presbytery by Bro. Carrol Williams, Deacon of Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church; to be questioned; examined; lay hands on him and turn him back to the Church as an ordained Deacon.

Elder Stokes charged the candidate, that God is the only authority you can look to. Look upon the Bible as your guide line. Make decisions prayerfully; do not be persuaded by anyone; be submissive to the brethren and your church. Serve this church as a servant. You can not serve the church without a good woman behind you. Both of you be swift to hear and slow to speak. You are a servant of the most high God. Serve your brethren and church humbly; go to the Lord in prayer. To the Church; do not tie his hands, work together.

Elder Prescott: Thankful that the questions have been answered, and is satisfied with the brother. Thank God for such gifts; to his compaion; may God bless you to fulfill this office. Remember there will be many crosses to bear. May God bless you and your companion to walk together humbly and prayerfully as the burden rests on the companion.

Elder Jones: By experience knows that it is to be in this place. There are times we don't know what to say or which way to turn. We have to stand still and wait upon the Lord. It is not an easy road to travel By the Grace of God we have been blessed to have companions to stand by us. May God lead you in the right way. He wil come to your rescue.

The Presbytery laid hands on the candidate in prayer.

The minutes were read and approved.

Moved and agreed a copy of the minutes be presented to Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church.

The Presbytery returned the candidate back to the church as an ordained Deacon.

Moved and agreed conference to adjourn.

Elder Henry C. Jones, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

On Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1974, the Mill Branch Church met in Conference, and agreed that we ask that Brother John Williams be set apart to the office of Deacon; and the ordination service was set for Sunday morning at 10:30.

On Sunday morning September 1, 1974 the church met and conference was opened by Elder Harvey Holland. The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Holland, Moderator, and Sister Estelle Joyner Cockrell, Clerk. Ministers and deacons present were invited to seats with us in the service.

The Moderator called for the candidate, who was presented by Deacons Amos Williams and Leon Griffin, and he was seated in front of the ministers: Elder Harvey Holland and Kenneth Windham.

The Presbytery being satisfied with the qualifications of the candidate, administered the laying on of hands and prayer. The charge was delivered by Elder Harvey Holland.

The ordained Deacon was delivered back to the church as a deacon of the Primitive Old School Baptist Church at Mill Branch, and the right hand of fellowship was extended to him.

A copy of this is to be recorded in the Church Book, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Estelle Joyner Cockrell, Clerk
Elder Harvey Holland, Mod.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143 DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1975 NO. 4

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

STIRRING UP THE PURE MIND

807 Pope Street,
Memphis, Tenn. 38112

Dear Elder Wood and all Editors:

The January *Signs* was so very good, and I wish I felt able in my weak way, to tell you some of the reasons it seemed especially good.

The things, or should I say the points of doctrine, were brought out so clearly the way I understand them. It did what Peter desired to do, "Stir up the pure minds." If I have this pure mind, (my hope is that I do), these words of love seem to stir this same love in us, causing us to desire and beg that God would enable us to adhere to these exhortations the Apostles are writing to them, and to us. We know the flesh, and if we have been born of the Spirit, we know that without Him we can do nothing: for we very well know what the flesh and its desires are. The Apostles did too, yet for love's sake they felt to encourage us to put off these fleshly lusts — Elder Beebe quoted Peter: they wish their brethren to see good days and love life.

I believe these things are just as needful to be brought to our minds attention, as other portions of scripture. Someone might say, "You have the Holy Scriptures, read them." We also have the scriptures telling us Christ has died, and put away the sins of His people, but look how eager we are to go to where a minister tells us again and again about it.

"It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. God, knowing all things from the beginning, knew who would be saved and how they would be saved. Yet it pleased Him to send ministers to preach these things to them: so He called them to that end.

Paul said his preaching was in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. Surely it was by the prompting of that same Spirit that he wrote the epistles.

The articles by Elder Campbell and Elder Beebe were so in line with each other it seemed to me,—and so exactly the way I have thought about it, and have wondered why these things were not talked among us. I wondered if I was weak and not sound in my rightly dividing the word of truth. I marked circles around paragraphs in Elder Beebe's article until I have almost circled his whole article.

Now I know, as I said before, that we are not able in and of ourselves to just up and say we will do these things, but it surely is our desire to do them, and somehow to have them brought to our minds, realizing that the Apostle Paul loved the brethren and was thinking of their welfare, gives one a little hope that we too need to be mindful of these more than we are — and that leads us to pray that the Lord would give us *the will* and *the do,* and draw us closer and fill our minds and hearts with zeal.

We know by many past experiences, that without His Spirit we grow cold, lukewarm, dull of hearing, and are subject to vanity, and we neglect the things

we desire to do. Our tongue speaks things that cause hurt, and we know that this is not good, and we also know there is a good way, and we pray for the return of that sweet spirit of love and and the fruits thereof.

Elder Wood, I had this written when your letter came, saying you would print Elder Griffin's letter to me in April. I understand and know you have much to do in getting out the paper. I trust your judgment about printing anything I send you. There are so many things I would love to ask you, but I know your time is taken up.

I am sending check for two year's renewal — use the rest as you need it.

In love and fellowship I hope,
Mrs. Lucille Young

BLESSED WITH AN EXPERIENCE OF GRACE

531 Jenks Blvd.,
Kalamazoo, Mich. 49007

Dear Elder Spangler:

I've wanted to write you for sometime, but when I endeavor to do so, I feel so poor in spirit, only God knows my poverty in spiritual things. I am so thankful the Lord said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

I truly believe that, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." I believe that this new-birth is brought about by the Spirit of God in the heart of man. It could never be brought about by any operation pertaining to the flesh, because, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit." (John 3:6) If a man could voluntarily of his own free will bring about his new birth, or that of another, he would have no need for God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit.

I do not know whether I am saved or not, for I have no record that God chose me in his covenant of grace before the foundation of the world, or that my name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life; but I do know at the age of eleven something happened that made me a different person. I could see and feel that I had suddenly become different, though I couldn't understand it. Then at the age of twenty I was blessed with a very vivid and beautiful experience of grace. I could say with Jacob, "The Lord was in the place and I knew it not."

I love the doctrine of an all powerful God that does his will in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. The world teaches that Adam was a free moral agent, and that all his posterity after him are free moral agents, and that they can voluntarily of their own free will, accept or reject eternal life. I do not believe that Adam was a free moral agent, any more than I believe that man now is a free moral agent to accept or reject things pertaining to God.

God said, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it." He did not stop there but also said, "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Genesis 2:17) The last part of the above is one indication to me that God knew that Adam and Eve would eat of the forbidden tree. Had God actually wanted, desired, and intended that Adam not eat of the tree, and Adam ate of it contrary and in spite of God's wishes, I would have to conclude that Adam was and is practically the equal of God, and on that case he could of his own free will and accord, accept or reject the things pertaining to God. I could never, never subscribe to that kind of doctrine.

When God made Adam and Eve, he blessed them, and said, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." (Gen. 1:28) He also gave them every herb bearing seed, fruit tree, beast of the earth, and fowl of the air, "upon the face of the earth," and He said, "To you it shall be

for meat." God must have known that Adam and Eve would eat of the forbidden tree, and be driven out of the Garden of Eden, for he had already made preparations for them on the outside before he ever said, "Thou shalt not eat of it."

We hear God say, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Evidently there was someone present with God even before man was formed of the dust of the ground. "In the begining was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1:1) We also hear Jesus say, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the same glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John 17:5) I truly believe that Christ was with the Father before Adam was ever formed of the earth, I believe that Jesus Christ was just as much the Saviour at that time, as he was when he hung on Calvary's cross.

Now, if Adam had not partaken of the forbidden fruit, he would have lived on forever in the Garden of Eden, and all the herbs, fruits of the trees, beasts of the fields, etc., that were made for Adam and his posterity, would have been uselessly created. If Adam had not partaken of the forbidden fruit, God would have had a Saviour on his hands with nothing to do.

Our God is too loving to be unkind and is too wise to make mistakes. It is man who makes the mistakes and tries to put our all wise, loving heavenly Father equal with man. There is nothing like unto our God. In the 15th chapter, 16th verse of the gospel according to John, we read, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." God never has nor ever will need man to help him do anything. He even said that he didn't need man to praise him, for he could cause the stones to cry out in praise to his name.

We had better be praising and thanking God continually for being so good and merciful to a portion of mankind, to choose them in his Son before there was ever any substance of them. Therefore we can truly say, "It is not of works lest any man should boast." It is "by grace that we are saved and that not of our selves, it is the gift of God." These people who are always wanting to help God, are really in a sad state. The Lord says, that the world is the Lord's and the fullness thereof: the world and they that dwell therein. For He has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the flood. This is the same Lord whom David said was his Shepherd, and therefore he confidently declared, "I shall not want." It is the same one who, "Maketh me to lie down in green pastures, who leadeth me beside the still waters." It is not left to the whims or descretion of God's sheep as to where they shall feed and lie down, or whether they shall lie down at all, for He, the great Shepherd of the sheep, works in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

He first prepares them for that which he has prepared for them, so that they are not only willing but anxious to be led and fed in the day of His power. He quickens them from the dead and makes them new or living creatures, requiring living food, which is signified by green pastures. Green typifies life, and neither is it left as a matter of choice with them as to what they shall do, whether they shall obey or disobey, for David said, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures."

We understand from this that he was not a free moral agent to do as he pleased, but he was made to lie down in green pastures, and neither do I believe that any violence was offered to his spiritual mind or will in so doing, for the word which God had sent forth into his heart had prospered in the thing, and had accomplished the purpose whereto God had sent it, and being weary and heavy laden, his very soul leaped for joy at the thought of being able to lie down and rest in the pasture which the Shepherd and Bishop of his soul had, in his infinite wisdom, ap-

pointed for him, "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake," says David. It was not for David's sake, or because of anything he had done, or might at a future time do, but all for the glorifying of Himself and the lifting of the name of Jesus on high, or in other words, For his own name's sake. Therefore says David, "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

O how blessed we are to have been taught in the "school of Christ," the high privilege and joy in believing in a crucified Christ, the wonderful experience of being blessed to know the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the great joy of seeing the Holy Scriptures open up to the account of our Jesus the friend of sinners!

Please pray for me Elder Spangler, that I will be kept at the foot of the cross, ever looking unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith, please pray for my precious daughter, Anne, who is very ill with pulmonary edema. She is a real true Primitive Baptist. Anne is all I've got since I lost my husband in 1967. I have three other children but Anne is the only one single, and we live together.

Thank you so very much. Love to all the dear saints of God, from one whose love is in the Lord.

Mary M. Pearson

"A LETTER FROM MY MASTER'S SERVANTS"

Rt. 87, Box 126,
Shady Spring, W. Va. 28918

Dear Editors:

I see my subscription is past due, and you will find a check enclosed for renewal.

Let me say to one and all, may the Lord enable you to keep the good work up, writing, preaching, and contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, that the *Signs* will be around a long time yet, for it is a letter from my Master's servants, crying that salvation is of the Lord, and it puts man where he belongs — to claim not one single thing to his credit. But does give Christ the honor, the glory and praise for the Hope in our breasts.

May we ever view Christ's merits as the pleading cause of our Salvation. My infirmities have overtaken me, so I will close.

May the Lord bless you.
Wallace Harvey

Route 4, Box 157
Quitman, Ms. 39355

Dear Editors,

Please find enclosed an article written by Isaac Backus (first Baptist historian in America) in 1773 on the *Sovereign Decrees of God.* I searched for several years for this historic document after finding it mentioned in early Backus maniscripts and found it in the John C. Stennis collection at Mississippi State University in a colonial-plantation library.

If you feel the readers of the SIGNS would appreciate it, please feel free in printing it.

Yours in hope
Stanley C. Phillips

THE SOVEREIGN DECREES OF GOD
Boston, 1773

by
Isaac Backus

This was written by Isaac Backus to a friend in response to a paper entitled *On Traditionary Zeal* which was circulated in Providence, R. I. and vicinity in 1773, by another denomination as a reproach against the doctrine of Particular Election and Efficacious Grace in our salvation; and against

those who preached it.

This is an able exposition of the doctrine, and is worth a careful reading and comparision with the Scriptures by our readers. — EDITORS

Beloved Friend,

Although we should endeavor to avoid all needless contention, yet the *faith once delivered to the saints* is sometimes treated in such a manner as to make it our incumbent duty *earnestly* and publicly to *contend for it.* Such a case I think is presented before us by means of a printed paper lately spread in Providence and towns adjacent which you have requested me to make some remarks upon. It begins in this manner.

On Traditionary Zeal. Some good Christian pastors will not scruple to tell you that they could find no joy in their own state, no strength or comfort in their labors of love towards their flocks, but because they know and are assured from St. Paul that God never had, nor ever will have, mercy upon all men; but that an unknown multitude of them are, through all ages of the world, inevitably decreed to the eternal fire and damnation of Hell; and that an unknown number of others are elected to a certain, irresistible salvation. Wonder not, my friends, if the inquisition has its pious defenders, for inquisition, cruelty, and every barbarity that must have an end, is mere mercy if compared with this reprobation doctrine. And to be in love with it, to draw comfort from it, and to wish it Godspeed is a love that absolutely forbids the loving our neighbors as ourselves and makes the Scripture-wish, that all men might be saved, no less than a rebellion against God.

This writer's evident design is against the doctrine of particular election and efficacious grace in our salvation, and against those who preach it. And he takes the same method that the heathen persecutors did with the primitive Christians, viz., to cover them with skins of wild beasts in order that they might be devoured by dogs, or if not, yet that they might be hated and avoided by all men. He asserts that some Christian pastors tell their people such a story as he has here related. If he can find any man upon earth that teaches so, he is welcome to correct him as much as he deserves, but till he exhibits his proof he ought to be accounted a blasphemer of God's sovereignty and a false accuser of Christ's ministers. Yea, out of his own mouth he is condemned, for as short as his paper is he has not been able to keep to one consistent story, but the same preachers that he accuses of rejoicing that God never will have mercy upon all men, when he comes to give us their own language it is,"O, the sweetness of God's election!" And neither the Devil nor any of his children will ever be able to make a rejoicing in God's *everlasting love to a chosen number* to be the same thing as it would be to rejoice in the destruction of the rest.

Our Lord says, *Every one that doth evil hateth the light, but he that doth truth cometh to the light;* and let the reader judge which of these characters suits the conduct of the writer before us. He casts out these horrid accusations against some good Christian pastors without naming any one, while his evident aim is against all that profess a sweetness in sovereign election; at the same time (like the savages) he tries to keep himself and his principles hid. Though it fares with him as it did with the old enemies of the *sure foundation* which God has laid in *Zion,* whose bed was shorter than a man could stretch upon it, and the covering narrower than that he could wrap himself in it. *Isai.* xxviii. For though by the title of his piece he would have people esteem him as a bold champion against *tradition* and a friend to Paul and the sacred writings, yet he does not so much as attempt to prove that sovereign decrees and irresistible grace are not fully taught by them. No, instead of confusing us or defending himself by the sa-

cred oracles, he, like those who prophesied out of the *deceit in their own hearts,* first makes his address to men's passions and exerts all his art to bring up the horrid ideas of an inevitable decreeing of multitudes to hellfire, of cruelty vastly worse than the *inquisition,* of God's sacrificing of myriads of his creatures to the Devil, etc., and having done his utmost thus to raise a tempest in the souls of men, he winds up by asserting that "The only possible way of avoiding every prevailing error and of finding every saving truth is to listen, solemnly, attentively to listen, agreeable to the written word, to the *still small voice within you.*"

This is just like the old serpent who, with malicious reflections upon God's government and lying pretences of friendship to man, drew him into rebellion against God's *revealed will* and to gratify his own *heart's lusts.* Yet from that day to this, when the tempter thinks it will serve his turn, he is very ready to catch at some Scripture *words,* to entice people into violations of the *truth* which is therein taught.

Let the pretended advocate for the truth now before us mean what he will by the *voice within,* yet when he or any others are brought solemnly and attentively to listen either to reason, conscience, or the Spirit of God they will teach them that the way to avoid error and to find the truth in any case, is not first to inflame our passions before our judgments are well informed. No, for a gift will blind the eyes of the wise and pervert the words of the righteous; therefore we must have our eye single or else our *whole* body will be *full of darkness.* Hence appears the necessity of the Holy Spirit to renew us in the spirit of our minds and to guide our souls into all truth.

The grand contest ever since sin entered into the world has been between the will of the Creator and the will of the creature. But as it is too shocking for human nature to have it openly appear in that light, God's enemies in all ages have *made lies their refuge and under falsehood have hid themselves.* And in the controversy before us we may take notice of the following refuges of lies which the enemies of sovereign grace try to hide themselves in:

1. As the sacred writers often appealed to men's reason and conscience and exhorted the saints to regard the teachings of the Holy Spirit in their souls above all human authority on earth, deceivers of various denominations have caught at and perverted that sacred custom as a place for setting up a standard *in themselves* to decide every case so as not to admit anything for truth that does not agree with their *inward test.* But it is well known in our nation that in order for us to enjoy our just rights and liberties, rulers as well as subjects must be governed by known laws and established rules, and that for judges to assume a discretionary power to dispense with old laws or to make new ones as occasion served would introduce arbitrary government, or rather a cruel tyranny. And were not people deluded with the religious names and great swelling words of deceivers, as their attempts to set up a *voice within* which speaks in any respects contrary to God's *written word* would appear as arbitrary and tyrannical as any such proceedings of earthly judges can be. Those holy men whom God employed to write his Word had their authority so to do *confirmed by divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost,* and woe to that man who presumes either to add or take from those holy oracles.

2. The advocates for their own free will in opposition to sovereign grace have determined that the doctrine of fixed decrees in the divine mind concerning the future state of men, is consistent with the liberty of their own wills and with the proper influence of precepts and promises, rewards and punishments. And, having quoted a number of precepts with considerations to enforce them (of which the Bible is full) they boast that they have gained their argument, when in truth they have never touched the point in debate.

We know, and as firmly hold as any free willer on earth, that all men are under moral government where precepts and promises, exhortations, warnings, etc. have their proper place, and ought to influence us in all our conduct. And I believe from the bottom of my heart that God never did or ever will punish any but the guilty, and that he will finally reward every man according to his works. But in the present controversy the true state of the question is this, viz., Whether the whole plan of God's government and the final issue of every action through the universe has not been known and fixed in his counsels from the beginning, so that *nothing can be put to it nor anything taken from it? Eccl*s iii, 14. Or whether many events are not held in suspense and uncertainty in his infinite mind, till they are decided by the free will power of men? We hold the first, they the last side of this question. But instead of attending to the true state of the controversy, and instead of referring the decision of it to the divine oracles, *tradition* and *corruption* has carried them into the way which this writer pursues of representing our doctrine to be that God decrees some to misery in the same manner that he does others to happiness. Yea, this slanderer, in imitation of those who have gone before him, sets reprobation foremost and would have people believe that we hold God's first design to be the damnation of *multitudes* and then, secondly, the *irrestitible salvation* of a *number!* Hoping no doubt by these horrid colorings to guard people sufficiently against all the Gospel weapons which are appointed to pull down the strongholds that are raised *against the knowledge of God,* and to cast down the *imaginations* which keep men's thoughts *too high* to yield their all to a meek and lowly Jesus, 2 Cor. x, 4, 5. Many in latter ages have carried their imaginations so high on this subject as,

3. To assume a dignity to themselves that they will not allow to the eternal God, for they claim a *self-determining power* in their own wills while they deny it to the Most High, and insist upon it that his choice of some men to salvation rather then others, is from either a foresight or aftersight of good dispositions and good doings in them more than others, so making that to be the cause of his choice which he declares is the effect of it, and representing that God is influenced in his work by motives *without* himself, at the same time that they hold to a power to determine all their own actions *within* themselves. Can any imagination ever be entertained more absurd or more contrary to Holy Writ than these are! See *Matt.* xi, 25-28; *Rom.* xiii, 29, 30; *Eph.* i, 4, 5; 1 *Pet.* i, 2; 1 *John* iv, 19.

The people we are now speaking of commonly deny the doctrine of man's universal depravity, but if to claim a sovereignty to their own will, while they deny it to God, does not prove them to be rebels against Heaven, I know not what can do it.

Nebuchadnezzar made trial how it would do to ascribe all his achievements to himself, but after he had grazed among the beasts of the field till seven times had passed over him, he declares that, "All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as *nothing* (before the Most High) and he doth according to HIS WILL in the army of Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay has hand or say unto him, what dost thou?" *Dan.* iv, 35. Thus it happens that the hearts of kings are in the hands of the Lord so that as *rivers of water he turneth them whithersoever he will;* i.e. to act voluntarily as he designs to have them. From whence it appears evident that there is no inconsistency in holding God's decrees to be immutable, and yet that men act as voluntarily as if it were not so. And the great reasoners on the other side cannot avoid this consequence, if they would once own that the will of man is always determined in its choice by motive or by what they at present prefer and think to be best, for that

person must be stupid indeed who cannot see the HE in whom we live, move, and have our being, can at any time set things in such a view before our minds as to make us think it best to choose one way of acting rather than another. Though Balaam was so madly set after the wages of unrighteousness that he *would* not be turned even by the reproof of a dumb ass, yet when the Lord opened his eyes to see the angels with a drawn sword before him, he at once chose to fall to the earth or to turn back rather than run upon it, *Num.* xxii. 31, etc. In order therefore to keep up their conceit that fixed decrees interfere with men's liberty, some of their great doctors have,

4. Tried to shelter themselves in such a miserable refuge as to pretend that they have a power in their wills to act *with motive or against motive* just as the will pleases. But I suppose it is as great a piece of nonsense in itself to hold that a rational soul can act voluntarily in any case without or against motive, as it would be to say there can be a rational action without any influence of reason in it! Thus professing themselves to be wise they become fools, for as Mr. Locke truly observes, even delirious persons are influenced by reason only they reason from wrong premises. As when such a man imagines that he is all made of glass, he is moved to act with the caution that would be necessary if the case were so. And the like may be said of other imaginations. And persons must be idiots and not reason at all, or else reason and motive will always influence their choice and conduct. Evil *imaginations* and *thoughts* always move men to act wickedly, Gen. vi, 5 and xiii, 21. But when any are brought to *know the truth it makes them free, free from sin, so as to become servants of righteousness,* John viii, 31; *Rom.* vi, 18. The main objections I ever heard against sovereign election and certain salvation, by free grace alone, appear to me to spring from this root, viz., Man who was flattered with the motion of being *as gods* still conceits that he has a power *in himself* to do as he pleases, let that pleasure be to comply with or to disappoint God's designs; and therefore, if they are not disposed at present to engage in his service, that he must wait their leisure, and be ready, when ever they set about the work in good earnest, to grant them the assistance of his grace and, if they improve it well unto the end, then to receive them to his glory. But for my part I have no more notion of worshipping a diety that can possibly be mistaken or disappointed in any one event than I have of worshipping Baal, who could not defend either his altar or grove when his votaries were asleep, *Judges* vi, 31.

(Continued next month)

ELDER GRIFFIN TO SISTER YOUNG

Route 6, Box 84,
Fayette, Alabama,
May 3, 1974.

Mrs. Lucile Young,
Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Sister in Christ:

"The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come." (Isa. 57:1) As members of the Adam family, we all unbosom our complaints in the same manner. In Christ we always triumph (2 Cor. 2:14); in Adam we always fail, all having fallen (Rom. 3:23). Thus, in our appearing before the Lord as short, we think how lamentable it was that the Lord called from hence a useful man like unto Ed Young. In this wretched condition none of us have taken to heart the joy that has been accorded him. Selfishness pervaded my heart, for I loved him dearly, and I enjoyed looking into his eyes; I enjoyed sweet fellowship with him in

the spirit of my Redeemer God; his countenance would light up with a glow as Jesus was presented to him from any text. I wanted to keep thus, for me, not for him only in an abstract way.

It always causes me to visit with those that go into another state or country. I want to know the customs of that land; I want to have clear ideas about the kind of country to which my acquaintances have gone; I want to know the make up and characteristics of the associates that my loved one has gone to. In sweet meditation I crossed death's impending chasm to dwell in Beulah land with my dear brother. He who gave the inhabitants of that land this unspeakable gift, met me in my reverie. As the light of city played upon my subconsciousness I saw that city whose Maker and Builder is God, and I saw Him. I did not see Ed, for while he was here he would not have asked me to behold him, but he would have enjoyed me preaching to him about Him that fills the glory land, for

"The bride eyes not the garment,
But her dear Bridegroom's face;
I will not gaze at glory,
But on the King of grace;
Not at the crown he giveth,
But on His pierced hand;
The Lamb is all the glory
In my Immanuel's land."

and that is exactly as it has been in my proclaiming Jesus while still in time's state — I did not look upon my congregation as men and women, but I only saw the Lord as I looked at them. So it was in my musing; I did not see him with the eyes that I saw him recently in your home. I saw him in a state of future glorification, and I knew him in Christ, and they were together, and as one, and yet it was Master and servant; it was bride and bridegroom.

As James and Peter and John were led up into the mountain of Transfiguration by the Saviour for the important lesson wherein Moses and Elijah vanished from sight and only Christ remained, then they were led down by the same Hand. When I came back from my journey yon, and had been set down again among transient things, I had, at least for the time, an unforgettable lesson imbedded in my mind.

I had been chosen and made to approach unto the Lord (Psa. 65:4), and to dwell for a little while in His courts, and to rejoice that my precious fellow-traveller had been called from a world of sorrow and anxiety and misgivings into a land of perpetual joy and happiness. As always when my weakness finds me out, I trembled in His presence. (First, read Rom. 8:3; read it carefully, and then turn and read carefully Ex. 19:-16, and then read Num. 32:23). I had violated an injunction of my blessed Lord. I had reversed heaven's order. He that appeared unto John commanded His servants to write, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, that they may rest from their labors, and that their works do follow them." (Rev. 14:13), and His counterpart said, "Better is the day of death than the day of birth." (Eccl. 7:1). I remembered my sin (Gen. 41:9); I had been complaining; I had said, Why doest thou? I had attempted to stay His hand; I had acted selfish; I had not taken Ed's case to heart in the acceptable way. Rejoicing set in; I was carried away in holy ecstasy that my dear brother had gained that land where the inhabitants shall never thirst, never hunger, never stumble because of darkness, never be sick, never have a clouded day. I was made so unconcerned about dying, for I had seen it as a passport given out by the Benefactor of heaven that another of His saints might enter in spirit into the haven of divine rest.

Yes, his works will follow him. As his spirit is resting in the sublime courts of glory, his works while here on this earthly globe will follow him. These works will not be seen as the work of a sinful man, but as the handiwork of him that walked in love among His brethren." (See Isa. 26:12)

How lovely God works. All blessings came from the Lord. I had wanted so badly to visit in the home with Ed. I had learned what a prince he was, and there

is not anything equal to sitting down in a home and sharing with that household where love dwells. It is a quiet place, and to share a morsel in quietness is a lovely thing. (Pre. 17:1) I had not been able to find the time to come, and the time found me. So many times since we heard the news of his death, we have been brought in thankfulness to the mercy seat, and we have been met there by Him that gave that blessing of refulgent glory. We got to come. It may be that some would say we could have come earlier, but not so, for we were blessed to be with him just before the Bridegroom took a member of His body through the threshold of death into a chamber of unsurpassed glory to rest in love of God until the Master of the guest chamber comes to make up His jewels —not to make jewels — but to make them up into a glorious body into a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.

I am glad he has gone to be with the Lord. I am glad that he believed the future resurrection of his body. I am glad, I well know, and I hope I am thankful to have been with him as he faced the gathering of the shadows just before the bursting forth of heavenly light.

May God bless us poor sinners that are left on time's rough and ragged shore; may it grieve us in such a way that in our anguish we cry out, "Even so, Lord, come quickly."

We can not pause beside his grave; we must not pine away. Our days, be they few or many, must be lived out. May God enable you to gather up the tangled threads knowing that He that knitted you into the body of Christ in love, will, in the same love, untangled the skeins of life's thread to His name's honor and glory, and to your comfort in the Lord.

In love and fellowship,

W. D. and Lois

EXPERIENCE

702 W. Academy Street,
Madison, N. C. 27025

Dear Elder Spangler:

Enclosed is my check for $10.00 to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*, use the balance on expenses.

Brother Spangler, I want to share a dream with you I had 63 years ago. I was in my early twenties, and I will be 83 in September. It is just as plain to me tonight as it was on that dark and cold night 63 years ago.

I was lost in the ocean, clinging to a big rock that was higher than the sea was deep. I was all alone with no one in sight. I called for help but no one answered. Everything was so dark: even the water was black, not even a star or the moon shining. I knew my only help must come from heaven. I begged the Lord with all my heart, and with all my soul, and with all my mind and strength, to have mercy on this poor sinner, and save me from that watery grave. I could feel my hands slipping, and I knew I could not hold on much longer. I was praying for life and forgiveness of my sins; "You know my heart, dear Lord. Thy will be done — my hands are slipping and I am falling; and I cried out in anguish, Oh Lord, if there is a God in heaven, please let me see a star." Then an arm reached down and lifted me up on a high mountain; and everything looked so peaceful and serene.

I was all alone, not even with the one who lifted me up; but in my heart I felt the Lord had heard my prayer. I walked around and was not afraid. I kept on walking, and came to the edge of the mountain, and there was a deep gulf between me and the most beautiful place I had ever seen. It was beyond describing. As I stood there in amazement and wonder, I knew I could never cross that gulf to the other side. Somehow I felt resigned just to be able to see the beauty of it all. Then a door opened over there, and a beautiful Bride came out in the garden — I could never describe how lovely and beautiful

she was. Her wedding gown was beautiful beyond words. Then the Bridegroom came out and took his bride in his arms and kissed her. I cried for joy, and asked someone to tell me who the bride was, for I had never witnessed love like that; and a voice spoke behind me and said, "She is the Bride of God the Lamb's wife."

I have had many sweet dreams, and ups and downs, but none that has touched my life like this one. When I get so deep in the valley, this is a beacon of light; and I am still searching for that star, and hope some day I will cross over to the beautiful garden.

Love and sweet fellowship,
Emma S. McCollum

"REMEMBERING FORMER DAYS"

P. O. Box 6,
Shokan, N. Y. 12481

Dear Elder Wood:

I have had a sincere desire to write a few lines to you, and ever remembering former days and the joy of meeting, hearing the preached word to our comfort, with love and fellowship.

I will put the pen to the paper, and opening the Blessed Book we come to the 8th chapter of Romans, reading the 26th verse, which says, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmaties: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." "With groanings which cannot be uttered." Well then the next verse says, "And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh interecession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Now, "Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril or sword?"

In all this we are concerned with suffering, concerned about ourselves, Yes, but where do we look? The lessons or lessons may be hard to learn, and the experience trying and even disagreeable, but if given strength to endure along with submission to the will of God, we will at some time, (and that time His also,) we shall see its refining effect, for there is a refining to be done: in passing through the refiner's fire, all the dross to remove. Suffering then seems to be, let us say, the measure of the lot of His people: some more and some a little less. This God, our God, the God who governs the world in righteousness, is teaching us this lesson which we must needs know.

We would ask then what must we need to know. We find in reading the Word of God that God teaches by His Son Christ Jesus, that He came as the Saviour of sinners, of which we all are, but the saving of these sinners meant bearing the burdens, the sorrows, the pain and perplexities of life here on earth with patience, with a strong heart and pure trust in his Heavenly Father.

Jesus Christ became a living example of partaking of all the hardships of life upon himself, that is, Christ was submissive to the will of the Father in heaven. Beloved, let us praise the Lord. Christ Jesus was not bound by limitations. We cannot reach up to the infinite, but we must understand that the infinate can and must come down to do the will of the Father. Again also, we cannot really compare our physical sufferings with the suffering of our precious Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus. All of us have our peculiar trials which this one or that one must and does endure. O yes, there are those that, like Job's wife when she saw all his trial and suffering, and says to him, "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God and die."

At this place we must not leave out what Job said to his wife, — "Thou speaketh as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not

receive evil?" This is the word — "In all this did not Job sin with his lips."

This is also the measure of suffering one has to pass through, even as a refining fire. Now we cannot say that because Christ was divine, His experience here below was less painful or more easily born than ours. Beloved, there is no pretense. He suffered for all those the Father gave Him, for the Word says in 2 Timothy 2:12, "If we suffer, we shall also reign." And Jesus says in John 10:25, "I told you, and you believed not, the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice and *I know them* and *they follow me.* And I give unto them eternal life and they never shall perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. I and my Father are one."

Beloved, your sufferings have redemption; and further this blessed Word says, "The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath nowhere to lay his head. That is a little more suffering on our Lord's part for you and for us. Also, you know if you read, how our blessed Lord suffered in Gethsemane, on the cross and before, to be cursed, sourged and spit upon; All this, I say again, all this for you and for me. Then what about our sufferings, and those we know about? Beloved there just is no comparing, for truly Christ Jesus tread the winepress alone.

But it was all for our sakes, yours and mine. Are our griefs so great that we cannot be comforted? Are the lives of some but a desert? because in their distresses, their fears, their trials, they fear that even God has forsaken them. I have found there is but one place to go, and that is to God the Father in prayer, and you will find Faith and His great Love, that the Father suffers even with you, for He reveals his Fatherly feelings for you in the very suffering of lonely Christ Jesus.

The Father sees the blind leading the blind, He sees the degradation of His Holy Name. He sees and is grieved with the works of scribes and Pharisees in the temple, and drove them out (the money changers); and he suffered the power of darkness — But remember He suffered and endured all these things for His very elect, His very own. Then He says in John's gospel, "I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me: for they are thine, and all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified *in them. "In them."* that is in you, Beloved, that have suffered, and He has blessed you and me, and all of like precious faith, and by the Holy Spirit bears you up in all needed strength, that you can bear the burden of your sufferings lightly, ever remembering He is your burden bearer, and mine. God the Father has laid on His only begotten Son the iniquity of us all.

Christ Jesus the Son even said, "Eli, Eli, Lama Sabachthane," that is to say, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me." and then in submission said, "Nevertheless thy will, O God, be done."

So for our sake His own dear heart was moved with tender compassion so much, to bear with fortitude and faith in God the Father for us, a perfect sacrifice for sin as Captain of our Salvation — So let us look up to our Heavenly Father in true thankfulness, and praise His name. Christ said to his Father, "The glory which thou has given me, I have given them, that they may be one as we are One," "Father I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory?" "I have declared unto them thy Name: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."

So then, beloved, are your eyes given sight, are your feeble knees strengthened, and in Faith your heart moved to compassion for Christ Jesus' sufferings for us? He doeth all things well, that some day, and even soon, all our trials, tribulations and sufferings will be no more, and we will be with Him in his

kingdom, eternal in the heaven. This is for all of like precious faith. "Praise His Holy Name. Selah."

Dear brother, at this place I know tribulation, and my beloved wife and sister in Christ even knows it far more, and both of us can say as Paul said about his trials to the Corinthians, "If I must needs glory, I will glory in the things which concern my infirmities."

Dear Brother Wood, what is the little flock up in this north country (New York State) going to do? We now have no pastor in the whole state, Elder Slauson having been called to his eternal home, and we are still poor and needy, needing both the sincere milk and the strong meat, and seemingly no one to nourish us. Yet we are thankful to our God that we are blest to meet in a covenant way. But this is the winter season and we are still hungry.

We do enjoy the *Signs* and testify to the truth in your Editorials. We are sending $4.00 for one year's renewal, and the rest for the Contributions — total $15.00.

Our love and prayers to you and yours, and those of the *Signs*.

Deacon Edward K. Adsit,
Olive and Hurley Old School
Baptist Church

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902 Maple Avenue,
Torrance, Calif. 90503

Dear Editors:

I enclose money order of $4.00 to renew my subscription for another year.

May the Lord always bless you Editors to continue writing, as well as those of our precious faith to express to others what the dear Lord has given them for those who love the Truth.

A sister, I hope in the Lord,
Neva Brooks

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Danville, Va. April, 1975

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

EXPERIENCE

"Knowing that tribulation worketh *patience;* and patience, *experience;* and experience, *hope;* and hope maketh not ashamed; because of the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Romans 5:3-5. We want to put the spotlight on EXPERIENCE in this treatise. Experience really means in this quotation: to observe diligently, or the proof of testing a thing. We rejoice in tribulation because it works out or produces patience, while the latter develops an experience of God. Patience works experience in bringing out as a proven fact God's power and love toward us in our preservation *in* and our deliverance *out* from trial. Experience means the sum of practical wisdom taught by the events and observations of life. "EXPERIENCE is the Lord's School, and they who are taught by Him usually learn by the mistakes they make that in themselves they have no wisdom; and by their slips and falls, that they have no strength!" (John Newton). I have adopted Laban's phrase to Jacob: "I have learned by experience." Gen. 30:27.

I have learned by experience that experience is not transmissible. I must suffer myself. I cannot learn from another person's suffering. I cannot fully sympathize with anyone's loss unless I experienced the same loss about the same time under like circumstances. True, we can give advice based upon our experience; yet it takes the same experience to bring forth conduct by the other person. Differences in degrees of experiences and revelation causes us to differ in our opinions upon the same scriptural subjects and texts. I have had such varied experience in my life. Almost all the things I was so sure about in my young life have sunk into oblivion, so that I am not so sure about anything other than what God has revealed.

Since I have not written to any of you either by letter or the printed page, I feel that I must tell you some of my experiences and revelations for the past two and one-half years. I reckon that the greatest shock that I have experienced was the loss of my wife, Dessie Mae, January 4, 1973. She opened the door in response to a caller and said, "Come in." She immediately fell backward and died within a few minutes as the result of a massive heart attack. I was away from the house and did not learn of her death until her body was in the funeral home after she had been pronounced DOA at the hospital. You can only imagine the impact of two words that were said to me by a neighbor as I waited alone in the darkened house anticipating Dessie

Mae's return from a hurried visit to some neighbor. All this person was able to say to me was, "She's gone." These two words together with the anguished expressions on the tear stained face of this neigbor have haunted me so much since then. This shock sapped all the energy from me that I was in such dazed condition which resulted in lack of consciousness of things occuring around me. I was awakened into consciousness by the words, "We are praying for you." I beheld a house full of people and read their faces which revealed love and a deep concern for my welfare. I responded, "I know it. I feel the power of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit." It calmed me. I was given a sweet peaceful and submissive mind as well as strength to my physical body. Your words of condolence both by mouth and by letter together with the flowers and contributions kept me mindful of your loving fellowship and labour of love in my behalf. I have been unable to answer any of these with the proper response because a severe attack of influenza upon my weakened body prevented me from doing anything other than that which was absolutely necessary.

The Lord says through the inspired writing of Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." See 2 Cor. 12:9. So much of the time for the past two years my weakness of mind and body has caused me to consider breathing a task. This extreme weakness coupled with having to live alone for so long has resulted in much anguish, which has made my life almost unbearable. The hope of being enabled to again experience the God-given power to preach the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ from the pulpit is the only thread that keeps me from insanity and the jaws of death. I know that God has miraculously strengthened me with physical ability and illuminated my mind with a chain of fast-moving well-ordered thoughts, as well as miraculously loosening and using my tongue to declare the gospel as it is being revealed to me. Unless you have experienced such a long siege of extreme physical and mental weakness; unless you have experienced such drastic change as I have indicated during this same time for two hours each week — you could not know what I am talking about. The hours spent in the houses of worship with the saints of God, I LIVE. I merely exist with much confusion of mind and conscious of my loneliness and extreme weakness between these precious hours. Some precious hours have been spent in godly conversation while visiting some earnest inquirers for the truth as the Holy Scriptures relate. (I am glad I began this treatise because I had been thoroughly convinced that I could never write again. Now, I feel the strength to perform it.) God's strength has been perfected in my weakness. Now, I glory in my infirmities for when I am weak, then I am strong in the Lord.

Every time I meet a gospel preacher accompanied by his wife, I want to say to him, "How rich you are to have such a wonderful gift as a life-long help-meet who works behind the scenes and shares all your sorrows, heartaches, burdens, persecutions, problems, etc., one who possesses special characteristics qualifying her to be a minister's good companion. May you stop to tell her once in awhile how you appreciate her." I told Dessie Mae many times that she was my *drawing card.* I informed a precious brother a few days ago that I had experienced a drastic change in the number of telephone calls and visits since Dessie Mae's death. He told me quickly that, "a preacher loses his social standing in the community when he loses his wife. You cannot expect the church members nor friends to visit you. We look to the preacher's wife as the better-half of the necessary team socially." I have about decided that a pastor should be the husband of one wife. Because of my weakness and inability to visit, it became necessary to rent a house in the midst of the churches I try

to serve as Pastor in Arkansas. The first time I entered the place as my "hired house," I noticed a plaque over the door. I read it aloud to the people who were inside to welcome me: GOD BLESS OUR HOME. I responded, this is not a home. It is only a house. The plaque clearly indicates that it takes more than one to make a home. A home can be converted into just a house instantly. Many times I have gone from the hired house in Norphlet, Arkansas alone to enter a house to dwell alone in Winnsboro, Texas, which was *our home*. These houses are 200 miles apart. I stay in each house several days of each month. I now consider this a blessing because I could not bear to stay in one house all of the time.

Sometime after I took up housekeeping in the vicinity of Eldorado I became very perplexed with the problems, burdens, and expenses of trying to keep two households going. Finally, something said within me, "Open the Bible as a venture and begin reading on the right column of the right page. You will find an answer." I picked up the Bible at hand as the same Voice said, "Not that one. You have used it." I looked around and was surprised to find a new Bible that had not been taken from the box. It fell open and I began reading the last part of the last chapter of ACTS. Surely there is no answer in this chapter, I reasoned, I know its contents. I was greatly surprised and elated to read the last two verses: "And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him." Acts 28:30-31. I received the answer with rejoicing. I was too weak to get out of the house. Paul received all that came in unto him. He did not go out to seek some one to talk with. I was to open the door to anyone who knocked. This means that I have two whole years for these problems to work themselves out. I should not be anxious over these natural things. I am to devote my time, "Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ," with the complete confidence that no person would hinder me. Hours of meditation that week-end upon this text clearly defined the difference in preaching and teaching. Those who really believe in the heart the *preaching* of the kingdom of God, are fit subjects to receive the *teaching* concerning the things of the Lord Jesus Christ. The quintessence of gospel truth is that JESUS CHRIST is the perfect and complete Saviour of each and every one for whom He lived and died and arose. Other so-called gospel is preaching and teaching that Jesus Christ's life, death, and resurrection is ineffective because some for whom He lived and died will fail to inhabit eternal Heaven and immortal glory. The doctrine of Arminianism is the doctrine of Anti-Christ. I hate this doctrine with a godly hatred. I do not hate the people who believe it because I once believed it and preached it with all my heart. I denied the power of the Holy Ghost not knowing really what I was preaching. God had great mercy upon me because I did it in unbelief of the truth, verily thinking I was doing God's will. That was the greatest sin I have ever committed.

I must tell you of an experience I had while in the jaws of death in the house in Winnsboro. I was exhausted before I left Norphlet for Winnsboro after the third Sunday of one month. I drove the 200 miles suffering with a nagging nervous backache to Winnsboro. I hardly could walk in the house. I went to bed without anything to eat. I was so dizzy that I could hardly move. I would look across the room to the telephone and think of many who had told me that they were as near to me as my telephone. I wouldn't dare try to get to the phone. I lay there for days all alone unconscious a big part of the time. I felt the grip of death and began trying to pray, "Lord, I'll be your *anything*." I could not get connection with God. I kept trying to pray, getting no relief.

Finally in desperation I prayed, "Lord, I'll be your *nothing*." He heard my prayer and I received some relief. Saturday morning came and I was absent from church services. Several came by and found me in critical condition. When the doctor finally saw me, he prescribed something for me that gave me some relief. My son and wife came from Hot Springs and stayed a few days until I gained strength to get about in the house. I have been submissive to be God's *nothing* since then. I could not be depended on to conduct funerals.

I am now gaining a little in strength and weight. Am yet trying and being blessed to attend Rehobeth, Antioch, and Bethel churches in Arkansas as well as Good Hope and Paran churches in Texas. Letter writing is yet out of the question so I receive very few letters. I have hope of being enabled to visit the brethren some day and regain contact with the people who are so precious to me. Pray for me. Write me, bear with my infirmities. I yet love you for Christ's sake, I trust.

E. J. Lambert

EXPANATION OF OUR VIEWS

In our haste we published without comment in the February issue, a letter in which the following statement is made:

"Let us not deny that the Holy Spirit can work faith in the heart of a person who has never heard the word through preaching, and cause this person to call upon the name of the Lord: But the usual way is by working faith in them through preaching, to believe and know God by hearing, as spoken of in the scriptures."

We did not note the expression "the usual way" when we read it. This does not at all express our understanding of the matter. We do not question what God has done or can do, but we do not understand that it is the "usual way" for God to impart faith through preaching. We believe, and have always maintained, that first there is a quickening of the Lord's people by the Spirit, which brings them out of darkness into His marvelous light. This work of Grace brings them to the new or spiritual birth, and being born of the Spirit they have the fruit of the Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, *faith*, etc. They know and understand spiritual things, and have hope of eternal life. Then when they hear the truth preached, they know it is the Truth, and rejoice in it.

The preaching of the gospel in spirit and power, is for the comfort and edification of the Lord's people, and to His praise, honor and glory. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

This is the doctrine the *Signs of the Times* has always maintained, and, the Lord willing, it will continue to be advocated as being the doctrine of God our Saviour. We know that many English writers have used such expressions as "means of grace", but such do not express to us, the "faith once delivered to the saints."

We feel we must give this explanation, and believe most will agree with us upon further light upon the subject.

Editors

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ELDER KER TO ELDER CHICK

Middleton, N. Y.

Dear Brother Chick:

I have just read your Editorial in the *Signs of the Times* for February 15, 1901, on the subject of prayer, with comfort and instruction. This subject has for many years given me much comfort, as well as many doubts and fears. The question often with me is, What is prayer? and do I know anything about it as the children of God do, who often

express themselves as to the comfort and sweetness of it, or in it, to them? I can remember when a mere boy I would often try to thank God for the preservation of my life, and the blessings as I as a child enjoyed, also when I did wrong would ask His forgiveness. I can say, for the last thirty years I have been trying to pray, and today I ask solemnly, Have I ever in the Spirit approached the throne of grace?

My dear brother, such questionings occupy much of my time. My doubts and fears are many, but my assurances few, as I hardly ever get above doubt and unbelief, and some of the questions I find in my mind often bring with them horror, I am made to mourn because of my lack of faith, trust and confidence in an all wise and gracious God, whose promises are yea and amen in Christ Jesus our Lord. I can now see that my prayers when a child were entirely selfish and without faith, and I fear they are the same today.

When speaking publicly in the way of prayer, I often feel it is cold, lifeless and without faith, and often would rather try to preach than to try to pray. When I seem to have freedom of mind in making my wants and desires known to God, the devil comes and tells me, You are doing well today, the brethren will enjoy such a prayer, at once horror takes hold of me and I fear and tremble. Again, when I seem to stammer and stumble, the devil comes and says, You have not prayed in your heart, and this is only form and mockery; and my soul sinks within me. Sometimes at night in my wakeful hours, and again at my duties in the day, I try to pray, and address the Father of mercy and the God of all comfort, begin with a few words, and perhaps in a few moments I come to myself, and behold I have forgotten I began to pray; my mind has been taken up with something of the world, and again I fear and quake. Do you wonder at such a poor, helpless, dependent sinner as I, having doubts, fears and sufferings of mind?

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know,
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I am not born again."

Lord, decide the doubtful case and give my weary conscience ease.

The few thoughts above will give you an idea of what troubles I have passed through in regard to prayer, but feel sure you cannot fellowship such an experience, and this causes me to doubt also, to know I am alone in such an experience, but just so I am, and instead of growing stronger, as I hoped years ago, I am getting weaker and weaker each day of my life.

You say in your Editorial, the Lord waits his own time to answer prayer, and if He waits long we should not faint or be discouraged. This I fully believe, but sometimes the request is not granted at all. Now the idea presents itself that a form of words is not always prayer, and many times when we have a thought we were praying, there was not a word of prayer in it; words without faith never reach God. You well remember when President Garfield was shot, how the different denominations of the United States set apart a day to pray for his recovery, but he died, this fully demonstrates the fact that all which is called prayer is not prayer. Had one of the thousands who desire his recovery had faith to believe God would hear or grant his request, the President would have lived.

James tells us, "We ask and receive not, because we ask amiss." We do not know what we need, and if all our desires were granted, we would soon be cut off from the fellowship of God's people, or would have a very different experience from what we do have. We ask to be delivered from temptation, affliction, fears, doubts, sorrows and pain, if this was granted how could we be conformed to the image of the Son of God? How could we grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? Nature and grace have their opposites, so what seems evil

to us is good and to the glory of God. The sick child would prefer sweets to the bitter medicine it needs, and so with the children of God, they would have the sweets at all times, but their Father knowing what is good for them, gives affliction, sorrow and pain, not that he has pleasure in their sufferings, but that they may know more of Him, and his strong arm, that they may have fellowship with the sufferings of Christ, and know the power of His resurrection. If we could feel as we would like, the time would be but short before we would be proud Pharisees, and would be thanking God that we were not as other men. This is not according to the will of God, therefore we are a poor and afflicted people, yet trust in the name of the Lord. The very knowledge we have of our sinful and depraved nature is a blessing, because it brings us to God, and here we see Christ the Mediator between, in garments dyed with blood; He is seen and not us. He paid the debt and is forever at the right hand of God to make intercession for us.

Now the question comes, who prays and whose prayer is answered always? The Apostle tells us in the following language, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the heart knoweth that is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." (Romans 8:26, 27) Nothing therefore in the way of prayer is answered but that which is in accordance with the will of God, consequently such petitions are given of God, and ascend to him through the Spirit, as Jesus said, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." Hence we cannot come unto Him in prayer only through or in Christ, anymore than we can ascend to Him when the summons comes that calls us from time to eternity, without having Christ, the truth, the the way and the life. We poor worms of the dust should indeed be thankful and rejoice because we have such an high priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and who being tempted in all points like as we, is able to succor us who are tempted, and with his own blood did cleanse us from all sin. Yet we feel the leprosy remaining, and are in continual warfare, but through him the victory is ours, over death, sin and the grave. Notwithstanding all this, we find ourselves trying to pray always, and are neither faint or discouraged though we wait and wait again.

The prayer of the publican is in the mind of the saint more than any other, and whether a child of God or not, it suits my case: "God be merciful to me a sinner." For surely sin is mixed with all I do, and mercy and grace I need every moment of my life. Mercy because of my sin, unbelief and rebellion, and grace to keep me and sustain me in the trials and conflicts of my pilgrimage. So, because of my crippled condition, I go halting and stumbling along, finding in this life no continuing city, but I seek one to come, where prayer and desire are no more, but there the saints have fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore.

With love and fellowship I am your brother in hope of the gospel.

H. C. Ker

ELDER CHICK'S REPLY

It affords us much pleasure that the Editorial upon the subject to which Brother Ker refers, has called out such an excellent letter from him. We can assure him that we are fully aware of the very conflicts of which he has spoken. In all our ministry we have found more perplexities and anxiety regarding prayer, than we have ever known concerning preaching. Perhaps we might be understood if we should express our feelings in this way: In preaching we are talking to men who are in some sense our equals, in prayer we are speaking to that God who is supreme, and who knows every thought of the heart, and who shall bring every secret into judg-

ment. We do not know what to pray for as we ought, and we may add that we feel deeply that we do not know how to pray as we ought. Yet it has been our encouragement that the Holy Spirit does make intercession for us according to the will of God, and we understand that this intercession, and groaning of the Spirit which cannot be uttered, goes on in our own heart.

LIFE AND DEATH — LETTER AND EXPERIENCE

P. O. Box 13,
Boones Mill, Va. 24065

Dear Brethren:

To faith, Love and Life are not two different things, but are the same thing. Therefore those who abide in death, are those who hate, and those who abide in love, are those who own Christ our Life. This is brought about when the beast is slain upon the altar. As the high priest under the law took a beast from the herds and slew it with a knife upon the Jewish altar, it was a shadow of the sword of the Spirit slaying our beastly affections, and the altar is our heart renewed. The High Priest is Jesus Christ.

Now the reasonable service of the temple is acceptable to God because Jesus is the High Priest who dwells in His people, whose bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost. Here Jesus dwells as He inhabits the praise of Israel, and deep within their purified conscience, called the Holy of Holies, or Holiest of All, He alone enters to bear witness with our spirit that we are His children.

This Voice is heard by faith, and is the Bread of Life called Shew Bread in the shadow of the law temple which clothes the stones but left the children naked. Thus His communication is eternal life: which life is bestowed by Love, and locked in the temple by our pure minds, or our remembrance.

When the Lord enables a preacher to preach and the silver trumpet is sounding Jubilee, then pure memories are stirred up and we eat of that Bread which causes us to rejoice in Christ Jesus by the grace of Jesus Christ.

Within every new born child of God Jesus dwells, and He is our Righteousness. This is shadowed forth as the veil of the temple, and it cost the blood of Christ and makes us acceptable to God, for it has a double in it which both hides our infirmities, and decks us with His virtues.

The royal law and the pot of heavenly manna are shadows of the keeping power of the Shepherd, who prevents and constrains us from evil to come, and from sinning beyond the reach of His mercy, while the pot, at His times, provides holy consolation, and we feed on heavenly manna as the Lord gives sweet absolution and freedom from the things that torment us; and from within fire of the altar is kindled, and we love one another; and this by the insipation of God. As His Divine graces unite in harmony we sing unto Him who bestows more favors and comforts than tongue can tell — but including in every saint faith, hope and charity.

I have tried to show from the scriptures, which all testify of Jesus, who dwells in His people which He seeks out to surely save and never forsake, that as an earthly king could not lawfully inherit his kingdom until the king before him dies, Jesus died to make us kings and priests unto God. He at this present time is the only One that is the Living One, — the rest of us are dying.

When Christ calls us from the dead at the last day, then we shall be entirely like Him that truly says, "I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore."

In bonds,
J. L. Bocock

WORDS OF EXPERIENCE AND COMFORT

Rt. 2, Box 78A
Strong, Ark. 71765

Dearly Beloved Sister Barron:

My mind is on a few things you said to me last Sunday, as well as some scriptures and thoughts that come to mind. My desire is that I might write something that will be of comfort to you. You spoke of being so dried up much of the time and that it seems to be not so with me as it was with you: You saw others rejoicing, when you couldn't. I do not know whether I have as many dry seasons as you do, or not, but still I have many barren and empty dry seasons filled with mourning, sorrows, doubts and fears of being one of the Lord's little ones — desiring of Him to show a token of his love and mercy to a vile and sinfully wretch as I.

At times I have felt to be a hypocrite. I recall hearing a minister in his preaching mention the Pharisee justifying himself before men; and I thought that I might be as that Pharisee, trying to justify myself, and I was saying within, Lord have mercy on me a sinner: let me not be as the Pharisee, when these sweet words came to me in a still small voice, "You are not your own, you are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are his." I rejoiced greatly in the Lord with tears. It was also communion time after the preaching that day. When the communion service started, I felt there was a coldness among us, and I was saying within, O heavenly Dove send thy Spirit down and warm these cold hearts of ours. Again I rejoiced with tears when a few more sweet words came to me, "I am thy God, and will still give the aid."

That was a sweet communion to me, as there was much love made manifest among the brethren. I haven't seen myself many times as I desire to be: it seems often I have such dull seasons of being shut up in prison, with no feeling of love and joy in heavenly things. So I believe that if we did not know something about being down in the valley, the slough of despondency, neither would we know anything of rejoicing on the mountain tops of God's love.

His love for his people is an everlasting love. He said, "I have loved thee with an everlasing love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Is it not wonderful to the little children of God, when the Lord sends them a little drink now and then, when they have been in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water? "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them. I the God of Israel will not forsake them, I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys. I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." (Isa. 41:17, 18)

How sweet and comforting are these words to the poor and needy! Jesus said, "The poor have the gospel preached unto them." Is it not precious to them when the Lord blesses them with ears to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches, a heart to perceive and rejoice in the true gospel of our Lord and Saviour. They cannot rejoice in the absence of their Saviour: it is indeed a dry, empty, barren season to them. We find we are unable to control our seasons — they come and go as our Lord sees fit. Our prayer is a sincere desire of the heart to the Lord to restore unto us the joys of his salvation.

Worldly minded people say they can find Jesus anytime: they boast of their good works, thinking they can save souls for the Lord, they feel to be rich and have no need. "They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." (Psalm 49:6, 7) "They are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued like other men." (Psalm 73:5)

"Poor and afflicted, yet they trust
In God, the gracious, wise and just,
For them he deigns this lot to choose,
Nor would they dare his will refuse."

The Lord hid his precious truth from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. How weak and helpless and dependent are these babes upon the Lord for all things. He works both the will

and the to do of his good pleasure, before they can do any good thing, or think any good thoughts, whether spoken or written. Dear sister, I believe if I was given a gift to write, it was made known to me before I joined Good Hope Church. In a dream I was sitting in my yard, there was clear water around me. I was handling three or four white doves that were gentle to me. Then I was embracing three or four little girls.

Three or four years ago I was called on to write and keep the minutes of Good Hope Church, and when I was called on to write my first church letter to the District Meeting, as well as the associations, that dream came to my remembrance. I hope the Lord has enabled me to write a few things concerning spiritual things, and to embrace the little sister churches of like precious faith, in that love for the precious truth as it is in Jesus, if I be a vessel of His mercy fitted in his building, for my Master's use.

. . . You mentioned to me that you didn't visit the sick as much as you should, and the things you felt you should do, you did not do. That is my feeling too. Sister Barron, I believe you have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you, as well as all of the Lord's people. I believe there is a spiritual sickness, as well as natural sickness. We read in the scriptures about many being weak and sickly. To support the weak, we don't know when we visit the sick — it could be in person, or thought, a friendly smile, a few kind words of love and sympathy, helping one that is in need, or entertaining, desiring to help in ways the Lord blesses us to. It could be in words spoken or written, who knows, but the Lord only. Saith the Lord, "Inasmuch as you have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

I do not know if I have given spiritual light from my Lord concerning the remarks you made and the thoughts I had, and have written. They express my feelings of thought and mind. If this is not of the Lord, it will be of no interest to you. Dear one, I hope I have written this letter in the spirit of love.

Your little sister, I hope
Lula Fox

OBITUARIES

MRS. IDA T. GHEEN

Our Heavenly Father was pleased to remove our much loved Sister, Ida T. Gheen, from the earthly scenes on January 5, 1975. She was born September 8, 1880 in Loudoun County, Virginia, the daughter of William H. Franklin and Laura Bitzer Franklin.

Sister Gheen was united in marriage to Nathaniel J. Gheen, October 28, 1896. To this union were born five sons and one daughter, George F. Gheen of Herndon, Va., Rufus Gheen of Leesburg, Va., Reginald K. Gheen of Leesburg, Va., William Robey Gheen of Arlington, Va., and Ralph H. Gheen of Leesburg, Va. These sons all survive, together with eleven grandchildren, fourteeen great grandchildren, and two great great grandchildren. The daughter, Elvie M., died at the age of four years.

For many years Sister Gheen lived with her son and daughter-in-law, Ralph and Betty Gheen near Leesburg. She was faithfully and tenderly cared for, and lacked for nothing, for all the family was solicitous of her health and welfare.

She was a member of Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church for more than seventy years, having received a hope at about sixteen years of age, and united with the church in 1902. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace alone and the sovereignty of God over all things. She would state her faith firmly, yet with meekness, so that she was loved and highly respected by all who knew her. She loved to assemble with her brethren in the meetings, and always had a way to be with them while her husband lived, and by her children after his death. For several years in latter life she was unable to attend the meetings often, but she was with them in spirit.

It was a great pleasure for us to visit Sister Gheen, for she was a ready conversationalist, remembering many interesting things pertaining to the church and other subjects. She was always humble, giving all the praise to the Lord.

Funeral services were held at the Muse-Reed-Bange Funeral Chapel in Leesburg, by her pastor and Mr. Charles H. Walton, and she was laid to rest beside her husband in the

Sterling Cemetery, to await the second coming of her Lord, when she, together with all the redeemed of the Lord, shall receive His promise to them, that they should be conformed to the image of Jesus in the Resurrection: thus fitted for heaven and immortal glory.

A great many friends were in attendance at the funeral, and the flowers, together with the many contributions to Frying Pan Church in memory of Sister Gheen, testified to the high esteem in which she was held.

May all who mourn Sister Gheen's passing, be given reconciling grace to say with Job. ". . . the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

John D. Wood

ELDER ARTHUR R. WARREN

It is with saddened heart that I attempt to write an obituary of our beloved pastor, Elder Arthur R. Warren, who passed away November 20, 1974.

He was born near Berlin, Maryland, the son of Albert and Della Rayne Warren, February 26, 1900. He wa smarried to Mattie M. Byrd October 11, 1924, and to this union a son and a daughter were born: Edward Warren of St. Martins, Maryland, and Mrs. Loren Kunkle of Wilmington, Delaware, who survive. Five grandchildren also survive.

Elder Warren joined the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church September, 1950, and was baptized by Elder Harold M. Bennett. He was appointed Deacon in 1951. He was liberated to speak in 1953, and was ordained to the ministry March 13, 1957 by Elders Harold Bennett, John D. Wood and Amasa Slauson. He served as pastor of Whitefield and Bowdenham churches in Maine, Hopewell, N. J., and Indiantown, Forest Grove, Little Creek and Rewastico of the Salisbury Association.

Elder Warren was a faithful Pastor, visiting the sick and those in trouble of any kind. He preached the sovereignty of God and salvation by grace, and had no confidence in the flesh. We will miss him, but believe our loss is his eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder James H. Poole November 23rd in the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church, and was laid to rest in Forest Grove Cemetery. May we be made reconciled to the Lord's will, especially his dear companion who was a faithful pastor's wife.

Written by request of Sister Warren.

Sister Charlotte Adkins

DEACON NOAH E. DAVIS

Members of McCray Church would like to pay tribute to a faithful Deacon for several years, Brother Noah E. Davis. Uniting with the church August 16, 1959, shortly thereafter the church soon recognized in his leadership the gift of a deacon and we was ordained October, 1960, serving until his passing January 25, 1974.

He always manifested a love and interest in the welfare of the church and we feel he was a man of understanding in the Word of God. His advice in church matters and it's doctrine was very sound, always generous in giving his labor and financial aid. Among his special joys was being with those of like faith where he often visited and especially visiting the sick, sometimes traveling many miles to visit among other churches and associations. Brother Davis was the son of the late Dvero Davis and Mollie B. Davis of Person County near Roxboro, N.C., where he was born and grew up on the farm and continued to live. He was survived by one sister, Maie Francis Davis and one brother, Charles Burch Davis, both of Roxboro, North Carolina. He was married to the late Myrtle Blalock Davis, November 13, 1943. Many will remember the pleasant visits in their home. Her death came in April, 1971 from a car accident in January of the same year. Later he married Lola Stevenson of Danville, Virginia, who survives along with several nieces and nephews. Among his nephews is Elder C. B. Davis of Roxboro, North Carolina.

His funeral was held at McCray Church, conducted by his pastor, Elder Wallis Smith assisted by Elder Raymond Goad of the Staunton River Association, interment was in the church cemetery.

Brother Davis was a veteran of World War I, served overseas eighteen months with the 30th Old Hickory Division, returning home on his birthday, June 18, 1919 and continued active in the Veterans Administration throughout the years.

His toils and cares of this life are over and his work on earth is finished. Indeed it was well done and his memory at McCray Church and among his friends shall not fade, but will linger long.

In the interest of McCray Church, with Elder Wallie Smith, Mod.

BERTHA E. WHITE

Was called home to be with her Lord, at the age of 89, on Monday, December 9, 1974, after a long illness, where she lived with her daughter in Salisbury, Maryland.

Born near Snow Hill, she was the daughter of the late John H. and Mary Hastings Truittt

and widow of the late Ernest E. White.

Suriviving are her five children, 11 grandchildren, 15 great grandchildren and two sisters. One daughter, Mary Perdue Jarvis died in 1963.

Left a widow in 1924, with six small children, she kept her family together by carrying on her farm and working in the fields like a man. She never ceased to praise God for his strength and grace and provision to keep her little family together. A devoted mother, she was always happy, when she had her family around her.

Sister Bertha was brought up in the Primitive Old School Baptist faith, where her father was a deacon and faithful member of the Primitive Baptist Church, Snow Hill, Maryland. She was a member of the Little Creek Old School Baptist Church, near Delmar, Delaware, where she was baptized in 1942 by Elder Harold Bennett. She served her church well as Clerk as long is her health permitted.

A devoted member and contender of the faith, she was always happiest when she met with "her people" as she called her Sisters and Brothers in Christ, who believed in the Sovereign will of God and salvation by grace. Although unable to attend her church during the later years, due to illness, she was always vitally interested in her church and so happy to see the many faithful ones that visited her.

Although her last four years were spent on a hospital bed in her daughter's home, she exhibited great patience and cheerfulness and never ceased to praise our sovereign and gracious God for his loving kindness and grace to see her through. She longed to see her Lord and Saviour and although she will be sadly missed by her family and many friends, we can only praise His Holy Name for taking her home and out of her suffering.

Just three weeks after her beloved Pastor, Elder Arthur Warren, went to be with his Lord, she was laid to rest in the Primitive Old School Baptist Church yard in Snow Hill, Maryland, beside her first husband, Oscar A. Perdue.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder James F. Poole in the Snow Hill Church.

Written by Her Daughter,
Frances Jarvis

I can truthfully say Sister Bertha was a faithful member in the Church and was loved by all who knew her. One of her favorite hymns was "His Loving Kindness." God surely did bless her with his loving kindness for Frances was a faithful daughter, as well as all the children, but Frances was surely blessed with God's grace and mercy to do what she so graciously did for her mother. Never did she once complain, and we all love her for her loving kindness to her mother. Frances came before the church and will be baptized at Snow Hill February 2nd, with her membership at Salisbury.

Pattie B. Krewatch

WE SHALL SEE HIM AS HE IS

Not as He was, a homeless stranger,
With no home to shield His head;
Not as seen in Bethlehem's manger,
Where the horned oxen fed.

Not as in the garden groaning,
Plunged in deep, mysterious woe,
All the guilt of man bemoaning,
While the precious blood-sweats flow

Not as seen on Calvary's mountain,
Where He offered up His soul,
Opening wide that sacred Fountain,
Which alone can make us whole.

Not as He was, a pale and breathless
Captive in the shades beneath,
But as He is, Immortal, Deathless,
Conqueror o'er the powers of death!

Yes we shall see Him as our Saviour,
Seated on His lofty throne,
Loved, adored by every creature,
Owned as God, and God alone!

There countless hosts of shining spirits
Strike their harps, and loudly sing
To the praise of Jesus' merits,
To the glory of their King.

When we pass o'er death's dark river,
We shall see Him as He is —
Resting in His love and favor,
Owning all the glory His.

There to cast our crowns before Him —
Oh, what bliss the thought affords
There forever to adore Him —
King of kings and Lord of Lords.

Selected

(From an old book published many, many years ago)

". . . as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." (Romans 1:15-17)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143 **DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1975** **NO. 5**

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

EXPERIENCE

Vesta, Va. 24117

Dear Elder Spangler:

It is time to renew my subscription to the *Signs*, also to ask you to send it to the two friends mentioned. Enclosed is a check to cover all three, plus $2.00 to help the *Signs*.

I want to tell you how much my wife and I enjoy the paper. It brings back memories long past, when the thought of going to church was enough to lift the spirits. Just to meet the brethren and shake their hands, was enough to bring tears to my eyes. I often think of the happy hours we spent in your home, talking of the goodness and mercy of God. I felt to be just a small boy as I listened to you brethren talk. I felt you were the greatest people on earth, knowing things naturally as other people, and also possessing that spiritual knowledge which comes only by divine revelation to the household of faith. It seems to me that all was love, joy, and perfection, but since then I have had many heartaches and trials.

One experience I would like to mention. On April 4, 1944 I said goodby to my wife and four little girls, having been drafted in the U. S. Navy. I welcome that call for I thought that by going I could escape the calling from on high, to go to the pulpit. I knew of myself I could never preach to God's little ones, so I thought when I had served my time for my country, I would be too old to preach, and the burden would be gone. Little did I know that I was going the exact way God had before determined. About the middle of July, 1944 we left New York for Ireland. On the third day at sea we were ordered to mount our battle stations, and fasten our life jackets as tightly as possible, in case we had to jump overboard.

I was standing at the bottom of I-9 Deck near the stairway. I lifted my eyes with a groan and looked toward Heaven, thinking of my little girls at home. Suddenly a three colored rainbow appeared and encircled the ship. I knew it was the hand of God, and the old ship would sail on. I laid aside my life jacket and began to tell the men around me that God was at the Helm, and was ruling Heaven and Earth. I don't remember all I said. Some of the men thought I had gone out of my mind from fright. It was not fright, but was, I feel, the time and place appointed by God to relieve the great burden I had carried for so long. While speaking, a young man fell into my arms, and cried out, saying, "I told mother when I left home this man would be on this ship." He and I sat and talked for some time. He was in the Army and I in the Navy, and we did not see each other for eighteen and one-half years. At the end of that time I visited a church near Danville, Va. While trying to speak, I told part of this experience, and a young man shouted. He later made himself known to me. During all this time neither of us knew who the other was, or if living.

I did not mean this to be so long, but would like to say, I believe that journey was to teach me that Salvation was and is by the grace of God. I fully stand on that ground. In my feeble efforts I want, "Thus saith the word of God" as my witness. I want my heart and experience to correspond with the Scriptures. Then I can say, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." I hope a few times while in company with the church of God, I have felt that in my heart. Then I can say, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me, thy rod and staff they comfort me."

I have heard you preach when my cup ran over. One time at Cascade, I fully thought I would have to ask for a home, but there is a time and a season to every purpose under heaven.

An unworthy brother, if one at all.

Bennie Clifton

ADAM AND EVE

Rt. 5, Box 140,
Bassett, Va. 24055

I desire to write some of my thoughts on Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, and his fall, along with all mankind.

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." (Genesis 2:7, 9)

"And the Lord commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. And the Lord God said, It is not good that man should be alone." (Genesis 2:16-18)

I believe that Adam was a figure of Christ and Eve a figure of the church. Eve was in Adam in the creation and also in the formation.

In the third chapter we read, "Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden: but the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden. God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. (Genesis 3:1-5)

The serpent told Eve a lie first, then told her the truth to get her to believe a lie. This is the way he deceived the woman.

"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also to her husband with her, and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked: and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden." (Genesis 3:6-8)

Adam was a figure of Christ, and Eve a figure of the church. Eve was deceived: Adam was not deceived. I believe that the reason Adam took the fruit, was because he loved her. Christ was made sin for the church, and a curse, yet he knew no sin. It was because he loved us, taking our sins upon himself:- our sins imputed to him, and his righteousness imputed unto us.

"And the Lord God called unto Adam, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was

afraid because I was naked, and I hid myself."

Brother Spikes of Mossey Rock, Washington, asked me what it meant when Adam heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the cool of the day in the garden. I paused for a moment or two, and said to him, Don't you think that he was under conviction? Brother Spikes smiled and said, "That is it." Let us turn back to the second chapter, verse 21: "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof, and the rib which the Lord God had taken from the man, made he a woman and brought her unto Adam. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. This is a beautiful type of Christ and the church. David was a type of Christ, and he said, "Ye are my brethren, ye are my bones and my flesh." (2 Samuel 19:12)

Christ spoke by the mouth of David and said, "I may tell all my bones: they look and stare at me." This does not mean only at the time he hung on the cross, but every one that is brought under conviction, for every repenting sinner by faith views and stares at Christ in the Spirit of prayer, crying, God have mercy upon me a hell deserving sinner. And he knows that if Christ did not atone for him, that he is hell bound. To me this is when we are in the cool of the day just before sun rise, when we realized we were naked and were afraid. This was the case with Adam when he heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the cool of the day. When the Lord clothed them with the skins, there had to be the shedding of blood to obtain the skins: this being a type of the shed blood of Christ. The blood of Christ was just as effectual then as it was when it was shed when he hung on the cross; for without the shed blood of Christ there could be no remission of sin — no forgiveness, no justification, no glorification.

We notice that the term Lord God was used in the beginning. Lord to me means to rule; God means to be mighty — Almighty God. And being almighty means the Lord rules supremely: He does all his will and pleasure, because he is Almighty.

I will stare at Jesus, but not without hope. I am hearing the voice of the Lord walking in the cool of the day, for I have this hope that the Son of Righteousness has shined upon me. The church and Christ will never be put asunder. "What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." This has to do with Christ and his bride.

"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:28, 39)

J. R. Hollandsworth

THE SOVEREIGN DECREES OF GOD

(Concluded from last month)

Those who are determined to believe nothing but what they can comprehend, are determined to be idolators, for 'tis certain that anything which can be comprehended by a finite mind cannot be the infinite Jehovah whose wisdom, knowledge, and judgements are *unsearchable* and his ways *past finding out; of whom, through whom and to whom are all things; to whom be glory forever, amen, Rom.* xi ,33-36. Thus to believe, adore, and obey is not, as many would have it, a sacrificing of reason to tradition and blind devotion; but the contrary. As, for instance, should any man conceit that he could not know whether or not there was light in the sun or warmth in the fire without looking through the one and running

into the other, and should try the experiment till he became blind and burnt, he could not from thence convince me that I had lost both my sight and feeling because I still professed to enjoy great comfort in the cautious improvement of those blessings. Now the perfections of the deity are compared both to the sun and the fire, to teach us the importance of receiving his grace freely, of acting towards him *uprightly*, and *serving* of him with *reverence and Godly fear, Psal.* lxxxiv, 11; *Heb.* xii, 28, 29.

Some serious persons are afraid to give in to the doctrine of immutable decrees lest they should make God the author of sin, but Mr. Norton, one of the fathers of this country, justly replied to this objection that sin is a defect, and God is the author of all efficiency but not of any defect at all. An illegitimate child is the creature of God, but its illegitimacy is wholly from its parents. It was their lusts which caused the *defect* or want of its being lawfully begotten. Yet the child is God's creature, and if he please he makes it a subject of his grace. The heat of the sun that attacks the secret virtues of the earth, is not the cause of the stink of the dunghill. And though carnal reasoners try to persuade people that to hold every event to be certain in the divine councils, takes away the guilt of evil actions, and the virtue of good ones; yet the word of truth abundantly shows the contrary. It shows that Joseph's brethren were as *verily guilty* in their actings against him as if they could have frustrated God's design, and yet that he over-ruled their *wrath* and *cruelty* towards their brother, for His own praise, (Psalm 56: 10) and to make Joseph much more of a public and extensive blessing than they could have made him in Canaan, if they had tried their uttermost for it. At the same time the sacred story clearly shows that they acted quite voluntarily, both in their wretched abuses to their brother, and in humbly prostrating themselves before him afterward. They acted by motive; when they first saw Joseph coming to them, they felt so that they thought they would slay him: But upon another view murder appeared so shocking that they thought it best to gratify themselves another way, which moved them to choose that way. On the other hand, when Joseph was tempted by his wicked mistress, though men were absent, yet God to whom he was under infinite obligation, was present to his thoughts, and that proved a sufficient motive to make him choose any suffering rather than to sin against such a glorious being.

The inquiry and pursuit of all men is after *good*, and the believer finds it only in God, who is *good* and is always doing *good*, and this causes his soul to be in earnest to *learn his statutes*, *Psal.* iv, 6, 7 and cxix, 68. Others do not like to retain the true God in their knowledge; neither his nature nor his government appear good to their carnal minds. Therefore they worship and serve the creature instead of the Creator, setting up gain, honor, or pleasure as their chief good. Yet to appear nakedly irreligious, is too shocking to multitudes who at the same time are very far from desiring to set the Lord always before them, so as to be influenced by him in all their conduct. Therefore they choose their *idol* shepherds that will prophesy *smooth things* to them rather than faithful watchmen who represent the true character of the *Holy One of Israel before them, Isai.* xxx, 8-11; *Zech.* xi, 17.

A darling topic with the carnal reasoners of our world is this, they say that either men are *able* to obey and serve God, or else, if they *cannot* do it, until God is pleased to convert them. they are not to blame for neglecting of it But the truth is, the natural man *cannot serve God* because he does *love* and *serve* an idol. And the soul before it is slain by the law, cannot be *married* to Christ because it is *wedded* to its own doings, *Matt.* vi, 24; *Rom.* vii. Yet this inability is so far from being any just excuse that the more unable they are to love God or to believe in Christ the

greater is their *condemnation, John* iii, 16, 19. And it is a most wicked device in the writer of the paper now in hand, to use the word *inevitable* concerning the reprobate and *irresistible* concerning the elect in such a manner as to exclude the idea of their own choice; whereas the vessels of wrath say, *We* WILL *walk after our own devices,* and EVERYONE *that doeth evil* HATETH THE LIGHT, *Jer.* xviii, 12; *John* iii, 20. And vessels of mercy pursue the same ways till God works in them to *will and to do of his good pleasure, Phil.* ii, 13; *Tit.* ii 3i,-5. Therefore though the final event is as certain to the one as the other, yet the manner of its accomplishments is vastly different. The vessels of wrath, *after their hard and impenitent heart, treasure up wrath* TO THEMSELVES, *while God endureth with much long suffering with them.* But he *makes known* the riches of his glory in effectually *calling the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory. Rom.* ii, 5 and ix, 22-24. And renewed souls are so far from assuming to themselves a power to be God's *counselors* or venturing to act upon *secret things which belong to him,* that where he has told them of his designs concerning any future event they have not made the design of the great Ruler but the laws he has given to his subjects the rule of their conduct; and the difference between subjects and rebels is discovered by this. As, for instance, God let David know that he designed to remove Saul and to make him king in his stead. Yet David refused to smite Saul when he had opportunity but left it with God to remove him in his own way, 1 *Sam.* xxiv, 12, 13. Whereas when the Jews heard Caiphas' prophecy concerning the death of Jesus *from that day forth, they took counsel together for to put him to death, John* xi, 49, 53. And God's accomplishing his infallible decrees in that great event, while the Jews were inexcusably guilty in their actings about it, are strongly asserted by the inspired apostle. *Him, being delivered by the* DETERMINATE COUNSEL *and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by* WICKED HANDS *have crucified and slain, Acts* ii, 23.

They acted most wickedly in conspiring against our Saviour who was perfectly holy and harmless and constantly went about doing good. Yet God's purposes and promises were thereby exactly accomplished in bestowing infinite and eternal mercies upon guilty and miserable men. Pharaoh used great subtlety and cruelty in order to keep Israel in bondage and set up his *will* at the highest rate against releasing of them. Yet God in his providence caused things to appear so to him and his subjects that they voluntarily furnished Israel with silver and gold, and *Egypt was glad when they departed, Psal.* cv, 37, 38, and that on the *selfsame* day which God had told Abraham of above four hundered years before, *Exod.* xii, 41.

These and many other instances of men's voluntary actions, the Lord declared with a perfect exactness before they came to pass, because he *knew* that with a *brazen obstinacy* and *wilful treachery* they would rather give this *glory* to their *idol* than to him, *Isai.* xlviii, 3-8. But the firm faith of the saints in every age in the certain accomplishment of God's promises, has made them the more watchful and active in the rational choice that he furnished them with for attaining the desired end. Jacob wrestled and prevailed with God, yet that did not make him neglect and to wisely improve the best that he had in his power to calm his angry brother, and it had the desired effect. Paul *believed God* that the lives of all those who were with him in ship should be saved, yet when the men who were skilled in managing the ship were about to leave it, he said to the centurion and to the soldiers, *Except these abide in the ship ye* CANNOT *be saved, Acts* xxvii, 25, 31. Here was a certainty of the event, and yet it is expressed conditionally, while both were true. It was true that all should be saved, and it was as true that the mariners must be instrumental of it.

Thus my dear friend, I have endeavored in as plain and brief a manner as I could, in the little time I had for it, opened and vindicated the great Scripture doctrine of God's sovereign decrees against a malicious attempt which has been made to villify the same. It may well seem surprising to those who are acquainted with the seventeenth article of the Church of England to hear that a minister who has solemnly engaged to maintain the truth therein expressed, should have a great hand in spreading this blasphemous paper which is diametrically contrary thereto, as has evidently been the case. But I leave him and all others in the hand of a righteous and gracious God, and rest,

Yours, etc.
Isaac Backus 1773

ONE GENERATION IN CHRIST JESUS

We have received many traditions from our fathers in the flesh, yet more meaningful from the apostles of old; II Thessalonians 2:15: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle."

We read much about the generations gap. I am sure there were problems in the generations of this world before now, yet it was a tradition of our forefathers to use discipline in love and understanding with patience.

I believe our Heavenly Father, the God of patience, chastises the precious ones whom He predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son; because they are sons, and they love Him because He first loved them. We love our parents because they first loved us.

We as parents cannot teach as the Holy Ghost teaches, yet we teach our children obedience because we love them; and I believe this is the tradition of the apostles, for in the First Epistle of Paul, the apostle, to Timothy is given the qualifications of bishops and deacons; one of them is having their children in subjection with all gravity and ruling them and their houses well.

I don't know how many generations there have been in this world nor how many God has appointed to be, neither do I know what the future holds; though I believe I know who holds the future; Ecclesiastes 1:4 "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh."

It is most inspiring to see the young and the old in years brought together in love and fellowship one for another, showing there is but one generation in our Lord and Saviour, for it is written ye are all one in Christ Jesus. We have access by one Spirit unto the Father; and the age of the Holy Spirit cannot be measured neither by years nor generations.

While attending my home association, The Upper Country Line, I was brought in remembrance to the many precious brethren that are now resting from their labour; and I wondered who would be missing at our next meeting. I know there is an appointed time to die, and the Lord is calling both young and old from the trials and troubles of this low ground of sin and sorrow.

I have no desire to praise man, yet there have been many precious ones who by the manifestation of the Holy Spirit have made my life richer. I feel most thankful for our moderator, Elder David V. Spangler, whom the Lord has blessed to preach the Gospel to the poor for more than 50 years; one who has been kept by the Grace of God through faith not to be ashamed to own his Lord nor defend His cause.

Through brotherly love and understanding and a desire to comfort the people of God, Elder Spangler is known over the United States and our sister country of Canada, wherever this people he so dearly loves are found.

One of his most precious gifts is his helpmeet of more than 50 years. One whom the wear of the years has never marred the depth of her beauty nor diminished her love and kindness, his lovely wife, Sister Nannie Spangler.

There is no generation gap in the little ones who are spiritually discerned.

The youngest minister in our association is Elder Wallis Smith by age. We have known him and his precious companion, Sister Ella Marie Smith, since they were brought to our meetings in their mother's arms; and the Church at Bush Arbor recognized the working of the Holy Spirit in their lives; and we saw them baptized together by their pastor, Elder W. C. King, assisted by his daddy, Elder Harvey Smith.

The Church called Brother Smith out of the congregation and gave him liberty to speak. He proved his calling and was ordained to the full work of the ministry. They are loved and esteemed by the people of this faith, both the elderly and the youth; for there is but one in Christ.

I oftimes feel so unworthy of the blessed privilege of talking about precious things with my family. Our daughter-in-law told of an experience while Elder H. W. Wray was preaching how there shined round about him a light and the things around him shined like pure gold. She is more to us than just our son's lovely wife, for there is a love that flows from heart to heart and breast to breast.

Of myself, I am a miserable failure. I fall short on every hand. I don't feel to know how to thank the Lord nor praise His name for the blessings He has bestowed upon me, even to see our son baptized into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church at Gilliams; a joy I have no words to explain. There are a few moments in my life I would like to live over, though I try not to look back at the many things I would like to forget.

Clifton C. Robertson
Route 1
Reidsville, North Carolina

"BECAUSE YE ARE SONS"

"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." (Gal. 4:6)

Here, somewhere in time, is a little one who cries out to Heaven above and says "Abba, Father". This may be all that he says. He may not offer a long, carefully worded prayer, filled with pious phrases that would be pleasing to the ears of man; but he cries out from the depths of his heart unto a great power above; to seek from Him all the blessings of comfort and strength which he needs. There was one of old whom Jesus declared bowed down in the temple to pray; he could not so much as lift up his eyes toward Heaven, so great was the feeling of his unworthiness; he offered no long, precise petition designed to please the ears of those about him or to speak (as the Pharisee) of his own works or efforts; but simply that old publican cried to the God of Heaven and earth and said but this: "God be merciful to me a sinner". What did he cry? "Abba, Father". Jesus said he went down to his house justififed. (Lk 18:9-14).

There was a little sister who cried "Abba, Father" also. She had asked for blessings from the hand of our Lord and he had told her that she was but a dog—not privileged to receive the things belonging to those of the kingdom. She did not become offended at His words, for she knew within her heart that He was right; that she had no righteousness of her own to offer; nothing good to bring before the King and lay at His feet; but yet something within her caused her to know that only this King had the power to bring healing to her daughter. And so she confessed her plight, as did the publican in the temple, that she was but a dog—a poor, miserable, lost, and undone sinner—but yet she cried "Abba, Father"—for she said, "Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table." (Mt 15:21-28).

My brother, my sister, have you ever cried unto the God of Heaven as this poor woman did — and as the old pub-

lican in the temple did? Perhaps not in words pleasing to the ears of men; perhaps not with all the elements that the theologians say must be present to constitute a proper prayer—but from the depths of your poor heart—perhaps in the face of sickness or death—perhaps in the dark hours of the night, when sleep would not come—perhaps in the face of decisions that you could not make—in trouble—yes, and sometimes in joy as you are blessed to walk upon the top of the mountain — has there not issued a cry from the depths of your heart unto the great King above? You knew you were not worthy to enter His presence or to look upon His face—and yet something within you drew you to Him for there was nowhere else to go and no one else to help; and you turned to the God of comfort above; with no ability or words to describe your helpfulness; and simply breathed "Oh God, Oh God". "Abba, Father".

And wherever there is one who so cries—not with the lips but from the heart—whether they are black or white; bond or free; young or old; rich or poor; male or female; that cry identifies the recipients of Divine Grace. History reveals that long before our ancestors settled this land, among the redmen were those who would steal away into the woods by themselves and utter such a cry. They did not learn it from the books of men for they had no books; nor from the teachings of man for they had no churches and no preachers. Yet these savage, uneducated people knew something far deeper and greater than the white men who came to "missionize" and "civilize" them; for they knew that God was a Spirit. (John 4:24). The white man brought his idols and images and said "bow to these Gods"; but the elect of God among the redmen knew that no image could convey the nature of God, the Great Spirit.

What caused them to cry "Abba, Father"? What causes any trembling child to look upward to Heaven and cry out for the blessings from above? Did he learn it at his mother's knee? Did he inherit it from his parents? "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven". (Mt. 16:17). Did the preacher bring him this privilege and plant this desire within him? No, but the same power which found Jacob in the waste howling wilderness found this little child at God's appointed time and placed within Him a desire to call out unto His father in Heaven; yet realizing he had no right nor power within himself to do so. Does he cry because he "accepted Christ"? Or, rather, does he cry because Christ has accepted Him in the beloved (Eph. 1:6) back before the foundation of the earth and has now made manifest His love unto him.

God is the God of order. He who set the stars in their perfect course in the Heavens above so that they constantly move through centuries, yet without collision one with the other; He who designed the order of nature which we see about us; is in all things a God of order. See it plainly written through the scriptures—"We love him, because He first loved us". I Jn 4:19. Here is God's order. First, He moves, then we respond. First, He loves, then in His appointed time He makes manifest that love unto us, and fills our hearts with love that issues back to him.

What makes us cry "Abba, Father"? Read the text again. It is not this old Adam man that makes such a cry. Not a decision on his part, or an effort he has put forth. But it is the "Spirit of His Son" within our hearts that cries "Abba, Father". John said it was "not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Jn 1:13.

And so it is not you or I that makes such a cry—not the Adam nature which we bear which suddenly decides to turn to the Giver of Life above. But it is when the Giver of Life reaches down with the gift of life and imparts it within our hearts; then that gift of life (the Spirit of Christ) is what cries unto the Giver above and says "Abba, Father". But what causes the God of

Heaven and earth to send forth this spirit into the hearts of certain people?

I heard a man recently at a funeral read from a new "version" of the Bible that God chose men because He foreknew that they would believe on Him. If that be so, then God foreknew nothing. Left to ourselves, Adam's race would never turn to God or cry out unto Him. "There is none that understandeth; there is none that seeketh after God." Romans 3:11. This is plain language and to use the expressions of our day—it tells it like it is. Of all of Adam's seed—Jew and Gentile alike—the Apostle declares that there is NONE—not a single one—that would seek after God. So if God chose only those whom He knew beforehand would believe on Him; He would have chosen none at all; for God knew that there would never be one of Adam's race who in and of Himself would seek after Him.

No, the reason does not lie in man—in his works, in his thoughts, or in his desires. The reason lies in God and is as old as God Himself. Before this world ever was, God chose a people as His own—a people to be His family, His children—and predestinated them to be adopted as His children and conformed to the image of Christ. Eph 1:5; Rom 8:29. They were His children in His mind and purpose from all eternity past—not in actuality for they were not yet born in time, the earth not being here to furnish the dust for Adam to be made of; but they were God's children—His family—His sheep—His loved ones—in His plan and purpose from all eternity. They cry "Abba, Father" in time because the Spirit of God within cries such; and the Spirit of God within was sent in God's appointed time not to make them children—but the text says "Because ye are sons."

Observe God's order. Election, calling, prayer. To those whom He chose He sends the Spirit of His Son (Calling) and because that Spirit abides within, they pray. The world looks at the little child who prays and says, you did it of yourself—now God will save you. But the scripture says that the little child who cries out "Abba Father" declares the evidence of the hope of salvation that God has planted within. So many times our "prayers" are but words upon our lips; but those times when they spring forth from the heart within with the cry of "Abba, Father" they speak of that blessed Hope which God has given to His own. Brethren, pray for me, and give all honor and praise to Him to whom it is due. A little one in hope,

(Elder) Bob Dickerson
Box 2262, Valdosta, Ga. 31601

SUBSCRIBERS FOR FOUR GENERATIONS

55 Maple Ave.,
Warwick, N. Y. 1099

Dear Elder Wood:

If I am not mistaken, my father told me that his father took the *Signs of the Times* from the time it was established in 1832, or soon thereafter. So if that is the case, the *Signs* has been coming to this Vail tribe for four generations: My Grandfather Vail, my father, mine, and my son Albert Vail, Jr. They were all members of an old "Hardshell" Baptist Church. Thanks for putting up with this Tribe.

And love to your good wife from my wife and me.

Albert R. Vail, Sr.

"THE BODY IS OF CHRIST"

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect to an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days which are shadows of things to come; but the body is of Christ. Colossians 2:16-17)

The words, "Let no man therefore judge you," in the nature of their use in this scripture, are positive in their order and could not possibly be wrested by the vanity of men's minds, to signify conditions on the part of men,

as having relation to something which we ought not to allow men to do, without doing violence to the preceding verses in this chapter. (Please read the entire chapter.)

This is just as positive in its nature of meaning, as if it had been rendered, "no man can judge you." Men may try, and do try, with all their might and main, to judge another man as to what he may eat doctrinally, or as to what he may drink to the assuaging of his spirititual thirsting after righteousness, and their efforts just utterly fail, because all of this eating and drinking, the place experimentally of your keeping of an holy day unto the Lord, or of the new moon, (servitude of the law,) of the sabbath days, (gospel rest seasons of the soul,) are all fixed of God in the personal experience of each heir of promise, out of the unwasting bounty of a kind and merciful Father, all of these things are meted out to the exercising of the soul individually, experiementally, to every one who, in his or her travel of experience of soul, through the administration of the Holy Spirit, has tasted that Jesus is gracious, as the Holy Spirit takes the things of Jesus and shews them unto you: Hence no man can judge you. When the Master, even Jesus, the high priest and bishop of your soul, brake the bread and blessed it, and gave to the twelve apostles, and said, "Take, eat, this is my body, broken for you; And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, drink ye all of it: for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

He was not leaving the matter optional with them as to whether they ate or drank, but rather made this positively manditory—not only to them but to all who have tasted that the Lord is gracious in the pardon and forgiveness of their sins. Every heir of promise, regardless of whether they have ever partaken of the emblems of the Lord's Supper, or not, in the order of what the church calls the keeping of the ordinance, they have and do subsist upon and eat the spiritual essence of the Lord's broken body, and drink his blood of the New Testament, every time they experience a season of rejoicing in a Saviour's love. Therefore, all of this being fixed in the experience of every heir of promise, "No man can judge you."

Again, when we come to examine the nature of an "holy day" the season or time, the day of days experimentally, the day when peace was spoken to your soul: when Jesus was revealed to you as your Saviour, when with tear bedimmed eyes you, by faith, beheld Jesus, God incarnate, smitten, afflicted, wounded for your transgressions, in your law room and stead, drinking the gall of the fierceness of the divine wrath of God, which was justly your due, and when you behold the mystery of mysteries, Jesus treading the winepress alone, and you beheld his garments dyed in the winefat, (his own blood,) and by faith you hear the sweet whispers of his love to the chief of sinners, saying, "I bore all of this for you, to set you, the lawful captive, free, and thus have taken the prey from the mighty, and have put away your sins by the sacrifice of myself, to be remembered against you no more forever. Even I have taken away the handwriting or ordinances (carnal commandments) which were against you and contrary to you, having nailed it to my cross, having slain the enmity thereby."

O holy day when I first rejoiced in a Saviour's love. There is no other day like it in my life. This is the day when the sun stood still and the moon stayed in its motions, while God fought your battle for you. The sun was turned to darkness (Jesus smitten: put to shame for you.) The law demanded the life of every guilty transgressor. Hence when Jesus agonized in Gethsemane and poured out his soul unto death on the tree of the cross, the Just for the unjust, the law which demanded the life of the lawful captive—when it got his life, it got your life: Jesus being your life.

"When he who is your life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

In his personal coming, dear tried and tempest tossed children of God, in your own personal experience and revelation of his gracious power to save: when it was yours to taste by faith, the moon (law) stoood still, i.e. ceased to have dominion over you. The moon (law) was turned to blood in the obedience of Jesus unto death on the cursed tree of the cross. (see the prophecy of Joel) The strict justice of God was forever satisfied in your behalf—the wrath of God was appeased. "Mercy and truth are met together: righteousness and peace have kissed each other." and the prey was taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive (poor guilty sinners) was delivered.

All of this must have its place in application in the experience of God's trembling children. And hence, this is the new moon to you. The law (moon) is fulfilled—forever satisfied by the obedience and righteousness of Jesus, even his obedience unto death. And thus the moon (law) experimentally is put under your feet: Jesus your Friend having satisfied its every just demand for you, having done for you what you could not possibly do for yourself. Therefore, in this glad day (season of rejoicing) you received your first tasting of the "sabbath days" seasons of rest in the finished work of Jesus. This rest is seasonal and intermittent from the time peace is spoken to your troubled soul until the time of your final and full deliverance: when and where you, dear weary child of God who are often cast down, groping in darkness, cast down by sore and fiery doubts, and often feel to be a cast away, you shall see the king in his beauty, in his holy glory, with unclouded eyes: eyes no longer fettered by sin, you shall see Jesus without a veil between, when mortality shall be swallowed up of life, and you shall be ushered into his holy presence to dwell in his fulness forever and forever.

This is the ultimate of your hope, the fulness of his grace. "Let no man therefore judge you . . ." for Jesus is the judge of the quick and dead. All of this dear children of God is yours to experimentally taste by the sovereign and irresistible will of God and sweetly yours through his abundant mercy, and predicated solely on the premise of "because it seemeth good in His sight," and not because of worth or merit of the creature, for they have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Every moment of your rejoicing is before Him in love when you are lifted up from your dead state in nature's night, and translated to His native air, (the Eden of love,) raised up and made to sit together in love before His wondrous throne, and taste through grace the dainties of Wisdom's table. All of this in its entirety, is but a little foretaste received in measure here, of that which shall be yours in its unmeasured fulness, when that which is in part shall be done away: When you are finally ushered into the fulness of His presence and of His glory, and shall see him as he is and be like him, and be forever satisfied in the ultimate of your hope: your hope is ended in fruition and faith is turned to sight.

Therefore these little seasons of His heavenly visitations, the seasons of tasting of wine on the lees, and of fat things full of marrow, when compared to the ultimate, and the glory which shall be revealed in you, to the praise of the glory of His grace, rightly are, "but a shadow of things to come."

But hear the conclusion of the whole matter: lest any flesh should glory in his presence, "the body is of Christ," and the body fitly framed together of Him, is nourished (strengthened) by joints and bands, and groweth into a holy temple in the Lord, to the measure of the stature and fulness of Christ,—and God sets every member in the body as in please him. Jesus Christ himself is the chief cornerstone, in whom (not just merely on whom) all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord. Where is boast-

ing then? Excluded! By what law? By the law of works? Nay, but by the law of grace!

This is my hope, my all, yea, all my consolation, all my joy, resting in the full weight of conviction, that the body is of Christ, first, last, and forever. Therefore it is of grace through faith to the ultimate praise of His holy name. Blessed be His name forevermore. How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out, how little a portion is known of Him. How great is His love! How wondrous is His grace!

Finally, "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God, is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption:

My God my life, my love,
To thee, to thee, I call
I cannot live, if thou remove,
For Thou art all in all.

Submitted in love of the truth,
H. J. Bird

October 30, 1951
(submitted by Sister Bird)

ENJOYED THE MEETING

Signs of the Times,

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am writing of a beautiful meeting at Valley View. We were disappointed the Elder B. O. Thompson could not be with us as he was ill. He and his wife, as they labor in His ministry, are indeed God's humble servants. However our assistant pastor, Elder Roy Agee, preached so beautifully. The songs filled our hearts, especially, "Amazing Grace".

. . . At times we receive a little manna but stay in the wilderness most of the time. My dear sister, Glenna, remarked several days ago that she would like to have more compassion. This too is my wish. Oh Lord, help us to live more pleasing, and give us more spiritual understanding—without you we can do nothing. We read in the scriptures of His hand leading us: when the lambs go astray, he will lead them back safely. We were all surely fed that day.

The following was written by Elder C. H. Martin's daughter, Ethel Martin Hawks. She was a neighbor of ours in Radford:

SEEING GOD

I see God in the heart of a rose,
I feel His love in the breeze that blows.
I see God in the beautiful trees,
I hear Him in the hum of the bees.

I see God in the blue of the sky,
I trust He guides me with his eye.
I see God in the beautiful spring ,
I hear him when the little birds sing.

I see God, Yes all the year 'round,
Even when the snow falls on the ground.
I see God in a little child's face:
Sense His abiding, sweet love and grace.

I see God when His dear people meet,
I hear Him in the songs of Zion, sweet.
I see God when we bow down to pray:
Sometimes feel His glory on that day.

I see God when the Apostles preach:
I see Him as they comfort and teach.
O, may I see God fully, complete,
Praise Him in heaven when we all meet.

—Ethel Martin Hawks

We are enclosing some money to be used as you wish.

In hope of eternal life,
Brother and Sister Wells

REQUESTS COMMENTS

2378 Sycamore Road,
Hurricane, W. Va. 25526

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Please renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. Am enclosing check for $10.00 for two years—use the balance as you see fit.

I enjoy reading the wonderful writings, and don't want to miss an issue. Thank God for you brethren who send out the Signs each month.

Would like for someone to comment on this scripture: Solomon's Song, 5th chapter, 3rd verse.

In bonds of love,
Elder Ernest Breedlove

(Will be glad if someone can answer this request.)

CHANGE OF MEETING TIME

The *Salem Primitive Baptist Church,* Benton, Ill., meets every First Sunday at 10:30 a.m. with communion service the First Sunday in May.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Elder Wayman Chapell, Mod.
Wm. Vantrease, Clerk
408 S. Commercial St.,
Benton, Ill.
James Cunningham, Asst. Clerk

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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A BRUISED REED—
A SMOKING FLAX
(Isa. 42:1,4; Mat. 12:18, 21)

As the Saviour preached His own everlasting gospel He set a precedent for all gospel preaching today. The Spirit was upon Him to the end that He was anointed to preach good tidings to poor troubled sinners, and I am sure that no minister of the gospel of the grace of God has ever gone forth preaching who had not been anointed to that end. He must be called, as was Aaron, and he must be anointed as was Aaron. God anointed His Son to preach the gospel, and every minister is now anointed by

the Holy Ghost.

The commandment to go forth preaching, is always accompanied by a description of the ones that must be preached to. Make no mistake, no minister has ever been sent to preach the gospel to anyone save those to whom the Holy Ghost dealt with. The government that rests on the shoulder of the child born, the Son given, is in harmony and it is consistent within itself. It does not send men to preach without direction, fields to labor in, people to preach to, results certain. Servants of the Lord Jesus Christ are limited as to where they go, and great is the sorrow when they undertake to hold the reins (Isa. 6; Jer. I; Ex. 3; Mat. 28:18, 20; Jer. 10:23, 24; 20:9; Jonah).

To me, every word in the testimony of God is sent in mercy to His people. It is true, that some things are said to the unregenerated, but it is yet to be applied to them, for they can not receive it now. It is true that some things in the Bible are the sayings of Satan and his hosts, and those sayings are not by the leadership of God's Spirit; but the men of God are moved by the Holy Ghost to give an exact recording of the things said by false prophets and false witnesses and by Satan, for our benefit in dealing with such things in our time.

To me, the work of God, and of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, are for the benefit of poor sinners. I notice from time to time that learned (?) men say that our family pets and other such absurdities will be in heaven. That is too foolish to be considered. But the question is often propounded to me that the mercy of God is often said to be applied to many things in the kingdom of heaven other than men and women. And, invariably, I give a negative answer to any such thought. We must remember that our Master hides from one class and reveals to another, and that He is well pleased that it is that way (Mat. 11:25, 26); that He speaks in parables and in allegories and other figures of speech and does it that understanding is given to one and withheld from another (Psa. 78:2; Mat. 13:11).

How lovely is the unity between God the Father and God the Son. How often that honor is paid to the Son by the Father. "Behold my servant whom I have chosen; my well beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased." This is a source of great comfort and satisfaction to find that the Father is satisfied with the work of redemption. This revelation was brought about by the God of all grace, and was mutual between God the Father and God the Son. It pleased the Father that in Christ all fulness should dwell (Col. 1:19); it pleased the Son that His Father had hid the things of His kingdom from the prudent and had revealed them unto babes (Mat. 11:25, 26). Twice we have heard coming down out of heaven the voice of the Father accompanying a visit of a dove saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Mat. 3:17), And on the Mount of Transfiguration we hear the voice of God coming out of the cloud as He said, "This is my beloved Son: hear him." (Luke 9:35).

As we launch out upon the blessedness of this precious Redeemer God we are face to face with the mystery of godliness, something that only the source of the mystery will ever be able to explain. Each one to whom the mystery has been shown is helpless to explain it. He or she may show the mystery, but explain it never. (I Cor. 15:51). How fruitless are the saviours of men in exploring the depth of the love of God. He or she that is dependent on Christ the Saviour of all people of God, can not give the saviour to another. The revelation of Christ, and the seeing in His face our God and Father, is the most sublime blessing in this time state; it is a saviour of life. It will be the beginning of the unfolding of the mystery of godliness, but this all being by faith, and faith being the gift of God, it will be according to the good pleasure of God. It will be according to the gift and measure of Christ to us, according to the measure of faith (Rom. 12:3; Eph. 4:7), and it is of His fullness (not the

fullness) ; it is here a little, there a little, line upon line (not line by line, precept by precept. (Isa. 28:10), and they will all come to feel as did Job that we know but a little portion of Him. (Job 26:14).

Salvation is an unbroken chain. It had its beginning in the eternal mind of God. If some man can affirm (his affirmation will have to be confirmed) how old God is, then I will instantly tell you how long that salvation has been in His mind. The beginning of this salvation has continued *with* God from then until now, and it has continued to us ever since His determination to save. No gaps have entered into this salvation. God has not had any lapses in His memory, nor has He had to lay this salvation aside for secondary matters, nor has He had to do a lot of traveling and counseling and begging and reconciling differences between intermediate agencies and powers before He could go on. All things have been, and are, in His hands. He is the first cause in this salvation, and nothing can be the cause of that which is in itself the cause of everything. In the order of things the first man was of the earth earthy, and therefore spiritual things were not first, but natural things (I Cor. 15:46, 47) : The history of the law and its reign together with the travel of poor frail sinners under it,—and since Christ we have had spiritual things. Each of these dispensations of rule has been effectual and complete and sovereign. The law reigned unto death, and grace reigns unto salvation.

In this reign of grace Jesus Christ has sent and shown judgment unto the Gentiles. A Gentile is an unbeliever, a man without God and without hope in the world, a man that had not been known as a chosen vessel, a man that was not known as the people of God. In this sense, all mankind were in that condition, both Jews and Gentiles, or all men. It pleased God to put away His chosen nation because of their unbelief, and to bring in the Gentiles. The rejection of the Jews was as a people, not as individuals; likewise the bringing in of the Gentiles was a people, not as individuals.

This judgment of God has been belittled and ridiculed by sages down the ages, but it stands today. The accompanying judgments were brought down upon the heads of those thus shown this judgment. He has shown mercy to whom He would show mercy and those not shown this mercy have shown their intense dislike of God's ways and judgments; but have also shown that they have not found out His judgments and ways. (Rom. 11:33).

The showing of this judgment has been in a unique manner. In order for us to know something of this uniqueness we will have to observe all other organizations in the carrying out of their crusades. It is not necessary to designate and personalize denominations and organizations. Look around you and see how the political, religious, economical, social, or any other organization carry on their advertisements and drives and lobbying and buying support. They are all alike, for they are all of the world. They will all acknowledge that without all of this wind and great crusade and heated campaigns, they would not be successful (I Kings 19:11, 12). Now I did not say it, but God has sounded the death knell of every last one of such drives and campaigns and crusades made in order to save sinners or to further their success.

Through the tender mercy of God I am spared to once again present the Lord Jesus Christ. His coming is not preceded by a band, and no radio nor television nor newspaper advertisements are displayed to announce His advent as an infant, or his arrival in any city or church. He does not defend himself; He does not strive to head off a source of opposition to His work; He does not strain and strive nor carry on a plan of espionage to out wit His adversaries, nor is His voice raised to carry His message beyond that of others. In the thickest of opposing forces and voices He does not cry out to gain support.

He is not heard in the streets. It may be considered folly, but if thus consid-

ered, then, by all means, I am filled with folly, but I can not conceive of a situation arising to where that I would go out into the street of a town for the purpose of preaching the gospel. To some, it may be too much spiritualizing, but I will not be found, if kept by grace, going into the ways (streets) of any order or denomination in proclaiming the doctrine of God our Saviour, and if I am wrong in spiritualize in this case, to those that deem it wrong, then, by all means, I suggest that they go in the streets and preach the gospel.

In the dispensation of bringing judgment to the Gentiles, He will not break bruised reeds. The kingdom of heaven is not composed of bruised reeds; the Gentile nation is not composed of natural bruised reeds. I am writing about spiritual things, and I am well aware that I am accused of drawing pictures that are overdrawn, but this has been my way for forty years, and as He gives me utterance, I will continue it. My reason for doing this is because my Master spiritlalized, speaking in allegories and parables to His people which were enlightening and edifying to them; but which caused the unrighteous to turn away.

There are two main references made to reeds in the Bible. The first one that I would notice briefly is its use as a measuring rod. Rev.. 21:15, 16; Ezek. 40:3, 7). The other is used in setting forth the children of God inthisspiritual kingdom. In the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. (Isa. 35:7). In these places of dragons we were sore broken, and we were covered with the shadow of death (Psa. 44:19), but what an amazing wonder is performed before our astonished eyes. The Saviour of sinners is seen to step between us and the dragons. He makes our cause as His, although it necessitated His going in among the sleeping places of the dragons. I am left speechless and without coherent thoughts as I ponder the amazing battle on the brow of Golgotha's Hill. The Immaculate Lamb of God stepping into another man's affray, and the preciousness of Christ is brought to bear upon my soul as I am made to realize that the man is black and vile and guilty of transgression. (Job 40:4; S.S. 1:6; Rom. 3:19) In this gigantic battle, every mandate of the law which was against us, is met and overcome, and is nailed to the cross of crucifixion. (Col. 2:15) The dragons of the law, their sharp and tearing teeth spent fury on the reeds and rushes in the outset of the battle, but when the glorious Benefactor stepped in the fray they turned upon Him with *all of their fury*. He took them on in battle, nailing them to His cross, taking them out of the way.

What compassion is shown as He comes from Calvary, marching in His overcoming and victorious strength. (Isa. 63:1) He comes to broken reeds. He does not tantalize and accuse; He does not discourage nor upbraid. (James 1:5) He could have justly brought great sorrow upon many (Luke 22:60, 62; John 4:17, 18), but His understanding and acquaintance with our already broken condition forbids such an action (Heb. 2:18; 3:15). O my dearly beloved, what a lovely doctrine is this to those that have come to Mount Sinai and heard the threatenings of the Holy God against sin. I look across the vista of the past with the broken reeds, and I see them all in the babe left unwashed and unsalted in the field, and how that One had compassion on it (Ezek. 16) ; I see them all in the person of poor old Job when One had compassion on him and blessed him to see Him as all of his salvation; I am standing on the sidelines when my Saviour dies, and I hear Peter's denial, but I also see that may hand was involved in the nails that pierced His hands and feet, and platted a crown of thorns for His brow, and my mind is entranced in vision and I hear once again what I hope that I heard on the plains of Southeast Missouri, in 1923, "Son, thy sins are all forgiven thee." He did not break me, nor will He ever break one poor bruised sinner.

"Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." (Isa. 50:10) Ah, there is smoking flax. Such was the use of flax in the time of the Saviour in the making of wicks for the lamps, and such is its use in our text. If the quotation above does not fit you, dear reader, how would language be clothed to do so? Does it seem to you that you are in the darkness? Does it seem to you that you do not have any light? Does it seem to you that the Lord has covered the light that you once thought you had, with dark, lowering, threatening clouds? Do you, dear readers, long to feel the warmth of His love as you did in the zeal of your new born condition? Cheer up saints, the Lord has come, and His mission is not to put to death; it is not to quench your light. To these stars in the kingdom of heaven, here is hope for them in the Lord Jesus Christ. When a man lights a candle or a lamp he puts it in an advantageous position. Who puts it in an advantageousness position? Who is light? As far as the characters in our text are concerned there is but one source of light; that light is *all* in God (John I:2, 9; I John 1:5); their feelings are that they do not have any light. What does the Lord say to them? If your light seems to be gone; if it is flickering and casting doubtful shadows about you; if it seems to have one time been lighted up with the light of heaven, but has since seemed to you a smoking wick of flax, His injunction to you is: Let him trust in the Lord, and stay upon his God. He is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. In our alienated state we are in darkness and do not have any light at all. Since men do not put lights under a bushel, and since God's ways are higher than the heavens, even so does God light His church and people with the light that emanates alone from Him, and He sets it on a hill, and since those that have this light in them belong to Him, the lighting of them, together with the light, is His to command. What He does is done forever. No man, including the one in whom the light is put, will ever be able to diminish the light, much less put it out.

"He made the stars also." (Gen. 1:16) Look out tonight and view the starry heavens. Watch the twinkle of each star. Those lights are placed there figuratively of the stars in the heavenly kingdom. Not one of them will ever go out. I know well enough that they feel in themselves to be walking in darkness; that they have no light, but only He that gives light can put out light, and He will never, never, no never quench the light out of His people.

W.D.G.

BLACK ROCK ADDRESS & KEHUKEE DECLARATION

This is a compilation of issues relating to the Baptist Separation between 1825-1840, including the Kehukee Declaration of 1827, the Black Rock Minutes and Address of 1832, Second Black Rock Minutes 1834, Biographical Sketch of Gilbert Beebe and editorials on the modern mission movement, etc.

We were glad when we received copies of the book entitled THE KEHUKEE DECLARATION AND BLACK ROCK ADDRESS, etc., with the contents listed as shown above.

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We gladly recommend this book published by Elder W. J. Berry — EDITORS

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Romans 8:31

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Dear Editors and Readers of the Signs:— In response to a number of solicitations from different sections of the country for me to write for publication in the *Signs,* I am sending you the following thoughts for your examination and disposal, which are submitted entirely to your judgment without prejudice on my part; only I would suggest that more suitable matter be not displaced to make room for this.

The quotation from Paul's letter to the church at Rome at the head of this article presents in two questions a wide field for thought. "What shall we then say to these things?" That is, the things which he has just been affirming to the people of God with such comforting assurance. "These things" embrace all of the transactions and relations of the "elect" under the law and the power and dominion of sin, their covenant standing in Christ as portrayed through Abraham, the father of the faithful, their redemption, justification, calling, adoption, sanctification, resurrection and glorification. The apostle took the various transactions up step by step and showed the ruined and needy condition of the subject of all these favors, his utter helplessness, without merit, without strength, without desire for holiness, without God, for he had separated himself from God by his sins, and without hope, for the law which was the creature man's only way of access to God had been closed and the flaming sword of God's vengeance against sin had been planted as an everlasting barrier against man's future attempts to reach God through the law. The apostle then declares how Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of eternal favors, has met all the demands of infinite justice on their behalf, and so completely blotted out every claim that stood in justice against them, that he challenges all worlds to bring a single charge against God's elect, by asking, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" Affirming, "It is God that justifies." The apostle shows also the nature and strength of the obligation laid upon these justified and called sinners to serve God. It subsists not any longer in the strength of the law's commandments and threatened penalties, but in a relationship established and promoted by love which is infinite in its origin and endless in duration. In making up his case the eminent apostle has raised up the victorious reign of grace in contrast to the conquests of sin, and showed how complete and how decisive is the victory, and admonishes the redeemed and called saints not to yield their members as instruments of unrighteousness, and assigns as the basis of his admonition, "For sin shall not have dominion over you," because you are not any longer under the law from which sin gets its strength, but under grace, which dethrones and abolishes sin and death and gives life to the dead and liberty to the captives under sin.

Now what shall we say to all these things? Are we doctrinally, practically and experimentally in accord with these things, or are we arrayed against them? We would do well as the professed disciples of Christ and faithful adherents to the divine record to follow the sacred injunction to "examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove yourselves," lest we be proven reprobates, having only a form of godliness without the power that establishes its being in God. Then doctrinally do we believe and teach that in our standing in Adam none are righteous and none seek after God? that together all are unprofitable? That while dead we were reconciled to God by Christ? That when we were without strength Christ died for the ungodly? That when

Christ died and rose again he freed every heir of promise from all claims of the law? and that the Holy Ghost takes the things of Christ and shows them unto his children and guides them into all truth? Reveals to them and in them first their own utter poverty and worthlessness, and then the treasures of the riches that are in Christ; and takes possession of them and dwells in them and leads them, directs and instructs them, keeps them and trains and disciplines them, that they may show forth the praises of him who has called them out of darkness into the marvelous light of Christ? And does our experience and practice harmonize with these glorious truths?

But to proceed a little further. Are we willing to acknowledge that without Christ we can do nothing? That to will is present with us, but we cannot find how to do the things that we would? That not only is it necessary for us to be made free from the legal claims of sin, but before we can enter the spiritual service of God we must be made free from the power of sin? "What shall we then say to these things?" Is that your experience, or are you a conditionalist and can set sin on the throne of grace just as you will? Can you become the servant of sin or of righteousness at your own behest? What are Paul's instructions on this point? I have felt that our experiences teach us much the same truth as he asserts. Hear him: "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."—Rom. vi. 18. Now to establish the fact that this freedom from sin was an experimental freedom from the reigning power of sin I will refer you to the sixteenth verse and the nineteenth verse of this same chapter, which show that you are the servant of sin if you yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness, and that at such times you are free from righteousness. The twenty-third verse shows clearly that we cannot serve God under such conditions, but must wait upon the Lord, must be made free from sin before we can have our fruit unto holiness. This I think is much the same as the apostle expressed when he said, "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." It is true this leaves the child of God helpless and dependent and exposed to all the corruptions within and all the temptations without, so far as his own strength of armament is concerned. When the strong man was stripped of all his armor wherein he trusted by the stronger who came upon him, he was from that time on defenseless in his own right, and so we hear him crying, O Lord, I am undone. I am a man of unclean lips; I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips. Yes, every trembling prisoner of hope has been brought to this point of desperation where he could have called for the rocks and mountains to fall on him and hide him from the face of him that sat on the throne.

But in the experience of these little ones are distressing scenes, threatening storms, frowning providences, legal doubts, heart conflicts, cruel persecutions, gloomy fears pouring into the soul. Can we do nothing about it? Can we not run away and hide from all this? Where shall I go and whither shall I flee, is the distressed soul's inquiry, but the answer comes back, "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." These heart exercises are designed for the trial of your faith which is more precious than gold, and you cannot run away from them. Then what is the defense of the Lord's children? How may they travel with safety through a world which is infested with bitter foes? The answer to every such inquiry is found in the latter clause of our text: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" I wonder if we comprehend just what it means for God to be for us. It means that all the

persons and all the perfections of Deity are engaged in our behalf; that nothing in the whole realm of God's government can operate subversive to our spiritual interests. "We know," says the apostle, "that all things work together for good to them that love God." Even though these searching experiences come which distress you, alarm you, wound you, strip you, humble you and cast you into midnight darkness, your interests are none the less the object of His constant concern than when you are mounting on eagles' wings to behold his glory. His consoling words are: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee." And again, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This it the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." He has engaged to make darkness light and crooked things straight. Everything can be found in Christ that a poor soul can need and all that a sovereign God can give. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" The greatest, the most precious, the most costly gift that heaven contained was freely bestowed to secure the heirs of promise in their inheritance, and the question now is, "How shall he not with him also give us all things?" Is it any surprise then that the apostle would say, We know that all things work together for good to them that love God? If God is for you, then, dear children of God, you have nothing to fear. He will turn every cross, every doubt, every tribulation, every persecution, every foe, to the promotion of your spiritual good. Your merciful Father has made that his concern, and he has assured us that he will not suffer his faithfulness to fail. It is a comforting truth that our safety or our happiness does not depend upon our faithfulness, but all that concerns our spiritual well-being depends upon his faithfulness to his covenant promises and his immutable oath. It would be as easy for God to cease to be God as for one of his promises to fail. So intent is Jehovah upon safeguarding the interest of his elect that he bestowed upon them in Christ the fulness of God, and turned all that befell him at the hands of his enemies to their everlasting benefit. His Flesh is their food, his blood is their drink, his stripes are their medicine, his righteousness is their garment, his salvation is their walls and bulwarks. When his enemies wounded and bruised him, crucified him and pierced his side, the fountain was opened for the sin and uncleanness of his people. He proved in every transaction that he was for them and that the worst that sin and Satan and the world could do did not in the least endanger the interests of the objects of his love and care. No wonder the apostles could say, "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?" when the rulers and the people were gathered against Christ. They raged because they were not reconciled to his authority and preeminence, and they vainly imagined they could destroy his power and set his counsels aside. But how vain were all their efforts; they only succeeded in doing just what God's hand and counsel predestinated; no more and no less; and this is just what he assures works together for good to them that love him. All of your interests, dear child of God, are intrusted to Christ and he guards them continually. He is that "nail in a sure place" upon which is hung not only "all the glory of his Father's house," but "the offspring and the issue." There is nothing that concerns God's glory or the welfare of his children that was not fully provided for in that fullness that dwells in Christ. This is that fullness that "filleth all in all." When Christ took that out of the way that was "against us" and "contrary to us" and "nailed it to

his cross" he left his children exposed only to such things as he had designed should work for their good, and in it all he has gloriously proven that he is "for them." "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" Let the apostle answer. He says in all our tribulations, distresses, persecutions, famine, nakedness, peril or sword, we are more than conquerors through him that loved us, and then adds, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Then let us say with the psalmist, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance."

Should this find its way into print, and be blessed to the comfort of one of the little ones in Zion, I shall be bountifully rewarded for the effort; and if your thoughts are for a little moment engaged with heavenly things, it will be to the praise of God's glorious grace.

Yours in humble hope,

(Written in February, 1932, by the late Elder J. R. Hardy, Dallas, Texas.)

PREDESTINATION AND FATALISM

(Republished by Request)

Is the doctrine of the predestination of all things fatalism? If not, wherein do they differ? Those who assert that they are the same, certainly betray an entire lack of understanding of the meaning of words, or of their uses; and besides, they are certainly ignorant of what the doctrine of fatalism is. They are not in the slightest degree the same. Fatalism was held by some in the past centuries, and we are informed by writers, that some people in the east hold this dogma still. It means that there is an indefinite something which has no consciousness, and therefore no will, and which is blind, which fixes the destiny of God, as well as of men. It is a dumb and dead power that is supreme, and from which the divine powers can no more escape than can men. In heathen ideas, the many gods whom they worshipped, were all subject to this intangible, indefinable power, as completely as were men. On the other hand, the doctrine of predestination declares that there is a supreme being, who ever lives and reigns, and whose purpose is eternal, and who governs all things, and moves all things, and is moved by none. This God is the Sovereign arbiter of all, and all things must bow to his sway. There is no power back of him, but he is himself the source of all power, and being, and life. We trust that those who have been saying that predestination was fatalism, have been ignorant of the difference, for if they have not been, they have been guilty of willingly deceiving, or trying to deceive the people by saying that they were the same. All things are fixed, but not as fatalism claims, by a dumb, dead power, above and beyond Diety, but by the sovereign will and power of the all-wise God himself.

Elder F. A. Chick

December, 1897

"MY REDEEMER LIVETH"

Dear Brethren:

When by grace a real preacher stands to speak for the comfort of heavy laden souls, and for the benefit of others of the blood bought family who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, that minister will always advocate that God, according to His eternal purpose and immutable counsel, and everlasting covenant which contains all of salvation from vast eternity, and from whom for all of his people He spake by the prophet, saying, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them

from death: O death, I will be thy plagues, O grave I will be thy destruction: repentence shall be hid from my eyes." (Hosea 13:14)

These glorious words our Lord will not alter: and our God's honor shines upon this promise so that here is that which saved us from the hand that is stronger than our own. When our Lord made this promise He knew He was able to do his entire will.

Then, faithful to his promise He came down from heaven to save His people from their sins: and He did not fail nor turn back in the day of battle. Of all that Jesus did on earth we cannot tell—the earth would not hold the books, but He answered all the law's demands, and satisfied justice, and obeyed and glorified God on earth: He suffered, bled and died, and finished forevermore the work which made an end of sin, and brought in free and everlasting righteousness. So now complete salvation surrounds the entire election of grace, the church of God forever, and has her sins all put away, her debts satisfied: the battle is fought, the victory gained by One who fills every longing soul with a kingdom which cannot be moved.

In Jesus Christ every single one of God's children has all things, including an interest in His precious blood to cleanse from all guilt of sin, grace to pardon, peace which cannot fail: and above all a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother, who has purposed to remove all our pollution, heal all our wounds, and prepare us to stand before Him cleaner than sin ever made us unclean—more alive than death can ever make us dead, more happy, more complete and more able to sing unto Him that loved us. And nothing short of this that satisfies God, shall ever satisfy any soul who anticipates the day when we shall see our Saviour's face and dwell in that City.

Yes my brethren, the hour is coming, and Jesus is coming again to receive us unto himself: then we shall see Him. And this is because He will take his servants up singing, "Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

By grace through faith these blessed facts are felt with a living unquestionable reality, in the sons of God at times, and then they can say, though they be covered with boils, "I know my Redeemer liveth . . ." This knowledge is life eternal.

In bonds,
J. L. Bocock
P. O. Box 13,
Boones Mill, Va. 23065

READS SIGNS FROM WAY BACK

Live Oak, Florida

Dear Brother Spangler:

It is about time to renew my subscription for the *Signs,* and I decided to write you a few lines to tell you how much I enjoy it—and I don't know what I would do without it.

My wife passed away May 12, 1945. She was confined to the house for almost four years, and my son-in-law was in the hospital at the time, and I came as soon as I could to try to be of some help to my daughter. He had a bad operation, and isn't back on a regular job yet. My daughter works in a bank. I do get lonely, but I read my *Signs* from a long way back. If I live to March 18th of this year, I will be eighty-seven years old. I want to tell you that my father was Clerk of the association when it was organized November 27, 1875. He was born Dec. 19, 1823, in Coffee County, Ga. I also have a copy of a letter his church gave Brother September 27, 1875.

I have stayed in the world of sin and sorrow longer than any one of my family. I have had my ups and downs, of course, but I want to say I have been wonderfully blessed, and do hope and pray I am thankful for all the good Lord's blessings. I wish I could visit more than I do.

Lots of love from a brother in hope. May the good Lord bless each and every one there, is my prayer.

A. J. Beauchamp

OBITUARIES

VERA FORSYTHE FAUCETTE

Out of a deep sense of appreciation for the life of our Sister, Vera Forsythe Faucette, the Church at Durham wishes to express its sense of loss at her death March 5, 1974—at the same time acknowledging the sovereignty of our God in all things.

Sister Faucette was born in Durham County on August 31, 1883, the daughter of James Smith Forsythe and Elizabeth Frances Waller Forsythe. On November 10, 1908 she was married to Samuel Fred Faucette. They became the parents of nine children—three of whom, Samuel Fred, Jr., Robert Kenneth, and Naomi Hand Fosdick—preceded her in death. On August 16, 1924 she was received into the fellowship of Durham Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized the following day. She lived a sweet life in the Church, constant in her love and fellowship toward the other members—always preferring them above herself. She served the Household of Faith with her own special gifts of grace: love, humility, and genuine hospitality.

She is survived by her children, Mrs. James S. Poole, Mrs. Charles Allen, and George Faucette of Durham, N. C., Billie F. Faucette of Fairfax, Va., Chesley Horton Faucette of Louisville, Ky., and James W. Faucette of Hillsborough, N. C.; one sister, Mrs. Omar Pope Darrow; 15 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren. Her husband had passed away June 18, 1968.

She truly manifested that her treasure was laid up in heaven.

Submittted in love,
D. V. Spangler

EVA BRITTINGHAM

The Lord called from our midst Sister Eva Brittingham. She passed away in the Millsboro nursing home, March 5, 1974, making her stay here on earth 86 years. She was married to Larry Brittingham in 1908, who preceded her in death June 1925. She was the daughter of John S. and Sallie P. Benson.

She leaves to mourn two sons, Olen and John Brittingham, and a step-daughter, Margaret Lowe. Also, a niece Sallie Hastings. Sister Brittingham raised her step-daughter and niece as her own children. Her only daughter, Mary Gordy, was very faithful in taking care of her mother, until she left these mortal shores. Then her niece Sallie took care of her until her health failed.

Sister Brittingham's membership was with the Broad Creek Church and was baptized in August 1942. The Broad Creek Church membership decreased and two members came to Little Creek Church in November 1966.

Sister Brittingham was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace, and was faithful in attending the meetings when her health permitted to do so. She was always glad to have her loved ones visit her, even though she did not feel able to carry on a conversation. Her Minister Elder Arthur Warren was always faithful and visited her often. We hope to be submissive to God's will and made to feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Warren from Windsor Funeral Home in Laurel, Delaware, and her body was laid to rest in the Broad Creek Cemetery.

Pattie B. Krewatch

BROTHER OWEN SLOAN

It pleased our Heavenly Father to call home Brother Oliver Sloan June 13, 1974. He was born March 31, 1905, making his stay on earth 69 years.

Brother Sloan was blessed by God to ask for a home with the New Bay Primitive Baptist Church while in the hospital. On August 20, 1972, he was baptized along with his wife by Elder D. B. Stokes and S. P. Jones.

Although he did not live very long after he united with the Church, he had been a believer of Salvation by Grace for a long time. His affliction was very painful. He was faithful to attend Church as long as he was physically able. He was loved by all who knew him.

His funeral was conducted by one of his pastors, Elder D. B. Stokes, at Edgerton Funeral Home. His body was laid to rest in Devotional Garden Cemetery under a beautiful mound of flowers, where we believe he is resting in peace waiting for the second coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

He is survived by his wife, Sister Lula Sloan, who was a faithful and loving wife to the end. Four brothers and one sister.

Done by order of conference, September 1974, written by one who loved him.

Nettie Brown

REMEMBERING HER HUSBAND

Ferrum, Va.

Dear Brethren:

Today has been a rainy and cloudy day. I received the *Signs of the Times* today and have just finished reading the good writings, and enjoyed them so much.

It has been seven months and ten days since the passing of my husband. I miss him so much, but I wouldn't call him back if I

could. He told his nurse the morning before his passing, to bathe him because he knew death was near, but he was ready to go. He ate a good lunch and began to get worse and soon passed away. I saw him on Wednesday and asked him if he would rather I come back and see him over the weekend or for me to go to Old Republican Church for the meeting, and come to see him on Monday the Lord willing. He said he would rather I go to the meeting. I went to Republican, and received the sad news that he had just passed away. It was such a shock, though I knew he could not get well, but did not think he would go so quickly.

My daughter-in-law saw him the same day, and when she went into the room she thought he was asleep, and told the nurse she saw the cover move, and she said that was his last breath. His passing was easy.

I dreamed I was with him, and heard him say, I have put her away, but she is my charming beauty. These words I can't forget —they have brightened my life so much.

Your in sweet fellowship
Hattie Radford

SISTER HELEN GUILLIAMS

The hearts of many, and especially Pigg River Church, were saddened on August 19, 1973, by the passing of Sister Helen Hale Guilliams.

At the special request of her husband, I will attempt to write this obituary. Sister Helen was born in Franklin County at Ferrum Virginia, May 20, 1911, the daughter of John and Lilly Howell Hale, making her stay on earth 62 years. She was married to George Guilliams on December 25, 1927. To this union were born two daughters and two sons: Miss Doris Guilliams, Mrs. Goldie Agee, and Donald Guilliams all of Callaway, Va. Earl Guilliams, deceased, and four grandchildren.

She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Pigg River the fourth Sunday in December, 1948, and was baptized the fourth Sunday in January, 1949, by her pastor at that time, Elder John P. Helms.

She loved her church, and manifested it in her efforts to have her brethren and friends in her home. It was a welcome place for the Old School Baptists.

She was a devoted wife and mother. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder W. M. Holland and Elders Julius Bocock and Amos Hash. She was laid to rest in Pigg River Church Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

We will miss her but feel our loss is her eternal gain. May we all be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father, who does all things well.

In love,
Bobby and Reba Bernard

Read and approved in our conference meeting at Pigg River Church Feb. 22, 1975. A copy to be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, one to the family, and it is to be recorded on our church record.

Elder W. M. Holland, Mod.
W. W. Abshire, Clerk

LESLIE ARNALD HUNTER

Brother Leslie Arnald Hunter was born October 20, 1913, and departed this life April 12, 1974. He was the son of the late Charles and Zillah Fountain Hunter, and was married to Irene Raynor Hunter on February 17, 1934.

Brother Hunter was a firm believer in Salvation by the Grace of God, and that only by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ could a sinner be saved.

He was in poor health for a long time, yet he was one who never complained about his illness. He was blessed beyond measure, in that he always had a smile and was soft spoken.

He was in Duplin County Hospital when his familly called on March 27, 1974. When we arrived his speech was beautiful concerning the Lord Jesus Christ and his unworthness to hope that Jesus came to die for a sinner as he felt to be. As he expressed it, he felt that he could not leave this world without telling the Church of his condition and his hope and trust that they would have understanding and fellowship for him. On this night, he asked for a home with the New Bay Primitive Baptist Church. It was a great privilege to hear this brother tell his experience wherein we had been called to travel and to hear him give praise to the name of our King.

On April 10, 1974, Brother Hunter received that call which took him from this life. His body was laid to rest at the side of his wife, we feel to await the second coming of the Lord Jesus.

He is survived by two sons, Charles and Carrol, and three grandchildren. It is our prayer that God may continue to reconcile his sons to their loss; as well as those who knew and loved him in Christ.

Written by order of Conference of the New Bay Primitive Baptist Church.

D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Norman Jenkins, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143 DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1975 NO. 6

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

HAPPY AT BEING BROUGHT TO THE CHURCH

Dear Elder Spangler:

After talking with Peggy today, I understand that Elder Poole called you last night, and told you about my uniting with the Snow Hill Church. I am so glad he did for I had you on my mind, and did so much want you to know. I'm not too good talking in person, so I thought perhaps a note would do.

I can't begin to tell you the joy and happiness I have felt since yesterday afternoon. I find myself happy and smiling when reflecting on the events that occured. I hope I can stay this way for a little while, for I know I must be brought back down. When I awakened yesterday morning and saw it was snowing, I was so depressed for fear there would not be church. I called my father-in-law and he laughed and said, "Don't you know a little snow never stopped an Old Baptist from having meeting?" I was thrilled!

All week I had felt and hoped that perhaps Sunday there would be two to be baptized instead of one, but just couldn't see how it could be. Sunday morning I went by myself to Salisbury Church, and after getting there, I saw there was neither of the three deacons there from the Snow Hill Church. I felt this was to tell me I would not go before the church that morning, and I didn't. Elder Poole preached so beautifully on the 23rd Psalm, which had been on my mind during the week. (He talked so nicely to me during the lunch hour, too.) I went home so upset that I went to my bedroom and got down on my knees and begged God that if I was to unite at the water, that I might be given the mind to take clothes. The words of Ananias to Paul to, "Arise and be baptized," came to me, and I gathered some things together.

But even at the church, I still felt hesitant as they were singing. Then Elder Poole said he felt to read out of Acts where Phillip preached Jesus to the eunuch, and baptized him: that was God telling me to go now, and I went. It was with trembling that I went down into the water, but with such a peaceful, joyful feeling I came up out of the water. Never such happiness have I felt! I keep thinking over and over, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." I was so afraid they might see me as I am, and turn me away. Oh, I know that my Redeemer liveth! I can't put all my feelings into words.

I was unaware until after the baptizings were over, that the hymn they were singing when I went before the church, was "Amazing Grace." I have always loved it, but it was the hymn sung when Mom went before the church. Also, my Daddy went at the water—remember. And all last week the last two verses of "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds" were going over and over in my mind. This was a favorite hymn of Daddy's, so Elder Poole tells me. I feel like God gave a tie spiritually strong, between Mom and Daddy and me.

I don't know if that makes any sense. I had to go back home Sunday night—went by the cemetery, then up to Audrey and Billy's. It seemed right that I should be home: all of us children were together there.

Don't know if this letter will sound O. K. to you, or not, but I hope I have not written to sound like I had any part whatsoever. God forbid it. There could never be condemnation enough for me, if flesh entered into something so precious.

I love you and Sister Spangler and wanted to talk with you. I told Richard I wished I was close by so I could embrace you both.

Hope to see you soon. Remember me when given to prayer,

Lovingly,
Linda Adkins

"HEARD THE VOICE OF GOD WALKING"

Elgin, Oregon 97827

Dear Elder and Sister Spangler:

We have long neglected writing you, and know that unless our minds and hands be guided we can say nothing that will be of comfort to the household of faith, yet, though we feel inadequate, we will attempt, the Lord willing, to write a few lines, and enclose two year's renewal for our family paper.

Genesis 3:8: "And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves amongst the trees of the garden." This expression, "and they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden," has been much on my mind for several months, for herein lies a great mystery.

The fall of Adam had already taken place for they, Adam and Eve, had eaten of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked (sinners). Right here is where they began their work system, for the scriptures read, "And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons." (Genesis 3:7)

Although God had said, "Let there be light, and there was light." (Genesis 1:3) this commandment of God was not yet applicable to them in a spiritual sense, for they were in a state of darkness spiritually. When one stands in total darkness he can hear the footfalls of another's approach, but cannot see him, and more often than not one will tremble in fear and seek a hiding place. And so it is in the beginning of regeneration, for each footfall of the voice of God makes us only the more aware of how great and how holy is our Lord God, and how totally depraved is the nature of man.

"I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." (Jer. 31:3) This drawing, so to speak, is the fruit of God's love to usward, for we love Him because he first loved us: and so it was with Adam as God made His light shine out of darkness, making manifest the power and mercy of the omnipotent God.

"When a strong man armed, keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." (Luke 11:21,-22) Oh, how secure one feels in his own works until the appointed time of his hearing the footfalls of the voice walking. "He looketh on the earth (these clay vessels) and it trembleth." (Psalms 104:32) No wonder Adam hid himself. For now he stood justly condemned before the righteous, just and holy God, and was given light to see the fallacy of his apron (works).

"And unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skin, and clothed them." (Genesis 3:21) A skin cannot be provided without the shedding of blood, and this all points to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who stood a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Yea, there is no depth to which the loving kindness and mercy that the Lord God cannot reach. For David said, "If I

ascend up into heaven thou art there, if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there."

Give our love to all the brethren. In much love

Lloyd and Florence Spikes

LORD I BELIEVE

Do you have a hard time believing in God sometimes? Do you have doubts that there is a heaven above the clouds or some where "up" there? Do you find it sometimes impossible to believe that some sweet day you will be carried to heaven? Does doubt ever creep in? Do you sometimes think there just could not possibly be a place where there is nothing but peace and joy and love, no pain, sorrow, worries or cares? Yes, I think all of us have these doubts. I think some times it is impossible to conceive a power like God, a place like heaven, Noah and the ark, the garden of Eden, people being raised from the dead, streets of gold, and on and on. No, we just become more and more doubtful when we think about the magnitude of our "belief." We lack the ability to understand and to conceive something that is beyond our power of understanding. Yet, we sometimes began to think that it is like the Indians believing they were going to a great hunting ground or the people of India believing you keep going up and up each time you are born and die until you reach the heights of king or something or other.

Let us pretend we do not believe there is a God . . . How then would we explain the birth of a baby? We do believe in birth, we have to, all we have to do is look in the mirror to know people are born. We know there is such a thing but, do we understand it? I can not say I do and I would hate to be given the job of explaining it especially while I am "pretending" I do not believe in God. I do not know how it could be done unless you believe. The little seed is planted, it begins to grow and if it is a normal seed a certain blueprint is followed. The mother does not have to worry about when to start this and when to stop that. The arms come out from the shoulders. The nose grows out from the face and not from the elbow. Do you understand how it can develop and grow and be fed inside the mother's body? Remember, we are pretending not to believe in God. We have to explain it without giving the credit to a Supreme Being. How can the baby live and know when to start the downward plunge to air, light and breath? Why does it not struggle to go upward instead of downward? Have you ever thought about that? How does it know how to breathe, and all the other things that it comes here knowing? Well, we may say, "nature teaches it . . ." What is nature? We are not believers in God or nature remember.

Gaye and Joan, our daughters, are nurses and they were taught and trained and then placed on duty in the maternity or delivery section of the hospital. When they saw their first birth of a baby they each had to call me on the phone, long distance, and tell me about it in their own words. They were almost ready to shout. They were so excited and filled with awe. They could not believe the miracle of it all. One of them said "Mother, you cannot imagine how hard it is to believe what you are actually seeing, the witnessing of a life coming into the world." They each spoke so sweetly of God and His power and how only He could perform such a miracle. You see the only way they could explain a birth to me was to say, "Mother there has to be a God!" This made me think of that song "How Great Thou Art."

It says something in it about "everytime I hear a newborn baby cry . . ."

There are a few "simple" things I would like to call to your attention to that are hard to understand and impossible to explain (without believing). Why do the leaves die and the trees and plants rest and then come back to life? How do they know when to go to sleep and when to wake up? Who planned cows for milk, chickens for eggs, herbs

for medicine, coal, gas, oil, clay, and the millions of other things we have. Man might have discovered their being here and use of them but we certainly did not "put" them here.

Can you understand or explain love? It is one of the greatest mysteries isn't it? Now if we can't explain man's love, how can we explain God's love? I forgot, we are pretending to not believe in God though, aren't we? I can't for the life of me, tell you why I love Hartsel Cayce, why I love my children, my mother, etc. All I can say is something draws me to them. When they hurt, I hurt, when they are sad, I am sad, when they want something I try to get it. I can't tell you why or what it is. I can honestly tell you this, however, I do not love any other man like I love Hartsel. Why is that? I love many children but I love my children in a different way than I love your children. I love many who are mothers but none like mine.

So you see there are many things we are forced to believe in life not because we understand them or can explain them but we are forced to believe because of the evidence that it is true!

There is a God! He lives! I do not know how or why or understand, I just know HE IS REAL. I have that that testifies within me that HE is real! Even if I have doubts and have (sometimes) to look about and consider all I see . . . I KNOW within me that HE LIVES! I see Him in the sunrise, the going down of the same, I see Him in the dew as it sparkles on a spider web, I see Him in the little blossom as it blooms and drops and the fruit begins to form. I see Him in the little bee as it carries out the pollination plan (which is a miracle in itself). I have seen Him (and I hold the memory so precious) as I looked down upon my nursing child and was held spellbound by the wonder of it all. But I will have to admit to you precious brothers and sisters, the thing that makes my belief the sweetest and dearest and most precious is that which I feel is within me. It causes me to want to shout from the highest mountain top "LORD, I BELIEVE!" Yet, I have days when I am forced to cry out in despair "Lord help my unbelief."

Love,
Jo Ann Cayce

(Copied from The Primitive Baptist)

"I HAVE CALLED YOU FRIENDS"

704 Oakland Avenue
Rocky Mount, N. C. 27801

My dear brethren:

It is a very serious undertaking to attempt to write about the scriptures that have dominated my thinking of late. While feeling inadequate, I also feel compelled. May Jesus prove to be the compelling factor.

I will not attempt to quote all of the pertinent scriptures, but will leave that to you, my dear reader, to read for your self. May God bless you to search the scriptures.

Jesus said to His Disciples before the time arrived for His own death, "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." (John 15:15)

Before uttering these wonderful words, He had previously mentioned a new commandment of love, and that His words were spoken that our joy might be full.

At this point I ask myself when did our Lord refer to His followers as servants; when did they cease to be servants, and begin to be His friends. Oh, the many questions that come to mind, and the many thoughts that come to mind is I ponder the depth of His riches.

Reverting to Jeremiah 25:4, we find the prophet saying ". . . And the Lord hath sent unto YOU all his SERVANTS the prophets, rising early and sending them; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear." There are

many passages that suggest that God referred to not only His people as servants, but also anyone of mankind that He designed to use in His eternal purposes. These references to God's servants came while the Covenant of the Law and of the Prophets was in effect. The ultimate way of God's people had not yet been manifested, as it pertained to salvation. Therefore, it quite naturally follows that in the age of Grace, God's way of salvation was to be revealed in His Son Jesus.

Having reached the end of His purpose, Jesus openly revealed the way to His followers; that which He had predicted aforetime when He began His ministry. Now, at the end, and the purposes about to be fulfilled, the relationship is changing. Changing from the dispensation of the law, to the age of Grace. The dispensation that now exists, of no longer being under the bondage of the law. In other words, no longer are we servants of the law, but have entered by God's grace into the Covenant of Grace.

Paul said "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by HIS GRACE through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus . . . "

The grand apostle is saying that it is clear that we cannot attain the righteousness of God by the deeds of the Law, but that righteousnsss is by faith in Jesus Christ. Which faith we are told is a free gift of God. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Jesus Christ, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

So now, as Jesus approached the agony and death on Calvary's cross, the Covenant of God is changing. Changing from the state of servants, to the wonderful state of intimate friendship with God's begotten Son. "Henceforth I call you no longer servants, but friends. . ." Fully revealed now, Jesus' followers can see God's way of redemption. And further our Lord had quite throughly stated the circumstances. Now His disciples were aware of this abiding friendship.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Jesus willingly, and knowingly laid down His life for you, that the righteousness of God might not be by the deeds of the law, but by faith in the Son of God. "For as by one man's disobedience (Adam) many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one (Jesus) shall many be made righteousness."

And now we come to the point of the friendship of Jesus. One song writer wrote "what a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and grief to bear . . ." But this still presents the thought of who initiated this glorious and abiding friendship. Who attached themselves to Jesus? Or rather whom did Jesus attach Himself to.

Webster's definition of friend is " . . . one who is attached to another by affection or esteem " . . . because He first loved us." And He loved you before the world ever was. And because God loved us, He sent His Son to die for us. Oh Blessed Hope, Oh Blessed Hope, what sweet experiences have reinforced that Blessed Hope!

One cannot underestimate the value of our natural friendships with those we love and esteem. It is truly in an hour of distress and need that our natural friends rise to the occasion, and in natural way succor our sinking spirits. Our natural friends come to our rescue in our daily trials, and prove themselves real and abiding friends.

When you were down, did you receive a cheery card? When your spirits were low, have you ever felt uplifted because some friend cared enough to come by. Just to have someone say "I love you." Yes, our natural friends are truly precious, and this world would be very desolate without these ties of friendship.

But when all seems hopeless, and life

is at its darkest hour, and our friends have failed to reach our case; even though they desired to raise us up from the pits of despair, it is then that we begin to search for a stronger and more powerful friend.

It is in such conditions of life that we now begin our searching, yes even begging for a friend to come to our rescue. We begin to seek God . . . but where do we go? We begin to seek help, on whom do we lean? In such a state of life, we begin to feel the attachment of someone who is standing nearby. A presence that can be felt, but not explained. Had not His presence been there all along? Had not Jesus been attached to you all the time? Had not He loved you, even though you felt Him not. Yes, oh yes, Jesus was with you, watching, loving, caring; even as a friend.

As the presence of Jesus is felt in gloom and despair, could you, dear reader, not cry with me? Could you my dear Brother and Sister not utter with me, as we seek that " . . . friend that sticketh closer than a brother." Cannot you see the attachment now as we cry:

Lord Jesus take me by Thy hand
When before God's Throne I seek to stand;
I know not how to beg or pray,
I know not what to ask or say.
Sweet Spirit cry for me again,
Then Jesus be to me a friend.

Lord Jesus take me by Thy hand
And lead me through this sin-scarred land,
For I am weak and cannot see
The rugged road ahead of me.
When faith grows weak and doubts slip in,
Then Jesus be to me a friend.

Lord Jesus take me by Thy hand
When I fail to do what I think I can,
And grant me strength to face the fight
And be my lamp to face the night.
Then when I cry from deep within,
Then Jesus be to me a friend.

Lord Jesus take me by Thy hand
And reassure this failing man,
That Thou who suffered Calvary
Did set this erring Adam free.
Show me that in believing, 'tho I sin,
That Jesus will be to me a friend.

Lord Jesus take me by Thy hand
And grant me faith to see the land,
That when this sojourn here is o'er
I might arrive on that fair shore.
But while here I must toil and bend,
Then Jesus be to me a friend.

Lord Jesus take me by Thy hand
And give me grace to understand,
That Thou who led me in the past
Will not forsake me at the last.
Then may I hear thee bid "Come in"
To be with Jesus, Lord and Friend.

Upon the death and resurrection of our Lord, who even now " . . . sits at the right hand of God," the dispensation of Grace was ushered in, and now His little ones are no longer servants, but friends. Friend, because He loved them. Friend, because what is to be known of the Heavenly Father is revealed in Jesus. Friend, because He laid down His life for you.

So now, the promises of God, being fulfilled in Jesus the Christ, take on more significance, more sweetness when He said "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

Henceforth Jesus calls you not servants, but FRIENDS. Oh blessed hope!

Your in love,
Elder W. L. Everett

PSALM 137

"By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion."

This scripture has been in my mind for sometime, and I feel like trying to write a few lines on the subject. I do not know whether it will be of any benefit to any one. We read in Psalm 46:10, "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth."

Brethren when we are made to sit down in the sense that David did, then we are made to remember the working of our God — then we can sing the songs of Zion, which is God's dwelling place,

and are made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ to worship him in Spirit and in Truth, They that worship God must worship him in spirit and truth. We must first know what the Truth is before we can worship him in Spirit: then we can sing the songs of Zion, and make a joyful sound to our God.

When our heart-strings are in tune and a tongue of utterance is given, we sing and preach the gospel according to the power of our God, and not of anything pertaining to man's works. Aren't we glad that the gospel is the power of God preached for those that are called; and sent to the Believer! God's elect are kept from singing the songs of Zion in a strange land. When God sent Philip to go down south to the way that goeth from Jerusalem to Gaza which is desert, Philip went according to the command of God, like everyone else who is called to sing and preach the word.

The Psalmist would have forgotten Jerusalem if he could have sung songs to the Babylonians. Daniel had no desire to turn to the Babylonian people because God kept him from their false doctrine. David could not sing songs of Zion in a strange land. He had no desire to forget his Harp.

There have been enemies of the truth, and still are, ever since the beginning of time. But I am made to believe that everything works according to God's will and purpose, because there is a season and time to every purpose, a time to be born, a time to die. God is the time of all things, because he upholds all things by the word of his power. He is our God today as he was in the days gone by. He is from everlasting to everlasting, and beside him there is no saviour.

"Be still and know that I am God," for in him is peace, love and enjoyment when we are enabled to worship Him. "He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding." (Jeremiah 51:15)

Brethren, a word that is fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver,—Proverbs 25:11. The word that is spoken is to the man of God, because all scriptures are given by inspiration of God, and are profitable to the man of God. David was one of the sweet singers in Israel. David knew that God knew every word that was in his tongue, and his thought afar off.

"Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God!
He whose word cannot be broken,
Form'd thee for his own abode.
On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
Thou may'st smile at all thy foes."

When David hung his harp upon the willow, it was a sign of grief, because he was tormented in knowing what had been done to him and his yokefellows. I believe God had pronounced the daughters of Babylon their doom, this being done in the beginning of time. We read in Genesis 2:1, 2 that God finished the heaven and earth and all the host of them, and on the 7th day he ended his work which he had made: and rested on the 7th day from all his work. "Known unto God are all his work from the beginning." Our God is all wisdom, and Wisdom is justified of all her children, because the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. This is from righteous Abel to the last one of His witnesses, for God will never leave himself without a witness. We believe the promises of our God, for "the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." This gospel has been preached all through the ages, and is still being preached and believed by those that have been born again.

"Saviour, if of Zion City
I through grace a member am,
Let the world deride or pity,
I will glory in thy name.

Fading is the worldling's pleasure:
All his boasted pomp and show.

Solid joys and lasting treasures
None but Zion's Children know."

O, how wonderful it is to know that there is a rest for God's humble poor: the poor have the gospel preached unto them. Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs of everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." (Isaiah 35:10) "This people have I formed for myself, and they shall shew forth my praise." (Isaiah 43:21)

I am glad that the elect of God do not praise men, for the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope." (Romans 8:20) We are saved by hope, we walk by faith and faith is the gift of God. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. Jesus is the strength of Zion. Zion is what David remembered, and he wept. I believe that the Babylonians just wanted to have David sing for them for amusement. But He remembered Zion, and could not sing the Songs of Zion in a strange land. "What wondrous love is this, O my soul," when we are able to sing the songs of Zion, and we cry out, "Lord have mercy on us," for God is a merciful God having mercy and compassion on whom he will have compassion.

So, Brethren, "the lot is cast into the lap, and the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." May the God of all grace be with us, is my prayer.

In bonds of love to all,
Elder Herbert R. Prince
4307 Manor Haven Drive
Memphis, Tenn.

EXPERIENCE

Ekfrid, Ontario, Jan. 2, 1905

Dear Brethren: — When about ten years old my father and mother joined the Presbyterians. It did trouble me for fear they had not known that change of heart I felt all should have before sitting at the communion. About that time in a vision I thought the world was coming to an end, and saw the Lord coming down from heaven with wings like an angel, to take me. How I did beg of him to take my eldest brother with me. From that time I was given great exercise of mind until the day of my wonderful delivery, when the blessed Jesus was revealed to me, as I hope, my salvation and my Redeemer.

How often I had desired to be prepared to sit at the communion. This Saturday while going into the meeting the lines were with me: "I joyed when to the house of God," &c. Go up, they said to me. Then came the thought, But I am as unfit as ever. The text was given out, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" That was the last I heard. What a power of condemnation rested upon me. I was taken out of the body, and saw hell open before me, and was ready to be cast in, but that did not seem to trouble me, but that I had crucified the Lord of glory. When in that distress the Savior appeared to me, and said, "Your sins, which are many, are all forgiven; put your hand in my side, and your fingers in the print of the nails; I will put my robe upon her, and shoes on her feet, and a ring on her hand." Then the Lord alone has brought salvation unto me. He took me from the fearful pit, and from the miry clay, and on a rock he set my feet, establishing my way. We were in the meeting from eleven a.m. until four in the afternoon, but I did not hear a word of what went on after the text was given out. When they dismissed I was weeping, and they asked my trouble. I said, Surely it is the work of the Lord; so I joined them, and I wondered that they never asked me to tell any experience; not one ever mentioned to me about the work of grace.

I was with them for over twenty years. Though feeling there were some of the Lord's people among them, I never

got anything from their preaching, but would feel it was in myself when I did not hear. All this time I was hearing the Old School Baptist preach, and while listening to their wonderful tidings would have a great conflict to conceal my feelings. It would come to me that I was like Joseph: I knew my brethren, but they did not know me. At God's own appointed time I was brought to the home of my friends, and baptized by the people I so dearly love, though I had to leave my kindred after the flesh. The text the Presbyterians had before I left was, Choose ye this day whom ye will serve, &c. The speaker made it all so natural I could not go any more. I remember at one time of wanting to tell my mind to a dear one (she was a member of the Baptists,) and she seemed to turn away, so I thought it was because I was a Presbyterian, but when this dear saint was on her death bed she asked me if I had ever felt the cleansing power of Christ. I said, It is some time since I felt he took me from the fearful pit and from the miry clay. She said, "It is enough."—The very words that came to me on the street in Glasgow.

I have passed through wonderful darkness as well as rejoicing. One evening while in sweet communion with my heavenly Father, his love rested upon me in such power that I felt loath to return to my family. When I was going before the church I felt forsaken, when the words came, "Think not what thou shalt say, for I will be a mouth to you." I dared not think what to say, but was given liberty to tell what I had passed through. A few years ago in a dream I thought I stood before God, who was as a flame of fire, and the words came, "Who shall be able to stand before God? when the Savior passed between us; he is the great mediator between God and man." At one time of the Ekfrid quarterly meeting, while weary in body and dozing to sleep, the words came, "Keep close to the shepherds' tents." Another time when very sick, and not expected to get better, I seemed carried above, and the words were with me, I am the purchased of the blood of Christ. After that I was for some time in such darkness that my heavenly Comforter seemed entirely gone, when he appeared, and the words came, All the devils in hell could not keep my Redeemer from me, for he is from everlasting to everlasting.

(Mrs.) Angus McTaggart.

(Sister McTaggart's obituary was published in the July, 1922 issue of the Signs. Her experience re-published by request)

WHEN WE ARE WEAK, THEN WE ARE STRONG

117 Bon Air Road,
Baltimore, Md. 21225
April 12, 1975

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

I trust you will not be offended by the above salutation, but I find it a great joy and comfort, through weak and vile as I am, to be able to call and to feel from time to time that the blessed saints of God, such as you both, are my brother and sister in the Lord, and that by the grace of God claim kinship with our Elder Brother Jesus.

I have felt to be weak and so far from the things of God lately that I fear at times to even be in the presence of His people. I fear that I am the biggest deceiver that ever was, and sometimes I am persuaded that I should stay away from the assembly of the saints.

Oh, but then my soul grows faint and hungry, and I find myself looking forward with eager anticipation to the next meeting. Such was the case last Sunday when we were blessed by a most gracious God to enjoy two lovely meetings. Although I am weak, vile and unworthy, I feel that surely God was in our presence. O, what a blessed privilege it is to meet together with the saints of God, and be enabled from time to time to worship Him in spirit and in truth, and to have no confidence in the flesh.

Daniel, the prophet of old, was cast into a den of lions because he was heard

making prayer and supplication before his God. Yet while he was there, all the night long his God was with him, and suffered him not to be hurt, but sent his angel and shut the mouths of the lions.

And we remember that Shadrack, Meshach and Abednego were cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace that was exceedingly hot, and the flames of it slew those men that cast them into the furnace. Yet we find that these men trusted in God, and He delivered them, and the fire had no power over them, nor was a hair of their head singed.

Nebachadnezzar, the king that commanded these three to be thrown into the fiery furnace, said, "Lo I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

Is it not a great comfort to know that God never leaves nor forsakes his people, and that He is with us even though we may feel to be in the midst of a fiery furnace? Our God knows what his people need: He knows their weaknesses and their sinful condition. Were it not that way, what need would there be for a Saviour?

But thanks be unto God that these things are not left to us, but He has fixed the end from the beginning: chose His people in His Son before the world began, and reveals His Son unto his chosen vessels of mercy here in this time world, and makes them to know that His is the only name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." May we ever be blessed to praise His holy name, and exalt it above every name that has ever been named, is my hope and prayer for Christ's sake.

May His people be able to come together in the bond of unity, and may they be enabled to pray one for another, and hopefully for

Barnabas J. Brammer

RECEIVES SPIRITUAL FOOD

843 Glendale Ave.,
S. Charleston, W. Va.

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a check to renew my subscription for another year — the remainder to be used as needed.

I want to tell you dear Editors how much I appreciate the time and effort you spend publishing the precious *Signs*, although I know it is all through the love of God and the inspiration He gives you, that you do this.

It feeds my hungry soul from month to month, and so many times has answered my prayers. No other editorials I have read can so completely satisfy my needs. What a gracious God we have that bestowes his love and mysterious wonders upon his believing people!

Brother Wood, I think so often of you and Sister Wood, and hope to meet with you again in the near future.

In bonds of love.

A sister I hope,
Mrs. Lester (Vertal) Haning

A HAPPY DAY

Rt. 2,
Elon College, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler:

Hope this finds you and your family well. It has been my desire for a long time to express my feelings, with the help of the Lord. Without Him I can do nothing, but with him I can do all things.

I have so much to be thankful for: My dear, sweet daughter asked for a home at Pleasant Grove Church last Sunday. She told of her love for them, and asked if they would accept her, and she was baptized Sunday afternoon. We had a wonderful, happy Lord's day, and I am so glad for her.

There has been a lot of trouble in my life, but I am thankful for the trouble the Lord has blessed me with, because

it has worked for my good. I love my Lord: He has been so good to me, and I hope I am thankful for I have much to thank him for.

Brother Spangler, I am thankful for the *Signs of the Times,* for I enjoy reading it so much. You may put this in the *Signs* if you desire. I don't have much earthly learning, but I hope the good Lord is blessing me to grow in the Spirit that I might have a thankful heart to him.

From a little sister in Christ, I hope,
Rosa S. Page

THE LORD IS REIGNING

St. Charles, Ky.

Dear Brethren:

Just a few lines to make me feel I am one of you. I read the *Signs* as long as my eyes will hold out, and get such a pleasure out of it, because I do not get to go to church very often where I get the truth as I believe it.

We enjoyed our meetings so much while Elder Biggs lived. We now have only three members, and two of them too old to go all the time, and all the preachers that could come to us, are so far away. But we are hoping the Lord is leading us. We are a people who are wandering on as did old Abraham. Our pathway is not strewn with roses. His people are called out of many tribulations, and we hope for our good and His glory.

So don't announce our meetings in the *Signs* (New Hope or Lick Creek, north of Dawson Springs) until we can have a preacher. I will notify you.

It is all for the glory of the God of heaven and earth as we travel through this vale of tears, and may we never forget in these dark and troubled times, that the Lord is yet reigning, and his purposes are not disturbed.

I love to read often the good writers. Brother Campbell had such a good piece awhile ago. I hope they will continue to write for the pleasure of us older people. I have traveled a long way, and have seen many mercies come. I feel we are traveling fast to the final wind-up of time, and my prayer is for the Editors and writers to be enabled to keep on writing.

Love and fellowship,
Mona McGregor

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, at Mill Branch Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in June, 1975.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 744,
Bennettsville, S. C. 29512

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EDITORIAL

"To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein he hath made us ACCEPTED in the beloved." (Ephesians 1:6)

This scripture has lingered in my mind for several months. In verse 1, the author, Paul, puts his name, declares his office, and how he came into it, and describes the persons to whom he wrote, "the saints which are at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus". In verse 2, Paul gives the salutation which is common to his epistles. In the rest of the chapter, the apostle gives thanks for blessings received by him and them; in which the efficient, moving, procuring and final causes of salvation are noted; and the several parts and branches of it are observed. The chapter is concluded with prayers for the Ephesians and various things are mentioned to the comfort of the saints and to the glory of Christ. The believer, Paul the apostle, writes to believers about their belief in the Lord Jesus Christ, whom to know is life eternal.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ", writes Paul in Ephesians 1:3. Here Paul gives thanks to God, as the God and Father of Christ, for spiritual blessings in Christ in general. In Ephesians 1:4, Paul proceeds to particulars and begins with election, which he represents as an act of God the Father choosing particular persons, as done in Christ, before the foundation of the world. The end of this is that "we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Ephesians 1:4. In Romans 8:29, it reads, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." The above is further illustrated under the name of predestination in Ephesians 1:5, where Paul writes, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." This blessing makes possible the adoption of children, those that he foreknew, by Jesus Christ to himself, the instrumental cause or means. The end is with God, "according to the good pleasure of his will." Ephesians 1:5.

Ephesians 1:6 reads, "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us *accepted* in the beloved". Here, "according to the good pleasure of his will" is explained as "being to the praise of the glory of his grace"; to which grace, acceptance in the beloved (Christ) is owing. Here then we have the third spiritual blessing mentioned, that is, "accepted in the beloved." The

three spiritual blessings so far as as follows: election, predestination, *acceptance* in the beloved, which is a branch of election and predestination. In the three spiritual blessings so far mentional, the *past tense* of the verb is used in each case; "hath chosen us in him", "having predestinated us unto the adoption of children" and "hath made us *accepted* in the beloved".

There are several words in the scriptures which come from the root word *accept* which is a verb: *acceptable* (adjective), *acceptably* (adverb), *acceptance* (noun), *accepted* (adjective and past tense of verb). It is interesting to look them up in the concordance to see how each scripture relates to the text in question. It is also interesting to look up the word *"accept"* in the dictionary to see its various meanings and synonyms.

Sometimes men say that they have *accepted* the Lord Jesus Christ. Others call upon men to *accept* him as their personal Saviour. Let us examine these ideas. Paul writes in Ephesians 1:9, "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will ,according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself." This settles the matter. God reveals to poor sinners that they have been made *accepted* in the beloved to the praise of the glory of his grace. Let us look further to the scriptures. In Job 34:19 and 21, it says that God does not accept the persons of princes nor does he regard the rich more than the poor, for they are all the work of his hands. "For his eyes are upon the ways of man and he seeth all his goings." In Galatians 2:6 it reads, "God *accepteth* no man's persons." In Psalm 130:3 it reads, "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?"

Flesh and blood cannot enter into the kingdom and its is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Jesus said to Peter in Matthew 16:17, "Blessed are thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven". Here, again, we find that Jesus speaks of the revelation of the mystery of his Father's will which is made known according to his good pleasure which he has purposed in himself. If a man says that he has *accepted* the Lord Jesus Christ and he means that the Father has revealed unto him that he has been made *accepted* in the beloved to the praise of the glory of his grace, this is according to scripture. Why do I say this? Some dictionary meanings for the word *accept* are as follows: "to regard or value", "to highly esteem", "to acknowledge as valued or received", "to acknowledge" and "to confess". I am fearful, however, that what is often meant by *"accepting* the Lord Jesus Christ," is not in accord with the less common meaning of *accept* as outlined above.

While God does not *accept* any man's person and it is out of reach of man by nature to be *accepted* by God, there are certain scriptures which should be cited to clarify the situation further. In Acts 10:34, 35, it reads, "Then Peter opened his mouth and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness is *accepted* with him." Here we find those that fear God (and perfect love casteth out fear) and worketh righteousness are *accepted* with him. In Romans 4:3 it reads, "Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Our sins are imputed unto Jesus and his righteousness is imputed unto us. It is the work of God that we believe on him who he hath sent. It is the work of God that we believe that he hath made us *accepted* in the beloved. In Job 42:8, it reads, "And my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I *accept"* and again in Job 42:9, "The Lord also *accepted* (the face of) Job." In Romans 8:11, 12 it reads, "Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have. For if there be first a willing mind, it is *accepted* according to that

a man hath, and not according to that a man hath not. A man must have faith (which is the gift of God) to be *accepted* with him. In 1 Peter 2:5 it reads, "Ye also, as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices *acceptable* to God by Jesus Christ."

We find then not by nature but by grace hath he made us *accepted* in the beloved. We do find in scripture that certain things are acceptable to God, things done by those who have been touched by his hand. Indeed we are under exhortation! In Jeremiah 37:20 it says, "Let my supplication, I pray thee, be *accepted* before thee." David writes in Psalm 19:14, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be *acceptable* in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer." Paul exhorts believers in Romans 12:1 as follows, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, *acceptible* unto God, which is your reasonable service." Again Paul speaks in Romans 14:17-18, "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is *acceptable* to God, and approved of men." In Ephesians 5:8-10, Paul gives the exhortation, "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) Proving what is *acceptable* unto the Lord."

In 1 Peter 2:20, Peter writes, "For what glory is it if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but, if when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is *acceptable* with God In Paul's epistle to the Hebrews he writes in 12:28, "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved let us have grace, whereby we may serve God *acceptably* with reverence and godly fear; and our God is a consuming fire." Believers are under exhortation re their walk, and their talk and their conversation. Finally in II Corinthians 5:6-10, "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilest we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be *accepted* of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ: that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

Those that by his grace have been made accepted in the beloved are found in all nations, and kindreds, and people and tongues, as in Revelation 7:9, in fact a great multitude that no man can number. Indeed, "The foundation of God standeth sure having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his," as in II Timothy 2:19. Yes, they are from both the nations of Jew and Gentile! In Romans 15:16, it reads of Paul, "That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the Gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be *acceptable* being sanctified by the Holy Ghost." In Ezekiel 20:41 it speaks of believers among the Jews, "I will *accept* you with your sweet saviour when I bring you out from the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you before the heathen." In Romans 9:23-24 it reads, "And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles."

In Ephesians 1:3, as mentioned earlier, it reads, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Three of the spiritual blessings have been named: election (hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world),

predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, and hath made us *accepted* in the beloved; all in the past tense. As well, we receive the following spiritual blessings as outlined by Paul in this chapter of Ephesians: redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, the revelation of the mystery of his will, that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, we obtain an inheritance (which is incorruptible and undefiled and fadeth not away), that we should be to the praise of his glory, we trust in him, we hear the word of truth, the gospel of our salvation, we are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest (promise) of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, and we have been made members of his body, the church. Why are we blessed with all of these spiritual blessings? Paul says in Ephesians 1, that it is according to the good pleasure of his will (vs. 5), it is to the glory of his grace (vs. 6), he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence (vs. 8), it is according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself (vs. 9), it is according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will (vs. 11), that we should be to the praise of his glory (vs. 12), and it is according to the working of his mighty power (vs. 19). We do not need any more to persuade us of the goodness and certainty of his divine will.

In Isaiah 61:2, it mentions the "*acceptable* year of the Lord" in relation to the office of Christ. In Luke 4:18-21, Jesus read from Isaiah 61 as far as, "to preach the *acceptable* year of the Lord." What is the acceptable year of the Lord? Not an exact year but time in general is meant. The whole time of Christ on earth was an acceptable and desirable time. The allusion is to the year of jubilee when there was a proclamation of liberty, of release of debts, of restoration of inheritances, and of cessation from work, all of which must make it an acceptable year. This proclamation was made in the time of atonement. This was made by the sacrifice of Christ and is proclaimed in the gospel as the acceptable year of the Lord and was acceptable to God himself, as were the incarnation of Christ, his obedience and righteousness, his sufferings and death, and his sacrifice and satisfaction. Hereby the perfections of God were glorified, his purposes fulfilled, his covenant confirmed, and his people saved. It was acceptable to men, as were the birth of Christ, and the things done by him. Peace was made, pardon was procured, righteousness was brought in, and salvation wrought out, all of which must be acceptable to such who are lost, and know it, and are sensible that nothing of their own can save them. No wonder the multitude of the heavenly host praised God saying, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men." Luke 2:14.

How do we come to realize that he hath made us accepted in the beloved? He, through the work of the Holy Spirit, even the Spirit of Truth, makes known unto us the mystery of his will. It is the work of God that we believe on him whom he hath sent. Paul says in I Timothy 1:15, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all *acceptation,* that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." How beautiful to a poor sinner is this good news from a far country!

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly

places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.

May my service which I have for Jerusalem be accepted of the saints.

(Elder) D. Alex McColl

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE NEW BIRTH

(A reply to Elder John R. Martin)

Elder Martin will, we trust, pardon our delay in replying to his inquiries. His letter had been filed with others, and overlooked until the present time. We will try to make our views more clear and intelligible to him, and to others who have failed to understand us on the vitally important subject of the new birth.

Our esteemed brother repeats the words which we used in our reply to sister Phillips in the *Signs* for Sept. 15th, 1876, namely, "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit; it never did belong to any other family, for it is born of God, and never was defiled with sin; it is born of incorruptible seed — and was never corrupted — being born of God; it was not purchased, redeemed nor adopted." Having quoted these words of ours, brother Martin asks, if the soul or spirit were never defiled with sin, were never corrupted, what necessity there was of being born again? Answer. The soul and body and spirit that were and are born of the flesh, were in that birth born of corruptible seed; they were not only corruptible, but actually became corrupted, defiled, sinful and depraved, and necessitated to be redeemed, washed, cleansed, purified and born again, in order to see the kingdom of God. But what we contend for is, that the spiritual life which is given to us in the new birth, is not born of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but is born of God. And the scriptures testify that "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."—1 John iii. 9.

We were trying to show that all in us which is born of the flesh is flesh, and all flesh is born of corruptible seed, has become corrupt, depraved and sinful. But all that is born of God is born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. —1 Peter i. 23. Our first or natural birth, which was of corruptible seed, developed or brought forth that life, in soul, body and spirit, which God gave us in common with all mankind in the earthly Adam. In him we all die: death has passed upon us all, for that all have sinned. If our natural birth constituted us children of God, it would also constitute all mankind children of God, and then we could see no need of a second birth to make us manifest as the children of God. But Jesus our Lord says, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." Our fleshly nature was not produced by being born of the Spirit, nor was our spiritual life produced by a fleshly birth; for all men are born of the flesh, but all men have not the Spirit of God.

We presume that brother Martin believes as we do, that God gave us our natural life in common with all the human race in the earthly Adam, and that except we were born of the flesh we could not see this natural world or be manifested in it. And that he gave us spiritual, incorruptible, eternal life in Jesus Christ, who is the second Adam, and the Lord from heaven, and that a spiritual birth was indispensable to bring us forth in that spiritual life. None of our brethren, it is presumed, will contend that our spiritual, incorruptible and eternal life is born of the flesh, or descended to us by generation from the earthly Adam; or that our natural, mortal life or earthly body is the production of the new and spirit-

ual birth. Now we hold that this natural man that is born of the flesh is a sinner, conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity. It is this earthly nature that is under the law, and that has transgressed the law and fallen under the curse, and which must be redeemed, washed from pollution and guilt by the blood of Christ, and then be born again, not of a corruptible seed, but of incorrupible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.

This Adamic man, born of corruptible seed, who has sinned, must be redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and born again of a pure and incorruptible seed, or he cannot see the kingdom of God; for that life which is born of corruptive seed is corrupt and sinful. But we hold that eternal life which is given us in the new birth, being of incorruptible seed, is not susceptible of corruption or pollution; therefore it was not redeemed, for it was never defiled with guilt, and it cannot sin, because it is born of God, and his incorruptible seed remains in him, and he, or it, cannot sin, because it is born of God, and therefore of a seed that cannot be corrupted. This life is Christ in us, the hope of glory. "For, for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." "When he who is our life shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory." "This life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us."—1 John i. 2. "Which God hath given us in his Son."—1 John v. 11, 12. And which is hid with Christ in God.—Col. iii. 3.

This life, we have said, was never bought nor sold, was never condemned by the law, never needed redemption; but those of Adam's race who are by grace the recipients of it, were by nature children of wrath, even as others. This life in us is born of the Spirit, and is spirit; but it is not the spirit of the flesh, which is vile, but it is the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, and which shall also quicken our mortal bodies in the final resurrection, when these mortal bodies shall put on immortality, and these corruptibles shall put on incorruption, and the saying shall be brought to pass, that death is swallowed up of life. We who have received this spirit still do groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies.—Rom. viii. 23.

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."—1 Cor. xv. 50. Why? Because it is born of incorruptible seed, and this earthly relationship which we now bear in our flesh, and in all our mortal powers and elements, must be dissolved by death; and when quickened in the resurrection by the Spirit which now dwells in all who are born again, they will bear the image of the heavenly Adam, as in our fleshly nature we now bear the image of the earthly Adam. Then when these vile bodies are changed, they shall be presented in glory as the children, not of the earthy Adam, but as the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.—Luke xx. 36.

We have tried to make ourself understood by brother Martin, and by all who read our views. We do hold that our body, soul and spirit, as born of the flesh, of corruptible seed, was corrupted, depraved, and justly condemned by the righteous law of God, did and do belong to another family than that of God, by nature were afar off, but are made nigh by the blood of Christ, and that in their new and heavenly birth they receive an incorruptible life, which is and always was pure and holy; and although we are still in these vile bodies, in which there dwells no good thing, we have the blessed assurance that our God will change our vile bodies, and raise them up from the dead by his Spirit which now (by the new birth) dwells in us. This mortal must put on immortality; it has not yet put it on, although we have received the spirit of adoption, as the earnest of our immortal inheritance, and the full assurance that these bodies, with all the

corruptible elements to them pertaining, shall be sown as natural bodies, in death; but they shall be raised from the dead as spiritual, immortal bodies, in the likeness of the risen and glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We cannot claim that anything in or about us that is sinful, depraved or mortal is born of God, or is of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever; nor that anything in or about us that is pure, spiritual, incorruptible or immortal is born of the flesh in us, as our daily experience as well as the scriptures fully demonstrate, is flesh, and all that we receive in the new birth is spiritual, and that these two elements are contrary one to the other; in the flesh dwells no good thing, in the Spirit there dwells no evil thing. The flesh wars against the spirit, and the spirit wars against the flesh; and this warfare will continue until the earthly house of our tabernacle shall be dissolved, and we shall be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.—2 Cor. v. 1-5.

In conclusion, suffer a few words on 2 Cor. v. 17: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is (or as in the margin, *let him be)* a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new. And all things are of God," &c. In the context we are told, "That if one died for all, then were all dead." And that he (Christ) died for all, (all his people, or members,) that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. That is, from the time of Christ's resurrection and ascension to glory, we know him only as he is revealed to us by his Spirit. As he was put to death in the flesh, which was our flesh, which he took on him for the suffering of death, and he was quickened by the Spirit; all those for whom he died were baptized into his death, and raised with him from under the law, and unto and into newness of life. When he was known in the flesh, he was recognized as in our law place; but now being raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, he is no more known as the man of sorrow, nor under the law, nor subject to death, as death hath no more dominion over him. He destroyed death, and him that had the power of death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. To know him after the flesh would be to know him under the law, for in being made flesh he was made under the law; but he has suffered for us in the flesh, and now is known to us in the newness of resurrection life, by the power of an endless life, in all the glory which he had with the Father before the world began. Now if any man be in him, he also is known in the fellowship of the Spirit, as crucified with him, raised up from the condemnation of the law, and a partaker of his resurrection life. The recognition of the saints is not on the ground of any fleshly excellence. The body is dead because of sin; but the spirit of life because of righteousness. The unity of the saints is in a unity of the Spirit. If any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his; but as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Our flesh is still mortal, corruptible, and under the irrevocable sentence, "Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return." Hence it is said, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above," &c. "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth," &c. "For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience.—But now ye also put off all these, anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communications out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is

renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all in all.' —Col. iii. 1-11. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13.

From all these scriptures we see that it is not our perishable, corruptible bodies which are in Christ, but our life which is hid with him in God; and we see that our fleshly natures have not became *new,* but are *dead* because of sin. And all things which have become new to us are of God; none of them are of the earthy Adam, of the flesh, nor of the earth. To be in or present with Christ, is to be absent from the flesh, "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. (For we walk by faith, not by sight.) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labor, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him." 2 Cor. v. 9-9. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead, because of sin; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness."—Romans viii. 1,8-10. So then to be in Christ is not that our carnal nature is in him, but all the gifts of the Spirit, by which we are recognized as the members of his spiritual body, and which things to us are *new,* and of God, and which we have received in the unspeakable gift of God's dear Son. Old things, such as the law, with all its carnal ordinances, its cursings, and its thunderings, are passed away; and while abiding in him, we walk not after the flesh, as formerly, but after the Spirit. Not in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the Spirit.

We submit these explanations of our views to the consideration of our beloved brother Martin, and to all who are of the household of faith. So far as they are sustained by the scriptures, and opened to our understanding by the Spirit, may they be received; and wherein they are not so sustained, may the Lord enable us all to detect all that is wrong, and to receive with joy all that is approved, and may his great name be magnified forevermore.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe January 1, 1877)

P. O. Box 551,
Monticello, Ark. 71655

Dear Elder Spangler:

I see that it is time to renew my subscription to the *Signs,* and am enclosing check to cover two year's renewal, and use the balance as you see fit. I have been enabled to get much comfort in reading past issues of the *Signs,* and am so very thankful that the all wise and merciful God has given you editors and associate editors, grace to carry on the good work which began over an hundred and forty years ago, and which has brought comfort and consolation to so many of God's humble poor. I hope and pray that the Lord will continue to bless you all in every way that is pleasing to Him.

Dear Brother in Christ I hope, if you should be given a mind to do so, I would like to have your views on the 51st chapter of Isaiah, where it reads, "Harken unto me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." Those that the Lord speaks to, are the ones that follow after righteousness, and

they are such as seek the Lord. They are not seeking to please men, they are not seeking to please themselves. But they are seeking the Lord their God, and to obey His commands. But there are those to whom Jesus speaks, "I go my way. and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go ye cannot come." And again, "Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come."

But there are those who seek the Lord, and follow after righteousness. And therefore He said, "Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." Look unto your origin—Look unto the Rock, Look unto the hole of the pit, and verily you will find in the beginning that Rock is God: the eternal God, who in the very beginning created all things for himself, and for his own glory. And therefore he made man that he might show the praise of God's redeeming grace, which was done by the first born of many brethren, and show forth the first fruits of the praise of them that love Him.

My brethren, we believe from the depths of our hearts that man is not the product of evolution, for God Almighty made man from the dust of the ground. And we see that in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, and all things which are therein. There is not a single thing that exists under the sun, that was not created and/or made by Him. Therefore you look back even before the hole of the pit whence ye are digged: you look to that Rock, for in that Rock (Jesus Christ) you had a name before the foundation of the world, and in that Rock your name was engraved, and your name was written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world.

As you look to the Rock, you notice that the Rock is a solid Rock — a rock of eternal ages. It has no beginning, and it has no ending. It is none other than Jesus Christ the only begotten of the Father: the foundation of the Church, the foundation of all Truth. And in that Rock you had your origin, if you be one of those what loves righteousness and seek after the Lord. If this be your state and this is your standard, your heart is in the very love that is on the heart of that Rock of everlasting love: then your origin came from there. If it were not for the Elect, it does not appear that God would have created any man. You look to the hole of the pit from whence you were digged, and man in nothing and less than nothing, and altogether vanity.

My precious brethren, it is so very plain that salvation is the gift of God, and comes not by any merit of the flesh, and no matter how very hard a man may try, it is utterly impossible for any to be saved except by God's grace.

Dear Brother, after reading some of yours and Elder Wood's editorials, and Elder Griffin's and others, it seems I would be very thankful if I could meet you face to face, and hear you speak on the unsearchable truths of Christ Jesus our Lord. In time past I have heard many of the Elders preach, and I humbly hope that I am thankful to the Lord for each and every one of them and their gifts: that by grace given them by the power of the eternal God, were made able to bring glad tidings of great joy on many occasions, to the comfort and consolation of many.

Yours in a sweet hope, I hope
David B. Lawson

CLAY IN OUR FATHER'S HAND

P. O. Box 1103
Panama City, Fla. 32401

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Romans 8:18)

The words suffer, suffering, and sufferings are many in our Bible. The word suffer means pain, agony or distress. God's people experience all these things before they enter the Kingdom, for Jesus has said that it is through much

tribulation that we enter his kingdom. Those who have not suffered, have not yet entered, for His word is truth and righteousness, and cannot be made void.

Jesus said that except we become as little children we cannot enter the Kingdom. Let us consider what a little child is. First of all a little child is totally and altogether dependent upon the parent. The child must look to the parent for his livelihood in every aspect,—not for just a part but absolutely every shred of it. That is just how dependent a child of God is upon our Heavenly Father: We must look to Him for every breath of life, for every step we take, and for every blessing we receive, may it be natural or spiritual. It is surely not given the child of God to direct his steps of his own accord. We are no more than clay in our Father's hand, and are altogether dependent upon Him for all things, let it be great or small.

Those who claim to have a free will, have not yet come in contact with my Holy and Righteous Father through Jesus my precious Lord and Saviour. Contact with Him will change their way of thinking and understanding, for He opens blinded eyes and causes hearts to understand that He is the great and eternal God who made heaven and earth, and all things therein, and that He truly rules all things according to His will and purpose.

When He brings us to the knowledge of himself, and we behold his power and his glory, then it is that we realize we have nothing whatever of our own, but all belongs to him. Today I surely know that the life in this body belongs to my eternal Father, to give or to take at his own will. It is in Jesus precious name I pray, "Thy will be done."

The precious treasure of my heart
Is Jesus Christ my King:
From him I never want to part,
For he's my everything.
To me He is eternal life
Which flows from heaven's throne,
Tis He who keeps my soul from strife:
In him sweet peace is known.

He is that pearl of greatest price
Which long my heart had sought,
And it was by great sacrifice
This precious pearl was bought.
I prayed and labored for so long,
Through many doubts and fears:
It seemed that everything was wrong
And bitter were my tears.

Then, lo, one day my Saviour came
And gave me perfect peace:
And glory to His precious name,
His praises never cease.
He truly is my life, my all,
So precious is his love
Some day I know I'll hear his call
And go to live above.

Ethel Gilland

OBITUARIES

ELDER ERNEST ATTEBERY

Elder Ernest Attebery was born February 20, 1892 in Latah, Wash., and departed this life November 8, 1974 at the Marion Nursing Home in Sublimity, Oregon, just one year from date of admittance, age 82 years, 8 months and 18 days. He was the son of Elder T. E. and Martha Attebery. He was united in marriage January 1, 1914 to Flossie Newman, who survives, with the following children: Donald Attebery, LaCenter, Wash.; Orville Attebery, Dayton, Wash.; Virgil Attebery, Eugene, Ore.; Mrs. Loren Gower and Mrs. Irvin Holmquist of Aumsville, Ore.; Mrs. Vernon Bryson, Hood River, Ore.; and Ila Martin, San Rafael, Calif. Also twenty-two grandchildren and thirteen great-grandchildren, one brother and five sisters.

Brother Ernest Attebery and wife was received into the fellowship of Salem Old School Baptist Church in Weiser, Idaho in June 1944, and baptized by Elder B. O. Jeffery. He was ordained Deacon of the church August 1951. In September 1953 the church licensed him to preach. He was ordained to the full work of the Gospel ministry in November 1954. They maintained membership here for sometime, but was later moved to Pleasant Grove Church in Naches, Wash., where it remained at the time of his passing. During Elder Atterbery's ministry he had the Pastoral care of three to four churches. For sometime he was also holding meetings with a few of the scattered Baptist and friends in the Spokane, Wash., area. He was faithful in serving these churches for many years, being a firm believer in the Sovereignty of God, and well established in the doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God, and he delighted to proclaim it.

The funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Elder Ben F. Preston at the Weddle Funeral Home Chapel in Stayton, Oregon on November 11, 1974. His body was laid to rest in

Lone Oak Cemetery at the edge of the city, there to await the second coming of the Lord, when this natural body is raised a Spiritual body, there to awake in His likeness and to be forever with the Lord. This is the reality of the Christian hope.

May the Lord bless his faithful and devoted wife, the family and all those that mourn, to feel that all is well with our loved one, and that our loss is his eternal gain.

Submitted by the unworthy writer by request of his wife.

Ben F. Preston

RUTH SAWYER RESPESS (1897-1975)

Sister Ruth was one of those few who are better described by their countenance. She was so wonderfully blest in that humility was ones' first impression of her. Her smiling "I thank the Lord that I am able to be here" endeared her to all her friends. Sister Ruth suffered very much in her later years from acute emphysema and breathing was always difficult.

Sister Ruth married Augustus Respess, deceased, and two sons were born to this union, Asthus Respess, deceased and Lee Respess of Washington, D. C. who survives.

She joined the church at North Creek on Friday night before the first Sunday in October 1942 and was baptized by the pastor, Elder S. Gray, the following day.

Sister Ruth died January 10, 1975 and was laid to rest January 14, 1975 in the church cemetery under a mound of beautiful flowers. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder J. T. Prescott.

We feel that her hope was such that she will hear that blessed call "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world".

Elder J. T. Prescott — Pastor
Reeves Smith — Committee

SISTER MARY CAYTON SMITH
(1888-1974)

Since it pleased our Heavenly Father to take from our midst on December 20, 1974 our beloved Sister "Mamer" as she was affectionately known, we pray that we, along with her family may be reconciled, that God does all things well.

I will not attempt to eulogize her because I believe that the life that she lived was as a light upon a hill, or maybe better expressed in this way, that her light so shined among her friends that they could see the spirit of God in her and render unto Him all the praise and glory.

Sister Mamer asked for and received a home with the Church at North Creek on Saturday before the third Sunday in September, 1915 and was baptized by the pastor Elder D. W. Topping the following day.

Sister Mamer was twice married, first to Charlie J. Marslender July 1, 1905 and to this union three children were born, Carlton W., Earna J. and Mrs. Verena M. Paul all of Route 2, Belhaven, N. C. and all survive. On May 3, 1916 her first husband died and on February 10, 1918 she was married to Fred W. Smith, Sr. who survives. To this union were born Fred W. Smith, Jr. and Cecil O. Smith, Mrs. Cora S. Bond and Mrs. Kathleen S. Sawyer all of Route 2, Belhaven, N. C., Forrest L. Smith of Biloxi, Mississippi and Mrs. Frances S. Carter of Portsmouth, Virginia all of whom survive and Miss Madeline Smith, deceased.

Sister Mamer was laid to rest in the Comcunity Cemetery with her beloved pastor, Elder J. T. Prescott, conducting the funeral. The many beautiful flowers attested to the esteem in which she was held.

She has crossed the barrier that finishes sin and awaits the second coming of our Lord and Master to gather the jewels of His mercy — there to ever be with the Lord.

Elder J. T. Prescott, Pastor
Reeves Smith, Committee

DEACON J. M. DENNY

By the request of the Church I will try to write a little memorial of our dear and precious Brother J. M. Denny, our Heavenly Father having called him home, June 10, 1974, leaving his dear wife together with the brethren and sisters to mourn his departing. Brother Denny was born December 25, 1897, and died June 10, 1974, making his stay in this life 76 years and 6 months and a few days.

Brother Jake was blest to join the Hillsdale Church by experience the 3rd Sunday in November, 1927, and was a faithful and precious member, and was greatly loved by all his brethren and friends. He was a good singer and loved it, and took great pleasure in leading the songs in all of our services: making melody in his heart, which was greatly cherished by all the brethren and friends. The brethren of Hillsdale Church felt the gift of a Deacon in him, and set him apart to this office, and ordained him on the 3rd Saturday night in August 1949. He filled this office well right up to the time of his death. He faced his affliction with courage, not giving up, and attended his services many times when he was so weak that he had to have help to move

around. Brother Denny made the church a good secretary and clerk. He served the brethren faithfully and was deeply loved by all, including the writer. He and his dear wife were very close to me.

He was established in the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things. He was strong in his belief and was not easily confused. He was willing to take the lead in any matter that came up, and was highly respected by his brethren and friends, and his influence was great among them, for they respected his judgment highly. He will be greatly missed by Hillsdale Church together with all of his friends, but we desire to bow to the will of the Heavenly Father, and thank Him for the life of Brother Denny, and for the gift he was to the church. We certainly would not wish him back here after seeing him suffer so much, and bearing it so patiently over such a long period of time. We would not awake him from his precious sleep and rest, but would say, Sleep on Brother Jake and take your rest. We the church sympathize with Sister Denny, and our prayers are that the good Lord will give her grace and strength to stand up with courage, and face the problems of life she will be confronted with, and that she will find peace and comfort in the thought that it will be only a short time when she will join him in the sweet beyond, and will know as she is known.

The church has asked that a copy of this be given Sister Denny, and one be for the Church record, and one be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

D. A. O'Bryant

(See the March issue of the *Signs* for Sister Denny's obituary. We regret that these were not published in the proper sequence.—J.D.W.)

LILLIAN MAE TICKLE MOORE

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our very dear and precious Sister Lillian Mae Tickle Moore. She was born May 2, 1889, and was called home October 7, 1974, making her stay on earth more than 85 years. Her husband preceded her in death many years. She was blest to mother five children, one having preceded her to the grave, leaving four to mourn her departure. She was blest to see two of her children unite with the church of her faith, and see them baptized.

Sister Moore united with the church at Hillsdale the third Sunday in September, 1926, and was baptized the third Sunday in October. She loved her church — the brethren and sisters were dear to her, and she loved her services. She was always present when she was not providentially hindered. On her last trip or visit to the services, she was blest sit in the car and see her son Luther baptized, and then was able to go to the house and sit through the rest of the service, and enjoyed it greatly.

She was a dear old mother in Israel. In her last years she kept her Bible near her chair and read it a lot, and had a wonderful understanding of it. It was a pleasure to visit with her and hear her express her experiences and belief. A dear old soul indeed is now resting peacefully in the presence of her dear Saviour. We certainly do not grieve after her, as we would one who had no hope, but would say to her children and many friends that Sister Moore did have a precious hope: she believed that Jesus died and rose again for the sole purpose of redeeming His people. She had evidence of being one of them. Her hope was that when He comes again, He will bring her with him. Yes, she is sleeping in Him. Paul has told us that God will bring with him all that are asleep in him, and those that are alive and remain shall not prevent them which are asleep. No, the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall ever be with the Lord.

We will miss Sister Moore, but we are not grieving or sorrowing because she is gone, but hope that we have thankful hearts to the God of all grace for her sweet and precious life.

The Church requests that a copy of this be given to the family, one kept for the church record, and one be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication. Written at the request of the church, by her humble pastor.

D. A. O'Bryant

MEMORIAL OF SAM D. BRITTON

In great sadness I attempt to comply with the request that I write a brief summary of the life and labors of one I loved, and was loved by his wife and family. My father, Sam D. Britton, was born April 16, 1901 in Madison County, Alabama, and called away from the walks of thi sworld on May 10, 1974 in the Fifth Avenue Hospital, Huntsville, Alabama.

He was married to Virgie Ann Fanning in 1922 in Jackson County, Ala. They were bound in love for 51 years and 6 months. They were married the eleventh hour, the eleventh day of the eleventh month and gave birth and raised eleven children with God's grace and mercy.

Daddy was the first of our family to be called away. Due to his illness, this was his prayer and wishes for a long time. It was very

hard to say goodbye, but knowing he had a good hope in Christ and his desire to go, it helped some. I know Daddy's death was for a reason, and not just something that happened and we should not question God's reason.

He was the son of the late R. G. and Angie Clark Britton. He leaves behind his wife, Virgie Britton, five daughters and six sons and three sisters. His passing has made a great miss and sadness to his family. Daddy received a hope in Christ and united with the Mint Springs Primitive Baptist Church August 19, 1926. Elder Jessie Towery baptized him and he served this church as a Deacon for several years. He was very much involved with his church before he became ill. Even after his illness, he still wanted to go to church.

Here are a few things Daddy believed and lived by:

Songs of Soloman 2:17 "Arise my love, my fair one and come away." Here we see the Lord's people being called away by Christ out of the darkness into his most marvelous light. As Paul says in II Timothy, verses 1-9, who hath loved us and called us with an holy calling not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. The wisdom of God established this world. God is all wise. God has known all things from the beginning. God declared the end from the beginning. God has a purpose in all things. "There are no new things under the sun." Eccls. 1:9. Col. 1:16-17. God makes us and shapes us in the way that is pleasing to him. It is but natural for men to say that it would be unjust for God not to give everybody an equal chance to be saved. "God has no respecter of persons". We have heard it said that it would not be fair if everybody did not have the opportunity to make his decision between accepting or rejecting Christ. But "As it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God had prepared for them that love him. But God has revealed them unto us by his spirit." "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child. I thought as a child. But when I became as a man, I put away childness things." Man goes to school to learn earthly things. But there are no schools where man can learn spiritual wisdom. This spiritual wisdom comes from God." "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteous, sanctification, and redemption." Through all of the external learning, man thinks as a man and cannot think as God does.

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

The nature of man is to run after evil. It is nature for man to make clean the outward part and appear righteous unto man, to hide his weakness. "The nature of man is to do evil." Jer. 13:23. There must be something done for him to do good in the sight of God.

Since man cannot change himself, then God does this work by his spirit. Since the nature of man is to reject God, to choose evil rather than good, our case is hopeless unless a higher power takes hold of us. If it were not for the mercy of God, our end would be everlasting destruction from the presence of God. But God, through his Grace and mercy, saw fit to choose his people and let the other perish in their sins. The love of God just passes them by. Why? It is not for us to question. "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." Rom. 9:11-15.

These are a few things in which Sam D. Britton believed and lived by.

Written by his youngest son.

Charlie M. Britton

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT
MARY A. ANDREWS

We, the church at Tarboro, N. C., trust it has pleased our Heavenly Father to call our dear Sister Mary Andrews.

She was born January 18, 1907, and died January 23, 1975, making her stay here 68 years. She attended our church for many years before asking for a home with us the first Sunday in August, 1971.

She was a faithful member and was always praising her God for all His blessings. Sister Mary believed in God as her Saviour and she lived by hope that she would meet Him in heaven someday. To knew Sister Andrews, was to love her.

THEREFORE WE RESOLVE: 1. That our loss is her eternal gain. 2. That we send our sincere sympathy to her family. 3. That three copies be made and have one sent to the *Signs* for publication; one to be sent to the family and one to be kept in the church records.

This done by order at our February meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143 DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1975 NO. 7

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"BLIND BARTIMAEUS"

217 Bastrop Dr.
Monroe, La.

Dear Brethren and Sisters:

I am fearful to write anything concerning spiritual matters, for I have not the gift to express what I feel in such a way that it might be rightfully understood. I do feel, however, to write a few of my thoughts; and if anyone should receive any comfort or joy from them may the praise and glory be to our most precious and merciful heavenly Father from whom all blessings flow; for I know that of myself I can do nothing that is right and good.

Blind Bartimaeus sat by the wayside begging. I would think he sat there daily asking alms of the people. Then on the day Jesus passed his way he was made to beg for mercy. He did not ask alms of the Lord; but mercy. Mark 10:47. "And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me." The people charged him to hold his peace; but Bartimaeus would have none of that and cried out even more. "And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they called the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee." Dear Brethren and Sisters, can there be anything of more comfort to the poor sinner's heart than to hear the call of our blessed Savior when he says, "Come unto me." Bartimaeus was literally blind, and, I believe he represents the spiritually blind. At one time we were as blind as he to our sins, but when the Lord opened our eyes and heart that we might see and understand we were made to cry out as Bartimaeus, "Jesus, have mercy on me."

"And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus."

He cast away his garment. That left him naked, did it not? But being a blind beggar and having nothing more than a filthy garment he cast it aside to appear before his Lord naked. When we see our own self-righteousness as filthy rags in which we are clothed, then we, too, will cast them aside and appear before our blessed Savior naked, helpless and begging to be clothed in the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. As the poet wrote:

> "Nothing in my hand I bring;
> Simply to thy cross I cling;
> Naked, come to thee for dress;
> Helpless, look to thee for grace."

This poem, or song, means much to this poor sinner; for I feel to always stand naked, helpless and begging before Him with absolutely nothing to offer for my own salvation. And were it not for His great love and mercy I would have been cast into hell a long time ago.

I recently read, and also heard on the TV, an advertisement that made my poor heart cry out in anguish. It said, Booze, broads, auto chases, violence and vengeance; all the things that make life worth living. O, my soul! What is this

world coming to? If these are the things that make life worth living then give me death. I know, however, that if it were not for the mercy and grace of our most precious heavenly Father that I would also be looking at these horrible things as making life worthwhile.

Bartimaeus desired that Jesus give him sight, and Jesus said unto him, "Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole." He had faith; for Jesus said he did. From whence did this faith come? Could he just say I will have faith. All I need do is ask, and he will give me sight? No! He could not do that, for faith comes not that way. Paul said, "For by grace are ye saved thru faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." God gave Bartimaeus faith to believe on the Son whom He had sent; therefore he was made whole.

"And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way." No! He did not go his way. He followed Jesus in the way. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life." Can any true child of God, who has had his eyes and heart opened, do anything other than did Bartimaeus?

I have written only a few of my poor thoughts on this great subject. It is my hope that they are in accord with His holy word. If you do not find them to be in agreement with your own experiences then cast them aside. Please spread a mantle of charity over my many errors, and when at the throne of grace may it be the will of Almighty God that you remember this poor sinner in your prayers.

Clifford Wilbanks

EXPERIENCES SHARED

704 Oakland Ave.
Rocky Mount, N. C. 27801

Dear Elder Spangler:

It has been some months now since I last spoke with you, but I must say that our last occasion to be together has been sweet to me. I have often thought of our conversation and the closeness I felt to you that day. I hope that God will bring us together again, that we might share our experiences in life once more.

After all, life is simply made up of each of our experiences, together with our reaction to that experience. Total together each experience, and each reaction to that experience, and we have the sum of our lives. Even reflecting into our childhood, when our parents would punish us for our misbehavior, and our reaction to that punishment, we find that simple experience having a great influence in our lives. Yes, we find that every experience in life influences our present behavior.

Each day brings to each of us a new experience, and a new reaction. May God bless us to react Christ-like, that when our life is totaled, we may be found among the faithful.

Even our short encounter, and my reaction to that association, has been a blessing to me; and thereby becomes a part of my life. I thank God for those sweet actions and reactions of God's people in my life. And that it will become a part of my life, and a part of me.

As we share each experience in a spiritual way, so we share each experience in a natural way. We still live in a natural world, and we are still carnal and mortal, and we share friendships in a natural way also. It is in this vein of thinking that I would like to share this experience with you, as well as others of "like precious faith."

Though I am recovering well from a Myocardial Infraction, and beginning to get out a little once more, I still remember a sweet incident while I was hospitalized, that proved that even in nature, God is revealed. That man too, is revealed in all created things. Even more so when we are blessed to "...stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." Praise God for each experience that reveals the truths of old, those truths as recorded in God's written Word.

One morning in early November a nurse friend came into the room I was occupying, with a single rose bud that extended from a long stem. As the young lady placed it into a slender white vase before my eyes, I thought how beautiful and how thoughtful; the beauty of the rose and the thoughtfulness of the person.

As I watched the rose unfold each day, little by little, revealing more and more of its beauty, my mind began to dwell on what Job said many years ago. Speaking of man, he said "He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: . . ." Of a certainty man does come forth like a flower, the little bud of childhood in all its beauty and honesty; and little by little more and more is revealed, as in the rose.

The petals as they began to open more, revealed also the imperfections that were not seen before. Yes, that too is like unto man. As we grow older we see more imperfections in ourselves and in others. But still we remember the little bud as it was before the imperfections came to light. That little rose had no control over the blight and disease that might attack it. So it is with man, his own utter helplessness over his destiny or character. We all have imperfections that we wish others did not see, but we hope that like the rose the overall view will hide the imperfections.

Isn't it wonderful to have a blessed hope that we "are new creatures in Christ Jesus." And that like the rose has more than one petal, so does God's little ones have more than one trait, that the beauty of each is seen as a whole, overshadowing the imperfections. But alas, both the disease of the rose, and our imperfections are still there.

And one day man will be as the rose, when all the petals have finally fallen away, as the petals fell from my little rose bud. Gone! But still I remembered the beauty as a whole. So man, and the friendships of man, are indeed like a rose.

Someone once said that to have a friend, you must be a friend. Our friends are a blessing to us in a time of need. As friends respond to our adversities we see their kindness and thoughtfulness, that we really never expcted to see. Or one who comes to help that you might not expect.

As the rose in its vase, daily revealed more of its beauty, so friends each day reveal more acts of friendliness, when one is in need of real friendship.

When our eyes are drawn to the beauty of a rose,
Or perhaps our thoughts to a friend,
What do we see when viewing the rose
Or how do we think of a friend?

Each day we see a rose and a friend
And view them only as a whole;
Why, oh why do not our thoughts ascend
And thank God for each petal and soul?

We pass through our life never seeing
The real beauty of both of God's gifts,
The individual petal that is gleaming
Or the friend that gives each burden a lift.

Should each rose have only one petal to see
And each friend have only one trait;
Would the rose appear in its beauty
Or friendships would we appreciate?

But to see each as a part of God's goodness
That makes the whole a beautiful sight;
It seems we must undergo illness
To appreciate the meaning of life.

And by then His light we can see
The lovely rose and a real friend,
And thank God for granting the key
To unlock our thoughts to a friend.

Then again when blest to greet one another,
We might be reminded anew,
That this might be our last time together
And be blessed to say "I love you."

Our natural friends are a blessing indeed in this life. And Job goes on to say of man that "he fleeth as a shaddow, and continueth not." Even though man comes forth like a flower, one day he will be cut down and will continue no more.

How marvelous that as man cometh forth as a flower in the springtime, that one day our Blessed Hope will be fulfilled in the spiritual springtime, when the Friend of all Friends shall appear to call his little ones home.

Thank you for sharing your life with me; may we meet again very soon.

In bonds of love,
Elder W. L. Everett

ROMANS 9:13

Cadiz, Ky. 42211
Rt. 5,

Dear Elder Wood and Spangler:

"Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." (Romans 9:13)

A few lines for your consideration. The Doctrine of Election is a most glorious doctrine to me: it is the truth, and gives God all the glory. It shows that he is a sovereign God, and works all things in heaven and earth after his own will. All things praise him, even the wrath of man.

It has been said that if God loved some of the Adam family more than others, He would be unjust. I ask, has not God the right to do as he pleases with his own? I remember when I was a youth, in nature and in the ministry. I saw an article written concerning Jacob and Esau, and the writer said that Jacob represents the New Man, and Esau the Old Man, and I thought it was the best piece I ever read. I was making crossties in the woods, and read this when I went to dinner. I went back to work rejoicing over what I had read, and something said to me Esau cannot be a figure of the old man, for God hated Esau, and God does not change. "I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." (Malachi 3:6) "Every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17) And Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:4-5, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved,) . . ." God hated Esau, but he loved the Elect before they were quickened and while they were yet in sin and walking according to the course of this world, and were by nature the children of wrath. But He loved Jacob that His purpose might stand, not of works but of Him that calleth.

It is written, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." and this was before the children were born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand And since God does not change, he hated Esau as far back as he loved Jacob. "What shall we then say, is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid." I say He has a right to do with his own as He pleases. All things are his, the earth and the fullness thereof. He said to Moses, that He would have mercy on whom He would have mercy, and compassion on whom he would have compassion. "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour. What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."

We see him calling Jacob to make it known that He had power to love one, and power to hate the other, as He pleased. Jesus said, two shall be in the field, one shall be taken and the other left, two women shall be grinding at the mill, one shall be taken and the other left. We read in Malachi 1:3, 4, "I have loved you saith the Lord. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places, thus saith the Lord of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down, and they shall call them, The

border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever . ."

Then if it is forever there will be no end. We see that Esau would have inherited the blessing, but he was rejected for he found no place of repentence, though he sought it carefully with tears. Esau was called Edom. (Genesis 36:1) "And I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel: and they shall do in Edom according to mine anger and according to my fury, and they shall know my vengeance, saith the Lord."

We have tried to show the destruction of Esau, we will now look at Jacob whom God loved with an everlasting love. Remember that God loved Jacob and hated Esau, that the purpose of God might stand, not of works but of him that calleth, and "I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy." "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee. I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine. . . . For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour . . . Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west, I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth." (Isaiah 43)

Many will quote that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. I ask, What world was it that the Lord loved? Was it the world that wondered after the beast, and the one that God loved, the same beast? Was the world that Christ prayed for, and the one that he didn't pray for, the same world? What world was it that Jesus came in the end of, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself?

So we see that there is more than one world. I do not believe the scriptures cross themselves. Paul wrote in 2nd Timothy, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." John wrote, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them (the spirit of anti-christ in the world), because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us: he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God." (see 4th chapter of 1 John)

If we love God it is because He first loved us. May it be God's will that the great love wherewith he loved us while we were dead in trespasses and sins, and raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ever be with us in this world, and keep us by His power unto that eternal inheritance, which is undefiled and is reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Unto Him, be glory now and forever, is our prayer for Christ's sake. May God bless the truth.

J. N. Darnall

PRAYER

The subject of prayer must be carefully considered and we need the spirit of God to enable us to rightly divide the word of truth. Prayers, exhortations, admonitions, reproofs, etc. are all embraced in the plan, purpose, decree or predestination of God. All of these which are directed and received by the Spirit of God are effectual.

True prayer is inspired by God. One must feel the need of prayer before he prays. What causes one to feel the need of prayer? I believe that God has purposed the cause of the need of prayer. All of the events that lead to one feeling the need of prayer have been decreed by God.

God has decreed or purposed that his people shall pray to him at the appointed times. "He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him." (Psalm 97:15) Why does one call upon God? He must be in trouble, doesn't he? One prays when he feels the need. God has purposed or decreed the circumstances that cause one to feel the need of prayer. We will not attempt to go any deeper in this matter, but will stop here and say these things are too deep for me. "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." (Psalms 139:6) "The secret things belong unto the Lord" (Deut. 29:29) These are things that are beyond man. "There is no searching of His understanding." (Isaiah 40:28) "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:8-9)

God has a purpose in the exhortations, encouragements, etc. concerning prayer; especially in the following parable. All of this is embraced in the predestination of God.

"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterwards he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night until him, though he bear long with them?" (Luke 18:1-7)

The theme of this parable is to encourage one to ever keep praying in spite of discouragements.

The widow did not stop seeing the judge again because he did not avenge her of her adversary. She had the endurance and the courage to keep going back to the judge and plead her case, in spite of the discouragement of his failing to fulfill her request.

Even though he was an unjust judge and did not fear God, yet he avenged this widow because he was tired of her coming back to him time and time again. He fulfilled this widow's request because he did not want to be bothered by her pleading her case any more.

The point is to show that God does avenge his own elect in due time. (7th verse) This is to encourage them to keep praying and pleading. God does answer in due time.

This reminds me of the time when Jacob wrestled with the angel all night. (see Genesis 32:24-30) The man asked Jacob to let him go. Jacob said, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." (Genesis 32:26) Jacob had the courage to hold on to the angel until he was blessed. (see Hosea 12:4 for proof that the man Jacob wrestled with was an angel.) Do we have that courage? Would we faint at the first discouragement? Jacob felt the need of the blessing, so was enabled to hold on.

Moses felt the need of the presence of God, so he told God that was his main desire in his travels here. "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence." (Exodus 33:15) God was with Moses in the wilderness. May the Lord bless us to take courage at the thought that this same God is with his people in the wilderness of sin during this day, and will be with his people in the ages to come.

Let us not be discouraged by those who hold to the "Fatalist Point of

View". We believe that prayer as well as repentence, etc. is embraced in the predestination of God. God's people shall repent at that appointed time. The command was given to those that were pricked in their hearts. "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:38) Let us carefully consider these two points: "Repent, and be baptized."

John the Baptist told some that desired baptism; but the evidence shows that they did not bring any fruits of repentance: "Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance . . . " (Luke 3:7-8) Let us carefully keep this in mind, as we believe all Scriptures are given by the inspiration of God. Since we are so few in number, we may be tempted to take just "anybody" in the church that desire to unite with us. Are they bringing forth fruits of repentance? "Ye shall know them by their fruits." (Matt. 7:16) The goodness of God leads one to repentance. (see Rom. 2:4) The Lord turned Ephraim and he repented. "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus: Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth." (Jer. 31:18-19) By examining these Scriptures, we note that God caused Ephraim to repent. We believe that repentance is a gift of God. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17)

We believe that true prayer is inspired by God, and this is embraced in the purpose of God. "He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him. With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation." (Psalm 91:15-16) Let the reader please give special attention to these words: "He shall call upon me and I will answer him." This is a positive declaration that one must call upon God or that one must pray unto God. The promise of God will not fail. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9) Therefore the prayer of one unto the Lord, as well as God's answer to this prayer, is all embraced in the predestination, decree or purpose of God.

Again, this parable is to encourage one to pray even though it may appear to you that there is not any feeling in your prayers. "Pray without ceasing." "Continue in prayer." Why do you pray for mercy? Is it because you deeply feel the need of mercy? Why do you feel the need of mercy? Is it because of a burden that is laid upon you? You pray because you want relief, and you desire to be delivered from that low state. Why do you pray for strength to bear all the trials, tribulations, and afflictions? Is it because your own strength has failed you, and you are blessed with the faith to believe that your God is able to give you sufficient strength and Grace to bear your daily trials?

May the Lord bless you to cast all your care upon him for he careth for you. (see I Peter 5:7) May the Lord bless us to keep praying in spite of difficulties, discouragements, etc. May we be blessed to seek the presence of God and not fear the scorn of men.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

EXPERIENCE

Dear Editors of the Signs,

One night several months ago I was

unable to sleep and it seemed I had a strong desire to express some thoughts that were running through my mind at that time. I went downstairs in the middle of the night and wrote the following:

Oh my GOD, my GOD, how sweetly and how wonderfully you have blessed me. All the days of my life you have watched over me, guiding me down the pathway of life, thy mighty hand upon me to give me strength and courage and love where there is much weakness and despair and hatred in my natural being.

Oh how wonderful it is from time to time to feel thy blessed presence, to be made to know without any shadow of a doubt that YOU are GOD and there is no other; to be drawn near to Thee; to know you are the great Creator of ALL things, declaring the end from the beginning and from time past the things that are yet to come. Oh, to be blessed with faith to believe in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in His birth, His life, His death on that cross. But for me? Oh surely not. I know myself too well to think that the blessed Lord would suffer such shame, such agony, such pain and die on the cross for me. I *know* I am not worthy for I am vile and full of sin and unrighteousness and think not of God but only of myself. I deserve nothing but to be cast in the everlasting fire. Is it really possible that the blessed Lord Jesus Christ shed his blood for one such as I? Oh, if I could only *know* that He shed that precious blood for me,. and that someday I might be gathered with all the saints to sing His praises forever and ever.

But alas, I cannot know that, but I thank Thee, O God, for that precious hope which from time to time bears witness within me, and I am made to wonder; could I possibly be among that number who were marked out and chosen by the Father before the dust of the highest hill was laid? How presumptious of me to even think of such a thing! And yet the question persists—could I be your child? Oh Lord, when will we know?

I feel to be so richly blessed far above and beyond what I deserve or could ever hope for. A most wonderful and faithful wife who always shares my heartaches and disappointments, and is always there to lift me up and encourage me when I need it most. A wonderful and faithful mother to our children. And our children; oh Lord, how could we be blessed with such loving children? Two fine sons and two beautiful daughters all full of life and health and love.

I know, Oh God, everything I have or shall ever receive is a gift from Thee. I have nothing that I have not received and therefore I pray you cause me *not* to be boastful or a braggart but always to look upward with a thankful heart for all Thy bountiful gifts. Draw me into thy presence more often Oh Lord, and deliver me from the constant cares and worries of this world that I may more perfectly worship Thee and sing honor and praise and glory unto thy Wonderful, Eternal and Holy Name.

I have hesitated to send this to you for I fear it to be unworthy of publication but please do with it as you see fit.

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Champeau, 803 W. Brooks
Norman, Oklahoma 73069

SOLOMAN'S SONG 5:30

Dear Brethren:

The following thoughts are sent by request of Elder Breedlove in the May, 1975, issue of the *Signs*, concerning Soloman's Song 5:3.

"I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them?"

While Jesus was here in the flesh He fulfilled a law which says, "He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none . . . "

The Lord Our Righteousness never needed anything. And while he went about doing good, He, by His obedience,

wrought out a robe of righteousness which in that sense made two coats, i.e. the righteousness that was His yesterday, today and forever, plus also the robe He wrought while He who knew no sin performed for us even unto death, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. This coat of righteousness the Lord puts off as it is imputed to the children of God, who put it on by faith after grace brings it nigh from the Fount of every blessing. "How shall I put it on?" is a reminder that nothing can be added to the righteousness of our Lord, a reminder that He who has righteousness to bestow, is more blessed than those who receive, a reminder that Jesus who suffered did so to bear our guilt in love, in pity, in reality, in faithfulness,—not to receive anything himself, but that we poor sinners might have the blessedness of the man whose transgression is covered by our Lord's obedience, and our transgression gone by his precious blood which washed us white as snow.

"I have washed my feet." is a prophesy which the unerring utterance of certainty God speaks by the mouth of the prophet, is telling of the shed blood of Jesus which was to be shed on the cross. The body of Christ, or that part of the body of Christ which needs washing and keeping, is called "feet". John saw these feet "as if they burned in a furnace." (Rev. 1:15)

Why don't He wash the Head? The head needs no washing. He keeps the feet of his saints — the head needs no keeping.

"How shall I defile them?" is a reminder that "I have washed my feet" is what God who cannot lie said. So justification is of God, and none can defile and none can condemn.

In sending these hasty views, I do so only to mention the primary meaning of Song 5:3. Their Speaker understands His words better than any man can, and He speaks as never man spake. Therefore, Songs 5:3 is exceedingly sincere, searching, truthful, and the message is weighty, and sharper than any two-edged sword: It is judgement to the line and righteousness to the plummet. And I, together with Elder Breedlove, feel the need of faith which alone can bring distant things near as we read the words of our Lord, who, we hope has made us not ashamed to ask questions, for every genuine preacher feels the need of confirmation of truth to assure him that he is called of God, and approved by the Holy Ghost.

In bonds,
J. L. Bocock
P.O. Box 13
Boones Mill, Va. 24065

HEBREWS 9:24-28

"For Christ is not entered into the Holy Place made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into Heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us, nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others: for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (Heb. 9:24-28)

Most of us are acquainted, at least in part, with the sacrifices and offerings which were offered under the law dispensation once a year for sin. But the text reads, "Once in the end of the world, (end of the law dispensation) hath He (Christ) appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

Having the foregoing scriptures be-

fore us, it seems clear that Christ took the place of his people — the Many as given in the text, in life, in death and in judgment, under the curse and wrath of God, which He bore and trod alone, and of the many people there was none to help. He did this to bear the sins and full penalty, curse and wrath, due divine justice for the sins of the Many, and they are the ones who look for Him, and to whom He will appear the second time without sin unto salvation. The Scriptures teach that Jesus bore their sins in his own body on the cross, making an end of sin, and arose victorious over death and hell for the justification of the Many for whom he died and arose again. Their sins were laid upon him, and he, making atonement for them, made perfect satisfaction to the Father. This was fully accomplished according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. God raised him from the dead for the complete justification of all for whom he died: and being freely justified by his grace, we have peace with God through him, and He is made unto us righteousness, justification and redemption . . .

The above being true, with the Apostle, "What shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" This is based entirely upon what Christ accomplished for his people. In the triumphant victory which Jesus obtained for them over sin, death and hell, included tribulation, distress, persecution, famine; nakedness, peril, sword: so that death, life, angels, principalities, powers, things present nor things to come, height, depth, or any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. And not only so, but above all this victory, He obtained an eternal inheritance for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed when Christ appears unto the many the second time without sin unto salvation.

It may be suggested that if Christ overcame and obtained victory for us over all these, and bear the just wrath and punishment for our sins, iniquities and transgressions, making an end of sin, moving them from us as far as the east is from the west, bearing them into the land of forgetfulness, completely abolishing and destroying them for his people: Then why are we killed all the day long? Why are we counted as sheep for the slaughter? Why do we grieve, weep and mourn as a dove bereaved of her mate? Why do we often have our sins come before us as mountains? Why should we have a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, and feel to be a poor wretched worm of the dust as we know we are, how could we possibly be one of the favorites for whom Jesus obtained eternal redemption and glory?

Are all of these things suffering with Christ? and according to that which Paul speaks, "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to His death"? It is quite something to be refined as silver is refined, and purified as gold is purified: And Jesus is an all sufficient refiner. Paul said, "I have suffered the loss of all things (temporal things) and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."

Jesus kept and fulfilled the law of divine justice, magnified and made it honorable, raising it as high as His throne of judgment, mercy, grace, truth and love for his people, and he orders and establishes his children, church and kingdom with the same judgment, justice, grace, mercy, truth and love. It is this judgment which Paul said, "Must first begin at the house of God." And also, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ: that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done,

whether it be good or bad." This does not say that every one will have to give an account to divine justice for all or a part of his sins, neither in this life, and much less in the resurrection of the just. The Lord's people are the just which live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved them and gave himself for them; and thereby redeemed to God that they should be holy and without blame before God in perfect love. And these whom the Lord loves He chastens, rebukes, teaches, leads, guides, keeps, preserves in and by Christ Jesus, and thereby He administers unto them every needed blessing for their good and his Glory in this life. The law of the new covenant is, (and Christ himself is the covenant,) "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more." And this very One is exalted a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and the forgiveness of their sins. That which the law of divine justice demanded for the sins of the people of God, Jesus met and paid in full, and now the same divine justice rightly and justly demands mercy and freedom to the transgressors for whom Christ died. The judgment seat of Christ is in the heart and mind of His people where He put and wrote the laws of the New Covenant — written not with pen and ink but with the Spirit of the living God. This judgment seat in their heart and mind, equally applies to his church and kingdom, as the apostle said, "Judgment must first begin at the house of God," also His kingdom which he orders and establishes with judgment and justice. This is experimental with every child of grace in this life, and has no reference to them beyond this life, for Christ shall appear unto them the second time without sin unto salvation. To teach that the Lord's people will be judged and have to give an account for all or any part of their sins in or after the resurrection, is an error, denying the sacrifice and atonement of God's dear true and eternal Son, and has no place in the gospel of Christ, nor in the heart and mind of His people, and must return to its native darkness where all errors in all ages have come from. When we are judged, we are chasened of the Lord that we should not be condemned with the world.

The book, "written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals . . . and no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon." (Rev. 5th chapter) This book is called the Book of Life, which was sealed with the seven attributes of God back in the law covenant dispensation, at which time the new covenant, or gospel dispensation was given in types and shadows. The Apsotle John said, "And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and read the book, neither to look thereon." "And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book and to loose the seven seals thereof. This book is worthy of its name and all it contains: it is The Book of Life: "The Lamb's Book of Life," and it is far from being a book of condemnation, or of death, but the Book of Life. Christ is the Book of Life, and all that accompanies it. It is of Him the fruit of the tree of life is found, the gospel of salvation: and the gospel of Christ is the gospel of our salvation.

All those whose names were not found written in the bok of life, were judged out of the things written in the books. This includes the dead, death and hell, and death and hell were cast into the lake of fire, called the lake of fire and brimstone where the beasts and false prophets are. This seems to be that which the apostle called the second death, (but I admit that I do not understand these things, and feel it is good that I don't.) The judgment of God and all His attributes are eternal, and He is eternal: whether we call it good or bad, all comes to pass or is executed accordingly to the eternal purpose and counsel of His own will. Jesus said,

'. . . the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good unto the resurrection of life and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." God's children escape all this evil, for their names are written in the Book of Life, and it is only those whose names were not found written in the Book of Life, that were judged out of the things written in the books. Jesus is the resurrection and the life of his people, just as he is all of their salvation: and, as has been said, nothing in life or death shall separate them from either Him or his love. Though they often fear and tremble, yet they are as secure as His throne and all His glory. All things are His, and all things are theirs in Him.

Please suffer me to say in as few words as possible: First, the sins of the Lord's people were open before hand, when they were laid on and charged to Christ Jesus by the Father, and He suffered the just wrath of God on the cross and atoned for all their sins by his own precious shed blood in His death, and arose from the dead for their justification. Second, when the commandments of the Spirit of life experimentally came to them, they thereby were condemned, and the sentence to them was death, and they felt to be under the same curse and wrath of God for their sins, which Jesus had previously trod alone, and by His blood atoned for their sins. Because of the guilt and condemnation they felt, and were in, they fully confessed their sins and transgressions before God with all their heart and mind. When all hope was gone and despair had seized them, immediately to their joyful surprise Jesus stepped in, stayed the execution, remover the sentence, pouring in the oil and the wine, bringing forth His righteousness as a great light, and His judgment as the noonday. Thereby loosed the captivity and let the prisoner go free. Therefore, "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

John L. Sanders

UPPER COUNTRY LINE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1975

The Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association cordially invites ministers, brethren and friends of our sister nation Canada and the United States of like faith and order, to its sixty-ninth session to be held with Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church the third weekend July 19, 20 and 21st, 1975, with services beginning at 11:00 o'clock Saturday and ending Monday.

Pleasant Grove Church is located in Locust Hill Township, Caswell County, North Carolina. Coming from the east via Yanceyville on 158 take left at Casville and church is about 1 mile on right. From the east via Burlington, take 87 to 150, turn right to Chilton's Store, take left about 2 miles to church.

Coming from north or south to Reidsville, N. C., take 158 about 12 miles east to Casville, take right about 1 mile to church.

Donald E. Smith, Assn. Clerk

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1975 session of the Pigg River Association will be held, the Lord willing, at the Pigg River Meeting House in Franklin County, Va. the 1st Sunday in August, and Friday and Saturday before. (August 1, 2, 3)

Those coming from the north on U.S. 220 turn right on to State Route 919 (which is three-quarters of a mile south of Boones Mill, Va.). Follow 919 to State Route 641 and turn right on 641 to Callaway, Va. Then turn left in Callaway on State Route 602, and follow signs to the Meeting House.

Those coming from the south take State Route 919 to the left just north of Rocky Mount, Va., and turn left on State Route 641 to Callaway, Va., then turn left on Route 602 and follow signs to the Meeting House.

A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

John D. Wood, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The one hundred thirty-fourth session will convene with the church at Cane Creek July 11, 12, 13 (Friday before the 2nd Sunday through Sunday), the Lord willing.

The church is located on State Road 726, located between Highways 29 and 58, in Pittsylvania County about ten miles east of Danville, Va.

We invite all of our faith and order to visit with us. We long to see our brethren of sister associations, and trust our God will richly

bless our meeting together in our attempt to worship His Holy Name.

Burnell B. Williams, Assn. Clerk

ALL-DAY MEETING AT SLATE HILL, N. Y.

The All-Day Meeting at Slate Hill, N. Y. is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday, July 5, 1975.

Brethren and friends are invited to attend.

NOTICE OF MEETING

The Maine Old School Baptist Churches will, the Lord willing, hold an all-day meeting the 5th Sunday and Saturday night before in June, at the home of James and Ruth Sevon, daughter of Sister Ruth Clark of the Whitefield Old School Baptist Church.

The Sevon home is in Jefferson, Maine, Route 213 on Damariscotta Lake Road. Route 213 branches off from Route 214, which is taken at a junction of Newcastle Village. Business Route 1 leads from Route 1 into Newcastle Village.

Elder D. B. Stokes of Jacksonville, N. C. is expected to attend the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all who may be able to attend. For more information if needed, write Mrs. Ruth Clark, Box 245, Newcasle, Maine.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Pine Creek Primitive Baptist Church will be held, the Lord willing, July 4th, beginning at 10:30 a.m.

The church is located five miles from Floyd Courthouse, just off of Route 221, east of the town.

This is to be an all-day service, and a cordial invitation is extended to all interested.

CONTRIBUTION TO HELP DISTRIBUTE THE SIGNS
(To May 1, 1975)

Mrs. Alma Wheeler, Can.	$ 2.00
Mr. Newton Butler, Ark.	3.00
Mrs. Maud Laws, Md.	3.00
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Mary Walker, Va.	3.00
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Davis, Jr., Va.	11.00

PSALM 100

1 *Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.*

2 *Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.*

3 *Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.*

4 *Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him and bless his name.*

5 *For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting, and his truth endureth to all generations.*

Danville, Virginia July, 1975

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

EPHESIANS I

I do hope that I have an abiding interest in the children of God, and that having an interest in them, I am concerned about the salvation of them all. If I am not mistaken about the desires and what concerns them as pertaining to their welfare in this world and in that which is to come, I am sadly mistaken for they are daily seeking tokens (Psa. 86:17), and are constantly imploring the Lord for a refreshing from the throne of grace. It was said of me when I began to speak in a public way that I would be an evangelist among our people. As to the general idea about what an evangelist is to do, I have not been impressed to that end, but as to what the Bible tells us about what an evangelist is, and what his work is to be, I do hope that I have been impressed, yea, called to that end. An evangelist (that is, a Bible evangelist) is to be one that announces or tells good tidings. If that is not my calling, I am the most miserably deceived mortal that has ever been. Not only have I felt the weight of preaching the gospel to him that has an ear to hear, but I have felt a heavy burden in the seeking of them out in the midst of a perverse generation.

In this series of articles, if the Lord is pleased to give me grace and the things that accompany salvation (Heb. 6:9), I will first call your attention to this above noted chapter. If I know my heart, be it far from me to throw any aspersion on any of the inspired writings, for I tell you frankly, the setting aside of one writer's testimony in order to make any theory plausible, is, to say the least of it, inexcusable, and, to me, is equal to a denial of the Lord. I well know that Paul makes a clear case in his Roman letter in regard to the predestination of saints to glory, but the thought that I have in mind is more readily served by his letter to the Ephesians in regard to the chosen people of God.

I do not have any desire to put words in anybody's mouth nor mind, but neither is it my mind to have someone taking words *out* of my mind nor out of the mind of God, nor out of His divine testimony to poor sinners. For me, God has not done anything in time that He did not determine to do in eternity, or before the world was made. He is *the* God of purpose (Pro. 15:22; 20:18; Jer. 51:29; Rom. 8:28; 9:11; Eph. 1:11; 3:11; 2 Tim. 1:9; Isa. 14:24; 46:11), and since, without counsel purposes are disappointed, and, since every purpose of God is established by counsel, and, since He worketh all things after the counsel of His own will, I am con-

strained to believe that He is *the* God of purpose, He being the only one that can purpose a thing and a liklihood of frustration or disannulment not stare Him in the face. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." God's purpose was to save His chosen people. The choice was His, was it not? May God enable me to comfort the poor and afflicted and troubled hearts of the people of God with the assurance that it was not left to them to choose Him but that He did, in eternity, choose them. But if this glorious and comforting doctrine falls on deaf ears, *then* you tell me what part that any man has played in this choice. Do not ridicule me; that is the weakest argument that you have, for it will not hurt me, but it will hurt you. Here in eternity, God moves towards the people that He loved from all eternity. This is a movement of God towards His people, and it is an action of love. (1.) God chose them before they were manifest in the morning of creation. That choice was according to His good pleasure. (2.) Simultaneously with making choice of them He blessed them for their time journey. The choice of them made in eternity, the blessing of them for their time journey made at the same time. His choice of them was the sovereign work of His eternal or *now* mind. When all the arguments have run their course, the glorious doctrine of God's choice of His people is still recorded in this illustrious chapter that God did, for a purpose of His own glory, choose a portion of the future generation of mortal men to salvation. Since they were chosen in Christ, at that time, God did bless them with all blessings necessary for their salvation in time. That is what Paul was moved by inspiration to write. This blessing of them with all things necessary for this salvation to be accomplished was at exactly the same time, and as much according to His purpose as was the choice of them. If this blessing was weak, so is the choice; if this blessing was not full and complete to the saving of them during their time journey, and the final bringing of them home to glory, just so is the choice as filled with loopholes as is the salvation, for as the first was, so was the second according as the first.

"Having (at the precise time of the other) predestinated us (the chosen) unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Now here is the medium by which this predestination comes about. Here is the embodiment of all spiritual blessings; they were assigned unto the children of God in Jesus Christ before the world had its being, and the manifestation of them, and the fulfillment of them, and the application of it to us in time, stems from the Lord Jesus Christ. This was, and still is, God's will towards you, dear reader. It was not a *rather not* will; it was not a captivated will; it was not a will yielded over to the captivator of sinners, but it was the will of Him that, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage (Heb. 2:14, 15). This is a universal deliverance, that is, it delivers each and every one chosen to that end, and this deliverance is common to them all. It is so common and so well known among them all that anywhere, at any time, however many or few that are present, if they have had a double application of these things to them; if they have had both the first and second application of spittle to their eyes; if they have really and truly been to the pool of Siloam for the washing; if they have had Jesus to live and die for them; if they have been chosen and caused to approach unto Him, they will raise their

jarred and feeble voices in holy union and royal ecstacy in praise to God for this universal and common salvation that reaches into every nook and corner of the globe and brings the Ethiopian (Ham's descendants), the Jew (Shem's descendants), and the Gentile (Japheth's descendants), and makes them lie down in unity and sweet complacency to that salvation wrought out by the Lord Jesus Christ. This royal doctrine made manifest in their lives will make Ham and his family serve as a servant without stealing from his master, and without trying to usurp power and authority that has not been delegated to him by the Lord (perhaps by earthly governments, yes, but even that to be redressed at the proper time, even though it brings down both governments and servants); it will make Shem a lowly and humble follower of the Lamb, even though he sees his once proud domain in ignomy and shame and shrinking as the tents of Japheth are enlarged and his descendants living in the spiritual ordinances that first belonged nationally to all of his (Shem's) people.

It is a wonder indeed as we watch the unfolding of the work of God towards this chosen vessel. All of the work begins with the choice (and that according to eternal purpose) of this vessel of mercy. It is not any small wonder that God questions Job so rigidly. These questions, when asked of any man or woman, will bring them down into humility and it will provoke them to acquiescence to His Holy will, even though that will condemns to death (Job 13:15). However, these questions are never (at least in this life) asked of the ungodly; they are truly reserved for the ones chosen and beginning to be caused to approach unto Him. (See Job 28). May these questions be asked of us all. Unless the Lord is pleased to grant unto us that needful blessing, blind unbelief will still carp and blaspheme in regard to the text. Where were we *when* God loved us? Where were we when He made a world that this love might be made manifest? Who or what was it that suggested, and, after suggestion, watched over and helped in making this eternal choice? Oh, how glorious is this God, and what a precious and abiding hope He has given us in His darling Son. And let me say, and having said it, may the reverberations of it sound out to all Christendom, that He is as much a darling Son to us as He is to His Father. By Him the Father and the subject are reconciled to each other, and reconciliation settles all variance and animosity, and brings both parties into peace and joy and love.

This is a divine movement. There is not a shred of human ability or emotions mixed in it. It stems from God, but if any one has the audacity to say that the nth part of it stems from some other quarter than divine and eternal love they must tell us what power that it comes from, and before this audacious spirit begins its monologue I feel bold to lay down these maxims, to wit, God is before all things, and He that is before all these things cannot be superseded by any of these things; that there is not any god save the God of Israel (Isa. 43:10, 13; 45:21, 22); that all power is of God; that power is made manifest in the face of Jesus Christ to the end that this government of His is laid squarely and pointedly on His shoulder for the ordering and establishment of it henceforth and forever. Now if any of my readers have in mind that this purpose to choose and cause to approach unto God was of, or by, or through any other medium than the God of Israel, I move that you begin right where this poor lisping stammering sinner has stopped. Or, if it cannot be found (and it cannot be) that this movement towards sinners began in any other than the God of Israel, and there is a lingering doubt that it begin with men, there must be a Bible explanation that will remove all fog and delusions and mystical conjectures out of the way as to God having created the man. In eternity (if you want to hold to this idle tale that man has anything to do with his salvation you may tell us how

long before) God chose and loved, and simultaneously with the love and that choice, He blessed or appointed the object of His choice, and whom He had loved with an everlasting love, all needed grace and peace and love, yea, even all things that pertain to God and godliness in time, and necessary to present him before the Creator unblameable and unreproveable in love: and this must have accompanying it the way that this uncreated man influenced or moved the Creator to thus make these moves towards his salvation.

I have heard it said that order is heaven's first law. I am well aware that this is not in the Bible in so many words, but I am equally sure that the truth if it is taught from Genesis to the Amen in Revelations. To all the poor and the needy; to all those that feel their weakness, and feel that they are not equal to the task of their own salvation, I beg of you to follow with me the work of God as portrayed in this chapter. (1). God chose the children of God in Christ Jesus before the world was created. (2). At this time, and in conjunction with the choice, God blessed and gave this royal nation every thing needed that they be saved, and that He have all the glory for that salvation; that this blessing entailed the involvement of Jesus as a Man in this salvation, that the blessings was so extensive and complete that it embraced all that pertains to life and salvation,—that pertains to God and godliness. This work was ordered in eternity, and the order covered from the time of the ordering until the order is finished, which embraces the deliverance home to glory of each and every heir of promise. This order embraced the dying of Jesus Christ. He could not have died unless it had been His Father's will, but it was His will not to spare Him, but, according to His purpose, to bruise Him,—in short, put Him to death. The purpose to save would have gone awry had God deviated from this consignment to death of His Son. He did not deviate; He did not spare Him. The sparing was designated to us, and this could not go awry. This part of the order could not be broken, and the sparing of us could be. As the sparing of Him could not be, even so, in like manner, to the same degree, no more, nor no less, can the giving unto us all things treasured in Him for us to be spared. (3). At this time He predestinated us unto the adoption of children. This is not a new thing. Carpers have said that the doctrine is new. That is correct. It is new to him or her that only knew the old song of creature effort. However, as an act of God it is as old as God is old. (4). This predestination of God has the approval of God. It was according to the *good* pleasure of His will; it pleased God to execute this predestination on His Son; it pleased the Son for the Father to hide it (to order it) from one segment of humanity and to reveal it to another. (5). This was all to the praise of His grace. (6). At the same time, we were made accepted in the beloved. (7). It was appointed at this time that we have redemption in His Son. (8). This redemption was through the blood of the Son, and it was bestowed upon us according to the riches of His grace.

Then, dear reader, let us draw near with a full assurance of faith that the purpose of God in regard to salvation will be carried out to the full salvation of our souls. He that gathers all in One, even Christ the Lord, has given us an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose (order) of him that works all things after the counsel of his own will. I hope that you will notice that the predestination first covers individuals, secondly, that it covers the inheritance (v, 5 and II), and, since any predesination that is contingent on the whims of devils or men or angels is not certain, it covers all that was done on Golgotha's hill by Pilate and Herod in the courtroom and at the place of crucifixion together with the whole mob, for, if the determination of God on that rugged hill is uncertain, likewise, even

so, no more, no less, the predestination of God in giving us adoption by Jesus Christ, and the predestination of an inheritance for us are beset by just as many ifs, ands, and buts as are found on Calvary's hill, for the predestination in Romans 8, and Ephesians I, comes from the same root word that *determined* comes from in Acts 4:28. If I did not know that this is true, I would not have contended for the things that have gone before in this article.

I promised about two years ago to let you know about my welfare. I have said, and now say again, that I have not quit the ministry. I have not quit preaching and writing. I am doing now what I have tried for nearly fifty years to do: preach and write the good news of the gospel. To be sure, I am breaking the doctor's orders; to be sure, I am paying for it when I do, but I tell you unashamed and unabashedly that even though the old building is being erased and that it suffers pangs of sorrow at the taking down, and pays in a natural way for going contrary to earthly orders, that this going in heaven's ways and orders are as restful and as full of joy and keen anticipation as ever in days of yore; and that I will, as blessed of God, continue to go on, yet being as careful as I can to take it easy for the sake of my brethren and my family.

I am losing weight continually although there is not any apparent organic reason for it. What the future holds for me, the God of all grace knows, and whatever it is, it will come to pass, for His will must be done. Please be patient with me in my continued weakness in preaching and writing, and when you have reasons of being closeted in with the King mention my name to Him.

W.D.G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

LUKE XV. 28-32.

Seminary, Ark., Feb. 10, 1877

Eld. G. Beebe — Dear Brother: — Please give me your views on Luke XV. 28-32.

E. E. Smith.

REPLY.

The text referred to is the closing part of the parable of the prodigal son, in which the elder brother was angry, because his younger brother was restored with joy and festivity to the family, after having wasted his portion of the estate in profligacy and riotous living.

The occasion which this and the two preceding parables were spoken, is given in the first two verses of this chapter. The pharisees and scribes murmured because Jesus received and ate with publicans and sinners. In reproving their murmurings, these publicans and sinners are compared in the several parables to the lost sheep, the lost piece of silver, and to the prodigal son. As lost sheep, they had departed from the Jewish fold, probably when Israel seceded or revolted from the house of David, in the reign of Rehoboam, and like the piece of silver, were lost to the Jewish nation. But in the application of the last parable—The certain man who had two sons, was, in our view of the subject, Abraham. The elder son was the Jews, who had never departed from the house of David; and the younger son represents those who took their portion of the goods at the inauguration of Rehoboam, and organized a separate government in Samaria, under Jeroboam.—See 1 Kings xii. These seceders were always regarded by the Jews as sinners, and as many of them were employed by the Roman Government to collect tribute from the Jews, to support the Romans, the hatred of the Jews to them was greatly intensified, as to them it was hiring themselves to feed swine; for the Jews regarded the Gentiles as swine. This younger son, though taking with him a portion of the rites, ceremonies and ordinances of Judaism, soon ran into gross idolatry, and was intermingled with

and contaminated by the Gentiles, and so wasted and expended all his portion in riotous living, and came to a sad state of destitution and want. In their famishing extremity they desired to return to the family and home of Abraham, their father, if only to be recognized as servants, and not sons. While he was yet a great way off, Abraham saw and recognized his wayward son, and embraced him as his son, and gave him a joyful restoration to his long deserted home. Meanwhile the elder son, the Jews, were in the field of their perpetual labor, in which they had been so long and unremittingly engaged, in performing the works of the law. It is true, the Jews had never been able to lay up anything, for the law had demanded constant and perpetual labor, and had never allowed them so much as a kid, with which to make merry. Still they were in Abraham's house, under the old covenant of works, and all that belonged to that house, under the legal covenant, they had, but by the works of the law they could have no more.

Now the parable seems to us to set forth metaphorically the relative state and condition of the Jews, and the publicans and sinners, and the unrelenting prejudice of the former towards the latter. The Jews and Samaritans had no dealing together, where Jews could avoid it. This accounts for the murmuring of the pharisees and scribes when they saw the publicans and sinners coming to, and received by Christ.

But there is also clearly set forth in these parables the enmity of the Jews, and of all legalists who, like the Jews, expect to be justified before God for their obedience to the law, or upon the ground of their own merits, They are angry when the gospel of God our Savior is proclaimed, setting forth that salvation is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. The self-righteous scribes and pharisees were exasperated at the thought that they, with all their law-righteousness, and with the blood of Abraham coursing in their veins, were to be cast out, and publicans, harlots and Gentile sinners were to come, by the saving grace of God, from the east and west, the north and south, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of our God. And this humiliating doctrine is as hateful to the pharisees of our age as it was to those of the time when these parables were spoken.

These parables also set forth the bitter enmity of all the workmongrel tribes of the earth, who, like the pharisees and scribes, expect to be justified before God by their own works, against the doctrine of salvation by grace. They think it hard, that with all their self-righteousness, those whom they regard as sinners should be received into the gospel kingdom by the grace of God, without any works of righteousness which they have done to commend them.

The elder brother, in the parable, was angry. The grace which saves poor, lost, guilty, bankrupt and helpless sinners, through the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, without any merit on our part, did not suit his ambitious aspirations; for it excludes all boasting, and secures all the glory to God. This is too humiliating to please the boasting pharisees. "He was angry, and would not go in." That is, he had no appetite for such a feast. No pharisee or self-righteous legalist ever had a relish for gospel food; nor have even poor prodigals, until they are made willing in the day of our Redeemer's power: "For it is God that worketh in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Until God so works in them, they have no will or desire to partake of the feast which is presented to the poor, destitute, prodigal, starving sinners who are saved by grace.

We do not understand the father of the two sons, in the parable, to mean God, but a *certain man.* Both the father and the two sons are clearly set forth in the allegory recorded Gal. iv. 23-31. God does not entreat, but "He spake,

and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast."—Psa. xxxiii. 9. But Abraham did intercede for Ishmael, and prayed that he might live. "Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bond woman and her son; for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman."

Our Savior said to the Jews, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." Salvation by grace has no attraction to the self-righteous pharisees. They would not go in, or participate in the provision of the gospel. Nor would the prodigal Samaritans, if they were not reduced by famine and starvation: for Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentence.

The whole account of the younger son is strikingly illustrative of the experience of the children of God, who, being subdued by the Spirit, find themselves in a perishing, starving condition, deeply sensible of their utter unworthiness, guilt-stricken, and without a single thing to commend them, trusting solely to the gracious compassion of him who alone has power to save, fall tremblingly and confessing at the feet of sovereign mercy, deeply conscious that if repelled and spurned, it is just; but if saved, it is alone of free, sovereign and abounding grace to the very chief of sinners.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, April 1, 1877.

OBITUARIES

DEACON JAMES WILBY BLACK

Deacon James Wilby Black, age 88, died in St. Thomas, Ontario, on September 30, 1974.

Brother Black was born in 1886, second of four sons born to Brother Archibald John, and Sister Kate Rawlinson Black of the St. Thomas District. He was married in 1917 to Sister Annie Louise McColl. Children surviving at time of death are Mrs. George (Flora Leslie) Snowden of British Columbia, Mrs. Lloyd (Muriel Elizabeth) Blackman of Saskatchewan, Gilbert Duncan of London and William Theodore of Colorado. Another son, Lieutenant James Black was killed in action in Italy in 1944. As well as fourteen grandchildren and four greatgrandchildren, two brothers, Daniel Crawford of Los Angeles and Kenneth Leslie of Detroit survive.

Brother Black United with the Covenanted Baptist Church in Winnipeg in 1915. He was baptized by Elder Silas H. Durand. His membership was transferred to Dunwich in 1972. In the same year he was appointed a deacon.

Brother Jim remained steadfast in the faith once delivered to the saints. How he loved the scripture in Psalm 103:1, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name." He was an inspiration to all who knew him and gave liberally, as he was prospered, to the cause of truth. We miss him much but are persuaded that our loss is his eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted from Dunwich Church on October 3, 1974, by the writers. Interment was in the McColl Cemetery at Eagle, Ontario.

Resolved that a copy be sent to the *Signs* for publication and a copy be entered in our church records.

(Elder) J. Stewart McColl, (Elder) D. Alex McColl
Pastors - Covented Baptist Church in Canada

SISTER MAUD PEARL McINTYRE

Sister Maud Pearl McIntyre, age 90, died in London, Ontario, July 7, 1974.

Sister McIntyre was born in Hollow Rock, Tennessee, the daughter of the late Elder William Isaiah Cornell and Martha (Stocker) Cornell. Sister McIntyre came to Canada in 1900. In 1902 she married James Alexander McIntyre of Lobo, Ontario, and to this union were born twelve children. Curry died in infancy and Eva (Mrs. J. Wilson) died in 1965. Ten children survive: Mrs. J. (Leota) Orr, Mrs. C. (Leona) Dobie, Mrs. D. (Norma) Cochrane, Malcolm, Theodore, Mrs. C. (Gladys) Martin, Mrs. C. (Mildred) Mayo, John, Frederick, and Mrs. G. (Betty) Barton.

As well as the ten living children there are forty-five grandchildren, ninety-two great grandchildren, four great, great grandchildren and five chosen grandchildren, in all, one hundred and fifty-six descendants, all healthy and well at the time of her death.

Sister McIntyre united with the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada at Lobo in 1957. She remained a faithful member as long as she lived and was a great encouragement to her brethren and pastors. As Moses wist not that his face shown but Israel saw it, so it was with Sister Pearl. She often told how her father, Elder Cornell, who served the Church in Canada, raised his hand in the hour of death and said "soaring on high".

Funeral services were conducted for Sister Pearl at the Needham Memorial Chapel in London on July 10, 1974, by Elders Stewart

and Alex McColl. A large company of friends and descendants paid their respects to this "mother in Israel". Interment was in Dorchester Union Cemetery.

Resolved that a copy be sent to the *Signs* for publication and a copy be entered in our church records.

(Elder) J. Stewart McColl, (Elder) D. Alex McColl
Pastors-Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada

BROTHER THOMAS HOARACE WILLIAMS

It is with a deep sense of unworthiness that I attempt to comply with the request of the church at Flat Swamp, to write a few words of respect for our highly esteemed and beloved Brother in Christ and Deacon, Thomas Hoarace Williams.

Brother Thomas was born in Pitt County, N. C. on June 10, 1908 and passed to his reward in Pitt Memorial Hospital, Greenville, N. C. February 25, 1975. He was the son of the late Thomas Henry and Lucy Wilson Williams, who were faithful members of Flat Swamp Church. He was married to Marjorie McGee of Knoxville, Tenn. on November 22, 1940.

Brother Thomas professed a sweet hope in the Lord Jesus Christ and united with the church at Flat Swamp the first Sunday in September, 1962, and was baptized by Elder W. E. Grimes. On July 10, 1963 he was ordained a deacon, and was a deacon indeed. He loved his church and was a strong believer in Salvation by Grace — a gift of God. His Christian ideals, wise council and firmness will be greatly missed. He desired that the peace and sweet fellowship of Christ the Saviour dwell within our hearts. He will be missed at our church and the various churches and associations where he was blessed to attend. He was an inspiration to all who knew him. We feel we can say that he kept the faith, and there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness. Though his work on earth is finished, his memory will remain with us.

He was a kind husband, a loving father and a good neighbor, always lending a helping hand to those in need.

Funeral services were conducted at Flat Swamp Church February 28, 1975, by his pastor, Elder J. T. Prescott, assisted by Willis Wilson. His body was laid to rest in the Robersonville Cemetery under a large arrangement of beautiful flowers, in the presence of his many friends and relatives.

Left to mourn his passing are his wife, Marjorie, one son, T. Jerry of Raleigh, N. C., one daughter, Brenda J. of Ahoskie, N. C., four sisters, Mrs. Wilma Denson, Mrs. Nettie Daughtery and Mrs. Mary James of Rocky Mount, N. C. and Mrs. John Council of Sarasota, Fla., one brother, Robert S. Williams of Rocky Mount, N. C., and two grandchildren.

The Flat Swamp Church extends her deepest sympathy to his family. We feel this loss deeply, yet all must submit to the will of God, believing that our loss is his eternal gain.

Done by order of the church at Flat Swamp in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in March, 1975.

Elder J. T. Prescott, Mod.
Hassel Allen, Clerk
Mary J. Jenkins,
Committee

ADA FAY BARTLETT

We bow in humbly submission to the Divine Will of our Heavenly Father who recently called home one of the few remaining members of the Whitefield Old School Baptist Church in the Maine Association. Sister Ada Fay Bartlett departed this life of sin and sorrow, April 12, 1974, and went, we hope, to join her Maker. She was a precious sister, frail of mind and body, but strong in the faith which was once delivered to the saints.

She had little in the way of worldly happiness and her happiest times were when the brethren gathered for meetings. She is fondly remembered by the many who visited her parent's home.

Sister Bartlett was born in Newcastle, Maine, May 11, 1932. She was the daughter of Sanford and Ida Bartlett, both members of the Whitefield Church. Sister Ada united with the Whitefield Church at the Maine Associational Meeting in August 1950 and was baptized by Elder E. C. Jones.

Shortly before her death, she wrote of her experience, some of which I quote below:

"Dear Brother in Christ,

I thank you for your lovely letter as I need the Word of the Lord, and as I hear the Word, He gives me more faith.

I wish I knew more than I do, but I believe that He is watching over me. I pray that I can start the New Year so that my sickness will stop. I hope to be able to go to sleep and I think if I have His Word I will be a lot better. I read my Bible every morning. I have been reading in Matthew, Mark, and Luke where it tells about His making the sick well, so I only pray that this will be my end."

Our little sister had only a short time before the Healer *did* come and give her eternal rest and relief from the handicap which had plagued her mortal body all her days.

Sister Bartlett is survived by four sisters and four brothers who will always remember with love, a little sister who was close to God

because He first loved her. One of her sisters, Ruth Clark is Clerk of the Whitefield Church. Ada was laid to rest beside her father and mother in the family cemetery on the old Bartlett homestead in Newcastle, Maine. There she will remain—

Asleep in Jesus. Oh, for me
May such a blissful refuge be;
Securely shall my ashes lie,
Waiting the summons from on high.

Written at the request
of Sister Ruth Clark,
Corrone E. Bryant

DEACON KING DAVID STEWART

It is with sadness we attempt to comply with the request that we write a few lines in memory of a dear brother, King David Stewart.

Brother Stewart was born February 28, 1892. He was the son of Jesse Martin Stewart and Mary Canady Stewart.

Brother Stewart was married December 24, 1913 to Callie Raynor. He was received into fellowship of the church on November 1, 1964. He was baptized by his pastor, Elder Lester Lee, and was ordained as a deacon the third Sunday in August, 1967.

Brother Stewart died on January 24, 1975 in the Cape Fear Valley Hospital in Fayetteville. He was in ill health for about 2 years. He attended church as long as his health permitted.

He was survived by 3 daughters, Mrs. Allene Wood of Benson, N. C., Route #2, Mrs. Corene Williams of Erwin, N. C., Route #1, Mrs. Alice Wood of Godwin, N. C., Route #4, one brother, Mr. Daniel Stewart of Fayetteville, N. C. and 3 sisters, Mrs. Mary Wagstaff of Dunn, N. C., Mrs. Louie Young of Dunn, N. C., and Mrs. Katie Barefoot, of Spring Lake, N. C. He was survived also by 6 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren. Surviving also were a host of nieces and nephews, and many friends.

The funeral was held in Rose Funeral Home in Benson, N. C. by Elder W. D. Godwin, Elder C. D. Turner and Mr. J. W. Smith. He was laid to rest under a beautiful mound of flowers at the Banners Chapel Church Cemetery.

Brother Stewart was a firm believer in salvation by grace. May the Lord comfort the family and bless them to say, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away."

We express our deepest sympathy to the bereaved family.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to the family, a copy to the *Signs of the Times*, and one copy be placed in our church books.

Committee,
Sister Leacy Beasley
Sister Gertrude Royal

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY
April 6, 1975

Ordination of Brother Wilbert Ennis as deacon of Liberty Primitive Baptist Church.

On Saturday before the first Sunday in April, 1975, the Liberty Church met in conference, and it was moved and agreed that Brother Wilbert Ennis be set apart to the office of Deacon, and the ordination service was set for Sunday morning at 10:30.

On Sunday morning April 7, 1975 the church met and conference was opened with hymns and prayer by Elder W. D. Godwin. The Presbytery was organized by choosing Elder C. D. Turner, Moderator, and Brother James G. Young, Clerk. Ministers and deacons present were invited, Elder W. D. Godwin, Deacons: Brother Faison Barefoot, Brother J. H. Barefoot and Brother James Young.

The Moderator called for the candidate, who was presented by Deacons J. H. Barefoot and Faison Barefoot, and he was seated in front of the ministers, Elders W. D. Godwin and C. D. Turner. The charge was given according to the Scriptural reading by Elder Godwin. The Moderator examined the candidate as to the duties of the deaconship, and his answer was that he would with God's help serve with the best of his knowledge. The Presbytery was well pleased. The laying on of hands and prayer proceeded, and he was presented back to the Church by the deacons, and the right hand of fellowship was given by all members.

A copy of this is to be recorded in the Church Book, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Elder C. D. Turner, Mod.
Brother James Young, Clerk

MRS. NANNIE F. DEW

On October 7, 1974, the Lord in his kindness called our dear Sister from this land of the dying to what we feel the land of the living. Sister Dew was born December 4, 1892. She was the daughter of the late Jesse D. Fly and Ellen Proctor Fly, and the wife of the late Brother Frank Dew. She joined The Falls Primitive Baptist Church second Saturday in July, 1963, and was baptized the same day. Sister Dew was always faithful to attend church and had been a lover of the truth, salvation by grace a long time before she was

blessed to unite with the militant church. It indeed was a joy to be in her presence as her speech was corncerning things that pertain to life eternal and of the things she had hoped that God in his infinite wisdom had done for his people through his Son Jesus Christ. Sister Dew indeed, I feel, enjoyed entertaining the brethren and friends of the church in her home, especially while her husband Brother Frak Dew, a Deacon of The Falls, lived. It was always a joy to be with them, and the doors of their home were always open.

Even after the death of her companion she continued to entertain and have the Lord's people in her home.

She shall be missed by her brethren and her friends, as well as her children and grandchildren.

Surviving are three daughters: Mrs. Mildred D. Kerr, of Rocky Mount, Mrs. Dorothy D. May of Red Oak, Mrs. Frances D. Whittington of Benson, and one sister, Mrs. Lola F. Felton of Rocky Mount, six grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted at Gay Yost Funeral Home Chapel by Elders D. B. Stokes and William Everett. She was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery to await the second coming of her Lord.

It is our sincere prayer that God would grant peace and reconciliation to her children as well as to us who loved her at the Falls.

Written by order of conference by her Pastor.

Elder D. B. Stokes

IN MEMORY OF BROTHER DAVID PARSONS

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst our beloved Brother David Parsons born June 20, 1895 and died Feb. 9, 1975. Brother Parsons joined Springfield Church September 13, 1924. He was faithful to the church and filled his place most every meeting as long as he lived. He was a firm believer in election and salvation by Grace believing it was all fixed in the mind and purpose of God before time was. Springfield Church bows in humble submission to the just and holy will of our Lord knowing that He doeth all things well.

Brother Parsons leaves to mourn their loss his wife, Sister Mary Parsons, two daughters Sister Ruby Atkins of Charlotte Court House, Mrs. Gracie Mohr of Cullen, two sons Courtney Parsons and Fred Parsons both of Cullen, one brother James Parsons of Charlotte Court House, five grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

His funeral was held at Oak View Presbyterian Church by his pastor Elder O. K. Tench, assisted by Elder Denver Simpson and Donald Wilkerson and his body laid away beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in the church cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord and Savior.

Written by L. R. Willis

SISTER MARY ANN WALTON

Once again the dear Lord has seen fit to remove one of our dear sisters, Mary Ann Walton. She was born at Keeling, Va. February 23, 1887, a daughter of Rufus Wise Walton and Laura Walton, making her stay on earth 87 years. She had been in declining health and semi-invalid for about twelve years.

She had been a member of Malmaison Church for more than fifty years. Her husband died in 1954. She leaves 2 daughters and 6 sons, 18 grandchildren, 34 great grandchildren and 14 great great grandchildren, with a host of friends who loved her, to mourn their loss. We feel our loss is her eternal gain. She loved the church and the doctrine it stands for, and she attended as long as she was able.

Her funeral was conducted at Swicegood Funeral Chapel by her pastor Elder O. K. Tench and Elder David Spangler. Her body was laid to rest in the Walton Cemetery to await the resurrection morning, when the dead in Christ shall rise to meet the dear Lord, be like Him and be satisfied.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be put on our Church Book, a copy sent to the *Signs*, and a copy sent to the family.

Written by one who loved her.

Kate Dodd

IN MEMORY OF SISTER MINNIE TERRELL SIMMONS

God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Many hearts are saddened, many nice things said, that were very fitting to our Sister who was blessed with a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God, of great price.

Death relieved Sister Minnie Simmons of her suffering on February 25, 1975. She was patient in long suffering and established in the faith with a good conscience.

She was received by the church at Bush Arbor in July, 1942 and was baptized by her former pastor, Elder W. C. King.

We bow in humble submission to the will of our Lord, feeling that our loss is her eternal gain. Now her suffering is over, after sixty-nine years in this low ground of sin and sorrow.

May the Gracious Lord continue his blessings upon her devoted family, and bless her precious campanion of fifty years, Brother Porter G. Simmons. May He comfort him that he may wait with patience to join the one so near and dear to his heart in that peaceful rest.

In Brotherly love, we extend our heartfelt sympathy to our Brother and their ten lovely children whose hearts are saddened by so great a loss. Mrs. Dorothy Stainback, Mrs. Claudia Clayton, Mrs. Alice Stokes, Mrs. Elsie Overman, Mrs. Leona Reagan, Mrs. Mildred Davis, Misters Billy H., James P., Johnny C., and Gilbert M. Simmons.

Sister Simmons was blessed with a love for the church at Bush Arbor, where her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elders Wallis Smith and Donald Smith. Her body was laid to rest and to wait that glorious resurrection, in the church cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, a symbol of love and esteem for the life she was blessed to live.

Written by request of the church at Bush Arbor by Clifton Robertson.

Read and approved at their conference meeting May 10, 1975.

Elder Wallis Smith, Pastor
Brother Earl Rudd, Clerk

JAMES JOSEPH PRUITT

Born January 29, 1916 the son of Benjamin Lee and Nellie Myers Pruitt. Called out of this time world September 22, 1974. Making his stay on earth 58 years 7 months and 24 days. Brother Pruitt was married to Mary Walker Pruitt who preceded him in death. He later married Catherine Anthony.

As I think back over the years and the life of Brother Pruitt, I remember him always being willing to help in the up keep of the church here at Bush Arbor. He spent a lot of his hime and resources here at this church when the new building was being built. Many a Fourth of July he helped with the erection of the stand for our assocation. All that he did was done because he had a love and respect for Bush Arbor Church and for the brethren here.

While in the hospital he expressed a love and a desire for a home with Bush Arbor Church. He was received into the fellowship of the church September 12, 1974. Brother Pruitt never gained his health back so he could be baptized with water, but we feel that he was baptized with the Holy Spirit. We read in first Corinthians 12:13 "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body."

He expressed to his wife how happy he was to have been received into the church that he had loved for so long.

After living a quiet humble life it pleased our Heavenly Father to call our Brother from his loved ones here in this world. His funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Church by Elder Wallis Smith and Mr. Charles Morton. His body was laid to rest in the cemetery at the church.

He is survived by his wife, two sisters and six brothers. We shall miss him. We feel a loss to have him taken from our midst, but we feel that our loss is his heavenly gain. So along with his wife, sisters, and brothers we mourn. But we mourn not as one without hope, for our brother had hope of life eternal.

Humbly Submitted
D. O. Chandler, Jr.

ADA THOMAS MINTER

Our beloved Sister of like precious faith, Ada Thomas Minter, was born March 19, 1888. She died as she lived, a Christian lady, on October 11, 1974.

In addition to the hundreds of saints who knew her and loved her, she leaves to mourn her passing, 3 sons: Edward, Raymond, and Len, and 3 daughters: Ida, Myrtle, and Alice. Also 13 grandchildren and 28 great grandchildren.

Sister Minter was afforded the finest treatment that loving children can provide. The writer, being her unworthy pastor, often talked to and visited with this precious Sister, and from personal observation feels constrained to be a witness that when Sister Ada was called to die, it was by the same voice she already knew and followed as being led by the hand and Spirit of Almighty God, who was, who is, and ever shall be Ada Minter's Lord and Saviour.

At Basham Primitive Baptist Meeting House, on October 14, 1974, the writer conducted her funeral, while wondering how we can ever be thankful enough for such a precious Sister, whom God added to our number after He had taught her that Jesus Christ is the Lord who has never failed in any one thing He ever set out to do.

The writer is happy in the belief that the family understands that our loss is her eternal gain. Yet we greatly miss the sweet smiling face of this dear one in Christ, who was so evidently His workmanship, who has prepared for his people a City where some sweet day the Church of God will all see Jesus and dwell forever with Him in the free Jerusalem, to praise Him who owns the kingdom for which our tears now fall.

Written in sadness by one who loved her dearly.

J. L. Bocack

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143 DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1975 NO. 8

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"WITHOUT HIM I AM HELPLESS"

Dear Elder Spangler:

I realize my subscription to the *Signs* is nearly due, so I am enclosing the amount. I have been a reader of the *Signs of the Times* since my girlhood days, which has been edited by several editors. I still love to read it.

I am nearing my 85th year. My parents were members, also my grandparents, and they read the *Signs of the Times*. I have been a member nearly 63 years. I deeply love the doctrine. We have some wonderful meetings here in California. Salida and Ceres churches are near each other, so I get to meetings each week end. I do praise God for it all, for without Him I am helpless, but with Him I am strong. He is our Master Pilot over all in all.

I spend most of my time reading my Bible and Baptist papers. Elder T. R. Bonds is our pastor and Elder H. J. Donahue is pastor at Ceres.

My old home church in Missouri is still having services. "I love thy church, O God, her walls around thee stand, dear as the apple of thine eye, and graven in thy hand." In Him I feel easy, without Him I am weak and feel the least of all.

May God bless you and all there. My Christian love to all.

Mrs. Mabel Lindsey

REMINISCING

209 Taylor Underwood
Collinsville, Va. 24078

Dear Brethren:

Many thoughts have been entering my mind, and I will pen them—the evil and the good.

Elder John Peter Helms was my pastor at old Republican Church, Franklin County, Virginia, and passed away in the year 1966. His last sermon was from the text in the 5th chapter of Matthew, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."

Those that do the will of God are those in whom He works the will and the do of His good pleasure. (Mark 3:31) It is the only way that one glorifies Him, giving him all the honor and glory.

I united with the church in the year 1939, Elder George Dyer being the pastor. He told us then he had seven years longer to live as the Lord had shown him. He passed away in 1946, and we were left to select another pastor, which was Elder Helms. He asked us to take it to the Lord in prayer. He served us until his passing, which was in 1966.

After his passing Brother William Holland was chosen pastor, who serves us now. When reading the first chapter of 2nd Peter, I think of Elder Dyer — what the Lord had shown him. I enjoy reading from the Apostle Peter exhorting and reproving of sin found as in Acts 8:18-23, also the Apostle Paul in 2nd Timothy 3rd and 4th chapters, and also his writing to Titus.

I enjoyed Elder Lambert's writing in

the April issue of the *Signs*. Those who have gone through great tribulations have their robes washed and made white as snow in the blood of the Lamb, and do not stand before Him naked, but clothed with the righteousness of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and are no more strangers but fellow citizens with the saints of the household of God: not boasting what they have done for the Lord, but what He has done for them—not the law covenant but the grace covenant: He bearing our sins in his own body on the tree. I know that if it had not been for free grace I would be eternally lost. I love to read 2 Peter 3:8, "'But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

Sincerely,
Mrs. Harry Underwood

NAOMI AND RUTH

Naomi out there in the country of Moab was just about as unattractive to the people of that land as the church of God is to the people of the world. She was not interested in them and they saw nothing to admire in her. A poor and desolate old woman—that is all she was to the Moabites; and she was the more unattractive to them because she did not feel at home among them, and cared nothing for their affairs. Two of them only were of any interest to her, and that was because they were her daughters-in-law.

To the world the church of God appears as devoid of interest or value as Naomi did to those people of Moab. How any one can care for such a poor, insignificant people the world cannot see. They are generally unlearned and poor, and are so few compared with other religious people. They were very few in the Saviour's time; he called them a "little flock". They were then looked down upon and despised by the world, and every where spoken against, and have been ever since. And they seem to have but little interest in the world, and especially in the doctrine and religion of the world. Naomi was homesick for Bethlehem, the house of bread, and so are they.

How come Naomi there? Although it was through a wrong, selfish, fleshly spirit in Elimelech, yet there was a wise purpose of God in it all. The predestination of God appears to his people, when they are spiritually exercised, not as an abstract question to discuss, but as a truth vitally connected with our hope of salvation, and with our spiritual concern and our experience of grace. The clouds interest us because of the shade they give us, or because of the rain that falls upon us from them, and the sun because of the reviving and healing power of his beams. So the doctrine of the foreordination of God is of infinite interest and importance to us because it is a part of that doctrine which drops like the rain and distills like the dew.

When we have had such experiences as Jonah did in the depths, which is the sign that Jesus gives of himself, and when we have seen in ourselves such rebellion and fretfulness against the Lord as he displayed, then there is a special humiliation and peculiar comfort and contrition brought about in our poor hearts by seeing the Lord's hand in all these terrible and wonderful exercises in our souls. We are led to praise him when we are given to know that he sent out the mighty tempest to arrest the fleeing prophet; and he prepared the fish to swallow Jonah when he was cast into the deep; and he spoke to the fish when the appointed time had come for him to be delivered and to know and acknowledge that "salvation is of the Lord"; and that he prepared the gourd to be a shadow over Jonah while he waited to see what would become of the city, undoubtly wishing his word might come true; and that the Lord prepared the worm to smite the gourd, and that he prepared the vehement east wind, which, with the beating of the sun upon his head,

made Jonah faint, and wish he was dead: and all to make us know the infinitely tender pity of the Lord toward the heathen, and toward the little ones who do not know their right hand from their left, and even toward the cattle.

What a terrible thing it would be to have to believe that anything, however wicked, could take place that wasn't embraced in the infinitely wise purpose of God. "Who is he that saith and it cometh to pass when the Lord commandeth it not." We could feel no safety if such be the case.

Naomi went to Moab because her husband would go, but it is likely she made no objection, for she afterwards spoke only against herself. Her husband's name was Elimelech, which means, "God is King." The truth thus expressed in his name was proved in the just judgment of his king against him, for he died in Moab, where he had gone because there was a famine in his own land. He forsook his people in their affliction, and went away to seek worldly help for himself and his family, instead of trusting in the Lord. "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die," is the law we are under to Christ. Those who turn away from Christ in time of famine and go seeking worldly goods, do not die literally as Elimelech, they die to spiritual usefulness and comfort during the time they are thus in Moab. They find no nourishment for their souls in the doctrines of men. Those who are taken up with worldly cares and elated by worldly prosperity are dead while they live. "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." (1st Timothy, 5:6).

The two sons also died. Their names were Mahlon (sickness) and Chilion (pining). This signifies all that had been the lot of this now lonely woman during her sojourn in this strange land, sickness, pining, and death. Her days had been filled with care and sorrow, and all that came with her out of Bethlehem, and all the goods she brought, were gone. "I went out full," she said to her people when she got back to them, "but the Lord hath brought me home again empty." She said moreover that the Lord had testified against her, and had afflicted her. She attributed nothing to chance, nor to men. She recognized God's hand in all that had happened to her.

"Then she arose with her daughters in law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how the Lord visited his people in giving them bread." How she longed to be with her own people again. In her desolation how her heart yearns toward them. She cannot feel that it is her right to share their prosperity, but she must be with them, though she came among them as one who can only look on them in their joy. She cannot stay away longer, though she has lost her right among them, as it seems to her.

"Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters in law with her, and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah." These daughters in law are all that she has acquired in the country of Moab. They belonged to her only as widows of her sons. Their real home and relationship are in Moab. According to custom it is their duty to go with her to her home and remain with her while she lives, and they do not seem inclined to evade that duty. But Naomi knows that their hearts are really with their own people, and that it would be a sacrifice on their part to follow her,—and that she does not want, however willingly made.

She has a real desire for their comfort, and she knows they would not feel at home in her land. She knows by a sad ten years' experience what it would be for them to dwell among a people they knew not heretofore. She tenderly entreats them for their own sake, to leave her to go on alone, and go back. "Go, return each to her mother's house: the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead and with me. The Lord grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of

her husband. Then she kissed them: and they lifted up their voice and wept. And they said unto her, surely we will return with thee unto thy people."

This is a touching scene, beautiful and lovely as showing the truth and tenderness of these earthly relationships. But so far it is all natural. They are willing and even desirous to go with her, but it is on her account instead of theirs, and she knows it much better than they do, and she cannot have it. She also stands as a type of the church as it appears and stands in relation to the Gentiles, and in that typical character it was necessary that these daughters-in-law do not follow because of that relationship, as a duty and as a sacrifice of their natural desires. Therefore she constrains them to go back, urging upon their consideration the lack of all hope of advancement or prosperity such as they would naturally desire if they go on with her.

Thus the church of God is shown in the peculiar characteristic. She does not want any one to go with her whose affections are with the world. Instead of extending invitations to such, and urging people to go with her, the true church refuses such sacrifices. She wants none but those whose hearts are with her. While their hearts are with the world a membership in the church would only be in outward appearance. It would not be a spiritual union. To all such the church would say, Go back to your own people.

Orpah is persuaded. Her name means "back, departure." She would sacrifice her own feelings, but it would be a natural, not a spiritual sacrifice. She kissed her mother in law, "but Ruth clave unto her." What an astonishing thing this is to that homesick, lonely woman. Orpah going back along that lonely road they have come, but here stands Ruth yet. She is not even looking back, but her face is toward Naomi, and toward Bethlehem, and what a new light there is in her eyes, and what an expression of more than a daughter's love there is upon her face, as she still stands looking into the face of her mother. But Naomi has not yet seen the secret of Ruth's tender heart, nor has she yet known the deep meaning of her name: Friend. "And she said, Behold, thy sister-in-law has gone back unto her people, and unto her gods, return thou after thy sister-in-law."

Now is to be seen why Naomi came away from the land of Judah to dwell and suffer for ten long years in the country of Moab; that Ruth might see and love her, and return with her. Now is to be seen the wonderful works of God in the heart, and how he brings his people from the ends of the earth unto himself. And now is Naomi to know something of the Lord's purpose in her long and afflictive sojourn here in this strange land. Orpah would have made a sacrifice if she had gone with Naomi, but Ruth makes none. She has no people any more in Moab, nor any gods there. Her name is "Friend," but it is a friend to Naomi and Judah, not to Moab.

What wonderful words fall from her lips! What tender love and faithfulness are shown to Naomi as she thus opens to her view the secret feeling of her heart. And Ruth said, "Intreat me not to leave thee: not to return from following after thee for where thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me."

Here is the most sweet and true expression of the Lord's work. Here is manifested the new and everlasting covenant, as the Lord writes it in the new heart. It binds all the Lord's people together in unity. It is the same covenant that was made between Jonathan and David. These words of Ruth do not express the feeling that she can be of help and benefit to Naomi. It is for herself she is speaking. It is on her own account that she pleads to go with her mother-in-law. Her desire to be in

that dear company is so strong and masterful that her words express assurance and sweet determination as well as desire. Nay, even she speaks with the authority of inspiration. She speaks for the Lord's people throughout all time, as they come, one by one, from the ends of the earth, drawn by that love of God which passes knowledge to the church of the living God.

When Ruth came to Bethlehem with Naomi she must glean in order that they, too, might live. Her hap is to light on a part of the field belonging to Boaz; that was the gospel field. Boaz finds her there and admonishes her not to go into any other field to glean. His expressions of kindness and favor astonish her, seeing she is a stranger. That is ever the feeling of those poor souls that come hungry into the gospel field to glean. They are astonished at the handfuls they sometimes find, not knowing that God's command is upon the reaper in their favor; and they are astonished at the tokens of care and love that come to them, since they are strangers. For so every one feels more or less a stranger, and not like one of the Lord's own people.

But Boaz lets Ruth know that he has heard about her, and has been told how she left her own father and mother and the land of her nativity to come to a people she did not know before. And he says, "The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel under whose wings thou art come to trust." Now what reward could here possibly be for Ruth for doing the thing that was her one desire. In all the world there was but one thing she wanted to do, and now it has been her privilege to do it. Can there be any reward for this? Yes, the reward is in the engagement of the thing itself. That is the the case with all those who truly desire one thing of the Lord: "That they may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of their life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to enquire in his temple." Their reward is in that sweet employment. To behold the beauty of the Lord is enough. This is the reward, to be married unto him who is risen from the dead, to rejoice in him and love him in eternal glory.

Silas H. Durand
Southampton, Pa.

(From Zion's Landmark, February 15, 1904 —Republished by request of Elder Noel F. Conner)

Rt. 2, Box 124,
Willis, Va. 24380

Dear Brother Wood:

By consent of our Pastor, Elder Hale Terry, I am sending you a letter I received from him after our April meeting, to be published in the *Signs of the Times*. It was so comforting to me, I felt it would be of interest to the readers of the *Signs*.

Hope you and Sister Wood are well. I remember so well the times I have spent in your home in the past: they are precious memories. I was 81 years old last October, and don't get to go to church very often on account of arthritis, and can't be on my feet without the aid of crutches.

I enjoy the *Signs* so much and read it through as soon as I receive it. I have been a member of our church 52 years last January, and have received the *Signs* most of that time. Would love to see you and Sister Wood again.

Your brother in hope,
Guy B. Phillips

(Dear Bro. Phillips: Many thanks for your letter with the one by Elder Terry enclosed for publication. These letters brought back many memories of the 1930's etc., when we lived in the vicinity of Roanoke and visited the brethren in Floyd County, together with Elder Terry's father, grand parents, uncles and aunts, etc. It is good to know that the doctrine they stood for is yet being maintained by Elder Hale Terry among the brethren, for which we are thankful unto the Lord.)

Yours in the best of bonds,
John D. Wood

GOOD LETTER FROM HIS PASTOR

Collinsville, Virginia

Dear Brother Guy (Phillips):

I am still rejoicing over the meetings this weekend. You were in my thoughts so much and the day was too short to visit you so I will make an attempt to write you a few lines to tell you about the wonderful meeting yesterday. You may have heard who all were with us. Elder Lyliston, Elder Hash, Elder Wray and Elder Leonard Key. Elder Lyliston and Elder Agee were with us Saturday. At Laurel Creek Saturday night there were five—Elder Agee, Elder Lyliston, Elder Conner, Brother Lane Carter and I. I thought that we had an association Saturday night but I don't have words to describe the meeting yesterday. I feel that it was as close to heaven as we will ever be here on earth. All were blessed to declare the whole Council of God. I can still hear the beautiful singing today and at times shed tears over the preaching as the sweet thoughts flood my mind. He is a wonderful God and the surety of his salvation to poor sinners will be declared by his servants as long as this world stands.

I am so unworthy of the blessings that I received by the preaching of the brethren. When Elder Lyliston arrived at 10:00 p.m. Friday night the doors of Heaven were opened. We talked until 2:30 a.m. Saturday morning. We were blessed to go back in our childhood days and tell of the dealings of the Lord and his mercy to such unworthy sinners as we feel to be. I am reminded of Jacob when he was fleeing from Esau and the night he made a pillar of stones and saw the ladder that reached from earth into heaven with the angels ascending and descending and he said surely the Lord was in the place and I knew it not. When I am given to view my unprofitable life I am made to realize that God loved us even when we were dead in trespasses and in sin. We may have at times wondered why things were as they were but when Christ appears we then have fellowship with Jacob. When I think of the angels and the ladder I somehow see his servants as they are caught up (ascending) and blessed to preach his Glorious Gospel and then down, down into the valley (descending) once more to keep them humble and cause them to cry unto him for *all* of their help and strength, and in his wonderful work make them to know where preaching comes from.

As each one came in his own gift the preaching grew sweeter and sweeter and I could see his bride and feel that we are married to him. As King Manasseh, after the Lord delivered him, built a wall around the city and set watchmen on the wall, Christ is the watchman over the city that is set upon a hill and it cannot be hid. On the hills of Mt. Zion the King is sitting on his throne. But Israel will say the Lord hath forgotten me and has forsaken me. The King speaks, can a mother forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, she may forget, yet will I not forget thee, Behold, I have *graven* thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are *continually* before me. Oh how wonderful, my precious brother, to realize that he is present and with his people continually even when we in our weakness forget him.

I have written more than I intended and must close. I hope this finds you feeling better and pray that God will enable us to be together again soon, that we may by his Grace be blessed to rejoice in his love that he sheds abroad in our hearts. Give Lucille our love.

A little one with Love,
Hale
(Elder Hale Terry)

ROMANS 10: 16, 17

"But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 10:16-17)

We hope and pray that God may enable us to rightly divide the word of truth and speak things that become sound doctrine. (see 2 Timothy 2:15 and Titus 2:1) Even though Paul is dealing with the condition of natural Israel when "blindness in part is happened to Israel" (please read the 10th and 11th ch. of Rom.), do you believe this text applies to God's people whether they be Jews or Gentiles? Is it not true that the Scriptures are directed to the Children of God?

Before we get to our text let us quote this Scripture to support our position that we are not taking the text out of its setting: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, *Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand:* That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. *For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?"* (Isaiah 14:24-27) The setting around this Scripture is that God would bring judgments upon the Assyrians. *Do you believe this Scripture also applies to the power, wisdom, decree, purpose, predestination, etc. of God?*

Let us notice Romans 10:3: "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." This has reference to the self-righteous people who are not blessed with the Spirit of God in their hearts, and are ignorant of the righteousness of God. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." (Romans 8:7) Man who is not blessed with the indwelling Spirit of God will only have an outward religion, and does not know anything about the power of God. "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." (2 Timothy 3:5)

Let us consider Romans 10:13: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." What causes one to call upon the name of the Lord? Is it because of the outward knowledge of the Scriptures and the doctrines of grace? One may obtain such knowledge by reading and studying the Scriptures, religious books, and hearing many sermons—but all this will be just head (or outward) knowledge. *Those who are blessed with the indwelling Spirit of God in their hearts are the only ones who call upon the name of the Lord.*

Let us note Romans 10:14: "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" Please keep in mind that one must call, believe and hear; and none of this depends upon the efforts of the creature. Man by carnal reasoning cannot believe and hear the truth. May God bless us to consider the word "hear." Man by carnal reasoning may hear (by his outward ear) the truth spoken, but it does not mean anything to him. Maybe some of you dear readers have heard the truth spoken for many years but it did not mean anything to you at that time. Then there was something that took place within you that caused you to hear as you had never heard before. Now you believe this doctrine is the truth and it is your meat and drink. Why do you believe it is the truth? Is it because your parents or friends told you it is the truth and you took their word for it? No! Christ is dwelling in your heart. ". . . which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Col. 1:27) Jesus said, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with

you, and shall be in you." (John 14:16-17) This Scripture proves that the Holy Ghost, Spirit of Jesus, Spirit of Truth, or Comforter dwells within the Children of God. ". . . we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (John 14:-23) ". . . he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you." (John 16:15)

Let us get back to the word "hear": Those who are blessed with the indwelling Spirit of God are the only ones who hear the truth with an understanding heart. You must be blessed by the Spirit of God to really "hear" a sermon, (or hear inwardly or given an ear to hear.) "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches:" (Rev. 2:7)

I believe that the expression *"preacher"* in this Scripture has reference to the Spirit of Jesus. ". . . how shall they hear without *a preacher?"* Please notice that the term *"a preacher"* is in the singular. "And how shall *they preach* except they be sent?" The term *"they"* is in the plural, which has reference to the ministers that God calls and qualifies. *"They"* cannot preach except they be sent by God. This shows that God sends his ministers to the appointed places.

Christ is the shepherd, and his ministers are the under-shepherds. "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." (John 10:11) "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: *Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof,* not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; *Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.* And *when the chief Shepherd shall appear,* ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." (1 Peter 5:1-4)

When the 5 thousand were fed, please notice that Christ gave the broken fish and bread to his disciples and *they distributed them to the multitude.* (see Matt. 14:19, Mark 6:41, Luke 9:16, John 6:11) Jesus gave the loaves to his disciples to set before the multitude. What a beautiful picture! We view the Spirit of Jesus upon a minister as he sets forth this wonderful doctrine of Salvation by Grace, and this is good news from a far coontry which is food for a hungry sinner !

How strange are the ways of God! *"God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform."* I have been fed by being blessed to hear the truth preached, listening to singing, having a Spiritual conversation with Brethren, reading religious articles when the Spirit of God testifies to me that it is the truth, etc. The Spirit has preached to me and also often blessed me to read the Scriptures with an understanding heart; and all this has fed me. I have been blessed with the sweetness of the presence of God during fiery trials. The presence of God seems sweeter and more comforting during times of trouble.

By my experience I have to advocate that *Christ is the "Preacher"* who calls and qualifies his ministers and sends them to the appointed places. The Spirit told Philip to go and minister to the eunuch. (see Acts 8:26-29) The true minister is the mouth of God. (see Jer. 15:19) "I have put my words in thy mouth." (Isaiah 51:16)

The ministers do not manufacture the food—meaning the true ministers do not prepare their sermons, but they wait upon the Spirit of God. "The preparations of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord." (Proverbs 16:1) As Paul said, "my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: *that your faith should not stand in the power of God:* (1 Cor. 2:4-5) "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but *it shall accomplish*

that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." (Isaiah 55:10-11) Jesus told Peter, "Feed my sheep." (John 21:16) What is the purpose of preaching? It is to comfort, edify and feed the Brethren. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, *to feed the church of God,* which he hath purchased with his own blood." (Acts 20:28) I have already quoted 1 Peter 5:1-4, but let us quote again part of the 2nd verse: "*Feed the flock of God which is among you . . .*"

"*Faith cometh by hearing.*" Faith is a gift of God. (Eph. 2:8) It is not something to reach out and grasp with our hands or to learn or study, etc. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17) It is not my desire to be misunderstood. I believe that the word "hearing" goes deeper than just natural hearing, as mentioned before. It has reference to "spiritual hearing," meaning that the Spirit of God is dwelling within one and blesses him to hear the truth, and also blesses him with faith and a sweet hope. All of this is included in the experience of God's people, and they all experience the same things, even though it may be in different ways. They all know something about the sorrow of darkness, experience trials, afflictions, tribulations, etc. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." (2 Cor. 4:8-9) *On the bright side, they have all tasted that the Lord is gracious.* "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." (1 Peter 2:2-3) Peter stated that he was a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed. (1 Peter 5:1) I think of this as a taste of heaven. Dear reader, have you tasted that the Lord is gracious? Does not this cause you to yearn for a closer walk with God? The children of God experience the sweet song of redemption. "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of his dear son." (Col. 1:13) "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." (1 Peter 2:9)

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1) Please keep in mind that one hopes for things which he cannot see. We walk by faith and not by sight. "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (Romans 8:24-25) This hope saves one from despair, saves one from this untoward generation, gives one fresh courage to press on in spite of trials, tribulations, afflictions, troubles, etc. "Save yourselves from this untoward generation." (Acts 2:40) The word save, saved, and salvation is mentioned in the Bible a number of times. (Since this goes into much detail, we do not have a mind to deal with that subject at the present.) *To be brief, I believe that Salvation is by the Grace of God and not by any works of the creature.*

"For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but *the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.*" (Heb. 4:2) This Scripture proves that just hearing the gospel preached will not generate or impart faith to one. One must have the faith within his heart before he can really "hear" a gospel sermon.

"*Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.*" Some take this to mean that the preaching of the gospel is used as a means to generate or impart faith to one. This leads to the theory that a minister is an instrument to impart faith to an individual or that a sermon is an instrument to infuse

faith in one. I cannot have fellowship with that doctrine, because my experience teaches me different. *Since faith is a gift of God, we advocate that the Lord works directly with one by the Holy Ghost.* It is the work of the Holy Ghost to bless one with faith and with Spiritual understanding. Often when one reads the Scriptures, the Spirit of God blesses him to read with an understanding heart, and to bless him with sweet meditation. "My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord." (Psalm 102:34)

Jesus said, "This is the work of God, that you believe on him whom he hath sent." (John 6:29) You cannot believe in Jesus unless you have the witness within your heart. If you really believe in Jesus, then the Spirit of Him is dwelling within—or the Holy Ghost is dwelling within you. You hear the preaching and the Spirit within testifies to you that it is the truth. The minister may mention things that you have not thought of and you believe it is the truth. Why? What causes you to believe it is the truth? The Spirit within testifies to you that it is the truth. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." (Rom. 8:16)

May the Lord bless the truth in honor and praise and glory to His Holy Name. Please excuse any errors of this writer.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
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ROCK OF AGES

"Rock of ages cleft for me." "He only is my rock and my salvation, The rock of my strength." Psalm 62:6, 7

"Let me hide myself in thee." "And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in the clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by." Exodus 33:22

"Let the water and the blood." "This is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ, not by water only, but by water and blood." 1 John 5:6

"From thy riven side which flowed." "But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water." John 19:34

"Be of sin the double cure." "And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy Spirit be upon me." 2 Kings 2:9, 10

"Cleanse me from its quilt and power." "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." Isaiah 1:18

"Not the labor of my hands." "I can of mine own self do nothing." John 5:30

"Can fulfill the law's demands." "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets, I am not come to destroy but to fulfill. Verily, I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Matthew 5:17, 18

"Could my zeal no respite know." "Let not those that wait upon the Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for my sake." Psalm 69:6

"Could my tears forever flow." "I am weary with my groaning: all the night make I my bed to swim: I water my couch with my tears." Psalm 6:6

"All for sin could not atone." "Wherefore when He cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure." Hebrews 10:5, 6

"Thou must save, and thou alone." "By the which will we be sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Hebrews 10:8, 10

"Nothing in my hand I bring." "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price." Isaiah 55:1

"Simply to thy cross I cling." "But

God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Galatians 6:14

"Naked, come to thee for dress." "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 13:14

"Helpless, look to thee for grace." "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Philippians 4:13

"Black, I to the fountain fly." "Purge me with hysop, and I shall be clean, wash me and I shall be whiter than snow." Psalms 51:7

"Wash me Saviour or I die." "If I wash thee not thou hast no part with me." John 13:8

"While I draw this fleeting breath." "As for man his days are as grass, as a flower of the field so he flourish. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone: and the place thereof shall know it no more." Psalm 103:15, 16

"When my eyelids close in death." "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the Spirit shall return unto God who gave it." Ecclesiastes 12:3, 7

"When I soar to worlds unknown." "In my Fathers house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto my self: that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:2, 3

"See thee on thy judgement throne." "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall He sit upon the throne of his glory." Matthew 25:31

"Rock of ages cleft for me." "And did all drink of the same spiritual drink, for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ." I Corinthians 10:4

"Let me hide thyself in Thee." "Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wing." Psalm 17:8

(The above was submitted by Elder W. R. Williams, taken from the Banner-Herald of October, 1921.)

EXPERIENCE

Dear Friends:

I cannot tell you the joy and peace I have found in reading the *Signs of the Times*. Nor the tears of sorrow I have shed until I could not see to read.

Dear friends, is there anyone like me? As poor and hopeless that I cannot think of the least thing I ever did for my Creator to merit staying here this long. If it be His will, I would like to mention some of my life and hint at a few things I hope I have seen and felt.

I grew up on a farm in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia as a poor boy among the rich folks and society. My father was a quiet, somber man that I never heard sing a note or whistle a tune. He did not even use a byword. My mother was a member of the old Primitive Baptist Church near by. She sang the old-time tunes going about her work, as far back as I can rember; and until a few days before she passed on. I was in my thirties then. But I have heard them in my mind many times since.

The first two times that I remember being at the church I went with my grandfather and father when they went to help clean up the church ground. And then when they went to help dig a grave, I was afraid to get close to it that I might fall in it. As they dropped out later, to some extent I hope I took over. The first time I remember being in the church I was with my mother, and the first time at the stand I was with my mother.

The first preacher I remember was Elder Turner. He and his wife and son and others spen the night at our house during a "big" meeting.

A few years later, disregarding a good start, my life became an unexplainable tangle, with nothing good I ever did to merit the notice of my Creator who has blessed me. He never needed the help of any man! He has blessed me I hope all the days of my life, not for what I have done or I will do.

In my early teens I began beating on a

banjo and sawing on an old fiddle. How my mother stood the noise, I don't know. A few years later a neighbor and I took to playing for parties and would go sometimes 3 or 4 miles to play. We drank some but I never was drunk in my life, but the older I got the more wicked I became. I was not ill-natured because I had friends wherever I went. When I was 24 or 25 I began to lose interest in parties.

Sometime later, one of my buddies and I stopped in at one of my neighbor's house. This neighbor had been married several months and there were 2 or 3 girls there. One of them was about my age and I had been to her house because she only lived about 2 miles from me. We had grown up together. But I had never dated her before or hardly noticed her. It was as if I saw her for the first time. As a friend, I asked her for a date. I filled that date and asked her for another one. She said, "sure". She also said that she would tell her other boyfriend not to come back. Her boyfriend was a man of society, he was quiet and had a good job. They had been going together for over a year and why she left him for this idiot I never knew. In about a year we were married. I named her my "baby" (she weighed less than a hundred pounds) and she was the joy of my life for 50 odd years.

When we were married I took my girl to a preacher's house in a buggy, and some of the family went along. The preacher came out and performed the ceremony. I took her to my home where I had one room furnished. A few months later I bought a 6-acre field that joined the road. It had a log cabin on it with a lean-to porch and a kitchen on one end. This was some let down from her father's 8-room house and his 3 or 4 hundred acres of land, but we were happy. Later we started a new house and before we got it finished she joined the Primitive Baptist Church. We later sold about everything we could spare and bought a farm down in the valley. We were in sight of a Primitive Baptist Church. A little farther on the other side of us was another church. I am proud to say that the whole community approved of us as neighbors and friends. I hope we did not let them down.

Dear friends, no one ever knew the deep misery that I went through. My friends and family knew that there was something bothering me that they could not help. At times, to forget the horror of the life that I was living, I would promise myself that I would quit swearing and do better. I had then got to the point where I began to feel proud of myself for I had quit swearing and was doing better. Then shortly after we had returned from church, there was a minor incident near the house, and my temper had never flown so high as it did then. I rushed out of the house swearing vengeance. When I got to the yard gate I was struck speechless, and instead of opening the gate, I shut my mouth. A voice spoke in my soul and said, "You have been promising your Creator that you were going to quit swearing. I turned and went back in the house. After that, I became a beggar instead of making promises.

One day my two sons and I were on the farm cleaning up a fence row. I had been in a horrible shape. I told the boys to take the cows in and that I would be on in a few minutes. As soon as they had got out of sight, I got down on my knees to beg my Creator to have mercy on me, but I could not open my mouth. A voice said, "Get thee hence." A horrible fear came over me and I grabbed up my tools and left in a hurry. There was still no relief; so I got down on my knees to beg again, and could not speak. The voice said, "Who art thou to call on the Savior?" The same fear came and I grabbed up my tools and tried to get away again. After some relief I began to look forward to our association meeting that was coming up.

(Concluded next month)

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the South Ouachita Association will convene, the Lord willing,

with Rehobeth Church commencing on Friday before the 4th Sunday in September, 1975. (September 26, 27, 28) Rehoboth Church is located north of El Dorado, Ark. From El Dorado take 167 north for 4½ miles. Get on Hwy. 7 north for 3 miles and take 335 south for ½ mile to Rehoboth Church on your left.

Lovers of the truth are welcome to attend our meeting.

C. C. Barron, Clerk

THREE DAY MEETING AT MOSSYROCK, WASH.

The Bethel Primitive Baptist Church of Mossyrock, Wash. will hold their annual three day meeting the third Sunday and Friday and Saturday before in August, with Elder W. W. Taylor of Tinsman, Arkansas being with us. Our pastor is Elder Ben F. Preston of The Dalles, Oregon.

Directions: Leave Interstate 5 at the road signs which say Mossyrock and Yakima, and travel east about fifteen miles to the first caution light, turn right and go to first stop sign, and make another right turn, and then a left at the Texaco Station on Isabella Road. Meeting House is a short distance on the left.

All brethren and friends are welcome.

Opal Huntting, Church Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the above Union is to be held, the Lord willing, with Mt. Ararat Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in August. All lovers of the truth are invited to visit with us.

Eld. H. W. Wray, Mod.
Doris Hamilton, Clerk

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, at Wilson Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in August, 1975. Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 744,
Bennettsville, S. C. 29512

PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The *Pleasant Valley Association* has changed its meeting time this year from the 3rd Sunday week-end in August, to the 2nd Sunday week-end in August. It will meet with Mt. Zion Church (D.V.) in the Rio Grande Valley August 8, 9 and 10, 1975. Lovers of the truth are invited.

Elder Jerry Evers

BICENTENNIAL OBSERVANCE TOWN CREEK CHURCH

The brethren at *Towne Creek Church* of the Pigg River Primitive Baptist Association, in Henry County, Virginia, will hold an all-day meeting, the Lord willing, the fifth Sunday in August.

This meeting is held in commemoration of our two hundredth anniversary, and we invite all persons interested to visit us at this time.

The church is located on State Road No. 605 off of U. S. Highway 220, west on road leading to Henry, Virginia.

Elder P. E. Ingram, Mod.
Tommy Lovell, Clerk

CORRECTION OF ERROR

In our July issue it was stated that the All-Day Meeting at Slate Hill, N. Y. would be held July 5, 1975. This was an error since the correct date is Saturday, August 2nd.

We hope that this notice will appear in time for those interested to note the correction. — J.D.W.

Danville, Virginia August, 1975

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

EPHESIANS 2

In our last our .space was allotted to God's eternal act towards us. In this feeble effort, it is my design to pay attention to His work in time in our behalf. I will do this as best I can. Although I have been reading and studying this sacred volume longer than many, I have been a poor student, and feel that I have barely touched the surface of the things that God has done for us, and the things that are still in His agenda to do for us. I am as poor today in spiritual things as I was nearly fifty years ago on the plains of southeast Missouri when He said to me, "Soul, this night thy soul shall be required of thee, and what are these goods going to be to you?" Since that time, I have not been anything in my relationship with the earth save a poor wretched sinner. Yet, I am not belittling myself in my relationship with Him that visited me at that time. I do not appear before you in my relationship with the earth, but if called of God, as was Aaron, I appear before you in the strength of the Redeemer God. I remember so vividly the singing of dear Brother Gladding in Baltimore,

"Afflicted saint, to Christ draw near;
Thy Saviour's gracious promise hear;
His faithful word declares to thee
That as thy days, thy strength shall be,
When ghastly death appears in view,
Christ's presence shall thy fears subdue,
He comes to set thy spirit free;
And as thy days, thy strength shall be."

and I think and believe that my soul has found out right well that all of our fleshly strength is as water poured out; unless I have been deceived, not by God, but by Satan, I have since had a new source of Strength, as well as a new strength, given me.

In His work of reducing my strength to a nonentity (as far as salvation is concerned), He then, as I humbly hope, gave me something that I had not known before, yea, something which I had not believed could be before. I had known strength yes, but going up against the yoke caused fatigue and running out of strength. Now that order of business was reversed. It was take the yoke and learn of me, and find rest, and find lightness in the tasks assigned to you, and no galling effects from the burden of the yoke. (Mat. II:28, 30)

It is my hope that I have learned at His feet. If so, I do not have a compromise to make about what I write and preach; I do not have any apologies to make for what God has done, is doing, or will do in the future; what He has said, is law and gospel to me, even though the most (and I sometimes fear all) is shrouded in mystery to where I

do not understand anything. But it is not always thus, for there are times when I am emboldened to say that I know Him whom to know is life eternal. Based upon this promise, I write and I preach. I do not have an open mind about what has been, as I hope, taught me at His feet. I am not subject to change about it; I do not want (and do not intend to engage in) argument and fault finding with any man, nor do I want any private interpretations of the Scriptures nor do I want Elder John Doe nor his contemporary, Elder Tom Roe, telling me what God means.

With this preface, which is meant to be to you, the readers, I venture to expound to you the unfolding of what God has done for sinners in time. Since hidden things belong to God, and revealed things to us and our children, it behooves us to remember that what God determined or purposed in eternity would not be worth one thing to us *unless* He reveals it to us in time. The wisdom of God in a mystery was hidden until revealed. God ordained this hidden wisdom before the world unto our glory. The world could not know this hidden mystery anymore than it can receive the Comforter, and if they could have known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. Had God not left them in ignorance, His ignorance in it would have surpassed them in their ignorance.

The beginning of this work with the chosen vessels in a manifest sense is in quickening them into life. In the talk between the Saviour and Nicedemus it was spoken of as being born again. Yet, there is, to me, a difference in the two. The begetting is not the birth. In the begetting life is impregnated, but the birth is afterwards. However, the quickening into life is always done where previously a state of death reigned. These Ephesians were dead and we well know that the dead can not act in order to be alive. This begetting or quickening was the work of God. That which is begotten can never be the means of its begetting; that which is born is never the cause of its having life. Dead things must wait in a dormant state until a living something acts upon them. Those that were quickened into life were as living in nature as those that had been quickened and born again even though years before. They were not any more dead corporeally than were the living in the flesh in all the world. Up until the quickening they were dead in sin, and this death is as extensive and thorough and complete as are corporeally dead. In corporeal death the body dies; in the death in trespasses and sin, the faculties are all dead.

This Adamic man does not know that he is dead in sin. If he knew the difference between life and death he would be well aware of his condition, but not knowing anything because of death (Eccl. 9:5) he thinks that he is as much alive as anyone. This he will never know as long as he is dead, but thinking that he is alive, he will be as active as anyone, not knowing that his actions are those of one dead in sin. The most useless and frustrating thing that a citizen of Zion can do is to try to show a dead man that he is dead. He will make a lot of noise in showing you that he is much alive.

In the midst of this deadliness, the Lord quickens the chosen vessels into everlasting life. This is not done because of any difference whatever between them and those not chosen. All of them were acting exactly alike. This action continued right up until the quickening. One great (?) theologian said that Paul heard Stephen praying and that he was giving heed to what he said, turning it over in his mind and concluded that it was better for him to turn over a new leaf. This does not have any semblance to the truth. Saul was still breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the people of God when the light shone around him, and surely he was qualified, both from experience and by inspiration, to give a truthful account of how that the Lord deals with sinners in the beginning. Before these Ephesians were made alive,

they were living just exactly like the course of this world; they were talking just like the people around them; they were fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were *by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*

Before one knows this, he or she will have to come under the quickening of God. This truth can not be taught by any man or set of men or by all men working in unison, for one that has been quickened by the Lord knows better than to join in such an affair; and all others are as dead and as blind as the ones whom they would quicken (Eccl. 9:5; Mat. 15:14). False doctrine must be denied; the mouth of a gainsaying world must be challenged, but never with the thought that they will see the light and come to the truth. Therefore, it behoves me to be sparing with our arrows into the camp of Babylon.

Let us look back to that illustrious day. It has been said that the children of Israel will remember the way that they have been led. As far as experimental knowledge goes, we have today as much to remember as did the ancient brethren on their forty year journey. Do you remember your days before trouble came. Have you, when your trials have been so trying, been guilty of upbraiding the Lord because you left the fleshpots of Egypt and came out into the wilderness road to starve? We did not have soul trouble, and if any trouble came our way we were so sold (dead) on ourselves that we verily thought that we could handle it if we but put our hand to it; and if the ways of life denied us something we turned from it as the fox turned from jumping after grapes, saying that it was not worth us expending our talents to get it. Our barns were full and we had our eyes set on building larger facilities to store our goods that had so grown in volume that our reservation had grown into a vast surplus. We had revelled in watching our conduct and enjoyed comparing it with the ones that professed to be following the Lord. We did not know anything about not being able to handle any situation that arose about religion, nor could we visualize anything coming up in our lives like unto that. But the day did come. It is etched in my memory with an indelible writing from God. The day came as all before it, but about middle of the day I became disturbed. As far as my memory goes (and I am reasonably sure) religion had not been mentioned; in fact, that was a subject that the men folks disapproved of for themselves and their wives; I had not received any meloncholy letters or messages. It is still, after almost fifty years, a great mystery as to what did happen. I do not say that it was the Lord, but I do say that it was a brand new thing; that I did not bring it about; and I go further and say that the sorrow and anxiety that stemmed from it was beyond my ability to cross out of my mind. Instead of it vanishing or lessening, the power of it became the ruling principle in my life. I am sure that a word has not fell from my lips nor a word crossed my typewriter in the last fifty years that would say that I am a fit subject to be compared with Paul except in my sins. I shudder now to think how profane that I was, and even today it throws a pall over me to hear that kind of talk. Verily, it is easy to see by the record how vile that Saul was, but only I and my one witness (the Lord) knows how sinful I was. I would beg for saving grace to be counted worthy to join with and follow along with that eminent apostle in telling this travel of how God deals with sinners in the beginning. I want to reiterate once again that not a man had done anything to get Saul started heavenward. He was "yet" doing the same thing that he had been doing for years. If any difference could be noticed, it would seem that his malicious spirit was more intensely absorbed in persecution than ever before. *As* he was engaged in this nefarious persecution; *while* he was "yet" doing as he had previously been doing, something took place that had never been done before. Isn't that the way that it was with you? He was stopped still and knocked to the ground.

I am sure that it says that he fell, but as you look back over life, how many times have you volunteered to fall? We fall because of a power that comes upon us.

It is easy to find this experience catalogued in religious publications. So many are able to tell a beautiful deliverance like unto this. Oh, I am well aware that but few of us have a spectacular experience as did our dear brother, but I am equally sure that we all came to a day that we had never seen nor felt before. This day we will never forget. As we look at Paul's description of us all, it is with astonishment that we listen at what men preach and write. We were dead in sin, and, according to his description, *and our experience,* we are well aware that it is true. All religionist will tell you that you must change your way before God will love you or let you into His kingdom. It was not that way with these Ephesians; it was not that way with Paul; it was not that way with you and me. God loved us with an everlasting love, and this love was manifested by His quickening us into life. "But God." Notice that, dear reader. Not that we did, but God did. He loved us because that He was rich in mercy, and while we were still dead, He quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved), and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Now that rich mercy and that saving grace had to do with our dead condition. "But God" who is rich in mercy quickened us. That is step One. Step two is like unto it. "But God" raised us up. He that thought he was doing God's will was destitute of all knowledge of God as Saviour. When this light and voice came, he died still again. He was utterly dead to himself as doing the will of God, for he did not know the Lord, and, although a busy man in religious affairs, he did not know the least thing about the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ; thus his religion died then and there. This is salvation by grace in changing Saul from a persecutor to a praying child of God; this is salvation by grace in the quickening of a natural man into life eternal, this saving grace does not stop there. It raises him up (for we all fell when it was made manifest that the life that we had been living was in death), and it is effectual grace. He had been a roving, railing persecutor on the go, zealous and energetic to keep the law and punish all that oppressed the way of the fathers, but grace has made him sit down in the same company with the persecuted. What a wonder! Behold the wonders of God! Extol in the highest strains the saving grace of God. Sinners quickened, sinners loved, sinners saved, sinners raised up, and sinners made to sit down in the assembly of the persecuted. This is rich grace indeed, this is tender mercy indeed. This is the most miraculous doctrine that ever fell from heaven or that has ever been proclaimed by mortal man. It is from God. You may talk all you please about repetition and triteness among the Old Baptist ministers, but this is something that we desire to hear again and again. God moves into the lives of men and women and deals with them in such a way that they are sent to the very people that they had persecuted, and they are made to preach and to believe that which they were determined never to believe.

God has saved us by His grace and His mercy when we were dead in sin. Now that is the way it came about with the Ephesians. If we are on the right road that is the way that it came about with us. As you watch the continuity of this grace salvation it raises up characters that fell from their former trust in the law and in themselves (like unto Saul) and makes them sit down in heavenly places with Christ Jesus. He does this that in the ages to come, that is, in future days, He might show the exceeding riches of His grace *in* His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. Now who is it that is coming forward and tell us that this grace which raises them up from their fallen state is a different variety of grace than that which brought them down? Who is coming forward to

tell us that this grace which is shown them in the ages after the first dealing with them is a different kind than that which is shown them in the outset. We must insist that it was mercy and grace that quickened them (v. 4, 5), and we must insist that it was the exceeding riches of His grace that was to be shown in the ages to come (v. 7.) Have I got a reader that would attempt to differentiate between the grace in verses four and five, and the grace in verse seven? I am writing with the thought in mind of finding out the work of the Lord Jesus Christ in saving sinners. I am not trying to trick you, nor to ridicule you. I do not intend to be dry and rigid. Evidently, God intended to show in the ages to come the riches of His grace, for in verse eight we are told that by grace ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is the gift of God.* The grace in this verse which is through faith, is *after* the saving in verses four and five. I am reaching after the simple truth, but I do not desire to reach unfairly. Will it be wrong for me to ask again for someone to explain the difference between the grace that quickened us and the grace that raised us up, the grace that made us sit down, the grace that is to be shown in the ages to come, the grace that saves us through faith? Paul tells us (v. 5) that we are saved by grace. This is present sense and it was applicable to the quickening. Now all of the other actions of God towards us were *after* the quickening. Now we all agree, do we not, that it was grace this first time. What kind of reasoning is it that would say that the saving grace in our time state after this quickening is a different grace? What have we got that will prove that by the written word? When was grace ever spoken about that was not saving grace? When did grace ever fail to save? If the grace that quickened (saved) us was saving grace, what kind of grace was it that Paul was speaking about later (that is, after the quickening came raising us up, making us sit down in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and by which we see and enjoy in the later ages) when he declared that "by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God?" That is present tense, it is grace that saves presently.

W.D.G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ROMANS 5:18, 19

"Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous."

The great doctrine of redemption by grace, is the theme of the inspired apostle in our text, and indeed of the gospel ministry. The consideration of this subject, involves the fall, guilt and just condemnation of God's people, in the earthly Adam, and their deliverance in the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven. Treating on this subject in our text and its connections, the apostle alludes to the federal relationship of the two Adam's, and their respective posterities. The first Adam, being of the earth, earthly, is unable to develop or produce a posterity of a different character or quality from himself; his offspring are consequently like himself, of the earth earthy. The second Adam, being the Lord from heaven, is spiritual, and the seminal, or progenitive head of his spiritual posterity. Hence the earthy Adam is the figure of the spiritual Adam which was to come, (see verse 14) "And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but natural; and afterward that which is spiritual; the first man is of the earth,

earthy, the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such, are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly," (1 Cor. 15:44-88)

The guilt and condemnation of the posterity of the first Adam bears even date with the first transgression of Adam in the garden, before the first of all his numerous progeny were born. They were all created in Adam, and they were Adam, and were therefore righteously included in the guilt of Adam's transgression, for they all being in him, were at the same time in the transgression. For such is and unavoidably must be the nature and effect of federal relationship. Therefore, the apostle tells us in our text, "as by the offence of one." That one was an entire race, imbodied in one man, but to be developed by multiplication into all the tribes of mankind. "By the offence of (this) one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." This argument Paul makes conclusive and indisputable, by the fact that by one man's offence, death reigned by one. None can deny this, that from Adam to Moses, death reigned over all the children of Adam, and that death still continues to reign over all the sons of men. Death cannot reign but by sin, for the sting of death is sin, and the wages of sin is death. Therefore it is evident that the sting infused the poison which results in death, when all were embodied in the one undeveloped man.

This judgment which has already come upon all men, is the decision of God the Judge of all; it cannot be reversed or annulled. It is in strict accordance with his holy law, and its execution is demanded by eternal Justice. It has come upon all men; not to come, if they do not repent or reform, for it has come upon all men to condemnation. All men are therefore condemned already, and have been, ever since the judgement came, which is nearly six thousand years ago; and it has come upon us who were not then born, and equally on all who are not yet born; for all have sinned in Adam. Every mouth is stopped by the law, and the whole world of mankind is guilty before God.

Now as the nature and effect of the federal relationship of Adam and his posterity, has involved all alike in sin, judgment and condemnation, "even so," exactly so; or in the same manner; the federal relationship of Christ and his spiritual posterity secures to all the people of God, the righteousness of justification of life. On legal principles, if the relation subsisting between Christ and his members was such, that Christ could bear their sins in his own body, or that Justice could inflict the penalties of the divine law on him, which were due to our transgression; then the same relationship must make Christ's obedience to the law, and sufferings under the law, the ground of our justification to life. The law condemned us to death, but the righteousness of Christ's active and passive obedience to the law, on our behalf takes away our guilt, and death as the consequence of guilt, and justifies us to life, as the opposite of death.

In further illustration of this, our apostle continued, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." We have shown that by the offense of Adam, all Adam's posterity are made sinners, judgment has come upon them all to condemnation, now taking this as a divinely authorized figure, we must unavoidably conclude that the justification unto life, of the seed of the second Adam, is by virtue of his obedience to the law on their behalf; and the analogy of the figure shows that the same law and divine justice of God, which could behold all the human family in the first Adam, and being in him, partakers of the guilt of his disobedience, must with equal clearness behold all the spiritual seed in the second Adam, when he obeyed the law and bore its penalties, as partakers, in him of his righteousness unto justification of life. We all sinned in Adam, and

in Adam we all die. So in Christ all whom God has chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, when he was delivered up for our offenses, and bore our sins in his own body on the cross, met the utmost of the penal demands of the law; and when Christ was raised from the dead, we were raised up with him to justification of life. Our perfect justification is therefore not predicated partly on what Christ has done, and partly on what his people are to do; but it is by the obedience of One, that is of Christ, exclusively of anything and everything else, that the saints are made righteous, this is prospective, of what shall be by the obedience of one. But if Christ did not fully, effectively and forever purge away all our guilt legally when he died and arose from the dead, this prospect, assurance and certainty that all his children shall be made righteous, experimentally, would be forever cut off. The atonement was perfect and complete, in Jesus Christ our Lord, and in him we were reconciled to God, while we were yet sinners in ourselves.—But all that was legally fulfilled for us in Christ, shall most certainly be experimentally fulfilled in us, individually at the appointed time. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Rom. v. 8-11.

Much confusion and jargon arises with arminians and universalists, in consequence of their confounding the type with the anti-type, the figure with the thing signified, the shadow with the substance.— General or universal atonement is inferred by them, from such declarations as those in our text, because they do not perceive that the earthly Adam, as the type, is connected with his own earthly posterity, prefiguring the anti-typical Adam, and his chosen generation, royal priesthood, and holy nation. The type is the natural progenitor of his own race which includes all his natural offspring; and Christ is the head over all things to his Church; which, if we admit that by the disobedience of one many were made sinners, we must admit that many sinned in that one man. A man is made up of a body, head, and many members. When we say a man breathes, we do not affirm that his hand, feet and all the members of the man respectively inhales and exhales the atmosphere; it is enough that the proper organs convey the vital air into and from the lungs, to justify the declaration that the man breathes. Personally, as the respective members of Adam, not one of his posterity was born when we were made sinners by his disobedience to God; and as none are sinners but those who have sinned, the declaration of *our text proves that although unborn, we did sin, in the disobedience of Adam. So in the application which the apostle makes of the figures to Christ and his seed, as antitypical of Adam and his seed, when Christ obeyed the law his people were so embodied in him, that his obedience was our obedience, his death was the very death which the law consigned us to; and when he died for all his people, then were they all dead, and when he arose for their justification, they were all quickened together with him; and raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places in him.* Legally this was all accomplished when Christ, and all his people in him, died and arose again from the dead, they were legally all made righteous then and there; but our text reads, "So by the obedience of one SHALL many be made righteous," in his body, who is the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

The righteousness of Christ unto justification of life, is not held up as a commodity in the market, offered to the highest bidder, nor is it offered conditionally to any; but, it is the *free gift.* It is not offered to, but *comes upon* all men; that is all the seed of the antitypical Adam. Free because it is uncon-

ditionally, without money, without price. "The gift of God, is eternal life; and that gift is free, sovereign, and effectual, and where God has sent it, it comes, and where it comes, and on whom it comes, it comes to justification of life. And it is God that justifies, while by the deeds or works of the law we are positively informed, there shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, August 15, 1861)

PRAYER AND PREDESTINATION

"Fourth question. *Does predestination destroy the idea of prayer?* We answer that, on the contrary, it assures the value of prayer. The objection supposed in this question, cuts like a two-edged sword. If it be said to be of no use to pray against evil, which is embraced in the predestination of God, then it can be said with equal force, that it is no use to pray for the good that he has predestinated. It may be said that the evil will come anyway, whether we pray for deliverance or not, but so may it be said that the good will come anyhow, whether we pray or not. This argument pursued to its conclusion, would drive all predestination out of the universe, or else it would drive all prayer out of the universe. It says that prayer and predestination cannot occupy the same ground. We are told that Elijah prayed for the very thing that God had determined should come upon the land, and which had been revealed to the prophet. The fact that it was in the predetermination of God, acted as an incentive for prayer, rather than as a deterrent, and it will ever be found to be so. We are sure that our God has never bestowed upon us any but predetermined blessings, and yet we have not felt restrained in prayer.

Fifth question. *Would not the foreknowledge of God, and the doctrine of his immutability, destroy all accountability, and all prayer, as well as his predestination?* It seems clear to our mind, that if one will do this, then the others will also. But we do not believe that either, or all these principles of truth, have any such result. Perhaps the best test of any docrine, is the results in the lives of men; and we know that in the circle of our acquaintance, the brethren who have held most strongly to the doctrine of God's foreknowledge and predestination, and immutability, have been at the same time most jealous and careful of their lives and conduct. *We have never met one yet who would say, when convinced of sin, I could not help it, for it was predestinated to be* so; and, as said before, *this has never entered our mind, that we could excuse ourself for sin, because we have believed so firmly the universal predestination of God, as well as his foreknowledge and immutability.* But we repeat, that it is sure that according to all known principles of human reason, foreknowledge, and the immutability of God, would do away with prayer and human accountability, as certain as would predestination. But neither of these principles of truth are fraught with such results in the case of any who love the doctrine."

Elder F. A. Chick

(The above were among some questions answered by Elder Chick in the December 1, 1897, isue of the *Signs*. We republish this by request)

THE EXPERIENCE AND OBITUARY OF SISTER REPSEY PHILLIPS

In loving memory of sister Repsey Phillips who passed from this life November 10th, 1974. She will be sadly missed by her four children and friends. She dearly loved her church and its members.

While going through her few precious possessions her daughter found some folded yellow pages that Sister Phillips had written forty-five years ago on January 5, 1930 before becoming a member of Otter Creek Primitive Baptist Church.

The following is a copy of sister Repsey's notes.

EXPERIENCE

I feel like writing a few words. If I leave this world before I can have a home with you (Primative Baptist Members) I shall not be satisfied. I feel like the Lord has shown me a better home hereafter. This fall and winter has been a terrible time for me.

I sit and cry most of the time and feel like I'm losing my mind. The sun shines but it looks like a ball of fire. My mama visits me and I tell her how red the sun is, and begin to cry. She goes home and tells my sisters that I really am losing my mind and they would have to take care of my small children.

When I had carried my burden as long as I thought I could I began to think about where I might get some help. I had always gone to the Doctor before and had never given the Lord any credit. But now from my heart I asked, "Oh Lord what have I done to suffer like this. "Well it wasn't long before I had what I must call a dream, yet it was much plainer than a dream to me. I was told to go and join the Primative Baptist Church and you shall be healed.

Within the next few weeks there was a revival at a church near my home. I thought I would go and join the church and get rid of my burden, but after I joined my burden was worse than ever. I would look up at the red sun and beg the Lord to help me.

When I had suffered as long as I felt I could, I heard a voice saying, "Your name is in the wrong church." Still I didn't know what to do. I couldn't eat or sleep and my family couldn't understand me any more. I wouldn't tell anyone about my dreams I had begun to have, but I couldn't get them off my mind. I dreamed there was a war going on and guns firing. Jesus was hovering over the guns, but not a shot or smoke reached him.

Later in the week I dreamed there was an old lady here at home with me and the world was coming to an end. I saw a cross covering the whole world toward the sunset. The lady climbed on a block of wood, and I climbed up with her and reached for my family. I knew she was a Christian and would be saved, and I wanted to be saved too. The flame went on, but we were saved. This bothered me so much I finally told my family that the world was coming to the end.

I am still burdened and having dreams. I heard a voice one night telling me that my blood would turn to water and you shall leave this world. "Oh Lord", I begged, "I am a lost sinner and shall die and go to torment, please have mercy on me." I knew I must die and leave my children in the hands of someone else. I cried day and night knowing I had to die.

In a few nights I had gone to bed and there was the prettiest light around me on the bed, and a voice said, "The same one is here to care for your children that took care of you." Then I could realize how helpless I was and could see how God had taken care of me. After this my burden seemed lighter.

The next dream was a week later. I dreamed that I knew when my crown was filled with blessings I would reach the everlasting home. I knew for sure now that I had to die because I was such a sinner. I feel there is no forgiveness for me. "Oh Lord I have got to leave my children."

Sister Phillips did leave her old world. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church shortly after she wrote this experience.

OBITUARY

Sister Repsey was born in Wilson County, May 22, 1899. It was January 5, 1915 when Sister Repsey was married to Amos Phillips. The good Lord blessed them with four lovely children, one daughter and three sons, Mildred, Willis, Bennie C. and Russell.

She loved the Doctrine of Electing Grace and she seemed to enjoy the fellowship of the church as long as she was able to attend. I would like to tell her children, family and friends who were so devoted to her, to grieve not over Sister Repsey, for deep down in my

heart I feel that God loved best and that our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was preached at her home by her Pastor Elder Joe Sawyers. Her body was laid to rest in the Macclesfield Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, to await the Resurrection Morning.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Experience and Obituary be sent to the *Zions Landmark*, one to *Signs of Times* for publishing, and one to be put on Church Records.

Done by order of Otters Creek Primitive Baptist Church the first Saturday in December, 1974. Written by a brother and sister who loved her, Brother Joe B. Coker and Sister Lina Gardner.

Elder Joe Sawyers,
Moderator
Joe B. Coker,
Clerk

OBITUARIES

MARGARET BAGGETT MURPHY

The Lord, at his appointed time has called our own dear and beloved Sister, from this earthly life to that "One" eternal sabbath day, a sweet day of rest, where we feel, she is now resting from all her labours, and her works do follow her.

Sister Margaret was born June the 6th, 1908, her parents were the late Marion Baggett, and the late Carrie Philips Baggett, of Dunn, N. C.

Sister Margaret passed from this life December 15th, 1974. She united with Black River Primitive Baptist Church at the age of 26 years, was at that time disabled to go to church, and a meeting was called at her home, and she related her experience, and was received into the fellowship of the church on the third Sunday afternoon, May 19th, 1934, was baptized the following Tuesday p.m. by the late Elder E. C. Jones.

Sister Margaret was married to the late Raymond Murphy in 1928 and only two children to this union, which survive her. One son, Kenneth Murphy, of Wilmington, N. C., and a daughter, Darlene McLaurin of Fayettville, N. C.

Sister Margaret was a very faithful member of Black River Primitive Baptist Church, fulfilling the many duties in her life, being a nurse, and possessed such a sweet personality she was a comfort to the many patients she nursed in the different hospitals she worked in from a young girl up to the last few months before her death. She loved her church, a place she found great consolation and rest for her soul, and was very prompt to lend a helpful hand for the needs of the church, when she was privileged to do so. She also stood strictly for the doctrine, Salvation by the grace of God.

She experienced many trials and disappointments in life, but by the grace of God, through faith, she was given sufficient strength to withstand the many storms of life, ever looking unto Jesus, who was the author and finisher of her faith, by which she was able to endure even to the end.

This dear sister acknowledged to her pastor, in her last few weeks of her illness that she did not expect to recover, so the writer feels that she was saying as one of old her departure was soon at hand, she had kept the faith she had finished her course, therefore there was a crown of righteousness laid up for her, that the Lord, the righteous judge shall give to her in that day.

We the Black River Church, do greatly miss her occupying a certain seat in our church at meeting time, just to the right from the pulpit.

Her funeral was conducted at Black River Primitive Baptist Church at 2 p.m. Tuesday December 17th by her pastor, Elder C. D. Turner, assisted by Elder W. D. Godwin. Her body was laid to rest in Greenwood Cemetery, at Dunn, N. C. There to wait the final resurrection, when Jesus shall come and call and her spiritual body shall rise with the great host of Gods elect, and the angels shall gather them from the four winds of the earth, to be caught up in that cloud of eternal glory, to be in the likeness of Jesus, and be satisfied for evermore.

We bow in humble submission to the will of the Heavenly Father, who doeth all things well, and knowest the best for us all.

Elder C. D. Turner, Moderator
Sister Nettie Turlington, Clerk

SISTER LIZZIE DALTON VASSER

In loving memory of a dear Sister in Christ, Sister Lizzie Vasser was born on December 19, 1876 to the late David and Lucy Hines Dalton and died on January 20, 1975 in the Medical Care Center, Lynchburg, Virginia, having spent 98 years, 1 month, and 1 day here on this earth.

It is with a mixture of joy and sorrow that I attempt to write this memorial of one that I esteem so highly. We are saddened at her death, but we rejoice that she had a beautiful hope in the Lord Jesus Christ.

From my earliest memory of Sister Lizzie, when I was a little girl, she was one of my favorite people, always wearing a smile on her face and a kind word for everyone. I can never remember her saying anything bad about anyone. She was always concerned about the welfare of others. Just to know her was to love

her.

She attended Weatherford Church all her life and was always faithful to her church before and after her joining, and was a firm believer of Salvation by Grace. She united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on August 23, 1964 and was baptized by her beloved pastor on the same day.

Sister Lizzie was married to Willie N. Vasser and to this union five children were born. Surviving her are one daughter, Mrs. Ruth Brumfield of Hurt, Virginia, two sons, Bradley and Willie both of Gretna, Virginia, one sister, Mrs. Lessie Bybee of Richmond, Virginia, 20 grandchildren, 47 great-grandchildren and 24 great great grandchildren.

Our dear sister, by an eye of faith, waited patiently and faithfully upon her God, trusting in his promise to his little ones to the end. She was blessed to manifest much love for her church and the brethren. I was blessed to visit her in the hospital and nursing home when she called upon her God and said she wanted to go home.

Her funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on January 22, 1975 at 2:00 p.m. by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and Elder Raymond Goad. Her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the call of her Heavenly Father.

We, the members of Weatherford Church will greatly miss Sister Lizzie, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. May God's richest blessings rest upon all that mourn, and may we be blest to say, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed by the name of the Lord."

Written by: Phyllis Goad at the request of Brother Marvin Brumfield.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. H. Doss, Clerk

HOWELL T. HORNE

God in His loving mercy has seen fit to remove from our midst another dear brother, Howell T. Horne. He was the oldest member of Cypress Creek church, being born Feb. 3, 1882, died Dec. 28, 1974, making his stay on earth almost 93 years.

He was afflicted and spent the last several years in a nursing home. Sometimes his nephews and niece would bring him to quarterly meetings when he was able to attend. One of his greatest pleasures was for the dear Elder that conducted his funeral to hold meetings for him at the nursing home. In one of my last conversation with him at one of those meetings, he said he wished he could go to sleep and never wake up. So I'm sure his feelings were "Come welcome death, I'll gladly go with thee." But I feel sure he was given the faith to run the race set before him as his favorite hymn was "Cast down, but not destroyed."

He united with the church April 13th, 1969 and was baptized by Elders L. L. Yopp and Harmon Brown.

He was married when a young man to Katie Simpson, who died, and later married Hattie Manning, who also preceded him in death. No children were born to either union. His survivors are one brother, one sister, and a host of nephews and nieces.

His funeral was conducted at Cypress Creek church by Elder D. B. Stokes and he was laid to rest in the family cemetery at the foot of his father's grave, which was his request.

Done by order of conference that I write this obituary and that a copy be given the family; one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and one put in the church records. February, 1975.

Velma H. Horne, Clerk
Elder Harmon Brown, Moderator

SAINTS REST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH
Dallas, Texas

WHEREAS, it has pleased our Heavenly Father, in His wisdom and holiness, on July 14, 1973, to remove from this life our dear Brother Thomas H. (T. H.) Graham, bringing sorrow to our hearts.

AND WHEREAS. We believe that our loss is his gain, and that he has been removed from this life to Realms of Glory, and from a world of trouble to a land of delight. We sorrow not as though we have no hope, but because we shall see his face no more. Nevertheless we believe what the Lord does is best.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by Saints Rest Church, that we bow in submission to His will, believing that when Christ shall appear, all those who are asleep in Christ shall be gathered up by Him in righteousness.

AND BE IT RESOLVED, That we extend sympathy to his family and friends, in that we have lost a true friend. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

ALSO BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be sent his family, a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and a copy written in our church records.

Written by order of Saints Rest Church while in regular conference September 2, 1973.

Elder Carey C. Morris, Mod.
Deacon Dean G. Connell, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143 DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1975 NO. 9

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

(concluded from last month)

My family and I always looked forward to the company that these meetings brought. They came on Saturday and some would spend the night with us. Elders and others came. My baby would sometimes say that she wondered what was wrong because we had not had company for two or three days. One day my baby, one of my daughters, and I went to an association meeting. We got lost so we got back on the highway. We saw two cars turn up ahead onto a side road. My daughter said, "Daddy, follow those cars." She was right. I began to get cold, I lost interest and never got a crumb that day. The next day I saw few friends and did not get a crumb again. The next day was no better. It began to look like my dream castle of the association that I had built, had crumbled. But not so!

Sometime in the dark of the night I was lying in my bed without a pain or a worry in this world. I heard a singing in the air above me, and as it became louder I recognized it as "Amazing Grace." There was a circle or beam of light that came down from above that circled the stand and seats above the brightness of the sun, not a shadow of a tree or anything to be seen. It seemed that I was in the trash that they had raked off of the church ground just outside the circle, as the light disappeared. How many times since, when I was down in the valley, I have seen it! But the hymn, "Mixtures of joy and sorrow," tells it better than I.

Sometime later the relief that I had received began to get dim. Back into the valley of doubts and fears. Again I began to wonder if it was only my imagination in the first place, and my doom was that terrible pit. If it is my Creator's will I will try to hint at what I heard and saw, for the half has never been told:

After many fears one night, I fell asleep and dreamed that I was about to be overtaken by a fire while I was in the mountains. And when I got to the top I could not go another step, and there was nothing to hold on to so I could drag myself further. I was on the edge of a valley which was only light enough for me to see across. I heard a voice say, "Hey". It was like one of my neighbors shouting to another. "Look back," he said. And when I did that horrible fire gradually faded out and a silver-like ball appeared in the eastern horizon. It was about the size of a baseball and, as it approached, it increased in size to about one foot. Inside it was a star which never increased in brightness as it passed over. But a light from somewhere did, as if it was the sun. In the morning I awoke without a care in the world to a perfect day. I went out to inspect some hay we had mowed and it was perfect. We rushed to begin it and I thought that I never heard the birds sing so lovely. I had never seen the sun shine brighter. When the boys started raking the hay, I began forking the windrow in. I had not got far when I heard somebody say, "Hey". I looked and no one was there so I closed my eyes, rest-

ed my head on the fork handle and saw that dream haven. The hay was in a valley similar to the one I saw and when it passed out of sight, I forgot it. I went to forking hay as hard as I could, and when I had gotten about half way across the field it happened again. How many times throughout the day I heard this same call I have no idea. Each time not quite as loud. Later along life's road of worry, I have a dim hope that I might be one of the many called but few chosen. But like the few words of a hymn I have heard many times: "The few lucid mornings that dawn on us here are followed by gloom or beclouded with fear".

(This was not signed by the writer, but since it bears the marks of an experience of grace, we publish it.—J.D.W.)

A COMFORTING LETTER BY HER SON

807 Pope Street,
Memphis, Tenn. 38112
May 4, 1974

Dear Editors:

This letter fell into my hands in 1972, and was laid away and forgotten. We lost our dear companion and their father who was buried April 27, 1974. While looking through some papers I found this letter. In my deep sorrow I read it. It contained doctrine and experience, and caused me to rejoice even in my grief.

I decided to send it to you for your consideration.

What a blessed Saviour believers have.

Mrs. James E. Young

ELDER SWAYNE YOUNG TO HIS SISTER

Sunday, March 5, 1972

To my Sister Mrs. Carrie Jo. Williams:

Dearly beloved Sister in hope of eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord, and my Sister in the flesh in our relationship and kinship to our worldly Father and Mother.

It may seem and appear, and you may feel, that I am not sympathetic or understanding in your feelings of wretchedness, unworthiness, and seeming deadness of life. Whether the writing that is to follow be prompted of the Spirit or of fleshly vanity, God knows and will judge.

As we were discussing after meeting today, we often tend, in our weakness, to want to have our faith rest in someone near and dear to us in this world. We often tend to think that we see in those we esteem a steadfastness, a strength of character and abiding faith that causes us to want or desire to be like them. We have seasons of feeling that if I could only be like them, I could rest more easily — I would be more assured that God has dealt with and taught me. As carnal creatures, so filled and subject to vanity, we often strive to attain and appear as a solid example before others without letting them know that we are too weak and frail, and constantly questioning our own belief and faith. This is our natural instinct and pride in our own work and accomplishments. This is the natural man (or creature) that was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. (Romans 8:20)

When we are acting or speaking subject to vanity, we are a constant thorn and a sore, adding affliction to those already sorely afflicted and burdened souls who are seeking comfort. Only when we are stripped of our vanity and made to confess our own unworthiness, our own faults, our own weakness and inability to even think to do good, let alone perform it, that we can comfort one who is made to feel that they alone are the vilest of sinners. We are comforted when those we have esteemed as the pillar of faith, confess their lack of it, and express their fears that they too are not worthy of our esteem, let alone the mercy and blessings of God.

At this writing I seem to be assured and persuaded that not just some men, but all men are subject to these vanities, these doubts, these fears and failings. Those with whom God deals and teaches, are the only ones who know it and will confess it. Even they don't confess it until they are made to feel they must, and are made to do so. In our weakness we often say this ought not to be, that we should always be willing to confess our faults one to another, knowing it will be of comfort to some. This however is not the case, we have to be made willing, and this is not a voluntary act of the creature so filled with vanity. Some of the time something seems to swell up within us, and we begin to search and look for something to do to help the cause of Christ — to work out a more perfect way of doing things: to go out into the hedges, the highways and byways, and compel all to come and hear the truth, the gospel that is so comforting to us. This, in my opinion, is the very height of vanity, phariseeism, workism, etc., for those who do not feel the need of Christ, do not see themselves as lost and undone sinners, do not see themselves in distress, in debt and discontented (Elder Griffin's text today 1 Samuel 22:1,2) will not and cannot hear the good news of the gospel that Christ had done all for the salvation of His people. As Elder Griffin was so blessed to proclaim in his discourse today, those who are not in distress, in debt and discontented would not feel secure and safe (only restless and uncomfortable) in the place where those so afflicted found rest.

I hope you do not think you are alone in these feelings of zealousness. I am persuaded that all of those who have been exercised of God, who have been made to feel after the mercies of God, who are made thankful for God's divine blessings and their hope of God's forgiveness, are from time to time filled with a desire to see more and more and larger numbers of Primitive Baptists and those who believe "Salvation by the grace of God and that alone." We tend to want more and more evidence that what we believe is the truth. Numbers we feel is a measure and evidence that we are on the right track. However, this is not the case: there are all around us churches with thousands even millions of members who teach a worldly-wise doctrine that is pleasing to the vanity of men's minds. Numbers have never been, and I seriously doubt will ever be, any evidence to the true seeker of the truth. To be one of many neither denotes that one is either in the right or wrong. There could be millions all of the same mind not having all the facts, and firmly convinced of a thing, yet be completely wrong about it. The reverse could also be the case as well. By whom one is taught does make a difference. If one is taught by Christ who is the way, the truth and the life, they are sure to have the truth — One of my continued questions is, am I and have I been taught of and by Christ. Has the Comforter (the Holy Spirit) came to me and taken the things of Christ and shown them to me.

Sister, I am truly sympathetic and do understand what you say and mean when you speak of being dead, and feeling to be less than nothing, a dead dog. It seems that most of my goings and my way is filled with such feelings. It seems that I am constantly in doubt, and very fearful that I am not only not a child of Grace but a deceiver and a perpetrator of all that is directly opposite. Some of the time, as meeting day approaches, it seems to be the height of hyprocrisy for me to get up before the congregation and speak or profess to speak in the name of God. Sometimes it seems that I can hardly wait for meeting as I want to tell something that seems would be comforting to God's little ones, —often I am stripped completely by meeting time and unable to say anything. At other times there seems to be a lot on my mind and I so filled that I cannot stop talking, but have an awful feeling afterwards that I spoke in my own strength and not by, through and of the power of God. I have some of

the most vain thoughts sometimes and am so puffed up as to think that I have some terribly important something or news to relate, and find myself jealous of the time taken by Elder Campbell and Elder Prince because I have something that is worth something to say — I am dreadfully ashamed of this, and have confessed this to them — but it seems that this is surely not the way of a God called minister — it is out of place and shamefully vain. What shall I do? shall I ignore it and pretend that I did not have such thoughts, or shall I confess them and beseech their forgiveness, and God's forgiveness? I am persuaded as stated earlier, that we should confess these things one to another, and not pretend and appear that we are a pillar of strength and above such thoughts and acts. This false pretense or appearance of staunchness will only tend to lead others to a false conclusion about you and make them feel that surely they are not one of the recipients of God's grace as they know themselves to be so much weaker and more faithless that you appear to be.

It is felt that this very thing was under consideration and voiced by the Apostle Paul in the 2nd chapter of his letter to the church of God at Corinth. In verses 3, 4 and 5 I quote, "And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speach and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." He is saying that had he come appearing to be a pillar of strength, a wonderful and eloquent speaker filled with enticing and desirable wisdom, their faith might tend to be in Paul and not in the power of God, which was able to make him fearful, able to make him tremble and weak, but in spite of this speak of God's power, God's dealings with his people, God's wonderful love and mercy. Do we not feel comforted when we read Paul's confession here. Do we not feel strengthened by the knowledge that Paul (surely a called man of God) felt to be weak, fearful and hopeless by himself to speak comfortably to them. I am comforted when I read that Paul was made to confess that when he would do good, evil was present with him. That which he did, he allowed not and what he would do, he did not. But what he hated, that he did. He confessed that the will was present with him but how to perform that which was good he found not. Oh! this fits my case, my own pitiful case. I seem to ever be doing the very thing that I hate — I seem to think of good to do, but never get around to doing it. I seem to do the very things I shouldn't do and leave undone all of the things I know to do. It is comforting to me to read where Paul confesses of the warfare within him, and that he delighted in the law of God after the inward men: but saw another law in his members warring against the law of his mind, and making him a captive of the law of sin in his members. He was given to feel wretched (as you do and I hope I have felt) and ask who shall deliver me from the body of this death? He was also given to give thanks to God that things were as they were, to thank God that he was with the mind given to serve the law of God, but recognizing that with his flesh he served the law of sin.

Dear Carrie Jo, so often I have the feeling that I wish you and I could be together often and could talk about these things. I get to feeling so ashamed when I know that we are so close together yet so far apart because of our daily duties and our need to fulfill our family duties. Often I think it is only vanity that causes me to be so needed by Chuck and Jeff. I have tried to teach them the things they should know, I have tried to provide and make them feel they are loved and that I am ever ready to help them (if they knew how frail, how helpless and undecided I am at times, they wouldn't want my help) and try to understand their needs. We are ever confronted with a way of life that contradicts everything we hope to believe

and trust in. I am fully persuaded and profess to believe that God has set things in order, done everything that is needful, determined all events and is eminently able to perform all that he has determined, and able to bring to pass all he has thought to do. Yet I find feeble, frail, weak me constantly trying to *help him get it done.*

How shameful and doubting I prove to be!

As I said in the beginning, whether all I have written is prompted of God in love for you and Him — God knows I hope it is not vanity. I hope it is with charity and you will be able to receive it in like manner. I love you very much — something, I hope it is love, causes me to want to let you know and to thank you for being kind toward me and displaying love my way.

Swayne (Young)

(The above was sent to us by Elder Young's mother, Sister Lucille Young who was much comforted by it after the passing of her husband, James E. Young in 1974. It was written to his sister)

MEETING AT HOUSTON

7942 Longridge,
Houston, Texas 77055

Dear Editors:

The brethren of Shepherd Fold Church in Houston, Texas, have permitted me to share the following glad tidings with the Signs:

The Church was blessed to host a special 5th Sunday meeting in March. Visitors from the sister churches of the Pleasant Valley, Sulphur Fork and South Ouachita Associations, and from the Saints Rest Church of Dallas met with us.

During the course of this meeting a presbytery was formed to ordain Brother Earl Hall as Deacon for Shepherd Fold Church. The minutes of this meeting are inclosed should you deem them of interest to your readers.

Elder Jerry Evers

Route 4, Box 157
Quitman, Ms. 39355

Dear Brother Spangler,

Recently, my thoughts have been upon the subject of God's judgments, and there appears to be many avenues of this subject in the New Testament. Since there are eleven different Greek words which are translated into the two words "judgment" and "judgments", the subject has a much broader meaning than commonly understood today. There are some sound and eminent brethren who render the word always to the future judgment when God shall gather all nations together and divide the sheep from the goats as the tares are separated from the wheat in the harvest. There are other eminent and sound brethren that assign the judgments exclusive to the heart during the gospel dispensation. There are still others who hold to both aspects of the judgment. I do not wish to get involved in those close hair-splitting views, but rather to pursue the different meanings as applied in the New Testament.

One interesting thing is that the word "judgment" connected with the word "seat" in "judgment-seat" carries a broad meaning which is a sentence, for or against, and can be understood of "justification, pardon, condemnation, damnation, or carried to law." It is the same as most often used in the Old Testament.

The JUDGMENT SEAT

The "judgment-seat" is most often used relative to the rostrum, pedestal, or throne, in the "judgment-hall" of the governors in the Roman provinces. Pilot sat on the "judgment-seat" when his wife told him not to have anything to do with "this just man" (Christ), and this was in the Judgment Hall in Jerusalem. Again, he sat on the Judgment-seat when he told the Jews to "behold your king". This word "judgment-seat" literally means a "foot's breath" or step, which was a raised platform, and was used exclusively when the governor made sentence "for or against" a per-

son under accusation before him.

Luke used the same word in recording the incidences involving Paul's arrest.

While Paul was in Achaia, he was arrested by Jews of Corinth and brought before Gallio the Roman governor of Achaia at his "judgment seat". He refused to hear the case, and certain Greeks seized Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the "judgment seat". It was here that the Romans drove the accusing Jews from "before the judgment seat". (Acts 18)

Later Paul was arrested, Felix kept him bound for two years to please the Jews. Howver, when Festus, the Roman governor, took Felix's office, the Jews informed him against Paul. So after ten days, Festus "sitting on the judgment seat commanded Paul to be called." It was here that Paul appealed his case at "Caesar's judgment seat". (Acts 25).

Only twice does Paul use this word-combination "judgment seat". In Romans 14:10-12, he writes: "But why doest thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? For *we* shall (future tense) all stand before the JUDGMENT SEAT of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one OF US SHALL give account of himself before God." It is well here to keep in mind that the word "judgment" connected with "judgment seat" also carries the sentence both "for or against" one. Justification and righteousness is pronounced as well as condemnation or damnation.

Again, in 2nd Cor. 5:10, Paul uses this same word combination. His subject centers upon "if our earthly house of this tabernacle be desolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, ETERNAL IN THE HEAVENS" (verse 1). In this context, he discusses our "confidence" knowing "whilst we are at home in the BODY, we ase ABSENT FROM THE LORD" (verse 6). He states his "willing rather to be absent from the BODY, and be PRESENT with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him." (verse 9). In its context, surely the word must speak of a sentence of forgiveness, righteousness, and justification, for he says "For WE MUST ALL (personal pronoun, future tense) appear BEFORE the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things in body, according to that he hath done, whether good or bad." (verse 10).

All the force of this context makes it certain and personal as well as future. In this sense of the meaning, this judgment can not be the judgments that are in the heart. It isn't that this judgment "appears to us", but rather we must "appear before" it. Here we have a reference to a pedestal, rostrum, or throne, from whence for the election of grace the sentence is righteousness and pardon. In fact, what greater confidence can one have who has a hope in Christ, that before Him who loved us, and gave His life for us, we will appear. Surely it is merciful that we appear before a judgment seat upon which our own Advocate is the Judge! For rather would I appear before a Friend, than an enemy for this judgment. Paul faired very well before the Greek governor's judgment seat, but not before the Jews' or Ceasar's!

It is noteworthy that in all our Articles of faith, and especially in the Old London Confession of 1680 "Of The General Judgment", Old Baptists in stating that they "believed in a resurrection of the dead and general JUDGMENT" always cited Romans 14:10-12 and II Cor. 5:10 as proof texts.

INTERAL JUDGMENTS

God's judgments, for and against, is often manifest within a regenerate believer's heart. "If OUR hearts CONDEMN (judges) us, God is greater." Judgment in the heart is often positive. Whenever we are spiritually lifted and God manifests His gracious care of us to revive our hope and faith, this is a judgment FOR US. The sentence is pronounced that we are RIGHTEOUS.

This judgment is always discriminating, or "distinguishing", and therefore has multiple effects in the heart. It distinguishes between truth and error; it distinguishes between that which is carnal and that which is spiritual; it distinguishes between those things which are approved, disapproved, or indifferent in nature and grace.

A case in Scriptures is that of the unjust steward who while forgiven by his lord, seized his own debtors by the throat saying "pay me what thou owest." The lord's judgment of him was "turn him over to the tormentors until he has paid every wit". He was forgiven, yet was tormented for his mercilessness. So it often is with the children of grace. Doctrinally, God has forgiven the trespasses of all His children by virtue of Christ's atoning sacrifice and forgiveness, yet they are all taught to cry out "Father, forgive me for my sins I've committed." No one takes the abstract doctrine contrary to what experience of God's internal judgment has wrought within the heart. Regardness of the doctrinal truth of Christ's completed work of salvation, including forgiveness of sins, sinners still beg for His mercies in forgiveness of sins. The specific work of the Spirit is not only to lead the believers into all truth, but also to convince the world of "righteousness, sin, and judgment" and doctrinal truth will not prevent His work within the child of grace. Rather, the doctrinal truth taught the believer is such that when the Holy Ghost convinces them of sin, righteousness, judgment, it has its fruit in them for their comfort and confirmation that "If we sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous." In fact, the head knowledge of the doctrine is merely the "letter" if the experimental judgment of the Spirit is lacking. But if the experimental judgments be present, the doctrine is of the greatest comfort when a broken and contrite heart is brought to beg before the throne of grace and receives a revelation of the forgiveness which is in Christ Jesus.

EXTERNAL JUDGMENTS

Within the Scriptures, external judgments abound more numerous. God's judgments against Israel is for our admonition and instruction. A good case in point is mentioned in I Peter, chapters 3 and 4. Peter tells the scattered flock not to think it "strange" concerning "the firy trials" which was to come against them, and admonishes them to be patient in suffering for righteousness sake. He points to the suffering of Christ to illustrate that patience. They once "worked the will of the Gentiles" such as fornication, lasciviousness, lust, excess of wine, banqueting, riot, etc. Those with whom they had their conversations in times past thought it strange that they no longer ran with them in the same manner. He explicitly stated that the past time in the way of the Gentiles should SUFFICE . . . they had been under lasciviousness for long enough and more than enough. But the time was at hand, when "judgment must begin AT the house of God". He does not say "IN the house of God" for this type of judgment can never be IN His house. The "firy trials" they were about to suffer was to first begin at the house of God . . . but it would certainly not end there. For he adds: "and if it begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God. And if the righteous SCARCELY BE SAVED, where shall the ungodly and sinners appear?" (verse 17-18)

Now it is evident to a child of grace that the righteous are not "scarcely" regenerated nor "scarcely" sanctified, or "scarcely" redeemed, etc. In the persecution against the Jewish nation, however, the church was first under attack by the ungod who obeyed not the gospel of God. Even in the days of Herod, whom God's angel killed, the apostles were "scarely" delivered or saved. Under Saul of Tarsus, many were delivered up to prison and death. But, while the church was scattered abroad and went everywhere preaching the word, the time of the ungod was even then at hand.

The Hebrew nation saw destruction, and the Romans were destroyed. But strangely enough, according to prophesy (Rev. 16:9; 18:4 Psa. 89:23), every persecution of the elect has resulted in national judgments of plague. Even so, the Roman world suffered following the destruction of Jerusalem a plague during the days of the emperor Hadrian. The same followed the persecution of the primitive Anabaptists during the Inquisition when the Black Plague claimed one-fifth of Europe's population. The experiences of believers in all ages testify to this fact, that judgment always begins AT the house of God, and the righteous are scarcely delivered, but the ungodly reap the force of this judgment and have no place to appear for deliverance or mercy. There is no hiding place from the wrath of God, save in the person of Christ, and only the righteous are found there.

JUDGMENT and DISCERNMENT

Another "judgment" is strictly the "discerning, or preceiving" of something or someone. In this sense, it is surely internal within the heart of a believer. "For this cause was the gospel preached to the dead (in trespasses and sins) that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit." (I Peter 4:6). This applies, this writer believes, to the election of grace who only receive the end or effect of the gospel . . . to "live according to God in the Spirit" after their regeneration. The effect is such, that they are "judged according to men in the flesh" who think it strange that they no longer enjoy the former lasciviousness they shared with others who wrought the will of the Gentiles. They are judged internally by the Holy Spirit who causes them to distinguish between the works of the flesh and the "grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching US to deny ungodliness and worldly lust, and live righteously and soberly in this present evil world."

This judgment is used in I Cor. 2:15 after the state of the natural man is declared that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually DISCERNED. But he that is spiritual JUDGETH (discern) all things, yet he himself is JUDGED (discerned) of no man." The spiritual man does indeed discern all things internally in his heart, for the unction he has received teaches him all things, and is truth. He needs no man to teach him to know the Lord, for the Spirit of God has written the law in his mind and heart. Yet he can not be discerned by those who find it strange that he can no longer find pleasure in lasciviousness, lust, and worldliness. The word "lascivious" is a broad word, much broader than other similar words. It has been experienced by all the righteous and they are yet plagued by it. To illustrate: "adultery" is fornication and lasciviousness, but fornication and lasciviousness is not just "adultery." Adultery is a single type of act involving married persons breaking the bonds of marriage and defiling its bed. "Fornication" extends out wider still. It is all immorality and unchastity. The man at Corinth who had taken his father's wife, whether he be married or not, had committed incest which is fornication. Whoredom, incest, sodomy, and adultery is fornication. However, lasciviousness includes all of adultery, fornication, and more. It is the unbridled wantoness seeking the fulfillment of all carnal pleasures. The greatest sin of this present world is "lasciviousness" . . . the unbridled pursuit of "happiness", the "good life" and personal "fulfillment" which are today's words for the drive after pleasure according to nature. The election of grace finds no lasting joys in these things they once enjoyed even as all men by nature enjoy. They have been given "judgment" within which bridles, restrains, and mortifies the deeds of the body by the Spirit of God. Yet they are "judged of no man" who can in no way understand or preceive the new principles of the new creature created in the elect.

A student recently asked me: "What do YOU do for "fun"? My sincere answer was: "Go to church". "Wow!" was her reply. She "judged me according to men in the flesh". How strange this must appear to those who seek for carnal pleasures and "doing their own thing"! Yet, the end result to a child of grace is that they might so be judged of men in the flesh, that they might live unto God in the Spirit. They have been given this type of judgment which means to "distinguish, discern, preceive, condemn, condemnation, and damnation".

Yours in hope,
Stanley C. Phillips

KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION 1975

The 210th session of the *Kehukee Association* is to convene, God willing, with Great Swamp Church located at the intersection of 10th Street (U.S. 264 business) and Forbes Street in Greenville, N. C. the 1st Sunday, Saturday before and Monday following in October (4, 5, 6) The Saturday and Sunday services will be held at the school house located in Stokes, N. C., and on Monday at the meeting house in Greenville, N. C.

Coming from the north and east travel U.S. 13 or U.S. 17 to Williamston, N. C. Take U.S. 17 south 2 miles to Highway 1001, turn right to Stokes, N. C. From the south and southwest come to Greenville, take U.S. 13 north 2 miles and turn right on 903 to Stokes. Coming from the north and west travel to Wilson, N. C., take U.S. 264 to Greenville, then travel U.S. 13 north 2 miles, turn right on 903 to Stokes, N. C.

We invite all brethren of the same faith and order and are at peace at home, to come and visit with us.

Marvin E. Garner, Clerk

ORIGINAL SOUTH ARKANSAS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The *Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association* convenes, the Lord willing, with Chapel Hill Church, located nine miles north of Holly Springs, six miles south of Sparkman, Arkansas, Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1975.

Ross Watson, Clerk
Florence Watson, Ass't. Clerk

THE SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1975 session of the *Smith River Association* is to be held, the Lord willing, at Long Branch Meeting House in Franklin County, Virginia, the 1st Sunday in September, and Friday and Saturday before. (September 5, 6, 7)

Long Branch Meeting House is located approximately 19 miles west of Rocky Mount, Va. on Road No. 40.

We look forward to meeting our brethren, sisters and friends at the meeting.

Amos I. Hash, Clerk

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The 1975 session of the *Seven Mile Association* will, the Lord willing, be held with the church at Liberty Meeting House in Harnett County, N. C. the third Sunday, Friday and Saturday before, in September, 1975. (September 19, 20, 21)

Liberty Meeting House is located 3 miles north of Dunn, N. C. at the junction of State Roads 1822 and 1705, west of 301 Highway.

We invite the Elders, brethren and sisters of our faith to visit with us.

James G. Young, Clerk

BLACK RIVER UNION

The next session of the *Black River Union* will, the Lord willing, be held with the church at Liberty Meeting House, Harnett County, N. C. the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in August, 1975.

Liberty Meeting House is located 3 miles north of Dunn, N. C. at the junction of state roads 1822 and 1705 west of 301 Highway.

We would be happy if blessed of the Lord, to have visiting Elders, brethren and sisters to meet with us.

Eld. W. D. Godwin, Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Belview Primitive Baptist Church, Roanoke County, Va., a presbytery met June 14, 1975 at Belview for the examination of brother William Lane Carter, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of the Gospel Ministry.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Hale Terry. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: William Hol-

land, J. R. Hollandsworth, Posey Plybon, W. H. Terry, and Noel S. Conner, L. J. Brammer and Wallis A. Smith.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder L. J. Brammer as moderator and Elder Wallis A. Smith as Clerk. Elders W. M. Holland and Noel Conner to perform the examination of the condidate. Deacon G. W. Conner having been duly appointed by Belview Church in conference June 14, 1975, spokesman for the church, delivered brother William Lane Carter to the Presbytery. Examination was made by Elders William Holland and Noel Conner using scripture reference 1st. Timothy, Chap. 3. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder J. R. Hollandsworth. Elder Hale Terry delivered the charge to the candidate.

The Moderator asked Deacon G. W. Conner if the church approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to brother William Lane Carter and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained was delivered back to the church as an ordained minister of the Old School, Primitive Baptist Church at Belview Church, Roanoke County, Virginia.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Wallis A. Smith.

Elder L. J. Brammer, Moderator
Elder Wallis A. Smith, Clerk

MINUTES OF PRESBYTERY

Shepherd Fold Church
Houston, Texas
March 29, 1975

The following Elders E. J. Lambert, J. A. Evers, G. D. Shipman, H. L. Ballard, E. B. Ault, and C. M. Haygood, and Deacons Barney Evers and D. G. Connell, met and organized themselves into a presbytery be electing Elder C. M. Haygood as Moderator, and Deacon D. G. Connell as Clerk.

The Moderator called the spokesman for the church, Deacon McCorkle to present the candidate Brother Earl Hall to the Presbytery. The Presbytery proceeded by examination of the candidate by questioning Spokesman Deacon McCorkle and the candidate as to the qualifications of the candidate for the office of Deacon. Motion and second to continue the ordination, the motion carried.

Elder E. J. Lambert was appointed to word the prayer, and Elder C. M. Haygood to give the charge. The Presbytery proceeded with laying on of hands and prayer, followed by Elder C. M. Haygood giving charge to Brother Earl Hall and the church.

After the Presbytery bid Brother Hall Godspeed, he was delivered back to the church as a properly ordained deacon. Motion and second by the church to receive Brother Hall as a deacon of Shepherd Fold Church, and extending to him the right hand of fellowship.

Minutes of the Presbytery read and adopted. Motion with second that the presbytery be dissolved, with prayer by Elder G. D. Shipman.

Elder C. M. Haygood, Moderator
Deacon D. G. Connell, Clerk
Eld. E. J. Lambert, Eld. G. D. Shipman
Eld. H. J. Ballard, Eld. E. B. Ault,
Eld. Jerry Evers, Deacon W. R. McCorkle
Deacon Barney Evers

CORRECTION OF ERROR

On page 137 of the June issue of the Signs, *the 4th line of the second paragraph, of the 2nd column reads, "Because it is born of incorruptible seed . . . " It should read "Because it is born of corruptible seed . . ." Please make this correction in your copy. J. D. W.*

SOLDIER CREEK ASSOCIATION

It is again time to send you a notice for publication of our annual association.

The *Soldier Creek Association* will convene the 2nd Sunday and Saturday before in October (October 11 and 12, 1975) with Salem Church, Benton, Ill.

Salem Church is located on Sequion Street about three miles east of Benton, Ill. — just off I-57 and Ill. 14.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and worship with us. Those wanting further information write Wm. Vantrease, 408 South Commercial Street, Benton, Ill. 62812. Phone I-618-435-3576, or James Cunningham, 5921 W. Park Ave., St. Louis, Mo. 63110. Phone 1-314-647-1021.

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2 CORINTHIANS 4:1-5

Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not. But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

Danville, Va. September, 1975

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

JACOB'S BLESSING

"And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days.

Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; and hearken unto Israel your father." (Gen. 49:1, 2)

This article is prompted by the request of a very precious brother and yoke-fellow in Christ and is undertaken with great fear and hesitancy lest I should fail in rightly dividing the word of truth.

Nevertheless, nowhere in the scripture is the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God made more indelibly clear than in Jacob's blessing of his sons and its subsequent fulfillment on the pages of time. Indeed many of its pronouncements are yet being unfolded before our very eyes as ample evidence of the fact that, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." (Acts 15:18) His eternal purpose long antedated His works in time and His prophecies are history written in minute detail before the events transpire.

Access to a map of Palestine showing its division among the twelve tribes of Israel in the time of Joshua and the Judges would be of considerable help to the reader in following the editorial.

"Reuben, thou art my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power:

Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel; because thou wentest up to thy father's bed; then defiledst thou it: he went up to my couch." (Gen. 49:3, 4)

Ordinarily the firstborn son in a family of Israel entertained certain rights and privileges which younger brothers knew not. Generally, he succeeded to his father's rank and position, as head of the family or tribe and as representative of its prerogatives. He also inherited a double portion of his father's property. During the tenth and last plague of Egypt, the firstborn of the Israelites were preserved by the sprinkling of blood on the lintels and door posts of the houses within which they resided. Precious though the birthright of the firstborn was; however, it could be sold to a younger brother as Esau sold his to Jacob or it could be forfeited on account of misconduct.

Reuben as the firstborn of Jacob ordinarily would have been Jacob's might and the beginning of his strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power. This position of excellency was forfeited; however, as Jacob prophecied because Reuben "went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine," (Gen. 35:22) thereby defiling his father's bed.

Hundreds of years later in 1 Chronicles 5:1, 2 it is recorded, "Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel, (for he was the firstborn; but, forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel: and the geneology is not to be reckoned after the birthright. For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler; but the birthright was Joseph's:)"

From this striking passage, it can be seen that Joseph rather than Reuben received the birthright and the double portion in having two tribes (Ephraim and Manasseh) descend from him: Judah became the royal tribe from which Christ came, and later as we shall see the tribe of Levi was given the priesthood.

In addition, Reuben became "unstable as water" or if you will, began to evaporate as a pool in the heat of summer as the subsequent numbering of the tribes begins to reveal, for the men of Reuben became fewer and fewer. (Num. 1:21 and 26:7) Neither did Reuben "excell" since no persons of note or eminence came from his lineage. Neither wealth nor riches was his portion and when the land was divided the allotment to Reuben was insignificant, for a firstborn, being a small portion to the south and east of Jordan.

This tribe settled down in a land of cattle on the wildreness side of Jordan saying, "Bring us not over Jordan." (Num. 32:5) as if in echo of Jacob's prophecy "thou shalt not excel."

Nevertheless the mercy of God is ever sure as the words Moses was given in blessing this tribe testify when he said, "Let Reuben live, and not die; and let not his men be few." (Deut. 33:6)

"Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations.

O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine hon-

our, be not thou united: for in their anger they slew a man, and in their selfwill they digged down a wall.

Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce, and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel." (Gen. 49:5-7)

Instruments of cruelty were certainly in the habitations of Simeon and Levi on numerous occasions. As Jacob came to the city of Shalim in the land of Canaan, Shechem the son of Hamor, prince of the country, saw Dinah the daughter of Leah, which she bear unto Jacob, took her, and lay with her, and defiled her. Shechem's soul clave unto Dinah and he begged his father to seek her for his wife. Later a covenant was made between Jacob and Hamor that the sons and daughters of both their peoples might dwell together that they might become one people providing the men of Hamor would become circumcised. Thus it was done. In spite of this covenant, however, on the third day, " . . . Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males. And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went out." (Gen. 34:25, 26)

Later, "Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land, . . . " (Gen. 34:30) for he feared reprisal at the hand of the Canaanites.

During the period of the seven-year famine, when Jacob's sons went into Egypt to obtain corn from Joseph, it was Simeon whom Joseph bound before the eyes of his brethren, indicative perhaps of the role he played on an earlier occasion in the conspiracy to get rid of Joseph, first by casting him into a pit and later by selling him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver.

It is interesting to note that years later the character of the tribe of Simeon remained true to form for following the death of Joshua, when Judah must needs go up against the Canaanites, it was Simeon he chose to go with him from among all his brethren. "And Judah said unto Simeon his brother, Come up with me into my lot, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I likewise will go with thee into thy lot. So Simeon went with him." (Judges 1:3).

Levi proved to be a true brother to Simeon in temperament, disposition and manner for when Moses came from the mount and found Israel worshipping the golden calf and said, "Who is on the Lord's side?" we find, " . . . All the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men." (Ex. 32:26-28)

Fierceness in cruelty became fierceness in devotion when Phinehas the grandson of Aaron the priest, who was of the tribe of Levi, upon beholding a man of Israel bring unto his brethren a Midianitish woman in the sight of Moses and the congregation, took his javelin and thrust them both through. Israel had been committing whoredom with the people of Moab and the devotion shown by Phinehas was so pleasing in the sight of God the plague which He intended was stayed from the children of Israel. Wherefore God said unto Moses concerning Phinehas, "Behold I give unto him my covenant of peace: And he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel." (Num. 25:12,13)

In their anger they (Simeon and Levi as the priesthood) slew a man. How this prophecy echoed throughout more then twenty-two centuries until Christ was betrayed and crucified. Judas covenanted with the chief priests to deliver Christ unto them for thirty pieces of

silver. Then a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders came to Gethsemane, laid hands on Him and took Him. Subsequently, they sought false witnesses, finally finding two to accuse Him to death. Hereinafter, they delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor. Since it was the time of the feast of the passover, Pilate would have released unto the people one of the prisoners, in this case Jesus or Barabbas. The chief priests and elders, however, persuaded the multitude that they ask for the release of Barabbas. When Pilate asked of the disposition of Jesus they all cried "Let him be crucified." (Math. 27:22) and "His blood be on us, and on our children." (Math. 27:25) In their anger they slew a man.

In their selfwill they digged down a wall or as it is rendered in the margin they "houghed oxen." This means literally they would hamstring an ox or a horse as described in Josh. 11:6,9 or 2 Sam. 8:4. How descriptive this is of the chief priests' attempt to maim Jesus permanently as the great ox or beast of burden which in type carried the sins of His people. No wonder Jacob cried, "O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united: . . . " (Gen. 49;6)

The anger of Simeon and Levi was of a sinful nature and their wrath was cruel; therefore, by Jacob was their wrath and anger cursed. In addition Jacob prophesied, "I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel." How literally was this prophecy fulfilled! When the land was apportioned decades later in the days of Joshua, the inheritance of Simeon was within the inheritance of the children of Judah, and they were literally "divided" among the cities and villages of that tribe. (Josh. 19:1-8) Levi, too, was "scattered" among the forty-eight cities of the remaining tribes of Israel. (Num. 35:8; Josh. 14:4, 21) Thus the map reveals no separate territory for Levi. How can any discount the decrees of a just and sovereign God?

"Judah thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy Father's children shall bow down before thee.

Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes:

His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk. (Gen. 49:8-12)

"For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler; . . . " (1 Ch. 5:2) The ultimate fulfillment of this prophecy culminated in the birth of Christ. He is the chief ruler of His people and the reason why Judah is to be praised of his brethren. Christ is to be given the preeminence in all things and although He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and well acquainted with grief; although He came to His own and His own received Him not, yet shall He come again to judge the nations and every eye shall see Him and every knee shall bow.

When He comes again, all things shall be put under His feet, and the dominance of the tribe of Judah begun in the days of David "whose hand was in the neck of his enemies" shall literally culminate in the second coming of Christ. At that time the redeemed shall glorify and praise Him, the literal Israel or as prophecied, "thy father's children shall bow down before thee," and Christ will reveal the full significance of Ps. 18:40 which says, "Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies; that I might destroy them that hate me." How solemn!

The comparison of the tribe of Judah to a lion's whelp, then to a full grown lion, and finally to an old lion in verse nine is not only beautifully descriptive of the gradual rise to power of this

tribe; but also of the complete and unwavering authority of Christ in all things as He is portrayed in Rev. 5:5 as the "Lion of the tribe of Juda."

A lion's whelp is descriptive of the tribe of Judah during its infant state in the times of the judges when it first went up against the Canaanites and prevailed against them during the period from Joshua to Saul. Then "from the prey, my son, thou art gone up:" alludes to the young lion or Judah going up to the mountains after it had found its prey and had satisfied itself with it. Later we see a likness of the mature lion in the period of David's reign, who was the first king over Judah, and was successful in subduing his enemies. His courage, valour and conquests were none short of lion like. Beginning with Solomon's reign which followed Judah and Israel dwelt safely under their vines and fig trees and were indeed like the old lion resting from its enemies. Subsequently of course the people of Israel were scattered to the ends of the earth and we feel if not deceived, that since 1948 when the separate state of Israel was created and the Jewish families once again began returning home an answer concerning the question of the "old lion, who shall rouse him up? is soon forthcoming.

But even more precious in this allusion to the lion is the revelation of Christ as the word incarnate first of all as a young lion or boy in the temple "sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers." (Luke 2:46-47) Later as the mature lion, Christ entered the temple and "began to cast them out them that sold therein and them that bought; Saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of theieves." (Luke 19:45, 46) Finally as Christ finished His work on the cross, and was transfigured to sit on the right hand of the Majesty on high expecting until His enemies be made His footstool He appears as an old lion and "who shall rouse him up?" How long O Lord will it be before He comes again?

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." This portion of Jacob's prophecy intimates that the tribal rod or staff of authority would not depart from Judah until the Messiah would appear. How completely this was fulfilled! The tribe of Judah was intact at the time of Christ, even though many of the other tribes were dispersed beyond recognition during the captivity. Those remaining of the other tribes went under the name of Judah as well.

The sanhedrim or court of justice still existed although after the Roman conquest it had no control over the death sentence. Thus while Christ was accused of blasphemy and treason by the Jews, He had to be sentenced to death by Rome as John 18:31 clearly states, "Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death:" Now that Shiloh had come the legal authority of Judah was diminished. By the admission of the leaders of Judah themselves Genesis 49:10 had come to pass.

"Unto him shall the gathering of the people be," undoubtedly refers to Christ as He walked on earth surrounded by so many who sought Him and loved Him, but even more fully to His second coming when the graves and sea shall give up their dead and those who are alive and remain will be caught up together with Him forever.

The reference of vines and grapes in verses eleven and twelve obviously refers to the fertile vine-growing district in the South of Palestine which was Judah's portion including the vineyards of Engedi and Carmel. In reference to the ass being bound to the vine; however, we cannot help but point out a more spiritual application for as Christ approached Jerusalem, He sent two disciples to Bethphage to secure an ass and a colt with her that the scripture might

be fulfilled, "Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass." (Math. 21:5) The ass is a clear type of the servant of God and a careful reading of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem according to Luke 19:30 reveals that the colt was one "whereon yet never man sat." The true servant of God is not ridden by the philosophies of men but carries Christ and he will be reminded from time to time that His yoke is easy and His burden is light.

Furthermore, in fulfilling the prophecy concerning Judah, his foal was to be bound unto the vine and his ass's colt unto the choice vine. Although types are never perfect, the "vine" and "choice vine" seem to typify the Lord's people among both the Jews and the Gentiles. Isaiah 5:2 tells us that although God had planted the choicest vine in his vineyard and fenced it, and built a tower in the midst of it, that instead of bringing forth grapes, it brought forth wild grapes. Indeed, Hosea 10:1 declares that "Israel is an empty vine." We know that "blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." (Rom. 11:25) However as Paul asks, "Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy." (Rom. 11:11) Does this give cause for the Gentiles to boast? No! but rather exhorts them to greater thankfulness for being grafted in among the Jews and being able to partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree.

The "foal" and the "ass's colt" which are bound to the "vine" and the "choice vine" respectively, remind us of Peter and Paul as well as the other disciples who as servants of the Living God laboured in the vineyard of our Lord. The characteristics of the ass in that it is strong, easily fed, forgiving and, yes, obstinate or stubborn when it comes to matters of doctrine are not only easily observable in Peter and Paul, but also in His servants today. Peter is like the "foal" bound to the Jews in his apostleship, and Paul, a vessel of mercy to the Gentiles, is much like the ass's colt who being headstrong and untamed as he hurried to Damascus "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord" (Acts 9:1) was fully broken and made willing to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ among the same people. No less effective today, is the power of God to bind the servants of our Lord Jesus Christ to the vine that they should go and bring forth fruit unto Him.

"He washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk" is beautifully descriptive of Christ as He tread the winepress alone. How striking is the similarity of this description of Christ and the one penned hundreds of years later by Isaiah who asked, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength?" (Is. 63:1) And then in answer, "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment." (Is. 63:3) What a clear declaration of the vengeance of Christ upon the enemies of his church in the latter day!

"Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he shall be for an haven of ships; and his border shall be unto Zidon." (Gen. 49:13)

Ample proof of the spirit of prophecy in which Jacob must have spoken is the fulfillment of his prediction two hundred years later when Zebulun's portion, decided by *lot,* under the leadership of Joshua fell between the Sea of Galilee and the Mediteranean Sea, bordering the latter at the Bay of Acre including the modern seaport of Haifa. Haifa is a natural harbour, in fact, the only deep water harbour in modern Israel and its

chief port, and the city itself is known for its manufacture of machinery, building materials, electrical equipment and the refining of oil. In addition there are seamanship and technical schools in Haifa; all positive proof of the fact Zebulun was to be an haven of the sea. The border of Zebulun was to reach even unto Zidon which was the chief city of Phoenicia that later became the great seafaring nation of the near east. How explicitly the word of God describes this part of Israel in Deut. 33:18 when it says, "Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out;" as one views the port of Haifa sending forth its ships of commerce into the open seas.

But this prophecy concerning Zebulun refers not only to its position among the other tribes in the promised land, but also to the character and disposition of many of its people. The portion allotted to Zebulun along with Naphtali became known in the New Testament as the "Galilee of the Gentiles." (Math 4:15) It is no less than remarkable that eleven of the twelve apostles of Christ were men of Galilee—Judas being the only exception. What manner of men these were whom Moses described when he said, "They shall call the people unto the mountain; there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness: for they shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sand." (Deut. 33:19) How Peter, Andrew, James, John and all the others were gifted in bringing forth the treasures new and old.

Zebulun is referred to with honour in numerous references throughout the scripture. In Judges 5, when Deborah and Barak celebrate in song the victory of Israel over Jabin and Sisera the people of Zebulun and Naphtali were heralded as those who "jeoparded their lives unto the death in the high places of the field." (Judges 5:18) Later when those were enumerated who gathered to David to help turn the kingdom of Saul to him, the people of Zebulun were "such as went forth to battle, expert in war, with all instruments of war, fifty thousand, which could keep rank: they were not of double heart." (1 Ch. 12:33) Not only were they skilled in the arts of war, but carried food for the hungry as 1 Ch. 12:40 tells us, "Moreover they that were nigh them, even unto Issachar and *Zebulun* and Naphtali; brought bread on asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen, and meat, meal, cakes and figs, and bunches of raisins, and wine and oil, and oxen, and sheep abundantly: for there was joy in Israel." Is not this descriptive in itself of the men of Galilee who were not only skilled in the arts of spiritual warfare but also were exceedingly generous in feeding the hungry and giving a cup of cold water in the name of the Lord?

The foregoing endorses so clearly the fact that Zebulun was to prove a genuine "haven for ships" both naturally and spiritually. Galilee, as the homeland of the apostles, still is a haven for the Lord's people as they shelter in the writings of the New Testament and receive comfort from their promises and assurances. As if to endorse more fully His capacity to be touched with the feelings of our infirmities, however, Christ, too, found in Galilee or Zebulun, a "haven" for it was here that Joseph and Mary brought Jesus after their return from Egypt. Here it was He spent the greater part of His life and ministry. How comforting it is to feel the presence of Jesus as our elder brother in the land of Galilee, for He is the real "haven" of His people. Wesley captured the essence of this feeling when he wrote.

"Jesus! lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly,
While the raging billows roll,
While the tempest still is nigh!
Hide me, O my Saviour! hide
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the *haven* guide;
Oh, receive my soul at last!

Nothing in the scripture is out of order. In blessing his sons, Jacob proceeds from his fourth son Judah to his tenth son Zebulon. At first glance this might seem inconsequential, but is it? In

blessing his fourth son, Jacob's prophecy embraced the advent on earth of our Lord Jesus Christ through the lineage of Judah. In blessing his tenth son, Zebulun, next, he describes the territory in which Jesus lived most of the first thirty years of His life on earth. The great Jehovah dots every "i" and crosses every "t" of prophecy as He does of salvation. May God be praised!

"Issachar is a strong ass couching down between two burdens:

And he saw that rest was good and the land that it was pleasant; and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute." (Gen. 49:14, 15)

Issachar proved indeed to be a "strong ass" as Numbers 26 reveals, for only Judah and Dan out of the twelve tribes were numerically stronger than he. Later by the days of the Kings, the men of Issachar had increased further, for in 1 Chronicles 7:5 we are told "their brethren among all the families of Issachar were valiant men of might, reckoned in all by their genealogies fourscore and seven thousand." Even the position of Issachar on the map among the other tribes west of Jordan and directly south of Zebulun and Naphtali makes him appear a "strong ass" carrying the weight of the two tribes immediately to the north.

To compare someone to an ass today might prove offensive to not a few, but in Jacob's time this was not looked upon with contempt. The ass was an honourable animal, useful for carrying people of rank as well as being a beast of burden. In fact, until the days of Solomon, Israel had no horses, being forbidden to ride them by Deut. 17:16. The ass in some ways was a gentle reminder to Israel that they were a peculiar people, a people reserved unto God who should trust neither in horses nor in chariots nor in any of the other shadows of Egypt.

Herein lies the key to the real meaning of the prophecy concerning Issachar, for in being likened unto an ass, this son of Jacob exemplifies the humility of Christ as He came "meek and sitting upon an ass" to serve His people. As a servant of tribute, Issachar reveals to us how Christ paid the full price of redemption for His people.

Two instances of the payment of tribute money are worthy of note at this time. One is recorded in Matt. 22 when the Pharisees asked Christ whether it were lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not. Tribute money is that which is exacted by a nation or king from foreign subjects. Christ is perceiving the craftiness of the question, asked His inquirers to show Him some tribute money and they brought unto Him a penny. When he asked whose image was upon the coin, they said "Caesar's". "Then saith he unto them, Render, therefore, unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's: and unto God the things that are God's." (Matt. 22:21)

On another occasion as recorded in Matt. 17, Christ was approached concerning the matter of paying tribute money for the upkeep of the temple. How absolutely preposterous it seems that Christ, the very son of God, would be asked to pay tribute to an earthly temple. Nevertheless, He said to Peter, "go thou to the sea and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee." (Matt. 17:27) The tribute money for every Jew, twenty years old and upwards was at one time one-third shekel, but later was raised to one-half shekel.

Now these two examples of tribute money reveal in type, how first of all the wilderness of this world is constantly exacting tribute in one form or another from the people of God, who are aliens in it and, second, how our bodies, which are the temples of the Holy Ghost, if we are Christ's, (1 Cor. 6:19 and 1 Cor. 3:16) are a burden to the Spirit which dwells within us. "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." (Matt. 26:41)

Thus, we bear two great burdens, namely to live in the wilderness of this

world when we have no continuing city here, and further, because we are brought unto a knowledge of sin due to the application of the law in our hearts. In both instances, we realize a spirit of bondage from which we are helpless to set ourselves free. The payment of tribute on both counts is utterly beyond us. "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." (2 Cor. 4:7)

God sent His only begotten Son who paid the price in full for our redemption and who said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (John 10:10) Not only has Christ redeemed us from our sins; but also, has given us a hope of dwelling someday in a better country, even a heavenly. This is why Isaiah was to speak comfortably unto Jerusalem and tell her that her warfare was accomplished and that she had received *double* for all her sins.

Issachar had to bow "his shoulder to bear" to show us Christ bowing his shoulders to bear the cross carrying the iniquity of us all. But Issachar, too, saw that "rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant," to also show us Christ high and lifted up and "who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:2) Because of the finished work of Christ, His people are from time to time given a foretaste of that heavenly country to come, and can say as David, "My flesh also shall rest in hope." (Ps. 16:9)

Issachar, as a strong ass couched between two burdens gives a realistic preview of Christ as our Redeemer.

Thus far, we have examined the prophecies of Jacob concerning his first six sons listed in Gen. 49, all of whom were born to Leah. Each son in turn was a separate identity, with unique characteristics and lived to fulfill the predictions of his father. But each, too, revealed a certain attribute of Jesus. Reuben identifies Christ as the firtsborn among many brethren, Simeon and Levi, His Priesthood and Judah His Kingship, Zebulun portrays Him as a Refuge or Haven and Issachar reveals His Unspeakable Gift of redemption. The half has never been told.

(continued next issue)

Humbly,
Stewart McColl

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"The like figure whereonto, even baptism, doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 3:21)

Baptism, according to this text, has a figurative import, and as a figure of our salvation, Peter classifies it with the figure of the temporal salvation of Noah and his family in the Ark; the former figure is *like* the latter figure. Hence, we understand that both figures refer to and set forth a spiritual reality in reference to the manner of the everlasting salvation of the church of God. The spirit of Christ was in Noah as in other patriarchs and prophets of the Lord. And Noah, as a patriarch, a preacher of righteousness, the representative of a family and progeny to be saved from the deluge, and as a builder of the Ark which was to contain all that God had ordained to that temporal salvation, was an eminent type of Christ. Christ is the builder of the spiritual Ark, the church, which contains all that God has, from the beginning, chosen to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth. He is also their spiritual progenitor, and they are accounted to him for a generation. And with him, in the church, they shall outride all the storms and floods, which shall sweep away the ungodly, and rest forever on the Mount of God. Salvation by grace was clearly

set forth in the figure of Noah's deliverance. And as also is the ordinance of christian baptism an expressive figure of the same salvation of the people of God. It is not, like the Jewish purifications, designed for the putting away the filth of the flesh, but is the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Christian baptism, as instituted by our Lord, and practised by the primitive saints, sets forth a death, burial and resurrection, and is applicable to, first, the death, burial and resurrection of Christ; second, to the experience of saints, who are slain by the law and raised up from condemnation and wrath, by the application of the blood and righteousness of the now risen and glorified Redeemer; and, third, it sets forth the dissolution, burial and ultimate resurrection of the bodies of all saints of God.

1. The death, burial and resurrection of Christ is called a baptism. "I have," said he, "a baptism to be baptised with, and how I am straitened until it be accomplished." The sons of Zebudee were to be baptized also with that baptism wherewith Christ was to be baptized. And Paul says the saints addressed in his epistle to the Romans, were also buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so they should walk in newness of life. Hence, it is our understanding that the whole church of God was represented in Christ, as to her spiritual identity, when he died on the cross, slumbered in the tomb, and when he arose from the dead and ascended up on high. When he died for all, then were all dead, and they were quickened together with him, raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. In this baptism we are truly saved: "The law has dominion over a man as long as he liveth." Rom. viii. 1. Christ as the embodiment of the church takes our law place, and that lawfully, not making void the law, but establishing it; for in him the law finds the church, and makes its stern demand. He asks for no abatement of the demand, but promptly meets and completely cancels it. The Sword awakes against the fellow of the Lord of Hosts. Deep waters come into his soul, and all the billows pass over him. Immersed in death, the law can ask no more—the dreadful debt is paid. The yawning grave receives the slaughtered body, and closes its doors upon him, recognizing in his person all for whom he died. This is baptism, but it is not all. His flesh must see no corruption. The pains of death cannot hold him long. As in baptism, the body is immersed but also raised up to make the figure complete, so Christ must arise from the dead, and bring immortality into light in his resurrection. Under the law he dies, but quickened by the Spirit he rises, and brings up from the dead all his sheaves with him. As except a corn of wheat falleth into the earth and dies, it abideth alone, and the germ of its production remaineth undeveloped, but if it die it will bring forth much fruit, simply by developing that which was in it,—so in the death and resurrection of Christ, his people are buried with him by baptism into death, wherein the extreme penalty of the law being executed, the law can henceforth have no more dominion over them. Now quickened by the Spirit they arise, not to a legal bondage state again; but they arise to walk in newness of life, and are married to, and become one with him who is raised from the dead, and are no more under the law but under grace. "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law, by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Romans viii. 4.

2. Christian baptism, sets forth the experience of the saints. When the commandment comes, sin revives and they die. They are slain, and all their legal hopes are cast off, and they are buried from their former elements, and raised up from the horrible pit and out of the

miry clay, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Dead to and buried from the rudiments of the law, and the beggarly elements of the world, they are crucified to the world and the world is crucified to them,— they are raised up to participate in all the privileges of the church of God.

3. The ultimate resurrection of our bodies from their graves and ascension to glory, is also embraced in the figurative import of Gospel baptism. One of the strong arguments of Paul, in proving the final resurrection of the bodies of the saints, is presented in these words: "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?" 1 Cor. xv. 29. Baptism was evidently designed to signify a resurrection, and would be divested of its doctrinal import if there is to be no final resurrection of the bodies of the the saints from the dead.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe April 1, 1856)

OBITUARIES

ETHEL ESTHER COCKERHAM MILLER
SIDNEY ABNER MILLER

Many brethren and friends were greatly saddened at the passing of Brother and Sister Sidney A. Miller, who died when their car was hit head-on by a car crossing the white line, the driver of the other car was also killed. This was November 21, 1974.

Brother Sidney Abner Miller was born in North Carolina, as was Sister Ethel Esther Cockerham Miller. They were united in marriage June 12, 1920, and moved to Maryland in 1937, living at the time of their death near Darlington, Maryland. To this union three children were born: Beryl Stuart Miller, Churchville, Md. and Mrs. Boyd Barbara Powers, both of whom survive. One son, Ray Vaughn Curtis Miller died January 25, 1969. Surviving also are 5 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren. Sister Miller is survived also by two sisters: Mrs. Lessie Lidden Craven and Mrs. Anna Perry — she had four brothers, all deceased. Brother Miller is survived also by four sisters: Ida Miller, Hazel Hurley, Jean May and Etta Lee Wright. One sister is deceased, as are four brothers.

Brother Miller was a member of Welsh Tract Church, and Sister Miller was a member of Rock Springs Church. They attended both churches, and others when they had opportunity. They had the love and fellowship of all the brethren who knew them. They loved to entertain the brethren and friends in their home, and their home was one of our stopping places, among others, on our way to the Rock Springs meetings. Our usual conversations were concerning the wonderful works of God in His dealings with his people.

While we miss Brother and Sister Miller greatly, we do not question but that it was God's time and way for them to be taken from the scenes of this life — nor would we ask the reason why, but rather give thanks to the Lord that we were blessed to know them for a number of years, and enjoyed their love and fellowship.

Their funerals were conducted from the Foster Funeral Home in Bel Air, Maryland, by the writer, and they were laid to rest in the Bel Air Memorial Gardens. Many were the friends who attended the funeral services, and their many flowers gave evidence of the esteem in which they were held.

Those who give evidence of their love of the doctrine of God our Saviour while they live, cause us to weep not as those who have no hope, when they finish their course in this life, for we are assured that they are at rest, awaiting the glorious resurrection, when they, together with all the redeemed of the Lord, shall come forth in the resurrection in the image of their Saviour, fully fitted for their eternal home.

May God give grace to all the survivors that they may be reconciled to the Lord's will in removing their loved ones from all troubles and sorrows.

John D. Wood

WESLEY BYNUM

Out of great love for my brother-in-law, I will attempt to write a few words in remembrance of him.

Brother Wesley was born September 14, 1903, and died March 5, 1975. He was the son of the late Thadaus and Emma Bynum. His wife, Sister Julia Bynum, is a member of North East Primitive Baptist Church. They had two children, Gordon Bynum and Helen Spangenberg and five grandchildren from a marriage of 52 years.

Brother Wesley was sick for several months with cancer and suffered much pain, but he was never one to complain about his illness.

As a young man he was a member of the Methodist Church, but for many years he had not attended any one church. Several months

before he was called from this life by the Lord his mind seemed to be on God and his blessed works of grace, he never went to school but just a little and his wife would read to him from the Bible. I went almost every day to see him for he was like a father to me and I could see he was burdened and we would talk of the things God had so blessed us with.

During his illness the Elders visited him time after time and he always received a great blessings from their visits.

During his last stay at the hospital before his death I visited him on Sunday morning and he at that time asked me what time Elder Bob Lyliston would be back from church and I told him around the middle of the afternoon, and he began to watch the door for the remainder of the day until Brother Lyliston came in, and as Brother Lyliston entered his room he opened his arms and put them around Brother Lyliston's neck and with much love and humility asked for a home with the church. He then looked at us and said he was now happy and at peace.

Brother Bynum passed away the following Wednesday morning, his son said he went out of this world in a peaceful sleep. May God be with his wife and family and may they one day join him, is my prayer.

Respectfully submitted in love
Muriel Lee Marshburn

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It has pleased God to call from our midst Brother Levy Adkins.

Brother Adkins was born April 18, 1904, and died April 8, 1975, making his stay on earth nearly 71 years.

Brother Levy came to Tarboro Church by letter on August fourth, 1974, from Lawrence Primitive Baptist Church. He was a member at Lawrence Church for 34 years and the clerk there for several years before it was disbanded. He was humble and believed in "Salvation by the Grace of God." He loved his church and was always willing to do his part in anyway he could.

To know Brother Adkins was to love him. We feel he is at rest with our Saviour, awaiting the Reseurrection.

Therefore, we the church at Tarboro resolve:

1. That God will bless his family to whom we send our sincere sympathy. We trust they will be blessed to follow the path that Brother Levy tried to lead them.
2. That three copies of this Resolution be made: one for the family, one for the church records, one to be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

This done in order of conference at our May meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

JULIA RUTH SMITH
6/3/1910 — 5/26/1975

In accordance with the will of God in Jesus Christ, it pleased Him to take our beloved Sister Julia Ruth Smith, wife of Deacon Brother Noble E. Smith, Sr., from the earthly scene on May 26, 1975. She was born June 10, 1910, the eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. O. S. Cruskshank in Sizemore, W. Va. She was married to Brother Smith on March 30, 1929, and from this union were born six children, who survive her: two sons, Elder B. K. Smith and Noble E. Smith, Jr. of South Gate, Cal., four daughters: Sisters Lila Ann Osborne and Nancy Jane Clay, of Bell, Cal., Lois Jean Thaxton, of South Gate, Cal. and Linda Lou Milam, of Garden Grave, Cal. surviving also are 25 grandchildren (16 grandsons and 9 granddaughters) 2 brothers, O. S. Cruikshank of Charleston, W. Va. and John W. Cruikshank of Dixie, W. Va., 2 sisters: Ruby C. Baker of Florida, and Iris Cruikshank of Bell, Cal.

Sister Smith was a faithful member of the Old School Primitive (Predestinarian) Baptist Church for more than thirty-five years, having been baptized by Elder Harvey J. Bird into our faith and order.

She was more than just a loving mother and sister in the church. She was a loving person, being enabled to live, as it were, her belief. When she spoke of anyone she never had less than a kind word. The Lord blessed her to have a deep concern for the church and the welfare of its members. She was always considerate and caring for all regardless of who they were or what they had to profess. She was enabled to see that they were what they were by the grace of God.

As long as I can remember I've heard her go about singing the hymns held so dear by our brethren. She was an able gift to the church and will long be remembered therein. She professed a hope in the belief that God is sovereign. She preferred to be known as one of the absoluters of the Old School. These last few years she was nearly blind, and did finally lose her sight in the left eye, she never complained of her ailments, and it was only on the Saturday night before she was stricken, while on the way to our regular meeting that she told the writer of losing her sight. She was my mother in nature for forty-two years and one day.

She was laid to rest in Rose Hill Memorial Park, Whittier, Cal. after church services and preaching by Elder T. R. Jefferson, Austin Tipton, Walter B. Wilson and B. K. Smith. Brethren believe what you may but we have no funeral service, but rather a meeting, for we find no scriptural evidence for a funeral. "This is the day the Lord hath made, be glad and rejoice in it."

Written by her son and brother in Christ, I hope.

Elder B. K. Smith

Resolved by the church in conference, that a copy for the foregoing be sent to *Zion's Landmark* and the *Signs of the Times* for publication, if so be the Lord's will. Copy furnished for Church Records, 6/21/75.

Elder B. K. Smith, Mod.
Deacon N. E. Smith, Sr., Clerk

LULA B. WATKINS

For as much as the Almighty God has seen fit to call from our midst at the church at Cypress Creek in Duplin County, our dear sister, Lula Watkins. We feel our loss is her eternal gain. I feel that she is now sleeping in the arms of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, until the day of Resurrection when she will enter the final resting place. Sister Lula was baptized into the fellowship of the church by Elder R. P. Batchelor on Aug. 19, 1934.

Sister Lula was born Dec. 5, 1909, and died April 29, 1975, which made her stay on earth 65 years and 6 months. She was married January, 1935 to Lawrence Watkins. To this union were born eight children, three daughters and five sons of whom all survive her passing. She was afflicted for many years which she bore with much patience. I feel her life here on earth proved in whom she put her trust and belief. She was a strong believer in Jesus Christ and before her affliction wrote several beautiful pieces for the church paper.

Done by order of conference, May 10, 1975.

Elder Harmon Brown, Pastor
Written by a sister, I hope
Anna Simpson

SISTER BEADIE GRAY MANRING

A precious Sister has been taken from us. Indeed she is a precious sister to me, having gone to church together for such a long time. I feel in my heart to know what a faithful, loving and dutiful member she was.

Sunday morning April 13, 1975, I intended taking Sister Beadie Gray Manring to meeting as I had so many times. I was informed our dear sister had passed this life about 7 a.m. I felt such a deep sense of loss, so hurtful to know we will not have her again in our midst in this time world, yet feel the desire to thank our Heavenly Father for having given us such a sweet sister for awhile.

Sister Manring joined us, the church at New Hope Primitive Baptist Meeting House, Rockingham County, N. C. in June 1968. May we be made to know, while we miss her presence so very much, the God of all Grace and Mercy, and forever Righteous, has done and ever will do His will among the inhabitants of the earth, and will reign in a Heaven of immortal glory eternally.

May the good Lord bless her three daughters, Mrs. Ruth Howell, Eden, N. C., Mrs. Pauline Stephens, Greensboro, N. C., and Mrs. Peggy Paschal, Rt. 5, Reidsville, N. C.; her three sons, Dewey A., Raymond and Clay, all of Reidsville; one sister, Mrs. Pearl Flinchum, of Danbury, N. C., and her brother, a precious brother in Christ to us in hope, Brother Cain Gray of Ashboro, N. C.

Written as requested in our Conference Meeting May 3, 1975, by the Church Clerk, approved and granted permission to send one copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, one copy be given to the family, and one to be spread on our Church Book.

Elder D. A. O'Bryant, Mod.
Sister Louise Cobb, Clerk

CHARLES HENRY GREATHOUSE

Charles Henry Greathouse was born in Webster County near Louisville, Kentucky, on March 17, 1883. He passed peacefully from this life April 26, 1975, in Grants Pass, Oregon.

There was no dread of death and he often mentioned he wanted no one to grieve when he was released from this earth for he'd lived a long and full life, having sojourned here 92 years, 1 month and 9 days.

He was one of eleven children of Elder Isaac R. and Sabina J. Greathouse. On Sept. 11, 1907, at age 24, he married Sadie M. Steddom, 18. Shortly after, they moved to New Mexico and homesteaded. Through a period of great hardships this pioneering effort developed into a large cattle ranch. This union truly was blessed of God, having lasted more than 67 years. They reared five children and one grandson. Besides ranching he was a taxidermist in his spare time and loved hunting and fishing in the great outdoors. He was always active, and possessed a firm conviction of right and wrong — yet lending a helping hand at every opportunity. He was loved and respected by all who knew him.

His life on earth was during the period of

greatest changes — from the horse and buggy days to freeway traffic. He witnessed one of the first flights of Wilbur and Orville Wright and also witnessed the landing of the first man on the moon by way of television.

He was baptized in the Primitive Baptist church on the 5th Sunday and 29th day of February, 1948, by Elder J. B. Hardy in Muleshoe, Texas. His pioneering spirit was again evident after moving to Grants Pass, Oregon, in 1958 at age 75. At that time there was no Primitive Baptist Church in the area. With the blessings of God, this soon changed and he was a charter member of the church of his belief. He loved to hear the gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and was a faithful member in attendance as well as a strong supporter. He continued to set the example in Christian service.

He was a very strong and independent individual, insisting on driving his own vehicle to worship services until about a month before passing to a better home in Glory.

One daughter, Fern Russell, preceded him in death in 1935. He is survived by his loving wife; three daughters, Lucile Lukits, Margaret Wagner, Frances Erickson and his son, Charles, Jr., 12 grandchildren and 20 great grandchildren. Also a sister, two brothers and two half brothers.

Charles Greathouse has departed the earthly body, his spirit has been carried away by the angels, and his body to its temporary resting place to await the hour of resurrection. "As in Adam we all die, so in Christ we shall live again."

"Thanks be to God which giveth us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1st Cor. 15:57) who also said, "Lo, I am with you always" (Math. 28:20).

Funeral services were conducted April 30th at 11 a.m. at the Hull and Hull Chapel by Elder Herbert Morris to the Glory of God and consolation of all our hearts, with interment at Hillcrest Memorial Park, Grants Pass, Oregon.

Submitted in love on behalf of the family by daughter,

Lucile J. Lukits.

IN MEMORIAM

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, The Dan River Primitive Baptist Church at Ruffin, N. C. hold sacred the memory of our dear brethren who have departed this life and unfriendly world into paradise where there is perfect peace and rest, where God wipes away all tears, where the bride the Lamb's wife can praise him more perfectly, and that forever.

THEREFORE, we should not grieve for them as for those who have no hope.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the names of those deceased be listed under this Memoriam.

Deceased

Brother Ernest Curry December 16, 1974
Brother Thomas Strader May 12, 1975

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
W. C. Vipperman, Clerk

SISTER SALLIE LOVELACE SAMUELS

Our Heavenly Father was pleased to remove our much loved sister, Sallie Lovelace Samuels, from the earthly scenes March 28, 1975. She was born January 1, 1878 in Pittsylvania County, Va. She was the daughter of John Lovelace and Elizabeth Crane Lovelace. Sister Samuels united in marriage to Archie Samuels November 24, 1897. To this union 2 sons and 2 daughters survive: John Thomas and William Clyde, and Miss Lillian Samuels of Danville, and Mrs. Christine Henderson of Keeling, Va.

She united with Mt. Ararat Church and was baptized by the late Elder W. R. Dodd, and remained a faithfur member. There were a few years that she was unable to attend church, The Lord blessed her to reach a ripe age. Later she was confined to a Nursing Home.

May the Lord bless the family and reconcile them to His will. She is awaiting that glorious resurrection when the elect family will be raised from the dead. Then they will behold Him and be satisfied. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh: blesssed by His Holy Name.

The funeral service was conducted at Wrenn & Yeatts Funeral Home by Elder R. S. Payne.

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds,
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole,
And calms the troubled breast,
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary rest.

Dear name! the rock on which I build,
My shield and hiding place,
My never-failing treasury, filled
With boundless stores of grace.

Jesus, my Shepherd, Husband, Friend,
My Prophet, Priest, and King,
My Lord, my life, my way, my End,
Accept the praise I bring.

Newton

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143 DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1975 NO. 10

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

BOUGHT WITH A PRICE

In a little group sometime ago, a young sister asked just what the apostle meant by his statement "And ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price," stating she knew we are bought with the blood of Jesus, but what, exactly did it mean in *her* life? Several comments were made, one being that she thought of it as in the days of slavery, when a plantation owner bought a slave, although the slave lived a fairly normal life, he belonged to his master, to serve him in whatever manner pleased him. Someone remarked "But I am not a slave."

This morning, confined to the house because of illness, I've been blest to meditate at some length on "the unsearchable riches of Christ" and the verse "Ye are not your own, etc" has kept coming back to me with a sweetness I am unable to describe. My mortal life is mostly spent and my natural vision is largely gone and at this moment, before it is too late, I would like to leave on record, providing the editors care to publish it, a little something of what this precious verse means to me.

I do not, I cannot know how others feel, but as for me, let me be a slave to Christ, let me be His servant, His prisoner, His anything or His nothing, only let me be His—His to command, His to direct my every step, my every thought, my every breath, His to shower with benefits or His to humble and afflict, according as it is good in His sight. How delightful it is when blest to "cast all our care upon Him" and then to see that according to His riches in glory, He has supplied, He does supply and we trust He will yet supply our every need as promised in Philippians 4:19.

It means to me that my life and my body are not my own, therefore if I abuse or misuse these gifts, I am not abusing or misusing my own property, but the property of Him who paid so dearly for my redemption and preservation.

It means to me that I am not faced with the responsibility of making my own decisions. My Blessed Owner made them for me before time began and I have only to walk in the path which my Master lays before me. Unbelievers would say what a terrible way to live, but not so with the Lord's people to whom it is a sweet servitude and a blessed privilege.

It means to me that although violence pervades the land and satanic forces are rampant; that although satan "goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour," I do not need to fear what men or satan can do to me because my dear Owner's eye is ever upon me to protect me. I am convinced that no harm or no evil can befall me apart from His direct, eternal decree. "He shall give His angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways; they shall bear thee up in their hands lest thou dash thy foot against a stone," is the promise of Him whose promises are, like Himself, immutable.

It means to me, as the apostle stated, that "I am crucified with Christ": that I "bear about in my body the dying of the Lord Jesus, "that though I walk in the flesh, I do not war after the flesh," therefore, sinful as I am, and I'm more aware of my sinfulness as time passes, "sin shall not have dominion over me," "The cross of Christ crucifies the world unto me and me unto the world," I do realize I am speaking with much boldness—I hope not with presumption, but "in the liberty whereunto Christ hath made us free."

It means to me that fear of death and the grave, probably the most universal of all human emotions, has been removed, because my dear Master went before me into death; He lay in the grave, but came forth in triumph, thus robbing death of its sting and the grave of its victory.

"I would not live away, oh welcome the tomb
Since Jesus has laid there, I dread not its gloom."

It means to me that my faithful Master has provided for me "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled WHICH FADETH NOT AWAY, RESERVED IN HEAVEN", an inheritance which I can never assign, mortgage, sell or waste. Although this inheritance is reserved in heaven for me, He sends me supplies of it every day of my life, which neither detract from nor add to that which is reserved in heaven. Moreover, the testator of this inheritnce will not have to die in order for me to receive it, for in His own words He assures me "I am He who liveth and was dead. Behold, I am alive forevermore" and He holds the key to my inheritance in His hands.

But I think the pinnacle of what this precious truth means to me lies in the last part: "for ye are bought with a price." It lies in the matchless love which motivated the payment of such a price. Love is the strongest of all motivating forces. I am told that demonstrations of love are just as important, indeed just as necessary for the proper growth and development of a baby as is food itself. This crumbling, sin-cursed world has been spared to this moment because its creator loves and protects the members of His elect who remain. It was wondrous love that formed the covenant among the members of the Godhead to pay this unspeakable price. Even in the affairs of men, the purchase price of an object is determined largely by the intensity of someone's desire to possess it. No such price was ever paid as that paid for our salvation.

As Jesus approached John the Baptist, he exclaimed "Behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." Oh, that by faith we may behold Him as He unveiled His deity in humanity, leaving for a while "the glory which He had with the Father before the world was," taking the form of a servant humbling Himself, making Himself of no reputation and became obedient unto death, even death by crucifixion, the most shameful of all deaths. May we behold Him going forth to meet those who would crucify Him. May we behold His agony of soul as He hung on the cross, and beholding Him, be crucified with Him. May we behold Him as He drank the bitter cup, containing every particle of the loathsome, putrid filth of sin which each of His chosen ones were and are guilty of. Even His holy person must be "made to be sin" that sin might be condemned in the flesh. He was mocked, ridiculed and smitten of men, He was bruised and forsaken of the Father, but He bore it all without a murmur; "He opened not His mouth." He knew He was paying the price that God's holiness demanded for the remission of sin. He could have come down from the cross but the purchase price must be paid and it could be paid by no other. This is the awful price with which we are bought. "Ye are bought with a price." I do not think the human mind is capable of conceiving the magnitude of this price. It "passeth understanding." But when we are blest to meditate upon His determination to obtain and possess us, it brings us to His feet in adoration and praise. It

creates within my very soul a depth of gratitude which I cannot describe, that He is the potter and I am the clay. May I ever be clay in His hands to mould as it pleases Him. Apart from my dear Redeemer, I'm nothing but clay anyhow. I was formed of the dust of the earth and dust is simply dry clay. "He knoweth our frame and remembreth that we are dust." But when it pleases God to implant even a little faith within this dust, we are sometimes given a glimpse of our Lord "as He looketh forth at the windows, showing Himself through the lattice." (S. of S. 2:0). At such times, there wells up within my heart a surging wave of response to "His great love wherewith He loved us" and with humble heart and flowing tears, I thank my God that before I was conceived in my mother's body, I was "bought with a price", which divine love alone could afford.

With fellowship for everyone, everywhere who love His dear Name.

Mildred V. Dykes
1114 Mt. Hermon Road
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

BAPTISTS FIRST MET IN 1715

by Mary L. Hellings

The trustees of the first Baptist Church of Hopewell was organized at the residence of Joseph Stout, April 23, 1715, which comprised of 12 members, five of whom were Stouts.

Until 1721 the church had only visiting ministers, when Thomas Simmonds came and settled here and preached to the brethren from private homes, but by 1728 Elder Joseph Eaton came from Montgomery, Pa. once a month for 15 years, during which time many members were added to the church.

By August 1747 Benjamin Drake and Henry Oxley were chosen to build a meeting house for worship on a lot of ground given by John Hart, and sometime the following winter had it ready to hold meetings. (This was not the house as we see it today.) It was added to at a later date.

In 1748 Isaac Eaton came from Southampton, Pa. and joined the Hopewell church and was ordained to preach.

In 1749 a parsonage (farm) was purchased for the minister. In 1753 John Gano came to Hopewell. He was one of the many ministers in those days who has always been remembered in our church history.

Then in October 1769 a petition was forwarded to the then governor, William Franklin of New Jersey to obtain a charter for the church from George the Third, King of England. Isaac Eaton and Zebulon Stout were appointed messengers to wait on His Excellency with this petition. Through this act it received the name of "The Trustees of the Baptist Congregation of Hopewell."

The church then met according to the appointment of the Charter and proceeded to choose a trustee board of whom Isaac Eaton was named president.

Down through the years, Elder John Boggs was pastor 39 years. Elder Philander Hartwell 25 years. In this time there were well over 350 members. (His picture among others is in the meeting house.) Next came Elder William Purrington, 27 years, followed by the beloved Elder F. A. Chick who served until his death, 18 years. I remember him.

In April 1940 the church held its 200th anniversary with its pastor of then 25 years, Elder Charles W. Vaughn. Because of lack of space, I must come down through all these many years to the present. In all these years the church has stood firm on the fundamental principles of doctrine and practice of the apostolic church on which it was founded.

On the present Trustee Board is Samual K. Hunt, Joseph B. Hill, III, David L. Smith, Ruth A. Blackwell (filling the unexpired term of J. Russell Riley), and the last remaining active member of the church, Mary L. Hell-

ings. Mrs. Samuel K. Hunt is secretary-treasurer.

A wreath is placed by the John Hart monument in his memory every July 4 and little flags mark the graves of Revolutionary war soldiers.

When reviewing history to date since the organizing of the first Baptist Church in Hopewell, time has taken its toll on the Christian way of life lived by those first settlers in a new land, so different in fact that after the death of the last male member, Charles E. Hellings in 1973, the old charter could no longer function and the beautiful wide doors were closed to church services.

Within the frame of this wonderful house of worship there yet lives an abiding peace and glory that will remain so long as it is God's will; it shall stand as a monument to all who contend for the faith once delivered to the Saints, which could embrace a reviving of a new church body.

Such things are not given us to know.

(From Hopewell Valley News, Hopewell, N.J.

EXPERIENCE

2305 Meadow Drive
Salisbury, Maryland 21801
July 2, 1975

Dear Elder and Sister Spangler,

This past weekend has meant so much to me. It had seemed like such a long time since I had seen you both. I guess it had only been about a year, but so much had happened. Brother and Sister Lambeth and Sister Gulden were such wonderful people. I told Mother this morning, when you arrived Saturday, I had never seen either of them. But by Sunday night, I felt like I'd always known and loved them.

Elder Spangler, I feel so ashamed. You asked me to tell you my experience and I couldn't seem to tell you my innermost thoughts. It sounded like a foreign language to me, as I talked.

If I have had an experience, it has been one of the most trying and most difficult times of my life, which I thank God for.

I feel it really did start the night Mother, Daddy and I heard about Brother and Sister Hastings' baptism for the next day. We were in Hopewell, staying at Aunt Letha's for the weekend when we received the joyful news. Right away, Mother and Daddy decided to go home for it. What joy I felt! That night, I went to bed and shed tears of happiness for them.The next day, I saw one of the most beautiful sights I believe I'd ever seen in my 13 years of life: their baptism. It seemed like the tears wouldn't stop coming. I was so afraid. I didn't know what was wrong with me. I could feel people staring at me and I wanted to go and hide somewhere. Such embarrassment and to not even understand what was happening. The years passed. If I had any sign of that feeling coming back I'd fight it. Satan became my constant companion for a while. The sins I committed, will haunt me for the rest of my life.

David and I started going to church together, 3 years ago in January. Dave and Kim were 1 and 2 years of age. David and I thought we should go to church so the kids would know how to act. He being a Methodist and I claiming to be an Old School Baptist, we divided our Sundays up and managed to go to both churches. Elder Spangler, before I knew it, I had tasted something very sweet and I hoped I would be blessed to taste more.

That following August, I was scheduled for surgery which could either be minor or major. After the initial shock wore off, a feeling of calm came over me. You see, I knew I wouldn't be alone when I was taken to surgery. Praise His holy name! To know where my strength was coming from, was a wonderful blessing. My surgery was minor and I thank God for it. The months passed. I seemed to have contracted a disease that couldn't be cured - churchitis. I wasn't happy unless in church, listening to the gospel or looking forward to the next meeting.

One night in May, I woke up to have the words, "Do not I love thee oh my Lord" going around in my head. It was something I couldn't answer, at that time. The next morning after sleeping very little that night, I opened the Bible to Jeremiah 31:3, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." My heart filled with joy for an instant. Could the precious Lord have drawn me? No, being the worthless sinner that I am, it didn't seem possible. That night, I went to Elder and Sister Poole's home. By the time the evening was over, I felt sure where I'd been led. If it was the Lord's will, I was going to ask for a home in Nassawango Church. Well, it wasn't the right time. The next Sunday that they had services, Elder Poole talked from Jeremiah. What a beautiful sermon! You could feel the Lord's presence. At the close of the service, I knew that I was too unfit and the door seemed to close in my face. I left with a heavy heart. I was so ashamed. I was afraid that all of my feelings had been imagined. That it was only what I wanted, but not what God wanted.

After that Sunday, a very cold, empty feeling came into my soul and stayed with me. That summer I learned that we were going to have another child. David was very happy. I didn't experience the happiness that I had felt with the other children. I felt weighted down with my sinfulness. This continued until the 1st Sunday in February. Sister Frances Jarvis was to be baptized that Sunday and I felt that Linda would be with her. She was! How wonderful it was. Linda had been burdened for so long. And it was wonderful for another reason. My coldness began to leave. I began to feel again. My desire for baptism returned—yes, *my* desire. As of yet, I didn't feel that it was the Lord's will. Then on the 2nd Sunday in March, my brother Francis, asked for a home in the Welsh Tract Church. We were so happy for him. He was to be baptized the next Sunday at Snow Hill Church.

That whole week, I prayed that by the grace of God that I could be baptized with him. Each night was filled with torment. I waited for some sign to show me the way. By Friday, I'd decided to definitely take my clothes. Even though, I knew that medically, I shouldn't be baptized, I felt to be in the Lord's hands. Saturday night, I prayed most of the night that I would be given the strength the next day. But it just wasn't to be. It was my time, but not the Lord's. That afternoon I went to Nassawango, hoping and praying that I would be shown the way. I felt like I was torn apart. When I got home, I went to bed weak and burdened. All night I tossed and turned. It just didn't seem like I could take much more without knowing in which direction I was heading. The next morning Mother and Daddy came over, I managed to talk to them some. They were so wonderful. Mother mentioned that if I had the desire to talk to the church before Sunday, that a special meeting could be called. I dismissed that thought at the time, because I felt there was no hope for me. Dave went to school in the afternoon and Kim laid down. So I thought I'd try to rest too. The baby was due at the end of March. Sleep came that afternoon, a restful sleep. When I woke up, I had to talk to Elder Poole, if given the strength to call him. I picked up the receiver, staring at it. I prayed, "Please help me, dear God." I put the phone down. I tried to wash some baby bottles. Again, I picked up the receiver, unable to dial. Before I hung up the phone, I heard someone knocking at the door. When I opened the door, I knew my prayer had been answered. My precious Lord had sent Elder and Sister Poole. My prayers were answered. I felt that I could now ask for a home in the church. After we had talked, and the church had accepted me, I felt as though the sun was shining in every part of my soul. As undeserving as I am, how could the Lord be so good to me? Elder Poole wanted to know if I wanted to be bap-

tized the following Sunday. But if the Lord's will, I wanted it as soon as possible. That Wednesday night, Brother Russell Jennings and I were baptized together. What wondrous love! I had never felt such peace. I felt the Lord's presence that night in church. It was wonderful.

Five days later David and I were blessed with a beautiful, healthy baby. It was a wonderful birth. You see, I wasn't alone. Isn't it a blessing to know where your strength comes from?

Since my baptism, I have been blessed to have a sweeter communion with my Lord. I feel as though my life is in His Hands.

Please forgive me if this hasn't sounded right. I've never been able to express myself very well. I hope and pray that it's the Lord's will that I will see you again soon. You both have a special place in my heart.

In bonds of love,

Ethel Bailey

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING IN CONNECTION WITH THE ABOVE

Recently we published a letter from Mrs. Richard Adkins, of Salisbury, Md. who was lately baptized into the fellowship of the Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church, Snow Hill, Md. by Elder James Poole, the pastor. Sister Adkins is the daughter of our deceased Brother and Sister Bill Davis, of New Church, Va. Her husband is the son of Deacon William S. Adkins, of Mardela, Md.

The above letter and experience is from Brother Adkins' daughter, Ethel Bailey, who recently was baptized into the Nassawango Church by Elder Poole. A short time ago Elder Poole baptized Brother Francis Adkins, a son of Brother William Adkins, into the Welsh Tract Old School Baptist Church at Newark, Delaware. I hope he will feel inclined to send us an account of his spiritual journey.

Our dear Elder Poole has been blest with a goodly number of baptizings in the vicinity of the Eastern Shore of Maryland. I served three churches, (the same ones he serves,) for many years.

May our God be praised!

D. V. Spangler

UPPER COUNTRY LINE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, JULY, 1975
CIRCULAR LETTER

To our correspondence, brethren and friends, we would desire to welcome you to the Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association being held with Pleasant Grove Church.

It is our desire to render thanks and praise to our Almighty God who spoke the world into existence and created the heavens and earth and the fullness thereof. He rules and has control over all things, in which we have no right to question His ways for they are right, whether we are given to understand them or not.

May we be given to pray that the Lord may lead, guide, direct and keep us in love and fellowship with each other, not only in this association, but as long as we journey here in this world. May we be given to strive for the things that would be pleasing in His sight and would be honoring and glorifying to His holy name. We want to thank our God that He has sent our ministering brethren, sisters and friends from the various parts of the country. We would also wish to thank everyone who has helped in caring for this association.

I feel to be such a poor excuse for such a task as writing this what is suppose to be a circular letter. May Almighty God keep us in the unity of His spirit and bonds of love and peace until we meet again.

Submitted by Earl S. Rudd
Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

CIRCULAR LETTER OF PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION 1975

Dear Brethren:

As it has fallen my lot to greet the Messengers and Elders who may compose the one hundred and fiftieth session of the Pigg River District Primitive Baptist Association, I do so confident that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

It is Jesus who redeemed us by His blood, justified us by His Righteousness, and sanctified us by His Spirit, and has not given us men and laws for leaders but has taken up His abode in our hearts so as to be our Lord, our God, and our Saviour, our All.

The honour of our Almighty God is engaged to keep His Church which is His workmanship and His own peculiar treasure, and is established by Him in holiness, mercy, and pity.

It is the life in the words of our gracious Redeemer which makes them a blessing to us named "faith".

And Jesus Christ Himself the sum and substance, or the Life itself, realized by faith in the heart, and revealed by the Holy Ghost.

Dear Brethren, it is only after He is revealed that He can be known.

And it is by this grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ which prevents us from taking man made laws and rules to be our guide, and blesses us to know that the law which came by Moses was only types and shadows of better things which are bestowed upon us freely by our glorious Redeemer who said, "Fear not little flock it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

Dear Brethren, no doubt the Lord will continue to take care of you. It is, therefore, in view of the fact that His kingdom cannot fail, that I bid you all Godspeed. I feel thankful for you dear brethren because God has chosen you from the beginning. Therefore, though I feel to be the least of all, if one at all, I'm not ashamed to write and say, "Salvation is of the Lord."

Your brother in unfailing bonds.

Elder Rufus Brown

EXPERIENCE

Pigg River, Va.
December, 1901

Elder F. P. Branscome:

Dear Brother: I will make the attempt to write some of my thoughts and feelings from boyhood to the present day. I was born in Patrick County, Va., Dec. 2, 1871. I had no thought of death, as I remember, until I was about ten years old, then I had some serious thoughts about eternal punishment. I thought when I was a little older I would quit all my bad habits and get religion, but I continued in sin and vanity. When about seventeen I had a great desire to read the Bible to see if I could find a way that I might attain eternal life. I read the Bible through, but it condemned me. I tried to quit my habits and do better, but, seemingly, got worse all the time.

I dreamed that I saw a company of soldiers, and a servant of God went up to them to battle without any earthly weapons, and slew and put to flight the whole army. The battle seemed to be above the earth. I then began to feel the weakness of men and the power of the Lord. About the same time I dreamed that one of my brothers and I were a little way from the house, and I heard the sweetest music up over us I ever heard, and I heard a voice cry out in praise and adoration to the Lord. I was given a message for every one of the family. I went back to the house and delivered the messages. I could almost recollect them when I awoke. At times I was greatly troubled about my condition, and would seek some lonely and secluded place to beg the Lord for

mercy. Again, at times, my troubles would wear off and I would enjoy myself with playmates, but as soon as we were parted I would be troubled about my sins worse than ever, and would beg the Lord to pardon me of my sins, and made many promises to do better, but all my promises were broken.

I was in this condition until in 1895, when my troubles grew worse. I was often begging the Lord for mercy. I had tried every way I could think of to quit sin and do better, but all was a failure. I saw I was a poor and helpless, lost, ruined and undone sinner, and without the mercies of God would be eternally lost: and I could not see how He could forgive such a sinner as I was. I had many visions and dreams in the fall of 1895 that gave me some comfort for a short time, and then my burden would be as heavy as ever. I dreamed of being with nearly all of the Primitive Baptist preachers there were in our section of the country, talking to them and hearing them preach. One time I thought I was at a neighbor's house, and started out of the house, and two Baptist preachers came to me and took hold of my arms, and we commenced leaving the earth. I thought we had started to heaven. I awoke and was comforted at the time, but my burden came back.

I was teaching in a public school, but the burden was so heavy it (the school) was no enjoyment to me. I said nothing about my troubles and tried to keep others from finding out that there was anything the matter with me. On Saturday before the second Sunday in Nov. I was on my way to Charity Church to preaching. I was walking along with a member of the church and he said, "It is expected that several will talk to the church today, and you may be one of them." This surprised me very much, more than anything that had ever been spoken to me before. I could not see how anybody could have such thoughts. I had not told anybody my feelings. He told me some of my feelings plainer than I could tell them. I could not understand how it was he knew my thoughts. I was weighted down with my burden until on Saturday night before the fourth Sunday in November I went to bed: all I could say was, "Lord have mercy on me a poor sinner." It seemed that I shut my eyes and I heard something say, God's faith is able to make the snow smooth before your door. I saw the snow around the house, it was as smooth as ice, and as clear as crystal. My eyes flashed open, my burden was gone and I felt happy. I could hardly keep from shouting the praises of the Lord aloud.

The next day everything seemed lovely. Some of my friends came to spend the day with me: they looked lovelier than I had ever seen them. This was one of the happiest days of my life. Monday morning, I went back to my school and everything still seemed lovely. I loved all my scholars more than usual, and could teach with more ease and comfort. I soon began to doubt and fear that this was not of the Lord. I tried to pray to the Lord many times that if I was deceived to undeceive me. Christmas came. I dismissed my school for the holidays. Some young people came to my school with their musical instruments and asked permission for a frolic. I objected at first, but after much persuasion, and as it had been the custom at that place, I consented. That night I heard music at the head of my bed and Jesus appeared in the form of a little child, and said, "If you allow frolicking in a house that is in your possession you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven."

I soon had impressions to join the church and to be baptized. The members of the church all looked so lovely and happy. It made me desire to be with them, but I felt too unworthy. I did not wish to deceive them. Occasionally some of the members would ask me about my hope, but I would deny it. In the early summer of 1896, I told a member of the church some of my feelings, and I was greatly relieved for a few days. Then I was sorry that I had said anything about it. I feared that I

had deceived some one. During that summer, I would often go off by myself and study over my condition to see if I could take what I had for a hope. I would often think, Perhaps it is only an imagination. But I could not put the matter from my mind. My health failed and I was the lightest that I had been since I was grown.

On Saturday before the 4th Sunday in September, I went before the church at County Line and told a part of what is here written, and, to my surprise I was received, and was baptized on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, by Elder W. A. Via. I received much comfort after talking to the church and being baptized. I rejoiced just one month from the time I talked with the church. At our next meeting at County Line I was cast down in feelings both days. This was the first time I had got so low down in feelings since I had been a member. I believe it hurt me the worst. This did not last long, and I was enabled to rejoice again. I have had these feelings at times ever since, but occasionally I trust I have been made to rejoice in Christ the hope of Glory. I have never regretted the step I made when I joined the church.

Soon after my baptism, one evening after I dismissed school, I was walking along with several of my scholars. I had a vision of the saints of God rising up. I thought it resembled the resurrection. I did not say anything about it to the children, and they seemed not to know anything had happened unusual. That must not have been seen with the natural eyes, or the children would have seen it too. This greatly confirmed me in my hope. I will relate one more dream or vision, as it is on my mind. I thought that one of my younger playmates and I were riding on bicycles and came to a crowd that were drinking liquor, all drank but my friend and I: One asked me to go home with them, and we said we were afraid we could not get back that night. We were told that as tomorrow would be Sunday, to go and stay all night. We consented, and the next thing I remembered we were at home preparing to go. Then the next thing I remembered we were about ten miles from home near the bend of a river,—though there is no natural river at the place. It seemed that we were hunting. There were several along, but we did not know any of them. Then the next thing I remembered, we had come back about three miles, and there was a large crowd present. I looked out a few steps from the path and saw some kind of a large fowl beside a tree. Someone pointed a gun at it, and it raised up taller than a man. I heard a voice say, "It is by this power the gospel is preached." I saw the saints and sinners divided. In the division one was brought in that was not a member of any church, and one church member that I knew was left out; and I heard a voice say, "All that is of Israel is not Israel." Then I remembered we were at the school house where I was teaching at that time. I saw a large crowd of children, and they were divided in like manner as in the first division. This same object that I saw at first went with us all the time. The next thing I remembered we were in a neighbor's yard, and started to the next neighbor's house to get peaches, and the object left us. That was the last I remembered of our travel. I cannot tell what it meant, it still bears on my mind.

Lest I weary the readers with dreams and visions, I will drop them. I have been a member of the church nearly five years and have been greatly blessed and comforted during these years...

Yours in hope of eternal life,
M. A. Thomas

(This is taken from The Messenger of Truth of December, 1901 and is published by request along with Sister Thomas' obituary in this issue. We remember Brother Thomas quite well. He died in 1965—J.D.W.)

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The 1975 session of the *Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association* will, the Lord willing, convene with the Church at Sand Hill, N. C., beginning on Friday before the 4th Sunday in

October at the church. The Saturday and Sunday meetings are to be held in the Beaulahville Elementary School building, beginning at 10:30 A.M. on Saturday and at 10:00 A. M. on Sunday.

To reach the Sand Hill Church take Highway 70 east out of Goldsboro. Turn right on Highway 111 about three miles out of Goldsboro, and proceed on to Beaulahville and turn left on Highway 41, and follow on 4 or 5 miles to the church.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

W. E. Turner, Clerk

THE SALISBURY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The *Salisbury Old School Baptist Association* will be held with the Snow Hill Church in Snow Hill, Maryland, on Washington Street, on October 22 and 23, 1975.

Those coming from the north on Tuesday can contact Elder James Poole on Route 13 in Salisbury, telephone 301 742-6406. Those coming from the south contact Bro. Billy Davis near New Church, Virginia, telephone 804 824-3137, or Bro. Harry Ward at Snow Hill, telephone 301 632-1816. Those coming on Wednesday go directly to the meeting house.

We cordially invite all ministers, brethren, and friends of our faith and order to be with us.

Maude Truitt, Church Clerk

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Contentnea Association* is to be held, the Lord willing, with Muddy Creek Church, Duplin County, N. C. the 10th, 11th and 12th of October, 1975. The church is located about 5 miles south of Beaulaville, N. C. The association will be held on Saturday and Sunday in the Chinquapin School.

Those coming from the north going south on #258 Highway, turn on #41 Highway going to Beaulaville, keep #41 through Beaulaville about 7 miles to school.

All lovers of the truth are invited to visit us.

W. W. Stallings, Clerk

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the *Contentnea Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, with Pleasant Hill Church, the fitfh Sunday and Saturday before in November, 1975.

The church is located in Edgecombe County just off Highway #43 between Pinetops and Rocky Mount, N. C.

All lovers of the truth are invited to visit us.

W. W. Stallings, Clerk

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NOTICE OF OMISSION

In the August, 1975 issue of the *Signs* there is a line omitted on Page 176 in the last paragraph of the second column (9 lines from the bottom of page) in quoting 1 Corinthians 2:4-5. The printing is, " . . . that your faith should not stand in the power of God, when it should read, "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." This is in Elder Hudson's article.

We regret the omission. —J.D.W.

"Hold fast the form of sound words, thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." (2 Timothy 1:13)

Danville, Va. October, 1975

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EDITORIAL

MASTER

In the Old and New Testaments Jesus is referred to either by title or name over one hundred and twenty-five times. Every title or name given him, was suitable to either His person or His work. What a wonderful thing it would be to trace out the true import of each name or title!

The title of *Master* was one used many times by both the followers of Jesus, and others who approached Him. Webster defines the meaning of the word as follows, "A male person having another living being so far subject to his will, that he can, in the main, control his or its actions."

Jesus tells his disciples in John 13:13 that He is their Master. "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well, for so I am." Again, in Matthew 23:8 Jesus said, "But be ye not called Rabbi, for one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." And again in Matthew 26:18 He said, "Go ye into the city of such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand, I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples." And in Luke 6:40, He said, "The disciple is not above his Master, but everyone that is perfect shall be as his Master."

Then we find his disciples approaching Jesus using the title Master on a number of times, especially when they were in need of help, or filled with joy: When the disciples were on the ship, being tossed to and fro with the storm and filled with fear, "And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, Master, we perish. Then He arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging water, and they ceased, and there was a calm." (Luke 8:24)

In the 7th chapter of Luke we read of Jesus eating with a Pharisee, and a woman, described as a sinner, came to where He was, bringing an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash His feet with her tears, and wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed His feet, and anointed them with the ointment. The Pharisee questioned in his mind, whether Jesus was a prophet or not, for if he were a prophet, He would have known that the woman was a sinner. "And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon I have somewhat to say to thee, and he said, Master say on." Then Jesus drew the line between the critic, who is forever sitting in judgment of others, and the poor woman described as a sinner, who had so many sins to be forgiven.

After the resurrection of Jesus from the dead and His ascending into heav-

en, we find the Apostles referring to Jesus as the Master. Paul in his epistle to the church at Ephesus, in exhorting the brethren as to their dealings with servants, has said this, "And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven, neither is there respect of persons with Him." (Ephesians 6:9)

In Colossians we read, "Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in Heaven. In Timothy 2:21-23, Paul wrote, "But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honor, and some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

In Matthew 26:49 we find Judas, the one who betrayed Jesus, using the term Master, "And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Master, (not spelled with a capital) and kissed Him."

It is possible that Judas had no choice in the matter, as to the title he gave him, even as Pilate had no choice in placing the inscription over Jesus on the cross. "And a superscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and in Hebrew. This is the king of the Jews."

In conclusion, How I would be thankful if I could use all of the over one hundred and twenty-five names and titles given Jesus in the Old and New Testaments, in deed and in truth. What a joy it would be! But most of the time I am fearful of using even the title, MASTER.

D. V. Spangler

EDITORIAL

JACOB'S BLESSING
(concluded)

"And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days.

Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; and hearken unto Israel your father." (Gen. 49:1, 2)

Thus far we have examined the blessing of Jacob concerning his six sons born to Leah namely Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Zebulun and Issachar. The prophecy concerning each is distinctive and articulate and reveals in addition some attribute of Jesus. The shadow of Reuben shows Christ as the firstborn among many brethren, Simeon and Levi His Priesthood foverer after the order of Melchizedek, Judah His Kingship, Zebulun His Refuge and Issachar His Redemption. Truly, "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." (Rev. 19; 10)

Let us now proceed to examine the blessing and prophecy of Jacob concerning each of the rest of his sons.

"Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel.

Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward.

I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord." (Gen. 49:16, 17, 18)

The word Dan means judge and his portion of land was to the west of Ephraim and Benjamin reaching to the Mediterranean Sea and containing the city and seaport of Joppa or modern day Jaffa which, in turn, merged with Tel Aviv in 1948 to become Tel Aviv-Yafo. Currently, this is the largest city of Israel and one of the most modern in the Middle East.

To begin with, the prophecy concerning Dan was exemplified in the life of Samson who was one of the most eminent of Hebrew judges and was a Danite, being born to Manoah at Zorah. From his birth no razor touched his head nor strong drink touched his mouth. As long as he submitted to these restrictions, he was capable of heroic achievements against the Philistines. However, since he was a slave to passion, Delilah was able to induce him to

tell her the secret of his great strength, which lay in the length of his flowing hair. At once, the Philistines shaved him and subsequently his strength departed. Then they put out his eyes and made him grind in the prison house at Gaza. Gradually, however, his hair grew again causing him to regain his strength. Not long after he was in the great temple, and knowing the structure of the building, he was able to move the two middle pillars, which caused the entire structure to come crashing down on a host of Philistines and himself. His judgment upon the Philistines was swift and vengeful, nevertheless his name appears among the Hebrews whose animating principle was faith. (Heb. 11:32)

Above all else, Solomon, the son of David, asked for an understanding heart that he might be able to judge justly, the people of God. His request was granted and, soon after, his gift of judgment was revealed in the skillful manner in which he discerned truth from falsehood when he decided between the two women, each of whom claimed to be the *true* mother of the surviving child in Kings 3:16-28. Solomon made his decision by asking for a sword to divide the child. The alleged mother said "divide it", while the true mother cried, "O my Lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it." Thus Solomon demonstrated his wisdom in judgment.

The reader might well ask at this point why this description of Solomon's wisdom is included here under the account of Dan because he was not of this tribe. The explanation is not difficult. Solomon's wisdom is a type of that judgment which comes from the great throne of God. Solomon determined to build the temple. To do so, he needed timber which under the covenant he made with Hiram, King of Tyre, was to come from the cedars of Lebanon in the north and be floated down along the shore of the Mediterranean Sea to enter the promised land through the seaport of Joppa situated within the portion allotted to Dan which means *judge*. For there were none "that can skill to hew timber like unto Sidonians." (1 Kg. 5:6)

These cedars of Lebanon are beautiful types of the Lord's people as described in Psalm 104:16, "The trees of the Lord are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted." The same are referred to in Isaiah as the "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord." (Is. 61:3) The servants of God are "the hewers that cut timber" (2 Ch. 2:10) and Solomon promised to give them measures of beaten wheat, barley, wine and oil for their work. Just as the natural cedars must be cut from the mountain tops of Lebanon and floated through the sea to Joppa and thereby transported to the site of Solomon's temple to be used in its building. A similar route in antitype must be followed by the Lord's people. They, too, must be felled from the mountain tops of self-righteousness, floated on the great sea of experience, pass through Dan meaning judgment and be assembled in the temple or the church of the living God. As they travel this route, servants along the way are given, for their comfort and edification, the beaten wheat or flour representing Christ, the measure of barley signifying judgments under the law, the baths of wine denoting the good news of the gospel and the baths of oil representing the outpouring of the holy spirit. Finally, being made willing in the day of His power, the children of God are brought before the One who is greater than Solomon exclaiming, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Gen. 18:25)

A further example of the judgment that came from Dan is illustrated in the ministry of Jonah who fled from *Joppa* after having been sent to cry against the city of Nineveh for its wickedness. Eventually Jonah's preaching brought Nineveh to judgment as he cried, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." (Jonah 3:4) Then the king of Nineveh decreed, "Let man

and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands." (Jonah 3:8) When God saw their works, He spared Nineveh, both man and beast and destroyed them not.

"Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path," and from Deut. 33:22 "Dan is a lion's whelp: he shall leap from Bashan." These are all prophecies literally fulfilled in Judges 18 when the tribe of Dan attacked Laish, the attack being serpentine in its cunning and lionlike in its cruelty. The image of the serpent; however, brings to mind an earlier scene of the fiery serpents in the wilderness which bit many of the Israelites, causing their death. Then Moses, according to God's directions, made a serpent of brass and raised it upon a pole. When an Israelite was bitten by a fiery serpent and he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived. Thus, the brazen serpent not only judged but redeemed the people of Israel from death. John 3:14 reveals to us the significance of the brazen serpent as a type of Christ, for, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

By nature, our flesh is a cunning serpent. To redeem us, Christ, who knew no sin, had to come in the likeness of sinful flesh to counteract the poisonous venom of the fiery serpent within us. Christ had to come as a serpent of brass, as one who had come through the fire of divine wrath so that His people might not perish. *To behold* the brazen serpent was sufficient to preserve the Israelite as *to behold* Christ is sufficient to preserve a wretched sinner. No wonder Jacob exclaimed, "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord."

"Gad, a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at the last." (Gen. 49:19)

Gad, Reuben and one-half the tribe of Manasseh received their inheritance east of Jordan. This area was known as the land of Gilead and was won before the land of Canaan was divided among the remaining tribes. Along with Reuben, the tribe of Gad had a multitude of cattle. Although Gad in number was not among the largest tribe, it became very warlike, for being east of Jordan it was continually harassed by the Ammonites, Midianites and others. In fact this tribe was in a continual state of warfare.

In 2 Kings 10:32, 33 we find that Hazael, a Syrian king, overran Gad along with Reuben and Manasseh as herein described. "In those days the Lord began to cut Israel short: and Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel; from Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the river Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan." Later the people of Gad were actually carried away captive by Pul and Tilgath-pilneser both kings of Assyria.

Still further, however, Jeremiah foretells of Gad eventually overcoming the Ammonites in these words. "Concerning the Ammonites, thus saith the Lord; Hath Israel no sons? hath he no heir? why then doth their king inherit Gad, and his people dwell in his cities? Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will cause an alarm of war to be heard in Babbah of the Ammonites; and it shall be a desolate heap, and her daughters shall be burned with fire: then shall Israel be heir unto them that were his heirs, saith the Lord." (Jer. 49:1, 2)

All this illustrates the truth of Jacob's prophecy in which he said of Gad, "a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at the last." Spiritually, Gad reveals to us the resurrection of Christ as he was crucified, conquering the last enemy death, and rose again victorious to sit on the right hand of the Majesty on High. Further it illustrates the second coming of Christ when He shall put all enemies under His feet and reign eternally with His people. May God be praised!

"Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties." (Gen. 49:20)

Asher along with Zebulun, Naphtali and Issachar were apportioned areas in the northern part of Palestine which became known as the "Galilee of the Gentiles." In particular, Asher lay between Mount Lebanon and the Mediterranean Sea, and included the strong city of Tyre. Its name means happiness and this land was preeminently rich and beautiful. Luxuriant palms grew in abundance there. Moses prophecied in Deut. 33:24 that this son would dip his foot in oil. The natural abundance of the area alone, is manifold evidence of the truth of Jacob's prediction that Asher's bread would be fat and that it would yield royal dainties.

Spiritually, Jacob's prediction was no less fulfilled for "Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons: and they built David an house." (2 Sam. 5:11) This city of Tyre was, as already stated, within the boundaries of Asher. Asher was yielding the "royal dainties" as out of the abundance of the heart His people speak good things.

Solomon benefited no less than David from this land of plenty as we learn from 1 Kings 5:1-10. "And Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants unto Solomon; for he had heard that they had anointed him king in the room of his father: for Hiram was ever a lover of David. And Solomon sent to Hiram, saying, Thou knowest how that David my father could not build an house unto the name of the Lord his God for the wars which were about him on every side, until the Lord put them under the soles of his feet. But now the Lord my God hath given me rest on every side, so that there is neither adversary nor evil occurrent. And, behold, I purpose to build an house unto the name of the Lord my God, as the Lord spake unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build an house unto my name. Now therefore command thou that they hew me cedar trees out of Lebanon; and my servants shall be with thy servants: and unto thee will I give hire for thy servants according to all that thou shalt appoint: for thou knowest that there is not among us any that can skill to hew timber like unto the Sidonians. And it came to pass, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he rejoiced greatly, and said, Blessed be the Lord this day which hath given unto David a wise son over this great people. And Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, I have considered the things which thou sentest to me for: and I will do all thy desire concerning timber of cedar, and concerning timber of fir. My servants shall bring them down from Lebanon unto the sea: and I will convey them by sea in floats unto the place that thou shalt appoint me, and will cause them to be discharged there, and thou shalt receive them: and thou shalt accomplish my desire, in giving food for my household. So Hiram gave Solomon cedar trees and fir trees according to all his desire."

A further example in the Old Testament of Asher's abundance is evident in the life of Elijah who for sustenance was sent by God to the widow in Zarephath, which according to Luke 4:26 was in Sidon, and Sidon, as listed in Joshua 19:28, was within Asher's boundaries. There Elijah asked the widow to make him a little cake and similiary one for herself and her son. Although she had left only a little meal in the barrel and a little oil in the cruse, she followed his instructions and they did eat many days. Just as Elijah declared God had promised, the barrel of meal did not waste nor the cruse of oil fail. How significant this is spiritually! For the people of God are constantly sustained by the meal (Christ) and the oil (Holy Spirit) and neither shall fail until rain cometh upon the earth or Jesus comes the second time. Asher, indeed, does yield its "royal dainties".

The New Testament is beset with examples, too, of the truth of Jacob's prophecy concerning Asher, but space

will permit but one illustration here. When the days of Mary's purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, Joseph and Mary brought Jesus to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord and to offer the sacrifice of two turtledoves or young pigeons. "And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, . . . which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem." (Luke 2:36-38) Often the "royal dainties" are the "golden vials full of odours which are the prayers of the saints." (Rev. 5:8)

The neverending wealth of Asher is a striking type of Jesus as the bread of life. It serves well to remind us of how the five loaves multiplied in the hands of Christ as He fed the five thousand and they took up the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. We can only say, "And they did all eat, and were filled." (Matt. 14:20)

"Naphtali is a hind let loose: he giveth goodly words." (Gen. 49:21)

Naphtali was apportioned the land bounded by the river Jordan and the Sea of Galilee on the east, Asher on the west, Zebulun and Issachar on the south. It was mostly mountains yet quite fertile. Naphtali along with Zebulun and Issachar formed what has been mentioned earlier as the "Galilee of the Gentiles". The word Naphtali means "wrestling" and the prophecy of Jacob likening the tribe to "a hind let loose" suggests a deer being freed from a trap and giving forth "goodly words" to vent its feelings of release and freedom.

How much this analogy typifies the children of God when as poor sinners, they are trapped within the law, tormented by Satan, then set free by the grace of a covenant keeping God. How they give forth the "goodly words" of praise and thanksgiving!

The hind is a beautiful animal as it romps through the forest and over the open fields untamed and free, but caught in the toils of the hunter it looks so anguished and pitiful as it labours to be released. A glimpse of such a scene causes us to hear the words of Jacob as he wrestled with the angel until the breaking of the day exclaiming "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." (Gen. 32:26) In the 29th Psalm we find that the voice of the Lord is powerful, full of majesty and *maketh the hinds to calve* or, as the marginal reference denotes it, causes pain and therefore makes the hinds bring forth. Bringing forth a new birth is descriptive of the sinner being born again or of being great with child in Christ. The first evidence of a new birth is a cry and the second is a desire to move, or to run and be free. Pslam 18:31-33 sums it up in saying, "For who is God save the Lord? or who is a rock save our God? It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect. He maketh my feet like hinds' feet, and setteth me upon my high places." Surely the poet has caught the essence of the feeling when he said:

> He to my tardy feet shall lend
> The swiftness of the roe;
> 'Till rais'd on high, I safely dwell
> Beyond the reach of woe.

But in every pang that rends the heart, the Man of Sorrows had a part. Christ, too, was caught in the net of divine justice as He carried the sins of His people. Nevertheless, the strength of sin which is the law could not hold Him for He rose victorious from the grave and sits on the right hand of the Majesty on High expecting 'till His enemies be made His footstool. Indeed He could say, "He maketh my feet like hinds' feet, and setteth me upon my high places."

Naphtali giveth "goodly words". As the sinner is freed how beautiful are the "goodly words" which pour forth. Can we not hear Jonah saying, "Salvation is of the Lord" or Paul asking "What wilt thou have me to do?" or Peter declaring "Thou art the Christ,

the Son of the living God" But Naphtali giving the "goodly words" is even more descriptive of Christ who spent His ministry and, yes, nearly all His life in the areas of Naphtali, Zebulun and Issachar known as the "Galilee of Gentiles". Through the prophecy of Isaiah, Christ foretold as having a learned tongue as chapter fifty, verse four declares, "The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary." What more could He say to the man sick of the palsy than, "Son be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." Or to the woman with the issue of blood, "Daughter be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole"? Indeed Naphtali giveth the "goodly words"—the good news of the gospel dispensation.

"Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall: The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him and hated him: But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob, (from thence is the Shepherd, the stone of Israel:)

Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee, and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts and of the womb:

The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren." (Gen. 49:22-26)

As a young man among his brethren, Joseph was a fruitful bough being so greatly loved by his father, having had a coat of many colours made for him, dreaming prophetic dreams which were fulfilled many years later, going down into Egypt as a preserver of life, and eventually riding in the second chariot to Pharoah. In addition, he received the birthright of his father Jacob in the place of Ruben since, the double portion or two tribes, namely Ephraim and Manasseh, descended from his loins. It is worthy of note that the meaning of Ephraim is "doubly fruitful" and the allotment of land to Manasseh included a portion on "both" sides of the river Jordan. In addition the fruitfulness proved to be by a well, whose branches ran over the wall, for Joseph went down into Egypt and by revelation was guided into storing up the plenty of that foreign nation which later was made available even to brethren from home.

How typical all this is of Christ who came as a fruitful bough even a Branch out of the roots of Jesse being a double portion: really in the form of two staves, one called *Beauty* and the other called *Bands* to feed the poor of the flock. This fruitful bough, even Jesus, grew by a well, yes, a well of living water, and not only broke down the middle wall of partition between the Jew and Gentile, but also bridged the wall of separation between God and His people as He interceded and continues to intercede on their behalf.

The church among the Jews and the Gentiles, respectively, is spoken of clearly as a wall in the Songs of Solomon. Speaking of the remnant among the Jews, we find, "We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she will be spoken for? If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver: and if she be a door, we will inclose her with boards of cedar." (S. of S. 8:8, 9) Going on to read of the believers among the Gentiles, we note, "I am a wall and my breasts like towers (ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper): then was I in his eyes as one that found favour." (S. of S. 8:-10) Christ, as THE BRANCH, went over the wall to make the believers among both the Jews and the Gentiles ONE in Him.

In the case of Joseph, the archers certainly did grieve him, shoot at him and hate him. Not the least of which were his own brothers who cast him

into a pit and sold him into Egypt. Even the wife of Joseph's master turned on him and had him cast into prison when he refused to consort to her wickedness. As a type of Jesus, the cruelty to Joseph foreshadowed the later and more vindictive cruelty to Christ who came unto His own and His own received Him not, who was taken by wicked hands, scourged, ridiculed, falsely accused, beaten and crucified; but just as is in the case of Joseph, the bow of Jesus "abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob."

Although Jesus, actually, was born of the lineage of Judah, nevertheless, Joseph foreshadowed His earthly walk in so many wonderful ways that Jacob concluded his remarks concerning Joseph by saying that his blessings upon him would exceed those of his progenitors, namely Abraham and Isaac, and would sit upon the crown of him that was separate from his brethren. To trace all the ways in which Joseph was blessed to be a type of Jesus would occupy an editorial in itself, but suffice it here to conclude that Joseph reveals Christ as the true preserver of life, who came into the Egypt of this world that His people might have life and have it more abundantly.

"Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil." (Gen. 49:27)

A wolf is noted for its swiftness, cunning and ferocity and the tribe of Benjamin exemplified these characteristics in every respect. In fact, it was the most warlike of all the tribes of Israel.

Two outstanding examples of individual Benjaminites who, in turn, displayed the characteristics of the tribe just mentioned, were King Saul and Saul of Tarsus. The vengeance of King Saul upon the priests of Nob was ferocious and without feeling as 1 Samuel 22:18 recalls. "And the king said to Doeg, Turn thou and fall upon the priests. And Doeg the Edomite turned, and he fell upon the priests, and slew on that day fourscore and five persons that did wear a linen ephod." Paul, too, or Saul of Tarsus, breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord as he hurried to Damascus to bring those who followed Christ bound to Jerusalem. In a few moments, however, surrounded by a light from heaven, the same Paul was made to say, "Who art thou, Lord?" and "What wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:5, 6) A few words of rebuke from the King of Kings and the wolf was ready to dwell with the lamb.

"All these are the twelve tribes of Israel: and this is it that their father spake unto them, and blessed them; every one according to his blessing he blessed them. . . . And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people." (Gen. 49:28, 33)

A great deal more could be said concerning the subject at hand. However, instead of trying to exhaust the topic, we have chosen rather to highlight each prophecy with a few examples of its fulfillment in order to keep the main theme intact. Uppermost in our mind is the desire to give Christ the preeminence in all things, and, as each son's prophecy unfolds, the various attributes of Jesus become more apparent.

We see Christ through Ruben as the Firstborn among many brethren, throuh Simeon and Levi as the High Priest, Through Judah as the King of Kings, through Zebulun as our Refuge, and through Issachar as our Redeemer.

In addition, Dan reveals Jesus as the Judge of all the Earth, Gad as the Victor over Death, Asher as the Bread of Life, Naphtali as the Preacher of Righteousness, Joseph as the Preserver of Life, and Benjamin as the One who will ravin His enemies when He comes the second time. Christ is in every line!

Humbly submitted,
Stewart McColl.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Brunswick, Maine, Oct. 31, 1861

Dear Brother Beebe:

Will you gratify me, your unworthy brother, by giving your views on Rev. 22:14 "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the holy city." More particular on *the city*. What city? Where is it? And when do we enter it? yours, as ever,

HIRAM CAMPBELL.

Reply—The names and description of the city as given in the connection, leave no room to doubt that the city mentioned in our text, is the Holy City, New Jerusalem—which descended from God out of heaven, and is a presentation of the Church of the living God, which is also called the Bride, the Lamb's Wife. It is also called the tabernacle of God, with men, in which God dwells, owning the citizens as his people, and manifesting himself to them as their God; wiping away the tears from their eyes, and shielding them from sorrow, crying, pain and death. In this case we have a singular combination and blending of figures. A city, a Bride, a Wife, a tabernacle, &c., all of which are elsewhere in the scriptures used to represent the Church of God in her union with and subjection to our Lord Jesus Christ. We should not forget that figures familiar to us, are employed by the Spirit, to set forth and illustrate to us things of a spiritual and heavenly character. The figure of a city, presents the subjects of grace, as a congregation of the Lord, in their congregation capacity, as fellow citizens, in the Church or City of God, and of the household of faith, and all under the regulations of a well disciplined community, under the same government, protected by the same walls and bulwarks which fortify and defend all who have the privilege of citizenship.

And in this City, are the common provisions which are so amply provided, for meat and drink, for light and comfort; for protection and safety. In this City the laws of naturalization exclude dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers and idolators, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie; admitting only those who are blessed of the Lord, and who as a manifest evidence that they are blessed, cheerfully take Christ's yoke on them, and show their allegiance to him by doing his commandments. As he has said, "Then are ye my disciples indeed, if ye do whatsoever I command you:" and for a more manifest token to all, if they obey his new commandment: for, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another." As Citizens they all have certain rights of citizenship; such as the right to the tree of life, which is in the midst of the street of the City, and on either side, which bears twelve manner of fruits, and yields her fruits every month; the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations. Instead of being forbidden, and kept back from the tree of life, by the cherubim and flaming sword, which turneth every way to keep the way of the tree of life, as under the legal dispensation, in the earthly paradise, or in the Jerusalem which is in bondage with her children in this New Jerusalem, all who are written among the living in Jerusalem, whose names are registered in the book of life, have a right to the tree of life, and to the pure river of water of life, which is clear as crystal, which proceedeth out of the throne of God and the Lamb. For unto all such the Spirit and the Bride saith, Come: and they have the privilege of taking of the water of life freely.

While as citizens, they are a multitude which no man can number, as the Bride, the Lamb's Wife they all make but one Bride, one Church, one Body. For ye are all one in Christ Jesus. There is one Body and one Spirit, even as ye are all called in one hope of your calling. Here then, is identity, Christ himself is the Head of the Body, the Church, and the Church is his body and the fulness of him that filleth all in all. As the Bride of Christ, her creation was in him, as the creation of Eve, in the fig-

ure, was in Adam. She is one with him, They twain shall be one. Bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh; and she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. She is not merely the bride, but the married wife of the Lamb. For thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name, and thy Redemer is the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called. The testimony of John the Baptist, when he identified and pointed out the Husband, saying, Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, was, He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom standeth without and rejoiceth because of the bridegroom's voice; thus my joy is fulfilled. This City is the City of God, and Ezekiel says (xlviii. 35) The name of the City shall be, THE LORD IS THERE. And God has said, by Isaiah, And they shall call them the Holy People, the Redeemed of the Lord. And thou shalt be called Sought Out, A City not forsaken, Isaiah 62:12.

From this last mentioned passage, we learn that the city is composed of the the Redeemed of the Lord, whom the Lord has not only redeemed, but whom he has sought out; he found this people as he did Jacob, is a waste howling wilderness, and led him about and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of his eye. These are redeemed from among men, out of every kindred and tribe of mankind; and they are redeemed into God, and made priests and kings, and they shall reign with Christ in immortal glory. They shall all of them come with singing to Zion, the Holy City, and they shall sit down in the kingdom of God, with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and they shall sing this song. We have a strong City; Salvation will God appoint for walls and for bulwarks. God himself is a wall of fire round about; and the glory in her midst. This is the city of which God has said, Here will I dwell forever; for I have desired it for an habitation. He will abundantly bless her provisions, and fill her poor with bread. The Lord God is her Sun and her Shield; He will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved. God will help her, and that right early. Truly, glorious things are spoken of thee, O, City of God: Not one of her stakes shall ever be removed, not one of her cords shall ever be broken.

Much more might be written in answer to the first enquiry of brother Campbell, What City? But we trust enough has been said to show that we understand the City mentioned (Rev. 22:14) to be the Holy City, New Jerusalem, which John saw in his vision, coming down from God out of heaven, and which he describes in and throughout the last two chapters of the New Testament; and which is designed to describe her in her gospel organization, and primitive purity, as the spiritual kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Second. Where is it? We reply, it is where two or three are gathered to gather in Christ's name. It is in all places where God has recorded his name. It is in the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. Of her locality the Psalmist has said, Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the North. Her locality is marked by stakes that shall never be removed, and confined by cords that shall never be broken. The sacred records of eternity show that God has been her dwelling place in all generations. She dwells in the secret place of the Most High, and abides under the shadow of the Almighty. Her life is hid with Christ in God. Her place of defence is the munitions of rocks. The Eternal God is her refuge, and underneath her are the everlasting arms. We find her in the Eternal, Immutable love of God; she is found in his decrees; wrapped up in the bundle of Eternal life, which is in his Son. She has her place in the Eternal purpose of God, which he purposed in himself before the world began; which purpose shall unshaken remain, when the world shall be no more. She is found in the Election of

grace, chosen of God in Christ before the foundation of the world. She has her standing in the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, and in his justifying righteousness she outshines the Sun, is more fair than the moon, and terrible as an army with banners. She inhabits the Rock, is in the secret places of the stairs, and she sits in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

But in regard to the house of her pilgrimage, God has chosen her in a furnace of afflictions. In this world she has tribulations, but in Christ she has peace. The place assigned her by the world, is as the off-scourings of all things, unto this day. Hated by the world, tried and tempted by the devil, opposed by the flesh, a jest and a by-word to all the children of the bond woman. But her home is in Jesus Christ, and in the earth she has no abiding place nor continuing city. As to her sorrows, trials, persecutions and her triumphs and victories, she is sometimes encompassed about by the armies of Gog and Magog; but some times she is seen upon Mount Zion, with the seal of God indellibly marked in her forehead, or on the sea of glass, which is mingled with fire, singing a song which none but the redeemed can learn or sing. She has had a place prepared for her in the wilderness, to be nourished and protected from the serpent, for twelve hundred three score and six days; and if the writer of this article is not mistaken, that period is about to run out, and to be succeeded by three days and an half, in which the witnesses shall be slain and be trodden under foot in the streets of the Great City which is spiritually Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. But whatever of sorrow, affliction, persecution or tribulation may be appointed for her here below, she has the asurance that she shall ultimately triumph through the blood of the Lamb and the word of her testimony. For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Third. When do we enter the city? As we view the whole church of God, existing in Christ, and chosen in him before the foundation of the world, according to Eph. 1:4, we regard the citizins as natives of the holy city. Sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called. Jude 1, Who hath saved us and called us, with an holy calling; not according to our works; but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. 2 Tim. 1:9. Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. Gal. 4:26. And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her; and the Highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people that this man was born there. Psa. 87:5, 6. Judicially the saints entered when they were quickened together with Christ, in his resurrection, when they were raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places. For they are risen with Christ—and are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God. the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the First Born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men, made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel.—Heb. 11:24-26.

But in what we regard as the immediate sense of the text proposed, (Rev. xxii. 14.) the saints come when they do his commandments; and thereby manifest that they are blessed of the Lord. This coming in through the gates, is an experimental matter. Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God; and Except a man be born of the water and of the spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.—John 3:3, 5. The city in which the tree of life yields her fruit is a spiritual city, and can only be entered by the gates which are called *Praise*.—Isa. lx, 18. The Lord

loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.—Psa. 87:2. David says, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord, Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together; whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord."—Psa. 122:1-4.

As the tribes of *Israel* went up to the Old Jerusalem to worship, and entered the city by the gates of that city, so the tribes *of the Lord* go through the gates of the New Jerusalem, experimentally in their devotion, to worship the Lord in his holy temple in the spiritual Jerusalem. As the names of the tribes of Israel, are written on the angels of the gates—Rev. 21:12.—we learn that the ministry of praise—embracing gospel experience, gospel doctrine and ordinances, and all gospel privileges—belongs to the tribes of the Lord, to the children of God, and to them exclusively. The gates of Zion, which are called Praise, are used to signify wisdom, honor, power, counsel, and peculiar privileges. And when the hearts of God's people are led by the Spirit in their heavenly exercises, of worship and praise, they enter into the spiritual privileges of the kingdom into the counsels of wisdom, and contemplate the glory of their Redeemer's kingdom, and talk of his power. "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city, Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." Isaiah 26:12. The gates of the Holy City are only open to the *righteous nation,* for who else can enter by the gates of Praise? They are not accessable to those who love and make a lie, but to the righteous nation that keepeth the truth.

"Those holy gates forever bar
Pollution, sin, and shame,
None shall obtain admittance there,
But followers of the Lamb."

"Blessed are they that do his commandments." The commandments of him who says in the preceding verse, "I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last." Who also says, in verse sixteen, "I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you, these things in the Churches, I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright morning Star." He is the King of Righteousness, the King Eternal, and our only wise God and Savior. His commands are proclaimed from his throne in the Holy City, and are applicable to all who are under the law to Christ. Their faith and obedience are the evidences that they are his disciples, and that they have a right to the tree of life, and to enter in to their peculiar privileges through the gates of the city; for the gates are open to the righteous continually, and his blessed people who know the joyful sound of his voice, shall go in and out and find pasture. They have right to the tree of life, and may eat of its fruits freely, and live forever; for their right is a birthright—it is their inheritance, and it is their Father's good pleasure that they shall inherit the kingdom.

There is a manifest entering into the holy city, by the gate of christian recognition and fellowship; not only when the new born babes in Christ declare in Zion what God has done for them; and when they publicly espouse his cause and take on them a profession of his name, and by the gate of baptism, declare their allegiance to Jesus as their King, but throughout their whole course it is by their obedience to the Lord Jesus that their feet are to stand within the gates of christian fellowship.

Should any of the citizens walk disorderly, and neglect to observe and to obey the commandments of Christ, the order and discipline which he has instituted, will dispute their right to the privilege of Church fellowship, until God shall give them repentance; and while shut out from communion and fellowship of their fellow citizens of Zion, they will be associated with dogs, and sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers and idolators, and whosoever loveth and maketh

a lie. And they shall weep when they remember Zion; for how can they sing the Lord's songs when in a strange land?

Finally, whenever the saints are enabled to worship God in the spirit, to rejoice in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh, in their social songs of praise, their prayers and supplications, in their love of fellowship, union and communion, in walking in the ordinances and order, the doctrine, discipline of the house of God, then we conclude they enter in through the gates, and enjoy their right to the tree of life.

We have been somewhat lengthy in our remarks, and perhaps have failed to meet the wishes of brother Campbell; but if any of our readers are edified or comforted in what we have written, our labor will not be in vain.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe Nov. 1, 1861)

OBITUARIES

SISTER ANNIE PETERS THOMAS

In loving memory of our dear Sister Annie Peters Thomas, daughter of the late Jack Peters and Maltide Vest Thomas, and widow of the late Brother Deacon Michael A. Thomas. Survived by two daughters, three sons, seven grandchildren, fourteen great grandchildren, and a sister-in-law. For fifty-eight years a gracious and exercised member of the Primitive Baptists, and for the last twenty-eight years a member of County Line Church, passed to her eternal rest at her home November 21, 1974 at the age of ninety-four years and sixteen days.

While visiting in her home she related how she was tried about uniting with the Primitive Baptists, having had a good hope of eternal life raised up in her breast. While under conviction of her sins, the quotation, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow, though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool," dropped into her soul with such power and comfort that she felt it must be scripture, but searched the Bible without finding it, until she feared she was mistaken in the deliverance she had been comforted in, and felt she couldn't ask for a home among such gracious people without the Lord would restore again these precious things. And she related, too, how as she came into the house from milking this certain evening, it came to her mind to look into the Bible this last time: so doing, it opened at the first of Isaiah, and her eyes fell on the 18th verse, and such assurance filled her heart that she was constrained by love to tell what great things the Lord had done for her soul to those assembled at their home that evening, and was received for baptism. She was baptised the 4th Sunday in September, 1917, into the fellowship of Long Branch Church by Elder J. D. Cockram.

Sister Thomas was greatly depressed after Brother Thomas' death in 1965, but was greatly comforted by being awakened in the night singing, "There is a land of pure delight." Before this time she was unable to sing, but after that she would make selections and help sing the hymns of Zion in the little meetings we held at her home. As long as she was able to express her feelings she asked of the welfare of the church and brethren, and would make such expressions that you could feel the Lord was still carrying on the work He had begun in her soul long ago. Through her long illness all was done for her to make her last days comfortable that the loving hands of her children could. The Church at County Line bows in humble submission to God's will. May He comfort the family in their great felt loss, for, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the deaths of His saints."

Funeral services were conducted at the Chapel in Wood Funeral Home, Floyd, Va., by Elders B. O. Thompson and N. F. Conner November 23, 1974 and her body was laid beside her husband's body in the family plot in Restvale Cemetery, Copper Hill, Va. in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection.

N. F. Conner

BROTHER TOM WITTY

As requested by our church in our last conference meeting, I will try to write a few words concerning the life and death of our dear brother Tom Witty. Brother Witty was born August 1, 1902 and departed this life October 14, 1974, making his stay here seventy two years, two months and thirteen days. Left to mourn his departing is his dear wife Mary B. Davenport Witty, two sons Thomas and William, three grandsons and a host of friends.

Brother Witty united with the Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church in May 1961. It was not long until the church recognized his gift as deacon and set him apart to this office. He served the church faithful and loyal until his death. Brother Witty was a meek and humble person and was loved by those who knew him. He was steadfast in the doctrine and traveled many miles to attend the meetings, sometimes going when he was physically unable to go. John said, "we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren". Brother Witty demonstrated this love and often spoke of his love for the brethren. He was meek and humble in life and

was meek and humble to the end. These are the marks of Grace. He suffered in his sickness long, but with no complaint. Only a spirit of submission and expressed many times his desire to be called home.

Brother Witty believed there was a time to be born and a time to die and that all things worked together to the good for those who love God, those who are called according to His purpose.

May God bless his dear wife to face life ever looking unto Him for her help and guidance, to think not so much on what she has lost but on that which she has had. We truly feel that what has been his loved ones loss has been Heaven's gain.

Brother Wittys funeral was conducted in the Greensboro Church by his pastors, Elder Kenneth and Leonard Key along with Elder Donald Smith. His body was laid to rest in the Hillside Church cemetery, there to await the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ with a sweet and precious hope that on the morning of the resurrection he will awake to hear the summons; come ye blessed of my father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from and before the foundation of the world.

Submitted in love
Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Brother Wayne Edwards, Clerk

SISTER ALMA ELY

In memery of Sister Alma Ely who passed away May 18, 1975. She was born June 26, 1903 at Troup, Texas. She married C. L. Ely, Post, Texas, November 19, 1922. God blessed them with a very lovely bond for over 50 years. She was surely a faithful wife, a dear mother and a lovely sister in Christ.

She asked for a home with Pilgrim Rest Church, Lawn, Texas, in July, 1962, and was baptized in August. She was a faithful member until ill health about five years ago.

She surely mourned the passing of her dear husband just less than two months before her death. She wanted the Lord to take her home. Surely we believe the Lord was good to take her suddenly from this old world of sin and sorrow. We feel she is sweetly resting by the side of her husband, to await the call of Jesus in the glorious resurrection.

May God reconcile her loved ones to their loss, and be given to say, "Our loss is her gain."

Written by request of the children.

Elder C. M. Haygood

ELDER CORTEZ L. ELY

God in his infinite mercy saw fit to call our beloved Brother Cortez L. Ely from our midst March 29, 1975. He was born March 11, 1901, in Comanche County, Texas. He was married to Miss Alma Haynes November 19, 1922, at Post, Texas. To this union one son and two daughters were born.

Brother Ely was baptized by Elder R. W. Rhodes during the South Ouachita Association in September, 1965. In April, 1958, he joined Pilgrim Rest Church, Lawn, Texas, by letter. He was ordained to the full work of the ministry in December, 1962. He loved the good old doctrine of free and sovereign grace and was blessed with the gift to speak of the wonderous work of God.

I thank God for having given me this man to walk with for over twenty years, and labor as yoke fellows in the ministry until his death.

He leaves to mourn his passing his beloved companion, one son and two daugters, and a host of other relatives and friends, but we trust and believe our loss is his eternal gain.

He was laid to rest in the Victor Cemetery near DeLeon, Texas, to await the call of his dear Saviour.

Written by request of his children.

Elder C. M. Haygood

SISTER CORA WORLEY SHELTON

Our hearts are saddened by the passing of Sister Cora Shelton on May 27, 1975 at the age of 79. She died at her home in Hurt, Virginia. She was born on December 21, 1895 in Pittsylvania County, the daughter of the late James Anderson Worley and Mary Ella Updike Worley.

She was married to the late Walter C. Shelton. Surviving are seven sons, Boyd, Sidney, Wesley, Edwin, Anderson, and Lincoln Shelton, all of Hurt and Osby Shelton of Altavista; three daughters, Mrs. Ella Priddy of Asheboro, N. C., Mrs. Vivian Keesee and Mrs. Catherine Chapman, both of Altavista; six sisters; 35 grandchildren; and 52 great-grandchildren.

Sister Cora united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on August 27, 1933 and was faithful to attend her church as long as she was able and had transportation. She was left a widow for 43 years to raise ten children. I am sure the road was rough for her at times and feel she was made to call upon her God many times, but feel she was reconciled with the promise to his children that He would go with them all the way, even to the end.

Her funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by her dear pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

Sister Cora will be greatly missed by the family, her church and her friends. May all that mourn be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father he does all things well.

Written by: Marvin Brumfield.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. H. Doss, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143 DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1975 NO. 11

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE REDEEMING BLOOD

217 Bastrop Dr.
Monroe, La.

Dear Brethren and Sisters:

It has been on my mind for some time, and if the Lord be willing I will attempt to write a few of my feeble thoughts concerning the redeeming blood of our Savior Jesus Christ.

Election and predestination are wonderful parts of the doctrine of salvation by grace; and there are some who seem to be content hearing and talking of these parts only: but what would our position be under God's just and holy laws if it were not for the redeeming blood of Jesus Christ? "—And without shedding of blood there is no remission." (Heb. 9:20). When Adam transgressed the law of God in the Garden of Eden he and all his posterity fell under condemnation of the law; and the only sentence is death. Adam and Eve attempted to cover their nakedness (hide their sins) with fig leaves (self-righteousness), but God clothed them with coats of skins; thereby was the first shedding of blood. Cain's offering was of the first fruit of the ground (his own self-works), but was rejected of God. Abel's offering of the firstling of the flock (blood) was accepted of God. In the old covenant of the law the high priest entered the holy place once each year with blood; but the sprinkling of blood of animals made nothing perfect. It took the blood of Jesus Christ, the perfect sacrifice, who stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, to do that. Yes, Jesus made us perfect thru death that he might present us holy and unblamable and unreprovable to the Father. He washed away our sins with his blood and redeemed us from the curse of the law. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." (Gal. 3:13). "—for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation." (Rev. 5:9).

As Jesus hung on the cruel tree of the cross a soldier pierced his side with a spear and forthwith came out blood and water. If that blood did not literally flow over his fleshly body I am persuaded to believe that it did so figuratively; for we are members of his body, flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone. We, (I have a hope that I am included), the church, the Lamb's bride, are his body and he is the head. His blood flows over us, washing away our sins, making us as white as snow and covering us with a robe of righteousness. And the water that came forth is symbolic of the well of water springing up within us to eternal life that Jesus told the woman of Samaria about.

The law of God is perfect and demands perfect obedience. Christ obeyed the law; fulfilling it to a jot and title: but the elect, the church, the children chosen in him from the foundation of the world, could not keep the law and

fell under its penalty. God knew that Adam would fall, for He said, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." There are those who say Adam could have kept the commandment: but God said he would eat and die. Therefore he did eat and he did die. I have heard it said that he did not die but was made very sick; by others that he only began to die. Both statements, if true, would make God a liar: for He said, "—for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Adam did not die a corporal death at that time but he surely did die spiritually in trespasses and sin.

But God, who hath loved us with an everlasting love, had, in eternity, provided the way of redemption for His children "—with the blood of Jesus Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you." (I Pet. 19:20) Although we are His children, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world and predestined to be conformed to the glorious image of His Son, the debt for our sins had to be paid.

Jesus said, "I am the good Shepherd, the good Shepherd giveth his life for the Sheep." The good Shepherd was to lay down his life for his sheep, and the people were gathered together to crucify him. They did not know that they were carrying out the determinate counsel of a sovereign God; neither did they know that their determination to kill him could not have been executed had it not been determined afore of God. "No man taketh it from me, but I have power to lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. This commandment have I received of my Father."

Yes, it behooved Christ to be made like unto his brethren, but without sin, to take part of the flesh and blood that he might suffer and die, the just for the unjust, who are flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone, that he might redeem them from under the curse of the law. But to suffer and die was not enough: for he must also conquer death and the grave: he must be raised again that we might be justified. And that he did: for the angel said to the woman who sought him at the tomb, "Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come see the place where the Lord lay."

I realize that I have barely touched upon this tremendous subject; for it seems that I can see the blood of Jesus throughout every scripture of the holy word: but it is my prayer, if I be not deceived, that God has directed my hand that it might be to His praise and glory and to the comfort and edification of His children. Now may it be the will of the Holy Father that you remember this poor sinner in your prayers.

Clifford Wilbanks

ATTENDED UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

5921 West Park Avenue,
St. Louis, Mo. 63110

Dear Elders Spangler, Donald Smith, Wallace Smith, Leonard Key, Kenneth Key, and all other elders and other brothers and sisters of the Upper Country Line Assocation, and all other Old Baptists who attended your association:

We feel to be the most privileged of all mortals to have been able to attend your association in July. It was hard for us to believe there were as many Primitive Baptists in one area until we were shown — we are few in our area.

We were royally treated by all, and we know that we don't deserve it, but we thank God for all you lovely brethren. You opened your homes and hearts to us. We had never been in your area before—such beautiful country and people, and we will never forget you as long as we have minds to remember. The miles were many but your hospital-

ity made the trip short. Your singing was most beautiful, and we never heard so many beautiful voices before. We don't have words to describe our feelings, but we would praise Almighty God for the wondeful blessings.

May God shower His saving grace on all.

We would like to extend an invitation for you to come and worship with us when you have a mind to. Our association is October 11th and 12th, 1975 at Salem Church.

Your unworthy brother in Christ, I hope,

James Cunningham

COMMEMORATING 200th ANNIVERSARY TOWN CREEK CHURCH

Henry, Virginia
August 31, 1975

This day was set aside in commemoration of our 200th Anniversary. An all-day meeting was planned and people started coming early and continued until an estimated crowd of 500 or more arrived. Singing began at 10:00 a.m. There were 16 Elders present and all preached or acknowledged their acceptance and belief of the preaching up to that point. We feel it was a good day and a respectful tribute to the occasion. Dinner was served from 12:00 until 1:30 p.m.

Associational Districts represented were: Upper County Line, Staunton River, Smith River and Pigg River. The following Elders were there: Raymond Goad, Leonard Brammer, Wallis Smith, Rufus Brown, Julius Bocock, William Holland, Amos Hash, R. A. May, D. L. Simpson, Lane Carter, P. L. Plybon, F. L. Clark, O. K. Tench, H. W. Wray, J. T. Turner and P. E. Ingram (who is pastor of Town Creek Church.)

Tommy G. Lovell, Clerk
Town Creek Church

TOWN CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH
1775 - 1975

During our long history, we can say we have lived and worshiped together in peace. There have been snags at times which were smoothed out by much prayer and much tolerance and christian love. Just enough to keep us humble, we believe.

Our church has not grown in membership, but they come as the Lord brings them. The important part of any church is the love and devotion to it's precepts, and the fellowship of it's members. Only can we go forward in peace if we agree and work together.

Our church was here long before the land was given in 1844 by William Turner. In the early days the "Meeting House" was used for church, school, public meetings, etc. The first two churches were built of logs, the third was weatherboard. The fourth, and present one was built in 1951, and our friend Virgil Goode, Sr. gave the cornerstone. Later we built the picnic shelter, and this year our "preaching stand" for our bicentennial meeting. Also, this year A. L. Philpott gave the church about one-quarter acre of land behind the church to give us some much needed space. We are thankful for all of this, especially our good friends of the church, and we have many - too many to list, but Robert Prillaman and Bill English are our dependables. Also, Harold Thompson has befriended us many times in many ways.

Our present church consists of the following:

Pastor: Elder P. E. Ingram.

Deacons: George W. Turner, J. Charlie Stone, Tommy G. Lovell.

Clerk: Tommy G. Lovell.

Members: 17.

We are glad to have all ministers and members of our faith and order worship with us, and our many friends visit and be with us in our services.

July 15, 1975

ACCEPTABLE WORDS

"The preacher sought to find out acceptable words; and that which was written was upright, even words of truth." (Ecc. 12:10)

I believe this has reference to the ministers that God calls and qualifies. The Scriptures speak of Noah as a "preacher of righteousness." (see 2 Peter 2:5) Paul was ordained a preacher and an apostle. (1 Tim. 2:7) In 2 Tim. 1:11 Paul said: "Whereunto I am appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher of the Gentiles."

May God bless us to rightly divide the word of truth and not forget that Jesus Christ is our only Preacher. The ministers that the Lord calls and qualifies are as the mouth of God. (see Jer. 15:19) "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" (Isaiah 52:7) All expressions in this verse point to Jesus. Let the reader notice the connection with Rom. 10:14-15: "How then shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how *shall they hear without a preacher?* And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" To be brief, no one can hear unless the Spirit of Jesus dwells in him. It is the Spirit of Jesus who preaches to you whether it is in private meditation or thru the mouth of a minister sent by God.

"The preacher sought to find our acceptable words." I believe this means words that become sound doctrine. (see Titus 2:1) It is good for the minister to be careful of his expressions. He should seek to speak the words that are easy to be understood. His theme should be: Do the hearers understand me? Do they understand what I am trying to say? He should not have "pet ideas" and expect the hearers to understand them if he does not explain what he means.

Consider this expression: "God made Adam able to stand but liable to fall." I do not believe that is an acceptable expression, and do not believe these are the words that become sound doctrine. "Speak the words which become sound doctrine." (Titus 2:1) I believe that in the providence, decree, predestination, etc. of God that it was certain that man would fall. God was not surprised at that event. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." (Acts 15:18) God is not surprised at the events that are taking place today, nor for those which shall take place in the future, because God has purposed or declared them from the beginning. "God declared the end from the beginning—" (Isaiah 46:10) Now, this covers all things, does it not? All events, both small and great, are included in the providence, decree, predestination, etc. of God. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered." (Math. 10:29-30) I am glad to know that Almighty God is able to take care of these poor sinners. "Who are kept by the power of God." (1 Peter 1:5)

"For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." (Rom. 8:20) Why did God create man subject to vanity? That is not for man to question. My answer is that God had a purpose in it, which is God's business and not mine. We are getting on dangerous ground if we attempt to question God. Why did God raise Pharaoh up to afflict the Children of Israel? "For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." (Rom. 9:17) Why did God have mercy upon the children of Israel and destroy the Egyptians? Who is man to charge God for being unfair, unjust? "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have

mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." (God hardened the heart of Pharaoh because it pleased him to do so.) "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will." If God's will was that certain events would take place in the future, do you believe that man can devise certain means to hinder those events from taking place? If so, then man, the creature, would be stronger than God, would he not? A chain is just as strong as the weakest link. If there are 100 links in a chain, and one link is weak, then the whole chain is weak. A poor helpless sinner would not have any confidence in a weak God. I am glad to know that God works all things according to his purpose. He works all things after the counsel of his own will. (see Eph. 1:11) "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" I believe this Scripture is enough to silence man who attempts to question God. "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?"

Let me get back to the subject of "Acceptable Words." "Lo, this only have I found, that *God hath made man upright;* but they have sought out many inventions." (Ecc. 7:29) I believe this Scripture is enough to show that God did not create man a sinner. God created man upright, yet man was created subject to vanity. I do not believe that God forced man to sin, do you? Some say that sin comes from God as water that flows thru a pipe. I do not see how those who are swallowed up in that error ever mourn over this sins. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4) A trangression is an act which man did. Please consider this thought carefully: A transgression is an act of man and not a created thing. God did not break the law. Jesus kept the law in the room and stead of his people. Breaking the law is the action of man. THEREFORE, IT IS NOT AN ACCEPTABLE EXPRESSION TO SAY THAT GOD CREATED SIN. It is true that God CREATED ALL THINGS —BUT SIN IS NOT A CREATED THING. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." (Col. 1:16-17)

God gave the law to man, and man broke the law. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. 5:12) This Scripture proves that sin entered into the world by man. To sum it up, I believe that sin came from man and not from God. GOD IS NOT THE AUTHOR OF SIN. God is just and holy. "There is no unrighteousness in God." (see John 7:18) If God is unrighteousness, then we do not have anything to base our hope upon, and we are just deceived in the whole matter.

Clear expressions and acceptable words. Expressions that are hard to understand are not acceptable words. Let the reader consider these expressions: "God predestinated sin and wickedness." One may get the idea from this expression that sin comes from God. In my opinion, acceptable expressions would be like these: "God has a purpose in sin and wickedness." "It was in the providence of God that there would be sin and wickedness in this world. God has decreed the entrance of sin into the world. It was by the counsel of God that there would be sin and wickedness in this world, etc."

To sum it up, I believe it is the minister's duty before God to speak words that become sound doctrine, to speak words that are easy to be understood (1 Cor. 14:19), to use the Scriptures as his guide, to plead to God for his presence, and pray that God will bless us to hold to the truth during these evil times. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall de-

part from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." (1 Tim. 4:1) 'For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine—" (2 Tim. 4:3) "I exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints." (Jude 3)

May God bless the truth in honor and praise and glory to His Holy Name. Please excuse any errors of this writer.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

THE SIGNS IS DEAR TO HER

4 Maple Lane,
Pennington, N. J. 08534

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

Now that I do not have any way of attending church meetings, the *Signs* is more than ever very dear to me. I look forward to that one sermon a month, and the precious words from the *Voices of the Past.*

I seem so far away from you all, yet I am blessed to feel not forgotten when the *Signs* come into my home each month.

In these troubled times when seemingly being surrounded with increasing problems, it is comforting to know that, while time has a way of changing many things it cannot change the preordained power of God in any age, nor can the unfortunate conditions that arise with time make common a true thanksgiving in a Christian's heart: and for such one can be thankful for God's mercy.

"I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." (Genesis 24:27) Indeed no greater blessing could come to anyone, no greater thing to be thankful for than that — come good times or bad in this troubled world.

Since our brother passed away almost two years ago, we have gathered about our bountiful table to offer thanks for material things, for health to carry on and God's mercy, but to sit beside his empty chair at the family table and pray for needed courage, strength and faith to continue to live one's life each day in the plan of God's purpose, one just has to experience "being in the way", to know sorrow in life can be a blessing too, that will be revealed in God's appointed time.

Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving who made heaven and earth, and the fulness thereof, and they that dwell therein. (see Psalms 24:10; 147:7)

I send love to all of like precious faith.

Sister Mary Hellings

(Another year's subscription is enclosed, and balance to the fund to help distribute the *Signs.*)

Ruffin, N. C.

Dear Elder Wood:

It has been requested that these lines enclosed, given as I hope from the giver of every good and perfect gift, be published in the *Signs,* though I wish no name be published as to who penned the writing.

My one desire is to praise the God who feeds his people in every land, kindred, tongue and people. He causes and moves us to the place he has forseen and foreordained we be, to receive the pure food he gives his servants that they feed his hungry little ones. It may come in a song, or even one sentence one of His ministers speak, or in a complete discourse — even more than one discourse: whatever the need it shall be met and given in his time and way. Oft times a handshake so warm has meant so much to a sorrowing soul, and a kind word — we praise our God for it all, and on bended knees and humbled heart, we thank Him for what He has done for us.

We thank Him for the many rich sermons that were preached at the association, and we beg that we never be one that falls out by the way. Let us be found with voices lifted to praise, honor

and glorify His great name ever more.

In a precious hope,
A Little Sister

In memory of the 1975 sitting of the Upper Country Line Association held with Pleasant Grove Church, Caswell County, N. C.

Through shades of darkness, or smoothest plain
Our Lord gives us our need:
His presence a very present help,
His smile so dear, indeed!

We would lift up our voices clear:
We'd call from every land.
He lifts the helpless souls to heights
And holds them in his hand.

Oh, why such doubt, Oh, why such fear!
We oft in prison feel.
When we can't feel he hears our cries,
Or our affliction heal.

The gospel to our souls apply:
Oh haste and bring it nigh.
We're destitute, the valley here,
Low at thy feet we lie.

Thy blood we plead to cleanse our guilt:
Thy pardoning love reveal
With healing in thy wings, Oh Lord.
On bended knees we kneel.

Our hearts are breaking when we view,
Such sinful creatures we.
Our Jesus hung on Calvary's Cross:
Our righteousness is He.

This truth we hold in Holy Zeal,
We beg we are your chosen race.
The food we crave: a morsel sweet
Of free and ever reigning grace.

AN EXPERIENCE IN THE LIFE OF BROTHER DALON EVANS

On the first Sunday in May 1963, I attended Scotts Church near Wilson. After services, my youngest brother offered to the church for membership. At that time a heavy burden came upon me, and an honest desire to go home to the precious saint's. My brother's baptism was set for the first Sunday in June, 1963. He recognized my burden and asked me to go with him, but I was not given that liberty. On that same Sunday night the Lord called my father from this world. The following week was a trying one. In my weak way I tried to beg the Lord for his mercies.

On the second Saturday morning in June, 1963, I walked outside of my house and looked toward the east to the rising of the sun, A voice seemed to speak saying, "This is the day." This feeling went with me all day. That afternoon we attended a wedding. That night my wife and I went to church at Wilson. Elder Boykin was serving the church that night due to the absence of Elder Stokes. During his preaching the same voice that spoke to me in the morning was telling me to go home. After the preaching, they began to sing a hymn without announcing an open door for reception of members. In the middle of the song, Elder Boykin stopped the singing and announced an open door. It seemed that I could not get to the front of the church fast enough. By God's providence the sweet deliverance of being received in the Church was given to me that night by the Wilson Church. The baptising was set for the next day after the preaching service.

On Sunday when the pastor announced an open door to the Church, my wife went forward and asked for a home with the Church also. We were baptized together that afternoon by Elder Stokes. The Lord's delivering mercies that day were greater than I can express.

After being baptized, there were times that I was given a desire to tell the brethren of the great things that the Lord had wrought in my heart. I wondered how one would know if the Lord had called him to preach. There were times when I wanted to talk with the Elders and tell them of the things that the Lord had told me in a vision. I realized that these things seemed silly to the flesh, but I believed that the spiritual man would understand. At times when Elder Stokes would ask me to dismiss service with prayer, I would become so weak that all strength would leave my body.

One night in a vision, I met a man with very plain clothes on. He asked me if I was prepared to meet Jesus. For a

moment, I could not answer him. Then I asked him where his clothes came from, he answered, "nature". When I became aware of myself I was telling him that I could not prepare myself to meet Jesus, but the preparation of a man's heart and life was in God's hand; that nature, even its best clothes could not prepare us. We must be clothed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

One morning, I awoke and I was aching all over. I prayed to the Lord to remove the pain which was followed by a fever. I continued to pray and about 3 o'clock that afternoon the pain left me. Remembering my pain, I was made to consider the day that Jesus hung on the cross. Somehow in my weak way, I tried to thank God for giving me relief that day, and for the many times that he has given relief to this sinner during his lifetime.

These are a few of the things that Jesus Christ has shown this sinner.

In Love
Brother Dalon Evans

A TRIBUTE TO BROTHER EVANS FROM HIS PASTOR

It was indeed a privilege to baptize Brother Evans and serve him as pastor at Wilson Church. He was a poor man by nature, but God blessed him with great riches in heavenly and divine things. He served the church as deacon, but at times he felt his burden was more than for a deacon. Often he would attempt to speak in church and was given no liberty. The second Saturday night conference in February, 1973, the church at Wilson was delayed because of a snow storm, and therefore was held second Saturday night in March, 1973. In conference Brother Evans asked to speak. For about fifteen minutes he was wonderfully blessed to relate his belief in Jesus Christ and what the Lord had done for him. As he turned to be seated he started to fall. I caught him and laid him in the pew. Mouth to mouth respiration was administered by a registered nurse but to no avail. The Rescue Squad was called but Brother Evans was already gone. It was indeed a beautiful experience for one to testify so strongly of his belief in his eternal God and then to be called home.

Elder D. B. Stokes
Pastor

Rt. 4, Box 21A
Winnsboro, Tex. 75494

" . . . we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." (Acts 14:22.)

We are all born into a sinful world, with a sinful nature. Our sinful nature is so prone to go after the things of the world, to go after its idols and to hew out cisterns for ourselves, broken cisterns that hold no water, forsaking the Fountain of living waters. Dear ones, can we not see how this world would become our paradise with our every thought and mind centered upon it if God did not cause it to became a wilderness, a desert land to us, through suffering, trials, and tribulations? Our afflictions may be great or small, but afflictions we must have. We are traveling on a stormy sea, tempted and harrassed by Satan, by the many idols of this world, sometimes by family troubles, temporal afflictions, and bodily afflictions. Many more may fall on those traveling to Zion, yea, sometimes troubles among churches and brethren, and the hiding of God's countenance. May we be given to proclaim this world is not our home, we are only passing through to that far greater and better home that God hath prepared for them that love him.

When it pleases God through the power of his Holy Spirit to bring one of his elect from the walks of fulfilling the desires of his flesh and of his mind, who was by nature a child of wrath even as others, God doesn't place him in the broad and easy pathway that leads to destruction, but through the strait and narrow way that leads unto life. But it is also a pathway that leads into a desert land. Why didn't the children of

Israel take the broad and easy way that would have led them into Canaan in less than three weeks time in place of entering into the desert? Christ leads his people. He was leading the children of Israel in a pillar of a cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night. Christ says concerning his people "And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not, I will lead them in paths that they have not known." Isa. 42:15.

Christ suffered untold sufferings for his people while here upon earth and is now sitting in glory at the right hand of the Father. If we have a hope of entering into that future glory then we must expect much suffering along our pathway of life here on earth, for there is no entering into glory except through suffering, nor a growth in the experience of grace without trials and afflictions. If we be in union with Christ (and there can be no communion with him without union), we must suffer to some degree with him, for how can the Head suffer without the body being affected? Our time here on earth regardless of age is only a drop in the ocean compared to eternity. If we should suffer each hour we live on earth for Christ's sake, what would it be compared to eternal glory if we be his children and heirs. "And if children, then heirs: heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Rom. 8:17, 18.)

Dear ones, consider it a wonderful gift from God if we be among those afflicted with an inward, an experimental suffering. "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him but also to suffer for his sake." (Phil. 1:29.)

Excuse me for using a personal experience. I was given a wonderful vision one night that occupied my mind much of the time for a long while, and still enters my mind quite often. I saw myself riding in a passenger train which had three coaches and a small coal burning engine pulling it. The three coaches had only a few scattered people in each. I was riding in the last coach sitting on the rear seat next to a window. We were moving along and came to a long steep hill that went straight up. As we started up the hill I was sure the train would tumble over backward and we would all be destroyed. As we reached the halfway point the little engine gathered renewed power and on up we went. I couldn't understand how this could happen. As we were going on we came to a wide body of water. The track ran on across the water on an ill contructed platform with no railings on the sides. When I saw how uneven the tracks were, I felt for sure the train would fall into the water and we would all be drowned. The little train wobbled on across in spite of my inability to understand how. I looked out of the window once more and saw where the track made a 90 degree turn which I felt would be impossible to make. When the little engine made the turn, I saw a form sitting at the controls and a voice came to me saying, no wonder, Jesus Christ is at the controls!

Dear ones, our pathway of life may have many ups and downs, many obstacles to encounter which seem far too great for our strength, and so they would be, but Jesus who is drawing and leading says, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness., (2 Cor. 12:9.) Isn't it wonderful indeed to have a precious Savior who watches over his people giving them peace and rest along with their trials and tribulations? "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer I have overcome the world." (John 16:33.)

If we be the children of God, and God through His Holy Spirit has begun a good work in us, we have the sweet assurance from his precious word that none of these little ones will ever be

lost or perish along the way. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all: and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (John 10:27-29.)

In hope of mercy,
(Elder) Joe L. Hamrick

UPPER COUNTRY LINE UNION

The next *Upper Country Line Union Meeting* will be held, the Lord willing, with Bush Arbor Church the 5th Sunday in November, starting time 10:30 a.m.

The church is located just off Highway 62 about 16 miles north of Burlington, N. C. — about 9 miles south of Yanceyville, N. C. The building can be seen from Highway 62. All lovers of the truth are invited.

Earl S. Rudd, Church Clerk

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, at Healthy Plains Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in November, 1975.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 744,
Bennettsville, S.C. 29512

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP DISTRIBUTE THE SIGNS
(To September 1, 1975)

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STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the *Staunton River Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, with Malmaison Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in November.

A cordial invitation is extended to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Elder O. K. Tench, Mod.
Peggy Wells, Clerk

NOTICE OF CHANGE OF ADDRESS

THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT HAS CHANGED THE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, AND OF ELDER SPANGLER, FROM ROUTE 1, BOX 539, DANVILLE, VA., TO ROUTE 6, BOX 270, BEECHWOOD LANE, DANVILLE, VA. — ZIP 24541.

PLEASE USE THE NEW ADDRESS TO AVOID DELAYS IN THE MAIL.

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." (1 Peter 2:9)

Danville, Va. November, 1975

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

THE PASSOVER— THE MEMORIAL SUPPER

While they were eating the Passover feast, the Lord's Supper was instituted. Dealing in technicalities can sometimes seem to be rather dull and rigid, but I do not know any other way to arrive at the truth of a matter than to follow exactly what is said.

"As they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take eat; this is my body. And he took the cup (Something not mentioned either in the exodus out of Egypt or in the Old Testament), and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." (Mat. 26:26).

There is not anything noteworthy said by the three other gospel writers nor by the apostles to change what Matthew says about the Lord's Supper. Let it be noted that they ate together the last approved Passover Supper, and *as* they were eating that which had already been prepared, He took (not the same bread), but, other bread and the wine and instituted something that had never been done before. Remember that this all took place in the year thirty-three, both the Passover Supper and the Lord's Supper — one bringing to an end the law dispensation, the other ushering in the gospel. It would seem wise to say that the Passover Supper was for a type of the Memorial Supper; likewise it would seem wise to say that the Memorial is in place of the Passover Supper. Each of them were and are in their own place. It is true that the Passover lamb was a type of Christ and His shed blood. This type was fulfilled in the death of Christ, who has become a new and living way, even our Passover who was sacrificed for us.

Theologians of the scholastic learning type have been at loggerheads about how often that the Lord's Supper should be observed. If the simple brethren that subscribe to the Bible as our man of counsel have differed about a certain time to observe this noted example of our Lord, I am not aware of it. Some have advocated that it must be carried out on the Sabbath, and, say they, that is the first day of the week. But the Sabbath is not the first day of the week (Mat. 28:1; Mark 16:1, 2). The fact of the business, we do not consider ourselves as being bound to one day above another. One day is as good for service to the Lord as another. (Rom. 14). No man has authority to judge another in regard to meat, or drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new

moon, or of the sabbath days (Gal. 2:16). Therefore, the church of the Lord Jesus Christ has a God-given right to have the Lord's Supper any time in the week. As far as can be found out, there is not the least hint about carrying it out every week. That is not anything but binding people with burdens which are not authorized by the Saviour nor by the judges in Israel.

There is a binding rule about the Lord's Supper or, as the most of us call it, the Communion Supper. As oft as you do it, carries with it not only a commandment, but a strict obligation that it be carried out. As Israel followed zealously the Passover Supper in remembrance of the blood that caused the destroying angel to pass over their house, even so are we to have the Lord's Supper and to do it in remembrance of Him. (Luke 22:19; I Cor. 11:24, 25). If language means anything (and it certainly does), the Saviour did not set the number of times that we observe His supper, but it is absolute and unconditional that we observe it. Moreover, the reason for doing it. This is the only reason for doing it. The New Testament does not imply that it is done for us to show love for one another, respect for one another, or to show our humility. If we show what is in us by what we do, whether by observing the Lord's Supper, or by being baptized in a pool of water, or by walking on spikes driven in planks or by walking on coals of fire in naked feet, then salvation is by what we do, and Paul did not tell the truth in Ephesians 2:5, 8 and in a number of other places.

What then is the reason that the Saviour assigned for our keeping it? Whatever the reason for doing that, the same reason is assigned in all that we do. All service rendered unto Him, and unto His brethren, is to be for His sake, and in His name. That child of grace that would dare to say or do anything in his own name or for his own sake, is not following the Lord. What greater incentive could be had than that? As we eat the bread, we see in it His body. "Take, eat; this is my body," can never be improved on by any writing or any utterance of any one, be he or she whatever they may say they are. "Drink ye all of it" is sublime to the humble follower of the Master. Too, each one will be looking in holy wonder at the hidden nuggets of gospel truth in the accounts of this lovely meal. Twice He says, "This is my blood of the new testament." (Mat. 26:28; Mark 14:24) Twice He says, "This cup is the new testament in my blood." (Luke 22:20; I Cor. 11:25) Unbelievers will hurl it in your face that this shows the Bible to be a myth or fabrication of imaginary writers; but to the contrary I would present it as work of men under the leadership of the Holy Spirit; that each of them was moved to hear the testimony of Him that administered the Supper in language that would give every meaning that we would ever need while traveling below. Let us, as led by divine grace, not be swept into the delusory and desultory Romish doctrine or transubstantiation (only recently I heard an Old Baptist make that ridiculous claim), for we well know that the bread which He ministered was not the minister of the bread. We well know, (if we do know) that the bread which we minister is not the bread that ministered the first bread. If it is treason to say that this is religious foolishness, then let me be guilty of the treason rather than to say that as I break the bread in communion that I am actually handling and breaking Him anew, from year to year, and many times a year, the real body of my risen Lord. Let it ever be said that we are in a symbolical manner picturing the salvation that is in His broken body, even as we picture the same salvation when we baptize one of the Lord's people. As we bury them beneath the liquid grave and raise them up out of it, we show forth in a symbolical manner His being buried beneath the fury of His Father's vengeance against sin and His raising Him out of it.

These two expressions, to wit, "This

is my blood of the new testament," and, "This cup is the new testament in my blood," cover a glowing gospel field for meditation and exploration. Without the cup we would not have a communion. There can not be an atonement without the shedding of blood, therefore the will of God in the salvation of sinners is impregnated with the glorious presentation of the shed blood of He who is our atonement. (Heb. 13:20) Without this blood the testament (will) could never be in effect, because without it, no remission could ever be. Thus saying it in that way forever shows us that being involved in His will, is the one thing necessary to the cleansing. Then to reverse it and say that the ingredient in the cup is the new testament in His blood, carries the same thought forward at all times in doing this in His remembrance. How lovely! His blood in the new testament, is presented to us in every communion, and the essential blood cleansing and enforcing power of the will is likewise presented.

This Supper with its two things, eating His body and drinking His blood, is kept alive when it is ministered under the auspices of heaven. It will thus be kept alive for the whole gospel dispensation. As often as it is done the work of Jesus Christ is presented to us. His whole life's work is brought to view again and again, even as often as the Supper is finished. Here is a great mystery to me, for it is appalling how neglectful or dilitary we have been, and still are, in regard to this sacred matter. "As oft as you do it, do it in remembrance of me," has been one of the most challenging matters of all His commandments to usward. Ah, what it means to see the bread being broken; to see the wine being poured. The bread being broken means something vital; it means everything to those that are exercised by faith, for they remember again the suffering, the sorrow, the loneliness, the sweat, the broken and crucified and crushed body of our precious Lord. Each time that I break this bread in communion my heart is made to stand in awe at the remembrance of Golgotha's Hill. I am made to see the place of skulls, (place of dying, of crucifixion), as He approaches it being pressed by the Jews and Gentiles, by the kings and the peasants, all gathered together by the determinate counsel of Him that gave us His Son, and with Him all things. Emotion stirs me (I do trust not human, but spiritual) ; my mind is carried forward to His glorious return and it is carried backward to Calvary. Ah, my dear brethren and sisters, may God give us grace to be punctual in commemorating His life, His crucifixion, His resurrection, and His glorious ascension; and may it be until He comes again.

I for one need this remembrance year by year, even each time as it comes around. I need to see Him weltering in His blood; I need to see Him being bruised and torn and crucified, for I am a sinner vile and needy, and I have not wherewith to pay. This being a part of the way wherein I have travelled (Deut. 8:2), my faith is increased, my courage for needy days is brightened. As the Passover brought to mind the door post saturated with blood, even so the Supper brings to mind the Deliverer on the cross, and His parting word, "I will never leave thee." The assignment of this perpetual eating and drinking at the table of the Lord is a gospel day boon for he and she that could not atone for sin, and is our earnest (interest) that He will return again and receive us to Himself in glory.

As it is with the other ordinance (baptism), also it is always for His glory and exaltation, always in His name. As baptism pictures the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, even so this Memorial Supper pictures the broken body and shed blood of our Lord, which *is* the death of Christ for our sins. These things are the very heart of the gospel, yea, without these two ordinances being instituted by divine power, and kept alive in His sub-

jects by the implantation of keeping grace and faith and love, no gospel news would ever be proclaimed. These ordinances are not, as one said, "vehicles of salvation" but they picture everything that is essential to salvation. These ordinances (and they are so close and vital that I have very little time or inclination to deal with them separately,) do not save anyone, but they both tell us who it is that saves us. Some poor deluded souls think that if we do not take the mass or the cup that we can not in any way be saved. Their theory is, No ordinance, no salvation. The keeping of either ordinance does not bestow grace, but the keeping of either shows the bestowal of grace. We do not keep either in order to have grace, but we keep them because that we have grace. The elements (emblems) used in the Supper are symbols and they symbolize the true meaning of Christianity. As we think upon this in its pristine beauty, we see the broken body of our Lord. The bread symbolizes His broken body; the bread, having its life crushed out, before becoming palatable to us, sets forth in symbol the body of our blessed Lord as His life was crushed out; and in our eating and partaking of its strengthening savor unto life, we are made to realize in amazement that He, too, became everything to us as a result of His having His life crushed out. So it is with the wine: the grapes, as with the bread, show that they were crushed and the juice flowed out, and we are blessed to see in this wine what was, and is, in reality in His blood: to wit, it has all of the soul cleansing faculties that are effectual or that are necessary. The bread and the wine are what they are because of what they have undergone, and equally so, the Lord Jesus Christ is to us what He is because of what He has undergone.

In the last thirty-eight years many poor tried pilgrims have said to me, I am afraid to commune. I have inquired the reason for this fear, and have had the words of our Lord quoted to me. "Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." (I Cor. 11:27, 29) I feel sure that this has caused much deep concern to many poor pilgrims, but I am not able to see why it should. I am able (as I hope) to understand that there is much room in our experience for doubts and fears, even for us to think of ourselves as being vile (Job 40:4), wretched (Rom. 7:24), and as the chief of sinners (I Tim. 1:15), but to apply those feelings and experiences to this statement of our Lord is wrong. It seems that this has been applied wrongfully to the hurt and disconsolation of many poor sinners. Too many times we have thought of the "unworthily" as being an adjective describing the condition of the communicants, but it is an adverb describing the manner in which the ordinance had been observed. *Unworthy* is an adjective and means, "not worthy or not deserving, but the word does not appear in this passage.

Let us look at the true situation as pictured in our Lord's testimony. The Corinthians had been making an ordinary feast of the ordinance, and had not eaten with the thought in mind that His death was the end of their sins. They had not rightly discerned the Lord's body. They had not seen in the bread the broken body of their Lord, nor in the cup His shed blood for their sins. Thus Paul was writing to correct their error in celebrating the ordinance unworthily. He said to them, "What? have ye not houses to eat and drink in? or despise the church of God? What shall I say unto you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not. And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation." Paul's words make clear that they had celebrated the Lord's Supper in a very unworthy manner. He further said, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat," etc. Now let us ask, What is the

reason for this examination? We surely do not think upon it as a discerning our own worthiness. If we took that view of it, all would be found lacking. (Dan. 5:27). No orthodox body of Christians would expect nor receive one to communion that was drunk yesterday, but even one like unto that would be nearer right in his approach to the table than would one that thought he was worthy to eat by what he found in examination of himself. The poor sinner that sees himself as unworthy for communion, yet sees Christ as dying for his sins is taking the communion worthily in discerning the Lord's body. If I eat it (the bread), and drink it (the wine) to satisfy hunger or as a love feast, or as a place for showing my own humility, I am taking it unworthily, but if I take it in obedience to His commandment, and to show forth His praise and His worthiness, and to do it in remembrance of Him, and to continue doing it in His name until He comes again, then I am taking the Communion Supper in a worthy manner.

W.D.G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

Falcon, Ark., April 28, 1877

Elder G. Beebe:—Will you be so kind as to give me your views through the *Signs of the Times* on 2 Cor. 5:10? and oblige yours,

W. D.

REPLY

Such views as we have we do not feel at liberty to withhold from any who are seriously inquiring after the truth; for we have no secrets in religious matters. Our views on this text, however, may conflict with the cherished views of some learned and popular commentators, and possibly fail to accord with those of some of our brethren, with whom we would be sorry to differ.

The text proposed for elucidation reads thus: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ: that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

Three important points are presented for our consideration. First, the judgment seat of Christ — what and where is it? Second, who must appear before it? Third, for what purpose must they so appear? By the judgment seat of Christ we understand the throne on which he as the sovereign and righteous Judge is seated. This is not spoken of as a seat or place of judgment in a far distant world, or in some other state of being than the present. God has already seated his King upon his holy hill of Zion.—Psa. 2:6. And unto his Son God has said, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever."—Psa. 45:6, 7; Heb. 1:8. Firmly established upon his Mediatorial throne in Zion, all judgment is committed to his hands as the Son of God. "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father."—John 5:22, 23. When in the days of his flesh, as the Son of man, he humbled himself; and "Though he were a Son," and "thought it not robbery to be equal with God, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered."—Heb. 5:8, and Phil. 2:6-11. "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father," in the triumphant resurrection of Christ from the dead. "Therefore let all the house of Israel

know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."— Acts 2:36.

It is for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross. He has risen from under the power and dominion of the law, and is now exalted to that glory which he had with the Father before the world began, and is now set down on the right hand of God. He has ascended his Mediatorial throne, the place of his power and dominion, where he sits in judgment. "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with JUDGMENT and with justice from henceforth, even forever." —Isa. 9:7. In the regeneration of his church which was buried with him into death, when he in their flesh died for them all, and being buried with him by baptism into death, were reproduced from the dead in his resurrection when he by the exceeding greatness of God's mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand, in the heavenly (spiritual, in distinction from the legal) places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.—Ephesians 1:20-23. From these, with many other scriptures, we think it not difficult to perceive that the judgment seat of Christ is his church—his holy hill Zion, where he is forever set down, until all enemies are or shall be put under his feet, and then the kingdom shall be delivered up to the Father, and the Son shall also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.—1 Cor. 15:24-28.

That the throne of God in Zion is the judgment seat of Christ is clearly established by the words and works of Christ, as declared by himself in his reply to Peter, Matt. 19:28, compared with the parable Matt. 25:31-46. "In the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall *sit* in the throne of his glory, ye (the apostles who had forsaken all and followed him) also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." And, "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels (or ministers, apostles, princes, &c.) with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." And then should he proceed to judge the world in righteousness; "And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." We are aware that many suppose that this judgment has not yet began, and that it will never take place in this world. But could the Son of Man impower the apostles to sit with him to rule in judgment, before he himself exercised that power? Did he not enter into his glory, and the joy that was set before him, immediately after he had endured the cross, and when he was made both Lord and Christ? Did he not in breaking down the middle wall of partition which had excluded the Gentile nations from the Jews, assemble before him all the nations of mankind? Was he not invested then with power over all flesh, to give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him? And has he not been separating his sheep from the goats, from his ascension to his throne till now? Is he not now setting his sheep on his right hand, and calling them by his Spirit, and saying to them, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world? And is he not now saying to those on his left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed?

Many of the dear children of God have been greatly worried by the traditional impressions made by those who teach that Christ now occupies only his mercy-seat, and that he will vacate that seat and ascend his seat of judgment

after the resurrection of the last day, and then, but not till then, it shall be finally decided who are and who are not his people. They have been taught to believe that all mankind are in this life in a state of probation, and they look for a judgment day, when the great Judge shall hold a court of investigation, when every one of Adam's race shall be accepted or rejected, as their merits or demerits shall be found. In support of this heart-sickening theory no scripture can be found. All the judgments that will ever be executed on saints or sinners are already adjudicated and pronounced by the eternal Judge, and every sentence which he has pronounced is irrevokable. The foundation of God already stands fast, and has this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." Enoch, Elijah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are now in heaven, and all the saints who have finished their course on earth. Nor are they prematurely there, with a liability to be cast out. The sins of all the sons of God have already been weighed in a righteous balance, and the crushing weight has been exacted at the hands of our precious Savior; and God has solemnly said, covenanted and sworn, that their sins and iniquities he will remember no more. How then can they be called up again for investigation or for judgment, when like a thick cloud God himself has blotted them out?

There is indeed a day that God has appointed in which he will judge the world, by that man whom he hath appointed; but that will be the execution of all the judgments already entered and recorded in the book of Moses and the prophets, when all whose names are not in the book of life of the Lamb shall be consigned to that condemnation which already rests upon them.

Finally we give, as our understanding, that the judgment day began with the coronation of our risen Savior, that it is now progressing, and that our exalted Savior now sits upon the seat and throne of judgment. He is now dividing the nations, and bringing the heirs of God into the inheritance of that kingdom which was prepared for them from the foundation of the world. He is himself the monarch of that kingdom, and the glory of it.

Secondly, Who are they that must appear before this judgment seat? While all the power of heaven and earth is given into his hands, and he has a name written upon his vesture and upon his thigh, King of kings and Lord of lords, with authority to judge among the heathen, and to rebuke strong nations for the sake of his saints, his seat of judgment in Zion we understand to be especially devoted to the judgment of the spiritual subjects of his power and grace. While in his universal providential government he is the Prince over all the kings of the earth, for he is exalted far above all principality and power, over all thrones and dominions, and above every name that is named in this world or in the world to come, there is a peculiar sense in which it is said, "he shall judge his people," which applies to them exclusively, and not to the world at large.

In our text the words, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ," are applicable alone to those whom the apostle identifies with himself, who know that they have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. A people who in the earthly house of their tabernacle do groan, and earnestly desire to be clothed upon with their house which is from heaven, and who have an assurance that God has wrought them for this self-same thing, and who are always confident, knowing that whilst they are at home in the body, they are absent from the Lord. They are a people who walk by faith, not by sight, and who are willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord. These are in a special, peculiar and exclusive sense under the discipline of their blessed Lord and Master. As their Lawgiver and their Judge, their Shepherd and their Bishop, their Prophet, Priest and King, they are under

his Mediatorial charge, and they must all, every one of them, appear before his judgment seat. To the people of God who are led and taught by the Spirit, a consciousness that the Lord is their Judge, and that all the things which are done in the body, the church, over which he is all things the Head, is manifest to him, as expressed in the next verse, and subject to his judgment and decision, will lead them to invoke the scrutiny of his all-seeing eye, "Search me, O God, and know my heart, try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." — Psalm 139:23, 24.

Aliens may flatter themselves that they may do what seems good in their own eyes, and that their sincerity of purpose will be as acceptable to God as an exact conformity to his word; but those who know the terror of the Lord, that "Our God is a consuming fire," will desire to "have grace whereby they may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear." They know that for every idle word they are held to a strict account at the judgment seat of their Lord and Master. And they love his judgments; for his *rod* as well as his *staff* is a comfort to them.

The reason why *every one* of the members of *the body must* appear before the judgment seat of Christ, is that all that is done in the body by the several members, whether good or bad, may be submitted to him who is alone competent to judge righteously, and that each may receive at the hand of the righteous Judge according to that he hath done, (as a member of the body, in the body,) whether good or bad. All that is done in the body, the church, is approved or condemned by him: whether in doctrine or practice, in words, thoughts or deeds. He is the Judge, the church is his judgment seat, and to his laws and ordinances all his members must submit. They who have transgressed his laws will be revoked, rebuked, and chastised according to the nature and magnitude of their offenses. He that knoweth his Master's will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he who has erred through ignorance, without any design to disobey, shall be more tenderly dealt with. But all shall from the righteous Judge receive according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. None but Christ is competent to judge the things done in the body, the church, or in the bodies of the individual members, who are included in his body. He alone is able to discriminate between what God has wrought in the body, and what has been wrought by the church or her members. All that is good, and approved by the Judge, is what God has wrought; for "it is God that worketh in us, both to will and to do of his good pleasure." But all in us that God has not wrought will be detected, and all the saints shall, at his judgment seat, receive the things wrought in the body, according to that they have done. For what God has wrought in them shall be made to appear by their godly walk and conversation; while all their own imperfect works shall be reproved.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe July 15, 1877.)

CIRCULAR LETTER

Written by Elder Arnold H. Bellows

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, at Shokan, New York, September 16th and 17th, 1936, to the churches composing the same, sends greeting.

Dear Brethren: — Pursuant to a commendable custom, we are assuming the task of writing a Circular Letter, not so much to conform to precedent, but more to edify the brethren, confirm them in their holy faith, present experimental truth encompassed by sound and enduring doctrine. In this age, when darkness has covered the land and gross darkness the people, when there have been many divisions among brethren and many perversions of the faith delivered unto the saints as

men have followed human reason or blind tradition, a Circular Letter is of greater relevant worth.

Feeling our dependence upon God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not, who is the fountain head of all wisdom, power, understanding and grace, we would present a few thoughts from the sixth verse of the twenty-fifth chapter of Isaiah, which reads as follows: "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." The prophet Isaiah in preceding verses had referred to the glorious majesty of the kingdom of God. Whatever literal meaning these verses may have to the destruction of Babylon and the overthrow of the enemies of Israel and the deliverance of the Jews from their long captivity, they are pregnant with an experimental application to the children of God in this present church dispensation, and in this light we choose to present our views, being fully aware that many Scriptures have a literal historical significance, a future prophetic fulfillment, and an experimental realization by those that constitute the bride of Jesus Christ.

The words chosen for our subject follow expressions of praise rendered unto God for the performance of wonderful things, assuring those to whom they were written that in a certain mountain the Lord would make unto all people a feast of fat things and a feast of wines on the lees well refined. The word "shall" denotes power, certainty, purpose, predestination, foreknowledge and unconditionalism, all centering around the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ which saves for time and eternity. The word "mountain" doubtless refers to Mount Zion in figure, which was the stronghold of the ancient city of Jerusalem, and has been often used to symbolize the church of God. Mount Zion is spoken of as the perfection of beauty out of which God hath shined, and the church is truly beautiful and glorious in the matchless comeliness of her Redeemer. Sometimes the church is spoken of as the mountain of God's holiness, for those that comprise the church have the imputed righteousness of Christ and are unto him a holy nation and a peculiar people. The expression "this mountain" denotes a special mountain, singled out from all others, hence implying choice, electing love, reigning grace, continued mercies and divine favor, since it is the Lord who makes this feast in this mountain. Man has no part in that which the Lord does, for He will not divide his honor with sinful, fallen, helpless man. Therefore an unconditional salvation is encompassed in the expression "unto all people," Jew and Gentile believers taught of God constituting the spritual seed of Abraham.

Because of the Adam transgression death has entered the world, and sin reigned unto death with all its pitiless penalty until Jesus Christ by his stainless birth, his sinless life, his holy offering of his prepared body on the cross, his ignominious death, glorious resurrection, triumphant ascension and Melchisedec priesthood brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Even the decalogue delivered unto Moses, and all the legal ceremonies, which were just and good, could give no life, nor make the comer thereunto perfect, for man is by nature a sinner, being united to his fleshly head Adam, and having the nature of sin will act out his nature, being of the earth earthy, filled with foolish thoughts, and in and of himself cannot rise higher than his source in being born of sinful parents with the curse of God upon him and the sentence of death in him. Even the thought of foolishness is declared to be sin. Before the bar of divine justice transgressing man is indicted under a holy law. Justice and judgment are ever executed by a changeless God before his throne before mercy and truth can be realized comfortingly by the guilty sinner. The demands of the inflexible righteousness of God require

a holy offering, and a holy offerer. The earth and its fruits being under the curse with fallen man, and sin separating the sinner from a thrice holy God, man could not offer himself as an acceptable sacrifice nor anything acceptable unto Deity from a sin-cursed earth.

But in the councils of eternal wisdom before man was formed of the dust of the earth God found a way and ordained it whereby his inexorable justice would be satisfied, judgment executed, sin expiated, an intercessor provided in the person of his only beloved Son, who in the fullness of time was to be born of a woman and made under the law, with a holy human nature because God was his Father, and therefore he would have the life, power, holiness and wisdom of God. Under the law mercy could not be shown else God's justice would be set at naught, and God would thereby cease to be God. The law must be enforced, satisfied, fulfilled. This was done by Jesus Christ, who is the end of the law unto all believers. The law given by God through Moses embraced Israel primarily as a nation, yet when the Gentiles, who have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves, showing forth the works of the law written in their hearts as God judges the secrets of men by the gospel. The decalogue manifests the wound of sin, and the ceremonial law with its numerous ordinances points to Christ, the law being a schoolmaster unto Christ. The Israelites had the covenants and the oracles of God directly and were of the circumcision in the flesh as a nation and unto them as a nation Christ came after the flesh, was rejected by them, condemned and crucified on false charges.

The believing Gentiles were embraced spiritually in the promises of God as well as the believing Jews, but the handwriting of ordinances which was against the believing Gentiles had to be removed and nailed to the cross, as the crucifixion of Christ abolished all that was written against believing Jew and believing Gentile, making of the twain one new man in Christ. In this sense all people, that is, all believers, being chosen in Christ are justified by his blood, receive pardon, which is release from punishment, and also justification, which is release from guilt, and stand in Christ before God as a holy nation and a peculiar people. Therefore in the expression "unto all people" in the subject taken for this article all the members of the family of God are included, whether Jew or Gentile, as the veil of darkness and legalism that has been spread over all nations is taken away as God shines in the heart and gives the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

The poor guilty sinner who has felt within his soul the fiery wrath of God because of his sins, which reach up to heaven and cast him down to hell, leaving him in himself justly without hope of eternal life and consigned by the righteous judgment of God to endless woe, finds a feast of fat things for him when Jesus is revealed to him by the Holy Ghost. He has felt the sighs and groans of the cross, realized the exceeding sinfulness of sin, hated it, loathed himself as the one in whom sin dwells, and tried in vain all human means to relieve his distressed condition. But when in his experience ready to perish, and already perishing, he was raised unto a comfortable Hope, as he discerned with the anointed eye of faith Jesus Christ on the cross between him and his sins, between him and the judgment of an offended God. A new life a new love, and the spirit of prayer and supplication have been given unto him with the revelation of the Christ of God. No longer does he trust his own filthy fleshly righteousness as before. No longer does he depend as before upon creature effort and the wisdom of man, but feeds upon the precious promises of the gospel, fellowship the saints of old testament times and new testament times in his experience. He realizes, as never before, warfare between flesh and Spirit, finds himself unable to

do the good that he would, and so leans upon Jesus. He finds himself crucified with Christ, yet living, and as he mortifies the deeds of the flesh as he daily sins, he finds a daily Savior as he washes his hands and feet in the laver of the word of God. He feels with unspeakable joy the cleansing power and merit of atoning blood. In all this there is a feast of fat things. It is also a feast of fat things full of marrow. In the natural human body the bone marrow plays an important part in making blood that provides tissue for the body. Spiritually speaking, in the Old Testament it was said that in the blood is the life of the soul. So in new testament times there is marrow spiritually in this feast of fat things, providing nourishment for the saved sinner who is renewed day by day. What a feast of fat things in redeeming love, in pardoning love, in justifying love as the streams of that river which makes glad the city of our God, flow into the soul! The partaker of this feast realizes new beauties in the types and shadows setting forth Jesus in suffering as well as in his dispensation of glory.

There were three great feasts that the Jews held among others, known as the feast of the Passover, the feast of Pentecost and the feast of Tabernacles. All of these three feasts set forth in type of work of the Trinity, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost and God the Father. The feast of Passover particularly emblemizes the death of Jesus Christ as the believer's passover, for God, witnessing the efficacy of the blood of the Lamb of God, passes over the sins of the redeemed sinner and abolishes them forever in the realm of eternal forgetfulness. The feast of Pentecost refers to the descent of the Holy Ghost and the establishment of the church of God, as the saved sinner realizes his joint heirship with Christ. The feast of Tabernacles typifies God tabernacling with man as the Holy Spirit makes him alive from the dead. The last mentioned feast was the last one of the three great feasts of the Israelites, and so God tabernacles in man as a result of the work of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

It is also a feast of wines on the lees when the believer discerns no life in the Old Testament wine and that it has been exhausted, and that the water of the word fills the empty vessel to the brim, is made into gospel wine, and is kept until now, refreshing and supplying and satisfying the new born child of God who thirsts after righteousness, is often made to feel sad and heavy-hearted because of the adversary Satan. Jesus turned water into wine at the wedding feast at Cana, the first of his many miracles. This occurred on the third day, signifying the gospel day, as well as life from the dead, for Jesus rose from the dead the third day. The church is espoused as a chaste virgin unto Christ, and it is appropriate that this wedding was graced by Christ's presence. It is the church that tastes of the wine that Wisdom (Jesus the wisdom of God in a mystery) has mingled, and it is good wine, kept until now. It is never exhausted. The subject of grace has felt the lifenessness of the old testament wine with its condemnation, and has longed for that sparkling, invigorating, soul-cheering wine of the gospel dispensation. One must feel lost before realizing salvation, must feel the need of Christ before comprehending his mercy, so there is in the mingling of the wine in the mountain of God's holiness a sense of need supplied and grace provided. The first miracle that a child of God knows anything about is when he is made to sip gospel wine and finds his heavy-heartedness gone and hope renewed and faith strengthened. This wine is well refined, being on the lees, with strength and virtue in it. As the poor sinner experiences many trials and is refined by them and conformed to the image of God, he is made often to partake of this wine, of wines well refined. As the wine made from the water at Cana's wedding feast filled the vessels to the brim, so there is fullness of joy and

glory for the believer as he feasts in the fellowship of the saints in this mountain upon the precious things prepared by the Lord of hosts.

OBITUARIES

BROTHER O. Y. CLAYTON

It has pleased our Dear Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our Deacon, Brother O. Y. Clayton. He was born September 20, 1888. He was the son of Soloman D. and Susan Frances Morton Clayton. He passed away May 21, 1975, making his stay on earth 87 years.

On May 18, 1912, he was married to Ruth Jones. They lived together 63 years and to this union was born six children: four boys and two girls; leaving his wife and five children to mourn his loss, Mrs. Eulyn Bridges, Mrs. Frances McKay, O. Y., Jr., Meredith and Dan Clayton. Harold passed away several years ago.

Brother Clayton united with J. H. Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church March 21, 1953, together with his wife, Sister Ruth Clayton. The brethren and sisters were dear to him and he loved his church. Though his health was not good for many years, he was always present when he was not providentally hindered. We will miss him, but want to be submissive to the good Lord's Will. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be His holy will. His funeral was conducted at the Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church May 22, 1975, by Elder C. B. Davis, Jr., and was laid to rest in the cemetery at Roxboro.

This done by order of our conference at J. H. Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church June 7, 1975.

Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
Humbly Submitted
Nancy B. Allen

IN MEMORY OF DEACON JONAH S. BLALOCK

Our Heavenly Father in His wisdom and mercy saw fit to call our beloved and highly esteemed Brother Jonah Blalock from the walk of life and give him peaceful rest, until He comes again and gathers His jewels who have been redeemed in the Saviour's blood.

Brother Blalock was born in Caswell County on February 6, 1899, and died January 29, 1975. He was the son of the late Brother Mack and Sister Anna McKinney Blalock. He leaves his dear companion, Mrs. Lester Rascoe Blalock of the home; one daughter, Mrs. Helen Rippy of Elon, N. C.; two sons, H. S. Blalock of Hickory, N. C., and Clarence Blalock of Graham, N. C.; one brother, Harvey Blalock of Gibsonville, N. C.; and seven grandchildren.

During the session of the Upper Country Line Association at Lick Fork Church in July, 1930, Brother Blalock asked for a home, to be with Gilliams Church. He was received into its fellowship and was baptized by the late Elder John Gilliam at the fourth Sunday meeting. In the year 1932 he was appointed assistant clerk. Later the church felt Brother Blalock had a gift as a Deacon and he was ordained September 23, 1945. He served Gilliams Church until May 18, 1952, when he asked for a home with McCray. By a letter of transfer he was received into the fellowship as a Brother member and Deacon.

He was blessed to serve well, always desiring peace and unity in the church, believing in Salvation by grace and mercy of the Lord, telling of the great things the Saviour had done for him and giving Christ the praise. He came to meetings when it seemed to our human eyes that he was physically unable to attend. I remember the third Sunday in January, only a few days before his death, he came to McCray and was almost carried inside by his loving family and seated on the front pew where he rejoiced during the preaching. I believe he heard the True Gospel from Heaven delivered by our beloved pastor Elder Wallis Smith. He enjoyed being with loved ones of like faith and traveled many miles to visit other churches and associations.

His funeral was held at McCray Church, conducted by his pastor Elder Wallis Smith. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers — resting in peace, awaiting the coming of Christ.

May God bless and keep his loved ones. We at McCray miss him, but our loss is his eternal gain. May we all be reconciled to the will of the Heavenly Father, feeling that our Brother has gone home to be with his Lord.

Written by: Thelma Allison at the request of McCray Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder Wallis A. Smith, Moderator
Ruth Jeffreys, Clerk

LAWRENCE ADKINS

Lawrence Adkins was born July 18, 1893, to Jacob and Emma Adkins who were members of Indiantown Church. He died December 31, 1974. He was married to Maude Bethards, and to this union three children were born. His wife and children survive, besides several grandchildren, also a brother, Paul Adkins.

He was an upstanding citizen of the community. He was not a visible member of the Old School Baptist Church, but he was a faithful friend, a great supporter whenever expenses were incurred, and a staunch believer

in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. He attended services all his life, and we at Indiantown Church will miss him greatly, but we feel our loss is his gain.

Funeral services were held by Elder James Poole, and burial was in the Parsons Cemetery, Salisbury, Maryland.

William S. Adkins, Clerk
Indiantown Church

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

We, the members of Skewarky Primitive Baptist Church, bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father in removing by death our beloved sister, Sister Mizzie Willor B. Clark.

Sister Clark was born in Martin County, N. C. on March 8, 1912 and died May 29, 1975, thus making her stay 63 years. She was the daughter of the late John Dennis and Ella Allen Bonds. She was married in 1934 to Jesse Clark who survives. She united with the church of Skewarky in May 23, 1971. She was a faithful member and believed in the doctrine and practiced it daily. She was a faithful wife and mother. She attended the meetings at Skewarky when her health permitted her. She was loved by all and will be missed greatly, but our loss is her gain for eternal and peaceful rest with our Heavenly Father.

Surviving besides her husband are one son Samuel Lewis Clark of Tarboro; two daughters, Mrs. Pauline Cherry and Mrs. Sallie Mae Wobbleton both of Williamston; three brothers, Fenner, Mervin, and U. A. Bonds; one sister Mrs. Virginia Dare B. Donaldson; six grandchildren and one grandchild.

Funeral services were held Sunday afternoon at 4:30 at Skewarky Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor Elder E. C. Harrison assisted by Elder I. S. Conner. Interment was in Woodlawn Cemetery.

Our deepest sympathy go to her family and loved ones.

RESOLVED, That a copy be placed on church record, a copy be sent to the family and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of conference the Saturday before the second Sunday in June, 1975.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Judy D. Raynor, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It has been God's will to call from our midst, Brother Roy Madra. He was blessed to live on earth 77 years before his death on June 23, 1975. Brother Roy was blessed to join Tarboro Church, along with his wife, first Sunday in June, 1969. He was faithful to his church until he was taken sick about two years ago and was never able to attend again.

Brother Madra was a believer in Salvation by Grace, and to know Brother Roy was to love him. He was humble to his brethren and he was a great supporter to his church.

Therefore we resolve:

(1) That three copies be made and one to be sent to the *Times* for publication; one to be sent to the family; and one to be put in the church records.

(2) We send our sympathy to his family, and trust that he is resting in peace with our Saviour.

This done by order of conference at our July meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

MRS. BERTHA HARRIS CHAMBERLAINE

Mrs. Bertha Harris Chamberlaine was born March 1, 1877 in Reidsville, N. C. She was the daughter of Elder James Martin Harris and Annie Robertson Harris. She was united in wedlock in 1903 to Alfred Cookman Chamberlaine by Elder L. H. Hardy. To this union three sons were born: Alfred, Richard and Harris. All preceded her in death, and her husband passed away in 1950.

She was educated in the public schools and State Normal School, and taught in the public schools for many years.

Sister Chamberlaine was a charter member of the Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church. After moving to Winston Salem, N. C. she was a charter member of that church, but in her later years she moved her membership back to the Reidsville Church, and died a devoted and beloved member.

It was my privilege to serve as her pastor a number of years: and to know her was to love her. She was as well established in the doctrine of God our Saviour as any one I ever knew. She analyzed everything she heard or read, and compared it with God's Word. I well remember visiting with her after she was past ninety years of age, and one of the first things she said when I entered her house, "There is an article in the *Signs of the Times* that I want to talk to you about." Whatever it was that raised questions in her mind, was settled or explained to her satisfaction. It was a great pleasure to me to know that God had given her that probing mind, even after ninety years of age, to compare what she read with the Word of God. She was as well established in the doctrine of Predestination, Election, and the cardinal principles of Doctrine as any one I ever knew.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer in Vogler's Chapel, Winston Salem, N. C., as she requested.

She had written her requests for her funeral, and also left a request that flowers be white.

Our loss is her eternal gain, we believe.

D. V. Spangler

DENNIS BAILEY

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our very dear Brother Dennis Bailey. He was the son of Asa Warner and Melinda Bailey, and was born in Martin County, North Carolina, October 7, 1891. He was united in marriage January 13, 1923, to Elsie Harris, who survives, with one son, Dennis Marion Bailey, a grandson and four brothers; Seth, Ophus, Lester and Warner Bailey of Bear Grass. A sister, Mrs. Martha Tice of Williamston, North Carolina.

Brother Dennis Bailey and wife were received into the fellowship of Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church in June 1958 and baptized by Elder A. B. Ayers. He was ordained Deacon of the church in February, 1973.

He was a faithful and loving member and attended services as long as his health permitted him to do so. May the Lord bless his faithful and devoted wife, the family and all those that mourn, to feel that all is well with our loved one and that our loss is his eternal gain.

The funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Elder E. C. Harrison and Elder J. T. Prescott. Burial was in Pinewood Memorial Cemetery in Greenville, North Carolina.

E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Theresa R. Ayers, Committee

BEULAH PEELE MOBLEY

Our Heavenly Father in his infinite wisdom, love and mercy called away our beloved sister Beulah Peele Mobley on March 13, 1975.

She was born in Martin County, North Carolina April 5, 1888. Her parents were John Henry Dawson and Nellie Clark Peele.

Sister Mobley was received into the church Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1917, and was baptized on Sunday at Bear Trap Mill by Elder John N. Rogerson. She had been a loyal and faithful member these many years and it is sad to part with those we love.

Her husband, Samuel H. Mobley preceded her in death fifteen years ago. She is survived by four sons and one daughter; Hildreth P., Ralph C., W. Worth, Haywood C. and Mrs. Evelyn Howell.

Her funeral was conducted by her beloved pastor, Elder E. C. Harrison at Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church, Williamston, North Carolina. Burial was in Martin Memorial Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

Done by order of conference Saturday before the third Sunday in March 1975.

E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Theresa R. Ayers, Committee

BROTHER CHARLIE R. ALLEN

We at New Bay Primitive Baptist Church bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, as it has pleased Him to remove from our midst, Brother Charlie R. Allen. Brother Allen was born October 31, 1898, near Verona. After his marriage to Sister Emma Rhodes Allen in October 1923, he made his home in Sneads Ferry, where he resided until his death, May 5, 1974.

He united with New Bay Church in February 1962, a strong believer in the doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God. His love and fellowship for the brethren and the church was always manifest with a beautiful smile and a warm handshake. His qualification for deacon was recognized and he was ordained to the office of deacon in October, 1962. He served the church well, in love and humbleness, always being submissive to the good of the church.

The last few months of his life, his afflictions were many, but he seemed to be reconciled to the will of God, as he never complained because of his suffering. He was a true and faithful brother to the end. We miss our beloved Brother, but we feel our loss is his eternal gain. The love and fellowship we shared with him lives on in our hearts.

He is survived by his wife, Sister Emma Allen of Sneads Ferry, N. C., five daughters, Virginia Lawen of California, Doris Laumann of Jacksonville, N. C., Vila Rae Swaney of Sneads Ferry, N. C., Hazel Enck of Collinsville, Va., Mary Thompson of Jacksonville, N: C.: two sons, R. C. Allen of Sneads Ferry, N. C., and Carlton Allen of Winston Salem, N. C.: seventeeen grandchildren and eight great grandchildren: two sisters and three brothers.

Funeral services were conducted in New Bay Primitive Baptist Church by Elder D. B. Stokes and Elder S. P. Jones. He was laid to rest in a Sneads Ferry cemetery, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, where his sleeping body awaits the resurrection when Jesus shall come again to gather all his children home.

Written by order of conference at New Bay Church.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Brother Norman Jenkins, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143 DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1975 NO. 12

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

GETS TO MEETINGS WHEN SOMEONE TAKES HER

Route 1, Box 127C
Glade Hill, Va. 24092

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood:

I am sending check to pay for the *Signs of the Times* two more years, and the balance for whatever it is needed. I don't want to miss any for I enjoy reading so many good writings. I do not get to go to church as I would like, for since my husband passed away eleven years ago, I just go when someone comes by and takes me. My Daddy was a Primitive Baptist preacher, his name was W. Lester Perdue, he passed away November 12, 1917.

I don't belong to any church, and don't know if I ever will, for I feel unworthy, but I wish I were worthy for I love the Primitive Baptists and go to hear them all I can, which is not as much as I would like to. I read so many good writings in the *Signs* by so many different ones, and I enjoy it so much. I re-read my older ones over and over, and I usually read mine through the same day I get them.

I read my Bible a great deal, and I believe the Primitive Baptists preach it just as it is. I don't believe in this save your self doctrine as some preach it. I believe if we are saved it is by the Grace of God, and not by works we do. I feel we are just helpless sinners, and that Almighty God does the saving — if left to us we are lost, for we are not saved by our works.

I beg your prayers if you feel to pray, for I am one of the poor, helpless sinners but love you all and do believe the doctrine you preach. I have heard you both, and many others too, and I also read the good writings of you both, and many others that tell my feelings so much better than I can, and hope to hear more of it.

Nannie Gracie (Perdue) Arrington

CHRIST THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Do not the Lord's people, the elect, acknowledge today that the Lord, as David said, is their shepherd. His people are the sheep of His pasture. They go in and out by Him and find pasture, being fed as David said, and they shall not want, because the Lord leads them. "I will bring the blind by a way they know not, I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." (Isaiah 42:16)

The Shepherd laid his life down for the sheep. The sheepfold represents the whole Church of God. The sheep are those that know the voice of the Good Shepherd, — and of every true shepherd, and the sheep know not the voice of a stranger — they will flee from him. The thief comes to steal and kill and destroy: he that is an hireling, and not the Shepherd whose own the sheep are, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep and fleeth, and the wolf catcheth

them and scattereth the sheep. (John 10:12) The Thief is a false teacher, proving himself to be such by their selfishness and rapacity. (Read the 34 chapter of Ezekiel) A Hireling is one that serves merely for gain, without any personal interest in the flock. Such a person may seem to be better than a thief or a robber, but the sheep are not safe in his care, for he will risk nothing for them — he is no true shepherd, for he lacks the essential characteristic of personal intimacy which exists between Jesus and every one of His sheep, resembling that which subsists between Father and Son.

Jesus said on one occasion to some, that you believe not because you are not my sheep. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me." And in Isaiah 40:11, we read, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."

Brethren, isn't it wonderful that God still feeds His flock? Oh, how we do get hungry and crave to be fed, and drink from the drippings that come from above! How wonderful it is to meet together and hear the Gospel expounded: the good news given by the Great Shepherd of the sheep. There is no truth in anything else, and if the truth makes us free, we shall be free indeed. The Truth as it is in Christ Jesus is put in the hearts of His Elect, because Jesus is the way, the truth and the life to each of His Elect: the ones his Father gave him before the world was, because the elect of God were chosen in Christ before there were any of them in the world, that they should be holy and without blemish before Him in love.

Jesus taught his Apostles to pray for food in this manner, "Give us this day our daily bread." They have to be fed daily because these are blessed people, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled," not going to be blessed, but already blessed. God has never changed: He is the same today as always. We think of the Prophets in olden times, how the Lord took care of them: Elijah was fed by the ravens that brought him bread and flesh in the mornings and evenings, and he drank of the brook of Cherith — and the brook dried up. And the Lord sent him to Zarephath, to a widow woman to sustain him. She had only a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruise, just for her and her son. But the Lord multiplied the meal oil, and they ate many days.

So when the good Lord of earth and heaven gives those that hunger and thirst as Elijah did, they rejoice in being filled, because they are already a blessed people. (Please read the 17th chapter of Kings) The sheep have always been fed by the hand of God. Do we have anything that we haven't received from God, either natural or spiritual? All good and perfect gifts come down from the Father of lights to the Sheep of His pasture. "A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men." (Prov. 8:16) This gift that men have causes him to study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15)

There are many gifts but all of the same Spirit, "For God hath not given us the Spirit of fear but of power and love, and of a sound mind." (2 Timothy 1:7), to worship him in spirit and truth. And we look unto Him who is the author and finisher of our faith, who works all things after the counsel of His sovereign will. I believe there is no event that has ever taken place, or takes place now, or will in the future, that is not according to God's sovereign will. "The lot is cast in the lap and the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." (Proverbs 6:33) "Fear not little flock for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32) Jesus calls them a little flock. So we read in Deuteronomy 7:7, "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose

you, because you were more in number than any people, for ye were the fewest of all people."

So the Lord's people is his portion of his creation: they were elected in Christ before the foundation of the world. Here is the little flock, the Sheep of his pasture that follow the Great Shepherd. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God." "God is a Spirit, and they that worship God must worship Him in Spirit and in truth," because these people are taught of the Lord. Jesus said, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." (John 6:45)

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God: who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Timothy 1:7-9)

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13)

"Love is the sweetest bud that blows,
Its beauty never dies,
On earth among the saints it grows
And ripens in the skies.

His purpose will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour.
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower."

Written in love to all.

Your brother in Christ, I hope,
Elder Herbert R. Prince,
4307 Manor Haven Drive,
Memphis, Tenn. 38128

GIVEN COURAGE TO GO ON

404 Spruce Street,
Rayville, La. 71269

Dear Brothers in Hope:

Enclosed you will find four dollars, for which please extend our subscription for another year. We do not want to miss a single copy.

Sometimes it is like a friendly ship to a drowning man at sea: it lifts us up and renews our weak hope, and gives us courage to go on, hoping and trusting in an all powerful God.

Yours in hope,
Mr. and Mrs. Earl Wilson

ENJOYED THE OCTOBER SIGNS

Dearly Beloved of the Lord:

I have been taking the *Signs* since 1953, and enjoyed this one (October, 1975) more than any, and that is saying a lot.

It was good to see Elder Spangler's writing again — it has been a long time. Sister Dykes is a very gifted writer and writes frequently. Sister Bailey's experience is extra good, and others — I can't remember them all as I have already sent this copy to a sister.

Elder Stewart McColl's editorial is very spiritually enlightening, as well as educational, on Jacob blessing the sons. He may be blest to write an editorial on Joseph, as he said one could be written on him. . . . Elder Beebe's article on Revelation 22:14 is one of the best — there is none better.

If you have an extra October *Signs*, please send one to the name and address shown, for which I enclose $2.00.

May the Lord bless you in your labor of love for the saints.

In brotherly love and fellowship,
Harry T. Vories

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 2, Box 148,
Pink Hill, N. C. 28572

Dear Loved Ones In Christ:

By God's grace it has been on my mind for some time to write to the *Signs of the Times*, but I don't feel worthy to

tell how my life has been in this vain world. It has been a rock bed, but by God's grace he has kept me this far. All I can say is, "Father I stretch my hand to thee, no other help I know. Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling."

I have always been sickly, and when 32 years old I took rheumatic fever and had to stay in bed almost a year. It left my heart enlarged, my people and the doctor thought I was going to die, but I am glad it is not left up to man. I have two daughters, one is married with three children, and my baby is eighteen years old and in her last year of high school.

I fell and broke my hip April 7, 1974. The doctors put a pin in it, and for six months I could put no weight on it. Later they took the pin out, and since then I can walk only with my walker. I have a good husband and he has been so good to me in all my trials, troubles and afflictions. He and the friends brothers and sisters, have done all they could for me. All I can say is, praise the Lord forever. I feel as little as an ant, and I know I can do nothing without God's help. I pray that His will is to let me walk again, and if it isn't, to reconcile me to His will. Sometimes it seems He has forsaken me, then again, I can rejoice a few precious moments. . .

Quite a few Elders have been to see me. How I would praise the good Lord for sending them. They and others would pray for me. The Lord has been good to me and my family. My mother was a Primitive Baptist. She was a good mother to us seven children. She loved the church, and so do I. I joined the church in 1963, I know I am not worthy to be there, but I trust the good Lord has done something for me that I could not do for myself. I am just as helpless as any vile sinner can be.

After many fears, I dreamed that I was alone in the darkness. It seemed when I started to go some place, I went up on a high hill and when I started to go through a gate there was someone to go with me. It was Elder Mitchell and others, and my sister came and took my hand. It was such a beautiful place. Everything in that place was gold and silver. I awoke and laid there wondering if I would ever see it again. It seems it has given me a better hope. Sometimes it seems I have to hope for hope, and I beg the Lord to please have mercy on me. Much of my time I am in pain, and I know God has had mercy or I couldn't stand it. Sometimes I can praise His holy name for the pain I have had. I hope some day it will be worth every pain I have had, and I will be with Him and be satisfied. That is the day I am looking forward to. How many times since, when I was down in the valley, I have seen it. But the hymn "Mixtures of Joy and Sorrow" tells it better than I can. Then sometimes I begin to wonder if it is my imagination, and my doom is that terrible pit.

I have been receiving the *Signs of the Times* for ten years, and I dearly love this paper. I have something to look forward to every month. I know I have been scattering and hard to follow. It is hard for me to understand myself. "What I am 'tis hard to know." It is so wonderful to be with God's wonderful family. They could live without me, but I just couldn't live without them. All I want in this world is a sweet home in heaven when I die. I know I love the people, and the doctrine Saved by Grace, for I know that without the grace of God I am lost. I cannot forsee what He has prepared for me. I do not question this, because He has led me to believe He will go with me to the end.

When given a mind to pray, please remember me. I am very low at times, but thank the good Lord at other times I feel singularly blessed. May He keep me humble at the feet of the precious saints, that I may never offend one of them. O Lord that I may spend the rest of my days in praise to thee!

A little sister in hope,
Mrs. Addie Kennedy

ROMANS 10:1, 2

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel, is that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge."

There is a nation of Israel and there is an elect Israel. The Elect Israel includes both Jews and Gentiles that were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Romans 9:6: "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel." There is a question as to how one learns of God and is saved. Romans 10:13: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Now there are some plain questions here in Romans and the answer also when we are blessed to see and hear. Romans 10:14: "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" Romans 10:15: "And how shall they preach, except they be sent?"

Now these are some of the questions. We haven't come to the answer yet. Romans 10:15: "As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" This is not a question. One may shout with joy, "How beautiful!" There is a beauty in the feet of the Elders and the path they have been blessed to walk. There is a beauty in washing the feet of the Children of God. Romans 10:16: "But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord who hast believed our report?" Romans 10:17: "So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." The Bible is the written word of God. And Jesus is the Word. John 1:1: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John I:14: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." There is also the gospel or the preached word. In the text, hearing and faith cometh by the word of God. God does speak directly to all the elect. One dead in sin can not savingly hear any man. One must be born again before he can believe and rejoice in the gospel. John 10:27: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." Romans 10:18: "But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."

It is plain to see that there was plenty of preaching all over the world. Did the dead receive it or not? Romans 10:19: "But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provike you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you." Romans 10:20: "But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me." Here is the answer we have been waiting for. He was made manifest unto them that asked not after him. Doesn't that sound just like one dead in sin? Dead and doesn't know it, and wouldn't know it if you told him all day long. Thank God! He does make himself manifest to all his children. Now, how did the preacher make out then and now unless God first healed the sinner. Romans 10:21: "But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hand unto a disobedient and gainsaying people." The scripture does not say in I Corinthians 1:21, it pleased God by the *usual way* of preaching to save them that believe. I Corinthians 1:21 says, "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." The word foolishness was not put there to fill up space. The preacher doesn't save anyone. The preaching doesn't save anyone. The ones here were by or under the sound of preaching when it pleased God to save them. After one is born again they rejoice when blessed to hear the Truth preached. Proverbs 16:1: "The preparation of the heart in man, and

the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." It could be said that it pleased God by the foolishness of the mother's womb to save John. It could be said that it pleased God by the foolishness of the journey to Damascus to save Paul.

Jesus is the only perfect preacher. He preached with power that no other man can equal. His message was this, John 6:44: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him and I will raise him up at the last day." Ephesians 2:8, 9: "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." If saving faith came by preaching, man would boast. This verse has been misquoted to say "it is a gift from God," however, "it is *the* gift *of* God." God the Father gave His only begotten Son. Romans 8:7,8: "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be. So then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God." I Corinthians 2:14: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto Him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Hebrews 8:11: "And they shall not teach every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for all shall know Me from the least to the greatest." John 6:45: "It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, Cometh unto me." Philippians 1:6: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Romans 1:16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, the just shall live by faith." The gospel is the power of God to those already blessed to believe. It reveals the righteousness of God from faith to faith. One must be given faith to hear and understand it, and one must be given faith to preach it. Where there is no faith there is no revelation or understanding.

We would want to view Israel, who She represents, and her condition. Romans 9:27: "Esaias also cried concerning Israel, though the number of children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved:" this describes the number of all of Israel, also a remnant which is all that were the elect, both Jew and Gentile. Now we want to view Israel the elect people. Romans 10:26: "And so *all Israel* shall be saved: as it is written, there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:" 11:27: "For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." 11:28: "As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election they are beloved for the Father's sake." 11:29: "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentence."

One does not repent in order to receive spiritual life. Repentance is evidence that one already has spiritual life. It is not my desire to quote a lot of church history or to prove a point by brother so and so. I will quote one article of faith of our association. "We believe that the Scriptures comprising the Old and New Testaments, are the words of God, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice; and we prefer the King James translation."

Some think that the preaching of the gospel is used as a *means* to import faith to the unbelievers. I do not have fellowship with that doctrine. My prayer is that we may be blessed with love to live in peace, looking over one another for good and not for evil, that our ministers be given grace to preach sound doctrine in love and power and we may be blessed to hear and rejoice in it.

In hope of Peace,
Earl W. Hall
1131 Pecan
Channelview, Texas 77530

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EDITORIAL

"HE MUST INCREASE, BUT I MUST DECREASE" (John 3:30)

The writer feels very empty in attempting to write upon this beautiful scripture. Yet, "my heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the King." I hope my pen will be that of a ready writer. If so, may He have the praise!

In John 3:23-36 we find the baptism and witness of John the Baptist. In Matthew 3 we find that John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, "Repent ye: for the

kingdom of heaven is at hand." He was the voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. In John 5 Jesus speaks of the witness of John as being true and that he was a burning and a shining light and that the people were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. John was not the light, the true light, the Sun of righteousness yet he was the forerunner of that light. He had much light that was given to him about the person and office of the Messiah; in the doctrines of faith in Christ, and repentance toward God. He gave great light to others, in the business of salvation, and remission of sins, and guided many into the way of peace.

There arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying. The Jews in common were very careful about ceremonial purifications and ablutions commanded in the law of Moses and as well the traditions of the elders concerning the various washings of persons and vessels. They felt these had been brought into neglect and contempt by the baptism of John. As well the people heard also of the baptism of Christ. Who could tell which was right and safest to follow? Would it not have been better to adhere solely to the purifications required by the law of Moses and by their elders?

John's disciples, who had been disputing with the Jews about purifying obviously did not understand how to answer the questions, so they came to John and said unto him, "Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him." John 3:26. Note that they spoke very respectfully about John, calling him "Rabbi", but of Jesus they simply said "he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness," not willing to call him by name. John's disciples felt that it was the peculiar business of their master, John, to baptize. While we have no record that Jesus actually baptized himself, yet his disciples baptized people at his command. As well John's disciples were much troubled that large multitudes flocked to hear Christ preach, and great numbers were made disciples by him, and then baptized.

In view of the above disputings between his own disciples and the Jews about purifying and baptism the words of John the Baptist are set down in John 3:27-36, to set things in perspective and give the pre-eminence to Jesus. How beautiful and solemn are these words! Please read them. Are they not surely believed among the Lord's people? It is a blessing that we are able to say with Jesus, "I thank thee, oh Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes, even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." Matthew 11:25-26. John felt his joy was fulfilled in that he, himself, was a friend of the bridegroom (Jesus) and that he rejoiced greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. John was aware of his own high calling as he said himself "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am unworthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner: but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Matthew 3:11-12.

"He must increase, but I must decrease." John 3:30. John felt that "He", meaning Jesus, must increase in fame, credit and reputation among men, as he was to do in Judea, by reason of his miracles and doctrines. As well Jesus must increase among the Gentiles through the spread of the Gospel and will increase more and more in the latter day when he alone will be exalted. Jesus must increase in the ministry which was published by him and his disciples throughout Israel. After the resurrection and ascension of Jesus the

apostles spread the gospel throughout the Gentile world and it will one day cover the earth as the waters do the sea. His kingdom and interest, which at first appeared very small, will one day fill the face of the whole earth for the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Isaiah 9:7. When John appeared among them, they were very fond of him, and even proud of him. They hoped that he was the light, the Messiah. Even the Pharisees and Sadducees attended his ministry. When they found out that he just bore testimony to Jesus — the true Messiah and this ran counter to their ideas of a temporal kingdom and their own self righteousness, they grew sick of him, rejected the counsel he gave and rejected his baptism. Even John's disciples, who were believers, had to be taught line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little that, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. John was to be cast into prison by Herod for Heriodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife, for he had married her and John had said unto Herod that it was not lawful for him to have his brother's wife. When the daughter of Herodias danced before Herod she pleased him and he said that he would give her whatsoever she asked unto the half of his kingdom. She asked for the head of John the Baptist. Herod sent an executioner and commanded his head to be brought. Surely, it was so with John the Baptist, "He (meaing Jesus) must increase, but I must decrease."

So it is with each believer, each follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, "He must increase but I must decrease." The new man must increase, the old man must decrease. He is born in us, the hope of glory. He is the quickening spirit. We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency might be of him. In John 5:25 Jesus said, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." Who are the dead here? They are the dead in trespass and in sins. They are quickened by His Holy Spirit. They hear His voice and live. He lives in them. They see their own corruption, they see their own dishonour, they see their own weakness, they see that they are altogether natural beings and vanity. They see that they are altogether unclean before God and that flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom. They see that "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone: but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." John 12:24. They see that Jesus is the corn of wheat, that unless he died and shed his precious blood for the remission of sins he would have abided alone with the Father and the Holy Spirit and elect angels because he was the *only* begotten son of the Father, who was fit to dwell in heaven because he was without sin and no guile was found in his mouth. "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared." Psalm 130:3-4. David wrote the above showing that it was the work of God that he believed on Him whom God had sent. John the Baptist said, "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all, and what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth: and *no man* receiveth his testimony." John 3:27, 31-32.

"How strange is the course a Christian must steer;
How perplexed is the path he must tread!

The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
And his life he receives from the dead.

His fairest pretensions must wholly be waived,
And his best resolutions be crossed;
Nor can he expect to be perfectly saved,
Till he finds himself utterly lost.

When all this is done, and his heart is assured
Of the total remission of sins,
When his pardon is signed and his peace is procured,
From that moment his conflict begins."

The conflict is between the old man Adam which is of the earth, earthy and the new man which is the Lord from heaven. The conflict then is between flesh and spirit. The conflict is between the "old I" and the "new I". Paul says in Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." I am glad that John said "He *must* increase but I *must* decrease" because in this we see by God-given faith that the new man must ultimately triumph and we shall dwell in His presence without spot, blemish wrinkle or any such thing .

We have the sentence of death in ourselves that we should not trust in ourselves. Paul says in Romans 7:18-25, "For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inner man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."

As we see Jesus we see more of the true light. As we get step by step closer home we see more of the corruption of ourselves, more of the dishonour of ourselves, more of the weakness of ourselves, more of the vanity of ourselves and feel more of the unworthiness of ourselves. We do not feel to grow better and better but we feel to grow worse and worse. Often we feel with Jacob of old who said, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage." Gen. 47:9.

When we are made conscious of our great sinfulness and wickedness we are made to cry for mercy with the publican as he stood afar off not feeling worthy to so much as lift his eyes unto heaven, but smote his breast saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Luke 18:13. Sometimes we are made to say with the hymn writer, "I want that grace that springs from thee, that quickens all things where it flows, And makes a wretched thorn like me, bloom as the myrtle or the rose."

"He must increase, but I must decrease." The old man dies daily, (the old man with his deeds must be put off), the new man is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." Romans 8:29. Our souls are quickened here by His Holy Spirit, our bodies will be quickened when Jesus comes the second time without sin unto salvation to take his ransomed people home. As Paul writes in Romans 8:11, "But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." 1 Corinthians 15:49.

At death the body is sown in *cor-*

ruption; it is raised in *incorruption:* it is sown in *dishonour;* it is raised in *glory:* it is sown in *weakness;* it is raised in *power:* it is sown a *natural body;* it is raised a *spiritual body.*

Thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. He must increase but I must decrease. Every word then (in view of the final victory and in view of our travel here), has a beauty to us. "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up in life. Now he that wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit." 2 Corinthians 5:4-5.

May we, then, by the mercies of God present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is our reasonable service and be not conformed to this world; but be transformed by the renewing of our minds that we may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you:

(Elder) D. Alex McColl

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

PSALM 31:15

"My times are in thy hand."

DEAR BRETHREN:—As a traveler upon a journey often when he reaches a mile-stone will pause and look back over the way his feet have trodden, and then forward, if perchance he may gain some view of what lies before him, so it seems natural that when the yearly mile-stones of our lives are reached we should reflect upon the past, and think of the future, and of what may lie before us in our journey. This is true of all men in every age and clime; but it must be specially true of the christian pilgrim. He has so much more than unregenerate men to reflect upon in the past, and so much more to anticipate in the future.

But whether he thinks of the past or of the future, the believer sees one thing along every step of the way that no one else sees, and that is the hand of God guiding, and the will of God ordering his steps. His journey has been no uncertain wandering of a blind man groping in the dark, but the ordered pathway of a father safely, wisely and lovingly guiding or bearing his child. The Bible teaches us that no more surely is it true that God appoints and controls all the coming and going and changes of the natural elements of the world, as the seasons, day and night, cold, heat, clouds, storms, sunshine, appointing to all their times and places, that it is true that he is equally sovereign in all the providences of our lives, and what is still more precious to be believed, in all the spiritual mutations through which we pass.

It is sure that the child of God has a providential pathway in which to walk, as well as a spiritual travel. It is equally sure that his God has appointed the one for him as well as the other; and we have but to read the life of David, together with the Psalms, or the life of Paul in connection with his letters, to see how our providential life is bound up with our spiritual life. God has ever made the former subservient to the latter; and in the latter no more than in the former does his sovereign will and eternal purpose appear.

I have felt moved for a few years past to insist upon a "God of providence" as well as a God of grace, because there has seemed to me to be a tendency to ignore this side of the matter, to throw out of the calculation our providential surroundings, doings, willings and sufferings, and to present exclusively our spiritual exercises, wherein God leads us with sovereign wisdom and power. It is sure that holy men of old counted it joy to believe in a God of providence as well as of grace. In their

view his providence entered into and appointed the minutest step of their lives. Naturally as well as spiritually they believe that they lived, moved, and had their being in God. No matter by what channel sorrow or joy came to them, they always said, "It is the Lord." Now it has seemed to me that we are in danger of drifting away from this. Instead of seeing God in all our lives, both providential and spiritual, we are prone to put him far off, and consider him not. Holy men of old rejoiced that the God whom they worshipped had ordained all their paths for them; and why should not we?

At this end of the old year I have been looking back and striving to look forward. I see much that looks dark and devious in the past, and much that seems threatening in the future. Personal trials in the past, personal anxieties for the future; and what is worse, church trials in the past, church trials for the future. Now it has seemed to me that underneath the throne of God I can see nothing to rest in; but by faith beholding the divine ruler I can rest. "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof." —Psalm xcvii. I do not know what may be in all the future of God's providence or grace toward me, but I am sure that he—his will, purpose, love and grace—will be everywhere. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without him;" and surely if, as the Lord said, we are of more value than many sparrows, we cannot take one step without him. Whatever may be unexpected to us, we may be sure that nothing is unexpected to the God whom we serve; for "known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world." So that from the beginning our God has not done one thing that from the beginning he had not appointed. With him there are no new purposes caused by changing and unforesen circumstances. In this we may rest. We seem to be tossed by varying winds upon a restless sea; but he holds the winds in his fists, and "the sea is his, and he made it." In the midst of these various reflections upon the past and present, called up by the advent of this new year, my mind has been led to these words of David, "My times are in thy hands," and they have made me glad; and through these words I have been led into some reflections which I desire to pen down and submit to you.

First, these words of David are not only the expression of his personal faith, but are the words of divine inspiration as well. They are not only the expression of that which David most certainly believed, but are the words of God to us, so that we may count them as being most certainly true. They are the expression of the sovereign, overruling and faithful care of Jehovah for his believing child David every moment of his life. They declare that God has appointed the variety and number of his times, and that they are measured out to him according to the one supreme will. This affirmative implies a full negative also. Our times are not in our hands. It is not ours to bid our seasons come and go at will. We cannot command the darkness nor the light, neither can we influence their coming or going. Who can bind either leviathan or the sweet influences of Pleiades? Let it be borne in mind that I speak here more especially of the providence of our God, but let it also be remembered that this is all true of the spiritual life as well.

Now, secondly, David speaks these words as though he were glad above measure. It seems to be a sort of exultant cry. The words are not the language of one who submits to the inevitable, to which he is opposed, but they express a great joy. David must have learned two things ere he could utter these words as he did. He must have learned that he could not guide his own feet safely, that he could not be trusted to measure out his own times, that he had not to look to blind chance in this matter; and on the other hand, he must have learned some things about the God whose sovereign appointment he con-

fessed and rejoiced in. Many of the heathen believed in a blind fate; but it was David's joy, and it is ours also, to believe in an all-seeing and all-ruling and all-appointing God. In order to rejoice and exult that he—his times—were in the hands of God, David must have learned that here was to be found almighty power, supreme wisdom, infinite love, and unchangeable purposes. Leave out any or all of these things, and there could be no room for rejoicing that "his times" were in the hands of God. The word teaches us that our minds are finite, while all the attributes of Jehovah are infinite. The finite cannot comprehend the infinite, and at best it can but dimly apprehend infinite things. How much we must believe of which we can see but a dim outline or shadow! So omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, eternity, holiness, heaven, are all words expressive of truth which we must believe, and yet we do not begin to grasp the meaning of one of them; and yet it is such a Being who reigns, and of whom David could rejoicingly say, "My times are in thy hand." Right here I am reminded that another and greater than David, "he who was David's Lord," also said, "The Son of man indeed goeth as it was written of him" (Mark), or "as it was determined." — Luke. This he said specially of his betrayal. His God had determined the fact, and the time and the way of his betrayal. Jesus confesses this, and declares that all must be as it was written in the prophets. Jehovah had decreed this time for the dear Savior, and that Judas should sell his Lord just then; and yet Jesus said, "Woe to that man by whom he is betrayed. It were good for that man had he never been born." Concerning this I will only remark further that two things meet us in the text, viz., that God had determined beforehand that Judas should betray Jesus, and that Judas was condemned for doing this act.

But Satan may take hold of the natural unbelief of our hearts, and tempt us after this fashion. David was a great man, and he had a great work to do in the world, and therefore his times were of vast importance, and therefore God held his times in his hand, and measured them out to him; but I am but a worm, a babe; I am of little use in the world; it matters little whether I live or die; and I cannot suppose that what was true of David is true of me. But this is truly a temptation of the evil one, and is met by the testimony of Jeremiah when he said, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." This is true of all men; and so by this testimony we learn that the times of the very least as well as the greatest are in the hands of God.

But now the question comes up in my mind, What does David include in this expression? Does he leave anything out? Does he say that any of his times are not in the hand of God? Who would venture to say that David made any exception? Who could point to any period in David's life and say, That time was not in the hands of God? From the time when he kept the flocks safely from the bear and lion, to the time when God called him home, was there one spot when it could be said, This did not come from God? The words of the text might present to our minds the picture of a child who stands waiting with expectancy the appointments of a father or guardian. All that this child can hope for or dread, that guardian has in his own control; but the child has no fear, and is well content, for he has learned to believe that his guardian is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. So he comes or goes, studies, works or plays, eats such food and wears such apparel as his guardian appoints; and because of his faith in and love to his guardian, he confidingly and joyfully confesses, "All my times are in his hand, He orders all my ways, and I must and do leave it all with him." So our sovereign Guardian and Friend holds our times, of whatever sort they are, in his absolute control. O that we may, like David, have a heart to praise God that

is is so!

If we turn to this Psalm, we learn (verse 4) that men were covertly seeking David's overthrow, (verse 7) that he had been having trials and adversities, (verse 8) that he had been assailed by enemies, and (verses 9 and 10) that he was filled with trouble and grief. Such times as these he had met with, and of them he said, They are in God's hands. Also, all through the Psalm he prays for deliverance and salvation; and these times of deliverance are also in the hands of God. David by this could learn submission under the afflictions, and patience while waiting for relief. Once he said, "I was silent, because thou didst it." And Job said, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." So we learn that our times of trial, in whatever garb they appear, are all in the control of the Almighty. He measures them out to us at his will; and so also the joy comes when and how he pleases. Nothing in our lives is left to chance. With Jehovah there can be no contingencies. "Known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world." He does nothing that he did not purpose to do ere time began. He works "all things after the counsel of his own will;" all things, without exception. Unless David had believed all this he could not have said, "My times are in thy hand."

How exactly similar to this confidence of David is the language of Paul in portions of the eighth chapter of Romans. In verse twenty-eight of that chapter we hear him saying most confidently, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose." Paul here takes strong ground: "We know." He takes broad ground: "That all things." He takes comforting ground; "Work together for good." He takes discriminating ground: "To them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I have just said that Paul takes broad ground. He says, "All things." Down in verse thirty-seven, in this same eighth chapter of Romans, he says precisely the same thing in other words. He enumerates tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and the sword; and then he says, "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." We are "more than conquerors." That is, we turn even enemies into our service; and thus all things work for our good, as he said in verse twenty-eight. God works secretly, and often we cannot see his hand, and still oftener we cannot trace out how good is to result from many providences; for his word says it all does work for good, and can we not believe his word, and trust him even when we cannot trace him?

To the sick ones this applies. Much is said in these days about health and cure-alls, mind cures and faith cures not excepted. Much is said also about the care of our bodies, and sanitary regulations for houses and cities; but I notice that men suffer and die everywhere alike. After all is said and done, it still is true that our times of sickness are in his hand. If there be sickness, it is from his hand; and the same hand makes us well again. Each in its place and time is fulfilling the purpose of God, and working for good to his loved ones. In this faith, patience and cheerful resignation are to be found; but if sickness does not come from the hand of God, and is not meant for our good, then it is vain to speak of resignation, for we have a right to murmur at what comes from the devil, or grows out of our own folly. May God help each sick one to say, "My times are in thy hand." The faith of Job is the best faith. In his losses and afflictions he saw neither Sabeans, nor Chaldeans, nor wind, nor fire, nor Satan himself, but only God himself. My brother or sister, whatever your afflictions may be, and however long they may endure, "it is of the Lord." All is in his hand.

To those who are passing through the

sorrows of bereavement these words apply. A dear sister whom I know had lost an only child. While the child lay dead in the house she was filled with great bitterness, and would not be comforted, and could not weep. As the hour of burial drew near an uncle came to her as she sat alone in the room, and said to her, "Think who has done it." Her heart responded to this, and all the bitterness gave place to submission at the thought, "The Lord has done it." This time of her trouble was in the hands of God.

This word suits those who are persecuted or slandered, or whose names are cast out as evil; those who are poor and needy and distressed. On the other hand, if we are well and happy and strong, if we have friends and prosperity, if a good name and riches be ours, these words are still just as true as before. Our times are in the hands of God; and if we believe these words we shall not be in despair when sorrow comes, and neither shall we be exalted above measure in the day of our prosperity. We receive either one or the other according to the sovereign will of God.

Our circumstances may change, but there is no change with him. With him there is nothing new. He has no new knowledge, no new purposes, but all was fixed in the infinite mind from vast eternity. He who created the ponderous world also created the mote that we see floating in the sunbeam; and so he who set bounds to nations also ordained the feeble steps of such finite worms as we. Just as carefully and omnipotently as he struck out the track of worlds in space, so accurately and omnipotently has he from the beginning struck out our pathways of joy or sorrow. Our times are in his hand.

I said in the beginning that I had been striving to look into the future, but I am glad that I cannot pierce that vail. I am also glad that all my ways of word or thought or deed, all that I shall do or suffer or enjoy, are in God's hands.

"The steps that I take, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will."

My brethren, I send this as a sort of New Year's greeting. I wish for you all, if it be God's will, a Happy New Year.

As ever, I remain your brother in hope of life,

F. A. CHICK

Reisterstown, Md.

(We enjoyed reading the above so much that we felt our brethren would enjoy it too. It was written by Elder Chick and published Feb. 1, 1888, and re-published about 20 years ago.—J. D. W.

SORROW UNTO DEATH

By

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND

The loneliest thing that can be imagined in all the world was the ark as it went upon the face of the waters. Not another object was to be seen on all that wide and dismal waste of water that covered the earth, not even a mountain top. "The waters prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth, and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth, and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail, and the mountains were covered." Alone upon that dark and dreary expanse, tossed upon that heaving, shoreless flood, with the terrible rain still falling from the black and angry heavens, what scene of greater and more awful desolation can be pictured to the mind, what lonelier object can be imagined?

But there is a scene of greater desolation, of more utter hopeless loneliness in sorrow and suffering, as the reality is greater than the type. It is Jesus in the wilderness, in the garden, on the cross. When the great deep of God's judgments was broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened to pour out the just wrath of God against sin, only One felt the full power of that terrible flood. It fell upon Jesus the Son of God, and he was alone in bearing it. He was appointed unto this suffering and pre-

pared for it. The infinite wisdom and power of God in the mystery are "unsearchable and past finding out."

All flesh upon the earth died while the rain was falling, but the ark was prepared to feel the full force and terror of the storm to the end. In that was the salvation of those within the ark. So while death passed upon all men because of sin, Jesus was prepared to feel all the terrors and pains of that death, and to bear all the curse of that law which condemns all flesh to death, until every jot and tittle of it should be fulfilled, until the last drop of the rain of God's wrath had fallen. It must all fall upon him while in our flesh. His sorrow was unto death while he was yet in this mortal life. He must taste all the bitterness of death before he died. Unconsciousness couldn't come to relieve him of one pang.

And he was absolutely alone in that suffering as the ark was alone in the flood. In a wonderful and mysterious sense the life of all his people was in him, and they were "preserved in" him, as all those who were to people the earth after the flood were preserved in the ark. But in his suffering and sorrow while under the curse of the law, he was alone. His disciples could go with him to the garden, but not to the place where extremity of sorrow brought him down to the ground. Three of them, who seemed more closely his companions on special occasions than the rest, could be with him a little farther, but could not yet follow him in his great sorrow. "Then saith he unto them, my soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here and watch with me." But they could not watch at that time. They slept for sorrow. The sorrow that prevents sleep was not yet upon them. That sorrow was his. He had looked forward to this hour, for he had come into the world for the suffering of this hour, yet now that it had come, "he began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy." No matter how certain our expectation of any affliction may be, yet we cannot feel it before the time, and then it will appear almost as though we had not foreseen it. This sorrow of Jesus was the greatest and most bitter sorrow and grief that ever was felt by man. It was by his Spirit, and concerning his suffering, that Jeremiah said, "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger." And again, "I am the man that hath seen afflictions by the rod of his wrath." (Lam. 1:12,-3:1) Now that the hour has come, his own will as a man, weak before the law because of other's sins, full of terror of soul on account of death under the curse of the law, caused him to cry unto his Father to save him from that hour, and to cause the cup to pass from him, if it were possible. So great was his suffering that "an angel appeared unto him from heaven, strengthening him." And even then, "being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." But the strength that the angel brought prevailed. He came down from heaven to do his Father's will, not his own, and his prayer was, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." He must bear the suffering alone. His people cannot share the burden of sorrow, pain and death, with him. It is their salvation that he, the pure and holy Son of God, a spotless sacrifice, bears the awful suffering alone. If that death that fell on him had touched one of them, that one must have suffered an everlasting death. If any of the water of the flood could have broken through the ark to touch one of those within, then the ark, with all it held, must have sunk forever. But it "was pitched within and without," so that it alone should bear the beating of the storm from the eight souls within are securely shielded.

So Jesus was prepared to suffer to the full alone, and to die, in this sense, as a sacrifice. The part his people have in that suffering and death is not with him, but *in* him.

In the ark the eight souls were saved by water. (1 Peter 3:20) The water

that drowned all flesh upon the earth lifted the ark and those within it above its own destroying power. So the death that Jeseus died raised him and all who were in him above the power of death forever. Death was all that was due for their sins. When he died the wages were fully paid, and when he arose by the power of God, the dominion of death is at an end. Death is abolished, and life and immortality brought to light.

Those who saw the rainbow on Mount Ararat had been in the ark, and had felt the terror and buffeting of the storm which fell upon the ark, though they had not at the time known what it was. So those who are able to see the everlasting covenant of grace are manifest as having been saved in Christ.

This wonderful story of the sufferings of the dear Saviour can never be told to the understanding of anyone who had not been already made to feel it in his own experience. It is not by the application of our mental powers that we come to know what Jesus suffered, but by experience. It is a revelation. The disciples, who loved him, and were near him in the garden, could not then know what he was suffering. How much less is our ability to enter into that awful and solemn mystery by our own efforts. It is one thing to have our natural sympathies stirred by reading the inspired recital of his pains and sorrows, and meditating upon them, and quite another thing to feel a measure of those same pains and sorrows within our own souls. In the later case the poor soul that is experiencing the fellowship of Jesus' suffering never know at the time that it is the fellowship of his sufferings that is felt. Those who were in the ark must have been in great terror and perplexity much of the time while they felt the tossings and the shaking of the ark, not knowing what was to become of them. They could not look out around them, for there was only one window, and that was above. But after the covering was removed from the ark, and they came out on the new earth, then they understood what had been done, and knew the meaning of their strange experience.

In coming into the knowledge of Jesus' sufferings each one is alone. It is so in the beginning of this necessary knowledge, and that every farther advance into this awful mystery the learner is alone. They are led by a solitary way. "They shall mourn apart, every family apart, and their wives apart." Each one says to himself, "No one can be as vile in heart as I." Each one feels his own to be an especial case of depravity. If he has been kept from outbreaking sins, and has not forfeited the respect of men, yet he sees that evil in his heart and in his thoughts which appears to him to set him apart as especially vile. He has to say with Job, "Behold, I am vile. I abhor myself." Yet he cannot feel that he stands where Job was when he said those words.

It is wonderful how this sense of being alone in all our troubles on account our special sinfulness attend all the Lord's people, and follows them in a measure all the way through. And yet how seldom it is that during the time of the especial tribulation they ever think that in this they are following the dear Saviour. Just what his sufferings were they must know, though only in measure, for it was for them he suffered, and they suffer in him. As soon as the thought comes to them that the great tribulation on account of sin that is pressing them down into the depths, is because Jesus suffered for that very sin, and that they are mourning "for him whom they have pierced," then the trouble is lifted and they rejoice, though still mourning on account of sin, and being in bitterness because their sins caused him such awful sorrow and anguish.

What cries for mercy go up from the poor soul while being tossed as it were on the waves of that desolate, shoreless sea. The cries may be unspoken, silent to the ear of any but the Lord, but O, how bitter, how full of anguish they are! Truly they are "groanings that cannot be uttered." What a tender, quieted feeling takes possession of our

soul when we first feel a hope that peradventure the Lord hears us. And who can tell the deep joy when we first get a glimpse of the beautiful bow of promise in the cloud, the everlasting covenant of grace, and feel in our soul the blessed promise of the Lord that "the waters shall no more go over the earth," and "that the Lord will no more be wroth with us nor rebuke us." How many a time since that blessed experience we have feared his wrath and felt the rebukes of the gospel, yet that promise has held good, and will be good until the end, for it is "yea and amen in Christ Jesus to the glory of God by us."

"As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." (2 Cor. 1:5) So we learn that suffering is the experience of the Lord's people all through their pilgrimage. They have consolation, but it is only according to the suffering of Christ in them, and as the result of those sufferings. When they stand before the throne, beholding the power of God with praise, it is as having come out of great tribulation. When the life of Jesus is made manifest in their mortal flesh, it is because they bear about in their body the dying of the Lord Jesus. (2 Cor. 4:10) When they are favored to lean upon their Beloved, it is as they are "coming up out of the wilderness."

Now this suffering is not some exalted, holy feeling, such as you my brother or sister, have imagined belongs only to those who are far above you in purity and goodness, but it is just what you felt of sorrow, shame and self-loathing while you see the evils of your corrupt nature, and the sins and sinfulness of your heart and life. This is sometimes proved to you while in humble contrition and self-abasement before God, you are enabled humbly to confess them, and are given the soul-surprising assurance that these very evils and transgressions in thought and word and deed that have made you hate yourself, are the ones that were laid upon the dear Son of God,—the very sins for which he died. While in the darkness, with only your sinful flesh in sight, how very much alone you felt, and how your soul was tossed about, and buffeted and almost overwhelmed, like a ship on a stormy sea, but now as your soul gets a sweet view of Jesus, and raised to a blessed hope that you are feeling the fellowship of his sufferengs, you feel like singing praises to his name, and telling to all that fear God what he has done for your soul.

At such times his service is very sweet and comforting. We count it a blessing to feel the spirit of obedience, and to be enabled to act out that obedience. But how often we are tempted to doubt our motives in our religion works, and fear that we are prompted by the vanity of the flesh. From first to last the experience of the exercised soul leads him to doubt the movements of the flesh, and to earnestly seek the Lord to be led by his Holy Spirit.

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." When the Spirit of the Lord is searching and probing our hearts, what anxiety, what jealousy we feel lest it be the flesh instead of the Spirit which is leading us, even when we are doing what we know it is the privilege of the Lord's people to do. We question sharply our motives, fearing they are selfish, and that we are not doing all to the glory of God. We are sometimes told that we ought to obey in order that we may feel better, but the word of God and his Spirit do not teach us that, but that "whatsoever we do we should do all to the glory of God." The Spirit alone can lead us in that holy way. Every fleshly motive is selfish, and hence our fear and anxiety.

It does not help and encourage a poor soul who is tried in this way to say to him, "You ought to obey in order that you may feel better." The Saviour's obedience did not make him feel better, but brought him into darkness and into the depths, and filled his soul with bitterness. But what he did was for the glory of God. We may say to one in whom we have seen an experience of

grace, "You ought to be baptized, it is your duty. If you obey you will feel better." But his reply may be, "I fear that such a holy privilege is not for such as I. I fear it would not be obedience, but presumption in me to receive that ordinance which belongs to the Lord's people." Now it is not for us to urge such an one forward while his conscience, which is very tender in the fear of the Lord, is filled with such solemn questionings. We can show to him, as we may be enabled, the scriptural marks of those to whom that ordinance belongs, but we must all remember that the assurance in his soul that the sweet command rests upon him must come from the Lord.

Brethren in the ministry, if your obedience to the call which you have felt in your soul to preach the gospel was in order that you might feel better, how many of you would or could go on in that solemn work? Think over your experience in that business which you did not seek, but into which you were thrust. What shrinkings and sinkings of soul you have felt as you have approached the time when you must stand before the people of God, and have tried to begin to try to preach in the name of Jesus, the gospel of his grace. Sometimes your trembling sense of unworthiness, inability and unfitness for that great work have continued through the sermon, and sometimes you have been lifted above yourself, and have been filled with the sweetest, holiest joy a poor mortal can feel as you declare, in the power of the Spirit, the glad tidings of salvation. Sometimes it has been quiet work, and you have felt thankful that you were in any degree enabled to speak a word in season to him that is weary.

But O, the trials, the misgivings, the wretched, wearying doubts after your work for the time is done, and you are alone again. What heart-searchings, what questionings whether you have not been preaching yourself more than Christ, whether your glorying was not more in yourself than in the Lord. How many times you have said to yourself, "Surely I must never undertake to preach again." Well, the Lord knows how to deal with his servants. You have not quit the work yet, nor will you until you have fulfilled the work unto which He has called you. You are not preaching in order that you may feel better, but for the glory of God. You cannot stop, though you feel as though you could not go on. There is a blessedness in the work, even in the sufferings and sinkings down for in it all Christ is exalted.

And you, poor soul who look with love and longing upon the ordinances and privileges of the church and wish that they might be yours, in the Lord's own time the sweet persuasion will be yours that they belong to all who are exercised in them. In the Lord's good time the power of his word of sweet command as written in the Scriptures will be felt in your heart: "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her." (Isa. 60:10) We must wait for the Lord, and, blessed be his name, He always comes "right early". All our times are in his hands, and they can neither be hastened or delayed.

We all see in ourselves enough of disobedience, and enough of sin in the best obedience of our hands, to give us daily errands at the throne of grace, and to bring out of our souls the Publican's cry for mercy.

How many of the Lord's dear people go far in disobedience, living after the flesh until they die away from spiritual things. How often we feel that in faithfulness we ought to exhort, reprove or rebuke them, but are held back for fear we are not spiritual, and therefore are not qualified to restore such ones, or thinking that we ourselves need the reproof as much as they, if not more. But we must try to do our duty, yet if it is only as a duty we do anything it is of but little account before God, and if it is only to relieve ourselves of the responsibility, and "to feel better," that we do anything, the motive is only a fleshly one.

When the love of Christ constrains us, then love to the erring or needy one will prompt what we do or say, and while we do our work faithfully, and in the fear of the Lord, we shall remember that the Lord only can give repentance. Scolding never restored a wanderer, nor ever honored the Lord. The fire which the Lord kindles on the altar of the heart will never quite go out. The Lord will brighten it in his own time. He, and not man, gives the stripes which bring back the children who forsake his law. However far they wander, he knows where they are, and is visiting their transgressions with the rod, as he said he would, and they are often feeling that rod most when to us they appear most defiant and stubborn.

The salvaton of God which grace brought to us in our first experience of a hope, is the same salvation which that grace bringeth through all our earthly pilgrimage in every time of need. That grace which bringeth this salvation teaches all the various subjects of it all things in their walk and life which become sound doctrine, and in which that salvation is manifested unto them from day to day, in all the various circumstances of their life, and that grace will keep them through faith unto the full and glorious revelation of that salvation in the last time. (1 Peter 1:5) It is that salvation which the Psalmist prays may set him up on high. It is that salvation that appears in all the beautiful order of the church, and which the saints minister to each other while walking in the commands of Jesus. It is the salvation of God of which the Apostle speaks when he says to Timothy, "In so doing thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee," and which appears in the faithful ministration of him who converteth a sinning brother from the error of his ways, when he thus "saves a soul from death and hides a multitude of sins." The saints have no salvation of their own to handle, and deal in, and minister, separate from the salvation of God. Jesus is our salvation, and to him the poor soul cries in time of darkness and distress, "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." Without Jesus, our salvation, we can do nothing. He is our sun, and his salvation, like the sun light, reaches "to the ends of the heaven, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof." That salvation will not fail any of the saints. That salvation, and the grace that brings it, are sufficient for us in all our times of need. They appear in the obedient walk of the faithful people of God, who walking in his fear and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, are edified and multiplied, (Acts 9:3) and also in the rod and the stripes with which our faithful and loving Saviour visits his erring children, and restores them to the joys of his salvation. All our times are in his hands, and provisions of grace and salvation are made for each of them. The child of God who has gone farthest in rebellion and sin, when, restored to his right mind, feeble and sore broken, humble and contrite, crying bitterly, he feels the sweet and compassionate and loving beams of salvation falling softly into his sorrowing soul, has to say, "Behold, what wonderous grace and mercy that could save such a sinner as I." And the most obedient child of God, as he looks over his life, and contemplates his labors in the Lord, and the love and fellowship which the brethren have manifested to him, and then sees in his own heart and life such evidence of a depraved nature as sink him into the dust, wonders at the mercy which, like Paul, he has obtained of the Lord to be faithful, is astonished that he has been kept in the comfort of obedience while others have been suffered to wander far away, and suffer much for disobedience, and instead of feeling that any praise or reward is due to him, he says "What have I that I did not receive? If God had dealt with me according to my deserts, I should not have stood. To him be all the praise. It was not I that did these works of obedience, but the grace of God which was with me." So the most faithful saint on earth, joins with the worst backslider when restored to the manifest favor of

God, and says, "By the grace of God I am what I am," and there is no one left out of that heavenly choir when they sing in perfect accord, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake."

Silas H. Durand

(Copied from the *Signs* of March 1, 1902. It will be enjoyed by many — J.D.W.)

OBITUARIES

SISTER LETHA A. BLACKWELL

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst Sister Letha Blackwell on August 22, 1975, after a long illness. She was born August 18, 1891 to D. W. and Lizzie Hill Sheppard, making her stay on earth 84 years.

She was married in 1913 to R. Lewis Blackwell, and to this union four children were born: one son who died in infancy, and three daughters who survive: Mrs. George Everitt, Mrs. A. Scott Dansberry and Miss Ruth Blackwell, also 3 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren.

Sister Letha was baptized into the fellowship of the Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J. in 1937 by her pastor Elder C. W. Vaughn. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. She loved the Church and all those who believed the same doctrine. Her home was opened to the Old Baptists, and she had entertained the different ministers from many parts of the United States. She was Church Clerk for many years, and Clerk of the Delaware River Association. She was humble in manner and had a wonderful personality, and was loved by many. She will be missed by her family and the brethren, but we feel our loss is her eternal gain, and she is at rest.

Her funeral was conducted in the Hopewell Meeting House by Elder Stewart McColl of Caadan, who spoke very comfortingly and tenderly from Psalm 16: 5 and 6. Her body was laid to rest in the Hopewell Old School Baptist Cemetery.

Written by her niece who loved her as a mother.

Mrs. William S. (Charlotte) Adkins

J. KYLE COLE AND MAE SOWERS COLE

It is, indeed, with a sad heart I attempt to write a memoir of two very dear friends, and I hope, by the grace of God, Brother and Sister in Christ: J. Kyle Cole and Mae Sowers Cole. Many brethren and friends mourn their passing. Should we? Is it not far better that they be taken from this world of sin and sorrow, since we have the assurance that they will ever be with the Lord?

Mr. Cole was born June 27, 1875. He was the son of Harvey and Cynthia Winfrey Cole. Our Heavenly Father called this dear friend January 29, 1975, to await the glorious day when the Lord shall come again without sin unto salvation, to raise the bodies of all who sleep in Him, fashion them like unto His own glorious body, and they shall forever be with the Lord.

Mr. Cole was a good entertainer, having the ability to entertain the aged and the youth. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace. Their's was a home which the church people and friends enjoyed visiting very much.

Mae Sowers Cole was born January 30, 1881, the daughter of Joseph and Abbagail Turner Sowers. Sister Cole was a dedicated member of the Laurel Creek Primitive Bapaist Church, with which she united November 27, 1909, and was baptized the following day by Elder H. V. Cole. She was a faithful member.

Their greatest pleasure was attending church, which they did as long as their health permitted. Another of her great pleasures was entertaining the church people and friends in her home. It seemed to her satisfaction she could not do enough for them.

It pleased our gracious Heavenly Father to call her a very short time after the passing of her dear husband, therefore one was not left to mourn the passing of the other, which was, indeed, a great blessing. She fell asleep, blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep, February 12, 1975. They were united in marriage February 11, 1898, and to this union were born nine children. One died in infancy. Surviving are six daughters: Elva (Mrs. Ed.) Martin, Hester (Mrs. Frank) Hoback, Effie (Mrs. Elmer) Conner, Dorothy (Mrs. Howard) Martin, Nina (Mrs. Doris) Martin, Carlene (Mrs. Rex) Nixon. Two sons: Archie F. and Marvin L. Cole. Surviving also are nineteen grandchildren and twenty-six great grandchildren.

The dear saints under considreation, by an eye of faith waited faithfully and patiently upon their God, trusting in His promises to his little ones to the end. "As for me I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." To express themselves they could witness with the Apostle Paul in I Cor. 15:10, "By the grace of God I am what I am." They loved the songs of Zion. This thought reminds me of the following hymn, of which I quote a part:

"Grace! 'tis a charming sound!
Harmonious to the ear,

Heaven with the echo shall resound,
And all the saints shall hear.

Grace taught my soul to pray,
And pardoning love to know,
'Twas grace that kept me to his day
And will not let me go.

Grace all the work shall crown
Through everlasting days:
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

Funeral services for Mr. Cole were held at the Wood Funeral Chapel, Floyd, Va. by Elders B. O. Thompson and J. L. Agee, February 9, 1975, at 1:00 p.m.. And for Sister Cole at Wood Funeral Chapel by Elders B. O. Thompson and J. L. Agee, February 18, 1975 at 1:00 p.m.

They were laid to rest in the Cole Family Cemetery, Floyd County, near their home, to await the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, when the trumpet shall sound, the dead in Christ shall rise first. We have every assurance to believe they will be among that number.

May God's richest blessings rest upon the family, and all who mourn, and may He enable them to say: "Gracious Father, thy will be done."

Submitted in love by request of a daughter.

Gaye A. (Mrs. B. O.) Thompson

DAISY B. SIMMONS

God in his infinite wisdom and mercy called home our dear Sister Daisy B. Simmons on July 19, 1975 at the age of 69. She was a faithful member of Upper Town Creek Church for many years, and moved her membership, along with her husband's to the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church, by letter in December 1968.

Sister Daisy was a lovely woman and attended her church faithfully, seeking a crumb from the Master's table. She loved the Gospel sound of Salvation by Grace, and stood fast in her faith. She loved the brethren and sisters enjoying the fellowship, always talking of what the Lord had done for her.

A faithful wife and mother, always putting her loved ones first, doing things for them that gave them pleasure.

In my poor weak way I would like to speak of her last few hours. She was blessed, I believe, to hear and see her Saviour Jesus Christ, and was ready and willing to leave this sinful world to be with her Lord. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints." Our hearts are saddened by her death, but we rejoice in our belief that she is resting in peace in the arms of our Saviour Jesus Christ. We pray God will comfort her husband, children and grandchildren, and all of us who loved her. May the light of his love shine upon her family now and always.

Surviving are her husband Mack Daniel Simmons; three sons, M. D., Jr.; D. O. and Jack N. Simmons all of Rocky Mount; four daughters, Mrs. Ruth S. Cooke, and Mrs. Jean S. Farmer of Rocky Mount; Mrs. Nell S. Speight of Durham; and Mrs. Judy S. Walston of Tarboro; two brothers, A. B. and Brice Bottoms of Elm City; three sisters, Mrs. Lucille Sharpe; Mrs. Pattie Durham and Mrs. Mattie Ruth Tyson of Elm City; fifteen grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Her funeral was conducted from Gay-Yost Funeral Home Chapel, by her pastor Elder D. B. Stokes and Elder W. L. Everett. She was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery, sleeping in the arms of Jesus awaiting the second coming of our Lord. The large display of flowers and host of friends were a tribute to her, and how much she was loved by the brethren and friends.

RESOLVED: A copy of these resolutions be sent to the family; a copy to the *Signs of the Times* and a copy for the church records.

In conference: August 8, 1975.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

FRANCIS HALDIN HATCHETT

It has been the will of our Heavenly Father to remove from this earthly life a faithful member and deacon of our church, Little Flock Church, Altus, Oklahoma, Brother Haldin Hatchett passed away in the Mangum City Hospital, Mangum, Okla., December 5, 1974. He was born January 17, 1884 in Limestone County, Alabama, to Jefferson Davis and Lura Mae Hatchett. He was married to Mary Ann Palina Buckner November 12, 1905. They moved to Oklahoma in 1912, and settled near Reed, Okla.

Four children were born to this union, three of whom survive, all living in Mangum, surviving also are 9 grandchildren and 9 great grandchildren, and 2 brothers. His companion and a daughter preceded him in death.

Funeral services were conducted in Greer Funeral Home (Chapel) Mangum, Okla., December 7, 1974 with his pastor, Elder C. M. Haygood officiating. Interment was in Reed Cemetery.

Brother Hatchett joined by experience the Hopewell Church, Reed, Okla., September 17, 1939, and was baptized by the late Elder W. N. Green. He joined Little Flock Church, Altus, Okla., March 12, 1955 in the consolidation

of Hopewell Church with Little Flock Church March 12, 1955.

He was faithful to attend church as long as he was physically able. Through his prolonged illness he was given patience, never complaining of his suffering. He was a firm believer in the Sovereignty of God, salvation by Grace and Grace alone.

Written by request of Little Flock Church, Altus, Okla., by his niece.

Ava Stewart

LALLA PAYNE WELLS

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call home Sister Lalla Payne Wells. She was born February 7, 1889, and departed this life April 29, 1975. Sister Wells was married to Walker Wells July 27, 1915. Born to this union were three children: Mrs. Ethel Terrell, Mrs. Elsie Walker and Mr. William Wells, ten grandchildren, and twelve great grandchildren.

She united with Mt. Ararat Church or Old Mountain Primitive Baptist Church many years ago. She had been in declining health a year or more. She also attended Moon's Creek Church.

The funeral services were held at Moon's Creek Church by Elders Kenneth Key and Raymond S. Payne May 1, 1975. We feel she is resting peacefully, awaiting that glorious day when Jesus will come for His people, then she will awake in His likeness and be satisfied.

Written by request of Old Mountain Church in conference June 14, 1975.

Elder R. S. Payne

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT
BROTHER JETHRO D. JOYNER

We bow in humble submission to the will of God, who saw fit to call away from this world Brother Jethro D. Joyner, August 25, 1975. He was born October 11, 1894. He joined the Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church in June, 1918.

Brother Jethro was always faithful in attending his church, and the corresponding churches, with his devoted wife, until his health failed. Then he was confined to his bed for a number of months. In all his sore afflictions his dear companion and children were so wonderfully blessed with strength from God, to care for and comfort him in any way they could.

Poor and afflicted, yet ere long, they'll join the bright celestial throng. And all their sufferings then shall close, and heaven afford them sweet repose.

RESOLVED, First, that we send our sympathy to the family, we feel our loss is his gain. Second, that we record a copy of this on our church book, a copy sent to the family, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done at the request of the Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church in conference September, 1975. Read and approved in October, 1975.

Elder Harvey Holland, Mod.
Sister Estelle Joyner Cockrell, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT
SISTER PEARL P. JOYNER

Whereas, God in His infinite wisdom and power has seen fit to call from our midst our beloved Sister Pearl P. Joyner on July 7, 1973. She was born September 28, 1894. She united with Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church January 20 ,1973 at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Otha Langley. Because of her feeble condition she was not able to go and be baptized, but she had already been baptized in the mind and purpose of God. She was always faithful to go to church before asking for a home with us, and most every meeting bringing flowers. We still hold in our minds she was present with us. But she has gone where there is no more trouble and sorrow. She was blessed to raise a family, and lived most of her life around Mill Branch Church.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church be submissive to God's will, and that a copy of this Resolution be sent to the family, one recorded in our church book, and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by request of Mill Branch Church in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1975. Read and approved in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in October, 1975.

Elder Harvey Holland, Mod.
Sister Estelle Joyner Cockrell, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT
SISTER ETHEL WHITLEY

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our beloved Sister Ethel Whitley, March 2, 1975. She was born October 18, 1900. She united with Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church, March 6, 1949, along with her dear sister, Lillie Shaw.

Sister Ethel loved her church and she was a loving sister to us all. She was always present as long as she could come—along with her devoted husband who helped her in at the door. After she became so feeble she did not try to come any more, but she would always

make you welcome in her home with her family. The morning she was found in her bed we feel that she just went to sleep in Jesus, never to feel any more pain, but just rest in peace.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church be submissive to God's will, and that a copy of this Resolution be sent to the family, one recorded on our church book, and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done at the request of Mill Branch Church in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1975.

Read and approved in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in October, 1975.

Elder Harvey Holland, Mod.
Sister Estelle Joyner Cockrell, Clerk

ELDER EARLIS PETERSON GERRARD

Brother Gerrard was born January 23, 1897. He was married June 29, 1927, to Elsie Horton Gerrard, who died August 14, 1963. Brother Earlis died May 22, 1975. Surviving are one son, William of Athens, Ga., one brother, Deacon George Gerrard, three sisters, Sister Nellie Gaskel, Mrs. Ethel Wilson, and Mrs. Oppie Jefferson, and four grandchildren.

The Lord brought Elder Gerrard to ask for a home with Blount's Creek Church in 1936. He was baptized in Blount's Creek in 1936 by Elder Tilgman Sawyer, and Elder Gerrard was ordained the same year.

He was unable to attend the meetings for the last several years, but at quarterly meetings there would be a letter to the brethren stating his continued love for them, and his desire to meet with them again. I'll always cherish my visits with him. Our hearts were made glad as we talked of our mutual beliefs in a God that predestinated all things, both good and evil.

Yes, our brother is dead but the love that God gave me and others for him, will never die.

Elder Gerrard is resting in a cemetery in Rocky Mount, N. C. to await the return of his Lord, who will come for those that he died for, and they will be with their Redeemer and eternally satisfied.

Written by request of Blount's Creek Church.

Elder Bob Lyliston

Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks, unto thee do we give thanks: for that thy name is near thy wondrous works declare.

Psalm 75:1

SISTER MABEL BUTCHER

We, the Danville Primitive Baptist Church of Danville, Va. sadly record passing of our devoted member, Sister Mabel Butcher. She was born August 23, 1900 and Mr. and Mrs. James Gilden Parcell, and passed away June 19, 1975. She was married to Howard Adkins in 1916. He died in 1952; and she married Lester Butcher in 1953. He died in 1966.

She leaves a step-daughter, Mrs. Edward Minsoro of Alexandria, Va; two step-granddaughters; two sisters, Mrs. Gladys Draper and Mrs. Hazel Dodson, of Martinsville, Va.; and two brothers, Noland Parcell of Danville and Howard Parcell of Martinsville, Va.

Sister Butcher joined Bannister Springs Church in 1938 and was baptized by Elder J. A. Brooks. She came to Danville Church by letter in 1970. She was a lovely person in her spiritual walk of life. She loved her brethren and sisters and family; and all loved her. We miss her very much, for she attended her, and other meetings, devotedly until the first of the year, when she had to take her bed. She endured her suffering without complaint, and always had some word in praise of her Lord and Saviour. We feel to say, as was said at her burial, "Blessed are those who die in the Lord."

Elders Haywood Wray, Raymond Payne, and Julian Williams spoke in the service held at Barker Funeral Chapel, and she was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park. The service was well attended by family, friends, brethren and sisters; with many flowers. How lovely to be loved here, and gathered home in the Master's love!

Written by request of Danville Church while in conference August 9, 1975.

Elder Haywood Wray

TOM MURPHY

God has called from our midst a very dear friend, Mr. Tom Murphy. He was born May 27, 1902 and died July 19, 1975. On November 26, 1938 he was married to Mary Ethel Meadors, who survives, along with two daughters, Mrs. Linda McDaniel and Mrs. Brenda Pruitte.

Tom never joined the militant church, but we feel his name is recorded in heaven. He was a strong believer in salvation by the grace of God. He attended Danville Primitive Baptist Church and others regularly. We miss him very much.

His funeral was held at Swicegood Funeral Chapel by Elder H. W. Wray, and he was laid to rest in Danville Memorial Gardens.

Written by one who loved him very much, R. T. Holley.

Elder H. W. Wray, Mod.
R. T. Holley, Church Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 144 DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1976 NO. 1

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1/76
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CIRCULAR LETTER
SALISBURY ASSOCIATION
1975

Snow Hill, Maryland
October 22, 1975

Dearly Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

May peace, mercy, and joy in the Holy Ghost be our lot both now and forever more.

In this Circular Letter for 1975 I would hope to express a thought or two on a vital point of our religion, as touching the Third Person of the Trinity. We understand the Word of God to teach that God is manifest to us in three distinct persons. First as Father, second as Son, and third as Holy Ghost. We understand no such doctrine or embrace any view, which would detract from the Trinity of Persons. Existing from endless ages in complete fulness and sufficiency, there has always been a Father, always a Son, and always a Spirit.

We understand further that Jesus was and is the Eternal Son of the Father, and only one text would be necessary to show this, though there are many. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten Son . . .". Since His people have been loved with an everlasting love (Jer. 31.3), it follows that the Son eternally existed to be given from everlasting. The Son having been given and the eternal redemption of the elect secured on the cross, we then look at the words of Jesus before that final hour when He would leave His little band, "And I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; Even the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him but ye know Him for He dwelleth with you and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." (John 14.15-18).

How sweet is the expression, "Another Comforter". Our dear Redeemer was to return to His Father, but before His ascension He said He would never leave us nor forsake us. We find the fulfillment of that grand promise in the Comforter. He was sent in the behalf of Christ to guide us in truth, to reveal to us the things that would glorify the Saviour. He was given as a seal and earnest of our inheritance. He came to lead us as sons. He works in us His blessed fruits, such as love, joy, peace, longsuffering, faith, and the others mentioned in Galations 5:22, 23. He is our voice when we cannot pray. (Rom. 8:26). He searches our hearts and makes intercession for us. Yea, when we begin to pause to reflect under His sweet influence, He is our very life's breath toward heaven. Always the Spirit works in harmony with the Father and Son and in all things. He draws out our souls to sing the praises of our Saviour.

But before we come to a close, may we consider Romans 8:13, "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." There is no contingencies or conditions in this text.

No uncertainties or maybe so's. Those who follow the flesh shall die. Those who kill (mortify) all activities of the human nature as opposed to God, shall live. But note carefully, "through the Spirit". Only as God the Spirit leads us out of ourselves to the feet of Christ can this be so. What a blessed God we have. Our Father chose us in Christ, and Christ the Son paid justice in full, and made us holy by sending another Comforter, the Holy Ghost to us. The Holy Ghost now leads us as sons. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father." (Gal. 4:6). Can you not see the Holy Trinity here as the Father sends the Holy Spirit of His Eternal Son into the hearts of his people.

Brethren, we have a truth to live with, and die by, if so be that we are truly His. May these thoughts stir our hearts to a fuller search of this subject.

Humbly submitted,
James F. Poole

SALISBURY ASSOCIATION RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing."

These words seem to fit these dear brothers and sisters:

Elder Arthur Warren, Indiantown Church. Brother Albert Fooks, Snow Hill Church. Sister Bertha White, Little Creek Church. Sister Mollie Fooks, Nassawango Church.

Our Heavenly Father has seen fit to remove from our midst these dearly beloved ones. Thy will be done, O God.

Frank Holland

SUFFERS STROKE

1136 Grove Street,
Baker, Oregon 97814

Dear Brother and Sister Carter:

Received your letter and will try and answer it before I again forget to write. I don't know if you heard that I had a stroke June 12th, and am still not back where I was before, and doubt if I will ever be. My left side is paralyzed, but I never lost consciousness, nor the use of my right hand, although I was so unstable that I was unable to walk for several days, and then later with one crutch or my seeing-eye dog. I can walk pretty fair now, but the stroke burned up, destroyed or disconnected me from everything that I had ever done, and took away all desire for pleasures, work, or any desire to do anything. So far it has not come back, and I am concerned about what I will have as a future. When we do anything we have a desire or a want to do things. When this want or desire is taken away, I don't know what is left.

Please don't give me a sermon about what I can, should, or what God has planned for me,—I have heard that from all sides and church denominations, and all those who know nothing about what I am going through, I know that God has placed affliction on me, and that it was his will; and that He can and will remove it in his own good time and pleasure. What I am to do about any of these things, until He sees fit to correct this, I do not know.

I know you are sorry to hear this, as I would be to learn of your having the same, or other afflictions; but we both know that God rules the inhabitants of the earth, and the armies of heaven, and that none can stay his hand, or say, What doest thou? So why try to paint a beautiful picture. There have been lepers, cancer patients and all manner of illnesses since the beginning of time. Some have been cured of their afflictions, and others have died from the same illnesses. What He has for men only He knows, and will reveal it at his own time and place.

If you believe this would be of interest to the readers of the *Signs*, you may

send it to them.

One of my neighbors died this morning. He had open-heart surgery and had lived about three years since that operation. Something went wrong, as it does with all man made things. He realized that he was on his last night, and told his wife, "This is going to be a long night," and she replied, "We have lived through a lot of long nights." He told her, "There will be no tomorrow." And there was none that any of us can see. This morning I wished I could exchange places with him, then I could find what tomorrow will bring, and won't have to wonder about trying to live with a half-brain and an arm that does not function as it should.

I will appreciate any messages from any of the folks, wherever they may be. I am praying constantly for strength, and that He will make me reconciled to his will in all things.

With a lot of pleasant memories of our past visits and good times together. Hoping that the One who is ruling all of this, will release me from this affliction, even if it takes "tomorrow" to do it.

Your brother,
C. W. Bond, Jr.

MANY WILL UNDERSTAND

2723 Main,
Vernon, Texas 76384

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I wish to renew my subscription for two more years, with the rest for the Fund.

I would that I could express the joy and sweet privilege to be able to see and read from its pages, the blessed truths, as I hope I have been made to see and believe and feel the love spring up in my heart, as I read of those so gifted and enabled to write comfortingly for those like myself, unable to attend church. I live alone except for good neighbors and some help, yet if not deceived, I hope I am made to feel the sweet comforting care of our ever present Lord and Saviour. I hope I am one given to hear His voice and made to follow Him. I have passed my 86th birthday and my seeing and hearing isn't good. I cannot express in words the love I hope I feel for those of like faith. As to why I have tried to write, perhaps there are some who will understand.

I just felt to try to write and tell you dear Editors that I so much look forward for the arrival of the *Signs* that we are blessed to receive.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. David Thompson

(There are many brothers and sisters who understand, Sister Thompson, for they experience the same things you do. We are glad for you to express your feelings. — J. D. W.)

IN A MOMENT MADE THE HAPPIEST OF ALL CREATURES

Guthrie, O. T.
2 June, 1902

Elder Silas H. Durand,

I am going to call you Dear Brother: Have been at a banquet—a feast of glory and good things that spread from your pen in the *Signs of the Times* of March 1, 1902. O, my soul goes out in thankfulness to God that He put it into your heart to write that article (I may as well say) for me, searching my heart and making many things clear to my understanding. By the aid of the Spirit you have taken of the things of Christ and shown them unto me. Something of a student myself, I feel it safe to say you could not have written that piece, only as a relation of a personal experience. I think the Merciful and Good Lord has shown you his secrets. I cried all through the reading of it, — tears streaming down my face as I write,—only to thank you and thank you. Wish I were near you, so we could speak often one to another . . . I feel so humbled and so relieved.

You know how to write of the Saviour, and of the experiences: few can do both. All my study is of Him. But since emboldened by this reading, I feel to say

to you, that I had years and years of "the fellowship of His sufferings" and it was ten hells. Yes, I drank of the cup, and my deliverance was so gracious, so complete of a nature and unlooked for (I could never hope for it), that from being the most miserable, I was given in a moment to feel the happiest of all creatures, — from being more vile in heart than the chiefest sinner, to see and feel that I was no sinner at all. I didn't see the rainbow, but the face of the world was covered by a light laid on the light of the 9 o'clock morning sun. I called on angels to help me praise God for sending Christ Jesus into this world to save sinners, of whom I was one.

O, I had suffered, and you told me that was my fellowship in the sufferings of Christ: I see it, and take courage, willing now to fill up the remainder of the sufferings of Christ in my body: — words that I never before understood. I am beginning now to have a closer conception of the sufferings of our Lord.

But I am not writing only a letter of thanks out of a full heart. Allow me to love you as a brother in Christ, I do hope and believe.

Yours truly,
Wm. S. Speer

(The above was written after greatly enjoying the article by Elder Silas H. Durand, which was published in the March 1, 1902 *Signs*, and re-published in the December, 1975 issue. It shows how God so often works to comfort his people.—J.D.W.)

GLAD TIDINGS OF THE GOSPEL OF REDEEMING GRACE

When one is brought by the Spirit of God as Paul to say "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth . . ." his statement is founded upon the greatest, richest, sweetest, and most joyful event in the history of the whole human race. All other events brought to the admiration of men pale into insignificance, and this event stands higher than the highest hills crowned with glory brighter than the noon-day sun. No human event has ever struck the hidden instrumental chords of the human heart. But this one causes all of nature and the whole heart, body, and soul to sing in unison to the Great I Am. Behold! What hath GOD WROUGHT!

There hanging on the tree between two malefactors is the Great Reconciler . . . the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world. By faith one can see the blood-stained trail of love which brought Him to this predestinated moment, place, and purpose.

Far off past the walls of Jerusalem, past the tribes of Israel, past the Garden of Eden one sees His footsteps. Yea, before all things were created, His steps began. In the eternal council of God, Christ was the light of the covenant of grace. Those that spoke "Let US make man in our image" also assured it to be so that they were "predestinated to be conformed to His image" and thus it was "according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be HOLY WITHOUT BLAME before Him in LOVE," for without this, none would be in the image of God. Hence, "having predestinated us unto the adoption of children" they are made heirs and joint heirs with God's First Elect, and ownership of them was established by the authority of God so that He might have the RIGHT OF REDEMPTION. (No one can legally redeem something which isn't his to redeem). From that right of redemption Christ prayed to His Father thanking Him that "I should give eternal life to all those Thou hast given me. Thine they were and Thou hast given them me." They are M I N E, I C A N REDEEM THEM! I shall REDEEM THEM because I have "loved them with an everlasting love."

There was so much more to be done for them before He could redeem them, and not one bit of power did they have to do any of it. "I looked and there was no man; therefore mine own arm hath brought salvation." He alone must do

this work, and a great work it was. The very stakes were high. If He failed, those He loved would perish. If He called upon them to do it, they would be totally unable. If He left it to others, it would not be done at all. To have it done right, He must do it Himself, by Himself. Thus his step descended upon the cursed earth, and thus, "He came under the curse to redeem them that were under the curse."

He must work for thirty-three years in preparation for this moment, and He must and shall fully accomplish His purpose. "He shall save His people from their sins." He loved them and therefore no price was too great.

Representing them that day the virgin mother gave birth, a "whole nation was born." They were chosen IN Him, BAPTIZED IN Him, now He must fulfill the "just, holy, and good" law of God while representing them. He knew they could not fulfill the law no matter how just and holy and good it was; nor how hard they tried, for if they "offended in one part they were guilty of the whole," and they were already offenders of it and resting under its curse. Not only so, but by "the disobedience of one (Adam) many were made sinners" and thus they were born in their father Adam's transgression. No, "verily, if righteousness came by the law" then His death would be in vain, and "by the law shall no flesh be justified before God." They were in a miserable predicament!

They were unrighteous for "there are none righteousness, no not one!" So, the law must be honored and magnified. It must be satisfied, and this He fully intended to do for them. He would give them a perfect righteousness based upon a satisfied fulfillment of the law. He would fulfill it, and then impute or charge it to their account by faith as if they had done it! "What wondrous love is this, oh my soul?"

Daily His delight was with the sons of men. Daily He kept the whole principles and requirements of the law. By the active "obedience of one, many were made righteous."

Now this day of atonement will see Him entering into the ceremonial law's fulfillment. The path behind saw a completion of all other aspects of the law of commandments. Now He is to become both the sacrificial Lamb, and the scapegoat. The fiery brazen altar will burn in Him this day "in the midst of the grates", and His blood will be shed "for the remissions of sins." It will be done publicly as the types commanded. The blood must be at the *base* of the brazen altar to atone for hidden sins. It must be sprinkled on the *sides* of the altar to atone for the public transgressions and known sins. His people knew many, many of their sins, so the blood must flow from His side. But, ah, those precious ignorant peoples of so little faith! How many sins had they committed without even knowing they were violating His commandments? Yes, the blood must fall to the base of the altar to cover these hidden sins, so from His side would flow blood and water. They would be truly washed, cleaned, sanctified. He knew how to do it, for He is "made unto them WISDOM, RIGHTEOUSNESS, SANCTIFICATION, and REDEMPTION!" That work He Himself would accomplish. Had He not discussed with Moses and Elijah on the Mount the "death He should ACCOMPLISH?"

Ah, my soul do you not see the greatest cluster of grapes hanging there on the cross . . . like none the children of Israel saw in Canaan?! What can a child of hope see there by faith? He sees a RANSOM which says the CAPTIVE goes free. He sees a REDEMPTION which says the SLAVES and SERVANTS of sin must be delivered up. He can see REMISSION OF SINS which must be his own, seeing the Sacrifice was "without spot or blemish, separate and apart from sinners." Hear Him cry: "Father forgive THEM for they know not what they do." Recall that He said, and proved, "My Father heareth me always." There is all their forgiveness. He spoke and His Father heard and He began even there his INTERCESSION for those He was dying for.

It would not end there either, but He would sit at His Father's right hand making intercession for them day and night, and that forever . . . and His Father would ALWAYS HEAR and ANSWER.

What else can the eye of faith see in that cluster on the cross? Surely it can see His SURETYSHIP, and how important that view. When the sinner was in debt to the law, he had absolutely nothing with which to pay. No works were sufficient, nor could he "give the fruit of his body for the sins of his soul." But, while a debtor to do the whole law upon eternal penalty at the default of the debt, there he sees the One who stood as his Surety. Will He pay the debts, and the debtor go FREE? "If Thou be the Son of God, save thyself and us also"—one cried. If He failed to pay the debt . . . the sinner must pay. Both for debtor and Surety the "WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH". Shall He actually pay such a horrid debt? "Father, into thy hands I COMMEND MY SPIRIT" and He "gave up the Ghost"! He DID PAY THE DEBT. HE IS THE SURETY! The DEBTOR, poor worm of a sinner . . . GOES FREE! Glad Tidings of Great Things! Surely this is THE gospel to a corrupt and unworthy sinner!

But why that TYPE of payment? Could something else have sufficed? No, no. "He is the PROPITIATION FOR OUR SINS." To the faith of God's elect it speaks of the very bases of hope, joy, and peace. To "propitiate" is to "render satisfaction" to "appease", to "pacify". The wrath of God against the sinner must be pacified; the law must be SATISFIED, the anger of God APPEASED.

"He hath reconciled us unto God by the death of His Son". "It is FINISHED," He cried. Salvation is FREE, based upon SOVEREIGN MERCY and the LOVE OF CHRIST.

Stanley C. Phillips
Quitman, Ms. 39955

FIRM IN HIS BELIEF

I have recently finished re-reading Elder Beebe's writings in the December, 1971 *Signs of the Times,* and can truthfully say that I enjoyed and rejoiced in reading it even more than I did the first time — for it expressed some of my thoughts and feelings I have experienced since I read it before, so much better and clearer than I could have put it in words. The scriptural sentiments are precious to me, and more importantly are honoring and praising of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost: these three are one. (1 John 5:8)

God willing, I desire to write some of my thoughts concerning Elder Beebe's sentiments on Absolute Predestination of all things. Brethren, it seems to me that anything lass than an Absolute Predesination of all things. Brethren, it seems to me that anything less than an Absolute Certainty in all things coming, being, doing, ending or continuing exactly as were in both His mind and purpose in creating them, would be dishonoring to God.

Brethren, I know that of myself there is nothing and less than nothing to this poor sinner, but I sometimes firmly believe that one day, (that fixed day) God only knoweth when that day shall surely be, but in that day every one born into this world, shall then know for a certainty that God was and is an absolute Sovereign, an Unchanging God over and above all else. Now some might say that then it will be too late, but I say, for every one whose names were not written in the Lamb's Book of Life before this time world and its inhabitants were ever created, it then was already too late, — not one has been added to, nor has one been subtracted from that number.

As for me, I can only hope that I am one among those numbered in that Book of Life, — not for the reason of any good thing I of myself have ever done, oh no, ten thousand times no. But the evidence upon which I base my precious hope, is what I feel my God and Lord

and Saviour has done for me. First of all, what a wretched and helpless poor and undone sinner I was, then after He showed me what filthy rags I wore, if not deceived, He clothed me with a most precious hope in Jesus Christ. I well remember being in our kitchen in our place of abode in Nags Head, N. C. when this sweet feeling of hope came within my very soul and being. I so well remember my two children coming into the kitchen where I was, and I took them both in my arms, and said, Oh dear children, I have been given a sweet and precious hope in my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We all stood there shedding tears together. Mine were sweet tears of joy, what my children felt I do not know, but they saw I was so happy, and both said, "I am glad for you Dad."

Dear Brethren, do you not well remember your precious moments? I feel sure you do. It was your and my moment, for it was, I feel and hope, a gift from God — and most assuredly a Free Gift, for it was unmerited on my part. I just hope I am thankful to my most merciful God of all grace, for all He has freely given and bestowed upon this poor boy all the days of his life. But of one thing I have no doubt, if ever I am thankful unto God for any thing, that thankfulness comes into being by His gift to me of a thankful heart: for of myself I can do nothing spiritually. Dear child of God's grace, I have no desire for a god whom I can help or do anything for, or is in need of anything. But my desire is that I might be enabled by God's free mercy and grace, to worship "The one true and living God," in both Spirit and Truth. He is in need of nothing, for if He had been in need of anything, He would have created it. This is the three-in-one God in whom I desire my hope and trust to be.

Recently from time to time, my mind has been upon what is in store for the children of God when this time world is no more, and is passed away to be remembered no more by His chosen vessels. For some cause I feel and believe that after that final day of this time world has passed, His children will never again have thoughts concerning this time world, nor of any worldly ties we have had as we lived and walked upon this sin cursed earth, be it our natural parents, companion or children, for in that place He prepared for them, and I hope for me, there will be neither male or female, but such a oneness that every thought will be praising their Lord and Saviour forever. It is far too much for my feeble mind to even remotely comprehend the fulness of what it would be, to never again to have a selfish, evil thought, or never again to desire something which I did not already have, or never again experience a dark and cold season, or never again be tempted by Satan.

How unspeakable is the depth and height and of His riches in all holy things. What a comforting truth it is when He speaks to one of his little ones, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Aren't you so very glad and thankful that when this great and merciful God speaks, it is done, and when He commands, it stands fast, and that all men and devils can neither hinder nor alter that certain and fixed course that He has set and established. I believe you are.

Dear children of our Heavenly Father, as it may be in accord with his holy will, may our minds be centered upon heavenly and divine things, and ever less upon the vain and perishing things of this present world, and to have no confidence in the flesh of man. If enabled to pray, I feel that this would be my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ and for his sake. Amen.

"Salvation is of the Lord," not just in part but from beginning to completion. My hope is that I am a spiritual brother of His children.

Troy G. Shepard,
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NOTE: In the November issue of the *Signs* the following error is noted in Elder Hudson's article. On page 245, 2nd column, 2nd paragraph, it reads "Clear expressions and acceptable words." It should read, "Clear expressions *are* acceptable words." Please make this correction in your copy. — J. D. W.

Danville, Va. January, 1976

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EDITORIAL

With this January, 1976 issue we begin a new volume of the *Signs of the Times* — the 144th, with a feeling of thankfulness unto our God who has sustained its publication all these years. We feel that we are correct in saying that none of the editors, and those who have had part in putting it together and getting it to the brethren and friends, have ever felt to claim any degree of credit in the matter, for all have recognized their need of the sustaining and enabling grace of God, or it would

have long since fallen by the way.

From the correspondence of many brethren and friends over the years we are assured that they have been comforted and edified in reading its pages, and have desired to thank the Lord for the faith with which He has blessed them, and which has been maintained by those whose writings have been published.

The doctrine of God our Saviour is in a class by itself: it stands separate and distinct from every other religious doctrine in the world, for it alone came from Him, and is Truth, being revealed to and upheld by Him in the hearts of his people, and they are enabled to proclaim it in their speaking and writing. The Apostle Paul summed it up when he wrote, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written. The just shall live by faith. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness . . . " (Romans 1:16-18)

The doctrine of God is not according to the wisdom of this world. The wisdom of this world in religion is after that which seems right to men, but the end thereof are the ways of death. (Prov. 14-12) God has made foolish the wisdom of this world, as pertaining to the truth as it is in Christ. "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are *called,* both Jew and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." (1 Cor. 1:21-24)

The called both Jews and Greeks (Gentiles) know the power of God and the wisdom of God. They know it by revelation. Peter and the brethren with him were told when they confessed that Jesus was the Christ, "Blessed art thou Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 16:17) And Paul said in 1st Corinthians 2:7, "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given us of God. Which things we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth: comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."

The slightest variation in the things Jesus preached, and his apostles maintained, renders it unfit to be preached under the heading of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Though this has often been done in the church, causing divisions. The Apostle Paul marveled, you will remember, that the Galations were so soon removed from the grace of Christ, unto *another gospel:* "Which is not another; but there be some that

trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." And repeated it for the seriousness and importance of it, by saying, "As we said before, so say I now again. If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I pleased men, I should not be the servant of God. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me, is not after men. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

These things have not become obsolete, they are active in those who were chosen in Christ before the world began, who have been quickened to know of their death in trespasses and sins; and who have also been born of the Spirit, and know the certainty of God's dealing with them in mercy. For these reasons the words of Paul to Titus give them peace and joy, for they are, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." Concerning which hope he further wrote to the Hebrews: "For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil: whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest after the order of Melchisedec."

For these reasons we desire to "speak the things which become sound doctrine," and to "hold fast to the form of sound words," and not to be "blown about by every wind of doctrine," for the Spirit testifies that all scripture was given by inspiration, and is confirmed in us when we are brought out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God. For these reasons we rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh.

We intended this to be a greeting to the brethren and friends at the beginning of the New Year, and to assure them that however dark and fearful things are in the world, the God who created all things, is still in command, and all things are accomplishing all His will and purpose. And though we cannot give the reason why of these things, except that it seems good in His sight, when He gives us faith and understanding that He does all things according to his will, we are often blessed to stand still and behold His work in our lifetime; and to know that it is by him we live, move, and have our being. And not only this, all that the Apostle wrote the Ephesians applies to the whole household of faith: "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

The Apostle John also speaks both of things in this life and that to come, when he wrote, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is." That will be the fulness of all we hope for as we enjoy the earnest of our inheritance.

We thank all the brethren and friends who by the grace of God, have by their writings, subscriptions, and contribu-

tions, supported the *Signs of the Times* so that it is published regularly each month. The *Signs of the Times* is your paper, and it is desired that the brethren continue to write for publication, that others may know how you get along in your pilgrimage.

We know that God's grace is sufficient for us. May we be enabled to praise and adore his name, and to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

PSALMS 11:3

"If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?"

Every government and every branch of business is founded upon certain foundations, often called "principles." The strength and safety of every government, as well as every branch of business, are in its foundations. All things must be done and transacted according to the foundations or principles upon which it is founded in order to safety, prosperity and duration. Failure to move according to the principles, or foundations, means rupture, hence defeat. At this time the strength and victory of our nation depend upon the strict adherence to the foundations, building upon, and relying upon, or trusting in, the principles by which we are so well fortified. Perhaps if we were to ask the question, If the foundations be destroyed, what can the nation do? it would emphasize the point we are trying to bring out: that everything depends upon the foundations, in the plan of salvation as well as in all other things.

Many claim, however, that there are no certain, or fixed foundations in the Lord's kingdom. How strange, as well as absurd, for men to think God works in no certain or decided way in his affairs, when everything in nature declares his perfect order in the arrangement of all things, and that all things work perfectly in the order prearranged for them. We can set up an hour or two the timepieces, but cannot change the rising of the sun nor the going down of the same. The names of the months and seasons can be changed so that the names of June, July and August take the places of December, January and February, but if it were done snow would fly, ice would form and we would find ourselves hovering near the fire during the months of June, July and August. Likewise in the months of December, January and February we would either be enjoying the warm weather or seeking refuge from the burning heat. The reason for this is, the Lord said in the covenant that as long as time lasts there shall be summer and winter, cold and heat, seedtime and harvest. Therefore as everything in the vegetable, mineral and animal kingdoms works according to the principles, or foundations, laid by the Lord, man can change nothing, nor can he destroy the foundations. All the systemizing of the earth combined cannot compare with the systematic plan with which God controls and "works all things after the counsel of his own will."

The foundations of the spiritual world are as certainly and substantially laid as those of the material world, and everything is working as perfectly and harmoniously in his spiritual kingdom as do all things in nature. If men are settled in their convictions that "nature will have its course," why not be settled in the truth that all things in grace are as sure? Simply because they cannot. If strong delusion be sent them, that they believe a lie, how can they believe the truth until born of God? If this be true, let us not censure them, but rather pity them because of their blindness. If the eyes of our understanding have been enlightened let us rejoice and be glad. The immutability of God has ever been the foundation of faith, and because of it the saints have strong consolation and good hope through grace.

He, who cannot lie, promised eternal life before the world began, and he tells us that because he is God, and changes not, that we, the sons of Jacob, are not consumed. If man could put his finger on one promise made and afterward broken by the Lord we could never be sure of anything, but he has ever been faithful to his word. "Even though we believe not, he is true." David, surrounded by enemies, Saul seeking his life, seems, by the reading of the first verse of this Psalm, to have been told to flee as a bird to the mountain that he might find a safe refuge, but remembering God's word, that they which trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion which cannot be moved, but abideth forever, answered, "In the Lord put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?" His trust in the Lord was a strong tower, a safer place of refuge than all mountains of the world, high places of men. Such faith as David exhibited was wonderful, and foreshadowed the faith of Jesus, the man of sorrows. David said, as recorded in Psalms xlvi., "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; * * * There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." O that we all could have such faith when storms of persecution, sorrow and affliction come upon us. If not so great, we have always had sufficient to carry us through, in fulfillment of his precious promise: "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." How wonderfully blessed it is that God is a very present help in trouble. Often when affliction comes to the children of God they are obliged to send for their friends to aid them, and must wait for them to arrive, if indeed they can respond to the sad call; but God is an ever-present help, and in his strength we endure and by his grace press on.

In the question: "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" there is not the slightest possibility of such a thing suggested, but rather the contrary, establishing the fact that the foundations abide forever, and because of that the righteous trust in God and fear not what man can do unto them. Were it not for the foundations of our nation to-day we would be without hope of maintaining our freedom. How easy to see, therefore, that we as a nation trust in the foundations of our government, confident of ultimate victory. Just so the spiritual nation of God trusts in the foundations that he planned, laid and established before the world began. Yes, the saints trust for time and ultimate victory over all enemies; even today the redeemed enjoy perfect liberty under the banner of God, which banner is love.

Perhaps some of our readers will be anxious to know what we consider the foundations of God's kingdom. First we would say, the omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence of God; then his eternal purpose, which he purposed in himself; then each fundamental principle of his doctrine, such as predestination, election, redemption, justification, effectual calling and final perserverance of the saints unto glory. Such are the foundations of the faith and hope of the children of God, and not one of them can fail or be destroyed. No, the devil with all his power and cunningness can never mar one of the strongholds of the blessed assurance that God reigns and that salvation is sure to all the seed.

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!
What more can he say, than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

May we all, like David, put our trust in the Lord.

(Editorial by Elder H. C. Ker, August 1, 1918)

THE VEIL OF THE TEMPLE

Brother Beebe:—I wish you would favor me with a short sermon on Mark 15:38: "And the veil of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom."

Brother Beebe, pray for me, that I may be

glory.

Men knew him, or supposed that they knew him, as the son of the carpenter, and regarded him as a despised Nazarene, but no man knew him in his true character save those to whom he was revealed by the Father. "Whom do men say that I am." They entertained a variety of opinions, but none of them were right. "But whom say ye that I am?" was demanded of the disciples, from whom the veil had been removed. Simon Peter declared the faith of the saints correctly, but he had not learned it of flesh and blood, but it was revealed to him by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. As the veil of the temple then pointed to the flesh of the Son of Man, and that veil concealed the glory of the holiest place of all from the outer court worshipers, so the flesh of Christ conceals from the understanding of all natural men the light of Immortality which he alone hath, for he is the only and blessed Potentate, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light whom no man hath seen nor can see, whom no man can approach unto. Indeed, it was not lawful for anyone to look within the veil while it remained, only the high priest, even so the law of God forbids a revelation of the unsearchable riches of Christ, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, to any of the sons of man until all the requisitions of the law are fulfilled and the veil lawfully removed. In applying the rending of the veil to the redemption of the children of God, we shall see that as the veil of the temple was rent in twain from top to the bottom, so the letter and the spirituality of the law of God, so far is it related to the family of God, were separated. The righteousness of the law was fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, while as a law of commandments having dominion over God's people, it was taken out of the way, and as a separating wall or partition it was no longer to obscure the way of life and salvation from the heirs of immortality. The trembling, guilt-stricken Israelite, conscious of his uncleanness, with his hand upon his mouth, dared not to look within the veil. He knew full well the terror of the law, and when Moses as the bearer of the holy law, came down the mountain from the presence of God the carnal tribes could not steadfastly look upon his face, for it shined with insufferable glory, but when God removed the veil of the covering which was upon all flesh, it is by the presentation of a new and living way into the most holy place. It was death to the carnal Israelite to look within the veil, but the way into the holiest of all is in the gospel found to be a new and living way. Not only is Christ the way, a living Christ, but those who by and through him approach unto God, instead of death, are delivered from death, quickened and made alive, and come boldly to the throne of grace. They draw nigh unto God with a true heart, in full assurance of faith by this new and living way which God has consecrated for them through the veil, that is, his flesh. The rending of the flesh of the Son of God has opened the way of life and salvation for all who come unto God by him. Neither can any other than those for whom he was pierced be saved in this way, for it is consecrated, set apart and appropriated to them alone who shall be the heirs of salvation. But is is a blessed thought that this consecration of the way to God by Christ includes all who feel their need of just such a Saviour and truly desire to be saved in and through this consecrated way, while all who look for salvation or access to God by any other way will find that the end of their ways are the ways of death. This is a new, as well as a living and consecrated way, not new to God, for known unto him are all his works from the beginning; but it is new, first in distinction from the ceremonial law, in which carnal men who were born in Abraham's house, or bought with his money, looked for remission of sins and acceptance with God by the deeds of the law, and through the flesh and blood of victims which were offered continually on the Jewish altars,

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 144 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1976 NO. 2

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/76
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

MERCY IS FROM EVERLASTING TO EVERLASTING

"O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever." (I Chronicles 16:34)

The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, to them that have been called from nature's darkness into his marvelous light. This mercy is as old as God is, and is just as sure and certain to endure forever toward those who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, as the fact that there is a heaven prepared for those who love God. All the power of the Godhead is supporting each of these promises and they are sure and steadfast. The comfort of this mercy that endures forever is the most precious treasure that the children of God experience in this life. It will never forsake them, because without it they could not stand, and the evidence is that they shall all stand without the loss of one.

This is the same mercy that was extended to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden when they partook of the fruit of the forbidden tree. They had no legal right or just claim to the mercy that was shown to them in their hour of need, or the promise that was made unto their seed which would come after them. It was solely the mercy of God, and had it not been extended to them at that time there would have been no heirs to inherit that heavenly kingdom that was prepared for the saints of God. Then, as it has ever been, this mercy is the eternal refuge of the children of God, and then, as Moses said, "Underneath are the everlasting arms." What security the heirs of promise are blessed with. Heaven will not be populated because there are some who are worthy, but only because mercy endured when man could not. The first man could not endure the temptations which confronted him, and all of those following are the same flesh, vain, weak, and as Peter said, "All flesh is as grass."

Mercy was extended to Abram when he dwelt in the Ur of the Chaldees, and the Lord told him to get out of that country away from his kindred according to the flesh, unto a land that the Lord would show him. He promised Abram at the same time that in Abram all the nations of the earth would be blessed. At the same time that the mercy of God was extended to Abram, the promise was given also, as it is with each of his children. They realize that they have not received because of any worthiness within themselves, but at the same time cannot deny that they do have a hope in things eternal, and a kinship toward those who have been called out in like manner. This mercy followed Abraham all of his life, and we hope to see the fulfilling of that promise on down through history, even to the present day.

By promise an heir was given unto Abraham through Sarah, and according to nature that was impossible, yet it happened according to God's promise. Abraham rejoiced exceedingly and yet

at the time appointed was made willing to offer his own son as a sacrifice unto his God. Mercy intervened and spared the son, but the trial was experienced in all its anguish by Abraham. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements and his ways past finding out." This most assuredly must have been the feelings of Abraham as he experienced this trial of faith which all of God's people must pass through in some measure. As Peter wrote, "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:" It is all to the glory of God and sent in that mercy that endureth forever.

It was this same mercy that sustained Job in all of his afflictions and brought him through them praising his Creator. The same mercy that called David from following after his father's sheep and placed him upon the throne of Israel. The way in which this was accomplished was not in what would normally be considered a natural sequence of events. Saul was king of Israel and as such, according to nature, had the power to raise up whom he would and to kill whom he would, but on several occasions he would have killed David but something (mercy) delivered David out of the hands of Saul. On at least two occasions Saul was delivered into the hands of David, but the same thing that intervened and spared David's life, intervened so that David would not stretch forth his hand against the Lord's annointed. This same mercy followed David all of the days of his life. Mercy prevailed on behalf of David when Absalom, his own son, sought to take his life, and the most precious time in the life of David when this mercy prevailed, was when in the lust of the flesh temptation overcame him and he sinned. This is true of each in their own travels, they are made to realize the weakness and sinfulness of the flesh and to know that unless mercy endures toward them they are eternally lost and without hope. This is why David was made to declare over and over, "the mercy of the Lord endureth forever." What comfort it is to the trembling heirs of promise to see David brought through all of his trials and then come down to the end of his natural life and be blessed, in spite of all this, to declare, "Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasing covenant ordered in all things and sure, for this is all my salvation and all my desire, although he maketh it not to grow." This is the testimony of all who have been brought this way. They acknowledge that although their standing before God does not warrant it, God hath extended mercy to them and all of their salvation and their desire rests alone in the mercy and in the promises made to those that possess it. They realize that it comes down to them sovereignly and majestically as the rain and snow from heaven and revives their trembling and fainting heart when it seems that they shall surely perish.

Daniel's life was an example of the mercy of God leading and directing the footsteps of His children in this life. By mercy Daniel was granted favor in the eyes of the keeper of the Hebrew children who were to stand before the king. By mercy he was given the interpretation of the dreams which was to raise him to positions of great authority in the kingdom of that day. Just as Joseph was in his day. These were times in which a great work was to be done for the Lord's people, and at such times one is always raised up to perform the work. Joseph was to save many people alive, and Daniel was to witness to the Lord's people in his day. They were what they were by the mercy of God.

The comforting thought is that this mercy is not bestowed upon the children of God because of what they are by nature, but rather in spite of what they are by nature. The Gadarene was a recipient of this mercy in the same way

that David or Saul of Tarsus was, and that was by the grace of Almighty God. The Gadarene and Saul of Tarsus are typical of all of God's children before they have been quickened by the Holy Spirit and called with a holy calling into the manifest family of God. They were creatures of wrath, even as others, whether they dwelt among the tombs, as outcasts from the societies of this world or were profiting in the religions of the world above many. When it pleases God who separated them from their mother's womb to separate them from their state in nature and call them by his grace, it is this same mercy that is bestowed upon them. For the first time they are clothed and in their right mind and they are shown what they are by nature and what they must be by grace. They are given to see that all flesh is as grass and the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field, and is profitable for nothing in spiritual matters. They all go home to their friends and begin to tell them what great things the Lord has done for them, and are surprised to find that their experience is not new to them. They had felt that surely their's was an unique case, and others did not require the same miracle of grace that they feel to have experienced. As they travel this new way unto them, they begin to see the sufferings that are also common to all in a greater or lesser degree, and are made to see their dependence on this mercy to sustain them on their journey. This is when scriptures such as the one above have such a special significance to each one.

This mercy extends to all the Ruth's, Cornelius' Syrophenician women, deaf, blind, halt, lame, poor and hungry for whom it was treasured in Christ before the foundation of the world, and every event will come to pass that is necessary for it to be manifested in their lives. According to nature, there are many times when it seems by chance but I believe that they are all the same as the Samaritan woman at the well, the scriptures state, "and he must needs go through Samaria," speaking of Jesus as he left Judea and departed again into Galilee He must needs go that way because that is where this woman was, and the time had come when it must needs be made manifest unto her and others as they were chosen vessels, even though they were not of the Jews. This is true of the blind man to whom Jesus gave sight. He told his disciples this man was born blind, "That the works of God should be made manifest in him." No accident or chance there, just this mercy manifest that it does indeed endure forever to those who are predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.

As Paul recorded in Romans, "Who shall separate us from the love of God?" He then lists several things that comfort the children of God in this life,—things which without this mercy would indeed cause them to fall by the wayside, but this does not happen to any because the one that has begun a good work in them will not, yea cannot fail. They not only do not fall by the wayside but Paul says, "Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." He sets forth the extent to which this mercy endures on behalf of those to whom it is extended, and then says he was fully persuaded that nothing was able to separate them from the love of God which was in Christ the Lord. Paul was led along the pathway of life in such a way that he also was blessed to see that the mercy of God covers all of these situations that God's children face in this life. It is comforting to read the writings of those who, we hope, have traveled the same way that we have been brought along, and find them ending their pilgrimage declaring that this mercy endures even unto death. Paul was blessed as he neared the end of his journey, to declare, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." No fear of dying, no desire to remain in this wilderness of sin, no sorrow of leaving those he loved: just confident that the same

mercy, which had been his constant companion since his experience on the road to Damascus, would sustain those who remained and bring them down to the end of their allotted time just as it had him. "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing." What a rich blessing of God's abounding grace upon this aging Apostle to be given at this stage in his life such a comfort in the blessed assurance that this mercy endureth forever, and included the assurance of his having a part in the glorious resurrection of the saints. O blessed thought!

Down through the ages of time the vessels afore prepared unto glory have all received evidence of this mercy in their lives, as each is born into the kingdom of God. As Jesus told Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again." which makes them realize their great need of this mercy and grace of God in their life. They are made to see what they are by nature and what they must be by grace, and realize that there is such a great gulf fixed between these two extremes, and they fear what their end will be. They realize that they cannot attain to what they must be, and therefore plead for mercy, not justice, because mercy is the only thing that can span that great gulf. As they travel in this mercy and are made accepted in the beloved, they are given to say with David, Paul, Peter, James and John, "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever."

This mercy is precious in the thoughts of all who have been saved and called with a holy calling. It his been their staff and their dependable friend, and is tailored to their individual need as they face the trials of life. It conquered all the Goliaths, quenches all the fires that would consume them, parts the waters that would overflow them, stops the mouths of the lions that would devour them, and overcomes the weaknesses and sins of the flesh which would cause them to fail to reach their heavenly abode. Isaiah recorded, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgement thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the saints of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me saith the Lord." What a precious and glorious heritage belongs to those whom God loves; and this mercy is the constant reminder that comforts and strengthens them along the way.

Our hope and our prayer is that we have experienced some of these things along our life's way, and that they are evidences of this mercy in God's dealings with us. May they continue to be ours to experience and to meditate upon as we sojourn in this wilderness awaiting the time when, "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangle, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." O glorious thought! O precious hope! and this mercy endures through it all. It is just as sure and certain to endure to all of the saints of God in all ages to come, as it has in ages past. It does not weaken or diminish with the passage of time, but is always sufficient unto the needs of the day for those to whom it is sent.

In bonds of love,

(Elder) Richard Campbell
2761 Cochese Cove
Memphis, Tenn. 38118

EXPERIENCE OF THE LATE ELDER WILLIAM GRAFTON

Forest Hills, Md.
Sept. 28, 1906

Editors of the *Signs of the Times*
Dear Brethren:

I have not been a writer for your paper, although I have been a reader of it for the greater part of my life, as was my father before me, but neither of us felt that we had any gift in the direction of writing for publication. Father, who passed away many years ago, was a firm believer of the doctrine contended for by the *Signs of the Times*. I think sometimes that I know it, but when I try to tell it I fail.

A short time ago I received a request from a very highly esteemed brother and his wife that I should write for publication a sketch of my experience and call to the ministry. My first thought was, I cannot attempt such a thing; but upon further consideration there came the feeling that I should not treat this request with indifference, and somehow the impression continues to follow me that I must try to comply with it.

Now in trying to present this matter I am at loss to know where to begin. In early youth I had serious thoughts on the subject of death and eternity, but at the same time I was greatly in love with the world and its pleasures. When upon the dancing floor I have sometimes had sharp soul exercises, so that my knees would tremble under me. I would look around upon my companions, but they seemed to be comfortable and happy, while I was in distress. These impressions would wear off in a measure at times, then I could enter again with zest into my youthful sport. During these years the doctrine held by the Old School Baptists was most obnoxious to me. My ideas of religion were in perfect accord with the popular religion of the day, though I felt I was not yet ready for religion of any kind as it would interfere too much with the pleasures of life, which I was still looking forward to; later in life I intended to have this religion, which I thought I could get whenever I chose to set about it. With all my hatred for the doctrine of election there would very often arise in my mind serious questionings in regard to it. I desired with all my soul not to believe it, and yet I feared it might be true.

Once when a great struggle of this kind was going on in my mind, I had presented to me an appearance or vision which impressed me greatly, and which I will here describe. I was at work in the field alone, a great struggle was going on within. Has God a chosen people? Is election a Bible doctrine? How could I decide the question? All of a sudden there appeared high up in the air a group of people clothed in shining apparel, and enclosed by a wall, the brightness of which I have never been able to describe. I did not seem to look up to see it, yet it appeared to be very high, and was plainly seen by night as by day. The vision remained with me three days, and was interpreted to me as follows: This is the church of Christ, the elect of God; the bright robes they wear is the righteousness of Jesus Christ; they are enclosed with the walls of salvation; and these words rested upon my mind: "The Lord is good;" and, "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." All my opposition to the doctrine of election was now broken down; I saw clearly that God had an elect people, and that salvation is now complete, and that the offering for sin will never be made again. "In that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth He liveth unto God."

My sorrow was now because I could not feel that I was embraced in the glorious plan of salvation, that I was enclosed within those shining walls with that happy company; but on the evening of the third day, just before the vision vanished, they all seemed to look down upon me for the first time, and the loving look they gave me encouraged me to hope that I should at some time be a sharer of their joys. This was not less than sixty years ago. Ever after that my leading desire seemed to be that I might be with this happy people and know the joy that seemed to be theirs. In the Lord's good

time I believe I did enter into the joys of that salvation which I thought they were enjoying, and was able to sit down with them in that blessed hope. Soon after receiving this comforting hope my brother Nathan and myself were baptized by Elder E. Rittenhouse, and received as members of the Harford Church, in Harford County, Maryland, where my membership still is.

If ever I have received the call to the ministry my exercises in that direction began right here with that view which was given me, although at the time I knew nothing of what it meant. There seemed to be with me constantly a desire to tell what I had seen, and I was continually at it in my dreams and while at work in the field. At this time it was the custom for our church to meet regularly for prayermeeting when no pastor was present. In these meetings I was usually called upon to speak, which I sometimes did, with some freedom of mind at times. I continue on in this way from September (the month of my baptism) until May, 1859, at which time the Baltimore Association met with the Harford Church. The Committee on Preaching had arranged to have Elder Harding follow Elder Joseph L. Purington, but he, (Elder Harding) being in poor health, declined doing so, saying that he was physically unable to preach. They then decided to put me in his place. My feelings at that time might perhaps be imagined (by those who have had a similiar experience) better than I can describe them. As I sat waiting for my turn to come, trembling in every limb, it really seemed to me that those who sat near must surely hear the beating of my heart. Elder Purington took for his text, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." It was soon evident to all that he was under a cloud and could not come forth, and he felt it himself to such an extent that he soon sat down. Just as I saw him failing I found myself growing a little stronger, and when my turn came I was ready to get up and go on. It came to me in this way: Now here is a great preacher, a man of wonderful ability, yet the Lord has shut him up. Does it not show plainly wherein is our strength, his strength as well as mine? I read these words for a text: "Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again." I seemed to forget my weakness for the time being, and spoke with considerable liberty and comfort to myself. When I had finished, someone in the congregation arose and said, "Loose him and let him go." The church then voted to ordain me to the work of the gospel ministry, and I was made willing to leave my case in their hands. After the laying on of hands, and prayer by Elder Gilbert Beebe, and charge delivered by the trembling hand of old Elder Trott, I sat down in the pulpit, and suddenly there came upon me such an overpowering sense of my weaknes, ignorance and unfitness in every respect for such a solemn and important work, that I was well nigh crushed beneath that awful weight.

I knew that I was liable to be called upon to administer the ordinances of the church, and how dare I attempt such solemn responsibilities? This surely was like unto the Egyptian darkness, of which it was said it might be felt. In the midst of this distress of mind a very beautiful but indescribble appearance seemed to fill the house and to rest upon the people, causing them to look very lovely indeed, and in some peculiar manner appearing to bring them and me very near together. Then it seemed to be presented to me that here was my work among these people, and a still voice whispered, I will be with you to the end, and the sweetness of this promise still abides with me. My ignorance distressed me, for I had learned that the wisdom I needed was from above. I felt now for the first time that I wanted to preach. I believe this was in 1859, and I continue until the present time, trying to serve this church, together with the Warren and Rock Springs Churches, which I began to serve soon after.

is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4)

Man did not keep the first commandment that God gave: "And the Lord God commanded the man saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Genesis 2:16-17) We deeply need the Spirit of God to enable us to rightly divide the word of truth! "*For until the law sin was in the world:* but sin is not imputed when there is no law." (Rom. 5:13) By the reading of this Scripture without Spiritual wisdom, one may get the idea that sin was in the world before there was any commandment given to Adam. What law is Paul talking about? I believe he is speaking of the law that God gave to Moses. Let the reader carefully notice that Adam broke the commandment God gave. This action of eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil caused sin to enter into the world. There was not any sin in this world before that event took place. It was many years later that God gave the law to Moses. Let us quote the 14th verse so that you may consider the fact that sin was in the world before God gave the law to Moses, but sin was *not* in the world before man ate of that forbidden fruit: "Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, (from the first commandment to the law—) even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come."

It has been reported that God created sin, but I do not believe this saying is backed up by the Scriptures. God has created all things (see Col. 1:16), but SIN IS NOT A CREATED THING. Sin is an act of man, which results in a transgression of the law or commandment given by God. Some say that God created man a sinner, but the Scripture says: "Lo, this only have I found, that *God hath made man upright;* but they sought out many inventions." (Ecc. 7:29)

Who is man to attempt to understand and search out the ways of God? It is written: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:8-9) We may understand the ways of man, but it is impossible for us to understand the ways of God. It is impossible for us to understand the wisdom of God. Man by all his research, learning, counseling with others, etc. just cannot understand the wisdom of God. It is written: "There is no searching of his understanding." (Isaiah 40:-28) God created man upright. Why did God create man subject to vanity? He created man this way because it pleased him to so so. "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." (Rom. 8:20) Who is man to question the ways of God? "Thou wilt say then unto me, why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" (Rom. 9:19-21)

PREDESTINATION IS A WONDERFUL DOCTRINE! LET US NOT BE AFRAID TO ADVOCATE IT BECAUSE IT HAS BEEN MISHANDLED. "But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, *nor handling the word of God deceitfully;* but by manifestation of the truth commending oursleves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." (2 Cor. 4:2) The Scriptures speak that the way of truth shall be evil spoken of by certain people. "And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) let us do evil, that good may come? Whose damnation is just." (Rom. 3:18) "But there were false prophets also among the people, *even as there shall be false teachers*

among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that brought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction. *And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.*" (2 Peter 2:1-2) Some use predestination as a cloak to hide their weakness, neglect of duty, sins, etc. Peter wept bitterly when he realized that he had denied Jesus. (see Matt. 25:-75) David did not try to hide his sins behind the predestination of God. "For I acknowedge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee ony, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest." (Psalm 51:-3-4)

Let me ask the reader some questions: Do you beieve that God had knowledge beforehand that man would break the law? If not, why is it written: "There is no new thing under the sun." (Ecc. 1:9) If God did not have knowledge beforehand that man would break the law, why did God determine the death of Jesus? "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." (Acts 2:23) "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, *For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.*" (Acts 4:27-28) The Scriptures speak of the lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (see Rev. 13:8) God had a purpose in the lamb (Jesus) to die for his people. "Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. TO THIS END WAS I BORN, AND FOR THIS CAUSE CAME I UNTO THE WORLD, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." (John 18:37) I believe this has reference to the eternal purpose of God which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. (see Eph. 3-11) The Scriptures quoted prove that God had a purpose in the death of Jesus, and that being true, we can safely say that God had a purpose in the entrance of sin into this world. Or we may say that God had a purpose in man breaking the commandment and falling from the innocent state which he was in before the fall.

Let us quote the first expression in the text again: "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation:" Adam stood as the federal head of mankind or the whole human race. We have all sinned in Adam. The penalty (death) has passed upon mankind. Since we have already quoted Gen. 2:16-17, we will just quote this part again: "*—for in the day* that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Please notice by reading this Scripture that God already knew of the day when man would eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:" (Ecc. 3:1) This shows that in the providence of God there was a certain day for man to break the commandment. Therefore it was certain that man would fall. God had a purpose in the fall of man. Who can deny it? If God did not have a purpose in the fall of man, then man would not have broken the commandment. The above statement is given to show that the purpose of God shall stand. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand:" (Isaiah 14:24) "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." (Job 24-13)

Please notice that the term "all men" in the first expression refers to all men in Adam which means all of the human race. The condemnation came upon all men in Adam. There is none that escapes this death sentence. "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are to-

gether become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES." (Rom. 3:10-18) May we think for a moment: The world does not have the fear of God within them. If we have the fear of God in our hearts, it is because God has placed it there. It makes us fear and tremble to think of this death sentence! I know that I am in Adam, but this question comes to me: Am I in Jesus or am I deceived?

As we think of the expression "all men in Adam", we think of the "world" that Jesus did not pray for. " I pray for them: *I pray not for the world,* but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." (John 17:9) This means that Jesus did not pray for all of mankind. "Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god: their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer, *nor take up their names into my lips."* (Psalms 16:4) Please notice the expression: "nor take up their names into my lips." This proves that Jesus does not intercede for all of mankind. Jesus intercedes for those that God the Father has given him to be his bride, body, church, etc. "—he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." (Rom. 8:27)

The term "all men" in the second expression of the text *does not mean all men in Adam, but it means all men in Jesus Christ:* "by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon *all men* unto justification of life." Thanks be to the grace of God, *the free gift came upon all men in Jesus Christ!* Since the term "all men" is complete, then all men in Jesus Christ shall inherit eternal life. This is the world that God loves. (see John 3:16) "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." (John 6:37-39) I am glad that Jesus said, "I should lose nothing." All of those that God has chosen shall be saved. God's people are spoken of as the elect, the chosen, the sheep, the bride, the church, the body of Christ, etc. *"For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."* For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. THIS IS A GREAT MYSTERY: BUT I SPEAK CONCERNING CHRIST AND THE CHURCH." (Eph. 5:30-32) Words cannot express this mystery: There is a close relationship between a man and his wife, and there is a close union between Christ and the church or his bride. "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." (John 14:20) "That they all may be one: as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."

May God bless the truth and pardon the error.

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will follow these lines, but who would do the same thing for his children, when they cry, even though that child has been ungrateful for past favors.

Disobedient and ungrateful though they were, God begins to move toward them. They had gone *from* Him, but He is moving *towards* them. He begins his display of deliverance by raising up Moses. What an ingenious manner that this is brought about; what mercy is displayed in the restrictions placed around Moses' parents to prevent his getting down to Egypt's courts of splendor. Death was in the mind of Joseph's brethren; death was in the minds of Pharaoh; death, cruel, mocking death everywhere prevalent, and not a ray of sunshine, not a ray of hope, with wickedness and cruelty rampant on every side: hope gone, deliverance remote. For God's sake do not bring at me that God's children are their own deliverer. Do not blaspheme the name of the Holy Redeemer, and the comforting influence of the Holy Spirit in going before. It does not matter who it is, nor from what quarter it comes, no one, no one at all, can produce a helping hand in this Deliverance.

But I see an objecting hand raised; I see a gainsayer seeking to interrupt so as to get in their quackery. He says, But did not the mother have something to do with Moses being delivered to Pharaoh's court? did not the midwife have something to do with it? did not the sister have a hand in the whole? did not the daughter of Pharaoh contribute much to the success of the deliverance of Israel? and the answer in each case is the same. Yes, they all had a part in the matter. But none of them *thought* or acted until God came down to deliver His people. When God comes down He confounds men, or He gives men for His people. (Gen. 11:7; Isa. 43:4) Let it be remembered that there was none to deliver until God came down, and at His coming all nations and all things and all people are subordinate to His will. He did not come seeking help; He did not come seeking cooperation of the Israelites, nor did He beseech them to coordinate matters so as to help Him carry out His designs. Let it also be remembered that God goes before His people. At no point on the compass of salvation has God commanded His people in front; but He is in front, and He directs all things to the end that deliverance is given to all those embraced in the promise. In all of the deliverances of God's people at sundry times and in divers manners, it has pleased Him to use that which He has created to that end. If one fact stands out above another in the Bible it is that God created all things, that these things are in heaven and in earth, that they are all things that are visible or invisible, that these things cover all thrones, all dominions, all principalities, all powers, and that each of them was created by Him and *for* Him. Paul, in the illustrious first chapter of Colossians, declares that "He created all things; that these things are *by* Him and *for* Him." In the noted eleventh chapter of Romans he declares, "For *of* Him and *through* Him, and *to* Him are all things: to whom be glory forever (v. 36)." In the Revelation to the churches, we have a picture of four beasts that rest not day and night, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when these beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth forever and ever, the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power; for thou hast created all things, for *thy* pleasure, they are and were created." (Rev. 4:8, 11) Moreover, the eminent Apostle John tells us that all things were made (to become, to begin, to be) by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. (John 1:3)

The Holy One in Israel, the God Almighty of the whole earth is before all

things. There is not any dominion or principality or power or thing that is before Him, for He made or created all things. Now this covers the whole ground of the sinner's hope. He knows that nothing has an existence that does not owe its origin to God. There are no crosses or incongruities. Consistency is marked on creatures and in all of their actions, for by Him all things consist.

This is the God that made the promise to our father Abraham. His sworn statement has behind it the wisdom and power of a covenant keeping God. The promise would be worthless unless He knew and determined the end from the beginning. This wisdom and this power was all engaged in bringing every last one of the Israelites out of Egypt. God gave Noah the rainbow as a token or sign or type of the promise that the world would never be destroyed by water anymore. God's people have always been coming through great tribulation. This has been true in every age and clime. Now as His chosen people are in the throes of this gigantic and soul depressing affliction, the promises of God are to unfold in their midst. They are to carry out of that land a remembrancer that they will never forget.

Our object at this time does not call for us to minutely examine all of the intricate details of preparation for the bringing out of the children of Israel. We might well advance the thought that the promise of deliverance set in motion the first stages of that deliverance, and that the promise culminated in the final and complete deliverance of the last one of them. In the outset, when Moses was being prepared for the deliverance, he, with every child of God when being dealt with by the God of all grace, begins to make inquiry as to the success of his advent into Egypt. (Gen. 24:1, 8; Luke 1:34) Make sure that an answer will ever be given for the inquiring child of God. He answers His servant by saying, "I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." (Ex. 3:14) The movements of the servant of the Most High God are those that are prompted by this I AM. There is not a mishap nor an accident. What we would see as delays are only the consuming power of God being wrought against anything that would molest His family.

A wise mother would always provide for her family if they were to take a journey that was too far for them. Wisdom is at the helm at this strategic time of Israel. Surely none would say that a nation so ignorant and disobedient as to get embroiled in the meshes and clutches of Egypt could devise a way out of this condition. This is the intervention of divine mercy, and the subject of this article is meant to convey to them a remembrance of that mercy ever afterward. They are to put up a lamb. Not just any kind of a lamb, but the best of their flock. They can not kill it on the thirteenth day nor on the fifteenth. Time is the most important factor in this matter. And without any hesitancy, without any qualms of conscience, without any fear of men whose life and breath is subject to Him that holds the times of all in His hands. It is God's time. God sets the times, and the times of all are in Him (Eccl. 7:14; Psa. 31:15). Who is to eat of it? If any Egyptian eats of this lamb, either by precept or example, I am willing to give up close communion; if not, I maintain that only those that come to our table confessing that they are of our faith and order have a right there. The whole assembly of the congregation were to eat of this lamb. Not one more, not one less; no compromise, no yielding, no giving ground. They were to take of the blood and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. (Ex. 12) The lamb shall be roasted whole; it shall all be eaten by all; they shall be ready to go as they eat. Plenty to eat before leaving, bread unleavened, meat well roasted. The bread signifies that no works of men were added to it, that it, within itself, had sufficient sustenance for the

journey out of Egypt, thus signifying that as long as the world stood, that they would not ever need anything else to sustain them in their journey from Egypt to Canaan. All of this readiness, the girdling, the shoes on, the staff in the hand, the eating in haste, is the work of God. Once again, it is not because of their aptness but by the grace and Providence of God. This is their passover, and it is from the Lord. The only thing that spared them was the blood of the lamb, "For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt."

The blood shall be to them a token upon the houses where they gather, not only that night, but a memorial, AND THEY SHALL KEEP IT A FEAST TO THE LORD THROUGHOUT THEIR GENERATIONS; THEY WERE TO KEEP IT A FEAST BY AN ORDINANCE FOR EVER. Come, dear brethren, come all ye weary and heavy laden sinners. Salvation has ever been by the grace of God. In every dispensation it is grace all the way. How often we think and many even *seem* to have something else, it is always brought home to us that salvation is of the Lord. Israel, while in the tabernacle that God pitched, will ascribe honor and glory to the Lord. No matter in what dispensation or stage of experience they travel, they will remember the way that the Lord has led them; how that He kept them alive, how that He gave them grace to endure their afflictions in Egypt; how that He prepared them for the journey; how that the innocent blood of the lamb preserved them from death. They were not permitted to forget this. A memorial that is set up will continue set in the place of its sitting. Statistics will tell us, if we need statistics to confirm us, how long that this memorial was kept. I hope that I live by faith, and I am sure that it would be dry as fresh cured hay to study the hieroglyphics of Egyptian writing to show and prove that Israel kept this Passover feast; but faith, even if I do not have it, rises up in the breast of those taught of God, and they know that the memorial was kept, for when the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world, His people were keeping it then.

When the fulness of time was come (God's time, not Mary's, not mine, not yours) God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. (Gal. 4:4, 5) He having come under the law, He was subject to every mandate of that law. He having been made sin for us, He must of necessity, have the sin removed from him by the perfect Lamb; He must not only be the Lamb, but, being made sin for us, must be cleansed by the Lamb, yea, although He is the Door, He must come in by the door.

All of the teeming ages that had rolled on anon, the rising and falling of thrones, had not removed from the minds of Israel the keeping of that Passover. They were keeping it when the Saviour came into the world, the promised Prophet to His people (Deut. 18:18). The unleavened bread had not been changed, and on that day the disciples came to Him and said, "Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?"

At the appointed time, He sat down with the twelve, and as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, etc. Now we have seen the end of the Jewish world; we have witnessed the end of the legal heavens; we have seen the accomplishments of the purpose for which this memorial was kept.

The legal heavens have passed away; the memorial lamb has filled its place; the day of the covenant of works has died in our midst (if Christ is in us). The day has passed away in a fitting way by the appearing of the anti-type and His partaking of that type in the same way, with the same kind of bread, with the same kind of Passover Lamb, with the same people, and for the same purpose. As, in the midst of one day,

even a passing day, another is at hand, even so, no more, no less, as the legal heavens are passing away, the heavenly kingdom of grace and peace is coming. One is going, the other is coming; one has now gone, never to be observed any more; the other is at hand, never to be left off as long as this world stands.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

FAITHFULNESS

It has been requested that we write upon the above subject, and in doing so, we confess ourselves as too much of the earth, earthy, to be able of ourselves to rise to that height from which we could instruct our brethren in faithfulness. To our sorrow, we find that though we are at times able to rejoice in the love and mercy of a faithful God, yet our recollections often reproach us with many instances of our unfaithfulness, from which recollections we ought to learn, yes, and we do learn, that in us, that is, in our flesh, there dwells no good thing. How good it is that "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." Faithfulness is not of man, and never can it proceed from man, it is the direct fruit of God's Holy Spirit, and there is only one way that this faith can be ours. The Scripture saith, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." True faith is only received by divine revelation, it is not the darkened mind of the creature depending upon the veracity of the word of its creator, but it is an illuminated mind confidently depending upon the ability, and walking in the strength, of Him who has promised. Thus faith is not just a blind assenting to the truth, but it is an implicit trust in him who has imparted strength by the word he has spoken to us. Thus David went forth in the strength of the Lord. Not only does faith believe the word spoken, but while it is in lively exercise the recipient feels and knows that all Scripture is given by inspiration, that not one word of our eternal God shall fall to the ground, that his faithfulness is unto all generations, and as he hath established the earth, so it abideth.

It is by and in this God-given faith that the soul diligently seeks God, believes his words and walks in his ways, and the more faith is in exercise the more that soul will have confidence in God, and lose confidence in the flesh. For one to walk after the flesh, is to walk after that that pleases not God, for in the flesh we cannot please God. Thus those who are in the flesh, and follow its motions, are without faith, and Paul tells us, "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Now while God in creation pronounced his work good, yet the work of man, that is, the work of the flesh, never was good and never pleased the Lord, and daily we find the flesh profiteth nothing, it is under the curse of sin. Of the word of God Isaiah saith, "It shall accomplish that which I please," and Jesus, the Word made flesh, said, "I do always those things that please him." It is here, we would say, that true faithfulness is found: in Jesus. Paul tells us that "Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

How necessary to examine ourselves, and that often, whether we be in the faith. It is easy to deceive ourselves, and we may deceive others, but we cannot deceive God. Paul says, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your ownselves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin. How clear and cutting such truth is, for how necessary, we say again, for both hearer and

speaker to examine themselves and prove themselves. Faithfulness is the keynote of Jesus as a Son, faithfulness should be the keynote of those who profess to be his.

"Let us ask the important question,
(Brethren, be not too secure.)
What it is to be a christian,
How we may our hearts assure.

Vain is all our best devotion,
If on false foundations built;
True religion's more than notion,
Something must be known and felt."

As we are concerned principally with those who profess Christ, we would direct our remarks first to those who are brethren, partakers of a holy calling. "Consider him that endureth such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." There is not one spark of faith in the soul but what Jesus is the author and finisher of it, and so, while we are in this life Paul says, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Now to live in Christ and Christ to live in us, is not like one sitting on a bus and that bus taking us to our destination, while we may read a newspaper, chat or sleep, but is a daily self-examination in the sight of truth, and struggling hard against sin and unbelief. A taking joyfully the spoiling of our goods and counting it all joy when we fall into divers temptations, is not according to the flesh. When the Lord gives a grain of faith, he will also see that that faith shall be tried. There will be a wicked heart to contend with, a darkened mind, a stubborn will, a hardened conscience, and all this in the one who has vowed to walk softly before the Lord. We are naturally proud, and the Lord knows how to humble, and he often takes a way we least expect to bring us low. "He that is low need fear no fall." Yet the lower we are brought faith sees the Lord exalted higher, views him as the chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely.

When faith is dormant in the soul we become high-minded, and, as far as spiritual things are concerned, we are asleep. To such Paul says, "Awake to righteousness, and sin not, for some of you have not the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame." At such times our faithlessness will be seen. There will be a winking at sin, an indifference to prayer, to the word of God, to the afflictions of Christ, as manifested in his saints. It is at such times that wars and fightings come, and oh how cruel sometimes brethren can be to brethren. Again this world will not be the enemy it once was to such, and riches will have lost their deceitfulness. However, the Lord will not leave them there if they are his, there is a furnace in Zion, and faith will again enable them, under affliction, to confess his hand and know no will but his. It is then that the fullness of faith excludes unbelief, softens, makes a tender conscience, denies ungodliness and enables one to live a godly, righteous and sober life in the present evil world. Faithfulness demands that all who own a Savior's blood shall lay their tongues in the dust, yea, shall be dumb rather than speak evil against those for whom Christ died.

Now, as it is often the case with those who speak in God's name, as with the people to whom they minister, we would write upon the necessity of faithfulness in those who are upon the walls of Zion. The word saith, "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful," that is, he must be faithful to his God and the word of his grace. He must be faithful in declaring what he has handled, tasted and felt of the word of life, he must not handle the word of God deceitfully. He must study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, doing it as he that shall give account unto God. Paul charged Timothy before God and

the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."

This charge was also given to us, and therefore how necessary to examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith. There are many who need reproof and rebuke these days, and do we reprove or rebuke them? and is it with all longsuffering and doctrine? All need exhorting, that they shall walk worthy of their high calling, not with eye service as men-pleasers, that they shall not copy their conversation after this vain world. A ministry with no rebuke or reproof in it will be very pleasing and satisfying to the flesh, but dishonoring to God. A ministry without exhortation will breed an indifference to the precepts of the gospel. Godly exhortation will not fail to stir up the pure mind of the hearers unless they be reprobate. Where there is a faithful ministry there is generally a faithful people, for it is often "Like priest, like people," and where there is a faithful people, such will pray that their minister shall prove faithful to them. A ministry that denies the doctrine of God in any part is not a faithful ministry. The church of God should always be careful in their judgment of a gift, for the words of an unfaithful elder will eat as doth a canker. A faithful ministry will not overthrow the faith of God's children like Hymenæus and Philetus, who were unfaithful in their teaching concerning the resurrection. And unfaithful ministry is to be blamed for much of the confusion and divisions that have ever crept into the church. Paul tells us, If I seek to please men I should not be the servant of Christ; and Elihu said, "Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person; neither let me give flattering titles unto man. For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my Maker would soon take me away." To follow the high calling of an ambassador of God calls for the speaker to be as God's mouth. His testimony must not be with high sounding words of man's wisdom, and only as he divides the precious from the vile, is he God's mouth. There are many, perhaps, today as the Lord declared to Ezekiel: "They come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not." The Lord said he would lay the land most desolate because of their admonitions. Surely there is a woe upon those who deal treacherously with God's people. Isaiah tells us, "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." If one speak, let him speak as the oracle of God, and if he minister, let him minister with the ability that God giveth. But we lack wisdom! James saith, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not."

There is nothing that brings a man to his knees in prayer if he be a servant of God more than a realizing sense of his insufficiency for these things, and the one who wrestles and communes with his God most in private, though he may often mourn an absent God, will find that God will give him a mouth and wisdom, which all his adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist. It is only when one goes forth in the strength of the Lord that he can

put to flight the armies of the aliens. Surely we need to cry daily, Lord, make and keep me faithful, faithful to thee and thy word, then I shall be faithful to those that are thine.

(Editorial by Elder George Ruston Sept. 1931.)

THE FALL OF ADAM

I sent some time ago a request to brother G. Beebe for his views on, "From what and to what did Adam fall? for we hear much about the fall. Was he an earthy man before he transgressed? and was he any more or less than earthy after transgression?" Please comply, if you have time; if not, please publish this, and ask brother W. L. Beebe to give his views on the same.

I remain, with love, yours,

A. TOMLIN

REPLY

When we speak of the fall of Adam we allude to his departure from the state of innocence in which he was created, into a state of transgression and sin against God. And as by his offense many (that is, all his posterity) were made sinners, and as death came by sin, we have inferred that Adam fell from a paradisaical state of innocence into a state of sin and death; and all his posterity, being in him when he transgressed, were involved in sin and death by his transgression.

We do not remember any scripture in which the phrase, *Adam's fall,* is used; but we have understood those who have used it to allude to his descending from innocence to transgression, causing his expulsion from the garden of Eden, and involving the consequences of his sin. Therefore, if we are correct, he fell from happiness adapted to his nature as an innocent man, into sin, misery and death.

Before he fell he was an earthy man, for we are informed that "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground." "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."—Gen. ii. 7, and iii. 17-19. These scriptures, we think, fully settle the question in regard to Adam as an earthy man, both before and after his transgression. The apostle Paul, in speaking of Adam as the figure of him that was to come, says, "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam a quickening Spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly."—1 Cor. xv. 45-48.

These scriptures are conclusive in answering the inquiries of our beloved brother; and we produce them, not to prevent Elder W. L. Beebe from giving such light as he may have, or any other brother who may feel disposed to express his views on the subject.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, March 15, 1879)

HE APPRECIATES THE SIGNS

217 Bastrop Drive,
Monroe, La.

Dear Brother Spangler:

It is now time to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times,* and I would like to use this occasion to tell you that I appreciate this paper very much.

I would like to offer my thanks to all the editors, and to all the brothers and sisters who have contributed their time and effort to this wonderful paper.

I love to read the experiences of the brothers and sisters, the Editorials, and Voices of the Past. They coincide so beautifully, and tell of the love of God from eternity. May He bless this paper to continue in the praise of His glory. And may it be the will of our most precious Heavenly Father that you remember me in your prayers.

In bonds of love,
C. C. Wilbanks

ENJOYED THE MEETINGS

2761 Cochese Cove,
Memphis, Tenn. 38118

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

This year has been one that I shall remember as long as I have a rational mind, and a love for what I understand to be the truth, and for the people whom I believe to be the childen of God. I have been blessed to visit three areas in which I had never been before, and found in each one of them the same doctrine declared and the same manifestation of that love that I believe adorns the Church of God when it is called in session by the only One who can bring them together to worship him in spirit and in truth. It is truly a blessed place to be when you feel this to be the truth.

I was blessed to attend the Union Meeting of the Ebenezer Association in south Alabama in June, a church in Florida in September, and the Upper Country Line Association in July. Each has a special place in my memories, and I hope, by the grace of God, to be blessed to return to each of them at sometime in the future.

I had hoped to see you and Sister Wood in North Carolina. I still remember with much pleasure my visit to one of your churches and in your home, last year.

If not deceived in my hope, the Children of God have a very precious heritage of which the children of the world have no knowledge. And it is worth more to them than all the wealth combined, but it is free unto them. It includes all the promises of God respecting the welfare of His children; all the seasons of love experienced by the elect in all ages, and is based upon the integrity of an All Wise Sovereign, all Powerful Unchangeable God who created the world for their good, and said, All things are for your sake. These all belong unto them by promise, and cannot fail because they are given unto them by the grace of their Heavenly Father, because of that love that he had for them before time began.

May God in his All Abounding Grace ever watch over all of his children and cause them to look unto him in their times of need. May He bless you both in all your needs both natural and spiritual.

In bonds of love,
Richard Campbell

ORDINATION OF DEACON
AT PITTMAN'S GROVE CHURCH,
KENLY, N. C.
December 13, 1975

1. Elder Curtis Rains was chosen Clerk.
2. All deacons were invited to take part in the ordination.
3. Presbytery was composed of the following: Deacons James Pope, Fred Barnes, Lee Pope, J. P. Pittman, H. W. Phillips, Lloyd Kinnady, Leon Griffin and Amos Williams. Elders W. E. Turner, Harvey Holland and Curtis R. Rains.
4. The deacons presented Brother Randolph Barnes to the Presbytery.
5. Sang Hymn 472.
6. Elder W. E. Turner chosen Moderator.
7. Elder W. E. Turner chosen to present charge to the candidate as to a deacon's duties.
8. Hands were laid on candidate with prayer.
9. Brother Barnes was presented back to the church by Brother Lee Pope.
10. The Minutes were read and approved and the Presbytery dismissed.
11. Hymn 563 was sung, then adjourned.

Elder W. E. Turner, Mod.
Elder Curtis Raines, Clerk

OBITUARIES

ELDER GEORGE LOUIS STEWART

It has pleased our kind and gracious heavenly Father to call from this life our beloved brother, Elder George Louis Stewart. He was born September 17, 1898 and fell asleep in Christ Jesus November 29, 1975. He was married to Lena (Higginbotham) Stewart for 51 years, who survives his departure. To this union four children were born, two girls and two boys: Mrs. Ruby Nell Chriswell, Mrs. Mary Sue Hutchinson, Mr. Calvin Stewart, Mr. George Donald Stewart. Also surviving are eleven grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Elder Stewart was a member of Nazareth Primitive Baptist Church, located near Sanatha, Tuscaloosa County, Alabama. He will be greatly missed by his home church, both his presence and faithful preaching of the gospel of Christ Jesus, and his brotherly love and communication with those of like precious faith.

He often expressed his faith in the sovereignty of Almighty God over all worlds, times and events; and in the perfect atonement of Christ Jesus for his people, making perfect reconciliation to the justice of God for their sins: thereby redeeming them to God that they should be and are holy and without blame before Him in love. Though they sleep in mortality, they will awake in immortality, to see Jesus as he is in glory; and so shall they ever be with the Lord.

This is written by request of the family and in behalf of Nazareth Church. The writer conducted the service at Oliver Funeral Home, Winona, Miss. and he was laid to rest in Winona Cemetery.

John L. Sanders

(Elder Stewart was a reader and supporter of the *Signs of the Times* for many years. — EDITOR)

MRS. BESSIE ROBINSON McLAWHORN

God in his infinite wisdom saw fit to remove from our midst one of our oldest and dearest members, Sister Bessie Robinson McLawhorn. She was born October 26, 1886 and died June 12, 1975. She was the daughter of William Lacey Robinson and Judy Taylor Robinson; and was the widow of Melvin Thomas McLawhorn, who died in October, 1936.

She is survived by two daughters: Mrs. Irma Lang and Miss Esther McLawhorn; two grandsons and seven great grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted by Elders A. P. Mewborn and Joseph L. Sawyer, and she was laid to rest in the family cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, in the presence of a host of friends and relatives.

Sister Bessie was a gracious, kind and gentle person: one who lived a Christian life. She was a firm and steadfast believer in salvation by the grace of God, and she manifested this faith by her talk and her walk in life. She united with Hancock's Primitive Baptist Church in September, 1924, and was a true and faithful member until death. She loved the church and her brethren and always greeted them with a tender smile and a warm handshake — thus expressing her love for them. She was held in high esteem by her church and all who knew her, for she was an honor to her church and her family and community.

We shall miss her but feel that our loss is her eternal gain. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to her bereaved family, and pray that God's richest blessings will be theirs.

Done by order of conference while in regular session.

Elder Joseph L. Sawyer, Mod.
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

SISTER B. D. HUTCHENS

Having been requested by the church, I will try to pen a short memorial of our dear and greatly loved Sister Hutchens, whom the Lord has just called home and taken from us. She will be greatly missed by all that knew her, especially by her Brethren and Sisters in the church. She was born June 13, 1890 to Sam Corns in Patrick County, Va., and departed this life September 13, 1975, making her stay here 85 years, 3 months and 3 days. Her funeral service was held at Mechanicsville Primitive Baptist Meeting House at High Point, where her membership was, by her pastor Elder D. A. O'Bryant and Elder Thornton Manley, and she was laid to rest there under a mound of beautiful flowers, to await the day when her Saviour will descend from heaven with a shout and the voice of the Archangel, and the trump of God, and meet the Lord in the air and ever be with her Lord.

Sister Hutchens united in marriage to B. D. Hutchens the 6th day of August, 1905, and to this union eight children were born: 4 boys and 4 girls. Four preceded her in death, leaving 2 boys and 2 girls to mourn: Elder B. Dennis Hutchens and Westley Hutchens; Mrs. Murphy Sharp and Mrs. Mary Frank. She joined Mechanicsville Primitive Baptist Church the 3rd Sunday in January, 1939, and was faithful to the church. She was left a widow a few years after joining the church.

Sister Hutchens was a dear and precious old mother in Israel, and was deeply loved by the brethren and sisters. She seldom missed the services each weekend, being faithful to the church and good to her pastor. She loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace and Predestination and the Sovereignty of God. She was well read and had a deep understanding of the scriptures. It was a pleasure to visit with her and hear her tell what she felt and saw in them. She will be missed, but we would not want her back, but would say, Sleep on dear Mother until your Saviour calls you, when she and all that are asleep in Him will come forth in His likeness, and ever be with Him.

Written by request of the church while in conference, with one copy to be sent the *Signs of the Times* for publication; one for the family; and one for the church records. Written by her Pastor

D. A. O'Bryant

MARY E. FOOKS

On February 2, 1975, our dearly beloved Sister Mary (Mollie) E. Fooks died at the Deers Head Hospital in Salisbury, Maryland. She and her husband, the late W. Durand Fooks, were both members of the Nassaongo Church, having been baptized on the same day, October 26, 1924.

Sister Fooks was born August 15, 1875, and at death was nearly one hundred years of age. She was the daughter of Samuel and Hattie Driscoll Hitch and was married to W. Durand Fooks in 1895. Their children, Vera Leonard, Hattie Dennis and William Fooks, are all deceased.

Surviving Sister Fooks are several grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Sister Fooks was loved spiritually and naturally by all who knew her. Her sense of humor was a delight, her person affectionate and meek. In her conversation and in her daily walk, she gave rich evidence of her deep and abiding faith in her Redeemer. Often acquainted with grief, she never complained but was enabled to put her trust in Him who does all things well. Her home, while she had one, and her room in later years, were always open with love to her brethren and friends with whom she was happiest when conversing on the Gospel. She was a faithful and steadfast member of her church and ably carried on the duties of Clerk until nearly a year before her death. Surely she was one of the Lord's jewels sent to comfort those in need.

Funeral services for Sister Fooks were conducted by her Pastor, Elder James Poole, on a snowy morning, February 5, 1975, at the John B. Parsons Home in Salisbury, where she had been a resident for several years.

Those who knew Sister Mollie Fooks do not mourn for her presence but take delight in her memory that will ever be a poignant reminder that it is from "God from whom all blessings flow," and "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

Written at the request of her granddaughter, Sister Jean Dennis Purnell, and humbly submitted by one who was blessed to call her Sister.

Frances P. Parish

SISTER POSIE BOAZE

The Lord has seen fit to call from our midst, Sister Posie L. Boaze on September 19, 1975. She was born January 17, 1888, a daughter of the late William S. and Labinda N. Myers.

On January 23, 1907 she was married to the late Elder C. Octavous Boaze, who died in 1925. From this union three sons and two daughters survive: Messrs. S. Irvin, Randolph, and Maurice Boaze; and Mrs. Lucille Marshall, all of Danville, Va., and Mrs. Gladys Gatewood, Rt. 6, Chatham, Va. Also five grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

Sister Boaze united with Strawberry Primitive Baptist Church August 11, 1908, and was baptized by the late Elder G. W. Hundley; and remained a faithful member for sixty-seven years. (Elder Boaze was not ordained until December 6, 1913) She loved her church and was always interested in her welfare and willing to share her part.

She believed in the sovereign power and grace of her God. Four or five weeks before her decease, while filling her appointment with her doctor, he told her to return the next week, and if her heart was not stronger he'd have her go to the hospital for a "Pace Maker" treatment. She told him her Lord had decreed her remainder of days on earth, and she would live all of them without his or any man's help, and did not return.

She was sitting in a chair helping her daughter string beans, and fell over in her lap.

Sister Boaze was a gifted singer and often led the songs at church services. Her daughter said she had been humming her favorite song, Amazing Grace, all the week. She and Elder Boaze would sing the songs of Zion together at home around the fireside at night: her eldest son and daughter may remember.

I feel I can say for the family and church these stanzas:

Mama, Grandma and Sister Boaze is gone,
Never will your songs and memory fade.
Home and church is not the same
Since you've been called away.

We saw you fading like a flower
But could not have our way:
We nursed you with tender care
Until God called you away.

For four score years and seven
You spread sunshine along our way,
But now you are sleeping peacefully,
Awaiting the Resurrection day.

We cannot wish you back
In this world of sin and woe,
For we hope to meet you again
On a brighter, happier shore.

In heaven that bright and happy home
Over on the Golden Shore,
There we hope to meet again,
Where we'll part no more.

The funeral was conducted at Wrenn-Yeatts Chapel, Danville, Va., by Elder Raymond Payne and Mr. J. William Hines, with interment in the Myers family cemetery; there to await the return of her Saviour to call his children home.

May the Lord bless the family and reconcile them to His will. "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh: blessed be his holy name."

Written as requested by Strawberry Church Nov. 2, 1975. One copy to be sent the family; one placed on our church record; and one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Read and approved December 7, 1975.

Elder R. S. Payne, Mod.
Josephine N. Dodd, Clerk

ELDER CLAY COEN WADE

Elder Clay C. Wade, pastor of the Sarah Primitive Baptist Church, Boone County, W. Va., departed this life December 8, 1974 at the age of 73 years. Elder Wade was born March 15, 1901, the son of the late Elder W. I. and Dora Harless Wade. He united with the Sarah Church August 9, 1959, and was baptized by the late Elder Aubrey Dolin. Elder Wade was ordained a Minister of the Gospel in 1963 and served as Pastor of the Sarah Church from 1972 up until the time of his death.

Surviving: widow, Carrie Wade, one son, Bethel Wade, three sisters, Daisy Stephens, Helen Stickler of Yawkey, W. Va., Ruby McClanahan of Poca, W. Va., one brother, Paul Wade of Harts, W. Va., three great grandchildren, three great great grandchildren and a host of friends to mourn his death.

Funeral service was conducted by Elder W. P. O'Neal of the Providence Church, in Koontz Funeral Home, Hamlin, W. Va., December 10, 1974 at 11:00 a. m. His body was laid to rest in the Beech Grove Cemetery to await the coming of the Lord.

Written by the request and direction of Sister Ruby McClanahan.

J. J. Bird, Clerk
Pocatalico Association

LILLIE MAY WATSON SCOTT

In sacred memory of Sister Lillie May Watson Scott, who answered the summons to eternal Glory to rest with the departed Saints in the Paradise of God until the trumpet shall sound in the glorious morning of the resurrection when the dead in Christ shall rise first to be in union with body, soul and spirit to ever be with the Lord in glory.

Sister Scott was born August 7, 1891, died June 13, 1975. She is survived by her husband, Coley D. Scott of Wilson County, N. C., two stepdaughters and one stepson, and fourteen grandchildren.

She united with the Church at Lower Black Creek December 11, 1921, and was baptized by Elder J. C. Hooks, her Pastor. She transferred her membership to Scott's Church, Wilson County, N. C., in the year 1941.

On January 15, 1936, she was united in marriage to Coley D. Scott by Elder W. E. Turner, her Pastor.

Sister Scott was appointed by the Church as Custodian for the Communion Supplies which she kept with Christian Dignity.

Sister Scott's walk in life was a living testimony of her faithfulness in Christ.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder S. R. Boykin and Elder Harvey C. Holland. The services were held in Scott's Church. She was laid to rest in the Upper Black Creek cemetery.

Written by Elder W. E. Turner, at the request of Brother C. D. Scott.

JETTIE MOREFIELD FRANKS

In loving memory of a dear sister in Christ, Jettie Morefield Franks, aged 83.

It is with sadness that we write of her death October 16, 1975. She was of a noble and gentle spirit, and all who knew her loved

her.

She joined the Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church in 1945, and was baptized by the late Elder O. J. Denny. She was a faithful member until poor health prevented her from attending church. She loved people, and always referred to the members as "My good church folks."

She leaves a daughter, Mrs. Janie Cutchins, of Sherrills Ford, N. C.; and two sons, Jack of the home, and Joe, Jr. of Greensboro, N. C.; nine grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted from the Lambeth-Troxler Funeral Home by her beloved pastor, Elder David Spangler. Her body was laid to rest beside that of her husband, Mr. Joe Franks, Sr., in Mt. View Cemetery near Winston-Salem, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the final resurrection, when Jesus shall come to raise the dead to be caught up in the clouds, to be forever with her Lord.

Humbly submitted,
Mary W. Somers

SISTER ELLA TAYLOR ROEBUCK

God in His divine mercy and providence has removed from our midst another dear Sister.

Sister Ella was born July 27, 1891, and died October 11, 1975. She was married first to Jim J. Taylor who proceeded her in death. To this union were born four sons, two of whom proceeded her in death. Leaving at her passing are her husband, J. A. Roebuck, whom she married July 4, 1959; two sons, Curtis Taylor of Robersonville, N. C., Jona Taylor of Farmville, N. C.; and one sister, Mrs. Ludie Grimes of Robersonville, N. C.

Sister Ella was blessed to unite with Flat Swamp Primitive Baptist Church in 1938 where she remained a faithful member until death. Sister Ella suffered much affliction in her later days, but was not one to complain. Her faith in her God and the love she had for her brethren carried her to her meetings when it looked impossible for her to go because of her weakened condition. She was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace.

I was blessed to enjoy many sweet meetings with her at church and in her home, which was always open to her brethren.

Her funeral was conducted in Flat Swamp Church by the writer and by Elder E. C. Harrison. Her body was placed in Robersonville Cemetery to await the call for the sleeping Saints of God, who will answer, coming forth glorified to meet their Saviour, to reign with him in glory forever.

May God reconcile all of us to His blessed will and comfort all that mourn her passing.

RESOLVED, A copy be placed on the church book, a copy be given to the family, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Written by order of conference, Saturday, November 1, 1975.

Elder J. T. Prescott (Pastor)

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It has been God's will to call from our midst brother James Everett Bird. Born April 11, 1906 in Putnam County W. Va., he passed away September 17, 1975. He was the son of the late Joseph Addison and Malinda Spears Bird. Surviving are his wife, Alma Lewis Bird and son Vernon Lee Bird and daughters, Macil, Inez, Alice and Louise, two brothers and seven sisters, sixteen grandchildren, and one great grandchild. He will be greatly missed by those who knew him. We feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted at the Fairview Primitive Baptist Church with Elder George Justice and Elder Allen Smith officiating. Everett united with the Providence Primitive Baptist Church in June 1964 and was ordained as a deacon in April 1969, an office he served well. Brother Everett's prayer was that we be blessed with love to live in peace and looking over one another for good and not evil. He earnestly contended for the peace of the church until his death, he loved the doctrine of choice and election of God. "For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." (As concerning the Gospel.) For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. One does not repent in order to receive spiritual life. Repentance is evidence that one already has spiritual life. This was Brother Everett's testimony.

Written by request,
Willard R. Bird

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 144 DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1976 NO. 3

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3/76
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

EXPERIENCE OF DUNCAN W. McCOLL

I was born on June 26, 1923, the second son of Samuel T. McColl and Mary A. Johnson. If I were to give an account of God's dealings with me perhaps I should begin with the first occasion where I was conscious that God began with me. It is one of my earliest memories and I would probably be three years old at the time. I awakened one summer morning about 10 o'clock, being alone in the house, for my parents were both working outside, and I got out of bed and looked at my image in the mirror on the dressing-table in the bedroom. I still remember very vividly what an overwhelming feeling I had as a vile sinner before a just and Holy God.

Nevertheless, following this incident, I went for months, even years, with few serious thoughts, vainly believing that morality was Christianity and going about to establish my own righteousness, little realizing that is was as filthy rags. I was at that time without Christ, being an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, and a stranger from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.

God's word was read regularly every morning in our home at the breakfast table and I never left the house to begin any task but what my mother would say, "Look up". If I ever achieved any measure of success, no matter how modest, she would always say, "Don't forget where your help comes from." God used Mother in a remarkable way to make me conscious of Himself.

Although I had from my earliest days been exposed to Arminian preaching, having visited with relatives who were of that persuasion and attended their revival tent-meetings and regular services at various times, I first became confronted with its full force in July, 1940, after I had completed High School, and a radio was given to us. As we had services at the Covenanted Baptist Church at Ekfrid only once a month, we began to listen to religious programs on the radio and, the admonitions of the various speakers being sent home to an accusing conscience, I began to feel acutely my state as a lost sinner. I was influenced by them to such an extent that I began to feel that the Old Baptists were merely fatalists, not interested in converting sinners as these other groups were putting forth such an effort to do.

Their arguments seemed so plausible about "taking God at His word" that I came to the place where I felt that some day, when, like Felix, I should have a "convenient season" I would "accept" Jesus Christ. One day while idly leafing through a marked copy of the New Testament, I noticed the words in the first verse of the eighth chapter of Romans, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" and I decided that when the time came for me to "accept" salvation that that would be an appropriate verse for me to rest my hopes on.

I continued in this unsettled state for

some months, feeling with increasing certainty that I was eternally lost. Finally on October 20th, 1940, we were listening to a religious program from Grand Rapids, Michigan, in the evening, and the speaker announced that he was departing from a series of talks that he had been giving on a certain book of the Bible each week because there was a general heavy rain over the whole of the eastern part of the North American continent that evening and, since many young people would be inside because of this, he was giving a special message aimed at them. To my dismay he announced as his text, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus", and I thought to myself, "The time has come for me to 'accept' salvation." He proceeded to set forth the figure of an accused person in a court of justice and made much of one point which, while I have never verified it with a legal authority, nevertheless seemed slightly absurd and that was that an accused person who had been acquitted of a crime could not be set free until he had *accepted* the verdict of the court.

At the end of the program he appealed to his listeners to get down on their knees beside their radios and accept the salvation which was so freely offered in Jesus Christ. I never felt so cut off at any time as at that moment—I felt so keenly that there was nothing in me that could reach out for and grasp Eternal Life while it was evident that this was something that others could do at will. I reached the most hopeless state that mortal man could experience as I saw the gates of Hell open and waiting to receive my never-dying soul and physical body.

As soon as the program was over, without a word being spoken, my mother and father and I arose and proceeded to retire for the night. I can still remember as vividly as if it were yesterday Father carrying the small kerosene lamp and going upstairs ahead of me. As he turned at the landing, part way up the stairs and ascended to leave the lamp in the upper hall, I dropped upon my knees in the shadows on one of the lower steps in a state of complete frustration rather than with even a glimmer of hope. If I prayed at all it was nothing more than a sigh with the realization that I was completely powerless to do anything towards achieving my own salvation. Immediately the words were spoken to me, *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus,"* whether in an audible voice or not I cannot say, but with such power that there was no doubt where they came from for they conveyed the meaning that "you are and *always* have been in Christ Jesus."

In a moment I was swept from the depths of despair to the heights of joy and happiness. I felt as free as the birds that fly and continued in that ecstatic frame of mind for about a week, feeling that sin would never bother me again. But, oh, how mistaken I was! for the longer I live the more I find myself plagued by my own sinful nature and I am constantly crying after Him like a little child, daily and even hourly, begging for mercy and beseeching Him to keep me from the corruption and deceitfulness of my own heart. However, regardless of what doubts and disappointments I have, I can always go back to the time on the stairs when the wonderful Words of Life were spoken to me.

In November 1952 while riding in a pick-up truck with my father and a cousin, after I had been blessed in a material way by the intervention of God's hand, I had for the moment the feeling of the bodily presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, an experience which remains a highlight of my life, although I cannot find language to adequately express its full significance to me.

About the same time I had another memorable experience on the Sunday morning of the Lobo Quarterly Meeting. I had risen before daylight in order to get the chores done early and went to the field to get the milk cows. During the summer months cattle will keep moving toward the wind in order to try to keep away from the flies and one can

often make use of this habit, even if there is only a slight breeze, to find cattle in the dark, for they will invariably be at the side or corner of a field from which the air currents are moving. On the morning in question, however, there was a dense but shallow ground fog and, of course, a complete calm. After making the circuit of a ten-acre field and being unable to find the cattle in their accustomed haunts, I paused in the centre listening for a cough or some sound that would betray their presence. As I stood there in the chill of that late summer morning a million stars sparkled overhead. In the north the figure of the Great Dipper lay over Siberia, overhead was the constellation of Andromeda in the shape of a chair and in the eastern sky the figure of Orion, the mighty hunter mentioned in the Book of Job, which at that season of the year begins rising just before the dawn. I thought of Him who made them all, and, for just a moment, it came to me so sweetly that it was the same One mentioned in Genesis who spake a world into existence, it was the same One who hung upon the cross—and how I hope it was for me, and it was the same One who said at the end of Revelation, "Behold I come quickly."

For approximately six years prior to his death on October 13, 1964 at the age of 92½ years my father was under a doctor's care with a heart condition, although he was not confined to bed, and his delight was to read the Scriptures and *The Signs of the Times* and pass the time singing the Psalms and Paraphrases. When he was about 90 years old he expressed to our pastor, Elder Ruston, a desire to be baptized, a desire that was never to be realized. When his nephew (Elder D. Alex McColl) was baptized in 1963 he expressed great joy that he had been enabled to take the step.

My mother was an invalid, following a stroke and a fall which had resulted in a fractured hip, for almost five years previous to her death on January 13, 1970 in her 88th year. She had always been very active, and a very hard-working woman, and it was a great trial to her to have to spend her waking hours sitting in a chair. Because of unsteadiness resulting from the stroke it was not safe to let her attempt to walk alone, but in her anxiety she began to feel that I was keeping her from walking and would often tell me that she was not going to submit to being kept in her chair but would try walking when I was out of the house, so that she could regain her strength. It was not possible for me to remain with her all the time, for I had my farm work to do, and had to go outside for periods of two hours at a time. How often I was made to cry to God to protect her and how often I was made to prove the truth of the words:

"That Christ is God I can avouch,
And for His people cares,
Since I have prayed to Him as such,
As He has heard my prayers."

for every time I returned she was sitting safely in her chair. How often I could say with Augustus Toplady:

"Thy ministering spirits descend
To watch while thy saints are asleep.
By day and by night they attend
The heirs of salvation to keep.

Bright seraphs dispatched from the throne
Repair to the stations assigned,
And angels elect are sent down
To guard the elect of mankind.

Their worship no interval knows,
Their fervor is still on the wing,
And, while they protect our repose,
They chant to the praise of our King."

Sometimes I was able to echo the sentiment expressed in the next verse and hope that:

"I too, at the season ordained,
Their service forever shall join,
And praise and adore without end
Their faithful Creator and mine."

During this period of my life fraught with anxiety and care I spent what in retrospect now seem to be some of my happiest days, reading the Scriptures to my mother and feeling the Lord's presence, and as I look back I can say:

"My saddest hours I prize."

Mother was brought up as a Presbyterian and was a member of that church

before her marriage. One of her favorite verses which she often quoted was:

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
Art all my ornament and dress.
Fearless, with these pure garments on,
I'll view the splendours of thy throne."

One morning a couple of years before her death, when she saw me getting ready to go to church, she expressed with much feeling a desire to be baptized and her own unworthiness.

Although I feel that I had tasted that the Lord was gracious in 1940, it was many years before I saw my way clear to ask for a home with the Church, for I felt it would have to be made as plain to me as the assurance that I had been delivered from the condemnation of sin had been. Once, during Mother's illness, I came into the house to see whether she were alright and, opening my Bible at random I read in John 21 beginning at the 15th verse the record of the incident when Jesus admonished Simon Peter to feed his sheep. As I reflected upon the matter of feeding Christ's sheep I realized the fact that I was not even a Church member and I thought of two dear ones who were very close to me, my cousins Alex and Stewart McColl. I thought to myself, "I won't ask to join the Church until they art both members." Alex had been baptized in 1963 but Stewart was not yet a member, although so much more fit for membership than I. As I was reflecting upon this, I glanced at the page and read the last part of the 22nd verse, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me." Just at that moment Elder and Mrs. Ruston drove into our yard at a time when I least expected them and, when they were leaving, Elder Ruston, on one of the few occasions on which he had ever mentioned the subject of my joining the Church, said, "When are you going to throw in your lot with us?", not knowing the exercise that I had just been through.

In April, 1970 while visiting our home, Elder Ruston expressed the desire that I would be led to take up my cross and at the Dunwich Quarterly Meeting on Sunday, May 10, 1970 I was given the strength to ask a name with the Church and was graciously received. I was baptized on Sunday, May 24th at Ekfrid by Elder D. Alex. McColl and, while I derive no comfort from the fact that there had been no additions to the Church since his ordination in 1966, it meant a great deal to me to be the first person whom he baptized. Four months later we were given cause for rejoicing when J. Stewart McColl was baptized after uniting with the Church at the Lobo Quarterly Meeting.

Early in 1970, in a period of less than two months, there occurred the death of not only my Mother but also her sister who was just like a second mother to me, and a dear niece of theirs who had been a regular visitor in our home. As I was partaking of Communion for the first time at the Quarterly Meeting at Ekfrid the words were dropped into my soul with much sweetness, "When my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." Anyone who is outside the Church cannot even imagine the sweet fellowship and bonds of love that are manifested inside the Church. The salutation of "brother" has a magic ring for me for I have never before been part of a family, as my only brother died at birth. In speaking of the Church I feel that I can say with the hymn-writer:

"There my best friends, my kindred dwell,
There God my Saviour reigns."

and I have been brought into this state of nearness to the dear saints of God it has been made possible as stated by Paul in his epistle to the Ephesians: "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

And finally, when I look back upon the way the Lord has brought me, I feel that I can say with John Kent:

"A monument of grace,
A sinner saved by blood;
The streams of love I trace
Up to the fountain, God;
And in his wondrous mercy see,
Eternal thoughts of love to me."

Duncan W. McColl

(Deacon Duncan W. McColl passed away after a lingering illness on December 24, 1974. This experience was found among his papers and forwarded to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.)

THE HOLY BIBLE

The account of Creation in grandly simple language, the generations of men and the formation of families, the flood and the miraculous preservation of the human race, the history of the nations in the world's infancy, the divine call of Abraham, and God's covenant with him, and its renewal with Isaac and Jacob, the sojourn and oppression of Israel in Egypt, and her deliverance, the history of the wondrous theocracy, the captivity of the covenant people for their sins, the preservation of the kingly tribe of Judah, who ruled with God until Christ came, the record of the virgin birth, the Saviour's life, given in touching simplicity, the account of his death, told in awful dignity and majesty, his resurrection, and ascension into heaven, the day of Pentecost, and the subsequent ministry of the everlasting gospel, and its glorious success, Christ's care of the newly planted churches, exhibited in the epistles, the descriptive and prophetic book of Revelation, all these matters contsitute the Bible, and were given by inspiration.

The inspiration of the scripture sets it alone, above and different from every other book that has existed, does exist and shall exist. The Bible is what it is because it is the inspired word of God. It is therefore absolutely unique. We shall call it the "Holy Bible," it is supremely, exclusively so. It is holy in the sense of being written by inspiration, and infallible. It is not composed of words chosen by the human writers of it to express thoughts which the Holy Ghost suggested, they spake as they were *moved* (inspired) by the Holy Ghost. They constantly say the word of the Lord came to them, the Spirit of God spake to and by them. Inerrancy requires that God should choose his own words. The revelation of himself, of his will and purposes, must needs be made to man in his own pure words. The man of business will dictate his own words to his secretary in all business letters, he will not trust that his secretary will correctly express important, delicate and complicated matters, which might be given to him in general terms. Much less would the Holy Ghost say to his penmen, Write to the *effect*. No, the deep things of God must be expressed by himself. The words must be his own words. He must say his own thing in his own words. His things are eternal. They are the Being of God, his eternity, his perfection, his subsistence in three Persons, bearing the essential names of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, showing their distinct Personalities, their eternal equality. Only God could, in the first place, utter the sublime sentence, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," it is too profoundly incomprehensible and glorious for merely human expression. And again, John 1:14-18, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." "No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

A mere suggestion of such divine truths would have shattered the mind which was required to express it in correct and adequate terms, by its very weight, mystery and glory. Only an involuntary pen, under the absolute control of the divine Dictator, could write such awfully grand and blessed words. Thus the Bible makes revelations of the eternal, internal acts of Jehovah, and who but himself knew how to put those mysteries into human language? This divine book states most explicitly the fall of man. It tells us that man was made upright, and under the law to God, his Creator. Here we must find man's responsibility to God, a better word perhaps is accountability, accountability of

which we cannot divest ourselves. The Bible reveals the second Man, the last Adam, who is a quickening Spirit to his seed. It must not be omitted to state that a holy and wise providence has a prominent, honorable, important place in our inerrant Bible. It is, as it were, the handmaid of grace. The lives of some individual persons, the histories of some nations, are related. Its accuracy in these is matchless, its impartiality, inimitable. Viewed from every standpoint it may be confidently affirmed that no merely human mind or hand could have produced our infallible Bible. *It is the very and immediate word of the Holy Ghost.* The penmen were his instruments. The Holy, beautiful words of revelation, of description, of history, of promise, of threat, were traced on the original parchments as He dictated them. Both the Testaments, Old and New, thus bear the ineffaceable stamp of divine origin, that is, of verbal, plenary inspiration. Moreover, by his numerous quotations from the Old Testament the Lord Jesus Christ has welded it into the New Testament, and thus are manifestly one organic whole. They have but one voice. They stand or fall together. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. The sanction of the holy Trinity is on holy Scripture.

I judge we are now in a position to adopt and lay down the proposition with which Dr. Owen opens his work on the divine origin of the Scriptures, viz: "That the whole authority of the Scripture in itself, depends solely on its divine origin, is confessed by all who acknowledge its authority." I hold that that portion is absolutely correct. The word of God can receive no accession of authority from any human source. It is a perfect Word. It is the sole and everlasting rule of faith and practice. Against this divine rule both the Papist and the Modernist object. The former, that he may introduce and place above Holy Scripture his necessary tradition, the latter, that he may honor his own intellect and inner consciousness—whatever that may be. Alas, divine authority is abhorrent to fallen man. The Papist has numberless idols, the Modernist has but one. He must rid himself of the incubus of authority, other wise he must bow down to the Bible. Rejecting that, as to its full, complete inspiration, he thinks himself at liberty to edit it, correct it, criticise its facts, question its doctrine, shorten it, omitting what he objects to, and to tell us what God ought to be, what he cannot do, and what He is ever attempting to do, but is unable to accomplish. Be it given to us to bow before Jehovah and reverence his word, which he has exalted above all his name.

(The foregoing is an address delivered at Brighton, England, October 3rd, 1929, by Mr. J. K. Popham, Editor of the *Gospel Standard,* of London, England. Volumes have been written on the subject of the inspiration of the Scriptures, but for brevity, conciseness and forcefulness this address of Mr. Popham's in defense of the integrity and verbal inspiration of the Bible, surpasses anything that has come under our notice recently.—H. H. Lefferts)

(The above is copied from the January, 1930 *Signs of the Times.)*

EXPERIENCE AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY OF THE LATE ELDER DODD

Dear Brother Gold, and all the brethren and sisters who may read this. After heading this article I looked over it again and my attention is drawn to the deep meaning of the word "experience." How do I know I have an experience. I am made at times to doubt I have had an experience of grace and I do not claim the bright evidences shown by many of our brethren and sisters in their experiences. However since my poor carnal sinful mind has I hope been turned from the vain perishable things of this world to the things pertaining to the blessed Master's cause I have never been willing, to the present time, to exchange the blessed hope I feel at times to possess for the world and all its cares.

Now lets go back and take up a few

brief sketches of what I hope has been the dealings of the Lord with me. Up to about six years ago I loved gay company and sought the pleasures of this life as much as anyone. I thought I was as good as anyone and better than some I knew. But for some reason as far back as I can remember I have had at times serious thoughts about prayers, again at times I would consider them nothing but a form of words. Until about six years ago I had never made an attempt to offer prayer in any way. I had never had any faith in self works, therefore I did not decide at any time that if I prayed to God He would save me. But the first time I ever knew anything about real prayer, if I have ever known anything about it, was when all my past life and daily walk rose up before me like mountains of sin and seemed to have fallen upon me and was crushing all my natural life from me. Therefore I found myself by day looking for some secret place where I might try to beg the Lord for mercy on a poor lost sinner, and by night spending long hours in meditating over my lost condition and begging the good Lord to show me what was the matter with me. I knew there was a great change but didn't know what it was, and I was afraid my wife would find out I was in trouble.

While in this condition I was made to have a desire to hear preaching. I had always believed the Primitive Baptists preached the truth but didn't care so much about hearing it, as most of them had some ways I did not like. But I was made to hear them preach and would go and get in some place where they could not see me, because the preaching seemed different to me from what it had been, and they knew it, and were preaching directly to me. Sometimes at the close of the meeting some of the dear brethren and sisters would shake hands with me and it would almost sink me into the ground because of my unworthiness of their notice.

After some short time I was made to love the Primitive Baptists as I never had before and, though unworthy, I now wanted to live with them. I went to meetings several times thinking I would offer, but did not, until Saturday before the first Sunday in August, 1911, when I went before conference at Old Strawberry and told them a part of what I above related. I was received and the next morning was baptized. This was a happy time with me.

But soon came doubts and fears that I was deceived and had deceived people who appeared to me to be the precious chosen elect of the Most High God.

Now as I have sketched along in my imperfect way with what I hope to be an experience of grace, I leave the same to your better judgment and come with a few remarks to what I termed in the outset "a call to the ministry," feeling that what I may have to say in regard to the calling, if I have any, will be in connection with what I have said, as I feel that both experience and calling is from the same fountain head, speaking His mighty works into effect, showing that He will do all things according to the words of the prophets sent out to declare that He is God and will do all His pleasure. And if I am deceived in one I am deceived in both, and the surprise and great mystery is that such a poor, ignorant, slow of speech mortal as I, should be led along this way. What a mystery indeed!

I am unlike anyone else it seems to me in many ways. My first attempt to speak in public was at a funeral and I was made to feel and do yet that that was the appointed time for me to make my first attempt. They tried to get a minister to hold the services and while they were trying I felt like they would fail. Not that I felt fit to make the attempt myself for I was made to wish I was miles away.

My brother-in-law's child had died and the services were to be at my home. And after they failed to get a preacher I told a brother of how I had been burning within all that day — the load had gotten so heavy I felt I could go no further — and asked him what he

thought of my trying to preach a few words. He told me to go ahead. Even then I sought an excuse and asked him to gain permission from the child's father, secretly hoping he would reject and release me. But he consented readily. I made the attempt, though didn't say much, but felt some relief of mind.

After this when the opportunity offered the brethren began to call on me to speak, and sometimes I would refuse, but most of the time, since I made the first attempt, I have been made willing to offer such as I have.

I often think of what old brother Thos. Bell wrote, that he had been in the service a long time but had not yet learned to preach. I am young in the cause, if in it at all, but could say amen to this confession of that dear old soldier of the cross; setting forth the idea that it is not in man to direct his steps. Again the steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord, &c.

If it be the Lord's will I feel a desire to spend the balance of my days in the Master's service. I don't feel to know anything about preaching except it is a great mystery and that I am made to love it, however each attempt is made with great fear and trembling, knowing that without Him I can do nothing. I don't know whether or not He will bless me to speak again but if He does I desire at all times to bring to the blessed hearers glad tidings of great joy that will be of comfort, building up and for the making of peace and happiness among the dear people of God wherever I meet them.

I have never been able to say much about myself in the stand, and have told but very little of my experience while trying to preach: I have often felt glad that I was blessed with something better than this failure to talk about, but have for some cause been impressed to write as I have. However I feel it is very scattering and perhaps of no profit.

A few words about my brethren and I will close. I wish to say they have manifested more confidence in me than I have in myself. A short while after I began to talk in public they licensed me and in less than two years they ordained me to the full work of the ministry. I have never felt worthy of such honor, nevertheless if the Lord is in the matter I desire not to look back. If indeed I have taken hold of the plow may the whole household of faith pray the good Lord that I may be enabled to lean upon His blessed staff and press forward ever looking unto Jesus the Author and finisher of our faith. Many have been the times I have promised myself never to speak in public again and at such times felt sure I had power to hold to my promise, but thanks be to His Great Name and Cause He continues to lead me by ways I know not; when He does anything it is always right and when I do anything it is always wrong.

I feel there could be much more added that would make this article of more profit, if someone else would take the pen, as I have just hinted at the subjects.

I will close as I have written now more than I expected.

Yours in hope of a better world and in love of the gospel.

W. R. DODD.

Whitmell, Va.

(Copied from *Zion's Landmark* of April 15, 1915, by request.)

"BE NOT AFRAID, IT IS I"

Rt. 9, Box 116,
Reidsville, N. C. 27320

Dear Elder Spangler:

As I sit here at home my mind has been on the wonderful 5th Sunday meeting at Bush Arbor Church; of the beautiful singing of praise to our God, and to the ministers proclaiming the wondrous words of Him. I feel I can witness with Elder McColl when he spoke of being on the street in Canada, and hearing the wonderful words, "Be not afraid, it is *I*."

It brought back a time a few years

back when my son-in-law and daughter were living in New Hampshire while he was in the Air Force. Ernest and I had gone to visit them, and had our first flight up there. When we were to return our flight was at night. It was a rainy, foggy night and the plane had to go about straight up over Boston — and I can say I was afraid.

As Ernest and I entered the plane and found our seats, I heard this still small voice saying, "Be not afraid, it is I." It was the most wonderful feeling. I felt the Lord rode beside us on our journey back to Greensboro. I wasn't afraid anymore. The heaven was so beautiful when we were high up over the traffic and all the earth below; I felt like I could just reach out and touch it. There is nothing else to compare with this feeling of being so near and feeling the presence of God.

Enclosed is a check for two years' subscription to the *Signs*. Please send it to this address as it is a little Christmas present. He is not able to attend church now.

Give our love to Sister Spangler. Hope you both have a very nice and happy Christmas and New Year.

A little sister if one at all,
Mrs. Ernest Stone

DESIRES TO HEAR PREACHING

2052 Greenway Blvd.,
Wichita, Kansas 67213

Dear Brother Wood:

Please find enclosed a check for $7.00 for two years of the *Signs*.

There are times that I doubt my understanding of God's word. But I will tell you some things that I do believe: I believe that God's Elect were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. So I believe in the election of grace and predestination, and that we are saved by Grace. I believe the Lord's people are born again of the Spirit. I believe in the resurrection of the dead, both the just and unjust, and that the punishment of the wicked will be everlasting. These things I was not taught by man.

I have no one to talk with on the scriptures — they all run when I say something about our dear Lord.

If I am wrong please write me sometime at your leisure. How I would like to hear the voice of a hard-shell preacher again.

From a sinner,
Fred C. Winfrey

The following letter is contained in the minutes of the seventy-sixth annual session of the Powell Valley Primitive Baptist Association (1894).

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Powell Valley Primitive Baptist Association, convened with the church at Holston, Granger County, Tennessee. August 31st and September 1st and 2nd 1894.

Very Dear Brethren: In compliance with your order of last year that I should write you something in form of a Circular Letter, I shall now endeavor to make the attempt. I shall call your attention to a certain scripture which reads thus: "And she shall bring forth a Son and thou shall call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." (Matt. 1:21.) This seems to be sufficient for us. "He shall save his people from their sins." Not try and fail as some would have you believe, but "He *shall save* his people from their sins." Not be instrumental in their salvation; not to be a co-worker in their salvation; no, that is not what he shall do; but "He shall save his people from their sins." It is not said of him that he came to open up the way by which we can save ourselves, but it is said that he came to seek and to save that which was lost.

He said, "I came down from heaven not to do mine own will but the will of him that sent me: and this is the Father's will which sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose

nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

This is what he came to do: Not to make proposals nor to offer eternal life to those dead in trespasses and sins, but to save his people from their sins.

I wish to notice who his people are and how he came by them and what relationship exists between him and them. First, as to who they are: I understand them to be of the family of Adam, who "were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." I also understand them to be elect, chosen from among the sons and daughters of Adam's family, who had fallen to the very depth of depravity, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others, and unable to extricate themselves either in part or in whole from that deplorable condition which they were in by reason of sin.

Second, I understand them to be the children of God (by virtue of choice made in Christ Jesus before the world began) and called the "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father," and said to be the "sanctified of God the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." Also, said to be chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world and predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ. It is also said by inspiration, "The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."

But, says the objector, are not all the human family His? I answer, Yes by creation they are His, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. For by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they are thrones or dominions or principalities or powers, all things were created by him, and he is before all things and by him all things consist." But, there is a sense in which the human family as a whole are not his, and that is by election. "Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." If any man have not this gift in Christ he is none of his. Consequently if we have this gift in Christ, by virtue of choice we are his, and it shall be made manifest to us at his own good time and place that we are his children, his elect. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." One more scripture to show that all men are not his in every particular; that is by election. Jesus said unto certain Jews, "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you, my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

Hence it appears that his people were given to him by his Father, beyond all doubt. But still the objector might say, were not all given to the Son? I would answer, No; we do not think they were; for we hear it said again; "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death."

A portion is not the whole, but a part of the whole. We hear him say again, "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." Which would imply only a portion of all flesh.

We hear it again, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." This would imply a part given, as all will not be saved. Hence it appears clear to our mind that his people are a chosen people, chosen by God the father in Christ before the world began, predestinated from eternity to adoption, called in time according to God's own good time and will, without any probability or even a possibility of a failure, and saved unto an everlasting salvation, world without end.

Now, as to what relationship exists between Christ and his people, we understand them to be joint-heirs with Christ, having the same God to their father, being children of the same parents, or in other words, "Both he (Christ) that sanctifieth and they (his

people) who are sanctified are of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." And again, "Behold, I and the children which God hath given me, forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." Not something like it, but part of the same flesh that they are partakers of. It is also said that we are, "Bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh." Not bones like his and flesh like his flesh, but of his bones and of his flesh. Our Saviour said again to his disciples, "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father and ye in me and I in you." This brings us not only to a close relationship but to a oneness of Christ and his people. It is said that the church is his body, the church is his bride, the church is his temple; She is his love, his dove, his fair one; She is his light, while he is her bridegroom. He is her life, her hope, her righteousness, her sanctification, her redemption and salvation. In fact he is her all in all. A church without Christ would be like a body without life, a city without inhabitants; and Christ without the church would be a head without a body, a captain without soldiers, a king without subjects. In fact the oneness of Christ and his church is so plainly taught in scripture that we are made to believe that when he suffered for her sins, she was represented in him. And He suffered the demands of the law to the full extent. The law now being satisfied, she in the person of Christ arose from the dead, to die no more in that sense. "For by one offering he (Christ) hath perfected forever all them that are sanctified." Yes, by that one offering he hath perfected forever all those chosen vessels of mercy, those elected, those sanctified by God the father. "For it became him, from whom are all things, and by whom all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering." Yes, this is the way he saves his people from their sins; for it is said, "But now once, in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; (Heb. 9:26), who his ownself bore our sins in his own body on the tree; that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes we are healed."

Yes, he was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before her shearer, so opened not his mouth. "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted, but he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." Yes, this is the way we understand "he shall save his people from their sins," their sins being imputed to him; and he bearing them in his own body on the tree, and putting them away by the sacrifice of himself, and his righteousness being imputed to them as their righteousness. So then it is "by grace ye are saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, least any man should boast".

So, in conclusion, I would say, brethren, live in peace among yourselves, believing that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." And, I would say, they cannot work otherwise. May the grace of our once crucified but now risen and exalted Redeemer rest and remain with you, and all the Israel of God here and elsewhere, to that world without end, is our prayer for Jesus' sake.

(Elder) James McDonald, Moderator
(submitted for publication)

Bracey, Va. 23919

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a notice of our meetings. Would you please include it in the *Signs of the Times* at your earliest convenience. Sincere thanks.

In fellowship,
C. B. Davis, Jr., Pastor
Florence Martin, Clerk

LEBANON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH
BRACEY, VA.

With Elder D. B. Stokes acting as Moderator, The Lebanon Primitive Baptist Church at Bracey, Virginia, was re-established on Sunday, October 19, 1975. All was done in order, love and fellowship. May all our energies attain to His glory.

Elder C. B. Davis, Jr. has consented to preach for us, and services will be held each second Sunday at 11:00 A. M. and Saturday night before at 8:00 P. M. The church is located off Interstate 85, Bracey exit 637 east, turn left on 619, one mile to the meeting house.

C. B. Davis, Jr., Pastor
Florence Martin, Clerk

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EDITORIAL

JOSEPH AS A TYPE OF CHRIST IN GENESIS 37

The book of Genesis abounds with accounts of many of the patriarchs; all principle men and well-favoured in the sight of God. Adam, Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph to mention a few, all walk its pages, each endearing himself to the hearts of those who fear God with ever increasing closeness. The character of each figure is revealed by the writer of Genesis through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost which uncovers the very thoughts

and intents of his heart and leaves no doubt as to what behaviour is acceptable and unacceptable before God. The life of no personage, however, is painted in greater detail than that of Joseph. More pages are devoted to his travels and experiences than to any of the others mentioned, and, all for a purpose, since Joseph portrays the earthly walk of Christ in so many ways. Chapters 37-48 of Genesis are dedicated, almost exclusively, to the story of Joseph. Our remarks in this editorial, however, are confined, for the sake of brevity, to the events in Chapter 37, and we hope they may be of comfort to the brethren.

Early in Genesis 37, we find Joseph as a *lad* of seventeen years feeding the flock with his brethren. The brothers of Joseph had to bring Benjamin; who, also, was but a *lad,* with them when they went into Egypt the second time, before Joseph would reveal his face unto them. David, too, was only a *lad* or a youth, ruddy and of fair countenance, when he went to do battle with Goliath, the uncircumcised Philistine. In the New Testament, when the five thousand were fed, there was a *lad* there who had the five barley loaves and the two small fishes. All these examples prefigure the account of Jesus when he was just a *lad* of twelve years old astonishing all those who heard him in the temple as he sat conversing with the doctors both hearing them, and asking them questions. As the clear antitype of the other *lads,* Jesus came to feed the flock like Joseph; came to be the hope of glory within us like Benjamin; came to slay Goliath representing the last enemy death like David; and came to fulfill the law to a jot and tittle being the embodiment of grace and truth like the "five loaves and the two fishes" of the parable. How succinctly, the *lad* Jesus summed up His mission in the earth by asking, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

It is also recorded in Genesis 37:2, that Joseph, while being with his brethren, "brought unto his father their evil report." Over two thousand years later, this statement was given greater significance when Christ came unto His own (Nation) and His own received Him not. Clearly, He scourged the scribes and Pharisees at the time of His coming as an untoward and perverse generation because they failed to repent of their sins. Indeed Christ exposed their apostasy when He told them, "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here." (Matt. 12:41) Nevertheless, Jesus recognized publically the great wisdom of His Father in this matter, in declaring, as recorded in the previous chapter in Matthew, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." (Matt. 11:25)

The sons of Jacob were twelve in number some being born to Leah, some to Rachel and some to each of their respective handmaids. Joseph and Benjamin were full brothers; however, being born to Rachel, Jacob's first love. Joseph was the older of the two and was spoken of as being the son of his (Israel's or Jacob's) old age. In addition, Jacob loved Joseph more than all his children. This close relationship which Joseph enjoyed with Jacob foreshadows the unity of Christ and His Father. Christ, as the Son of Man, was born of God, who was in existence from before the foundation of the world, even from everlasting. Moreover, the love of God for His Son was so profound that He appointed Him heir of all things, gave Him a name which is above every other name, anointed Him with the oil of gladness above His fellows, and made Him so much better than the angels, for unto which of the angels said He at any time, "Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee?" (Heb. 1:5) Furthermore, God the Father said to His Son, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy king-

dom." (Heb. 1:8)

The same love which God the Father showed for His Son is manifested in turn from His Son to His people as the words of Christ reveal in John 15:9, when He said, "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love." This love of Christ for His people is partially revealed, at least, by the relationship which Joseph and Benjamin shared being full brothers. Joseph charged the rest of his brothers when they came to Egypt for corn that the second time they were to come, they must bring Benjamin with them else they would not see Joseph face to face. As we pointed out earlier, Benjamin is a type of Christ in you the hope of glory and before we dare hope to see Christ someday face to face, we must be given precious evidence that He is ours. Benjamin, being younger than Joseph, could call Joseph his elder brother, just as we can call Jesus our Elder Brother if so be that we are One in Him.

Jacob made Joseph a coat of many colours or as is shown in the marginal reference a coat of many "pieces." Coats of divers colours were worn by those who were victorious in battle. Such were of great worth and highly esteemed. Kings' daughters, also, that were virgins, were apparelled with garments of many colours. David, in describing the Church, in Psalm 45:13, 14 said, "The king's daughter is all glorious *within*: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework." Now we can begin to see the spiritual significance of Joseph's coat for it represents the righteousness or the glory of Christ our Great Victor in battle. It had to be a coat of *many* colours for, of God, Christ Jesus is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. In Christ's death, our sins were imputed unto Him, and His righteousness was imputed unto us. In fact, Christ is the righteousness of God *in us* if we are His, and therein is the king's daughter made glorious *within* for grace is the work of the spirit.

Joseph was hated of his brethren just as Christ was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and well acquainted with grief. Joseph was hated yet the more by his brothers; however, because he dreamed dreams, yet each dream was significant in revealing, not only how he was to be a blessing to his generation, but also how Christ was to be a blessing to *His Generation.*

In Joseph's first dream, the family of Jacob was binding sheaves in the field and, lo, Joseph's sheaf arose and stood upright; and the sheaf of each of his brothers stood round about and made obeisance to his sheaf. Many years later, this dream was fulfilled literally, when his brothers went into Egypt to seek corn from him. Even the questions his brothers asked at the time were answered for, certainly, Joseph did "reign" and "have dominion" over them.

This dream is of the earth, earthy, for it deals with sheaves being bound in the field. And in dealing with earthly things, it reveals Christ as the Son of Man having dominion over all sheep, and oxen, the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. Indeed, all things were put under His feet and He was and still is blessed to reign over all the works of God's hands. Spiritually, this dream reveals Christ in the flesh, as One among many brethren, One unto whom we ascribe honour and glory, majesty, dominion and power for His name is above every name. Still further, Joseph's sheaf is a type of Christ risen from the dead to become the firstfruits of them that slept. In this light, the dream brings great comfort to His people "for if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches." (Romans 11:16) This is what causes the people of God, also, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, to groan within themselves waiting for the adoption to wit, the redemption of their body. As the brethren of Joseph

were blessed by his sojourn in Egypt to preserve life, so much the more is the Generation of Jesus Christ blessed by His gift of eternal life. May God be praised!

But Joseph dreamed yet another dream which was of heavenly things. In this dream, the sun, moon and eleven stars made obeisance to him. When he told it to his father and brethren, his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down to thee to the earth? And his brethren envied him: but his father observed the saying." (Gen. 37:10, 11)

In relating to heavenly things, this dream reveals that Christ does according to His will in the army of heaven, as well as among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand or say unto Him, What doest thou? In His incarnation, Christ came to redeem His Church resplendent in the glory of the Father as a bride adorned for her husband and crowned with eleven stars (the remaining apostles) for Judas, one of the twelve had betrayed Him. Later, in Rev. 12:1, John witnessed a more complete fulfillment of this dream, when he saw "a woman clothed with the *sun*, and the *moon* under her feet, and upon her head a crown of *twelve* stars." This woman or Gospel Church was great with child (representing the birth of Christ) and was hounded by the dragon (representing Herod or the power of Rome) which was ready to devour Christ at His birth. The child was caught up unto God; however, the woman fled into the wilderness of this world prepared for her even unto this day. where she had, and still has, a place. This woman wore a crown of *twelve* stars because God had ordained a replacement for Judas in the person of Paul who was a vessel of mercy unto the Gentiles. The stars clearly represent the apostles for we read in Daniel 12:3, "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." The woman was clothed with the sun representing the Son of Righteousness, who was the brightness of God's glory, and stood with the moon or the law under her feet because she depicted the Church in the Gospel dispensation. It is little wonder, then, that Jacob "observed the saying" of Joseph, just as Mary, centuries later, kept all the "sayings" concerning Jesus in her heart.

In verses 13 and 14, we find that Israel or Jacob *sent* Joseph to see whether all was well with the flocks, to see whether all was well with his brethren, and to return and bring him word again. What a beautiful type of our Lord's incarnation! Christ, too, was *sent* from God to redeem His people and after having died on the cross rose again to sit on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Israel sent Joseph from the vale of Hebron to find his brethren. The word Hebron is very significant for several reasons. First, the word means "unity" and spiritually refers to the "oneness" of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Second, Hebron was the place where Sarah was buried by Abraham in the field of Machpelah and Sarah is the freewoman representing the covenant of promise or Jerusalem above which is free and the mother of us all. Third, Abram also built an altar unto God in Hebron. Fourth, Isaac died there. Isaac, is a type of Christ as "the acceptable sacrifice" and coupled with the fact that he died at Hebron where Abram had formerly built an altar unto God, reveals Christ as the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world. Hebron, then spiritually typifies the Throne of God, the place from which Christ came to find His flock and to which He again was received up into glory.

Joseph set out from Hebron and finally came to the place where he would find his brethren, even at Shechem which means "shoulder." This meaning is significant for the shoulder is a place for carrying a burden and spiritually typifies the condition of the Lord's peo-

ple carrying the burden of sin under the law. At Shechem a "certain man" found Joseph wandering in the field. This "certain man" typifies Moses or, more particularly, during the first advent of Christ, John the Baptist, who was the *last* prophet under the law. John the Baptist found Christ who had come to search for the lost sheep of the House of Israel for the Lord searches the hearts of His people and understandeth all the imaginations of their thoughts. When John saw Jesus coming unto him, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1:29)

When the "certain man" found Joseph, he asked him, "What seekest thou?" And Joseph said, "I seek my brethren: tell me, I pray thee, where they feed their flocks." And the man said, "They are departed hence; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan." Dothan was a place but a few miles from Shechem and means a place of "two wells." The old dispensation was a place of "two wells" even the law and the prophets from which the people of God drew strength (and still do) for the things written therein foretell of better things to come. When Christ came in the flesh, as the sacrificial lamb, he was offered without spot or blemish to satisfy the *law* and to fulfill the prophecies concerning Him foretold by the *prophets*. All this was foreshadowed when Abraham took Isaac to Mount Moriah to offer him there for a burnt offering. It is so significant that Isaac asked at that time, "Behold the fire (Law) and the wood (Prophets): but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" (Gen. 22:7) Many centuries later of course, John the Baptist, heralded Christ as the Lamb of God. The chief priests and the scribes of the people were not as disposed toward Jesus, of course, and sought to take him by subtilty and kill him. How significant it is, then, that Joseph was to find his brethren even at Dothan, "And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him." (Gen. 37:18), just as the elders of the Jewish people conspired against Jesus hundreds of years later.

As soon as Joseph's brothers saw him they said to one another, "Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams." (Gen. 37:20) Reuben intervened on behalf of Joseph, at this point, and persuaded the rest not to slay him but merely to cast him into a pit thinking he might afterwards deliver him safely unto his father. Later when Joseph did come among them, they stript him out of his coat of many colours and cast him into a pit, even, an empty pit, wherein there was no water. Then they sat down to eat. Soon a company of Ishmaelites came by on their way from Gilead to Egypt with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh. Content with Reuben's counsel for ridding themselves of Joseph, the brothers drew him out of the pit and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver.

A striking similarity exists between the conspiracy against Joseph and the conspiracy against Christ centuries later. The chief priests, the scribes and the elders of the people consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty and kill him just as Joseph's brethren conspired against him to slay him. Pilate, the Roman Governor, before whom Christ was arraigned, would have released Jesus rather than Barabbas for it was the time of the passover, just as Reuben counselled his brethren not to slay Joseph but to cast him into a pit instead. Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver, just as Judah counselled his brothers to sell Joseph to the Ishmaelites which they did later for twenty pieces of silver for Joseph was not yet a full grown slave. The soldiers of the governor parted the garments of Jesus and cast lots upon his vesture, just as Joseph's brothers stript him of his coat of many colours. Following the

crucifixion of Jesus his body was placed in a sepulchre wherein never man before was laid, just as Joseph was cast into a pit which was empty and contained no water therein. Later when Joseph's brethren went to Egypt to obtain corn from him, he forgave them, saying unto them, "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life." (Gen. 45:5) Jesus, as an antitype of Joseph, asked forgiveness of those who maligned Him as well when He said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34) The captain of our salvation was made perfect through suffering for, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (John 12:24) The sufferings and death of Christ certainly brought forth much fruit unto righteousness. Joseph, as a type of Christ, must suffer too, before he would be guided to store up the abundance of Egypt for the preservation of his brethren.

Although it is true that the scribes and the Pharisees of the Jews were the ones who accused Christ, falsely, and the Roman soldiers carried out His crucifixion under orders from the Roman Governor, we must emphasize at this juncture that Christ died to be a propitiation for the sins of His people. Therefore in a truer sense, it was our sins if we are His which caused the nail prints in His hands and feet. Christ was the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. This does not, however, in any way eradicate the guilt of those "wicked hands" which carried out the awful deed, but it should deter the Lord's people from casting "the first stone" of self-righteous accusation against them.

"And they (the brothers) took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood." (Gen. 37:31) At first glance, the shedding of the goat's blood might be construed to represent the outpouring of Christ's blood for the remission of the sins of His people. However, a closer look at the act reveals it to be one of deception designed first, to represent falsely, the alleged death of Joseph, and second, to conceal the brothers' own guilt before their father. This act, then typifies "false doctrine" which, of course, is contemplated to represent Christ as dying for the *whole world* and *covering* the sins of everyone. Nothing could be further from the truth. Goats represent the wicked in Matthew 25:32, which is further evidence of the imposture of the act of Joseph's brothers for *by His own blood,* Christ entered into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for *those whom the Father had given Him* before the foundation of the world.

"And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days." (Gen. 37:34) Although the account of Joseph's death, by the brothers, was a cunning fabrication of the truth; nevertheless, to Jacob, the father, the loss was very real and heartbreaking. Jacob wept for his son and declared that he would go down into the grave mourning for him. Something of the divine love of God the Father for His Son Jesus Christ is revealed again here. How much it must have grieved God to leave His Son in His humiliation with His judgment taken away, even for a small moment, yet He spared Him not that His people might have life and have it more abundantly. How shall we ever be able to thank Him enough?

The preceding represents some of the ways the writer has been led to see Joseph as a type of Christ in this chapter. We can only hope that you, dear people of God, may receive them in the light in which they are given; that is to the praise, honour and glory of a Just and Sovereign God. It is our hope that others may be stirred up to write about this lovely character, Joseph, for his life serves to magnify Christ in so many

ways that truly, we could say he is "a fruitful bough."

Humbly,
Stewart McColl

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

EZEKIEL XXXVII. 3.

"Can these bones live?"

How wonderful and good it is and has been that the Lord has preached his gospel in all ages of the world to his chosen people. When we consider the gospel as the message of salvation to lost and ruined man we can see the mercy of God in preaching the gospel. When we consider it as the power of God we can understand why, in the wisdom of God, that such power should visit mankind. Before the transgression of the law there was no necessity of glad tidings, nor was there need of demonstration of God's power to save; but immediately after Adam's sin good news was vouchsafed to him in the promise of victory over the power and work of Satan through the Seed of the woman.

Not many years after the great and precious promise the Lord worked in Abel to preach remission of sins through the shedding of the blood of the lamb, and he was given the witness that through the shedding of the blood of the Lamb of God he was righteous. Not many years after that display of his grace he manifested his power over death in the translation of Enoch; and "Enoch was not, for God took him." After that the Lord preached his doctrine of electing love in the salvation of Noah and his family in the ark. After this he made known the doctrine of effectual calling by calling Abraham and separating him from his own house. After this he preached his doctrine of predestination in declaring that in Abraham's Seed all nations should be blessed. This he confirmed by an oath. After this he presented the experience of his people in famine and starvation in their own land (nature), and then sent them into the land of plenty, where Joseph their brother had preceded them and made provision for them.

After this the doctrine of mediation was preached in making Moses a mediator between the Lord and his brethren. Then the frailty and forgetfulness of his people was shown in their worship of the golden calf. At that time God's broken law was made manifest when Moses threw down the tables of stone and broke them, on which was written the law of commandments. After which was presented the keeping of the law by Christ in placing the tables of the law in the ark of the covenant. Then the doctrine of the priesthood of Christ was presented in appointing Aaron high priest to enter into the holy of holies to offer blood for the sins of the people. The end of the law was shown in the death of Moses, he never entering the land of Canaan, or gospel rest.

The leadership of Jesus then was shown in the appointment of Joshua as leader of the people across the Jordan (judgment) into the inheritance of the people of God. After this the wisdom of Jesus and his power to build his church of lively stones was presented in the anointing of Solomon to be king, and in giving him wisdom above all other men and commandment to build the house unto the Lord. After this the gospel ministry was foreshadowed in sending the prophets to the Israelites with the commandment to speak comfortably unto Jerusalem.

Then in this subject before us is shown the dead, lost and ruined state of all men in the figure of the dry bones and the fulfillment of God's promise to raise the dead. Ezekiel tells us that the hand of the Lord was upon him, and he was carried out in the Spirit of the Lord and set down in the midst of the valley, which was full of bones, and that he was caused to pass by them round about, and he discovered that there were very many of them in the open valley and they were very dry. Ezekiel, like all other proph-

ets and those who preached the gospel in word, life or figure, was under the influence of the Spirit of the Lord. We understand that the Lord worked in Ezekiel, giving him the wonderful vision of dry bones and the interpretation of it by causing the bones to live. The hand of the Lord means the power of God, therefore the power of the Lord was upon him, and he was carried out of himself and surroundings and given the revelation, as it were.

We have not thought for a long time that the terms, carried out, and he carried me away in the Spirit, mean that those given to behold such wonders of the Lord had to change location or take a journey in order to see the things of God. This is clearly shown by the experience of John on the isle of Patmos. All that was shown to him was shown while he was there. When one is given to behold the kingdom of God and its glory and unspeakable beauty, he or she is not transported from one place to another. The revelation may be given at the business desk, surrounded by cares and duties; it may be given when between the plow handles; it may be given when about household duties or in the silent hours of the night; but whenever or wherever, that one is under the hand or power of the Lord, and by his Spirit is shown the wonderful things of God. Ezekiel therefore was shown the valley full of bones, and they were very dry, indicating that all life in them was gone. It will be noticed, too, that the bones were all in an open valley—all on the surface of the earth, visible to the eye of the prophet. Hence this vision of dead bones could not represent the resurrection of the dead, except in the quickening of dead sinners by the Spirit of God. Had the bones been buried they would have been out of sight, but they were all in plain view.

The prophet was no doubt amazed at such a sight, and wondered what it could mean, and in the midst of his amazement the Lord asked him if the bones could live. Startled at the question and seeing that by all the powers of earth it was impossible, he answered, "O Lord God, thou knowest." It would be as reasonable for a court of justice to ask, Can a guilty man be clean in the eyes of the law? All intelligent people know that such is an utter impossibility; therefore if a guilty man cannot possibly be clean, but rather condemned by the law, how could dead, dry bones live? Ezekiel did not know, but confessed that the Lord knew. The prophet and the apostle Peter were companions in faith, for Peter said to the resurrected Lord Jesus, "Thou knowest all things." Yes, he knoweth all things, and volumes could be written upon the foreknowledge of God, for indeed it is all foreknowledge—nothing new with him. Everything, beginning with creation, has existed and transpired according to his foreknowledge and plan embraced in his foreknowledge.

The Lord commanded Ezekiel to "prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord." This shows the class that hears the word of the Lord. The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. The word of the Lord to the dry bones was, "Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord." The knowledge of God and salvation in his Son comes to man only as he is made alive from the dead. "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." In that state of death and condemnation all men, as dead, dry bones, are without hope and without God in the world. How infinitely wonderful is the doctrine of God preached in this vision of dry bones! Nothing even in the New Testament seems clearer, even though "plainness of speech" is employed there by the

Holy Spirit. We want to emphasize the fact that Ezekiel was moved by the Spirit of God to speak to the dry bones, and not one word did he utter except that which the Lord commanded him, therefore the word had effect upon and prospered in the thing whereunto the Lord sent it.

As the message was delivered there was a noise, and, behold, a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. This scene has sometimes, to us, associated itself with the day of Pentecost, when all nations heard the word of God and there was a coming together, bone to his bone. We are not prepared to say whether or not there was any connection between the two, further than the quickening of dry bones and dead sinners. Perhaps no man has ever been able to enter into the wonder and amazement of Ezekiel when he heard the noise and beheld the bones coming together, "bone to his bone." There was absolutely no mismatching of the bones, such as bones forming or coming to the wrong body, it was bone to his bone; in other words, all the bones of each and every body came together to form the body, or frame, that originally was, and so complete was the work that every bone came to and fitted into its own place. This same thing in another sense was done by the power of God when all living things entered the ark. They did not need to be directed here and there, but each entered into its place prepared beforehand. The dry bones were operated upon by the word and Spirit of God until they lived and stood upon their feet an exceedingly great army, and then the Lord said, "This is the whole house of Israel."

This wonderful thing, no doubt, has its reference to the condition of national Israel in its state of deadness because of rebellion and transgression and God's ultimate mercy upon them, but as said in the introduction of this article, God's everlasting doctrine of power, grace, quickening, saving, and everything pertaining to making alive the dead and saving them with an everlasting salvation, is here presented. "The whole house of Israel" not only means all the seed of Abraham, but the whole spiritual house, showing the condition by nature of every son and daughter of Adam chosen in Christ before the world began, and that it requires the power of God to deliver them from the lost and ruined state. Unity is also shown, or preached, in the coming of bone to his bone. The members of Christ's body are called bones several times in the Scriptures, and not one of his bones shall be broken, lost nor marred. Hence, as the children are the bones of his bone, they all come to and center in the one body, the church, which body is the whole house of Israel, raised from the dead in him and by him and stand upon their feet triumphant over sin, death, hell and the grave. All such know the Lord and praise him for his wonderful works to the children of men.

Thus we say again, the gospel of God has been preached by him in all ages of the world in sign, figure, vision, promise and so on, and as is said in the book of Revelation, He has his own everlasting gospel to preach, and such preaching will not cease until time shall be no more, then all the redeemed shall join in the song of Moses, the servant of God and the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

(Editorial by Elder H. C. Ker, July 15, 1918)

OBITUARIES

ELDER REASON WAYMON RHODES

Elder R. W. Rhodes departed this life on Dec. 7, 1975 at the age of 83 years. He was born in Spearsville, La. on July 21, 1892. He was married to Etta Burnside in Dec. 1910. All his children were from this marriage. Their home was a good place to visit, and many Primitive Baptists from various states loved to visit in this fine home where they found a warm welcome. Mrs. Rhodes passed away in Aug. 1965. Elder Rhodes later married the former Mrs. Leona Bagwell of Fayette, Ala.; who passed away in Feb. 1970. The brethren also found a warm welcome in this

home. She asked for a home with the church and Brother Rhodes was blessed to baptize her.

Later he married Mrs. Emma Long Rhodes who survives him: Other survivors are: six daughters, Mrs. Mabel Welch, Houston, Texas; Mrs. Blanche Rockett, Mrs. Sue Bennett, Mrs. Bobbie Bennett, and Mrs. Lynette Barron, all of Spearsville, La. and Agnes Holloway of Laran, La. His three sons are: Joe W. Rhodes, Pineville, La.; Edward L. Rhodes, Little Rock, Ark.; and Vergil H. Rhodes, Spearsville, La. He has five sisters, two brothers, twenty-seven grandchildren, and a host of great grandchildren, neices and nephews who survive him.

The Lord impressed Brother Rhodes to ask for a home in the church when the South Ouachita Association convened at New Hope Church near Spearsville, La. in Sept., 1914. The Brethren detected that Brother Rhodes had a burden and liberated him to preach on Oct. 14, 1914. He preached his first sermon at Liberty Hill Church near Farmerville, La. on the 4th Sunday in Oct. 1914. His text was the 1st chapter of Psalms. The Brethren ordained Brother Rhodes to the work of the ministry in July, 1916.

Elder Rhodes was faithful in serving the churches under his care and was blessed to visit churches in many states and Canada. The Lord blessed him to serve as moderator of the South Ouachita Association for 22 years. (1943 thru 1965) Elder Rhodes was known as a peace maker among the churches and he was also one of the best to visit the sick and afflicted. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (James 1:27)

Elder Rhodes was blessed to write many articles which were published in the *SIGNS* and other periodicals not in print today. He wrote two books, *GOSPEL COMMENTS* and *SECOND COMING OF CHRIST*, as well as these debates: *RHODES-WEST DEBATE* (with a Limited Primitive Baptist minister) and *JONES-RHODES DEBATE* (with a Church of Christ minister). He also defended the Gospel with other unpublished debates. "I am set for the defence of the Gospel." (Phil. 1:17)

The writer has many precious memories concerning Brother Rhodes. He was blessed to write me many comforting letters years ago, and he has told me about writing several Brethren in various States. The Lord blessed him to preach over the radio for many years, which was a comfort to the Brethren. Brother Rhodes has told me some of the trials and tribulations that he has experienced upon this earth, which marks him as a good soldier of the cross. "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." (2 Tim. 2:3) He was blessed to be firm in the doctrine and order, and also blessed to rightly divide the word of truth. The Brethren appreciate the fact that he was blessed to manifest an humble spirit.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder John Lee Smith, assisted by Elder David Turner and Elder George Jones. His body was laid to rest in the cemetery by New Hope Church to await the glorious resurrection.

Written by request.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.

Harmony Church
Belk, Alabama 35545
December 15, 1975

Mrs. Ralph Bennet
Spearsville, Louisiana 71277

With deepest sympathy Harmony Church extends her heartfelt thanks to our Heavenly Father for the gift of Elder R. W. Rhodes.

WHEREAS, It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst by death our beloved brother, Elder R. W. Rhodes, we, the Harmony Church of the Hopewell Association, bow in humble submission to God's will.

We will miss him visiting our Associations but feel that our loss is his eternal gain. Elder Rhodes was a man of great tenderness in his ministry and we at Harmony Church were blessed in having Elder Rhodes as an Elder and a member.

Done by request of Church in conference December 14, 1975.

Elder W. D. Griffin
Elder C. C. Hand
Co-Moderators
U. R. Taylor, Clerk
Robert Crowley, Assistant Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

We, the members of Reedy Prong Church, desire to write a few lines in memory of our beloved Sister, Addie Bryon Lee. She was born March 11, 1896 and died May 10, 1975, making her stay on earth 79 years, 1 month and 30 days. She was the daughter of Sallie Jackson and Winston Byron of Newton Grove, N. C. On January 3, 1915 she was married to Leffell Lee. They had three sons, J. Russell, Irvin D. and John Jacob. Their son John Jacob gave his life for his country July 20, 1920. Her husband Leffell was laid to rest in the church cemetery August 5, 1966.

Sister Addie and Leffell Lee united with the church at Reedy Prong June 20, 1920. Sister

Addie was a true and humble servant of God. Not only was she blessed with a wonderful hope, but she was also blessed to comfort those around her: she was a friend indeed at all times. Her life was adorned with much grace, being faithful, humble and unassuming. She was well established in the doctrine of grace.

She is survived by two sons, J. Russell and Irvin D. of Dunn, N. C.; eight grandchildren and six great grandchildren; one sister, Bertha Bryon Tart of Dunn and one brother Alton Bryon, Newton Grove, N. C.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder W. D. Godwin at Reedy Prong Church, and she was laid to rest in the church cemetery, awaiting the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

BE IT RESOLVED, First, the church at Reedy Prong bows in humble submission to God that doeth all things well. Also that our deepest sympathy be extended to her family, who so loyally and lovingly looked after her in her sickness and time of need. May they find the grace of God sufficient for them in the days to come. Second, that a copy of this be sent to her family, one recorded in the Church Book, and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference in May, 1975.

Sister Doaries Barefoot
Sister Thelma Smith
Committee

DEACON DUNCAN W. McCOLL

Duncan W. McColl passed away at Newbury Hospital on December 24, 1974. He was born on June 26, 1923 in Ekfrid Township, Ontario, Canada, the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Samuel T. McColl. He is survived by several aunts, uncles and cousins. One brother, Colin, died at birth in 1920.

Duncan asked a name with the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada on May 10, 1970. He was baptized on May 24th at Ekfrid by Elder Alex McColl. Later he was made a Deacon of this Church and served it well until his death.

Duncan was in the Hospital for seven months and had many lovely scriptures come to him during his lingering illness. Upon entering the hospital the words of this hymn by Newton were very precious to him:

"He who has helped me hitherto
Will help me all my journey through;
And give me daily cause to raise
New Ebenezers to his praise."

His faith remained steadfast until the end and many times he was heard to say that he would not wish to change places with anyone because of the sweet hope that he had been given. One text which brought him much comfort is found in Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

His funeral service was held in the Ekfrid Meeting House on December 27, 1974 and was conducted by Elder Stewart McColl and Elder Alex McColl. He was laid to rest in the Appin Cemetery.

Brother Duncan will be greatly missed by his many relatives, friends and brethren in the faith. Throughout his life, he earnestly contended for the faith once delivered to the saints. We sincerely believe that our loss is his eternal gain.

Elder D. A. McColl
Elder J. S. McColl

FRED WARREN SMITH, SR.
May 19, 1888-July 5, 1975

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing;" as Paul admonished his son Timothy in words and by example, so Brother Fred, by his life and dedication to the faith, left his light among the brethren.

The last several years of his life, Brother Fred was bedridden and unable to attend his church, but he was always interested in the welfare of the church and glad to have the brethren stop by and talk about the great things that the Lord had done for them.

Brother Fred joined the church at North Creek in September 1923 and was baptized by the Pastor Elder D. W. Topping. On November 9th, 1958, he was chosen by his church to the office of a Deacon — which office he fulfilled faithfully as long as health permitted.

Brother Fred was twice married, first to Lillie S. Smith, who died in 1917. In January, 1918, he was married to Mary Cayton Smith who preceded him in death in December, 1974. To this union were born: Fred W., Jr., Kathleen S. Sawyer, Madeline Smith (deceased), Cecil Smith, Mrs. Cora S. Bond all of Route 2, Belhaven, N. Carolina, Forrest L. Smith of Biloxi, Mississippi and Mrs. Frances S. Carter of Portsmouth, Virginia, three stepchildren, Carlton and Earna Marslender and Mrs. Verona M. Paul all of Route 2, Belhaven, N. C.

Brother Fred was reconciled to his illness and stated several times that at the Lord's appointed time he felt ready to meet his Maker. He firmly believed that his Lord had conquered Death, Hell and the grave for all the recipients of His great mercy.

His funeral was conducted by his beloved pastor, Elder J. T. Prescott and burial was in the family cemetery. The many beautiful flowers showed the great respect of his many friends.

Done by request of Conference, Saturday, December 13, 1975.

J. T. Prescott, Moderator
Reeves Smith, Committee

BROTHER WILLIAM E. VANTREASE

The pilgrim journey of this mortal life was completed for Brother William E. VanTrease on August 19, 1975. He had long been used of the Lord as a comfort and strength to the brethren. In the sorrows that are a part of this earthly life we mourn his departure, while with joy we rejoice to know that his earthly trials are over and that he now is fully at rest in Christ.

Brother VanTrease asked for a home and was received into church membership on the 17th of September, 1939. His passing leaves, what seems to our mortal minds, a void in the church and in the lives of his wife and loved ones. But God, who called him home, makes no mistakes. May the God of all mercy comfort and keep his loved ones and all of us who dearly miss his face and hearing his encouraging words.

Written by request of Salem Church, Benton, Illinois — read and approved in conference, with a copy to be sent to *The Signs of the Times.*

Wayman Chapell, Moderator
James Cunningham, Clerk

BOBBY LEE SNYDER

It was the will of our Heavenly Father to remove from this life Brother Bobby Lee Snyder on May 31, 1975. He died instantly in an automobile wreck when his car was struck by another car while he was returning from work. He was born June 21, 1936 in Martinsville, Va., the son of Richard G. and Louise Eanes Snyder.

On June 24, 1961 he was married to Phyllis Ayers House in the Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church by her grandfather, Elder A. B. Ayers. To this union one son Richard Lester Snyder was born. He is survived by his wife, Sister Phyllis, son Lester and his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Richard G. Snyder.

Brother Snyder united with the Martinsville Primitive Baptist Church June 21, 1959 on his twenty-third birthday, and was baptized by the pastor, Elder Cecil E. Turner. He enjoyed traveling among the brethren and enjoyed talking about the wonderful things our Lord has done for his people, having a hope that he was one among those who should be conformed to the image of Jesus in the resurrection.

His funeral was conducted at the Barker Funeral Home by his pastor Elder C. E. Turner, and burial was in the Roselawn Cemetery, Martinsville, Va. beneath a mound of beautiful flowers. He is asleep in Jesus, awaiting the second coming of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, when in the resurrection this mortal shall put on immortality and ever be with the Lord.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to all who mourn his passing.

John D. Wood

HERBERT SPENCER BROWN

Brother Herbert Spencer Brown was born July 26, 1905, and died July 5, 1974, at the age of sixty-eight in Duplin General Hospital. The place of his home was in Chinquapin, North Carolina.

Brother Herbert was married to Alma F. Brown who preceded his death in February. He had two surviving sons and two daughters: Warren R. Brown of Chinquapin, Leaman Brown of Burgaw, Lena Mae Bradham of Fayetteville, and Regina Simmons of Morehead City. He had eight grandchildren, three surviving brothers, and three surviving sisters.

Brother Herbert was a quiet man in later years and a truly sincere friend to many people.

He was very active as a brother in the church and an extremely close Uncle. I know his sincere hope was a hereafter with his Maker.

His funeral was held in Edgerton Funeral Home by Elder D. B. Stokes and Elder W. L. Everett. He was laid to eternal rest in the Brown Family Cemetery near his home.

Stewart D. Brown, Clerk
William L. Everette, Moderator

ALBERTA FUTRELL

It is with great sadness to attempt to write

about the death of my sister, Alberta Futrell. However, it is also a great pleasure to have had such a wonderful person for a sister in the flesh as well as a dear sister in the church.

She was born February 28, 1897 and died November 21, 1974. She united with the church June 1, 1969 and was baptized the second Saturday in June, by Elder L. L. Yopps. The good Lord saw fit to call her away from this troubled world to a home in Heaven with Him. We all feel that our loss of her is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder D. B. Stokes and Elder Harman Brown at the church at Muddy Creek. Her body was laid to rest in the family cemetery near her place of birth.

Written by Norman Brown
Stewart Brown, Clerk
Eld. W. L. Everette, Moderator

MISS MATTIE H. FOUNTAIN

Again our Father in Heaven called a dear sister, Mattie H. Fountain. He gives us life and takes it away according to his will. She was loved dearly by all that knew her.

She was the daughter of the late Henry and Alice Brown Fountain. She was born September 16, 1903. She died June 9, 1974, in Duke Hospital.

Sister Mattie made her stay on earth seventy years, eight months, and twenty-four days. She leaves to mourn two sisters, Mrs. Annie Shepard of Chinquapin, and Mrs. Hettie Fountain of Chinquapin. She leaves four brothers, Oliver and Raleigh Fountain of Chinquapin, and Jay and Morris Sloan of Chinquapin.

Sister Mattie united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Muddy Creek in February in the year of 1965.

She will be missed by many but we feel our loss is her eternal gain. Her funeral was conducted at the Edgerton Funeral Chapel in Beulaville, North Carolina, on Wednesday, June 12, 1974, at eleven o'clock. Services were conducted by Elder D. B. Stokes of Jacksonville, North Carolina. Her body was laid to rest in the Nick Fountain Cemetery.

This done in order of our meeting.

Written by Margie Fountain
Stewart D. Brown, Clerk
Eld. W. L. Everette, Moderator

IN MEMORY OF
BROTHER JOE CURUS RAYNOR

God in His love and tender mercy saw fit to remove from this life here Brother Joe Curus Raynor on January 24, 1974, at the age of seventy-five years. He was at Duplin General Hospital when his call from "Jesus" came. His suffering didn't last long as he was taken quite suddenly on January 15, 1974, while getting some wood near his home. His wife found him down. She came to the house and called an ambulance to come and take him to Duplin General. They came quickly and took him as fast as they could. He was admitted with cerebral vascular accident. He never regained consciousness except to call his dear wife's name twice. Brother Joe was born September 19, 1898.

His father, James Thomas Raynor, was married twice. His first union was blessed with four children. He and Mary Susan McGowan were married on December 22, 1889. God blessed this union with Rosetta Raynor Blauton, George Thomas, and Cara Don Raynor, Alvania Raynor, Joe Curus, and Charles Leslie Raynor. The family are all deceased except Charles Leslie. He was again married to Ruth Barber May 2, 1956, by Mr. A. L. Brown, Pastor of Beaulaville Baptist Church. It wasn't in God's plan to bless this union with any children.

Brother Joe united with Muddy Creek Primitive Baptist Church on March 7, 1973, at four-thirty o'clock by Elder Harmon Brown and Sam Jones. His physical and mental health was very feeble, but his heart was faithful to his church as long as he was able to attend. His wife was a member of Coles Chapel Penticostal Holiness Chuch, but she was faithful to go with him to his church anytime.

His funeral was conducted at Edgerton Funeral Home Chapel at three o'clock, January 26th by Mr. George Pike, his wife's pastor. She was very upset and didn't know how to locate his pastor. Burial followed at Lanier's Cemetery. There was a large attendance of brethren, sisters, and friends from both of their churches.

Written by Arlene Williams at the request of our pastor, Elder W. L. Everette, in Conference in August, 1974.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 144 DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1976 NO. 4

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4/76
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

SIMILIAR EXPERIENCE WITH BROTHER BOND

1206 S. Oklahoma,
Liberal, Kansas 67901

Dear Editors:

After reading a letter in the January *Signs* by C. W. Bond in Oregon, I decided to write a similiar experience — not that it will be of any comfort to him; as many say to me, and have no doubt said to him, "It could have been worse."

My stroke came almost two years ago, February 27th at 11:30 at night — with no warning at all. My left side was completely paralyzed. When I began to recover my doctor told me to walk every day, and to take up golf, which I did.

I grew up as an athlete in baseball, basketball, and track, and played a good game of golf. When I was ordained into the ministry by Elder R. W. Rhodes and Elder L. L. Schenck (part of the presbytery,) I gave up most or all of my games and devoted my time to reading and praying for wisdom and light on the Holy Testimonies.

After my stroke my speech was so garbled and my strength so low, that to try to preach seemed all in vain: I was so depressed that I almost gave up. I thought God was showing me that I should leave the efforts to preach, and that it was being brought home to me, as I have many times thought, that I was mistaken in my calling.

Very few encouraged me to continue, and invitations to other churches came less and less often as my afflictions became known, and that I was unable to preach with power and demonstration of the Spirit.

I decided to write to a deacon and a minister, to see if there was such a thing as an un-ordination; and if there was, I would resign as pastor of the Pleasant Valley Church in Kingman, Kansas. Somehow I didn't do this as I had firmly planned, so Brother Bond, I'd rather give up anything than the pleasures when I am in the stand, of looking over the congregation and seeing sometimes a head nodding in agreement, or a tear on a cheek.

I know not if God will ever restore my strength and former liberty. I doubt and fear, even though I know He could if it be His will. The song, "Dark and Thorny is the Desert," seems to fit us. I know there are many who have suffered more, but I don't know how much more we will suffer here on earth. One thing I am sure of is that man cannot do anything about it: "It is not in man that walketh, to direct his steps."

Please forgive my ramblings, and may the Lord bless and comfort His dear people everywhere, and may we thank Him for the mercies we have received from His bountiful hands.

Yours in hope,
Elder W. A. Winfrey

GOD'S ATTRIBUTES: GOD'S OMNISCIENCE

God's omniscience is the perfection

of his nature by which he knows all things most perfectly in himself, by one eternal act. God is greater than our hearts and knoweth all things. (John 2:20) God is and always was so perfectly wise that nothing ever did, or does, or can elude his knowledge. He knew from all eternity, not only what he, himself, intended to do but also what he would incline and allow others to do. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. God knows nothing now, and will know nothing hereafter which he did not know and foresee from everlasting. His foreknowledge being co-eternal with himself, extends to everything that is or shall be done. (Heb. 4:13) All things which comprise past, present and future are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do. God did not decree anything because he saw it as future, but he foresaw it as future because he decreed it. His being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge is based upon the determinate counsel. As the London Confession reads: "He hath not decreed anything because he foresaw it as future." But he foresaw it as future because he decreed it.

Elder Lytle Burns

(From his *Bible Truth Presented In Prose and Poetry,* 1942).

THANKFUL FOR GOD'S BLESSINGS

P. O. Box 48,
Duanesburg, New York 12056

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood,

Enclosing a money order to cover 2 years subscription to the *Signs of the Times.*

I am thankful that it was God's will to keep and sustain us these many years. I am thankful that, when there were trials and anxious periods, the Lord was there to guide us and provide means for a safe ending.

Although we are few in number up in this section of the country, we have been blessed to have a number of union Meetings. Several Elders from the South and Canada have come and preached to us from the abounding storehouse of God.

We were thankful for the fellowship of the brethren and those who came with the Elders. All this gave us encouragement, that it pleased the Lord to have His name proclaimed once more in this land. God's word has been expounded through out this area for many years and we hope it will continue.

I am thankful that God before time began, elected Himself a people, and provided for all their needs and the way of salvation.

I am thankful that God inspired David to write in the 23rd Psalm: "The Lord is my shepherd: I shall not want." It is comforting when in trial and affliction to think on the verse, and feel to repeat, "The Lord is my shepherd: I shall not want." The Lord has provided for the elect, and if we are one of God's chosen ones a way will be provided for us.

God provided various gifts for the comfort and edification of His chosen people. In Ephesians chapter 4 verse 11 we read, "And he gave some, apostles and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." God, being all wise and able to determine what is best for his elect, rightly sent the proper messengers. For "As newbore babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." (1st Peter 2nd chapter verse 2) In Ephesians chapter 4 verse 12 we read "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

I am thankful that God is from everlasting and stands firm in his judgments. When God makes a covenant he keeps it. In Genesis chapter 9 verse 16, we read, "And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth." How beautiful it is, after a rain, to look up

at the clouds and see the beautiful colors of the rainbow. Also we find comfort in the 37th Psalm verse 25. "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." We also find that we need no money or works for God's salvation or comfort, for in the 55th chapter of Isaiah the 1st verse reads, "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea come, buy wine and milk without money; and without price." How wonderful it is all free from a wonderful God for his elect people. For in the 2nd verse we read, "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread?"

I am thankful for all the little things. Many small things make up the whole. The still small voice, a quiet thought or a warm glow makes you feel that the Lord is near.

"Thank you, God, for little things
That often come our way,
The things we take for granted
But don't mention when we pray,
The unexpected courtesy,
The thoughtful kindly deed.
A hand reached out to help up
In time of sudden need
Oh make us more aware, dear God
Of little daily graces
That comes to us with "sweet surprises"
From never dreamed-of-places."

(Author not known to me. Selected and sent to me by the late Elder Amasa J. Slauson)

With hope and trust in God,
Woodrow W. Bellinger

Rt. 2, Box 920,
Bassett, Va. 24055

Dear Editors:

Am sending check for two more years' my subscription is out and I don't want to miss a copy of the *Signs of the Times*. I enjoy reading it more than I can put in words.

Elder Silas H. Durand's wonderful sermon in the December *Signs* is so precious to me. God in his loving mercy blessed him to write it; and one so vile and wretched as I was blessed to read it. He brought out so plainly that the flood and the ark represents or tells before hand of the awful suffering of our blessed Lord Jesus, who suffered, bled and died for all his chosen ones. I often wonder am I his or am I not. Only the Lord knows them that are his: He knows all things, sees all things, and rules all things. We cannot even breathe the good air in our own strength. I am pleased and I hope thankful to our heavenly King, that all things are in his hands, for He does all things right. Bless his holy name!

I am not worthy of any of his blessings, but the Lord has been so good and kind to me and mine all the days of my life. My dear husband passed away February 1, 1974, and my home is with my daughter Edna Mae Rea: (please use the other $7.00 to renew her subscription for two more years.) My dear husband told me long before he passed away, to sell our place, land and house, and go live with Edna. I couldn't answer him at first because he said "I can't stay with you. I've got to go and the sooner the better." These words hurt me so deeply, I couldn't answer without crying. He told me again to sell and go stay with Edna and Ben. I answered, with tears, "I will," but I had to leave the room.

May the loving kindness and watch care of our blessed Lord be with all the dear Editors, and all His little ones everywhere, is my desire, I humbly trust. Please pray for this old vile sinner, if it is the good Lord's will to bless you my precious brothers and sisters.

Your least sister, if one at all,
Callie I. Clark

ECCLESIASTES 7:29

117 Bon Air Road,
Baltimore, Md. 21225

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

"Lo, this only have I found that, God made man upright; but they have sought

out many inventions." (Eccl. 7:29)

This subject has been on my mind for some time, and, in a measure, I feel I have enjoyed some sweet meditations on the beauty contained therein.

There are many who believe that God created all things by and for his Son, and that He rules all events; and at the same time they hold God responsible for the sins of mankind.

Most all non-believers (of the Old Baptist doctrine) will tell you, that if any of the things we believe are true then God causes or makes one to sin; and that those who have a hope could continue to sin with no evil consequences to their person in the world, and no loss in the world to come.

In thinking along these lines several scriptures come to mind. In the first chapter of James we read, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." Although this was written about sixty years after the death of Christ, it relates back to the scripture quoted first above, which was written 977 years before the birth of Christ.

Yes, man was made upright, but they have sought out many inventions. From the day when the woman (Eve) saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise. From that day to the present evil day man has sought out many inventions. For in that day she took of the fruit and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat. Up until that time Adam and Eve did not know or realize they were naked, but after they had eaten their eyes were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons; and they hid themselves from the presence of God when they heard his voice walking in the garden.

All men are naked before the eyes of the all seeing and all wise God. Yes, all are naked in the sight of God, but we find that even as Adam and Eve did not notice their nakedness until sin had entered after they had eaten of the fruit; we still find that man does not know that he is a sinner — dead in trespasses and sins, until such time as God calls him out of darkness into the marvelous light of his Son. Then a man is made to know his wretched state: he is made to know that he is guilty before a righteous God.

Many seek refuge in the law, and works of the law, only to find themselves sinking down farther beneath God's righteous frown. It is then that a person feels lost and undone, and that there is no hope at all for him. It is then that Jesus in all his glory and sweetness is revealed to him as his Saviour. It is then that he can answer as did Simon Peter, "Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God." Surely this is a most welcome blessing, for Jesus said, "Blessed art thou Simon Barjona for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

While it may seem a small thing to some to know Christ, the Son of the living God, I believe it is a great blessing, for only to His people is He revealed. Jesus said, "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with the heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." Those of whom He spoke have sought out many inventions; they are dead to all things spiritual and feel no need of a Saviour, and are content to live in sin and unrighteousness. But of His people Jesus said, "But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear."

It is my chief desire that I know Christ and am known of him. Most everyone would say that he knows Christ, but I believe of a certainty that for the most part they only know of him, and do not really know Him, and have never seen him through an eye of

faith. What a blessing it is when one can see Jesus as He was scourged, as a crown of thorns was put on his precious head, and as he was smitten by the soldiers, and finally, as He, our Lord of Lords and King of Kings, was crucified on the cruel cross between two evil doers. Not that we would glory in his suffering, but rather that we could feel and know from time to time that our Saviour suffered, and bled and died *for us*. O, what a blessing, what a joy it is to meditate upon these things. Most of the time these things are too high for me and I cannot attain unto them.

I must confess that for a time most of my joy was overshadowed by a misunderstanding on my part of the origin of sin and the cause of it. Some believe that because God created all things and controls all things, that therefore he was the author of sin. I agree that God created all things, but I differ with the above line of thought. God made the devil and endowed him with a spirit of evil; and He made man and made him subject to vanity. Thereby, when man is tempted (by the devil and the lust of the flesh,) he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived it brings forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death.

Elder Wood, I was greatly saddened this morning to hear you were still ill with a cold and was unable to have services here at Baltimore today. I hope according to God's will you will shortly feel much better. (After a few days I was much better — J.D.W.)

I so much wanted to attend the meeting today that I hardly knew what to do. I dressed and left to go to church, for I wanted to go somewhere so badly: I wanted to sing praises unto His holy name. O how I wanted to hear His doctrine drop as the rain and His speech distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass. I went by a church where I had formerly been asked many times to go: I passed on both sides of the building and looked and wondered what doctrine was being preached by those inside. I wondered if they believed an all wise God who works his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; or whether they believed in a god who must depend on the help of men.

I found myself unable to enter in, so I drove on another road that would lead to another meeting that laid some claim to believing the same doctrine we do. But remembering some of the things I had heard and heard about, I found myself unable to make the next turn that would bring me there. How can one sing praises unto God in a strange land? Then I drove over to the Baltimore Meeting House. I remembered the doctrine that is preached there: salvation by the grace of God without any work or merit on the part of puny, sinful man; Election, Predestination, and the choosing of His people before the world began — and this by grace and mercy. What a blessing it is to believe such a wonderful and marvelous salvation, and to know that God is the Rock, and His work is perfect: all His ways are judgment, and God of truth and without iniquity — just and true is He.

Please over look my many mistakes and weaknesses; also renew my subscription to the *Signs* for two years, with the remainder for the Fund. "To the only wise God our Saviour be glory and majesty, dominion and power both now and forever." Please remember this worm of the dust when enabled to pray. Your prayers are desired for

Barnabus J. Brammer

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515 W. Mississippi Ave.
Ruston, La. 71270

Dear Editors:

Please find my check enclosed for $8.00; this to cover renewal of my subscription for one year, and the remaining $4.00 to help with the expenses of the *Signs*.

I hope and pray you will be able to continue this wonderful publication until the return of our Lord and Saviour — for the comfort of His own.

I read the *Signs* and weep; and the weeping makes me to rejoice because of my hope.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Ruth T. Smith

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EDITORIAL

Beginning with this issue we are publishing in installments the pamplet by William Gadsby published in London in 1841, entitled:

The Present State of Religion; or Who Are The People Miscalled Antimonians.

This was an able exposition of Bible Truth in an age when the truth was assailed on every hand by those who had not been brought out of darkness and unbelief; and may be characterized as in Proverbs 14:12: "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but

in the end thereof are the ways of death."

We may well say that the signs of the times in every age indicated the wide spread denial of the doctrine of God our Saviour, and at the same time showed that the Lord had not forsaken his people, for there were those who were blessed to be steadfast in contending earnestly for the faith He once delivered to the saints.

In *The Present State of Religion* by W. Gadsby, Love-Truth ably and plainly presents those things which are written in the Book, and are revealed by the Spirit unto each and every one of those Born Again. For, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Those who know nothing of that, "wind that bloweth where it listeth," cannot but have a way which seems right to them.

The signs of the times which are prevalent now, are as an open book describing that which Paul wrote to Timothy, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men will be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traiters, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as James and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt mind, reprobate concerning the faith, . . ."

Though the Lord's people are concerned about these things, they are assured by the Apostle Peter that, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promises, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, (that the Father gave him,) but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that we look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless. And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation, even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen" (2 Peter 3:9-18)

The dialogues in *The Present State of Religion,* are self-explanatory, and we hope our brethren will enjoy reading these things as much as we have. *Love-Truth* maintains the doctrine of God our Saviour which we love.

May the Lord give each one of His people the Spirit of love whereby they love one another, and may we be more conscious of our need of His grace in these troublesome and perhaps last times; and realize that we are "sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until

the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory."

May we all walk humbly, realizing that it is by grace that we are what we are, as well as what we shall be in that Day.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT NOAH

Noah was preacher, head and priest. In these things, we may say without offense to the Scriptures, that there is a striking likeness to Jesus the Christ, who is preacher, head and priest in an infinitely greater sense than Noah ever could have been. Nevertheless, Noah is a shadow of the character of Jesus, and it may be worth our while to spend a few moments in pursuing this likeness. In 2 Peter ii. 5, Noah is declared to have been a preacher of righteousness. We have heard it said by Arminians that Noah went about the antediluvian world warning people of the coming flood, and exhorting them to repent of their sins that God might turn from his wrath. This is not so, and there is not one word in the Bible in support of such an imagination. We have not on record any sermon that Noah ever preached with his lips. His preaching consisted in that he, through faith, believed in Jesus and worked in the building of the ark strictly in accord with God's commands. Every act of Noah in this work on the ark was an expression of faith and trust and hope in God. He added nothing to nor took anything from the word of God as it came to him, ordering him as to every detail in the shaping of the vessel that was to be their security from the flood.

The greatest sermons ever preached are often not those that come from the lips, but those which are preached with the hands and feet, that are lived out of the life of the believer. This is the kind of preaching Noah did. Could all of us let our lips and lives express the holy gospel we profess, then all would be preachers. We doubt not that every one who believes in God through the divine gift of faith is a preacher to the extent that faith moves them. Whose righteousness did Noah preach? Not his own, but the righteousness of Jesus. Abel, in offering the sacrifice of the lamb, was showing forth the righteousness of Jesus, the Lamb of God. He, by his offering, preached the righteousness of Christ. So Noah in building the ark with its three stories, with its window in the top and with its door in the side, all made of gopher wood pitched within and without, was preaching the all-sufficient righteousness of Jesus, who is the ark of salvation in whom all the elect of God are saved. In this Noah is a shadow of Christ, who is the great Preacher of all preachers. "I have preached righteousness in the great congregation." As Noah preached not his own righteousness, but the righteousness of Christ, so Jesus declared not his own righteousness as a man, but the righteousness of his Father, the Almighty God. As Noah did his preaching more in his living (that is, in his doing) than in his merely saying it, so Jesus' every act and every work and every step were a profound preaching of the righteousness of that Father who had sent him into the world to do all his will. The great congregation in which Jesus does his preaching is that great body of the elect effectually called to hear his word out of every nation under heaven. By his Holy Spirit he reveals his power and his truth in the hearts of his people, wholly unaided by the many devices men have set up for the regeneration of mankind. Man can never preach the gospel of the grace of God except as he is called, qualified and sent forth by the great Preacher.

Noah was the head of all that were saved in the ark, he was head over his family, and over all the beasts and other living things that were there, all were subject to him. Here, again, he is a shadow of Christ, who is head over

all things to his church. (Ephesians i. 22.) All the church, both of the Jews and of the Gentiles, God's elect everywhere, are subject to the dominion of Jesus, the head of the church. All the life of the body, every member, comes from the head; all her power and direction come from the head. From Christ is delivered to the church her doctrine, her order, her ordinances: all her government and discipline. Even the apostles themselves could not add to nor take from the gospel rule as delivered to them by Christ himself. Even they were not lords over the heritage of God, but servants of the church, having no dominion over the faith of the members.

Noah was a priest in that, when the ark rested upon Ararat, he came forth and made a sacrifice to the Lord. In this sacrifice he used nothing but clean things. He took of every clean beast and of every clean fowl and offered it as a sacrifice. This sacrifice was a sweet smelling one unto the Lord, because it was the fruit of Noah's faith. Without faith no one can please God. This faith is the fruit of God's Spirit, and God never fails to recognize the work of his own Spirit, and to accept the work his Spirit produces, but he will not accept the offerings which men make of themselves and in their own fancied merit. Noah offered what he did in the faith that God had wrought in him. For this reason it was a sweet smelling savor to God, a fragrance given off by the faith that was in Noah's soul. As a token of his covenant which God made with Noah in acceptance of the sacrifice which he offered, God promised not to curse them again, that he would no more smite the earth with woe for man's sake. Noah in his work here as a priest is a shadow of Jesus the great High Priest of our profession, the Priest after the order of an endless life. Jesus offered to God a clean sacrifice for the ransom of his people. This clean sacrifice was not the blood of beasts, but his own spotless body, which he took as Priest and offered upon the altar of Calvary for the sins of his people. Jesus combined in himself both Priest and offering. Such a thing was never seen before, nor ever will be again. No man took his life from him, but he laid it down of himself, which act it became him to do as the Captain of our salvation. In view of the clean sacrifice which Jesus has made of himself God has declared he will never count our sins against us any more. That is, there shall be no more curse. There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. They are delivered from under the curse of the power of sin, from under the condemnation of the law of sin and from the captivity of death, the wages of sin. All the flood of God's wrath against sin was poured forth upon the Ark of our salvation. He endured it all. The day of vengeance was in his heart and he paid all the debt we owed.

We try faintly to portray the wonderful offices of our Saviour in his relations toward his God and his people, but we can only glimpse the glory of his being, and words are futile to set forth all he is to his people, for he is their all in all.

(Editorial by Elder Lefferts July 15, 1919)

THE PRESENT STATE OF RELIGION

By William Gadsby, London 1841

PREFACE

After the following pages were written, a church-meeting was called, and they were read to the church, then present, meeting in St. George's-road Chapel, Manchester; who unamiously wished them to be published. They are, therefore, sent forth to take their lot in the world; and there is no doubt that, like their author, they will meet with a variety of receptions. But it avails little what men think. They either contain truth or falsehood; if truth, they will stand the test; if falsehood, let them be refuted by the word of God.

However some may start at the accounts given of *Universal Charity,* I can assure them they are stubborn facts, and are but a very small share of what I am in possession of. Such is the dreadful state of religion in our day, that it is a well known fact that a man may make a great profession, and at the same time be enriching himself by the cruel hand of oppression, whose promise is not considered worth a single farthing, who is counted a liar even to a proverb, and yet who can be highly esteemed by the religious world, and have the *highest seat* in their public meetings; yea, can be nominated by a great number of ministers to reclaim what they call, *Antinomians.* But what will they do in the end thereof? "Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan, that are in the mountain of Samaria, *which oppress the poor, which crush the needy,* which say to their masters, Bring, and let us drink. The Lord God hath sworn by his holiness, that lo, the days shall come upon you that he will take you away with hooks, and your posterity with fishhooks." (Amos iv. 1, 2.) Soon, very soon, will the sinner in Zion tremble, and fearfulness will surprise the hypocrite; and though they may solicit rocks to join with them in rebellion against Jehovah, crying, "Rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the wrath of the Lamb," it will be all in vain; for could they get ten thousand rocks to obey them, and each as large as *Pendle-hill,* they would not screen them from the wrath of Jehovah. Happy, thrice happy, is the man who is blessed with a living faith in a living Head. He, and he only, shall stand; for he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

The readers will find this little tract to appear in plainness of speech, as that is the best outward dress the author is in possession of; and as he is no grammarian, they must not be surprised if they meet with many grammatical blunders. But though this should be the case, he feels himself happy that errors in *grammar* have no condemnation connected with them; so that he can cheerfully bear the frowns of the critic, while he enjoys, in his own soul, the sweetness contained in that scripture which says, "There is therefore *now* no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit: for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." (Rom. viii. 1, 2.) That Zion may flourish, and the word of the Lord run and be glorified, is the prayer of

Thine, Reader to serve in the Gospel of Christ,

W. G.

THE PRESENT STATE OF RELIGION

Investigation, having a little leisure time, thought he would go and spend an hour with Love-Truth. Finding him at home, full of thought and concern of mind, he addressed him thus:

Investigation. Good morning to you, Love-Truth. You seem quite busy this morning.

Love-Truth. Good morning to you. I am glad to see you· but you seem full of your jokes; for, instead of being busy, I am doing nothing at all. I was almost lost in thought before you spoke; and to tell you the truth, I do not think these are times to joke.

Inv. Do not be angry, my brother; I was not jesting, for I perceived you were almost buried in thought, and if that is not being engaged, what is? But will you tell me what you were thinking about? for I expect it is no trifling matter that has caught your attention to such a degree.

Love-Truth. I will tell you with the greatest pleasure, as far as I am able. I was thinking over the state of religion; for you know there is a great deal said about its prosperity; but to me it appears that the religion of Jesus is not so prosperous as most men think it is. Indeed, things of this nature wear a very gloomy aspect in my view; for most of our religious people have so little to say about the work of Christ,

done for and in his people, that I am ready to say, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." They have a way of preaching what *they* call the Gospel, without ever giving offence to Greek or Jew. A self-righteous Pharisee may remain as secure, and wear as impudent a face, under the greatest part of the preaching in our day, as Goliath of Gath did in the days of Saul, before David came to the fight. In fact, the offence of the cross is now ceased, that is, if such men preach Christ, for we seldom hear of any going away offended, unless it be a poor, hungry, helpless, broken-hearted, sin-burdened, sensible sinner, or one who is led by the good Spirit of God into the fountains of ungodliness within, and the sweet suitability of Christ as his Saviour, and so lives not by sight, but by faith; and this man may as well go to a spouting-club for relief and instruction as to most of our religious assemblies. Indeed, some tell us, that it is wicked *self* to expect comfort under the word preached; so that the language of Pharoah is carried into the pulpit, as a suitable substitute for the bread of life. "Ye are idle, ye are idle," is the sovereign balm applied to the wounded conscience; and if the poor soul cannot receive this, double his diligence, and get peace of mind by his activity, he may starve for want, for anything the pulpit orator cares. I have known some who have gone to hear with a degree of joy in the Holy Ghost, but the man in the pulpit having caught their attention, and led them from Christ to self, they had joy little enough when they returned.

Inv. You say that true religion is not so prosperous as some men think it is; do you mean to infer that the work of God is at a stand, or that it is impeded by the character you refer to?

Love-Truth. No; I mean no such thing; for sure I am that God's counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure; nor shall the word that is gone out of his mouth return unto him void, but shall accomplish the thing whereunto he hath appointed it. God works, and none can let or hinder; he speaks and it is done; so that his work can never be at a stand. All I mean is, that the greatest part of the religion of the day is nothing more than the religion of nature, accomplished by the power of man, and not by the power of the Holy Ghost; for, out of many thousand professors, you will find very few who are able to give a good reason of their hope, saying nothing about a hope within them. Talk about their peace, joy, love, or what not, you will not hear a word about the sentence of death in their conscience, or the law working wrath, the commandment coming, sin reviving, and they dying; not a word about being brought to the land of starvation, and perishing with hunger; nor being brought to their right mind, and going to the Father as miserable, lost, helpless, and guilty sinners; nor a word about the Father's kind reception of them, the kisses of his lips, the ring, the best robe, the fatted calf, and the music; no, nor a word about the suitability of Christ in his characters, offices, and relationship, as known and felt by experience; nor the blessings treasured up in him; nor the Spirit's work in leading them from one degree of faith to another; nor the Spirit of adoption whereby they cry, "Abba, Father,." The whole is begun by the flesh, and will end in the flesh; so that it may be properly called, a fleshly religion.

Inv. Well, but may you not be mistaken in your views? Was it ever known that the kingdom of Christ wore so grand an appearance as at this time? Only consider what crowds of professors there are, and what a number of eminent ministers are training up at the different academies for the benefit of the church; and what a spirit of universal charity prevails through the whole. There is no need now to exhort any to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, for all denominations are aiming at, and contending for,

one point, namely, an unlimited charity; and this, you know, is considered as the best evidence of Christianity. You will not find that bitterness of spirit in our ministers which was in that contracted being, Paul, who was for pronouncing a curse upon the head of both men and angels, who preached any other gospel than he had preached. No, they are now taught very differently, and are all *one* in Christ, though they differ in the fundamental truths of the gospel; so that you will find it no uncommon thing for an eminent minister of Christ to say that the righteousness of Christ imputed to a sinner is "imputed nonsense." But are you to conceive that because you have no righteousness of your own but what is as filthy rags, and so are under the necessity of trusting to the righteousness of Christ, that it is not possible for one of God's faithful ministers to have a righteousness independent of Christ's, and therefore with holy zeal assert that to talk about righteousness imputed is nonsense?"

Love-Truth, Stop, stop, my friend, and before you proceed any farther let me just observe, that it is the word of God I wish to make the rule of my faith; and I am sure if God's testimony is to decide it, it will soon be settled. David tells us, "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God: they are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no not one." (Ps. xiv. 2, 3.) And Solomon says, "There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not." (Eccl. vii. 20) The church by the mouth of Isaiah says, "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags,' (Isa. lxiv. 6.) And this is not only the case with some, but with all. Hence an inspired apostle asks, "What then! are we better than they?" and his answer is, *"No, in no wise;* for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin: as it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one." (Rom. iii. 9, 10.) And a soul made sensible of his state, by the good Spirit of God, will be glad to be found in the righteousness of Christ; and for their encouragement we hear the Lord saying, "Harken unto me, ye stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness; I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry." (Isa. xlvi, 12, 13.) "Surely, shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall man come, and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." (xlv. 34, 35.) Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works. (Rom. iv. 6.) Yea, Paul counted all things but dung, that he might win Christ, and be found in him, not having on his own righteousness which was of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. (Phil. iii. 8, 9.) Nor is it one of the least mercies the church is favoured with, that Jesus Christ is the Lord their righteousness. (Jer. xxiii. 6.) Are not the ministers you speak of such who have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, not submitting themselves to the righteousness of God? (Rom. x. 2, 3.) Now, if it is any part of a minister's work to set forth the glory of his Master, and to show the need a poor sinner has of such a Saviour, I am at a loss to know how any man can be a minister of Christ, and call that nonsense in which alone a sinner can be just before God! Nay, may we not rather expect that all who are thus incensed against him shall be ashamed? But go on with your subject.

Inv. But you tie one so tightly; for if we must be as contracted in our views as the Bible, we shall be ready to say, Who then can be saved? Beside, human virtue and natural goodness will not

find a spot on which to stand, upon Bible principles; for it roundly asserts, that without faith it is impossible to please God; (Heb. xi. 6;) and faith is said to be the gift of God, (Eph. ii. 8,) and the fruit of the Spirit; (Gal. v. 22;) but we must go upon a broader bottom than the Bible; so I will proceed to observe, that you will find another minister very modestly arraign the great Jehovah at his bar, and call upon him to give an account of his proceedings; and if he dares to assert, either by prophets, apostles, or Christ himself, that "whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate; and whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified; (Rom. viii. 29, 30;) yea, or any thing that amounts to his having absolutely chosen a spouse for his Son, and left the rest to perish in their sin; this godly minister will very judiciously tell God he is worse than *Nero, Moloch,* or the *Devil* himself; and, with a very modest countenance, piously assert he had rather dwell with the devil in hell, than with such a God in heaven. But who, beside a bigot, would ever presume to say that this man was not a minister of Christ, and sent of God to declare his will, and that he does not faithfully do the work of an Evangelist, and so make full proof of his ministry? I have heard men, who call themselves Predestinarians, speak in the highest terms of such, and call them *stars of the first magnitude,* Thus we see they are all of one heart and soul; and of such an extensive nature is this spirit of universal charity, that it has taken into its affectionate arms those heavenly divines the Papist Priests, or, at least, some of them. Surely a spirit of this nature ought to excite gratitude, and cause us to sing, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen;" for what can be greater proof of the fall of Babylon than to see Arminians, Arians, Predestinarians, and all classes meet together, and preach and hear so as not to offend each other? Besides, you may now attend a place of worship, and if the minister professes to believe in the doctrines of election, free justification by the righteousness of Christ imputed, &c., you need not be afraid of having them rung in your ears, for if he mentions them, it will be very finely indeed, and frequently you will hear him say, they ought to be well guarded, if preached at all; but the less they are preached the better. Then does it not appear that this is a day of great things, think you? Now view the scene with wonder, and be not so contracted in your mind.

Love-Truth. I have viewed the scene with wonder for many years, and still continue to wonder how men who profess to be ministers of Christ dare act so basely. The word of God declares that he that is of God heareth God's word, (John viii. 47,) and they who hear not his word are not of God; and God's ministers are exhorted to preach the word, to be instant in season and out of season; to reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with all long suffering and *doctrine;* for the time will come when they will not endure *sound doctrine;* but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. (2 Tim. iv. 2, 3.) So that it appears that God's ministers are to preach the doctrines, and, if the Bible be true, election is one of the doctrines; for "the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." (Rom. xi. 7.) The Lord of the house preached this doctrine when he entered into the synagogue of Nazareth, as it is written; "But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow; and many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet, and none of them were cleansed, save Naaman the Syrian." (Luke iv. 25, 26.) Now the Jews were so enraged at this doctrine, that they sought to kill him; nevertheless, we find him preaching the same truth again and again. At one time he thanks the Father that he has hid the truth from the wise and prudent, and revealed it to

babes. (Luke x. 21.) At another time he told some of the Jews they believed not, because they were not his sheep. Then he assures them that his sheep shall believe, saying, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." (John x. 26, 27.) The elect lady and her children are exhorted not to receive any into the house, nor bid them God speed, that do not bring the doctrine of Christ; for he that biddeth them God speed, is partaker of their evil deeds. (2 John 10, 11.) And is it possible for men who speak reproachfully of what Christ himself preached, to be the ministers of Christ? Surely not; and those who bid them God speed will one day find God jealous of his word and honour. If God has sent men to preach his word, he has not sent them who blasphemously speak against it. God says, "He that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully." (Jer. xxiii. 28.) The Lord hath pronounced more woes upon the heads of false prophets, who prophecy lies, and speak not his word, than against any openly profane character upon the earth; and if the ministers of Christ preach his word, that man cannot be a minister of Christ who does not preach the things that Christ preached. And as it respects guarding the truth, what harm has the truth done? Is not the gospel fit to be trusted in the hands of God? Shall poor vain man, who is not able to guard himself, attempt to guard the truth that makes Zion free, which God has been pleased to reveal in so conspicuous a way, and that comes to the church not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance? (John viii. 32; 1 Thess. i. 5.) God forbid! I am sure that the gospel must guard me, or I shall soon err. Surely our *gospel-guarders* have forgotten that they are born like a wild ass's colt, and so they fain would be wise. (Job xi. 12.) I am persuaded God will never thank any man for guarding the gospel, till he himself is not able to make it accomplish the end for which he has appointed it. Your remark on the fall of Babylon brings to my mind a circumstance that took place some time ago, about the first great meeting held in London, upon the missionary business. There was a very great stir made, and *bigotry* was declared to be *buried.* Thousands seemed to rejoice at the event, and when the funeral solemnities were ended, they all repaired to their homes full of joy and gladness. A few days after this, a Baptist minister called upon one of those ministers who preached on the above occasion, with a begging case, wishing him to give his signature, but was answered very roughly, "for," said this minister, "this is not to be a Baptist interest; if I had known it was, I would not have given anything towards it, and I wish I had the money back that I have given." Now this man had an independent fortune of some hundreds a year, and a large salary for preaching beside, and he had given half a guinea towards building this place, and as it was likely to be a Baptist interest, he wished for it back again, and this directly after he had preached at the *funeral of bigotry;* so that the burial of *bigotry* and the fall of *Babylon* appear to be much in the same state, for they seem to have drunk of the wine of her fornication till they are drunken with it; or there would be but little room for either his Holiness the Pope, or his priests.

(Continued next issue)

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

New Vernon, N. Y., July 15, 1845.

"Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." (Psalms 116:7)

While the arminian tribes of antichrist are engaged with might and main to connect the Jewish covenant with the statutes of our state and nation in order to establish the first day of the week as a legal Sabbath, and to coerce the consciences of our citizens into an

observance of their improvement upon the divine law, how pleasant it is to the children of the heavenly kingdom to contemplate the substance, or antitype of which the Jewish Sabbath was only a shadow. All the rites and ceremonies of the old covenant which enjoined the Sabbath implied an external or outward performance of duties in which the children of Israel were to be perpetually engaged, until the sceptre should depart from Judah, and the lawgiver from between his feet; but the law and its requisition was not of faith, neither did it require faith, but obedience, perfect and unremitting.

To establish a kind of worldly religion in the absence of faith, and of the Spirit's work in the heart, it is not strange that the modern usurpers of Moses' seat should manifest so strong a propensity to revive the dead works of the law, the abrogated rites of Judaism, and have them incorporated with the laws of our land, and thus pave the way for a national church in our country. But a soul enlightened by the Holy Spirit, is released from the bondage of the law, and ushered into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. In the spiritual devotions of the inspired Psalmist, we trace some sublime predictions of our great Redeemer, his labor and suffering under the law, his bitter death, triumphant resurrection and entrance into his rest; for he hath set down at the right hand of the majesty on high. And what appears so clearly to point to the incarnation, death, resurrection and exaltation of Christ in this beautiful subject, points out also the Sabbatic jubilee of all the saints of God, which the blessed gospel brings to light.

Compare the connection of the text with the experience of the saints who have ceased from their own works. "The sorrows of death compassed me; I found trouble and sorrow." When was this the case? Ah, when the arrows of the Lord had entered the heart; or at the time when the quickened sinner was brought to see and feel the terrors of the law of God, to hear and tremble at its thundering; to feel a load of guilt and sin sinking his stricken heart in deep despair. Death with its gloomy sorrow as the consequence and wages of sin, presents its awful terrors, compassing the distressed and despairing soul with sorrows; the pains of damned spirits seized with desperate grasp the helpless victim, and the contemplated destiny of banished souls seemed already to have begun its work of retribution. Here was a time of labor, of toil, but alas, the struggle of the soul was unavailing.

> "Stern Justice cried, with frowning face,
> This mountain (Sinai, or the law) is no hiding place."

Not all the poor creature could do, could satisfy the rigid demands of the law of God, assuage the anguish which he felt, or afford a refuge for his soul. The pains of hell had taken hold with such a deadly grasp, the very best obedience the victim could render to the law would not answer, but still he labored, sought for peace, for comfort; but what did he find? "I found trouble and sorrow;" and these were all that he could find. The soul became weary, distressed, fainting and exhausted, finding no more to rest upon in the law, or in his works, than Noah's dove could find when absent from the ark. These exercises of the soul, produced by the work of the Spirt, a breathing of desire to God for deliverance. "Then called I upon the name of the Lord, O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul." This calling upon God for deliverance doth not take place until the soul is made sensible that there is deliverance no where else. The Spirit in whose hands he is, directs the supplication, and that Spirit opens to the sinking soul the way of life through Jesus Christ. At which he is enabled to break forth in the language of the next succeeding verse of this Psalm. "Gracious is the Lord."

O, yes, the plan of grace now breaks forth upon his soul; his heart is ravished, his burden removed; joy and thanksgiving, love and wonder, now overwhelm his soul. But how, he now inquires, can such deliverance be in

justice extended to a wretch so vile, one whose condemnation was so clearly sealed by the law? But, lo! the Savior's blood appears, and he is made to add, "And righteous, yea, our God is merciful! The Lord preserveth the simple," and as an illustration of this, he pleads his experience, "I was brought low, and he helped me." The all-inviting charms of Jesus are now presented, and sweeter than the melody of angel voices sounds the words, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls." To which his joyful leaping heart responds: "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." His Sabbath is here begun, his servile labors are ended; he enters into rest. No more to think his own thoughts, or speak his own words; for it is God that worketh in him, to will and to do of his own good pleasure. No more shall he gather sticks, kindle fires, or attempt to warm himself by what he can do; but finds in Christ a sun of righteousness, emitting upon him the golden rays of heavenly light, of burning love; and the fruits of the Spirit are unto him "Love, joy, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, and faith." This is a Sabbath indeed, the observance of which is dictated by a law which is written in his heart, and enforced by the governing power of grace reigning in his soul. This is the day which the Lord has made, and he will rejoice and be glad in it.

We have offered some remarks upon the preceeding verses of the Psalm from which the above text is taken, in which we not only regarded the theme as predictive of the sufferings and triumphs of our Lord Jesus Christ, but also expressive of the experience of all the children of God, who have been delivered from the power of darkness, the bondage and works of the law, and finally brought experimentally into the enjoyment of the christian Sabbath, where they are enabled to rest from their own works, and rely alone upon the finished salvation of our God. That all the sabbatic seasons under the law, and especially the seventh day Sabbath, were typical of the gospel rest, is so fully, clearly, and emphatically settled by the inspired writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, that he must be but a very superficial reader who does not discover the end of the shadow, and the introduction of the substance, gospel rest. In Heb. 4:4, the apostle speaks of the seventh day, in which God rested from his works, &c., and brings forward that rest, in connection with the oath of God, that the carnal unbelieving Israelites should not enter into it. Now it is very certain that the apostle did not intend to say, that the carnal Israelites were prohibited by the oath of God from observing the seventh day Sabbath as enjoined in the fourth commandment of the decalogue, as well as in many other special precepts given by Moses; for no such oath as that had been taken; and no penal laws which our legislatures can enact or enforce can make the citizens of our states keep a seventh day, or a first day Sabbath with as much exactness as did the carnal Israelites the seventh day Sabbath which God enjoined upon them.

But although the Jews kept the Jewish Sabbath according to law, they did not, nor could they enter into the Lord's rest, because of unbelief. Unbelief was no impediment to their observing the seventh day as they were commanded; but in a state of unbelief, or in the absence of that faith of which Christ is the author and finisher, no man can enter into his rest. The Sabbath under the law was among the carnal ordinances, and belonged to a worldly sanctuary, (see Heb. 4:1-11,) and it was therefore adapted to their carnal state. But that the rest which remaineth, (after the withdrawing of the carnal ordinances) is spiritual, and no man having not the Spirit can enter into it. There is just as great difference between the Sabbath enjoined by the law on Israel,

and the christian Sabbath, as that between a bleeding lamb offered upon the Jewish altars, and the Lamb of God, whom they prefigured; and yet it seems to be one of the most difficult lessons for professing christians to learn, that the gospel Sabbath is a spiritual antitypical rest: designed not as a rest for the flesh, but for the spiritual creation. The idea of the seventh day Sabbath being continued, with the change only of the day from the seventh to the first, is prefectly preposterous, being sustained by about the same proof as that which can be brought for changing circumcision for baptism, and baptism for infant *rantism* or sprinkling, but no more. The same arguments which are brought for a perpetuation of the Sabbath as a legal institution on any day, first or seventh, would go just as far to prove the obligation of circumcision according to Moses' law, or the continuance of the Jewish priesthood, periodical sacrifices, &c., as they can do establish *new moons and Sabbath days.* With the same propriety might we urge upon Gentile christians the observance of the feast of the Passover as any other of those abrogated Jewish rites.

But it is argued that the Sabbath day was incorporated with the moral precepts of the law of God, and therefore is, and must of necessity be alike binding on all rational beings, throughout all time. But if this argument proves anything it proves too much for those who use it, for if the law of the Sabbath was a moral law no circumstance nor period can change the manner or time of its observance. If it were binding by a moral precept let it be remembered that moral precepts can admit of no changes, and this argument, if valid, would establish a *seventh day,* but not a *first day* Sabbath. But are we not indebted to tradition for the notion that the ten commandments are the moral law of God? That there were precepts of a moral nature written on the tables of stone we have no disposition to deny; but that the circumstance of their being written there constituted them a moral law would imply that man was not, until the giving of the law in that form, under moral obligation to God. But the fact that death reigned from Adam to Moses, and until (or before) the law sin was in the world, fully establishes the doctrine that man was created under the law of God. The law which was given to Israel on tables of stone was given to them as a covenant in which they were distinguished from all other nations under heaven; and although there were embraced in the commandments obligations such as the Gentiles were under, yet in that particular or covenant form of the ten commandments had only to do with Israel. Hence the Lord told Moses that it was a covenant which he would make with him and with the house of Israel; and it is referred to in the promise of a new covenant, that the new covenant should not be like that which he made with Israel in the day when he led them out of Egypt, &c.

Now, if there is a place in the bible where the observance of a Sabbath day is enjoined upon the Gentiles, or any Gentile, we have not been able to find it; and we will be greatly obliged to any person who will direct us to the chapter and verse. Or if it can be found we will be equally grateful for information where or when the Gentiles were ever charged with the sin of Sabbath breaking. We may as well look for charges against them for failing to be circumcised. But had the law of the Sabbath been a moral law it would have applied as well to Gentiles as to Jews. If it were moral it could not be typical or figurative. We not only find it given expressely as God's sign between himself and the nation of Israel, to be observed by them throughout their generations, but by an apostle divinely and infallibly inspired by the Holy Ghost it is classed with *holy days, new moons, meats, drinks, hand-writing of ordinances, &c.* See Col., where the apostle tells us not only that the Sabbath was a shadow, but that the substance or body of it was Christ. Then the seventh

day Sabbath was not the shadow or type of the first day Sabbath, but of a real substance which is Christ. Nor are we left to grope in the dark as to the direct and immediate application, as we have before shown that the rest which heaven born souls find in Jesus Christ is the substance or body which is Christ.

In the application of this figure we see how perfectly it describes the gospel rest.

1. The typical Sabbath was given only to Israel, and to them in covenant form, and to designate them as his peculiar people; so its antitype is given exclusively to those who, being Christ's are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise; as the exclusive property of those who are the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

2. As the Sabbath was a part of God's covenant to Israel, so the *rest* to which it pointed is a new covenant provision for a new covenant people.

3. As none but the legally circumcised tribes of Israel had anything to do with the type, so none but those who are Jews inwardly, whose circumcision is that of the heart, and whose praise is not of men but of God, can enter into this rest or anti-typical Sabbath.

4. As the keeping of the Jewish Sabbath required a strict abstinence from servile labor, so the gospel requires a perfect abstinence from all the works of the law as a ground of our justification before God.

5. As the Jewish Sabbath could not be kept on any other than the seventh day, or until the toil and labor of the six days was ended, so neither is it possible for the heirs of glory to enter into or enjoy the gospel rest until they are released from the bondage and dominion of the legal dispensation.

6. As the gathering of fuel, kindling of fires, thinking of one's own thoughts or speaking of one's own words was a desecration of that day, so the christian violates the spirit of the gospel by attempting, by what he may call *means*, or anything else, to furnish materials for a revival, or to kindle or get one up, or to rely on anything less or more than the gospel itself for light, warmth, comfort or defence; and so also the inventions of our own thoughts, or the utterance of words which God has not spoken, in a gospel sense is a desecration of the sacredness of the gospel Sabbath.

7. All those venders of merchandise who came from Tyre and other places to vend their wares, their victuals, &c., on the Sabbath day, interrupted the observance of the day by the children of Israel in the days of Nehemiah, so those modern venders of foreign merchandise, who come among the saints and lodge around the walls of Zion, professing to supply spiritual food for stipulated salaries, do also interrupt the true Israelites in their attendance on the privileges of the gospel, and break in upon their hours of rest. And as in the days of Nehemiah there were some Jews belonging to his company which were ever ready to encourage these traffickers on the Sabbath days, so there are always some among the members of the gospel church ready to transgress the order of the gospel by encouraging ware speculations in divinity, to break the rest of spiritual Israel by attempting to feed them upon the leeks and onions of Egypt, or the fish and other commodities of Tyre.

In the epistle to the Hebrews we find an exhortation to the New Testament saints to fear, lest any of them should *seem* to come short of the promised rest, after the example of those who could not enter into rest because of unbelief: "For we which have believed," says the apostle, "do enter into rest." And again, "Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." All chrisians have to maintain a conflict with doubts and unbelief; and when doubts and unbelief prevail, they cannot enjoy their Sabbatic rest, but seem to come short of it. When, however, these doubts are removed, and their

faith is in full exercise, it lays hold on the promises, and they are brought into that sweet enjoyment of rest to their souls. And all christians have found that in proportion to the power and prevalence of faith in them, their souls have found rest in Jesus. But alas! how can they rest on him as their sure foundation, when they lack the evidence that they are his; or while through unbelief they are led to doubt that he is their foundation, or that they have any special interest in him? Nothing can be a more direct violation of the gospel Sabbath, than the observance of the abrogated ordinances and rites of the old covenant; and Paul had just cause to fear that he had bestowed on his brethren labor in vain, when he saw them observing days and months and times and years, which course had a direct tendency to entangle them in the yoke of bondage. He commanded the Colossian brethren to let no man judge them in relation to holy days, new moons and Sabbaths; and enjoined on them to touch not, taste not and handle not any of these abolished rites; they belonged to the six days of labor, but not to the Sabbath of the Lord. The Jewish Sabbath continued but for a day, and was succeeded by days of labor and toil; but the gospel Sabbath is that in which there remaineth rest for the people of God. The gospel Sabbath dawned upon the church of God more than eighteen hundred years ago — when the Sun of Righteousness arose with healing in his wings, and must endure for ever. It is neither confined to the mountain of Samaria, nor to the ancient city of Jerusalem; nor is it to be observed or enjoyed on any particular days, or times, or seasons, but only as the weary soul shall be made to hear and obey the voice of Jesus, commanding him away from everything else to find rest in wearing his yoke and in bearing his burden.

There is a great stir at this time among the workmongrel tribes of antichrist, in regard to the sanctification of the first day of the week as a Sabbath; and from the zeal which they manifest they would, if it were in their power, move heaven and earth to bring us into bondage, even upon the subject of rest. But alas for them, they have never known what it is to rest in Jesus, nor can they know it, unless they shall be born of God; for they are like the troubled sea, which cannot rest, which continually casteth up mire and dirt.

Christian brethren, have we not wandered from the place of our rest? Have we not at times been led to cry out, as the spouse, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest the flock to rest at noon; for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?" — Cant. i. 7. And when we have heard the sweet response of the Beloved, saying, "Go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents," have we not in the language of our hearts ejaculated the words, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee?" Then let us "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not again entangled with the yoke of bondage." Let no man judge you in meats and drinks, holy days, new moons, and Sabbaths. These are matters between us and our God, and for the use or abuse of which we are not amenable to our fellow-man. Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshiping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind; and not holding the head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why as though living in the world are ye subject to ordinances which all are to perish with the using, after the commandments and doctrines of men. Touch not; taste not; handle not; is the solemn admonition of the apostle of our

Lord Jesus Christ. If when Christ died on the cross, to which he nailed all the hand-writing of legal ordinances, we were represented in his death, died with him, and to the law became dead by his body, if he was delivered up for our transgressions, and raised for our justification, — if he is to us the end of the law for righteousness — why should we belie our faith, and act so inconsistently with our profession, as to go back to the beggarly elements, and thereby betray a desire to be again in that bondage from which Christ has delivered us? Although Paul admits this voluntary humility, which is urged upon us in regard to abrogated rites and ordinances, *has a shew of wisdom in will worhsip,* it cannot have that effect in spiritual worship: let the will worshipers, arminians, workmongers and children of the bond woman monopolize this shew of wisdom, but, my soul, come not into their secret; "Return unto thy rest, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."

The words of the text at the head of our remarks, are peculiarly applicable to the case of a soul delivered from a state of trials, temptations and bondage. Although in our foregoing remarks we have alluded to the first entrance of quickened souls into gospel rest, the idea of returning to one's rest certainly implies that he has been there before. The children of God who have been brought into the light and liberty of the gospel, experienced deliverance from the yoke of bondage, and made partakers of that rest which the gospel is to them that believe, do sometimes through their unbelief transgress the principles of the gospel Sabbath. The moment that our faith yields to unbelief, we begin to do that which is not lawful for us to do on our spiritual Sabbath. When unbelief prevails, how soon the tempted, tried soul forsakes his rest, and like the dove which went from the ark, seeks throughout the broad expanse around him for something to rest upon. How in vain is his research, how unavailing are all his efforts to find a sanctuary, a Sabbath, or a place of rest while absent from the ark. The spiritual Israelite cannot wander far without thinking some of his own thoughts; and he will be very much exposed to speak some of his own words. From his doubting, unbelieving heart, such thoughts as these are apt to arise: Can it be possible that I have passed from death unto life? I find myself so cold, so stupid, and so vile, that I am led to doubt that I ever knew the Lord; all my former exercises must have been imaginary; I must have mistaken my exercises and mistaken the excitement and working of my fleshly mind and feelings, for the work of the Spirit; but if I were indeed a child of grace I should feel as a christian ought to feel. Ah, I did hope that I was delivered from sin, and from sinful thoughts, but now I think there never was a time when I was so filled with depravity. I look within me for an evidence that I am born of God, and am frightened at what I find within me. O, the corruption of my nature, the hidden depravity of my heart; all is confusion, darkness, murmuring, and unreconciliation to God. And, withal, such a torrent of wicked and blasphemous thoughts break forth, as to lead me to conclude that I am worse than I saw myself to be before I thought I had experience a deliverance from guilt and bondage. Is there a saint on earth who has not experienced much of what is described above? Certainly they all know something about these peculiar temptations, doubts and fears; therefore of them all, we inquire if they do enjoy a Sabbath of rest while their minds are distracted with doubt and unbelief. As well might we feel comfortable upon a bed of embers as to feel our souls at rest while unbelief prevails against our hope in the Redeemer. In this state of unbelief, we not only think our own thoughts and speak our own words, but we are very apt to look about us for a few sticks to make a little fire. We feel so cold, what can be done to warm us? and in this ex-

tremity we collect every thing that looks to us like fuel; some duties look as though they would burn with a little blowing, and perhaps afford a sufficient warmth to relieve us from this freezing state that we are in; and before we are aware we find ourselves gathering sticks and kindling fires. And in some extreme cases, perhaps, we have been tempted to borrow a little fire from strange altars to kindle with. We see that our neighbors, the Philistines, and the Moabites, and the Assyrians seem to be warm and animated, and conclude there cannot be much harm in trying the experiment, just to see if we cannot get warm by their fire; for we frequently hear them saying "Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire." But they find by sad experience that the enemies' fire cannot warm their souls; still they labor, and still they are heavy burdened, and still they find no rest to their souls. There were many ways in which the children of Israel transgressed the law of the Sabbath, and every way in which it was possible for them to do so, was figurative of the many ways in which heaven-born souls are tempted to wander from the place of their rest. No toils or labor at the works of the law, no hewing of cisterns, no gathering of sticks, no kindling of fires or any thing that the poor backsliding soul can perform will bring him back to the place of his rest. Like the Israelites in the type, he finds in bitterness of soul, that his Sabbath breaking brings bondage to his spirit, and death to his present enjoyments, until he hears the well-known voice behind him saying "This is the way; walk ye in it" He now sees and feels that he has departed from the place of his rest, is astonished at the ingratitude, unbelief, and jealousy of his own wandering heart; is melted down in tenderness at the glorious display of boundless goodness and grace of God which he now beholds, and is led to sing:

"He brings my wandering spirit back,
When I forsake his ways;
And leads me for his mercy's sake
In paths of truth and grace."

And from his very heart he says, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."

He is now fully satisfied that Christ is his only resting place, that the gospel is his only rest; that to depart from Christ, or turn away from the spirit of the gospel, is to depart from the place where he causeth his flock to rest at noon.

"For the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." The goodness of God leadeth to repentance. How the poor wandering, unbelieving heart is made to repent and to dissolve in love, in grief, and in gratitude, as he now beholds new manifestations of his faithfulness and loving kindness. Return, O my soul! Earth has no charms for thee.

"Wretch that I was to wander thus
In chase of false delight;
Let me be fastened to thy cross,
Rather than lose the sight."

In returning to our rest, we turn away from our own ways, our own thoughts, and our own works, and from everything that conflicts with the gospel; and how sweet and heavenly the exercise, when we can rest upon Christ as our foundation, receive and trust in him, and rest upon his promises, feeling their application by the Spirit to our souls. We can then dismiss our doubts and fears, and rejoice in the sure mercies of our God. Sustained by that almighty power that bears up heaven and earth.

"How can I sink with such a prop
As my eternal God?"

"They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed." So very different is the spirit of the gospel from that of the law, the very duties which the gospel requires of us are essentially connected with our rest. They do not fatigue the child of grace as Jewish rites fatigued the carnal Israelites. They that wait on the Lord find their strength renewed. They

learn of Jesus, and bearing his yoke, or adhering to his commandments, they find rest to their souls. The institutions of the gospel, the ordinances of the house of God, the privileges of the sanctuary, of the closet, and of communion with heaven, cannot weary the soul that rests in Jesus.

His laws are written in their hearts, his government is supreme in their souls; they love his law, they love his government, and cannot rest in anything short of them. While the way of the transgressors is hard, and the wicked are as the troubled sea that cannot rest.

"Go ye that rest upon the law,
And toil, and seek salvation there,
Look to the flame that Moses saw,
And shrink and tremble in despair.
"But, I'll retire beneath the cross,
Savior, at thy feet I'll lie,
And the keen sword that justice draws,
Flaming and red, shall pass me by."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe July, 1945.)

OBITUARIES

GRACE IONA ETTA RHODES

Our dearly beloved Sister Grace Rhodes was born to Frank Greenlee and the former Cordie Kidwell, March 10, 1900 in Tennessee. The family moved to Texas when she was two years of age. She married Mack C. Rhodes May 14, 1918 who preceded her in death February 13, 1965.

Survivors include two sons, Milton Rhodes and Curtis Rhodes; one daughter Mrs. Maxine Newsome; two brothers; three sisters; nine grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Sister Rhodes was a faithful member of the Good Hope Primitive Baptist Church. She fell asleep in Christ Jesus November 6, 1975. The faith once delivered unto her kept her looking to Christ Jesus in great hope of eternal life to the very end of her earthly journey. Her soft gentle smile, her kindly face and presence will be greatly missed by the members and friends. We at Good Hope Church trust to humbly submit to the will of our heavenly Father who doeth all things well. We deeply sympathize with the bereaved family of the sweet mother in Israel.

Her funeral services were conducted by E. J. Lambert and the writer in the Winnsboro Funeral Chapel. Burial was in the Good Hope Cemetery.

Written by request of Good Hope Church in conference Saturday, December 27, 1975 and resolved that one copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication and one copy be kept for church records.

Joe L. Hamrick
E. J. Lambert, Moderator
Gertrude Jones, Clerk

MYRTLE INEZ SMITH

Our highly esteemed sister, Myrtle Smith, was born to P. L. Stunkard and the former Alice Ledbetter, April 12, 1900 in Franklin County, Texas. She was married to Euell Smith who preceded her in death February 19, 1965. There were no children born to this union; however, Sister Smith and her husband raised her neice, Polly Peals and their home was a gathering place for many young people who delighted in the warm atmosphere and kindness found there. In later years, due to poor health, Sister Smith had to leave her home and live in a nursing home in Winnsboro. She never complained and enjoyed visits from her many friends. She enjoyed reading the *Signs of the Times* as long as she was able and loved to talk concerning the scriptures and what she hoped Christ had done for her. She was a faithful member of Good Hope Church and attended regularly until poor health prevented it. Her absence was greatly felt by all the members and friends.

Survivors include Polly Peals; six sisters, Mrs. Earl King, Mrs. Getrtrude Jones, Mrs. Pinkie Bass, Mrs. Cecil Jordan, Mrs. Mary Barker, and Mrs. Syble Carnes; several step sisters; neices and nephews.

Sister Smith was called by her God, October 20, 1975. Her funeral services were conducted by Elder E. J. Lambert, Dalton Graves, and the writer. She was laid to rest in the Good Hope Cemetery to await the resurrection morn.

Written by request of Good Hope Church while in conference Saturday, December 27, 1975 and resolved that one copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication and one copy for the church record.

E. J. Lambert, Moderator
Gertrude Jones, Clerk
Joe L. Hamrick

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call Sister Mary B. Cox from our midst.

Sister Cox was born October 7, 1906 and died December 21, 1975, making her stay on earth 69 years. She was blessed to attend our

church for many years before she joined on April 1, 1973. She was the daughter of the late Brother Clay Brown and Sister Lossie Brown who were also faithful members of our church.

Sister Mary was a great believer of salvation by the Grace of God. She always praised her God and was glad to be with the Primitive Baptist. To know Sister Mary was to love her and we feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Therefore we Resolve:

(1) That we send our sincere Sympathy to her family, and we trust she is resting in peace.

(2) That 3 copies of this Resolution be made, one for the family, one for the church records, and one to be published in the *Signs of the Times.*

This done by order of Conference at our January meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

SISTER ANNIE YOPP

We, the Church at Muddy Creek desire to write a few lines in memory of our dearly loved sister, Annie Yopp. She was born May 30, 1885 and died August 13, 1974 at the age of 89 years.She offered to the church at Muddy Creek on September 28, 1969. She was received and was baptized the same day, by Elder Harmon Brown and Elder L. L. Yopp.

She was a faithful member to her church. She became so afflicted she could not attend her meetings but she enjoyed the Brothers and Sisters going to see her and hearing them sing those good old hymns.

She spent her last three months in the nursing home at Jacksonville, North Carolina. It was here she was called home.

She was first married to Willie Hunter and they had three children. We miss her a lot at church, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was preached by the Elder William Everett from Rocky Mount, N. C. Her body was laid to rest in the family cemetery near home beneath a beautiful mound of flowers. There to wait the glorious resurrection day.

Written by Debbie Simpson
Stewart D. Brown, Clerk
Elder W. L. Everette, Moderator

A MEMORIAL TO SISTER MARY JANE HORNE

We, the Church at Muddy Creek bow in humble submission to the will of a loving Heavenly Father who called our dear Sister Mary Jane Horne to be with Him September 1, 1974. She died in Onslow Memorial Hospital after a short illness. Her health hadn't been good for quite sometime but she was well enough to attend her quarterly meeting fourth weekend in August, and enjoyed it very much.

She was born an Albino child in Onslow County, February 27, 1891 and died at the age of 83. Her parents were William Ira Horne and Anna Futral. They were married March 2, 1876 and this union was blessed with nine children. Sister Mary's mother died May 30, 1893. Later her father married a second time to Ellen Brown Lanier. This union was blessed with 3 children.

She united with Primitive Baptist Church Saturday night, April 6, 1946, first Sunday in April at Brother Lewis William's home. Baptism was the following morning at Nine Mile Creek by Elder Lonnie Yopp. Sister Mary was a faithful devoted member at Muddy Creek and all sister churches so long as her health permitted. If she didn't have a ride from home she would walk to where she could get a ride to attend her meetings. She firmly believed the Doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God and was very interested in the welfare of her church.

I felt very close to her and loved her so much as a sister and a very dear friend. There were times when I could help her when she was in need of a helping hand. She seemed to appreciate it a lot and said she would never forget my willingness to help her in a time when she needed it so much.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder W. L. Everette at Muddy Creek Church, Tuesday at two o'clock. This was by her request and the members sang two hymns she loved so much as requested. Relatives and friends, also brethren and sisters in the churches were there to pay their respects to Sister Mary. "To know her was to love her." Her body was taken to Nick Fountain Cemetery at Back Swamp where it was laid to rest beside her sister "Lina" as she was known by her family and friends. They'd agreed while they were both living they wanted a double monument for their graves. The beautiful array of flowers manifested the love of all whom had come to know her. We feel our loss is her eternal gain and she is resting peacefully in the arms of her Dear Saviour. We all miss her so very much.

Written by a Sister that loved her.
Arlene Brown Williams
Stewart D. Brown, Clerk
Elder W. L. Everette, Moderator

HAZEL L. ROWLAND

In sadness I attempt to write a few words in memory of my beloved neice and our Sister in Christ. She was born May 12, 1917 and died December 7, 1975. She Joined Springfield Primitive Baptist Church June 7, 1975. She was a firm believer in salvation by the Grace of God, believing it was all fixed before time. Many times I heard her say during her sickness she didn't think anything would take her from this life before the time alloted for her. I know we will miss her very much, yet knowing our wonderful God never makes a mistake we feel that our loss is her gain.

She leaves to mourn their loss, her parents Brother Calvin Mayhew and Myrtle Mayhew, Gretna. Her husband Bland Rowland, one daughter Mrs. Charlie Bowler, one son Danny Rowland; two sisters Mrs. Reese Younger and Mrs. Jimmie Bowler, three brothers Lanier Mayhew, Reed Mayhew, and Stover Mayhew all of Gretna, Va.; three grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Her funeral was conducted at Springfield Church by her Pastor Elder O. K. Tench assisted by W. C. Harrelson and Ernest Roebuck.

Her body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Gretna Burial Park to await the second coming of our Lord.

Written by L. R. Willis

BROTHER ALBERT D. FOOKS

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call home Brother Albert D. Fooks. He was born July 7, 1895, son of Gelbert H. and Annie Perdue Fooks. He was born in Worchester County near Snow Hill, Md.

He was married to Beatrice Hammond on June 6, 1923. There were seven children born to this union. His wife, Sister Beatrice and six children survive; William Fooks, Berlin, Md., Sister Roselee Atkinson, Delmar, Md., Martha Quillen, Salisbury, Md., Alberta Lynch, Mary Jane Age, and Barbara Parks of Snow Hill, Md. Also two sisters, Virgie Hales and Nora Perdue, Snow Hill, Md., eighteen grandchildren, and three great grandsons survive.

He united with the Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church on August 31, 1958.

We were baptized together, by our pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler. We have traveled together many miles with our wives to the different churches; he was a lovely and dependable brother, we will always cherish the memory of fellowship with him.

His funeral was preached by our pastor, Elder James R. Poole. He was laid to rest in the Snow Hill Church Cemetery to wait the glorious Resurrection.

1. John 3:2 — Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

This is submitted by special request by one who loved him very much.

Brother Frank A. Holland

SISTER LOLA SHORT

It is indeed with much sadness that I attempt to write a few words in memory of one I love and esteem so highly.

It pleased our Dear Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our Sister Lola D. Short on November 4, 1975. She was born in Pittsylvania County on July 25, 1895 to the late Robert and Octavia Dalton.

On December 27, 1918, she was married to John L. Short who survives her. Other survivors are, one son, Marvin C. Short; two brothers, Brother Tilman Dalton and Brother Noel Dalton; three sisters, Mrs. Nannie D. Fitzpatrick, Sister Clydie D. Pickeral and Sister Jennie Dalton Shelton.

Sister Lola united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on July 27, 1924 and was a very lovely and devoted member. She always filled her seat as long as her health permitted. She was a good wife, mother and neighbor and was loved by all who knew her. She always enjoyed visits from her friends and brethren during her long illness. I can recall on many occasions when we were blest to visit her, she always requested us to sing the songs of Zion and I feel we were blest to feel the love that flows from heart to heart and from breast to breast at times when we visited with her. I believe Sister Lola was made reconciled to her illness and to death. She will be greatly missed by her family, friends and brethren. May we all be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father who never makes a mistake. We feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted on November 6, 1975 at 2:00 P. M. at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by her beloved Pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and Elder Raymond Goad. Her body was laid to rest in the Church Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the glorious resurrection when Jesus shall come again to gather all his children home.

Written By: Marvin Brumfield
Elder O. K. Tench — Moderator
L. H. Doss — Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 144 DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1976 NO. 5

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5/76
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

AGREEMENT BETWEEN ELDER JOHN LELAND AND JAMES MADISON COMMEMORATED

An interesting and important event in American history was recalled on October 4, 1953, when the Leland-Madison Monumental Park was dedicated near Orange, Virginia. The site of the park marks the place where Elder John Leland and James Madison met to discuss their differences pertaining to the ratification of the Constitution of the United States. This was in 1788.

The Constitution, as it was drawn up by the Convention in Philadelphia in 1787, did not contain a guarantee of religious liberties and free speech. Elder Leland, and those he represented, opposed the ratification by Virginia unless such provisions were included. This was a large and influential group of citizens, and it was not likely that the Constitition would be ratified without their support.

The following is quoted from an article in a Washington newspaper by Dr. Joseph M. Dawson:

"Authorities agree that Leland was a key man in obtaining Virginia's ratification of the Federal Constitution. Without Virginia's favorable action, in all probability the Constitution would never have been ratified.

"The Rev. John Leland though a native of Massachusetts, owes his place in history to his activities in Virginia from the time he went to Culpepper in 1775 to his return to Massachusetts in 1791. In that 16-year period, he proved to be a statesman as well as a flaming evangelist. Elected to the Virginia Assembly, he collaborated with Washington, Jefferson, Madison and Mason in behalf of religious liberty. He also baptized more than 700 converts in the region between the Ketockton Mountains and the York River. He was affectionately called Parson.

"While Leland enjoyed the Friendship of the leaders mentioned above, he opposed Madison's election to the Virginia Ratification Assembly because Madison's document lacked a Bill of Rights. At a picnic near Orange, the two men composed their differences and agreed on an amendment. Then Leland pledged his support, with the result that Madison was seated and Virginia ratified the Federal Constitution as amended.

"In the meantime Leland, on behalf of the Baptists, had written George Washington, saying, "when the Constitution first made its appearance in Virginia, we, as a society, feared that the liberty of conscience, dearer to us than property or life, was not sufficiently secured . . . . Under the regal government mobs, fines, bonds and prisons were our frequent repast."

"Although Washington belonged to the Established Church of Virginia, he sympathized deeply, as evidenced by his reply: "If I could have entertained the slighest apprension that the Constitution formed by the conventions where I had the honor to preside might possibly endanger the rights of any

ecclesiastial society, certainly I would have never placed my signature to it; and if I now could conceive that the general Government might ever be so administered as to render the liberty of conscience insecure, I beg you will be persuaded that no one would be more zealous than myself to establish effectual barriers against the horrors of spiritual tyranny and every species of religious persecution."

The first amendment to the Constitution, referred to above, reads as follows.

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press; or the right of the people peacefully to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

There is little mention in secular history of the part our religious fore-fathers took in securing this freedom for us, but we should be most grateful that in the purpose of God, He gave us men of courage to fight for and secure our priceless heritage. —J. D. W.

(The above is re-published from the December, 1953 issue of the *Signs* because of the importance of the events narrated, which led to the radification of the Federal Constitution as amended.

See the First Amendment quoted above. — J.D.W.)

HAS A LONGING IN HER HEART

1020 S. E. 11th Ct.,
Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. 33316

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I wish to renew my subscription for two more years, with the rest for the Fund.

I enjoy reading it so much. We don't have a Primitive Baptist Church here in Ft. Lauderdale. I united with the Mechanicsville Primitive Baptist in High Point, N. C. in the year of 1945. All my family were of the Primitive Baptist Faith. One night I had a vision, I thought it was the end of the world, and I was out in the yard kneeling, trying to pray. I looked up and the whole world was on fire, and Jesus was over me. He said to me, "Fear not, your sins shall be forgiven, and you shall be saved." I awoke crying and rejoicing. But have come through many trials and tribulations since that. I know that we can't live on flowery beds of ease in this low ground of sin and sorrow. We have to be let down, to be able to be brought up again. But I love the good Lord with all my heart, and realize what a poor sinner I am, begging for His mercy; and knowing without Him I can do nothing.

We have been living here sixteen years. My husband is a Missionary Baptist, so I go with him on Sunday morning; but it doesn't satisfy that longing in my heart to hear the truth preached as I believe it.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. Uzenia Blackwell

THANKFUL FOR BELIEF AND HOPE

S. Charleston, W. Va. 25303

Dear Brother Wood:

I notice that my subscription is about to expire, so I am sending a check for another year, the remainder to be used as needed.

As I have said many times before, without this paper my soul would become hungry for the sweet truths it contains. All the articles are precious to me, but the one written by Troy G. Shepard in the January *Signs* seemed to express my sentiments precisely.

I feel to be one of least, but, if not deceived, I thank my Lord for this glorious belief and a sweet hope in Him; without that I would have nothing to live for, nor anything to die for.

I am so sorry that I failed to meet with you dear brethren at Mt. Zion Church the 4th Sunday in December. We had to return home before your meeting day. I am anticipating a visit to Virginia this summer, with the an-

ticipation of seeing you then.

Hope you and Sister Wood are well. Give her my love.

In bonds of love,
Mrs. Lester (Verta) Haning

New Horizons,
1140 Bloor Street # 1213B
Toronto, Ontario,
Canada.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed find money order in memory of our former pastor's dear wife, and dear sister in the church, Esther Ruston. We miss them both, but they wanted to go "Home", in their later years, and we cannot mourn as some do, as we have our very precious hope.

God has been good to us as a church to give us such a blessed couple, and to answer their prayers and ours as a church for two young ministers to carry on to speak the truth as we feel has been revealed to us. We do appreciate the ministers coming to Canada to bring "glad tidings" and encourage us.

Due to mail strike we did miss the *Signs,* but all three of mine came, and I felt they would be a feast for me. I enjoyed your Editorial in the January *Signs,* Elder Wood. All the writings are good spiritual food for me. May all you editors be blessed by our God, as you said, "who still is in command."

Yours humbly, a little sister in hope,

Verna Carscadden

SAVED BY GRACE ALONE

6290 S. Lakeshore Drive
Shreveport, La. 71109

Dear Brother Spangler and Editors:

I have enjoyed many years; and still do.

I see my subscription is almost up so am sending a check for one year's renewal —use the rest as pleases you.

The article in the December *Signs* by Elder Silas Durand is so good to read. I feel so alone and sinful in this world of trouble. I can go and hear our wonderful little preacher explain the great way of salvation by grace, and know he cannot do that by himself. Brother Loyd Wall is our Moderator. I feel my time is almost spent in this world of sin, of which I feel the chief sinner. I will be eighty-four in February. I don't know if I ever had an experience of grace or not. But the little hope I have I would not take the world for it, if I could.

In 1920 I was sick in bed, and it seemed that all at once I saw the darkest place I would go when I died; and I knew that no human could help me: only God could keep me from stepping on in that awful place. Then I heard the words, "You have got to die." O how heavy my heart was! I began to read, but all that I read in the Bible was against me. The doctor came and he asked me what I was worrying about. I thought he wanted the truth, and I said, Where will I go when I die? He said, I cannot do anything about that. And I replied, How well I know you can't. It seemed that heavy weight was in my heart for a year, and I could find no relief.

One night I dreamed, Well I have to die, but I do not dread it. I looked up toward heaven and saw Jesus dressed in white, and a great chain so white spread around. When I awoke that heavy feeling was gone. Oh, how proud I felt. I went over to my mother's and told her; and she began to cry. I thought at such good news, why would she cry; I soon learned why.

This is just a little of what I hope I have had in my travels in this sinful world. We are saved by grace, and grace alone. I don't know why Brother Spangler and all, I am writing this. Do as you please with it. It seems I cannot stop. No man or person can do anything: we are weak but can be made strong by our Redeemer. All our help must come from God and Him alone.

May He keep you all to send the good news to His lonely sheep that are scat-

tered over the face of the earth. God bless you all.

A sister I hope,
Mrs. J. S. Moffett

JUDGEMENT BEGINNING AT HOUSE OF GOD

Rt. 2, Box 78A
Strong, Ark. 71765

Dear Editors:

I enclose a $4.00 check for the renewal of my subscription. I enjoy reading the *Signs* and do not want to miss any copies. I enjoy reading the precious truths it contains.

In the November issue under *Voices of the Past,* Elder Beebe wrote concerning the *Judgement Seat of Christ,* what and where is it. I agree with Elder Beebe's writings. This is not spoken of as a seat or place of Judgement in a distant world, or in some other state of being than the present. God has already seated his King upon his holy city of Zion. (Psalm 2:6) And unto his Son he has said, "Thy throne O God, is forever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre" (Psalm 45:6) "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgement unto the Son: that all should honor the Son." (John 5:22)

One place in the scriptures it mentions about the judgement beginning at the house of God. I believe His people's sins are open beforehand, going to judgement here. "Some men's sins are opened before hand, going before to judgement; and some men they follow after." (1 Timoty 5:4) ". . . for we shall all stand before the judgement seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." (Romans 14:10-12)

I believe God's people acknowledge their sins to God while here, and their sins are ever before them, as it was with David. I cannot help but believe that the Lord is our Judge and lawgiver, "Whereof the Holy Ghost also is witness to us: for after that he had said before. This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." (Hebrews 10:15-17) Precious Words! "This people have I formed for myself: they shall shewforth my praise." How good it is to sing praises to His holy name, when blessed of the Lord to sing with the Spirit and with the understanding also, as Paul mentioned in some of his epistles.

In the scriptures we read where Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world." And again he said to his disciples when he was with them in person, "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Luke 22:-29, 30) "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and kingdom." (2 Timothy 4:1)

We read in Matthew, 16th chapter, "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here which shall not taste death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." I believe that Peter, James and John were the three disciples that the Lord mentioned, that should not taste death till they see the son of man coming in his kingdom. I believe they saw Jesus coming with power and glory of his Father in his kingdom, in the transfiguration of Jesus on the mount.

"The Lord shall reign forever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the Lord."

I love the people of God that are of Zion.

Mrs. Lula B. Fox

PRESENT STATE OF RELIGION

By William Gadsby, London 1841
(Continued)

Inv. Do not be so uncharitable. Be advised, and give way a little to the bulk of professors, and, like them, let your charity be universal. Love all, take in all, embrace all, and then you will act like a modern Christian.

Love-Truth. Well, but after all you have said, I can assure you that charity is not quite so extensive as you intimate; for there is one class of professors that Universal Charity hates in her very soul, and is warning her pupils to beware of, on all occasions.

Inv. Indeed! what sort of outlandish beings must they be then? for, to my knowledge, she has united together some who pretend to believe in the doctrines of election and predestination, and others that say they are dammable doctrines; some who say the sinner is justified by the righteousness of Christ imputed, and others who say it is imputed nonsense; some who believe the Spirit must apply the word to the mind, and others who say the word is sufficient of itself, independently of the Spirit's influence; some who profess to believe that except a man be born again he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, and others who say there is no such thing as being born again; some who say they believe in the essential Diety of Jesus Christ and the atonement made for sin by the God-Man Mediator, and others who boldly deny both; some who will say that sinners are saved by grace through faith and that not of themselves, and others who say it is of themselves; some who say the ransomed shall be saved with an everlasting salvation, and others who roundly assert that there are thousands in hell for whom Christ shed his blood; some who say that God's people shall never finally fall, and others who say that they may; and some who say that God will accomplish all the good pleasure of his will in the salvation of his elect, and others who say that he has willed the salvation of all men. Now all these have that one and the self-same spirit, *Universal Charity,* united together in one bond of perfect union; so that if there are any that her loving arms cannot embrace, they must be a wonderful set of creatures indeed! Do have the goodness to tell me who they are, and what they are called?

Love-Truth. Called! Why Universal Charity calls them *Antinomians,* bigots, narrow-spirited, and many ugly names beside.

Inv. Antinomian! Why that is as frightful a name as the term *heretic* was in the days of Queen Mary.

Love-Truth. You are exactly right, and it answers the very same end; for then, if a servant of Christ was enabled to confound a bishop, a priest, or any other deluded Papist, with the word of God and sound experience, the strongest argument they were able to bring was, "You are a wicked heretic;" and to this moment men are taught to despise the children of God, and call them *Antinomians,* and many of God's weaklings are frightened at the idea of going to hear a man who has experienced a divine change, and contends earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, because they are told he is an *Antiniomian.* I was once in company with four or five persons, all members of one church, who told me I was an *Antinomian;* and when I asked them what an *Antinomian* was, they honestly said they did not know, only their minister said I was one. Thus *Antinomian* is a kind of bugbear word to frighten people from the truth.

Inv. But will you have the goodness to tell me what the term means, and why Universal Charity calls people by such a frightful name?

Love-Truth. I will, in the first place, as well as I am able, give you the outlines of these people's faith, and the truths they preach; and then we will a little investigate the meaning of the term, and show to whom it is applicable.

Inv. With all my heart; and be as concise as possible. But wait a moment, for yonder comes John Demure and

Samuel Trifle, perhaps they will stop and hear.

Love-Truth. They are both enemies to the truth, and, if they stop, you will find them out.

Inv. Say you so? Well, here they come, and at all events I will ask them. How do you both? Friend Love-Truth and I have been talking about religion, and he is just going to state some of the sentiments of those people called *Antinomians;* but I wished him to stop till you came up, not doubting but you would wish to hear.

Demure. Antinomians are a very wicked set of men indeed! I should almost think it a crime to speak of them; but as you wish me to stop, I will comply with your request.

Trifle. I have heard our minister trim them famously many times; and, if I mistake not, he was sent for thirty-six miles on purpose to do it; and so zealous was he in the business, that he preached four times in one day, and I assure you he did it to a nicety. For my part, I was vastly pleased. But at your request, I will stop and hear.

Love-Truth. I have heard speak of trimmings before now, and I have been told that people mostly pay dear for them; and I am greatly mistaken if some of *these* trimmings are not very dearly bought. But to return to our subject. These *Antinomians,* as Universal Charity calls them, maintain and preach most of the doctrines contained in the articles of the Church of England; but what makes the most stir, and for which they are called by this name, are the following things.They believe that Jehovah, in eternity, or before time, chose unto himself a people for his own glory, and that he did this independently of any goodness he saw in, or done by them, but merely as an act of his own sovereign pleasure, "according as he hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy (not because they *were* holy, but that they *should* be holy) and without blame before him in love, having predestinated them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. For the children not being yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of him that calleth." (Rom. ix. 11.) As it is written, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." (Jer. xxxi. 3.) Thus it appears that God's everlasting love is the cause of his calling them. They also maintain that man is so awfully fallen by sin, that, while in an unregenerate state he can do nothing but sin; for they have not faith, and without faith it is impossible to please God. They also believe that every holy breathing, panting, longing, groaning, thirsting desire of the soul is implanted by the good Spirit of God; for all their springs are in him; and it is God who worketh all their works in them. Every good gift and every perfect gift cometh from above. (James i. 17.) They believe that no man can know any more of God, to any good purpose, than God is pleased to teach him; seeing it is the Spirit's work to take of the things of Christ, and show or reveal them to the church. They also maintain that no sinner can come to Christ, except the Father, which sent him, draw him; and that a sinner will never come to Christ to be healed before he is wounded; to be filled before he is empty; to be clothed before he is naked; to be washed before he is made to see and feel himself filthy; nor will he run to Christ for shelter before Moses has burned his house over his head; flee for refuge before he is aware of the storm; nor want to be hid in Christ before his sins have found him out, and he can hide himself no longer; that he will never hunger and thirst after righteousness so long as God will let him feed upon vanity; nor in reality cry, "Lord, save me, or I perish," before he finds himself in a perishing condition; nor submit to Christ and bend to his sceptre, before God, (by the power of his omnipotent grace,) humbles his proud

heart, and brings him into the dust.

Demure. You make my very blood run cold; I cannot bear to hear you any longer; God will never save a sinner, if the sinner does not first seek after him; and as an eminent divine observes, "we are every moment pleasing or displeasing to God according to our works." I believe I am in the favour of God, because I have lived these six months without committing one sin, but that damnable doctrine of *Election* my soul perfectly hates; and the things you have spoken of are connected with it I am sure; therefore I reject it altogether. I would sooner be a Deist than of such a religion. All men have a *chance* to be saved, and God wishes them all to be saved; and it is their own fault if they are not, say what you will!

Trifle. Though I do not altogether agree with brother Demure, yet I hate such strait-laced work.

Love-Truth. One at a time if you please. Let me just have a word or two with Demure, and then say what you have to say. He has just observed that he has not committed sin for six months; but Job says, "If I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse;" (Job ix. 20;) and it does not require an eagle's eye to see that this is the very case with Demure; for he is so full of perverseness that his very eyes sparkle with indignation against the doctrine of God's sovereignty; and he that is perfect has maliciously called the doctrines of the Bible *damnable;* notwithstanding that we have proved it both from the Old and New Testaments. He appears to be one of those characters whose damnation, Paul said, slumbered not, (Rom. iii. 8,) who resist the truth. As for his sinless perfection, Solomon points out to a nicety, for the Lord says by him, "There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness." (Prov. xxx. 12.)

Demure. It would have been well if some part of Paul's epistles had never been written. Let me hear no more about Paul, for I have read his 7th, 8th, and 9th chapters to the Romans till I have been ready to burn them; and did I not believe that Paul spoke of himself when in a carnal state, in his 7th chapter, I should hardly believe him a Christian. I am sure I feel nothing of those things he talks about, neither did the great Mr. Wesley, nor Mr. Fletcher; they knew better. I have just been reading Mr. Wesley's* thoughts upon good works, and in the Minutes of the Conference of 1770 it is stated, that Methodist preachers "had received it as a maxim, that a man is to do nothing *in order* to justification." But in these minutes he declares, *"nothing can be more false.* Whoever desires to find favour with God, should *cease from evil, and learn to do well.* So God teaches us by the prophet Isaiah. Whoever repents should do *works meet for repentance.* And if this is not *in order* to find favour what does he do them for? Is not this salvation by works? Not by the *merit* of works, but by works as a condition. What have we then been disputing about for these thirty years? I am afraid *about words.* As to *merit* itself, of which we have been so dreadfully afraid, we are rewarded *according* to our works; yea, *because of our works.* How does this differ from *for the sake of our works?* And how differs this from *secundum merita operum,* as our works *deserve?* Can you split this hair? I doubt I cannot." This is my faith also, and I bless God that I feel the reward of my own works every day, and am always happy. But to believe in salvation without works, is wretched *Antinomianism.*

Love-Truth. Be assured of this, that what you and your oracle, Mr. Wesley, say about salvation, differs from what God's oracles say as much as heaven differs from hell; and this you will find if you examine the word of God. Hence, God by the mouth of Isaiah brings a variety of charges against Israel, and sums them up in saying, "But thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities." (Isaiah xliii. 24.) Now if Wesley and

you be right, there can be no hope for such monsters, but to hell they must go; and indeed it is a wonder of wonders that there is any ground of hope. But, God be praised, so it is; for says Jehovah, in the very next verse, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Now if this be the word of God, what becomes of your plan of being saved according to your works? If this is not salvation all of grace, I know not what grace is. And to this agreeth the New Testament; as it is written: "Even so then at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace; and if by grace then is it no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works then it is no more grace, otherwise work is no more work." (Rom. xi. 5, 6.) "For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. ii. 8, 9.) Boasting is excluded, and if God had ever made known to you what sin is, and where it lives, and caused you to know him by faith, it would have excluded boasting in you. But you are a total stranger to that salvation the Bible speaks of. The church are "saved and called with a holy calling, not according to their works, but according to God's own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Now if you and Wesley be right, the Bible is wrong. I will not say you are not Bible characters; no, for you are there described as "seeking salvation by the works of the law, and stumbling at that stumbling-stone." (Rom. ix. 32, 33.)

Demure. You had better say that that man of God, Mr. Wesley, is gone to hell.

Love-Truth. I have nothing to do with that; God only knows; all I can say is, that if he died in the state he was in when he made the confession that you have repeated, he is not in heaven; for God in his word declareth that "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. x. 10.) "And out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." (Matt. xii. 34.) So that when such a declaration is made, it proves that there is a whole troop of the same sort behind; but "he that is of God heareth God's word;" (John viii. 47;) and this is quite opposite to God's word, therefore cannot be of God. As for your living without sin, your very countenance proves that at this time you are boiling full indignation against the scriptures I have quoted; and if that be not sin, what is?

Demure. Say what you will, you shall never move me from my views. I am sure you are a wicked *Antinomian.* If the doctrine of election be true, God must be a tyrant; yea, worse than Pharoah a thousand times. If he gives his grace to one, and not to all men, he can be no better than a monster.

Love-Truth. Who is this coming towards us?

Demure. It is one of my neighbors, named Insolence.

Love-Truth. Is that his proper name, or is it a name of reproach?

Demure. It is his proper name, and if his business is with us, you will soon be convinced of it.

Insolence. Mr. Demure, I have been seeking you for some time, and now have found you at last.

Demure. What do you want with me?

Insolence. Want! I am likely to be sold up for rent, and I want you to give me the money to pay it with.

Demure. I pay your rent! Not I indeed! What right have I to pay your rent?

Insolence. Sir, you have plenty of money, and you paid the rent of Thomas Deceit the other day; and you have as great a right to pay my rent as his; what had he done to deserve it more than I?

Demure. I acknowledge I did pay his rent, and that he deserved it no more than you; but does that lay me under any obligation to pay yours? Is not my money my own, and is it not right in me to give it to whom I will, without being insulted by you? Surely it is.

Insolence. No; you have as great a right to give to me as to him, and you are nothing but a partial tyrant if you do not.

Demure. Begone man; I will not pay your rent, for I have no right so to do.

(Insolence goes away foaming with madness, crying, "You tyrant; you are nothing but a tyrant.")

Love-Truth. Mr. Demure, the man seems very much offended at you.

Demure. Yes, that he is indeed; did you ever see such an insolent fellow in your life?

Love-Truth. Yes, Sir, the world abounds with such. But suppose you had brought up this man from a child, and he had always been waiting for an opportunity to kill you, and had robbed you again and again; suppose he was in the habit of ridiculing you, reproaching your character, spitting in your face, despising you in all you said and did, and yet told you that you were a tyrant if you did not still keep him, and give him a part of your estate into the bargain; what should you think of him then?

Demure. I should think it just to send him to prison.

Love-Truth. Well, now bring the matter home. Man is born like a wild ass's colt, and goes astray from the womb, speaking lies. Every imagination of his heart is evil, only evil, and that continually. Thus he lives in open rebellion against the God of all his mercies, and, as much as in him lies, robs God of his glory, despises his holy name and way, and were it in his power, would dethrone him. Now what claim can this man have upon God for an eternal inheritance? and what can be greater insolence than for this man to tell the great Jehovah that he is a tyrant if he does not give him a chance of being saved?

Demure. But if all men are alike, and God has predestinated some to glory, and left the rest, is it not acting a most tyrannical part indeed?

Love-Truth. And so you are one of those insolent beings who exalt themselves above God? You help one man who is in trouble, and call another insolent for demanding the same assistance. And you say you have a right to do what you will with your own; yet you say God is a tyrant if he disposes of his blessings as he pleases. For shame! blush if you can! Your insolence exceeds that of the devil himself.

Demure. I do not understand you, but I hate that damnable doctrine of election.

Love-Truth. Then you hate God, for it is of God; and if you were of God, you would hear his word.

Trifle. Although I do not altogether agree with Mr. Demure, I am far from agreeing with you; for I think you have got too much of the bigot in you. Besides, according to your account, there is something very gloomy in religion. I remember our dear minister once observing that Jesus Christ disliked to dwell in a sad heart, as much as a man disliked to dwell in a dungeon; and I thought it a wise observation. All we have to do is to credit the gospel, and walk uprightly in the world, and then take the comfort of the gospel; so that I am mostly happy myself, if the things of this world go on to my mind.

Love-Truth. I heard your minister make the same observation, and almost trembled for him at the time, it was so contrary to God's word; "But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word." (Isa. lxvi. 2.) "The Lord is nigh unto them who are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." (Ps. xxxiv. 18.) Yea, the great Head of the church says, "Blessed are they that *mourn,* for they shall be comforted." (Matt. v. 4.) "Blessed are ye that *weep now,* for ye shall laugh." (Luke vi. 21.) It is "the wicked who are not in trouble as other

men, neither are they plagued like other men." (P.s lxxiii. 5.) But that man who knows the plague of his heart will find enough to make it sad. If your preacher knew the gospel for himself, he would not advance such things.

Trifle. Why, do you dispute our minister's Christianity? I wish you had heard him the other night upon "Family Religion;" you would have thought differently, I am sure.

Love-Truth. I did hear him; but pray what did he say?

*Should any be disposed to say I ought not to have mentioned the names of characters who are dead, (though at the same time they can indulge themselves in showing their abhorrence to the name of Calvin and the doctrines he maintained,) I reply, I go upon Scripture authority. Paul mentioned the names of Jannes and Jambres, who resisted Moses; and so do these also resist the truth. (2 Tim. iii. 8.)

(Continued Next Issue)

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STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the *Staunton River Union* will convene, the Lord willing, with Strawberry Church, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in May.

An invitation is extended to all of our correspondents and lovers of the Truth.

Elder R. S. Payne, Mod.
Josephine N. Dodd, Clerk

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, at Sandy Grove Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in May, 1976.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
P. O. Box 4524,
Rocky Mount, N. C. 27801

EASTERN UNION

The *Eastern Union* is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Bethlehem, Tyrell County, N. C. on Saturday before and fifth Sunday in May, 1976.

The Eastern Union was organized one hundred years ago in 1876, at Bethlehem Church, and so far has lived together in peace and fellowship since that time. All brethren of the same faith and order, are invited to come and be with us. A special invitation is extended to our ministering brethren.

Elder N. M. Ambrose, Union Clerk

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During the past year probably one-half or more of our subscribers have sent donations along with their renewals of the *Signs*. Others have sent donations separately from their subscriptions. This has been a great help both in paying our bills and sending the paper to those unable to pay for it. But for this generosity our income would not be sufficient to meet our expenses; yet by the kind consideration of the brethren and friends, we have been able to meet them.

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The cost of each paper depends on the number of subscribers we have. We feel sure that a little effort on the part of each subscriber would increase our circulation, which is necessary to maintain our present schedule. We have some families who send the paper to their children, and see to its renewal each year. Others send it as a gift to those they believe would enjoy it.

Will you help increase our circulation either by sending it to a believer who does not now take it, or to a relative, or lend your copy to someone whom you feel would be interested in its contents, with the suggestion that they subscribe?

With the strong support we have from our readers, we believe each one will make some effort on behalf of the *Signs of the Times*.

EDITORS

EDITORIAL

PEACE

We learn that there is an effort for reconciliation among brethren who have been separated in different parts of the country. This is very encouraging; and we hope that the Prince of Peace will guide them in their efforts.

There are many of God's humble poor who are separated from each other, who believe and love the same Truth. Where there is unity in the doctrine of our Lord, how important it is that there be gospel labor to find sweet fellowship with each other.

Where there is unity in the doctrine of Salvation by Sovereign Grace, and grace alone, what a blessing it would be to find a unity in the order of God's house: if we have Gosepl Order, it must flow from the doctrine of God. Genuine peace can never come if there is a disposition to take another by the throat, and demand "pay me what thou owest," or an eye for an eye, and tooth for a tooth approach.

If the desire and grounds for peace exist, you will find a manifestation of Humility, Meekness, Longsuffering, Kindness, and not least of all, Brotherly Love and Forgiveness, even as our Lord has forgiven us.

We are told that when a brother is overtaken in a fault, to restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering ourselves, that we all do err.

Many years ago when a division had separated me from a beloved Elder, whom I loved very much, he wrote me as follows, "Do not let this division separate us as brethren, as Abraham told Lot when there was striving among their herdsmen. Another lovely minister, also separated, wrote me and said, "I think you are the servant of a great King." Both of these are now sleeping; and I hope to meet them one day. I cannot think of them without warmth filling my heart.

How poor and weak we are. How we do need the spirit of meekness! What a blessing it would be, if God brought

separated brethren to His feet and to each other's feet? How blessed we are if we seek our support from the Word of God, and not from some sympathizer.

In this dark and gloomy day, how we do need the strength and love of all who know Him, whom to know is life everlasting.

In the publication of your paper, The *Signs of the Times,* it has been and will continue to be the policy to publish the writings of those whose doctrine is sound, and walk according to godliness, for we are sure there are many lovely brethren in various groups, who are sound in the faith, but often because of matters over which we have no control, are separated from others.

We stand ready to help in any way we can in restoring peace among brethren; but have no desire to intrude in these things.

May He give us to pray with and for each other, with the sweet sentiment in our hearts of the poet:

"My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life or breath remains;
There my best friends, my kindred dwell,
Where God my Saviour reigns."

D. V. Spangler

I am glad to endorse the above, for I have long desired that the Lord would bring the brethren together who are agreed in doctrine. Both doctrine and order must be in the church of the living God, or it is not, "the pillar and ground of the truth."

May the Lord lead us in all things.

John D. Wood

EDITORIAL

"Blessed Are The Poor in Spirit: for Theirs is The Kingdom of Heaven." (Matthew 5:3)

Methinks that it would be a bright day for the redeemed of the Lord could we be given sweet and silent meditation on these divine blessings found in this teaching of our Redeemer. Some have called these nine blesings the beatitudes; and it might be noted that students of theology differ as to the number of them, some noting that they are not all equally related to our welfare. In passing, let it be noted that the three blessings in the first verse of the Psalms are as much a beatitude as are these nine in the chapter named above, as well as about one hundred and fifty other times in which disciples are said to be blessed.

This lovely scene before us is the outstanding fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah, to wit, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." (Isa. 54:11, 14) I am sure that had the Spirit of prophecy declared that "all thy children shall be taught about the Lord" that Jesus would not have ever uttered the text. (Rev. 19:10) This text is the first one mentioned in the beginning of the sermon on the mount.

After His temptation in the wilderness He began to preach and to announce the kingdom of heaven as being at hand. Then followed the fulfilment of still another prophetic announcement, to wit, Isa. 61:1, 3. I am sure that it is one of the strongest portions of the word of truth that He called every one of them that was called, and that every one of them answered the call and followed the Master. There is not anyone that can find a volunteer in this work, nor can anyone find one that refused to follow the Saviour. For us to be instructed and comforted by the text this is the only position that can be safely and scripturally followed.

This instructive lesson begins with a multitude gathering around the Saviour: And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain and when he was set, his disciples came unto him, and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying the text.

I used to think that the Saviour left the multiutde behind, but that left me years ago. His going into a mountain was for the same reason that we build our outside seating arrangements today — so that they could seat themselves in a comfortable manner, and in a way

so as to hear the Saviour as He expounded His truths. It is obvious that this, as are all multitudes, was a mixed multitude — some of them were gainsayers, some of them were truth seekers. The Saviour taught the believers among the assembly.

The Lord has been immensely good to me in every way of life, yet it has pleased Him to keep from me the luxuries of life. This privation has been from necessity., definitely not from choice. Here and there one may be found who become poor by choice, but I am not yet convinced that this is true. However, it may be true in nature, but I am sure that no one has ever become poverty stricken spiritually by a volunteer act. I am sure of this. I do not have any hesitancy in making this blanket expression. It embraces all men, all natural creation. At the earliest infantile state we watch the taking for granted all that we come in contact with as being ours, and if we find instances of this *right* being questioned, we will immediately see a war started to take what belongs to some one else, and to usurp it as ours. This rich state follows as long as we are in the state of solvency. It is against human nature to become or to admit a state of insolvency. This is the strong man of the scriptures. If we have lost our solvent state each of us knows it; if we have not, you could make a world as easy as you could argue that man or woman to believe that they will ever lose it. The Saviour did not argue with the multiude to become poor in spirit. He did not do this. It is useless for any of that class of people to tell us that unbelievers, unborn men and women, strong men and women, can be persuaded to become what they are not.

The change from a solvent state to an insolvent one, is in the hands of the stronger man. The strong man does not have an opportunity to have a say in the reduction from riches to servitude; from robes of our weaving in gaudy colors, to rags and destitution of the poor; from going down to the sea in ships equipped for great business, only to end up at their wits end. Just as long as the stronger man delays his coming in upon the premises of the strong man, that strong man's goods will stay in fresh and bountiful supply. Rich men in nature are not satisfied with present riches, even more so is one who is spiritually rich. He is growing in riches; his eyes becomes intrigued with his rich surroundings and he makes plans for more storage space for his riches, and these wandering eyes stand out with fatness.

Acceptable works are all finished in the daytime. (John 4:9) They had (must) to be finished by the Lord from heaven. Had He not finished "the works" no one could have been saved. When "the night" (Luke 12:20) comes, there poverty begins, there is the beginning of our blessedness.

Strange as it may seem, the Bible is full of the experiences of the Lord's people. Among them all, not one volunteered to become poor; not one of the strong men went to the Saviour, the stronger Man, and volunteered to surrender his possessions. And yet, when the stronger man came in upon them all, they then and there, lost all of their possesions that they seemed to have, or thought that they had. It is utterly impossible for a man or woman to do anything acceptable to God by the powers of the flesh. Why are you so rigid? If I am rigid, it is because the doctrine taught in the New Testament is rigid. Before the strong man is overcome he is immensely rich, and after He is overcome, the same man becomes immesely poor. In fact, the word "immensely" is not strong enough: that man who was strong has every part of his armour removed from his use. He does not have any power to maintain his rich estate; all of the estate that he *seemed* to have is spoiled; moreover he himself is bound. If anyone thinks that riches and armour and strength (of nature) can be retained and used in the kingdom he or she is sadly mistaken. It is the work of the stronger man that reduces the

strong man's resources to a nonentity. If there is any of this man's strength or goods left him, the Bible is silent about it. He is first disarmed, he is secondly bound, he thirdly is made to lie in his or her bound condition and see his goods spoiled. If anyone's conception of our precious Saviour is that He will in any wise recognize and accept these spoiled goods in His kingdom, I am filled with pity for them.

The day this strong man is overtaken by the stronger man (which I am sure, is our Lord Jesus Christ,) he instantly becomes poverty stricken. He is then and there a fit owner of the kingdom of heaven. This being poor is one of the characteristics of a child of God, and I am sure that there is not an intellect on the face of the globe that can make the Bible teach us that this poor fellow thought or acted to become this way; therefore the owners of the kingdom of heaven are all poor people. Not only does He set the standard for the subjects of His kingdom, but He brings them to that standard. May God be praised.

I may not know, experimentally, about what I write, but I hope and believe that I do. If not mistaken, my theme is:

"I need thee, precious Jesus,
For I am very poor;
A stranger and a pilgrim,
I have no earthly store."

and I do hope that it is by faith unfeigned that I boldly face those that have earthly stores, and those that are able to perform that which is good, and those that are not going to sit down and wait for God to save them. What can I do to get and maintain the kingdom? I am bound, how could I get it? all of my goods are spoiled, what could I exchange for it? I have nothing to overcome an enemy, for my armour is gone. My goods having been spoiled, if I ever get anything else, my captor will have to give it to me. I have been bound: if I am ever loosed, it will be at the pleasure of my captor. If I ever fight, he will have to arm me. Some would probably say to me, You must be miserable in such a state. My answer would be, O no, to the contrary, I am rejoiceing in the work of my captor. I was rich in the goods of the world, of my natural lusts, of Satan. The world is to be destroyed; fleshly lusts are to be crucified, and Satan is also to be destroyed with an everlasting destruction. Yes, I am poor. I do not have the ability to do good; I often wander away and have to be brought back; I would, if not bound, get the spoiled goods that I one time relished, and be puny and sick.

What a great mercy it was when He disarmed me. I was a bold fighter like unto Peter in that way, and my arms would not have brought anything to me except perishableness. (Mat. 26:52) What a mercy it was when he bound me. If this miracle did, as I hope, take place, then it worked two ways. It put me in close proximity to Him, having spoiled my mind that *thought* I had been close to Him (Mat. 7:22; Isa. 4:1; Luke 7:46), and it bound me to Him. I was bound to the things that I thought to be unto life, and, left in that bind, I would have died and gone down to woe; but in binding me *away* from spoiled goods, He bound me to the principles of grace.

Of all the beautiful blessings in this sermon pattern (how many of us that minister follow it?), this is the first and the best. The divine blessing comes first, and we know that it comes from God, for He alone is able to bless. This blessing which comes from above (James 1:17), gives the afflicted and poor people of God the title deed to the kingdom of heaven. Ah, how the text broadens; how the field flourishes as we walk out into it with its golden harvest waiting for the Reaper to come and gather the sheaves into the garner, ever to be with Him and His saintly body. Come dear afflicted saint, come and eat and drink at the table set in this kingdom while on the wilderness road. The kingdom is given to you (Luke 12:32), not according as you receive

it, but by the good pleasure of your Father; and all of the subjects of that kingdom of heaven, and that no others dare trespass on the premises. Israel is to receive double for all of her sins, and here is a verification of that promise. The kingdom has been willed to her by her Father in eternity, and it has been given to her in this time state, by His Son living and dying in her stead. That is double enough to keep poor bankrupt sinners at a throne of grace for all time. But that is not all. The half has not been told us. There is always something more; there is always a reservation unalloyed, there is always a change of raiment without a dropped or broken stitch, without a blemish or a spot. This reservation is not given to you to keep. Oh, no, not that. It is reserved in heaven for you and administered to you by Him that made all arrangements for time and eternity for your reception of the same. That is not all. He set the standard of those that are the owners and occupants of this kingdom.

The world tells us that this is His part, and that for us to get it and to enjoy, is up to us. That is another fairy tale; that is another deceptive role which Satan plays, but it remains just that, no more, no less. He set the standard for the subjects of the kingdom, and then brought the standard up to His setting. He reduces every last one of them to the utmost poverty. These are the heirs of God and the joint heirs of the Lord Jesus Christ. God is their Father, and He has only one Son, and that Son is immensely rich. (Gen. 24: 36) Time rolls on. Sons and daughters walk in their nature, revelling in the riches of that nature; mothers may weep over wayward sons and daughters; fathers may grow bent and gray by reason of rich offspring, but let time roll in her inevitable way, for the sons and daughters that belong to God in a covenant sense, will use up the last farthing of their possessions; they will become ignorant and ignoble in his and her feelings. Former things pass away; former resolutions fade from the mind; former riches canker and rust away. In desperation they cry, and crying is the characteristic that marks them as the children of God, as the owners of the kingdom of heaven. Crying in nature, but more so in the Spirit is a sign or token of helplessness, of poverty. These cries are all prompted from heaven, and every last one of them will be answered by Him that not only gave them the kingdom but everything needed, yea, everything acceptable in it. Job 14:15; Psa. 138:1; I Cor. 3:21; 23; 2 Pet. 1:3).

This cry for mercy is a universal cry; it is heard wherever poverty is found. It is the cry of the redeemed, (Psa. 107:1, 8); it is the crying, hungering emotion of the penitent soul (Luke 15): It is the cry of the helpless (Psa. 79: 9); it is the cry of those that are beset with insurmountable adversaries (Rom. 7:24; 2 Cor. 12:8); it is the cry of the ignorant (Psa. 27:11; 143:10; Acts 9: 5, 6); it is the cry of the poor and needy (Psa. 70:5); it is the cry of the perishing (Psa. 69:1, 3; Mat. 8:25; 14:30).

What a triumphant travel. Entirely weaned from timely works and things; made a new creature in Christ, separated from the perishing riches of time, but made the possessors of the kingdom and all things. (2 Cor. 6:10).

In conclusion, I read many of your precious letters in which you complain of being alone, of being poor, of being weak. Lift up your head, dear child. You are poor in spirit, but you are rich in faith. That faith is made manifest by your poverty. W.D.G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

FORGIVENESS

Why did the inspired servant of the Lord say, Heb. xii. 24, that "the blood of sprinkling speaketh better things than that of Abel"? The voice of Abel's blood cried unto the Lord from the

ground, and called forth vengeance upon the head of Cain. (Gen. 4:10-12.) The punishment of Cain was a righteous retribution from the hand of God, for the unprovoked murder of his innocent brother, according to the spirit of that law which requires even handed justice, "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, a foot for a foot, and life for life." But in the execution of strict justice upon transgressors, there can be no mercy, no forgiveness " He that despised Moses' law died without mercy," and "every transgression received a just recompense of reward." But the blood of Christ was shed for the remission of sins; and speaks of peace, pardon and salvation. What an amazing exemplification of the peace-speaking excellency of the blood of the Lamb was given when the great Redeemer drained the last drop from his sacred heart for his most bitter and malicious foes, and while the purple torrent gushed from his pierced side, his temples, hand and feet, he cried, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Christians, can you see in this an example worthy of imitation? Did Jesus cry *Forgive,* and leave his children at liberty to call for vengeance upon their supposed or real enemies.

"Led as a lamb to meet the sword,
He bow'd beneath the stroke;
Not one revengeful angry word
The dear Redeemer spoke.

O may his meekness be my guide,
The patron I pursue;
How can I bear revenge or pride,
With Jesus in my view?"

Can we possess the spirit of Christ and still desire the destruction of those we deem our foes? Let us all remember that as many as are led by the spirit of God they are the sons of God. But if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. Whatever may be our standing in society, whatever our religious profession, whatever our creed, our works, our recognition by those who profess Godliness, we are forbidden access to the throne of grace, if we do not from our heart forgive those who have trespassed against us. Solemn momentous thought! Those who are taught of Christ to pray, must say, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. For if ye forgive them their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive you your trespasses." (Mat. 6:12-15) "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Gal. 6:7)

Do we really mean what we say, when we ask our God to forgive us as we forgive our debtors, or those who have offended us; or do we presume that our God will fail to note the malediction of our hearts and lips against others? We have heard men professing godliness almost in the same breath pray for the destruction of their real or fancied enemies, and for their own forgiveness. Do not such believe God will allow us to mock him. If conscious in my heart that I am a rebel and a traitor to my God, and confess to him that I deserve his awful wrath, can I consistently with the admonitions of his holy word give my voice, my vote, or my influence for retribution and wrath against those whom I deem rebels or traitors, and then ask God to forgive me, only as I forgive them. Should our God only forgive us as we forgive others, what would become of us?

It is not strange to hear those whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness, and whose feet are swift to shed blood, before whose eyes there is no fear of God, imprecating the thunderbolts of wrath upon those whom they dislike; devils may be expected to rage, for the devil was a murderer from the beginning, and those who are led by the spirit of satan or of the world may belch forth the malice of the wicked one; but what can be more terribly astounding than to hear from the lips of those who pray to God to forgive their own transgressions, and the denounciations of wrath against their fellow men.

We admit there are ministers of jus-

tice in the civil government of states and nations divinely authorized to bear the sword, and to be a terror to evil doers; and to maintain the peace and safety of the righteous; but they belong to the department of state, not church; and even their authority is limited. If they transcend their bounds, God will judge them; for his throne and authority is far above all principalities, powers, thrones and dominions. But where shall we find authority, from the precepts of Christ, from the examples of our Lord or his apostles or primitive saints for christians to avenge themselves, or give their voice of vengeance? In the language of Pope, should they not rather say:

> "Let not this bold, this erring hand,
> Presume God's bolts to throw;
> And deal damnation round the land,
> To each I deem his foe."

"Vengeance is mine, I will repay;" is the language in which God speaks to us; and he commands us to love our enemies, and to do good to them who dispitefully use and persecute us; and he forbids that we should render evil to any man, whether friend or foe, saint or sinner. We are as christians to, "follow peace with all men, and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." And as much as in us lies, to do good unto all men, especially to those who are of the household of God. We are as strictly commanded to lay aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocricy, and envies, and evil speaking as we are forbidden to curse and swear, lie or cheat, commit murder, or any other crime. And we are told that if we take the sword we shall perish by the sword; and he that is angry with his brother is a murderer; and we know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. When the disciples saw their Lord treated with scorn, feeling indignant they asked if they might call for fire from heaven to consume the offenders? Though they did not propose themselves to execute the vengeance, but to call on God to send down the fire, Jesus rebuked them, and said they knew not what manner of spirit prompted their indignation. And when for what seemed to be the most palpable provocation Peter smote the servant of the high priest, he was reproved, and commanded to put up his sword.

Indeed all the precepts, instructions, reproofs, admonitions and examples of our Lord and his holy apostles were brought to bear upon this very point, forgiveness, meekness, patience, long-suffering, gentleness and benevolence. And the spirit and temper of christianity is fully expressed in the hymn which resounded in the plains of Judah from angel voices, "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth and good will to men." In strongest contrast with which the dragon's voice of cruelty, malice, wrath, and carnage marks the hellborn spirit of anti-christ in every age, from Cain, down to the last effort of the man of sin in the final gathering of the armies of Gog, and Magog, to assault for the last time the church of the living God, (Rev. 20:8, 9) "Wo unto them for they have gone the way of Cain." (Jude 11) But, Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile *you,* and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have *thy* cloak also."

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy: But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for" (mark, not prey upon) "them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others?* do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Such are the instructions which were given by our Lord Jesus Christ, to his disciples on the mount. And he says, "Then are ye my disciples indeed, if ye do whatsoever I command you." "If ye love me, keep my commandments." "And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." (Luke 14:27) "And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me; for whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's the same shall find it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels." (Mark 8:34-38).

If there ever was a time when these admonitions were specially required to be held forth to the children of God, and solemnly considered, it is at the present time. It is in these last days in which many shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. In these days, in which the most powerful influences are brought to bear upon the Lord's people to lure them from the pathway of holiness, and cause them to indorse the murderous spirit and madness of the sons of Belial. While all the synagogues of Satan are belching forth their most violent appeals for blood, and lashing the worst passions of men to deeds of cruelty, how important it is that God's dear children should watch and be sober. The elements of nature are now melting with fervent heat; the day of trial of our faith has come upon us. The line of discrimination between the carnal hypocrites and true disciples of our Lord, is being manifestly drawn. May our God save us in this hour of temptation, deliver us from evil, and enable us to show forth his meek, gentle, lamb like spirit, forgiving one another even as God, for Christ's sake has forgiven us. The day of the Lord is surely at hand, it shall come upon this wicked generation as a thief; but ye, brethren are children of the light and of the day, let not the day of the Lord come upon you as a thief.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe July 1, 1865)

A FEW OF HIS MEDITATIONS

Route 4, Box 57
Rocky Mount, Va. 24151

Dear Brother Spangler:

I notice that my *Signs* are about to quit again, so herewith enclosed is my check for $7.00 for another two years. Sometimes I have an urge to write a few of my meditations for the *Signs*, but by the time I would get started I have concluded like Isaiah, that none would believe the report anyway; and for the fact of that I sometime get hard pressed to know what I believe myself. There are times I know much better what I DON'T believe than what I do believe.

My mind has for a little season of late been dwelling upon the doctrine

of fasting, and if there is one subject of the gospel that I would love to hear well expounded just now, I would choose this. I note by the scriptures that there are two kinds of fasting, just as there is in all other aspects of religion, the true and the false. As usual the false is not recommended but it seems there were situations in the old days where fasting was indeed an important part of the early gospel ministry, as is indicated by fact in Acts 13:3. I fail to see importance in fasting when it bears more on the diet or weight control, but I have found upon a few occasions in my poor unprofitable travels and observations that my soul is so grieved when I see our people, (they are good brethren too,) partaking of devilish things as though the Bible was something invented by the Apostles of old for their own use only, and there is no longer any necessity for us to "take heed". I fail to be able to endorse such an opinion. I don't believe the Lord God has ever changed one iota regardless of who would advocate otherwise. What was good for poor stranded Elijah centuries ago, is still the solid comfort of God's humble poor today, and will be the day the bomb falls.

I don't worry about what any of Satan's cohorts can do in respect to damage to God's people, for all of them have an insurance coverage that all the secular companies ever chartered put together could never provide. If a man could only be blessed to see what it really is like in the "cleft of the rock" he would be well assured of just how certain Heaven is. Even fasting would not improve this: it might improve one's view thereto. If not terribly de ceived, I have been a few times to where I *couldn't* eat — and I mean in a setting of plenty, but my soul had, as it were, "meat we know not of."

I cannot continue writing without expressing gratitude to God for such bounty of soul in the midst of confusion, and calamity. I notice in the 13th of Acts at verse 3, they of old fasted and prayed (in that order); and if there was really nothing to fasting, and prayer was sufficient to maintain order, I don't believe fasting would have been mentioned. I, for one, am obliged to believe there was a certain necessity brought about by an effectual working of the Holy Ghost in those holy brethren, to be most careful to maintain good works and make every effort at all cost to do the bidding of the Holy Spirit. That is why it is sometimes still referred to as the "Holy Bible" because its precepts and order are eternally binding on mankind; whether we like that or not. When the wages of sin was declared to be death centuries ago, it appears modern medical science has failed to cancel that requirement; and when Holy Writ so beautifully declares all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, it appears even good brethren have failed to tear up the church. The secret of that is: the Lord's church *is* indestructible.

May God bless is my prayer.

James R. Holley

THE WORK OF GOD IN CREATION

Dear Brother Hutchens:

My mind is constantly dwelling on our God, the Creator of all things, and undoubtedly, He did create and make all things as suited Him, and for the purpose of His own glory, and all He created accomplished His glory. He tells His purpose in raising up a Pharaoh. Now, if God saw fit to raise up a Pharaoh to show His power in him, had He not the right to do so? Pharaoh was to national Israel what Satan is to spiritual Israel. How could God better show His power, nationally, in Pharaoh than to lead him on step by step, hardening his heart at each step so he would surely take the next one that he did until He brought him and his army into the sea where He would destroy him and all his host? And it is sure the Lord did this. He did not go in by chance nor by any conditions, but as the Lord guided him in the sea. As he

guided Israel out of destruction by Pharaoh's cruel hand, He guided Pharaoh in; giving Israel a wall of light and the Egyptians a wall of darkness, so each one was guided by the same hand, one to life and peace and the other to death and destruction, and yet God is perfectly excusable and man inexcusable. Thus when God got Pharaoh and his army right where He would be the most glorified in him, God breathed and the sea returned unto its strength and God's power was made known, Pharaoh was destroyed and God fully glorified.

A part of the way of God was, "by His spirit to garnish the heavens, and by His hand to form the crooked serpent." (Job 26:13) Now who can dispute this way of God? Did He not have as much power to glorify Himself in the formation of a Satan as He had in the raising up of a Pharaoh? This Satan is the worst enemy of God, but has God not the right to make an enemy as He had to make a friend? And does He not take care of His enemy until He gets him to where He will be most glorified in His destruction?

God made man of the dust of the ground and He gave man a rule of life to govern him. "Of all the trees of the garden thou mayest freely eat." This was good ground, and here the man could eat and live. But God gave an exception to the tree which was in the midst of the garden. "Thou shalt not eat of it (and live), for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." These words (and live) are surely understood there for in the day he ate he died, as God had said. This destroys all conditions in the case and makes all things sure. But why should Satan come to that part of man called "woman" with his temptation? It is plain for as the mother so are children. A father may be a bondman but his children are free if the mother is. So if the mother is in bondage so are all her seed, be the father bond or free. Thus the mother being a bond woman the whole human race are damned before God. Now, no mercy can come from man so in the transgression all men are guilty before God and all damned in His sight, for He is holy.

Now suppose that God leaves man here with Satan in possession of him, where is his hope? But God makes known something which otherwise could never have been known. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed, and it shall bruise thy head." Right here Christ is promised to overcome the devil; the devil is confined to eat the dust. This old carnal mind of the people of God. He cannot touch them in the spirit, for that enmity shall bruise his head, or put him to death. This enmity is the Son of God. He was promised before the world and now He as the Father commanded bruised the serpent's head as God had said. But when? Surely when He appeared to have the least power, and when Satan seemed to have Him altogether in his coils. He is poor and despised of men, His cradle is the manger, thus He is laid low as the beasts of the stall. "The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but He has not where to lay His head." Satan, why not strike now? Ah, he seizes the opportunity, and in the person of the great red dragon, "Herod," he comes to kill Him. Who is this Herod? The son of Esau. He is an Idumean. He had the promise of Isaac that when he should have power he should break off Jacob's yoke. Now is the time and he embraces the opportunity and tries his hand, but our Lord had the word of God that He should bruise the serpent's head. Shall He do it? Yes, and the devil is raised up for this very purpose that the power of God should be made known. Herod and Pontius Pilate are friends and the Jews are in subjection to them. They are Tetrarchs in the Roman Government and thus all the powers of earth and hell are against Him. He is nailed fast to the cross. Can one be more secure than this prisoner? But that is not enough. He lays down His life and dies. He is buried and the grave is sealed up with Romish Kingdom. The

great red dragon is champion now and death is his partner. But the third day comes and the veil of the temple is torn asunder. What is the matter? The mighty God is risen from the dead, the powers of hell are overcome and the head of Satan is bruised. Death is swallowed up in victory and mercy abounds in Christ for all who were chosen in Him. How wondreful. The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. What a covenant our God has made for us in Him. "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness and their sins and iniquities I will remember no more."

Thus the Lord appears for all His chosen in Christ.

Your brother in hope,

L. H. Hardy

(From The Lone Pilgrim December, 1929)

OBITUARIES

BROTHER WILLIE MALLOY KIMBRO

God in his holy and righteous will has called Brother Willie Kimbro from our midst. May we be given to bow in humble submission to the will of him who has called us and saved us with an holy calling.

Brother Kimbro was born November 21, 1908 to Charles E. and Lillian Rudd Kimbro, and passed this life January 20, 1976, making his stay on earth 67 years and 2 months. He was married to Sister Etta Bryd Kimbro in 1937, and to this union were born one daughter, Mrs. Isabella Allred, two sons W. M. Kimbro, Jr., and Eric D. Kimbro. He is also survived by six sisters, Mrs. Savannah Oakley, Mrs. Mary Oakley, Mrs. Edna Rudd, Mrs. Mildred Oliver, Mrs. Selma Enoch, and Mrs. Lillian Enoch, four brothers, George Kimbro, Banks Kimbro, Wilson Kimbro, and Glynn Kimbro.

At the second Saturday night service in October, 1967 Brother Kimbro came forward at the close of the service and was received into the fellowship of Buch Arbor Church and was baptized the next morning with his wife who was received the 4th Sunday night previous. He attended his services regularly until his health prevented him and was blessed to walk softly among his brethren in love. That love will never die. Let us weep not as those who have no hope.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder Wallis Smith, Assisted by Elder Donald Smith and Elder Kenneth Key. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to wait the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Written by Thomas I. (Isaac) Rice by order of the church in conference February 7, 1976.

BE IT RESOLVED, that one copy be sent to *the Signs of the Times* for publication, one to be put on the church records and one sent to the family. Read and approved in conference March 13, 1976.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

WILLIAM GARTHA GLOVER

We, Liberty Church, bow in humble submission to the will of God's call of our dear brother in Christ, William G. Glover, December 2, 1975 in Betsy Johnson Memorial Hospital, Harnett County, N. C.

His funeral services were held at Liberty Primitive Baptist Church by his pastor, Elder C. D. Turner and assisted by Minister Billy Nowell. Burial was in Bethsada Church cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

He was born February 13, 1913, in Harnett County, his parents Walter and Vancy Norris Glover. Having lived with a very good name and highly respected by those who knew him for 62 years, nine months and nineteen days. He married Cora Lucas March 5, 1935 and were blessed with three sons and two daughters. He leaves to mourn, his family, Liberty Church, and a host of friends; The widow, Cora, Joyce Sanders, Weldon, Williard Glover, Rt. 4 Dunn, N. C.; Sherrill Glover, Erwin, N. C.; and Barbara Andrews, Tarboro, N. C.; Five sisters: Evelyn Hudson, Rt. 4 Dunn, N. C.; Euphrosyne Hobbs, Mable Strickland, Erwin, N. C.; Esther Stewart, Godwin, N. C.; Aline Dunn, Swannsboro, N. C.; also nine grandchildren.

Brother Glover was loved by many but God loved him best and called him into his fold. We rejoice in our belief that he is resting in peace waiting for the reutrn of the Saviour Jesus Christ to present him to the Father to live with the saints around God's Throne and forever be satisfied. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." We should remember God makes no mistakes. In this there is much to rejoice in.

In December conference a committee was appointed to write these respects. One for the family, one for the church record and one to be printed in the *Signs of the Times.*

Committee: Sisters Lovie Young
Minnie Weaver
Iva Stewart

DEACON GEORGE LEE SAUNDERS

Our Heavenly Father, in His infinite wisdom, love, and mercy, has called from our presence Brother George Lee Saunders. This sovereign God is "too wise to err; too good to be unkind." Brother Saunders was born April 5, 1895, and departed this life on August 20, 1975.

Though we loved him and miss him, we would not wish him back to this world of trials, tribulations, heartaches, and tears. As the Apostle Paul wrote, "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (for we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." We believe Brother Saunders is experiencing a peace and rest that we who are left behind know not.

At the last setting of the Upper Country Line Association in July, 1975, he was very ill. His loved ones had tried to dissuade him from attending for fear that he would become worse. However, he was determined to go, for he said it would be his last association. His Lord had revealed to him that his time in this life was short. He had been made reconciled and willing to leave all in this time world to be with his Lord and Saviour.

Brother Saunders united with Gilliams Church on the Saturday before the fourth Sunday in May, 1965. When he reached the front of the church to ask for a home, he found his dear wife by his side also asking for a home. Neither one knew that the other was going, but this had been revealed in a dream to his pastor several months before. This is the effectual working of a Sovereign God who makes no mistakes. They were baptized together on the Saturday before the fourth Sunday in June by Elder Wallis Smith.

In Brother Saunders' experience, he dreamed he was sinking down and when almost gone, a hand reached down and lifted him up. Yes, he could witness with David in Psalms 40:2, 3: "He brought me up out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise to our God." His calling as a deacon was recognized by the church, and he was ordained the fourth Sunday in April, 1970. He was blessed to serve the church well with much love, wisdom, and humbleness. "For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus."

He is survived by his wife, Sister Minnie Gwynne Saunders; three daughters; Mrs. Loften Page and Mrs. Staley Kernodle of Route 2, Elon College, and Mrs. Thomas Paschal of Route 4, Burlington; one son, Scott Saunders of Route 2, Burlington; eight grandchildren; and five great grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted in Gilliams Church by Elder Wallis Smith and Elder Donald Smith. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the glorious morning of the resurrection when the elect shall meet the Lord in the air and ever be with the Lord.

Written by request of Gilliams Church by Cleo Robertson.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Freeman Somers, Clerk

SISTER EMMA POWELL

It is with sadness we attempt to write of the loss of our dear sister, Emma Powell, who was born May 10, 1888, and departed this life July 15, 1975. She was the daughter of the late Calvin and Martha Taylor White, and lived all her life in Martin County, N. C. where she was born. She was married to the late Brother Joe Powell on December 23, 1908; and to this union were born seven children, who survive her: three daughters, Norvella James, Vera Hathaway, Mattie Lou Lumsden; and four sons: Vernon, Ollie, Joe King and Billie Powell.

Sister Powell united with the Primitive Baptist Church in 1919 and was baptized by the late Elder B. S. Cowin. She was a strong believer in salvation by grace, and faithful in attending church meetings as long as she was physically able; and did so much enjoy having the brethren and sisters visit in her home. She will be greatly missed by her church, family and all who knew her.

Her funeral was conducted at the Robinsonville Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder I. S. Conner and Elder E. C. Harrison. She was laid to rest in the Robinsonville Cemetery there to await the morning of the resurrection when Jesus will carry his children home, where all will be peace and love forever.

Done by order of conference August 2, 1975.

Elder I. S. Conner, Mod.
Malena Stevenson, Clerk
Magalene Brow, Committee

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Sister Armelia Lee was born May 28, 1895, and departed this life November 16, 1975, making her stay on earth 80 years. She was married to the late Oscar Lee. Surviving is a daughter Mrs. Jessie Tyndall, of Erwin, N. C., and two sons, Warren G. and Lovitt E. (Ten-

nie) Lee of Route 2, Dunn, N. C.

Sister Lee was a member of Old Mingo Primitive Baptist Church. She was faithful to the church, and attended as long as her health permitted. We have seen her go to meetings when we felt sure she was not able to be there. Her faith, trust, and love in the Lord was manifested in her walk and conversation. Sister Lee will be missed by all who knew and loved her, but we believe she is resting in peace waiting for the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Her funeral was conducted by her Pastor, Elder W. D. Godwin, at Hickory Grove Meeting House, Johnston County, N. C.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the family; one to the *Signs of the Times*, and one to be recorded in the church book.

Written by K. Belle Lee at the request of Old Mingo Church in conference December, 1975.

Elder W. D. Godwin, Mod.
Leslie Belle Lee, Clerk Protem.

LESLIS H. SOUTHERLAND

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst a dear Brother, Leslie H. Southerland. He united with the church at Muddy Creek on February 26, 1950. He served as a Deacon and also served as the Clerk until he became disabled. He was a faithful member and loved his church dearly.

He was married to Lillie Williams who preceded him in death. There were two daughters and a son born to this union.

His death came on January 13, 1975, in Jacksonville hospital. His funeral was preached by Elder D. B. Stokes. He was laid to rest under a mound of beautiful flowers and surrounded by his friends.

Elder W. L. Everette, Moderator
Written by Bessie Sloan
Stewart D. Brown, Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Union Primitive Baptist Church, Patrick County, Va., a Presbytery met Januray 24, 1976, at the Church for the examination of brethren Jim H. Perdue and H. D. Ingram, if found qualified with the written Word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, to ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of deaconship.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder William Holland. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the Presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders P. E. Ingram, Posey Plybon, Noel Conner, William Holland, W. L. Carter, Amos Hash and Wallis A. Smith.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Leonard Brammer as Moderator, and Elder Wallis A. Smith as Clerk. Elders Ingram and Plybon were chosen to perform the examinations of the candidates. Deacon Elmer Akers having been duly appointed by Union Church in conference January 24, 1976 spokesman for the church, delivered Brother H. D. Ingram and Brother Jim H. Perdue to the Presbytery. Examination was made by Elders Ingram and Plybon, using scripture reference 1st Timothy, 3rd chapter. The Presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidates, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was by Elder W. L. Carter. Elder Amos Hash delivered the charge to the candidates.

The Moderator asked Brother Elmer Akers if the church approved the work of the Presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

Certificates of Ordination were presented to Brother H. D. Ingram and Brother Jim H. Perdue, and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given, and they were delivered back to the church as ordained Deacons of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Union Primitive Baptist Church, Patrick County, Va.

The Minutes of the work of the Presbytery were read and adopted.

The Presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Noel Conner.

Elder Leonard Brammer, Moderator
Elder Wallis A. Smith, Clerk

STERLING WEBSTER GANN

Brother Sterling Webster Gann was born February 2, 1908 to the late Anna Bell and Benjamin Gann. He departed this life January 16, 1976. Brother Bill, as he was called by all that knew and loved him, and his beloved wife Sister Maude Gann were united in marriage March 11, 1926. Of this marriage Brother and Sister Gann were blessed with eight lovely children: two sons, Billy Gann of Route 10 Reidsville, N. C. and Joseph Gann of Reidsville; six daughters, Blossom Salseth of Reidsville, Mary Ann Page Route 1 Reidsville, Becky Holt of Reidsville, Rose McKinney, Ruffin, N. C. Linda Wray of Reidsville, N. C. and Treva Ward of Elon College, N. C.

Brother Gann joined Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Churh about fourteen years ago. His funeral was conducted there by his Pastor, Elder Donald Smith and Elder Wallis Smith on January 18, 1976.

Brother Gann was a man of few words, but they were always well spoken. He was a lover of the truth and faithful to the end. His quiet, humble ways was a beautiful example of one of God's most humble servants. He was a valued member at Pleasant Grove and will be missed; but we know our loss is his eternal gain.

Written in love and with humbleness, by Sister Billie Pruitt, as requested by Pleasant Grove Church at their Conference meeting, February 14, 1976.

Elder Donald Smith, Mod.
Robert F. Walker, Clerk

SISTER AMELIA SMITH

We bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, who has called from our midst a dear Sister in Christ, Sister Amelia Smith.

Sister Smith was born August 4, 1884 and passed from this life September 13, 1975 making her stay on earth 81 years and 9 days. She was the daughter of Mrs. Edith Lee. Sister Smith was married to Howard Smith October 13, 1913 who preceded her in death on May 20, 1949. She left to mourn her loss three daughters, Mrs. Margaret Godwin, Mrs. Sarah Jane Norris and Mrs. Annie Bell, two sons, Elasta Smith and James Howard Smith, 21 grandchildren and 20 great-grandchildren.

Sister Smith united with Hickory Grove Primitive Baptist Church August, 1917 by experience and Baptism and was a faithful member as long as health permitted. We send our sympathy to her family and trust that she is resting in peace with her Saviour.

Her funeral was conducted by Minister Robbie Moore. She was laid to rest in the Smith Family Cemetery near Peacocks Cross Roads beneath a mound of beautiful flowers to await the resurrection morning.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the family, one put on the church record and one to the *Signs of the Times.*

Committee
Sister Velma Wood
Sister Gertrude Royal

ROSA AGEE BELL

Rosa Agee Bell was born September 12, 1898 and passed away July 18, 1975. She was the daughter of the late T. T. and Lillie Vest Agee of Floyd, Va. She was married June 22, 1927 to Moyer C. Bell, who survives: also one son, Agee Bell; two grandsons, Thomas and Terry Bell, all of Copper Hill, Va.; two brothers, Morris Agee, Check, Va; Alvin Agee, Floyd, Va.; one sister, Mrs. Emma Costa, New Freedom, Pa.

She grew up near County Line Primitive Baptist Meeting House, Floyd County, Va. and attended there with her parents from early childhood; and in later years whenever her health permitted. She taught school several years before her marriage.

She loved the Primitive Baptist doctrine and people, and enjoyed singing the beautiful old hymns: her favorite was, "Amazing Grace".

Her funeral was held on Sunday, July 20, 1975 at Salem Church by Elders Roy Agee, B. O. Thompson and Frank Wimmer. Her body was laid to rest in Rest Vale Cemetery beneath a lovely mound of flowers. She is greatly missed by her devoted companion, son and family, relatives and kind neighbors and friends. But we feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Submitted by her sister-in-law, Mrs. Alvin Agee — requested by her dear companion.

MRS. ALICE GRIMMES JONES

God in his infinite wisdom saw fit to remove from our midst one of our oldest and dearest members.

Sister Alice was born June 18, 1897 and died December 13, 1975. She was married to Charlie Jones, Sr., who preceded her in death in June, 1973. She was born in Edgecombe County near Tarboro, N. C. Her parents were Almarine and Mary Edmondson Grimmes. She is survived by three daughters and three sons, eighteen grandchildren and thirty-one great grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Boykin, assisted by Elder E. C. Harrison. She was laid to rest in the cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, in the presence of a host of friends, relatives and family.

Sister Alice was gracious, kind and a gentle person, one who lived a Christian life. She was a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God. She manifested this faith in her talk and walk in life. She united with Briar Swamp Church fifty-seven years ago the 2nd of September.

She was a true and faithful member until death. She loved the Church and the brethren, and always greeted them with tender smiles and warm handshakes, expressing her love for them. She was held in high esteem by her church and all who knew her. She was an honor to her church, her family and community. We miss her but feel our loss is her eternal gain. We extend heartfelt sympathy to her grieved family. We pray that God's richest blessings will be with them.

Written by,
Pauline Ross,
Eld. S. R. Boykin, Mod.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 144 DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1976 NO. 6

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/76
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

APPRECIATES THE SIGNS

P. O. Box 261,
Asheville, N. C. 28802

Dear Elder Spangler:

Enclosed is my check for $100.00 as a little gift to the *Signs of the Times.* I very much appreciate the *Signs.* I am always glad to see Elder Poole's name in the *Signs,* and to know that he is pastor of the Welsh Tract Church, — the oldest Old School Baptist Church in the United States.

Elder Poole received great comfort from Romans 8:28 when he was being persecuted for contending for the eternal truths when he lived in the South. He knew the truth of God, and preached it. He did not let men tell him what he should preach and what he should not preach. . . . The word absolute was added to Predestination to refute the conditional doctrine of predestination, which (among other things) held that predestination was based on a person accepting Christ, making predestination an act of the creature conditional.

I have a quotation from Augustus M. Toplady that I think is to the point.

"In short, there is no such thing as casulty, or accident, even in things of temporal concern, much less in matters spiritual and everlasting. If the Universe had a Maker, it must have a Governor; and if it has a Governor, his will and providence must extend to all things without exception. For my part, I can discern no medium between absolute predestination and blank Atheism."

It seems that the world is fast approaching the war of Armageddon. I don't know how many people in the war will be killed, but there will be a large number left; for, as one of your Canadian Associate Editors mentioned in his editorial, "the knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters do the sea." Of course, this is after the war of Armageddon.

I hope that you and Sister Spangler are enjoying the best of health, and that you are having good meetings at all your churches.

Yours in hope,
Milton M. Absher

23RD PSALM

217 Bastrop Dr.
Monroe, La. 71201

Dearly Beloved Brethren & Sisters:

Soon after retiring one night recently the beautiful 23rd. Psalm came to my mind along with some very sweet meditations. If only I could write like I saw it then! But that is not possible unless God should so direct my hand tonight. May God be praised if it is any comfort to anyone.

"The Lord is my shepherd." Isn't that a wonderful proclamation? He IS my shepherd. It does not say He "will be" if I will let Him or accept Him or not reject Him; but that He IS. When you read this Psalm does it apply to yourself, or do you only think of it as the words of David? Has the words "MY SHEPHERD" been applied to your

heart with power? I cannot say that I know He is my Shepherd, but I believe I have been given evidence and a sweet hope that it is so.

What is a shepherd? and what are his duties? A shepherd is one who is a keeper of sheep. If he owns them, and is not a hireling, he will guard them diligently against all enemies; lead them in and out to pasture; cleanse and bind up their wounds and sores. Do you not feel this is what the Good Shepherd has done for you? Not only this, but Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd, and know by sheep, and am known of mine." and again, "I lay down my life for the sheep."

"I shall not want." I do not believe any child of grace would apply this as a natural desire of the mind or flesh. It means to me that I will never fail to have any good thing that is necessary for my well-being. I will not have all I desire, but I will never lack anything that I need; and this includes afflictions as well as the pleasant things.

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." He doesn't ask my desire in this; He makes me do it; bless His Holy Name! He makes me lie down in pastures that are green because they are watered and well tended by His own hand.

"He leadeth me beside the still waters." These still waters represent peace, quietness, depth of love; not the shallow, turbulent waters of wrath, envy and strife. There are times that we go astray and fall into the turbulent waters, but when it pleases the Good Shepherd then He leads us back to the still waters.

"He restoreth my soul." Many times we feel to be bogged down in the miry clay, our soul seems to be in the bottomless pit of hell and all hope seems to be gone; but He causes us to remember and to cry out to Him, and then answers our cries: He restores our souls. And when He restores our soul He leads us in the path of righteousness which is the path of holiness. No lion nor ravenous beast shall ever tread there; but the redeemed shall walk there. (Isa. 35: 8-9)

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me." Before a child of grace has been regenerated he walks through this life fearing death; fearing the many evil things that might befall him here in this life and not looking forward to that which lies beyond the grave. But when he has been given a hope in Christ this fear seems to disappear: not that we do not have some natural fear, but this hope in Christ so overrides this fear that we are made to feel at peace. At least this seems to be my experience? Is it not so with you?

"Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." I have felt His rod of affliction upon my back many times and would be lying if I said that it felt good: yet I know within my heart that it is for my own good. Paul says, "Now no chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but grevious; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Though God gives us this rod of affliction, He also gives us His staff to lean upon. This is the same staff that Jacob leaned upon after that his thigh was put out of joint by the Angel with whom he wrestled: the staff of love, mercy truth, and the wonderful promises given us in Christ before the foundation of the world. Let us not therefore complain when we come under these afflictions.

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." Satan is constantly trying to feed us with lies, deceit, and half-truths, and when we are drawn away by the lusts of our flesh we feed on these vile things. But the Lord has prepared a table in the presence of these our enemies, and when a child of grace, one who has tasted the goodness of the Lord, again tastes of the vile food he quickly repents and turns again to the table of love and truth.

"Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." Surely this is

the cup of joy and mercy which continually runneth over for the ones who love Him; and we love Him because He first loved us. Because of this great love surely goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our lives and we will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

These are only a few of the thoughts I had concerning this most beautiful Psalm. I pray that they are in accord with His holy truth. Pray for this poor worm of the dust. I love all of you for Christ's sake if not deceived.

Clifford Wilbanks

DESIRE OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD

The Primitive Baptists are accused of advocating it is okay for one to go out and have the fill of sin because his part has already been determined in the Covenant of Grace.

Those not included in the Covenant of Grace are the wicked who shall be punished with everlasting destruction (hell) from the presence of God. (see Matt. 25:41-46) The wrath of God shall be poured out upon those whom Christ did not redeem from the curse of the law. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." (Gal. 3:13) If this Scripture applies to all of mankind, then I would have to advocate universal salvation. On the other hand, if this Scripture applies to the whole human race, and then some miss going to heaven, then I would have to advocate a God who failed to accomplish his purpose. Also, the Scriptures would not be true: "*He shall not fail nor be discouraged,* till he have set judgement in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law." (Isaiah 42:4) If the conditional doctrine is true, then my case is hopeless, because I do not have the strength nor the ability to perform any conditions. I need a God who is able to save me because I am not able to save myself. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." (Heb. 7:25)

If it is left up to man to perform certain conditions to seal the contract and merit his salvation, then man has the right to praise himself. If this were true, then God would be robbed of his praise. "I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." (Isaiah 42:9) The Scriptures point out that the Lord's name shall be praised, and there is nothing that can or is able to stop the children of God from praising the name of the Lord! "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." (Isaiah 43:21) "From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the Lord's name is to be praised." (Psalm 113:3)

The following Scriptures prove that our praise comes directly from God: (if not deceived, I have been given a sweet hope that I am included in that blessed number.) "Let my mouth be filled with thy praise and with thy honour all the day." (Psalm 71:8) "O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise." (Psalm 51:15)

In life upon this earth, the wicked do not have the desire in their hearts to do that which is acceptable in the sight of God. "---the wicked shall do wickedly and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." (Daniel 12:10) They have pleasure in unrighteousness. (see 2 Thess. 2:12) They do not have the fear of God in their hearts, and they do not seek after God. "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Psalms 14:2-3) "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

They are all gone out of the way, they are altogether become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: *There is no fear of God before their eyes.*" (Rom. 3:10-18)

The point to consider is: The children of God do not have the desire to live a wicked life. They are sick of sins and mourn over them, and have the yearning desire within their hearts to do that which is right in the sight of God. Why do they not have that desire within their hearts? Because God has put his fear in their hearts. "And *I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever,* for the good of them, and of their children after them: And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but *I will put my fear in their hearts,* that they shall not depart from me." (Jer. 32:39-40)

Since the children of God have the fear of God in their hearts, they have the desire to walk a Godly life, or walk the right way, or do that which is acceptable in the sight of God. "*The fear of the Lord is to hate evil:* pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate." (Proverbs 8:13) "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." (Psalms 37:23-24) Please keep in mind that this Scripture shows that though a good man may fall for a while, yet the Lord will uphold him. This Scripture destroys the theory of "falling from Grace" or "some of the saved people today may backslide and be lost tomorrow." "For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief." (Proverbs 24:16) "Therefore I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me. Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: *when I fall, I shall arise;* when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me." (Micah 7:7-8)

Please consider this: "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps." (Proverbs 16:9) The steps of the children of God are both ordered and directed by the Lord. God blesses them with the inward desire for a Godly walk, but they also experience the inability of the flesh to fulfill that desire. "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh.) dwelleth no good thing: *for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.*" (Rom. 7:18) "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jer. 10:23)

Dear reader, how do you feel about the matter? Do you fear God, or man? Do you have an inward desire to walk in the footsteps of Jesus? Do you desire to follow after the unction of the Holy Ghost, or follow after the tradition of man? Do you mourn over your sins and yearn for a closer walk with God? Is your prayer similiar to this: "Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me. When thou saidest, Seek ye my face: my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek." (Psalm 27:7-8) "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?" (Psalm 42:1-3)

If these questions plus the quotations of the Scriptures have touched your heart, it is some sweet evidence that you are acquainted with the inward work of God, and you are included in that blessed number. May God give you

sufficient strength and grace to press on for the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

PRESENT STATE OF RELIGION

By William Gadsby, London, 1841
(Continued)

Trifle. Say! what did he not say that a subject of the nature required? Did he not tell us that the man who *prayed* in his family did well, but he that *prayed* and *read* did better, and he that *prayed* and *read* and *sung* did best of all? and did he not give us to understand that Aquila and Priscilla gained that knowledge by family worship that enabled them to instruct an eloquent Apollos more fully in the gospel? and did he not intimate that if we neglected this part of our duty, our servants and children would be damned through our neglect, and we be everlastingly punished for it? and did he not signify that neither the world nor the church could stand, if it were not for family religion? and what could he say more?

Love-Truth. But did he say a word about the necessity of the Spirit to teach men to pray, or of Christ the altar that sanctifieth both the gift and the giver? No, not a word of this sort. All the religion he contended for was an outside religion, without having anything to do with the Spirit of God. But the word of God declares, that "he is not a Jew that is one outwardly, but he is a Jew that is one inwardly; and that is not circumcision which is in the flesh, but that is circumcision which is of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter." (Rom. ii. 29.) And though I believe that every Christian at the head of a family ought to attend to prayer in his family, yet I am sure all the devotion your minister contended for was at best but a fair show in the flesh; nor am I acquainted with any scripture that says that Aquila and Priscilla got their knowledge of divine things this way. It is the Lord alone who can teach to profit. But if you recollect, he told us that where there was a minister in the houes he was to take the master's place; and if so, what a glaring reflection upon Apollos; for if he had done his duty as well as Aquila and Priscilla, he needed not to have been taught by them, for he would have learned it without, if they learnt it that way. Shame for you, Apollos! if this minister had you, he would sharply reprove you for your neglect. But one observation was very singular. He brought in Cornelius, and for my part I wondered that he did not blush at his own ignorance the moment he mentioned his name; for though Cornelius kept up his family worship, he was under the necessity, by divine command, to send for Peter, that he might be taught more fully the things of God. So that it appears he could not get his knowledge by family devotion, if Aquila and Priscilla did. Where your minister got his religion I cannot say; but one thing I can say, I never heard him preach in my life anything that could prove that he was taught by the Spirit of God. I once heard him say, if men believed their sins would find them out, and that they would be punished for them, they would never commit any. But sure I am if sin had ever found him out, as it found out Paul when the commandment came, he would have known what it was to have been found out with a witness, and feel the sentence of death in himself, and yet not be able to cease from sin all the while. But in this sermon, though he said many things about sin finding men out, he said nothing about it finding them out when God circumcised the heart, and convinced of sin by his Spirit. No, it was like all the rest, it was all outside. Now what can we think of a man who professes to be a Predestinarian, who talks about the church and the world standing as the effect of family religion, and this religion without the Spirit; the whole nothing but a round of duties; and giving us to understand if these are neglected, the servants and children of such who ne-

glect them will be damned through this neglect? Are they not deceiving the simple, through philosophy and vain deceit? Surely they are. Let them be honest, and they will join hand and heart with Mr. Demure and Mr. Wesley. There is not a doubt they are Arminians in heart, and strangers to vital godliness.

Trifle. I am sure there is not one minister in twenty that contends more for holiness than our minister does, and therefore he must be a holy man himself. But you are of an *Antinomian* turn, and catching at everything. I have no doubt but our minister is very partial to the Arminians, and so he ought to be. Where do you find men who do so much for God as they do? As our minister beautifully observed, "If all professors would but do as much as they did, a minister would have but little to do in comparison to what he now has, for the stones would be polished ready to their hands by parents and masters, and a minister would only have to put them in their places."

Love-Truth. I have heard before now that he made such an observation; but one would think he should not begrudge a little work, as he is very well paid for his work; but do not the scriptures tell us that Christ is the author and finisher of faith, and did not Christ say, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it?" (Matt. xvi. 18.) And is not the church "fitly framed together, and groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord?" (Eph. ii. 21.) "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. ii. 5.) This is "the Lord's doing, and marvellous in our eyes." (Ps. cxviii. 23.) God's house is a spiritual house, and his sacrifices are spiritual; "for they are dead to the law by the body of Christ, and bring forth fruit unto God." (Rom. vii. 4.) But your minister's house is all natural, and the worship is the same. It appears to be what the apostle calls, a voluntary humility, saying, "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." (Col. ii. 18, 19.) Wherever this voluntary humility is, it stands opposed to the truth of God; and you will find it so in the end.

Trifle. You are the most contracted mortal I ever met with, and if brother Demure is willing, we will begone, for I have had quite enough both of you and your religion.

Inv. No, stay a little longer; perhaps you will have a better understanding of the matter by and by. For my own part, I have heard nothing in Love-Truth's description of *Antinomians,* as they are called, that I dare object to; but perhaps he has not said all he wishes to say upon the subject. But I confess you have rather staggered me, for I could not have believed you would have found fault with what was said. Will you go on, friend Love-Truth, with your description of those people's faith, called Antinomians?

Love-Truth. Then to proceed. They further believe, that when the poor sinner has become dead to the law by the body of Christ, he is married to Jesus, and Jesus and he are evidently become one; so that Christ is the Bridegroom, and the sinner is his bride; and, as the spouse of Christ, she is to receive all she needs at the hands of Christ, and live wholly dependent upon him. "For it has pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." (Col. i. 19.) "And out of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace." (John i. 16.) "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sancitification, and redemption." (1 Cor. i. 30.) So that the church rejoices because they are complete in him, (Col. ii. 10.) and that with him they have all things; for "all things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." (1 Cor. iii. 22, 23.) They also

maintain that the kingdom of God doth not consist in observation, but is set up in the soul of every one who believes in Christ; so that they will frequently observe, that a man may have all the doctrine's of the gospel in his head, and at his tongue's end, may make a great profession of religion, be very beautiful without, and at the same time be a stranger to the work of God in regeneration, and know nothing of fellowship with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ; nor with the Spirit of adoption, whereby the believer cries, "Abba, Father." They also believe that no man, in the best sense, can call Jesus, Lord, but by the Holy Ghost; and that where Christ is formed in the soul, the hope of glory, there will be a warfare, seeing light is sure to discover darkness; for "what will you see in the Shulamite but as it were the company of two armies?" Sin and grace, flesh and spirit, never can agree; and the more grace a man has, the more he will see and feel of his own deformity, the more he will abhor himself, and repent in dust and ashes, and the more he will see of the beauty of Christ, his all and in all. They also believe that the soul that is married to Christ, is dead to the law, (Rom. vii. 4,) and that Jesus, as King in Zion, rules them by his own law, not with the rod of his wrath, (Lam. iii. 1.) nor a rod of iron; but with the rod of his strength, sent out of Zion, (Ps. x. 2,) called by law of faith, love, kindness, and the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. (Rom. viii. 12.) They maintain that all the glorious doctrines of the Bible are just suited to the case of the sheep of Christ, and that it is one part of the work of the ministry to show how all the perfections of Deity harmonize in the salvation of his people; for "mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other." (Ps. lxxxv. 10.) In the person of Christ the whole Deity meets and shines, to the glory of Jehovah, and the everlasting salvation of the church; nor do they believe that a sinner can know anything of the truth, in its beauty, nor receive it in the love of it, only as God is pleased to make it manifest, as that which just suits his case. In fact, they wish to crown Christ Lord of all; though by so doing they debase man to less than nothing and vanity.

Inv. Well, and is this contrary to the spirit of Universal Charity? and are her holy arms too short to embrace characters of this description? If they are, I shall be out of conceit with her myself in a very short time; for I have for some time believed that unless a man is brought by the good Spirit of God to feel the necessity of the truth, he can never prize it. For instance, till a man is brought to know and feel himself such a base, vile, wretched sinner that if the great Jehovah had not chosen him, independently of any good in him, he never would have chosen him at all; and if he had not made this choice manifest in bringing him to the Lord Jesus Christ, it would never have entered into the sinner's mind to have made choice of Christ. I say, till a man is brougth to know and feel this, he cannot in his heart delight in the doctrine of God's everlasting, electing, unchangeable love, but will feel a secret indignation against it, as well as every other branch of divine truth. For a man to glory in the Lord as his strength, so long as he believes he is strong enough to break off the yoke of sin and the devil, and obtain salvation at his *own* pleasure, is inconsistent with the very nature of things. To glory in the Lord as his wisdom, while he is "wiser than seven men who can render a reason," (Prov. xxvi. 16.) is folly in the abstract. To glory in Christ as his righteousness, while he believes he is as good as any man, and a great deal better than some, and presumes he has it in his power to get perfect in the flesh, is as good sense as to suppose that a man will glory in being a pauper upon the parish, while he possesses an estate of ten thousand a year. I know, by experience, that Christ and truth are only prized as we see the worth of them, and we see the worth of them just in proportion as we feel the

need of them, and as they are made manifest in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. And pray, is this all for which these people get that bugbear name of *Antinomian?* and are there no professors except these, which the loving arms of Universal Charity cannot embrace?

Love-Truth. I am not acquainted with any that she has not more charity for than these; nevertheless, when she is put close to it, which is the case sometimes, she will say she is not so much against their sentiments, as the *bad spirit* they are delivered in.

Inv. Bad spirit, indeed! I have known ministers preach against men of a bad spirit, till in the height of their zeal they have very charitably sent the men they have been preaching against to hell, without either judge or jury.

Love-Truth. Very likely! but that is not considered wrong, if they only contend for *candour* at the same time. I could produce a variety of instances, where *Universal Charity* has been at a deal of pains to blacken the characters of men, and has done it with as much pious solemnity as his holiness the Pope would pronounce the curses of *Bell, Book,* and *Candle* upon the head of a heretic. Yes, I could, if I chose, mention more than one of her votaries, who have industriously gone from place to place to defame a man's character, and where they have met with men that would not go upon the ground of mere report, neither with nor without money, (for *money* has been offered,) I say, when neither money nor words were sufficient to prove that the man was bad, the reporter has been under the necessity of saying, he knew nothing bad of him. But all this, and a thousand times more, may for universal holiness, it is all right, that is, if *Universal Charity* be right, for she can take the scorner's chair on all occasions without rebuke, unless the God of heaven gives her a little now and then.

Inv. Really it is a solemn matter! what accounts can such men think of giving at the great day, when God pronounces a curse upon all them who bear false witness against their neighbour? I am ready to exclaim, "O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united."

Love-Truth. Yes, and all this time they are contending for the law of works as their only *rule* of life; but what rule they walk by, when bearing false witness, it is hard to say. But it appears that there were such in Paul's day, and he sharply reproved them, saying, "Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?" (Rom. ii. 23.) Neither scripture nor reason can justify the conduct of some profesors. I knew a minister who threatened to cut off some of the members of his church because they encouraged, what *he* called, an *Antinomian,* to come to that town to preach, and he assured them that nothing but a wicked spirit influenced the *Antinomian* to come there; yet, at the same time, this very minister was mighty active in raising a fresh interest in the town where this *Antinomian* statedly laboured; yea, he formed a church, administered the ordinance, and assisted them in building a very elegant meeting-house, and all this he did for the glory of God; but for the *Antinomian* to go near *him* was a crime of the basest nature. A few months ago, a minister reproved a friend of mine for communing with an *Antinomian,* and told him that he would rather commune with a Papist; and so it appears, for he has now very honestly declared himself a *Socinian;* and though he professed to be a Particular Baptist before, yet his change of sentiment, as it is called, has made no very great stir; all seems quiet and still; but if he had been so unfortunate as to have turned what they call an *Antinomian,* the country would have been all up in arms against him. But they can see a thief, or one who robs Christ of his glory, and consent with him. (Ps. l.

Inv. One would be ready to conclude that the charge brought against the ancients of Israel is also applicable to

many in this day: "Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chamber of his imagery? for they say, the Lord seeth not, the Lord hath forsaken the earth." (Ezek. viii. 12.) "Surely judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off, for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter; yea, truth faileth, and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey, or, is accounted mad." (Isa. lix. 14, 15.) But the Lord seeth it.

Love-Truth. If men were not blind, they would see into their own folly and wickedness.

Inv. But will you tell me what these *Antinomians* do, that evidence such a *bad spirit* as to cause the whole country to ring about them?

Love-Truth. Yes, surely I will. What they call a bad spirit is this; when the minister begins to give a scriptural description of a wolf in sheep's clothing, and cry against the false shepherds, who feed not the sheep, or such preachers who do not preach the truth of Christ, but endeavor to exalt man, and make it appear that man can of his own good will and pleasure perform good works, and such works as will bring God to terms of peace with him, and thus degrade the very nature and offices of Christ, while at the same time the creature is set up; now, when the minister says that these men were never sent of God to preach the gospel, but are ministers of Satan; it is called a *bad spirit.*

Inv. But if it be wrong to speak against false shepherds, *Universal Charity* is wrong, for she has, in my ears, said as much against these *Antinomians* as ever they can say against any spiritual whore under heaven; and thus you find that her spirit is as bad as theirs; is it not?

Love-Truth. O no; you must recollect that what she does is out of love to holiness, and therefore the most evident marks of spleen and malice in her are all right; for this must be the view that thousands have, or they would blush for shame at their own works.

Inv. But after all, do not these *Antinomians,* as they are called, pursue the same track that the prophets and Christ and his apostles did? Does not the Lord exhort the prophets to cry against the false shepherds, who feed themselves and not the flock, saying, "I am against the shepherds, for the diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost, but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them?" (Ezek. xxxiv. 4.) And how many poor, disconsolate, sin-burdened souls are to this day ruled with force, instead of being pointed to the Lamb of God! But the prophet was to cry against them. Yea, Christ pronounced more woes against them than he did against Satan himself, and Paul was for having both men and angels cursed that preached any other gospel than he had preached; and, by the by, he mentioned names into the bargain, Hymenaeus and Alexander. (Tim. i. 20.)

Love-Truth. Yes, all this is true; but we are told that this is *no* rule for ministers in this enlightened day; nor ought we to copy after either Christ, his apostles, or the prophets; so that in this case, the Bible is not to be our rule.

Continued next issue

Rt. 2, Box 10
Star City, Ark. 71667

Dear Editors:

I am late in sending in my renewal. "So many things step in my way." But, as David was made to cry, "Give ear to my words, Oh Lord, consider my meditations." I fear my meditations are very weak. I am not worthy of notice, if left to myself. Only when it is the Lord's will to smile upon me do I have grace to pray as I ought. I can only beg the Lord to help me, for all my help must come from Him. When lifted up, I can see God's handiwork all around me, nature in bloom, and birds singing so sweetly. Then I am soon cast down again, and all is dark and desolate until it is the Lord's will to send a ray of light. His arm is not short concerning His promises.

"Come Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,
With all thy quickening powers:
Kindle a flame of sacred love
In these cold hearts of ours."

Only He can soften these stony hearts, and cause us to say, "Thy will be done, not ours." When it is His will, we can sing his praises in the glorious Spirit.

A sinner in hope of mercy,
Mrs. Havis Donaldson

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17)

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ANNUAL MEETING AT PINE CREEK CHURCH

The ANNUAL MEETING of the brethren and friends at Pine Creek Church, in Floyd County, Virginia, which has been held annually on the Fourth of July for a number of years, will be held on July 5th this year. Services to begin at ten o'clock A. M.

The 4th of July this year falls on Sunday—this is the reason the Meeting has been changed from the 4th to the 5th.

Dirctions to the Meeting House are as follows: If going east from the Town of Floyd on U. S. Route 221, turn left at an old store building about five miles from Floyd C. H. If traveling west from Roanoke, take right hand road at the mentioned store building, after crossing Little River, and travel about three miles. The Meeting House is located about one-half mile from Route 221.

An invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth. Large crowds have been attending, with a number of ministers in attendance. It is a good way for lovers of the truth to spend the day. Services are expected to be held morning and aftrnoon.

D. V. Spangler

Danville, Va. June, 1976

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EDITORIAL

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house." Hebrews 3:1-2

My mind has been exercised recently on a particular portion of the above scripture, namely, "Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." Therefore, in this article the writer hopes to dwell on these particular words .

The apostle Paul (a believer) writes to believers about the superior excellency of Christ, to angels and men, and the superior excellency of the priesthood of Christ Jesus and his sacrifice, to the Levitical priesthood and its sacrifices. What a wonderful exhortation to believers to "Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus"!

In the first two chapters of Hebrews Paul sets forth the dignity of Christ's person, his assumption of human nature, and suffering in the room and stead of his people. In the third chapter Paul exhorts believers to consider Christ Jesus, to pay attention to him, to have faith in him and to be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

Paul uses the word "wherefore" to mean "for which reasons" (which are set forth in chapters 1 and 2) holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, should consider Christ Jesus. Paul believed that they were holy brethren because they were of the same spiritual relationship with him. They had the same Father, they were the adopted sons of God, they were the brethren of Christ, they were of the same family and Jesus was their elder brother. They were holy because they were sanctified by the Holy Spirit. They were so by profession because they had professed their relationship in the family of God as he had done. They had given a reason of the hope that was in them with meekness and fear. As well, Paul refers to believers as partakers of the heavenly calling. This calling is a call from heaven to come out of nature's darkness into his marvelous light, a call to the enjoyment of the blessings of grace here and to glory hereafter. These, as all believers, are partakers, that is, they are called as are all believers by God. Paul says, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began". I Tim. 1:9.

Paul (a believer) writes to believers, to consider. Jesus was sent of God to do the will of his Father; to preach the gospel, to work miracles and to obtain redemption and salvation for his people. The high priest among the Jews was considered an apostle or messenger on the day of atonement. So, Christ Jesus is spoken of here as the Apostle (spelled with a capital to set forth "Christ Jesus", particularly) of our profession which should be made both in word and deed. The word "apostle" literally means "one sent forth".

We should note that High Priest is also capitalized in the King James version and rightly so. This sets forth the particular one, Christ Jesus.

In I Tim. 2:5-6, we read, "For there is one God, and *one mediator* between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." The word mediator means intermediary and intercessor. When we consider "one mediator" we should consider Christ (meaning the anointed) Jesus as Prophet, Priest, and King. Prophets, priests and kings were anointed when they were vested with their offices. These offices seldom if ever met in one person. Paul says Christ Jesus was faithful to him that appointed him as also Moses was faithful in all his house. Christ Jesus was counted of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. Moses was faithful in all his house as a *servant*, but Christ as a son over his own house; whose house we are, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

Christ Jesus is Prophet, Priest and King. God's children are ignorant, and blind and need him as *the Prophet* to enlighten them and instruct them and make known unto them the will of God. God's children are sinful, guilty creatures, and children of wrath by nature even as others and need *the Priest* to make atonement for them. God's children in their state of nature are enemies of God and need him to subdue them. In their converted state God's children are helpless and weak and need *the King* to rule over them and defend them.

In this particular article the writer will confine remarks to that of Christ Jesus as Priest, because of space. The Lord willing, Christ Jesus as Prophet and King will be considered on another occasion.

Christ Jesus has executed, is executing, and will continue to execute his priestly office. To this great work he was verily ordained before the foundation of the world.

In Hebrews we find many descriptions of Christ Jesus as the High Priest. The reader would do well to read Hebrews when making a consideration of Christ Jesus, as the High Priest of our profession. Only a few considerations will be mentioned here. He took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. It behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. In that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. He was faithful to him that appointed him, that is to God. Christ Jesus was faithful as a son in his house (whose house we are) while Moses was only faithful as a servant. Christ Jesus is a great high priest that is passed into the heavens. He is a high priest which can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and he was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Christ Jesus glorified not himself to be made an high priest but God called him, said unto him, "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec".

Christ Jesus was a son yet he learned obedience by the things which he suffered. Being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. Christ Jesus was made a priest not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. Christ Jesus, because he continueth ever, hath an un-

changeable priesthood. He is able, also, to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. He is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. He needeth not daily to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. Christ Jesus is such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. Christ Jesus hath obtained a more excellent ministry than Moses, in that he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. "This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Hebrews 8:10-12. The high priest, under the old dispensation, went into the holiest of all, alone, once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people, but our High Priest by his own blood entered in once into the holy place (even heaven), having obtained eternal redemption for us. Now he appears in the presence of God for us. So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto Salvation. "After he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, he sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool, for by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Hebrews 10:-12-14. Surely, Christ Jesus is the High Priest over the house of God (whose house we are, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end).

Christ Jesus was, is, and will continue to be the High Priest of our profession. As High Priest he *has made* the sacrifice for his people, he *is making* intercession for his people and will continue to make intercession for them and bless them. Often the following questions are deep in the bosom of this poor sinner. Has the High Priest laid down his life for me? Is he making intercession for me on high? Has he blessed me in the past and will he continue to bless me? Sometimes the words of the hymnwriter,

"His love in times past, forbids me to think,
He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink,
Each sweet Ebenezer I have in review,
Confirms his good pleasure to help me quite through."

Let me examine his sacrifice, his intercession and his blessings which I hope by faith and hope I believe are for me.

When Jesus said on the cross "It is finished", this one who often feels to be poor in spirit, believes that he did indeed lay down his life for all of his friends, not one more and not one less. He shed his precious blood for the remissions of all of the sins of all of his friends. Was this sacrifice for me? When he brings to my remembrance whatsoever he has taught me I am made to remember the burden of wrongdoing, the depths of wickedness of my heart and the troubled days and sleepless nights. When the burden was lifted what joy I found in the words of the hymns:

"Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song,
The joy of my heart, and the boast of my tongue;
Thy free grace alone, from the first to the last,
Hath won my affections, and bound my soul fast.

Thy mercy in Jesus exempts me from hell;
Its glories I'll sing, and its wonders I'll tell;
'Twas Jesus my friend, when he hung on the tree,
Who opened the channel of mercy for me."

The lines of another hymn, "My Saviour's obedience and blood, Hide all my transgressions from view" have been a wonderful strength to me. As I look back over the twenty and more years there have been many doubts and fears as to whether Jesus did indeed die for me. About two years ago when everything was as dark or darker than ever before or since as I lay awake tossing and turning and failure in everything seemed uppermost in my mind, the words as found in Job. 16:19 came to me, "My witness is in heaven, and my record is on high". Are not these precious to us? Sometimes we have in remembrance many precious moments of communion with him. Other times we search and seemingly find none.

Has the High Priest made and is he making intercession for me? Again my mind goes back over the years. As Paul said in Romans 8:23, "Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" and Romans 8:26-27, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what to pray for as we ought; but the Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is in the mind of the spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." How precious to me is the scripture found in Hebrews 4:15, "For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin". We often sing the 58th Paraphrase:

"Where high the heavenly temple stands
The house of God not made with hands,
A great High Priest our nature wears,
The guardian of mankind appears.

Though now ascended up on high,
He bends on earth a brother's eye;
Partaker of the human name,
He knows the frailty of our frame.

Our fellow sufferer yet retains
A fellow-feeling of our pains;
And still remembers in the skies
His tears, his agonies, and cries.

In every pang that rends the heart,
The Man of sorrows had a part;
He sympathizes with our grief,
And to the sufferer sends relief.

With boldness, therefore, at the throne,
Let us make all our sorrows known,
And ask the aids of heavenly power,
To help us in the evil hour."

Also, I often ask, "Has the High Priest blessed me?" How wonderful is the scripture in Ephesians 1:3 etc., "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, etc." Many are the blessings of the High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. Some particular hymns and scriptures come to mind to illustrate some of the blessings which I hope I have received from Christ Jesus. I believe that,

"There is a period known to God
When all his sheep, redeemed by blood,
Shall leave the hateful ways of sin;
Turn to the fold, and enter in."

The realization that we are dead in trespasses and in sins and that we have been quickened by his holy spirit is a wonderful blessing. He and he alone changes the heart, renews the will and turns the feet to Zion's hill. We see our righteousness as filthy rags. It is said of Abraham "He believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness", Genesis 15:6. Paul says in Romans 5:1 "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ". This faith to believe is a gift or blessing of God. "Hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Romans 5:5. The two mites of faith and hope are sufficient for commendation by Jesus as they were with the widow when she cast them into the treasury.

There are other blessings which follow quickening and belief. When we receive the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, "Abba Father" and the spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God, we can then

say, "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed by thy name".

Christ Jesus blesses us with his spirit, even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him but we know him for he dwelleth with us and in us. He maketh the storm a calm and we realize the peace that passeth understanding. His grace is sufficient for us, his strength is made perfect in weakness. Amazing grace is what we are given to sing. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance". Psalm 89:15. Holy brethren and partakers of the heavenly calling know the joyful sound of the Gospel, the good news from the heavenly country. Israel knew when Aaron went into the holy place before the Lord, and when he came out because they heard the bells on the hem of his garment. So, spiritual Israel hears the gospel that Jesus has gone into heaven, the holiest of holies, and we shall hear and know the sound when he comes again. Another great blessing is the desire to be baptized, even as he was, and to partake at the Lord's table. Sometimes it takes years before our desire is fulfilled, after much meditation and prayer. As we look back upon this uniting with his friends, our friends, it is a great strength and blessing to us.

One of the sweetest scriptures that is often in my mind was spoken by Simon Peter in St. John 6:68, "Lord, to whom *shall* we go? thou hast the words of eternal life". The desire for eternal life is often uppermost in our minds. The foretastes of our heavenly home are precious. Are these not wonderful blessings of our High Priest? All of the blessings of our High Priest are covenant blessings, spiritual, irreversible and eternal.

Aaron was to bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart when he went into the holy place for a memorial before the Lord continually. So with our High Priest.

"My name from the palms of his hands,
Eternity will not erase;
Impressed on his *heart* it remains,
In marks of indelible grace."

Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.

(Elder) D. Alex McColl

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

CHARITY.

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

Have we considered what the apostle means by charity? He has used the whole of the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians in setting forth what charity does, but have we considered what he means? It is commonly accepted among men in the world that charity means giving to others of this world's goods. But the apostle will not allow the meaning of charity to stop at that, for he says, "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." Therefore we will have to look still further for the apostle's meaning of this word "charity," the absence of which he felt rendered all that he did of no value or benefit. One might consider that much education in natural and spiritual things and then propounding them freely, would be considered to be charity, but the apostle says, "Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains," all this would avail him nothing if he lacked this one great essential point, charity. Then certainly this charity must be very essential, and in fact, the most to be coveted of all gifts, for the apostle says, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am be-

come as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." Certainly if one may possess the tongues of men or of angels and in the absence of charity that would avail nothing, it behooves us to look carefully what and where this wonderful gift is, as one would be unfit for a place in the church, and neither would all the wisdom of the world, nor any other gift which he might possess, avail him anything in the absence of charity. In order to learn what charity is, we must look to what it does. The apostle says, "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

Certainly the apostle has made it plain, and when we see churches growing cold and lukewarm, and brethren becoming uninterested in each other, and neglectful of meeting together there can be but one answer if we ask the reason for this, it is the lack of charity. The apostle declares that all other gifts avail nothing if charity be wanting. But, says one, What shall we do, or how shall we become charitable, seeing that no church can exist without it, and that no deeds of any kind will avail anything without this essential gift? The apostle says, first, that charity suffereth long and is kind. What does he mean by this? There can be but one answer. Our God is said to be long-suffering toward His people. This means that though his children provoke him by sinning against him, and offend him in every way, yet he is long-suffering unto them, and continually kind. Thus we are reminded that in order to be charitable toward our brethren we must suffer all their abuses and offences, and render kindness in return. This will in the end recall the heaping of coals of fire on his head.

Again, charity envieth not. This is certainly one of the sweetest gifts that one can possess; it is one of the greatest helps in the church. How often do I ask myself the question, Do I possess this essential gift? Have I been envious toward a gifted brother or of any member of the church? If so, this renders all my other gifts as nothing, and I had better never have united with the church. Charity vaunteth not itself. Have I vaunted myself over others? If so, then I have not charity.

Charity is not puffed up. Have I been puffed up, and felt myself more able and wise than others? If so, it is evident that I lack the all-important gift of charity. So if we behave ourselves unseemly it is sure that we are lacking in this all-important gift, charity; and the same is true if we have been seeking our own, and have had no thought of others in the church nor of the interest of the church, no matter what beside charity we may possess, we are nothing.

Charity seeketh not her own, but the welfare of others. If one possesses this charity he will look after the welfare of the church; he will hunt up the brethren and see how it is with them. When all the members of the church possess charity there will be a happy meeting, and warm shaking of hands, and a manifestation of love. Brethren, do we possess all this? If not, then all else that we may possess will avail us nothing. Still further, are we easily provoked over things in the church or among the brethren? Charity is not easily provoked. Are we lacking in this essential thing? If so, whatever else we posses amounts to nothing. We had better never have professed a hope than to lack charity. Do we think evil of brethren? If so, we are not fit to be among them, and the church would be better off without us, for charity does not think evil, and it suffereth long, and is kind, and envieth not. Where we see this charity among the brethren there we are sure that peace will reign supreme. Do we endure any of the burdens of the church? If so, then we have charity, for charity endures all things. From reading this thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians one would

have to conclude that if there be any lack of fellowship, or lukewarmness, or broken confidence, or neglect of assembling ourselves together, there is a want of charity, for, from what Paul has said, if charity exists none of thes things can exist. If we desire a better understanding among brethren, and if there be any of this essential charity about us, our desires will be realized. If we wish for more meetings, more fellowship, more of assembling of ourselves together, more union and communion, charity will bring it about, for the apostle says, Charity never faileth; it always accomplishes its desires. Prophecy, tongues, knowledge, faith, giving our goods to feed the poor, all fail, or avail nothing, if we have not charity. Faith, hope and charity abide, but the greatest of these is charity.

Hence the apostle exhorts the brethren to follow after charity. Here he means to follow after the things which belong to charity, and do them. The one thing needful in all this is love for the church, love for the brethren, and forbearing each other in love. Charity will tell us if in any way we have offended a brother or the church that we must in some kind way make reparation. If we have thought evil of a brother we are nothing to the church so long as we do so. All our other deeds are nothing so long as this is the case with us. We are holding aloof from a brother? If so, then charity is absent, and we are nothing, neither fit to commune with the church nor of any profit to any church or brethren. Do we think that there is a brother or sister we cannot fellowship? charity is wanting. Charity seeketh not her own, but suffereth long, and is kind, charity seeks the love and fellowship and comfort and welfare of others. Has this or that church grown cold and lukewarm? If so, charity is wanting. The apostle also says, Follow after charity. No one can be of any profit to the church if there is not a following after this all important charity. If brethren neglect to assemble themselves together, it is for the want of charity, and if this is the case, Paul says we are nothing. We are fit only to be spewed out.

Do we hold something against a brother, and do not appreciate him as we used to do, there can be but one reason: charity is absent. If there be a feeling against a brother to the extent that his visits are not wanted, there can be but one reason: charity is lacking, and the lack of this renders that church or brothther unprofitable in every way. Such ones are of no use as brethren at all. The same is true of us if we cannot endure or suffer long. If we think evil, and do not, unless providentially hindered, assemble with the brethren, we are not charitable. But do we desire that we might have good meetings once more, as we used to, charity can bring them about. Charity will heal every breach of broken fellowship among brethren; charity will enable us to take each other by the hand; charity will cause the servants of God to feel as though the word is as fire shut up in the bones, and will cause that brethren will fail to see anything save love; charity will cause a shaking of the dry bones, and inquiries will arise as to how brethren are getting along, and as to when they can meet to talk of the goodness of God; charity will cause the true saints to speak well of each other, and to think no evil. If we see a brother overtaken in a fault, charity will resore such an one in the spirit of meekness, and so long as that one is not restored, just that long charity is lacking, and the church can do no good, for without charity all else shall fail; therefore it behooves us to inquire whether we possess or lack this all-important gift. Is it wanting in the church or in ourself? We will each feel that we are as prone to fail in this all-essential thing as any one, and that we have done so more than any one we know. But one thing is certain: charity never faileth.

The apostle says that love is the fulfilling of the law, and that no man can love God and hate his brother at the same time. He that hateth his brother

is a murderer. Hate and charity cannot dwell in the same house; neither can coldness and charity dwell together in the same church. Brethren ask, Why is it that we have not the zeal we used to have, and why is it that brethren are not nearly so anxious to see each other as they used to be? The only answer is, that charity is wanting. I feel certain that charity never yet found fault with a brother, nor looked for motes in a brother's eyes. I feel certain that charity will forgive all wrongs, and cause us to seek after our brethren, and even to travel miles to see them. Charity will desire to hear them talk of God's love and mercy. Charity will always find a place and time to hold meetings, and will cause brethren to find no rest until they are sitting together in heavenly places, and with charity there will be gladness in thus meeting.

NEWTON PETERS.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

"Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." (1 Cor. 15:51)

Dear Brother Hutchens:

The article in the September number of the Lone Pilgrim on the subject of the resurrection of the dead, by Eld. W. M. Shoemaker, was read with much interest on my part, and to my mind the position he has taken he has fully supported by Scripture testimony, and so can not be confuted by anyone from a Scriptural standpoint.

A few thoughts relative to the same subject, while and since reading his letter, have to some extent occupied my mind, which I feel inclined to submit to your consideration.

There have been, no doubt, ever since the days of Hymeneus and Philetus, those who have disputed the future resurrection of the dead, and say it is "past already," with all who have died, and they will never know any more resurrection of the dead. I have heard the doctrine assailed by reason and by ridicule. But such I take to be the "vain babblings" Paul the apostle speaks of, when he admonishes Timothy to "shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a canker; of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some." (2 Timothy 2:18)

There is no fact of the Scriptures more clearly and positively stated than that Jesus came into the world to save His PEOPLE from their sins. It is His people that have sinned. It is His people that have died, and do die, and "the wages of sin is death." If His people are not raised up out of death, out of their graves, then they are not saved, but lost. And the word of Jesus when He said, "They that are in the graves shall hear His voice; and shall come forth," is not true. Paul, the inspired apostle, to the Thessalonian church said, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." (1 Thes. 5: 23, 24) Now it would be just as much to dispute the word of the apostle, to contend for the annihilation of one of those component parts of the believer as another.

Again, to the Corinthian brethren the same apostle said, "And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will (not "hath" nor "doth") also raise up us by His own power. Know ye not that your BODIES are the members of Christ?" (1 Cor. 6:14, 15) Then if these bodies are never raised up, the members of Christ are perished. Death and the grave have the victory. "But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord," they shall be raised up, not any more to "bear the image of the earthy, but the image of the heavenly," for in this res-

urrection "they shall be changed" (not exchanged) from mortal to immortal; for this mortal shall put on immortality. This corruptible is to be made incorruptible. As Paul says, "this corruptible *must* put on incorruption." (See 1 Cor. 15:53, 54)

Again we read from the same apostle, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself." (Phil. 3:21) It is just as foolish and unscriptural to claim that in the glorified state beyond this life, the saints will be as they are here, knowing each other as fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, parents and children, etc., and to deny the resurrection of the body at the second coming of Jesus. Both positions are a denial of the teaching of inspiration. Jesus said to the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection of the dead, "The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage; but they which shall be counted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage. Neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."

When we go down in natural, or corporeal death, our relationship to this world, to the things of this earthly life, are forever dissolved, and we will never live in our Adamic relationship any more, but our heavenly relationship can never be dissolved. It is in this sense that the believer cannot die; but in Adam all must die. But "For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are His at His coming." 1 Cor. 15:22, 23. As Christ the "firstfruits" went down in death, through the tomb, rising again, all the other fruits that follow must do likewise. So Paul says, "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead SHALL ALSO quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." (Rom. 8:11) I do not understand that the saints die as a penalty, for a violated law, for "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." (Gal. 3:13) But death is a necessary part of that change from mortal to immortal, from corruptible to incorruptible, etc.

It is true that the saints die, and are the subjects of that final resurrection of the dead, when Jesus shall appear the second time "without sin unto salvation." (Heb. 9:28) Again, it is true that saints or believers do not die. Jesus said to Martha, "I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." John 11:25, 26. Paul said also, Acts 26:10, speaking of what he had done as Saul of Tarsus, "And many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them." Here, the saint or believer bears relationship to two headships: the earthly Adam, his seminal head and representative in nature; also to Christ, his spiritual and covenant Head. In the one he dies; in the other he does not die. After being begotten and born from above, there are two indwelling lives and natures. Beyond this sphere of action there is only one. By the power of that life from above (Jesus is their life), they are destined to be conformed to the image of Jesus, for "whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren." (Rom. 8:29)

Jesus Christ is said to be "the firstborn from the dead." (Col. 1:18) He could not be the "firstborn from the dead without others to follow. Paul said, when arraigned before Felix by his persecutors, "But this I confess unto thee,

that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets. And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection, both of the just and the unjust." (Acts 24:14, 15) When arraigned before Agrippa, Paul asks the question, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?" (Acts 26:8) Further down in the same chapter, in his defense Paul said, "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come. That Christ should suffer, and that He should be the FIRST that should rise from the dead," etc. Verses 22, 23.

Death to us is but a sleep in the Lord. Jesus said of the daughter of Jairus, Luke 8:52, "Weep not: she is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed Him to scorn, knowing that she was dead." Again, He said of Lazarus, John 11:11-15, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of his sleep. Then said His disciples, Lord, if he sleep he shall do well. Howbeit, Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that He had spoken of taking rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead." Paul, testifying to the resurrection of Christ, and of His appearance among the disciples afterwards, after mentioning several other witnesses, said, "After that He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once: of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep," or, are dead.

While the word "sleep" is put for other things sometimes, as in 1 Thes. 5:6, 7, yet in the places referred to, it clearly means literal death. It has been asserted that the word as used in 1 Thes. 3:13 is to be understood in the same sense as in 1 Thes. 5:6, 7. But to my mind, a very slight examination of the connection ought to show to any unbiased mind, that it is not used in the same sense. The words "death" and "sleep" are used interchangeably, and evidently mean the same, in the following quotation: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thes. 4:13-18) How plain this blessed language. Why a "Hymenaeus and Philetus," or any others, should want to spiritualize, or otherwise explain it away, I can not understand. I know it is a wonderful mystery, and will be a stupendous miracle. But is not Israel's God "equal to the occasion"? He spoke the universe into existence out of nothing. He who created and formed the first man Adam of the dust of the ground into a natural existence, is He not able to raise up a multiplied Adam from the dead into a spiritual existence? "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with us that God should raise the dead?" Just as sure as God's Word is true, Jesus is to appear in this world "the SECOND TIME," and this time, "without sin," and some of His people are going to be living here in the world, and they shall be changed as those that are dead. For, says inspiration, "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep; but we shall be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall

sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. 15:51-55.)

It has been said that our visible, material body, when dead, is not a *mortal* body, and Webster is quoted to show that the word *mortal* means something subject to death, and so substantially argued that the word could not apply to our body when dead. But let us remember that Paul wrote this to the living, telling them of a most wonderful change that awaited them, whether they were living when the appointed time came, or dead. The living must be changed (die to this life, and awake to the other), as well as the dead. Every one must be changed, the mortal being made immortal; that which is vile and corruptible must be made pure and incorruptible. What a glorious fruition of hope it is to awake in the likeness of our blessed Redeemer. Many times through life we are experimentally raised up, and realize a blessed union, or oneness with our Saviour and Redeemer, but shortly to lapse back into a state of carnality. But in this final resurrection and change, there will be no more lapsing back; carnality is no more. Mortality is swallowed up of life.

The Psalmist said, "As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Thy likeness." (Psalm 17:15) The Apostle Peter said, "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day," and "For David is not ascended into the heavens," etc. See Acts 2:29-34. Now it is evident that David has ever been with the Lord in spirit. But David, the person, the individual, was in Peter's day still in the sepulcher, not yet "ascended into the heavens," and was yet to awake in the likeness of His Lord.

The Apostle John, 1 John 2:2, said, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."

In our finite state here in this life we can not see, nor understand what we shall be, or what heaven is like. We live not by sight, but by faith, and hope to see and know in that sweet day that the Lord has appointed for us. Like Abraham of old, we "look for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God," a glorious habitation, where everyone is in the image of Jesus, the risen and glorified Savior and Redeemer.

In a little hope of that glorious resurrection and change, I hope I am "your brother and companion in tribulations, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ."

H. B. Jones.

(From The Lone Pilgrim December, 1929)

WHAT AMERICA MEANS TO ME

With the coming of the 200th. Anniversary of our beloved United States of America and it's celebration, brings to mind the three basic R's of Citizenship —Rights, Respect and Responsibilities. In order to teach our children and youth of the real meaning of our democratic freedom and perpetuate our American way of life, it is necessary that all of us American Citizens demonstrate that we through God's love, mercy and guidance have mastered these basic principles.

Looking about us, we observe how far many in our Nation have slipped and also have forgotten the price that was paid by our early forefathers. May we "Praise" God for what he has done for us. God's providence has blessed us with freedom of speech, freedom in the exercise of religion; democracy; patriotism; the courage of our forefathers

and its benefits.

Our Nation has been blessed of God above all other Nations. It is the greatest and we should love it and be thankful to God for blessing us with the privilege of living in America the land of opportunity and abundance. Let us confess our individual and national sins that God will forgive us our sins, will lift us up and lead us in the paths of righteousness for his glory and precious namesake.

Psalm 20:5 says, "We will rejoice in thy salvation and in the name of our God we will set up our banners; the Lord fulfill all thy petitions." May we in this hour remember God's promises, humble ourselves and ask the Lord to fill our cup and lift us up. Then may we go forward in His power to reclaim liberty throughout all the land for his honor, glory and majesty! Let it be our prayer to almighty God, therefore, and our goal that freedom and liberty may always be ours.

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins and will heal their land." II Chronicles 7:14. Oh, dear Lord, just once more may we be given strength and understanding in thy mysteries; unworthy as we are, Oh God, be merciful to us. In spirit and in truth may we approach the throne of grace through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Almighty God, who didst lead our fathers to these shores that they might lay here the foundations of civil and religious liberty, bless to us the glorious heritage which we have received from them, preserve thou this nation which was established through grace by their prayers, heroic deeds, and their sacrifices. We thank thee, Lord, for America and our United States constitution and the freedoms which we enjoy from the bounty of thy hand. May other nations know this same freedom, we pray.

We pray for our President and those in authority that they may do thy will, so that thy name may be honored and praised. Please dear Lord fill us with thy Holy Spirit that we as Christians every where may "reclaim liberty throughout the land." Help us Lord, to be true to the great ideals for which our fore-fathers stood. May we ever keep our trust in thee and may our country ever be the home of justice, liberty and true brotherhood. Defend it against every peril and may it be increasingly a blessing for thy honor, glory and majesty.

Thank you dear Lord for all of the blessings bestowed upon mankind. Please keep us at the foot of the cross, ever looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.

From one who loves the Lord Jesus Christ and loves America, too.

Mary M. Pearson
531 Jenks Blvd.
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007

BLESSINGS ARE EVERY MINUTE OF HER LIFE

St. Charles, Ky. 42453

Dear Elder Wood:

I am sending a check to extend my paper another year.

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." I often hope I have some evidence of a hope. When I was in deep trouble, He answered my prayers: my husband and I were given to see a great light which we have never been able to describe, although it was on the highway, no one else saw it. And I have had many dreams which have meant a lot to me.

I have come a long way, for I am getting old and have had many troubles. But God has led me, and all I have is the Word of faith, which we preach.

I love the *Signs of the Times*, but can read but few minutes at a time. Yet I am wonderfully blessed, for I will be ninety-four years old in June, and able

to go to church some, where I hear the truth preached, but don't get much out of it if the truth is not preached.

"By grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Every day of my life is a gift of God—my blessings are so many, for they are every minute of my life. When I was young I took life for granted: I didn't think trouble would come. I tried hard to get religion and the minister told me I was all right, but that did not make me satisfied. I love the experiences of the writers in our paper. I feel I could write a book of my wonderful blessings all along the way. We are all traveling the same road. I love His people far and near.

Mona McGregor

OBITUARIES

ELDER B. O. THOMPSON

It is indeed with a sad heart that I attempt to write the obituary of our dear pasor, Elder B. Odell Thompson. He was born August 15, 1893, to the late E. K. and Mary Y. Thompson, and passed from this life December 19, 1975. He is survived by his wife, Gaye Akers Thompson; three brothers: J. Murphy Thompson, L. Ray Thompson, F. Moyer Thompson, one half-brother, Artis L. Young, and several nieces and nephews.

He and Gaye Akers were married September 3, 1914. They were baptized October 4, 1925 by Elder J. H. Cummings. He was an Elder in the Primitive Baptist Church for 47 years. He served as Assistant Clerk of the Smith River Association from 1955 until he was chosen Moderator and Honorary Moderator for 14 years, until death. During his ministery he served Union Church in Indian Valley for 18 years. At the time of his death he was pastor of Salem Church, and Valley View at Riner; and was also pastor of Paynes Creek Church. I remember so well November 14, 1959 when he became pastor at Valley View, he preached so wonderfully from the 9th chapter of Acts. He served so faithfully for 16 years, coming many times when he wasn't physically able. He was a peace loving pastor, his advice always in order. He stood firm for the true gospel of Jesus Christ. He ever continued to give praise unto His holy and righteous name.

To his faithful wife, may God's richest blessings be with you always. We who loved him share an empty space in our hearts with you.

Submitted in love by request of his wife.

Fannie Sue Lucas

JOHN WILLIAM HOUCHINS

Brother John William Houchins was born Dec. 29, 1884, a son of the late William Moses Houchins and Sister Amanda (Turner) Houchins, formerly of Patrick Co. Va., and the last of this union, died Dec. 23, 1975. He was first married to Leonie Shortt in 1916, daughter of the late John and Sister Mary (Thomas) Shortt, Floyd, Va. Employed as a machinest in U.S. Steel Mills, they lived in Illinois until the middle 1920s. Of this union two sons, John E. and William R. Houchins and one grandson, John William Houchins, all of Roanoke, Va., survive. He was a farmer in Botetourt Co. Va. His first wife, Leonie, died in 1939, and in 1941 he married Sister Evelyn Howery who survives and lives on the farm.

A long time friend of the Primitive Baptist, and they had Christian fellowship for him. His niece said, "I remember after they moved back to Virginia, having some very pleasant conversations with him on Scripture, experience, and his confession of how he felt his sins were worse than any one else." But because he felt he could not tell of great dreams or visions, as he called them, he was slow to ask for a home with the Primitive, nor could he join any other denomination. But he and the family requested that we at County Line Church visit him. On January 16, 1972, we, as many of us that were able, did meet in his home, and in his talk, after a brief service of song and prayer and reading some scripture, he spoke of wanting to join us and a great desire to be baptized. As the eunuch to Philip, he was enabled to give witness of a work of grace in his heart to us. His strong living expression that he believed Jesus is the Son of God will not soon be forgotten, we trust. We felt to receive him in full fellowship and at our next church conference the rest of the members approved this work. By reason of his health he was unable to be baptized until July 16, 1972. We met at the water, Elder B. O. Thompson led in prayer and he was baptized by Elders R. A. May and Noel F. Conner. He was able to be at meeting one time only after that.

One of his most out standing days was, (while still young and visiting his mother in Floyd County, Va.) to rent a surry and take her to Charity Church meeting in Patrick County, Va.; and visit where they were raised.

He spent the last months of his life in

the hospital and nursing home where all that family and skilled hands could do, was done to make him comfortable. He often expressed a desire to leave this life of affliction and be at rest.

Funeral services were conducted December 25, 1975 by the writer, at County Line Meeting House, and his body laid to rest in the church cemetery. May it please the Lord to remember his survivors, the meeting place and community in His tender mercy, for we feel our loss, but trust it is our dear brother's great gain.

Noel F. Conner

GEORGE MARTIN SUTPHIN

George Martin Sutphin, son of Zechariah Taylor Sutphin and Ruth E. (Knowles) Sutphin, of Floyd County, Va., was born November 24, 1889, and died October 20, 1975 in Roanoke Memorial Hospital. He and Mattie Ella Akers were married August 12, 1912. To this union one daughter, Tula Hazel, was born, and, though very afflicted, saw to it her father was well cared for to the end. They lived in Roanoke many years and he was employed in the N. & W. shops.

He attended Roanoke Church with his wife and daughter as long as they were able to go to meetings. His wife, a member at Roanoke Church, (moving her membership from Greasy Creek to Roanoke) died November 2, 1957. Mr. Sutphin continued to attend Roanoke Church as long as he was able to go. He was heard to hum some of the hymns while caring for children left in his care, and seemed to enjoy, especially, Elder O. K. Tench's preaching many times. His health became very poor the last two years or more, and was in the hospital several times, finally becoming bed fast.

A year or more before he died he requested Elder Noel F. Conner to conduct his funeral, and that being the daughter's wishes also, Bro. Conner was called to do that. Elder Conner visited him in the hospital and the home several times. Some times he did not know those visiting him. Bro. Conner feels the 2nd and 5th verses of the hymn 992 in Gadsby selection expressed his feeling as his conversation with him indicated.

"Poor and afflicted", yes, they are;
Their cup is filled with grief and care;
But he who saved them by his blood,
Makes every sorrow work for good.

And while they walk this thorny way,
They are often heard to sigh and say,
"Dear Saviour, come, O! quickly come,
And take thy mourning pilgrims home".

The funeral was conducted by Elder N. F. Conner at Oakley's of Roanoke, Oct. 22, 1975, and with grave side service at Greasy Creek Church Cemetery, Floyd County, Va., his body was laid to rest by the side of his companion to await the glorious resurrection.

The wishes of the daughter is that a memorial be published in the *Signs of the Times*, and with Elder Conner's help I am glad to try to compose this memorial.

Catherine A. Houchins

IRENA TART JOHNSON

The God of all glory in His infinite wisdom, whereby He governs all things, has called from our midst our beloved sister, Irene Tart Johnson.

She was born December 3, 1891, a daughter of the late A. P. and Louie Johnson Tart of Benson, North Carolina. To this union was born one son, Joseph M. Johnson of Dunn, North Carolina, and three daughters, Mrs. Annie Ruth Wilson of Aberdeen, North Carolina, Mrs. Iva B. Hubbard of Richmond, Virginia and Mrs. Louie J. Wilkes of Fayetteville, North Carolina. Sister Johnson also leaves two sisters, Mrs. Unice Johnson and Mrs. Hester Tart of Benson, North Carolina, nine grandchildren and sixteen great grandchildren.

Sister Irene Johnson joined Hickory Grove Primitive Baptist Church November 16, 1974. She passed away Tuesday, January 27, 1976 in the Betsy Johnson Memorial Hospital, Dunn, North Carolina. Funeral service was held in Hickory Grove Primitive Baptist Church with Elder W. D. Godwin, her pastor, officiating. She was laid to rest in the Johnson family cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers expressing the love of her family and many friends.

Sister Johnson's passing left a vacancy among our people which only God can fill. May we thank God we were privileged to know this servant of His. We feel our dear sister is resting in the arms of an all loving and merciful God who imparted His grace to save poor sinners.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be sent to the family, one be placed in the church records and one be sent to *The Signs of the Times*.

Written by request of the Hickory Grove Primitive Baptist Church Committee, this day of April 1, 1976.

Committee: Gertrude Royal
Velma Wood
Leacy Beasley

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 144 DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1976 NO. 7

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/76
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CLINGS TO HER HOPE

Atlantic, Va. 23303

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Greetings in the name of our precious Saviour. I trust this finds you resting in that perfect peace which passeth understanding.

It is time to renew my subscription, so am enclosing same with a little over to use as you see fit. I do, indeed, look forward each month to receiving the dear paper, and have been blessed from time to time to read with some understanding, if not deceived. I especially enjoyed the piece on "Joseph as a type of Christ" by Elder Stewart McColl in the March issue. Whenever I read about, or hear the subject spoken on, it just seems especially sweet to me, for I am given to see Joseph as such a lovely type of Christ.

I have been experiencing a very dry spell (spiritually) of late, but am hoping and praying that He will bless me with patience to wait on him. If it be that I am included in His elect family, I know that He will never forsake me utterly. But, Oh, I long for a felt sense of His presence, and my desire is that He might visit me once again, that I may feel that sweet communion with Him whom my soul loveth.

Even so, with the feeling of abandonment, I cannot help but cling to that hope, however faint it is at times, that the Lord has been good to me, and indeed, has led me all the days of my life, and all my dependence is on Him and in Him. For this I know of a certainty, and have been taught, that I cannot depend on myself.

An interest in your prayers I crave, and may He who does all things well ever keep you in his tender mercy, and grant you grace to sustain you, and strength that you may run with patience the race that is set before you.

In sweet fellowship
(Sister) Dixie Davis

DAVID'S PSALM OF PRAISE

"The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his work. All thy works shall praise thee, and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power."

The above is found in the 145th Psalm, verses 9, 10 and 11, and is entitled, David's Psalm of Praise. This is the theme of many of the Psalms of David and other writers of scripture throughout the ages. It is the theme of all of God's children as they are given to meditate upon the goodness of their Creator, and to think upon the way in which the mercies of God were made known unto them, and all of the ways in which they have been led. They bless Him with every fiber of their being and rejoice in speaking of His glory, and the greatness of His power. It is wonderful indeed to see much of the glory and majesty of their Heavenly

Father set forth so beautifully, so simply and yet so forcefully, in such a few words. This is surely the wisdom of the Ages being revealed by the pen of a servant of God as he is inspired by the Holy Spirit, as these things do not stand in the wisdom of man. It seems that so much of what is experienced, and what is most surely believed by the called and sanctified heirs of promise, is contained in these few lines of scripture.

None knew better than David of the goodness of the Lord, or experienced more of the tender mercies of God, than he. He was led in the nurture and admonition of God, and he wrote many verses of scripture praising His name for all of His many blessings.

David began the 145th Psalm with, "I will extol thee my God, O king, and I will bless thy name for ever and ever." None knew better than David of the goodness and mercy of God, but all of the saints of God know in measure as they are led along life's pathway, and these things are made manifest unto them in their experience, and in God's dealing with them.

Peter knew, as did David, of the goodness and mercy of God, and expressed the same sentiments in his writings. He was blessed to declare, "According as his divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." Here Peter is confirming the same understanding of God and his glory as David did, and these two, of whom we have scriptural evidence that they were children of God in two different ages of the world, declaring each in his own way these wonderful truths. Each ascribing all of the honor and glory of their own salvation, unto their gracious heavenly Father. Herein is manifested the truth that His saints shall bless him and they shall speak of his power, as long as there are those who have been saved and called with an holy calling. Always these who have been so called, have fellowship for one another, even though one lived in the first century of time, and the other lived in the last day that this world stands. As Peter said, speaking of money, it has no part in the matter, the same thing applies to time. It matters not in what age of the world one may live, the same power exists, the same love is experienced, and the same fellowship for the same truths will be found. There is a bond between those who fellowship these things, that all of the powers of earth and hell cannot break: because that bond is the love of God that is shed abroad in the hearts of His children. That love stands the test of time, the strain of the trials of the flesh, and anything else that the elect of God shall face in this life.

"All thy works shall praise thee and thy saints shall bless thee." The works of God are everlasting and they will continue to praise him by their very existance in the way and manner in which they were created, and by their continuing to fulfill the purpose for which they were made. This is true of the children of God as they are called from nature's darkness into light, and their salvation is made manifest in their lives, as well as in all of the rest of His Creation. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." The very fact that we are still having one day to follow another, months, seasons in proper sequences, and years, in this age of the world, is but fulfillment of the promise that was made to man in the days of Noah. They are sure evidences that the same God is on his throne, and are reminders to the present day heirs of these promises, of the Omnipotence, Omniscience, and Omnipresence of His sovereign grace. As they are blessed to understand these glorious truths, they do in deed bless His Holy Name, and render thanksgiving and honor unto Him for his matchless grace. The chosen vessels which were afore prepared unto glory, are the only ones who are conscious of these things being evidences of the power of God. The world sees them as nature and phenomenon to be studied by science. To the children of God they are mani-

festations of the same power that wrought such a miracle of grace in the secret confines of their hearts. They will not and cannot deny this work of grace because it is so indelibly imprinted upon the fleshly tables of their hearts, and it will continue with them as long as they live. They cannot fully explain it, but they certainly cannot deny the power by which it came.

"They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power." This is surely witnessed and experienced by every one that has been quickened into spiritual life, and into whose heart and mouth these words of life have been placed. They can acknowledge the feeling of Jeremiah when he was advised that he had been ordained a prophet. He stated, "Ah, Lord God! behold I cannot speak for I am a child." But as Jeremiah, these words have been placed in their hearts for a purpose, and that purpose shall be made manifest. They shall speak them, and they shall accomplish the thing whereunto they were sent, and it shall be unto the honor and glory of God, who is the author of it all. David does not leave the reason for this being, as he declares that it is, "To make known to the sons of men his mighty Acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom." This is indeed done, and it is fulfilling the prophesy of Malachi, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord harkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." It is a wonderful blessing to behold how the scriptures of the Old and New Testament confirm and support the testimony of the other. They are all from the same source, and all are for the comfort and edification of the saints of God dwelling in this tabernacle of flesh.

The last verse in the 145th Psalm is, "Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdam and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations." This is most certainly believed by all of the Lord's people, and is the whole basis of their hope in things eternal. All that they have known in the flesh is temporal and changes from day to day, as it perishes with the using. They are made to acknowledge, by the weight of daily evidence, the weakness and frality of the flesh, and their heartfelt prayer is for peace, stability and security, which the natural world cannot provide. The testimony of David that God's kingdom is an everlasing kingdom then is comforting and reassuring to those tossed about by the trials and troubles of this life.

"Let Israel rejoice in him that made him, let the children of Zion be joyful in their king. Let them praise his name in dance, let them sing praises unto him with the timbrell and harp. For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation." What sweet and precious promises are made to those who love the Lord, those who are the called according to his purpose. They were created by him who made all things according to his own will and pleasure, and speak of security, peace and stability of soul. This is the heritage of those whom He created for his own peculiar people, and they do rejoice in him, speak of his glory and power, and praise him for all of his wonderful works. They praise him in song, they praise him in prayer, and they praise him in the midst of the congregation, the general assembly and church of the first born. "For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation." Not that he *may* beautify them with salvation, or will upon certain terms or conditions, but he *will* beautify the meek with salvation, and all because it is his pleasure to do so. What grand and glorious promises have been made to those who love the Lord, those who have been made to see what they are in nature, and acknowledge their sins and their just condemnation. What precious words of comfort to those who have been made to realize what their end would be if justice was meted out to them. They have experienced the Lord's dealing with them in delivering them from the

awful wrath of God's judgment, and instead hope against hope that they have been made accepted in the beloved. Then they can witness with the children of God in all Ages, and the Apostle Paul when he was blessed to pen these lovely words of truth: "If God be for us, who can be against us."

In bonds of love,

Richard H. Campbell
2761 Cochese Cove,
Memphis, Tenn. 38118

PSALM 120

"In my distress I cried unto the Lord, and he heard me. Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue. What shall be given unto thee? Or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper. Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar! My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace. I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war."

Some of the brethren have often asked me why I did not write something and contribute it to the *Signs* for their consideration. I have never felt worthy nor capable to write anything of comfort to the readers, but in light of these requests, I am herewith attempting to comply with their request, leaving all judgment in the hands of our editor as to the fitness of it for publication. I want to assure one and all that if it is not deemed worthy of being submitted to the readers, that we all will remain peaceful brethren. I desire to deal primarily with the above chapter as a basis for what I write.

David begins this psalm with these words, "In my distress I called unto the Lord, and He heard me." The self righteous person, the person at ease, the comfortable, do not feel the need to cry unto the Lord. Christ said that he did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Obviously, David felt the extreme weight of his sins, his lying lips, his deceitful tongue, and his adultery. He is confessing many of the things the apostle James later writes about regarding the unruly tongue and the offense often caused by it. James states that the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity, and that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. He tells us that no man can tame the tongue; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison, and that with it we bless God and curse man.

Now David says in the text, "He heard me." To me this means that God heard David and knew his distress; therefore God both heard and was merciful. Just look sometimes how many times David records and declares, "His mercy endureth forever." I recall when the Pharisee and the publican went up to pray, and the Pharisee thanks God that he is such a good man, while the publican could only beg God to be merciful to him a poor sinner. We note that Jesus Christ declared that the publican went down to his house justified. (Luke 18:13) All men are sinners but all men do not recognize themselves as such; nor can they, while in this state, beg for something they cannot see they need. In His infinite wisdom, it has pleased God to reveal their sins to some, while hiding it from others. In our nature, we cannot understand, fathom, or even be reconciled to God's purpose, His election, His predestination, His grace, or His love: this comes only when one is born again and enlightened by the Holy Spirit. Then can he feel his distress and sinfulness, and feel the need to call upon one in whom he is made to believe, is his only source of relief. In His prayer to the Father, the Saviour petitioned, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father: for it seemed good in thy sight." (Luke 10:21)

David continues in this psalm to mourn over his heinous crimes, sins, and

transgressions. He begs God to deliver his soul from lying lips, and a deceitful tongue, and asks, What shall be done to these (his own) sins; to these, the perpetrators of evil and sinful acts? In the Book of Books it is written, "Let God be true and every man a liar." (Rom. 3:4), this was long after David had gone from the stage of action. David is made to mourn that he is dwelling in the tents of Kedar, in Mesech in adultery with Bathshebe (the stolen wife of Uriah whom he had put into the heat of the battle, to get him killed, as he lusted after Bathsheba and caused her to conceive a child,—and afterward she was the mother of Solomon) Then David confesses that his soul has long dwelt with him that hateth peace, (I verily believe David means himself in the carnal flesh.) Then he says, "I am for peace but when I speak they are for war." Here I believe David refers to his own tongue which he is unable to tame: his lying lips, and his deceitful tongue, as referred to by James much later. Paul later tells us that he found a law that when he would do good evil was present with him. (Romans 7:21) It would seem to this poor sin weighted soul attempting this article, that both David and Paul were speaking those things which we all are brought in fellowship with: to wit, that we all have the same burden of sin, and are helpless to do good or create the peace which our souls long for. God declares, "I form the light and create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." (Isaiah 45:7)

Now let us make one more comment relative to David. He was not permitted to build the temple promised Israel, but was promised by the Lord that his son Solomon would do so. The reason David was given for not being allowed to build the temple, was that he was a man of war. God does truly work in mysterious ways His wonders to perform. It was God's inspiration and presence that enabled David to slay the lion and the bear, as well as the Philistine Goliath. It was at God's command that Samuel went to the house of Jesse and finally to anoint David King of Israel while he was yet a lad, so much so that Jesse then forgot about David until asked by Samuel, "Is there not another?" God had declared David to be a man after his own heart. He had inspired David to win many battles, and upheld him entirely while Saul sought his life. These battles were crucial to Israel, and the Lord prepared David to win them for Israel's sake, and the fulfilling of his purposes.

As uninspired mortals, we would declare and feel that God was unjust with David, that God used him, and then cast him aside, but this was far from the case, and one of the reasons that David continued to say, "The mercy of God endureth forever and to all generations." We find recorded in David's last words, "Although my house be not so with God, yet He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure, for this is *all* my salvation, and *all* my desire, although He maketh it not to grow." (2 Sam. 23:5)

I will close with one other scripture. God has declared to His chosen people, yea this peculiarly loved people, "That I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore, with loving kindness have I drawn thee. (Jer. 31:3)

In love and sweet fellowship,

Swayne Young,
Memphis, Tenn.

Rt. 5, Box 104
Bassett, Va. 24055

Dear readers of the *Signs of the Times:*

I have in mind to write you again on some vital points that we all may consider at times.

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goeth." (Eccl. 9:10)

According to the above quotation there is no life in the grave, nothing but a dead body completely silent in the grave, that has returned to dust

from whence it came. "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." (Eccl. 12:7)

I believe that there are three spirits: the Spirit of God which has no beginning and no ending, and the spirit of the Devil which has a beginning and no ending, and the spirit of the flesh which has a beginning and an ending, which is temporal and done away in death. The Spirit that goes back to God who gave it is the new man that is born of God, to sleep in Jesus until God shall come again to quicken our mortal bodies.

"And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." (Acts 7:59) What spirit was he talking about? the new man that is born of God, and none other. "Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?"

The spirit of the new man is the Spirit of the Son of Man which is Christ Jesus born in His people, and this is what God will bring with him, those that sleep in Jesus, to raise the dead or quicken our mortal bodies, and the spirit that goeth downward is the spirit of the Devil which is the beast: this spirit will rise up only to be in the non-elect, to stand upon this earth to be judged out of the books of the law, and then they shall be cast into the lake of fire after the saints have already risen: for the dead in Christ shall be raised first.

"For I am in a strait betwixt two, having desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better: nevertheless to abide with you in the flesh is more needful for you." (Phil. 1:23, 24)

This shows that Paul would expect that his spirit would be parted from the flesh at the time of death, until the resurrection of the dead. What, and why would we in the spirit want to dwell in a stinking, mortified dead body, when we cannot enjoy being in it while we are walking around in it on earth. Paul said, "If Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness." (Romans 8:10)

"Yea I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, (fleshly body) to stir you up by putting you in remembrance, knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. (2 Peter 1:13, 14) To me this was the spiritual Peter, the inner man talking, meaning the same thing as I have quoted above. (Phil. 1:23, 24.)

My reason for writing this letter is that about two hundred years ago there was a denomination called Cater Baptists. The word Cater means downwards, meaning that when a man of God dies, the spirit that is born of God is buried with the body in the grave. This is not true. The only Spirit that will go upward at the time of death, is the spirit that God gave in regeneration in being born of God, and the only spirit that will go down is the spirit of the Beast the Devil. I do not want to dwell on the spirit that goeth downward, nor where it goes, but the spirit of the rich man, or the rich man went to Hell, and Lazarus in Abraham's bosom.

I do not know how many heavens there are, but Paul spoke of the third heaven, and later called it Paradise: Paradise is the place of rest — resting from your labors. "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." (Rev. 14:13) I do not believe that we in spirit will see Jesus as he is, until we awake in his likeness, but we sleep in Jesus until God comes again to quicken our mortal bodies, then we will be caught up into the air to meet the Lord in the air. I already know in some measure what it is to be caught up in the air, but I did not see Jesus but felt a great joy in ascending upward toward heaven, and I awoke in

the air praising God from whom all blessings flow.

I believe in the resurrection of the dead as much as I believe in God. I believe that the divinity of Christ and the spirit of the thief rested together in the same paradise for three days, and the Spirit of Christ by the commandment of the Father left paradise entered into the body of Jesus and raised him from the dead, and after forty days Jesus ascended into heaven and all power was given into his hands over death and hell, and he has the keys to Satan's kingdom, to bind or to release as he pleases.

"But I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that you sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thes. 4:13-18)

The Apostle said that he would not have us ignorant concerning them which are asleep. I ask the question, What did the writer mean when he said, them that sleep in Jesus God will bring with him? Does anyone think that the grave is above? or do you believe that the grave is below? "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." This which God will bring with him, is none other than our spirits which are, or will be resting in paradise and yet asleep in Jesus; but when our dust is made a new body we will be perfect, and then we will know as we are known. We know in part and see in part, because all that we know is that which hath been revealed, but when we wake with His likeness then that which is in part will be done away. "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And thy cried with a loud voice, saying, How long O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" (Rev. 6:9, 10)

These certainly were not in the grave, for there is no wisdom, knowledge, nor device in the grave, as I have already quoted: Eccl. 9:10. There is a difference in the soul and that of the body: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Mathew 10:28)

I believe that all earthly ties will be done away with in death. My mother and father as they were on earth will be no different from anyone else that I have met on earth. For one to think that we will recognize them from the others, is carnal thinking. We will be as the angels of God, and there, and even now, there are neither male nor female, neither rich nor poor, neither bond nor free, for we are all one in Christ. In Galatians 3:28, we find, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for we are all one in Christ Jesus." If we cannot tell whether they are male or female as they were on earth, how could you know your mother or father? The reason I mention this is that a brother said to me that he believed he would know his mother in heaven.

Elder Wood, I do hope you will see fit to publish this. I have written with the thought of edification to the saints, and of good will. May God bless the Editors and writers of the *Signs of the times*.

J. R. Hollandsworth
Bassett, Va.

In the following we present another installment of, *"The Present State of Religion; or Who Are The People Miscalled Antinomians?"* by William Gadsby in 1841, and published in England. In this work the Truth as it is in Jesus is clearly presented by *Love-Truth;* while *Demur* and *Trifle* oppose the doctrine of *Love-Truth;* and *Investigation (Inv.)* finds that Love-Truth is correct in his presentation of the doctrine of the Scriptures, and was glad to say in the end that, "I desire no happier lot than to live and die as an Antinomian."

William Gadsby, like many others, maintained that the Gospel, and not the Law, is the rule of life for the believer; and for this he was stigmatized and persecuted as an *Antinomian.* (see page 617 of Hassell's Church History)

The doctrine of Love-Truth is the doctrine that has been held by the true church from the days of the Apostles, and the doctrine of *Demur* and *Trifle* has been held by opposers of the Truth.

J. D. W.

PRESENT STATE OF RELIGION
By William Gadsby, London, 1841
(Continued)

Inv. Then I was right in my observation some time ago, when I told you we must go upon a broader bottom than the Bible; but I perceive such an observation will not bear reflection, for if the word of God is not to be a rule for ministers, and if they are not to follow the examples of prophets, apostles, nor of the Lord of the house himself, what is to be their rule, and who are they to follow?

Love-Truth. Indeed I cannot say; but to me it appears evident that if we are not to go by this rule, we have no rule at all. But it will be found in the end that it is required of a steward to be faithful, that he may please Him who has called him to his office, and not to consult the feelings of men, but keep in view the honour of his Master. And, if I am not mistaken, one who was moved by the Holy Ghost to speak and write, said, "if he yet pleased men, he was not the servant of Christ." (Gal. i. 10.) And sure am I, that the gospel of Christ (though the best news that was ever made known to mortals) is not calculated to please the carnal mind, but quite the reverse.

Inv. "The natural man discerneth not the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned;" and to be blessed with the truth in the heart, and be instant in season, and out of season, is no small matter; and those who are thus blessed have not to thank *self* for it, but know well that they are indebted to sovereign grace for all they know and enjoy of the truth; and for being faithful to dispense it to others too, so that boasting is excluded.

Love-Truth. It is just so; God's ministers are laid in the dust, and with Paul say, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;" and thus boasting is excluded, not by the law of works, but by the law of faith; for boasting can never be excluded by the law of works, for he that doeth them shall live in them, and then "the reward would not be reckoned of grace, but of debt, but now is the reward of grace."

Inv. Well! let us be thankful that God, in the riches of his mercy, has made the law of faith manifest in our hearts, for "what have we that we have not received, and who hath made us to differ?"

Love-Truth. True; it is all of grace, and we are not in our right minds when we forget this, and I am sure that a sense of it will make the soul thankful; and while we are thankful, let us cry to the great Head of the church to make us faithful unto death, and enable us to set our face against everything that exalteth itself against God, and treat every species of error as the poison of asps; and may we watch and pray that we enter not into temptation.

Trifle. I am determined to be gone, for I believe you are both *Antinomians* at the bottom. According to your ac-

count, our works are nothing worth.

Demure. You are exactly right; I believe they are both enemies to good works; and, for my part, I have been weary long since; for if I must give up my good works, I must give up my hope; so that I will abide by them as long as I live, and have no doubt but they will be of great use to me when I die; for I expect on my death-bed to look back upon a well spent life with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Love-Truth. I assure you both that I am no enemy to good works, but believe that every believer in Christ is "God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God had before ordained that they should walk in them." (Eph. ii. 10.) Good works are the *effect,* not the *cause,* of God's love to us, so that "We love him, because he first loved us," (I John iv. 9,) and we perform good works because "he works in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure." (Phil. ii. 13.) But I have no hope of having any real consolation from any works that I do, neither at nor after death. All my hope centres in Christ, for he is my all, and in all. Besides, to talk of good fruit from a bad tree, is inconsistent indeed! The great Head of the church says, "A good tree bringeth forth good fruit, and a corrupt tree evil fruit;" (Matt. vii. 17;) "The good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil; for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh." (Luke vi. 45.) Thus it appears, that till there be a good heart, there cannot be any good works. Then how can an unconverted man do works pleasing in the sight of God? or how can the favour of God be gained thereby?

Demure. I do not understand your doctrine, for, as a noted minister observes, "if we do not do them to gain God's favour, what do we do them for?" I am a stranger to such mystical work as you talk about; and if brother Trifle is willing, we will be gone.

Trifle. I am quite willing, for I am as sick as you can be; so we will leave them to prate by themselves.

Inv. Well, brother Love-Truth, I find your words true; they appear to be quite in the dark. I perceive more and more that a fair show in the flesh is one thing, and vital godliness is another; but suppose we now enter upon the term *Antinomian.*

Love-Truth. With all my heart. It is allowed on all hands that an *Antinomian* is one who is *against the law;* but to me it appears impossible that a man can be against the law, who alloweth it all the power and authority which it ever possessed.

Inv. Very true! for if *he* is against it, who can be for it? But what do the Scriptures say upon the subject, for it is by them that we must decide the matter?

Love-Truth. It is by them that I wish to act, and the apostle, when writing to the Romans, (chap. iii. 19,) observes, "Whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, that every mouth might be stopped, and the whole world become guilty before God;" "The law entered that the offence might abound;" (Rom. v. 10;) and that sin by the commandment might appear exceeding sinful." (Rom. vii. 13.) Now from this account it appears that the design of the law is to bring the sinner in guilty before God, and to justify Jehovah in his righteous sentence of condemnation; while it stops the sinner's mouth and makes him speechless. And all that I am acquainted with, who are called *Antinomians,* always insist upon it that whenever God's law takes hold of the of the sinner's conscience, as made manifest by the Spirit of God, it is sure to stop his mouth; nor will the sinner dare to justify himself, but will justify Jehovah in the sentence of death which he feels passed upon him by the commandment; for when the commandment comes, sin (which he thought was dead,) revives, and the sinner dies; and the very law which he expected to be unto life, he finds to be unto death. Thus his fleshly hopes give way, nor has he a gleam of hope left upon the footing of

good works; for "by the deeds of the law no flesh living can be justified;" (Rom. iii. 20;) for "the law worketh wrath;" (Rom. iv. 15;) and "the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." (2 Cor. iii. 6.) Paul tells the Galatians, that "the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe; but before faith came we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith, but after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." (Gal. iii. 22, 25.) And "the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient." (Tim. i. 9) From these scriptures it appears that when the law has brought them in guilty, stopped their mouths, cut up all their hopes, worked wrath in the soul, passed sentence of condemnation upon them, it holdeth them fast, till faith comes to deliver them. Christ is made manifest in the soul as the poor sinner's surety; faith lays hold of him, love embraces him, hope anchors in him. Jehovah speaks the word, "Loose him and let him go, for I have found a ransom;" and it is done. The poor soul cries, "Lord, I am black." Jesus answers, "Thou are comely through the comeliness that I have put upon thee." "I am desolate," cries the sinner. "Thou shalt no longer be called forsaken, nor desolate, for thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name." The ring is put on the hand, the best robe brought forth, and the poor sinner clothed with it; the fatted calf killed, shoes are put on the feet, the music played, and there is joy both in heaven and earth. The law is completely satisfied, yea, magnified and made honourable by the sinner's Surety, who is her loving Husband, and by the blood of the covenant the sinner is sent forth out of the pit wherein is no water; and here Moses cheerfully gives them up, not being able to take them to rest, saying, "Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand, and they sat down at thy feet, every one shall receive of thy words." (Deut. xxxiii. 3.)

Inv. But I have been told that by the schoolmaster the *ceremonial* law is intended, and have been asked, what the law of works teacheth, if *it* be the schoolmaster.

Love-Truth. They would have had but little reason to ask what it teaches, if they themselves had been taught terrible things in righteousness. I am well convinced that those who have, in this sense, believed Moses, have been taught a lesson that they will not forget in this world. But if it cannot teach anything, as such men suggest, it will make a poor figure as the believer's only *rule* of life. The apostle says, as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; and is this the ceremonial law, think you? Surely not; for that preached Jesus. The curse, or the sentence of death, is in the law of works. A man must do violence to his own understanding before he can think that this is the ceremonial law. Perhaps they have forgotten that the Galatians were Gentiles and never under the ceremonial law; and how could it be a schoolmaster to them who were never under it? This, in my view, needs a little explanation.

Inv. I, for my own part, confess I cannot see how it can be any law but the law of works; but let me hear a little more concerning these *Antinomians*.

Love-Truth. They believe that the law of works can never be altered, but must for ever stand a just and holy law, with all its authority, in the very sense that God gave it; and that all who are under it, are under its curse. They also believe that Jesus the great Head of the church, was made under the law, and *that* cursed him as the Representative of his people. But he has fulfilled it, and made it honourable, and given it all that it could require, in every sense, and set them for ever free who believe in him; for if the Son make them free they are free indeed; and "the law of the Spirit of life has made them free from the law of sin and death." (Rom. viii. 2.) Now they do

not wish to alter the law, nor to strip it of its authority; but to give it its just due, and by faith in Jesus establish it, thus using the law lawfully, and not making it into a *nose of wax,* to turn it just which way they please to suit their own purpose. No, they dare not thus trifle with God's holy law.

Inv. To tell you the truth, I have often thought that some professors get the terms, *moral* and *ceremonial,* and use them as *stepping-stones;* so that if you say that the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, but when faith is come we are no longer under a schoolmaster, they call this the *ceremonial* law; then, if you say that the believer is under the law of love, faith, liberty, or the law of Christ, this they call the *moral* law. So you will find them *stepping* from one to the other, to darken counsel by words without knowledge.

Love-Truth. Yes; and tell them that the believer is dead to the law, (Rom. vii. 4,) free from the law, (Rom. vii. 6,) not under the law, (Rom. vi. 14,) that the law is not made for him; (I Tim. i. 9;) they then say that it is as a *covenant* of works that they are thus free from it, and not as a *rule* of life; but ask them to produce a passage of scripture to prove this, and that points out the difference between the law as a *rule* and a *covenant;* and they are totally at a loss to find such a scripture, for the Bible will not furnish them with one. Some will tell you that they are free from it as it was given to Moses, but *now* it is in the hands of Christ, and in his hands it is a *rule of life* to the believer; but if you ask them whether the law in the hands of Christ can do anything less than curse for transgression, some of them will say, it cannot; and so what advantage can be had by its being in the hands of Christ, I cannot tell! for it can but curse in the hands of Moses, and if it can do no less in the hands of Christ, where is the difference?

Inv. Where indeed! but from what has been said, those men who are called *Antinomians* cannot be such, for they are *not* against the law.

Love-Truth. They are not; but if we attend a few minutes to what those say, who are so fond of calling others by such frightful names, we shall soon see that they are marking out themselves. It is no common thing for them to say that a man may be a believer in Christ, and never have a law-work in his conscience, or experience its condemning power. This they call being drawn by love. Thus they have fled for refuge before there was any storm, and have applied to the physician before they were sick. From such people you will hear very little of stopping of mouths, or the letter killing, so that they are against the law in the very first instance. Such men never say, "Let not the Lord speak unto us any more; neither let us see this great fire any more." No, they have never heard his voice in the place of thunders. But in order to make the law a perfect rule of life to a believer, they strip it of its authority to condemn, and say that Christ has taken away its condemning power; and if this is not being against it, what is? for what is any law that has no authority to condemn for transgression?

Inv. But you said just now that some of these men would say, that the law as a rule did condemn for transgression, and could do no less than condemn; now you say that they rob it of its condemning power. This cannot be a true statement of the case surely; for if it be, they condemn themselves.

Love-Truth. Strange as it may appear, it is true; and I have heard them do it more than once; nor is it to be wondered at, for they cannot go straight, unless, in the first place, they can overturn the word of God. And indeed you may hear almost as great *inconsistencies* as this in every sermon that some men preach. Now you will hear them say that God hath chosen a people for himself, and left the rest; and, in *fifteen minutes,* you will hear them say that God has sent them to invite *all* to come to Christ, and that There is provision enough in Christ for *all the world;* and they will tell the whole

congregation that they can believe in Christ, and obtain salvation this moment, *if they will.* I once heard a student from Hoxton academy say that Jesus stood with open arms, begging, praying, and beseeching them all to come to him, and have life; nay, said he, it is as if the Father came and fell upon his knees before you, praying you to be reconciled to him, and come and have life, but ye will not. Now this man called himself a *Predestinarian;* so you may judge how straight he could keep.

Inv. Really it makes me tremble; it is little less than blasphemy. Pray, what did you think of the man?

Love-Truth. I thought he was one of those who think that God is altogether such a one as themselves. Indeed I could not help thinking he was an *Atheist* in heart, or one that says in his heart "there is no God," (Ps. xiv. 1,) for the God of heaven works all things according to the counsel of his own will, and will do all his pleasure; and therefore cannot be that God who is not able to conquer a worm of the day.

Inv. But to return to our subject. It appears that those men, falsely called *Antinomians,* believe that the law is holy, just, and good, and stands for ever a rule of life to all who are under it, with all its authority to condemn for sin; and it can show no mercy to the transgressor, nor speak peace to a troubled breast, yet it is strictly righteous in all its denunciations; that Jesus did not destroy it, nor take away its authority to condemn, but fulfilled it, and gave it, in his people's stead, all that it could require; and delivers them from under it, and enables them, by faith in him, to establish it, without killing it or stripping it of its authority.

Love-Truth. Yes, this is the case, but such who say it is the believer's rule of life, are under the necessity of first saying it is dead, then it is alive; *now* it can condemn, *anon* it has no power to condemn; and so by trying to make it *all,* they do as much as in them lies to make nothing at all.

Inv. These then must be the true and proper *Antinomians.*

Love-Truth. Without doubt they are; and if they can deny the charge, let them come forth like honest men, and do so.

Inv. Did you not write upon this subject to one Legal-Definition?

Love-Truth. Surely I did.

Inv. Have you a copy of it?

Love-Truth. Yes; and if you choose, you shall hear it.

Inv. I shall be glad to hear it.

Love-Truth. Well then, thus it reads:

"MR. LEGAL-DEFINITION.

"Dear Sir,—Friend G— informs me you wish me to write to you and inform you what law it is that I say the beliver is in no sense under. I therefore write to say (though I cannot help thinking you must know) that it is the law given to Moses on Mount Sinai, commonly called the moral law, or ten commandments, recorded in Exod. xx., and hinted at, with its curses annexed to it, in Deut. xxvii. This is the law I intend, and do venture to say that the believer in Christ is in no sense whatever under it; so that it is not a rule of life to that man who is led by the Spirit. As you promised to answer me if I should write to you, I will propose to you a few questions, and I hope I shall do it in the fear of God, and shall expect you to answer them in plainness of speech; and

"1st. If the law is the believer's rule of life, shall thank you to tell me what is intended by the letter written by the apostles and elders, and sent to the believing Gentiles, as recorded in Acts xv. and shall expect you to explain the chapter.

"2ndly. Hope you will tell what the apostle means in the first six verses of Romans viii., where he says that the believer is dead to the law, and free from the law; and let me know how that law can be his rule, when he is as dead to it, and as free from it, as a woman is from her husband when she has buried him. Should you be disposed to say that the believer is dead to it as a COVENANT, but not as a RULE of life; you will, no doubt, point to those scriptures which

make the distinction between the law as a covenant and as a rule of life; for, unless you do this, you will not move me.

"3rdly. You will have the goodness to inform me what is intended by the first four verses of Romans viii,; and let me know how it comes to pass that the law of the Spirit of life in Christ has made me free from the law of death (called in another place the killing letter) is my rule of life; and how it is that it is my rule of life after it has killed me, and I am made free from it.

"4thly. You will read 2 Corinthians iii., and let me know how it is that the administration of death, written and engraven on stones, is the living man's rule of life, and how this can be consistent with what the apostle observes in ver. 11, where it says "it is done away," and in ver. 13, where it says, "it is abolished." Now, my dear Sir, you are to tell me how that law which is done away and abolished still remains the believer's perfect rule of life.

"5thly. You will also show me how it is that the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that when faith is come we are no longer under a schoolmaster, and yet that this schoolmaster is our rule of life after faith is come." (Gal. iii. 24, 25.)

"6thly. You will inform me how it is that if we be led by the Spirit we are not under the law, and yet that the law is a perfect rule of life to that man who is led by the Spirit. (Gal. v. 18.)

"There are many things in the Epistle to the Galatians which you will find worthy of your attention in this business. I hope you will read the whole.

"7thly. Shall expect you to tell me how it is that the handwriting which was against us, and contrary to us, is taken out of the way, and nailed to the cross, (as Col. ii. 14,) and yet remains a perfect rule of life. Should you be disposed to say that the ceremonial law is here intended, you will tell me how that law, which was the gospel in its day, came to be against the believer, and what there was in it contrary to him.

"8thly. You will be sure to inform me how it is that that law which is not made for a righteous man is the righteous man's rule of life. (1 Tim. i. 9.)

"9thly. As Christ was made under the law, to redeem that that are under the law, (as Gal. iv. 4, 5,) you will see how it comes to pass that they still remain under it in any sense that Christ was made under it, seeing he was made under it to redeem them from under it.

"10thly. But as whatsoever the law says, it say says to them who are under the law, (as Rom. iii. 19,) and as the believer is not under the law, (as Rom. vi. 14; Gal. v. 18,) you will inform me what the law says to them who are under it.

"11thly. If the law contains the whole revealed will of God, as to matter of obedience, as Fuller and others have said, you will let me know upon what ground you prove that unbelievers have no right to be baptized, and partake of the Lord's supper, seeing that what the law says it says to them that are under it; and if it contains the whole of obedience it must require unbelievers to be baptized. You will be sure to reconcile this, if you can.

"12thly. You will inform me how it is that while men contend for the law being a perfect rule of life to believers, and call these ill names who do not, they can and do, openly, knowingly, and designedly, break the fourth commandment every week. You will inform me whether doing *every* sort of work on the seventh day is walking according to that rule which says, 'Thou shalt not do *any* work, no, not so much as kindle a fire.' (Exod. xxxv. 3.)

"13thly, and lastly. You will inform me how it is that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, (Rom. x. 4,)and yet that the believer, who is got to the end of the law at once, namely, by faith in Christ, must come back again, and begin at the beginning by taking it for a perfect rule of life.

"It does appear that most preachers

think there should be a distinction made between the sheep and goats; but does it not appear that the greatest part of preachers, in this day, are attempting to give to the goats what belongs to the sheep, and to the sheep what belongs to the goats? for when on the one hand they address the unconverted, they tell them that it is their duty to look to Christ, and believe in him, and that they are warranted to offer them all the blessings of the gospel, thus making the gospel the unconverted man's rule of faith and practice; they, on the other hand, send the sheep to the law of works, and tell them that their comfort depends upon their walking according thereunto. And when any poor soul is in darkness, through the power of the world, the flesh, or the devil, instead pointing them to Christ, and telling them it has pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell, they tell them to 'remove the cause, and the effect will cease;' and thus the goats are sent to the law of life, and the sheep to the killing letter. But there will be a reckoning day by and by; and a thousand to one but some of these men will be proved to have got over the wall. Thus, my dear Sir, I have proposed a few plain, simple questions, and shall expect you to come to the point in your answers, and it shall be my prayer to the great Head of the church that God will be with you. Waiting your answer, I remain,

"Yours, tried, cast, and condemned, upon the evidence of

Dietrephes, by the Associated Ministers,

LOVE-TRUTH."

"Manchester, Aug. 8, 1806.

(Continued next month)

UPPER COUNTRY LINE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION
JULY 17, 18 and 19th, 1976

The seventieth session of the Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association, July 17, 18 and 19th, 1976, will convene with McCray Church, Alamance County, N. C. The introductory sermon to be preached Saturday, July 17, at 11:00 o'clock, the Lord willing.

We extend a cordial invitation to ministers, brethren and friends of like faith, fellowship and order to join with us in this meeting.

McCray church is located about 3 miles north of Burlington city limits on Highway No. 62 in Alamance County, N. C.

Assoc. Clerk: Donald E. Smith

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Pigg River Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with Little Hope Church, July 30, 31 and August 1, 1976. Please note that the meetings all three days will be held in the Cave Spring High School Building. This is the same building the association was held in in 1972.

Those coming from the south on Route 220 will turn left on Route 419, and go a little over a mile to traffic light on Chaparral Drive, Road No. 800 and turn left about a mile to the School building. Those going south on No. 419, turn right at traffic light on Chaparral Drive, Road No. 800 to the school.

We cordially invite our correspondents and other brethren and friends to meet with us.

Dorsey W. Cochran, Church Clerk
John D. Wood, Assn. Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The one hundred thirty-fifth session of the *Staunton River Association* will convene Friday at 11:00 a.m., July 9th, and continue through Sunday July 11, 1976. The host church is Union, located in Pittsylvania County west of Chatham, Va., in the Climax Community. Those traveling from the north or west should turn south at Highway 605 off of Highway No. 40, about 5 miles west of Chatham, Va. Travelers from the east or south should take Highway 57 out of Chatham and turn at the Climax sign about 4 or 5 miles west of Chatham, Va.

There will be association signs at these intersections and on Highway 605 at the church road.

All the lovers of the gospel truth are invited to our meeting.

Burnell B. Williams, Assn. Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP
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ALL DAY MEETING
AT SLATE HILL, N. Y.

An all-day meeting is appointed to be held at the Old School Baptist Meeting House at Slate Hill, N. Y. on the first Saturday in August, which is August 7, 1976.

All brethren and friends are invited to attend. Lunch will be served.

PLEASE NOTE

WE ARE HAVING A GOOD RESPONSE TO OUR APPEAL FOR OUR SUBSCRIBERS TO HELP IN INCREASING OUR SUBSCRIPTION LIST. HAVE YOU SENT A SUBSCRIPTION FOR A FRIEND, RELATIVE, OR SOMEONE YOU THINK WOULD BE INTERESTED IN READING THE SIGNS? PLEASE HELP IN THIS REQUEST. EDITORS

Danville, Va. July, 1976

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
R. F. D. 6, Box 270 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

GOSPEL ORDER

Having observed the order of the Primitive Baptist Churches for almost sixty years, with a deep interest in their doctrines and order, I have been led to pen some thoughts in reference to the subject, for the consideration of the household of faith.

The order and doctrine of the church of God are inseparable, as both are to be set forth as having a Thus saith the Lord for the man of our counsel. Most divisions among the churches are by failure to follow the teachings of the Scriptures for faith and order.

I hope to write that which becomes sound doctrine, and expect to write articles on Associations, Union Meetings, Church Sovereignty, Gospel steps to be taken by the churches where there have been transgressions against the church, Ordinations, Receiving ministers, Funerals, Washing feet, and Weddings. I also may branch out from these subjects.

ASSOCIATIONS

During the past fifty years I have attended many associations, and enjoyed loving fellowship with others of like precious faith. Meetings of this kind should be exactly what the name implies: to meet together to worship God only. When an association is used to try to regulate the internal affairs of a church or churches, it ceases to function in the capacity for which it was constituted, and becomes a Supreme Court. It is unscriptural and churches should no longer remain members of it.

I think it is generally known among us that the *Kehukee Association* of North Carolina, is the oldest Primitive Baptist Association in the United States. Elder Sylvester Hassell, author of Hassell's Church History, and a member of the Kehukee Association, has this to say about associations exercising authority over churches: "Scriptural Associations are only General Meetings of churches, . . . for the purpose of divine worship and mutual edification, and, while no church should, either in a general or private way, maintain fellowship with a church which persists in heresy or disorder. Yet there is not a particle of New Testament or Apostolic authority for any such general meetings assuming the functions of an individual church, such as admitting, disciplining or excluding members of a church, or electing or discipling the officers of a church.

"It cannot be repeated too often that each church is, according to Christ and his apostles, the highest ecclesiastical authority on earth. While all gospel churches should always so live as to maintain peace and fellowship with each other, Christ no where in the New Testament gives the slightest authority for an organic union or consolidation of gospel Churches. Such a union would be a fruitful source of corruption and oppression."

In 1782 the Kehukee Association met with the church at Arthur Cotten's. Here the association adopted Rules of Decorum for the association. On page 701 of the History we find this comment in reference to the Rules of Decorum: "Upon the adoption of these rules much discussion arose as to the power of associations over churches, which resulted in an understanding to leave to the churches their entire independence, permitting the association (which is but a collection of churches) to act as an advisory council only." This appears to be the rule of action adopted in the beginning, which has prevailed to the present time.

"Should the churches ever allow the association, or any body of men formed by their combination, to dictate to them against their consent, it has ever been held that their liberties in such case will have passed away, and they become no longer churches of Christ, but tools of tyrants."

In the Articles of Faith of the *Upper Country Line Association,* Article 12, we find the following: "We believe every church is independent in matters of discipline, and that associations, counsels and conferences of ministers or churches, are not to impose upon the churches the keeping, holding or maintaining of any principle or practice contrary to the church's judgment." This same Article is in most of our association minutes. No doubt this rule has been ignored at times, but where it is, it only leads to confusion.

Each association where I have visited in the past, have their own Rules of Decorum and Articles of Faith. In the most of them the independence of the churches from the association's control, have been clearly stated: which is very good.

Some years ago I was visiting in Ar-

kansas, and a long article was read of the history of a former association. The question arose on one occasion, as to how a church would discontinue her membership in an association. It was decided that if a church asked for a letter of dismission, it would be admitting the authority of the association over the church, and that the church should only notify the association that she no longer desired to remain a member of the association.

A church in uniting with an association, does not surrender any of its sovereignty, and in standing independent of an association does not lose any of its identity as a church of Jesus Christ: and the only thing necessary for a church to cease to belong to an association, is to ask that their church be dropped from the list.

I notice in some association minutes that, in their efforts to make it clear that they do not lord it over the churches, they adopt a lot of resolutions and articles so that when we sum up the matter, they seem more bound by articles than they were before.

Some might get the impression that I am opposed to associations. I am not opposed to association when conducted in the spirit of gospel fellowship, to meet with Zion's little ones to hear the gospel of our salvation preached, and have spiritual communication with each other. But to have long drawn out business sessions, with the attitude of ministers and messengers that they are a supreme court, I am opposed, and I believe the most of Old School Baptists are.

I am often reminded of a hymn in Gobel's Hymn Book — No. 103:

Not to control the church of God,
Nor bind, or rule her sons,
But to associate below
With Zion's little ones.

We meet to counsel, and advise,
And hear from all around,
And sing and pray, and preach and hear,
And so our joys abound.

These seasons still from year to year
Our comforts do restore:
While love and union sweetly roll
Our Saviour we adore.

If thus to meet on earth below
So warms our hearts with love,
What raptures will his children feel
When they shall meet above!

May we ever be on guard against any group setting themselves as a dictatorial body over the churches of Christ. May we keep in mind that the Word is committed to the churches, and not allow any man or set of men to dictate to the churches in her internal affairs.

Those sent to the associations from the churches, are messengers and not delegates. The churches do not delegate to messengers any authority to bind their church in vital matters. Their authority is to bear tidings, and make a report to their church when they return. After they have reported to their church as messengers, and are discharged, they have no more obligation to represent their church.

Likewise moderators of associations, after the association has adjourned to meet at some future time and place, have no further authority to represent the association as a moderator.

Some years ago I noticed in the minutes of the Salisbury Association of Maryland (one of the oldest in America) an article stating that the association receives all in their correspondents, with the exception of any in disorder in that association. In this way a wholesale cutting off of an entire association would not be done because of a clear disorder in the body, which the church had not yet dealt with.

In conclusion, I will set forth some of my observations and opinions. Years ago I attended a certain association where the ministers were elected to preach by a balloting by the messengers. this soon became like a political election, and soon partiality became prevalent, which we are commanded not to show.

Of course it is the right of each association to do as they wish. Personally, I think ministers the fartheset a w a y should speak at a time when the largest number of the people can hear them,

which we usually do. When there is a large number of ministers present, I think each minister should have the time to expound his subject, and not try to preach all like running something through a mill. But choose ministers who represent their various communities, without partiality. When ministers have been present two days of a meeting, and then one comes in for a short time and is appointed to preach before those who have been there the two days. Is not this partiality? I notice in the old minutes of the Kehukee and other associations, that about four would usually occupy the stand on Sunday, even when there were many more present.

In concluding this article I want to make it clear that these last references to conditions, are personal observations, but the things set forth in reference to associations usurping authority over churches, and setting themselves up as a supreme court, are not scriptural, and I humbly hope we may take heed to them, and that God will bless his beloved people to meet with one sincere desire — and that is to worship God in spirit rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh.

Submitted in love of the truth,

D. V. Spangler

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ZECHARIAH 3:3

"Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel."

Contemporary with Nehemiah and Zerubbabel, at the time of the building of the second temple in Jerusalem, Joshua presided as the high priest of Israel, and as such a type of the great High Priest of our profession, who is brought to view in the gospel, as presiding over the building of the spiritual and antitypical temple, which of lively stones is built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ. Christ as the builder of his church was prophesied of by the same prophet in Zech. vi. 12, 13, saying, "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The Branch: and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."

The priesthood of Aaron and his sons claimed no regal power, no right to reign or rule, but was confined to the service of the altar, and continually engaging in offering sacrifices for the sins of his people, but in the figure of the man whose name is The Branch is presented a regal or royal priesthood, not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchisedec, and in it is presented the king and priest in one man, whose name is The Branch, and the counsel of peace between them both, that is, between the king and the priest. As all the approved kings of Israel counseled with the priests, and through them received counsel from the Lord, they in their communion and consultation pointed to him who should sum up all that was set forth by the prophets, priests and kings in the person of him who is our Prophet, Priest and King, the King of Righteousness, and Priest unto the most high God, and all the counsel of peace involving and embracing the eternal salvation of his church and kingdom is embraced in the official characters which are embodied in and sustained by our Lord Jesus Christ. Men sometimes volunteer their counsels, professedly for peace, and which they seem to flatter themselves will be an improvement on God's counsel; but the counsels of men invariably conflict with the counsel of the Lord, which alone shall stand.

In offering a few remarks on the text which we have placed at the head of this article we propose to notice Joshua in his typical relation to Christ, and of

Christ in his vital relation to his church. The person, priesthood and official service of Joshua differed in nothing essential from that of our priest of the same order, but in his name, and connection with the building of the temple, as also in his presentation in the subject under consideration, are found some expressive peculiarities in which he prefigures our Lord Jesus Christ. The name Joshua is in signification the same as Jesus, and signifies a savior, and as such was given to our Lord to assure us that he should save his people from their sins, and Joshua's connection with the building of the temple gives additional significance to him as a type of our great High Priest, but the position occupied by him in our text, and its surroundings, demands our special attention.

The prophet says, "And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him." Here, if we comprehend the figure, our Lord Jesus Christ is brought to view in his mediatorial work in his priestly habiliments, as bearing all the tribes of his redeemed Israel, and stands for them before the angel of the divine presence in his holy law. The angel, or spirit of the holy law of God, is the angel of the Lord. God's presence is called his angel, and God appears in his law demanding satisfaction for the sins which Christ in his priesthood came to expiate and make atonement for. No priest or offering under the old dispensation could meet the demands of the law and justice of God, but our spiritual Joshua was able to stand before the angel, and although there resisted in his mediatorial work by Satan, sin, death, hell and the grave, he occupies the place, as one arraigned before the angel, to bear the judgment and meet the awakened sword which God had commanded to smite the shepherd.

In his description of this dreadful conflict Jude says, "Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, * * * said, The Lord rebuke thee." From this declaration of Jude we learn what was the ground of contention. By the body of Moses, which God buried in the wilderness, and whose sepulchre could never afterwards be found, we understand signified the power and dominion of the law as administered by Moses over God's people, Israel, whose demands were met and canceled by our Redeemer, and which in its dominion became dead to them, and they to it, by the body of Christ. In this conflict an effectual appeal was made to God to rebuke the disputing adversary. "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem," the very God of election, whose sovereign choice of Jerusalem is in the eternal and immutable election of grace, "rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" Observe the figure:

After a seventy years' captivity of the children of Israel in Babylon, in which the city had been nearly demolished, the old temple destroyed, its consecrated furniture desecrated and carried away, and few of the citizens permitted to return, what more appropriate figure could represent this preserved remnant according to the election of grace than is here used: "A brand plucked out of the fire?" Nearly consumed, but a brand remains, which must inevitably have been consumed but for the election of grace. Now in the great redemption and deliverance of his chosen remnant our High Priest appears before the angel of our Lord clothed with filthy garments. His work is to purge and cleanse Jerusalem from all her uncleanness, and to do this as her High Priest he must represent her as she truly is, by an assumption of all her sins and pollutions.

"And the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all." Bearing all the sins of his people he stands before the angel of the divine presence. The flaming eye of the law and justice of the pure and holy God is upon him, and yet he stands clothed in filthy garments before whose searching gaze no unclean or unholy thing can be tolerated or allowed to live.

No greater affront could be offered to the law than for the priests to appear before the Lord except in consecrated priestly garments perfectly pure and clean. But wonder, ye heavens, and be astonished, O earth, the High Priest of our profession before the presence of the angel of the Lord in filthy garments; behold, he comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, and he will stain all his rainment. He is made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He is numbered with the transgressors, and bears the sins of many. He is holy, harmless, separate from sinners, and higher than the heavens; he who is the righteousness of God is clothed in filthy garments and stands before the angel. How could this be? The Word which was with God, even the Word which was God, is made flesh. He has taken upon him the seed of Abraham, is made of a woman, is made under the law, to redeem them that are under the law, and in the assumption of the seed of Abraham all the transgressions of that seed are laid upon him, and bearing them in his own body on the tree he stood before the angel, with full ability to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and to finish transgressions and make an end of sin, and to bring in everlasting righteousness. Having as our High Priest made an offering for sin, he has by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified. There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Through the efficient priesthood of our spiritual Joshua a fountain is opened for the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness, for he has himself borne our griefs, carried sorrows and endured the chastisement of our peace, and with his stripes we are healed.

Truly such an High Priest became us. No other priest could, with our sins upon him, have stood before the angel. He only was able to bear the storm of wrath which was due to our transgressions, as none but Jesus was able to lay down his life and then to take it again. Not all the blood that flowed from Hebrew altars, nor all the sacrificial offerings made by Aaron and his sons, could have purged our hearts from an evil conscience, or qualified us to serve the true God acceptably, but he was delivered up for our offences and raised again for our justification, and so we are freely justified through the redemption that is in him. The brand is rescued from the burning, the fire of righteous indignation and wrath is quenched by the one offering which Jesus Christ, through the eternal Spirit, made of himself unto God, and by the which he has obtained eternal redemption for us.

Can we contemplate the subject without feeling emotions of love and gratitude to him who hath loved us and given himself for us? He endured the cross, he despised the shame, he suffered without the camp for us, and shall we, can we, feel reluctant to go unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach? He has redeemed us unto God with his precious blood, plucked us as brands out of the fire, called us by his grace, quickened us by his Spirit and assured us that we shall reign with him in glory. Then what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversations and godliness? No service by him enjoined can be too hard, no sacrifice of ease and wealth, of time or substance, can be too great. If indeed we love him let us keep his commandments.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe June 15, 1867)

Rt. 1, Box 434,
Scott Depot, W. Va.

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing check for $5.00 to renew my subscription to the *Signs*, use the remainder as you see fit. I don't want to miss getting the paper. I have read it for many years, and it is next to my Bible. I am 88 years old and have read the Signs just about all my life. My

father was a subscriber when I was a girl at home, and I love what it stands for. It gives our Saviour all the praise, honor and glory in heaven and earth.

Mrs. Sallie M. Moore

ISAIAH 40:29

"He that is so impoverished that he hath no oblation chooseth a tree that will not rot; he seeketh unto him a cunning workman to prepare a graven image, that will not be moved." (Isa. 40:29)

My understanding of this scripture is so vague I fear to try to write anything about it, yet there is something that moves me to try to pen some of my thoughts along this line. If it just went out to the world I would not have any fear, but the fear comes when I think of it going out to God's children who are the judges of the truth. As I write, I am wondering why one so weak in faith and unlearned in spiritual things as I am, would ever open my mouth or use a pen. I want to say to begin with that I believe, or hope that I believe, that God rules all things, making them work together for good to them that love Him, to them who are the called according to His purpose, this includes the weak and the strong, and it confounds the works of men, and proves the work of His own hand.

Most of the people these days are rich and do not have any need of anything. They have an abundance at their finger tips to make offerings unto their god. They melt their graven images, overlay it with gold and put chains about it. Much could be said about those chains but that is not my subject at this time. Does anybody believe that the Bible teaches that God accepts the works of men's hands for an offering for their sins? Yes some undoubtedly do, but they are not like this character in this text. He was not one of the rich ones. He is so poor that he does not have any offering to make unto his God. In as much as he is so poor and needy, he is a begging character,

Lord, have mercy, is his prayer,
Nothing in his hand for fare,

and yet this condition has not been brought about by his own will, because that is against all nature. Who would volunteer to be poor in this world's goods? Not one, and thus this trouble has been brought about by Him who sends these things in love. We listen at the dear Redeemer as He teaches: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for their's is the kingdom of heaven. No sinner can control the natural realm, and if so, his adeptness would also control the spiritual. The poor have the gospel preached unto them, and certainly the character that does not have an oblation to offer, is as poor as one can ever be. God has chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and in every good work not behind (I Cor. 1:4,7;2 Cor. 9:8), and they, like unto Mary, have chosen that better part, and like unto Moses, choosing to suffer afflictions with the people of God, the poor and needy in every nation, kindred and tongue. (Luke 10:42; Heb. 11:25) These are heirs of the kingdom which he has promised to them that love Him .Can His promise fail? No, because He is faithful in all things.

Nothing can we say to God,
We in fear view the rod;
Flinching backward from our sin,
We sharply feel the rod within,
Which makes us say to God on high
Save, or I perish, yea, I die.

Seeing the failure of all human institutions, and being led by the Spirit of God, this poor character chooses a tree that will not rot. All trees of this naural world will rot as he has already seen, and has been left with nothing to lean upon, and this has brought his feeble knees to the ground. The Tree that will not rot is the great Tree of Life that stands in the midst of the great Ciy, the Holy Jerusalem descending from God out of heaven. What a wonderful Tree; it will not rot, and it is a productive tree. It bears fruit in twelve manners and for the twelve months, and the leaves of this Tree is for the healing of the nations. This poor one that does

not have an oblation does not have to make the leaves be healing, for they were for healing before he became aware of needing healing. A good physician, a healer of the sick and weak and afflicted, knows exactly how to dose out the healing balm for the disease. He that is well does not need a physician; he that has an offering does not need the One who offered Himself to God without spot for poor sinners. We hear the prophet saying, "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number; he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that He is strong in power; not one faileth." "When the poor and needy seek water and ther is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them."

"He seeketh unto him a cunning workman to prepare a graven image, that shall not be moved." The great sculptors of this universe can make graven immages with their hands, but they that make them can move them about (Isa. 46:7), but this immoveable Christ is not moved by all creation, but bids planets roll and sinners to come. These men made idols, as was Dagon, will prove no good to the poor and needy that does not have an oblation or offering. The only cunning workman that carved an Image that cannot be moved is the Lord of lords and the King of kings. He it is that wrought the great work on the wheels and set the world in motion to move at His command. Christ being the image of God, as the scriptures teaches us, we see God the great workmen that fashioned the Immaculate Lamb in the womb of the virgin Mary, in His own likness and image. (Psa. 139:14, 15; Heb. 1:1,-3) This is the Tree that can not be moved. It is too much for me; such knowledge comes not from men's wisdom. It is too high; I can not attain unto it. It is much beyond the attainments of mortals to know the love of God by efforts of scholastic learning. (Eph. 3:16, 19)

Dear child of God, do you have anything else to seek? He is the rod and staff that will not rot. The branches of the tree overshadow you through the dark and dismal valleys. It is a shade from the parching sun and a harbor from all of the boisterous waves of adversity. David said, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence." Dear poor and despondent child of God this sound Tree is found wherever a child of God is found. He is *the* Tree that was cut off from the land of the living that you might be cut or grafted into the living Tree. The pit of torment will not ever be your lot because the life of this tree is the life of God's people. (Isa. 65:22). As the Tree never is destroyed by age, but rather that the dew of the morning is ever upon His lips as He goes conquering all foes (Psa. 110:3), even so shall the branches of the Tree never decay or become cloyed with rottening timbers. While this tree laid in the heart of the earth, it did not see corruption but sprouted again (Job 14:7) and it will also bring forth from the dead all of those that die in the Lord, and all of the hosts of immortal glory shall sound redemption's song. They will never sing a song about the works of men but the miraculous and curiously wroght Image of God in the womb of Mary, the One as the Son of Mary, was visited with the condemnation of our sins, but as the Son of God never to be moved although furiously dealt with by all the cunning ingenuity of Satan and his hosts. This is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ the Saviour of sinners.

It pleased God to form in one body a portion of Adam's race, a weaker vessel, and He called her woman, the Bride, the Lamb's wife. Of the component parts of this body each is without an oblation or offering to offer for their sins. She, being the weaker vessel, she could not make an offering; she could not do the work of Boaz redeeming Ruth, but she was married to One who is the Strength of Israel, and He became her offering before God, fulfilling all of the mandates of the law which she had broken,

which was the cause of her helplessness. He made her cause as His, and procured for a her a trust in Him, who of God is made unto her wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. (I Cor. 1:30, 31) He hath given her all things pertaining to life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3), and will not withhold any good (thing) from them that walk uprightly, and all of her uprightness is in her Husband. (Psa. 84:11; Isa. 45:24), and He gives her to enjoy His rich provisions here, and hath made her the beneficiary of the inheritance that is incorruptible, and undefiled, and fadeth not away, which is reserved in heaven for her who is now ready by the One Offering for sins.

Oh, may I thank thee, O my God,
For every pathway I have trod,
Each one is a link in the chain,
That brings me closer to the King.
There's something that I need each day,
As I go stumbling down the way,
'Tis mercy; that is all I need,
To check my daily rapid speed.
Let me with patience run my race,
Teach me to sing Amazing Grace,
And may we thank thee for the Tree,
That let every child of God go free.

In sorrow, but in hope,

Mrs. Maggie Lee Hayes,
P. O. Box 411,
Vernon, Alabama 35592

OBITUARIES

ANNA COBB ROACH

She was born Aug. 28, 1900 and died Feb. 8, 1976. She first married Andrew Cobb who died Aug. 29, 1925. To this union was born one daughter, Odell Cobb Bulla and one son, John Andrew Cobb both of Burlington, N. C. with four grandchildren and five great grandchildren. Later she married Luther Roach who is a resident of Burlington.

Sister Roach joined Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church April 14, 1963 manifesting a godly love for the brethren and friends as well as being faithful in attending church meetings as long as she was able to attend. She attended church last at the October communion 1975, expressing it would probably be her last visit, which it was.

A written funeral request was left by her that "Father we'll rest in thy love," be sung. We can only believe that she is resting in our Father's love Her funeral was conducted at her church by Elders Wallis A. Smith and Donald E. Smith and laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the second coming of our Saviour. Written by one who loved her in hope, a little sister Alice R. Smith. Done by order of Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church, one copy for the church records, one copy to be published in *The Signs of the Times* and one copy to be sent to the family.

Deacon: Earl S. Rudd, Clerk
Elder: Wallis A. Smith, Moderator

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

We bow in humble submission to the will of God, who saw fit to call away from this world Sister Mattie Ruth Griffin, October 3, 1975. She was born June 9, 1903. She united with Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church April 11, 1972, with her devoted husband, Brother Leon Griffin, who survives, while a meeting was being held in their home by Elder Wayne Mitchell. She being confined to her bed or wheel chair. She attended church but a time or two after joining, and was never well enough to be baptized. But we believe she was already baptized in the mind and purpose of God.

I remember that before her health failed, she and Brother Leon attended church faithfully. As we saw her suffer with her afflictions and spent her last days in the hospital, we in our belief feel that she is now resting with her Lord in peace.

We pray that God will bless her husband and all who survive her. She was blessed with faithful nurses night and day to do whatever could be done for her comfort. Whatever was done for her was done through love and kindness. We feel that our loss is her gain.

Her funeral was conducted in the Chapel of Gay-Yost Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder Harvey Holland.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the family, a copy to the *Signs of the Times* to be published, and a copy recorded on our records.

Done at the request of Mill Branch Church in conference March 1976. Read and approved in conference April, 1976.

Elder Harvey Holland, Mod.
Sister Estelle Joyner Cockrell, Clerk

SISTER LULA MEADS EVES

In loving remembrance of Sister Lula Meads Eves, She was born in May, 1873, and was quietly laid to rest from her labors in October, 1974 at the age of one hundred and one years. She was the daughter of Elder Charlie C. and Sister Annie James Meads.

Sister Lula was united in marriage to Willie Eves January 19, 1893. The survivors include two daughters, Mrs. Sarah Harris, and Mrs. Lima Everton; three sons: Willie J. Eves, Wilson Eves and Lester Eves.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder B. D. Handy as a tribute of love. She was laid to rest under a beautiful mound of flowers.

Brother and Sister Eves joined Flatty Creek Church when they were very young and were faithful in serving the church as long as their health permitted. Wilson and Lester made their home with their mother and father, and were very dutiful to them and took care of them in their old age. After the death of their father, their mother's health declined very rapidly, and with all they did, with the help of the other children, it wasn't enough, for she needed the care of doctors and nurses, which resulted in putting her in a rest home. She remained there until the Angel of mercy came and took her to her eternal home, where she had longed to go for a long time.

It's beautiful to depart this life with a hope in salvation by grace. Salvation through the Saviour dying is finished and complete. He paid whatever his people owed, and cancelled all their debts.

Done by order of conference.

Beadie L. Meads

STERLING WEBSTER GANN

Brother Sterling Webster Gann was born February 2, 1908 to the late Anna Bell and Benjamin Gann. He departed this life January 16, 1976.

Brother Bill, as he was called by all who knew and loved him, and his beloved wife, Sister Maude Gann, were united in marriage March 11, 1926. Of this marriage Brother and Sister Gann were blessed with eight lovely children: Two sons, Billy Gann of Rt. 10, Reidsville, N. C., and Joseph Gann of Reidsville, N. C., six daughters: Blossom Salseth of Reidsville, Mary and Page, Rt. 1, Reidsville, Becky Holt, Reidsville, Rose McKinney, Ruffin, N. C., Linda Wray of Reidsville and Trena Ward of Elon College, N. C.

Brother Gann joined Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church about fourteen years ago. His funeral was conducted there by his pastor, Elder Donald Smith and Elder Wallace Smith on January 18, 1976.

Brother Gann was a man of few words, but they were always well spoken. He was a lover of the truth and was faithful to the end. His quiet, humble ways were beautiful examples of one of God's humble servants. He was a valued member at Pleasant Grove, and will be much missed, but we know that our loss is his eternal gain.

Written in love and with humbleness, by Sister Billie Pruitt, as requested by Pleasant Grove Church in conference February 14, 1976.

Elder Donald Smith, Mod.
Robert F. Walker, Clerk

A copy to be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, one to the family, and one spread on our church records.

SISTER NELLIE P. SUMMERLIN

Sister Nellie Summerlin, 87, passed away December 8, 1974. She made her home at Edgecombe Acres in Tarboro, N. C. She was born in Edgecombe County and was the widow of the late Brother James W. Summerlin, who passed away in 1967.

Funeral services were held by Brother Joe Sawyer, at Otters Creek Primitive Baptist Church. Burial was held at Pleasant Hill Cemetery.

She is survived by two step-daughters, Mrs. Arthur Harris of Fountain and Mrs. Walter Mercer of Elm City; one adopted son, Walter Higgins of High Point.

Sister and Brother Summerlin joined the church at Otters Creek in 1947.

I had the pleasure of going to her home a lot of times with my mother. We would not be there long before you would hear God's name mentioned. When two or more of his children get together you will hear his name. For it is good to speak of God when you are with someone who believes as you do. Deep down in my heart I believe she was a Child of God. She did not have Sunday religion. Brethren she believed in God seven days a week and gave God all the glory, as a child of God must do.

Our loss is her gain. May her soul rest in peace.

Brother J. C. Edwards

For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. (1 Thess. 2:13)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 144 DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1976 NO. 8

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8/68
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

8684 Davis R. D. Rt. 1,
Maineville, Ohio 45039

Dear Elder Wood:

It has been four or five years since I wrote you last, and have thought of you many a time. We are strangers in the flesh, but I have a hope we are not strangers in spirit and truth.

I have renewed my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. I have been some what confined at home due to an injury I received in 1967. My wife also has had a bad heart condition, so that I can't leave her for a long period of time. Being confined at home, I get great joy in reading the *Signs*. It contains so much truth about the God of the universe.

Brother Wood I hope you are doing well, and hope you will have time to drop me a few lines, for I surely would like to hear from you. I don't get to be with my home church very often, it is so far away. My membership is at Union Church at Sharps Chapel, Tenn. There are a lot of Primitive Baptists around here that believe in salvation by grace, but say that all that God predestinated was the salvation of His people. I wish I could locate a church of our faith and order in Ohio. . . .

I hope to hear from you soon. May God bless you is my prayer. Remember this poor, unworthy one in your prayers.

I was not blest to be at our association in 1975, but they sent me some Minutes ,and I am enclosing one for you, that you can see what we believe.

Your in hope,
Elder Garrett Wilson

Princeton, W. Va.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I have just read your article in the *Signs of the Times*, and it gave me such a lift I felt I had to let you know how I feel about it. I have longed and tried to pray these many years that the time would come in my life time, that those who love and have true fellowship for each other, could all group together and worship together. I am separated by bars of fellowship from many whom I love, and I hope love me.

I am in my 89th year and have been following after these dear people for 66 years. We have a lovely little band at Glenwood Park. I love the good writings in the *Signs*.

Remember me when you can, give my regards to Sister Spangler.

In bonds of fellowship,
Mrs. S. J. Priddy

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500 E. Chestnut Street,
Delmar, Del. 19940

To the Elders of the *Signs of the Times:*

As the *Signs* is the oldest Primitive Baptist periodical in America, and as this is the Bicentennial Year of our country, and as the Welsh Tract Church, near Newark, Delaware, is the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in America, it is befitting that we make mention to the

readers of the *Signs* how our God has dealt with us at this Meeting House: He has brought us many able Elders — each and every one at the needed time, and each and every one with his own gift to feed the poor, hungry, thirsty sinners, to keep them alive.

As we walk in the cemetery and look upon the graves of those buried there and now resting in the dust, awaiting Resurrection of their bodies, we give thanks to our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ that we still have the glorious Light of His Holy Spirit shining in our midst. We thank our Blessed Lord for this Light. Sometimes the Light is small, sometimes bright. All we can say is, Bless his Holy Name.

The dust of these bodies in the cemetery is in the keeping of His Holy Spirit until the resurrection morning.

Henry Townsend

Elgin, Oregon

Dear Elder Spangler:

I am enclosing a copy of a letter that my mother wrote to her mother almost forty-two years ago. I have deleted personal items; and if you deem it worthy of a place in the *Signs*, you have mother's permission to use it. She is now in her eighty-third year, and though her sight and hearing are failing, she still loves the company of the brethren when opportunity permits her to welcome them into her home.

In much love,
Lloyd C. Spikes

THE LETTER

Touchet, Washington
October 26, 1934

Dear Mama:

Was surely glad to get your letter — had looked for such a long time to hear from you.

Brother Jones (Elder Peter Jones) came up day before yesterday and he, as usual, had some wonderful things to talk about. When I got your letter I felt like I just had to write to Aunt Susie. I had been wanting to ever since I heard she was blind, but was afraid I couldn't write what I wanted. I hope what I wrote will be of some comfort.

This morning I am alone, and got to thinking about the mercy seat and the cherubims we were speaking of when you were here in June. It just came to me that I wanted to write you just a little, if I may be enabled to do so.

You can read about them in Exodus 37:8 and 9. Of course we know that Christ is the Mercy Seat. For there is no other name under heaven whereby man must be saved, — that doesn't leave much for conditionalism, does it? And these golden Cherubims were beaten out of one piece. Don't you see, it takes them both to make a whole, for they are nothing less than the testimony of the Prophets on one side of the Mercy Seat, and of the Apostles on the other. Oh, I wish I might find the language to make it as plain to you as I hope I see it.

As Christ is the Mercy Seat, and the testimony of the Prophets came testifying that He was to come and be crucified for the redemption of his saints; and the testimony of the Apostles saying he did come, and laid down his life for our sins, and rose for our justification. Was it any wonder that their wings were raised on high and covered the Mercy Seat, with their faces one to another, for they form the three links in the wonderful chain of testimony: the Prophets declaring He was to come and lay down his life; Christ saying I am he of whom it is written; and the Apostles saying He did come and laid down his life; and rose.

Isn't that one beautiful figure — enough to prove to us that there is no other way by which we obtain mercy except by the Lord and Saviour; by which is the blood of the everlasting covenant.

These Cherubims are also the two olive trees spoken of in the fourth chapter of Zechariah, who through the gold-

en pipes, empty the golden oil out of themselves. They are typified also as standing on either side of the golden candlestick with a golden bowl on top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, which are the seven spirits of God, and the golden bowl is the Church in her purity after Christ has lifted her up.

It is easy to see why these two anointed ones, at the crucifixion of Christ, lay in that city as dead men; for none of that golden oil was then pouring forth, for the testimony was hushed, and they couldn't say then that the Lord had risen, for He was then lying in the tomb.

But now that golden oil of testimony is ever flowing, for it is the testimony, or word of truth, which shall continue to flow as long as there is one member of the family of God who remains to be gathered into the fold, and whenever all those jewels are gathered in, then will come the end of time. God and Magog will then be gathered together to battle, which is nothing less than the devil and his angels.

I have just re-read my letter, and it didn't seem to convey all my thoughts, so am going to write just a little more. I wonder if you can see that one Cherubim with his face pointing toward the mercy seat, for he was here declaring, before the Lord was manifest in the flesh, that he was to come; and the testimony of all those old Prophets up until His actual coming, was that golden oil ever flowing which was meat and drink to all those saints of God who were on that side of the great river of the water of life, and the coming of Christ. Once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. He came right there, at the end of all types and shadows, at the end of prophecy — and there was a world of them. So he came in the end of this world for all prophecy, and the end of all types of offerings. He came to that end to sacrifice himself once for all, thereby forming the great link in the chain of testimony. It is the greatest link, for if it were taken away the chain would be broken. But all this grand and wonderful testimony is fastened to that link, which is the very substance of the testimony of the prophets and apostles. Yet this last great link in the chain couldn't be manifest until after the crucifixion, for they came declaring him a risen Saviour. And this last link which is the other Cherubim, has its face pointed toward that mercy seat also. So they point toward it from either side and in this the gospel day, which is the last day. They are pouring forth the golden oil while they are declaring a risen Saviour: and what golden oil that is, and what food and drink to the dear saint of God! but still no less than what it was to the saints on the other side of the mercy seat, for they feasted by the same power that we do in this gospel day — the day of glad tidings. For they, looking forward, beheld through the eyes of faith the self same things that are precious to us. They beheld Him high and lifted up, and that is as we behold him. We can now see as Zechariah 14:8 declared, "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem: half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be."

Isn't it wonderful to know that these living waters reach out and embrace all the family of God that were before, and to all those that must be yet manifested. They extend on either side of the resurrection. That is the reason the great tree stood in the midst of the river of water of life and on either side. His mercy and waters of salvation is extended on both sides, flowing in summer and winter each way. What a beautiful figure!

Write sooner next time.

With love,
Elva

ACCOUNT OF PLEASENT VISITS

2232 Memorial Ave., S.W.
Roanoke, Va. 24015
April 4, 1976

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

Am enclosing subscriptions for my oldest brother Chester's daughters to the two addresses shown. He died in an accident while moving from Floyd to Roanoke when they were real small. I recently visited them, and my brother Charles in Richmond. They are very dear to me, and they conveyed me from Richmond to near Williamsburg and to Rising Sun, Md. and back to Roanoke. I have retired and have had time to visit some.

While in Maryland the oldest niece's husband took me to Rock Springs Meeting House. I am sorry I was not there at a time that I could have heard you preach, and meet some of the members. When they learned that I love to see such places, everyone did everything to make me happy. Of course we went to other places of interest too, but they made a special effort to take me to see the Rock Springs Meeting House. At least I thing it is where you preach. In the cemetery we noticed the names of Jenkins, Lowes and many others. (You were evidently at the right place - J.D. W.) It was late in the evening and the wind was blowing, but somehow I felt it was indeed a home to someone that, like I do, loved to meet and hear Jesus' name proclaimed, declared and confessed.

I came back to the other nieces' home, and she took me to many places of interest as she lives near Williamsburg and Jamestown, Va. And, while I enjoyed this very much, I thing I felt closer to her as we came home from seeing all these places, she began to tell me of her mother's death. The sun was shining brightly behind a small storm cloud. It gave us an awed feeling and we spoke of its beauty, then she told me in a hushed voice that her last words were, "I see Jesus." What could be more fitting to hear these words at a dying bed, or to hear when viewing such a heavenly beauty in the sky. So you see the Lord was giving me something even while driving along, and being able to enjoy the presence of Him in a feeling sense with these children that I had not been with for a long time.

Even while with my brother, his wife spoke of the *Signs of the Times* as there being something in some of the issues that he had especially laid up or aside to be kept; and that they shared these monthly issues with a brother-in-law who had begun to want to read too. We never know when or in what way it may reach down into our very being, especially causing our hearts to leap with joy. I often ponder some things I read and hear that declare the workings of His Spirit in someone's life. I do believe, He being a Spirit, and when it is revealed, it is effectual in moving us to want to praise and adore Him above all else. Sometimes, in our efforts to declare our depravity, we forget Him who does, and can, move us to follow Him. We are prone to be very careful to bring out what we think is doctrine, or points of doctrine, and sometimes to emphasize how strong and sound in doctrine we are, we add words that are not in the scriptures: we get beyond temperance—and temperance is a very needed spirit in us when we are testifying of His teaching. Doctrine is His teaching. Does our walk, our conversation, our dealings with each other, show forth temperance — that which is embodied in Charity. One said years ago, (I believe I read it in something from our folks in England.) "The Doctrine is what it is, because Jesus is what He is."

Somehow this stayed with me for a long time. Inasmuch as the scriptures do show forth Him as being meek and lowly in heart — that He did not strike back when he was struck. Evil hit him on every hand, and yet He so often reached out to heal. So I would rather listen to hear a halting voice and a face showing desire to tell me something that they had felt and stood in awe of. We speak of many fears, and we read of it. How glad I am there is a testifying of godly fear. We read in the scriptures of things that "came to pass" and again that which was "brought to pass."

It seems sometimes I look and see so much, and it doth praise Him. Again I am unable to see.

I like to remember when, after being very sick with typhoid fever, I came from the springhouse with a bucket of fresh water, and I looked at a little ragged weed that we failed to pull up along the path. There had been a long dry spell and we had just then received a good shower of rain. This little briery weed looked so happy, so cleansed from dusty footprints, and seemed to raise its leaves in praise to God. It so portrayed my feeliings that I stopped to touch it. I felt I knew what that cleansing meant, and it could praise God better than I could.

We had a good meeting at Roanoke Church today. Elder Donald Smith preached well, and when Elder Plybon preached it was like a glorious song, and I again felt the cleansing shower of rain on a dry land: it lifted my heart in a life that seemed tired and near dead. They read Scriptures, and that I like to hear, and if we stay within it and see the beauty therein, we cause no trouble, but do comfort the hearers. We are mindful, I think, of what Paul said in 1 Cor. 4th chapter, 6th verse, and I think the brethren of old reminded us often not to get wise above that which is written.

So I beg you to remember me in your prayers and to forgive this long scribble or trying to let you know I thought of you both while on this recent trip.

I often think of and still feel I can almost hear Elder Cole speaking of 1 John 5:7,8. It is good to remember.

Humbly,
Catherine A. Houchins

P.S.: I have just remembered, it will be 43 years ago the 3rd Sunday in April since I was babtized. "Tis Grace has brought me safe thus far, and Grace will lead me home."

"A TIME TO EVERY PURPOSE"

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under Heaven", etc. (Eccl. 3:1-8)

Editors of the *"Signs of The Times"*

Dear Brethren,

Enclosed you will find a check for two years subscription for the *"Signs of the Times"*. You may use the remaining amount as you see fit.

According to man's way of thinking, I am late with my subscription dues. But according to my way of thinking (today) that according to God's purpose I am right on time to the split second.

We will find in Ecclesiastes the third chapter and first verse, "To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under Heaven." The second verse, "A time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted", and etc. through verse eight.

But I must admit that I have promised myself many times that I would quit reading *"The Signs"* or anything else. I have laid my Bible down many times declaring to myself that I would never pick it up again, and feeling at that time I would be able to do that. But, dear brethren, I could not. Maybe it would not be a day or even an hour before I would be searching again. Realizing all the time that the scriptures plainly state that the letter of the word killeth but that the spirit maketh alive.

Dear children of God, if not deceived, I have been lifted up a few times beyond what any man could be within and of himself.

Why do I say, dear children of God. If I am what I hope to be, you are the ones I am addressing my writing to. Why? I believe that you are the only ones that will have knowledge or understanding of what I am trying in my weak way to talk about. Whether I am one that was included in God's love and mercy I know not. But I have a hope that I would not exchange for all the world and everything therein. We find in Romans the eighth chapter, twenty fourth and twenty-fifth verses, "For

we are saved by hope: for what a man seeth, why doeth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." I would like to say that I think this saved by hope is pertaining to this life in which we now live. For I believe that we are saved eternally by Grace, as the scriptures so plainly states in the second chapter of Ephesians, beginning with the eighth verse. "For by Grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Notice the little word *is* means already.

"Not of works, lest any man should boast." Oh, let us notice the tenth verse. "For we are His workmanship created *in* Christ Jesus *unto* good works, which God hath (past tense) before ordained, (predestinated) that we *should* walk in them." Will we or will we not? I believe that surely we will.

I believe that the scriptures and the preaching of the Gospel is to a born again child of God: one that has been born of the Spirit and made alive to spiritual things, and not to a dead sinner. For we are all sinners by nature. "He that sayeth he has no sin deceiveth himself and the truth is not in him."

I have been going to church for the past year or two (especially) feeling so unworthy to be in the midst of what I believe are God's little ones, trying to quit all at the same time. But I will tell you that I believe I will go every time and place God has purposed or fixed that I would. You know that I just love that little word "fixed" because I believe that God has fixed each and every event that has or ever will take place. He fixed it according to His own will, and not man's. In fact, man does not have a will of his own. Why, because He worketh both the will and the to do in man. There is no one that can change it in any way, for He does His will in the army of Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and there is none that can stay His hand or say, What doeth Thou? We read in the scriptures, "As I have thought so shall it come to pass: and as I have purposed so shall it stand." So there has not anything come to pass or any words spoken that He did not know about before the foundation of the world, for He knoweth even every word that is in our tongue, and by Him all things consist. For it is in Him, and of Him, and by Him, that we live, move, and have our being, for without Him we can do nothing. For as the Bible so plainly states that "We within ourselves are nothing, yea less than nothing and all together Vanity." We are what we are, as the Apostle Paul says in his writing, by the grace of God, and by nothing that we worms of the dust have or ever will do, for we are altogether Vanity.

Elder Wood, I was asked by a precious brother to ask you to write your view on second Timothy first chapter, particularly tenth and eleventh verses, when you have a mind to do so.

Yes, I believe to everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under Heaven. Poor and afflicted in hope of God's Mercy.

W. T. Posey,
38 Claundal Estate
Northport, Alabama 35476

In the following we present another installment of, "The Present State of Religion, or Who Are The People Miscalled Antinomians?" by William Gadsby in 1841, and published in England. In this work the Truth as it is in Jesus is clearly presented by *Love-Truth,* while *Demur* and *Trifle* oppose the doctrine of *Love-Truth,* and *Investigation (Inv.)* finds that *Love-Truth* is correct in his presentation of the doctrine of the Scriptures, and was glad to say in the end that, "I desire no happier lot than to live and die as an Antinomian."

William Gadsby, like many others, maintained that the Gospel, and not the law, is the rule of life for the believer, and for this he was stigmatized and persecuted as an Antinomian. (see page 617 of Hassell's Church History)

The doctrine of *Love-Truth* is the doctrine that had been held by the true

church from the days of the Apostles, and the doctrine of *Demur* and *Trifle* has been held by opposers of the Truth.

J.D.W.

PRESENT STATE OF RELIGION

By William Gadsby, London, 1841
(Continued)

Inv. Did he answer it?

Love-Truth. He wrote, saying it would not be wise in him to answer it; but after a few letters passing and repassing, without coming to the point, we had a personal interview together; and a short time afterwards I heard that he had circulated some untruths; so I wrote the substance of our conversation, and sent it in a letter to him, wishing him to write and say whether it was a true statement; and if it was not, to say wherein I had erred.

Inv. And has he written?

Love-Truth. No; he judged it prudent to be silent. Perhaps he knows that if he were to write he would expose himself, as I am sure he would, and prove that he did not speak the truth; therefore, in this case, he thinks silence the best.

Inv. Lord, what is man! But do not those called *Antinomians* believe in imputed holiness?

Love-Truth. Yes, some of them do, but not to the exclusion of holiness of heart.

Inv. I have heard they do, at least one in this town.

Love-Truth. Yes, I know there is a man in this town, who can *hop* about and lie as fast as most men of *his age,* who has taken great pains to circulate such things abroad. But with your leave, I will tell you what they do believe upon this subject.

Inv. I will hear with the greatest pleasure.

Love-Truth. They consider that by sanctification we are sometimes to understand setting apart for holy purposes; so the vessels in the temple are called holy; and the church are said to be sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and called; so that in this sense they are sanctified before they are called; that is, they are *set apart* by the Father, in his eternal purpose of grace, as a peculiar people. They also consider that the people of God are made holy by imputation; that is, that the holiness of Christ, as the Head of his church, is made over or imputed to them; as it is written, "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." (1 Cor. i. 30.)

Inv. That the righteousness of Christ is imputed to his people, I will not deny; but how can his holiness be imputed?

Love-Truth. Is the righteousness of Christ a holy righteousness, or is it like our own, as filthy rags? If it be altogether a holy righteousness, and this holy righteousness is imputed to the church, it must be that holiness is imputed to them; nor can I see of what advantage the righteousness of Christ would be to us, if it were not sinless and pure. Can we be complete without holiness? Surely not; and the Lord's people are complete in him, (that is, in Christ,) therefore they must have holiness in him, or they cannot be complete in him. Can the church be all fair, perfect, and comely, without holiness? Surely not! But her beauty is said to be perfect through the Lord's comeliness which is put upon her. (Ezek. xvi. 14.) He is our all and in all; and if Christ be the beliver's all and in all, he must be holiness unto him. If we consider Christ as the Head and Representative of his church, it must be that he is holiness unto them It is in him that the Father is well pleased, in whom his soul delighteth; and in him he is well pleased with his people, for it is them that he represents, and not himself as the eternal God. Thus they are complete in him, and the church are encouraged to behold Christ in this sense; as it is written, "Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth." (Isa. xliii. 1.) And again, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." And it is the church's privilege to listen to the Father's command, and behold Christ, and what they are in him; and in proportion as they are enabled so

to do, they will sit loose to this world, trample upon the necks of their enemies, live near to the Lord, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and glory in tribulation also. But let them lose sight of Christ, and they are sure to turn towards the mountain that burns with fire; sin will be stirred up, and the mind will be filled with wrath and rebellion. All things, both spiritual and temporal, will appear to go wrong, and the poor soul will be ready to say, "My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over of my God. I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath; he hath led me and brought me into darkness, and not into light; surely against me is he turned; he turneth his hand against me all the day." (Lam. iii 1, 3.) But let him release the mercies of the Lord as displayed through and treasured up in the Lord Jesus Christ, and let him behold his own interest in them, and he will break forth into a song of praise, and say, "It is of the Lord's mercies that I am not consumed, because his compassions fail not; they are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul, therefore will I hope in him." (Lam. iii. 22, 24.) Thus will he make his boast in the Lord; but if Jesus is not holiness unto him, there will be a very great deficiency in his portion.

Inv. You bring to my mind an old professor who is very often boasting of his having been a professor more than forty years, and who, speaking upon this subject, said, "he had no hope of the holiness of Christ being of any use to him.

Love-Truth. Perhaps he spoke truth; for we read of some men who are without hope, and of others whose hope soon perisheth; and if he is one of these, how is it possible that he should in reality expect to derive any benefit from the holiness of Him who is the only hope of Israel? But Paul and this man do not agree, for Paul was for glorifying in nothing but Christ, was determined to know nothing but Christ; but surely if Christ was not holiness to Paul, he was mistaken in his views; for Paul was a lover of holiness.

Inv. But is there no other sense in which the church is holy?

Love-Truth. Undoubtedly there is; for they are saved by the "washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." (Tit. iii. 5.) But even this is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy. The Spirit quickens the dead soul, makes it alive unto God, (Eph. ii. 1,) drives the strong man armed from his throne; Jesus enters with his glorious train of graces, and rests there, as in his own habitation; a new creation is formed, and the sinner is made partaker of a divine nature; old things are passed away, and, behold, all things are become new; a new heart is given, called a new creature, (Gal. vi. 15,) the hidden man of the heart. (1 Pet. iii. 4.) This is God's new creation, and is perfect in its nature, holy and undefiled. The sinner is put in possession of a most holy faith, a holy love, hope, zeal, meekness, patience, and all the graces of the Spirit; as it is written, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law." (Gal. v. 22, 23.) Again, "The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth." (Eph. v. 9.) So the apostle prayed that the church at Philippi might abound more and more in love, in knowledge, and in judgment, and approve things that are excellent, and be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; but from whence is it all to flow? From Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God. (Phil. i. 9, 11.) And to this James agrees; "For the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hyprocrisy." (James iii. 17.) "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the

breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." (Eph. iii. 17, 18, 19.) "Christ in you the hope of glory." (Col. i. 27.) This is their internal glory. (Psa. xlv. 13.) Nor does it appear that the saints possess one holy thought or desire, or one good gift, but what flows from Christ; for "it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;" (Col. i. 19;) and "of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace." (John i. 16.) Since the fall of man there has not been a grain of spiritual holiness found in the human breast separate from Christ; for says Christ to his disciples, "The branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing." (John xv. 4.) He is the root of the matter in every believer. (Job xix. 28.) All their springs are in him. (Psa. lxxxvii. 7.) And from him is their fruit found. (Hos. xiv. 8.) When he commands the north wind to awake, and the south to come and blow upon his garden, that the spices thereof may flow out, we find that he speaks, and it is done; and the church soon cries, "Let my Beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits;" not *my* pleasant fruits, but *his* pleasant fruits. Thus she considered that all that was pleasant and good came from and belonged to him; and when the soul by faith and love abides in the vine, it will live to his glory, walk circumspectly, honestly, and godly, in this present evil world. Sin will appear in its own deformity, detestable in all its branches, and holiness will appear in its beauty; nor will anything that is sullied with sin suit the new man, for he that is born of God cannot sin, nor can he live upon nor be delighted with anything that is not strictly holy. Holiness is his element, nor does he need wrath and hell fire thrown about his ears to spur him on in the practice of holiness, for it is the delight of his soul to do the will of his Father; and his light is sure in some good degree, to shine in the world. Talking about holiness is one thing, but practicing holiness in the fear of God is another. Many say, and do not, while others put no dependence in anything they can do, and say but very little about doing, yet walk in the fear of God, and prove that they have been, and still are with Jesus.

Inv. Then it appears that a sinner, separate from Christ, is as destitute of holiness as Satan, the father of lies.

Love-Truth. That he is; and every believer is made sensible of it too. Hence one cries, "My wounds stink and are corrupt;" (Ps. xxxviii. 5;) another, as the mouth of the rest, says, "We are all as an unclean thing;" and another, "We are black as the tents of Kedar;" and another, "O Lord, I am vile;" and another, "In me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing;" and Jehovah says that "the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." (Jer. xvii. 9.) But when the church are spoken of, as being one with Christ their living Head, they are said to be fair as the the curtains of Solomon; yea, all fair, and no spot in them; and, in this sense, Jehovah hath "not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel. The Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them." (Numb. xxiii. 21.) Now here rests the beauty of holiness; and by faith such men esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the pleasures of sin.

Inv. Then these *Antinomians,* as they are called, are for that religion that abases man, lays him in the dust, excludes his boasting, strips him of self-importance, makes him appear less than nothing and vanity, while it crowns Christ Lord of all. God grant that I may be found in him, and that this religion may be mine; and I care not by what name they call me. But do not these *Antinomians* deny the doctrine of *progressive sanctification?*

Love-Truth. It altogether depends

upon what is meant by progressive sanctification. If by progressive sanctification you mean that the old man of sin continually gets better and better, till it becomes holy, they *do* deny it; for they believe that the old man, or, as Paul terms it, sin in the members, is in an unconvertible state, and never will be made better; for "the carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, *neither indeed can be.*" (Rom. viii. 7.) But if you mean that a believer grows in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, from a babe to a father, just as Jehovah pleases, they *do not* deny it, but strenuously contend for it. They believe that the Christian grows up into Christ in all things, and not into himself.

Inv. Surely there are none so bewildered as to think that sin is converted into grace; are there, think you?

Love-Truth. I have heard many a man preach and talk about sanctification, and I am sure that all they said amounted to nothing else; so that anger, wrath, peevishness, were converted into meekness and patience; pride into humility, and lust into chastity. Now, if they had said that these things did not *reign,* and that sin should not have the dominion over the believer,seeing they are not under the law, but under grace, and that unto eternal life, it would have been the truth; but sin will ever be sin, and will strive for the mastery too in every believer under heaven; which is the reason that they are exhorted to watch and be sober, to fight the good fight of faith, and to lay hold on Christ, the eternal life, in this fight; for if they are not enabled so to do they are sure to smart for it.

Inv. But are not these *Antinomians* enemies to *practical godliness?*

Love-Truth. If by practical godliness a round of duties (as they are called) is intended in order to *get* and *keep* the love of God, they *are* against it; for "they that are in the flesh cannot please God;" (Rom. viii. 8;) but if a walk and conversation consistent with the gospel of Christ, as the *effect,* and not as the *cause* of grace ,is intended, they *are not* against it. They know, from experience, that the grace of God teaches those who are in possession of it to deny ungodliness and the world's lusts, and to live righteousnesly, soberly, and godly in this present evil world; for a good tree will bring forth good fruit. "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John iv. 24.) Every believer is led to consider that he is not his own, seeing that he is bought with a price; and he lives not unto himself, but unto the Lord, whose he is, and whom he serves. For a man to boast of faith, while his works prove that he is a stranger to vital godliness, is sad evidence that he is a stranger to that faith which purifieth the heart. "Sin shall not have dominion over you," says God, by the mouth of Paul; "for ye are not under the law, but under grace." (Rom. xi. 14.) But there are many who make their boasts of the law, whose works are too base to stand investigation; and these are they who justify themselves before men. But God knoweth their hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God. (Luke xvi. 15.) I assure you, my brother, I am no friend to those professors whose works are the works of the flesh, whether these works appear in a religious or a profane shape; for, as that man of God, Hart, observes,

> "No big words of ready talkers,
> No dry doctrine, will suffice;
> Broken hearts, and humble walkers,
> These are dear in Jesus' eyes."

And this agrees with the testimony of Jehovah; "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." (Isa. lxvi. 2.)

> "True religion's more than notion;
> Something must be known and felt."

But it is the Lord who wounds; and the Lord alone can heal the wounds he has made; and if we are enabled to keep a conscience void of offence towards God and man, and to walk circumspectly,

not as fools, but as wise, all the glory belongs to God; for it is he that keepeth Israel; and, to his praise be it known, he neither slumbereth nor sleepeth. To charge the glorious doctrines of the gospel with having a licentious tendency, is downright blasphemy. If a precious faith's view of interest in Jesus, and all the blessings treasured up in him, with a lively sense of his love, and a firm persuasion of the stability of the covenant of grace, under the sweet and powerful influence of the Holy Ghost, will not make a man's face and light to shine in the world, nothing will. If a child of God at any time falls by the power of sin, as David, Peter, and others have done, so as to bring a public reproach upon his character, you will never hear him blame God and truth for it; no, his language will be, "Against thee, and thee only have I sinned;" and such men as lay the blame upon the doctrines of the Bible, wear more of the image of the devil than Judas himself did; for, with all his abominations, he had not insolence enough to act that part, but said, "I have sinned, in that I have betrayed innocent blood." All the good done in and by a child of God flows from one source; and he will give God all the glory, and will take the blame of all the bad to himself, and praise the Lord that he has an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

(To be continued)

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST AND FIRE

"John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water, but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner, but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable." (Luke 3:16, 17)

Surely we know that to be burned with fire is not a pleasant experience. But beloved, the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire, is exactly what it is. A burning fire in the soul: the agony of that burning is experienced only by the born child of God. He who has not yet been experienced in this matter, knows not what this scripture is telling us. There is much suffering to be done before we enter the Kingdom of God. We are told that it is through much tribulation that we enter, and surely we know that tribulation is suffering in both soul and body. Many today are speaking of the great tribulation as though it was something way off in the future to be experienced at a certain time.

But beloved, the tribulation of God's people has been going on every time one is baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire, and born into the Kingdom of God. We do not enter the Kingdom except we experience much tribulation — the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire. I know of what I speak, because I have had this experience. But, O the joy and peace which comes to the child of God when the tribulation period is ended and we enter into that rest of soul of which our precious Saviour has spoken. Our Saviour said, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He only promised this rest unto those who are heavy laden. Surely there is laboring before that precious rest comes to us. The labor of which our Saviour is speaking is not a natural labor of the flesh but of the spirit and soul. Today it seems that all natural circumstances are against me, but there is a rest in my soul which the world knows nothing about. There is a peace and happiness which the natural eye cannot see or understand. I have been through the fire of which my beloved Saviour spoke. He brought me safely through in His great love and mercy. And though I suffer much in this body, my soul is at peace and I rest at my Saviour's feet, which is joy unspeakable and full of glory. I know he is with me every step of my journey on this earth, and when this life is over, I shall go to live with Him in eternal

glory, where there will be no more suffering, no more sin to grieve me or hinder my perfect existance. I cannot be perfect in this body of flesh where sin hinders, but I am joyfully looking toward the time when my spirit leaves this body of sin and corruption, and I shall forever be free from all things which are not holy and perfect. Oh happy knowledge!

Ethel Gilland
P. O. Box 1103,
Panama City, Fla.

Chestertown, Md.

Dear Elder and Sister Wood :

This card doesn't seem to be a proper one for such a lovely couple as you are, but the card is only a gesture of what I really mean to say.

You have been blest with a beautiful life together in the service of the Lord preaching the gospel in all its truth and beauty, to all those who came hungering and thirsting for good news from the Word of God: always adhering closely to a "Thus saith the Lord," and being faithful in preaching sound doctrine in the face of criticism from those who did understand. Sister Wood being close beside you, and a loving helpmate over many long, often burdensome paths, always pressing forward to the blessing promised at the end of the way.

I often think of the hours I have spent in your company, loving every minute of it. Enjoying the fellowship that only the children of God can understand. The world does not know what it is all about: but praise God, we do.

I pray the Lord will always be with you and keep you in good health as long as he leaves you here on earth.

Love always,
Sister Ruth Lucht

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The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, at Old Beulah Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in August, 1976.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
P. O. Box 4524,
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EDITORIAL

WAR

"O wretched man that I am Who shall deliver me from the body of this death." (Rom. 7:24).

Methinks as I sit here at my desk and ponder the works of God, I am sure that no portion of Holy Writ contains more tragic pathos than this one does. I am likewise sure that it means nothing to him and her that has not experienced the wretchedness with which the apostle was beset. Too, one that has thus, from day to day, experienced this wretchedness will not be found denying the sovereign work of God in measuring to poor and wretched sinners the measure of faith and grace. What a hard and unbecoming doctrine it is to dangle before poor sinners the doctrine that their life is what they make it. The apostle tells the young minister what to speak. Now are we going by that, or are we going to hew out another way? If so, they may not hold water when we get them. (Jer. 2:13) The way of God's saving grace is a fountain of living waters. This fountain does not rise in the heart of God's children whether the old one, or the new heart. Or does it? If it does rise in the heart of God's children, it is high time that we get the fountain primed and flowing. If it does not rise there, to be consistent, it is high time for any of us not to say that we are able to bring more cleansing powers to the fountain, or that we can stymie the amount of cleansing done by the fountain.

Does the sinner, dead in his own sin, bring this warfare about? Does he start the activity that causes his wretchedness? Far from it. He is in peace. There is not an opposing force operating against his will, against the law of his mind,—natural mind, which is the only one that he has or that he knows anything about. Again, if this opposing force is sent into him independent of his natural mind, has he then, by that natural mind, got to maintain the warfare?

Nay, isn't it true that the Lord, who

undoubtedly sends this stronger force into this strong man, the One that maintains and finishes this work?

Now let us inquire: Have you been brought to this wretched state? Let us inquire a little further about Paul's experience: Who was it that brought the "lest" into Paul's life? Was it Paul or the Lord? Wasn't it the Lord that is inspiring Paul to say, "lest I should be exalted above measure, through the abundance of revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure." Here is one of the greatest mysteries that the child of God has ever met. Did God sit idly by and let Satan give this messenger? Let me look back across the vista of the ages and look in on another servant of the Lord. Did Satan discover the status of Job before the Lord? Was it the will of God for Satan to subject the servant of the Lord to all of the terrible conflict of soul and heart and mind? Ask yourself, Who spoke first about Job, Satan or the Lord? Did Satan seduce, captivate, inveigle, outmaneuver, the Lord into letting him send His servant through all of this hell?

I am not in the least afraid of what I preach and write. I am often carried into the depths of the slough of despondency as to my relationship with the kingdom of heaven; but the kingdom, never. It is a great mystery but no less the truth, that the Lord sent this terrible conflict on Job. Just recently I heard a man, in his preaching, say that God did not ever use the devil in saving His people. If ever a creature was used, God never used the devil in saving How much difference is between Job's cry of despair and Paul's cry of wretchedness? Whose hand and power was it that set off the series of events that brought about the trial of each man? Do not be so naive as to suggest to me that it was, in either case because that they were disobedient servants. It was to purge them, try them, wean them, separate the vile from the precious in each of their lives. This trial, this purging is not for lack of fruit-bearing, but it is to cause more fruit to be on the plantings of the Lord. Ah, what a tormenting doctrine it was to poor old Job when his company of so-called friends, taunted him with that sullied, vague doctrine that his condition was because of the lack of fruit-bearing. Our dear Saviour said "every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." (John 15:2)

The children of God have ever felt their sins. The more grace that was given them, the greater feeling of leanness and barrenness. Not the first carping critic can find fault with Paul's life after the Damascus road event, and yet no poor sinner was ever ready to confess his present sinful condition any more than was he. And yet, Ah, that word. And yet. Go back with me a little ways in his life. At the time of his astounding conversion he was *yet* breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the church of God. At this time he had no conflict; he did not know the meaning of the Christian warfare; he did not know the first thing about wretchedness. But he learned a great lesson all at once, and kept right on learning as long as he lived. The first lesson was from heaven, all subsequent lessons were from the same source. These lessons were not becaue he was disobedient. The warfare of the saints is not based on such cunningly laid fables as that. As he was "yet" breathing out the threatenings and slaughter against the church of God, "yet" after the cessation of this wasting of the churches, there is not an instance of his going back under that "yet". He did not outwardly live in sin anymore. No man had more sadness in his life than Paul; "Yet" the argument that our blessings and chastenings come to us according to the way we walk and talk falls to the ground, and there is not enough logic to put that kind of spurious doctrine together again as it pertains unto the apostle.

His labors more abundant; in stripes

above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths (among death) more often. This is the life and experience of the obedient Paul. He was blessed to live in the flesh (Christ living in him) in an honorable way, but instead of receiving greater blessings for it, he received more abundant, above measure, more frequent and more often the afflictions of the gospel, which is saying that his warfare waxing heavy and weighty, was not brought upon him because of his sinning more.

From the moment the Lord visited Saul on the Damascus road his warfare started. From that time his sufferings grew in intensity until his death. From that time his devotion, his obedience to the precepts and commandments of the law to Christ, were above reproach. How precious it is to know that the warfare is not a punishment, but that it is the way of the Lord in the trial of His saints. "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God, for as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the induring of the same sufferings which we also suffer." etc. (Cor. 1:3, 5). What glorious dealings are these. The apostle tells these brethren that his sufferings are (not because of his disobedience, but) for the salvation of others.

"It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I can not tell; or whether out of the body, I can not tell; God knoweth; such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) how that he was caught up into paradise, and he heard unspeakable words, which is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such an one will I glory: "yet" of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmitiees. For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth; but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me. And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For (in behalf of, or because of) this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." (2 Cor. 12:1, 10; Rom. 5:3, 5; 1 Pet. 4:12, 14; Mat. 5; 10, 11). What a travail of soul that Paul is going through. It is not any wonder that David, in speaking of those that go down to the sea in ships, that they reel to and fro (Psa. 107:27); it is not any wonder that Job said, "When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise, and the night be gone? and I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day." (Job 7:4) It is not any wonder that David, in telling his own travels, says, "I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me. I am gone like the shadow when it declineth; I am tossed up and down as the locust." (Psa. 109:22, 23)

What do you see? Do you see a man that God has favored with abundance of revelations, and yet he is buffeted, smashed at from every direction, that war is raging in his mind, and his soul is in despair and Wretched. If you do, methinks that saving grace, the trial of your faith, the hardships of a soldier of Jesus Christ are strange things to you,

and that, without the interceding work of divine mercy, you will never have a warfare, therefore will never have the victory bestowed upon you.

Dearly beloved readers, do not think that a strange thing is happening to you when this mighty chain of God's power comes upon and binds you. It is God at work within and upon you. Your reign of sin is ending as a reign. It has reigned supremely. There has not been any conflict betwen two waring powers. Peace and contentment has been your lot. When in nature we do not visualize a power of such force as coming upon us to disannul everything that we have said, nor are we able to comprehend a power that is able to make void everything that we have done. To that being (and if you and I are children of God, to us) nothing has ever happened to shatter his or her faith in our integrity. We are at home in the body, and have never been present with the Lord, thus being complete in our own resources. Do you remember, dear ones, the first inkling that God gave you that your house was not so with God? If so, as sad as it is, you are highly blessed and favored of God. If this has come upon you, it follows that you will never be the same any more. War has come to your house. Heretofore, if some saint had spoken in sorrow about being molested by Satan, you would not have known of what they speak. Now you know. Now heaven is dealing with you. This you had not known. You were at home in the body, and the kind of teaching that one at home in the body had taught you that a follower of the Lord would have a happy and serene life here and afterwards heaven and immortal glory. But the scenes are changing. The delusive vision is passing away. Your hand is often reached for the eyes to brush away that which impedes the sight, but repeated efforts to remove the sorrows of the way are a failure. The dust (we are dust) is thrown into a disarray by the clash of the armies, and the maze causes consternation.

This war, when it begins, causes everything to be disarrayed and out of order. We begin to try to restore things as we had been led to think we could at any time do. Now the taste of blood is to be had. What a shock, for it is our blood being shed. Devastation has come into our life. The things we had depended on will not buoy us up. The bread that had strengthened us has lost its taste and is stale; the drink in our cistern has lost its assuaging power of our thirst, and it is fast leaking out. (Jer. 2:13) The clothing of our dexterous weaving will not cover our nakedness any longer. The dire necessities that arise when war is spreading over the land causes deep groanings.

As the stronger antagonist begins the steady dealing with the strong, his first act is to overpower and bind him. It would seem that all theologians agree that this is Christ dealing with a sinner. The first thing they read is the binding of the strong man. And they leave that reading, they leave what they have clearly in the letter seen, and at once they leave the spot and go forth telling sinners that they have things in your hands, that you are the master of your destiny, that you are a free moral agent, that you can please God by going to heaven, or you can displease him by taking the road to hell. You can do as you please, because it is up to you. That is not the experience that every strong person has been brought to that has been dealt with by the stronger man. He is first bound. Now have you been bound? Secondly, he will spoil his goods. Now, dear reader, has yours been spoiled? He will disarm him and her of every weapon and tool that they thought they had. Has the fight been taken out of you? Have you lost your resistance? Have the things that you had depended on and trusted in, failed you? He will spoil your house. Has yours been spoiled? Do you now cry out in anguish that your house is not so with God. If so, to these things, the war has set in, and the ravages of it will last as long as you are in this vale of tears.

Warfare reduces the arms of every

warrior if they are not replenished. These arms have been removed and wrest out of your grasp, and you are left to the greatest conflagration a sinner has ever experienced. The combat is between the works of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit. They both are in us, if so be that the stronger has come upon us. I am sure that if it were a ball game Paul was discussing, that each reader could give a clear description of it play by play. How many can give a description of the sorrow and anguish that is produced in the heaving bosom of every one exercised in this way. Oh, they say, that is not a mystery. Any one that can read, can instantly tell just what is under consideration. You may think that I am impugning the motives of million of Christians. But I assure that you I am not. I am taking the Bible as my only man of my counsel. Of Primitive Baptists I am sure, and they profess to believe that "we take the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired words of God, and they are the only rule of faith and practice." If they live up to that well and good. If they do not, there is not anything good about it. By far he greater portion of them spend a lot of printer's in in telling us that they can handle this situation of the works of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit being in them. But Paul denies that. He says, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye can not do as you would." I am sorrowful because of this. I would like to be able to do as I would, and if I am not badly mistaken, I have a desire to do good, but I am not able to do so. I fit the description of those that Paul gives of these Galatians. Do you? If so, the warfare is intense indeed.

This warfare is alike in every child of God. The intensity and degree may vary, but the warfare is the same. The hymn writer said,

> 'Tis seldom I can ever see
> Myself as I would wish to be;
> What I desire, I can't attain,
> From what I hate. I can't refrain,

and I am sure that this is the wailing cry of every sorely tried warrior in this warfare. It was the lamentation of Paul. Is it of you? Or can you attain to that which you desire? If so, can you refrain from what you hate? If so, the warfare has not started in your life.

"That which I do I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that I do. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members. Warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death. I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." (Rom. 7:15, 25).

My heart's desire is that it might be made manifest that our victory and deliverance comes through Him that led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men, and among those gifts was fighting the good fight of faith which saves and makes whole. (Mark 5:34; Luke 8:48; 7:50; 18:42)

W.D.G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

PHILIPPIANS IV. 5.

"Let your moderation be known to all men."

First. It seems to us that this brief sentence is inseparably connected with the preceding verse, and with the two following verses, and that this was so in the mind of the apostle. The Holy Ghost has placed these admonitions together so that each one could seem to grow out of that which immediately precedes it. The one central thought in all these four verses is, first, trust in the Lord and then rejoice in him. The following expessions set this forth clearly: "Rejoice in the Lord." "The Lord is at hand." "Let your requests be made known unto God." "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds." The apostle reminds his brethren that theirs is a high and holy calling, that they serve the King of Kings, that in him there is safety perfect and entire, and therefore there is for them no need of anxiety, nor care, nor restlessness, but, on the contrary, that they may rest in full assurance that all is well. Men of the world may run to and fro, and here and there, seeking to build for themselves secure hiding-places and settled foundations; but to the brethren no such need existed, since God was himself their refuge and since he is always at hand. These are, as it seems to us, the general thoughts of this Scripture. These things all the people of God have need of, and of all these things it is good to be reminded, that our strife and restless seeking after that which we call good may cease, and that we may come to believe and rest in God. The things presented to the church at Philippi by the apostle are also needful for all who believe.

Second. Let us trace briefly the connection between the six special clauses of these four verses. First, always rejoicing in the Lord is enjoined; this must include all that pertains to him in his holy character and in his redemption. Believers rejoice because their Lord is their King, Lawgiver and Judge; because he is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him; because he so loved them that he gave his only begotten Son to die for them, and to justify them freely by his finished work upon Calvary; because he never leaves them nor forsaken them; because he is a defense round about them, so that no enemy can set upon them to do them harm, and because he supplies all their need through riches of grace in Christ Jesus. They are, all of them, poor, weak and sinful, yet they have room to rejoice in him. Yea, just because they lack all things their rejoicing must be in him. All that can produce sorrow and shame is found in them, but though sorrowful they are always rejoicing in him, for in him are riches for their poverty, strength for their weakness, righteousness for their sinfulness and redemption for their lost estate. They are shut out of all room for rejoicing in self and shut up unto rejoicing in the Lord Jesus Christ. A sinner says, What have I to rejoice in? I am empty, wretched, blind, miserable, naked and lost. Yes, all this is true, but sinners are not bidden to rejoice in themselves. Is there not enough in the blessed Lord to cause rejoicing in the hearts of all such sinners? Nay, more than this, none save a lost, condemned, perishing sinner ever can see anything in the blessed Lord to cause rejoicing. Jesus is the precious honeycomb. He that is full of self and of his own ways will loathe this precious honeycomb ,according to the testimony, A full soul loathes the honeycomb. But if in our weakness we are persuaded of the riches of grace and glory in the blessed Jesus, then indeed must we rejoice in the Lord, and rejoice always.

Third. Among the things connected with rejoicing in the Lord will follow a spirit of moderation, according to the next verse. Rejoicing in the Lord, and moderation before men, abide in the heart together. This word "moderation" has in it all these following shades of meaning: that which is suitable, or fair, or reasonable, or gentle, or mild, or patient, or upright. The word in the original Greek bears all these shades of meaning. In the text substitute either or all these words for the word "moderation" and we shall do no violence to

the meaning of the apostle. When the apostle said, "Let your moderation be known," he said all that the above named words convey. Now, is it not apparent that if one has come to trust in God, and to behold such excellence in him as to rejoice his heart, there will follow the beginning and the growing up of all of these graces of the Spirit: uprightness, patience, mildness, gentleness, reasonableness, fairness, with all suitableness of life expressed by the word moderation? That which makes men unkind to each other, unfair in their dealings with each other, unreasonable in their judgment and language about each other, impatient either with their fellow-men, or with the circumstances that surround them, harsh and severe in their treatment of each other, and in short that which leads to that which is unsuiable to the profession of the religion of the meek and lowly Master, is want of trust in God, in the absence of which there can be no joy in the Lord. Rejoicing in God, and moderation before men, therefore, spring out of the same fountain, and will be found flowing together in the stream of the believer's life.

Fourth. The apostle enforces all this upon the minds of his brethren by reminding them that their Lord is at hand. He is always at hand. Not only shall he come the second time without sin unto salvation, to which glorious hope the believer looks, and, looking, is encouraged to endure to the end, as seeing him who is invisible, but even to-day, right in the midst of trials, sorrows, weaknessss and temptations, he is at hand with them one and all. Clouds may obscure our vision, thick clouds may be his chariot, but it is sure that he does ride upon the clouds even though our eyes are holden. I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, he has said for our consolation. This is one of the reasons for rejoicing in him. He is not a God afar off, but he is nigh. The Lord is at hand. Though it be winter or summer, day or night, cold or hot, dark or light, with us still, through every changing season, the Lord, our Lord is nigh, nigh to all them that call upon him. In sorrow or gladness, loss or gain, sickness or health, temptation or deliverance, conflict or victory, he is never far off. Always he is a very present help in time of trouble. The apostle has not then laid upon his brethern an impossibile task when he bids them always rejoice in the Lord. What more is needed than the assurance that the Lord is nigh? How true to experience and to all the word of God was the testimony of Habakkuk: "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olives shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places." And how appropriate the words that close this wonderful testimony: "To the chief singer on my stringed instruments." Joy and singing go together.

Fifth. Now, from all this, how natural the admonition that follows: "Be careful for nothing." Could this assurance that the Lord is at hand be with us and reign within us we should indeed be careful for nothing. We should be found then bringing all our affairs to the Lord, and then there would be that peace which passes all understanding, which would keep our hearts and minds from all that disturbs us. Then worry and anxiety would cease, and we should not be troubled about the future of our lives here below. These brethren at Philippi were among all the various trials that any of us ever have had; they were subjected to deprivations, dangers and losses, which we know little of in this day, because of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There was need for them to be reminded, as the apostle does remind them, that, after all, their Lord was at hand. Nothing could then befall them without his presence, and nothing could possibly harm them, and nothing could beset them that he had not appointed for

them. "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" This is no less true of the children now than it was of their Elder Brother. It is our mind that the apostle here is speaking of the life of his brethren in this world, rather than of the inward conflicts between the flesh and the Spirit, or of the temptations of the world and the devil, which so ofen cause doubts and fears as to whether we have come to know the Lord in salvation or not. The blessed Saviour said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." That is, all needed wordly provisions. And so here, as it appears to us, the apostle is presenting the truth that believers need not be anxious about temporal things when following the commandments of the Lord. "Be careful for nothing," but bring all your desires before the Lord, and this they may do without delay, for he is at hand always.

Sixth. Returning to the words first quoted, "Let your moderation be known unto all men," it seems clear to us that the apostle does not mean by this that his brethren shall go about publishing their moderation, their kindness, mildness, gentleness, &c., but simply live that way day by day. These things cannot be hid if they be indeed in our hearts and lives. It seems to us sure that if one loves the Lord he will not need to call to men from the street corners, Come behold my zeal for Him. He who has the love of God reigning in him will most probably be the last to feel sure that it is so with him. Perhaps he may not even think that the love of God has been shed abroad in his heart, but, on the contrary, many times feel very anxious lest it be not so, though he will with great longing desire that love, but there will be a making that love appear to all those who know him, by the quiet, humble, steadfast adherance to the faith that has been revealed to him, and by his quiet walk of obedience to the commandments of his heavenly Father. The more he loves God the less will he feel satisfied with that love. Indeed, this is one of the infallible marks of love, that one bemoans his lack of love. So will it also be with showing forth moderation.

In short, the apostle presents to the church the suitableness of all the things which belong to moderation, in all their daily life. Live before all men with equity, with gentleness and kindness, with mildness and patience. These are not loud-voiced virtues, they do not come before men with the sound of the trumpet heralding them, they belong to the humble walking before God of those who fear him and desire to live to his praise, but who yet so far fail that they never can be satisfied with what they have done, and (least of all) satisfied with their state before the all-seeing eye of God. A servant might boast when among his fellow-servants alone, but hardly any servant would be found doing so in the presence of the master of them all. He who feels that he is the servant of the Lord first, and then the servant of his brethren for the Lord's sake, while he remembers this will not find room for boasting, or calling attention to his work. It is sure the inspired apostles never have urged a vainglorious display upon the part of the children of God; it must be, then, that the words, "Let your moderation be known," simply signify that we are to liveout that which the Lord has wrought within us. Is is a wonderful thing when the spirit of all that this word "moderaion" signifies has found a place in the heart, and out of the heart filled with these things it is good that there should flow forth in word and in deed the suitable fruit. This the apostle enjoined upon those to whom he was writing.

Seventh. In conclusion we will say that by these words we are taught that believers are to strive to show forth all godliness, not only in the house of God, but before all men. For instance, we are to show all honesty toward all men. One of the meanings of moderaton, as said before, is reasonableness. This also is enjoined upon believers toward all men. We are to deal with them not only justly, but reasonably; that is, not even ex-

acting what the law might give us, but using a justice beyond what any law can provide or demand, save the law of the love of God and the neighbor. The text means, so far as wordly affairs are concerned, that we are not to be axacting or grasping, but to deal with men kindly, mildly and gently. We have hope, and we say that this world is not our home, but that we seek a city above. We say that earthly treasures all perish, but that heavenly treasures endure. The apostle here enjoins that we live as though we possessed the spirit of this truth.

As we close these reflections it appears to us that after all the whole matter might as well be summed up and left in the one sentence, In all things let your moderation be known to all men.

(Editorial by Elder F. A. Chick, May 15, 1912)

ELDER CURRY'S FIRST COMMUNICATION TO ELDER BEEBE

Hopewell, Ky.
December 7, 1880

Dear Brother Beebe:

Since God by his kind providence put into my hands some copies of the *Signs*, I am resolved to write you. Although I feel sharply my unworthiness and utter weakness, I trust that I have been brought by sovereign grace to know the Lord.

I am yet quite young, but have read with intense interest the word of God, and have found it so different from what I have always been taught from the pulpit, that I have often been greatly perplexed. All the preaching I ever heard was so different from my feelings and the scriptures, that I sometimes beleived that all was heresy, and that God's church was not represented here; but when my own weakness and sinfulness were brought to view, how dare I denounce those wise and good men as heretics? When I dared assert my faith I was derided and called a heretic, and informed that of all heresies, both ancient and modern, none such ever made its appearance. Thus things went on for years, until I receive your excellent paper, and there I found the same precious faith so ably set forth and so earnestly contended for, that I exclaimed within myself, God had a people, and I have found them. Since then I have received some numbers of your paper, which come laden with choice dainties and rich luxuries to a hungry soul. I am going to subscribe to your paper soon for I love the doctrine it advocates and the people it represents, although we have neither here.

Do with this as you think best, and I will send you something more some day, for I want to help swell the anthem of salvation by grace, and grace alone.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
H. M. Curry

OBITUARIES

SISTER DENNIE HAMILTON

Sister Dennie Hamilton was born March 5, 1893, the daughter of the late Brother and Sister Nancie and Pharaoh Gurnues. She died January 6, 1976 at the age of 82 at her home. There were 4 children born to her and her husband, 3 girls and 1 boy.

Sister Hamiltin and husband joined the church the 3rd Saturday in August, 1953, was received in full fellowship and baptized by Elder Eddie Humphrey. She was a faithful member as long as she was able to go to church. She suffered affliction for many years. She was a kind and loving member and was alwalys glad for us to come to see her.

We feel our loss is her heavenly gain. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away at his good time. Blessed be his Holy Name. May we be submissive to his will, who doeth all things well.

This done the 3rd Saturday in February, 1976 in conference. Written by E. D. Morton.

Eld. J. T. Prescott, Mod.
Bro. Louis Sammon, Clerk

IN MEMORY OF HESTER MIDKIFF

Sister Hester Midkiff, 91 years old, died March 26, 1976 in the Ann Penn Hospital in Reidsville, N.C. Sister Midkiff was born in

Pittsylvania County, October 23, 1884, a daughter of the late John William Robertson and Lettie Adams Robertson. She joined Springfield Primitive Baptist Church November 8, 1908. She was the widow of Brother James W. Midkiff. Surviving are 5 sons: Charlie and Howard, both of Gretna, Va., William of Hurt, Va., Haywood of Woodbridge, N.J., and James of Wilmington, N.C., three daughters: Mrs. Arthur Joyce of Madison, N.C., Mrs. Johney Hall, Greensboro, N.C., and Mrs. A. Ray Sheldon of Chatham, Va. Surviving also are two sisters, Mrs. Florence Saunders of Gretna and Mrs. Mamie Creasy of Altavista, Va., 19 grandchildren and 31 great grand children.

Sister Midkiff was loved spirtually and naturally by all who knew her. She gave rich evidence of her deep and abiding faith in her Redeemer and was faithful to attend her meetings as long as she was able. She always welcomed the members and friends when they visited her. She was a quiet peace-loving person, and we of Springfield Church will miss her.

She was buried by her husband in the family cemetery. Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and Mr. Don Davidson at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. The many beautiful flowers showed the high esteem in which she was held. Our sympathy goes out to the family and all who mourn her passing.

Written by request.

Annie Tosh

LENA PERKINS LOCKE

Our Heavenly Father in his infinite wisdom and tender mercy saw fit to remove from our midst, one of our oldest and most beloved sisters, and placed her in that peaceful rest, to await that great and glorious day when our Saviour will return to call his precious saints to meet Him in the air and be with Him for evermore.

Sister Lena Perkins Locke was born June 28, 1881 and was called to her eternal home February 27, 1976, making her stay here 94 years, 7 months and a few days.

She was the daughter of the late Elder and Mrs. J. M. Perkins. Her father was a Primitive Baptist minister. She was married to Brother Charles H. Locke November 19, 1899. Brother Locke passed away April 13, 1963. To this union were born four sons and one daughter. Brother Elmer Locke, her oldest son, passed away May 30, 1970. The three boys surviving are Brother Warnard Locke, Benton, Ky. Rt. 1, Harry and Vernon Locke of Michigan, and the daughter, Mrs. Imogene Creason, Benton, Ky. Rt. 3. Surviving also are 9 grandchildren, 32 great grandchildren, and 8 great, great grandchildren.

She was a member of North Mt. Zion Church since 1915. She and her husband, Brother Charles Locke, were baptized the same day by Elder J. M. Perkins. They attended church services regularly, not only at North Fork Church but other churches of the same faith and order within their reach. She was a true and faithful member, one who lived a Christian life, and was loved by all who knew her. She loved the church, the doctrine of Predestination and Salvation by the Grace of God. She believed in a God who has all power both in earth and in heaven. She loved the brethren and sisters, and felt it a blessing to have them in her home.

Sister Locke was an invalid for a few years, having lost her eye sight. She was confined to her home for some time but never complained. She bore her affliction without a murmur, and often expressed her desire to go on: she had a hope of eternal life after leaving this world.

The last few years she lived she made her home with her daughter, Sister Imogene Creason, who spent her time looking after her mother, making her as comfortable as possible. She was blessed with good hearing and an active mind as long as she lived.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Paul Poyner at Linn Funeral Home in Benton, Ky. in the presence of a host of friends and relatives. She was laid to rest in North Mt. Zion Cemetery beside her husband, beneath a beautiful floral offering.

We humbly bow to the will of a Sovereign and Merciful God, believing our great loss is her eternal gain.

Written by request of family.

Trudie Adams

SISTER NONA GORDY

As requested by the church in conference that I write a memorial to our dear and precious sister, Nona Gordy, I will undertake to do it. Sister Gordy was born in Davidson County, August 9, 1890, and departed this life February 17, 1976, making her here in this life 85 years and about 6 months. She was the daughter of Thomas L. and Lou Ella Tysinger Greer. She was married to Fred L. Gordy October 25, 1911, and to this union were born two children, one having passed away in early life, leaves only her husband and son to mourn her departing.

She joined Mechanicsville Primitive Baptist Church at High Point in October, 1911, and was a faithful member for 64 years. I have served her church for 43 years, and she filled her seat most of the time. She enjoyed the services and loved the doctrine of salvation by

the Grace of God, the doctrine of Election and Predestination of all things. She was a dear old sister and was loved by her brethren and friends. She was always ready and willing to do anything she could for the comfort and welfare of the church. The good Lord blessed Sister Gordy with a wonderful personality, and a wonderful way to meet with and entertain her brethren and friends. She was a lovely Sister.

The church at High Point certainly will miss her, as will the rest of the brethren and friends, but we certainly would not ask for her back. The Lord blessed her with and long and wonderful life here, and now He has called her home, to be where she will not suffer any more, and she is resting peacefully. Sleep on, dear sister, until your dear Saviour awakens you to carry you to that Home that awaits all that are Redeemed by His blood, where they will for ever praise his holy name.

Written at the request of the church in conference Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in March, 1976.

One copy of this for church records, one for the family, and one for the *Signs of the Times* for publication. Written by her Pastor.

D. A. O'Bryant

SISTER MARGARET JANE STAPLES

Sister Margaret Jane Staples, age 95, died at the Delaware Nursing Home on March 6, 1976.

Sister Staples was born in 1880 in Lobo, the daughter of the late Thomas and Isabel Johnson. She was predeceased by two brothers and a sister. She was married to the late Fred G. Staples of the City of London. Several nieces and nephews survive.

Sister Staples was, we believe, a gracious character. She was a long time member of the Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada. She attended the regular and quarterly meetings of the church until her health failed her about seven years ago and she was confined to a nursing home.

Sister Staples, when about 6 months old, was "snatched" from the Thames River in the Victoria boat disaster in 1881 when 181 lives were lost. Her little body was laid on the bank of the river and she was given up for dead. A nurse passed that way and felt there was life in her little body. Her life was ahead of her for 95 years.

Sister Staples gave evidence in her life that she was "snatched" as a brand plucked from the fire of God's wrath. His right arm of salvation laid hold upon her and gave her sweet evidences that she had been with Jesus and learned of him. Her desire was fulfilled for her to follow her Elder Brother Jesus in baptism and be united with His friends and her friends in the church militant.

She died with a sweet smile in her face to give evidence to her loved ones here that her departure was in peace, a departure to take her to her heavenly home to be with Jesus and His friends.

Funeral services were conducted from Logan's Chapel in London by Elders Stewart and Alex McColl. Interment was in Ivan Cemetery.

Resolved that a copy be sent to the *Signs* for publication and a copy be entered in our church records .

(Elder) J. Stewart McColl, (Elder) D. Alex McCall, Pastors, Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada.

SISTER EFFIE GRAHAM

Sister Effie Graham, age 86, died at the St. Thomas-Elgin General Hospital on April 4, 1975.

Sister Graham was born in 1888 in Dunwich, the daughter of the late Duncan and Betsy Graham.

Sister Graham taught school for many years in Ontario. She made her home at the Grand Central Hotel in St. Thomas the last number of years.

Sister Effie united with the church in May of 1974. She related a beautiful experience of how she had been persuaded that her sins which were many were all forgiven her.

She was baptized in a stream not far from the church in June of the same year by her pastors, Stewart and Alex McColl. Sister Effie was very happy in the church and generated love and gentleness among her friends.

In the fall of the same year Sister Effie felt she had been impressed with the scripture "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25:34). Her health began to fail but the impression was strong in her mind. She had to wait all the days of her appointed time till her change came.

Funeral services were conducted from the Williams Funeral Home on April 7, 1975 by her pastors Stewart and Alex McColl. Interment was in Black's Cemetery.

Resolved that a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication and a copy be entered into our church records.

(Elder) J. Stewart McColl, (Elder) D. Alex McColl, Pastors, Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada.

SISTER CLARA MAY REEVES

Sister Clara May Reeves, age 63, died in St. Thomas, Ontario on March 23, 1975.

Sister Reeves was born in 1911, the daughter of the late John Campbell and Catherine Pollard Campbell of Howard Township.

Sister Reeves is survived by her husband, Albert of Dutton, three sons, and four daughters:

Malcolm (in Alberta), James (in Dunwich), Alice (in Alberta), Carolyn (in Milton), Robert (in Dutton), Betty (in Alberta) and Janette (in Alberta). Fifteen grandchildren and two brothers and one sister also survive.

Sister Reeves was a faithful member of the Covenanted Baptist in Canada until her death. She was a regular attendant until she was confined to her home with a lingering illness.

Sister Reeves realized that, "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (II Cor. 4:17) and that "Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Romans: 3-6). Sister Clara was blessed with a faithful husband and family who were able to care for her at home until a few days before her death.

Funeral services were conducted from the Beill Funeral Home on March 25, 1975. Interment was in the McKillop Cemetery.

Resolved that a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication and a copy be entered in our church records.

(Elder) J. Stewart McColl, (Elder) D. Alex McColl, Pastors, Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada.

CALDON BRINSON QUINN

It is with sadness we attempt to write of the loss of our dear sister, Caldon Quinn, who departed this life January 28, 1976, at the age of 92. She was married to the late Henry Quinn, and to this union were born six children. Those who survive her are three sons, three daughters, two sisters, two brothers, 18 grandchildren, and four great great grandchildren.

Sister Quinn united with Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church June 12, 1926. She loved her church and brethren, and attended meetings as long as she was able to go. She was our oldest member, and will be greatly missed by her church, family and all who knew her.

Sister Quinn was a strong believer in salvation by grace. Her faith, love and trust in the Lord was manifested in her daily life. We feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted at the Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder Curtis Raines, and she was laid to rest in the church cemetery surrounded by many beautiful flowers, loved ones and friends, to await the morning of the resurrection, when all will be peace and love forever.

Elder Curtis Raines, Mod.
Brantley Kennedy, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

We, the church at Tarboro, bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Father, who called our dear Sister Maggie Staton from our midst.

Sister Staton was born Sept. 6, 1886 and died April 27, 1976, making her stay on earth 89 years.

She was one of the oldest members of our church and she was faithful to attend as long as she was able to go. She was a strong believer of Salvation by Grace, and she loved to tell the church what good things the Lord had done for her. Sister Maggie was forever praising His name and giving thanks for his blessings.

THEREFORE, WE RESOLVE: That three copies of this resolution be made, one for the church records; one to be sent to her family, and one to be published in the *Signs of Times*.

We also send our sincere sympathy to her family as we feel our loss to be her eternal gain.

We trust her children will be guided by the ways their Mother has taught them and trust God to have mercy on them all.

This done in order at our May meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Mod.
John H. Coker, Clerk

Hungry, and faint, and poor,
Behold us, Lord, again
Assembled at thy mercy's door,
Thy bounty to obtain.

Thy word commands us nigh,
Or we must starve indeed;
For we no money have to buy,
No righteousness to plead.

The food our spirits want
Thy hand alone can give;
Oh! hear the prayer of faith, and grant
That we may eat and live.

Newton

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 144 DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1976 NO. 9

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/76
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"GO AND SHEW JOHN AGAIN THOSE THINGS WHICH YOU DO HEAR AND SEE."

St. Matthew 11:4: "Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which you do hear and see." As Jesus spoke these words, John was in prison. No doubt, John was in a natural prison; but I also believe that he was in a spiritual prison. Each of you who have been called out of nature's darkness and into His marvelous light can witness with John. I believe that John typifies the church. In your experiences have you not come to the place where you felt to be in prison. Where you felt that the Lord had turned His face from you; that He had completely forsaken you. And there was no one who could help you; that could reach your case. You felt that you had come to the end of the way.

My dear people, so much of my time is spent in prisons and dark places. So much of the time I feel separated from the people that I love so much and surrounded by the things of the world. I believe John was in this condition. This was the same John that had leaped for joy in his mother's womb at the salutation of Mary, mother of Jesus. This was the same John who saw Jesus coming to be baptized and said, "Behold the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." This is the same John who baptized Jesus in the river Jordan and who saw the heavens opened and the spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon Jesus and heard a voice from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." This is the same John of whom Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you among them that are born of women there has not risen a greater than John the Baptist, not withstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." Yes, even John had come to the place where he was made to doubt and to wonder and to inquire, "Art thou He that should come or do we look for another." My dear people, have you not come to the place where you inquired of Jesus through your groanings — Lord, is this the way? Lord grant some evidence that I might know that this is the way. Lord, have I been completely deceived in the whole matter. Grant a handful of purpose along the way.

Jesus was walking upon this earth at the time that John was in prison. He had the power that he could have presented himself there in person to John, but John had to learn the same lessons that you and I must learn. He had to learn to live in this life by faith. Jesus sent two unto John. To me, this is faith and hope that were sent to comfort John, just as in this day the Lord sends faith and hope unto every child that is called by His grace. Yes, when you feel that time and just in the right amount.

I also believe that this is setting forth the calling and qualifying of God's ministers. Today, there seems to be so many that are so anxious to be ordained as ministers; but my dear people, if God has not called them, what do they have to say that is comforting and edifying.

In the scripture Jesus showed these that He sent to John His power, His love, His mercy, and then He sent them telling them to "go and show John again those things which you do hear and see." John has to be shown again and again as you and I; for so often we find ourselves in prisons and in dark places. These ministers whom Jesus had sent had something to say that was comforting to John because Jesus had shown them and told them these things. They had been qualified by the Lord. They had to tell of those things they had heard with their own ears, seen with their own eyes and handled with their own hands.

"Go and shew John again those things which you do hear and see, the blind receive their sight." There was a time when we were blind, that we thought we were as good as anyone else. We had heard the name of Jesus, but we knew nothing about Him. We had seen the church with our natural eyes, but it meant nothing to us. Then when we received our sight, we saw the terrible condition that we were in, We saw what great sinners we were. We saw how wretched, undone and lost that we were unless saved by the grace of God. We saw as Isaiah said, "In the year that King Uzziah died I also saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up and His train filled the temple." Yes, there must be a death for us to see the Lord high and lifted up. We saw also for the first time the beauty of the church, the Lord's people. We saw those who walked with bowed heads and heavy hearts; and though we desired so much to be one of them, we felt too vile and too unworthy. When I think of the blind receiving their sight and their eyes being opened as it were, I think of the old prophet Elisha as he was compassed about by a host of his enemies. "And his servants said unto him, alas my Master! how shall we do?" And the old prophet answered, "Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that that be with them, and Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man and he saw: and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."

"Go and shew John again those things which you do hear and see and the lame walk." When one is lame, he cannot walk of his own power. When one is brought to realize that he is in a lame condition, he begins to look for any crutch that the world has to offer. A child of God is brought in such a way that he finds no crutch. He finally comes to what seems to him to be the end and is made to beg unto his God for help. There was a certain man who had an infirmity thirty and eight years lying on one of the five porches of the pool at Jerusalem. To me the five porches are as the five stones that David selected from the brook and used only one to slay Goliath. They represent the five books of the law. This man was under the law of sin and death and realized that no man could help him; for when Jesus said unto him, "Wilt thou be made whole?" The man answered, "Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me." Jesus saith unto him, "Arise, take up thy bed and walk." Only the Lord could help his condition. Yet, his bed of trials and afflictions must go with him.

"Go and shew John again those things which you do hear and see, The lepers are cleansed." Leprosy represents sin and only through the shed blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is one cleansed of this disease. Only those that the Father gave Him of which He lost none are cleansed. How precious is the hope in our breast that we are included in that number that he suffered, bled, and died on the cross for.

"Go and shew John again those things which you do hear and see and the deaf hear." Wasn't there a time with you when you were deaf to the gospel. When you heard only words that had no meaning to you. Yes, a time when you could see the tears rolling down the cheeks of one with his head bowed and you wondered why. Yet, there came a time when

you were given spiritual ears to hear, and the good news from a far country touched your heart. When Christ says, let those with a hearing ear hear, can any man close up this ear? Can you refuse to hear? No, this is the effectual work of a sovereign God who speaks and it is done and commands and it stands fast.

"Go and shew John again those things which you do hear and see; The dead are raised up." I believe in a God who has all power in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. I believe in one who can raise those who are dead naturally, but I believe the reference here is to those who are dead spiritually. There was a time when you were dead to the things that be of God. There was a time when you were too much a part of the world to have any interest in the things of the spirit; and yet, at the appointed time, it pleased this sovereign God to separate you from the world, showing you were predestinated to be conformed to the image of His son. Yes, it pleased this God to raise you up from the dead; and you were able to witness with David when he said, "He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay and set my feet upon a rock and established my goings and He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." Your baptism was typical of the resurrection as you were buried in the liquid grave and raised again a new creature in Christ.

"Go and shew John again those things which you do hear and see: the poor have the gospel preached to them." Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven." Here Jesus is saying that the poor in spirit are already blessed because theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, the poor in spirit are the elect family of God, and the scripture states that they have the gospel preached to them. Yet, the world through its self-works and self-righteousness is trying to send paid emissaries to every corner of the world for fear that someone will not be preached to; and therefore, will be lost. My bible says just the opposite. The poor *have* the gospel preached to them and blessed are the poor, for theirs *is* the kingdom of heaven. It never ceases to amaze me to behold the effectual working of such a wonderful, merciful and yet powerful God that can bring one who is so opposed to the doctrine of salvation by grace, to the sound of the gospel being preached and to see the tears streaming down their face when they hear this wonderful news. There is no room for the works of man and for his doctrine. When one is poor in spirit, he sees just how small man is and just how unable man is to do anything of his own.

"Go and shew John again those things which you do hear and see: Blessed is he whosover should not be offended in me." Somehow, my dear people, I feel that those who have experienced receiving their sight, the lame walking, the lepers being cleansed, the deaf hearing, the dead raised up and the poor having the gospel preached to them, that they are blessed not to be offended in Christ. The world will try you seemingly at every hand. I have had complete strangers by nature to tell me that my clothes looked like an old Primitive Baptist, people I had never seen before nor had I been introduced to them, yet somehow it did not offend me; for I desire to be one of you, and I am not ashamed to look like you. I am not ashamed to be recognized as one of you, for I feel that the Lord has done something for you that you couldn't do for yourself. Yes, "Go and show John again those things which you do hear and see."

Yours in hope,
Cleo D. Robertson
Route 4, Box 357
Raleigh, N. C.

PRIVILEGED TO READ WHAT SHE BELIEVES

Rt. 2, Box 134
Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

There has been something stirring my

mind to write you a little note and tell you how I do love the *Signs of the Times.*

I have expressed this more than once, but it keeps coming to mind that once again I must write and let you and the other editors know how thankful I am to receive the *Signs,* and be privileged to read what I believe. I know this doctrine is hated by many, and we are persecuted because we believe it, but this only fulfills the scripture. "Ye shall be hated for my name's sake." This is the best evidence I know, to be hated for this belief.

It is not in men and women to direct their steps. Each step fulfills God's plan and wise design. There is not one step taken too many or too iittle, too far or too short: each step is ordained of God and Him alone. I am made glad this is the truth, and no other doctrine feeds me. I hope I love you all for Christ's sake.

I miss my companion so much, but am made to realize he is just asleep, and he left evidence that God chose him before the foundation of the world, and will call his sleeping dust to arise in the glorious resurrection.

"Blessed be the Lord who comes to men
With messages of grace;
Who comes in God his father's name
To save his chosen race."

Mother sends her kindest and best regards to you. She is with me this summer, and also enjoys the *Signs.* If given a mind to remember me in your prayers.

A helpless sinner,
Mrs. Pauline Spencer

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortingly unto Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." (Isaiah 40:1,2)

The prophet was told what to cry, and what he was told to cry was comforting to some body, and that somebody was the family of God — God's people who were chosen in Christ before the world began. There is a lot of difference in what God told his servant to cry, and what men are crying in this age of time. The cry now is, to scare sinners and tell them that if they don't repent and give their life to Christ, they are going to die and go to Hell. They are telling dead, alien sinners something to do that is impossible for them to do. The sinner's condition is described in Romans 3:10-18. (I will quote part of it) "As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God," etc.

It is enough to say that the dead sinner is totally depraved of will or power to recover himself from the awful condition he is in.

It is a comforting thought to all who have a hope in God, that their sin-debt is paid in full. Our God is not a defeated God. He is a God of purpose: he foreknew his people and has ever loved them. In his mind, wisdom and foreknowledge his children shouted His praises. When the morning stars sang together, all the sons of God shouted for joy. God foreknew all events of time from the beginning to the end, and all things will come just like God saw it. He is perfect in all his attributes. "That which hath been is now, and that which is to be hath already been, and God requireth that which is past." (Eccl. 3:15) We understand that this verse of scripture means that everything that has happened, or is happening, or will happen in the future has already been so far as God's foreknowledge is concerned. God foresaw the fall of man, and Christ his blessed Son was set for the fall. People tell me that God made man able to stand but liable to fall. If this be true, then God set his Son for the fall, in case there should be a fall. Man was made to fall, for God said, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." It did not read, *If* he ate thereof.

The eternal arrangement of the salvation of God's people was fixed in the eternal counsel of God before the world

was. Christ stood in the eternal arrangement of the salvation of His people, as a Lamb that had already been slain. "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." (Acts 4:27) That was the reason the prophet Isaiah could cry unto God's people the comforting words that her iniquity was pardoned. And at the appointed time of God he sent his Son to fulfill that counsel. The angel of God declared to Joseph in Matthew 1:21, "For she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." (note the Shalls)

God's work is a finished work: he finished all his work in six days, and rested from his work which he had made. (Gen. 2-1) Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. All of God's work, his decrees, his purposes, his counsels are being fulfilled every second of time.

Almost two thousand years ago our Saviour came to save his people. Sometimes my mind goes back to the time when he was nailed to the cross: how he suffered! The faultless lamb of God dying, and paying a debt his children owed that they could not pay. They were ten thousand talents in debt, and not a farthing to pay. He loved his children so much he bore their sins, — the pains of hell got hold of him. "He bore our grief and carried our sorrows: he was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquity, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him: and with his stripes we are healed."

Dear children of God your iniquity is pardoned: you have received of the Lord's hand double for all of your sins. What a comforting thought! "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people." Our Saviour laid in the earth three days and three nights. The third appointed morning he was brought forth from the grave: He arose for our justification, and having obtained eternal redemption for us, he sat down at the right hand of God and is making intercession for us.

The *us* he was speaking about were the ones the prophet was told to comfort. The scriptures declare that the Son of Man came to save that which was lost. My precious friends, he either saved them, or failed. I am glad my name is recorded among the people who affirm that Christ finished the work his Father sent him to do. The God I am writing about has never been defeated, and He has declared that his glory he would not give to another. This God does his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. We get lost for words to describe His greatness — "the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain him." (1 Kings 8:27) He fills the whole immensity.

God has never left the eternal destiny of one sinner in the hands of men. There are men preaching all over the world that if they don't get the gospel to the dead alien sinner, they will go down to eternal woe and misery. How can men believe such doctrine! If the eternal salvation of sinners depends upon the preacher getting the gospel to them, and that is the only way they have to know God or to be saved, and the preachers fail to get the gospel to them, then the sinner is going to die and go to hell, according to their doctrine: God is sending the sinner to hell for what the preacher failed to do. Who can believe it?

Christ said, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." He was speaking here of the dead alien sinner: the eternal salvation of his church. His Bride is just as secure as the throne of God is, inasmuch as they are going to hear His voice and live.

I have thought many times of young men dying on foreign battlefields, whose bodies were never found. But our God knows where every one of them is. . . . And at his second coming, when he will

say to the north give up, and the south keep not back, he will bring his sons from afar and his daughters from the ends of the earth, all that call upon my name. The whole family of God in heaven and earth is named, and he will be coming back after this family, I feel in the near future. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thes. 4:16-18)

In conclusion I want to say, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people." Your sin-debt is paid by the blood of Christ. I have a hope though unworthy I be, that some sweet day we shall meet to praise the one that saved us from our sins. May God bless his church and people, is my humble prayer. I would appreciate hearing from God's people. I have an injury so that I can't go like I once did, and hearing from the people of God is a great joy to me. May God bless the editors of the *Signs of the Times.*

Elder Garrett Wilson,
8684 Davis R.D. Rt. 1,
Maineville, Ohio, 45039

In the following we present another installment of, *"The Present State of Religion; or Who Are The People Miscalled Antinomians?"* by William Gadsby in 1841, and published in England. In this work the Truth as it is in Jesus is clearly presented by *Love-Truth,* while *Demur* and *Trifle* oppose the doctrine of *Love-Truth,* and *Investigation (Inv.)* finds that Love-Truth is correct in his presentation of the doctrine of the Scriptures, and was glad to say in the end that , "I desire no happier lot than to live and die as an Antinomian."

William Gadsby, like many others, maintained that the Gospel, and not the Law, is the rule of life for the believer, and for this he was stigmatized and persecuted as an Antinomian. (see page 617 of Hassell's Church History)

The doctrine of Love-Truth is the doctrine that has been held by the true church from the days of the Apostles, and the doctrine of *Demur* and *Trifle* has been held by opposers of the Truth.

J.D.W.

PRESENT STATE OF RELIGION

By William Gadsby, London, 1841
(Continued)

Inv. Yes, it is matter of thankfulness; but Christ, in the offices he sustains, and the relationship in which he stands, is of but very little use to some professors; for they are too ful of self to need such a Christ.

Love-Truth. True; but this is not the case with those that they call *Antinonians;* for, whatever character Christ bears, they are led by the Spirit to see and feel the need of him in those characters. If he is the *foundation* laid in Zion, (not in the world,) they know by experience he is just such a foundation as they need. They have endeavored to build their house upon *self;* but when the winds blew, and the floods came, down fell their building, and they began to sink into the horrible pit, where there is no standing. But when God the Spirit leads them to Christ, and fixes their feet upon him as the rock against which the gates of hell shall never prevail, they find firm standing for their feet, and with pleasure say, "The Lord is my fortress and my deliverer;" (2 Sam. xxii. 2;) "Neither is there any rock like our God." (1 Sam. ii. 2.) This rock is the foundation of the believer's faith, hope, joy, and peace, and will be esteemed by him as such; nor will he make haste to seek another, for "he that believeth, shall not make haste." Is Christ the *bread of life?* He is just suited to the hungry soul; and when they eat his flesh, and drink his blood, by a precious faith, great is the refreshment they derive from him, and, of a truth, find that he is meat indeed. Is he the *water of life?* How cooling and refreshing to the poor

soul who has been labouring under the hand of God's wrath, (Ps. lxxxiii. 7,) till his moisture is turned into the drought of summer! (Ps. xxxii. 4.) When the poor and needy seek water and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, and God is pleased to open this precious fountain, and cause them to drink of that water which is a Well of Water springing up to everlasting life, it will revive their poor drooping spirits, cool their parched tongues, and with great joy will they draw water out of Christ, the well of salvation. (Isa. xii. 3.) Is he the *wine of the kingdom?* He cheers the faint, and makes the poor weakling strong, and causes him to sing, "Thy love is greater than wine." He is the wine that cheers the heart of God and man. Here is milk for babes who are too weak to live upon strong meat, and strong meat for young men and fathers. Is Christ a *fountain* opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and uncleanness? How precious to the sinner who feels himself nothing but wounds, bruises, and putrefying sores; who is brought to know that though he wash himself with nitre and much soap, yet his iniquity is marked before the Lord. This fountain just suits his case, for it cleanses from all sin. his case, for it cleanses fro mall sin. "Then washed I thee with water, yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood," or, as it is in the margin, thy *bloods* "from thee, and I anointed thee with oil." (Ezek. xvi. 9.) Thus their sins are washed away, or blotted out; the oil of joy is given for the spirit of heaviness, and heaven begins below. Is the poor sinner *naked,* and has he laboured long to weave a garment of his own, but, alas! his nakedness still appears? Jesus just suits him; for he is the clothing of wrought gold in which the King's daughter appears. (Ps. xlv. 13.) When clad with this, how thankful will the soul sing, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." (Isa. lxi. 10.) Thus is her shame hid, and the King himself greatly desires her beauty, for he is her Lord. (Ps. xlv. 11.) Is the poor sinner by nature *blind?* Yes, for all the church were once darkness, but such who are chosen of God, and called, are now light in the Lord, and not in themselves. The Lord calls upon the poor, dark, benighted soul to arise, and shine. The poor wretch is ready to say, "What, *I* shine! such a vile, dark, miserable monster as I!" Yes, *thee.* "Arise and shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee; for, behold! darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people, but the Lord shall arise upon *thee,* and his glory shall be seen upon *thee.*" (Isa. lx. 1, 2.) Thus Christ is their *light,* and their salvation too; he is the bright, and the morning star; yea, he is the Sun of righteousness, the very fountain of light; he is the true light that lighteth every child of God, nor have they any light but him. Is the Christian called a *soldier?* and is he to endure hard ness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ? are his enemies great and many? Yes, for they are threefold, namely, internal, and external; lust, pride, unbelief, anger, wrath, discontent, rebellion and a thousand things beside rise up within, and threaten his destruction. He also has to wrestle against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. (Eph. vi. 12.) The profane and the professing part of the world, with the deceitfulness of the world's smiles, and terrific nature of its frowns, will also join hand and heart, with sin and Satan, to oppose the child of God; yet, after all, it is he that overcometh, and no other, who is to sit down with Christ on his throne as he hath overcome and sits down with his Father on his throne. (Rev. iii. 21.)

Inv. But where is there a man who is sufficient for these things? Samson himself, who was the strongest man that ever lived, save the man Jesus, once gave

way, and cringed to one of the weakest of them; and if so, how ran such a poor weak worm as I overcome foes so dreadful and terrific in their nature as the prince of the power of the air, and the god of this world, with all his infernal crew, and those worst of all devils that dwell within? I have sometimes thought that if Satan had ransacked the bottomless pit, and infused the very dregs of hell into my carnal heart, it could not contain a worse nest of vipers than it does. I often stand confounded like a man almost distracted, and am compelled to pray, "Let not the water-floods overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me;" (Ps. lxix. 15;) and it is nothing less than a miracle of mercy that I still stand.

Love-Truth. Jehovah told poor worm Jacob that he would make him a new sharp threshing instrument, having teeth; and that he should thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and make the hills as chaff. (Isa. xli. 15.) While God is the strength of his people, a worm is more than a match for hell itself. And here the suitability of Christ appears once again, for he is his people's *shield,* wherewith they are able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. He is their *hiding place, high tower,* and *strong hold,* into which they run and are safe. Their *breast-plate, helmet, girdle, staff,* and *sure defence;* yea, he is the *captain* of their salvation, that fights their battles for them, and leads them forth to conquest and a crown; nor does he ever quit the field; for though sometimes, through the smoke of the enemy, we are not able to see him, he is always there, to be a very present help in time of trouble; yea, "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved, God shall help her, and that right early." (Ps. xlvi. 5.) The weakest believer in the camp shall be more than conqueror, but it is through him who hath loved him. With that courage may a child of God fight, seeing he is sure of victory, and shall in the end say, "O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength;" (Judges v. 21;) yea, the strength of the world, sin, flesh, and the devil; by and by he shall see them all lie as dead men, and though the conflict may be sharp it is but for a moment. It is our privilege to be strong, not in ourselves, but in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; and when, through the power of sin and Satan, we are so confused as to be at a loss to know what to do, then is the time to stand still, and see the salvation of God; or, like sinking Peter, cry, "Lord, save me, or I perish." "And it shall come to pass, whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be delivered; for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call." (Joel ii. 32.) Thus you see that deliverance is sure, but no thanks to us; all the glory belongs to the Lord.

Inv. I believe it in my very soul, yet I find something within that wants a part of the praise, which often makes me cry, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" yet I hope I can say, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God: but with the flesh the law of sin." (Rom. vii. 24, 25.)

Love-Truth. So then, you are one of those mystical beings who are in possession of two I's, one I that serves the Lord, and another that serves the law of sin. This is what the religious world calls *enthusiasm,* and little less than madness.

Inv. If it is enthusiasm, Paul was a famous enthusiast; and that you will see if you read the seventh to the Romans; and in another place he says, "For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God; I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal. ii. 19, 20.) Now if this is one and the same *I,* it requires a wiser man than *Fletcher* himself to prove Paul anything less than a madman; but I believe them to be the words of truth and soberness. Paul had

the company of two armies within him, the old man and the new; and the *I* in the old man hates God and truth, but the *I* in the new man loves God and the things of God; and every believer under heaven will find the same things, more or less.

Love-Truth. I exactly agree with you, and it appears that Paul's life was nothing less than Christ living in him. It is well for us that Christ is the church's life, for because he lives, they shall live also. For "ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God;" therefore it must be safe; for neither sin nor Satan shall be permitted to enter heaven, much less to search the heart of Jehovah, and destroy that life which is hid in him. Omnipotence must become as weak as a worm, Omniscience cease to behold the things that are in heaven and earth, and Omnipresence be shut up in a corner, before the sheep of Christ can be deprived of their life; for he gives unto them eternal life; and if it be eternal, it can never die. "But when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory;" (Col. iii. 4;) and "he that liveth and believeth in him shall never die." (John xi. 26.) He is gone to prepare a place for them, and as sure as he is gone he will come again, and fetch them to himself, that where he is, there they may be also. (John xiv. 2, 3.)

Inv. No doubht this was the reason the sweet singer in Israel, in such holy rapture, sings, "The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?" (Ps. xxvii. 1.)

Love-Truth. Yes, David could sing as sweet a song as most men, when, by a precious faith, he could look beyond himself to Christ his living Head. In the strength of his God he could leap over walls, and run through troops; but let him try his own strength, and trust to his own life, and the very sight of Bathsheba is more than a match for him. If the Christian must live, it must be by faith in Christ; and just in proportion as he loses sight of Christ as his life, so he will live unto self, and not unto the Lord. Is Christ the great *Highpriest* of Zion's profession? He bears all their names upon the breast-plate of his heart; yea, they are sealed upon his heart, and he bears them all upon his shoulder, for the whole government is upon his shoulder. He has also offered up himself a sacrifice for sin, made an end of sin, finished transgression, and by one offering for ever perfected them that are sanctified, or set apart in the eternal purpose of the Father. "But Christ being come a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made wtih hands that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his *own* blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." (Heb. ix. 11, 12.) How divinely suited to the poor sinner who is made to know and feel that he cannot redeem his own soul, is this precious High Priest! for the redemption he has obtained, without the aid of the sinner, is an eternal redemption. He gave up the ghost, and said, "It is finished," and is now gone to heaven with the trophies of victory upon his heart; "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for *us*." What a ground of consolation is this to a soul sensible of its guilt! Does the believer feel his sins rise up as foul as hell? Christ is entered into heaven *now* to appear for him. However dark, bewildered, and wretched he is in himself, the consideration of Christ being *now* in heaven for him is sweeter than honey, or the honey-comb, when the Holy Ghost makes it manifest to the mind. Yes, then will Jesus appear precious indeed as his High Priest, who ever liveth to make intercession for him. When Job's complaint was bitter and his stroke heavier than his groanings, he knew from experience that if he could but find him, and come even to his mercy-seat, he should be enabled to order his cause before him, and fill his mouth with arguments; he

was sure that he would not plead against him with his great power, but would put strength into him. (Job xxiii.1—6.)

Inv. Job knew the worth of Christ, and very sensibly felt the need of him; not only then, but when unbelief said, "Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both." (ix. 33.) A just and holy God, and an unholy sinner, can never meet but in Christ; and if he be out of sight, what is it that unbelief will not say? and what is it that faith cannot do with Christ in view? Paul could do all things, but it was through Christ that strengthened him. (Phil. iv. 13.)

Love-Truth. Yes, Christ is both need ful and precious as a *Daysman,* for none will be able to stand, but such who stand in him. Nor is he less needful as a *Physician,* for all the physicians in the world can never cure that worst of all plagues, *sin.* It rages through every power of body and soul, has killed its thousands, who have been at great pains and cost to obtain a cure, and vainly supposed they had obtained their end; but it is a disorder that is as full of flattery as hell itself. It renders men quite insensible, till they flatter themselves that they are strong and healthy, when they are at the very door of eternal death. Such is man, that he will never apply to Christ till all other hopes fail him; but when, through the good Spirit of God, he is enabled to come unto Jesus, and commit his case into his hands, a cure is as certain as the existence of Jehovah, let the case be as dreadful as it may. One thing that renders him precious to a sin-sick soul is, that he cures without money, price, worth, or worthiness. The beggar and the king, who are led by the Spirit of God, have equal access unto him. Is he the *Way?* He leads to the Father and immortal bliss. This way is paved with love, nor can any that travel therein finally perish. He is a God-glorifying, sinner saving, flesh-mortifying, world-overcoming, sin and Satan-defying, soul-refreshing, divinely pleasant, sure and safe way; nor is there any other but what leads to death and destruction. Happy, thrice happy is that man who walks therein; for "the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err." (Isa. xxxv. 8.) When they turn to the right hand or to the left, they shall hear a voice behind them, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." He is a *Friend* that sticketh closer than a brother, nor shall things present, nor things to come, be able to separate from his love. In *six* troubles he will be with his people, and in *seven* he will not forsake them, but will be their God and their guide even unto death, and their exceeding great reward beyond the grave.

Inv. Surely there is no God like this God! He first makes sinners sensible of their danger, then he delivereth them, and blesseth them with those blessings they need, watches over them for good, keeps them through evil and good report, holds them up lest they should fall, and makes them faithful unto death; and though the work from first to last is all of grace, and not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy, yet in the end he gives them a glorious reward of grace, and welcomes them to immortal bliss, with a "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Love-Truth. Yes, so it is; and while in this vale of tears, he supplies their every need. Are they called sheep? He is the good *Shepherd* that lays down his life for his sheep; and though they may have been scattered in the dark and cloudy day, he has promised to search them out; as it is written, "As a shepherd seeketh out his flock, in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day." (Ezek. xxxiv. 12.) He leads them into pastures fresh and green, feeds and folds them, lifts them up when down, cures them of all their diseases, preserves them from savage beasts of prey, and causes them to rest at noon; which makes the church to say, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou

feedest, where thou maketh thy flock to rest at noon; for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?" (Cant. i. 7.) He appeared exceedingly precious to the psalmist in this character; for, under the sweet influence of the Spirit, we hear him sing, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want; he maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters; he restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his *name's sake*. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." (Ps. xxiii. 1, 4.) Nor is he less precious to his sheep to this day; they feel the need of him; and when by faith they can behold him as *their* Shepherd, enjoy a sense of his everlasting love, and feed in green pastures, they can cheerfully join David in his sweet song, and call upon every power of the soul to bless the Lord their Shepherd, who doeth great things for them, whereof they are glad.

(To Be Concluded Next Issue)

NOTICE OF MEETING

Dear Editors:

The *Signs of the Times* is a highly valued publication, as it serves God's little ones in their sharing of their hope in Christ, and their experiences, with each other. Your publication of the following notice for the benefit of lovers of the truth would be greatly appreciated:

The annual three day meeting of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, Lord willing, will be on October 29-31, 1976, beginning at 7:30 p.m. Friday, October 29, and continuing through Sunday noon on the 31st. Singing is scheduled to begin at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church is located at 2710 Engle Street in the Oak Cliff section of Dallas. Engle Street is a short distance south of Illinois Avenue and parallel to it; the meeting house is about three blocks west of Hampton Road.

Our regular meeting times are 10:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. each Sunday. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us during our annual three day meeting, or any other time the Lord in His kind providence so blesses.

Elder C. C. Morris, Pastor
Deacon Dean G. Connell, Clerk

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the *Contentnea Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, with Muddy Creek Church, Daplin County, N. C. the fifth Sunday in August and Saturday before, 1976.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Contentnea Association* is to be held, the Lord willing, with Stump Sound Church, Onslow County, North Carolina, to begin Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1976.

The Friday session will be held at the church which is one-quarter mile east of Holly Ridge, N. C. just off 17 highway. The Saturday and Sunday meetings will be held in the Dixon School on highway 17 between Jacksonville and Holly Ridge.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The *Smith River Primitive Baptist Association* is to convene with Salem Church, located in Floyd County, Virginia, on Highway 221, near Check, Virginia, beginning on Friday before the 1st Sunday in September, 1976, the Lord willing.

At the three day session we look forward to meeting with the saints.

Amos Hash, Assn. Clerk

SALISBURY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Salisbury Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, on Wednesday and Thursday, October 20 and 21, 1976, at the Salisbury Church House, located on U.S. 50 where it intersects Route 13, Salisbury, Maryland, at 10 a.m. on Wednesday.

We shall cordially welcome any and all ministers, brethren and friends who love the truth as revealed in our Blessed Redeemer, and set forth in His written word.

Anyone seeking information of any kind call either Elder James Poole, Tel. No. 742-6406, or Deacon William Adkins, Tel. No. 742-2198, Area Code 301, or Deacon Billy Davis, Tel. No. 824-3137, Area Code 804.

Mildred V. Dykes, Clerk
Salisbury Church.

PLEASE NOTE

WE ARE HAVING A GOOD RESPONSE TO OUR APPEAL FOR OUR SUBSCRIBERS TO HELP IN INCREASING OUR SUBSCRIPTION LIST. HAVE YOU SENT A SUBSCRIPTION FOR A FRIEND, RELATIVE, OR SOMEONE YOU THINK WOULD BE INTERESTED IN READING THE SIGNS? PLEASE HELP IN THIS REQUEST. — EDITORS

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP DISTRIBUTE THE SIGNS

(To July 1, 1976)

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SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Seven Mile Association* is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with Reedy Prong Church, Johnston County, N. C., September 17, 18, 19, 1976.

We invite the elders, brethren, sisters and friends of like faith to join us in this meeting.

Reedy Prong Church is located 12 miles southeast of Benson, N. C., on State Road No. 1124, between 50 and 55 Highways.

Eld. W. D. Godwin, Mod.
James Young, Clerk

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The One Hundredth Annual Session of the Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the church at Mill Branch, Nash County, N. C. the fourth Sunday in October, and Friday and Saturday before. (October 22, 23, 24) Please note that the meeting on Friday will be held in the Mill Branch Meeting House, and on Saturday and Sunday the meetings will be held in the West Edgecomb School Building.

The Mill Branch Meeting House is located about half way between Sharpsburg and Jack's Grocery on 97 Highway. Those coming from the north on 301 Highway turn right at the stop light in Sharpsburg; and from the south turn left. Those coming from the north on 97 Highway turn left at Jack's Grocery, and from the south turn right. Jack's Grocery is five miles south of Rocky Mount, N. C.

The West Edgecomb School Building is on Highway 43 about ten miles south of Rocky Mount, N. C.

We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

W. E. Turner, Clerk

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1 Am I a soldier of the cross,
A follower of the Lamb?
And shall I fear to own his cause,
Or blush to speak his name?

2 Must I be carried to the skies,
On flowery beds of ease;
While others fought to win the prize,
And sail'd through bloody seas?

3 Are there no foes for me to face?
Must I not stem the flood?
Is this vile world a friend to grace,
To help me on to God?

4 Sure I must fight, if I would reign;
Increase my courage, Lord!
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain
Supported by thy word.

5 Thy saints, in all this glorious war,
Shall conquer though they die:
They see the triumph from afar,
And seize it with their eye.

6 When that illustrious day shall rise,
And all thy armies shine
In robes of victory through the skies,
The glory shall be thine.

— Watts

Danville, Virginia September, 1976

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

Due to the sharp increase of $325.00 per month in the cost of printing the *Signs of the Times,* and other increases, we find it necessary to increase the subscription price of the *Signs* from $4.00 per year to $5.00 per year, or two years $9.00.

It is expected that this increase, together with the Contributions to Help Distribute the *Signs,* renewals, and new subscriptions, will enable us to meet the rising costs.

The usual co-operation of the brethren and friends is appreciated.

EDITORS

EDITORIAL

TITHES

"Bring ye all the TITHES into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." (Mal. 3:10)

The entire prophecy of Malachi, written in approximately 400 B.C., closes the Old Testament with a vivid description of the apostasy of the people of Israel, a stinging reproof of their infidelity, the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the promise of His blessing and the punishment of the wicked. His writings fervently admonish the chosen nation to repent and honour God, to love Him, to cease from offering Him polluted bread, to refrain from wearying Him with many words and to bring all their *tithes* into the storehouse. But the influence of the Scripture does not exhaust itself in the particular age to to which it is addressed for as Paul instructed the Romans, "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." (Rom. 15:4) How especially true this is of the writings of Malachi, for in them, the Lord, himself, is speaking through the mouth of the prophet, directly to the nation Israel which is but a type of spiritual Israel in every age. Whenever God, therefore, enunciates in the hearts of His people, "Bring ye all the *tithes* into the storehouse," it is not merely an exhortation, but a command arresting them in love for Christ is born in them the hope of glory. The words of Malachi, then, are as current to-day as they were during the period in which they were penned even though it was during the old dispensation.

Under Mosaic law, to tithe of one's substance meant to give one-tenth either of all one possessed or of his yearly increase. This is clearly seen from such

scriptures as Genesis 28:22, Leviticus 27:32 and Numbers 18:26. No doubt, in many instances, this placed a grievous burden upon the Jewish people in Old Testament times. It is interesting to note, however, that the Egyptians bore an even greater burden under Pharoah who decreed that they must give no less than the fifth part of their yearly increase unto him, keeping the remaining four parts for seed, for food, for their households and for their little ones. (Gen. 47:24) In fact most nations during the period exacted the separation of a certain proportion of the products of their citizen's industry or of the spoils of war as tribute to their gods or to the nation itself as witness the Lydians, the Phoenicians and the Carthaginians. In this article nevertheless, we shall consider a "tithe" to mean one-tenth for we are concerned with the way it is identified in the scripture.

The Old Testament is no less exact in identifying the substances which were to be tithed as note "the increase of thy *seed*" and "the tithe of thy *corn*, of thy *wine*, and of thine *oil*, and the *firstlings* of thy herds and of thy flocks" in Deut. 14:22,23. One-tenth of all these possessions was to be taken to their place of worship and if their place of worship was too far away to enable them to do this, they were to exchange the substances for money and take it instead bound in their hand. When the people reached ther place of worship, they were to eat of this substance before the Lord or of others, as their money might afford and rejoice with all their household. (Deut. 14:23-26)

As we have already seen, one of the uses or purposes of the tithes being brought to the meeting place or the sanctuary was in order that the people might eat of the same before the Lord and rejoice in the abundance He had given them. In fact the people were forbidden to partake of these tithes of corn, wine, oil, or the firstlings of the flock at home. They must be eaten in the place where the Lord had chosen to place His name there. (Deut. 14:23) In times of religious declension, the people often neglected to pay their tithes regularly. Hezekiah found it necessary to call authoritatively for their payment as Malachi, in his day, rebuked the people for robbing God by withholding their tithes and offerings. The response to Hezekiah's appeal was so overwhelming that chambers had to be built in the house of the Lord to accomodate the tithes. (2 Chron. 31:11,12) The second temple was likewise provided with storehouses and the Levites, as the priestly tribe, were charged with superintending the gathering of the tithes into the same. Thus one use of the tithes was for the feasts and sacrifices at the temple.

In addition, all the tithes of Israel which they offered as a heave offering were given to the Levites. This portion was allotted to them in return for the service they rendered as priests in the sanctuary and for the fact they received no inheritance or appointment of land as did each of the other tribes when they entered Canaan. The Levites, unlike the others were scattered among the rest of the people of Israel. To provide for their natural needs, they were to be given the heave offering which was a tenth part of the tithe and because they received no inheritance in the land, God said unto them, "I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel." (Num. 18:20)

A further use of the tithe occurred every third year when one-tenth of each man's increase was to be laid up within his gates (or in his town) whereupon the stranger, the fatherless, the widow and the Levite (because he had no inheritance) might come and eat and be satisfied. These tithes were to be given in order that the Lord their God might bless the people of Israel in all the work of their hands. (Deut. 14:28,29)

The earliest example of tithing in the scripture is in Gen. 14:20 when Abram returned from his victory over Chedorlaomer and the confederate kings that had captured Lot, his brother's son, to give Melchizedek king of Salem and priest of the most high God tithes of all

the spoils obtained in battle. Jacob followed the example of his grandfather at Bethel by vowing to the Lord one-tenth of all he might acquire in Mesapotamia. Finally, the practice of tithing was ordained in the law by Moses under the command of God and included the seed of the land, the fruit of the tree and the tenth of the flock as it passed under the rod whether it be good or bad. The tithe of grain and fruit need not be paid in kind. The owner might redeem it by purchasing it at one-fifth more than its market value, but the tithe of the herd and the flock could not be redeemed nor was it to be changed and if changed both it and the change were to be regarded as holy. "These are the commandments, which the Lord commanded Moses for the children of Israel in Mount Sinai." (Leviticus 27:34)

To tithe, then, as related in the Old Testament, meant for people to bring of their abundance as the Lord had blessed them and to set it before God and worship Him. When they entered the promised land they were to exclaim, "And the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstreached arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders: And He hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, even a land that floweth with milk and honey. And now, behold, I have brought the first fruits of the land, which thou, O Lord, hast given me." (Deut. 26:8-10)

But tithing in the Old Testament also provides clear types and shadows of even better things as we are given to see them in the New or Gospel Dispensation. The storehouses represent the various meeting places wherein the Household of Faith gather from time to time. To these places, dear child of God, you are commanded to bring of the *corn* or of the word of God, as it has been revealed unto you in your experience, as you have been drawn to love it, and, in measure, as God has given the increase, for out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh good things. Bring also of the *oil* and the *wine* or of grace and truth as you have been given. Oil represents the indwelling of the Holy Spirit which is freely given and culminates in amazing grace. Wine typifies the truth as it is revealed in Christ Jesus for the law came by Moses but grace and truth by Jesus Christ. We know the Good Samaritan (Christ) poured into the wounds of the one who was left half-dead, both oil and wine, as He has done to each of you, His precious jewels. And as each of you has been given, you are to return a tithe of these precious gifts as evidence that the Lord has made His abode with you. You may feel to have nothing to bring, but upon more careful contemplation, you have much to bring. You have a little hope and a little faith just as the widow who threw in the two mites, you have a little righteousness (i.e. His righteousness) and a little peace, you have a little mercy and a little truth, and if you have a little of these precious gifts, you have enough, for the oil will never fail nor the meal diminish until He comes the second time. Yes, you have much to bring that "there may be meat in mine house," saith the Lord God. And what good "meat" it is when you speak one with the other of His Grace and of His Truth and renew your strength by feeding upon His Word. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse and keep bringing them that the widow, the fatherless and the stranger may eat and be satisfied and that the Levite or servant of God might be encouraged on his way.

Two verses should be quoted at this juncture from the New Testament which further clarify the significance of tithing as it is ordained in the Old and provide the key for us to see the true meaning of the term as established by Christ in the Gospel Dispensation. The first is recorded in Matthew 23:23 and reads as follows, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin and have omitted the weightier matters of the *law, judgment, mercy,* and *faith:* these ought ye to have done, and not to leave

the others undone." The second is found in Luke 11:42 and please note how parallel in structure and content it is to the first. "But woe unto you, Pharasees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over *judgment* and the *love of God:* these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." In both verses, Christ acknowledged the principle of giving of material things, but scourged the Phariseees because they had failed in bringing the weightier matters of the law, or love of God, judgment, mercy and faith. In this, he left a beautiful example of the real meaning of tithing in so far as Gospel order is concerned.

Let us examine these two verses somewhat more carefully. First, Christ clearly places the emphasis on the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith. Tithes of these are definitely to be brought into the storehouse. Second, Matthew identifies the law and judgment first, also including mercy and faith, while Luke includes only judgment and the love of God. The law mentioned here, I believe, refers to the great commandment under the law which is the love of God and the love of thy neighbor as thyself. Now, if we fuse the two lists, it becomes the law or love of God, judgment, mercy and faith with the emphasis falling on the first two mentioned. Third, I do not believe, for one moment, that Christ, in admonishing the Pharasees "not to leave the other undone" i.e. the giving of mint, rue, anise and cummin was establishing the practice of the literal tithing of all material things, for salvation is far beyond the law of a carnal commandment and mint, rue, anise and cummin were all herbs scarcely included under the law of tithing. Nevertheless, I do feel it is exemplary for those who have been taught of Him to give toward the cause of truth as they are able. In particular, the people of God should not forsake the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is, should give as they are able; to maintain, refurbish or erect such meeting places as will be comfortable and decent, should help the poor, the fatherless, the widow, the stranger and the Levite or servant of God as they can. But these are secondary matters in so far as the real issue of tithing is concerned. The real issue is the matter of bringing something of His love, something of the judgment we have undergone, something of His mercy and something of the faith He has given us to carry on. These things we know, we cannot do of ourselves, but we do know that Lydia, whose heart the Lord opened, attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul, was baptized, and entertained in her household, those of like precious faith.

How can we tithe of the love of God? When the lawyer among the Pharasees stood up and asked Christ. "Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." (Mat. 22:36-40) This love is the law that God promised, through Jeremiah, that He would write in the hearts of His people and when He does imprint it in your minds, dear children of God, it wells up to overflowing. We know it is shed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto you, for we know that love is one of the fruits of the Spirit. We know that it is an everlasting love, that it passeth knowledge and the love of women, and that many waters cannot quench it.

To tithe of this wonderful love of God is to let brotherly love continue, to love without pretense or dissimulation, to love not only with our mouths, but with our walk and deed, to refrain from offending our brother, to love our enemies, but what is more to actually *provoke* one another to love for this is love that we walk after his commandments. Furthermore we are commanded to love our neighbor as ourself; and who is our

neighbor? Who was neighbour to the certain man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves? It was the One who shewed mercy unto him, even the Samaritan or Christ. And when we love Christ as Our Neighbor we are bringing some of the tithes given by Our Father into the storehouse. Often this heart of mine is so cold it seems to have no feeling, but there are moments, there are periods, there are seasons, when all my being, my heart, my mind, my soul and my strength praise Him in His glory and fill to overflowing only to exclaim with tears of joy, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." (1 John 3:1) What is impossible with man is possible with God!

How do we tithe of His judgment? We know that "it is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment." (Hebrews 9:27) And we know that the people of God receive their judgment here in this life for they are condemned by the righteous law of God, and plead for mercy at His throne of grace. They know that save for the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ for them, they would some day be cast into outer darkness and receive the pangs of hell. However, they also have it revealed to them that Christ stood in their stead on Calvary and because of His sacrifice "There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Rom. 8:1) Therefore, dear child of God, having come through these fiery trials, you know something of the terror of God, something of His wrath, something of His justice, something of His sovereignty and yet something of His compassion through His unspeakable gift Christ Jesus. A knowledge and understanding of this judgment, you bring into the Household of Faith. May God be praised!

In addition, there is another way in which you tithe of judgment. Solomon, in all his splendour, asked above all the riches of the earth, "understanding to discern judgment." (1 Kings 3:11) He wished for a discerning ear. If you have been given a hope in grace, you have been given an ear circumcised by faith, an ear tuned to the clear ring of the Gospel wherein you are able to detect the slightest note which is off-key, the slightest discord. And this judgment is God given. It spurns within you the desire to glean in no other field than the field of Boaz. It causes you to be watching for the tares which grow among the wheat. It enables you to discern truth from error. Paul is comforting in his epistle to the Corinthians when he says, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Cor. 1:10) Boaz gave Ruth six measures of barley that she might not go empty handed to her mother-in-law Naomi. These measures of barley are identified in the nineteenth Psalm and read as follows: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." No, my precious ones, God does not bring you empty handed, for He gives you an understanding heart, a discerning ear, a single eye and a keen knowledge of your own depravity. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse!

How do we tithe of His mercy? We know that the Lord is long suffering and of great mercy; we know that His mercy endureth forever and is upon them that fear Him. We know that the Lord was with Joseph, and showed him mercy as well as Job, and David and Peter and Paul. In fact, we know that He will have mercy upon whom He will have mercy and compassion upon whom He will have compassion. But, if we have a hope, we cry as Ruth did, "Why

have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?" (Ruth 2:10) When we are brought to a knowledge of ourselves, and see how vile we are and how just God would be in casting us into outer darkness only to find that the clouds are filled with mercy; it is then that we rejoice with David when he said, "But I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou hast been my defense and refuge in the day of my trouble. Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing: for God is my defence, and the God of my mercy." (Ps. 59:16-17) When we sing as David did, then we are tithing of His mercy!

How do we tithe of His faith? Faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. Faith moved so many in the scripture and gave them strength that it enabled Abel to offer a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, Enoch to be translated to not see death, Noah to build an ark, Abraham to not stagger at the promise, Rahab to receive the spies with peace and the children of Israel to pass through the Red Sea dry-shod. Faith, dear reader, has also enabled you to pass through the valley of Baca (tears), enabled you to endure bereavement, and prospered you in the way of truth. But faith is a gift of God and it is God that giveth the increase. When He gives you faith sufficient for the task, however, and enables you to say with confidence

> Trust in the Lord, for ever trust,
> and banish all your fears;
> Strength in the Lord Jehovah dwells
> eternal as his years.

Then you are bringing the tithes of faith He has given you into the storehouse.

But the significance of tithing, according to the scripture, goes beyond even this. We note that according to the law of Moses the people were to tithe not only of the corn, and the oil and the wine, but of the firstlings of the flock. We know also that Christ was the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world, as the firstlings of the flock, and upon entering into His glory became the first-fruits of them that slept. In this He brought tithes into The Storehouse on behalf of all His people. But let us go further. Christ was made a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. Now the Levites or priests after the order of Aaron, not only received tithes of the people, as we have noted already, but also paid tithes to Melchizedek because they were in the loins of Abraham when he tithed to the high priest from the spoils of battle. In like manner, the elect according to grace, who are made kings and *priests* unto God, through the cleansing of His blood, pay tithes to Christ of their love, and judgment, and mercy and faith, but receive tithes of Him in death as they obtain from Him a crown of life even life everlasting. Christ is the one among the ten lepers who came under the law, fulfilled it to a jot and tittle and returned to give thanks. As He carried His people in His own body on the tree and thereby secured for them a place in Heaven, we can hear Him say, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." (Mat. 11:25)

This unfeeling heart of mine seems so cold much of the time that in trying to describe something of the love of God, something of His judgment, something of His mercy, and something of His faith I can find no words adequate to embrace or grasp the wonder of it all. I cannot even bring the smallest evidence of His greatness into the storehouse as I ought. But how comforting it is to realize that even in tithing, Christ has paid and continues to pay the full price on our behalf as He makes intercession for us at the throne of grace. This gives us no excuse, however, for failing to give Him all the honour and the glory and the praise. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing,

that there shall not be room enough to receive it." (Mal. 3:10)

In bonds of love,
Stewart McColl.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

1 TIMOTHY II. 4-7

"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity."

Our sister, Mrs. John T. Neely, of Charleston, Miss., writes us asking that we give such views as we have upon the above words. She says she is a firm believer in salvation by grace, but feels puzzled somewhat by the above language. No doubt the trouble with our sister, and also with many others, is found in the expression, "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth," and in the words, "Who gave himself a ransom for all." We trust that there is no desire in our heart to take away from any portion of the word of God the meaning that belongs to it, or to turn aside from the design of the Holy Ghost in the language used. We have always desired to give to each portion of the word its full intention and meaning, whether we could reconcile that portion of the word with other portions or not. It has never seemed necessary with us to be able to point out all the harmony that really is in the word, but it has seemed essential to us that we do not pervert the language which may be under consideration, and we do believe with all our heart that there is perfect harmony between all portions of the Bible in the infinite wisdom of God, though to us all may seem contradictory and irreconcilable with itself.

In the second place, let us remember that all the Scriptures are not the words of fallible men, who may err or be mistaken, but they are the word of God, and are plain statements of absolute truth, every one of them. Our God cannot lie, and he cannot be mistaken; he does not lack in knowledge, either of the past, present or future; all things are naked and open to him, so that there is not a thought in the minds of men of which he is uninformed, and there never can be a thought in their hearts which is not known to him now as distinctly as it will be when it shall be formed there. Men do not know what will be their thought one moment in the future, but God knows all men, and all their thoughts, past, present and to come, and as he knows their thoughts so also he knows all their words and deeds, not with successive knowledge, as we come to know what before we have not known, but from the eternity that is past to the eternity that is to come.

Let us then come to the consideration of the Scriptures with full belief that all is just as the Holy Ghost gave men to write. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God; there are no mistakes nor contradictions there; this is true, though to us there may seem to be many contradictions. They may appear to be so to us, but the fault really is that our eyes are blinded and our hearts dull of understanding. The sun still shines, though the earth sees it not, because of the mists and clouds which arise, not from the sun, but from its own surface.

In the third place, there are some statements made in the word of God regarding the salvation of men from sin, death and hell, and made there many times, which stand out clear, and when these things are said to be recorded there, nothing must be understood to in anywise contradict those statements. For instance, if there be any expressions in Holy Writ that seem contrary to the doctrine of salvation by grace, we must believe that this contradiction is only seeming, and not real. This we must do, and this we will do, unless we are ready

to accuse the word of God of teaching two opposite things as being both true. Far better will it be for us to confess our short-sightedness and want of understanding than to believe for a moment that the Scriptures contradict themselves. Still further, the doctrine of salvation by grace alone involves all other principles of doctrine relating to salvation. If salvation be by grace alone, then the predestination of the children of men, who shall be finally saved unto that salvation, must be true. This predestination to salvation would also include the doctrine of personal election, full and perfect atonement, effectual calling, final preservation to glory, with all that these glorious truths involve. If predestination, election, full atonement, effectual calling and final perseverance to glory be denied, one or all of them, then salvation by grace is denied, and then salvation would belong, not to the will of God, but to the will of man.

Fourth. The expressions in the text which we suppose are on the mind of our sister, and which seem to be a puzzle to her, are among those that upon the face of them seem to teach things contrary to the principles of doctrine that we have named. We say that this would appear that way upon the face of them, yet it is sure that they are not really so, unless we are ready to take the ground that the apostle was not inspired of God when he penned these sayings, and so may have been mistaken. But to say that the apostle wrote here what he was mistaken in thinking to be true, is to throw doubt over all that he wrote, and, in fact, over all that all holy men of old wrote. This we are persuaded no child of God will desire to do. If, for instance, the expression, "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth," must mean that it is the will of God that all men everywhere and in all ages shall be prepared for glory, and be saved in the future world, it follows surely either that universalism is true, or that the will of God is not finally accomplished. But those who know the Lord know that all his will is done in heaven and in earth, and that nothing has any power to say, Why or what doest thou? and that what His soul desireth that he doeth. On the other hand, if universalism be true, and all men shall be finally saved, then election is denied, and other truths taught in the word, such as that some shall go away into everlasing punishment. The same things in substance may be said of the expression in verse six: "Who gave himself a ransom for all." If indeed the meaning of the apostle were that Jesus Christ gave himself a ransom for all individuals of the human race, then either the whole human race are redeemed unto God, or else the dear Redeemer will not see the travail of his soul and be satisfied. To be satisfied he must receive in the end the full purchase of his blood, which was the price of ransom. But this is universalism, and, as said before, universalism is a denial of election, and of the future punishment of the unredeemed.

Fifth. We have called attention, first, to the negative, or to what these expressions cannot mean, in order to clear the field of obstacles; now we desire to call attention to what the whole connection presents, for a little time. First, we will say we do not understand that the apostle was here speaking of final salvation through the atoning blood of Christ at all. A careful reading of the whole chapter will show that the general theme of the apostle relates to the present welfare of his brethren; we mean their welfare while they live below. God has called his people not only to partake of his eternal glory, but also to serve and honor him here. In this life there is, and always will be, a warfare, for many things fight against him all along his course; some of these things are within, and some without. His own fleshly lusts, the allurements of the world, the conditions which surround him, all may fight against the profession he has made. The church, considered as a whole, would find themselves affected by the powers over them in the governments of this world; quiet,

good order and wise ruling would be a benefit to them, while the opposite things would tend to disturb them and to furnish occasions for practices which would be dishonoring to God; therefore the apostle prays, or rather exhorts to prayer upon the part of all who love God, for all men, among whom he specially names rulers and all in authority, to the end that believers may live quiet and peaceable lives, which is good and also acceptable in the sight of God. No doubt believers would find it in their hearts to desire that all whom they had to do with should come to know the Lord in the salvation of their souls if it were the will of God for this to be, but still, here it seems evident that the substance of the supplication and intercession which he enjoins does not relate to this final salvation, but rather to the giving of that wisdom which should enable kings and all in authority to enact and enforce by suitable means just laws, which should tend to the welfare of believers and to the glory of God, and lower down in the chapter the apostle enjoins upon believers themselves that behavior which will show forth the reality of the profession of godliness which they had made. All this would tend to peace in the churches and is good to follow at all times.

In the sixth place, the apostle urges upon his brethren the one great truth that there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. It is thus presented to the churches that the God whom they adored was the only true and living God, and that they had access to this God through the one name, Jesus Christ, whom God had given as a ransom for them. Here was their encouragement to pray or intercede for that which they desired. This God was their God, who had already given boundless proof of his care for them, and interest in them, by the giving of his only begotten Son for them. It was his will that they should live quiet and peaceful lives in all godliness; this was good in his sight; this was the design of redemption through Christ, together with the attainment to final glory. Paul teaches that his brethren should pray for that which their heavenly Father had designed for them, and because he had put his Spirit in their hearts they would feel to pray for what his Spirit taught them. The whole design of the apostle here related to that which belonged to the travel of the children of God while on their earthly pilgrimage, it is the welfare of the churches that is had in view all through this chapter.

Seventh. From all the above considerations it is our conclusion that the expressions, "Who gave himself a ransom for all," and, "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth," relate solely to the elect of God in all nations and places, and his desire is not only their final glory, but that meanwhile, while on their pilgrimage, they may be so situated as not to be hindered in their course as disciples of the Lord. It cannot be remembered too often that many times in the New Testament the apostles found it necessary to remind their brethren that the gospel, with all that belongs to it, now is for the Gentiles as well as for the Jews. This the early disciples were slow to learn. Surely we do not need to present proof of this here and now. Let it be remembered that the people of God of Gentile nations who had been called out from the world, and given the Spirit of the world above, were still citizens of their respective countries and subject to the laws of those countries, therefore let them pray to God that he would take such charge of the hearts of infidel and ungodly rulers as to cause them to rule kindly and justly over their subjects who had come out and confessed themselves the followers of Christ. Persecutions might be expected, but such persecutions would be a hindrance to quiet and peaceable living; to secure this quiet life let them look to God; let them present their petitions to God and not to men. It was not enjoined upon them by the inspired writer here that they should

come before rulers, beseeching them to be considerate and just, for the welfare of the churches, but that they should leave their cause with God, who holds in his hands the hearts of all men, yea, even the hearts of kings. Living quietly and peaceably after this fashion believers would find salvation and a growth in the knowledge of the truth. To this knowledge Gentile believers should come as well as Jews, and what a blessed thing it is to know the truth which makes free. This the apostle desired for all his brethren, and to this end he gives these exhortations of his son in faith, Timothy.

(Editorial by Elder F. A. Chick, June 1, 1912)

CHRIST THE MEDIATOR

It pleased God in his eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, his only begotten Son, according to the covenant made between them both, to be the Mediator between God and man, the prophet, priest and king, head and saviour of the Church, the heir of all things, and Judge of the world. Unto whom from eternity he gave a people to be his seed, and to be by Him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified and glorified. (Isa. 42:1, Ephesians 1:22-23, Romans 8:30)

"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth," (Romans 8:23) Jesus being the Son of God, the brightness of the Father's glory, of one substance and equal with Him who made the earth by his power and established the world by his wisdom, and stretched out the heavens by his understanding. (Jer. 51:15) He upholds and governs all things he hath made, and did, when the fulness of time was come, take upon him man's nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities there of, yet without sin, being conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary, the Holy Spirit coming upon her, and the power of the most High overshadowing her, and so was made of a woman of the Tribe of Judah, of the seed of Abraham and David, according to the scriptures. So that two whole, perfect and distinct natures were inseparately joined together in one person, without conversion, composition or confusion — which person is very God and very Man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and man. (Rom. 8:3, John 1:14)

The Lord Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit in him in all wisdom and knowledge, in whom it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell, to the end that being holy, harmless, undefiled and full of Grace and Truth, he might be thoroughly furnished to execute the office of Mediator and Surety, which office he took not upon himself, but was thereunto called by his Father, who put all power and judgment in his hand, and gave him commandment to execute the same. (Matt. 28:18, John 5:22-27)

God from all eternity decreed to justify all the elect, and Christ in the fulness of time died for their sins and arose again for their justification. Nevertheless they are not justified personally until the Holy Spirit doth in due time actually apply Christ unto them. (1 Tim. 2:16, Rom. 3:25) The justification of believers under the Old Testament was in all these respects one and the same with the justification of believers under the New Testament. (Romans 4:22-25) All that are justified have access to the throne of grace, and are able to cry Abba Father,—never cast off but sealed to the day of redemption, and inherit the promises as heirs of everlasting salvation. (Rom. 8:15, Eph. 2:18)

So we walk by faith and not by sight. "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." And aren't we glad that we are blest to walk in the calling whereof we are called, as we hope, that everything has been done for us and not by us? We believe that God has a people in all nations, tongues and people, who will be housed in heaven one day. "For the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal. The Lord knoweth them that are his," and known unto God are all of his work from the beginning of the world, because He es-

tablished the world by His wisdom; and wisdom is justified of all her children.

Christ the Mediator is the head of the Church, in whom by the appointment of the Father, all power for the calling, institution of order or government of the Church is vested in a supreme and sovereign manner: neither can a man in any sense be the head thereof, for he would be that anti-christ that man of sin and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the temple against Christ, as it is written of him. Whom the Lord will destroy with the brightness of His coming, even him whose coming is after the working of Satan, etc.

As the Apostle Paul wrote in 2 Thes. 2:13 "We are bound to give thanks always to God for you brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the Truth. Christ the Mediator came to save sinners. If the law could have given life then Christ would never have needed to die. If a man can save himself, why does he need a saviour to die in his place? If a man can keep himself *Saved,* why does he need a High Priest to intercede daily for him at the right hand of God? But man has to depend on God for all things, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ. For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. (Gal. 2:16) "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Romans 5:1) "Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound, but where sin abounded, Grace did much more abound." (Romans 5:20)

Being turned from the law to Christ for Mercy, for Pardon and for Grace, I humbly say

"Not the labor of my hands
Can fulfill the laws demand;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone,
Thou must save, and thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling:
Naked come to thee for dress,
Helpless, look to thee for Grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly:
Wash me Saviour or I die."

"For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did: by the which we draw nigh unto God." (Heb. 7:19) "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." (Gal. 2:16) "For the law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ." (John 1:17) Man is without righteousness and is under the curse of the law. (Gal. 3:10) His condition is such that he cannot better himself, because he is without strength: he cannot work out his own salvation. (Rom. 7:18)

I will quote Jeremiah 17:9, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Who can know it?" "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may he also do good that is accustomed to do evil." (Jer. 13:23)

I believe that I see the workings of God in all things. May the God of all grace keep us all in love one with another, is my humble prayer.

Elder Hubert R. Prince,
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OBITUARIES

IN MEMORIAM

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, hold sacred the memory of our dear loved ones who have departed this land of the dying into the land of the living, where there will be no sins or sorrow, pain or separation.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we hope and believe that they will be among that great multitude which John saw that no man could number of all nations, kindreds, people and tongues which stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands and cried with a loud voice saying, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb."

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the

names of these deceased be listed under this memoriam.

Written by request of the church,
D. V. Spangler, Moderator
W. C. Vipperman, Clerk

Deacon W. N. Tilley, Nov. 14, 1975
Sister Daisy Minter, March 27, 1976
Bro. J. L. Cassell June 26, 1976.

BROTHER RILEY THOMAS FRALIN, SR.

God in His infinite wisdom saw fit to call from our midst one of our dearest members. Brother Fralin was born September 12, 1899 and passed from this life April 23, 1976, at the age of 76 years. He was the son of Daniel Tazewell Fralin and Martha Jane Hundley Fralin Reynolds, and was married to Pearl Evelyn Meador Jan. 6, 1940.

Brother Fralin is survived by his wife, and one son, Mr. R. Thomas Fralin, Jr., Grottoes, Va., one daughter, Miss Jane L. Fralin of the home, two granddaughters; three sisters, Mrs. Telitha F. Graham, Danville, Va., Mrs. Sarah F. Shearer, Canal Point, Florida, Mrs. Lucy F. Poage, Roanoke, Va., and a number of nieces and nephews.

Brother Fralin retired from the Norfolk & Western Railway, Roanoke's East end shops, August 29, 1969 with 47 years of service. He joined Belview Church April 15, 1945 and was baptized May 20, 1945; was chosen Trustee of the Church, and served faithfully and well, filling his seat at the meetings, doing his part to help as long as able to do.

Brother Fralin had strokes in 73; pneumonia in 74; surgery twice in 74; and again in 75, he was in and out of the hospital several times.

We feel that he had every thing that kind and loving hands could give, his wife and children with their untiring efforts did every thing they could, it seems.

Brother Fralin loved his church and his brethren, he loved to have them come to see him, he was sound in the Faith of Salvation by grace, and grace alone. He had requested that the 8th Chap. of Rom. and also Eccl. 3, be read at his funeral, the family tried to carry it out the way he wanted it as near as they could.

It was a real pleasure to visit with him, he would always want prayer and reading of the Scriptures. As we bow to the will of the Lord, it is our prayer that the Lord will comfort the bereaved wife and children, also the Church at Laurel Ridge, knowing that all of us have felt a great loss, but we feel our loss is his eternal gain.

We believe he is sweetly sleeping in the arms of Jesus, waiting the second coming of the Lord, the one he loved and worshipped, to raise his sleeping dust and fashion it like his own Glorious Body, to be like him and satisfied, because one said when I awake with Thy likeness I shall be satisfied. Sleep on dear Brother Fralin and take your rest, our eyes are filled with tears as we write this, because we know we are going to miss you, but we shall soon join you where there will be no more death, and no more sorrow, but in a new Heaven.

His funeral was conducted at Oakeys Roanoke Chapel, by his pastor the writer assisted by Mr. Allen Pugh, was laid to rest in the Franklin Memorial Park beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, as a host of friends and relatives gathered around.

This poet we feel is fitting to this one.

"Let cares like a wild deluge come,
And storms of sorrow fall,
May I but safely reach my Home,
My God, My Heav'n, My all.

"There shall I bathe my weary soul,
In seas of Heav'nly rest,
And not a wave of trouble roll,
Across my peaceful breast."

RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to the family, one for the church record, one for *The Signs of the Times*, done by the order of Laurel Ridge Church, May 15th, 1976.

Written by his pastor by request.
Leonard J. Brammer

BEAUFORD W. EAST

God, at His appointed time, has called from our midst a dear friend, Mr. Beauford East, of Princess Anne, Maryland. He died on February 13, 1976.

He was born on March 17, 1920, in New Church, Virginia, to William Esley and Flora Farlowe East. On October 19, 1940, he was married to Esther Ward, the daughter of Harry and Eunice Ward of Snow Hill, Maryland. To this union was born one son, Michael Craig.

Beauford was truly a friend of the church and a believer in the sweet doctrine of God's Sovereign Grace and rule in all things. He was a farmer all his life and was often heard to remark that after he had done all he knew to do, he had to look to the Lord to give the increase. In his last days in the hospital and then at home he was given a peace and calmness that only God can give.

He was survived by his wife, son, mother, one sister, Agnes Letts, and 2 devoted grandsons, as well as all the friends and members of the Old School Baptist Churches on the Eastern Shore.

His funeral was conducted at the Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church, by the pastor, Elder James F. Poole, and his body was laid in the church cemetery.

May the Lord see fit to fill the void in the lives of all his family is our prayer.

Written by Sister
Peggy Poole

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 144 DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1976 NO. 10

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10/76
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ISAIAH 45:7

"I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things."

Notice the opposite extremes as light and darkness, peace and evil. We know the extreme between daytime and nighttime. "For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favor is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." (Psalms 30:5) In a spiritual sense, if God is blessing us with His manifest presence, we are dwelling in the light. If God has withdrawn His presence from us, then we dwell in darkness; and this is darkness that is felt within our souls and it is sorrowful! ". . . thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled." (Psalms 30:7)

"I make peace and create evil." Jesus made peace between divine justice and His bride. "And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." (Gal. 1:30)

Webster's Dictionary gives the following definition on the word EVIL: Having qualities tending to injury and mischief. 2. Having or exhibiting bad moral qualities; morally corrupt, wicked, as evil conduct, thoughts, words, etc. 3. Producing or threatening sorrow, distress, or *calamity* as evil days, an evil sign.

These definitions are given on the word *calamity*: A state of deep distress or misfortune, produced by some adverse circumstance or event—as misery. 2. Any great misfortune or cause of loss or misery.

God created the insects that destroy crops. We know that this is a calamity for one to lose his crops, garden, etc., by insects that eat them up. It is God who sends storms that cause great damage. God causes the earthquakes, hail, lightening, etc. Who do you think caused the damage to the sugar cane in Louiana this past fall? (1974) You may say it was the weather. Do you not believe that God controls the weather? Do you believe that God sends the rain, lightning, storms, etc.? "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places. He causeth the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasuries." (Psa. 135:6-7)

In a spiritual sense, we view this *evil* as a great distress over the sorrow of sin. One experiences a great calamity when he is under conviction. His days

are *evil*—or his days are full of sorrow, until the time comes when he experiences this sweet peace within his soul. ". . .few and evil have the days of the years of my life been." (Gen. 47:9) What causes one to be convicted? Do you believe that the Spirit of God does the work of convicting? I do not believe that man has any part in salvation. It is all of God!

The word evil is mentioned in the Bible a number of times. You will notice by the above definitions that the word evil does not mean the same every time. It is according to the usage of the word *evil in* the sentence, and the meaning of the statement.

We will quote a portion of Deut. 31: 29: ". . . and evil will befall you in the latter days." I believe this has reference to the deep distress and misfortune, and destruction, judgments, etc., that fell upon the Jews later on. In order to get the complete picture, please start reading at the 24th verse.

Let us quote another phase of Deut. 31:29: "Because ye will do *evil* in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands." Now, I certainly believe that the word *evil* in this expression means wickedness, or wicked and sinful deeds. We know that this took place during the days of the old law. This law was conditional, and only natural blessings were promised under this covenant. In short, it meant this: "If you keep my laws, then I will bless your land, and you will prevail against your enemies. But if you break my laws, I will bring judgments, distress, etc., against you." In connection with this subject, please read the 28th of Deut., which deals with the blessings promised under the old law. (only natural blessings.)

In referring to the above subject, we wish to call your attention to Exodus 32: 1-14, and give special emphasis on verses 11-14: "And Moses besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord, Why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountain, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this *evil* against thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply you and as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever. And the Lord repented of the *evil* which he thought to do unto his people."

Notice that the word *evil* is mentioned. Now, someone might think by reading these scriptures that Moses "talked the Lord out of bringing this evil against the children of Israel." I believe that at this situation Moses was interceding for the children of Israel, which is a type of Jesus Christ interceding for His people. It was in the *secret* purposes of God for him not to bring this *evil* against the people of Israel. Yet, the situation is very beautiful, as we view Jesus who is our Advocate. ". . . and if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (1 Jn. 2:11)

Now, Moses did not know what the secret purpose of God was, and we notice that he was pleading for the chil-

dren of Israel. In the 13th verse we note that Moses was pleading the covenant or the promise that God gave to Abraham. Moses stood as the type. As the anti-type, we see Jesus pleading the sacrifice. "Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. (Isa. 7:25)

Let us get back to the subject. Please notice that the word *evil* does not have the same meaning in the following; consider 1 Kings 14:9 and 10: "But hast done *evil* above all that were before thee." We believe that the word evil in the 9th verse has reference to wicked deeds, sin, etc. "Therefore, behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam," The word *evil* in the 10th verse has reference to great calamaties, misfortunes, etc., that God said that he would bring upon the house of Jeroboam.

"And Ahab said to Elijah, hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee; because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord." (1 Kgs. 21:20) The word evil in this verse has reference to the wicked deeds of Jezebel, the wife of Ahab, in causing the owner of a vineyard to be killed so that Ahab could take possession.

Notice the 21st verse: "Behold I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity." The word *evil* in this verse has reference to calamities, misfortunes, distress, etc., that God said He would bring upon the house of Ahab.

It was in the *secret purpose* of God that Ahab would repent of his wicked deeds, and in this secret *purpose* God determined not to bring evil upon the house of Ahab while he lived. To sum it up, let us say that God decreed or purposed or determined not to bring evil upon the house of Ahab (secret to God) as he had threatened that he would do. (outward to man) "And it came to pass, when Ahab heard these words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon the flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly. And the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Seest thou how Ahab humbles himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the *evil* in his days: but in his son's days will I bring the *evil* upon his house." (1 Kings 21:27-29)

"But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus *evil* things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented." (Luke 16:25) Lazarus lived in poverty, and his days upon the earth were sorrowful. This reminds me of what Jacob said: "few and *evil h*ave the days of the years of my life been." (Gen. 47:9)

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4) Since sin is a transgression, it is not a created thing. (see Col. 1:16) Sin is the action of man which resulted in the transgression of the law. The created thing committed the sin, and this was all included in the decree, foreknowledge, purpose or predestination of God. "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." (Rom. 8:20)

Let us quote this Scripture to prove that sin came into the world by the disobedience of one man: "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners." (Rom. 5:19) The 12th verse tells us the consequence of this action

of man which resulted in disobedience to the commandment of God. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." All have sinned in Adam. For further proof that sin entered into the world by man and not by God, please carefully read this quotation: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. THEN WHEN LUST HATH CONCEIVED, IT BRINGETH FORTH SIN: and sin, when it is finished bringeth forth death." (Jas. 7:13-15) At this point we quote from page 89 of *Absolute Predestination,* J. Zanchius: "God is the creator of the wicked, but not of their wickedness; he is the *author of their being, but not the infuser of their sin.*"

Elder W. W. Hudson

(To be continued)

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER B. O. THOMPSON

By the providence of God I attempt to leave on record the dealing, if not deceived, of the Lord with me, a poor dying sinner.

When I was a young man, I worked for the N & W Railroad Company at the round house in Roanoke, Virginia. Several of the boys and I were boarding at the same place. I dreamed the police were chasing me, and I was running to escape them. When overtaken I asked, "What do you want? I do nothing but work, eat, and sleep." One of them said, "You owe a man a dollar and will not pay it."

When I awoke I believed I owed a man a dollar, but remembered nothing about it. I put a dollar in my pocket before going to the table for the next meal. I asked myself what power can show a man things while he sleeps? I told my dream at the table and asked, "Do I owe one of you a dollar?"

One of the boys said, "Odell, do you remember when we were standing on a certain street corner and you asked to borrow a dollar to buy an article you wanted?"

I remembered it well.

Later on two of my friends that I had known for many years (we had grown up on adjoining farms) came to town. I wanted to show them a good time. I took them to a tenpin alley. Right now I want to say no betting was involved. While we were rolling tenpins I enjoyed it.

After this I had another dream. I dreamed that I was rolling tenpins when I saw my mother and the girl who later became my wife, standing by looking at me. I felt condemned. I rolled no more tenpins.

I would like to go back to my childhood, now. When she was five years of age, I met the little girl at school that later became my wife. A new school building was erected near my home, one was also erected in the opposite direction from her home. She was sent to the school last mentioned. Therefore, I did not see her except when I passed her home on my way to the mill on horseback, when taking a turn of corn. How well I remember seeing her playing on the lawn at her home! When she was in her thirteenth year we were in school together again. I wanted to start dating her. Her mother said, No.

Back to my job in Roanoke City.

After having worked there a few years I married the girl I have been speaking of, in her nineteenth year, and took her to Roanoke where we lived a few years. I became disgusted with my work. My foremen were extremely nice to me. My helpers (as a whole) were good men to work with, but I was tired of the place. We moved back to the country. We lived in my father-in-law's home. I helped him and his sons on the farm that year, until we purchased the grist mill previously mentioned.

I became in so much trouble it seemed I could not bear it. I knew I was going to die, and hell was my doom. When we were going out to work on the farm, I would lag behind the wagon to weep, hoping not to be seen. Words could never express what I suffered on account of my sins. It was not that I had lived such a bad life; it was what I was within.

About three years later I was milking our cow in the barn, when (after having left the house in great distress) a great light suddenly shone just enough to cover me. With it came relief. My burden of sin was gone. I thought I would never see any more trouble.

Oh, the rejoicing in this poor heart of mine! This great light was above the brightness of the noon day sun. Having no idea what this meant I desired to tell my mother-in-law about it. After I left their home she told her husband, "That boy has received a hope."

When I told my wife what had happened at the barn, she wept and said, "I have tried to to pray for this from time to time, since we have been married." I did not know what she meant; and as time went on I wondered why the burden did not return.

My wife became in greater trouble over her sins after we were married. I would find her weeping when I would return home from work. I became grieved over this, thinking she was unhappy with our marriage. I asked her if I was not as good to her as her parents were? She said, "Oh yes, it is not that, I am lost." I said, That is easy to take care of, and told her about the minister that preached at the round-house from time to time, and that I would take her to hear him at his church. She desired not to hurt my feelings and said, "If I feel like going sometime I will mention it." She never did.

A man who worked where I did lost a member of his family. I asked my wife to go with me to the funeral. As for me it was just another funeral; not so with her.

She told me, "I would like to go to the church where he speaks." I inquired and found he was pastor of the Primitive Baptist Church in town. I took her to hear him again.

After we left she asked, "What did you think about the preaching? I replied, "It was all right I guess." The fact was I knew nothing about it. I could understand the man that spoke where I worked.

We read in 1 Cor. 2:14: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

About three years from the time I received a hope, I began to desire baptism. That was about seven years after my wife received a hope. The Sunday morning we were getting ready to go to church, I must have been well wrapped up in my own strength that morning. I said to my wife, "You can fool along in this

way if you want to, but I am going to tell those people how I feel and ask for a home with them." She answered, "Go ahead if you can." I thought, "if you can."

We went to Salem Church, Floyd County, Virginia, a few miles from home that day. I have never felt further from wanting a home with them than I did that day. Many times since then I have if not deceived, been thankful that I was not allowed to carry out my plans. I needed to be shown again, that I was nothing, yes, less than nothing, and that all my times are in His hands.

I now feel to witness with the Psalmist in 108:8: "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy."

My wife and I, by the mercy of God, were received into the fellowship of the Church the first Sunday in September as West Fork Meeting House, when the association (Smith River) was adjourning. They were singing the closing hymn. We were baptised the following first Sunday, October 4, 1925, by our Pastor, Elder J. H. Cummings, with membership at Payne's Creek Primitive Baptist Church.

Psa. 103:10: "He hath not dealt with me after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. Psa. 103:11: "For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him." We were so happy. In our childish way we thought all of our troubles were over.

Sometime during the following winter, if memory serves me right, I became heavily burdened to preach, I hope, the gospel of the Son of God. I said within myself, " O Lord, I cannot go, I would rather die than to make the attempt." During the time I was so burdened Elder J. H. Spangler and Sister Spangler spent the night in our home. I was so heavily burdened the next morning I could hardly wait until they left.

After seeing them off my wife and I went back into the living room, I took her in my arms and said, "I want you to promise me you will never tell anyone what I am going to tell you. She said, "I know what it is."

I did not think she knew, but she did. She had suffered much over this too. After I told her how I was suffering we wept together. She did not tell me then, but she was opposed to the thought in the beginning, and had tried, in her feeble way, to show God it could not be. Not long after this she became reconciled to God's will. She has, indeed, been a good helpmate. The Lord has blessed us with a good life together.

My father, father-in-law and I built a merchant mill on the old site. I was the miller. We manufactured flour, meal, and chops. I became so burdened one day while upstairs checking on some of the work, I thought if I could go to the basement I could pray. I started, and just as I reached the head of the the flight of steps I fell to the floor. All I could say was, "Lord have mercy."

I became very anxious to talk with Elder S. L. Moran, I thought it would relieve me to talk with him about my burden, and at the same time I could convince him there was nothing to it. This went on for a few months and I never got around to going to his home to talk with him.

One day after the meeting adjourned at Salem Church, where he and Elder H. V. Cole were pastors, I asked Elder Moran to step aside with me, and I tried to convince him, after having told him about my burden, that there was nothing

to it. He said, "Brother Thompson, when you were baptised I remarked to some of the brethren, we have seen a preacher baptised."

I soon learned that Elder Spangler's wife had made a similar remark to someone just after we came out of the water. After this I decided to end it all. I told my wife I was going above the house into the woods near by to see if I could get a squirrel. She told me later she felt confident my plans were to take my life; however, she believed God had called me to preach. She had become perfectly reconciled to it, and had tried many times, in her feeble way, to pray God would be with me. Therefore, she was not afraid for me to take the gun and go out. Man's strength is as but a drop in the bucket to compare with the power and love of the great God, I hope my God.

When my burden became so heavy it seemed unbearable, I asked my church if I could have a few words. I tried to tell them some of my impressions, how in my meditations, when at work, I would be before the people telling them of the power, love, and mercy of the great God and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

After having made the attempt to speak for a while I was so discouraged with my feeble efforts I began to complain. I asked why would the Lord call a man to preach and withhold wisdom from him? After this I dreamed I was sitting alone in a field. I knew someone was approaching me from behind, but I was not allowed to look back. A hand was laid on my shoulder and a voice said, "I will give you what you need and no more."

Many have been the times I have sat down in shame, vowing I would never make the attempt to speak again. The brethren have been so kind and forebearing. Elder H. V. Cole used to go back where we were sitting, talk with me a few minutes, lay his hand on my shoulder and say, "Come with me to the stand, Brother Thompson."

That was at Salem Church where he and Elder S. L. Moran were pastors. After his death the church called me to serve with Elder Moran. I loved him so very much, I hope for Christ's sake. He was so kind and considerate of me. I thought after his death I could not go on without him. The Lord favored me. Elder J. L. (Roy) Agee, whom I dearly love, I hope for Christ's sake, was called to serve with me. He has been a precious yoke-fellow. When it pleases God that I go the way of all the earth, and I hope to be with Jesus, I hope that it is in the providence of God that peace and unity may reign in all of the churches that I have, in my feeble way, served, together with the many churches I have been blessed to visit.

Many are the times I have, in my feeble way, tried to pray for the peace of Zion.

Again I am reminded that little as it may have seemed to me, He gave me what I needed and no more. Thanks to the precious name, there have been times when I could say, "It is enough."

Nahum 1:7: "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble and he knoweth them that trust in him." Only those whom He has given grace and strength to trust in him know anything about His goodness and mercy. Do we have this strength all of the time? No, only when it pleases Him.

Psa. 115:1: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy and thy truth's sake."

Psa. 116:1,3: "I love the Lord, (and he gives the reason why) Because He hath inclined His ear unto me, therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live."

B. O. Thompson

Copperhill, Va.

(See Obituary, June Issue)

In the following we present the final instalment of, "The Present State of Religion, or Who Are The People Miscalled Antinomians?" by William Gadsby in 1841, and published in England. In this work the Truth as it is in Jesus is clearly presented by *Love-Truth* while *Demur* and *Trifle* oppose the doctrine of *Love-Truth,* and Investigation (Inv.) finds that *Love-Truth* is correct in his presentation of the doctrine of the Scriptures, and was glad to say in the end that, "I desire no happier lot than to live and die as an Antinomian."

William Gadsby, like many others, maintained that the Gospel, and not the law, is the rule of life for the believer, and for this he was stigmatized and persecuted as an antinomian. (see page 617 of Hassell's Church History)

The doctrine of *Love-Truth* is the doctrine that had been held by the true church from the days of the Apostles, and the doctrine of *Demur* and *Trifle* has been held by opposers of the Truth.

J.D.W.

PRESENT STATE OF RELIGION

By William Gasby, London, 1841

(Concluded)

Inv. In some countries where the sheep are large, and their wool is heavy, you will find that in the spring time they will often fall upon their back and not be able to get up until some kind person lends them a helping hand. In my country the people call this being *cast.* When these poor sheep are thus down, some lazy shepherds will send a dog to them to frighten them up; and I have often observed the poor things struggle very severely at the bark of the dog, but the more they struggled, the weaker they were; and if they had fallen into any dirty place, the heavier was their wool; and as the great quantity of wool that they have upon them may be one means of their being cast, it is not likely they should get up by this means, because the dirt will stick to the wool, and make it so much the heavier. In this case I have often thought that the shepherd did not act a faithful part to his master, that he did not run himself and help the poor creature up, instead of standing at a distance, while the dog almost scares them to death. But after all, I have observed the sheep falling in the dirt, the shepherd's laziness, the snarling of the dog, nor any thing else, was able to convert the poor sheep into goats, for they were sheep after all; though sometimes very weak and feeble through the usage they had met with. But what makes you smile, my brother?

Love-Truth. I smile to think that if you mean to imply the case of the sheep and the shepherd to the sheep of Christ and an hireling shepherd in Israel, you will have *Universal Charity* about your ears very soon.

Inv. Think you so? Do you not think that there is some likeness in the figure?

Love-Truth. Yes, indeed, I do; for the sheep of Christ are never nearer a fall than when they are inclined to think they have a good fleece of self-righteousness upon them. This haughty spirit is sure to bring about a fall; and when they are down, they can no more help themselves than the poor sheep you have been describing, for without the chief Shepherd they can do nothing that is good. How often does an hireling shepherd send wrath and fire about the poor soul, in order to stir it up, as it is called, You will find such shepherds very libral in *offering* Christ to the unconverted; but the poor sheep are told to remove the cause; and if this cannot be done, they may be still and die for anything

the false shepherd cares! for he will act much like the Levite and the Priest who passed by the man who fell among thieves. But blessed be God, the good Shepherd Himself will come, lift them up, wash them, and bind up the wounds that the dog has made; and in the end will pay the hireling with his own coin, namely, fire and wrath; but His sheep He will preserve.

Inv. Yes, and they are sheep still; so that though David get into the miry clay, and Solomon fall into the deep ditch, and Peter be tossed about in the devil's sieve, their faith shall not fail, for the Lord their Shepherd prays for them.

Love-Truth. Yes, and as it was with them, so it is with all who are ordained to eternal life; so that Christ as a Shepherd will appear exceedingly precious indeed. Is Christ *King?* His sceptre is a right sceptre; His laws are laws of love; His yoke is easy, and His burden is light; His kingdom cannot fail! Zion's bulwarks are grace; her walls salvation, and her citizens are free. He blesses them with freedom of access unto the Father. Here they can unbosom their whole heart, present their petition, and receive answers of peace and love. He liberates them from the yoke of death, sin, Satan, and the law; makes them free from all other lords that have had dominion over them, and from every legal yoke, and they are free indeed. They are free to all that His house can afford. The fatlings are killed, the wines are mingled, the table furnished, and all things are ready. There is not a blessing that they need but what is here, and all without money and without price. Satan may batter the walls, and give the alarm at the gates, but an invasion can never take place. The subjects of this kingdom are blessed indeed, for they are all heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ; yes, all things are theirs, for they are Christ's and Christ is God's "They are not come to the mount that burneth with fire; nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, which voice they that heard entreated that the words should not be spoken to them any more;" (for they could not endure that which was commanded, and if so much as a beast touched the mountain it was to be stoned, or thrust through with a dart; and so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, "I exceedingly fear and quake;") but they are "come unto Mount Zion, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the First-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." (Heb.12:18-24) O the riches of God's love made known to His dear people! How great, how immense are the privileges with which His kingdom is blessed! The promises of the gospel, the doctrines of grace, the ordinances of His house, with every blessing that shall be for His glory to give, and their good to receive, are all made over to them; nor is there a subject in all His kingdom but what He communes with, and at one time or another blesses with the kisses of His lips. Such a King is just what the church needs, and therefore they prize Him.

Inv. If the case be thus with the kingdom of Christ, *they* do not appear to be of His kingdom who are doing all they can to lead a poor sensible sinner to the mount that burns with fire.

Love-Truth. True; His commands are not grievous, but joyous; and it is with pleasure that they who love Him keep His commandments. Such is Christ, that whether He is compared with things in heaven or things in earth, things animate or inanimate, the child of God needs Him in them all; and it is the Spirit's work to reveal Christ in him. Is He called *The Tree of Life?* His *leaves are for the healing of the church,*

and His fruit, which is always fresh, is sweet to their taste; but, sweet and precious as it is, He bids them eat and drink abundantly, and to let their hearts delight in fatness; yes, He calls them *friends* and *beloved.*

Inv. I have been astonished at the endearing language of Christ to His church. When I consider what a base, vile, guilty, mean, and contemptible wretch she is, I am sure it can be nothing but love that is stronger than death, which many waters cannot quench, neither can the floods drown, that induces him to call her His *love, dove, undefiled, friend, sister, spouse,* etc. *For by nature she has* nothing lovely in or about her; but this is one of the methods He takes to endear Himself unto her; and so she loves Him, because He first loved her. But go on with your discourse.

Love-Truth. If He is a Vine, they grow in Him, and receive all their sap and nourishment from Him; and if He is the Head, they are united to Him, and are one with Him. He is bone of their bone, and flesh of their flesh; and they are made partakers of His Spirit. And as the food that supports the body goes through the head, so every new covenant blessing flows through Him, and every joint is supplied by Him, and from Him; nor till He, the living Head, can be severed from the body, shall one member perish. Is He the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley? How fragrant His smell! how rich His perfume to a poor soul who is almost poisoned with the stench of sin, or the old man! how reviving to the fainting soul! and how acceptable to the Father is the sacrifice He has offered up! for He "hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor." (Eph.5:2) Here we have an emblem of His bloody sweat and the pure white robe in which all His children stand complete.

Inv. I perfectly agree with what you say, but I have heard some very popular ministers say that we had better let things of this nature alone, and not attempt to allegorize at all.

Love-Truth. They only mean to say that you must not meddle with such allegories as do not suit their taste; for instance, you must not mention Paul's allegory in Gal. 4:22, unless you have skill enough to allegorize his meaning quite away, and then you may touch it, if you please; but if you were to ask them what this scripture means, "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn," you will not find one preacher in ten that cannot find two meanings for it; so that they can allegorize fast enough when it suits their purpose. You will hear some men say more about the allegorical ox in our sermon, than you will about allegorical Hagar in seven years.

Inv. I believe you, for I have heard the ox brought forward repeatedly by men that would rage with madness if you were to say that allegorical Hagar and her seed are or ever should be in bondage, and that Sarah and her seed are free.

Love-Truth. Bless the Lord for liberty of conscience, His precious word of grace, and the sweet teachings of His Holy Spirit. Is the poor sinner tossed about with wind and tempest, and not comforted? Does the wind of false doctrine, the wind of persecution, inbred corruption, and the temptations of Satan blow and toss him about like a ship in a storm? There is no hiding place from this wind, nor covert from this tempest, but Christ. Is he tossed with the dreadful tempest of Mount Sinai? Christ is the only *refuge* from the storm; yes, and what a delightful shade is Jesus to the weary traveller, who is almost scorched up with the heat of the sun? He is the shadow of a great rock in a weary land; nor shall one that takes shelter here ever be destroyed; for, "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of

His counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." (Heb. 6:17,18) So that Jehovah must forfeit His word and be guilty of purjury, (which would be blasphemy to suppose) before the church can fail of heaven.

Inv. What a firm foundation is laid in Zion! and what a divine treasure there is in Christ! All the promises in Him are Yea and Amen, to the glory of the Father. May I be enabled to feel more of the liberty, and enjoy more of the sweetness of the truth, and run with patience the race that is set before me, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith, who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God. For we have great need to consider him that endureth such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest we be wearied and faint in our minds. (Heb. 12:2) There is no settled hope out of Him, and no settled peace but by faith in Him; nor did the poet miss the mark, when he said,:

"Some this, some that good virtue teach,
To rectify the soul;
But we first after Jesus reach,
And richly grasp the whole."

Love-Truth. True, for He is eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, ears to the deaf, strength to the weak, and might to them that have no power; He is a Father to the fatherless, a Husband to the widow; a Prophet to teach and instruct fools, into the mysteries of His kingdom; the faithful and true Witness, the bright and morning Star; the Counselor to plead His people's cause; the Leader that leads them by the right hand of His righteousness; the substance and glory of all the types; and end of the law; the Messenger of peace; the Son who is faithful over His own house, by whom came grace and truth; the Minister of the sanctuary who preaches good tidings to the meek, who binds up the broken hearted, and proclaims liberty to the captives, and opening of the prison to them that are bound; who proclaims the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; who comforts all that mourn in Zion, and gives unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called Trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified. (Isa. 61:1-3) In short, He is all that a helpless soul can need, and all that a God of infinite grace can give; for in Him we have all things. Do you ask the church what her Beloved is more than another's husband? She shall answer for herself, "My beloved is white and ruddy;" *white*, as He is the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace, the brightness of His Father's glory, and the express image of His human nature, the obedience of His life, His condescending love and grace, His imputed righteousness, His glorious resurrection and exaltation; ruddy, in His bloody sufferings for the sins of His people, in the displays of His wrath against His and their enemies; in the battles that He fought; for "every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood." (Isa. 9: 5) "He is the chiefest among ten thousand." In His nature, dignity, character, and relationship; in His work, both of providence and grace; he is pleasing to the Father and delightful to the church. "His head is as the most fine gold." As the great Jehovah and as Husband, King and Captain; yes, as the Head of His body the church; the Head of influence, what gold so fine, valuable, and desirable! He excels all the gold of Ophir. "His locks are bushy, and black as a raven." The purposes of His grace, the doctrine of His word, and the members of His body, though weak in themselves, grow in Him as their Head, and are beautifully connected together. How wise, prudent, and well connected

are all His dealings with the object of His love! "His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters." He ever watches over His people for good; He sees all their enemies, nor is it possible they can be in any place, state, or circumstance, but He beholds them. The fulness of Deity dwells in Him, and He will surely do them good. He beholds the place where, the time when, and the means how, He will bless His Spouse.

He sees the end from the beginning; nor is there any place of darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity can hide themselves from Him. "His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers." How divinely animating the light of His countenance!, how engaging and precious the displays of His love in His word and ordinances! how ravishing His beauty! and how comely His looks! "His lips like lilies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrh." How cheering His promises! how firm the doctrines of grace how encouraging His declarations of mercy! with what sympathy, tenderness, and love He speaks to the church! how prevelant His intercessions! how cheering His communications! how fragrant His truth! "His hands are as gold rings set with the beryl." He is mighty to save, strong to deliver and able to support; nor shall earth, hell, or sin, pluck His people out of His hands. His own arm has brought salvation, and His fury has upheld Him. "How pregnant with a numerous seed of heirs according to promise! and how great are the secret purposes of His love, which are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed only to His spouse! The bowels of His compassion, the tenderness of His heart, proclaim Him precious indeed.

He is pure, holy, and innocent, in all His works and ways: "His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold." He upholds all things by the word of His power. He bore all the sins of His people, and the vengeance due unto them. He bears all their sorrows, carries all their burdens, and enables them to lean upon Him as their staff and stay. The government of the church rests upon Him. He tramples under His feet all that exalt themselves against Him and His kingdom. He trod the wine-press alone and of the people there was none to help Him. "His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars." The smiles of His face, the visits of His grace, the glory of His names, offices, and relationship, how dear, delightful, and precious!

"His mouth is most sweet; yea, He is altogether lovely; this is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem." He speaks the sweet words of reconciliation, peace and pardon, life and salvation. The kisses of His lips are beyond comprehension. The words of His mouth are sweeter than honey, or the honey-comb. He has ravished my heart; He has won my affection. My soul is taken up with Him, and His divine glory. There is none in heaven above, or on earth beneath equal with Him. When by faith I behold His divine excellencies, I am overcome with bliss. Dear Lord, let me live much in the enjoyment of Thee, and sit loose to all things else.

Inv. Well, if this be *Antinomianism*, I think we may say, "Blessed are the people who are in such a case." I desire no happier lot than to live and die such an Antinomian, and am persuaded, if Christ be mine, I shall be blessed with immortal glory in the world to come.

Love-Truth. To live in the enjoyment of God's presence, under the sweet influence of the Holy Ghost; to be blessed with the Spirit of adoption, whereby we can call God, Father, in the best sense; to behold Christ as mine in everlasting covenant, and by all the ties of everlasting love and faithfulness to know that whatever title, character, or name He bears, that it is for me; to be filled with the fullness of God, by the divine energy of the Holy Ghost; to find the wells spring up, and salvation worked in us; and to be employed in working it out, the fountain constantly playing the blessings of grace into the heart, and we

enabled to pour out our desires unto the Lord, with the freedom and liberty of a child, without fear or wrath; yea, to be blessed with that perfect love that casts out fear, is nothing less than a measure of heaven below; and is certain earnest of an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

Inv. And these are some of the things that *Universal Charity* calls *Antinomianism,* are they? Well, let her display her parts in holding such things up to contempt; but let her votaries beware lest that come upon them which is written in the prophets: "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish, for I will work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe though a man declare it unto you." (Acts 13: 31) But I must be gone. The Lord be with you, and make you faithful unto death.

Love-Truth. God grant that in blessing He may bless you, and in multipling He may multiply you.

Inv. Amen.

Love-Truth. And Amen.

The End

UPPER COUNTRY LINE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1976 CIRCULAR LETTER

To ministers, messengers and churches of the Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association, our correspondents and friends in the seventieth session with the church at McCray, Alamance County, North Carolina, July 17, 18 and 19, 1976, grace unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

How wonderful and heart-warming it is to see you brethren being gathered together once again. Many of you are from close by, but some have traveled great distances. I think of the young lad, David, as he left his home to "look how thy brethren fare." Is that not one reason you are here? To see your brethren and to see how they are. As David talked with his brethren, Goliath came to defy the army of Israel. All the men of Israel were sore afraid, but David asked, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he shall defy the armies of the living God?" His oldest brother became angry with him. "And David said, What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" Today, my dear brethren, is there not a cause that has brought you together and caused you to desire to be at your brother's feet? Is there not a cause for which you have been made to stand against the doctrines of the world and those who would defy the armies of the living God? Is there not a cause for which you have been made to leave the ties of the world and cleave unto Christ? As Paul would say, "For which cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." Brethren, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised). Let us not be negligent in observing the ordinances set forth by our Lord.

Some whose faces we behold, we will behold no more. "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." 1 Thess. 4:13,14. What does this world have to offer you? The only joy is meeting together with you precious brethren. Someone has said that a child of God has more to die for than to live for. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

May the God of all grace comfort you and keep you until Jesus comes again.

Submitted by Cleo Robertson
Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

DOESN'T WANT TO MISS A COPY

Loganville, Ga.

Dear Editors:

This date, August 1st, I must send in my renewal for your precious paper, the *Signs of the Times*. Enclosed is check for $10.00 to pay for two years. The balance for your use in sending out the *Signs*. Many of the "poor and afflicted" long for its appearing each month, and, as I, don't want to miss a copy. I often sing, "Poor and afflicted, Lord, are thine: among the great unfit to shine." His words, "Blessed are the poor in spirit for they shall see God;" ah, blessed is His gracious, holy name.

May He bless you dear Editors with all the other good writers. I enjoy all so much! I feel to be the least, if included in that number, yet in a sweet hope,

Ela Watson

NOTICE OF MEETINGS

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union will be held, the Lord willing, at White Oak Church, the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in October, 1976.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
P. O. Box 4524
Rocky Mount, N. C. 27801

KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

The 211th annual session of the Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association is to be held, the Lord willing, with Skewarkey Church, Martin County, Williamston, N. C., the first Sunday in October, Saturday before and Monday following. October 2, 3, and 4.

The Skewarkey Meeting House is located at the intersection of U. S. Highway 64 and U. S. Highway 17, in the town of Williamston, N. C.

We invite all the brethren in the same faith and order to join us in this meeting.

Elder M. E. Garner, Clerk

SALISBURY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Salisbury Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, on Wednesday and Thursday, October 20 and 21, 1976, at the Salisbury Church House, located on U. S. 50, where it intersects Route 13, Salisbury, Maryland, at 10 A. M. Wednesday.

We cordially welcome any and all ministers, brethren and friends who love the truth as revealed in our blessed Redeemer, and set forth in His written word.

Anyone seeking information of any kind call either Elder James Poole, Tel. No. 742-6406; or Deacon William Adkins,, Tel. No. 742-2198, Area Code 301, or Deacon Billy Davis. Tel. 824-3137, Area Code 804.

Mildred V. Dykes, Clerk
Salisbury Church

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R.F.D. 6, Box 270 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

DOCTRINE Vs. EXPERIENCE

"Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak: and hear O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew; as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass."
Deut. 32:1,2.

"Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God."
Isa. 50:10.

Have you been among a number of the people of God as they were discussing the preaching of various ministers? If so, you have heard them extolling the gift of one that was good at doctrinal preaching, saying that they did not come for experimental preaching. Then, no doubt you have heard someone extol the gift of some other that was good at experimental preaching, saying that they did not know much about doctrine, but that they loved experience.

I have titled this writing in a peculiar manner. I have intended just as I have titled it, so as to draw attention to our state. It seems just like that to me. Not in the inspiration of God, but we have drawn a line of difference between doctrine and experience, saying that one of them is good preaching, but that the other is not; saying that one of them is permissible, but that the other is not. We have placed doctrine in opposition to, or against experience, or vice versa. In our estimation, God gives us only doctrine to preach; that we have set up experience in opposition to God, and that it is thus God sanctioned to preach doctrine, but that it is man made to preach experience.

Too much of the time those that like to hear doctrine preached (as they call it) have heard something that was called experience, but that was foreign to the experience of a saint of God. If we always had a correct perspective of what experience really is about, we would be in a better condition to pass judgment on what is called doctrinal preaching or experimental preaching. For instance, much has been said about preaching the sincere milk of the word, meaning, as I take it, that little ones can digest

milk better than strong meat. I agree with that. But I do not think about it as I have heard it explained. Preaching experience does not mean that the minister is preaching to nor about the natural man. He does not have any right whatever, nor any time whatever, to preach to nor about that. Nor does it mean that when a minister is preaching experience that he is preaching soft or conditional. Moreover, when a man is preaching doctrine, it definitely does not mean that he is doing good preaching, for I assure you that there are many doctrines of men being preached.

Personally, I believe all preaching is doctrinal. It is as much doctrine to preach that God leads the blind by a way that they knew not, as it is to preach that God loves His people with an everlasting love; it is as much doctrine to preach to the laboring and heavy laden to come to Christ, as it is to declare that God declared the end from the beginning. Furthermore, doctrinal preaching will never be profitable to the children of God unless it is experienced. Faith is the gift of God, but unless that faith exercises the child of God it is dead faith. Preaching that faith is a gift of God, and that having that faith means that the child of God is not active under the administration of that faith, is not true doctrinal preaching. The child of God is not active to get faith but when faith comes, when faith is given, he is then active, not in order to have faith, but he is active because that he is acted upon.

What people generally call doctrinal preaching is telling what God did in covenant before the world began. All of the purposes that originate in the eternal mind of God will never be worth anything to a sinner until such time as it is revealed to us, and that revelation is an experimental work in our heart and mind and soul. This is as much doctrinal truth as the purpose to do so. They cannot be divided; they cannot be separated one from the other. They both are received in an experience. Paul tells us that we glory in tribulation. Tribulations were appointed to us by our Savior just before He entered into His glory. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me peace. Both the tribulation and the peace are parts of the doctrinal dealings of God with His people. When we attempt to say that this is doctrine, but that this is experience, and attempt to allot each one as being good and better, we are subverting the written word as well as the gospel of our salvation, I do not know of a harder, more austere doctrine than to say that God does not have anything to do with our tribulations, sorrows, sufferings, but how destitute our lives would be if we did not have His effectual workings in us in showing (John 16) us these sublime things. It is Jacob; if it is the best thought of minister; whoever it is, or whenever they say it, that tribulations are against us, or that they are not good for us, then Paul (and the Romans, and thus you and I) are in something that ought not to be. We glory (boast) in tribulation. This is experimental, that is, it is presently in this life, but surely no one would attempt to separate the allotment of tribulations as not being a segment of the doctrine. And let it be noted in passing, that this glorying or boasting (for that is the meaning of this glorying) is not found in him or her that says, If a tree is falling toward you there is not any need to run, or that if a train is coming down upon you there

is not any need to step out of the way, or if false teaching is creeping in upon the people of God there is not any need for a voice to be raised in protest by the spirit of him or her that is glorying in tribulations. That is an experience alright, but it is an experience of the deluding power of Satan, and it is just as false as my Arminian neighbors that tell me that God does not have anything to do with a storm destroying my home or of God having nothing to do with a car wreck in which some one is killed.

The children of God glory in tribulations, why? Because that they are now working for our benefit. I have been dealt with in derision because I have been ready to maintain that the only salvation I know anything about is time salvation. I would never have had a taste of living water; I would never have had a crumb of living bread, had it not been for the revelation of these things to me in time.

Tribulation, to men without God and without hope in the world, is the work of the devil; it is because that we are not acquainted with God (Job 22:21); it is because that either we or our parents have sinned (John 9:2). Job's miserable would-be comforters were condemned for their position that Job's sins had separated him from his Maker, and, even though they were disciples that suggested that either the blind man had sinned or his parents had sinned, they were put in their place by the Savior. All things work together for good. They are now doing that. They do that from the beginning of our experience to the end of it. But try to tell Jacob that and he replies, No, some things are not for my good; some things are against me. But search for Jacob after the deliverances of the Israelite family and listen carefully if that is his refrain. Try to tell Jacob that before he knows God, and you will always get that answer, to-wit: bad things are against me; tell Jacob, or any disciple, then at home in the body that God's blessings come to us because of our obedience, and he and we will acquiesce to that, but let the same man, Jacob or you and I, be brought where John Newton travelled, and one and all will sing,

Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

Or, if lifted to the third heaven, one and all will declare boldly but humbly that it is by the grace of God (1 Cor. 15:10), or if anyone of us has been brought into the presence of God in the face of Jesus Christ, he or she, one and all, will declare to ancient Israel, or to spiritual Israel, that "He is all my salvation, that He is all of my desire. (2 Sam. 23:5)

How gracious are the dealings of the Lord with His afflicted people. Moses, being inspired of God, and looking foreward with joy to a better kingdom, founded on better promises, and thus bringing better things, is moved to say, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain." God does not accidently drop it, but He turns it loose for a predetermined place or person. He turning it loose, it drops to its designated place. In His determination of the inheritance of the people of God. He set the bounds of their habitation, (v. 8, also see Acts 17:26) and thus they were at the precise place in the most minute detail for the dropping of the doctrine on them. No other power inherited; no wind of doctrine (or even of nature) caused the least variation as to when and where and how it fell on the designated people. That

much is what you would call doctrine, is it not? That is what many of us want to hear (so we say), but there is more to it than that. It does not fall without purpose either to a designated person or people, it does not fall without purpose in their life, in their experience. It falls as the rain, that is it asks no let, it permits no hinderance. It is never void; it never fails to get to the designated end. But getting to the mark is not all. It accomplishes the will of Him that drops it upon the heirs of promise. It distils as the dew. That is as much the purpose of God as is the getting of it to the designated end. It distils as the dew.

Have you ever walked out at night and heard the dew distilling? Have you? If I am on forbidden ground, let him that is wise, come tell us what our souls are longing to hear. Have you ever heard the dew distilling? If you have not, and it drops sovereignly, please be cautious in running around the country telling poor bankrupt sinners that they can command or countermand the coming down or the dropping down of doctrine. If you can even hear the distillation of the dew, certainly it would be distilled before you could prevent it reaching the designated person or people or place. There is not any noise when a son of Adam is being translated out of darkness into light. (Isa. 33:20; Lam. 3:26; 1 Kgs. 6:7; 1 Tim. 2:2; 1 Pet. 3:4) If you do not hear any sound of a thing being done, certainly you can not help nor hinder. Please remember that this soundless condition is experience.

Another thing. The dew distils in the night time. Do you know the difference between the experience of God's people and that of the world? It is good, it is extensive, it is strange. From the standpoint of the children of God, they are walking in darkenss. From the standpoint of an ungodly man or woman they are walking in the light, or in the day time. (Isa. 50:11,12) What an experience is this: One outside Christ, outside the kingdom and walking in the light. What need has she or he that is so much their own keeper? They kindled the fire that makes all of their sparks, all of their light, but what is to follow? What of them? What is to be their end? *They shall have at the hand of the Lord a lying down in sorrow.* But he or she feels to be walking in darkness, that poor tried soul has a wonderful experience. He that lets the doctrine drop as the rain; that lets it distil as the dew; that sends it forth as the drouth-breaking word on tender herbs, (little unwashed, unswaddled babes in Christ.) (Ezek. 16) It causes them to give off the sweet smelling frangrance of a newly washed, newly anointed little member in the midst of the church with Jesus as King and His subjects gathered around Him, will dwell by experience among men, that is, quickened men. In the same manner, from the same source, He that causes His "let" to bring light also causes His "let" to be in the midst of the storm to hear no stroke of lightening, nor shift of clouds, no unknown power, no unseen enemy will hinder that dropping doctrine to get to the earth, causing it to give bread to the eater and seed to the sower.

When earthly pride is crucified in you, when you have seen and felt all light gone, when you have felt to be in gross darkness, when the treasures that you thought to have been stored up, lose all vitality and apppeasing power, and thirst quenching waters are all dried up,

will you remember a poor helpless sinner and beg the Lord to send forth His quickening Spirit in my life that I might be kept and blessed to rightly declare the word of truth, both as regarding what is called doctrine, as well as what is called experience, and to have no fear (of man) in doing it.

W.D.G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Atlantic, N. C., Sept. 8, 1922

Dear Brethren Editors:

"Elder L. H. Hardy, my dear friend and brother in Christ, I have just read an article with your name signed to it, which I greatly enjoyed reading. Elder Hardy, please answer the following questions: Are God's children their own free agents after regeneration, to live in obedience or disobedience? The so-called Primitives in this country say that God has no will about his children after regeneration, but that it is left to them to live in obedience or not. So please write a long letter on obedience, as I desire to know the truth. I would be glad for other able writers to write on this same subject, as I am in trouble about it. Pray for me, a poor beggar of the earth."

I do not know the location of the writer's post-office, and therefore cannot be personal in my remarks, and I do not wish to be.

I want to first examine the term, "Free Agent." "Agent: A substitute, deputy, or factor; one entrusted with the business of another; an attorney; a minister." "Free: Being at liberty; not being under necessity or restraint, physically or morally." There are the primary meanings of these two words. Then Webster gives the definition of free agency as follows; "The state of acting freely, or without necessity or restraint of the will." That this definition of "free agency" flatly contradicts his definition of the word, "agent" any one can see who desires to know nothing but the truth. Was Adam free in his primeval state as he was when the Lord made him, and put him in the garden of Eden? Let us see: "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen. 2: 16,17. Thus man was under the command of God, therefore he was not free. Neither was he an agent, for he was put at the head of a possession. It was his. The Lord saw the condition of the mind and will of man, even of his most faithful servants and children. "For the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." Gen. 8:21. In whom did God see this? Surely in Noah, a preacher of righteousness, the only person in all the old world who found favor in the sight of God; the only one to whom the Lord said, "For thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." Gen. 7:1. It would appear that there were conflicting principles in that man of God: he had in him the Spirit of truth, which bound him to preach righteousness to the praise of God, and the Lord recognized it; he also had in him the spirit of the world, so he would or did make wine and got drunk. In him the Lord saw that the imaginations of the heart of man were evil from his youth. There it was fully manifested that the flesh

lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh (Gal. 5:17), as Paul saw it and felt it more than four thousand years later.

Noah was not free. He was led either by the Spirit of God or by the lust of the flesh. He was a child of God, had been born again of that incorruptible seed by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, yet was moved by a power that was in him, therefore was not free. It was the word of God that moved Abraham to go out of his father's house, from the land of his nativity, from all his people. God commanded; his word was the word of power, the word of the King of kings and Lord of lords. Abraham was a true and faithful servant of that word. He must obey. He was moved by faith. Faith is the gift of God, and God's gift moved Abraham. It was not his free will, but the gift of God. Therefore he was not a free agent, but a servant of the living God. With him and in him did the Lord make his covenant, and fix the promises which were given in his everlasting covenant before the world began, in which all the members of his body were written, when as yet there was none of them. (Psalms 139:16) Isaac was the promised seed, as all the elect of God are. He was not like Ishmael, who was born at the dictation of fleshly haste, as all the nonelect professors of religion are. In the fulfilment of the promises of God in his people they laugh for joy and comfort to know that the impossible things of this world are fully accomplished in the Lord. They are born children of God with love, faith, and hope in them. These principles of righteousness show to them their helplessness and dependence on the Lord to move them, and to cause them to go forward in the things he has commanded.

Jacob was the chosen, and the one beloved of God, as all his children are. His twin brother was the one they said God hated, as he does all the non-elect. Not because of what they have done, nor because of what they left undone. The children were yet unknown, and had done neither good nor evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand (Rom. 9:11) What was the character of Jacob? Was he obedient, always doing right? The evidence is to the contrary. He was a supplanter, conniving for the things of this world. But it might be said that these things were done before he was born again, or before his name was changed. Yes, and afterwards, too. Jacob was always Jacob, and yet he enjoyed the blessings with Israel. God never withdrew His love from him which he had for him before he was born. Whether he doubted or trusted, the Lord led him about, and kept him as the apple of his eye. None of this conditionalism with Jacob. God was his God, and he could be blessed in no other.

Unexpectedly the Lord appeared to him in the vision of the night, and he saw the faith of God's people as a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, with the angels of God ascending and descending upon it. God stood at the top of this mysterious ladder, and there he renewed in Jacob the covenant he had made with Abraham, and with Isaac. Was it because of the obedience he had rendered to God in some good work? No, He had just perpetrated one of the most evil deeds of his life, in taking advantage of his blind father, in securing the blessing which that old man had allotted for Esau, and because of this

very deed he was now running away from his father's home. Did the Lord's blessings come upon him because of this evil deed? No. But because God had blessed him, and could not and would not break His word because of Jacob's ugly disposition. Jacob's will was nothing, God's will was everything.

Who was the cause of Moses being a proper child? Was it the goodness of his father and mother? or was it because the Lord had appointed him to be a judge, and (under him) the deliverer of Israel? Was it not by the gift (faith) of God that the mother of Moses hid him three months? Was it not the same faith that would not let his parents fear the king? (Heb. 11:23). Was Moses a free agent in obeying God in his calling to go unto Pharaoh, and to Israel? or did he rebel, and refuse to go? Would God release him from the work unto which he was born, and preserved from the destructive persecution of the Egyptians just because he was rebellious, and refused to go to that work? His rebellion did not change the purpose of God. When he refused, and said, Send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send; why did not the Lord release him and send another? (See Exodus 4:13) The Lord had said, Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharoah, that thou mayest bring forth my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt. That was God's word, and it could not be broken. Was that conditional? Was it not absolute? It was pertaining to the salvation of Moses and the children of Israel from Egypt in Canaan.

I might mention hundreds of things along that line, but must pass on. "He knoweth the way that I take; when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Job. 23:10. Thus faith speaks. Had he gone astray? He had spoken the words which were too wonderful for him, he had honored himself. Why did not God cast him off? The Lord knew his way, and he intercepted him to turn him about, as He does all of His people. Those miserable comforters preached conditionalism to him, and the Lord condemned their sayings, as He does all the conditionalists of today. The Lord spoke to Job, and he saw the folly of his way, and confessed it before the Lord. Even so are his dealings with all his children. What was David doing in the horrible pit? (Psa. 11) Why did he not just obey, and come up? But no, the Lord must bring him up out of that pit. Surely now he can get on the rock. No, the Lord must put him there. Well, he can sing a new song. No, the Lord must put it in his mouth, then it is praise to God from first to last. Surely now he will never see sorrow any more. But hear him: "I cried unto God with my voice, even unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me." "Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for ever? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in his anger shut up his mercies?" Oh how terrible! David, what are you doing with such an experience? Why not obey and rejoice, and praise the Lord? Ah! poor man! Hear him: "And I said, This is my infirmity," etc. Psa. 77. You, David, a child of God, the sweet singer of Israel, you have an infirmity? That is his word. Ah! this cloud. It obscures my vision of the Sun, and shrouds me in darkness, but in it are the refreshing showers of the gentle rain on the tender grass. Could I be without this? In the world ye shall have

tribulation, said our dear Jesus. What next, David? "For great is thy mercy toward me; and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell." Psa. 86:13

But who is this man David? Is he a common evil doer in Israel? No. A shepherd boy, the slayer of Goliath, the king of the enemies of God's people, a man after God's own heart, and with but one fault. It is he who was the standard for all the kings who were to follow, and whom the Lord called his servant. Then why all this trouble, and such great heaviness? We will let Paul tell us. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Heb. 12:6. Then, David, instead of rebuking you, as a vile sinner in the house of the Lord we extend to you the right hand of fellowship, peace and love as a dear fellow-traveler in the pathway of our God: Here the conditionalism goes down forever. Amen.

How about Isaiah? He saw a wonderful vision, and it was so terrible that he cried, "Then said I, Woe is me; for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips." How do you know? "For mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." Isa. 6:5. Strange that such a wonderful vision should have reflected so much corruption in the beholder. Very far from agency this, and in a child of God, too.

Jeremiah, give us a word. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Isa. 17:9. But was not Jeremiah one of the outcasts to say such as that? Read Jeremiah 1:5, and see that he was ordained by the Lord before he was born, and was kept all the days of his life by the mighty hand of God.

Jonah, we will hear a word from you: was told to go to Nineveh, and preach that in forty days Nineveh should be overthrown. I would not go. I went to the sea and paid my fare to go to Tarshish, but a storm arose, and I was cast into the sea, and swallowed by a great fish. There I was in the belly of hell, and I learned that the Lord was ruler, he made me willing to do his bidding. He taught me that "salvation is of the Lord." and made me willing to pay my vows. Jonah, is that salvation which you say is of the Lord for time and for eternity? It is for now when the great fish will, at the command of the Lord, vomit me up on the dry land to do His commandment to me. Then it is for time. What had he done to bring about that salvation? Absolutely nothing, or it would not be of the Lord. Any part he had done it would be of Jonah.

I will pass from this, Our Lord said, "I can of mine own self do nothing." etc. John 5:30. Was he a free agent?

Paul said, "For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I." Rom. 8:15. Was he a free agent? He surely was a child of God. Read all of it. Again, he said, "For by grace ye are (not were) saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. Eph. 2:8,9 Saved for the present. Are saved. Any free agency in that? Any conditionalism? "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Phil. 2: 17. That is it, is it not? Who were to do this? The most obedient church to which Paul wrote. Not dead sinners, not those Christians who are out of the church, not even the disobedient in the church; but those who have always obeyed. Why, and by what power do they do this? 13th verse: "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good

pleasure." He first works the will. Then every opposition is gone. He, in this way, works the do, and the salvation is worked out. There is nothing in the way when God works in them both the will and the do. Hence it is all of God. The commandment comes to them in the things which the Lord doeth in them. Then who or what can hinder them from working out their salvation? What power can offset, or in any way cause that this commandment of God shall not be done? Therefore there is none who can hinder that salvation from being worked out. It is they that receive the commandment who do it, but it is the Lord who first does it in them. God has possession of that heart, and He does not work disobedience in the heart. He does work in it both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Disobedience is worked in them by following their own lust. But at the time the Lord has appointed for obedience to reign He destroys their lustful powers to that extent that His will is done. Then they are swallowed up of their lust, and it proves to be to them the very belly of hell. There the Lord teaches them to obey His commandment and they do it. Thus they have to be destroyed in themselves before they walk in the commandments of the word. Thus they learn that salvation is of the Lord. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." 2 Tim. 1:9,10. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost. Titus 3:5.

These things show the way we are saved, and the way our salvation is continued in us, and we in it, and when we have done all that is commanded we shall say, I am an unprofitable servant, for so it was my duty to do. The Bible abounds with so much testimony in praise of the Lord, and so much to show that we are grass, and dung, and dross; vile, nothing, cut off, doing nothing good, nothing but filth. I wish I could say it as I feel it, but have no words. I could write a book and not tell the half on either side. The good Lord deliver us from the awful Arminianism of conditionalism, free agency, and all such foxes as come into the vineyard and destroy the vine with its beautiful clusters.

Your brother and friend, hoping only in the grace and mercy of God for salvation for time and eternity.

L. H. Hardy

PLEASE NOTE

WE ARE HAVING A GOOD RESPONSE TO HELP IN INCREASING OUR SUBSCRIPTION LIST. HAVE YOU SENT A SUBSCRIPTION FOR A FRIEND, RELATIVE, OR SOMEONE YOU THINK WOULD BE INTERESTED IN READING THE SIGNS? PLEASE HELP IN THIS REQUEST.

—EDITOR

OBITUARIES

THOMAS EZRA GALLOWAY

God in His infinite wisdom and mercy has removed from the scenes of mortal existence our beloved brother, T. E. Galloway, whose soul departed from his fading tabernacle, Monday, January 12, 1976, to be with heavenly Father. Brother Galloway lived all his 83 years on earth in Wood County, Texas. He was a member of Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church and a retired farmer.

He married Sister Bertha Gilbreath, and to this union were born one son, Elvin Galloway of Winnsboro, and two daughters, Mrs. Grace

Cain of Grand Saline and Mrs. Martha Humphries of Edgewood; all were left to mourn his passing along with one brother, Henry Galloway of Sulphur Springs; eight grandchildren, several nieces and nephews along with many friends.

Brother Galloway had a great zeal and love for the truth and was a regular attendant as long as his health permitted him. He had the name by all who knew him as being a good man, honest and upright, full of kindness and love, always glad to welcome visitors, especially Old Baptists. His greatest joys came while talking and listening to the things pertaining to the wonderful words of his Heavenly Father.

Our church has lost a dearly beloved member. God has removed him from a world of trouble and suffering into a land of joy never again to suffer pain or sorrow. We believe our loss is his eternal gain.

His funeral services were conducted by the writer and Elder C. M. Haygood in Winnsboro Funeral Chapel. Burial was in Rock Hill Cemetery. Written by request of Hopewell Church in Conference, Saturday, April 10, 1976, and resolved that one copy be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication and one copy be kept for church records.

Joe L. Hamrick, Moderator
Audrey Hamrick, Clerk

ANNIE B. CREDLE

May we bow in humble submission in the passing of our beloved sister, Annie B. Credle.

Sister Credle was born in Sladesville, N. C. July 10, 1883, and passed away January 19, 1976, making her stay on earth 92 years, six months and 9 days. She was the daughter of the late William and Eliza Bridgeman. Was married to Richard Y. Credle July 4, 1906, by Elder Wilson Lupton in Belhaven, N. C. This union was separated by death June 12, 1945. She moved to Norfolk, Va., January 1946 and united with the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church June 16, 1946, by Elder R. B. Denson. She loved her church, the doctrine and all it stood for, and lived true and faithful to it and her loved ones. Her mother was a Primitive Baptist, and her grandfather, Elder Albert Cartwright preached for more than 40 years and was one of the original builders of the Primitive Church at Fairfield, N. C.

She leaves two daughters, Mrs. Harvey Williams, with whom she made her home at Virginia Beach, Va., and Mrs. Edward Cotton, Raleigh, N. C., and a sister, Mrs. Lida Williams, Virginia Beach, Va., two grandchildren and four great-grandchildren of Raleigh, N. C.

Her funeral was conducted January 21, 1976 by Elder Linwood McKinney, and she was laid in the arms of mother earth next to her husband in Belhaven Community Cemetery, to wait that glorious morning to see her blessed Savior whom she loved so well.

There is a time to every purpose; a time to be born and a time to die. She had run her course, and was ready to meet her God whom she tried to serve.

Done by order of the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church Marlh 20, 1976.

J. TAYLOR BOYD

Brother J. Taylor Boyd was born on September 14, 1897, in Athens, Texas, and was raised in Rising Star, Texas. It was there that on July 7, 1925, he married Flora Teague, daughter of the late Elder C. B. Teague.

Brother Boyd departed from this life on Sunday afternon, April 4, 1976, in Dallas, Texas, at the age of 78 years, 6 months, and 21 days. He is survived by his wife, Sister Flora Boyd, of Dallas; one daughter, Mrs. Jeannine Walters; three grandchildren: Mrs. Pam Tedford, and Jeff and Phil Walters; one brother, J. George Boyd; one sister, Mrs. Willie Hughes of Rising Star; and a number of nieces and nephews.

Brother Boyd had been a member of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church in Dallas since December 1964, where he served faithfully in the capacity of deacon, to which office he was ordained on January 21, 1968. He loved to travel among the brethren, attending meetings among the churches and associations as long as God in His providence saw fit to have it so.

He rejoiced in the gospel of Jesus Christ, invariably expressing his hope in the shalls and wills of Jehovah and the hope of the resurrection of these mortal bodies in the glorified likeness of his Lord.

Brother Boyd was a valued member among the brethren both at home and abroad in his concern for the affairs of Zion, his steadfastness in doctrine, his Christ-like example of humble forthrightness, and his God-given wisdom in counsel. He is and will be deeply missed by those who have known him.

His body was laid to rest at Laurel Land in Dallas to await the resurrection at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

RESOLVED, by Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church in conference on June 6, 1976, that a copy of this be sent to the family, a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times, and a copy be recorded in the church records.

Elder C. C. Morris, Moderator
Deacon Dean G. Connell, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 144 DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1976 NO. 11

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/76
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

IMPRESSED TO EXPRESS HER FEELINGS

Rt. 3, Box 295, Ruffin, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

I don't feel I can rest until I tell you that I believe the Lord blessed you to preach Christ tonight. When you arose to speak there was a sincere prayer in my heart that the Lord would bless you, and bless me to see Him whom my soul loveth. It seems of late that I go through so many dry seasons, and that I feel separated from all that is holy and righteous. But tonight I felt elevated from the beggarly elements of this vile world and I could see my Lord in His glory. What a beautiful sight it is to behold this One who is my only hope of salvation.

The 53rd chapter of Isaiah has been a precious chapter to me for a long time, because I found Christ there. You spoke of searching the scriptures as a young boy. I too, Brother Spangler, searched the scriptures at an early age. There was a period in my life when I was as staunch an Arminian as anyone, for I was bent on working my way to heaven. This shows the natural tendency of the human nature, for I had attended no church save that of the Primitive Baptist, and yet I knew nothing of their doctrine. I remember well studying the scriptures and even learning some by heart. The first Psalm is an example of this. I learned it by heart, and was so blind as to believe that I could order my walk in such a way as to fit the description of that righteous man spoken of there. But thank the Lord, that He showed me that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Most importantly though, He showed me that I did not have to depend upon my own righteousness, which is as filthy rags, but that salvation is by grace, free and unmerited.

Another scripture had a great attraction for me in that early period, and that was the description of Christ's baptism. I do not know if that attraction was due to the scripture itself, or the beauty of the language in which it was written. I do know that I thought it very beautiful and, if I have been led of the Lord, I believe He was even then bringing me to the knowledge of Him.

In high school I remember defending the doctrine of predestination oftimes in opposition to the whole class, except for a good friend who also felt inclined to defend the truth. And yet I am not sure that I had more than a head knowledge of this precious point of doctrine at that time. I am convinced that even

though I would have told you that I believed in salvation by grace, I did not at that time know the meaning of salvation by grace in my heart.

You remarked tonight of your experience of first hearing the gospel and wanting to hear more. I remember well Elder John Lee Smith preaching from the text, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." This was at a union meeting at Pleasantville, and the first time I remember truly feeling that I had not just heard with my ear, but with my heart.

Not long after this I went to Pine Creek on the 4th of July for the first time, and you preached from the 12th chapter of Hebrews, dwelling on the second verse. As you were so wonderfully blessed to portray a Savior "who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God," my heart was deeply touched, and I felt perhaps there was some hope that He died for me. I do not have the assurance that some have, and I know not whether I be embraced in that covenant, but I do know that if I have any hope it is Christ. He is the only door to heaven, and if I have Him, I need nothing else.

If not deceived, I trust the Lord has broadened my view of Him since I was baptized four years ago. I see Him as the great Mediator between God and man; and the Son of man and the Son of God; as the great High Priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; and the King of kings and Lord of lords; and as the Head of the church; as our Advocate; as a kind and gentle Shepherd; as the only true God and Father, our Lord Jesus Christ. What greater blessing could there be than to be numbered with the brethren of Christ and be a joint-heir with Him? What more could one ask, or even desire?

Brother Spangler, I hope I have not been tedious. I felt a great burden to express what was in my heart. So often I feel that I am as Sister Mary Parker remarked of herself: "When I feel the most, then I am the most silent." I would not be thus, but I cannot do that which I would. Please overlook my errors for good and bear with my weaknesses, as I am the least in my Father's house. Once again, I would express how very much your beautiful sermon meant to me. It is not often that I am blessed to rejoice as I have tonight.

May the Lord continue to bless both you and Sister Spangler. I love you both, I trust, with the unfeigned love of the brethren that I hope has been placed in my heart. If given a mind to, please remember me in prayer.

In bonds of love,

Mary Lee

IS GOD THE AUTHOR OF SIN?

Dearly beloved brethren and sisters:

It has been on my mind for some time to write a few of my feeble thoughts on this subject. I trust that God has indited the matter; if not, then this will be useless trivia.

It was recently brought to my notice that there are some, even among us who profess to be Old Baptists, who believe that God is the author of sin. It is not my intention to try and change their minds; for that is in the good hands of the Lord. I only intend to give my humble opinion and quote a few passages of scripture that I believe sustains my belief.

In Isaiah 45:7 we read, "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." Prov. 16:4 states, "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Job says, "His hand hath formed the crooked serpent." God has a purpose in all these things, and He knew that sin would enter the world; but He did not create sin, because sin is not something that was created: it is the transgression of the law. John gives us a very positive definition of sin: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4). I can in no way agree that God is the author of sin in that He would cause any man to transgress His holy law: for to do that would be charging God with sin. Under what law could He be charged? The law of man? God is the Lawgiver and His laws are just and holy. We are not even tempted of God to sin. In Jas. 1:13, 14, we read: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lusts and enticed."

When God formed man from the dust of the ground, He made him upright, but subject to fall. "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." (Rom. 8:20). To be subject to something, one must of necessity be under its power. God placed Adam in the Garden of Eden and gave him a commandment. This commandment was given before Eve was taken from his body and returned to him as his help meet; but Eve was in Adam when the law was given, therefore she was subject to the law. Eve did also know the law (Gen. 3:2, 3), but was deceived by the serpent. She ate of the forbidden fruit, gave to Adam, and he did eat. Neither of them was tempted or forced of God to break the only law He had given. Eve was a type of the church, and Adam a type of Christ. Eve was deceived, but Adam knew what he was doing. He could not bring back his wife, therefore he went to her. This was a shadow of what Christ would do for His bride, the church. And as Eve was in Adam when the commandment was given, so was all his posterity. Adam is the federal head of all the Adamic race; and because of this relationship we are all charged with this transgression of the law. Paul says in Rom. 5:12-14, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him who is to come.")

As I stated earlier, sin is the transgression of the law, God has a purpose in it, He in no way is the cause of the transgression. Let us suppose, however, that God did force, tempt, or in some manner cause us to sin. (May He forgive the thought!) In such a case what would be the need for mercy? for the agony and death of Christ? for repentance? We are helpless creatures, completely dependent upon Him for all our strength, and have nothing with which to resist His sovereign will. We would then be able to rightly say, "Who hath resisted his will? Why does he yet find fault?" It is a very shameful thing

therefore to suppose that God would cause one of His creatures to sin in order that He might have mercy on him only after he had done what he had no power to resist in the first place. Is it reasonable to believe He would do this to have reason to send His beloved Son into the world to suffer and die? The thought is blasphemous.

When Adam died in trespasses and sin all of his posterity was in his loins and therefore died with him; but God had a people, chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundations of the world; a people whom He has loved with an everlasting love (Jer. 31:3), a people to whom He gave His only begotten Son, (John 10: 29 and 3:16). These same people hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sin. (Eph. 2:1). We (I say "we" because I have a hope, if I am not utterly deceived, that I am included), are passed from death unto life (John 5:24), because of His great love, mercy and grace.

Sin dwells in all flesh, but when one has been regenerated, born again of the Spirit, there is constant warfare between the Spirit and the flesh; therefore do we witness with Paul, "Oh wretched man that I am! who shall deliver my from this body of death? I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Dearly beloved, can you witness with me when I say I feel to be the greatest sinner ever born, and that I in time past freely and even joyously served sin in my flesh; and if it were not for the love, mercy and grace of God, I would still be a child of wrath even as others. It is my heart's desire and prayer unto the most high, holy and righteous God that you can thus witness with me. May He continue to bless you in all things; and may it be His holy will that you remember this poor worm of the dust when you are at the throne of grace. May He bless this effort to the edification and comfort of His children. Please place a mantle of charity over my many mistakes. All praise and glory be to the Father, from whom comes all good and perfect gifts. If I be not deceived of my poor sinful heart, I love each of you for Christ's sake.

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IN MEMORY OF ELDER AND SISTER GEORGE RUSTON

We are publishing the obituary of Sister Esther Ruston in this issue, written by Elders D. A. McColl and J. S. McColl. We are also publishing some very interesting accounts of incidents in Elder and Sister Ruston's life among the brethren, which we have taken from information furnished by their son, Dr. Frank Ruston. They often visited the churches and associations in the northern and eastern parts of our country, and are well remembered for their pleasant conversation and his able preaching, and for his Editorials in the Signs of the Times.—Editors.

Mother was born December 29, 1889 at 9 Gunter Grove, Chelsea, London, England, the daughter of Benjamin and Rhoda Martha (Barber) Aston. She met Dad at the age of 16 years at Chapel—noticed him because of "his beautiful tenor voice" and found out later that he was a student of the Royal College of Art in London.

Their love increased, and after her 21st birthday, led to her crossing the Atlantic on the Lusitania, meeting Dad in New York, and they were married in

Athens, Ohio, at his brother Will's home January 14, 1911. After a residence in Zanesville Ohio, they returned to England on account of the illness of Dad's mother, and I was born January 18, 1912. Dad returned to New York and got a position as a sculptor with an architectural firm; and Mother returned to America with me at 14 months old.

In the mean time Dad had found the Old School Baptists at the Ebenezer Church in New York and they became great friends of Elder John McConnell. Mother and Dad had come from Strict Baptist families and it seemed they had found a home, for "the people were lovely to us, and we dearly loved them."

Both Mother and Dad had for some time been going through a period of chastening from spiritual exercises. In fact after the birth of Rhoda July 4, 1913 she had a hemorrhage, and wrote, "I was so weak I got into a terribly bad condition, (physically and mentally). George had wanted to join the church in New York, and wanted me to go too, but I told him I had nothing I could tell them; and to go on without me, but he would not. He was tempted to think he had driven me crazy talking religion to me."

That evening when they were reading the scriptures, Mother wrote, "My mind was caught away from what he was reading, I saw clearly Jesus suffering on the cross, bowed down by my burden, and suddenly, (like the woman Jesus had healed who had been bowed down and could in no wise straighten herself up, and He laid hands on her and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God), I could stand upright. I told George but he thought it was just another phase of my melancholy. I could hardly wait until I could go to meeting and tell those dear people what the Lord had done for me. I told Elder McConnell my story, and he called the church together after the afternoon service. They received me: and then Elder McConnell said, 'What are you going to do, Mr. Ruston?' He said, 'I've been waiting until I felt fit, but it says that the saints shall judge angels, so I will let them judge me;' and he was received too."

Mother and Dad were baptized December 14, 1913 by Elder McConnell. Dad was licensed to preach in 1915, and was ordained in 1916. In the spring of 1917 Dad accepted to be pastor to the churches of the Roxbury Association, and his and Mothers' membership was transferred to the 1st Roxbury Church at Vega. (Later the Lexington-Roxbury Association).

Mother was an ever mindful, loving mother to her family, a helpmate to her husband, ever available to help her neighbors from her practical and St. John's Ambulance nurses training. She was a true mother in Israel, for she complemented Dad's ministry, whether it was a Bible reference, visiting the sick and afflicted, or sharing a large correspondence.

In August, 1929, after a period of grave doubts, Dad was led to accept a call as pastor to the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, where the joint ministry which started in the Catskill Mountains continued. Their home in Dutton was a haven to their family and to the church as a whole.

Mother was cared for following the death of Elder Ruston in the summer of 1972, in the Babier Convalescent Home in Dutton, where she died October, 28, 1975. Her spiritual life was really her all to her, even though it was a series of ups and downs, as she puts it in a

diary entry, "Have had sweet little helps by the way, but often cannot write them down, and they slip out of my mind. 'My head thou dost with oil anoint, and my cup overflows.' It was not so much the words as the feeling accompanying them: such a gratitude to God that He should have mercy on such a weak, helpless, unworthy one as I, and gave me a hope in His mercy. I feel a warming of heart and a little lift by the way. Have many sweet things to look back on in my life when the Lord has appeared for my help. Some may wish they could be young again, but I do not. I feel I have something far better to look forward to, as Abraham, who 'looked for a city which hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God. For here we have no continuing city, but seek one to come.' How I have to thank God for His goodness to us in giving us His Word and applying it to us as food when we need it."

(See Obituary in this issue)

ISAIAH 45:7

(Concluded from last month)

God is an holy, righteous God and man has transgressed the law. Who is man to attempt to hide his sins behind the predestination of God? "To shew that the Lord is upright; he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him." (Psa. 92:15). Please keep in mind that the scriptures state there is not any unrighteousness in God. In John 5:17, we read that "all unrighteousness is sin." Again, sin does not come from God. If it did, then God would be unrighteous. Please think about that. John 7:18 also states there is no unrighteousness in God.

Now God certainly did have a purpose for sin to enter into the world. God created the devil. "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent." (Job 26: 13). It was in the decree, counsel, purpose, foreknowledge, predestination or providence of God that man would fall. Let us say it this way: God had a purpose in the fall of man. In the purpose of God, He had already made provisions for the remedy of the fall before the event took place. This knowledge is too wonderful for us! "Oh the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor?" (Rom. 11:33, 34).

What a difference between sin and righteousness! It is man that sins. The righteousness that is acceptable to God is not a product of the flesh. Our own righteousness (of the flesh) is as filthy rags in God's sight. "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:13). The righteousness that is acceptable to God has been produced by the Spirit of God. Man does not have anything to boast about (See Rom. 3:27). "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you and ordained you that you should bring forth fruit." Works of the Spirit or good fruit mean the same. Let us sum the matter up. Man does the sinning and God does the saving.

We quote from the London Confession of Faith, No. 4, ch. 5: Of Divine Providence: "The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom and infinite goodness of God, so far manifest themselves in His providence, that His determinate counsel extendeth itself even to the first fall, and all other sinful actions both of angels and men; (Rom. 11:32-34; 2 Sam. 24:1; 1 Chron. 21:1) and that not by a

bare permission, which also he most wisely and powerfully boundeth, and otherwise ordereth and governeth, (2 Kings 19:23; Psa. 76:10, in a manifold dispensation to His most holy ends, (Gen. 50:20; Isa. 10:6:6, 7, 12) yet so as the sinfulness of their acts proceedeth only from the creatures, and not from God, who, being most holy and righteous, neither is nor can be the author or approver of sin." (Psa. 50:21; 1 John 2:16).

Dear reader, please notice carefully that sin proceeds from man and not from God. God created the wicked, but He did not create his wicked acts. "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." (Prov. 16:4). The wicked acts are sinful. Yet the creature was made subject to vanity. (Rom. 8:20)

It has been said that the day of evil means the time when the children of God go through great tribulations. That is a good thought and if not deceived, I do believe it. Now I quote from Elder Samuel Trott, pg. 68, in the book, Predestination: "By the day of evil, we understand, the day in which God brings evil upon His people or upon others. It has pleased God to bring His church and people through great tribulations; from whence are their tribulations to arise but from the persecutions of the wicked?" Predestination by Elder R. L. Dodson.

Now, God is a sin-hating God. He is an Holy God, and a just God. "For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: Neither shall evil dwell with thee. The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity." (Psa. 5:4, 5).

We certainly believe that God has a purpose in the wicked, who are the sword of the Lord. "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." Zech. 13:7. We are glad to know that God restrains the wicked acts of men.

We read that blood thirsty men will not live out half their days. (See Psa. 55:23). Hitler did not live out the days he would desire. He would have loved to conquer the world. I believe the scripture means that these cruel men shall not live out half the days of their expectation. By this, we can see the connection with Ecc. 3:2: "A time to be born, and a time to die. . . "

"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints." (1 Cor. 14:33). These two words "the author" are added words by the translators. The original is: "God is not of confusion, but of peace in all the churches of the saints." The meaning is that God is never confused and cannot be a part of confusion. "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." (John 23:13).

God works in ways that are beyond our understanding. We cannot understand the ways of God. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isa. 55:8, 9). God used a lying spirit to carry out His purpose. (See 1 Kings 22:20-23). God has a purpose in sending strong delusion, and who are we to question why? "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all

might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness". (2 Thess. 2:11, 12). Please keep in mind that God is not of or a part of their confusion.

What does the word author mean? Webster's Dictionary gives this definition: "the maker of anything, creator, originator." If not deceived in my poor heart, it is with the spirit of love that I say the following: I wonder if those who believe that God is the author of sin really understand what they are advocating?

"The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth." (Eccl. 12:10). In my opinion, they are not "acceptable words," to advocate that God is the author of sin. Expressions as these are misleading and tend to stir up confusion among the brethren. It is better to advocate expressions that are easy to be understood. (See 1 Cor. 14:9)

The scriptures do not support one in blaming God for his sins or hiding them behind predestination. David did not blame God for his grievous sin after he had committed adultery with Bathsheba, and was responsible for the death of her husband. He acknowledged that he had done it. "For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, and thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.. . ." (Psa. 51:3, 4).

Peter did not try to blame God for his sin in denying Jesus. "And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly." (Luke 22: 60-62).

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. . ." (John 14:27) God is an holy God, and His people are spoken of as an holy nation. (1 Peter 2:9.

In closing, it is with much fear and trembling that I say I believe we are living in the latter days. The scriptures must be fulfilled and they tell us what must take place before the end of the world.

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine: but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears." (2 Tim 4:3). "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." (1 Tim. 4:1). It causes us to fear and tremble as we think of this expression: "In the latter times some shall depart from the faith." Almighty God has decreed that the time must come when some shall depart from the faith. The question comes to me: Will the Lord continue to bless me to hold to the truth and to bear witness to His name, or turn His back upon me and allow me to be one of those that shall depart from the faith? It is only through the mercy, grace and strength of the Lord that we can stand. As it is written: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4:13).

May the Lord bless us to press on for the mark of the prize of the high calling as it is in Christ Jesus. (See Phil. 3:13, 14). "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witness, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us,

and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb. 12:1, 2). May the Lord bless us to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. (Jude 3).

May God bless us to hold to the truth, and seek the presence of God, and not seek after the favor of man. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." (Col. 3:

May God bless the truth in honor and praise and glory unto His holy name. 1-3).

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(Please Note: The scripture reference given as Gal. 1:30 in the second paragraph of the above article in October issue should be Col. 1:20)

WHAT MANNER OF LOVE

"Behold, (observe with care) *what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."* 1 Jno. 3:1, 2.

In the foregoing, John, the apostle, and one of the twelve princes sitting upon twelve thrones, gives no occurrence of anything taking place, nor gives the least space of time between Christ's appearance and when we shall be like Him, and see Him as He is. Again Paul, the apostle, and one of the princes sitting on the twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, has the following to say in bearing witness to the same truth as John, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall all be changed." (1 Cor. 15:51, 52). Here again the apostle gives no occurrence of anything taking place between the sound of the trumpet, and "the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall all be changed." with the exception of, "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye."

Again, this apostle of the Lamb of God writes, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (Thess. 4:13-18).

Again this same apostle writes, "For our conversation is in heaven from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our

vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Phil. 3:20, 21). This change and fashioning our vile body is in accord with all the foregoing scripture; and indeed all the holy scriptures treating on the glorious resurrection of all the saints of God.

In speaking of the vile body, Paul said, " . . . It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." Therefore, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. 15:51-58).

All the foregoing scripture, and all the other scripture treating on the change and resurrection of the saints of God in Christ's likeness, have been and still are of great comfort to me; we have every reason to believe that they were to the apostles who were given the revelation to see, believe and write the scriptures. Furthermore, the apostles believed that the same teaching would be of great comfort to all the people of Christ's kingdom in this life, throughout the gospel dispensation; otherwise they would not have exhorted them, saying, "Wherefore, comfort ye one another with these words." And these words were, as he had previously stated, "by the word of the Lord."

The prophet in reference to the redemption by the atonement Jesus made and accomplished for His people, writes "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath (past tense) received of the Lord's hand, double for all her sins." Isa. 40:1,2. So, likewise, just as the atonement Christ made for the sins of His people, is comforting to them, so is the doctrine of the resurrection of Christ, and of all His people, to be glorified in His likeness the very instant He personally appears unto them in all His glory, is of great comfort to them. And will be the fulfilling of their hope, and will be the fulness of joy, peace and rest in Jesus' likeness, to ever be with the Lord. For, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

Now, we believe with all our heart and mind both by experience and the teaching of the scriptures, that ". . . the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all (all manner of) men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this

present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus 2:11-14).

All of these good works are wrought in them by the same spirit of grace which teaches them; and its teaching includes correction, reproving and rebuking, the trying of their faith, though it be tried as by fire, but afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby.

After Paul had admonished the brethren, saying, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ: that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad," he followed it by saying, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." Therefore we are persuaded that Paul not only knew the terror of the Lord by revelation, or the Old Testament, but by experience also, just as every child of grace knows it. For he most surely was one of these sons, "whom the Lord loveth" and chastens and scourges. (Job 5:17; Heb. 12:5; Rev. 3:10). Likewise one of those sons which John speaks of, "But we do know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is," and be one of the many sons which the Captain of their salvation will bring to glory. Surely, there is no greater evidence that a child of grace can have in this life that Christ loved him and atoned for his sins, than that He chastises and scourges him. "For if we be without chastisement, wherewith all (sons) are partakers, then they are bastards and not sons."

The dear Lord of glory is not charging their sins to them by chastising them but simply bringing them to, and giving them repentance for the sins which He has (past tense) already atoned for. This is exactly what He (Jesus) is exalted a Prince and a Savior to do—"to give repentance to Israel, and the forgiveness of sins." This is directly in accord with His promise which He promised in the New Covenant, swearing to it and sealed it with His precious blood, saying, "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." All of our righteousness of the flesh is as filthy rags in his sight, and therefore we are taught and convicted that we are poor, needy wretches of ourselves, and therefore can only be a spared vessel of mercy: which mercy the dear Lord has promised to His chosen people, and for which mercy they humbly and sincerely desire and pray for. Likewise, they hunger and thirst after righteousness, and have His promise that they will be filled therewith in the glorious resurrection in His likeness. Here we have an earnest hope, faith and assurance that there we will receive the fulness in Jesus' likeness; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

David ignorantly passed the sentence of death upon himself; but when the prophet told him. "Thou art the man," he confessed, "I have sinned against the Lord." Nathan said to him, "The Lord also hath put away thy sin." But Nathan further told David, ". . . the sword shall never depart from thine house," etc. (2 Sam. 12). This is evidence that though the Lord had put away David's sin, charging them to Christ Jesus, yet he would be chastised of the Lord, and

have to continually repent, begging for mercy and forgiveness: just as he testified to throughout his writings in the Psalms, saying, "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, according to thy lovingkindness; according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions." Thus David's entire writing is a mixture of joy and sorrow, repentance and praise, which was from his heart in the Spirit of Christ Jesus. If David had not had faith, hope and assurance that the Lord had put away his sin by the sacrifice of Himself, but would remember his sin against him at a later date, then he would have been of all men most miserable—without God or hope in the world. But instead, he did have these assurances, and could thereby say, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." (Psa. 17:15.)

The poor woman brought to Christ condemned by the law of Moses, yet no man was worthy to condemn her, except Christ; and He did not, saying unto her, "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more." And, while Jesus could and did forgive this poor woman's sins, just as He forgives all His people, even the chief of sinners, simply because and upon the ground that He would meet and satisfy divine justice in their stead by His own sacrifice and atoning blood upon the cursed cross; being made a curse for them. However, neither this woman nor David, nor any other of the Lord's people can forgive themselves of their sins: for God only by the sacrifice of His own Son can forgive sins. Regardless of how much they may seek repentance as Esau did with tears, God only sovereignly holds the key of repentance of forgiveness of sins. He, and He alone prepared Himself an offering in the person of His true, darling, eternal Son, in truth and love. He was the offering, the only offering which He prepared for the redemption, sanctification, justification of His people. (Gen. 22:8; Heb. 10:5). And He (Jesus) being made perfect, who thereby obtained eternal redemption for His people, whereby nothing in time nor in eternity can be laid to their charge. Everything that Jesus did as a Redeemer and Savior of His people, He did it for them, and it is theirs by gift, set to their credit and benefit in the very presence and pleasure of the Majesty on high. And He is perfectly satisfied, reconciled and glorified, both in Himself and in His Son and in His people. And we truly, faithfully and sincerely hope that we believe that the Triune Jehovah, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, are three persons, but one in the essence of the divine nature. And that all He has ever done or ever will do, it is in perfect wisdom, righteousness and judgment, without any variableness or shadow of a turn. We further believe that all scripture is given by divine revelation, and is the only authority given for our faith, order and practice: whether it be in nature or grace, natural or spiritual, earthly or divine. All of which we are wholly and completely dependent upon the sovereign providence and grace of the all wise, almighty, true and living God of heaven, earth and all deep places.

"Now to him that is able to keep you (us) from falling, and present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior be glory and Majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen." (Jude 23, 25)

John L. Sanders
Tuscaloosa, Ala.

SOME THOUGHTS ON BEING UNABLE TO MEET WITH THE BRETHREN

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

I missed being with you Sunday and hearing about our dear Lord. I felt like I wanted you to know some of the things that are in my heart tonight as I was sitting here with such sweet thoughts of my dear brothers and sisters of the church.

What a sweet joy to meet together in the Lord's house and to feel the love of God all around. The great, almighty God has shown me so much love and sweet fellowship among the Old School Baptist people, that I could never thank Him enough. If I could only write all the joys and the sweet moments I have with the Lord! How to express such sweet hope is beyond me. Such a low, vile worm of the dust I am to be brought forth with what it is like to live in Christ, and in hope of the great joy to live beyond with our dear Savior and Lord, is almost more than this poor sinner can stand: For Him to help and lead us through this wicked world to the great beyond.

I thank Him for the sweet love and fellowship of all my brothers and sisters, and I pray that I shall never do anything to harm or hurt any of them in any way. May I be blessed to live with them, and die with them, and meet in the great beyond.

I am looking forward to Sunday, and if it is the Lord's will, may we meet in His house to hear our dear pastor tell us more about the One we never get tired of hearing about.

With love and sweet fellowship,

Nannie Potter

ENJOYED THE MEETING

Rt. 1, Ruffin, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler:

Both Fred and I enjoyed the Dan River meeting last fourth Sunday. When the preacher comes there is food given God's ministers to feed the poor and afflicted people of God. I don't know that I am one. I have hope from time to time from evidence given to one who feels she is less than the least of all saints; not worthy of the notice of God or His dear family, and made to beg God for mercy, not justice.

The preacher is Jesus—precious and dear is this One. He is the One we desire to praise above every name. There is none like unto Him. Man will fail many times; He never. Much rather could this sinful creature have one precious promise be given from Him, than to be the possessor of all the world. He came to me when I was in much trouble, saying, "Though all men may forsake you, I will never leave nor forsake you," and mine eyes ran down with tears as I felt encircled in His arms.

So often have I reached back to such dear scenes and tried to recall the sweetness, the dearness of His sweet presence. I am unable to do so of self. He must show again these things, the blind see, the lame walk, and the poor have the gospel preached unto them. Oh, how this should keep us beggars and open our hearts to receive the pure food God's ministers give to the hungry souls. The name of Jesus is praised in taking the things of Him and shewing them to His little children. Oh that one as I should be counted worthy to suffer with Him. What a blessing!

If we love Him, it is because He first loved us, and gave Himself for us. I believe I know what it means to go out and

weep bitterly over the errors of my ways also. I hope the tears I am made to shed are repenting tears, when none but He alone can see them—alone, yet not alone, cast down, but not forsaken.

Out of the depths of wo,
To Thee, O Lord, I cry,
Darkness surrounds me as I go,
But Thou art ever nigh.

Fred joins we in love to both you and your dear companion.

A sinner,

Louise Cobb

HOPE SEEMS LITTLE AT TIMES

Elizabeth City, N. C.

Dear Elder and Sister Spangler:

It is time for me to renew my subscription, so am sending check for two years with a little over to use as you see fit. I do look forward each month for the coming of the Signs. I am glad we have people that can write so wonderfully, that we poor worms of the dust can read and be blessed to understand it to the joy of our souls. It is a great help when we do not have a way to go to church very often. I just feel so far away most of the time. I am hoping and praying He will bless me to wait on Him that He will never forsake me utterly. Oh, I long to feel His presence. I still have that little hope He will visit me once again.

Our hope seems little at times; it is all we have to cling to. But for it, we could not go on in this life. The Lord has been so good to me. It was so good to be up in Maryland and to see you and Sister Spangler once more, and hear you and Elder Poole preach so sweetly. It was a great joy. It is a wonderful place to visit. Beadie and I felt like we had been to an association when we got home. It is not long before we long to hear it again. I wish I could go to the meetings more often, but I don't drive like I once did. I hope and pray the Lord will enable me to be contented with whatever my lot is in life.

Sister Spangler, I hope you are doing all right by now. Also hope this will find you both well and able to enjoy the meetings up your way. I was glad, Brother Spangler, to read the Editorial on Gospel Order. An interest in your prayers I crave.

In sweet fellowship,

Sister Catherine Vass

THE TRUE REDEEMER

When the true and living Savior has been revealed to a heart and soul, then we lay down old fantasies and traditions of men and follow Jesus Christ, who has forever saved His chosen people. The old has passed away and we see our living and precious Redeemer, whose name is Jesus We do not esteem one day above another, but worship our Lord every day, and praise His holy name for His love, mercy and grace towards lowly sinners such as we.

It is then that we long to be perfect and holy, and instead we see ourselves as filthy rags. It is then that we know that we know that salvation is truly of the Lord, and not of ourselves. How helpless and unworthy we feel when our Redeemer reveals Himself unto us. It is then that we see ourselves as we truly are, and cry out for mercy. It is then that we learn that we can do nothing to merit our salvation, but all must be in and through the death and resurrection of our precious Lord and Savior. When He died and arose He forever sealed the salvation of His people. Only His chosen can know and understand this precious truth. He said, "My sheep hear

my voice, and a stranger they will not follow." How true this is!

The day I heard my Savior's voice, I was no longer able to follow the doctrines and traditions of man. And I learned what it meant to bear the cross when He said, "Take up thy cross and follow me." It was then that we learned we had a cross to bear. Oh how heavy that cross became to me for a long time. The anguish, the sorrow and bitter agony of my soul cannot be described by mortal man. Only those who have experienced it can know of what I speak. It is truly through much tribulation that we enter the kingdom where there is joy unspeakable and full of peace of heart and soul, which the world knows nothing of.

It is in Jesus' name alone,
My Father that I pray;
No other name to me is known,
For Jesus is the Way.
It was for me He bore the cross
Of agony and shame,
That I may never suffer loss,
But enter by His name.

The nailprints in His precious hands,
My Father, are for me:
He met for me all sin's demands:
He won the victory.
It is for me my Savior lives,
Before Thy holy throne;
Eternal life He freely gives,
To those who are Thine own.

Ethel Gilliland,
P. O. Box 103,
Panama City, Fla. 32401.

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—EDITORS

NOTICE OF MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the Staunton River Union is to be held, the Lord willing, with Cane Creek Church, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before, in October, 1976. The Church is located on Highway 726, near Ringgold, Pittsylvania County, Virginia.

All who love the truth are invited to meet with us.

Fannie D. Wiles, Clerk
Elder R. S. Payne, Moderator

ANNUAL THANKSGIVING MEETING AT DAN RIVER CHURCH

The Annual Thanksgiving Meeting will be held, God willing, at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church (Mayfield community) at 7:00 P. M. Elder James Poole is appointed to speak.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Pastor

Danville, Virginia **November, 1976**

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EDITORIAL

MEN HAVE A WAY OF THEIR OWN

It is very grievous to those who know something of the working of the Spirit in their hearts, and are brought into the realities of true spiritual worship, to read in the public press and to hear through various mediums such as we quote:

"Mass evangelism, which only a few years ago was thought outmoded, is reappearing with dynamic impact.

By brilliant salesmanship, moving preaching, capable management, the arts of the hippodrome and amphitheatre are again winning men and women to Christ. Those who find God by this method, and who resolve to live a new life, are being integrated into the churches by the most skilful educational evangelism yet developed."

—Washington Daily News.

To say that we may not expect anything else of men does not alleviate the distress. We are reminded of the feelings of Lot, as stated by the apostle Peter: "And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked. For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds."

For more than forty years we have been reading and hearing, and sometimes seeing, the various doctrines and ways in which many present what they call the gospel, and the manner which they proclaim men are brought to Christ. With all this, we ask ourselves the question, How can men profess that the Bible is their authority — their only authority—and yet believe and proclaim as they do. Surely it is demonstrated that there are yet those whose eyes have not seen, ears have not heard, neither have entered into their hearts, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.

What child of grace, who sees and hears these things—these melodramatic methods of stirring up the flesh to fear and profession, does not realize the travesty upon wonderful and serious matters!

To some extent we were partaker of these things in our youth; so we can testify that men believe and practice only what they know. And it must be remembered that there is a way which seems right to them. But it also must be remembered that these things are always contrary to the revealed things of God; for, the carnal mind is enmity against God.

Perhaps there are not many who are insincere in what they do. But sincerity of purpose can never be held as authority for transcending the very fundamentals of revelation. Evidently there are not many who actually believe the Bible to be the written word of God—the revelation which God has given of His decrees and purposes. How many profess that it is, and at the same time believe and teach contrary to it! How many profess a zeal for the glory and power of God, and yet would limit the accomplishment of His purposes to the will and desire of men!

We are satisfied that the reason for such is that men neither know God, nor themselves — neither know the power and majesty of God, nor themselves as dead in trespasses and sins. But whether they know it or not, these things are true. To be dead in this sense is to be dead to all things spiritual, and to be without means or ability to rise above the things they have by the "spirit of man." In this condition men have only a natural religion; and while they profess to believe in and worship the true and living God, they have their own notions about the matter, and are at variance with the things God has revealed.

It is impossible to reconcile their belief and practices with the plain import of revelation. And we may be sure that God makes no compromise with them. When God told Moses, "See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount," he was explicit. (Heb. 8:5). When Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," He was explicit. (John 6:37) So was the apostle when he said, "As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." (Gal. 1:9). And do we not read, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. 3: 16, 17).

So, all truth is laid before us by the voice of authority: and no man can go beyond (or fall short of) these things without disclaiming himself.

There is a situation which is not recogized by many, but which we must call attention to. And that is, the departure which began even in the days of the apostles and grew step by step during the years. These things the apostles warned against. They renounced the new things and those who taught them. Nevertheless, under the leadership of those who were far removed from the teachings of the Spirit, during the second and following centuries, many things were added both in doctrine and practice, until those who retained the name of Christians were so far removed from the pattern that scripture criterion meant little to them. Yet with all of this, it must be remembered that there were many who stood firmly against these new things, and those who followed them, are the ones who preserved the true doctrine and order of the gospel; and that these and these alone are they who worship God in Spirit and truth.

It is often stated by them that we need to return to the "old time gospel." But in returning, they must not stop at the things of the Nineteenth Century, nor at the so-called Reformation, nor at the Third, nor yet at the Second Century, but all the way back to the apos-

tolic teaching, before there could be a returning to the old time gospel. Our readers may easily trace these departures in any of the many histories available, such as, Hassell's, Mosheim's, Neander's, Jones', Orchard's, and many others.

We have often pondered over the fact that a great majority of the members of religious bodies today (and during the centuries) are not concerned any farther than the teachings of their own leaders. They are followers of men. They are not interested enough to inquire into matters of doctrine and practices; and even if any are interested, they can find nothing wrong unless stirred up of the Spirit to make an honest inquiry. Such is the darkness that prevails in the hearts of both teachers and pupils.

These teachers would have us believe that we are not dead in trespasses and sins: not dead to spiritual things in our Adamic life, but that we have it within our ability to go far beyond the realm of nature and enter into the things of the Spirit of God. And this is in spite of the declaration of inspiration — by Jesus Himself—that men cannot see the kingdom of God except they are born again; and who declared it to be beyond the natural abilities of men by saying, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." So being born of the Spirit does not mean that by exercise of their natural wills men may bring themselves to this birth. It does not mean that a person may decide to change his ways, "accept Christ," and go through a form of baptism (baptismal regeneration), and are thereby born of the Spirit. Thousands have done this who show no fruits of the Spirit; and we may safely say that thousands have "accepted Christ," whom Christ has never known in a saving sense, and who are as graceless as they ever were. Their very walk and talk proves it.

So, what do we have in today's "Return to Faith?" Why it is the same they have ever contended for. Thousands flock to their revivals — and what do they hear?: God sent His Son Jesus Christ into the world to save the fallen race of Adam, and that He has sent preachers, evangelists, etc., to present it to all men, and to use every means possible to persuade all men to accept the salvation offered; for God requires that men renounce the devil and the ways of sin, and believe on Jesus Christ; which they can do if they will. Men can be born again (which many will admit it is necessary) by showing their willingness, by prayer, being baptized and joining a church, etc. And that they can keep themselves in the way of salvation by keeping the faith, supporting the cause, and being full of good works, until they will finally inherit their reward for well doing when they leave this world.

That the above is the substance of modern preaching cannot be denied. We have ourself heard the terrors of hell described before unregenerated people with such agonizing fury that they have become so afraid of the devil that, in order to escape, they will attempt to do anything they are told to do. Their fear is such that they grasp at a straw; and the straw is nothing more than human will and effort. They make a profession, but many of their professions amount to nothing more than, If they will do the best they can—the best they know,

then God will reward them for their good intentions. Do not these say that God can do nothing for you unless you will let Him; do not they say that you must choose whom you will serve; do they not contend that God has done all He can, but that He wants every body to be saved?

But we forbear to pursue the subject further, except to say that when the end comes, when Christ shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father: when He shall have put down all rule and authority. (For He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet), and the last enemy, death, is destroyed, then every one of these whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life will be safely in the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world; and there won't be a stranger to the amazing grace of God among them.

How clearly the apostle summed up the faith of God's elect in the eighth chapter of Romans when he wrote: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things, If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

We would not have any feel that we are opposed to moral teaching for the betterment of society. We are as much concerned about juvenile delinquency, etc., as anybody. But we do wish to be understood as saying that human agencies acting on human intellect and conscience, go no further than human capacities for reform; and cannot be rightly called religion — that is, of the Lord Jesus Christ. Nor is this sort of reform worshiping of God in Spirit and in truth.

(While contemplating the present state of religion, we remembered that more than 20 years ago we had written somewhat on the same subject, and finding that it suited our present thoughts, we publish it again.

It is good to realize anew what the Lord has saved us from, and has given us a hope of eternal life, which He promised before the world began.—J. D. W.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

SAMSON'S RIDDLE

"Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." *Judges* 14:14.

The greatest thing in the world is love, and of all the various manners of love the love of God is the greatest. The Bible abounds in love narratives, most all of them looking forward to, or having their source springing out of the greatest love story of all: that of Christ and the church.

It is a singular thing that man is so fashioned that he likes to dwell on the subject of love. Books of fiction, we suppose, are more widely read and bring in their authors more remuneration than any other class of literature, and there are very few works of fiction but have a thread of love-narrative running through them. The fact that there is in human nature a principle which this sort of thing appeals to, makes such books profitable to those who put them on the market.

But of all the love-themes that ever occupied the minds of men, none are worthy of comparison with that love which the almighty God bore and still bears toward His people in His Son, Christ. This is a theme of love which only the pure mind, the spiritual mind, of the true believer can rightly contemplate, for the natural or carnal mind cannot know the things of God, since divine things are discerned only in the light of the Spirit. The most remarkable thing about Samson was his great strength, and had it not been for his strength he would never have had any riddle to propose to his enemies. That which called forth the exhibition of Samson's strength on this occasion was his love for a woman. Samson's life prior to his love experience is summed up in two short Bible verses telling of his birth, growth and of the Spirit's moving him. The Bible can be wonderfully brief and condensed when there is nothing of spiritual import to be recorded; again, it can be wonderfully elaborate and extensive when every minute detail has its spiritual import. Much space is given to the love affair of Samson with the woman of Timnath, while his childhood and youth are passed over in almost silence. This must be, because the love of Samson contains a spiritual lesson for the people of God.

It is this spiritual truth we desire to arrive at. Now, Samson was an Israelite, but he loved a woman of Timnath, and the people of Timnath were Philistines, that is, they were Gentiles. Being Gentiles, they were aliens to all things Jewish. They were strangers to the covenant under which Israel lived. However, there is no telling what love will do. It is more likely, much more likely, to leap over the barriers of caste and nationality than it is to confine itself to one's own class or race or creed. Samson's father and mother were at a loss to understand his affection for this strange woman, and questioned him: "Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines?" But parents rarely have much influence in the love affairs of their children nowadays, and it was so hundreds of years ago in the judgeship of Samson. Samson asked not his parents to choose a wife for him, but followed the bent of his own heart, much as the young of this age now do. Now Samson, with all his imperfections, was a type of Jesus. He had to have imperfections, else he would have been too near like the Savior, and there could be, nor can be but one Jesus. He must have the pre-eminence in all things, hence each and every type throughout the Old Testament possesses singular blemishes which compel them to fall short of the substance they portray. Thus Samson had his faults to prove him mortal; yet, notwithstanding this, he foreshadowed the immortal.

Jesus said: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I must bring." Jesus had sheep which were outside the Jewish nation; He had a people among the Gentiles; these are the "other sheep." Just as Samson's parents could not understand Samson's love for the foreign woman, so the Jews could not see how the Gentiles could possibly be included in the covenant which God made with their father Abraham. It seemed to Jews that Jews only should share in Messiah's kingdom. Just as Samson's parents thought their son should confine his affections to a woman of his own people, so the Jews believed Messiah, when He

should come, would exalt Israel alone and alone marry her unto himself. But God is able of stones to raise up children unto Abraham; this the Jews knew not. We would say, then, that the Timnath woman represents the church of Jesus among the Gentiles, the "other sheep" not of "this fold." These are by nature strangers to the covenants of promise, "without hope and without God in the world."

Now, between Samson and this woman of Timnath there roared a young lion against him. It is plain that this obstacle must be gotten rid of before he can come to her whom he loves. This young lion represents the barrier between Christ and His Gentile people. This lion is the "handwriting of ordinances that was against us which was contrary to us." This, Jesus took out of the way, nailing them to the cross and making a show of them openly. This handwriting of ordinances was the Mosaic covenant, and embraced all the rituals and ceremonials which God prescribed for the Jews. but which the Gentiles never had anything to do with. Samson rent the young lion as easily as he would have rent a kid, because the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, so that he had supernatural strength, for we are expressly told he had no weapon of any kind in his hand. Just so, Jesus, because the Spirit was poured out upon Him without measure, and without the use of carnal weapons at all, destroyed the Mosaic covenant and put it out of the way. As Samson rent the lion, so the veil of the temple was rent in twain from top to bottom when Jesus cried with a loud voice and gave up the ghost. The law written upon tables of stone was fulfilled by Jesus only in its spiritual significance, literally it held no meaning for Him. So far as the redeemed people of God are concerned, the handwriting of Jewish ordinances came to an end when Jesus died. This was the obstacle between Jesus and His Gentile sheep, and by the presence of the Holy Ghost mightily with Him He put it out of the way.

Some time after Samson had slain the lion, he returned to take this woman he loved, and turned aside to see the carcass of the lion. "Behold, there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcass of the lion." He ate of this sweetness out of that which had formerly stood between him and his love. Jesus had to go away into death and the grave in order to rise from the dead for the justification of His people. Now, being risen, He returns in the Spirit to gather His people unto Himself from the east and from the west. Many are brought from the east and from the west to sit with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God. The north gives up, the south keeps not back, God's sons are brought from afar and His daughters from the ends of the earth. All this has reference to the bringing of God's people among the Gentiles in this present gospel age to the knowledge of the truth. As Samson returned after the slaughter of the lion to take the woman he loved, so Jesus comes back in the Spirit to gather His people from among all nations unto Himself after having taken out of the way the handwriting of ordinances which was against us Gentiles, being contrary to us.

This dead carcass of the lion yields sweetness and food on the return of Samson. So the dead carcass of the "handwriting of ordinances" is made to yield spiriual food to the people of God among all nations when Jesus comes in His Spirit now and takes of these Old Testament feasts and fasts, offerings and

sacrifices, rites, and ceremonies, and opens them up to our understanding as containing deep, spiritual truth. While all those Mosaic ordinances are a dead letter now, and no longer have power to terrorize the children of God, yet out of that dead carcass the spiritual Samson brings forth gospel truth and beauty for the delectation of the saints of God. We see now that the altars of burnt offering and of incense, the table of shew-bread, the seven-branched candlestick, the meat offerings, sin offerings and peace offerings, the Aaronic priesthoood, the feasts, of trumpets, of tabernacles, of the passover and of the Pentecost, the sabbaths, etc., are all things which are dead to the Gentile church now, but when the Spirit of Jesus takes these dead things and breathes gospel meaning into them, we eat meat out of the eater and sweetness out of the strong. This is something which the Gentile people of God are now realizing in this present age of the world. Some of our ministers have been wonderfully gifted to preach from these Old Testament themes and to expound from them gospel doctrine. When this is done, though the handwriting or ordinances has been taken out of the way, the carcass yields honey to the comfort and edification of the inquiring, hungry souls.

We said in the beginning, had it not been for Samson's strength there would have never been any riddle to propound. So, had it not been for the omnipotence of God manifest in Jesus to the overcoming of His enemies, there never would have been any end to the old heavens and earth, therefore no triumph for the new. Hence there would have been no carcass for the bees to swarm in, no honey of gospel sweetness for the people of God. The love in Samson's heart for the strange woman wrought the occasion for the slaying of the lion; so the love of God for us sinners furnished the eternal cause for the sufferings and triumph of Jesus on the behalf of His people. All we enjoy here or ever shall enjoy hereafter centers in the love of God. There would have been no election, no predestination, no effectual calling, no justification of the sinful, no glorification of saints, had God been otherwise than the God of love. While God is equal in all His attributes, just now, as we write, the attribute of infinite and eternal love seems to be the propelling power that actuates the Godhead in all dealings with creatures here below.

"Oh for such love let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break,
And all harmonious human tongues
The Savior's praises speak."

Written by request. —L.

(Editorial by Elder H. H. Lefferts, December 1, 1917)

OBITUARIES

SISTER ESTHER RUSTON

The Particular Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada mourns the loss of a true mother in Israel in the passing of Sister Esther Ruston on October, 28, 1975; yet we mourn not as others who have no hope for we realize our loss is her eternal gain.

She was born on December 29, 1889 at 9 Gunter Grove, Chelsea, London, England, the daughter of the late Benjamin and Rhoda (Barber) Aston. At 16 years of age, she met at chapel the young man who later was to become her husband, George Ruston. A few years after, they were married in the United States, where both became faithful adherents of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church of New York, under the pastorship of Elder John McConnell. In December 1913, they were united with the Ebenezer Church. Subsequently her husband, George Ruston, was licensed to preach, ordained and became pastor of the churches in the Roxbury Association before coming to Canada in 1929, where they served so faithfully for over forty years.

She was predeceased by her husband, George in 1972 and two sons, John in 1941, and Henry in 1969. She is survived by a brother Benjamin Aston, a half-sister, Eunice Aston, and sisters Francis Barker, and Ruth Walker in England, and by two daughters, Mrs. Claude (Rhoda) Smith of Toronto, and Mrs. John (Ellen) Loaring of Windsor, and

one son, Dr. Frank Ruston of Nipissing, Ontario. There were twelve grandchildren and and fourteen great-grandchildren.

Sister Ruston will long be remembered here and among the many brethren in the United States for her faithful and earnest contention for the faith once delivered to the saints. Indeed she was a gifted helpmeet, devoted in every way to walk with her companion in the cause of truth. Her gift in the knowledge of the scripture was outstanding, her attentiveness to detail, her voice in song, her thoughtfulness not only as a member, but as a loving mother and friend in the communities where her companion served gave ample testimony to her desire to follow Jesus. How often in later years the two young pastors who have attempted to follow in her late husband's ministry sought and found comfort and solace by her bedside in the nursing home as she encouraged them to press on toward the prize of the mark of the high calling in Jesus Christ. They will ever miss her sensitivity to the need for encouragement of those called to serve Him.

We pray that God will continue to provide for and bless those of her family who survive. What wonderful memories we all have of the sanctuary of their home in Dutton, which was ever a haven of joy to those of like precious faith.

Her funeral was conducted on October 31, 1975 by Elders Alex and Stewart McColl from the Dunwich Meeting House with her remains being interred in the adjacent McKillop Cemetery.

Elder D. A. McColl
Elder J. S. McColl

BROTHER WADE CLARENCE STRICKLAND

It has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst our beloved brother, Wade Clarence Strickland. He was born in March, 1883, to the late Bennett Carson Strickland and Emma Price Strickland. He departed this life in March, 1975, making his stay on earth 82 years.

He was married to Sister Mary Ida Bunn Strickland. Their union was blessed with four children: two daughters and two sons. Surviving his death are his wife, Sister Mary Ida Strickland, one daughter, Sister Jewel Strickland Lamb, and one son, James Colon Strickland, one grandson and one great granddaughter.

Brother Strickland was a member of Creeches Church for 18 years. He was an humble brother; very quiet in appearance, and a believer of salvation by grace.

May it please our heavenly Father to bless those who mourn the loss of this dear one to feel their loss is his eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted in Creeches Primitive Baptist Church by Elder D. B. Stokes. His sleeping body was laid to rest in the Creeches Church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

Written by order of the conference held at Creeches Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Jeffrey Creech, Clerk.

SISTER BERTHA BUNN HODGE

The Lord has seen fit to remove from our midst, Sister Bertha Bunn Hodge on September 30, 1975. She was born October 17, 1899, the daughter of the late William "Bill" and Cindy Ellen Collier Bunn. She was married to the late John Bennett Hodge who died February 6, 1947. From this union two sons and one daughter survive. Vick and Hubert Hodge of Route 2, Kenly, N. C.; Jean Hodge Bailey, Renoldsburg, Ohio; 15 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren.

Sister Hodge believed in the sovereign power and grace of God and had been a faithful member of Creeches Primitive Baptist Church for almost 52 years. Her walk in life was one of much happiness and meekness. Her church and family will miss her, but feel our loss to be her eternal gain.

The funeral was conducted at Creeches Church by her pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, with interment in the Church cemetery.

May the Lord bless the family and reconcile them to His will. "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be His holy name."

Written as requested by Creeches Primitive Baptist Church in conference, December 1975.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Jeffrey Creech, Clerk

WILLIAM RONNIE HOWARD

In my sorrow, I will try to write an obituary for my grandson, William Ronnie Howard. He was born July 8, 1954, and was unable to walk, talk, or feed himself. His mind was real good especially spiritually speaking.

On or about November 23, 1971 he was received and baptised in full fellowship of Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church. Here he enjoyed many good meetings. Ronnie dearly loved the children of God anywhere he met them, and all that met him, seemed to love him. He loved Jesus better than all other things. Ronnie said Jesus called him to follow Him. Now we believe that Jesus called him to come live with Him, that where I am, there ye may be also.

Ronnie wanted Jesus to come and get him, and give him a new body.

On the first day of June, 1976, we feel that Jesus took him home with Him, where He will give him that new body which Ronnie longed for so much. So we, his loved ones, will say, Sleep on Ronnie and take thy rest. We all loved you dearly, but Jesus loved you best. The only thing we, his loved ones could say would be, "Thank you, Jesus, for taking him home with You to that great new Jerusalem, where there is no need for the light of the moon nor the sun for the Lamb of God lights that City." There will be no afflicted bodies, no more sickness, sorrow, pain, nor death. All tears will be wiped away from our

eyes, and all will be peace and joy. Then we shall sing that new song of God and the Lamb in that city of God where the walls and streets are paved with gold as it was tranparent glass in that world that will never end.

Funeral services for Brother Ronnie were main as long as we live. We feel our loss is held at Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church officiated by Elder Curtis R. Raines, pastor, and a dear friend, Preacher Chance. Ronnie is survived by his parents, Coy and Katie Howard, two sisters, Shirley and Wanda, and their children, and his grandparents, Oscar and Mary Howard.

Brother Ronnie was laid to rest under a beautiful mound of flowers at Pollocksville, awaiting the return of Christ.

Written by Oscar Howard, by order of Conference, June 13, 1976.

IN MEMORY OF OUR DEAR MOTHER
LENA PRESCOTT SMITH KEY

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write a memorial for our dear mother, Lena Prescott Smith Key. She was born December 11, 1884 in Carteret County, N. C., and died November 10, 1975, making her stay one earth ninety years and eleven months. She was the daughter of Josiah and Mary Ann Prescott. Her first marriage was to Joe H. Smith, December 17, 1902. He preceded her in death July 8, 1926. To this union five children were born. One son, Frank Pierce died at sixteen months, and one daughter died in infancy. She is survived by three daughters, Lila B. Ross, Idell Sawrey, and Cleo Walston; five grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

After living a widow for ten years she and Elder J. D. Key were united in marriage January 20, 1936. After his death in December 1953 she made her home with her youngest daughter.

Mama professed a hope in Christ and united with Old Hadnot Creek Primitive Baptist Church in 1913. She was baptized by Elder C. C. Brown. She loved and believed the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God. A faithful and devoted member of the church, she also enjoyed attending associations and other churches of the same faith, whenever she had an opportunity to do so. About a year before her death, her health began to fail and she was unable to attend services. During this time she received much comfort from reading the Signs of the Times and Zion's Landmark. Mama was ready to go home because she talked about it often. I believe with all my heart she is at peace with her Lord.

She was hospitalized from September 15, until November 10, when she passed away. Her suffering, trials and tribulations she had to endure here were many, but she held fast to the faith that was given her from a higher power. We miss her so much; there is an emptiness in our hearts that will re- her eternal gain.

Funeral services were held in Ball-Munden Funeral Chapel. Due to the illness of her pastor, her funeral was conducted by Elder Bob Lyliston and her nephew, Elder J. T Prescott. She was laid to rest in the Prescott Family Cemetery, near her old home place under a mound of beautiful flowers, to await the return of her Lord, who will come for those that He died for, and they will be with their Redeemer and eternally satisfied.

Written by a loving daughter, Idell Sawrey

JONAH SHEPARD

Our heavenly Father has taken from Cypress Creek Primitive Baptist Church, our dear brother, Jonah Shepard, born January 12, 1902 and died on February 29, 1976, making his stay on earth 74 years and 1 month.

He was married to the former Esther Horne and to this union were born three sons and one daughter, still all surviving.

By confession of faith, he united with the church on April 26, 1972, and received baptism by Elder Harmon Brown. He was a faithful member and attended as often as possible until his death. He loved his brothers and enjoyed meeting with them.

His funeral was held by Elder D. B. Stokes and his body was laid to rest in Onslow Memorial Park, Jacksonville, North Carolina, beneath a number of beautiful flowers.

His passing from this life will be his eternal gain.

Done by order of Conference that I write this obituary and that a copy be given to the family, one sent to the Signs of the Times for publication and one placed in the church records.

Written by Rovean Horne, Elder Harmon Brown, Moderator.

"For we know that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." 2 Cor. 5:1, 2.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 144 DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1976 NO. 12

NOTE TO OUR READERS

Our readers will notice that all the articles in this December, 1976 issue, are taken from the December, 1876 issue—One hundred years ago. Your Editors felt that this would be interesting reading for everyone, since the writings of the brethren in 1876 were upon the same subjects they are now—one hundred years later. The doctrine and spiritual exercises have not changed. The Truth remains the same in every age, and under all circumstances. —Editors

Warwick, N. Y., Oct. 28, 1876

Dear Brother Beebe:—As I enjoyed the privilege of meeting with our brethren at London Tract and the Salisbury Association, and shared with them in the disappointment we all felt in your absence, I have a desire to send you an account of those meetings, and of some of the incidents, to me, a very pleasant and I hope not unprofitable trip.

Accompanied by my wife, we took the cars at Jersey City on Monday, Oct. 9th, at 11:30 o'clock a. m., and traveling over the New Line, Brown Brook Road, we arrived at Philadelphia early in the evening, and were received with great kindness by our brother, Thomas Banes and his daughter, Sister Maggie, well known to very many Old School Baptists, and whose kindness we can never forget. We passed through Hopewell, the residence of our beloved brother, Elder P. Hartwell, who I saw for the first time. We remained in Philadelphia three days, visiting the great Centennial Exposition. It is indeed wonderful, and a world of curiosities, of nature and art, and to be known must be seen.

On Friday morning we resumed our journey, and exchanging cars at Wilmington, Del., took the train on the Western Road for Brandenburg, where we were met by our dear brother, Wm. H. Crawford, who took us to his pleasant and hospitable home in Chester, Co., Pa. This is a beautiful agricultural region, and everything indicated taste, thrift and enterprise. But alas, the destroyer had entered the home of our brother, and the residence which he had so beautified had been made desolate by the removal of his dear companion; and he showed me an advertisement, offering for sale one of the finest and best appointed farms I have ever seen. Brother Crawford said he had purchased and fitted up the place, expecting it would be a home for his wife and daughter after his departure, and where his other children, who lived some distance from him, could visit their mother. But said he, "All is passed away, and it is home to us no more." But they sorrow not as those who have no hope; and she who was the faithful wife and affectionate mother here, is believed to be the occupant of a fairer mansion,

which death can never make vacant.

On Saturday brother Crawford took us and Sister Mayhew, of Philadelphia, to the place of worship of the London Tract Church. There we met Elders Housel, Rittenhouse, and our dear brother, Elder William Grafton, whom I saw for the first time, and had the privilege of hearing him preach the unsearchable riches of the gospel of Christ. He labors lovingly in his Master's cause, and is beloved by the people of his charge. The last time I met with the brethren at their annual meeting, nine years ago, those venerable and faithful soldiers of the cross, Elders Barton and Conkling, were present, and the fact was alluded to by a number of the brethren present.

The meeting was pleasant and very interesting, and the preached word was listened to with deep attention. A holy calmness seemed to pervade the entire audience, and the words of the poet seemed most appropriate:

"How decent and how wise,
How glorious to behold,
Beyond the pomp which charms the eyes,
And rites adorned with gold."

The meeting continued until Monday noon, when, taking an affectionate farewell we were taken by sister McConaughey in her carriage to the residence of our aged brother Griffiths, near Newark, Del. We found him mourning the death of his companion, who was taken away only two weeks previously. Elder Housel was with us, and the time was passed in conversation upon the things of the kingdom, and the happy state of those who, "absent from the body, are present with the Lord."

The next morning we bade our venerable brother farewell, not expecting to meet again on earth, and were conveyed a distance of eight miles to Kirkwood Station, on the Delaware Railroad. On our way to Salisbury we were joined at the various stations by Elders Hartwell, Chick, Rittenhouse and Hubbell, and quite a number of brethren and sisters constituting a large company when we arrived at Salisbury. Here we were met by brethren with carriages, who took part of our company, and were joined by others who rode with us to Pittsville, where brother G. W. Mezick claimed the whole company.

Meeting was held in the district school house, and brother Housel and myself addressed the people. The occasion will be long remembered by the lovers of truth, and will never be forgotten by its enemies, if any were present. After meeting, the company being large, we separated, some staying with brother Mezick, while we went with Mr. Daniel Holloway, who entertained us with true southern hospitality, and the next morning took us to the place of meeting. The house of worship is situated in a grove, near the village of Powellsville, and the church is known as the Indiantown Church. We were early, and not many had yet arrived, but they soon came in from all quarters; and although the country seems sparsely settled, it was soon apparent that the house could not contain the multitude. The introductory sermon was preached by Elder J. D. Hubbell, of the Lexington Association, N. Y., and was a plain, scriptural presentation of divine truth, setting forth the "Lamb of God" as the only hope and Savior of sinners. The association was organized by choosing Elder E. Rittenhouse Moderator, and brother J. L. Staton Clerk.

The letters from the churches were excellent in sentiment and spirit, and one in particular, from the Salisbury Church, read by brother Chick, I have

seldom heard equalled. It was listened to with the deepest attention; and the Clerk of the association would confer a favor upon the readers of the Signs by sending a copy of it for publication. The business of the association was conducted in a quiet and orderly manner. The preaching was varied in subject, but there was but one theme, Christ and Him crucified. The ministers evidently felt the force of the truth they proclaimed, and this made the impression on the audience more apparent. One sermon in particular created a profound impression. If the human countenance ever speaks, the language of each one was, "That man means me"; and lest any might misapprehend, he plainly told them he did, and meant his brethren in the ministry also; but as he took a liberal share to himself, we had no just reason to complain.

Meetings were held at various places, Elder Hartwell and Chick preached on successive evenings at the house of Mr. James Laws, whose large heart would have been satisfied with nothing short of entertaining at his spacious mansion the entire association, if it had been possible. His venerable parent now eighty-four years of age, enjoyed the society of the brethren and the meetings very much. He is nearly blind, and reminded me very much of our dear brother Woolford, whom we saw at Fishing Creek, nine years ago. A large number of brethren were entertained by Mr. Adkins, and the evening was occupied in the relation by several brethren, of their religious experiences. It was full as pleasant, and pronounced by some as profitable as if there had been preaching.

The attendance each day was so large that seats were prepared in the grove, and the ministers standing at the door, perhaps preached to as many as were in the house. The deepest attention was paid to the preaching, and the best order and decorum pervaded the large audience. Abundant provision was furnished for all, and each day many baskets might have been filled of that which was untouched. I saw a table, at which colored people were eating, waited upon by a well-dressed white lady, who appeared as solicitous for their comfort as if they were the noblest in the land. I asked one, an aged man, "Have you long known these Old Baptists?" A smile beamed on his face as he answered, "Yes, a good many years. I'se one of 'em."

On Friday the meeting closed, and the visiting brethren were compelled to bid their kindred in Christ farewell, and the lingering grasp of the hand and the tearful eye, showed that it was most reluctant. It was declared by very many, one of the most pleasant meetings they ever enjoyed. Our generous friend, Mr. Laws, sent a carriage full of brethren and sisters to Salisbury, a distance of fourteen miles from the place of meeting. Brother Chick preached for the church in the evening, and the next day we started for home, the brethren accompanying us in the cars. Owing to a heated axle the train did not reach Philadelphia in time for us to take the train for New York City; and availing ourselves of the kind invitation given us by brother and sister Craven, whom we met at the London Tract Meeting, we went to their house, and on Sunday met with the "little flock" at the room where they worship. Although but few in number, and without a stated minister of the word, they have learned by sweet experience that better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than the greatest of what

the religious world regards as luxuries, where that heavenly grace is wanting; and obeying the heavenly command, they forsake not the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is. May the Lord of the harvest soon send them one to go out and in before them, to feed them with knowledge and with understanding.

Brother James Thomas and his wife spent the evening with us at the house of Brother Craven, and it was pleasantly, and we hope not unprofitably, occupied in religious conversation. The next morning we bade our dear brother and his family farewell, and started for home, which we reached the same evening, and found family, kindred and friends all well, and we trust all grateful to the God of mercies for his care and divine protection.

Here the narrative might properly end, but several were of so interesting a character that I will incur the risk of being regarded as prolix, and briefly relate a few of them.

Our dear brother Poulson is the only ordained minister at present in the Salisbury Association; but unless the opinion expressed by several of the ministering brethren, and in which I fully concur, is greatly at fault, it will not be so much longer. There are talents there which the Lord never designed to be wrapped in a napkin and buried in the earth; and I am fully convinced the time must soon come when those upon whom they are bestowed will esteem it as the chiefest of their delights to proclaim among their brethren the unsearchable riches of Christ.

We met our friend, Mr. Ebenezer McColl, of Ontario, Canada, and his brother in Philadelphia, and as he had previously visited the Centennial buildings, he kindly acted as guide to us, and contributed very largely to our enjoyment and instruction. Sister Maggie Banes accompanied us each day, and having been often at the place, was almost as familiar with the labyrinths as with the streets of her native city. Their kindness can never be forgotten by us.

Soon after meeting brother Chick, on our way, he said, "You will see at the association what is seldom witnessed, twin sisters, so greatly resembling each other that their intimate friends can hardly distinguish one from the other." At the recess on Wednesday he called me aside, and introduced me to the sisters Townsend; and truly his words were verified, for scanning their countenances I failed to perceive the slightest difference. They are indeed as like as "twin roses on the stem." And if I may use the expression, they are also twin sisters in Christ, for brother Chick informed me they were at one time brought to the knowledge of the truth, and baptized together. Few, I think, can behold them without the poem arising to the mind:

"They Jesus' image bear,
How lovely is the sight;
With Him they surely shall appear,
In everlasting light."

At the house of Mr. Adkins, on Wednesday evening, we met brother Cain Hurley, whom I consider one of the most remarkable men I ever met. His great grandfather, James Reed, was born in Dorchester Co., Md., and removed to Kentucky when that state was a territory. He died there in the year 1855, at the age of one hundred and twenty-seven years. At the time of his death he had seventeen children, all living, the eldest one hundred and three years, and the youngest seventy three years of age. Brother Hurley is now eighty-four years old, but does not ap-

pear over sixty. He has never tasted ardent spirits, beer, cider, lemonade or coffee, or ever used tobacco; never attended school a day in his life, but has taught school two and a half years; has been Justice of the Peace thirty-seven years, and only one appeal has been taken from his decisions, and that the court dismissed; has been married three times, and been the father of twenty-five children; at the age of eighty-two years he walked twenty-five miles in four hours and thirty-six minutes, and said he could easily walk fifty miles a day; he inherited no property, and is now the owner of four hundred acres of land; he has undergone enough to kill half a dozen ordinary men; once a loaded cart fell over on him, and he lay crushed beneath it three-quarters of an hour, and for sixty-seven days unable to rise up, or turn himself in the bed. One of the brethren present jocosely said, "He had not a whole bone in his body;" and he was not so very far out of the way. His collar bone, an arm, three ribs, and a leg have been broken; and the pelvis, or bony case in the lower part of the body, has been broken in three places. He never made a wish. Brother Chick rode with us from the place of meeting to Salisbury, and as it was raining, rather mischievously said, "I wish we were at Salisbury, don't you?" The answer came as quick as thought, "No, I don't care a thing about it." He has been a member of a church twenty-seven years, and on Saturday before the association rode twenty miles to attend the church meeting. He is very quick and unobtrusive, and it was only by close questioning that I drew from him the facts I have narrated. His modesty will not allow him to consider himself in any respect a hero. Judging from his hale appearance, it seems not improbable that he may live to be as old as his long-lived ancestor.

While at Salisbury we visited, in company with sisters Mary and Susie Woolford, the "big oak tree," standing on an eminence in the center of the village. It is twenty-four feet in circumference, four feet from the ground, and is the largest I ever saw. An incident in its history was related by sister Woolford while standing under its branches.

Many years since a Baptist minister named Baker was preaching to a congregation standing under the shade of the tree, when a word was brought that a "cruel and blood-thirsty man," armed with a gun, was approaching, having sworn to kill the preacher in the midst of his flock. The female part of the congregation were very much frightened, but the undaunted servant of God seemed only to wax bolder, and continued his discourse in even a louder toned voice. The God in whom he trusted did not fail him. His enemy, before he reached the place, learned that a fugitive servant who had fled from his master, being pursued, had entrenched himself in the loft of a building, and being armed, declared he would kill any man who attempted to arrest him. The bold, bad man at once declared he would take him; and proceeding to the place, as his head appeared above the floor of the loft the fugitive shot him dead. As I listened to the narrative how appropriate seemed the words of the apostle Peter, "And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good.?"

Yours in the bonds of the gospel,

WM. L. BENEDICT

REVELATION 22:5

"And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign forever and ever."—Rev. 22:5.

This is written of the holy city of God and its foundations, and is what the angel of the Lord showed John, and then said unto him, "These sayings are faithful and true: and Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must stortly be done." All this has not yet been fulfilled, neither will be until that which is perfect is come, and that which is in part shall be done away; for these perfect beatitudes and this full-orbed brightness of glory belong not to the earthly, but heavenly state of the kingdom of God. When the vail of the flesh shall be rent in twain, and the darksome valley of the shadow of death shall be left behind, and mortality shall be swallowed up of life, then all this heavenly glory shall be revealed in us, who are the children of the resurrection, and all the redeemed tribes of Israel, as the saints of the Most High, perfected in the image of the risen and glorified Son of God, shall in bodily presence enter into and possess the kingdom of Life and Light in all the perfection of beauty and glorious radiance of light celestial and blissful fruition of life eternal. It was of this transporting and true vision of the new Jerusalem that the rapt and inspired John here wrote so wondrously, in simple, sublime style, saying, "And there shall be no night there." Not so is it here upon these mortal shores of time; for "the children of the day", though they "are not of the night," and "not of the world," yet they "are partakers of flesh and blood," which is to them as a dark glass and heavy vail. True, as born of the Spirit, they are of God, "who is light, and in whom is no darkness at all." Therefore they are "the children of light," and "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels;" and now, while this continues, the earthen vessel obscures or hides the glory of the invisible God, so that "now we see through a glass darkly," and "know in part" only. And just as Gideon and his little army must first break their earthen pitchers in which their lamps were burning, before the full light within could shine out and be seen, so this earthly body of the saint must first be broken, as the body if Chrst was broken, and as the grain is crushed and the bread is broken, before the shadows of the night shall flee away, and the brightness of the resurrection morning and the glory of God shall shine fully upon us.

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." When that glorious day of eternity comes, then we who have received the first fruits of the Spirit, who have part in the first resurrection, and serve the Lord in the first sanctuary, the holy place, shall enter into that within the vail, where the glorious Forerunner is for us entered, and shall see and know and enjoy all the beauty and blessing and glory of the holy of holies, and the dwelling-place of God and the Lamb, where there is no night; for God is our everlasting light; and there we shall see face to face, know

even as we are known, and reign forever and ever, as heirs of God and joint heirs with the Lord. That truly will be the Lord's Day, the day without a night, the day of an endless life, and we as clothed in light will rejoice and be glad in it. When we shall thus appear in glory then indeed our whole body shall be full of light, and our whole spirit and with the fulness of God and the likeness of his beloved Son we will be *satisfied* world without end.

D. BARTLEY

October 21, 1876.

Near Pitt's Wharf, Va., Sept. 11, 1876

Dear Brother Poulson:—With a deep sense of my weakness, and in much fear, I attempt to write you what I hope the Lord has done for my poor soul. But I feel sure you will make allowance for one like me.

If I remember rightly, when I was about fourteen years of age, I thought a great deal about dying, and felt myself to be a lost and ruined sinner, and often thought I would like to be a Christian. When these deep, sad feelings would come on me I would go off by myself and weep, and try to ask the Lord to forgive my sins; for I felt myself to be so great a sinner, and I thought I was going to die, and what would become of me? I feared that after death I should be lost forever. At times I would think, when in this state, that perhaps if I lived to grow up, when I became older I should be better prepared for death; this would somewhat allay my trouble, and I would feel better. I often thought it was strange that I had all this sadness and trouble come on me, as my mother had tried to raise her children without sinning, so far as she could; and when I had grown up, I had tried to avoid sinning, so far as I could; but this did not make my burden any lighter. I would try to wear this dreadful feeling away, and would go in young company, and my depression would seem to be all gone; but it would return again more severely than before. I kept this all to myself, and thought myself like one alone, "Oh, is there anyone like me?" At about this time I went mostly to hear the Methodists, attended their protracted meetings, where I heard of many getting religion, as they said; I thought if that would give me relief I would also go forward, for I felt in need of all that could be done. Although I did not believe their doctrine, yet I went forward several nights, and tried to pray with all my heart; but my prayers did not seem to rise any higher than my head. They would say to me, I know you have got religion, if you would just put your confidence in yourself and arise. But I knew I had not felt any change, and so I stopped going, as I had no hope that going there would do me any good. Indeed I often felt that I was beyond the reach of mercy, that I was one of those to whom the Lord will say, Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, for I never knew you. I had often heard preachers say, You can get religion if you will seek for it; if you will go to Jesus he will have mercy on you. But I was like the poor publican, who could not so much as lift his eyes to heaven, but could only say, God be merciful to me, a sinner. I continued more or less in this state of mind until 1874. In that year, on the tenth of February, my dear little sister was taken home to rest, as I hope; and on the ninth of September my dear father was also taken from us, and oh what

a trial. I thought how soon I might be the next one of our family that would be taken, and I not prepared. I thought that both of my troubles were almost more than I could bear, and my heart seemed almost broken; but our blessed Lord works all things for the best. So I continued on with my heavy load of guilt until late in the fall, when the Protestant Methodists held a protracted meeting. I said to my mother that I would go and look at them a while, and so I went, and she went with me. When the call was made for mourners, and all who wished to be prayed for too come forward, I at first thought I would not go, for it could do me no good; then I thought was it not hard if they should all be saved, and I lost? Such foolish thoughts came into my mind, and it seemed to me that I could not stay away, for my sins were more than I could bear, and so I went and tried to pray, as well as I could. The next night I attended and went forward again, and there at the foot of the cross, tried to pour out my soul in prayer to God, and while there I thought I felt relieved of my burden, and tried to tell them how I felt; but it seemed as if they could not understand me. But I thought this was not religion, because I could not enjoy it as others seemed to. I thought before I left the place that I was deceived. I returned home and retired to bed, and the next morning my trouble was as great as ever it had been. I felt that I was deceived, and had deceived my friends. It seemed as though something told me I had committed a great sin in pretending to have that which I had not; and I thought if I were as I was before I would have less sin to answer for. But before night I was relieved and felt perfectly calm, and felt to say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name." I have never had such a burden since that time; but I often have doubts and fears that I am deceived, and have deceived others. Now I began to be in trouble in regard to joining a church. I though I would not be hasty, but believed the blessed Lord would lead me right. I went among other denominations, but none of their preaching suited my feelings except the Old School Baptists. With them I desired to have a home; but I felt too unworthy to have a home with such blessed people. I would go to Nassaongo Church to hear the preaching, and I do believe that what I there heard was the gospel; and I felt that I was drawn that way so strongly, that when I would come away it would be with a heavy heart and dissatisfied mind, like a lost sheep that had wandered from the fold and had no home. I had put it off as long as I could, and Saturday before the fourth Sunday in July I went to the church, was received by them, and on the next day was baptized by you; and ever since that time I have been so much better satfied than I was before, that I would not be out of the church for anything in the world, although I feel my weakness and unworthiness so as to make me fear sometimes that I am not one with them. But I am often comforted by the words, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." And oh what joy it affords me; for I know that once I did not love them, but now I do. Take from me the love I have for you, and I should have but very little to depend upon as assurance that I have passed from death unto life; for

"'Tis seldom I can ever see
Myself as I would wish to be;
What I desire I can't attain,
From what I hate I can't refrain.

"So far from God I seem to lie,
Which makes me often weep and cry;
I fear at last that I shall fall,
For if a saint, the least of all."

I have felt a desire to write you, because when I went before the church I felt too weak to say what I desired to satisfy the church. I will bring this poor scribble to a close, for I fear that what I have written will fail to be satisfactory to you or to the church. Do with it as you please, and all will be right. I can only say, I am a poor sinner, and if saved at all, it is by grace alone, and for nothing that I have done or can do.

Your poor, unworthy sister,

M. S. CHESER.

Frankfort, Ind. Oct. 1, 1876.

My Dear Brother Beebe—and, I trust, companion in tribulation and the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. Permit me to unburden my downcast soul this morning, by talking a little while to the poor and afflicted family of God.

The Lord said to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." Is not that enmity still seen and deeply felt by many of the living family of the Lord Jesus? In the time of the old prophet Elijah, when Ahab and Jezebel ruled in Israel, the children of the Lord had to hide in caves and dens of the earth, because of that bitter enmity. The poor old man had to flee for his life, and sat down under the juniper tree, and requested that he might die. Ahab's sons and Jezebel's daughters are still living, and would slay all the Lord's prophets very soon, were it not that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. Oh that I could be still and know that the Lord is God. Is not this the day of trouble and the hour of temptation that is to try them (the saints) that dwell on the earth? Oh that I knew where I might find him! Behold, I go forward, but he is not there, and backward, but I cannot perceive him.—Job 23. I have found much comfort in the seventy-first Psalm, if one so very unworthy as I can claim such blessed promises. 1st verse, "In the Lord do I put my trust; let me never be put to confusion." 5th verse, "For thou art my hope, O Lord, thou art my trust from my youth." 9th verse, "Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth." 16th verse, "For I will go in the strength of the Lord; I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only." 20th verse, "Thou which hast shewed me great and sore troubles." "Now also when I am old and gray headed, O God, forsake me not." Such scriptures as speak of the deep trials and afflictions of the Lord's children, seem to suit me in this day of great trouble. "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a moment, until the indignation be overpast."—Isa. 26:20. But I hope I know in whom I believe, and I also believe he will keep poor me, and through the finished work of the Lord Jesus give me a place with the sanctified in endless glory.

LOTT SOUTHARD

Franklin, Ind. May, 1876

Dear Brother Beebe:—(If one so unworthy may call you brother.) I have often desired to write something for your valuable paper, could I be assured that I could write anything that would comfort even one poor, temptest-tossed soul. I take much pleasure in reading the communications of the dear people

of God, they describe so well my own feelings, and if ever I am saved it must be entirely through the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ. Many times I am made to rejoice in the Lord, while at other times all is dark, and I feel that I am left to grope my way in darkness; and oh how awful is that loneliness, to feel that we are forsaken by the Lord! Even then I am made to confess that it is just and right; and if He never again lifts upon me the light of His countenance, it will be right; I deserve it; yea, I deserve everlasting death. I know I desire to live as becomes an humble follower of Christ, but I come so far short of living as I should, like Paul, I am made to cry, O wretched one that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I cannot say with the boasting pharisee of the present day, "I have done great things, therefore the Lord has blessed me; I tarried long among those boasting ones, but I could not be satisfied. They did not preach the way of salvation as I hoped the Lord had taught my poor soul. Writing this brings fresh again to my memory the sore conflict of mind I endured while trying to stay away from the Old Baptist Church. I could not become reconciled to the doctrine of election, until about a year ago, and since then my mind has been at rest in regard to my duty. I am no more fettered with the thought that I was trying to uphold a broken down system. I no more hear that voice, saying, "Come away, come away from such a people." I know I am the same ungrateful wretch but I am now with a people who do not boast of their goodness. Oh, if I were half as good as the dear saints of God, I feel that I could be satisfied. Yes, my mind is at peace concerning my duty, and it seems to me that if every quickened soul could realize but for a moment this peace of mind, they surely would not stay away from the place where they feel the Lord is calling them. Jesus says, "He that is ashamed of Me before men, of him will I be ashamed before My Father and His holy angels." When we know His will, and do it not, do we consider that Jesus is ashamed of our conduct?

From your little, unorthy sister,
SOPHRONA B. THOMPSON

Baltimore, Md., Jan. 23, 1876

Eld. G. Beebe: Dear and venerable Brother:—As I take up my pen to address you merely the business note, (which I ought to have done more than a month ago) I feel a renewed sense of the favor of the Lord still vouchsafed to His children, in permitting you to labor in His "vineyard." I am so very cold and indifferent nearly all the time, so much of my first enthusiasm seems to have died out, even this early, that I do not know oftentimes whether I have any love, either for the cause or people of our God. Still when I think of you, the place you hold in the affection of so many—remember the fatherly interest that you manifest, as well as feel, and see, too, how closely interwoven with the comforts that you enjoy are the trials which the heavenly Father even yet sees best to send, I cannot restrain the longing to once more grasp your dear hand, and to listen to your familiar voice. Whether it is the memory of a sweet dream, with which you and others were connected, or whether it is that there is still, aay down in my heart, a life that appreciates the food on which the children live, I do not know. Sometimes I seem totally without evidence.

Again, when others testify to the same experience of discouragement—others whose position seems to us beyond doubt or question—I feel that perhaps I ought to take courage. But the sweetest moments that I know, are when, in spite of a total lack of evidence, comes the thought that "even to me" this grace may belong. Nothing can separate God's children from His love; and a hope, not in frames or feelings, or in seeming evidence, but in Christ, is for a moment enjoyed. But these moments come so seldom, and all the rest of the time seems so barren of spiritual fruit, that even acknowledgment and confession seems almost hypocritical. Truly, "What I am 'tis hard to know."

I hope the new business arrangement you have made may relieve you of some care, and be in every way productive of benefit. I should more properly have addressed my letter to the new firm, but I did not recollect until just now the published change. However I suppose it is not important.

With love and dearest wishes for your comfort and peace, I am, unworthily,

Your sister,

CLARICE E. PUSEY

Duart, Ontario, Nov. 23, 1876.

Dear Father:—I left Covington, Georgia, on the 14th, and reached this place, the residence of my son-in-law, Mr. J. C. Macdonald, on Saturday evening, having been detained two days on the road by missing the connections of different railroads. This gave me the opportunity of calling upon my childhood's friend, brother S. Hansbrough, near Elizabethtown, Ky., and Mr. Jos. J. Danks of Cincinnati, both visits being very pleasant. On my arrival I was much gratified to find Elder Pollard here, and himself and all the family well. Next day I was with him and heard him preach at Duart and he kindly excused me, being wearied with my journey of nearly 1,000 miles. I have been stopping here since, the weather being unfavorable for getting about, though not perceptibly colder than it had been in Georgia before I left.

I do not know yet where I shall locate, but any letters addressed to me here, will be received. I propose to be entirely subject to the will of Elder Pollard and the church as to my location and field of labor. Tomorrow I am to meet him, and attend the meeting in Dunwich on next Sunday.

I have not been here long enough to determine how I shall like this country; but with the people, and especially the church, I am already satisfied that the unity of the Spirit and bond of peace forbids any variance between us, and I love them just the same as those with whom in the States I have been associated for thirty-five years. I find no essential difference between them, since they all, so far as my acquaintance extends, give evidence of being taught of the Lord, who fashioneth the hearts of His people alike in every age and in every place.

I promised to write to many brethren and friends in Georgia, and still design to do so; but for the present they will please accept this as a general note, and when I have better opportunity and more information I will write them more fully.

The providential direction by which I have been sent here is very inscrutable to me, yet I am compelled to see the hand of the Lord in it. No personal object could have induced me to leave my family and the friends of a lifetime, to

come among total strangers; yet so strong was the impression of duty that I dared not refuse. May the Lord lead me, and all who wait for Him, in His own right way, and by His grace enable us to pray, " will be done."

As ever, in fellowship and love,

WM. L. BEEBE

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, convened with the church a Jay, Franklin Co., Me., September 8th, 9th, *and* 10*th,* 1876, *to the several churches whose messengers she is, sends greeting in the Lord.*

Dear Brethren:— While another year has passed with arrowy speed, and is with things that were, we feel that we have cause to give thanks to God for His preserving care and tender mercy toward us, who feel to acknowledge that we are the chief of sinners, and of ourselves unworthy to receive anything at the hand of God. Our utter unworthiness and the great goodness of God must ever be the substance of our conversation. Every day and every hour do we find occasion to confess the one and acknowledge the other. This we feel to do as we now send you our usual letter of love.

Can we call your attention, brethren, to a theme more glorious and more comforting than that of redemption through the blood of Christ, and of salvation in Him? The world has its charms for those who are of it and it loves its own in return; but brethren, our treasure is in heaven, and we are professed believers in Jesus, and so we love to look upon the things of God, and to hear and speak of His wonderful works among the children of men. If He has redeemed us at so great a price, surely we can never praise and adore Him too much. He loved us, and gave Himself for us; surely the heavens above and the earth beneath, must be filled with admiration at so great a gift. Here is love without bottom, brim or shore, and lost in Diety. In view of such wonderful love, does it not become us to give heed to the precepts of the gospel, that thereby we may glorify Him? And brethren, how blessed are we who live under the gospel! It is called a state of freedom, a being made free; not free to serve sin, for the service of sin is our bondage, but free to serve God in full singleness of heart. Men by their nature love to serve sin, they love the chains that bind them; and though through fear of future or present consequences they may abstain from outward crime, yet are they in heart no more free from sin than they were before. What a man loves must of necessity be that to which he is in bondage. Thus, though a profession of godliness may be put on, the sinner still loves sin for its own sake, even while he professes godliness for the punishment's sake. This is bondage indeed. But on the other hand, how free is the disciple! First he groaned under a burden of sin, and then he groans under the law, until Jesus is revealed a sin-bearer and a law-fulfiller, and then he is free from sin and free from the law, and only serves the Lord Christ with eager joy of heart.

Since such is the state of the sinner under the law, and such the state of the believer on the other hand, who would, having once been delivered into this glorious liberty seek again to be in bondage? We are free in Christ, we are saved in Christ, we live in Christ; He has become our all and in all. We have become

dead to the law by the body of Christ, that we should be married to another; even to Him that is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

We will enumerate some of the advantages which the believer in Christ under the gospel has over the servant under the law. First, the law is very strict in its demands, while it provides no ability to obey. It says, Pay me that thou owest; but furnishes not a farthing to the beggared sinner. It demands all and gives nothing. But the gospel gives all, relating to pardon, justification, redemption and salvation, and demands nothing but praise, and this too, it fails not to bestow; so that if praise waiteth for God in Zion, it is because it also must the Lord bestow.

Again, the law brings no forgiveness, and provides no atonement save the life of the offender himself. The Mosaic or ceremonial law did no more than point to Christ, the sum and substance of the gospel; but its sacrifices never purged the consciences of its followers from dead works to serve God, neither could the comers thereunto be made perfect by any of its provisions. The law had only the shadow of good things to come; but in the gospel we have the reality. Jesus is the atonement provided, and in Him we obtain the forgiveness of sins; and to those who are in Him there is no condemnation. The apostle is careful to state the distinction between the gospel and the law. Under the old dispensation all was conditional. "Do this and thou shalt live," or "Do this and thou shalt die," were the sum of its provisions. It should be born in mind, however, that all this related to this life; it never assailed the true foundation upon which believers even then rested. Its blessings and curses were limited to them. The sure promise of eternal life in Christ had been given, and that promise no law could disannul, so as to make it of no effect. Now this law of conditions is done away, and instead the apostle says, "For the gospel which we preached unto you was not yea and nay, but yea and amen, to the glory of God." Believer, this is your glorious resting place. But listen to Paul while he again says, "For we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but we have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father." Thus deliverance from servile fear and adoption through the Spirit is another happy privilege of the gospel which the law can never bestow.

From all these pleasant considerations, dear brethren, we exhort you to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage. That God may bless you all with the freedom which is in the truth, is our prayer for Jesus' sake.

To the churches and associations with whom we correspond we would say that our meeting has been pleasant and profitable. Your messegners have come to us in the fulness of the gospel; we are glad that you still remember us, and solicit a continuance of your correspondence.

We have appointed our next meeting to be held with the church at Whitefield, Me., to commence on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1877, when and where we hope to receive your minutes and messengers again.

WM. QUINT, Mod.
Charles Clough, Clerk.

Milltown, N. J., Nov. 11, 1876

Dear Brethren Beebe:—I ask the use of a small space in the Signs to comply with many requests that were made by brethren in the west, while it was my happy privilege to visit among them in the summer, that on my return home I should give an account of my journey, from first to last.

I left home Wednesday, August 3, for the purpose of visiting the Old School Baptists of the west. On Thursday, about 5 o'clock p. m., I reached Knightstown, Henry Co., Ind., where I was met by Eld Harey Wright, and taken to his comfortable home, and cared for. I rested on Friday, and on Saturday morning he and I started through the rain, in his buggy to fill an appointment sixteen miles distant, with the Shiloh Church; had meeting Saturday and Sunday, a good attendance, and returned that evening to his home. Tuesday evening following, filled an appointment with the Little Blue River Church, near brother Wright's residence. There I met brother Nay, on his way to the White Water Association. Next morning was conveyed by brother Wright, in company with his wife and daughter, to the Lick Creek Church, where the association held her session. Here I met over twenty preachers, mostly ordained, and nearly all strangers in the flesh to me. Our meeting was largely attended, and interesting, and the preaching good, except what I did. Those that I heard at this meeting were Martindale, J. A. Johnson, L. Bavis, Weaver, Jackson and Morehouse, with others that I cannot now remember. Elder Bavis and myself with Elder Wright, the pastor, spent Saturday and Sunday with this church very pleasantly, and returned to brother Wright's home. On Monday we three started for brother J. A. Johnson's at Springport, Ind., and found him very unwell; but the next day he so improved in his health as to take the cars with us there in company, for the Lebanon Association, which commenced the next morning. This meeting was largely attended by preachers and hearers, and passed off with strong manifestations of brotherly love and fellowship. From this meeting I returned with brother Johnson to his hospitable home, and spent Sunday with him and the Lebanon Church, near his residence. On Monday evening I parted with him and sister Johnson, and the rest of the friends, and took the cars for Connersville, where I arrived in the evening, and found brother Beck and his family, who kindly cared for me in the very best manner. I shall long remember them for their hospitality and kindness to me. The next morning, in company with Elder Wright and his wife, and brother Newhouse and his wife, of Little Blue River Church, we started for the Salem Association, in Boone County, Ky., where I met Elders Jones (of the Licking Association), Bavis, Underhill, Winston, Humston, Morehouse, and our brother Thomas of Missouri. This meeting was well attended, all was harmonious, and brotherly love prevailed. At the close of this meeting, brother Jones and myself went to, and spent Saturday and Sunday with the Salem Church, and from thence to Varonia, where I tried to preach, in the Methodist meeting house, to a large congregation. Next morning we took the cars on our way to the Mt. Pleasant Association, stopping at Turner's Station, with brother Humston and other brethren, and tried to preach in that vicinity. On Friday morning I reached the association, where I met Elder A. B. Francis,

of New Jersey, and Elders J. F. Johnson, J. M. Demaree and Samuel Jones of Ky. This meeting was largely attended, and with the best of feeling. From this point brethren Jones and Thomas, and myself, went to Shelbyville, with some brethren in Shelby County, and all three of us tried to preach in that vicinity, at brother Johnson's and the two brother Money's. Brethren Jones and Thomas, and others, remember this trip. Here our congregation was composed of every kind of religious character, a few Old Baptists, and a number of others you could not tell apart, from the new light to Unitarian.

The next morning we started to the meeting, six miles distant. Here I met, in addition to those before mentioned, brethren Durand, Wallingford, Moore and Smoot. The introductory sermon was preached by our venerable brother Dudley, who preached as much, in the same time, and as much to the point, as I ever heard in my life. But according to the course of nature, his voice will soon cease to be heard here on earth. This meeting was largely attended, and I never heard greater preaching. Christian love and fellowship was manifest throughout. On the next day, in company with brother Francis, I left Lexington, after bidding all farewell. Brother Spencer Jones, whom I had companied with nearly three weeks, was the last to take my hand and crave God's blessing upon me. Truly, dear brother, our interview was one I shall not forget. I arrived in Cincinnati at night, and went over to Ludlow and stayed with Elder Levi Bavis until Thursday. Thence, in company with him, I went to the Indian Creek Association, where I met Elders J. A. Johnson and S. H. Durand, and a number of the other preachers.

This meeting was well attended, and closed with good feeling on Sunday. On Monday morning I took the cars for Cincinnati, arriving in time to take the 12 o'clock train, by the Atlantic and Great Western R. R., for New York, reaching there Tuesday, 11 p. m., and on Wednesday reached home, found all well, and glad to see me. I was gone seven weeks, attended six associations and several churches, tried to preach between thirty and forty time, saw many brethren and preachers, young and old, and enjoyed my visit much.

I have great reason to be thankful for God's goodness to me and my family while absent. Brethren, when it is well with you, remember me, a poor unworthy worm.

Yours to serve in the gospel,

WILSON HOUSEL

RETROSPECTION

It has been our practice at the close of every successive volume of the Signs of the Times to review the way in which the Lord our God has brought us, and to call attention to the preserving goodness and tender mercy which have followed us all our days. Prophets and other inspired men have frequently recorded the former loving-kindness of the Lord to them, and it certainly becomes us to bless the Lord, and forget not all His benefits.

Forty-four years ago, under very trying circumstances, with much fear and trembling, we were induced to issue proposals for publishing the Signs of the Times, to be devoted to the Old School Baptist cause. A brief summary of the leading sentiments of those who at that time were so called was published in our Prospectus, and cordially endorsed by the Convention of Primitive Baptists

that met at Black Rock, in Baltimore Co., Md., in the same year, who recommended our proposed paper, a specimen number of which had been issued, and was then there carefully examined and approved, and commended to the patronage of all Baptists who desired to maintain the ancient doctrine, order and ordinances of the gospel, as established by Christ and His apostles on the day of Pentecost, and who repudiated all the institutions of men, including numerous organized societies which professed to be auxiliaries to the church of God, and to have in view the salvation of souls.

From the time, early in the present century, began to be disseminated in the United States, and to be entertained by such Baptists as could not endure sound doctrine, it became clearly apparent that there were two discordant, conflicting and irreconciliable elements in our churches; and while the one party contended earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, and continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, the other party embraced Fuller's theory of an indefinite atonement, offered salvation, and *gospel condemnation.* This last item was explained to mean that the atonement provided salvation for all the human race who would accept it on certain conditions to be by them performed; that these conditions embraced faith and repentance, and that the ministry of the gospel commanded all sinners to repent and believe the gospel as conditions or means by which they could secure salvation, and that this they must accept and perform on pain of damnation. Thus representing that sinners are condemned and damned, not for being sinners, condemned already by the law of God, but for refusing to repent and believe. This delusive but plausible doctrine, being of the world, the world and all worldly religionists were ready to receive it, and it soon became exceedingly popular. Moreover, it opened the way for the introduction of Mission, Tract and other societies, with Sunday and Theological Schools, as a sort of machinery for converting the world. It was not claimed fifty years ago, by even the most zealous advocates of these institutions, that there was any authority or precedent for them in the Bible, or in the former practice of the Baptist Church; but it was claimed that as the world was making great advancements in arts and sciences, that the church must keep pace with the world by improving on the institutions of our Lord Jesus Christ; and all such Baptists as would not patronize the new improvements were reproached as *old fogies,* as clogs and hinderances to the advancement of religion, and of the salvation of souls.

The spirit of this new departure from the ancient doctrine and usages of the Baptists spread like a pestilence through out the breadth of our land, and in every church and association that was not fully given to the idolatry, divisions and contentions ensued. Numerous professedly religious societies, in the name of benevolence, and as auxiliaries to the church, were formed, offering memberships, directorships and life memberships for money to all, without distinction of character, who would pay the amounts demanded, and even successful horse-racers were politely solicited to invest of their ill-gotten gains for prominent offices in the directorship of these new institutions; while the poor only were excluded from a place among them. This new policy found immense favor with the world, and the churches

governed by it were soon filled up with a most graceless and carnal membership. The pulpits of churches who adopted the new order were soon filled with graduates from Theological Schools, and the doctrine which had formerly distinguished the Baptists no longer rang out from them. Doctrines of men, suited to the taste of the world, now became popular, and no other would find favor with them.

Under these circumstances the remnant whom God had reserved to Himself, as in the days of Elijah, who could not be induced to bow to this modern Baal, were stigmatized as enemies to the spread of the gospel, and too the salvation of sinners, and they were denounced as clogs and hinderances to the evangelization of the world.

At the time of the commencement of the publication of the Signs of the Times the new order had in the field a large number of periodicals, in all of which the position, doctrine and order of the Primitive Baptists who protested against the new doctrines and practices of the popular party were misrepresented, ridiculed and persecuted; and those who stood fast in the truth, being few and far apart in their localities, having no medium of general correspondence, and being denied the columns of the New School, in which to repel the false, malicious calumnies of their enemies, or to publish words of cheer and encouragement to their persecuted brethren, at that time as to make them, in many instances, fear that the few in their own respective localities were all that had not bowed to the modern Baal, and that their lives also were sought by the well fed prophets that eat at the table of their pious Queen Jezebel.

At this trying time there was not an Old School or Primitive Baptist paper published in the United States, nor was there any Baptist of our order found that could be induced to undertake, in the face of fiery persecution, and with the very faint prospect of being sustained pecuniarily, the seemingly hazardous task of publishing a periodical devoted to the Old School Baptist cause, and to be used as a medium of communication and correspondence among those who could no longer hold in, even a nominal or implied fellowship, those who had so greatly apostatized from what they once had professed to believe and practice.

The issuing of our proposals to publish the Signs, with a plain, emphatic declaration of our determination to oppose of innovations on the doctrine and order of the Primitive Baptists, together with the whole brood of the modern religious societies, brought down on us such an outburst of wrath and storm of denunciation from all the New School papers and associations, conventions, etc., as served to thoroughly publish our proposals where we had not the means to publish them, and by the aid of our bitterest opponents, whose indignation was turned in our favor, we were encouraged to begin the publication; but not without many fears on the part of our friends and hopes of our enemies that it would prove an utter failure. Our circulation soon rose to about six hundred copies, in the year 1832, and gradually increased from year to year, checked from time to time by the publication of other papers in various localities dividing the patronage, reducing the circulation. From the large number of non-paying names, amounting in the aggregate to many thousands. Some of these have been entered on the free list of those who desire to read our paper,

but are not able to pay anything; but a far greater number who have subscribed and neglected to pay, letting their paper run on for years without any remuneration.

Those who have read our paper for the past forty-four years, and those who have seen the first and second volumes of our reproduced Editorials, will not need to be informed that we have encountered no small amount of opposition from the open enemies of the cause we advocate; nor have we been able to give entire satisfaction to all our friends. That our enemies have denounced us, was no more nor less than what we expected; but that the friends of truth and righteousness have found occasion to blame us, is to us a matter of deep regret; yet, knowing our own weakness and imperfection, we have no cause for surprise that dear and loving brethren should detect imperfection in our best performances. But we have received from time to time the most cheering assurances of the hearty concurrence of a very large majority of our brethren and sisters, which have been fully appreciated by us.

Brethren, we have spent much the greater part of our life in trying with such ability as God has given us to make our paper edifying and profitable to you. We have not knowingly shunned to declare to you all the counsel of God, so far as that counsel has been made known to us. And now, after forty-four years of incessant labor, it is a comfort in our declining days to recall the wide acquaintance we have formed with those of the household of God throughout our extensive country, and the thousands also whose faces we have not seen in the flesh, whose correspondence has assured us of sweet and delightful fellowship in the doctrine of God our Savior, and in the order of the gospel of our Lord. Now our personal labors are drawing to a close. The vigor of youth and manhood with us is past, our sun is declining, soon to set, when we shall cease to labor, and we hope to rest from all labor, and to be with Jesus in the realms of immortal glory. Of the seventy-six years of our mortal pilgrimage, sixty-five have been spent in the fellowship of the saints, as a member of the Old Order of Baptists, and about fifty-eight years in the work of the gospel ministry, and forty-four in editing and publishing the Signs of the Times. We have great reason to thank God that our health and activity are well preserved, and we are still able to labor in the good cause.

We have, as our readers are aware, associated with us in the publications of the Signs and the general business of the office, our youngest son, Benton L. Beebe, who is also a member of the Old School Baptist Church, who, having spent his lifetime in the office is perfectly familiar with every department of the duties and labors of the work. This arrangement, while it greatly relieves us from much of the pressing care and toil, gives assurance that the work will still go on, and with greater facility for improvement, both in the mechanical and editorial departments.

We have never been favored with a greater number of able correspondents than at the present time; and with the blessing of our heavenly Father we hope to make the forthcoming volume equal at least to any that have preceded it, and as far superior as possible. Those who have hitherto favored us with their communications, are earnestly requested to continue to labor in the good cause, and not be weary in well doing. —G. Beebe

Danville, Virginia December, 1976

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DECEMBER, 1876

EDITORIAL

Middletown, N. Y. December 1, 1876

EVIDENCES OF A NEW BIRTH

There is no subject of more vital and thrilling interest to a poor tempest-tossed child of God than that which presents to his inquiring mind the reliable evidences of being in a quickened state. Subjected, as the children of God are, while here in the flesh to manifold temp tations from Satan, intensified by the infidelity of their own depraved nature, which questions the reality of their hope, and contests and disputes every step of the way in which they have been led by the Spirit, how often and how terribly are they perplexed to decide the all-important point, Have I indeed and in truth passed from death unto life? Am I truly born again, of an incorruptible seed, by the Word of God that liveth and abideth forever? If I am truly and experimentally born agan? why do I find in me so much vanity and vexation of spirit? Why do I walk through so much darkness, coldness, and barrenness, and why am I beset with so many cruel doubts and fears? Why are my spiritual enjoyments so few and so far between? Why have I carnal propensities to do the things which I would not, and to leave undone the things which I would do? Why do I find in me a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me? Why am I so frequently brought into captivity to the law of sin that is in my members, and why is there still a law of sin suffered to remain in my members, if I am indeed a subject of the heavenly birth? Such serious inquiries are not unfrequent with those who entertain, at least, a trembling hope that they are born of God.

Of those who are thus tried and perplexed, there are very many who are, and long have been, deterred from making a public profession of their faith, and from walking in the ordinances of the house of God, fearing that they have not experienced what is necessary, and hoping that by waiting they may have brighter and more reliable evidences of an interest in the Redeemer. And those who are followers of the Redeemer, who have publicly confessed their allegiance to him as their King, by obeying his commands, are by no means free from

the same distressing doubts and fears. Even they, too, by the light of life from Christ their Lord, shining in and upon them, see and feel so much depravity in their earthly or fleshly nature, that, although they have in their new birth received the first fruits of the Spirit, still they groan within themselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their bodies. It is consoling to know that the apostles of the Lamb, and the saints of all ages, have had the same conflict between their flesh and spirit, which settles the point affirmitively, that those who are truly born of God are subjected to all these bitter conflicts, trials and temptations. But neither from the scriptures nor our own observation have we ever found in all the race of mankind a solitary instance of these or similar trials and conflicts in any one who was not born of God. When therefore we meet with those who boast that they have become so spiritual (or sanctified, as they call it) that in soul, body or spirit, and in thought, word or deeds, they are free from all doubts and fears in regard to their acceptance with God, we unavoidably conclude that they are those who separate (or sanctify) themselves, being sensual, having not the Spirit of whom we read, Jude 19. Dead fish float with the tide, but living fish struggle against the stream.

But our principal object in this article is to call attention to some of the scriptural evidences of a quickened state, or of having been born again.

Various and conflicting theories have been expressed by brethren as to what the new birth is, what is born again, etc.; but however much brethren may differ in theoretical speculations, we trust all will fully agree as to what are the evidences that we are truly born again.

The first scriptural evidence we will name is spiritual light, or perception. The Savior said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."—John 3:3. And the apostle says, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man."—1 Cor. 2:14, 15. All mankind in their natural state are in darkness, and under the power of darkness, in regard to the things of the Spirit of God; so dark that no man by teaching can find out God. The things of the Spirit, God has hidden from them, because so it seemed good in his sight. But the life which is given in the new birth is light. "In him (Christ, from whom we receive spiritual life in our new birth) was life, and the life was the light of men."—John 1:4. "Of his fulness shall all we (who are born again) received, and grace for grace." He is the Sun of Righteousness, and in his light the saints have light. This light which is life only illuminates us by the special power of God. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. 4:6. Whatsoever maketh manifest is light; and when the sinner is quickened, the first evidence of vitality is a light which manifests to him something of the purity of God, and of his holy law, and our justly condemned state as sinners. This we are made to see and feel, in a light which we never saw or felt before. And when the law has had its due effect in convincing us of our guilty, helpless and lost condition, then

the same light of life, in greater refulgence, reveals or makes manifest to us the Savior of sinners as our Redeemer, who has put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself, and brought in everlasting righteousness for us, and by the quickening power of that life which is light, we are made to rejoice in him, as being of God made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, and we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. This same light of life makes manifest to us the kingdom of God, and all the things of the Spirit which we are permitted to know and enjoy. No sinner has ever enjoyed one solitary ray of this light, except by the quickening power of God. By the power of this light the scriptures are opened to our understanding. Even the quickened saints of God can see no farther in the scriptures, or in any of the things of the Spirit of God, than they are led and taught by the Spirit which is given to us in our new and heavenly birth.

If then we can see and distinguish the kingdom of God from every other religious organization on earth, we are surely born again, and manifestly the children of light.

The love of God shed abroad in our hearts is perhaps the most infallible and demonstrative evidence that we are born again. This witness is far more reliable than knowledge, zeal or benevolence. "Though I speak with the tongue of men and angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and have all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." 1 Cor. 1:3. If it were possible to possess all these extraordinary gifts, in the absence of the love of God they would fail to demonstrate a vital interest in the quickening power and saving grace of God; while, on the other hand, if we love God supremely, love his truth, his ordinances and his people, we are, beyond all possibility of failure, born of God. "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him. Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."—1 John 4:7-11. Here we have the emphatic testimony of an inspired apostle. First, that love, the love of which we speak, is of God. "Not that we loved God," or that this distinguishing love originated with us, for it is of God; there fore it cannot possibly emanate from any other source. "We love him because he first loved us." His love to us is the *cause*; our love to him is the *effect.* Secondly, this love is communicated to us who possess it by a birth. "He that loveth is born of God." It is not the mere passion of our fallen nature drawn into a new direction, for that is carnal and selfish; but this is heaven-born, and fixed immovably on things which are above. It is the special gift of God. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."—1 John 3:1.

It is peculiar in its manner, as well as in its source and nature. In nature it is like its adorable author, eternal, immutable, sovereign and discriminating; and in its manner, irresistible, transforming and conforming those on whom it is bestowed to the image and likeness of the only begotten Son of God.

Neither the nature nor manner of the love of God is changed in the least when bestowed upon and dwelling in the hearts of God's children, from what it was in God before it was shed abroad manifestly in them. If we possess the love of God, we shall love the things which are approved of God; and as God has loved his people with an everlasting love, and for the great love wherewith he loved them hath quickened them together with Christ, and has loved them even as he loved his own dear and only begotten Son, whom he loved before the foundation of the world, (John 17:23-25) so we shall, if this love of God be perfected in us, love one another with a pure heart fervently. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"—1 John 4:20. The image of the invisible God is borne, at least to some extent, by those who are the recipients of his love, and who walk in his institutions. If we have no love or special regard for them in whom the fruits of his Spirit are developed, how can we love the invisible God, in whose righteousness they shine? "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death." This is a solemn declaration. If we love the brethren, we are born again—have passed from death unto life, and however poor, weak and trembling we may feel, we are certainly born of God. But whatever amount of knowledge, zeal or works we may possess, if we have not this love, we abide in death.

How fearful is the blind infatuation of those who cherish the delusive hope that if they can but slip into heaven even by stealth, they could there enjoy the blessedness thereof. If now they possess not the love of God, they cannot now endure his truth, they have no love for his people, they see no beauty or excellency in his institutions, how could they, without a change of heart, be happy there? We do feel fully warranted to believe and preach that every one that could be happy in the unveiled presence of the glory of God, and in the society of holy beings, will be found among the glorified in heaven. But if we do not love God and holiness, heaven can be no place of happiness to us, even if it were possible for us to get there. God is himself the center of attraction to all the saints in glory; but if we do not partake of his love, we cannot be happy in his presence.

Now the anxious inquiry of some poor, doubting, trembling, tempted child may be, "Do I love the Lord or no? Am I His, or am I not?" the certainty that all who love God are born of God, have passed from death unto life, and shall never come into condemnation, but shall assuredly live and reign with Christ in everlasting glory, how shall I know or be satisfied that I truly love God, or that He has bestowed His love on me? We have proved by the scriptures that we have passed from death unto life if we love the brethren. Well, John says, "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments, and his commandments are not grievous."—1 John 5:2, 3. If

then His commandments are not grievous, if we love them, see beauty in them, it is because He has written His law in our hearts and shed His love abroad in us, that we find His yoke is easy and His burden is light to us. If we love His service and delight to obey Him, and to honor Him as our Lord and Master, by this we know that we love His children, and are passed from death unto life.

Another reliable evidence of being born again is that we endure chastening. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; but if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." Heb. 12:6-8. It is a great mistake to suppose that uninterrupted joy and comfort attend the children of God while here in the flesh, and that sore trials, temptations, persecution and buffetings are indications of an unconverted state. The ungodly often prosper in this life, and seem to have more than heart can wish, so that eyes stand out with fatness, while they set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth. While God's own dear people return hither, and the waters of a full cup are wrung out to them. (Psa. 73:9. 10) Could the saints always know that their sore afflictions are dealt to them in love, and as evidence of their sonship, they would indeed rejoice in tribulation, and welcome the chastening rod of their heavenly Father.

Still another comforting evidence of sonship is in being led by the Spirit of God. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."—Rom. 8.14-16. "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."—Rom. 8:9. The indwelling of the Spirit of Christ is an infallible evidence that we are born again. And if that Spirit dwells in us, its fruits will be to some extent manifested in us, which are: "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance."—Gal. 4:22, 23.

We might greatly extend this article, and from the rich treasury of divine inspiration recite many additional evidences which demonstrate the relationship of children in those who are born of God and are led by His Spirit; but we will now only speak of two more. "They (who deny that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh) are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error."—1 John 4:5, 6. They whose religion is of the world, hear not the apostles' testimony; but all who know God have an ear to hear and heart to receive the testimony of the apostles of the Lamb of God. Jesus testified to the unbelieving Jews, "He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." And again, "But ye believe not, because ye are not my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, etc.—John 8:47, and 10: 26-28.

The other evidence which we propose to name is that all who are truly born of God, without any exception find a law in their members, warring against the law of their mind, bringing them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members, and like the holy apostle they exclaim, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death,"—Rom. 7:23, 24.

There are two classes of those whom we recognize as the children of God to whom we desire more especially to address the foregoing recital of scriptural evidences of a quickened state. In the one we would embrace those doubting, desponding Christians, who write bitter things against themselves, because they feel so sensibly the depravity of their carnal nature, and find themselves coming so far short of what they desire, and of what they think all Christians ought to be, that they are sometimes deterred from filling their places in the house of God and at the table of the Lord, from a deep and heartfelt sense of their unworthiness to be numbered with the children of God. We wish to say to all such that our acceptance with God is not on the ground of our own worthiness, but on being freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. It is "By grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." —Eph. 2:8, 9. The very light that reveals to you your own depravity is immortal life; and your very groanings after holiness is conclusive evidence that ye are born of God.

The other class embraces those who are bleating around, outside of the walls of the organized church of God; who, though once slain by the law, and delivered from the burden of guilt which once they felt, are fearful that they have not yet received a sufficient amount of evidence to warrant them to take on them the yoke of Christ and walk in his ordinances. The voice of the Redeemer is not, If ye feel worthy, if ye have no doubts or fears, no sense of short coming, no longings after more holiness; but it is, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." The evidences of a quickened state we have attempted to present. Dare you say that none of them have been developed in your experience? Dare you say you do not love the Lord or his people? Do you see no beauty in the ordinances of the house of God? Is there not a longing desire to mingle with and in the fellowship of the children of God? Do you believe that your feelings are a more safe and reliable guide for you than all the scriptures recited in this article? We would not encourage those who bear none of these marks to make a profession of religion; it would do them no good, nor could it benefit the church. But those who truly love God will deeply feel their own unworthiness to be called his disciples. But the more sensibly they feel their own unworthiness, the more sensibly will they appreciate the spotless righteousness of Christ, in which alone we can be justified before God.—Gilbert Beebe.

☞ 1976

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Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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EXPERIENCE

Marshall, Saskatchewan, Canada
Sept. 23, 1976

Dear Elder Spangler:

I must write a letter that has been on my mind for 28 years, in order to get relief.

I will start with my earliest experience of grace, which was 49 years ago this month. I thought I had committed the unpardonable sin. It lasted about a month. On Sunday evening while the tempest was at its worst, I called on an Old School Baptist lady where I often was want to go, and told her my troubles. "Oh" says she, "it is the Spirit of the Lord striving with you." Next morning when I was leaving, she gave me some Old Baptist doctrine to read, including *Songs in the Night,* by James Durand; and also a "Memoir of the author" by Silas Durand.

I spent all the next day reading them until late at night. When I went to bed I felt I was forgiven; then I had a second thought. Am I really forgiven, and the Spirit came a second time and so flooded me within that I wanted to die, and cross over where sorrow is never known. What beautiful hours I then enjoyed! The memory lingers still. About a month, little by little it was taken from me, so that my great deliverance seemed like the faintest ray of light! I went back to this same lady and never said a word about what I was passing through. When I was leaving I asked if she had any old *Signs.* Much to my surprise she had three numbers tied together for me to take home.

I thought I was alone in what I was passing through. Much to my surprise, I found others were telling the same story. I drank its contents like a thirsty horse would drink water. Now that I have mentioned the horse it reminds me that when my favorite team came to the well for water, I would gladly have changed over to being one of them, as they had nothing to answer for after death. About a year and four months later I was pierced through with an arrow on account of sin. Then I went along for about eleven years without much trouble. I used to think that the Good Master was angry with me, and would have nothing more to do with me. I longed for it to return, just to prove I still was a son. Well it did return and I started to have sleepless nights. I went back to this same lady and told her of my trouble. She said that she had sleep-

less nights; and as we talked my troubles left me.

About a month or six weeks later I had another spell—my weary steps surely did falter. I woke up one morning and it was all gone. I was so happy I didn't care whether I did my chores or not. I thought I was in for a long period of rest; but not so. I entered into an agreement with a neighbor to ship a carload of oats, which wasn't strictly honest on my part. While I was in the grain elevator before the agreement, a powerful jab took place in my chest, and a voice spoke silent and powerful and said, If you sign that contract, you are forever lost. I argued with the agent that I didn't want to sign, but he would have none of it. No one can understand what I passed through, only those who have had a like experience. The following night at mid-night, while reading a letter in the Signs by the late Elder J. W. Bowden where he wrote, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us, etc.", shows conclusively that all our spiritual blessings are and were deposited in Jesus before the world was manifested, and in time are given to His little ones by revelation, and made known to those who are born of God.

At that moment the peace that flooded within me I cannot tell. I heard no voice, I saw no vision, neither could I ask for any.

Now comes the painful part of this letter, as far as I am concerned. It is about 28 years since I first attended an Old School Baptist association which was held at Riffe, Washington. On Saturday while they were singing, "Must I be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease," I was so overwhelmed with the Spirit I burst into tears. After coming back home I wrote a sister how I enjoyed the meeting; which I did. Here is part of what I wrote, "Again on Sunday morning I had a similar experience just before you partook of the Lord's Supper, when Elder Hughett said, This is my broken body. I did enjoy the service, but I wasn't overwhelmed with the Spirit like I was on Saturday." Now why did I write that after how good the Lord had been to me?"

Here is an excerpt from a letter by Elder Harris in the April 15, 1920 Signs: "In looking through the catalog of all my deeds in this life what will I find listed? Sin, foolish and wicked thoughts, a heart desperately wicked, and who can know it? I do not, for it deceives me and leads me into doing things strictly wrong and forbidden of my dear Lord. Then why do I do them? I can only say, as did Paul, it is sin that dwelleth in me. I am corrupt, as the result of the inheritance of sin from Adam. I hope I am righteous according to the inheritance of eternal life given me through Jesus Christ."

I have a good hope I did not commit an unpardonable sin, for while coming home from a meeting at Riffe a year or two later, I fell asleep on the bus, and a presence or something came before me. I don't remember now whether it was the presence or myself that removed my shoes and socks. My feet were covered with sores. Whatever the presence was, wrapped my feet in soft down. I never felt anything so comfortable in my life. When I awoke it was daylight. I became startled when I saw my shoes were still on.

If it is all right with you Elders, I would like this letter published in the Signs. If I live till next summer, I will

be 80 years old. I have a bad heart, and this may be my last letter.

Dear Elder Spangler, I said at the start of this letter that I had to write in order to get relief. Well the relief came last night while reading a letter in the August 1, 1904 Signs. A Mrs. Tuttle asked Elder Chick: "Do you believe that one that is born of God fears death?"

He answered as follows: "In reply we can but say that all whom we have known who have spoken to us about the matter at all, have confessed that It was so with themselves, and very many have doubted whether they were born of God at all upon this very ground. . . .

It is only when and as we see Jesus the Conqueror that we are able to say, 'O death, where is thy sting, O grave, where is thy victory?' "

I am deleting part of what he wrote, but here is some more of it, " . . . God at times gives to His children such strong and living faith that they can rejoice even in the hour of death, and cry, "O grave where is thy victory, O death, where is thy sting?"

This means experience here, that is the way I understood it last night. I had been spending sleepless nights, but not so last night. I spent the night without one bit of fear. If my doctor had told me last night that my case was hopeless, which I sometimes fear it is, I don't think it would have worried me one bit. I am setting my earthly house in order: it seems that I have nothing to do with setting the other house in order.

My love to all the Old School Baptists. I may be seeing you next summer.

—Joe McKenzie

P. O. Box 551
Monticello, Ark.

Dear Elder Wood:

It is near one O'clock, August 22nd, and I haven't been able to sleep because my mind is fastened on the 23rd Psalm and a recent dream.

I believe the writers of old were inspired to write for our learning, and that no one should try to alter or change any words of the Scriptures to suit their fancies, or try to justify the flesh thereby.

I attended the funeral of an acquaintance yesterday, and the minister used the 23rd Psalm as his text, saying that the words: I, My, and Me, should be changed to Our, Us and We. I cannot agree with him, because I believe David was expressing an individual, personal experience by the grace of Almighty God. Liksewise I believe it is so with every little one of grace. Since this grace blessing is a private, individual experience, the words I, My and Me are very properly used in their respective places; and we are not to change or distort the wording of the Scriptures, or to missapply them at any time or place. In order not to take up too much space I will use references.

David said, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." (See Psa. 34: 9, 10)

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." (See Psa. 36:8)

"He restoreth my soul, he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." (See Psa. 5:8)

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." (See Psa. 16:8 and 27:1)

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil: my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever." (See Psa. 25:7, 10)

Surely it was a grand and glorious experience that David, by the grace of God, with the eye of faith, could see the Lord as his Shepherd. It was a private, personal blessing to David. So, why shouldn't he say, "The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want." God had revealed himself to David to the extent that David knew for a fact, that God's promises were and are sure, and will come to pass for the benefit of God's elect, and to the praise, honor and glory of God the Father and His darling Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Let us refer to Psalm 36:8 David said THEY, and at this point David had reference to every little child of the household of faith—those whom God chose in Christ. Those whom the precious Lord died to redeem. "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures." Now he did not say that the Lord would invite or plead with them to drink of the river of the Lord's pleasures; but thou shall *make* them drink of the river of thy pleasure.

Oh yes, He makes them to rejoice at the time and season when it is pleasing unto Him. Though we may be cast down in the valley of nature's darkness, His hand is able to lift us up, and His arm mighty to restore our strength. From the fullness of my heart, may I say to you as David did in Psalm 117, "O praise the Lord all ye nations: praise him all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the Lord endureth forever. Praise ye the Lord."

Dear ones, if I may I would like to tell you a dream I had a couple of nights ago. First, I want you to know that I do not consider myself a spiritual dreamer, since I can't recall over three or four times that I have dreamed anything spiritually discerned. Most all of my dreams are of war-time experiences, and they are not at all pleasant; and my dear wife awakens me if I make an unusual sound in my sleep. But this is the dream I had a couple of nights ago. I I dreamed I was sitting on my front porch in the heat of the day. The sun was shining very brightly, and I saw the eastern sky light up with an extremely brilliant, radiant light that reached from the north even to the south. And in the midst of that light was a great and mighty face. In the face I could see Justice, Love, Mercy, Kindness, Power and Understanding. At this point I was made to rise to my feet and say, Surely this is the face of my Lord and my Redeemer. And as I beheld the glory of the face, my mouth was opened, and I began to praise God the Father and the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. And I saw a little band of people, not many in number, that had gathered before me; and to my amazement and dismay, my mouth was opened and I was made to minister to the little band, and before the mighty face. And that face smiled at me, in promising approval. I was speaking in a language that was altogether unfamiliar to me. I tried to quit speaking but could not. The more I tried to quit the faster and louder the words came.

Dear ones, I do not know what this dream meant, or even if it had a mean-

ing. I do know that within myself and my nature, I am not worthy to speak the blessed name of our dear Lord. But if you do love the Lord and His truth, and have fellowship with Christ, you are very dear to me. I would like to hear from one of God's people concerning this dream, by personal letter or through the *Signs of the Times,* if you feel *you may* have an interpretation for me.

Yours in a sweet hope,

David B, Lawson

P. S. I enclose check for one year's sub- to James B. Lawson, 943 East College Ave., Monticello, Ark. 71655. Use the balance as you see fit.

---

208 Frederick St.
Bastorp, La. 71220
September 6, 1976.

Dear Elder Griffin:

Since I deeply feel the need of the presence and guiding Spirit of God, my prayer is that the Lord may bless me to answer your letter of June 11, 1976. Your first answer is: "Do you believe that an Elder, either you or I both having been duly ordained to the ministry by a presbytery of Old School Baptists, have a right to go preach, without affiliation, to people of that Old Baptist persuasion, who are not in what we would call gospel order?"

I believe that the ministers have an obligation to God to go and PREACH anywhere and any place where the Lord leads and directs them. "And he said, unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Acts 20:28. "And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." Rom. 10:15. Who is to question God for sending ministers to preach to certain churches? Of course, the question may arise: Were they led by the right Spirit, or was it by the wrong spirit? We do not know. We walk by faith and not by sight. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." John 4:1.

God called Paul to preach to the Gentiles and he did not seek permission from man to do what he was impressed to do. "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me: but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus." Gal. 1:15-17.

God directed Philip to go and preach to just one man. "And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot." Acts 8:26-29.

I believe that the Lord sends His ministers to preach at the appointed places prepared by God. "So shall my word be

that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it." Isa. 55:11. God preaches through His ministers. "I have put my words in thy mouth. . ." Isa. 51:16, see also 59:21. "For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God. . . . John 3:34. "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." 1 Cor. 2:4.

Question two: "Have you thus preached?" I am not ashamed nor afraid to say that I have filled private appointments at Primitive Baptist churches not of our affiliations. (Please remember that I did not affiliate with them. All I did was attempt to preach at these churches). It is a strange experience to feel the pouring out of the Spirit of God in churches not of our affiliation! The word of God is not bound! (See 2 Tim. 2:9). "And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 10:45.

Please read Gal. 2:9-14. I believe that Paul was blessed to be correct when he withstood Peter to the face. Why did Peter eat with the Gentiles, but then withdrew and separated himself when he saw the Jews coming? He feared man! Notice that some dissembled with Peter, and even Barnabas did the same. Paul saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel. Let us ask ourselves these questions: Do we fear man or God? Are we called to please man or God? Are we a seeker after popularity? "For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." Gal. 1:10.

May God bless us to follow the impression and guidance of the Lord and not fear the scorn and frown of man. ". . . we ought to obey God rather than man." Acts 5:29. ". . . full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition." Mark 7:9. "So that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." Heb. 13:6.

May God bless us to pray earnestly over the matter and follow this advice one old brother told me years ago: "Young brother, it is good to strive as as much as possible to follow the unction of the Holy Ghost." "What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" Rom. 8:31. "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn." Isa. 54:17. (See Psa. 27: 1-6).

Yours in hope.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.

HER TRUST IS IN GOD

515 Boone Road.
Eden, N. C. 27288.

Dear Editors:

Inclosed is a check for $10.00 for two years renewal, the rest a contribution to the Signs. We have taken the paper many years and have enjoyed it very much, and I wish to have it continue.

My husband, Warford N. Tilley, passed away November 14, 1975. Had he lived until March of 1976 he would have been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church 15 years, and served most of these years as a deacon. He was a strong believer of salvation by the grace of God and always attended his meetings and enjoyed them very much.

He was in the intensive care unit at Morehead Hospital one week. The children and I visited him shortly before he went away, and he seemed so happy, we thought he was better; but about 30 or 40 minutes later the Lord called him home.

I feel he could have adopted the language of the apostle Paul, (2 Tim. 4: 6-8): "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing."

It has been a very lonely and difficult year for me, but my hope, I trust, is in God who does all things right; without Him I could not have made it this far.

May the Lord bless and keep all the Editors of this good paper, and give them the grace and strength to carry on the good work they are doing.

In Christian love,

Lessie Wray Tilley

Rt. 5, Cadiz, Ky. 42211

Dear Elder Spangler:

I see my subscription is about due, so inclosed is a check for two more years, and the balance as you see best. I have been taking the Signs for over fifty years, and have the first volume of Elder Beebe's Editorials. He was a wonderful gift, and it is good to see that the Signs is being published in the same way today. Surely the God of heaven is upholding it for the comfort of His people. One of the writers wrote, "Known unto God are all of his works from the beginning." Acts 15:18. He knows how to take care of His children at all times and places, and He knows what is best for them, and what they need; and He said He would supply all of our needs. "All things work together for good to them that love God."

I don't know whether I love Him or not, but I hope I do, and I believe I do. Paul wrote, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he elso glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

If God knew all of His works from the beginning, and knew all about His people, and chose them in Christ before the foundation of the world, and laid the sins of His people on Christ, did He not know what and how many sins they would transgress against Him; and if their sins were laid on Christ, and He died for them, are they not all atoned for? If not, Christ died in vain—I don't believe He did that, but He suffered for our sins, if I am one of them.

I say again, "Who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect?"

I enjoyed your Editorial concerning the associations, Elder Spangler. There are many who think associations are a court to try the churches.

May God continue to bless you Editors, is my prayer.

(Elder) J. N. Darnell

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."

Dear Editors of the Signs:

It is encouraging to note the Editorial entitled, Peace, in the May issue of the Signs. Your endorsement of the same was commendable, Brother Wood.

Then the Editorial by Elder Beebe (July 1, 1865), entitled, Forgiveness, all speak in harmony with the sixth Beatitude: Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

To be peacemakers requires action. Peacemakers must be, ". . . doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving ourselves." Jas. 1:22.

The Lord said, "Come now let us reason together." And again we find Him saying, ". . . let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified." The Psalmist says, "Seek peace and pursue it."

The poet knew the blessedness of peace when he wrote:

"When peace like a river attendeth my way,
When sorrow, like sea-billows roll;
Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul."

How much effort have we put forth to bring about reconciliation with our brethren? Let us not merely stand ready but make an honest effort to become peacemakers. Let us humble ourselves, seeing that we are not faultless, and call a peace-meeting of the ministers and brethren who are like-minded and "reason together."

Our people who are taught of the Lord can, with the Lord's help, walk together and we should. I would like to hear from other peace-loving brethren and especially the ministers on this subject, either through the Signs or write me personally.

I will close with Christian love to all the true Israel of God. P. E Ingram

301 Rives Rd., Martinsville, Va 24112

THE LATE BROTHER VASS TO ELDER SPANGLER

Nov. 3, 1938

My dear Brother Spangler:

Ever since you preached in Norfolk last September, just fifteen years after I heard you for the first time at the church of my membership, during an association, I have entertained a desire to write you. I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed your preaching, especially on Saturday. Oh how good and how pleasant it was to sit under the sound of your voice once more as you proclaimed the unsearchable riches of Christ with power from on high. Mine eyes ran down with tears ere the meeting was over and I feasted that Saturday afternoon as I thought upon the same. It is not every time that I thus feast upon a sermon. As the poet said,

"Sometimes I hear the word of life,
And all is death within;
Yet I find a strange mysterious strife,
Between my soul and sin."

I cannot put myself into a frame to hear the gospel. If I hear indeed I am given to hear. The heart must be prepared or opened as was Lydia's for the reception of the gospel. The hard and stony heart receives it not, for it is not capacitated to take the bread of life, the bread from heaven; it is not charmed with the gospel news, but rejects it as foolishness. But it is not so with the new heart, the heart of flesh. The gospel is its meat and drink and it cannot thrive upon husks. I hope that I have a new heart, agreeable to the profession I have made. If not, I am deceived and a deceiver. Brother Cobb once said to me from the pulpit that if I knew nothing of a change I would never know of it. I understood from the expression that he

had confidence in me as to my being born again of incorruptible seed, and it did me good. It is good to have the confidence of those in whom you have confidence.

Well, I went down to see Brother Duncan last Sunday and we had a pleasant time together. I like to be with him for I am satisfied that he has been with Jesus in his experience. I do not seek the company of the world, though I am thrown with the world in business. I have to work in an office with infidels, but I don't relish it, even though there is infidelity in my corrupt, vile nature. I don't believe the carnal mind it changed in regeneration, but that it still cleaves to the dust. I can look back and see that I had a rebellious nature as a child, and I have it yet to my shame. The old man will be with us, our corrupt nature will remain until it is dissolved in death never again to perturb us if we be among the ransomed. It will be great to get away from ourselves, so to speak, and enter the abode of the saints where there will be nothing to mar our happiness and tranquil joys will have no end.

I will now bring my letter to a close, hoping that in the providence of God you may come this way again. Your preaching is what we like. I see nothing in it to divide, but much to build up in the most holy faith. You take heed to your doctrine as the Bible directs, and it is profitable to do so. Brother Duncan and I felt drawn to you notwithstanding the schism that has separated peace-loving Old Baptists in many places. I am sorry the differences on doctrine ever led to an open break, but I had nothing to do with it. I would like to see the breach healed and a better understanding prevail, but I may never see it.

In hope, C. W. Vass

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union will be held, the Lord willing, at Creeches Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1977. Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
P. O. Box 4524, Rocky Mt. N. C. 27801.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK

We have placed an order for an edition of the Durand and Lester Hymn and Tune Book in the shaped notes. And we are promised delivery about the middle of December.

The prices will be, $6.50 each plus state sales tax, delivered. One dozen $78.00, plus state sales tax, delivered.

Send orders to:

Elder Donald E. Smith, Rt. 7, Box 483, Burlington, N. C. 27215;
Or to:
P. G. Lester, Jr., 2246 Memorial Ave., S. W., Roanoke, Virginia 24015.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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EDITORIAL

With this January, 1977 issue, we begin another volume of the Signs of the Times, the 145th Which means that the Lord has maintained the paper since 1832, for what we believe has been His honor and praise; and to the comfort and edification of His people.

As we have read the old volumes of the Signs there has never been a time that the writers did not contend earnestly for the sovereignty of God over all times, worlds and events, and affirmed that the Lord's people are those who were chosen in Christ before the world began and that He sends His Spirit unto them manifesting that they are His children, and that their salvation is secured to them by the atoning blood of the Lord Jesus Christ; and that it is all by His grace from beginning to end.

In the late 1700's and early 1800's there were many doctrines advanced by some Baptists whose minds were turned from the simplicity that is in Christ. This greatly disturbed the brethren who had been taught of the Lord, and who believed the doctrine clearly taught by Jesus and His apostles. The Lord had prepared Elder Gilbert Beebe to sum up this doctrine and publish the Signs of the Times in 1832, and enabled him to continue as Editor for fifty years, when others also were prepared to take over, and continued to contend for the faith even until the present time.

The following are the proposals which Elder Beebe sent out among the brethren when he commenced the paper, and which are still at the mast-head and faithfully adhered to:

Proposals for publishing a semi-monthly paper, to be called the "Signs of the Times," devoted exclusively to the Baptist cause, maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfections of the great Jehovah — the Revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, "These Three are One."—1 John 5:8.

2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.

4. The Total Depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

5. That the Atonement and Redemp-

tion of Jesus Christ are for the Elect only.

6. The Sovereign, Irresistible, and in all cases, Effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in Regenerating and Quickening the Elect of God.

7. The Final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

8. The Resurrection of the dead and Eternal Judgment.

9. That the Church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers —that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God.

10. That there is no connection between Church and State, and as touching the proposition for a marriage between them, the Hon. R. M. Johnson, in his Report on the Sabbath Question, has expressed our faith:

"The *Signs of the Times* will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath Schools, &c, &c, making war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of Institutions."

Along with the above, Elder Beebe published the following in March, 1833:

THE OBJECT OF OUR PAPER

New Vernon, N. Y., March 27, 1833

Our brethren of the Old School of Christ will bear in mind that this humble sheet is devoted to the Baptist cause, as we believe the Baptist cause to be the cause of God, and that its columns are designed to be used as a medium for the circulation of Bible doctrine and general information.

The dear people of God who remain steadfast and unshaken in the apostles' doctrine are at this day greatly scattered through the country, and in many instances where one or more of them are found they are supposed to be the only ones remaining of the same faith and order. Indeed, they are often themselves driven to the conclusion of Elijah: "They have digged down thine altars and killed thy prophets, and I am left alone, and they seek my life." In their scattered condition it affords them peculiar pleasure to hear from one another. "As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.—Prov. 25:25.

It is certainly good news to the scattered pilgrims to hear of the numbers in different parts of the land who still adhere to the doctrine and practice of the primitive church. In days of old, "they that feared the Lord spake often one to another;" and the exhortation of the apostle is, that we "exhort one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching "

We are glad to greet our brethren and friends at the beginning of this New Year, and thank them for supporting the publication of the Signs of the Times by their subscriptions, donations and writings; and we hope they will continue as the Lord enables them.

In these distressing times, may we ever be led to remember that the Lord is yet reigning, and that His purposes are not disturbed.

His church is built upon the Rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

May the Lord bless each one to earnetly contend for the faith He once delivered to the saints, and enable us to praise and adore His precious name.

—J. D. W.

"They glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, that God hath visited his people."
Luke 7:16.

In 1 Tim. 2:5, 6, we read, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." The word mediator means intermediary and intercessor. When we consider "one mediator" we should consider Christ (meaning the anointed) Jesus as Prophet, Priest and King. Prophets, priests and kings were anointed when they were vested in their offices. These offices, seldom if ever, met in one person. There are many names and titles of Christ as in the hymn by Newton,

"Jesus, my Shepherd, Husband, Friend,
My Prophet, Priest and King,
My Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,
Accept the praise I bring."

However, in the article, the writer will consider Jesus as the Prophet of His people, having considered in an earlier article Christ Jesus as the High Priest of our profession. In another article, the Lord willing, Christ Jesus will be considered as King.

The word prophet has several meanings. Firstly, a true prophet is one who foretells future events. Secondly, in the scripture a prophet is one who preaches. Thirdly, a prophet is one who speaks for another, usually God.

The Jews believed that Jesus would be a prophet and it is said in John 6:14, "This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world." This was prophesied in Deut. 18:15, 18 by Moses, to whom the Lord said, "I will raise one up from among their brethren like unto thee." Jesus was raised up from among His brethren, like unto Moses, yet greater than Moses. The law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Moses was raised up and sent to be a redeemer of Israel out of Egypt. Christ was raised up, and sent to be the Savior and Redeemer of His people, (the Lord's portion is His people) from the bondage of sin. Moses was faithful in all his house, Christ Jesus was counted of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who builded the house hath more honor than the house. Moses was faithful as a servant, Christ was and is faithful as a Son over His own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

The qualifications of Christ for His prophetic office were foretold. In Isa. 55:4 it reads, "Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people." In Rev. 3:5, the scripture reads, "and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness and the first begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood." Job bore witness to the truth of the above in Job 16: 19, "Also, now, behold my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high."

In Isaiah 42:6 the scripture speaks of Jesus as the light to the Gentiles, "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee and give thee a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles." In Luke 2:32, Jesus is called "A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of my people Israel."

Jesus is spoken of as a teacher of the ways of God and the truths of the gospel. In Isaiah 2:3 it reads, "And he will teach us his ways and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth

the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Nicodemus came to Jesus and said to him in John 3:2, "Rabbi, we know thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him."

In Isaiah the scripture reads, "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned." In Hebrews it reads, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him. "Even the officers of the Pharisees said, "Never man spake like this man." in Luke 7:46. Jesus is called a counselor. He was concerned in the counsel of peace and He gives counsel in the gospel and counsel to His saints. In Isaiah 9:6, Isaiah says, "And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." In Rev. 3:18 Jesus speaks to the Church at Laodicea, "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakenness do not appear and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve that thou mayest see."

Jesus is spoken of as Wisdom. In Proverbs 4:7 it says, "Wisdom is the principal thing: therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting, get understanding." And understanding is the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. We believe also that Wisdom hath builded her house. In 1 Cor. 1:30 Paul says, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

Jesus is a messenger of the covenant that is in all things ordered and sure. He interprets the mind and will of God. Job 33:23, 24 reads, "If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his unrighteousness: then he is gracious unto him and saith, Deliver him from going down into the pit; I have found a ransom." Jesus is the beautiful Messenger bringing the beautiful message to His people, in John 11:25, 26, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"

The qualifications of Jesus Christ for His prophetic office were all foretold. He received the gifts and graces of the Spirit without measure. At Nazareth, Jesus read from Isaiah 61 in the synagog on the sabbath day. "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." He closed the book, gave it again to the minister and said, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." What a beautiful sermon!

Truly, Jesus as Prophet is our preacher, our messenger, our wisdom, our counselor, our teacher, our speaker, our light, our faithful witness, our all in all.

I trust it is not presuptuous for the writer to set forth a few of the ways that I hope my Jesus has been a prophet to me as I reflect on the past quarter of a century. Often, we must reflect to see the hand of God in our lives. Many were the pricks of conscience yet went I on, as Paul, breathing out cruelties against

my Maker. Yet when He stopped me in my mad career all was darkness, all was ignorance, all was unbelief. How we need the Prophet to quicken us who are by nature dead in trespasses and in sins, to enlighten us, and make known unto us the minds and will of God. How He made me to know that man walketh in a vain show, that man walketh after the imagination of his own heart. He persuaded me to believe as in Jer. 10:23, 24, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. O Lord, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing." How God in His tender mercy and loving kindness showed me the immutability of His counsel as in Isaiah 46: 9, 10, "For I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." There was no choice when He persuaded me to trust no longer in the old man, but to trust Him. Such was the perfect love (and perfect love casteth out fear) that was shed abroad in my heart that I verily felt in my very being "that though my soul were sent to hell, His righteous law approved it well." When we are in our right mind, we do indeed believe that He knoweth what is right for us better than we know ourselves and that He will supply all our needs according to His riches in Christ Jesus. He, and He alone doth open our heart, and illuminate our mind, cause us to attend to the things spoken and embrace the truths of the scriptures. In Him do we trust when He causes our cup to overflow and feel that "Goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our life, and we shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever." When the Lord fills our soul with the feeling that He has loved us with an everlasting love, therefore, with lovingkindness is He drawing us with His sweet resistless grace we are made confident that He will bring us off more than conquerors. The closer we come to being in His presence the more we feel to need Him as our Prophet, Priest and King. Who is like unto Him?

As well as one who foretells future events, I found Jesus to be the preacher. Again, Jesus the teacher taught me, if not deceived, that if there is any preaching done, He does it. Experimentally, He taught me that He preaches good tidings unto the meek. He binds up the broken-hearted, He proclaims liberty to to the captives. He opens the prison to them that are bound, He comforts all that mourn, He gives unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning and the garment of praise for the spirit of heavines. Why? That they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified. How He persuaded me to desire some good news from Him! How beautiful when I learned that the end of the conversation of every true watchman on the walls of Zion is "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever" as in Heb. 13:7, 8. When asked to speak the first time He gave me to feel and say, "His truth at all times firmly stood and shall from age to age endure." How precious has that thought been down through the years! He must give mouth, matter and utterance or there is no preaching. The longer we stand to speak in His name, the more we realize that we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency might be of Him.

When we preach Jesus and Him crucified, His people are fed. There is no other foundation than that which is laid, Christ Jesus. Jesus said on the cross, "It is finished." What a beautiful sermon in such few words!

The prophet Jesus speaks for God as He is God How precious it was when by faith I saw "Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man, for it became him for whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering, for both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." Heb. 2:9-11. Surely, "One there is above all others well deserves the name of friend." John rejoiced to hear the voice of the bridegroom and we rejoice too when we hear His voice and are given to feel that since we have heard His voice we shall see His face, and then only be satisfied, when we awake with His likeness. When all seems to be gone we are still given to say as Peter in John 6:68 "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." What a blessing it is to have faith and hope that we shall be called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. If He has given us faith and hope we shall indeed be called and have the high privilege of dwelling eternally with Him.

Jesus is our Prophet, Priest, and King. He is a Prophet mighty in deed and word, a Priest after the order of Melchizedek, and is King of kings and Lord of lords.

"Ye chosen seed of Israel's race,
A remnant weak and small!
Hail Him who saves you by His grace,
And crown Him Lord of all!"

(Elder) D. Alex McColl

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

CHRISTMAS

G. Beebe Sons—Dear Brethren:—

This day is recognized by many as the anniversary of the birth of our Savior. Whether or not the twenty-fifth day of December is truly the anniversay of that greates event ever recorded byeither the sacred or profane historian, is not a question that I am now disposed to discuss. We find no command within the lids of the sacred volume which requires the true followers of our once meek and lowly, but now exalted Lord, to celebrate in any way that day, the day in which He laid aside the glory He had with the Father before the world was, and took upon Himself that body which was prepared Him. As the sacred volume is silent on that subject, it behooves the children of God to keep that day to the Lord, but not more so than all other days. The sublime glories that burst forth upon a sin-cursed world when the angel of the Lord announced His advent to the shepherds who watched their flock by night, present to us a subject of such superlative glory that when we attempt to meditate upon it we are lost in wonder and astonishment.

The condescension of our glorious Lord, the mystery of the union of God and man, is beyond the reach of human thought, and its contemplation causes us to exclaim, in the language of the apostle, "Great is the mystery of godliness! God was manifest in the flesh." The apostle has said to the saints for their

comfort while sojourning in this land of sin and sorrow, "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." Yes, and His own sacred lips have declared to you, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." When you remember this you are lost in more than astonishment, if more could be; for you know that all His sorrows, afflictions and sufferings during the thirty-three years of His earthly pilgrimage were for your redemption, and to fit you for the enjoyment of the inheritance prepared for you, to whom He will say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world."

But the sacred historian says, "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not, for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.'

It will be observed that when that announcement was made to those shepherds they were watching their flock by night. They were attending to their secular affairs, not looking for nor expecting that they would be the first on earth who would hear that glorious news, those glad tidings. "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior." How was it with you, dear saint, when you first realized the need of a Savior? It was night to you; for "darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people:" Then you, like those shepherds, were afraid. How were you engaged when that announcement was first made to you? Your answer is, I was engaged in the affairs of the world. I, like our first parent, am of the earth, earthy; and when the glory of the Lord shone about me it was that light which shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. When that light shone in you it disclosed to your astonished vision the loathsome pollutions of sin that permeated your corrupt heart and nature, which caused you to adopt this language of the apostle, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" For your comfort that infinitely important question is ansewered by that heavenly messenger who announced to the astonished shepherds His advent to earth in these cheering words, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." The prophet, viewing in prophetic vision this great and glorious event, breaks forth in this language, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Isa. 9:6.

His coming was not attended by the pageantry and pomp of earthly courts, nor heralded by thrilling martial music, for His kingdom is not of this world; but the prophet of the Lord beheld afar off His advent, and announced it in language which all the wisdom of earth has failed (and will ever fail) to comprehend. He in prophetic vision viewed Him in His exalted and glorious character as the God-Man Mediator, the glori-

ous One in whom all fulness dwells. The apostle says, "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." The prophet declares Him to be "The Everlasting Father." And the psalmist, when addressing Him, says, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations;" "even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God." Then He in whom all fulness dwells is from everlasting to everlasting. Glory to His exalted name! He is "head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. Justice and truth go before his face; and in his all-exalted character as the Redeemer of His people shine resplendently His justice, eternity, omnipotence, immutability, truth and love. Viewing Him in His truly exalted character, in whom is the perfection of holiness, you, dear saint, exclaim from the depths of your heart, "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, unto the Lamb forever and ever." And you are ready to join the heavenly hosts, praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

When the glory of the Lord shone round about those shepherds they were sore afraid. They heard a voice from on high which announced to them the fulfillment of the promise made to Jacob at Bethel, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Jacob said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not." He was afraid, and those shepherds were afraid; but their fears were dispelled when the heavenly messenger said to them, "Fear not; for lo, I bring you good tidings of great joy." The promise both to Jacob and those shepherds was sufficient to have dispelled their fears; but they did not rely on those promises. Although the Lord said to Jacob, "Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest," yet he showed a want of confidence in those promises when he said, "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God." He put a condition as to the Lord being his God. The shepherds desired to know more than had been revealed to them by the heavenly messenger. They said, "Let us now go even to Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us."

This is all in accord with the experience of God's people in this age, as well as in past ages. They pray for greater manifestations of His grace. They desire to know more of the sublime glories of the great plan of life and salvation through Him whose advent to earth was announced by the angel of the Lord. "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior." It will be observed that the language used by the angel was, "Unto you—" unto those shepherds. We learn that anciently the vocation of shepherds was a very humble one, and their flocks were dependent upon the bounties of heaven, to sustain them. The history of this great event does not negative that idea. They were keeping watch over their flock by night. They were isolated from a busy world, yea, even from their friends and families by night. Then the advent of our glorious Lord was first announced to men cut off from all places of honor, from social intercourse with the busy world. But low as the shepherds were, they were permitted to hear the sweet-

est music that ever thrilled and charmed mortal ears; for "suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly hosts, praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Still more, His coming was not amidst scenes of splendor, not in a lofty palace decorated with silver, gold, precious stones and gaudy trappings; but He who is King of king and Lord of lords was found by the shepherds wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger, the habitation of the ox, where he doth eat straw. Then surely He who was rich, for our sakes became poor. He who was the Creator of the vast universe, when He came to earth was denied by vain, sinful man, the lowest hospitalities of civilized life, and was found by the shepherds among the lower grade of animal life. The prophet, viewing Him in His humiliation, breaks forth in this language, "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." "He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people was he stricken." Isa. 53. His great condescension, humiliation and suffering were for the transgression of His people. He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth. Then surely "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

The pronouns *our* and *we* used by the prophet, personate that same people to whom the angel referred when he said to Joseph, " She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." The prophet, Zechariah, viewing afar off in prophetic vision the complete fulfillment of that glorious promise, "He shall save his people from their sins," breaks forth in this language, "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water." The apostle says, "By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." It was His blood shed upon Calvary which was the blood of the everlasting covenant, by which He obtained eternal redemption for His people, and sent forth His prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. Ah dear saint, earth affords no springs of living water that will wash out the polluted stains of sin. Nothing but the blood of Jesus, which cleanseth from all sin, will remove those pollutions, and array you in "fine linen clean and white, which is the righteousness of saints." For your comfort the prophet says "Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope: even today do I declare that I will render double unto thee."

Isaiah says to these same people, "prisoners of hope," whom Jesus has saved from their sins "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God: speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Those people had violated the law, the penalty of which was death. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." They were led captive, by

the devil at his will, and hence were prisoners; but glory to God's exalted name, He by the blood of the everlasting covenant hath sent forth those prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. Not only did He redeem them from the penalty of the law, but He is made unto them righteousness. Then they, having no righteousness of their own, are made partakers of His holiness. The apostle says, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Speaking of the grace given them, he says, "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." Then surely those prisoners of hope have received of the Lord's hand double for all their sins. They are redeemed from under the curse of the law. They are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called. They are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. They are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; heirs to an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away. All is secured to them in and through their glorious Lord. Then they are prepared by grace divine to join the heavenly hosts in sweet accents of praise to His exalted name, saying, Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will to men.

Then dear saint, "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Col. 3:2-4. This is the highest thought, the most earnest and exalted wish and desire that has found a lodgment in your minds and hearts since you have been enabled to hope that the glory of the Lord has shone about you, and you have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

To you who may read these rambling thoughts they are presented as a Christmas gift, from one who daily realizes himself to be less than the least of all saints, if one at all.

Jan. 30, 1889. H. Cox

OBITUARIES

IN REMEMBRANCE OF SISTER ALICE RUDD SMITH

In humble submission, we bow to the righteous will of our heavenly Father, in our bereavement. We mourn not as those who have no hope, for her suffering here is not to be compared to the joy that is to come.

Sister Alice Rudd Smith, from whom the Lord called His Spirit home June 13, 1976, was blessed to live by that faith once delivered to the saints and that lively hope that maketh not ashamed.

Born on the family farm February 20, 1906, overlooking the rolling hills of Caswell County, she spent many of her seventy years at their home on Route 7, Burlington, North Carolina with the husband of her youth, whom she married on December 26, 1920. Little did she know the predeterminate purpose of God that by this union she would become the wife of a Primitive Baptist minister, Elder J. Harvey Smith, a very able minister and pastor of four churches, who preceded her to that peaceful rest. She made a precious vow: until death do us part, that she was blessed to keep; and to be his helpmeet from the depth of the lowest valley to the height of that great joy in the Lord. Just as they lived, they now rest from their labors in that sweet peace, side by side in the church cemetery at Bush Arbor, from whence they shall respond to the voice of their Savior at the resurrection.

Sister Smith was a mother in Israel to many precious ones who loved her. She was the mother of seven children of which two died in infancy; and to her lovely family of five, who were blessed to be God-fearing men and women, and her precious husband, she was a good gift from Heaven. She prepared earthly needs with love and kindness and in prayer she instructed them.

May these precious ones whose hearts are deeply saddened, be grateful for the wonderful blessing to have known the sweetness of a mother's love. Mrs. Lowman H. Scott, Burlington, N. C.; Sister Nellie Diner, Elon

College, N. C., Mr. J. Elmer Smith, Burlington, N. C., Elder Donald E. Smith, Rt. 7, Burlington, N. C., Elder Wallis Smith, Rt. 7, Burlington, N. C., Mrs. Grace Johnson, Burlington, N. C., and Mrs. Noel Calco, Sea Girt, New Jersey.

Our sister was blessed to enjoy the love and fellowship of this people for more than thirty-five years, having first united with the James Street P. B. Baptist Church in Burlington, N. C., Sept., 1940. After her beloved husband united with the church at Bush Arbor, she was received by letter there, July, 1948; and by the same grace by which she lived, she saw one daughter and two sons baptized into fellowship of this church.

She most surely felt the Lord blessed her with a double portion when two of her sons, Elder Wallis and later Elder Donald were ordained to the full work of the ministry by her home church. No doubt she felt a little sympathy having experienced the burden as well as the joy of a minister's wife, as well as that of his helpmeet.

The large crowd of brethren and friends and the huge mound of beautiful flowers said more than words can express, though many comforting words were said in her funeral, held at her home church by Elder Cecil Turner and Leonard Key, with a few words fitly spoken by each of the other ministers, many from our corresponding associations.

She humbly loved the brethren and visited in many states with her husband, and later with her sons in the ministry, including the lovely brethren in our sister country of Canada.

May the gracious Lord continue His blessings upon the precious ones whose hearts are saddened. Because she lived, our lives were made a little richer: for she ascribed all honor and praise to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, in word as well as singing the songs of Zion she loved so well.

Sister Alice, as we knew her, was not only a precious sister but a friend to this family, leaving precious memories of her many acts of kindness. With a sad heart, a prayer, Lord help me, has been the instrument accompanying my pen as I have endeavored to fulfill the request of the church at Bush Arbor.

Clifton C. Robertson

Read and approved by the church at their conference meeting on Sept. 11, 1976.

Elder Wallis Smith, Pastor
Deacon Earl Rudd, Clerk

A. W. CHANDLER

It is with a feeling of much unworthiness that I attempt to try to write an obituary of a dear brother that God in His infinite wisdom and love has called from our midst.

Brother Atholl Wilkerson Chandler was born Sept. 19, 1901, to Brother Joseph Ingraham and Sister Lucella Chandler, and passed from this life June 16, 1976, making his stay on earth 74 years, 9 months and 7 days. He was married to Sister Bettie (Sissy) Alridge Chandler, Saturday before the 5th Sunday in Nov., 1824. To this union were born: two daughters, Mrs. Clyde Black and Mrs. Kimbro Jobe Jr.; one son, Colon Chandler. Three sisters, Mrs. Lorena Bonwell, Mrs. Earlie Briggs and Mrs. Allen Miles; one brother, D. C. Chandler; eight grandchildren and one step grandchild, with a host of other relatives and friends also survive.

On the second Sunday in February, 1939 he was baptized with his wife, into the fellowship of Bush Arbor, by his pastor, the late Elder W. C. King. He walked in humbleness with his mind on heavenly things. A scripture he often quoted was, "If God be for us who can be against us." Rom. 8:31. No more my God, I boast no more of all the duties I have done. I quit the hopes I held before, to trust the merits of His Son, was one of his favorite hymns. I feel that these were evidences that he had passed from death unto life.

His funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Church by his pastor, Elder Wallis A. Smith, assisted by Elder Donald E. Smith. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, there to ever by be with Him and forever satisfied.

BE IT RESOLVED, that one copy be placed on the church records, one be sent to the family and one sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Written by T. I. Rice by order of church conference Saturday, August 7, 1976.

Deacon Earl S. Rudd, Clerk,
Elder Wallis A. Smith, Moderator

BROTHER JOHNNY T. DRAKE

Brother Johnny T. Drake was called from life June 25, 1976. He was born November 27, 1900, making his stay on this earth 75 years, 6 months, and 28 days. He was the son of the late James J., and Elizabeth Pittman Drake. Brother Drake is survived by his wife Nannie Pender Drake and five children. Elizabeth Arp of Roanoke Rapids, Catherine Crisp of Nashville, John Lee of Tarboro, James Ray of Rocky Mount, and William Jasper of Woodland.

Brother Johnny loved the church and he loved to mingle with the brethren. He was a faithful member and attended church regularly as long as he was physically able, often going when he did not feel well. Brother Drake was a member at Pleasant Hill for 17 years and 8 months.

Funeral services were held at Johnson Funeral Home by his pastor, Elder Henry Jones, assisted by Elder Kenneth Windham. His body was laid to rest in Pinetops Cemetery to await the glorious second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, when He shall call His children home to forever be with Him where we shall praise Him as we ought.

Brother Johnny had a precious hope that he will be among those called in the first resurrection, for the dead in Christ shall rise first. Blessed is he that has part in the first resurrection for over them the second death has no power.

Brother Drakee will be greatly missed by his family and friends. May we be given grace to be submissive to God's will for we know He does all things well and makes no mistakes.

Written at the request of the church in conference, Saturday before the fourth Sunday in July, 1976.

A. E. Lancaster

CHURCH MEETING DIRECTORY

ALABAMA

BETHLEHEM, Malvern, Alabama meets each second Sunday at 10:30 a. m. with Elds. D. W. and H. H. Collins.

HOPEFUL, Ozark, Alabama, meets each 4th Sunday at 10:30 a. m.
J. J. Watson, Pastor

NEW HOPE, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each 1st Sunday, 10:30 a. m.
V. C. Hartzog, Pastor

RAMAH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each 3rd Sunday at 10:30 a. m.
A. B. Chumney, D. W. Collins, Pastors

The churches of which Elder E. E. McCool is pastor meet as follows:

MACEDONIA, Sulligent, Alabama meets 1st Sundays at 11 o'clock.

MT. ZION, 16 miles south of Fayette, Ala. on highway 159, meets 1st Sundays at 2. p.m.

SALEM, 6 miles south of Gordo, Ala. meets 2nd Sunday at 11 o'clock.

MT. CARMEL, 14 miles north of Reform, Ala., on highway 17, meets 2nd Sundays at 2 p. m.

ZION, 7 miles north of Gordo, Ala., on highway 159, meets 3rd Sundays at 11 o'clock

BETHEL, 4 miles west of Fernbank, Ala., meets 3rd Sundays at 2 p. m.

PLEASANT RIDGE. Moore's Bridge, Ala., meets 4th Sundays at 11 o'clock.
E. E. McCool, Pastor
Rt. 1, Steens, Miss. 39766

MT. ZION meets each 4th Sunday at 11 a. m. about 10 miles N. W. of Birmingham, just off of 78 highway in Westwood, 2601 Forrestdale Blvd.
H. C. Moon, C. C. Hand, Pastors

ELAM OLD SCHOOL, located two miles north of Goshen, Pike County, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday at 10:30.
J. P. Morgan, Pastor
A. C. Carter, Clerk, 1335 Avalon Lane, Montgomery, Ala.

LITTLE HOPE, meets each 2nd Sunday at 11 a. m. ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
C. C. Hand, Pastor

EPHESUS, Slocomb, Ala., meets each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a. m.
V. C. Hartzog, Pastor

WRITES CREEK, 5 miles south of Slocomb, Ala., meets each 4th Sunday and Saturday before.
E. B. Hughes, B. A. Anderson, J. A. Tew, Pastors
J. T. Collins, Clerk, Slocomb, Ala.

MT. CARMEL, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each 1st Sunday 11 a. m.
W. A. Williams, Pastor

PILGRIM REST, located six miles north of Fordyce, Ark., (leave Hy. 167 on Hy. 273—church is located about ¾ mile from Hy. 167) meets each 3rd Sunday at 10:30 and on Saturday before at 7:30 p. m.
W. W. Hudson, Jr., Pastor

NAOMI OLD SCHOOL, six miles south of McKenzie, Ala., meets the 2nd Sundays in December, February, April, etc.
Elder W. C. Stanley, Pastor
Duncanville, Ala. Rt. 1.
E. C. Weaver, Clerk, Rt. 5, Box 47, Andalusia, Ala.

SHILOH OLD SCHOOL, 7 miles north east of Andalusia, Ala., meets the 2nd Sundays in July, September, November, etc.
Elder W. C. Stanley, Pastor
Rt. 1, Duncanville, Ala.
Nora Lee McLeod, Clerk, Red Level, Ala Rt 3

MOUNTAIN FORK, Madison County, Ala., meets each 1st and 3rd Sundays at 11 a. m.
R. C. Simmons, R. H. Hale, Pasors
James Colbert, Clerk

The churches of which Elder C. C. Hand is pastor meet as follows:

OLD UNION, meets each 1st Sunday at 11 a. m. 6 miles S. W. of Winfield, Ala.
C. C. Hand, Pastor

HARMONY meets each Sunday at 11 a. m. approximately 10 miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala. Near Belk, Ala.
C. C. Hand, and W. D. Griffin, Co-Pastors

NEW HARMONY meets each 2nd Sunday at 11 a. m., near Hiram, Ga.
C. C. Hand, and W. D. Griffin, Co-Pastors
Glenn Ragsdale, Clerk.

NEW PROSPECT meets each 3rd Sunday at 11 a. m. near Sulligent, Ala.
C. C. Hand, Pastor

HOPEWELL meets each 3rd Sunday at 2 p. m. approximately 5 miles north of Fayette, Ala.
C. C. Hand and W. D. Griffin, Co-Pastors

MT. ZION meets each 4th Sunday at 11 a. m. in the Westwood section of Forresdale in Birmingham, Ala., 2601 Foresdale Bldg.
C. C. Hand, Pastor
Rt. 8, Box 57D, Jasper, Ala. Phone 387-7477
We welcome our brethren and friends to meet with us any time.

ARKANSAS

NEW HOPE, near Patmos and about ten miles south of Hope, Ark., meets each 1st Sunday at 11 a. m.
W. W. Hudson, Jr. Pastor

WHITE WATER OLD SCHOOL, located about one mile northwest of Tinsman, Ark., meets on 1st Sunday mornings at 10 a. .m The anual meeting meets at 10 a. m. on Saturday before the 1st Sunday in August and continues through Sunday.
W. W. Taylor, Pastor
Joe Reaves, Clerk

GOOD HOPE, in Arkansas, about one mile north of Oakland, just across the State line, meets each 2nd Sunday at 2:00 p. m.

G. W. Jones, Pastor

Ina Newsom, Clerk.

CALIFORNIA

SECLUSIA, Compton, Calif., meets each 4th Sunday at the home of L. W. Langwell, 12812 S. Williams St.

DELAWARE

WELSH TRACT OLD SCCHOOL, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in the United States), meets each 2nd Sunday at 11 a. m. The meeting house is located one mile south of Newark, Del., just off Highway 896.

James Poole, Pastor

ILLINOIS

SALEM, Benton, Ill., meets every 1st Sunday at 10:30 a. m. with communion services 1st Sunday in May.

All lovers of truth are invited to be with us.

Wayman Chapell, Pastor

James Cunningham, Clerk, 5921 W. Park Ave. St. Louis, Mo. 63110,

Celia Pinson, Ass't Clerk.

KANSAS

PLEASANT VALLEY, Kingman, Kans., meets with Mrs. Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C., an each 2nd Sunday.

W. A. Winfrey, Pastor

KENTUCKY

LOST CREEK Old School Predestinarian, meets 1st Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Ky., 10 miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton, on Grayson highway. Leave U. S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

LOUISIANA

CONCORD, about 12 miles north of Bastrop, La., one-quarter mile west of the Bastrop, La., and Hamburg Road, meets each 2nd Sunday at 10:30 a. m.

G. W. Jones, Pastor

Geneva Pettis, Clerk.

NEW HOPE, Spearsville, La., meets 1st Sundays and Sat. afternoons before at 3:30.

J. L. Smith, Pastor

C. C. Barron, Clerk.

LIBERTY HILL, located six miles northeast of Farmville, La., ¼ mile east of Farmerville-Marion highway, meets each 4th Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30. Services are also held on each 2nd Sunday at 10:30.

W. W. Hudson, Pastor

UNION, located near Linville, La., meets each 3rd Sunday at 10:30 and on Saturday afternoon before at 2:30 p. m.

David E. Turner, Pastor

MARYLAND

EBENEZER, Baltimore, Md., meets each 3rd Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert.

John D. Wood, Pastor

BLACK ROCK O. S. B., Butler, Md., meets each 1st Sunday afternoon at 3. Butler is on Falls Rd., about 20 miles north of Baltimore.

John D. Wood, Pastor

MISSISSIPPI

BETHEL, located three miles N. E. of Steens, Miss., on Millport Road, meets 3rd Sunday afternoons at 2 p. .m.

H. C. Moon, Pastor Hanceville, Ala.

Eulie McCool, Ass't. Pastor, Steens, Miss.

NEW YORK

WARWICK O. S. B., Warwick, N. Y., Orange County, holds monthly services on each 4th Sunday, from March to, and including the 4th Sunday in November. The meetings are held at A. R. Vail's home, 55 Maple Ave., Warwick at 11 a. m.

MIDDLEBURG O. S. B., meets at the home of Deacon Woodrow Bellenger, Duanesburg, N. Y., on 5th Sundays when the Lord so wills.

Beatrice E. Hocking, Clerk

419 Toll St., Scotia, N. Y.

NORTH CAROLINA

WILSON CHURCH, N. C., meets each 2nd Sunday at 3 p. m. and Saturday evening before at 7:30 p. m. The location is on the corner of Green and Jackson Sts.

D. B. Stokes, Pastor

Preston Gay, Clerk, P. O. Box 117, Black Creek, N. C.

FALLS OF TAR RIVER, Rocky Mount, N. C., meets each 2nd Sunday and Saturday before. Quarterly meetings Mar., June, Sept., and December.

D. B. Stokes, Pastor

Nina Pearson, Clerk.

MOON'S CREEK, located near Providence, N. C., Rt. 86, on Park Springs Rd., meets each 3rd Sunday at 11 a. m.

Kenneth Key, Pastor

The churches of which Elder D. V. Spangler is pastor meet as follows:

MONTICELLO, on U. S. highway 29, between Greensboro and Reidsville, N. C. Services 1st Sundays at 11 a. m.

REIDSVILLE, Lindsay Street, Reidsville, N. C., meets each 2nd Sunday at 11 a. m.

DURHAM CHURCH, Durham, N. C., on Pacific Ave., west of town, just off hwy. 501 leading from Durham to Roxboro, N. C. Services every 3rd Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday afternon before at 2 p. m.

DAN RIVER, at Mayfield, N. C., on U. S. Highway 700 leading from Eden, N. C. to Danville, Va., about ten miles from Eden. Services each 4th Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday evening before at 7:30 p. m.

OKLAHOMA

LITTLE FLOCK O. S. B., Altus, Oklahoma, meets each 4th Sunday at 10:30 a. m., and Saturday before at 2 p. m.
C. M. Haygood, Pastor
Ana Stewart, Clerk

OREGON

BIG SPRING, Elgin, Ore., meets each 1st Sunday at the home of Brother Lloyd C. Spikes at 290 N. 7th Ave.
Ben F. Preston, Pastor
Lloyd C. Spikes, Clerk

PENNSYLVANIA

ROCK SPRINGS O. S. B., Lancaster Co., Pa., meets each 1st Sunday at 10:30. The meeting house is located on highway 222, about ¼ mile of the Maryland- Pennsylvania State line.
John D. Wood, Pastor
Chas. B. Osborne, Clerk, Quarryville, Pa.

SIDELING HILL O .S . B., Fulton Co., Pa., meets by appointment on 5th Sunday afternoons.
John D. Wood, Pastor

TENNEESSEE

THE FIRST P. B. CHURCH, Memphis, Tenn., meets each Sunday at 10:30 a. m., except the 1st three weeks in October, when we dismiss for associations in the area. The church is located on Andrews Rd., one block north of highway 70 in the Ellendale Community 7 miles east of Memphis.
H. R. Prince, Pastor, 967 Maxey, Memphis
C. S. Young, Co-Pastor 807 Pope, Memphis.
Richard H. Campbell, Clerk.

CANE CREEK, meets each 4th Sunday at 11 a. m., and is located nine miles S. W. of Martin, Tenn. All lovers of truth are invited.
Hubert Prince, Pastor, 967 Maxey, Memphis,
Elmer Prince, Clerk, Clinton, Ky.

BORDEAUX PREDESTINARIAN, Nashville, Tenn., meets each 1st Sunday at 10:30 The church is located on the old Hydes Ferry Rd., in Bordeaux, in Nashville. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

WALNUT FORK near Cottage Grove Tenn. meets on the 2nd Sunday of each month.
R. L. Veasey, Sr., Clerk.

UNION P. B., Sharps Chapel, Tenn., meets at 11 a. m., each 2nd Sunday. We are located about 15 miles north of Maynardville, Tenn., on Big Valley Rd. There is a sign on the main highway showing where to turn.
N. E. Lay, Clerk.

The following churches compose the Original Powell's Valley Primitive Baptist Association:

UNION, Union Co., Tenn., meets 11 a. m. on the Sunday following the 2nd Friday each month.
Odra Davis, Moderator

MOUNTAIN CREEK, Claiborne Co., Tenn., meets 11 a. m. on the Sunday following the 3rd Friday each month.
D. R. Cabbage, Moderator

DODSON'S CREEK, (Formerly Powder Spring Gap) Union Co., Tenn., meets 11 a. m. on Sunday following the 1st Friday each mo.
Odra Davis, Moderator

FRIENDSHIP, Jefferson Co., Tenn., meets 11 a. m., on Sunday following the 4th Friday each month.
D. R. Cabbage, Moderator

TEXAS

SHEPHERD FOLD, 815 Little York Rd., Houston, Texas, meets the 1st Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a. m., for its regular monthly meeting and business conference and each Sunday at 10:30 a. m. for regular meetings.
Elder C. M. Haygood, Pastor
Elder Jery A. Evers, Ass't. Pastor
Sister Robbie Hollaway, Clerk.

MT. ZION, Rt. 2, Box 23, Weslaco, Texas, meets each 2nd Sunday at 10:30 a. m., and each 4th Sunday at 10:30 a. m., 7 miles west of Weslaco, on highway 83.
Gerald Shipman, Pastor
E. B. Ault, Clerk

THE P. B. CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, has moved their meeting place to 3629 8th Ave. They met each 1st Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m. Take College Ave. bus to Butler and Ryon; go one block, then half block north to church.

ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST, Lawn, Texas, meets each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a. m.
C. M. Haygood, Pastor
Mrs. Nola Stewart, Clerk

AN ARM OF PILGRIM REST, meets each 2nd Sunday and Saturday night before at Earth, Texas.
C. M. Haygood, Pastor
A. A. Chambers, Clerk.

MACEDONIA PREDESTINARIAN, Rising Star, Texas, meets each 2nd Sunday at 11 a. m., and Saturday before at 2 p. m.

MT. OLIVE Predestinarian, Stockdale, Tex. meets on 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month at 10 a. m., in the meeting house at intersection of highways 123 and 87. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.
Gerald D. Shipman, Pastor
Lela Culpepper, Clerk.

OLD SALEM, four miles south of Teague, Texas, meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before.
Maggie Elmore, Clerk

SAINTS REST, Dallas, Texas, meets each Sunday at 10:30 a. m., at 2710 Engle St.
C. C. Morris, Pastor
D. G. Connel, Clerk.

HOPEWELL, near Winnsboro, Texas, meets each 2nd Sunday at 10:30 a. m., and Saturday before at 10:30 a. m.
Joe L. Hammrick, Pastor

The churches of which Elder Lloyd Wall is pastor meet as follows:

MT. ZION O. S. B., meets each 1st Sunday at 11 a. m., and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30 p. m., Cash, near Greenville, Tex.
Guy Sisk, Clerk

FELLOWSHIP meets each 2nd Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a. m., near East Mt., out of Gladewater, Texas.
C. E. Camp, Clerk

PROSPECT, meets each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a. m., Brother Paul Daniel, Ass't. Pastor. Located on hyw. 67 west of Texarkana, Texas about 28 miles.
W. B. Burkhalter, Clerk

PROVIDENCE, meets 3rd Sunday afternoons and Saturday afternoons before at 2 p. m.
PLEASANT HOPE, meets on the 4th Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a. m., 8 miles south of Atlanta, Texas off F. M. 251.
H. S. Hill, Clerk

The churches of which Elder E. J. Lambert is pastor meet as follows:

PHARON, meets 1st Sunday morning and Saturday night before, 5 miles N. E. Hawkins, Texas.

REHOBETH, meets 2nd Sunday mornings and Saturday morning before, 7 miles N. of Eldorado, Ark.
Neila Ryan, Clerk, 1601 N. Emmett, Eldorado, Ark.

BETHEL, meets 3rd Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles NE of El Dorado, Ark.
Jean H. Burnes, Clerk, 606 N. Parkway, ElDorado, Ark.

GOOD HOPE, mets 4th Sunday mornings and Saturday before, 7 miles N. E. of Winnsboro, Texas.
Gertrude Jones, Clerk, 905 Y Dr., Winnsboro.

ANTIOCH, near Camden, Ark., meets each 2nd Sunday at 2 p. m. Everyone welcomed.
E. J. Lambert, Pastor

VIRGINIA

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN, meets each 2nd Sunday at 11 a. m., and is located on Centreville Road, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia.
Arthur Carter, Clerk, Manassas, Va.

NEW VALLEY meets each 5th Sunday at 11 a. m., the meeting house is near Lucketts, about 8 miles north of Leesburg, Va.
Mrs. Robert Duke, Clerk.

MT. ZION, meets each 4th Sunday at 11 a. m., and is located about one and ½ miles east of Aldie, Va., on Rt. 50, between Washington and Winchester Virginia.
Mrs. Ray Hawling, Clerk, Leesburg, Va.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington D. C. We are always glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Manassas, 368-4857.
John D. Wood, Pastor

NORFOLK P. B. CHURCH, Norfolk, Va., meets each 3rd Sunday at 11 a. m. and Sat. before at 8 p. m. Fairmont Park, 2023 Tidewater Drive.
R. H. Lyliston, Pastor

RICHMOND P. B. CHURCH, Qualla Road, Chesterfield Co., Va., meets each 1st Sunday at 11 a. m., Following are directions to the meeting house: South from Richmond at McGuire Circle, take Rt. 360 9 miles to "Longest" Service Station; turn left and go one mile, and turn right on No. 363, one mile to church.
Elder D. L. Simpson, Pastor
Mrs. Wm. Lee, Clerk, 4407 Clairton Rd., Richmond, Va. 23234.

DANVILLE P. B. CHURCH meets each 2nd Sunday at 11 a. m., and Saturday night before on State road No. 1515, near Hughes Memorial School.
H. W. Wray, Pastor
R. T. Holley, Clerk.

The churches of which Elder Leonard Brammer is Pastor meets as follows:

LAUREL RIDGE (Formerly Belleview) meets 3rd Sunday at 11 a. m., and Saturday night before at 6:30. This church is located near Cave Springs about 4 miles from Roanoke, one mile from 221. All visitors are welcome.

SANDY LEVEL, Sunday afternoon at 2:30. This church is located on Rt. 635 about 5 miles south of Hardy, Va., 10 miles from Vinton. Va. All lovers of truth are invited.

UNION, meets each 4th Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m. This church is located on Rt. 623 about two miles from Fairystone Park. All visitors are welcome.
Leonard J. Brammer, Pastor

LEBANON, Bracey, Va., meets each 2nd Sunday at 11 a. m., and Saturday night before at 8 p. m. The meeting house is located off Interstate 85, Bracey exit 637 east, turn left on 619, one mile to meeting house.
C. B. Davis, Jr., Pastor
Florence Martin, Clerk.

WASHINGTON

PLEASANT GROVE, Naches, Wash., meets at 11 a. m., each 2nd Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the Clerk.
Ben Preston, Pastor, The Dalles, Oregon.
Mildred A. Simpson, Clerk,
Rt. 8, Yakima, Wash. 98902.

BETHEL, of Predestinarian Faith, of Mossyrock, Washington, meets each 3rd Sun. at 11 a. m., and Saturday before at 2 p. m. For information write the Clerk.
Ben Preston, Pastor
Mrs. Opal Hunting, Clerk
Silver Creek, Wash. 98585.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 145 DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1977 No. 2.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 2/77 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

PERSEVERANCE

There are many false teachers gone forth in the world,
With falsehood they have all their banners unfurled;
They glide on the breezes of popular will,
And say they are climbing up Zion's fair hill.

Free will is their motto they flaunt to the breeze,
And say they can do good or bad as they please;
They call God a tyrant, a monster indeed,
If He has the end of His creatures decreed.

But in His good word, lo! a story is told—
He loveth His people, He loved them of old,
And gave them a portion secure in His Son,
In whom they were chosen before time begun.
No shipwreck nor peril, nor fire, nor the sword,
Can separate them from the love of the Lord;
Whom God has ordained to eternally save,
And raise them in triumph o'er death and the grave.

Their bodies must slumber awhile in the ground,
Until the Archangel the trumpet shall sound,
Then bursting the tomb, they shall mount to the sky,
And reign with their Savior eternal on high.

Dear brethren and sisters, be patient awhile,
A few days of conflict will end all your toil,
And Jesus will call you to rest in His arms,
To gaze on His glory and feast on His charms.

Oh may I be numbered with that blessed train
Who enter the portals of that blest domain,
Who dwell in the presence of Jesus my Lord,
Who taught me in time to believe in His word.

JOHN SCHENCK
Springdale, Leavenworth Co., Kansas, (1876)

ECCLESIASTES 3:15

"That which has been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past."

I have not quoted the above scripture as a text, but as a starting point. It is my intention, if God be willing, to put forth a few thoughts on one word of this scripture. May God bless my efforts that they be not in vain.

The word "hath" seemed to envelope my mind recently as I read the first chapter of Ephesians, and I did some research. Webster describes it as, the third person singular present tense of the word "have". This is the only definition given in the dictionaries I used; and I was somewhat amazed, because "hath" is used in the past tense often, especially in the Bible. I was also amazed when I looked up "hath" in my concordance. "Hath" was listed well over one hundred times, but could have been listed many more times. Was it coincidental that in most cases where it was used in the past tense to tell of something God has done, that it was omitted? I do not know, but it makes me wonder.

"Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it." What has God done? The world could not hold the books that should be written on this, therefore I can only mention a very few

things that mean so much to me, and I hope to you also.

The first and foremost of these is that He "hath" saved us. Christ suffered and died on the cruel tree of Calvary for the sins of His people; He shed His precious blood to pay the just debt that justice demanded, that we, (I hope me too) might be set free; "that he might present us holy and unblamable and unreprovable in his sight;" that we might be housed in heaven and immortal glory; that we might see Him as He is and be like Him. Oh, how precious are these thoughts to me! "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Christ laid down His life for us, for He hath loved us with an everlasting love; and in laying down His life, He "hath" saved us from that second death and that lake of fire that is reserved for the devil and his angels.

Not only HATH He saved us but "he HATH called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace." (2 Tim. 1:9). Aren't you glad that it is not according to your own works of self-righteousness, which is as filthy rags in the sight of God? And this "grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death and HATH brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." This scripture does not say that He will abolish death or will bring us life and immortality if we let Him come into our heart or accept Him, but that He HATH. Not only that, but can a dead person do anything? Until we are born again of God we are dead in trespasses and sin; and the carnal mind is enmity against God and would not accept Him even if it were possible. But God has given us life. (2:4-6) "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, HATH quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved:) and HATH raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." But if any should keep the law by works, he is not justified before God because, "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." (Rom. 3:20). "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God HATH before ordained that we should walk in them. (Eph. 2:8-10). Therefore we see that if we do any good works it is not of our selves, but what has been ordained of God to be done.

God HATH blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; HATH chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; HATH predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to his good pleasure. (Eph. 1:3-5). God does all things according to His own will and good pleasure in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand or say unto him. What doest thou? If God be for us, who can be against us? God has done everything for us, and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. (Rom. 8:28). All things are declared to be good for us, but we know that many things are

not good to us; and because of this we murmur and complain to God in prayer and this redounds to His praise and glory.

Beloved, we are the children of God, if so be that we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world and have been baptised into His death; and if children, then are we heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ; and unto us it is given not only to believe on Him, but to suffer for His sake. God "hath" given us His only begotten Son: how shall He not freely give us all things? If we have been born again, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, then are we the sons of God. "Behold, what manner of love the Father 'hath' bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God."

Beloved, I ask that you put a mantle of charity over my many mistakes and receive this only as much as you find it to be according to the scriptures. Your prayers are needed and much desired for this poor worm of the dust. May God continue His many blessings upon you and count you worthy to be called His sons.

Clifford Wilbanks
217 Bastrop Dr., Monroe, La. 71203

CIRCULAR LETTER

Of the Salisbury Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Association, 1976

Brothers and Sisters.

May we at this time pause to look upon one of the sweet and precious truths our Heavenly Father has given us for our comfort and His glory. While all truths exalt Him, none does more plainly show forth His Eternal Mind in Christ Jesus than the subject of predestination.

About one hundred and fifty years ago the enemy moved among our people and brought in strange and novel doctrines. It was suggested that we were backward and unfeeling toward the lost and that the chief reason for this was our hard and narrow doctrine. Eloquent men and deceivers carried off their thousands with these reproaches and denunciations of the doctrine of predestination. Naturally, the doctrines of election and particular redemption would stand or fall with that of predestination, and of due consequence, they also fell under heavy and unrelenting attack. Strangely, those who were for sweeping change in doctrine and practice were for a loose and weak order among the churches. Drunks, fornicators, thieves, or anyone else was welcome to the church roll so long as predestination was kept out and the money was brought in.

However, as when Israel needed a Moses and God raised up such a one for the time, just so our churches needed a leader and our blessed Father raised up Elder Gilbert Beebe. Persecutions were fierce and the love of many waxed cold. In time, though, a publication was began by Elder Beebe and faithful and sound Baptists from all quarters began supporting this cause of God and Truth. Thus in the midst of trial and adversity the *Signs of the Times* went forth carrying the banner of our Redeemer. It is the opinion of this writer that for but one item the "Signs" would never have been so sorely assailed and would have received a much wider and favorable reception. That item was the second article of the Prospectus of the "Signs" which affirmed a belief in THE ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS. This writer further believes that without that item the *Signs* would have soon

fallen into the same morass as myriads of other sheets have little or no purpose of existence except to bombast Truth and promote error.

Today the *Signs of the Times* is still a source of comfort to many, and the doctrine of the absolute predestination is a leading tenant of our faith. Some have suggested we put less stress on this point. Others say, "Avoid the use of the word, absolute, as it agitates our adversaries. Well may we then ask, "Why dwell on predestination, and especially why use the word, absolute"?

First, the predestination of all things by God from all eternity is the only consistent understanding of the nature of passing events and their relationship to each other. Do we not recognize that the denial of all predestination is to consent to chance or blind fate? God is order. Without His universal government, and that by purpose from all eternity, all would be chaos.

Second, if some things are predestinated and others remain to happen or not to happen, who commands the wisdom to determine which events will come to pass and which may, or may not, come to pass, or may begin to come to pass but for lack of sufficient determination fail to come to pass, hence pass before passing. What a confusing system that would be.

The truth lies in the fact that God is all wise. He knows all things with a perfect knowledge from eternity. Knowing all things means that they must all happen exactly as God knows them. Anything less than that would be a falsification of the Holy knowledge. Could we believe that God knows an event will come to pass and then the unregulated actions of men or devils interfere and and throw the whole into confusion. This would be possible if God had not predestinated all things from eternity.

As for the expression, "Absolute", may we say that originally Elder Beebe used the term in opposition to the error of conditional predestination. Workmongers in his day promoted a "half-breed" doctrine that predestination required the will of man to activate it. In later years the Old School Baptists were called "Absoluters" by many as a form of ridicule, and to this day there is in the minds of our foes no worse expression to identify us by than saying, "Those Absoluters". May our gracious God bless us to care nothing for this abuse but rather be set for a defense of the gospel.

This is a grand and soul comforting doctrine. However, may we never be guilty of losing sight of God's Wisdom in the Predestination of all things. It is not just so we may have a hard doctrine to be identified with, nor is it to make us self-secure. Jesus Christ the Lord saving sinners, which were given Him by the Father before the world began, is the heart and aim of predestination. All events great and small, far reaching or seemingly insignificant, are working together for good to those that love God. Our being conformed to the image of God's Son is the aim of predestination. From the first motion in eternity past to the continuing and eternal love of God in ages to come, the sum of all existence is to fashion a Bride for Christ and each and every motion, event, action, thing or substance, eternal, seen or unseen, good or evil, sweet or bitter, is so most absolutely predestinated that God would cease to exist before the least of them fail in their accomplishment. I speak after the manner of men.

Brothers and Sisters, this is a won-

drous and precious Truth. I need not quote an abundance of Scripures to defend this little piece. Those who are blessed to believe in the predestination of God know with certainty it is contained in God's Holy Word. Those who disbelieve could not be convinced though the whole of it was quoted to them unless it pleased our dear Father to reveal His Power to them.

Humbly submitted,

James F. Poole

A FALLING AWAY FIRST

"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." 2 Thess. 2:3.

To attempt to write our views on this very important scripture (important to God's children) would be like trying to scale a sheer cliff without any help. So our revelation must come from the most high God, which is our help, as He is our all in all.

Athough my views may not correspond with those of some brethren, it is all I have and what I have give I to thee

First, we must read in the first chapter preceding to find out who is talking, to whom he is talking, and what he is talking about.

Paul, of course, is writing to the Church of the Thessalonians, and not to all the world. He, (Paul) has a message to give unto a certain people, who, we are led to believe, are a chosen people.

Now, to find out what "that day that shall not come" is, we must read 1:7: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels," also 2:1 and 2: "Now we beseech you, brethren by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in your mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand."

Now we have led up to the text in mind. The day of Christ is at hand, but that day of Christ shall not come except there come a falling away and that man of sin be revealed.

I have heard from my youth up that the "falling away" is the going down of the temporal churches; a turning away from godliness unto the world. This I believe is true in a natural sense here on earth; however, for many years I have been interested only in the spiritual experiences of God's chosen people.

The elected people of the Lord go through a certain path into the divine revelation of Christ and Him crucified, and God as all wise and all powerful. Everyone that you speak with about their walk in the natural, right up to the spiritual—all will relate almost the same experience.

Elder Rhodes wrote of his trials and tribulations and of how he suffered when being brought from law to grace.

Adam was made and created and formed (not especially in that order) and then was placed in the Garden of Eden. Until he ate of the fruit he was not ashamed of his nakedness. He had nothing to fear as he was without sin, but when he ate of the fruit, he knew he had broken God's holy commandment, and there was a falling away of his own ability to stand and the man of sin was revealed; and he hid.

The experience of all the heirs of God is made manifest in the flesh when they have been made to know that they are

sinners, and they have a desire to hide; to hide not only from God, but from all the ones they believe to be believers of the truth.

My experience (and I know it better than anyone else) is that I wanted to join the Church, but every time I wanted to, the man of sin was revealed to me (the flesh) and I knew there was no greater sinner in the Adam-race than I. But first there was a great falling away of my ability to participate in my own salvation. I turned to the world and found no help. I turned to folly and was disgusted with it, and was in deepest despair. I felt myself lost beyond redemption. Man could not help me, and I just knew God would not give me any consideration.

But how wrong I was, as I do believe that God favored me with a season of His sacred nearness and possibly has smiled on me, which made me rejoice in His holy and just name.

The apostle Paul had all the attributes of an evil and wicked man. But when he saw the light and heard the voice, there was a great falling away of his former state of power, and the man of sin was revealed. "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest"—the day of Christ was come.

Jonah bought a ticket to Tarshish, but when all things were brought about to show Jonah the power of God, and he was in the belly of hell, I believe he had a glimpse of Christ through whom all are saved that were in the book of the Lamb.

When they were to cast someone overboard, Jonah realized and felt to whom the lot would fall. Why? Because there was a falling away of his own power to escape the all wise God, and his own sins were revealed.

We do not have to prove to anyone that the world today is evil continually. We do not have to prove by a jury of men that the murderer, rapist, robbers, and thieves are wicked, but His elect are shown that they are sinners by practice as well as by nature, and can say with Paul, "In me, that is in my flesh dwelleth no good thing."

When it is revealed in us, we then find a great warfare—the flesh against the Spirit — but thanks be unto God, the Spirit over-rules. The natural, that is, the weak and sin-laden, would be satisfied to live and lust after temporal things, and would, but are subdued by the Holy Spirit.

Again, Paul said that sin dwelled in him, meaning that sin lived in him. A dwelling place is where one lives and has his abode.

How would anyone know sin if he did not know good from evil? How would one know sweet if he had not partaken of sour? How would one know grace if he had not broken the law?

By the new birth and regeneration the child then sees himself as no longer self-reliant, and will say as Jonah, "Salvation is of the Lord."

Solomon said, "Look not upon me for I am black." How did Solomon know that he was black with sin unless there was a falling away first, then a divine revelation of his sins. Our sins are magnified by the law (which could not give life) that says, with no variation, no maybe's, the soul that sinneth it shall die.

How blessed it is in the natural travels when one is lost and feels all hope is gone, to hear a voice in the distance that calls your name and you feel you can now escape. How wonderful it is to get a word of comfort from a weary fellow-traveler who has been over the same

road.

How is the escape from your sins? How can you gain a poor trembling hope? Here is the light that shines out of darkness—Jesus said, "I am the light of the world." He also said He came to seek and to save those who were lost, who were dead in trespasses and sins.

The dear saints were lost. They were dead in sin. How do they know this? The man of sin was revealed, but Christ is formed in them the hope of of glory, He revived their hope, increased their faith, and forgave them of their many sins.

Peter told Christ, "I will lay down my life for thy sake." Jesus answered him, "Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice."

Peter did just what Christ prophesied and denied Him thrice. At once the man of sin was revealed in Peter and he saw himself weak, unable to follow Christ with his own strength or power. His self-determination to lay down his life fell away when he was faced with death—a falling away and a revelation of the man of sin.

The day, even in our natural lives, means light, so even in our spiritual lives we also have a day of light—the day of Christ.

I firmly believe that in the resurrection we shall see Him and be like Him, and be satisfied; but I also believe every child of God who has been born again has a day of light here in this low ground or sin and sorrow when Jesus appears unto him. When Christ is formed in you the hope of glory, your sins are revealed and you are made dead to the law (which is darkness) and alive to grace through our Lord (which is light).

How weak and undone man is, is also set forth in the experiences of Job when God said, "Gird thyself as a man and answer me." All the questions God asked Job were unanswered, because when we are girded as a man we know not the things of the Spirit, neither indeed can we know them; but when the light shines out of darkness and we have the breastplate of love and the helmet of salvation, we are then in the position to be raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Thanks again unto God who works all things after the counsel of His own will, and not after the will of the natural man; and His will is that you must be saved. There is no escape from so great a salvation.

"There is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Not may be saved, but must be saved.

Now if children, heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. What more precious inheritance can one hope for than to inherit eternal life, and be a joint heir with our Lord, our Redeemer, and our Savior Jesus Christ.

Now may we be made to thank God from whom all blessings flow and praise His righteous and holy name now henceforth and forevermore.

Yours in hope of eternal life which God who cannot lie promised before the world began.

W. A. Winfrey
1206 S. Oklahoma,
Liberal, Kansas

PREDESTINATION

We quote from the London Confession Chapter III, of God's Decree, Section 2: "Although God knoweth whatsoever may or can come to pass upon all (Acts 15: 18) supposed conditions, yet hath he not decreed anything (Rom. 9:11, 13, 16, 18) because He foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions."

The meaning of this part of the London Confession is that predestination does not rest or depend upon foreknowledge. God foreknew future events because He has predestinated, decreed, or has a purpose in them.

God did not predestinate anything because He foreknew it as future. Otherwise, this would make predestination rest or depend upon foreknowledge. But God predestinated, decreed, determined, etc., all things because He had a purpose in them. "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Eph. 1:11.

God foreknew future events because He has decreed them. But God did not decree future events because He foreknew them. The world may say that God predestinated a person to eternal life because He foreknew that person would repent, accept Jesus Christ as his personal savior, walk in good works, etc. That doctrine would advocate the predestination of God is dependent upon His foreknowledge.

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Eph. 1:4 God chose His people because He predestinated they would be holy and without blame before Him in love. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." 2 Tim. 1:9, 10. "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified." Rom. 8:29, 30.

Since God has decreed or predestinated all events that have taken place and shall take place in the future, then God has foreknown all events. Let us consider Eccl. 1:9: "The thing that hath been" (in the mind and purpose of God—these are events not manifested as yet.) "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isa. 46:9,10. will do all my pleasure." Isa. 46:9, 10. Since God declared the end from the beginnig, "the things that are not yet done" must take place in due time. Why? These are things that God has purposed or predestinated and nothing can hinder them from taking place. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand:" Isa. 14:24. "Thine eyes did see

my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." Psa. 139:16. All the members of Christ's body were written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world. All of them are born in this world in due time, and they are born of the Spirit of God at that set time that God has purposed for them to be quickened and made alive. "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;" Eccl. 3:1,2. (See 2 Tim. 1:9, 10) already quoted). This salvation is made manifest in due time to all of the children of God. It may be when they are young or old, or even on their death bed. (Consider the dying thief on the cross. See Luke 23:38-43). This time has been determined by God.

"It is that which shall be" (this refers to future events that must and shall take place) "and that which is done" (in the mind and purpose of God who has declared and purposed all things which shall take place in the future) "is that which shall be done." (Again, this refers to future events which take place in the future). "And there is no new thing under the sun." (This shows that God has seen all things from the begining and God is not surprised by events taking place today nor is He learning anything today). Let us quote the 10th verse: "Is there anything whereof it may be said, See, this is new? It hath been already of old time, which was before us." "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world." Acts 15:18.

For those who say that God foreknew all things, but did not predestinate, decree, declare, or have a purpose in all things, I ask these questions: How could God be sovereign if He did not predestinate or decree all things? Why did events take place if God did not predestinate or have a purpose in them? If one does not like the word, predestinate, let us say it this way: Why and how could future events take place if God does not have a purpose in them, or if it is not according to His will? Do events take place that are contrary to the will of God? If this were true, then God does not control all things, does He? Is it true that God had a purpose in Joseph being sold as a slave to the Ishmaelites? (See Gen. 37:27, 28) If not, why? Do you believe that in the providence of God it was necessary for Joseph's brothers to sell him as a slave? God overruled their evil actions for good. "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." Gen. 50:20.

Since the Scripture shows that God declared the end from the beginnig (see Isa. 46:9, 10, already quoted), do you believe this covers all events, both small and great? "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose." Rom. 8:28. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing, and one of them shall not fall on the the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered." Matt. 10:29, 30.

I believe the above Scriptures are sufficient proof that the providence, predestination, purpose, decree, etc., of God

covers all events, both small and great.

W. W. Hudson

208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220.

New Church, Oct. 11, 1876

Elder Beebe and Son—Dear Brethren:—Inclosed you will find a transcript of the experience of a young sister that was baptized on the fourth Sunday in July last, which I have the privilege of sending to you; and for the benefit of a number that were present, and I hope for the comfort of others, you will please give it a place in the Signs of the Times, that blessed medium through which the children of God can communicate one with another, and see that the teachings of the Spirit of God bring fellowship to the saints from Maine to Georgia. And how consoling it is, while many whose lots have been cast among the self-righteous, who seem to have dug down the altars of God, and whose lives are sought, (their spiritual lives) and seem to be alone, to tell the wonderful story. Now in this state of mind the Signs comes like the good news to Elijah assuring them that the Lord has reserved to himself seven thousand, and thousands upon that, which have not bowed the knee to Baal, but are breathing out the penitent sighs of an humble confidence in no other save our Lord Jesus Christ, that saves upon his own merit, and not on that of the creature, knowing by experience that cursed is he that trusteth in man, or maketh flesh his arm, by which the world is claiming to be saved. But the children of God are taught to cry unto God the Father, to lead them to the Rock that is higher than they.

My love to you, brother Beebe, hoping the Lord may spare you long yet to wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon.

T. M. POULSON

(See page 291, December issue)

December 16, 1976
Ann Arbor, Mich.

Dear Editors of the *Signs*,

Dear brethren: The *Signs* came a few days ago and as I saw that it was all a reprint from the *Signs* of one hundred years ago, I leafed through it to see if there were any names I would recognize among the writers. Then I saw the name Clarice E. Pusey. She was my mother. I found it almost impossible to put into words how that letter affected me. I had been in such a lifeless state of mind for a long, long time. I grieved over my condition but could do nothing to change it. But as I read the letter it expressed exactly the way I had been feeling so that it caused some life to manifest itself in me. I read it over and over with a feeling of comfort that I was not alone after all. Someone else had passed that way and that person was my mother.

Then I read the Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe and all the others letters—they brought refreshment. Time seemed to be eliminated. They could have been written yesterday, they were so pertinent to today.

The Lord surely directed you to publish that issue.

I was deeply impressed by the fact that the *Signs* had not changed in those hunderd years. It was just the same.

"Thy truth at all times firmly stood,
And shall from age to age endure."

God bless you all; unworthily your sister

Mildred Durand Gordy

Rt. 5, Goldsboro, N. C. 27530

Dear faithful servants of God:

I send greetings of love, along with a fervent prayer for each of you, and the household of faith.

We read in the scriptures, and our ministers are telling us, of the perilous times that lie ahead. If I know my heart, my prayer is that I might be counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake. What a wonderful, merciful and loving God we have. Do we appreciate Him? I truly hope we do.

Inclosed is a check to cover two years of the Signs, and the balance to help distribute this worthy publication.

Thank you for your efforts to keep the Signs in circulation.

Dora Ellen Vick
Pittman's Grove Church

Rt. 2, Box B—419,
Oxford, N. C. 27565

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am thankful to be able to renew my Signs for another year, for I enjoy it very much.

I lost my last sister, the one my mother was living with when you and Sister Spangler visited us several years ago. She was ill and suffered from August, 1975 until it was the good Lord's will to end her sufferings June 2, 1976. I miss her very much, and am the last of the living daughters of my mother and father. I am living at the same place, as she left me a home that I am very thankful for.

I would love to have you to stop by and see me on your way to Durham sometime.

I am inclosing a check for $10.00 for two years' renewal and the balance to use as you see fit.

Again thanking you for the good news in the Signs, I am I hope a very small sister in hope.

Pattie Arrington

Rt. 1, Box 12A
Fisherville, Va. 22939

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is check for ten dollars to renew my subscription for another year. Use the remainder for whatever you choose.

For some reason I have not received the last issue of the *Signs*. It usually arrives the last week of the month, or first week of the incoming month. I feel lost without the paper, as I get much enjoyment and comfort from it.

In this area there is not a church close enough that I can attend meetings. There are plenty of churches, but none of the Old School Baptist faith, so I have to depend on the *Signs of the Times* for the preaching I hope I love and believe.

I observed my 91st birthday last October, and feel I have been blessed many ways all through the years. My eyesight is not so good, and I have to use a reading glass, but trust I will be blessed with sight to read my Bible and the *Signs* as long as I live. I trust you editors can continue to publish and keep the paper going to those who love the truth.

Sincerely,

Estelle Jones (Mrs. George Jones)

11458 Hartley Road
Houston, Tex. 77093

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is check for $12.00 for two year's subscription to the *Signs;* use the balance as you see fit.

I can't do without the *Signs*. It is to me like that wonderful song *Amazing*

Grace: it never gets old. I am awful weak both in flesh and spirit. I am now 78 years old, so I realize my time is not long until the Lord calls me home.

I regret at times, when I read the good letters the brethren write, that I am not gifted to write; but I do feel as the Apostle Paul said, "By the grace of God I am what I am;" and can be no other.

I send my love to all the Editors and the dear brethren. My prayer is: Let us bless the name of our God, who has made and created all things for His own glory, and lives forever and ever. I am living with a little hope of eternal life that the Lord has given me. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Your brother in hope,

Calvin L. Berry

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the Contentnea Union will be held, the Lord willing, with New Bay Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1977.

The church is located in Onslow County, N. C., between Jacksonville and Holly Ridge, off highway 17 a few miles.

All lovers of truth are invited to visit us.

W. W. Stallings, Clerk.

CORRECTIONS

In Elder Hudson's article in November, 1976 issue on page 246, the reference is given as John 5:17. It should be 1 John 5:17. Also on page 247, first paragraph, the reference is given as 2 Kings 19:23. It should be 2 Kings 19:28.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP DISTRIBUTE THE SIGNS OF THE TIME

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Correction: In a late issue a donation was acknowledged in the amount of $50.00 in the name of A Friend. This should have been listed as a Sister from N. J.

PLEASE NOTE

WE ARE HAVING A GOOD RESPONSE TO HELP IN INCREASING OUR SUBSCRIPTION LIST. HAVE YOU SENT A SUBSCRIPTION FOR A FRIEND, RELATIVE, OR SOMEONE YOU THINK WOULD BE INTERESTED IN READING THE SIGNS? PLEASE HELP IN THIS REQUEST.

—EDITORS

Danville, Virginia **February, 1977**

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
R.F.D. 6, Box 270 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Virginia 24541

EDITORIAL

"The preparations of the heart of man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." Prov. 16:1.

There are two classes of people in the world. To preach and write this glorious truth will cause weeping (for joy) and singing and supplication to the Lord for the verification of this truth in their life, and in silent prayer to God for a continuation of the same mercy. There is, let us be certain, another class, when they hear or read this soul-cheering doctrine, that will rave and gnash their teeth at the ones that thus preach and write.

That is exactly the way that they treated the precious Savior. It is sad when we suffer as a wrong-doer, but we are to count it all joy when called upon to suffer for righteousness' sake. The persecution by our own people is the most excruciating sorrow that will ever be allotted to us here. If we say arrogantly that it does not make any difference what people say and do against us, we are not being truthful. If we say that we do not care what they say about us, that is not Christ-like.

The natural mind of men and women is no different than it used to be (Gen. 6:5), he that is wicked will never cease or turn and do righteousness within himself. (Jer. 13:23). That is what the Savior preached, and for that reason they turned and left Him, and would not walk with Him any more. I beg each and every poor sinner in my reading public that you turn to the sixth chapter of John. May the dear Master clear your mind of the hay and wood and stubble and gold and bauble-like stones, and enable you to read His words as the words of eternal life, as the words dropping from the lips of a once humiliated and crucified man, but now the highly exalted Prince and Savior. Regardless of what it is, and how much you have cherished and worshiped it, everything under the sun will perish except Him and His people.

Will you please consider the case of Joshua praying for the sun to stand still? Before he asked for the sun to stand still, the Lord had already promised him that He would deliver all of the Amorites into his hand. I look out in my

meditation and think of you so often. I think of your afflictions and sorrows and your miserable doubtings. I join in so often in my reflections on the past, even when it looked as if destruction of faith flooded your soul, even active and all-swaying faith. You did not, nor could not, see how it would come, but you knew it would come, because your God had promised it. God did not promise Joshua that the sun would stand still, but He did promise him deliverance.

Notice how Joshua prayed. He spake to the Lord, and he spoke in the name of the Lord, but he did not ask God to cause the sun to stand still. I beg you to follow me closely. Joshua said, "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou moon, in the valley of Ajalon." God gave him a promise, and in giving him the promise, He gave that poor beseiged sinner living faith that looked out upon the dismal picture, to know that all things had already been fulfilled. When he said, "Sun, stand thou still," it was by faith, already accomplished. He prayed according to the will of God that had already been expressed to him. "And it stood still." I am just as sure that not a ray of light from that sun stood on the valley of Ajalon as I am that God today is impregnably seated on His throne and directing every atom in the universe to the damnation of all that the moon has stood on in the valley of Ajalon, and the salvation of each and every one that the sun stands still on in that day, as well as in this day. As I stand trembling on the brink of death, I will fear no evil, for my precious Master has overcome death.

My present desire is to draw on the lintels of the open door that opens to eternal glory, which is opened in heaven, and even in your trembling bosom. I would picture the Savior of sinners as a Man of sorrow, but also as the King of saints. It will not reach your case if all that we know of Him as He abode in the bosom of His Father; nor will it be profitable if all that we see and hear and feel of Him is talk about Him in that blessed abode. Thus I want to write about Him as the Savior of sinners. The purpose to save, or a description of Him in immortal glory, will never suffice for our comfort and edification, unless we know Him as having come in the flesh as a babe, as a burden-bearer, as a carrier and bearer of our griefs and sorrows; and that He has now made Himself alive forevermore in our hearts and minds and souls.

Today, as it was yesterday, and as it will be tomorrow, and forevermore, He is living. You will not see Him on the street corner nor in the garb of Santa Claus, but you will look into the sad countenance of His little children and you will see Him. You have travailed with Him, as He was brought forth in the stable, being delivered from His mother's womb; you have suffered persecution, as He suffered it, and that for no other reason than that, instead of calling some man-made pope, or other man-made dignitary, your father, you paid allegiance only to God. And my frail arms reach out as I write, to my dear yoke-fellows in the ministry, and I embrace them all, as I hope, in the love of God as they go forth with the seed bag, it being filled with the good seed of the gospel; and yet you are made sad because the cause that is more precious than this fleeting life, seems to languish in spite of all of your labors.

May the love of God throw on the screen of our hearts the ministry of the

Lord Jesus Christ. If it is in your mind and heart to do so, come sit down with us a little while. Let us wait on His voice, on His counselling. If we hear, we hear Him preaching His own gospel. What a gospel it is! Yea, it is the only gospel. That which brings the various other gospels, are to be rejected. Please read the whole chapter, but let us notice particularly verses 65 and 66. Does this 65th verse have any conditions in it? Is there any work to be performed by the recipient in order for this coming to Him? How is the sinner to perform a work that he cannot do? It is true that there is a story being circulated around the globe that salvation is up to sinners. It is an old story, being hid from the heart, but well received in the old heart of these that know not God. Its outcroppings have been seen all along, beginning in the history of our foreparents, and showing in great fires and whirlwinds and earthquakes, but never in the quietude of Him who speaks in a still, small voice. Life was made dreadful for poor old Job with its incessant din in his ears, and it is rampant today, as it was in the day of our Savior.

He said, "No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." What did many of His professed followers do? Did they endorse Him? Did they congratulate Him on His brilliant discourse? Did they say to Him, We hope to hear this kind of preaching again? No, far from it; they then and there severed their relationship with Him. If you notice, He did not reprimand those that went away. He turned to those that were still present, and He asked, "Will ye also go away?" What did Peter say? What would you have said? Peter said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

Now let us return to the text at the head of this article. It is the full pithiness of the gospel. Solomon used it first in his relationship as the type of the Lord Jesus Christ. Job found it out also as a type of the redeemed Church of Lord Jesus Christ. Job found it out also of God-called ministers. (Job 23:8, 10; Jer. 10:23). In each case, as they found it out, they also found out, as the Savior found out, that men, by nature do not know, and consequently, will not love and follow Him. In each case, the world by its wisdom did not know Him, and did not follow the called of God nor Him that was God, and I counsel you, dear wayfaring pilgrim, that they will not follow the truth when you preach it, any more than they followed Him when He preached His own gospel.

"The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." The reason for the professed disciples not following the Lord when He preached His gospel, is revealed to us in the second verse: All of their ways are clean in their own eyes. Do you think you could convince a man that he is a sinner while he is clean in every way? How long do you think it would take? What procedure would you use on a man or woman that was clean, and had been clean all of the time? (Matt 19:20; Luke 18:11, 12; Acts 22: 3). Would you expect those that are already clean to follow One that came to save sinners? Did you notice the difference in those that went away and those that remained? That difference is still apparent in the world today. They that are perfect, they that are whole, they that are not sick, they that are not

sinners, sooner or later (always about the time that the loaves and fishes give out) turn away. Those that have found they fit the description given them by Isaiah, always have, and always will follow the dear Savior, and all of those that are of God will, at His time, and at His place, and in the manner which He designates, follow the Lord and His people. (Isa. 1:6; 1 John 4:6).

We will never confess what Peter and the faithful in Christ Jesus in all the world confessed, until God begins the preparations in the heart. It is true that love of parents, and even the love of misplaced praise, will sometimes bring people to follow in the steps of the people of God in a nominal way, but they are always finally denominated as having come in unawares as spies, often slipping, creeping, sliding inside. And if a spirit of self-righteousness should invade our frail vessel and delude us into thinking that our fallen condition in our federal head, Adam, exempts us from future thinking that we are capable of managing and preparing ourselvse at any time for service to God and to His people, it will take a consumation of our preparations, and then the rebuilding of that which we have laid waste. If such a repulsive condition arises in our mind, we will then understand what Solomon said in the text, to-wit: "The preparations (all of them) of the heart in man is of the Lord." As long as grace keeps us we will be able to sing:

"Prepare me, gracious God,
To stand before Thy face,
Thy Spirit must the work perform,
For it is all of grace."

But let us fall, as Peter and this poor sinner, have often fallen, then the rubbish of our self-righteous works must be consumed and the ashes removed.

This first preparation, or this beginning of the work in the heart, we will never forget. Yet, although engraved in our being, we will never be satisfactorily able to describe it. How little we have to tell, or, to put it perhaps a better way, how unable we are to tell what we feel. If the way is clear; if you are able to give a cohesive account of what happened in your experience; if you are able to walk in the light and to rekindle it as it grows dim, it would be advisable to reexamine your surefootedness, (Isa. 50:11). If on the other hand, you feel only that you have begged for mercy; if you have felt that you had no light and that your walk seemed to be in darkness, perhaps after all you have cause for delight (Isa. 50: 10).

What a change there was when the first preparation began to come about in our clean and satisfied heart. I dare say that at the outset you became fretful towards yourself, even upbraiding yourself because you did not think that the work of grace could ever be such an upheaval in your life. The things that had meant the most to you now begin to lose their lustre, their value, their attraction, and the things that had seemed small and mean and inconsequential, became more important. Is that the way with you, dear reader? If so, be of good cheer, the road is being prepared before your astonished eyes and you are on the way to heaven. When your precious Lord begins the preparation, He first removes old things, old desires, old values, old associates, old outlooks, old beliefs, even those things that you had been taught, and that you had believed, were unto eternal life.

How wretched you felt as they were abolished and removed. You had nothing left; you were around a threatening mountain with fiery denunciations sounding in your doomed ears. You fled from that terrible Voice, and you had nowhere to go:

"Vindictive justice stood in view,
To Sinai's fiery mount I flew;
But justice cried with frowning face,
This mountain is no hiding place."

and on and on the work and preparation of that trembling heart for the erection of Zion on its walls went on. You were helpless, you did not know what to make of it, you could not shake it off. After the debris of nature, the old heart of flesh had been removed, and you had no resistance to give or to do, then the preparation for the loosing of the tongue began to be felt. I know you did not mean for your tongue to get away from you. You did not mean to let anybody know about what you had been passing through. Tell it you would never do. Associate with people, even though your heart agreed with what they told, you would never do. Go home to them and tell about the work, you would never do it. But that is what the heart will say when the tongue is not in agreement with it. But He that stirs the heart, He that gives you a new heart and a new desire and a new mind never leaves a son or daughter unattended. He starts His preparation in that vessel, even that unruly and untamed member, and when His work is consummated, then the tongue will sing, that tongue will warble praises unto its Maker, it will speak in honor to the Preparer of the desert to breaking out in floods, and that tongue will come to Zion with songs of joyous lays will flow out and join in the melody of heaven. —W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"My kingdom is not of this world." John 18:36.

The words of Jesus are spirit and life when applied to the subjects of His kingdom; every one of this kingdom is subject the the King of kings. All power and authority are His, His word is law and verily truth. When He says, "My kingdom is not of this world," we are not to question what He says, but believe His kingdom is not of this world, whether we can understand it or not.

The apostles in their first acquaintance with Jesus, as a Man, thought He would set up an earthly kingdom; two of them, James and John, desired to be prominent in such a kingdom by sitting the one on the right and the other on the left hand of Jesus. He answered, "Ye know not what ye ask." They had to be taught by many sorrowful lessons, in drinking of the cup that Jesus drank and in being baptized with the baptism that He was baptized with, that His kingdom is not of this world. The apostles had no prominence in the world, we mean religious world, or among men, because of being the servants of God, but were considered "the offscouring of all things," accused of most every evil because they preached Christ and the resurrection; they were prominent, however, in the kingdom of God, where believers in Christ and His power to save are only found. These men did not seek the applause of the world, they did not love the world, nor did they seek to please men. Paul said, "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." A most serious question arises

here: Are we who profess to be the servants of Christ seeking to please men? If so, we are not the servants of Christ; He is our King and Master, to Him alone are we accountable for our stewardship. Do we sometimes round the corners in presenting the gospel, or desire to speak "smooth things," lest some one of the world be offended? Do we fail to talk of Christ and His lovingkindness when in the parlor because some are present who do not believe the truth? What is this but denying Christ and pleasing men? The conversation of those of God's kingdom in the early ages of the church was, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever;" they were not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. A command was once given to "Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it." Should not the gospel of the grace of God be so set forth today? Should we not be bold in the defense of the truth to speak in such a way that all who hear may know where we stand in this matter of salvation?

There is no place in the army of God for a coward; in ancient times those who were afraid were not numbered with those who fought the battles. The doctrine cannot be preached too plainly nor too strong for those who believe it; if unbelievers are offended at the truth it will be no more than they were when Christ preached His own power, the efficacy of His own blood and God's eternal purpose in preparing Him a body. Hundreds were offended at this kind of doctrine at one time, twelve only in that great company heard with comfort and said, "Thou hast the words of eternal life." Jesus did not shun to preach the truth just as it is because it would not be received by unbelievers. Why should we attempt to build up this kingdom of God (which He alone builds) with worldly matter? Why, if it is not of this world? John, when in the isle that is called Patmos, saw, in a vision, the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven; this is God's kingdom, and the fact that it comes down from God shows conclusively that it is not of this world; it is in the world, but no part of it, it is of God. It is a peaceable and quiet habitation, "For God is not the Author of confusion, but of peace." God's kingdom is spiritual, heavenly and divine, because He reigns in it without a rival, He is one Lord and His name one, therefore there can be no such thing as division in His kingdom.

The question might be asked, Does not the strife and war in the church today prove clearly that there is division, and that all of His kingdom is not spiritual? No, unless the words of our text, "My kingdom is not of this world," can be proved untrue. If we say there is division in God's kingdom, we say that in part His kingdom is of this world; we also say the Zion of God is not a peaceable and quiet habitation. In our ideas of the kingdom of God we must not deny the world, His word is true, and all things must be tested by it. How can there be division in a kingdom when there is but one power? There is no power in God's kingdom except His own almighty power, therefore no division, no strife. Now the question, What means all the strife in the church of God today? "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand." If there is division in God's kingdom or house what will be the result? "It shall not stand." Who would dare

say the kingdom or house of God shall not stand? "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." If there is division in it, it cannot stand, but the fact that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it proves conclusively that in it there is no division. The fighting of Satan against it does not make Satan a part of the church; he may be transformed into an angel of light, "so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God," but it is false, this is only one of his ways of fighting against it; he is still Satan, a liar and a deceiver. Would God work against Himself? No. Satan cannot work against himself. Why should we imagine that God is divided against Himself, or that there is division in His kingdom? God is God, Satan is Satan, truth is truth, error is error.

"From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?" "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not; and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy, and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." Does not James make the distinction clear between these two principles? They are set forth as being opposite in every sense of the word; the one of the earth, the other from above; the one working evil, the other all good. These principles cannot be blended, therefore are not divided against themselves. When trouble, war, strife and confusion are manifest we have no authority to say the kingdom of God is divided, but the two principles are made manifest, the one of war, strife, error, unrighteousness and every false way; the other of peace, truth, righteousness and every good work.

In this we see the word of God still maintained, "My kingdom is not of this world." The precious is often separated from the vile, but the vile has never been a part of the kingdom of God. "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." When the apostles speak of division, a careful reader will observe that the idea of division in the kingdom of God is not set forth, but carnality was ever manifest, and we know that carnality is not a part of that kingdom which is "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Should wolves, in sheeps' clothing, get into the visible kingdom of God, they are not part of His house any more than a goat would be a sheep if clothed in a sheepskin. God will cast out all such, because no worldly material can have place in His heavenly kingdom. When we say visible kingdom, we mean church organization, nevertheless "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation." Mortal eye cannot behold it; the Holy Ghost guides and teaches, but by faith we see the house of God eternal in the heavens.

The saints of God do not differ in form and appearance from those of the world, but there is something within them that identifies them with God; "it is Christ in you, the hope of glory." They do not love the world with its follies and delusions, they hate the commandments of men when preached as the gospel of God, they hate all sin, yes,

even thee appearance of evil, they hate their own life; this shows also that the kingdom of God is not of this world.

The bondwoman and her son were cast out, because her son could not be heir with the son of the freewoman; it was impossible that there could be division in the inheritance. This casting out of the bondwoman's children is still going on, and will continue; this is one of God's ways to make manifest the heirs of promise. Paul did not claim relationship with the children of the bondwoman, but said, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that is born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." The children of God need not be disturbed with regard to His kingdom, He builds the house and keeps the city. In Christ was chosen a definite number before the world began; this number composes the kingdom of God, hence having been chosen in Christ it is not of this world. Neither has it nor can it diminish, "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." This kingdom cannot be divided on earth nor in heaven. May the Lord give us to see by faith its spiritual completeness and perfection. (Editorial by Elder H. C. Ker, August 1906).

OBITUARIES

SISTER OCTAVIA S. DUPREE

Sister Octavia Dupree was born April 8, 1895, the daughter of Wright L., and Emma Jenkins Stallings. She died May 25, 1976, at the age of 81 at a rest home. There were four children born to her and her husband; two daughters and one son: Mrs. Julia Cherry of Rocky Mount, N. C., Mrs. Virginia Harvey, Rocky Mount, N. C., and Frank Dupree, Kinston, N. C. She also had a foster daughter, Mrs. Beth Fowler and Durham, North Carolina. .

Sister Dupree and husband, Charlie joined Pleasant Hill Church at a called meeting at their home on September 21, 1951. He was sick and confined to his bed and was never able to attend meetings, nor ever able to be baptized. Sister Dupree was baptized on October 27, 1951 by Elder R. B. Denson.

Sister Dupree was not able to attend church for the seven years she was confined to the rest home.

When the members and friends visited her she seemed glad to see them and begged them to come and not wait so long. We feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was held at the Gay-Yost Funeral Home on Wednesday, May 26, 1976. Funeral services conducted by her pastor, Elder Henry Jones, and Mr. Harry Fowler.

Burial was in the family cemetery, in Edgecombe County, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, by the side of her husband, to wait the second coming of our Lord.

That a copy of this resolution be sent to the family, one placed in the church records, and one sent to the Signs of the Times.

This done the 4th Saturday in July, 1976 in conference.

Fannie Mae Harper

INEZ ROBISON

Inez Robison was born June 1, 1900, to W. F., and Eliza Winfrey, in Kingman, Kans. God called her home May 25, 1976.

Sister Robison was united in marriage with Layton Lynn Robison April 12, 1917, and to this union were born five children: a daughter, Dorothy, who preceded her in death; a son, Eugene, of Kansas City, Missouri; twin daughters, Helen Bunting of Wichita, Kansas, and Ellen Williams of Liberal Kan. a son, James, of Orlando, Florida. Also surviving, besides grandchildren and great-grandchildren, are two brothers, Fred C., of Wichita, Kansas, and W. A. Winfrey, of Liberal, Kansas, and a sister Gertrude Hardy, of Perryton, Texas.

Sister Robison united with the Pleasant Valley Primitive Baptist Chursh in Kingman Kansas on June 19, 1921, and was baptized by the late Elder J. R. Hardy. Both of her parents were charter members of this church.

Funeral services were held at Miller Mortuary by a layman of the First Baptist Church of Liberal, and she was laid to rest beside her husband who passed away in 1968. All arrangements were made by the children.

We feel that God has received her spirit unto Himself, as she was His as well as are all His children, and to Him she has returned.

Written by her brother and authorized by the Pleasant Valley Church.

W. A. Winfrey, Pastor.
Maradell Richardson, Clerk.

SISTER DORA BRASWELL

Sister Dora Jackson Braswell was born July 30, 1888, died February 13, 1976; age 87 years, 6 months and 14 day.

She joined Pleasant Hill Church April 25, 1915 and attended as often as was possible for her to do so. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace.

We at Pleasant Hill, bow in humble sub-

mission to the holy will of our Lord, who does all things well.

Sister Braswell leaves four daughters to mourn her passing: Mrs. Ada Proctor, Mrs. Alma Morrison, Mrs. Irene Smith, and Mrs. Willie Taner, all of Rocky Munt, N. C. and several grandchildren.

Funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Henry Jones, Mr. Hollifield and Benny Vickrey, at Johnson Funeral Home, Rocky Mount, N. C. Her body was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery under a beautiful array of flowers.

Done by order of the church in conference Saturday February 28, 1976.

Fannie Mae Harper

SISTER MARY OLA RICHARDS

We would like to share a few thoughts concerning our sister who departed this life June 3, 1976. We knew her from our childhood, and as we grew up we remember her walk in life as being one that we wish we were blessed to walk. We would give honor or glory to no other than God. As we understand the scriptures, He has blessed people to serve Him from the beginning of time. This sister, we believe bore the fruits of such a person who was called. We remember when she joined the church and was baptized. It was not a big show for the world, but for us it was a display of the effectual work of the Holy Spirit moving a person to follow her Lord.

We would like to turn to John 15:5: "I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit for without me ye can do nothing." And Matt. 7:16-18: "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."

We would like to be thankful to God for having blessed her, and having blessed us by having her as our sister in the Church.

Mrs. Mary Ola Richards, 76, wife of Leonard "Jack" Richards, died June 3, 1976 at the Oka Cliff Methodist Hospital in Dallas Texas, after an illness of two weeks.

Mrs. Richards was born February 6, 1900 in Bradley County, a daughter of John and Lille Anna Vickers Harrod. She was a member of Antioch Primitive Baptist Church.

Other survivors include 2 sons; Jack of Memphis, Tenn., and Frank Richards of Arlington, Texas; 3 daughters: Mrs. Bonnie Trussell of Grand Prairie, Texas, Mrs. Mary Adams of Scurry, Texas; and Mrs. Martha Sullivan of Cornersville, Ark.; 2 brothers: Johnny Harrod of Banks, and Opha Harrod of Hermitage; also by 11 grandchildren, and 3 great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Saturday, June 6, 1976 at Union Hill Baptist Church by Elder Stanley Phillips. Burial was in Union Hill Cemetery by Frazer's Funeral Home.

Pallbearers were Fred Harrod, Keith Harrod, Charles Harrod, Jerrell Harrod, Elgin Harrod, and Charlie Morgan.

In bonds of love.

Charlie Morgan

BROTHER LELAND HOLLAND

Our dear brother in the faith, Leland Holland, of Kenly, N. C., died January 13, 1976, in a Goldsboro hospital.

Brother Holland was born October 4, 1900. His parents were Gurley and Mildred Holland of Wayne County, N. C. He united with the Pittman's Grove Primitive Baptist Church near Kenly in thee year 1952 and was baptized by his pastor, W. E. Turner the second Sunday in November.

He was united in marriage to Percy Davis on November 27, 1921. To this union were born nine children as follows: Leland Clevis, of Raleigh; Celion Davis, of Fremont; Mary Udell, of Raleigh; Rosa Lee, Wilson County; Magdalene Marie, Greensboro; Edith Lorraline, of Smithfiled; Dora Ellen of Goldsboro; Lugenia, pre-deceased, and one infant predecaesed.

Brother Holland's funeral was conducted by Elders Curtis Rains and Harvy Holland, and he was interred in Pitman's Grove Church Cemetery.

He is survived by his wife and the children listed, and by 22 grandchildren and nine great grandchildren.

This obituary was written at the request of his widow, Sister Holland and his family.

W. E. Turner

WALTER DIXON FUTRELL

It has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst a dear brother, Walter Dixon Futrell. He was a native of Onslow County, and the son of the late Daniel Thomas and Martha Ellis Brown Futrell. He was born July 30, 1905 and died May 23, 1975, making his stay on earth 70 years, 9 months, and 23 days. He was married to Roxie Gurganus Futrell. To this union were born 12 children: seven daughters, and 5 sons. One son died at a very early age. The last year of his life, he had many afflictions. I believe he was made to know that salvation is only by the grace of God. I feel that he was reconciled to his afflictions. He never complained because of them.

Through his afflictions he was brought to the place he could ask for a home with Cypress Creek Church on December 7, 1975 while in the hospital. Later in the same week his companion united with the church. They were blessed to be baptized together by Elder D. B. Stokes and Elder Harmon Brown. He was faithful to attend church as long as he was able. We miss him very much at Cypress Creek as a brother and also as a father. We feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

He was laid to rest in the family cemetery under a beautiful mound of flowers, where his sleeping body awaits the resurrection when Jesus shall come and take his little children to their heavenly home.

Written by request of conference at Cypress Creek Church.

Brother Ervin Futrell,
Sister Christine Futrell.

CLAY ANDERSON DALTON

It is with much sadness in my heart, as I attempt to write a few words in memory of one whom I esteem very highly.

He was born in Pittsylvania County on Aug. 18, 1916, the son of the late Ross and Kate Pickeral Dalton. He was married to Sister Meta Simpson who survives him. He also leaves one daughter, Jeanette Bramham of Augusta S. C., and one son, Morris Dalton of the home; also surviving are 4 brothers,

Edgar and Bernard Dalton, both of Danville, Curtis Dalton of Roanoke, and Paul Dalton of Gretna; 2 sisters, Mrs. Nerie Worley and Mrs. Rebecca Keen of Danville; also 3 grandchildren.

Brother Dalton was a faithful member of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church. He will be greatly missed by Weatherford Church and by his neighbors and friends of this community. He was a cheerful giver, always dividing what he was blessed to have with his friends and neighbors.

God in His infinite wisdom saw fit to call Brother Dalton from this life on July 9, 1976 at the age of 59 years. We feel our loss is his eternal gain. His funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by his beloved pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, Elder Raymond Goad and Elder Denver Simpson. His body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in the church cemetery. A host of friends and relatives manifested that he was greatly loved.

Written by:

Marvin Brumfield
Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. H. Doss, Clerk.

SISTER CALLIE BROWN ROBERSON

The members of the Robersonville Primitive Baptist Church bows in humble submission to the will of our heavenly Father who called from our midst our beloved sister, Callie Brown Roberson on April 15, 1976, making her stay on earth 87 years and 2 months. She was the daughter of Alexander and Fannie Moore Brown and spent most of her life in Martin County, N. C. She was married to L. Joseph Roberson who preceded her in death 46 years. To this union were born 3 daughters: Mrs. C. B. Martin of Tarboro, N. C., Mrs. Herbert I. Highsmith and Mrs. Charles M. Hurst of Robersonville, N. C. two sons, Kenneth of Robersonville and Hoke of Windsor, N. C.

She united with the church in 1960 and was faithful in attendance as long as her health would permit. She will be also remembered as one faithful in visiting those who were sick.

Her funeral was conducted in the Biggs Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder I. S. Conner and Mr. Willis Wilson, after which her body was laid to rest in the Everett family cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

Done by order of conference Saturday before the 1st Sunday in Aug., 1976.

Elder I. S. Conner, Moderator
Magalene E. Brown, Comm.

SISTER CARRIE JENKINS ROBERSON

It has pleased our heavenly Father to call from the walks of this life, Sister Carrie Jenkins Roberson. She was born near Robersonville, N. C. Sept., 16, 1886, the daughter of Elder H. Dawson Jenkins and Susan Davis Jenkins. She died May 18, 1976. She is survived by 3 children, one daughter, Mrs. Geo. G. Edmondson; two sons, Paul Brown and Wallace O. Brown, all of Robersonville.

She was received into the fellowship of the church in May, 1922 and proved faithful as long as she was able to attend. She loved the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God and greatly rejoiced in meeting with the brethren and sisters at our meetings and in her home.

We, the Primitive Baptist Church at Robersonville feel deeply the loss of our precious sister whose memory will live long in our hearts. Our deepest sympathy goes out to the bereaved family. May the good Lord in His mercy reconcile, bless and comfort them all.

Her funeral was conducted at the Biggs Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder I. S. Conner, and Mr. Jerry Smith. Her body was laid to rest in the Robersonville Cemetery beneath a lovely mound of flowers to await the second coming of our Lord and Savior.

Done by order of conference Saturday before the 1st Sunday in August, 1976.

Elder I. S. Conner, Moderator
Magalene E. Brown, Comm.

ELDER JESSE C. PASCHAL

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write of the passing of our dear brother, Elder Jesse C. Paschal, who lived near Reidsville, N. C. He was born September 28, 1898 to William and Bell Paschal and had lived in Rockingham County all of his life. He fell asleep in Jesus November 2, 1976, making his stay on earth 78 years, one month, and 5 days. He was first married to Prim Caudle who passed away, then he was later married to Gladys McCollum, who survives; also surviving are 7 sons, Robert D., John W., and D. L. Paschal of Reidsville, N. C. J. C., Stoneville, E. L., Greensboro, N. C., J. P., Columbia, S. C.', and D. W. Paschal, Georgetown, S. C., one son, Clarence E., preceded him in death. Three daughters survive: Mrs. J. R. Dillard, Mrs. H. W. Quackenbush, Reidsville, N. C., and Mrs. George H. Purcell, Graham, N. C. Six half-brothers, Brother R. D. Newman, P. D., F. H., and E. C. Newman, High Point, N. C., R. L., Randleman, N. C., and R. S. Newman, Reidsville, one half-sister, Mrs. Naomi Hargrove, High Point, N. C.; 18 grand children and three great grandchildren.

Elder Paschal received a hope that Jesus is his Savior and united with Macedonia Primitive Baptist Church, Rockingham Co., N. C., July 23, 1922. He was ordained a minister of God July 26, 1942. He loved the doctrine of salvation by grace. He loved the old paths and was blessed to declare the whole counsel of God. I feel he will be long remembered by many who sat under the sound of his voice as he preached Jesus, the Way, the truth and the life of God's children. Though for many years he suffered affliction in body he continued in his call to the ministry, he was a true soldier of the cross. Now his voice is stilled, and he has gone from the evils of this world. We are sad that we shall no more see his face on earth, or hear him preach the things he loved so much, yet we would not call him back if we could, for we feel he is at rest. He has fought a good fight, he has finished his course, he has kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness. May God comfort his family, together with all who mourn his passing.

His funueral was held at Wilkerson Funeral Home by Elders Z. L. Rhue and Thornton Manley. The many beautiful flowers tell of the respect and love for him. He was laid in the grave at Macedonia where he had

seen in a vision he came forth in the resurrection when Jesus comes for His bride.
"When that illustrious day shall rise,
And all thy armies shine
In robes of victory through the skies,
The glory shall be Thine."
—dearest Lord.

Written by request by one who loved Elder Paschal. Mrs. Fred Cobb

BROTHER LEE VILLARD JOHNSON

It has again pleased our heavenly Father to call one of His jewels home

Brother Lee Villard Johnson of Huntington W. Va., was called from this life June 23, 1976. He was born March 8, 1923, making his stay on earth 53 years. His mother, Alta Smalridge Johnson preceded him in death. He leaves to mourn for him, two sons, Ralph of Fort Riley, Kansas, and Paul David, of Huntington; his earthly father, Hugh C. (Shan) Johnson; stepmother, Rosetta Johnson of Huntington; one brother, William W. Johnson of Hurricane, W. Va.; one sister, Ina Thornton of Milton, W. Va., two stepbrothers, Vernon and David Chaney of W. Va. Three stepsisters, Vada Abshire and Doris Dalton of W. Va., and Patsy Adkins of Ohio; one grandchild, Marion; several neices, nephews and other relatives and a host of loving friends. We miss him, but our loss is his eternal gain.

Brother Lee was a world war 2 veteran and had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church since July 30, 1950, being baptized by the late Elder H. J. Bird. He had many sore trials and tribulations in this life and had been afflicted with near blindness for many years, but was blessed by a covenant keeping God to remain steadfast in faith, believing that all things work together for good to those thaat love God, those that are called according to His purpose. That all things are ordained of God and come to pass as He has predestinated. That salvation is alone by the grace of God and not the works of sinful man and all that the heavenly Father gave His Son before the world began will be saved without the loss of one. It was his delight to attend the meetings and talk with the brethren and sisters, to sit and listen to this doctrine being preached. We firmly believe that his soul and spirit are now resting in the paradise of Jesus Christ.

As Brother Lee had requested, his funeral was conducted at Indian Fork Primitive Baptist Church at Culloden, W. Va., by Elder Woodrow Lake. His body was laid to rest in the Mt. Moriah Cemetery near Hurricane W. Va., with military graveside rites. His body has gone back to dust from which it came and is now awaiting that glorious time when Christ comes again in the clouds of glory, with all His holy angels. to gather the sleeping dust, reunite it with his spirit, glorify it in His own likeness, take it to heaven and immortal glory, there to be with the heavenly Father, and be satisfied forever and ever.

Requested by his father, brother and sister, and submitted by his cousin, Mildred Stanley.

CLARA SUTTON HILL

Once again our heavenly Father in His infinite wisdom has seen fit to remove from our midst one of our dear and esteemed sisters, Clara Sutton Hill, who was born on September 3, 1881, and died on January 20, 1976. She had been in declining health for several months. Sister Hill was born and raised in Pamlico Co., N. C., but had resided in the Winterville and Ayden commuities for several years.

Surviving are: her husband, L. B. Hill of Ayden, N. C., three sons, Alton, of Winterville, Willard of Carthage, N. C., Simmons Hill of Ayden; one daughter, Mrs. Herman Hardison of New Bern, N. C.; two sisters, Mrs. Annie Wilcox of New Bern; Mrs. Sam Williams of Vanceboro, N. C., eleven grandchildren and 16 great grandchildren.

Sister was a gentle, lovely person who lived an exemplary life; the kind of person who made the world a richer place for having lived in it. She was loved and respected by all who knew her. She always visited the sick and was there to give comfort and consolation when there was death in a family. Sister Hill was a true neighbor, always eager to share with others. When her fruit and vegetables became ready to eat, she, with her husband would gather and carry some to each of their friends.

Sister Clara was a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God, so on a confession of faith she united with Hancocks Primitive Baptist Church August 19, 1956, and was a faithful member until death. She, with her husband, attended church services regularly, not only at Hancocks, but many churches of the same faith and order within their reach. They had the pleasure in visiting in the homes of many of the brethren and gave a warm welcome to those who visited in their home. Sister Hill was a gracious hostess who made one feel wanted. On their trips to these churches, they mostly carried other with them, especially those who had no other way.

Funeral service for Sister Hill was held at Farmer Funeral Chapel in Ayden. Elders Joe Sawyer and Henry Jones officiated. She was laid to rest in the Winterville Cemetery under a beautiful mound of flowers in the presence of a host of friends and relatives.

We shall miss her, but feel that our loss is her eternal gain; and we express our heartfelt sympathy to the family and pray that God will comfort and sustain them.

Done by order of conference, while in regular session.

Elder Joe Sawyer, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk.

MATTIE CUTHRELL BRIDGMAN

God in His divine mercy and providence has removed from our midst another dear sister.

Sister Bridgman was born April 6, 1897 and died February 26, 1976. She was the daughter of the late Frank and Molly Sawyer Cuthrell, and widow of Thomas C. Bridgman. She was a native of Hyde Co., N. C., but resided on Route 2 Elizabeth City, N. C. most of her life. She is survived by two sons, Cassell and Lindsey Bridgman of Rt. 2. One brother Mr. Birdie Cuthrell of Camden, N. C.; one sister, Mrs. Margaret Caswell of Chesapeake, Va.; and 5 grandchildren.

Sister Bridgman was blessed to unite with Flatty Creek Primitive Baptist Church Aug. 26, 1962, where she remained a faithful member until death. Her faith in her God

and the love she had for her brethren carried her to her meetings when it looked impossible because of her weakened condition. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and truly manifested that her treasure was laid up in heaven.

Funeral services were conducted in Twiford's Memorial Chapel February 28, by her pastor, Elder I. S. Conner, and her body laid to rest beside that of her husband in Highland Park Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers: a wonderful evidence of the love and esteem in which she was held by her family and friends. We grieve not as those without hope, but feel our loss is her eternal gain.

May we bow in humble submission to God's holy will, and give due praise and glory to Him for His grace while here we live, for the promise of His presence in death and for the heavenly abode of uninterrupted happiness He has prepared for His own before the foundation of the world.

Written by one who knew and loved her for almost fifty years. —Maude S. Meads

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ETHEL M. ROGERSON

Almighty God in His infinite wisdom and mercies removed our beloved sister, Ethel M. Rogerson from this life on the 21st day of April, 1976.

Sister Rogerson was the daughter of Alonzo and Lavinia Mizell and was born in Martin County 75 years ago. She was married to Charles Gilbert Rogerson who preceded her in death. She is survived by three sons: Mack G., Samuel M., and John P. Rogerson. Six daughters: Mrs. Kathleen Lilly, Mrs. Amanda Faye Griffin, Mrs. Janie Harris, Mrs. Lavinia Peaks, Mrs. Olivia Whitehurst, and Mrs. Grace Russell.

Third Sunday in September, 1924 at the waters edge Sister Rogerson joined the Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by Elder W. E. Grimes.

Funeral services were conducted in Biggs Chapel, Wiliamston, N. C., by Mr. Thermon Griffin, and Johnny R. Gardner. Interment was in Woodlawn Cemetery.

E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Fannie M. Cowin, Committee.

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT
SISTER CELIA BATTS

We, the Church at Mill Branch, humbly bow to the will of God who called our dear sister, Celia Batts from our midst. Sister Celia was born July 19, 1905, and passed away from this world May 8, 1976. She united with the Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church February 3, 1973. She was a faithful member as long as she was able to go. She was also faithful in attending church a long time before uniting with the church. We all do miss her, but may our loss be her eternal gain. We feel her suffering is over and she is at rest with her Lord. She loved her church, and showed love for the brethren and sisters and friends. She was a good neighbor in her community and had lots of friends. May we all be reconciled to His will.

Therefore we resolve, That three copies of this Resolution be made: one for the church records, one to be sent to the family, and one to the Signs of the Times for publication.

We also send our sincere sympathy to her son Guy S. Batts and family and her surviving relatives.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Harvey Holland, and Elder Wayne Mitchell, and she was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful floral offering, to await the morning of the resurrection, when all will be peace forever.

Written at the request of Mill Branch Church, and approved in conference September 4, 1976.

Elder Harvey Holland, Moderator,
Sister Estelle Joyner Cockrell, Clerk.

LUCY MAY CAUDILL COTTLE

Lucy May Caudill Cottle was born December 29, 1895, and departed this life July 1, 1976, making her stay on earth 80 years and 6 months. She was united in holy matrimony to Bernie H. Cottle December 25, 1913. Born to this union was one son, who preceded her in death. Surviving are her husband, Bernie Cottle; one brother, Roy Caudill, Kansas City Mo., three nephews, and a host of friends.

Sister Cottle united with the Primitive Baptist Church in May, 1914, a member of the Fairview Primitive Baptist Church, Scott Depot, W. Va. Casdorph and Curry Funeral Home was in charge of the arrangements, and Elder Allen Smith and Elder G. W. Justice officiated in the funeral at Fairview Church, and she was laid to rest in the Caudill Memorial Cemetery at Morehead, Ky.

Sister Cottle was faithful to the church and filled her seat as her health permitted. We will miss Sister Cottle, but our loss is her gain.

Written at the request of her husband, Bernie Cottle, by an unworthy sister,

Gracie McClure.

NOTICE TO THOSE WHO WRITE
OBITUARIES

We must ask that Obituaries be as short and condensed as possible, giving all pertinent information. We find it very difficult to re-write or condense once an Obituary has been written. We have on hand more than thirty obituaries which we will publish as we have space. We are glad to publish obituaries of our brethren and friends, but need the cooperation of those who write them. A full page or less of double-spaced typewritten copy is about right, so that we can publish all the obituaries sent to us. Hand written obituaries must be legible and not too lengthy. Thanks for your cooperation.

EDITOR

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 145 DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1977 No. 3

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 3/77 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE

To the Dearly Beloved Brethren:

If God will permit, I will write a few words on the subject of wisdom and knowledge.

Solomon was the wisest man to ever walk upon the face of this earth, except our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for God gave Solomon great knowledge and wisdom and inspired him to write the Book of Proverbs as well as other books of the Bible. God also gives knowledge and wisdom to all His children, and "How much better it is to get wisdom than gold; and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!" I sometimes think I have no knowledge or wisdom at all and that I should never try to speak or write in His holy name; and at the same time I feel compelled to do so. If I be compelled, then it is not of me, but of God; and His children will know the difference, for they are all taught of God. It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God.

The Bible is not addressed to the whole Adamic race, as some men contend, but to the children of God, the ones God chose in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world: and when Solomon said, "My son, attend to my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding," he was speaking the words of God to the sons of God: for all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. 3:16-17) I do not know, but have hope, that I am one of the sons to whom the Bible is addressed; of whom John proclaims, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." What manner of love is this? Is it not an everlasting love? "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yes, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." And Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him; and I will raise him up again at the last day." Again, "Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh to me."

Now I do not wish to throw stones at anyone's belief, but to separate error from truth; for there are many who will tell you there are people dying daily and being cast into hell because there is not enough money to send the word of

God to these poor, lost souls. How far this is from the truth! Do all who hear gospel preaching believe? Was Stephen stoned to death because he preached Christ? and some of the apostles slain? Paul said in his letter to the Romans, "But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." And, "I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people."

Therefore we see that God does teach all His people. Are you not glad that you believe in a God who does not depend upon puny man and his lack of money? Surely, we would have no hope.

We are told by those who do err, that God loved the world so much that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever would believe on Him, and accept Him, and give Him a chance to save them, that He would do so; but it has not been revealed to me in this fashion. John said, "For God so (in a very particular manner) loved the world that he gave his only begotton Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life." This belief is not of man, but "unto you it is given, not only to believe, but to suffer with him." Also, there is more than one world: "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on Him (these are His children) is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, (these are the children of Satan), because he hath not believed on the name of the Son of God." God's children are in this world, but they are not of this world. "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of this world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." (John 17:15-16). "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." The world for which Christ did not pray is the world of the ungodly, the world of the devil. Jesus said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lust of your father ye will do." And, "He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." (John 8:44-47). We also read 1 John 3:27: "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man should teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, you shall abide in him." Again Jesus saith, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

There are many more scriptures that could be quoted to substantiate what I have tried to show, but time and space will not permit, therefore let us consider how one becomes a son of God. Again they do err when they preach and teach that one must give his heart to God and accept Christ; for when the disciples asked Jesus about this, He replied, "With men this is impossible." Also, before there is action there must be life; and until one is quickened (made alive), he is dead in trespasses and sin; and

we know that the dead can do nothing. Birth does not give life, but only makes it manifest. This is in natural life only, for before a spiritual birth there is always life.

Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." Again, "Except ye be born again ye cannot see the kingdom of God." Therefore we see that we must be born again as a little child if we are to ever see or enter the kingdom "that is prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Because this new birth cannot be accomplished by man, then it must be, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of men, but of God." Who then will be born again? Are they not the ones chosen of God in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, whose life is hid in Him and is eternal? We read 1 John 5:11-12: "And this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." Eternal means from everlasting to everlasting, therefore the children of God have ever had life: but the natural man knows nothing of this life until it is made manifest unto him of God. This is the new birth, and I am sure no man can ever show another this life and how to get it. But the child of God patiently waits to hear, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Brethren, I will confess that the above letter is not what I purposed to write at the start; for I had intended to write a few words from the book of Proverbs; but I have written the things that have come to my mind and trust they are of God from whom all our blessings flow.

Pray for me, brethren beloved, when at the throne of grace.

Clifford Wilbanks
217 Bastrop Dr., Monroe, La. 71203

SHARING HIS THOUGHTS

Rt. 2, Box 460
Deatsville, Ala. 36022

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am enclosing my check to renew three subscriptions to the *Signs*. The balance may be used to help send the paper to others. I am also enclosing an obituary that you may publish if you see fit. Any Old Baptists who visited this area in times past will know of Wiley A. and Flossie Carter. If they visited more than nineteen years ago they almost certainly spent one or more nights with them.

If you deem them worthy, you can share some of my thoughts with the other readers. I am thinking of peoples' philosophies regarding the God of heaven and earth. And I think their actions speak louder than words,—and I hope mine too.

In the first place I believe there are many professing religions which have little or no regard for God. I think the object of their activity is social and business and has little or no relation to God. Their actions will bear this out.

Those philosophies that somehow relate to God, range all the way from one that God is dead, to the one that God by His word in the beginning created all things just like He wanted them, and that He is just as much alive and in control now, and ever will be, as He was in the beginning.

Those who believe God is dead obviously believe they have to do the work for

Him. Anyone can observe them working like bees or ants to do this. If I believed like they do, I think I would be most despondent over the visible results.

Those who believe that God may be alive but is unable to accomplish His purposes without help from man, are in about as bad a position as those who think God it dead. They work, they raise vast sums of money; they develop many programs to help God accomplish His purposes. They evaluate the results of their labors by the amount of money they raise, the number of "decisions" they get. Apparently the more they work the greater the burden gets, and the more they have to accelerate their efforts. Do they ever get despondent over the results? Yes, as many as God determined get despondent over the works of the law, and are *made to believe* that God made everything, is alive, and is both able and does still perform His will. The best of our righteousness is as filthy rags before God. If I believed that my eternal destiny depended on my works, or those of a preacher, a bishop, a church or the auxiliary of a church, I would be of all men most despondent. I can see no hope for me or mankind except in the complete and total work of God who is just as much alive now, and ever will be, as when the earth was created.

The works of the so-called "workers for the Lord" are evaluated by God in the scriptures. If we read the account of the Pharisees and the Publican in prayer, and the account of the resurrection when the goats were placed on God's left hand, and the sheep on His right, we can see what God thinks about those who think that they have to help God perform His will.

Yours whose only hope is in the finished work of God. A. C. Carter

1206 So. Oklahoma
Liberal, Kans. 67901

Dear Elder Spangler:

I would like to write something about the unbaptized believer.

We write nice obituaries about deceased church members, but I don't remember anyone mentioning the faithful non-members. I know the *Signs* would not have room for all of these, but what if Christ had said to the thief on the cross: "If I had room for you, I would see that this day you would be in paradise with me." We have closed communions which I endorse and believe in, we have very little praise for the dear believer whom God has not seen fit to bring into the visible Church.

In the Pleasant Valley Church, we had a man who lived for the concern of the Church, and went with my father to see ones who caused trouble in the Church, and also saw that everyone was made to feel at home when visiting. Elder Hardy said that he thought this man, Elta Cates, was the most faithful non-member he had ever seen.

Brother Grady Parsons of Hereford, Texas, traveled far and wide to attend meetings, and loved the fellowship of the saints. I have talked many hours with him and found him to be very sound. He was loved by his family, his neighbors, and by all the brethren who knew him. To me he was a good friend and brother in the spirit. In the flesh he was a good husband, father, and a good provider; but above all, he loved the truth of salvation by grace, although he knew that he was an unworthy sinner by practice as well as by nature. He was spoken of by some as a good man but not a member of the Baptist Church, but in all this I firmly believe he was a child of God, just as much as any water-baptized bro-

ther I ever met, and more than some who see good in their own works and gifts.

The government is on Jesus' shoulders, not ours. He alone governs the going in and out of all that the Father gave Him, whether they have titeral baptism or not, He will or did not lose one, because He promised. We encourage the little ones to join our churches however we should think as we speak with them how much more they labor under guilt and fear of hurting the church—fear of unworthiness or of someone having doubts about them. This is God's work, not man's. Neither preacher or deacon can do anything except preach the truth and comfort and feed the believing saints. Don't get me wrong, I believe in a certain amount of encouragement, but not to the extent of over-indulgence. Christ said, "He who dips in the sop with me will betray me." Men everywhere are still trying in small ways to dip in and serve themselves and others in a selfish and carnal way. Christ is a perfect server and knows who are His. Let us just wait on the salvation of the Lord.

When Philip met the eunuch, he did not say you should be baptized, but the eunuch said Here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized. The eunuch was made to desire this act. Philip only preached to the eunuch and by the foolishness of this preaching, the man was made willing as he saw the day of God's power.

The late Elder J. R. Hardy never, at any time, said to me that I should do my duty and join the church, but just kept preaching and touching my heart until I was led by the Holy Spirit to offer myself for membership. Elder Hardy was a firm believer in God and not man. He thought that he was sent to preach, and not to try to fill the shepherd's tent through men's judgment, but believed that God would and will take care of all things after the counsel of His own will. (Incidentally, Elder Hardy was pastor of Pleasant Valley Church for twenty-seven years. His father was the original pastor of this same church when it was organized eighty years ago, as of April 1976.)

May the Almighty God continue to bless all you precious saints who have not yet been brought to the great desire of uniting with the church, and above all, when God sees fit to bring you in, then, and only then will you be eager beyond all excuses, to enter the church. The Holy Ghost will lead you. Do not be discouraged—all is in the hands of the Father. He knows what your feelings are and what to do about them. We must feed, if sent to preach, all the elect whether beside the shepherd's tent or living inside.

Written in love and not to intentionally cross anyone.

—W. A. Winfrey

P. S. I forgot to say that Grady Parsons recently passed away—still an unbaptized but believing brother.

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH IN SNOW HILL

The Old School Baptist Church in Snow Hill, Worcester County, Maryland was constituted one hundred years ago November 20, 1876. It is a member of the Salisbury Association.

Elder Rittenhouse acted as moderator and Elder Joseph L. Staton as clerk. He served as clerk until he was called to pastor Welsh Tract Church. At his removal John H. Truitt was chosen to serve in his place. Zedekiah Truitt was appointed deacon.

At this time Articles of Faith were drawn by the Church to guide and direct in order and spiritual content.

Due to the distance they had to travel for meeting, some members of Nassawongo, Salisbury and Indiantown Churches withdrew and combined to form the Snow Hill Church. This church building was formely used as a school, then as a Methodist Church, before being used by the Baptists.

Early records were destroyed by fire but complete records have been kept since June 10,1899.

Elder Poulson served faithfully until his death in the fall of 1913.

Elder B. F. Coulter supplied from then until he accepted the pastorship on December 11, 1915. He served as pastor until he passed away in May of 1923.

Beulah Truitt Littleton, our oldest member, was baptized by Elder Coulter in 1914.

A shed building was put in back of the church in the fall of 1920 to be used for serving lunch in at the Association and all-day meetings. Chairs for the pulpit were purchased in December of that same year.

In March of 1922, Brother G. E. Coulbourne was appointed to serve as clerk to replace John H. Truitt who had served thirty-seven years.

When Elder Coulter passed away, the church was again without a pastor. Elder Ker supplied until September when he accepted a call as pastor. He served until his death on February 27, 1946.

The building had become in need of repair. A Committee was formed to investigate as to cost of repair in regard to a new building. It was decided that a new building would be preferrable. Over seven thousand dollars was contributed toward paying for the building and furniture, leaving a balance of seventeen hundred dollars. Mr. Archer Holloway paid the balance, saying the church could not be in debt.

Meetings were held in the town theatre while construction of the building took place. The all-day meeting in 1924, the fourth Sunday in November, was held in the new meeting house. A silver Communion service was presented to the church by Mr. A. C. Holloway.

November 25, 1926, Brother G. E. Coulbourne was ordained to the full ministry of the gospel. He is the only person who has been ordained in this church since it was constituted.

March 23, 1929, the Pitts Creek Church consisting of four members dissolved and united with the Snow Hill Church.

Sister Martha Holloway who had been assistant clerk for some time, was appointed clerk.

June 26, 1938, a strip of land between the Methodist Cemetery and the Baptist Cemetery was purchased straight ening the line between the two.

John H. Truitt, who was clerk of the Salisbury Association for more than fifty years, passed away on January 29, 1939. He never missed an Association in that time.

Elder Ker passed away in February of 1946. He served for nearly twenty-three years. The following pastor accepting the call was Elder D. V. Spangler. This was unanimously agreed in June of 1946.

Lights were installed in the church in August of 1947. They enabled the church to hold night meetings.

At the December meeting in 1947, Sister Maude Truitt was appointed clerk pro tem.

Mr. Horace Payne, a friend of the

church, had an oil furnace installed in the coal furnace. When he died, he left the church a legacy. Since that time, there have been many gifts and donations which have enabled us to make the improvements for the benefit of the church which we so greatly appreciated.

After Sister Martha Holloway's death Sister Maude Truitt was appointed clerk.

In December of 1959, the church called Elder W. D. Griffin as a supply in the absence of Elder Spangler, due to poor health.

At the December, 1964 meeting, Elder Spangler asked to be relieved of his duties as pastor. The request was granted. He had been pastor since January of 1947. The church voted to call Elder Griffin who accepted.

The church properties were surveyed and several plots were combined. A deed was made to that effect and recorded in the Court House.

In September of 1968, a new gas furnace was installed to heat both the auditorium and the basement.

A marble marker with the proper inscription was placed in the corner of the church.

In January of 1971, Elder W. D. Griffin tendered his resignation as pastor because of ill health.

A pool for baptizing was built in the basement of the church in January of 1971.

On July 27, of 1971, a special meeting was called with Brother Harry Ward acting as moderator to call Elder James F. Poole as pastor. The motion was made and unanimously carried. A letter of acceptance was received August 20.

A loud speaker system was installed and paid for by friends and members in October of 1972.

At the December, 1972 meeting, a motion was made and carried that a committee be formed and officials appointed to care for a perpetual fund to take care of the cemetery.

A central air-conditioning system was installed in July of 1976.

Meetings are held every third and fourth Sundays of the month and Wednesday nights between the second and third Sundays. Communion is observed the fourth Sunday in March, June, September, and December.

At present, there are thirty members. We are blessed each meeting with a good congregation made up of friends and members.

The following Deacons have served:

Zedekiah Truitt
John H. Truitt
T. B. Walters
William Pilchard
Dr. Lee Warren
Handy Truitt
Harry Ward
Billie Davis, Sr.
Merrill Beauchamp
Billy Davis, Jr.
Frank Holland

Trustees that have served are:

G. W. Mazik
John H. Truitt
A. C. Holloway
Harry Pardue
Daniel Holloway
Merrill Beauchamp
William Holloway
Handy Truitt
Frank Holland
Albert Fooks
Jesse Ward
Otho Tilghman

Compiled from minutes by:
Maude P. Truitt, Clerk,
Elsie Beauchamp, Ass't. Clerk

LETTER TO SEVERAL SISTERS

My dear Ones:

The dear Lord willing, I would like to address several of you in one letter. Most of you know each other. Some of you have never met a few I hope to address. I would like to introduce you.

First, I address a few of my home sisters who have been as mothers to me since I have been in the church: dear Sister Susie Willis, the first time I tried to address a dear one and used the name of the dear Lord, I addressed you; and Sisters Dalton, Doss, Tosh, and Tuck, you have all welcomed me in your homes and cared for me on second Sunday weekends. I want to tell you of a recent trip and some of the dear ones seen again and some met for the first time.

I attended the Salisbury Association with Sister Phyllis and Elder Raymond Goad and Sister Christine Linthicum. I had been thinking of this Association and had hoped that I would feel like driving and could go this year.

So you can imagine a little how happy I was to receive a letter from Sister Phyllis asking if I would like to go with them. My usual self-pity and cold heart disappeared and I hoped again that He who is King had been pleased to make His face to shine upon us. The days before the Association were filled with (working for a living) and doing what I could in preparation for the trip.

We arrived safely at Salisbury Church on Wednesday and greeted others before the Association met. It was good to see dear ones from "our part of the country" as well as the familiar faces in that area. Elders Spangler, C. Turner, H. Jones, C. B. Davis, Hollingsworth, L. Key, Godwin and Goad were present and spoke bringing good news. You see, my dear little ones, I live in many worlds. In one I hear the precious name of the Savior we hope to love used in unbecoming and unloving ways. And in another world I hear His name set forth, lifted high, looked up to, revered. Now in this world I sit quiet with no desire to be another place; I hear good news. I see love. You see love. Do you see it so much that it has become commonplace to you? No, but don't we become afraid and faint that we have ever been included in that one hope of heaven and immortal glory. Yes, little ones, these Elders brought good news.

Now I want to introduce someone to you. This little sister greeted us with "I want you with me." What sweet words. I had met and been in the home of this little one a few years ago. She had not been baptized at that time, but her interests were well recognizable. It was good to see Sister Elsie Husten and my heart yet warms with the love she and her husband, Brother Husten showed us. When the Association closed its afternoon session, this sister and her husband took us to a nearby shopping center. We did some looking and a little buying. All ladies like to "go to the store." We returned to the church for supper and services after. I saw and spoke with two sisters in whose homes I had been on previous trips. After services Sister Husten wanted to take us to visit another sister. We enjoyed this visit very much. She had been with the church for about one year, and spoke about the journey she has traveled. You know, Brother Simpson has made that expression mean much to me. He speaks often of the journey we are on. I say "we", I don't know, but I hope I am on that journey that leads to rest eternal. We went on to Sister Husten's to rest in her home and her love. Yes, we rest in the love of one

another from time to time. I have often rested in your love. You know, many have expressed words to me to the effect that I travel so far to come to church. Well, my dear little ones, I feel that I could not have traveled so often if you had not given me your love to rest in. We enjoyed being with Brother and Sister Husten and returned to church next morning. The Association continued with preaching good to the ear and love good to the heart. We left Salisbury Association after lunch on Thursday and drove to Richmond for the night.

Now this trip continues to the Black Creek Association. We left Richmond Friday morning and drove to the church just outside of Rocky Mount, N. C. Elder Holland, with Elder Raines, alternate, preached the introductory sermon (both speaking). I did not remember hearing Elder Holland before and had only seen Elder Raines a few times. Both were blessed to preach to our enjoyment, and when Elder W. E. Turner was making announcements about lunch, he spoke of these two yoke brothers in such a lovely, brotherly manner, expressing thankfulness for them. It gave me a special feeling of "being at home" to hear him speak of them in this way. You know, Elder Tench has always spoken with much love toward the young Elders in our Association. How good it is to see love. The preaching continued to be God-honoring and soul-cheering.

Now I want to introduce someone else. I was later told that nineteen were gathered in this home for supper on Friday night. I understood that these two dear ones had recently moved into their new home, formerly traveling good distances to go to church. I had met this couple before, but had not "been in their presence," so to speak. They attended our Association this year. Sister Sylvia and Brother Harold Pittman. I don't know how to say—except I believe they love the dear ones. You know, Sister Susie, I told you in that first letter long ago who are the "dear ones" to me. I enjoyed being in this home and have often thought of the many seen that night.

We spent Friday night with dear ones you all know. Tilly and Henry Jones. I have been blessed to meet many dear ones and have been in the homes of many. There is one thing that I have seen that makes us want to be with them again. It is the love they have for each other. I was raised in a home where love was and I enjoy being with people who love one another. Brother Jones and Tilley cooked us such a good, big breakfast on Saturday morning. We enjoyed being with them too. And back to the Association we went on Saturday morning. At lunch time when Sister Phyllis said they would be leaving for home I felt a little lost. I wasn't sure what I should do but went back into the building and heard more preaching. I left about 3, p. m. and began the trip back home, alone again for the first time in four days. I had no trouble finding the right road and the dear Lord, I hope, made me think again "I am with you." The little lost feeling went away and since that time I have had many pleasant thoughts of the dear ones about whom I have tried to tell you.

My mother had an expression she used when I was slow about doing something: "It is high time" you do so and so, well, "It is high time" I write letters saying: I am safely home, I enjoyed being with you and thank you for your kindness. These I would like to address to Siters Phyllis, Elsie, Sylvia and Tilly. I have not been able to separate any of

this to any one of you. I think of you all together. Please accept a copy of this letter as my way of saying thank you. May the dear Lord bless us and keep us. You are all dear ones to me.

With love, I hope.

Agnes Reid Pickral

MY EXPERIENCE

Dearly Beloved:

It is my desire to discuss the Lord's goodness in dealing with me by His mercy, bringing me to rest in Christ and guiding my footsteps in the way of truth. When this article is completed, I hope the reader will be impressed to say, "Truly the Lord HATH done great things." (Psa. 126:3).

When I was about eleven years old, I was persuaded to join a Missionary Baptist church although I had little interest in what I was doing. Having known nothing of the mighty conviction of the Holy Spirit, I had no spiritual interest in the things of God but thought I could casually drift into the kingdom.

About four years later, it pleased God to send a preacher our way who delivered his sermons in a very straightforward manner and easily held my attention. I bought a Bible from him and from that time I became very religious and started searching for the Truth. Reading the Bible constantly, listening to radio preachers and taking religious magazines, my self-righteousness really grew, although I sincerely wanted to know what was right.

In early 1954 (when I was fifteen years old), the Lord brought me in contact with an old-time preacher who strongly emphasized the sovereign grace of God and the need of an experimental acquaintence with the truth. This was all very strange to me, but somehow I liked it and listened very intently. By the fall of 1955, the Holy Spirit was uncovering my cloak of self-righteousness and I admitted that I was lost and never had any true faith. My eyes were being opened by His grace to see the truth and it came with effectual power to my heart, so that I could not resist! How gracious the Lord is to bring a sinner to face his miserable condition.

What could I do? The Lord brought home to my heart that I was separated from Him, and had no claim upon Him, no right to expect Him to hear my prayers. Prior to that time, How self-righteous I had been! Proud of my religious knowledge and what I knew about the Bible (or thought I knew), but now I must admit I had nothing, no righteousness, no faith, no goodness!

Up until that time I had kept a regular praying spot beside an oak tree on our mountain. I was like the Pharisee in the temple (Luke 18). I stood and prayed thus with myself: "I thank Thee that I am not as others." But now the Holy Spirit showed me that self-righteousness, and I went to that same praying spot to pronounce judgment on all the former prayers, asking God to forgive me for those works of my own righteousness which were "filthy rags" in His sight. I cried to Him to reveal the righteousness of Christ to me.

Then the truth became clearer that I was totally lost, depraved, destitute of the love of God. In me was nothing but that which God hates—self-righteousness. Oh what a horrible state this is! How many religious people are in that condition but know it not.

Searching the New Testament and Psalms, I went to the mountain daily.

One day I found a verse which served as a beacon all the days of my Egyptian darkness. It was Psalm 116:13: "I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord." By the help of the Lord, I would never turn back from seeking Him. Brethren, let me tell you, my heart was determined that day! Come what may, I must call on the Lord!

Graciously the Lord brought me to see another truth — the sovereignty of God. Psalm 115:3: "Our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased." Rom. 9:15-16 said: "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." These truths brought me a sense of hope instead of despair—though I knew my utter unworthiness and the impossibility to save myself and likewise confessed the Lord might justly pass me by—because He was sovereign; He *could* deliver me, and I had a little hope that in His own time He would. I must wait on Him!

The natural joys of living faded away. I struggled along, like Christian in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, but I could not rid myself of my burden. Many times I said aloud "I believe, help my unbelief!" My last thought each night upon my bed was my guilty distance from God, and when I awakened the next morning it was, "I'm lost, doomed, separated from God." It was my fear then—and has often been since—that those convictions were not deep enough to be the true experiences of an elect soul.

At times those experiences would seem to fade and I drifted, feeling I was not at peace with God, yet less concerned. With a hope that *someday* God would reveal His Son to me, and knowing I could not help Him in the work, the sense of urgency was diminished. So I drifted. I grew so cold in 1959 and 1960 that I doubted the very existence of God. But I thank the Lord that late in the year of 1960 He again powerfully appeared in my behalf, laying me low in the dust. Several Scripture promises were impressed upon my heart and the Lord revealed His love to me in an effectual manner, if I am not deceived.

Isaiah 41:17: "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them: I the Lord of Israel will not forsake them." This was a constant companion. Also Jeremiah 15:20 brought great comfort to my heart. "I am with thee to save thee and deliver thee." Psa. 32:8 said, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." What a gracious God to give these blessed promises to a sinner like me! They were not just words in the Book, but became impressed upon my heart as the very word of God to my soul.

Also I began to realize that the Lord had not only favored me by His grace, but that His mercy had wrought redemption on my behalf. "He sent redemption unto His people" (Psa. 111:9—I began to hope that He included me! Then in John chapter 17 where the intercessory work of our Lord is told, I found a revelation of His heart in verse 20: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." A little hope welled up in my heart that I was included in this number for whom Christ prayed! Christ had said on another occasion that the Father heard Him always and if He included me in His intercessory prayer, then I *must* be saved! Never did I experience a dramatic experience — as

many can testify—but a gradual increase of this precious "hope." "Oh what a wonder that Jesus loved me!" I shall never cease to revel in that love and the experimental way He brought me from the bondage of sin, death and self-righteousness into the precious hope wherein now I stand. "Salvation is of the Lord." (Jonah 2:9. I have no other testimony. no other experience, no other hope

"Here I raise mine Ebenezer;
Hither by Thy help I'm come,
And I hope by Thy good pleasure
Safely to arrive at home."

Since my early experience in my late teens and early twenties, the Lord has granted many manifestations of His grace and love. He has daily borne with my sad failures and has kept me in the dust tasting of the wormwood and the gall, as He has been pleased to reveal more and more of the depths of depravity that abides in my heart. This has kept me from a shallow easy-going, parrot-like profession of "I know I'm saved!" It has constantly made this man to fear and to tremble.

"Prone to wonder, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it,
Seal it for Thy courts above."
—R. Robinson

Soon after the Lord had given me a sensible hope in His mercy, it was my desire to publicly proclaim His great name. So I bought time on a radio station in North Carolina and preached for one year with what was called the "Message of Truth". At the end of that year, I was called into the Army, and later stationed in Texas where I met like-minded believers. It was also in the Lone Star State where God had placed the girl who would be my faithful wife! His mercies were so abundant while we were in Texas, but soon I was returned to the Carolinas and we continued in fellowship with a few brethren who knew the truth of God's sovereign grace and whose experiences were similar to my own. My desire during those years was to preach the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, but the Lord was not yet ready for me to do that. He seemingly kept me hedged about so that I could do very little. During that time I was to collect a splendid library and to read after many of the old writers. The great hymns of the church had always blessed my heart, and I began to learn more about the hymn-writers, finding many of them had experienced afflictions and deliverances similar to mine and had believed the same things I believed. John Newton's works were some very precious fare indeed, along with the writings of Augustus Toplady, William Cowper, Joseph Hart, John Bunyan, etc.

Free Offer, Means, Gospel Regeneration.

During the past few years many of the Calvinistic brethren in this country have been advocating what is called the "free offer of Christ." This was something I could never square with my own personal experience, nor did it fit in with my concept of salvation as an inward work of grace wrought in the heart of a sinner. More than that, when I searched the Bible such an idea was foreign to New Testament Gospel preaching. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself never offered Himself to an indiscriminate multitude, but He invited the heavy laden (Matt. 11: 28). Thinking I needed more light on the subject, I kept quiet since many respected brethren and many great Puritan and sovereign grace writers had held such a view.

God who is rich in mercy was pleased to give me the light I needed in a definite way. While reading and meditating on the subject of Gospel preaching and regeneration, the Holy Spirit very defi-

nitely pinpointed 1 Corinthians 2:14: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Quickly I turned to Romans 8:5-8: "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Many times I had used Scriptures to enforce the truth of man's total depravity and need of divine quickening. But never did I see what I saw that day!

The truth of unconditional regeneration dawned on my heart; the truth that the gospel is not the means to regenerate the spiritually dead sinner, but is only for the regenerate child of grace. If the gospel is one of the things of the Spirit of God—and truly it is, for no man can really preach the gospel except with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven. If the gospel is one of the things of the Spirit of God—and truly it is, for Paul said, "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after men. For I neither received it of men, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:11, 12); "Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 2:11b). If the gospel is one of the things of the Spirit of God—and truly it is, for the gospel tells the glad tidings of Christ "who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God" (Heb. 9:14). If the gospel is one of the things of the Spirit of God, then that natural man will never receive the gospel! Then your theory of the gospel as a *means* or tool in regeneration must fall flat! How can that which the natural man never takes in be the instrument by which he is to be born again? Brethren, such is the foolishness and weakness of the theories of men! Although firmly believing in the sovereignty of God, particular redemption, the effectual calling and all the doctrines of grace—how many times had I tried to tell people they must receive man's preaching of the gospel for only by it could they ever hope to be born again! Ah, brethren, the work of rengeration is His work exslusively!

Turning to John chapter three, we have the interview of our Lord with Nicodemus the ruler of the Jews, perhaps the main Scripture passage on the new birth. In dealing with the religionist, did Jesus ever *offer* Himself to the will of Nicodemus for "immediate reception or rejection?" No, He impressed upon him the fact: "You must be born again!" It is a work coming from outside you, Nicodemus. You are passive, must be acted upon. "You must be born again!" Nicodemus (like our free-offer and gospel regeneration Baptists of today) thought he could participate in the work. But the Lord Jesus is stronger: "You cannot even see the kingdom of God until you are born again, born from above. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." And our Lord Jesus Christ proceeded to show how God's Spirit works like the wind, apart from any human agency whatever. You cannot bring the wind (the Spirit) upon the scene through your offers; you cannot hinder Him by your refusal to give tithes and send out

missionaries. He moves upon God's elect when and where and how He pleases. "Thou canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is *everyone* that is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8). Our Lord Jesus Christ told Nicodemus the truth about this work of regeneration, but *even HE* did not regenerate him with His message. He said, "It is a birth that must come direct to your soul from heaven above!" Brethren, that is all I am contending for in this article. Please hear me out.

In Scripture the regeneration of God's elect is likened to three things: 1. Creation. 2. A birth. 3. A resurrection. Now if you will show me how the thing being created can contribute to its own creation —show me how the thing being born can contribute to its own delivery—show me how a dead thing can contribute to its own quickening—then I will yield the point. In the original creation of this universe there could have been no human means involved. God Almighty spoke and His Word gave existence to all things and that is what has happened to every regenerate soul: "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6). Where is any human means in that Scripture, beloved? God did it all. In the natural birth of a child there is no way that baby can come forth in response to speaking or suggestions made by outside agents. He comes forth as nature does its wondrous work, nature which is God's creation. When it comes to the resurrection of the dead, where is the free-offer preacher who will try to help God in that work? In John chapter five our Lord who had preached the truth to Nicodemus, again shows the unuconditional nature of His regenerating work, "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will" (John 5:21). Contrary to our dispensational friends, that is the "first resurrection" and all God's elect must experience this resurrection from spiritual death unto life in Jesus. That is what it means to be "born again." Then our Lord told about the literal resurrection from the graves on the last day (in verses 28, 29).

In the case of Lazarus, beloved, we can see where our Lord sovereignly spoke the word direct to his soul that brought him back to life. Then when he had come forth from that tomb, Jesus used human means to loose him from his grave clothes and set him free. Read John 1:43, 44. Was it not so in our own experience of grace? God Himself spoke the word that brought life, then one or more of His faithful servants in preaching this glorious gospel became the instrument to instruct us and lead us in the way of grace.

In the resurrection of our Lord, can we possibly see any human means in the process? Now His disciples did not raise that body; that body did not raise itself. God Almighty through the quickening Spirit brought His body forth. So it is in the spiritual birth of every sinner. So it will be in the bodily resurrection at the last day. It is all of God! "Salvation is of the Lord" (Jonah 2:9). Just like Jonah in the belly of that whale was said to be dead—what preacher or human means could avail for him? The Lord God spoke directly to the fish. He speaks directly to every sinner He ever saves. We are not talking about a little mental concept for salvation which might do if we were nice people. We are talking about

life for those who are dead in trespasses and in sins, for those who cannot help God save them, for those who are "enemies. . . by wicked works" (Col. 1:21).

Get your doctrine of regeneration from the apostle Paul—don't rely on the Puritans, the free-offer Calvinists, or any other uninspired human being however sound he may be on many things. Notice: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1), and then Paul describes our former life, how we served the god of this world, walked according to the course of this world, had our desires totally on the things of the flesh, and "were by nature children of wrath, even as others." Then he will tell you what made the difference: "But God" (vs. 4). "But God," says Paul, "who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:4-6). What the apostle Paul will not tell you is that man's preaching or "offering the gospel" was needed to accomplish the quickening of our soul with Christ! And if you will compare Paul's words in Colossians chapter two, you will see that it was *Christ* in whom "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" who accomplished the redemption *and* regeneration, the first quickening of the soul into life. It is not accomplished through preaching. Preaching is surely necessary as is Bible reading and all other gifts that the Lord of the church has provided for our benefit. Bible reading is of benefit to the child of God alone—the Bible is to God's people, not Satan's! All the Epistles are plainly addressed to churches, to brethren in Christ, to those called to be saints. Not a book in the Bible addressed to the alien sinner informing him how to become a child of grace! The Book of Revelation is plainly sent by John to the seven churches, yet so many professed Bible students send it out to "whosoever will," telling men they can come and get life if they want it!

PROBLEMS AND OBJECTIONS.

Let us now look at some Scriptures whereby men object to what I am presently teaching. 1 Peter 1:23: "Being born again. . . by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever," is said to prove that the written word and the preaching of that written word is the means of our regeneration. If you will look closely at that expression "Word of God," you will see that not every time does it mean the Bible itself. The "Word of God" came to Jonah, to Isaiah, to Jeremiah, to Daniel, etc.,—does that mean this black-backed book we call the Bible came to them? Does that mean a message from some preacher came to them? Ah, no! It means God *directly* communicated His Word to their hearts. So it is in our "being born again." This is the incorruptibe, life-giving Word He speaks directly to our souls, as in Jn. 5:25, 2 Cor. 4:6, the case of Lazarus, the Original Creation, etc. 1 Peter 1:25: "But the Word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you," does not say the the gospel *conveys* this Word but "preaches" (describes, explains, tells) this Word!"

(To be continued)

Elgin, Oregon

Dear Elder Spangler:

Enclosed is check for $10.00 for which I would like to send the *Signs* to two of my children at the addresses shown. . .

I want to tell you how disappointed we all were that you did not get to visit us out here last summer. I do hope Sister Spangler is well and you can make the trip next year. The last time you were here I wasn't able to be at the meeting, but had planned on going this last August. Our meetings are so far apart, and such a few of us, I wonder sometimes how long we may be able to hold meetings. Brother Preston is so wonderful to come to preach to so few in number. We love him very much. He is everything a called preacher should be, and has liberty in declaring the whole counsel of God.

I would love for some of the brethren to give their views on Tithing. I have thought of this Scripture so often—also Melchizedek.

I was just reading the seventh chapter of Hebrews, and cannot think this would be money. Christ said when asked about giving thithes, "Render to Caesar that that is Caesar's, and unto God the things of God." Also, Levi paid tithes unto Melchizedek when in the loins of his father, when Abraham paid tithes unto Melchizedek.

I have thought that all the children of God, as they are typically in the body of Christ, might have spiritually paid tithes when Christ lay down His life for His chosen vessels. I sincerely hope that someone has a mind to write on this.

My eyes are very poor, but I have a Bible with large print, and with my magnifying glass can read the *Signs* and my my Bible, so have done a lot of reading, since now I don't do too much work. I have stacks of old *Signs*, which are years old. They are such wonderful reading.

I have a record of your sermon on the Ark, and have listened to it many times. Am thankful you had such wonderful liberty on that subject. My prayer is that I may be enabled to sit under the sound of your voice again.

Love to you and Sister Spangler from an unworthy one, if one at all.

Elva C. Spikes

(See the September, 1976 issue of the Signs for Elder Stewart McCall's article on Tithing.)

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EDITORIAL

IMPORTANT THINGS

Each of us use the expression, "I believe."

Do we, however conscientiously ask ourselves why we believe what we believe? Or do we believe—or profess to believe, certain things without substantial ground for believing? The things we believe and practice in everyday life are important; while the things we believe and practice in our religious life are much more important.

Are you a member of an organization called a church? If not, do you lean toward one, or another? In either case do you know what the doctrines of your organization are? Do you know your Articles of Faith? Does your church actually believe and practice its creed? Have you ever inquired into the facts of the history of your organization?

Though there are many organizations, known by different names, there is but one Church of God. There is but one foundation—Jesus Christ. The doctrine of the Church is such as He and His apostles taught; and these only, which He has caused to be recorded for us. Names mean little except to historians; while the truth means much, or should mean much to each of us. Doctrines firmly held and practiced is the test of a gospel church.

The history of each organization should show how and why it came into existence, and who was its founder; it will show whether its beginning was an attempt to reform an existing organization; whether it was the result of a "new" revelation; or whether it is founded upon rational principles, or upon the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Men have long since ceased to blush at the name "Christian." Though first given in derision to those who believed and followed a "crucified Christ," the stigma has been removed for the "ordinary professor" by the keeping alive of "smooth things, and discarding "hard" sayings. It was not so at the beginning, and it is not so now. For believers then believed all things which Jesus taught; and believers, true believers, still believe and hold fast to those same things. These things have no variations, or different shades; they are not subject to alterations to suit particular times or notions. They are eternal;—they are right for all

times or conditions. Believers are conformed to them, rather than they being conformed to believers.

If all "believers" knew the truth, and if "truth" did not take on so many variations in the professions of men, it would not be necessary to "try the spirits." But the chimericals of much of professed truth make it necessary to "beware of every wind of doctrine," and to hold fast to that only which fits the original perfectly. A searching, if prompted of the right spirit, will lay aside the "doctrines of men"; for "he that hath an ear" will hear only what the Spirit says. The Spirit displays the truth in its mysterious splendor; and at the same time brands all its would-be kindred as false.

The Scriptures contain all that God has been pleased to reveal of His eternal will and purpose. Inspired men recorded them; and the same Spirit that inspired acts also to reveal and confirm them to to whomsoever they pertain. No further revelations have been made, nor are necessary for the doctrine and order of the church, depite the claims that men make.

The simplicity of the true worship of God,—the worship in Spirit and in truth, has no attractions for "wise and prudent" men. Only babes in Christ are able to understand and rejoice in the completed and fulfilled type and shadow manner of worship, which was formerly proper, but is now comprehended in the "Simplicity that is in Christ." 2. Cor. 11:3.

We call attention to these things. If any are exercised in them they might well hear the apostle Paul when he says, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." 1 Thess. 5:21.

(Re-published from the August, 1952 Signs. The regular Editorial was not received in due time, perhaps because of the severe snow storms with much ice.—J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

Having been requested to give our view of the above text, we shall endeavor to do so with such ability as the Lord may be pleased to bless us.

This text will be found in connection with Peter's wonderful sermon on the day of Pentecost and following the addition of three thousand souls to the church. The apostles were commanded to tarry at Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high, and when Pentecost was fully come they were all of one accord in one place. Cloven tongues were given them and they declared the wonderful works of God as they were given utterance by the Holy Ghost. While they preached Jesus, and Him crucified, many were pricked in the heart by the same Spirit that moved the apostles to preach, and they cried out, saying, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Peter said unto them, Repent, every one of you, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. All them who gladly received His word were baptized. These were those of whom it is said, "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

There were many in after years who did not continue steadfastly, many departures have taken place from those days unto the present time, and such will doubtless continue while the world

stands. Such things were fore-told by Paul and other apostles, and when they come to pass it is but the fulfillment of their word. Men of your own selves shall arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. Deceivers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived; false prophets shall arise. Men also claimed to be apostles who were not. Such men attempted to exercise apostolic power, when they had no power or authority of that nature at all. Such did not then continue in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, nor do they now.

It may well be asked, What is the apostles' doctrine? In reading the second chapter of Acts it will readily be seen that salvation through Jesus Christ, the Holy One of God, was their doctrine in opposition to all legal rites and ceremonies of the law. The Jews had fully expected life eternal to come to them through the law, and had not some of them been pricked in the heart by the Holy Ghost they all would have continued in that hope and expectation. Christ, and Him crucified, has been the apostles' doctrine since their revelation of the Lamb of God. This same doctrine is now preached in many places in the world, but this doctrine embraces many things not continued in by some. Things that become sound doctrine are as nesessary to observe and preach as salvation through Jesus Christ. High-mindedness, self-exaltation, is contrary to the apostles' doctrine, but peace is according thereto. Lordship over the heritage of God is in opposition to this doctrine, but for the young to submit themselves to the older ones of the church is the commandment of the apostle. Self-will, stubbornness, is contrary to the doctrine of the apostles, but pliableness and meekness are in keeping with the doctrine. To do things in any way, regardless of the judgment and desire of the church of God, is contrary to the doctrine of Paul, who commanded that "all things be done decently and in order." To cause divisions in the house of God is not continuing in the apostles' doctrine, who exhorted the brethren to study the things that make for peace, whereby we may edify one another, also to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. To back-bite, devour a brother or brethren, is contrary to the commandment, Love one another with pure hearts fervently. All these things, and hundreds of others, are embraced in the apostles' doctrine, and it behooves those who profess godliness to take heed to them and to preach them, as it is the only way to continue in the apostles' fellowship. To depart from their doctrine means to discontinue in their fellowship. John said our fellowship is with the Father and with the Son Jesus Christ. Can one be therefore out of the fellowship of the apostles and in the fellowship of the Father and the Son at the same time? Where there are differences of opinion with reference to either doctrine or order is the fellowship? Without fellowship what is left for any one? To lose fellowship of the household of God means to lose everything in this life. How careful therefore should everyone be to continue in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. Departure means death.

The brethren mentioned in the text continued also in the breaking of bread and in prayers, The breaking of bread was in remembrance of the broken body of Christ, the Bread of Life. It seems that it was done often in those days, though Jesus gave no commandment as to how often it should be done, but said,

"As often as ye do it, do it in remembrance of me." Remembrance of Him, His love, His sufferings and death, was and is the chief things in the Supper. Thousands partook of the bread and wine without a thought of Jesus. What mockery! Yet, how can one think of Him in this special sense who has no fellowship with His sufferings? The slaying of the paschal lamb in Egypt, the eating of its flesh, with bitter herbs and unleavened bread, is altogether another thing from slaying the Lamb of God, our Paschal Lamb. Through the first the Israelites had assurance of God's protecting care and their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. Through the second the spiritual Israel of God has forgiveness of sins, deliverance from eternal death, redemption and everlasting blessedness. This is why the church continued and now continues, in the breaking of bread in remembrance of Jesus. Some churches at the present time observe the Supper four times a year, some three times, others twice, or even less, but the breaking of bread seems to have been a daily occurrence after the day of Pentecost until churches were established in order in the different parts of the world. In them we have no record of how often the bread was broken and the wine served.

The brethren continued in prayers. Peter told those to whom he preached on the day of Pentecost to pray to the Lord, peradventure He would blot out their sins in the crucifixion of Jesus. Whether any of these mentioned in our text had personally anything to do with it or not we are told, but His death was demanded by the Jewish nation, and all at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost were Jews. Doubtless all who prayed asked God's mercy upon their souls because of sin. They desired tokens by which they might know they were accepted in the Beloved. Too, no doubt, they prayed for the apostles that the word of God might have free course, and that they be delivered from evil and ungodly men. Such is the prayer today of the Lord's people. They want the gospel to be preached to the glory of God and to the comfort of His poor and afflicted people. The church, no doubt, has the same prayer in her heart for the ministers of Christ that the brethren had in the early days: that they be kept faithful, sincere and upright; that they be delivered from the snares of death, and from bringing trouble and discord into the house of God. The peace and prosperity of the church depend largely upon a faithful ministry, rightly dividing the word of truth, continuing in the doctrine and fellowship of the apostles. Paul said to Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." This is as good for each of us now in the ministry as it was for Timothy. May the Lord help us all to take heed unto our ways, that the churches be united in love, doctrine and order of His house. It is just as true now as in the days of Paul that "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." If, therefore, the churches do not want to be leavened, let them continue in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. If all brethren so continue all will be joy and peace, otherwise all will be desolation.

We hope our sister of New York who requested our views on this text will be given to understand its import whether we have touched it or not.

(Editorial by Elder H. C. Ker, January 15, 1922.)

OBITUARIES

JOSIE C. (Shearer) MITCHELL

It is with a saddened and heavy heart that I will attempt, the Lord willing, to write a memorial to my beloved mother, Josie C. (Shearer) Mitchell of Naches, Washington, who died April 29, 1976, following a 6 months illness with cancer.

She was born in Goldendale, Washington December 24, 1882, a daughter of Milton and Susan (Flanary) Shearer, who were also members of the Primitive Baptist Church established in Goldendale. She moved with her parents to the Naches Valley at the age of eleven. On October 31, 1900, she was married to Joseph J. Mitchell; and in 1904, they moved to Sunnyside in the lower Yakima Valley where they farmed for 40 years before returning to Naches to retire in 1943. My father preceded Mother in death April 17, 1962 and the eldest son, Carroll, died three weeks prior to her.

Survivors include two daughters, Mrs. Gilbert (Alma) Coate of Olympia, Wash., and Mrs. John (Lola) Emel of Seattle, Wash.; two sons, Stanley J. Mitchell of Beavercreek Ore., and Theron W. Mitchell of Centralia, Wash.; a sister, Mrs. Earl (Eunice) Robinson of Yakima, Wash.; nine grandchildren, and 21 great grandchildren.

When Mother was only six years of age, she experienced the Lord's great power in her life in which she was only able to look upward and respond "I love you Lord Jesus." In due time, she was accepted into the sweet fellowship of Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church at Naches, Washington; and was baptized by her uncle, Elder William Hess, nearly 75 years ago. Her very nature reflected her spiritual living to all who knew her. The radiance of her facial expression was evidence of the faith and trust she constantly exemplified. Mother became a pillar of strength to the members of the little church in Naches where fewer than twenty members now remain. Since no church edifice exists there, the meetings are held in the members' homes and Mother's was one meeting place until her death. Such precious memories will ever remain with those of us who are left to have known the sweet fellowship with her blessed company. It has been a special joy in recent years when visiting elders could make the trip to visit our little flock. Among those who have come are Elds. David Spangler, J. L. Smith, Winfrey, W. D. Griffin, and James Hollandsworth.

Mother had an astonishing memory and up to her final illness, she could recite poetry for an hour from her memorized selections. Her knowledge of the Scriptures was common knowledge even among members of other churches, so she was often invited to lead in the Bible interpretation. Truly, Mother was a good wife, a dear mother, a wonderful neighbor and friend in a completely selfless manner. She has left an indelible legacy of love and devotion to those who knew her. One of her happiest experiences was the opportunity of spending ten days visiting the churches in Virginia and North Carolina in June, 1967 when her grandson, Stuart Read accompanied her. Many of you in those areas will no doubt remember her visit.

The members of the Naches Presbyterian Church asked to have her final services held there where her many friends could attend. The church was full to overflowing with loved ones from near and far. Elder Ben Preston gave a beautiful eulogy and Mr. Donald MacNeil gave the memorial meditational message entitled "Go Forward and Through." taken from Exodus chapters 14 and 15. The minister knew Mother well and as a longtime friend and he knew her love for the Scriptures. The 23rd Psalm was one of her favorites as was one Mother often used to cheer and bolster the spirits of others; and likewise, it was a source of strength to her.

TRUST

When you live every hour by the grace of God's power,
And know He will guide you aright,
Then day in and day out faith is stronger than doubt,
And faith puts your worries to flight.
When you walk down life's road, and in spite of your load,
Rejoice every step of the way.
In your heart you will feel God is present and real,
And not untold eons away.
To believe with sweet trust; and not trust 'cause you must,
Is faith born of truth you have known,
That all things will pale and then crumble and fail
Before God fails one of His own.

—Jon Gilbert

Mother had reached the sunset of her years on earth. She had yearned to be called home beyond this vale of tears. She often expressed her hope that on that glorious resurrection morn she might be chosen to sit at the Master's feet and to sing His praises for all the blessings He had bestowed upon her. A mother and a friend like she was is more than a memory. Her influence for good will continue to live in the hearts and minds of those who knew her—young and old alike.

Written by her daughter who yearns to live according to the life she exemplified, God willing. Alma F. Coate

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IN LOVING MEMORY OF
JOSIE CHRISTINA SHEARER MITCHELL

Who passed away April 29, 1976, at Yakima, Wash., at the age of ninety-three. In her early adulthood she was baptized into the Primitive Baptist Church, and was a loyal and faithful member of Pleasant Grove Church, Naches, Washington.

Her abiding faith and trust in our dear Lord was forever unyielding, as evidenced by the following poem, which was revealed to her in a dream after she had experienced several seemingly unsurmountable material problems:

"My child, why art thou so downcast,
Why is your heart so heavy laden,
Have you not faith in Jesus Christ,
Is not your home in heaven?
The pillars of this huge great wall,
The crumbling of this house of clay,
Held in the hollow of God's hand,
Shall last till everlasting day.
'Tis God's command, it should be thus;
And when the time is given,

This dark cloud will be lifted
And you shall enter heaven."

She was ever a shining, guiding light and is sorely missed by her family and many, many friends.

A daughter,

Lola E. Emel

(I was blessed to know and love Sister Josie Mitchell since 1963. I visited her that year in her home at Naches, Washington. I have never known one who appeared to live nearer her beloved Lord than she. She battled with cancer for several years, and when she took her bed, realizing that the end was not far away, she called us long distance to tell us what was approaching. Her attitude was as one looking forward to the fulfillment of her blessed hope.

She often used the expression, "Oh Joy," when she was blessed to meet her loved ones, or hear the gospel preached.

Her memory will remain with my wife and I while we sojourn)—D. V. S.

HATTIE HILL SIMMONS

God in His foreknowledge and determinate counsel has called another dear sister from our midst. May we be given to bow in humble submission to His holy and righteous will. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Psa. 116:15.

Sister Hattie Elizabeth Hill Simmons was born to Ronald and Susan Holden Hill may 22, 1895 and died October 23, 1976, making her stay on earth 81 years, 5 months, and one day. She was married to W. E. Simmons Sr., May 5, 1918 by Elder J. W. Wyatt. To this union were born two daughters, Inez Hobson of Harrisburg, N. C., and Virginia Carper of Long Beach, Miss., two sons, W. E. Simmons, Jr., and Andrew R. Simmons, both of High Point, N. C., Five grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

She united with Mount Lebanon Church, Durham County, N. C., at the age of seventeen and was baptized by Elder J. W. Wyatt. After her marriage she came to Bush Arbor Church by letter in 1919. She walked in love and fellowship with the church about sixty-four and a half years. She died being old and full of days, Job 42:17.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Wallis A. Smith and Elder D. A. O'Bryant at Sechrest Funeral Chapel. Her body was laid to rest in the Floral Garden Park Cemetery, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, there to be with Him, be like Him and be forever satisfied.

Be it resolved that one copy be placed on the Church records, one sent to the family, and one copy to the Signs of the Times for publication. Done by order of Bush Arbor Church conference, December 11, 1976.

Written by T. I. Rice.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Deacon Earl S. Rudd, Clerk.

SISTER MATTIE WRIGHT RICE

"What more can one say than to you he hath said." We believe the gracious Lord of Lords spoke His perfect peace with His voice of joy in the humble heart of our precious sister, Mattie Rice, and she was comforted in her afflictions.

On October, 17, 1976 the sting of death was over. Her heartaches and sorrows shall be no more, for she desired to behold the beauty of the Lord; and her countenance manifested peace with Him, a blessing beyond words to describe.

Sister Matt, as we called her, was born January 4, 1890, in Caswell County, North Carolina almost within the shadows of the church at Bush Arbor where she was blessed to come home to her friends in July of 1924. Fifty-two of her eighty-six years in this time world was spent in the love and fellowship of this people, with whom her love was mutual.

We mourn not as those who have no hope, but kindly accept our loss with thankful hearts for the example of humbleness the Lord blessed us to behold in our midst.

On December 26, 1909, she was united in marriage with William S. Rice. This union was blessed with a lovely family of six children who are left to mourn the loss of a precious mother's love and tender care. One who put forth every effort for their welfare after the death angel called their beloved husband and daddy home on December 10, 1938.

May the love of God abide with these precious ones: Annie Cheek and Mrs. Nettie Rainey of Route 1, Elon Colloge, North Carolina; Herbert Rice of Burlington, N. C.; Marvin Rice of Burlington, N. C., Brother David Rice of Yanceyville, N. C., and Clyde Rice of Route 1, Elon College. Sisters: Sister Minnie Simmons, Route 1, Elon College, N.C., and Mrs. Mollie Truitt, Reidsville, N. C.

Sister Rices' funeral was conducted at her home church by her pastor, Elder Wallis Smith assisted by Elder Donald Smith. She was laid to rest that peaceful rest in the church cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, and the memories of her will not soon be forgotten.

We have a blessed promise by One who cannot lie, that Him to know is life everlasting will come again and receive unto Himself every jewel of His mercy, that where I am there ye may be also.

Written by request of the church at Bush Arbor by Clifton Robertson. Read and approved in their conference meeting January 8, 1977.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Brother Earl Rudd, Clerk.

LILLIE STADLER PAGE

It has pleased our heavenly Father to call from our midst, Sister Lillie Stadler Page, at the age of 83. She was born in Caswell County N. C., October 4, 1893, to the late John Anderson Stadler and Annie Eliza Walker Stadler.

Sister Page married John Robert Page in December, 1910. To this union two daughters were born: Eva Page King (deceased), and Grace Page Boswell who survives; four grandchildren and eight great grandchildren. After her husband passed away in 1930, she resided with her daughter Eva and her family until Eva passed away in 1972, then she lived with her daughter Grace and her husband. She passed away November 8, 1976, after several years of failing health and over three weeks of critical illness.

Sister Page joined Bush Arbor Church in

August 1937, and was baptized by the late Elder W. C. King. She attended the meetings as long as her health permitted.

She was a cheerful and lovely person; she loved people. She always greeted her family and friends with a warm embrace and a kiss. One of her greatest pleasures was receiving visitors and talking with them. 1 John 3:14: "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." She suffered a lot in the last few years, and had to use a walker to walk, but she was blessed to bear her afflictions well.

Her daughters gave her the very best of care in their lovely homes; they and their families loved and respected her. But we feel that God loved her more, and our loss is her eternal gain. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to her family, and may God's richest blessings be theirs.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Wallis Smith and Elder Donald Smith, at Bush Arbor where she was buried beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the coming of the Lord.

Written in love and humbleness, by Sister Gladys Page, as requested by Bush Arbor Church in conference, December 11, 1976. One copy to be sent to the family; one be placed on our church record; and one be sent to the Signs of the Times.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Deacon Earl Rudd, Clerk.

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst a dear brother, Lonnie Strickland. He was born September 9, 1892, and died November 19, 1976, making his stay on earth 84 years. He was blessed to join our church on July 1, 1956.

Brother Lonnie was faithful to his church and God blessed him with health to attend most every meeting until his death. He was always humble, and forever praising his God for all blessings. Brother Lonnie was a great believer in salvation by grace. He will be missed by all who knew him; as to know him was to love him.

Therefore, be it resolved:

1. That we send our sympathy to his wife, and trust God will bless her to continue on without him. 2. That we, the church, feel that our loss is his eternal gain, and he is resting with our Savior in peace and without pain.

3. That three copies of this Resolution be made and one sent to his wife, one sent to the Signs of the Times for publication, and one to be placed in the church records.

This done by order of conference at our December meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk.

BRYANT KELLUM

It is with a bowed head and sad heart that I attempt to write the obituary of our beloved Brother Bryant Kellum, whose soul departed from his fading tabernacle June 1, 1976, to be with the heavenly Father. He was a member at North East Church from February 18, 1960 until his death.

Brother Kellum was born March 12, 1878, making his stay on earth 98 years, 2 months and 19 days. He married Sue Henderson Mar. 27, 1901, who passed away February 15, 1960. To this union were born four daughters and two sons: Mrs. Della Kellum; Mrs. Nellie M. Gray; Mrs. Beulah Shipley; Mrs. Dorothy Welion; Norman and Herman Kellum.

He had several grandchildren and some great grandchildren, and many friends.

Brother Kellum had a great zeal and love for the truth and was a regular attendant as long as his health permitted him. Our church has lost a dearly beloved member. We, the church feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

His funeral was conducted by Elder J. T. Prescott and Elder Robert Lyliston. He was laid to rest in the Maysville Cemetery to await that glorious morning to see his blessed Savior whom he loved so well.

This being written by request of the church in conference, one copy being sent to the family, one sent to the Signs of the Times for publication, and one to the church record.

Elder J. T. Prescott, Moderator
Lewis J. Sammons, Clerk.

HENRY AYLMER PATTERSON

This man came of a robust and energetic stock, and like his father before him, was among the hardest working of men, and one of the very best farmers I have known.

He was a man of great physical strength and endurance, and these he put to good use throughout his life-time, being blessed of God to provide an ample living for himself and family on the same farm where he spent his entire life.

His parents, both Primitive Baptists, were the late W. A. and Nancy (Kennedy) Patterson, his father having served efficiently and honorably as deacon in Liberty Hill Church, near Farmerville, Louisiana, for a goodly number of years.

He was born March 9, 1894. He lived exactly 80 years, 6 months, and 16 days, passing suddenly away in bed, near 10 p. m., September 25, 1974.

The Lord certainly gave him a faithful and devoted companion, the former Rosa Rhodes, sister to the late Elder R. W. Rhodes. They were joined in marriage by my father, the late Elder W. K. Smith, in our home, December 18, 1917, and the dear Lord surely blessed them with a mutually happy and godly relationship, covering a period of almost fifty-seven years.

He also blessed them with seven children, three sons and four daughters: Rayoule Patterson, Lake Providence, La.;Henry Patterson, Lafayette La.; Carl Patterson, deceased in July, 1976, Farmerville, La.; Mrs. Chloe Pugh, Springhill, La.; Mrs. Mary Ruth Futch, Arcadia, La.; Mrs. Annette Wade, Famerville, La.; Mrs. Marie McTernen, Peoria, Ill.; also twenty-eight grandchilden and five great grandchildren. His sister, the only survivor of his father's large family, Mrs. Ressie McDougald, resides at Marion. La.

Though Aylmer never united with the visible church, there are many, including the writer, who feel that he was a member of the church trumphant, embracing the saved of all ages.

In more ways than one, he, I believe, was made a blessing to the church. This surely was the case, I feel, with reference to his readiness, with that marvelous bass voice, with which his maker endowed him, to bass the dear old hymns at church meetings. That outstanding, wonderful, pleasing voice will be

happily remembered doubtless by many, for a long time to come.

He was a plain, simple, straight forward and morally upright man, with very little, if any time, for the vain and frivolous things that charm many.

But this excellent man is gone—gone from us, but not from the Lord. Rather, we believe, he has departed to "be with Christ"—which is "far better." Phil. 1:24.

May these words, under God, prove a comfort to his sad and lonely, though reconciled wife, and to all his dear family; also to the many friends and loved ones who still so miss him, and who were so truly fond of him.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder W. W. Hudson, assisted by David E. Turner and George Jones in the Liberty Hill Church house. The body was laid to rest in the adjoining cemetery to await that day of all days, the glorious resurrection morn.

Written at the request of my life-long friend, and dear sister in Christ, Sister Rosa Patterson. May God richly bless you all.

(Elder) John Lee Smith

BROTHER BRADY TART

God saw fit to call from our midst the beloved Brother Brady Tart to his eternal home. He was the son of Eulas and Betty Johnston Tart. He was born May 3, 1904. He departed from this world on June 11, 1976, making his stay on earth 73 years. Brother Tart united with Reedy Prong Church on August 26, 1932. He was a failful member and deacon as long as his health permitted him to be. He married Lily Barefoot on October 8, 1927. She was also a faithful member of Reedy Prong Church. Brother and Sister Tart had born to their family 3 children: one daughter, Amelda, and two sons, Lonnie Franklin and James Layton who are all living. Sister Tart passed away on July 17, 1941. Brother Tart was a good husband and father. He kept his children together after her death.

Later, he was married to Josephine Lee on October 19, 1946. Then to his family was born one son, and another son was adopted. Both are living now. Brother Tart was the oldest of eleven children in his family. Brother Tart's body was at the Skinner and Drew Funeral Home until one hour before the serivce. He lay in state at Reedy Prong Church where his funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder William David Godwin.

He is survived by his wife, Josephine Tart; one daughter, Amelda Jackson; and four sons, Lonnie Franklin of the home, James Layton of Pine Level, Gerald and William in Goldsboro. His three surviving sisters are Mrs. Loureta Williams and Mrs. Pearl Lee of Benson, and Mrs. Evelyn Darden of Dunn. His four surviving brothers are Cicero of Durham, Allen, Earl, and Rufus all of Dunn. Three brothers are deceased. Seven grandchildren also survive.

The Church at Reedy Prong extends their heartfelt sympathy to the family and to his loved ones. Brother Tart was laid to rest in the Evergreen Memorial Cemetery on Rt.2, Princeton, N. C.

A request of the church is for a copy of this Resolution be recorded in the chuch book at Reedy Prong Church and a copy sent to Brother Tart's family and a copy sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Respectfully submitted.

Thelma Smith, Comittee.

BROTHER DAVID BYNUM

It is with heavy heart that we report the death of Brother David Bynum. He was born on March 18, 1880. He was married to Ella Lively in 1903. They came to the Hunt Co., Texas area in 1919 and he became a member of the Mt. Zion Church that year. He passed away on February 26, 1976, at the age of 96.

He was survived by his wife and one son, Clarence Bynum of the Dixon Community; three daughters, Mrs. Bessie Phillips of Greenville, Mrs. Jessie Barrow of Lone Oak, and Mrs. Bertha Phillips of Lone Oak; two brothers, Claudis Bynum and Alton Bynum; three sisters, Mrs. Ora Campbell, Mrs. Dora Master, and Mrs. Ioma Hill; nine grandchildren; and 28 great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at Coker-Mathhews-Peters Funeral Home in Greenville, Tex., and burial was in Simmons Cemetery next to Mt. Zion Church.

He was a fine and faithful member. Although unable to attend church regularly in his later years because of health, he was held in very high esteem and regard by fellow brothers and sisters.

The Lord in His infinite wisdom blessed Brother Bynum with a long and fruitful life. His passing left an empty place in all our lives.

Submitted in hope. Derrell White, Clerk

MABLE WALKER HARRELSON

The hearts of many, and especially Pleasant Grove Church, were saddened on October 10, 1976, by the passing of Sister Mable Walker Harrelson.

A native of Caswell County. She was born April 13, 1888 to the late Tom and Mary Enoch Walker, making her stay on earth 87 years. She marriad Pete Harrelson March 9, 1918, who preceded her in death February 16, 1936. To this union there were nine children born, who survive: Mrs. Herman Walker, Mrs. Aubrey Simmons, Mrs. Geoffrey McKinney, Mrs. Hazel McKinney, Mrs. James Clayton, Mrs. Ernest Oakley, Mrs. Vernon Stowe, Emmitt Harrelsan, Pete Harrelson and 28 grandchildren. Three sisters, Mrs. Pat Apple, Mrs. Ethel Lane, and Mrs. Ray Resmondo.

Sister Harrelson united with Pleasant Grove Church July 20, 1941. She was baptized Aug. 17, 1941 by the pastor at that time, Elder T. A. Stanfield.

She was a faithful member, loved her church, and manifested it in many efforts. Her walk in life was softly and with much weakness. Sister Harrelson believed in the sovereign power and grace of God. She served the household of faith with love, grace and humility.

Her funeral was conducted at Pleasant Grove Church, by Elders Donald and Wallis Smith. Interment was in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

We will miss Sister Harrelson, but we hope to be submissive to God's will and made to feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by Sister Maggie Apple at the request of Pleasant Grove Church.

Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
Brother Robert Walker, Clerk.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 145 DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1977 NO. 4.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE Is 4/77 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

EXPERIENCE OF WYLIE FULTON
(Continued)

James 1:18, "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth," is much used to argue gospel regeneration. But the preceding verse will clearly show that this all came down from above! Compare John chapter three, and remember Jesus is saying "born from above." Gospel preaching can describe this work to God's people who should be "swift to hear" (James 1:29) these wondrous truths. But gospel preaching cannot make it so. In like manner, gospel preaching takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto men (that is, children of God.) Gospel preaching tells of His death, burial and resurrection, how He redeemed God's elect on that old rugged cross. Gospel preaching says, "When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. 5:6). But gospel preaching, telling the good news, does not hang Christ on that cross! That happened nearly two thousand years ago. Gospel preaching tells the children of God about it, and it becomes our food and our drink when spiritually blessed to lay hold of it. So it is, my brethren, in this gracious work of regeneration. Gospel preaching—faithful preaching—will tell about the work of God, as I am now doing. But all the telling the world cannot perform the work—only a sovereign God can. Have you ever seen the real helpless condition of the lost sinner? If you have experienced this, then you surely know that only God's power bestowed directly upon your dead spirit could accomplish the work. Let us praise Him for such grace!

Many Old Testament Scriptures are brought forth to combat this great truth of unconditional salvation. The "Why-Will-Ye-Die" passages cannot apply to the spiritually dead sinner. It is not a question of whether he will die, but whether he will live! Here again, I must remind you those Old Testament passages are given to God's people, not the dead, alien sinner. Most of them refer to temporal blessings to be gained by their obedience. "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land" (Isa. 1:19)—NOT: "If ye be willing and obedient ye shall receive the Lord and be born again and go to heaven when you die." That is the Arminian understanding of this verse, and I remind you the free-offer, gospel-regeneration Calvinists have joined arm in arm

with the Arminians in their interpretation of much of the Bible.

When I have expounded along this line, I have had good brethren scream at me, "What about the Great Commission?" And I have been blessed of the Lord to gently remind them the Great Commission was given to the apostles. If you think you are apostles, why not raise the dead, cast out devils, heal the sick, and perform all the other sign-gifts of the apostles?

Someone challenged me to Scripturally show where regeneration is separate from repentance and faith! The resurrection of Lazarus earlier mentioned, the opening of Lydia's heart, the baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch, as well as Paul's conversion, all illustrate that life is prior to repentance or belief. Where Scripture mentions hearing the word in order to believe and be saved, it never refers to regeneration. You are reading that into those passages. I ask for one Scripture to show that preaching the gospel or Bible reading (as such) is involved in regeneration. The Bible was written by children of God, yet how did they become children of God, if a Bible is necessary to make one? The first preacher in Scripture was Enoch—if preaching be an absolute essential to salvation, then how did Enoch come to know God? Whose preaching or Bible reading converted John the Baptist? (I think you know John the Baptist was "born again" before he was physically born.) Brethren, these are some truths we are facing from God's word, and may He give us wisdom here.

I have also been accused of failure to distinguish between the general call and the effectual call. It is claimed the purpose of gospel preaching is to give a general call—and I am well aware that the Puritans and many later theologians speak of the two "calls"—but where in Scripture can we find that preaching is a call to the dead sinner to get life? If you bring Romans 1;16 as proof, I will just remind you the preaching itself is not the power but HE of whom the preaching tells, namely, CHRIST, is the power of God unto salvation. And there is a sense in which there is a salvation to be derived from preaching (that is our conversion to the truth) but that is a distinct thing from regeneration which is our present concern.

WHAT THEN IS TRUE GOSPEL PREACHING? WHAT DOES IT ACCOMPLISH?

Coming to the close of this article, I must give you a few thoughts showing what to my mind constitutes true gospel preaching. As earlier insisted upon, preaching is simply proclamation of the good news. It is not itself a portion of that good news. Only the work of the triune God is the glad tidings of great joy. In preaching the gospel, the Spirit-blessed messenger can set forth faithfully the wonderful work of redemption that our Lord finished. He can bring before the children of God that which is cause for great rejoicing. He can instruct the awakened, trembling sinner to turn away from the law which speaketh death and direct his gaze to the bleeding Lamb of God who is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth. He can trace out the method and manner whereby God is pleased to work among the children of men in quickening His elect, in leading them down into labor and then lifting them up. He can only preach to their comfort, though, as he is blessed to set forth the things which pertain unto their peace and preach it

"with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." None but a Spirit-born man can so preach, and then only as God in His sovereignty is pleased to grant liberty of utterance. He can steal the letter of truth from other writers and *recite* it but that is not true preaching! He can only preach as God lifts him above a prepared "speech" and carries him away in the Spirit to behold "things too wonderful." No matter how wrought up the speaker is, still he does not preach this glorious gospel unless the Lord opens hearts as He did Lydia's (Acts 16:14) to receive it. Any such child of God will receive it "not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." 1 Thess. 2:13. Then indeed the hearts of preacher and hearer are firmly knit together as their thoughts are lifted up to think on this great and glorious God. Christ is the Center of attention in such preaching, while man's works are wholly lost sight of. A man who thus preaches the gospel is indeed a gift of the exalted Head of His Church.

Of course, any man of God should preach the "good news" anywhere and at any time the Lord is pleased to grant him an open door.

Let me close this paper now by coming to Ephesians 4:11, 12.

"And he gave some apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers."

These are the gifts, the ministerial offices Christ placed in the church. What is His purpose for their work? Is it His purpose that these servants shall save souls, get people to be born again, do mission work, win sinners to the Lord? Just what are these gifts intended to do?

"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

Now that's His purpose for all ministry, evangelists included.

Truly I desire to bow my knees to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to praise Him for the hope He gave me years ago, for keeping that hope alive, for gently leading me in the pastures of His truth, and for giving me a love for my brethen to whom this article is sent. Please, each of you, bear with my many infirmities and if you receive me it must be for "Christ's sake," for in me there dwelleth no good thing! If you get any benefit from what I have written, give all glory to Christ who loved me and washed me from my sins in His own precious blood. At least, that is my hope, now and forever!

Yours by His grace,

Wylie W. Fulton

P. S. In all of this, I have but heeded the admonition to "give a reason of the hope that is within me," and to set forth some of my "things most surely believed." If you can receive me as a little child of grace, and my witness as true, then I will be especially rewarded for this effort. If not, I have done what I *had* to do.—W. W. F.

EXPERIENCE

Dear Pastor and Sister Spangler:

I have been requested to write my experience, if indeed I have one. I wrote something for the Landmark sixty years ago, so I shall call this reminiscing.

When I was thirteen years of age, I had serious thoughts about death. I felt to be a great sinner, and thought if the good Lord did not undertake for me, that I would surely die and go to tor-

ment. I loved to read the Landmark and the New Testament, but I would hide beyond the bend of the stairs so that no one would know that I was interested in those things. I had a dream one night and it seemed I was on top of a dwelling. I was terribly frightened and felt so helpless. When Jesus appeared (I hope) in the form of a man, I felt safe and happy.

I remember watching the sun go down from my bedroom window, and feeling certain that I would not see it again, and torment would be my doom. I cried and begged the good Lord to have mercy on my poor soul—it was almost more than my young heart could bear.

Soon I visited my aunt, Cynthia Williams, who lived with my grandfather. I felt to confide in her, and told her what a terrible condition I was in. She smiled and said, Go to the church and tell them your feelings. My grandfather awoke, and my aunt told him that I was troubled about my soul's welfare. He took me in his arms and asked the Lord to bless me. I feel surely he has for I have had a good life. I am reminded of this when I read of the patriarchs of old blessing their children and grandchildren.

I went to church the second Sunday in September with no thought of asking for a home with them because our pastor was not able to be there, but when the invitation came to talk to the church, I felt I would never live to get home if I did not tell them part of what I have written. I was received, and what a great relief to my poor soul. I left a burden there that I have never felt again. Oh, how happy I was! It seemed the leaves on the trees and everything was praising God. I was baptized the first Sunday in October by our dear pastor, Elder Jesse A. Ashburn of Winston Salem. It was a beautiful day, and I never cross the Yadkin River that I am not reminded of being buried beneath its waters years ago.

It came easy for me to feel at home in the church as my grandparents on both sides of the family were Primitive Baptists, and I was taken regularly to the meetings at Pine Church long before I can remember.

Of course there have been sad times and happy times: sad, when my seven brothers tenderly bore our precious Dad to his last resting place. Our saintly mother followed him in death eight months later. Eld. O. J. Denny preached their funerals; happy, when I fell in love and married one of the dearest and best men who ever lived; sad, when over the years I have been called to the funeral of one of my dear brothers, and then a sister; happy, when God sent three fine sons into our home. I have two precious daughters-in-law who could not be better to me if they were my own girls.

My membership is now with the Reidsville Church, and I want to thank each member for their merciful goodness to me.

In love and sweet fellowship,

Mary W. Somers.

"And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

Acts 2:47.

The setting of the text is that these events took place during the days of the apostles. If not deceived, I believe we advocate the same doctrine that Jesus set forth. Since God added to the church during the days of the apostles, I believe the same principle holds true today. God is not changeable. "For I am the Lord,

I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Mal. 3:6.

As the Lord blesses us, please keep in mind the text has reference to the militant church, or the one Christ set up upon earth. The Lord impresses the ones to unite with the church. The Spirit of God moves them and they experience strange things within their heart. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." 1 Peter 4:12, 13.

As I think of the spiritual church of God, these Scriptures come to mind: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." Dan. 2:44. Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. . ." Jn. 18:36. "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Rev. 21:2.

As the Lord blesses us, let us prove by the Scriptures there is not any increase nor decrease in the Church of God which is the body of Christ. This Scripture shows there is not any increase or growth in the Church of God: "Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." 2 Sam. 23:5. "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Eph. 5:30. These Scriptures show there is not any decrease in the church: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day." Jn. 6:37-39. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." John 10:27-29.

"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." Psa. 139:15, 16. The expression "when as yet there was none of them" means that God knew all of them before they were in existence. As time moved on, it was made manifest what God beforehand determined or predestinated. Please read the following Scripture very carefully, because I have put my views in parenthesis between the expressions: "The thing that hath been" (In the mind and purpose of God.) "it is that which shall be;" (future events that must and will take place) "and that which is done" (What the Lord hath predestinated from before the foundation of the world.) "is that which shall be done;" (Again, this refers to future events that shall take place.) "and there is no new thing under the sun." Ecc. 1:9. (Since God hath seen

all things from the beginning, He does not need to learn anything.)

Let us quote this Scripture to show that in the mind and purpose of God, the sheep, the body of Christ, bride of Christ, Church of God, children of God, etc., were saved from before the foundation of the world. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." 2 Tim. 1:9. The following verse shows that this salvation is made manifest to one in due time: "But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." ... "for thou hath lifted me up, and cast me down. My days are like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass. But thou, O Lord, shalt endure forever; and thy remembrance unto all generations. Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: For the time to favor her, yea, the set time, is come." Psa. 102:10-13. Please notice that God has a set time to have mercy upon His people. May the Lord bless us to be patient in tribulation and in our dark seasons when we cannot feel the presence of God.

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." All of God's children shall believe in Him at the appointed time. What causes them to believe? The Spirit of Jesus dwells within them and causes them to believe. This is what we call "the witness within." "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." John 14: 16, 17.

Although the names of God's people are written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world, I do not believe that all of the sheep unite with the church upon this earth. God knows His people wherever they are, and in due time He sends His Spirit within their hearts, causes them to repent, walk in good works, teaches them the truth, etc. If God has decreed that one should unite with the church upon this earth, He sends His Spirit and causes him to "go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the Lord has done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." Mark 5:19. Let me say it this way: I believe that God has determined the number of those that shall unite with the churches and has decreed the exact time they shall join.

I have discussed this subject with some of the brethren and they all expressed to me that they did not plan on joining the church before they did. When they were at church there was something that got hold of them which impressed them to unite with the church. If not deceived, I believe that the Spirit of God directed me to unite with the church.

On the subject of the addition of new members to a church, I believe in leaving the matter in the hands of God, and attempt to practice it. "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." "To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven." Ecc. 3:1. Dear reader, do you believe there is a season for new members being added to the church? Has this season been determined beforehand by God?

May God bless the truth in honor and praise and glory unto His holy name.

W. W. Hudson
208 Frederick St. Bastrop, La. 71220

1028 Westford, Houston, Texas 77022
Dear Editors:

I enjoy my *Signs* so very much. I find myself so overcome with joy, I wish I could place it in the hands of everyone I love—since this is impossible, I will narrow it to two. Enclosed you will find the addresses and $11.00, the dollar extra is for the Fund. It seems so very little, but I love the expression, Little is much if God is in it. And I trust He is.

"Sometimes hy hope is little, I think I'll lay it by, and then I find my Savior, and hope to reach the sky." I have had the sweet pleasure of meeting some of the writers of the *Signs,* which makes me feel as I read that it is a real visit with them.

I am bound to give thanks for you brethren in Christ Jesus. May God in His great love and mercy bless you to carry on, continuing to bring us these precious crumbs from the Master's table through the *Signs.*

I am enclosing a little poem I wrote some years ago. I went through an experience which I will not take space to write at this time, but I trust it was of the Lord's dealings. I found comfort after writing it. You may publish this writing and the poem if you deem it worthy of space.

May the Lord bless and keep you, is my prayer for all for whom it is our duty to pray the world over. In thy name we pray.

Helen Johnson

A SPECIAL TREE

I went Christmas tree shopping
But I could not find
A one on the market,
Like the one I had in mind.
A tree as high as hope,
A tree as broad as love.

A cross of faith on every bough—
In Christ Jesus above.
I thought of all the shoppers,
Could it possibly be.

They were searching too,
For this special type of tree?
Now I can tell them all
There is one true for sure.

That fits this description—
The Tree of Life so pure.

1964

P. O. Box 294, Salida, Cal.
Dear Elder Spangler:

I have known and read the *Signs of the Times* since in my teen-age. My parents and grandparents were subscribers back in the 1890's. I was six years old in 1896. I still love to read the *Signs,* so it is not a new paper to me. Mother used to read it aloud to us. I subscribed for it after I was married. I am now 86 years old.

There have been several elders as editors in all that time. It is the leading paper to me. My mother used to teach school and I went to college and taught school a few years.

My subscription is about up so I am sending my renewal for one year—use the remainder as you feel.

God bless you in editing the *Signs.*

Mrs. Mabel Lindsey

Rt. 2, Box 134, Meadows of Dan, Va.
Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

This morning this hymn was presented to me, and it seemed to fit part of my experience of grace. I felt that I wanted to write you and the saints that read the *Signs*. We are not blessed with these wonderful moments all the time—they come at the appointed time and place, and keep the helpless pressing on.

The hymn is:

"When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride."

This hymn was given to Isaac Watts. Jesus went about bearing the cross for His helpless little children, despising the shame, preaching the gospel, not sparing any, and declaring that He came not to do His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him. They are not chosen to do their will, but the will of the One who chose them. All contempt is poured out on fleshly works, and kills the pride.

"Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my Lord;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood."

The cleansing blood of Jesus did not just remove one spot, it makes the chosen whiter than snow. This blood does not reach the ones that claim to be righteous, for they need not a Savior. They claim they are going about making friends and doing good, which is contrary to Paul's writing, denying the power of the blood? and saving grace. Is this your case?

When I survey the wondrous cross, all my good works become as filthy rags. I have been shown that I have never done anything good to boast of, but if I am His true witness, then give God the honor and glory.

The other lines of this hymn are the truth in Christ Jesus. The earth is a present far too small, if it was ours to give, because the earth is the Lord's already and the fulness thereof, they and all that dwell therein. God made the wicked for the day of evil, they shall do wickedly and shall not understand. Those that believe not are condemned already; you cannot save a condemned man or woman: one that Jesus did not die for. Thank God He knows His little sheep and lambs, He calls them to repentance and they shall come to their Redeemer. I thank God the gospel is preached to the poor.

To all the saints who have been shown these wonderful truths, I send my love in His name.

A helpless sinner

Pauline Spencer

Rt. 4, Box 57, Rocky Mount, Va. 24151
Dear Elder and Sister Spangler:

We missed you at the recent sitting of the Pigg River Association, and we heard certain infirmities abide you which we truly trust the ever gracious Lord of all grace and comfort will sustain you through. We know, in letter at least, that all things work together for good to God's people, but is it not our constant prayer that this holy promise would be blessed and confirmed to us in virtue?

I have a body of thought circling around in my mind and would very much appreciate the views and counsel of the household of faith to aid me on my way. The substance of the matter evolved around what we usually refer to as the Lord's Supper, or Communion. To start with, I will readily confess my inability to properly present the matter, but I am

convinced that God's people are charitable.

In the wee hours of the morning on Thursday before the fourth Sunday in June of this year in either a dream or a vision I found myself in the upstairs bedroom of my mother's house where we lived briefly when my wife and I first married in 1964, and there appeared written in big beautiful letters upon the wall where I had to see these words: "and he took the cup and blessed it" and shortly thereafter I awoke so happy that I can find no words tn the English language that suffice to describe with. But needless to say, I have not been the same since as before that. I cannot get that off my mind and so far I have not happened upon anyone that I have opened my mind to at length about the matter. I have reviewed the matter sketchily with my dear pastor, Elder C. E. Turner and have gleaned some comfort from his conversation.

The above passage is, of course, linked directly to the occasion of the Lord's Supper which He desired to take with His disciples. For some months now I have desired to commune with His disciples but in as near exactly the same way and manner that the Bible says Jesus did. I understand the first occasion was held in an upper chamber which well signifies the chaaracter of the church as being well superior to that of the world. His disciples were to "go and make ready" which they did. I perceive that simply related to the putting in place of the sacramental symbols and preparation of the setting for what was about to take place. The timing I submit was sometime late in the day, signifying this new ordinance was happening "in the end," that is, subsequent to the previous two periods of about 2,000 years each, and being in the last dispensation of time which is becoming far short now. I can envision that there was no one else in that chamber upon that occasion but Jesus and His disciples, and that not a word was heard from a one of them. It was a most reverent occasion. I can see Jesus now saying, "Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do," (think of that if you can), this do, and by that the poor man no doubt in my mind certainly meant that His disciples in subsequent generations until the end of the world should do exactly as He had set forth. If He did not mean exactly, then, I am sure He would have left language granting tolerance and explained to what degree, for this He did as related to the frequency of the occasion. Some rules of decorum dictate that the frequency be anually or some stated interval, but Jesus undoubtedly knew the paths of all generations that would follow Him and declared to their perpetual comfort that there will be times and seasons when we cannot assemble and commune as we would, but the eternal blessing was, as oft as ye do this, etc., but again He takes up the substance of the matter and declared, "This do in remembrance of Me," not in a fashion done for grandpa or John Bunyan or Augustine or the way a neighboring association does, but (I wish thunder could drive this to the heart of every disciple), this DO in remembrance of ME. I hope it eternally proves that my meditations here is of Him, with no malice toward any person anywhere, but rather to know nothing among men but that which pertains to God and godliness.

The Spirit of the matter has gone from me now, attended by the prayer that God would yet bless us and cause

us all to honestly search for the truth as it is in Christ, and walk, and talk in an acceptable manner before Him, for Christ's sake let it be.

With warm regards,

James L. Holly

ELDER BEN F. PRESTON WRITES THE FAMILY OF THE LATE SISTER JOSIE MITCHELL

Dear Elizabeth and Elbert:

I was very sorry to have been gone when you attempted to contact me by telephone, concerning your dear mother's passing. It is sad at the time when our loved ones are taken from us, but nevertheless our heavenly Father is able to heal the broken hearted, to reconcile each one to our lot, that we might be made to feel that all is for the best. God rules in heaven and amongst the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say unto Him,, What doest thou? God's will be done, not ours. For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved in death, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. (Our spiritual life.)

When one of God's people departs this natural life the spirit returns to God who gave it, and the soul departs ever to be with the Lord. Spiritually speaking, one never dies: eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Here we see that each child of God experiences two births —a natural birth and a spiritual. Natturally speaking one does die. "Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return." But while this is true, my dear ones, these fleshly bodies are a purchased possession. Christ paid the debt owing for sin when He sacrificed Himself on the cross of Calvary, and poured out His precious blood for the sins of all His people; and said, "It is finished."

The work, that the Father had given Jesus to do, was a finished work. He said of all that thou hast given me I will lose none, but raise them up at the last day.

Jesus is coming again (second coming of Christ) and these flesh bodies that were sown a natural body, will be raised a spiritual body. Here is the full adoption, when these flesh bodies come forth spiritual, (resurrection) to dwell in that blissful home on high, where all is joy, peace and gladness world without end. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

I was to visit your mother about three weeks before her passing, but she did not speak any words at all when I would talk to her. I feel our loss is her eternal gain.

May God bless you dear ones and give you grace to sustain you.

Love, Ben.

GENESIS 22:1-13

Abraham was climbing a mountain,
  With Isaac by his side;
Abraham carried a rope with him,
  Isaac was soon to be tied.

Isaac was carrying some kindling,
  Abraham, fire in his hand,
We have the fire and kindling,
  But where will we find a lamb?

Abraham builded an altar,
  Ready to take Isaac's life;
He laid him on the altar,
  And raised his hand with the knife.

Now let us give God glory;
  A voice from heaven glad;
Said to our father Abraham,
  Do no harm to the lad.

The voice of an angel from heaven
  Saved little Isaac's life;
A ram was caught in a thicket,
  That served as a sacrifice.

We see here a type of Jesus,
  A ram tied up by the horns;
Christ died for our redemption,
  When He wore a crown of thorns.

—P. E. Ingram

LETTER BRINGS BACK PLEASANT MEMORIES

Rt. 7, St. Thomas, Ontario, Canada

Dear Elder Wood:

I hope this finds you and Sister Wood well. I am well, and was 72 years old yesterday, December 23, 1976. We are the old ones. It is wonderful though to look back and remember those brethren that we have known over the years, and to think what a privilege it was to have been with them and in their presence, and have a hope that I may be with them when the time comes to go to be with them. I have to say with Jacob, "Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life," and when that time comes like Jacob, "He gathered up his feet onto the bed and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people."

This bit of hope is all I have, but is the anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast and which entereth into that within the veil.

Please remember me to Brother Gladding. I hope he is well.

You will find enclosed a Royal Bank money order to renew my sister's subscription. . . She goes with me to meeting quite regularly. She has been following our people for years. Elder Stewart McColl's first funeral was her husband's. Everyone of her family have gone off with other churches. One son is a preacher near Pittsburg. She has seven children. I did not intend to write so much.

May I say your brother in a precious hope,

Eldon Gilbert

(Thanks, Brother Eldon, for your letter. It brought back many pleasant memories.—J. D. W.)

ENJOYED DECEMBER SIGNS

338 Cedar Dr., Salisbury, Md. 21801

Dear Elder Spangler:

I felt I wanted to write you a note to tell you how much I have enjoyed the December issue of the *Signs*. I enjoyed going back through time and listening to the beloved brothers and sisters speak of their love for each other—how much their communications with each other meant to them, and to listen to the blessed ministers of God so beautifully proclaim the truth to the glory and praise of His holy name.

The letter to Elder Beebe from Wm. L. Benedict touched me, especially since it was mentioning the Salisbury Association. I felt such a warmth as I read it that I was in the midst watching and listening. I could almost feel the love that they felt as they congregated at each station stop on the train. We go to our meetings sometime by ourselves, or someone else, but mostly in a hurry. We no longer can experience the slow way of traveling and being with God's saints as they did.

Even now as I write, I can feel the warmth returning in my heart. Nowhere else that I have been, have I ever felt such love among a people, except among God's jeople. Why such a sinful person such as I have been so richly blessed, I do not understand; but oh, how I feel to praise my Lord and Master for it.

I appreciate the editor's efforts of allowing us to visit with our brethren of 100 years ago.

Sincerely,

Linda Adkins.

(Many have expressed their joy in reading the articles re-published from the Signs of 1876. They found no change in the doctrine then and now.—Editors).

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EDITORIAL

THE VESSELS OF THE TABERNACLE FULFILLED IN CHRIST

" And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, ...And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it."

Exodus 25:1, 8, 9.

The tabernacle which Moses was commanded to make was a moveable sanctuary in the form of a tent wherein God might dwell as Sovereign among His people. Hence it was severally called "the dwelling" or "the tent of the congregation" even the very "house of the Lord thy God." Exact specifications were decreed by God for both its dimensions and its materials and these instructions were carried out by Moses precisely as they were given. Its basic shape was recangular being thirty cubits in length and ten cubits in width with the entrance at the eastern end. The tabernacle stood in a courtyard like itself rectangular in form with its longer sides of one hundren cubits running east and west and its shorter sides of fifty cubits running north and south. The entrance to the courtyard faced the east too, as did the entrance to the tabernacle.

God also commanded that seven articles of furniture be made exactly as He would detail them and that these would rest in the sanctuary in the following order. As one entered the courtyard from the east, the first vessel would be the Altar of Burnt Offering, followed by the Laver. Then within the holy place, was to be situated the Table of Shewbread on the right and the Golden Candlesick on the left with the Altar of Incense immediately before the entrance into the most holy place. Finally within the holy of holies was to be placed the Ark of the Covenant and the Mercy Seat.

The tabernacle was dedicated on the first day of the second year after the departure of the Israelites from Egypt. A cloud rested at its door by day and a pillar of fire by night during all the period in which the Israelites wandered through the wilderness. When the people broke camp, the Levites disassembled

the tabernacle and reassembled it at the new camping ground. Following the conquest of Canaan, Joshua set up the tabernacle at Shiloh, where it remained during the period of the Judges. During the reign of Saul, it was at Nob, and during most of David's reign it was at the high place of Gibeon. Finally Solomon built the temple to replace it which was constructed on the model of the tabernacle except that in every part it was twice as great.

The prime purpose of the tabernacle or the sanctuary was to provide a place where God would commune with His people. The description of God communing with Moses at the entrance to the tabernacle in Exodus 33 is very comforting for it was here at the door of the sanctuary that He talked with Moses, that He spoke with him face to face as a man speaketh with a friend. It was here that God said to Moses, "I know thee by name, thou hast also found grace in my sight." He further promised Moses that He would go with him and that He would give him rest. Here it was as well that God promised to hide Moses in the cleft of the rock and to cover him with His hand. How beautiful!

Our intended purpose in this article is to examine briefly the description and use of each of the seven vessels of the tabernacle as ordained of God in the Old Testament and to behold their complete fulfillment in Christ as revealed through the gospel as witnessed by John in the New. It would be helpful for the reader in following the article to peruse carefully chapters 25, 27, and 30 of Exodus which describe the vessels of the sanctuary and the Gospel of John which reveals the respective attributes of Christ which each vessel reflects.

Let us now begin to examine each in turn. We shall take them in the order in which they would appear upon entering the tabernacle, which, by the way, is the precise sequence John follows in revealing their fulfillment in Christ. Experimentally, we, too, have to be shown the spiritual significance of the Altar, the Laver, the Shewbread, the Candlestick, the Incense, the Ark and the Mercy Seat. And once God establishes His sovereignty in our hearts by communing with us at the tent door as He did with Moses, then the myriad of pieces of divine grace all begin to slowly fit into place. How beautifully the types and shadows of former things magnify Christ in all His glory!

Exodus 27:1-8 describes the Altar of Burnt Offering as it was to be made and Exodus 38: 1, 2 declares, "And he (Bezaleel, the artificer) made the altar of burnt offering of shittim wood: five cubits was the length thereof, and five cubits the breadth thereof; it was foursquare; and three cubits the height thereof. And he made the horns thereof on the four corners of it; the horns thereof were of the same: and he overlaid it with brass."

The brazen altar or the altar of the burnt offering held the lamb or the bullock which was to be sacrificed. The Hebrew word for altar has distinct reference to the thought of sacrifice, being derived from a word meaning to slay or to slaughter. Each time God was worshiped in the sanctuary, whether by an individual Israelite or by the assembled congregation, this altar was used. In type it represents the perfect sacrifice of Christ as He bore our sins in His own body on the tree. From Isaiah 53: 10, we read, "Thou shalt make His soul an offering

for sin;" and from 2 Cor. 5:21, we note, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin: that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Christ, becoming the perfect sacrifice, was unto God the Father an offering of a sweet savor. As He was nailed to the cross, the expression in Psalm 118:27 was fulfilled. "'God is the Lord, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar." Christ's sacrifice was perfect, "Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then the people's: for this he did once when he offered up himself." Heb. 7:27. His blood must be shed for the remission of sins. The old covenant was ratified by the blood of calves and goats, but the new covenant was established by the blood of Christ for "by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Heb. 9:12. Then His sacrifice became the "unspeakable gift."

The altar of burnt offering had to have horns to which the sacrifice was bound to reveal Christ being bound by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. The brazen altar had to be overlaid with brass to endure the fire, to show Christ's capacity to endure the divine justice of Almighty God. The altar of sacrifice must be foursquare to foreshadow the holy city, the new Jerusalem, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband made possible by the efficacy of the work of Christ. In substance these are some of the things John is saying in chapter 1 when he relates John the Baptist's declaration of Christ in saying, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29. Indeed most of this first chapter is devoted to revealing Christ as the Son of God who was with the Father from the beginning and who gave Himself as the Lamb of God, the perfect sacrifice as a ransom for many.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and his foot also of brass, to wash withal: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein. For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat:" Exod. 30: 17-18.

Once again in the Laver of Burnt Offering, we find the use of brass which typifies firmnesss, solidity, incorruptibility and the power of endurance. We read elsewhere of the "gates of brass" (Psa. 109:16), "bars of brass" (1 Kings 4:13), and "fetters of brass" (Judges 16:21) as expressive of singular strength and individuality. In Rev. 1:15 the feet of the Son of Man appear "like unto fine brass, as if they were burned in a furnace." Gold is reserved for the vessels of the inner court and the holy of holies, but brass was used for the two vessels in the outer court, namely, the Altar and the Laver. The brass directs our thoughts to the firmness of Christ's purpose and His divine will to "endure" the cross, despising the shame for the sake of His people.

The Laver underlines our need to be cleansed. In the Old dispensation, it was here that the priests must wash both their hands and their feet that they die not. Its purpose was to remove that which would have disqualified them for service. However, in the New dispensation, because of the effectual work of Christ,

His people are made kings and priests unto God, for they are not only a peculiar people, but a chosen generation and a royal priesthood. And just as Aaron and his sons had to wash as they entered into the tabernacle of the congregation, so His people must "be born of water and of the Spirit" before they can enter into the kingdom of God. This is revealed to us in John 3:5 when Christ declares to Nicodemus the necessity for man to be born of water and of the Spirit. Now it is Christ which baptises His people with the Holy Ghost for it was revealed unto John the Baptist by God the Father that "Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptiseth with the Holy Ghost," and John saw and bear record that this with the Son of God. (John 1: 33). Thus, again, the Gospel according to John shows us the true antitype of the Laver, namely the power of Christ to cleanse His people from their sins.

And "Thou shalt also make a table of shittim wood: two cubits shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, and make thereto a crown of gold round about. And thou shalt set upon the table shewbread before me alway." Exod. 25:23, 24, 30. Here we have a vessel of wood overlaid with gold to show our Lord Jesus Christ as God and man in one person. The bread was made of fine flour to reveal Christ as the corn of wheat ground between the nether and the upper millstone of the law and prepared through His suffering to nourish spiritually His ever grateful redeemed. Elijah reminded the widow that God had promised that the meal in the barrel should not waste nor the oil in the cruse fail until the Lord would send rain upon the earth. The cakes or loaves were twelve in number, one for each tribe, and regardless of the relative prominence of the tribe each remembrance was to be made equal before God. One of the greatest benefits of the church on earth is the fellowship it has with God. He communes with His people through Christ who is the true bread from heaven. Again John's gospel reveals this to us in chapter 6:33-35, "For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto Him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

To the left of the Table of Shewbread was the Golden Candlestick which was to be patterned on this wise. "And thou shalt make a candlestick of pure gold: of beaten work shall the candlestick be made: his shaft, and his branches, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers, shall be of the same. And six branches shall come out of the sides of it; three branches of the candlestick out of one side and three branches of the candlestick out of the other side. . . and it shall be one beaten work of pure gold. And thou shalt make the seven lamps thereof: and they shall light the lamps thereof, that they may give light over against it." Exod. 25:31, 32, 36, 37.

The Candlestick gave light and this light is a type of Christ. Indeed, from John 8:12, we know that Jesus revealed this attribute of Himself unto the people when He said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light

of life." Also from 1 John 1:5, we read, that "God is light and in him is no darkness at all." In addition, we know that life is an inseparable and manifest attendant upon light, and light is intimately associated with life. Therefore, how relative it is to read from John 1:4 that, "In Him (Christ) was life, and the life was the light of men."

To reveal some of this attribute of Christ, the Candlestick must of necessity have seven lamps. Seven represents perfection in the Scripture and in this instance, particularly the perfection of Christ. It is interesting to note from Isa. 11:1, 2, the seven spirits that are identified which are to rest upon Jesus, i. e., the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of wisdom ond understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. All these are manifest in Christ as the Spirit of truth as He is revealed in the New Testament. It is also interesting to note in Rev. 1:13 that John saw one like unto the Son of Man in the midst of the seven candlesticks when he turned to see the voice which spoke unto him.

The Candlestick consisted of a central part called the shaft and six branches, three coming out from each side. The word "shaft" is significant, being the same root word that is translated "loins" in Gen. 46:26 or rendered "thigh" in the marginal reference for the same verse. As the children are represented in this passage in Genesis as proceeding from the thigh or loins of the parents, so the six branches spring from, or are dependent upon the "shaft" of the Candlestick. How beautifully this represents the church as it is begotten in Christ, for righteousness is the girdle of His loins. His life, His Spirit, His strength, His firmness, His glory and His righteousness all flow through the members of His body for in Christ they are all fitly framed together. From Hebrews 2:11,12 we see the consummation in these words, "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." How appropriate it is then for Christ to be referred to as the BRANCH in Zech. 3:8.

The gold for the Candlestick had to be beaten gold for it would be inappropriate for this vessel to be cast in a mold; rather it had to be hand-crafted by a skilled artisan to reveal Christ as the Captain of our salvation made perfect through suffering. The oil for the lamps was the pure oil of the olive tree, again a beaten oil to cause the lamps to burn more brightly. The wicks, no doubt, were made of linen woven from the flax plant which depicts the gift of grace. And it is this precious gift of grace in the heart of the believer which draws strength from the Holy Spirit (the oil) that causes the light of divine truth to shine within us. How significant it is to note that the light sent forth from this beautiful vessel, tho proceeding from seven lamps, is nevertheless but one light. The oil, too, is purposed not for the lamps but for the light for this light must burn always before the Lord. From Rev. 1:20 we note the seven candlesticks which John saw represented the seven churches and one like unto the Son of Man was in the midst. This is the real significance of the Candlestick in the tabernacle, i. e., Christ as the light of divine truth shining in the midst of His people.

"And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: of shittim wood

shalt thou make it. . . And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, the top thereof and the sides thereof round about, and the horns thereof: and thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about." Exod. 30:1, 3. On this altar the fragrance of sweet spices was offered constantly to ascend from thence to God. It therefore represents a ministry in heaven itself. How typically it depicts Christ as the High Priest after the order of Melchisedec and the only mediator between God and man. This altar stood higher than the other measured vessels of the sanctuary for it was two cubits in height compared to their one and one half, again revealing Christ's ascendance to the right hand of the Majesty on high. In Psalm 141:2, David echoes the words of Christ who became the acceptable sacrifice, and declared before His Father, "Let my prayer be set before thee as incense: and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice." Incense, in the Scripture bespeaks prayer for in Rev. 5:8 we find the four and twenty elders held in their hands the golden vials full of odors which are the prayers of the saints. This is the picture John gives us in his gospel in chapter 17 where He records the Lord's Prayer. How beautifully this prayer of Christ must have risen as incense before His Father's throne. Let us hear His words again. "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them." Jn. 17:9, 10. Peter knew something of the fragrance of Christ's prayer for himself when He said to Peter, "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." Luke 22:31,32. How we all need, as Peter did, the Altar of Incense in our earthly sanctuaries to make intercession before the throne of grace.

"And they shall make an ark of shittim wood: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it, and shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about." Exod. 25:10, 11.

This vessel along with the mercy seat was placed in the holy of holies. It was here that God communed with His people. This was the most important vessel and was the first one to be described by God to Moses. It was to be made of shittim wood which was considered to be an incorruptible wood. This was a fitting emblem of the humanity of Christ who in His unstained spotlessness was completely undefiled. The ark overlaid with gold denoting the Savior as the Son of God resplendent in His office of Mediator between God and man. Exodus chapter 25 also reveals that the ark was to have four rings in the four corners, two rings on each side. These rings held the staves which carried the ark and show us the significance of Christ to His people as He is unto them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. The two staves are enunciated in Zechariah 11:7 as "Beauty" and "Bands" revealing Christ in the glory of His suffering bound to the cross by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. This is what carried His people to victory.

The ark was designed to contain the Testimony on the tables of stone. Herein they were placed to denote Christ as He

kept the law to a jot and tittle. Therefore the especial use of the Ark was to preserve the law, and to preserve it out of sight for it was concealed from Israel's way, lest this ministration of death break forth in vengeance upon His people. Christ died that we might have life and have it more abundantly. From Hebrews 9:4 we learn that the ark also contained the golden pot of manna, to remind His people of the means which God sustains them in the wilderness, and Aaron's rod that budded to reveal Christ as our great High Priest.

The fact that the ark contained not only the tables of stone, but Aaron's rod that budded as well as the hidden manna helps us to see Christ more vividly as He is revealed in John. In John, chapter 20 Mary saw Jesus raised from the dead for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. He came not to destroy the law, but rather to establish it. When He called her by name, she exclaimed unto Him, Raboni, which is to say, Master. In the same chapter Thomas saw Jesus as his Lord and his God. Aaron's rod had truly budded. In chapter 21, when Jesus commanded the disciples who had fished all night and caught nothing, to cast their nets on the right side, He revealed Himself unto them on the shore by the fire and said, "Come and dine." This was a foretaste to the disciples of the day to come when His people will feast eternally with Him and all the mystery which He now shares with His Father shall be revealed unto them. Indeed, great is the mystery of godliness!

"And thou shalt make a mercy seat of pure gold; two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat." Exod. 25:17, 18.

Thus the Mercy Seat was made to cover the Ark exactly, and what a wonderful blessing it is that His mercy falls not short of covering all who are preserved in the Ark, and all who are preserved therein will find His grace sufficient and His strength made manifest in weakness. At each end of the mercy seat were the cherubims facing inward and it was here from between them that God chose as His place to commune with His people. The cherubims are symbolic of justice and judgment for we read in Psalm 89:14 that, "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face." We learn as well that the cherubims were made of beaten gold even of one piece for the justice and judgment of God are inseparable, and His mercy and truth walk hand in hand together.

The entire Gospel according to John is filled with the mystery which surrounds the Son of God as He exemplifies the mercy of our heavenly Father in not sparing His own Son, but delivering Him up as a ransom for many. And seemingly to climax it all, we behold in the first chapter of Acts that Christ "was taken up: and a cloud received him out of their sight," thus to sit on the right hand of the Majesty on high. His work or redemption was finished. He had become the Lamb slain, had washed His people in His own blood, had become unto them the bread of life, and the light of men, had become unto the Father a sweet savor, and now was about to enter the Holy of holies as the ark of a better covenant and the sure mercies of David.

May God be praised!

In bonds of love, Stewart McColl

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

GRACE—WHAT IS IT?

Perhaps there is no subject of the Scriptures more important. Perhaps no subject is so little understood by the masses of men. Surely no subject should be emphasized more. After an acquaintance and experience with and in the ministry for many years I have never heard any man tell his audience what "grace" is. This is my one point in this short article, and I wish that every statement be tried by the holy Scriptures, which are the infallible record of God, by which everything pertaining to godliness must be tried to see if it be true, just and right.

When the Lord put Adam in the garden of Eden to keep it and dress it, he gave him a law by which his life therein should be governed. The law gave him right to all the trees of the garden except one, which was called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The law said to him, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt die." That law was the word of God, hence was holy, just and good, and for Adam to transgress it meant death to him and to tell his posterity. He did eat of that tree, in violation of the law, and immediately became dead in trespasses and in sin, separated from God, driven out of the garden, and the flaming sword was placed at the entrance of the garden to avoid his return. In that sad state and condition the Lord made Adam the promise that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, or undo the devil's work in bringing sin, and death by sin, into the world. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "So by the obedience of eous." Here is the key to the subject, "grace."

If the law of our land holds the transgressor thereof responsible for his disobedience, and the guilty must meet its every demand, how much more so does the law of God hold the guilty accountable. Should man commit wilful murder the law says he shall die. If he were to faithfully promise never to transgress again, and were able to keep that promise, would the law excuse him? Certainly not. If all men have sinned and come short of the glory of God, does God's law excuse the guilty upon promise to do better? Certainly not. The only hope for a man indicted for crime is to prove that man innocent in the eyes of the law of the crime of which he is charged. This is often done, but every man was guilty in the eyes of God's law, because all had sinned; hence by nature all were under the curse. All being in this condition, "without hope and without God in the world," the Lord manifested His mercy to men in sending His only begotten Son to die that they might live. Christ met every demand of God's law, suffered all its penalty, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. Therefore Paul tells us that we are saved by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. Since the sinner therefore could not merit the favor of God, since he could not undo what he had done, salvation is God's free, unmerited gift, which is "grace."

It seems remarkably strange that while all intelligent persons admit the above facts, many still contend that all men are saved by their own works of obedience and self-righteousness. The

apostle tells Titus that men are not saved by works of righteousness performed by them, neither are they called with an holy calling according to their works, but according to the purpose and grace given them in Christ before the world began. A man condemned to death by the law and in the death house awaiting the day of execution is no more helpless to work himself into the favor of the law and be excused for his crime than is the man condemned by the law of God for sin. When the apostles conceived the idea that they could do some things themselves, and desired, each, to be the greatest in the kingdom, the Savior said, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye can in no wise enter the the kingdom of God. Little children are helpless, and can do nothing whatever for themseles. This is why, it seems to us, the Savior said. "Little children." There must be a realizing sense of this helplessness and a revelation of the power of God before any man can know experimentally that salvation is by grace and in no sense of creature works.

If the children of God are the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus, what part of the work did they perform and what part in the creation did they take? Such questions put the wisest men to silence, as was the case of Job when the Lord asked him, saying, Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? That question taught Job that he was not in existence when the Lord laid the foundations, hence had no part whatever in the work. The word "create" means to bring into existence that which did not exist before. Hence if the children of God were created of the Father in Christ Jesus, what part of the work did they perform? Absolutely none. Therefore salvation is by grace, to the glory of God the Father, and because of this salvation they are called with an holy calling unto holiness and everlasting life. But salvation by grace is not for eternity only, but for this time state, that the children may be saved now from falling away from the doctrine of Christ; that they be saved from despair when overtaken with the afflictions of this world; that they be kept from evil in the day of temptation; that the tongue be bridled that it speak no guile; that the hands be governed that they commit no crime. It is also a light to the pathway of the pilgrim, that the feet be kept in the way of peace. When we see mighty works of God in building His spiritual house, the song is grace, grace be unto it. Then of grace let us sing, of grace let us preach, of grace let us write.

"Grace 'tis a charming sound,
Harmonious to the ear;
Heaven with the echo shall resound,
And all the saints shall hear."

(Editorial by Elder H. C. Ker August 15, 1916).

NOTE TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

When renewing your subscription, if you would cut out the name and address from your paper and mail it to us, it would help us very much. Also please renew in the exact name you receive the Signs.

When changing address, please notify us ahead of the change. When a paper is returned to us with improper address, the return costs twenty-five cents each. So please notify us ahead of time.—Editors.

NOTICE TO THOSE WHO WRITE OBITUARIES

We must ask that obituaries be as short and condensed as possible, giving pertinent information only. We find it very difficult to re-write or condense once an obituary has been written. We have on hand more than thirty obituaries which we will publish as we have space. We are glad to publish them of our brethren and friends, but need the co-operation of those who write them. A full page or less of double-spaced typewritten copy is about right, limit about 250 words, so that we can publish all the obituaries sent to us. Hand written obituaries must be legible and not too lengthy. Thanks for your co-operation.—Editors.

OBITUARIES

IN MEMORY OF MARGARET MOORE (STARTZMAN) TAYLOR 1887-1976

My beloved mother, Margaret Moore (Startzman) Taylor, was born in Dover, Missouri, May 3, 1887, the fifth of eight children of Cornelia Bowen and Elder William Martin Startzman. At the age of seventeen she was baptized into the Old School Baptist faith and remained devoted to that cause throughout her life, which ended peacefully in Portland, Oregon, April 25, 1976, after a four-year illness.

She and my father, John Willis Taylor of Cass County, Missouri, after their marriage on June 26, 1918, in the bride's home at Blue Springs, Missouri, made their home six miles southeast of Pleasant Hill, Missouri, near Little Flock Primitive Baptist Church, where Mother placed her membership. Two children were born, the writer of this, and a daughter Elizabeth (Mrs. Elbert J. Barnes, Sandy, Ore.); and a son, William Bowen, who died at the age of sixteen months.

The home my parents established, was, through the years a home for Baptists. It had been the Taylor family home, and "Uncle Billy" Taylor, my grandfather, was a devoted member of Little Flock Church. My maternal grandparents were also Old School Baptists, my grandfather a minister serving churches in the area. He had a reputation, according to my mother, as "talking" while others "preached." Revered in our household in my growing-up years were many beloved servants of the gospel of salvation by grace. An uncle, Elder David Bartley, author of the Christ Man in Type, etc., was an early much loved influence. Elder William Lawson Hall, Blue Springs, Missouri, I believe baptized my mother. Elder J. R. Hardy and Sister Hardy visited the churches and were much revered by my parents and others. Also included among the highly-regarded by my mother was Elder J. T. Barnes, later of Wenatchee, Wash. my husband's grandfather, whom my husband remembers as having preached one of the most beautiful sermons of his life from his sick bed the day prior to his death.

My father through the years worshipped with my mother, attending services faithfully until his death in 1964 at the age of 94.

In later years my parents moved from their rural home to nearby Pleansant Hill, Missouri, and then in 1959 to Portland, Oregon, to be near my husband and me. Through the years in Portland, until her illness, my mother and my father until his death, made the long monthly trip from Portland to Pleasant Grove Church in Naches, Washington, then under the pastorship of Elder T. E. Atteberry, where she placed her membership. These meetings were times of great joy to both my parents.

My mother was preceded in death by my father on March 7, 1965 and by her last remaining sister, Ida Startzman Norvell, on March 25, 1975. Mother had devotedly cared for her sister Ida during her later years, a fact which contributed to her own decline, but which was a labor of love she would not forego. Her life had been one of ready compassion, unselfish devotion and steadfast faith. She befriended many, taking into her home those for whom she could do — the motherless, the ill, the lonely, the needy. She gave of her own slender means and strength far more than could be returned. The gifts of her hand and spirit endeared her to friends and to family. My father joined her in these undertakings.

Brief but touchingly beautiful services in Portland were conducted informally at casket side by Elder Pleasant R. Stark whose friendship and spiritual gifts had been a source of much joy to both my parents. His presence was the fulfillment of a request made personally by my mother in my presence prior to her death. I do not believe that she ever understood that Brother Ben Preston had been ordained to the ministry and had followed Elder Atteberry as pastor of the church in Naches. The family wished to have him at the service also, but were unable to reach him at the time. He had been a faithful friend and source of great joy and comfort to Mother during the years my parents were together in Portland, often coming and taking them to church, and his visits to her during her illness were such a blessing. Elder Preston sent to my husband and me a most comforting message, a sermon in itself, which I enclose for use as those editing this see fit.

Interment was at Pleasant Hill, Mo. Here services were conducted by Elder Wilmer Harper, Osceola, Missouri, cousin of my husband. Many spoke of the singular power and beauty of his message. Among lifelong friends and remaining family, her funeral was conducted, and she was laid to rest beside my dear father in the family cemetery.

Mother's prayer, oft repeated, that God release her, had been answered. The dear Lord had taken her unto Himself

"For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (A passage especially loved by my mother).

Submitted by a loving daughter,

Elizabeth Taylor Barnes

SISTER MARY OLA RICHARDS

We would like to share a few thoughts concerning our sister who departed this life June 3, 1976.

We knew her from childhood, and as we grew up we remember her walk in life as being one that we wish we were blessed to walk. We would give honor or glory to no other than God. As we understand the Scriptures, He has blessed people to serve Him from the beginning of time.

This sister, we believe, bore the fruits of such a person who was called. We remember when she joined the church and was baptised. It was not a big show for the world, but for us it was simply a display of the effectual work of the Holy Spirit moving a person to follow her Lord.

"I am the Vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without Me you can do nothing." And Matt. 7:16, 18, "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."

We would like to be thankful to God for having blessed her, and having blessed us by having her as our sister in the church.

Mrs. Mary Ola Richards, 76, wife of Leonard "Jack" Richards, died June 3, 1976 at the Oak Cliff Methodist Hospital in Dallas, Texas after an illness of two weeks.

Mrs. Richards was born February 6, 1900 in Bradley County, a daughter of John and Lillie Anna Vickers Harrod. She was a member of Antioch Primitive Baptist Church.

Other survivors include two sons; Jack Richards of Memphis, Tenn., and Frank of Arlington, Texas; 3 daughters: Mrs. Bonnie Trussell of Grand Prairie, Texas, Mrs. Mary Adams of Scurry, Texts, and Mrs. Martha Sullivan of Cornerville, Ark.; two brothers, Johnnie Harrod of Banks, and Opha Harrod of Hermitage; also by 11 grandchildren, and 3 great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Saturday, June 6, 1976 at Union Hill Baptist Church by Eld. Stanley Phillips. Burial was in Union Hill Cemetery by Frazer's Funeral Home. Pallbearers were Fred Harrod, Keith Harrod, Charles Harrod, Jerrell Harrod, Elgin Harrod, and Charlie Morgan.

In bonds of love,

Charlie Morgan.

BLANCHE ELLEN TOWNSEND

It falls my lot to bring our readers the passing of Blanche Ellen Townsend on Nov. 30, 1976. She was the wife of Henry H. Townsend, and daughter of the late Annias and Nora Hastings. She was a member of Welsh Tract Church. She was born July 17, 1901, and died in her home on Tuesday morning, November 30. She had been under treatment for lung congestion for two weeks and was taken worse during the night. About five minutes before she died her head was in my arms. She looked up at me with a smile and said, I believe I am going to die. She closed her eyes and did not say another word as she expired. I called Elder James Poole who came at once to my aid.

She was laid to rest with her mother and father in the Little Creek Cemetery lot at Smith Mills Church. She is sadly missed by her friends and members of the churches we attended. In all sadness I said, The Lord has given and the Lord has taken away. Bless His holy name.

Henry H. Townsend.

ZORA ELIZABETH ADAMS

Zora Elizabeth Adams, daughter of Floyd S. Agee and Sarah C. Age of Christiansburg, Va., was born October 26, 1919, and died Jan. 13, 1976. She was united in marriage to Andrew K. Adams, and to them a daughter was born, Mrs. Joyce A. Davis.

She and her husband lived for awhile in the northern part of Virginia, and she attended the meetings at one of the churches. She was much interested in the doctrine and the people, and it was in that part of the country that she received a good hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. She was a lovely person and it was a great pleasure for her to be with the brethren and hear the preaching of the gospel.

Surviving are her husband and daughter, her mother and the following sisters and brothers: Ora A. Guthrie, Ruie A. Poff, Ruby A. Hawley, Doris A. Gawley, Francis A. Lewis Madeline A. Bonham, Elder Roy Agee, Willie R. Agee, Andrew C. Agee, and Floyd S. Agee, Jr. Surviving also are two grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted from the Richardson-Horne Chapel, Christiansburg, Va. Elders Hale Terry and Lane Carter. Interment was in the Restvale Cemetery. She loved the hymns, "There is a fountain filled with blood," and "Jerusalem, my happy home," and they were sung at the funeral.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from the labors; and their works do follow them."

May each of the bereaved be blessed of the Spirit to say. " . . the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

John D. Wood.

MARY HART PITTMAN

It is with a sad heart I try to write this tribute to our dear mother, Mary Pittman.

She was born February 17, 1882 in Jackson County, Fla., and passed away Sept., 8, 1976 at the age of ninety-four. She was married to the late Frank Pittman, Oct., 18, 1900, and to this union were born seven children.

She united with Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, June 5, 1905. She was most faithful to her Lord in whom she put all her trust. She loved her church and sister churches and was faithful in attending until her health began to fail in the past few years. She was loved by everyone that knew her and she loved everybody, always wore a lovely smile, and had a cheerful greeting. She was a loving mother whom we will always miss, but it is our loss and heaven's gain. She is survived by one son, Chalker Pittman; three daughters Ethel Skipper, Audrey Borland, and Eunice Deese; eight granchildren; nineteen great grandchildren, seven great, great grandchildren; one sister, and two brothers.

Funeral services were conducted September 10, 1976 at Ramah Church by her pastor, Eld. D. W. Collins, and assisted by Elder Harry Collins. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery by the hands of the Ward-Wilson Funeral Home, of Dothan, Alabama.

We trust that God who doeth all things well, will comfort us as only God alone can do. We pray the church will bow in humble submission to God's will and we pray that we will be kept in the love of Christ to walk in like manner.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Written by her daughter who loved her dearly.

Eunice Pittman Deese

Read and approved while in conference Sept., 19, 1976, with a resolution that one copy be entered in the minutes of Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, one copy be sent to the Western Primitive Baptist Association, and one copy be sent to the Signs of the Times, with a request for publication.

Elder D. W. Collins, Moderator
Sister Vivian McCall, Church Clerk.

BERTHA N. ADSIT

Sister Bertha N. Adsit was the daughter of the late Alice and Jacob Beesmer. She was married to Edward K. Adsit, June 18, 1924. She was a faithful, consistent member of Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, Shokan, N. Y. for thirty-seven years.

Sister Bertha was truly adorned with a meek and quiet suirit. In her humble way she walked in the gospel of her blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. She was a great sufferer, but her faith never wavered. She was an inspiration to any who visited her, comforting them instead. The beauty of her life is a blessing now to her devoted companion. It was true of him, as always of Sister Bertha, we went hoping to be of some little comfort to him, but he it was who strengthened us.

A simple service was held at Lasher Funeral Home by Winford J. Berry, speaking from 2 Cor. 5:4: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. If so be that being clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon that mortality might be swallowed up of life."

Mr. Dale Farley, a minister friend who had faithfully visited them in affliction, read a beautiful hymn, and made a few very suitable remarks.

Our sympathy, and the sympathy of her many friends goes out to dear Brother Edward. May the dear Lord continue to be a living presence with him. He feels, and so must we all, that the Lord has but taken to Himself His own. And blessed be His holy name!

Written by one who loved her,
Mrs. W. J. Berry.

FLOSSIE R. CARTER and
WILEY A. CARTER

Even though there is a difference of nearly 19 years in their deaths, this obituary is written to include both Flossie Rodgers Carter and Wiley A. Carter because of their similar relationships and their interest in Elam Primitive Baptist Church and the Primitive Faith in general.

Flossie R. Carter was born April 21, 1887, one of 15 children of Thomas Matthew Rodgers and Olivier Folmar Rodgers. Both parents were members of Elam Church and T. M. H. Rodgers was one of the Deacons during his life time.

Wiley A. Carter was born February 16, 1881, one of 12 children born to Henry Sanders Carter and Emaline Josephine Bryan Carter. Both of his parents were also members at Elam Church and H. S. Carter was also a Deacon during his life time.

On April 29, 1904, W. A. Carter and Flossie Rodgers were married. One little girl, Voncile was born January 24, 1905 and lived less than two years. On June 12, 1927, W. A. Carter was baptized into the fellowship of Elam Church. One month later, Flossie R. Carter was also baptized into the fellowship at Elam. One year later, on June 9, 1928, W. A. Carter was set apart as Deacon and was ordained to that office on July 5, 1928.

W. A. Carter died Dec. 23, 1957. Flossie R. Carter died June 28, 1976. We believe it could be safely said that no couple within the range of our memory ever did more for the welfare of Zion than did this couple. Their home was always open to Old Baptists and few if any entertained more of them than did this couple. Brother Carter was invariably the first to see the physical and material needs of Elam Church and took the lead in supplying those needs—setting examples that few others ever matched. Sister Carter was just as faithful and liberal in her support of the church as her husband had been during his life time. The last thought of both of them concerned the welfare of Elam Church. Both, in their wills, left the major portion of their earthly possessions for the maintenance of Elam Church and cemetery.

By faith we believe they have both gone on to the Mansion that Jesus said He went to prepare for the saints. We believe our loss is their eternal gain. By motion and second Elam Church ordered this spread on the church records, and a copy sent to the Signs of the Times.

A. C. Carter, Church Clerk, and Nephew of the deceased.

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It has pleased the Lord to call from us Bro. Joseph Floyd Williams. He was born April 20, 1913 and passed away Oct. 28, 1976 at the age of 63 years. He united with the Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church Feb. 9, 1974. Being afflicted in poor health he attended church as often as he could. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Jeraldine L. Williams, four sons, Joseph, and Timothy of the home, and John T., and Gary Williams both of Rocky Mount, N. C. Three daughters, Mrs. Mary Jo Robinson, Mrs. Rebecca Tharrington, and Miss Isabel Williams of Rocky Mount, N. C. Four grandchildren; two brothers, John and Sam Williams of Elm City, N. C. three sisters Mrs. Maggie Williams and Mrs. Minnie Robbins both of Rocky Mount, N. C. Mrs. Maggie Wilson of Kingstree, S, C.

The last days of his earthly life were spent mostly in and out of the hospital, so may the family be reconciled to the will of the Lord, and feel to believe that his suffering and trials are over, and now at rest in peace.

We, the Mill Branch Church and friends, will miss him, but we hope to be submissive to the will of our heavenly Father in all things, for He knows best.

His funeral was conducted Saturday, Oct. 30, 1976 from Johnson's Funeral Chapel by Elder Harvey Holland. Burial service was in Mill Branch Cemetery.

Resolved:

That we send sympathy to the family, that

three copies of this respect be made: one to the family, one for the church records, and one be sent to the Signs of the Times to be published.

Done by order of our conference in December, 1976.

Elder Harvey Holland, Moderator,
Sister Estelle Joyner Cockrell, Clerk.

JOHN PASCHAL

Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church acknowledges the passing of our dear Brother in Christ, John Paschal. Born Dec. 12, 1885, passed Jan. 27, 1976. His parents were Geo. Washington and Addie Poteat Paschal. His wife Annie Wall Paschal, passed away in 1967. He leaves, daughters, Mrs. Lelia Carter. Greensboro, N. C., Mrs. Lucille Small, Reidsville, N .C. Son, John H. Pashcal, Reidsville, N. C. four grandchildren, four great grandchildren.

Brother Paschal loved the truth, and was a devoted member. He manifested the grace and faith of God in his walk of life. He was a farmer and loved to work, and was blessed to do so, having prepared his crop land for planting, for this year, being ninety years of age. He has a lovely family, that showed him love and care daily.

Services were held in the meeting house by Elder David Spangler, and Elder H. W. Wray. Burial in the cemetery there.

Written by the request of the church, and accepted in September conference.

Rachel Wray

MIDDIE ANN McLAWHORN HARRIS

Whereas God in His all wise providence removed from our midst our beloved sister Middie Ann McLawhorn Harris, daughter of Elias James Franklin McLawhorn and Drucilla Louvenia Manning McLawhorn. She was born February 20, 1892 and died on Aug. 8, 1976. On January 7, 1908, she was married to Levi H. Harris. He died in June 1955. She is survived by two sons, Jarvis E. Harris and Alton E. Harris; two daughters, Ethel Taylor and Alma Athleen Norville; twelve grandchildren and fourteen great grandchildren.

Sister Mid was a kind hearted, generous person who was eager to share with others. It was her station in life to live in several communities; and in each she made many friends, who remained to be life long. She was a woman of honor and integrity. Her walk and her talk in life was that of a true Christian; one who tried to serve her God. She was a firm and steadfast believer in salvation by the grace of God. So on a confession of faith she united with Hancock's Church in September 1919, and was baptized by her pastor, Elder G. W. Stokes. Sister Mid read her Bible faithfully as long as she could see; for she was blind for several years prior to her death. She was a praying woman. She was a firm believer in prayer for she realized that man is a weak and helpless creature and that all her help must come from the One who has all power.

We sorely miss this dear sistter, but feel that our loss is her eternal gain. and pray that God will bless and comfort her bereaved family.

Done by order of conference while in regular session, on August 14, 1976.

Elder Joseph L. Sawyer, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk.

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT
SISTER LILLIE SHAW

We, the members of Mill Branch Church bow in submission to the will of our Lord, who doeth all things well. Sister Lillie Shaw was born February 21, 1886 and passed from this world August 16, 1976, at the age of 90 years. She united with the Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church March 6, 1949 along with her sister, Ethel Whitley, now deceased. She is survived by one sister, Mrs. Gertrude J. Bass of Rocky Mount, N. C. She attended church in a most sweet, humble way as long as she was able to go. When she got so feeble she went to live with her sister and was a shut-in for quite a few years, but as she became more feeble she was moved to a local nursing home. We feel that she is now resting in that sweet, peaceful sleep, never to have any more pain or discomfort. May our loss be her gain.

Her funeral was conducted at the Johnson's Funeral Home by Elder Harvey Holland and laid to rest in the family cemetery.

RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution be placed on the church records, one sent to the family, and one to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of conference in December 1976.

Elder Harvey Holland, Moderator
Estelle Joyner Cockrell, Clerk.

IN MEMORY OF MISS VELMA WOOD

It is with sad hearts we try to write of the loss of our dear Sister Velma Wood. She was born August 31, 1908 and departed this life July 16, 1976. She was the daughter of Brother Fernie Wood and Sister Melia Johnson Wood. She joined Hickory Grove Primitive Baptist Church December 7, 1969 and served as treasurer of the church from April, 1970 until she passed away July 16, 1976. She was faithful in the attending her church meetings and did a lot of work in the church and will be greatly missed.

She laves to mourn their loss, three sisters, Mrs. Gertrude Royal, Mrs. Kathleen McLamb, Miss Cleon Wood and one brother Mr. Gary E. Wood and many relatives and friends. Her funeral was conducted at Rose Funeral Chapel in Benson by her pastor, Elder W. D. Godwin, along with Elder C. D. Turner and Elder Curtis Raines. She was laid to rest in Devotional Gardens Cemetery near Dunn, N. C., beneath a lovely mound of flowers there to await the morning of the resurrection when Jesus comes to gather His children home where there will be no more pain, sickness, or death. We pray to be in that number. May God's richest blessings rest and abide with her family and friends now and forever. May we all be comforted with the Scripture, "We grieve not as those that have no hope."

That a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times and one to the family.

Sister Gertrude Royal
Sister Leacy Beasley.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 145 DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1977 No. 5

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5/77
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

Dear Elder Spangler:

All issues of the Signs are an inspiration, but the December issue is very special, bringing forth praise and appreciation from many readers. It has been suggested that some thought might well be given to making every December issue somewhat similar.

Elder Wm. L. Benedict's reference to Elder Joseph L. Staton (Elizabeth's grandfather) and to Daniel Holloway (my grandfather) two wonderful men, is a reminder of how deeply rooted our families are in the Old School Baptist doctrine. We are immensely proud of our ancestors for our heritage, and for their influence and guidance all along the way, instilling in us at times the importance of trying to justify our existence.

Elder E. Rittenhouse was pastor of Little Creek Church and baptized our mother, Martha Ellen Hastings, while still a school-girl, and later (Dec. 10, 1884) married her to Archer C. Holloway. Elder Rittenhouse was moderator when the Snow Hill Church was constituted November 20, 1876. The observance of the 100th anniversary of the Snow Hill Church was in keeping with the Old School Baptist philosophy of maintaining a low-key decorum at all times. Elder Poole opened the meeting with appropriate remarks, and announced that copies of the Church history were available; gave out a hymn and spoke in prayer. Jack Dawsey preached. Then we had refreshments in the basement. Maude Truitt had provided a beautiful florial arrangement for the table as a tribute to the memory of Handy B. Truitt in appreciation for his loyal and faithful devotion to the church and the principles for which it stands. Handy was a moving force and source of strength over the years from the time he was the only male member. We salute him, and thank him.

We are deeply grateful to Maude Truitt and Elsie Beauchamp for their exhaustive research into church records, and elsewhere, in procuring the authenic data for the Church history, and making copies for distribution. We are richly blessed with willing workers.

Our love to you, Mrs. Spangler and all your young folks.

William Holloway

Duke Hospital
Durham N.C.

Dear Elder Spangler and readers of the Signs:

This is to thank you for your visit to see me while in Duke Hospital, Durham,

N.C. the third Sunday in December. Also appreciate the other brethren visiting me the same day.

A few days after you were here I was transfered to New Hanover Memorial in Wilmington, N.C. as an out patient. First treatment there while connected to the hemodialysis (artificial kidney machine) I had a heart attack and this followed by pneumonia. I was placed in the cardiac unit (c.c.u.) for five days. During this time I was in a very critical condition. In spite of my affliction while lying helpless, much comfort came from the following verse which is found in the twenty-third Psalm, **"Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil."** These words have lingered in my mind everyday and I believe I have felt and still feel the true meaning as it came from the pen of King David and I was made to know that I was in the hands of a just and merciful God. One who controls everything that exists even the winds and the seas.

I'll never be able to find words to express my deep sorrow in being separated from my brethren. I have received many telephone calls and many get well cards.

Many Elders such as you have been by and prayed for God to extend his reconciling grace to me and my family. I believe their prayers have been answered. I would like to acknowledge the names of those who have written, called and visited me, through the Signs but it would take too much space. I do want to mention some of the Elder's who visited me and said words of comfort in my behalf. Elders Oliver Allen, Sam Jones, D.B. Stokes, J.T. Prescott, Brother Jack Dawsey and Brother Ernest Jones, last but not least a dear brother in the flesh Elder Zennie L. Rhue.

And to the three churches. Atlantic, Sea Level and Hadnot Creek. Although I am not able to help myself, I am dependent upon some very good doctors and a just and holy God in directing their hands. My love goes out to each one of you. I have tried to pray for someone to be sent to hold services for you and I understand that Brother Jack Dawsey, Elder J.T. Prescott and Elder Sam Jones have been holding services for you. I have a small glimmering hope that the Lord will bless me to meet you again. If it is not his will for me to see you again, I hope to meet you over yonder beyond the chilly waters of death where we will all be dressed in that white robe that Christ wrought out on Calvary's Cross. I would love to hear from any Old Baptist or friend who has time to write. The hospital bed can be a lonesome place. The prospect for my recovery is not very good. I love all Old School Baptist. Yours in hope of eternal life. This I have just dictated to my wife.

A brother in Christ, I hope,
Elder J.J. Rhue

(Since receiving the above. Elder Rhue has been removed from this life. His letter will be of much interest to his brethren. Editor.

Dear Brother Wood:

Enclosed is a check for one year renewal, the remainder to be used as needed.

I enjoyed reading the Dec. issue written by the dear old brethren that have been gone so long, and thanked God that the writers of today are still contending for the same doctrine in the **Signs** as they did 100 years ago. I believe with God's help they will continue to do so.

What a privileged and special people the Primitive Baptists are. The old writers were blessed to write these sweet truths, then a century later the brethren

are blessed to read them with such love & emotion, tears flow from their eyes with joy. What a kind and gracious God we have.

I hope you and Sister Wood are in good health after this cold and harsh winter

In bonds of love,
Mrs. Lester (Verta) Haning
843 Glendale Ave.
S. Charleston, W. Va.
25303

Route 1, Lake Jackson
Monticello, Ga.

Dear Elder and Sister Spangler:

The Lord's blessings upon you this New Year. So often I think of you, wonder how you are, and wish I could be with you more often.

I have wanted to tell you how very much I enjoyed the December **Signs**. How wonderful was Elder Beebe's editorial, David Bartley's letter on Rev., the recounting of Wm. L. Benedict's travels among the Baptists of that day-all of it. I particularly cherish this copy of the **Signs** and am thankful the editors were moved to issue it.

To think that the truth is ever the same through all the ages, that the people He has plucked as a brand from the burning ever praise him, is comforting to those who walk this lonely way, often wondering if there is basis for their small hope. Almost daily my cry is, **O that I knew where I might find Him! that I might come even to His seat!** Job 23rd chapter sums up my heart's language.

We went to New Harmony at Hiram Sunday. Elder Hand came for Elder Griffin, whose health is no better. Sister Hand told us that Brother Griffin was experiencing nausea and could eat but little, therefore continues to lose weight. He is to enter the hospital again soon. I think of him with love, and hope he can feel the presence of his Saviour in this affliction. . . .

O, the many sad faces of life! Can you look back and recall how wonderful and bright life seemed, how much we expected of it, when we were very young? This is the natural, human (and wrong) picture of life's purpose, and the road of earthly joy is not the true one that leads to life eternal. No, that one is filled with trials, wreckage of our earthly plans and ambitions, fears that even our hope that He has visited us, are vain, with uprisings and downsittings. A dismal picture and not to be desired, says the world. Yet we would cling to His promises to His people, **"But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold."** Job 23:10. **". . . when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me."** Micah 7:8.

Our best love to you both. Think of us and love us even though we feel unworthy of the regard of His people.

Humbly,
Florence A. Gibson

---

605 Beacon Street,
Laurel, Miss. 39440

Dear Children of God:

I feel like shouting from the housetops that God still answers prayers. I have been sick for some time, not able to do my own house work. My daughter has cancer, and with this trouble I couldn't seem to get much better. I wasn't able to attend the Saturday meeting at our little church. I asked if our dear pastor and Bro. Grady Dearman would pray for my daughter and me. They did pray, and Sunday morning I was able to attend church, and my

daughter told me she felt much better.

Brother Philips says that we are inclined to think too much of our servants. I hope I don't give that impression. I do love them for the truth that flows through their mouths. I know that God has given them what they have, and without God they can do nothing. I don't believe prayer changes anything, for we pray that God's will be done. Other churches have called and asked if they could pray for us, and I say yes. They have the privilege of praying, and we don't know who the children of God are, but God knows them that are his, and they follow him.

God did not give me the talent to write as he has some, but if you have room in your paper to place this, I will be grateful. I want God's people to know what a blessing I have received from him. Please pray when you have a mind, that if it is His will to take my child, to make me submissive to his precious will.

A Sister in Christ, I hope,
Viola Carter

Route 2, Box 78A
Strong, Ark. 71765

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am sending a $5.00 check for the renewal of my subscription to the **Signs** for 1 year. I felt to be so empty and barren at this time to write anything spiritual, but all of a sudden it seemed the spirit of love was flowing from my heart, rejoicing in my Saviour and my God, and the lovely hymn came to me,

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believers ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole,
And calms the troubled breast;
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary rest.

Dear name! the rock on which I build,
My shield and hiding place,
My never failing treasury, filled
With boundless stores of grace.

Jesus, my Shepherd, Husband, Friend,
My Prophet, Priest, and King,
My Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,
Accept the praise I bring.

Weak is the effort of my heart,
And cold my warmest thought;
But when I see thee as thou art,
I'll praise thee as I ought.

Till then I would thy love proclaim
With every fleeting breath;
And may the music of thy name
Refresh my soul in death."

Yes, the name of Jesus does sound sweet to a believer's ear. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved. In him we live, move and have our being. For without him we can do nothing. We can sing praise unto his holy name, from whom all blessings flow, when blessed of him to sing with the spirit and with an understanding also. Jesus said, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. Verily, verily I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so that he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

How sweet to feast on Jesus the living bread which came down from heaven, when spiritually blessed of him! His words to them are spirit and they are life, to the ones the Lord quickens. The spiritual birth is likened unto the wind, they hear the sound thereof, but don't know whence it came, or where it goeth: so is everyone that is born again of the Spirit. For to be carnal minded is death but to be spiritual minded is life and peace, said Paul. The carnal mind is enmity against God, not subject to the laws of God, neither, indeed, can be.

I know that when left to the flesh, I cannot please God. I feel much of the time to be, "A stranger here below, and what I am is hard to know: I am so prone to sin, I fear that I'm not born again." This verse of a hymn comes to mind, "When through deep waters I call thee to go, the rivers of woe shall not thee overthrow: for I will be with thee thy troubles to bless, and sanctify to thee thy deepest distress."

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promises, as some men count slackness, but is long suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." He that hath the Father, hath the Son also. They cannot be separated. To we who believe, there is but one God. Love to all of you.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Mrs. Lula B. Fox

---

64 Cedar Crest,
Tuscaloosa, Ala. 35401

Dear Elder Spangler:

Enclosed please find my check for $25.00 for which I wish you to extend my subscription for two years from its expiration, and apply the remainder to help distribute the **Signs.**

Last May of the fourth Sunday, along with Sister Lorene Nixon, I was baptized into the fellowship of Salem Church, five miles southwest of Gordo, Alabama. Elder E. E. McCool and Lic. W. T. Posey were in the baptism. Since then I've had many doubts and fears and good reasons for sorrow because of illnesses in my mother's family and in my wife's mother's: but I am not sorry that I was finally brought to the point of asking for a church home. My best hope now is that I will be made to cling to what I have considered to be a hope – dim though it has often become. I feel to be weak in faith, and not nearly so charitable as once I thought I was; and from day to day it turns out that my worst battles are within myself.

My wife's health and attitude seems to be good still, except she still suffers somewhat with her left ankle which was broken last June. She is still teaching, and I have to start back on Friday, January 7th to complete the last half of my 22nd year at the University of Alabama.

Please give our regards to Mrs. Spangler, and remember us in your prayers. Forgive my feeble attempts to convey some of my feelings. I'm sure that you can read between the lines.

Hoping that you and Mrs. Spangler are well, I am.

Yours sincerely,
James L. Howell

(How glad I was to learn that our dear Brother Howell had been led to identify himself with the Lord's humble poor. I remember him when he taught at the University of Delaware, and I was pastor at the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware. – D.V.S.)

HIS CUP RAN OVER

Dear Brother Spangler:

I'm enclosing $5.00 for Mrs. M. E. Inge, 18 Laurel Avenue, Danville, Va. for the **Signs** for 1 year.

This morning before going to church Mr. George Soyars called and asked me to ride with him to Dan River; and I accepted. On the way down there he was telling me of some meetings he had attended; then he said, "I don't know if it does me any good for me to go at all." I thought to myself, that's about the way I feel this morning. George has pulled out from another faith and had his name taken off the church book. He is a believer in the Old School Primitive Baptists, I believe.

Getting back to the way I felt this morning. My wife said to me before I left for Dan River, "I hope preacher Spangler says something this morning to make you feel better." I was feeling a little low. By the time we drove in the church yard that low feeling left me. We entered the church and sat about middle way back. The singing I thought was just wonderful. Then you said, "good singing was better than poor preaching." When the meeting was over, I didn't feel that we had had poor preaching. May the Lord be praised! It was one of the sweetest meetings I've attended in a long time. It seemed like the Lord just lifted me up.

2 Cor. 4:18, the text you used Saturday night, also this morning, has somehow lifted me up: The natural eye and also the spiritual eye. The things that are not seen are eternal. The preaching this morning somehow was sweet to me. "My cup runneth over." When we are given to meditate on spiritual things and eternal life, we are a blessed people.

Galatians 1:1. The Apostle Paul in the first verse declared that it was not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father who raised Him from the dead. Though a learned man, the Apostle Paul sought not the praise of man, but pointed to one who had done all things well.

I just love to meet with God's people in sweet fellowship.

Love and fellowship,
Allen Carroll

SOMETHING TO CONSIDER

607 Millbrook Street,
Selma, N.C. 27576

Signs of the Times.
Dear Elder Spangler:

So many times we fail to express our feelings to loved ones until it's too late. This letter is to my Mom and Dad, and I hope they can read it before it's too late.

Mom and Dad have been active in the Primitive Baptist Association for about 35 years. There were so many things I wasn't able to understand until now. In the ways they tried to teach we children, I just thank God for them, what they believe, and the way they live by what they believe.

I knew there was something different, but I was so wrapped up in the worldly things of life, I thought I was right and they were wrong. I didn't become aware of just how wrong I was until the 3rd Sunday in October, 1976. Would you believe this was same day Dad was baptized 34 years ago.

Now I know the blessed hope they have comes from God, because they could not have received the strength they have from any other source. I pray that God will continue to give me this strength, and I can live the rest of my life the way they taught me.

I love them dearly and hope that I will be worthy to see them beyond this life.

A sister in Christ, I hope,
Mary P. Mitchell

3737 Tillott Road, S.W.
Roanoke, Va.

Dear Elder Wood,

I am enclosing a copy of a letter written to us by Elder C.B. Davis, Jr. of Roxboro, N.C.

Having his permission to send this to you and ask that if you think it worthy for publication in the **Signs**, to edit and publish at your convenience and space.

I was blessed to visit the Upper Country Line Asso. last July and on the Saturday evening there, Elder Davis used the scripture 17th Chapter of Jeremiah, 11th verse, as part of his discourse. My Cup ran over. It was just a short time before this, I was reading that scripture and was given to wonder what those eggs meant. Having returned from the Association, I wrote him and Sister Davis of those thoughts. This letter was an answer I received. I felt it too rich not to share it with the many readers of the **Signs.**

However we leave this to your judgement. I trust that you and Sister Wood are well and enjoying many blessings of the gracious Heavenly Father. We would love to have you both to visit us when ever you can.

Harding joins me in best regards and love for Christs sake.

Rlee B. Houchins
2737 Tillett Rd., S.W.
Roanoke, Va. 24015

("As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so is he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at the end shall be a fool." (Jeremiah 17:11)

Roxboro, N.C.

Mr. and Mrs. H.C. Houchins
Roanoke, Va. 24015

Dear Ones:

We were so glad to see you folks again and spend a few moments in fellowship. We enjoyed the meeting so much, for it so seemed that Christ was there.

We appreciated your letter as I told you Sunday, and I should have answered before now. It seems we are so busy, it is easy to put off that which is our duty.

I would say, let us praise his Holy Name that He gave you the desire to hear of the eggs that wouldn't hatch; and I trust gave me an expression of words.

The scripture is the absolute likeness of carnality and self-works. He allows his people to go a full measure of their ways, and then shows them the folly thereof.

The partridge sitting is totally depending on her labor for the regeneration of life. There is no surety for her that the eggs are fertilized, and yet she sits, and will suffer even death to protect that trust she has in self-works.

The worldly people rest (sit) upon and rely on their self-works, and are satisfied that it is sufficient. Their hope has not been fertilized (the quickening Spirit of Grace) so they know not that their hope of regeneration is dead (can hatch not).

Surely it is disappointing to the partridge to find that she must learn that upon which she trusted, just as God's people feel that the end has come when He teaches them that their self-works cannot bring forth regeneration.

The eggs (seed) of God's dear ones were fertilized in Abraham when he was told that he and all his seed would inherit the kingdom. Then our hope (nest) is full of living eggs in that God is not lax in his promises. Faith does not cause us to believe that regeneration will cause us to resemble these bodies (as the

chick the partridge) but will be a spiritual one in perfection.

Within the egg (natural) are two parts, the yoke which is inside enclosed in the white – just as the body of man encloses the spiritual, which is actually new life that some day shall burst forth to glory in Christ.

The spirit desires to break out and go to be with Christ, and this is why God's people think of death as the beginning rather than the end.

The end (destruction of the egg) is the only way life can come forth, so the body must be destroyed that the life eternal may be attained. Flesh and blood cannot (carnal) go to see Christ.

I had not intended to write so much, yet it seemed hard to find a stopping place. May we render praise and thanksgiving unto him that the nest (his sovereign will) is filled with the works of Christ (live eggs) to a jot and tittle, and that the incubation (his word) is assured through the warmth (Grace) that He tenderly watches over the eggs (His little ones in mercy) and will not see the nest robbed or a single one fail to hatch (be lost), but will see that all are raised up in the last day (the resurrection).

We send our love and best wishes to all of you.

In bonds (eggs) of Christ,
Eld. C.B. Davis Jr. and Jeanette

SISTER LUCHT EXPRESSES HER APPRECIATION

Chestertown, Md.

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

There doesn't seem to be any better way for me to thank all the precious brothers and sisters, everywhere, than to send a letter to the **Signs**, for all the cards, letters and flowers I received while in the Hospital during February. To feel the love and fellowship each one expressed, was better than the best treatment the nurses could give.

Then one day while I was still in the Coronary Care Unit, I looked up to see the dear face of Elder Poole. Brother Harry Ward was just outside the door. No one can ever guess what that visit meant to me, as well as another, the following week, by he and Sister Poole. To know they cared enough to travel nearly 100 miles to visit me, was almost more than I could stand. I feel to be such a little one in God's great Kingdom, and to realize His love extends even to such a little one, thru His chosen Pastor and others, who I feel are much more important in His sight than I, overwhelms me. I was richly blest again about an hour before I was discharged, by a visit from Brother Frances Adkins. It was near lunch time, and when my tray came, I told him spiritual food was much more needful than natural food, just then. His visit just added a sweet flavor to my lukewarm food, later. How the Lord did seem to bless me, and continues to do so. I missed the Welsh Tract Meeting very much, but Sister Poole promised to record it for me. First time I've missed in many years, but the Lord knew why, and He knew I was there in spirit.

Now I am home and doing nicely, as long as I take it easy and rest a lot. When I go back for my checkup in a couple of weeks, I hope the Doctor will give me permission to return to my part time work. If not, I ask the Lord to bless me with the understanding to say, "Thy will, O Lord, not mine", be done. For I know, that too, is in His hands.

Receiving the **Signs of the Times** while in the hospital was a real treat, for it provided me with a "solid" contact with my people, and provided good reading.

There was many precious portions of Scripture given me during that time. To mention just a few of His precious promises to those who trust Him, and believe, "II Corinthians 12:9 – "My Grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness"; and Isaiah 41:10, "Fear thou not, for I am with thee. Be not dismayed for I am thy God, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness". And then the precious 23rd Psalm, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want". And oh, so many other comforting verses. "There remaineth a rest for the people of God." Hebrews 4:9.

Many times we do not heed the warnings given us to slow down. We go on in our strength until finally He puts a stop to it, saying "Be still, and know that I am God." Our "stops" are for His purposes to be made known. I often think of His promises to His children, and each and everyone is sure and steadfast. He never goes back on a single one.

I always enjoy the many good articles in the **Signs.** I especially enjoyed the articles in the latest **Signs** on Predestination, and to read again, Elder Poole's Circular Letter to the Salisbury Association. It could not have been said in any plainer words, for anyone to understand, if the Lord has blest them with a mind to do so.

I've written more than I intended, but I do want everyone who wrote me, to know I appreciated it, and I love you all, for Christ's sake.

God bless you all and keep you in His Care,

Sister Ruth Lucht

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** will be held, the Lord willing, at Aycocks Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in May, 1977. Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold Pittman, Clerk
P.O. Box 4528
Rocky Mount, N.C. 27801

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the **Staunton River Union** will be held at Weatherford Church, the Lord willing; the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in May, 1977.

L. H. Doss, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP DISTRIBUTE THE SIGNS TO FEBRUARY 25, 1977

Mrs. A. J. Beauchamp, Fla. $1.00
Mrs. Wyllye Warren, Md. 1.00
Mrs. James M. Hawley, Va. 1.00
W. J. Mera, Cal. 1.00
Mrs. Elizabeth Barnes, Ore. 20.00
(In memory of her mother, Mrs. Margaret M. Taylor)
Mrs. Nellie Turlington, N.C. 1.00
Sister Fernie & Morrison, Can. . . . 50.00
(In memory of Eld. & Sister Ruston)
Joe Mackenzie, Can. 1,000.00
Mrs. G. W. McDuff, Tex. 1.00
Miss Brookie Stewart, N.C. 1.00
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Mrs. Estelle Cockrell, N.C.. . . . . 3.00
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Clifton Robertson, N.C. 2.00

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All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to to Danville, Virginia, as shown below.
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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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Danville, Virginia 24541

EDITORIAL

ACTS 10:1-8

"There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the Italian band. A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always. He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, "Cornelius." And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, "What is it, Lord?" And he said unto him, "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is on the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do." And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually; and when he declared all these things unto them, he sent them to Joppa."

All of the religious world is involved in preaching what they call the gospel. The fervor in one order of people is about like that in another. Their objects may differ, but what one has in mind is an important to them as what the other fellow has in mind. I feel sure, in the most, if not all cases, everyone is sincere. Every man is religious, and worships the god that he knows. There is something vital and sacred about everyone's religion. As far as our system of government is concerned, we do not have any right to intrude on his religion and deny him his American right to it. Since this is true, I indulge no thought in my mind to regulate the American people in their right to worship as they please.

With all of the above in mind, it is yet my right and obligation, as a minister of the gospel, to oppose error wherever I meet up with it. But my right does not end with opposing error; it is also my obligation to contend in a kind manner for what I feel the scriptures teach and to remember that I might be wrong and that he might be right. This assertion might be questioned by something like unto this: Do you know that you are a minister of the gospel? The only answer that I feel free to give is found in the ministry of another man. His experience was that he did not know anything as he ought. I do not know anything as I

ought, but I have authority given me as an ordained minister, by the highest ecclesiastical body recognized by the Bible as well as my government.

In the expounding of the above writing, together with related passages, I do not anticipate dealing with personalities. I will, as blessed of God, write to the point, even calling things as I see them. I do hope that I will not be stampeded into any unbrotherly charges or language, but to deal only with the subject under consideration. To do this, it will be necessary to oppose some matters that have been promulgated in various places. I also realize that what I call error may be regarded highly by someone else as truth. Of one thing I am sure both ways are not true. One of them is wrong, and it could be that both of them are.

I have read quite a bit, and studied to some extent, the comments of Dr. John Gill, that sinners are regenerated by the preaching of the gospel. I feel sure that that expression will be called in question. It is not my intention to make regeneration and being born again as synonymous to each other. I do not think that it is correct to do so. If any of my readers think so, and they mean to say so in their writing and preaching, then I mean to deal with them in that way as though I believed it that way. I had never heard such an idea expressed by our people in America until recently. I know some Missionary Baptists near me that preach acceptably to our people until they get on the effects of the preaching of the gospel on dead sinners.

It is true that nearly all, if not all, of our English brethren accept that as being the truth. I have recently conferred with the editorial staff of both the Gospel Standard and the Zion's Witness, and they kindly advised me that that was their position. They were somewhat reluctant to affirm that all unborn men were brought into divine life by preaching the gospel. I am sure that they have a satisfactory explanation of that position for themselves. It just does not seem compatible with the general tenor of the scriptures to say that God has more than one way to imparting life to dead sinners.

I have felt sure that the Bible taught that the gospel of Jesus Christ brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, but if language means anything (and it does) then bringing to light a matter or a thing is far different to bringing about life. All of the people I know are careful to feed the living, but I have not known a case of them feeding the unborn or the dead.

In turning from the Jews to the Gentiles where will we find a record of the bringing of them in? In such an important matter, we need to know, 1. How that nation that was not a nation toward God, was dealt with in the matter. 2. We will certainly need to know the relationship between this brought in nation and the Jews who had been the choice of God for centuries.

Let us take up how the first Gentile was brought into the kingdom of heaven manifestly. This is a test case both as to his condition before being brought in, and the manner in which he was brought in. I realize that a lot of people, yea, even brethren, think that any other Gentile would have, and that he could have, been the pattern to leave on record. This does not fit the gospel of the grace of God. God calls His children by name. Jesus Christ did not call at a bunch of men on the Damascus Road. He only called to Saul of Tarsus, and in our present text He only called Cornelius. That means everything to me. He called Abraham by name; he called Martha by name

twice in succession; He designated Peter when He first arose from the grave. If I have been called out of nature's darkness into the light and liberty of God's children I was called by my given name. This man Cornelius was a devout man, and this word is also used in connection with Ananias. In each case it means that they were both reverential. There must not be any question, any quibbling, about the integrity or the veracity of either one of these men's standing before God, for a reflection or a question hurled against either as not being genuine children of God, is a reflection on the other. It is unequivocally true that Cornelius was a child of God before Peter ever saw him. If not, why not?

This man, this certain man, also feared God with all of his house. It might be said, Many men fear God but that does not make them children of God. True in many cases. In this and many other cases, this has the Greek meaning of the word 'feared' as one that is caused to fear. If that isn't the way that it is with every God-fearing child of God, then you may have it all, for it is a tinkling cymbal and as sounding brass. This same usuage with the same meaning is given in connection with scores of other children of God. Therefore He was a child of God before he ever beheld Peter, and this fear was God-caused.

He gave much alms to the people. Ah, how delightful the theme grows. How this displays the mercies of God. Whatever subject that we may write or preach upon this is the center of it, the theme of every (God-given) article or discourse, it is the same; the divine mercies of God. The subject is about God's children being quickened into life by the direct and effectual workings of God's Spirit in them without any auxillaries or any instrumentalities or any secondary works by men or angels. The proof of it is before us. He shared with others what the Lord had given to him. The word "alms" in every case in the New Testament means kindness, or a kind act. If we give credibility to the testimony of James (who will be first to say that we do not?), we are assured that neither faith nor works will stand alone. He brings up a case in support of that lofty thought. If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled, notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit? (James 2:15,16) He explicitly clarifies that the children of God have faith given them; that this gift of the Spirit, as do all of the gifts of God, makes room for it wherever it is sent. Verily by their fruits are they known. Cornelius had the fruit, therefore he had the Spirit in Him from whence all goodness and kindness (alms) come.

He prayed to God always. Ah, what a line of communication had been opened between God and the sinner, Cornelius. Who opened it? Did the man Cornelius open it? What? A man born of a woman that had brought death in sin upon every descendant delivered from her womb? A man born under the law that always produced death, and that never will produce life? Surely, surely no one will take that position. Seeing that it is utterly impossible for a man dead in sin to act in order to have the marks of a child of grace which this man had. It does seem that it is better to follow that line of thought than it is to say that God sent Peter to feed sheep, and lo and behold he found one of them dead.

This man saw a vision about the ninth hour of the day. I am sure that had I the

gift and the time, much could be found delightful for meditation on this ninth hour, but since that is not the subject, let us pass on. I know that the human mind is often catapulted into melancholy and disarrangement from which many illusions and visions come. Those things do not belong here; to refer to them as bearing on the truth is another serious illusion. This man Cornelius saw a vision. He did not think that he saw it. He saw a vision. Luke said that he saw one (Luke is the author or the Acts), and I believe that he saw one. Do you? Furthermore, in the vision an angel of the Lord appeared, and called to Cornelius. Cornelius was afraid. You tell me, well you have gone too far. You are palming this off on us as a miracle of grace, but if it was the workings of grace, Cornelius certainly would not have been afraid. To this argument, I suggest that you read Acts 9:5, 6, 13, 14.

In his astonishment he asked, "What is it Lord?" Saul did not ask what at the appearance of Jesus of Nazareth. He asked, "Who art thou?" That is the question every awakened sinner asks. He does not know who is disturbing him. He knows that a Lord has disturbed him, he knows that a Sovereign has disturbed him, but he does not know who he is. But Cornelius is in the divine relationship that exists between the Lord Jesus Christ; being in that relationship, He asks, "What is it, Lord."

What was the angel's answer? No one, no one at all, can take what the answer implied and ever be found advocating that it is necessary for an Adamic man to hear the preached word before he becomes an inquirer, before he becomes a follower of God, before he becomes acquainted with God, before he becomes a child of God.

W. D. G.

" I AM the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

I desire to offer some of my thoughts on the words of our Savior as here quoted, because these words of the Savior have been hard for me to reconcile with my belief of what the Scriptures teach: "salvation by grace," but now for some years past I have had my mind settled as to the truth taught by this parable. I have a desire that my brethren see them, provided the editors see fit to publish them, for I believe the editors are right in wanting to keep out of the **Signs of The Times** that which is not in harmony with the Scriptures and does not make for peace. Self or our individual feelings should not be considered when the interest of the cause of truth is at stake.

The Savior here, as in many of his parables, takes a natural illustration: the vine and its branches, to teach us a spiritual truth. We know in nature it is true that a branch severed from the vine cannot bear fruit, so Jesus says: "No more can ye, except ye abide in me." So we see it would be just as impossible for a sinner to bear the fruit of the Spirit, separate from Jesus, as it would be for a natural branch to bear fruit separate from a natural vine. Now let us reason a little here. We know that no natural branch has anything to do in uniting itself to the natural vine in order that it may bear fruit; this alone is the work of the husbandman. In nature the abiding in the vine, the branch is passive,

and I will also say in bearing fruit it is also passive, and the bearing of fruit depends not upon the branch, but upon the vine, and should there be any superfluous growth on the branch it is alone the husbandman's business and work to trim it off, or as the Savior says, purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit. In every sense of the word we know in nature the branch is passive. "I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." So here we also prove that salvation is by grace, and that all depends upon the union: "If ye abide in me." This is a statement of a condition, and not a proposition, as though it depended upon the man. "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit;" no "if" about it.

Now let me here call special attention to the words of the Savior as above quoted: "He that abideth in me, and I in him." I believe there may be an abiding in Him in the letter in profession, and they are the branches that wither and bear no fruit. Now this parable, like other parables of our Lord, was spoken of the state and condition of the kingdom of heaven at the closing of the law and the beginning of the gospel dispensation, at which time both saint and sinner were together; each had the same right in that law service, but in the setting up of the gospel dispensation the axe is laid at the root of the tree, and fruits meet for repentance must be brought forth. Take the parable of the ten virgins. The five foolish had no oil, though they had the lamps (the profession), and they could not enter the gospel kingdom, and here Jesus said, I never knew you. They were the fruitless branches taken away, because they were not in vital union with the Vine, so bare no fruit. Also the parable of the wheat and the tares, where it is said: "Let both grow together [in the law dispensation] until the harvest [the beginning of the gospel dispensation]: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn." In his explanation of this parable Jesus says: "As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world [the law dispensation]. The Son of man shall send forth his angels [gospel ministers], and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity." These are the fruitless branches that were in the kingdom, as represented in the vine, that were to be taken away and burned. So the parable of the net that was cast into the sea, which, when it was full, they drew to the shore and sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world (law dispensation), the angels (gospel ministers) shall come forth and sever the wicked from the just. These are the branches in Him nominally that are taken away; as they had no vital union with the Vine, so bare no fruit. "If a man abide not in me." If this is not indeed and in truth his state and standing "he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." But on the other hand, "He that abideth in me, and I in him [if this is his state and condition], the same bringeth forth much fruit [for no difference what our claim or profession may be]: for without me ye can do nothing." If I were in a vineyard with a friend and should point to a branch of a vine and say, Except that branch abide in the vine it cannot bear fruit, I would make a

statement of a truth that my friend would not think of denying, nor would he for a moment think it depended in any way upon the branch to abide in the vine.

Then if this proposition is true in nature, will it not hold good in the way and plan of salvation? Is the sinner passive in the reception of life? I here mean eternal life, for it cannot be disputed that he is in natural life. We take the position that man is passive, that life to him is a gift, and the reception in no way dependent upon the act of the dead sinner, and that all are dead in sin no one who understands the teaching of the Bible will deny. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." And by reason of this death in sin there is none that doeth good, there is none that seeketh after God; they are all gone out of the way and become unprofitable, and in this state can no more go to God than could a natural branch engraft itself into a natural vine. "No man can come to me, [says Jesus] except the Father which hath sent me draw him." "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman."

So all who bear fruit in this vine are grafted in by the Husbandman. Yes, all the branches were loved and chosen in this Vine before the world began, and because in union with the Vine, are born again and receive as a gift the "divine nature." So the Lord said to Israel, "From me is thy fruit found." Doing good works is the fruit, the evidence, and not the cause. He that is of God heareth God's words. "We are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error." Now is there any choice with the natural branch in regard to bearing fruit, or is it optional with the branch whether it bear fruit or not? I do not believe it is. Then has the sinner born again any option in the matter of bearing the fruit of the Spirit? Can he in any way prevent or hinder? I do not believe he can. The apostle said to the Philippian brethren: "For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Could those brethren in any way have prevented God's good pleasure being done in them? I am not carrying this point too far, am I, brethren? When Jesus said unto Lazarus, "Come forth," he could not help coming forth; so I believe that all who hear the voice of the Son of God come forth, having passed from death unto life.

Now let us go back to the branch again for a little while. There are only certain seasons when the branch bears fruit; there is in nature winter and summer seedtime and harvest. There is not power in the branch by which it can bear fruit "out of season," it must wait the appointed time to bear fruit. Is not this true in nature? How is it then in the spiritual kingdom, does the antitype agree with the type? I must say I believe it does. All the blessings God has in store for his people are in his own hand; he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and will have compassion on whom he will have compassion. So says Paul, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but to God that sheweth mercy." David says: "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favor her, yea, the set time, is come." And the set time with our God can neither be hurried nor hindered. For he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. This, some may say, is all true as to the redemption

and calling of God's people, but after they are called they are to perform good works. "A branch cannot bear fruit of itself," so Jesus says, "Without me ye can do nothing." Then if I do good, that which is pleasing to God, it is no more I that do it, but the grace of God that is with me. There is no inherent goodness in man from which good can come, and the stream will be like the fountain. A clean thing cannot be brought out of an unclean, and to my way of looking at it, it is very wrong to ascribe the glory to man when it is the grace of God that enables his people to walk uprightly, according to the gospel. If his people cannot do anything without Jesus, then it seems to me all the praise is his; and now, instead, as I believe, God's people are not blessed for doing, but blessed in doing. The blessing goes before, as we read: "Blessed are they that do his commandments." Just as it is written, "Blessed are they that mourn," or, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." We do not believe God's people, who understand the truth, would think that the poor sinner mourned or hungered and thirsted after righteousness in order to be blessed. Then why think they are blessed for doing? For all true obedience is the result of divine grace, for it is God that works in his people to will and to do, and it is all in the hand of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will and for the purpose of his own glory. The nights and the days, the winter and the summer of God's people, are the ordering of their heavenly Father, and he hath said, Summer and winter shall not cease. David says, "Thou hast made summer and winter." He makes those seasons with his own dear children, and they cannot change winter to summer nor night into day. David says: "Thou hast visited me in the night; thou hast tried me." This is the time when the Husbandman purgeth the branches, and they are made to inquire, "Watchman, what of the night?" and are made to say with Job, "Wearisome nights are appointed to me." For here "He shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening."

These are the appointed seasons of our God in the personal experience of all his people, and the night and the day, the winter and the summer come and go at God's appointed time, and are among the all things that work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. We might say if the natural branches could make the season, then they might always bear fruit, then they might escape the purging process; but this cannot be done. So if God's people could prevent the winter they might bear fruit the year round, and so escape the scourging. But whom the Lord loveth he scourgeth; bastards do escape, but no son or daughter does. Take Job as an example, for I believe he was a figure of the church, and the Lord bears this witness of Job: "A perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil;" and yet the Bible gives no account of one more afflicted and tried than Job. God has chosen his people in the furnace of affliction, that their faith should be tried as gold, and there is no way to escape this furnace.

I have had a little hope now for forty-six years, and have been trying to preach about forty years, and I truly believe in these long years I have been taught the truth as expressed by the old prophet: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not a man that walketh to direct his steps." I have waked much in darkness, doubts and fears, and

can say as did one of old, I have heard from afar glory to the righteous, but as for me, my leanness, my leanness. Now if others can and have escaped bonds and afflictions by their obedience, I confess I am remiss in duty, I have not yet learned how; and there is no desire stronger in my heart than that the blessed Lord would say unto my soul, I am thy salvation, and that I might rest in his love. "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?" The answer to this inquiring one gives me some hope: "If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock." Here we are told to follow the pattern, "The footsteps of the flock," and to do this, then we know "Through much tribulation" they entered the kingdom. So hope, blessed hope, is the anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and by this precious hope we are saved. Without him, we can do nothing.

Now, brethren editors, I have written more than I intended; I had only in mind to say something about the Vine and the branches, and that it was not branches in union with the Vine that were taken (not cut off) away, but I got to writing of my personal experience, and have written maybe more than will be profitable, if so, cast it aside and all will be well. I want to say I believe and love the doctrine contended for by the **Signs of The Times**: "Salvation by grace;" yes, the grace of God that bringeth salvation to the poor, helpless sinner, both for time and eternity.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD

Elgin, Oregon, Jan. 12, 1913

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"IT IS FINISHED"

When the beloved Son of God hung on the accursed tree, when his soul was poured out unto death, when frighted rocks were burst asunder, the heavens in sackcloth were veiled, when the rugged bars of death were loosed and tombs of marble resigned their sleeping tenants, when by the rending of the veil of the temple the ark and cherubims and mercy-seat were all disclosed, while, nerved with malice, Jews and Romans mocked, while racking pains and most tormenting smarts were inflicted on that blessed Lamb who bore our sins, when justice drew its flaming sword and vengeance struck the dreadful blow, when hell exulting in her hour of darkness, amidst the awful grandeur of that dreadful scene, the voice of triumph from the expiring Savior's lips shook the creation to its very centre; stern death, in dreadful terror clad, affrighted, paused and felt the thunder of that voice which in all the power and majesty of the eternal Godhead shouted, "It is finished."

With due humility and that reverence which becomes the ransomed of the Lord, let us inquire, What was finished? From the sacred record of eternal truth we learn that all was finished that the glorious Mediator had begun. Love was not finished, for the love of God had no beginning. Election and predestination, with all the perfections of Jehovah which shine forth in the economy of salvation, were not finished, for these were without beginning and can never, never end.

But something was certainly finished by the Savior when he in triumph gave the victorious shout, nor has our Lord

left this important subject in the dark. He who runs may read, He finished transgression, made an end of sin, &c. He himself has declared that he has finished the work that his Father gave him to do. We eagerly inquire, What then was the work that his Father gave him to do? The Son of God responds, I come to do thy will, O God. I am come to do the will of my Father who sent me, and to finish the work. And this is the will of him that sent me, that of all that he has given me I should lose nothing, but should raise them up at the last day. And the Father has given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. A shining messenger from the world of glory came down from heaven to earth to announce the work that Jesus was to perform, viz.: His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his poeple from their sins. He finished the redemption of his people agreeably to the prediction of the palmist: "The redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever."

First. He has finished the redemption of his people, and it ceaseth forever.

Second, He has finished, or made an end of sin, as far as it relates to those he represented.

Third. He finished the law as far as relates to its demands in reference to the election of grace and the fulfillment of its divine requisitions. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." Heaven and earth shall pass away, but one jot or tittle of the law shall not pass until all is fulfilled. He is the end of the law for righteousness unto every one that believes.

Fourth. He has finished transgressions, for his blood cleanseth from all sin. He has given himself for his church, that he might redeem it from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Fifth. He has finished the curse, having borne our sins in his own body on the tree, and being made a curse for us, as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.

Sixth. He has finished the covenant of works, having blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which were against us, nailing them to the cross.

Seventh. He has finished the work of making sacrifices for sin. "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins."

Eighth. He has given a finishing stroke to the perfection of his people, for by one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified.

Ninth. He has finished death, having destroyed death and him that had the power of death, which is the devil.

Tenth. He finished the work of his sufferings, being now baptized with that baptism for which he was straitened until it was accomplished. When deep called unto deep, and the billows of divine wrath went over him, deep waters came into his soul.

Eleventh. He finished the complete pattern which he set for his children to walk in. Let no presumptuous wretch dare attempt to change the pattern of the things in heaven.

Finally, he has completely finished all that was written of him in the law, in the prophets and in the psalms, and all that was necessary to secure the eternal salvation and justification of his people, and left them to challenge wicked men and devils, to declare, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." It is Christ that died. He was wounded for their transgressions, he was bruised for their iniquities, and the chastisement of their

peace was upon him and with his stripes they are healed. He sees of the travail of his soul, and is satisfied.

Reflection. Is it finished, or is something remaining to be done by the redeemed in order to secure the blessed objects of the death of Christ? If something remains to be done, whether it be using means, or giving our hearts to God, or our money to modern institutions, or sitting on anxious benches, or anything else, much or little, then is the work not finished, and the words of the expiring Lamb of God are contradicted. But be assured, dear reader, whatever relative duties are enjoined on the disciples of Christ, there is among them nothing to be added to the finished work of the Redeemer—nothing to render his redemption efficient or effectual, or to extend its benefits to any for whom God did not eternally intend it; so far indeed from it, all the good works of the people of God are the immediate result of the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing can be added to or taken from the work which Christ finished when he yielded up the ghost and bowed his head unto death. "It ceaseth for ever."

Here then the Old School Baptists find a sure foundation to build upon, and hence we preach Christ crucified, and proclaim a finished salvation in his worthy name—a salvation completely suited to the case of the poor, the needy, the halt, the lame and the blind; a salvation suited to the condition of every hungry, starving soul who by grace is made to feel his wretchedness and mourn his sins, but by no means suited to the case of the whole, who need no physician. The Pharisees of eighteen hundred years ago rejected this finished work, and from that day to the present it stands rejected, despised, opposed and slandered by all the workmongers who have flourished in our sinful world. But tell us, reader, how do you view the prefect work and finished salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ? for be assured if you despise this doctrine you are yet in your sins, but if you love the doctrine and can feed on it you are not far from the kingdom.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, February 10, 1837)

HOPE

It having been suggested that we give some expression regarding the above subject, shall try to comply. Perhaps few subjects antidate this one, and few are of more importance. After Adam's transgression, and the Lord had promised deliverance from sin through the seed of the woman, his soul was filled with hope. Hope is expectation, anticipation, hence began to be enjoyed by man early in the beginning of the world. Before the transgression, in Eden, there was no need of hope. Man had all things to be desired and needful to his natural being. There was no need of increase of the things of earth to cause him to look forward with hope of better days. The trees of the garden were plenty, fruitful and pleasant to the eye. The river, eastward in Eden, well watered the garden, so that it was sure to produce abundantly. Every beast needful and necessary to man was at his hand. Every fowl of the air was there present, and the fishes of the sea were at his command.

In all this is seen the perfection of the garden, the air and the sea. With nothing lacking, there was, therefore, no need of hope—nothing to anticipate. But when man sinned there was an infinite vacancy, and at once he began to hope that he might hide his naked condition from the Lord with an apron of fig leaves. This re-

minds us of the hypocrite's hope, which is like a spider's web. The first utterly failed, and the second is of no value whatever. The first hope is very prevalent in the world to-day. Thousands are hoping to hide their sins from God by their good works, but universally fail. It really seems strange, when such hope was exploded in the beginning of the world, that intelligent men will continue to make fig-leaf garments to cover their sin. But the blind cannot see, and the dead (in sin) know not anything.

One thing was necessary to Adam that he lose confidence in nature's garment, and that was to be clothed with skins by the Lord, through the shedding of blood. Never again did he depend upon the figleaf garment. The promise of God to the sinner, of salvation through the seed of the woman (Christ Jesus), was the hope of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Because of such hope, and faith in the promise, Abel offered a lamb unto God and it was accepted. Because of hope and faith in God, Enoch walked with God and was translated, not seeing death. Because of hope of salvation Noah built the ark. Because of the same hope Abraham went out, not knowing whither. He sought a city that hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God. Because of this hope he staggered not at the promise, but believed God, being strong in faith, and it was counted to him for righteousness. Because of this hope old Jacob blessed his sons and prophesied concerning better things than Egypt could afford. Daniel, because of his hope in God's promise, worshipped with his face toward Jerusalem, not fearing the displeasure of the king. David and other prophets exhorted the Israelites to trust in the Lord, who was able to deliver them. One said, "What wait I for, my hope is in Thee?"

Christ Jesus was the hope of the Lord's people, according to God's promise, in olden times. Job hoped to see Him for himself and not another, being assured that his Redeemer lived. By faith men of God in the former dispensation anticipated the coming of the promised Messiah. Simeon gloried in the Lord when his eyes beheld the salvation of Israel, and said, "Now, O Lord, lettest thy servant depart in peace." The apostles were begotten unto a lively, or living, hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. When it was revealed to them that the Lord had visited his people through Jesus in the forgiveness of their sins, they rejoiced in the hope of the glory of God, and ever talked and wrote of this blessed hope. Paul said, "We are saved by hope." In this bringing the saints of old and of the gospel day into fellowship one with the other. The hope in the Lord of salvation from sin and death is one hope, strong and everlasting. This good hope through grace, or the unmerited favor of God, is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and is entered into that within the vail, whither our Forerunner for us hath entered. Therefore in times of fire we hope; in times of storm we hope; in times of temptation we hope; in times of affliction we hope; in times of loss, in times of cross, we hope; hence are save by hope;

Hope is always in the future, therefore we look for still another heaven, wherein dwelleth righteousness; where we shall see him as he is, and be like him; where that one glorious song is sung, which none but the redeemed can learn: "Worthy thou art, for thou hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood." When this is entered into, the fullness of God's promise to Adam shall have been fulfilled,

and hope, sighing and weeping will be no more.

Editorial by:
(Elder Ker. July, 1922)

OBITUARIES

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

By request of the members composing Paynes Creek Primitive Baptist Church that a Memorial be written in behalf of our Pastor, Elder B. Odell Thompson, who God called from this life December 19, 1975, I trust God will direct my mind to write a portion of my feelings.

Elder Thompson and his companion, Sister Gaye Thompson were baptized into the full fellowship of the Church October 4, 1925. After a short time he had impressions to speak to God's people in public of the wonderful works of God toward the children of men, and soon after was ordained to the full work of gospel ministry, which he served about 47 years.

It can certainly be said that he was a faithful member and Pastor, who was blessed to preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified, this being the only way of life and salvation. He was a lover of peace among the brethern and was blessed to speak so comfortably to the believers of God's truth. Sometimes only a few words were so comforting till my cup was filled and runneth over. To those who were in trouble, trials and afflictions he was blessed to speak so comforting. Several times I have had to go to him when in trouble and so heavily burdened. After talking to him I found a great comfort, then felt bad to have bothered him with myself. He was so understanding and much concerned and always tried to comfort me in my trials. I am sure there are many who have had some similar experiences with Elder Thompson.

The members and friends of Paynes Creek Church have suffered a great loss, as well as the other churches he served as pastor. He will also be missed by the sister churches and associations he was blessed to visit. We feel that our loss is his eternal gain. That he could witness with the apostle Paul "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." II Timothy 4:7, 8.

We feel he is resting in peace, waiting for the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who will change this mortal body to a spiritual body, like unto his own glorious body, and be carried to that Heavenly Home to ever be with the Lord in praising his name forever in perfect praise. Then Elder Thompson will have come in possession of this good hope he prized so dearly these many years.

Our deepest heartfelt sympathy goes out to Sister Thompson who was a faithful companion till his death. May God comfort her in her bereavement for He is the only Comforter.

Be it resolved that we bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Father who works His sovereign will. That three copies of this Memorial be made. One to be sent to Sister Thompson, one to be placed in the Paynes Creek Church records and one to the Signs Of The Times for publication.

This done by the Church in Conference at our October meeting 1976.

Elder J.L. Agee–Moderator
H.B. Cannaday–Clerk

IN MEMORY OF ELDER B. O. THOMPSON

I first met Elder B. O. Thompson about 25 years ago. As we kept meeting, our friendship and love for each other grew. In 1953 when we lost our pastor Elder L. A. Harris, Elder Thompson began to come and visit Union Church. Others came also, but it was not long before Union Church called him to pastor at Union. He served us faithfully for 18 years, coming when it was a task for him to come, always declaring the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of the Christian's faith.

I had some wonderful experiences with Brother Thompson. Most of the time he served us I would be referred to the scripture he used as a text, and read it before I went to church. Many times I went to his home when I would get into trouble, and we would talk, and I would leave satisfied. While he served Union Church seven members united and he baptized five of them. When his health began to decline he asked the church to look out for them a pastor. He recommended Elder Hale Terry who

serves us now.

I visit some of the churches Elder Thompson served, and we miss him everywhere we go. It is easy to see how his companion misses him; but we realize that an alwise God makes no mistakes, so we bow in humble submission to His will, believing our loss is his eternal gain, and ever hoping that some sweet day we shall meet in a spiritual recognition to ever praise a loving Saviour who did it all for his people.

Union Church will always hold him precious in her thoughts. It was wonderful to have known such a man, and to be with him.

Written by a little brother who loved him,
Willard Cox

OBITUARY OF LEE ANDERSON PICKERAL

As requested by Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing, I will write a few words in memory of our Dear Brother Lee Pickeral. It pleased our Heavenly Father to call him from our midst on December 8, 1976 at the age of 95. He died in Lynchburg General Hospital, Lynchburg, Virginia.

Brother Lee was born in Pittsylvania County, the son of the late George and Paninah B. Pickeral. Survivors are five daughters; Mrs. Virginia Harmon, Concord, N.C., Mrs. Vernice Atkinson, Miss Grace Pickeral and Miss Nona Pickeral all of Hurt, Va., Mrs. Lois Pallante, Gretna, Virginia; two sons; Henry Pickeral of Vienna, and Acie Pickeral of Hurt, Va.

He was received into the fellowship of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on September 26, 1925, a faithful member, always ready to help whenever he was needed. I remember hearing my Grandmother speak many times of what wonderful people they were. I believe the life he lived was as a light set upon a hill or maybe better expressed, that his light so shined that his friends could see the Love of God in him and render unto Him all the praise and glory. Brother Pickeral was always concerned about the welfare of Weatherford Church.

We will all greatly miss him, but most of all, he will be missed by his family and friends in Hurt, Virginia. I feel our loss is his eternal gain and may we all be reconciled to the Will of Our Heavenly Father who does all things well and never makes a mistake.

His funeral was conducted at Springfield Primitive Church by Elders O. K. Tench, Raymond Goad, and Denver Simpson. His body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Gretna Burial Park.

Written by: Marvin Brumfield
Elder O. K. Tench – Moderator
L. H. Doss – Clerk

NANNIE KIRK POTTER

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to take from our midst a dear and lovely sister, Nannie Kirk Potter.

Sister Potter was born August 5, 1885, and was married to Lewis Jackson Potter, July 10, 1904. He died eleven years ago. To this union there were ten children born. Two died in infancy. Two daughters and six sons survive: Mrs. Clara Jones, of Martinsville and Mrs. Ruby Reynolds of Rocky Mount; Willard Potter, Martinsville, Benjamin Potter, Roanoke, Ralph Potter, Penhook, Cliff, Gene and Hoover Potter of Rocky Mount. Surviving also are 23 grandchildren and 28 great grandchildren.

She was received into the fellowship of Chapel Church and was baptized June 9, 1918 by Elder Joe Brooks. She was a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace.

She was a lovely and faithful member and attended services as long as health permitted. The children so lovingly cared for her, always providing a way for her to go to many churches, which she enjoyed so much.

She passed away in Franklin Memorial Hospital, February 28, 1976. Funeral services were conducted at Lynch's Funeral Home by her pastor Elder O. K. Tench, with burial in the family cemetery near Penhook, Franklin County, Va. beneath a beautiful mond of flowers, awaiting the coming of her blessed Saviour. We shall miss her but feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by request of her daughter, Sister Jones.

Elder O. K. Tench, Mod.
Mary Brown, Clerk

WILLIAM RONNIE HOWARD

In my sorrow I will try to write an obituary of my grandson, William Ronnie Howard, who was born July 8, 1954. He was unable to walk, talk, or feed himself, but his mind was real good, especially spiritually speaking. On or about November 23, 1971 he was received and baptized in full fellowship of Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church, where he enjoyed many good meetings. He dearly loved the children of God anywhere he met them, and all that met him seemed to like him. He loved Jesus better than all other things. He said Jesus called him to "come and follow me."

We believe that Jesus called him to come and live with Him, that where I am ye may be also. He wanted Jesus to come and get him and give him a new body. On the first day of June, 1976, we feel that Jesus took him home where he will be given that new body, which Ronnie

longed for so much.

So we, his loved ones will say, Sleep on Ronnie and take thy rest. We all loved you dearly, but Jesus loved you best. And they will say also, Thank you Jesus for taking him home with you in that new Jerusalem. . . There will be no afflicted body there, nor sickness, sorror, or pain, and no more tears but peace and love, singing that new song of God and the Lamb in the City of God, which will never end. Written by order of the church by

Oscar Howard

MRS. LESSIE HALL SMITH

Mrs. Lessie Hall Smith died at her home Friday, May 28, 1976, age 79 years and 11 months. She was born in Caswell County, North Carolina, and a life-long resident of the Camp Springs Community.

Surviving are, her husband, Arthur L. Smith, two daughter, Mrs. Nina Wilson and Mrs. Eva Paschal, one son, Hilton Smith, four brothers, Elmo, Birch, Irvin, and Coy Hall, one sister, Mrs. Blanche Talley.

In her last years Lessie suffered much, and was confined to a wheel chair. Even then, she showed concern for all to be comfortable in her home. Her husband and children did the best they could for her.

Before her last illness, she attended meetings at Pleasant Grove Church when able, and enjoyed the singing of hymns. Among her favorites were "Amazing Grace," "Rock of Ages," and "Cast Down, But Not Destroyed." She often spoke of being so tired, but we believe she is now at rest. We do miss her, but the good Lord knows best for us. May we trust Him and look to Him.

Burial service was conducted at Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church by the pastor, Elder Donald Smith, and Elder Wallis Smith.

Written by her sister-in-law,

Mrs. Rosa Page

MARY CLEMMIE EVANS

Old Mountain Primitive Baptist Church acknowledges the passing of their dear Sister in Christ Mary Clemmie Evans. She was born June 28, 1892, died October 12, 1976.

Her parents were William and Nora Bryant Evans. Her husband was E. B. Evans.

She leaves three daughters, Mrs. Bessie Owen, Mrs. Dorothy Hundley of Danville, Va., Mrs. Ruby Guthrie, Newport News, Va., and one son, O. L. Evans of Danville. Twenty grandchildren, 33 great grandchildren, and three great-great grandchildren.

She was retired from Dan River Mills where she had worked 53 years.

Sister Evans was a lovely member. She loved her Brothers and Sisters and family dearly, and had many friends. She loved the Truth, and was Blessed to bear her illness, the past four years with Grace and Patience, and speaking always, that the dear Lord's will be done. She suffered the loss of both legs, a few years apart, by operations. After the first one was taken, she continued to come to meeting in her wheel chair. We miss her very much. Her family attended to her every need with love and kindness.

Funeral services were held in the Swicegood Funeral Chapel by Elder Haywood Wray, Burial in Danville Memorial Gardens.

Written by request of the church and approved by them.

Elder H. W. Wray

DURA A. SMITH

We bow in Humble submission to the will of our heavenly Father, who has called from our midst our beloved Brother D. A. Smith. He was born to, John Harvey and Sallie Bell Smith, in Parker County, Texas, on November 11, 1891 and passed away December 13, 1976, age 85, in Mangum, Oklahoma Nursing Home.

He was united in marriage December 2, 1967, to Sister Willie Foster, in Snyder, Oklahoma. Though their marriage came late in life it was filled with great joy in their belief of a Great and Merciful Heavenly Father. Brother Smith, united with Little Flock Church, Altus, Oklahoma, February 24, 1968 and was baptized March 23, 1968. He loved, strongly advocated and was blessed and willing to defend the doctrine he so dearly loved, salvation by grace and grace alone. Even in a very weakened condition on his death bed his Faith in Jesus gave him a supply of inner strength to proclaim his Great God. Oh, what wonderful evidence he was given to show forth each time I visited him in his home; also, in the nursing home.

He leaves to mourn his passing, his beloved wife, Sister Willie Smith, of Mangum, Oklahoma. A daughter by his first marriage, Juanita Copeland, a step-daughter, Ela Bell Simpson, two brothers, three sisters, five grand-children and seven great-grandchildren and a host of other relatives plus friends who will greatly miss him; and we truly believe our loss is surely his eternal gain.

Our beloved brother was laid to rest in Frederick, Oklahoma Cemetery, to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Humbly submitted by request of his dear wife

Elder C. M. Haygood

MRS. LUTIE HOLLY POWELL

Mrs. Lutie Holly Powell, daughter of the late John and Virginia Holly, was born July 29, 1909 in Pittsylvania County, Va. and passed away suddenly at her home in Roanoke, Va. on Feb. 2, 1977. She was married on Aug. 7, 1926 to Brother Henry J. Powell.

She is survived by her husband and one son, Ray J. Powell; two daughters, Mrs. Lois Huddleston and Mrs. Linda Guttman; seven grandchildren; one great-grandson; two sisters, Mrs. Clarence Stegall and Mrs. Virginia Horsley.

Sister Lutie joined the Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church Dec. 1, 1956 and together with Brother Henry was baptized by their pastor, Elder Cecil E. Turner, Dec. 2, 1956.

She was a lovely and faithful member, always filling her seat at church and entertaining the many brethren, sisters and friends in her home. She was a devoted and loyal wife and a devoted and helpful mother and grandmother. To her neighbors and friends, she was most kind and enjoyed helping the sick and the afflicted and ministering to those in need.

Her funeral was conducted at Oakey's North Chapel Feb. 5, 1977, by her pastor, Elder Cecil E. Turner, after which she was laid to rest in Sherwood Memorial Park, there to rest until the day of the resurrection, then her hope will become a reality. The many beautiful flowers and large attendance of friends testified to the esteem in which she was held.

May the Lord bless Brother Henry in his great loss, together with the rest of her family and give each of them the Peace, Comfort and Consolation that none but the Lord can give.

By the request of Brother Henry, this memorial was written and humbly submitted by an unworthy sister,

Mrs. H. C. (Rlee) Houchins

BROTHER AND SISTER GEDIE L. BLALOCK

It is with sadness that I write a short notice of the passing of these two precious members of Bethel Church. Yet, I unhesitatingly affirm to you that my heart and soul breathed a humble petition to God for a spirit of thanksgiving that He had called them out of the sufferings of this present time. Through the ministration of His divine Spirit, He has given us the best assurance that their passing was one of going out of a land where sorrow and desolation prevailed, into rest that is beyond the comprehension of occupants of this land to know.

I do not know much of the life genealogy of our brother. The primary interest of these near to him in the flesh and those near to him in the Spirit, in the fact that for a long time he was a bitter enemy of the truth as it is in the Lord Jesus Christ. His first wife had not lived long, and he had married Miss Ruth Dorris, daughter of Elder William Dorris, and he had led her away from the truth to follow him, as he told me, a lot of silly foolishness. But she was never satisfied, and God begin a silent, and yet a sovereign work of grace with him. Accordingly, they both came before the Union Primitive Baptist Church in 1932, and was baptized by our lamented Elder E.Z. McCool. In May 1937, they, together with others, were constituted into Bethel Church, and our brother was ordained a deacon, which he performed the duties thereof in a most humble manner.

They were married in early 1916, to which union the following children were born, Mrs. Enda King, Columbus, Miss. Mrs. Doris Blanton, Columbus, Miss., William Blalock, Columbus, Miss., and Mrs. Ellie Ruth Younger, Meridian, Miss.; with several grandchildren and other relatives.

Brother Blalock was born Dec. 17, 1881, and died Nov. 11, 1976. Sister Blalock was born Dec. 30, 1896, and died Dec. 29, 1976. In life and in death the Lord displayed His divine goodness to them. He had been in a bad state of health for several years and had to be waited on like an infant. Sister Blalock had often been closeted in prayer that she would be able to wait on him as long as he lived. This was granted to her.

Their home was always a resting place for the disturbed, the wearied, and their presence at church was always a full day for those that loved the kingdom of heaven. Neither one of them desired any eulogy in life not at their funeral, and yet their children, their brethren, their present pastor as well as two former pastors will always remember their many deeds of kindness.

Each of their funerals were attended by the only three pastors that their church had had, Elders N. C. Moon, E. U. McCool, and the writer.

Written by request of the family.

W. D. G.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 145 DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1977 No. 6

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION
DATE IS
6/77
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE WORK IS FINISHED

How distressing it is for us to hear men proclaim doctrines entirely contrary to that of God our Saviour; and our souls are vexed at the ungodliness in high and low places. False doctrine is the rule rather than the exception among the nominal christians, and millions follow their leaders without question. It would not seem quite so bad were it not for the fact that these things are professedly preached in the name of Jesus; if they were in any other name we would not be so much concerned, but when the name of our God and Saviour is dragged in the dust of ignorance and unbelief we are much troubled. For many years now there have been but few voices raised in strong and persistent opposition to these things, or, as a matter of fact, in strong defense of the truth. To do so has seemed to many to be a hopeless and thankless task, but it did not deter the prophets of the Lord in olden times to cry aloud and spare not, for thus they were commanded to do. Jesus and the Apostles did not spare ungodly men and their errors. In Proverbs we read, "The lot is cast in the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord."

Not only did the prophets cry against the heathens, but they also reprimanded Israel for their idolatries and unfaithfulness; and in the days of the Apostles there was a continual cry against errors both in and out of the church. Paul charged Timothy to, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." No one can deny that this is what many did, and it remains so until now; and it accounts for the many different denominations in the world,—and the many different and contrary doctrines, each claiming to be the church and to hold the doctrine of the church. These claims are absurd when a comparison is had of the things taught and recorded in the Scriptures, —and written in the hearts of the true followers of Jesus, with the things taught and believed by the many orders.

There is no denying that Jesus established but one church, and set it up on one foundation, with the doctrine and order clearly defined. It is, therefore, safe to say that any organization, no matter what its name, is definitely

not the church unless it is standing solely on that foundation and upholding the doctrine and faith and practice of the original. It appears that all men must have some sort of religious belief, which may be called a natural religion, for it is after the way that seems right to them; but pure religion, and true worship is truly a matter of revelation from the Father, for in no way else can mortals know God, nor the things of God; neither can they know his purpose in all created things, nor his decree for eternity after time and earthly things are ended. Philosophers of old searched for these things, but their searching could not open them up; it remained for God himself to reveal them, and this he did to holy men of old, causing them to record them in the Scriptures. And not only this, but he reveals and confirms his ways in the hearts of his people by his Spirit, when the blood of Christ purges their consciences from dead works to serve the living God. The religion of man is handed from father to son in their generations, and may be taught in schools and learned by study, but can never transcend the limitations of the spirit of man which is in him; while the Spirit of God teaches the individuals of the generation of Jesus Christ and they are all fellow-citizens of the household of God and they are, "A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that they should show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light." (1 Peter 2:9)

The church, therefore, is not a worldly organization; though they are in the world, they are not of the world. Their worship is in Spirit and in truth, and they are no longer concerned with forms and ceremonies, for they are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein they were held; that they should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. (Romans 7:6). The church is composed entirely of those who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began, being the very ones for whom Jesus came into the world to redeem,—every one of them, no more or no less. The whole purpose of God in them is complete, since it is both designed and executed by the God-head; and the members of it are the recipients of the amazing love and grace of God, rather than the attainers unto it either by will or by work.

The purpose for which Jesus came into the world is stated clearly in the Scriptures. It was to save his people. He did not come to offer the world anything, or to compromise with them, or make a way possible for them to be saved; but rather, to redeem those who were his people and who had eternal life with him, but who needed redemption because of their fall in sin. The angel announced to Joseph that Mary should bring forth a Son, and that he should call his name Jesus; for he should save his people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21). And Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." And also, "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." This is a sure thing, – the whole power of the God-head is behind it. Peter said to the strangers scattered that they were, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."

ELDER WOOD RETIRES AS EDITOR

The above was one of the first Editorials written after assuming the editorship of the *Signs* with Elder Spangler in 1951. In re-reading it, I find that it contends for the same doctrine I have been preaching all the while; and that it is the truth on which my hope is anchored.

For more than a year I have felt that I must give up some of my activities; and feel that it is the Lord's will that I do so. At my age of 79 with its infirmities, and trying to serve several churches, I find it difficult to keep up with the work on the *Signs of the Times*. My resignation has been accepted by the Trustees as of this June issue, and I am glad that Elder James F. Poole was appointed Editor by the Trustees; and he has accepted. He stands firmly on the doctrine which Elder Gilbert Beebe announced in the beginning of the Signs in 1832, and, as enabled of the Lord, he will maintain the same doctrine, and the paper will remain sound in the faith. We trust that the Lord will enable the brethren and friends to support him by their writings on scriptural subjects, experiences, etc., which are of great interest to those who love the doctrine of God our Saviour.

It has been a pleasure to be associated with Elder Spangler and the Associate Editors. Elder Spangler and I have worked together in complete harmony in maintaining the doctrine, etc. for 26 years.

Through my work on the *Signs,* I have become acquainted with many brethren in many parts of the country, and they have greatly supported us by their comments, in our endeavor to publish such articles we deemed sound in doctrine and written in language easily understood. We have not been able to publish all articles received, due to the limited space in the paper.

The Lord willing my interest in the *Signs* will not cease. My prayer is that the Lord will sustain the paper in doctrine, etc. to the interest and edification of the brethren and friends,—all to the praise and glory of the Lord.

Elder Poole's address is P. O. Box 1250, Salisbury, Maryland Zip 21801, to whom letters and notices of meetings, etc. should be addressed.

"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen."

In the best of bonds,
John D. Wood

ELDER POOLE ACCEPTS EDITORSHIP

Sometime in 1963 Brother Turner Lassiter of Atlanta, Georgia, who many remember as the one who reprinted Hassel's History and Gill's works, called me to come by his place of business in downtown Atlanta for a visit. At that time I had been about two years in that area pastoring a congregation of limited Predestinarians. They were lovely people, but the elders of that area were in fierce opposition to the doctrine I advocated. Bro. Lassiter knew this and after a few minutes of warm conversation he went to the back room and returned with a stack of old yellow covered magazines. "Here is what you believe. They are the people you should be with," was about what he said. I inquired as to whether he believed the material he was giving me and he said that while

he couldn't deny a word of it, he sorta stood in between. Thanking him, I took my new acquaintances home to see if indeed we really were friends. Oh! the joy to discover for the first time what others had known for years. Someone was printing a periodical with the doctrine of God, my Salvation in it. This was my first exposure to the *"Signs of the Times."*

Sadly, however, I did not follow up this contact until the fires of opposition grew hotter. The Lord's time was now come and I wrote Elder Spangler, as I had observed that he was Managing Editor. After his response to my questions there was little doubt but that the people known as the *Signs* Baptists were my people. In time I was blessed of the Lord to beg a home among them, confessing Christ and His Holiness as my only Hope.

Now, though weaker, more feeble, and vastly more unqualified than ever, I have been asked by the Trustees to serve as Editor in the capacity that Elder John D. Wood has so ably been serving. Dear Friends, I feel this to be fearful and trying. Yet I am made to feel at the same time that our dear Lord is sufficient. Without Him I cannot lift a finger, say a word, pen a line. With Him, I cannot fail, but prosper in that which He has ordered. How can we tarry when our Master bids us follow? Dear Ones, pray for me. Remember me at the time of prayer. I would desire to do a job worthy of His Name and for the comfort and edification of the Flock. That worthiness can be found only in His approving smile. May Providence guide us all and may the *Signs* continue to be the Standard of Truth. By His Grace I will do my appointed part. I ask the other Editors and many contributors to the *Signs* to continue in your fine support. I am but a child and the work is for a man.

In conclusion, may I say that Elder Wood has been for these many years a true watchman on Zion's wall. We have all felt secure knowing that he and Elder Spangler upheld the principles upon which the *Signs* was established. May the gentle breeze of His prosperity continue with our publication.

Humbly,
James F. Poole

DIRECTORS TO THE UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION, 1977

The seventy-first session of the Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association will be held with the Greensboro Church, the host church, at McLeansville School, Guilford County, N. C.

At Greensboro take I-85 north about 10 miles, exit north at Mt. Hope Church Road, about 8 miles to McLeansville. Coming from the east, exit also at Mt. Hope Church Road.

We cordially invite Ministers, Brethren and friends of like faith and order to join with us in this association. Services beginning at 11 o'clock Saturday before the third Sunday in July, 1977, ending Monday.

Donald E. Smith, Assn. Clerk

NOTICE OF MEETING

As there has been considerable interest for some time in an Old School Primitive Baptist Home for the aged, a meeting has been called for the purpose of discussing the same. All interested persons are invited to meet at the Falls of Tar River Church, Rocky Mount, North Carolina, at 9:00 A.M., on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1977. The church has offered its meeting place for this purpose. For further information, call or write Brother George Pearson, 508 Bethlehem Road, Rocky Mount, North Carolina, Phone 919-443-3814.

PINE CREEK MEETING

The Annual Meeting at Pine Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Floyd County, Va., is appointed for the usual time, July 4th, 1977.

Danville, Virginia June, 1977

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All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Danville, Virginia, as shown below.
All notices of meetings and obituaries should be mailed directly to P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Virginia 22110. Articles for publication may be mailed to either address.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
R.F.D. 6, Box 270 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

"And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords." Rev. 19:16

In "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John," Rev. 1:1. John saw Jesus as the *King of Kings* and *Lord of Lords.* This name was on his vesture and on his thigh. "He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and his name is called The Word of God." Rev. 19:13. John saw Jesus as King in his Kingdom which was now made manifest as he reigned before his ancients gloriously. John saw His People with him, "they that are with him are called, and chosen and faithful." Rev. 17:14.

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the *King* say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matt. 25:31-34.

Paul, in writing to Timothy, in I Tim. 6:15-16, says "in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen."

We see (by faith) Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death; crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man, for it became him for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he

is not ashamed to call his people brethren.

But now we see not yet all things put under him but we see Christ Jesus as our Prophet, Priest, and King. We are ignorant, and blind by nature and need him as the *Prophet* to enlighten us and instruct us and make known unto us the will of God. We are sinful, guilty creatures by nature and children of wrath even as others and need him as the *Priest* to make atonement for us. We are enemies of God in our state of nature and need him to subdue us. In our converted state we are helpless and weak and need him to rule over us and to defend us as the King. We see Jesus as our Prophet, Priest and King. What a blessing!

In former articles the writer considered Christ (the anointed) Jesus as Prophet and Priest. In this article Christ Jesus will be considered as the King.

Our Jesus is King, yes King of kings and Lord of lords. He is God, God over all, and as the Son of God heir of all things. He is God the Creator. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God; and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." John 1:1-3. John says in John 1:14 "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." He is God the Creator, he has a right to dominion over all his creatures, in heaven, earth and hell. The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. Nebuchadnezzar says in Dan. 4:34-35 "I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion and his kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?". In Dan. 4:37, Nebuchadnezzar said, "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase." Here we see Jesus as King and the kingdom that belongs to Christ and God — man and mediator. This is a special limited kingdom over which he is king. This concerns only the elect of God, and others only as they are enemies of the elect and his kingdom. The subjects of this kingdom are those who are chosen, redeemed, sanctified, and glorified. These bear the name of saints. In Rev. 15:3 Jesus is made known as King of saints. This kingdom and government of his is what is put into his hands. In Is. 9:6-7, it says that the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. There is no room in this declaration for any of the works of men. When the number of his elect is completed in effectual vocation, he will deliver up the kingdom to the

Father, perfect and entire, that God may be all in all.

How do we know these things? It is the work of God that we believe on him whom he has sent. We are given to say as in 1 Peter 1:3-5, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." We see Jesus. We feel we can say, "His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me" Sol. Song 2:6. All temporal blessings are from him; life, health, home, family, and everything that is needful. We feel these blessings are given us as we travel through this wilderness, this world, which is no longer felt to be our home. We feel that we are given faith and can say that the life we now live in the flesh we live by the faith of the Son of God who loved us and gave himself for us. We feel we are justified by faith, our sins are pardoned, we have been given the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, "Abba Father." We feel when Jesus said on the cross "It is finished" it was for us. We feel as David did in Ps. 16:11 "Thou wilt shew me the path of life; in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." With meekness and fear do we give the reason of the hope that is within us. We feel that he that has begun a good work in us will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Temporal or left-hand blessings are bestowed upon all of the children of men yet they truly realize it not. Spiritual blessings are bestowed upon only the elect of God. They do indeed realize the giver of temporal and spiritual blessings, yet, cold their warmest thought but when they see him as he is they shall praise him as they ought. They and they only can say truly "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" that is the gift of his dear Son.

We see Jesus in the prophecies. In Ps. 2:6-7 it reads, "I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou are my Son: this day have I begotten thee." In God's eternal purposes, Jehovah set up Jesus, as king, over his church and people. And as he appointed him to be king he also appointed him a kingdom. In Luke 22:28-30 Jesus said to his disciples "Ye are they which have continued with me in temptations, and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." In Heb. 1:8 it reads, "Unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." In Ps: 24, David speaks of the King of glory, the Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle, the Lord of hosts he is the King of glory.

In the types of Christ in the Old Testament we see Jesus as King. From his quality as king, Melchizedek had his name which means king of righteousness or righteous king and from the place of his government, king of Salem which means king of peace. David was a type of Christ for his wisdom, his leadership skill, his courage, and his justice in government. Solomon's reign portrays his wisdom, his

riches, the extent of his kingdom and the peace of it. Jesus makes mention of it in Matt. 12:42 when he speaks of himself "Behold a greater than Solomon is here."

It is a wonderful blessing when we read the Old Testament, to see our Jesus. We see Jesus in Gen. 3:15, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Here we see Jesus Christ and him crucified. Surely this is a demonstration of his kingly power. In Jer. 23:5-6, it reads "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord Our Righteousness." In Hosea 13:10 and 14, it reads "I will be thy king" and "I will ransom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave I will be thy destruction." What other but our King of Saints could bring to pass the saying "Death is swallowed up in victory?"

Christ was with the church in the wilderness. He spoke to Moses on Mt. Sinai, and it was from him that went the fiery law, the oracles; for the rule, government and the instruction of Israel. He went before them, to guide and direct them. He brought them out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, through the wilderness and into the promised land. He appeared to Joshua as the Captain of the Lord's host. David acknowledges him in the 145th Psalm, "I will extol thee, my God, O King; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever. Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever. Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable. Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations."

We read in Matt. 2:1, that the wise men who came from the east to Jerusalem said, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." An angel said unto the shepherds in Luke 2:10-11, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." In Matt. 21:5 it reads, "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass." As Christ rode into Jerusalem the people cried saying, "Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest." When Jesus hanged upon the cross they set up over his head his accusation written, "This is Jesus the King of the Jews." On the day of Pentecost Peter declared that that same Jesus which was crucified was honoured as Lord and Christ. He declared as Paul did that he was crowned with glory and honour. Paul declared in Phil. 2:9-11 "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." Our King is eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God.

May we give him honour and glory for ever and ever.

Our King is anointed with gladness above his fellows. He is crowned with glory and honour. He is clothed with majesty. His sceptre is a sceptre of righteousness. Isaiah saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up and his train filled the temple. Paul says in Heb. 1:3 "When he had by himself purged our sins sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high" and in Heb. 1:13 "Sit on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

As in Ps. 103.9, "The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all." In Is. 66:1 it reads, "The heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool." His kingdom as mediator is special and limited and is over a certain number, his elect, chosen in him before the foundation of the world. They go under the name of Israel, house of Jacob, the holy hill of Zion, and are called saints. His people are the whole spiritual house of Israel consisting of the elect among Jews and Gentiles. The church of God is Christ's kingdom and the members of it his subjects. They are of all nations, and kindreds, and people and tongues. Some belong to the church militant, others do not.

Christ executes his kingly office by the ministry of his word, and administration of church ordinances and in the exercise of discipline in the church. He works internally in the hearts of his people and by his power in subduing the enemies of his people. He has promised to write his laws into their (his people's) minds and write them in their hearts and he has promised to be unto them a God and also that they shall be unto him a people. The Lord's portion is his people. He has said also that they shall not teach every man his neighbour and every man his brother to know the Lord for all shall know him from the least to the greatest. He has promised in the new covenant which is ordered in all things and sure that he will be merciful to their unrighteousness and their sins and iniquities will he remember no more. Jesus said that his kingdom was not of this world.

In Heb. 1:10-11 it reads "Thou Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: they shall perish; but thou remainest; and they shall all wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." We see that the first heaven and the first earth shall pass away. Peter says in II Pet. 3:10 and 13, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

Christ's kingdom as mediator is not of this world. It is not a temporal but a spiritual kingdom. Although his people are in the world they are not of the world. The first man Adam was of the earth earthy. The last Adam (a quickening spirit) is the Lord from heaven. "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have born the image of the earthy, we shall also bear

the image of the heavenly," I Cor. 15:48-49. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed and caught up together with the Lord in the air to be forever with him. Christ's kingdom is spiritual, it is righteous, it is peaceable, it will last forever. It is built on a rock and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Often we are given to reflect on the way we have come. We felt in our state of nature to be our own king but alas we found all to be vanity, pride ruled our will and we were of our father the devil and his works we would do. The King stopped us in our mad career, changed our heart and turned our feet to Zion's hill. He quickened us who were dead in trespasses and in sins. We were given to feel with Isaiah in Is. 6:5, "Woe is me for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." Once having tasted that the Lord was gracious, the desire of David in Ps. 27:4 has been a continuing desire, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple." Sometimes we feel so strongly that with Isaiah our eyes shall see the King in his beauty and behold the land that is very far off. At times we are filled with doubts and fears and are of such little faith if indeed any of the true faith at all. Yet we do have a wonderful realization that like David we shall not be satisfied, unless and until we awake and behold His face in righteousness.

We have been weaned from trusting in ourselves. We have learned to trust the King who knows the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things which should come to pass. We found his word to be the voice of a King when he said, "Humble yourself therefore under the mighty hand of God and I will exalt you in due time." When he said, "Come and see" we were obedient to the voice of the King. When he said, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord," we found we must obey. We have felt chastening and yet realize that we are sons and not bastards if chastened by him. We have seen him turn the heart of a king in our dealings with men. After we have suffered awhile the King has established us, strengthened us, and settled us. We have found that we have rejoiced that "The Lord is King" and that "The hand that made us is divine." Sometimes we feel there is prayer and praise when we can feel to say, "O Lord thou art my God and King, thee will I magnify and praise."

What a wonderful Prophet, Priest and King we have. The writer intended to write but a little. My mind at this moment seems to rest in the words of a Psalm we sing (Ps. 24)

"Ye gates, lift up your heads; ye doors,
doors that do last for aye,
Be lifted up, that so the King
of glory enter may.
But who is he that is the King
of glory? who is this?
The Lord of hosts, and none but he,
the King of glory is."

(Elder) D. Alex McColl

TWO DAYS MEETING

The Dan River Primitive Baptist Church at Mayfield, N.C. has appointed a two days meeting, Saturday and Sunday, June 25th and 26th, 1977.

This meeting will be the fiftieth anniversary of the re-possession of their meeting house, after being deprived of it almost four years; and also the observing of the fiftieth year of the pastorship of Elder D. V. Spangler.

An invitation is extended to brethren and friends to meet with us.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE FIG TREE

Ghent, Ky.
Feb. 1, 1890

ELDERS GOLD AND LESTER, DEAR BRETHREN:—It is written: "And when he saw the fig tree in the way he came to it and found nothing thereon but leaves only and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee hence-forward forever. And presently the fig tree withered away." Matt. 21:19. I was requested recently by sister Wiginton of Franklin county, Ky., to give my views through the columns of the LANDMARK on the above quotation. I am often made to inquire why dear brethren and sisters do not submit their inquiries to able ministers of the gospel rather than to one like I am who knows his ignorance of sacred things and his inability to offer that which would comfort, instruct and edify them while in their earthly pilgrimage. But let it be remembered that our Lord did not see that fig tree by chance, by accident, but he saw it in the way. His way while on earth was fixed in the eternal mind and when in that way he saw that fig tree and it was barren. He saw it with all that was growing on it which was nothing but leaves.

It is written: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works." While that language when it was recorded applied to the Old Testament Scriptures yet it now applies with great force to that which was recorded in the New Testament. To the inquiring saint this inquiry arises. How am I instructed by what is recorded about that fig tree? It may be very appropriately said that if there was nothing in that text that was profitable to God's people it would never have been recorded. But as it is part of the sacred word it behooves his saints to seek to know what its teachings are. He saw that fig tree in the way and it may appropriately be said that he saw it from before the foundation of the world, for it represented the law dispensation which he in his advent to the earth must close up.

The word "way" there used had a deep and wonderful meaning. The fig tree was in the way. The legal dispensation was in the way and must be removed before the gospel dispensation could be set up. But none could cause it to wither. Yea to be rolled up as a scroll and be thus removed out of the way of the glorious gospel dispensation, but him who was the great antitype of the things pre-figured by that law dispensation. Those figures and those shadows presented to us in that dispensation were only shadows of good things to come. Certainly none can be filled by attempting to satisfy their hunger by attempting to eat a shadow. That fig tree bore no fruit, nothing but leaves, hence there was nothing on it to satisfy hunger. The legal dispensation was only a shadow of good things to come. There was nothing in it to free the spiritual Israelite because Christ is the only living bread, and that dispensation pointed to him by its shadows. Those shadows were profitable because they pointed to the substance which is Christ. Then the scriptures that give us an account of those shadows are profitable to the children of God as well as those which

present its removal out of the way. The apostle in speaking of that which was represented by the fig tree says: "Whose voice then shook the earth, but now he hath promised saying, Yet once more I shake not only earth but also heaven." And this word, Yet once more signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken as of things that are made that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

When the law in all its jots and tittles was fulfilled by our gracious Lord it like the barren fig tree was moved out of the way. The glorious gospel dispensation could not be shaken because its foundation was the Son of God. "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid which is Jesus Christ." He says, "Upon this rock will I build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." That rock was Christ. Was that of which David speaks saying, "He placed my feet upon a rock." He is the true foundation into which all the building (the church) is fitly framed together. He is the substance prefigured by the law and the offerings made under it. But the fig tree was barren of fruit, it only bore leaves. The offerings under the law dispensation could not make the comers thereunto perfect. They could not take away any sin more than the leaves on that fig tree could afford nourishment. But our Lord came to that fig tree and said that it was barren. He saw that the law dispensation was barren of power to save his people, thereupon he was made under the law to redeem them that were under the law and declared by his servant the apostle, by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

The leaves on that fig tree were evidence of life but not of vitality which produced fruit, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. Not the knowledge of that life which alone dwells in the great antitype of its offerings. Therefore it must be removed out of the way. Our Lord alone could cause that barren fig tree to wither and he alone could fulfill that law and remove it out of the way of the gospel dispensation. He by his prophet says, "Behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven and all the proud and all they that do wickedly shall be as stubble. Behold the day cometh that shall burn them up both root and branch, but unto you that fear my name shall the Son of righteousness arise with healing in his wings."

Our Lord said to that fig tree, let no fruit grow on thee henceforth and forever, and presently the fig tree withered away. The prophet said, The day that cometh shall burn them up saith the Lord of hosts. This prophecy was fulfilled when our Lord came to earth. All the pride and vanity of the Jews which led them to look to the law for justification was burned up. There was no fruit borne by that law to feed the living children of the Lord Almighty. It only yielded to them a knowledge of sin the wages of which is death and consequently it presently withered away. When it withered then it was removed and the glorious Son of Righteousness arose with healing in his wings. He arose out of the darkness of that legal dispensation, and by his rising the redeemed in all lands and climes have that light shining in them which is the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Ah my dear sister, when light shone in you there was no more looking by

you to that barren fig tree for fruit. Then you in rapture saw the gospel heaven opened to you and by faith beheld the Son of Righteousness shining in all his ineffable glory in its vast dome, healing the wounds that sin had made upon all his redeemed. Healing those wounds which could not be healed by any other than he who shone in your heart and gave you a knowledge of the glory of God. Not the glory of the law. Although that law is holy yet by it you saw that you were carnal sold under sin, for by it you had a knowledge of sin. Then you hungered and thirsted after righteousness. But how soothing the sweet and precious promise "Ye shall be filled." That was food to your hungry soul. You hungered and thirsted after righteousness because you in sadness and weariness had been looking to that barren fig tree (the law) for fruit and finding none. Then with the poet you cried out:

"When to the law I trembling fled
It poured its curses on my head.
I no relief could find."

When in that extremity the leaves of that fig tree could not sustain you. They were as valueless to you as the husks which the swine did eat were to the prodigal son. Those husks could not relieve his hunger because they were the food for swine. O what a contrast between those leaves, those husks and Christ the living bread. But that contrast is no greater than that which exists between those who are looking to the law for righteousness and those who are looking by faith to the glorious Son of God and are called by his name the Lord our righteousness. Our Lord said in giving the parable of the fig tree, "Behold these three years I came seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none, cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground." From the days of Malachi the prophet four hundred and twenty years before the coming of Christ the Jews had sunken more and more into idolatry and during the last three hundred years before that great and glorious event that people had ignored the great purpose for which the temple had been built, so much so that our Lord said it is written, "My house shall be called the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves." To that people was given that law dispensation. Through the offerings in their temple service the spiritual Israelite looked away to the coming of Christ. But during the three hundred years preceding that event prefigured by the three years that the man had sought fruit on his fig tree and found none, the Jews had so perverted the law that they disregarded the teachings of the law.

At that most momentous period he said cut it down. This with the other words quoted declare the end of that legal dispensation which was followed by the fearful judgments of God upon that wicked and perverse generation, and the gospel dispensation was set up that prefigured by the fig tree was removed. John says, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and earth were passed away and there was no more sea." When he had that vision the law dispensation had been closed for the things pertaining unto it were until John the Baptist. Then he saw the new heaven and the new earth for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. In that new heaven all the saints sing the song of Moses the servant of God and the

song of the lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways thou king of saints. For in that glorious kingdom, "A king shall reign in righteousness and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man, (the man Christ Jesus) shall be a hiding place from the wind and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as a shadow of a great rock in a weary land." All these great and glorious things are now to his people, to his redeemed because he has met all the demands of the law of sin and death and forever removed its penalty from them. When in a sweet and precious faith they behold him in his great and glorious character their song is "Bring forth the royal diadem and crown him Lord of All."

H. Cox

(From Zions Landmark)

"Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned by grace, but of debt." (Rom. 4:4)

The reward or salvation or inheritance in heaven is by the grace of God. Have you ever heard of anyone working for an inheritance? The reward or salvation IS NOT BY WORKS, but BY THE GRACE OF GOD. We quote these Scriptures to prove that salvation is not by the works of the creature: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Tim. 1:9) This Scripture states that salvation is according to the purpose and grace of God which was before the foundation of the world. (Please read it again.) "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2:8-10) Please notice that faith is not a product of the flesh, but it is the gift of God. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17) The Scriptures plainly teach that salvation is not by works but by grace. What causes God's people to walk in good works? Since God has ordained that his people should walk in good works, do you believe that they should fail to walk in them? (Please read Eph. 2:10 again.) Since God has purposed that his people should walk in good works, bring forth good fruit, etc., I do not believe there is anything that can hinder them from performing the good deeds. "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, *I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed* it, *I will also do it.*" (Isaiah 46:9-11) Please keep in mind that the providence, decree, predestination, etc. of God covers all events that the Lord has purposed in himself before the world began. Remember that we cannot understand the ways of God

"—There is no searching of his understanding." (Isaiah 40:28) We know exactly what it has pleased almighty God to reveal unto us, otherwise we know nothing. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." (Isaiah 55:8)

Let us get back to the subject. These words of Jesus show that he has ordained his people to walk in good works. What is the difference between bring forth fruit and walking in good works? "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you." (John 15:16) "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:12-13) PLEASE NOTICE THAT GOD WORKS BOTH THE WILL AND THE DO WITHIN HIS PEOPLE. They will not fail to perform these deeds because the spirit of God is working within them. "And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." (Ezekiel 36:27)

Dear reader, if you have the desire to do that which is acceptable in the sight of God, it is some sweet evidence that God has given you that desire. "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." (Rom. 7:18) Paul had the will or desire to walk in good works, but he knew something about the weakness of the flesh, and learned that he did not have the ability to perform his desire. Have you traveled this path? If so, then you have fellowship with Paul. At this point, we think of this Scripture: "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps." (Proverbs 16:9) "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jer. 10:23)

May God direct us to consider another important point: The children of God are the only ones who have the desire to do that which is right in the sight of God. "There is a way which seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Proverbs 14:12) The wicked have pleasure in unrighteousness. (see 2 Thess. 2:12) It is not left up to man to question God why we were created with the nature we have. "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." (Rom. 8:20) Who is going to charge God for being unjust for making us as He did? "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will be hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? (Rom. 9:18-21).

By nature there is none that seek after God and none that do any good. "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that

understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Rom. 3:10-12) Only those who are led by the Spirit of God bring forth good fruit. By nature there is not any difference between the children of God and the children of wrath. (see Eph. 2:3) What and who caused the change? "And you hath be quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." (Eph. 2:1-3) The spirit of God causes the change in the heart of one. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." (Ezekiel 36:26) One realizes that he cannot trust in his own works because they appear to him as filthy rags. Why? He once glorified in his own works but he learns that he cannot trust in himself any longer. The spirit of God causes you to know and mourn over your sins. "Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations." (Ezekiel 16:2) "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass." (Isaiah 40:6-7) Your own self righteousness fadeth away when the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon you. It was not pleasant, was it? "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our inequities, like the wind, have taken us away." (Isaiah 64:6) Let us quote the 6th and 11th verses of the 12th chapter of Hebrews: "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.—Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

It was hurtful to see yourself as a wretched and ruined sinner in the hands of a just and perfect God. You found out that you were in debt with nothing to pay. You were not able to do anything to help your case and learned the doctrines of men could not help you. You wanted a God who would go all the way to you and not one that pleaded for you to take the first step. You were made to cry for mercy and in due time the Lord delivered you. "He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him." (Psalms 91:15) "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:" (Col. 1:13)

Let us quote the text again: "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." The main thought that rest upon our mind concerning the text is this error that has crept in among the churches: "Our blessings in time depend or rest upon the result of our performing certain conditions." According to this

theory, God has laid out blessings for those that earn them. "If one does not perform the conditions, then he will miss the blessings that God has laid up for him."

In writing, I have learned that it is hard to convey one's thoughts to the readers. The writer may have one theme in mind while expressing his views; but the reader may not understand the thoughts that the writer is trying to bring out. "The preacher sought to find out acceptable words." (Ecc. 12:10) We (both the writer and the readers) need the Spirit of God to enable us to rightly divide the word of truth.

I believe that the blessings of God's people have been stored up in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, and they will receive all of them that God has purposed or decreed for them to receive. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." (Eph. 1:3)

Let us assume that one works for the blessing and performs all the necessary conditions. Then he has earned it and the reward is not by grace, but by debt. In this case, he expects the blessing because he has earned it, and God is indebted to bestow the blessing upon him. If he does not receive the blessing, in his heart he accuses God for being unjust. "To him that worketh, the reward is not reckoned of grace, but of debt." In this case one would not praise God for the blessing, but he would have the right to pat himself upon the back and glory in himself. "Where is boasting then, it is excluded." (Rom. 3:27) "That no flesh should glory in his presence." (1 Cor. 1:29) "Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another." (Gal. 5:26)

It is not my desire to be misunderstood. May God bless us to rightly divide the word of truth. Some handle the word of God deceitfully when they make conditions out of the exhortations in the Bible. God has a purpose in the admonitions, exhortations, reproofs, etc. that he inspired the ones to write. "—Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter 1:21)

Let us remember that an exhortation has its effect when the spirit of God is working at both ends of the matter. Therefore this leaves out the work of the creature. Meaning, when God is directing the one exhorting and the one who receives the exhortation, then it has its effect. Does man have anything to glory about? What has he done to receive any praise? Jesus said, "—Without me ye can do nothing." (John 15:5)

Since man can do nothing by his own efforts, he realizes that he has nothing to glory about.

The motive of satan is to rob God of the honor, praise and glory that is due the Holy name of the Lord. The conditional doctrine mentioned above robs God of praise, does it not? Those trapped in that error would deny robbing God, but in their hearts they would praise themselves for all their good deeds in performing the necessary conditions.

May the Lord enable us to render unto God all the honor, praise and glory that belongs unto His Holy Name. "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." (Psalms 29:2) "From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the Lord's

name is to be praised." (Psalms 113:3) The Scriptures do not speak of giving any praise or glory to man. "I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." (Isaiah 42:8)

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

EXPERIENCE OF BRO. LEE HOLLANDSWORTH

Dear Brethren in the Lord:

I have been given a desire to write to you for some years, unworthy though I feel to be, I just cannot get it off my mind.

I was born April 11, 1903 in Franklin County, Va. on old Brown Hill, about a half mile from Old Republican Church, in a two room log house, and in a very poor family. I hope I am thankful that I was raised poor, a poor helpless child; yet I feel the Lord knew me before the world began, and, if not deceived, the Father chose me out of the world and gave me to his Son with his generation of Jesus Christ our Lord.

I grew up in the mountains a wild sinful boy, but did not care. I lived with my father. We came to Bassett at the age of twenty. I stayed with my mother one year, then I was married to the girl of my choice. My mother and father were members of Knob Primitive Church; my wife's mother was also a member there. We had been married two or three years, when a very strange thing took place with me. We lived about a half-mile above the old furniture shop where I worked near the railroad, where I feel the Lord opened my eyes and caused me to see my condition, and all I could see were sins dark and dreaful, – my sins were so heavy that I thought I just could not bear them.

One morning as I walked down that old railroad, I began to look at the mountains on each side, and had a desire to go into one of the mountains where no one could hear me, that I might, if it were the Lord's will, find Him; yet I went on to my job. I went with my head bowed and spoke to no one. I went over to my machine, and it seemed that I could not live: my sins were all before me. I looked out of the window and it was so dark, yet the sun was shining, but it seemed it was not shining for me. I thought I was going to die and go to hell. I turned around and started my machine but could not work. I turned my face to the wall and cried, "O Lord have mercy, O God forgive." A strange feeling came upon me. The sun was shining and as I looked out the window, it was a brand new world with the glow of the sunlight coming across the mountains with the heavenly rays.

I looked upon the apple trees which were in bloom, it seemed the leaves were waving praises to the Lord, as was the grass under the trees. When I came to myself my lips were moving, and I believe with my whole heart I was praising the Lord from whom all blessings flow. I had been walking in the path of sin, rolling sin under my tongue as a sweet morsel, having my conversation on things of this world even as others. He lifted me out of the miry clay, and placed my feet upon a rock. He established my going and put a new song in my mouth, even praises to the Lord. I was so happy I felt I would never sin any more, but go

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Obituaries

ALEXANDER CUTLER USSERY

It was unanimously approved in regular conference that an obituary be written and sent to the Signs of the Times after the passing of our dear Brother, A. C. Ussery.

Alexander Cutler Ussery of Rt. 4, Greenville, Texas, passed away on October 9, 1976 at a local hospital. Funeral services were held at Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church on Monday, October 11, 1976 with Elder Lloyd Wall officiating. Burial was in the Simmons Cemetery located at the church.

Brother Ussery was born on January 21, 1889, to Elijah Turner Ussery and Mary Eliza Lawson Ussery in the Cash community. He married Lillie Leonard on April 24, 1910. She preceded him in death on October 20, 1955. A son, Roy Ussery passed away on February 24, 1970. He married Buleah Stiles, April 22, 1956. He was a retired farmer and stockman.

Survivors include his wife Buleah Ussery, a daughter-in-law, Mildred, seven grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, and three great-great-grandchildren.

Upon his passing it is the first time in many years that there has not been an Ussery on the Church rolls. Brother Ussery's family donated the land where the present Mt. Zion Church is located.

Brother Ussery was ordained as a deacon on June 1, 1971. He was a true and faithful believer and lived to every letter of his ordination charge.

It is with grievous and heavy heart that we make this report.

Derrell White
Church Clerk

BERTHA BEAUCHAMP MORRIS

Dear Editor:

This is to inform you that my mother, Bertha Beauchamp Morris, passed away Friday, March 25th, at the age of 91 years and 10 months. She was born in Snow Hill, Md. May 27, 1885, and

was the daughter of Virginia McKee and Willard Beauchamp.

Her only survivors are myself and her sister-in-law, Mrs. Merriel (Elsie) Beauchamp, of Berlin, Md.

My mother was a loyal reader of the **Signs of the Times** throughout her life, and I would appreciate it if you would include the above in your Obituaries.

Mother had been a California resident since 1914. My father, Charles B. Morris, died in 1944. Her ashes will join his at the Chapel of the Chimes in Oakland, Calif. Private services were held March 26th.

Thank you,

Mrs. Claire M. Barber

JO ALICE TATE CHILTON

It is sad as I try to write of the passing of our dear sister, Jo Alice Tate Chilton. She was born March 14, 1896 and died at the age of 79 years and 11 months. She married Brother Ernest Chilton Dec. 26, 1922. They had no children. She was the daughter of John and Emaline Tate.

Brother Ernest and Sister Jo Alice united with Lickfork Church at the July meeting, 1937, by experience and baptism. She was a faithful sister as long as she was able—until the good Lord saw fit to call her from our midst February 18, 1976.

She left to mourn her passing, her husband, one sister, Mrs. Pat Robertson, and one brother, Hassell Tate, and a host of relatives and friends. She was a kind and faithful wife. To her dear and heartbroken companion I would say do not grieve for her, for your loss is her eternal gain. "Blessed are they that die in the Lord." She is now resting from all the trials and sorrows of this earth.

We all looked on this dear sister as being one of the bright jewels of God's mercies. . . . She left full and complete evidence of a hope in the dear Saviour. We will all miss her at church. The seat is now vacant, which she always filled when she was able to be there. She gave a hearty welcome to every one, showing her love so strong for them. We at Lickfork loved her so much and she will not be forgotten, but we would not wish her back. Her work on earth is finished. She is now sleeping, awaiting the coming of our blessed Saviour, where she will sing praises to her heavenly Father forever. She often told me how good the Lord had been to her, and how unworthy she felt, hoping there was a better place waiting for her. We will all miss her, but none will miss her half so much as her sad and lonely husband.

This was written by order of the deacons of Lickfork Church. May it be resolved that this be recorded in the church records, a copy sent for publication in the **Signs of the Times,** and a copy sent to the family.

Willie W. Lee, Church Clerk

ANTHONY A. McCLANAHAN, SR.

Anthony A. McClanahan was born August 9, 1897 to Sam and Mollie McClanahan at Lanham, West Va. and died Sept. 19, 1976, being 79 years old.

He is survived by his wife, Ruby Jewell McClanahan, and the following children: Mrs. Mary Belle Asbury Landers, Lanham; Mrs. Irene Lawrence, Tyler Mountain; Anthony A., Jr. of Tyler Mountain; Wm. H. of Lanham. Surviving also are the following sisters and brothers: Mrs. Della Robinson, Charleston; Mrs. Dorothy McClanahan, Teays Valley; Brady and James McClanahan, of Lanham. Also eight grandchildren and a host of friends.

Though not a member of the church, he was a firm believer and attended Hopewell Church as long as he was able.

Funeral services were held at Gatens Funeral Home Chapel, Poca, W. Va. September 22, 1976, by Elder Veldon Lynn, and burial was in Tyler Mountain Memory Gardens.

He is greatly missed by his family and friends.

Mrs. Ruby J. McClanahan

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen are not made of things which do appear." (Hebrews 11:1-3)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 145 DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1977 No. 7

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/77
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

Lebanon, Ohio, Jan. 1, 1902

Dear Brother Beebe: – Inclosed I send you a copy of the poem from which I quoted in an article in the "Signs" of some time ago. I have had some inquiries about it, so I will send it for publication. It is in my estimation a rare poem indeed.

Yours in the truth,

H. M. CURRY

See the mystic weaver sitting
High in heaven, his loom below;
Up and down the treadles go,
Takes for web the world's dark ages,
Takes for woof the kings and sages,
Takes the nobles and their pages,
Takes all stations and all stages.
Thrones are bobbins in his shuttle,
Armies make them scud and scuttle;
Web into the woof must flow.
Up and down the nations go;
At the weaver's will they go.

Calmly see the mystic weaver
Throw his shuttle to and fro;
'Mid the noise and wild confusion,
Well the weaver seems to know
What each motion and commotion,
What each fusion and confusion
In the grand result will show.

Glorious wonder, what a weaving,
To the dull beyond believing;
Such no fabled ages know.
Only faith can see the mystery,
How along the aisles of history,
Where the feet of sages go;
Loveliest to the fairest eyes,
Grand the mystic tapet lies.
Soft and smooth and ever spreading,
As if made for angels' treading'
Tufted circles touching ever;
Every figure has it plaidings,
Brighter forms and softer shadings;
Each illumined, what a riddle,
From a cross that gems the middle.

'Tis a saying, some reject it,
That its light is all reflected,
That the tapets lines are given
By a sun that shines in heaven.
'Tis believed by all believing,
That great God himself is weaving,
Bringing out the world's dark mystery
In the light of faith and history;
And as web and woof diminish,
Comes the grand and glorious finish,
When begin the golden ages
Long foretold by seers and sages.

Dear Beloved Brethren,

I sit here trying to write this letter in my own words. Our only son was killed in an automobile accident a little over 5 years ago and it seems like a century, at least. Over a two year period I was almost going around in a trance. I was so depressed and all alone. I didn't even seem to notice people and did not want to join in any conversation. I did not care to go any place. I just wanted to stay home and think of the past. I was really getting uneasy about myself. I would go to church from time ot time, one Sunday right after another, but could hear nothing. I could hear people compliment the sermon and that

would not mean a thing to me. That just made me feel like giving up.

That went on for three years or more. I wasn't getting any better. I was almost getting in despair. I was just about ready to give up when Jim and I got to going to the Old School Baptist Church. We attended the weekly meetings. I liked to go but I just could not be satisfied. I was so all alone. I could not shake off the past, which was eating me up inside. My nerves were terrible. I just thought I could never stand it.

One night at one of the meetings Elder Griffin was there and they had open house, and when they sang the closing hymn Jim stood up and confessed. Well, I tried so hard to stand up beside him that night but my feet just would not go. The time just had not come. I had prayed for faith and hope so many times, and I know that my prayers were answered a couple of weeks after that. They had a Saturday night meeting at Salisbury and Elder Spangler and Elder Griffin were both there. I felt like my heart and soul had really been lifted. It seemed as though I was so happy. I felt like I was floating on air. When they gave out the closing hymn something was saying, "Go forward and confess your sins." I felt just so happy inside, so I went forward and from that day to this I felt like a new person. I was baptized and when I came up from the water I know that faith and hope were with me and from that day to this I have felt like a new person. There are quite a few sermons that I can really hear and what a blessing that can really be to your body.

Sister Margie Ward

(This beautiful experience apparently was never finished. Her husband, Jim, found it recently. Sister Ward is now in the Salisbury Nursing Home with hardening of the arteries and other afflictions. She is, however, blessed to show no noticable signs of pain and is on occasion able to sing parts of the Hymns of Zion. Ed.)

April, 1977

My dear Elder Spangler,

I'm writing to ask that you please renew my "Signs" for another year, and use the balance as you think proper.

Writing became a peculiar thing for me at the time I went to the Church. Before that time I do not recall trying to set forth the name of the dear Lord. Since that time, when addressing a dear one, I have the desire to speak of the dear Lord. I know that I am the smallest of the small and the most unworthy to utter (write) His grand and glorious Name.

I have stated that to use, speak, or write His Name is one of two things: He blesses one to speak His Name or one takes His Name in vain. I can only hope He looks upon me as a child.

I enjoy receiving the *Signs* each month and hope the dear Lord shall continue His blessings on the editors.

I hope that you and Sister Spangler are fine.

With love, I hope,
Reidy Pickeral

Elder Spangler,

I won't take much of your time. I would just like to say a few words. The Old Baptist doctrine of absolute predestination of all things is the only doctrine I can understand. The world of "do it yourself" hates this doctrine of predestination. They say that God did not know or have anything to do with the bad things that take place. But if

I read my Bible right, God tells us about these things taking place. So if He told us about them, He must surely know about them. To me this is predestination.

Jesus tells us there would be antichrists, and already they were in the world. So it seems to me that the "do-gooder, do it yourselfer" is the antichrist that Jesus spoke of. They do have a form of godliness, but they deny His power when they tell us that God cannot save us unless we let Him. They strain at gnats and swallow camels.

If we see heaven we must enter in by Him, and whosoever climbeth up another way, the same is a thief. Again, it seems the "do it yourselfer" is trying to climb up another way, so the antichrist must also be a thief.

I believe Paul did say to believe God, Who was able to perform that which He has promised. Then he said although the work was finished from the foundation of the earth. So if we believe, it is because the work is finished. It is not in man to direct his own steps. God told us all these things, so as far as I can see I can only believe in God's absolute predestination of all things. That surely means that what is to be will be.

Thomas McCullough
Route 1, Box 97
Cedar Grove, N. C. 27231

EXPERIENCE

Route 1, Box 110
Christiansburg, Virginia 24073

Dear Elder Spangler,

I would like to tell some of my experiences.

In the year 1954, I began to be very troubled. I looked at the grave as a cold, dark place where there was no hand to deliver and no eye to pity. I did not know the Lord Jesus. I have had many dreams in my life, but they were all sealed up.

On March 28, 1955, in a dream, I saw my daddy die. In this dream I was taken over in the mountains where we had logged a yard of logs. I looked Daddy right in the face and he took his last breath. There was a place like a grave and he was put in it. I was looking toward the East, over my shoulder, when from the North came an arm that hit that steel vault like a flash of lightening. He had taken that body up into the sky in just that moment of time. I knew it was a perfect body. At that time, I was working in a factory with a man whose body was perfect to look at. His name was Red Dobbins. I did not see Daddy's body raised, but I saw his body as perfect as that of Red Dobbins. I saw Daddy walking up in the clouds. I said, "Oh, what a satisfied walk." I did not see his face again, just the back of his pants, but it was glorious to see.

The next morning I got a phone call. It was Mama saying that Daddy had had a heart attack. We took him to the hospital and he died at four o'clock. I watched him die as I had in my dream. He raised his right hand and took his last breath. He had no trouble. He died free. In the next little while, a voice spoke in my heart. It said, "Give up the ghost." I did not know what that meant. In my heart I said, "Daddy is dead." But I could not say it openly. Those words stayed in my heart.

Later, I went down home where the body was. Those words were still in my heart. I went in the room where he lay and looked at him. He looked

very good. I must say, I had a very good feeling. I had never read the Bible with any understanding. I had a mind to read and try to find these words that were in my heart. I hardly knew the Old Testament from the New Testament. I opened the book and read from St. Luke 23:46,47, "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, 'Father, into Thy hands I command my spirit.' Having said this, He gave up the ghost. Now when the centurian saw what was done, he glorified God saying certainly this was a righteous man." Tears blinded my eyes. Those three days I felt like I was in the arms of Jesus. All that was said at the funeral pleased me. They sang "Amazing Grace" and I had never heard it like that before. I loved and forgave everybody at that time. I was in a new world. I read my Bible every day. I wanted to learn all about Jesus. I wanted to know all that He did here on earth.

I began reading *The Signs of the Times,* which I had never read before. I enjoyed them. I would sit and cry as I read. I began going to church every Sunday. I had a heart to understand and an ear to hear. The preaching was sweet to me. I did not know whether or not I would join the church.

One Sunday in 1956, I was at Little Hope. Otie Conner was preaching. I knew when they sang the last hymn that I would ask for a home with nothing in my way. Just before they sang the hymn, a voice spoke in my left ear, "It is alright if you do go." It was a soft, sweet voice. I believe it was the voice of an Angel. But then, I could not go. Twenty-one years have since passed and I still cannot go. I still have a hope I will go, but I do not know if I ever will. I have rejoiced to see others go. It is alright this way. I do not want to change anything, for I know I can not.

Some time later I became very sick and had to stay in bed. I had four girls, all small and going to school. One came to my room and said, "Daddy, do you want anything?" I said, "No." Then another one came and asked me the same question. I said, "Sing me a song." They sat down beside my bed with the little song book. I do not remember the first song they sang. But the second song they sang was

"What wonderous love is this, O, my soul?....
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul?....
When I was sinking down, beneath God's
righteous frown,
Christ laid aside His crown for my soul...."

The words were sweet to me and the girls looked like little dolls. Tears ran down my pillow. The girls looked at me in amazement. They finished the song and left the room. In two weeks I got better and went back to work.

When I was in my first year of school, we sang two songs which I remember very well. One was "All God's children are going to Heaven. They will sing and shout all over God's Heaven." The other one was "Wind, wind, wind the thread; Pull, tap, tap, tap.....". My mind went back to this first year in school one day in 1957 while I was at work. I work in a weaving mill. I have for thirty-six years. That day at work I cried for joy. I knew I was there by God's providence. I sometimes believe I am a child of God. I have a hope that Heaven will be my home. The Lord has been very good to me.

Some years later, my wife had to go to the hospital for an operation. She was very fearful to go, but the same Jesus that came to me came to her.

She got along very well. One evening the girls and I got a bunch of flowers to take her. On the way to the hospital one of the girls said, "I know Mama will cry." Since the song book was in the car we sang, "O, beautiful hills of Galilee," as we rode. When we got there she did cry. She was beautiful. She told me later about a song that came to her:

"How lost was my condition
'Till Jesus made me whole!
There is but one Physician
Can cure a sin-sick soul.
Next door to death He found me,
And snatched me from the grave,
To tell to all around me
His wond'rous pow'r to save."

Some things are made plain.

In 1956, I was reading in "The Sovereign Grace" paper. It was an article about home. I mean a home in the Old School Baptist Church. It was so true to me. I began to cry aloud, so I left the room. Two of my girls followed me. This thought was in me, "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner." I did not say it, but it was in my very being. Still crying, I went in a little workshop in the backyard and sat down. The girls were still with me. One said, "Daddy, what is the matter? Is it Grandpa?" I said, "No." She asked, "Is it Uncle Jack?" I said, "No." (Jack is my wife's brother and was at the point of death.) My trouble was that I had no home here. I was not a member of a church. I must say that since then I have felt to be at home where the Old School Baptist are. I do enjoy being with them. They sing the sweetest songs and say the sweetest things. I have no other place to go.

In 1943, I was in the Army, close to combat. I was so scared my stomach was sore. That night, in a dream, I saw a little old man with a hat on going up a hill. He was bent over at the stomach. The next morning I knew that was me. I did not go to combat. I will always remember my dream. I came home safely. I still have stomach trouble, but I can live with it.

I have one last miracle I would love to tell. In my teen-age life I was very depressed. Daddy asked me one day what was the matter. I said, "Nothing." I did not know what was wrong. I was sitting in the dirt one day very sad. I said, "Oh Lord, if I ever have any children, may they all be girls. May there never be another one like me." I have no boys. I knew I had asked for what God already had in store for me.

One night later, I got very sick and went to bed. The moon was shining in my room. It was very light and I was not asleep. Two people were in my room with their arms locked around each other. They could not move. Something like glue was all over them. There was no way they could be freed. Then, one with an ax chopped them apart. I did not see him. I was very scared. I thought their arms and legs would be cut off. The glue-like stuff fell off in the floor in a big ball. These people had no pain. They were set free. I was scared to move even my little finger. I do not know if I slept at all that night. The next morning, I looked out the window. It was a beautiful morning with not a cloud in the sky. I recovered, but for twenty years I told no one what I had seen that night. Then Jesus spoke in my heart and I told Mama of what I had seen. It was sweet to me. No one can do a miracle like that but Jesus.

My mother and daddy have been Baptist as long as I can remember. I have always thought that they feared

God. I have heard Mama tell about how, when the dark clouds rolled over and death was near her children, she called on the Lord. I do believe she did and I also believe He hears our cries.

Roy, my brother, is a Baptist preacher. I have had much joy talking to him. He is a good minister of Jesus Christ.

I would like to quote Romans 8:15-18: "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joining-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

I have enjoyed writing my experiences. I have desired to do this for a long time. I have tried to tell how it was given to me; how Jesus set His people free, and free they will ever be. If I am saved, it is by grace. I have no righteousness but Jesus. Please print this if you see it fit. We love to read *The Signs of the Times.*

Andrew C. Agee

HUNTINGTON ON PREACHERS

Beloved, — Yours came last night to Mondwell Street, and I am now up to scratch a few scraps in return. Be not ignorant of Satan's devices; his whole aim is to thieve, and rob God of His glory, and us of our peace. He accuses God to man, and men to God, as may be seen in his tempting Eve, when he suggested that God, envying man's happiness, had forbidden their eating that fruit which alone could make them wise, and which to the eye was so pleasant, and to the taste so good; and he accused Job, that he loved, feared, and served Him because He had increased his wealth. And to me he has done the same, telling me that God knew the work He had designed me to, and might have furnished me with some degree of learning, spelling at least; that I might not have recourse to a dictionary five times in a page, first for the sense, and then to know how to spell it. And he accuses God to you for giving you too much. But neither my ignorance nor your learning prevented His calling us any more than the wisdom of Moses, and the ignorance of Peter prevented theirs. There is no knowledge, council, nor device against the Lord, but what is hatched in hell. To make every saint discontented with his lot; to magnify the prosperity of others, and diminish our own; that all may murmur and none be satisfied; that God may be robbed of His honor, and man deprived of his peace, is the constant drudgery of the devil. "Wherein a man is called, therein let him abide;" that respects his situation and employment. If called circumcised or uncircumcised, care not for that; this respects his natural religion. "He that ministers, let him do it of the ability which God giveth;" this respects natural abilities; and these abilities are by some improved, and by others unimproved; but if God calls him to minister, let him use these, whether polished or covered with rust.

Wonder not at sudden changes; we that labor are not private saints. They feed, chew the cud, digest, concoct,

and thrive; they trade for themselves, but ours is for the good of the public. Formerly, I came out of the furnace purged, and then filled, and went in the strength of that meat forty days. But such a fulness is now spent by one full, profuse, and overflowing discourse. And when some who have filled their vessel at my spring, and kindled their torch at my live coal, have come in afterwards to shine in my ornaments, then I have been so shorn of my locks, and so bereft of all dew, and my coal so quenched, that I was like a thief, ashamed to look at them, being dry and barren, poor and beggarly, hungry, cold, and naked. But these young colts, who only ear the ground, are not up to this. Whether we labor in irons or in oil, filled with gall or with honey, whether like flaming torches or like smoking flax, we are sure to suit some. God will make us all things to all cases, to gain some. I have stood in the pillory, been laid in the stocks by the heels, and been muzzled in the jaws, when, at the same time, not one in a hundred saw it or knew it. And if so confused as to contradict myself, and to speak unscripturally, and not common sense, so that the people could not understand me, nor make it out, yet they have concluded that "in the Spirit I had spoken mysteries," and that I had soared so high in wisdom as that they could not attain to it, it was too wonderful for them; when, at the same time, I blushed at my own folly.

Darkness and bondage are common in our calling. When we fall first into these we have no understanding or judgment; we labor to keep from drowning, and that is all. And when enlarged, we are so in love and enamored with the King, and so engaged with the flavor of the new wine, that we mind nothing else. This being the case, we describe both confusedly; it is needful, therefore, to take us again and again to drill, under more light and a better judgment; that we may consider and be more explicit.

God bless the rector. The Doctor salutes the little bishop and all.

William Huntington, S.S.

Portsmouth, May 13, 1807

(As there is a great deal of interest in Huntington's writings, we publish this unique letter, and we hope to publish more of his works in the future. Huntington is considered by many to be the most able spiritual interpreter of God's Word since the Apostles. Ed.)

EXPERIENCE OF JOSEPH HART (1712-1768)

As I had the happiness of being born of believing parents, I imbibed the sound doctrines of the Gospel from my infancy; nor was I without touches of heart, checks of conscience, and meltings of affections, by the secret strivings of God's Spirit with me while very young. But the impressions were not deep, nor the influences lasting, being frequently defaced and quenched by the vanities and vices of childhood and youth.

About the twenty-first year of my age I began to be under great anxiety concerning my soul. The spirit of bondage distressed me sore; though I endeavoured (as I believe most under legal convictions do) to commend myself to God's favour, by amendment of life, virtuous resolutions, moral rectitude, and a strict attendance on religious ordinances. I strove to subdue my flesh by fasting, and other rigorous acts of penance and mortification; and whenever I was captivated by its lusts (which indeed was often the case), I

endeavoured to reconcile myself again to God by sorrow for my faults which, if attended with tears, I hoped would pass as current coin with Heaven; and then I judged myself whole again, and to stand on equal terms with my foes, till the next fall; which generally succeeded in a short time.

In this uneasy, restless round of sinning and repenting, working and dreading, I went on for about seven years, when, a great domestic affliction befalling me (in which I was a moderate sufferer, but a monstrous sinner), I began to sink deeper and deeper into conviction of my nature's evil, the deceitfulness and hardness of my heart, the wickedness of my life, the shallowness of my Christianity, and the blindness of my devotion. I saw that I was in a dangerous state, and that I must have a better religion than I had yet experienced before I could, with any propriety, call myself a Christian. How did I now long to feel the merits of Christ applied to my soul by the Holy Spirit! How often did I make my strongest efforts to call God MY God! But, alas! I could no more do this than I could raise the dead. I found now, by woeful experience, that faith was not in my power; and the question with me now was, not whether I WOULD be a Christian or no, but whether I MIGHT; not whether I should repent and believe, but whether God would give me true repentance, and a living faith.

After some weeks passed in this gloomy, dreadful state, the Lord was pleased to comfort me a little, by enabling me to appropriate, in some measure, the merits of the Saviour to my own soul. This comfort increased for some time; and my understanding was wonderfully illuminated in reading the holy Scriptures; so that I could see Christ in many passages where before I little imagined to find Him; and was encouraged to hope I had an interest in His merits, and the benefits by Him procured to His people.

In this blessed state my continuance was but short; for, rushing impetuously into notions beyond my experience, I hasted to make myself a Christian by mere doctrine, adopting other men's opinions before I had tried them; and set up for a great light in religion, disregarding the internal work of grace begun in my soul by the Holy Ghost. This liberty, assumed by myself, and not given by Christ, soon grew to libertinism, in which I took large progressive strides, and advances to a dreadful height, both in principle and practice. In a word, I ran such dangerous lengths, both of carnal and spiritual wickedness, that I even outwent professed infidels, and shocked the irreligious and profane with my horrid blasphemies and monstrous impieties. Hardness of heart was, with me, a sign of good confidence; carelessness went for trust; empty notions for great light; a seared conscience for assurance of faith; and rash presumption for Christian courage.

My actions were, in a great measure, conformable to my notions; for having (as I imagined) obtained by Christ a liberty of sinning, I was resolved to make use of it! and thought the more I could sin without remorse, the greater hero I was in faith. A tender conscience I deemed weakness; prayer I left for novices and bigots; and a broken and contrite heart was a thing too low and legal for me to approve, much more to desire. Not to dwell on particulars, I shall only say (what, though shocking to hear, is too

true!) that I *committed all uncleanness with greediness.*

In this abominable state I continued, a loose backslider, an audacious apostate, a bold-faced rebel, for nine or ten years, not only committing acts of lewdness myself, but infecting others with the poison of my delusions. I published several pieces of different subjects, chiefly translations of the ancient heathens; to which I prefixed prefaces, and subjoined notes of a pernicious tendency; and indulged a freedom of thought far unbecoming a Christian.

But God, who is rich in mercy, and whose grace is like Himself, almighty, did not altogether give me up to hardness and impenitence. I felt, from time to time, meltings of heart and inward compunction, and had a secret hope at the bottom (which often rose above my gross corruptions) that I should not always go on in this abandoned manner, and run as reprobate to final perdition.

About seven or eight years ago I began to reform a little, and to live in a more sober and orderly manner. And now, as I retained the form of sound words, and held the doctrines of free-grace, justification by faith and other orthodox tenets, I was tolerably confident of the goodness of my state; especially as I could not also add that other requisite—a moral behavior. Surely, thought I, though I have been so profligate and profane, yet, as I am now reclaimed, and am not only sound in principles, but sober and honest in practice, I cannot but be in the right way to the favour of God.

For several years I went on in this easy, cool, smooth, and indolent manner, with a lukewarm, insipid kind of religion, yet not without some secret whispers of God's love and visitations of His grace, and now and then warm addresses to Him in private prayer. But, alas! all this while my heart was whole; the fountains of the great deeps of my sinful nature were not broken up. I was therefore conscious that the written Word of God was against me, especially those parts of it that represent the children of God as a poor, afflicted, mourning, broken-hearted people; of which characteristics I was destitute. Nor was the blood of Christ effectually applied to my soul. I looked on His death, indeed, as the grand sacrifice for sin; and always thought on Him with respect and reverence; but did not see the inestimable value of His blood and righteousness clearly enough to make me abhor myself and count all things else but dung and dross. On the contrary, when I used to read the Scriptures (which I now did constantly, both in English and the original languages), though my mind was often affected, and my understanding illuminated, by many passages that treated of the Saviour; yet I was so far from seeing, or owning, that there was such a necessity for His death, and that it could be such infinite value as is represented, that I have often resolved (O the horrible depth of man's fall, and the desperate wickedness of the human heart!) that I never would believe it; and have been tempted to tell God Himself, that He could not make me, without injuring my reason, and imposing on my understanding, by downright violence and perversive power.

About three or four years ago I fell into a deep despondency of mind, because I had never experienced grand revelations and miraculous discoveries. I was very melancholy, and shunned

all company, walking pensively alone, or sitting in private and bewailing my sad and dark condition, not having a friend in the world to whom I could communicate the burden of my soul; which was so heavy, that I sometimes hesitated even to take my necessary food. But after many a gloomy, doleful hour, spent in solitude and sorrow, not without strong and frequent cries and tears to God, and beseeching Him to reveal Himself to me in a clearer manner, I thought He asked me, in the midst of one of my prayers, whether I rather chose the visionary revelations of which I had formed some wild idea, or to be content with trusting to the low, despised mystery of a crucified Man. I was enabled to prefer the latter; and felt great comfort in expecting the future effects of my choice.

But gloom of mind and dejection of spirit still frequently overwhelmed me; from which I used to be relieved by pouring out my soul to Christ, and beseeching Him, with cries and groans and tears, to reveal Himself to me; praying at the same time that it might be done without pain; for I was so much a coward, that I preferred ease to every other consideration. I was often answered by such portions of Scripture as these: "Behold I come quickly; and my reward is with me." "That which thou hast already, hold fast till I come." To the latter of these, I closed my hands fast, and cried, I would sooner part with every drop of blood than let go the hopes I already have in a crucified Saviour; and to the former, I used to reply (after considering the words, "My reward is with me,") "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." For though I expected some sore visitation, yet, believing that Christ would bring strength and power with Him, I waited, and longed for His coming.

The week before Easter, 1757, I had such an amazing view of the agony of Christ in the garden, as I know not well how to describe. I was lost in wonder and adoration; and the impression it made was too deep, I believe, ever to be obliterated. I shall say no more of this; but only remark, that, notwithstanding all that is talked about the sufferings of Jesus, none can know anything of them but by the Holy Ghost; and, I believe, he that knows most, knows but very little. It was upon this I made the first part of Hymn I., "On the Passion," which, however, I afterwards mutilated and altered.

I used to be often terribly cut down with those words, "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 25:30), which sometimes sunk me almost to utter despair; and then again I used to receive some comfort. At length, despair began to make dreadful head against me; hopes grew fainter, and terrors stronger; which later were increased by a faithful letter I received from a friend, who had also run great lengths of impiety with me formerly, but was now reclaimed. The convictions I now laboured under were not like those legal convictions I had formerly felt, but far worse, horrible beyond expression. I looked on myself as a Gospel-sinner; one that had trampled under foot the blood of Jesus, and for whom there remained no more sacrifice for sin. I shall not enlarge here, choosing rather to suppress than exaggerate; as I do not lay any stress on my own sufferings, or those of any other man, except the man Christ Jesus; but surely what I felt was very

grievous. For so deep was my despair, that I found in me a kind of wish that I might only be damned with the common damnation of transgressors of God's law. But, oh! I thought the hottest place in hell must be my portion. All the evangelical promises were so far from comforting me, that they were my greatest tormentors; because they would only increase my condemnation.

This distress and anguish of soul was likewise attended with great infirmity of body. One morning I was waked with intolerable pain, as if balls of fire were burning my reins. Amidst this excruciating torture, which lasted near an hour, one of the first things I thought on was, the pierced side of Jesus, and what pains of body, as well as soul, He underwent. Soon after this fiery stroke, I was seized in the evening with a cold shivering, which I concluded to be the icy damp of death, and that after that must come everlasting damnation. In this condition I went to my bed; but dared not close my eyes, even when nature was overcharged, lest I should awake in hell.

While these horrors remained, I used to run backwards and forwards to places of religious worship, especially to the Tabernacle in Moorfields, and the Chapel in Tottenham Court; where, indeed, I received some comfort (which, though little, was then highly prized, because greatly needed); but in the general almost everything served only to condemn me; to make me rue my own backslidings, and envy those children of God who had continued to walk honestly ever since their first conversion. Notions of religion I wanted no man to teach me; I had doctrine enough; but found, by woeful experience, that dry doctrine, though ever so sound, will not sustain a soul in the day of trial.

In this sad state I went moping about (and that I could was next to a miracle), having some little hope at the bottom under all, which now and then would glimmer, but was soon overwhelmed again with clouds of horror, till Whit-Sunday, 1757, when I happened to go in the afternoon to the Moravian Chapel in Fetter Lane, where I had been several times before. The minister preached on these words: "Because thou hast kept the Word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them which dwell upon the earth" (Rev. 3:10). Though the text, and most of what was said on it, seemed to make greatly against me, yet I listened with much attention, and felt myself deeply impressed by it. When It was over, I thought of hastening to Tottenham Court Chapel; but, presently altering my mind, returned to my own house.

I was hardly got home, when I felt myself melting away into a strange softness of affection, which made me fling myself on my knees before God. My horrors were immediately dispelled, and such light and comfort flowed into my heart as no words can paint. The Lord by His Spirit of Love came, – not in a visionary manner into my brain, but with such divine power and energy into my soul, that I was lost in blissful amazement. I cried out, "What, me, Lord?" His Spirit answered in me, "Yes, *thee.*" I objected, "But I have been so unspeakably vile and wicked." The answer was, "I pardon thee fully and freely. Thy own goodness (for I had now set about a thorough amendment, if, peradventure, I might be spared,) cannot

save thee; nor shall thy wickedness damn thee. I undertake to work all thy works in thee and for thee; and to bring thee safe through all." The alteration I then felt in my soul was as sudden and palpable as that which is experienced by a person staggering, and almost sinking, under a burden, when it is immediately taken from his shoulders. Tears ran in streams from my eyes for a considerable while; and I was so swallowed up in joy and thankfulness, that I hardly knew where I was. I threw my soul willingly into my Saviour's hands: lay weeping at His feet, wholly resigned to His will, and only begging that I might, if He was graciously pleased to permit it, be of some service to His Church and people.

Thenceforth I enjoyed sweet peace in my soul, and had such clear and frequent manifestations of His love to me, that I longed for no other heaven. My horrors were banished, and have not, I think, returned since with equal violence. And though I can see little signs, as yet, of His granting my request concerning usefulness; (This was written before the author's call to the ministry. Ed.) though I am very barren of good, and full of evil; though I have many sore trials and temptations in my soul; yet it pleases the Lord to reveal Himself often in me, to open the mysteries of His Cross, and give me to trust in His precious blood.

Not long after this my—shall I call it *re-conversion?*—I was terribly infested with thoughts so monstrously obscene and blasphemous that they cannot be spoken, nor so much as hinted, and, I believe, such as hardly ever entered into the heart of any other man; though I am sensible that most of God's children are sometimes attacked in like manner. But mine were foul and black beyond example, and seemed to be the masterpieces of hell. They haunted me some months, and used to make me weep bitterly, and cry earnestly to my God to remove them; which at last He was pleased to do in a great measure, though they would often be returning still, like intruding visitants, but were not permitted to come with much power. In short, I feel myself now as poor, as weak, as helpless, and dependent as ever; but now my weakness is my greatest strength. I now rejoice, though I rejoice with trembling.

I soon began to be visited by God's Spirit in a different manner from whatever I had felt before. I had constant communion with Him in prayer. His sufferings, His wounds, His agonies of soul, were imprest upon me in an amazing manner. I now believed my name was sculptured deep in the Lord Jesus's breast with characters never to be erased. I saw Him, with the eye of faith, stooping under the load of *my* sins; groaning and grovelling in Gethsemane for *me*. The incarnate God was more and more revealed to me; and I had far other notions of His sufferings than I had entertained before. Now I saw that the grief of Christ was the grief of my Maker; that His wounds were the wounds of the Almighty God; and the least drop of His blood now appeared to me more valuable than ten thousands of worlds. As I had before thought His sufferings *too little*, they now appeared to me to be *too great;* and I often cried out, in transports of blissful astonishment, "Lord, 'tis too much, 'tis too much; surely my soul was not worth so great a price." I had also such a spirit of sympathetic love to the Lord Jesus

given me, that after I had left off to sorrow for *myself*, for some months, I grieved and mourned bitterly for *Him*. I looked on Him whom I had pierced, and felt such sharp compunction, mixed at the same time with so much compassion, that the pain and the pleasure I experienced are much better felt than expressed.

(concluded next month)

DELAWARE ASSOCIATION

The Delaware Association will meet for one day only, the Lord willing, on the fifth Sunday in July, 1977. Services will commence at 10:30, promptly, and then again as soon after the noon meal as possible. Place of meeting will be at the Welsh Tract Old School Baptist Meeting House about one mile south of Newark, Delaware, just off State 896. As there are only a few accommodations in the vicinity of the Church, the members of the Salisbury Association in and around Salisbury, Maryland, will house all visitors coming from the South. Please contact either Deacon William S. Adkins, 301-742-2198 or Elder James F. Poole, 301-742-6406 and a place will be provided. All lovers of the Truth are invited.

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1977 session of the Pigg River Association convenes with Republican Church, but will be held at the Pigg River Meeting House, Franklin County, Va., the Lord willing, the 1st Sunday in August, and Friday and Saturday before. (August 5, 6, 7)

To get to the Pigg River Meeting House, those coming from the north on U. S. 220 turn right on to State Route 919 (which is three-quarters of a mile south of Boones Mill, Va.) Follow 919 to State Route 641 and turn right on 641 to Callaway, Va. Then turn left in Callaway on State Route 602, and follow signs to Meeting House.

Those coming from the south take State Route 919 to the left just north of Rocky Mount, Va., and turn left on State Route 641 to Callaway, Va. then turn left on Route 602 and follow signs to the Meeting House.

A cordial welcome is extended to our correspondents and all lovers of the truth.

John D. Wood, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene for its one hundred thirty-sixth session at Weatherford Church on July 8, 9, and 10, 1977. The meeting will begin at 11:00 A.M., Friday, July 8th,' and continue through Sunday, July 10th.

Weatherford Church is located in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, at the intersections of Virginia state roads 760 and 763, near the town of Gretna, Virginia. Our correspondants and friends are invited for this meeting.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

UNION MEETING

The South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association Union Meeting will convene with Pilgrim's Rest Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in July, 1977. The Church is located 6 miles north of Fordyce, Arkansas. Take Highway #167 out of Fordyce north 6 miles. Take the first left hand blacktop road (#273) at the top of a hill. There is a sign, "Pilgrim's Rest Church." Travel this road across the railroad and you will see a sawmill. The church is down the hill from the mill on left side of road.

Elder Clovis Townley,
Moderator
Ross Watson, Clerk

SLATE HILL MEETING

The annual all-day meeting of the Brookfield Old School Baptist Church at Slate Hill, N. Y., will be held the third Saturday in July, which is July 16, 1977.

All lovers of the Truth are invited. Lunch will be served.

DIRECTIONS TO THE UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION, 1977

The seventy-first session of the Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association will be held with the Greensboro Church, the host church, at McCleansville School, Guilford County, N. C.

At Greensboro take I-85 north about 10 miles, exit north at Mt. Hope Church Road, about 8 miles to McCleansville. Coming from the east, exit also at Mt. Hope Church Road.

We cordially invite Ministers, Brethren and friends of like faith and order to join with us in this association. Services beginning at 11 o'clock Saturday before the third Sunday in July, 1977, ending Monday.

Donald E. Smith, Assn. Clerk

Danville, Virginia July, 1977

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EDITORIAL

"In Him we live, and move, and have our being." (Acts 17:28)

I have coveted the gift wherein I might call on my brethren for a text and be blessed to preach on it. This has been denied me. I have not been able to write savingly about things that have been requested. Usually, the texts and the subjects that have been sweet to me have come out of the blue, that is, they have come when I deserved banishment from the sanctuary of the Lord, yet the very seat of my condemnation has been my sanctuary. However, while I have not been able to say with joy and sweetness and pleasure that I had a gift of expounding and opening texts or subjects, I am often asked to write on them. It has been with reluctance and hesitancy that I have endeavored to comply with such requests. I hope that I say that it has been in humility that I do try to do so, realizing that judgment begins at the house of God, and that the occupants of that house judge angels. Therefore, if I am blessed of God to that end, then I do not have any more right to refuse a request from my beloved hearers and readers than Peter or this sinner had (and has) the right to deny our blessed Lord. The text shows the relationship to this end.

One other thing. I do not have the foresight to know the motive of those that request for me to write on a text or subject. I do not feel that I have the right to probe into that. It may be that I am sometimes used to pull somebody's chestnuts out of the fire. If so, that is alright, for I have often said, and, having grace, will say again, that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to His purpose; that God has, in times past, according to many incidents in the Bible, used things that are evil, things that are the work of men's wicked hands, and things that God hates, to bring to pass things for the comfort and strengthening and edification of His chosen flock. I would much prefer to give the source of all the requests and inquiries that are brought to my attention, but I do not know the state of mind of my inquirers, therefore, I leave the name of

this one out that has requested that I write on salvation as a subject and that I cover it in all of its aspects. That will be impossible for me to do. First, it is too vast for such an undertaking, both for me or any other man. I do not say that thinking that because I am weak all other men are weak, but because that it has not pleased God to have given us the knowledge of the fullness of salvation after death. That phase of salvation awaits the people of God, therefore, I feel compelled to write on that salvation which I hope to have experienced, to wit; what is known as time salvation.

I have been over this ground time and again among you. I do not know of anything new to write about. I have not had new revelations, therefore I will cover ground that is called common, or repetitious, and how well I know that repetition is banned by many that claim to love salvation.

In the Old Testament, salvation is so often mentioned. Time after time, saint after saint, begged and longed for that salvation. As far as I know, both by scriptural evidence, and ancient writings, not the first one beckoned the Lord to stay out of their affairs, feeling that they could get the job done without help or interference. To the contrary, they longed for it. They felt the need for it. They were often brought to experience it as being all in all to them. This is a mystery to find the failure of Israel to attain unto salvation. We find them all falling short of the glory of God. We find that the only typical salvation that they ever realized came from God. And yet, knowing that they were a type of the people that were to come, and that they (Israel) had to be saved by the Lord time and time again, in this day some still claim they can save themselves. It is not to be found, as they looked for the better day, that they said, "It doesn't matter whether He comes or not, for we have salvation within our grasp."

As far as the Bible tells us, Israel did not save themselves. To the contrary, they longed for, and begged for haste in it coming. To long for a thing is an acknowledgment that we do not have it within our grasp. No man or woman is going to yearn for that which they have at their finger tips.

As God promised these yearning people, He did send Jesus into the world. He sent Him to do what they could not do. Had they been able to save themselves, it was a travesty wrought against the Babe of Bethlehem. This would be, yea, it is a monstrous doctrine. If subjecting the Lord Jesus Christ to His suffering, to do for a people a thing that they could have done for themselves, is not a monstrous and hard doctrine, it would be hard to conceive of one. The fact that the old covenant was folded up and laid away is full significance that salvation based on the works of man — any man — is a failure. God took that kind of doctrine or system out of the way. That kind of doctrine ruined David, and it ruined Peter, and it ruined Saul of Tarsus, as far as either of them attaining to salvation. That kind of doctrine was contrary to both Paul and Peter. Paul mistakenly thought it to be unto life; he found it to be unto death. Peter mistakenly believed that he could walk with the Saviour even after He told him that he could not. While he believed that, I am sure that had he gone to see his brethren, he would have tried to strengthen them by telling them what he preached to the Saviour,

to wit, "I am able to go with you to death's door." I am sure about this. I am sure that a man who preaches *to* the Saviour his ability to follow Him, that he will certainly preach the same thing to his brethren. But I am also sure that after the failure of Peter, when he went to visit his brethren that he would have gone in a repenting and turning away spirit to them. The shame, the condemnation, the guilt, laying on his mind would have constrained him from confessing anything else. It is one thing to *say* that I have denied Him, but after saying it, the proof of feeling it is found in whether we confess that salvation is of the Lord. If we *say* that we have denied and turn around and say that we could have kept from it, as Peter said that he would keep from it, is for us to deny twice.

Will you read with me the writing of Luke's record of what Paul said on Mars' Hill? These people had a number of devotions. Paul noticed that. Have you noticed that? Some follow this thing; some follow that; some follow Paul; some follow Apollos; some follow Christ. Some say He is with us; others say the same thing. Some say that it is by doing this; others say that it is doing that. How unstable they were at Athens. They had a number of devotions. They understood all of their devotions except the one on the totem pole that they attributed to the unknown God. They were true fatalists. That which they understood, they worshipped their god for. That which they did not understand as coming from their god, they attributed to some kind of an unknown god. That is the doctrine of the severe ascetic-minded or the Stoic-minded Greek philosopher. That is the doctrine of the dark-minded that dwell in Stygian darkness. The very setting of Luke's picture is about those who worship a plurality of gods. Like the ancient Greeks, they could attribute some things to the god of evil, and other things to the god of goodness, but those things that puzzled them, that brought them to superstition, they consigned to an unknown god. In plain language, they were in the hands of fate.

The unknown God they worshipped, but truly it was the unknown that they worshipped. It was the unknown God that Paul preached, but it was not that He was unknown to Paul. It was the unknown God that he preached to them, but He was known to Paul. Paul preached the God to the Athenians which had been unknown to him, and is still unknown to them. His expounding of that Being shows that he did know Him.

Let us read: "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands, neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things, and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply (then) they might feel after him and find him, though He be not far from every one of us." Then comes the text that I have placed at the head of this article. Read silently, and (the Lord willing) prayerfully. May God bless you to read what it says, not what you think it says, nor what you want it to say.

When the news broke out over the

Bethlehem and Jerusalem country that the Saviour was born, there was great rejoicing. When the day of Pentecost was fully come, that is, when the pouring out of the Spirit on all flesh (all flesh of those with whom He that poured out the Spirit was concerned with) they came in deep anxiety and concern. They did not know what to do. They had been under a long night of labor, but yet no salvation. The watches had been long. The intensity of darkness had permeated their longing souls for deliverance, and yet it had been denied them. The burdens were great, the prospects dim. There was a power that brought them from various directions in Israel, but while hope had sprang up, and faith had propelled them on, deliverance had tarried. At last the dawning of day—at last a stirring was at hand in the camps of Israel.

Labor wearied, sin burdened, ridden with unfinished tasks, they had gathered at Pentecost. Let us remember that it was not a decision made by Israel. Let us remember that the text carries with it the assurance that salvation is in Christ in God. (I Cor. 1:30,31); that it is in Christ that we live, and move, and have our being.

Every one had borne false witness before Christ. The law summer (summer is the time to work) had not produced any salvation. Summer, the work time, and harvest, the time of gathering, are both past and no salvation, (Jer. 8:20); no balm, no healing, no salvation.

I humbly trust by the grace of God that I come to you as one wise unto salvation (not wise nor able to bring salvation) bringing you the good news of angelic significance, to wit, the Saviour is born. If salvation is of interest to you, if your works (summer) and your harvest is come (that is, what you have produced) and you are not yet saved, let us read the account of Jesus coming into the world. First, the prophetic announcement of His coming. A Virgin (who was a young woman, but not a young woman alone) was to become impregnated by the Holy Ghost and bear a son, and His name was to be Immaneul. (God with us; Isa. 7:14). That ought to forever settle the source of salvation. Sad, but it does not. Although the language tells us that before this we were without God, therefore without a Saviour, definitely not a law-giver nor a law-enforcer, and yet what do we find? We find devotions many; we find saviours many; we find rites many; we find methods many; yea, we find salvations many, but as sad as it is, we find but a few poor despised people declaring that salvation is of the Lord.

The salvation that is of the Lord was purposed in eternity and displayed in time, The Saviour by birth; salvation by application. This salvation was applied to one while in his mother's womb. It was displayed to another while as far from God as a sinner can get. It was displayed to still another while casting nets for fish, to earn a living. The Apostle tells us, "This is love, not that we loved God but rather that He loved us, and gave Himself for us." Peter tells us that everything pertaining to this salvation is the gift of God, and Paul tells us that it came to him while he was in an unsound mind. Who would expect any sound action out of an unsound mind? The Lord gave him a sound mind. This gift is like unto the Saviour crossing the sea to give the lowly Gaderene a sound mind. In giving a sound mind,

who moves first? Has the sacredness of salvation become so low in the minds of men as to think that it is based on the action of an unsound mind?

The Apostle continues to tell us about this salvation. He (Christ) has begun the salvation. If we have a good beginning we are certainly on the right road to heaven. We could not chart our course, being in an unsound mind. The work having been properly started, it must be properly continued, and it must be properly finished. Paul assures us about the beginning. The continuity and the finishing of it is not a whit less assured. He that hath initiated the work finishes the work. Daniel tells us about the falling of kingdoms that were made of various materials. The falling of our kingdom is no less exempt from a like fate if it is based on anything short of the righteousness of God, our Saviour. We must remember that in the day of these falling kingdoms God is to set up a kingdom that shall stand forever. It shall not be left to any man or woman. It shall break into pieces all of those that would put their hand forth to steady the Ark of the Covenant, and it shall consume them. If there is any comfort in a doctrine that would give the least credence to the kingdom being a joint affair between Giver and receiver, one and all are welcome to it.

After having been through a great despair of retaining life we are brought to witness a great deliverance, a great salvation. This deliverance or salvation is safety. It is an escape. It is being brought up out of the wilderness. The Saviour, the God of our salvation, put the sentence of death in us. Surely not one of the afflicted and poor people would get into the volunteer class of people and take the ridiculous position that we go forward and take the sentence of death. It is placed upon us and in us. What is it for? Why does Paul tell us that the sentence of death is in us? *It is for no other reason than that we not trust in ourselves.* If we have the sentence of death in us, we are not trusting in ourselves. Now let us face it. Let us face the consequences of our religion. If we have the sentence of death in us, it is that we not trust in ourselves. If not in ourselves, who are we to trust? We are to trust in God that raises the dead. This was said by the Ancient of Days as pertaining to the afflicted people of God, to wit, that they should trust in God. (Zeph. 3:12). Paul, the pattern, and all they that are cut by it, are not to trust in men that cause us to despair of life, but in God that raises the dead. This is the zenith of salvation. This is the acme of our hope. It is the climax of the work of redemption. Even though we lost everything in Adam, even though we lose our life, we have a sure Refuge, a sure salvation, a Physician of great value that has never diagnosed a case wrong, that has never applied the wrong treatment, that has never lost a case. Looking back, He has delivered us in the days past and gone. We are sure of this — without fear I say that we know this – for had He not delivered us yesterday we would not be here today. But that is not all. Right now, this day, yes, dear troubled heart, in the midst of this perverse generation, in the midst of a situation when we fearfully look for this troubled land and government to be toppled, God is delivering us. God is saving us. Come dear reader, come dear inquiring brother, come dear sorrowing sister, notice Who this Deliv-

erer is. It is He that raises the dead. How far removed are all would-be saviours? How far removed from the premises of the Kingdom of Heaven are all those that would divide salvation into parts – my part and God's part? They all know (if they know) that they did not have anything to do with raising the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, and equally so, no more nor no less do sinners have anything to do with belief. (Eph. 1:19,20), and that they do not have anything to do with raising the dead. (II Cor. 1:9, I Thes. 4:16); therefore, no man or woman has anything to do with deliverance or salvation.

The same source gives this deliverance all the way through life and death. Our present welfare is based on Him that raises the dead. He delivered yesterday; He delivers today; and our trust for tomorrow is based on the same divine source. Furthermore, the same writer tells us that our Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself for our sins (sins are committed in our time state), that (to that end) He might deliver us in this present evil world, *according to the will of God.* (Gal. 1:4). If there is a basis for present deliverance other than in Him that raises the dead, other than Him who gave Himself for us, then Paul was not in possession of it. It was Paul that spoke of many trials and afflictions that were to come after his day, but for that sad day, he was looking heavenward for deliverance from them all.

There is no greater deliverance or salvation than that which was made manifest in the life of Paul. What did he attribute it to? I say once again that there is no mark or reference made in the lids of the New Testament to Paul falling into practical sins. From the Damascus Road event to the time of his departure there is not a recording of him sinning. I hear my friends that claim to be living above sin, and they claim credit for it. But Paul did not do that. What did he say about such an important miracle? He attributed it all to the grace of God. (I Cor. 15:10). But what did he say about the balance of God's dear children?

In conclusion, to our dear inquiring brother in New York, and to all of like precious faith everywhere, regardless of affiliation, regardless of faction, regardless of natural background, regardless of social standing, that this eminent Apostle (eminent because of grace) included his brethren in all places and in all time as being saved by the grace of God. (Eph. 2:8). If saved by grace, then not saved by works. (Rom. 11:6).

In Him we live, and move, and have our being. (Acts 17:28).

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE SOUL.

ELDER H. H. LEFFERTS—DEAR BROTHER: —We have been taking the *Signs of the Times* for the past year, and like it more than any other paper. I have had a mind for some time to ask your views on what the soul of man is. For instance, when the soul of man is spoken of, does it always mean the body of man? I have pondered upon this much. If you have a mind to do so, please give your views through the *Signs.*

Yours in hope of life eternal,

(MRS.) S. J. PRIDDY,

Princeton, West Virginia.

Our attempt at this time to comply with the above request is with no desire whatever to stir up any controversy. As to what the soul of man is has ever been a subject fraught with

difficulties, a subject over which there has been no end of argument, and which has never yet come to any definite settlement. We think it will always be so. The subject is one that defies definition. It will never be possible to so get the matter expressed in words as to be satisfactory to all parties. But, as elusive as the "soul" is, it is no reason why we should not write upon and express such thoughts about it as we may be enabled to. Others have a perfect right to their views, as we have to ours, and we write with no aim to convince any one who may differ with us. We believe sister Priddy would be glad to hear from any of the brethren who feel they have some light on the subject, and such may write directly to her, not to us, if they care to do so.

The words "soul" and "souls" occur about four hundred and seventy times in the Old Testament, and about sixty times in the New. It is obviously not possible to take up, within the space of a short article, each of the more than five hundred passages where the words occur. At best, we can but scan the matter, and doubtless may overlook some important passage which should be taken into consideration. To save time, we shall not mention anything about what Webster, or some other authority on words, says "soul" means, but shall come at once to texts of Scripture, and try to make the Bible the man of our counsel. We can, at the start, say to our sister Priddy that soul is not the body, although there are several passages where the soul includes the body, and more than the body. For instance, "Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran." This not meaning that Abram, Sarai and Lot had no souls before they came to Haran, but that the persons or servants that had joined with Abram, Sarai and Lot while in Haran, went with them out of Haran. In this passage the souls are the persons or individuals themselves, not merely the bodies of those persons, not yet their spirits, but the whole person. This use of the word to designate the persons themselves is to be found in many Scriptures. Instances of this are as follows: "All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were threescore and six." This passage indicates not only that the souls were individuals themselves, but that the souls came out of Jacob's loins, hence were born of man, therefore were not immortal or undying. The idea that every man has an immortal soul is false, and not one passage in the whole Bible where the word is used allows us to make any such assertion. The soul of man is mortal, subject to death; not immortal unless redeemed from sin by Jesus Christ. Matthew records that Jesus said, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Luke records the same utterance of Jesus thus: "What is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?" Taking the statement as Matthew has it and putting it with Luke's, we find that Jesus meant by the soul the man himself. Soul is not the body, but embraces the entire personality of the individual. Jesus also said, "Fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Here the body is mentioned apart from the soul, showing that in the mind of Jesus body and soul are not the same. Paul's prayer for the

brethren at Thessalonica was, "Your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." This passage makes a distinction between the spirit and the soul, and the soul and the body. The soul is not the body, neither is it the spirit. That the soul is not the spirit is proved by Hebrews iv. 12: "The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit." Not only, therefore, is the soul not the body, neither is it the spirit, but these are distinctions so fine that only the word of God, sharper than a two-edged sword, can show us what the difference between them is. Only by taking the Bible Scripture by Scripture and comparing one text with another, the Holy Spirit guiding our inquiries, can we arrive at a satisfactory conclusion of the whole matter. Metaphysic nor philosophy nor science can tell us what the soul is. A few years ago some scientist found that a body after death did not weigh as much as just before death. It seems that he weighed a man's body just before death, and then weighed it immediately after death, and discovered that the body lost a few ounces in the process of dying. He immediately concluded that these few ounces represented the weight of the man's soul, inasmuch as the soul was supposed to leave the body at death. The Bible does say that the spirit returns to God who gave it, but the spirit is not the soul, as we have found in Hebrews and in Thessalonians. If there is any Scripture which says a man's soul goes to God at death, we have never seen it. It may be so, but we rather think the Bible is silent on this point. The record in Genesis says that God breathed into Adam the breath of life and he became a living soul. It then took the breath animating the body which God had prepared for it, to make a living soul. The body without the breath was not a soul, nor was the breath without the body a soul. A dead body from which the breath after it has left the body, is not a soul. Further, merely the breath and the body taken together do not make a soul. If this were so, then animals would have souls. The Bible never uses the word "soul" in connection with animals, but only with human beings. It is a whole lot easier to tell what soul is not, than to tell what it is. As a definition, we risk the following for you to take it or leave it: The soul is that living, animating, sentient personality which constitutes one's individuality apart from the beasts, and which so pervades and controls the body, and which is so interwoven and commingled with the body as to make "disembodied souls" an unscriptural phrase. The soul is so much a part of the man, and the man is so much his own soul, that the man cannot exist without the soul, nor the soul without the man. Both are the subjects of redemption. Christ did not offer himself a sacrifice for sin in order to save man without a soul, nor yet to save the soul without the man. The work of redemption is to save sinners, and that work Jesus did. We hear much said on every hand about "saving souls," as though it were a part of man that is saved, and not the man himself. Jesus, however, said, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. The whole man, not a part of him, is the subject of regeneration. There has been much discussion in former years as to what part of a man is

born again, and some have concluded it is only the soul which has been born again. You cannot separate the soul from the man himself. The soul cannot be regenerated without the man being at the same time regenerated. All such hair-splitting arguments are vain, and lead nowhere. The simple truth is that Christ Jesus came into the world to save his people from their sins. This people were sinners. As sinners, they were fallen human beings: men, women and children. As such, they were living souls, but souls living in a state of condemnation. Christ redeemed these fallen beings, these men, women and children given him of the Father before time began. He redeemed them all, every one of them, and redeemed all of them, body, soul and spirit; for redemption, according to the Scriptures, includes the whole man. It is the man who is born again, and it is wasting time to try to tell what part of him is born again. Our treatment of this matter may not meet with your approval, but we said at the start that the subject is an elusive one, and we expected at the beginning to have to conclude with not settling it. Wiser men than ourself have wrestled with the subject without being able to write "finis" at the end of it. We did not expect to clutch what has alawys eluded those wiser than we.

L.

OBITUARIES

SISTER LUDIE WILLIAMS HOUSE GRIMES

God in His infinite wisdom saw fit to remove from our midst one of our oldest and dearest members, Sister Ludie Williams House Grimes. She was born in Pitt County, November 8, 1887, the daughter of Gray and Mary Emily Corey, and died January 5, 1977, making her stay on earth 89 years and 2 months.

Sister Ludie united with Flat Swamp Primitive Baptist Church the first Saturday in July, 1934 and was baptized by Elder W. E. Grimes. She was a faithful member for over 42 years and a firm believer in the Doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God and greatly enjoyed her meetings and having the brothers and sisters visit in her home.

She was first married to J. O. Williams in 1906. He died in 1947. In 1950, she married Lester House and he died in December, 1954. Then in 1959, she and Elder W. E. Grimes were married and he passed away February, 1969. She leaves to mourn her passing several nieces and nephews, nine stepsons and five stepdaughters.

Funeral services were conducted at Flat Swamp Church on Friday, January 7, 1977 by Elder M. E. Garner of Greenville. Her body was laid to rest in the Robersonville Cemetery under a large arrangement of beautiful flowers in the presence of her many friends and relatives to await the call of her Heavenly Father in that great and final day.

We, the members of Flat Swamp Church, will miss her but feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Done by order of conference, Saturday before the first Sunday in February, 1977.

Elder M. E. Garner, Moderator
Hassel Allen, Clerk
Selma Roebuck
Mary J. Jenkins, Committee

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst Sister Annie Pittman.

Sister Pittman was born December 21, 1893 and died February 12, 1977, making her stay on earth 83 years. She was one of the oldest members of our church and she was blessed to attend most every meeting until shortly before her death. Sister Annie had a certain place she wanted to sit in our church, and we miss seeing that place being filled. She was a great believer of Salvation by Grace, and she was always praising her God. To know Sister Pittman was to love her.

Therefore be it resolved:

That we send our sympathy to her family, and trust God will bless them to follow the path their mother has set forth.

That we, the church, feel our loss is her eternal gain.

That three copies of this resolution be made. One for the church, one for the family, and one to be sent to the *Signs* for publication.

This done in order at our March conference.

Elder Curtis Raines, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

BELINDA JONES GAY

Belinda Jones Gay was born February 6, 1899 and departed this life February 28, 1977; making her stay on earth seventy-eight years. She was married November 27, 1919 to R. R. Gay who survives, and to this union was born one daughter, Mrs. Louise Lewis Boyles of the home.

Sister Gay was received by letter into Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church of Rocky Mount, North Carolina July 23, 1921.

The funeral was conducted from Gay Yost Funeral Home March 1, 1977 by her pastor Elder Henry Jones, and her body was laid to rest in the Pineview Cemetery in Rocky Mount.

Written by order of conference fourth Saturday in March, 1977 by her neice.

Lois Gay

R. B. WALL

Brother R. B. Wall was born on January 3, 1912, in Scroggins, Texas, and grew up in that community. He married Ruth Shirey in Winnsboro, Texas, on January 11, 1942.

After a short but serious illness Brother Wall departed from this life on Wednesday, January 12, 1977, in Dallas, Texas, at the age of 65 years and 9 days. He is survived by his widow, Sister Ruth Wall, and his son Glyndon Wall, his daughter Mrs. Linda Gail Daniel, and his two grandchildren Bryan and Glynis Daniel of San Benito, Texas; two brothers, Harvy and Homer Wall, of Winnsboro; and one sister, Trudy Hamrick of Tyler, Texas.

Brother Wall has been a member of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, since September, 1960. He served the church faithfully as a deacon, to which office he was ordained on July 19, 1964.

The evidence of his care for the church building and grounds remains as a silent testimony to both his natural, gifted skill and craftsmanship and his deep and abiding love for God's people and things of Spiritual Zion. In spiritual matters he manifested a deep, unerring wisdom and influence which was sought out and valued by many, both at home and abroad.

He was employed by Methodist Hospital from 1967 until his death. While he worked there he often visited and cheered the sick. His visits and deeds of charity were not confined to members and friends of the church, but extended to co-workers, neighbors, friends from bygone years, and strangers.

Brother Wall rejoiced in the doctrine and gospel of Jesus Christ, who was his only hope, being ever ready to confess his own unworthiness and the worthiness of Christ, the Lord of Glory, in whose sovereign hands are all the affairs of mankind.

Brother Wall's body was laid to rest in the Clearwater Cemetery near Scroggins, Texas, to await the resurrection at the coming of his Lord.

He was a valued friend and member among the brethren both at home and among our sister churches. Brother R. B. Wall is and will be deeply missed by those who have known him.

Resolved that three copies of this resolution be prepared: one to be sent to the family, with our sympathy; one for the church records; and one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Written by direction of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church in regular quarterly conference of March 6, 1977.

Elder Carey C. Morris, Moderator
Deacon Dean G. Connell, Clerk

MISS HELEN JANE JONES

Helen Jane Jones was born April 15, 1907, in Madison County, Iowa, and slept away peacefully on October 8, 1976, in Studio City, California. Elder Hornberger, pastor of the deceased, conducted the services. Helen Jane was the only child of the late Jesse and Grace (Jordan) Jones. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church at the age of 17 years.

She leaves four cousins, two aunts, and several long and loving friends. Helen Jane was a scholar all her life, and at an early age she became a professional librarian.

Her education included degrees from Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa, Drexel Library University, New York, and her Masters degree in English from Columbia University. Helen Jane held positions in many states, and after locating in California, she became head librarian at U.C.L.A., Los Angeles Law Library, and Lockheed Air Craft.

She had been a reader of the *Signs of the Times* for more than fifty years, and believed its sound doctrine with all her heart.

Her loved ones and many close friends will miss her, as she had so much to give, and gave it so beautifully.

She loved her Lord and lived a wholesome and happy life. Our hope is that through God's love and mercy we may be blessed to join her some sweet day.

Written by her loving Aunt,
Mrs. Dorothy Jordan

SISTER LILLIE MAUGHMER WEIDER

It was our Father's will to call from this life another dear sister. Sister Weider was

born July 25, 1884, and passed away at the age of ninety-two on April 6, 1976, in a nursing home in Sanford, North Carolina. She is survived by a sister, Mrs. Daisy M. Wright of Dickson, Tennessee, a brother, Elder Russell E. Maughmer of Jackson, Tennessee, and a niece, Mrs. Ralph Brigman of Hamlet, North Carolina. Her young life was spent in Tennessee and she was married on January 27, 1904, to (Brother) Gilbert S. Weider.

Sister Weider was a charter member of the Richmond Primitive Baptist Church which was constituted June 25, 1910. She spoke often of having been baptized in the James River at Richmond. She was a loyal and faithful member and served her church as clerk for many years, until glaucoma forced her to resign. She continued to come to church using her cane as long as she was able. This dear old sister suffered many trials and tribulations. Her last years were spent in hospitals and nursing homes in Virginia and North Carolina. She was so very lonely and endured many depressing months but she was given sustaining grace to bear her afflictions. She told of some of her experiences and was blessed to receive comfort from them.

Graveside services were held for Sister Weider by Mr. Scott Turner of Second Baptist Church and Mr. Clyde Hass of St. Paul Lutheran Church. Her body was laid to rest in Richmond Memorial Park in Rockingham, North Carolina to await the coming of her Lord.

Be it resolved that a copy be placed on the church records, one be sent to the family, and one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Written by request of the Richmond Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder D. L. Simpson, Moderator
Sister Azalee Lee, Clerk

BUFORD ELMO BRUMFIELD

As requested by Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing, I will write a few words in memory of our dear brother.

It pleased our Heavenly Father to remove Brother Brumfield from our midst on Feb. 18, 1977, at the age of 61. He died at his home in Gretna, Virginia.

Brother Elmo was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, to the late James Morgan Brumfield and Cecile Dove Brumfield. He is survived by his wife, Sister Vera Worley Brumfield; three sons, Roney and Dean, both of Gretna, Virginia, and Shelby of Richmond, Virginia. Also surviving are five sisters and five brothers, Mrs. Irene Lumkins, Mrs. Mable Adams, Mrs. Ruby Shelton, and Mrs. Doris Adams, all of Gretna, Virginia, and Mrs. Liona Adams of Lynchburg, Virginia; Ira, Bernard, Paul, and John of Gretna, Virginia, and Carson of Pittsville, Virginia.

Brother Brumfield was received into the fellowship of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on August 12, 1962. He was a faithful member, although his health was not good for several years and he was not blessed to attend regularly for quite some time. When we visited in his home he would always greet you with a smile.

He will be greatly missed by his Church, family, and friends. May we all be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father and may Sister Vera be blessed to think on what she has had more than what she has lost. His funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by his beloved Pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Elder Denver Simpson. His body was laid to rest in Gretna Burial Park beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the glorious Resurrection.

Written by Marvin Brumfield
Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. H. Doss, Clerk

IN MEMORY OF BROTHER OLIVER ANDERSON RUDD

God in His infinite wisdom has seen fit to call our precious brother home from this world of suffering. Brother Oliver was born September 6, 1901, died February 4, 1977, age 75 years old. He united with Bush Arbor Church August 11, 1968. He was faithful to the church and attended meetings as regularly as his health permitted. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace. He was groundskeeper for Bush Arbor Church from April of 1968 to June of 1971 when his health failed.

He is survived by his widow, Sister Bessie Simmons Rudd, two daughters, Mrs. Doris Dabbs of Miami, Fla., Mrs. Margaret Essick of Greensboro, N. C.; one son, Mr. Jerry Rudd of Miami, Fla.; one sister, Mrs. Mary Andrews of Burlington, N. C.; one brother, Mr. Phillip Rudd of Burlington, N. C.; eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Funeral services were conducted February 7, 1977 at 3 p.m. at Bush Arbor Church by Elder Wallis Smith, his pastor, Elder Donald Smith and Elder Leonard Key. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Be it resolved, that one copy be placed on the church records; one sent to the family; and one copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by the order of Bush Arbor Church Conference April 9, 1977.

Written by Brother William Travis.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Deacon Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 145 BURLINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA, AUGUST, 1977 No. 8

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION
DATE IS
8/77
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

JESUS MAKES INTERCESSION

I was a guilty sinner,
But now by grace I'm saved.
Upon the Hands of Jesus,
Forever I'm engraved.
In His own precious body,
He bore my every sin;
Now at the Throne in Heaven,
By Him I enter in.

Before the Throne He's living,
My High and Holy Priest;
In Him I have full pardon,
And on this truth I feast.
To me He is most precious,
My Pearl of greatest price;
For me the cross He suffered
My Holy Sacrifice.

He's now my great Redeemer,
And He can die no more;
It is by Him I enter,
At Heaven's Holy Door.
The gift of my Great Father,
He's now before the Throne,
He's making intercession
For souls who are His own.

By Ethel Gilland

Signs of the Times,

I am sending $7.00 for renewal of my paper. I am now two months behind, so please mark back for same.

I wish to hereby state that the original set up of this paper is no stranger to me in doctrine or order, though I am not a member of the Church. This paper has been in the family almost constantly since it was established to show the difference between the limited predestinarians that claimed to be the true Baptist and the absolute predestinarians.

I am getting along in years, myself. I have read many of the old papers when it was printed in newspaper form. "The Lone Pilgrim" used to come to our door, also.

I regret to say I find very few old soldiers who have the nerve to stand up and fight for the principles that the Beebe brethren did. They seem to be inclined to pacify or appease the worldly element. They rather want their preachers to preach the Truth, alright, but in a way that won't offend the worldly element. I don't know but one preacher, who is about my age, who goes in the stand with his pocket full of nuts that the Arminians can't crack. He is highly criticized by some of his own, too. He has no pocket full of candy or anything for their sweet tooth; no feather cushion for them to sit on; no feather pillow for them to lean back against. But rather a basket full of nuts with the shells so hard that they flee out the door when he begins reaching in the basket. But there is nothing strange in that, because it has always been that way. It is all in His

purpose and decrees. The Truth has always suffered and been crucified. Though the number be few that defend it, it will be enough to fulfill the purposes of the triune Godhead. The images they, the three in one Godhead, designed and decreed when in their wisdom they molded man, both male and female. They, like a machine, were made upright and perfect in every respect to fulfill the design for which they were created. Every cog in the machine will turn to perform in the full image that which the man was made to fulfill. Be it good or evil, honorable or dishonorable in the sight of man, it is all praising Him and is working to His honor and glory.

A. M. Campbell

A MESSAGE TO OUR READERS

In the year 1936, I was appointed Associate Editor of the *"Signs of the Times"* by Elder R. Lester Dodson, who was then Editor and owner of the paper. I served in that capacity until 1951.

In December 1950, prior to Elder Dodson's death, the *"Signs of the Times"* was incorporated as a non-profit corporation. He donated the paper to the Old School Baptist, with him retaining control while he lived. A Board of Trustees was appointed with provision for its continuance after his death.

In 1951, I was appointed Managing Editor and President of the Board of Trustees, and Elder J. D. Wood was appointed Editor, and a member of the Board. We have now served twenty-five years together as Managing Editor and Editor, and I do not believe any two men have ever worked together more agreeably, and in peace and harmony. As Editor, he has been blessed to guard the pages of the paper well, publishing sound doctrine, and contending for gospel order in the house of God. He now feels it necessary to resign as Editor in order to devote his time to serving his churches. He has agreed to continue as a Member of the Board of Trustees, for which we feel thankful.

We have two young men, Elder James F. Poole, of Salisbury, Maryland, and Elder Donald E. Smith, of Burlington, N.C., who have agreed to assume the role of Editor and Circulation Manager. Elder Poole has been appointed Editor, to take the place of Elder J. D. Wood, in this work. Elder Smith has been appointed Circulation Manager and will take over the distribution of the paper. May God bless them to work together. I will continue, the Lord willing, as President of the Board, and Managing Editor.

Our humble desire is that all who read the paper will feel that the paper belongs to every reader, and continue to get new subscribers and work for the continuance of the paper in every way.

From now on all letters and communications, notices of meetings, obituaries, ets., should be mailed to Elder James F. Poole, P.O. Box 1250, Salisbury, Maryland 21801. All renewals and communications regarding any questions about renewals, etc., should be addressed to *"Signs of the Times"*, Route 7, Box 483, Burlington, N.C. 27215.

D. V. Spangler

April 7, 1977
2265 Liberty Road
Lexington, KY 40505

Dear Brethren:

It has been on my mind to write you concerning things that have been published in the ***Signs of the Times***, which have been of great comfort and joy. The writings of Elder Beebe on the judge-

ment seat of Christ and Elder Lefferts writings on Noah and the Ark especially have given much comfort to me and others here in this locality. Elder Hudson's writings have also touched upon our experiences, to comfort.

The *Signs* published an editorial in the May issue of 1976, written by Elder Spangler and endorsed by Elder Wood, on peace. I must agree with the editorial and also the comments of Elder Wood concerning the editorial. It is also my understanding that both doctrine and order must be in the church of the living God for there to be peace among brethren and churches of our Lord. This unity comes by the blessed Lord, who is the head of the church and in all things has the pre-eminence. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. (John 14:37).

Now the Lord of peace, Himself give you peace always by all means, the Lord be with you all. (II Thes. 3:16) And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever. (Isa. 32:17-18) And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places. Great peace have they which love thy law; and nothing shall offend them. (Psalms 119:165) For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Therefore it is my understanding, concerning the peace of God's people, which the Lord gives to them, it is in righteousness, which includes all they need in the kingdom of God; that has to do with the precious doctrine, practices, order, fellowship, walk and etc., which are wrought by the blessed Holy Spirit in love. When the Lord gives this righteousness to his people then there is peace among them and great occasion for rejoicing in Christ Jesus through the Holy Spirit.

We have longed to see you again, with the desire to establish some communication between us, that both could be comforted by the mutual faith of Christ.

I see on the copy of my ***Signs of the Times*** that my subscription has run out, so please renew my subscription for another year. May the Lord continue to bless you and all concerned with publishing the ***Signs of the Times*** to the comfort and edification of God's poor and afflicted children, which are called by the Spirit of the living God.

Your unworthy servant,

Fred B. Neikirk

EXPERIENCE

I feel I must express, if blessed to, the reason for my little hope the good Lord gave me. I became interested in the Primitive Baptist as an orphan boy, but had never heard them preach until I was grown. I loved Elder Robert Dodd a good many years before I offered to the church at Moons Creek. As my wife was a member there I looked after the church and would tell her to let me go up and get the Minutes of the other churches when they called the names of the churches in our Association.

Once I asked a very dear friend, who was a member at that time, if I offered to the church did he think they would take me in. He said, "Mr. Sartin, try it and see." Some of the dear Primitive Baptist said the day I joined at Lick Fork during a Union Meeting that they thought I was already a member. I planned to join during an Association held at McCray Church on Monday, but my wife

got up that morning and said, "Let's not go today, as you have so much work on hand." My burden grew heavier after this.

I would like to tell of a vision I had. I was invited to take a tour to the West by a man from whom I bought feed, and he lacked one person having a bus load. He wanted his customers to see the feed plant, how it was made and processed, and so I consented to go. All the way to St. Louis, Mo. the people on the bus would talk about the pretty archway that led to the West. When we reached St. Louis the ground was covered with a heavy sheet of sleet and you almost couldn't travel. The people from down South, who were with us, were screaming and very upset, but I felt very calm. When I went to my hotel room I found an open Bible there, and I read a few verses and went to sleep. While sleeping I heard a terrible noise as a tin tub would have made falling to the ground. I didn't awake but looked up, and I saw an arch gateway that could not be compared to the one man made. It seemed to me this one was made of pure gold, and so beautiful. As I walked over to the gate I saw Brother D. O. Chandler standing by this most beautiful arched gateway. He opened the gate and I walked in. He said, "We have been looking for you a long time." Inside this place that was so beautiful I saw some whom I believe were God's children, and are His children. I saw Sister Alice Smith with a pretty hat that I had seen her wear, and Sister Della Mangram and Sister Marie Smith, with one of her familiar hats on, and there were many others too numerous to mention. Sister Alice, Della, and Marie embraced me with a spiritual embrace. I felt they were extending love and fellowship to me. I hope I felt the same for them, and all who were in there. I was so happy to be in such a wonderful place with these folks that I thought surely this must be a touch of what Heaven will be like.

When we were asked on the way home to tell something about our trip, a voice seemed to say, "Go tell this that has been shown you on the Mountain top." I stood up in the bus and told it the best I could and there was a man on the bus, who had carried on a lot of foolishness on the way there, who broke down and cried when I sat down. He led us all in a beautiful prayer.

I love the brethren for Christ sake, I hope, and enjoy more than anything having them visit in my home.

Henry Sartin

Route 6, Box 297
Bassett, Va. 24055

Dear Brother in Christ,

Inclosed is $10.00 for my subscription to the *"Signs of the Times"*.

Also inclosed is a wonderful letter in which I have Brother Lawson's permission to do with as I choose. I felt the letter too great in the Almighty Spirit of God for me not to share it with the dear children of God.

Brother Lawson has written in the *"Signs"* before and I feel you will be familiar with who he is. He has been a member of Providence Church near Star City, Arkansas, since the age of 16.

Please send me the time you will hold your Associations near and around Danville, or Bassett. I hope to invite this dear brother and wife to our part of Virginia to hear you preach as it is given from God out of Heaven to feed God's humble poor.

May God bless all His dear little ones everywhere.

Love in Christ,
Nancy A. Craig

Dear Sister Craig,

Greetings, in the dear and precious Name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

The Lord willing, and if I am blessed to do so, I will try to answer your good and comforting letter, dated Jan. 6, 1977.

No! Sister Craig, as far as I know, I have never preached a word in my whole fifty-eight years of life, and do not suppose that I ever will, for I do not feel worthy of so great a gift. There are times with me that I believe the Holy Spirit is with me, and I am made to sing all praise, honor, and glory to His matchless Name. But it seems that I am in the valley of darkness, sin, and sorrow most of the time, begging and hoping and praying for His mercy and guidance, and asking that He will keep me in His righteousness to do the things that are well pleasing in His sight, and to the honor and glory of His Holy Name.

If ever this poor wretched sinner spoke or wrote and words of comfort or consolation to any little child of Grace, it was not I that did it, but the Holy Spirit, that doeth all things well. Which brings to mind a portion of the Holy Scripture, found in the book of Romans, and as taught by the great Apostle Paul, beginning with the first verse of Chapter 8. Paul said, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." Now it appears to me that this word, "Who" as spoken here in this particular place represents those and includes each and every poor sinner who was redeemed by the death of Jesus Christ and the pouring out of His precious blood there on the Cross on Mount Calvary. These all, by the Grace of Almighty God, are they that walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Thanks be to God the Father and His darling Son, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, that neither the way or the how to receive a home in Heaven and eternal salvation was not by the works of the carnal man. Oh no! For Paul said, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit."

Oh! my precious sister, when by the Grace and mercy of the Holy Spirit I am made to rejoice and feel in my poor heart the sweet fellowship with Christ my Lord, then, if it were possible, I would denounce all the pleasures of this time-world, and take the wings of the morning and fly away into that eternal rest and peaceful abode to ever be with my Lord and Saviour. Oh! dear ones, how I long to serve God perfectly, but I can not. For when I would do good, evil is present with me. I long for holiness, yet in my own view, I seem only to increase in unholiness, and it fills me at times with such great despair of myself that I am made to cry out as the Apostle Paul did, as recorded in Romans, Chapter 7, Verse 24. "O, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Please remember me in your prayers, if you can.

A poor sinner,
David B. Lawson
Monticello, Arkansas

UNKNOWN, YET WELL KNOWN

I have so long delayed answering yours of the 7th of June, that by this

time I shall not wonder if I hear you have concluded that I either esteem you an hypocrite in Zion or a deceiver deceived; but the Lord knows, before whom I write it, that I cannot help hoping, from the contents of your letter, and the piece in the "Standard", that you are one among the very few whose eyes God, the eternal Spirit, has opened, and to whose soul the Holy Comforter has imparted divine life. And O mercy of mercies! what an unspeakable mercy, that while thousands of tinkling cymbals, who are high in doctrine, and stand high in the estimation of the "religious world", are content with a form of sound words and a round of services; I say, what a mercy, if the Lord has brought you and me really to pant after the inwardly manifested Kingdom of God, which stands not in word only, but in power! I don't know how it is with you, but I often wonder how I dare to go about bearing witness against a form without power, and contending for a feeling religion, when, for the most part, I seem to be nothing but a dry formalist, and seem to be as destitute of spiritual feeling as a pebble; but even then I know that nothing will bear weighting in the balances of the sanctuary, and have "pure religion" stamped upon it by the Holy Ghost, but soul feeling, and its consequent effects produced by God the eternal Spirit. Confessions of sinfulness, without felt hatred to sin; expressions of thankfulness, without felt gratitude; and petitions for favour, without felt desires, are what my soul dreads.

But O, how seldom it is that I can feel sin really hateful, self really abhorred, God's goodness really admired, and His mercies really desired; yea, I never feel these things but when He Himself produces the feeling, and never (in my right mind) wish to do; for if I produced the feeling I should, no doubt, take to myself the praise; but I do from my soul wish it would please His dear Majesty to produce these feelings oftener. I know that we are charged with wanting to live upon frames and feelings; but what I want is to live upon a felt Christ; I want to feel Him a solid rock beneath me, a wall of fire around me, a glorious fountain to me, a blessed covert over me, the hope of glory within me, a complete robe upon me; yea, I want to feel Him the bread on which my soul feeds, the staff on which my soul leans, and the water that my soul drinks, yes, He knows that I want for myself to feel that He is living in me my all and in all. But alas! alas! I sometimes don't even want Him; I am neither drinking nor thirsting, eating nor hungering, desiring nor having, praying nor praising, asking, nor receiving, hoping nor fearing. Surely this is being free (from all feeling) among the dead, like the slain in their graves. O, nothing do I dread like this unfeeling feeling! The language of my soul of late has been, "Lord, make me sigh if I cannot sing; Lord, help me to groan if I cannot speak; give me an appetite if I am not eating; do let me feel some signs of life".

Woodhurst, Hunts., 1842 Septimus

(Taken from "The Gospel Standard", 1842)

EXPERIENCE OF JOSEPH HART (CONCLUDED)

Jesus Christ, and Him crucified, is now the only thing I desire to know. In that incarnate mystery are contained all the rich treasures of Divine wisdom. This is the mark towards which I am still pressing forward. This is the cup of salvation of which I wish to drink deeper and deeper. This is the knowledge in which I long to grow; and desire at the same time a daily increase in all true grace and godliness. All duties, means,

ordinances, etc., are to me then only rich when they are enriched with the blood of the Lamb; in comparison of which, all things else are but chaff and husks.

Pharisaic zeal and Antinomian security are the two engines of Satan, with which he grinds the Church in all ages, as betwixt the upper and the nether millstone. The space between them is much narrower, and harder to find, than most men imagine. It is a path which the vulture's eye hath not seen; and none can show it us but the Holy Ghost. Here, let no one trust the directions of his own heart, or of any other man; lest by being warned to shun the one, he be dashed against the other. The distinction is too fine for man to discern; therefore, let the Christian ask directions of his God. These two hideous monsters continually worry and perplex my soul; nor is the former, though appearing in a holier shape, one whit less, but (if possible) more odious to me, than the latter. Therefore, from the wonderful dealings of God towards me, I endeavour to draw the following observations.

On the one hand, I would observe, that "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God which showeth mercy." That none can make a Christian but He that made the world. That it is the glory of God to bring good out of evil. That whom He loveth, He loveth unto the end. That though all men seek, more or less, to recommend themselves to God's favour by their works, yet to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. That the blood of the Redeemer, applied to the soul by His Spirit is the one thing needful. That prayer is the task and labour of a Pharisee; but the privilege and delight of a Christian. That God grants not the requests of His people, because they pray; but they pray, because He designs to answer their petitions. That self-righteousness and legal holiness rather keep the soul from, than draw it to Christ. That they who seek salvation by them, pursue shadows; mistake the great end of the law; and err from the way, the truth, and the life. That God's design is to glorify His Son alone, and to debase the excellence of every creature. That no righteousness besides the righteousness of Jesus (that is, the righteousness of God) is of any avail towards acceptance. That to be a moral man, a zealous man, a devout man, is very short of being a Christian. That the eye of faith looks more to the blood of Jesus than to the soul's victory over corruptions. That the dealings of God with His people, though similar in the general, are nevertheless so various, that there is no chalking out the paths of one child of God by those of another; no laying down regular plans of Christian conversion, Christian experience, Christian usefulness, or Christian conversation. That the Will of God is the only standard of right and good. That the sprinkling of the blood of a crucified Saviour on the conscience, by the Holy Ghost, sanctifies a man; without which the most abstemious life and rigorous discipline is unholy. Lastly, that faith and holiness, with every other blessing, are the purchase of the Redeemer's blood; and that He has a right to bestow them on whom He will, in such a manner, and in such a measure, as He thinks best; though the spirit in all men lusteth to envy.

On the other hand, I would observe, that it is not so easy to be a Christian as some men seem to think. That for a living soul really to trust in Christ alone, when he sees nothing in himself but evil and sin, is an act as supernatural as for Peter to walk the sea. That mere doctrine, though ever so sound, will not

alter the heart; consequently, that to turn from one set of tenets to another is not Christian conversion. That as much as Lazarus coming out of his grave, the feeling himself restored to life, differed from those who only saw the miracle, or believed the fact when told them; so great is the difference between a soul's real coming out of himself, and having the righteousness of Christ imputed to him by the precious faith of God's elect, and a man's bare believing the doctrine of imputed righteousness because he sees it contained in Scripture, or assenting to the truth of it when proposed to his understanding by others. That a whole-hearted disciple can have but little communion with a brokenhearted Lord. That "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ; he is none of His." That a prayerless spirit is not the Spirit of Christ but that prayer, to a Christian, is as necessary and as natural as food to a natural man. That the usual way of going to heaven is through much tribulation. That the sinner which is drawn to Christ is not he that has learnt that he is a sinner by head-knowledge, but that feels himself such by heart-contrition. That he that believeth hath an unction from the Holy One. That a true Christian is as vitally united to Christ as my hand or foot to my body - - consequently, suffers and rejoices with Him. That a believer talks and converses with God. That a dead faith can no more cherish the soul than a dead corpse can perform the functions of life. That where there is true faith, there will be obedience and the fear of God. That he that lives by the faith of the Son of God eateth His flesh, and drinketh His blood. That "he that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life". That many imagine themselves great believers, who have little or no faith at all; and many, who deem themselves void of faith, cleave to Christ by the faith of the operation of God. That faith, like gold, must be tired in the fire, before it can be safely depended upon. Lastly, that Christians are sealed by the Holy Ghost to the day of redemption; and to this seal they trust their eternal welfare - - not to naked knowledge, or speculative notions, though ever so deep. They dread to dream they are rich, when they are blind and poor; to have a name to live, and yet be dead; or to be forced to fly for precarious refuge to the conjectural scheme of universal salvation, with those who hope to be saved, because they think there will be none lost.

For my own part, I confess myself a sinner still; and though I am not much tempted to outward gross acts of iniquity, yet inward corruptions and spiritual wickedness continually harass and perplex my soul, and often make me cry out, "O wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from the body of this death!" From me they are not yet removed; though I once hoped, with many others, that I should soon get rid of them. All I can do is to look to Jesus through them all; cling fast to His wounded side; long to be clothed with His righteousness; pray Him to plead my cause against these spiritual enemies that rise up against me; and, though I feel myself leprous from head to foot, believe that I am clean through the work which He hath spoken unto me. In short, I rejoice, not because the Spirits are always subject to me, (for alas! I find they are often too strong for me to control,) but because my name is written in heaven.

I am daily more and more convinced that the promises of God, to His people, are absolute; and desire to build my hopes on the free electing love of God in Christ Jesus to my soul, before the world

began; which, I can experimentally and feelingly say, He hath delivered from the lowest hell. He hath plucked me as a brand out of the fire. Though my ways were dreadfully dangerous to the last degree, His eye was all along upon me for good. He hath excited me to love much, by forgiving me much. He hath showed me, and still daily shows me, the abominable deceit, lust, enmity, and pride of my heart, and the inconceivable depths of His mercy; how far I was fallen, and how much it cost Him of sweat and blood to bring me up. He hath proved Himself stronger than I; and His goodness superior to all my unworthiness. He gives me to know, and to feel too, that without Him I can do nothing. He tells me (and He enables me to believe it,) that I am all fair, and there is no spot in me. Though an enemy, He calls me His friend; though a traitor, His child; though a beggared prodigal, He clothes me with the best robe, and has put a ring of endless love and mercy on my hand. And though I am often sorely distressed by spiritual internal foes, afflicted, tormented, and bowed down almost to death with the sense of my own present barrenness, ingratitude, and proneness to evil, He secretly shows me His bleeding wounds; and softly, but powerfully, whispers to my soul, "I am thy great Salvation".

His free distinguishing grace is the bottom on which is fixed the rest of my poor, weary, tempted soul. On this I ground my hope, oftentimes, when unsupported by any other evidence, save only by the Spirit of adoption received from Him. He hath chosen me out from everlasting, in whom to make known the inexhaustible riches of His free grace and long suffering. Though I am a stranger to others, and a wonder to myself; yet I know Him, or, rather, am known of Him. Though poor in myself, I am rich enough in Him. When my dry, empty, barren soul is parched with thirst, He kindly bids me come to Him, and drink my fill at the Fountain-head. In a word, He empowers me to say, with experimental evidence, ***"Where Sin abounded, Grace did much more abound."*** Amen, and Amen.

April, 1759

A BEAUTIFUL SUBJECT

The union between Christ and the Bride is a beautiful subject. This is true love. Man cannot separate what God has joined together. "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church." (Eph. 5:30 - 32)

Since man cannot separate Christ and the bride, man cannot pull one out of that number. There are many members, but one body. These many members compose that one body, which is the Bride of Christ, or the Church of the living God.

"My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them from my Father's hands. (John 10:29) "Who are kept by the power of God- - -" (1 Peter 1:5) Nothing can separate you from the love of God. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long: we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things

present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:35 - 39)

God the Father, gave the bride to Christ. What a mystery! When Adam was asleep, God took from him a rib and made he a woman. Adam said, "this is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh." (Gen. 2:23) Eve is a beautiful type of the church.

Please consider how the Lord directed the servant of Abraham to go and find the bride of Isaac. Abraham commanded the servant to go to his country, to his kindred and find a wife for Isaac. When the servant went to the city of Nahor, he prayed unto the Lord to make it manifest to him who the woman was that God had appointed to be the wife of Isaac. "And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for all the goods of his master were in his hand: and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor. And he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, even the time that women go out to draw water. And he said, O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold, I stand here by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water: And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and ***she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac:*** and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master. And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder. And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her: and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up. And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher. And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hasted, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink. ***And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking.***" (Gen. 24: 10 - 19) The Lord made the journey prosperous! The servant brought back Rebekah, who became the bride of Isaac. This is a beautiful type of the Church or bride that was given to Christ. Isaac loved the woman! (see verse 67) Why did he love this woman whom he had not seen before? This love comes from God. "God is love." (1 John 4:8) Dear one, what causes you to love those of like precious faith whom you have not seen before? They were strangers in the flesh, but you find in your heart a love for them. Why? Can you explain how? This love of God draws his people together. This is the love that flows from heart to heart.

Think of the love that Jesus had for his bride when he was willing to come down upon this earth to redeem her from the curse of the law. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15: 13) Jesus had the love for you that he died for you! In connection with this, consider the love that Adam had for his bride when he was willing to eat of that fruit and die with her.

Jesus, our husband, has satisfied the just demands of the law by dying upon the cross. He rose again the third day, and now he is upon the right hand of

God, who ever lives to make intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

We do not know how long this world will stand, but it will stand until the last one of his members has been brought into that fold. All of the members of Christ shall be taught of God. They shall be brought to the knowledge of the truth. "- -And they shall be all taught of God.- -" (John 6:45)

What a comforting thought to know that God sends his spirit to quicken the hearts of his people! "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (John 14:26)

The world cannot receive the Spirit of truth. The world does not know the truth and cannot believe the truth. Why? Because the world has not received the Spirit of truth or the Holy Ghost. (see John 14:17)

If the world had received the wisdom of God, they would not have crucified Jesus. "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." (1 Cor. 27-8)

Please notice that the world does not know God. Since the world does not know Jesus nor the Father, then it does not know the children of God or the bride of Christ. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." (1 John 3:1)

Dear one, what a comfort it is to know that the world does not know the bride of Christ! Do you feel to be an outcast? Do you feel that you do not belong in the society of this world? "Mine inheritance is unto me as a speckled bird, the birds round about are against her." (Jer. 12:9)

"Draw me, we will run after thee." (S. S. 1:4) Do you enjoy the sweet meditations of God? "My meditation of him shall be sweet." (Psalms 104:34) Why do you desire a nearness with God? Why do you desire a closer walk with God? Why do you desire to do that which is acceptable in the sight of God? This is because God has placed his spirit within your heart. This spirit in your heart is what causes the separation between you and the world.

"They think it strange that you run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you." (1 Peter 4:4) The world spoke evil of Jesus, and the world speaks evil of the saints of God. Paul said, "We are made as the filth of the world and are the offscouring of all things unto this day." (1 Cor. 4:13)

As the Lord blesses us, let us come a little closer to this mystery. The spirit of Jesus dwells within the hearts of his people. "The kingdom of God is within you." (Luke 17:21) In some way deeper than we can explain, there is a separation between Christ and the Bride as long as there is time. The song of the dove is a lonesome call. On the earth, the song of the Bride or the Church is lonesome because Jesus, her husband is in heaven. She is waiting here below and cries for the presence of God. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." (Rom. 8:22-23) As long as we dwell upon this earth, we

will continue to have that warfare. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." (Gal. 5:17)

In this life the Lord blesses you with some love visits by his manifest presence. How comforting and consoling are these visits! He speaks peace to your soul. The presence of the Spirit of God drives the dark clouds away, and causes the hard road that we travel to become easy, and makes the heavy trials to become light. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matt. 11:28-30)

Words cannot express the beauty of the end result of the love between Christ and the Bride. Paul heard unspeakable words which was not lawful for man to utter. (2 Cor. 12:4) "That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Eph. 5:27) "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." (Rev. 21:2)

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ROMANS 8 : 28

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

I hope that I believe in a sovereign God; an omnipotient God; an omniscient God; an omnipresent God; a God who hast declared the end from the begining, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, and said, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." "I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." (Isa. 46:10-11)

God made the heavens and the earth and all things therein by the word of his power. Will he not control all of them? or will they be controlled by man, or fate, or some other creature? Consider the scripture at the head of this article. If God does not control all things, how can we be sure that all things are working for our good? God's children are of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation and when we read of wars, famines, earthquakes, floods, etc. that kill or hurt thousands, even millions of people, we question with our natural mind how these things can be for our good, even though we are told these things must be, and that we should not trouble ourselves about them: but we are finite and God is infinite. His ways and thoughts are higher than the heavens above our ways and thoughts.

All things must come to pass exactly as God did decree before time was: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, "Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." (Isa. 14:24). "For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disanull it?" (Isa. 14:27). God has thought of everything, and there is none who can disanull; else he is not sovereign and omniscient. And, "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." (Ecc. 3:1). If there is no purpose to a thing that comes to pass, how can it work to the good of God's loved ones? or how can it be for his praise and glory? for he hath said he would not give his glory to

another, neither his praise to graven images. "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: and the remainder thou shalt restrain."

When God formed man of the dust of the earth, he made him upright, but subject to vanity; and because he was made subject to vanity, man did transgress the law and fall under its curse: because to be subject to something one must of necessity be under its power. Had Adam never trangressed and fell it could not be said that he was subject to vanity.

God's law is just and holy and demands the death of transgressors; therefore man died in trespasses and sin, and had nothing with which to redeem himself; but in the eternal wisdom and foreknowledge of God the redemption and salvation of his children, the ones chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, was already sure; because Christ stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world for those whose names are written in the book of life. (See Rev. 13:8 and 1 Peter 1:18-20). And at the appointed time this was made manifest: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." (Acts 2:23). They tried to kill the Lord many times before, but were not able to lay hands on him, because his time was not yet come: he had been sent to heal the sick; cast our devils; cause the blind to see, the deaf to hear, and the lame to walk; to preach the gospel to the poor; to fulfill all prophecies of him; and to fulfill the law to a jot and a tittle. They did not know they were fulfilling prophecy of many hundreds of years past when they hung the Savior between two thieves, pierced his side, and cast lots upon his vesture; nevertheless it came to pass exactly according to the determinate counsel of God.

Christ was placed in a new tomb, a great stone was rolled to the door of the sepulchre, a seal was placed on the stone and a watch was set to prevent the theft of his body; nevertheless Christ came forth victorious over death and the grave, as had been prophesied by David: "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption." (Ps. 16:10)

Christ suffered and died on the cruel tree of the cross for the sins of his people, and rose again for their justification: not one of them will ever be eternally lost: because, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and I will in no wise cast him out." Jesus did not say that all who wanted to come, or were willing to accept him as their Savior, could or would come to him; but only the ones given to him by the Father. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." In the strictest sense, "accepting Christ" would be a work, and also a "hit or miss proposition": but salvation is not of works, but by grace, thru faith; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed. (Rom. 4:16). And if we are of the seed to whom the promise was made, then are we heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. There is nothing one can do to become an heir, because one is an heir only by relationship. In the wisdom and foreknowledge of God, he chose a particular people to be the body of Christ: "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written when as yet there was none of them." (Ps. 139:15-16). Again, "According as he hath chosen us in him be-

fore the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Can you think of anything more precious than that God gave his only begotten Son for our sins and made us to be sons by adoption? "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God."

"How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more than the sand."

Dearly beloved brethern, I have set forth the above to show that I believe God has, in his great wisdom, eternal counsel, and foreknowledge, predestinated all things; that all things are for his praise and glory, and work together for good to those who love him and are the called according to his purpose.

Beloved, watch and pray. The time of his coming again is nearer today than when we first believed.

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ORDINATION OF ELDER JACK DAWSEY

The Forest Grove Old School Baptist Church and other sisters and brethren met at the meetinghouse in Parsonsburg, Maryland, on March 26, 1977, for the purpose of ordaining Brother Jack Dawsey to the office of Elder.

The church had requested that Elders John Wood, James Poole, D. B. Stokes, and J. T. Prescott organize the Presbytery. Elder Wood was unable to attend the meeting. The Presbytery convened with Elder James Poole chosen moderator; Elder J. T. Prescott, Elder D. B. Stokes, and deacons as follows: George Pearson, Falls of Tar River Church, Rocky Mount, N.C.; Harry Ward, Frank Holland, and Bill Davis of Snow Hill Church; William Adkins of Indiantown Church; Francis Adkins of Welsh Tract Church; Jim Messick and Victor Laws of Salisbury Church; Clarence Houston of Little Creek Church; Laurence Holloway, Elmer Hastings, and Elbert Robbins of Forest Grove Church, the latter being chosen clerk of the Presbytery.

Licentiate Jack Dawsey was given liberty to relate his experience and call to the ministry. Brother Dawsey told of his travels in Arminian falsehoods and of his eventual deliverance to gospel truth- -salvation by grace- -independent of the works of fallible man.

The Elders then questioned Brother Dawsey. Elder Prescott asked the candidate to speak his views on the doctrine of unlimited predestination of all things, time and eternity and asked the brother if predestination in any way justified man. Brother Dawsey expressed orthodox Baptist views on these points declaring that justification is by faith, not by works of righteousness; that renewing is the work of the Holy Ghost; that faith is a gift of God, a virtue deposited in man by God. It is in fact God's faith working in us.

Elder Stokes asked if the brother desired the office of Elder. Brother Dawsey responded affirmatively--but only if it is the will of God: "I come to do thy will, not my will." Brother Dawsey said he preferred the term gifts to the term office. Elder Stokes then asked the brother if he were willing to be submissive to conditions existing in the church and traditions even where there is no gospel foundation. Brother Jack responded: "If I am a servant of God, I shall submit as long as it does not conflict with conscience." Elder Stokes cautioned the brother to preach the gospel, not to fight against tradition.

Elder Poole stated that we know each other and generally understand what we believe in common, but that for the benefit of hearers he would ask if, because of belief in God's predestination of all things, one is entitled to live in any loose or immoral way. Brother Dawsey said that accompanying predestination is the fear of God; that when God reveals His doctrine the sinner will tremble. God is just in all acts: when the doctrine takes hold of a man he will know that God is the first cause, that acts are all arranged so He (God) will be justified and the sinner will be found guilty. Adam is guilty and responsible before God. God is a law unto Himself.

The Elders in the Presbytery then performed the customary "Laying on of Hands" with Elder Poole speaking in prayer.

The charge to the candidate was given by Elder Stokes who directed him to II Timothy and Titus. Elder Stokes cautioned the brother to preach the gospel not to pacify anyone unless supported by a "thus saith the Lord." He advised also that Brother Dawsey take heed over the flock in meekness and humility, and that if a man transgressed he should show compassion, remembering from whence God has brought him. Elder Stokes spoke comforting to Sister Linnie in her life as a minister's wife.

Elder Prescott charged the church to be mindful that Brother Dawsey is yet a man, that he will make mistakes when left to himself and that God will take care of these things. He reminded the church also that God has fitted each in his place of service, none above the other. If we are children of the Heavenly King, we are all created equal in Adam. Even in the manifestation of flesh, God will be manifest. The church was advised to remember also his helpmate and her burdens.

After the Right Hand of Fellowship by the Presbytery, the candidate was presented to the church as an Elder. The church received the work of the Presbytery unanimously. Afterward, with the dissolving of the Presbytery, the brethren and friends of the church extended the Right Hand of Fellowship to Elder Dawsey and Sister Linnie.

By order of the Presbytery
and the church,

Elder James F. Poole — Moderator
Elbert Robbins — Clerk

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1977 session of the Pigg River Association convenes with Republican Church, but will be held at the Pigg River Meeting House, Franklin County, Virginia, the Lord willing, the first Sunday in August, and Friday and Saturday before, (August 5, 6, 7)

To get to the Pigg River Meeting House, those coming from the north on U.S. 220 turn right on State Route 919 (which is three-quarters of a mile south of Boones Mill, Va.) Follow 919 to State Route 641 and turn on right on 641 to Callaway, Va. Then turn left in Callaway on State Route 602, and follow signs to Meeting House.

Those coming from the south take State Route 919 to the left just north of Rocky Mount, Va., and turn left on State Route 641 to Callaway, Va., then turn left on Route 602 and follow signs to the Meeting House.

A cordial welcome is extended to our correspondents and all lovers of the truth.

John D. Wood, Clerk

SOUTH ARKANSAS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association will convent with Bethel Church, the Lord willing, on September 16, 17, 18, 1977. The church is located approximately 2 miles north of Bearden, Ark., Ouahita County, on the Bearden and Hopeville Road. There is a large cemetery at the church. If you come through Bearden, get information there.

Elder Clovis Townley, Moderator
Ross Watson, Clerk

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union will be held, the Lord willing, at Sand Hill Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before, in July 1977. Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold Pittman, Clerk

Anyone who could supply the Editors of the Signs with old copies or bound volumes of the Signs of the Times from its beginning thru 1875, kindly write stating particulars. Also needed - one copy of the writings of Elder J. F. Johnson of Kentucky, published by the Signs in about 1879.

Write: James F. Poole
P.O. Box 1250
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

It is necessary to have all announcements for the Signs in our hand two months before the month of publication. An item for the October issue would have to be in by the first of August at the latest. This is necessary due to new printing schedules which we must meet to have your Signs to you the beginning of each month. Thank you for your co-operation.

Ed.

Burlington, North Carolina **August 1977**

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All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Burlington, North Carolina, as shown below.
All notices of meetings and obituaries should be mailed directly to P.O. Box 1250, Salisbury, Md. 21801. Articles for publication may be mailed to either address.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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EDITORIAL

ACTS 10:5 - 48

Since my readers have Bibles I will not quote this lengthy matter, but I will, as blessed of God with a fruitful mind, deal with the subject matter involved.

If not mistaken, our object is to find out how that, since the Kingdom of Heaven has been at hand for approximately two thousand years, and that we are fully expecting it to continue under the same Divine management until the return of the Manager in Person, it is a source of keen anticipation as to how He deals with the born again children in the reception of Gospel food, and in subduing the belligerent nature of both hearer and minister.

First, it is most fitting that the Lord places before us the Apostle Peter. To begin with, he is impulsive, impetuous, and quick on the draw. You say to me, "I do not think you should speak of an apostle in that way." Why? Do you think that it would be insulting to Peter? Not when Peter has these qualitities removed or suppressed in him. He, like the whole household of faith, is as humble and as lovely as anyone you will find when the Lord is pleased to screen him and show him to himself. You remember how most people would fight if you call them a dog? I know of one poor sinful wretch who did not fly into a passionate tantrum when she was called a dog. She said, "Yes, Lord, I know it." I know of a king who when the finger of Divine accusation was leveled in his face broke out in sorrowing repentance saying, "I have sinned against the Lord." (Matt. 15:27; II Sam. 12:13). In connection with these thoughts, let it be urged that each time Peter's sin found him out, it humbled him, (Num. 32:23) and it seems today, if it pleases our heavenly Father to satiate us with the washing and cleansing of Living Water, we, too, would be willing to cast our carnal weapons behind us and to reach a helping and an understanding hand to all the little ones from to sea to shining sea. I beg Him that I might be blessed to write in that spirit, and to that end.

When a thing has been ours for thousands of years, it is indeed hard to admit anyone else into the blessings of that gift. That is exactly the feelings of

Peter. The Lord has chosen Israel for His special people, for a dwelling place for Himself. How significantly the Lord had favored His chosen people. Although Peter was straightened (and straitened) out and corrected and made to acknowledge his sinfulness, yet he resented sharing the blessings of Israel with the Gentiles. Aren't we still turned that way? If you will look back at our history here in America you will find many instances, both past and present, when our people have arrogantly drew their skirts around them and said, "Do not come near me lest you spatter our garments with your defilement." It would seem that the experience of Peter would have taught us better than that, but the experiences of yesterday will not suffice. We must pass through our own experiences whether they are pleasant scenes wherein love abounded or those sad times when malicious words were prated against us. (III John 10)

At no time has God ever abdicated His throne. At no time has He ever left us to our own resources. He declared the end from the beginning, and did not, as our enemies suggest, leave the accomplishment of that declaration (decree) to fatalism, but He has executed what His wisdom declared. Oftimes God has been teaching two lessons side by side and neither party realizes that He was at work with the other. God works quietly, and often in secret. Cornelius knew nothing about Peter until the revelation was shown him; likewise Peter knew nothing about Cornelius until God made him acquainted with him. Do not, dear brethren, come at me with the flimsy thought that either man could have brought this about earlier; and do not come at me with the thought that they could have disobeyed this revelation in either case. These are momentous matters, and the time had come for them to be enforced, and God wrought effectually in each of them to that end. (Psa. 110:3)

At the right time (the settled and fixed time to favor Zion), and while the stirring of the Lord was effecting the demeanor of Cornelius, God was stirring just as effectually in his servant, Peter. He went up on the housetop as an obedient servant, as it was the Jewish custom to pray about the ninth hour. The servant of God became hungry on the housetop so much so that he was about to eat. Evidently he had carried something to eat with him. It is also evident that some of his Jewish brethren went with him to the top of the house. While they made ready to eat, behold Peter fell into a trance. He fell into it. He did not decide to do so; he did not jump into it. He fell into a trance. Would you volunteer to fall into a trance? Would you volunteer to go into a condition wherein the soul and body seemed to be separated? Would you fall into a state of hypnotism? Would you volunteer to fall into insensibility to ordinary circumstances of life? You may think me sarcastic; you may think that I am filled with bitter opposition to other viewpoints. I do not intend to be so. I intend to be gentle to those that oppose the fixedness of God in establishing His relationship with the Gentile church and the breaking of relationship with the Jewish church, but the position itself is unthinkable.

Having fallen into a trance, he is now in the power of the one that caused him to fall in the first place. Sometimes I have been called a necessitarian Baptist. That doesn't bother me. Thank God, Peter was one at this time. While in the trance, he saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him. I want you to note that. It was descending to him. As the voice spoke only to Saul

and affected only him (with saving knowledge), even so, this vessel descended from above (where he had not and could not get) to Peter. This vessel was as a sheet, and it was knit at four corners. (Do you know who knitted it?) There is not a hint that a single stitch had been dropped, and it was let down to the earth, and was filled with all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fouls of the air. I desire that you meditate with me for a moment on the momentuousness of these different species of creatures. You would say, "What a conglomeration of vile creatures." And you probably would make decisions about some of them being worse in nature and looks than others. But did you notice that they were all in the same vessel or sheet? Did you notice that the voice did not differentiate between any?

Remember how hungry Peter seemed to be? But when the Lord told Peter to kill and eat, have you noticed how quick he lost his appetite? As is notable in his apostleship, he was quick to argue with the Lord (Mark 14:31) and now is not any exception. The thing that I want to impress on your mind is the inflexable manner in which all of these worked together to bring the central truth about. "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." As Peter would have kept the Saviour from being crucified, and thus have sealed his own eternal damnation, even so, with the same disrespect, he would have kept the door forever closed on the Gentiles, thus closing the door on the salvation of any of us poor sinners. See, poor trembling sinner, how gracious the Lord is to His elect among the Gentiles? See the penetrating, soul-absorbing thought in the second charge to Peter? What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.

Even while his vision is transpiring, the three men that Cornelius had sent to call on Peter got ever nearer. In the midst of his doubting, the reason of it all drew nearer solution. While the vision caused Peter much rumination, the Spirit said unto him, "Behold three men seek thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them: for I have sent them." The mystery grows. Tenseness grips them all. Peter is saying, "I am he whom you seek? what is the cause wherefore ye are come?"

Ah, dear reader, keep a sharp lookout on this man, Peter. Great things are being taught him; great paths and streams of mercies are hereby opening (manifestly) to us poor sinners. Ah! mark ye well the solemnity, dear reader. Peter has not been able to maintain his integrity (perfection), but he is graciously dealt with so that he surrenders it, and tells them of his conversion, in that God had shown him that he should not call any man common or unclean. He is saying that this lesson was so forceable and convincing that I came without gainsaying (without objection) as soon as I was sent for.

As the scene unfolds, we hear Cornelius saying, "Now therefore are we all here before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God." I know I am tedious; I know that I am technical, but I have to be. Cornelius did not say that we are to hear all things that are commanded of us. I want you to notice how careful the whole matter is worded. In feeding five thousand, the fishes and the loaves were first given to the disciples and by them given to the hungry crowd. I desire for you to read carefully the fourth chapter of Ephesians. The Lord gave to some, apostles; and (to some) prophets; and (to some) evangelists; and (to some) pastors and teachers.

May I, in brotherly kindness, point out to you that none of these servants were for the making of any of these people into sheep. I insist on that, because the welfare, the peace and the unity of poor bleeding Zion is involved in it all. Each and every one of them were for the perfecting and edifying of the saints of God.

I beg you to further notice that what Peter said was, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness is accepted with him."

My understanding of language is limited, but it seems clear to me that the word of the gospel is to be preached to all under heaven that feareth God and works righteousness. Isn't that what Peter is saying? If it is, then God is calling men today to preach the gospel to the sheep. Please read the 10th chapter of Acts, carefully.

Now will you please go with me to the first chapter of Romans. I trust, in brotherly kindness, that I call your attention to the fact that it is not the book for hobby riders. The subjects are varied. Yes, election and predestination have prominent places in the book. But I am presently interested in what Paul says about the gospel, "As much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome, also, for I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek, for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, the just shall live by faith. (Rom. 1:15, 16). If we are going to disprove that the gospel is to the living; if we are going to disprove that Peter's and Paul's, and all poor ministering servants preaching is only to feed sheep; if we are going to disprove that ministering servants are perfecting and edifying the people of God, then we must take the above text out of the Bible. Too, we must get another apostle to take the place of Paul for he had discredited himself as the apostle to the Gentiles. His gospel, which he wasn't ashamed of, only reached from faith to faith, but never from faith to the man that did not have any.

Now I have one other witness that I desire to examine. That is the testimony of John, chapter four. After warning about trying (testing, proving) the spirits, we find that just two classes will be found, one denying that Christ has come in the flesh, and the other affirming that He has not. God's children are now overcoming the other class. How? They that deny His having come in the flesh are of the world; they speak of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. I do not understand how that one who is not of God can hear the gospel. He that is not of us, heareth us not, but he that is of us, does hear us. If he ever does hear us, someone has to give him a hearing ear before we preach to him.

If my reasoning is wrong I stand amendable for the wrong.

Trembling, yet pursuing,
W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

SUICIDE

Remarks on Matt. 26:41

Being the substance of a discourse preached by the Editor, June 22, 1874, at the funeral of our late beloved brother, Deacon Loton Horton.

Text, ***"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."***

We do not propose to, nor could we if we would, give a repetition of the discourse as delivered on the sorrowful occasion referred to; but as the positions taken by us in several important particulars seem to be new to many of our hearers, and in direct opposition to long cherished traditions, especially in regard to suicides, we feel impelled to give the following synopsis of that discourse, as expressive of our understanding of the subject.

There never was a more solemn or vitally important time or occasion than that in which the words of our text were addressed to the three disciples who were called to witness the agony and distress which Jesus endured in the garden of Gethsemane, when His soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; when Peter and the two sons of Zebedee were selected from the other disciples to watch with him in this hour of dreadful suffering--When, notwithstanding the daring boldness and ardent zeal of Peter, the tender love of John and James, they were not able to watch with Him at that time for one hour. "And He cometh unto the disciples and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with Me one hour?" What an example we have here of the fellowship of the saints with their Redeemer in His sufferings. They were to be baptized with His baptism, and to drink indeed of His cup; and in their experience, and in the experience of all who shall reign with Him in ultimate glory, they shall know what was true in His case, as in their own, that the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. The elements of flesh and spirit were manifest in Him whose image all the saints were to bear, and in whose sufferings they were to be in fellowship, and whose death they were to be conformed. Beyond all controversy this is a great mystery: God was manifest in the flesh, and as the Mediatorial Head over all things to His church, the Spirit of the Lord God in all its boundless fullness was in and upon Him. That spirit in Him was willing to bear all the dreadful sufferings of death in its most dreadful form; but the flesh in which He suffered was our flesh, and therefore weak, and could, and did recoil in that most solemn and terrible hour of agonizing suffering. This was expressed in the words of His prayer, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." But the willingness of the spirit was equally demonstrated in the words, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." In the assumption of the flesh of His people, He took on Him the seed of Abraham, and was found in fashion as a man. A man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." Heb. 2:14. "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the sufferings of death." "For Christ once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." 1 Peter 3:18.

Now as Christ has taken on Him our flesh, that He might bear our sins in His own body, and die our death, and redeem us to God, by being put to death for us in our flesh, so by the new birth we are made partakers of His resurrection life, and recipients of His Spirit, which is Christ in us the hope of glory. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."

The spirit which is willing, and the flesh which is weak, are distinct elements; as they were in Christ while in the flesh, as in all the members of His

mystical body while they are in the flesh; both elements are clearly manifested in all who are born of God. The flesh, including all that is born of the flesh, and the spirit including all that is born of the Spirit. These elements are as distinct in parentage and origin as they are in nature and disposition. One is of the earth, earthy, and subject to all the elements of fallen sinful nature, including our liability to all manner of diseases and temptations; the other is of the Spirit, and spiritual. One is mortal, the other is immortal. One is earthly, and the other heavenly. One is altogether depraved, having no good thing in it; the other is the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. One is weak, the other is willing. These, the apostle declares, are contrary the one to the other. In the flesh no good thing exists; the spirit cannot sin, because it is born of God; and hence arises what we call the christian warfare. This being the case, the admonition of our Lord in the text is peculiarly appropriate, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." The weakness of our flesh, and its constant propensity to evil, demands constant vigilence and watchfulness, to crucify the old man with his affections and lusts; but in watching, the christian will discover the necessity of prayer, as we find by heart felt experience that our flesh is too weak to resist successfully the temptations which every christian is sure to encounter. We are not to think it strange that we are tempted, as though some strange thing had happened to us, but rather count it all joy; for the trial of our faith is precious and profitable. No amount of watchfulness will prevent us from being tempted, but we are to watch that we be not captivated by the tempter, and to pray that God may lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. The spirit of Christ in His children is willing to do and suffer all that God has appointed for them, and not only so in profession, or in word, but in deed, in acts as well as in profession. It is God that worketh in us, by His Spirit, both to will and to do His good pleasure. And God's people are made willing in the day of their Redeemer's power. But while we feel the weakness of our flesh, and all our fleshly powers, to resist temptations, it is a consolation to the saints to know that they have a merciful and faithful High Priest, who is easily touched with the feelings of their infirmities, who knows how to succor them that are tempted. "For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin," or without being captivated or overcome by the power of temptations. But the tried and tempted child of God is ready to inquire, Are there no temptations felt by the saints that their dear Redeemer did not feel the power of in the days of His flesh? The text just referred to assures us that He was tempted in all points as we are. Was He tempted like us to doubt His Sonship? He was led, aye, driven away by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, and each of the three temptations were prefaced with the words, "If thou be the Son of God". And in the weakness of our flesh He felt the force of that cruel "If". But was He ever tempted to destroy himself, by suicide? What else can we understand by the temptation to cast himself down from a pinacle of the temple? If such a temptation to take one's own life ever assailed a child of God, then that was one of the "all points" in which Jesus was also tempted. There cannot be a point in which the people of God, in the weakness of their flesh, can be tempted that

Jesus did not feel; but possessing all the fullness of the Godhead, He was able to vanquish the tempter, and triumph over the temptation, and in His triumph the ultimate victory is secured to all His members. A cruel tradition has prevailed among the superstitious that no one who, under any circumstances, is left to take his own life, can be saved, or finally enter the portals of immortal glory. But without the fear of successful contradictions we assert that there is not in the sacred volume of the Holy Scriptures one word to sustain that tradition. The only passage we have ever heard cited in support of that tradition is I John 3, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." This text is distorted and changed to say, "No self-murderer hath eternal life, or can be saved." But the words "self-murderer" involve a contradiction of terms. The crime of murder is to slay a fellowman from a principle of hatred, malice aforethought, as the text most clearly shows. But the Scriptures expressly declare that "No man ever hated his own flesh." Although no man has a right to destroy his own life, yet in doing so the elements of murder are not involved.

How strange the infatuation that leads men to judge that a man may be guilty of murdering whole families, be convicted and sentenced to die for the crime, yet salvation is supposed to be easily obtained for such, and in modern times very few murderers, however attrocious and cruel, are suffered to be launched into eternity from the gallows without receiving from the clergy a passport to the regions of glory, while the very same clergy would consign to everlasting perdition any tried demented Christian whose life and deportment for many years have given the clearest demonstration of christianity, if in an evil hour, when deprived of reason, when no more responsible for his acts than a locomotive is responsible for running off the track, he shall take his own life. If self destruction is a crime for which there is no forgiveness, then Israel cannot be saved; for God, the Judge of all, has said, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in Me is thy help". And the apostle says, "Therefore all Israel shall be saved in the Lord".

The same wicked spirit that tempted our parents to commit the suicidal act of self destruction, by eating of the forbidden fruit when they know the inevitable consequence was death, tempted our Redeemer to cast himself down from a pinacle of the temple still tempts men in various ways to self destruction. It is a glorious truth to us that our dear Lord, being God as well as man, was able to vanquish the tempter, and will destroy the works of the devil in all His members, not by preventing them from being tempted, or being often overcome by the power of temptation, through the weakness of their flesh, but in so overruling all their conflicts as to make all things work together for their good, and for His declarative glory.

The spirit of Christ in them is always willing to do and suffer all that God has appointed for them. To will is as present with them as it was with Paul, or with Peter and James and John; but how to perform that which is good they find not. There is a continual conflict between the flesh and the spirit of every Christian. They find a law, or a governing element, in their members, warring against the law of their mind, which brings them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members. With their mind they serve the law of God, but with their flesh, which is too weak to resist, they serve the law of sin. The things

which they would, they do not; but the things which they would not, they do. But in God is their help; He rideth upon the heavens in their help, and in His excellency on the sky.

"Nor death nor hell shall e'er remove
His children from His breast;
In the dear bosom of His love
They must forever rest."

He who walketh in the midst of the golden candlesticks and holds the stars in His right hand, holds the keys of hell and death, and He openeth and no man can shut, and He shutteth and no man can open.

"Life, death and hell, and worlds unknown,
Hang on his firm decree."

A sparrow cannot fall to the ground without an order from His throne; and the hairs of our heads are all numbered, and not one of them can fall without your heavenly Father. Does our God care for sparrows? "Fear ye not, therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows." - - Read Matt. 10:29 - 31; Luke 12:6, 7.

Our text is clearly illustrated.

First, in its application to our dear Redeemer. His spirit was indeed willing, as in the Spirit He said, "I delight to do thy will, O God"; but in the weakness of our flesh He cried, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me."

Second, it was illustrated in its application to the three disciples. Their spirit was indeed willing to go with their dear suffering Lord to prison or to death, but in the weakness of their flesh they could not watch with Him one hour.

Thirdly, the same truth is exemplified in the experience of every child of God while here in the flesh. They all delight in the law of God, after the inward man. The spirit of Christ in them loves God supremely, loves holiness and hates sin; but they can only worship God on the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, but have no confidence in the flesh.

Again, we find the application and illustration of the text in the life and death of our dear departed brother. The willingness of his spirit to honor and obey his Lord, and to suffer for His sake, his labors of love, his devotion to the cause of God and truth, his indefatigable labors of love in the church, and exemplary walk and irreproachable conversation before the world, gave full demonstration of the willingness of his spirit to be in submission to the will of God. But, of the weakness of his flesh, how often we have heard him complain. Constitutionally he was subject to deep despondency, which he had no power to overcome; he groaned, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with his house which is from heaven. Finally, in his last days, and for several weeks, his physical powers yielded to disease of the head, affecting the brain, until he at last lost all control of himself, and in the delirium of the moment did what any of us would have done under the same circumstances.

"Not Gabriel asks the reason why,
Nor God the reason gives."

In recognition of the providence of God, we bow in submission to His inscrutable will in this inexplicable dispensation, but in the full and unabated assurance that our departed brother's life is hid with Christ in God, unaffected and secure, and we have no doubt that he is now engaged in swelling the happy songs of the redeemed, and forever free from temptation, disease or depression, ascribing salvation to God and the Lamb forever and ever. Amen.

OBITUARIES

ENNA MAE PORTERFIELD

Sister Enna Mae Porterfield passed from this life unto a new one with Christ on November 7,

1976. She was born September 25, 1897. She is survived by one son and four daughters. Sister Porterfield was the daughter of Calvin C. and Mary Elizabeth Kelly.

Sister Porterfield loved the Lord and was a faithful member of Moriah Primitive Baptist Church for forty-nine years, of which she served nineteen as Church Clerk.

Funeral services were held at Moriah Primitive Baptist Church in Butler County, Alabama on Tuesday, November 9, 1976, at 10:30 A.M., with Elder Sam Dean officiating.

Sister Porterfield will be greatly missed by her children and friends, including her brothers and sisters of the Church.

Written by request of Moriah Primitive Baptist Church in conference the third Sunday in January, 1977.

SISTER SOPHIA O'BRIAN BOWLES

We, the members of Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church, bow in humble submission of our Lord who doeth all things well. Sister Sophia Bowles was born September 29, 1896 and passed away in March 1977, making her stay on earth 80 years. She was the wife of Isaac Bowles and was raised in Granville County, was the daughter of Lucious and Mary O' Brian. She united with Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized the second Sunday morning in June 1966 by Elder Wallace Smith.

She is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Mamie Brooks of Route 4, Oxford, N.C., 7 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren. I knew her most of my life and as I grew up I remember her walk in life as living one that we wish we were blessed to walk. We would give honor or glory to no other than God. As we understand the scriptures, he has blessed people to serve him from the beginning of time. This sister, we believe, bore the fruits of such a person who was called. She was a sister of few words, but seemed to walk humble and softly before her God. We would like to be thankful to God for having blessed her and having blessed us by having her as our Sister in the church.

Her funeral was conducted at Gentry, Newell & Vaughan Funeral Home by Elder Donald Smith and was laid to rest in Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery. In all sadness, I said the Lord has given and the Lord has taken away. Bless his holy name. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. Done by order in conference April 9, 1977.

Nancy B. Allen
Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
Annie C. Gregory, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT FOR SISTER SARAH FRANCIS WILLIS

God in His will saw fit to call from our midst the beloved Sister Sarah Francis Willis to her eternal home. She was the daughter of Bernice Haywood Langdon and Polly Ann Stephenson Langdon. She was born on February 28, 1892. She departed from this world on November 21, 1976, making her stay on earth 84 years, 8 months and 28 days.

Sister Willis united with the Reedy Prong Church in April of 1919, making her stay with the church 57 years and 7 months. Sister Willis was a true and faithful member as long as her health permitted. Her husband united with Reedy Prong Church in May, 1957.

Brother Richard Willis was deceased on May 28, 1958. This made her stay here much longer than him. Sister Willis was loved and missed by all of us at Reedy Prong and her loved ones. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder William David Godwin with burial in the family cemetery at Coats, North Carolina.

She is survived by 3 sons, Rupert, James, and Burcklis Willis, all of Clinton; 2 daughters, Nevada Tart of Coats, and Beatrice McGee of Clinton. 18 grandchildren and 23 great grandchildren also survive.

Sister Willis was 20 years old when she married in Johnston County, on April 27, 1913, and to this union was born 4 sons and 3 daughters.

The church at Reedy Prong extends their heartfelt sympathy to the family and loved ones.

A request of the church is for a copy of this resolution to be recorded in the church book at Reedy Prong Church, a copy sent to Sister Willis' family, and a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Respectfully submitted,
Thelma Smith

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 145 BURLINGTON, N.C., SEPTEMBER 1977 No. 9

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION
DATE IS
9/77
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

SIGHING AND SINGING

All, all is so dreary,
I'm sin-sick and weary,
I sigh dearest Lord, after thee;
For temptations annoy,
Sin my peace would destroy,
O, come and have mercy on me.

In deserts I wander,
And here much I ponder,
Midst conflicts, trials, and grief;
Lord, I'm brought very low,
And my hearts filled with woe,
O, wilt thou not grant me relief?

O, I'm tossed to and fro,
And I've nowhere to go
This world can afford me no rest;
Unto thee, Lord, I cry,
In compassion draw nigh,
And pillow my soul on thy breast.

Lord, I'm sinful, I own,
But did'st not thou atone,
Dear Lamb, all my guilt on the tree?
O, heal my backslidings,
O, speak the glad tidings,
That I'm thine, thou still lovest me.

I'm as one veiled aside,
After thee have I sighed;
O, where is thy peaceful retreat?
Draw me to thy resort,
Where thy loved and blood bought
Dwell in comfort at thy dear feet.

This thy voice that I hear
That removes all my fear,
Day dawns 'neath the smiles of thy face;
My heart's to thee clinging,
Thy praises I'm singing,
To me thou hast shown wonderous grace.

In Jesus abiding,
Upon thee confiding,
I shall by thy grace overcome;
Satan oft doth assail,
But no power shall prevail
To rob me of my glory, my home.

My Beloved is mine,
And thou sayest, I'm thine,
Then onward, and upward I move;
There nothing shall sever,
Ah, never, no, never,
My soul from Emmanuel's love.

Frederick W. Keene

DAN RIVER CHURCH
June 25, 1927 - 1977

More than fifty years ago there arose a division among the members of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. As a result of this division our people, made up of 19 members, lost possession of the meeting house and had to seek other places to worship. They met in homes and school buildings for a period of approximately 4 years, while the wheels

of legality took their course, which resulted in our people being declared the rightful owner of the meeting house by a decision of the Supreme Court of North Carolina.

On June 25, 1927, our people returned to the meeting house to hold their first service. It is recorded in the church minutes of this meeting these words, "We bow submissively to our Heavenly Father for the privilege of coming together at this place and may peace and love abound in our hearts from time to time." Elder David V. Spangler was called to serve as pastor at this meeting. He, with God's help, has served as pastor for 50 years and has stood as bold as a lion and as meek as a lamb in uncompromising defense of the gospel of the Son of God.

June 25, 1977, was a joyous day for our dear pastor and his wife, along with the present membership and our many brethren and friends. We had an all-day meeting on Saturday, June 25th, and Sunday, June 26th, both of which was largely attended, including the following visiting Elders: D.W. Simpson, O.K. Tench, Hayward Wray, Donald Smith, Posey Plybon, and James Poole.

We can take comfort and joy that our Lord has granted that petition as recorded in the first minutes of 1927, that peace and love abound in our hearts from time to time, which has been so until this time 50 years later.

We therefore desire to bow in humble thanks to Almighty God for the gift of our dear pastor these 50 years and that he may continue in the defense of the gospel of the Son of God until he is called to leave the battle here for the blissful home on high and that peace and fellowship may continue at this place until our Lord comes to gather His people unto Himself in a cloud and take them home to be with Him forever and ever.

"Peace be within this sacred place,
And joy a constant guest
With holy gifts and heavenly grace,
Be her attendants blest.
My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life and breath remains;
There my best friends, my kindred dwell,
There God my Saviour reigns."

Humbly submitted,
Harold Weatherford

Dear Brother and Sister Spangler,

If I could put into words what my heart tells me, I would like to express to you how much I appreciate your lovely sermon on Acts 16.

While reading some time ago, in the stillness of the night, I feasted on this beautiful record of Lydia and other brethren who gathered by the river side "where prayer was wont to be made". I fell asleep and dreamed of discussing this scripture with you, and we both shed tears of joy as we felt the sweetness of this account of Paul and Silas preaching by the river side.

There are four beautiful points that arrested my attention in this scripture. First, they went out to the river side on the Sabbath. Is this not symbolic of rest and rejoicing? It is not this day that we cease from ourselves (our own strivings) and are enabled to rest in the finished work of our blessed Redeemer? The next thought that impressed me was that "prayer was wont to be made". How blessed it is to be given the spirit of prayer. Dear Brother, I have never gotton beyond this, and I hope I never will. I confess that I know not how to pray except the Spirit maketh intercession, but is not the sincere desire to pray as effective as uttering mere words?

As I read further, I was struck with the fact that God has opened Lydia's

heart. She could not have felt the sweetness of the preaching by Paul and Silas, if her heart had not been opened by God! What a sacredly blessed meeting that must have been as they worshipped God by the stillness of the river side! Yet, down through the centuries, we have left on record by the inspiration of God, that He has opened the hearts of His saints and caused them to worship Him - even to this present time.

The last thought I would like to express is that when Lydia and her house were baptized, she besought the servants of God to come into her house and abide there. This I have felt so keenly through the years. I would, if it were possible, have my humble home be a "haven of rest" for God's servants as they come year after year bringing with them sweet messages of hope and consolation. O, how my heart yearns to be able to take them in and share with them such as I have. I love my brethren, and would, if I could, be near them - as Paul says, "that I may be comforted together by the mutual faith both of you and me". Again, let me say that the sweetness of this precious scripture still lingers with me, for which I am thankful to God. I know from past experience this earthen vessel will not long be able to retain it regardless of how tenaciously I try to hold to it.

May God so bless us that we may see that all His works shall redound to His glory. I feel to ask an interest in your prayers. Come to see us.

Humble but sincerely written,
Mamie P. Aldridge
Reidsville, N.C.

Dear Elder and Sister Spangler,

I want you to know how much you mean to me. I do hope I love you for Christ's sake. The Lord is so merciful and gracious to bless me (though I am nothing) to be permitted the privilege of dwelling among His precious people. Just to be among you, to listen to your spiritual conversation, and to eat the crumbs that fall from the Master's table is more than I deserve. However, I have been blessed with such kindness and such love from you wonderful people. Oh, I am not worthy to lift my eyes to Heaven or to even assemble with His lovely Bride; yet my name is on the church books. Those on the outside who feel unworthy should realize that we all feel unworthy. Being accepted as members does not make us any more worthy or make us feel any more worthy. It is, though, a great source of joy and thankfulness.

Elder Spangler, I believe you made a statement tonight about yourself being your enemy. This fits my case as well. I find a warfare within myself. One part of me desires to fall at my brethren's feet, to serve them and not be noticed. Another part wants to be noticed and admired. Oh! how I hate the sinfulness, the pride and vanity of my own flesh. I long to leave this world of sin. I often long to escape this body of flesh. I desire to praise my Lord perfectly, to worship Him without sin mixed in all I do. This flesh is so easily enticed by this world's goods. Is it sinful to ask the Lord to take me home, if it could be His will? I know I am young and would hate for my parents and loved ones to be hurt, but I sigh for what I hope is my home.

Brother Spangler, I am sorry to bother you with my scribbling, but I admire your judgment in spiritual things so much. I also wanted to tell you and Sister Spangler how much I love you. We do now know how many opportunities

we will have to express our love for our brethren. I do not want to wait until it is too late.

May we be kept at our brethren's feet and ascribe all honor and glory to the Name of our precious Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

A little Sister, I hope,
Joyce Williams

6019 McCallum St.
Philadelphia, Pa. 19144

To the Editor of the Signs,

I have neglected my subscription for the ***Signs of the Times.*** It was due to be renewed in December, and I am renewing it from that month to December of 1978. I have enjoyed reading the paper since I was a little girl. My Grandmother Lefferts used to take the paper. I am now 84 years old.

I have been sick and in the hospital for 5 months, and the doctors didn't think I would make it. I am back home now, and the God above brought me through it all. He is the Rock of my Salvation.

Sincerely,
Sara L. Taylor

Strathroy, Ontario, Canada

Dear Editors:

Enclosed please find an order for $15.00 to renew our subscription for 2 years and the balance to use as you see fit. We have received the ***Signs*** for many years and get great comfort from its many articles.

We are blessed with good preaching by the Elders' McColl. May the Lord bless you to carry on the Truth as it is in His Holy Word. I remain a poor sinner.

John Olde

To the Editor of the Signs:

The enclosed letter touched my heart so much that I felt I wanted to share it with you. If you feel it worthy of printing in the ***Signs*** please do so. This expresses my feelings so well. Bro. and Sis. Martin have been made dear to all of us here on the Eastern Shore, and they have been made so hungry for the Truth as it is in Christ.

Maude Truitt, Snow Hill, Maryland

Dear Sister Maude,

Bless you for writing. Of your "desire to search and know more of His precious promises" is something I truly share with you. For the past seven years I have felt consumed with desire to know, and I have read almost constantly. I have said a number of times, "I'm not going to read anymore", only to reach again for another book to feed my spirit.

Today I read something that I feel is in my heart and I quote, "The one thing my heart always longed for is with me now. I love life and all things in life and I have never loved life so much. For twenty years, I had nothing but that urgent hunger, that thirst for what I did not know. It is different now. Where ever I go and what ever I am doing, I see the same mighty power, the same mighty law that makes the elements flower into souls and turns souls to God. The soul never loses its path anymore than water runs upward."

This yearning is like a fire within me. At times I feel empty and burnt out by the fire. At other times I feel its warmth and love. In each experience I feel to be consumed. And I am made to wonder. Nothing else seems important to me. Any discussion not concerning the things of God sound empty and void.

Elder Davis is most patient with me. I truly believe no two people could ever

see everything exactly alike. How could we? We have each experienced different things. No two paths are identical and we can only understand what we have experienced. I have talked with many of the Primitive Baptist and each have different ideas as to exactly what they believe. Basically, they all believe in "Salvation by Grace, and what is to be will be", and I am truly convinced of that.

Much has been written on death and the beyond. I feel I am beginning to get a glimpse of truth concerning death. I do know I have no fear of death. I feel the same power that brought me into this life, put me where I was supposed to be, gave me the things I needed to experience, will be the same power that will carry me through death, and I will again be delivered and will be placed again where He wills and I know whatever He does is perfect and so I do not fear. I do know we have only scratched the surface as far as things of the Spirit is concerned. Wish I could visit with you and we could talk all we wanted on these subjects.

Do come to visit us any time you can, and bring anyone you care to bring with you. You are always welcome.

Florency and Tom Martin
Bracey, Virginia

ANSWERED PRAYER

"When I was in the Establishment, burdened with all the things I had to go through, and troubled and distressed in my mind, I was calling upon the Lord to deliver me, to lead me out, to show me what to do, to make the path plain and clear. Now that was my sincere cry; but I expected some miraculous interposition–to hear some voice, to have some wonderful leading; and in waiting for that, I was waiting for what the Lord never meant to bestow. And I was brought at last to this internal conviction; suppose I were living in drunkenness, suppose I were living in adultery, suppose I were walking in known sin, should I want a voice from God to say to me, 'Leave this drunkenness, come out from this adultery, give up this sin?' Should I want some divine manifestation to bring me out of a sin, when my conscience bore its solemn witness, and I was miserable under the weight and burden of it? No; the very conviction is the answer of God to the prayer; the very burden which the Lord lays on us is meant to press us out of that in which we are walking. So I reasoned with myself: 'If I am living in sin, if it be a sin to be where I am, if I must do things which my conscience tells me are sins, and by which my conscience is burdened as sins, the very conviction, the very distress, the very burden, is the answer. It is the voice of God in the conscience, not the voice of God in the air, not the appearance of the frown of God in the heart.' And on this simple conviction I was enabled to act, and never to this day have repented it. I have, therefore, been led to see by experience, that we are often expecting wonderful answers, mysterious answers, and the Lord does not mean to give those answers."

J. C. Philpot,
Early Sermons, Vol. 1., p. 264

UNDER-SHEPHERDS' FARE

My dear Brother,

I thank you for your kind letter, and, like yourself, am truly glad that the war spirit has passed away, and peace is restored. I never was so sick of contention in my life as now. There is nothing

worth contending for but God's truth and glory; but the devil, like a selfish lawyer, blows a blast upon our pride and self-consequence; self-defense starts up, attended with revenge and malice, till we are, like a drunken fool, determined to fight at all hazards; and those that try to extinguish these mad sparks are viewed as enemies or fools. The devil knows that the peaceful dove can find no rest for the sole of her foot in such a storm as this; and, were it not for Him that stills the raging of the sea, our foes would never suffer us to have a moment's peace. But it is wisely ordered that the under-shepherds should sometimes have a turn or two round the field, and be hunted, worried, torn, and tumbled by the black dog. It teaches them their weakness; what is in their hearts; that they need the chief Shepherd's constant care, instruction, keeping, and directing mercy, instead of amusing themselves by whipping those poor penitents, with dirty coats and groading souls, who are cast in the forrow, and cannot get out until lifted out by Him who, "though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion, according to the multitude of his mercies".

Grieving thorns sticking in with festering anguish, pricking briers dangling at our heels, our burden twice the usual weight, and our fleece soaked with mud and mire, fit us for the good Samaritan, who comes where such are, and manifests compassion to such sin-and-guilt-afflicted mourners; heals their wounds, restores their souls, and brings them back to His fold in peace. Then their cups run over in praise, and in love and gratitude to Him who loved them, and gave Himself for them. And He will have His servants feel and manifest sympathy for such. If Peter had fulfilled his fair promise, no doubt he would have viewed the rest as a set of cowards, and that he alone deserved the name of a man of valour; but he must be shaken in Satan's sieve, and learn his cowardice, that he was capable of denying his Master with oaths and curses. His Lord looked on him, and broke his heart into penitence and sorrow; thus was he fitted to write to the church and put things in their proper place, "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation". Yes, my brother, those that are of any use to feed "the flock of slaughter", must groan for it. It is a journey on foot for life, taking all weathers, night and day, up and down hill, with long tiresome flats, strewed with nets, pits, and snares; in season and out of season; whether encouraged or mortified, strong or weak, healthy or sick, sleep or awake, received or rejected; through evil report and good report; through honour and dishonour; as dying, and, behold, we live. In all things we are instructed; and yet it seems unfeeling if we complain of the roughness of the way to be told, "You are of no use to us without it". But our Captain will encourage us with a little prize money now and then, and then we feel able and willing to run through a troop, or leap over a wall to serve Him, or those whom He loves.

Welwyn, Dec. 29, 1841 D.S.

(Selected from "Gospel Standard", 1842)

MacClenny, Florida

To All Dear Editors:

I enclosed $20.00 to renew my subscription to the ***Signs*** for two more years and the balance to help to distribute this worthy publication. And may God bless all that are gifted to write for the ***Signs***.

Best regards and love for Christ's sake.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Letcher Smith

EXPERIENCE

May 9, 1977

Dear Brother Spangler, and Many Other Brethren & Sisters:

In the first two installments of my experience, published in the March and April *Signs*, it was my desire to write and tell my early experience and hope, then to describe how the Lord had delivered me from the means-regeneration Gospel of the sovereign grace missionaries. At that time I did not mention the Primitive Baptists for I was not publicly identified as one of them. Today I can praise my God that He has brought me home!

The earlier part of my experience was sent out to many of the sovereign grace missionary Baptists as an explanation of my change of views with regard to gospel regeneration. As told in my earlier writings, I received hope in the Lord ("A good hope through grace." I trust!) almost 17 years ago. Since that time I had believed the doctrines of grace and was associated with the Calvinistic Baptists. A controversy was raging among them over the terminology surrounding the "free offer of the gospel." I knew that many of the sovereign grace Baptists were afflicted with the disease of "doctrinitis," proud of the five-point Calvinistic theology yet with no evidence of a broken heart which characterizes the poor and afflicted people of God to whom the Gospel is preached (Isa. 61:1). Yet many sincere sovereign gracers--out of an honest conviction of the Gospel's necessity in regeneration--felt they had to make some kind of "offer" to these who are spiritually dead. So, while I personally did not use the term, I continued in fellowship with those who did until the Lord was pleased to grant me deliverance from the entire missionary-means system.

From about the time of my spiritual experience (1960), I was aware of the existence of "Primitive or Old School Baptists." In fact I had corresponded with some of them and they visited in my home about the same time. These people could not understand how I believed in predestination, election, particular redemption, the effectual work of the Spirit, and all the great principles of grace, and yet was not a Primitive Baptist! At that time my position was somewhat as follows: I believed the Lord had elected His people, Christ had redeemed them alone, but that the Lord who chose them also chose the preacher as the means to "reach" them for salvation! When you are so deeply entrenched in that position, beloved, it is only by special mercy that you come to see the truth of sovereign regeneration! I might add, these people who visited me and with whom I had exchanged letters were all of the "conditional time-salvation" doctrine. They told me it was a duty incumbent upon all who see the truths of grace, to unite with the Primitive Baptist church. This was "obedience," they said, and would result in "time salvation." They seemed to exalt the "church," whereas my emphasis was upon the glory of Christ the Head of the church Who Alone saves His people from their sins. While I was teaching missionism and meansism, still I believed that "Salvation is of the Lord" (Jonah 2:9). I believed (and still do) that all salvation for time and eternity was of God's grace. And thinking all "Primitives" taught this same view of "conditional time salvation," I was reluctant to go among them. But I must confess, beloved, that at that time there was a beauty about many of their songs, their simplicity of worship, the humility of their ministers and members--a beauty that attracted my heart

to them.

From that time until 1975, I occasionally read some "Primitive Baptist" papers, visited some of their churches and bought some books, like Hassell's History and the Autobiography of Elder Wilson Thompson. These things were interesting to me; and whenever my sovereign grace friends would speak in disrespect or condemnation of "hardshells," I quickly rose to their defense. Still I could not accept this idea of a "voluntary" time salvation--something God "desires" His child to enjoy but can only "invite" us to "freely partake of." I heard some of their "invitations" (although addressed, they said, to the child of God) which sounded too much like Arminianism! Also when I would speak of the "absolute sovereignty of God," declaring with the scriptures that our God "ruleth over all," it was a position these people would not accept. They seemed to be so fearful lest we make God responsible for something other than "eternal Salvation!" As stated above, I was really disappointed in Primitive Baptists--and I thought all who took the name of "Primitive Baptist" would teach these same ideas! Ah, brethren, I had much to learn! (And still have much to learn; so must beg the Lord's dear ones to deal gently with poor me.)

My thinking in these areas changed very little from the early 1960s until about 1974 when the Lord was pleased to teach me the truth on regeneration--as outlined in my previous article. Then I began once more to go among the Old Baptists, for I knew them to be the only people who saw as I now do with regard to missions and means. At that time I was attending a Southern Baptist church but was far from happy. One day in early 1975, an old brother mentioned visiting some sick folks who lived "over near that little Primitive church." My attention was captured instantly! "What kind of church?" I asked. Then he told me about a Primitive Baptist church within just five or six miles of our home! I inquired about the church and some of its members, began to make the necessary contacts, and anxiously awaited the next time of service. The people were the most lovely people I had ever known. I found them to be sound in the truths I had come to hold dear; yet they were not affiliated with any "Primitive Baptists" I had known heretofore. Through many afflictions, doubts, anxieties, fears and tremblings, I was brought (as I trust) over a period of nearly two years to love these people, to feel at home among them, and finally brought to desire more than anything on earth to be a part of them.

In March of this year 1977 (during the time my articles were being carried in the ***Signs***), on Saturday before the first Sunday, I was brought to beg for a home among them. To my joy, my wife also wanted to be among them. Amid tears of rejoicing which I shall never forget, we were received by that lovely band. On Sunday March 6, 1977, my wife Lou and I were baptised into the fellowship of Philadelphia Primitive Baptist Church, Ellenboro, N.C. by Elder W. B. Aaron (the pastor) and Elder W. H. Greene.

Our people are in the Bear Creek Association--not directly affiliated with the ***Signs***. The majority of our people are reading the ***Signs*** and esteem you brethren very highly for the truth's sake. The bars that separate us are but temporary, I feel. After the traditions of men, these things exist; but the Spirit of Life has made us free to worship God in Spirit and in truth. "The Father seeketh such to worship Him" (John 4:23). And it is that love in the truth, that desire for

the glory of God in all things, that Spirit of grace which God hath poured out upon His people–this is what makes us "One." A forced mechanical "union" is no union, beloved brethren. Neither is a man-made "bar" a separation between brethren of kindred spirit. God has called us to peace. We need to labor to this end. What I have been led to see is our need for peace and truth–not peace at the expense of truth. May the Lord graciously lead us all. I hope we are brethren, and I hope when you are driven to bended knees the name of Wylie Fulton shall be impressed upon your heart.

Written in love to the good old way,

Wylie W. Fulton
P.O. Box 879, Forest City, N.C. 28043

ROMANS 5:1-5 W. W. HUDSON

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." (Romans 5:1-5)

There is a prayer in our heart that the Spirit of God will direct us to write things which become sound doctrine and which are for the edification of the readers. We believe that God must bless the writer to write and the reader to read with an understanding heart; therefore all the honor and praise and glory belongs to the Lord. Man has nothing to boast about. "Where is boasting, then? It is excluded---." (Romans 3:27)

As the Lord blesses us, let us consider the first expression of the text: ***"Therefore being justified by faith."*** The word of truth must be rightly divided as we examine the word "justified," and we need the Spirit of God to bless us to this extent. Let us quote the 9th verse of Romans 5: "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." There must be a separation between "justified by faith" and "justified by the blood of Christ."

As the Lord blesses us, let us consider the Scriptures which show that Jesus has satisfied the just demands of the law in laying down his life for the sheep, and that Divine Justice is looking at the Children of God through the righteous blood of Jesus Christ, and later examine the Scriptures which show that the Children of God experience the application of the blood of Christ or feel the spirit of "justification by faith." We would like to ask the readers to get your Bible and read the 59th chapter of Isaiah, because it deals with both principles which are connected.

Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear; (Isaiah 59:1) This shows that God is able to save his people. Other Scriptures advocate the fact that God is full of mercy and loves His people. Let us quote the 2nd verse: "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." God is a just God and even though He loves his people and is full of mercy; the Divine Justice of the Lord demands perfect obedience. "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." (James 2:10) "As it is written, There is

none righteous, no not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. ---There is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." (Romans 3:10-12, 17-29) "And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and ***that will by no means clear the guilty.***" (Exodus 34:5-7) Divine Justice demands death for the broken law. All of the sacrifices (under the law) mentioned in the Old Testament pointed to Jesus whose righteous blood cleared the guilty. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." (1 Peter 3:18) The blood of Jesus speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. "And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that ***Speaketh better things than that of Abel.***" (Hebrews 12:24) The blood of Abel cried vengeance, but the blood of Jesus speaks peace and pardon to a poor sinner, "Having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven," (Col. 1:20) "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." (Romans 3:24-25)

Let us consider 2 Cor. 5:18-19: "And all things are of God who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation." (18th verse) This shows that God by his mercy reconciled His people to Divine Justice (the Justice of God.) through Jesus Christ. "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and committed unto us the word of reconciliation." (19th verse) The word impute means charge, so God the Father does not charge the sins of the elect to them, but rather charges them to Jesus Christ, who is the eternal son of God. "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." (Isaiah 53: 5-6) "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. 5:21) The sins of the elect were placed upon Jesus. (For a beautiful type, read the 16th chapter of Leviticus.) "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." (1 Peter 2:24) We wish to call to the reader's attention these expressions in 2 Cor. 5:18-19: "The ministry of reconciliation" and "the word of reconcilia-

tion," which we believe is interwoven with the doctrine of the application of the blood of Christ, or justified by faith, etc.

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law---" (Galations 3:13) This Scripture proves that Jesus has satisfied the demands of the law, and that His people stand justified before God. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Romans 8:29-30) The children of God stand justified in the sight of the Lord or Divine Justice.

It takes the Spirit of God to enable one to rightly divide the word of truth, and there is a sweet connection between the Scriptures when one is blessed to see the beauty therein. At the first of this article we mentioned about the separation between "justified by faith" and "justified by the blood of Christ." We believe that 2 Timothy 1:9-10 gives a beautiful picture: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," (9th verse) This shows that in the mind and purpose of the Lord, the decree, plan, purpose, predestination, foreknowledge, etc. of God is that the sheep have always been saved, because the Lord would take care of the necessary steps, works, etc. that were necessary for the salvation of the Children of God. "But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." (10th verse) This shows that the salvation was first made manifest when Jesus made his advent into this world. "--to this end was I born and for this cause was I come into this world---." (John 18:37) If not deceived, we trust that we see something else beautiful which one experiences when the Spirit of God first appears to one, and this salvation is made manifest to you at the set time that God has decreed it. "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;" (Ecc. 3:1-2) The Spirit of God takes care of the work of bringing one to the light. Dear reader, I believe that the Lord determined the time for you to hear and know the truth and to rejoice in the wonderful things of God.

I would ask the reader to read Ezekiel 16:1-9, which shows the work of God in convicting one of his sins and shows him his condition by nature, and then raising him out of this bondage and blesses him with a taste of heaven. "Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations." (2nd verse) One must feel the need of mercy before he can really cry unto God. I really believe that the publican felt his sinful condition which made him cry out as he prayed unto God: "--God be merciful to me a sinner." (Luke 18:13) I believe that he was blessed to look beyond the law as he made this plea to the Lord. "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses." (Heb. 10:28) There is not any mercy under the law. The publican was blessed to look to the righteous blood of Jesus as he cried for mercy, and the Scripture tell us that he went to his house justified. (see Luke 18:14)

Those that were pricked in their

hearts cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (see Acts 2:37) We believe the Spirit of God pricks and convicts the hearts of the Children of God, and they all shall call upon the name of the Lord in due time. "He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him." (Psalms 91:15) "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come." (Psalms 102:13)

One may read in the Scriptures that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God", and hear many sermons of man's depraved condition; but this will not do him any good unless the Spirit of God blesses him to hear. "Blessed is the man that heareth me,--" (Proverbs 8:34) There is a great difference between having a "head knowledge" about man's sinful state and another is to feel and experience it. This reminds me of these Scriptures: "Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:" (Isaiah 29:13) "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me." (Matt. 15:8) "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb. The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." (2 Peter 2:20-22)

This Scripture shows that God deals directly with His people and changes them: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." (Ezekiel 36:26-27)

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." The Scriptures teach that Jesus is upon the right hand of God and ever lives to make intercession for the Saints according to the will of God. Here is more evidence that the Spirit of God changes one in due time: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." (Eph. 2:1-3) Not only does the Spirit of God convict or pricks one in his heart, but the Spirit of Jesus raises one out of this low state and blesses him with a taste of heaven and with sweet seasons of assurance.

"Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness; yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine." (Ezekiel 16:8) One may feel to be black and vile within and he cries out as this: "Look not upon me, because I am black,

--" (Song of Solomon 1:6) It causes the poor sinner to rejoice when he hears these sweet words: "Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee." (Song of Solomon 4:7)

The Lord teaches one to wait with patience: "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." (Psalms 40:1-3)

Jesus is the light of the world and causes this light to shine in the hearts of his people. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. 4:6)

(CONCLUDED NEXT MONTH)

KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION (1977)

The 212th session of the Kehukee Association is to convene, God willing, with Brairy Swamp Church located in Stokes, N.C., the first Sunday, Saturday before, and Monday following in October (Oct. 1, 2, 3, 1977).

Coming from the North and East, travel U.S. 13, or U.S. 17, to Williamston, N.C. Take U.S. 17 South 2 miles to Highway 1001, turn right to Stokes, N.C., turn left on Highway 33, go 2 miles to church. Coming from the South and Southwest, come to Greenville, take U.S. 13 North 2 miles, turn right on Highway 903 to Stokes, turn right on Highway 33, go 2 miles to church. Coming from the Northwest, travel to Wilson, N.C. Take U.S. 264 to Greenville, then travel U.S. 13 North 2 miles to Highway 903; turn on 903 to Stokes, N.C., turn right on Highway 33, go 2 miles to church.

We invite the elders and brethren of the same faith and order and who are in peace at home, to come and visit with us.

Elder Marvin E. Garner, Clerk

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION 1977

The Lord willing, the Seven Mile Association is appointed to be held with the church at Mingo Meeting House, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 16, 17, and 18. The meeting house is located in Sampson Co., N.C., located 5 miles south of Dunn, off 421 highway east side on state road 1005. We invite the visiting Elders, brethern, sisters, and friends to meet with us. Services beginning at 11 o'clock Friday, 9:30 o'clock Saturday and 10 o'clock Sunday.

Elder W. D. Godwin, Mod.
Brother James Young, Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1977 session of the Smith River Association is to convene with Union Church located in Patrick County, Virginia on State Route 623 (Fairy Stone Park Road), beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in September. Services to be Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, the Lord willing.

We look forward to meeting with believers there.

Amos Hash, Association Clerk

ORDINATION OF DEACON

Lebanon Primitive Baptist Church at Bracey, Virginia, desires to meet the second Saturday in September at 2:00 p.m. for the purpose of ordaining for deacon Brother Thomas S. Martin.

We invite ministers and members of our faith and order to be with us for this meeting.

Elder C. B. Davis, Jr., Pastor
Florence Martin, Clerk

NOTICE TO CHURCH CLERKS

If it all possible, please have your church listing to us by October 1st, if you wish it to be in our January issue. This will allow us time to arrange them in a more orderly fashion, as Elder Wood did this year. It will be difficult to get late notices in their respective state listing.

Thanks, Ed.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP DISTRIBUTE THE SIGNS TO JUNE 30, 1977

Miss Reidy Pickeral, Va. $50.00
D. H. Sartin, N.C. 1.00
Mrs. Opal Hardy, Ill. 6.00
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D. E. S.

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Thank you,
Editors

Burlington, North Carolina September 1977

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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EDITORIAL

MEETING THE FAMILY OF NAOMI

1. Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem-judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.
2. And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehem-judah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there.
3. And Elimelech Naomi's husband died; and she was left, and her two sons.
4. And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years.
5. And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband.
(Ruth 1: 1-5)

We do well to remember in reading the Old Testament that "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." (Romans 15:4) Although the types and shadows of the law and the prophets may not be the very image of the things revealed during the gospel dispensation yet they prefigure the life of Christ in nearly every detail and add clarity to the significance of its varied dimensions. The Book of Ruth contains many of these types and shadows which foretell some of the good things that were to come.

The account of Elimelech and Naomi begins in Bethlehem-judah, which, during the period under consideration, was a small town approximately eight kilometers or five miles south of Jerusalem. As a village, it had existed from the time of Jacob. From Genesis 35:16, 19 and 48:7, we learn that Rachel died and was buried in its vicinity. Later it became the residence of Boaz, Ruth, Obed, Jesse and David. Originally, this town was called Ephrath, and in order to distinguish it from another Bethlehem in the country of Zebulun, it became known as Bethlehem-ephrathah or Bethlehem-judah. Nevertheless it was the

same Bethlehem in which Christ was born in order that the prophecy referred to in Matthew 2:6 might be fulfilled, "And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel." Consequently, Bethlehem was greatly favoured in both the Old Testament and the New, being called the city of David in the former and being the birthplace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the latter. How significant it is then, spiritually, that its name should mean "house of bread"!

In direct contrast to the sanctity of Bethlehem was the idolatry of the land of Moab. The progenitor of the Moabites was a son of Lot by an incestuous union with his elder daughter. The last encampment of the Israelites before they crossed the river Jordan was within the bounds of Moab since it was situated to the east of the Dead Sea and toward its southern end. The Moabites were an idolatrous people, and for much of their history, avowed enemies of the Israelites until subdued by David during his reign. From time to time, however, there was an intermingling of the two peoples as in the days of the captivity when some of the Jews sought refuge in Moab. One of the meanings of the word Moab is "desire" which endorses the fact that it typifies the Egypt of this world.

The land of Moab was for the most part fertile, being well watered by rivers, and especially adapted to feed sheep and rear cattle. What a contrast it was to the more mountainous and sterile land of Canaan! As a consequence the children of Israel were poor, while the Moabites, Ammonites and others east of Jordan were wealthy and prosperous. The typical descendant of Moab was thrifty in business, successful in his ventures, and rarely seemed to encounter those reverses and disappointments which so often befall the family of God. This is one of the reasons he was to appear so much at ease and hardly one of those of whom James later speaks as being poor in this world but rich in grace. Furthermore the people of Moab often became a snare to the Israelites. Indeed, in Numbers Chapter 25, we have an account of the men of Israel becoming entangled with Moabitish women, which incurred the wrath of God resulting in severe punishments to follow.

A famine in the land of Judah caused Elimelech and his family to leave Bethlehem to go down to Moab. In Canaan, hundreds of years before, a similar famine had caused Abraham to sojourn in Egypt. Still another famine in Jacob's time forced him to send his sons scurrying into Egypt to procure corn from Joseph. Famines were caused by the absence of rain, the irregular overflow of a main river such as the Nile or a plague of locusts or other insects which destroyed the crops. Just as natural famines caused families to search for security in neighbouring places, so spiritual famines cause convicted sinners to become restless in their nests of self-righteousness and to search for rest and comfort even among the shadows of Egypt. God tempts no man but He does try our faith. Naomi had to go into Moab with her husband Elimelech and their two sons that patience might have her perfect work for tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience, hope.

A famine in the scripture represents a spiritual declination or an absence of manna from heaven. The outpouring of the spirit is not evident. The love of many may actually wax cold and little if any interest is shown in spiritual things. All too often a general attitude of indiff-

erence prevails. The land instead of flowing with milk and honey becomes a waste howling wilderness. The brooks dry up. The few left who crave spiritual food become so hungry and thirsty they begin to search desparately for an oasis of truth. In Psalm 107, we find them reeling to and fro and staggering like drunken men, crying unto the Lord in their trouble because their souls are melting within them.

The Scottish Psalter paraphrases the condition of these weary travellers in this way:

What though no flow'rs the fig-tree clothe,
  though vines their fruit deny,
The labour of the olive fail,
  and fields no meat supply?

Though from the fold, with sad surprise,
  my flock cut off I see;
Though famine pine in empty stalls,
  where herds were wont to be!

It was in this condition, I believe, that Elimelech and Naomi and their two sons left Bethlehem-judah for the land of Moab.

The journey from Bethlehem to Moab was long and tedious, frequently over cruel terrain, and always downward. A similar journey was experienced by the "certain man" who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. The downward journey from Bethlehem to Moab or from Jerusalem to Jericho is a necessary one for each child of God to take. The dross must be consumed; the gold refined. The old man, which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts, must be crucified. Yet in the ultimate purpose of God, this journey culminates in a wonderful blessing as Job reveals in his expression, "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." (Job 23:10)

A careful reading of our text also reveals that Elimelech and Naomi left for Moab during the period when the judges ruled over the children of Israel. In addition, we note in the Book of Judges 2:16, 17 that "the Lord raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them. And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the Lord; but they did not so." The natural mind is enmity towards God loving darkness rather light for its deeds are evil. The Israelites, during this period, proved no exception to the rule for not only did they intermingle with the people of the surrounding nations such as the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites and others; but also worshipped their sun-god Baal wherefore the Lord their God was angered with them and sold them into the hands of their enemies.

We are reminded at this time of another couple, even Adam and Eve, who in the beginning enjoyed the manifold blessings of the garden of Eden for, "God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." (Gen. 1:31) As our federal head, Adam along with Eve was placed in the Garden to dress it and to keep it. Because he partook of the forbidden fruit, however, through the deception of Eve, the sentence of death was passed upon him, toil and undesirable results were affixed to the tillage of the soil, labour was annexed to child bearing, and both he and Eve were cast out of the garden. Centuries later, Ezekiel declared, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezekiel 18:20)

In the New Testament, Paul draws a parallel between Adam and Christ when he reveals, "For as by one man's (Adam's) disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." (Romans 5:19) We know; however, that where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, for Christ, who knew no sin, came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh that we might have life and have it more abundantly. The first man Adam was made a living soul, subject to vanity; but the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. As the last Adam, Christ is our elder brother, who came to redeem those He was given by the Father from before the foundation of the world.

Elimelech represents the flesh of all those who died in Adam and are redeemed in Christ. He had to go down into Moab because of a dearth in the land of Judah to show us that our old man must be crucified with Christ that the body of sin might be destroyed. To proclaim this doctrine centuries later, Paul said, "I die daily." (I Cor. 15:31) Elimelech's two sons also died with him in Moab without posterity, emphasizing the fact that flesh and blood cannot procreate children unto the kingdom of God. Boaz, however, as a type of Christ, called Elimelech his brother (Ruth 4:3), for, "he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he (Christ) is not ashamed to call them brethren." (Heb. 2:10)

When Elimelech died, he left a parcel of land which Naomi sold on her return to Bethlehem. This parcel of land represents the souls of the elect for later it was redeemed by Boaz, just as Christ, through his death, bought with a price the salvation of those whom the Father had given Him before the world began. The meaning of Elimelech's name is also significant, for it translates "my God is King". The flesh of the redeemed, under the workmanship of God, is made willing in the day of His power, shall rest in hope as asserted by David, shall see God as testified by Job, and in the words of Paul in death is sown in corruption, and raised in incorruption; is sown in dishonour, and raised in glory: is sown in weakness, and raised in power: is sown a natural body, and raised a spiritual body. The flesh, then, as seen in type by Elimelech can surely cry in keeping with the meaning of his name "my God is King".

Elimelech had two sons named Mahlon and Chilion which mean, respectively, "sickly" and "a wasting away". They, like their father, are types of human nature which is unregenerate and unsanctified. In Moab, Mahlon married Ruth and Chilion married Orpah. Both of these sons died in Moab, once again corroborating the evidence that we dare not have any confidence in the flesh.

Often, Naomi is spoken of as a type of the Church, and rightly so, yet more explicitly she prefigures Jerusalem which is above and is free which is the mother of us all. Her image, is typified by Sarah who being the freewoman gave birth to Isaac representing the children of promise and with whom God made a new and better covenant. In Moab, Naomi's husband Elimelech died because he was brought under the law and by the law came the knowledge of sin. "For I was alive without the law once," Paul said, "but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." Elimelech's death, however, freed Naomi to marry another even Christ. "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband." (Romans 7:2)

The fact that this family was brought under the law in Moab, is further correborated by noting that it dwelled there about ten years; ten representing the basic commandments under the law. And what a gloomy existence it was, especially for Naomi! Her husband was gone; her two sons taken as well; the bonds of earthly affections broken. Her heart must have pined for the ones she loved. How deprived she must have felt with her main means of earthly support gone. But how typical of conditions and feelings under the law! For the commandment, which was ordained to life was, and still is, found to be unto death.

The feelings of Naomi, however, are witnessed by every true born child of God. If we know anything about the new birth, we must first know something about being crucified under the law. We feel so often to be despised and rejected of men; unworthy of the least of His notice. We feel to have no life in us and cry as the whole house of Israel, "Our bones are dried and our hope is lost." (Ex. 37:11) How destitute we feel, when God seems so far off. We wonder if He will hear our cry. We echo the words of David in Psalm 13, when he lamented, "How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?"

The law is a mirror which shows us what we really are. Through it, we realize that in us, that is in our flesh dwelleth no good thing. We know that all is vanity. We know that the good, we would, we do not; and the evil, we would not, that we do. We are stripped of our self-righteousness, and search, as Adam did, for the fig leaves to cover our nakedness.

Even in the things of providence, we often feel to be without hope. When the weather hinders the harvest, or business diminishes, or the children are rebellious, or an associate turns against us, we cry with the disciples, "Lord, save us: we perish." (Matt. 8:25) Even though in this life we see through a glass darkly, we see enough to fellowship Paul when he cried, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death." (Romans 7:24)

Christ, too, suffered as we do when he came under the law to redeem His people. He, too, cried as we often do "Why?", when He lamented, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46) For a small moment, His judgment was removed from Him that He might know the frailty of our frame. How beautifully the Psalter paraphrases Christ's feelings for His people as follows.

Though now ascended up on high,
He bends on earth a brother's eye;
Partaker of the human name,
He knows the frailty of our frame.

In ev'ry pang that rends the heart,
The man of sorrows had a part;
He sympathizes with our grief,
And to the suff'rer sends relief.

God does not leave His people for long without hope; however, And Naomi was no exception. He gave her two daughters-in-law from the land of Moab. Ruth and Orpah (respectively types of the Lord's people among the Gentiles and among the Jews— both loved Naomi and when she kissed them, they lifted up their voice and wept. Naomi must now begin the journey home to Bethlehem, and as they start out, for Ruth and Orpah began the journey with her, we can hear the words of Isaiah heralding the eternal assurance of God to His people when he proclaimed, "For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and the Redeemer the Holy One of Israel: The God of the whole earth shall he be called. For the Lord hath

called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God. For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." (Is. 54:5-8) It is a wonderful mercy that the same God of all comfort that supported Naomi in her troubles is ever present with His people today.

Humbly,
Stewart McColl

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

RIGHTS OF CHURCHES, AND LEGITIMATE SPHERE OF ASSOCIATIONS

It is generally conceded that every regular church of our Redeemer has an undisputed right to regulate all her own affairs, so far as order, discipline and church government are concerned, by what she understands to be the Divine rule laid down by authority of the Head of the church in the New Testament, without the interference of any other church or religious body of any kind whatever. It is true, neither churches nor individuals have any right to do that which is not in itself right; but each church must be, in her own case, most competent to judge what the Divine standard recognizes as right. The Baptists in all past ages, so far as we know, have contended that each church is, to a certain extent, an independent body. By independence, however, they simply mean to deny that they stand amenable to any other ecclesiastical body or power on earth; but it is not claimed that any church has a right to act independently of the laws of the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Whilst each church stands an an independent community in itself, the duty and privilege of maintaining an intercourse with all sister churches of the same faith and order has been duly acknowledged; and in order to keep up such correspondence it has been found necessary for each church to give such expressions of her faith and order as to satisfy sister churches that there is unanimity in faith and order, which is indispensable to a general fellowship. Each church is, of course, to judge for herself in what matter the Divine rule requires her to exhibit her faith and order; and her sister churches, on hearing of her affairs, or on beholding her order, have the right to judge of it, and extend or withhold from her the expression of their fellowship according to their judgment. In addition to the exhibition made from their pulpits, and their public administration of ordinances, it has been common to write a summary of their faith, or of what their faith apprehends to be taught in the Scriptures, as the grand and fundamental doctrine of the gospel, and the order which they believe to be essential to the church of God. We are fully aware of the evils sometimes attending what are called Articles of Faith; and when they are placed between the disciples and the Bible we repudiate them as involving a principle of idolatry. But we see no necessity for making a written statement of what we as churches or as individuals hold to be Bible doctrine or order, to stand between us and the Scriptures as the only inspired and infallible rule. We have witnessed many of the evils to which a brother has made allu-

sion, and with him we deplore them; but it really seems to us that written articles, when simply to set forth the sentiments which distinguish the churches of our fellowship from all other professed churches, are not changeable for the bad use which some misguided persons make of them. For instance, we are known as Old School Baptists. Well, what kind of Baptists are they? The terms "Old School Baptists" are used to distinguish those churches and individuals who are so called, from the New School, Campbellite, Free Will, or Seventh Day Baptists, and to distinguish them as holding certain definite views of doctrine and religious order. And when it is demanded of us, we hesitate not to publish to the world what doctrinal sentiments and gospel practice distinguish us from all other kinds of Baptists or other professors of religion.

If Articles of Faith are, however, used to supply what is supposed to be a deficiency in the Bible, or are to be clung to when we perceive that they are not in harmony with the Scriptures, their tendency cannot fail to be evil. And for all that we can see, what we may publish in the *Signs*, or what we preach from the pulpit, is liable to the same abuse. If the decision of the editor, or of any brother writing in this paper, should come to be regarded as a standard for the faith or practice of all the readers, the consequence would be a departure from the infallible, and an adoption of a fallible guide; and the same would, in our estimation, be the case were our views expressed in the pulpit or elsewhere. We have never been any stickler for what are called creeds, and we have been, and still are, decidedly opposed to formulas to be taught as theories of religion, whereby unregenerated persons are aided into a religious profession; but we should not know how to decide in favor or against the reception of a member into the church, who only professed to believe the Scriptures, unless we, with the church to which we belong, had some definite understanding of the distinguishing doctrine and order of the gospel. Whether such distinguishing understanding were written on paper, or only distinctly understood by all the members, would not change the nature of it. The sentiments of the church being written or unwritten is not what constitutes the faith or belief of the church. Great care should be observed by all Christians and churches to guard against an unjustifiable reliance on written expressions of faith, and all other unspired writings, lest we should by them be swerved from the Scriptures as our only fallible guide and standard.

By associations, we understand our brother to mean the voluntary association of the churches of our order together for the purpose of mutual correspondence and edification. It is not claimed by any that associations are essential to gospel order, or that they are formed in obedience to any specifice command of our Lord found in the Divine record; but they are, and have been, regarded like other voluntary gatherings of God's people for the worship of God and the general edification of one another, as lawful privileges of the saints. As to their legitimate sphere, they have, in our estimation, no more power than any other collection of Christian brethren have who are thrown into each other's company, and mutually agree to spend the time in religious worship and edifying converstation.

If we regard associations as many good brethren do, to be the creatures of the churches still they have no power except such as the churches have given to

them, as messengers. If brethren are sent only as messengers to meet and associate with messengers sent in like manner from other churches of the order, then they have power to carry the messages which are sent by them, and to make a fair report to their churches of the manner in which they have discharged their duty. ***With us the term delegate is very objectionable when applied to brethren sent by the churches, because we know of no power the church has to delegate to any of her members, and because that term implies a representative, whereas none can represent the church of the living God in that sense.*** This term is not used among the churches in this section of the country, because our messengers are not empowered to act as delegates, or to use the power of the church for any purpose, only as messengers to act in obedience to the authority of the churches to which they severally belong. Associations deriving all the authority they have from their churches, can have no authority to lord it over the churches, as the churches have no such power to delegate to them, and as they have no power from any other source. Yet it is certain that many associations, especially those of the New School, have virtually converted themselves into ecclesiastical councils and legislative bodies, and at their sessions gravely discuss questions of expediency, pass decrees, levy taxes, concoct measures, employ agencies, and and assume a general supervision of the churches; and any church refusing to be bound by their decisions is branded as heterodox and disorderly. The associations in this vicinity disclaim being even advisory councils; they simply hold their annual meetings for the worship of God, and to cultivate an acquaintance with each other by intercommunication and Christian correspondence. But there are very many others in various parts of the United States which profess to be advisory councils. Where they are so, this sphere, of course, embraces the duty of giving advice to the churches, when called on to do so.

We know of no good reason why any Christian should not give advice to his fellow Christians on all proper occasions, expecially when asked for it; but the formation of an ecclesiastical council for that or for any other purpose is of more doubtful propriety of utility. Churches and Christians generally, if they lack wisdom, should ask it of Him who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not; and if in any unusually trying case a church desires to be favored with the wisdom of sister churches, it has the undoubted right to invite such churches to send faithful brethren to sit with (not over) them in their regular church meetings, where they can have full opportunity to let their light shine.

Gilbert Beebe, January 1, 1851

Our interest in Christ does not depend on our sanctification, but out sanctification depends on our interest in Christ.

Toplady

Christ's sheep do not contribute any part of their own wool to their own clothing. They wear, and are justified by, the fine linen of Christ's obedience only.

Toplady

OBITUARIES

MINERVA DOSS BOLLING

Sister Minerva Doss Bolling, age 86, died April 17, 1977, in a Martinsville, Va., hospital or Nursing Home. She was the daughter of Ulyses and Virginia Brumfield Donn, and was born August 1, 1890, in Pittsylvania County.

She was the widow of John Albert Bolling. Sister Bolling joined Springfield Primitive Baptist Church on August 9, 1941.

Sister Bolling is survived by one foster daughter, Jessie Taylor, of Norfolk, Va., two foster sons, Percy Fox of Altavista, Va., and Junior Bolling of Gretna Virginia, and one brother, Goldie Doss, of Fairfax, Va.

Graveside services were conducted at Gretna Burial Park on April 19th by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench. May the Lord bless all who mourn her passing.

Written by Annie Tosh

WILLIE SIMPSON INGE

Sister Willie Simpson Inge, age 88, died Wednesday, May 4th in the Memorial Hospital of Danville, Va. She was born in Gretna, Va., March 22, 1889, and was the daughter of the late William and Eliza Dalton Simpson. For the last 22 years she had lived in Danville. She was married to Mason E. Inge, who died April 16, 1967. She was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church for 68 years.

Sister Inge is survived by 4 daughters, Mrs. Florence Grogan, Mrs. Viola Million, and Mrs. Frances Hardy all of Danville, Va., and Mrs. Ruth Edwards of Gretna; 4 sons, Noel E. of Elon College, N.C., Berkley H., M. Elmo, and C. Woody, all of Burlington, N.C.; 19 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench. She was laid to rest in Gretna Burial Park beneath many beautiful flowers, that testified to the esteem in which she was held.

May the Lord bless and comfort her children who loved her so much, together with Springfield Church, to be submissive to His will.

Written by Annie Tosh

ELDER L. L. YOPP

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write of the passing of our dear brother, Elder L. L. Yopp, who lived near Jacksonville, N.C. He was born September 29, 1903. He fell asleep in Jesus December 31, 1976, making his stay on earth 73 years, 3 months, and 2 days. He was married to Peanie Raynor who survives; also surviving are 3 sons, Freemon Yopp, L. A. Yopp and Terry Yopp, and 2 daughters, Mrs. Aillen Walton and Mrs. Elois Charett.

Elder Yopp received a hope that Jesus is his Savior and united with Southwest Primitive Baptist Church November 20, 1932. He was ordained a minister of God in November, 1935. He loved the doctrine of salvation by grace and we feel he will long be remembered by many.

His funeral was held at Jones Funeral Home by Elder D. B. Stokes and Elder A. P. Mewborn. He was laid to rest at Onslow Memorial Gardens, Jacksonville, N.C. May God comfort his family together with all who mourn his passing.

It is requested that 3 copies of this Memorial be made. One to be sent to Sister Yopp, one to be filed in the Church records and one to be published in the **Signs Of The Times.**

Done by order of conference at New Bay Church March 5, 1977.

Ahoskie

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Norman Jenkins, Clerk

SISTER JENNIE (CAMPBELL) McCALLUM

Sister Jennie McCallum, age 86, died at the Craigholme Nursing Home, Ailsa Craig, Ontario, on January 18, 1977.

Sister McCallum was born in Dunwich Township in 1890. She was the daughter of the late Archie and Regina (Pollard) Campbell. She was married to the late Archie Thomas McCallum. One daughter, Mrs. Leo (Janet) Bodkin, lives at Parkhill. Grandchildren Tom, Beth, Paul and Danny Bodkin also survive. Sister Jennie was predeceased by brothers Robert, William and Alex. A sister, Mrs. William (Mary) McCallum of Dutton and a brother, Humphry Campbell of Iona Station survive.

Sister Jennie was a steadfast and faithful supporter of the Church all of her life. Never will the writer forget the joy when he learned that Sister Jennie was to be baptized in 1963 the same day as he was. Sister Jennie was a dear sister in the Church, respected for her loyalty and good judgment and faithfullness in the the cause of truth. In humility and meekness she ran with patience the race that was set before her, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of her faith.

Malachi 3:16-18 was used as a text at her funeral, with particular emphasis on verse 17, "And they shall be mine saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels;

and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him". Service was conducted at the Beill Funeral Home, Dutton, on January 20, with interment in Cowal Cemetery.

Sister Jennie was loved and respected in the community, in her family and in her Church. We miss her greatly in the Church but we hope to one day be where she is with her Heavenly Master. Our sympathy goes to all her dear friends that remain.

Resolved that a copy be sent to the **Signs** for publication and a copy be entered in our Church records.

Elder J. Stewart McColl
Elder D. Alex McColl

LEE M. GODWIN

It was requested by the ministers and members of our church that I write an obituary for my brother in the flesh, and I hope, in the Spirit, Deacon Lee M. Godwin. He was 75 years of age and he was taken from our midst on April 14, 1977, after much long suffering.

We are all of the church deeply saddened by his death as he was a kind and gentle upright man who manifested his love for his God and his brethren by the life he lived on this earth. All who knew him loved him dearly, and we shall all miss him so much.

Lee was born to Dave and Delma Godwin on February 5, 1902, at Chestnut, Louisiana. He was married to Ola Kirkham, who is yet with us, and to this union was born two sons, Joe David, of Natchitoches, La., and Lee M., Jr., of Jonesboro, La.; five daughters, Mrs. Betty White of Monroe, La., Mrs. Delma Nunn of Jonesboro, La., Mrs. Gloria Dixon, and Mrs. Kay Dixon, both of Shreveport, and Mrs. Evelyn Adams of Caushatta, La. Also he is survived by one brother, Elder David Godwin, five sisters, Mrs. Gladys Lucky of Vivian, La., Mrs. Mertie Tyler of Chestnut, La., Mrs. Edith Norman of Shreveport, La., Mrs. Kate Mathews of Saline, La., and Mrs. Heldredge Burch of Springhill, La., 21 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

The funeral was under the direction of Edmonds Funeral Home of Jonesboro, and was held in the Oak Grove Primitive Baptist Church. Services were conducted by Elder Hilton Mercer, Elder Wilburn Morse, and Mr. F. C. Thompson. His body was laid to rest in the Strange Cemetery under a beautiful mound of flowers.

May God comfort and strengthen us all, and especially the wife and children.

Elder David Godwin, Moderator
Kate Mathews, Clerk

ELDER J. J. RHUE

Having pleased our heavenly Father to remove from this life our dear brother and pastor Elder J. J. Rhue, we humbly submit to God's will and Counsel.

Elder Rhue was born September 5th, 1908 and passed away February 10th, 1977, leaving a loving wife, sister Velma G. Rhue, five children, Mrs. Hugh Burton, Mrs. Graydon Tripp, Mrs. William Cunningham, Reginald, and Joe, sisters: Mrs. C. C. Norris, Mrs. John Weeks, Mrs. W. P. Vinson, brothers: Deacon Jessie R. Rhue, Elder Z. L. Rhue, W. R. Rhue and Roy T. Rhue.

He united with the Hadnotts Creek Church, September 1948 at which time a gift was recognized and he was ordained a deacon. He served faithfully in this capacity.

The gift of preaching was manifested and in March 1962, he was ordained to that work.

He was blessed with numerous qualities. As pertain to this life, he was a successful businessman, a warm neighbor, and highly esteemed among all who knew him. Additionally, the spiritual and heavenly virtues were bestowed upon him.

He embraced and preached the doctrine of God our Saviour and confessed it to be the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.

He pastored the churches of Atlantic, Sea Level and Hadnotts Creek.

The family, his brethren and friends will sorely miss him; however, we believe he is entered into that Rest and will wake to weep no more.

Memorial services were conducted at Hadnotts Creek Church by the writer, and Elder Sam Jones, with Elder Jack Dawsey saying benediction at Gethsemane Memorial Gardens, Morehead City, N.C.

May God comfort his devoted family.

Be it resolved that a copy of this be given to the family, Hadnotts Creek Church, and a copy be forwarded to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Written by,
Elder J.T. Prescott

Scripture has stated, this is some sweet evidence that the Lord is dealing with you. This causes you to rejoice, does it not?

"But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead; Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us." (2 Cor. 1:9-10) This Scripture shows that the children of God are convicted in their hearts and are made to trust in the Lord who is able to deliver his people. They experience a sweet deliverance from death to life, or from law to grace or from darkness to light.

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." (Col. 1:12-13) Do you know anything about darkness that is felt in your soul? If so, then have you experienced a sweet deliverance from this darkness? This caused you to rejoice and sing praises unto the Lord, did it not? "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." (1 Peter 2:9) We think of this deliverance as a taste of heaven. "---if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." (1 Peter 2:3)

It is in one's experience that he stands condemned and sees himself as a lost, ruined, undone sinner at the hands of a perfect and just God. He is made to cry unto the Lord for mercy. "Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." (Isaiah 6:5) In due time the Spirit of God speaks peace and pardon to this poor sinner, and we think of this as the application of the blood of Jesus applied by the Holy Ghost. These Scriptures give a beautiful illustration: "Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." (Isaiah 6:6-7) "And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan, standing at the right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan the Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." (Zech. 3:1-4) "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." (Isaiah 61:10) When the Spirit of God applies this to one, this causes him to rejoice and seek those things which are heavenly. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the

earth." (Col. 3:1-2)

"By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." We read in Revelations 1:6 that the blood of Jesus hath made us all kings and priests unto God. Under the law one went to the priest to make a sacrifice for his sins, and to pray for him. The priest gave the sacrifice and prayed unto the Lord for the sinner. As we said before, all of the sacrifices under the law only pointed to Jesus. Since the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ; one is able to approach God the Father in prayer through the name of Jesus. We do not have to get a priest to pray for us, as was done under the law, but we can pray unto God through the name of Jesus.

The Holy Ghost blesses one with joy and love, which causes you to speak to yourselves in psalms and hymns and Spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. (see Eph. 5:19) "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them. The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." (Psalms 126:1-3)

"And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope;" Why do we glory in tribulations? It causes us to rejoice when we feel the presence of the Lord during heavy trials. Tribulation is one of God's ways of teaching his people patience. Tribulations are not pleasant but Paul rejoiced when he realized he was learning the virtue of patience through these unpleasant experiences. Many times we really have to learn rich experiences through heavy trials. That is why he said: "We glory in tribulations." There is a glory in learning Spiritual things through the teachings of the Spirit of God, and also there is a glory in feeling the presence of God even though it is through heavy trials.

We cannot learn the virtue of patience by reading it in a book, but God teaches it to us through tribulations. "My brethren count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." (James 1:2-3) It is necessary for our faith to be tried before we can learn patience. We trust that we have the need of patience. (Heb. 10:36)

Paul was patient in tribulation. (Rom. 12:12) We need patience in that race that is set before us. (Heb. 12:1) It is good to be patient toward all men. (1 Thess. 5:14) The Children of God are taught to bring forth fruit with patience. (Luke 18:15)

Patience is especially important since we are living in the latter days. "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." (James 5:7-8)

When one learns patience through tribulations, he has found a rich experience which causes him to rejoice with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory. All of this is by the tender watch care of this great God who is the God of all mercy. It causes a poor sinner to rejoice when he receives the special attention of this great God who teaches him a sweet ex-

perience. The presence of this wonderful God is richer than anything the world can offer. "That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." (Eph. 3:16-19)

"And hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." It causes you to rejoice when you meet others of the same faith and order, does it not? What causes you to have this love for them? What causes you to feel this love that flows from heart to heart? This love has been given to you by the Holy Ghost, and is not this a wonderful gift? This love that flows within your heart causes you to love others and to "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5:16)

The Spirit of God blesses one with a sweet deliverance, faith, hope, love, repentance, to walk in good works, etc. May all the honor, praise, and glory be given unto the Lord.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

CONDITIONAL TIME SALVATION

Dear Brother B.....,

Thank you for taking out the time to write me. I believe you take pretty much the standard position on "conditional time salvation". This is a point which has been debated by Old Baptists since before the turn of the century, according to the information I have on the subject. It is a very difficult issue in many ways, but Brother, I desire once again to set before you the Truth as I see it. To state unequivocally that there is but one phase of salvation would be an impossible position to hold, because we know the word "salvation" really means "deliverance". And surely there are many ways in which the Lord delivers, but surely this work of deliverance is His work and not ours. Then it is right to speak of any salvation as being conditioned upon the works of the creature? Whether speaking of the "old creature" or the "new creature" makes little difference--this salvation is His work and hence wholly of grace. Whether salvation from spiritual death and condemnation, salvation from some earthly trouble, or salvation in the church--it is His work. "Salvation is of the Lord". (Jonah 2:9)

In Phillipians 2:12-13, which you are discussing, you intimate that verse 12 speaks of a salvation which God desires that we have part in but does not effectuate it; while you think of verse 13 as being an altogether different salvation, the eternal unconditional salvation of all God's elect. But, my Brother, are you ignoring that little connective word "for"? That salvation of verse 13 which God works in and through us is the basis on which he exhorts God's people to obedience. Yet, I believe in exhortation of the living family (not the dead alien sinner) and I believe the Lord is pleased to make use of that exhortation on the very basis of the fact that all this "working out" is the direct result of God's working in us "both to will and to do of His good pleasure". "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power". (Psalm 110:3) ***You teach grace effectually worketh in the alien sinner, but you deny that his grace***

pleasing in His sight. With the Apostle we cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans 7:24) Our desire is to be more perfectly conformed to His image, that for which we are "predestinated" (Romans 8:29), but we know that is too high a work for us. It is His work, and we must wait upon Him.

Speaking of predestination, he says, "The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity". (II Timothy 2:19) "Them that are his" and the ones "that nameth the name of Christ" are ***the same group of people.*** They are predestinated unto the adoption of sons ("them that are His") and also to the departing of iniquity or "good works". "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them". (Eph. 2:10) Notice that word "ordained". Pretty much the same as the word "predestinated", isn't it? The "good works" we are to walk in are our "time salvation", aren't they? Then this is not left to the uninfluenced will of the "new creature" (conditional!!).

When our Lord returns, one of the things He will do is, "in flaming fire taking vengence on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting (eternal punishment; not temporal!) destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power". (II Thess. 1:8-9) If they don't obey the Gospel, they will be punished. Would you have it that this obedience to the Gospel is a work of the creature by which they escape eternal punishment--or would you not rather prefer to say, as we would, that their obedience is a grace wrought in them by God's Holy Spirit?

Quite often the Old Baptists who contend for this "conditional time-salvation" have argued that all our belief of the truth and obedience to Christ relates to this time-life only. But speaking of the priestly office of Christ, the writer of Hebrews says, "And being made perfect, he became the author of ***eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."*** (Heb. 5:9) This is not an Arminian statement, but it is the written Word of God. Following are the comments of the learned Dr. John Gill: "The salvation Christ is the Author of is eternal; it was resolved upon from eternity, and contrived in it; it was secured in the everlasting covenant...it is the salvation of the soul, which is immortal; and the continuance of it is owing to the abiding and lasting virtue of Christ's Person, blood, and righteousness: and Christ is the cause or Author of this salvation by His obedience and sufferings; by obeying the precept, and bearing the penalty of the law; by the price of His blood, and by the power of His arm; by His death and by His life; by His sacrifice on the cross and by His intercession in heaven; by bestowing grace here, and glory hereafter: this shows that salvation is done, and that Christ is the sole Author of it, and that all the glory of it should be given to Him...Christ is not the author of salvation to all men; all men do not obey Him; ***all those whom Christ saves, He brings them to an obedience to Himself;*** for His obedience for them does not exempt them from obedience to Him, though their obedience is no cause of their salvation; Christ Himself is the alone Author of that." (John Gill, "Commentary", Vol. 6, p. 702, Lassetter reprint edition) This is so gloriously true. Praise God! To be sure, this obedience is not the cause of their eternal salvation but a sovereignly ordained effect.

Dear Brother, as you read the works of our Old Baptist writers, there is not a word regarding "conditional time salvation" until near the end of the last cen-

tury. And I have read where some so-called Primitive Baptists recently praise the men who "developed this truth of conditional time salvation", admitting it to be a doctrine of recent origin! We reject Sunday Schools, mission societies, organ music, and many other modern innovations just simply because they are modern additions to the church. Let us also reject this very modern and very shallow teaching of a "take it or leave it" conditional salvation in the church here in time. Let us not deny the exhortations and duties of children of God, but at the same time let's remember that the fulfilling of any duty is a grace rather than a creature accomplishment wherein we can boast!

I am fully aware we have extremes on both sides of this issue. One who cannot recognize that "all things are of God" is in danger of pride and self-sufficiency. On the other hand, one who fails to recognize the need of exhortation in the church because "what is to be will be" is already in a sad spiritual condition. So these are the extremes. But I will stand (as the Lord enables me) along with Dr. Gill, Bunyan, Philpot, Beebe, and other Old Baptist writers who all proclaimed, even as Gill states above, ***"All those whom Christ saves, He brings them to an obedience to Himself."***

In your letter you accuse Beebe of teaching "God is the Author of sin", but the quotes you give of course, do not state such a proposition and until proof is furnished that he in fact taught such a doctrine, then there is no need to answer the charge or further discuss it. He believed in the absolute sovereignty of God and the predestination of all things--it's one thing to say God is the Author (Originator) of sin, but it's another matter to teach that He predestinated the course or outcome of sin. This latter position is what all predestinarians believe, so far as I know. Acts 2:23 illustrates this point. God delivered Him to the "wicked hands" of sinners who slew Him in accord with God's purpose.

I am glad to have this exchange of letters with you, but I feel it would be fruitless to continue debating these fine points of doctrine. Probably our true positions and feelings are not too far apart. You stated you believed we both worship the same God and that you receive my experience and receive me as a brother in the faith. If I know my heart, I love you and many of your dear people. My desire is that the Lord's great and good Name be honored in what we do, what we say, and what we teach. Only that doctrine which is according to godliness is of any profit. If we use any teaching as a cloak or license to sin, then surely the teaching is either wrong or our hearts are deceived and we have neither part nor lot in the matter. (Acts. 8:21-23)

My desire is not to offend you--but to honor Him who called me by His grace to reveal Himself in me. If notdeceived, I desire to rest at His feet and receive of Him such favors as He is pleased to bestow. But I know full well that such a sinner as this poor writer has no ability to lay Him under obligation to bless me in reward for my obedience! If I have ever obeyed Him, I know it is all of grace. If I have ever truly desired to obey Him, that too is "all of grace"! There I leave it.

Be assured of my interest and love in Christ.

By His mercy,
Wylie W. Fulton
P.O. Box 879
Forest City, N.C. 28043

(We feel the need to explain our publishing this article, with the hope that we may avoid any misunderstanding. We are in full agreement with the sentiment of our writer and believe our readers are also. However, some may feel we are stiring up controversy with such an article. Not at all. Must truth remain silent lest error be offended? The ***Signs of the Times*** has always stood

UPPER COUNTRY LINE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION SEVENTY FIRST SESSION JULY 16, 17, AND 18TH 1977 HELD AT McCLEANSVILLE, GUILFORD COUNTY, N.C. GREENSBORO, THE HOST CHURCH

Greetings to the Upper Country Line Association, our sister associations and our other correspondance in the Lord.

I thank God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ for his love, kindness and tender mercies toward us in this journey of life. We realize there has been a people traveling from the beginning of time that will all meet at the end in a place of peace and rest everlasting.

I like to read in the book of Exodus where God gave Moses a charge to bring my people out of Egypt. When I think of Moses the servant of God I think of the law and when I think of the law I think of God the creator of Heaven and earth, just, rich and holy under no law.

God gave Moses the law of commandments to deliver to the children of Israel. The law demanded perfection and had no mercy. To break one of these laws brought the sentence of death. Moses gave no inheritance to the children of Israel. Joshua was given to reign over the children of Israel after Moses. Joshua was a type of Christ and gave the children their inheritance. The law came by Moses but Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the end of the law to every one that believes that Jesus Christ is the son of God. I think of two ministrations. The first ministration of Moses was death, yet it was gracious because it was a schoolmaster to bring us to the throne of grace. It showed us we were by nature sinners sentenced to death because we could not keep the commandments of God. We saw ourselves the children of wrath and ashamed and were made to cry to our Heavenly Father to have mercy on us and to deliver us from this awful condemnation. I believe that God hears the cry and supplications of every child of god and reveals His son unto them. This being the second ministration, our Lord Jesus Christ the son of God, made under the law a Lamb without blemish or spot.

Jesus Christ came down from Heaven fulfilling every demand of the law and died on the cross and paid the great debt for us and on the third day arose from the grave. He was victorious over death and through His victory we have eternal life.

God could not look at us poor sinners as the children of God only through the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. We believe Jesus made free the sons of God through the shedding of His blood on the cross and our sins are blotted out forever.

May the Lord give us grace to praise Him with all our heart, soul and strength is my prayer.

A little one in hope,
Leonard Key
Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Union will be held, the Lord willing, at Mt. Ararat Church (better known as Old Mountain Church), the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in October, 1977. Everyone is cordially invited to come an be with us.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
Doris Rowland, Clerk

PLEASE NOTICE

WE NEED YOUR CO-OPERATION IS SUBMITTING ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR PUBLICATION. TO HAVE THEM IN THE *SIGNS* WHEN YOU WANT THEM, WE MUST HAVE THEM TWO (2) MONTHS IN ADVANCE. THIS IS NECESSARY BECAUSE OF PRINTING SCHEDULES. WILL YOU PLEASE HELP? TWO MONTHS IN ADVANCE MEANS THAT AN ITEM FOR JANUARY MUST BE IN OUR HANDS BY NOVEMBER 1st AT THE LATEST.

THANK YOU,
EDITORS

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EDITORIAL

FOLLOWING AFTER NAOMI

Then she (Naomi) arose with her daughters in law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread.

Wherefore she went out of the place where she was, and her two daughters in law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.

And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mother's house: the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me.

The Lord grant you that you may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and wept.

And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.

And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me? Are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands?

Turn again, my daughters, go your way; for I am too old to have an husband. If I should say, I have hope, if I should have an husband also tonight, and should also bear sons;

Would ye tarry for them till they were grown? Would ye stay for them from having husbands? Nay, my daughters; for it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the Lord is gone out against me.

And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her.

And she said, Behold, Thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law.

And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for wither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:

Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so

to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.

When she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

(Ruth 1:6-18)

The land of Judah or the land of Canaan as it is often called is God's appointed place for His people. Frequently, it is identified as the promised land, the land God gave to Abraham to inhabit, the land from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates. Elimelech and Naomi left this land to inhabit the heathen land of Moab. Here death passed upon Elimelech and his two sons, Mahlon and Chilion. Now, Naomi and her daughters-in-law Ruth and Orpah are left in bereavement. Naomi decides to return to Judah, the land of promise, for she has heard how the Lord has visited His people in giving them bread. We must not fail to point out, at this juncture, how explicitly this journey parallels the life of each child of grace. First, each is foreknown by God the Father and elect in His Son Jesus Christ from before the foundation of the world. Next he walks in an earthen vessel for a few short moments through the wilderness of this world being condemned by the law and being redeemed by Christ. Then he is presented holy and without blame before the Father in love. The travels of Naomi from the sanctity of Bethlehem-judah to Moab along with her return portray so clearly the universal sojourn of the Lord's people that the parallel is striking indeed.

Specifically, the return journey of Naomi and Ruth from Moab to Bethlehem-judah is typical of the pathway of the elect from law to grace. Although the Book of Ruth does not say specifically that this family sinned in moving to heathen Moab, we do not know that whatsoever is not of faith is sin. When the famine came in Judah, Elimelech and Naomi looked for natural means in neighboring Moab to relieve their plight rather than trusting in a kind Providence to bring them through. It is clear from Deut. 23:3-6 that the people of Moab were barred from participaion in the life of Israel and the Israelites were forbidden to "seek their prosperity". In Moab, Elimelech and Naomi were far from the promised land, away from the people who worshipped God, with their sons married to two heathen girls Ruth and Orpah. Although God does not deal with His people after their sins, nor rewards them according to their iniquities, it is evident that this family came under judgment. Naomi, Ruth and Orpah were left alone. Later, Naomi is heard to say, "the hand of the Lord is gone out against me". Yet, the ways of God are above our ways and the travels of this family reveal much of the mysterious and wonderful ways of God in fulfilling His divine purpose is sovereign grace.

Our text says that Naomi "heard in the country of Moab how that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread." Centuries before, Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt. In Revelation 1:10, 12 John heard a great voice behind him commanding him to write in a book what he saw and such was his faith that he turned to see the voice. What did John and Jacob and Naomi hear? they heard none other than the voice of God just as in the beginning of time Adam heard the voice of the Lord God walkng in the garden in the cool of the day. Sometimes the voice of God is heard as the sound of many waters, sometimes as a trumpet, sometimes as a still small voice. From Psalm 27 we know that the voice of the Lord is powerful and full of majesty. We know it breaketh the cedars of Lebanon, divideth the flames of fire, shaketh the wilderness, maketh the hinds to calve and discovereth the forests. The forests or more particularly the cedars or Leba-

non are types of the Lord's people. They are discovered and broken by the voice of Almighty God. Naomi, as their indisputable antitype experiences the irreversible effect of the voice of God calling her with irresistible grace to come home from the land of Moab to Bethlehem-judah.

Certainly God uses many means to guide and direct His people. Dreams, the circumstance of events, the preaching of His word, the exhortation of the brethren, to mention a few, are but precise instruments of compassion in His hands to rebuke, to chastise, to exhort, and to comfort those whom He loves. In addition, however, the direct intervention of God through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is exemplified in the scriptures so frequently, and in no case more beautifully that with Naomi, as the means of calling His people from darkness unto His marvellous light. Truly, "there is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." (Psalm 19:3, 4)

In these words God has set a tabernacle for His Son who is as a bridegroom coming out of His chamber and is as a strong man to run a race. The Word of God written in the hearts of His people by God the Father through the inspiration of the Holy spirit is Christ in you the hope of Glory. Thereby His people become the Body of Christ because His Word is a Living Word. His people are therefore part of Him and being part of Him, they will be given someday that inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled and which is reserved in heaven for them. Naomi, representing that number which no man can number must be brought home from Moab to Bethlehem-judah for of all that the Father gave Christ before the foundation of the world none shall be lost.

When Naomi heard in the country of Moab how that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread she arose with her daughters-in-law that she might return from Moab to Bethlehem-judah. To arise in the scripture is indicative of the new birth for it signifies a newness of life. In the New testament when the man sick of the palsy was brought unto Christ, He said unto him, "Son be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." (Matt. 9:2) and "Arise, take up thy bed and go into thy house." (Matt. 9:6) Indeed in the Songs of Solomon, Christ comforts His entire church with this assurance," Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grapes give a good smell. Arise my love, my fair one, and come away." (Song of Solomon 2:10, 13) Wherefore Naomi arose and went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daugters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.

The spiritual significance of Ruth and Orpah as daughters-in-law of Naomi should be noted before proceeding further. Clearly, Ruth is a type of each believer among the Gentiles and Orpah is a type of each believer among the Jews. When Naomi kissed them after recommending that each return to her mother's house, "they lifted up their voice, and wept." worthy of emphasis at this time is the fact they wept with one voice, "for there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him." (Roman 10:12) Furthermore, both said to Naomi, "Surely we will return with thee unto thy people," for they loved her. In addition both began the journey to Bethlehem-judah with her, then, later Orpah turned back unto

her own people and unto her own gods. It is interesting to note the fulfillment of this prophecy in the New Testament for when Jesus said, "no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.....many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him." (John 6:65, 66) Paul explains the purpose of this turning back among the Jews in his epistle to the Romans when he declares, "that blindness in part is happened to Israel; until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." (Romans 11:25) It is very definite in Ruth 4:9 that Boaz bought all that was Elimelech's and Chilion's and Mahlon's therefore, we are not presumptuous in assuming that Orpah's portion was redeemed just at Ruth's. This has always been of comfort to the writer. More will be said about Orpah's inheritance later, but suffice it here to indicate the spiritual significance of Ruth and Orpah as types of the elect among the Gentiles and the Jews respectively.

The daughter-in-law relationship between Ruth and Orpah on one hand and Naomi on the other is also of spiritual significance. When Jesus was reminded in Matthew 12, that His mother and brethren stood without, desiring to speak with Him, He immediately said unto the one who told Him, "Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?" (Matt. 12:48) Immediately He asked the question, Jesus stretched forth His hand toward His disciples and said, "Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." (Matt. 12:49, 50) Naomi, as a type of Jerusalem above and the mother of us all, represents collectively all those who are led to do the will of the Father, the same which Jesus refers to as His brethren and His mother. Any individual, thereore whose first husband dies, (which is the flesh under the law) and is free to marry another even Christ, upon doing so becomes a daughter-in-law to the total company who do the will of the father. It follows then, that Ruth and Orpah representing those among the Gentiles and the Jews who are brought to Christ, must be daughters-in-law of Naomi to reveal this spiritual relationship. And of course they are since they were married to her two sons Mahlon and Chilion. How wonderful is the mystery of Godliness!

We cannot help but feel for Naomi in her extreme loneliness. Truly, she appeared to be without hope and without God in the world. In losing both her husband and her sons, her grief must have been overwhelming to the point she could say, "My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid." (Gen. 4:14) The earth to her must have been a desert place, without water, without nourishment, leaving her parched in the heat of the sun. Christ experienced this type of suffering on the cross as is evident in Psalm 22 when He cried through the mouth of David, "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death."

"And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go return each to her mother's house: the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me. The Lord grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. The she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice and wept." (Ruth 1:8, 9) At first glance it might seem that Naomi's counsel to Ruth and Orpah revealed that her love for them was not strong, but there are underlying sentiments here which are more

apparent under further consideration. God does not tempt His people, but He does try their faith, and the church has an obligation to reveal to those who are being brought home what priorities are really extant and what obligations are really expected. Would Ruth and Orpah really be content any longer in their mother's house and the land of their husband's? No, say you if they have been shown some evidence of grace. I believe these two Moabitish girls gave the same answer when they lifted up their voice and wept and said, "Surely we will return with thee unto thy people."

But Naomi continued further, "Turn again, my daughters:why will ye go with me? are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands? Turn again, my daughters, go your way; for I am too old to have an husband. If I should say I have hope, if I should have an husband also to night, and should bear sons; Would ye tarry for them till they were grown?" Probably at this moment, the keenest longing for Ruth and Orpah was to have their husbands returned unto them. But this was impossible as it was inconceivable for them to hope for Naomi to bear more sons to grow up to marry them in their brothers' stead as was the practice often in the Old Testament. In other words, to follow Naomi meant no fulfillment of these natural desires just as there is no earthly enticement put forth to join the church of the Living God. The true church parades no attractions to the flesh. Nevertheless if the genuine love of God is present, it is just as true that nothing shall separate us from Christ; neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature. "And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her." The Gentiles began coming to Christ when He came the first time upon the earth as the Word was made Flesh. They have and will continue to come "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." (Romans 11:25) This is revealed in the actions of Ruth as she not only "kissed" Naomi but "clave" unto her. Orpah "kissed" Naomi too, but turned back to her people to reveal that when christ came "blindness in part" would "happen to Israel." (Romans 11:25) However the day will come when the remnant of Israel will be spoken for because the inheritance or Orpah's husband was redeemed the same as Ruth's as we shall discuss later.

Naomi left speaking any more to Ruth as well for she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her. The Household of Faith is always alert when someone is being brought home. How sensitive and anxious the members are that it is the Lord's work, that the love is unquenchable and that the heart is being changed, renewed and firmed in the right way. All should be wont to encourage the coming, but careful to not spoil the fruit, and fearful to not touch the ark when the oxen stumbled and the anger of the Lord was kindled against him (I Chr. 13:9) What a relief and joy there is, however, when the child of grace, is finally "steadfastly minded". No longer is there any doubt, any waiting, any uneasiness, but joy and thanksgiving. Naomi knew this joy and rejoiced with Ruth as they set off together on their journey home to Bethlehem-judah.

The stedfastness of Ruth is clearly evident in her expression which has such universal appeal among the people of God and reads, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die,

and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me." These words are so clear and self explanatory. Every child of grace feels this desire to follow and to be with the people of God, to hear them tell of their travels, to see their faces shine, to feel their embrace of love, and to share their mutual woes. We have great consolation in knowing that, "this God is our god for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death." (Psalm 48:14)

Humbly,
Stewart McColl

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

PRAYER

Few subjects, perhaps, have occasioned greater concern in the minds of the children of God than that of prayer; and it is indeed, when rightly understood, a comforting thought, that the living children of God are more seriously tried upon this subject than any other people. Indeed, we do not know that any other people have any trouble at all in regard to prayer. The Pharisee who stood and prayed with himself, and paraded before the Lord what he evidently regarded as his own good works and self-esteem, had not a single petition to ask of God, and being full of self-righteousness, betrayed no doubt or fear that his prayer was meritorious in the sight of God. The parable of the Pharisee and publican was spoken by our Lord unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others, (Luke xviii. 9-14), and it is applicable to all self-righteous Pharisees, whether of ancient or modern times. The ease and fluency in which all self-righteous persons can read or recite what they call their prayers, is very observable. They profess to regard it as a duty to do a certain amount of praying; and when they have read or repeated their task, they can say, with the strange woman described in Proverbs vii. 14, "I have peace offerings with me; this day have I paid my vows." Of this class of will-worshippers, not a few are like their ancient brethren, fond of being heard in their devotions: they choose the corners of streets, or market places, or places where they may be heard of men, that all may see how devout and righteous they are. They think, as we are told, that they shall be heard for their much speaking, and therefore make long prayers, and use vain repetitions. But our Lord has said of them, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." – Matt. xv. 8, 9.

It is not then the fluency of speech, the eloquence of language, nor readiness to engage in public or in private prayer, that God will accept as worship. Nor is it a periodical appropriation of times in which to go through the form of prayer, for the spirit of grace and supplication are not at our command. In his sermon on the mount, our Savior forbid his disciples praying as the hypocrites do, or using vain repetitions, as the heathen do. Be not ye therefore like them; for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him. Even the repetition of the form of prayer which Jesus taught his disciples, (Matt. vi. 9-13), becomes with us vain and forbidden repetition when we are not led by the Spirit to pray with the spirit and with the understanding. How many of us

have been taught from our infancy to commit to memory what is called the Lord's prayer, and to repeat it, as though by so doing we could secure the mercy and protection of the Lord. It is used as a kind of charm, to keep evil from us when we lie down to sleep, and we have felt as though we have secured the favor of the Lord; when not a word has been felt in or uttered from our heart. Even the saints of God, including the apostles of the Lamb, have asked in prayer of God and received not, because they have asked amiss. We may rest assured that we have asked amiss, if God withholds from us that which we ask for; and this is a great mercy to us, that he does withhold those things which his Spirit has not made intercession for. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. And he that searches the heart knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." – Rom. viii. 26, 27. Our Savior said to the woman of Samaria, "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship in spirit and in truth." – John iv. 24.

The experience of the saints is in harmony with the last two references, expecially when they feel their heart drawn out in prayer to God. When they remember that God is a Spirit, infinite and eternal, the inquiry from their heart arises, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God?" – Micah vi. 6. They know they cannot approach him with a price in their hand, or with any offerings they can bring. How often in their heart the unuttered desire is hidden, O that I knew where I might find him! They may bend their knees to the ground, but their lips are sealed; they perhaps cannot utter a word, a syllable, and they sometimes even fear that they have offended God by their very attempt to pray. How sensibly do they now feel their weakness, and in deep humility they groan in spirit, in inexpressible breathings of desire. This is prayer, and this prayer enters the ears of the God of Sabaoth. And this prayer God has promised to hear, for he has said, "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them: I the God of Israel will not forsake them." – Isa. xli. 17. This is truly helping their infirmity. Their tongue has failed; it can utter no sound, it cannot express the deeply hidden groaning for the water of life which is felt within. No created ear can hear the silent emotions that rend their broken hearts; the deep contrition that overwhelms them in unspeakable anguish can be heard only by their gracious prayer hearing God. "I the Lord will hear them." What heavenly consolation is found in these gracious words. The heavens had seemed to them like brass, and the earth as dust, and their prayers had seemed utterly unavailing, and shut out from the ear of sovereign mercy. A consciousness not only of infirmity, but also a sense of guilt and unworthiness, had paralyzed their tongue; but their inability to articulate with their tongue cannot prevent him, who searches the hearts and trieth the reins of the children of men, from hearing the prayer which his own Spirit has indited in the heart, and no other prayer than that which his Spirit indites will be accepted, though uttered in thunder tones. "For we know not how to pray as we ought," nor can we learn from all the prayer-books ever publish-

ed, or by any lessons taught by good or bad men. It is only the Spirit that can search or know what is the mind of God, or make intercession for the saints according to the will of God. The spirit of our flesh would ask that God would yield to our carnal desires; but the Spirit of God teaches us to say. Not our will, but thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven, and to ask for grace to reconcile us in all things to God. The Spirit of our God will never lead us to pray for or desire that God should grant us anything more or less than what he has in store for us; and when we pray for the gratification of our carnal desires, we surely pray amiss, and it will neither be for our good or his glory, and therefore he graciously denies our requests. The saints are instructed to pray without ceasing, and in all things to give thanks. We do not understand this injunction to mean that all our time is to be devoted exclusively to a form of prayer, for vain repetitions in prayer are forbidden; but at all times in our heart to breathe forth our desire to God to preserve us from evil, and lead us by his counsel and wisdom in all things. There is no place or period of our pilgrimage when we can say our prayers are ended, or that we can cease to call upon the name of the Lord. And in all things, whether agreeable or painful to us, we are to give thanks to God.

"Our days of praise shall ne'er be past,
While life or breath or being last,
Or immortality endures."

The peculiar trials which are experienced by God's praying children, when their prayers seem to be unheard, and they feel as though they were sinking in deep waters of sore affliction, should not lead them to conclude that God's ear has become heavy that he cannot or will not hear them; for he often withholds the answer to our prayers for the trial of our faith and patience, and that we may the better understand and more fully appreciate the blessings when received. Our blessed Lord spake a parable of the unjust judge and importuning widow, (Luke xviii. 1-5), "to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint." A sense of our abject poverty and utter unworthiness should not cause us to faint, or despair of the mercy of the Lord, for it is the poor, humble, contrite, laboring, heavy laden child that God has made welcome to come boldly to his throne of grace in their Redeemer's name; and the promise is that they shall obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need; but the rich, self-righteous, he sends empty away. The poor publican, bowed down under a sense of unworthiness to even raise his eyes to heaven, in deep contrition smites upon his breast, and the hidden anguish of his heart in trembling accents cries, "God, be merciful to me;" and to this last petition he signs his name and character, "A Sinner." He does not claim to be a saint, nor indulge a thought that his sad prayer is meritorious. If God shuts out his prayer, and spurns him from his presence, he feels in his heart that God is just. But with fear and trembling he feels that this is his last, his only hope; for if God withholds from him his mercy, he sinks in hopeless despair. But O, what wondrous grace! his prayer is heard, and he is justified rather than the boasting Pharisee.

There are times with some who have hoped in the Lord, when they have had so deep a sense of the infinite majesty and holiness of God, and so deep a sense of their own pollution, as, like the publican, to stand afar off, and because they dared not to lift up their eyes to heaven,

or take the sacred name of God upon their lips, have concluded that they have not – cannot pray; when perhaps in no part of their experience have they in reality and truth prayed more, or with greater acceptance. Their prayers have not been formed into words, nor articulated with their voice, but from the deepest recesses of their aching heart the pent up ejaculation has in unutterable groanings, in heaving sighs and flowing tears, expressed the desire and confession, "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

The subject of prayer opens before us a boundless theme for serious reflection. The God to whom prayer is to be made is the "high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, and his name is Holy." He is "of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity." Yet in the amazing riches of his grace he has provided a way of access through Jesus Christ, the one and only Mediator between God and men, whereby his children may approach him, and come even unto his seat, and not be consumed. Most truly, Jesus Christ is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life, and no man can come unto the Father but by him. – John xiv. 6. ***Our prayers to be acceptable to God must be presented in his name, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must or can be saved; and he has instructed us to address all our prayers to the Father, in the name of Jesus Christ the Son, and as indited by the Holy Spirit.*** This rule should be strictly observed when we approach the throne of grace. It is true that these three are One, but officially to be regarded in our prayers, as Jesus has commanded us. By the Spirit we address the eternal God, as "Our Father which is in heaven," whose name is hallowed; and we find access to him through his Son, in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, whom the Father has given to be the Head over all to the church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all; and in whose sacred Sonship is treasured the sonship, heirship, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, with every other spiritual blessing of all his members, and their eternal, vital union is securely treasured up in him. Therefore when we pray we should ask our petitions of the Father in his name, as taught by his Holy Spirit. Thus the "Three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost," are recognized in our spiritual devotion. While we call upon God, as our Father, this relationship is in and through Jesus Christ his Son, who by the gift of the Father is our Head, and officially our Mediator, in whom alone we stand accepted. The Holy Spirit which is given us, while one with the Father and the Son, is officially our Comforter, our Teacher, and the gracious, infallible Prompter of our prayers. Every prayer, therefore, to be acceptable to God, must be addressed to the Father, in the name of Jesus Christ our Mediator; for in no other name or way can we have access unto God. The new and living way unto the Father, which is consecrated for us, in through the vail; that is to say, through the flesh of him who was made flesh and dwelt among us: whose glory we beheld, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. How frequently Jesus informed his disciples that after his resurrection, and ascension to his Mediatorial throne, they should address all their prayers to the Father in his name. "And in that

day ye shall ask of me nothing. Verily, verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he will give you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." – John xvi. 23, 24. "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it." – John xiv. 12 - 14.

The privilege of asking in his name belongs exclusively to those who are embraced in his name; as all the members of a man's body are included in his name, and as a wife is in the name of her husband, and as children are legally included in the name of their paternal parent, so the church of God, as the Lamb's wife, and all her members, are members of his body, and covered by his name; and as his seed, or children, his name is their inheritance, and their approach unto God in his name implies a vital relationship to him; and his name is to them a strong tower, and perfect indemnity for all they need for time or for eternity. And the Holy Comforter shall lead them into all truth; for he shall take of the things of Jesus and show them unto them. This Spirit shall make intercession for them and in them, according to the will of God. Hence the gracious assurance is given, that whatsoever they are moved by the Holy Spirit to ask in the name of Christ shall be given them; for the Spirit will not lead them to ask for anything contrary to the mind and will of God. And as none can call Jesus Lord but by the Holy Ghost, so none can pray in his name but by the same Spirit. An inspired apostle has assured us that all our necessities are known and amply provided for by our heavenly Father. "But my God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." – Phil. iv. 19. But as we have not wisdom to discriminate between our need and what our carnal mind may crave, the blessed Spirit maketh intercession for us, withholding only what would be hurtful to us, and incompatible with the righteous will of God; for he will withhold no good thing from them who walk uprightly.

The subject of prayer opens before us so wide a field for meditation, that we cannot – we know not where to stop when dwelling on the subject. Our principal object in this article is to relieve, so far as we may be enabled, some trembling ones who, from a sense of unworthiness, and of inability to order their speech aright before the Lord, have been sorely tempted to doubt their right to pray, and fear that it is sinful for them to attempt it; we have labored to show that such are the very ones that are the most welcome to approach the awful majesty of God in prayer and supplication. They come not in their own name, but in the all-prevailing name of him who forever liveth to make intercession for them and in them.

Prayer, as a mere duty, is a very dull and unavailing employment, yet it is a duty devolving on all who feel their need of divine favor, because Christ has enjoined it upon them; but when led by the Spirit to the throne of grace, it is a most delightful privilege. Poor, weak and worthless as we are in and of ourselves, yet,

> "Sprinkled with reconciling blood,
> They may approach the throne of God;"

and not be consumed; because the name of Jesus Christ, their Advocate with the Father, is upon them, and he has sealed them with the Holy Spirit of promise. – Eph. i. 13. In prayer we are permitted

to hold communion with God, through our High Priest, from over the mercy-seat. The apostle speaks (Eph. vi. 18) of "praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit," &c; from which we infer that the apostolic practice of social as well as private prayer is to be perpetuated in the church of God until time shall be no more.

In social prayer, one is mouth for all who are present and qualified by the Spirit to unite in the devotion. If the saints who meet for prayer are, like the primitive saints, all of one heart and one mind, and all are led by the one spirit, there will be no discord nor confusion, and the prayer expressed in words by him who is mouth for all will be equally the prayer of all. In social prayer we use the plural form of the personal pronouns, our, us, &c., as taught Matt. vi. 9-13. This is proper, because it is the prayer of all who in their hearts can say, Amen.

We have many instances recorded of the saints meeting for prayer, and the practice should be continued in the church of God. When Herod the king had killed James with a sword, and had imprisoned Peter also, intending also to deliver him unto death, many were gathered together praying: and their prayers were graciously heard and answered. – Acts xii. 1-19. We have many other accounts of the meeting of the primitive saints at places where prayer was wont to be made; and should not the saints of the present age walk in the footsteps of the early Christians.

But in social or public prayers, we should carefully avoid all ostentatious display, or effort to elicit the admiration and praise of men. ***Be not like those who pray to be heard and admired by men; nor should we use vain repetitions, for that is forbidden. Our words should be few; for God is high in the heavens, and we are on the earth. It is not becoming in ministers, while assaying to lead in public or social prayer, to presume to explain or expound anything to the Lord: he needs no logic or explanation from us, and our prayers are to comprise supplication, intercession, and thanksgiving, under a full conviction that the Lord knoweth all about us, that he searches the hearts and tries the reins of all, and with a solemn consciousness that all things are naked and open to his all-seeing eyes.*** In our public or social prayers, our wandering thoughts are prone to seek the applause of those who are present, and almost forget that we are professedly addressing the God whose dwelling is in the heavens, and from whose sight the inmost secrets of our heart cannot be concealed. The cruel tempter is ever ready to divert our mind from the awful solemnity of holding communion with the eternal God. How cold and dull and formal are our prayers when thus yielding to the carnal impulse of our fleshly nature and the temptation of the adversary; our pride and vain ambition are either inflated or mortified, as we have succeeded or failed to make a display. One would hardly believe Christians could be troubled in this way; but they are the only class that are really troubled on this account. Carnal professors and self-righteous Pharisees feel perfectly satisfied with their prayers if they can secure the applause of men; but those who are taught of God feel and lament the imperfection of their most solemn devotions, for they feel deeply their short-comings; and were it not for the blessed assurance that the Spirit helpeth their infirmities, supplying the ability which they lack, and making intercession for them ac-

cording to the will of God, they would not dare to take the sacred name of God upon their lips in prayer or praise.

The humblest and most simple expression of desire that comes welling up from a broken and contrite heart, is far better than the most eloquent flow of words that charm the carnal ears of men; for the sacrifice of a broken and contrite spirit God will not despise.

In our secret prayers, when alone in our closet, that is, when the world is shut out from our mind, and there is none but God can hear, and we feel that our devotion is a personal matter between the trembling suppliant and his God, we use the personal pronouns in their singlar form; as My God, why hast thou forsaken me? God, be merciful to me; hear me; deliver me, &c. Whether upon our knees, prostrate on the ground, or upon our beds, or ever when our hands are engaged in labor, by night or day, when our heart is drawn out to God in the secret aspirations of the heart, we pray with the spirit and with the understanding, even when our lips are sealed in silence. We cannot suppress the secret desire inwrought by the Spirit, and involuntarily arising from the depth of our heart to God as the giver of every good and perfect gift; and from a deep sense of our own vileness, every ejaculation is presented in the name of Jesus, with a full conviction that we can approach God in no other name.

The apostle Peter reminds us that the end of all things is at hand, and admonishes us therefore to "be sober, and watch unto prayer." – Peter iv. 7. What Jesus our Lord has said unto one, he also says unto all his dear saints, "Watch." "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."

In a careful, vigilant watching, we cannot fail to find abundant incentives to prayer; and if our watching does not have the effect to incline us to pray, it must be that we are in the sad condition of those saints of whom Peter speaks, 1 Peter i. 9, who, having neglected the admonition given in that chapter, are blind, cannot see afar off, and have forgotten that they have been purged from their old sins.

In conclusion of this already lengthy article, we wish to say to those who have been exercised upon the subject of prayer, and who have requested us to write upon this important subject, You cannot be too poor, too needy, or too unworthy to call upon the name of the Lord. It is especially for those of just your description of character that God has provided the new and living way, which he has consecrated for all who, being humbled under his mighty hand, do feel their need of his mercy and grace. It is the poor that he filleth with good things, which the rich he sends empty away.

"Blest are the humble souls that see
Their emptiness and poverty;
Treasures of grace to them are given,
And crowns of joy laid up in heaven."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, January 1, 1879.)

OBITUARIES

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

God is calling our Little Flock at Strawberry Church home to glory, one by one. It has pleased Him to take from our midst our dear beloved sister, Janie P. Giles on April 26, 1977, making here stay here a little over 80 years. Sister Janie joined Strawberry Church November 1, 1919. She loved her church and was always faithful to fill her seat whenever she could. A devoted member

always ready to help her church, she wanted to do her part. Her love, faith, friendship and fellowship will always be remembered at Strawberry Church.

She was married to Charlie W. Giles, who preceeded her to the grave June 10, 1972. to this union was born four sons and two daughters — William T. Giles, Mooresville, N.C.; Charlie E. Giles and Nathaniel Giles of Danville, Virginia; Virginia and Luther L. Giles, Roanoke, Virginia; Mrs. Louise Suggs, Dallas, Texas; Mrs. Myrtle Ferguson, Danville, Virginia. Two sisters and four brothers, 19 grandchildren and 27 great grandchildren.

Her funeral was held at Townes Funeral Chapel by Elder's R. S. Payne, Wallace Smith, and James Hollinsworth. She was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park beside her husband beneath a mound of beautiful flowers to await the resurrection morn. Be it resolved that we bow in humble submission to His holy will, who works all things after the council of His holy will. He never makes a mistake. Sister Janie was a firm believer in salvation by grace. She lived her religion in her conversation always repeating God's promises, never ashamed to own her Lord.

Her meek and humble way, oh, how we miss her, our loss is her eternal gain.

May the Lord bless and comfort and give reconciling grace to her dear family she loved so dearly.

By order of Strawberry Church
June 4, 1977
Elder R. S. Payne, Moderator
Written by a Sister who loved her dearly,
Sister Gertie Holley

SISTER MARGIE CHERRIX WARD

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst Sister Margie Ward.

Sister Margie was born on August 8, 1907, near Snow Hill, Md. The daughter of Charles F. and Mary W. Cherrix. She passed away in the Salisbury Nursing Home, Salisbury, Maryland, on July 7, 1977, making her stay on earth sixty-nine years.

Sister Margie was united in marriage to James E. Ward on April 27, 1927. This unity was blessed by an only son, James Edward Ward, Jr. born April 26, 1939, and died April 5, 1958, in an automobile accident.

She is survived by her husband, James, and one sister Blanche Sorrells, Edinburg, Virginia. Several nieces and nephews also survive.

Funeral services were conducted at the Old School Baptist Church, Snow Hill, Maryland, on July 9, 1977, by Elder James F. Poole. Burial services were conduced at Snow Hill, Md.

Sister Margie united with the Old School Baptist Church at Snow Hill, Md., and was baptized at Schumacher Pond, Salisbury, Md., April, 1961.

This sister had been in declining health for several years. She spent the last twenty-three months in the Salisbury Nursing Home, Salisbury, Maryland.

Her husband, Jim, found recently a letter but apparently never finished of her beautiful experience. This was in the July, 1977 issue of the ***Signs of The Times.*** Those that have read this article and knew Sister Margie can surely say, I believe she related her innermost feelings and was aware of her blessings.

She loved to attend the meetings and be with her beloved brethren when she was well. Our loss of this sister is her eternal gain. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Written by request of her husband, Jim.
Betty W. Tilghman

ELIZABETH L. WILKERSON

Eighty-six years, three months, and fifteen days after Sister Elizaeth Wilkerson was born, it pleased the Lord to remove her from this low ground of sin and sorrow. She had been afflicted for several years, and spent much of this time in nursing homes. She was blessed to attend her church very little during these years, but that did not weaken her faith in her Lord and Master. I was asked by her to serve as Clerk of Kehukee Church, since they did not have an active member, which I have done to the best of my ability. I was blessed to visit her several times in the nursing home and each time she talked about how good the Lord had been to her,

and how much she had to be thankful for. It was very enjoyable to hear her tell her experience of how she believed she heard the Lord talk to her and how much it strengthened her hope.

Sister Wilkerson was born September 15, 1890, and died December 13, 1976, in the Scotland Neck Hospital.

She united with Kehukee Primitive Baptist Church By letter the third Saturday in Nov., 1952, making her a member here for 24 years.

Sister Wilkerson was first married to Willie Merritt and was blessed with a son and a daughter. Later she was married to Frank Wilkerson.

She left to mourn her passing, a daughter, Mary Lee Merritt Jones, and a son, Joseph Merritt. We of Kehukee Church extend to the family our deepest heart felt sympathy and hope they may be strengthened by remembering the faith and hope their mother had.

Done by order of Kehukee Church in conference, third Sunday in February, 1977.

Bertha Lane, Hassel Allen, Committee
Elder I. S. Conner, Moderator

ELDER EARLIE B. HUGHES

Elder Earlie B. Hughes was born May 14, 1911, and lived his entire lifetime in the Fayette Community of Geneva County, Alabama. He was married to the former Lela Mae Singletary who survives him. To this union was born three sons and two daughters. There are also eight grandchildren.

Brother Hughes joined Pilgrim's Rest Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by Elder J. A. Tew. He later joined Harmony Church in Florida and was ordained to preach the Gospel on January 11, 1964. Those officiating were Elders R. P. Hendrix and J. L. Sanders, and Deacons H. C. Shumock and E. C. Weaver.

In November, 1964, Brother Hughes and three other Primitive Baptist met at Wrights Creek Church and held a meeting and constituted a church as there was no living members of the former church. They agreed to hold meetings on the fourth sunday and Saturday before of each month.

He was a faithful member and elder in his church. He believed in salvation by Grace and that Grace is a gift of God. He fought a good fight and kept the faith and has now gone to receive his reward.

On March 28, 1977, God called Brother Hughes home. He was laid to rest in Wrights Creek Cemetery on March 29, 1977. The officiating ministers were Elder J. A. Tew and Elder B. A. Anderson.

He leaves a host of relatives and friends to mourn his departure. No tears in Heaven will be known.

Written by Fairlie Sorrells at the request of Wrights Creek Church members.

NANCY JANE COBB MASSEY

It is with a feeling of much unworthiness that I attempt to comply with the Churches request to write an obituary of a dear one in Israel.

Sister Massey was born to J. K. and Lucey Ann Cobb March 11, 1882 and departed this life April 19, 1977, making her stay here on earth 95 years and one month. She was married to brother and deacon Nathan Thomas Massey, who preceded her to the grave some 23 years. Blessed be the Lord that taketh, blessed be the Lord that gave. To this union were born; 3 daughters, Mrs. Ethel Brooks, Miss Effie Massey, and (Miss) Sister Exie Massey, 3 sons; Claude Massey, Leon Massey and Hubert Massey, and one grand-child.

She united with Bush Arbor church in the early thirties and was baptized by Elder W.C. King the second Sunday in August the same year. She loved her church and attended her meetings at often as her health permited. Her favorite hymn was "Amazing Grace".

Her funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor Elder Wallis Smith assisted by Elder Donald E. Smith. Her body was laid to rest in the Bush Arbor Church cemetery, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to wait the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus christ, there to ever be with Him and be forever satisfied.

Written by T. I. Rice as ordered in conference June 11, 1977.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 145 BURLINGTON, N.C., NOVEMBER 1977 No. 11

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION
DATE IS
11/77
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

(This poem was composed about two o'clock one morning, after being pressed in spirit to arise and pen these thoughts. I have had several requests to re-publish it.)

When the moon in all it's glory,
Cast it's brilliance o'er the earth,
Then I thought of Jesus, Saviour,
And about his humble birth.

Soon I saw him in a manager,
Glory shining all around;
By a heavenly host surrounded,
Shouting, glory to his name.

Then I saw him meek and lowly,
Walk the earth in grief and shame,
All to save poor, wretched sinners,
Who will ever praise his name.

Next he bows inside a garden:
Sweat like drops of blood flow down;
All the earth about him silent,
As he kneels upon the ground.

As he prays in solemn anguish,
For the cup to pass away;
Yet he knows that he must drink it,
To prepare the glorious way.

Then upon the scene most softly,
Came an angel dressed in white,
Touched him gently, said, look upward,
Soon the darkness will be light.

Soon the scene of darkness changes;
Darkness breaks, the light appears —
Heaven opens to receive him,
Never more to bow in tears.

He appears in heaven for sinners,
Who were purchased with his blood:
All his intercession for them
Is because his life is love.

Then dear God, may all his suffering,
Guide me on this heavenly road;
May I never, never murmur,
As I think about my God.

Though my soul is oft in sorrow,
Soon these things will pass away.
Sickness, sin and all my trials,
Will be over in that great day.

Then our garments will be spotless
As we gaze upon his face.
We will need the Moon, no never,
For the Sun will take it's place.

When his children all shall meet him
On that bright and shining shore,
Where our sorrows, pains and trials,
Will be over, ever o'er.

Soon, my brethren, we shall meet him,
May his love be all our guide,
And his grace and tender mercy,
Land us safe on Heaven's side.

Sept. 1954 D. V. Spangler

Chattaroy, Washington

Dear Editors of the Signs of the Times,

My subscription is due again and I am sending you $5.00 for another year's renewal. It has been coming to me for many years, and I don't want to give it up. My dear old father, Davis Burch, took it for many years before me. I enjoy the experience letters very much. Some are much like my own experiences.

May you be blessed to carry on many years more. I am 84 years old and one in hope of a better life and a happy home. I like that old song, #54 in D. H. Goble Hymn Book,

"I long to find some peaceful bower
Where sin hath neither place nor power."

So much trouble in this old world - "I can't feel at home in this world anymore."

A little sister in Hope,
Mrs. Blanche B. Brown

Yakima, Washington

Dear Editors,

Please find enclosed a check for $10.00, which is to be applied on a renewal of two years to my subscription to the ***Signs of the Times,*** which is listed as two for $9.00. Please use the extra dollar for the Indigent Fund.

I hope and pray that God will continue to bless you, the Editors, and all who write for the Signs to continue to write the truth as set forth in the scriptures.

We of the Pleasant Grove Church of Naches, Washington, are looking forward to the visit Elder Spangler is planning on making out West, and pray that God will work things out according to His Divine will.

Humbly, your Sister in Hope,
Marguerite C. Simpson

A LETTER BY WILLIAM HUNTINGTON

Grace, mercy, and peace be with thee, through out Lord Jesus Christ! This comes in acknowledgment of your favour to me, hoping that some spirituals have been sown, as you send to me. I hope you will occupy, and I hope you gain by trading, for 'tis heartless working when there is no profit; but this never will be the case with those who set their heart upon the truth, and trade in godliness. The hardest branch of this business is to learn our poverty, and submit to be stripped of our supposed worth and worthiness. The true riches are soon brought in, when the soul becomes poor; and the breaking in of light and life is perceptible enough, for Satan will couch behind the old vail, and shelter himself in our mind's unbelief and hardness of heart as long as he can. They that take them captive hold them fast, and refuse to let them go. But the Redeemer is strong; He pleads our cause, and takes the spoil from the strong; and in nothing does the devil strengthen and support his hold of us and his interest in us more than by labouring to sink us in despair or despondency; this is his master-piece, and our strongest bar. But plain simple truth weakens it, makes inroads upon it, and gains ground upon the will, the mind, and the affections. I should like to know how you got on. I am not in circumstances to make any other return than a share in my poor petitions, when the promised help is afforded me.

Yours most affectionately,
Cricklewood, April 24, 1806 W.H., S.S.

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I Certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete. Elder Donald E. Smith, Publisher

August 2, 1977

COMFORT

Dear Friends:

I hope I love you in the Lord. If the dear Lord will, I will write something that may comfort someone.

I have had many troubles, but there may be some of you who have suffered much more. I know that Job had many troubles, more than any of us, but he never gave up. He still said, "I know that my Redeemer lives." I know that too, but I find that I often complain.

Right now I am thankful for the many blessings the dear Lord has bestowed upon me. I have not had many afflictions of body. I have been in the hospital but one time. I am seventy-two years old.

I had a good mother who loved her friends in the Lord, and her church, and went as long as she was able. My daddy was not a member, but he walked about twenty miles sometimes to hear preaching.

I am made to look up at the quivering leaves and listen to the song of the birds, and I see the good Lord's power. There is nothing too hard for Him. He knows everything, and He is my All in all. I know that everything is in His hands. I thank Him for a place to stay, something to eat, clothes to keep me warm. I often think on how much He suffered for His people. If I am one, it makes the tears come. I hope I have been made to know and love Him by His power and goodness. I could not thank Him enough for the many blessings. I love my children and my friends in the Lord, but I long to go Home. Sometimes I am made to love everybody. But most of all, I have been made to love my dear Jesus, but so often, I do not know what I am. I am often made to cry, Dear Jesus, help me!

A sister in hope,
Rosa Page
Route 2, Elon College, N.C.

THE EVERLASTING ARM

For approximately a year I have had a deep yearning to share with the Lord's people a portion of the trials and joys experienced during an illness. I have desired to share them on several occasions with my brothers in the flesh, but I have great difficulty speaking of the wonders of the grace of God.

In the summer of 1975, while on medication for migraine headaches, I became unintentionally a victim of an overdose of drugs. Many of the events of that summer I have never been able to recall. I do remember my family being quite concerned about my welfare. I was made aware of my semi-conscious existence only when awakening to the sound of car horns under a stop light while en-route to a doctor's office with

an ill son. Incidentally, I was driving the car.

Shortly I began to seek additional help from several doctors, including a psychologist. It was he who diagnosed my drug overdose by the evident symptoms of swelling and an extreme emotional state. In recovering I experienced chills, fever, nausea, and hallucinations - drug withdrawal symptoms.

One Sunday I remember being in extreme depression and fear. I was even fearful of staying in a room alone day or night for several days. The migraine headaches became so intense that I was awakened during the night when I moved my head. In early September, I was able to get on reduced medication and slowly became a human being capable of again recalling events of a day just past.

Please bear with me while I regress to that Sunday of extreme depression. I had been shown by my dear Lord that all the advice and prescriptions of doctors could not reach my case. Prayer was my only alternative. I'm convinced I had attempted to utter words directed to my Lord on many occasions prior to this; in fact, since I was sixteen. But this Sunday I visualized as my last hope to plead mercy. I begged and pled without an audible sound for God to remove me from this life, or reconcile me to my illness. Without any apparent cure, I thought my agony and burden to my family too great to continue. Yes, I felt it best to be out of the way.

Then as I lay half asleep, an arm more powerful than any I ever felt slipped beneath my shoulders. My entire body seemed to be somewhat elevated. I could not comprehend that an unworthy person as I, was worthy of the inner peace and strength that suddenly swept over my body.

Yet, that was of short duration, and I was again filled with fears and doubts. That night I slept restlessly and was at times frightened; later it became a most precious night.

All of the truly God-inspired moments of my life seemed to float by as a vision or a dream. I was made to see my first vision anew: it was a ship with "All is Well" on its sails, while my brother, Julian Williams, was en-route to Europe during World War II. I felt the bonds of love encompass me when I initially heard the Truth of our dear Lord preached by Elder D. V. Spangler at Malmaison Church when my father, J. Floyd Williams, was critically ill. I envisioned the Sunday in June, 1963, when I was brought out of the baptismal stream by Elder O. K. Tench, when the everlasting arm of my Lord was beneath me. I was made aware, also, of the beautiful cloud formation that brought me to the realization that "it's all right" the day before my last child was born when I was forty-one years of age.

These are the outstanding memories of that one night and the flash backs of time that I cherish two years hence. The Lord revealed many evidences of His love and His presence during my year's absence from the teaching profession. The greatest and most lasting impression that lingers each day is that we cannot direct our footsteps, not can earthly physicians reach our illnesses. The all powerful arm of God is there when we least expect it, but when we need it most. He knows our needs, directs our prayers, and heals our wounds.

In Deuteronomy 33:27, we find, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms..."

Medley, in his beautiful hymn, has left us these words of comfort:

"Whatever woes and fears betide,
In thy dear bosom let me hide;
And while I pour my soul to thee,
Do thou my sanctuary be."

My intentions were to be brief. Please forgive.

An undeserving Sister,
Naomi W. Houser

TO JOSEPH PARRY

Stadhampton, April 19th, 1834

My dear Mr. Parry,–Our mutual friend, Tiptaft, informed me a few days ago of his visit to Allington and of your wish to hear from me. So dark, ignorant, and benighted is my mind, that if I were to give you a view of what is doing in the chambers of imagery, it would afford you but little pleasure or profit. The first time that I saw you, as we were standing in the church yard together, I think I observed that I knew more of the dark than of the bright side of religion, and I feel it to be so still. I cannot, like some professors, make to myself wings to soar when I please to the third heaven, nor kindle a fire and compass myself about with sparks, and then walk in the light of it. I am obliged to come to this; "Behold, He shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening." "When He hideth His face, who can behold Him?" Some of our professors here can always lay hold of the promises, and so strong is their faith, that they neither doubt nor fear; but this is a religion which I cannot come up to. And when I see that this faith of theirs is the work of man, and born of the flesh, I tell them that I would sooner have my unbelief than their faith. Not that I think unbelief and darkness good things, but this I learn from them, which few know in our day, that faith is "the gift of God"; and this, too, I know, that the feeling sense of our own helplessness and unbelief is the necessary, yea, the only preparation of the soul for the inward discovery and manifestation of Christ. We have in our day too many spiritual thieves and liars. They first get their assurance by climbing over the wall, and then "boast themselves of a false gift," which, as Solomon says, is "like clouds and wind without rain," i.e., has all the appearance of watering our souls, and then goes off without giving them a drop. From such a religion may the Lord keep us. It is better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud. It is better to sigh and mourn over a heart full of unbelief and corruption, than to take to ourselves one promise which the Lord does not apply. Many will tell us to believe, and say, "Ye are idle, ye are idle," who have never been in the iron furnace, nor sighed out of the low dungeon.

I believe, for myself, that the souls which can really and spiritually rejoice in the Lord are very few, and that their experience is very much chequered with seasons of darkness and distress. And as for that religion which tells us we must rejoice, because believers are told in the Bible to rejoice always, it savours to me too much of man's power and free-will to be of God. The religion which I want is that of the Holy Ghost. I know nothing but what He teaches me; I feel nothing but what He works in me; I believe nothing but what He shows me; I only mourn when He smites the rock; I only rejoice when He reveals the Saviour. I do not say I can rise up to all this, but this is the religion I profess, seek after, and teach; and when the blessed Spirit is not at work in me, and with me, I fall back into all the darkness, unbelief, earthliness, idleness, carelessness, infidelity, and helplessness of my Adam nature.

Religion is a supernatural and mysterious thing. It is as much hidden from us, until God reveals it, as God Himself, who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto. It is the work of the Holy Ghost from first to last; and no text is truer than this: "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." He will have mercy on whom He will have mercy, and He will have compassion on whom He will have compassion; and these favoured objects of mercy, and these alone, know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent; and

that happy soul which is thus experimentally taught of the Holy Ghost, and brought into a heavenly fellowship with the Father and the Son, will enjoy forever the Triune Jehovah, when professors, high and low, doctrinal, experimental, and practical, Calvinist and Arminian, will be cast into the blackness of darkness forever. A man thus experimentally taught will be humble and abased, will be swift to hear and slow to speak, will have a tender conscience and a godly fear, will seek rather to please God than man, and would sooner speak with God for five minutes than with a frothy professor for an hour. This religion I am seeking after, though miles and miles from it; but no other will satisfy or content me.

I cannot say I am all nearer leaving my post here than when I last wrote; indeed, whilst I am heard with acceptance, and have nothing to perform which presses on my conscience, I cannot move till I see my way. I am praying to be delivered from a carnal system, but my way out seems at present hedged up. Let me have your prayers that I may see my way clearly, and neither run before I am called out, nor stay after I hear the warning voice. I can't move just when and as I please, but must wait for the pillar and the cloud.

Give my Christian regards to _____, and believe me to be,

Yours affectionately, in Jesus Christ
J. C. Philpot

August 8, 1977
Chestertown, Md.,

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

This morning as I sat down to write, the Scripture was on my mind, and it suited my thoughts upon our meeting of the Delaware Association July 31st; Rock Springs meeting with Welsh Tract, at Newark, Delaware the first time since 1961. It was a very lovely day. The pastors present were Elders John Wood, Jack Dawsey and James Poole, preaching the Truth.

Since our last Association many changes have taken place; many loved ones gone to be with the Lord. As we looked about at the dear folks assembled there, we saw the many who were patiently awaiting God's Call. And we knew that when the Call would come, it would be answered joyously, for all who are true to the Faith handed down from God know that a perfect peace and rest awaits. This Faith is based upon the Solid Rock, which is Christ Jesus, our Lord and Saviour. The Rock of our salvation. He is the One sent from God, to redeem lost sinners, and when He died upon the cross, He cried, "It is finished." He prayed to His Heavenly Father, saying, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me, for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." And He prayed, "I pray not for the world, but for them that thou hast given me." Space will not allow further quoting, but please read the 17th Chapter of St. John. He said, "It is all finished!" And so it is. God said it. I did not, but I believe it, and He knows all them that are His. Not a one shall be lost! The Shepherd knows His sheep and they answer to His call.

A letter to the Association from Elder W. D. Griffin was read and passed around for further reading. It was good to hear from our absent brother and former Pastor. He could not be here in person, but I am sure he was here in Spirit.

Elder Dawsey spoke humbly and sweetly from the 42nd Chapter of Isaiah, 13-16th verses. It was my first time to hear him speak and I did enjoy his message. Looking forward to hearing him again in October, the Lord willing. Elder Wood used the 40th Psalm for his message and it was a joy to hear him speaking of God's mercy

and love, in lifting up fallen man from the depths to which he has sunk, beyond hope of redemption, except by the Mercy and Grace of our Father in Heaven. He raises us up and puts our feet upon a solid foundation, the Rock of our Salvation. Seems like we always return to that Rock!

Elder Poole used various scripture, the basic one being Mark 16:1-3. Each scripture used pointed to the same Author and Finisher of our Faith. The words of Ezekiel 36:26 proclaimed the salvation and redemption of the children of God, as did Isaiah 62:10. Matthew 28:2, and Luke 23:52 refer to the burial of Christ, and the risen Christ. But the real subject was the rolling away of the great stone. It produced a very real picture in my mind as he unfolded its present day significance. The women, as they approached the sepulcher, were concerned about how they would roll away the stone. But they found it was already rolled away. They could see the empty tomb and knew Christ was gone. Only when He revealed Himself did they know He was the risen Christ. But when He did, they instantly believed. No doubts at all. Today, so many in unbelief, do not see beyond the stone. They fail to see or believe that the tomb is empty, that He is indeed arisen and lives. The believer knows He lives, because He lives within their hearts. The great stone of unbelief has never been rolled away for the unbeliever; it still lies before the tomb. The true born again Child of God is glad, and oh, so thankful that it has been rolled away, and to see the empty tomb. Positive proof that Christ is risen! Praise the Lord!

The thought this morning, as I noted the date, was on the passing of time. How quickly it goes. I think of how near the return of Christ must be. We all note the passing of years in a natural way, and we are aware that our time here, in nature, is growing short. We have all had periods when we have felt His nearness, but in His great mercy He has spared us and told us, "Wait a little while, my Child, carry on a little longer, and I will come for you." He gives us a little more time and each time He seems to have grown nearer and dearer to me. This world is filled with God's beauties and benefits in nature. Some beyond description. But think of how beautiful Heaven must be! What I am longing to see first of all is the blessed redeemer, Jesus Christ, face to face. To behold Him in all His beauty! All else will be secondary.

My precious brethren, I am always so happy, and my heart overflows with Joy in the Lord, because He blesses me to meet with you all now and then, in sweet love and fellowship. It can only be "sweet" because the Lord is in it. It's not of man, and I give all Praise and Glory to God. He it was that reached down when I felt to be so lost and seeking to find the way, and lifted me up, putting my feet upon the Solid Rock which is Christ Jesus, and pointed the Way to Eternal Life with Him. That was 30 years ago, and each day, as I get nearer Home, it grows sweeter and sweeter, and my Jesus grown dearer and dearer.

My life here is a happy, contented one as far as is possible in a natural way. My seven children and their mates have always been a great blessing to me. The dear Lord took care of that. My many grandchildren and great-grandchildren are very dear to me. But even so, as I get glimpses of the Glory of Heaven now and then, it makes me long to be where my Lord is waiting.

My dear Dad once told me before he passed to be with the Lord, "We are all a small part of God's machinery here on earth. Each of us has a particular part in His plan and purpose, and when that purpose is served, He will call us Home." It's a lovely thought, but it's beyond my poor mind to picture one, as small as I am, being a special part of any plan of

His. But I guess it could be! Every bolt has to have a nut, and even the tiniest spring in a watch can keep it from working. Did not out Lord say even Satan served God's purpose here on earth? It may not be in the Bible, but I'm sure it's true, because our Lord can use anything and everything to further His will. Think of Joseph! He told his brothers, "Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good."

I would like to go on telling of the Love of God and all it means to me, but space prevents it. I had not meant to write so much, but the Lord seems to be right here at my shoulder and He speaks sweetly to me. I do love Him so much and, praise God, He loves me. How do I know? The Bible tells me so.

I want to mention, although I am sure it isn't necessary, the tables were laden with all kinds of natural food provided by all who came from our down-shore folks, as well as near-by folks. All who meet with us anywhere know how acceptable natural food is, but for me the spiritual food was most important and a vital necessity.

In Christ,
Sister Ruth Lucht

PRINCIPLES OF GRACE

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?

Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?

For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.
(Romans 11:33-36).

Paul, the greatest mind in the history of the Church, and for that matter the history of the world, was overwhelmed in the wisdom of Divine purpose in the writing of these verses. He was taught to see the folly of human wisdom. He was reminded again and again of man's frailty and lack of absolute freedom and determination. God had placed within Paul's breast a persistent reminder of man's impotence and that man (unlike his maker in whom there are no unconscious activities and hidden potentialities) is largely governed by them. He saw that God was absolute, the first cause, the one who declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure (Isa. 46:10). And I would remind the reader from Isaiah's text (Vs. 9-11) that not only did the Lord declare the "end from the beginning" but does in fact execute that counsel even to the calling of a ravenous bird from the East, or a man from a far country as the effectual instrument of that counsel.

My counsel shall stand: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass, I have purposed it, I will also do it.

And so you see, my brethren, that when a poor benighted soul is ***awakened*** to the eternal I AM, ***awakened*** to the everlasting Jehovah Jesus with whom we have to do, ***awakened*** to a felt realization and need, ***awakened*** I say to what we are in Adam; then, there will be something deposited in him, a principle of life, a motive, a pre (but ***living***) supposition, a distinct doctrine, especially regarding God and the Bible, that cannot be found in the life of the carnal mind.

At the writing of this text (Rom. 11:33-36), Paul could see it, he felt it, he embraced it, and he confessed the ignorance of the flesh and the incomprehensive nature and work of God.

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

Paul, the apostle, confessed openly this mighty God. Confessed him I say in such a way (through the medium of a letter) that all the world throughout all ages would know the frailty of the flesh and wisdom of God. And yet there are those who will perhaps read this letter, who are ashamed to confess the Lord openly and before the public and in the personal world wherein God by providence has placed them. Ashamed to acknowledge (in the local community through the given mode of baptism) what this holy man acknowledged for the world to see.

For those of you who are ashamed of our mighty God, we know the reason. Paul gave it to us. See II Cor. 4:2 and until our friends (so called) renounce the hidden things of dishonesty, it behooves the Church to hold them at "arms length."

Divine truth separates the living family of God from the family of Satan. Moreover, the truth will separate the "living ones" from the "whitewashed" professor. The "quickened" from the "nominal." And it is these truths that will manifest wherein one's loyalty lies. These truths when put to the "acid test" will determine the "riches" or "poverty" of heart.

Ye know a man's heart is fastened on "things" above or "things" below. And I marvel at the winnowing nature of the truth regarding the heart. The doctrine, like the dew or rain, will fall and penetrate the heart, softening and loosening that which is not "rooted" and " grounded." And if the loyalty of the heart is in ***anything*** other than God and ***truth,*** it will rise and ultimately be swept away in the floods of judgment.

The truth when deposited in the heart creates a love for God and truth. It is said of those to whom this "love of the truth" is given that they have been translated from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light, and that God hath commanded the light to shine out of darkness into the face of Jesus Christ (Col. 1:13, II Cor. 4:6). The sinner becomes God conscious. Awakened. Made alive. A God-ward motion springs up in the heart and it is recorded of that sinner, "you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins."—Eph. 2:1.

"Long my imprisoned spirit lay
Fastbound in sin and natures night;
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray,
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart was free;
I rose, went forth and followed thee."
—C. Wesley

The manifestation of the truth is evidenced by the laying down of the old life in the figure of baptism (Rom. 6:3,4), (II Cor. 5:17), (I John 3:16), the mortification of the flesh (Rom. 8:13), effectual sanctification (Rom. 8:14), a following on to know the Lord (Hos. 6:3). Moreover, it is the conviction of this writer that the truth and the various branches are the secrets that God will judge in Christ (Rom. 2:16). Every man's work is tried by fire to determine what sort it is (I Cor. 3:13) and if "your works" be "your works" then O what loss. But if "your works" be "God's works" (Phil. 2:13) then O what joy and bliss.

"When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace all sufficient shall be thy supply;
The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design,
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine." — G. Keith

For convenience sake, I will refer to these secrets as ***principles of grace*** and I shall endeavor to show that such principles are manifested in the life of a believer and from time to time they are blessed to shine as bright as the noon day sun. These principles are absent in the life of some men and they are left in a state of darkness and abject poverty. As the scripture says, their foolish heart was darkened.

As these doctrines are found in the

heart of the believer and quite frankly very pronounced at times, even so the absence of truth is very pronounced in the unbeliever and especially the spurious believer, or religious pharisee whose loyalty is to a "religious system," a denominational heritage and practice, antiquity and traditions, rather than to God and truth. Spurious converts who in knowing God glorify Him not as God neither are thankful; but become vain in their imaginations, and consequently the foolish heart is darkened, professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man. The inspired writer said they changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the creator and as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, ***God gave them over to a reprobate mind,*** to do those things which are not convenient. See Romans 1:21-28.

Religion is a serious and dreadful undertaking. And if one does not have grace and charity in he heart, he will inevitable fall foul and err in practice and doctrine. To enforce the weight of this thought, I remind the reader to consider the story of Hymenaeus and Philetus who are mentioned by Paul in II Timothy, Chapter two. Also Judas, who betrayed "the innocent blood" (Matt. 17:4, 5). On the other hand, a person who holds them or rather is held of them, and is of sound mind and intelligently honest and consistent, will be led to confess that salvation is of the Lord (Jonah 2:9).

I know of no better place where these principles appear together than in Paul's outburst of praise and adoration in the last four verses of Romans, chapter eleven. These grand truths and foundations of Christendom appear as the wisdom and power of God.

Firstly, that God is the author of everything that comes to pass. For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: (vs. 36). Now I beg the reader to go and find out what are the "all things."

Can these "all things" be a reflection of the sovereignty of God? If you take God seriously, would you not perceive that He is the first cause of all things to whom be glory for ever?

The prophet Isaiah said, under divine inspiration, that God formed the light, and created darkness; "I make peace and create evil: I the Lord do all these thins." — Isaiah 45:7.

Paul in speaking of the revelation of divine mystery said that God worked "all things" after the counsel of His own will (Eph. 1:11). Again, "all things" work together for good to them who love God, to them who are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28). Now the reciprocal of this verse is also truth. For we know that "all things" work together for the bad of those who are not called, etc., etc.

Whatever the arrangements of God toward the saint or sinner, "all things" are of God.

Notwithstanding the depth of Paul's theology, there are men today who profess faith in God but deny that God is the author of everything that comes to pass. Or worse yet, they propogate that "all things" are contingent upon the will of the creature.

Evidently these "professors" have a deeper school of theology that that of the inspired apostle Paul, or else there is the absence of this first principle of truth in their heart.

Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools (Romans 1:22).

Secondly, another principle of grace is that man can have no knowledge of God and His ways except through Divine revelation.

"For who hath known the mind of the Lord?" (Verse 34).

Paul makes a convincing argument of this principle in I Corinthians, chapter two. The reader will note in that chapter

that Paul said, "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him." (Verse 11).

I ask the reader, can one know the mind of his neighbor if the neighbor chooses not to reveal himself? That is precisely what Paul is saying. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God. But God hath revealed them unto us by His spirit. For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. And our Lord, in the offering of prayer said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou (God) hast hid these things from the ***wise*** and ***prudent,*** (the professor of faith, the nominal believer) and hast ***revealed*** them unto ***babes*** (the little believer). And no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and ***he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."***

Ah my brethren, I say on the authority of the book and I trust in the power of Christ that one's knowledge of God is contingent on the grace of God. As sinners, we are entirely dependent on Sovereign Grace for the knowledge of Diving truth. We have no other plea. Who among sinners is able to ascend into heaven, the mount of God (that is to bring Christ down from above:) or, who shall descent into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) Who is able? Who among us can force Christ the Eternal Son to reveal the Father?

"My heart is leaning on the word,
The living word of God,
Salvation by my saviour's name,
Salvation thro' His blood.
I need no other argument,
I need no other plea,
It is enough that Jesus died,
And that He died for me." — L. H. Edmunds.

Thirdly, God owes no obligation to man, and man has no rightful claim on God (verse 35).

Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? (Verse 35).

I've heard and witnessed the religious hucksters in this country (evangelists so-called) say that if you the sinner got on your knees and said the sinner's prayer (Luke 18:10-14) that the most high God of heaven and earth was ***obligated*** to that sinner.

Can you imagine the most high God in an obligatory state? Such anemic reasoning as that on the part of an evangelist is not worthy of refutation.

Me thinks to myself that a one-cell ameba has greater reasoning powers.

Under the experience of grace, the sinner will inevitably learn this principle of truth and grace. God will "burn" the standing corn of the sinner(Judges 15:4, 5) so as to make room for the "good seed" (Matt. 13:8) that it might be called "the planting of the Lord."

Under the experience of Divine grace, the sinner will learn of his demerit before God, not only will God burn the field but also the barn and storehouses. All works of flesh will be burned. The sinner will be stripped of his self-righteousness, his cloak, his friends; yea, even his loved ones may forsake him and like Isaiah, he will lament, "woe is me! for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts." — Isa. 6:5.

In Isaiah's text, you might note that when he saw the Lord, the "posts" of the temple were "shaken" and "moved." Even so, when the poor sinner sees the Lord God of Sabaoth and feels that his sins are exceedingly sinful, the "posts" in the heart will tremble and quake, and he will cry, "woe is me."

When Elijah ***heard*** the voice (I Kings 19:13), he wrapped his face in his mantle so as to hide himself. Elijah "sensed"

God's glory and "felt" his own utter depravity and demerit.

When Moses heard the voice from the burning bush, he was afraid and hid his face (Ex. 3:6). Moses, I say, hid his face. If a man of Moses character and esteem, a man to whom the oracles of God were committed, "felt" to hide himself, how much more should we depraved wretches feel our dependence upon God and that we have no rightful claim on Him? The Lord is under no obligation to man, but rather hath concluded us all in unbelief. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God, there is none righteous, no not ***one*** (Romans 3:10), there is none that doeth good, no, not ***one*** (Romans 3:12).

If there were one righteous man in all the earth, a man of merit and esteem who could approach God on the grounds of self-righteousness, then God would be obligated. But since ***all*** are concluded in unbelief, God is under no constraint nor obligation to man.

Therefore, those who would kick and butt and rail against the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty, let every mouth be stopped.

Fourthly, another principle of grace reigning in the heart is that the supreme and ultimate purpose of "all things" is the glory of God. (verse 36).

For ***of Him,*** and ***through Him,*** and ***to Him,*** are "all things": to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

Isn't that a bit strange? The word "all things" seems to appear again and again in the text. Incidentally, have you found out what the "all things" are as propounded in the introductory remarks of my paper?

In discussing this doctrine with one, the remark was made my him that "he believed that whatsoever God ***purposed*** came to pass."

I agreed and responded, "whatsoever comes to pass, God purposed."

Can you name one thing that has come to pass or is coming to pass, or shall come to pass that God did not purpose?

I feel to offer a word of caution here however when one is condsidering the "absoluteness" of God. And that caution is to consider the work of God in the context and language of Paul's last seven words of verse 36.

"To whom be glory for ever. Amen."

If one does not consider the "glory of God" as the supreme purpose of "all things;" then, the sinner will inevitable offer violence to the "guilt-ridden" conscience of the creature and destroy the liberty or contingency of second causes rather than establish them.

But for those of you who would accuse me of going off on the "deep-end" and tag me as a Hyper-Calvinist, let me say now and forever more, "I's rather be in the ***deep end*** of an ocean of Sovereign Grace whose everlasting arms are underneath than to ***splash about*** in the mud puddles of human responsibility."

The language of Paul is that whatsoever ye do, do all to the ***glory of God*** (I Cor. 10:31). Man's chief end is to glorify God. And I verily believe that when the doctrines of God are realized and manifested in the world to come, that man and all the arrangements of human events will have been so "fixed" so as to reflect the glory and image of God. Salvation as well as damnation will reflect this glory. The one will magnify the attribute of Divine Mercy, the other Divine Justice, to wit, the scales of God will be perfectly balanced and the one will compliment the other.

The arrangements are so "fixed" ***for of Him,*** and ***through Him,*** and ***to Him,*** are "all things," in this world and the world to come. Amen.

In hope of the Gospel,
Jack H. Dawsey

Dear Editors,

Enclosed you will find an article I wrote, after feeling impressed to write

about two dreams I had recently. If you think them worthy of publishing, you have my permission to use them, and if not please throw them away.

Last night I finished reading the ***Signs,*** (June issue) and really enjoyed it. Everyone of the writers were blessed to write the things we love to hear, giving all the praise, honor, and glory to God, to whom it all belongs, and explaining the Scriptures in such a beautiful way, it was food for the soul. I believe His ministers are the ones He gave the five talents to in Matthew 25, and the talents are the precious treasures He gives you, revelations, dreams, and visions, and you will hear Him say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant". You are often tired, weary, and don't feel physically able to go, but God gives you strength, desire, wisdom, and puts words in your mouth to praise Him and feed His children. We feel thankful to God for you all. He has really been good to His little ones.

Gladys Page

"WE HAVE GOOD THINGS TOO"

Praise the Lord O my soul for all the good things He has given us. As unbelievable as it seems I can witness with David, (if not deceived) in some of his experiences. The 23rd Psalm has been precious food to my soul, especially the 3rd verse; He restoreth my soul. I feel that is what He did for me. Psalm 40:2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a Rock and established my goings. 3rd verse, And He has put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." He also lifted me up out of what I felt was a horrible pit and filled me with praises to His Holy name, to whom all the praise, honor and glory belong.

It is my desire to write and tell the elect family of God what He has done for us; words that will be to His praise, and a comfort to his little ones. Of myself I can do nothing but through Him I can do all things. Also, I feel it is my duty to share the wonderful dreams He has given me, one who is nothing but a failure, the vilest of sinners.

On Friday, May 13th, 1977, we heard about another one of our dear members at Bush Arbor, being dead. It seemed that everything we heard was bad news. That night, feeling grieved, and worried about several other things, also my sins, weakness, and failures; feeling I has sinned against my God, and my little hope seemed almost gone. I felt so undone, I cried and asked the Lord to give me courage. Finally I fell asleep and I dreamed a little girl came to me; I don't know who she was, but believe she represented the Church of God. She told me that she too had doubts, fears, and anxieties; (I could witness with her when she said this). But, she said, "we have good things, too". I felt my spirit revive in my breast and rejoiced, I could witness the good things with her, too. Then I heard a voice say with authority, "The war of the mind is over". My burden was gone when I awoke and I felt so calm and peaceful; felt the Lord would take care of all my problems, and He has; some of them already.

The following Monday night, I dreamed one of our neighbors and I were in our yard, as we started to go inside, I looked at the trees, they were the prettiest I had ever seen. After telling my neighbor to look at that pretty scenery, I looked up at the sky and saw Jesus in a white cloud. What a beautiful sight! For a long time I had longed to see Him, and I saw Him plainly for just a moment. What a wonderful God we have to show us these precious things, and turn our mourning to joy.

The good things have been on my mind a lot, since my dreams, and I will mention a few of them, if it's the Lord's will.

The greatest of these is the love of God for His little childen; so great that He

gave His only Son to die for them, (and I hope I'm included).

He gave us a little hope that we are His, and some day will take us to dwell with Him on High, and be forever satisfied.

He sends His Ministers to preach and write words of comfort to his children.

He gives us meeting houses to attend on Sunday, to hear the gospel preached, and meet with our people of like faith, which is indeed a joy and privilege.

He gives us our dear families, friends, homes, food clothing and everything we need. The list seems endless.

Little Children of God, when you feel down and out, may we all be blessed to think of the good things that we have, (they will out weigh the bad) thank God for them, and praise Him from whom all blessings flow.

Humgly Submitted In Bonds Of Love,
Gladys Page

Some harbours have bars of sand which lie across the entrance and prohibit the access of ships at low water. There is a bar, not of sand, but of adamantine rock, the bar of Divine Justice, which lies between a sinner and heaven. Christ's righteousness is the high-water that carries a believing sinner over this bar, and transmits him safe to the land of eternal rest. Our own righteousness is the low-water, which will fail us in our greatest need, and will ever leave us short of the heavenly Cannan.

Toplady

By postal law publications being mailed by second class postage are required to submit circulation and management information yearly to the postal authorities and print the same in their periodical. You will find this in the front part of this issue.

Probably very few of our subscribers had any idea of the amount of our paid circulation, and knew not if it was great or small. To some the amount may be more than they thought, and to others, much less. This number has been more or less the same for several years. When the subscription list fell off and appeals went out our people were very good to respond. For this we are thankful.

On simple investigation it may be seen that the number of subscriptions we have will not even pay for our printing costs. Were it not for the generosity of so many of you we would long ago have reached the crisis stage.

At this time, since our tables are laid bare before you, may we earnestly seek your continued support. We especially appeal to our Elders to get new subscriptions in your respective areas, and to our other subscribers to try and see if they can find at least ONE OR MORE new subscriptions.

We have the oldest and one of the finest magazines among the Old School Primitive Baptists. For over one hundred forty-five years we have found comfort and solace in its pages, and that to the glory of God. By His grace it will continue.

One other area in which our people can help is to send in good material for publication. News from our churches scattered abroad is always refreshing and informative.

Hoping to hear from you, we remain, hopefully, your servants.

The Editors

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Union Primitive Baptist Church at Floyd County, Va., a presbytery met July 30, 1977, at 10:50 A.M., for the examination of Brother Larry Hollandsworth, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, to ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of the gospel ministry.

The solemnity was begun with song and prayer by Brother Larry Hollandsworth, discourse following. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders Amos I. Hash, Leonard Key, Kenneth Key, Lane Carter, Denver Simpson, Roy Agee, N.F. Conner, Rufus Brown, Hale Terry, Raymond Goad, and Donald E. Smith.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Hale Terry as Moderator, and Elder

Donald E. Smith as Clerk. Elder Kenneth Key and Lane Carter were chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Elder Hale Terry, having been duly appointed by Union Church in conference July 30, 1977, as spokesman for the church, delivered Brother Larry Hollandsworth to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder Kenneth Key using scripture reference Tit. 1:4-9, and Elder Lane Carter I. Tim. 3:1-2. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Denver Simpson. Elder Amos I. Hash delivered the charge to the candidate. Scripture references for the solemn Bible charge was I. Pet. 5:1-3, with Elder Leonard Key in conjunction with Elder Hash.

The Clerk asked Elder Hale Terry, spokesman, if the church approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to Elder Larry Hollandsworth and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained Elder was delivered back to the church as an ordained minister of the Old School, Primitive Baptist Church at Union Primitive Baptist Church, Floyd County, Virginia.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Raymond Goad.

Elder Hale Terry, Moderator

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Mrs. Pattie Everett, N.C.	1.00
Lucille McGee, Wash.	9.00
Beatrice E. Hocking, N.Y.	5.00
Elder W. L. Everett, N.C.	1.00
Mrs. C. C. Rudd, N.C.	1.00
Mrs. W.R. Pennington, Ala.	1.00
Welsh Tract Church	500.00

(We acknowledge the gift from Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Del., of $500.00 with sincere thankfulness and gratitude. We are glad to hear of your newest member. We think of Sarah, who in her old age yet yielding fruit of the Lord at 90 years old. Gen. 17:15-21. D.E.S.)

God? What of the poor working people who go in debt hundreds of dollars to "give the kiddies Santa". All the while lying to them by saying Santa is the giver of good gifts (if you will be a good little Arminian) when James 1:17 teaches the opposite.

Our sensible readers, however, have seen much of the folly and would admit that "commercialism" has taken over Christmas. To that I would say, "Let commercialism have it, I don't want any part of it". Several years ago a professing church woman told me that she was making an effort to put Christ back in Christmas. To which I replied, "I never knew He was in it to begin with." Needless to say, she cooled on me soon. More recently, in speaking with an acquaintance, the subject of Christmas came up and when I commented that our family had never celebrated the birth of Christ on December 25th as such, the man became incensed and terribly upset, remarking, "You're a weird man. Everyone is entitled to a birthday, even Jesus". Away he went, shaking his head. I tell this to set forth a point. The man was and is exceeding wicked and does not even profess to believe in Christ. To him, Christmas is like New Year's day and Halloween - a time to make merry. Brethren, be not unequally yoked. (II Cor. 6:14-17) Abstain from all appearance of evil. (I Thes. 5:22) You think that because you do not enter into the grosser forms of this pagan festival that it will be alright? You may say that the spirit of Christmas to you is to get together with the family and exchange a few simple gifts and nothing more. Curious that you would select December 25th to do this. However, let me move on to another consideration.

Second consideration - the first day of the week is of Bible origin, whereas Christmas is not. Ample proof of this can be supplied, but let the following suffice, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." (Acts 20:7) No one can prove that the first day is the only day we may gather to worship. On the contrary, every day is the Lord's day and we may and do call upon Him in Grace at any time. Even though, in the Apostolic pattern, the disciples came together weekly, (more often in the first church in Jerusalem) ***and the time was for the family of God to remember the Lord's death in the breaking of bread.*** (This is very likely a reference to the Lord's Supper.) The elect family of God, chosen, called out, are not to follow the way of the world but to meet in a holy love feast - a true family reunion, unlike any that the family of man ever engaged in. What a blessed thought, that we have a spiritual family to meet with and to exchange our gifts with. Not worldly trinkets bought from a list of those who gave to you last year, but gifts such as love, joy, exortation, prayer, helps, governments, teaching, and others which freely we have received by Grace, and freely we give to our spiritual family by that same Grace. (I Cor. 12:28-31) "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhoreth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness." Romans 12:6-8 Dearest family of the Lamb of God, this December 25th, how will it be with you? Will you want to, as many will, call off the church meeting so you can get together with the family of man?

Or will you rather, under the sweet influence of God's Spirit, wish to meet with the bloodwashed family under the banner of love? To those, drawn under

the sweet influence of a Saviour's love, there is no choice. Nor will there by any reluctance to tell our earthly families that we are to "Seek first the Kingdom of God" and be found in that Holy convocation when they meet to worship.

Let Santa Claus have his admirers as Dagon and Ashdod did in Old Testament times. ***To the believer, Christ must have the pre-eminence.*** Saints of God have been taught by the Spirit of Holiness that they can not have respect to these so called man made, money motivated, Satan directed, religious days, but rather do they say:

Peace be within this sacred place,
And joy a constant guest!
With holy gifts and heavenly grace,
Be her attendants blest!

My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life or breath remains;
There my best friends, my kindred dwell,
There God my Saviour reigns.

In conclusion, may you be stirred to ask yourself, "Where will I find my ***best friends and kindred*** on December 25, 1977? With a desire to offend none of the House of Faith, but stir up their pure minds, I remain,

Your humble servant,
J. F. Poole

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ABLE TO STAND BUT LIABLE TO FALL

(By Elder H. M. Curry in 1895)

The Proposition that Adam was able to stand but liable to fall, came first to my ears from Methodists and New School Baptists. The expression sounded puerile and illogical to me then, and sounds so yet. To me the phrase is meaningless; but grant it a meaning, and it arrays itself against the whole tenor of Bible Truth, and all facts of human experience, as exemplified in the universal history of the human race. Such sayings and phrases as this became current through lack of thoughtful investigation. I invite the reader's attention to the following discussion of this trite expression; and if, after impartially considering this matter, he should still be of the opion that "Adam was able to stand, but liable to fall," his position will be more clearly defined in his own mind, and perhaps entitled to more credit from those of contrary belief.

Let us now proceed to consider some of the ***a priori*** arguments. First, God had a purpose in man on the earth. When faith beholds the works of God in creation it sees nothing in vain; the domestic beast of burden, the ravenous beast of prey, the wholesome grape, the deadly upas, the useful iron, the seducing gold, the wholesome food, and the destructive poison, all answer some useful end, some wise purpose, some intelligent design of the mind that created them. Shall we confess this, and then say that man, the climax of the natural creation, was created without a purpose or design, either for time for eternity by the God of all wisdom? Did God create man, and turn him loose in the world to ruin himself and all his posterity, to thwart God's will and destroy all his pleasure?

The first purpose of God in placing man upon the earth was that he should multiply and replenish it. God made the earth not in vain; he made it to be inhabited. — Bible. If Adam was able to stand, he was able to defeat God's purpose in this; for had he stood, there is no ground to believe that the earth would ever have been inhabited; for, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (John 12:24) These words of Jesus set forth a universal fact in nature, a deep and

comprehensive truth. The same truth may be stated in these words: Without death there is no reproduction. In the vegetable world seed must die before they germinate and reproduce their kind. The same principle, although not so plainly exhibited, extends into the animal world. The animal organism embodies both animal and vegetable life mysteriously combined, and the power of reproduction, growth and repair lies in the vegetable life. The multiplication of the human race did not begin until death passed upon the man; so from this it is seen that if Adam was able to stand, he was able to render the creation of the world in vain.

But grant that the multiplication would have gone on without the fall, what would have been done with the people who would have come into the world by this time? The garden of Eden would have been full to overflowing against this time. There would have been a continually increasing stream of humanity pouring into the world, and none going out. What would be done with them? Upon what would they subsist? Where would they stay? What would be their occupation?

Again, suppose Adam had stood, then each of his posterity would have been subjected to the same probation. Each one able to stand, but liable to fall. Some, doubtless would have succumbed to this liability to fall, and would have fallen, while some would have demonstrated their ability to stand, by standing. The human race would then be divided by death, some dying, and some living here forever. What a state of confusion this would be. Instead of the wisdom of the Creator being exemplified in the harmony of his creation, it would be impeached by this monstrous, unnatural, impossible discord.

It was doubtless God's purpose that the earth's resources should be developed, as exemplified in the various lines of human industry, enterprise and progress. The one essential element of human character upon which all industrial enterprise depends is the love of money. This is declared in the Scriptures to be the root of all evil. This root of all evil, then, is the prime impetus in all human progress, advancement and improvement. Without it new countries never would have been discovered, explored and settled; cities would never have been built; civilization would never have developed; the arts and sciences would have remained unknown; there would be no such thing as social or political society, no commerce, no trade, no improvements, no progress, no luxuries, no conveniences; in fact men would all be savages. The fall of Adam enters into the very foundation of all the essential elements of the qualification of men to inhabit the earth. All the lust of the eye and pride of life are essentially necessary to building up human society, either social, political or religious.

Again, the world in its present condition is either as God intended it should be, or it is not. If it is not as God intended, then God's intention has gotten from under his control. There are only three positions to be taken with regard to the first man: God either purposed that he should fall, or purposed that he should not fall, or else had no purpose at all in the matter. If he purposed that he should not fall, but remain sinless forever, then the earth is peopled with an entirely different race of beings from what God intended; everything has gone contrary to God's purpose. If one man could reverse the purpose of God, and change the whole world, both for time and eternity, of what account is God's purpose? Where is any ground of hope of salvation either for time or eternity through the purpose of the same God? Where are our obligations to call him God, or worship him as such? Where is his right to call himself God,

and claim our confidence, reverence and praise? To say that God purposed him to stand, but that man fell, is to plunge into the darkest, blankest, most hopeless fatalism. If we say that God had no purpose one way or the other, then what do we mean by talking of God's purpose? If we say that God purposed the fall, then there is no conflict between God's purpose and the existing state of affairs. We can then look upon the word "purpose" as meaning something; and when we talk of God being a God of purpose our speech harmonizes; and when we speak of his purpose of grace we can do so with just reverence and holy confidence.

Again, God purposed that man should be removed from the earth by death. "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." One may say these words were spoken after man sinned. True enough; but did they come into the mind of God after man sinned? This is the utterance of a decree; but is the decree no older than its utterance? If God did not intend in the creation that man should return to dust, why did he create him from dust? Why did he not make him of some other material? But the very fact that He made him of dust shows that the decree, "Unto dust shalf thou return," was in the mind of the Creator when He made him. "It is appointed unto men once to die." — Bible. Death, then is an appointment. Who made the appointment? God made it. Has God any appointments now that he did not have from eternity?

Let us now turn to God's purpose of grace in Christ. All the provisions of grace for the salvation of the people were made in Christ before the foundation of the world. If Adam had stood, what would have become of the purpose of grace? When we say he was able to stand, we say that he was able to defeat God's purpose in Christ. It is declared in the Scriptures that Christ was foreordained before the foundation of the world. Foreordained to what? To die. To die for whom? For men who might not need it — for a man who was able to stand? If Christ was foreordained to die, and Adam was the figure of Christ, is it not plain that Adam was included in the same decree of death? When Christ died He was delivered to death by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; not by the provisional counsel, as a remedy provided to meet an emergency; not by his permissive counsel, as one permitted to be slain for the sins of others. There is no mention in the Scriptures of a Permissive Counsel, but Determinate Counsel. Then, if Adam was included in God's counsel at all, he was in his determinate counsel. The creation of Adam was in God's counsel, for He said, "Let us make man." God's dealings with the man after he was made were in his counsel, for He placed him in a certain environment, with certain restrictions upon his liberties.

One may say that God knew that Adam would fall, and provided the remedy before the calamity came. To admit God's foreknowledge of the event is to yield the point that he was made to stand, for how was he able to stand if God knew that he would fall? The proposition is incompatible with foreknowledge. It is argured by some that God knew that he would, but he did not fall by God's decree. By whose decree did he fall? If God foreknew the man would fall, the event was certain, inevitable and could in no wise fail to come to pass. Now, what made the event certain? What rendered it inevitable? What brought it to pass? One says that God's foreknowledge of an event does not necessitate its coming to pass. If God's knowledge does not, what does? "Who is he that bringeth to pass when the Lord commands it not?" (see Lam. 3:-37) Either God's decree makes the event certain, as foreknown, or it is purely a matter of total necessity.

If Adam was able to stand, how long was he able to stand, against what was he able to stand, and wherein consisted his ability to stand? Was he able to stand forever? Was he able to stand under all circumstances? If we answer yes to these questions, then his ability to stand consisted in his infinite perfection, for nothing short of infinite perfection could stand forever under all circumstances. If he was infinitely perfect, to enable him thus to stand, wherein lay his ability to fall? Ability to stand and liability to fall cannot exist at the same time in the same creature; for where liability to fall sets in, absolute ability to stand ends. ***Ability to stand, in this expression, must be absolute or it cannot be considered, for if it is not absolute it must be relative, and relative ability to stand is entirely swallowed up in liability to fall.***

Let us now pass to the ***posteiori*** arguments. The fall itself is evidence that the man could not stand. Had he not fallen he would thereby have demonstrated his ability to stand; but he fell, and consequently he demonstrated his inability to stand.

The transmission of his sin to his posterity is conclusive argument against his ability to stand. The total, inherent, hereditary depravity of the human race is essentially and inseparably connected with this subject. Cavil as we may about predestination in Adam's case, it shows itself in all his progeny. They are all born sinners, grow up sinners, and die sinners, without exception or remedy. What then has fixed the universal, unalterable, irrevocable reign of sin and death? Is it fixed by God, or does it come by fate? Is it the provision of infinite wisdom, or is it through the lucky intervention of some work of chance? Did God, either in ignorance or knowingly, leave the issue of life and death of unborn millions to the uncertain will of one man? If God did not know the consequence when he created man, then he is ignorant and stupid, and is no God. If he knew the consequence, and yet created the man, and gave him power to ruin his unborn progeny in sin, death and eternal destruction, knowing certainly that he would do it, is he not a strange kind of God? Is not such a course more like that of a madman than like that of an allwise God? Which is the greater display of wisdom, righteousness, justice and judgment, for God to leave the issues of life and death of an unborn world to the caprices of one man's will, or to fix all by his own infinite will and wisdom? Which would faith choose as a source of consolation, that the wellbeing of a world was left to one man, and he ruined it, or that God held the issues in his own eternal grasp?

The great stumbling-stone in the way of most minds is the trite, meaningless expression that this would make God the author of sin. But is it not taught in the Scriptures that God visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children? Where is there any human code of practice or standard of justice but what would pronounce that unjust, wicked and cruel? Visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children of the third and fourth generations. Punish the child for the crime of its grandfather, a crime committed before the child was born, or even before its parents were born. If we are going to impeach God by human standards we must impeach him here, and declare him wicked, unjust and cruel; and renounce his name, and abandon his worship. But again, Jesus said that the blood of all prophets, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zacharias, that perished between the temple and the altar, shall be required of this generation. Where is the justice, from a human standpoint, in requiring all the righteous blood that had been shed for four thousand years, of that generation? Such destruction as had not been since the world began was sent upon that

generation of men, women and helpless children, and God did it. Then, upon this point of God being unjust if he does so and so, let the words of inspiration stop every mouth, and silence every tongue.

The law in its nature, design and effect enters into this discussion. Many minds are misled by their wrong notion of the law. The law was not given for men to keep. It entered that the offense might abound. They say that God would not have commanded Adam not to eat if he intended that he should eat. How do they know what God would have done? By what or by whom do they judge? How could man transgress without a commandment? It required the commandment to answer the purpose. It is argued that God's decreeing the fall of Adam would destroy man's accountability. Would it be and worse, from their own standards of judging, to hold Adam responsible for what he was purposed to do, than to hold a babe born in the nineteenth century responsible for Adam's transgression by fixing upon it the sin committed by another six thousands years before it was born? The doctrine of hereditary total depravity will not harmonize with the proposition that Adam was able to stand.

Lastly, I shall call in the testimony of Christian experience. Can a Christian live without sin? We regard those persons who hold and teach that a man can live without sin as deluded, fanatical heretics. If the Christian, who is born of God, washed in the blood of Christ, justified, sanctified, and led by the Spirit of God, cannot live without sin, how can the natural man live without sin? Adam in his creation was a natural man, of the earth. earthy. He had natural capacities, fleshly qualifications, propensities and desires; ***then how could this man in nature be expected to do what the most gifted saint cannot do?***

Elder H.M. Curry

There is sometimes on trees and flowers what florists call a false blossom; how many such do we see in the world of professing Christians!

Toplady

If I build a house, it is ten thousand to one if I do not afterwards find it defective in some respect or other: there is continually something to add, or something to alter, and something that may be improved for the better. If I write a book, I find it imperfect. Some errata of the printer, some defects in the language, something to add, or something to retrench. So it is with all human works. The work of Christ's righteousness and redemption is the only finished, the only perfect work that ever was wrought among men. God gave me faith in it!

Toplady

OBITUARIES

BROTHER WILLIE S. RUDD

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. We saw the evidence of faith, hope and charity in the walk of our precious Brother Willie Rudd, who was born in Caswell County, North Carolina on December 26, 1911, and having spent many of his 65 years as a successful businessman in Mebane, North Carolina.

He proved his love with his time and talent and many other ways, for the Church at Bush Arbor, where he came home to his friends in May, 1960, and remained a loyal and faithful member unto death.

Our Brother departed this world to be with his Lord, May 13, 1977, leaving a precious and faithful companion for more than 41 years, to mourn her loss with a lonely heart: Sister Edna Kembro Rudd and a lovely foster daughter, Mrs. Kay Langler, sisters Mrs. Fannie Ribelin, Sister Lessie Clayton, Sister Betty McKenney, Mrs. Ethel Dabbs, Brothers Robert, Nathaniel, Columbus and

Thomas Rudd. May the gracious Heavenly Father continue his richest blessings upon these precious ones.

Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Brother Rudd's funeral was conducted at his beloved Bush Arbor by his pastor, Elder Wallis Smith. His body was laid to rest that peaceful rest in the church cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

Approved by the Church at Bush Arbor on June 11, 1977.

Clifton Robertson
Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Brother Earl Rudd, Clerk

MEMORIAL

INASMUCH as it pleased Almighty God to remove by death two of our very highly esteemed members of Hopewell Church within the past year, to wit: Sister Ruth Duit and Sister Beulah Kimbro; and

WHEREAS, we deeply feel the great loss of these sisters and with sadness of heart, we must bow in humble submission to God's will.

BE IT RESOLVED, that we encouch their brief obituaries in this MEMORIAL.

RUTH DUIT (March 4, 1895 — December 23, 1976). Sister Duit became a member of Hopewell Church, September 13, 1975, at the age of 80 although she was a faithful attendant at church long before this time, and was able to attend church up until two months before her death. She had a great love for the truth and for all the brethren. She often contributed to the welfare of needy persons even though many of them were complete strangers to her. She was the personification of love and she communicated that love to everyone she met especially to the Household of faith. Her death came at 6:30 p.m. in a Winnsboro nursing home just as a group started singing a religious hymn. Her husband preceeded her in death in 1968. Until two months before her death she lived with her daughter and son-in-law, Elder and Mrs. Joe L. Hamrick. She leaves one son, one daughter, five grand-children, and three great-grandchildren. Her funeral was conducted by Elders E. J. Lambert and W.W. Fleet. Her remains were laid to rest at Hopewell.

BEULAH KIMBRO (May 27, 1892 - February 26, 1977). In January 1910 she married Henry Kimbro who preceeded her in death June 1960. There were no children born to this union. Aunt Beulah joined the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church October 1, 1950 and was baptized by Elder E. J. Lambert. She was blessed with a good singing voice and a love to sing. She could often be heard singing hymns while alone in her home. Rock of Ages was one of her favorites. She lived on the same farm she and her husband bought for over fifty years. She dearly loved to attend church and rejoiced in the precious truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Her suffering at times seemed more than she could bear but she never murmured nor complained, bearing it all with that same faith and patience that marked her christian life. Many times she said she was ready to go and often longed for that sweet rest that is not disturbed by pain. Her death came February 25, 1977 in a Winnsboro nursing home where she had lived her last eleven months. Her funeral was conducted in the Winnsboro Funeral Home by Elder E. J. Lambert and Dalton Graves. Burial was in Hopewell Cemetery.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this memorial be filed with Hopewell Church records and one copy be sent to the ***Signs of the Times*** for publication.

The above ordered written by Hopewell Church in its regular conference June 11, 1977.

Elder Joe L. Hamrick, Moderator
Audrey R. Hamrick, Clerk

GEORGE F. MARINER

It was God's pleasure to cease the earthly life of a dear brother, George F. Mariner, on March 21, 1977, at the age of 87. He was a member of Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church. His parents were the late Mr. & Mrs. William Mariner. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Myrtle Mariner, a son, Vincent Mariner, a daughter, Dolie Hastings, four grandsons, one granddaughter, twelve great grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews. His funeral was held in Snow Hill Church, conducted by his pastor, Elder James Poole.

Brother Mariner rode to church with us quite often and it was such pleasure to hear him reveal his innermost feelings. He loved salvation by grace and told us many times, "When I die, if you can't get an Old Baptist preacher, just bury me." God's humble poor cannot compromise, there being no substitute for the truth. He related with Paul, "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

May it be a comfort to his family, to his brethren, and to his friends, knowing he was given a firm belief in an all powerful God. May it humble us to know that this is according to God's holy plan and a step closer to Jesus.

With humble love,
Sister Audrey Davis

SISTER BESSIE TUCKER

God moves in mysterious ways, His wonders to perform and we are made to wonder of His hand-i-work. He does all things well, even when He called our beloved sister Bessie Tucker to unite with the Primitive Baptist Church at Hickory Grove in 1959. She was a devoted and faithful member as long as she was able to attend. Sister Tucker was born May 11, 1898 and died on January 23, 1977, making her stay on earth some over 79 years.

Sister Bessie was married to Marvin L. Tucker, who passed on several years ago. She is survived by two sisters, Mrs. Della Stewart and Mrs. Lillie Bell Wood; one son, Hassie, with whom she made her home as long as she lived. Also surviving are several grand children and great grand children. Her funeral was conducted at Rose Funeral Home Chapel, Benson, North Carolina. Officiating was her Pastor, Elder W.D. Godwin and Elder C. D. Turner. She was laid to rest in the family cemetery near her home beneath a mound of beautiful flowers to await the morning of resurrection when Jesus comes to gather His children home.

In as much as God saw fit to remove her from our midst, may we be blessed to bow in humble submission to His will and gave thanks of witnessed reflection of our blessed Saviour.

Be it resolved, that a copy be sent to the ***Signs of the Times*** for publication, one be placed in Hickory Grove Church records and one be given to her family.

This day being June 30, 1977.

Moderator: Elder W. D. Godwin

Committee: Gertrude Royal
Leacy M. Beasley
Kathaleen McLamb

A. G. BURNETT

It is with much fear that we try to write an obituary for A. G. "Jack" Burnett, at the request of Old Mountain Church.

A. G. "Jack" Burnett, age 69, of the Dry Fork Community, died January 22, 1977, in Memorial Hospital after a short illness. He was a native of Pittsylvania County and a son of the late John Pratt Burnett, and Mary Elizabeth Farthing Burnett. He married the former Alma M. Scearce on June 9, 1928. Mr. Burnett spent most of his life in the Dry Fork area, and was engaged in farming until his retirement in 1967. He was of the Primitive Baptist faith.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by two sons, A. G., Jr., of Franklin Turnpike, and Bobby P., Dry Fork; one daughter, Mrs. Deane B. Doss, of Atlanta, Georgia; one sister, Miss Lessie Burnett, Dry Fork, and four grandchildren.

The funeral was held at Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Home Chapel, January 24, 1977, by Elder H. W. Wray and Elder O. K. Tench, and Elder Wallace Smith. His body was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to wait the second coming of his Lord and Savious Jesus Christ.

Jack was highly esteemed by all who knew him, and in his community he was looked on as a leader. He had the love and respect of Old Mountain and other churches in the Association, as well as other associations. Although his name was not written on the church book, we have a hope his name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

We feel sure that each one could have called him Brother, for in Matthew 7:20, "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." Jack did indeed bear good fruits, and related beautiful experiences. In a dream he saw a little lamb following behind, and in a measure he felt to be that little Lamb.

Written Ballard and Sarah Barker

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 145 BURLINGTON, N.C., DECEMBER 1977 No. 12

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12/77
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

THE KITE
or
Pride Must Have A Fall

Once on a time a paper kite
Was mounted to a wond'rous height,
Where, giddy with its elevation,
It thus express'd self-admiration:

"See how yon crowds of gazing people
Admire my flight above the steeple:
How would they wonder if they knew
All that a kite like me can do!

Were I but free, I'd take a flight,
And pierce the clouds beyond their sight;
But, ah! like a poor pris'ner bound,
My string confines me near the ground:

I'd brave the eagle's towering wing,
Might I but fly without a string."
It tugg'd and pull'd, while thus it spoke,
To break the string:--at last it broke.

Depriv'd at once of all its stay,
In vain it tried to soar away;
Unable its own weight to bear,
It flutter'd downward through the air;

Unable its own course to guide,
The winds soon plung'd it in the tide.
Ah! foolish kite, thou hadst no wing,
How couldst thou fly without a string?

My heart replied, "O Lord, I see
How much this kite resembles me!
Forgetful that by thee I stand,
Impatient of thy ruling hand;

How oft I've wish'd to break the lines
Thy wisdom for my lot assigns?
How oft indulg'd a vain desire,
For something more or something higher?

(And, but for grace and love divine,
A fall thus dreadful had been mine.")

John Newton (Author, "Amazing Grace")

Troy, Alabama

Dear Editors,

Please find check for $9.00 enclosed. This will keep your great paper, ***The Signs of the Times*** coming. My husband passed away in 1970, and we both always enjoyed reading it.

It was a great pleasure to have Elder and Sister Spangler and Elder and Sister Lambert in our home. I was so sorry to hear that Sister Lambert has gone on. I shall look forward to entertaining others, also.

I am looking forward to reading every line you print in this next issue.

Yours respectfully,
Mrs. Milton C. Carter

WORD FROM TEXAS

Kleberg, Texas

Dear Editors of the Signs of the Times,

I am writing to renew my ***Signs*** for two years. I am sending a check for $9.00.

I enjoy it so much when I am feeling bad. It always helps me to have it to give a boost to life. I am a lonely one living alone, and the ***Signs*** is always a welcome visitor in my home. I usually read most of it the first day.

Bertha Carter

Kitty Hawk, N.C.

Dear Editors,

Enclosed is a check for two years subscription to the ***Signs***. Please use the balance to help to distribute the ***Signs.*** My receiving the ***Signs*** is just one in that steady stream of innumerable blessings I have received all the days of my unprofitable life. Each time I open the mail box and see the ***Signs,*** I receive a warm feeling. Oh what a great merciful God we have, dear Brethren. Without that worthiness in and of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, none would exist that I might receive of His blessings. Therefore, except I have a worthiness thru Him, outer darkness would surely be my continual stay here in this life.

In as much as be in accord with Thy will, O God, continue enabling the dear Editors of the ***Signs*** to publish only those truths as are good in Thy sight. AMEN

Troy G. Shepard

A LETTER BY MR. HUNTINGTON

The epistle of my sister is come safe, and now lies before me. It is, according to the prophet Habakkak, a song of various things, sung in various tunes.

Your days have been sorrow, and your travail grief. Call this time of adversity Gad, for there is a troop behind; or call them the beginning of sorrows, for unbelief will often tell you that there will be no end of them. Satan is a skilful adversary; he can alter both his appearance and his influence. While I lay in the dark regions of the shadow of death, under the arrests of divine justice, and filled with fury and the rebukes of my God, he worked constantly upon the hardness of my heart, the carnal enmity of my mind, and on that soul-destroying sin of unbelief, in which I was shut up. He took occasion to multiply his accusations, by the sins which stood before my eyes, the burden of guilt which I felt, and the wrath of the law which worked in me. And I know that this was the devil and the works of him; but after my deliverance had been proclaimed, my calling made clear, and my election sure, he came to me again, so altered in appearance, in language, and in influence, that I really did not know my old acquaintance. He came not now in his sable garb, but in his shining robe; not to attend my funeral to hell and the grave, but as a friend at my wedding; not to accuse, but to give me counsel; not to drive, but to draw; not to sink me into despair, but to lift me up to the wind, and make me ride upon it; not to reproach me, but to praise; not to tell me what an awful rebel I had been, but what a saint I then was. Satan had changed his voice.

And surely among them that are born of woman there had not appeared a greater wonder than Parson Sack. I, not in the least suspecting this strange visitor to be one of the king of Babylon's ambassadors, was pleased with his coming as much as Hezekiah was, and showed him all my precious things; for he came not with heavy tidings, but with smooth things; not as a destroyer, but as a builder up. He treated of the goodness and safety of my state, of the height of divine favour in which I stood, and of my certain arrival at the desired haven. From this he descended to the small number of God's elect; very small, when compared to the world at large. And as he preached, so he endeavoured to apply the doctrine. He worked his bottle-screw into my natural affections, and made my bowels sound. He set before me all my little ones, and my dame, and influenced every tender feeling I had. My compassion, earnest desires, etc., etc., began to rise up and flow out at such a rate, just as Milton describes the lust of Adam and Eve working in them, after they had eaten the forbidden fruit, till they conceived it was now divinity springing up within them. And so I thought that my heart was filled with grace. Having worked

me up to the highest pitch of natural affection for my wife and children, he then left the old hen and chickens, and led my mind abroad to my friends and relations; then to my old acquaintance; next to many tender-hearted, pitiful, and well-meaning people that I knew in the world. And still my heart enlarged, and as he presented them to view, so I took them in. Then he came to the nations at large; still my heart opened and extended as he brought them to bear upon my mind. Then the poor heathens were presented to my view, until my bowels sounded like a harp, not only for Moah, but for all these. And then the irrevocable decrees of God were set before me, just as they are set forth by the Arminians. And next the devils were presented to me as objects of my pity. And this last imagery discovered the cheat. Satan could no longer be hid; and I remembered his former fiery darts, and soon was delivered from the snare of the fowler. However, this was of use to me in the ministry; ***for from that time I knew most assuredly who it was that instructed, furnished, equipped, and sent out the whole heard of Arminian teachers; for sure I am that it is the devil transformed that supplies them all.***

Some time after this he paid me another visit, similar to the last. At that time I was in the ministry; he came now as a parson-maker, to instruct me how to proceed in the important work. And that was, to draw no lines between saints and sinners; to make no applications; to enforce no marks, evidences, love-tokens, or sure tokens; to insist upon no criterions, characteristics, infallible proofs, signs, or touchstones; and then I should give no offence, nor should I raise any bars of prejudice against me, nor have any stigma upon my character; my usefulness would be extensive, and my reputation a sweet savour to all. I should endeavour to cast my net so as to take in all that came within the walls of my meeting, and endeavor to win all to love me; and those who love a believer are passed from death to life. This plan I intended to adopt; but when I was in the work, the fire of Zeal, of love, fervour, holy fear, boldness, and fortitude, flowed into me; so that instead of crying a confederacy, I became a divider and scatterer wherever I went. The hypocrite hissed, and the honest soul felt the energy; and soon God led me to see this stratagem of the devil; and I learnt this lesson by it, that of all the workmen of God, and of all the works of God under heaven, except the death of Christ, a minister of the Spirit and the Holy Ghost's work on the souls of men are the greatest enemies to Satan. ***He has no objection to external reformation, if there be no internal regeneration.*** It is the Holy Spirit that casts out the strong man armed, takes away his armour wherein he trusted, spoils his house, and takes the prey from the mighty. Having escaped this snare, throught the good hand of my God upon me, he paid me one more visit in his counterfeit rags; at which time he set before me all the real and imaginary evils and dangers that would attend me in the perilous work of the ministry; the oppositions from the world, from heretics and hypocrites; the hunger, cold, and nakedness, that I was exposed to; the treachery of pretended friends; the difficult work of getting to be clear in the greatest mysteries of religion, and of escaping all errors; the danger of my life by the way and of death at the end in a hundred forms; together with the uncertainty of the Lord's presence, aid, and support, which he argued from the sad desertions which had lately befallen me. He then showed me my own safety, the goodness of my state, and the happiness which would occur if I withdrew to some lonely place, and kept all the dealings of God with me locked up in my own breast. But this not succeeding, he soon made good his predictions; for there was not a tool, falsely called a gospel

minister, in town or country, but what was barking, biting, warning, or cautioning people against me. And this has continued, without intermission, for twenty-four years and upwards; and I shall think it an ill omen should it cease, which I am in no fear or danger of, seeing the devil has stocked the nation with so many novices whom he puffs up with pride, till they fall under the same sentence that fell upon him.

The bowels of compassion and the inordinate affection that you felt for your sick child, and the rebellion against God that attended it, you may safely conclude, were the effects of a visit from this transformed devil. For God is as well able to regenerate a child as a man; and can perform that good work in the last moment now, as well as in the thief upon the cross. "His hand is not shortened." Besides, you have no scripture to prohibit or forbid your praying for your child, nor yet for the life of the child, supposing you conclude with, "Not my will, but thine be done." And if we cannot say this from the heart, then we can pray for submission that we may do it. David fasted, cried, and prayed all day and all night long for his child, though God by His prophet had declared it should die. He prayed even against the revealed will of God. But your prayer would have been according to His will. This is plain, because the child is restored to you again, even without being prayed for. God will have us at His feet; and it is not a little crossing and trying that will bring us there and keep us there. To be stripped of all comfort, and to be laid in irons for a whole year, and this attended with intolerable hardness of heart; to be left free among the dead and be given up to the influence of a sleepy devil, who shall give you a dose of his opium under every prayer that is put up and under every sermon that is preached; this, this will be worse than all the afflictions that have befallen little Isaac. So I conclude, and so you shall confess. Call it one more secret from the locks of Samson.

W. Huntington

Towaco, New Jersey

Dear Brother Poole and family,

It is the Lord's day today. What a great blessing that the Lord has set a day apart that we may rest from our labors and go to His house and hear His Word. That it may be like David, "O how love I Thy law, it is my meditation all the day." Even on the Lord's day at night we must say, "My soul cleaveth unto the dust. Quicken thou me according to thy word." The world takes such a big part of our life; sometimes I am afraid my whole life. We have to come to such a low state before there is a need for deliverance and when He works that need, then the Lord is also ready to help us. O what a dissimilarity. It is to our shame! But it shall also be to His praise. We shall never be able to say that we sought after God. And because He sought after us there is hope that one day we will be delivered and brought there where He is Who has bought us with His blood.

Here we are only strangers in a strange land. Oh, that the Lord may give us grace to stay strangers. How is the gold become dim. How is the most fine gold changed. Instead of seeking His communion, we seek after the money god, after the god of entertainment. There is nothing left but shame. That we may go to Him, shamefaced! There He shall remember His covenant - covenant security (that is better than Social Security). "Trust in Him at all times, ye people, pour out your heart before Him. God is a Refuge for us. Selah

I hope that you may experience this often, and your family. I hope you are all in good health. Please give our regards to our friends. We are all doing good. We hope to hear from you soon. We hope

that God may bless you and your people, and I just read on the bottom of your last letter, "Pray for us." May I make the same request. We need this so much - His intercession, but also prayer for each other.

Leonard VanWingerden

(This communication is from a precious one who is a member of the Dutch Reformed Church in New Jersey. They have visited our meetings in the Salisbury area and stayed in our home. While we could find points to differ on had we wished, we were able to talk of that free and everlasting grace, and our lovely Redeemer.

We would be delighted to have more such letters to print in the ***Signs.*** Letters free of flatteries and praise of men are refreshing and most welcome. May we be blessed with more of the praise of our God, for this, I believe, is what our subscribers really want to read. The Editors)

Durham, N.C.

Dear Editors,

For the past few months I have received two subscriptions each month of the ***Signs,*** the old issue expiring 5/77, and the new 5/79. Please correct this error in mailing out the next issues.

Sometimes I lend my copies out to my son, so now would be a good time to subscribe for his own. Therefore, I am sending a check for a 2 year subscription as a gift to him. In that way it will pay for the extra copies I received and he will then enjoy his own collection. His cancellation will be the same as my own. His mailing address is Mr. Charles R. Stewart, Route 6, Box 204, Durham, N.C., 27703.

Seems the reading matter gets better every year, but then I read through the old issues, they are as sweet to me as the new. Nothing changes when the truth is written. As God is unchanging, I hope the Word preached to our people is never changed as I have seen and heard among some who have drifted away from the Truth. One, who is a member of our church, moved to a distant state, and related the request of a man and wife acquaintance of hers, that they hunger to hear the Truth preached to them again, as they know it. All around, all they hear has been "watered down" to suit the evil modernism trend of following after the wants of the people instead of the needs of the Truth set forth by God.

Therefore, I feel to be blessed of God when I receive from the ***Signs*** words of comfort for my soul and a witness to what I feel to be the true word of God. Even though the allotment given me is small, it is sufficient.

May the Lord continue to bless you to write the words of truth to those who have been given an ear to hear and a heart to understand.

Novaline Stewart

Mobile, Alabama

Dear Editors,

Please renew my subscription to the ***Signs*** for another year. The enclosed check is to cover same, and use the balance as you see fit. The ***Signs*** is the most wonderful paper. May the good Lord be with all you editors, all ways, and in all things.

Yours truly,
James D. Randolph

Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Dear Editors of The ***Signs of the Times,***

Please enter my subscription to The ***Signs of the Times.*** I am enclosing my check for $7.00. It has been several years since my subscription expired, and I find myself longing to receive the ***Signs*** again.

A sinner in Hope,
Louise Clowdus

Montreat, North Carolina

Dear Elder Spangler,

I wish to start a new subscription to this address. I have been a follower of the ***Signs of the Times*** for a couple of years and now find myself at school in North Carolina, with no one in my immediate contact who takes the ***Signs.*** My hope is that God will continue to bless according to His will.

Yours in a hope through Christ,
Mark Jackson

(It was a particular delight to see this new subscription. I can remember so well the lovely meetings we held each Thursday evening in the home of Mark's parents, Dr. and Mrs. Tom Jackson, in Rome, Georgia. Mark and his brothers and sister were small children then and the Jackson family had moved to Georgia to begin medical practice. The scripture comes to mind to "train up a child....". (Prov. 22:6) So often a portion of the word of God may appear to be admonition in its beginning and yet prove to be a sweet and fulfilled promise. Our hope is that we see a realization of this here. J.F.P.)

Williamston, N.C.

Dear Editors,

Enclosed find a check for $15.00 to renew my subscription for two more years. Use the balance as you see fit. I enjoy the ***Signs*** so much I don't want to miss a copy.

With love for Christ's sake.

A little sister in hope,
Miss Kate E. Philpott

Route 6, Box 577
Austin, Texas 78737

Dear Brethren,

It has been some time since visiting you brethren in my home state of North Carolina. I have lived in Texas since 1953. We now live near Austin, Texas, and know of no Old Baptist in the area. Anyone who may know of a church in the area please write to me.

Enclosed is a check for two more years of the ***Signs.*** Also, I am sending a piece I wrote one morning before work.

May the Lord bless the Editors, writers, and children of God in sound doctrine and practice. We desire no new ways. May we be blessed by and in the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Unworthy,
Earl W. Hall

It has been said that God had a purpose in an event or action of an individual. The word or letter "a" is singular and means one. To say that God had a (one) purpose in an event leads you to think that the rest of the event was of another purpose or by chance. Instead of God having a purpose in man, or an event performed by man, man is in the purpose of God, (yes, the whole man-body, soul, spirit, every action, or thing, visible, invisible, in the past, present, and future). The will of God, predestination of all things, and the purpose of God fills the universe. No man or no thing can get in or get out of the all-powerful will and purpose of God.

Some people look at the doctrine of Predestination of all things as an old tune that is true, but has caused trouble and divisions among churches. Some will readily admit the truth of the doctrine, then prefer to change the subject. I do not believe that the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things, or any other true doctrine, has caused the true church any trouble. The ones who rejected sound doctrine in unbelief and darkness divided the churches. The truth shall set you free. One that is free is at peace. Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Our hope is in Him, and He is in us. May He lead us in the way of truth as it is in Christ Jesus. May we dwell with Him in eternal life.

I feel that our brethren are sound in doctrine. Each of us express our belief

with a limited use of English words that are inadequate to declare the greatness of God. My light is no more or no less than has pleased the Lord. What has been said is in hope of love and peace and according to my belief. I will close with this quote that is true and has no beginning or end and is perfect. (Rev. 19:6)
"Alleluia: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."

In brotherly love,
Earl W. Hall

Copper Hill, Virginia

Dear Elder Poole,

You will find enclosed a copy of a letter written by my late husband, Elder B. Odell Thompson, to Sister Ada Bartlett, of Maine. She was the afflicted daughter of the late Brother and Sister Sanford Bartlett. The letter was written in either 1964 or 1965.

If you consider it worthy of space in the ***Signs,*** I would be very grateful if you would have it published.

Yours in a sweet hope,
Gaye A. Thompson

Sister Ada Bartlett,

By your request I will make the effort to pen down some thoughts on the book of Ruth. In Chapter 1:1 we note that there was a famine in the land of Bethleham-Judah. First we must consider that God was at the helm bringing to pass a desired seed. Just as it was in God's purpose in Israel going down into Egypt, that He might display his love and mercy to the Isrealites and his power to the Egyptians. Next we would like to quote Jer. 48:11. "Moab has been at ease from his youth, and he has settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity; therefore his taste remained in him, and scent is not changed."

Now let us examine the scriptures and we will find that the people that God loved has been perplexed with infirmities such as recorded in Hebrews 11:36-37; and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings.

Yes, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, and tormented.

So according to Paul's experience and those of God's children that had gone on before they have been emptied from vessel to vessel and could not rest in their own strength, but are brought as David of old Ps. 116:3-4. The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell got hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.

Then called I upon the name of the Lord: O Lord I beseech thee, deliver my soul. We hope to get back to David later. So we must conclude that it was in the providence of God that Elimelech went to sojourn in the land of Moab. Let us consider that God has a people in every kindred and tongue and people and nation, so it seems that God had at least one of his children in the land of Moab.

O but what a mysterious way to us it was in bringing Ruth out of the land of her nativity into the land of Judah. As we remember that Naomi had two sons and they took them wives of the women of Moab, to wit, Orpah and Ruth. So in a space of time they both lost their husbands.

It seemed to Naomi that she had lost all she had, but at this point Naomi heard that God had visited his people in giving them bread, in the land of Judah. She said unto her daughters-in-law, "Return to your Mothers." Then she kissed them and they lifted up their voices and wept. It seems that both wanted to go with Naomi to her people.

And again they lifted up their voices and wept, and Orpah kissed her Mother-in-law, but Ruth clave unto her, and said to her, "Intreat me not to leave thee or return from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people and thy God shall be my God." But yet she did not know how dear Naomi's people would be to her.

So they journeyed to Bethlehem and they said, "Is not this Naomi? and she said, Call me not Naomi. Call me Mara for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full and the Lord hath brought me home again, empty; why then call me Naomi, seeing the Lord hath testified against me and the Almighty hath afflicted me?" Those people knew that Naomi had a husband and two sons; now she was back with only a daughter-in-law.

But we can see in the providence of our God; tho Naomi being brought home empty and afflicted the purpose of the almighty was being manifested that Ruth the Moabitess came to Bethlehem. She was much loved by Boaz and was received graciously by the rich and the laborers.

Boaz told her not to go into another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens: And after he spoke so kindly to her, she fell on her face and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, "Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger? But Boaz had heard of her faithfulness toward her Mother-in-law, and had left her Mother and the land of her nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knowest not heretofore. The Lord recompence thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust." Ruth said, "Thou hast comforted me and hast spoken kindly to thy handmaid."

She was bidden at mealtime to partake of the bread and of the food very kindly. Boaz, also, spoke to the young men to allow her to glean in the field and let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her. Therefore we can see, in the record, many types that I will not now take space to mention. Ruth took what she had gleaned to her Mother-in-law. She asked her where she had gleaned and she answered, "The man's name with whom I wrought today is Boaz." You will please note in Ruth 2:20 Naomi said, "Blessed be he of the Lord, and also the man is near of kin unto us." One of our next kinsman. We can see in Chapters one and two that there was a love which existed between Boaz and Ruth. Boaz took Ruth to be his wife. And she bore him a son, he was named Obed: And he is the father of Jessie, the father of David: so we can see that Ruth was the great-grandmother of David. David became a king and a very noted man. But the most outstanding experience in his life was that the Spirit of the Lord came upon him (I Samuel 16:13). God did so wonderfully bless David. But David had some sore trials along the way. We can know according to his testimony in (I Samuel 27:1). And David said in his heart, "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul."

We may consider the life of David and we will find that he was brought through much tribulation. I feel sure he could say with Job, 'tho he slay me yet will I trust him,' also with Jonah 2:4, "Then I said I am cast out of thy sight, yet I will look again toward thy holy temple." Also Isaiah 33:21, "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our law giver, He will save us." We find in Zech. 12:10 and 13:1, He speaks of a day that there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanliness.

Now let us go to Matt. 1:1, the book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son

of David the son of Abraham. We may go also to Matt. 1:13 and read the remainder of the chapter and also the second chapter. We will find just why He left the shining courts of heaven and came into this sin cursed earth to make an offering. This offering was not to man but to God for man. For those that God had given grace in his Son before the world began.

The prophet Isaiah spoke of things to come as though they were. He says in Isa. 53:5, but he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

Paul speaking of the patriarchs of old in the 11th chapter of Hebrews, 13:14; These all died in faith, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. See 2nd Peter 3:13; we according to his promise look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

We poor worms of the dust that have this hope through grace can say with one of his servants, "What is man that thou are mindful of him?"

We are as the poet in his expressions:

Nothing in my hand I bring!
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me Saviour or I die!

According to history Abraham's day was around 1900 years before the birth of the child Jesus. Yet, Jesus said in John 8:56, Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. All of God's children, before Christ came, were looking forward to that day that was mentioned so many times by the prophets.

In Zech. 14:8 it is said, "In that day that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea; in summer and in winter shall it be."

So we can see, plainly, that for those before him, the Christ, the son of Abraham, was their Saviour the same as ours.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
(Elder) B. O. Thompson

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FLOWERY AND FRUITFUL PREACHING

Dear Brother, -- May mercy and peace be with you, and the God of all comfort support and bless you.

Yours I received, and can truly say that I was glad to read the contents of your letter. It appears that God is keeping you in a low place, emptying and stripping you of self, and endearing His blessed sovereignty to your soul. It is a great blessing to be kept a poor pauper upon mercy's store; for there is no want of blessings treasured up in Christ for poor beggars that have no where else to depend on; and never one yet was sent empty away. Bless His Dear Name, He never did nor ever will despise the sighings of the needy; He will, in His own time and way, lift the poor out of the dust, and the beggar from off the dunghill, and set him amongst the princes of His people. Bless His Dear Name, He has done this both for you and me many times; yes, and will do it again. But, my dear friend, you and I must not expect to have the sweets without the bitters, the day without the night, prosperity without adversity, healing without wounds, clothing without stripping, feeding without famishing, singing without groaning, shouting victory without fighting, having sips of heaven without pangs of hell. My dear friend, God has set these one against another, that we should find nothing after us to glory in; but "let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord"; and the Lord be praised that we can say at times, "God forbid

that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;" yea, we can exclaim with David, "Not unto me, not unto me, but unto thy name be glory, for thy truth and mercy's sake".

But it is trying work to flesh and blood when the Word of God is a sealed book; when the heavens are as brass, and the fountains of the great deep of fallen nature are working and boiling up in the heart, like a pot, with all manner of evil too base to hint at. My dear friend, I have known what it has been, scores of times, to go into the pulpit believing in my very heart that God would make it manifest that I was nothing but an apostate, and have been obliged to stammer out my misery as well as I could, and determined that if I could but get through this time, I would give it all up, and never preach more; and I have gone home staggering and reeling to and fro in my soul, and at my wits end, thinking that I should never be made a blessing to one soul, and was quite sure that the people were sick at heart both of me and my preaching; for I was confident that it was nothing but the same thing over and over again and again; and my very soul has roared out like a bear bereaved of her whelps, till I have determined that I would give up preaching, and go into some way of business to get my bread. Then I have cried again unto the Lord with my soul, that He would show me what to do, and have many times had nothing but this answer--"He that has set his hand to the plough, and looks back, is not fit for the kingdom". This has brought me down to His feet like a child, to beg of Him that, if He had sent me into His vineyard, He would be so kind as to furnish me with every blessing that I stood in need of; and that my poor blind eyes might be opened that I might see wonderful things out of the book of His law, and go before the people like a good steward of the manifold grace of God, and feed them with wisdom and understanding. Here I have cried, groaned, and wrestled by the hour; and at length the dear Lord has been pleased to speak a word of peace, saying, "It shall be given thee in the same hour. Thou needest fear not; for I am with thee. Be not dismayed; for I am thy God". This has set all right for a time; and then I have been encouraged to read and pray over the dear Word of God, and hoped and expected that the dear Lord would lead me into some mysterious part of God's Word, that I might come up before the people with some precious new things which they had never heard or seen before. But, alas! when Saturday has come, I have been in the old spot again; instead of having any new things, I have been as dark as a dungeon, as hard as a nether millstone, as stupid as a mule, as unfruitful as a barren heath, as rebellious and peevish as the devil; the Bible has appeared full of nothing but inconsistency, trumpery, and lies; and religion has altogether seemed nothing but an empty bubble of confusion.

Ah! my dear brother, this is hard work. But God will bring down high looks; and the loftiness of man shall be bowed down. God has brought me down hundreds of times till I could only just whisper out of the dust, and has made me willing to be anything or nothing, and to feel quite willing, if it would add to His honour and glory, to stand up before the people, and be dumb; and say, Amen to it. Here I have found solid peace and quietness in the Lord, feeling that if He opens, it is well; and if He shuts, it is well. He is, I find, and see, and feel at these times,

"Too wise to err;
Too good to be unkind".

At these times, I have found the Lord to be with me in a precious manner; not giving me, as my flesh has wanted it, a deal of fine flowery things to tickle the ear; but solid, weighty experimental truth, with Divine anointing attending

it, and proving as nails fastened by the Master of assemblies in a sure place; and I have then proved, by soul-experience, that the Kingdom of God is not in word, but in power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.

My dear friend and brother, I have been so shocked before now with great preachers, when I have heard the glorious, grand, and precious things which they have brought forward, and have then compared my poor stammering with their preaching, that I have blushed and been ashamed like a thief, and not known where to hide my head, and whispered, "Can I ever have the face to attempt to stand up again?" I have really thought that it would be the greatest presumption even for me to try again. But what is all this? A pack of pride and fleshly trumpery. My dear friend, "God's thoughts are not our thoughts". What we call little things, God owns as great things. What do the children of God want? Is it flowery speech? No. Some of them come to the house of God with their heads hanging down like bulrushes, fearing that they never knew the Lord aright for themselves. Others come bowed down with the corruptions of their hearts, believing in their very souls that they have not one grain of grace in their hearts more than the devil has. Others come so stupid, dead, and barren, that they can neither pray nor desire to pray, and firmly believe that they are totally dead and plucked up by the roots. Others come with the fiery darts of the devil flying through their poor souls, and all manner of blasphemous thoughts against the Holy Trinity, especially against the Holy Ghost; they fear that it's all over with them, and that they can have no forgiveness, neither in this world, nor in the world to come. Others come that are shut up in the dungeon of darkness, with only groans and sighs: "Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thee; according to the greatness of thy power, preserve thou those that are appointed to die". Others come so bowed down with providential trials that they are afraid they never can hold on their way. My dear brother, what sort of preaching will do for these poor dear souls? They must have the stumbling-blocks taken out of the way, and the standard lifted up, with the Divine power and unction of the Holy Ghost attending it. And who is he that can take up these stumbling-blocks out of the way of God's people? The man that God has thrust out into His vineyard, and that has known and proved these stumbling-blocks in his own soul from day to day and year after year, and keeps proving by happy experience how the Lord takes them up out of his way; and as he proves and feels the goodness and mercy of a covenant God, in helping, comforting, and delivering, so he comes forth with it, and testifies that he cannot but speak of the things he has handled and felt. God owns such preaching, and ever will own it. Paul declares, "We comfort you with the same comfort with which we ourselves are comforted of God; and whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation."

We are going on happily and comfortably as a church and congregation. We had seven added to us last ordinance day, and we are going to have more. We are quite crowded as a congregation. I am quite astonished, and wonder how it is that the people flock from all parts around to hear such simple truth. O the mercy, kindness, and goodness of God to such a worthless worm! O that I had but more grace, that I could but praise and honour Him more, who has done, and is doing so much for me!

God Almighty bless you, my dear brother, and keep you near to His blessed Self, and bless you with much of His love and grace, to bear you up under all your conflicts, both of flesh and spirit. I firmly believe that God will ever stand by you. I can assure you that you

are in my very soul; and at times I can carry you to a throne of grace when I cannot carry myself. O that we may be kept little in our own eyes, and that we may ever walk and act like servants of God, and never say, "A confederacy, to those that say, A confederacy."

That God may bless you and all the friends, is the soul's desire and prayer of your unworthy brother.

Trowbridge, July, 1834

John Warburton

(Selected from "The Gospel Standard", 1842)

Man, even in his most enlightened state, can no more form a competent idea of the wisdom that lies at the bottom of God's effective and permissive decrees, than an earth-worm or beetle can enter into the political views which actuate the movements of a prime minister.

Toplady

LIKE PRODUCES LIKE

The new creature cannot be the product of natural power, because everything is received and improved according to the nature of that which receives it. Plants, and other creatures, turn all their nourishment into their own species and property. A vine and a thistle, both planted in one soil, have the same sun, dew, air, and other influences common to both, yet each one converts the whold of that it receives into its own substance and kind. You may plant and prune, dig and dung an evil tree, bestow what pains you will upon it, it does all but enable the more pregnant productions of evil fruit; just so does the natural man, even "turn the grace of God into lasciviousness". (Jude, verse 4) As to the pure all things are pure, so to the impure, all things are defiled. (Tit. 1:15)

E. Coles

It seems hard to wait contently till tomorrow for tomorrow's bread; I want to be sure of now. The form of prayer taught us is, "Give us this day our daily bread." There seems no special promise to the Lord's people for tomorrow concerning temporal things, but we are reminded that we know not what a day may bring forth, and are told not to take thought for tomorrow, in respect of temporal things; "for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Our entire trust is to be in the Lord. But I cannot trust of myself. I want to arrange for tomorrow, though I know I cannot. I am worldly minded to a fearful degree. If the Lord did not hold me, and keep me, and hedge me in on every side, and cut me off continually from worldly dependence, I should never manifest any other than a worldly mind, if I ever do.

"Fragments" by Silas H. Durand

Grace finds us beggars, and always leaves us debtors.

Toplady

The kingdom of heaven is elective, to which men are chosen by God; and yet, at the same time, it goes by indefeasible, hereditary right; it proceeds in the line of election and the line of regeneration.

Toplady

Some people hear the gospel as a butterfly settles upon a flower, without being at all the better for it. Others hear the gospel as a bee settles upon a flower; they enjoy its fragrance, they imbibe its honey, and return home richly laden with its sweets. And some hear the gospel as a spider visits a flower: they would, if possible, extract poison from the Rose of Sharon.

Toplady

above accounts the angels are round about the throne and the elders and the beasts. Angels worship God, they know that our Saviour came to die in our room and stead but they cannot sing the song of the redeemed. Only poor sinners who are quickened will be able to truly sing that song. Paul writes in Heb. 1:6, "And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." These angels were praising God because of the birth of Christ and the redemption that was to be obtained by Him for His people. This shows how much angels rejoice at the spiritual and eternal welfare of God's people. Luke 15:10 reads "Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." The angels rejoiced at the coming of our Lord, they rejoice at the quickening of poor sinners, they will rejoice when the whole family of God will be together in heaven. When the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind He asked him, "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth","Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened?" or "Who laid the corner stone thereof: when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy". God's heavenly host worships him but only the redeemed from among men can sing the song of the redeemed.

The heavenly host was sent to affirm that the glory of God is great in the salvation, peace and reconciliation of His people by Jesus Christ unto Himself. Great glory from hence arises to God, who is in the highest heavens, for His wisdom, His prudence in ordering a covenant which is in all things sure. Great glory arises to God for His mercy, for His love, for His grace, for His faithfulness in fulfilling His covenant and oath and all His promises and prophecies relating to it. Great glory arises to God for the gift of His dear Son. Glory to God in the highest.

And on earth peace, good will toward men. There was peace on earth when Jesus came the first time. Peace was made by Christ for His people when He shed His precious blood for the remission of the sins of His people and so He is their peace. But here, "on earth peace" means Christ Himself. It is said, "This man shall be peace" in Micah 5:5. It is said "He is our peace" in Ephesians 2:14. Isaiah said "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given" in Isa. 9:6 and "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end". Isa 9:7 The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this as He will work all things after the counsel of His own will. John says in John 1:14, "The word was made flesh and dwelt among us". In John 1:1-2 it reads "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God". Heb. 10:5 reads, "A body hast thou prepared me". "God sent forth His Son made of a woman" the scripture reads in Gal. 4:4. In I John 4:2-3, the epistle reads, "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God. Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is the spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." We see Jesus, our peace who came, yes, God manifest in the flesh.

The birth of our Saviour, which is Christ is owing to God's good will toward men. Yes, His coming was owing to the free unmerited favour, to the good will and pleasure of God toward chosen men in Christ Jesus. Christ was on earth, where He had not where to lay His head, to be our peace maker, to be the propitiation for our sins. In Eph. 1:4-9 it reads, "He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us

then of the curse pronounced against them on account of transgression. If this truth be clearly apprehended, it will clear away many difficulties from our minds. The whole race fell in Adam, both old and young. Men by consequence are born into the world depraved. And all men go astray from the womb, as David confessed. And let it be remembered that David spoke by revelation, and under the power of divine inspiration, so that what he thus declared, was the truth of God. Therefore it would have been absolutely just had not one of the race ever been saved. If any are saved, whether old or young, it is in all cases the act of the sovereign mercy and grace of God. We repeat, that if we admit and believe that the salvation of any who are saved, is of grace alone, in which there is no possibility of the mixture of any human righteousness, or of any human work, then it follows that all might have been left to perish, and infants as well as adults, have shared in this condemnation.

Second. We would call attention to the fact that no one of any age can enter the kingdom of heaven without the atonement and the new birth. If any who have died in infancy, or in mature years, are now enjoying the favor of God, and have a dwelling-place at his right hand in glory, they are partakers of all this solely upon the ground of the imputed righteousness of Christ, who died for them, and rose again for their justification. Imputed righteousness is what must demand the praise of all the redeemed to all eternity. No man by nature has any claim to the least of the mercies of God. Infants are condemned by sin, and grow up under the same condemnation, and unless the blood of Christ has been shed for them, die in this condemnation, and are lost forever. If then any dying in infancy are saved, or if any dying in old age are saved, it is upon the ground alone that Christ died for them, and put away their sins by the sacrifice of Himself. Infants, no more than adults, are saved because they are innocent. It is not because we have ourselves in our own individual acts sinned, that we are lost, but we are condemned and lost because our first parents sinned; and we are all in this condemnation when we are born into this world. Infants are innocent from actual personal transgression, but they are not innocent from the condemnation of original sin, neither are they pure and sinless beings, but are of a depraved stock, and are depraved themselves. But this we need not stop to argue at any further length. Being earthly, and of the earth, they like the rest of mankind cannot see the kingdom of heaven without the new birth. If those who die in infancy then are saved, they must have been included in the atonement of our Lord, and must also have been born from above. All who are so happy as to gain that blest abode, will freely sing the praise of sovereign grace. No one there will discordantly sing praise to their own goodness of any form or kind; no one there will testify, "I died in innocent childhood, and therefore I am here," but all will with one accord praise redeeming love and grace. If then any or all who die in infancy, are saved, let it be clearly understood that neither innocency, nor age, had anything to do with it, but it is solely upon the ground that God has chosen them to salvation, and has sent His Son to die for them, and has brought them to the kingdom of heaven by a new birth, which is of the Spirit of God. If we clearly apprehend this, much of the difficulty that rests in our minds concerning the question at the head of this editorial, will vanish. It is all summed up in the two facts, that the justice of God demanded the condemnation of all, and that if any are saved, it is the result of electing love and grace alone.

Third. What do the Scriptures have to say concerning this question? There are

one or two Scriptures which seem to bear upon this question. Some that have been supposed to bear upon it, do not seem to us to apply there at all. For instance, the language of the Savior, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven," does not bear upon this matter at all. It is simply an illustration of the fact that they who enter into this kingdom, must possess a childlike spirit. It determines nothing concerning the future world, or concerning the destiny of children there. But there are two expressions in the Old Testament that does seem to our mind to bear upon this matter, and which seem to give warrant for believing that all who die in infancy are included in the sovereign election of God, and that they are the subjects of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and of the new birth.

The one instance is the well known language of David, when the child that he loved so well was dead, and the news was brought to him. It is said that he ceased to put on the garments of mourning, and when asked wherefore, replied, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." Had he meant that he would one day go to the grave where the body of the child had not yet been carried, it would not have been any consolation. This is manifest. He could not have meant the grave, for the reason already given, that the child was not yet in his grave, but he meant that he would go to him in the upper and better world. Now the argument which has seemed to have force in our mind is, that David had a hope of everlasting life and joy in the future world, and expected to go there, when he should die. Second, he could not have had any personal assurance from the little child, that he had been born again, because the child was too small to have given any such assurance. But yet he believed that the child had gone where he expected to go. He spoke with assurance about it. The only reason he could have possibly had for this assurance concerning the child, would be that he believed that all who died in infancy were among those who are saved. It seems to our mind evident that the inspired David, did believe that all who die in infancy are among the saved.

The second instance to which we have been wont to refer in our own mind, as bearing upon this matter, is the case of the woman whose child had died, and who went to meet the prophet. He said to her, "Is it well with thee, is it well with thy husband, is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well." The same reasoning applies here that we have used above, in treating of the case of David's child. She could not have had any assurance that it was well with the child, except as she believed that the child was saved. She could not have had any assurance that the child was saved, except upon the ground that all who are taken away in infancy, are included in the covenant of grace.

Thus, we have concluded, that the faith of David, and of this woman, was that children dying in infancy, are saved. This faith seems to have met with no rebuke. From these Scriptures we have been led to the same conclusion. To believe this, does not in the least degree deny election, nor does it in the least argue that they are thus saved on any other ground than the sovereign mercy and grace of God, through the atonement and the new birth. We have held out these Scriptures for the comfort of those who have lost little children, when called to speak at such occasions. We have felt warranted in doing so from these reasons. It seems to us worse than useless to spend time in trying to prove that all who die in infancy are not among the saved.

October, 1897 C.

Brethren, pray for us. I Thes. 5:25

The terrors of the law have much the same effect on our duties and obedience as frost has on a stream; it hardens, cools, and stagnates. Whereas, let the shining of divine love rise upon the soul, repentance will then flow, our hardness and coldness thaw.

Toplady

As fruits artificially raised or forced in a hot-house, have not the exquisite flavour of those fruits which grow naturally and in their due season; so that obedience which is forced by the terrors of the law, wants the genuine flavour and sweetness of that obedience which springs forth from a heart warmed and meliorated with the love of God in Christ Jesus.

Toplady

When a believer marries an unbeliever, what is it but reviving the old cruel punishment of tying the living and the dead together?

Toplady

I bless, honor, and extol the God of my forefathers in the faith of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for making me fruitful in my old age, which shows that my God is upright; for there are still sons born to Naomi in Bethlehem. Our place is much crowded, without the help of schools, organs, bagpipes, or singing men and singing women. The silver trumpet sounded by a free-born citizen of Zion, the harp of God, and the heart in tune by grace, make the best melody in the ears of the Lord God of sabaoth. My soul blesses Him for having kept me from superstition, human inventions, voluntary humility, will-worship, and all gaudy show in the flesh; which is setting the ark on a new cart, and drawing it by beasts.

Huntington

Elder R. C. Leachman, of Virginia, once told me of a peculiar dream he had when he was exercised about baptism, and seeking assurance as to which was the true church. Elder Samuel Trott was then serving a few scattered churches of the Primitive order, while popular preachers were preaching to large congregations of the New School. Mr. Leachman liked the preaching of Elder Trott, but the question would often arise in his mind, could so few be right and so large a number be wrong? One night in a dream he saw large fields of wheat, and men with cradles cutting it down. He admired the large fields and the fine appearance of the wheat standing so erect; but when he took some of the fine appearing heads of wheat in his hand he found no grain, only chaff. Then he looked more particularly at an old man whom he had noticed gathering with an old-fashioned reaphook or sickle some scattered stalks of wheat in various fields. He observed that the heads of wheat which he was reaping were hanging down, and as he took some of them in his hand he found they were well filled with sound and excellent wheat. When he awoke he had no longer any doubt as to where the true church was. He was soon after baptized by Elder Trott. I was favored to travel some with Brother Leachman, and to hear him preach many times, and I think I never heard a more powerful preacher nor a more eloquent speaker.

"Fragments" By Silas H. Durand

OBITUARIES

VIOLA K. PROCTOR

Sister Viola Lee King Proctor was called home from our midst after an extended illness. She was the widow of Frank H. Proctor and the daughter of the late Spicer King and Minnie Scott King.

She was a member of Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church for 45 years. Her funeral was conducted by her Pastor, Elder Henry

Jones, and she was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery to await the coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ, when He will gather all of His little ones and carry them to Heaven to forever be with Him. There they will suffer no more sorrows, heartaches, nor pain, but sing praises unto our God forever.

Sister Viola was survived by four sons, Benford of Nashville, Marshall and Robert of Rocky Mount, and Donley of Fredericksburg, Va.; Six daughters, Mrs. Minnie Lee Drake and Mrs. Margie Wooten of Rocky Mount, Mrs. Odell Rowe of Sharpsburg, Mrs. Vera Mae Everett on Conetoe, Mrs. Lula Snipes of Raleigh, and Mrs. Susie Campbell of Kannapolis. She also has two sisters, Sister Annie Wood of Morganton, and Sister Edna Cockrell of Swansboro, thirty-one grandchildren and twenty-seven great-grandchildren.

Written at the request of the Church in conference Saturday before the fourth Sunday in May, 1977.

Mae Lancaster

BROTHER RAYMOND W. EDWARDS

God called Brother Raymond W. Edwards from this life July 9, 1977, at the age of 77. His funeral was conducted at Gay Yost Funeral Home by his pastor, Elder Henry Jones, assisted by Elder A. P. Mewborn.

Brother Edwards united with Pleasant Hill Church on June 25, 1932. He was appointed Clerk on February 26, 1938, and served the church in that capacity until June, 1971. He also served as clerk of the Contentnea Union for several years. The church called him to be ordained as Deacon on July 23, 1939.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Eunice King Edwards; three sons, Elmo, of Chevy Chase, Md., Roy and Jimmy, of Rocky Mount; three daughters, Mrs. Mabel Zboyoesky of Haywood, Calif., Mrs. Lucille Hathaway, of Charlotte, and Mrs. Patsy Williams of Greensboro, N.C.

Brother Raymond attended church faithfully as long as he was physically able, but due to ill health was unable to attend in recent months.

Written by order of conference Saturday before the fourth Sunday in July, 1977.

A. E. Lancaster

SISTER EMMA HAWKER COX

The Lord, in His love and mercy, called from this world of sin and sorrow, Sister Emma Hawker Cox, on January 22, 1977. She was 69 years of age having been born of February 12, 1907. Her husband, Roger Cox, preceded her in death by 15 years. They had no children.

She is survived by five sisters: Mrs. Ethel Thomas, Mrs. Katie Lee Whitehead, Mrs. Elizabeth Murray, and Mrs. Dora Wright, all of Burlington, North Carolina; and Mrs. Edna Edwards of Graham, North Carolina; three brothers: Mr. Howard Hawker of Reidsville, North Carolina, Mr. Patrick Sneed on Yanceyville, North Carolina, and Mr. Berkley Sneed of Burlington, North Carolina.

Sister Cox was baptized into the fellowship of Gilliam's Primitive Baptist Church in April, 1963. She was a quiet, meek woman who regularly filled her seat on meeting days. Her last years were spent in Garrett's Rest Home, Burlington, North Carolina.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Wallis Smith and Mr. Phillip Bumberger at the McClure Funeral Home, Burlington, North Carolina. Her body was laid to rest in the Gilliam's Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery to await the glorious morning of the resurrection.

Written by Cleo Robertson at the request of Gilliam's Primitive Baptist Church in its conference meeting on May 21, 1977.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Cleo Robertson, Clerk

DEACON LEONARD T. NICHOLS

Brother Leonard Nichols was born on September 21, 1895 and passed away on June 4, 1977; living upon earth for 81 years, 8 months and 15 days.

Brothers Nichols left a faithful companion - Mrs. Maggie Peters Nichols, two daughters - Sister Agnes Sutphin and Mrs. Verlie Lawson, four grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Brother Nichols united with Paynes Creek Church on May 30, 1953. The church felt that he had a calling from God as a deacon. On December 3, 1955, he was ordained a deacon of Paynes Creek Church where he served faithfully until his death.

He loved his brethren and traveled many miles to visit the sister churches and Associations.

We miss his presence very much but we feel he is resting in peace; waiting for the resurrection morning when Christ will come the second time to take His children home and change this mortal body to a body immortal like unto His own Glorious Body; there to sing praises to His Holy Name forever in Heaven.

Brother Nichols will then become in possession of this good hope he held so precious.

Memorial services were conducted at Paynes Creek Church by Elders J. L. Agee, Amos Hash and Hale Terry. He was laid to rest in the Radford Cemetery.

Written by one who loved him.

Harry B. Cannaday

JOHNNY FRANKLIN SMITH, SR.

God, in His love and kindness, has called from our midst our beloved Brother Johnny Smith. Brother Smith was sick for some time, but God in His mercy blessed him to attend his meetings. He came with a bowed head and loving heart.

He believed in a sovereign God who rules all things, his life, his hope, and his all.

We miss him greatly, but we believe with joy he was called from this world of woe. For him to die is gain.

He was a native of Caswell County, and the son of the late William and Lucy Rudd Smith.

Brother Smith was a member of Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church. Surviving are his wife, Annie Harrelson Smith; daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Devinie; son, John Smith, Jr.; two brothers, Robert Smith and Brother Onza Smith; two grandchildren; and one great grandchild.

His funeral was conducted at Bethesda Church by his pastor, Elder Donald Smith, and Richad Muller. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Written in love and humbleness by Sister Warnell Tatum, as requested by Pleasant Grove Church at their August 21, 1977, Conference Meeting.

Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
Brother Robert Walker, Clerk

SISTER ADER CASEY

It is my sad duty to inform the church of the passing of our beloved Sister Ader Casey. She and her husband joined the Pleasant Grove Church at Naches, Washington in November of 1964.

Sister Ader Casey was born in Pyatt, Arkansas, September 13, 1895, and passed away May 20, 1977, at age 81 years.

She and her late husband came to Yakima, Washington in 1935 and later settled in the Cowiche area, in 1950, where they owned their home and operated a fruit orchard for many years. Sister Casey lived the last three years of her life in a nursing home.

She is survived by two sons, Ewell of Tieton, and Ulis of Cowiche; four daughters, Mrs. Ruth Smith of Spokane, Mrs. Retha Bogle of Yakima, Mrs. Joy Witherall, of Lacey, and Mrs. Dorothy Iverson of Seattle; two sisters, Mrs. Lilly Milum of Salem, Oregen, and Mrs. Ider Cunningham of Springfield, Mo.; 14 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren.

Services were held May 24th at 11:00 A.M. at Shaw and Sons Chapel, with Elder Ben Preston officiating. Burial was in West Hills Gardens. Pallbearers were her six grandsons.

Mildren A. Simpson

MRS. ROBERT M. JONES

In loving memory of one of our faithful members, Rosa Jones. Sister Jones passed away July 14, 1977. She was born May 26, 1908, making her stay here on earth sixty-nine years.

She was the daughter of Henry and Mollie Lovelace of Pelham, N.C., and was married to Robert M. Jones, March 3, 1928. They were blessed with seven children, four sons and three daughters.

She is survived by her husband and her seven children, Mrs. Pauline Walker, Mrs. Geneva Miller, and Mrs. Nancy Walker of Reidsville, N.C.; Hillary, Danny, and Allen Jones of Reidsville, N.C., and Bernard Jones of Greensboro, N.C. she is also survived by one brother, Henry Lovelace, of Danville, Va.

Sister Jones joined Lickfork Church the first Sunday in June, 1936. She was a faith-

Signs of the Times

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 1/79 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

JESUS SAVIOR PILOT ME

Jesus Savior pilot me,
While upon lifes troubled sea.
May I walk e'er close to thee,
Weak, unworthy tho I be.

Often when I try to pray;
All kind of things get in my way.
I am so carnel, so full of sin;
I seldom know how to begin.

Take my hand dear Savior, lead me
Til my earthly journey's o'er.
Lead me gently, Savior lead me,
Let me walk Dear Lord with thee.

When the Saints of God are gathered
On that bright and peaceful shore;
There to praise our Lord forever,
To be free for ever more.

When we shall see thee face to face
Saints shall praise thee for thy grace.
Grace by faith hath made us free.
I pray dear Lord remember me.

Jesus Savior Pilot me,
Tho from sin I would be free
Ever closer to walk with thee.
Dear Lord I pray remember me.

Written by Alice Graham

EXPERIENCE

Glenwood, Alabama

Dear Editors and Elders,

Please find a check enclosed for a one year subscription to the ***Signs of the Times.*** Please use the balance as you see fit.

I enjoy reading the ***Signs*** very much and do hope it keeps on, for I enjoy reading of peoples' experiences.

I want to write just a few words about myself. I was raised in a Primitive Baptist home but I never gave any thought to it until in 1942. I was 24 years

old at that time. I had a dream. In it, I saw a communion take place. I saw my Dad wash a man's feet, and the man was not a church member at that time. This took place in January, and I was blessed to see this fulfilled the first Sunday in May. The thing about this is that I was on the outside looking in. I never saw myself as a part of it. This changed something in my life. I wanted to go to church where I saw the communion, but I did not want anybody to know I had that thought.

I went along until June, 1948. My mind was "called away" from what I was doing and I saw things that were beautiful to see. I saw a river of water clear as a crystal come out of the Throne of God and the Lamb in the midst on either side of the Tree of Life. The leaves were so pretty and green and the water was so clear. It was the most beautiful place I have ever seen.

After this a love sprang up in my heart for the Primitive Baptist people. I wanted to ask them for a home, but I felt so unworthy and tried to forget the thought. I traveled along with this for several years. Things began to occur, and again, in all of it, I was on the outside looking in.

In July, 1974, a thought came into my mine - It is a fearful thing to fall in the hands of the living God. I thought on this about a week and went to Church on Sunday morning. Elder Donaldson went in the stand and greeted the people, then turned and looked straight at me and said, "It is a fearful thing to fall in the hands of the living God". When he finished I was satisfied I was in God's hands and had been since the days of old.

The first Sunday in August, 1974, I asked the church at Pine Level for a home with them. My wife and I joined together and were baptized at the same time. When I came up out of the water everything had a new look and I thought all my troubles were over, but this lasted only a short time. Then came along the want for a better understanding and light. I began to read the Bible. Every time I can now, I read.

I don't think there is anyone ever satisfied after he is brought into the knowledge that Christ is the Son of the living God, and that He rules and super-rules in the army of Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

If I have a special chapter of the Bible it is the eighth chapter of Romans.

I did not intend to write this much. I will close in Christian love.

A brother in Hope,
B. F. Godwin

Atlantic, N.C.

Dear Elder Poole,

I am sending some writing to be published in the ***Signs*** if you think it is worthy of a place. I am a very poor writer. I have never been able to put into words the great and wonderful works of the Lord as I hope I see them. I can only write as I hope the Lord blesses me. So do as you see fit.

Mrs. Eva M. Hamilton

Dear Brothers and Sisters and kind Friends in the Lord,

I have been reading the ***Signs of the Times*** and Zion's Landmark ever since right after I joined the church. I have enjoyed the good writings of the Brothers and Sisters. I have written many times in the past and my writings have been published in Zion's Landmark. But these last years I haven't been impressed to write very often. I have been asked several times to write and send it to the ***Signs,*** but I have never done so before. I don't believe I can write anything of myself that would be any comfort to God's people. The Scripture says it is impossible to please God in the flesh. "God is a Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and truth. For the Lord seeketh such to worship Him." He also

maketh His people a willing people in the day of His power. When we are made willing, (and I believe it is through suffering that we are made willing) then we have a hope that it is God working in us both the will and the do of His own good pleasure. With this in mind I will write as He blesses me to do.

We read in John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." Then we read in the same chapter and verse 14, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." It is plain to see that the Word spoken of in this Scripture is Jesus, full of grace and truth. Jesus has been with the Father from the beginning and is still with Him today. Dear Brothers and Sisters, Jesus is the only Way by Whom men come to God. There is no other Name given whereby we must be saved.

There are some out all over the land telling the people how to be saved and to accept Jesus or to give their hearts to God. Man's work is in vain, but God's work stands sure and steadfast. The Lord knows them that are His. Jesus said, "No man can come unto me except my father which sent me draw him." When God speaks it is done and when He commands it stands fast. No man can withstand the power of God. He opens and no man can shut; and He shuts and no man can open. The Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Jesus kept and fulfilled the Law for His people. They are no more under the Law but under grace. "He came unto His own, but His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name:" (John 1:11, 12). Read the 13th chapter of John and you will find who received Him and who believed on His Name. They were those who were born "not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God". They were born of God before they received Him or believed on His Name. Just as the angel told Mary, the Mother of Jesus, "He shall save his people from their sins."

I don't know that I am one of the Lord's people, but if I am or if I am not it doesn't change these blessed truths. They are sure and steadfast. My heart's desire is that God will draw all His people together as one in Christ Jesus the Lord. Then there will be no name given by man that can separate them. I hope I love all the Lord's people and that I will never offend one of God's little ones. The Scripture says it is better that a millstone were tied around his neck and he were cast into the sea than to offend one of God's little ones.

Mrs. Eva M. Hamilton

When the rays of the sun fall on the surface of a material object, part of those rays are absorbed, part of them are refleced back in strait lines, and part of them refracted, this way and that, in various directions. When the Holy Ghost shines upon our souls, part of the grace He inspires is absorbed to our own particular comfort, part of it reflected back in acts of love and joy and prayer and praise, and part of it refracted every way, in acts of benevolence, beneficence, and all moral and social duty.

Toplady

Martin, Tennessee

Dear Brother in Christ,

I see that my ***Signs*** is past due. I'm sorry I am late. I am mailing a check for another year. It is good news from a far country to an unworthy creature like me. I seem to be so much of the time in the horrible pit and the miry clay, but at times He plants my feet on the Rock and establishes my going and puts a new song in my mouth, even praises unto God. He is the Rock. His work is perfect. He hath made everything beautiful in

his time. Also, He hath set the world in their heart so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end. Jesus said, "I am the way; I am the truth; I am the life. No man cometh to the Father but by Me." Known unto God are all His works from the foundation of the world. He speaks to His sheep and they hear His voice and they follow Him because they know Him. They follow not a stranger because they know not a stranger's voice. "I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." (John 10:25-30)

He saved us and called us with a holy calling and may we be blessed to hear that voice when he says, "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

I'm sorry I am so late. Excuse the bad writing and spelling. May the Lord bless you all in your printing of the ***Signs,*** which is a wonderful work.

Your unworthy Brother,
(Elder) Elmer Prince

How beautiful it is, how edifying it is to see a life of faith crowned by a blessed death, to hear from the bed of languishing and pain, not the murmurs of unbelief, not the cries of guilt and despair, but the words of faith, hope and love; the voice of thanksgiving and praise! When nature sinks under a load of pain and suffering, when the things of time and sense drop away like the leaf from the autumn bough, when death draws near and eternity opens to view, when heart and flesh alike fail, then to have the Lord near, whispering consolation and peace, and find Him the strength of his heart and his Portion forever, surely this direct and immediate testimony from heaven stamps a man's religion as truly divine.

O how much of what is called religion bears no such divine stamp upon it; no divine stamp upon the beginning, and no divine stamp on the end! But let men take up with what religion they please, and be as religious as they may, the Lord will own no work but His own, and smile upon no soul which He has not regenerated by His grace.

J. C. Philpot, 1854

EXTRACT FROM WARBURTON

"One who professed to be my friend told me that he was afraid I was turning Antinomian. 'Antinomian!' said I, 'what sort of people are they?' 'They are those,' replied he, 'who deny the moral law to be the believer's rule of life, which is a most awful doctrine, and leads to all manner of sin.' 'Moral law,' said I, 'What is that?' 'It is that just and holy law of God,' replied he, 'in which He commands us to love and obey Him.' 'What?' asked I, 'Do you mean that law which Paul meant when he said, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them"? Do you take that law to be your rule of life?' asked I. 'Surely I do,' said he, 'and all those who do not are Antinomians.' 'Then,' said I, 'I am one of those Antinomians. Blessed be God! He has delivered me from that law. Christ has obeyed it for me. and has been made a curse for me, and has gone to the end of it for my poor soul.' I asked him how he felt that law, what it did for him when he was under it, and how he had been delivered from it. Upon this subject he could say nothing, but he maintained, that believers were required to be obedient to the law, as well as to believe in Christ. But I insisted

on it that there was obedience and blessed obedience, too, in Christ, which did my soul good, pleased God, honoured the law, pardoned all my sins, confounded the devil and made my soul dance for joy. I told him it was my meat and drink to do the will of my God and Saviour, who had done so great things for me. 'When I was under the law,' said I, 'I had no obedience, but was full of anger, rebellion and wretchedness, and sometimes felt such wrath that I could have pulled the Almighty from His throne for not having made me a beast that has no soul to appear before so holy a God, who cannot acquit the guilty. But now, having been delivered from the law, and having the love of the Lord Jesus Christ shed abroad in my heart I can believe in Him, obey Him, praise Him, thank Him and adore Him night and day.' "

John Warburton, Mercies of a Covenant God

Dear Brethren in the Lord,

I have been very much strengthened here of late, hearing from the gospel Ministers bringing glad tidings of great joy, as they deliver the messages that God hath sent them to deliver, including the Pigg River and Smith River Associations, and from the ***Signs of the Times.***

I read the writing from Sister Julia Myers. I told her I enjoyed it, and she replied that she could not have kept from writing. I could understand her.

When anyone can write or preach the Truth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is only when they are blessed and moved by the Holy Spirit of God.

I had a nervous breakdown some years ago. I quit reading and quit going to church meetings. I decided there was not anything to any of it.

A dear Sister at the Association at Leatherwood Church some years ago asked me to write to the ***Signs*** because she enjoyed my writings. I did not say anything to her, but my mind was that she would never read another line from me.

On the Sunday following, I went to the meeting at the Head of the River. Brother Spangler was blessed to preach so wonderfully, how that Christ died on the cross shedding His blood for His people and had finished the work His Father gave Him to do. I left the place feeling better. Later on I had a mind to write again to the ***Signs.***

I enjoyed reading Elder Agee's writings in the September issue. The only way anyone can judge is hearing what they believe, why they believe, and where they got their belief, and from whence it came.

As I read his instructions to the brethren who have good wives, though they do not go with them, "Be good and kind as you can to them. The Lord works wonders", I thought of a scripture which is found in I Cor. 7:12-16. The 16th verse says, "For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife".

This, to me, means saving from trusting in false doctrine. We read in I Timothy 4:1, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;". I Cor. 8:3-6 says, "But if any man love God, the same is known of him. As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many and lords many), but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him.

I have noticed the capital letters from the small letters. In Malachi 4:2 the word, "Sun", and the word "Son" are in

capital letters. John 3:16, 17, we read, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

We read in Psalm 110 where it says, "Thy people shall be a willing people in the day of thy power,". I hear it quoted, "My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power", which means the same thing. Power means authority.

A few people have told me they enjoyed my writings. It did not puff me up, put made me thankful that we had some witnesses to the Truth that we love.

We hear it all over the land the name, Reverend so and so, but in Psalm 111, verse 9, "He sent redemption unto his people; he hath commanded his covenant forever: holy and reverend is his name.

We read again in Matthew 23:9, "And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven." Also in John 17:11 we read, "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are."

May God continue to be merciful to us and our loved ones.

Mattie Underwood

Strong, Arkansas

Dear Editors of the Signs,

My subscription has expired and I am sending a check for one year. I hope you receive it in time. I enjoy reading the ***Signs*** very much, and always look forward to each issue. I enjoyed the Editorial in the February issue by Elder W. D. G. very much. He is a faithful soldier of the cross, who like the Apostle Paul, shuns not from declaring the counsel of God, who fears not man, nor seeks to please man. As the Apostle said, "For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ". He only fears God with a reverence, and Godly fear. He described the church of the first born in his writings so wonderfully. I believe it as he described it, and rejoiced in those precious truths. I hope this poor sinful wretch is encluded as a member of the general assembly and church of the first born.

The following was written several months ago, but I felt like I still wanted to send it.

Dear loved ones in Christ,

You are the dearest people, so humble, lovely, and kind. As my mind seems to be led of the Lord this morning, tears of sorrow and joy in the Lord, concerning His goodness and mercy upon His poeple, fill my heart. His people are an afflicted and poor people, who weep and mourn in Zion. They are comforted at times amidst all their trials, tribulations, troubles and afflictions, by that still small voice, or words of comfort spoken from our Lord through His humble ministers who preach the gospel of peace and glad tidings of good things.

Dear ones in Zion, have you not felt at times that our precious Lord still furnishes a table before us in the presence of our enemies at times. As David said in Psalm 23, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever". In Hebrews 3:6 we read, "But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

Dear ones, I felt this morning I was weeping with the ones that weep, and rejoicing with the ones that rejoice. I desire to suffer the afflictions with the righteous rather than to enjoy sin for a season. "For unto you it is given in the

behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." (Phil. 1:29) Jesus said, "Take up thy cross and follow me." "My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power." "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish. Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my father's hand."

Where He leads them they will follow, even if it is through the firey furnace, through floods, through the desert, or in the waste howling wilderness. He tells them, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer I have overcome the world." "It is through much tribulation that ye enter the Kingdom." "Fear not little flock for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." "The kingdom of God is within you." "This is the kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor given to others, but will break in pieces all other kingdoms." The Lord is sitting on His throne of glory, ruling, and reigning in His spiritual kingdom, and his apostles are sitting upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Written in love.

Mrs. Lula B. Fox

Riner, Virginia

Dear Editors,

If you do not have room to print my experience in the wonderful ***Signs*** it will be alright.

I am at home now after an operation. I miss my dear husband so very much, but the dear Lord is able to walk by my side. I stayed with my daughter and family, Mrs. Donald Agee, after I came out of the hospital. They have been wonderful, and the dear Lord's presence was with me all the way. Oh! how wonderful to have the Christian's hope. Without Him we can do nothing. With Him we can do all things.

Also, all of my loved ones and my Christian friends have been just wonderful to me, including our dear pastor, Elder Raymond Goad and wife, and Elder Roy Agee and wife.

I want to give the Lord all the praise, glory, and honor for giving me such lovely Christian sisters and brothers.

I do hope you can visit us at our church at Valley View. We meet the third Sunday in each month.

I am glad to see the young Elders helping with the ***Signs,*** and I am thankful to have the older ones still with us, too.

In Christian love,
Beulah A. Wells

On this date, April 28, 1978, I am moved to write a little of my experience. While a young girl I felt a great burden in my breast, especially during the fall. I did not know that Fall meant the harvest.

While my youngest brother, Roy Altizer, was so seriously ill I gave up my job as a telephone operator to help my mother wait on him. He would ask my mother to pray and he would feel relieved afterward. The last time my mother asked if he wanted her to pray for his relief and he replied, "Not this time. But if I live longer I want to join the Primitive Baptist Church and be baptized". He passed away shortly after that.

After his death my three sisters and I became members of Valley View Church. I have been through many trials and afflictions since that time. When our only baby to live was born, I promised God that if He would allow her to live I would give Him all the praise, glory and honor.

My husband and I have been blessed to see our grandchildren. And then after a lifetime of happiness together, along with some dark clouds of afflictions, he passed away on March 23, 1978.

I am scheduled to enter the hospital tomorrow. After my husband's death, and before I knew of my physical condition, I said, "Whatsoever the Lord has in store for me will be alright". "If it be His will I would like to enjoy my friends and my church longer, but His will, not mine, be done." This morning I awoke with tears in my eyes and these words from a song my brother, Roy, sang was running through my mind:

"Sometimes I grow homesick for heaven
The Lord has prepared for His own,
When all the redeemed of all ages
Sing glory around the white throne."

I know not what the future holds, but I know Who holds the future.

Your sister in Christ,
Beulah Altizer Wells

Route 5, Box 301
Goldsboro, North Carolina 27530

Dear Christian Friends,

Greetings to you in the bonds of love and fellowship. I feel impressed to write a few lines, Lord willing.

I was blessed today to attend our Black Creek Union held with Healthy Plains as host, four able ministers were present. The preaching was as manna from heaven. One dear elder spoke from Heb. 4:1-11. I am still enjoying the sweetness of his sermon. What joy and peace we share when taken away from the cares of everyday living and given a few moments of gospel rest.

If not deceived, and I don't think I am, my single desire is to walk pleasingly in the sight of God. It was God's will to bring me to the knowledge of truth in my early teens. With the passing of time this knowledge grows more precious.

There is so much I do not know, but there is this I do know - Jesus is our Great Salvation and it is by the grace of God that one receives this salvation. I realize that we must live our appointed time in our body of flesh, but don't you at times feel as Paul. "I would be absent from the body and present, Lord, with thee." I Corinthians 5:3. I sincerely hope that I am no longer entangled with the flesh to fulfill the lust thereof. The burning desire in my breast is this - that by the grace of God I know something of the labor of love. When I shall be called from this life may it be God's will that I enter into eternal rest.

I cherish an experience of grace written for me by my precious mother. I have her permission to share this with the household of Faith. My mother didn't get much natural education, but she is richly educated in the school of grace. I believe the only diploma she is interested in is a home in heaven. My mother and I have a beautiful relationship and I cherish every moment spent with her.

May God richly bless us and Keep us in the hollow of His hand.

A little sister in hope,
Dora Ellen Vick
Pittman Grove Church

EXPERIENCE

Dora Ellen, my dear child,

As I can't get my mind on my work today, I will try to do what you ask me to do for you some time back. I feel just as unworthy now to attempt to write as I did years ago when I tried to write and would end up burning what I had written. I hope the God of all power will give me strength and guide my hand to write only what is the truth for your sake as well as mine.

Dora Ellen, I don't know hardly how to begin, but I do know nearly as far back as I can remember I felt that I knew there was a power stronger than mans power. I would have serious feelings about myself and would want to get by myself and cry. I would not even know why I was crying and I didn't seem to have fun playing with other children. These feelings stayed with me off and on after I was in my teenage. Sometimes the feelings were worse than others. I went on in this way until a few years

before I was married. My burden would get so heavy at times that I wondered what was going to happen. I felt to be one to myself and didn't care for the good times other young people seem to enjoy. I tried to think it was because I was left at home with no one except one brother and my father. My mother passed away when I was very young and then my brothers and sisters were all married and gone except one brother who was younger than me. Most of my time was spent at home alone and I thought this had something to do with my feelings. There would be times I could see my way brighter, but those dark and lonely days would come back.

A few months before your Daddy and I were married I seemed to feel better. I felt that I had found one person on earth who cared for me. I was hoping that my life would be more at ease and for a short time it was. Soon these feelings began to come back and I tried in every way I could to keep them hid. When I went to bed at night I would lie for hours shedding tears and trying to ask God to have mercy on me. This went on for years. Everytime these unworthy feelings came back they would be worse.

In the year 1936 my burden was so heavy at times that I thought my time to leave this world was close by. I could hardly sleep and had a desire to talk to someone, but felt that no one would want to listen to me. I could only beg God for mercy. One night it seemed I had stood about all I could without telling someone how I felt. I spoke to your Daddy about how I felt. He tried to tell me how wrong I was for feeling that my friends had forsaken me and that our friends were good to us. I told him they were his friends and that no one cared for me and in spite of all I could do, I began to shed tears. He asked me if the church was worrying me. I told him no, that I was not fit to even think of the church. We had been going to church when we could and I enjoyed going, but I never thought I would join. I lay awake for a long time that night after everyone was asleep. I was thinking about what Leland said and I tried to pray to God if the church had anything to do with my feelings, if He would let me sleep I would go to church the following Sunday and ask for a home.

God knew I was telling a story, but I really thought I was telling the truth. He blessed me with a good nights sleep. I don't even remember hearing my baby cry during the night. Next morning I felt better and did for the rest of the week. It was the week before the fourth Sunday. I thought I would go to church at Upper Black Creek on Sunday and join if they would have me in the church and be baptized Sunday evening. That was my plan; not God's. I went to church Sunday feeling the best I had for a long time. I enjoyed the preaching and singing and got along fine until the doors of the church were open and they began to sing. The feelings that came over me, I can't tell you or anyone else. It just seemed to me if I stayed in the house I would die. I got up and went out and waited for Leland to come out after church was over. After that Sunday my burden was worse. I decided that anybody that could lie to God as I had was not fit to even go to church and I decided to stay away from the church and live the best I could at home. So I stopped saying anything about my feelings. This went on for a year or longer.

We moved from where we were living and I thought the change would help me. I did feel some better for a while, but soon my troubles were worse than ever. My health grew from bad to worse. Some of the children were sick nearly all of the time. I just felt that all of this was put on me because I was so full of sin. I felt that I was the biggest sinner on earth; not fit fo live and less fit to die. Finally I had the greatest desire to go to church I had ever had, but then we didn't have any way to go nor any money to pay anyone to take us. No one lived close to us who I

thought would want to go to a Primitive Baptist Church and that was the only church I wanted to go to. The burden I was carrying was getting heavier all the time, but the worst was still ahead. I got where I didn't care to live and begged God to take me out of my troubles.

Dora Ellen, please don't let what I'm about to write upset you for it's not because I didn't want you, it was a thing I couldn't help. I feel it was a very sinful thought for me to have. You ask me to write this for you and I want only to write the truth as far as I can remember and I can remember the things that happened during those years better than I can things that happen now. This was a few days before you were born. I tried to pray that God would take both of us. I didn't want to live and didn't want to leave a baby for someone else to bring up. I guess I thought the rest of the children and Leland would be better off without me. To tell the truth, I don't know what I was thinking, but I do know that it was not God's will for either one of us to die. As for me, I thought my prayers were being answered. Everyone around me thought I was dying. I thought I was too and I was not the least bit afraid. I could feel death coming on and I couldn't talk or get a long breath. I was just weaking away. The doctor came back and with God's help I was soon better. God was showing me what a power He has. Then there I was seeing myself a bigger sinner than ever before.

Before you were a year old, you were taken sick. I was afraid this would be the way God would punish me for the many sins I had committed. This time my prayers were for you to live; not to die. You got well, but my troubles stayed with me. I was always afraid something would happen to you. This went on for over a year. I was taken sick again and thought I wanted to die. There seemed to be nothing ahead for me but troubles and they were getting worse all the time. I got seriously sick and the doctor had me sent to the hospital. I was so sick that I don't remember leaving home and don't remember getting to the hospital. I was unconscious for three or four days. When I regained consciousness, I was told that my baby was dead and had been buried. The thoughts of all that had happened were almost more than I could bear. What I went through lying on that hospital bed no one but God and me will ever know. I can't tell it all. While I was there I had a dream; I guess it was a dream. I don't know whether it was day or night, but I saw myself lying on a high bed. It was as white as snow. There seemed to be two of me. I could see myself on this bed and down below us were all you children running around trying to get to me. When I woke up I lay for a long time wondering what it meant and it came to me as plain as if someone spoke these words, "you children needed me". Before then I didn't much care if I lived or died, but from then on I wanted to live and go back home to Leland and you children. I couldn't get back fast enough. After I got home my burden was heavier than ever to think how I wanted to be taken away from my family and then to see how much it meant to them to have me back.

After I came home I found out that my brother died while I was in the hospital. They were afraid to tell me about it until after I got well. It just looked like trouble at home was piling up again. This was in September of 1939.

I went on with this burden till the spring of 1940. I felt if I couldn't get to church I would go crazy. By this time we had moved again and no one in that neighborhood went to church and we still had no way of our own to go. I would speak about going to church, but that was as far as I got. I would dream of starting to church but would never get there. Then one night I dreamed I went to church. It was night and I had a lantern for a light. I had to go a long way through the woods, but I wasn't afraid. I went until I found this church. It was in the woods. I walked up to the door

steps and didn't see anybody. There was a light inside. I stood for awhile not knowing whether to go in or not. A voice said, "Pull off your shoes and go in." I pulled off my shoes and left them on the steps and went in. I saw only one person inside. It was a man sitting as if he was asleep. He didn't speak or notice me. I sat down on a seat near the door and began looking around. The lights were very dim. A second voice said, "If you come to this church you will have to bring such as this if you don't have any money." Looking the way the voice came from, I didn't see anyone, but I saw a lot of canned food. This thought came to me - if I have got to pay to come to church I won't come. I got up and went out. Then I woke up and lay for a long time thinking and wondering about the dream.

My burden got so heavy that I could neither eat or sleep. It just seemed like I was forsaking my God and friends. I felt to be one to myself and had the same feelings I had before going to the hospital. I felt that my family had forsaken me, oh, I was so alone. All I could do was beg God to have mercy on a lost sinner, for that was what I felt to be. One night I had another dream. This time I found myself in a big house by myself and I was the happiest I had ever been. There was a hall in the house and I looked and saw Leland standing in the door. I was overjoyed at seeing him. I met him at the door and he took me in his arms and said it won't be long now. He didn't say what he meant by those words, but I believe I know what they meant. Then we both walked out into the hall and down at the end of this hall was the whitest bed I have ever seen. Dora Ellen, you were out there playing on that bed and you were the prettiest little angel. You were just as white as snow and you would rise and fly and fall on that bed and it was like down and would cover you when you fell on it. I stood there watching you for awhile and I felt so happy for you. Then I missed Leland and went outside to see if I could find him. I found him working on a new building and he seemed to be happy. He was whistling a hymn. I don't know the name of the hymn but I know it was one. I thought that was the prettiest place I had ever seen. The ground was as white as snow and out a little way from the building that Leland was working on was a great place of water as blue as the sky. Out in the water were places that looked like white stone with the prettiest flowers around the edges of the water. I walked up to the edge of the water and was standing there thinking how pretty it was when I heard someone speak. I turned and looked. It was L.C. He asked me if he could get some of the flowers that were out in the water. I told him he might get wet and he said, "no, I won't." Then I heard someone crying and I looked and it was Celion coming to me. I went to meet him and put my arms around him and he stopped crying. Then I turned to look for L.C. He was way out in the water. The water was up over his knees and he had his arms full of flowers. he came where I was and said, "Mama, I told you I wouldn't get wet." I felt of his clothes and they were dry. Then I woke up and lay there a long time thinking how good it would be if I could be as happy always as I was in my dream. I couldn't believe anyone could be that happy here on this earth.

In another dream, I was going to a brick church. When I went in there was a woman sitting holding a little child. I wondered about that dream and where that church was. I couldn't remember going to a brick church except Lower Black Creek. I couldn't believe that was the church I dreamed about. It had been so long since I had gone to church, if I had heard that they had taken Pittman's School for a church I had forgotten it. However, I felt that the church I had seen in my dreams was somewhere and I would see it.

When Leland came in from work one evening, he said he had thought of a

way I could go to church. I don't think he could have said anything that would have pleased me more. I asked him how I was to go and he said to catch the school bus to Mr. Leroy Jackson's and see if they would take me. I got ready the next morning, which was Friday before the second weekend. I got on the school bus and went to Mr. Jackson's. When I spoke to Sister Jackson about going to church, I thought my trip was for nothing. When the boys came in for dinner she asked them if they would take us. They promised to take us on Sunday.

On Sunday when I got to church there was the brick church I saw in my dream. I don't remember ever seeing Brother Turner before, but I thought he preached the sweetest sermon I had ever heard. When the doors of the church were opened I don't remember getting out of my seat. When I came to realize what I was doing, I was on my way to the stand. I was received into the chruch. I experienced part of the happiness I saw in my dream. I put off being baptized until the next second Sunday which I regretted for the next month was a miserable one for me. I had never wanted to do anything as badly as I wanted to be baptized. It seemed the time would never come and when Brother Turner brought me up out of the water I felt the same happiness I had felt in my dream. It seemed I had left all my troubles and fears in the water. I wanted to shake everyone's hand. When I got back to the church and went in, there sat the woman with the child in her lap as I saw in my deam. I have had more pleasure since my name has been on the church book than I had ever had in all my life before. It's a different kind of joy and pleasure than I had ever known before and that's why that dream stays with me. I feel like it showed me the joy there was ahead for me. I think the words Leland spoke to me had something to do with the joy I have found, but I can't explain how I feel about it all.

The dear brothers and sisters have been more than kind to me. They treat me better than I feel to deserve when they took me in among them. I wonder sometimes after going through all I have if I had any right to go before the church and ask for a home. Then I wonder what would have become of me if I had stayed away.

Dora Ellen, I don't know if this is a true experience of a child of grace or not. All I know is it's just a part of what I have felt and seen, but so much of the time I feel the way these hymns go:

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am tis hard to know.
I am so vile, so prone to sin.
I fear that I'm not born again."

"O for a closer walk with God."

Experience of grace as felt and written by Mrs. Peircy D. Holland.

Some harbours are fenced with massy chains of iron, reaching from side to side, to obstruct the access of shipping. Similar is the profession of Christ and His cause in persecuting times. But as a ship has often been able to force its way into the port, and burst the chains that oppose its entrance by the aid of a favourable tide and a strong breeze, so persecution is nothing to a believing soul whose sails are filled with the breathings of the Holy Ghost, and the full tide of whose affections is turned by grace to God and Christ and Heaven.

Toplady

A LETTER TO A FRIEND AFFLICTED BY ILLNESS

By the Late J. M'Kenzie

My dear Friend in the Lord of life, - - A few weeks ago, Mr. M., informed me that you were unwell, and expressed some fears for the issue of your illness.

My friend, our lives at most are like a person walking into a house at one door, and immediately out at the other.

Human life is indeed a vapor, as the passing away of the morning cloud, as the tale told, or a dream of the night. Before we well begin to consider we have a being, our days are ended. We flourish, and in a few days or years we wither and are in the dust. The life of the flesh, which descends to us from the first Adam, is indeed transitory and fading. But, O my friend, to have an interest in the blood and life of the second Adam, the Lord of life and glory, is to live indeed! The first Adam was the federal head of the human race, under the covenant of works; the second Adam was the grace-covenant head of His elect family, under the covenant of promise. Through the fall of the first, life was lost, and death and the curse followed in its stead; through the second, in His blood and righteousness, life and immortality are brought to light.

First. Spiritual life is communicated to the soul of elect sinners in the day of grace, by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit. And where this life is given, there is given to feel the inbeing, the guilt, the loathsomness, and the power of sin, which feeling will cause the soul to feel condemnation, fear, bondage, and distress of mind. And in such a one the mouth will be stopped, hope of heaven by works will give up the ghost, sinking helplessness in self will be felt, and prayers and sighs for manifested mercy will go up to God with many fears of not being heard.

Second. The life, or continued power and exercises of this life, will be kept alive by the Lord of life. Throughout our pilgrimage here below, there are a thousand things to deaden and benumb this life in the soul. The snares of Satan, the cares and anxieties of business and the family, the spirit of the world, the carnal mind within, and other things, all tend to wither and damp the life of God in the heart; but the Lord of life appears again and again, and revives the drooping heart and deadened spirit. He enlightens us, quickens us, softens, melts, blesses, encourages, and reproves, just as He sees we need; but he does all in lovingkindness and tender mercy. If He bless and soften our hearts, it is in love; if He chasten, it is in love; if He shine, it is in love; if He hide His face, it is in love. All His ways to His people are chalked out in lovingkindness. "The Lord loveth the righteous."

Third. Through Him is life eternal and immortality beyond the grave. "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." (Col. 3:3). The life of the believer is, therefore, secure in God, out of the reach of devils, men, sin, death, and the curses of a broken law; and therefore, because Christ lives, the tried and tempted believer shall live also: not because of his goodness or badness, but because Christ lives. What a sweet mercy is this! And, my dear friend, whether your sickness be for life or death, may the Lord favor you and me with the experimental enjoyment that Christ the Lord of life is our Life and our All in All.

I am, yours sincerely in the truth,
J. M'Kenzie

Liverpool, Dec. 14, 1848

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PROSPECTUS

(The following is an exact reproduction of the original Prospectus of the ***Signs of the Times*** published in 1832. This is still our doctrinal position and is subscribed to by the entire Editorial Staff and Board of Trustees.)

Proposals for publishing a semimonthly paper, to be called ***Signs of the Times,*** devoted exclusively to the Baptist cause, maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfections of the Great Jehovah - the Revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. "These Three are One." (I John 5:8)
2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.
3. Eternal, Unconditional Election.
4. The Total Depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.
5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the Elect only.
6. The Sovereign, Irresistible, and in all cases, Effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in Regenerating and Quickening the Elect of God.
7. The Final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God, by Grace.
8. The Resurrection of the dead, and Eternal Judgment.
9. That the Church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers - that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God.
10. That there is no connection between Church and State, and as touching the proposition for a marriage between them, the Hon. R. M. Johnson, in his Report on the Sabbath Question, has expressed our faith.

The ***Signs of the Times*** will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath Schools, etc., making war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of Institutions.

It seems to me that when one is prepared by the Spirit to write or speak upon the precious doctrine of God our Savior, he will not feel like writing ironically or with bitterness toward those whose views he is opposing. It is wearisome to read after one who ridicules those with whom he is engaged in conference or controversy, and applies harsh terms to them. "In meekness instructing them that oppose themselves," is the apostle's direction.

"Fragments" by Silas H. Durand

CHURCH DIRECTORY

The Editors of the ***Signs of the Times*** feel that it is best to discontinue publishing an annual Church Directory for the following reasons:

1. There is not a sufficient interest among the churches for a directory to make the list anything more than a sampling of the many churches across the land.
2. It has become next to impossible to determine in many cases if a church should be listed or not. We feel unqualified and unauthorized to make such determinations, and have no desire to involve this paper in local differences.

We wish to thank the churches and individuals concerned who have helped us in the past by supplying information regarding their assemblies.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Editor
Elder James F. Poole, Editor

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS

(LAST EDITORIAL ON THE SUBJECT BY THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE, IN THE *"SIGNS OF THE TIMES,"* OCTOBER 1, 1880.)

The Old School or Primitive Baptists in former years have been very definitely identified and distinguished from all other religious or ecclesiastical organizations as Predestinarian Baptists, and as such have borne reproach and vituperation from those who hold more limited views of what we regard as the absolute and all-pervading government of God over all beings, all events, and all worlds. With deep solicitude and painful concern we have witnessed in the preaching and writings of some of our brethren a disposition to so yield or modify the doctrine as to limit its application to such things as the carnal mind of man can comprehend or the wisdom of this world can approve. *While some will concede that all things that they regard as pure and holy are ordained or predestinated of God, they deny that the absolute government of God does dictate by absolute decree the wicked works of wicked men and devils, for that, they say, would make God the author of sin.* They therefore set up their judgment, and set bounds for Infinite Wisdom to be restricted to, and beyond which limitation He must not extend His government, without subjecting Himself to their censure as an unjust God and the author of sin. But how lamentable is the infatuation of poor, blind mortals, when

> "The vain race of flesh and blood
> Contend with their Creator, God:
> When mortal man presumes to be
> More holy, wise or just than He."

There are undoubtedly many of the dear people of God who feel jealous for the glory of God, and who, without any aspiring ambition to be wise above what is written in the sacred Scriptures, from inability to comprehend the two great parallel mysteries of *godliness* and of *iniquity,* have felt a commendable concern lest in our weakness we should impute to God aught that would reflect on His adorable perfections, or withhold from Him that which He has ordained for the manifestation of His glory. It certainly becomes us, as finite beings, to speak of Him and of His government with fear and trembling. He is the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, and His name is Holy. His attributes are veiled in that infinity which no finite being can by searching find out. He keepeth back the face of His throne, the place and power of His government, and spreadeth His cloud upon it. As the Heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's ways higher than our ways, and His thoughts higher than our thoughts. The standard of infinite purity and holiness is the will of God. There can be no higher law than the will of God, for only to the standard or counsel of His own will and pleasure does He Himself conform. "He worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."—Ephesians i. 11. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isaiah xlvi. 10. In this connection He says, "I am God, and there is none like me." And in the revelation of the Lamb, in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells, "The four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat upon the throne, and worship Him that liveth forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created."—Revelation iv. 10, 11. "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor? or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be

the sun and moon, and all the stars but one, held firmly to their orbits by the irresistible will and decree of God, and that one solitary star, without any fixed orbit, is allowed to range the infinity of space, wandering with more than lightning velocity, guided only by chance; where would be the safety of all the other stars? what would become of the predestination of those heavenly bodies intended to be perserved from hazard by the decree of God?

To us it has been a comforting thought that God has set the bounds of our habitation on the earth, and the number of our months is with Him, and our days are appointed to us as the days of an hireling, who cannot pass His bounds; but what assurance of safety would that afford, if He has left murderers and bloodthirsty men or devils unrestricted by His predestinating decree? To our mind, either everything or nothing must be held in subjection to the will and providence of God. *Even the wickedness of ungodly men is restricted by predestination,* so that "the wrath of man shall praise God, and the remainder of wrath He will restrain."

"Pains and deaths around us fly—
Till He bids we cannot die;
Not a single shaft can hit
Unless the God of Heaven sees fit."

For death and hell can do no more than His hand and counsel have determined shall be done. Does this make God the author of sin? or, in other words, does this make Him a sinner, or charge on Him an imputation of impurity? By no means. Against whom is it possbile for God to sin? Is He amenable to any law above Himself? If so, by what law can He be indicted, in what court can He be tried or convicted? How preposterous! It is His eternal right to do all His pleasure, "Nor give to mortals an account, or of His actions or decrees."

It savors of atheism to deny that He is the self-existent, independent God who has created all things for His own sovereign will and pleasure. And if it be admitted that He had a right to create the world, and all worlds, it must then be also admitted that He had a right to create them according to His own will and pleasure. Worms cannot charge Him with error because He did not assign them a more exalted place in the creation, or for creating them worms instead of men. Men cannot justly charge Him for not creating them angels, nor angels because He did not make them Gods. The world, with its infinite variety of living creatures, from the minutest insect to the most huge monster, as well as man, were all made for the pleasure of their maker, and all must subserve the exact purpose for which they were made. Even the crooked serpent, as well as the harmless dove, all were pronounced good in their respective places; not good in the sense in which God is good, but good because they were precisely what He intended or predestinated them to be. Had the serpent been straight, or the dove crooked, or if the things made had been different from what the Creator intended, there would have been a defect in the workmanship. We cannot, with such exalted views as we entertain, think that God has ever failed to secure the perfect accomplishment of His own design or purpose in anything He has ever done. *The entrance of sin into the world, and death by sin, which by the offense of one man has passed upon all mankind, was no unprovided-for event with Him, to whose eyes sin, death and hell have no covering.* The eternal purpose which God had purposed in Himself before the world began was sufficiently perfect and comprehensive to include all that could or can possibly transpire, or He would not have declared the end of all things from the beginning. "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world."—Acts xv. 18.

But there are many who admit the foreknowledge of God, and yet deny His determinate counsel, on which the

And by His saints it stands confess'd
That what He does is always best."

Men act voluntarily when they commit sin; they have no more knowledge of or respect for the purpose of God, than Joseph's brethren or Potiphar's wife had in his case, for there is no fear of God before their eyes. It is even so with the princes of this world; if they had known Jesus, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But it was needful that Joseph should be cast into prison, and it was expedient that Christ should suffer; therefore that knowledge was withheld from the persecutors of Joseph and of Jesus, until they should fill up the cup of their wickedness. And it is thus in the wisdom of God that the world by wisdom shall not know Him. Yet such is the wisdom, power and righteous government of our God that He can and does set the exact bounds by which the wickedness of men and devils is limited, and beyond which they cannot go. Satan is bound a thousand years with a great chain, and after the thousand years he shall be loosed for a short time. With all his rage and malice he is restricted by the supreme power and decree of God, to do no more nor less than what God will overrule for the good of His people and for His own glory. And thus also, "God, willing to shew His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," as in the case of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, hardening the heart of Pharaoh until all the plagues and judgments were accomplished, and His own almighty power and glory were then made known in delivering the Hebrews, and in overwhelming Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea. "Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth He yet find fault? For who hath resisted His will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"—Romans ix. 17-22.

The Apostle, fully aware of the disposition of the carnal mind to cavil and reply against the sovereignty of God in the execution of His pleasure, did not attempt to apologize for God, or so to modify the doctrine as to render it less objectionable to the carnal mind; but he called attention to the infinite disparity between the infinitely wise, holy and omnipotent God, who holds our everlasting destiny, and by whose long-suffering we are permitted to live, and poor, finite, depraved, short-sighted man, and the daring presumption and extreme folly of questioning the justice or wisdom of God in working all things after the counsel of His own will. We regard it as a very serious matter to charge that God cannot govern the world, by His own determinate counsel, wisdom and power, according to the eternal and immutable design or purpose purposed in Himself before the world began, without subjecting Himself to the charge of being the author of sin. Sin is the transgression of a law under which the transgressor was justly held amenable, and to the penalty of which he is subject. But we have endeavored to show that God is under no law but that of His own will and pleasure, and therefore He doeth His pleasure in the armies of Heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. He could by no law be held under obligation to leave the affairs of this world or any part of them to be governed by chance, or by the will of men. As He is in one mind, and none can turn Him, His purposes are eternal, like Himself. His decrees being perfect from everlasting, admit of no improvement or change. If He had not the right to predestinate all things pertaining to the events of time before He created the world, we ask what right has He acquired

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ATONEMENT

"Did Christ atone for all our sins?

If so, why do we pray to him to forgive our sins?

And why is all our suffering here on account of our sins, if he has atoned for them all?

Why is Christ interceding for us, if a full atonement has been made for us?

Are we mistaken when at the first in our experience we feel that we are condemned sinners?

Did Christ atone for all our sins, or only for those committed before we were regenerated, and after this we atone for them ourselves?

What is meant by the forgiveness of sins?

And what is meant by the intercession of Christ?"

REPLY

The above questions were presented to us by letter some time ago, with the request that we would reply to them at our earliest convenience. They call attention to most solemn and weighty matters pertaining to the religion of Christ, and the hope of the believer. We do not feel at all able to write in reply as the subject demands, but yet this is the theme of all gospel ministry, and if one is called to preach at all, this theme must engage his attention, and still more, if one has been called to a good hope through grace, these questions and their answers have become most important to him, and must be the subject of his most earnest thought. Still further, upon the right conception of these matters must the hope and faith of all such ones rest. These considerations have induced us to present some thoughts upon this matter in this public way, rather than by private letter.

"Did Christ atone for all our sins?"

There can be but one answer to this question; the Bible is clear upon this one thing, if upon anything: "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity." "Himself bare our sins in his own body." This text suggests no limit to the number of them. "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities." "The Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all." "For the transgression of my people was he stricken." "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities." "And he bare the sin of many." "He was put to death for our sins, and raised again for our justification." In the great type of atonement under the ceremonial law once a year, the sins, every sin of all the people of Israel, were confessed upon the scapegoat which was slain, and the one that was sent away into the wilderness, and not one sin remained upon all the people when this was done. So also when the red heifer was slain, every sin was covered in all Israel. From all these Scriptures it is clear that Christ did atone for all the sins of all the true Israel of God. None of the above Scriptures suggest any partial atonement, either as regards the number of sins covered, or the completeness of the covering, and there is no Scriptures that speak of the atonement at all that could be twisted by any argument into the idea presented in the question above. An atonement that did not cover each and all our sins, would be as good as no atonement, seeing that one sin unatoned for would condemn any one of us to everlasting punishment. One transgression of our first parents plunged not only themselves but all their unborn race in condemnation, guilt and unending woe. If sin then was such an exceeding sinful thing, it is no less so now. So that one sin left unatoned for would plunge the guilty into irrevocable destruction from presence of the Lord. We cannot be too careful or too earnest in insisting upon this; the whole scheme of the gospel hangs upon it; the good hope of the believer, which is through grace, hangs

upon it; the very doctrine of salvation by grace hangs upon it. If not saved by grace, through the atonement which is in Christ Jesus, from all sin, then there is no salvation at all except through works of the creature. If by grace, it must be by grace all along the line, and the atonement must cover every sin. If our work, our repentance or our faith must be considered as the ransom price for any sin at all, then these things must be the ransom for all sin. If by grace, it is no more of work, and if by work, then it is no more by grace. The testimony is clear upon this in the word. But the apostle leaves no room for cavil, for he says it is by grace. Therefore the atonement of Christ must cover all sin, if it covers any at all.

The atonement lies at the foundation of all the gospel, yea, it is the very substance of the gospel. If we are right in the view we have of the atonement, we cannot be far wrong in any other principle of the doctrine of grace. If we are wrong in the view which we have of the atonement, we cannot be right in anything that pertains to the gospel. It is therefore all important that we have right views of the atonement; the glory of God is involved in it; the exaltation of the crucified and risen Redeemer is involved in it; the comfort, peace, happiness and security of the believer is involved in it. Except Christ did indeed atone for all our sins, his death was utterly in vain, the wisdom of God was at fault, and there is no certain salvation for any one; nay, it is then certain that no one can be saved. Surely every believing humble heart must shrink from the contemplation of such awful consequences as the above.

"If so, why do we pray to him to forgive our sins?"

It seems to us only necessary to say that if we pray for the forgiveness of sins, it can be only upon the ground of the atonement. It was upon the ground of the atonement under the ceremonial law that the high priest made intercession within the veil for the sins of the people. When he came within the veil, provision was made that he should come there with the blood, as full evidence that the required atonement had been made. It was the same with every prayer made by the priests for the transgressor: all was founded upon the blood of atonement. So when now we come before God as priests unto him, our intercession for not only forgiveness, but for every needed blessing, must be upon the ground of the full atonement of Christ, and all our prayers must be in his name, God will not hear them otherwise. And Jesus, our true High Priest in the heavenly places, pleads before the throne for all whose sins he bore, upon the one ground that he has himself died for them, and put away all their sins by the sacrifice of himself. There would be no use to ask for any forgiveness or any other gift had not Jesus died. The law knows no forgiveness. Forgiveness is one of the precious gifts received for the rebellious when Jesus ascended on high and received gifts for men. Were it a fact that we ourselves must make satisfaction for sin, and could we make such satisfaction, then indeed there would be no room for forgiveness, seeing that we had paid all our debt against the law of God, but as we do not and cannot pay this debt, but Jesus does pay it, to us forgiveness comes upon the ground that he has died and risen again, and only upon that ground.

"Why is all our suffering here on account of sin if he has atoned for them all?"

Our sufferings here are not for atonement, seeing that a whole eternity of suffering could not atone for one sin. In no sense is suffering on account of sin here an atonement for it; then indeed would the atonement of Christ be nullified, and all his work would be shown to be useless. But suffering is often for a trial of faith, and often as

chastisement, to correct. David said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word." And again he said, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statues." The sons of an earthly father are chastised, but not to atone for their transgressions. The stripes inflicted upon a child are not payment for wrong which he has done, but for discipline, that he may learn not to transgress, and this is for his salvation and good, not to satisfy any demand of obedience from his father. The father having chastised his child, does not therefore remit the duty of obedience, as though the strips inflicted were in place of the obedience. So God chastises his children, not to atone for their sins, but to correct and to lead them in the way of peace and blessing.

"Why is Christ interceding for us, if a full atonement has been made for us?"

This we have in substance answered in our reply to the second question, concerning prayer for forgiveness. It is only needful that we repeat that the very ground of the intercession of Christ is his own atonement. He pleads his own work in behalf of his chosen ones. He says in substance, "Father, I have died for them." He does not, as the advocate, seek to extenuate their sins, or to make excuses for them. He at once confesses before God all their vileness and foul transgressions, and that they are without excuse. There is not one charge against them that he does not at once confess as being true. He does not plead for mercy upon the ground of the smallness of their guilt, or of extenuating circumstances. He pleads not for small sinners, but for great sinners. One said in former days, "O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great." He pleads for his own because their sins are many and great, and therefore he pleads his own wonderful work upon Calvary. His plea for them is all summed up in the words, "I have died," and so his intercession avails always for them. Had he not died, he could not be our intercessor. The atonement is the sole ground of intercession. Instead of the atonement doing away with the need of intercession, it is the only ground upon which any intercession can be made, and such intercession is effectual always.

"Are we mistaken when at the first in our experience we feel that we are condemned sinners?"

We answer positively, No. At the first in experience the law of God is doing its work, the commandment has come to us, as it did to Paul, and sin revives and we die. The law is to us then as a schoolmaster unto Christ. We are then hearing the voice of God in the law, and the law of God, holy, just and good, can but condemn us. When applied to the conscience by the Spirit, at once sin becomes exceeding sinful. The glorious gospel has not yet come in, and the sinner hearing only the law, feels its condemnation. He is not mistaken under the work and sentence of the law; he is condemned and he dies. It is needful that we travel as did Israel, first of all by Sinai, and hear its thunderings filling our souls with fear. This is a needful experience, otherwise we could not understand the gospel of salvation, or rejoice in it. God has thoughts of peace to us in all this experience, but we are not yet prepared to receive the knowledge of this, or to understand in its fullness just what the atonement of Christ means, nor just what infinite mercy, which provides the atonement, means. To gain some conception of these things there must be first a knowledge of our condemnation and need. To appreciate bread we must be hungry. To understand what redemption in Christ means, we must feel the burden of sin and condemnation, and in mercy God leads us into the knowledge of the condemnation, that we may come to rejoice in the salvation afterwards, he leads us one step at a time, he shows us one thing at a time.

"Did Christ atone for all our sins, or

only for those committed before we were regenerated, and after this we atone for our own sins?"

We do not need to repeat what we have already said in reply to this question: Christ atoned for all sin; all our sins, past, present and to come, were laid upon him; he bore them all away forever, and before God and his judgment bar not one of them shall ever arise to condemn the elect. We do not atone for sin after we believe, any more than for those committed before. If we sin, it is still true that we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus, who is the propitiation for our sins, these present sins which we commit now, as the text just referred to clearly shows. Beside, as said before, if one of the least of our transgressions be not embraced in the atonement of the Lord, we are forever without hope. But as all was embraced in his atonement, when we sin we are privileged to come, asking to be forgiven, and pleading as the justification of our plea, that Jesus has died, and that he has cleansed us from all sin by his one sacrifice.

"What is meant by the forgiveness of sins?"

As the atonement blots out all sin in the sight of God, so forgiveness blots out all sin from the conscience. The atonement regards sin as it is in the sight of God. Forgiveness regards sin as it rests upon our own heart and conscience. There can be no redemption without the atonement from the curse of the law, which says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." So there can be no peace of conscience until there is an assurance of forgiveness applied to the sin-burdened heart and conscience, and this assurance, as said before, comes only through the one fact that Jesus has died, and that full atonement has been made. Forgiveness brings us home to God in our own experience, reconciled, penitent and humbled. First there is conviction of sin, then God gives to the burdened soul the assurance, "Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee." Literally the word "forgive" in the original Hebrew and Greek means, "to put away," "to let go," and sometimes "to cover". The word "pardon" is from the same Hebrew and Greek words, and means the same things as forgiveness. The thought seems to be this, when assurance of forgiveness comes to a soul, it means that he is shown that his sin is taken away from him, as the scapegoat carried to a land of forgetfulness the sins of Israel, or that it is covered, as a robe covers all the body with all its deformity and uncleanness. Thus the very meaning of the word "forgive" involves the taking away of sin, or the covering it out of sight, and this is the work of the atonement alone.

"What is meant by the intercession of Christ?"

This is also already answered in substance, but we will add that an intercessor, as the word is used in the Scriptures, signifies one who stands between two others, bringing them together. Jesus stands between God and the humble sinner, and in him they are one. Redeemed unto God is an expression in the word that presents the full consummation of all the work of Christ, and through him we look to God and come to him, and through Christ God bestows all answers of prayer, and all spiritual blessings, and final glory upon all the redeemed. Jesus by the Spirit presents to us the love of God, and his glorious salvation provided for us, and he presents before God his loved ones in his own righteousness, and with the single plea for them, "I have died."

July 1st 1903

Elder F. A. Chick

A man's free-will cannot cure him even of the toothache, or of a sore finger; and yet he madly thinks it is in his power to cure his soul.

Toplady

Signs of the Times

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 2/79 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

TRUST IN GOD

In all our lives some
Shadow must fall
Death, sickness, and sorrow,
Must come to us all.

But God in His wisdom,
Each life doth control.
Tho deep in affliction,
His love He unfolds.

He can make the sick bed,
A pillow of down,
When in His dear presence
Sweet peace we have found.

No mortal hand the
Comfort can bring
As our dear Savior,
Our Jesus, our King.

Written by Alice Graham

CONSOLATIONS

O gracious, dear Lord, how can it be
That Thou hast given Thine own life for me;
That Thou shoulds't so live, and so humbly die
To save one so wretched and sinful as I?

And can it be such a faithful, true Friend
Shall never desert me; not e'en to the end'
When this life on earth shall be with me no more,
And all of this world's pains and sorrows be o'er?

Dids't Thou, gracious Lord, indeed, cast up for me
A Sacred, great Highway to blest eternity,
Where I shall always see Him, and that face to face,
And praise gladly, forever, Thy mercy and grace?

These things, O Great King, my soul now inquires,
And greatly, indeed, Thou my sad heart inspires,
For, when I did pray Thee my faint soul to fill,
Thou softly did answer, "In My good time I will".

O most precious words, and O, most sacred hour,
When I tasted, then, first His sweet love and great power!
I encouraged my weak soul to trust in the Lord,
Knowing, indeed, that He can't break His word.

But as time, for a year or so, rolled on apace,
My being groaned sadly to see again His kind Face,
I felt lost, quite bewildered, yea, forsaken by Him,
And all of earth's sunshine had now grown quite dim.

My pained soul cried out in the wildest dismay,
"Why did my tearful eyes e're see light of day?"
If now and eternally I must ever thus mourn".
I asked, "Why was I to this fearful end born?"

Fleeter than the arrow could strike its sure mark,
Swifter than the lightning could light the great dark,
Most wonderfully and powerfully His word came unto me,
And calmed in my soul a most tempestuous sea!

"Thou dost suffer," He said, "that in thy heart" (O, sweet story),
"Jesus might be revealed as thy Hope of Glory"!
He must have, indeed, known my wretched, lost estate.
That He such fair words to my poor soul did relate.

So, this is my Hope; He's my joy and my song,
He has so greatly blessed me in Him to be strong;
He has since often favoured me by His presence and word,
So my soul is enthralled by her Saviour and Lord.

Then, then my blest soul, it is true, Oh, indeed,
That, if Jesus so loved thee, for thy sins He did bleed.
Yea, He died, but He lives, and brings Heaven to thee,
And shall bless thee to praise Him through Eternity.

Edna McColl (Carey) Turner

(Written, originally, after hearing Elder George Ruston preach in Dutton, Ontario, about 1929, from the text: (Isaiah 35, verses 8, 9, 10.)

Dear Elder Poole,

I trust you and your dear family are well and enjoying the tender mercies of the dear Lord. I think of you often and enjoy reading your writings in the ***Signs of the Times.***

I well remember the few times I have heard you preach and I sincerely enjoyed you and your family coming by Monticello and stopping at my home to visit before you went on to Warren for services.

Brother Poole, I am sending you a letter I wrote back in 1975 on the first five verses of the 23rd chapter of Second Samuel. The brother to whom I wrote the letter typed it up and sent it back to me asking me to send it to the ***Signs of the Times*** for publication. I put the letter up but never sent it. A few days ago I was going through my letters received from the dear brothers and sisters down through the years. I kept them all and read them over again and again. I came across this one, and thought I would sent it to you and let you read it, and if you think it worthy, you can publish it in the ***Signs.*** Some dear reader might get a crumb from it. If you

don't think it worthy, just lay it aside and my love for you will be the same as it has been since I first met you. May the dear Lord continue to bless you and your loved ones is my prayer.

Your unworthy Brother in the
dear Lord, I hope,
Jesse J. Lawson
Monticello, Arkansas

Dear Brother,

Oh may we ever be made to thank and praise the dear Lord for His loving kindness and tender mercy to the children of men. How wonderful He is. Yes, wonderful is His name; His first name according to Isaiah, the prophet, when he said, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; And the government shall be upon His shoulder: His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." (Isa. 9:6, 7) Yes, my dear Brother, He is Wonderful to all of His dear children; so wonderful that they want to give Him all the honor, all the praise, and all the glory, for all things given to them. Blessed be His Holy Name for ever and ever. Amen.

Brother, for a long time I have wanted to write you my views on the first five verses of the 23rd chapter of Second Samuel, and now more so, since I have heard some of the Elders preach on it. Most of these I enjoyed very much. However, there seems to be a few words used by some which I do not understand. The scripture reads, "Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow. (II Samuel 23:5)

Dear Brother, this is very comforting to me. I have searched the scripture, and still search it, and it seems to me that it is the New Covenant, ordered in all things and sure, which "He maketh it not to grow". I have found in both the prophets of the Old and the New Testament that the church of our blessed Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, does grow, and will continue to grow until the last heir of salvation has been called out of nature's darkness into His marvelous light and liberty of the Gospel; each one being born of the Holy Spirit of God, and brought into the Kingdom, which is the church.

Now, my dear Brother, the dear Lord willing, I would love to write some of what I trust the dear Lord has shown me by His divine Spirit of this so great and glorious text. I know that without His Holy Spirit what I would write would be nothing and less than nothing, but vanity in His sight.

We read in the 23rd chapter of Second Samuel these words, "Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain. Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." (II Sam. 23:1-5)

Now, in the first verse I see an introduction of David, telling us first that these be the last words of David; also, who he was - the son of Jesse, and

he was anointed of the God of Jacob, and he was the sweet psalmist of Israel. The sweet Psalms which he wrote, singing praise to the great Almighty God, thanking Him for His kindness and tender mercies, praising Him for His love that He shed upon him, and testifying of Him proved that he was indeed the sweet Psalmist.

The second verse tells who is speaking, and how He speaks -- it was the Lord God speaking by David, and His words were on his tongue. The third verse tells what the Lord said, "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God". Now my dear Brother, I don't see David any more from the last half of verse three through verse four. But with my mind's eye, which I humbly hope is the eye of faith, I see the blessed Son of God from the time He was born in that lowly stall of the beast and wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger; and until He hung on the cruel cross of Calvary, and poured out His life's blood for all the dear ones who were given Him before time began. In Verse five, David, that great king who ruled over Judah and Israel for forty years, and was blessed by the Almighty God all through that time, knew that God was not speaking of him in the preceding verses, and he confessed, saying, "Although my house be not so with God, yet He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, for this is all my salvation, and all my desire; Although He make it not to grow". Oh, my dear Brother, how this fills my heart with joy and gladness, for I believe that when David said, "Although He make it not to grow," that he was telling us that it was all the salvation of all the redeemed of God, for every one whose name was written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world; and that everlasting covenant of salvation, ordered in all things and sure, does embrace the fulness of the Godhead. Isaiah, the prophet, clarifies this when he said, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be on His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." (Isa. 9:6) In Verse 7 it speaks of His government and peace that shall have no end, "Upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Oh, how beautiful are these words to a poor hungry and thirsty sin-sick soul. They are manna from heaven, and water from the River of Life.

Now, this everlasting covenant that God made with David was His word to David, that He would raise up one after (of) his seed to sit upon his throne, and rule it for ever. And in the book of John we read, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." (John 1:1-5) In verse fourteen we read, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth". Now, since it has been established that the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure is the Word of God, and the Word was made flesh, let us go back to Luke 1:26-32, "And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David: and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast

in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:". So after the birth of the blessed Saviour, we read in the second chapter of Luke about a devout man by the name of Simeon, and the Holy Ghost was upon him, "And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." Yes, my dear brother, this is the child that was born unto us, this is the Son that was given to us; this is the precious Lamb of God that the Lord was speaking of in our text. When He told David that, "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain", He was speaking of this same Son.

Dear Brother, I know you have seen many times in your life in the spring of the year after the ground is warmed and it comes a warm shower of rain, the tender grass springs up in perfect form without a blemish, so pretty and green. So in like manner was the life of the blessed Lamb of God, but in a more glorious way. There was nothing that He ever did, said, or thought, that would cause a blemish in Him; no, not one. He was just, holy, and righteous in all His ways. He was meek and lowly, and with an humble heart. He took upon Himself the form of a servant, and went about His Father's business of healing all manner of sickness, causing the lame to walk, the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the dumb to talk, raising the dead forgiving sin, casting out devils, and all the good things that He did. Besides all this He bore the sins of all His children which the Father gave Him before the foundation of the world. He bore their sins on the cross, and there He poured out His life's blood to redeem His people from all their sins. And before He died, He said, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." Yes, He was loving, and forgiving, even to the end. And now He has risen and ascended into heaven, and is King over His kingdom. He has set up His kingdom, which is His church here on earth, and He rules over it in love and tender mercy and feeds it with the Bread of life, which is His word, and He waters it from the fountain of living water. And my dear Brother, I believe that this living bread and this living water is so nourishing that the church will grow. The prophet, Malachi said, "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." (Mal. 4:2) So likewise, the church of the living God, when His servants or ministers preach to the church the blessed gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, then it will certainly grow. The apostle Peter said, "Wherefore, laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:". He also said in II Peter 3:18, "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen." Also Paul in the book of Ephesians gave some sweet and blessed doctrine, "In whom all the building fitly framed together growth unto an holy temple in the Lord." (Eph. 2:21) And to this I say, Amen.

Now my dear Brother, I will close trusting that I haven't written anything that offends you. If I have, I trust the dear Lord will grant you mercy enough to forgive me. I know that I have been scattering, and I don't have time to write all the things which I see in this great text.

Please spread the mantle of love over my imperfection and when you are down on your knees at the Throne of God's grace, I beg an interest in your prayers. Pray that the dear Lord will ever keep me humble at the footstool of mercy, and at the feet of all the dear saints, for that is where I want to be. When I can look up to my dear brethren, then I can see the perfect work wrought upon them by His Divine Spirit, and long to be like them.

Yours in a sweet hope,
Jesse J. Lawson

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CHRIST, THE KING-BRANCH

There are at least seven Bible verses which refer to the Lord Jesus Christ as the Branch. Psalm 80:15 is the first and most general in its extent and application. With its context it covers the entire scope of the gospel; the other six verses present Jesus Christ the Branch in the scope of the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John: Matthew sets Him forth as King; Mark displays Him as the Servant of God; Luke emphasizes His being the Son of Man; and John wrote of Him as the Son of God.

Admittedly, this is a simplified way of summarizing these inspired writers, as all four of them touch in some way upon those four aspects of His being. Nevertheless, there is more than an element of truth in this approach, and as a general rule this is not an improper way of thinking of these gospel accounts. This view answers in good measure to the four faces Ezekiel saw on each of the four living creatures, as he recorded in Ezekiel 1:5-10: each living creature had the face of a man (Jesus as the Son of Man), a lion (Jesus as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, Rev. 5:5, the King of the Jews), an ox (Jesus as the laboring Servant of Jehovah), and an eagle (King of the heavens, Jesus the Son of God). The apostle John saw a similar vision on the Isle of Patmos (Rev. 4:6f). There he saw four living creatures (Rev. 4:6, margin) of which he says, "And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle." Here the lion, the man and the eagle are the same as in Ezekiel. The only change is that the ox is replaced by a calf.

Briefly, then, with the symbolic language of Ezekiel and John in mind, let us look at a few of those scriptures which present Jesus as the Branch which is King.

Jeremiah, writing of the coming of Jesus Christ, said: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS (Jer. 23:5f)." Then, ten chapters later he wrote in similar language, but with important changes, "In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our righteousness (Jer. 33:15f)."

By comparing these two texts in Jeremiah it is evident that: (1) this Branch will be a King descended from David, and the legitimate heir to his throne: (2) this King shall be both successful and prosperous: (3) this King

shall effectually administer judgment, justice, righteousness and salvation; therefore, the salvation provided by Him will be in full harmony with righteousness and justice; (4) Israel shall again be identified with Jerusalem, for it is said of both Israel and Jerusalem that they "shall dwell safely." It must be said that Israel and Jerusalem shall "again" be identified with each other. When Jeremiah wrote, Israel and Judah were separate kingdoms and had been for over 350 years. The ten tribes known as Israel had nothing to do with Jerusalem since Israel, led by Jeroboam, had revolted against Solomon's son Rehoboam (I Kings 12). Jeremiah, however, saw the time coming when Israel will be identified with Jerusalem again, dwelling safely under the rulership of their prospering, saving King, the Branch.

The ultimate fulfillment of these two prophecies is that God's spiritual Israel--His elect from every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue--is identical to the inhabitants of His spiritual Jerusalem, the holy city, New Jerusalem which John saw coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. That spiritual Israel is composed of people of every nation, including every Gentile nation, appears from Paul's writings to the Galatians who were Gentiles by birth and nature: "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise (Gal. 3:29)"; "Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all (4:26)"; "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise (4:28)"; and, "As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God (6:16)." This last phrase, the "Israel of God," and indeed all of the above-quoted texts, would have certainly sounded foreign and meaningless to the Galatians had they not understood themselves to be included in that term; and, (5) Not only will spiritual Israel be one and the same as the New Jerusalem, but she, New Jerusalem, will be totally identified with her husband and King, for she shall wear His name--THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. It is "His" name in Jeremiah 23:6, but it is "her" name in Jeremiah 33:16!

In the fulness of time, God sent the King-Branch to be born of a virgin in Bethlehem. From the beginning of His earthly sojourn to its end He was recognized as the King.

Although the other gospel writers--Mark, Luke and John--certainly touch upon His kingship and His kingdom, none does so quite as thoroughly and systematically as does Matthew. From the opening verse of the New Testament, Matthew establishes his message: "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David..." (rightful heir of David's throne) "...the son of Abraham," the father of national Israel (over which Jesus Christ has every earthly and heavenly right to rule!).

Matthew then, after his opening verse, conclusively documents the forty-two generations from Abraham to Christ, not merely alleging, but proving his position that this Jesus is of the royal blood of the seed of Israel. No one proves his case more fully than Matthew, who quotes directly from the Old Testament scriptures over sixty times in his short book, and is only exceeded in this respect by the apostle Paul!

After recording the angel's visit to Joseph, Matthew gives the account of this King's birth and the events surrounding it: an august caravan of oriental dignitaries arrived one day in Jerusalem. These rulers of eastern kingdoms were quite civil and certainly polite toward the local ruler, king Herod, but they were not impressed by him. What was their real quest? They stated it plainly. "Where is He that is BORN KING OF THE JEWS? For we have

seen His star in the east..." And, what was their intent? "...and are come to worship Him."

We have here not three vagabonds, quietly stealing into Jerusalem by night and hastily leaving before sunrise, as has been depicted by worldly traditions. This was an awesome delegation from the eastern kingdoms, a caravan loaded with treasures, lead by men of astounding wisdom, attended by servants and armed guards, and all with the intent of worshipping a child of which the embrassed political and religious systems of Judea knew nothing. The result? When Herod the king had heard, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him (Matt. 2:3)! This was news; news such as had never been heard since the foundation of the world. A peasant-babe had invaded not only the province of Herod, but the Roman Empire as well!

Matthew records much about this King and His teaching about His Kingdom which must be passed by at present. Thirty-odd years after his birth, however, the Branch of David unpretentiously entered Jerusalem riding a colt, after having been known for years as the carpenter's son, the prophet from Nazareth, and the prophet of Galilee. Matthew recognizes this humble entry into Jerusalem as the fulfillment of another prophecy, one of Zechariah's: the inspired Matthew says, "Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass."

Again as it was at His birth, all the city of Jerusalem was moved, this time to say, "Who is this?" The crowd cried out, "...blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord..." (Mark 11:10) "...blessed be the KING that cometh in the name of the Lord..." (Luke 19:38). Again, the religious and political systems of the day were shocked.

Within a matter of days the King Branch was nailed to the Roman tree, bearing the sins of His people, for which purpose He was ordained before the foundation of the world. The Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, wrote a title and put it on the cross. The writing was, "JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS." Literally, then, "from the cradle to the grave," He was proclaimed to be the King, from His first worshippers who sought Him in Bethlehem to this Roman governor Pilate, who finally delivered Him to the mob and added this last postscript in Greek, Latin and Hebrew.

Thus the King came and went, unrecognized by the governments of His time and unbelieved by the religious leaders who plotted to destroy Him in the very name of religion. Born of a poor family, raised in a city of bad reputation, having no place of His own to lay His head; the song of drunkards, called a devil possessed Samaritan by the Pharisees, dying the death of a criminal--how could this Righteous Branch fulfill Jeremiah's prophecy of a successful and prospering King effectually administering judgment, justice, righteousness and salvation?

This very question is what was the stumblingblock to the Jews.

The answer to that question is, that Jesus the Lord and King, as God the Son, never has stopped ruling as King of Kings. He did not relinquish His sovereignty even as a babe in arms, even as He never ceased to be the Creator, God the Son. The fact was, He was perpetually ruling and constantly reigning in the very presence of His enemies, although they did not know it. "For the Jews require a sign (I Cor. 1:22)," and the sign they required was one of dazzling military power; they wanted a king that looked and acted like a "real" king, in splendor and might throwing off the Roman occupation troops and reestablishing Solomon's domain; someone worthy of the palace of David, and not some Galileean carpenter who camped

out at night with a dozen fishermen and other itenerants.

How then, in the days of His humiliation, how was it that even then He was fulfilling Jeremiah--". . .a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth...and righteousness in the land"? May the Lord give us the eyes to see and the heart to understand.

Considering His life and ministry very briefly, the following can and must be noted and commented upon as at least part of the answer: there never was a man who established such righteous foundations of judgment and justice as Jesus Christ did from the very beginning of His ministry. Who, as He, had ever so plainly taken ethics and morality, for instance, away from the level of mere outward conformity to long lists of do's and don'ts, and linked them (ethics and morals) with the basic inner attitudes of a person's heart? It is there, in that unseen domain of the heart, mind, soul and spirit where Jesus the King-Branch reigns, fully as well and as completely as He does in His governing of the universe! He preached that it is there, in a person's heart, that one finds true righteousness or true corruption. He left it plain that a man in his outside deportment could be as beautiful as a freshly whitewashed tomb, and like that tomb, be full of death and decay on the inside. Spiritual and moral rot is every bit as nauseating as physical rot, and more so: the repentant thief on the cross was purer in heart than was the corrupt high priest Caiaphas who would kill an innocent man because it was expedient to do so (Jn. 11:49f).

When the Righteous Branch Jesus Christ sat teaching His disciples on the slopes of Hattin, in the first minute of His speaking He established these two righteous principles which no mere human being will ever be able to administer: (a) Blessed are the poor in SPIRIT, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven; and (b) Blessed are the pure in HEART, for they shall see God!

No priesthood, no judge and jury, no governor or power among men can effectually legislate and enforce ethics, morals, or the true worship of God in these two areas of the spirit and the heart. Yet, here is exactly where Jesus Christ the King rules constantly in both the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction and the vessels of mercy which He had afore prepared unto glory. "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord as the rivers of water: He turneth it whithersoever He will (Prov. 21:1)." God here makes no distinction whether the king's heart be Herod's or David's, Caesar's or Solomon's, Pharaoh's or Melchisedec's. Any king's heart is included here; and who dares exclude the hearts of all the people at large from this sovereign rulership? "A man's heart deviseth his way but the Lord directeth his steps (Prov. 16:9)." "There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand (Prov. 19:21)." "Man's goings are of the Lord; how can a man then understand his own way? (Prov. 20:24)" "The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord (Prov. 16:1)." "Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear: to judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may no more oppress (Psa. 10:17f)."

As He continued what has been called "The Sermon on the Mount," the Christ traced the sins of murder and adultery to their roots of anger and lust in the heart. He established love of one's enemies as a basic element of being God-like; for God is good and kind even to the unthankful and the evil.

He then devastated mere outward, external show in religion–long, loud public prayers; fasting with a pained expression on one's face so that people would say, "Look! Good old So-and-so is fasting again;" and false prophets who

outwardly come in sheep's clothing but inwardly (in heart and spirit) they are ravening wolves. His disciples were bidden to lay up treasures in heaven "for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." It was on the basis of the heart-and-spirit condition that He here bid His disciples, "Judge not, that ye be not judged," for no man has the ability to understand the heart and spirit's motives of another, or for that matter, even those of one's own self--"how can a man then understand his own way?" Paul said, "I judge not mine own self. . .judge nothing before the time until the Lord comes, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts;" Can such an attitude be improved upon?

When it came to Jesus Christ's executing His judgment and justice, time and space here again fail us; we would cite His stern rebuke of the Pharisees who would have killed Him because He healed on the sabbath day: "Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment (Jn. 7:24)." Then, when a fringe-area follower asked Him to "Speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me," Jesus answered him with, "Man, who made me a judge or divider over you?" and immediately used the occasion as an object-lesson against covetousness–a heart condition.

Examples could be multiplied, but they would all center in this fact: Jesus the King Branch of Jeremiah does execute true judgment and justice in the hearts of His people; He always has, He did in the days of His earthly ministry, He does now.

In the experience of His people, this is exactly why they in many cases feel bitterly condemned in their heart, soul and conscience, even after outwardly seeming to conform to all that is required of them; it is because the King is executing judgment and justice in the midst of the earth, in the midst of their heart. They feel the condemnation because they know they have sinned and come short of the glory of God. The depravity of their own heart is such that no amount of consolation, comfort, or cheering up by friends and relatives can help at a time like this, for, "All the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart...(Zech. 12:12) "It is because the King killeth and maketh alive, He bringeth down to the grave and bringeth up (I Sam. 2:6-9)."

"Whom Jesus wounds he wounds to heal--
Oh! 'tis a mercy thus to feel:
There's none can mourn while dead in sin,
Thine are the marks of life within."

The fact that Jesus Christ is both Lord and King over both the external universe and the internal affairs of the heart, soul and spirit as well needs no proof to those who have experienced His movings; and no proof is possible for those who have never known His presence. For, how could the existence and rulership of Christ be proved to one who can neither see, feel, or comprehend Him in whom we live, move, and have our being?

May He be pleased to make His reign of sovereign grace increasingly manifest in our lives.

In that blessed hope,
(Elder) C. C. Morris

Kenly, N.C.
October 25, 1978

Dear Brethren,

There is a great desire in me to express my thanks to God for our 102nd session of the Black Creek Association and for the wonderful brethren that came to be with us. It seems that God poured out His spirit on both the speakers and those who heard. I have already spent many hours in deep thought and sweet remembrance of those three days. I hope that it is God's will to bless us to have many more meetings of such joy and to see brethren make such effort to

be with each other and share the wonderful gift given to us of God.

I hope you will see fit to print this in the ***Signs.*** I would like all that are in Christ to know our love for them. I have often wanted to write something to be printed but I am my own worst critic. I begin to feel unworthy and unfit so I leave it to others. I can't help but feel there are many that have beautiful thoughts that would comfort the Lord's people, yet out of fear and shame we keep them to ourselves.

God bless you to continue your good work.

By faith,
(Elder) Harvey C. Holland

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I have known several wealthy persons who, contrary to all sense and reason, have teased and harassed themselves with a fear that they should at last come to want. Equally, nay, infinitely more absurd and groundless, are the doubts of those who have fled to the righteousness and blood of Christ for salvation. Such must be in state of grace; they must and infallibly are accepted of God; and they certainly shall persevere to the end. They who think themselves the poorest in spiritual things, are immensely rich, without knowing it. But such is the state of man below, that if God does not lay crosses upon us we are sure to create crosses for ourselves.

Toplady

ORDINATION OF DEACON

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written Word of God, Moons Creek Church looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift. They, therefore, called for a presbytery to be formed on Sunday, October 15, 1978, at Moons Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Providence, N.C., for the purpose of examination of this gift, Brother Willie Neal, and if qualified, be ordained to the full work and service of Deacon.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together. The meeting was opened by prayer by Elder D. V. Spangler. Elder Kenneth Key was elected as Moderator and Elder Wallis Smith to serve as Clerk. Brother Sartin, acting as spokesman for the Church, delivered Brother Neal to the presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon were read by Elder Leonard Key from I Timothy, 3rd Chapter. Examinations followed by Elder R. S. Payne and Elder Julian Williams. The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifi-

cations of the candidate proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder Wallis Smith. The charge was delivered to Brother Neal by Elder D. V. Spangler using Acts 6th Chapter. During the charge Elder Spangler also told Brother Willie Neal that he had attended many meetings with his Mother and Sister Williams, and that he felt that Willie's Mother had rather this be done than for him to become the president of the United States. Brother Neal said that today was her birthday. Brother Neal was then delivered back to the church as an ordained Deacon.

The Minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed by prayer by Elder Julian Williams.

Elder Kenneth Key, Moderator
Elder Wallis Smith, Clerk

Mr. Irons says that Romans 5:1 in incorrectly punctuated, that the coma should follow the word justified; that the apostle did not mean to say that we are justified by faith, but that we have peace with God by faith. It seems Mr. Irons must have forgotten other declarations of the same apostle to the same effect as this, as we have it punctuated. Three times in the epistle to the Galatians he says distinctly that we are justified by faith. (Gal. 2:16, 3:8, 24.) Faith seems to be the active power by which we receive the justification which was affected by the death and resurrection of Christ, and when we thus experience that justification then we have peace with God.

"Fragments" by Silas H. Durand

A dear brother was lamenting his inability to remember the good things he heard in preaching; he feared they were not for him because he could not keep them in mind. "Last Sunday," he said, "I heard such a good sermon, and felt comforted while listening to it, but I had hardly left the house before I had forgotten it." I told him I saw a beautiful and vigorous stalk of wheat the other day, and it was crying. "What are you crying about?" I asked. "Why," it replied, "a sweet, refreshing shower fell on me yesterday, and now not a drop of it remains in sight." "You silly thing," I said, "the shower is inside of you." The good things that are ministered to the Lord's dear children by His gifts to the church go into the heart, into the life. The memory, however good it may be, can only retain the words, it cannot keep the spirit and life that was in them when Jesus spoke them to our souls. Never mind if you cannot remember the words of a sermon; if you heard it with comfort it was because the doctrine dropped upon your soul as the rain, and its speech distilled as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass, and it has gone into your life and caused spiritual growth.

"Fragments" by Silas H. Durand

September 29, 1978

Dear Editors, Brothers and Sisters and Friends:

I hope I love you for Christ's sake. I thank the dear Lord for you all. You are so good to send me the ***Signs of the Times.***

Dear Elder Spangler, it is with a sad heart, if the good Lord will, I want to write a little about my son's death. He was my first-born son. We called him Robert Odell Page. He was known in Burlington, where he lived and worked. He was born in October, 1926, and passed away April 23, 1978. He was found dead in his bed, from a serious heart attack. He suffered for a number of years with a serious heart condition.

Odell was 18 when his father died. My youngest son was only 3 years old at the time. He always thought of Odell as though he was his father.

Odell farmed the first year, then he was employed by the Western Electric Company in Burlington, until he became unable to work. He was then

called into the army, and served in the Korean war. He was married to Sue Stanfield. I have often thanked my Lord for her. They had four sons. He was a kind, devoted husband and father, and a faithful and kind son to me.

He helped to provide for me and the younger children, sending money from Korea. This helped me to put them through school. Five years ago he had a serious heart attack. We though then that he would leave us. Everything was used to stimulate his heart that the doctor knew. At one time a Doctor said, "He's gone!" He told us that he knew everything that was happening, and of the attempts to help him. He knew it was not his time to go. He said that in his mind's eye he could see a light which grew dimmer and dimmer, and then it began to grow brighter and brighter. He felt that his soul left his body, and went through a dark tunnel. Then he came out into a beautiful green garden from which he could see the golden gates.

He wanted Corinthians 13 read at his funeral. I believe he is with his blessed Jesus, and was chosen by God before the foundation of the world.

We loved him, but his Lord loved him more. The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away; blessed be His holy name. He loved life, but he was not afraid to die. Oh, dear Jesus help me to say, "Thy will be done."

He had read the Bible, and borrowed and bought books to prove there is no God. But he said, (Placing his hand over his heart), "You will never know God until He puts it right here!" I know this to be true. We cannot believe in the Lord without the Holy Ghost teaching us.

He was a wonderful person, and now we all miss him so much! But I have precious memories, and I feel sure that he is with his blessed Jesus.

Thank you, Brother Spangler. I love you and Sister Spangler, I hope, for Jesus' sake.

Humbly,
Mrs. Rosa Page

EDITORIAL

THE LAMB

(A taped message to Bro. Wylie Fulton)
(By Elder D. V. Spangler, Winter, 1978)

It seems a long time since we have visited with you, and we have thought of you many times (also, Brother Aaron). I have been confined to the home for over a month with what is called heart failure, and I feel like I want to send you a message.

I want to speak to you about the lamb that we find in God's word. So many things are set forth whereby it is a picture of our blessed Lord. In the first part of the Bible, we find that God took coats or skins and clothed Adam and Eve. And here is the picture that all the salvation there would be for sinners is the Lamb, no doubt.

The first offering of men unto God as a sacrifice that we find is Abel bringing a lamb. At the same time we find his brother bringing the work of his own hands. God accepted Abel before He accepted the lamb. So we must be accepted in our Lord Jesus before any offering we make to God is acceptable. God rejected Cain and his offering. When Cain slew his brother, we are told that his brother's blood cried to God from the ground, and so the first cry we find in the Bible that goes to God from man was the cry of blood. Abel made by faith a more excellent offering than Cain. And so, throughout the ages, all the offerings that God has accepted are offerings He, Himself, has prepared and wrought with faith in those who brought the offering to view by faith of the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

Throughout the Old Testament the picture of the lamb is a picture of humiliation, as the lamb, as an animal, is pictured as one who openeth not his mouth when led to the slaughter. I cannot but believe that God, in creating the lamb, created an animal that would

have characteristics typifying Jesus, our Lord. It was not by accident the lamb was to provide both food and clothing, either.

A picture of the Lamb is most wonderfully presented in the twelfth chapter of the book of Exodus where the picture of our sacrificial lamb was presented. God instructed Moses to prepare this sacrifice and told him that this was to be the beginning of months with him. "Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening." (Exodus 12:3-6) To me, here is a picture of the lamb that was to be the sacrifice and whose blood was to be put upon the lintel of the doors of the Gentiles, being partakers of the efficacy of the blood of Jesus.

There is something here that is hard to describe, that a single lamb could be presented and yet a whole congregation should slay the lamb, showing that all of God's people took part in the dying of the lamb as their sins were laid upon Jesus. And in the evening the lamb was to be offered. Christ was offered in the evening of the Law. Paul speaks of this when he said he was offered once in the end of the world for sin, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. "And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it." (Exodus 12:7) Here the lamb is connected with the door. Jesus said, "I am the door: by me if any enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." (John 10:9)

"And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it." (Exodus 12:8) They were commanded not to eat of it raw or sodden with water, because our Lamb, the Lamb of God, could not be contaminated in any way. The lamb was to be roasted whole. Jesus is a whole saviour to a whole sinner.

Three elements were involved in this passover service - unleavened bread, the blood of the lamb, and bitter herbs. We are told that they were not to waste any of the lamb, and that what was left over was to be burnt with fire, thus showing that none of the precious blood of Christ would be wasted. The death angel from God passed over that night and in every home where the blood of the lamb was not found, their firstborn died, even of the cattle. But where the blood of the lamb was upon the lintel of the door, the death angel passed over that home. Truly, truly, Jesus is our spiritual Passover.

In Genesis 22 we see the lamb in a figure when Abraham was told to take his son, his only son, Isaac, and offer him at the place that God would show him. What a faith it was that God had given Abraham. He didn't delay. He, together with Isaac and two others, immediately starts to the place that God had told him to offer his son. As they journeyed, Isaac carried the wood, and Abraham carried the fire; and the Bible says, "They went both together." Oh, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. Here is a picture of God the Father, and God the Son in a journey of salvation; and They went both together. How beautiful in all the scriptures is the Lamb presented connected with the Father--with our God. Isaac raised the question as they approached the mount. He said, "Behold the fire and wood: but where is

the lamb for a burnt-offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering:" (Genesis 22:7-8)

We leave this picture and we move on to the lamb as a sacrifice on the Jewish alters. In the 118th Psalm we find this scripture, ".....bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar." (V. 27) The altars whereby the sacrifices were offered had four corners, four horns, and to these horns the sacrifice was bound with cords. We see in this a picture of Christ being bound in an eternal covenant to die, but we also see a picture of a lamb who is willing to die. The great picture of salvation through the blood of the Lamb would not be complete if we did not see the Lamb opening not His mouth when being led to the slaughter, showing His willingness to die for us. We also see Him bound in a covenant with His Father to die, as the lamb was bound on the Jewish altar. In the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, (one of the most wonderful chapters of the Bible) Christ is pictured as a Lamb brought. ".....he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." (Isa. 53:7) Could God have shown in any greater way His love for sinners than by the Lamb being bound and the Lamb being led as a lamb and not opening his mouth? The Old Scriptures abound with the suffering of Christ and the glory that should follow, especially the 53rd chapter of Isaiah. In the New Testament, the lamb is mentioned three times. In John 1:29 the Apostle said, ".....Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." If the world under consideration is all of mankind then universalism is true. If the world he refers to is both the Jew and Gentile of the election of grace, then election is true. Jesus commanded His disciples not to go into any city of the Samaritans or to the Gentiles, but "go ye rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." When He rose from the dead, He commanded them to go into all the world, which refers to Jew and Gentile, and preach the gospel. John said, "He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world." This is believers, both Jew and Gentile.

Peter speaks of Jesus as being led as a lamb to the slaughter. Then we find the expression in Acts 8:33, "In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation?....."

There was a hour and a moment when God forsook His Son, when the Lamb could not refer to God as the Father, when He was made a perfect sacrifice for His people. His judgment was taken away. The only way He could be a perfect, satisfactory sacrifice was for God to leave Him momentarily alone. Then He said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Finally, as He leaves the world, He could say, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit", thus addressing Him as Father, again.

In I Peter 1:18, 19, we read, "Forasmuch as ye know that we were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:"

It is a wonderful thing to note that in the book of Revelation the Lamb is mentioned 25 times - more than in any other book of the Bible. In the fifth chapter of Revelation we find the Lamb whom God has highly exalted at His own right hand. "And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book,

neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." (Rev. 5:1-6) It is noticable that the Lamb now was in the midst of the throne and in the midst of the elders. He is first called the Lion of the tribe of Judah to show His strength and His power, and then He is the Lamb as it had been slain, and we notice in the thirteenth verse of the fifth chapter, "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." Notice, my dear brother, it was to him that sitteth on the throne and unto the Lamb equally, that power and glory were given.

The sixth chapter shows that the Lamb has the power to loose the seals mentioned in the fifth chapter, and as we follow through and follow this Lamb throughout the book of Revelation, we find in the sixteenth verse of the sixth chapter that there will be a time when the enemies of Christ will say to the mountains, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." Notice here, "he that sitteth on the throne, and from the Lamb". In the twelfth chapter and the eleventh verse, we behold a people with a power given to them by the Lamb, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."

In the fifteenth chapter we find the song that they were singing, "And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." (Verse 3) We often sing the words, "Awake and sing the song of Moses and the Lamb". In this we honor Moses the same as the Lamb, but in the Bible the distinction is made. They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb. There are two songs. In the seventeenth chapter we find that the enemy will make war with the Lamb. "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen and faithful." (Verse 14)

In the thirteenth chapter of Revelation, the eighth verse, "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." They will worship the beast. Observe the expression, "The Lamb's book of life". And here we find it "the book of life of the Lamb", showing that throughout all the scriptures Jesus is the book of life of the Lamb, and the Lamb's book of life, and this book is presented to us in the 139th Psalm when David said, ".....and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." (Verse 16)

In the nineteenth chapter of Revelation it says, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb....." (Verses 7-9)

In the twenty-first chapter, there is more said about the Lamb, probably, than in any chapter of Revelation. What

a wonderful thing is presented in this chapter. It is the closing of the Bible. "And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." (Verse 22) This is the city that has the streets of pure gold. "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." (Verse 23) "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." (Verse 27)

(Conclusion of taped remarks)

BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God! Rest for the weary!
Weary, restless now I come;
Yea, would quit a world so dreary,
To enjoy thy peaceful home;
Quit this world to dwell with Thee
Quit this dark mortality!

Lamb of God! Is not thy presence
Heaven, ecstatic, fullest joy?
Constitutes it not the essence
Of delight without alloy,
Ceaseless bliss, felicity,
Such as can but flow from thee?

Lamb of God! I come dejected,
Fearing, hoping, and dismayed;
Foes of strength, oft unsuspected,
Lurk in sunshine and in shade.
Lamb of God, what arm but thine
Can repel such foes as mine?

Lamb of God! As chief of sinners,
Well deserving wrath, I come;
Wilt thou rank me with beginners
In the race to heaven, to home?
Though I halt along the road,
Holy Lamb, lead me to God.

On Thy bosom lay me Saviour,
Bear the outcast in thy arms'
Let the world, in it's endeavor,
Though it tempts, allures, alarms,
Know each arrow hurl'd at me,
When it pierces, reacheth Thee.

Lamb of God! No shade of evil
Can infest that glorious place;
Scorning world nor tempting devil
Enter that bright realm of space;
Only spotless purity
Finds access to heaven and Thee.

Lamb of God! Whilst here a stranger
Be my faithful, constant guide;
Shield from evil, defend in danger,
Comfort, strengthen, and provide,
Till I quit the world of woe,
And what grieves me - leave below.

Ann Hennah

What can be more feeble than the ivy, the jessamine, or the vine? Yet these, by the assistance of the tendrils, or claspers, rise and are supported until they sometimes mount as high as the tree or the wall that sustains them. So the weak believer, laying hold on Jesus by the tendril of faith, rises into the fulness of God, defies the invading storm, and becomes as a fruitful vine upon the wall of an house.

Toplady

The great secret in religion - that secret which is only with those who fear the Lord, (Psa. 25:14) and to whom He shows His covenant - is first to get a sensible union with the Lord, and then to maintain it. But this union cannot be got except by some manifestation of His Person and work to our heart, joining us to Him as by one Spirit. This is the espousal of the soul, whereby it is espoused to one husband as a chaste virgin to Christ. (II Cor. 11:2) From this espousal comes fellowship or communion with Christ; and from this communion flows all fruitfulness, for it is not a barren marriage. But this union and communion cannot be maintained except by abiding in Christ; and this can only be by His abiding in us. "Abide in Me, and I in you."

J. C. Philpot

doubled, of gold, blue, purple, scarlet and fine twined linen, span long and a span wide. This was the breastplate, and was called the breastplate of judgment. Further, in this breastplate were to be set twelve stones in settings or "inclosings" of gold. These stones were to be arranged in four rows of three stones each: the top row was a sardius, topaz and carbuncle; the second row was an emerald, sapphire and diamond; the third row was a ligure, agate and amethyst; and the last row was a beryl, an onyx and a jasper. On each of these stones was the name of one of the tribes of Israel, so that the twelve stones complete in their settings of gold stood for the twelve tribes of Israel. This handsome set of stones all inclosed in gold was set in the breastplate, but could be removed therefrom when the breastplate was not in use.

Now, reading the thirtieth verse of the twenty-eighth chapter of Exodus, we have this: "And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the Lord: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually." The Urim and Thummim, therefore, we believe were the twelve stones in their gold settings, which together made a solid piece of jewelry to be set in the breastplate. The breastplate could not be worn without it when the high priest went in before the Lord to make intercession for the sins of his people. The Urim and Thummim were not two transparent stones to be used like spectacles to read through, but twelve stones engraved with the names of the twelve tribes, to be worn by the high priest in his intercessory work.

Turning now to the eighth chapter of Leviticus, where we are told how Moses carried out the directions given him in Exodus, we find Moses duly consecrated Aaron and his sons to the priesthood, as he was divinely ordered to do. In the eighth verse it says: "He put the breastplate upon him; also he put in the breastplate the Urim and the Thummim." Here we see Moses not only put the breastplate on Aaron, but set in the breastplate the twelve stones in their settings of gold, which constituted the Urim and Thummim.

Now, turning to the twenty-seventh chapter of Numbers, Aaron having died in Mount Hor, we find his son Eleazar priest in his stead. Joshua, the new leader of Israel, is brought before Eleazar, that Eleazar may ask counsel or advice for him according to the Urim. This is the first place in the record where the Urim is spoken of as being a counsellor. In some way, we do not know how, the Urim had the power to communicate the will of God unto the high priest, that he might communicate this will to the people. In I Samuel 28:6, we have it that Saul inquired of the Lord, but that the Lord would not answer him in any way whatever, "neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets." It seems, therefore, that the Urim and Thummim, the twelve stones worn in the breastplate of the high priest, not only represented the people for whom the high priest stood, but also that through them was reflected the answer or counsel of God to the high priest, that he might make it known to the people.

In the prophecies of Ezra and Nehemiah we have the history given us of the return of the Israelites from captivity in Babylon. In the returning remnant there were some who claimed to be priests, but whose pedigree was lost, so that they could not prove their right to be among the priests. These the Tirshatha (which is a Persian name for governor) prohibited from exercising their priestly office until there should appear a priest having the Urim and Thummim. Thus some Bible students have concluded the Urim and Thummim to have been lost, so that the priests after the captivity were unable to wear it. This evidently Joseph Smith

believed, for he claims to have found these lost stones on a lonely hillside in New York. However, it taxes our credulity to believe that a set of jewels lost in Judea somewhere around 600 B.C. should turn up in 1823 A.D. in New York State. We believe that the record in Ezra and in Nehemiah means not so much that the Urim and Thummim were lost, as that the governor compelled the upstart priests to produce those stones as a proof of their right to the priesthood, inasmuch as their names could not be found among the pedigrees of the priests. As much as to say, I cannot find your names in the record as having been priests when we went into captivity, but if you can produce a priest having the Urim, I shall accept that as proof of your priestly right, otherwise you shall not eat of the most holy things nor enjoy any of the privileges of those who are rightfully priests. This means, then, not that the Urim was lost, but that their pedigrees, if they ever had any, were lost.

Thus far we have referred to every text where the Urim and Thummim are mentioned, except one. Let us now turn to that, Deut. 38:8. Here we have the prayer of Moses unto the Lord, just before his death, in which he seeks the blessing of God upon each of the twelve tribes. For the tribe of Levi, which tribe contained the priesthood of Israel, he asks: "Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah." This would mean that Moses pleads with the Lord not to take away from the tribe of Levi the priesthood, that is, the right to wear Urim and Thummim, notwithstanding the fact that the Lord proved Aaron at Massah and found him to fall short in the trial which befell at the waters of Meribah. Moses did not want the Levites to forfeit their priestly rights on account of Aaron's lapse at the waters of Meribah.

It would seem that it was the purpose of the Lord to answer Moses' prayer, for the Levites continued in the priesthood throughout Israel's existence as a nation. But there is a spiritual import in this prayer of Moses that is of more account than its literal application to Aaron and the Levites. This reference is to Jesus. Jesus is God's Holy One, the great High Priest of our profession. The Urim and the Thummim surely never depart from him. He wears the names of all his saints on his breast continually. The breastplate of judgment is his garment, and his people are his jewels in that judgment. The day of vengeance was in his, Jesus', heart. Instead of the law of divine justice wreaking its vengeance upon the guilty sinner, his sins were imputed unto the blameless Savior, so that he was made sin for his people and paid himself the full penalty of all the guilt of his people. Thus the day of vengeance was his portion when the year to redeem his people had come. He wore then, as the great High Priest of his people, their judgment when he went to offer himself as a sacrifice for their sins, without spot unto God. The judgment which should have in strict justice been theirs, in mercy to them fell upon his innocent head.

When Jesus offered unto God this sacrifice of himself, his people like jewels were in the breast of his love impressed; he wore the Urim and Thummim when he went beyond the veil of his flesh to appear in the presence of God for us. O holy thought, with what heavenly comfort fraught! The word "Urim" is the plural form of the Hebrew word "ur", meaning light; the word "Thummim" is the plural form of the Hebrew word "tam", meaning perfection. Thus the "Urim and Thummim" means lights and perfections.

Spurious gems, made of paste or something else, have not the quality of glistening and sparkling like real gems.

Real gems look as though a miniature sun were hidded within them. So God is hidden in his people and shines out of them. This causes them to be lights in an otherwide dark and sin-cursed world. "Ye are the light of the world," Jesus says. Why is the church the light of the world? Because, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." Arise and shine, thy light is come, says Isaiah to the people of God. The glory of God is risen upon us from the empty tomb which the Savior occupied. The Spirit and power of his resurrection dwell in his people, making them to shine as stars in the kingdom of the Father. James says God is the Father of these lights. Not only the light of God is shining in his saints, but the perfections of Jehovah are reflected there also.

The name "Urim and Thummim," then, fits in very well for a term by which to signify the jewels of election embraced in the covenant which God made in his Son before time began. When Jesus died, these lights and perfections were secure in him to shine with renewed and undimmed lustre when he should rise from the dead.

As we have already mentioned, it was a function of the Urim to give the counsel of God to the people, of course through the high priest. Individual members of the church seek the mind of God as it is reflected in and through the church. That is, if a man thinks he is called to preach, the church collectively is his judge in that matter. If they say he has no gift to preach, he must accept that counsel as truth in the matter, for no man is judge of his own gift. If one has a desire to be baptized, he judges not his own case, but the church as a body judges him worthy or not worthy of that holy ordinance. The counsel of God is revealed through the Urim or through his people, who are his jewels composing the diadem in the hand of our God.

Too much stress cannot be placed upon this capacity of the church to be the counsellor of its individual members. We would do better than we do if we more frequently sought the advice and counsel of our mother, the church. Preachers too often try to impose their own judgment on their churches, instead of seeking to know the mind and will of the churches. Not only preachers do this, but often a member of the church seeks to have his own way about matters without knowing or trying to discover what is the will of the brethren in those things. We are really servants one of another, and we do well to remember this and to act accordingly. Let us seek the counsel of God at the Urim, and not at the shrine of self-love and ambition.

Today is cold and snowy, the roads are blocked with snow, so that we are not able to fill, this morning, our regular appointment with the New Valley Church. Since we cannot talk with the little flock at New Valley, it seems good to sit down and talk by means of the pen with the dear children of God scattered all over this broad land of ours. May this new year just dawning be filled with the blessings of God to all our dear readers, and whether or not it be God's will to bring about peace among the nations of the earth now warring, may he grant you that spiritual peace in Christ Jesus that passeth all understanding.

Jan. 1918 H. H. Lefferts

Believers should not have a slavish dread of death. Where is the infant that is afraid to go to sleep in its nurse's arms?

Toplady

A Christian too conversant with people of the world, resembles a bright piece of plate too much exposed to the air: which though in reality it continues plate still, yet grows tarnished and loses its fine burnish, and needs a fresh cleansing and rubbing up.

Toplady

MARTHA ONA ADELINE VIA MARTIN

At the request of Old Mt. Church, we will try to write a few lines in memory of sister Martin, one that we all loved and esteemed so highly.

Sister Martin was born June 30th, 1880, in Ferrum, Virginia. She later moved to Danville, Virginia. She was married to the late George W. Martin. They had one son, James Albert Martin, "deceased."

She is survived by six grandchilden and seven great grandchildren.

Sister Martin joined Old Mt. Church February 18, 1968, and was a faithful and devoted member, attending the church she loved so much until she was 97. Then she became disabled, and was put in a nursing home in Martinsville, Virginia, where she left the sorrows of this world behind when called home to be with her Lord, February 1, 1978, at the age of 98.

The funeral was held Saturday, February 4, at 2:00 at Lynch Funeral Home Chapel in Rocky Mount, Virginia, by Elder Amos Hash.

She was laid to rest in the family cemetery at Ferrum, Virginia, there to wait the day when the saints of God will arise in the likeness of their Savior. Resolved, that a copy be placed on the church record, a copy be sent to the ***Signs of the Times,*** and a copy be sent to the family. Done by order of Old Mt. Church, September 16, 1978, written by Ballard and Sarah Barker.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
Sarah Barker, Clerk

ALICE ELIZABETH HALE

With a portion of my heart empty forever because God has called my dearest friend home, I shall try to write her obituary. She was our much beloved sister, Alice Elizabeth Hale. She was born July 4, 1937 and died July 20, 1978 at the age of forty-one years and sixteen days.

She is survived by her husband, Elder R. H. Hale; three sons, Max, Dexter, and Darryl Hale; one grandchild, Jennifer Elizabeth Hale; her parents, Elder and Mrs. R. O. Simmons; two brothers, Loyd and Eugene Simmons; and other relatives, plus a host of friends.

Sister Elizabeth loved the Old Baptists and was known far and wide for her hospitality and careful entertaining of the saints. She once expressed to me that it was a pleasure for her to administer to them and it didn't seem like work at all.

She had a malady that lasted two years and wore her natural body away a little by degrees, but thanks be to God, it never altered that Spirit and great faith she had that whatever her heavenly Father had in store for her, she would face (with His strength) without complaint -- and that she did. She was blessed to enter death with the same faith in which she had lived.

In the year 1972, she was baptized by her husband, Elder R. H. Hale, and was received into the fellowship of the Mountain Fork Assembly.

So many, many more things I could extol about this dearly beloved sister and her loveliness of grace, but time and paper would never permit. The Lord made us willing at the end, and when he received back the spirit which He had given we could only cry, Thank you God.

Elder Stanley Phillips, Elder Otis Freeman, Elder Donald Johnson, and Elder David Mattingly spoke comforting words to the family and a large gathering of friends at Spry's Funeral Home in Huntsville, Alabama, after which she was laid to rest in the Miller Cemetery where her body awaits that great day -- the day of the trumpet and the summons to come forth and be forever with the Lord.

We loved her, we miss her, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

By: Lavonia W. Lee

DORSEY W. COCHRAN

It is with a sad heart and tear filled eyes that I attempt to write a few lines in memory of my husband who died December 20, 1977.

God, at His appointed time, called from our midst Dorsey W. Cochran, who was 73 years old. He joined the church at Little Hope in Montgomery County in 1948. He was a Deacon and faithful member until his death. He spent most of the last three months of his life in the hospital where all that skilled hands and family could do for him. He never complained any through all his illness. He knew he could not get well. I overheard him tell our Pastor, Elder Lane Carter, that he

felt like he was such a burden on his family, and that he had been praying to die. He told me lots of times he was not afraid to die.

Besides his wife, he leaves a son, Jack W. Cochran; daughter-in-law, Barbara; two grandchildren, Jackie Jr., and Anne Cochran; five sisters, Mrs. Hattie Hibbitts, Mrs. Pearl McDaniel, Mrs. Delphia McDaniel, Mrs. Mary Gardner, and Mrs. Martha Butt; along with lots of friends and relatives.

His funeral was conducted from John M. Oakey's Funeral Home in Salem, Va., by Elder Lane Carter and Elder Roy Agee. His body was laid to rest in Little Hope Cemetery, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

Written by his wife,
Pauline Cochran

SISTER MILLIE JANE ROEBUCK

It is with a deep sense of unworthiness that we try to comply with the request of the church at Flat Swamp to write a memorial of our beloved sister in Christ, Millie Jane Roebuck. The daughter of the late James Alexander and Millie Frances Roebuck, she was born September 5, 1890, in Martin County, and passed away August 1, 1978, in Pittman Nursing Home in Chocowinity.

A graduate of East Carolina University of Greenville, she taught in the Martin County schools until she retired in 1965.

Sister Millie united with the Primitive Baptist Church in 1960 and was baptized by Elder A. B. Ayers. She remained a steadfast loving member until her death, always filling her seat as long as she was able to attend.

Surviving is one brother, Raleigh Roebuck, of Marianna, Arkansas, several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were conducted in the Flat Swamp Primitive Baptist Church, August 3, 1978, at 11:00 by the Elder Joseph Leggett and Elder M. E. Garner. Her body was laid to rest in the Robersonville Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, there to await the coming of her blessed Savior.

The Flat Swamp Church extends her deepest sympathy to Sister Millie's family. We feel this loss deeply, yet all must submit to the will of God, believing that our loss is her eternal gain.

Done by order of Conference on Saturday before the first Sunday in August 1978.

Elder N. L. Ambrose, Moderator
Hassel Allen, Clerk
Selma Roebuck
Mary J. Jenkins, Committee

SISTER SALLIE BETT ROBERTSON

In memory of my lovely Aunt and Sister, Sallie Bett Robertson.

Sister Robertson passed away Sunday, August 20, 1978, in Memorial Hospital of Alamance, making her stay on earth 81 years, 4 months, and 16 days.

She was born April 4, 1897, to the late George P. and Elizabeth B. Oakley McKinney. She was the wife of the late Marcellus P. Robertson, an Alamance County Sheriff, who was killed in the line of dury of December 7, 1938.

Surviving is one brother, Dewel McKinney, along with a brother-in-law and sister-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Collie Robertson, who made their home with her after the passing of her husband. As we heard so beautifully set forth at her funeral, they took her under their wing and gave her the best of care all these years. May God's richest blessings rest with them

Her funeral was conducted, as she requested, at Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church, by her pastor, Elder Wallis A. Smith assisted by Elder Donald E. Smith. Her body was laid to rest in Pine Hill Cemetery in Burlington.

She united with Bush Arbor Church in June, 1942. She was devoted to her church. When physically able, she attended her church services and manifested a great love for her Saviour and Brethren.

Though she will be greatly missed by relatives and friends, we feel our loss is her gain.

As she has said on many occasions, "If God is mine, I'm all right". I feel I was made reconciled to her passing the day of her funeral. When I entered the church door to view her body for the last time, it seemed her voice said, "Betty, I'm alright", and I do feel that she is.

Written by one who loved her dearly, her niece, Betty Foster.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 3/79 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

708 N. Casa Grande Circle
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MEDITATIONS ON ISAIAH 53:10

Gethsemane hides Jesus on
That awful night of old.
Was suffering e'er on mortal face
As one can there behold?
He agonizes, sweats as blood,
As God His death demands;
And yet the pleasure of the Lord
Shall prosper in His hand.

Here knelt the Christ, the living God
Made like unto His men;
Tempted as we are, yet without
The taint or spot of sin.
Imputed sin where no sin lay
Was placed upon this Man,
And yet the pleasure of the Lord
Shall prosper in His hand.

His bride composed of sinners from
Each nation, tribe and tongue;
All dead in sin, both bond and free,
The aged and the young.
How can He bear the awful curse
Jehovah's law demands?
And yet the pleasure of the Lord
Shall prosper in His hand.

His bride she was ere time began;
His bride she will e'er be,
And this shall be her only song
In all eternity:
"All we like sheep had gone astray,
What a disloyal band!
And yet the pleasure of the Lord
Shall prosper in His hand.

"Wounded for our transgressions, bruised
For our iniquities;
Though He in life and death had done
All that the Father pleased.

thing of the Lord." (Jas. 1:6-7).

Brethren, if I may dare address you so, have you ever experienced such as this, or am I alone? I hope you have; not that I wish this upon you, but that I might receive comfort in knowing that my experiences are as yours. If our experiences are alike, then I may feel that my hope is not dead. Paul tells us that we are saved by hope; but when left to myself I constantly murmur and complain; not remembering that tribulations worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope.

May God grant us faith (for faith is His gift to us and not of ourselves) to trust in Him and not murmur and complain at our lot. May He also grant that you remember this poor worm in your prayers of faith.

I have at times been comforted by reading the experiences of others. Now I feel a bit comforted in writing my own and feel the efforts of some value even if someone else is not comforted.

In bonds of love,
Clifford Wilbanks
217 Bastrop Drive
Monroe, La. 71203

1320 W. Buffalo
Holbrook, Arizona 86025

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is my check for $15.00 to renew my and my mother's subscription for another year. You may use the balance to further the circulation of the ***Signs of the Times.***

I look forward to my ***Signs*** each month. I live in Arizona and there are no Primitive Baptist Churches in the area. It is a great blessing to me to be able to read what I believe even if I can't hear it preached. I find great comfort in it and the taped sermons and hymns my brother in the faith, Elder Grady Dearmon, sends me from time to time. I have especially enjoyed the "Bank of Faith" article each month. I feel a fellowship with the author as I find some parallels in his experiences and my own and it gives me great comfort. I hope you will continue with articles of this kind.

Thanks,
Vera Nell Potter

Greenville, Alabama

Dear Elder Smith,

I'm sending you a little poem that I wrote while sitting by my dear father's sick bed. In the wee hours of the morning I so felt my Saviour's blessings as these words came from the depths of my soul and I was made to rejoice in my God, Whose presence I felt to be so near.

It is my prayer that God will so wonderfully bless you Editors of the ***Signs of the Times*** to keep sending out the glorious truth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Praise His Holy Name.

In bonds of love,
Emmie L. Grayson

MY JESUS

Jesus is my song,
I love to sing all day long.
To sing His glorious praise,
In all His works and ways.

Jesus is my light
That guides me day and night
Oh! Happy shall I be
As long as my Jesus is with me.

Jesus is my all
To Thee, to Thee I call
Lord give me thy grace
And the smilings of Thy face.

Jesus is my love
Coming to me from above
May I be blest as He gives
To say, "I know my Redeemer lives".

Grace cannot be severed from its fruits. If God gives you Paul's faith, you will soon have James' works.

Toplady

LETTERS FROM SISTER PICKRAL

September 2, 1978

My dear Elder Spangler,

A few months ago I found some words addressed to you under the date of August 1, 1974. Having been unable to "finish" the letter or to discard it, I will try to mail it to you today. I carried it with me to several meetings where I expected to see you, but I find it still with me. I didn't rest well last night and finally arose very early, ate breakfast, and began reading the ***Signs*** (March, 1950, issue, a letter from Sister Duffus). I thought of the "unfinished" letter to you and here you find me. Tears fell as I read those words again for I knew the story behind each word although I'm not blessed to tell the "story" as I would like. Could it be, my dear one, that my "story" is simply Jesus, and who can tell of Jesus to his satisfaction? I am too sinful to speak His Name. But sinner though I am, I yet hope it is He who has blessed me.

I must try to stop and put words together. Elder Spangler, I enjoyed the meetings I have attended this summer, and the love there seen is still my food. I was not blessed to be at Springfield in August and hope the dear Lord shall bless me to meet with the dear ones this month.

I hope that you and Sister Spangler are well and that the dear Lord reveals a blessing to you each day.

With love, I hope,
Reidy Pickral

August 1, 1974

My dear Elder Spangler,

I received the August ***Signs*** tonight. I had been looking for it and had a happy feeling when I saw it in the mail box.

My first memory of the ***Signs*** is seeing my Mother read it and read it to my Daddy. He was blind in his late years and I can still see her read to him as he sat in the rocking chair. Sometimes she would stop and they would talk a few minutes. Another distinct memory of the ***Signs*** is after the dear Lord took my Daddy. Often when Mother received a copy she would take the previous one to a sister (in Christ) who lived nearby. At times I went with her to visit this dear old lady, and I remember telling Mother one time that I wished she wouldn't give the ***Signs*** away, but just loan them. Now I didn't read them at this time in my life.

Also, at this time in life I was very conscious of wanting to hear one thing when I went to preaching and that was that the dear Lord came into the world to save sinners. I had become very conscious of the fact that I was a sinner. A few years back I had heard someone say that we sin every day. My reaction to that was to resolve to get up one morning and not do anything bad. Well, my dear one, when this resolution came to my mind again I had already sinned in that day. Needless to say, rather than my sins disappearing, they grew worse.

In following years I read the ***Signs*** some but didn't understand much, so didn't read much. I still wanted to hear that Jesus came into the world to save sinners. I heard the preachers speak of hope and grace but I didn't understand these. I didn't understand experience, either. I had nothing I wanted to tell anyone. I only knew I was a sinner.

One night I was reading my Bible, trying to find something to make a sinner feel better, and I saw words that made me feel better than I had in a very long time. I remember thinking that maybe I can rest now because it plainly says Jesus forgave a sinner. I have always though the words were in Corinthians but have never been able to see them as I did that particular night. The years passed and the time came I have been trying to tell you about.

After the dear Lord took my Mother I began reading the ***Signs*** every chance

I had. I do not remember thinking anything but that the Baptists were the best people in the world. In fact, some of the condemnation I had felt in the past was knowing myself and knowing I was not good enough to be with them, and the condemnation grew so heavy I felt I would have to change or I couldn't even go to their meetings. When reading the ***Signs*** in this time I saw that all the dear ones confessed to be sinners. To this day I do not think of the dear Lord's people as sinners except in the sense that the God of Heaven has said He looked and there was none good, no, not one. I believe that because it is the word of God. Yet in the sense of my brothers and sisters, you are the dear ones the dear Son came into the world, in the form of man, to cleanse. The dear Lord Himself, I hope, hastened the revelation to me that He is God of Heaven and earth, that He had been leading me all the days of my life, that all the agony, pain, condemnation, and grief were for my good. And He revealed to me that all these are as nothing compared with the joy of one prayer answered by Him.

Now what do I hear when I go to hear preaching or sit to read the writings of those blessed by the same God of Heaven and earth who I hope has blessed me? The grace of the dear Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ! How wonderful it is to hear the things you hope the Lord has done for you. To hear of His love, mercy, and charity is so joyful to that soul who has tasted the Lord is good.

LETTER FROM SISTER LUCHT

Dear Brother Poole,

Today you spoke of Lam. 3:21, and of course, that included most all of the chapter. That message seemed to put a cap upon Scripture that has been on my mind for over a week, and I feel I want to tell you about it tonight, before the outside world has a chance to get mixed up in my thoughts.

I always read a portion of Scripture each morning after I have had prayer. The other morning I felt I wanted to read a bit of Revelations, so I turned to it, got so engrossed in it that before I realized it I had slowly and quietly read 15 chapters. If the phone had not rung, I would probably have finished the book, but I saw it was late and I had not had breakfast. But I had enjoyed the whole thing as I had never been blessed to before. But that was not what I wanted to tell you. I am sure you have found the same beauty in the verses I will write upon, so if my thoughts are not your thoughts, just remember I am only me and very unlearned, I feel. The beauty and depth of the Word of God is beyond the comprehension of mortal minds.

The subject you were blessed to speak upon was basically "hope". In all the trials, tribulations, sufferings, and whatever else Jeremiah had to endure, he always came back to the fact that there was Hope. What a sweet word! Our Hope, as a true believer, is great, if our faith and trust rests completely in or on the Word of God, not straddling the fence, ready to fall which ever way is easiest and most comfortable. A believer's way was never intended to be an easy one, because as true followers of Jesus Christ, our way is beset by all kinds of pitfalls and Satan's stumbling blocks - temptations, doubts, fears, and every imagination of the mind. Our Lord suffered more than we will ever be called upon to suffer, because He bore it for us. As you so truthfully quoted, "My soul hath them (our trials and sorrows) still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope". What a blessed thing is our Hope! Each of us who claim Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord can look back and see the sinful way in which we once traveled, and we shudder to think how far from God we were. Then one day the Lord spoke and we began to see a glimmer of Hope. But we think, "Oh No,

that cannot be for me. I am not good enough or worthy for Him to think of me." But then we hear it again, and again, until finally one sweet day we feel perhaps there is a Hope. Many nights of sleeplessness and conflict, and that Hope became a reality. Jesus Christ gave me comfort! The light shone bright and the older I get the brighter it shines. Praise the Lord! The death and resurrection of our Lord brought a new bright shining Hope of life eternal with our Father in Heaven. When Christ was dedicated in the Temple, and Simeon was present he saw the fulfilling of the Hope that God had promised him, that he would not die until he saw the coming of the Messiah. He was in the spirit and knew Christ was that promised Messiah, and he praised God and blessed them, and was ready to die. I think that portion of Scripture is so beautiful. (Luke 2:25-32) So lovely! He said, "For mine eyes have seen thy salvation which thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel." Simeon saw and believed. So many see and hear but never hear or understand, and the sadness of it all is that they do not want to know or see. Our Lord knoweth them that are His and when He speaks they will answer. All this has led me to what I wanted to say to start with, but I am so filled with the beauty of it all as I see it, that I just cannot stop until it is all said. So please, my Brother, bear with me a little longer. I will try not to be tedious.

As we spoke of our Hope and how it rested upon every word of God coming to pass, in all things, from Genesis to Revelation, I was taken back to the Psalms and how we are taken care of by our Good Shepherd. That is where my thoughts have been and I will try to make you see it as I have seen it, as I read and meditated.

The 23rd Psalm tells us He is our Lord, the Shepherd of His sheep. In John 10:11, He tells us He is the Good Shepherd, and on down into the 27-30 verses we see another side of that Psalm. He speaks of the sheep "Knowing His voice and they follow Him". Now, here is what I see in this portion of this chapter. "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them to me is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." Don't you see the beauty of that? Those Hands!! Christ's hands and His Father's hands! Such blessed security! Perhaps I can show you in my small way, what I feel blessed to see. Our Lord is preaching, or teaching, the mystery of the two hands, so I expect He will use His hands to illustrate what He means. He first shows how safe the believer is by putting him in His hand, where he will be safe and secure in the hand of Christ. No one can pluck him out. No harm can come to him. I think He also means that His sheep have eternal life and will never perish. Don't you think so? No one, no man, demon, or devil can ever get to them and harm them. Alright now, we have them safe, each one, and He put them there. They did not get there by themselves. God's Grace. Right?

His Father is greater than all, and no man, or devil, or demon is able to pluck them out of His Father's hand. As He speaks, in my minds eye, I see Jesus Christ putting the believer in the other hand - His Father's hand. As we watch and listen, we follow His teaching - and His hands. We see the believer placed safely, securely in one hand -- Jesus' hand, then we see the believer placed in security and safety in the other hand -- the Father's hand. We watch and wonder how we can be in both hands at once? There is only one way, and we see how, as we read verse 30. He says, "I and my Father are one". He brings His Father's hand and puts it over His own hand, so both hands are together, one above the other, covering us securely

from all harm. There we see the perfect security. You can picture a precious believer, cupped in Christ's hand and covered by God's hand, and you can know for sure that you are safe. We know these things for sure because our Lord said so, that no one, but no one, can ever pluck them out of that place of maximum security!

I cannot think of a more beautiful way to express the reason why I believe as I do; why I have the faith, small as it seems to be at times, that the Lord has given me; why I trust in the blessed hope that is God-given. These are immutable facts, given us who claim a precious Hope of eternal life with Jesus Christ, when we are called home. Can anyone who loves our precious Saviour and the Heavenly Father desire to linger here in this world when all our riches are stored in Heaven? Oh, my dear Brother, the time grows short, and I long to be where He is.

I am sorry if I've tired you, but I am all through now, and feel emptied out. This doesn't happen often! Hope to see you all soon.

Love to all,
Ruth Lucht
Chestertown, Maryland

It is a great thing to have gospel humility. If you know you want it, it is a sign you are not quite without it.

Toplady

Paul was constrained by the love of Christ. It was a personal matter with him. It must be so with us. Paul's view of the blessed Saviour will not be ours unless we in our measure have been brought by the Holy Spirit to look upon Him whom we have pierced and mourn for Him. (Zech. 12:10) Only then shall we find that God's eternal Son in His person, His love and His finished work, is the life of our souls. Oh! May we be found at the Cross more!

C. Sleeman

WHAT IS LOVE?

Love is one of the most precious words in the English language.

First I will begin with the first love. In nature, when we first came into the world and grew to the point that we began to know anything about things around us we realized that Mother was our first love. Why? Because she taught us to love her and she taught us that she loved us. Also, Mother taught us to love our Father and our brothers and sisters and friends. How did our parents teach us to love? It was by first loving us. So love in nature is taught with love. So even in nature love is a good word.

As we grew up into young men and women we began to love and marry and raise children. We found that we loved our wives and children with a different kind of love from that we loved our mother and father, brothers, and sisters.

As I grew I came to the point when I was about seven years of age there was something that caused me to begin to love something else. The things I think that I began to love were the doctrines of salvation by grace and His goodness. So then the cause of love is because someone first loved you, and I hope me.

Now I would like to write about a greater love - the love of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. This love that comes from the Father and Son is far beyond anything that we have ever known. If we are changed from nature's darkness into His marvelous light it is because He loved His children. Now Jesus said, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love". As I understand it everlasting means something that has no end. No end means it is love all the way. So now as I begin to look at and try to understand this word, it becomes one of the greatest words I have ever known. The love of God is sure and steadfast. It is unchangeable. God changes not. We also read where the Bible tells that, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his

friends. (John 15:13) In this we begin to find out a little about what is being talked about. One brother said to me, "Do we know what love is"? I don't know if I do or not, but I believe I have felt a little of it somewhere along the way, and I would like to tell you what I feel about it.

First, it will make you love things that you have never loved before. In fact, it makes you love things that you would never love. And the things you did love, now you hate. It will make you fear and tremble and shake. It will make you love your brethren. Not only that, but it will make you love your enemies, also. It will make you love them that say all manner of hard things about you for abuse. It will make you stand bold. It will make you not fear those that wrongfully use you. It will be with you when all other things have failed. It will comfort you in distress, or whatever comes. When you are down in the valley it will be there. When it is time for you to go to the church meetings it will be there. Where ever you are called to go it will go with you. I find according to the Bible that God is love. If God shed His love in you and for you then I believe that you will love the things of God and hate the things of the world.

Why do we love the Lord? Because He first loved us. Then if He loved us, then we are chosen in Him. If we are chosen to love Him we are His, and if we are His children then we love Him and have a desire to be up and about the things of His love.

Many times I have gone to the meetings hoping to hear or find something that I would love, and when the Lord would bless His preachers to preach love and friendship, then I could say with a sigh, "This is love".

When I think of the love of Christ I wonder if I have ever been loved with this love. I have a hope that this love was shed abroad for me, as I feel it was for you dear brothers and sisters. In my later years when I think of love, it seems that it means a lot more to me than it used to.

Now I will ask you a question. How could we have traveled all the way through the firey trials, tribulations, and heart aches and pains of life if love had not been with us? If love had not been in the cause, I believe that we would have fallen by the wayside a long time ago. I believe that this drawing love has been with the children of God all of the way.

Now I would like to say that this love is not just said in words, but it shines abroad in the faces and in the walk of His dear children, and it is visible to others. We find that love flows from breast to breast. If it flows in our breasts then it affects us, and that is love.

We will say again that God is love, and when we say this it means that God was with us (if I can include myself in it). Now we find all the way through the Bible, including both Old and New Testament, that love was the main factor. In the Song of Solomon love was the one theme of this book, not to mention other books. The Queen of Sheba traveled many miles, because of love, to ask Solomon all of those questions about love. She felt that Solomon was a man of much wisdom. The Queen of Sheba, when she had heard the answers, said that half of it had not been told.

I find many places through the Bible where that love had its part in it, so we will say again that God is love.

There is no condemnation to those who love God. If we have this love bestowed upon us then there is no condemnation for us because that was given to us of God and God will not condemn that which is His. Then if it was given to us, it is something that we did not reach out and get. Neither did we find it nor did we buy it, but it was a gift. By grace are you saved and not by works, and this grace is a gift from the God of love, so love is a gift. Now if it is a gift, how can we turn from it? This is the

love that I think will cause you not to hate. It will cause you to love in such a way that you will not want to do or say anything that will offend or hurt the dear children of God. If love flows from breast to breast then I cannot see or understand how any with this pure love of God could misuse the word and treat anyone with contempt.

This love that is born in us from God is pure and undefiled. If it is the pure or the true love of God, then it is holy.

I will close by saying if you want to print this you have my permission to do so. From a brother in love, I hope.

Clyde Caudle

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CHRIST--MASS, NO
ALPHA AND OMEGA, YES

If God had purposed we should know
The date of birth of Christ His Son,
His word would plainly, clearly show
The hour and advent of this one.

The day, the week, the month or year
Is not important to our ear
For let us not exhalt a day
Apart from Christ, who is the way.

We would not celebrate one day
As separate from the heavenly way
For all the work of Christ, the king,
To Him we would our praises bring.

To exhalt one day above another
In honoring Him, our elder brother,
I'm sure that we forgetful be
That He truly's deity.

His birth, His life, His blood, His cross
Makes all things else appear as dross.
He is alpha and omega, too;
The beginning and ending, Oh how true.

I remember the day, the month, the year
He was born in me. My Saviour dear,
The cross and trials along the way.
Has made Him more precious, day by day.

If round a tree your family meet
In spirit bow at His dear feet
Behold in Him abounding grace
And find in Him a hiding place.

This tree of life is ever green
Twas in the garden, first was seen
In Revelation Twenty-Two
We there behold, what it can do.

Elder D. V. Spangler

A house uninhabited soon comes to ruin; and a soul uninhabited by the Holy Spirit of God verges faster and faster to destruction.

Toplady

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Briary Swamp Primitive Baptist Church, Pitt County, N.C., in their conference on the second Saturday in June, 1978, a presbytery, composed of Elders Noah L. Ambrose, Creswell, N.C., A. P. Mewborn, Farmville, N.C., and M.E. Garner, Greenville, N.C., met together on the second Sunday in July, 1978, for the examination of Brother Joseph A. Leggett, and if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment ordain Brother Leggett to the full work of the ministry.

The service was begun by singing a hymn and prayer by Elder Noah L. Ambrose, after which Deacons Reeves Smith and Vernon Jenkin presented Brother Leggett to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder M.E. Garner. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, Elder A. P. Mewborn delivered the charge. The presbytery administered the laying on of hands and prayers by Elders Noah L. Ambrose, A. P. Mewborn, and M. E. Garner were delivered.

The church was asked if she approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Elder Joseph A. Leggett and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood was given. Brother Joseph A. Leggett was delivered back to the church as an ordained minister of the Old School, Primitive Baptist Church at Brairy Swamp.

Elder Leggett was called on to preach and was blessed by the power of God to preach the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to the comfort and edification of the saints of God.

Written by one who loves and esteems him very much.

(Elder) M. E. Garner

From whatever quarter affliction comes it has a voice, and if we but have ears to hear we shall find God speaking in it. This is the grand difference between those who fear God and those who fear Him not; that the former see God in everything, and the latter see God in nothing.

J. C. Philpot

P.O. Box 317
Hazen, Ark. 72064
Dec. 12, 1978

Though sin abounds within as strong as ever, if not stronger; through the mercies of a Covenant God I am lifted up in glorious hope and joy in the Lord. It is amazing to me how freely and sovereignly the Lord seems to deal with me. It seems that most of the time I go about more dejected than lifted up. My sins lie heavily on me, and Satan accuses me, and I wonder and doubt my interest in saving grace. But many times the Lord just raises my hope and confidence till I am made to break forth in praise--and I cannot make the doubts or fears come. Because these miraculous visits usually come--not when I have made some great stand or won a great victory, but rather when I am almost swept away in temptation, sullenness and all manner of evil--I try to call up my doubts, but to no avail! I say to myself, "How can you rejoice and be at peace when you are such a sinner?" And I answer myself, "Because God has been gracious to my soul and I am accepted in the Beloved!"

Then I object, "But how do you know you are accepted and not deceived?" I answer again, "Because the Spirit of Christ is shed forth in me crying, 'Abba, Father!' "

Just when it seems most that God should thrust me away, or at least hold me at arms length, so far from doing that, He reaches down, down, down, into the depths to raise me up. Without my conscious effort to even look up, He draws me up from the pit and causes me to stand on the Rock. My heart and tongue are filled with song. "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together." "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord," because I have nothing outside of the Lord to boast in. Also because the Lord's wonderful and gracious works toward

me demand the boasting of my soul. "The humble shall hear thereof, and be glad," because they know their hearts as well as the mercies of God shown to them. They match this experience, and they are not offended. The proud, on the other hand, rail and cast stones at the blest. They stop up their ears and cry Duty! Duty! Means! Give us our MEANS! They want to deserve their favors, or at least take the first step, and let God meet them half-way.

The poor and helpless delight to magnify the Lord, and exalt His name; but the work-monger or means-monger always tries to find a way to magnify man and exalt free-will or MEANS.

I hope I am blessed to serve the Lord and walk before Him in meekness and fear. And if so, I know it is by the same free and omnipotent grace of God from whence all blessings flow. May His name be praised.

Shannon Vaughn

ONLY TWO RELIGIONS

There are but two religions upon earth. One, that which centers in the dogma of Free-Will; the other that which springs from the Divine Election. One which says, "Salvation is of self-movement;" the other, "Salvation is of the Lord!"

These two religions are two different systems. One metaphysical, which goes to philosophy for its reasons and argues from consciousness and from the nature of things--this system, brought within the circle and the influence of Christianity, does not refuse the Scripture, but evades those parts of Scripture which it cannot seem to subordinate, and of which it cannot make use. The other system stands on Scripture only, and argues from the truth of revelation--from the scope and details of the Book--from facts which have been witnessed by a competent authority, the Holy Ghost. This system, when brought within the circle and the influence of human argument, does not necessarily refuse reason, but subordinates reason, and regards the "If?" of reason, where God speaks, as blasphemy.

These two systems in the Church have been called by different names--Augustinianism and Pelagianism; Calvinism and Arminianism; the Old and New School. With every spiritual crisis, side by side, these rival systems emerge--a bridgeless gulf between them, however names may change.

George Sayles Bishop

COMMENCEMENT OF THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF THE LATE W. GADSBY

This is the last will and testament of me, William Gadsby, of the township of Cheetham, in the parish of Manchester, in the county of Lancaster, Baptist minister of the everlasting gospel of God our Saviour, by the matchless grace of God, through the invincible power of God the Holy Ghost, made and published as follows: that is to say, First, I am brought firmly to believe and maintain that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the word of God, and the only certain rule of faith and practice. And I also further observe that I firmly believe in Three equal Persons, namely, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, in one glorious undivided Jehovah; and that each glorious Person is an object of spiritual worship, and is loved, praised, and adored as such by all the heaven born family of God; and that a denial of this glorious truth is altogether Anti-Christian, and repugnant to the glory of God. I also believe in the glorious doctrine of absolute, personal, and unconditional election; and that God's dear elect were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, both to grace and glory. I believe in special, definite, and particular redemption, by the

glorious Person of Immanuel; and that the doctrine of an indefinite atonement is, to say the least of it, an invention of men, calculated to vamp up a whole-hearted sinner, and distress those whose hearts the Lord has broken. I believe in effectual grace in calling; and that God the Holy Ghost both has made and will make all the elect willing in the day of God's power. I believe that all the sins of the elect are absolutely pardoned through the glorious atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ; and that their persons are justified in His glorious righteousness, without any idea to their works, worth, or worthiness, as the cause, in any sense whatever, of their justification before God, but absolutely in and by the righteousness of Christ imputed unto them; and that they stand complete in Christ. I believe in the eternal and inseparable union of the elect to the Lord Jesus Christ, as the glorious Head of the church. I believe that all spiritual blessings are treasured up in Christ, and that all grace and glory, necessary for the holiness and happiness of God's elect, are secured in Christ for them, and made sure to them. I believe that nothing short of the divine quickening power and special teachings of God the Holy Ghost can make a sinner spiritually acquainted with the glorious truths of God's grace; and that all religion short of that which God the Spirit teacheth and leadeth into by His glorious, quickening, enlightening, teaching, guiding, anointing, and sealing power, is at best but a fair show in the flesh; and that every elect sinner must have his fleshly religion rooted up by the roots, and be fuel for the fire, in the day when God purgeth His people "by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning"; (Isa. 4:4) for every real believer in Christ must and shall in this world have his works tried by fire. (I Cor. 3:13) I believe that the kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom in all its bearings; and that God the Spirit sets up and maintains the kingdom of grace in the hearts of all His people, and by His invincible power enables them to give God the whole of the glory. And I believe that all religion short of a spiritual religion, taught and maintained by the Spirit of God, will leave its possessor to perish in his sins. I believe that while God's quickened children remain in this vale of tears there will be a constant warfare between flesh and spirit, the old man and the new, but that "grace shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life". I believe that when God's people walk contrary to the will of God in Christ, as the Lord and Head of the church, He will visit (as a Father) their transgressions with a rod; nevertheless, He will not cease to love them, nor suffer His faithfulness to fail. I believe in the final perseverance of all real saints to glory. I believe in believers' baptism, by immersion, to the total exclusion of infant sprinkling; and that the Lord's Supper is a privilege belonging to the church of Christ, to show forth the death of Christ till He comes. I believe in the resurrection of the body, both of the just and the unjust; and that the bodies of the saints will rise a glorious body, like unto the body of Christ, and that they shall live and reign with Him in glory, in the presence of the Three-One undivided Jehovah, for ever and ever. I believe in the last judgment and eternal punishment of all the ungodly.

The above solemn truths, together with those truths in direct union to, and immediately connected with them, I firmly believe and maintain; and I pray that, if it be the will of God, the Lord will make all my dear family acquainted with the same.

A man would not be sorry to be ejected from a cottage in order to his living in a palace: and yet how apt we are to fear death, which to a child of God is but the writ of ejectment that turns him out of a prison, and transmits him to his apartments at court!

Toplady

EDITORIAL

WHAT AND WHY BRIEFLY STATED

(Written March, 1955)

While searching through some old copies of the ***Signs*** to find what we felt would be an interesting and suitable article for "Voices of the Past", we found the one which is re-published in this issue, by Elder Gilbert Beebe.

While reading it, the language of Jeremiah came, and seemed to apply as an illustration of our thoughts: "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may they also do good, that are accustomed to evil." We know it is not considered polite in these days to speak against any man's doctrine or way of worship, for it is generally agreed among the various denominations that all of them will arrive at the same place (Heaven), only in different ways and manners. We have no objection whatever to anybody worshipping how or what they please, believing this should be the civil right of all men -- and we are glad of this freedom, and could wish that it were world wide.

Then, it might be asked, why be such a stickler? Why not go along with them?

And we answer: If not entirely deceived, we have been commissioned to preach the gospel; and in doing this we are deeply impressed with the exhortation of Jude, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares,.....", etc. We are entirely concerned, therefore, in contending for this faith.

But to know this faith and to be enveloped in it, is an amazing experience. It is as mysterious as it is real. Well might one ask, "How can these things be?" He was told, "The wind bloweth where is listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." This should be enough to inform all that such is beyond the reach of carnal action; and yet to be absolutely necessary else no man can see the kingdom of God.

That there was a change wrought in me (and that without desire or work of my own), I humbly believe; and I was turned away from things that seemed right before. It was so wonderful that I stand in awe to this day, and often question, could it be possible? But surely old things had passed away, and all things had become new. Instead of an abiding trust in self and works, I found that there was absolutely nothing good in me. My foundation had given way, and I was sunk into a horrible pit; and all my struggling for relief only increased the misery. No one's condition could have been more hopeless than mine. Then, suddenly, there came a peace and calm never known before: My cries had been heard, and He who died for sinners was manifest as my Saviour. The impression to publish abroad what had been done for me was in my thoughts day and night. I was received as a member of the church and soon was asked to speak, and after a short time, I was given license. But the matter was too high and holy for such as I, and I just could not continue. For about ten years I ran away from it, going to Florida for two or three years where my impressions were not known, and tried to loose the impression by close application to business, and often remained away from meetings lest I be asked to speak again, -- all of these things and many more; yet the time came, undesigned by me, that I began to speak again, was ordained, and by the sustaining power of the Lord have continued to this day, though with much weakness and many doubts.

What do I preach? Why, the things I

was taught -- the things I learned -- in these sore trials. The Scriptures confirmed the things I found experimentally true. These, and these only, do I earnestly contend for with such ability as I have; and I hope to know nothing else among the Lord's people.

What do I preach? Had I found that salvation came by my own works and efforts, I would preach that; and would tell all men that they could have it the same way. Had I found that God was not a God of purpose in all His works, I would preach that: and contend for conditionalism. Had I found that the will of men controlled their eternal salvation, I would preach that; and urge every man to exercise his will. Had I found that the election of grace was something that men could come into merely by the effort of believing, I would preach that; and urge all men to believe. Had I found that God wants all men of the Adam family to be saved, I would preach that; and urge all men to accept salvation. Had I found that men who were once saved could fall away and be lost, I would preach that; and warn all men to keep themselves in the way. These and many other things I preach, had I found them true in my experience, and in the testimony of the Scriptures.

But what do I preach? Why, that salvation is entirely by the grace of God, and that the Spirit alone is effectual in bringing the elect of God into the knowledge of their election, and into their hope of eternal life - that men are not able to discover this themselves, nor to someone else - that the family of God, the redeemed, are those who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and to these their redemption is sure and certain, and this because Jesus completely finished the work His Father gave Him to do. Yes, I preach that Jesus is the Author and Finisher of their faith, and that they are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. I preach that these walk in obedience when their flesh is subdued and they are led by the Spirit in the paths of righteousness. I preach that God's grace is sufficient for us, and that He never leaves us nor forsakes us; and that our pathway is laid out before us, and that our trials and troubles, doubts and fears, are designed in the eternal purpose of God to keep us humble, and to learn over and over again that all our strength is in the Lord, for the Lord's strength is made manifest in our weakness. I preach that we are awaiting the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body, and that which we have given us in this life is a sealing with the holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory.

Yes, these things I preach; and many others relating to them, which ascribe all power and glory and praise to our God, and declaring, with the Apostle, that it is by the grace of God that we are what we are.

I have stated briefly what I preach and why I preach. The matter is too sacred and holy to be trifled with. I feel that I know what is the doctrine of men, and why it is their doctrine, but, having been brought the way I have, I hope that I may be kept in the faith once delivered without waivering either to please friends or foes. There is no middle ground between truth and error. "Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid." (Isaiah 8:12)

Elder J. D. Wood

C. H. SPURGEON ON ACTS 13:48

"As many as were ordained to eternal life believed."

"Attempts have been made to prove that these words do not teach predestination, but these attempts so clearly do violence to language that I shall not waste time in answering them. I read: 'as many as were ordained to eternal life

believed' and I shall not twist the text but shall glorify the grace of God by ascribing to that grace the faith of every man. Is it not God who gives the disposition to believe? If men are disposed to have eternal life, does not He--in every case--dispose them? Is it wrong for God to give grace? If it be right for Him to give it--is it wrong for Him to purpose to give it? Would you have Him give it by accident? If it is right for Him to purpose to give grace today, it was right for Him to purpose it before today--and, since He changes not--from eternity."

"Get grace - get faith - get an interest in Christ," say the Arminians. When, in truth, grace is not of man's getting, but of God's giving; nor is faith of man's acquisition, but of God's operation.

Toplady

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

AN APPEAL

We have been pained to learn that in some sections of the country some churches have been making the doctrine of the predestination of all things a test of fellowship. We have been anxious that brethren should be forbearing to each other, even though they could not see eye to eye upon this matter. We have not heard of any churches who hold this doctrine declaring non-fellowship for those who do not hold it; but we have heard that in several instances churches who do not hold it have closed their pulpits against those who do hold it and in some instances have declared non-fellowship for ministers who believe and preach it. We can but feel sad at such news; and we can but protest, and beseech brethren to pause and consider all that is involved in this action. While we suppose it is generally known that we personally believe that God has predestinated all things whatsoever come to pass, yet we have never felt like rejecting a brother because he could not see his way clear to accept it. None of our churches that accept this doctrine have ever, so far as we know among all our eastern associations, excluded a brother for not believing it. We therefore think that we can with good ground appeal to those churches of whom we have heard the reports stated at the head of this article to pause and consider all that is involved in what they are doing.

In declaring non-fellowship for those who believe in the predestination of all things they are also declaring non-fellowship for the hundred or more Baptist Churches which by messengers met in London in 1689, and among other good and wholesome things declared the following as their faith with regard to God's decrees: "God hath decreed in Himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever come to pass; yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin, nor hath fellowship with any therein; nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor yet is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established, in which appears His wisdom in disposing all things, and power and faithfulness in accomplishing His decrees." (Hassell's Church History, page 670) We have omitted scriptural references. This was adopted by the Philadelphia Baptist Association in 1742; also the Charleston Association in South Carolina, in 1751, and the Kehukee Association, in North Carolina in 1765, were organized upon the basis on this same London Confession.

Are brethren willing to declare non-fellowship for their brethren during these past two centuries in London, in Philadelphia, in South Carolina, and in North Carolina? Surely no one has ever stated his faith in the doctrine of predestination any more strongly than in the above sentence, which we quote

again: *"God hath decreed in Himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever come to pass".*

We hope that all our readers will carefully note that we are not here entering into an argument to prove the doctrine true. If this were our object we should not quote the London nor any other Confession as authority, but appeal to Scripture alone. Our only design is to urge upon brethren the fact that in declaring non-fellowship for those who hold this doctrine now, they are also cutting off our former brethren during all these past two centuries.

Coming down to a more recent date, we would call attention to another fact. When, sixty-three years ago, at Black Rock, Md., sound Bible Baptists declared their withdrawel from all the vagaries of Arminianism, which like a moth had eaten the beauty and glory of all away from many Baptist Churches, one of the principles of faith expressly laid down was that God had from all eternity predestinated all things that came to pass. This doctrine was then advocated by the ***Signs of the Times.*** This paper circulated in all parts of the country, among all Old School Baptists, north, south, east, and west. This doctrine continued to be advocated as strongly then as it ever has been since. No protest ever came up against it except from New School sources. It is but fair to presume that it was then believed by all where the ***Signs*** circulated. Those who believe in predestination now, believe no more nor no less than was then believed by all Old Baptists where the ***Signs*** circulated. Are brethren prepared to declare non-fellowship for all those who fought then against New Schoolism? *The arguments against the predestination of all things sound to us who believe the doctrine just like what we have been accustomed to hear from Arminians all our lives.* May we not be patiently borne with if we cannot all at once be convinced that their arguments are sound?

We trust that brethren will pause before going farther in this way. We hope that they will be patient with those who cannot all at once give up the faith which has so long been dear to their hearts. It surely is not a crime to believe this doctrine now, any more than it was for our fathers to believe it. Are brethren prepared to say that they have no fellowship for all the churches and brethren in the past of which we have here spoken? No one, we are persuaded, now believes more than that God has unchangeably and freely ordained all things whatsoever come to pass. If this was not heresy in the London Baptists, in the Philadelphia Baptists, in the North and South Carolina Baptists, in the Baptists all over the land in the early years of the ***Signs of the Times,*** surely it is not heresy now.

We trust our brethren will bear with us in this appeal, and that it may do good, and not harm.

(From ***Signs of the Times,*** 1885)

Elder F. A. Chick

RELATIVE DUTIES OF PASTORS AND CHURCHES

By request of an esteemed brother in Alabama, the following remarks on this important subject are submitted for the consideration of the readers of the ***Signs.***

In professing to accept the New Testament as a perfect rule of faith and practice, every christian acknowledges the authority of the apostolic decisions therein contained as paramount to all other considerations. Then we have only to examine the perfect law to ascertain all the duties devolving on those who desire to yield obedience to the King in Zion. In deducing from this unerring standard the law of Christ on this subject no apology is requisite, though perhaps the language of Paul to the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:33-35) may justify me in observing that I speak not with

reference to myself in this essay. Not being engaged in the service of any church, I have no pastoral claim on any; and yet I should be guilty of base ingratitude indeed, were I to fail to acknowledge the undeserved kindness which has been uniformly manifested to me by the churches where my lot has been cast.

It appears from Acts 2:44, 45, that in the organization of the church on the day of Pentecost there was a common stock of all the worldly possessions of all them that believed. Yet they were not exempted by this general distribution, from the necessity of each individually using all diligence in business to provide things honest in the sight of all men. (Rom. 12:11, 17.) And the Apostle in setting in order the things which pertain to the visible church organization, effectually prohibits the turning of this common provision into an encouragement to laziness, by commanding "that if any would not work neither should he eat". (II Thess. 3:10) And in the context Paul records his own example in working night and day to avoid being chargeable to the church, although in this connection, as also in I Cor. 9:1-14, he expressly asserts his authority to claim a support from the earthly possessions of the saints to whom he ministered. So plainly is the obligation of this duty enjoined on the churches throughout the scriptures that it would seem that there could be no excuse for any of them to plead for disobedience to the laws of their Lord. Surely those who overlook their obligations in this respect have not considered the injunction recorded in Gal. 6:6-8, "Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting". The scriptures referred to with their connections are sufficiently plain and definite to clearly show the gospel rule by which the churches are required to support their pastors. We will now consider the limitation of that obligation, or, in other words, the extent of the claim to the carnal things of the members of the churches of their charge, which may be set up by a pastor according to the New Testament rule. On this point, while there is no specific apportionment to each individual member, the gospel rule is very definite. In the second letter of Paul to the Corinthian church, he states the proper principle for the distribution of all the burdens incident to the temporal existence of the church, when in the eighth chapter he is treating upon the equitable distribution of their goods to the assistance of their poor brethren at Jerusalem, who had forfeited their earthly possessions for the profession of their faith in Christ. He does not levy a forced tax upon them, but simply appeals to their own sense of equity, and states to them plainly that he means not that others should be eased and they burdened; but that there may be an equality. This is in strict accordance with the whole spirit of the New Testament. The principle which pervades the whole gospel revelation is mutual love, and that of the most unreserved and unselfish character. And whenever the hateful principle of selfishness was manifested in any of the disciples, it was promptly rebuked by our Lord, as when the disciples contended who should be greatest, or when the mother of the beloved disciple sought special honors for him and his brother in the kingdom of glory. No more sacred principle could originate in the natural heart that the maternal affection which prompted her request, yet the answer to her petition must indeed have crucified her natural heart. Then it is clear that the burden of the gospel ministry is not to be borne alone by those to whom is given the gift of preaching; neither are they to be exalted after the manner of the anti-christian clergy, as an order of aristocracy to live luxuriously upon the

labor of their brethren. But the mutual love of Christ leads both preachers and hearers cheerfully to bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ. It may be asked, how is it then, that very many faithful ministers of the gospel are allowed to serve churches year after year at their own charges? Clearly because the law of mutual love is not in operation. In some cases the false pride of the preacher has caused him to shun to declare the gospel rule on this subject, lest he be accused of preaching for pay; while in some and perhaps most instances this wretched state of affairs results from an inordinate love of the world, or plainly speaking, covetousness on the part of the members of the churches they serve. Now this is a painful point to touch upon, but I dare not shun it. The law of Christ is perfect and changes not. Covetousness is idolatry and is an abomination, if not the particular thing spoken of by Daniel, yet one whose desolating traces may be seen in most of our churches and, I had almost said, in the experience of most of the saints in the evil times which are now upon us. Bitterly indeed have we proved that in living after the flesh and gratifying our selfish desires we die to all spiritual enjoyment in our individual experience; while the desolate walls of many old meeting houses where the gospel was formerly proclaimed, bear melancholy witness that the destructive ravages of a terrible departure from the laws of Christ have inscribed "Ichabod" on all their former glories. The Church of Christ always flourished most under the bitterest persecution. Prosperity and worldly favor have always proven baneful and destructive to her peace and spiritual welfare. Selfishness is nourished by the sunshine of fortune, and it is now, as in the time of our Saviour's incarnation, impossible to serve God and mammon. Indeed, the deceitfulness of riches will frequently so bewilder those whose hearts are set upon them, that they are unconsciously held in slavery to their wealth while they fancy that they control it. God will deliver His children from such idolatry, even though the stroke which breaks their chains should dash their most cherished plans to destruction and overwhelm whole nations in blood and ruin. In chastising the nation of Israel He suffered them to be oppressed by the wicked nations by whom they were surrounded, which nations, when they had accomplished the will of God as a scourge to His people, were overthrown with utter destruction. Truly, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God". His people have ever found Him faithful in His judgments as well as His mercies. His children are certain to feel the rod of affliction as often as they forsake His righteous statutes. For to all their transgressions He is a consuming fire. His truth is pledged that He will thoroughly purge the sons of Levi. He purifies them by fire, as the word itself signifies. This must necessarily imply suffering which is also expressed by the word crucifixion.

It is a cross to the selfish old nature of the saints to submit to the law of Christ on this subject. The preacher must deny himself to serve destitute churches and even to look after the poor of the flock without hope of compensation for his toil, other than the reward of conscious obedience. Yet this is reward beyond expression great. The hearer of the word must bear the cross in every step of obedience, as well in contributing to the support of the ministry as in obedience to every other command of our King. It is not obedience to the command of Jesus when we simply contribute from our abundance such a pittance as we cannot feel, because in so doing we bear no burden, and our gifts are acceptable according to what we have. On this principle the widow's two mites exceeded all the proud munificence of the rich Pharisees.

But probably some may suppose that the necessity for such an article as this sustains the charge which has been

brought against the Primitive Baptists in which their enemies accuse them of illiberality. On the contrary, I feel no hesitancy in asserting that there is more true generosity and christian liberality among the Old School or Primitive Baptists than in any or all the rest of the human family. And for proof of the assertion I can refer to my own experience, when sick and in prison I was the recipient of the bounty of those whose faces I had never seen, and who knew me only as a suffering member of the household of faith. Hence, what they gave was given me in the name of a disciple, and was the effect of the love of Christ actuating the saints who gave not to me only but to many others in like distress. While personally I can never cease to be grateful to them I see in their hearty liberality only compliance with the example recorded in Acts 4:34-37. All that a christian has, as well as his whole heart, should be laid at the Apostles' feet; that is, held subject to the divine directions, not as considering our property exclusively our own; but as being committed to our keeping by our Lord who will hold us responsible for our stewardship. Remember, brethren, that even our minds and hearts are the property of our Lord who has redeemed us by His blood; and let us endeavor in all things to render cheerful obedience to His laws. This is the true manner of proving that we are the disciples of Jesus, by doing what He has enjoined upon us. (John 13:35, and I John 3:15-21)

In many cases, no doubt, the remissness of the private members of churches in looking to the temporal welfare of their pastors may be traced to the negligence of the deacons in the performance of the duties devolving on them. If they are the successors of the seven faithful brethren mentioned in Acts 6, it is evident that their duties are by no means limited to the service of handling the bread and wine at the Lord's Supper. They should intimately know every member of the church and be informed of the temporal affairs of each sufficiently to be certain that none of them suffer for the necessary comforts of life without the knowledge of the church. Especially is it their duty to see that their pastor is released from the necessity of being overburdened with the cares of the world in securing necessary supplies for himself and family. Where this duty is neglected the church robs herself of the benefits of an obedient gospel minister wholly given to the work, and suffers the consequence. The marks of christian love do not appear in such cases. The minister sees no fruit of his labor, or in other words, he feels that his services are not appreciated, and consequently his zeal is abated and if he continues to endeavor to serve those who have neglected him it is with the continual consciousness that he is laboring hopelessly and that he is not profitable to his brethren.

Thus far, I have spoken mostly of the disregard of the laws of our King on the part of private members. But with sorrow it must be confessed that there are corresponding faults on the part of the ministry. How many preachers give themselves wholly to the improvement and exercise of their gifts, as enjoined on Timothy? (I Tim. 4:6-16) You may say this would result in ruin to the minister who should attempt to wait on his ministering to the neglect of his worldly cares. If God requires continual ministerial labor of any, He will feed them even if the ravens have to bring their food. He is not an austere man. Duty rightly understood does not call any one in opposite directions, or to conflicting works. If God has called a man to devote himself to the ministry, he is to consider that duty paramount to all other claims on him; for he belongs soul and body to his Lord. But as Paul, in whom the grace of God wrought more abundantly than all the other apostles, found time and opportunity to labor with his own hands to minister to his own necessities, it is harldly probable that any other

minister of Christ will ever be too much engaged in his ministry to have the opportunity of laboring to a greater of less extent for the temporal sustenance of those dependent on him. Not compulsory, for the Lord hath ordained that they that preach the gospel shall live of the gospel; but from the exuberance of his affection for the cause of truth, the apostle was willing to labor with his own hands that he might be enabled to relieve his oppressed brethren from any of the burdens incident to the support of the gospel ministry, and herein he thought it worthy of his lofty position in the church to glory, that he made the gospel of Christ without charge. (I Cor. 9:18) The saints to whom Paul ministered were improverished by persecution, and he thought it ample reward for his arduous toil that he was enabled to serve them without charge. So at Rome it seems that he hired the house in which he preached. (Acts 28:30, 31) From the example of Paul it is plain that the principle of mutual love is the rule by which the mutual relations of pastors and churches should be regulated. The preacher who makes merchandise of his ministry runs greedily after the error of Balaam for reward; yet the church which would receive the services of a faithful minister without endeavoring to assist him to bear his burdens according to the abilities which God has given them, falls into temptation and a snare, and those who will be rich, coveting the wealth of this world, have erred (or been seduced) from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. (I Tim. 6:9, 10) If the avaricious shepherd seems to care for the fleece rather than the flock, the careless or negligent flock manifesting no solicitude for the welfare of their pastor certainly show none of that christian affection which marked the true believers in the primitive age of the church.

It appears from the gospel rule, then, that is is incumbent on each member of the church to render to every other member all the assistance in his power to enable all to bear the burdens of this life with as nearly equal weight as practicable. This duty devolves alike on official members and those in private positions, on preachers and hearers, and preachers should show themselves patterns in this, as in all other particulars. See James 2:15-17, and Titus 2:7. Yet as by the peculiar demands which pastors must attend to, they are required to devote much more labor and time to the service of the church than other members, it is enjoined on those who are taught in the word to give especial care to the relief of those who minister to them in word and doctrine.

May the Great Shepherd watch over His flock, and cast out from among them every hateful spirit and thought of selfishness, which might tend to harrass His sheep, and give to each of His children that spirit of fraternal love which will banish all jealousies and evil surmisings. May He quicken our mortal bodies to walk in obedience to His great commandment, that we may bear fruit to the praise of the glory of our heavenly Father's grace; and to His great name be unceasing thanks, is the prayer of the unworthy writer.

This communication is unsatisfactory to me, not that I have any doubts of the truth of what is expressed, but that much more should have been told in fewer words. Such as it is, however, it is submitted to the consideration of the saints. If any brother will give his views on the subject in the manner and with the ability which its importance demands. I shall be gratified; especially if he succeeds in causing the saints to "awake to righteousness" in their practical course in this matter. I hope my brother at whose instance this is written, will pardon my delay in complying with his request, and may the grace of God which is in him, enable him to use his office well, and so purchase to himself a good degree, and

great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

I beg the readers of the ***Signs*** to pardon the length of this letter, and remember in their prayers their unworthy brother in the joys and sorrows of the kingdom of the Redeemer.

Feb. 1, 1869 William L. Beebe

OBITUARIES

OBITUARY

Elder Ephraim C. Harrison of Rt. 4, Williamston, North Carolina was called to rest from his labors on Tuesday, July 25, 1978. Born April 20, 1901 in Martin County, he was the son of the late David and Louendie Bowen Harrison and had spent all his life in the Bear Grass Community.

Elder Harrison was a man of firm convictions, reasonable in his approach, steadfast in the declaration of the Gospel of the Son of God and uncomprising when the principles of truth and the practices of the Church were concerned. He united with the Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church third Saturday in October 1924, and was pastor from June 1962, until his death; Clerk of the Kehukee Association from 1960 to 1968; Moderator of the Kehukee Association from 1969 until his death. He was ordained to the full work of the Gospel Ministery in 1957. A good and faithful servant, was he.

Brother Harrison was married to Maggie Wynn on July 14, 1923, and to this union seven children were born, four sons and three daughters. One son and two daughters preceded him in death. Survivors include his widow, three sons, Levi Harrison of Kinston, North Carolina, Eli D. and Billie Harrison of Route 4, Williamston, and a daughter, Miss Diana Harrison of the home.

Funeral services were held for him in the Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Noah L. Ambrose, Elder Joseph Leggett, Elder M. E. Garner and Elder Donald E. Smith on July 28, 1978, with interment in Martin Memorial Gardens near Everetts.

By order of Bear Grass Church while in conference, August 20, 1978.

N. L. Ambrose, Moderator
Fannie Myrtle Cowin and
Theresa R. Ayers, Committee

ELDA PHYLLIS LAWS

I want to write a few words in memory of our darling Elda Laws who departed this life on November 9, 1978 at Sparks Regional Medical Center. She suffered from Leukemia and bore intense pain with patience. Her Bible was always beside her and she was reading and discussing it when ever she could.

Elda will be missed greatly because she was one who walked about Zion considering her bulwarks, and what her hands found to do she did with all her might. In the community where she lived she will be missed as she was so helpful in sickness and any in need of help.

Funeral services were conducted in the Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church with Elder Ersel Tillery officiating. Interment was in Hartford Cemetery at Hartford, Kansas.

Survivors are her husband, Mr. Roy Laws, of Mena, Arkansas; one daughter, Mrs. Susan Nobles, Emporia, Kansas; father, Mr. Ross Mark, Burlington, Kansas; and two grandchildren.

We need the prayers of all. Written by one who dearly loved her.

Lillie Ramsey

SISTER ANNIE EDMONDSON

On September 25, 1978 a dear mother in Israel was taken from our midst, Sister Annie Edmondson. Her family, the membership of Spring Green Church, her brethren of like faith, her friends, neighbors, and all that knew her mourn her absence and a void is left by her passing. Seldom in our life time has one so filled with the Grace of God passed our way. This Godliness was manifested in her walk, talk, faith, in her strength, and devotion to her church to which she was a member for sixty-two years.

She was born in Martin County, North Carolina March 30, 1895, making her stay

here 83 years. She was married to Robert H. Edmondson in 1911, who preceded her in death in 1972. To this union was born ten children. Surviving are four daughters, Miss Annie Ruth of the home, Mrs. Janie Roberson and Mrs. Magnolia Forbes of Robersonville, N.C., three sons, James of the home, Joe of Milford, Connecticut, and Roy Edmondson of Robersonville, N.C. Also left to mourn her passing, one brother, S. A. Edmondson of Hackensack, New Jersey, sixteen grandchildren and one great grandchild. Her children tenderly cared for their mother during her sickness. She had been in declining health for many years, but patiently waited upon the Lord to take her to her rest, often expressing her desire to be absent from this world and be at home with her Lord.

Funeral services were conducted at Biggs Funeral Home in Robersonville, N.C. on September 28, 1978 by Elders M. E. Garner and Joseph A. Leggett. Her body was laid to rest in the family cemetery, beneath a mound of beautiful flowers to await the morn of the resurrection.

Done by order of conference Saturday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1978.

Elder Joseph A. Leggett, Moderator
Mary J. Jenkins, Clerk

EPPA LYNN NORMAN

Brother Eppa Lynn Norman was born in Loudoun County, Virginia, April 26, 1916, the son of Charles Walter and Inez Long Norman. He died at his home near Winchester, Va. April 30, 1977.

He was a farmer most of his life. He lost a limb above the knee in a farm accident about two years before it was discovered he had cancer, which led to his passing. For several years he had been exercised with the desire to be baptized, and was received into the fellowship of Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church in Loudoun County, Virginia, during his illness. All who knew him had much love and fellowship for him, for he was deeply taught of the Lord. He loved to attend the meetings and is greatly missed from our congregations.

He is survived by his wife, Anna Carpenter Norman and two sons, Lewis Walter Norman of Warren County, Va. and James Lynn Norman of Frederick County, Va., and four grandchildren. Surviving also are four brothers, Walter W. Norman, Richmond, Va., I. Gregory Norman, White Hall, Va., William L. and Garland R. Norman of Herndon, Va., and two sisters, Mrs. Robert Pope and Mrs. Fred Case of Front Royal, Va.

Funeral services were held May 1st at the Jones Funeral Home, Winchester, Va. by his pastor, Elder John D. Wood, and interment was in the Leesburg Union Cemetery, Leesburg, Va.

The many friends and relatives and their flowers, testified of the high esteem in which he was held.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to his family and all who mourn his passing.

Elder John D. Wood

ABEL GLENN ROBERTS

Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church records the passing away of our Brother in Christ, Abel Glenn Roberts, at 88 years of age.

He was a native of Rockingham County, N.C., and lived in the Bakers Cross Roads Community most of his life. He was a retired farmer. He was the son of the late Tony J. and Ida Williams Roberts. His wife, the former Ludy Comer Roberts, died in 1969.

Surviving are daughters, Mrs. Rufus Knight, with whom he made his home for many years, and Mrs. Garland Everett of Rt. 4, Reidsville, N.C.; sons, Kent W., of Durham, N.C., Jerry, of Clearwater, Fla., Rex, of Lynchburg, Va., Ralph, of Seminary, Miss., Ray, of Reidsville, N.C., who is Chief of Police; 21 grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren; three brothers and one sister.

Funeral services were held at Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church house and burial was in the cemetery there. Officiating was his pastor, Elder Haywood W. Wray.

Brother Glenn was a member for many years and always attended his meetings until the last several years, when he was not able to be out. He manifested the love and grace of our Lord in his walk of life. Though his loving spirit is gone from us we can say, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord

Jesus Christ, Who giveth us the privilege of knowing His dear children and blessed be our dear Father Who calls them home to rest, to die no more."

Written by request of Pleasantville church and approved in conference on September 30, 1978.

Rachel P. Wray

SISTER SUSAN BRUMFIELD HOLLY

It pleased our Lord to remove from our midst, Sister Susan Brumfield Holly. Sister Holly was born June 24, 1884. She was the daughter of the late Ferdinand and Martha Johnson Brumfield. She was the wife of the late Charlie Lester Holly.

Sister Holly passed from this life September 13, 1978. She was laid to rest September 15, 1978 in Highland Burial Park, Danville, Va. Her funeral was preached by her pastor Elder O. K. Tench; Elders Haywood Wray and Julian Williams.

Sister Holly joined Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, June 12, 1915. She loved the church and attended faithfully as long as her health permitted.

Sister Holly is survived by four daughters, Mrs. Inez Holly, Mrs. Viola Davis, Mrs. Gladys Stegall and Mrs. Mabel Wilson. Three sons, Posey Holly, Russell T. Holly and Irvin Holly all of Danville Va. She left twenty-four grandchildren, thirty great grandchildren and four great great grandchildren.

Sister Holly will be sadly missed by all. We hope each one will be reconciled to God's will.

Written by a sister in hope.

Carol Pickral
Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Oscar D. Pickral, Clerk
R.F.D. #1, Box 279
Gretna, Virginia 24557

BROTHER DANIEL A. LAW

We at Chapel Church must bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, who in His infinite wisdom saw fit to call from our midst one of our beloved members, Brother Daniel A. (Ford) Law, on March 1, 1978.

He was born in Franklin County eighty-two years ago. He united with the church at Chapel on May 19, 1974, and was a faithful and lovely member as long as he lived. He loved the church and always welcomed the brethren into his home with a welcome and warm hand shake and a friendly smile, making them know he was glad to have them. He was a World War I veteran.

Brother Law is survived by his wife, Sister Pearl Akers Law; one foster son, Max C. Johnson of Richmond; one brother, E. E. (Dock) Law of Rocky Mount; three sisters, Mrs. Aurie Southerland of Penhook, Mrs. Elizabeth Powell, of Wirtz, Mrs. Alice Johnson of Roanoke County; and many good neighbors and friends.

We trust he is resting in peace with God our Saviour, where there will be no more sickness and sorrow, no more pain or death, and where God will wipe away all tears from our eyes. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints". We know God makes no mistakes.

His funeral was preached at Oakey's Roanoke Chapel by his pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and was laid to rest in the Law family plot in Mountain View Cemetery to await the morning of the resurrection, when Jesus will carry His children home, where there will be peace and love forever.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Mary B. Brown, Church Clerk

DEACON ADOLPHUS PASCHAL

"Cast Down but not Destroyed" was his favorite song. Cast down but not destroyed was the evidence he bore so much of his time in this life. Cast down but not destroyed are our humble feelings and thoughts of a very dear soldier of the cross that has left the presence of a few humble poor that loved him so very much. I feel so deeply that Brother Adlophus James Paschal was cast down in this life here so many times, and I feel so sure he is not destroyed.

Our dear Pastor, Elder Clyde Kiser, as he spoke so beautifully at our dear Brother's last respects on this earth, mentioned the song, "Cast Down but not Destroyed", as being Brother Paschal's favorite song, saying it was referred to by our Little Church as "Brother Dolph's Song".

The last time he attended our meeting at New Hope, being in so much pain before the service was over, Brother Roy Somers asked him if he wanted him to take him home. His reply was for him to bring a car up close to the church door so that he might rest there and continue to hear the preaching. Yes, the gospel of salvation by the grace of God meant this to him.

The next day he was carried back to the hospital, and he passed away six weeks later. While sitting by such a stilled and seemingly unconscious body, his Pastor hummed, "Cast Down but Not Destroyed". Yet surely God works in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform.

Brother Paschal was born August 31, 1900. He asked for a home in New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Rockingham County, North Carolina, in November, 1947. He was ordained a Deacon on June 13, 1948, and died July 17, 1978.

Brother Paschal is survived by his wife, Sister Martha Knowles; four sons, Adolphus, Jr., Bill, Ronnie, and Rodger; one daughter, Rebecca P. Isley; two brothers, David and Carl Paschal; four sisters, Sister Lizzie Perdue, Sister Vesta Bobko, Sister Pattie Tate, and Shirley Brumfield.

Done by order and request of the church, and written by Sister Fannie Sue Ware.

Elder Clyde Kiser, Pastor
Sister Dixie Kiser, Clerk

ELDER MAJOR L. SIMMONS
SADIE M. SIMMONS

Whereas God in His infinite wisdom has called from us by death our beloved Brother and Pastor, Elder Major L. Simmons, who calmly fell asleep in Jesus on January 18, 1978, at the age of 88 years, and his wife, whose death preceded him by a few weeks, on November 27th, 1977, at the age of 89 years.

Sister Sadie was devoted to her family and made every sacrifice possible for them and the many church members and friends who visited them.

She united with the Primitive Baptist Church of Newport River on June 20, 1931, and was baptized the following day by Elder W. W. Roberts.

Brother Simmons united with the Primitive Baptist Church of Newport River on May 31, 1913, and was baptized the following day by Elder Isaac Jones.

In 1932 the Church recognized his gift, as he was impressed to comfort others with the comfort wherewith he was comforted. On June 18, 1932, he was licensed by the Church to exercise his gift wherever his lot was cast. On June 14, 1934, he was ordained to the full work of the ministry and was a faithful minister until suffering a stroke in April of 1975. For 33 months after this until his death he was unable to preach, but did attend church a few times.

Brother Simmons became pastor of his home church after the death of Elder W. W. Roberts in 1964, and remained pastor until his death. He was also pastor of the Hadnots Creek Primitive Baptist Church from September 1934, until his passing, a total of 41 years.

Brother Simmons was faithful to the cause he so much loved and had the utmost respect of those who opposed him.

Brother Simmons and Sister Sadie were invalids during their illness of more than 2½ years, but were blessed to live at home. They had very good medical attention and through their children, friends, and nurses, excellent care until the end. But let us remember that earthly wisdom and loving care cannot stay the hand of death.

We pray that the good Lord will comfort the children and grandchildren in their loss and that His good council will follow them. We miss Brother Simmon's comforting words in the church, but desire to be reconciled to God's holy will and feel to say, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done". We know that though we walk through the Valley of the shadow of death we shall fear no evil for God will be with us. His rod and staff will comfort us; even then nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. No other is worthy of our trust.

Funeral services were conducted in the church of their membership by Elder John M. Draper, Assistant Pastor, assisted by Elder William Benton. They were laid to rest in the Amiriah Garner Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord, when their bodies that are sown in weakness will be raised in power and see the great King in His glory, be like Him, and be satisfied.

Submitted by Ethel Mason, Clerk

Signs of the Times

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"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 4/79 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

INCARNATION OF CHRIST
(Luke 2:8-15)

Hark! the heavenly chorus sounding
Through the vaulted, midnight sky:
Peace to mortals! love abounding!
Angels with the tidings fly.
Christ, the Saviour!
See him in a manger lie.

"Fear not, O ye favour'd shepherds;
This shall be a sign to you;
Ye shall find the babe there wrapped;
God incarnate go and view
You, in Bethlehem,
Jesus love and serve him too."

Lovely babe, dear child mysterious,
Son of David, Son of God,
Gift of gifts the best, dear Jesus,
Come to shed thy precious blood
For thy people,
Those for whom He Surety stood.

Glorious news! Our God is faithful:
Christ, the promised seed, appears:
Ancient records, how delightful!
Now revealed, forbid our fears.
Hope of Israel,
Welcome to this vale of tears.

Hell, and sin, and death, and Satan,
Thou shalt conquer, though thou die,
And shall rise, th' elect engraven
On thy heart, to reign on high.
Blessed Zion!
See thy dear Redeemer lie.

Great Messiah! Lord of glory!
All our hopes on thee depend.
Saints, repeat the joyful story,
Jesus Christ, the sinners' Friend!
Hail! dear Shiloh,
We to thee ourselves commend.

Dec. 1844 G.T.C.

SHORT DISCOURSE
BY WILLIAM HUNTINGTON

"For he that is dead is freed from sin."
(Romans 6:7)

The elect of God, as well as all others, are by nature dead; they are dead in sin, living without any spiritual life; and to be carnally-minded is death: they are without any affection for God, motion towards Him, delight in Him or in His service; and they are dead in law, being condemned in Adam, for judgment by one offence came upon all men to condemnation; and they are under the curse of the law, and by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

In this state the law could give us no strength to obey its precepts, and consequently it could give us no life; for all our obedience thereto is only dead works. But "what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh," hath done for us. Christ was sent in the likeness of sinful flesh. "The children being partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same." And to him were our actual transgressions and inbred corruptions imputed. "He was made sin for us," and He stood charged with the whole of our sins, and was arraigned and condemned, "being numbered with the transgressors;" and, under the sentence that fell on Him, "our sins were condemned in his flesh." He dies the death of the cross, and "makes his soul an offering for sin." And "our old man is crucified with him", and we too, for we died in our Head by virtue of a preceding union with Him. "I am crucified with Christ", says Paul; I died in my Head; in Him I have died the death due to me for sin by virtue of my union with Him, and by His being cut off, not for Himself, but for me; in Him I died, in Him I suffered the law; "for if one died for all, then were all dead" when He died. And in this sense we were all dead together; the Head and all the members in Him. But there is a voice in the promise: "Thy dead men shall live," saith God. "With my dead body shall they arise", saith the Saviour. And in our Head we all arose. "Ye are risen with Christ; God hath quickened you together with him, having forgiven all your trespasses;" His blood has purged your sins; His resurrection is a pledge of ours, and eternal life is in Him for all His members.

To let us know this, the law that cast condemned, and cursed to death the covenant Head, who was made sin for us, that law comes to us, sin revives, and we die; which is a planting us together in the likeness of His death: the Spirit directs the eye of faith to the death and atonement of Christ, and quickens us by His influence; and we rise under the operation of the Spirit of God, and are planted together in the likeness of His resurrection. Now we live no more in the old way; we are dead, buried, and risen with Christ. To the lust of men, to the lust of the flesh, to the will of men, to sin, and to the law, we live no more.

"Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." We are dead to self. "No man liveth unto himself nor dieth unto himself. Whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's." And to this end "Christ died, rose again, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and of the living;" the Lord of those elect souls who are as yet dead in sin, and of them that are already quickened. He is dead to sin and lives no longer therein. He is dead to the law by the sentence passed on the body of Christ, and by the sentence felt in himself; and expects no life from that. And by a sweet union to Christ, and the enjoyment of it; by communion with the saints, and affection for them, "he is crucified to this world", He can find no life in the company of the dead; "and the world is crucified to him", they can find no delight, or life, in the company of one that is dead to sin and alive to God.

The old life, and all old things, are

now passed away, and all things are become new. He is born again, walks in newness of life, in a new and living way; lives by faith on the Son of God, or the risen Saviour lives in him; he has a new heart and a new spirit; he speaks with a new tongue; finds new desires and new delights; pursues a new end, and chooses new company; the form of godliness passes away, and every branch of vital godliness is entirely new to him.

And "he that is dead is freed from sin". What! from the inbeing of it? No. "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us". Are we freed from the in-dwelling of it? No. "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." Is it a freedom from the oppositions, motions, and struggles of it? No. "I find a law in my members warring against the law of my mind." Are we free from all slips and falls into it? No "There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not." "In many things we offend in all." "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults." "For the just man falleth seven times, and riseth again." "And if thy brother sin against thee until seventy times seven, and turn again, and say, I repent, thou shalt forgive him." Are we freed from all carnal desires after evil? No. "Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." "The spirit in man lusteth to envy." Are we freed from all the usurped power of sin? No. "The good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that do I." But are we freed from it in the house of prayer, and when engaged in God's service? No. Groundless fear and trembling are often in the pulpit, the carnal wanderings in the pew. "When I would do good evil is present with me." Is there nothing in us that serves evil? Yes. "So, then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."

What is this freedom, then? Answer: The new man of grace is put on, which is created in righteousness and true holiness; such are new creatures in Christ and complete in Him.

The old man is put off, as condemned, crucified, dead, and buried, by the sacrifice of Christ for sin; and therefore saith Paul, "It is no more I (the new man) that do it," but the old man. "It is sin that dwelleth in me", which evil I would not, which I hate, which is the source of all my misery. "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?" "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened;" having a soul on the stretch for heaven, and yet clogged with corruption.

What is this freedom, then? Freedom from the reign of sin; for grace shall reign in every believer, over sin, to eternal life; but sin never shall reign in a believer over grace, to eternal death, for "the just man shall live by his faith." We are freed from sin touching the hand-writing, or debt book, that was open against us. The hand-writing is blotted out and nailed to His cross; and so are our transgressions blotted out as a cloud, and as a thick cloud our sins. Freed from the destroying power of sin, and from the imputation of it. Sin shall not be our ruin, for, "Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord will not impute sin." Freed from all liability to eternal punishment on the account of sin. "The sins of Israel shall be sought for, but there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, but they shall not be found; for I will pardon them whom I reserve". Christ shall present us to Himself a glorious church, having neither spot nor wrinkle.

I am redeemed from all evil; the price of my ransom is paid; I am justified freely from all things. And who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died to expiate my crimes; and is risen again to see me justified, and to plead my cause and revenge my wrongs. I am in Christ,

and there is no condemnation to them that are in Him; I have the law of faith (by which I am to live) written on the tables of my heart, and that law of the Spirit of life in Christ has made me free from the law of sin, which is in my members, and from the law of death engraven on tables of stone.

Moreover, my body is the temple of the Holy Ghost; He has taken possession of it, and dwells in it, and is the pledge and earnest of the future inheritance, and has sealed me up to the last day of redemption; that is, the redemption of my body from the grave, which will be revealed in the last times, when Christ will be the plague of death and the destruction of the grave; when the last enemy, death, shall be destroyed, and He that only hath immortality be all in all. This is Paul's language.

Furthermore, God's promised grace is sufficient for me. When I am as a saint, an apostle, or as fruitful, "by the grace of God I am what I am," saith Paul. If my success is great in conversion, in victory, gifts, fortitude, I am not the labourer, "but the grace of God that is with me": that which changed my heart at first was "the abundance of his grace upon me."

If I stand fast, it is by faith; and I am a debtor to His grace both for my faith and my standing. Should I fall, I shall not be utterly cast down, for grace shall raise me again; should I backslide, He will heal my backslidings, and grace shall restore me. His grace is sufficient for me.

Thus am I free. If I look to the law, the hand-writing is blotted out and nailed to His cross. If I look to the book of God's remembrance, the debt is cancelled, and God will remember my sins no more. If I look to justice, it is satisfied, and God is just in forgiving me my sins, and in cleansing me from all unrighteousness. Nor is He unrighteous, to forget my works of faith and labours of love; nor will His justice forbid me the crown of righteousness when I have finished my warfare; no, the righteous Judge will give it me in that day. If I look to Christ, I am complete in Him; if I look to God the Father, it is He that justified me; and if I look to my infirmities within, it is sin that dwelleth in me, for my soul hates evil. My will is sanctified: "I would do good"; my mind is renewed: "With the mind I myself serve the law of God". My affections are sanctified: "I delight in the law of God after the inward man". I will glory therefore in my infirmities, for they drive me from all confidence in the flesh, and make me cleave the closer to Christ, and rejoice in Him; they keep me humble, watchful, and grateful to my Saviour for so great a salvation. I have renounced all that I was, and all that I had, and have received Christ as all in me and all to me. I am a dead man in His death and in the law; and, as such, He took possession of me, and I live by Him; yet, not I, but Christ lives in me, shines out of me, speaks by me, and mightily works in me. I fill up the measure of His suffering in my flesh, and His strength is made perfect in my weakness; His wisdom is displayed in my ignorance, His beauty in my deformity, and His matchless grace in my preservation and salvation, and in the salvation of all that believe on His name. "For to me to live is Christ, (for He lives in me), and to die is gain", for Christ is the portion of my soul and my all in all. "He that is dead is freed from sin".

November, 1850 "Gospel Standard"

Among the great variety of preachers, some give the pure gospel wine, unadulterated and undashed. Others give wine and water. Some give mere cold water, without a drop of wine among it.

Toplady

A minister can only lay on the caustic; God alone can make the hearers feel it.

Toplady

Dear Editors,

"Ye must be born again". By nature we are born to pain and death - born at the appointed time and place, to the earthly parents that God chose for us before the foundation of the world. God hated Esau before the foundation of the world, but Oh! dear born again children of God, He loved Jacob before the foundation of the earth, not because he had done any good thing, or would ever do any good thing, but because he was a chosen vessel of mercy. We only have a hope that we are a chosen vessel of mercy. If not, then hell is our everlasting home. In nature we are sinful and will be until death takes us to the grave, and we do confess we are the most vile creatures that ever walked. But when the spirit of God comes down upon one of His chosen, and shows him or her, what a vile wretch they are, then they will lay in dust and ashes, till the God of all mercy lifts the burdened soul out of darkness, and gives you a hope in Jesus Christ, the one that was crucified, and our sins did crucify Him - the Lord of glory. When they cried, "Let His blood be on us and our children, and our children's children," they did not know what they were saying, or understand it till the Lord pricked them in their hearts on the day of Penticost. Then they knew what their sins had done. They had nailed Jesus to the cross.

Now, after you are born again, you also will cry, "Oh Lord, let His blood be on us and our children and our children's children" because we do know very well that without the shedding of the blood there is no remission for sin.

Before you are born again, you are a rebel to your God. You will have everything contrary to God in your feeble mind. This is also absolutely predestinated or ordained to be this way. But by His spirit you are born again to see the Kingdom of God, not the kingdom of men. Then you are raised to newness of life, and cannot walk in the old letter, which is the law, with a good conscience. Because if you stray back under the old law, God will surely lay the chastising rod on your back, and bring you hither again to His feet, and you shall not have any gods before Him, and Him only will you worship. This makes you desire a better country, a house not made with hands, a building that no man can touch, or build of himself, a foundation that cannot be built upon by man or woman. Because just as sure as you start works system in this building, God will throw it down. We are commanded to wait upon the Lord. The ones that you bring in will be a vessel to dishonor. I still say all this is ordained of God, because in a great house there are some to honor and some to dishonor. He has a right to make a vessel to honor and one to dishonor. They all are walking every step God has ordained them to walk. The Devil has no power of his own. He sows the tares among the wheat at God's appointed time and place, because the wicked shall do wickedly, and shall not understand, but the wise will understand.

Dear brothers and sisters, I have written this letter to you desiring not to offend in any way, but I hope I have been taught these things in the valley by God Almighty. These things are hid from the wise and the prudent, but we hope they are revealed to us little babes along the strait and narrow way.

I remain a helpless sinner and hope I have been born again to see a new Kingdom.

Pauline Spencer

Gospel ministers are usually, in will and desire at least, employed for God to the last moment of their lives. Their work being accomplished, they are called from labour to heaven; as Cincinnatus was found at the plough when he received his call to the dictatorship of Rome.

Toplady

ENJOYED BANK OF FAITH

Box 48
Duanesburg, New York
December 27, 1978

Dear Elder Smith,

I would like to go on record as one who obtained comfort and spiritual uplifting from the "Bank of Faith" series of articles printed in the ***Signs of the Times.***

I could, somewhat, understand Huntington's humble beginnings, as I feel that it was only by the grace of God that I have come this far. My father died at the age of 49, when I was 17 and in the 3rd year of high school. The Lord provided a way and as I look back 43 years I can see that the Lord was a wonderful provider. Much more than I deserved. As it reads in the beginning of the 124th Psalm, "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side..." Oh! we can say many times, "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side". It is too wonderful for words what a wonderful God we have for we do not merit esteem or give the Creator delight, by ourselves. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Philippians 2:13)

The Truth is the Truth, whether it is expounded by a humble converted Methodist, a previous Free Will Baptist, or "a dyed in the wool" Old School Baptist, or any other. I am told that the Lord has a people in every kindred, tribe, and tongue.

I thought Brother Gooch's article "Is there not a cause", was so fitting in the December issue. Is there not a cause?

In Second Corinthians 5:12-17 it says, "For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance, and not in heart. For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new."

You, probably, many times have heard the song, "Will the circle be unbroken"? It will not be broken because God elected Himself a people. In the 8th Chapter of Romans, starting at the 29th verse you will read of foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification, and glorification.

In John Chapter 6, Verse 39, we read, "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

The ***Signs*** came in my parents home and I have enjoyed it for many years, and I hope it is the Lord's will to keep it in print.

With Hope and trust in God,
Woodrow W. Bellinger

(We appreciate Brother Bellinger's good remarks and words of encouragement. Editor)

SIGNS NOTICE BY D.V. SPANGLER

APPOINTMENTS

The Lord willing, Elder James Poole, one of the editors of the ***Signs of the Times,*** will fill the following appointments.

Laurel Ridge, near Roanoke, Va., Friday night, April the 27th, at seven o'clock p.m., Saturday at the Stauntion River Union, Saturday night, April 28th, Reed Creek Church, near Basset, Va., and Sunday, April 29th, at the Upper Country Line Union Meeting, at Dan River Church.

The Lord willing I expect to accompany Elder Poole to these appointments.

D. V. Spangler

P.O. Box 82
Coffee Springs, Alabama

Dear Elders,

On October 21, 22, and 23rd, 1978, the Clay Bank Association met in her one hundred thirty-fourth session. The Lord blessed us with an experience most wonderful and different from any thing we have had in the area before. I am copying from our Minutes a portion of the proceedings:

"Proceedings of the one hundred thirty-fourth annual session of the Clay Bank Primitive Baptist Association, being held with New Providence Church, near Kinston, Coffee County, Alabama on October 21, 22, and 23, 1978. Appointed Elder Clyde Barton, Moderator for the beginning. The Association was opened with song and prayer by Elder Collins of the Western Primitive Association. The introductory sermon was preached by Elder J. P. Morgan of the Conecuh River Association, with no special text, followed by Elder Sam Dean of the Ebenezer Association — Text Daniel 12:1-9. Dismissed one hour for lunch. The Elders and Delegates met in the house and organized in conference with song and prayer by Elder Paul Stott of the Mt. Enon Association. Invited visiting Brothers and Sisters of our faith to sit with us. Read letters from the various churches and enrolled delegates as per tabular statement. By motion; received letters, together with the bearers. (These churches were Ebenezar, Cool Springs, New Providence, New Travelers Rest, Travelers Rest, and Pleasant Ridge.)

By motion elected Elder W. A. Williams, Moderator, and Roace Bass, Clerk, with Sister Ruth Parrish, Assistant Clerk for this session. The Moderator then called for petitionary letters. Elder Williams made a statement about the letters. By motion received the churches together with the Delegates. The churches are: Mt. Pleasant, Mt. Carmel, Bethany, Paran, Bethel, and Gethsemane. By motion extend the right hand of fellowship to all who came by petitionary letter. We are now in direct correspondence with the following Associations: Ebenezer, Conecuh River, Western Primitive, Mt. Enon, and Yellow River."

Our hearts are overflowing with joy and with that sweet peace that passeth all understanding. For this cause we humbly bow before the Throne of God's mercy and as much as in us we endeavor to thank Him for His goodness towards us and for His marvelous grace.

Yours in Hope,
William A. Williams

January 4, 1979

"Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?" Matthew 21:42.

That stone, which is Christ, the only true church, never has fit in with the rest of the stones. The builders, (those who put their dependence in their own works of the flesh) cannot use it. It is in the way. It will not fit into any opening that they have prepared. It's shape is wrong, so they reject it. But God, who prepared the stone in the first place, puts it where it belongs, as the head of the corner. It is the only stone that will stand, it will be there when the rest have fallen. This is truly marvelous in our eyes.

This stone has always been a stumblingblock in this perverse and alien world we live in. "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence." (I Cor. 1:27-29.)

It is only through him, that we are in Christ Jesus, who of God is make unto

us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: "That according as it is written, He that glorieth, let his glory in the Lord." (I Cor. 1:31)

A sister in hope
Lois L. Cottrell
Route 3, Box 15-A
Hurricane, W. Va. 25526

The Arminians think, that in conversion God does little or nothing for men, but gives them a pull by the elbow, to awake them from their sleep. Rather, He acts as maritime officers do by their sailors; He cuts down the hammock or carnal security in which the elect are; down they fall, and the bruises and surprise they receive awaken them from their death in sin, and bring them to themselves whether they will or not.

Toplady

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213 Virginia St.
Minden, LA 71055

Elder Poole:

It is with a felt sense of unworthiness that I attempt to write the ***Signs.*** If the Lord blesses me, I would like to make a few comments on the eighth and nineth verses of the First Chapter of Job.

In the eighth verse God asks Satan to consider my friend Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil.

In the ninth verse Satan asks God, "Doth Job fear God for naught?" This verse seems to me to involve all the difference between the two Peoples set forth in the scriptures as the elect and the non elect. Those that serve God or serve self. Those that are obedient unto death or those that are obedient for reward. Those that possess true religion or the ones that have worldly religion.

All who profess religion, whether true or worldly, are on one side of this question or on the other. One has Christ in him the hope of glory, the other the spirit of this world with a hope for gain.

Worldly religion looks at this question the same as Satan. They do not serve or fear God for naught, but in hope of reward. In exchange for their service or fear, they expect something in return. Theirs is a selfish motive, for selfish reasons, not because of love or any such thing. Always expecting to get the better of the exchange.

Not so with the child of God. With these their actions are because of the reward, not to obtain the reward. Their virture or goodness is because of the Spirit within them. Their obedience is because of love. This Spirit and love causes them to follow after holiness even without the fear of hell or the hope of heaven, but from the sincere desire for good.

All else is self seeking, self glorifying, self rewarding. All such things are hateful in the eyes of God and as far from the truth as the east is from the west.

After Job had been stripped of all he possessed, he was blessed to say, the Lord gave, the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord. The same is true with the child of God. No matter what kind of circumstance he finds himself in, whether trials and afflictions, or joy and thanksgiving, because the Lord doeth it, it is marvelous in our eyes. Nothing less will satisfy the child of God.

Thus it is so, that in pure religion, the Spirit causes us to walk in unselfish obedience, in a way that at one time we knew not, with a desire for that which is good, that at one time was completely alien to us.

Therefore Job did not fear God for naught. Brethren consider, doth thou fear God for naught? Job's was not a legal or law service but of God given faith with love as the moving force. Job was given true freedom, freedom from unselfish motives, freedom of heart which loves and seeks after God. May this be our happy lot.

Brother Poole, it was good to meet and talk with you at Dallas. I am looking forward to seeing you again.

If these few comments are agreeable to you, you are welcome to use them. If not discard them.

Remember me in your prayers.

Elder G. R. Smith

Old Adam never was a saint yet, and never will be; (Rom. 7). On the other hand, the new man, or principle of grace in the heart, never sinned, and never can. (Rom. 7, I John.)

Toplady

I have just read this sentence: "God has promised to bless His people when they obey Him." My own experience concerning this subject is that the Lord's blessing causes the obedience, and so I think every child of God feels to thank the Lord that he has obeyed the sweet commands of Jesus. He does not feel that he is entitled to the credit and praise of it, but humbly thanks the Lord that he has been given the spirit of obedience. He does not say, "I went in paths of righteousness", but, "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake". We must have grace in order to serve God acceptably. It is not grace because of our good works, but good works because of grace; it is not the blessing of the Lord because of our obedience, but obedience because of the Lord's blessing. The disobedient child of God will feel that he is altogether to blame for his evil walk, and that his punishment is well deserved; but when he is restored, and is walking again in obedience, he will not, cannot claim any of the credit for his return to paths of obedience; he will say with Naomi: "I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty". His going away was all of and by himself, but his coming back was all of and by the Lord.

Fragments Silas H. Durand

THOU ART STRONGER THAN I, AND HAST PREVAILED

Dear Friend,---Yours I have received, and have read it with pleasure and profit, proving the same ins and outs, ups and downs, more than ever I did before in all my life; which brings me to praise sovereign, electing, discriminating grace more than ever.

"O, to grace, how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrain'd to be!
Let that grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee."

My greatest trouble is my wretched departings, backslidings, and wanderings from my covenant God and Father, who has been with me in so many storms, held me up under so many sinkings, supplied me so richly, so freely, so abundantly in all my needs and necessities, and delivered me out of so many great and sore troubles. Bless His dear Name, He has been very good, very merciful, very kind, very tender, and very faithful; for not one good thing has ever failed that He has promised me; all have come to pass; yea, I say, not one good thing has ever failed.

It grieves me, my friend, to find and feel such a host of devils in my heart pouring all manner of insults upon my God and Saviour, which makes my very soul heave up with groans of sorrow. "My wounds stink and are corrupt, because of my foolishness." "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death?" O the sad pangs it brings me to feel that, after all His loving kindness which He has caused to pass before me, in the way, going hard upon fifty years, when He has never once failed me, but has ever been a very present help in all my troubles. O, my friend, this is grief, this is real trouble, to see and feel how I am abusing and sinning against so compassionate, so tender a Father; a dear Friend that has ever stuck closer than a brother; a dear Saviour that has ever saved me out of all the pits, gins, snares, and prison-houses that ever I have been

in to this present moment, and has very many times assured me that He will be with me even unto the end, and has given me many sweet hopes that when my little work is done here upon earth I shall be with Him in glory; and yet at times to feel so carnal, so worldly, so peevish, so proud, so lifeless, so stupid, so filthy, so devilish! My friend, I stand astonished, and cry out,

"Can ever God dwell here?"

Can ever a Christian feel like this?--a precious Bible to read, without a heart to read it; a precious throne of grace to approach unto, without a heart to draw near to it; a comfortable house to dwell in, a good bed to lie down in at night, food and clothing, the use of my natural faculties, a measure of health and strength, and yet no heart to bless God for one of them! O, my friend, it is grievous to me to see and feel how basely I reward my God for all His kindness! I do indeed sometimes fear that He never can bear with me long. I have verily many times looked and expected His judgments to come and rid the earth of such a lump of nuisance at a stroke; but, instead of this, He has come with love in His heart, tenderness in His eyes, mercy and kindness on His tongue, and proclaimed with much power in my soul, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee. Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon; look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards. Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck." My dear friend, such a sudden burst of His glory, full of loving kindness, mercy, and grace to such a filthy, hell-deserving wretch, who has looked for, and expected nothing but wrath and frowns, has so astonished, amazed, humbled, shamed, and broken to pieces my soul, that I have cried out, "Who is a God like unto our God, that pardoneth iniquity, transgressions, and sins, for His name's sake?" O! I have not known where to hide my blushing, shame-covered countenance, to see how I have abused Him, and to feel how He loves me; to see and feel how I have departed from Him, and to see and feel how close and fast He sticks to me; to see and feel my unfaithfulness to Him, and to see and feel His faithfulness unto me! Can I help loving Him, adoring Him, thanking Him, praising Him? No, I cannot, I must not, I will not; for if such a worm were to hold his peace at such seasons, the very stones would cry out. I must sing out, "The Lord has done great things for me, whereof I am glad. I was brought low, and he helped me. Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with me. For Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living".

O what pleasure and delight to be here! Here is a large room indeed, where there is plenty of space to walk, to dance, yea, and to fly in, without any weariness, stupidity, bondage, or guilt of soul. And is this but a drop of that heavenly joy and peace in our Father's house above, where our souls hope to arrive? What must the fountain be? If my poor soul land safely in that heavenly kingdom, I shall know all about it; but the drops are so rich, full, and glorious, that it beggars both tongue and pen to describe it. The apostle says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is;" and my soul can say with David, (and so can yours,) "Then shall I be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness".

I shall conclude my poor, weak scrawl with my soul's desire towards you, that you and I may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that we may walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing,

being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; that we may be strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering; with joyfulness giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. That God may grant that this may be the happy lot of you and me, is the prayer of

Your worthless, unworthy brother for the truth's sake,
Trowbridge, June 14, 1844 J. W.

The Gospel ministers do, indeed, in some sense, turn the world upside-down. The fall of Adam has turned human nature upside-down long ago; and converting grace must turn us upside-down again, in order to bring us right.

Toplady

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EDITORIAL

"And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel; they are enemies for your sakes, but as touching the election, they are beloved for the father's sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." (Rom. 11:26-29)

The way the apostle lays this down to the children of God is certainly good news to those thus addressed. In fact, this is the center, the nucleus, of the gospel. Ancient tribes enjoyed this promise, ancient scribes found it filled with nutritious substance as they heralded the coming of Immanuel. If this has a hidden or a double meaning to the Jews as a nation, well and good; if it only has a meaning as reaching all of the spiritually born children of God, good, and very good it is indeed; for it reaches all those under consideration.

The saving under consideration is to all Israel, and it is to come about through the merits of the Deliverer, who is to come out of Zion. As for agitators, skeptics, critics, disturbers of God's poor and afflicted people, I leave them to their own, but I do hope that I write to all of the poor wayfaring children of God everywhere. If called and qualified and sent of God, then I begin what I have to say as gospel news. All of them will be saved, and this salvation is all from first to last to come to this Israelite nation as a free gift from God. I do not believe that a minister of Jesus Christ sits in some high and exalted seat (who, the most of the time so sits only in his own estimation), studying smart things to say, but that his plea is that the Lord would bless him to know nothing among his brethren save to preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and he to be made to realize that he is a poor unworthy servant of Jesus Christ. This Deliverer was, and is, God. God sent Him, and this

God is full of grace and truth, and fills us, and delivers us, world without end.

How true it is that not the first one of Jacob's brethren are a contributing factor in this Deliverer turning ungodliness away from them. They do not know God, let alone know godliness. Before ungodliness is turned away from any of them, they have already had godliness applied to them. The work is accomplished before they can know to start. In fact, any start that they make is the wrong one, for they know not God, as they knew not the Saviour. The first aspiration after godliness is a sure sign that ungodliness has already been turned from them. That is the first indication that His covenant with His people is being made manifest. Up until this revelation is made to them, the law had them under bondage, under corruption, under slavery and bondage to sin. They have labored and struggled under a covenant of works until they know not what to do. (Acts 2:17; 16:30) When mankind gets to the place that he does not know what to do (to say nothing about doing anything to be saved) he is then and there in a helpless condition. All of Israel did not know what to do about anything, and certainly if they do not know what to do about anything, then the only thing that will ever turn ungodliness away from them is to show them what it will do for them, and then show to them the all important matter that only this Deliverer can save them. If they are taught this by God, he and she then know that the covenant of works is a failure from beginning to end and if a failure all of the way, then they learn for the first time that salvation must come from a covenant based on better things than Moses' law or covenant can ever do for them. What a miracle when poor sinners are taught that they do not know what to do, nor what it is that they must be saved from. Here now, in this astounding revelation the text takes on added beauty and deliverance. They have found no deliverance, not even any hope of it, but they have had the denunciation of God against sin, and its sentence has been so austere that they could see nothing for them save the avenging wrath of God being poured out upon them with all of His power. Behold what a miserable, dejected creature is this. No hope for mercy can he or she find by searching. The inflexible vengeance of God; yes, it is seen, it is felt, but mercy for such a character - never. But let us pause for a moment. Let us wait, for it is certainly encouragement for troubled hearts.

There is a pleasant sound coming from over the lea (pasture). A description of these is given. "They are enemies for your sakes, but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For "(now let us mark that word well)," the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." No, No, dear heavy laden sinner, there is no disannulling of His covenant of redemption. The promise of God is as new today as it was to our ancient brethren when God appeared to them in the long ago. It makes glad the heart of burdened souls today, as it eased the aching hearts of ancient Israel; as it did our brethren when He took them by the hand and led them out of Egypt. This kind of comfort comes only from Israel's God. It can only come from a being like unto Him, and only a poor ruined sinner ever will find any rest and comfort and consolation, as did Job. It has been said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation". In fact, this is the only way by which objects of our text ever enter the kingdom (John 16:33; Acts 14:22; II Cor. 4:17), and this fitted the description of Job. What a picture of God-given faith. As it was with the suffering woman to make her whole, and as it was with the poor woman who kissed the Saviour's feet, and it saved her (Mat. 9:22; Luke 7:50) even so does God-given faith save those today, and as living water flowed backward to the hinder sea, even so the

cleansing water of life giving faith enabled Job to say, "Even though He slay me, yet will I trust Him". (Job 13:15)

As it was in the times of the Saviour and the apostles, so it is now, and since God is unchangeable in all of His ways, it will continue to the end of time. The world did not know us in His time, and it does not know us in our time. The reason for this was not because of a reason based on the conduct of Him or His people. The reason was that they did not know Him. What a change there would have been had the world known Him. The woman at the well would have fell prone at His feet in holy worship had she known Him; Herod would have sought Him that he might lay all of his kingdom's wealth down in service to Him and His kingdom, and you and I, if we had known Him, would have followed Him to Gethsemane. Even so today, could we know Him all of the time, as we some of the time hope that we know Him, we would not be arrayed in persecution against Him and His dear people. Ah, how cruel and unforgiving we are of our weak neighbors and friends, and brethren, because that they do not all line up and follow Him as we do. Yet, we know (if we do know) that we follow Him if we do, because we have been commanded to lay down everything that we are striving for, and everything that we have, and follow Him, and that one of the fundamental tenets of what we profess to believe is that God effectually calls His people. People do not follow Him because He has not been revealed to them, and they have not been called to follow Him. The reason that we follow Him (if we do) is because He has been revealed to us as our Saviour. Thus one of the families of the earth know Him, and knowing Him by revelation, they love Him. The other family of the earth does not know Him.

It is certain that if we know him (thus loving Him) that we love and cherish His doctrine. If we do not love Him, we thus do not love His doctrine. John tells us, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not". (I John 3:1) "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before that it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you". (John 16:18-19) The hatred of the world for the Old Baptist people, as well as the hatred of the brethren for one another, is because of the discriminating love of God that has been bestowed upon this one, and the others left out. In our preaching and our writing, that is, if it is wrought in us by the power of the Holy Ghost, it is going to arouse hatred, malice, jealousness. It is not a mark of God's displeasure against us, but it is a mark of His love, even His discriminating love. Any time a people is chosen to show forth His praise, those not thus chosen will hate that people; any time one poor wayworn subject of grace is blessed to go to a place or to pastor a church, or is chosen and sent where others aspired (in the flesh) for that favor, hatred is displayed. This is not because that the one thus favored is hated because of his earthly conduct but because of God's favor toward that people or that individual.

If we have travelled in the kingdom of God's dear Son, it has been a varied journey. We boldly ascended Sinai, having already freely said, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do". (Ex. 19:8) If people could read, they would never refer to what they had the ability to do again. This shows that their eyes are blinded and that they can not read. What a debauchery was enacted on Sinai! What blasphemy, that in the midst of it a sinaitic bound crew of law worshippers today are still saying, "Let us hasten there and do what is commanded and thus become acquainted with God". Thanks be unto God that we

have been, as we humbly hope, delivered from Mt. Sinai, and have been blessed with a hope that we have journeyed to Mt. Zion, the city of the living God.

As we look over the beautiful situation (Psa. 48:2) our hearts are made to leap for joy unspeakable and our lips are filled with praise as we hear it sounded throughout the abode of the family of God that every gift given to His children is sure to the whole relationship and each of these gifts are in no way dependent on the whim or fancy of any created thing. These gifts are given us in Christ Jesus our Lord. When I was in school a great many years ago, I joined my schoolmates in singing, "Count your many blessings, Name them one by one. Count your many blessings, see what God hath done". I did not know anything about such sacred matters then, and often doubt that I do now. But today our song is the truth, and today it means everything that is worthwhile to me. In taking a look or an inventory of what He has done, I think the most meaningful gift of God is the bestowal of eternal life on poor sinful wretches. Let men pout and allegorize and satirize the precious and comforting doctrine of grace to their let, it still is the truth that the gift of God can never, no never at all, be repented of giving, or a change made in the gift in any way either by precept or by degree or those appointed for it. This cannot be said of what the Holy One determined to do. He is the only Constant One that can be in any government. He is of one mind and who can turn Him? And no created being can challenge the question. Thus no created being having ever challenged Him, the text still stands. It was this Holy One who moved Job to issue the divine message to poor storm-tossed little children that their Maker is their Husband and that He has given to each of them what His soul desires for His subjects to have here in this world and in the world to come. He has not, and He will not, and He cannot, repent of having given these things to them.

God inscribed the names of each son of God in the Book of Life, and this Holy One gave them Himself, and He gave His Son to them, and there is no way for one name to be erased from that Book of Life, and there is no way for one to be added to the list. He was satisfied at the time (the time was in eternity) with the names written therein, and He was satisfied with the names left out of the Book, for (call it what you may) the names of each one, both elect and non-elect, were known and determined. Verily, the gifts and the callings of God are without repentance.

Poor tried and afflicted saint, draw near; let us come together in praise to our Almighty Friend. He has wrought all things after the counsel of His own will. Can a doubt ever be cast on the fact that the gifts and callings of God will ever be repented of? This doctrine as declared by Paul in Eph. 1:11, is all to the point. In order for God to give what He pleased, to whom He pleased, it is of necessity, that he do just that; no more and certainly no less. His saying so would not be enough to encourage and comfort them unless He did do just that. If He does not work all things after the counsel of His own will (in all things) then His declaration that His gifts are not to be repented of falls even before it is executed. Everything included in the declaration is freely given (not reluctantly given) and unconditionally given.

As we sum up the beauties of the text, let us not forget that He has given us all things. He did not spare His Son, but He did spare us all. He took away the life of His Son, even leaving Him forsaken in the midst of the enemies of both God and man (the Man), and gives us now all things, and with the all things He gives us the guiding presence of Jesus Christ our Redeemer God. These gifts are all good gifts. And remember, dear saint, that He will not withhold anything from them that walk upright, that is, that

walk in Christ, Who is our uprightness. The text grows--may those that sit in solitude and that seldom see a well day, those who are often tossed about by the wiles of Satan, those that a few more rolling suns at most will bring an end to ill health, false brethren, walking in darkness, fearing that they have no light, and He that gave them a sweet and abiding hope in the Lord, will break forth in a refulgent endless morning and shall enter into the joy of the Lord. To those that were given to Him, and that He was given them, which gift shall never be repented of, they shall welcome the soundings of Heaven's comforting voice, "Come ye blessed (who blessed them?) of the Lord, enter into the joy of the Lord and into the kingdom not made with hands, but freely given to you before the world had a beginning, and everything ordered in all things and sure to the end that the appointment of you to better things was not in jeopardy, made with regret, nor in repentance, nor was heaven moaning with regret that He whose abode is in Zion had made a mistake". May God be praised.

(Elder) W. D. Griffin

"Get grace - get faith - get an interest in Christ," say the Arminians. When, in truth, grace is not of man's getting, but of God's giving; nor is faith of man's acquisition, but of God's operation.

Toplady

Gifts may differ; but grace, as such, is the same in all God's people. Just as some pieces of money are of gold, some of silver, others of copper; but they all agree in bearing the king's image and inscription.

Toplady

Ministers then only draw the bow successfully, when God's Holy Spirit sharpens the gospel arrow, and wings it to the hearts of them that hear.

Toplady

June 23, 1903

Who is it that follows Christ? What is the path in which He went? How can one follow Him? His was a path of suffering, of shame, and of reproach. He had not where to lay His head. "He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners," and yet was most deeply and sorely afflicted on account of sin--the sin of others. "His visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men". He was feeble and sore broken. His soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. "He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief". He was finally crucified. And He said, "Except a man deny himself, take up his cross and follow me, he cannot be my disciple". One decides to follow Christ, sets out to do so, as he thinks, and complacently regards himself as a disciple, a Christian, and yet has never seen Christ, and knows nothing of the path of suffering and self-denial in which He went during all His life. How many such professed followers of Jesus there are in the world, proud, self-confident, self-satisfied, to whom the suffering Jesus is a stranger, and who would be His revilers if He were here in the flesh.

Another feels a desire to follow Jesus, and sets out to do so, but cannot find the way. Again and again he tries, but seeks in vain for the way. He cannot get away from the path of sin, for he finds that he is all sin. Sin has a hold upon him, and the law is the strength of sin, so that he cannot get away. He cannot get into the path of holiness, for he is all unholy. He finds his strength is weakness, his wisdom foolishness, and his righteousness filthy rags. Finally he gives up, and feels that he must be lost--that he is already lost, and justly, too. He can find no foundation in himself upon which to rest a hope, and nothing in the world upon which he can rely.

Now, just when he has become entirely discouraged in his efforts to follow Jesus, when he has lost all hope

that he can ever come near to the holy One, he is upon the right road. How strange such an assertion would seem to him at such a time. Nevertheless it is true. He is now following Him who went down to the depths of suffering on account of our sins, Who was bruised for our iniquities. The fear of the Lord, which has been put into his heart, and which "is to hate evil", has made him hate himself, and hunger after righteousness. He sinks down, as Jesus sank down, in deep waters of affliction, and as he follows Him into the depths, so he rises with Him to walk in newness of life. As he still follows Him in suffering in the flesh, so he shall follow him in the joys of His kingdom.

The following of Jesus is all by faith, whether it be following Him in sorrow or in joy; in feeling the waves and billows of the Lord go over us, or in feeling the sweet, mysterious power of His resurrection; in receiving the reproaches of the world, or in feeling the answer of a good conscience and the testimonies of the Lord that we please HIm; all is by faith. And in all our works in the church, in obeying the commands of Jesus, and in all our self-denial and bearing the cross, and in our experience of the suffering of Christ abounding in us, and of our consolation also abounding by Christ; in all of this we are followers of Him only by faith; "for we walk by faith and not by sight". Therefore, so far as we do follow Jesus we are faithful followers of Him.

Fragments Silas H. Durand

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Aycock's the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in April, 1979.

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and worship with us.

Harold Pittman, Clerk
Box 4524
Rocky Mount, N.C. 27801

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE NEW BIRTH

When Jesus said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," he gave a name to a hitherto nameless fact. The doctrine of the new birth as announced by Christ and developed in the New Testament Scriptures, was a novel doctrine at that age of the world, and remains a novelty yet. The fact of the new birth, as exemplified in the experience of God's people, is as old and as universal as man himself; but the doctrine had never been named before. The new birth is not stated in the Old Testament, although the effects of it are clearly manifest in the experience of patriarchs, prophets, priests and kings, and many in the humbler walks of life, among both Jews and Gentiles. It is not mentioned in any religious writings, either Jewish or Pagan, before the New Testament. The ancient epics of India, the ethical codes of China, the complicated systems of Egypt, the fanciful philosophy and poetry of Greece, the gorgeous ceremonials and mystic rituals of ancient Mexico and Peru, are all silent upon this doctrine. It came from the lips of Jesus a novelty, an original doctrine, a new name for a hitherto nameless truth, a golden key to unlock the rich mines of Christian experience so long closed by human ignorance, so completely covered by ceremonials, and so deeply buried in tradition, a lamp by which the wonderful works of God in the children of men was to be more clearly understood, the exceeding greatness of his power to usward more fully known, and the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints more fully beheld.

The novelty of the doctrine is one of the clearest proofs of the divinity of the great Teacher who was the first to announce it. The most gifted prophet,

the most highly favored priest, the great law giver, Moses, nor even the favorite Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, had never been blessed to discover this truth or honored with the commission to announce it to men. Thus the novelty of the doctrine gives weight and prominence to its

IMPORT

"Ye must be born again" is the initial statement of the doctrine of Christ, and constitutes the fundamental difference between Christianity and all religions. Take away the necessity of the new birth and Christianity will take its place on the common plane of all other religions, and will be robbed of that which alone entitles it to the distinction of divinity, and will be degraded to a mere system of ethics, a naked code of morals, or to empty, meaningless and vain ceremonials. The fundamental idea in all other religions is man's ability to reform himself into newness of life, based upon the alike false idea of the universal fatherhood of God. The last of these, the universal fatherhood of God, gave birth to the World's Congress of Religions in Chicago; and the first, man's ability to save himself, formed the basis of every system presented, whether by Buddhist, or Brahmin, Mohammedan or Morman, Catholic or Protestant. Hence all of them are loud in their cry for reformation; and the only difference to be found among them is the name and manner in which the end is to be reached.

The superficial notion of religion is deeply fastened upon all men; but it seems that modern Protestantism has a double portion of it. The Jews, in the time of Christ, were extremely zealous for vain traditions, empty formality and hypocritical appearance. They thought that drinking wine and eating with unwashed hands polluted and defiled a man. But the Saviour condemned their foolish traditions by the simple axiom, "It is not that that goeth into a man that defileth him, but that cometh out." It is from the heart that evil thoughts, thefts, murders, and all other wickedness, proceed, Evil thoughts are not in the wine a man drinks. Bad conduct does not come from the food taken with unwashed hands. A man steals because he is a thief; a man kills because he is a murderer, or lies because he is a liar. The theft is in the heart before the hand is put forth to steal; the murder is in the heart before the hand is stained with blood; the lie is in heart before it rises to the tongue or is coined by the lips. The tree bears fruit after its kind. Cultivating the tree can never change the kind of fruit; the only effects of cultivation are seen in the quality and quantity of the fruit. Can a thorn tree ever be made to produce grapes, or a thistle to bring forth figs?

Men are carried away with the notion that through religious instruction, training and favorable opportunities, children or men are made Christians; that men enter the kingdom of God through teaching and moral suasion. Agrippa had this idea when he said to Paul, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian," and Nicodemus betrayed the same weakness when he said to Christ, "We know that thou art a teacher come from God." But the answer of Jesus covered the whole ground, when he said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." This is as much as to say, "Why, Nicodemus, this is not a mere matter of teaching; there is something vastly deeper; a man must be born again." A man does not have to be born again in order to be religious; he may be infatuated with religion, and be a zealous devotee to creed and ritual; he may be taught to observe most rigidly forms and ceremonies, and to subject himself to the strictest discipline; to mutilate his body and deprive himself of all earthly comforts; to yield perpetual obedience to priestcraft; to pray three times a day and give

tithes of all he possesses; take up the sword in defence of his religion, or lay down his life in testimony of his zeal; but except he be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. A man must be born again in order to receive Christ, or embrace his doctrine in truth and reality. The import of the doctrine leads us to consider its

NECESSITY

"Ye must be born again" is not a mere dogma of theology, but a necessity, arising from deep fundamental, basal principles of biology; hence we shall first consider the biological necessity. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." The term flesh, here, is generic, and is used in the Scriptures to designate man as a whole, and comprehends him with all his attributes, all his powers, parts and capacities, including body, soul and spirit in their mysterious combination in constituting human personality. It is equivalent to saying, That which is born of man is man.

Men by nature are dead in trespasses and sins. This death is not merely a moral or ethical condition, but a condition extending far beyond the moral or ethical sphere. It is a biological condition. Take this illustration: Science divides this world into two great kingdoms, the organic and inorganic, or in equivalent terms, the dead and the living. The stone belongs to the inorganic or dead kingdom, the plant to the organic or living kingdom. The difference between the stone and the plant is a biological difference. Again, the organic kingdom manifests different orders of life: animal and vegetable life.

The difference between the animal and the tree is a biological difference. They belong to different orders of life. Now, just as the animal life is of a higher order than vegetable life, so Christ life is of a higher order than Adamic or natural life. And just as the tree, although alive in its own order, is dead to the presence and voice of the bird that sings among its branches, so is man, although alive to all within his environment, dead to the things of the Spirit of God. This truth, although most persistently disputed, most vehemently opposed and wickedly ridiculed, by professors of Christianity, is legibly and indelibly written in the stones and in the trees, in the earth and in the sky, and in the experience of millions of human hearts. Man, then, is cut off from the kingdom of God by the deep, mysterious, impassible gulf that separates the non-living from the living, the organic from the inorganic, the natural from the spiritual. As man enters this world by birth, just so he enters the kingdom of God by birth; and as his birth into the world was contingent upon things entirely outside of himself, so his birth into the kingdom of God is contingent upon things entirely outside of himself. This birth is "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God;" so says the Scripture. Except a man be born he cannot see the world, is a fact which none can deny, and which none would ever think of denying. But how few of all who have read it acquiesce so readily in the conclusive truth of its analogous expression, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

We turn now from the biological to the experimental necessity of this birth. Children may be most carefully trained from their youth in the name of Christ and in the precepts of the Scripture and religious observances, but except they be born again they have no more knowledge of Christ than if they had never heard his name.

This birth is the beginning of the Christian experience, and all that is ever seen, felt, heard and known of grace in this world, or glory in the world to come, is but the development of the life imparted in this birth. All knowledge of Christ is vital or experimental knowledge; this includes all knowledge of the

need of Christ. I once thought that the time when the child of grace received his hope and experienced deliverance, was when he was born again; but I have come to a different conclusion. Who can remember when he was born naturally? Let the mind run back to childhood, to our earliest recollections, even to the very borders of infancy; but our birth was prior to that. All things fade from our memory, and we are lost in a sea of oblivion, and still the time of our birth is not reached. We grew into the domain of memory, passing through a long stage of which we know nothing at all. Think back over your experience; you came to many Ebenezers, to many milestones and memorable places; you approach the time when hope came to you, a helpless sinner; but the birth was before this. You pass on to the time when you first realized that you were a sinner indeed; but the birth was before this, and this was only the result of it. How long before you felt the first movements of soul I cannot tell, but it was before. Those who place their birth upon conditions to be complied with by those receiving it, have never seen the necessity of it. If a man can repent of his sins and believe in Jesus before he is born again, then the Scriptures are not true. This notion of religion puts the cart before the horse, puts the fruit before the tree, the effect before the cause. Without this birth sin would never be hated and holiness would never be loved, poverty of spirit would never be felt, and the riches of Christ would never be prized; none would ever hunger and thirst after righteousness, and the bread which came down from heaven would never be desired; the fountain of living waters would never be sought, there would be none to love the truth, and faith would not be found on the earth; the wilderness would never blossom as the rose, and the parched ground would never become a pool; the name of God would be but an empty sound, and his existence a mere matter of speculation, and all worship would be but dry formality and empty mockery.

EFFECTS

The person affected by the new birth is the Adamic sinner. This needs no argument, for there is no other personality on earth, and personalities in heaven do not need it. The immediate effects make up what is called Christian experience, and belong to time; the ultimate effect is to awake in the likeness of Christ, and is realized in the resurrection. The effects are evidences to us that we have been born again. Let us now examine ourselves, and prove ourselves, and see whether we are indeed what we profess to be, or only graceless hypocrites, carnal professors, who have never known the love of Christ or the power of his resurrection. The most momentous question ever propounded to an exercised heart is, Have I been born again? And when we begin to examine ourselves, the evidence that the carnal mind seeks is not found within us; but we are full of things that our traditional notions of religion record against us. The carnal mind is not eligible either to sit as judge or to testify as witness in the trial of a Christian, because it is enmity against God, and cannot be subject to his law.

One of the best evidences that any one has ever had that he is born again is that he is personally concerned about his own case. The man who thinks that salvation is by works is never concerned about the new birth; but the heart upon which the import and necessity of being born again have been impressed, is bound to be personally concerned in the matter; but the import and necessity of the birth are only communicated through the birth itself. Let us begin the examination with a question. Do you know that you are a Christian? Every exercised heart answers at once, I do not know that I am a Christian. Do you know that you are a sinner? O yes, I know that I am a sinner. Do you know

that you are saved? O no, I do not know that I am saved. Do you know how a sinner is saved? O yes; a sinner must be saved by grace. How did you find that out? Everybody does not know that. If you know that salvation is by grace, rest assured that you are saved, for that knowledge comes only by experience. None of the princes of this world know that. Human wisdom has never made that discovery. Those who have this knowledge are in possession of that hidden wisdom which God before the world ordained to our glory.

The knowledge of sin is one of the brightest evidences that you will ever have that you have passed from death unto life. Permanent, incorrigible, inherent sinfulness has always been acknowledged by holy men. David said, "I am a worm, and no man," Isaiah confessed that he was a man of unclean lips, and Paul exclaimed, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" There was a time in the experience of many of us, perhaps, when we thought that we would never know sin nor sorrow again, but that we would live in the comfortable peace of that sweet deliverance all the rest of our days. But when we began to feel again the power of sin in our members, we sank into a sea of doubts and fears, and disappointment bordering on despair. We thought that one who is born again is free from the motions of sin; and when we found that sin still remained in us, we concluded that we were still in the gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity. But we have learned many lessons since that time, and are still learning. We have learned that in the flesh we are ignorant, sinful creatures, no better now than at the first dawn of our hope. I think these lines of Newton express the experience of us all:

"I asked the Lord that I might grow
In faith and love and every grace;
Might more of his salvation know,
And seek more earnestly his face.

"I hoped that is some favored hour
At once he'd answer my request,
And by his love's constraining power
Subdue my sins and give me rest.

"Instead of this he made me feel
The hidden evil of my heart,
And let the angry powers of hell
Assault my soul in every part.

"Yea, more, with his own hand he seemed
Intent to aggravate my woe,
Crossed all the fair designs I schemed,
Blasted my gourds and laid me low.

"Lord, why is this? I tremblingly cried;
Wilt thou pursue thy worm to death?
'Tis in the way, the Lord replied,
I answer prayer for grace and faith.

"These inward trials I employ,
From self and pride to set thee free,
And break thy schemes of earthly joy,
That thou may'st seek thine all in me."

— Newton

Men in nature have most strenuously assailed the doctrine of total, innate, inherent depravity, and have long devised and proclaimed their lying, deceptive and seductive argument against it; but God will make his people know the truthfulness of it by a daily experience of their own sinfulness. A vital knowledge of sin puts to flight every traditional theory of human ability or Adamic purity, and fastens upon the conscience a pungent conviction that man is a sinner, from the cradle to the grave, with no part or capacity reserved. It is not the Christian's burden that he only sins by word and deed, but his thoughts are unclean, and above all he discovers lurking like a serpent in the deep recesses of his heart the love of sinful things. This almost drives him to despair, and makes him hate his own life, and trust nothing but the blood and righteousness of the adorable Redeemer.

How prone we are to take comfort in the thoughts of our own hearts, or the state of our own feelings, and to look within ourselves for something good to build our hope upon. How often do we

say, "O! if I could only see myself as I desire to see myself, I would have some hope that I am a Christian." If you could always see yourself just as you would like to be, would you ever deny yourself? And if you should never deny yourself could you ever be the disciple of Jesus? Did he not say, "If any man will be my disciple let him deny himself?" When Jesus said, "Let him deny himself," denial of self must follow. God said, "Let there be light," and light was. He also said, "Let the earth bring forth," and it was so. Have you not yet been able to translate those feelings of unworthiness that fill your soul, and stand like an impassable wall, an immovable mountain, between you and your ideal Christian character that your own imagination conjures up and places before you? They are translated into this sentence, "Let him deny himself." This is the first qualification to follow Christ.

The tempter comes with another plea that we are not the children of God. This plea is our weakness. How often do we consider this suggestion of the tempter and put it on file as evidence against ourselves? Christ put the tempter to flight by quoting what is written; so allow me to bring the same weapon to our defense; it is written, "Except ye be converted and become as a little child ye shall in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven." What did the Saviour mean by this expression? I heard preachers say, in my early exercise of mind, that little children are innocent, pure and sinless, and that we must get like them or we can never be saved. I thought this was true, and set about most diligently to attain unto this child-like purity of character, but failed, utterly failed, failed as completely as Hermes in his search for the philosopher's stone, or Ponce de Leon for the fountain of youth. The more I tried it the more hopeless it seemed to grow, and yet I thought it must be so. O what absurb things will men not undertake in the name of religion! If all the absurdities that have been taught and practiced in the name of religion could be collected and placed before men's eyes, the exhibit would shock the world, and would doubtless surpass in quantity and quality all other follies, whims, caprices and wickedness that the world has ever known. Suppose for one moment that little children do receive the kingdom of heaven upon the grounds of their purity of character, and we must become as they, where is hope to be found for any who have grown out of infantile purity? How can a man ever be a child again? We might repeat here the question of Nicodemus, "How can a man be born when he is old. Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Suppose a man could be born when he is old, would he not come forth again in the likeness of his parents?

A man might be made a child again, ten thousand times, if such a thing were possible, and still he would never be raised above the nature and likeness of his parents. A corruptible seed can never bring forth an incorrupt object. So if a man should be born again of the same father and mother, would he not come forth the same natural man, and grow up the same blind, alienated, wicked sinner? It is not only necessary to have another birth, but a birth proceeding from an entirely different source, a birth from above, from an incorruptible seed, a birth of water and the Spirit, of that water which is above the firmament. The Saviour did not mean that the little child is sinless, and we must become such. Sinless persons have no need of Christ, and he has no blood for them. What is the characteristic of the little child that forms the basis of the Saviour's teaching here? It is the helplessness, the weakness of the child, its inability to provide for itself. The child is not only unable to provide for itself, but unable to minister to itself what others may provide for it. Food and drink and raiment might be abundantly provided and placed in the

closest proximity to the child, and it left to itself, and it would be none the better off. It would perish as certainly and as speedily as it would if nothing had been provided. The man or woman who has experienced this helplessness in a spiritual sense has become as a little child, or, in other words, has been born again; and the very weakness which he so much deplores, and from which he would daily flee, is the sure and abiding evidence that God is his Father. Our blindness is often urged as an evidence against us, but God says he will bring the blind by a way they knew not, and in strange paths will he lead them. God leads his people as those who are blind, and cannot find their own way. If your travels have been in entirely different ways from what you yourself marked out, if you experience daily the opposite of your own planning, if you are led as one blind in unknown ways, then you are led of the Lord; and "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

Belief in Jesus is an effect of the new birth, and consequently an evidence of it. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." (I John 5:1) What a comprehensive, decisive and conclusive statement! This birth raises men to a knowledge of Christ, and imparts to them the evidence that he is the Christ. The doctrine that men have the capacity to believe in him as a condition of salvation, is as fabulous, as illusive and as foreign to the gospel of the grace of God as the grotesque mythologies of the ancient Northmen, the fanciful poetry of the ancient Greeks, or the nonsensical nursery rhymes of Mother Goose. Belief is not a volition of the will. We do not have to revert to dusty libraries of philosophy to prove this statement, but to our own minds. Each man knows more about himself than the wisest philosopher knows about him. Belief is a condition of mind produced by evidence; it is an effect, and evidence is the cause. Every day we hear reports that we do not want to believe, and seek in every direction a refuge from the conviction of the truth of the report. Every power of the mind is aroused against it; but facts come, evidence conquers, and we reluctantly, unwillingly sink into a belief on the very thing we tried so hard not to believe. Upon the other hand, how often have we exerted every power of will to believe a certain thing to be true; but notwithstanding our ardent desire and willing efforts we at last had to yield, to lack of evidence or to contrary evidence, and believe against our will to the contrary. Believing in Jesus is brought about by the new birth. It is only by the Holy Ghost that any man can say that Jesus is the Christ; and the man who believes in the only begotten Son may rest assured that he is born of God. "He that hath the Son hath life." It is he that hath the son that believes on him.

Faith, which is the substance of the Christian's hope, is the evidence upon which we believe; and this faith is born of God, is the fruit of the spirit, and is found alone in the man who has been born again. Believing in Jesus, repentance and faith, are new covenant blessings themselves, instead of being conditions of blessings, and are the fruit of the new birth instead of conditions upon which it is brought about.

The ultimate effect of the new birth is to awake in the likeness of Christ. This birth constitutes the man who receives it as a son of God, and consequently an heir of God, and guarantees to him a resurrection in the likeness of Christ, and consequently an eternal and enduring satisfaction. The development of Christ's character is a process begun, carried on and consummated by the inherent, sovereign, unfailing working of Christ-life in the soul. It is an evolution, but a grander evolution than ever Darwin dreamed of; not the process that transforms a monkey into a man, but an evolution that conforms a wretched, wicked, hopeless, helpless sinner into

the image of Jesus, the immaculate Son of God. This process is first the blade, then the stalk, and after that the full corn in the ear. The blade and the stalk may appear here, but the full corn in the ear must appear hereafter. Inasmuch as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

This birth originates from above, and is directed alone by sovereign, unconditional election. It comes by virtue of life given us in Christ before the foundation of the world, according as the saints were chosen in him in the ages eternal. We could never be born from above without a life above. This heavenly, eternal, incorruptible Christ-life is implanted in the subjects of God's electing grace, by the sovereign, irresistible, unconditional working of the Holy Spirit. It is imparted in God's own time, whether it be in the babe upon its mother's breast, as was the case with David, or from its very birth, as with John the Baptist, or in the declining days of old age and decrepitude, as may be the case with many; but whether in the babe upon its mother's breast, or in the man in the prime of life, or in old age upon the verge of the grave, the issues are all the same, and alike certain in results. All who receive it shall awake in the likeness of Christ.

Elder H. M. Curry
March 20, 1895

No sooner is a ship built, launched, rigged, victualled, and manned, than she is presently sent out into the boisterous ocean, where she is never at rest, but continually fluctuating, tossing, and laboring, until she is either overwhelmed and wrecked, or, through age, grows leaky and unserviceable, and so is knocked to pieces. So no sooner come we into the world as men or as Christians, by a natural or supernatural birth, than we are thus tossed upon a sea of troubles. "Man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upwards." The spark no sooner comes out of the fire than it flies up naturally; it needs not any external force, help, or guidance, but ascends from a principle in itself; so naturally, so easily does trouble rise out of sin. There is radically all the misery, anguish, hid in the coals, so does misery in sin; every sin draws a rod after it. And these troubles fall not only on the body, in those breaches, deformities, pains, aches, diseases, to which it is subject, which are but the groans of dying nature, and its crumbling by degrees into dust again; but they fall also on all our employments and callings. (Gen. 3:17), These are full of pain, trouble, and disappointment. (Hag. 1:6). We earn wages, and put it into a bag with holes, and disquiet ourselves in vain. (Flavel)

As bread to the hungry, as water to the thirsty, as sight to the blind, and liberty to the imprisoned, so - and a thousand times more - is Jesus Christ to the wounded and to them that are broken-hearted.

Bunyan

Those who are born again know that the unlawful indulgence of their appetites and lusts is sinful. While they see in themselves the same sinful nature they had before they received a hope, they abhor themselves for it, and do not feel that they can excuse themselves for any indulgence on the ground that it is in their nature, and that they cannot restrain themselves. There will be a check of conscience, and punishment will follow transgression. Paul says, "But I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest having preached to others I myself should be a castaway". Castaway from the fellowship of the church, from usefulness to the brethren, and from the comforts and blessings of the gospel.

Fragments Silas H. Durand

OBITUARIES

BROTHER GUY SISK

It is with great sadness that we try to report the passing of Brother Guy Sisk on March 16, 1978. He was born on October 21, 1894 at Nobility, Texas, the son of Robert Marion and Lillie Anderson Sisk. He married Eulah Oliver in 1923. She preceded him in death in 1973. He married Daisy Sellers on July 21, 1977. He had no children.

Survivors include his wife, Daisy, and a brother, John. Both reside in Emory. Also two sisters: Miss Gertrude Pound of Point and Mrs. Pauline Irwin of Royse City, Texas.

Brother Sisk was a member of Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, a World War I veteran, a retired mail clerk, and a farmer. Brother Sisk was a faithful church member and supporter. He will be missed by all.

Derrell White
Church Clerk
Mt. Zion Primitive
Baptist Church
Cash, Texas

MARJORIE POTTER KERMAN

By the request of the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church I will attempt to write the obituary of Sister Marjorie Potter Kerman.

Sister Marjorie was born in Pamlico County, North Carolina and departed from this life February 17, 1978 in Norfolk General Hospital, Norfolk, Virginia. She was the daughter of the late James and Julia Whitford Potter. She is survived by two children, a daughter, Mrs. Marjorie Maddrey of Garner, North Carolina and a son, James Kerman of Norfolk, Virginia, and five grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Sister Marjorie united with the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church on Saturday, September 17, 1955 and was baptized on Sunday the 18th by her Pastor, Elder R. B. Denson. She loved the doctrine of Salvation by grace as it is in Christ Jesus. She loved her church and the brethern and sisters, and was always faithful to attend her meetings until her health failed in late 1977 and she had to go into the hospital. We all loved her and miss her very much at the Norfolk Church, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted on Sunday, February 19, 1978 at 3:00 P.M., by Elder A. P. Mewbern at the Hollomon Brown Funeral Home Chapel on Tidewater Drive, Norfolk, Virginia, after which her body was taken to Reelsboro, North Carolina where a graveside service was conducted by Elder Curtis Raines and she was laid to rest in Reelsboro Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers there to await the second coming of our Lord, when He comes to claim His own. We, at the Norfolk Church bow in humble submission to His will. May the Lord bless her family and all who mourn her loss and enable them to say Thy will be done.

Written by one who loved her
Sister Thelma Wilson

Done by order of the Norfolk Church in Conference, September 16, 1978. The Church request that three copies be made, one for the family, one to be sent to the ***Signs of the Times*** for publication, and one for the Church records.

Sister Ruby Cowart, Clerk
Elder Joseph W. Leggett, Moderator

SISTER EULA DOT McCORKLE

With a heavy heart and much sadness we try to report the passing away of Sister Eula Dot McCorkle, a faithful member of Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, Cash, Texas. She died August 15, 1978, and was buried in Simmons Cemetery next to the church.

She was born in Hunt County on May 15, 1891 to J. F. Cross and Lodia Skinner Cross. She married Porter McCorkle in February, 1911. She was preceded in death by her parents, her husband, one brother and one sister, one son Justice and one daughter Margie Faye.

Survivors include two sons, David of Garland, and Willie Ray of Texas City, also one sister, Minnie, eight grandchildren, and seven great grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Lloyd Wall.

Derrell White
Church Clerk
Mount Zion Primitive
Baptist Church
Cash, Texas

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 5/79 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE SPIDER AND THE TOAD

Some author (no great matter who,
Provided what he says be true)
Relates he saw, with hostile rage,
A spider and a toad engage;

For though the poison both are stor'd,
Each by the other is abhorr'd:
It seems as if their common venom
Provok'd an enmity between 'em.

Implacable, malicious, cruel,
Like modern hero in a duel,
The spider darted on his foe,
Infixing death at ev'ry blow.

The toad, by ready instinct taught,
An antidote, when wounded, sought,
From the herb plantane, growing near,
Well-known to toads, its virtues rare

The spider's poison to repell;
It cropp'd the leaf and soon was well.
This remedy it often tried,
And all the spider's rage defied.

The person who the contest viewed,
While yet the battle doubtful stood,
Remov'd the healing plant away,
And thus the spider gain'd the day;

For when the toad returned once more,
Wounded, as it had done before,
To seek relief, and found it not,
It swell'd and died upon the spot.

In ev'ry circumstance but one
(Could that hold too, I were undone!)
No glass can represent my face
More justly than this tale my case.

The toad's an emblem of my heart,
And Satan acts the spider's part,
Envenom'd by his poison, I
Am often at the point to die:

But he who hung upon the tree,
From guilt and woe to set me free,
Is like the plantane leaf to me.

To him my wounded soul repairs,
He knows my pain and hears my prayers;

From him I virtue draw by faith,
Which saves me from the jaws of death;
From him fresh life and strength I gain,
And Satan spends his rage in vain.

No secret arts or open force
Can rob me of this sure resource:
Though banish'd to some distant land,
My med'cine would be still at hand;

Though foolish men its worth deny,
Experience gives them all the lie;
Though Deists and Socinians join,
Jesus still lives, and still is mine.

'Tis here the happy difference lies,
My saviour reigns above the skies,
Yet to my soul is always near,
For he is God and everywhere.

His blood a sovereign balm is found
For ev'ry grief and ev'ry wound;
And sooner all the hills should flee
And hide themselves beneath the sea,

Or ocean, starting from its bed,
Rush o'er the cloud-topt mountains head,
The sun, exhausted of its light,
Become the source of endless night,

And ruin spread from pole to pole,
Than Jesus fail the tempted soul.

John Newton (Author, "Amazing Grace")

THE BREASTS OF CONSOLATION

I received the epistle of my beloved son, the heir of promise. "It is enough; my son is yet alive;" and my heart said, "I will go and see him before I die". The bondwoman, I perceive, is about to leave the tent; and her son, who is nothing but slavish fear, will go with her; for surely he "shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac;" for the mother is nothing but bondage; her very conception genders this; and the fruit of her womb is servile torment. Cast them forth; for the servand abideth not in the house for ever; but the son abideth for ever. "If the Son make you free, then are ye free indeed"; for "we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free". The better covenant suckles the heir of promise. The promises are her breasts; consolation is the milk; faith is the mouth; and the new man is the babe. And let her breasts satisfy thee in all times; and be thou ravished with her love. Why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, an Egyptian, and embrace the bosom of a stranger? For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the Lord, and He pondereth all his goings.

Let faith consider the noble pedigree, "Now are we the sons of God". O the honour! Keep this Father in view--the Father, I say, and not the master; the Fountain of living waters, and not the consuming fire; our exceeding great Reward, and not the inexorable Judge. And view Him in His covenant made with Abraham, not in that made with Israel; dwelling and resting at Zion, not at Horeb; shining in the face of His dear Son, not at the back of Moses, nor hid in his vail; shining out of Zion, "the perfection of beauty", not smoking on Sinai; reconciling the world to Himself, not devouring the earth with the fire of His jealousy. These evangelical prospects of faith, and this propitious Object of hope, thus viewed, will be an assimilating view. It will change thee into the same image, from glory to glory; and this will sweetly waft thee into the arms of thy lawful mother, Sarah, and set thee nibbling and quibbling at her breasts. Her milk will soften, sweeten, cheer, revive, animate, and evangelize thee; whereas, the contrary views to the above are the prospects of slaves, servants and hirelings, who look for the reward of their work, and earnestly wait for the shadow. And sure I am that such views, taken in the false mirror of unbelief by the deceptive rays of carnal reason, betray thee into the arms of Hagar. And sad experience tells me that she comforts in vain; for, being in bondage, and in the flesh, she nourishes the flesh, and nothing else but self-love, self-pity, self-seeking, self-exaltation, with hard thoughts of God, of Sarah,

and of all the heirs of promise, yea, a shyness of them, and a shunning of them, with the heart alienated from them all. These views of God taken from the law betray even the heirs of promise into all this. Therefore, listen thou, my son, to the voice of Wisdom. She crieth at the gates, at the coming in of the doors; she uttereth her voice, saying, "Hearken unto thy father, that begat thee; and despise not thy mother when she is old". The voice of thy Father is sure to be directed to the sons; and the Father's voice to the heirs of promise is in the promises; which are all yea and amen in the First-born of the family. And these are the breasts of old Sarah. Despise her not, though she is old. She can bear, and suckle too, though she is past age. "Look to the rock whence ye were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham, your father; and unto Sarah, that bare you; for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him. For the Lord shall comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places".

The old coalheaver has been over all this ground, and has done much business in these bitter waters of strife. You may read this to the flock. Many of them will find these ingredients in their hearts, if they cannot distinguish them with their heads; for you will never see a churlish or surly husband, or a scolding wife, unless there be some union with Hagar.

My love to dame and all the flock,

W. H., S. S.

Cricklewood, Nov. 27, 1807

LETTER FROM ELDER RUSTON

Dutton, Ontario
March 2, 1965

Dear Stewart and Viola,

Your letter of January 20th, with the one you wrote December 19th, 1962, brought us great joy and gladness and I have wanted time to answer them and I feel after seeing you at Dan's funeral, Stewart, I must try and answer them. I have missed dear Kate Sinclair very much, along with others of like precious faith down around Duart.

In your December letter you told of being comforted at one time with the words "continue in prayer and watch in the same with thanksgiving". (Col. 4:2) As I read that it seems to encourage poor me, for I know I have so much reason to be instant in prayer and I also have much to be thankful for. I remember so well the Elder in New York, who baptized Esther and me, said, "Brother George, watch the hand of the Lord", and I have found in watching His hand we have been much strengthened in the task He has for us to do. How often we have had to say, "God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform". He made a way for Israel in that great wilderness and I feel He makes this world a wilderness to His dear people and He has said, "Thy bread shall be given thee, Thy water shall be sure". I have been in my feelings much on my knees crying to the Lord for myself and for quite a few other dear ones who are in trouble. Yet we need every bit of trouble and trials the Lord sends. John Berridge says, "When our dear Master would bestow, Much patience on his friends, He loads their shoulders well with woe; And thus obtains his ends". He has a purpose; He will bring us down, and there we learn of Jesus, of His sufferings and also find fellowship with those who with patience inherit the promises. Your letter of December 19th, 1962, was not written in vain. Thank you for it.

Now I turn to your sweet letter of Jan. 20, 1965, which did us good to receive, for we had been thinking of your dear boy doing so poorly, and then we had heard that you, too, were far from being as well as you wish to be. We were so glad to be with you at Dan's funeral. It was wonderful that you could be there. I am sure it did your Mother a great deal of good, for she has been doing beyond her strength during Dan's illness.

Yes, the book of Job seems to show God's complete wisdom and power over all things and also it shows man's inability to understand God's dealings with the sons of man. I have several of Elder Durand's books written on Job. I will mail one to you if you don't have one. It is very worthy reading, I think. He thought Job was a type of the Church of God, who, through passing through many trails, finds at the end she has all that God gave her before the world began. The Word of God is, "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction", and we learn it is never for our good that we have an easy path. "Trials make the promise sweet. Trials give new life to prayer. Trials bring us to His feet, Lay us low and keep us there."

I have just received a letter from a dear brother, Woodrow Bellinger, a boy I used to know when his parents brought him to meeting over 40 years ago. He says he is alone in what seems to be an outpost, and it made me think of you in Peterborough, except that Elder Slauson does have meeting at Duanesbury, N.Y., where Woodrow lives, two or three times a year. He loves the truth. He came to the church during Elder Bellow's ministry. I have felt many times how happy his father and grandfather would be to see him so interested in things that are divine. "The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above". How we do love to hear others tell of their travel, and how quickly one who is being brought and led of God can detect in the conversation of people generally just about where they are, and if they are in the right way at all.

Light on God's word is something that must come from above so that we can say, "In Thy light we see light". The word written so long ago was written for us that we through patience and comfort of the scripture might have hope. God has a merciful purpose in showing to us our own view of ourselves, so that we cease to trust in ourselves. The 97th Psalm says, "Ye that love the Lord hate evil; he preserveth the soul of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked. Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart". I remember once finding much sweetness in Psalm 118:27, "God is the Lord which hath showed us light....."; such light seems to shine in His word both old and new and the words of the verse that follows, ".....Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar." The sacrifice for us is the Lamb of God, and the cords, all scripture given by inspiration of God, and when Jesus is revealed to us He is the substance of all prophesy. Jesus Himself opened their understanding when He expounded to them in all scripture the things concerning Himself. (The two disciples going down to Emmaus in Luke 24:13:32). No wonder one of the prophets would say, "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love; and I was to them as they that took off the yoke on their jaws and I laid meat unto them". (Hos. 11:4) It seemed as if I was blessed to see the whole word of God, the testimony of the Father, Word, and Holy Ghost, were like a three fold cord that bound Christ as a sacrifice for poor guilty sinners like us.

That is a lovely hymn you mention singing together, "We travel through a barren land, etc." How good the last line is and how true; "The christian's hope can never fail".

You may seem to be in a wilderness, yet the Lord, I am sure, is feeding you even there. I was once in a very low place, feeling everything against me and He gave me these words, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee"; drawn with the cords of man.

We were so glad to have you with us at Dan's funeral and hope you got back home safely.

Much love to all of you,
Elder George Ruston

tion, who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies". Yes, my dear sister, we have indeed found that all our diseases were healed, yea, and sores that run in the night, some of which we feared would cause our death; and thus have we proved the virtue of atoning blood, in curing all diseases, removing all guilt, vanquishing the devil, overcoming the world, and, by its manifestive power, we have enjoyed sweet peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. But as to myself, I can assure you that I do not long remain in this blessed frame, but soon return to my old place; for if the Lord hides His face for a little while, my confidence seems all gone, and the devil and my vile heart begin to rise and rebel against God, and I think my lot very hard. I look around me, and see the wicked prosper, and they that tempt God are set up; and then I again begin to bewail myself, and say, "He hath hedged up my way, and surely against me is he turned". Yet, notwithstanding all my murmuring and complaining, because of God crossing my desires and thwarting my plans, there are seasons when I feel ashamed that, with all my taking thought, I cannot add one cubit to my stature. I am satisfied that Hart is right where he says,

"For shouldst thou wait till thou couldest meet
Reception worthy thee,
With sinners thou wouldest never sit;
At least, I'm sure, with me."

I am a living witness of the truth of the above, and so are you, my dear sister. But our dear Lord generally sends a messenger to prepare a room for Himself; at least, I find it so--such afflictions in my poor soul, which make room for Him as my Rest. And I think that Job knew something of this when the Lord sent one messenger after another till he had instructed him; and he knew that the answer of the tongue, as well as the preparations of the heart, were both alike from the Lord. And when we are taught experimentally that we can neither add to, nor diminish from, the eternal blessedness and safety of our souls, we then discover what poor paupers we are, and behold also the eternity of the nature of that grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Thus, my dear sister, we soar as the eagle, and again we mourn like the dove; sometimes shut up in our prison, and then crying out, "The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage". And thus I have found it, more or less, ever since the Lord manifested himself to me, as the chief of sinners, with these words: "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief". And thus you see that I received mercy as the chief of sinners; and so I feelingly bow at times before the mercy-seat. Last Lord's day morning, I did in my very soul bow as such (the Lord is my witness that I lie not). I had to go to M____ and O___ to preach; and I felt quite unable. The weakness of body was one reason, having sprained my foot when a boy, which pains me much at times; and the Bible appeared a sealed book to me. This brought a lamenting of my hard fate before the Lord; and while I was lamenting it, O the cutting reproof that I felt from these words: "When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they answered, Nothing!" And so cried I with shame to myself; while I never shall forget the words that followed, for they spoke to my very heart: "Have I been a barren wilderness unto thee?" O how I dropped my vile head in the dust! and said, "No, Lord;" while my eyes gushed forth tears of shame and gratitude. My very soul was humbled in me as a little child. All my murmuring was then at an end for a time, and my poor soul was willing to be fashioned by His dear hand for His own glory. So I went and preached at M___ and O___ in the evening; and the Lord was with me; and

I believe that some of the dear people were much refreshed, and were willing to give God the glory.

And now, my dear sister, may the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give unto us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, of being cleansed by His blood, justified by His merits, upheld by His arm, constrained by His love; and that ere long we shall be out of the reach of a tempting devil, a lying world, and our evil hearts. And then no more the falling tear, no more deep-fetched sighs, no more the sacred groan; for we shall be like Him, we shall see Him as He is, and so shall we be ever with the Lord. Adieu.

Ever thine in the best of bonds,
John W.

Jan. 16, 1843

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CIRCULAR LETTER

October 8, 1978

To the Brothers and Sisters meeting with the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association at Indiantown Church, Powellville, Maryland.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In Philippians 4:6-9 we read, "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you."

With the exception of the subject of love nothing is more on the lips of God's children than the word, Peace, and if appearance is to be credited, nothing is generally further from being their condition of life.

This subject lends itself to many branches, such as: 1.) Peace within; 2.) Peace with our-

selves; 3.) Peace with our fellowman; 4.) Peace from oppression; 5.) Peace with God; 6.) Peace with our family; 7.) Peace within our church; 8.) Peace among the churches.

For the purpose of this letter I should like to consider the latter two branches, namely, Peace within our church and peace among the churches. First, it must be borne in mind that there is no peace for the wicked, (Isa. 57:21) and to whatever extent the wicked have crept in unawares among us, to that extent there shall always be unrest. For that reason alone, we should be cautious and much in prayer that our God would give us wisdom in the receiving of members. To let down the standard of the Bible and to take in anyone is in itself a breaking of the peace. Better that we should meet with two or three in sweet peace and love than to dwell in a church full of blind and worldly members who will vex and wound our soul at every turn until we could scarcely believe that peace has ever existed.

What is Peace? Jesus is the Prince of Peace, (Isa. 9:6) therefore peace, whatever it is, must be vitally linked to Him, else it would soon be discovered to be a false peace. The clearest illustration of Peace from the Word of God will be found in the fourth chapter of Mark, verses 35-41. In this wonderous scene Jesus is seen arising from His sleep on the little ship, as the storm beats upon it and rebukes the wind and says to the sea, "Peace, be still". And what was the result of this brief exhortation from the Word made flesh? Why, the wind ceased, and there was a great calm! Truly a matchless display of Divine power. How easy it would be to be caught up in the wonder of it, but let us again look to our theme of Peace. When Jesus says, "Peace, be still", even the elements must obey His command. Until then the disciples can expect tossing and heaving in a turbulent sea. The church, like the disciples on the little ship, find that even Jesus in our midst does not assure us smooth sailing. Nor will His presence alone keep our hearts from sinking at the sight of the dreadful storms about us. But when we have been sufficiently aroused to cry to Him in prayer, then, and not until then, we shall see what a great calm He makes when He says, "Peace". Remember too, that the first thing our risen Lord said to His disciples when He appeared to them was, "Peace be unto you". (John 20:19)

Jesus rebuked the waves and sea and so brought calm to the elements. But the greatest calm was the one He wrought in their soul. What peace it is to see the display of His power and hear His command drive back the storm. Such Peace as this is not easily shaken or soon disturbed. And mark well that there was no peace until Jesus bid it come.

So must it be in the Church. There may be calm. All may be smooth on the surface, but is it Peace? No, not until our Lord makes it so. All true Peace is of Him. (II Peter 3:14)

The church should value its peace. It is a precious possession. When we are in peace we feel a flowing of love and fellowship among our members. Peace will shut our eyes to the faults of others. It will still an otherwise loose tongue. Peace, flowing like a river, is a visible condition. It can be seen. Peace pervades an assembly so that it may be felt, and it resembles an actual sensation or feeling. To be in Peace is to gather without malice or hard feelings and draw us to one another in fond embraces. In summary, peace in the church is a Spirit of Christ-likeness and living with the family of God without any fear. May God give us peace in the churches. May Jesus say, "Peace be still".

Peace among the churches is a somewhat more difficult subject to define. Churches may associate in geographic arrangements or be linked together in doctrinal unity. But, we ask, are they in peace with one another? Again we observe that any peace must be associated with the Prince of Peace or it is no peace at all. ("Peace; Peace", when there is no peace is all too familiar a cry to God's weary children.) To find churches together in peace is to find churches led of the One Spirit of God, to worship the One Holy Father thru the redemption that is in their One Lord. One church will not be promoting this theme while another is promoting that theme. A group of churches or even one strong church will not try to impose upon its weaker sister church anything at all that is not according to godliness.

We might say that churches together in peace is like members of one church living in peace. One is not lording it over the other. Neither is one seeking pre-eminence or dominion over the conscience of others. Peace among the churches is a living together in

careful examinations and criticism of all who read it, and should be candidly, but kindly scrutanized; that we may prove all things, and hold fast that which is good. All who write with the single desire to elucidate truth for the edification and comfort of the saints, will desire to have their views tested by the divinely authorized standard; and if anything be detected which the scriptures will not sustain, especially anything conflicting with divine testimony, its detection and exposure should be regarded as a favor equally to the writer and the readers.

Recently some difference has been obvious in the views of brethren in regard to the scriptural signification of the word regeneration, as used in the New Testament; some holding that it is, and others that it is not the same in signification and application with what is called the new birth. Some applying the word regeneration to the resurrection power of God which brought again from the dead the crucified body of Christ, and in Him the resurrection life and immortality of all His mystical body and members, from under the law which was the ministration of death, into the resurrection life and immortality of the Son of God.

Now, as a birth, either natural or spiritual, always implies a generation, because without generation there can be no birth; and whatever is born, is the development of that which was generated, it is not strange that the two terms have been thought by many to mean one and the same thing. Such indeed had been our view for years; but as we now conceive, because we had not been led to closely investigate the subject, until it was presented for consideration by some of the brethren. Here let us observe that those who take the position that the terms regeneration and the new birth mean one and the same, and that both apply to the experimental quickening of the children of God, do not deny that all the saints are redeemed and quickened together with Christ, and raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Nor, on the other hand, do those brethren who apply the word regeneration to the quickening of the whole elect family of God by the resurrection of Christ, hold with less tenacity the vital importance of the new birth, as it has always been held by the church of God, in its personal application to all of the saints in their individual experience, in being quickened by the Spirit, and born into the liberty of the sons of God.

While, so far as we understand them, we agree with our brethren that the regeneration which is mentioned but twice in the Bible, in both cases refers to the reproduction from death of the whole mystical body of Christ, by His resurrection, we at the same time hold, as we have ever held, that every member of the body of Christ must experience the new and spiritual birth, of which Christ spake to Nicodemus in John 3:3-10. Still in perfect harmony with that vitally important sentiment, we also believe that Christ in His incarnation took on Him the seed of Abraham, and that all who are Christ's are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise; and that they were so identified with Him in His assumption of our flesh, that when He died, they were legally dead with Him; and when He arose from the dead, they were quickened together with Him, and they were raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places. The whole church, as the body of Christ, was buried with Him by baptism into death, regenerated, or reproduced from death, by the resurrection life of His resurrection; so that in like manner as they were buried with Him into His death, they were raised from the dead with Him to newness of life; married and identified with him in resurrection, or regeneration life. How else can it be said we are quickened, and raised up together with Him; that we are risen with Christ, and dead to the law by His

body? How else shall we understand that we are raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, to walk in newness of life? Raised up from under that law which holds dominion over a man as long as he lives; being by that law crucified with Christ, dead with Him to the law by His body, and regenerated in a new life, and reproduced, in a new relationship, over the which the law of wrath and condemnation has no dominion; and being thus risen with Christ, now instead of continuing to seek for righteousness by the works of the law, or for those things which belong to the legal dispensation or worldly sanctuary, we who are risen with Christ are instructed to seek those things which are above, even in the heavenly places of the regeneration, which are the heavenly places of the spiritual kingdom, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

If it is conceded that our participation of flesh and blood by our creation and generation in the first Adam, placed us in and with him under the law that he was created under, which he transgressed, and by the transgression of which he involved us in guilt and death, from which Christ, the second Adam, to redeem us was required to be made flesh, and to dwell among us, under the same law, and that in doing this, He took on Him the seed of Abraham, that seed of Abraham which was reckoned in Isaac, (not seeds, as of many, but to thy seed, Abraham's seed, which is Christ), and that in being made flesh, He was to suffer in the flesh, bear our sins in the body of His flesh, be put to death in the flesh; then not only was He put to death in the flesh, but the flesh in which He suffered was also put to death. Now observe, the reproduction of those thus buried in death by His baptism of suffering, was not a mere resuscitation, or recovering to that life which was put away, but a resurrection to immortal life, and to a spiritual state perfectly free from guilt, condemnation and death. Hence it is said that God hath begotten us again to a lively (or vital, immortal) hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance which is (like the seed by which this immortality is generated), incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away. Is it heresy to call this regeneration? Redeemed from the generation of the earthly Adam--reproduced in the life and immortality of the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven, our relation to earth, to the flesh, to the law, to sin, corruption and death is dissolved and we are identified with the risen Saviour in His resurrection life, is not this regeneration? But in other words, was not that life which quickened and resurrected the crucified body of our Lord, the same resurrection life of which we are made experimentally the partakers when we are born again? If so, was it not communicated to the whole church of God, in her spiritual Head, when He was raised from the dead? If not, at what period was it communicated from God the Father, through Christ, the Mediator, to His mystical body and members? But why apply the terms generation, regeneration, begetting and birth, to this reproduction of the church in her spiritual life? Because the Bible uses terms which in our judgment fully warrant us. That His resurrection was a regeneration, will appear from the record. He was begotten in the flesh by the Holy Ghost, conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary, and that holy thing which should be born of her should and was called the Son of God. Thus by generation He was made flesh, made of a woman, made under the law, that in this flesh He should be put to death. In His resurrection divine inspiration has used similar terms. "Thou art my Son. This day have I begotten thee". (Psa. 2:7) And in Acts 13:33, these very words are applied to the resurrection of Christ. "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise made to the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same

unto us, their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again, as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee." If these scriptures together with those which declare Him to be "the first begotten of the dead", (Rev. 1:5) "The first born from the dead", etc. (Col. 1:18) do not imply a regeneration, we are at loss to find words in our language to express the idea. Generated, in being made flesh, circumcised, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, and begotten again from the dead, and born from the dead, in immortal life, over which death hath no power; and to be known no more in the flesh, but to be known henceforth as the Resurrection and the Life of all His members.

But, admitting the application of the term, to the Resurrection of Christ from the dead, some may ask why we include it in the regeneration of the church.

Well let us see. Did Christ arise from the dead and leave His church, or any part thereof, behind Him, and under the curse of the law, the guilt of sin and dominion of death, or did He not rather abolish death, and bring immortality to light in His resurrection? When He went forth weeping and bearing precious seed, did He not return again rejoicing, bearing His sheaves with Him? (Psa. 126:6) In what other sense, or by what other generation does Christ claim His members as the children of the resurrection? Can the relationship of children exist without generation? It is written, "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done it." (Psa. 22:30, 31) Is it not presumptuous to deny that the church was quickened together with Christ, and that they were raised up together? In what other sense can we understand that impressive and striking illustration which He Himself gave of His death and resurrection. "Verily, verily I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (John 12:24) The context proves that this double asseveration was used to impress deeply on the minds of His disciples the application of the figure, as illustrative of His death, and the quickening and reproduction of His seed, whom He would redeem from the earth, and bring up with Him, and in Him, as their Resurrection. A very similar figure is used in illustration of the resurrection of the saints, in I Cor. 15:36. "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body which shall be; but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain. But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." If Christ is that corn of wheat which fell into the ground and died, what is His own body which God has given Him, in His resurrection? Let the inspired apostle answer: "According to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead", etc. "And gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all". (Eph. 1:19-23) "Thy dead shall live, my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew, the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead". (Isa. 26:19) Compare with Hosea 6:1, 2. "Come, and let us return unto the Lord; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will also bind us up. After two days will he revive us; and in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." Ages and generations may pass before all the members of Christ's mystical body shall be quickened and live in the sight of any but God. But in the sight of the omniscient eye, when his soul was poured out into death, all his seed was clearly seen, as living in his sight, and in that life which is hid with

Christ in God, and which in the absence of Christ can never be seen. When, and wherever He, who is their life, appear, then, and there do all His members appear with Him in glory. In His death, the corn of wheat containing the germ, of all the harvest, fell into the ground and died. Here is the planting in the likeness of His death, which is set forth by christian baptism; and resurrection with Him to newness of life. By death this relation to the earth is dissolved. We have known Him in the flesh, as a Man of sorrow, acquainted with grief, subject to pain and death: but henceforth know we Him no more. "He was taken from prison and from judgment; and who shall declare His generation; for he is cut off out of the land of the living?" (Isa. 53:8) "Thou sowest not that body which shall be". Before His death He was under the law, laden with all the sins of His people; for God hath laid on Him the iniquities of all His people; prepared for the sufferings of death, and made a little lower than the angels. But God giveth it a body as hath pleased Him, and to every seed his own body. Now, in his own body, the church, quickened with immortal, or resurrection life, He dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. The greatness of God's mighty power is displayed, which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him up from the dead. Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments, which were on Him when He was put to death in the flesh. He has nailed them to His cross--and leaving these all behind, He has arisen from the dead in a spiritual resurrection body, begotten by the Father from the dead, He is exalted in His resurrection body, "far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come". The seed which fell into the ground and died has burst the bands of death, and triumphed over the grave. Bearing His sheaves with Him, He enters the portals of immortality as our triumphant Prince and Saviour. "God has gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet". "Lift up your heads,

"Ye everlasting doors, fly wide,
Make ready to receive my bride;
Ye harps of heaven, come sound aloud.
Here comes the purchase of my blood".

Now tune your sweetest harps, ye ransomed sons of God, and without a jarring note, swell the immortal notes written by Peter, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again". Don't falter at that strain--heaven shall resound with its melody; sing it loud, sound it clearly, and high as the heavens your voices raise when you repeat the chorus. Blessed God, who hath begotten us, in this Resurrection Regeneration, "to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away; reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time".

Now, brethren, does this doctrine of Resurrection Regeneration alarm any of you? Examine it closely, carefully, and prayerfully, and compare it with the scriptures and with your experience.

We have called your attention to the scriptures on the subject; now suffer us to appeal to your own experience. You are born again of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. What think you; was that incorruptible seed in Christ when like a corn of wheat He feel into the earth and died for you? Were you quickened by the power of the resurrection of the Son of God, when you passed from death unto life? If not, from what begetting did your new birth proceed? To what generation do you by it belong? Do you really think the Head of the church was begotten from the dead at one time, and

the body and fullness of Christ at another? Has your new birth brought you forth as children of the Resurrection? Is the life of the Head of the church the same that is the life of His body? Is Jesus Christ your Resurrection and your Life?

But, say you, Jesus arose from the dead eighteen hundred years ago, and our birth transpired but recently. True, but can you ascribe it to anything short of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ? Had He failed to have risen from the dead, could you have been born again? Was not the very first gleam of hope that cheered your desponding heart, a view, by faith, of the risen Saviour? Could you rest upon any other hope than that power which God wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead? Were you quickened and made to believe in God, as were the saints at Ephesus, and all the faithful in Christ Jesus, according to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead? If you were born of the spirit that raised up Christ from the dead He shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you. (Rom. 8:11)

Now let us review the decree, in the second Psalm, "Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee", and the inspired explanation of it in Acts 13:32, 33. "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made to the fathers, God hath fulfilled unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee". How is the resurrection of Jesus Christ the fulfillment of the promise made to the fathers, unto us their children? This risen Jesus is our Resurrection and our life. The day of this decree of God was ushured in by the resurrection of Christ, and cannot terminate until all who are begotten by His resurrection shall be born of the spirit that raised Him from the dead. It has been rightly said by some of our brethren, that generation must always precede a birth; begetting and quickening are always before the new birth. This generation chosen in Christ, as a seed that shall serve Him, which shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation, shall come, and shall declare His righteousness unto a people that shall be born. (Psa. 22:30, 31) Paul declares to us the gracious purpose of God, in quickening, and raising us up together (or simultaneously) with Christ; and it is, "That in the ages to come", for in the order of time, ages are required for the development of this regeneration, and the personal development of that people, who, being already regenerated in Christ, shall be born of His resurrection life and spirit; yet all this shall certainly be accomplished in the one day, in which God will make up His jewels, and in which a nation shall be born. So in the ages to come, the ages which have come, and the ages yet in the future, God will shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus. (Eph. 2:7)

One farther consideration. Our Lord Jesus Christ is expressly called the Only Begotten of the Father; how then is it possible for us to be brought into the vital relationship of sons of God, unless we were begotten and regenerated in Him, as sons of God, and heirs of immortality? We have supposed that the eternal deity or Godhead of Christ, is unbegotten, underived, self-existent, and eternal; and that His Sonship has reference to His mediatorial Headship of the church over which He presides, and that the members of the church, as being the members of His body, have their sonship in His Sonship, their life in His life, their righteousness in His righteousness, and their heirship jointly with His, to an inheritance of glory. In what other way we can be sons or heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, we cannot conceive. In the election of grace all His people were chosen in Him before the

foundation of the world, and their eternal life was and still is hid with Him in God. In the divine purpose, so far as that purpose is made known to us, our God ordained to manifest the body of Christ in all its members, by a first and second birth; provided for them through the first and second Adam. Through the generations of the first (in the order of their development) in Adam, they were partakers of flesh and blood, in which they were subjects of the law under which Adam was created and under which he fell; so that in Adam all die; and in their Adamic nature they were all children of wrath, even as others; but in their regeneration and new birth by, and through the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven, they are made partakers of the divine nature, are washed from all pollutions, and cleansed from all guilt, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

Hereafter, we propose to treat on the new birth, as taught in the word and experienced personally by the saints.

August 15, 1868 Elder Gilbert Beebe

November 12, 1903

GIFTS

The Scriptures of the New Testament present the gospel church in her perfection, as the workmanship of God. Her doctrine and order are plainly shown there to all of her children, as they are also revealed to each in his experience, so that the word and the experience witness together to all that is of God. We are to look only to the inspired Scriptures of truth to decide concerning any point of doctrine, or any ordinance, or any gift to the church of God; and there alone shall we find the proper order of those things of God, as arranged and established by His authority.

Whatever assumes to belong to the church is to be tried by the pattern shown to us in the Scriptures of the New Testament, and if not found there it must be discarded by every lover of the truth. The gifts of Jesus to the church are named by the inspired apostle in his letter to the Ephesians: "And he gave some apostles, and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers". The object of these gifts is also there stated: "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ". Any professed gift that is not included in this catalogue and description, must not be recognized as of God; and any one who claims to have work to do as a gift of God to the church in behalf of any but the saints, or in order that any may become saints through his work, is clearly not manifesting the character of a gospel gift, for all of these gifts are declared to be exclusively for the benefit of the body of Christ, to which they themselves belong as "joints and bands" which minister nourishment to the body. (Eph. 4:11-16; Col. 2:10)

Fragments Silas H. Durand

Christ would not entrust our redemption to angels, to millions of angels; but He would come Himself, and in person suffer; He would not give a low and base price for us clay. He would buy us with a great ransom, so as He might over-buy us, and none could over-bid Him in His market for souls. (Rutherford)

Wherever Christ is, clusters of divine promises grow out of Him, as the motes, rays, and beams from the sun, and a family, as it were, and a society of branches out of a true. (Rutherford)

All the disputes between us and the Arminians may be reduced to these two questions: 1. Is God dependent on man, or is man dependent on God? 2. Is man a debtor to God, or God a debtor to man?

Toplady

EDITORIAL

MOUNT ZION

But ye are come to mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

To the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. (Heb. 12:22-24)

In this chapter, Paul is comforting the Hebrews by telling them that they have not come to Mount Sinai, as the children of Israel had come in the wilderness, for that mountain only God could touch and when He did, it burned with fire and was covered with blackness, darkness and tempest, but ye are come, declares Paul, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God even to Mount Sion. The sight, alone, of Mount Sinai was terrible and no man could endure what was commanded there. If so much as a beast touched the mountain, it was stoned, or thrust through with a dart. Moses, himself, did exceedingly fear and quake at its presence for the law which came from this mount brought death, whereas the law which comes from Mount Sion brings life for the law of the liberty of Christ makes us free from the law of sin and death.

"Wherefore," says Paul, "seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb. 12:1, 2) Paul's words are just as applicable today, to you, dear child of God, as they were to those he addressed among the Hebrews as "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling". For there is one generation of Jesus Christ though members of it live in every age and in every nation, kindred and tongue, for there is but one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

Let us begin to examine, now, what Paul declares that we are "come unto" for this city of the living God is the ultimate triumph of all our spiritual hopes and aspirations.

Clearly from Hebrews 11:16 God has prepared this eternal city for those who confess they are strangers and pilgrims on this earth and who are seeking a better country, even an heavenly. For God is not ashamed to be called their God, neither will He overlook the poor and needy in the day of the restitution of all things. By faith, David described this city of Zion as beautiful for situation and the joy of the whole earth. He assures us that God is known in her palaces for a refuge, and that the kings of the earth pass by her walls and ramparts and marvel and haste away because of her strength. Indeed, David prompts us to, "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces: that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death." (Ps. 48:12-14)

While speaking to His beloved from the Mount, Jesus said to them, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." (Matt. 5:14) For this city or habitation of God is really in the hearts of His people for the kingdom of God is in you and it is the city of a great King. And just as the natural city of Jerusalem is set on a hill surrounded by other hills and mountains, so are ye set among the hills and mountains of

God's promises. For it is of great comfort to know that God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble, and we, therefore, will not fear though the earth be removed and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea. And of no less comfort is God's assurance when he said, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love and with heavenly kindness have I drawn thee." Moses, when blessing the tribes, makes our mountain to stand strong when he declares, "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms...Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency..." (Deut. 33:26-29) It is little wonder that David mused, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth." (Ps. 121:1, 2) And so close was God's presence to Ezekiel that he felt to be an integral part of this city and in triumph disclosed that the name of the city from that day shall be, "The Lord is there."

Now, this city has cold flowing waters which run through it, even a river the streams whereof make glad the city of our God, the holy place of the tabernacles on high. And this river is the love of our Heavenly Father which flows from the throne of God and from the Lamb and reaches the farthest corner of the city to the very least of its inhabitants, even to you and I. This river is like the river of paradise which went out of Eden to water the garden and parted and became into four heads severally known as Pison, Gihon, Hiddekel and Euphrates. Now each of these streams flows from the main source with a fixed purpose to bring comfort to the inhabitants of the city of Zion, to the trees of righteousness the planting of the Lord.

The river Pison means a multitude or flowing and there is a constant flow of the Lord's people into this city for "one generation passeth away, and another generation cometh:" (Ecc. 1:4) From the days of the Patriarchs, through the legal dispensation and later from the days of the Apostles until the end of time, there is a great multitude which no man can number. And they all have something in common for the river Pison encompasseth the whole land of Havilah which means affliction. In Revelation, one of the elders identifies these afflicted as those, "which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." (Rev. 7:14)

The second river is Gihon which means grace for it is by grace ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. The third river is Hiddekel, meaning a voice or sound which represents the voice of the Lord which is full of power and majesty and divides the flames of fire, shakes the wilderness, makes the hinds to calve, discovers the forests and breaks the cedars even the cedars of Lebanon. The fourth river is the Euphrates which means fruitfulness, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth:" saith the Lord, it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." (Is. 55:11)

All of these streams flowing through the city refresh the inhabitants of Zion and prosper the cause of truth so that there is no turning back. I believe the inspiration and comfort of these waters prompted Jeremiah to declare, "Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon which cometh from the rock of the field? or shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken?" (Jer. 18:14)

Now this blessed city of Zion is

exceedingly precious to us for we have no continuing city here on earth because this world with all its fleshly enticements is a waste howling wilderness to the people of God. And when we are refreshed by another glimpse of this eternal paradise through a renewal of the hope of better things that is within us, we often become overjoyed as David when he said, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.", and sometimes we reach the exultancy of Newton in his hymn when he exclaimed, "Glorious things of thee are spoken, Zion, city of our God! He whose word cannot be broken, Formed thee for his own abode: On the Rock of Ages founded, What can shake thy sure repose? With salvation's walls surrounded, Thou may'st smile at all thy foes...See the streams of living waters, Springing from eternal love, Well supply thy sons and daughters, And all fear of want remove. Who can faint while such a river, Each flows their thirst t'assuage? Grace, which, like the Lord, the giver, Never fails from age to age."

It was this same city which Abraham was hunting when he went out from his homeland not knowing whither he went, for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Abraham, in his age, saw the city from afar off as did David who warned us that except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain. This city is the Lord's design and it is His prerogative who shall enter his gates and walk its streets of gold. And no one shall find shelter within its walls who is not born again of the water and of the spirit and who does not come as a little child in meekness and humility. But what a comfort it is to know that when Naomi and Ruth approached Bethlehem-judah on their way from the fleshly tabernacles of Moab, the whole city was moved at their appearance for the inhabitants of Zion are made one body and one spirit in Christ for which cause may he ever be eternally praised. David captured the sweetness of the moment for the poor pilgrim in every age as he or she comes nigh the gates of the city when he said, "Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King, and my God." (Ps. 84:3)

In any one single place or period of time, the city often looks small as it did to Ecclesiastes, the Preacher, for he asserts there was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and built bulwarks around it and beseiged it. This enemy of the city, of course, is Satan who makes war incessantly with the woman (the Church) in the wilderness. Ecclesiastes continues, however, to say that there was found a poor wise man, who by his wisdom delivered the city, yet no man remembers that same poor man. Now Christ came meek and lowly and riding upon an ass for He was the poor wise man and when he approached the city of Jerusalem there was a great multitude which spread their garments and palm branches in the way and rejoiced singing. "Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest." (Matt. 21:9) And it is said that all the city was moved when Jesus came, yet no man remembers the poor wise man. The inhabitants of Zion are so prone to forget His mercy and His love that we are all too like the lepers who went on their way without returning to give thanks.

Often, as we travel through the vast regions of our land and yours finding only selected areas where spiritual life seems evident, we wonder, sometimes, if the very image of this eternal city is gradually being removed from the earth and, though, this, no doubt, is true for

the period of the fullness of the Gentiles seems to be quickly approaching, we should not, we must not despair. We do well to remember that in Christ's messages to the Churches in Revelation, it was only to Philadelphia that He said, "thou hast a little strength." For He has declared that His people shall be gathered one by one as a hen gathereth her chicks under her wings and wherever the two or three are gathered together there He has promised to be in the midst of them. And often we feel the greatest sweetness in meeting when the handfuls are assembled together in His name, but we joy, too, when we witness on occasion the larger assemblies when we see a greater portion of the "great congregation" come together.

But the more we capture a glimpse of this celestial home, the more we long for its coming. We desire to see the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. We pray and long to see it shine as a jasper stone, to see its great wall and gates, to behold the twelve foundations of its wall garnished with all manner of precious stones. We beg to walk its streets of pure gold, transparent as glass. We plead to see the throne of God, and the four and twenty elders, its four beasts and the Lamb in the midst as it had been slain having seven horns and seven eyes. For we cry to realize the eternal noon which this city emanates where there will be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying; nor pain, for God, himself, it is said, shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. I cry as Paul did to the Philippians, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." (Phil. 3:10, 11)

Now ye are come, also, declares Paul, to an innumerable company of angels. When Abraham sent the eldest servant of his house to find a bride for Isaac, his son, he assured his servant that the Lord would send his angel before him to guide and prosper his way. The angel of the Lord was sent to tell Zacharias that his prayers had been answered and that Elizabeth, his wife, would bear a son whose name was to be called John for he would make ready a people prepared for the Lord. Six months later the same angel, Gabriel, announced to Mary that she would bring forth a son, whose name would be called Jesus. Likewise, Gabriel appeared to Joseph to allay his fears regarding his espousal to Mary already great with child. And it was Gabriel, again, who descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone from the sepulchre so that Mary and others could see that the tomb of Christ was empty. Angels in chorus praised God at the birth of Christ, ministered unto Him following His temptation and cast the great dragon, that old serpent, out of heaven into the earth by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony. David reassures the Lord's people in Psalm 91 that the angels of the Lord would have charge over them in all their ways. A precious deacon, recently told me of the last hours of an aged one years ago who said on a certain morning, "The angels are coming to take me home today." And during the day her family could not dissuade her otherwise. About four o'clock that same afternoon she was taken home in a quiet rest. It is related of the late Elder W. I. Carnell, who served our church in Canada for several years, shortly after the turn of the century, that he preached almost until his last breath when he raised his arms in exultation and exclaimed soaring! soaring! Indeed, comforts Paul, ye are come unto an innumerable company of angels.

In addition, Paul proceeds to comfort the Hebrews by saying, ye are come to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven. We know that the names of the Lord's people are written in heaven even in the

book of life and that He has graven His elect upon the palms of His hands. Indeed Christ has raised the members of his body from servitude under the law to be sons by adoption and if sons then heirs and if heirs then joint heirs with Himself. He has raised His people to become Kings and Priests unto God. Collectively, they are the general assembly and the Church of the firstborn or the "great congregation" for Christ through the words of David in Psalm 40:9 edifies His people when He declares "I have preached righteousness in the great congregation; lo I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest."

Furthermore continues Paul, ye are come to God the Judge of all. What a solemn and yet glorious awakening there remains for you, dear child of God, to be raised among the saints and brought before the Judge of all the earth and presented there unblamably and unreprovably before Him in love through the merits of His gracious and merciful son. You know, when Christ was born, he was wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And these swaddling clothes represent, as I see it, two things. First, of all, they suggest clothes which are tightly bound signifying the covenant by which Christ is inseparably bound to His people and, second, they represent the mystery which permeates the entire realm of godliness as "thick darkness" is declared by God to be a swaddling band for the sea. We cannot by searching find out God, but He will reveal Himself unto whomsoever He will and we know that "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." (2 Tim. 2:19)

Let us go on, now, to consider the spirits of just men made perfect. We know that the word spirit in the scripture is used to denote the Holy Ghost, the third person of the Trinity, but it is also used to signify the renewed nature, or spiritual part in man. In fact, from Proverbs 20:27, we learn that, "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly." Now Christ said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (Jo. 3:5) To emphasize this truth, Paul tells the Corinthians, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." (I Cor. 3:16) The Lord's people are a trinity within themselves having body, soul and spirit, and Paul in praying for the Thessalonians asks God that their "whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Thes. 5:23)

Joshua was to succeed Moses for God said to Moses, "Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him:" (Num. 27:18) It is said of Daniel that an excellent spirit was found in him. The spirit of Elijah rested on Elisha. Now from Ecclesiastes 12:7, we know that at death, the dust or body shall return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it. And this spirit which dwells in the Lord's people is the same spirit that abides in Christ for there is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. For, "if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall quicken your mortal bodies by the Spirit that dwelleth in you. (Rom. 8:11) This is why Paul exclaimed to the Romans, "even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." (Rom. 8:23)

Furthermore this is the reason for the hope of our calling for "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit," declares Paul, "that we are the children of God." (Rom. 8:16) For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of

adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made you free from the law of sin and death.

But Paul tells the Hebrews they are come unto the spirits of just men made perfect. How are His people made perfect? This is very high ground. We know that Job was described as perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil. Certainly this perfection comes not as an inheritance from Adam for he was of the earth, earthy, and the carnal mind is enmity against God for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Therefore, we must look to another for perfection, that is, to Christ. When Jeremiah was commanded to go down to the potter's house to behold the potter who wrought a work on the wheels, he saw the first vessel which the potter made marred in his hands, so he made it again another vessel as seemed good to the potter to make it. Is this not a picture of Adam and Christ? For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Adam is of the earth, earthy. Christ is of heaven, heavenly. Adam is a living soul. Christ is a quickening spirit. As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. But as ye have borne the image of the earthy, ye shall also bear the image of the heavenly. And it is in bearing this image of the heavenly that ye are made perfect in Him.

Let us behold, now, some of the ways in which ye are made perfect in Christ. When Jesus entered the temple and cast out all them that bought and sold and then healed the lame and blind, the children began crying, "Hosanna to the son of David." When the chief priests and scribes became displeased with Jesus, He said unto them, "Yea have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise." (Matt. 21:16) He perfected praise out of the mouth of Jonah, as well, after he had spent three days and nights in the belly of the great fish, for Jonah said, "I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord." (Jonah 2:9) This is one way in which ye are made perfect, by rendering praise and thanksgiving unto God as did Peter, Paul, Anna, Simeon the Centurion and a host of others.

Furthermore the trial of your faith worketh patience, and patience must be allowed her perfect work that ye may be perfect and wanting nothing. For tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience and experience, hope; and hope maketh us not ashamed for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. We need to remember that even the Captain of our Salvation was made perfect through suffering. At this point we are reminded of the silversmith, who heats the furnace and continually removes the dross from the surface of the molten mass until, finally, he can see his image in the liquid metal. Then he knows that his work is finished. Paul, having spent his life in the ministry of God, and suffered, sometimes immeasurably, in the cause of truth, wrote to Timothy toward the close of his journey and said, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Tim. 4:6-8)

Love is also a source of perfection in Christ for God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect and perfect love casteth out fear.

But all these illustrations of the ways in which His people are made perfect in Him are the results of God's workmanship in the hearts of His

people. They permeate from the fact that the righteousness of Christ is imputed unto you, dear children of God, and your sins are imputed unto Him. And they are summed up in God's comforting words, "Come now, and let us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Is. 1:18)

Now Paul comes to the heart of his text, for he says ye are come to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. Jesus continually makes intercession for us who were sometime afar off but now are brought nigh unto God through the shedding of His precious blood. In Revelation 12, when the child of the woman is caught up unto God and to his throne, we are told that Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, that old serpent called the Devil, and Satan, and prevailed against him and cast him out into the earth where he makes war with the woman in the wilderness. But the woman is given the wings of a great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness unto the place which is prepared for her there where she is nourished for a time, times and half a time from the face of the serpent. Now the child, of course, is Christ and the woman in the wilderness is the Church of the Living God in this age. And it is so revealing to note when the child was caught up unto God, Michael and his angels were able to overcome Satan by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony. Then there was a loud voice in heaven saying, "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ:" (Rev. 12:10) Thus it is through the blood of the Lamb that Satan is subdued, that your conscience is sprinkled and purged from dead works to serve a living God, that your robes are washed and made white as snow and that you shall be presented, someday, before His Father's throne without blemish in love that God might be all in all. Truly, the blood of Christ speaketh better things than that of Abel.

The majesty of Paul's text encouraging our hope that someday we might be raised to live in the eternal city, among the heavenly host with the elect of God and with Christ the Lamb in our midst lifts us to soaring heights far beyond our reach. Yet, I believe, Watts, somehow captures the wonder of these soaring heights in these words, "Eternal Power! whose high abode, Becomes the grandeur of a God; Infinite lengths, beyond the bounds, Where stars revolve their little rounds." And in like manner he also captures the feelings of our helpless yet yearning spirits when we peruse the marvel of eternal life and cry, "Lord, what shall earth and ashes do! We would adore our Maker, too; From sin and dust to thee we cry, The Great, the Holy and the High!"

Please pray for my wife, my family and myself while at a throne of grace.

In bonds of love,
Elder Stewart McColl

What coming and what returning sinner need despair of acceptance? No man can be worse that Paul was before his conversion; and no man can be worse than Peter was after his conversion.

Toplady

Christ is still crucified between two thieves; Antinomianism and Pharisaism.

Toplady

OBITUARIES

SISTER ERMA APPLE CLARK

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst our beloved sister, Erma Apple Clark. Sister Clark was born to Eugene and Ross Apple on August 5, 1913,

and departed this life October 31, 1978, making her stay here sixty-five years. She was married to Orvin Clark in December 1928, who preceded her in death October 1972. To this union was born one daughter, Mrs. Robert McCoy, and two sons, Kenneth and Windall Clark.

Sister Clark united with Lickfork Church in August, 1967, and was a faithful member until her death. Her walk and conversation was manifestation of her hope through Christ. She was humble in manner and had a wonderful personality. Sister Clark desired not to be seen or heard but just to have a place with her people.

Sister Clark spoke of a cloud of loneliness since her husband's death, but there is coming a dawning of an uncloudy day when the Son of God and man shall come with healing in His wings and gather His children home; where there will be no loneliness or any such thing, but all will be like Him and be satisfied.

This was written by order of Lickfork Primitive Baptist Church. One copy to be sent to the family, one to the ***Signs of the Times,*** and one recorded in the church records.

Submitted in love,
David Underwood, Clerk
Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator

NANCY HALL MITCHELL

God in His infinite mercy saw fit to call Sister Nancy Hall Mitchell on July 18, 1978. She was the daughter of Joseph and Nancy Hall of Woodsdale, Person County, North Carolina, and the grand-daughter of Elder Andrew N. Hall, who was the founder of Shiloh Church, where she was a member. She was born and reared in a family of God fearing people who believed in the doctrine of Election. Her birthday was May 21, 1886, making her stay on earth 92 years.

She was married to Earl Mitchell of Person County and to this union was born two children; Fred Taylor, of Woodsdale, N.C., and Mrs. Evelyn Boone, of Amherst, Virginia, who survive her; also five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. She had five brothers and one sister, one of the boys being her twin. They all preceded her in death and she was the last of her generation to go.

In her later years she lived with her son, Fred, who was very good to her. Although she became partially deaf, she still enjoyed attending church.

Her funeral was conducted at Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church at Woodsdale by her pastor, Elder C. B. Davis, Jr., and Mr. Fred Braswell of Bethel Hill Church. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the coming of the Lord.

Clarisse Brooks, Church Clerk

PRISCILLA PARKER BROWN

The Lord saw fit to take from our midst our dear sister in Christ, Priscilla Brown on Aug. 12, 1978. She was born Feb. 12, 1902, making her stay on earth 76 years and 6 mos. She was married to the late Deacon Needham Brown and to that union was born one son, Cecil Brown.

She was received in Cypress Creek church by letter on Nov. 12, 1949 and remained a faithful member as long as her health permitted. She suffered severly for a long time. Christ said, unless you suffer with me, you shall not reign with me. We hope she suffered in Christ. We miss her presence very much.

Done by order of conference Nov. 11, 1978 and that three copies be made, one for the church records, one for the family, and one sent to ***Signs of the Times*** for publication.

Written by: Sister Anna Simpson
Elder Harmon Brown, Moderator

SISTER LENORA SKINNER WILLIAMS

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call home our dear sister Williams; after an automobile wreck October 10, 1978. She was 82 years of age and enjoyed visiting and meeting with those of like Faith.

She joined The Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church in July 1930, and was a faithful member. She was known from all parts of North Carolina and Virginia, as she visited the sister churches in all parts of the state, driving her car wherever she went. She was soft spoken and loved the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God. Visiting in the homes of the people she loved; talking of what Jesus had done for her; Her love for Him and her hope in Him for eternal life.

We, at the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church will miss her so very much; but we believe she is at long last resting in the arms of Jesus; asleep in Him, waiting for the grand and glorious day when He will come again to take His children home.

She is surviced by three nieces and three nephews.

Her Funeral was conducted from the chapel of Gay Yost Funeral Home, by her Pastor Elder D. B. Stokes and Elder William L. Everett. The host of friends attending and the lovely array of flowers gave evidence of how much she was loved. She was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Resolved: A copy of these resolutions be sent to the family; one to ***The Signs of the Times*** and one for our church records.

Order of Conference, January 13, 1979.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

MARY "MOLLIE" YEATTS DALTON

As requested by Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing I will write a few words in memory of our dear sister. In God's infinite wisdom and mercy He called to rest Sister Mollie Dalton November 20, 1978. She died at her home in Gretna, Va. Sister Mollie was born in Pittsylvania County, Va. to the late Jacob T. and Mary Dalton Yeatts. She is survived by one son, Carroll Dalton of Gretna, Va., six daughters, Mrs. Frances Marsh of Chatham, Va., Miss Vivian Dalton, Sister Irene Myers, Sister Gertrude Myers, and Sister Reba Myers all of Gretna, Va., Mrs. Pearl McCracken of Lynchburg; also ten grandchildren, ten great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.

Sister Dalton was received into the fellowship of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on July 23, 1944 and was baptized August 27, 1944. She was a faithful member although her health was not good for several years and was unable to attend regularly for quite some time.

She will be greatly missed by her church, family and friends. May we all be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father and may the family be blessed to think on what they have had more than what they have lost. Her funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by her beloved pastor Elder O. K. Tench. Her body was laid to rest in the Church Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the glorious resurrection.

Written by: Marvin Brumfield
Moderator: Elder O. K. Tench
Clerk: L. H. Doss

BRO. GROVER EDWARDS

Brother Grover Edwards, 82 years of age, was called home by our Heavenly Father on December 14, 1978, after being hospitalized several weeks. Bro. Edwards was blessed by God to unite with The Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church, May 1970. He was loved by all who knew him; a man of honesty and integrity; with a loving wife and children. He loved the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God, and always enjoyed meeting with the brethern talking about Jesus and singing the songs of Zion. We were blessed to meet at least once a week with him, his wife, and a few members to sing, talk and praise God (From Whom all Blessings Flow). We loved him and will miss him so very much; but feel and believe that he is now resting in the arms of Jesus. His hope is now real and his sufferings are gone.

Brother Edwards is survived by his wife, Mrs. Annie Lee Edwards; one son; Grover Edwards, Jr. of Nashville; three daughters; Mrs. Beatrice Winstead of Elm City; Mrs. Theresa Braswell, and Mrs. Patricia Daughtridge both of Rocky Mount. Three sisters; Mrs Ida Sharp, Mrs. Gladys Pittman and Mrs. Morning Farmer, all of Sharpsburg; nine grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; one bro. Jack Edwards of Sharpsburg.

His Funeral was conducted from Johnson Funeral Home Chapel, by his Pastor Elder D. B. Stokes and Elder W. L. Everett. He was laid to rest in Rocky Mount Memorial Park amid a host of friends and a large array of flowers giving evidence of how much he was loved. We believe he is asleep in Jesus, waiting for the second coming of our Lord.

Resolved: A copy of these resolutions be sent to the family, one to ***The Signs of the Times,*** and one for the church records.

Order of conference, January 14, 1979.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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IT IS TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 6/79 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CRUCIFIXION

Break, my flinty heart, in pieces;
Run, my eyes, like rivers run;
See, his agony increases!
Man of sorrows, God's dear Son:
Mingled tears and blood are streaming
From his lovely head and eyes;
Now his bride he is redeeming.
Though the rabble him despise.

See his bosom swell with sorrows,
Cover'd o'er with clotted gore;
In his back are deep-made furrows,
Bow, my soul, thy God adore:
Stretched on the cross, and bleeding
At his head, back, hands, and feet;
For his murderers interceding,
Saints, his dying love repeat.

Now forsaken of his Father,
Overwhelm'd with grief and woe;
Very man, and yet Jehovah;
Reason cries, Can it be so?
Faith the glorious truth embraces,
As 'tis in the word reveal'd;
In his work the Godhead traces,
Owns him as her strength and shield.

Wounded, bruised, mangled Saviour,
Why, O why such love to me,
When my conduct and behaviour,
Calls for vengeance, Lord, from thee?
Hark! " 'Tis finished!" rocks are rending,
Hell and earth convulsed appear;
See, his head in death is bending,
Lovely Lamb, to me thou'rt dear.

O, what love and condescension,
In the Saviour's death I see;
Who the thousandth part can mention,
Or what he endured for me?
Now salvation work's completed,
And the dying Conqueror risen;
Death's destroyed, and hell defeated:
Saints, this Son to you is given.

1836 J.N.

MARKS OF A SHEEP

Dear Sirs,

To those of your readers who have felt in their hearts the law of God, quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and opening to their view the corrupt thoughts and intents of their hearts, whose ears have been circumcised by the Holy Ghost, and whose eyes have been anointed with spiritual eye-salve, I would give a little of the experimental exercises of my own soul; because I think if I am one of the Lord's people, there may be something in the remarks to suit some such like tossed-about being as myself. I often think my experience is peculiar to myself, which makes me sometimes judge it is devilish experience; and some, perhaps, in the household of faith, may think the same of themselves, and so by this means we may both be comforted together. If the Lord will, then, I shall give a little of the experience in which my soul has been, and often is exercised; and whether the marks cut me off from the Lord's quickened family, or they be a testimony that I am one, I shall endeavour to be faithful in this simple relation.

Some time back, I was under the rational, legal taskmasters of the day, those spiritual brick task-masters, who set me to work, but they themselves would not touch one particle of it, even with their little fingers. While I was under them, I endeavoured to perform the work, but, from real inability, always failed. Still I attempted, thinking the fault was my own, never questioning the truth of their Christ-dishonouring system. While in this state, I laboured hard for perfection and salvation, upon condition of my own judicious compliance with the means of grace, though I, like my taskmasters, in word, held not perfection in the flesh, nor salvation upon conditions. Here I set to work, and hard I toiled, assiduously applying myself to Baxter's, "Saint's Rest," and other such duty-exalting and God-dishonouring works, striving hard for betterness in the flesh, yet finding myself no better. At length, having, I hope (though I often question it), been led by the Spirit to see the blasphemous fallacy of such a system, and that if I am saved it must be upon the ground of absolute redemption and unconditional grace, a change took place, and since that period my experience has been somewhat singular. Before, I could and did work hard, as I thought, for salvation; but now, I cannot be forced to believe that salvation is in any wise conditional. Before, I thought I had some good qualities about me; now, nothing earthly can persuade me that I am not one of the most subtle, crafty, and deep pharisaical professors: I really feel my heart a nest of every unclean bird. I do not imagine merely that I am wretched and detestable, but I actually feel myself so. The very presence of my body is a nuisance to me. At times I verily think I should be thankful to the Lord, if He would take me and dash me to pieces against the stones. I sometimes think I am a threefold spiritual hypocrite, that I am so subtle and crafty that what knowledge and experience I have, I have learned as a lesson from others. I think the Lord's people will one day find me out, and that it would be better for me to give up my profession at once than attempt to deceive the household of faith, and myself. When I hear the family of God converse, and look them in their countenances, I think I can see the very image and life of Jesus in them; but when I look into my own heart, I see and feel the very dregs of hell there; and it grieves me to hear God's people talking of my being a child of God, for I think they are deceived in me. Though I can see the glory and stability of the everlasting covenant, I cannot believe I have any interest in it. This makes me peevish and impatient, that I could quarrel with a straw. Then I conclude, what I feel is not the experience of

the Lord's family, but the work of Satan in my heart, ripening me for hell. I look back for an evidence that I am interested in the blood of Christ, but cannot find one; then I think that all those marks I aforetime set down as evidences, were only my own carnal conceptions. As for praying, I might at seasons as well think of flying. I once thought I would get the better of this, but I get worse and worse. Very often all I can do is bend my knee, and come out with a few long sighs or straitened groans. Then I think it is my own fault, because I do not ask aright. Then I try again, but am mortified worse than before. For a moment I think this is the Spirit making intercession for me; but I no sooner think so, than it appear to be the devil groaning in me. O, I find it the hardest task possible to pray. Although I am more or less daily in this plight, I never for a moment question the God-glorifying, Christ-exalting, and Holy Ghost-magnifying doctrines of the blessed gospel in discriminating grace. Yea, I could freely venture every particle of my salvation on their truth; for though at one time I was sadly perplexed about their validity, my anxiety now is not, Are they true? but, Have I anything to do with them? To get rest to my soul, I sometimes try to squeeze myself in at this gate, "Come unto me all ye that labour", etc., and similar passages; but though I feel that I am weary, and heavy-laden, yet come I cannot. Then I try to take hold of this passage, "Look unto me, and be ye saved", etc.; but to look unto Jesus is to see Him by faith, and I cannot exercise faith, though it is just what I want. At last I am brought to where I started, "the wormwood and the gall"; then a little hope breaks in, that these feelings are the feelings of the Lord's family; but no sooner do I think this, than the devil hoists up doubting flag, and I am again involved in darkness and fretful anxiety. Sometimes I can truly say, "I am more brutish than any man"; "I am a worm and no man"; "I abhor myself in dust and ashes"; I am "tossed with tempests, and not comforted"; I am "poor and needy, and seek water", and "hunger and thirst after righteousness"; then I am tempted to think these are all natural feelings and imaginations. I often feel as if I was neither spiritually dead nor alive, as if I was neither a child of God nor a child of Satan.

These, and many such things is my poor soul perplexed with; still my appetite can be satisfied no where but amongst the few despised outcasts, sarcastically called Antinomians.

Dear Sirs, if you, or any of your readers, can be made the means of giving me a dead lift, I shall feel very thankful.

Yours truly,
A Doubting Sinner

Preston, December 11, 1835

Everything that is suitable in the life of a child of God, everything that is desirable to the spiritual mind, and that is becoming the gospel of Christ, is made the subject of exhortations by the apostles. Exhortations, admonitions and reproofs do not imply conditions upon which the favor of God is offered; on the contrary, the love and favor of God are the cause of the exhortations. The exhortations of the apostles are inspired by the Spirit, and they touch the spiritual life, and reach and make manifest the desires of the spiritual mind; they stir up the pure minds of the saints by way of remembrance of those things which are first in our spiritual life, and which are contrary to our carnal minds. "Reproofs of instruction are the way of life", says the wise man; they are for our spiritual health and comfort; they feed the spiritual life. "Feed thy people with thy rod". The smitings of the righteous do not bruise and break, but are an excellent oil.

Fragments Silas H. Durand

Minden, La. 71055
Dec. 5, 1978

Dear Brother Poole,

Just a few lines on second Thess. chapter 2, verse 13, 14. If there was such a thing as the plan of salvation it would be contained in those two verses. It reads. "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethern beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and belief of the truth."

Without doubt there is more confusion and mystery in the experimental teaching of the Holy Spirit to each child of God than in any of the great works of salvation.

Salvation is made up of three parts. First, is God the author, His will and purpose in his choice of his elect people. The scriptures teach that we were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, without blame before Him in Love. The only way we are involved in this choice is as a blessed recipient. This was set and fixed in the mind and purpose of God before any of us were.

Second, is the advent of Christ into the world, the miracles He performed, His teaching as set forth in the scriptures, His promises to His little ones. Even His name means God with us. These promises are the ernest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession. His taking upon Himself the sins of all His chosen. His death on the cruel tree of the cross. His burial and resurrection from the dead. He tells us that because I live, you may live also. He came that we might have life, Spiritually, and that we might have it more abundantly. This work of Christ in redeeming His people, justifying and atoning for their sins, was all done without any help from the sinner.

The third work of salvation is the teaching of Christ. In the 16th chapter of John, Christ tells us that it is expedient that He go away, "For if I go not away the comforter will not come unto you; if I depart, I will send him unto you." He, the Holy Ghost, shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

My desire, if I know my desire, is to make a few comments on the work of the Spirit in sanctification. This Spirit, I think, is the quiet still voice that tells us to go this way or that way, that this way is right or this way is wrong. This is God's kingdom, set up and manifested in the heart of each child of God. Until this work is begun in him, the child of God is by nature a child of wrath, even as others. These others, this scripture speaks of, are the ones mentioned in the book of Proverbs. There is a way that seems right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. This is the way we all travel, until touched by the Holy Spirit.

There are many scriptures that describe the work of the Spirit in the heart of a child of God. the first such work is bringing to the attention of the child of God, that he is a sinner, that within him dwells no good thing, that all or the best of his goodness is as filthy rags. When we are given the heart to examine ourselves and find that we have not one good thing to offer this just and Holy God, then do we cry with Paul, "Who can deliver me from the body of this death?" thus, we learn that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Then do we begin to search the scriptures.

In this search we find that the same Paul who considered himself the chief of sinners was the same one given as a pattern for those who come after him to believe unto life eternal. That David, a man after God's own heart, was an adulterer and murderer, causes one to hope that because God showed mercy on such as these, that we are not so far away that He could not reach even such as you find yourself to be, that he does not save someone because of what he is,

but in spite of what he is.

When, by the Spirit, this hope is set up in a child of God, he finds things much different than before. He has been turned from the love of the world and worldly things to those things that do not perish with the using. He longs for closer fellowship with people who believe as he does, to know more of the ways of Christ, a love for the truth that at one time he knew not. He becomes a seeking person.

In the Song of Solomon there is such a seeking person. "Tell me oh thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedeth, where thou maketh thou flock to rest at noon." Dear brethern, if this longing is sincere, He always answers. "If thou know not, oh thou fairest among women, go thou way forth by the footsteps of the flock, feed thy kids beside the Shepherd's tent." Is not this your desire?

He does not put the desire for Him in your heart and then withhold the way. He tells us in the 45th chapter of Isaiah, 19th verse, "I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain."

So in conclusion, brethern, I believe that when the Spirit-and God is that Spirit- has taken up abode within your heart, you are ever being taught those things that are good for you, the things which are conforming you to the image of His darling Son, those things that are well pleasing in His sight. May it ever be thus with you.

Yours in hope,
Elder Graydon Smith

"And I will turn mine hand upon the little ones". (Zech. 13:7) I do not understand this to mean that when the Lord smites the Shepherd and scatters the sheep that He will protect the little ones from the stroke of justice. The phrase, "turn my hand upon", appears to me rather to imply antagonism, punishment, the execution of judgment. The little ones are a part of the flock; they are all to know the just anger of a holy God on account of sin, the little as well as the great. This is the day of judgment; the Shepherd receives the stroke, and in that stroke that fell upon Him all the flock, to the least of the little ones, is included. Justice and judgment are thus executed for and upon every one of them. When Jesus died the flock all died in Him, in a legal and mystical sense. The sheep are all scattered, and left helpless and defenseless, and the Lord's hand is turned, in judgment, upon the little ones, when the Shepherd is stricken down. The condition of the Shepherd shows the condition of the whole flock. This condition of condemnation and death must be experienced in measure by every one of the little ones. But lo, to their glad surprise the Shepherd appears again, risen from the dead, having paid the debt of justice, and now with all power in His hands He gathers the sheep that were scattered, and carries the little ones in His bosom. The hand of the Lord is not turned upon them in anger any more, but is laid upon them in love and tenderness, to cover them in the day of judgment, and to uphold them in the time of trouble.

If this sentence, "And I will turn mine hand upon the little ones", had meant in protection from the judgment that fell upon the sheep, then it appears to me, it would have read, "But I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." The word "and", to my mind, includes them all in the judgment which turned the hand of the Lord upon the Shepherd and the sheep.

Fragments Silas H. Durand

Some people can no more help cavilling at the doctrines of grace, than some dogs can help howling at the sound of a trumpet.

Toplady

Memphis, Tennessee

Dear Editors, and all who have a hand in making up and getting out the paper for the comfort and edification of God's children,

I most always feel a desire to pen a few lines when I send in for my renewal, but now I do it more fearfully than at one time. I have written when my heart was so full that I felt I would burst if I didn't, and then fear lest it was not from an unction from the Holy Spirit. But when I get the ***Signs*** and enjoy the travel of minds as they tell some of their experiences, believing they were the dealings of God in their lives, I feel drawn to them and am so thankful that I hope to have the same witness within me, and I am made to want to share mine. But when I take my pen I am made to ask myself - Will this be worth the space it takes up, if they see fit to print it?

I enjoyed the January ***Signs*** so very much and couldn't wait to talk with others about it. I went back and read the December issue again, and Elder McColl's editorial was so good. That is when I began to feel good that I felt to be with them when they rejoiced, and when they felt the cold blast of doubts and yes, even unbelief and fear, I could say, "That is my experience, too". I believe we have all been brought along and taught by the same teacher and that is what makes us understand each other, and causes us to bear with one another in each trial. It is indeed a wonderful thing to rejoice in the Lord. However, if one is not in the Spirit, nothing can enable one to truly "get" in the Spirit. I am like Elder Spangler once said, "If I can't feel to be one of the ones to whom this is written I can't feel comforted or uplifted. If I can feel a bearing about in my body the dying of the Lord Jesus, then I feel these things are for and to me, and nothing can hinder or keep me from reaching my eternal home which has been prepared for me".

I hope I am never allowed to underestimate the power and leadership of God in any of the dealings with His children, or His sovereign right in everything He does with any of His creatures and the worlds He made. It is wonderful to believe that God is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Was Jacob seeking Him when God found him in a waste howling wilderness? I believe He finds one and then they are made aware of Him, and then they diligently seek His face and to please Him. They hunger for a resting place here in this world with a people who speak their language, speak the things they have been taught to believe in their hearts.

We have a sweet mother and daughter who came to us several years ago. She had been seeking a people who preached and talked as she felt for many years. She had corresponded with Elder Rhodes in Louisiana. He told her there was a church in Memphis. She asked and searched, and tried to find us, and finally the Lord led her to our meeting. They came into our fold, and I think I never knew anyone who is so completely at peace and satisfied and thankful to be among us. It is a pleasure to hear her tell of her long search for the church, and it is a pleasure to have them.

I always beg, "Please do not let this crowd out better material. I believe I love all of God's children, where ever they are, or what they belong to. I think all are where they are according to His purpose, and we do not always understand things, but He knows.

Please renew my subscription for one year and use the rest as you wish.

Lucille (Mrs. James E.) Young

AN ORIGINAL IDEA

Messrs. Editors, -- A few Sunday evenings ago, I went to hear a certain curate, who, at the close of his discourse, attempted to disprove believers' immersion, and to establish the Popish practice of sprinkling infants. He was, he said, rather unwilling to meddle with

the subject, but would let it lie in undisturbed repose, did not the Baptists agitate it.

Mingled with other incongruous remarks made by the preacher, was one on Rom. 6:5, "If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." "This passage," said the preacher, "is by the Baptists made much of to prove immersion. Now," continued the Rev. Expositor, "everybody, who has a grain of common sense, knows what planted means. It means, putting a thing part in, and part out of, the ground, and leaving it there; so that, according to the figure, the Baptists should be put part in the water, and part out of the water, and remain there."

The Rev. Gentleman also told his auditory that the Baptists were "a sect who arose only about three or four, or four or five, hundreds of years ago; that they were actuated by a legal spirit, and might justly be called troublers in Israel."

Yours,
Tildesley, Nov. 1835 An Outcast

(With regard to the first part of the above, viz., the planting, we give the speaker full credit for the originality of his thought, for we do not think that any one, less wise than the curate of Sutton Courtney, could have been so exceedingly happy in invention. Nevertheless, we must ask him, which part he puts in, and which leaves out, when he sprinkles his pretty little babies, wherein, according to his own creed, they are made members of Christ, and children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven, and when he thanks God for regenerating them?--As regards the statement, that the Baptists are a new sect, etc., we appeal to his conscience, as a professed believer in the discriminating truths of the gospel, whether he can solemnly bend his knee before God, and say, "The Lord is my witness, I do believe that believers' baptism by immersion has sprung up within the last few centuries, and that to maintain that ordinance is to trouble Israel? We ask him, as in the sight of an heart-searching God, whether it is not more likely to trouble God's spiritual Israel, to maintain baptismal regeneration, and its awful appendages? God's kingdom is a spiritual kingdom, not a national one, and nothing short of the love and power of God, can make "children of God", etc., and to teach otherwise is to insult God, and trouble spiritual Israel. Eds.)

From "The Gospel Standard" 1836

2764 Clifton Ave. N.W.
Roanoke, Va. 24017

Dear Elder Smith,

Enclosed is a check to renew the ***Signs of the Times*** in my mother's name for two years. Please apply the remainder as you wish.

Also enclosed is a letter from a dear sister whom I assisted her pastor in baptizing this past July. I felt to ask her permission to send it to the ***Signs*** for publication if you consider it worthy of space.

Yours in hope,
(Elder) N. F. Conner

Route 2, Box 155A
Stuart, Va. 24171

Dear Brother and Mrs. Conner,

You are in my thoughts today, as I am thinking of the lovely meeting we had yesterday. It was a sweet feast to my soul to see such sweet fellowship with each other, and we hope we have sweet fellowship with God. The people that cheer me most on life's rugged road are the friends of my Master, the children of God.

I dreamed when I was just a little girl of the rough road that my sister and I would have to travel in this life. The road was so dark we would stumble and fall, and we would help each other up and go on our way feeling a little something in our hearts that surely the sun would shine again for us, and the way would be made smooth for just a little while. In real life it has been just that way, but I hope I have a sweet hope in Jesus, for I know that without Him I am nothing.

Back in the year of 1954, when my two oldest girls were about 2 and 3 years of age, I was out in the yard moving some brush. I got so tired I went in the house and lay down on the bed between my two little girls and fell asleep. In a dream I saw Satan come to me and he had a little scribbled piece of paper with my name on it. He told me I had only two years to live and hell would be my doom. When I awoke I was the most miserable creature that ever was in this world, for my sins rolled up before me like mountains.

I begged the good Lord for mercy both day and night, but no relief could I find, for my burden was so heavy. I wanted to talk to my Mama about this awful state that I was in, but I was afraid she wouldn't own me as a child, for I felt to be the black sheep of the family. I felt that I had sinned away my day of grace and that there was no hope for a sinner such as I. I went on this way, not telling anyone my condition until I got to where I could not eat nor sleep. I did not want to go to church or anywhere, for I could not talk without crying, and I could not tell anyone why I was crying. For about three weeks I was so sick that I could not care for my little children. I felt that I surely must die in this condition. I told my Mama that I felt like I was going to die and hell would be my lot, for I was such a sinner. She said she had felt this way, too, and then she told me her experience. That gave me some relief, but I felt that I was just the worst person there ever was. Mama was so kind, so loving, she just could not have ever been such a sinner as I felt to be. I went on in this state of mind for two years, and that was the longest two years of my life. I went to bed each night feeling that I would never live to see the light of another day. But God in His sweet mercy came to me in a sweet dream. I was in a hedge and I saw Jesus upon the cruel cross and His life-giving blood was running from His side. A voice said, "My people are hedged in and the devil can not destroy them". I awoke with a heart so light and gay and I was singing, "Cast down but not destroyed". The sun shone so bright on that day. I do not remember just what month it was, but if it was December, "It was as pleasant as May".

Just as soon as I got my husband off to work I ran to tell Mama the good Lord had whispered sweet peace to my soul. We sang most of the day, and talked, and cried, together. "O, happy day, when the burden of my soul was rolled away."

But I did not stay happy very long. Soon I began to feel depressed, but It was never like it was before. Then I dreamed of talking to a dear brother. I told him of my dream, and my sweet hope, and he said, "Sister, go home to your friends and tell them what the Lord has done for your soul." But still I could not go until this past summer.

Please excuse all the mistakes my letter has. I have written much too long, but I wanted to tell you some of my experiences.

"Blessed be the ties that bind, Our hearts in Christian love." I look forward to the meeting days when I get to see you all. Hope all are well.

Your little unworthy Sister in hope,
Everine Chaney

Dallas, Texas

Dear Editors,

We have enjoyed another year of good reading from the ***Signs,*** for which we hope we are thankful. You have been so wonderfully blessed to carry on and our hope is that the same may continue in the future.

My subscription expires with the February issue. Enclosed is a check to cover same for another year.

Best wishes to the staff and may the great God of all righteousness be with us all now and in the future.

In bonds of love,
Pearl Lee

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION

Elder Gilbert Beebe

In the January, 1979, issue of the ***Signs of the Times*** we published the last editorial on Predestination by Elder Gilbert Beebe, written originally on October 1, 1880. In the minds of many, nothing since the Apostles has been written on this subject that compares with this article.

We are happy to announce that this article has now been reprinted in pamphlet form and is obtainable from us at the price of four (4) for one dollar. We pay postage. We have no desire to make a profit on this and unless we sell our entire stock out, we won't even break even.

Brother Shannon Vaughn of Hazen, Arkansas, donated his time in printing this valuable article and only charged for materials.

This pamphlet will make an excellent gift to anyone who you may wish to show or tell what Old School Primitive Baptists believe on this subject. Please, no orders for less than four.

Order from:

Signs of the Times
P.O. Box 1250
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

Pastors, your help in distributing this pamphlet will be appreciated.

Editor

Price 4 each for $1.00

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ORDINATION OF DEACONS

Jan. 7. 1979

Ordination of Bro. Clyde Debow and Bro. Odis Daughtridge, as Deacons of The Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church.

A Presbytery was called composed of the following; Elders D. B. Stokes; W. L. Everett; W. B. Barnes: Deacons; George Williford; Tom Martin; Stedman Brown; Hassell Brown; Alvin Lancaster; John Williams; John Coker; Thelbert Hocutt; Carroll Williams and E. D. Ward.

The Presbytery was called into conference.

Conference was opened with Praise and Prayer by Elder W. B. Barnes.

A motion was made and carried for Elder D. B. Stokes to act as moderator.

It was moved and agreed to call Sister Nina Pearson as clerk.

The candidates were presented to the Presbytery by the Deacons of The Falls of Tar River Primitive Church.

Elder Stokes asked the Church if it was unanimously agreed to set Bro. Debow and Bro. Daughtridge apart as Deacons. It was unanimously agreed.

Elder Stokes asked the Presbytery if they had any questions or advice for the candidates. The Presbytery had no questions or advice, and were satisfied.

It was moved and agreed for Elder Stokes to deliver the charge to the candidates, and Elder Barnes to charge the Church. He spoke of this being a sacred matter; Paul was capable to give advice and charge the Church, and I feel that I am not. Having grown up in the Primitive Baptist Church, I have respect and love for the Falls Church, their Pastor and Deacons, and feel they are capable of making the right choice.

Elder Stokes gave the Charge to the candidates, reading from the 3rd Capter of the book of Timothy, giving the qualifications of a Deacon. Listen and be not swift to answer. Read and study the scriptures, (The Word of God); show compassion: place yourselves in the life of

another. The Church is not to tie your hands. Take care of the needs of any member and report back to the Church.

The clerk read The Church Covenant.

The Elders laid hands on the candidates in Prayer.

Moved and agreed to return the candidates back to the Church as Ordained Deacons.

Moved and agreed to send a copy of these minutes to the ***Signs of the Times;*** a copy to the candidates and a copy for the Church records.

Moved and agreed to read the minutes; they were approved as read.

Moved and agreed to adjourn the Presbytery.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1979 session of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, according to appointment, at Malmaison Church, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, July 6, 7, 8, 1979, which is the second week-end in July.

Malmaison Church is located on State Road 726 in Pittsylvania County, about 6 miles N.E. of Danville, Va. Signs to the Association will be posted on U.S. 29 and U.S. 360 highways for directions to Rd. # 726 and the church.

We invite our corresponding brethren and friends for this meeting.

Burnell B. Williams, Association Clerk

DIRECTIONS TO THE UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION 1979 SESSION

The seventy-third session of the Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association will be held at Moon's Creek Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing, with Moon's Creek as the host church.

Moon's Creek Church is located approximately one mile off Highway No. 86, midway between Danville, Virginia and Yanceyville, North Carolina, at Providence, Caswell County, North Carolina.

This session convenes at 11:00 A.M., Saturday before the third Sunday in July, 1979. (July 14, 15, 16)

Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Pittman's Grove the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in July, 1979.

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and worship with us.

Harold Pittman, Clerk
Box 4524
Rocky Mount, N.C. 27801

It was not in the hope of getting out of the lion's den, nor after he had been taken out, that Daniel had his greatest joy and comfort, but in the presence of the Lord while he was there, and in the knowledge that the angel of the Lord had shut the lions' mouths. It was not in the prospect of getting out of the fiery furnace, nor after they had come out, that the three Hebrew children experienced the chief blessing of their lives, but it was in the presence of the Son of God with them in the furnace, and that faith in Him which was given them in such measure that by it they quenched the violence of the fire, so that the flames could not kindle upon them.

It is in the tribulation that we are enabled most sensibly to rejoice, for there is our dear Saviour most clearly manifest to our souls. It is while bearing about His dying in our body that His life is manifest in our mortal flesh. It is in the fellowship of His sufferings that we know the fellowship of His joy. (II Cor. 4)

Fragments Silas H. Durand

December 23, 1978
Route 5, Box 235
Carthage, Miss. 39051

Dear Elder Smith,

Enclosed you will find my personal check in the amount of ten dollars to pay for the past year's subscription and the coming one. I have not meant to be so slow, but I have had much to happen to me and much on my mind for the past year, and when I would think to do it I

was not where I could do so, and when it was where I could, I would not think of it. I trust that you can find it in your heart to forgive your fellow yokeman and be forbearing in my infirmity.

I trust that the past year has been good to you and yours. As a human I could find things that I could question but I know that our God is just and right and too wise to make a mistake and I just thank Him that I can truthfully and willingly say that He has been so much better to me than I deserve. May the coming year be the best ever to you. Remember us in your petitions when pleading for Zion. We who are contending for the faith that was once delivered to the saints (in the Primitive doctrine and practice) are getting thin here. The others, while a larger bunch in number, are not growing either. However, to really enjoy fellowship, love, and peace in the Spirit is worth more than numbers and human friendship. I am, I trust, a little brother.

In Christ Jesus,
Waddell Moore

December 31, 1978
33 Hillcrest Ave. N.E.
Roanoke, Va. 24012

Dear Ones in the Lord,

A few weeks ago I met a friendly lady who referred to their church building worship room as a sanctuary. Later I realized the word does appear somewhere in the Scriptures and it seems to me it does mean a place of worship, as a general definition.

But as for a spiritual definition, Jesus Christ is our only sanctuary and if His blessed presence is hid, the meeting house fails to be a sanctuary.

Doesn't the word also mean a place of rest, spiritually and naturally? Yes, Jesus Christ is the poor sinner's rest. Can the word be interpreted as home? The child of God is never really going to be home until he gets to heaven. That is his home and his eternal rest.

Recently one of our servants of God spoke on the scripture, "In my Father's house are many mansions", and expressed that the mansions spoken of there were God's people. Here also we are made to think of the stones that make up the Temple. Isn't it true that each little stone (each little child of God) is part of the sanctuary of Heaven? We recall Jesus said unto His people, "I will be to them a God and they shall be to me a people". (Heb. 8:10)

Of course we know that the subject of God's praise is endless. I have pondered on a great subject with the one word, Sanctuary, which I hope to look up in the scriptures.

We would hope that one or more wise children of God will be given to write sweet comfort on this word, Sanctuary. There is nothing to do but wait upon the Lord, for all we receive, including the enlightened sermons to God's praise that He gives His servants, and though they may rarely mention the word, Sanctuary, in the gospel as it is given to them of God, isn't it true that the gospel, as God gives it to us, is the sanctuary - the height of happiness for the believing christian as they journey through this life? It seems to me that the word, Gospel, and the word, Sanctuary, come together with harmony and love in it through and through. Yes, God is love, and He is everywhere present and nowhere absent.

I am a poor weak worm of the dust. Anything that has been done for me has been by the mercies of our Lord. Oh, how I hope the word, our, applies to me.

Humbly,
Mamie Rose Ferguson

The same night I wrote the above concerning the Sanctuary, I promptly got a copy of the scriptures with a concordance in the back. It gave me the following information concerning this word. I feel I want to add the followng scriptures to my thoughts on the Sanctuary.

Exodus 25:8 says, "And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them."

In Leviticus 19:30 we find, "Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord". Again, the same holy commandment from the Lord is found in Leviticus 26:2, "Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord".

Psalm 63:1, 2 says, "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary."

Psalm 73:17, "Until I went in the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end."

Psalm 74:7, "They have cast fire into thy sanctuary, they have defiled by casting down the dwelling place of thy name to the ground".

Psalm 77:13, "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?"

Isaiah 8:13, 14, "Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem."

Lamentations 2:7, "The Lord hath cast off his altar, he hath abhorred his sanctuary, he hath given up into the hand of the enemy walls of her palaces; they have made a noise in the house of the Lord, as in the day of a solemn feast."

Ezekiel 11:16, "Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord God: Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come." Verse 17 of this chapter continues with much comfort.

Daniel 9:17, "Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is disolate, for the Lord's sake."

Hebrews 9:1, 2 "Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary."

The above references all came from the concordance that I have. Maybe these verses will help someone to think on the Sanctuary.

I enjoy reading the ***Signs,*** very much, especially the experiences of God's children, the dealings of God with them, the humbleness and love, and the love and fellowship to God and His quickened people.

If you wish to publish this you may. If it does not praise God or honor His precious people, I don't want it published. May God direct.

A poor small Sister,
Mrs. Mamie Rose Ferguson

ON CONTROVERSY

Dear Sir,

As you are likely to be engaged in controversy, and your love of truth is joined with a natural warmth of temper, my friendship makes me solicitous on your behalf. You are of the strongest side; for truth is great, and must prevail; so that a person of abilities, inferior to yours, might take the field with a confidence of victory. I am not therefore anxious for the event of the battle; but I would have you more than a conqueror, and to triumph not only over your adversary, but over yourself. If you cannot be vanquished, you may be wounded. To preserve you from such wounds as might give you cause of weeping over your conquests, I would present you with some considerations, which, if duly attended to, will do you the service of a coat of mail; such

armour, that you need not complain, as David did of Saul's, that it will be more cumbersome than useful; for you will easily perceive it is taken from that great magazine provided for the christian soldier, the word of God. I take it for granted, that you will not expect any apology for my freedom, and therefore I shall not offer one. For method's sake, I may reduce my advice to three heads--respecting your opponent, the public, and yourself.

As to your opponent, I wish, that before you set pen to paper against him, and during the whole time you are preparing your answer, you may commend him by earnest prayer to the Lord's teaching and blessing. This practice will have a direct tendency to conciliate your heart to love and pity him; and such a disposition will have a good influence upon every page you write. If you account him a believer, though greatly mistaken in the subject of debate between you, the words of David to Joab, concerning Absalom, are very applicable: "Deal gently with him for my sake". The Lord loves him and bears with him; therefore you must not despise him, or treat him harshly. The Lord bears with you likewise, and expects that you should show tenderness to others, from a sense of the much forgiveness you need yourself. In a little while you will meet in heaven; he will then be dearer to you than the nearest friend you have upon earth is to you now. Anticipate that period in your thoughts; and though you may find it necessary to oppose his errors, view him personally as a kindred soul, with whom you are to be happy in Christ for ever. But if you look upon him as an unconverted person, in a state of enmity against God and his grace (a supposition which, without good evidence, you should be very unwilling to admit), he is a more proper object of your compassion than of your anger. Alas! he knows not what he does: but you know who has made you to differ. If God, in his sovereign pleasure, has so appointed, you might have been as he is now; and he, instead of you, might have been set for the defence of the gospel. You were both equally blind by nature. If you attend to this, you will not reproach or hate him, because the Lord has been pleased to open your eyes, and not his. Of all people who engage in controversy, we, who are called Calvinists, are most expressly bound by our own principles to the exercise of gentleness and moderation. If, indeed, they who differ from us have a power of changing themselves, if they can open their eyes, and soften their own hearts, then we might with less inconsistence be offended at their obstinacy; but if we believe the very contrary to this, our part is, not to strive, but in meekness to instruct those who oppose, "if peradventure God will give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth." If you write with a desire of being an instrument of correcting mistakes, you will of course be cautious of laying stumbling-blocks in the way of the blind, or of using any expressions that may exasperate their passions, confirm them to their prejudices, and thereby make their conviction, humanly speaking, more impracticable.

By printing, you will appeal to the public, where your readers may be ranged under three divisions. First, such as differ from you in principle. Concerning these I may refer you to what I have already said. Though you have your eye upon one person chiefly, there are many like-minded with him; and the same reasoning will hold, whether as to one or to a million. There will be likewise many who pay too little regard to religion, to have any settled system of their own, and yet are pre-engaged in favour of those sentiments which are least repugnant to the good opinion men naturally have of themselves. These are very incompetent judges of doctrines, but they can form a

tolerable judgment of a writer's spirit. They know that meekness, humility, and love, are the characteristics of a christian temper; and though they affect to treat the doctrines of grace as mere notions and speculations, which, supposing they adopted them, would have no salutary influence upon their conduct; yet from us, who profess these principles, they always expect such dispositions as correspond with the precepts of the gospel. They are quick-sighted to discern when we deviate from such a spirit, and avail themselves of it to justify their contempt of our arguments. The scriptural maxim, that "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God", is verified by daily observation. If our zeal is embittered by expressions of anger, invective, or scorn, we may think we are doing service to the cause of truth, when in reality we shall only bring it into discredit. The weapons of our warfare, and which alone are powerful to break down the strong holds of error, are not carnal, but spiritual; arguments fairly drawn from scripture and experience, and enforced by such a mild address, as may persuade our readers, that, whether we can convince them or not, we wish well to their souls, and contend only for the truth's sake: if we can satisfy them that we act up to these motives, our point is half gained; they will be more disposed to consider calmly what we offer; and if they should still dissent from our opinions, they will be constrained to approve of our intentions.

(Continued next month)

A truly enlightened believer (i.e. one who has a clear view of gospel privileges, and makes conscience of gospel duties), stands between two fires; the pharisees call him an Antinomian, and the real Antinomians call him a pharisee.

Toplady

EDITORIAL.

"The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." Proverbs 8:22-31.

If God would bless me, I would like in some measure to bring before you some picture of the glory of Christ. The scripture in the 22nd verse, to me, is Jesus speaking. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way...." The writer does not say, "In the beginning of his ways", but "in the beginning of his way". In this chapter Christ is presented first as being one with God in the creation; in the creation of all things. He is presented in the Oneness of God in all the realm of nature, and the latter verses speak to us of His eternal Sonship with the Father before the world was, in the covenant of grace. In the lives of those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, they often see the ***way*** of God before they see the ***glory*** of God. People, from the natural standpoint, can behold the wonders of God in creation and in providence, but how blessed are the people, wherever they are, who can behold One who is equal in

creation as He is in providence and in grace; when they can behold One whose work is as effectual in one realm as it is in another. The first request that Moses made of God after the manifestation of God to him that He was God, was, "Shew me thy way. If I have found grace in thy sight show me now thy way". In the same chapter Moses was led to say, "Show me thy glory". In our spiritual knowledge, if we have any, it is often first a picture of the way of God - not the ways of God, but the way of God. As a sinner beholds the way of God then the holiness of His law appears. As he beholds this holiness then the justice in condemnation of a sinner appears. How wonderful it is when God brings a sinner to inquire to show him His glory. God did show Moses His glory. First the request, "Show me thy way", and second, "Show me thy glory". If we haven't seen the glory of Christ before we leave here I question we will ever see it in the life to come. And I don't believe that a person can really, truly see the glory of Christ without believing that they are a particular people. The way that God showed Moses His glory was to place him where God had already prepared a place. The Scripture says, "Behold, there is a place by me". What a blessing, "A place by me". "And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen". (Exodus 33:22-23) I don't know in all the word of God where God could have more wonderfully brought to Moses' view His glory than just this way. Do you? He covered him with His hand. What a good covering that is, too. A safe place, while all His glory was passing and His works were being unfolded His hand covered him. Have you ever felt the need of the hand of the Lord covering you? Have you ever known the truth of that scripture, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms:"? (Deut. 33:27) In our pilgrimage here we need help from above and we need help from beneath.

In Proverbs 8:23 it says, "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." If there is a doctrine precious to me it is the eternal Sonship of Christ. Even before the world was made He was with the Father. The scripture clearly shows that He was the creator of the world and all things therein. The apostle tells us in Colossians 1:16, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:"

John, in the first chapter brings Christ to our view as the eternal Word of God - not as Matthew, Mark, or Luke does, but he soars away. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." I think probably if you or I had to write that scripture we would have passed on, and not have said any more about it, but the Lord layed an emphasis on that Word. He says, "The same was in the beginning with God". I know of no reason that last statement was made but to lay the emphasis on it. "The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men." Paul, in writing to the Hebrews said, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person". (A person cannot see the glorious work of Jesus and the salvation of His people without seeing that quality - the express image of God's image and the brightness of His glory).

"And upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." (Heb. 1:1-3) Proverbs 8:23-26 says, "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth; While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world". We know all these things that I have said are but a setting forth of the things that God's word has proclaimed throughout the ages.

Now comes that relationship of the covenant of Grace. "Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him:" (Prov. 8:30) It is impossible to see the glory of God without seeing the glory of His Son. It is impossible to see the glory of the Son without seeing the glory of the Father. And when we think about this glory, and the wonders of God the Father and of God the Son and of God the Holy Spirit, in all this God glorifies His Son and His Son glorifies Him. It was a unison of work.

As Christ approached the hour of death He asked the Father, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John 17:5) Christ also thought that not only would His work be glorifying to His Father, but we are taught that certain things wrought in us glorify God as the Father glorified Him. Also the Holy Spirit in taking the things of Christ and bringing them to your heart, is the glorifying of Jesus always. Seldom do we stop and consider that there is not one moment of peace in our heart, not one moment of joy that lifts us above self, not one moment of true praise, but only as the work of the Holy Spirit opens to us and glorifies Jesus in our hearts. So it is the glory that God is glorified with in Christ's work. God glorified His Son and His Son glorified Him and the work of the Holy Spirit is to glorify that work of the Father and the Son. "Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;" (Prov. 8:30) We can only glimpse at that day, before the world was made, before the foundation of the world, before the highest crest of the hills was made, of that unity of the Godhead, of that pleasure that God had with His Son, in that eternal covenant that was ordered in all things and sure, whereby His Son would come and take upon Himself the form of a servant and be to you and I, if we are not deceived, all of the love of God. The first text of scripture I ever felt a burden roll off my heart from was the text, "God is love". How little I knew about it then, if I know anything at all now, but some way that day a burden was removed.

Later, we are made to see that out of all the wonders of God in His creation, and all the wonders of God in providence, His love only shines in His Son whom He sent forth to be a propitiation for our sins. God is love, and this is the exaltation of the wisdom of God. Someone would say, well, how can you exalt love as wisdom? Christ was both. Paul said of Christ; "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." (I Cor. 1:30) So in all the realm of providence God's wisdom shines forth only in the eternal will whereby He has determined through the work of Jesus to redeem His people, to purchase them back to satisfy the commands of God's righteous law for them, and to show a wisdom that excells all other wisdom. In Job 28 we find the question, "Where shall wisdom be found?" One says, "It is not here." Another says, "It is not in me". The conclusion was, "The fear of the Lord, that is widsom". So both the wisdom of God and the love of God was fully ex-

pressed in the sending of His Son. "God is love". The holy highway for sinners to enter heaven was called ***"the Way"*** in the Bible. Not ***a*** way. I can start to Maryland and I may go by the city of Washington, or I may go by the Bay Bridge. Those are both a way. But Jesus said, "I am ***the*** way, ***the*** truth, and ***the*** life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6) What does He mean? He means they come through His righteousness. They come through His redemption. They come through every merit that the sinner has or has had that was given him in our blessed Lord. "Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight rejoicing always before him: Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men".

I notice in the New Testament almost every salutation at the beginning of a chapter the apostle mentions two things we need - grace and peace. He doesn't say we need peace and grace, because we can't have peace before grace. We have to have grace and then peace. And another thought I notice in the salutations of the epistles is, "From God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ". See the oneness! He brings His mercy, but most times He sends grace and peace. I like the way that Peter expresses it in II Peter 1:2, "Through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord". There cannot be a genuine true peace in our hearts unless we see the unity of the Godhead in the realm of salvation. When Christ entered the world many books were written of His life. Also many books could be written on His glory before He came into the world, and if God blesses me to live long enough I want to write about His glory before this world was: that there was a Oneness; that He was the Creator; that this was His creation, and I want to write about His glory while He was here and His glory now. It is an endless subject, isn't it? An endless subject. He brought His first begotten Son into the world to let all the angels worship Him. The message goes out, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men". (God's will to men.) That is the way we could have put it. God's will to men. He veiled His glory while He was here. It is still veiled upon the minds. It will always be veiled to the carnal mind of men and natural man. But my friends, those of you who have tasted this are continually looking for His glory. You look for His glory in the way you read your Bible. First you will find His sufferings, and that will lead you to His glory. I like to think how God begins a work in the heart. First, the eyes are cast down; they go forth weeping. They are like the publican; they can't lift their eyes to heaven. There is a smiting of the breast, and then gradually, as God brings the forgiveness of our sins to our hearts, (whether it be a gradual load laid down, or whether it be suddenly) our eyes are lifted - lifted. No wonder David said, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills" (the elevated realm that we are talking about) "from whence cometh my help". This is a holy hill that gradually I was raised to. Then I could cry with David, "O send out thy light and thy truth": (Light and truth are inseparable) "Let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill." (Psa. 43:3) That was a holy hill where Christ died, wasn't it? It was an exalted place.

His glory was veiled and yet it was such that a man who couldn't see naturally could see Christ's glory. (I mean from the standpoint of understanding all about Christ.) In John 9 the man who was born blind didn't know much of it. He couldn't explain lots of things; and I can't and you can't. He couldn't tell all about Christ. The people pressed him, but he could only tell them one thing. The people who were enemies of the great work of Christ, pressed him. They said, "Give God the praise; We know that this man is a sinner". They were saying, "That man is only a man.

He is a sinner". He answered and said, "I know not whether he be a sinner or no one thing that I know, whereas I was blind, now I see". (John 9:24-25) I know a night when I was blind and then I could see. Can you say that? Many of you can. Yes, blind, but now I see. Christ appeared and said, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?" (John 9:37) He said, "Yes, I believe, I believe". Don't tell me that God's work in the heart of a sinner doesn't do something for him. But the greatest work it can do in your heart is to give you a glimpse of the glory of Christ, the honor of Christ. That is the greatest. I remember in going to Canada many years ago, and Elder Ruston announced a hymn I had never heard before. "Lord let me see thy beautous face. It yields a heaven below, And angels around the throne will say, Tis all the heaven they know." It had just the right ring in my soul - a glimpse of Christ. And you can't have a true glimpse without seeing His glory. I'm not surprised that Christ was concerned with two things while He was here on earth. One was the glorifying of His Father, and the other was that His people see His glory. He was concerned that they be where He was, because they couldn't see it unless they were there. I have little concern as I face eternity, and I want to find but one thing in the Bible while I live here on earth, and that is the glory of Christ and the glory of the Father.

I went to visit a dear sister this afternoon and she said, "Talk on the Bible". I picked up the Bible and read the scripture to her, "Thy shalt remember all the way the Lord thy God hath led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee...." (Deut. 8:2) What a blessing it is that God has a way of humbling sinners like us. It is a true blessing that when God humbles us we are not going to do any living thing any harm. Love fills our breast. We can't describe it. And I said, "God brings His people often through a way to prove them; not to prove to them how strong they are, but to prove how weak they are and that He is a covenant keeping God." "All the way which the Lord God has brought thee". Do you remember that? Many of you do. Can you look back over your journey? Can you realize part of it was to humble you? And to sum the whole thing up - to prove that "Man shall not live by bread alone...." Thank God for that. "But by every word" (One word of God applied to your heart is worth more than 10,000 worlds) "But by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of God."

Something happens to me when I read that Scripture found in the last part of the 3rd chapter of II Corr. where it says, "But we all with open face beholding as in a glass" (That is when the veil of the Law has been removed.) "the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory". (If we behold things of the gospel it is like looking through a glass.) It is impossible for a person to really see the glory of Christ unless something has changed them into what they see and feel. They are taught by Him. They are enabled by Him to see part of His sufferings, part of His heavenly glory, and they are waiting (where ever they are, they are waiting) for His second coming when they shall see Him as He is. When we shall surround the throne of God, what a wonderful day that will be, and to forever be with the Lord. Paul concludes the chapter in the Thessalonians on the subject with this; "And so shall we ever be with the Lord." Amen and Amen.

(Elder) D. V. Spangler

(A sermon preached at Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church, Snow Hill, Maryland, December 30, 1978)

KNOWN DEPRAVITY

Take the whole range of God's children, interrogate them first and last, and say to them, one by one, "Did you merit the grace of God"? Was there any-

thing in your life, anything in your heart, anything in your lips, before you were called, so truly holy, so invariably pure, so pleasing in God's sight, as to merit His grace?" Every child of God, whose heart and conscience have been made tender in His fear, would answer in a moment, "No; for whatever I might have been in the sight of others as moral and religious, I certainly was in myself the farthest of all from God and godliness. If I was not an open sinner, I committed sin in secret; if my life was not outwardly vile, my mind was full of pride and worldliness, and my lips of vanity and folly; if I was not altogether abandoned to gross licentiousness, my heart was as a cage of unclean birds. I had no true fear of God, no real love to Him, no sure hope in His mercy. My religion was almost my worst feature, for I was a Pharisee, building up a Babel of good works, trying to climb to heaven on a ladder of duties, and reckoning God my debtor for the poorest acts of mere legal, external, and I now see hypocritical service."

J. C. Philpot

FREE GRACE

Must there not be always a proportion between what is bought and what is paid? If eternal life could be bought, what equivalent sum could be offered for it? What price could be paid at all adequate to an eternity of bliss? But when we put into the balance what man is as a sinner by nature and practice, then to presume to proffer a few paltry deeds, which men call good works, a few duly muttered prayers, a few shillings dropped into a charity plate, a regular observance of private and public worship, an unfailing sacramental attendance, a due keeping of feasts and fasts, when the heart is really absorbed in sin and folly,--to lay these poor miserable performances down before the throne of a holy God as so many meritorious acts, and say, "I have done my duty, regularly attended church or chapel, and now I want to be paid: give me heaven; give me eternal life; give me bliss unspeakable; give me that which will ravish my heart through endless ages:"--common sense revolts at the idea of a poor fallen sinner using such language and attempting to drive such a bargain with God for heaven. I appeal to you if it is not insulting to God, mocking the Majesty of heaven, to tell Him in heart if not in lip that a few good works can merit eternal life. I have purposely used strong language to show you what human merit and what human presumption are in all their naked deformity. Heaven is not to be bought, eternal life is not to be earned. It is granted or is withheld; it is a free gift, or it is never received at all.

J. C. Philpot

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ACTS 3:1-11

Of all the signs and wonders that the apostles did through the power of God, only those are recorded in the Scriptures that are needful for the instruction of the children of God in righteousness and the confirmation of their faith. The first eleven verses of the third chapter of Acts relate an incident in the apostolic ministry of Peter and John that occurred soon after the descent of the Holy Ghost and the establishment of the visible church on the day of Pentecost. Peter and John visited the temple at Jerusalem at the ninth hour of the day, a special time of prayer, and saw a lame man that had been carried daily and laid at the gate of the temple, that is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that came to the temple for worship, and who was about to ask alms of the two apostles.. Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth

rise up and walk". Peter then took the cripple by the right hand and lifted him up, and the bones of his ankles and feet received strength. The cured man leaping, stood and walked and entered with them into the temple praising God. Those who witnessed the miracle were filled with wonder and astonishment at that which had happened to the lame man, who held Peter and John, as they ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

Peter and John were witnesses of this demonstration of the mighty power of God. Out of the mouths of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. These two apostles were thought to be the oldest and the youngest of the apostles respectively. It seems appropriate that they should participate in this miracle, for it is by a miracle of grace that every child of God enters savingly into a knowledge of the truth, from the time that the first one of the family of the redeemed tasted that the Lord is gracious, until the last one finds a place in that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Peter and John went together into the temple, denoting that blessed fellowship that the children of God have together in spiritual companionship when they sit down in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Peter and John were together at the trial of Christ, they ran together to his sepulcher, and they came to the temple together, not to offer up the sacrifice of lamb or bullock on a Jewish altar, but to attend to prayer and to offer spiritual sacrifices, also to preach to the Jews who assembled in numbers at the ninth hour, which was three o'clock in the afternoon.

This was one of the hours observed for prayer and sacrifice by the Jews. It was the ninth hour when Jesus Christ on the cross commended his spirit to God as he gave up his life, saying, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Prayer is the christian's vital breath, his means of communication with God. A sigh, a cry for mercy, a groan because of sin from a burdened soul in prayer, is indited in the heart by the spirit of God and is heard and registered in heaven. When the high priest under the law dispensation made intercession for Israel, he took a live coal of fire from the brazen altar of sacrifice and placed it upon the incense on the golden altar. As the fragrant incense vapor ascended, perfuming the place of worship, the high priest offered prayer. When a child of God, one of the priesthood of believers, prays, there is a work of the Holy Spirit in his heart, convicting him of sin and teaching him the justice of his condemnation and the righteousness of that fiery law that went forth from the hand of the Lord at Sinai. It shows him his ruin in nature, and in its application consumes all the combustible material of creature effort and legal works. The law burning in the bosom of the convicted sinner as holy fire shows him the vileness of his heart and causes him to groan within himself and to cry for mercy. The creature was born in sin, and to live unto God, must die to sin and realize his need of Christ.

As the ninth hour was observed as an hour of prayer in Jewish worship, there is in this a spiritual signification. It denotes judgment in the sense that when a sinner prays for mercy, he acknowledges the righteous judgment of God for his sins. It was not far from the ninth hour when the first passover lamb was offered up at the time of the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt for the promised land. This lamb died typically in the place of and for the Israelites, and by the sprinkling of the blood of this passover lamb on the lintels of the door posts of the houses of the children of Israel, they escaped the wrath of God and became a nation. Jesus met the judgment of God for his bride, the church, at the ninth hour of the day. He suffered for her and in her stead all the penalty that she would have had to

endure if he had not been a propitiation for her sins. By his death and resurrection the church became a holy nation and a peculiar people of the Lord. At the very hour Jesus died, the high priest in the temple was about to slay the passover lamb when suddenly the earth shook, rocks were rent, many graves were opened, and the veil of the temple was rent asunder from top to the bottom, showing that the way into the holiest was now made open, that the type had ceased, as Christ the true passover lamb fulfilled the requirements of the law and made the observance of ceremonial rites no longer necessary. At the ninth hour Jesus died with a prayer upon his lips as he commended his spirit to the Father. When we enter the church, which is the true temple of God, it is through prayer and supplication; it is because of the merit of the sacrifice of Christ; it is through a sense of guilt having lain heavy on our conscience and our inability to lighten the burden. We can not stand or walk in our own strength before God. The man who was healed in the miracle under consideration could neither stand nor walk. He was lame from his mother's womb. All mankind is conceived in sin, born under its curse, unable to meet its just requirements and under its condemnation. This man had been carried daily to the temple that he might receive alms. This shows he could not stand or walk or live of himself, and that no man could relieve his infirmity. Vain is the help of man to relieve the sinner.

The word certain is used by the Holy Spirit to designate this man from all other individuals and shows him to be a representative character. A subject of grace is distinguished from all other individuals not receiving God's favor. This man represents a sinner who is convicted of sin and is slain by it. Such a character is separate from the world. This man had no strength or means by which he could relieve himself and was fully aware of his physical infirmity. He had to be brought to the gate of the temple to which reference has been made. It is the law that brings a subject of God's redeeming love to a realization of his need, for the law is the schoolmaster of believers unto Christ that they might be justified by faith. The decalogue manifests the wound of sin and the ceremonial law points to the remedy, but is powerless to apply it. The law therefore is a ministration of death. Sacrifices under the law dispensation were offered daily, but could not take away sin. The repetition of these sacrifices day after day and year after year emphasized their impotency to purge the conscience or cleanse forever the foul stain of sin. The daily presence of this invalid at the temple to beg alms proved the gravity of his condition. He was incurable by any aid of man.

Peter and John bade this man to look upon them, not that they could of themselves effect a cure, but that through their ministration he might look to Jesus who is the fullness of grace and truth. Peter bade the afflicted one in the name of Jesus of Nazareth to rise up and walk, stating that he had neither silver nor gold to give him, gifts that perish with the using. Jesus had resided a considerable time as the word made flesh in his holy humanity in Nazareth. So the lame man was bidden to rise and walk in the name of Jesus Christ, the God-man, the holy one who had left the shining courts of heaven's effulgent glory to assume holy human flesh, that he might bring many sons to glory. When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his son, made of a woman and made under the law to redeem his church, which was under the law. The children of God being partakers of flesh and blood, Jesus likewise partook of the same that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, and deliver them that all their lifetime are subject to bondage. The law of God required obedience in the flesh, therefore Jesus was manifest in the

flesh. In Christ dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily. In the matchless name of Jesus the lame man was bidden to rise up and walk. Peter then took the afflicted one by the right hand, which denotes acceptance, fellowship. Those that enter into fellowship with the son of God are placed at the right hand of Christ when the Lord shall come with his angels and sit upon the throne of his glory. Immediately the lame man was lifted up, his feet and ankle bones received strength and he was able to leap and walk and to praise God.

The poor child of God who has felt the plague of his own heart, and to be without hope in the world, leaps in a spiritual sense when his burden is removed, when peace is spoken to his soul, when he discerns Jesus as his great salvation, when he is lifted up from law into grace, when he enters into manifest life in Christ, and his soul magnifies the Lord and rejoices in his Savior. It is then that he walks, not after the flesh, but after the spirit. It is stated that the healed man entered into the temple. When the child of God is lifted up above the condemnation of the law, he enters into that rest prepared for the people of God and has his place in that antitypical temple of lively stones built up for a habitation of God through the spirit. The lame man, fully restored, resorted to Solomon's porch, one of the precincts of the temple that then was. Solomon typifies wisdom as well as peace. In the spiritual temple the subject of God's grace learns that wisdom that is from above, and which is pure and peaceable. Jesus Christ is made unto his people wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. By nature we learn wisdom from man, which is foolishness with God, but through the healing power of the Great Physician of our souls, we are taught the wisdom of God. The lame man did not enter the temple until he was healed, and the little ones in Zion do not learn the wisdom that is from above until they are made alive spiritually. It was in the temple that the healed man praised God. It is in the true church that God's redeemed family praise him. Of such it is written: "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." The lame man was cured without the use of silver or gold, which emphasizes the truth that all the gold, that all the natural wealth of men poured into societies and organizations of men, whether at home or abroad, can not suffice to save a single soul from bondage to sin and death. Only from Jesus comes the priceless blessing of eternal life.

Arnold H. Bellows

March 1943

OBITUARIES

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT FOR SISTER GERTRUDE ROYAL

We, the Church at Hickory Grove bow in humble submission to the will of God to take from our midst, our dear Sister Gertrude Wood Royal. She was born and reared in a family who believed in salvation by the Grace of God.

Sister Royal was born June 1, 1903, the eldest child of the late Brother Fernie and Sister Melia Johnson Wood of Johnston County, North Carolina. She along with her husband, Brother J. Luby Royal united with the church August 1966. Sister Royal served her position well as Clerk for several years prior to her illness.

She departed this life September 17, 1978. Her funeral was conducted at Rose Funeral Chapel in Benson, North Carolina by her Pastor, Elder W. D. Godwin and assisted by Minister Rossie Blackman. She was laid to rest in The Devotional Garden Cemetery near Dunn, North Carolina under a blanket of beautiful flowers from those who loved her.

She is survived by her husband, J. Luby Royal, one daughter, Mrs. Thomas F. Frix, three sons, James Earl, Fernie Lee and Jerry Bruce Royal, nine grandchildren, two sisters, Sister Kathleen W. McLamb and Sister Cleon Wood, one brother, Gary E. Wood.

The church at Hickory Grove miss her very much, but feel that our loss is her eternal gain and that she is resting with our Saviour awaiting the day of the Resurrection, when Our Heavenly Father will call His little children home to be at rest.

Therefore, we the Church at Hickory Grove, resolve that three copies be made; one to be sent to the family, one to the ***Signs Of The Times*** for publication and one kept for our church records - written by Order of Conference.

Elder W. D. Godwin, Moderator
Sister Kathleen McLamb, Clerk
Sister Cleon Wood, Committee

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Once more the Lord has called from our midst a dear beloved sister, Gracie S. Barbour on January 30, 1979. She was born in Pittsylvania County April 29, 1889 to James Edward Scearce and Mary Jennie D. Scearce making her stay here almost 90 years. Sister Gracie united with Strawberry Church in 1911, and was a faithful member, always interested in the welfare of the church. She loved her church and filled her seat as long as she was able to get there - many times with the help of a dear Sister in Christ.

She was married to Bruce J. Barbour and to this union was born four daughters, Mrs. Clara Meadows, Mrs. Ruth Finch of Danville; Mrs. Doris Shinn, Stroudsburg, Pa.; and Mrs. Marion Fredrick of San Antonio, Texas and two sons; James M. (Jack) Barbour of Danville and Charles S. Barbour of West Point; one sister, Mrs. Bertha Grogan of Danville and one brother, Bernard Scearce of Martinsville, Va. - ten grandchildren and two great-granchildren.

Her funeral was held at Townes Funeral Chapel by her Pastor, Elder R. S. Payne and Mr. K. H. Lashley and was laid to rest in Mountain View Cemetery beside her husband beneath a mound of beautiful flowers to await the coming of her blessed Savior to gather His jewels home.

She was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace, such a lovable Sister, her sweet smile, kind words and sweet fellowship, so many virtures too numerous to mention, will always be remembered at Strawberry Church. We miss her so much, but feel our loss is her eternal gain.

This leaves a sad and lonesome feeling, as I try to write this memorial of our dear Sister in hope and spirit. For she asked me about two years ago to write this when she passed away. She talked often to me about how she enjoyed going to her church meetings, and thanked God for it all.

Be it resolved that we bow in humble submission to His holy will - He never makes a mistake - Blessed by His Holy name.

May the Lord comfort and give reconciling grace to her dear family.

Resolved that a copy be sent to the family, one put on church record and one sent to the ***Signs of the Times*** for publication.

Written as requested by
one that loved her,
Sister Gertie Holley

NANNIE CARNEY

Sister Nannie Carney came to this life on Nov. 25, 1893 to Franklin Melton and Margaret Jane Bailey at Poca, W. Va. She came to Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church on Tyler Mountain on Aug. 5, 1939 and was baptized by Elder J. C. Hammonds. Sister Carney served as church clerk from May 31, 1941 until the end of Dec. 1967, when failing health made it impossible for her to continue. She was a most faithful servant of the church.

She was a former school teacher of Mason County. She is survived by her husband Silas Edgar Carney and two daughters Mary Anne Withworth of Atlanta, Georgia and Margaret Gibson of Charleston, W. Va. One brother James of Gallipoles, W. Va. and one sister Edith Summers of Southside W. Va.

She fulfilled God's purpose on this earth on July 7, 1978 making her stay here on earth 84 years 7 months and 12 days. Her funeral service was conducted by Elder Randall Pennington at Keller Funeral Home, Dunbar, W. Va. and her body was laid to rest in the family cemetery at Ortin Heights, Nitro, W. Va. to await God's calling.

Elder J. J. Smith, Pastor
J. J. Bird, Clerk

Obituary prepared by Bro. Charles Gott by special request.

MEMORIAL TO BROTHER OKEY W. McCLANAHAN

Okey W. McClanahan was born Feb. 4, 1900 to Vrig Fleet (Tobe) McClanahan and Adelia Melton on Poca River. He was married to Gertrude Fisher on April 17, 1938, at Hometown W. Va. To this family was given one daughter, Mrs. Earlene Bailey, who along with his wife also survives. Also surviving is one brother Boyd McClanahan of Nitro, W. Va.

He was united with Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church of Tyler Mountain on April 2, 1950, and was baptized by Elder J. C. Hammond. He was made deacon and trustee of the church on Nov. 5, 1950.

Brother Okey was a most faithful servant to his church and served the above offices until he answered God's call on Feb. 20, 1974, which made his stay on this earth 74 years 16 days. His funeral service was at Gaten Funeral Home Poca, W. Va. with Elder V. B. Linn and his body was laid to rest in the family cemetery on Poca River.

Brother Okey believed that the chosen children of God was from before the foundation of the world.

Elder J. J. Smith, Pastor
J. J. Bird, Clerk

Memorial prepared by Bro. Charles Gott by special request.

SISTER BELLE COBB PAGE

Sister Belle Page, passed away December 9, 1978, at the home of her daughter, after several years of declining health, at the age of 94.

A native of Caswell County, she was the daughter of John K. and Lucy Ann Massey Cobb, (deceased) and the widow of Monroe Calvin Page, who died Dec. 28, 1964.

She is survived by their three children: Lonnie Claude Page, Edna Page Minor, and Monroe Howard Page. She was a devoted wife and Mother, and highly esteemed by all who knew her. After her health failed she lived with her daughter and son-in-law. They (with the help of the other children and in-laws) gave her the very best of care: it seemed to be a labor of love for them. She was a very cheerful and pleasant person and is greatly missed by her family and friends. May God bless them to feel that she is asleep in Jesus, to arise in His likeness, and praise Him forever.

All her life, she believed in God and His power and at a called meeting, at the home of her son Lonnie, she united with Bush Arbor Church, and was baptized by her Pastor, in June 1972.

Her funeral was conducted by her Pastor, Elder Wallis Smith and Elder Donald Smith, at Bush Arbor Church, where she was buried beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Resolved, that this be recorded on the church records, a copy sent to the ***Signs of the Times,*** and a copy sent to the family. Written by request of Bush Arbor Church, by Gladys Page.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Brother Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

HOWARD FRANKLIN McCLANAHAN

Howard Franklin McClanahan was born to Eldridge McClanahan and Helen Turner on Aug. 5, 1898 on Poca River where Brother Howard spent his lifetime. He worked at American Viscose and was a farmer. He was united in marriage to Mary Whittington and to this union was born one son and one daughter. The daughter preceeded him in death. This union was ended at the death of his wife Aug. 10, 1935.

On April 12, 1938, Brother McClanahan was united in marriage to Jewell Fern McCallister in Kentucky. To this union was born one son and three daughters who along with his wife also survive. Also nine grandchildren.

Brother Howard came to Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church on Aug. 21, 1966 and was baptized by Elders H. J. Bird and Howard Murphy. He was a trustee of the church.

He departed this life April 19, 1978 making his stay on earth 79 years 8 months and 14 days. The funeral service was at Gatens Funeral Home with Elder V. B. Linn. His body was laid to rest under a mound of flowers in the family cemetery on Poca River to await the call of our most high God.

Elder J. J. Smith, Pastor
J. J. Bird, Clerk

Obituary prepared by Brother Charles Gott by special request.

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 7/79 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE CONTRAST

O Death! O Death! terrific foe to him
Whose hope of happiness to earth's confined;
His portion great, takes his whole wishes in,
And fills the narrow compass of his mind.

When health decays, and life ebbs out apace,
And all beyond is wrapt in dark despair;
His eye in vain seeks for a resting place,
To buoy his hopes, and chase away his fear.

He turns to earth, but there, alas! the ties,
The slender ties, that hold him here expire;
To Heaven he casts his sad and anxious eyes,
But justice threatens with eternal fire.

Anon he turns his troubled thoughts within,
Tho' yet to look within he hardly dare;
But conscience, wak'ning to a sense of sin,
Thunders aloud, "There is no refuge here".

Dismay'd, he bows his head, gives up his hopes,
On worlds above and worlds below doth frown;
Deprived of all his vain, though boasted props,
Headlong he plunges in a world unknown.

O Death! O Death! where is thy dreaded sting?
The dying saint aloud exulting cries;
His hopes being fixed above the world he's in
Far, Far, beyond these transitory skies.

This life decays, but what is mortal life
When life immortal opens to his view?
Death draweth near, but what a phantom's death,

When faith can pierce the gloomy shadow through.

He turns to earth, but earth, with all her cares,
Is closing fast to his declining sight;
With joy he bids adieu, her hopes and fears,
And seeks the mansions of eternal light.

Anon he turns his busy thoughts within
Yet sees nought else but vile corruption there,
His sin he owns, yet full deliverance sings,
The blood of Jesus banishes his fear.

Living, he dies! dying, behold! he lives!
A life eternal he receives for this;
A mortal, immortality receives,
A life of sorrow ends in endless bliss.

C.H.

Watford, November 12, 1835

CONTROVERSY
by John Newton
Continued From June

You will have a third class of readers, who, being of your own sentiments, will readily approve of what you advance, and may be further established and confirmed in their views of scripture doctrines, by a clear and masterly elucidation of your subject. You may be instrumental to their edification, if the law of kindness, as well as of truth, regulates your pen, otherwise you may do them harm. There is a principle of self, which disposes us to despise those who differ from us; and we are often under its influence, when we think we are only shewing a becoming zeal in the cause of God. I readily believe, that the leading points of Arminianism spring from, and are nourished by, the pride of the human heart; but I should be glad if the reverse was always true; and that to embrace what are called the Calvinistic doctrines was an infallible token of an humble mind. I think I have known some Arminians, that is, persons who, for want of clearer light, have been afraid of receiving the doctrines of free grace, who yet have given evidence that their hearts were in a degree humbled before the Lord. And, I am afraid, there are Calvinists, who, while they account it a proof of their humility, that they are willing, in words, to debase the creature, and to give all the glory of salvation to the Lord, yet know not what manner of spirit they are of. Whatever it be that makes us trust in ourselves that we are comparatively wise or good, so as to treat those with contempt who do not subscribe to our doctrines, or follow our party, is a proof and fruit of a self-righteous spirit. Self-righteousness can feed upon doctrines, as well as upon works; and a man may have the heart of a Pharisee, while his head is stored with orthodox notions of the unworthiness of the creature, and the riches of free grace. Yea, I would add, the best of men are not wholly free from this leaven; and therefore are too apt to be pleased with such representations as hold up our adversaries to ridicule, and, by consequence flatter our own superior judgments. Controversies, for the most part, are so managed as to indulge, rather than to repress this wrong disposition; and, therefore, generally speaking, they are productive of little good. They provoke those whom they should convince, and puff up those whom they should edify. I hope your performance will savour of a spirit of true humility, and be a means of promoting it in others.

This leads me, in the last place, to consider your own concern in your present undertaking. It seems a laudable service to defend the faith once delivered to the saints; we are commanded to contend earnestly for it, and to convince gainsayers. If ever such defences were seasonable and expedient, they appear to be so in our day, when errors abound on all sides, and every truth of the gospel is either directly denied, or grossly misrepresented. And yet we find but very few writers of controversy who have not been manifestly hurt by it. Either they grow in a sense of their own importance,

or imbibe an angry, contentious spirit, or they insensibly withdraw their attention from those things which are the food, and immediate support of the life of faith, and spend their time and strength upon matters, which at most, are but of a secondary value. This shews, that if the service is honourable, it is dangerous. What will it profit a man, if he gain his cause, and silence his adversary, if, at the same time, he loses that humble, tender frame of spirit in which the Lord delights, and to which the promise of His presence is made? Your aim, I doubt not, is good; but you have need to watch and pray, for you will find Satan at your right hand, to resist you. He will try to debase your views; and though you set out in defence of the cause of God, if you are not continually looking to the Lord to keep you, it may become your own cause, and awaken in you those tempers which are inconsistent with true peace of mind, and will surely obstruct communion with God. Be upon your guard against admitting any thing personal into the debate. If you think you have been ill treated, you will have an opportunity of shewing that you are a disciple of Jesus, who, "when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not." This is our pattern, thus we are to speak and write for God, "not rendering railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing; knowing that hereunto we are called". The wisdom that is from above is not only pure, but peaceable and gentle; and the want of these qualifications, like the dead fly in the pot of ointment, will spoil the savour and efficacy of our labours. If we act in a wrong spirit, we shall bring little glory to God, do little good to our fellow creatures, and procure neither honour nor comfort to ourselves. If you can be content with shewing your wit, and gaining the laugh on your side, you have an easy task; but I hope you have a far nobler aim, and that, sensibly of the solemn importance of gospel-truths, and the compassion due to the souls of men, you would rather be a means of removing prejudices in a single instance, than obtain the empty applause of thousands. Go forth, therefore, in the name and strength of the Lord of Hosts, speaking the truth in love; and may he give you a witness in many hearts, that you are taught of God, and favoured with the unction of his Holy Spirit.

I am,
John Newton

Eustace, Texas

Dear Editors,

It is time for me to renew my subscription for the ***Signs of the Times,*** and I am enclosing a short piece for your consideration for printing. If you feel that it is of no value, just discard it.

"If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? (John 21:22)

The apostle Peter, after being asked by Jesus Christ, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" for the third time was somewhat aggrieved that the Lord found it necessary to ask him the same question so many times. In his own mind and heart Peter remembered that he had previously denied Him thrice, and his own conduct was grievious to him. Upon the third appearance of Jesus to His disciples before His ascension, the scriptures record; "So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" (John 21:15) What He was asking was, did Simon Peter love Him more than the other apostles loved Him. Peter answered and said, "Yea Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs." On the next two occasions Peter was told to "feed my sheep"; there being a difference in the feeding of the lambs or babes in Christ with the milk of the word, and the feeding of the sheep with a

stronger meat of the word. Christ also, at this time, reminded Peter of what he had done in the past according to Peter's own will, and what he would do in the future according to the will of God. (John 13:36) "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me." (John 21:18, 19) In this the Lord told Peter by what suffering and death he would have to endure in order to glorify God, and He also commanded Peter to follow Him.

Now when Peter saw that John whom Jesus loved, (the one who leaned on Jesus' breast at supper and asked, "Lord which is he that betrayed thee?") was following he asked, "Lord what shall this man do?" Jesus saith unto him, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" Brethren, the Lord is rebuking Peter and telling him that if it be His will, His desire, His purpose, that it is of no concern of Peter's. Not only was it no concern to Peter, but the question was also improper. Wherefore it behooves the saints to mind their duty in following Christ, and not to concern themselves in matters that do not belong to them. Christ is the Shepherd, the Chief Shepherd, the Leader of His flock and has left an example to be followed by His people. As according to the 23rd verse, error emerged from this and went forth unto many of the disciples and brethren that declared that John would not see death and would be among those that were here alive at the second coming of Christ. This was only clarified by John, himself, as he bore witness to Christ, the appearing of Christ to John coming in the spirit according to Rev. 1:1, 2. It therefore becomes every saint to attend to the ordinances established and set forth as examples by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and concern not ourselves with what others are to do or not to do. Peter, knowing his own conduct, and realizing that Jesus knows our hearts (yea, even before we ourselves know) answered and said, "Yea Lord, Thou knowest I love Thee." Here he set an example by not saying himself that he loved the Lord more than the other disciples. He was showing brotherly love and meekness toward his brethren. Just as surely as it come to pass that Peter would suffer and die a horrible death (just as did the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ), so shall it be with the saints of God. While here in this life if we are made to suffer the agony of realizing the sin and sorrow that our own deeds of the flesh have brought upon our Lord and Saviour and are made to feel the burden of sin in our hearts, then the precious hope spoken of by the apostle Paul brings comfort to our souls. It is not being justified by any action or deed on our part, but truly is by the grace of God. Thanks be unto God that He is our all in all and that He is able to keep and care for all that are His and raise them up in the last day.

Your Brother in Hope,
(Elder) B. J. McLaughlin

LETTER FROM SISTER RUSTON

Dutton, Ontario
April 30, 1933

Dear Sister Gillis,

It is quite a long time since you first asked me to write some of my experience to you. Each time you have mentioned in your letters that you would like me to write you, I have felt ashamed, and the postscript to your last letter seemed to rebuke me for neglecting your request for so long, so I will make the attempt, hoping the Lord will guide my pen. I think the real reason that I have delayed so long is that I have felt afraid of writing something I should not. From

my earliest childhood I believe I can say I had a love for the people of God, and although I often did and said wrong things, I always felt condemned in them and would try to do better, only to find that my natural disposition conquered again and again, in spite of all my efforts. I felt so ignorant of the things of God and would often beg the Lord to show me what I ought to know.

My parents were not members of the church, but attendance at the meetings and Bible reading in our home seemed to have consideration above everything else. My dear grandfather lived with us, and as I look back, I think he was one of the saintliest men I ever knew. He was a deacon in the church, and when ministers and friends visited him I would linger in the room that I might have the privilege of listening to their sweet conversation. I felt to be separated from those dear people by a veil, which I feared would never be removed.

There were seven children younger than I, so mother and I took turns Sunday nights in going to meetings, although we all went in the morning. After I had put the little ones to bed one Sunday night I was reading in Phllippians, when I came to the words, "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." They seemed to stand out and impress me so, that for many years after, my constant cry to the Lord was that He would make me to believe on Him, even if it had to be through suffering. I remember one day very distinctly that when I was house cleaning, I dropped on my knees by a chair, feeling so deeply that I must beg of the Lord to reveal His truth to me. I cannot say that in all this time I was in any trouble of mind; I had a lovely home, the kindest of parents and brothers and sisters, and sheltered childhood and girlhood. It was simply that the things of God seemed so worthwhile to me, and I knew I was so ignorant of them. Especially did I desire to know the meaning of "Jesus", and His part in the redemption of His people. I would listen to the ministers, hoping and hoping I might be able to follow them, but I felt all the while that they were preaching over my head to those who had already experienced what I so earnestly desired. There was much that I enjoyed in the meetings, but I felt I was lacking in the one thing needful.

At one time while still a girl at home in England, I received a lot of encouragement from a sermon preached by an old minister named Mr. Wady, from the words, "Wait, I say, on the Lord". It gave me fresh courage to keep hoping and praying that the Lord would show me what I should know in His own time.

After I was married, we lived for a short time in Zanesville, Ohio, but we did not find anyone there who believed as we did, and we missed the meetings very much. We soon returned to England, and stayed there for a while until it seemed advisable to return to the States. We had so much enjoyed the meetings again in England, and it was a great trial to leave our friends. However, the Lord was better to us than our fears, for we found a company of our own people in New York City. The members and friends received us most kindly and we felt "the lines had fallen to us in pleasant places". My husband seemed more and more attached to the people, and his mind was frequently exercised about joining the church. He would talk to me about it, but said he wished I could go with him. I felt horrified at the idea of it, for I felt he had so much to tell, and I had nothing. All I felt in my mind was "Lord, thou canst if thou wilt", but that was the great question. Would He ever notice me? I told my husband to go on and not wait for me, and often he would go to the meetings feeling he must speak, but was unable to do so. After our second child was born, I became very weak and nervous. I kept getting lower and lower until for months I thought my

mind would snap. I slept very little and lost all interest in life. I had always had such a happy life, both before and after marriage, had enjoyed nature to a wonderful degree, so much so that the sight of green trees and grass against a blue summer sky would fill me with a pleasure indescribable, but now I was oppressed with a feeling of gloom almost amounting to horror which enveloped me all the time. I did not feel any interest in my husband or children whom I had loved so dearly. The only thing that roused me at all was if they were not well, and then I became frightened for fear the Lord would take them from me. I went on in this way for many weary months. I did not know what was the matter with me. I had always had a happy bouyant disposition, but the terrible burden now upon me seemed to crush me to the very earth. The beauties of nature, once so sweet to me, did not appeal to me in the least. I felt my only hope was that God might appear for me. My constant cry day and night was "Lord help me". I felt that the only pleasure I had in life was the Sunday meeting where I could be with the Lord's people. Dear Elder McConnell was the pastor, and once when we were invited to his home, he was much concerned at my altered looks, and evident distress of mind, for my burden was so crushing I could not conceal the misery in which I lived. He said very gently to me, "Don't you think you would be happier if you were in the church?" Althought I thought so much of him, I felt very annoyed at him for saying such a thing to me. I thought if he were willing to have such a wretched one as I in his church, he was like the ministers of the worldly churches, who only think of adding to their numbers whether the members are worthy are not, and I could not understand it, as I had never though he was that kind.

I searched the Bible and the only comfort I could get was from Job or David. I remember saying once to my husband that David must have known what it was to be where I was or he could never have written some of his Psalms, especially the 5th Psalm, but I could not get any further than the 7th verse. Although I did feel a nearness to the Lord in prayer more than I ever had before, I had no assurance that He would appear for me.

Life seemed a fearful dread of everything, and yet I felt I had no hope for the future if I should die. I missed my mother so much, as she had always been able to smooth out all my little troubles when I was with her, but she was three thousand miles away, and with no likelihood of her being any nearer. Then I thought that if only my husband could be with me instead of being away all day, that I should feel better, but one day when he had a holiday, and he was home, I felt worse than I ever had before, and dropped down on my knees by the bed, and all I could do was groan in the bitterness of my soul, "Lord help me". I felt all my earthly props had been taken from me, and if the Lord did not appear for me, I should be lost both mind and body. The very atmosphere seemed gloom, and I lived in a darkness that could be felt. One day I noticed the room seemed a little brighter, so that I spoke of it to my husband.

At the same time I felt a desire to write to my grandfather of the trouble I was in. I knew he was such a good man and I thought he might understand me. I felt a little lightening of the burden as I wrote, but only a little. The evening passed on until I noticed it was nearly ten o'clock, so I asked my husband to read a chapter before we went to bed. He had been tempted to think that he had talked religion to me until he was driving me crazy and was feeling a hardening rebellious condition of mind over the wretched state I was in, and he did not want to read. He said we should do better to go to bed, as we had to get up early on Sunday morning as it was a long journey to the meeting house, but I

told him I did not want to miss it, and he commenced reading Isaiah 55. "Ho every one that thirsteth, etc." While I was listening to it, my mind seemed entirely taken from what he was reading, and I saw in my mind Jesus hanging on the cross bowed and crushed by the burden which I had been carrying for so long, and suddenly instead of being crushed to the earth, I could stand upright, my burden was gone. In an instant, all the prayers and hopes of many years were answered. I knew at last the meaning "Jesus the Saviour of sinners". I knew what it was to have a hope that He had died for me, for my sins He was afflicted. In my letter to my grandfather I had mentioned the following hymn and told him that was where I felt myself to be:

"O love divine, how sweet thou art!
When shall I find my willing heart
All taken up by thee?
I thirst, and faint, and die to prove
The greatness of redeeming love,
The love of Christ to me.

Stronger his love than death or hell,
Its riches are unsearchable;
The first-born sons of light
Desire in vain its depth to see;
They cannot reach the mystery,
The length, the breadth, and height.

God only knows the love of God;
O that it now were shed abroad
In this poor stony heart!
For this I sigh, for this I pine;
This only portion, Lord, be mine;
Be mine this better part."

Now I felt that prayer had been answered. My very being seemed filled with love to the One who had saved me from that lost condition I was in for so long. I felt like the woman of whom it is said that she was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself, and Jesus laid hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. That was just what I wanted to do, to praise God for His wonderful goodness to one so unworthy.

I tried to tell my husband, but he had been troubled so long by my depression that he feared my joy was just another phase of it. The change was so great, he could not believe it really was so. However, when morning came I was up early, dressing the babies, and urging him to get started early, all I could think of was getting to meeting to tell Elder McConnell and the other dear ones of the Lord's goodness to me. I have often wondered since how I could have forgotten to even think of my unworthiness. All I could think of was the Lord's goodness. My husband spoke to the church at the same time and Elder McConnell baptized us the following Sunday in the Hudson River. It was one of the happiest days in our lives. When speaking in prayer in our home, my dear husband has often asked the Lord that we might grow up together as "calves of the stall", and it seemed wonderful that He should have brought us to the church together. I knew what the words meant, "Old things are passed away, behold all things are become new".

The very Scripture seemed illuminated when viewed in the face of Jesus Christ. The epistles had always seemed to me so deep, and difficult to understand, now so much of them seemed opened to my understanding. The preaching seemed all for me. Like the good Samaritan, it came just where I was. My heart overflowed with gratitude to the God of my salvation.

Over nineteen years have passed since that time, but the sweetness of those experiences still remain, and I hope the Lord will never suffer them to be effaced from my memory. My physical weakness still continued for some time, but with such a difference. Before, I had a dread of the future, whether life or death, and afterwards I felt if the Lord saw fit to take me to Himself, I should be only too glad to go.

My health, relieved of the trouble of mind, gradually improved, so that I again felt fit to carry on the burdens of life and raising a family, and I have

always felt since that the Lord "has been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall". Many a time have I found that "a man" (the man Christ Jesus) "has been an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land".

I could write much more of His goodness to me, but have already made this letter too lengthy, so will close for this time. Forgive what you see amiss in it, for I am a poor frail creature, so fearful that pride may creep in, and make "even the grace of God a snare". George is in Toronto today, but I am sure he would join me in love. Write when you feel to do so. We are so glad to know that once again the Lord has given you the oil of joy for mourning.

Your sister in a precious hope,
Esther Ruston

(Sister Ruston was the wife of the late Elder George Ruston, who was the former pastor of the Covenanted Baptist Churches of Canada. Their memory is still fresh among the subscribers to the ***Signs of the Times.*** Editor)

CASTING ALL YOUR CARE UPON HIM

My dear Sister in the Lord,--I was very sorry to hear that you were laid by, and that your master and mistress were so much tried. But the Lord knows best what to do with both you and them; He is never disconcerted; His ancient thoughts stand fast for ever. All that He does is well done. No affliction comes by chance; and though it may be painful, yet it is needful, and always ends in our profit. Our Lord does everything for our profit, for His love will not allow Him to do otherwise; and though our ignorance may disapprove of His wise decrees, and our enmity rebel against His love, yet He, being full of compassion, forgives us all, and still pursues our good. True heaven-born faith can trust Him when reason fails to do so. We should remember that our Lord Jesus Christ was a mourner all His days, and that they who, mourning, follow Him, are blessed. The Master and the scholar must have the same fare. It is enough that the disciple be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord. The joy that is prepared for suffering saints will make amends for all their troubles here. What is our life? It is a vapour, which appeareth for a little while, and then vanisheth away. Both our worldly joy and our fleshly woe will soon have an end; but the righteousness, salvation, peace, joy, love, kingdom, and glory of Christ are for ever. Holy Ghost, inspire our hearts with the love of Christ and heaven; for here we have no continuing city, but seek one out of sight, a city which is the perfection of beauty, built on the sure foundation-stone, by the great Omnipotent Himself, for His own delight and everlasting rest, of which He is the entire light, purity, joy, security, beauty, and glory for ever and ever.

My dear sister, entreat the Lord that your faith and patience may hold out a little longer, for He "will come, and will not tarry". "We are saved by hope. But hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." "Casting all your care upon him" is very blessed work; it is the work of God; and the encouragement to do so is a most precious truth; "for he careth for you". What greater care could be manifested than the shedding of His own blood for us, and to be for evermore interceding for us? In what could greater care be shown than in making all things work together for our good, and in watching over and keeping us day and night, lest any evil should befall us? What greater care could He take of us than to provide for us an eternal rest, made us meet for

it, give us an earnest of it, preserve us unto it, and give both body and soul the everlasting enjoyment of it? Surely He who thus careth for us may well be trusted with all our care; and but for our wicked hearts, we should find no difficulty in trusting Him. O may the dear Lord give us to know more of Him as our own God and portion, as our joy and eternal inheritance! and this will raise our hearts and thoughts above and cause us to forget our troubles by the way.

I hope that by this time you are better, and able to resume your employment. My wife sends her love and gratitude to you.

I remain, yours very affectionately,
J. S.

August 16, 1842

REWARDS

Route 4, Box 57
Rocky Mount, Virginia 24151

Dear Brethren everywhere,

My mind seems to indict a matter and I cannot tell if it is penworthy or not. There is a Bible doctrine, found in the New Testament, called "Reward", which, if the Lord above would be pleased to guide my pen, I should love to exploit briefly.

First, there is a dual application of the same word, one as pertains to the wicked or such as stand on street corners and holler, "Lord, Lord", and these have their reward. As it is used here the reward is meant in terms of secular esteem, reputation amongst one's peers, secular religion, promoting good works like accepting Jesus as your Saviour, etc. All these are the rewards which Jesus says the hypocrites have and undoubtedly this is the solid truth.

Now, there is another reward which requires much more careful consideration to understand and be sure to keep separate from that of the hypocrite. Now, we see Jesus doing many good works and commanding of His children to likewise do--works of righteousness they are called, like singing praise to God and submitting to water baptism and living righteous, and it is in doing (by God's grace)--let's don't have a controversy about it--these things that a good feeling, called in the Bible "answer of good conscience" or reward comes to us. This reward we find is totally beyond our control but in God's time it comes. Some say the blessing is not in the doing but because we were chosen in Christ before the world was. To this I answer that it is a certain truth that all spiritual blessings all of God's people ever shall have were treasured up in Christ before the world began but not one subject of grace ever has felt an acquitted conscience toward God without submitting (doing it) to water baptism. I have never heard young or old say they got that reward without obedience and indeed it is not possible. God has not changed. What He required two thousand years ago He still requires. Men constantly change their doctrine and order but God has not. When Jesus prescribes the way and order of the government of His house I'm quite sure that must be held to or we shall wonder where the glory went. He will not bless another and He will not accept anything but His own. Our mercy is that He consider us His own and grant us to behave ourselves, all praise and glory to Him.

A sinner Brother,
James R. Holley

3625 Stancrest Drive
Glendale, Calif. 91208
February 20, 1979

Dear Elder and Sister Spangler,

Please forgive me for the long delay in sending the enclosed account of my beautiful experience while visiting Associations and all the beautiful people last summer. I enjoyed writing it and humbly hope that it is acceptable

and that I was guided by the Holy Spirit.

Since Christmas I have had the flu and a relapse and it has been very difficult to get over the weakness which seems to be the after affect, consequently the illness drags on and on. I'm sure everyone will feel better when the weather becomes stable.

Now concerning you and Sister Spangler--how are you? I hope you are well. Sister Sarah Barker wrote me about your trip to Snow Hill, Md., and the nice meeting you had with the precious Baptists there--also you spent one night with Elder Poole and family, which was a real treat. I am remembering the wonderful day we spend driving the Blue Ridge Parkway, having buckwheat cakes at the historic Mabry Mill, visiting the area of your homeland as a boy and finally stopping for dinner at the lovely early American home of your daughter, Mildred and her family. It was also very special to sit at your table in your home and discuss spiritual things and the mercy and loving kindness of our dear Saviour.

I was so happy to receive your poem which you sent during the Holidays. Not only does it cover our beloved doctrine, but it is instructive and embraces the full purpose of the advent of our Lord Jesus into this world and also His abounding grace and redeeming love.

"His birth, His life, His blood, His cross
Makes all things also appear as dross,
He is Alpha and Omega, too;
The beginning and ending, Oh how true."

This is only a portion of the beauty of this poem--your experience of grace and the 22nd chapter of Revelations has given me so much to meditate upon. My experience, if I have one, is so different. However, I get consolation when I think of the scripture, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

Your Editorial in the February issue of the ***Signs*** entitled, The Lamb, is a profound subject and the Lord has blessed you to portray our Lord as the Lamb of God from before the foundation of the world through time and into eternity. How beautiful and how deep! May the Lord give me grace to understand the sweetness and the depth of it more fully. What a joy you must feel when the Lord reveals these truths and enables you to teach and feed the sheep and the little lambs.

I did not intend to write such a lengthy letter. May the Lord continue to bless you "that you might finish your course with joy, and the ministry which you received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God". I love this scripture and I know that it has been in your heart during all of your long years of faithful service in the ministry. God bless you and your dear wife.

I love you and our fellowship is in Christ.

Your sister in the Lord, I trust,
Ruby Gilbert

(Another letter next month)

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The time of love, in the experience of some Christians, is much more sweet, conspicuous, and lasting, than it is in others. Whether that time lasts a week, a month, a whole year, or even a much longer season, depends entirely upon the sovereign pleasure of almighty God, who gives His people neither too little nor too much comfort. In that pleasant season, the believer often enjoys the gracious, sensible presence of Jesus, and walks in the light of God's countenance. His meditation on Christ is sweet; he has pleasant frames and feelings; and the invitations and the promises are frequently applied to his heart. Zion furnishes him with many a dish of milk; secret prayer is very pleasant; and the public means are very delightful, because whilst under them, he finds the house of God and the gate of heaven. He is dead to the world, alive to heavenly things, and runs well, so long

as he enjoys the power and the Saviour. At length, men, devils, and his own heart flatter him. Self predominates--he thinks too much of his faith, prayers, gifts, revelations, frames, feelings, and graces.

"The heart uplifts with God's own gifts;" and his spirit seems to be, "Come and see my zeal for God". The spouse of Christ now sits as a queen, and flatters herself she shall see sorrow no more. At present, she would not much mind the Bridegroom's absence, if she could have the jewels and the ornaments without Him. The heart joins itself to some idol; but a shyness is growing up between the soul and Christ, whose visits are now short and "far between". Every day brings the believer farther from his proper objects. Darkness overspreads his mind, dejection enters his spirit, and faithful warnings from the word reach his soul, as, "Pride goeth before destruction"; "Be not high-minded, but fear;" "Beloved, think it not strange at the fiery trial which is to try you." Then the enemy violently assaults the believer, and a horror of great darkness falls upon him, that fills him with terror and confusion. In this man's breast, every part of divine truth is assailed, as the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, the fall of man, election, the work of the Holy Spirit, redemption, justification, perseverance. In these conflicts, the believer is hard put to it. He is wounded, and falls; but his Captain lifts him up, and heals him, puts his sword into his hand, and gives him strength to resist the devil, who seems to flee away. The young soldier, full of false valour, dares the adversary again to the combat, and loudly blows the trumpet of victory over his retreating foe. The devil now assumes the serpent, comes by stealth, gets to the believer's weak and blind side, puffs him up with vanity and conceit, bloats him with pride, tells him he has done wonders, and that God has certainly raised him up for some great work. The hellish poison takes; pride and self are now nearly all in all. Dark clouds come on again, a dreary night commences, and sad desertion is bitterly experienced. For a time, the believer cries amain for the sweet presence of Christ, for another love-token, another glance, another crumb: but no; his prayers are now to be answered by crosses. Apparently, an inward spiritual decay is begun, and the man falls by little and little. Light, vain, trifling thoughts find a harbour in the breast, one troop succeeding another, until the soul feels it to be as difficult to raise its thoughts to heaven, as it was easy during the time of love. Now the heart begins to open, there are all manner of evil thoughts, desires, and affections. Every sinful principle is seen and felt within, as unbelief, pride, self-righteousness, envy, discontent, distrust, doubts, fears, hard thoughts of God, hardness of heart, self-will, obstinacy, murmurings, and apparently, even enmity to God. Daniel is now in the den of lions, and each roaring lust seems ready to devour him. Satan stirs up the offensive puddle of the man's heart, and its deadly stench makes the poor pilgrim sick. The tried soul descends into the chambers of imagerv. and is greatly alarmed at the ugly pictures he sees on the walls. Does God indeed dwell here? says he; how can it be? At length, he is favoured with a breathing time--cries to God for pardon, peace, and holiness. Hope rises again, and the Christian thinks he must have seen the worst of it; but he soon hears a voice saying, "Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations that they do". (Ezek. 8:13) He is again plunged in the deep. Every hour there are new turnings up, more fearful discoveries of indwelling sin, until the dungeon opens fouler than hell, and the man's breast is seen and felt to contain the principle of every sin that ever was committed under the sun. It is well when the Holy Ghost graciously overrules

these frightful discoveries, and excites the man to sigh and groan under this heavy body of sin and death, maintaining in the breast the fear of God, and tenderness of conscience, and filling the soul with self-loathings and abasement. The believer is now ashamed to sit amongst the saints, and views himself as being a moving pesthouse. He can hardly find a suitable companion, thinks he has got quite out of the path, cannot make a judgment of his case, and scarcely knows which way to look. His best companions are Job, David, Hezekiah, Jeremiah, Paul, etc. Now the priest and the Levite pass by on the other side. Modern professors suspect him; they do not understand his bitter complaint. He is a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls, and appears like the solitary pelican of the wilderness, the picture of bondage and misery. O! says the poor child of God, can any good come out of experience like this? I answer, Yes, and great good, too. Hereby you will learn to distinguish between those two opposite principles that dwell in you, the new man and the old, or, grace and sin; you will obtain a much deeper knowledge of your fallen state than you had before, and you will sink deeper in self-abasement. Hereby you will obtain a blessed understanding of many scriptures that you were previously unacquainted with, such, for example, as the 7th chapter to the Romans. Hereby you will learn more than ever of the preciousness of Christ's blood, for now, as a filthy leper, what can you plead but the blood of Christ? What can cleanse you but this? Here, under the power of the Holy Spirit, foul and loathsome as you can be, you will plunge into the atonement, and bless God that there is a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness. The precious blood of Jesus, applied by the Spirit's influences, shall thoroughly purge your conscience from guilt, speak pardon and peace to your souls, and make you cheerfully obedient to the gospel precept. Thanks be to God that there is balm in Gilead, and that we have a Physician of great value. May we ever and anon be under His healing hand. But O, believer, beware of making light of sin, or of discoursing about these things in a vain and unprofitable manner, for that would be dishonourable to your profession, and injurious to yourself and others. May you and I be preserved in the fear of God, and be kept from that deadly snare of being lifted up with pride on account of the deep discoveries we have had, or suppose we have had, of our own corruptions, seeing that is devil-like, for his scales are his pride.

May the good Lord keep our corruptions from breaking out, our feet from falling, and us from poring too much upon ourselves.

"The Gospel Standard", 1836

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1979 session of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, according to appointment, at Malmaison Church, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, July 6, 7, 8, 1979, which is the second week-end in July.

Malmaison Church is located on State Road 726 in Pittsylvania County, about 6 miles N.E. of Danville Va. Signs to the Association will be posted on U.S. 29 and U.S. 360 highways for directions to Rd. #726 and the church.

We invite our corresponding brethren and friends for this meeting.

Burnell B. Williams, Asso. Clerk

PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The thirty-third annual session of the Pleasant Valley Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Shepherd Fold Church, Houston, Texas, commencing on Friday before, and continuing through the first Sunday in August, 1979. (August 3, 4, 5)

For additional information contact Elder G. D. Shipman, Route 2, Box 128, Von Ormy, Texas 78073. (Telephone 512-624-2148)

Elder D. G. Shipman, Clerk

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The One Hundred Fifty-fourth annual session of the Pigg River District Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Riverview Church, Bassett, Va., commencing on Friday before and continuing thru the first Sunday in August, 1979. (August 3, 4, 5)

Riverview Church is located in Bassett, Va., approximately 200 yards off Route 57 on Bassett Height Road. The meeting house is next to a New School Baptist Church on the right coming from Route 57.

The brethren suggest that visitors bring folding chairs with them, as the meeting house will not hold all the congregation. Public address speakers will be in use.

For further information contact Elder J. R. Hollandsworth, Route 5, Box 104, Bassett, Va. 24055. (Phone 1-703-642-3030)

Elder John D. Wood, Clerk
8902 Cherry Tree Lane
Manassas, Virginia 22110

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Pittman's Grove the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in July, 1979.

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and worship with us.

Harold Pittman, Clerk
Box 4524
Rocky Mount, N.C. 27801

DIRECTIONS TO THE UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION 1979 SESSION

The seventy-third session of the Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association will be held at Moon's Creek Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing, with Moon's Creek as the host church.

Moon's Creek Church is located approximately one mile off Highway No. 86, midway between Danville, Virginia and Yancyville, North Carolina, at Providence, Caswell County, North Carolina.

This session convenes at 11:00 A.M., Saturday before the third Sunday in July, 1979. (July 14, 15, 16)

Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1979 session of the Smith River Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, August 31st, Sept. 1st, and 2nd, at Salem Church (Head of the River.) Laurell Creek is host church.

Salem Church is located in Floyd County on Highway 221, between Check and Copper Hill, Va. For additional information contact Elder Amos Hash, R.R. 2, Box 36, Ferrum, Va. 24088.

All lovers of the truth are invited.

Elder Amos Hash, Clerk

Route 1, Box 83
Tennessee Ridge, Tenn.

Dear Editors,

As my subscription to the ***Signs of the Times*** will be due after the April issue, I am sending a check for one year somewhat in advance for I do not want to miss even one issue.

I am now past 84 years of age and I know I can't be here much longer and this is the only way that I can get crumbs from the Master's table.

Our little church has not had a pastor or moderator since the third Sunday in November, 1967. Since that time most of our old members have passed away, leaving only a very few members.

We have had quite a number of trials, troubles, and tribulations since that last meeting in 1967.

On October 19, 1976 we re-organized the church and were going on in peace until a few outsiders began to interfere. We, the Church, had a small bank account and we did some repairs on the church. The outsiders, including the bank, told us we would have to have a court order before we could use any of our finances to pay for our repairs.

We did not intend to go to law in this matter, so we had to pay for our repairs out of our personal finances.

Paul says in First Corinthians the 6th chapter, "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before

the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?" So we refused to go to law and these outsiders, including the bank, brought suit against us, asking for the church property to be sold and, along with our bank account, be divided among them. They already had a sale for the church property. The property was to go to some club house so they could have bingo parties or any other worldly party. They claimed the building was rotting down, so they might as well get something out of it. But we thought if it was good enough for the club, it was good enough for us to serve and to worship the Lord.

So we were brought before Chancery Court and the judge was good enough to say he would not allow the church to be sold and that our bank account was still to go for the benefit of the church. And he gave us the authority to re-organize and to continue on in worshipping of the Lord.

This building was built for a house of prayer, but they wanted to make it a den of thieves. "It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." (Matt. 21:13)

This old church was originally organized back in the year 1810, and has fought its way up to the present with many obstructions and obstacles.

It reminds me somewhat of the incident that happened to a church in North Carolina (I think it was), that was written about in the ***Signs of the Times*** some time back. The opposition had taken the church building, and used it for themselves, but the State Supreme Court turned it back to the original owners after many years.

I believe we do get natural blessings from the Lord as well as spiritual. It is all of the Lord.

Yours in Hope,
Harvey Vick

EDITORIAL

EATING

"Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)" (Phil. 3:17-19)

There are several points of matter to be considered in this article. Chiefly in verse 19, observe the expression, "Whose god is their belly". My subject is in regard to eating. We will consider later on, not natural eating, but eating in regard to the spiritual or renewed man. You may ask, "What kind of a subject is that for the gospel of Jesus Christ?" If the Lord wills, we will discover what kind of a subject it is and its importance to us today as well as those to whom the Apostle Paul wrote.

The Apostle Paul obviously had something in mind when he spoke of the character of individuals whose god was their belly. He begins in a beautiful way, "Brethren". He is not addressing his enemies. He is addressing a people he dearly loves; a people who he has served among; a people who he has preached the gospel to; a people who have been exposed to enemies on the right hand and on the left. His heart goes out to them and in this warning he sets before them a certain class of people whose god was their belly. He has already introduced his letter with a suitable heading, but he interjects once again the expression of union. "Brethren," he says, "be followers". If God has called you to leadership, then you must lead. Otherwise, be followers. The sheep of His pasture are followers, and indeed they have no desire to lead. They follow the Shepherd. They long to hear His voice. The voice of a stranger they will not follow. Following is a way of life to

them. When the Apostle Paul says, "Brethren, be followers", they long to do exactly that. There is a wrong way to follow. He says, "Be followers together." We don't want divisions. We don't want some sheep going one way and others going a different way. Be followers together is the admonition of the Apostle. There is a true joy in togetherness. May we together follow him who submitted that to the church of God.

And he said,"Mark them". There is someone to put a mark on. Why? Because they walk, "so as ye have us for an ensample." Their walk is different. You cannot follow two courses. Romans 16:17 says, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them". You see the similarity here with our text in Philippians 3, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." We certainly do not see too much avoiding in this day, do we? There is a great deal more mingling with the world going on than should be admissible among the people of God. "For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly;". Is there not a relationship in these two scriptures? The words are almost identical. "They that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." So the Apostle is identifying two classes of people. One - those who follow the apostolic doctrine and listen to the voice of the Shepherd. Two - those who follow after deceivers. Those who cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which they have learned are many. In fact, we may say that they are legion. Our text says, "Many walk". If it was an exception, or there were only a few along we might not be much alarmed. But he says, "Many walk of whom I have told you often." Now if Paul has talked about this subject often then certainly it should give us encouragement to talk about it occasionally, shouldn't it? "Many walk of whom I have told you often, and now even tell you weeping." There must have been a very troubled feeling in the heart of the Apostle to have to tell them something like this with weeping. Bitter tears, that such things occur; yes, even weeping. He saw them as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end was destruction. There is no question; they will be destroyed.

This brings us now to examine the scriptures for several illustrations where eating caused divisions among the church. In one instance we find recorded in the book of Galatians where Peter was preaching among the Galatian brethren, and as he was preaching the gospel he was also eating with the Gentiles. At this time some of the Jews from Jerusalem came and when they discovered him so eating, and they had apparently rebuked him for it, he ceased his eating with the Gentiles and at that period Paul accused him of hypocrisy and rebuked him to his face bacause of his inconsistency in his eating habits. A division had now arisen between these two apostles over the simple matter of whether he could eat with the Gentiles or not.

Another illustration - In the very first church at Jerusalem there arose a division. Was it over doctrine? No, it was over the daily ministration. The Greek widows were being neglected at the meal time when the daily food was being served. So bad was the dispute that it became necessary for the apostles to appoint seven to look out over these matters. The first division occurring in the church of Christ after its establishment then, came over eating. When reading the word of God this could easily be overlooked. We feel, however, that it is vital that we see these points in regard to eating as something of a warning for us at this time. There are many instances as these. Please do not misunderstand; this is not a suggestion that everyone immediately stop eating

because of these illustrations from the word of God. Rather, "Having food and raiment", Paul said, "let us therewith be content." While we can be contented with food we should be very aware that there is a spiritual lesson involved in all of this. The reason is seen when we trace our subject of eating from its origin in the very beginning of the Bible.

Let us go back to the Old Testament. First, we find in the Book of Exodus when Moses was on the mount receiving the tablets of stone, the Israelites determined, "As for this Moses,.....we wot not what is become of him." (Exodus 32:1) "Up, make us gods, which shall go before us;". So they gave their gold and silver and other precious metals to Aaron, and he manufactured a golden calf for them. As soon as Aaron had made the calf, what did the Israelites declare? They saw their idol god before them, and "Aaron made proclamation, and said, To morrow is a feast to the Lord." (We are going to have a dinner on the ground to celebrate our new god.") This is hardly an exaggeration. This is basically what took place. These are the simple facts, and they regard, as we have noted from the beginning, the subject of eating.

The mixed multitude who went along with Israel in the wilderness also created problems regarding eating. "And the mixt multitude that was among them fell a lusting; and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely, the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic; but now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, besides this manna before our eyes." (Numbers 11:4-6) What was their complaint? The same as Israel's in Numbers 21:5. They said, "Our souls loatheth this light bread." The manna God had given Israel from heaven was a wonderful symbol of our holy Lord and Saviour, and yet it had become a loathesome thing to them. "Our souls loatheth this light bread." They thought they were better off back in Egypt with the melons, the garlics, the cucumbers, the onions and leeks, and the flesh pots where they did eat to their full. However, they were lying! They never had eaten to their full while they were back in Egypt. They were in bondage. They decided, however, that the Egyptian food was better than heavenly food. How we should fall before our gracious God, and praise His holy Name if it is otherwise with us. If we are blessed to see that this manna is rich food indeed to our souls may He receive the praise, the honor, and the glory.

Another case in this regard is found in II Kings 4:38-41, "And Elisha came again in Gilgal; and there was a dearth in the land; and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him: and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets. And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full, and came and shred them into the pot of pottage: for they knew them not. So they poured out for the men to eat. And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, O thou man of God, there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof. But he said, Then bring meal. And he cast it into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was no harm in the pot." Elisha had come to the sons of the prophets and requested that they set on the great pot. They were soon making a mess of pottage of some sort. One unnamed prophet went out and gathered wild gourds. These wild gourds were shredded up so they wouldn't be noticeable, and he poured them into the pot. When they begin to eat they cried out to Elisha and said, "There is death in the pot". Somebody had added poison food. Even so today much that passes for the gospel is polluted with wild

gourds of free will, works, Arminianism, and other Babylonian foods; wild gourds, if you will. It is beautiful to see however, that the remedy for the bad food, is found in the meal. The meal which Elisha brought and poured into the pot that they may eat and have no harm, is a beautiful picture of Christ, the Bread of Life.

Next, in Genesis 2:15, "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying," (this is the first commandment given by God to the human race.) "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat." At our beginning we stated that our theme was eating. Can you begin now to see this a little clearer? In each instance we have brought from the Bible it has regarded eating in some manner or another. Does it now appear more like something of importance? "Of every tree in the garden thou mayest freely eat." God has here licensed man to partake of every tree in the garden and use it to eat from. It is interesting to observe now this is the very first act of permission God gives man. That of eating. But now we come to the very first prohibition in the Bible. "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it." The first thing God tells man that he cannot do is eat of this one particular tree. Again we would point out the importance attached to this subject. "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The first warning in the Bible was that to eat of the forbidden fruit would bring the calamity of death upon them. In the same day that they were to eat they were to die. There are a number of firsts in the Bible, and it is interesting to observe them. May the Lord bless us in the seeing of these things.

Now in Genesis chapter 3 we find the introduction of the serpent, Lucifer, the old dragon called Satan. "Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat.....?" The very first question in the Bible concerns eating. Is that interesting to you? Does it mean anything to you? The first question was, "Hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" This, incidently, is the devils first work recorded in the Bible. He asked a question, planted a seed, and introduced doubt concerning the subject of Adam and Eve eating of the tree.

We have here, too, the very first words of the human race. The very first. "And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat." Is that worth observing? The first statement is "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden God hath said ye shall not eat of it. Neither shall ye touch it lest ye die." And let it be noted that here Eve misquoted God. God did not say, "Neither shall ye touch it." That was her speaking. "And the serpent said unto the woman, ye shall not surely die. For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof that your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." This was the first lie ever recorded in the Bible. The father of lies, Satan, lied to Eve to destroy the human race, but God in His mercy over-ruled.

Now this next verse gives us the first sin recorded in the Bible. And what was the first sin? Was it murder? Was it stealing? Was it idolatry? Was it eating? No, it was none of these; it was the thought to eat. Concupisence! Evil thought! But what was the evil thought about? When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, then it was pleasant to her eyes and a tree to be desired to make one wise. It was when she saw it. John speaks of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. (I John 2:16) In the sin in the garden we find all these lusts present. The lust of the flesh; the craving after forbidden fruit. The lust of the eyes; she saw that it

was good; and the pride of life; the desired result - we shall be as gods. She took of the fruit thereof and did eat. Also note the first action recorded in the Bible by the human race is taking forbidden fruit and eating it. Now we have named a number of firsts, so far and they all have dealt with the subject of eating. Have we overstepped the bounds of the Bible to write about this subject? We think not. "She took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." (Gen. 3:6) The very first gift recorded in the Bible is the gift of forbidden fruit from Eve to Adam, and he ate. We might point out to you the word eat is found 15 times in this one chapter, and the word eaten is found two times, making a total of 17 times that it is recorded in the 3rd chapter of Genesis alone.

"And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:" (Gen. 3:14) This is the first recorded curse in the Bible. What is the penalty in the first curse? The serpent must eat of the dust the remainder of his life. In the very first curse of the Bible, God pronounced a curse of eating dust.

"And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hath eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: Cursed is the ground for thy sake: in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life:" (Gen. 3:17) The first curse placed upon the human race was that of eating in sorrow. "Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee: and thou shalt eat the herb of the field: In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,....." (Gen. 3:18)

Sufficient has been said to establish the fact that the subject of eating in its proper prospective plays an important part in the early recording of the word of God. Now, what does all this mean to us? Satan introduced sin originally in the garden, and the fall of man resulted. In every state of activity the subject, eating, is involved.

The first sin, that of eating the forbidden fruit, was in violation of God's plain command. And since that time man is described thus: "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Every breath we take in sinful. Every deed we perform is sinful. Our very being is emnity and sin against our God. Our human make-up is one mass of sin. Our old nature craves after every forbidden fruit, and seeks to take of the tree of knowledge of good and evil whenever it may. One may ask, "What is forbidden?" Put simply, everything outside of Christ's imparted righteousness is as forbidden fruit. Anything not cleansed by the blood of our Redeemer Jesus Christ is forbidden fruit.

Now on a more positive note, in turning to the things more edifying, let us consider the following occasion. "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." (John 6:26) Here there are two foods described, one a meat which perisheth, the other a meat which endureth unto everlasting life. Eating of one bringeth life. Eating of the other endeth in death. When our Saviour was speaking to Peter in the Gospel of John, chapter 2, verses 15-17, two times He says, "Feed my sheep." Once He says, "Feed my lambs." How comforting it is to know that in the final hours our Lord was with His disciples, He would remind them their chief duty. Their chief mission was to see that the sheep were fed, and that the lambs had sufficient to eat. (Gospel food.)

The Apostle Paul in speaking to the elders at the church of Ephesus had the following to say to them, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased

with his own blood." (Acts 20:28) How comforting again it is to see that the Apostle, like his Lord before, was mindful that the church be sufficiently and properly fed after his departure. (Again, gospel food.)

But we come to the matter then, what is appropriate food for the family of God? Going back again to the book of Exodus 16:14, "And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground." They went out daily and gathered it. What was it? It was manna. Our Saviour described this manna in John 6:48-49, "I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead." God sent down in a miraculous was food for them and provided them for the 40 yrs. they wandered in the wilderness; ***day after day, provision was made for them, and they never so much as had to offer a prayer or lift a finger to receive it, and God never failed them.*** They had sufficient to eat. Notice, too, where the manna fell. It was only among the Israelites. No one but Israelites were allowed to eat this food. Not a drop of manna fell back in Egypt. None fell in Canaan. It only fell where the people of God were gathered together. This speaks of how God sends His children bread in gospel form today. It doesn't fall yonder somewhere among the goats. It doesn't fall among the heathen. It falls, rather, where His children have been gathered by the Holy Spirit.

"Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: and they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread: and with bitter herbs shall they eat it." (Exodus 12:5, 8) In a figure we find the lamb as food for the whole house of Israel. However, they must eat it with bitter herbs, showing that in much tribulation we must enter the Kingdom.

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and break it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body." (Matt. 26:26) The Lord's final hours before His death were taken up with preparing His disciples to come before that table of remembrance and eat those emblems of His body and blood. Even so in the church today we still have His table spread and we hear His lovely voice saying to us, "Come and dine".

"As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." (John 6:57) It should be in our minds a simple thing to observe that if anyone is not eating of their Saviour and worshipping Him as Lord then their god is their belly. Our Saviour is at the right hand of the Throne on high, and we eat and drink of Him spiritually, and partake of His nature by virtue of the Holy Spirit of God infusing in us life, bringing glory and light and immortality. "Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst for they shall be filled". And on what shall they be filled? The bread of life. The blood of life. Is it any wonder then that David could say, "Oh taste and see that the Lord is good;" (Psalm 34:8). Or that Peter joins in David's theme by saying, "If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." (I Peter 2:3)

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." (Rev. 22:1, 2) In this closing scene of the Bible we are brought back to the tree of life. We may freely eat, for our Jesus has taken away the curse. Eating with Adam under that terrible curse was in bitterness and sorrow. But now, in this heavenly scene, all tears are wiped away, and eternal bliss awaits those

being brought by grace to the ever-yielding tree of life. We may freely eat and live, and live in Him. Oh, brethren, it is good that God has provided us natural food, and when we gather with God's people or set by ourselves and eat, may we be thankful that He has given us our daily bread. But ever keep in mind the word of God, where it says, "Man shall not live by bread alone." It is not life simply to eat and to live. Life is to eat of the Lamb of God and to live in Him. Life is to have the Spirit of God reveal unto us His glories as we see Him here in the Tree of Life. We may eat and partake of everlasting joy and happiness, that was, for all appearance, gone forever by the act of Adam and Eve in the garden. But where sin abounded grace does much more abound. That is the gospel story. Sin reared its head in the beginning when our first parents took of the forbidden fruit and ate. But God has provided a table for His chosen ones and brings them into His banqueting house. This is no slaughter house, nor judgment house, nor jail house. But He brings his bride into a banqueting house, and there spread above the table is the banner of love. God's love to His people provided a food that overcame the curse.

How sobering to think, then, that but for free grace we would be with those whose god is their belly. Their end is destruction, their god is their belly and they glory in their shame. In other words they are happy in sin, and they mind earthly things. We fear being identified with those whose god is their belly. They love the things we hate. They hate the things we love. This earth is their life. They expect to live off it and eat from it. We know we cannot live by bread alone, and how we long more and more to taste the graciousness of our dear Redeemer as our Bread of Life because we cannot mind these earthly things any more. They cannot hold us in bondage as they once did. The longer we go along, the more we are drawn away from them, and we more and more mind heavenly things. Our citizenship is in heaven. We need not fear belonging to that category of people Paul says has a belly for a god. When we, like the Prodigal, have spent all, and wasted our substance in riotous living, and have been sent out to feed swine, we will soon discover that we cannot eat of the husks. Soon the Father's house will be our desire. We are going home. Home to the robe of righteousness; home to the ring of love; and home to the gospel shoes that our feet will be shod with. But most of all we are going home to partake of the fatted calf which our Heavenly Father has provided for us. (Luke 15:22, 23) Let the world say, "Eat, drink, be merry". They have their portion in this life, but ours is in the world to come. Amen.

(Elder) James F. Poole

Danville, Arkansas

Dear Editors;

My subscription is over-due for the ***Signs.*** Enclosed is a check for two years, and your may use the extra where it is needed.

I thank you for sending the ***Signs*** to my home. I enjoy reading the sermons, experiences, and Voices of the Past. In the August issue "Fatalism and Predestination" by Elder F. A. Chick was good. He explained it so well. Also, "The Common Salvation" by Elder H. H. Lefferts was good, too.

So many of our loved ones have passed on. In our Church at Rehobeth, ElDorado, Ark., we have lost two sisters and one brother in the last few months, but we feel it is their eternal gain.

In hope,
Jane Carroll

Dear Editors,

I am enclosing a check for another year's subscription for the ***Signs of the Times,*** the remainder to be used as needed.

I thoroughly enjoy every article that is written, but especially the one published in the January, 1979, ***Signs*** written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe on the Absolute Predestination of all things. The more I read it the more I believe it to be the absolute truth.

May God bless the editors and writers to continue sending the good news through the dear old periodical.

A sister in Christ, I hope,
Mrs. Lester Haning
So. Charleston, W. Va. 25303

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

TIME SALVATION

BELOVED:—The Old Baptist people have long been troubled with the confusing doctrines of "means of salvation," "means of grace," and such like; but not until the present young generation rose up, who assume to be wise above all the fathers, has the confusing and uncertain sound of "conditional time salvation" been trumpeted forth in almost all the camps of Israel. The last ten years this strange and startling blast of trumpets has echoed and reechoed with exciting and bewildering effect, and great has been the widespread confusion and division, where peace and good will prevailed before. This dividing of salvation, and subdividing it into fragments and parts, partly eternal salvation, and partly time salvation, (as the teachers of this yea and nay gospel call it,) they boastingly claim, is "rightly dividing the word." It certainly has a dividing quality, for it has scattered the flock. Yea, it has brought bitter strife and alienation into the rank and file of the conditional Baptists themselves. Thus has God confounded their language, and they cannot understand one another. And, as did the confused Midianites, they are now falling upon one another in deadly strife. But the remnant according to the election of grace, the little band with their spiritual Gideon, break their earthen pitchers that the light may shine out, and shout, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." By this they conquer, for the Lord fights for them and gives them the victory.

Let us now consider salvation in the light of the Lord as revealed in the word. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." "Salvation" is a Bible term, and it runs all through the divine book, being used very many times, yet it is always the one single, simple word, never plural, complex or compounded. "Salvation." The plural word, "salvations," is not in the holy Bible. This term, "salvations," so common and popular now, belongs to the literature of a yea and nay gospel, but it is not in the gospel of Christ. This late word, "salvations," is incomplete without another word, "conditional," joined to it. For the recent salvations, so much talked of, which depend upon creature obedience, are necessarily conditional. Any conditional salvation is necessarily of works, and entitled to a reward, therefore all conditional salvation is legal, yea and nay, and most uncertain. There is no grace at all in any conditional salvation, because the grace of God is free, unconditional, never sold and never bought. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." "And if by grace, then is it no more of works." All conditional salvation calls for works to obtain it, for something must be done. So grace is entirely excluded from the yea and nay doctrine of conditional salvations. The teachers of conditional salvation have not yet presumed to say the grace of God is conditional, and so all conditionalism is a denial of salvation by grace.

Conditional Baptists, however, seem to think that they take away the objectionable feature of Arminianism or

conditional salvation, by confining it to time, and so they qualify this legal doctrine of salvation by works by inserting the word "time" between the two words, conditional salvation, and make it read, "Conditional time salvation;" that is to say, salvation in time is conditional. If so, then salvation in time is not by grace, nor of the Lord.

Now it behooves us to know what salvation is, when it is, and who it is to. Salvation is redemption, deliverance; it is always in time, and it is always to the lost. No one who is not lost can be saved. The one who knows what to do, and can do it, is not lost. So doing conditions is not salvation at all, but merely working for a reward. We never go to salvation, because salvation is righteousness and justification, and we are sinful; but salvation must and does always come to us as lost. Salvation has no meaning to the one who is not lost, but claims ability to do and obtain the desired good. It is hypocritical to call that which is within our own power salvation. So long as Peter stood on the water, he did not pray, "Lord save me." Such a cry would have been false then; but when he had no power left, then the prayer was one of need, and salvation came to him.

When is salvation? Does it take place in eternity? or in time? It is important that we understand when salvation is. While the Bible clearly shows that God's purpose to save his chosen and predestinated people in Christ is eternal, the divine testimony is abundant and clear, that all the work of their full and glorious salvation unto holiness and a blissful immortality is begun and ended in time. This triple work of the Father, Son and Spirit, three in One, consists in redemption, regeneration and resurrection. The resurrection of all the redeemed and heaven-born people of God shall take place at the last day of time. And so Christ said of all the church, that the Father's will is that "I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." And of every believer in him he says, "And I will raise him up at the last day." The last day is a part of time. The resurrection of all the dead, who sleep in Christ, is the completion and crowning glory of their salvation. This is in time. Redemption from the law of sin and death, by the death of the Son of God, is in time. So is salvation by his risen life in time. Paul says, "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." This salvation by his life includes being born again, and passing from death unto life. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." All this is wrought in time. Paul therefore says, "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." That is, until the full revelation of Christ in you in his resurrection, power and glory. Until that glorious day, God will perform the good work of salvation in you. O this is assuring and blessed, my beloved! In this faith Paul said, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." This is the full glory of our ascended Lord Jesus Christ. God, who exalted him at his own right hand of power, will perform his blessed work of salvation in us until the redemption of the purchased possession. "Then we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

All the work of salvation is fulfilled in time. But the adjective, the long and dangerous handle, "conditional," is not found in the Bible as belonging to our time salvation. But this is true: "Salvation is of the Lord," and salvation is in time. All the redeemed of the Lord shall be saved in time. "Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord!"

All legal teachers, who strive to burden the salvation of the Lord's poeple with conditions, are putting a yoke upon their necks which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear, but which is a curse and snare to the people, and a reproach upon salvation. But when they think that they have improved upon Arminian conditional salvation by inserting the word "time" in it, they are deceiving and being deceived, for this is the day of salvation. "(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)" So any one who is not saved in time has no salvation. Therefore, the modern term, "conditional time salvation," means no more nor less than conditional salvation. To prove this, they must first prove that Jesus is a conditional Savior. This they dare not attempt to do. Salvation is of the Lord and in Christ. Yea, he himself is Salvation. "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation." "Neither is there salvation in any other." Then there is no salvation in conditions nor in man. "For by grace are ye saved: * * * not of works." "Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation. * * * My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence; I shall not be moved. In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God." David here personified the man Christ and every member of Christ. As this was true of David and Christ under the law, is it not equally true of us under the gospel of grace? Since God only was the rock and salvation of his people under the old covenant, which was conditional, is he any the less their only rock and salvation under the new covenant in Christ Jesus, which is free from all conditions?

The Lord said, "For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." This is a perfect description of conditional salvation; for it can hold no water of salvation.

But blessed be the Lord of salvation, Jesus saves his people from their sins, gives them the water of life, and says, "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." This is all my salvation and all my desire.

And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

(Elder) D. Bartley

April 1, 1905

OBITUARIES

MISS SALLIE BUNN

Sister Sallie Bunn was born January 20, 1897, and died September 5, 1978, making her stay here 81 years, four months, and 13 days. I feel she fell asleep to wake with Jesus. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Sandy Grove, Nash County, North Carolina, June 2, 1927.

She was faithful to her church during this time. She never married, but as Paul said, "He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord and how to please the Lord."

Before she passed away, she said she was ready and wanted to go to dwell with the Lord.

There are many relatives and loved ones left to miss her, but I would say as the hymn writer said, "Grieve not for she would say, my soul would leave this heavy clay at that transporting word, run up with joy the shining way, to embrace my dearest Lord." Written by request,

Sister Rachel (Murray) Wiggs, Clerk

By Request

I, the sister of the deceased, Sallie Bunn, want to add these words, which are a part of

her experience.

After I was married in 1934, Sallie lived alone until her death. Being fearful and lonely at first, these words were given as a promise, Job 5:23: "For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field; and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee."

It was shown to her that these words meant that no one would harm her in any way, and with that promise, knowing that God is faithful to His promise, she lived at ease the remainder of her life.

She did not live a rich life in temporal things, but was content to live simply. She read her Bible and books pertaining to the Scriptures, and going to hear preaching were her chief joy.

She died of cancer of the colon, but did not suffer intense pain. The Lord supplied her every need her entire life.

Bruce (Bunn) Coleman

Sims, N.C.

SISTER BETTY HOWARD

It is with a feeling of much unworthiness that I attempt to comply with the church's request at Northeast to write the Obituary of a dear one in Israel, Sister Betty May Howard who was born September 2, 1900 and departed this life September 2, 1978, making her stay on this earth 78 years.

She was married to Rufus Howard, November 20, 1918; to this union was born four children, one daughter Mrs. Marjorine Nelmes, three sons, Leland, William, and Elbert.

She is survived by her husband and their 4 children, 2 brothers, 1 sister, 9 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild.

Sister Betty was a member of Northeast Church for over 40 years. She was a faithful and devoted member to her church as long as her health would permit her to attend.

We the church feel that our loss is her eternal gain although we have to be submissive to our Heavenly Father's will. Blessed be the Lord that giveth life and blessed be Him that taketh for He does all things according to His will in His own good time. We feel that He called this sister from this world to be with Him and be forever satisfied.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, the Elder J. T. Prescott. She was laid to rest in Jacksonville Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

Written by Lewis Sammons, Clerk
Elder J. T. Prescott, Moderator

OBITUARY OF SISTER EDNA AMBROSE

Whereas it has pleased our Heavenly Father in His infinite wisdom and love to remove from our midst our dearly beloved and highly esteemed Sister Edna Ambrose.

The subject of this notice was born February 20, 1914, and departed this life July 14, 1978, making her stay on this earth sixty-four years, four months, and twenty four days.

At the age of thirteen she was married to Phillip Ambrose. They lived together over fifty years, and into this union was born six children, all living except one who preceded her to the grave by several years. Sister Edna was a devoted wife and a fine mother.

Sister Edna had a wonderful experience of Grace that manifested the work of God in her heart. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Concord on the fourth Sunday in August, 1940, and remained a true and faithful member until her death. She was loved by all who knew her.

Later, she was given a mind to write her experience for publication and sent it to Zion's Landmark. It was so rich and full of grace and love that Elder T. F. Adams chose it to print in the book of his autobiography.

Her funeral was conducted on Sunday, July 16, at Walker Funeral Home in Columbia, N.C. by her pastor, Elder N. L. Ambrose, assisted by David Sykes. Her body rests in Azalea Gardens Cemetery.

Therefore, be it resolved that a copy of this obituary be spread on our Church records, a copy sent to her family, and one to the ***Signs of the Times,*** and Zion's Landmark for publication.

This was written by one who loved her very much, Elder N. L. Ambrose.

This was done by order of the Church at Concord in conference on the fourth Sunday in January, 1979.

Elder N. L. Ambrose, Mod.
Sudie A. Ambrose, C.C.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 8/79 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

IN JESUS IS ETERNAL LIFE

My Saviour is the Treasure,
Which I have found at last.
And now that I have found Him,
I want to hold Him fast.
For He is far more precious
Than anything I know;
And with me He is walking,
As on this earth I go.

His love, His grace, and mercy,
By money is not bought.
It only comes from heaven
And by Him it is wrought.
His mercy is forever,
For every soul he chose.
His love and grace eternal,
To His now freely flows.

How very sweet the knowledge,
That my Redeemer lives;
And from the Throne in Heaven
Eternal life He gives.
He died but now He's living
Within my humble heart:
The precious peace He gives me,
None other can impart.

In Him I know there's nothing
Unholy or impure:
In Him there is perfection,
And in Him I'm secure.
He took away the sorrow,
My lonely heart had known,
And gave me grace and beauty
Which comes from Him alone.

In Him there is compassion,
For sinners such as I:
And though I've naught to offer,
On Him I can rely.
I know I am a sinner,
But by His grace I'm saved;
Upon His hands so precious
My soul is now engraved.

The nail prints are eternal,
And they are there for me:
And when I get to Heaven
The nail prints I will see.
I'll sing and shout His praises,
With others gone before:
I'll glorify my Saviour
On Heaven's happy shore.

Ethel Gilland

GENESIS 2:16-17

"And the Lord commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth and everything therein. He spake it into existance by the word of his power. "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." (Gen. 1:31). And he said, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." (Isa. 46:8-11). "For of him, and thru him and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen." (Rom. 11:30). "Thou are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." (Rev. 4:11).

This is the God in whom I hope I trust; the one who hath loved me with an everlasting love, and hath taught me thru the Holy Ghost all things that I may know of him; if indeed I know anything. And if I do know anything, I am sure that it was not taught me by the wisdom of man; for it is the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: which none of the princes of this world knew: for if they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." (I Cor. 2:7-9).

God has at least one purpose for everything in the world; and they show forth his glory and praise him, and are for his pleasure; even the wrath of man praises him and the remainder he restrains. (Ps. 76:10). By this we know that God is the first cause of all causes; but that does not remove the second causes. When God formed man from the dust of the ground, he was a creature made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope. (Rom. 8:20). For one to be subject to anyone or anything, one must of necessity be under the power or authority of someone or something. If Adam, the creature, could have successfully resisted vanity, it could not be said that he was ever under its power; but we know he fell and all his posterity with him. Some will say, "Since He has made us subject to vanity, why doth he yet find fault? for we have not resisted His will." Paul answers, "Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay; of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another to dishonor?" (Rom. 9:20-21). In other words, does He not have the right to do with His

own as it pleases Him? Who would deny Him this right?

Adam ate of the forbidden fruit willingly, and therefore trangressed the only law God had given. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." (I John 3:4). "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. 5:12). By this we see the entering of sin into the world, and it was by man. As I said before, God has a purpose in all things, even sin and the devil. If God had no purpose of sin or the devil, surely he would not have created the devil, and surely He had the power to keep sin out. If He did not have such power to keep sin out of the world, then how can He keep it out of heaven? But God overrules sin to the good of His children. A good example of this was the selling of Joseph by his brothers into Egypt. "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." (Gen. 50:20).

"For in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Although the Arminian says that Adam had a choice of eating or not eating, God did not say, if thou eatest, but, in the day thou eatest: for God knew that He would; else God did not know and was ignorant of something that would come to pass. (I shudder at the thought.) And, the Arminian says, Adam did not die in that day; but, as I heard one say, he was only made very sick. In so saying, they declare God a liar. But it is impossible for God to lie, (Heb. 6:8), therefore they died in that selfsame day. No, they did not die a corporal death; but a spiritual death. Death means to be separated from; therefore they were separated or cut off spiritually from their creator and driven from the garden of Eden.

Had Adam never sinned he would yet be in the garden of Eden; because it is sin that brings forth death, (Jas. 1:15), and he still would not be a fit subject for heaven and immortal glory; for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. (I Cor. 15:50). And Jesus said, "Verily, verily I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (John 12:24). Therefore I conclude that it was necessary for Adam to die; that the world might be populated, and that he might be born again.

Brethern, there is no end to this great text, but I feel to stop here. "Knowing this first, that no prophesy of the scriptures is of any private interpretation," (II Peter 1:20), and knowing the weakness of my flesh, I cannot declare with any certainty, as have some, that this writing is in perfect harmony with the holy scriptures; but I would exhort each and every one of you to search the scriptures to see if these things be so; and may God grant you wisdom and knowledge to discern between truth and error, and also rightly divide the word of truth.

Clifford Wilbanks
217 Bastrop Drive
Monroe, La. 71203

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702 Ranier Drive
Longview, Texas

Dear Editors,

I must tell you that I enjoy the *Signs* every month more than words can express. I hope and trust that you will be blessed of the Lord to keep the good news coming my way.

Many of the good writings are worth more than the price of the paper. Some are so uplifting.

I trust this will be another year filled with such good reading as has been in the years gone by. I am renewing my subscription for two years. Use the rest as you see fit.

In His Name,
Mrs. G. W. McDuff

Eden, N.C.

Dear Elder Poole and Family,

As I write to you this morning I am deeply grateful for my brethren, sisters, and friends. It is when God slows us down that we meditate on the sweeter things of life.

As I awakened today to a calm and peaceful morning, my thoughts went back to 11 P.M. last evening when a thunderstorm was raging. I was made thankful for the mercy He has shown this sinner through the years of my life. I felt blessed to be brought through the night, to see the light after such a darkened night. It is like the storm of our life - dark - until God sheds light to our sin-sick souls and our hope is revived.

I've never had a smooth way with words, but if I know my heart, I love the brethren.

We have had some precious meetings since we last saw you. Elder Spangler has been preaching on the Resurrection. So thankful are we to have such able ministers with a gift only God can give.

Again I would like to say that I am thankful for all the telephone calls, cards, and acts of kindness shown me during my recuperation from a broken foot. Come to see us when you have a mind to; you are always welcome.

May God's richest blessings be upon you and your family.

A sister in Hope,
Bea French

Elgin, Oregon, Jan. 18, 1905

Elder F. A. Chick — Dear Brother: — I have always believed that it would be in harmony with the teachings of Christ and the apostles, and with their practice, for a minister who should be traveling and preaching where there was no church organization, should he meet with any who could give a reason of their hope in Christ, and who desired to be baptized, that that minister should baptize them. And should a minister receive a letter from those who live far from any church, who desire him to visit them and preach for them, and such ones wish to be baptized, and he deems them worthy, it would be right for him to baptize them. Now am I right in my view? Again, would it be in harmony with the teaching of the Scriptures and the practice of the apostles, and of those who labored with them, for a minister who in his travels should find persons so situated, and who desire to be baptized, to advise them to wait until they could go before the church; and if there was no opportunity for them to do that, then the ordinance was not required of them, as the ordinance belonged to the church, and could not be performed outside of a church organization?

Again, would the baptism performed under the condition which I have named, by a minister where there is no church, be valid, or would such persons, should opportunity be given afterward to unite with some church, be required to be rebaptized?

Now, Brother Chick, I would be glad to have your views upon these questions, for if I am wrong in my position I want to know it. There are others who would like to see your views on this subject. In this country churches are few and far apart, and the ministers often find one here and there, far from any church organization, who knows and loves the truth; and sometimes our ministers receive letters from such isolated ones, desiring that they visit them and baptize them. Now, I am anxious to know whether it would be good order, or not, to do so.

Please publish what I have written, and reply if you think it best.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. Mayfield

REPLY TO BROTHER MAYFIELD

As we grow older, we come to realize more and more the need of carefulness in responding to requests for our views upon the order that ought to prevail among the churches; it is so easy to say

too much or too little.

Speaking generally, our understanding of the matter is in harmony with that of our brother. We believe that a minister under the circumstances named has a right, and that it is his duty also to baptize such as give evidence that they know the Lord, when they come to him desiring it under the circumstances named. If he meets them in his traveling and preaching, or if he receives a letter from some one to the same effect, in either case it is his right and duty to respond. It would not be right to say to them that they should wait until they could come into the bounds of some organized church, when no prospect of such a thing was in sight, and neither is it true that the Lord does not require this at their hands, unless there should be some church organization to receive them. Still further, such an one when coming to live in the bounds of some church should not be required to be baptized again.

Having said this much, we desire to add some reflections to the above, in the way of caution. First, it is to be supposed that when a church has called for the ordination of a man to the work of the ministry, and when that church bids him Godspeed, as he goes about his labors in that ministry, she has confidence in his experience, in his call to the work, and in his judgment to act wisely, to some extent at least. If such a minister goes about his Master's business it will be with humility, carefulness and an anxious desire to honor God, and for the good of the cause. It is not likely that such a man (and none others ought to be set apart to this work) will be found admitting to the ordinance of baptism any who would not also be acceptable to the church. We know members in the churches whose judgment we would be willing to abide by in all such cases, and the churches everywhere no doubt feel willing to abide by the judgment of their pastors, if indeed their pastors are truly pastors.

But on the other hand, it should be borne in mind that ministers thus alone, and thrown on their own responsibility in such a case, should be exceeding careful, and be fully satisfied that the candidate is a fit subject for the ordinance, and that he or she would be likely to prove a faithful member of some church, if that should ever be their privilege. We think that when it is possible, in all such cases, some of the members of some church should accompany the minister and hear the testimony of the candidate. It seems to us that in this no hard and fast rule can be laid down, however, each one ought to move forward carefully, and in the fear of God. We have known instances in this part of the land where the churches have appointed some one or more of their members to accompany the minister and act for the church in hearing the confession of the candidate, and if satisfied, they were authorized to receive the candidate in behalf of the church; and when they reported the baptism of such distant ones to the church, the church at once had their names entered upon the church book as members with them. In the circumstances named by Brother Mayfield, it is our judgment that the minister should give a statement in writing to the candidate, telling the circumstances under which the baptism was performed, so that the candidate might be received anywhere among the churches, if in Providence it was his privilege to visit them afterward. We also think that the minister ought to report what he had done, to his own church, and that his church could cause the name of the person baptized to be entered upon their church book as a member with them; we could see nothing out of order in such a course. In such a case the one thus baptized would be assured of having a home, and of being held in remembrance by brethren where his name might be.

So far as the teaching of the

Scriptures of the New Testament are concerned, (and to this we must all be subject) we do not recall any instance where any person is recorded as having narrated an experience to the church before baptism was administered, and we do have instances recorded where evangelists baptized believers alone. Witness the instance of Philip and the eunuch. Confession of faith was made in all instances, but we do not in any instance read that it was done in a formal manner before the church. We do not mean by this to say that this is not now right and wise, and that it ought not to be continued. We do think that it is wise and conducive to good feeling and order, and to that oneness in fellowship, without which church membership is but a mockery and a mere form. They that gladly received the word were at the first baptized at Jerusalem, and all such have a right to baptism now.

We wish to also say that where those desiring baptism can possibly come to some church and there tell of the dealings of God with them, it is always best. It comforts the church to hear such testimony, and it will comfort the candidate to find that the Lord's dear children cordially receive him to their number. One who was received at one of the churches which we were serving many years ago, as the brethren and sisters came to her afterwards and gave her such cordial welcome, turned to ourself, as we were standing near at hand, and said, as though she could hardly believe it, "O how cordially they all receive me, don't they?" In all such cases pastors will desire that the church shall rejoice with them, and churches will rejoice also in the joy of the candidate, and in the gladness which is felt by their pastor. For these, and for other reasons, it seems to us best that candidates should come to some gospel church for the narration of experience, and for reception, when it is at all possible; but still, when not possible, we are in agreement with Brother Mayfield.

Elder F. A. Chick

Roanoke, Va.

My dear Brother Donald,

I see my subscription is running out. I am sending a check to renew it. Do as you think best with the rest.

Sometimes I feel I do not belong with these precious people - that I am pretending. But I hope by faith I keep pushing on. (Hebrews 11) By faith I want this paper in my home. By faith I hope I love the beautiful fellowship these people have one with another. By faith we assemble ourselves together to hear the Word preached. By faith we love the brethren. How beautiful this faith is when felt.

By faith I hope you and the brethren who work with you will be given strength to carry on. By faith I hope I love my brethren one and all. Come again to see us.

Mrs. D. A. Law

February 6, 1979

Dear Elder Spangler,

It has been on my mind to write you a few lines. First, I will ask if you are feeling better? I truly hope you are.

Now in regards to your remarks about the Lamb. I have read and reread what you said about it. I also heard the tape recording you sent to Brother Wylie W. Fulton and I am very much impressed with what you said. These are some of the things that I have been looking for for over 50 years, I hope. I have read and reread over and over again many quotations about the Lamb, and I will say that it is the truth all of the way, and I am glad that there are some left who are not afraid to tell the truth. I know that there is a lot of "bars" of non-fellowship set up all about, but we are a little church with no bars against the truth.

I am going to close for now.

A brother in Christ, I hope,
(Elder) Clyde Caudle
Huntersville, N.C. 20878

P.S. Please excuse the mistakes. I am enclosing a copy of some of the things I have written about.

BARS OF NON-FELLOWSHIP

What is this and what is it for? Is it for people, or what? Does it mean to put up a fence to keep something out or in? What is the bars of non-fellowship against, or for? Where in the Bible do you find room to put up bars of non-fellowship? Are they children of God or the children of wrath? If they are children of God, then who are we to put up bars of non-fellowship against one another? "There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female. For ye are all one in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3:28) This being true, then where is the room for non-fellowship? "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3:29) "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ". (Gal. 4:7) "That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel." (Eph. 3:7) That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." (Titus 3:7) Then how can bars of non-fellowship be put up against heirs of promise? "For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be a firstborn among many brethren." (Rom. 8:29) Are there any room in this for bars of non-fellowship? If we be conformed to the image of His Son, then who is supposed to put bars of non-fellowship up, and for what? Love worketh no ill to his neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfilling of the Law. So then, if this is so, and if we love one another as we ought, then where is there any room for bars of non-fellowship?

Written by Elder Clyde Caudle

SCRAPS FROM LIVING WITNESSES

What does a man know of the Spirit's help, who never felt he could not help himself? What does he know of Christ's righteousness, if he has not felt he has none of his own? What can he know of eternal happiness, if he never had forebodings of eternal misery? There is no man so afraid of being deceived as a spiritual man. He is jealous of being deceived with fair show, fair words, and fine speeches; and, above all, he is afraid of being deceived with his own heart. He does not receive doctrines at random, but goes on very jealously, and will assent to no truth but what does him good. He tries all by the word of God and his own necessities. The child of God begins at the bottom, and goes up hill, judging as he goes on; and when he gets to the top, being taught the doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ in his soul, and feeling his own awful depravity and absolute dependence upon the Lord, he stands firm in the knowledge of the truth; while those who began at the top have tumbled head over heels, and are again rolling in the filth of the flesh, as they were before they made a profession of religion.

Standing in union to Christ, his whole family were alike objects of redemption, and every spiritual blessing they enjoy is the result of his everlasting love. Every particle of spiritual obedience that God required of his people was performed by Christ; therefore, he is called, "The Lord our righteousness". The law requires of us, as creatures, that we shall love the Lord with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves; and this requirement Christ has fulfilled, for he says, "Thy law was in my heart". Indeed, whatever the law requires was perfected by Christ, on behalf of his family, practically and passively.

The Scriptures have always a character in view, and when they speak to one, they speak to all in a like state; and as the sure mercies of David are promised to those who are made spiritually to cry for mercy, let me ask, how many of you are here? For however high or great may be your profession,

your religion is worth nothing, if you have not been made to groan and cry under a sense of your sins and vileness, in heart, lip, and life. According to apprehension and comprehension, if a poor child of God wants to find the greatest sinner in existence, he must look at home, for he cannot find a greater than himself. If God give us a martyr's faith, we can meet a martyr's fate, as cheerfully as those who have gone before. Whoever the gospel suits, there is an adaptation suited for its reception. Therefore, where there is a wounded conscience, there is the balm of Gilead to heal it. Until the law has entered into the heart of a sinner, making him cry out, "What must I do to be saved?" it is impossible for him to enjoy real gospel liberty. Today we may be with one groaning, and sighing, and nearly broken down under the weight of sin, and tomorrow God has broken into his heart, and shows him his glorious standing, his perfection in Christ; and here both law and gospel are glorified, God honoured, and the sinner justified.

November 29, 1835 J.H.

(From "The Gospel Standard")

3625 D Stancrest Dr.
Glendale, CA 91208
February 5, 1979

Dear Elder and Sister Spangler,

As I contemplate writing this--long overdue letter, I am overwhelmed with so many beautiful memories and experiences of my trip to Virginia that I hardly know where to begin.

I do know that it was certainly a joy and a privilege to meet you and Sister Spangler, in person, for the first time. I am so thankful for that day on July 5th, 1978 when you two came to the Airport in Greensboro, N.C, to meet Sister Ruby Reldtman, Sister Marguerite Simpson and myself, and so graciously drove us to your home in Danville, Virginia. We were delighted with your Colonial type home which proved to be a lovely example of the lifestyle we were to become acquainted with during our visit--also when we learned of all the arrangements the beloved church members and friends had planned for our stay. Words cannot express my gratitude and I'm sure I can speak for Sister Ruby and Sister Marguerite, all of the homes and loving people where we visited will never be forgotten. Such hospitality and Christian fellowship made us feel so welcome.

Now, in regard to the Associations--I recall mentioning to you that I had not had the privilege of attending Associations. For years I had read announcements and circular letters from the different Associations published in ***The Signs of the Times.*** How my heart longed to be able to attend these meetings. Here, I wish to relate that I firmly believe that my Heavenly Father led me, in a way I knew not, which resulted in my being able to attend the Staunton River and the Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Associations.

For this I want to give thanks to my Heavenly Father and to Sisters Ruby Feldtman and Marguerite Simpson whom I met when I visited Bethel Primitive Baptist Church in Mossyrock, Washington. They informed me that they were planning to attend a special Fiftieth Anniversary in honor of Elder D. V. Spangler and Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, constituted in the year 1884. The purpose of the occasion was "to acknowledge God's mercies in bringing both church and pastor through fifty years of united fellowship and love, and the sharing of the many joys and sorrows along the way." Dan River Church was to act as the Host Church for the Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association on July 15, 16, and 17, 1978. Sisters Ruby and Marguerite invited me to join them--thus the Lord provided the way and in loving kindness bestowed countless blessings upon us during the meetings.

As the time arrived for the

Association meetings to begin, a large number of members from corresponding churches as well as friends and visitors from various states and Canada began to assemble for the service.

How beautiful were the Lord's people as they convened, with their chairs, to a grove of evergreen trees where they seated themselves around an altar which had been placed on a large covered platform. The platform was located in the midst of tall trees reflecting many shades of green as the sun shone through. What a peaceful, restful place! This scene brought to mind Isaac Watt's Hymn--

"Lord, how delightful 'tis to see, a whole assembly worship Thee.
At once they sing, at once they pray;
They learn of Heav'n, and learn the way."

When the congregation was seated, the ministers walked onto the platform and were seated in a semicircle around the altar. As is the custom at Association meetings, the speakers are each appointed a day and a time to preach. There were a large number of ministers from Canada and different states. I was very impressed as these men approached the platform in quiet dignity and humility--trusting alone in Jesus to give them strength and utterance by the Holy Spirit. There are the Lord's servants, called and ordained of Him to preach His everlasting gospel. What a solemn and sacred place--yet a joy unspeakable!

The services began by the singing of hymns and prayer. How lovely is the singing when the heart has been tuned by the Holy Spirit to sing His praise and to exalt His Holy Name. Three hymns stand out in my memory--"Rejoice, The Lord is King," was sung in such beautiful harmony that we were lifted up and our hearts were made to rejoice in the Lord, our King!

Secondly: "Oh How Happy Are They Who Their Saviour Obey"--As I observed these precious Saints as they sang this hymn, I was made to feel that these--a portion of the Children of the Heavenly King, were walking in obedience and bearing the fruit of the Spirit--love, faith, joy and peace. What a fellowship, and what a love Divine!

Thirdly: "Father, We Rest in Thy Love." This hymn was often sung at the close of the services. How reluctant we are to leave the place where the Lord shows His smiling face--and how blessed to receive that Rest the Lord, alone, gives to those He loves. "We rest, we rest in Thy Love!"

Following the singing, prayer and supplication was made, giving thanks and beseeching the Heavenly Father, in the name of His precious Son, to bless the waiting congregation and the speakers with the presence of the Holy Spirit.

As each minister approached the altar to preach from the Word, it became evident that the Lord had heard our prayers. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." In His great mercy and redeeming love, He had prepared a table before us - a table laded with every manner of spiritual food and drink. Oh, how our hungry and thirsty souls did partake of the sumptuous feast! A feast of Holy manna brought to us from the word of God spoken from the mouth of His servants -- extolling a Sovereign God and His beloved Son Christ Jesus. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ," Eph. 1:3.

There were so many beautiful scriptures chosen for texts that I have a desire to record some of them.

I Tim. 2:5 "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

I Peter 1:6 "Whom having not seen, ye love, in whom, though now you see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

Rom. 8:1 "There is therefore no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after

the Spirit."

Eph. 2:1 "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins."

I Cor. 10:1-4 "Brethren I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that our fathers were under the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ."

John 1:1 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Ps. 33:12 "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance."

Ps. 40:7-11 "Then said I, Lo, I come: In the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: Yea, the law is within my heart. I have preached righteousness in the great congregation; lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest. I have not concealed thy loving kindness and thy truth from the great congregation."

I am thankful to my Heavenly Father for His ministers. What a privilege it was to meet so many of them while I was attending the Associations. Some of the Elders, I felt I already knew, having read (over the years) many of their comforting and edifying sermons and experiences in ***The Signs of the Times.*** What a pleasure it was to meet them face to face!

Isaac Watt's Hymn expresses my thoughts about these noble men--

"How beauteous are their feet who stand on Zion's hill;
Proclaim salvation with their tongues, and words of peace reveal!

How charming is their voice, how sweet the tidings are!
Zion, behold thy Saviour King, He reigns and triumphs here!

How happy are our ears that hear the joyful sound
Which kings and prophets waited for, and sought but never found!

"How blessed are our eyes that see this Heavenly light;
Prophets and kings desired it long but died without the sight.

The watchmen join their voice and tuneful notes employ;
Jerusalem breaks forth in song, and deserts learn the joy!

The Lord makes bare His arm through all the earth abroad:
Let every nation now behold their Saviour and their God."

Elder Spangler, I am thankful to you and your gracious wife for inviting me along with our beloved sisters Ruby Feldtman and Marguerite Simpson to be guests in your home. It was a joy to be a part of the "Year of Jubilee" celebration held in your honor, and to witness the love and high esteem manifested by the Lord's people (and fellow ministers) for you. As a tribute to you and all of the true ministers of God, I want to quote the words of the Apostle Paul in Acts 20:24, 27 and II Tim. 4:8.

"But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."

With love until we meet again, our dear Lord willing,

Ruby Gilbert

March 7, 1979
Route 9, Box 395
Paducah, Ky. 42001

Dear Editor,

I am the youngest of six sons of Effie Blagg Bowden and would like to write a little about her for the ***Signs.*** She was a subscriber of the ***Signs,*** and through her subscription I also became a reader

and a subscriber. Enclosed is my check for $10.00, $9.00 for two years subscription and $1.00 for the fund.

Effie Blagg Bowden was a member of Salider Creek Primitive Baptist Church for about 80 years. She became a member at age 10 or 12, and was passed 90 years old when she died on April 7, 1978. She had 2 or 3 light strokes and often repeated herself, but it seemed that her memories of the scriptures was unusually good. She would repeat Romans 8:2, more and more; "For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." I had this verse written on her tombstone. At first this verse didn't have much of an impact on me, but since she died and her memories seem sweeter at time goes on it begins to have a stronger meaning. I guess you could liken the letter Paul wrote to the Hebrews telling them that in Christ they had something better. That is what this verse of scripture has begun meaning to me. When we read the generations of Adam the emphasis is on death. But when we turn to Matthew's gospel and read the generations of Jesus Christ there is no mention of death, although we know that we do die in this body.

My mother was especially fond of Brother Griffin and he wanted to preach her funeral but was unable to do so.

I thank you for the many years of enjoyment that you gave to my mother through your paper. I believe that through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ she now has something far better that we could ever have in this life.

Yours truly,
Billy Blagg

ORDINATION

The second Saturday in March, 1979, North Creek Primitive Baptist Church met in conference for the purpose of ordaining Brother Reeves Smith to the full service of the ministry. Conference was opened with hymn and prayer by Elder N. L. Ambrose. Agreed Elder J. T. Prescott be chosen moderator. Agreed Brother Hassel Allen serve as clerk of this conference. Agreed on move by Elder Henry Jones that Brother Ernest Marslender and Brother A. F. Rowe be appointed spokesmen for the church.

The candidate, Brother Reeves Smith, was presented to the presbytery by Brother Marslender and Brother Rowe. Agreed there be no spokesman appointed on questioning the candidate. Agreed Elder J. T. Prescott be appointed to lead in the charges to the brother being ordained. All Elders of the presbytery were asked if they had any questions to ask the candidate. None of the Elders had any questions, but all spoke comforting words of encouragement to him and his companion. Elder J. T. Prescott gave the charges to the candidate in very comforting words and read from First Timothy, Chapter 3, Verses 1-7, and Chapter 4, 14th Verse. Agreed all ministers present take part in the laying on of the hands on the candidate being ordained. The Elders of the presbytery were Elder Henry Jones, Elder N. L. Ambrose, Elder J. T. Prescott, Elder M. E. Garner, Elder Lane Carter, Elder W. E. Everett, Elder Joseph Leggett, Elder Hale Terry, and Elder Sam Jones. After the completion of the laying on of the hands with prayer by the presbytery, Elder Smith was presented back to the church as a full Elder in the ministry. Agreed the minutes of the conference be read. Agreed the minutes stand approved after certain corrections were made. Agreed the clerk be given permission to rewrite the minutes to a legible status. Agreed to adjourn.

Elder J. T. Prescott, Moderator
Hassel Allen, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES TO MARCH, 1979

Mrs. Phyllis H. Snyder, Va.	$1.00
Ben Blalock, N.C.	1.00
Jane Carroll, AR.	1.00
Mrs. D. A. Law, Va.	1.00
Mrs. Lester Haning, W. Va.	2.00
Mrs. Sarah A. Barden, Va.	1.00
Elder Ernest Breedlove, W. Va.	1.00
Mattie Lee Hinton, N.C.	5.00

and Sunday. (September 21, 22, 23)

Bethel Church is located six miles north of El Dorado, Arkansas, one-half mile west off U.S. Highway 167.

For further information contact Clifford Wilbanks, 217 Bastrop Drive, Monroe, La. 71203.

C. C. Wilbanks, Association Clerk

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Seven Mile Association will be held, the Lord willing, at Hickory Grove meeting house, Johnston County, North Carolina. The meeting is to begin on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1979, and continue through Sunday. (September 14, 15, 16) The church is located about 7 miles east of Benson on Highway 50 near Meadow School.

We invite the Elders, brethren, sisters, and friends to meet with us.

Elder W. D. Godwin, Moderator
James G. Young, Clerk
Route 2, Dunn, N.C. 28334

THE ORIGINAL
SOUTH ARKANSAS ASSOCIATION

The original South Arkansas Association of Primitive Baptists hold their next session, the Lord willing, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, September 14, 15, 16, with Antioch Church.

Antioch Church is located on Highway 4, from Camden to Locust Bayou. Turn at Butler store, and church is located behind store.

For further information contact Elder Clovis Townley, Route 2, Box 245, Fordyce, Arkansas.

Sister Francis Townley, Association Clerk

FIVE MILE CREEK ASSOCIATION

The One hundred Twelfth annual session of the Five Mile Creek Old School Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Dorsey Creek Church, Cullman County, Alabama, on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, September 14, 15, 16.

Dorsey Creek Church is located at Breman on Alabama Highway #69, about halfway between Jasper and Cullman. All lovers of the truth are invited.

For any further information contact Elder H. C. Moon, Route 1, Box 167-A, Breman, Alabama. (Phone 1-205-287-1603).

Elder H. C. Moon, Moderator
R. L. Jacks, Clerk

EDITORIAL

GOVERNMENT

"Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian. For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood, for this shall be with burning and fuel of fire. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." (Isaiah 9:1-7)

I would beg for grace, even the grace that saves from sin, that I might be blessed of God to preach and write to you about the Lord Jesus Christ that was crucified and arose the third day, (I Cor. 1:2; Acts 10:40) and that each of you have been, and are now being brought

into perfection in Him. (Psa. 138:8; Col. 1:28)

We will never read a book with the advancing forward of the subject as is found in the Bible. If our eyes have been opened, and our heart is enlightened in the things of Christ, then it has become unto us as a moving picture from the morning of creation, and it will continue to move toward perfection until every child of God is brought unto the presence of God forevermore - never more to need or desire anything.

Please read the last verse and then notice the opening of the sixth verse. All that has been before in this wonderful chapter has been leading up to this verse. All of it was necessary, yea, not a step could have been left out. There is not a man living that can get Joseph into Egypt when they leave out the most minute detail of that journey. Not one step, not one moment of suffering, but what was in God's meaning it for good. Every single through and deed of the brethren were included in their meaning in the matter, for one left our will keep Joseph out of Egypt, and keeping him out of Egypt will cause starvation, and thus the loss of every Israelite. Anyone that desires such a weak doctrine as that can have all of it. From the very outset, their intention was evil, and from the outset God's intention was good. From the very outset in the morning of time, we acted evil, for I assure you that we were all in the loins of our first parents. Our ways were the ways of death, the ways of evil, but God's purpose in it all was that sinners might be saved. This chapter is telling about some of our ways, and some of God's ways. The balance of the Bible both from its beginning in Genesis to the amen in Revelation, composes all of our travels here and God's mercies here and hereafter.

The warfare in our experience is one that comports with one main characteristic of the One that we now desire to expound to you. He was seen of John on the Isle of Patmos with eyes as a flame of fire, and feet like unto fine brass as if they burned in a furnace. (Rev. 1:14, 15)

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder." Now each poor sinner desires to have a portion or allotment in every portion of scripture. The "us" under consideration is the same one found in Matthew 1:21. By faith Isaiah was looking with fond anticipation on this child and Son, as was Joseph as the angel talked with him as he slept. It is the same us found in the language of our Saviour when He declared that, "all that His Father gave Him would come unto Him"; (John 6:23) this is the same people that love God (definitely not that will love Him–Rom. 9:16); and that He conforms to the image of His Son (Rom. 8:29); this is the same people, the same us that must be saved; (Acts 4:12) this is the same us that God is not slack towards, and whose long-suffering will not allow us to perish. (II Peter 3:9)

Not one of Adam's sons and daughters can interpret the prophecies of the prophets so as to align one individual of all nations into this us. All prophecy owns Israel, and only Israel. Of those that were embraced in Isaiah's gospel, and all of those included in Matthew 1:21 receive the benefit of this birth and gift of the child and son. Involved in this birth and gift is God, and His being made flesh and dwelling among us. At God's time and way every one of them will receive all of the benefits of this birth and gift.

Our text embraces the government of the kingdom of heaven. This is the one and only kingdom that the Lord God Almighty has established. To be sure, He gave us a legal covenant or government to show us our weakness and the utter futility of building a tower to heaven, but it was only given to last long enough to convince us that because

of our weakness it could never save a sinner. (Romans 8:3) In the days of limited and carnal weaklings for kings the God of heaven set up this kingdom. (Dan. 2:44) In the mind and purpose of God the kingdom and the King were from everlasting, (Prov. 8:23, 30, 31; Psalms 139:15, 16) and are made manifest right early in the morning of creation. (Genesis 3:21)

The government, as well as those governed, was made manifest early because of the need for government. Adam is a figure of this government, as well as a figure of the Governor. God put Adam over what was presented to him, (Genesis 2:15) and dealt with him in such a manner that he acted towards that which had been given into his care in precisely the same manner as One would later deal with that Kingdom that He had been given into His hands. It must be remembered that Adam did not maintain his integrity or uprightness, but in losing it and in losing control over that which had been given him to dress and to keep, that he was in God's hands to the end that he set forth one that would also fall into the earth in death and that in His death He would be with His bride forevermore.

Adam was not deceived. He knew better than to do what he did do. But if God's purpose in Adam had failed, this writing, as poor as it is, yea, my preaching, as poor as it is, would never have gone forth from my lips and my pen. There is not a man on the globe that can prove that God use coercion or even influence on Adam. God did make him a helpmeet out of one of his ribs, but the government was at that time on the shoulder of this child and Son. I am not accusing anyone of saying that this government was not on His shoulder then, but I am made to wonder about what is often published as gospel truth. This is the solid and sure deliverance for everyone that the us embraces. Not only was the child born unto us, and the Son given unto us, but likewise and at precisely the same time the government rested on His shoulder it was given to us as the perfect gift. (James 1:17) In this work, and its manifestation to poor sin-smitten wretches, was the work of God. It is that way now, or else it is not God that begins the good work in us. (Phil. 1:6) Both the beginning and the ending, and all in between, the government rested on the shoulder of the Lord Jesus Christ.

One of the names of this child and Son is Wonderful. Oh, that divine revelation would capture my mind and enrapture my spirit to draw out for your consideration the beauties of such a Being to poor sinners as is this. As we comtemplate the various qualities of this King let us humbly ask the Lord for a fruitful mind that we might lay hold on eternal life and the Giver and Governer of it to see in a small measure this child and Son whose name is the Lord our Righteousness. (Jer. 23:6) All of the inhabitants of this kingdom shall be taught of the Lord, and out of that teaching peace shall be granted them, and they shall all be established in the righteousness of this King. In the ushering in of this spiritual kingdom, that which has been a hindrance or that was against us, was removed out of the way. We were under a conditional covenant, and in His governing it was moved out of the way, Is it possible that any one would say that He did not move it out of the way? I doubt it, yea, if He is their Governor, I am sure that they will not. Now I am equally sure that none would say that this faulty covenant (always remembering that the fault was in us) was removed by us. He that governed in taking the faulty one out of the way is equally the Governor in establishing the second. (Heb. 10:9)

"His name shall be called Wonderful". What a name, and what a boon it is to the bankrupt sinners that corrupted our standing in the first Adam to have a

King who is wonderful in saving them. He was wonderfully made, and certainly He would be a wonder to those that He came in contact with who knew Him not as Jesus of Nazareth. This wonder by those that know Him not is merely a curiosity, but to those that do know Him, He is indeed wonderful.

A strange and mysterious phenmenon is brought to bear when it is declared that a virgin shall conceive and bear a son. As the mystery deepens and the wonder grows in intensity, blind unbelief staggers at such a thought, and not only rebels at such a thought, but hatred sets in on such an one. Strange as it seems, God inspired the prophets to write about this wonder and then they did not recognize Him when He arrived among them. The Jews, who had the promise of His coming, rejected Him on arrival, and the Gentiles, who did not have a promise of Him, did believe on Him.

What a wonder He is to us. But the wonder is not to a believer what it is to an unbeliever. He is wonderful to poor sinners in that while He was rich He became poor that they through His poverty might be made rich, and it is a wonder that a man should attempt to palm himself off as God.

"His name shall be called Counsellor". Here the wonder becomes more Wonderful. To think that He would become a counsellor to one that nailed Him to a tree is indeed meat and drink and righteousness in the Lord to the feeble lambs of His fold. Have you, dear reader, given it any examination as to what would have become of us had the doctrine of men prevailed? If it had been true, do you know what Joseph would have said when he saw his brethren coming for corn? Let us bring it a little closer home. If the doctrine of works had been true, how long do you think that it would have been before Jesus Christ had said to you, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest?" Isn't it wonderful to have a Counsellor that counsels you to come even though you sold Him into slavery? This counselling has never been to entice us into sin, but it has been to counsel us that if we do sin, that we have an Advocate with the Father. If you have the mind, read the many precious counsellings of this exceedingly wonderful Saviour.

"His name shall be called the mighty God". Now that verifies what an apostle told us about this Being. Look a long time, dear reader, at the unity between the prophet Isaiah and the apostle John. Inspiration linked them together in the building of the temple of the Lord. (Eph. 2:20) One tells us that this Son was a child, and the other tells us that God was made flesh and dwelt among us. I have no desire whatever to explain what I mean when I say that He was Mary's son, and I have no hesitancy whatever in saying that He was the son of God--that He was God in the flesh; His name - the mighty God. For one, I believe just that, no more, and praise God, no less. And I enjoy immensely the poet,

"So guilty, so helpless am I,
I durst not confide in his blood,
Nor on his protection rely,
Unless I were sure he is God."

and the uniting of the child and the Son, and the giving of them both to the running and maintenance of the government on which my hopes are based gives me the spirit to further sing,

"If asked, what of Jesus I think,
Though still my best thoughts are but poor,
I say, He's my meat and my drink,
My life, and my strength, and my store,

My Shepherd, my Husband, my Friend,
My Saviour from sin and from thrall
My hope from beginning to end.
My portion, my Lord, and my all".

and here under the shadow of His everlasting arms of love is the best resting place a poor sinful wretch will ever find in this vale of woe.

"His name shall be called the everlasting Father". No man has been gifted with talent to explore the grandeur and majesty of such a superb Being as this Ruler and Governor. When we survey

the fulness of Jesus Chist, the Holy One in Israel, it is indeed a mercy to have had Him born unto us a child and given unto us as the Son of this everlasting Father. As I write, my mind is drawn in rapture to His bleeding side, and the poet again breaks out in heavenly refrain,

"Alas and did my Saviour bleed,
And did my Sovereign die?
Would he devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?"

and faith takes hold of His royal Highness, and listens in holy ecstasy as He whispers in divine language, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love and with loving kindness have I drawn thee". He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and they are inseparable in age, in governing, and co-equal in honor and power and glory.

"His name is the Prince of peace". This language forever sounds the death-knell to all that ever come from the sons of Adam promising us peace. The language is so full of grace and truth, and the government is on the shoulder of the Prince of Peace. This is the promise full and free that the commands and promises and assertions and declarations of this Prince will all be carried out and delivered to all the chosen ones.

In addressing his letters to the churches and brethren, the apostle Paul ascribes peace as coming from God and the Lord Jesus Christ to the brethren. In the most of these salutations and endings to his letters he ascribes grace to them as coming from the same divine source, and likewise commands them to the grace of God as coming from Him. But that is not all about peace. There is a full provision made about this peace. He forever separates this peace from the works of men, and from their way of giving peace. He gives and leaves peace with His people, but it is not as the world gives peace. All that worldly princes give will be worldly and the fashion in which they give passes away, (I Cor. 7:31) but His peace is left with those under His divine government.

This Prince of Peace sends His Spirit into His chosen ones and they are born again by that Spirit. This Spirit comes before the fruit; it makes the tree good, (Isa. 61:3) and the fruits are good, and this The Lord our Righteousness brings to them by the government that is laid on His shoulder.

God willing, more later on the same text.

Elder W. D. Griffin

Loganville, Georgia

Dear Elder Smith,

Enclosed you will find a check for $10.00. Please use it for the renewal of the ***Signs of the Times*** for Mrs. Ada B. Watson and myself.

Even though my eyesight grows dim I do not want to miss a copy. Oh, I have so much enjoyed the wonderful writings in the April issue. I have been reading the ***Signs*** for around 60 years, and it is contending for the same precious truth in Christ Jesus, if this poor sinner knows anything of the truth.

May God richly bless each of you Editors, and all who write. I would thank Him for His great love and mercy all through my many years.

Unworthily, in bonds of love,
Ela Watson

How is it that one who has led a good and innocent life in the sight of men should, when made alive spiritually, feel as much trouble and sorrow on account of a sinful heart as one who has been guilty of outbreaking sins? We know that naturally there is a great difference of feeling between one of a delicate taste and a refined disposition, and one who is of a coarse and depraved habit of mind, so that what the one would shrink from with disgust and abhorrence, the other would not dislike at all. But we know that only divine life

common reader now cannot understand the real meaning of candid and plain words. It is a vaunting assumption on the part of a few selfstyled "leading Baptists," and it betrays a lack of "candor and plainness" before God and men.

In chapter two, speaking of God, the Confession says, "Who is immutable, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, every way infinite, most holy, most wise, most free, most absolute, working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will, for his own glory. * * * He is the alone fountain of all being, of whom, through whom and to whom are all things; and he hath most sovereign dominion over all creatures, to do by them, for them or upon them whatsoever himself pleaseth. In his sight all things are open and manifest. His knowledge is infinite, infallible and independent upon the creature, so as nothing is to him contingent or uncertain. He is most holy in all his counsels, in all his works and in all his commands." All these statements are very candid and plain, and they need no master to explain them.

In chapter three those candid and plain men of God speak of God's decree, saying, "God hath decreed in himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever come to pass; yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin, nor hath fellowship with any therein; nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor yet is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established, in which appears his wisdom in disposing all things, and power and faithfulness in accomplishing his decree." The simple meaning of this sentence is so frank, candid and plain to the mind of every reader, that it will stand against the efforts of every modern convention of "leading Baptists" to doctor and obscure it to suit modern theology. Every child in the kingdom of God's grace as well knows the clear sense of this declaration of faith in the sovereign power and wisdom and holiness of the omnipotent and unchangeable God as does any teacher in Israel, so that no recent footnotes added to it can explain it away or disguise the plain meaning of those solemn words of wisdom. They are based upon Scripture proofs, which are omitted here for brevity; and in this one sentence on the holy decree of God is most plainly declared just the candid belief of all who humbly and devoutly revere God as at once almighty and holy.

These simple words of those godly men of old do most clearly repel the false accusation, that this solemn and scriptural belief in the complete sovereignty of the Holy One makes him the author of sin, and his holy decree the cause of the wicked acts of ungodly men. Arminian opposers of God's sovereignty have ever made this slanderous charge, which is nothing but replying against God and condemning the Almighty, but not till recently have professed Predestinarian Baptists joined in this slanderous report against the unlimited decree of God, that it makes him the author of and responsible for all the things he has embraced in his changeless counsel, purpose and decree.

Faithful Paul has met all such false inferences when he says, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" He refutes the slander and rebukes the false accuser when he adds, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" This is just what all such "things" do say when they speak thus against God. Who are men who thus rail against the Most High? Hear the answer of God: "All nations before him

forth their true belief in the London Confession.

Until latterly such uncharitable and reproachful accusations have come from the multiform hosts of Arminian will-worshipers, who limit the Almighty in his attributes and power, and it was not so strange that they would thus slander the doctrine of God as proclaimed by his true servants; but now, alas, Baptists themselves join in this "railing accusation" against the servants of the Most High, and flaunt forth the unblushing outcry, that to believe he predestinated all things, makes him the author of all sin, and that all wickedness is the "result" of God's unlimited decree. Yet they say they stand on the London Confession! That Confession honors God in his "eternal power and Godhead," as having "Decreed in himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, ***all things whatsoever come to pass;*** yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin, nor hath fellowship with any therein." But such most unfair criticisms and slanderous reports against the unlimited decree of God do dishonor him and falsely accuse his worthy servants of old. The Lord will rebuke those who "speak evil of dignities," and despise the dominion of God, bringing railing accusation against his true and faithful servants of old, among whom was Elder Gilbert Beebe, a valiant man of God in Israel, who gave his long life in defense of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, yet he is assailed and his doctrine aspersed, long after the Lord, whom he loved and served, took him to himself, and he is charged with having proclaimed a doctrine so abominable that it made our Holy God the author and doer of all the abhorrent crimes of all wicked men, because he believed just what is declared above by those holy men of old, who adopted the London Confession. When it comes to this, dear brethren, it may well be asked, "Is there not a cause?"

O, how deplorable, when Baptists will profess to publicly adopt and stand on the London Confession of Faith, then publicly reproach and denounce the very doctrine that it most solemnly and plainly sets forth pertaining to God and his holy counsel and decree. That Conconfession is not binding on the consciences of any, as it is only a synopsis of what the Baptists then believed the Scriptures to teach, while they accepted the Bible alone as the standard of their faith; but why should any claim to accept this Confession, when they are at war against its teaching on the Decree and Providence of God, and cruelly reproach the brethren who do honestly believe it, with making God the author and responsible cause of all wickedness and crime? Is this "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace?"

For one, I do most truly believe every word here copied from that good Confession, and I accept it as a clear, just and full refutation of the untrue charge that the Baptists who thus believe make God the author of any sin, for we revere him as most holy, and believe he will judge all liars, who reproach his holy name and slander his sovereignty and truth with righteous judgment.

In the filial fear of God and love of his truth, yours to serve,

(Elder) D. Bartley

August 1901

The house that is built partly on a rock, and partly on the sand, will fall; and the sinner who rests his hope of salvation partly on Christ and partly on his own works, will be damned.

Toplady

I am resolved, in the strength of grace, to preach all the truths of the gospel so far as I know them; and leave God to take care of consequences.

Toplady

OBITUARIES

COLIN CAMERON

Brother Colin Cameron passed away August 11, 1978 in Seattle, Washington where he lived approximately 38 years. He was born February 20, 1909, the son of Elder John W. Cameron and Mary A. Cameron in Pemberton Wigan, England. He came with his parents to the United States in 1915 where he grew up and received his education. He married Miss Ruth Hart June 25, 1944.

Brother Cameron leaves to mourn his passing, his widow, Ruth Cameron and a son, James who is not married and lives with his mother in the home at Seattle. A daughter Janice, (Mrs. William Currier) lives with her family in Burlington, Vermont. They have a son Reid, who is the only grandchild. A brother, William B. Cameron and a sister, Margaret E. Taylor, both of Seattle, Washington. Also two other sisters, Hannah Bates of Corvallis, Oregon and Rhoda Hamilton, Chehalis, Washington.

Brother Cameron united with Bethel Primitive Baptist Church of Riffe, Washington in 1952 and was baptized by Elder I. F. Coleman, who was then the pastor. The Church and its membership was later moved to Mossyrock, Washington. Though the Church feels a great loss by his passing, yet we are made to feel that our loss is his eternal gain, for to depart and be with Christ is far better. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

The funeral was held August 14, 1978 in Seattle, Washington with Mr. Tom Atkinson officiating at the service. The body was laid to rest in Washelli Cemetery to await the resurrection.

Written by request of members of the family.

(Elder) Ben F. Preston

SUSAN ETHEL WILSON

Our dear sister, Susan Ethel Wilson of Bullard, Texas, was called home on February 9, 1979 at the age of 84. She was born April 19, 1894 in Como, Texas to the union of Isaac Humphrey and Martha J. Kennemer. She was married to Clarance L. Wilson in 1909 who preceded her in death May 25, 1968. She is survived by two sons C. L. Wilson of Kilgore, Tx. and Don Wilson of Hobbs, N.M., one daughter Mrs. Boyd Weeks of Lake Palestine, TX, two brothers, one sister, five grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. All her children and many friends mourn her passing but we believe our loss to be her eternal gain.

She was a very dear, sweet, gentle, and kind person greatly loved by all who knew her. She believed and loved the doctrine of salvation by grace and went to hear it preached as often as she was able. Having been led by the teaching of the blessed Spirit to know and feel something of the preciousness of Jesus and God's way of salvation, she was made willing to follow Jesus as one of his found sheep. Having a desire to follow Him in that blessed ordinance of baptism, she asked for a home with Hopewell Church, was received and baptized in 1938. After she and her husband moved to Hawkins, TX in 1958, she asked that her letter be put with Paran Primitive Baptist Church where it remained until her death.

Even though she suffered in body as well as in Spirit and was unable to attend church for some time, a blessed hope remained with her that after she had suffered all His will below, she would inherit an eternal home with Christ through His blessed blood. She wrote in her Bible that when the veil is gone, I want to see my name written in the Lamb's book of life.

Funeral services were conducted in McCrary-Edwards Funeral Home, Winnsboro, TX by the writer. She was laid to rest in Hopewell Cemetery. "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away: Blessed be the name of the Lord."

Written by request of Paran Church while in conference -- one copy to be sent to the ***Signs of the Times*** and three to her children.

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

FLORENCE I. SIMPSON

It being in God's divine plan of love that reunites His children with their heavenly Father, Florence I. Simpson was called from our earthly midst on October 25, 1978.

Sister Florence was born in Onslow County on July 17, 1892, to Elizabeth (Lizzie) Horne and Asa Simpson. She is survived by one sister Eva Simpson, having had three

brothers and five sisters to precede her in death.

Sister Florence was a dear, quiet, faithful servant and walked among the Primitive Baptist for many years. She united with New Bay Primitive Baptist Church on April 21, 1972, and was baptized on the following fourth Sunday in May.

Sister Florence developed a rare blood disease and was confined to the hospital or home since May 17, 1978. Though her family and church members miss her, there is a certain blessing we feel in total submission to the will of God. Sister Florence was made to suffer, as all mortal man will know suffering, and in what man calls death, there is a complete yielding of the body, and those who believe, witness again the Spirit reigning supreme. Sister Florence's finite body became a very real burden to her, and she was made willing to shed the weight that had encumbered her Spirit, and in rendering unto God what is God's, the imprisoned splendor of her soul was freed. Her thoughts, right up through her last consciousness were of God; and once in all her pain and frustration she was understood to mumble "hallowed be Thy name." Those of us who remain here for a short while can find comfort in the perfection of the way of the cross, as ordained by God from the beginning. In recognition of the sisterhood with the church which Sister Florence loved, we believe her to be a Son of God, and we accept and feel to know the Spirit always rises above the illusion of this material realm and crowns Itself as the only Reality of God.

Sister Florence's funeral was conducted on October 26, 1978 by Elder D. B. Stokes. She was buried in the family plot in the Jacksonville Cemetery. Many flowers, cards, and other expressions of love evidenced the high esteem and love of her family, church members, and friends.

The membership of New Bay Primitive Baptist Church voted in conference on March 3, 1979 that a copy of the obituary become a part of the church record, a copy be sent to the ***Signs of the Times,*** and a copy be given to the family.

S. Catherine Aman
Norman Jenkins, Clerk
D. B. Stokes, Moderator

SISTER MARY LOUISA HELLINGS

Sister Mary Louisa Hellings, 78, of Pennington, N.J., passed away on April 6, 1979, at Helene Fuld Hospital. She was born September 1, 1900, the youngest in the family of the late Augustus M. Hellings and Olivia N. Tyndale. Her older sister, Lydia West Hellings, of Spokane, Washington, is the surviving member of the family.

Sister Hellings became a member of the Old School Baptist Church in Hopewell, New Jersey, in 1937, and was the last remaining member when the church was closed for services in April, 1974, after the death of her brother, Charles Hellings, who was the last male member and deacon in the church. She will be remembered for the church letters she wrote at meetings comprising the Delaware River Association.

Funeral services were private and under the direction of the Blackwell Memorial Home, Pennington, N.J. Interment was in the family plot at Ewing Church Cemetery.

In her last will and testimony Sister Hellings stated that the ***Signs of the Times*** had come into the home of each generation of the family since its publication in 1832.

J.F.P.

ELLA BENNETT GRIFFITH

By request I write a word in memorial to our precious sister, Ella, who was a faithful and highly esteemed member of the church at Charity, Patrick County, Virginia, for over 57 years. She entered into her eternal rest on November 30, 1978, at the age of 88. She was the widow of Deacon James J. Griffith. Both joined the church in 1921.

A work of grace showed forth in all her pilgrimage; a humble member and servant of God in the church; in her home, a devoted companion, helpmeet, and mother; in the community, an ensample to all who knew her. She was a precious sister to all acquainted with her. Both her walk and conversation manifested she had a part in the first resurrection. The presence of this dear Mother in Israel will be missed by all, but we that have known her do not sorrow as for one that has no hope, but rather give thanks to God for lending this precious gift to His church and people for our comfort and

His honor and praise in the church.

Surviving are 1 daughter, Mrs. Orea G. Rakes; 2 sons, Mr. T. H. Griffith, and Mr. Clifford Griffith, all of Stuart, Va.; 1 sister, Mrs. Alice B. Lackey; 1 brother, Mr. Rush Bennett; 5 grandchildren, and 8 great grandchildren.

Services were conducted by Elders Amos Hash, Randall Saunders, and the writer at Moody Funeral Home Chapel, Stuart, Va., on Sunday, December 3, 1978, with interment by her companion in the Bennett family cemetery, in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection to be like and in the presence of her dear Redeemer.

May the Lord bless the bereaved family with the true Spirit of reconciliation to God's holy will and make them diligent in every good word and work to the praise of His glorious grace, wherein He has made each of His humble poor acceptable in the Beloved.

(Elder) Noel F. Conner

SISTER MYRTLE TURNER WOOD

"The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord". Our dear sister, Myrtle Turner Wood entered her eternal rest on January 7, 1978, at the age of 78, after over a year of declining health. The last several days of her life were spent in Roanoke Hospital where all help of human skills and hands failed, and she was taken to behold her Redeemer's face in righteousness. For over fifty years she was a faithful member of the church at Charity, Patrick County, Virginia; a sweet singer of the hymns of Zion; and Church Clerk most of that time. She treasured her membership with the Primitive Baptist, spoke and wrote often of her hope in Jesus. She was a strong believer in salvation by the grace of God, and that a true conviction for and deliverance from the consequence of sin was an evidence of being "born again". She was a most devoted companion and mother, and a faithful servant in the church and in the community, always feeling her life was not her own. I was most favored to have met this dear saint of God in the church, in the home, and to correspond by letter of the wonderful works of God to poor sinners. In one letter she wrote, "I have a different view of death than I once had. It once seemed a terrible thing. One night I awoke and thought I was dying, and oh! the sweetness and readiness that was given me. I believe I won't ever have that great fear again. I pray to be reconciled to God's will in all things. This will be my fiftieth year as a member of Charity and clerk most of that time. I do love the church and the dear brethren, and my faith in the power and mercy of God is beyond my expression. The road has been long and sometimes rough but I feel the journey is near the end."

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Randall Saunders and the writer on Monday, January 9, 1978, at Charity Primitive Baptist Church followed by interment in the Turner family cemetery, there to witness the redemption of her body when He that redeemed her shall come again.

Survivors include her husband, Mr. Robert A. Wood; daughters, Mrs. Nancy W. Via, Mrs. Edith W. Page; son, Robert S. Wood; 11 grandchildren, and one great grandchild.

Written by request of Charity Church.

(Elder) N. F. Conner

ALICE MAE HUGHES

Sister Mae Hughes, a beloved member of Little Flock Church, passed away December 22, 1978, after several years of declining health.

She was born May 21, 1896, and was married to Lannie Hughes on March 22, 1914, at Altus, Oklahoma.

She is survived by her companion; one son, Jack Hughes, and two grandchildren by adoption, relatives and friends.

Sister Hughes joined Little Flock Church by experience and baptism. She was baptized by Elder W. W. Taylor on May 27, 1968. She was highly esteemed and loved by the Church. May God reconcile and make us submissive to His dear will.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder W. W. Taylor at Tim's Chapel of Memories, Altus, Oklahoma. Interment was at Altus Cemetery.

May God bless and comfort all those who are left in sadness.

Done by order of the Church while in conference January 27, 1979.

Ava Stewart, Church Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 9/79 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

2737 Tillett Road S.W.
Roanoke, Va. 24015

Dear Elder Smith,

I am enclosing a letter written by Elder C. B. Davis, Jr., giving his views on a scripture that I had asked him about sometime ago. This scripture, Psalm 68:13, was presented to me over 26 years ago when I was so very ill in the hospital awaiting surgery. I was so alone in my feelings, no friends on earth and none in heaven, it seemed. As I lay there in the midnight darkness trying to beg that the Lord would indeed have mercy, the door to my room was closed but suddenly a beautiful white dove flew in, perched on the foot of my bed, and slowly walked across and then flew out the unopened window. Oh the peace and love and joy I felt flood my poor soul. Then came this scripture. I had never read it but I knew it was scripture. I had such a great desire to know the meaning of the gold feathers and silver wings, that I was always asking for someone to explain it to me. (Remember?)

Then after over 26 years I asked Elder Davis his views and this letter enclosed was his answer to me. I am completely satisfied now and may the Lord be praised.

I feel many of the readers of the ***Signs*** will remember how often I inquired about the scripture, that I want now to

share the answer that our Precious Lord and Master gave to Brother Davis. Therefore, with Brother Davis' consent, you do as you see fit and it will be alright with us.

A little unworthy sister,
Rlee B. Houchins

"Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold". (Psalm 68:13)

Roxboro, N.C.

Dear Sister Houchins,

We enjoyed being in your home again and though unworthy, we feel to thank Him who makes these moments transpire.

With reluctance I feel to express some of my (His) thoughts on your scripture of Psalm 68:13.

First, we all have lien among the pots for we are indebted to God among the pots of clay and carnal life and Christ is the only hope that the debt has been paid in full. The dove you saw could be none other than the Holy Eternal Spirit, the same manifestation recorded when Christ went down into the liquid grave and came up. This dove said, "This is my Son in whom I am well pleased". Were you not well pleased (rejoicing) when you were blessed to see this spirit enter your realm (room) of concern?

Let us consider now that the door opened and the dove came in - "He opens and no one closes". There is no way the Spirit can be subdued and He opens the door of carnality and enters when He so desires. Thanks be unto Him there is no visitor's pass necessary and no door closed so tight that He can not enter.

We see the gold feathers as the perfection of God overshadowing (covering) the dove (spirit) that it might be outstanding and be protected (sealed) in the most precious metal we know. Is not His protecting Grace the most treasured covering we shall ever know in this life? The book speaks of wisdom and grace as more precious than the gold of Ophir, etc.

We see the silver wings as none other than the person of Christ. The wings were the motivation of the dove (spirit) and it was and is Christ who is the power of God manifest to us. He came from the climes of Glory as the motivating power of God and being attached, as it were, to the very heart of God (breast) and was the expressed power of God in the world. We see then the fulness of the Diety of God, the Three-in-one, the white (purity) of the spirit, gold, the perfection of the Godhead, and the silver as the power (Christ). When blessed to that end we feel the power of the wings, reverence the gold and feel the comfort and peace of the spirit.

Now it entered the door and went out the window. "My word goeth out of my mouth and shall not return unto me void", etc. This dove went out by the window of grace to visit and comfort another and though it seemed closed, I can assure you that the window of Grace is never closed. It just seems so to us. The dove would not go back as it came in that it could not return void and must convey peace and love to yet another longing soul. Christ does today and forever more convey the peace and love of God through the closed doors of tears, trials, and afflictions and travels (flies) through the window of Grace to open yet another door.

The Psalmist said on one occasion, "Oh that I had the wings like a dove". Yes, just to have the presence of Christ, it is enough.

I guess I have seemed to ramble and did not plan to write so much and yet I feel to see this morning so much in the perfection of your dove, and hope we all some day shall see it (Him) without the glass between.

Express our love and regards to your family and others we love, who cling to

the wings of silver, bear the perfection of gold and have the peace of the spirit.

With our love,
(Elder) C. B. Davis, Jr.

Quarryville, Pa. 17566

Dear Elder Smith,

Please renew my subscription to the ***Signs of the Times*** for another year. Check for $5.00 is enclosed.

I received the last issue of my present subscription just yesterday and found it filled with messages of truth. "If ye know the truth, the truth will make you free". Many times do I think of the understanding that is present with the "born again" subject of free grace. Men in darkness know not how to "rightly divide" the word of Truth.

Very sincerely yours in hope,
Charles B. Osborne

A SHORT DISCOURSE ON SANCTIFICATION

By Mr. Huntington

"Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." (John 17:17).

To sanctify is to appoint, ordain, consecrate, or set apart any person or thing to a holy and special use; and thus God sanctified the Sabbath day, the tabernacle, its furniture, and all the vessels of the ministry. (Gen. 2:3, Exodus 40:9-11). These things were not only to be set apart by the appointment of God to be used in his service, but they were to be sprinkled with blood and anointed with oil. To sanctify, in one sense of the word, signifies to wash, cleanse, or purify. The priests were sanctified by washing in water, and with the anointing oil; and by blood upon the right ear, the thumb of the right foot, the and the great toe of the right foot; the common people by washing their flesh, clother, etc., etc.; and others by the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer, or sprinkling the unclean, which sanctified to the purifying of the flesh. (Heb. 9:13). But it is the substance of this shadow that I aim at, which sanctifies wholly, body, soul, and spirit.

"Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth."

I. The elect of God were sanctified in the purpose of God from everlasting; and in this purpose of grace Christ was made sanctification and redemption to them from all eternity. "From everlasting I was set up." (Prov. 8:23.) And in his undertakings for us "he went forth from of old, yea, from everlasting." (Micah 5: 2.) In this sense we are said to be "sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and called." (Jude 1.) God worketh all things after the counsel of His own will; and this is His will of purpose, which in time, when He began to speak to men, became the will of promise, and in the fulness of time it became the good-will of God in christ Jesus; that is, at Christ's appearing, Who came to execute every branch of the Father's goodwill and pleasure, and to be manifested to us as our Sanctification, according to the ancient settlements or counsels of old. "Then said I, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God; by the which will we are sanctified." (Heb. 10:7, 10.) This branch of sanctification, being in the purpose and goodwill of God, must undoubtedly signify setting apart and appointing us to it; and, as it was settled and done in the purpose of God, it is spoken of in the past tense: "Sanctified by God the Father from everlasting, preserved in Christ Jesus" in time, from the womb to conversion, and called in due time to the fellowship of the Lord Jesus; for, being chosen in Christ from eternity, we are preserved in Him throughout our state of nature, as His own remnant. "Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb; and even to your old age, I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you. I have made, and I will bear;

even I will carry, and will deliver you." (Isa. 46:3, 4).

II. We are sanctified by the blood of Christ, which has appeased the offended majesty of heaven; which blotted out our transgressions as a cloud from the book of God's remembrance; which satisfied justice, removed the curse, purged our consciences, and procured our enlargement from the prison. "By the blood of the covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water." (Zech. 9:11) "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." (Heb. 13:12.)

III. We are sanctified by the Spirit of God, who reveals God's secret purposes of grace to us, and applied the great atonement to the conscience; and who by His powerful operations, regenerates and renews us, which is called "the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Under these operations the soul is cleansed, renewed, and the faculties of the soul are turned to God; the will submits and chooses the better part; the heart relents, and repents towards God, and becomes soft, broken, and contrite; the mind begins to be heavenly, and to mind heavenly things. Such have life and peace; the affections go after God and are placed above, and the conscience acts an honest and just part for God. "That the offering up of the Gentiles might be accepted, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost." (Rom. 15:16.)

Thus it may be seen that each Person in the Godhead has a hand in the Sanctification of His people. We "are sanctified by God the Father" in His purpose; Christ sanctified us by His own blood when He suffered without the gate, and we are made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

Moreover, we may see that the word sanctification, both in the Old Testament and in the New, signifies something more than setting apart; in this sense we were sanctified in the purpose of God. But we read of purging our sins, and of purging the conscience, of purifying the heart; of sanctifying and cleansing the church, with "the washing of water by the word," (Eph. 15:26;) and of the washing of regeneration, etc.; and of "cleansing us from all our filthiness, and from all our idols." Now this sanctification reaches to body, soul, and spirit. The body is sanctified by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost; the body is His temple, and He is the Lord that sanctifies us. The soul is sanctified as above described; and even the animal spirits are often high and much elated in the service of God, when the powerful operations of God are upon the believer; much more so than a fainting, wearied man is inebriated and made merry with the most generous wine.

Furthermore, to cleave close to Christ in love, and abide in Him; to walk with God in filial fear, and with a good conscience; to serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter; to follow peace with all them that call upon God out of a pure heart; to shun the works of darkness, and abide in the truth; and to perserve in faith, is possessing the vessel in sanctification and honour.

"Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth." This word of truth is not the old law, though that was true. No, nor yet the prophecies of the Old Testament, though they are the "more sure word of prophecy," and are all infallibly true and cannot be broken. But then Christ is the Truth of all the legal types, and He is the substance of all the prophecies; for "to him gave all the prophets witness," and of Him they all prophesied. He is the end of the law for righteousness, and the substance of all the prophecies for life and salvation; and therefore He magnified the one and sealed the other: "He magnified the law and made it honourable; and He fulfilled and sealed up all vision and prophecy." (Dan. 9:24.) Moses the lawgiver, and Elijah the prophet, both resigned their

offices to Jesus on the mount. (Matt. 17:3) And hence it is said, "The law and the prophets were until John." (Luke 16:16) Before Christ came, the law, both moral and ceremonial, was in full force; and the prophecies respecting Christ lay open, unaccomplished, and unfulfilled. But when Christ came He abolished the one and fulfilled and sealed up the other; and now we must look for all truth cleared, fulfilled, and fulfilling in Christ; for "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." And, as He is the Substance of all the ceremonial shadows, the Truth of all the legal types, the true light of all vision, and the subject and subject-matter of all predictions of prophecies, He styles Himself "the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

The "truth", therefore, mentioned in my test, through which we are sanctified, is without all doubt the absolute and unconditional "promises of God, which in Christ are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God by us;" to the glory of God's grace by the eternal salvation of us.

I have shown that we are sanctified by the election of God, by the blood of Christ, by the Holy Ghost, and by the continual communications of grace; and as we are to be sanctified through the truth, ("thy word is truth,") we must look for some true word of promise, where this sanctification is held forth and promised to us; and, let them be where they may, they are all now in Christ.

And first, "I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away." "Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." (Isa. 41:9; 65:22.) Here is His choice of us, in which decree we were sanctified.

"I will cleanse their blood which I have not cleansed." "So shall he sprinkle many nations." "From all your filthiness will I cleanse you." And, "By the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit." Here are the promises of sanctification by the blood of Christ.

"I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh," "I will pour out my praise." "I will direct their work in truth." "I will give them one heart and one way." "I will keep them." "I will water them, and put my fear in their heart, and they shall not depart from me." Here is the sanctification and honour that shall be upon every chosen vessel.

Now, Holy Father, as Thou hast promised thus to sanctify them and hast made my sanctification to them, and hast promised that they shall be sanctified through Me; and as Thy choice of them is in Me, and the blood I am going to shed is for them, and the fulness of the Spirit that is upon Me is to flow to them from Me; and as all the fulness of grace is in Me for them, then sanctify them according to Thy true and faithful word of promise, for "thy word is truth."

"Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." Wherever Thy word is preached by those who are chosen in Me, and appointed to preach; who declare Thy whole counsels; who are pardoned by Me, and preach pardon; who are born again, and are ministers of the Spirit; who are partakers of grace and good stewards of it; let the knowledge of Thine election of them, the atonement that I have made for them, the Spirit that thou hast promised to them, and the abundant grace given them in Me, ever accompany the word of truth preached, and be communicated to all the appointed heirs of it, who receive the word with power and in the love of it: "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth."

And every believer that is called under the ministry of the word, or by the operation of the Spirit without the word preached, which is promised in the word and come according to it, it is a living witness of His truth. By these means they make their calling and election sure; receive pardon and peace by faith in the blood of Christ, which faith mostly comes by hearing; they receive

the Spirit by the hearing of faith; and find the good work of grace begun and carried on under it, which is a full answer to this prayer: "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth."

And in this way the disciples were sanctified under the personal ministry of the dear Redeemer. "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you; abide in me." (John 15:3, 4.) What word was this? He told them of His Father's election of them. "Rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

He had told them that He "laid down his life a ransom for many," and that "his blood was drink indeed." He promised to send them the Spirit, the promise of the Father, and a measure of the Spirit was upon them, though they knew not what manner of spirit they were of. And virtue had gone out of Him to them all; the grace of life was in them; and by faith they had passed from death unto life, and had everlasting life. And thus God's promised sanctification attended the word of the Saviour to all that heard the word and kept it; they were sanctified through the truth, and clean through the word that the Lord had spoken unto them. This is the sanctification of the Lord's people, and it is all of God. "I am the Lord that sanctify you."

The prophecies and promises of the Old Testament respecting Christ were two branches; the one was what he should do and suffer, the other branch was the glory that should follow His sufferings. The former were all fulfilled by Him, and then all the other became "Yea, and amen" in Him; and all the promised blessings, and all the glory that should follow, are in Him also. Hence He is made sanctification to us in all its branches: He is the first above, and our election is in Him; our sanctification by blood is of Him, Who is the Fountain opened for sin; our sanctification by the spirit is the same, for the Spirit with all its fulness is in Him; He sends the promise of the Father upon us, and all the communications of grace to us are out of His fulness; our sanctification is complete in Him, and we are sanctified by a believing, cordial reception of Him into our hearts; and our life of sanctification in this world stands in our walking in Him, cleaving to Him, and holding communion and fellowship with Him; for "He is made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."

W. H.

Lake, Mississippi

Dear Sirs,

May I humbly ask that you send me the ***Signs of the Times*** for two years. It is a most inspiring book to me during my sad and dark hours. I find much comfort in all the articles written (I believe) by God's gifted ones.

I have been blessed that our dear Pastor, Elder Wardell Moore has shared his books with us.

When you pray, please remember me and ask that God will stay very close to us as we journey on.

Thank you very much,
Pauline H. Culpepper

(The following article appeared in the April 1, 1841, ***Signs of the Times*** and later was included in Vol. I of The Editorial Writings of Elder Beebe, published in 1868. We think the readers will find it not only interesting but a sound refutation of unwarranted criticism regarding our order. Editor)

REDUCTION OF KETOCTON, VA., ASSOCIATION

"The Ketocton Association is one of the oldest associations in Virgnia, and formerly one of the most flourishing. In 1833 it contained nineteen churches and about two thousand members. But, say the editor of the "Religious Herald", 'The blighted influence of Antinonian-

ism has reduced it to a withered, blasted, lifeless body'. It now numbers six hundred and fifteen members, and it is yearly diminishing. When it began its opposition to the benevolent institutions, then began its downfall. We have a few similar instances of cause and effect in Ohio. All this, however, our anti-effort brethren consider only as a necessary purification of the church, and as a plain indication of the kind regards of their heavenly Father, since 'Whomsoever the Lord loveth, he chasteneth.' When will their eyes be open that they may see". -- Cross and Journal)

REMARKS

New Vernon, N.Y.
April 1, 1841

And thus old Hagar vaunted when she became the mother of her illegitimate bantling, Ishmael; in the ecstacy of her vain glory, forgetting that she, being a bond woman, could not give birth to a free child, despised her mistress, and that too on account of her barrenness. When will the eyes of these New School mockers be opened to see the close resemblance they bear to their ancient prototype. The position they assume in relation to Ketocton Association, and to all the old fashioned Baptists of the present day, serves only to demonstrate that they are a true and exact copy of the bond woman and her brood of slaves. Hagar could speak as disdainfully of the superannuated body of her mistress, as the "Herald", and the "Cross and Journal" can of the Ketocton Association; and with as much apparent plausibility. Sarah, and even Abraham seemed despondent at the appearances which, in all human calculation stood against them and in favor of their bond woman's being the mother of the promised seed. Nevertheless God had promised Abraham, and repeated His promise to Sarah, that Sarah should have a son. Thus stood the case with the despised, insulted, "withered, blasted, lifeless body" of the free woman, until the appointed hour of God's pleasure had arrived, when, contrary to all human reasoning, triumphant over all the boastful insolence of her slave, Sarah embraced the free born boon that God had promised. Even so now stands the case with Ketocton Association, and with all the churches of the Primitive faith and order of the gospel; they seem, in the eyes of their enemies, as Mr. Sands has happily expressed, and Mr. Cole has reiterated in the above paragraph, "Reduced to a withered, blasted, lifeless body", having only the promise and oath of God to assure her, that according to His appointed time, God will come, and His antitypical Sarah shall embrace her heaven born seed.

But, to review the above article, how stands the case in point of truth? These New School mocking children of Hagar assert that "the blighting influence of antinonianism has reduced the Ketocton Association since 1833, from about two thousand members to six hundred and fifteen". As we have not the minutes of 1833 at hand we cannot say what their number was at that date, but we know that about the year 1835 three churches under the ministry of Mr. Gilmore were dropped from this Association; and at the same session, at Broad Run, a resolation was adopted by the Association to withhold their countenance and fellowship from the New School doctrines and operations of the day; this was virtually refusing to leave the very ground they had uniformly occupied from the date of their constitution, sixty-nine years previously. To this resolution the Arminian churches, called Broad Run, Buck Marsh, and Ketocton took exception; and greatly to the peace and purity of the Association, they were dropped at the next meeting, in 1836, at Winchester; and subsequently the Thumb Run, and if we mistake not, Goose Creek also was dropped.

Thumb Run has since returned, making at least six or seven large churches that were dropped for their corruption, either in faith or practice. In addition to these churches dropped for corruption and disorder, some one or more, we believe, were set off in fellowship to constitute the Rappahannock Association.

Now if these facts will justify the round assertion of these Ishmaelitish editors, that the blighting influence of antinomianism has reduced it from two thousand to six hundred and fifteen members, then have they done the Ketocton Association no injustice; but if, as it evidently appears to us, this reduction has resulted from a close and truly commendable regard for gospel truth and gospel purity, on the part of the Association, then they are persecuted for righteousness' sake, and have abundant reason to rejoice and be exceedingly glad.

To the special attention of Messrs. Sands and Cole we commend Paul's allegory--Gal. 4:21-31, inclusive, but more especially the 30th verse, "Nevertheless, what saith the scriptures? Cast out the bond woman and her son; for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman."

Elder Gilbert Beebe

LETTER FROM SISTER RUSTON

Dutton Ontario
October 24, 1933

Dear Sister Gillis,

The last time I saw you, you reminded me of my promise to write you again. I do so, hoping that the Lord will guide my pen, so that I may not be left to write anything that will not be to His glory.

I think in my last letter, in response to your request, I wrote of the way I had been led up to the time of joining the church in New York City. I cannot just remember where I left off, but will go on from that time.

For a time I was very happy, but gradually I slipped back again into the depressed condition I had been in for so long, but ah! with what a difference. Before, I knew that the Lord could help me if only He would but I feared I was an outcast. Now I had the sweet assurance that He had appeared for me, and a hope which was as an anchor of the soul to me. I remember once feeling very oppressed and fearing that the old burden I had carried so long was returning, and feeling so weak and unfit to cope with earthly cares, when suddenly the words dropped into my heart, "Casting all your care on him, for He careth for you", and immediately I felt my heart lightened and could leave all my cares in His hands.

We were living in a most unsuitable apartment at this time, and we felt we must move, yet my health being so poor, I was not fit for the exertion, but the goodness of the Lord seemed so amazing to such a poor insignificant creature that it filled me with new courage, so that the way was opened for us to move to a much nicer apartment.

I went on in this way for some time, sometimes feeling there was so little comfort for me in this life on account of the depression under which I lived most of the time that it was my constant desire that the Lord would take me home to Himself. I felt all fear of death had been taken away from me, all I desired was to be with Christ, which I felt would be far better. The words were often with me, "If such the sweetness of the streams, what must the fountain be, where saints and angels draw their bliss immediately from thee?" I went on in this self-centered condition for a long time. Although I dearly loved my husband and children, I felt I could gladly lie down and leave them, if only it were the Lord's will, for I still felt physically too weak to live and care for them.

So I struggled on, never neglecting them, but hoping death might relieve

me, when one day I commenced to spit blood. I thought that I must be in a decline and that it was responsible for all the weakness I had suffered, and that I could not live long. Then to my surprise, I found that the thought of leaving my husband alone to care for our three babies seemed terrible to me, and I felt I had to beg of the Lord to spare me to them. I have always felt it must have been a slight rupture of a blood vessel, as I never had any more trouble of that kind, but it showed me that we have to take up the burdens the Lord lays on us, and that we cannot lay them down, but have to look to Him for strength to bear them. My health gradually improved, but we had trials in other ways.

My husband had been set aside to the ministry, and he accepted a call to the churches in the Catskill Mountains in New York State. It was altogether a new life for us, as it meant giving up his profession and all which that meant, but the Lord blessed us with good health, and many providential blessings, and we had many happy times together in spite of some trying things we had to pass through. We can look back and see how wonderfully the Lord appeared for us many times. At one time an epidemic of septic sore throat swept the district where we lived. We all recovered without any ill effects, except our eldest two boys. Soon afterwards our eldest boy had rheumatic fever, and for three weeks the only sleep I could get was two or three minutes at a time. When he was recovering we found that our second boy had a very uneven heart beat caused by poison from the sore throat. The condition of our two dear boys was a great grief to us.

One night a few weeks later, when the one who had been ill with rheumatism was recovered sufficiently for me to go to bed, I lay awake. I seemed to have lost the habit of sleep, and to make it worse, my husband was far away preaching. I had no objection to that, but it increased my feeling of loneliness and anxiety. A feeling of terror took hold of me. I wondered how I could ever face the future. My husband was away so much, and the two boys I had learned to depend on so much for help and companionship both so afflicted, (at this time one was eleven and the other fourteen) it seemed doubtful if they would ever be well again. I felt exhausted, and I felt I could not care for them and manage the farm work so well during the frequent absences of my husband. My sister, Grace, was with me at that time, but she had plenty to do as well, as we had two other little ones. She was a great comfort to me, but I lost sight that night of all my comforts. As I lay there in the darkness, the darkness in my mind was far greater. Suddenly across the corner of the room appeared in illuminated letters the words, "The Lord is my shepherd". The writing was so bright in the darkness, it seemed it was the glory of the Lord. As my mind travelled over the rest of the Psalm the words, "I will fear no evil" appeared. The word "no" was underlined three times. My terror was gone, and in its place there was peace and joy unspeakable. I fell into a sweet sleep, and during the trying months that followed, when some times our hopes would be raised only to be dashed again, I felt I could leave everything in the hands of the dear Lord who had appeared so wonderfully for my help.

Eventually the boys recovered, and we could praise the Lord that apparently they suffered no ill effects. To me it has always seemed that it was as much the handwriting on the wall by the finger of God as was the writing seen by the wicked king, Belshazzar, but how different was the result wrought. To him it was death, to me life. What has never ceased to cause wonderment in my mind is that the Lord condescended to notice such a poor weak unworthy creature, and relieve my misery in such a way, when so many of the Lord's dear

people, so much worthier than I, live year after year desiring a visit from the Lord, and sometimes never experience it in this life. I do believe, though, that when they pass from this earthly scene, they prove the truth of the beautiful words of James Durand, "And morning cometh!, soon these watchings ended, Soon all these earthly nights and vigils o'er, On the freed soul shall break the radience splendid; Of perfect day upon the sinless shore".

I often think of my own precious mother, who seemed to live for the things of God, and was beloved by all who knew her, for her sweetness and loveliness of character. Before I left home she would talk to me of her desires that the Lord would bless her with an assurance of His mercy to her. A few weeks before she died, she wrote us how much she desired an assurance from the Lord, but it seemed to be denied her, but she added, I can say, "I have loved the habitation of thine house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth". I believe she went to her Father's house on high, and realized the fulness of her desires.

Things were now very comfortable and pleasant for us for a time. The Lord had blessed us with a comfortable home, and our church people were wonderfully kind to us, increasingly so. Our children were all well, and progressing as well as we could desire in school. We loved our people and felt our love was returned, and I really believe we thought we should live and die with them, when our peace of mind was rudely disturbed by a conviction in my husband's mind which pressed more and more heavily, that he would have to leave our churches where we were so happily settled and serve the Covenanted Baptist Churches in Canada. When he first mentioned it to me, I was too taken aback to be very impressed by it. I felt he could not leave our people, but as time passed on and I could see what a weight it was on his spirits, I was compelled to consider it too, and as Scripture after Scripture seemed to show his duty in the matter, it became more and more a burden to us. You will remember that you gave a call to two other ministers during this time. He said each time he wished they would accept, and that would settle his mind that he would not have to do, but each time he said he did not believe they would accept for he felt he was the one who had to go there.

After two years of this anxiety, he said to me one day that if the Canadian Church gave him a call he felt he should have to accept, and very soon the call came. It was an unhappy trying time for us. To leave our dear people who had shown us love and consideration beyond measure, besides disposing of our property, tested our endurance very much. Our people could not understand how we could leave them and we did not know how we could leave them, but we found it impossible to resist what seemed to us a direct command from the Lord. The last Sunday service we attended before leaving was especially trying, but we sang, "God moves in a mysterious way", and I felt every word of it was for me, and I think I was enabled to go in the strength of that meat many days. I could not understand, and cannot yet, why we should have lived so happily for twelve years with our dear people, and then all our hearts be so disturbed and rent, but the words calmed me then, and I still have to leave it there: "Deep in unfathomable mines of never failing skill, He treasures up His bright designs, And works His sovereign will".

Our life in the church since coming to Canada has made us feel we did not do wrong in following the dictates of our conscience, but really, it was taken entirely from us; there seemed no other course open to us but to come here.

I think I have written you enough for this time, or you will be wearied. I feel a pleasure in writing to you, because on account of your deafness, you are cut off in a measure from visiting with your

brethren and friends, but you seem to enjoy letters so much. I will close with much love from your sister, I hope,

Esther Ruston

TAKE MY YOKE UPON YOU

My dear Friend's letter should have had an earlier notice, but I have had many engagements, on which account I have been prevented writing.

"It is a good thing that a man bear the yoke in his youth". The bondage of the law, the curse of it felt in the conscience, the wrath that it works, the fear of death and of judgment to come, is what most in our day seem to escape. They know nothing of the guilt of sin, the depravity of our nature, nor feel their lost and perishing condition. But God comes near to judgment, (to his people while in this world,) and appears a swift witness against us. He arraigns us at his bar, and our secret sins are set in the light of his countenance, and he causes us to possess the iniquity of our youth. Shame and confusion of face cover us, and guilt makes us afraid. The caul of our heart is rent, and we meditate terror; the yoke of our transgressions is bound by his hand, and, like David, we sink into the horrible pit. The Lord makes inquisition for blood, and his arrows stick fast within us. Death is to us the king of terrors, and we look forward with dismay to the judgment to come. We feel nothing but wrath, hardness of heart, enmity, stubbornness, bondage, and fear.

"The law is holy", says Paul; "but I am carnal, sold under sin." This shows the great disparity there is betwixt God and us. By the law is the knowledge of sin. It reveals to us the concupiscence of our nature, shows the abounding of our transgression, and worketh wrath. This fills us with slavish and tormenting fear. We would fain flee out of his hand, but cannot. Turn which way we will, everything makes against us, and there appears no way of escape from this stormy wind and tempest; there is no rest for the sole of our feet; we are dissatisfied with ourselves and with everything about us. None appears so miserable as we feel ourselves, nor can we imagine that there are any like us - none so vile, so corrupt; none have that evil working within which we find, none feel so hard, so impenitent, stupid, and dead as we. We see our state, but cannot mourn on account of sin as we desire. Nothing seems to draw us, nor does anything drive us. We have no happiness in the world, and no comfort in God. We hear of Christ, and read of him in the Scriptures; but we have no power to come to him, and for want of faith we cannot lay hold upon him. We know we have destroyed ourselves, and that in Him alone is our help; but whether he will show mercy, we cannot tell. We have no doubt of his power, but of his willingness. "Lord, if thou wilt", said the leper, "thou canst make me clean". We know that he died for sinners, but we dare not entertain a thought that he died for such as we. What we feel makes us conclude that we are too vile for the Saviour to show mercy. Though we call upon him, we cannot find that he hears our prayers; and instead of getting rid of our guilt and the load of sin we feel, every day we appear to get worse and worse, and often fear we shall be obliged to give it all up; and so we should, were it not for the power of God, which keeps us asking, seeking, knocking, though we seem to have no expectation, no hope, that we shall ever obtain what we are seeking for. We feel restless and dissatisfied on account of our state.

But there is a power we feel that causes us to separate from the world and from them that have the form of godliness only. It is the Spirit which giveth life; and this is its quickening influence. We obey its voice, and follow, as we are able, this power that we feel; but what it is we know not, nor do we know what to make of it. We have no

light or judgment to know what it is, nor whose we are; but are full of confusion, always in a hurry and in haste. When we attempt to pray the mind is filled with a thousand things, nor can we confess our sin or ask for pardon as we would; and as soon as we have tried to do so we feel ashamed, and think, "This is no prayer". Dreadful sensations seize us, and what to do we know not; but somehow or other, contrary to our expectation, we are kept calling and seeking. Abraham obeyed and went out, not knowing whither he went. This is the case with every sensible sinner. The blind are brought by a way which they know not. Ask such a one where he is going, he knows not; or what is the matter, he cannot tell. He is dissatisfied, and goes on according to his feelings, but cannot believe it is a work of grace. He is distressed and asks for pardon; but whether he shall end in heaven or hell he does not know, but fears the latter. Paul says that Abraham set out for the land of Canaan, and to the land of Canaan he came. So with every one who, from a feeling sense of his wants, seeks Christ Jesus, the only Friend of sinners.

My friend complains, but I am glad to find he bears his yoke. If he follow on to know the Lord, in due time it shall be destroyed because of the anointing. Though the vision tarry, wait for it; God will avenge his own elect, that cry day and night unto him. Seek the Lord, seek his face, and you will not seek in vain. Wait upon him, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say on the Lord.

1849 J. C.

EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER

Patrick Springs, Va. 24133

Dear Brother Poole,

If the Lord would see cause to direct my mind I would like to make mention of some precious thoughts occasioned by recent meditations upon the scriptures. At the time they first came to me I did not give them as much consideration as I did later, after I had tried to speak of them to others. I found in this case - as in many others - that I was not able to impart the sweet comfort that I felt unto others with any significant degree of success. Yet, I trust I realize that whatsoever things we truly need, God will supply.

From the three chapters preceding Acts Chapter 27, we learn that the Apostle Paul was falsely accused by the Jews of preaching heresy and sedition for affirming the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Being brought before governors and rulers for judgment he appealed unto Caesar for a hearing. Inasmuch as the seat of Caesar was located in the city of Rome it became necessary to transport him thither, together with others. So it was, that he and others prisoners were taken on board a ship and the ship set sail.

Acts 27:9-11 says, "Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished them, And saith unto them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives. Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul."

Two things stand in the forefront here. One is that at this point in time the wind was yet favorable and the sailing was yet smooth. The other is that the ruler of the ship was placing his trust and confidence in the arm of the flesh; which is, as we know, providentially attended by a curse.

Let us follow their journey further and consider the ensuing events. Acts 27:18-25 reads, "And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next day they lightened the ship; And the third day we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship. And when neither

sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away." (Take this to heart, dear brother; much is said here in a few words.) "But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss."

(Remember what Mary and Martha said unto Jesus as they came to Him in mourning, "Lord, if thou hadst been here our brother had not died"? But if not so, then the counsels of God could not have been made to shine in the bodily resurrection of Lazarus. The Lord surely knew what to do and how to do!)

"And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Saying, Fear not, Paul thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me."

We would quote further but we have already told more than could be said in a great volume, had we the ability to write one. Brother Poole, if we have ever seen a biblical picture of our experience we can see it in these precious scriptures. Let us look at that picture, with the Lord being our help.

First of all, the people on board that ship where taking a journey over a sea that was sometimes calm and sometimes stormy and tempestuous. At the first they put their trust in the ability of the flesh to bring them safely to their journey's end. So long as the weather was fair they made good progress.

But by and by a storm arose; the strong wind began to blow and the waves began to roll. Whatever ability they thought they possessed to control the ship was wrested away by a power over which they had no control.

"And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away". Ah, dear brother, almost the tears begin to flow when I think back to the time that I came to such a place as this. It seemed that whatever faint light I had ever beheld was taken away, and my hope of ever seeing God was almost gone. The inward storm that raged in me was exceedingly mighty, and I knew that there was not one single solitary thing that I could do to save myself from the wrath of God. What did I then do? I feel confident that you know.

However, as with the men aboard that ship, so there finally stood before me (I fervently hope) the same One who stood by the bed of the poor crippled man and exhorted him, "Man, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." I believe He came to me in the night (I speak now of inward darkness) and stood by me and caused me to feel that even my sins - which were so many - were forgiven me.

But there is more to the story. "Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar; and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee."

I am reminded so vividly of the ship of Zion and how it passes through this world and where it is bound and into whose hands it has been committed. The inhabitants of that ship are turned away from any confidence in man by the storms and famines and persecutions of this journey of life. They finally come to the point where they realize - as did Paul's companions - that, "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved."

Do you remember the words of that precious song, "I am just a poor wayfaring stranger"? Doesn't it bring to your mind the thought of what he was looking for and how very much it meant to him? And how he journeyed leaning upon the promise that was given unto him, "He said He would meet me when I come"?

The Apostle was leaning upon a promise in all his journey, also.

Acts 23:11 says, "And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome".

And we know of a surety that the promise unto him was kept and that the counsels of God were made to shine thereby. Surely, we must confess with some of old, "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes."

Farewell in bonds of unity and peace for this time. Greet all the holy Brethren for me in the name of our wonderful Saviour, and remember me in your prayers, if given to do so.

Humbly, your brother in hope,
John T. Wingfield

NOTE OF THANKS

We desire to acknowledge each and every contribution to the ***Signs of the Times*** and wish it were possible to express such to each of you, personally. Your donations, small or large, have been a valuable help, and the chief reason why, thus far, we have avoided a price increase. May God be pleased to continue with us.

Also, a word of special thanks to all who helped us with the Association announcements this year. Your valuable assistance has made our job easier.

Finally, a note in regard to the article on Absolute Predestination by Elder Gilbert Beebe which we advertised in June at 4 for $1.00; the response was very good and mailings went out to nearly every state where we have subscribers. We incurred no personal expense and have a very limited number left for those who still wish to order.

Best regards,
Editor

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union will be held, the Lord willing, with the Church at Creeches, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in September, 1979. (Sept. 29, 30).

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and worship with us.

Harold Pittman, Clerk
Box 4524
Rocky Mount, N.C. 27801

SPECIAL NOTICE

The Lord willing, Elder David Spangler will be guest minister at the Yearly Meeting of Nassaonga Old School Baptist Church the fifth Sunday in September, 1979. (Sept. 30) The church is located on State Road 12 approximately 7 miles south of Salisbury, Maryland, going to Snow Hill, Maryland.

Also we expect Elder Spangler to fill an appointment at the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church on Friday night before the fifth Sunday at 7:30 P.M.

SEPTEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

THE ORIGINAL
SOUTH ARKANSAS ASSOCIATION

The original South Arkansas Association of Primitive Baptists hold their next session, the Lord willing, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, September 14, 15, 16, with Antioch Church.

Antioch Church is located on Highway 4, from Camden to Locust Bayou. Turn at Butler store, and church is located behind store.

For further information contact Elder Clovis Townley, Route 2, Box 245, Fordyce, Arkansas.

Sister Francis Townley, Association Clerk

FIVE MILE CREEK ASSOCIATION

The One hundred Twelfth annual session of the Five Mile Creek Old School Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Dorsey Creek Church, Cullman County, Alabama, on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, September 14, 15, 16.

Dorsey Creek Church is located at Breman on Alabama Highway #69, about halfway between Jasper and Cullman. All lovers of the truth are invited.

For any further information contact Elder H. C. Moon, Route 1, Box 167-A, Breman, Alabama. (Phone 1-205-287-1603).

Elder H. C. Moon, Moderator
R. L. Jacks, Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

(Wash-i-taw)

The eighty-ninth annual session of the South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Bethel Church, Friday before the 4th Sunday in September, continuing Saturday and Sunday. (September 21, 22, 23)

Bethel Church is located six miles north of El Dorado, Arkansas, one-half mile west off U. S. Highway 167.

For further information contact Clifford Wilbanks, 217 Bastrop Drive, Monroe, La. 71203.

C. C. Wilbanks, Association Clerk

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Seven Mile Association will be held, the Lord willing, at Hickory Grove meeting house, Johnston County, North Carolina. The meeting is to begin on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1979, and continue through Sunday. (September 14, 15, 16) The church is located about 7 miles east of Benson on Highway 50 near Meadow School.

We invite the Elders, brethren, sisters, and friends to meet with us.

Elder W. D. Godwin, Moderator
James G. Young, Clerk
Route 2, Dunn, N.C. 28334

OCTOBER ASSOCIATIONS

KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Two hundred and fourteenth session of the Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association is to convene with the Robersonville Church, Martin County, Robersonville, N.C., the first Sunday in October, Saturday before and Monday following. (October 6, 7, 8, 1979) The church is located along U.S. Highway 64 in Robersonville. The Association is to convene on Saturday and Sunday at Robersonville Junior High School, located along U.S. Highway 64 in Robersonville. On Monday the Association will be at the church, along U.S. 64 in Robersonville.

We extend a cordial invitation to all brethren of the same faith and order to come and meet with us. All friends are welcome.

(Elder) Marvin E. Garner, Clerk

HOPEWELL ASSOCIATION

The ninety-fifth annual session of the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Association will convene, God willing, with Liberty Hill Church, Tuscaloosa County, Alabama, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in October, 1979. (October 19, 20, 21)

Going north from Tuscaloosa on Highway #43, turn east on County Road 38 at caution light between Mile Marker 221 and 222, and follow signs to the church.

Our brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

Elder A. H. Brock, Moderator

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association is to be held, the Lord willing, with Upper Town Creek Church, Wilson County, N.C. It is to begin on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1979. (October 12, 13, 14)

The Association will be held Friday in Upper Town Creek Church, and Saturday and Sunday in Elm City School.

All lovers of the truth are invited to visit with us.

(Elder) W. W. Stallings, Jr. Clerk

SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

The Salisbury Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church at Snow Hill, Maryland, on October 24, and 25, 1979.

All ministers, brethren, and friends of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us.

Those arriving on Tuesday will please contact Deacon Bill Davis, New Church, Virginia, (telephone 804-824-3137), or Elder James Poole, Salisbury, Maryland, (telephone 301-742-6406). Those coming on

Wednesday go directly to the church on Washington Street.

Maude Truitt, Church Clerk

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The 1979 session of the Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Healthy Plains Church, the fourth Sunday, Friday and Saturday before in October, 1979. (October 26, 27, 28)

The Friday services will be held at the meeting house which is located a few miles south of Bailey, N.C., on Highway 581.

The Saturday and Sunday services will be held at Rock Ridge School, which is located on State road 1142. Those coming from the North or South on Interstate 95 turn west on Highway 42 for one mile to State road 1142. Those coming from the East or West on Highway 264 should take Interstate 95 South to Highway 42 and proceed as above.

An invitation is extended to all our brethren and friends to come and be with us.

Harold Pittman, Asst. Clerk

BUTTAHATCHIE ASSOCIATION

The One Hundred Fifty-fourth annual session of the Buttahatchie Old School Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Poplar Springs Church, Vernon, Alabama, on Friday, and Saturday, and Sunday, October 12, 13, and 14, 1979.

For directions to the meeting house contact Elder Eulie McCool, Steens, Mississippi, 39766, (Phone 1-601-328-0532) or ask directions in the city of Vernon. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

Elder Eulie McCool, Moderator
Charles P. Hayes, Clerk

I must question whether the man that dies an Arminian can go to heaven. But certainly he will not be an Arminian when he is in heaven. The employ of the blessed is to cast their crowns at the feet of God and the Lamb, and to sing, "Not unto us, O Lord".

Toplady

EDITORIAL

GOVERNMENT

Isaiah 9:1, 7

As we come to examine this outstanding portion of the text, let us take a little stroll down into the fertile field of New Testament doctrine. The theme of salvation begins with the unfolding of that salvation as it is laid down in the testimony of Christ as recorded in the Old Testament. Let it be remembered that the Bible is not our salvation but that it is the testimony of it.

In the hidden annals of eternity the Father gave to His Son a portion of the human race. His dealing with this kingdom, as well as the manifestation in time, was entirely the work of God. God set up the kingdom; God overshadowed the virgin and made manifest His Son. It seems to the enlightened child of God so foolish to speak of man having anything to do with the setting up of the kingdom. (Dan. 2:44) It is foolish to suggest to him that the Father placed the government on His Son's shoulder, but that we have got to put our shoulder to the government to get it started into motion.

Let us begin with that, to wit, that the government is upon the Lord Jesus Christ; that it was laid there by God the Father. It is blasphemy for any creature to advocate that the sinner initiates it being there, or its beginning, or its perpetuation. Come, dear reader, and look with joy upon the work of God. If you have been jested at, sneered at; if you have had to endure hardness in your following of the Lord Jesus, rejoice and be exceeding glad, for thus it was when our Lord was in the flesh. There is not any question about this. It is not a matter to be argued and debated about. A question settled is not a debatable question. This is a settled matter, for His word is forever settled in heaven, (Psa. 119:89) and men that claim to be saved by their works, and that know that they

are going to heaven, are doing all they can to prove that heaven is unsettled about salvation, and is waiting in suspense to find out if the sinner acts favorably about the matter. As far as the manifestaton of these sacred matters is concerned, the Lord looked over humanity and did not find any help in salvation. (Isa. 63:5) Why is it that people can not see that? It surely is because that they can not see, and the reason that they can not see is because that Jesus came into the world that they which see (that is, that think they can see) might not see. (John 9:39) The Pharisees crucified the Lord because of His doctrine, and if the time ever comes that the wrath of man is unrestrained to where he is not afraid of the law of the land, His children will receive the same treatment. It must be because that they can not hear, for if they could have heard, they would have heard the Master while here in the flesh, and if this had been true, they would, today, hear them that are of God. (John 8:47; I John 4:6) It must be because that they cannot understand, for there is none righteous, even none that understands. (Rom. 3:11) Not having had a revelation, those that argue and debate and dispute are saying that nothing has been revealed unto them, and the Saviour verifies the case by telling them why they do not understand. (Matt. 12:40; Matt. 13; Luke 8:9; 10:26)

Two precious thoughts are contained in this. God the Father laid the government on the shoulder of Jesus. But why did Isaiah use the singular number. The scriptures describe Him as a Man, and a man in nature has two shoulders. If a load needs moving we do not say that he put his shoulders to the wheel and pushes the load out. But I urge, dear brethren, that you take deep draughts of this glorious river and fountain of everlasting love. The government was on His shoulder, and on His right shoulder is the hand that beckons His sheep to Him, and that carries them in His arm, and the side on which they are placed. There is not any fear in this arm and hand and shoulder. He will govern in righteousness until He has put down all rule and dominion and authority that would raise its malicious head against Him or His brethren, and on His left shoulder He will reign in righteous judgment against all of the vessels of wrath to the end that not one of them shall lift their sneering voice against the poor family of God. The victory of grace manifested in His right shoulder is equal with His left shoulder in His glorious providence. The enabling power of His right shoulder in reigning grace (Eph. 3:7; 4:16) is parallel and lies coincidental with His left shoulder in providential power. (John 19:10; I Chron. 29:10, 12) His grace kept Job from charging God with evil; His power kept the evil forces from destroying Job. This government being on the shoulder of the Son causes Zion to shout for joy, and to be thankful that one part of the government was not laid on her fragile shoulder. What glorious doubles are given the saints of God. (Isa. 40:2; Num. 6,9 -- Joshua and Caleb; Eccl. 4:9, 11; Rom. 5:10; II Cor. 5:18, 19) No, little one, the Lord did not make salvation dependent on my shoulder and wisdom and power on one hand and on Jesus on the other shoulder, for (since a union, or a boundary, or a chain, cannot be any stronger than its weakest part) that would make salvation the surest thing to damnation.

In the long ago when I was pouring over my lessons in journalism, it was a pleasure to note in the writing of others the sequence of plots and articles, and I was sometimes given credit at being adept in using that talent in a story or a plot. Although that gift has been laid by for what I deign to hope are better things, I still enjoy the beauty of sequency in writing. The beauty of it in natural things is desirable for a writer, but what joy and thankfulness to my hungry soul when divine inspiration

moved poor sinners to write in sequence in regard to spiritual things. Needless to say, we are often told that God has done His part, or that God has done all that He is going to do, or that our life after regeneration is what we make it, or that we get out of Christianity according as we put in it. That is not sequency, that is travesty; that is starting out with the high and lofty and sublime subject of the child born and son given, and changing it to the recipient of divine mercy. Paul would call that kind of writing as beginning in the spirit and following and carrying on the flesh. (Gal. 3:2, 3) But if we have learned (and not over learning and never coming to the knowledge of truth) Christ (that is if we have been at His feet), that is not food nor shelter nor raiment, nor is it the truth. The government shall be on His shoulder. Now, as some of the old elders used to say, let us put a scotch there until we find what is to follow. If that is all that God and His son has to do with this illustrious government, we need to know it now, the sooner and the better, for if I have to play a part in my salvation, with the fast weakening of my mortal powers, I need to get in a hurry. If it is that I have a part in this important work, I also need to know what it is that I am to do. But, what is that I hear? What is that death-knell sound that comes loud and clear? Ah, yes, troubled one, it is God speaking to all troubled ones. (II Thes. 1:7) The government was (and still is) laid on the mighty shoulder, the right hand, and the holy arm of the Lord Jesus the Christ. (Ps. 98:1) This One that comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, He is glorious in His apparel, and He is travelling in greatness of His strength. "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." (Isa. 63:1) And God laid help on Him, and gave Him as the Governor of His people Israel. (Matt. 2:6) I speak fearlessly, and I hope in humility, that there is not an account of this government having been laid or placed on anyone, save Jesus Christ the Son of God and the Saviour of sinners.

Although Satan started disputing right early about what God had said, his adherents have outshone him in it. Their claim is that the enhancing and increasing is in the hands of poor fallen sinners, and that by their good order, and their silver and gold, they can have a much better government than we can ever have by leaving the increase, and order, and establishing of it to He on whose broad and strong shoulder that it was laid.

Daniel, in his prophecy, told some gracious and precious things to the king, Nebuchadnezzar, but which really reach their intended benefit as these things are revealed to the children of God today. (Rom. 15:4) The kingdom which God set up was not to cease; it was not left to any other people; it had a breaking and consuming power of all kingdoms in opposition to it, and that is the subject matter of our text. The government is not by man's power nor wisdom, but by the mercy of God. This is an increasing government, but the increase comes from the Son of God; and did you notice the perpetuity of it? An everlasting kingdom with a government that will never end. My mind and heart and soul is lifted up above the despairing confusion around me, and I do hope that thanksgiving to my Father and God for His unspeakable gift to poor sinners. The King sent down to us from God; the government of His people manifested to them by saving grace, and held in God's longsuffering to the wicked; (Rom. 9:22) this perpetual rule never to end; the increase to come from the Son to whom the government was given; the ordering of it to continue in His hands; the establishing of it to be His glorious work.

This continuity of this government was to be upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom. This man, David, being figurative of the Son of God, then the government is to be ordered

(enforced), and established solely for the honor and glory and majesty of David's throne and His kingdom. This government extends over (not to) all things. God our heavenly Father has swore to David, His servant, His chosen one, and He will not repent (turn back). Since God will not turn back from His oath to David (Christ), I am sure that everything promised and purposed in Christ will come to pass.

Ah, how puerile it is for poor puny man that has broken every law that the Lord has given him, to fling in the face of the Creator, the Father and God of our Lord Jesus Christ, that He is an oath-breaker; that He does not honor His oath to His own Son. The God that swore that the government would not end, also "declared (swore) the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure". (Isa. 46:10) "For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil. (Heb. 6:16-19) Poor puny man will do all that he can to maintain his cause; he will do all that he can to care for and protect his family; he will enter court and sit on juries and a case among men is settled or confirmed by an oath, but that same man is up in irons against the oath of God being honored and kept.

This oath in behalf of those that flee for refuge is commensurate and compatible with the government of the kingdom of heaven being laid on the shoulder of the King of glory. The laying or placing of the government on His shoulder was for the poor laboring sinners unto whom the rigid and exacting law of God has been placed over them. The oath was made for the benefit of the same people, the same poor harassed and burdened sinners. Each of them had been brought into a burning and fuel of fire wherein all of their possessions and faculties were coming to an end for them. The government was ordered that the burning with fuel became so intense that they would flee, and it was likewise ordered that they would not be consumed. All of their self righteousness would be mowed down by the great conflagration, but they themselves would be saved by a government, and the King on the throne of it, that will not share its glory nor its throne to another.

All of the dominion found in the law; all of the rage and destruction found in the nature of the waster and his horde of ministers; all, all of the faults and weaknesses found in our flesh, as well as all other things, be they legion, will be subordinate to the reign of government and the King on the throne, to the end that all shall be broken in pieces and consumed by this government, never to molest nor make afraid forevermore.

What a joy it is to have a good hope through grace that this government was laid for us in eternity, made manifest to us while viewing through a glass darkly in time, finally to break in refulgent glory on us in the presence of the King who put down for us all opposing powers and principalities and governments.

(Elder) W. D. Griffin

Should it be thought harsh to question the salvation of one who dies under the blindness of Arminianism; as if a man who only robs God in part might miss of glory; let it be considered that, even on earth, if a person robs me only of my watch, or of a single guinea, he has forfeited his life to the law, as much as if he had robbed me of all I am worth.

Toplady

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Shrob, Ill., May 7, 1859

Dear Brother Beebe:—I earnestly desire you to answer, through the *Signs,* the following questions: 1. Why do the Old School Baptists object to their members joining secret and oath-bound orders, as the Free Masons and Odd Fellows? 2. What course should a gospel church take with members who join these orders and attend their lodges? For one, I feel deeply the importance that the Baptists should be well informed on these points, for numbers of them are joining these orders. I mourn that it is so. Please answer early. Affectionately your unworthy brother,

D. Bartley

REPLY

In replying to the inquiries of brother Bartley, it is not necessary for us to attempt to show what are the merits or demerits of the societies or orders of which he speaks, and we frankly confess our utter inability to do so from our own knowledge. We have never been connected with any of them, either directly or indirectly. Like most of the modern self-styled religious societies of the present age, these orders claim to be benevolent, moral and philanthropic, and to possess some valuable secret, which their philanthropy does not lead them to divulge without money and without price. Our soul has never come, or sought to come, into their secrets, with their assemblies we have had no inkling to be connected. As worldly, social or benevolent institutions, we shall not attempt to analyze them, nor to pronounce sentence of approval or condemnation on them. But the question of our brother calls for the reason of the course pursued by the Old School Baptists in regard to their own members, and we deem it proper that we should, so far as we are able, reply to his inquiries. Of course he does not expect us to answer for all the Old School Baptists, or to pledge all Old School Baptists to indorse what we may say on this or any other subject, but merely to give such reasons as have weight on our own mind on the subject.

The first reason we have to give why we do not join those institutions, or feel willing that our brethren should join them is, that whatever may be their excellence, even admitting them to be as pure and benevolent as their advocates claim that they are, we find in the gospel of Christ and in the organized church of the living God, a fullness which leaves no room to hanker for any of the leaks or onions of Egypt. In Christ, it has pleased the Father, that all fullness should dwell, and if, as professed disciples of Jesus, we are found seeking for treasures or comforts which are not found in Zion, we imply by our conduct that there is not that fullness in our Father's house which has been represented. Why should we go abroad for joys if we have a feast at home?

Second. Whatever may be the secrets held by Free Masons or Odd Fellows, we have a secret which is far more profound, more useful and important; for the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and God will show to them his covenant. As heaven is higher than earth, so does the Lord's secret transcend all human mysteries. In Jesus our Lord are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And this fact the apostle has declared to the saints, lest any man should beguile them with enticing words. (Col. 2:3, 4.) This wisdom and knowledge comprise all that can be profitable to the saints; for in him is given to them all things that pertain to life and godliness. (2 Peter 1:3) This heavenly treasure, this divine secret of the Lord, which God has hidden from the wise and prudent of this world, and revealed unto babes, is far superior to any secret of the orders under consideration. First, because it is the free and sovereign gift of God, and cannot be bought with money. Secondly, it requires no oath, pledge or

penalty to keep it, for none but God can reveal or show it, and none but those who are born of the Spirit of God can possibly learn it. Christians may talk freely about it before all men; ministers of the word may proclaim it unreservedly to Jews and Gentiles, without the fear that any of Adam's race will ever know it unless it be to them revealed as it was to Simon Bar-jona, by our Father which is in heaven. To seek for a secret or mystery in any other fraternity or brotherhood than that of the household of faith is to depart from the greater to seek a less.

Third. Old School Baptists object to their members uniting with those orders, because the obligations assumed in doing so conflict with the obligations assumed in their allegiance to Christ, to be subject to the watchcare of one another. In visiting the lodges, they cannot be under the watchcare of their brethren, who are not permitted to accompany them in their secret conclaves. That which makes void the laws of Christ is incompatible with the christian profession.

Fourth. It is said an oath or affirmation, a solemn pledge, or profane imprecations, are exacted of those who become members of those orders. Presuming this to be the case, the Old School Baptists object to their members assuming such obligations, because the King of Zion has forbidden them to forswear themselves.

Fifth. To waive all other objections, it is certain that when members of the church unite with those institutions, it occasions grief and trouble to their brethren. This, of itself, is sufficient to render it highly improper and disorderly for any member of the church to join such orders. They have professed to prefer Jerusalem above their chief joys; and if they do not they certainly never ought to take on them the sacred name of Jesus, or profess before heaven and earth to be disciples of the Son of God. Those who name the name of Jesus should regard it as the business of their lives to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace; to follow after the things which tend to peace, and things whereby one may edify another. What can there be in our joining the secret orders of Free Masons or Odd Fellows that tends to the peace or edification of the saints of God? Churches have been thrown into disorder, distress, and, in some instances, have lost their visibility from this very cause. But who that sincerely loves our Lord, who is willing to deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow the Lamb, will persist in breaking the peace of the church, wounding the hearts of dear brethren, and in bringing reproach upon the sacred cause of God for this gratification of his fleshly mind? Who would, like Esau, for one morsel of meat, sell his birthright among the saints in the house of God? We have Christ and his apostles as our example, and until we can find them running into these connections, and disregarding the peace and comfort of the church, we are solemnly bound to abstain from them.

These are, at least, some of the reasons, as we apprehend, why Old School Baptists object to their members joining any of these societies, and they are some of the reasons why we could not consent ourself to join them, or feel satisfied with brethren who do join them.

The second question of brother Bartley is, "What course should a gospel church take with members who join those orders and attend their lodges?"

According to our understanding of the laws of the kingdom of Christ, a gospel church should labor faithfully, affectionately and prayerfully to reclaim such disorderly members. Point out to them the impropriety and wickedness of their course, and to restore them to the order of the church. But if after a gospel course of labor they cannot reclaim them, if they really prefer the society of Free Masons and Odd Fellows

to that of the church of the living God, then the course of the church is very plain. Let them go to their own company; but let the church withdraw from every brother that walks disorderly, as Christ by his apostle has commanded. If they refuse to hear the church, let them be unto thee as heathen men and as publicans.

Before we close this article, we wish to say, that on all subjects of discipline, a hard, overbearing or domineering spirit should be studiously avoided. You that are spiritual should attempt the work of restoration in the spirit of meekness. Let nothing be done through strife or vain glorying, but with singleness of heart to the glory of God. We have doubted the propriety of requiring a brother who has joined any of these orders to come out and denounce them, or to divulge any of their secrets, which he has promised or pledged himself to keep secret. To satisfy our own mind, it is enough that the brother discontinues his connection with such institutions, come out from them, and walk no more with them.

One word more. We hold the same objections to our brethren or sisters joining any of the professedly religious or benevolent societies of the age, except the church of God, whether it be for religious, moral, social or political purposes. Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are of good report, may be pursued, without any unjustifiable confederacy or organization with any of these institutions. And we should never turn aside from the footsteps of the flock of Christ for any cause or pretext whatever. If, for instance, Mission, Tract or Sunday School societies do not require the forswearing of their members, yet they make more extravagant pretensions to religion than the order of Free Masons or Odd Fellows do, and are perhaps more likely to decoy the unsuspecting. Other institutions for the ostensible purposes of temperance or politics, have used pledges, if not oaths, which are very far from being harmonious with either the spirit or letter of the gospel. Concerning all these things then, we would reiterate the admonition of inspiration, "Touch not, taste not, handle not." The man who attempted to go from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among thieves, who stripped, and robbed, and wounded, and left him half dead. Let us take warning then, and remain in Jerusalem forever,

"Where our best friends and kindred are,
Where God our Savior dwells."

Middletown, N.Y., August 15, 1859.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

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B. F. Godwin, Al.	6.00
Mrs. Wm. J. Sladky. Ill.	5.00
Andrew C. Agee, Va.	3.00
Selma Strawbridge, N.C.	1.00
Harold D. Weatherford, Va.	11.00
Mrs. P. G. Divers, Va.	1.00

The gospel is a sovereign plaister; but Christ's own hand must make it stick.

Manton

OBITUARIES

SISTER BETTY M. TURNER

I feel a duty laid upon me to write my mother's obituary. Sister Betty M. Turner died March 13, 1979, at the age of 87 years and 10 months.

Sister Turner was a member of Martinsville Primitive Baptist Church for 37 years. She attended services faithfully as long as her health permitted, and still had a great desire to after being confined to Martinsville Convalescent Home, where she was a patient for two years.

She talked to her children, the family, friends, and brethren of the love and mercy that she had received from our Heavenly Father. Often she would tell us of not being alone, that God was with her and she would lay there and talk of Him.

The personnel of the Convalescent Home marvelled because they had never experienced the death of anyone who was alert and of sound mind up to the very last of life on earth. Neither had they or we, the family, ever witnessed the beauty of death and the love and mercy that God gives to His dying saints. On the day of her death, her entire day was spent telling lovely things such as, "Children, my call has come. I won't be with you much longer. The place is so pretty, but it is so hard to get there, and it is taking me so long. Don't try to bring me back. Please don't grieve for me. The Lord has been so good to me. He has shown me Heaven and it is the prettiest place. Every one is the same, white as snow, and moving about without making any noise". She asked Frances to go get Mrs. Draper, the R.N. She said to her, "Mrs. Draper, is this death? I felt a sting. Is this death on my body? It must be. I feel half here and half there. It must be death." She said, "Oh Lord, you have been so good to me. I have called on you so many times. I do wonder if I have asked of you too much. I know that death is on me, and Lord, if you will, please make it just as easy as you will." Well, praise His Holy Name, dear brethren, He answered a dying saint's prayer. What a beautiful day that we spent at her bedside, knowing that her time with us was short, but feeling the presence of God in the room and seeing His love and mercy being manifested on the dying bed. I desire to portray to all you dear ones how merciful and tender God's love abounds within the depth of the soul of one of His, to the moment when the spirit leaves the body, and not another wave of trouble shall roll across our peaceful breast.

Her last words to us was, "Goodby", and the day that she had so eagerly waited for had come.

Two of her favorite songs, "Amazing Grace", and "When I can Read My Title Clear", with the chorus, "How long, how long, Oh Lord, have I on earth to stay", were sung at her funeral. Her pastor, Elder Cecil E. Turner, and Elder Posey E. Ingram conducted the services.

Mama had a beautiful life. She was beautiful in death, and I feel that she will be even more beautiful on the morning of the resurrection when her spirit and body will be reunited to ever praise our God.

She is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Charlotte M. Peters, and Mrs. Frances M. Cooper, both of Martinsville, Va.; and one son, Russell L. Martin, of Richmond, Va.

Written in our love for Mama, and in praise to our God for His loving kindness and tender mercy to us. He is our All in All.

Written By Frances M. Cooper

SISTER LUTIE BOHORN ANDERSON BOLTEN

Laurel Ridge Primitive Baptist Church acknowledges the passing of our dear sister in Christ, Sister Lutie Bohorn Anderson Bolten, daughter of the late John T. and Mary Elizabeth Donman Bohorn, of Roanoke County, Bent Mountain, Virginia. She was born on July 26, 1887. She died at her home January 9, 1979.

She was united in marriage to Malcom W. Anderson in 1923. He died March 1, 1935. She married again to Samuel V. Bolten from Pa., in September, 1945. He passed away Feb. 14, 1965.

She united with Bellview Primitive Baptist Church November 18, 1911. She was a faithful member for over 67 years and was faithful to attend until her husband's health began to fail. In the past few years her health began to fail, too.

She was loved by everyone who knew her. She is sadly missed by her friends and members of our churches. She was buried in Fairview Cemetery beside her first husband.

Services were conducted by her pastor.

Written by request of Laurel Ridge Primitive Baptist Church in conference, March 17, 1979.

Ethel Sowder

SISTER ROXIE CONNER

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst Sister Roxie Conner, widow of Willard Austin Conner.

She was born Dec. 15, 1901, and departed this life August 16, 1978, at the age of 77 years. She leaves to mourn her passing two sons and one daughter, James Warren Conner, of Roanoke; Beulah Mae Richardson, of Roanoke; and G. W. Conner, of Blue Ridge, Va.; and several grandchildren. Perry B. Conner died in December, 1977.

Sister Conner united with the Bellview Church and was baptized the first Sunday in October, 1960, by the Pastor. She was a faithful member and attended her meetings as long as she was able, and always contributed freely to the expenses of the church.

Sister Conner was sorely afflicted with arthritis and suffered much, but we feel her suffering and troubles are over.

May the family and we at the church be reconciled to our loss and His will.

Written by request,
(Elder) Leonard J. Brammer

OBITUARY OF DIANA HARRISON

Sister Diana Harrison, 35, died December 2, 1978. She was born April 28, 1943, the daughter of Ephraim C. and Maggie W. Harrison and had spent all her life in the Bear Grass Community, Williamston, North Carolina.

She is survived by her mother and three brothers, Levi, Eli D., and Billie Harrison. Sister Harrison joined the Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church in 1960 and was baptised by her father and was faithful to attend church as long as her health permitted. She enjoyed singing and would often ask for the hymn, "Robed and Ready" to be sung when Brothers and Sisters of the church would visit her. She bore her afflictions patiently and her dear mother cared for her with love and tenderness.

Funeral services were held for her in the church by Elder N. L. Ambrose, Elder Joseph Leggett, Elder M. E. Garner and Elder Billy Everett on December 4, 1978, with interment in Martin Memorial Gardens near Everetts, North Carolina.

By order of Bear Grass Church while in Conference, December 16, 1978.

N. L. Ambrose, Moderator
Fannie Myrtle Cowin and
Theresa R. Ayers, Committee

WILBERT CLIVE HOLLANDSWORTH

I will attempt to write the obituary of our brother Clive Hollandsworth, as requested by the Union Church while in conference March 24, 1979.

Brother Clive was born June 6, 1899 and passed away February 23, 1979, making his stay on earth 79 years 8 months and 17 days.

He is survived by three sons; Herbert, Randolph, and Elder Larry, seven daughters; Mrs. Ruth Gallimore, Mrs. Bessie Cox, Mrs. June Reynolds, Mrs. Majella Mayers, Sister Ardith Harris, Mrs. Joan Henley, and Mrs. Joyce Henley, one brother; Martin, three sisters; Mrs. Vettie Harris, Mrs. Mazie Phillips, and Sister Blanche Semones, 35 grandchildren, and 23 great grandchildren.

His body was laid to rest in the Hollandsworth Cemetery in Floyd County, Virginia, to await the second coming of our Lord.

Brother Clive had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church since 1921. He was a faithful member of his home church and visited among the other churches and associations. He was always ready to help the church in any way he could.

We read that a good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth. By the large congregation at Brother Clive's funeral, I believe he had a good name.

The funeral was held at Maberry Funeral Home and was conducted by Elder Hale Terry, Elder Amos Hash, and Elder Donald Smith.

May we at the Union Church and His family bow in humble submission to our Lord.

A Sister in Christ, I hope,
Lessie Cox

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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Route 1, Box 65 Keeling, Va. 24566

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 10/79 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CRYING FOR DELIVERANCE

Once I could praise the Saviour's name,
And joy his face to see,
Believing he in mercy came
From heaven, to rescue me.

My fears were gone, my sorrows fled,
I longed at home to be,
And blest his name because he had
In loved delivered me.

Since then how many changing scenes
My soul has lived to see;
And in distress I cry again,
"Dear Lord, deliver me".

My foes I hoped would reign no more;
My soul was blest and free;
But now I faint beneath their power;
"Dear Lord, deliver me."

My heart's deceitful, vile, and base,
To that immense degree,
I cannot live without thy grace;
"Dear Lord, deliver me."

Till Christ, my sun, these clouds remove,
Thy face I cannot see;
O let thy everlasting love,
"Dear Lord, deliver me".

O may thy blood, which speaketh peace,
Again my spirit free;
And as thy mercies never cease,
"Dear Lord, deliver me."

Sarah

"Gospel Standard", 1836

THE MINISTRY

Beloved Editors, -- You will greatly oblige an unworthy worm, by allowing these remarks to appear in your valuable work; for, as I am often sorely tried, some of your correspondents may, perhaps, under the Holy Spirit's teaching, be enabled to give me some information, and also, I trust, some consolation.

What I am so often tried about is, on account of the work of the ministry. I have stood up in the Lord's name rather more than a year, to a despised people, and the Lord only knows what trials I have had to encounter. I will just give a brief outline of what I went through, before I began to speak publicly, when the Lord first set my soul at happy liberty. I can assure you it was a time to be remembered; for I had been under severe bondage; the terrors of a broken law, the lively nature of sin, and the awful thoughts of eternity and the vengeance of Jehovah, were as though they would drive me distracted. But, bless the Lord, when he broke in upon my mind, it was heaven upon earth to me. He brought me by a way that I knew not, made the Lord Jesus exceedingly precious to my soul, and led me to see such glory in him, that I cannot describe.

At that time, the Lord directed my mind to the Acts of the Apostles; and O how I could read of Paul's conflicts, and his zeal for his Lord! No tongue can tell how my soul was poured out unto the Lord, that he would make me as valiant for the truth as Paul. Never mind, said I, what conflicts I endure. O how I thought I could spill my blood in the defence of truth; for I so loved the Lord for what he had done for me; and I continually prayed that the Lord would make me one of his ministering servants. This was about two years before I began to speak in the name of the Lord, and these words often dwelt upon my mind, "He that desireth the office of a bishop, desires a good work;" and I was led to see that it was a good work - - no station under the sun like it; and I really believe that my desire was good, wholly for the glory of the Lord. O that it were with me as in months that are past, for this was when the candle of the Lord shone round about me. But, O wretched man that I am! Soon after this, darkness seized my mind, and I began to condemn myself for having such thoughts. Now the warfare began. Evil thoughts filled my mind; fretfulness, rebellion, lust, and a host of things that I cannot mention. Now I had rather be anything than a preacher, the Lord is my witness. The first words that cause me a great deal of trouble were as follow. It was in a dream, when I was ruminating in my mind on the importance of the work of the ministry, that it was required of a minister to be faithful, that he must be taught of God, and several other things, and these words came as an answer: "That he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier"; which were followed immediately by these words: "And in nothing terrified by your adversaries". The trouble this dream caused, I cannot relate; and though the first words did not come personally, yet those, "And in nothing terrified by your adversaries", caused me to say, What can it mean? Thus I went on for about a month, till I determined I would not be a preacher. Nay, said I, I cannot speak in the name of the Lord; for it seemed to be a trick of the devil; and then I dreamed the same dream over again, only with this difference, "That you may please him", etc. When I awoke, I had a sorrowful heart, saying, I cannot, I will not speak. O that I had never been born! Go where I would, this followed me. When I went to hear the word preached, I could receive no comfort; and when the speaker named his text, I thought whatever should I do if I were in his place, and deeply did I feel for him, wondering how he would get through.

About this time, the Lord's people whispered it about, that they thought the Lord was fitting me for the work of the ministry, and that I should come forth very shortly. This was no way pleasant to me; and when they asked me if my mind was not exercised about it, I dared not to say no, though I shuffled it off as well as I could. Soon after this, I was so greatly oppressed that I determined to go to a friend's house, and open my mind; but when I arrived, I found a parson there; and he so terrified me that my mouth was closed, and instead of getting comfort, I was sorrowful beyond expression; for he prated away as though preaching was a trade. He said he had had three calls; one was not salary enough, another lay too far distant; and so he went on. I was now sorry that I had ever gone, for this mongrel made me worse than ever. I was looking at the importance of the work, but he was as trifling as could be. When I left the house I went sighing and groaning till I came to a bridge; and now I thought it was all over, and hard work indeed I had to get over without throwing myself in the river. I went home, but my friends being all carnal, I could not stop in the house five minutes; so I went out, and cried heartily to the Lord to put an end to this strife; and after I had groaned my petition to the Lord, I felt a little eased for a short time. Soon after this, being oppressed as before, I cried out unto the Lord, "What wilt thou have me to do?" and these words came as an answer, "Preach the word"; and enjoying at this moment a little sense of the Lord's goodness towards me, I said, "Lord, I will, if thou wilt teach me;" and I really did think I could speak at this time. But this did not continue long, for doubts and fears soon again took possession of my mind. On one occasion, I was saying within myself, "Surely the Lord never can have chosen me to preach the gospel! If I ever attempt it, I shall be confounded;" when these words were made to set all right again:

"Too wise to be mistaken, He,--Too good to be unkind".

Again set for the defence of the gospel, I was again all hot for speaking; but now another difficulty arose. I was not a member of any church, so that I could not be sent out as is the usual custom. But O what fit words these were for me at this time: "And immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood, but preached Christ, that he is the Son of God". Now the word of God was like a fire in my bones; but very shortly I began with my old tale: "How can I stand before the people? They will disdain me; I shall never be able to meet them;" and a host of such like things. But the reply I received was, "What is that to thee? Follow thou me." Then I said, "Lord, if thou wilt teach and uphold me, and strengthen and keep me, I will attempt to speak in thy name." And the Lord said, "I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

The next night I began to speak, and no tongue can describe what I went through before the time came. I spoke from Deut. 33:27. The passage lay on my mind all the night and day before. I had a good opportunity, and was a wonder to myself.

Now, beloved Editors, what has caused me to write so fully, is to know whether a man can go through these things, and be deceived at last; for sometimes I am tried severely as to whether I have any business to speak in the name of the Lord; that I am nothing but a deceiver; that I am a preacher to others, and shall be a cast-away myself: and when the people say (as is often the case) that the word has been blessed to them, I sometimes cannot believe it; and when I am compelled to believe it, O, says my unbelief, the Lord employed the raven to feed his servant. Look at Balaam, look at Judas, I say to myself; and then I am ready to conclude that I will not speak any more in the name of the Lord. But O what a dagger this is to me. I feel

satisfied within myself that if I am not called to the work of the ministry, I am not called by grace. I go to the pulpit in a worse state, I think, than a man goes to the gallows; yet in general I have liberty there; but I am seized directly that I come down, that I have condemned myself. What is worse than all, I cannot pray from the heart; it seems only lip service. Sin is too much for me; and though I hate it, yet do I the things I hate.

May the Lord grant to some one or other of your correspondents a spirit of sympathy, and enable him to be a means of strengthening my weak hands, and confirming my feeble knees.

A traveller

---

629 Hwy. 95A South
Cantonment, Fla. 32533

Dear Editors of the ***Signs of the Times,***

I see my subscription expires next month and I want to keep it coming. I get lots of satisfaction out of reading its contents, especially Elder Beebe's article on Generation and Regeneration (May issue).

I am sending a check for two years, and you may use the rest as you see fit.

I want to say from my heart that I thank you and may God bless you to continue the good word, as no carnal mind can write as the writers of the ***Signs.***

A brother in hope of eternal life,
J. A. Avera

FROM AN OLD "SIGNS"

Mt. Rose, N.J.
Feb. 4, 1898

Elder F. A. Chick -- My dear Pastor, At your request I will make the attempt to write some of the Lord's dealings with me. I was brought up a Presbyterian. My parents were of that denomination. We had to go to Sunday School, whether we wished to go or not. We were never allowed to play, or do anything of that kind, on Sunday. I was deeply impressed in my mind upon spiritual things, when quite young. I felt myself to be a lost and ruined sinner, and was deeply grieved for some time, and formed resolutions that I would live a different life, but found to my sorrow, that I only grew worse. They told me that I must pray to God for a new heart, and he would hear my prayer. I found no peace for a year or more. Then they held a revival meeting at Pennington Church. I went, with my parents, night and day, but while others were rejoicing in their Saviour, I felt that I was an outcast. One evening when alone Christ spoke peace to my troubled soul. At that time I had never heard an Old School Baptist preach, nor had seen any one baptized. I was received into the Presbyterian church the day that I was fifteen.

A few years after I was married my husband also joined the Presbyterians. My children all became members of that denomination in their early youth. But the time came when their preaching no longer reached my case. I did not feel satisfied. I was hungering for the bread of eternal life, for something to comfort and strengthen me. I did not know what the matter was, until the Lord directed my steps to go and hear Elder Purington preach, at Mt. Rose, N.J., from the Song of Solomon, second chapter, fourteenth verse. He spoke about the redeemed being in the clefts of the rock, and in the secret places of the stairs. It was then that I heard as I had never heard before. It appeared as if every word was intended for me. He told me my experience better than I could have told it myself. I then thought, "Can it be that I am one of them?" How it humbled me. I felt as if I wanted to get right down upon my knees and thank the Lord for his love and mercy. Such words of comfort and consolation I never heard before. Here then was comfort in a finished salvation, wrought by the grace of God in

our hearts, not by our own works, but by the renewing of the Holy Ghost. I was lost in wonder, love and praise to the giver of every good and perfect gift, which cometh from above.

In two months I went to hear the Elder again. After the meeting I told him that although I had been a member of the church thirty-two years, I had never heard preaching as I did when I heard him two months before. He said it was an arrow from the quiver of the Almighty. I told him that I had often wondered why there was so much love among the Old Baptists, but I understood it now, for I loved them, as I had no other people, and that I was bound to them by ties which could never be broken. Now it was my desire to be baptized, but I kept all these things to myself as long as I could, for I feared to make it known, because there would be so much opposition. Finally I had to tell my husband. He sent right away for his minister. He came and talked and prayed until I became so nervous, and felt so badly, that I was glad when he went away. I went up stairs and fell upon my knees and tried to pray, but not a word could I say. I felt as if I was forsaken both by God and man. I cried in my anguish, "Was there ever sorrow like my sorrow?" Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? But alas! like Peter, I denied the Lord, and remained with the Presbyterians two years more. I felt that I was no longer one of them, and did not feel at home, and there was nothing in their preaching for me.

In the spring of 1883 I attended the association at Hopewell, N.J., the first time. Such preaching I never heard before. They all appeared to be of one heart and mind. They spoke with demonstration of the Spirit, and with power. How much I longed to be one of their number.

I never went to Pennington but very few times after that. How anxiously I prayer to the Lord to show me, or make known to me, the way that I should go. Two weeks before I was baptized, all at once, everything was made plain to me, so that I could no longer doubt what was the way for me to go. Before this I had pondered these things over in my heart, at home and abroad, the Lord had spoken so many precious promises to me, and I had felt that his presence was near me. I was thinking one day of the fact that my husband and children were all members of another church, and how hard it would be for them to have me leave them, and go to another church, when the words came to me so forcibly, "I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee". How these words comforted me. At another time these words came, "I will be thy God and guide, even unto death;" and many others at different times, which I could not now speak of.

I sent word to Elder Purington that I intended to come before the church on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in July, after the Association, and that nothing would hinder me, but sickness or death. But could or would they receive me? I was so unworthy. If they did not, where could I go to hear the words of eternal life? But they did receive me, and need I tell you how happy and peaceful I felt.

The next morning, as we stood by the water, I thought of my husband and children. If they could only see and believe as I did, when these words came to me, "For I say to you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham". I have rested upon that promise. You know how gracious the Lord has been unto me, in bringing two of my children to follow in the footsteps of their Saviour, by being buried with him in baptism.

"Am I called? O, can it be?
Has my Saviour chosen me?
Has he named my worthless name,
Among the followers of the Lamb?"

Hymn 679, (Beebe's collection) tells my experience better than I can tell it. I soared above the world. I thought I would never have anything but sunshine. But

in this I was mistaken.

"Little of myself I knew,
Little thought of Satan's power."

For all along my pathway I have had my doubts and fears, my joys and sorrows, but I still have a hope that I may be clothed in the robe of Christ's righteousness. It is by the grace of God that I am what I am. If I am one of the chosen, it is through his love and mercy, and not by works of righteousness, which I have done. It is by the renewing and sanctifying of the Holy Ghost which he has shed on us abundantly, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity. I fear that I shall weary you by this long letter, so I will close. Please excuse all mistakes.

Eure A. Drake

Danville, Va.

Dear Brother Smith,

I am sorry to be late sending in for renewal of my subscription for the ***Signs.*** I have been sick and unable to write.

Enclosed is my check for one year and use the other as you see fit. I love the ***Signs*** and read it through as soon as I get it. I don't get to the meetings much any more, and Oh, how I miss the sweet fellowship of like kindred faith. I feel all I have to live for is my Saviour Jesus Christ.

Please pray for one so unworthy when at the Throne of Grace. I am a little sister in hope of eternal life though I feel to be the least.

Lillian Holt

I DIE DAILY

So many things harass the mind, heart, and soul! The believer in Jesus finds things on the right and left hand to distress him: sin and the consequences thereof! O wretched man! He finds himself to be wretched. He would live as holy as God is holy; and it is his pain, grief, and burden, that he does not. The bitter root of past sins is continually growing bitter fruit,--yielding it as naturally as the fruit from a tree. O the bitter consequences of sin! When he would do good, evil is present with him. Evil habits, the consequences of sin, are, day by day, a thorn in his side. What to do and what not to do; where to go and what next he should turn himself to; in these things he finds difficulty. The bitter root of nature, grown into a tree by the continual practice of sin, more or less, throughout his entire life, is a thorn under the pillow of every earthly satisfaction that the believer has. O sin, sin, sin! says he, that killed the Son of God; and I do not know but that it may kill me to all eternity, for I often, yea, continually, at times, have felt myself, I fear, to have no part or lot in precious redemption. Thus, fears and fightings, repentance and woe, anxiety and dimness of anguish, continually beset him. He does not want any one to tell him that he is a wretched man. He finds himself to be so, and very often, indeed. O that I had never sinned, says he, then would my peace have flowed like a river. He has no communion with those who say sin can do us no harm; for he bitterly bewails, laments, and, as it were, beats on his heart, day by day, like the publican, that he has sinned against God. I have sinned, says he, against God, my fellow-creatures, and myself. O wretched man that I am! I cannot undo the past. I fear I am, perhaps, in an evil snare. He finds and feels himself to be a link in the chain of predestination; whether he is made for heaven or hell, alas, he knows not! Certainly, my sins, says he, testify against me.

Woe unto the world because of offences! He finds himself to offend in many things; and the enemies of the gospel eat up his imperfections, faults, and shortcomings, like as they would eat bread. This gives him pain, and stirs him up to have such wrath, indignation, and revenge against himself, such a

jealousy for the Lord's honour, and such a tenderness of conscience, as he often thinks is a mark of his salvation, being that which he thinks the reprobate never has. He knows Arminian holiness is rotten, and that head-knowledge Calvinism grows no such fruit. Thus the believer is hemmed in on all sides, and he finds what Paul said to be his own case, "Fears from within, and fightings from without"; and he finds, at times, constrained also to speak openly of these things, and say, "I would not have you ignorant of what a great fight of afflictions I find myself to be beset with". (2 Cor. 1:8)

Alas for the day, for it is great! for Ephraim's sin is no longer bound up; but our iniquities testify against us; the ground is chapt (Jer. 14:4); and he finds himself to pine away in his iniquities, and to feel what the prophet says, "As for our iniquities, we know them."

David says, "Cleanse thou me from my secret faults"; as if at what he knew already of them, he was stunned: but what was behind the curtain he did not know how far the dismal extent might be. What he knew already of his sins drove him, at times, to the borders of madness, blasphemy, and despair. For when a saint feels he has no part in redemption, he fears he must begin to blaspheme aloud! O the awful nature of man! O the solemn nature of God! "When I think of thy terrors", says he, "I am distracted, and I am afraid of thy judgments."

Thus Christ, that exalted Prince, gives manifestatively repentance; as much overtopping all natural repentance which natural conscience knows anything of, as the blessed Almighty differs from Satan, or heaven is exalted above hell.

This man has no communion with the empty-headed nonsense of mere praters about free grace; for he believes and feels such to be only two-fold more the children of hell than the profane. He feels they have no fellowship with Christ in his sufferings; that they know much of Christ as they think, but that they know nothing of themselves; which is a complete mark of reprobation, unless grace tears up such men's hearts; for there is not the slightest shadow of evidences that such men are of the number of the elect. For, I ask, is not Christ exalted to give this divine repentance, as well as remission of sins? Yes. (Acts 5:31)

Thus, in our day, there are swarms of persons talking about free grace and a free and full salvation, who are members of Calvinist churches and congregations, who are only twice dead, once in their Christianity, and once by nature! and therefore are as bad again as the profane, who are only once dead.

A Godly sorrow, a brokenness of spirit, a fellowship with Christ in his sufferings, a tenderness of conscience, a bewailing and lamenting through softened feelings of communion with Christ on the bloody tree, is the grand sap, as it were, of the tree of life and knowledge; and the glorious truths of imputed righteousness alone, without works, and of sin-atoning blood, are the precious fruit and eternal ornament thereof.

A knowledge of Christ, as the Prince and Saviour, to give remission of sins, without a coequal knowledge of Him as the giver of repentance too, is all head-knowledge, confusion, contradiction, and abomination; for how can he bestow remission without bestowing knowledge of the sins also?

And, moreover, when Christ comes to live in the elect soul, the carnal mind, which is enmity agains him, will spit its poison and venom, by indwelling corruptions, and working all manner of concupiscence and sin against Him; and this war will continue, more or less, as long as the saint is in the body.

The elect are priests. A priest is to offer sacrifice; and the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, and a broken and contrite heart. "With this man will I dwell, says

the Lord". (Isa. 57:15; 66:3)

Thus, the elect are made to be poor, trembling, humble groaners, burdened in the tabernacle of their sin and death: they pray with groanings, deep, heartfelt, real, and which cannot be uttered (a certain sign that God the Spirit dwells in them). The Lord saveth such as be of a contrite spirit; but none else. Thus the walls of the true Jerusalem are always built in troublous times (Dan. 9:25), and the true paschal Lamb is always eat, roasted in the fire of tribulation, and eaten with bitter herbs (Ex. 12:8): for ye shall burn no leaven nor any honey in any offering of the Lord made by fire; (Lev. 2:11) but the sweets and bitters shall go together; and they who have great light and not great darkness, great consolations and not great sufferings, and a knowledge of Christ in light and not also in darkness, I believe to be all a delusion, and to be vamped up alone by the false angel of light, the devil; and that it is not the work of the sin-reproving, judgment-reproving Comforter.

Abingdon, May 17, 1836 J. K.

(This article is as vital today in 1979, as it was when originally written. Editor)

Summerfield, N.C.

Dear Sirs:

I find my subscription to the ***Signs*** is past due. My deepest appreciation for the courtesy extended by continuing the copies which have been sent past the expiration date.

My wife and I enjoy the good reading provided by the ***Signs,*** and at times are made to feel a blessing by the sermons and the experiences of His little children.

Enclosed is my check for $15.00. Extend my subscription for two more years and use the remainder for the distribution of the ***Signs.***

Yours in Christ (I Hope)
Hugh Knight, Jr.

Shreveport, La.

Dear Elder Smith,

We are sorry to be late in sending in our payment of the ***Signs of the Times.*** My beloved husband has been in the hospital over a long while now and my health is not too good. I am a lot slower than I used to be in getting things done, yet I have so much to be thankful and praise the Lord for. He has blessed me to care for my dear husband since he had open-heart surgery last July. One lung collapsed during surgery and the doctor's could not get but three of the by-passes done. (He needed five). I just thank God for sparing his life and for His marvelous grace, strength, and help to both of us. I firmly believe in a God who is all wisdom and works His will in the armies of Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth - Who is all Power and makes us to rejoice even in sickness, tribulations and oppressions. Nothing just happens, but God has a purpose and reason for everything that takes place, and by experience I do know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.

I do not know that I am one of God's little children, but my little hope is so precious to this poor sinner and I can look back and see that He has ever been with me and my beloved husband. Even at a very young age, though I didn't understand at the time, the Lord began showing and revealing and teaching me things by His blessed Spirit in dreams and visions and in the softest and sweetest voice, and with such power and force. I cannot express or explain, but I do know by experience that when the Lord begins a good work in one of His children, He never stops it but just goes on and on until our lives in the present world are ended. Salvation is alone of the Lord. It is all of grace, amazing grace, that saves poor hell-deserving beings such as I know myself to be. Blessed be the Name of the Lord.

Dear Brother, I didn't know when I started this note that it would end like

this. The Lord speaks and it is done. He must lead, guide, and direct us, for we can do nothing of our own that is good. Sin is mixed with all we do or say, or at least I find this so with myself. So precious are all God's promises. He'll never utterly leave or forsake one of His children. If we have not had chastisement and have been made to feel that rod, then are we bastards and not sons and daughters. We also have the staff to lean on, Jesus Christ the Rock, wherein our little hope is anchored, though often times we feel so all alone and cast down. He knows our every need and supplies all we need (not our wants).

Blessed be the God, our Father and Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ for all He hath done for us.

Remember us when bowed down at the Throne of mercy.

Forgive all errors and mistakes. May God bless you all to keep the ***Signs*** coming. It is a comfort.

A little sister, I humbly hope,
in Jesus,
Mrs. Robert Miles

MINISTERIAL GIFT

I have often heard it said of persons, that such and such as one has a gift. What gift, I ask? natural? or spiritual? For, I am persuaded, there is a difference of the highest nature between even the utterance of a natural and spiritual gift. The one is formed by the dry handicraft of the stores of nature; the spiritual gift is the costly and most precious workmanship of the Holy Ghost, that most supreme and blessed Sovereign. The utterance in a spiritual gift breathes life; it has dew. Moistened and comprehending in its expression of heavenly and experienced glories from the man's soul, wherein the blessed Trinity walks and dwells, the utterance of such a man falls with a weight neither saints nor sinners can reject. It is the key, unlocking to the eye, fellowship, advantage, or injury, of all, the mysterious kingdom of God, in the speaker's soul, a savour of life or death, increasingly, to a certainty, to every saith and profane man that comes within its reach. What dry, miserable nurses are the college-clad, academy-made, sons of nature, who, not sent of Christ, preach him,--but how? As Cain, with the fruits of the earth, which are cursed, the stores of nature, their own bread, (Isa. 4:1) natural intellect, judgment, and understanding--all fallen, the endowments of the first man (I Cor. 15:45),--of the earth, earthly, having nothing whatsoever to do with the second Man, the glorious Lord from heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ. And I believe the fallen mind of natural man, in all its endowments of reason, ideas, capacity of expressing itself, memory, judgment, and intellectual excellence, is all Christ-hating, and has an impassable gulph of eternal enmity and separation drawn between it and the God and Father of the Lord Jesus, the true God. Natural-made ministers, who have a gift in and by the stores of nature, as above, differ as much, and are quite as much of a different kind, from heaven-ordained, and grace-ordained, experimental, ransomed ministers, as heaven differs from hell. No; never let there be confusion on this head. And, if it is said, Such an one has a gift; ask, What gift? Is he a ransomed soul, manifested in his experience? For, as for dry letter-men, their religion, standing in what they know of God through natural conscience and reading the Bible, and being breathed upon by the false angel of light, the false Christ; I say, these men, amongst dissenters and the church, as well as amongst the universal herd of self-made, and mongrel, and infinitely varied professors, are a plague, sore, and confusion to any weaklings of Christ's flock, not yet severed from them. And, as Nehemiah cursed them that spake half Ashdod and half the Jew's language, so,

generally, the vast herd of Baptist, Independent, and various profession ministers, in and out of the Establishment, who fatten on Christ and the loaves, but never, as the predestined elect, experimentally manifested by the Spirit in themselves and to spiritual persons; I say, these mongrel, Samaritan, and academy-made race, are the plague often for a long time to some poor souls that know Christ. They are the stronghold of the devil, who never leads any of the human race, so inextricably involved in his nets, as those in a false and mere natural religion. The nearer to the truth in the letter, the better for him, and the easier. Thus, he is called the false Christ; and this tribe whom I have been here attacking, are the most disguised and efficient officers in his army, children of the bondwoman. head-knowledge Calvinists and Arminians, whose natural conscience and judgment, exercised on the Bible, under the tuition of the devil, dressed as fair as any angel of light, Thus, if it were possible, planning for the deception of the very elect themselves; and thus, we are sure, he will het all the rest. All these mysteriously Satan-endowed, natural-gifted, and admired orators, of every shade and kind that can be imagined, the world is infested with; and, like Satan, walk up and down in it all around us, and increasingly every day.

And lettery high Calviniss, with a general experience, have the stamp of reprobation, as far as we can see, along with these mentioned. For, there is neither salt, dew, brokenness, contrition, extent of experience, or living marks in them to satisfy the discerning eye of a spiritual man. Their experience is like the miracles of Pharoah's magicians, as two to ten, when compared with the living marks in a living child of God: so small, scanty, feeble, and unsatisfactory; quite within the reach of natural conscience, the letter-knowledge of Scripture, and the mystic touch of the devil to inflate and decorate it up.

Abingdon, January 14, 1836 I.K.

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

On Saturday before the first Sunday in May, 1979, the Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church met in conference, and agreed that we ask that Brother Hardy Barnes by set apart to the office of Deacon, and the ordination service was set for Sunday morning at 10:00 A.M.

On Sunday morning, May 6, 1979, the church met and conference was opened with Hymn No. 563, by Elder Holland, and prayer by Elder Kenneth Windham.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Harvey Holland, Moderator, and Sister Estelle Joyner Williford, Clerk. Ministers and deacons present were invited to seats with us in the service.

The moderator called for the candidate, who was presented by deacons John Williams and Leon Griffin, and he was seated in front of the ministers. The ministers present were Elders W. B. Barnes, Kenneth Windham, and Harvey Holland.

The presbytery being satisfied with the qualifications of the candidate, administered the laying on of hands and prayer. The charge was delivered by Elder Harvey Holland.

The ordained deacon was delivered back to the church as a deacon of the Primitive Old School Baptist Church at Mill Branch, and the right hand of fellowship was extended to him. A copy of this is to be recorded in the church book, and a copy sent to the ***Signs of the Times*** for publication.

Conference was dismissed by Elder Kenneth Windham.

Elder Harvey Holland, Moderator
Sister Estelle Joyner Williford, Clerk

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association is to be held, the Lord willing, with Upper Town Creek Church, Wilson County, N.C. It is to begin on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1979. (October 12, 13, 14)

The Association will be held Friday in Upper Town Creek Church, and Saturday and Sunday in Elm City School.

All lovers of the truth are invited to visit with us.

(Elder) W. W. Stallings, Jr. Clerk

SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

The Salisbury Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church at Snow Hill, Maryland, on October 24, and 25, 1979.

All ministers, brethren, and friends of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us.

Those arriving on Tuesday will please contact Deacon Bill Davis, New Church, Virginia, (telephone 804-824-3137), or Elder James Poole, Salisbury, Maryland, (telephone 301-742-6406). Those coming on Wednesday go directly to the church on Washington Street.

Maude Truitt, Church Clerk

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The 1979 session of the Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Healthy Plains Church, the fourth Sunday, Friday and Saturday before in October, 1979. (October 26, 27, 28)

The Friday services will be held at the meeting house which is located a few miles south of Bailey, N.C., on Highway 581.

The Saturday and Sunday services will be held at Rock Ridge School, which is located on State Road 1142. Those coming from the North or South on Interstate 95 turn west on Highway 42 for one mile to State Road 1142. Those coming from the East or West on Highway 264 should take Interstate 95 South to Highway 42 and proceed as above.

An invitation is extended to all our brethren and friends to come and be with us.

Harold Pittman, Asst. Clerk

BUTTAHATCHIE ASSOCIATION

The One Hundred Fifty-fourth annual session of the Buttahatchie Old School Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Poplar Springs Church, Vernon, Alabama, on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, October 12, 13, and 14, 1979.

For directions to the meeting house contact Elder Eulie McCool, Steens, Mississippi, 39766, (Phone 1-601-328-0532) or ask directions in the city of Vernon. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

Elder Eulie McCool, Moderator
Charles P. Hayes, Clerk

KEHUKEE
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Two hundreth and fourteenth session of the Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association is to convene with the Robersonville Church, Martin County, Robersonville, N.C., the first Sunday in October, Saturday before and Monday following. (October 6, 7, 8, 1979) The church is located along U.S. Highway 64 in Robersonville. The Association is to convene on Saturday and Sunday at Robersonville Junior High School, located along U.S. Highway 64 in Robersonville. On Monday the Association will be at the church, along U.S. 64 in Robersonville.

We extend a cordial invitation to all brethren of the same faith and order to come and meet with us. All friends are welcome.

(Elder) Marvin E. Garner, Clerk

HOPEWELL ASSOCIATION

The ninety-fifth annual session of the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Association will convene, God willing, with Liberty Hill Church, Tuscaloosa County, Alabama, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in October, 1979. (October 19, 20, 21)

Going north from Tuscaloosa on Highway #43, turn east on County Road 38 at caution light between Mile Marker 221 and 222, and follow signs to the church.

Our brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

Elder A. H. Brock, Moderator

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE
DISTRIBUTION OF THE
SIGNS OF THE TIMES
TO MAY, 1979

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CONSOLATION

What an unspeakable mercy and soul-supporting truth it is, that the everlasting covenant of grace is ordered in all things and sure! How comforting and consoling to the mind when under affliction or desertion. The tried, tempted, buffeted, cast down believer may reason thus: Well, I am afflicted in my poor body; I feel the symptoms of approaching dissolution; this poor tabernacle will soon be taken down, soon be laid in the grave, and moulder into dust. I know this is all according to covenant arrangements. The afflictions I now feel, the time when I was to be exercised with it, the measure of it, the nature of it, how long I am to endure it, and when to be brought out of it, or whether it will end in my removal from this desert of sin and woe are all ordered by my heavenly Father, who has my good at heart, and will do all things right.

"Sweet to lie passive in his hands,
And know no will but his."

How blessed it is to be brought to bow to divine sovereignty, and to perfectly acquiesce in the will of our heavenly Father. None but the blessed Spirit of the living God can bring a poor sinner here. He may now and then remind us that this is not our rest, for it is polluted, by laying upon us his afflicting hand; yet he is ever with us, and has passed his infallible word that he will never leave us nor forsake us. Precious promise! the perfection of his nature is stamped upon it, and upon every promise of his word. O for precious faith in exercise in his blessed promises! They are like so many bank notes. Christ is the believer's never-failing bank; for it hath pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell, and in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead. John well knew this was an inexhaustible bank; for, having been taught by the blessed Spirit his own emptiness, he cries out, with holy rapture, at the thought that he and his brethren had such a bank, "Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace." The children of God have been drawing upon this bank for nearly six thousand years, and it is not exhausted yet; so far from it, it contains as much now as ever it did. It still stands the same, "His fulness".

Hallelujah! Precious Jesus! Bring me, though a poor beggar, all in rags, without a friend, without a home, bring me, by thy blessed Spirit, to thyself, as my almighty Banker. Give me a little note, even one, out of the many that are in thy word. Hast thou not said, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest"? Here is a precious note, of thy own blessed writing, signed and sealed! Pay it off, thou blessed Banker, and give me rest. Enable me to rest upon thy precious promises, thy immutable veracity, covenant love, atoning blood, complete and eternal redemption, finished salvation, justifying righteousness.

May I know, by thy Spirit's teaching, that my name is written in thy book of life, that my title is good, that my interest is founded upon union, upon relationship, to thee. Bear witness to my spirit that I am a son, and if a son, then an heir, heir of God, and joint heir with Christ Jesus.

We read of some, in the days of Nehemiah, who could not show their Father's house, nor their seed, or pedigree; whether they were of Israel or no. (See Nehemiah 7:61-64) O my soul, canst thou prove thy pedigree, as belonging to the Israel of God, the election of grace? Is thy name written amongst the living in Jerusalem? (Isa. 4:3) Or is it written in the earth? (Jer. 17:13) Solemn thought! Search, my soul; give no sleep to thy eyes, nor slumber to thy eyelids, till thou art satisfied upon this important subject. The great question is, Am I born again? Have I been quickened from a death in sin to a life of righteousness? Have I been made to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, to trust my all in his hands, to love him above all things, and to cry to him for mercy? He says he calls his sheep by name. What is my name, and character? My state by nature is described in the latter part of Rom. 1; but can I read my name in Romans 3:19, and Rom. 7, or in Isaiah 55:1? If I can, under the sweet power and unction of the Holy Ghost, then I may be sure it is written in the Lamb's book of life.

O what poor, worthless worms we are; nothing in ourselves but a mass of corruption. May the blessed Spirit bear witness to each of our souls of our interest in a precious Christ, and bless us, manifestatively, with the sweet consolations of his love, for his name and mercy's sake.

R. J.

Wherever there is a Paul to preach, there will be a Tertullus to find fault.

Toplady

EDITORIAL

GALATIANS 5:17-26

"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, n rders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh wih the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another." (Gal. 5:17-26)

As I come before you with this vast and important subject, I do hope that kind indulgence will flow to me from you. I am sure that the object of Paul is the comfort of believers and the glory of God, and I do hope that this object might be mine as I write on these sacred matters. Many things I am lacking; in fact, if I am a sharer with the apostle, I do not know anything as I ought. However, that these are good things I am sure, and only good things will do us any good here or here after. I may say something that you do not agree with, but the object or the lesson intended, I do believe that we are mutually agreed. I am sure that Paul is condemning all ungodliness, and that he is injoining upon us only the good things of the Spirit. If we can lay aside our personal whims and ideas and come to Him in the Spirit of holiness for guidance and instruction, we will sit down at His feet.

I do hope that as long as I avoid dealing in personalities or attributing to the apostle that he is encouraging any lasciviousness, that I will have your well wishes in my endeavor to find the beauties in what is being dealt with.

If we always know what the inspired writers were dealing with, we could safely say that the inspired writers say what they mean and mean what they say. Our limited understanding forbids us taking a rigid or dictatorial position about sacred things. For instance, it is an established fact that we are not under law. But if we take that as it first appears we immediately are ready to say that the child of grace is not under any restraint about indulging in the lusts of the flesh. I am sure that such a thought is not true; that the Bible condemns it from beginning to end; that the experience of each and every child of grace condemns such a thought. The truth of the matter is this: We are not under the law of Moses (which is to say that he brought it down from Sinai, but that it proceeded from God), but we are under the grace of God. This grace of God is in action now, and, while it has always been in force, yet it was not manifest to Israel with the same sweetness that it is unto the Gentiles. It is made unto us with power as the New Covenant is made known unto us. Before this, the law was written on tables of stone, now it is written in the heart. As it appeared to Israel from the Lord, they were under it but unable to hear it and live (under it). If God had left them in that condition there would not have been any salvation, for no one could be justified by the deeds of keeping that law. (Acts 13:39) It was in mercy that He (God) raised them up another prophet, and they could hear Him. (Deut. 18:18) This covenant of grace was not written on the hearts of men and women in eternity; it was not written in their hearts while they were in a state of death or aliens from God. It was written in their hearts and put into their mind as they came into the light of the New Birth. The law was not removed from the heart and the mind. I think that this is getting into the inward man as much as it could ever be--to be put into the mind, and to be written in or upon the heart. Instead of removing the laws of God from a man or woman, it seems that it is bringing it into their lives much closer than while on tables of stone. If this does not seem to be the case, what would you suggest that Jeremiah and Paul meant about this sacred matter? You surely would not attempt to say that all law was done away with. I do not see how a law could very well be done away with, when it is removed from tables of stone and put in the mind and written into the heart. For it to be put in the mind simply means that it is there all the time from the first operation of the Holy Spirit until that subject of grace is called hence. This is in keeping with the apostle, to wit, "To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not". (Rom. 7:18) I do not think too much of the thought, to wit; "I did not know any better." I do not think too much of the assertion, to wit; "If you will show me where I have done wrong I will confess to it." This might be, and is, true about head matters, but it is not true about heart matters. You do not need a minister to tell you whether you have done wrong or not. The laws of God, being in your mind, and on your heart, you will know when you have done wrong.

As Christ is raised up in our experience, He becomes everything to us. At the first beams of His rising, we see Him through the lattice work or through the veil, and He does not look promising to us. He is dull; He is as a Root out of dry ground. What did Isaiah mean by a "Root out of dry ground"? Surely we are not going to say that He was as a natural root out of dry soil like my garden often is in the summer. Surely there must be something more important being said to us. The question is, What is it? Well now look at the achievements of Israel; look at their

history; look at the way that they have broken every mandate of God as uttered in that law. That is dry ground indeed; that is not much to base a hope on; that is little, if any, better than what our forefathers were under. His speaking to us as the dismal curtains of the law, as to obtaining salvation for us, is pulled down; is, seemingly, far off, so much so, that we at first feel that what we have heard is nothing but a mirage to a lost wanderer in the desert. But the Sun rises still further, and with His rising the fears and the doubtful surmisings of the soul are dispersed; his ears are unclogged from the ravages of death; his eyes are slowly adjusted to the brilliant light. The Voice comes a little closer; the smoothing tenderness of its resonance floods our astonished soul as it says, "Come unto me and I will give you rest", etc. (Matt. 11:28)

Therefore, we must conclude that we are not under the law as our means of obtaining salvation. It has condemned all of the way; it condemns us in our experience every moment when under the auspices of the Holy Spirit. No one ever obtained rest by the deeds of the law. Had God left us to obtain it that way, there never would have been any rest. "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal. 4:4, 5) God did not give the law to have it tread under the unhallowed feet of vile sinners. He did not give it that it might become ignoble at our hands. If that is our conception of God having given the law to us, we have either forgotten from whence we have been hewn, or we have never been hewn. It has been said that God did not intend for the law to be kept. It does not seem that anyone could adopt that view. Those that would say that seem to think that they are advocates of good old sound predestination. To me there is not any soundness in it. The law of God entered that the offence might abound. That is predestination, and it is credible and sound. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." That is predestination, and that is sound. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." That is predestination, and it is sound. Jesus Christ having stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and He having come to save His people from their sin, and He having been made under the law that they were under, He became their sin bearer, therefore He must die in their room and stead. That is predestination, and it is sound. But do not tell me that God did not purpose or intend that His law be fulfilled. He gave it to be fulfilled.

Jesus Christ fulfilled that law to a jot and to a tittle. It had to be that way. God has purposed the salvation of His chosen people before the world began. This purpose was purposed in Jesus Christ. He became the surety for His people. He obligated Himself to fulfill that law. He obligated Himself to live for them--to keep the law for them--and to die for them when they failed. That is the work of a surety - to pay the debt if the one to whom the law was given fails. We failed in the morning of time, and we have been a failure ever since, but Christ came in the morning, that is in the time of youth (Psa. 110:3) and the vigor of the morning is perpetually fulfilling that law in us according to His fulfilling of it for us. On tables of stone it was binding on Israel; on tables of the heart it is binding on us. Else what was the reason for instilling it in the heart and in the mind? It is binding on us, but we must remember that we are not under any law--the law of sin and death, the law of Moses, the Levitical laws of ceremonies or any other kind of law, as a means to our attaining righteousness or salvation. Christ has fulfilled all laws for us, having nailed all that was against us to His cross and took them out of the way. But they are now in our hearts and our minds as our rule of

conduct. They have been fulfilled by Christ, together with all penalties and condemnations. This removal of the children of God from under the law of sin and death was through the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the One who has made us free from that law. The law could not do this; it was not its use to free us but to condemn us. But Christ coming in the flesh, and under this law of sin and death, fulfilling it for us before God, thus reconciling us to God by His death. However, being reconciled to God was not enough. He had died for us, but if death held Him, we would not have any one to live in us and for us. Death could not hold Him, and He came from the dead. This is a two fold blessing. This is one of the doubles that is graciously given to us. His coming from the dead forever signifies that He both lived and died for us. He did not need to live under the law given Adam nor the one given by Moses to enhance His own glory or well being. But we needed all of His life, and we needed it so much that His blood draining from Him to the last drop was exactly, no more, no less, what we needed to reconcile us to God. If our poor hearts are not deceived, this gives us all that Christ came to do for us. Everything that we needed to reconcile us to God was in His death; everything that we needed to justify us before God was in His living that law for us. And this is not all. God having sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. May God give us an unction from above that we might glean a little while in this fertile field that Paul has given us. Christ condemned sin in His flesh. Let us not pass that by too lightly. Let us meditate on the high favor from God to usward. We could not remove our sin from our flesh, must less could we, already in a condemned state, condemn sin in our flesh. We did not have the will nor the ability to do this. We could not make a token payment on such a gigantic undertaking. We were completely depraved, not able to think, much less able to do, such a high ranking necessity. Jesus came and condemned sin in His flesh, that is, in His dying as a sinner would have to die. Sin is condemned before God, that is, our sinning is the cause of His death, and by this ignoble death, He has condemned sin as well as the consequences of it. But there are greater things in store for us. His having condemned sin by His death in the flesh, and us having Him as our Advocate and Intercessor; His death in the flesh was for the condemning of sin in our flesh, as well as forever removing our being condemned before God in our flesh. This condemnation of sin in His flesh presents us before God as without sin, as without ever having sinned. But it gave us more than that. The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, because He lives in us and it is because of this indwelling of Him that the law is thus fulfilled.

Let us remember that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us. There was no righteousness in store for us by keeping any law; rather there was always condemnation. Righteousness did not come by us keeping the law, but that does not say that the law was unrighteous. Not at all. We were the ones who were unrighteous. How could he or she that was unrighteous keep a righteous law? It is not fulfilled in us to give us life, or, if you want to talk of the law of Moses, to give us the good of the land. But it having been made honorable by Christ keeping it and magnifying it, it is now being fulfilled in us. We who went astray, (Isa. 53:6) have been redeemed, sought, and brought back, now having a more sure standing than when we fell, having been loved which, by the shedding of that love abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, causes us to love Him, which shows forth in the light of heaven that the law is being fulfilled in us; love being the fulfillment of the law.

Now please be patient with me here. Let us look at Paul in the 16th verse of this fifth chapter of Galatians. "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh". If Paul had stopped there I would not be pursuing the subject any further. If Paul had not gone any further, I would be miserable indeed. It is miserable enough to be such a sinner as to be unable to walk in the Spirit, but that is not nearly as miserable as it would be if the apostle had told us to do it, and had left the impression that it would not be difficult to do so. Finding it out, as he found it out, (Rom. 7:18) and as I have been finding out for more than fifty years that I can not do as I would, it would indeed be an austere doctrine. But finding out, as Paul gives us to know in the text, that we can not do as we would, gives us hope that the Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings that are not utterable. He continues, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye can not do the things that ye would". I do not rejoice that my flesh lusteth against the Spirit, but I do rejoice that, since Paul tells us this, I know by experience that it is true. It has been a matter that I have wondered at much, to wit, how can a poor sinner say that he or she can do righteousness at any time? How can they? How can they say that? Poor sinner, if you have said this, how do you say it? When you malign some poor sinner that says that they are unable to do as they would, or that says that they have not found how to perform that which is good, have you considered who you are talking about? You are talking about the Apostle to us Gentiles. When one says, "You need not tell me that you can not do righteous deeds and think righteous thoughts", they are saying that the testimony of Paul does not have any weight with them. However, this may not be what they mean. If not, I wonder what they do mean?

These two principles being in us, and being contrary to one another, is the warfare that all the children of God know so much about. Or do they? If the differences between these two principles or lives were so great in Paul's day that he and the Galatians could not do as they would, and they have been dealt with in such a way today that they are not quite so diametrically opposed, then by all means the intensity of the warfare has lessened since Paul's day. The warfare was critical in Paul's expereince. His experience receives very little credence today. It is rare to hear a professed follower of Jesus Christ say, "When I would do good, evil is present with me"; to say, "The things which I would do, I do not, and that the things which I would not, that I do". One thing is certain; Paul was either buried in some kind of foreign ideology to a child of God, or we today have lost the right perspective in regard to the religion of Jesus Christ. I will have to acknowledge, both from my limited knowledge of Holy Writ, and from my daily experience, that I believe that Paul said the very thing that he experienced. The only escape from this warfare; the only oasis in the desert road; the only way that we are able to do the things of the Spirit is when we are strengthened by the self same Spirit of Christ. Then we can do the things of the Spirit; and if not thus strengthened, we cannot do them. Thus the glory belongs to either the One who strengthens or to the one strengthened. Unless the Bible is not ture, and unless I do not have an experience of salvation, I know who is due it. Do you?

(Elder) W. D. Griffin

I have no more conception of a true believer without morality, than of a river without water, or of a sun without light and heat.

Toplady

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE OMNISCIENCE OF GOD

Omniscience — boundless knowledge. Omniscient — knowing all things. God only is omniscient, for he alone knoweth all things. All his intelligent creatures whether men or angels, are greatly limited in knowledge, being finite in all their powers. Not so with God, who is unlimited in every perfection of his, for he is the infinite one. Infiniteness cannot be measured nor bounded, and therefore God is absolutely unlimited, both in his being and in all his faculties or powers. So his knowledge is as unbounded as his eternity, and omnipresence, and omnipotence, for these, with all his other perfections, ascend upward and downward and outward forever and forever, all filling infinite eternity, having no bound or limit. And in all these majestic and awe-inspiring attributes, our blessed God and Father has always been present in all his limitless or infinite universe, and now is

AT ONCE AND EVER SEEING AND KNOWING ALL THINGS.

This is profoundly wonderful, and it overwhelms us, beloved, because we are so infinitely less than nothing, as compared with God, and we know nothing perfectly. But the omniscient One, who fills eternal space or limitless ether, sees and knows us and all things at a glance, perfectly and exactly as we are. For although his word says that all the nations are as the small dust of the balance, which is too small for us to notice, yet they are all so clearly seen in his omniscient eye that he watches the little bird, and numbers the very hairs of our heads. No wonder that David the king would say, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me: it is high, I cannot attain unto it." "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee." All this is as true of every child of God, as it was of David. How blessed for us that it is true!

Yet there are those who are so wise in their own eyes that they make light of all this, and even ridicule the belief that the infinite One takes notice of all little things, because they in their self-importance would not. And so they measure God by themselves, and think themselves so wise that they can judge of what the Almighty should be and do, and set limits for him. It is a rich mercy, however, that our omniscient God does see and care for the smallest particles of dust in his boundless dominion, because unless he did, those vaunting nothings, who reply against their Maker, would be left to their own reward, that is, to perish in their littleness.

EVIDENCE THAT GOD IS OMNISCIENT.

While Baptists and many others admit the omniscience of God, that he forever knew all things, still this does not prove that it is so, and we must therefore turn to the law and testimony of the Lord in proof of this, as also of every other attribute and truth of God. For, on the other hand, some Baptists and many others deny the omnipotence of God, his unlimited sovereignty, but their denial of this truth does not disprove it by any means, for if it did, then "his eternal power and Godhead" would be destroyed. The apostle Peter said to his Lord, "Thou knowest all things." James said, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." And as to the extent of his works, Solomon said, "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." David asks, "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see? he that chastiseth the heathen, shall not be correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know? The Lord knoweth the thoughts

of man, that they are vanity." Hannah said, "The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed." "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard," sang the sweet psalmist of Israel. "For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." To his disciples the Lord said, "Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; nor hid, that shall not be known." Of Christ, Paul says, "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." The wise man said, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." Paul said of him, "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

All this Scripture fully establishes the omniscience of God, and shows that all things were forever known unto him, so that his foreknowledge is perfect, unlimited or infinite. To deny this, is equal to saying that the Lord was both ignorant and changeable; for every increase in knowledge shows former ignorance, and change to more perfect knowledge. It follows also, that if God did not possess perfect knowledge from all eternity of all things that should ever be, then neither could he "work all things after the counsel of his own will," nor could Paul have truly said, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose;" for both his counsel and his purpose would be at fault concerning everything which God did not perfectly see and know from the beginning. This is a self-evident truth. The most perfect man in knowledge, is yet ignorant of many things, both present and future, and so he cannot provide for or against anything or all things unknown to him, even if he has the power to do so.

This absolute truth as certainly establishes another truth; that is,

GOD'S ATTRIBUTES ARE EQUAL.

His counsel and his purpose and his power are as unlimited as his knowledge, and all are alike infinite and changeless. To deny this, is to deny that God is, and say with the fool, "There is no God." For as truly as the omniscience of God saw and knew all things from the beginning, or ever the earth was, so surely did his wisdom and counsel and purpose also determine all things; because either himself or some one else must determine all things, before they could be foreknown as certain to come to pass. This is a self-evident fact. For not God himself could foreknow anything, great or small, and yet that thing never exist or come to pass. To say he could, would be as absurd as to say that a lie is the truth. Therefore, beloved, all must admit, either that the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God "

ESTABLISH THE CERTAINTY OF ALL THINGS,

or else they must deny the certain foreknowledge of God, and limit him in knowledge, even as they limit him in his "determinate counsel" and purpose; for it is self-evident that the divine foreknowledge of all things, makes

ALL THINGS ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN

And we know, beloved brethren, that when God knew all things in the beginning, there was no other being or power besides himself that could have determined the certainty of all things, nor of anything whatever. Therefore, the God of omniscience is equally the God of omnipotence, and his foreknowledge and foreordination are co-extensive and co-equal, for they are parallel and harmonious one with the other, as also with every divine attribute. To deny this, would be to say that God is divided against himself, and that while he is unlimited and infinite in some of his perfections, he is limited and finite in others. But our infinite God declares that his ways are equal; and we know

that there is no weakness or defect or lack in him, but in all his divine nature he is a unit or one, and so he is

INFINITE PERFECTION.

O, beloved, how this divine truth fills us with supreme reverence and adoration in his holy presence; and inspires our spirit with confidence and trust in him, and the heart with the love that casteth out fear. And now, as God is omniscient, perfectly foreknowing all things in his unlimited universe, this fixes the absolute certainty of all things, and also makes it evident that God himself determined their certainty, because not anything yet existed, outside of himself, when he foreknew all things in eternity, before he had created heaven and earth, with all the fullness of them. For unless the infinite Creator of the universe had before determined in his wisdom and counsel and purpose all things, his omnipotent power could and would have prevented them, and he in his infinite wisdom would have purposed and ordered differently. Certainly he would. To say otherwise, is to charge God with folly, and such folly that even an intelligent man would not knowingly be guilty of.

The self-evident truth, therefore, beloved children of God, is this: The infinite foreknowledge and the infinite foreordination of all things,

BOTH STAND OR FALL TOGETHER.

This is inevitable, because there is not the least discrepance, conflict or opposition in the uniting and perfect attributes of him who is at once all knowledge, all wisdom and all power, and who says, "I will do all my pleasure." It certainly follows, therefore, that the infinite and blessed and holy Lord God Almighty, who "declared the end from the beginning,"

BOTH DETERMINED AND FOREKNEW ALL THINGS.

For unless God had before determined all things, they could not possibly exist or come to pass; and unless all things are certain to come to pass, they could not exist in the foreknowledge of God. These are undeniable facts. So then, a denial of God's determination of all things, is a virtual denial of his foreknowledge of all things, and there is no sensible escape from this fact. *Hence, Arminians, who limit the Almighty in his foreknowledge, as they do in his other attributes, are more consistent than Baptists, who limit him in his "determinate counsel" and "eternal purpose," while they admit his unlimited foreknowledge.* For the eternal and infinite Jehovah, whose presence fills all immensity and all eternity, is as almighty and unlimited in all his attributes as he is in any one of them. This is perfectly self-evident, and God has thus most infallibly and gloriously,

REVEALED HIMSELF IN THE BIBLE.

Therefore, beloved, a denial of any of the unlimited or infinite perfections of the everlasting God, who changes not, is a virtual or real denial of his "eternal power and Godhead," and it leads to godless infidelity. While many brethren, who limit the holy One, do not so intend, and do not see that they are replying against God, or else they would not tremble before the Majesty of heaven and beseech his forgiveness for their ignorant presumption and folly, and shrink with horror from this whirlpool of dark infidelity, which is fast swallowing up the faithless world; yet the fact is solemnly the same, that all the divine attributes are alike unlimited, and they all co-operate and join in unison as the mighty pillars of the grand and unbounded universe, which God upholds by his own power, and are

THE GLORIOUS HIGH THRONE FROM THE BEGINNING,

or else the kingdom, dominion and power of the Most High, all are denied and charged with weakness and fearful failure. We know, beloved brethren, that all the Arminian religious world, no less than open infidels, do thus charge the God of the Bible, whose attributes are all

alike unlimited, with weakness and woeful failure, with "wanting" many things done in which he is defeated. But we know that the Almighty, who "doeth his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth," has no "wants," never "tries", and knows no failure, but "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." And this because omnipotence is an limitless as omniscience. And now, beloved, well may we be glad and rejoice in the Lord that it is so. If the Lord will, the closing attributes will be the truth of God.

Sept. 1, 1902 D. Bartley

Newton, Alabama

Dear Elders,

I am sending a check for a renewal of two years and use the rest for the Indigent Fund.

I witness as Elder W. A. Williams, Moderator of the Claybank Association in south east Alabama did, the reunion of the two factions of the Claybank Association. This association convened with the New Prospect Church near Kinston, Alabama, in Coffee County, on October 21, 22, and 23, 1978. In my 79 years of life I have never witnessed such rejoicing and happiness in a "jam-packed" house. How I wish all divided associations could be blessed to lay down their grievances and reunite.

My membership is at Bethlehem Church, located 5 miles south of Dothan, Alabama, just of Road #52, and we meet each second Sunday at 11 A.M. All believers of like faith are invited to meet with us.

In bonds, I trust,
Charles T. Collins

Charleston, W. Va.

Dear Brother Spangler,

Please find enclosed a check for renewal of the ***Signs of the Times*** for one year. I notice it is due again. I hope I don't miss one copy, because I do love the dear paper. I don't get to go to meeting any more due to my age and poor health. I have been reading the dear ***Signs*** ever since I was big enough to read. My father always got the ***Signs*** and I always loved it and believed the dear doctrine. I am not any good at putting on paper what I believe in and hope for. I sometimes wonder why such a worm as I and a sinful human as I could hope to be redeemed. Oh that God's holy wisdom could bless me. And yet I know that His will must be done and not my will. I cannot see very good so will close.

Hope all of you are well and I do love you.

Your sister in Christ Jesus, I hope,
Lurecy Smith McCutcheon

Weak faith says, "God can save me if He will." Strong faith says, "God both can and will save me." See Dan. 3:17.

Toplady

OBITUARIES

SISTER EULA RUSS WOOLARD

Sister Eula Russ Woolard was born in Beaufort County on June 24, 1893, and she passed away on January 5, 1979, after a critical illness of about a week.

She was the daughter of the late William Charles and Nancy Warren Russ. She was married to Jesse R. Woolard on July 19, 1911.

Sister Woolard was a membr of the Singleton Primitive Baptist Church for many years, and she attended regularly as long as her health permitted. She always inquired about the welfare of the church and was faithful to send gifts to the church and her pastor when she was not able to attend. We will miss her.

Sister Woolard leaves to mourn one son, James L. Woolard, of Atlanta, Georgia; two daughters, Mrs. Allene D. Darrow, of Washington, and Mrs. Eloise W. Gibbs, of Greenville, six grandchildren; and two great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at the Paul

Funeral Home Chapel by Dr. Glenn S. Weaver, and she was laid to rest under a beautiful floral arrangement in Oak Dale Cemetery to await the King who will say, "Come ye blessed of My Father; inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Written by Violet J. O'Neal

MARY O'NEAL DILLON

Sister Mary O'Neal Dillon was born May 7, 1891, and departed this life March 12, 1979, after a lingering illness of more than two years. She was the daughter of the late John and Susan Gibbs O'Neal. She was married in 1912 to Southey Dillon, who passed away in 1936. Surviving is one son, William Dillon of Kinston; one brother, John B. O'Neal of Washington; one aunt, Martha Eborn of Hampton, Va.; two nephews and one niece.

Sister Dillon was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for more than fifty years. She was a faithful member, attending regularly as long as health permitted.

Funeral services were held at the Paul Funeral Home Chapel by her Pastor, Elder Joe Leggett, assisted by Elder Reeves Smith. Sister Dillon was laid to rest under a beautiful floral offering in Mount Olive Cemetery in Hyde County.

Written by Violet O'Neal

SISTER ERA WADE WHITATAKER

Many friends and brethren mourn the loss of our dear Sister Era Wade Whitataker, who was called from this earth on November 19, 1978.

Sister Era was both a sister in the church and a cousin to me. She was very dear to me from the time we were children as well as after we became members of the church.

Sister Era had been in declining health for several years, and for the past two or three years she had been unable to attend church as she would have loved to. Her heart was always with her church even though she was not able to attend. She was a dutiful wife and mother as well as a good friend and neighbor.

Sister Era was born on May 18, 1916, and was married on September 28, 1935, to Zeb Whitataker. She and Brother Zeb had been members of our church for several years and he later became our deacon, and has served his church well.

Sister Era had two children, Barbara Jean and Donald Wayne. Donald Wayne died on July 21, 1970, and was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

Sister Era leaves her husband, Zeb Whitataker, and one daughter, Barbara Jean Reaves, five grandchildren, and six great grandchildren.

Elder Amos Hash and Elder William Holland conducted her funeral at Republician Church and she was laid to rest in the church cemetery. We trust our loss will be her eternal gain.

Prepared by request of her husband and family.

Sister Sally Cundiff

(Brother Zeb spent two months in the hospital with a broken hip, broken shoulder, and internal injuries. He later went back for hip surgery and at present is back home and is getting around very well with a cane. He needs the prayers of all his friends and brethren.)

ALTON F. ROWE

July 10, 1897 - March 19, 1979

Brother Rowe was born in Small, a rural community in southern Beaufort County, North Carolina, the son of Willis C. and Margie Dowty Rowe.

He joined the church at Sandy Grove and remained a member there until all the other members had either died or moved away. He wrote a letter to North Creek Church and presented it himself asking for transfer of membership. He was no stranger to our church and we felt so thankful that God had sent him to us. He was a deacon and one of the most qualified that this writer had ever known.

Brother Rowe took over as manager of the Planters Bank in Ayden during the Depression in the early thirties and remained there until he retired.

He married Rosa Sasser on February 21, 1922; she died January 3, 1964.

He is survived by two children, Mrs. Majorie R. Taylor and A. F. Rowe, Jr., four grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Brother Rowe's walk in life was a manifestation of the love that he had for his

fellow man. His greatest desire was that he might walk humbly and circumspectly before his God. We the members of North Creek Church feel the loss of a devoted member, but we feel that he was prepared of the Father for this corporal death and at times had a great longing to go home to be with God.

His funeral was conducted by his beloved pastor, Elder J. T. Prescott, at an Ayden funeral home and the large floral arrangements and large attendance showed the esteem of his neighbors and friends.

Like all of us, he had his fears and doubts but felt that his hope was founded on the promises of our Lord and Savior and that he would hear that precious voice saying "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

J. T. Prescott, Moderator
R. O. Smith, Clerk

SISTER
FLORENCE SAUNDERS BUTLER

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write the resolutions of one so near and dear to me. She was born July 30, 1880 and on February 19, 1979, our Heavenly Father saw fit to call her home to that blessed Kingdom on high, making her stay on this earth 98 years, 7 months, and 11 days.

Her earthly father was William Robertson Saunders and her mother was Mary Virginia Dix Saunders. She was married in 1903 to J. L. Butler and to this union four children were born, Lawrence and William, deceased, and Ethel and Herbert of Reidsville, N.C.

Sister Butler joined Lick Fork Church in June, 1905, and remained a faithful member for nearly 74 years. As long as she was able she attended church and was a faithful servant. She loved Lick Fork and supported it in any way she could. Through all her suffering she always had a smile and a kind word for everyone. She loved for her pastor, brethren, and friends to visit with her and delighted in talking about the Lord. Her face was always beaming like a drop of morning dew that sparkles on a rose when the sun comes shining through.

We at Lick Fork will miss her so much. Sister Butler's walk on this earth was witness that she had a wonderful hope. Her suffering was long but her faith remained strong.

Our prayer is God's richest blessing upon her dear daughters who stood by her so faithfully until the end and feels her departure so keenly.

This was written by the order of Lick Fork Church. May it be resolved that this be recorded on the church records, a copy sent to the ***Signs of the Times*** and a copy sent to the family.

Submitted in love,
Willie W. Lee
Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator

BROTHER MORRIS K. AGEE

This is written in memory of Brother Morris K. Agee, one who we loved and were drawn very close to over the years.

Brother Morris was born January 20, 1911 and passed from this life on January 18, 1978. I do not feel uneasy about his resting place. We feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

Brother Morris was afflicted for about 4 years, but he bore his afflictions patiently. He would always say that what God does is right and he hoped he could be made willing to His will.

He was the son of Thomas and Lillie Agee, and he was married to Velvie Lenora Sowers by Elder B. O. Thompson the 25th day of February, 1956. He leaves to mourn his lovely widow, and one daughter, Karen Edmonds, a foster daughter, Judy Wood; also one brother, Alvin Agee; a sister, Emma Casta.

I was present when he asked for a home among Old Baptist at Laural Creek Church the fifth Sunday in July, 1956. He asked for his membership to be placed at Mountain View Church. He was baptized by Elder Otey Conner. He was a faithful member and went many times when seemingly he was not able to go. He loved to hear God's Name praised above every name and man abased as nothing. He often said he was nothing. The writer and all of those that loved him will never forget him, but may we be blessed to say as one of old has said, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, Blessed be the name of the Lord."

His funeral was conducted by Elder Roy Agee, Elder Hale Terry, Elder Larry Hollandsworth. His body was laid to rest at Wilson's Cemetery, Floyd County, Virginia, to await the second coming of the Lord when He will call them to take them to be with Him in that world that shall never end.

Written by Elder Roy Agee

JOHN HERBERT LOVELACE

Brother John Lovelace born December 15, 1898 departed this world of sorrow March 30, 1979.

He was the son of the late Carolina Burton and John P. Lovelace. Brother Lovelace leaves behind his lovely wife of 50 years, Sister Emma Lovelace and one son Herbert Lovelace.

Brother Lovelace was a humble, meek, and kind man with a strong Hope in his Blessed Savior. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by the Grace of God and was ever ready to give a reason for his hope. To know him was to love him and a comforting person to be around and talk to.

We here at Pleasant Grove will miss him greatly, but our prayer is to be reconciled to God's will and we feel that our loss is his eternal gain. May the love of God be with his lovely wife that she may say not my will but Thine be done.

His funeral was conducted at Pleasant Grove Church by his pastor Elder Donald Smith and Elder Wallis Smith. His body was laid to rest at Reidlawn Cemetery to return to dust from which it came, we believed his soul return to God who gave it.

Submitted in love by
George Tatum
Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
Brother Robert Walker, Clerk

SISTER VIRGINIA (JENNY) TILLETT BEASLEY

As appointed from before the foundation of the world by Almighty God the Creator of both heaven and earth and the fulness thereof, this great God of all grace, infinite wisdom, and mercy, removed from this earthly vail of tears Sister Jenny Beasley (as she was known and called by her friends and neighbors) January 22, 1979. She was born March 9, 1890 to Benjamin D. and Almira B. Tillett, making her sojourn here some 88 years and 10 months.

On July 12, 1905, she was married to the late Samuel B. Beasley. To this union was born 3 boys, Lorenzo Weldon, Elbert Vonzell, and Marshall Jennings; these first two having preceeded her in death; 2 girls, Orential Dell Henly, and Sister Virginia Dare Dowdy. All living are within a short distance of where Sister Jenny lived in Kitty Hawk, N.C.

I, the writer of this, having lived near Sister Jenny for some 7 or 8 years prior to her death, spent many pleasant hours visiting in her place of abode, talking with her concerning our sweet hope and our Lord and God. Those are precious moments for my memory still at times.

In September, 1918, at the age of 28, she was received into the fellowship of the Providence Primitive Baptist Church in Kitty Hawk, N.C., and remained a loving and faithful member unto her departing from this earthly life. Her earthly remains was laid to rest in the Austin Cemetery here in Kitty Hawk in the presence of a host of her friends and neighbors. Her pastor, Elder Henry Jones, officiated at her funeral.

To her children who are left here, and to all others of us who loved her; in as much as be in accord with the will of God, may you and all be reconciled to His holy will and pleasure, to take her out of this world of sin. May we from time to time be brought to the memory of these things; "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints", and that "our loss is her eternal gain". May those words be of some comfort to you, her children, from time to time.

Written by her little brother in Christ, I hope,
Troy G. Shepard

A note to the Editors of the ***Signs***

Dear Brethren;

To know this Sister and (I feel) Mother in Israel, was to love her. Not that I have any desire whatsoever to praise the flesh or mankind of himself, for therein lieth no thing deserving of praise. But on some few occasions while in the presence of Sister Jenny Beasley, I felt to see the very beauty of the workings of the precious Lord in her. She was one of the most unselfish people I have ever had the privilege to meet. Naturally speaking, her dealings with her fellowman manifested clear evidence that she truly believed and practiced that saying -- "It is better to give than to receive". She seemed to find pure joy in so doing. Now as for her love for the church and "Christ its Head" of that I am left with no doubt. Why she ever manifested and expressed a love for this poor unworthy feeling one, I sometimes feared I had deceived her into such feelings toward me. But if not deceived in my own heart, I loved her for Christ's sake. As is my hope, that this love I feel toward all the children of God everywhere is "for Christ's sake".

Troy G. Shepard
S. R. 28
Kitty Hawk, N.C. 27949

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 11/79 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

YOU'RE NOT ALONE

When days are dark and things go wrong
Say a prayer and sing a song.
You may be sad as you go along
When things are darkest you're not alone.

Listen quietly and He will say,
"I am beside you and I will stay.
I'll comfort and guide you all the way.
I'll not leave or go away."

"In times of sorrow I'll be near,
With words of comfort no one can hear.
When you stumble I'll hear you call.
I'll be with you when you fall."

"I'll give you courage to try again,
As you know we all can't win.
When the time comes, we know not when;
I'll be with you even then."

S.W.C.

(Written after the death of a grandson)

Roanoke, Virginia

Dear Ones in the Lord,

Enclosed is a precious letter I received from a brother in response to the letter I tried to write on the word "Sanctuary". I found it to be a precious gift of wisdom and comfort and I hope it can be to others, also.

I promptly wrote back to the brother and expressed how very pleased I was with his views and hoped he would give me his permission to have it published.

I have had no further answer. Perhaps you might wish to contact him, or it may be I will get an answer one of these days with the permission to publish it.

Humbly,
Sister Mamie Rose Ferguson

Shokan, N.Y.

Dear Sister in Christ,

I am a stranger in the flesh to you and I too have pondered much; thought about blessed words, even the "shalls" and the "wills" of Almighty God, with the little "if's" and "ands".

There is nothing to do but wait upon the Lord for all we receive from the Comforter, the Holy Spirit of Truth, even as you said.

You asked that some one might be given to write sweet comfort on the word "Sanctuary". And you say isn't it true that the gospel, as God gives it to us, is the Sanctuary? It is and has all stirred something within me to consider. The gospel truly is the right place, and the only place, to know what the "Sanctuary" is and all about it. Let me see if I have been given anything as I look into the blessed Word and find, not only for you, but for myself also (a poor needy soul ever) that through Christ Jesus, who said He would send a Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost (Spirit), "Whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you". (John 14:26) John 15:26 says, "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth...."

Now to the "Sanctuary" again; the word generally is a place set apart for the worship of God; the most high place, also a place of refuge and protection. It is the place of the Holy of Holies.

Let us look at Leviticus 12:4, and it reads, "And she shall then continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days; she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled." In this is the type of the Church. She shall not come into the sanctuary until she is purified. For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for her. Remember how the Old Testament has Christ concealed in it, and the New Testament has Christ revealed in it. This is the shadow of good things to come. Purification and Christ is your atonement for sin, and mine, also, and those of like precious faith. These offerings all had to be burned or cleansed in the fire (the dross to remove). The Word in Numbers 3:38 speaks of Aaron and his sons keeping charge of the Sanctuary. Leviticus 19:30 also states, "Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord."

Now in First Chronicles 22:19 David says, "Now set your heart and your soul to seek the Lord your God; arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the Lord God,....". Now read King David's prayer in I Chronicles 29, beginning with the 10th Verse. In Verse 13 he says, "Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name"; and then Verse 14, "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee". This is true humbleness, as is pleasing to God from you, from me, from us all who are His "my people". "For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding". (Verse 15) All this "cometh of thine hand" (Verse 16); "Prepare their heart unto thee" (Verse 18); a most beautiful prayer is this last chapter of First Chronicles.

Many places, dear Sister in Christ, we read of the sanctuary being built in the midst of the Tabernacle, the holy of holies of which Aaron went once a year on the day of atonement. Only the

priesthood could enter and it was called the holy place.

Going to Hebrews in the New Testament we can read in Chapter 8, "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." At the third verse it reads of the offering and gifts and sacrifices under the Law and the fifth verse says, "Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things....", and verse 6 "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry..... established upon better promises"; and 10th verse, "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Then you, dear Sister, read the ninth chapter and find how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself, without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God. Continue to read Hebrews even to the end, and we find the law having a shadow of good things to come. "But this man, (Christ Jesus) after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." (Heb. 10:12) "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified". (Heb. 10:14) This chapter goes on to say in Verse 17, "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more". Sister, it looks like there is a place in the sanctuary for you, for me, even, and for us all that have been born again and called. Just think of it! It brings only fear and trembling in this poor heart of mine. It speaks of boldness, but I only keep on saying, "O Lord, where do I stand before Thee." Verse 20 says, "By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh". He suffered, was cursed, scourged, spit upon, all for such as us. So then in Verse 22, "Let us" (think of this) "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water"; the pure water of the word! It says, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together"--how can I, alone, assemble and exhort one another? The meeting house would be verily empty would I not enter in. There is no minister here to hear, but God can preach to "an invisible church" and has many times.

Have you ever considered this thought as it is written in Eph. 1:4, "Chosen in Christ from before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love"? "In whom we have redemption"; and "You hath he quickened"; "For by grace are ye saved through faith"; yes, even the faith of a grain of mustard seed. And again, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works". And again, "In whom ye also are builded together". "For in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord". Yes, through the Spirit (Comforter) submitting (humbling) yourselves one to another (to Christ) in the fear of God. Do you see that? "One to another". The submitting is obedience; not that you or I or any can do something.

It is like also as dear Brother Spangler says in his sermon - We see thru a glass darkly. God's glory is so intense, so strong, so great that as Moses had to cover his face with a veil, so that is the way we see - "thru a glass darkly". But a most blessed hope. Christ is our Hope; as Philpot says - made tender in His fear, and His love endureth forever.

Edward K. Adsit

(To consider the Sanctuary one must consider or be concerned as how to arrive there or receive sanctification, which is an act of God (Holy Spirit) or even the Trinity for all are apart, to be

made holy. An act of consecration in which one is set apart for the sacred purpose of consecration. To be sanctified is to sanctify a person or persons, is then first to be made holy, to separate, to set aside, to make holy or sacred, to appoint to a holy place or position, to be prepared for divine service, to purify from sin detaching the affections from the world; in order to enter the "Sanctuary".

(From dictionary)
E.K.A.

COMMENT ON 10TH CHAPTER OF JOHN

What manner of darkness do people live in to misinterpret the tenth chapter of John. One passage may be misconstrued and then the whole message of God's election and calling of His people is scrapped because of the ninth verse:

> "I am the door: by me if any man enter in he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture".

One famous Bible handbook (Haley's, page 543) comments on the entirety of verses 1-21 this way: "Jesus declares Himself to be the Shepherd of mankind, that is, of as many of mankind as will accept Him as their Shepherd."

Even so, let us look at the passage that is so misunderstood. First, Jesus compares Himself to the door--the passageway to eternal life. Who has control over the opening and closing of this portal to heaven? Jesus declares, "By me, if any man enter....". Thus, not by the wishes of men is this door opened, but by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Moreover, those that enter by Him, "Shall be saved". No other one will be saved for "the sheep hear his voice and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out". (Verse 3) His sheep will not follow a stranger's voice (Verse 5), while those that believed not on Jesus were so "because ye are not of my sheep". (Verse 26) So only the chosen flock of God will be saved, and blessed. They roam in His pastures of love and grace, and after a bodily death they reach an everlasting pasture and eternal home.

With the firm belief that God has called every member of His flock, comfort is found for us in this chapter. "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring..." (Verse 16) Paul consented to the persecution of those who believed on Jesus. We may consider him at that time not of the earthly fold. Yet he was one of God's sheep, and he was called by name, and his carnal heart was made unto one of Jesus' own. If it would have been up to Paul, I don't believe there would have ever been such a change. As in my own life, I've come to believe what I do, not by my own human reasoning, but our precious doctrine has been laid in my heart by a force more powerful than I. Paul heard the voice and followed, for his name was called, not by chance, but by God's eternal plan for His people.

"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (Verse 28, 29)

What about Judas Iscariot? Was not he plucked from the hand of Jesus? Was he a disciple gone bad through the Devil? On the contrary, the act of betrayal was prophesied in the 41st Psalm well in advance of the event. Jesus also predicts the event in the 13th chapter of John. We can say Judas was never of the flock, but was fulfilling prophesy in his role. And what about the rest of us? If we be so blessed to be one of God's called, the promise has been made - we shall never be removed from God's grace or guiding light. I would pray for such but often feel unworthy of even that.

In love of the truth and of the brethren,
Thomas P. Houser III

June 3, 1979

Dear Elder Spangler,

I have been trying to write to you ever since the ***Signs*** came three days ago, but haven't been able to get started. I read the paper through that afternoon, as the weather has been so gloomy for some time. I rarely write in the day time as I like to be out in the sun.

As I send the ***Signs*** to a sister, I am sending $10.00 to have this issue sent to me. I am sure the ***Signs*** carries extra issues each month. since they have had such a large distribution. I especially enjoyed this month's issue, and I thought your Editorial was the best I have ever read. One reason is that several years I had been to a three day's meeting and they sang the hymn, "Glorious things of Thee are spoken". I started humming it and all the next morning I could not think of a single word of it. Just as I got to the door of the building the words came into my mind. I went immediately and found it. That is a beautiful hymn and the word "glory" and its derivatives have meant so much to me, and especially after the Lord gave you such a blessing to write the edifying article. You stated that you hope to write other articles on His glory, and you should be able to have it published together with this one in the June issue. You can make it as large as you desire, as there is no ending to it.

Elder Bellow's article in "Voices of the Past" is good. He was a good writer and a good preacher as well. I met him on one of my trips to Brother Rustons'. Also in this issue Sister Ferguson was blessed to find references to the "Sanctuary" that she inquired about. All the ***Signs*** was extra good.

None of the writers was equal to David in his praise in blessing the Lord. He used glory about a dozen times in the Psalms. I hadn't seen the beauty in Proverbs 8:22-31, but Solomon was no such a man as David, but he was one of the strongest. He asked for wisdom but the Lord gave him everything which was a snare unto him. He died in almost disgrace, and there is no record of him ever repenting. Someone said that David was such a wicked person. That is given to show if the Lord is for you nothing can destroy you.

I am anxious to see your next writings or even a book.

In love and fellowship,
Harry T. Vories

NUMBERS 32:32

"And be sure your sin will find you out."

These are very solemn and awful words. The circumstances attending their utterance by Moses were these; Israel had now finished their journey in the wilderness. They were about to enter into their inheritance in the promised land, but the land was full of enemies who must be conquered and driven out before them. A sore warfare awaited them. Now, as they stand upon the borders of the promised land, soon to cross over Jordan, the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, seeing that the land upon this side of Jordan was good for pasturage for their flocks and herds, came to Moses asking that they might have their inheritance here, and not on the other side of the river. Moses replied, "Shall your brethren go to war, and shall ye sit here". This land was already conquered, and conquered by the arms of all the tribes. Should they now sit down here, and leave the rest of their brethren to still fight for the possession which should be theirs on the other side of the river? He also reminds them that to do so would be to discourage those who should go over to the conflict. He reminds them that thus did their fathers when from Kadesh Barnea he sent them to see the land. They brought back such a report as discouraged the people, and the anger of the Lord was therefore kindled against them, and he swore that none of those who came out of Egypt should ever enter

the land, who were from twenty years old and upward. He goes on to recount that the Lord made them wander forty years in the wilderness. And now, he says, "Ye are risen up in your father's stead, an increase of sinful men to augment yet the fierce anger of the Lord toward Israel; for, if ye turn away from after him, he will yet again leave them in the wilderness; and ye shall destroy all this people". Then they came to him, and promised they would go over with the rest and help them until their enemies were conquered, and then they would return and dwell in this place. Moses gave them this permission, but said they if they did not fulfill this promise, they should have sinned against God, "and be sure your sin will find you out". This is the narrative in brief of the event which gave rise to these words.

The truth taught here is in no wise different from that which is taught all through the Scriptures. In Genesis 4 the Lord said to Cain, "If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." That is, your sin is ever ready to meet you . It shall, like a wild beast, leap upon you at any time. It is the same truth that Paul taught in the following words, "What a man sows, that shall he reap. If ye sow to the flesh, ye shall of the flesh reap corruption". The sin of the brethren of Joseph met them when they were face to face with him in their distress in Egypt. Judah said, "God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants". There is no truth more clear than this. In some way, sin always finds out the sinner, and he reaps his reward. There are some things in the text, and in its connection to which we wish to call attention.

First. Moses said that in doing as he had said, that is, in neglecting to aid their brethren, they should sin against God. It was not in the judgment of Moses, against their brethren that they should sin, but against God. All sin is against God. Thus David felt, when he had been brought to a conviction of his sin, in the case of Uriah and Bathsheba. In response to the searching words of the prophet of the Lord, "Thou art the man", he said, "I have sinned". And in that wonderful confession in the fifty-first Psalm he said, "Against thee, and thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight". He did not, under the sense of the enomrmity of his guilt, say, "I have sinned against Uriah and Bathsheba, or against my fellow-man, in any way, but against thee." The anguish of his soul was deeper in this view of the matter by far, than it could have been had he thought only of the harm done to his faithful captain and his wife. The vice in which he had engaged, and the crime of which he was guilty, was all swallowed up by the force of the far greater thing; sin against God. So Moses, in the text, and in the connection, does not lay stress upon the wrong which their brethren might suffer at their hands, but solely upon the sin against God. The wrong which we do to our fellow-man may be made good again, but we cannot make our sin good. Thanks be to God, there is one who has paid even that debt, the sin against God. But there are some reflections concerning this, which we wish to present. The whole testimony of the Scripture, and of our own experience, is to this effect; the one who suffers the wrong is not to be pitied so much as the one who willfully does the wrong. Sin is a far more fearful thing than any other thing can be. He that observes lying vanities forsakes his own mercies. The man who does his brother wrong, injures himself still more. Thus the Saviour said, that it were better that one should be drowned in the midst of the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones which believed in him. His care was not so much for the little ones who believed in him, and who suffered the wrong, as for that disciple, who might be led under the dictates of the flesh, to do his brother wrong. Such an one should find that it is indeed a fearful thing to fall into the

hands of the living God. Thus David felt when he made his confession. We may be sure that the wrong against his faithful captain seemed none the less, because the sin against God seemed so great. He who fears to sin against God, will fear to wrong his fellow-man. It is impossible that he should do the one without the other. The wrong against our fellow-man may endure but for a moment, but who shall limit the duration of the sin against God? The one may be measured by a little time, or by the bounds of its results against the man who is injured, or we may make reparation, but who shall atone for his sin against God. As love to God must always be accompanied by love to our fellow-man so an abhorrence of sin will be accompanied by an abhorrence of wrong against our fellow-men. The one is not and cannot be without the other. There is also another side to this matter, which is most important. He who suffers the wrong, will be helped by remembering this fact that all sin is against God. It will serve to make him patient and submissive, and prevent him from revenging himself, since the wrong-doer must appear before the Judge of all, against whom he has sinned. The heavenly Father may, and will, make up to him who has suffered the wrong, in other ways, more than he has lost, yea, he may make the very wrong itself the medium of still greater blessings. Out of it he may cause to grow, more patience, and trust, and faith, and more of the spirit of forgiveness, but for him who has done the wrong, and so sinned against God, there remains the rod of his displeasure. There also is this in it, viz: the wrong rebounds to the hurt of his own soul. He reaps the very thing he has sown. He has sown the wind, and he shall reap the whirlwind. A child in a family, stronger than his brother, may rob him of some gift which his father has bestowed upon him, but the child must not seek revenge; he must not take the case into his own hand. the father will settle all that. He who has robbed his brother, has sinned against the common father. He must settle the whole matter. He can make up to the weaker brother more than he has lost, but who shall make up to the wrong-doer the smiles of his father, which he has for a time lost? No! If we, when we feel we are wronged by another, could but remember that God sees it all, and that he will visit the transgression with the rod, while he will bind up the heart that is broken, should we not feel very different from what we sometimes do? Where, in view of these things, would be room for any spirit of revenge, or malice, or resentment? Would not all this be swallowed up by the greatness of our pity for the one who has done the wrong, seeing that he has fallen into the hands of the living God, on account of his sin?

Thus Moses would put the matter upon the high ground of sin against God. If this reflection will not avail to prevent a man from doing the wrong, surely nothing else will. In this view of the matter, both he who has done the wrong, and he who has suffered the wrong, must fall at the feet of the Lord of all, and leave themselves with him. How quickly would strife cease between brethren everywhere, could this be remembered. Thus Jesus, our Lord and life, and example, committed himself to him who judgeth righteously. And he was heard in that he feared. The whole spirit of what we have been trying to say is summed up in the prayer, "Father forgive them, they know not what they do". Also in the prayer of the first martyr, Stephen, "Lord Jesus lay not this sin to their charge".

A second thing which seems to us to be taught in the text is this: no man can live to himself. The people of God cannot withdraw themselves to themselves, and think alone of their own interests, without committing sin against God. The tribes of Israel were taught that they must stand together in mutual love, and helpfulness. They were one people.

It is true today, that if one member suffer, all suffer in their measure, with that member. So if one member be wrapped up in himself, and so that he has ease and prosperity, it matters little about how others fare, the harm will not only fall upon him, but upon all the body. Because of the false report of a few, who brought back discouraging news of the land to which the tribes were journeying, all Israel suffered in the wilderness. And so here Moses tells them that if they do not go over to the battle with the rest, they all will be discouraged, and the anger of God will fall upon them. How close is the union which our God has established among his people. It is compared to the union between the members of the body. The church at Laodicea was in this condition. She said that she was rich, and increased in goods, and had need of nothing, and as she needed nothing, it is evident that she also cared little for the love and fellowship and help of her kindred in Christ; and that help which she needed not, in her estimation, she would not bestow upon her brethren in their need. And the Lord said that he would spue them out of his mouth. This is as true today as it has ever been. It is a sin against God, when we do not feel a readiness to bear each other's burdens. To bear each other's burdens, is to fulfill the law of Christ. This law is love, and love is the fulfilling of the law. If we do not as churches, and as individuals, find our hearts going out to our brethren in their need; if when we are well supplied for instance with the word of the gospel, we do not think of those who are destitute of such privileges, and stand ready to minister help to them, we are guilty of sin against God. Love for God, and for each other will solve all this, and solve it upon the right side. If we love enough, the rest will follow. It would be no task for these two tribes to go over and help the rest in their warfare, if they loved God and the rest of the tribes, as well as they did themselves.

Moses accompanies the word of commandment, with a word of warning. If they should not do this, then they might be sure that their sin should find them out. Its results should be sure. All sin reacts upon the guilty one. We cannot hide from the consequences of our sins. That which is evil, indulged in and followed, will be found to eat into one's own soul, as does a canker. It will abide there, and lead to still more ungodliness. We may forget the sin, but it has not forgotten us, and will lie in wait for us, and meet us at our own door. We have often thought of the peculiarity of the language of the apostle: What a man sows, that very thing he shall reap. He may reap sorrow for his sins. It is sure to be so, and it is well when it is so, but he shall reap more than this, he shall reap just what he has sown. From sowing the wind, he shall reap a mightier wind; the reaping shall be the whirlwind. The evil that we do fastens itself upon our own hearts. The little foxes that seem so small, soon grow to be large foxes. If we are careless toward our brethren, in their need in any way, we shall grow poor in soul. Our sin will find us out, in poverty, and leanness and barrenness. Who has not found it so in his own experience? Ungodliness leads to more ungodliness. One begins to neglect his privileges in the house of God. How rapidly this grows, and how many companion evils come into that soul, and abide there. The sin has found them out. This comes in the way of that discipline which the Lord holds in his own hand, and which he visits upon the disobedient. This is the rod, and these are the stripes, with which he visits them. It is their sin finding them out. Such discipline is good for the disobedient child, but he has this also for his strength, that he be not overborne with sorrow. His redemption is secure. Though he has the rod, yet it is the rod of love. The blood of Jesus Christ has put away all sin: therefore his loving-kindness he will not take away from him, nor

from any in him. Their sin shall indeed find them out, but so shall redemption find them out, yea, it has already found them out, and none can perish who are embraced in this everlasting covenant. We will leave the subject. The field is very broad; we have but glanced at it.

(Elder) F. A. Chick

May 15, 1898

MY WAIT UPON THE LORD

Many years have passed - and yet they seem few - since I first began to wonder about an Omnipotent God. I attended the Primitive Baptist Church throughout my childhood, and as a teenager with my parents. Suddenly, I found myself continuing the practice as a young adult in a strange town. Was I finding my way to this denomination through habit or respect or through interest? Why didn't other churches, their large crowds and various functions, attract me? I soon rationalized that my feet were leading me to the Primitive Baptist by deception.

I inquired and learned that choir practice, sponsored by a nearby church, met on Wednesday nights in private homes. I attended several of these and was made most welcome. I was then invited to sing in the choir the following Sunday. I accepted their invitation and considered it an honor. On Sunday, I stood before a strange congregation, with a robe on, uttering words that made me weak with shame. I simply couldn't believe such a dishonor to God - and I in the middle of it all. This one frightful attempt at performing with the world proved to me that I couldn't reappear in the role. I never returned.!

My greatest concern then seemed to be just to be given a small token of evidence from time to time that I was a believer. Yet, each such token would only cause me to crave for something more concrete. For many nights and years, I would attempt to beg God for mercy and kindness toward me. I tried to be reconciled to the idea that I would never be shown the way, or be able to belong to His church. I only wanted a few crumbs to comfort me.

Throughout these twenty years I would slip into church two or three times a month, but always when our home church met on first Sundays. Just to be allowed to attend church - the Primitive Baptist - was a great privilege (and still is!) My active thoughts concerning becoming a member had almost been banished. The realization of my obvious short comings had convinced me of my unworthiness to be numbered among those precious brethren.

By this time in life I was married to a most understanding husband and had been given three wonderful children. The urge to belong to the church had become more pressing each time I attended. I could not allow myself to attend Saturday night services or to attend baptisms. My burning desire to ask for a home was as an impenetrable cloud; yet, I could not utter a sound to anyone.

One rainy Sunday I suddenly decided to go to church alone. Usually, I'd contact my Mother, but not this day. I crept in, sat near the back of the church, and left immediately after services. Elder O. K. Tench, Pastor of the church, followed me to the car and requested that I bring my clothes to the baptizing the following Sunday. The tears rolled down my cheeks; I can't recall giving him any reply. I thought I'd been concealing my feelings so well.

Tuesday night I wrote him that I would be there if God would permit. My doubts were great, and only on Thursday could I mail the letter. How could I deceive the very people I esteemed so highly? Friday afternoon I visited Elder D. V. Spangler to inform him of my intentions and request his presence. Through the years, I had dreamed of offering to the chuch in his presence as he had served Malmaison, our home church, much of my life. Elder

Spangler had previously arranged for someone to fill his appointment and attend the baptizing.

My heart rejoiced. I could not believe the way had been made straight just for me. All those years the obstacles had been insurmountable; useless utterings to an Omnipotent God had seemingly bounced back. The door was now open, and my soul rejoiced and praised the Lord. Yet, I knew the burden was heavy, and wondered if survival would be possible if the church saw me as I really was.

The day came - a bright, "unclouded" day, in June, 1963. The members graciously heard my feeble attempts to explain my wishes and doubts and received me. I was baptized.

Recently I have been made more aware than usual of God's goodness and mercy toward my family. Without His blessings and the fellowship and friendship of His people, all our days would be as nothing.

I sincerely hope I have written this in humbleness and in love and as an unworthy member of God's Church on earth.

Submitted in love,
Naomi W. Houser

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MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Rocky Mount Primitive Baptist Church, Franklin County, Va., in conference April 21, 1979, a presbytery met July 21, 1979, for the examination of Brother Junior Dent, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, ordain the above named to the full work of deacon.

Prayer was offered by Elder P. E. Ingram, and Elder C. E. Turner was chosen as Moderator, with Brother James Holley as clerk. Brother Ira Powell was spokesman for the church. The questioning of the candidate was lead by Elder William Holland and Elder Rufus Brown assisted him. Questions from Bible reference in I Timothy, Chapter 3, verse 8-13 were asked and satisfactory answers were given. All Elders present participated in the laying on of hands and the ordination prayer was by Elder P. E. Ingram, and Elder Lane Carter gave the charge.

Brother Dent was returned to the church as an ordained deacon of Rocky Mount Primitive Baptist Church. The Presbytery was dismissed by Elder Rufus Brown.

In addition to the above named Elders, the deacons present were Brothers M. Davidson, C. Haygood, A. Hudson, C. Johnson, T. Lovell, P. Poindexter, J. Tynee, and T. Young.

Elder C. E. Turner, Moderator
Deacon James Holley, Clerk

Burlington, N.C.

Dear Brother Smith,

Enclosed is a check to renew the ***Signs of the Times*** for another year. We enjoy it in our home and look forward to reading the wonderful experience and walk of life of our dear ones in Christ. We hope to be one that the dear Lord will have mercy on and remember.

May God bless and keep you all in His loving care.

Yours in hope,
Junius Allison

Mt. Brydges, Ontario

Dear Elder Wood,

I have enjoyed reading the ***Signs of the Times*** for a number of years. The letters bring a warmth to my breast not found elsewhere. But due to an oversight on my part for some time, I find myself considerably in arrears in paying for my subscription, as I find it ran out in November.

You will find enclosed a Royal Bank Money Order to pay for my 1979 subscription. Sorry to be so late with it.

I so enjoyed reading "Bank of Faith" published last year. I often felt akin to the writer for so many times past I have felt the Lord provided for me and my family in many times of special need, not only in a material way, but in a spiritual way as well.

Congratulations to the editors for their good work, and for publishing the writings of the brethren of 100 years ago. It does one's heart good to read of how they wrote 100 years ago and to realize the present Elders write and speak the same--the Word of God taken from the Bible--without embellishments.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Lilliam McColl

Macclenny, Florida

Dear Editors, and dear people in Christ,

For some reason best known unto God, I must submit a few lines. I pray the good Lord will bless this unworthy one to do so. I beg God to enable me to write pleasingly of Him and the ones whom I hope God gave me to love for

Christ's sake - "The children of God". They must be the children of God for there is that love that runs like a lovely and beautiful brook - sweet and peaceful. This love can never be told or expressed in words.

I remember how happy I was after being accepted into the fellowship of my church. I love all the brethren in Christ. May the God of all grace bless every one and all the gifted writers.

Enclosed is $20.00 to renew my subscription to the ***Signs*** for two more years and use the balance to help distribute this worthy publication.

With much love, a sister in hope
of eternal life,
Mrs. Letcher Smith

Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Elder Smith,

You will find enclosed a check for a two year subscription to the ***Signs of the Times.*** Use the balance as you see fit.

Brother Smith, I hope you editors will keep the ***Signs*** in the Truth. I have been a subscriber for many years. I can't remember ever believing any thing else than what I hope to be the Truth today, as it is in Christ Jesus. For we know that there is "none other name given whereby we must be saved". There is salvation in none other. So may the Lord bless us all is my prayer.

Love to all,
(Elder) H. R. Prince

Hermitage, AR.

Dear Editors:

Please renew my subscription for two years and you may use the balance as you see fit.

I enjoy the paper very much. Although I am not a member of the Primitive Baptist, if not deceived, I believe the doctrine they advocate. My desire is to be associated with them.

J. O. Harrod

OUR THANKS TO
ELDER JOHN WOOD

Be it known that we, the Pigg River Association express our sincere thanks and appreciation to Elder John Wood for his years of devotion and service to us while serving as clerk of our association. He has served us faithfully and well for forty (40) years. We do hope that he and Sister Wood will be blessed with health to attend our association in the future years. May our Heavenly Father continue to uphold you both with the power of His love and mercy.

Jamie E. Cooper

Chattaroy, Washington

Dear Editors,

I am sorry I have overlooked the ***Signs of the Times*** subscription and it is now a month late. I am sending it now. I have taken it for many years and I don't want to stop now. I am 86 years old and my father took it as long as I can remember, so it has been in our home a long time. I do enjoy the many good letters in it. Some of them are so much like my own experience.

May God bless you all to keep up the good work.

Sister in Hope,
Mrs. Blanche Brown

I can compare some ranting Arminian preachers, who represent salvation as a matter of choice, and press men to help forward their own conversion, upon pain of damnation, to none so well as to auctioneers; who, with the hammer in their hands, are always bawling out, "Now is your time; now is your time: a-going, a-going, a-going".

Such a method is equally inconsistent with the analogy of faith, and subversive of the majesty of the gospel. Shall I order a dead soul to awake, and raise itself to life? Let me rather address the living God, and say, "Awake, and put on thy strength, O arm of the Lord! Breathe on these slain, that they may live!"

Toplady

EDITORIAL

GALATIANS 5:17, 26

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of which before, as I have told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. In all the literature that the world has produced there is not a fuller nor more comprehensive treatise ever written on the works of the fleshly nature of men and women given than this. We may take texts apart, and we may be blessed to put them together, but no sacred writer has ever been inspired more than this apostle. These are works of the flesh. They are not the fruit of the flesh; they are not by-products of the flesh. They are the things that are being done by the flesh in men. Let us make it clear that this flesh is the carnal mind of man (Gr. fleshly). There is not a thing good about it. It can not do a good deed nor think a good thought. This carnal mind is an evil tree. In this carnality Paul did not have a good thing about him. He did not say that there was not anything good in him. I think that we are mistaken when we make so bold a statement as to say that there is not a good thing about us. It is a good thing when the heart is established in grace, and Paul said, I am what I am by the grace of God, therefore he was not saying that there was not anything good in him or about him. But he did say that, I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing (Rom. 7:18). As at other times, it seemed that he was about to leave the wrong impression (Gal. 2:20; I Cor. 15:10), and lest he do that, he said it in the right way. Therefore, it seems to me, using the ministry of Paul as our guide, that we should not say that there is not anything good in us. The tree being evil, it can not bring forth a good thing or fruit. The Saviour said that. He spoke the truth, yea, He was truth. It still is the truth today, that a good tree can not bring forth evil fruit, and an evil tree can not bring forth good fruit. These are self evident facts, and it seems so strange to hear intellects say that an evil tree can will to do good. For an evil tree to bring forth good fruit, it must be made into a good tree. This is a strange matter with most of today's theologians. They are mistaken in thinking that the old or evil tree is renovated or made over. There is not a thing done for the evil nature of that tree except that it is brought into subjection to a new tree. The man or tree that was evil is born again, even from above. The old nature or tree is not removed, only subjugated and brought under control. This tree being born again, not of a corruptible nature or seed, but of an incorruptible, is a good tree.

These works of the flesh emanates from the flesh; they are the flesh at work; they are the works that the flesh is always doing. These works are not found out by noble birth; they are not taught in the schools of men; they can not be learned at mother's knee; they can not be ascertained by the flesh searching them out. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it (Jer. 17:9)? None can know it save He that knows all things. And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually (Gen. 6:5). What a sentence is this, and yet, as I sit here and ponder the religious situation in the world, I am somewhat taken back to find that most of the religious forces in the universe believe that this carnal and fleshly nature can turn and rise above its level and get itself into favor with God and do good things. These works of the flesh none but God can understand how untamed they are, and how far afield it will go to

indulge its sensual appetites to satisfaction. While the children of God were not able to fathom this fleshly or carnal mind before regeneration, neither have they come to a clear knowledge of it since. It still baffles them; it is still beyond their powers of perception to where they can manage it. Yet, they know something of their weakness, and me thinks that my readers will see themselves in these works of the flesh, and they will be often at a throne of grace begging the Lord that He will keep them from these presumptuous sins. It has been so hard to understand why that people whose experience of the first deliverance from the law you would not question, will stand off and mock poor sinners that also have been delivered, but who are not only looking for deliverance from the same source now, but do not expect to improve in the future, that do not expect to learn better how to do righteousness, that do not expect to get a promotion in the future, but are, like unto an eminent citizen of Zion, hoping for deliverance in the future (2 Cor. 1:10). Since these that belong to the commonwealth of Israel know their weakness, it seems out of line to dwell on these bad things, these works of the flesh. Remembering that there is law against these works, and since the inhabitants of Zion are begging for deliverance from these works of the flesh, realizing that, while they have not found out how to do that which is good, at the same time that they have a will toward fruit instead of work, we will leave these matters and go to the fruits of the Spirit.

Ah yes, dear readers, what a lovely and transcending thought it is to have our minds arrested and placed on divine and glorious things, even the fruits of the Spirit. But we are not carried away into imagery and into seeing mirages. We have found out by bitter experience that the flesh is deceitful above all things, therefore, our longing desire is to be preserved from thinking that we can bring the fruit of the Spirit to fruition. Doesn't it seem like a hard doctrine to think that we who desire these fruits in our lives must join in with the Spirit to produce them, and harder yet, it seems so out of place to think that we, in our flesh, can keep the Spirit from bearing fruit. If that had any credibility in it at all, then the Lord would not have ever brought us to fruitbearing, for we said in the early days of His ministry that we would not have this man reign over us (Luke 19:14).

In our relationship with the flesh, is there any of these fleshly works that we have not done? I hear you saying, Well I have not murdered anybody, I have not committed adultery, I have not done this and that and the other. Let us look at ourselves for a moment. Let us not cast a personal stone, insinuation, accusation, but let us come to the tribunal of truth, leaving our pharisaical spirit out of the investigation. Have we lacked at all? Is there a skeleton hid (?) in our closet? Have we failed in the least degree? Have we loved the Lord with all of our hearts, minds, souls, and strength? Have we loved our neighbor accordingly? Have we denied the Lord in the crisis of His life? You tell me again that I have not denied Him. Pardon me, but I thought that we were going to leave the pharisaical spirit out of this. Have you failed to attend services because that it was too far, or too hot, or too cold, or because of business, or because of your children coming? ***If the answer is yes, then you are as guilty of denying Him as Peter ever was.*** As far as fleshly service is concerned, if you have failed in the nth degree to keep the law of Moses with all of its ramifications, you are guilty of the whole. I realize the triteness of what I am saying, but it is necessary to say it once again in order that I might get before us what I am reaching after. There is not any beginning in the law and discontinuing it; if we continue not in all points of it we are guilty of the whole, and cursed is every one that continueth not in all

points of it. Now are we guilty? It is true that I have not killed anybody, but providence is to be praised for that, for I have been angry enough that I would have, if I could have, killed somebody, and so we run down the whole list of these works of the flesh; if I have not openly broke them it is not because of a sanctimonious nature, but because the providence of God prevented it, and, I do hope, that for the last forty-nine years because of the grace of God in my heart.

"But they that do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." If our failure to enter heaven and immortal glory is predicated on what we do not of these fleshly works, then by all means none of us will get there. We shall not get into the kingdom of God, the law giver, if we have been guilty of any of these things. The law of God (the entrance into His realm of existence) demanded that we not sin at all. We failed in our father Adam, and we have failed in a practical sense all of the way. Regardless of all the hurrah about keeping the ten commandments, or of mending our disobedience of the first commandment in the garden of Eden, none of the Adamic family has, or ever will, make the grade. It is too demanding, too steep, and our uprightness in the morning having been natural, we have not been able to refrain from these fleshly works.

But we must remember that some of the most illustrious mouthpieces of God have been openly guilty of these fleshly works. Take Noah, the brethren of Joseph, Jonah, Jeremiah, David, Peter, Paul, you and I, and we are all as guilty as sin can make us. Will heaven be our home? Is that the zenith of perfection that we are seeking? If so, it will never be reached by having avoided the works of the flesh. It will be by the mercy and love and grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But you say to me, Some of these have committed these sins after having had mercy shown them. That is true with the most of them; that is true with this sinner. Then we must find a scriptural solution to this predicament. It is not worthwhile to lambast one another for seeking something that is scriptural to alleviate the suffering and anxiety that comes to us when we survey our life, since we have had a good hope in Christ, and have found it lacking along the way. I want you to notice what Paul says. He had said it before (I Cor. 6:9), and in our text, he says it again, that they that do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. He does not mention doing them one time, or slipping from a stedfast position and lapsing into a mistake. He is talking about a habitual living in them. All of the Lord's people are sinners, and they are not able to continue at all times in gracious living. But the apostle is not talking about those that do not have any sin, but he is talking about those that do such things, those that live in them, and those that are habitually sinning and living in these fleshly works.

The beloved John is treating on the same order of truth when he sent the precious messages to the elect lady and her children. I want to urge that you notice carefully the many urgent pleas to these elect children that he makes as to their obedience to the commandments of God. Dear brethren, dear readers from coast to coast, you that have been maligning one another (and I am guilty) so often, over one word, one application of the scripture, so often about a private interpretation. I plead with you to stop the deadly devouring of one another about these matters. Do not be one sided about a sinner. He and she has more of it than they desire; if they were not hampered and hindered by still being a poor sinner they would not ever sin again. Some of us have gone too far about this; some of us about that; some of us about the other, ***and, sad to relate, some of us about nothing in particular except that we seem to have a burning intention to bite and devour one another.*** We have

forgotten the sure word of our Lord and Master that biting and devouring one another brings the consuming of one another. When our brethren first came to America at Welsh Tract, they had some differences with the Baptists over the laying on of hands. They felt that it was an ordinance as was baptism and the communion. They had a meeting or two with the thought in mind of finding a solution to the matter so that fellowship would abound. Let me ask, Would we do that today? Would we try to find a middle ground for our differences so that fellowship could be had among these that we are separated from? Would we? These Welsh Baptists did not want to give up the practice of laying on of hands, but neither did they want to be separated from the surrounding Baptist people. Because both sides desired union in the privileges of the gospel, and because that they that were without were mocking because of the variance between the Baptists, they compromised about the matter. Would we do that today? Would we even consider meeting together to talk over differences? Would we give a hoot about what the outside people thought about us? Even though the same situation exists to day (that is, that many people look upon us with disdain and amusement because that we can not get along with each other) would we, like the Welsh brethren (whom we like to claim when we get hot pressed by our enemies), consider meeting together to settle differences?

Please pardon my digression (not that I am asking pardon for being wrong, only for digressing from the subject), but John and Paul were writing the same doctrine. John said a number of lovely things about this important matter. He wrote that our joy be full, and it is worth our time to find what it takes to make our joy full. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. This reference to walking in darkness can not mean our mistakes in moments of weakness, for this is stumbling but not walking. This is habitual sinning, and it is equal to Paul's doing such things. If one is walking in darkness; if he is doing such things, where is the evidence that he has ever been in the light? If Paul had continued from the Damascus road to breathe out threatenings and slaughter against the church of God, would Ananias have called him brother? Would he have baptized him? The answer is obvious, and thus seeing that one does such things, or that one walks in darkness, or that one is habitually evil, has no part in the kingdom of God or in the kingdom of heaven.

If we walk in the light, as He is the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin. The walking in the light, having fellowship one with another, and the cleansing by the blood, are all in the present tense. They all come together; the walk, the fellowship, the cleansing are all blessings that we were blessed with in Christ before the world had its beginning. They do not originate with us. They originated in the eternal mind of God and are manifest in our present life. They are timely blessings. It has been whispered around the country that I advocated time salvation. I certainly have. *Although I realize that the crossing from out of this time state is close at hand, yet, I am, at this writing, still on the time side of eternity. I am writing to those on this same side. I am not expecting these lines to reach beyond this vale of sorrow. However, if I am mistaken, and it does reach any beyond this life, let me hear from you. If I do not hear from you, I will know that you also are a sharer with me

*(We believe that Elder Griffin is not setting forth the doctrine of "Conditional" Time Salvation, but rather expressing the true view that while we live in time, we are blessed in time, and that by free grace. Editor)

of timely blessings, of time salvation. Walking in the truth is the only way that gospel fellowship can be had. If our churches are faithful, none will ever get into them that are not walking in this truth both from a doctrinal as well as a practical standpoint. A faithful church would not receive one that was "doing such things." Nor would they receive one that said that they were free of sin, for I do not think that any one could be indulging in "such things" any more than by lying, and John tells us that the one that says that he does not have any sin is a liar (I John 1:8). If one came to the church that seemingly was a fruit bearing tree, and yet told the church that he or she would be a valuable asset to the church, they would be "doing such things" and would certainly be a liability to that church. It is as much enjoined upon us to confess our sins as it is for us to abstain from saying that we do not have any sin. His faithfulness will not fail, for He forgives our sin and cleanses us from all unrighteousness. This cleansing from all unrighteousness in the ninth verse is the same cleansing by blood in the seventh verse; it is in the present tense; it is in manifestation in our daily experience, and this is stemming from what was actually accomplished on the Tree by the glorious Sufferer.

As I draw near conclusion I would notice what John says, I write unto you, that ye sin not (I John 2:1). Would any of you say different to the saints, to the little children? Would any of you dare lift your voice in the pulpit, or write it in a letter that it is alright to sin? If so, I write as humble as I know, but I write boldly as I know how that there is a law against any of "such things" but that in walking humbly and quietly and peaceable in the fruits of the Spirit that there is not any law against it.

Yours in blessed hope,
W. D. G.

Meadow Grove, Nebraska

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is $1.00 for 4 copies of the Absolute Predestination by Elder Gilbert Beebe. I think it is so very good. I also thoroughly enjoyed the "Bank of Faith". I also like the "Voices of the Past". I guess I should say I like the paper, the letters, the editorials, and all. Since it has been coming for so many years, I feel the Lord will continue blessings to us thru its pages as long as time endures. I know my folks took it for years and I'm sure some of my children will continue after I am gone.

In Christian fellowship,
Mrs. Walter Black

It is a great mercy to enjoy the gospel of peace, but a greater to enjoy the peace of the gospel.

Dyer

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION

Our Standard Lexicon defines absolute to mean, in its literal, or general sense, free, independent of anything extraneous. 2. Complete in itself; positive, as an absolute declaration. 3. Unconditional; as an absolute promise. 4. Existing independent of another cause; as, God is absolute. 5. Unlimited by extraneous power or control; as an absolute government or prince. 6. Not relative; as absolute space. See Webster's definition. As this word is nowhere used in the Scriptures to qualify the word Predestination, we will not contend for it, especially as the word predestination when rightly understood needs no such qualification, as it cannot be otherwise than absolute. We merely use the word absolute to distinguish our views of predestination from those who, while they admit that the term is frequently used in the Scriptures, deny

its plain and obvious meaning, as though it were only vaguely used by the inspired writers, without any positive or unequivocal meaning.

On the signification of the word predestination, our brother is correct; it means foreordination by an unchangeable purpose. But the grand question on which we are principally at issue, is, whether the predestination of God extends to the wicked actions of men and devils. We have rejoiced greatly in the firm belief that God's government is universal, that there is not a sparrow or a worm, but is found in his decree. That sin, and death, and hell are under his control, so that the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain. If the Scriptures do not authorize us so to believe, we know not at what hour we may fall a prey to the unbridled rage of the enemies of God and of his people. If the divine government of Jehovah only extends to the good conduct of his creatures, his government is much more limited in regard to this world, than we had supposed, for he has informed us that there is none that doeth good; no not one. But that he has set limits to the wicked men, we should infer from his declaration, "I have formed the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and bringeth forth an instrument for his work; I have created the waster to destroy. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that riseth against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." (Isa. 54:16, 17) If God has created the smith, and the waster, to destroy, and so limited their operations that they cannot go beyond his decree, and if this is a part of the heritage of his servants, they cannot yield it without marring their inheritance. We confess that to us this part of the saints' inheritance is too valuable to be sold for a mess of pottage. Paul has said that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; and God has told us by the mouth of Isaiah, that he has declared the end from the beginning, etc., "saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravening bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass, I have purposed it, I will also do it." How unmeaning would all this language be to us in the absence of predestination! The end declared from the beginning, and yet not determined in the mind or purpose of God, how preposterous! We cannot believe that our God would declare a thing beforehand that he was undecided upon, and which might be quite different from what he had declared; and if he has only declared what he had determined on, that is the most absolute predestination that we have any knowledge of. This predetermination of events extends throughout all the intervening space, from the beginning to the end, and consequently embraces all things. When wicked men conspired against the life and liberty of Joseph, and against the predestination of His and their own destiny, as signified by Joseph's dreams, they intended evil, but God intended all for good. If God had not previously intended to harden Pharaoh's heart, he would not have told Moses that he would do so. If he had not predestinated that the children of Israel should sojourn in a strange land, and be afflicted by the Egyptians four hundred years, he certainly would not have told Abram so; read Gen. 15:12-16. Let it be remembered that God told Abram this long before either the children of Israel or the Egyptians, who were to be concerned in it, were born, and the things which the Egyptians were to do to the children of Israel were such, as God told Abram he would judge and punish them for.

The Son of God was delivered into the hands of wicked men, that they should, with wicked hands, do to him what

God's hand and counsel had before determined to be done. He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.

Paul writes to the Thessalonians concerning the manifestation of that wicked people, whom the Lord would destroy, and said, God will send them strong delusions that they may believe a lie, that all may be damned, etc. God said by the mouth of Isaiah that he would choose their delusions. This is solid Bible testimony, and it is what we intended to express by the words absolute predestination. And pray brother, what objection have you to it? Would you wish to restrict his government, and confine his dominion to good people and their good works, and leave the powers of darkness to rage at random, without the restraint of God's predestinating decrees? Are you fearful that this view reflects upon the purity and holiness of God? But why these fears? Are not the inspired Scriptures sufficiently guarded to secure the honor of their supreme Author? If not, all our attempts to supply the supposed deficiency, will be as vain, if not as presumptive, as Uzzah's attempt to protect the ark of God. Because God controls, restrains, overrules, and disposes of all beings, and all events, precisely as he eternally designed to do, it does not by any means follow that he is the fountain from whence impurity proceeds. He is perfectly holy, just and good; but he has all power to set bounds and limits to that which is unholy, unjust and wicked. If it be admitted that God now has power to restrain the wickedness of men and devils according to his sovereign pleasure, and that he is immutable, then it follows, that he always had that power. If it be denied that he has that power, where is the safety of his church? Or if he has now a perfect knowledge of all beings and of all events, then he must always have had that knowledge. It certainly does not become us to say that either his wisdom, holiness, prescience or power, are at fault, that he has allowed his creatures to rebel against his government when he had power and wisdom enough to have prevented it, if it had been his pleasure so to have done. We do not charge our brother, nor those brethren who are associated with him, with attempting to limit Jehovah, or set bounds for him to be governed by, but we would give and take the admonition, "Be still and know that he is God." If we cannot comprehend him, it still is our privilege to confide in him, for he is too wise to err, and too good to do that which is wrong.

We have no disposition to press our views on those who do not understand the Scriptures as we do, on every subject. ***But we wish all our readers to understand that we do as firmly believe, and as greatly rejoice in the doctrine of Predestination, and its extension to everything in heaven, earth, and hell, as we do in any other part of divine revelation.***

(Elder) Gilbert Beebe

Middletown, N.Y. July 1, 1855

The foregoing article was published in the editorial columns of the ***Signs of the Times*** nearly half a century ago, and many thousands of copies of it read in nearly every State and Territory of the country, and received by the brethren and sisters generally, as the truth. As then stated by our dear father, "This is solid Bible testimony, and it is what we intend to express by absolute predestination", so we now state. Many of the dear saints have been deceived by a misrepresentation of the position of the ***Signs*** on this subject, and we can but feel that in many cases they have been deceived by those who knew they were misrepresenting us. There has been an effort to make it appear that the ***Signs*** advocates, and its patrons believe, that God, or the Holy Spirit of God, prompts man to sin. Some have even gone so far as to say that with us a man can commit any sin, and if arraigned before the church, he can plead that it was all predestinated, and

we are obliged to accept his plea, and can take no further action in church discipline.

Now if any one will show us a single number of the ***Signs of the Times*** in which any such a sentiment is published, either in the editorial, or correspondents' columns, we will make a public acknowledgment of the error, if in an editorial, or if by a correspondent, we will refute the same, and beg the forgiveness of our brethren for having published it.

We have seen quite frequent allusions to a mythical individual, who somewhere, came before some church, with the argument that he was not accountable for his sin, because it was predestinated, and he could not help it. ***But personally we have never met with such a case, nor have we ever met with any one that has ever met this much maligned individual.*** And if there are any who may know of an authentic case, among Primitive Baptists, who will write us, giving name of party, church, place, and date, when and where this oft repeated incident occurred, we will agree to send that church a scriptural antidote, or specific, for all such maladies.

We have been pained to observe of late, in some of the periodicals claiming to be Primitive Baptist publications, a disposition to resort to ridicule, and slang, in referring to brethren who believe the doctrine of the predestination of all things, designating them as "the can't help its". Aside from all question as to the truth or error of the views held by the brethren on this subject, there can be no doubt as to the spirit manifested in such a course being prompted by the carnal mind. It is one of the strongest evidences of the self-consciousness of the weakness of the position of an opponent, when he is driven to ridicule or derision, in an effort to maintain his position.

As to the appellation itself, taken in a scriptural sense, it is not so objectionable to us. We were born of the Adamic race, and we "can't help it"; we were conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity, and we "can't help it"; we are prone to evil as the sparks are to fly upward, and we "can't help it"; the good that we would, we do not; but the evil which we would not, that we do, and we "can't help it". Almost endless instances of scriptural definitions might be sighted in which we know that we are a "can't help it". Does it then follow that we are led or prompted by the Holy Spirit to sin? God forbid. From whence, then, come these wicked promptings, causing us to sin? Let an ancient inspired "can't help it", answer. He says, "Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me". (Rom. 7:20)

Now if Paul had done that he would not, he most certainly was a "can't help it". But he does not leave us in the dark as to why he could not help it, but tells us it was because of sin that dwelt in him. Inherent sin is the cause of all our wicked acts, the grace of God is the restraint, power, or limit placed upon them. The Psalmist says, "The wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain". In our sinful nature we are full of wrath against God; our carnal mind is enmity against him, and is ever striving to rebel against his holy law, and if not held in restraint by his almighty power, will make itself manifest. The engineer admits just such amount of steam in his engine as may be necessary to accomplish his work, and the remainder he restrains, but what sane man would say that the engineer propels the engine? Just so we understand our God permits just sufficient amount of the wrath of man to escape, to accomplish his praise, and the remainder he restrains.

That every thought, act, and circumstance, is as firmly fixed in the future, as in the past, and that by the determinate counsel of God, we most sincerely believe, and this is what we mean by the predestination of all things. If this doctrine seems, to some, to be fraught with too fearful

consequences, we have no disposition to argue that matter; the inspired word, to our mind, answers all cavilings on that point. What we wish to refute in this article, is the false charge that is being circulated throughout the land, that the ***Signs,*** and those that indorse its position in regard to predestination, believe that the Holy Spirit prompts men to sin, and that a member of any of our churches having been overtaken in a fault, could plead that his wickedness was predestinated and therefore he was not responsible, and we would be obliged to accept this excuse, and could not deal with him for his sin. As stated above, we never knew of such a case, but if we should, we would have no hesitancy as to what course to pursue. In the first place, we should have very serious doubts about any one who could commit sin, whether discovered by his brethren or not, and not experience "a certain looking for of judgment", having any knowledge of the grace of God. But, be that as it may, we have the law of the gospel directing us how to proceed against a transgressor, and if we act in obedience to that, we need have little concern as to whether or not it is in harmony with the reasonings of the carnal mind, as to justice.

When we commenced this article it was on our mind to simply append a note, stating that the editorial above was in accord with the views of the present editors of the ***Signs,*** and its readers in general, as far as we understand them, but we have extended it to a much greater length than we intended, and ask the forgiveness of our brethren for trespassing upon their forbearance. If what we have written is of the Lord, no matter how crudely it is expressed, it will be blessed to the comfort and edification of some poor saint, but if it is merely the promptings of the flesh, we know that the Lord can overrule it for good to them that love him.

Elder Wm. L. Beebe

Feb. 15, 1898

OBITUARIES

SISTER EFFIE ALLEN

Sister Effie Allen was the daughter of the late Randell M. and Media Frances Barefoot Smith. Sister Allen was born November 10, 1890, and departed this life January 16, 1978, having lived 87 years, 3 months, and 10 days.

She was married to Brother Jason Allen and to this union was born two sons and a daughter. Her husband died in 1947; son, Jesse Lee died in 1943; and son, Randell Eldridge (Tobby) Allen died in 1975. Her survivors are one daughter, Miss Mozell Allen; four grandsons, and three great grand-children, also many nieces and nephews.

She was blessed in having a wonderful daughter that rendered her loving care so faithful and patiently in her long declining health.

Sister Allen joined Bethsada Church many years ago and moved her membership as a charter member to Liberty Primitive Church the first Sunday in August, 1955. She loved her church and was faithful in attending as long as her health permitted.

Her services were conducted by her Pastor, Elder C. D. Turner, and Mr. J. A. Allen, in Cromartie, Pearsall, Smith's Funeral Home Chapel. She was placed beside her husband in Bethsada Church Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

We, the Liberty Church, and friends believe she will be placed on the right side of the Saviour to be with the family of God and be satisfied for ever more.

Committee: Sister Lovie Young
Sister Dorothy Barefoot
Sister Bessie Hall

WILLIAM COY HOWARD

William Coy Howard was born on October 22, 1915, in Duplin County, near Pink Hill, North Carolina. He was the only child of Oscar and Mary Houston Howard.

He and I (Katie Eubank) was united in marriage on December 26, 1934, by Elder Lenster Bryan. God blessed us with three daughters and one son.

Coy united with the Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church on May 14, 1961, and was baptized by Elder Lonnie Yopp.

He was employed by the United States Civil Service as an Aircraft Electrician for twenty years. He retired in 1963, because of declining health. He suffered from bad health for sixteen years. On December 20, 1978, God took him out of his suffering in this world to a peaceful sleep.

He was laid to rest in the Sand Hill Cemetery, with Elder Curtis Rains officiating, where he will remain until God's time comes to take him to the home He has prepared for him. There, there, will be no more pain, sickness nor sorrow, but will be peace forever more.

Coy was a good husband, a loving father, and attended his church meetings as much as his health permitted.

He never spoke of death until the morning he departed from this earth. He said to me, "This is it". I believe he was ready and had been for a good while, to make the change.

He leaves an empty, lonely place in our home that can never be filled, but his work in this world is finished and I can never wish him back to suffer again.

Written by request of the Church,
Katie E. Howard

O. R. (DOC) BRUMFIELD

With a heart pained with sorrow and filled with grief I attempt to write an obituary for our beloved father and husband, and your beloved brother in Weatherford Church, Mr. O. R. (Doc) Brumfield.

He was born July 3, 1905, and passed away on March 29, 1979, making his stay on earth 73 years and 8 months. He was faithful to the church until his sickness kept him from being able to attend. He was a firm believer in salvation by Grace, believing the Lord has fixed all things. It is well said that a man's days are numbered, and his time appointed, and his bounds are with the Lord, and he cannot pass them.

He was received into the fellowship of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on July 7, 1962, and was baptized by his pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, on July 22, 1962.

He leaves to mourn their loss his wife, Sister Ruby D. Brumfield; two daughters, Shirley Dalton, and Sylvia Hughes; four sons, Calvin, Carvel, Donnie, and Billy Brumfield; eight grandchildren; one brother, and one sister.

His funeral was conducted at Weatherford Church by Elders O. K. Tench, Raymond Goad, Denver Simpson, and Julian Williams, and his body was laid beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Weatherford Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour.

May God enable us to be reconciled to His will, and say, "Not my will, but Thine be done".

Written by his son, Billy Brumfield
Moderator - Elder O. K. Tench
Clerk - L. H. Doss

SISTER EVA GADLOCK

God, in His infinite wisdom, called Sister Eva Gadlock into His fold on June 3, 1978. She arrived in the home of Lazrus A. (Bud) and Lessie McLamb Stewart on August 6, 1908, making her stay on earth 69 years, 9 months, and 28 days. She was stricken with a stroke in 1976.

Sister Eva was a faithful person in her home, her neighborhood, as well as in her church, and especially in sickness. She heard about Sister Edna Barefoot being sick and expecting to enter the hospital for surgery. She was taken to see Sister Edna. When she was brought back home she asked for a drink of water, but by the time the water was brought she was slumped over in her wheel chair unconscious. She remained in this condition for 11 days before her death. This represents her life. She never gave up duties in life easily.

She joined the Primitive Baptist Church in the early part of the twenties. During Associations the Gadlocks always brought so much food to try to feed all the people who came.

She married Mr. James Gadlock on October 10, 1926. They were blessed with five respectable children.

Her funeral was conducted in Cromartie, Pearsall and Smith Funeral Home Chapel by her Pastor, Elder C. D. Turner and Mr. W. R. Pearce, and she was laid to rest in Devotional Gardner Cemetery in Harnett County under a mound of beautiful flowers.

She leaves to mourn Liberty Church; the widower; and sons, Larry, John Wesley, of

Dunn, N.C., James, Jr. of Varginio; a daughter, Magadlene Stephenson, Angier, N.C.; a sister Miss Lydia Stewart; and a brother, Ollin Stewart, of Dunn; also a half-sister, Mrs. Alva Pearl Simmons, Fayetteville, N.C.; half brother, Weldon Stewart, of Raleigh, N.C.; six grandchildren, many nieces, nephews, and a host of friends.

On the Resurrection Day we feel she will be placed with the elect family of God. She will be missed by all those who knew her.

Committee: Sister Lovie Young
Sister Dorothy Barefoot
Sister Bessie Hall

BROTHER DANIEL R. STEWART

Daniel R. Stewart arrived at the home of Jesse Martin and Mary Elizabeth Cannady Stewart on December 6, 1895, and God's calling came on September 26, 1978. He was faithful in many worthwhile duties during 82 years, 9 months, and 20 days of life.

Brother Daniel married Dora Monds in 1928. To this union were born 3 sons, and 3 daughters. Preceding him in death were two infants; his oldest son, Daniel, Jr., on May 26, 1965, and the oldest daughter, Mary Lou Whittington on Feb. 21, 1978. His survivers are one daughter, Margaret Woodall, of Forest City, N.C., a son, W. N. (Bobby) Stewart, of Spring Lake, N.C.; three sisters, Katie Barefoot, Spring Lake, N.C.; Lovie Young and Mary Wagstaff, of Dunn, N.C., and eight grand children.

His funeral services were held in Geddy and Adcock's Funeral Home Chapel by his Pastor, Elder C. D. Turner, and Elder W. D. Godwin.

The ones who knew him have the upmost confidence in his well-being in the resurrection. He lived his religion every day.

Committee: Sister Lovie Young
Sister Lucille Moore
Sister Bessie Hall

Brother Stewart was a very humble man and was very much loved by all who knew him. Being left after the death of his wife in 1940 with four small children, he was both father and mother to them, seeing to their every need.

He was a very faithful brother to the church as long as his health permitted. In his later years he lived with his daughter until her death and then with a son. His children were very faithful to give him the best of care during his long illness. He will be greatly missed by Liberty Church and all who knew him. May God's richest blessings rest upon the family.

Sisters Iva and Lucille

I only heard good words said about Brother Stewart. He attended Liberty Church and was a good supporter for many years before he united with the church on September 3, 1964. He came to church when hardly able to be present.

Much could be said about this faithful brother.

Sister Bessie

ELDER JOSEPH DARNALL

Elder Joseph "Nuck" Darnall was born in Trigg County, Kentucky, April 9, 1895. He gave up the ghost while in sleep at his home on April 13, 1979, making his pilgrimage of sojourn in this life 84 years and 4 days.

He was the son of the late Elder Jessie Lyn Darnall and Martha Ann Atkins Darnall. He was united in marriage to Ella Dixon on August 13, 1916 and to this union was born seven sons and two daughters; one daughter preceded him in death in infancy.

He is survived by his loving companion; Sister Ella Darnall: seven sons; Fentress, Clayton, Eugene, Elwood, Joe, Irvin, Elias and one daughter; Addie Pearl Harris, one sister; Mrs. Ricks Skinner; twenty-one grandchildren and fourteen great grandchildren.

Elder Darnall was the fourth generation of preachers in his family. His father, grandfather and great-grandfather were all preachers in the Primitive Church before him.

He became a member of the body of Christ in Dry Creek Church in the year 1917. He preached his first sermon there the second Sunday in May 1919. Had he lived until May 13, 1979, he would have served the Church for sixty years.

Besides serving the Church at Dry Creek throughout those years, he pastored other Churches both within and without the Little River Association and from time to time was an itinerant preacher; doing the work of an evangelist preaching both far and near,

visiting Churches and Associations everywhere.

Elder Darnall was a man greatly endowed of God. The manner of man he was, the excellency of his gift and the ability of his preaching demanded and received from those who heard him the highest of respect and honor. His sermons and discourses were so profound and to the point, so illuminating and enlightening, so penetrating and in depth that they continued alive and living in the hearts and minds of those that heard him a feast of fat things for days, yea, even weeks afterwards.

He was a pillar in the house of God and a chief man among the brethren. He had and maintained a good report among them that were without. He was, within his own right, an institution in and around the little town of Cadiz, Kentucky. In the eyes of that community he was the epitome, and epitomized all that was good pertaining to the Primitive Baptist and their cause in Christ.

His eulogy was delivered by this writer at Goodwin Funeral Home, Cadiz, Kentucky in the presence of one of the largest gatherings I ever saw, consisting of both those within the Church and of those without.

His seven sons carried him to his final resting place, where like Stephen of old, great lamentation was made over him. I deeply sympathize with the sons and daughter and especially with his companion, Sister Ella, who endured with him throughout all those years and hardships, the many sacrifices and afflictions of the gospel common to a man of his stature, but who also shared with him the many happy, content and exhilarating blessings received from God that Giver of every good and perfect gift.

His race was set before him - he ran it with patience. He looked to Jesus, the author and finisher of his faith. His departure is now past and with his fathers before him his body now sleeps in Jesus on one of the many little knolls that grace the landscape behind old Dry Creek Church where he served so many years.

This man was so talented and gifted in preaching the Gospel of the Blessed Son of God that I think we shall never see the likes of him again - at least not in my generation. Humanly speaking, one might wonder what Elder Darnall might have been had he been a highly educated man, but then again, had he been highly educated, we might never have known the real Elder Darnall.

As I have endeavored to pen with words this last tribute of respect to this great man of God, I am burdened with such a deep feeling of inadequacy and shortcomings of expressions, but in my weakness I feel and believe with all my heart that he died the death of the righteous and his last end shall be like His, and when this *Boanerges* (son of Thunder) day of *Talithacumi* (I say unto thee arise) comes, I am confident that it shall not be a day of *Tekel* (weighed and found wanting), but rather a day of *Jezliah - Jezoar* (Jehovah delivers-the shining one) and he, like the wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmaments and like him that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever.

He is now at rest but shall yet stand in his lot, whose destiny is known only by Him whose *Urim* and *Thummin* (lights and perfections) are with His Holy One.

Elder R. H. Hale

JAMES LINDSAY BEESON

Camp Branch Primitive Baptist Church mourns the loss of one of its members, James Lindsay Beeson. He was born in Alvarado, Texas on September 15, 1919. His parents were Thomas Lindsay and Nettie Voila Hathcock Beeson, who are both deceased.

Brother Jimmy entered C. C. Camp at an early age, and then joined the Army at age 17 and served overseas 9 years. He served in the Normandy invasion.

Brother Beeson was later married to Geraldine Snyder and to this union was born 2 sons. Brother Jimmy leaves to mourn their loss, his wife, two sons, one step daughter, several grandchildren, two sisters, and two brothers and a host of friends.

Brother Jimmy was taken sick at work and he was carried to the hospital where he passed from this life into the great beyond, a few hours later.

His funeral was held at McKee Funeral Home, and his body was laid to rest in Roselawn Cemetery at Martinsville beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour.

Elder Rufus Brown, Moderator
Nancy Haynes, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 12/79 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

SPECIAL NOTICE

Several rumors have been circulating lately that the ***Signs of the Times***, or the Editors, more specifically, have been guilty of deliberately publishing error and unsound doctrine. Allegations of "tempting God", "bringing in confusion", "robbing God", "ignoring the Scriptures", etc., etc., are but a few of the specific charges.

We claim nothing near perfection. Rather, we see much imperfection in ourselves. We do, however, deny that any justification exists for such rumors.

If the subscribers will be patient with us we will in short order fully answer all such charges publicly. God willing, we shall do it decisively and to the satisfaction of all fair minded readers.

Humbly,
The Editors

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Old Beulah, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in December, 1979.

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and worship with us.

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JESUS CHRIST, THE SERVANT BRANCH

"Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH."—— Zechariah 3:8

We have before considered Jesus Christ as the Branch of Psalm 80 (***Signs of the Times,*** March, 1978), and as the King Branch of Jeremiah 23 (January, 1979). Now, may we be graced to see Him as the Servant-Branch of Zechariah 3 as He is set forth in the inspired scriptures.

As certainly as God says, "Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness," He just as surely proclaims, "Behold my Servant whom I uphold." (Isaiah 32:1, 42:1) Those who are given that spiritual ability to behold Him will see not only the King of Kings but also the Servant of servants and will realize that both are one and the same in Jesus Christ.

Usually, people either rule or are ruled; they will serve or be served, but ordinarily not both. Over a course of a lifetime one might possibly do both; a king might first rule and later be made a servant to a conquorer who defeated him, or a servant might eventually attain to a throne. However, when either of these things happens, the conquored king who has become a servant obviously no longer reigns, and the servant who has ascended to the throne no longer serves.

Notwithstanding this usual flow of events in the natural world, Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, is unique in every respect, including this one. He is not like a mere mortal who is bound by providence to rule or to be ruled, to reign or to serve. He alone can and does do both simultaneously. Many religionists in so-called Christendom state that Christ served during the days of His earthly ministry, but that He rules now, or that He will rule in the future, as though He can only do one or the other at any specified time. Few see the truth that He also ruled in His humiliation and that He likewise serves in His glorified state. It is said that the first sentence of Psalm 96:10 in the old Latin version reads, "Say unto the people that the Lord reigneth from the tree;" that is, He reigns from the cross; not in the sense of a perpetual crucifix, but that, while He was in His deepest humiliation suffering death on the cross as Jehovah's servant, He nevertheless ruled the universe as He ever has and as He ever will. There is no correct way to trisect the mediatorship of Christ Jesus into past, present and future functions.

As Matthew wrote of the Kingship of Jesus, Mark wrote of His servitude. Kings must have a geneology to prove their royal heritage, to show that they are of royal blood and legal heirs of the throne; therefore Matthew quite correctly traced Jesus' ancestry back to Abraham, the father of the Israelite nation, through forty-two generations of royal blood, tracing His lineage through their great and respected King David, just as would be required.

In contrast, Mark, who presents Christ as the Servant-Branch, gives no geneology, for, who cares about the ancestry or birth of a servant, a slave? Pedigrees add nothing to one's ability to serve. The only requirements for a person to be a good servant are a spirit of obedience and the strength to carry out the assigned tasks. Mark then, saying nothing of Christ's lineage, begins abruptly with Jesus' baptism, His temptation, and the beginning of the work set before Him.

The servitude of Jesus Christ might be considered from two major standpoints: His service to His Father, and His service to His people. However, it soon becomes apparent that these two branches of the Servant-Branch's task are inseparable, since His direct service to His Father is an indirect service to the children of God, while His direct service to them is an indirect service to His

Father. This will become increasingly manifest if God so graces us to consider first,

I. Jesus Christ, the Servant-Branch, as the Servant of His Father:

"Behold my servant whom I uphold," says Jehovah in Isaiah 42:1. God speaks this to a beholding, seeing people, directing their gaze and attention toward His servant. He effectually bids them to behold His servant in this text, thereby emphasizing the importance of Christ's servitude, for, why else would He call our attention here to His "Servant"? He certainly would not direct the hungry, longing eyes of His little children to something unimportant.

The mind or attitude in the Son of God whom we are here bid to behold as a servant is described by the apostle in Philippians 2: being in the form of God, He "thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Angels are servants of God and fellowservants with His children (Rev. 22:8f); yet Christ took not on Him the nature of angels (Heb. 2:16), taking on rather the seed of Abraham. This taking on the seed of Abraham was lowering Himself beneath the level of the angels (Heb. 2:7, 9). Paul generalizes this "seed of Abraham" to "the likeness of men" (Phil. 2:7) because the entire Adamic race, of which the seed of Abraham was only a part, originally was put into the garden of Eden in a relationship of service to God (Gen. 2:15). Thus, when Paul says Christ Jesus "took upon Him the form of a servant," he further explains, "and was made in the likeness of men." Then, in that likeness, Christ humbled Himself-further indicating His ready mind to serve His Father--and became obedient (a word which can only be linked with servitude). The obedience of this man-servant was to the extent of death, but not an ordinary or quick, easy and painless death. The death He was foreordained and predestinated to undergo was the ultimate form of a suffering death: crossifixion, or, as crucifixion literally means, being fixed or impaled upon a cross. In this way, under the terms of the eternal covenant, He that was co-possessor of the Father's glory before the world was (John 17:5) divested Himself of the eternal glory inherent in Himself and demonstrated forever another type of glory, the ultimate glory of serving the Father even unto death. from the form of God (Phil. 2:6) to the form of a crucified servant (Phil. 2:7f)! What a magnificient move on His part; how awe-inspiring, how productive of worship! And Paul says, "Let this mind be in you."

Having thus briefly looked at the mind of the servant of the Lord, let us return to Zechariah and Isaiah and see the power and support He receives from His God. Jehovah says, "I" will bring forth my Servant the Branch. I uphold Him. My soul delights in Him. I have put my Spirit upon Him. I the Lord have called thee in righteousness and will hold thine hand and will keep thee (Isa. 42:1, 6). Through Jehovah's support the Servant-Branch's success is such that He shall not fail, nor even be discouraged at His tasks (42:4). He shall neither fail nor be discouraged in what? What does Jehovah say His Servant-Branch shall do? God says He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles, bringing forth judgment unto truth. He shall set judgment in the earth and the isles shall wait for His law. He Himself, Jesus, shall be for a covenant of the people and for a light of the Gentiles. His task as Jehovah's suffering Servant is to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. He shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall

stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against His enemies (Isa. 42:1-13).

These are some of the specifics that the Servant-Branch is to accomplish as far as His direct service to the Father is concerned. Isaiah continues, chapter after chapter, as do the other Old Testament writers, prophesying of His accomplishments. A book could be written on the subject. That book has been written: "Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart (Psalm 40:7f)." With this in mind, we now need to summarize Christ's direct service to His Father without further attempting to itemize here those things written of Him in the volume of that book. To do so, we might resort to the following few New Testament citations:

A. At the time of Jesus' baptism by John (Matt. 3:13ff) He said, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." Of necessity, the "us" in that statement goes far beyond Jesus and John. It embraces every one of the elect of God for whom the Servant-Branch fulfilled all righteousness in a manner acceptable to the Father. One phase of the task set before Him was to finish the work and to cut it short in righteousness. This involved removing the elect sinners' unrighteousness from them and fulfilling all righteousness in their place; "so by the obedience of one (Jesus) shall many (the elect) be made righteous (Rom. 5:19)."

B. Jesus, confronted by the Pharisees in the temple, said, "He that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please Him (John 8:29)." Consequently, whatever it took to please the Father, that and that only is what the Servant-Branch Jesus did.

C. Jesus later asked the same legalists, "Which of you convinceth me of sin? (John 8:46)" The weight of His question in more modern terms is, which of you can convict me of sin--who could convince anyone that I am a sinner? Face to face with such a now-or-never challenge his enemies were forced to back down. The negative aspect of His service to His Father, then, was in His not sinning, not indulging in any variation from His Father's commandments, His will, or the eternal covenant.

D. "It became Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings (Heb. 2:10)." Whatever it would take to bring these "many sons" unto glory from their fallen and lost condition, while yet remaining perfect through whatever He suffered, this would be done by the captain of their salvation who is none other than the Servant-Branch, Jesus Christ.

It should now be seen readily that, without exception, all of Christ's direct service to His Father--His fulfilling all righteousness, His humility and submission to the Father in all things, His obedience to God's laws through suffering even unto death--was an indirect service to His people, because (1) both His service and His suffering in their entirety were vicarious, being done in His people's place and on their behalf; and (2) all of His merits are imputed and reckoned to their credit before the Father.

We come now to consider,

II. Jesus Christ, the Servant-Branch, as the Servant of His people:

Mark's account of Jesus' ministry is direct and powerful. In bold, incisive language Mark tells of Jesus Christ's baptism, temptation, His call of His disciples and His teaching in the synagogue of Capernaum; His healing of a man with an unclean spirit, His healing of Simon Peter's mother-in-law who was sick with a fever. That evening He healed countless who were diseased and possessed with devils. Long before

daybreak the next morning He went out to pray. After daybreak He left on a tour of Galilee, preaching in the synagogues of the entire region, and casting out devils seemingly everywhere He went. He touched an untouchable leper, healing him of that dread disease that illustrates the plague of sin which only Jesus can touch and not be tainted by it. By His touch and the expression of His will ("I will, be thou clean") He banished both the disease and the sin it typifies.

Returning to Capernaum Jesus then healed a man sick with palsy, forgave his sins, and for His words and actions was immediately attacked by the Pharisees. Undaunted, He went forth as a mighty man, and stirred up jealousy as a man of war, just as Isaiah had prophesied. He returned to their synagogue the following sabbath and healed a man with a withered hand, knowing full well He was stirring up the wrath and jealousy of the Pharisees again. They immediately began plotting His death.

He withdrew to the seaside and multitudes followed. Again He taught, He preached, He healed. He ordained His twelve apostles. The multitudes came again and He served them so constantly He literally had no time to eat (Compare this with Christ's account in Luke 17:7-10 of the servant who, having worked all day must first feed his master before he feeds himself; Jesus in practice took the position of the unprofitable servant He there described).

His friends came and said, "He is beside Himself," unsuccessfully trying to take Him into protective custody for what they thought was His own good.

His enemies came saying that He did His healings by the prince of devils.

His mother, His brothers, and His sisters (Mary's other children) came and called for Him, but He de-emphasized human family ties, stressing instead the importance of His spiritual family.

Neither friends, enemies nor family succeeded in stopping His service to His people.

From a boat He then spoke in parables to the multitudes on the shore of Galilee, and later expounded all His teachings to His disciples when He was alone with them. That evening, after sending the crowds away, He had his disciples sail to the other side of the little sea. It was then, only then, that Mark finally says that this marvellous Servant rested, "in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow." It would almost seem that Mark would not have mentioned this brief rest-period even now, had it not been pertinent to the further account of Jesus' stilling the storm that night.

The account of His service to His people is quickly resumed: He healed the demon-possessed man of Gadara's tombs and returned to Capernaum. There He healed the woman with the issue of blood and raised Jairus' daughter from the dead. Soon after this He returned to His home town of Nazareth from which He sent out His apostles two by two, preaching and healing--an extension of His own service.

It was then that word came to Him of John the Baptist's death, and upon the return of the apostles He said, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place and rest awhile," providing rest for His weary followers while He Himself had little or none. Mark says they had no leisure so much as to eat.

They departed to a desert place, but the crowds followed Him there also. Instead of resting awhile, He taught and then miraculously fed the thousands. He went on from there to Gennesaret, and throughout the cities of that region He continued to heal untold numbers.

All of these miracles and activities which Christ did in service to His people, and much more, is recorded in only the first six chapters of Mark. Thinking of it all, it seems enough to leave us breathless as Jehovah's seemingly tireless Servant appears to rush about, day and night, always going, always about His Father's business, ceaselessly helping, aiding, teaching, healing, comforting, caring, encourag-

ing and serving His people wherever He goes.

Nor was He reluctant or slow in His service. The Greek word "Eutheos" means at once, instantly, or immediately. It is a word which would tell what kind of service one would expect out of a bond-slave. In the King James New Testament it is translated by the English words anon, as soon as, by and by, forthwith, immediately, shortly, and straightway. "Eutheos" occurs eighty times in the New Testament, and forty of those times, exactly half of all of the occurrances, are in Mark's gospel. Of the forty uses by Mark, the grand majority tell of what Christ did and the immediate results, and the good results produced in others by Him. It is true that several times the word is used to describe the evil to which Judas, the chief priests, and Satan himself all hastened (Mark 14:43-45, 15:1, and 4:15); but, in a word, the servant's words "straightway" and "immediately" in Mark show Jesus' willing, instant response in service to His people, and their resultant, immediate response to Him.

Of course, Mark's catalogue of Christ's service does not end with chapter 6. Mark continues, but we must break off here, as the point is amply illustrated: the Lord Jesus Christ lived an entirely selfless life of service to His people. And, even as His direct service to His Father was an indirect service to His people, so His direct service to His people was an indirect service to His Father, the True and Living God. This principle is made plain in:

A. Christ's own words recorded in Matthew 25:40--"Verily, verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Here Christ is speaking as God the King (Matt. 25:34). Further, He said in Matthew 10:40, "He that receiveth you (Christ's brethren) receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth Him that sent me (God the Father)." John amplifies this principle in I John 5:20: "If a man say 'I love God' and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" Putting these scriptural facts together, Jesus as the man-servant, when He loved, received, healed and saved the demoniac of Gadara, the lepers, the palsied, the poor and afflicted throngs, was doing kindness to God the King, God the Father; for God's abode through Jesus Christ, in the Person of the Eternal Spirit, is in His people. Thus, to serve one of God's children is to serve God Himself.

B. Christ's fulfilling all righteousness in behalf of His people, which was before discussed, but which can now be considered from another approach: as God requires of His people their being kind one to another, tender-hearted and forgiving one to another, loving one another, bearing one another's burdens, and many such things, so Jesus the man-servant did all of these things and more. His goodness, kindness, love, longsuffering and all other graces are imputed to His children and recognized by the Father as service to Himself. Although His healing of Bartemaeus, for example, was a direct service amd kindness to that poor, blind beggar, it was also in a very true sense a service to the Father.

In closing, may God give us a clear insight into the combination of Christ's two offices as King and Servant. A Servant-King is illogical, unreasonable and indefensible to the carnal mind. Solomon said, "For three things the earth is disquieted, and for four which it cannot bear," and the first of these things which disquiets (takes away the peace or tranquility of; disturbs, alarms) the earth and which the earth cannot bear is, "for a servant when he reigneth (Prov. 30:21f)."

Why is this so? It is so because of the exact same conflict between the princi-

ples of God and the principles of this world which is set forth in the first chapter of I Corinthians. The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, and being a servant was a major step which Jesus the Servant-Branch took toward the cross. The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom, and there is neither a sign nor wisdom to either a Jew or a Greek in servitude, crucifixion and death. As Christ crucified is unto the Jews a stumblingblock and unto the Greeks foolishness, so likewise is a Servant-King. The natural mind, which desires so desperately to reign supreme as king, ranks servitude and crucifixion as something totally humiliating, foolish, and undesireable. The natural mind craves to glory in itself. But God, in His widom has forever confounded natural wisdom by His King-Servant-Branch "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption, that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

In hope of life in Christ,
(Elder) C. C. Morris

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STONE CASTERS

(For those who have eyes to see and ears to hear.)

Text: II Samuel 16:5-6

"And when king David came to Bahurim, behold, thence came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera: he came forth, and cursed still as he came. And he cast stones at David, and at all the servants of king David: and all the people and all the mighty men were on his right hand and on his left."

This was one of the many trials King David endured. He had seen his beloved son, Absalom, his trusted councellor, Ahithophel, and multitudes of his brethren turn their back on him. He was now going into exile and had just passed over brook Kidron and ascended up the Mount of Olive and was weeping as he went, with his head covered and his feet bare. (II Samuel 15:30)

It was grief enough for David to find treachery in his family and treason in his court, but the tirade of Shimei only added insult to his injury.

Let us learn from this the following things:

1. ALL THE SAINTS OF GOD HAVE ENEMIES.

This we know from the Word of God and from our own experience. Yes, and David could even speak about it in the highest terms when in Psalm 23 he made mention of the Lord preparing a table for him in the presence of his

enemies. Our Saviour instructed His disciples thusly, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you". (Luke 6:26)

2. OUR ENEMIES USUALLY DISTORT THE FACTS. (Verse 8)

You will observe when Shimei came out casting stones at David he also hurled many false invectives. He accused David of being a "bloody man" and "a man of Belial". (Verse 7) Such accusations as these were handling the truth in a deceitful manner. True enough, David was a bloody man but was it not in the cause of Israel? But could it rightly be said that because of this he worshipped a false god? Indeed it could not, except by one who would seek to cast stones. (Shimei may have been referring to David's affair with Batheshba, but this would have made his stone casting all the worse. David had confessed his sin and God had delivered him.)

3. STONE CASTERS MORE OFTEN THAN NOT ARE ALSO LIERS IN WAIT.

They seek the right moment to cast their stones. They wait until the Davids are in distress, or have their heads bowed low because of troubles to cast their stones. Stone casters are always on the offensive and seek to take advantage. Stone casters will also hold their distance. They will not face David in a personal confrontation. Rather they will travel along on the outskirts at a safe distance and cast their stones and kick up their dust.

4. STONE CASTING MUST BE ENDURED.

When David's men would seek to take off "the head of this dead dog" (Verse 9) as they considered him, David denied them their desire. His reply was, "The Lord hath said unto him, Curse David". However evil the intentions of stone casters may be: however vile may be their accusations, remember David's attitude. Remember his patience in the matter. He says further, "Let him alone, and let him curse", which brings us to....

5. STONE CASTERS ARE DOING GOD'S BIDDING.

Even though their actions are evil, and they intend it for such, God intends it for good. (Gen. 50:20) Listen to the sweet words of David as he replies, "Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more now may this Benjamite do it? let him alone, and let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him". (Verse 11) Observe David traces the problem to the source, - that being the eternal purpose of God. May we ever look to the First Cause and not the agencies. May we see behind the cloud to the bright sun of God's good will.

6. SEE NOW THE GROUND FOR HOPE.

David says in verse 12, "It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day." Stone casters may seek our harm. They may despise our person. But when they are done, the Lord's children will always have profited by the ordeal and the enemy will receive his recompense. David looks for the good that the Lord will bring from this in what he calls "mine affliction", and David looks to His hand for deliverance. He dares not draw his own sword for "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord". (Rom. 12:19) May we ever find hope in God when stone casters show themselves.

In closing this brief expression, observe that when David and his men went along the hillside over against them, and as Shimei cast stones and cursed as he went and cast dust, they finally came to their appointed place, and though weary, they refreshed themselves there. So it is at the end of our journey that we find our refreshment, and though the stone casters may follow us to the very gaping tomb, may we know that they can do no more harm by and by. There are those in this world that would put us out of the Synagogue, as our Lord said, "Yea the time cometh,

that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service". (John 16:2) They do their stone casting in the name of God and in the defense of truth and to uphold order and church integrity, etc., etc. But Jesus says, "But these things will they do unto you because they have not known the Father nor me." (John 16:3) We cannot say if all stone casters are aliens or not. Often times we've been guilty ourselves of taking up a stone to throw at someone. May the Lord stay our hand from casting stones. But if stone casters would seek to destroy us, let us follow this example of David. I see also that in II Samuel 19:16-21 when David returned again in his full glory as king, Shimei came crawling seeking mercy and David granted it. However, in I Kings 2:8, 9 we find that David counselled Solomon to "hold him not guiltless". In I Kings 2:26-46, we find Shimei receiving the end of his wicked deeds.

A final word of caution. Never be surprised at the prominence or station of stone casters. Shimei was of the family of the house of Saul the king. May the Lord instruct us in this lesson.

James F. Poole

Dear Sister Mamie Ferguson,

I feel very unworthy as a person, and thank God daily, morning and night for all the blessings He has bestowed and all he has provided even in the heart and very soul even of me.

As I reread the letter to you I found another beautiful thought. It is that part where I said, "Many places dear Sister (In Christ) we read of the 'Sanctuary' being built in the midst of the Tabernacle". The children of God are themselves verily "The Tabernacle" or in the New Testament they are the "Church" built up in heavenly places in Christ. But the "Sanctuary" is a place "within" that church. A place "within you" and the blessed hope of Glory, for Christ is our Hope and there is no better place for He is "all our assurance".

Old Baptists speak mostly of "Hope" but that hope is Christ and Christ is our Assurance of life eternal, for Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and we say "Walk ye in it". In this I see our travel to come into the "Sanctuary" like I Chronicles 29:14-17, "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee. For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers; our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding. O Lord our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee an house for thine holy name cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own." And then verse 17 says, "I know also, my God that thou triest the heart", (not hearts, for it is an individual matter) but we press on to that high calling "in order to come into the Holy Place, the Holy of Holies".

You may send the letter, dear Sister, but may the Editors of the ***Signs of the Times*** consider well also before acceptance.

I close this message with David's words in I Chronicles 29:11, "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory and the victory, and the majesty, for all that is in heaven, and in the earth is Thine.

With joy in His love,
Edward K. Adsit

LETTER TO
BROTHER FRANK HOLLAND

July 13, 1979

Brother Holland,

I think I told you I could not go to sleep unless God sent the sleep to me, and it is now almost midnight and still no sleep. I did enjoy you talking over at the cemetery. No I wasn't blessed to have the lovely vision you spoke of but I am always glad to hear of others having

them. Oh so much I have longed for a vision, but it hasn't been the will of the Father to grant me those things. As I said to you, all my travels have been full of sorrow and heartache, but each one I have had I hope has taught me my Lord rules and reigns and none can add or take away what He has in store for each of us. The valleys have become so deep and the hills have been so high, but that has been my lot here. "I am a stranger here below, And what I am tis hard to know".

I have had lots of dreams of being in large crowds of people and all were loved ones, and I would always be left standing alone and they would all vanish in the air. That has all made me feel like I was standing as "one alone". I go with a sorrowful heart feeling my unworthiness of even being in your company, but when I am blessed to sit among the Lord's people, like it was today, it is just a little bit of heaven here below. It is my meat and drink.

I feel so washed up and so empty in my feelings tonight but thanks be unto God He holds the world in His hands and all that therein is, so I hope I am thankful for what He has blessed me with, for it is far more than I deserve. Some are blessed with much joy and some with a little, but it has been enough to keep me longing and begging for mercy to go home where all will be peace and joy unspeakable, if this one is blessed to go there. "Oh for a closer walk with Thee" is my desire but I fall so short that it grieves me. I spend lots of sleepless nights moaning and groaning over my failures. I can say I am glad I have seen myself and what I see in me is less than nothing and a vile sinner saved by the grace of God if saved at all. Thanks be to the Lord, first of all, and then I thank you for the love and fellowship you have manifested towards me. I treasure it highly and you all are most welcome in my home. Jim loved you also. May it please the Lord to grant you a rich full spiritual life while you travel in this world, and in the end may He grant you grace to say, "Come death I will gladly go with thee". Sometime I am blessed to feel I could truly be glad to go home where there will be no sorrow, and all will be sweet peace.

Say a little prayer for this weak frail vile sinner and may God always keep us close to Him and to each other. I need the Sisters and Brothers so much, but they don't need me.

May you be blessed with a safe journey home and come to see me. It was a sweet day and a sad one too. I miss Jim and Brother and Sister Walker so much. I would catch myself almost expecting to see them coming among us.

God bless you.

In bonds of sweet fellowship,
Nannie Carter

A believer's affections are, too often, like a cascade, or waterfall, that flows downward; instead of being like a fountain, which rises and shoots upward toward heaven.

Toplady

LAZARUS, COME FORTH

Dearly beloved brethern, if the Lord will bless me to do so, I will share with you a few of the precious thoughts that have lingered with me for several days concerning that glorious command from the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, found in the eleventh chapter of John.

At the time Jesus gave this command, Lazarus had been dead four days, and buried. Who else could have given such a command, and know that it would be obeyed? On another occasion he touched the bier of a dead man and said, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise." And he that was dead sat up and began to speak. And again: he spake to the dead daughter of the ruler of the synagogue, saying, "Maid, arise." And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." Jesus is the resurrection and the life. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will."

Every born-again child of God has heard the voice of Jesus speaking to his soul; though he was dead in trespasses and sin. "Lazarus, come forth." "Young man, arise." "Maid, arise." The very moment you heard this majestic command, you came forth; from a state of death, sin and darkness you came forth into the marvelous light of Jesus Christ: you passed from death unto life. The world knows nothing of this passing from death unto life, for they have never heard his word. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." Death means, to be separated from or cut off. When Adam transgressed the law of God he died a spiritual death: he was cut off or separated from fellowship with God. Adam was the federal head of all men; and when he fell, all his posterity fell with him. In Adam they all died: they were separated from God. As surely as death separates loved ones here on earth, were they separated from God.

Now let us carefully examine what Jesus said in the 24th verse of John, fifth chapter. "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." He did not say "if he will hear my word" and "if he will believe" I will give him everlasting life, etc. No, he definitely did not say that: but that the ones who hear his word and believe on him hath everlasting life. That life is eternal; it has ever been with the Father. That life is in Jesus Christ: but no one knows anything about that eternal life until Jesus speaks to his soul. Birth does not give life; it only makes manifest the life that already is.

"Lazarus, come forth." And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Lazarus came out of the grave still bound by the law and his eyes were covered so that he could not see the end thereof. What advantage would it be to a child of grace if he came forth, but was still under the law that he could in no wise keep, and could not see Jesus thru the eye of faith? None that I can see; but the One who gave the commandment to come forth also said, "Loose him, and let him go." What a marvelous command! Jesus is the end of the law; he completely fulfilled it to a jot and tittle, and paid to justice all her due; therefore he could justly command, "Loose him, and let him go." He is now free from the law thru faith, and the vail has been taken away. He can see Jesus thru the eye of faith, and walk in the law of the Spirit of life in Jesus Christ which has made him free from the law of sin and death. As Paul wrote: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God thru Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. Therefore there is now no condemnation to them which are in Jesus Christ, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

"Maid, arise." And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat. Every living thing must have food to survive. Natural food sustains the flesh, but spiritual food must be the diet of the spiritual. Jesus is that spiritual food. "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I give is my flesh, which I will

give for the life of the world." Natural man cannot eat the flesh of Christ nor drink his blood, for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Only the ones who have spiritual life need spiritual food and drink, and, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." Those who hear his command to come forth, those who believe in him, those who eat his flesh and drink his blood, are those who have eternal life; and shall never come into condemnation, and are passed from death unto life.

"Young man, I say unto thee, Arise." And he that was dead sat up and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother. Jesus hath called you forth from your dead estate; he hath set you free; he hath fed you manna from heaven; and he delivers you to your mother. Who is your mother? Is she not the church of God; and Paul says, "Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." And when Jesus delivers you to the church, you begin to speak and tell your friends what great things God has done for you.

I do not know for a certainty that I have heard the voice of Christ; but I do believe I have been given a good hope, however small and weak it may seem at times. I am certain of this however, all who have heard that majestic voice have eternal life; and shall be called home on that great day when Christ shall come again and say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Beloved brethern, cast a mantle of charity over my mistakes. I beg an interest in your prayers of faith for this poor worm of the dust.

Clifford Wilbanks

EDITORIAL

BUT WE SEE JESUS

"For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me." (Heb. 2:5-13)

In reading the words of this text the lovely lines of the poet expresses so much our feelings in connection with this which the apostle wrote the Hebrews:

"Lord let me see thy beautious face,
It yields a heaven below,
And angels round the throne will say,
Tis all the heaven they know.

A glimpse, a single glimpse of thee,
Would more delight my soul,
Than this vain world with all its joys,
Could I possess the whole."

What more could a poor child of God ask for than the words expressed in this poetry? "A glimpse, a single glimpse of thee". If we have that we are rich beyond our fondest desire. We may want to often see our brothers and sisters in the Lord;

we may often desire to see our pastor, or our dear friends, having in mind that we might walk among them and be among them but all of these joys cannot compare with the joy of having a single glimpse of Him, whom to know is life eternal. This is why we meet in His Name. We feel when gathered together that we are richly and greatly rewarded, and satisfied, too, when in these meetings we see Him whom our soul loveth. We thought some years ago that more than anything else the people of God needed to be instructed in strong doctrines. And certainly strong doctrines do have their place. But what benefit would it be to a man if he had his head crammed full of strong doctrines and had not seen the Jesus of the doctrine. He would have nothing. What good would it do if he knew all doctrines and had not seen in those very doctrines Jesus the Saviour? What good would it do if we attended meetings for years and were able to boast that we had not missed a meeting, and yet had missed seeing Him? We would be no better than the brute beast or the heathen who worships idols, or the poor unhumbled Arminian who strives to win new stars for his crown. The joy in assembling, the joy in praying, the whole sum of all joy in our salvation is in seeing Jesus. This is the intent, spiritually, of the expression in John when the Greeks came and said, "Sir, we would see Jesus". Whatever their motive was we cannot say with certainty. We can say, however, that the heaven-taught child of God will meet together and come together with the view in mind that they would see Jesus.

When reading our Bibles what are we looking for? Often the preacher is reading to find a text. The Bible student is reading so that they might be more familiar with the scriptures. Others read that they might be more proficient in defending their belief. These things may all be good in themselves, but these are not the best motives. Our Lord said to the Pharisees, "(Ye) search the script ures for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and these are they which testify of me". (John 5:39) All the Psalms, the prophets, and the Law have but one aim, and that is to set before the reader or hearer the one sweet name from Heaven which saves poor sinners from their sin, which delivers them from their ungodliness, removes them from the wrath to come, takes the broken hearts and binds them up, and delivers up the cast down and gives them hope, and takes the destitute and makes them full. They make the thirsty to be satisfied. They make the hungry to be fed. That alone is how to read God's Word. To see Jesus, to have a glimpse of Him, and find there Him whom our soul loveth. And when we see Jesus there we have been well repaid. We are made to feel rich then, and not before. We feel blessed, indeed, and when we feel that heaven has come down to manifest its glory in us, and that glory of heaven being nothing more or less than the felt (and by faith observed) manifestation of Jesus to our souls. Oh, what glory!

One of old spoke of seeing Jesus. Listen as he speaks. "I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Septre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth." (Num. 24:17) There has been many a person read these words and said, "Well, Balaam was a false prophet". Indeed he was. Balaam knew no more of Jesus Christ than the ass which spake concerning his madness. But he spoke under the moving of God's power, and if you listen to his words carefully, you will see that he never said anything that would give us even a small assurance that he had a true hope. He said, "I shall see him, but not now." If there is one thing we can be certain the Word of God teaches regarding the redemption of God's people, it is this; they shall know Jesus in this life. They

will see Him, by faith, in their heart. We cannot make exception to this. No blood-bought sinner shall ever rest in Glory but what he has by faith seen Jesus in this life; not just waiting to see Him in the next. There will never be a saved sinner in heaven but what saw Jesus while in this life. Balaam said, "But I shall see him, but not now:" and that was right because Balaam did not see him at that time. He said, "I shall behold him, but not nigh." Observe, his anticipation of seeing Him regards some future time but not in this life. Here is the clue to what Balaam said: "But not nigh". "I will not see Him close at hand. I will see Him from a distance." Did Balaam really know what he said? Whether he knew or not he had said that he would never hear in this life the sweet voice of the Son of God speaking blessed trust and hope into his soul. He would never in the life to come hear the precious words, "Come ye blessed of My Father". He would see Him from a distance, not nigh. You see, there was a great gulf fixed, and the hireling Balaam never crossed it, for only the elect rests in Abraham's bosom. (Luke 16:23) Balaam is a sad case. Balaam gives many manifestations that many would accept as being christian experience. But the facts of the matter seem to teach that Balaam was a hireling and utilized his gifts for gain and not for the glory of God.

Compare now Job with Balaam. "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skinworms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another: though my reins be consumed within me." (Job 19:25-27) The difference between what Job said and what Balaam said lies in Job's first expression, "I know that my redeemer liveth". Balaam could not say words like that because he had no redeemer. Job knew something about redemption and could say so. And though he would not have a visible manifestation of God in this world, he said that in the latter days he would see Him. He knew that his Redeemer lived, and that he would live also. What a beautiful figure Job is of all believers in whatever age they may live. They know something. Though they may have many trials, as Job did, their anticipation is to see Him Who is their life, Who is their salvation, and Who is their deliverance.

This leads to the words our Lord spoke to Martha when He proclaimed Himself the Resurrection and the Life. "He that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live." Did Martha believe this? "Yea, Lord, I believe." (John 11:27) She did believe, too, as all of God's children do, no matter where they might be scattered in this world. He is their Resurrection and their Life and they long more to see Him for there is nothing else in this world worth seeing. As we observed earlier there may be things we long to see in this world, people we long to be with, but that which our inward man longs for is a glimpse of Jesus. We cry out daily, "We would see Jesus".

Jesus took Peter, James, and John to the mount and He was transfigured before them. What a scene of beauty and wonder; the Lord's face shinned as the sun, and His raiment was as white as light. (Matt. 17:3) In the progress of the events on the mount, a cloud overshadowed them and God spoke from Heaven saying, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him." (Matt. 17:5) In their great fear they fell on their faces and when sore afraid Jesus came and touched them and instructed them to arise. "And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only. (Matt. 17:8) Moses is gone! Elijah is gone! But He who was all glorious remains and they could see Him. Blessed as they were on the mount, however, they are no more blessed than those today who with the eye of faith see the glorified Saviour.

Peter, James, and John saw something that no mortal eye had seen before, but the faith which God gives His little children sees the same glorified Saviour. From first to last all the heirs of grace may say, "We see Jesus", and they care not to see Moses or Elijah or anyone else. They see no man, just Jesus only.

"But we see Jesus". How did Paul see Him? He said, "We see Him made a little lower than the angels". Multitudes have seen Jesus as Balaam saw Him, but few have seen Jesus as Job did. Balaam didn't have a vision, for instance, such as Stephen had, did he? Stephen in his dying breath said, "Behold I see the heavens open and the Son of man (Jesus) standing ....." In his dying agony that which he saw was an unveiling of his Redeemer at the right hand of God to receive his dying spirit. Can we not all take great comfort in the words of Stephen, "I see the heavens open", and what do we look for there? We look to see Jesus. Oh, how we long to see Jesus when our eyes are wearied of seeing the evil scenes of this life. As quoted before, "A glimpse, a single glimpse of Him". If we have that, who would not want to be in Stephen's place, to lay down our head and sleep. "Lord Jesus receive my spirit". Oh, to be carried away in the arms of the lovely, heavenly, eternal Redeemer. It would be a glory to die, would it not?

But we are called upon to live, and brethren, if we must live in this world a little longer, what do we long to see? Hopefully, we long to see Jesus, lower than the angels, first. When blessed to see Him lower than the angels we learn something of His humanity. You will never know anything of His heavenly diety until you first see His humanity. He was made lower than the angels. "Then said I, lo I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, Oh God." (Heb. 10:5-7) Our Lord came from heaven, came from the highest heights and descended a little lower than the angels. He was ***made*** lower than the angels.

A scripture of particular interest at this point is the following, "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." (I Peter 1:10-12) Observe first in verse 11 the order of Christ's service. It spoke of His sufferings, and the glory that should follow. We observe this to be the order throughout the holy word of God. First, Christ suffered, then He entered into His glory. Then we notice that these were things that the angels themselves finally desired to look into; the things of the gospel story. They cannot see it. Here is contained a key as to why Jesus was made a little lower than the angels. The angels could not, did not, and never will understand the gospel message. They cannot sing with the saints of God regarding salvation. They cannot cry as we have, "Worthy is the Lamb". They cannot lift their voices up in anthems of praise to Him who washes away sin in His own blood. The angels who have kept their first estate, who have not fallen with those that fell with Lucifer, have never known the love of a saviour, because they don't have a saviour. He is their Lord but He is not their saviour, and thus tho sinless, they cannot comprehend these things and yet God has suffered them to desire to look into it.

Had Jesus been equal with the angels He could not have entered into the sufferings mentioned here. Angels can know nothing of sufferings; they can know nothing of grief; they know nothing of mercy as we understand it. All they know is holy and eternal obedience to the God who created them to serve Him and to gather round the throne, and being ministering spirits to those that shall be the heirs of salvation.

(Heb. 1:14) But it was necessary for Jesus to descend lower than the angels. He came down to the regions of sin to take the nature of man and to bare our sins in His body on the tree. This an angelic being could not do. Yet He Himself was without sin though this be the wonder of wonders. We must ever keep in mind that in heaven God could not come in contact with sin. To be made lower and equal with the angels would still not answer our needs; for an angel could not suffer for a man. But for Jesus to be made lower than the angels we have One with whom we can find communion for He took upon Him our infirmities.

He came down to earth that He might suffer in death. Listen to the wording, "But we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death." His suffering in death is the area, seemingly, which amazed the angels and rightly so, for it amazes us, too. How we sit and wonder when we think of the love of God to send His Son to suffer and to suffer to the extent that He did.

Oftentimes when someone we love dies, we reflect on just how they died. It seems to be a great comfort to the remaining to be able to say, "I'm so glad they didn't have to suffer". Dying seems bad enough to our weak nature, but suffering in death is worse. Many people die without suffering, and their families are greatly relieved. It is the desire of most, knowing that they must die, to hope that the Lord will spare them from suffering. "Lord, please don't let me suffer. Deliver me from pain", is our petition. Also, we don't want to be a burden on our families, and dread the thought of a long stay in the hospital or a nursing home. There are so many things we dread and fear regarding the subject of growing old and dying, and the suffering aspect is no doubt the greatest. But notice now that nearly always throughout the writings of the Epistles, the dying of Jesus is associated with suffering. He suffered first, and then He died. Jesus didn't just die, but He died suffering. He is truly the suffering Saviour, and He suffered for His people. A suffering Saviour, indeed! "We see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death". He came for that express purpose. God prepared Him a body that He might suffer in when He died. Now brethren, can you enter into that thought. Jesus died of suffering. He didn't suffer because He needed to for Himself. He died suffering because you needed to. He died suffering because God's justice demanded suffering according to the Holy covenant. Jesus had entered into a covenant agreement with His Father from everlasting on our behalf. He came in order to be made lower than the angels so that the whole of His dying might be suffering. And we might add that the whole of His living was also suffering. A suffering angel could not even save himself much less the whole elect family. Thus Jesus must he made a little lower than the angels so that He might learn (accomplish) obedience by the things which He suffered. (Heb. 5:8)

From the time Jesus entered into this world He suffered. He suffered at the hands of Herod, so much so that His family fled with Him to Egype. He suffered at the hands of the self-righteous Pharisees when they saw His works. He suffered the disbelief of His own family when they thought He had gone mad. He suffered untold agony in seeing His people commit sin. He suffered grief when He looked upon Jerusalem and so wept over it. He suffered when He saw the temple of God being desecrated by money changers. In everything about the life of our Lord, we see His suffering. He suffered an untold life of suffering. The whole of His life was filled with one unending amount of suffering. He was and is despised and rejected of man. "A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief". (Isa. 53:3)

"But we see Jesus," also in the following Old Testament scripture, "And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived". (Num. 21:8, 9) What is the lesson here? Simply stated, it is look and live! They saw the serpent lifted up. They had been bitten by fiery serpents in the wilderness and a death sentence was pronounced upon them. They needed deliverance. God instruced Moses how to provide that deliverance. In this we see a figure of our great salvation as the Apostle John recorded it in the 3rd chapter of John. Observe first; was anyone told to go forward and lay hold of the serpent? Was it said that they should gaze for long periods to be delivered? Could they be rid of the poison by praying to the brazen serpent? No! Did they need perfect vision so that they might make out every detail of the serpent? No, when they looked they lived. You may say, "Well it was left up to them whether they looked or not". Again, No, Never! Let me ask you this. Is it reasonable in natural things to say that a man dying of poison would refuse a remedy set before him? Would he say, "I will not have the remedy"? A dying man will grasp at most any straw. It is the nature of the case. How much more a poor sinner who feels the need of salvation and who has been made to feel the need of salvation by the power of the Spirit of Christ, will look to the Saviour when He manifests Himself to him, even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness for those who were bitten by fiery serpents? It is the nature of the case because He makes them willing to look. He makes them long to look, and by faith they see their salvation. Truly, they may say, "we see Jesus". He makes them realize that they must look. That they have to look. And they will look. This is what the song writer meant when he said, "I can, I do believe". He can believe because his God has given him power to believe, and he does believe because he couldn't do anything else. He could sooner make a moon than fail to believe. We see Him as Moses lifted up a brazen serpent. We see Him made a little lower than the angels (for suffering), and all this that He might take all the elect family, and show them a saving view of Himself lifted up from suffering to be a complete Redeemer.

"That He by the grace of God should taste death for every man". Lest our article swell beyond its bounds, we will conclude with this expression, "that He by the grace of God tasted death for every man." It would appear that the "every man" is in contrast to the angels. Our Redeemer did not die for angels. He died for men. We would observe that the men that He died for will surely be saved. There can be no question about it. Would He suffer needlessly? Would He suffer only in anticipation? Could we dare believe that Jesus would come from the regions of Glory and lay His life down a ransom for many without the sure realization that all for whom He would die would certainly comprise His elect bride in Heaven? A thousand times, no! We cannot believe such a view as that. It appears very plain in the context that the every man referred to in Verse 9 would be the same as the many sons referred to in Verse 10, and that they are the same as the ones that are sanctified in Verse 11 and become of the "all one". They are also in Verse 11 called brethren of which He is not ashamed to be identified with. Further in Verse 12 He says that He would declare His Name unto those brethern in the midst of the church so we would conclude also that the "every man" from Verse 9 is the same as the church in Verse 12. And then finally in Verse 13 when He says, "Behold I and the

children which God hath given me", we find the complete number there. All those who are children, children of God, those which God has given Jesus from everlasting are those for whom He tasted death and that by the grace of God.

What a marvelous doctrine we have. What a more marvelous salvation we have. And even above measure, what a wonderful Saviour. May our great God bless us to daily cry "Jesus, come quickly". May He bless us to long to see Him who is our Salvation, and may we be able with Paul to say, "But we see Jesus". What a sweet life it would be if we could see Jesus at all times, but we know that it is not intended. May we rest then in the sweet assurance that if we have seen Jesus, even a glimpse, we shall everlastingly see Him with a pure unsullied gaze in the world of glory.

(Elder) James F. Poole

Eden, N.C.

Dear Editors,

I am enclosing a check for another year's subscription for the ***Signs of the Times.*** Please use the remainder as needed. I enjoy the contents very much, especially the experiences and the trials and travels of the children of God.

May God bless the Editors and writers to continue sending the good news.

A Sister in Christ, I hope,
Lessie Wray Tilley

Troy, N.C.

Dear Editors,

Enclosed find a check for $10.00 for the renewal of the ***Signs of the Times*** for another two years. The remainder is to be used as you need it most.

The dear ***Signs,*** with its contents, has been coming to me for a long time, and I look forward to each copy. May you be blessed to continue the publication.

In Christian love,
Mrs. Esther B. Cole

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

SOUND INSTRUCTION

New York, N.Y., Feb. 11, 1918

Dear Brother Dodson:—Your letter of yesterday just received, and I will reply at once. Today and tomorrow are "workless" days, and I propose to employ most of the time in writing to members whom I have sadly neglected in correspondence. I am so far behind, however, so deeply in debt, that I cannot hope to write them all at this time. Perhaps I should give attention first to my longest outstanding obligations, instead of beginning by replying to the last letter received, but your letter is before me, my thoughts are of you and of the way of life you confess to, and I am impressed to write you first. We missed you yesterday, far more than you think. Our gathering together seemed incomplete without your presence; and to me especially was your absence noticeable, for your close attention and evident interest in the services is helpful and encouraging to me. Often there is comfort in feeling that within our measure, in preaching the gospel of Christ, we reach unto others. Your letter stirred my mind again to remember how dull in understanding I have been, from the beginning, of what be the first principles of the oracles of God. It passes understanding how the church could have continued for the past nineteen years to recognize me as a gospel minister, while I have been so indifferent to the fact that the gospel of the grace of God is in demonstration of his Spirit—the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, quickening our mortal bodies to newness of life, that we should not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us and rose again. How presumptuous I have been all these years to indulge a hope that perhaps the Lord had set me apart

to minister spiritual things unto his saints, to be a helper of their joy, while I was barren and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Some time ago there appeared in the ***Signs*** an editorial on "Bible Reading." It has occasioned much thought and some comment among the brethren, especially the suggested possibility that, in the course of time, the name "Old School, or Primitive Baptist," may cease to be the name of our faith and order. That many of our churches are weak in membership is undeniable, but that fact is no reason for fearing the eventual loss of our name. I am persuaded that such loss will result sooner from failure to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. It is not unusual for members and pastors of dying churches, in lamenting existing conditions, to excuse themselves of responsibility by making mention of their own righteousness in having maintained the order and good works of a gospel church. But in this the word of the Lord: "Hast thou not procured this unto thyself," &c.,— Jer. 2:17-19, does not speak by them. There is a cause and a reason for everything under the sun. "Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us."—Eccl. 1:10. The Scriptures testify of all that has, is now, or ever shall come to pass in the life of the church. They are "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."—2 Tim. 3:16. Self-justification is denial of the faith once delivered unto the saints. Taking heed unto ourselves and our ways, that we sin not with our tongue, looking diligently lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble us, and thereby many be defiled, is holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. (2 Tim. 4:16; Psalms 39:1; Heb. 12:15; 1 Tim. 3:9.) Where there is great profession of zeal in mainaining order in churches there is usually manifest bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and evil speaking; but bitterness against the persons of men is no part of the nature of the zeal of the Lord's house; quite the contrary. Its opposition to sin is chiefly against the iniquity of our own hearts. There is nothing in true christian zeal opposed to the spirit of meekness, gentleness and love—the spirit of a little child. The Scriptures expressly and clearly assert the absolute necessity of mercy, forgiveness and love, as exercises belonging to the character of the Child of God. They are positive in asserting that none can be truly saints but those who are of a spirit to pity and relieve the poor and needy. "The righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth."—Psalms 37:21. "He is ever merciful, and lendeth."—Verse 26. "He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor."—Psalms 112:9. "He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with him: was not this to know me? saith the Lord."—Jer. 22:16. "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy."—Matt. 5:7. "For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy."—James 2:13. And Christ, in describing the day of judgment, represents the different sentences as being passed, according as men have been merciful or otherwise. His design is to convince us that, unless this is our spirit, we can have no hope of being owned and accepted by him. The last day, or final judgment, will not be a trial of our hearts for the satisfaction of God's mind, but a declarative judgment, a manifestation of the justice of God to our own consciences. Hence the day of judgment is called the day of the "revelation of the righteous judgment of God."—Romans 2:5. In Scripture the terms, a righteous man, and a merciful man, are synonymous expressions. "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come."—Isaiah 57:1. And a forgiving spirit, a disposition to overlook injuries,

Christ urges both negatively and positively. He expressly declares that if we are of such a spirit it is an evidence that our sins are forgiven, and that if we are not of such a spirit it is proof that we are not forgiven. "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," is the manner of prayer he taught his disciples, and then he adds, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses."—Matt. 6:12, 14, 15. The Scriptures know nothing of a merciless, unforgiving, ill-tempered, contentious, malicious christian; a greater contradiction does not exist. The grace of God that bringeth salvation teaches us the denial of these things as having any place in a new creature. A remarkable change is confessed to by the subject of grace. "For we ourselves also were sometime foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."—Titus 3:3-5. "In the which ye also walked sometime, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth."—Col. 3:7, 8. Ministers are not altogether blameless for the hurt many churches have suffered. It cannot be denied that much of the evil deplored has been the consequence of failure to study to shew themselves approved unto God, as workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. The inevitable result from lording it over God's heritage, striving about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers, thinking we know anything, when we know nothing as we ought to know, is confusion and hurt. However steadfast we may be in maintaining good works, we can never glory in our profitableness, for Jesus said unto his apostles: "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do." Is it not true that all who are contentious for their own judgment and understanding of order in the church, denouncing as corrupt all who, for conscience toward God, cannot walk according to their rule, are denying the faith of God's elect? "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it."—I John 5:16. The spirit of true prayer is in fellowship with Christ—a fellowship of life; and that which is the animating principle of our life must be the animating principle of prayer. The prayer of love is that which esteems others better than ourselves, desires the peace and prosperity of Jerusalem, and is expressed in endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. The sympathy of brotherly love expresses itself in prayer. As our chief concern is our own spiritual poverty and need, and as such neediness arises from sin, our sympathy for a brother will have special reference to the same need, which we feel to bear with him. In consciousness of our own weakness, our own need of continual redemption, we will be pitiful, merciful and kind. It is perfect love which feels as its own a brother's need. Sympathy, fervent desire for the good of an erring brother, is prayer, intercession prompted by love—a service of love. "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." There is a sin unto death—a cutting off of our life from the fellowship of them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Paul made full proof of his ministry in taking heed unto himself, fearful lest he be overcome through the deceitfulness of

sin. He is wise to the weakness of his flesh and the nature of its works (Gal. 5:19-21,) when he said, "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."—I Cor. 9:26, 27. Surely, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."—Matt. 7:14.

Your unworthy brother, in hope of life in Jesus,

JOHN McCONNELL

CIRCULAR LETTER (1884)

To the Church of the Smith River District Primitive Baptist Association -- We once more make the feeble attempt to address you with a Circular Letter. We call your attention to the Gospel recorded by Luke, 21st Chapter and part of the 36th verse. "Watch ye, therefore, and pray always". We understand this as addressed to the Church of God; we learn that God is the same yesterday, today and forever. In ancient times the Lord was sought unto for His blessings by some of His people, seeing the need of the same. Not only national but individual blessings. The children of God have been a dependent people in all ages of the world, and this is the reason why they go to the Lord for blessings. As far back as the days of Daniel the prophet, when the children of Israel were in bondage and he sought the Lord to bless that people, and God heard his supplication and sent an angel to inform Daniel that the time was drawing near when he would deliver His people and when they returned to Jerusalem God was glorified. Dear brethren and sisters, this ought with many other things that we find in the Scriptures to encourage us to go to the Lord when we feel cast down and forsaken. God's people not only seek in word but in deed and in truth. Christ said unto His disciples, "seek and ye shall find". We believe one cause of the Church being established in her militant form is to show forth the praise of the Lord. Saints oftimes feel like they can't praise the Lord. The Lord is not only praised in word but in deed, and one of the deeds is to assemble ourselves together. When the Church is in peace each one filling their seats there is no greater praise that ever ascends to the Lord. We believe that many of the chastisements of the Church is for neglect of assembling together in order to worship God. Dear brethren and sisters we remember the time when we thought our souls must go for our sins, and we hope the mercy of the Lord came to our relief at a time unexpected to us. Then we desired to tell God's people what the Lord had done for us. Let us call these things to our minds and not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another. When God's love dwells in our hearts our love is strong toward the union of God's people, and it does not stop here, for we desire to live peaceable with all men. When the love of the Lord sways our feelings then we can do as God's people anciently done, where it is said, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard it and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name". So God's care is the same towards them that think upon His name as it is towards them that speak. So dear saints let us try to honor God both in our bodies and our spirits which are His. So the saints don't feel worthy to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. The worthiness is not in the saints, but in Christ; for thou art worthy who hast redeemed us from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

May the God of peace be with us while we remain here on our pilgrimage, and at last bring us off more than conquerors through Him that loved us, where

God will be praised in a world that shall never end. Amen.

1884 Asa D. Shortt
(Submitted by Elder N. F. Conner)

The Gospel is a box of most precious ointment; by preaching it the box is broken and the fragrance diffused.

Romaine

OBITUARIES

SISTER RUTH TRAVIS

There is no power greater than love. It would be inhuman not to mourn the loss of one near and dear to our hearts. We deeply feel the loss of a precious one, Sister Ruth Travis.

The Lord called her spirit home on April 8, 1979; and we feel that she is now sleeping that peaceful sleep in Jesus. She was born to John and Dillie Smith on February 3, 1892; and most of her 87 years were spent overlooking the rolling hills of Caswell County, North Carolina.

She took the marriage vows with Brother Robert Travis in 1912; and after his death parted them in 1951, she faithfully remained his widow. This union was blessed with eight lovely children to whom she was a mother indeed.

Four children preceded her in death leaving three daughters, Mrs. Mable Redding, Mrs. Ola White, and Mrs. Lillie Somers; one son, Brother William Travis. They mourn the loss of a mother's love. Also, she leaves four grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Our precious Sister in hope united with the church at Bush Arbor in July, 1937, and was blessed to be a humble and faithful sister as long as she lived. She spoke of being the last of a group of elderly widows who sat together so many times.

Her funeral was conducted at her home church by her pastor, Elder Wallis Smith. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers that bloomed out and soon faded away, just as life on earth.

We believe that Sister Travis will be raised in the likeness of her Saviour and blessed to sing His praise in that house not made with hands eternally in the sky.

Written by request of the church at Bush Arbor. Clifton Robertson.

Elder Wallis Smith, Pastor
Brother Earl Rudd, Clerk

SISTER NORA CREWS

Sister Crews was born August 26, 1906 and died March 7, 1979, which made her stay on earth 72 years, 7 months and 19 days. She was married to the late Elijah Crews. To this union were born five children and four of them live to survive her passing.

Sister Nora was received in full fellowship to Cypress Creek on November 15, 1942, and was baptised by Elder R. P. Batchelor.

Sister Nora was faithful as long as her health permitted and was loved by all. She met everyone with a smile that only could come from our heavenly Father. I feel that she is sleeping, awaiting the return of Jesus to take her to that wonderful home where there is no sin and no parting. We are just waiting to meet her in that wonderful place.

Done by order of conference on Saturday before second Sunday in May, 1979. Three copies made, one for the church records, one for the family, and one sent to the ***Signs of the Times*** for publication.

A sister I hope,
Anna Simpson

FRANCES D. HARRISON

It is with a deep sense of unworthiness I try to write these lines in memory of Sister Frances Dupree Harrison.

I feel sure she was one of God's chosen little ones called by His grace. She was born September 22, 1889 the daughter of Julius and Mittie Dupree of Edgecombe County, North Carolina and passed away June 8, 1979 in a nursing home in Leonardtown, Maryland. Her funeral was conducted on Monday, June 11, 1979 at 11:00 at Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church, by her pastor Elder Henry Jones.

Sister Harrison united with Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church on the fourth Sunday in May, 1913 and was baptized by Elder George Boswell. She married Thurman L. Harrison June 2, 1914 and to this union were born twin girls, one died very young, the other, Mrs. Jessie Dare Green of Jackson-

ville, Florida survives, and one son, Thurman L. Harrison, Jr. of California, Maryland. Other survivors are two sisters, Mrs. Julia Stallings of Tarboro, North Carolina; Mrs. Orie Elliott of Norfolk, Virginia; eight grandchildren and thirteen great grandchildren.

She was laid to rest in the Dupree-Cherry Cemetery in Edgecombe County, North Carolina beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the coming of the Lord.

We at Pleasant Hill Church extend our deepest sympathy to Sister Harrison's family and friends.

Resolved that a copy of this obituary be sent to the family, one to the ***Signs of the Times*** for publication, and a copy be recorded on our church records.

Done by order of conference fourth Saturday, June 23, 1979 and submitted in love by:

Fannie Mae Harper

BROTHER JOSEPH RAYMOND PRIDGEN

By the request of the Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church I will attempt to write a few lines in memory of our friend and brother, Joseph Raymond Pridgen. He was born October 1, 1903. He was the son of the late Debro Pridgen and Sister Bell Pridgen of Nash County. He is survived by his wife, Sister Myrtle Stallings Pridgen of Sharpsburg, N.C.; 4 sons, Al Joseph, Robert Elwood, of Rocky Mount, N.C., Jimmie Ray of Matthews, N.C., and James Warren of Sharpsburg, N.C.; 10 grandchildren; 2 great grandchildren; 2 brothers, Randloph Pridgen of Rocky Mount, N.C., and James Hubert Pridgen, of Wilson, N.C.

We knew him by his love and friendship. He will be missed in his family, and his friends, and in the community in which he lived. We, the Mill Branch Church, also will miss his presence with us. He attended our meetings whenever it was possible. He was blessed to have a hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, and asked for a home with us while he was in the Nash General Hospital in Rocky Mount, N.C. He was received in full fellowship in the Mill Branch Church in the presence of Brother Leon Griffin, Brother John Williams, Sister Betty Williams, his wife, Sister Myrtle Pridgen, his son, Jimmie Pridgen, and Elder Harvey Holland, on September 21, 1978. In a few hours he passed from this life, we believe, to a home of eternal rest, on September 22, 1978.

Whereas it has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove him from our midst, we hope that our loss is his gain. May we be submissive to the will of our Lord Who makes no mistakes.

His funeral was conducted by Elder Harvey Holland, at Johnson's Funeral Home in Rocky Mount, N.C., and he was laid to rest in the Pineview Cemetery.

Elder Harvey Holland, Moderator
Sister Estelle J. Williford, Clerk

THEA WELLINGTON WHITEFIELD

My beloved husband, Thea Wellington Whitefield, passed away April 29, 1979, at the age of 83 years, and after years of afflictions. He was the youngest of ten children born to John Henry Whitefield and Cornelia Jane O'Briant of Person County.

He left behind to mourn our loss his wife, Esther Wilson Whitefield; one son, Clarence E. Whitefield of Durham; four daughters, Mrs. Iva Pearl Godwin of Okeechobee, Fla., Mrs. Foye Cole of Durham, N.C., Mrs. Esther Goetze of Raleigh, N.C., and Mrs. Lois Hanekamp of North Brook, Ill.; 21 grandchildren, and 15 great grandchildren, a large number of nieces and nephews, as well as Baptists in several states and friends.

His funeral was conducted in Durham Primitive Baptist Church on May 2, by Elder William Holland and Elder C. B. Davis. His remains were interred in O 'Briant-Snipes Family burying ground in Person County to await the resurrection morning.

We were married December 23, 1915, by Elder J. A. Herndon in my Father's home, making our lives together over sixty-three years.

As far back as he could remember he had serious thoughts about death. His first spiritual trouble came when he was ten years old. He stayed in this trouble for about five years. Then he had a wonderful dream, and awakened by a trumpet which made him sore afraid. Just then he saw a bright light in the east, much brighter than the sun. Behold it was Jesus, in a purple robe with a crown on

His head. He felt himself rising, as singing was in the air with a promise that he would be carried there. He said it was the sweetest music he had ever heard.

Of course, this did not stay with him all the time. On Tuesday night before the first Sunday in June, 1914, he was cast down again. He felt like the children of Israel at the Red Sea. He got up and walked the floor begging God for mercy. Then he remembered his sweet dreams, which was some comfort. A strong impression came to him to ask the Church for a home, unworthy though he felt.

He promised God that if He would spare him until Saturday he would ask the church for a home. Then he fell across the bed and went to sleep. When he awoke his troubles were gone. On Saturday before the first Sunday in June, 1914, he went before the Primitive Baptists at Roxboro, telling a part of this and was received into their fellowship. After he had gone forward his aged Mother followed him and asked for a home, too. Both were baptized by Elder J. A. Herndon on Sunday morning. This was the happiest day he ever spent. All was love, peace, and joy.

Of course this did not last always. He had his doubts but loved to hear the gospel preached and the members sing the sweet songs of Zion.

He desired to be guided that he might not deceive the brethren, but be kept in the faith, giving all praise to His Holy Name, in whom we have righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, through His precious blood, which cleanseth us from all our sins and ever give all the praise to God to whom it belongs.

Remember me when at the Throne of Grace.

Your unworthy sister,
Esther W. Whitefield

ALICE SHOAF SNIDER

It is with a sad heart that I try to write the obituary of my Mother, Sister Alice Snider who was born June 9, 1891 in Davidson County, N.C., the daughter of the late William H. and Susan Sharpe Shoaf. She was the widow of the late Brother James A. Snider who preceded her in death 24 years. She departed this life on October 6, 1978, at the age of 87.

She is survived by five sons, L. Kern, G. Reid, and J. Ray Snider of Charlotte, N.C., O. Leo Snider of Denton, N.C., and Philip L. Snider of Norfolk, Va.; one daughter, Elva Snider Crotts of Norfolk, Va., with whom she made her home for the last several years. Three sons preceded her in death, an infant son in 1934, Hal A. Snider who was killed by a car in 1974; J. Lacy, who passed away in May of 1978. Her last trip to Charlotte was to J. Lacy's funeral five months before her death. Also she leaves to mourn her passing 28 grandchildren, 33 great grandchildren, and one great great grandson; two sisters, Essie Swicegood, and Bertie Leonard of Davidson County, N.C. (Bertie has passed away since Sister Snider's death.)

Sister Snider was a member of the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church in Norfolk Virginia. She attended her meetings regularly until the last several months when she was not able to go. Her Pastor, Elder Joseph Leggett visited her in her home and had prayer. She enjoyed his visits along with his wife and other members and friends who visited her. I feel the Lord was there. He is everywhere present and never leaves His people even though at times they think He is gone forever.

Sister Snider stood firm for the doctrine of election, salvation by grace, and the absolute predestination of all things. She was blessed to hold fast to that which was good. Her countenance, walk, and talk in life was to praise God from Whom all blessings flow.

Her funeral was conducted at the Davidson Funeral Home in Lexington, N.C., by Elder Amos Hash of Ferrum, Va., Elder Wallis Smith, of Burlington, N.C. Both Elders spoke so beautifully in the Name of Jesus. People of other churches said the services were so beautiful. The Lord does all things well.

Sister Snider was laid to rest in the Snider Cemetery in Davidson County, N.C., next to her husband under a beautiful mound of flowers to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Mother left this world with a smile on her face. How sweet it is to fall asleep in Jesus.

Writen by her daughter who loved her and misses her presence, and has a precious hope to meet her some sweet day.

Elva Snider Crotts
Norfolk, Virginia

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 1/80 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

We propose to publish the four articles by Elder Samuel Trott titled "The Absolute Predestination of All Things". These first appeared in the 1833 volume of the ***Signs of the Times.***

We are happy to send them out to you as sound doctrine. This doctrine was suitable for Baptists then, and is so now.

The other three articles will appear in future editions of the ***Signs*** this year.

Editor

THE ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS

No. 1

This sentiment as expressed in the Prospectus of the ***Signs of the Times*** has called forth so much invective from some, and so much ridicule from others of the popular Baptists of this region that one would conclude some strange and absurd idea has been advanced; some absurd whim daringly promulgated as a part of the secret things of god.

It, therefore, may not be amiss to re examine the subject, and enquire whether it be a revealed truth of God, or a visionary notion of man, which is calling forth such malicious sneers from those who profess to be the servants of God.

Predestination is the same in meaning, with fore-ordination or fore-appointment; and is with God, one with pre-determination; for as God declares, so he determines, the end from the beginning; saying my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Thus the pre-determination of God, to

admit sin into the world embraced in it the decreeing of the time, manner, result, etc., of that event. And his predetermination to bruise his Son in the place of sinners included in it the instruments, time, place, and manner of his death. Compare Acts 2:23 and 4:25-28, and John 13:1, and Heb. 13:11, 12. The doctrine of predestination, then, is this, that God has so pre-determined every event, as to fix with such precision its limits and bounds, its causes and effects that with him it is divested of all contingency. This, Brother Beebe, is the monstrous doctrine, which you engage to maintain, in your paper, and which we Old Fashioned Baptists, some of us, profess to believe, and which is drawing down upon you and us the reproaches and contempt of all the learned gentry among the Baptists.

The term absolute, has been prefixed by yourself and others to the word predestination, to distinguish the doctrine you hold from the idea of a conditional predestination. Strictly speaking, however, this is an unnecessary appendage. A conditional predestination is no predestination; for the predestination of an event conditionally, is but a pre-determination to leave the event undetermined, and therefore excludes predestination altogether.

Having thus briefly explained what we mean by predestination, I will procede to show that it is a doctrine taught in the Scriptures. In relation to the salvation of the Elect we have the doctrine of predestination expressed in direct terms, as in Rom. 8:29-30, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son etc.---Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called etc." And Eph. 1:5, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, etc." and verse 11, "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will". In these passages, we have not only the word predestination used in the translation, but in the original the Greek word employed is of a corresponding signification; being Proorizo, formed of Pro, before, and Orizo, to bound, or limit, to determine, to define, etc., and is derived from the theme, oros, a bound or limit, or the end of a thing. Hence the literal signification of the word, used is, a fixing before, the bound or limit, of a thing or event.

If we look at the connection, we shall find the idea conveyed by the word, fully sustained by its use in these cases. In Rom 7:29-30, the whole of the Apostles argument in these and the following verses of this chapter are in support of the declaration he makes, verse 28; "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." To this the enquiry might be made, how, Paul, can we know this? "For, or because", is the answer, "whom he did foreknow" that is as the objects of his purpose and call, "he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren". Did decree that they should be like Christ, should partake of his image; should as his brethren participate in that life that is in him, in a justification from the demands of the law, in the Father's peculiar love and care, in the resurrection, and in that glory which the Father gave him, etc. And this was no inefficient purpose. "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified". Paul, now retorts some iniquiries to those, who might doubt the assertion made in verse 28; he asks in verse 31, "What shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us"? or more emphatically "who against us", that is who is it, that is against us?--He goes on to confirm his position by a series of

inquiries, in which he shows that the predestination of God is firm against all the assaults of tribulation or distress, etc., and against death and life, and angels and principalities, and powers, and things present, and things to come, and height and depth, etc. Thus we see that the predestination of God in this case, not only secures the leading purpose, that the Elect shall be conformed to the glorious image of his son, but also fixes the limits, and determines the end of all things which transpire in relation to them.

Again if we refer to the use of the word in Ephesians we shall find that the predestination, and the determination or purpose of God, go together. Thus Chapter 1, verses 4-6, "According as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, to himself according to the good pleasure of his will,--To the praise of the glory of his grace wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." Predestination is here represented to be according to the good pleasure of his will, and is a decreeing of the objects of his choice unto the adoption of children by Christ Jesus, before the foundation of the world; but determines at that early period, their being accepted in the Beloved; and of course, decides with certainty, their repenting, believing, and being sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise; things necessarily embraced in their experimental acceptance in Christ. Again in verse 11, the Apostle speaks of having obtained an inheritance as the result of that predestination of God which is according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Here then, we have in these and the connecting verses every part of salvation brought to view as the predestination of God. For he worketh all things, not according to the caprice of fallen men, not according to any fortuitous circumstances which may transpire, but according to the counsel of his own will. If then it is a fact, as the Apostle declares that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; then does the counsel of God's own will, not only determine with certainty all the parts of salvation and fix the whole chosen race, blameless before him in love in the possession of their inheritance, as heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, but also decrees the result of all events according to his good pleasure.

If all persons with whom we have to do, were disposed, cheerfully to submit to the decision of Divine Revelation, there would be but one question more to decide, in order to determine whether all things absolutely, or things in a limited sense, are predestinated, or worked according to the decision of the counsel of God's own will, and that question is,--how far does the government of God extend? If his government extends universally over matter and mind, then there is no movement either of matter or mind but what God works after the counsel of his own will, or determines the result thereof according to the good pleasure of his will. King Nebuchadnezzar evidently thought that God's Dominion was universal, over Heaven and earth, for he says of him, "He doth according to his will in the army of Heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?" Dan. 4:35. And the King was certainly correct in this, for Christ assured his Disciples in Matthew 28:18, that all power was given to him in Heaven and in earth; that is as Mediator. If so, God had it in his own hands to give. Again Christ says in John 17:2, "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him". Hence his power is over the wicked as well as over those to whom he gives eternal life; and it being all power, it must extend to both matter and mind,

as there can be no disposing influence, or power besides, and therefore, the devices both of men and devils, as well as their actions, must be under his control.

Still, however, many persons are unwilling to believe, that the predestination of God has anything to do with the wicked actions of men or devils. They, in order to be consistent with themselves, ought to believe that wickedness is under the control of an opposite power, and that God exercises no control over wicked actions or thoughts, to limit their extent, or to overrule their results in accordance with his purposes; lest thereby he should be charged with being the author of sin.

I think, however, I shall be able to bring from the Scriptures of truth, several facts which go to prove that the predestination of God determines the results, fixes the limits and so controls the actions and devices of wicked men and devils, so as to cause them to terminate in the furtherance of his own glorious purposes.

But as I wish not to be tedious, I will leave the further consideration of this subject for another number.

S. Trott

Fairfax Court House, Virginia

WE ARE BOUND

This morning I have before me a portion of the Book of Thessalonians, the Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle to them. "Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." And in the third verse he said something that's on our mind, I trust I have your prayers as we try to expound the scripture: "We are bound to thank God." "We are bound to thank God always for you." The word "bound" is used oftentimes in that which our duty brings us to. We are bound by a lot of things in this life, we are bound by the laws of the land, we are bound by tradition, we are bound by the bonds of truth. We are bound by a lot of things, but here Paul is speaking of that which they are bound. It would be absurd to give someone else thanks for what God has done. I believe that God's ministers serve their purpose in this life and that they serve it well. I believe they are bound by their calling to follow in that which the Lord leads them. Here this great apostle is saying, "We are bound to thank God always for you." "You" is a personal pronoun that does not include everyone. He's talking of the church, the Thessalonians, and Silvanus and Timotheus and, "We are bound to thank God for you." I think we should keep this in mind, that we are bound by the truth, we are bound by our experience, we are bound by the scripture. We are bound by the precept that's left by those who've gone before, who were faithful in Christ Jesus, "We are bound to thank God for you."

In the churches that I have served in this community for more than forty years we've had a lot of good meetings, we've had a lot of things that bring us to rejoice but for every one who's found rest to his soul I am bound to thank God for you as Paul said. This great evangelist--perhaps the world has never known one before and shall never know one equal to him. He was converted on the Damascus Road when he was on an errand of mischief. And the theory is that he taught and that we believe and that the scripture teaches that God calls those where He finds them and He turns them round about and He places them in a position that they are bound to thank God always for their deliverance. We could not say that in the conversion of this great writer we could give any man on the earth credit for it. By the same token we believe that with all the preaching that has been done, and all the evangelists that have traveled many miles, that when one believes in God we are bound by the truth to give God thanks for him. Paul said, "We are

bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet." The word "meet" here means that it's right, that it is according to the truth. "Because your faith groweth." "Because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of everyone of you all toward each other aboundeth." It aboundeth and we are bound.

These things I wish we could keep in mind: that we are bound by the truth, we are bound by the scripture, we are bound by the words of the prophets, we are bound by the words of Jesus Christ to give God thanks for every increase in the church, every blessing in the church, every one that's added to the church; the church is not to be defined as a building made with hands that a fire or an earthquake might destroy because if you should destroy every building in this country that's called a church building you wouldn't destroy the church. And you might build a building that reached across the county or across the State, God does not dwell in buildings or temples made with hands. His church is his people and He lives in them, He dwells in them, He guides them and we are bound always to give God thanks.

Now, in the 13th verse of the 2nd Chapter of Second Thessalonians, and I'll have to agree that I've heard some beautiful expositions on this scripture, and I shall not try to copy the words of those who have gone on before but I think hearing them inspired me or gave me a desire to talk about the same things, and we have not skipped over scripture for any special purpose but we have this word "bound" on our minds. In this Chapter God describes two types of people. He describes those who are led about by Satan and those who are led of God and He said, "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." I didn't say it, Paul said it. He's talking of somebody, "Even him, who's coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders." These are the words of Paul and he speaks of the "mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

I'm sure that these words we've just read in the latter part of this discourse have no application to a true believer in God. But in the 13th verse he said something else. He brings again this word: "But we are bound." I am bound by my experience, by the things that I have felt, by the things I trust the Lord has revealed to me, by the truth that I've found in the scriptures and I believe something that the Lord put in my heart and wrote in my mind, I am bound. And we are bound, and God's people are bound, and God's ministers are bound and those who believe are bound. "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you." We have just read in the first part of this scripture where Paul said, "We are bound to thank God always for you." That's the 1st Chapter and the third verse of Second Thessalonians. This is the 13th verse of the 2nd Chapter of Second Thessalonians: "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you,...because..." We are bound because. This scripture is not complete unless you read the whole verse. When we take a portion of a verse and preach it and leave the other portion out we are not rightly dividing the word of truth because it's important--the truth can be preached and not rightly divided.

But we are bound, we are bound to "search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." But now, to get back to this scripture, we see eternal security in it; we see the sovereignty of God; we see that which ever existed as faith by which we believe: "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation."

Now this is what we have believed, we have tried to preach here in this community for forty years that "from the beginning." In other words, "beginning" might be interpreted many different ways but "In the beginning God"--that's the first four words of the Bible. "In the beginning God." We have here a standard set up, we have a rule to follow: "In the beginning God". And Paul says here fifty-four years after the beginning of the christian era, "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethern beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." Now if God has chosen someone from the beginning, "In the beginning God" as we have the first four words of the Bible. Can you go back further than that? I don't know whether he has reference to this globe or not, I don't know whether he has reference to the universe as we know it or not, I don't know whether he has reference to the galaxies as we know them or not, but "from the beginning." You couldn't find anything further back than that: "from the beginning." "We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you". Now, if you are chosen of God, and let us hope that you are, let us suppose that you are, if you are chosen of God it is from the beginning. It wasn't the beginning of a meeting, it wasn't the beginning of the year, it was "from the beginning" because God has never changed and I am inclined to believe that if He loves me today, He always loved me, there never was a time when He didn't love me. And if I'm chosen today, and I trust I am and I hope I am, "from the beginning." Can you go further back than that? Can you see anything that can disannul that? Can you see anything that would dispute that?

And the choice of God and your choice of God, God's choice of you and your choice of God. We have heard it debated many times; there are many different versions, there are many different ideas of what it means. But we have the words of the apostle or rather the Lord Jesus Christ, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." I believe the Lord Jesus Christ said to somebody, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you...that you should go forth and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain." Can anyone disannul this choice. And if you have chosen God this scripture brings out very clearly that your choice of God is because He first chose you. And the psalmist said, "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face Lord, will I seek." Have you sought His face--until He speaks in you?

Now we are bound. "We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you." "You" here could mean one or it could mean every child of God. "You" is a personal pronoun that has no bounds for number. "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren."

What does it take to make brethren or what happens that you are a brother to somebody. Are you responsible for it? Did you choose your brothers? Did you choose your sisters or did you choose your parents, or did you choose your grandparents? I am sure if you did you would choose very noble ones. You wouldn't go back to trace your genealogy and find "a dead cat on the line" as it were. I am told by those who seem to know that the name I bear goes

back to a pirate who lived in the Atlantic Ocean called Bluebeard. I don't know if it's true or not but if I had my choice of choosing my ancestors I would not have chosen a pirate. But we don't have that choice. But in the choice of God, God hath chosen you, it's a complete statement. God has chosen you to salvation. If God has chosen you to salvation, everything you have that is human seems to fight against it, rebels against it, as Paul was told, "it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." "We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you." You know, I don't remember when Noah went into the ark, I don't remember when Adam came out of the Garden of Eden; I don't remember when old Abraham took his son upon the mountain as it were to sacrifice him; but, if I'm chosen of God, if I belong to God, if I'm one of His children: before this all happened I was one of them. I just didn't know about it. "We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord." If you are beloved of the Lord you were always beloved of the Lord. The theory that you can do something now that will incur the love of God just will not stand up in the scrutiny of the scriptures because we have all sinned and come short of the glory of the Lord and God does not love sin, in fact He hates it.

But as we get back to the text before us: WE ARE BOUND by the things we believe, by the things we have experienced, by the Bible, by the words of Jesus, by the words of the apostle Paul, by the first words ever written: "In the beginning God." In the beginning of your faith, in the beginning of your experience, in the beginning of your love for your brethren--and that's the only real tangible evidence that you have. You cannot say you have credentials to say that you are chosen of God, you cannot say you have credentials to show that you love God. The only real tangible evidence you have in this life: "For we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren."

Now, getting back to the doctrine. We are bound, everything that's in us, everything that's been taught us, everything that we have believed, everything that we have loved, and all the reasoning power that we can bring up as we study the scriptures, we are bound by these things, by these traditions, "to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord." That's who they are: brethren beloved of the Lord, "because God hath from the beginning." In the beginning God made heaven and earth and from that beginning God has chosen you to salvation. "Chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth." Salvation means to save that which was lost. "Chosen you to salvation." If you have salvation it's because God has chosen you. And if He has chosen you, you will not fail to be saved. And the word "saved" often means "separated." But "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification." I love this word. Paul speaks of it in the right perspective and he said sanctified by God the Father. They say, those who study the words and in the translation, that sanctify means to set apart for the service of God. So when Paul spoke of the status of the church he speaks of them as sanctified by God the Father, chosen in Christ Jesus and called. The calling is the last part. Of these three progressive things toward believing in God, the calling comes last. You are called because you are preserved, sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called. The calling comes because of the preservation, the preservation comes because of the sanctification and this comes because God hath from the beginning. I love these words. Now, I can hear someone, the objector, someone who doesn't believe it, someone who believes

something more liberal, saying then we are robots: that if this is true, we are robots. It is true. We are not robots. We are God's children if indeed we are not deceived. We believe the Bible because it's been wrought in us. And we are bound.

(Transcribed from tape of a sermon by Elder O. K. Tench delivered on the radio, 4th Sun. in Nov., 1978).

(Continued next month)

SELECTED FROM "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" 1834

ARMINIANISM

As every reader may not have a clear determinate idea of what Arminianism precisely is, it may to such be satisfactory to know that it consists chiefly of five particulars. (1.) The Arminians will not allow election to be an eternal, peculiar, unconditional and irreversible act of God. (2.) They assert that Christ died equally and indiscriminately for every individual of mankind; for them that perish, no less than for them that are saved. (3.) That saving grace is tendered to the acceptance of every man; which he may, or may not receive, just as he pleases. Consequently, (4.) That the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit is not invincible, but is suspended for its efficacy on the will of man. (5.) That saving grace is not an abiding principle; but that those who are loved of God, ransomed by Christ, and born again of the Spirit may (let God wish and strive ever so much to the contrary) throw all away, and perish eternally at last.

To these, many Arminians tack a variety of errors beside. But the above may be considered as a general skeleton of the leading mistakes which characterize the sect.

Toplady

FROM AN OLD SIGNS

Dalark, Arkansas

Dear Brother in Bonds:

I received your very comforting letter about a month ago, and was certainly elated over the contents, but wonder why any one would stoop so low as to even notice such a wretched character as I am.

Brother Griffin, I feel to hope that we have a few things in common. Your age exceeds mine only about four years. In relating your experience you gave the "waymarks" so plainly that I believe we were brought over the same road. We are both members of the same faith and order. We have both been placed under the same yoke of the ministry. Having so many things in common, I am impressed to relate to you by pen some things of my experience along life's way, if it be God's will. I have never attempted to write it before, but have been blessed to tell it in public a few times. It seems so different from the experience of most people that I very often doubt it being an experience of grace. I was raised by very religious parents, my father being an ordained minister of the Missionary Baptist people. Very few Sundays did I miss Sunday School and church services. I was reared in an Arminian atmosphere. I do not remember ever hearing the term "Primitive Baptist," or ever meeting a "Hard Shell," until I was grown. I was taught that there were a very few ignorant, devilish people, who lived in the backwoods, who were called "Hard Shells," who I was to shun as a wild beast. Of course I did not want to even meet one. At a very early age I, too, joined the organization with my parents. Being termed as one of the best "kid speakers" in our community, I was solicited to take part in the testimony meetings. When I was sixteen years of age I obtained a teacher's license, and began to teach both literery and Sunday School. This, of course, helped me "practice up" on public speaking. Being first

in the school-room, first in the Sunday School class, and first in the other community socials, gave me a good case of "Big I," and the foremost symptom was self-righteousness. Then I was solicited to preach, and having such a good opinion of myself, and seeing so many of my fellow-men falling so far short of me, I also thought it prudent that I should be clothed with the authority to tell them of their wicked ways, and admonish them to "get right." Therefore, I was ordained, and zealously pursued my task, and went along smoothly for awhile.

Now, dear brother, the saddest, most heartrending and serious part of my experience I am about to tell. The thoughts of it even now make me shudder. One certain night, during a protracted meeting in our community, I was called by the "big preacher" from the city, to take full charge of the service. He called me the night before, and thus spoke: "Brother Lambert, I have been preaching here every night for almost a week with no results. No mourners have come forward. Tomorrow night I want you to make the altar call after you have preached." Of course I was elated over the opportunity to try my luck. The next day I studied the proposition seriously. I decided on the theme, "Sinners in the hands of an angry God," using "Thou shalt be cut off, and that without remedy," as a text. That particular night I must have been blessed with rhetorical eloquence, for when I made the altar call old men, old women, boys and girls began at once to flock to the altar. Dear brother, I suppose you think I should have been somewhat overjoyed. Naturally I would have been, but alas! there seemed to be an audible voice which spoke, "Who are you, that you should invite?" This would not have been so bad if the answer had not come immediately by the same voice, "You are a sinner vile and needy." I wanted to run out at the door and hide from every one. As soon as I could I did get away from there. Oh how miserable I was! On that night I saw myself as a sinner for the first time, and I went about to right myself. The more I tried to do the deeper in sin I sank. I tried until I could try no more, and gave it up as a hopeless task. Of course I gave up trying to preach, but I was still in possession of my credentials.

Some little time after that, I drove into a little town quite some distance from home, about sundown. Some of the people there knew I was coming, but did not know I had given up trying to preach, and had given out an appointment for me that night. As I drove in town the church bell began to ring, and I asked the one that I was stopping with what it meant, and he informed me that I was to preach that night. I told him I could not do it, but he informed me that it was too late to back out then. I saw the trap I was in. I was in a strange community, so decided to act the hypocrite and get up one of my old themes and texts and raise a reputation for myself in that community. But alas! I could not think of a thing. I tried to think of some Scripture and to take some of my Sunday School knowledge, but that had all sunk into oblivion. I know I tried to think soberly on the Scriptures, but I could not, I could think of nothing except how sinful I was, and I knew it would not do to tell them that, for instead of giving me a reputation I would lose it. A great audience was in front of me when I went behind the pulpit and I was as blank of thoughts of the Bible as any one could be. If I ever prayed I did then. I groaned, "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner." I became unconscious of action or thought, and when I became conscious I was exhausted and was standing there feasting upon the power, holiness and wisdom of God. I left that place thrilled to the highest, still feasting upon several of the attributes of God. I was driving home in my car that night by myself, still feasting, when the train of thoughts

was turned. I saw myself the blackest of black sinners, and then glimpsed God as the Holiest of Holies. I saw myself as most foolish and God as all-wise. I saw myself unable to perform anything, and God as having all power. What a great gulf there was to be spanned between my condition and the requirements of the law. I went along groping in this predicament for quite some time. Finally the sweetest of my experience came. I was teaching school in the community where I had witnessed that glimpse of God, when one day a neighbor came to the place where wife and I resided. He suggested that we go to a home that night to preaching. He said Elder A. D. Wall, of Amity, Arkansas, would preach. I asked him if they were "Hard Shells," and told him if they were I did not care to hear them, because they believed that a man was justified in killing another because God predestinated it. He answered thus: "I just supposed you would be interested, for if I ever heard a Primitive Baptist sermon you preached it here last year." I answered, "For curiosity's sake I will go." I have never been able to recall anything that I said that night, as I seemed to be in a subconscious state, and have often wondered what I did say. Therefore, I consented to go for the first time to hear a "Hard Shell" preach, and I was glad I did go. I accused Elder Wall of being a mind reader that night. He was blessed to take up each question that came to my mind and to thresh it out to my satisfaction. That night I was blessed to see another attribute of God: that of mercy. I saw the character who was able to span the gulf between my sinfulness and God's holiness; my inability and God's power; my foolishness and God's wisdom. I saw Jesus, who was verily God and man, with one foot on God's side of the gulf and the other on puny man's side. I saw him, as it were, pick up sinful men, whom God had chosen, and cleanse them with his blood and place them safely on the other side, without spot or blemish, to bask in the sunlight of God's eternal love and power forever on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance. Jesus died in my low room and stead, tread the wine-press alone. In my stead (as I hope) he kept the law to a jot and tittle. The keeping of this law by Jesus was charged to my account, my sins were laid on his shoulders and he bore the penalty. His life's blood was shed while hanging on the cross of Calvary for the remission of my sins, as I hope.

This experience was so consoling to me that I thought my troubles were over. But my lot seems to be akin to Job's. The last of my experience told was at the dawn of the year 1930. I will tell briefly some of the things that took place with me that year. Three cars were wrecked for me, a son was born to us and in about a month my wife died with pneumonia. I lost my position and health. I had to give up teaching because I was not able to meet the requirements for a license of course. With all this, and doctor bills, funeral expenses and other things, I suffered a nervous breakdown. In that year I was received in Cedar Hill Church. In September I was visiting the South Ouachita Association, among strangers in the flesh. I was so nervous and burdened down with something that I could not face any one. One night, at the home of Elder J.R. Evers, a sister (who was a total stranger to me) requested that I be called on to say a few words. I was on the outside of the house, but was called in, and God blessed me with the light and liberty of unloading that burden. In the course of time I was licensed to preach. Then, against my protests of not being qualified, called for my ordination, which was carried out while the South Arkansas Association was in session, in September, 1934. I met and married my second wife in that year and God blessed me with the privilege of baptizing her last year.

Brother Griffin, I have tried to give you some of the marks of the road I was

forced to travel. I am glad that God blessed you to come to Arkansas, and hope that we may meet again. If you receive any comfort from this give God all the praise. Pray for me at the throne of grace.

Hoping in Christ for my soul sufficiency, I am your brother,

(Elder) E. J. Lambert
Jan. 1938

(Selected)

SPIRITUAL TRIALS

Dear Sirs,-It is with an heart overpressed with sorrows, that I take up my pen to write a few lines to you, and I do sincerely believe that was I not supported by an unseen hand, they would be too many for me, when darkness of soul, and darkness in my way, with God frowning, no light, no life, no liberty, no hope, at least very little, no joy, but, on the contrary, all sorrow, all gloom, all wretchedness, all misery; these things make me think, at times, that it is all over with me, that what in months that are past I have been enabled to triumph in has been all a delusion, and that I must eventually lie down in eternal sorrow. O sirs, do tell me, is it, or has it ever been thus with you? I now know what the psalmist meant when he said, "I mourn and am as a swallow alone upon the house top". Indeed, sirs, I have told the Lord that if he designs sending me to hell at last, if he would but condescend to let me enjoy him while in this time-state, I should feel far more satisfied; but not to know him as my God neither here nor hereafter, is more than I can bear. What if God this day was to call me to his bar, to give an account of deeds done in the body! what could I say, but, "Amen, hallelujah!" to my damnation. It is his love, or rather his forbearance, that has kept me hitherto out of hell; but what grounds have I to hope that I shall not one day awake there? I am so tossed about with temptations, sins, and fears, that I think at times that if I belonged to that number gathered out of every nation, kingdom, people, and tongue, I should not be tried and left to sink so long and so deep where there is no standing; for if I go to pray, in secret or in the family; if I go on a Lord's Day to worship God in public; if I attempt to read my Bible; yea, whatever I do appears to bring me under that passage, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me". But, sirs, I have more than once had pleasure in what God says by Isaiah, "My ways are not your ways, neither are my thoughts your thoughts". If they had been, where should I have been at this moment? Why, in hell, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched; and yet, amidst all within and without, a small hope rises at times; but unbelief says, "The end of these things is death; for dare I hope in his mercy who crucified him afresh? Well, here I am, and I do think I cannot know much worse, or feel either.

Dear sirs, now do tell me the truth. Can you for a moment think these are the feelings of God's family, that, for the trial of their faith, they are thus perplexed, thus cast down, and thus in despair, having to wade through hot fires and deep waters, thinking the next wave that comes will swallow them up for ever? If these are the feelings of God's family, let me know, for these are mine. Often am I led to say,

"Is this, dear Lord, the way?
Dear Saviour, still lead on;
Nor leave me till I say,
Father, thy will be done:
At most, I do but taste the cup,
For thou alone hast drank it up!"

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JOHN 3:16 AND THE LITTLE WORD "SO"

If "so" is a word, and if all words mean something, then "so" means something. When a word with a meaning is placed within a sentence, it modifies, changes or qualifies that sentence. In John 3:16, "so" modifies and qualifies the simple statement, "God loved the world." Without that word "so" and what follows it, one would find God doing what He told His children not to do in I John 2:15--"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.

If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Yet, innumerable Arminian pulpiteers throughout the world hammer on what they consider to be the world's favorite text, John 3:16, as though it says, "God loved the world."

However, to say that God loved the world merely elicits a bored "Oh" from the unquestioning natural mind. The spiritual dullard who would believe anything that is comfortable to him would soak up this statement in nature's blindness and go on to other things. "God loves the world? Okay, then he loves you and me, I guess. What's for lunch?" Such is the carnal mind's appreciation for the love of its God.

I.

To say God loves the world is vaguely satisfying to the natural mind but specifically frustrating to it. The Old Testament pharisees were a case in point: "Yet ye say, 'Wherein hast thou loved us?' (Mal. 1:2) When love is generalized to include all, it loses its potency and its very appeal. To love everything equally is to love nothing. Love becomes too diluted to mean anything. To love someone means that the loved one is someone special. To love everyone would mean that everyone is special, which means that no one is special; for, by definition, "special" must separate someone or something out of a general group. For example, we speak of loving our country, meaning that our country is something preeminent to us; or, a man loves his wife, which tells us that his wife is peculiarly precious to him, more dear to him than all other women. Now, if a person loves all countries or all women equally, then must he not admit that his own country and his own wife are nothing special to him?

Is someone says he "loves all the cities of England equally," is he not saying in those very words that London, for example, is nothing special to him?

The misleading Arminian proclamation that "God loves everyone without exception" is a designing, scheming approach. Bluntly, it is a contrivance based on crude, carrot-and-stick psychology, designed to make people feel obligated toward God. It is a subtle theory,

not too well thought out by the men and devils who designed it with a hope that it would produce within mankind a response toward this God who loves them--a response of gratitude, service, obedience and devotion. It is a subtle system which in theory is supposed to bring the maximum number of the citizens of this world to feel and to say, "God loves me? Then, I must love (and serve) him in return! I must feel gratitude for his love, and, to repay him for it I shall obey all of his laws forever."

However, in actual application, the believers in this universal love are not particularly moved toward obedient service by their theory, but are ultimately reduced to looking about themselves at the "mess" in which they perceive the world to be and mulling over the ineffectuality of this vague, universal love which does nothing special for anyone in particular. They proclaim a yearning god who is just as concerned over a Pharaoh or a Judas as he is a Moses, Peter, James or John. He can do nothing for any of them unless they let him. According to Arminianism, the primary difference between the apostates and the apostles is that the former would not avail themselves of his love while the latter would and did; so, this god continues to yearn and mourn over his losses and failures while ever offering more love, more love.

Musing upon his god's lavish waste of the same love upon the atheistic, hellish hordes around him that he "offers" to his most faithful saint, the thoughtful Arminian must cynically say in his heart, "Wherein hast thou loved us?"

Whenever the statement "God loves you" comes to an entire class, as on the surface of things it seemed to come to all of national Israel in Malachi 1:2, the natural response from any subset within the "universally loved" entity will be identical to that of Israel's leadership, which was not undying gratitude, willing service and obedience, or total devotion and love to God in return (as the Arminian theory would lead us to expect), but rather this question from an undiscerning mind: "Wherein hast thou loved us?" When love is generalized, diffused, scattered everywhere and made as common as straw, it becomes as cheap as straw in the estimation of the "beloved" one(s). The implication in Malachi is that the Old Testament religious leaders were saying, "What distinguishing marks prove you love us more than you love anyone else? Just what have you done for us lately?"

It is of vital interest to the child of grace that God Himself answers the question in Malachi by directly proclaiming His sovereign election of Israel. The thrust of God's reply is, "Jacob is elect, Esau is not; THAT is wherein I have loved you." Election in Christ Jesus to the eternal salvation which is in and through His blood--that is the cardinal proof of God's love; conversely, without divine election there is no proof of divine love, Yet, for years the Arminians ave misused John 3:16 to preach around the truth of God's sovereign election without directly having to confront it or even having to mention it. Perceiving election as an enemy they have, like the ostrich hiding its head in the sand, ignored it, hoping it would go away. Election has not gone away, nor will it; and the theory that God loves the world is weighed in the balance and found wanting.

II.

On the other hand, to say that "God SO loved the world..." is entirely different from saying "God loved the world." "SO" is a qualifying word, and inserting it in the complete sentence, "God loved the world," results in its no longer being a complete sentence. To say God SO loved the world raises the valid question: how, or in what manner did He love it--how SO? This leads to the fact that Jesus both anticipated and answered this question when He continued, "...that He gave..."

His continuation and explanation to Nicodemus would indicate that perhaps we are on the right track; He did not say, "God loved the world, period." He said, "For God SO loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son," but He did not stop with that revelation, either. "He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Here Jesus sets forth a fact about believers. Nowhere did He either tell Nicodemus (or anyone else) how to believe, or urge him (or anyone else) to do so. It remained for Paul to point out that belief is, like the only begotten Son Himself, also a gift (Phil 1:29), and that all who believe in Him do so "according to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead..." (Eph. 1:19-22) Paul's doctrine is that it takes the same power of God to bring a poor sinner out of natural unbelief into a state of belief, the same power of God that raised Christ from the dead and exalted Him in glory at His Father's side. It takes that kind of power to make a believer out of an unbeliever. But, in John 3, Jesus did not go into these things with Nicodemus. He told Nicodemus how God loved the world so that believers would not perish, and he indicated that belief is ***evidence*** of eternal life--not one of several steps toward it.

Nowhere in the third chapter of John is there any indication that the love of God does anything for an unbeliever. Nowhere does it say that any unbeliever, ***per se,*** is loved. The unbeliever is condemned already (verse 18) and shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth, or stays continually, on him (verse 36). This is unchangeable, unalterable, abiding. The evidence that the unbeliever is condemned is that he loves darkness and hates the light (I.e., Christ, John 8:12) and will not come to Him lest his deeds should be reproved (3:20). In contrast to this, another evidence of eternal life in the believer is that he does come to the light that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God, which is to say their deeds are produced by Him (John 3:21, Phil. 2:13).

The world thinks it is doing God a favor by attempting to make His love as broad as possible. John well answered all who believe such when he said, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." If Christ is not the propitiation for an individual's sins, there is no proof whatsoever that God loves him. If Christ is his propitiation, then this proves that God does love him. God's love, The Father's election, the Son's propitiation, the Spirit's regeneration, and the result and belief in the individual's heart--these are all to the exact, same extent.

The error of the world is: "God loved the world; God gave His only begotten Son; IF you will believe in Him you will not perish but have everlasting life."

But ye have not so learned Christ.

The doctrine of Christ is: God has a people, God loves His own; He gave His only begotten Son for them, He gives their belief to them, He works their deeds in them. They believe in Him, and they shall not perish but have everlasting life. His people rest in His love which is eternal, unchangeable, specific, and effectual. A renewed heart and a changed life are the results and evidences of God's love in anyone's life. In summary, it can be truly said that the knowledge of God's sovereign, electing love, when it is implanted by the Holy Spirit in an enlightened sinner's heart, will produce in him or her that genuine gratitude, obedience and devotion about which the will-worshippers of this world can only speculate when they are in their finer moods, and which they try to imitate when they are on their better behavior.

In that blessed hope,
(Elder) C. C. Morris

EDITORIAL

GALATIONS 5:17-26

"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another."

I do hope that as I endeavor to write about the fruits of the Spirit, that I will have the patience of those to whom I would write. I would beg that the mantle of charity be cast around me, for I am a poor sinner, and as subject to error as water is to flow down hill. If I am thus carefully handled by my readers, I will be covered by this mantle, for it covers a multitude of sins.

Only one reference to the works of the flesh do I want to make. That is this, to wit, that there is a law against each and every one of these works. As far as I am concerned, there is not a "thus saith the Lord" for us to engage in any of these works. Not a single commandment, not a single sanction, not a single approval can be found from the Lord. As far as the deportment of the children of God is concerned, it is like unto this, "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." (I John 5:3) It is grievous that I am weak, that I am often going astray, but the commandments are not grievous to me. I am often stumbling, and I am often disobedient to the commandments of my God, but I am not given to being burdened because that He has not left me a place to sin once and awhile, to take vengeance, to get even, to blow my top. His commandments are delightful. When I sin, it is the greatest sorrow to me, showing definitely that there is law against all works of the flesh.

I desire that you notice the technicality of manner with which Paul deals with this intricate matter. It is indeed intricate when one is engaged in such bitter opposition to the other that he and she in whose breast the battle rages, is unable to do as they would. As he finishes his account or narration of the works of the flesh, and the dire consequences when they are engaged in, then he turns. His turning from one to the other is complete. He does not carry a single part of his treatise on the works of the flesh over into his treatise on the fruit of the Spirit. One is altogether dealing with the works of the flesh; the other is altogether dealing with the fruit of the Spirit. He turns from one subject to another with the little word "but" which, I used to be told, was a conjunction used to separate phrases in the same sentence. One phase of this deals with the works of the flesh, the other deals with the fruit of the spirit, and when he turns from the first to the second, he turns all the way.

These fruits are as follows: Love is the first. I used to feel that the apostle did not list these fruits according to their importance, but not any more. This word is the foundation of everything that is precious to the child of God. God is love. It is not that this is one of His characteristics, that it is one of His attributes, but that is what He is. Love is active. It doesn't make any difference to

me whether it is God loving His people, or His people loving Him (and if Him, then one another), love is active.

The subject is of so much importance to us; it is the only hope for poor sinners, and yet its magnitude overwhelms me. I am so unlovely, and God is so lovely, that an effort for me to speak of my relationship to it causes me to approach handling it with much reluctance. I am not able, in my flesh, to command nor to put down and out this love. I am sure that no one, no one at all, can command love. It handles us, for it is not handled by the objects of love. Love is not severed by the actions of a person any more than it begins by the action of another. Love originates with God. I am well aware that men are running around in circles telling sinners that are dead in sin that they can love God, but I am sure that it is not true. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son (to be) the propitation for our sins". (I John 4:10) Here is love. It is not in sinners to love. It is in them to hate, but not to love. This love of God in action moved Him to send His Son into the world. In this delivering Him up for His people, showed to us the manner of love that has been bestowed upon us. Even though bestowed upon us, we are not able "yet" to handle it. The One that bestows this love upon us is the One that supplies it to us. We do not have access to this love except as it is shed abroad in our hearts by the giving to us of the Holy Spirit.

This fruit is effective as it grows on this good tree. It does not hang on the tree and ruin for the want of somebody plucking it off and utilizing it, but it is shed abroad in our hearts, and what changes are wrought. It causes us to love God. The English Baptists are called Particular, and I do not have a fault to find with the name. This work of love is a singular, a particular love. God loved us when we were dead in sin, and because of that love, He quickened us into life. The result was that the one dead in sin, in turn, loved God. He did not love God and turn, but God loved him, and being loved, it turned him to God. It is utterly impossible to love God and not love those begotten of God. "Every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him." (I John 5:1) This is a universal doctrine. If I have a reader that is not in love with his brethren (all of them) then he is saying that he does not love God.

Now these that are born of the Spirit love God. These that love God love those begotten of God. I said earlier that love is active. There is no such a thing as love resting or becoming inactive as long as a single case of need exists. If all of the need to praise God is past; if all of the praise due Him has been rendered; if all of the need of the brethren has been met, then, by all means, we have a love that is inactive. Loving God, and loving those begotten of God, brings us to the things of God. The commandments of God, the promises of God, the accomplishments of God, all, all, are things that love is active toward. This love is a fruit of the Spirit, and fruit grows from that of which it is a fruit of.

The second fruit of the Spirit is joy. Let us remember that this is the joy of our salvation, the rejoicing that comes about by the in-wrought work of God's Spirit in us. This Spirit does not seek help in the benighted soul into which it has entered. Not being dependent on the flesh, and, all of the work of quickening, sustaining, moving this hidden work, being all of the Spirit itself, it follows that it is not hindered by the flesh, and that no resistance is offered it by the spiritual nature, thus this, as are all the other fruits, wholly the work of the Spirit. God having, from all eternity, loved the sinner, and having acted to the bringing of him to see his lost and ruined condition, His work produces the joy. Certainly, this joy does not come from the flesh. There is a constant crucifixion of this flesh, and it can not joy--yea, it has nothing to joy in, rather

to groan and lament at the overthrowing of itself. The good tree, the new creation, the spiritual man, has so much to joy in.

In the beginning of our experience there is not any joy. It is always in much trouble and sorrow when the God of the law comes into our lives. He is hard and austere; He demands so much, and we cannot do the first thing to appease His wrath. Although there is not any relief in what we do, the magnitude of the condemnation which the broken law demands causes us to double our labors. The result is His frowns come upon us with nothing to give us any hope. In the midst of our mourning because that there is no hope for us, we hear the Voice of the Lord Jesus Christ as He says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. 11:28) This is a joyous message.

It is a long night when we are sowing in tears; the night endures as we weep, and the long watches bring us low. But what joy comes in the morning, as we see Jesus as our Faithful One who has kept the law for us. As salvation is made known unto us, joy will always spring up. As the water of life springs up with us, joy will abound. This water is the gift of God. It flows from Him to usward. A flowing, springing well does not abate. As it cleanses, purifies, assuages, joy equally flows from the poor recipient of this great mercy. If we have anything to do with the water coming that much, no more, no less, do we have something to do with the joy. This giving of joy is the work of the Spirit of Christ in us. (Isa. 61:1, 3) This giving of the oil of joy for the mourning enables these newly planted trees of righteousness to go forth with joy, (Isa. 55:12) and there will be so much joy that clapping of hands will follow.

When love and joy grows as lively fruits in the dear weeping and groaning children of God, peace will follow. Love has conquered all of the hatred of our dull mortal frame; it has caused the wolf and the lion, the leopard and the bear, to become domesticated and to lie down in the same fold. The unity that accompanies the work of grace in the midst of those thus dealt with, is a wonder; the peace which the indwelling of the Spirit gives, passes all understanding. (Eph. 3:19, Phil. 4:7)

We may sometimes have natural patience, but it is not extended to the people of God and their doctrine. If I could draw the picture of us toward the people of God before we were put in our right mind, (Luke 8:35) and then extend that picture to include us as all things become new we would have us in introspection and in retrospection. We were not anything within ourselves--in fact, as we looked within all was a mass of sin and corruption, and as we looked back at our name set down in the Lamb's Book of Life, peace, even the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ would flood our soul, and we would become the most forbearing and patient with the saints of God, and longsuffering would be extended to every vessel of mercy. This longsuffering is a fruit of God's Spirit. The sons and daughters of God get the likenesses of their Father. In fact, the family likenesses pass from Father to Son, and all of the sons and daughters of God become the brethren of the Elder Brother. As the King reigns in righteousness, the family in unison with one another, bearing one another's burdens, sharing in the obligations of God's children towards one another. This long suffering is a great blessing with so many personalities in the family. While these fruits have their likeness in each other, our unity ends with them, for no two are alike. If we all tried to have our way what discord there would be in the Kingdom of Heaven; if all had a tendancy to force our peculiarities on each other what gloom would set in at the first meeting. This longsuffering is one of the lovliest of these fruits; it only comes from much pruning and removal of unfruitful

boughs and branches. This vital work is not left to the barren branches--if so, it would not be done. The Husbandman looks after this as much as He does the bringing forth of fruit. This is as it ever must be because the garden is His, and is all to the praise of His grace. This longsuffering of the saints acts in love and it is gentle and merciful; it is slow to believe rumors, it is quick to commend good stewardship.

As I look back over the writings of our lovely elders and others, I am made to regret each and every scathing remark or charge that I have ever made towards those with whom I have disagreed. Our sarcasm has never converted one from the error of their way; perhaps our gentleness has not changed anybody's view, but it has given credence to our having had visits from the gentle Saviour. As I look over the many times that His people were contentious and fault-finding and even contemptuous, I am amazed to find Him gentle. His rebukes were given in mercy and in such a way as to cause a falling down, as it were, at His feet begging for mercy. But, you say to me, "You are writing about His gentleness, and your text is talking about our fruit". O, no, I am not writing about our fruit. I am writing about the fruit which His Spirit causes us to bear. The kind of gentleness that He bore towards His frail brethren is the same kind that we will bear towards them. We will be known by the bearing of this fruit.

But do you mean that the Spirit causes or moves or influences us to be gentle towards those who are weak in doctrine? O, yes, very much so. How gentle He asked, "Will ye also go away?" How gentle he turned and looked on the wretched Peter. What gentleness did David feel towards his son, Absolam, when he asked that they deal gently with him. Paul was moved by the gentleness of Christ to write to Titus that he be gentle towards all men; James was moved (not moved towards, or upon, but) to write about the wisdom from above that enabled us to be peaceable and gentle; the minister is commanded to be gentle to all men. (Tit. 3:2; Jas. 3:17; 2 Tim. 2;24; 2 Cor. 10:1)

If any among us would make light of goodness, of good things, of good walk and talk among the saints of God, they do not have any right whatever in the church of the living God. If any among us stand off and belittle those that avoid telling dirty yarns, hitting the bottle, I tell you once and forever, that their writing and preaching has lost its savoriness. The Spirit does not, never has, and never will, bear ungodly fruit. It bears goodness. The goodness which God has ever borne towards His church and people, is the same kind (as though there was any other kind) of goodness that His people bear towards Him, towards His kingdom, and towards the subjects of that kingdom. The good things of the kingdom are the good things that the saints at Rome were full of, and they were full of them because of the fulness which we receive from Him. (John 1:16)

As mentioned, I used to think that faith should have been placed at the head of the list of this cluster of fruits, but over the years it has seemed that faith is placed in this category of fruits at exactly the right place. These other fruits are states of mind that we are brought into from day to day by the Spirit. It is speaking more of what we are than it is of what we do. Something is said of faith that is not said of any other fruit. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. (Rom. 14:23) Over and over, time and time again, I have, over the last fifty years, quoted this declaration of Paul's, and yet have had it hurled into my face that I advocated free willism. Once more, God willing, I want to say this, that what is not of faith that it is sin. Further, let me say that it is impossible to please God without this faith. Further, this faith is a gift of God. Further, this gift is a fruit of the Spirit.

This gift of faith, like all of the gifts of God, are without repentance; that they are not given Indian fashion - if you do not use them and appreciate them that God will take them away from you; that is is given to use or move you into obedience; that is is given to you for your use; that it is not given to you who do not have faith, so that you get faith; that is is not given so you can exercise faith, but that it does exercise or move or cause you to perform good works, to please God.

It is an established fact that God perfects that which concerns us: "Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands." (Psa. 138:8) Often the perfecting of us is done before we are aware of the need, but as far as its manifestation to us, as far as the consummation of the perfecting of us, it is always in faith that we receive it and enjoy it. If not, then it is sin to receive it and to joy in it, and then we have one of these fruits contrary to the other, yea, we find that there is a law against at least one of these fruits, and if one, I do not know who would say that there was not a law against them all.

There is not a law against admonition, exhortation, encouragement; if so, Paul broke his own writing hundreds of times. There is not any law belittling right living, seeking to stand in the ways of peace, lifting up the low head, giving a helping hand to the children of God, even to all men. However, there is a law against all of the works of the flesh.

The two last of these fruits are meekness and temperance. Goodness and meekness are so closely related that I do not know how to separate them from one another. Yet although I fear that I do not know what true humility is, yet it is the outstanding mark of a child of God. I can find much more enjoyment with a humble brother, even though we do not agree, that I can a sarcastic arrogant one that is in agreement. Meekness speaks its own piece; it tells us whether the meek and lowly Lamb of God is dwelling in us, and the best of all is that it is a fruit of the Spirit.

Temperance is usually looked upon as the reasonable use of wine. I doubt that, taking what the Scriptures say in the aggrogate, that there is a temperate use of it as a beverage, but as a blessing of God, its temperate uses are borne to us by the Spirit.

This temperance or moderation is given to us by the Spirit, and its effectual working in us lets it be known unto all men. When it comes to sin, temperance and moderation does not have any place, but when it comes to the things of God there is a time to speak and a time to remain silent. It is the Spirit's work to work in us to that end.

In conclusion, if we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. This commandment is not to ships without an anchor, nor is it to vessels of honor that do not have a rudder. In both cases, yea, in all cases, they are stabilized and guided by the same power, to wit, the power of God as made known unto us by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

This is my love. Farewell in the Lord.

(Elder) W. D. Griffin

Nothing but Christ will do for a dying sinner; and why should we dream that any thing else will do for a living sinner?

Sin cannot enter into heaven; but a sinner may.

Toplady

Worms and other insects take up their habitation under the surface of the earth. A plat of ground may be, outwardly, verdant with grass, and decorated with flowers. But take a spade in your hand, and turn up the mould, and you soon have a sample of the vermin that lurk beneath. Temptation is the spade which breaks up the ground of a believer's heart, and helps to discover the corruptions of his fallen nature.

Toplady

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

IT IS FINISHED

When the beloved Son of God hung on the accursed tree, -- when His soul was poured out unto death, when frighted rocks were burst asunder, the heavens in sackcloth were veiled, when the rugged bars of death were loosed, and tombs of marble resigned their sleeping tenants, when by the rending of the veil of the temple the ark, the cherubims, and mercy seat were all disclosed, while, nerved with malice, Jews and Romans mocked, while racking pains and most tormenting smarts were inflicted on that blessed Lamb who bore our sins, when justice drew its flaming sword, and vengeance struck the dreadful blow, when hell exulting in her hour of darkness, amidst the awful grandeur of that dreadful scene, the voice of triumph, from the expiring Saviour's lips shook the creation to its very centre; stern death, in dreadful terror clad, affrighted, paused and felt the thunder of that voice which in all the power and majesty of the eternal God-head shouted, "It is finished".

With due humility and that reverence which becomes the ransomed of the Lord, let us inquire what was finished? From the sacred record of eternal truth we learn that all was finished that the glorious Mediator had began; love was not finished, for the love of God had no beginning. Election and predestination, with all the perfections of Jehovah which shine forth in the economy of salvation were not finished, for these were without beginning, and can never, never end.

But something was certainly finished by the Saviour when He in triumph gave the victorious shout; nor has our Lord left this important subject in the dark. "He who runs may read". "He finished transgression, made an end of sin", etc. He Himself has declared that He has finished the work that His Father gave Him to do. We eagerly inquire, what then was the work that His Father gave Him to do? The Son of God responds, "I come to do thy will, O God." "I am come to do the will of my Father who sent me, and to finish the work. And this is the will of him that sent me, that of all that he has given me I should lose nothing; but should raise them up at the last day." "And the Father has given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him." A shining messenger from the world of glory came down from heaven to earth, to accounce the work that Jesus was to perform, viz: "His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." He finished the redemption of his people agreeably to the prediction of the Psalmist: "The redemption of the soul is precious, and it ceaseth forever."

First. He has finished the redemption of His people, and it ceaseth forever.

Second. He has finished, or made an end of sin, as far as it relates to those he represented.

Third. He finished the law as far as relates to its demands in reference to the election of grace, and the fulfillment of its divine requisitions. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfill." Heaven and earth shall pass away, but one jot or tittle of the law shall not pass until all is fulfilled. He is the end of the law for righteousness unto every one that believes.

Fourth. He has finished transgressions; for His blood cleanseth from all sin. He has given Himself for His church, that He might redeem it from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.

Fifth. He has finished the curse, having borne our sins in His own body on the tree; "and being made a curse for us, as it is written, Cursed is every one

that hangeth on a tree."

Sixth. He has finished the covenant of works, having blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which were against us, nailing them to the cross.

Seventh. He has finished the work of making sacrifices for sin. "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sin".

Eighth. He has given a finishing stroke to the perfection of his people, "for by one offering He has perfected forever them that are sanctified."

Ninth. He has finished death, having destroyed death and him that had the power of death, which is the devil.

Tenth. He finished the work of His sufferings, being now baptized with that baptism for which He was straitened until it was accomplished. When deep called unto deep, and the billows of divine wrath went over Him; deep waters came into His soul.

Eleventh. He finished the complete pattern which He set for His children to walk in. Let no presumptuous wretch dare attempt to change the pattern of the things in heaven.

Finally, He has completely finished all that was written of Him in the law, in the prophets, and in the Psalms; and all that was necessary to secure the eternal salvation and justification of His people, and left them to challenge wicked men and devils, to declare, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; It is Christ that died. He was wounded for their transgression; He was bruised for their iniquities, and the chastisement of their peace was upon him; and with his stripes they were healed. He sees of the travail of his soul, and is satisfied.

Reflection. Is it finished? Or, is something remaining to be done by the redeemed, in order to secure the blessed objects of the death of Christ? If something remains to be done, whether it be using means, or giving our hearts to God, or our money to modern institutions, or sitting on anxious benches, or anything else, much or little, then is the work not finished, and the words of the expiring Lamb of God are contradicted. But be assured, dying reader, whatever relative duties are enjoined on the disciples of Christ, there is among them nothing to be added to the finished work of the Redeeemer - nothing to render his redemption efficient, or effectual, or to extend its benefits to any for whom God did not eternally intend it; so far indeed from it, all the good works of the people of God are the immediate result of the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing can be added to or taken from the work which Christ finished when He yielded up the ghost and bowed His head unto death. "It ceaseth forever."

Here then the Old School Baptists find a sure foundation to build upon, and hence we preach Christ crucified, and proclaim a finished salvation in His worthy name - a salvation completely suited to the case of the poor, the needy, the halt, the lame and the blind; a salvation suited to the condition of every hungry, starving soul, who by grace is made to feel his wretchedness, and mourn his sins; but by no means suited to the case of the whole, who need no physician. The pharisees of eighteen hundred years ago, rejected this finished work, and from that day to the present it stands rejected, despised, opposed, and slandered by all the workmongers who have flourished in our sinful world. But tell us, reader, how do you view the perfect work and finished salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ, for be assured if you despise this doctrine you are yet in your sins; but if you love the doctrine and can feed on it, you are not far from the Kingdom.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

February 10, 1837

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION

We are pleased with the communications of our esteemed Brother Trott, on this all-important subject; and we do

hope that our readers will faithfully examine all his numbers, comparing them with the infallible standard, the Bible, with unbiased minds, open for the reception of truth. These numbers we are fully persuaded will bear examination; and certainly the importance of the subject should be a sufficient incentive to lead us to weigh them in the balance of the sanctuary.

Among others, we doubt not, some well meaning brethren have started at the position assumed by Brother T., that the predestination of God extends to the wicked actions of men and devils. But is there not a cause, why they are so fearful? Few, very few of our pulpits have rung with this doctrine for the last ten or fifteen years. Arminians and New School Baptists have and do hate it; while some, who are compelled to acknowledge the truth of it, have thought they were doing God service by suppressing the publication of it; and of that class, not a few who have seemed unconscious of the presumptuous stand which they occupy, while they are virtually attempting to dictate to the all wise God what portion of His truth will do to publish, and what should be kept back. **It is sufficient for us to know that God has revealed this doctrine in the Bible; it is our privilege to publish it, and leave the result with Him.**

This subject evidently involves the consideration of the extent of God's government. If we say that God cannot, without attaching impurity to His nature or motives, govern or overrule the wicked actions of men and devils, we say in substance, that He cannot maintain His holiness unless He resigns His universal government.

The examples given by our brother, from the sacred volume, of the overruling providence of God in regard to some, and the express declaration of His foreknowledge and predestination of the wicked action of others, are in point; nor can they be easily surmounted by those who protest against the universal government of God. The Bible is full of testimony on this subject. God has declared the end from the beginning; and He says His counsel shall stand, and He will do all His pleasure. Prophets and apostles have corroborated this testimony. Balaam was forced to acknowledge that he could not go (though a wicked prophet), beyond the word (or decree) of the Lord; and Satan himself, if he could speak truth, would tells us that he could not drown a swine without the permission of God.

But leaving all other witness, we would be perfectly safe in resting the whole subject on three of the scripture references offered in brother Trott's numbers, viz: Acts 2:23, 4:27, and the history of Joseph. In the first two passages, in relation to the crucifixion of our Lord by wicked hands, we have an example on the extent of God's government, in perfect harmony with the responsibility of man for his conduct; and in this transaction we have placed before us the grand centre of all human events; this is the most important of all; all others, past, present, and to come, stand connected with this. The model then which displays the government of God over the wicked hands which acted in the murder of the Holy Child Jesus, is suited to every event that ever has or ever can come to pass.

In the case of Joseph, we are taught that notwithstanding the foreknowledge and determinate counsel of God, which bounds the rage and wickedness of all beings that exist, men and devils act voluntarily in sin, without the least regard to the purpose or decree of God; of whose purpose or decree they are totally unconscious. Of this truth, what a striking example is given in the case of Joseph's brethren. Read the words of Joseph to them, Gen. 50:20. "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive". Thus we see that while men and devils

act from wicked motives, with wicked hands, God means it for good; overrules even their wicked acts and murderous designs for his glory, and the good of all such as are the called according to His purpose. Amidst all our trials and conflicts, opposition and persecution, be this our consolation:

"That death and hell can do no more
Than what our Father please."

Elder Gilbert Beebe
March 19, 1834

A FEW THOUGHTS

They are so many, so sweet
Yet none, save Him, may secure
My devotion which within retreats
That One of which I am sure.

And, Oh, there are many others
That would quench my earthly thirst;
To lead me on a way corrupt,
To be even, if possible, accursed.

But am I not nearly so already?
One poor soul, doomed to sin?
So God sent His only begotten Son
Our hasty hearts to win.

Yet, to help us our Saviour came
And led us from the world's path.
Now in the Truth we're no longer lame.
Or ever, we pray, will feel His wrath.

Thomas P. Houser IV
December, 1978
Blacksburg, Virginia

OBITUARIES

CHARLIE FRANK BIDDLE

Our dear husband and father was born in Plain Dealing, Louisiana on April 27, 1886 and departed this life June 15, 1979, making his stay on earth 93 years and 49 days.

He was in Lafayette County Hospital four weeks but died in Homestead Nursing Home in Stamps, Arkansas. He was in the nursing home only two and a half days before his death.

Brother Biddle was baptized the first Sunday in May, 1951, by Elder W. A. Speer at New Hope Primitive Baptist Church in Patmos, Arkansas. His funeral was conducted at New Hope Church by Elder David E. Turner of Marion, Louisiana.

His first wife was Lilie Curles and to this marriage was born five children. She passed away and then he married Mary Eva Hilms Stultz who had five children, four boys and one girl. He had grandchildren and great grandchildren who all loved him dearly and called him Papa Biddle.

My husband and I were baptized the same day and he will be missed by his relatives, friends, and neighbors.

This was written by his sad and lonely wife. I hope some sweet day to be with him in our Lord and Saviour's house.

Mary Eva Stultz Biddle

ELWOOD E. DUNLAP

Brother Elwood E. Dunlap, age 56, of Route 1, St. Albans, died in St. Francis Hospital after a long illness.

He was a retired mechanic for Chemical Leaman Tank Lines and a member of Fair View Primitive Baptist Church.

Surviving is his wife, Wanda; sons, Lyle E. of Little Rock, Ark., Jerry W. of Hurricane, W. Va.; Mother, Mrs. Effie Dunlap of St. Albans; sisters, Mrs. James Gaylor of South Charleston, Mrs. Aaron Martin of Milton; brothers, Edward of St. Albans; two grandchildren.

Services were held August 25, 1979 at Fair View Primitive Baptist Church with Elder Wallace Justice officiating. Burial was in Cunningham Memorial Park. Services were handled by Casdorph-Curry Funeral Home of St. Albans.

Brother Elwood always filled his seat in the church as long as his health permitted him to. We will miss Brother Elwood, but our loss is his gain.

Sent in by a brother and sister in hope of eternal life.

Okey & Gracie McClure

SALLIE ALTIZER GRIM

Our Heavenly Father called our dear Mother, Sallie Altizer Grim, from her earthly home on March 3, 1979. She was 93 year, 6 months and 9 days of age.

She was born to William H. and Angeline Graham Altizer on September 22, 1885 at

their home near Riner, Virginia.

She was married to Zoll Lewis Grim on June 3, 1908. To this union were born four daughters: Pauline Grim Mast, Reba Grim Rasnic, Nell G. Grim, Madeline Grim Basham and two sons; Zoll Grim, Jr. and Kermit Grim. All survive her except her eldest daughter, Pauline Grim Mast. Also surviving are her sister, Mrs. W. F. Gordon, fourteen grandchildren and eighteen great grandchildren. Her husband died on October 23, 1962.

Funeral Services were held at the Richardson-Horne Funeral Home in Christiansburg, conducted by her pastor Elder Raymond Goad. Her body was laid to rest in Sunset Cemetery.

She was received into the felowship of the Valley View Primitive Baptist Church near Riner on the third Saturday of July in 1930 and was baptized on the following Sunday. Also baptized at this time were her two sisters Mrs. L. L. Lawrence (Lucy) and Mrs. W. F. Gordon (Myrtha) and her brother-in-law W. F. Gordon.

Her Family sadly misses her and remembers her unselfishness, patience, kindness and loving care among many other wonderful characteristics.

Written at the request of the Valley View Church by her Daughter.

Reba Grim Rasnic

SISTER BEATRICE HAMMOND FOOKS

Sister Beatrice Hammond Fooks was born October 25, 1903, and died February 4, 1979. Her funeral was conducted in Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church, where she was a faithful member, on February 8 by her pastor, Elder James F. Poole. She was buried in the church cemetery beside her beloved husband, Brother Albert D. Fooks, and her first born son, Albert D. Fooks, Jr. She is survived by twins, William H. Fooks, and Sister Rosalee Adkinson, and four daughters, Martha Quillen, Mary Age, Alberta Lynch, and Barbara Parks. There are 18 grandchildren and 8 great grandsons.

The word "gracious" brings Sister Beatrice to mind. She lived a gracious life and loved a gracious God. She praised Him always and could solve any problem through faith in her Saviour. She was a beloved member and a devoted mother; the church and her family being her life. Sister Beatrice was released from this flesh by God's grace and I believe she welcomed death to be in His presence.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints".

"And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."

In Bonds of love,
Sister Audrey Davis

SISTER MINNIE BET SIMMONS

The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Sister Simmons was born to James Abram and Bettie Simpson Wright, Dec. 30, 1893, and departed this life July 24, 1979 making her stay on earth 85 years, 5 months and 6 days. She was married to Jessie Gold Simmons in 1912 and to this union were born; seven daughters and three sons; Miss Mabel Simmons, Mrs. Mary Mabe, Mrs. Nellie Webster, Mrs. Janie Wray, Miss Virginia Simmons (deceased), Miss Helen Simmons, and Miss Lois Simmons. Sons; Lawrence Simmons, William E. Simmons, and James Simmons.

On the second Sunday in August 1960 she united with the church at Bush Arbor and was baptized the following second Sunday, by Elder W. C. King, and remained a faithful servant until her death. Though she had much sufferings and afflictions to bear, she bore them patiently; waiting for the adoption to wit, the redemption of our body; Rom. 8:23. She spent much of the time of her invalid years reading the Bible, on one occasion she stated she was glad to be blessed to suffer for Christ's sake.

Her funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor church by her pastor, Elder Wallis Smith, assisted by Elder Donald E. Smith, her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, there to be with Him and be forever satisfied.

Written by T. I. Rice as ordered in conference at Bush Arbor church Aug. 11, 1979.

Be it resolved that one copy be sent to the ***Signs of the Times*** for publication, one placed on the church records, and one be sent to the family.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 65 Keeling, Va. 24566

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 2/80 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

JESUS HAS TIME FOR ME

It seems no one has time for me,
I'm very much alone.
But in my Saviour I can see,
The grace which keeps His own.
His precious hand will lift me up,
For in Him I believe:
His beauty then will fill my cup,
As blessings I receive.

I surely know my Saviour cares,
When trouble comes my way:
And every one I know He shares,
He's with me night and day.
So very precious is His love,
His mercy and His grace:
Which flows from Heaven's throne above,
My soul now to embrace.

Upon His mercy I depend,
He's greater far than all;
His grace will keep me to the end,
He hears my humble call.
He safely keeps me, this I know,
When life for me is drear.
His love and grace He will bestow,
And I have naught to fear.

By Ethel Gilland

Dear Brother Spangler,

I often feel alone and unwanted in this sinful world, and but for faith in my precious Redeemer I would be most miserable and unhappy. But bless His Holy Name He keeps me looking up toward a beautiful place called Heaven where sin and sickness cannot enter. My afflictions are many but by the grace of my Saviour I am able to bear them, I hope to His praise and glory.

There is much I do not understand concerning my treatment in this world, but I do understand that my Redeemer

was not treated with kindness when He walked here. The desire of my heart is to please and glorify Him as long as I journey here, and then meet Him in that eternal home above where there is perfection and love forever.

May He bless you and yours is my humble prayer.

In sweet hope,
Ethel Gilland

Hazen, Arkansas

GOD RULES OVER ALL

"Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against His Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." (Acts. 4:24-28)

Yes, God really is God. The Creator of the heaven and the earth is also the Governor and Disposer of the same. He is the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity. He is the One in whom we all live and move and have our being. He is the One that upholds all things by the word of His power. By Him all things consist, and He is the Head and King over all. He is the eternal, Sovereign, Almighty God. All creatures and all events are under His Sovereign control, and He disposes of them according to His eternal purpose and to the praise of His eternal glory.

The above-quoted scripture passage shows a striking display of the sovereign majesty of the One and True God. Here we see Him gathering together and manipulating some of the most powerful and rebellious of His creatures to bring about His will. It was not because they wanted to further God's cause in the world that they acted. Rather, they imagined a vain thing. They imagined that they would throw off the oppressive yoke of God's authority from them by putting this troubler, Jesus, to death. But even as they raged against God and His Christ they were being "gathered together" (by the Providence and Power of God) "For to do" not what would upset and overthrow God, but "whatsoever (God's) hand and (God's) counsel determined before to be done." Notice, it was not whatsoever God foresaw would be done, but "whatsoever" God "determined before to be done". Jesus Christ is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world for the redemption of His people, who were chosen in Him before the world began. When the fulness of time was come, He accomplished their redemption "by Himself", and "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Praise and honor be to His high and holy Name. This is the One and true God, who overrules all creatures and all events to bring to pass His Sovereign Purpose. May we be blessed to see Him as He is and fall before His feet in worship and love.

Shannon Vaughn

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

In the December, 1979 issue of the Signs of the Times we promised to issue a statement regarding rumors of error and departure in the pages of the Signs.

The following statements express the feelings and position of the entire Board of Trustees and Associate Editors.

1. The Board and Associates reaffirm their support and defense of the Prospectus of the Signs of the Times and deny any departure from it by the Editors, either in doctrine or in practice. Neither has there been any departure by the board. The Board and all Editors stand on the same ground occupied since the

Signs had its beginning in 1832 with Elder Gilbert Beebe.

2. The Board of Trustees publicly affirm their belief that the work of the Board of Trustees meeting at Riverview Church, Bassett, Virginia, on August 3, 1979, was performed in order and was carried out in a brotherly manner in all points. The present Board affirms their belief that the two resignations from the previous Board were voluntary and properly accepted.

With the two above statements, we republish the original Prospectus and endorse the same with our signatures. This will close the matter for our part.

PROSPECTUS
of the
SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Proposals for publishing a semi-monthly paper, to be called the "Signs of the Times", devoted exclusively to the Baptist cause, maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfections of the Great Jehovah - the Revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These Three are One". (I John 5:8)
2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.
3. Eternal, Unconditional Election.
4. The Total Depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.
5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the Elect only.
6. The Sovereign, Irresistible, and in all cases, Effectual work or the Holy Spirit, in Regenerating and Quickening the Elect of God.
7. The Final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God, by Grace.
8. The Resurrection of the dead, and Eternal Judgment.
9. That the Church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers - that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God.
10. That there is no connection between Church and State, and as touching the proposition for a marriage between them, the Hon. R. M. Johnson, in his Report on the Sabbath Question, has expressed our faith.

The "Signs of the Times" will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract, and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath Schools, etc., etc., making war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of Institutions.

D. V. Spangler
Elder D. V. Spangler, Pres.

Julian R. Williams
Elder Julian Williams, V.P.

Burnell B. Williams
Deacon Burnell Williams, Sec.

Kenneth R. Key
Elder Kenneth Key

James F. Poole
Elder James F. Poole

John D. Wood
Elder John D. Wood

Haywood Wray
Elder Haywood Wray

W. D. Griffin
Elder W.D.Griffin, Assoc.Editor

E. J. Lambert
Elder E.J.Lambert, Assoc.Editor

WE ARE BOUND
(Concluded)

We are bound by all the things that we have learned, we are bound by all the things that we believe, we are bound by all the things that we have experienced, we are bound by the words of the scripture, we are bound by the old and the new, we are bound by the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, we are bound by those who have left a precious hope, we are bound by those who have gone on before. "We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation." If you have salvation it's because God has chosen you and because God is sovereign. No one has ever said what doest thou, no one has ever circumvented His purposes. No one has ever frustrated His will. He doeth His will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and this writer said, "We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification" setting you apart, designating you, putting His laws in your heart and writing them in your mind "through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." The truth. Jesus Christ is Truth. That's how you know Truth. Because He's revealed in you the hope of glory. The ministers have served their purpose well, the prophets have served their purpose well, the apostles have served their purpose well, but they have never added one to to the Lamb's Book of Life. Because this is sealed with seven seals in the hands of Him who sits upon the throne. No one has ever disturbed it. No one has added it No one has taken from it. All things are as they ever have been and as they ever shall be for God hath chosen you: "because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation." You ask where He has chosen you to--to salvation through sanctification, setting you apart, designating you.

And by the same token forty-some years ago, almost fifty years ago, something happened to me, I don't tell of any apparitions I saw, I didn't see a white horse without a head, I didn't see an angel come down from heaven, but something was wrought in my heart that made me to believe, and I believed in that day just as I do today that if the Lord loved me in the twentieth century when I was a lost young man, why He loved me from the beginning. And if He chose me in the twentieth century, in the year of 1932, why I was in His choice before the world was. "God hath from the beginning chosen you."

Now suppose we should have a selfish motive and try to change these words, try to change this dialogue, how would we go about it? It is so plain, it is so clear: "we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation." Is there any other way to put it, is there any other way to read it, can it be read out, can it be changed or can we say we can change it or could we say that it will fail, His choice will fail because of something we have done or haven't done? If you do you dispute the power of God. God hath chosen you to salvation through sanctification, setting apart, designating, picking you out and taking hold of you and putting His laws in your heart and writing them in your mind and saying "and I will be to them a God and they shall be to me a people." And we find in this eternal security. If one that God loved from the beginning, if one that God chose from the beginning, if He chose somebody from the beginning, if He chose ten thousands times ten thousands and thousands of thousands, can anyone frustrate His purpose, can anyone cause one of these not to reach heaven, can anyone take a blessing from them? It's just as easy to

disfranchise them whose inheritance is laid up in heaven as it would be to take a blessing that's stored up in the Lord Jesus Christ because that's where they are. I believe every blessing that the Lord has directed toward me from the beginning I will have it, I will receive it. I believe "we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel." Now here's the gospel call.

You know we have so many instances of it (the gospel call). When Peter went up to Cesarea he found one whose heart the Lord had opened, who listened to him and believed the truth, and those that were not opened did not believe it. Every time the messengers, the servants of God, the ministers sent from God--they went out to preach the gospel to those that believed. You know that when Paul in route to Macedonia stopped over at a village on the Sabbeth day and was waiting for it to pass, he walked a short distance down by the riverside, there a group of women had resorted down by the waterside and Paul felt impressed to preach and there was one whose heart the Lord had opened, she attended to his sayings. The Lord had been there before Paul got there. You will find every time that the gospel has any effect it's to those whose hearts the Lord has opened and the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, and has nothing for an unbeliever. They will not believe it, they will not hear it, they will not have it, and they'll say away, depart from me, they will say some more convenient time, I know, but, but, but. But those whose hearts the Lord has opened, where the Lord gets there first and makes the preparation, thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power. I have not doubted for forty years that God's people are always willing when He makes them willing and they will never be willing until He does. There's a time for all things, a time to be born and a time to die and God is so perfect that we are bound always.

"...we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth:"

"Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle."

"Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace,"

"Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work."

"Now unto Him who is able to keep us from falling and to present us faultless before His throne with exceeding joy, be the honor, glory, dominion and power. Amen."

Transcribed from tape of a sermon by Elder O. K. Tench delivered on the radio, 4th Sunday in Nov., 1978.

THE ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS No. 2

Brother Beebe:--I proposed at the conclusion of the preceeding No. to show from the Scriptures of truth, that the predestination of God extends to the wicked actions of men, that is, that God has decreed or predestinated every wicked act, which he permits man to perform, so that man does not act out any part of the enmity or corruption of his heart, farther than God has predestinated to permit him, and so that every act, however vile, has its allotted place in the government of God, and

accomplishes the very purpose for which it was designed in the eternal council.--The first proof I shall bring in support of this position is the declaration of the Apostle, relative to the crucifixation of Christ as recorded in Acts 2:23, "Him being delivered by the determinate council and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." I know there are those who say that the event accomplished by the death of Christ, was so glorious, and of so great magnitude, as to justify the making use of wicked men or predestinating their acts relative to it. But this is measuring the mind of God, by our little contracted views. We are apt to be so dazzled by splendid events, as to overlook the means by which the event may have been accomplished; whereas if the event had been less splendid, we should have condemned those means. But let us beware of attaching such imperfections to God.--As great as was the benefit accomplished by the death of Christ, it did not lead God to overlook the perpetrators of the act.--Judas received his marked punishment, and went to his own place, and the Jews are to this day receiving the punishment of their crime, as denounced upon them by Moses, Deut. 28. As great as was this event, there were many circumstances connected with it, which were done with wicked hands and yet were foretold of God, and of course had been determined. He was delivered up, that is to be slain, by the determinate council and foreknowledge of God. Jesus says of his life, "No man taketh it from me but I lay it down of myself", John 10:18. Yet in this laying down of his life, was involved the wicked act of Judas in betraying him to the Jews, of the Jews in delivering him to Pilate, of Pilate sending him to Herod, and his being sent back, and of Pilate's delivering him up to be crucified though he found no fault in him. Judas' act was evidently predestinated; for Christ said to his Disciples, "One of you shall betray me", and when asked of John who it was, he designated Judas, by a sign; "And after the sop Satan entered into him". (John 13:21-27) And even farther back than this, it was designated, compare Acts 1:15-20 with Psalms 41:9, and 109:8. Thus also Herod and Pilate's combining to deliver up Christ as also the Jews and Gentiles being united in that act, was predestinated of God. See Acts 4:25-28, compared with Psalms 2:1,2. The circumstance of the Jews' wagging their heads at him and mocking him, etc., their parting his garments among them were prophesied of. See Psalms 22:7, 8-18; and that these circumstances were not foretold upon the mere ground of God's foreknowing that they would do these things. See the circumstances of their giving Christ gall mingled with vinegar as prophesied of in Psalms 69:21, and the fulfilment as recorded in John 19:29-30; from which it is manifest, that the prediction governed the event, hence that the prediction might be fulfilled, Jesus says, I thirst. ***Indeed it is altogether idle to attempt to seperate the foreknowledge of God from his predestination;*** for how could God foreknow that certain persons would give to Christ vinegar and gall, unless he had predestinated to bring those very persons into existence, to preserve them alive to that time, to give them health and strength sufficient to attend on the crucifixion, to leave them to the enmity of their hearts, and to give them the occasion to act out this enmity by Christ's saying, I thirst, and then to suffer them to offer that insult? So of every event fore-known to God. If God then fore-knows all things, all the circumstances necessary to bring those all things to pass, must have been predestinated of God, it is said by the apostle relative to what Herod and Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel did to Christ, that they did "Whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Acts 4:27,

28.

Another proof in support of the doctrine that the wicked actions of men are predestinated of God is found in Isa. 10:5,6, "O Assyrian; the rod of mine anger, and staff in their hand is mine indignation, I will send him against an hypocritical nation and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets". Here God in the clearest manner declares what use he will make of the Assyrian. Can any say that he did not predestinate the Assyrians "taking the prey, etc."? Yet these were acts of violence and cruelty in the Assyrian as is manifest from the connection. Verse 7, "Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so, but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few." And verse 12, "Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon Mount Zion and on Jerusalem I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the King of Assyria and the glory of his high looks." In perfect accordance with what God says of the Assyrians relative to their ambitious, murderous course, that they are the rod of his anger, the Psalmist in praying to be delivered from the wicked that opposed him, and from his deadly enemies, says, "Deliver my soul from the wicked which is thy sword, from men which are thy hand, O Lord, etc." Psalms 17:9-13,14. Can the wicked thus be God's sword and God's hand, and he not determine and govern their acts? And if their acts were foreknown to God, did he not predetermine or predestinate those acts? Hence it is said in Proverbs 16:4, "The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Some may suppose that by the day of evil, for which the wicked are made, we are to understand their own destruction. But such is not the faith of the Old School Baptists. They do not believe that God in bringing the wicked into existence had no higher object in view than their destruction. By the day of evil we understand, the day in which God brings evil upon his people or upon others. It has pleased God to bring his church and people through great tribulations; from whence are their tribulations to arise but from the persecutions of the wicked? God will give those blood to drink, who have shed the blood of Saints and Prophets by whom will he do it? Not by the righteous. He had made the wicked for this day of evil; and so has he prepared instruments for every evil day. "Thus says the Psalmist, Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain". Psalms 76:10. What is this but a predestination, that limits and bounds even the wrath of man, letting it go just so far as to accomplish the purpose of God, and no further?

If the above is not sufficient, to establish the fact that God predestinates the evil acts of men, we have additional proof from the history of Joseph and his brethren.

Joseph says to his brethren, "Be not grieved nor angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither, for God did send me before you to preserve life", again, "God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God", Gen. 45:5-7,8. And in Gen.50:20, "But as for you, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive". Thus we see that whilst Joseph's brethren thought evil against him, and wickedly devised means to put him out of the way, in order to disappoint his dreams, God had determined that this very wickedness of theirs should be the means of bringing about the fulfilment of those dreams, and to terminate in his and their good. So also he employed the wickedness of Potiphar's Wife, to bring about the

ultimate exaltation of Joseph, and consequently to fulfil the purpose for which God sent him into Egypt. So full was Joseph in the belief, of the predestination of God in this thing, from the manifestation he had received, that he said plainly, to his brethren, It was not you that sent me hither, but God. And as full proof that this affair was determined on before-hand, or predestinated of God, we have not only the thing revealed to Joseph in dreams; but the dwelling of Israel in Egypt, and the length of time they should be there was foretold to Abraham, See Gen. 15:13-16.

These several proofs which I have brought forward, are not to be considered as so many peculiar instances in which God's government is exerted over the wicked actions of men' but rather as special illustrations of the universal government of God. They show how surely he will cause the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain. The soldiers must not break the legs of Jesus though so commanded, but they pierce his side, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, that is that the foretold purpose of God should stand. See John 19:31-37. So Joseph's brethren could neither kill him nor leave him to perish in the pit, nor could Reuben deliver him; but the company of Ishmaelites must needs come along at that juncture of time, and they sell him to be carried down into Egypt. These several instances which are thus particularly recorded, of God's making the wickedness of men and devils subserve his purpose are sure pledges that in spite of the combined malice and rage of both, he will roll on his gracious purposes, accomplish all his promises, and fulfill every prophecy. He that could make the enmity of Joseph's brethren and desire of gain in the Ishmaelites, the wickedness of Potipher's Wife and the ingratitude of Pharoah's Steward, all combine to accomplish the exaltation of Joseph and the purpose God had in view, will while he causes judgment to begin at the house of God, surely accomplish at the appointed time; the complete destruction of the Man of sin, in all his branches.

And, dear child of grace, however much men may revile you and hate you, or Satan may desire to have you,--you have a sure pledge both from the declaration of God, and from what you have seen of his overruling providence, that all things work for your good, as they did for the good of Joseph, when taken from his father, and for the good of David when hunted as a Partridge upon the mountains. For as it is said in Prov. 16:9, "Man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps."

In another Number I purpose noticing some of the objections brought against this doctrine.

Fairfax Court House, Va. S. Trott
January 7, 1834

FROM AN OLD SIGNS

Altus, Okla., May 26, 1931

Dear Sister Turner:—After some delay I will try and answer your good letter. We all enjoyed it very much, for it brought with it that spiritual relation that binds us together as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that relation is unknown to the world.

In such messages we are drawn so close together by the Spirit of Christ that dwells in his people that we are made to praise him from whom all blessings flow, yet so far apart in person. There are evidences connected with these spiritual relations that we most gloriously feel, but cannot explain, even to ourselves. "Oh the depth of both the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out!" God's wisdom and knowledge are perfect and his ways and judgments are right. How consoling it sometimes is to us to even hope that we believe in and are possessed with a

sufficient amount of faith to say in our poor hearts (forgetting self) that God is right and just in all his ways.

But the question might arise, and does, What are his ways? His ways are those that bring to pass the events of time according to the counsel of his own will, and they are just and right because they were all embraced in his will, in counsel, and that before the world was. We must acknowledge this or deny the perfection of God's wisdom and knowledge; in the coming to pass of the events of time, in time, before he made the world. I must accept the testimony of God's inspired prophets and apostles. Their testimony is that he is God and there is none else. He is God and there is none like him, declaring the end from the begining, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. God's holy and righteous will is executed in the events of time, all of them, through the channel his perfect wisdom designed.

Yes, every channel and avenue by which the events of time, all of them, are made manifest here in this time world was embraced in and according to the counsel of his perfect will. God, being holy and righteous, could not possess an unrighteous or an unholy will. All events of time were embraced in his eternal counsel, in which counsel all the divine attributes of the Diety were present.

Oh yes, a God by whom all worlds and things that have ever been, are now, and things that are yet to come, had their existence in that counsel. Nothing was found in them all but the divine perfection of God, which is eternal. The material or timely things all had their existence in that counsel, according to the purpose of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will. Would it be in violation to the teaching of the Scriptures to say that in that counsel which is, only his decrees and purposes in all things whatsoever come to pass, and are according to the foreknowledge of him who is the first great cause of all things? Then let our eyes behold that perfect God in his lofty habitation before there was any world, for he was before the world, for the world was made by him, and without him was nothing made that is made.

We see him surrounded with every event of time, all creatures and things, from the least atom that floats in the air to the greatest monster that inhabits the earth. These things were not only present with him in purpose, but every movement, act, desire, thought and deed was known unto him, as though it had already been done by each creature and thing in all the world that God's foreknowledge embraced, and that before God had made a world, and if the least event of time that God's foreknowledge embraced failed to come to pass it would destroy his perfection in knowledge, and if there has ever been, is now, or ever will be, an event of time that was not embraced in his foreknowledge it would destroy his perfection in wisdom.

If there is any power in heaven, earth or hell that can hinder one of God's decrees coming to pass, or bring to pass an event by the act of one of God's creatures that God had decreed should not come to pass, it would destroy his power and set up a greater power than God. But not so. All the "shalls" and all the "nots" are the unchangeable decrees of God, who possesses all power in heaven, in earth and in all deep places. He is head over all worlds, and over everything that in them is; his eternal counsel, wisdom and knowledge embrace them all.

Oh how I wish I could find words to express the greatness and perfection of God as I understand the Scriptures teach it. God is eternal, and all that is perfect, holy, righteous and right is connected with his being. He made the heavens and the earth, and all that in them is, made them after the counsel of his holy and righteous will. How can

they fail to accomplish the end for which he made them? They will not fail. "Let every soul be subject to the higher power, for there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God."

"Keep silent, all created things,
And wait your Maker's nod;
My soul stands trembling while she sings
The honors of her God."

The heavens declare the glory of God, the firmament showeth forth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, night unto night showeth wisdom. There is no language or speech that their voice has not been heard. All his works shall praise him, and his saints shall bless him. Yes, all created things, from the least to the greatest, are praising God. In that they are carrying out perfectly that which God's perfection designed for them. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, honor and power, for thou didst create all things, for thy pleasure they are and were created." Will they fail to accomplish his pleasure? No, a thousand times no. But if any part of God's creation, even the smallest particle of dust, was to fail to glorify God's perfection, then we could not say that God is perfect in all his ways.

"I will publish the name of the Lord (in perfection), ascribe ye greatness to our God. He is the rock, his work is perfect. All his ways are judgements. A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."

"Not Gabriel asks the reason why,
Nor God the reason gives;
Nor dares the favorite angel pry
Between the folded leaves."

The secret things of God are folded up in his divine perfection, and can be known only as it pleases him to reveal them. Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, Father of heaven and earth, that thou didst see fit to hide these things from the wise and prudent and reveal them unto babes. Even so, Father, for it seemeth good to thee. This saying of Jesus only furnishes us one more link to put in the chain of events that was embraced in God's counsel, and was decreed by him to be, as seemed good to him. God's eternal decree is all that ever did or ever will make any event of time sure to come to pass, hence he could not have foreknown any event of time had he not decreed it to be so. His foreknowledge is an attribute of his perfection, and his decree or purpose in the event foreseen makes it sure to come to pass. Then it is possible for any event that God saw and knew would come to pass in this world, to not carry with it the seal of God's decree? or, in other words, could he foreknow and event if the event was not firmly fixed in his certain decree? Then can an event fail to come to pass that God decreed should come to pass, or can any event not yet come be sure to come without God determining it shall be? To not accept this would destroy God as a sovereign. It would ever destroy the testimony of those inspired men who testified of his perfection.

This doctrine neither makes God the author of sin, nor having any fellowship therewith, for God is eternal, immortal, without the beginning of days or the end of time. He is above law, but is the lawgiver, through which sin entered the world. Some people would like to believe the doctrine of God's absolute perfection in knowledge, wisdom and power, and that he has been eternally able to execute according to the good pleasure of his own will, but they say that kind of doctrine would get God into trouble, and get him mixed up in sin entering the world. ***Perish the thought.*** God in his entirety is divine and eternal and cannot be touched or influenced by the corruptness of sin. All corruption and sin came into the world by and through an act of the creature God made. God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man, but when you are tempted you are drawn away of your own lust and enticed. Lust when it is conceived bringeth forth sin. The law was holy and just, because it came from

the eternal God, but the violation of that law came by man.

Hence God was just as much separate and apart in his divine perfection from the fruits of that act of man as was the man separate and apart from the divine perfection of God. When he gave the law, by man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death is passed upon all, for all have sinned, and the law entered that the offense might abound, which means sin.

But says one, "Did God know the fruits of the act of man would be sin? ***He surely did.*** Did he decree the act? ***He surely did,*** or how could he have known sin would enter the world? He either knew it or he did not know it, which one shall we believe? If we say he did know it, then we must say he had a purpose in it, and God being eternal, just, holy and righteous, surely the end of all his purposes must be the fruits of his most holy and righteous will. To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven, a time to be born and a time to die. Read the full quotation, beginning with the first verse of the third chapter of Ecclesiastes. Does this embrace everything or just part of the things that are under heaven? Then we find God's inspired witnesses wrong in these statements? No, they are not wrong, but are true witnesses of God. Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Then we must accept what they say as being the truth. It is not given to any one man to understand all of their sayings, but we must accept it as the word of God.

"The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it; surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of the Lord shall stand forever." Surely the word of God is the truth. In a man's heart there are many devices. nevertheless the counsel of God it shall stand. Yes, God is ever in one mind. Who can turn him? Whatsoever his soul desireth even that he doeth. We know that whatsoever God doeth it shall be forever. There shall be nothing taken from it nor anything added to it, and God doeth it that men should fear before him. What is this that God has done that shall stand forever? It was to drive the Nail in a sure place, upon which safety hang God's eternal purposes and unchangeable decrees in counsel before the world was. Yes, and surely there was not one act of all the creatures in all the world, in all ages, that passed by his divine perfection unnoticed. Do you think there was? How could it, and God be perfect in wisdom and knowledge? Yes, and they shall be forever; nothing taken from them and nothing added.

Blessed truth, it is all arranged by him and for him in the accomplishment of one grand, glorious and holy end. Surely there cannot one event of time fail to come to pass, and that at the very time appointed, for there is a season and a time to every thing and purpose under heaven. All devils, and hell itself, cannot hinder one event from coming to pass. Yes, he works all things after the counsel of his own will, and they shall stand forever. Not one act of any creature of God's creation will fail to accomplish the desired end, which will be to his name's honor and glory, and his honor and glory will remain throughout all eternity. The evil acts of men and devils will be placed to the honor and glory of God. We see these things in his will of decrees that was nailed in a sure place.

Yes, he created all things for himself, yea, the wicked for the day of evil. All the deeds of the wicked will in the end brightly shine* to the glory and honor of God, although they meant them not so. They will not go unpunished for the wicked deeds done, for the wrath of God, which is an attribute of the Diety,

stands out against all unrighteous and ungodly deeds of men, and punishment will be inflicted upon the creature according to the righteous and just judgment of God, yet the effect of the deed done will in the end glorify and honor God. "The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder he will restrain." These are hard sayings. Who can hear them? The prophet said, "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" The Lord must reveal his almighty arm to us before we can behold perfect justice in all his ways and judgments, and his arm cannot be revealed to us in nature, because in nature we are dead to the knowledge of spiritual things, for the carnal mind is enmity against God, not subject to his laws, neither indeed can be. The natural man understandeth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Then there must be something done for us before God reveals his bare arm to us. When his arm is revealed, then we believe the report of the prophets and apostles, but there must be life imparted first, and God alone is the source of spiritual life, and it must be a life from him before we discern things of him. Neither did we understand things of nature before we were born of our natural parents, which life comes from a corruptible seed and only has to do with the corruptible things of earth.

Let me point you to one event done by man, only in possession of natural life, and let us note God's hand in the matter: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him, in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Was God glorified in that act done by those wicked hands? ***Most assuredly he was.*** That was just one link in the chain of events that God in counsel had decreed should come to pass in the accomplishment of one great and glorious end, and every event of time is a link in that chain. Listen, "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are in earth; even in him." That will be the end of all timely things, then God's glory will shine throughout eternity. "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

Written by your pastor,
(Elder) W. N. Green

*(Note to P. 35, Col. 2, last par. We agree with the brothers sentiment, but question the words "brightly shine" as regards the deeds of the wicked. Editor)

AVAILABLE AGAIN
ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION

Elder Gilbert Beebe

In the January, 1979, issue of the ***Signs of the Times*** we reprinted the last editorial on Predestination by Elder Gilbert Beebe, published originally on October 1, 1880. In the minds of many, nothing since the Apostles has been written on this subject that compares with this article.

Due to a complete sell-out of our last printing, we have printed this article once again in pamphlet form and it is obtainable from us at the price of four (4) for one dollar. We pay postage. We make no profit on this and unless we again sell our entire stock out, we won't even break even.

Brother Shannon Vaughn of Hazen, Arkansas, donated his time in printing this valuable article and only charged for

materials.

This pamphlet will make an excellent gift to anyone desiring to know what Old School Primitive Baptists believe on this subject.

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FROM AN OLD SIGNS

The Baptist Church at Welsh Tract, to the Elders and Messengers composing the meeting of all Old School Baptist to meet on Monday after the third Lord's day in May, with the church at Black Rock, Maryland sendeth greetings:

Dear Brethren:--As you are about to assemble together to consult on the great interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom, it is our desire to meet you with our friendly epistle.

Through the tender mercy of our Heavenly Father, and the Divine influence of the Holy Spirit, we are yet enabled to stand together, contending for the ancient landmarks of Zion. We consider it Brethren, a day of gloom and darkness with the church, we have also reason to fear that the darkest time is yet to come, we hear the watchmen in Zion saying, the morning cometh, the morning cometh. We would respond and say, Oh, that it were come, that the darkness may flee away,--but we rejoice that the foundation of God standeth sure, the Lord knoweth them that are his, though his people are called to pass through the deep waters of affliction, they have the promise that it shall not overflow them, or through the fire it shall not kindle upon them, he will be with them in six troubles, and in the seventh he will not forsake them. We are sorry that so many of the good old servants of our Divine Master are leaving the long trodden path of gospel truth, and are allured by the meteors that are floating around them. We have the pleasure of saying that peace and harmony prevails among us, and we are desirous of holding fast the form of sound words, and maintaining the faith once delivered to the Saints. Oh, that the Lord would lift up his banner, and draw souls to it, and we earnestly pray that he would make bare his arm of saving grace, that his people may grow as the corn, flourish, as the vine, and appear as tall cedars of Lebanon, and that rebels be made to submit to his authority, until the stone cut out of the mountain without hands shall subdue the power of the Beast and deface his image, and wax and fill the whole earth, and the praises of our great high Priest and King resound wherever there are voices to extol his name. We now commend you to God, praying that you may be preserved in this day of trial, and may you take sweet counsel together in things appertaining to the Kingdom of our dear Redeemer.

Done by order of the church, May 3, 1834.

William K. Roberson, Pastor
Joseph Griffith, Clerk

Near Lexington, Ky.
January 31, 1834

Dear Brother Beebe:

Since I last wrote you I have felt more encouraged than for years past. I trust we have experienced a refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Three of the churches I supply have had additions within the present month. I baptized two on first Lord's day, three on the third, and two on the fourth Lord's day--all upon profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus. We require something more than a bare assent to the truth that Jesus is the Son of God. Each of them related all that we could ask, in order to full fellowship.

Thus you discover that preaching the Doctrine of Sovereign, reigning grace, so far from hindering the gathering

together of the Elect, into the Churches (as is contended by some) it encourages the

"Helpless and poor, to Jesus to come
Nor hope to bring a perfect thought".

For with him there is for such mercy and plentious redemption. It has often been said of us that the rigid course we pursue in examining candidates for baptism will operate as a hinderance to young converts who may be seeking an asylum with us.

I have yet to be convinced that heavenborn and heaven-taught souls object to a critical search after fellowship without which we have no disposition to increase our number. There is considerable excitement amongst the members of those churches belonging to what is called the "General Union", but which would more appropriately be styled "General dis-Union". In our vicinity the frequent applications to join our churches by letter and examination, I consider a good omen. The practice of our churches is to read our declaration of Faith at the introduction of every church meeting, and no one is received into fellowship who does not profess to receive cordially our declaration of faith and practice. Hence you may account for the unprecendented oneness of sentiment prevailing in our Association.

Perhaps there is no section of our country where the same means have been resorted to arouse prejudice against a body of people, which have characterized a number of the General Union Baptist against the Particular Baptist in this country; and those efforts have been but too successful where there is no Particular Baptist ministry. But where our ministry visit these sections, they are by many received cordially; and frequently greeted with:--"This is the doctrine our souls feed upon, and you are not the people we have been taught to believe you were"!

The crisis is at hand when I conceive another split amongst the Baptist is inevitable, an event I much desire to see, forasmuch as I consider it indispensible to the production of harmony of sentiment from whence flows brotherly love and affection amongst professors. Indeed there is little of what I denominate gospel fellowship existing among a large portion of the Baptist in Kentucky, hence a division, if such division shall throw those who harmonize in sentiment together, should be ardently desired by all those who love the cause of our Redeemer. Our Association stands firm, and uncompromising in the doctrine of the Cross, and in her opposition to the trickery of the times, combining Schools, Societies, Conventions, etc., in which the most erroneous of our day would seem to think they are helping the Lord to build up his Kingdom upon the earth. I wonder whether they have ever thought of Uzza and the Ark? Or of David's declaration, "Except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain". (Ps. 127:1) It is confidently believed there is not to be found in our Association one dozen who are favorable to these establishments; and yet the Lord seems to prosper us; without the use of such means. One of the churches I supply was constituted about eighteen months ago with six members, in the midst of a Baptist Church composed of more pliable materials and surrounded by several other Baptist Churches of the General Union Stamp, besides a variety of other denominations from whom the little Church has had to encounter opposition to a considerable extent, and yet, requiring as she does, a renunciation of all connection with, and fellowship for the popular societies of the day; she has quadrupled her original number, and her prospects are brightening daily, for a further and more extensive increase.

I must desist as my paper is nearly full.

Yours,
(Elder) Thomas P. Dudley

EDITORIAL

MATTHEW 1:20, 21

"And while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins."

Recently, while seemingly, at the point of death, and after some unkind attempts upon my life in the church, and while feeling already the approach of the grim monster that has never asked leave of any victim, there appeared to me in my irregular thinking as I was slowly being engulfed in the steam of death, there was a still small voice that spake as no man has ever spoke, said to me, the time is not yet. Then and there was an invisible, yet a power that was effectual and sovereign and inevitably coming down from God out of heaven turning me in an eddy of water from the stream which I was drifting into, and into this peaceful, restful, gift of life giving and life restoring waters, wherein no galley with helpful oars went by, nor no gallant ship sailed by (Isa. 33:21). That restful "not yet" restored my desire to live and, as I have hoped and believed that I had testified before this to the goodness and mercy of God, that I yet would be blessed "also" (Acts 21:11).

How singularly blessed art thou O Israel, anointed of God, for thou, O Lord is the Comforter of thy blood bought children. His promises are yea and amen to the glory of God. If His promises are fulfilled in Him to His name's honor and glory, then, by all means, and to all dying (even though they think they can give life) men and women, is, depart from me, ye workers of iniquity. The old time worn expression of man that men and women are masters of their own destiny, is with Babylon, fallen, fallen!

Ministering angels are from the Lord. All of them are given to those that need ministering to. Certainly this truth is clearly substantiated in the episode in which our text takes and finds its background. All of the writings of heaven sent men are to those that need comforting. Let us apply the text. Was Joseph in a condition where he could have comforted God or man? Are the afflicted and poor people of God in a fit condition for imparting comfort and instruction to the Lord Jesus Christ, or to any of His elect family? When life is ebbing out of you, and it seems that man and God has forsaken you, are you qualified to comfort and instruct the lamenting children of God? If you are, then by all means, I write to you in a singular manner. I could never bring anything to you worthwhile. I am reminiscing from a recent sick bed, and it was doubtful if I would ever leave it or not. What little of life was left me, certainly I could not have mustered up a revival of that life to where my advice, my instruction, my handling of the things of God, would have meant anything to you.

That able character does not desire, and does not need what a dying man would have to offer. I feel a lingering desire to write to those that have been in darkness for a long, long time and in the shadow of death that I have been looking for and seeking the rays of a new day dawning, even the appearance of the lovely Saviour of sinners. Perhaps the greatest news that the Gentile believers ever heard was when the herald voice of mercy said unto these that were not a people, behold thou art now my people. Individually, as well as collectively, was when the Lord said, "Say unto Zion, Behold thy salvation cometh" (Isa. 62:11). When the time came for the Lord's people to know a thing, the Lord taught it to them by signs and wonders, by ways past finding out by

his people, as well as those not His people (Rom. 11:33, I Cor. 2:8). No man, by seeking or researching can find out God, equally so, can no man, nor set of men, find any excuse for making an exception to this divine rule, for God does not ever come to creatures for an increase in His wisdom. If any of my readers have ever thought that He stood in need of their help, or have thought that general principles would devolve upon creatures to be instant ready to teach him to reach a helping hand or to ladle out wisdom to him, then that person has not been taught how frail that he is before God. If any have a notion that this is treason to the cause of Christ, or that I am guilty of blasphemy, then by all means say so. God willing, I will notice your case. However, dear readers, one and all, the needy, the destitute, those that are afflicted, that are poor, that oftimes are made to see your needy and lost condition, that you need instruction, that you need the guiding hand of the Lord to lead, to beckon, to point out to you the Way, then, this is sent forth to you hoping that it may be a heavenly breeze sent your way to ease your burdened soul.

This has been, as I humbly trust, my lot for more than fifty-five years. O, how good and merciful He has been through these trying and soul searching years. I have been oftimes afraid that I am deceived in it all, and yet, for what I hope in, and what I hope for and that which has been taught me in part, here a little and there a little, a line here, another one there, and it all woven into a glowing fabric into a covering for my naked soul, how precious it has been, and how precious it still is to a poor sinner.

Oh, it is admitted that I have, as I hope, sent two disciples to the Saviour to know if he was what my longing heart and soul desire, or should I look for another. I long to know more, for being weak, the evil one often inveigles my soul and my spirit into a troubled dream. The dream is from the Lord, those that dream or lulled to false dreaming are under the influence of the evil one, but that are given dreams of warning or of good tidings, are under the divine care. How little is known of Israel's God, and what a great favor and blessing it is to be taught in dreams. God's children (all of His children) are taught salvation is of the Lord; they are taught of the Lord, not about Him. Every dream sent by the Lord has had the intended effects upon the dreamer. There is not any loose or broken links in the teachings of the Lord. The text at the head of this little epistle condemns such an interpretation. Filthy dreamers may interpret their dreams, giving them the bent that suits their preconceived doctrines, but the God given dreams carry weight, conviction, teaching, satisfaction, encouragement. (Acts 4:12).

I must urge about the sufficiency of what the Lord teaches in the dreams given to His saints. Let me repeat the text. It is the voice of an angel speaking words of instruction to one of the Lord's precious saints. It was a time of great trouble to that saint. He was in the same condition as all those to whom I write. He could not solve the trouble with which he was being assailed. He was not going about seeking to put to the front his prowess as a follower of the Lord; he was not looking for something to do wherein he might do the works of God. Tossed to and fro, tossed about in mind, seeking guidance, at a loss as what to do. It was a tedious question. It was a question that concerned he and his wife. No man had answered him; no man had suggested a number of plans whereby he could do any one of them and do very well by himself and his wife.

Please allow me to digress. If you are walking on your own highway; if you are travelling where the saints have trod, you have indeed been loved with an everlasting love. God indeed has set His love on you in His eternal mind, even before the world ever had a beginning.

At the manifestation of this distinctive love upon you, God had given to you His Son with all of the glorious benefits that comes to sinners. In giving you His Son, he likewise freely and unequivocally gives you all things. Gives you all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus before morning stars sang together.

What support to the text. What corroboration of one truth by another. What more can God say to you than what He has already said. He set aside all time. Nothing that has occurred in the time state to undo that which God, out of His own will, and for a purpose of His own declarative glory, placed His love on His people. This love of God was solemnized between God and you when Jesus died. No man made love was mixed in this solemn work, nor was any of it mixed in the solemn work when the Man that has His way with a maid takes you and presents you unto himself in the holy bonds of wedded bliss. (Pro. 30:19; Eph. 5:27).

This is the work of the Lord Jesus Christ with His chosen people. As the tiny helpless infant out in a cold field was noticed by its lover as He passed its way, even so, each of God's chosen people are ever before Him in love. I would, yea, I must insist, that the love of God never ceases for one of His little ones. What a deplorable condition was this little one in. In our relationship with earthly matters it would call for a turning away for such a polluted one as was this. As deplorable as the description gives us to see the babe, yet to this glorious Benefactor, it was a time of love, and it was given to live instead of perishing. (See Ezek. 16:4-8)

Joseph was thrown out on his own resources. He did not know what to do about his wife Mary. Wearily and desperate, he went to sleep. What a great blessing to go to sleep. I have heard it so much of late coming out of the mouths of those that have professed to be taught of the Lord, that so and so sure was lucky. In the face of God's great love and mercy, the use of the work luck is the most misplaced word that is ever heard from the lips of a professed believer in God. The Lord gives His beloved sleep; this He does to one and all. In addition to that, He is the maker of their bed in all of their sickness (Psa. 41:3; 127:3). In addition to these glorious promises, he loved (and He loves) His church, His people, His bride. He gave Himself for her that He might redeem her from all iniquity, and present her unto Himself without spot or blemish or wrinkle or any such thing. There were not any exceptions; there were no ifs or conditions or strings attached to His promise. His blood cleanses from all sin, or, to be explicit, from all sins. This gives me place to mention the pieces that is often talked about as peace is talked between brethren. There are no exceptions. Peace does not have a set of qualifying terms for peace, that is, it does not, unless I have missed the true import of the Saviour's salvation. If He made an "if" or set a condition for sinners to be housed in heaven, only then do we have the right to limit fellowship to those that will meet a set of rules for fellowship. Where fellowship is, peace is there; where peace is, there is fellowship.

All the peace that is peace, is that which is wrought in us by His Spirit. He always takes the initiative in bringing this about. He comes to us, He crosses the sea to get where the Gaderene is at in his awful condition. (Mk. 5:1) In all of the approaches of a man towards a maid, it is He that makes the first approach, although this world (and unless we, as a people, are preserved in Christ Jesus, we are apt to catch it) has gone mad in reversing heaven's order, and is wooing and beseeching the maid to take the initiative and have her way with Him.

He gives His people sleep. He gave Joseph a sweet rest in sleep. In no sense of the word could Joseph wake up of himself and say, Now I have found out what to do. No sir, not that. Joseph was

as much at a loss as to what to do when he went to sleep as he had been at any time. If salvation had been in the power of the Jews, there would not have been any need for Christ to have come. If those things attributed to Christ could have been as easily done without Him having come, then by all means God the Father, certainly would not have made a mockery, a travesty, on His darling Son as that would have been.

Manifestly, to Joseph, the Prophet prophesised of did come (Deut. 18:18). That prophesy not only was devoid of conditions as to His work, but the reaction of those to whom He was sent was likewise devoid of conditions. He comes, they hear. I like that, don't you? Isn't that heaven's language to poor sinners? And isn't our example fitting for that kind of doctrine? Isn't Joseph showing forth, even before Christ's arrival, that His Spirit was dwelling in him? Let us remember that Christ loved (loves) the church, and gave himself for it, and that we are commanded to love our wives as He loved His wife, and that Joseph shows that he was a follower of Christ and indeed a doer of the word. His concern was for his wife. What to do about her? Whether to do this or to do the other. There is not a theologian on God's green earth that can prove that Joseph met God in sleep with a plan half way concocted as to how to take care of the situation. Nor was Joseph about to complete a plan, and that God builded on his scheme. That is a doctrine that is part from below, and a part from above, and my soul abhors it. That is part of grace and part of works, and my soul abhors that also.

Maybe I am mistaken, but I think not. Only that which is from above saves sinners; only that name given under heaven and among men is today, or ever has saved men. This is what was taught Joseph when he was asleep, when he was not able to think, to concoct, to perform. Every unanswered question was answered from heaven. The answers were all baffling to nature-bred sinners, and was enlightening to heaven born sinners. With all the sophists in the universe, from time immemorial until the glorious and final coming of the blessed Redeemer berating and lamenting sound doctrine, they will never set aside the doctrine that satisfied Joseph, and not only he, but all the true Israel of God forever and forever. One thing is sure, Joseph would have waved an Arminian flag and would have solved the dilemma that he was in without having to wait. Yet, how great the lesson taught him in God's way and in God's time. David waited and yet longed for that salvation that comes from the Lord. This longing and yearning and waiting after and for the Lord, is for a display of His saving hand. This is the history of God's people without exception. There isn't, nor cannot be such a thing as a saved sinner satisfied with his own righteousness or his accomplishments. In our text, when applied to us by His Spirit, is the history of us all, without exception. It causes anxiety and a longing after and for, and Joseph did not know where to turn nor what to do. In that time, in just such a time as that, it was and is made manifest that He loves His own, and that He giveth His own sleep. Joseph was put to sleep by Him that gives sleep.

God's care continued after sleep was given. Joseph did not have a nightmare in order to scare him into activity, but he had a dream. In all the universe that there is not one that can give a dream. (If I have overlooked something or somebody that can, please feel free to communicate with me, and I will be glad to retract this). Again, angels are messengers to comfort to instruct, and this is not an exception. He was given sleep with the problem unsolved, and he was awakened with it solved. The union is soleminized, the coming together of man and wife is given heavens approval, all of the gossip talk about Mary's being with child is stilled and

she was made honorable before God and His children.

The question of the virgin Mary, to wit "How shall I know this?" shall be to every querist of like import, answered by the angel of mercy to she, and the question of Joseph is answered in the same way, and that from heaven, to wit, this is the work of God wherein He shall save His people from their sins. And, like all solved problems, great joy is always felt in Zion the city of our God, whether it is an anxious Mary or a perplexed Joseph.

Elder W. D. Griffin

CONTRIBUTIONS
To October 31, 1979

Bertha Brown, N.C.	$1.00
Mrs. R. L. Milligan, AR.	3.00
Mrs. C. R. Hollandsworth, Va.	1.00
Elder W. D. Griffin, AL.	6.00
I. J. Prescott, N.C.	9.00
Virgil Gaskill, N.C.	1.00
Judson Whitehurst, N.C.	1.00
Larry Weatherford, Va.	1.00
Mrs. James H. Davis, N.C.	1.00
F. A. Bowman, AL.	1.00
Mrs. Luther Procter, N.C.	1.00
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Mrs. Lura Tidwell, TN.	2.00
Emma Ledlow, AL.	2.00
Vera N. Potter, FL.	5.00
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V. B. Carawan, N.C.	1.00
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G. M. Lackey, N.C.	6.00
J. F. Clark, AL.	3.00
Mrs. A. L. Ratliff, Va.	1.00
E. O. Hall, Va.	1.00

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ISHMAEL AND ISAAC

Dear Brethren Beebe:—Will you be so kind as to give your views on Genesis 17:20, 21? Your compliance with this request will oblige a poor old sinner, whose only hope for salvation is in the grace of God which was given in Christ Jesus from the foundation of the world, for all the elect of God. Your brother in hope of eternal life, although often troubled by doubts,

W. L. McPherson

Hood, Co., Texas, March, 1890

REPLY

"And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee; Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year."—Gen. 17:20, 21.

So strong is our sympathy with a consciously "poor old sinner", it would be a most delightful privilege if we could in the least degree minister to his comfort by presenting such views as are committed to us in reference to any portion of that Scripture which is given by inspiration of God. All such Scripture is the testimony of Jesus, which is the Spirit of prophecy. Recognizing this fact, even the historical records of the Old Testament glow with heavenly luster, which is not seen by the wisdom of this world. To the natural mind only earthly and temporal events are recorded in the book of Genesis; but when they are by the Spirit of truth revealed in their spiritual import with heavenly radiance they all unite in bearing witness of the grace which shines in the face of Jesus Christ. Many of these lively types are defined by inspired authority in the New Testament. The application thus revealed is certainly correct; and no theory of human invention must be accepted by the believer in Jesus, unless it is strictly in harmony with such

inspired explanation. Paul has left for our instruction the true definition of this expressive type. He says, "It is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond-maid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory; for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."—Gal. 4:22-26.

In the light of this revealed explanation it is evident that Isaac represents the whole seed of our Lord Jesus, who is the antitype of Isaac in that he is the true child of promise. Time and space would fail us to trace every point in which this lively figure is descriptive of Christ Jesus as the embodiment of his chosen generation, whose election of God is in their ever living Head. It is of him that Jehovah speaks by the voice of inspiration, saying, "Behold my Servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, not lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench; he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law."—Isa. 43:1-4. The inspired apostle applies this prophecy to our Redeemer, and interprets the last clause plainly, "And in his name shall the Gentiles trust."—Matt. 12:17-21. In no other sense can our Lord be called the Servant of God but in his unity with his people. Aside from this relationship, there is no revelation of his glorious character except as being one with the Father, in which glory he thought it not robbery to be equal with God.—Phil. 2:6. Certainly in that infinite Godhead he could not be under bondage as a servant, yet he did not cease to be the very and eternal God when he was made flesh, and dwelt among us. While no finite intelligence is competent to solve this great mystery of godliness, by faith the subjects of salvation are enabled to know the truth as it is revealed in the scriptures and in their own personal experience. All the study and research of the best and wisest of men has never penetrated this mystery beyond that which Paul has left on record, and it is still "the mystery of godliness." He says, "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." 1 Tim. 3:16. He is the promised Seed of the woman who has bruised the serpent's head. Our Jesus is not anywhere in the Scriptures called the second person in the Godhead, or the third part of the eternal God. "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."—Col. 2:9. No less than the perfection of divine holiness and immortality could qualify him for the work of saving his people from their sins. For this purpose he is "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."-Rom. 1:4. In this omnipotent glory he is the true Isaac, of whom it is written, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."— Isa. 9:6,7. He is the promised Seed of whom the patriarch

Isaac was but a faint type. Every circumstance recorded of the natural Isaac is profitable to the saints in all ages only as it is seen to foreshadow the glory of this Child of promise, in whom all the chosen seed of our God are made holy and without blame before him in love. So, Paul says, "For they are not all Israel which are of Israel; neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."—Rom. 9:6-8. Ishmael was as nearly related to Abraham in the flesh as was Isaac; and in that respect he was Abraham's seed, and had as much claim to inherit from him as did the sons of Jacob who were born of the bond women, Zilpah and Leah, to be recognized as his heirs. It was by the express commandment of God that Abraham hearkened unto the voice of Sarah in casting out Hagar and her son, Ishmael. It is for those who dare to charge God with injustice to decide what they will do in the case; but let those who have the fear of God in their hearts confess he is just and true in all his wonderful works, whether in loving Jacob, or in hating Esau, when "The children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said unto her (Rebecca), The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."

The sovereign purpose of God chose Isaac as the type of the election of grace in Christ Jesus, just as the same sovereignty is displayed in giving Jacob the precedence over his older twin brother Esau. However reason may be lost in contemplating this mystery, the fact connot be controverted by any believer in the truth of the inspired record of the Scriptures. With infidels, who deny this truth, we have no desire to contend. They must be silenced by the word of him whose authority governs all the legions of the bottomless pit, and makes them tremble at his name. The precious truth of the electing love of God is the very foundation of the hope of every saint; and it is to them that this article is written. The denial of this doctrine of God our Savior would remove the only ground upon which any sinner can trust in the salvation which is revealed in Christ Jesus. Every conditional system of salvation is built upon the quicksands of human reasoning, and must sink to the bottomless pit of falsehood, from whence it originates. When this truth is revealed in the experience of the subjects of divine instruction every form of false doctrine is at once exposed and overthrown; for error can no more stand in the presence of the light than Dagon could retain his position before the typical ark of God. No saint can afford to entertain a question of this fundamental truth of the gospel of the grace of God, on which alone his whole hope of salvation rests.

It must be remembered that in himself Isaac had no more claim upon the favor of God than Ishmael. The election of grace alone gave him the inheritance of the blessing which of his own sovereign will God gave to Abraham when he called him, out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gave him the promise, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."—Gen. 22:18. Both the sons of Abraham were by nature the children of wrath even as all others of the sinful children of Adam. If Isaac had any merit by which he was entitled to divine favor, then there could be no grace in the election by which he was blessed of God. And if the blessing came on the ground of natural relationship to Abraham, Ishmael was entitled to the preference as being the firstborn son. But the election of God directed in the matter, so that the blessing must come upon Isaac,

as the promised seed thus presenting him as the type of Christ in whom is the election of all who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. So, Paul says, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." The birth in which this relationship is developed, is not according to nature, but by the sovereign power of God. The inheritance of the saints in light is not upon the principle of natural relationship to earthly parents, but by virtue of "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."— 1 Peter 1:23. This heavenly birth is in no sense dependent upon the earthly parentage of its chosen subjects. It is exclusively according to the will of God. Therein is manifest the grace of God in the election of his chosen vessels of mercy, which choice was in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world.

Much of the unbelieving doubt which troubles the saints in their sojourn here in time, arises from the incapacity of their natural mind to receive the gracious truth of the sovereignty of God in choosing guilty sinners in Christ, and ordaining that they shall be in him holy and without blame before God in love. This infinite sovereignty is one point of the truth which is typically expressed in this case of the two sons of Abraham. Under the shadows of that prophetic night the testimony of Jesus was dimly revealed in all the types which were ordained of God; but when the Spirit of truth takes those symbols and shows unto the saints their spiritual signification, they all unite in proclaiming the glory of Jesus as the Saviour of his people from their sins. When this truth is realized by the believer, the assaults of the adversary are powerless to disturb his comfort in believing, since it is only their conscious sinfulness which gives force to all the cruel suggestions of unbelief and doubt in the experience of the saints. The shield of faith quenches all these fiery darts of the devil with the divine assurance that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin. He is our immortal Isaac, in whom we are already justified freely by his grace from all things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses. Since he is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes, it is evident that they whom he has redeemed from under the law of sin and death can no longer be subject to its condemnation. They are no more under the law, but under grace. To every accusation of the adversary their only and sufficient answer is that "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree; that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."—Gal. 3:13,14. Every unbelieving doubt is predicted upon the denial of the birthright of the saint as an heir of God and joint-heir with our Lord Jesus Christ. When this divine heritage of freedom is acknowledged, all the infinite righteousness of Christ is the perfect justification of every child of his grace. Even the inflexible judgment of eternal justice then commands, "Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom."—Job 33:24. The heritage of the freeborn children of God in Christ Jesus is all the righteousness which is ordained of God in him as their omnipotent Redeemer. In him they have righteousness and strength. "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory."—Isa. 45:25.

(Concluded next month)

We can never be truly easy and happy until we are enabled to trust God for all things: and the more we are enabled to trust Him, the more gracious and faithful we shall find Him.

Toplady

The old Arminians mentioned in scripture are blamed for thinking wickedly that God was such an one as themselves; but our new Arminians out - sin their predecessors, and actually represent God as a being in many respects considerable inferior to themselves. They suppose Him both to form schemes with less wisdom, and to execute them with less power, spirit, and success, than a prime minister of common sense forms and executes his. They dare ascribe to God such impotence, blunders, imperfections, and disappointments, as they would blush to ascribe to a Ximenes, or a Sully.

Toplady

However sound and orthodox (as the phrase is) professors may be in their principles, though true candour will make tender allowances for the frailty of nature, and the power of temptation, yet neither candour nor charity will require us to accept them as real believers, unless the general strain and tenor of their deportment be as becometh the Gospel of Christ.

John Newton

OBITUARIES

BESSIE CHAMBERS

Funeral services for Bessie Chambers, age 80, of DeLeon, Texas, were held on September 21, 1979 in DeLeon Northside Baptist Church with Brother Frank Robertson of Cross Plains officiating. Burial was in Stag Creek Cemetery under the direction of Nawlin Funeral Home.

Mrs. Chambers was born January 29, 1899, in Oliver Springs, Texas to the late Andrew and Nancy Baen. She was married to Charlie L. Chambers on December 15, 1917, in Comanche. She was a retired nurse and a member of the DeLeon Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church and had lived in and around DeLeon most of her life. Mrs. Chambers passed away on September 19, 1979 in the Loving Care Nursing Home in Stephenville, Texas after a lengthy illness.

She is survived by her husbane, Charlie, of Stephenville; two daughters, Jalene Loza of Santa Maria, Calif., and Norma Jean Skeen of Reevesville, S.C.; three sons, Baen Chambers, of Ocean Springs, Miss., William J. Chambers of Sunny Vale, Calif., and Don Chambers of Aurora, Colo.; a brother, John Baen of DeLeon. She was preceded in death by a son, L.C. Chambers, one sister, Myrtle Chambers, and five brothers.

OUR LOSS

Rehobeth Church of Union County, Arkansas, mourns the passing of the following previous members within the last year:

Irene Murphy - Born Sept. 12, 1892, and Died Feb. 11, 1979.

Neila Ryan - Born Dec. 18, 1901, and died July 4, 1979.

Even though we lament their passing yet we remember without ceasing their works of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope. Each of us treasure the memory of their deeds of love to such degree that surely our loss is their gain.

We pray God's blessings upon us so that we will be reconciled to His will and content with out lot.

Rehobeth Church agreed to file a copy of this memorial with our church records and that copies be sent to the bereaved families and to the ***Signs of the Times*** for publication.

This was read and approved in conference Saturday, October 13, 1979.

Faye Hogg, Church Clerk
Elder E. J. Lambert, Moderator

SISTER POLLY GEORGE McCLAIN

It was our Father's will to call Sister Polly George McClain from this life on January 25, 1979. Her rather sudden death was caused by a cerebral hemorrhage, which seems to run in her family. She was born April 13, 1906, the daughter of the late Brother Robert and Sister Nannie Pickral George.

Sister Polly joined Richmond Primitive Baptist Church on October 12, 1976, at the pool at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church in Gretna, Virginia and was baptized along with her husband, Brother William, by her pastor, Elder D. L. Simpson, assisted by Elder Julian Williams. She was faithful to her church and had recently attended her Union when she was called home. She told

her Pastor and others how much she had been blessed to enjoy that Union.

She leaves to mourn; her husband, Brother William G. McClain, her son, Robert Best of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, two sisters, Mrs. Lena Tyre, and Mrs. Louise Ballard; two brothers, Mike and Arthur George, all of Lynchburg, Virginia.

Sister Polly's funeral was held January 27, 1979, at Joseph W. Bliley Funeral Home's Chippenham Chapel in Richmond, Virginia by her Pastor, Elder D. L. Simpson. Her body was laid to rest in Greenwood Memorial Gardens beneath a blanket of beautiful flowers to await the resurrection in her Saviour and Lord.

May God bless and comfort her companion and all who loved her.

Written by request of the Richmond Church. Resolved: one copy to be placed on the Church Records, one to be sent to the ***Signs of the Times,*** and one copy to be sent to the family.

Sisters: Nannie Varnier
Azalee Lee, Committee

POSEY LESTER HOLLEY

Once more the Lord has called from our midst a dear and highly respected brother, Posey Lester Holley on July 24, 1979. He had been in declining health for ten years.

He was born in Pittsylvania County on September 14, 1902. He was the son of the late Charlie Lester Holley and Susan Brumfield Holley. He was married on December 25, 1926 to the former Gertie Cassada who survives. He united with Strawberry Church on September 18, 1938 and was ordained a deacon there on March 3, 1946. He served his church well in this capacity as long as his health permitted.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by three daughters; Mrs. Iva H. Ligon, and Mrs. Linda H. Allmond, both of Danville, Virginia and Mrs. Betty H. Clark of Walnut Creek, California and three sons; Posey L. Holley, Jr. of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Ray W. Holley of Gendora, California, and J. Donald Holley of Raleigh, North Carolina. Also, four sisters; Mrs. Viola H. Davis, Mrs. Mabel H. Wilson, Mrs. Gladys H. Stegall and Mrs. Inez H. Hollie all of Danville, Virginia: two brothers, Russell T. Holley and Irvin R. Holley of Danville; twelve grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Brother Holley was a firm believer in salvation by grace, a humble and highly respected man and to know him was to love him.

On July 26, 1979 his funeral was conducted at the Wrenn-Yeatts Chapel by Elder O. K. Tench and his pastor Elder Raymond Payne. He was laid to rest in the Highland Burial Park in Danville, Virginia to await the coming of his blessed Savior to gather his jewels home.

Be it resolved that we bow in humble submission to His holy will.

May the dear Lord comfort and bless his dear wife and children.

Resolved that a copy be sent to the family, one put on church record and one sent to the ***Signs of the Times*** for publication.

Written as requested
Sister Mary H. Stratton
Brother Guy H. Hundley

SISTER EMMA LOIS GAY

Sister Lois Gay was born on January 19, 1934, to the late George and Effie Calhoun Gay. She is survived by a sister, Mrs. Bettie Gay Alford, Route 4, Rocky Mount, N.C.; a brother, Alton Gay, of Rocky Mount, N.C.; a niece, Mrs. Robin Alford Thigpen, of Midlakes Trailer Park, Rocky Mount, N.C.

While a patient at Edgecombe General Hospital, Sister Lois told the members of Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church of a wonderful experience she had. She was gladly received in full fellowship on June 11, 1975, and was baptized on June 29, 1975.

She passed from this life on September 10, 1979. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Henry Jones, and Elder Bill Everett, in Gay-Yost Funeral Home Chapel.

She was a good nurse, and was loved and respected by all her co-workers at Edgecombe General Hospital. She kept working and studying off and on during her sickness and suffering.

We at Pleasant Hill Church loved and miss her very much, as do her loved ones and many friends. I feel that she is resting peacefully, awaiting the coming of her Lord.

Written by request of the church in conference.

Fannie Mae Calhoun

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 3/80 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

DIVINE CERTAINTY

"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21.

These are some of the words the angel spoke to Joseph when Mary was found to be with child of the Holy Ghost. In these words we see three Divine Certainties. Notice the word "shall" in each statement. God's "shalls" and "wills" are not conditional or contingent as are man's. What He speaks comes to pass without fail. In Isaiah 46, the Everlasting God says, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: ...yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."

The first certainty is this verse is, "she shall bring forth a son." There was absolutely no possibility that anything could come to pass to prevent her from bringing forth a son. She could no more bring forth a daughter than she could create a world. She was absolutely certain not to miscarry or bring forth a still-born child. God spoke it, and He brought it to pass.

The second certainty is, "thou shalt call his name Jesus." Joseph did not have to worry about what to name the son. God named him. The name Jesus means "The Salvation of Jehovah". God decreed that His name should

describe His Person and Work, and the "shall" forever eliminated all other names.

The third certainty—and the most important to helpless and hopeless sinners—is, "for he shall save his people from their sins." Blessed be His Glorious Name! This God, this Saviour came into the world not to do some uncertain work—not to try to save some people—not to make salvation possible to men if they will add something to his work. This Saviour is a Saviour indeed. He came to save. The angel of the Lord said "He shall save." And He did save. He came to save His people. God has marked them out and given them to His Son before the world began, and the "shall' shows that their salvation is certain. Jesus said in John 10, "other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice;" "He shall save His people from their sins." Sin is that which damns us, but Jesus has and shall save His people from the guilt, the power, and the presence of sin. May His name alone be praised.

Shannon Vaughn
P.O. Box 317
Hazen, Ar 72064

THE ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS

No. 3

Brother Beebe: I will now notice some of the objections, which are made to the doctrine under consideration.

The objection most frequently made, is that this doctrine represents God as the author of sin. Most of those who make this objection will allow that God governs the world, and that no event takes place but by his permission. Where is the difference between them and us? It appears to be something like this. We believe that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, that he has a wise design in every event which he either permiteth or causeth to take place, that each event and all the transactions of men, even the vilest, are as so many links in the great chain of that providence, by which the eternal purposes of God are connected together, and drawn on to their ultimate and glorious consummation; that from eternity God drew the wonderous plan of his government, saw through the operations and bearings of every event, and assigned to each its place and use in the dispensation of his providence, his justice, or his grace. They, if I can comprehend their views, believe that God has not beforehand determined the wicked actions of men, that merely as a spectator he suffers the wicked to go on according to their own wills. Of course, if God has had no previous determination relative to their acts, he can have no design in permitting them, unless it be simply the general design of leaving those persons to aggravate their condemnation. Now it would seem to me that if either of these systems makes God the author of sin, it is the latter, for it makes God to be, in a most wanton manner, accessary to the vices of men. But why is such a system preferred? Surely only because it takes the government from God and gives it to the will of man.

But says one in the case of an assassin's way-laying a man and murdering him, it would be horrid to suppose that God had predestinated this barbarous act. Where is the preacher who talks thus, if called to preach on this funeral occasion, that would tell the afflicted relatives that God had nothing to do with this affair, and therefore instead of exhorting them to eye the hand of God in it, and to be submissive to his will, would direct them to regard only the hand of the assassin? And yet he ought thus to tell them to be consistent.

The Master said to his disciples, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing, and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father? But the

very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows" Matt. 10:29-31. Christ had been telling them not to fear them that kill the body, etc., in reference to persecutors, and then brings in the case of the sparrows. Would not the disciples naturally be led to think of the sparrows as exposed to the ravages of birds of prey? And when thus assured that the hawks could not seize their prey but by the will of God they would feel such confidence in the care of their heavenly Father, as to believe that their bloody persecutors could not take their lives until his gracious purpose was accomplished, and he for wise purposes saw fit to suffer them to be put to death.

If God thus taketh care for sparrows, can it be supposed that any human being will be left to fall by the hand of an assassin without our heavenly Father? If any can find comfort in believing that men's lives are thus left to the sport of chance, I envy them not that comfort.

Let us take another view of this subject--I think it more consistent with what God has revealed of his universal government, to suppose that the days of this murdered man was numbered, that the designs of God in his existence on earth were accomplished, and the period had arrived for his being taken from it; and that God had determined to leave him who was the assassin thus to manifest the enmity and depravity of his heart, to be a warning to others, and to receive that open punishment which his depraved principles merited. Also that such afflictions as attended this affair, God has seen fit to appoint unto the relatives, if not to result in their good, yet for wise and good purposes.

I do not see that this view of the subject, any more makes God the author of sin, than any other system would short of that, of the Magi which supposed the existence of two Gods the one good and the other evil. Nor any more than the Lord's having appointed to Peter the death by which he should glorify God, made him the author of the sin of his persecutors. See John 21:18, and 19.

But to give, if possible, a clearer illustration of this subject, I will offer a few remarks on the text - Luke 13:4-5. "Or those eighteen upon whom the tower of Siloam fell and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." I have said in a former Number there is no movement either of matter or mind but what has been so fixed by the counsel of God as to work for his glory. In the text above quoted I think there is an illustration of this fact. In the case of the eighteen being slain by the fall of the tower of Siloam, are the following circumstances to be noticed.

First, the passage gives no statement of the special cause which produced the fall of the tower; neither is there any intimation that it was occasioned by any thing miraculous. The whole account appears clearly to imply that it was what would by termed at this day, a mere casual event.--Second, the Jews having been taught by their lively Oracles, to acknowledge the hand of God in every event, considered this a special visitation of God upon those who were slain, and accounted for it by supposing that they were sinners above others. This latter idea, the Master evidenty designed to correct, and to impress upon the minds of his audience, that they were sinners equally, with those eighteen, and like them, exposed to the judgments of God, unless they repented with that repentance which their law required of them as national Israelites.

Whilst we are left ignorant of the direct cause of the tower's falling, whether it was carelessness in building, negligence in repairing, the wear of time, or some other circumstance, the fact is evident, that the materials of which it was built, having been undermined or in some other way

removed from their proper balance one upon another, fell by the regular operation of the law of gravitation, and in their fall killed eighteen persons. Can any be so hardened in opposition to the sovereignty of God, as to contend that he by whom alone the sparrow falls, had no hand in the death of these persons? Yea, is it not manifest, from the improvement which the Saviour made of the event that it was designed as a warning to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, of the impending judgments which hung over their heads? These impending judgments of which the Jews were thus warned, were brought upon them, as the event shows, by the instrumentality of the Roman arms. That these impending judgments were limited and bound by the predestination of God is evident from Matthew 24:15-28, and Luke 21:17, 24. It is equally manifest that it was the ambition and pride of the Romans which impelled them forward to the destruction of this devoted people.

Now if in the one case God could accomplish his purpose of cutting off those eighteen persons, by the instrumentality of the effect of the law of gravitation upon the materials of the tower in Siloam, without diverting that law from its regular course of operation, why could he not in the other case, bring his threatened and defined judgments upon the Jews, by the instrumentality of the Roman's thirst for conquest and blood, without being the author of their sin, or without infringing upon their free-agency in the act? Some may say that God was the author of the law of gravitation. True, God did establish it in the original creation of matter; and so did he originally permit sin to enter into the world and man to become so depraved, as that it is as natural for him to sin, as it is for a heavy body to fall to the earth. And there was no more necessity for God, in the one case, to produce a new principle of depravity in the hearts of the Romans, than, in the other case, to produce a new principle of gravitation or give a new bias to that heart. In the one instance God had only to permit the interposition of certain occasions, to bring the law of gravitation into effect upon the materials of the tower, and to bring those eighteen persons within its reach, to accomplish his purpose concerning them. So in the other case, he had only to permit the Jews, by their turbulency and rebellion, to provoke the resentment of the Romans to be the occasion of their acting out their bloody cruelty, so far as God had determined to permit them.

What I have said upon this subject is probably not sufficient to satisfy the minds of some who may think they are honest inquirers after truth. But it is not dependent on me to vindicate the revelation and ways of God from the charge of sin. Let those who charge that doctrine which God has revealed, with a sinful tendency, answer to him for it.

I will offer a few remarks for the consideration of those who think that God has too great affairs to manage, to concern himself with the smaller particles of matter, such as are seen floating in the air; for such professors there are. I would ask them whether they believe in the resurrection of the body? If so whether they believe that God will raise the bodies of all or only of such whose bodies he can find on the resurrection morn? We know that the bodies of many have been burned to ashes, and those ashes scattered towards the four winds of heaven, the bodies of others have been left to moulder to dust on the surface of the earth; the graves of many have been opened and the dust that once composed the bodies mingles with other particles of earth, not to insist upon the continual process through which matter is passing of decomposition and new organizations, by which that which was once the component part of an animal body, becomes incorporated in a vegetable substance, etc. How can any

person with these facts in view believe that God will or can raise the bodies of all persons, unless they believe that he exercises that infinite knowledge, and that universal disposal of all things, that every particle of matter is present to his notice, passing through what process it may, filling by his direction the very place, and accomplishing the very object he designed? Is this knowledge too wonderful for your comprehension? So it is for mine. But is it too extensive for our God whose understanding is infinite?

Other objections I leave for another No.

Fairfax Court House, Va. S. Trott
January 21, 1834

Benton, Ky.

Dear Editors of the Signs,

Enclosed please find a check for a contribution to help distribute the ***Signs of the Times.***

I enjoy the ***Signs*** so very much as I am not able to go to church. May God bless you Editors for your wonderful work and may He bless you and keep you able to keep it coming to the sick and ones not able to go to church any more.

Best wishes,
Maggie Culp

Rayville, La.

Dear Editors,

I see it is time for me to renew our subscription to the dear ***Signs of the Times.*** We enjoy it so much. It seemed that the September and October issues were so full of good pieces.

Enclosed is a check for another year. May the Lord bless and keep you and help you in your wonderful work.

The paper is really a gift or a visit from above to people like us who can't go to church.

A little child of God (I Hope),
Mrs. Earl Wilson

LETTER FROM SISTER SPENCER

Meadows of Dan, Virginia

To the Signs of the Times:

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus,

It has been a while since the Lord has laid a burden in my heart and mind to write a little to the ***Signs.*** Without this burden it is just flesh and no comfort to anyone, but with the burden so heavy, there seems nothing to stand in my way, only to say, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living God. Without the Spirit and Truth, it is nothing.

They that worship God must worship in the Spirit and Truth, all else is mockery. I feel very weak in spirit tonight. But then when I am weak, Thou art strong. Therefore Thy strength is made perfect in my weakness. Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, and no man cometh unto me, except my Father draw him." If this is not in us, then we are deceivers and have come on our own accord, and shall hear the awful verdict, "Depart from me, I never knew you". I do not believe any one can rob God of His glory, yet on every hand we hear how they say they are saving souls for God, and blaspheming against the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that every sin was forgiven except blaspheming against the Holy Ghost, and that sin is not forgiven.

In Revelations the 22nd Chapter John was blessed to behold and see these things that was done and shall come to pass. The eleventh verse says, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." There is no works system in this verse of scripture for man to try to carry out. A man once told me it was his duty to go and tell a drunkard to clean himself up and come join the church and live a decent life, and be saved and go to heaven. I said, "When you get him there, and God says, 'Depart from me, ye that

work iniquity, I never knew you', just what will you do with this man?" He looked at me for a while and then closed his Bible and put it in his car and never bothered me any more that day with his "soul saving system".

Verse 13 reads, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last". Now I cannot find any works system in this verse. Verse 17 reads, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come." To me this is the Spirit of Almighty God drawing His chosen to Him, and the Bride is the true Church also saying, "Come". "And let him that heareth say come". Yes, this is the Spirit also saying "come" to the hearer. "And let him that is athirst come". This means the chosen that are thirsty for the true Spirit. "And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." Now, if I have to pay a man or woman to give me or show me the water of life, then it is not free. Away with such a blasphemous doctrine. This is a free water of life which cannot be bought or sold. Please read the 18th and 19th verses. The angel which showed John these things said for him not to worship him, but to worship God. I feel sure John did worship God in the Spirit and in the Truth. These things are very precious to me tonight.

I remain a helpless sinner,
Pauline Spencer

Riner, Virginia

Dear Brother and Sister Williams,

I am glad to write you at the Circulation Office of the ***Signs of the Times.*** We would so enjoy having you visit us at Valley View Church, and hope you will in the near future. We would also love to have you in our home when you are up this way.

Last third Sunday was so beautiful. Brother Donald Agee was ordained a deacon. Oh! how wonderful to see the Elders, some old and some young, who traveled so many miles after serving their own church.

It seemed the Heavens were opened. The Gospel was preached, and how beautiful to see the love. I shed many tears of joy, and it seemed there were tears in everyone's eyes.

We had a number of elders with us, our dear Pastor, Elder Raymond Goad, Elders Roy Agee (the father of Donald), Tench, Brown, Simpson, Hash, Sanders, Hollingsworth, Conner, Carter, Jones, and Cox. The songs were so beautiful, too, especially "Amazing Grace". That was a beautiful melody.

I am sending a check for two years of the ***Signs,*** which I love so much. Use the rest as you see fit for the ***Signs.*** I do hope the older ones with the ***Signs*** will continue to write and am thankful for the younger ones, too. He will send His servants in due time.

Give my love to your family, and we hope you will visit us soon.

In love,
Beulah Wells

Kitty Hawk, N.C.

Dear Editors of the Signs,

Once again the time seems to have arrived for me to renew my subscription for the ***Signs.*** Enclosed please find a check for the same for two years, with the remainder to be used as you deem necessary. It is with much pleasure I receive our paper, and from time to time precious comfort in reading its contents. Dear Brethren, is it not a wonderful wonder of wonders, whenever our memories are once again brought to bare upon the reality of our having been given a precious desire that our trust and hope be in the One and only three-one God in whom there is no shadow of turning, neither does He need, ask for, nor receive, any help from puny sinful mankind in the process. So therein being made fully aware that no man is deserving nor worthy of any praise or honor for anything. I am so glad, and I hope thankful, unto my God for having

brought up such precious ones as you Brethren, who are given both mind and strength to put forth your allotted time in publishing the ***Signs*** in the manner in which it has been and is published at the present time.

In recent months I have received much joy and comfort in reading the writings of Elder Silas H. Durand in "Fragments", his Autobiography, and later writings. I am now reading it for the second time. If you have this book and should find the time and desire, look on page 231 under the heading, "How Often Shall I Forgive my Brother?"

If you should ever find the time and desire to include this in the ***Signs,*** someone or more who do not have this book might find themselves benefited by deep searchings within their very soul, as I felt to experience in reading same. I feel a precious love for Old Baptists everywhere; I just hope this love I feel for you all is for Christ's sake, and by reason that He first loved me (though oh, so unworthy I feel) and worked that same love within me.

Your Brother in Christ, I hope,
Troy G. Shepard

P.S. I have no more conception of one child of God being either larger or smaller than another, than of God's love being greater for one of His children than for another. I say the above even in the face of my feelings to be (if one at all) the very least of them all; but yet must confess of my belief that God's love for all His children is the same unchangeable everlasting love, and so therein establish it as an unchangable fact of truth; they all are just His children Period... Surely God gives different gifts to some of His children than to others, as be His pleasure to do so, but those gifts unto one does not change that one into a larger size or of any more importance in the operation of His government than that of any other one that be of that total number consisting of them all that make up that whole structure of the Body of Christ's Church. For the gifts of God unto His children cannot rightly be measured as if one gift were greater or smaller, for they each and all are given with that exact same everlasting love He has for them all. Therefore my precious Brethren, it is entirely impossible to rightly claim of any one elder, or deacon, or member, being even one iota greater or smaller than another. For they all are just His afore chosen children Period... Because for just one of the total to be smaller in importance would in itself be proof of an imperfect body of Christ's Church. So I say to all my precious Brethren, please do not speak to me of any one or more great or big preachers, or elders, or deacons, or members; for that arrow of all Holy true Greatness points directly and only unto the three-one God over and above all things. For whatsoever ability any one ever had to speak, or act, or feel, that be to the praising or honoring or the glorifying of His great and Holy Name, was and is only the direct resulting from a free gift from God, unto that very exact end. So my Brethren, the pleasure of God is the one and only rightful consideration to ponder concerning those above mentioned things. Christ's Church is just simply Christ's Church. He is its only Builder, its only Supplier, and its only Keeper and Saviour and Transporter unto Heaven and immortal glory. So therefore there can be no rightful claim of any of mankind ever aiding or hindering in its (the church) structure or otherwise.

The hands of mankind may put up a building, and then call that building a church, and some members of Christ's Church might meet together within its walls; but nevertheless no board or nail or timber or brick nor stone that goes into that man-constructed building can rightly be referred to as any particle or portion of Christ's Church; for it is just and only a meeting place or house, for a

portion of the members of Christ's Church to meet together in, and is just one more of His many, many blessings unto His children; so therefore my Brethren, wherever or whenever we point to a man-constructed building as being the Church, we so say without a true knowledge of what we truly are saying. Dear Brethren, has the ways of this present world become of so much importance (to us who profess a hope that we are Old or Primitive Baptist) that we are afraid to say we are going to "meeting" (instead of to church, or to preaching), or we are going to the "meeting house" (instead of to the church). True Primitive Baptist not only believe, but know for a surity, that fire and storms have and do destroy man-constructed buildings; but do they not feel just that sure that neither fire nor storm shall ever destroy or even hurt the true Church of the living God, and that man's hands had nor has any part in the building thereof. I feel and believe they do.

All the above was written without malice toward any one, but only as food for thought. So I say to one and all who may read it; please look over all my mistakes and shortcomings with charity, and charge them all to my depravity; while at the same time, if there be any portion herein that is in accord with Holy Truth, and any portion should be any comfort to any one, please refrain from praising or honoring this poor sinner for it; but instead, render any and all praise, honor and glory unto the Name of our Lord and Master.

In Hope I could be your
Brother in Christ,
Troy G. Shepard

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Mill Branch, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in March, 1980.

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and worship with us.

Harold Pittman, Clerk
Box 4524
Rocky Mount, N.C. 27801

SKEWARKY UNION

The Lord willing, the next session of the Skewarky Union will be held with the Kehukee Primitive Baptist Church the fifth Sunday in March and Saturday before. The Church is located at Scotland Neck, N.C.

Kehukee is the Mother Church of the old Kehukee Association, and we invite all of same faith and order to visit with us.

Hassel Allen, Union Clerk

ORDINATION OF DEACON

At the request of Valley View Church we met for the purpose of looking into the qualifications of Brother Donald Agee for the office of Deacon, and if found qualified, proceed to go through the process of ordination.

First, Elder Noel Conner offered prayer after which Elder R. L. Goad was chosen moderator and Elder Amos Hash was to serve as clerk. Elder Henry Jones and Elder Rufus Brown were chosen to lead in questioning, with Elder O.K. Tench to deliver the charge. Elder Lane Carter was chosen to lead in the ordination prayer and Brother Vance Duncan was selected as spokesman for the Church.

Brother Vance Duncan was asked to deliver the Candidate to the Presbytery. After questioning the candidate and the questions being answered to the satisfaction of the presbytery, the charge was impressively delivered to the candidate by Elder Tench.

All Elders and Deacons then proceeded to lay on hands. The Elders present were R. L. Goad, O. K. Tench, J. L. Agee, N. F. Conner, Lane Carter, Henry Jones, Rufus Brown, Randall Saunders, Denver Simpson, and Amos Hash.

Deacons present were Clay Brown, Vance Duncan, Lonzie Nichols, Harry Cannaday, Fred Murphy, W. R. Bernard, Marvin Brumfield, H. D. Ingram, and Tiras Conner.

The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Lane Carter after which the Church was asked if they were satisfied with the work of the presbytery. After being

answered in the affirmative, Brother Donald Agee was delivered back to the Church as a duly ordained Deacon by Elder Randall Saunders.

We had a motion with second and approval that the minutes be approved as read.

Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
Elder Amos Hash, Clerk

FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lord willing, Elder D. V. Spangler will be with the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church, Salisbury, Maryland, the fifth Sunday in March, 1980.

All lovers of the Truth are welcome.

James F. Poole, Pastor

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES THRU NOVEMBER, 1979

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"WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED"

This was the deeply solemn question of the jailer at Philippi. Paul and Silas, the faithful servants of the Lord Jesus, answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house."—Acts 16:31

The miraculous and almighty power of the Lord was manifested in all this amazing and glorious work of salvation, as the inspired history of it clearly shows. In this merciful work, the power of God had quickened the heathen keeper of the Roman prison, by his life-giving and convicting Spirit, so that he was filled with awful fear and trembling, under a solemn sense of the mighty power of God, as well as of his own sin and guilt, and his righteous accountability to him who had so fearfully shaken the foundations of the prison by an earthquake, opened the prison doors, and loosed the bands of all the prisoners. The jailer was awfully convinced that all this was nothing less than the righteous judgment of God in this fearful display of his just indignation against his wicked enemies, who had so cruelly sinned against him in persecuting his servants, in which he himself was guilty, and that now the impending wrath of God was about to fall upon him in a fearful death, which he justly merited. His only hope of escape from this dreadful doom was in the mercy of God, and so he, in his guilty terror, instinctively pleaded with the servants of the Lord to tell him what he must do that he might escape the fearful

punishment of his sins and be saved.

This guilty and awfully condemned man fitly represents the case of every awakened and unpardoned sinner, who is made to experience sin and guilt and condemnation by the law and Spirit of God, in the dreadful ministration of justice and wrath against sin and ungodliness. It was at the dark hour of midnight, when men naturally are locked up in unconscious sleep, typical of death. Out of this helpless sleep the mighty power of God awaked this unthinking and uncaring man, and at once guilty terror and remorse seized him. Till now he had been unmoved by the tortures inflicted upon the meek servants of the Lord, but his own hands would add to their cruel persecutions by making their feet fast in the stocks.

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," and they are dead in trespasses and sins, and are by nature the children of wrath, even as was the cruel and wicked jailer. But the fearful display of the power of God, "who quickeneth the dead," awakes the sinner out of death, as did the power of the Lord call up Lazarus out of death, and although the guilty soul was locked up in carnal security, yet the power of God fills him with a sense of impending wrath and dreadful guilt; fear and trembling overpower him, and he cries out in alarm, turns to man for help, and asks what he must do to be saved. For every awakened sinner is under the law, and sincerely thinks, but ignorantly, that he must keep the law or do something to be saved. So did the troubled jailer think, not knowing that "Salvation is of the Lord," nor that the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, the chief of sinners. This was the gloomy and hopeless experience of each one of us who have believed on the Lord Jesus. For the law was our schoolmaster until Christ came and fulfilled it; yea, until he fulfilled it in us. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteous of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Not fulfilled by us, but in us, by the righteous Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, and who liveth in every believer.

But of this way of salvation, the guilty and fearing jailer was ignorant, and he therefore tremblingly asked Paul and Silas, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" In this he voiced the legal spirit of every one to whom God has not revealed his Son, for, like him, all naturally depend upon works of their own doing to save them, and cleave to the law of works for salvation, as does the wife to the husband for protection when danger is impending. This is the way that seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof is the way of death. For the reward or wages of sin is death, and all our works are marred by sin.

There are only two principles and ways of salvation, and the question of the lost jailer represents one way, the legal way, the way of works, the way of being saved by what we must do. This do religion, do and be saved, is the way of all the world, and all the world, both Jew and Gentile, Catholic and Protestant, accept and believe in this way, and it is the way that seemeth right unto them. Then let us not abuse them for it, dear brethren in Christ, for they, like Paul and we, were alive without the law, and so they are not dead to this first religion, which is natural and legal. Therefore, as we see and know, the whole world is carried away with this do salvation, and their great zeal is in doing something to be saved. All their religious works are for this purpose and to this one end—to be saved. So with the jailer; he was deeply in earnest, devout and sincere in it, for he was lost, and fearfully he felt

and realized it, so now he sought to be saved, but he sought it by what he must do. So it is with the world. The fatal weakness and error in this way of being saved is, it is of self, by self, for self, and all selfish, for it both begins and ends with self. It asks, What must I do? What for, we ask? Because you love the Lord, who died for you and saved you, and therefore you would live to him and glorify him? No, not this, but "to be saved." What must I do to save myself? So all the religious world is saying, both in christian and heathen lands. This, then, is the way of the wise and prudent, the popular way, the only way that will ever make the Baptists popular and sought after. Alexander Campbell, Andrew Fuller, and all lesser leaders among the Baptists who have gone in their steps, have gone in this way, and have taught the people that they must do something to be saved. They may be and are shades of difference as to what must be done, and as to the extent of salvation, yet the principle remains the same among all—do and be saved.

The answer of Paul and Silas to the trembling sinner reveals the other way of salvation: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Through faith in the Lord Jesus is the way of salvation, therefore, and so Paul states it, saying, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." This settles it, both as to the power and the way of salvation, showing that it is not of works, but by grace through faith in Christ, and faith is the gift of God to us, therefore not of ourselves. "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." And so, when the legal Jews said to Christ, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." It was not their own work, then, to believe on Christ, but the work of God, wrought by the Spirit in them, and faith is a fruit of the Spirit, not a work of ours, which we must do. So when Peter believed on the Son of God, Jesus said to him that his Father in heaven had revealed it to him. This is true in every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul therefore says, "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. * * * * Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed"—to all the heirs of promise. How clearly and strongly does Paul thus separate between works and grace, as between chaff and wheat, and shows that faith is of grace, but not a work that we must do.

To teach otherwise, and say that to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ is what we must do to be saved, and that it is now a condition of our salvation here in time, and is our work, and depends upon ourselves, and that this is voluntary on our part, to be either done by us or refused, is an Arminian and legal principle and doctrine. And it is condemned by the Scriptures already given, and by all the oracles of God. Our works never produce faith in the Lord Jesus, nor cause us to believe in him, but the revelation of his faith in our hearts by the power and Spirit of God, will and does produce in us the works of faith and labors of love, moving the blessed possessor of the faith of the Son of God to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and to show his faith in him by his heart-given service of loving and willing obedience. This is the obedience of faith, which worketh by love and purifieth the heart, and it is both the way and the evidence of salvation; yea, and its testimony in the heart and life of every saved sinner is, that salvation is of the Lord, and by his mercy and grace alone. The believer in Christ will not say, It is by what I must do that I am saved, but

the blessed Jesus saves me now and ever by his death and life, by his Spirit of love and grace and power, "which worketh in me mightily," so that I joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, whose grace is sufficient for me, and whose strength is made perfect in my weakness. "For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Therefore, to me the precious word of Jesus is all my desire and all my salvation, saying, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." "By him my prayers acceptance gain," of his fullness do I receive, and grace for grace, and with him my God, who is rich in mercy, freely gives me all things; so that for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

The jailer earnestly desired and sought to be saved. Paul faithfully told him by whom and how he should be saved. He should be saved by the Lord Jesus Christ, through faith in his name. Thus and in this way he and his household should be saved. What did they mean by the word "saved?" It would be trifling with the most solemn matters and feelings to say that neither the question nor the answer meant anything more that a sort of salvation which was only temporal and in part for the time being, and which he must obtain by what he must do, for the guilty sinner cried out for salvation from his sins, and of this salvation Paul and Silas preached to him and his household. They pointed them to Christ, the Lamb of God, testifying that salvation is by him, and that whosoever believeth in him shall be saved. So the vastly momentous word "saved," in the question and answer, covers the whole ground of salvation, affirming that Jesus is the only Savior, and that faith in him is the medium or the manifestation and assurance of salvation. "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Not for calling on his name, but because they realize that they are lost and cannot save themselves, they do thus pray to him who is able to save them to the uttermost who come unto God by him; therefore they shall be saved by him on whom they call, and living in him they also believe in him, and call on him in whom they believe. Thus saved by the Lord Jesus Christ, and given faith to believe in him to the joy of their heart, yet with fear and trembling, they are received to the cross of Christ, and to them is given the sacred ordinance of baptism by the authority of Christ, as the declaration of their faith in him as their only Savior, and as the figure of their salvation from sin and death, by him who died for them, and rose again, and is their resurrection and their life. It was of this salvation from all that can destroy that the jailer asked, and faithful Paul and Silas answered.

From this answer, which is by inspired revelation, let every penitent and fearing believer in Jesus, who trembles in view of the solemn greatness of salvation, of which he feels entirely unworthy, take courage and be comforted in faith and hope. For the beloved John says, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." Paul says, "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto

righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." And blessed be the name of the Lord, this salvation is now, and for ever and ever. The blessed Savior himself says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."Saved now, and saved world without end. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life." "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die," said Jesus to Martha. Nothing less than this salvation did the jailer tremblingly ask for, nor Paul and Silas assure him of in the blessed words of truth: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house."

This is the glorious way and power and fruit of salvation, and it is to the glory of the Lord and his grace, and the rejoicing of the saved.

In the faith of Jesus,

D. BARTLEY

May 28, 1902

Rocky Mount, Va.

Dear Elder Spangler and all who love the good Lord;

I will try to write some to the ***Signs of the Times,*** hoping the good Lord will guide my pen.

I awoke this morning at 3 A.M. and did not go back to sleep. I was just thinking about what a good Lord we have.

I was born November 27, 1887. I will be 92 years old if I live until the 27th of November. My dear wife will be 91 years old this November 3. As you have heard me say at some of the Associations, we will have been married 70 years on December 15, 1979. We would love for all to come to see us at that time, but my dear wife and family do not think she is able to go through with all of that. Our family consists of 8 children, 7 in-laws (we lost one of our son-in-laws in September, 1978), 17 grandchildren, (11 of them are married) and 15 great grandchildren.

We do want all of God's children to remember us in their prayers.

I fell and broke my hip on October 4, 1977, and had to stay in the hospital 16 days. My dear wife fell and broke her hip on March 10, 1979. We both have to walk with walkers, but we have a lady to do the work and wait on us. We do thank the good Lord that we can walk at all. We are so very thankful that we are up and around.

My dear wife joined the church the second Saturday in June, 1912. My Papa baptized her the third Sunday in June, 1912. I joined the church on September 14, 1907, and Papa baptized me on Sunday September 19, 1907. Many times I felt to be a poor lost sinner and have to go down on my knees and beg the good Lord to have mercy on me, a poor sinner, but on that day, that appointed day, He gave me a Hope.

It was Monday after the fourth Sunday in August, 1907. I was in the field at work, and I had felt all the morning that I was going to die and be forever lost. It got so heavy on me that I went down on my knees and laid my face upon the ground and begged the good Lord to have mercy on me, a poor sinner. I raised from there singing "Amazing Grace". I never could sing it like that before. I went to the house and thought I would tell Papa. I did not tell him that day, but that night I was upstairs laying on my bed and I heard the prettiest singing. I looked up and saw three angels over me, dressed in white. I was so happy. The next morning Papa told me at the breakfast table to go to the mill, and he would measure the wheat while I hitched up

the horses to the wagon. I could not go until I told him. I went up to him and told him I wanted him to pray for me. He shed tears and said, "I have tried to pray for you." That was the appointed time for me to tell him.

I dreamed that Papa and I were out in the water and the water was so pretty and clear. The day he baptized me it was just like that I had dreamed it was. When Papa raised me out of that water I was so happy.

In a few years I felt a burden on me to preach. Many times I got on my knees and told the good Lord I would rather die than to go and preach. One day I was in the field suckering tobacco and He made me willing to preach. I said, "If You will spare me until the second Saturday, I will go and do the best I can with the ability You give me." That morning my dear wife asked me if I was going to meeting. I told her I thought I would plow corn. I got my mule and went to the field and plowed a round or two. I got in such a fix that I was made to say, "Good Lord, if I am deceived, undeceive me, and if it is Your will for me to preach, make the burden heavier". I got in such a fix I felt like I would die if I didn't go. I went and when I got to the church Papa was in the stand waiting for me. He told me to come to the stand, pick a song, and introduce and preach. I did, and felt good. That was Saturday, July 8, 1922, 57 years last July.

Dear Brethren, sometimes I try to pray and feel like it doesn't get any higher than my head, and sometimes I feel like I do pray. The good Lord has to prepare our hearts to pray. Two years ago when I was in the hospital with my broken hip I begged the good Lord that if it be His will to restore me to health I would go back in the stand and preach His glorious Gospel. I thank Him. I have been in the stand many times since that time. I preached a dear brother's funeral a month from the day I came home from the hospital.

Brethren, I am not boasting at all. I just thank my good Lord.

Brother Spangler, you and I have been speaking longer than any of the ministers in four Associations. I love them all.

I could write more but this is long and I will stop for now. This is to the Dear Ones. I beg all to pray for me and my dear wife and come to see us.

Your Brother in Hope of Eternal Life,
(Elder) Posey L. Plybon

Every person that sits under the sound of the gospel should ask himself these three questions: "Do I know any thing of the excellency of the gospel? Do I feel the power of it? And do I live according to the rules of it?"

Fanch

LETTER TO SISTER CATHERINE HOUCHINS

Dear Sister Catherine:

Hope this may find you well and being comforted of "the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." (Quoting from II Corinthians 1:3-5)

Sometimes I think I am partial to Paul's writings, however, when I am blessed to read the writings of Isaiah I ask myself could anything be more comforting. Isaiah 25:4, "For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall."

Therefore, I come to this conclusion, all scripture is comforting when we are prompted to read by the God of mercy, the God who gives us to understand a little here and a little there. Oh! this

great God, He is a God of mercy, a God of truth, a God who forgiveth our many sins. He has been so kind and so merciful to me, a poor dying sinner, saved by His mercy and grace, if saved at all.

I want the comradeship of a people who will not hold my sins against me. I think of you as one of those people, a people who "Serve in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter". (Rom. 6:7)

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." (Isa. 40:1-2) Oh! the many scriptures that are so comforting, that comfort us when the Comforter comes.

When I was about to retire to bed last night, I thought--O! if I could but read a few comforting words wherewith I might be comforted. I picked up my Bible, opened it, not choosing any certain book. I opened to John 6, beginning with the 44th verse. When I had read to verse 48, "I am that bread of life", Sister Catherine, I felt I had eaten of that bread. I desired to read no further. Again, I felt assured the Comforter had come. However, this morning when preparing breakfast I suddenly felt so depressed. I need not attempt to describe that awful feeling, since I am sure you know something of that condition, too. Where was that sweet comfort I had enjoyed? Is not this one of the ways we are kept at His feet? I am so prone, when things are going well with me, to forget the God that brought me. Right now, I can say, "Yes, brought me from nature's darkness into His marvelous light".

May it please God to visit you, from time to time, comforting you with the assurance that He still cares.

Yours in bonds of love,
Gaye A. (Mrs. B.O.) Thompson

EDITORIAL

FIVE SMOOTH STONES

Text: I Samuel 17:38-50

Much has been said or written in regard to the five smooth stones David carried with him into battle against Goliath the Giant of Gath. Most views regarding these stones seem to be the result of a forced, or strained interpretation of what these stones represent. Nearly all expositors have come up with what is, to them at least, a satisfactory meaning of the five smooth stones, but they by no means give a reasonable explanation as to the number five itself.

One writer says these stones are the eternal decrees of God. (Why five?) Another believes they represent the attributes of God, while yet another sees them as the cardinal doctrines of our faith. (Again, why five?) Others have seen in the five smooth stones the graces of God's children while they live here in the world. One dear soul has even dared suggest the five smooth stones represent the four corners of the earth; the north, east, south, and west, with the fifth stone representing up! Still others believe they point to the five words Paul said he had rather speak with his understanding. (I Cor. 14:19)

While there may be a measure of truth in all these explanations, they surely do not tell us why David, nearly one thousand years before the birth of Christ, actually did, with purpose, "Choose him five smooth stones out of the brook". (I Sam. 17:40) He didn't select four, or six stones. He chose five, no more or less! "Well", someone opines, "five is the number of grace, and that is why David took the number of stones he did." If David's number was based on the spiritual meaning of Bible numbers then we should suppose he would rather have selected a number to represent death, or conquest, or judgment, or possibly the

number seven since it supposedly represents completeness. David's conquest over this uncircumcised Philistine and his army certainly was complete, at least for that day of battle.

We are compelled to believe, however, after reading this and corresponding passages very carefully that David had a specific purpose in selecting five stones. His choice was not casual or happenchance, but rather, based on knowledge and wisdom gleaned from his own personal experience and understanding in the current situation.

It will be noticed that David wouldn't go out to face this Philistine in Saul's armour, although it was offered to him. "He had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him." (I Sam. 17:39) The armour surely had been proved, time after time, by Saul. But it had not been proved by David. David could not, dare not, go into battle with armour which had been given another man to use. In like manner the Christian cannot enter into his battles with another man's experience (armour).

We see David then going out to meet this uncircumcised Philistine, the enemy of Israel, with armour that is much more suited to his experience. David has put off Saul's armour, and instead of it he carried with him (1) his staff, (2) five smooth stones that he chose from the brook, (3) a shepherd's bag to put them in, and (4) his sling. Carefully note the choosing of five, not more or less, but five smooth stones. With these and his staff, his bag, and sling, he had in effect, put on the whole armour of God (Eph. 6:11). He was now prepared to do battle with the enemy of Israel.

In this chapter the story of the battle is recorded. We find when David made his approach, the Philistine said, "Am I a dog, that thou cometh to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods." (I Sam. 17:43) You see how the enemy ridiculed and spoke lightly of the armour of David. Little did he know that he soon would bitterly discover how complete David's armour was. Fearless of God, and despising the young shepherd boy, Goliath boasts further, "Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field." (V. 44)

They draw closer on the field of battle and David cries out that he comes to Goliath, "In the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou has defied." (V. 45) "And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands." (V. 47) How glorious to see that David defends the Name of our God and the cause of Israel. He recognizes that swords and spears are not suitable armour for the children of the Heavenly King, for the battle is the Lord's. What wonderful truth, that even now, our battles are not to be fought with sword and spear, but in the Name of the Lord. "And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hastened, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth." (Verses 48, 49) And we read then in Verse 50 that David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone. How comforting to know that the battle really was the Lord's and He did give David and all Israel the victory that day.

"When first my soul enlisted
My Saviour's foes to fight,
Mistaken friends insisted
I was not arm'd aright.
So Saul advised David,
He certainly would fail,
Nor could his life be saved,
With a coat of mail.

But David, though he yielded
To put the armour on,

Soon found he could not wield it,
And ventur'd forth with none.
With only sling and pebble,
He fought the fight of faith;
The weapons seem'd but feeble,
Yet prov'd Goliath's death.

John Newton

One may wonder at this point what has been so often asked, "Why, then, did David take five smooth stones when he only needed one?" Let the Bible answer all our questions concerning the Bible, for surely it is a thorough furnisher. In turning to II Samuel 21, we see there what should be conclusive evidence that David would not have carried the whole armour of God into battle had he carried only one, or possibly two stones with him. "Moreover the Philistines had yet war again with Israel; and David went down, and his servants with him, and fought against the Philistines: and David waxed faint. And Ishbi-benob, which was of the sons of the giant, the weight of whose spear weighed three hundred shekels of brass in weight, he being girded with a new sword, thought to have slain David. But Abishai the son of Zeruiah succoured him, and smote the Philistine, and killed him. Then the men of David sware unto him, saying, Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not the light of Israel." (Verse 15, 16, 17) Notice here that Ishbi-benob was a son of the giant and he has now been slain. Then again we see that Sibbechai the Hushathite slew Saph, who also was one of the sons of the giant. (V. 18) and then again we find that Elhanan, a Beth-lehemite, slew another brother of Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam. (V. 19) I Chronicles 20:5 gives the name of this brother as Lahmi. Then again there was another battle in Gath, and there was another brother of Goliath, who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot and the scripture says he also was born of the giant. (V. 20) "And when he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimeah the brother of David slew him." (V. 21) Finally, "These four were born to the giant in Gath, and fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants." (V. 22)

Listed below are the sons of the giant and who they were slain by:

SONS OF THE GIANT	SLAIN BY
1. Goliath	David
2. Ishbi-benob	Abishai
3. Saph	Sibechai
4. Lahmi	Elhanan
5. Unnamed brother	Jonathan

How clear this should be to us. David, in going to battle against Goliath, the son of the giant, beyond question knew that he had four brothers; so it seems plain enough he took a stone for each one of them. David went into the battle to smite Goliath and there was a good possibility that another giant, one of his brothers, would step forward and take up the battle. Should he slay him then another, and another until David had killed the five. You see the importance then of carrying the whole armour of God. David needed five stones for there were five potential enemies to be destroyed. David needed only the one stone on that day, but we see that another day (II Samuel 21:15-22) the other giants would be met and destroyed. There were five stones for five giants although only one stone was used on one giant. The point to be stressed is this: when the children of the Heavenly King prepare themselves to go to battle and put on their armour it is necessary for them to put on the whole armour of God. In the case of David the whole armour would not be one, two, three, four, or even six stones; but rather five. Five stones for five giants! David could not know if he would need to slay one or all at that time, but he was prepared.

Let us conclude this subject with Paul's instruction from Ephesians, Chapter 6: "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." (V. 11) In the case of David, as we have pointed

out, the whole armour would include five stones. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers (note rulers, plural) of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (V. 12) Observe that it is a wrestling, and in going into this battle these principalities, powers, and rulers of darkness are in high places, as formidable giants rising up against us. "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." (V. 13) The whole armour of God! It is worthy of consideration that we take notice of the expression, "armour of God". We dare not use Saul's armour, nor any other's armour, but only God's. Even then we must beware that it is the whole armour, not just part of the armour. Think not that we may take three or four stones with us, but learn rather we have need of all five, as did David. In Verses 14 thru 18 the Apostle listed those things comprising our whole armour of God; truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And then too, he exhorts us to praying and watching. Could we believe we could be properly equipped for our battles if we left off the breastplate of righteousness, the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And then too, he exhorts us to praying and watching. Could we believe we could be properly equipped for our battles if we left off the breastplate of righteousness, or possibly enter the battle without the shield of faith? Would we dare face our enemies without the helmet of Salvation? How naked would we be without the sword of the Spirit. The battle would be impossible. Nay, brethren, we seem all these things that we must have the whole armour of God. We must have the truth; we must have righteousness, we must have the gospel, we must have faith, we must have the helmet of salvation, and so on.

In all of this we hope we have shown that when David went into battle, the whole armour of God consisted of his staff, his shepherd's bag, his sling, and five smooth stones, for there were five formidable enemies. Even so, our warfare requires us to put on the whole armour (Christ) of God, or we will not be equipped to meet the enemy. May the Lord bless us to consider these things.

(Elder) James F. Poole

Carey, N.C.

Dear Elder Williams,

I am very sorry to be so late with my renewal check. I will make no excuses. I am grateful for the continued issues although I owed for them. I try to read each new issue through as fast as I can. Even though I do not belong to any church I sincerely believe exactly as the paper reads. Both my parents and my grandparents on both sides of my family were Primitive Baptists. Please forgive me for being late with my payment.

Sincerely,
G. M. Lackey

All the altars of the law were but so many steps to the cross of the gospel.

Dyer

Criticism is not without its benefits to the Elect of God. Among the many "woes" our Lord pronounced during His ministry this one in particular is fearful to those with a tender conscience, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you". (Luke 6:26)

The Editors of the ***Signs*** have been the target for some rather strong and critical remarks of late. To the authors of these remarks we feel indebted, for by making the same, they have surely relieved us of any dread of the above mentioned "Woe". Thank you.

Editors

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ISHMAEL AND ISAAC

(Concluded from last number)

Dear Brethren Beebe:—Will you be so kind as to give your views on Genesis 17:20, 21? Your compliance with this request will oblige a poor old sinner, whose only hope for salvation is in the grace of God which was given in Christ Jesus from the foundation of the world, for all the elect of God. Your brother in hope of eternal life, although often troubled by doubts,

W. L. McPherson

Hood Co., Texas, March, 1890

REPLY

"And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee; Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year."—Gen. 17:20, 21.

"And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee." Notwithstanding the fact that his son of the bondwoman was cast out from the house of Abraham by the commandment of God, the prayer of Abraham was that he might live before God, and this prayer was accepted of God. In the literal circumstance it appears that the desire of Abraham was only a natural regard for his son who was born after the flesh. But the purpose of God was that this fleshly son should live as the typical representative of that legal covenant which should be given four hundren years afterward from mount Sinai. As Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and is in bondage with her children, so Ishmael is the embodiment of all those children of Abraham who look to their own works for acceptance before God. While these do not enjoy the liberty of the free born children of promise, they are yet subjects of the blessing of God. In their bondage they are in no sense different from others who toil under the hard servitude of the law, which cannot give life. Is there not a sense in which those saints who foolishly desire to be under the law, are represented by this son of the bondwoman? They certainly seem to be "entangled again with the yoke of bondage." If the churches of Galatia were thus entangled, may not the saints still be liable to fall into such bondage? These questions may be worthly of earnest consideration by the saints now, even though in the past it may be said of them "Ye did run well." "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."—I Cor. 10:12. There was need that our Lord should say to his disciples, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation!" Are his disciples now beyond the need of this admonition?

In the allegory Ishmael is the son of Hagar, who is defined as being mount Sinai in Arabia, and answering to that literal Jerusalem which was in bondage with her children. The prayer of Abraham on his behalf was heard, and God blessed him with the promise of temporal prosperity and fruitfulness; in this is figuratively expressed the truth which is plainly written by Paul, "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them."—Rom. 10:5. This blessing is all that can be bestowed upon such as are held in bondage. Hence the inspired admonition to those who sought justification by their own obedience to the Sinai law, "Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing; for I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law are fallen from grace."—Gal. 5:2-4. This is the only portion of Scripture in which anything is said of falling from grace; and it is manifest in this text that the meaning is not those addressed were so fallen for want of righteousness in themselves,

but that the justification by the law for which they were striving was only the approval of an obedient cation in the perfect holiness of their Redeemer, by which they were made free from the law. When the child of grace looks to his own works for justification, it is as if Isaac had attempted to perform the slavish service which was the duty of the bond servant, Ishmael, thereby seeking to obtain the inheritance of the blessing which was already secured to him by the appointment of God. Certainly such action on his part would have been falling very far below his standing as the divinely appointed heir of Abraham. The same is true of every saint who desires to be justified by his own works of obedience to the law of Moses.

In the giving of the legal covenant to the natural children of Israel God did bless them with temporal favors, such as were never bestowed upon any other people; but there was no promise of eternal life in that covenant. Its penalties for disobedience and its blessings for obedience were all limited to this natural life. This was the blessing of Ishmael.

"Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation." The literal fulfillment of this promise concerning Ishmael is recorded Gen. 25:13-15. There is evident significance in the number of the sons of Ishmael being the same as the number of the sons of Jacob; but it is not our purpose now to consider this coincidence further than to remark the fact that the appointment of God was not less positive in the one case than in the other. The blessing of God made Ishmael a great nation, although the covenant of the Mosiac law was not given to his children. In this fact it is manifest that the will of God is as positive in fixing the circumstances surrounding the natural children of Adam as in establishing the condition of his own chosen people, who are in our text represented by the free born son of Isaac. In what is written both these sons of Abraham are evidently presented as embracing their respective generations, as their mothers represent the two covenants. In the casting out of Hagar and her son from the house of Abraham is typified the rejection of that carnal people to whom the first covenant was given; and as it was said that the son of the bond woman should not be heir with the son of the free woman, so there is no possibility that the servants under the bondage of the law of a carnal commandment shall ever attain to the inheritance of divine righteousness, which is the gift of electing love to the children of the covenant of grace in Christ Jesus. In the antitype, the Jew had much advantage every way; "chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God." They enjoyed the special protection and favor of God in his temporal providence, and had his law written upon tables of stone, in observing which they were assured of all earthly blessings. No enemies could oppress them while they observed the statutes which God had given them, and they were never to suffer from blighted crops or unfavorable seasons so long as they were obedient to the conditions enjoined upon them in that covenant. These peculiar marks of the blessing of God exalted them above all the nations of the earth as the people whom God had chosen from among the inhabitants of the world. All this is presented in the blessing of Ishmael; but it did not include any promise beyond what was afforded by this earthly existence.

"But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year." Three prominent points of the doctrine of God our Savior are clearly shown in this declaration of the Lord to Abraham. First, the unchanging purpose of God

controlling all events, whether to man they appear to be good or evil. Second, the special and personal election of the subjects of divine grace without reference to any merit in themselves. Third, the time for the manifestation of the purpose of God is so set by his own appointment that it can neither be delayed nor hastened by any efforts of created beings. These essential principles of the gospel enter into the personal experience of every sinner who has received the hope of salvation from sin through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. It is therefore profitable to the saints to understand the truth of the doctrine in these particulars, since their assurance of hope in Christ is built upon these immutable principles.

Nothing but the sovereign purpose of God could have determined the selection of Abram from among the idolatrous Chaldeans, when God called him out of his native land, and gave him the promise that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. This purpose must have been immutable, or there could have been no certainty that it should be accomplished. Finite intelligence can assign no reason why Abram was thus called instead of Lot, or any other man. Neither is there any intimation that Abram was consulted in the matter. God did not submit to him an offer conditioned upon his acceptance; nor did he issue a general call to all the idolatrous Chaldeans proposing to bless such of them as should accept his proposal. Abram had no more power to resist the voice of God in calling him, than did the dead Lazarus to refuse to come forth at the command of our Lord Jesus. As when God said, "Let there be light!" his word was irresistible, so when he called Abram the same omnipotence secured the accomplishment of his will. Neither men nor devils could prevent obedience to his word. The iniquity of the Amorites could not be full until the time appointed of God; nor could it fail to be full when that set time had been fulfilled. In the purpose of God this was a firmly established as was the favor which was bestowed upon Abram.

In the establishment of his covenant (that is, the counsel of his will) with Isaac, the sovereign choice of God is manifested. Notwithstanding the evident desire of Abraham that the promise of God might be fulfilled through Ishmael, and the impossibility according to nature which forbade the birth of Isaac, the choice of God secured its own fulfillment at the time which God had set. Reason cannot explain why it was needful that Isaac should be born contrary to the laws of nature; but by faith it is revealed that in this peculiarity there is a plain declaration not only of the miraculous manifestation of the son of God in the flesh, but also a typical revelation of the spiritual birth of the whole family of them that believe on the name of Jesus, "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." This is settled beyond the possibility of failure by the election of grace; and sin, death and hell are powerless to prevent its development in the fullness of the time which God has set.

Until this set time, there is nothing to indicate that the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction differ in any respect from the vessels of mercy, which God had afore prepared unto glory. Manasseh may cause innocent blood to flow in the streets of Jerusalem, and Saul may persecute the saints even to strange cities; but when the set time is come they must call upon his name in prayer, and the Lord will hear them in his infinite mercy. This next year in which Isaac is manifested is the year of the redeemed of the Lord, and it is in this year only that the Lord appears in his glory in building again his spiritual Jerusalem. The covenant of the grace of God is established with our spiritual Isaac, who is the antitypical Seed, even Jesus Christ, in whom alone is revealed the

She is survived by her husband Harry C. Dalton, one sister, Mrs. Elmer Cox, two brothers, Eugene Quesenberry and Fred Quesenberry, step-mother, Mrs. Eula Belle Martin.

Sister Verna united with the Union Church, Sunday, February 25, 1978 and was baptized, Sunday, April 23, 1978.

We have already missed Sister Verna at Union Church.

I Thessalonians 4:13, 14

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

May God comfort all who mourn their loss.

Written by request of Union Church.

A Sister in hope,
Lessie Cox

SISTER MARY JANE PATTERSON

The Lord saw fit to remove from our midst one of our beloved sisters, Mary Jane Patterson.

Sister Patterson was born December 19, 1888, in the Dry Fork community, but she spent most of her life in Danville, Virginia. She passed away in the Roman Eagle Memorial Home on September 3, 1979, making her stay on earth nearly 92 years. We trust our loss is her eternal gain.

Sister Mary Jane was the daughter of Robert Hartwell Herndon and Cora Alice Collins Herndon. She enjoyed a large family of 15 brothers and sisters. Only 3 brothers and 3 sisters survive, namely: R. Clifford and Marvin Harold of Danville, and Gilbert P. of Brandon, Fla., and Mrs. Noni Patterson of Williamsburg, Va., Mrs. Blanch Saunders of Staunton, Va., and Mrs. Wyrtle Moon, North Woodbury, Danville, Va.

Sister Mary Jane was married to James "Jim" Patterson, who died in 1941, leaving her with three sons, Julian, James, and Keith Patterson of Danville, and one daughter, Mrs. Merwin P. Smith, of Baltimore, Md. She also left 9 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren.

Sister Patterson worked hard and long hours to care for her children and they all respected and loved her for it, as did all who knew her. She always carried a smile.

She joined the Danville Primitive Baptist Church at the age of 14, and she was a faithful member until sickness overtook her. She believed in salvation by grace.

Her funeral was conducted at Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Home by Elders H. W. Wray and D. V. Spangler. She was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park to await the second coming of the Lord.

Written at the request of the Danville Church. Resolved that one copy of this obituary be retained by the Church, one copy sent to the ***Signs of the Times*** for publication, and one copy sent to the family.

Written by Mrs. Bernice W. Marshall.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
R. T. Holley, Church Clerk

MABLE CLARA AKERS SCHLEISMAYER

Mrs. Mable Clara Akers Schleismayer was born in Olympia, Washington to Charles and Florence Akers on January 10, 1888, and died October 25, 1979, making her stay here on earth 91 years, 9 months, and 15 days. She came with her family to the Yakima Valley area and in 1896 they settled in the Naches, Washington area. She lived there until her marriage to her late husband, Andrew L. Schleismayer in 1907. Following their marriage they moved to California where they lived for five years, returning to Yakima in 1912.

She offered herself for membership to the church and was received and baptized by Elder Jefferson on April 11, 1947. Her membership was in the Pleasant Grove Church of Naches, Washington.

She was the mother of two children; one son, Conrad Schleismayer, Yakima, Wash., and one daughter, Mrs. Lauora Davis, of Salem, Oregon; 6 grandchildren, 11 great grandchildren, and 6 great great grandchildren. She also leaves one sister, Mrs. Nora Miller, of Bathell, Washington.

She was a faithful member and attended the meetings whenever she was able to do so. She was laid to rest in the Terrace Heights Memorial Park to await the voice of the Saviour when He shall call His children from the grave. Elder Ben F. Preston ably conducted the services, speaking comfortingly to his hearers.

Written by request.

Marguerite Simpson

SISTER ANNER LANGLEY

On Tuesday, December 19, 1978, Pittman Grove Primitive Baptist Church lost a dear devoted member, Sister Anner Langley. God saw fit to call her home after blessing her with 97 years in this present world.

Sister Langley was born January 7, 1881 in Wayne County, N.C. to W. H. and Sallie Barnes. On December 13, 1904 she was married to Joseph Langley. He departed from this world on November 14, 1956. After his death she lived with her loving daughter, Ella, who cared for her until her death.

Sister Anner died in Wilson Memorial Hospital, Wilson, N.C. after a short period of serious illness. She is survived by one daughter, Ella Langley Evans of Kenly; one half-sister, Nancy Tedder of Lucama; 6 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren and 6 great-great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at Grizzard Funeral Home Chapel in Kenly, N.C. with Elder Harvey Holland and Elder Curtis Rains officiating. Burial was in the Bennett Barnes Cemetery in Wayne County.

She joined Pittman Grove Church August 7, 1933. She believed in salvation by grace and enjoyed the fellowship she shared with the brethren. She was a loyal member and attended church regularly until her last few years when her health failed. The family, the church, and her friends will miss her deeply, for she was an inspiration to all that knew her. We know that her labor in this world is over and feel that she is resting eternally with God.

Written by request,
Asst. Clerk, Randolph Barnes

FANNIE LEE BURCH WARREN

How sweet and precious are the memories of our dearly beloved sister, Fannie Lee Burch Warren, whom it has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst. May we be given to bow in humble submission to His holy and righteous will.

Sister Fannie Lee was born August 12, 1893 to Gaston D. and Martha Evans Burch and died Saturday afternoon, July 21, 1979 at Alamance County Hospital. She was nearing her 86th birthday. She was married to L. W. Warren and to this union were born three sons and four daughters. Her husband and two daughters preceded her in death. Her survivors include two daughters, Mrs. Ruth Richmond of Mebane and Mrs. Sarah Almond of Richmond, Va.; three sons, W. G. (Bill) Warren and James T. (Jimmy) Warren both of Mebane and Donald G. Warren of Spruce Pine; 16 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

She was received into the fellowship of Mebane Primitive Baptist Church, August 8, 1937 and baptized by her pastor, Elder T. Floyd Adams. The great love she manifest in her faithfulness to the church, as a member, and her concern for the welfare of the church, the warmth of her handclasp and sweet smile still lingers in our memory. She visited other churches and associations far and near, when she had the opportunity, the last one being the Lower Country Line Association. Her endurance and determination has strengthened others and especially me. Her walk in life was truly an example. She bore a good name, ever feeling her unworthiness.

After her husband's death in 1942, she was cafeteria manager of Alamance County Schools for many years.

Her funeral was conducted by her beloved pastor, Elder Burch Wray, at Mebane Primitive Baptist Church. Her body was laid to rest by her husband in Oakwood Cemetery. The many memorials and beautiful floral arrangements showed the esteem in which she was held in the hearts of her family and friends.

We are truly thankful, I hope, for the privilege of having known and loved one whom we held in such high esteem. We feel that her soul and spirit are now resting in the Paradise of God, there to await the second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Psalms 116:15.

Be it resolved that a copy be placed on our church record; a copy be sent to her family; and a copy sent to Zion's Landmark for publication.

Done by order of Mebane Primitive Baptist Church, in conference, November 3, 1979.

Written in love and humbleness by one who loved her dearly.

Bessie Gilliam
Elder Burch Wray, Moderator
Victor Walters, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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IT IS TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 4/80 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

SEVEN WOMEN

"And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach". (Isa. 4:1)

As I traveled to a meeting the second Sunday in September I passed by many "beautiful women" on my way. But the one that I was looking for was a little farther on down the road, meaning the Church of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and it was not these seven women. Now, if these seven women had no reproach then why did they desire to be called by this man's name? Now it seems to me like these seven women were of something other than the true church of the most high God or they would not have desired to be called by the other man's name. Now it seems that they wanted to live their own ways of life or as some would say, have their own self-righteousness, than the righteousness of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This is why they wanted to be called by this man's name. They wanted to wear his name so they could pass as righteous women. They have gone their way, they have built their own buildings and they have furnished them with all of the finery that they could bill their people with, and all kind of things to try to get the world to come and walk with them. They are out to please the world, and not the children of God. I have heard it said that Old Baptists have nothing to offer, no kind of entertainment to intice people to go to their meetings. I don't know what you

think, but to me the Old Baptist have more to offer than all seven women have to offer. I drove two hours to get to see one "woman" and to hear the truth, and then drove two hours back home.

Now I would like to write a portion of my experience in connection with the above statement. When I was about seventeen or eighteen years of age, my burdens got so heavy that I did not feel like I could bear them much longer. At this time I was visiting with these "seven women" trying to work out my own salvation. It wasn't long before I ran out of tools and timber so I had to look somewhere else for comfort if I was to have any. At that time I began to try to beg the good Lord to show me the Church that was right, and if there were none that was right, to show me the one that was nearest to being right. I went on this way for a few weeks, and as I lay on my bed early one night, and it seemed before I had fallen to sleep there came something over me and I was shown the inside of a church building and was shown the people in it at that time. The walls and ceiling were made of knotty pine lumber which at that time had not been painted. I was allowed to look over the building and also the people, both young and old, and to study them for some time. And then it changed from this to another scene. At this time it was the most beautiful thing that I have ever been blessed to see. The knotty pine walls and ceiling and the people that were there were all changed to the most beautiful white that my eyes have ever seen and while I was looking on these things something spoke to me in a small sweet voice and I looked around to see where the voice came from, and I saw what appeared to be the very Christ, and then I felt a strong right hand on my shoulder and it felt so strong that it could crush me to nothing and I was allowed to see a portion of a large left hand and an arm up to the elbow and I looked for more but I was not allowed to see any more at that time. The left hand pointed out toward the pulpit where my late uncle, Elder Walter C. Edwards, was standing and then my name was called by the most kind and tender and soft voice that I have ever heard, and said, "Clyde, there is your place". I was allowed to look on this for some time and all the people there from infants on up were all the same size and all dressed alike in pure white, and all looked just alike.

Now I don't think the "seven women" have anything like this to offer to their friends. Then I went back to the first scene where I was allowed to look and study it again and at this time I knew everybody that was there.

Now this sounds like the one "woman" which I believe Christ bled and died for and I believe this woman is the example of the church. The seven women, to me, represent the Arminian world which has but little to offer to the afflicted and poor children of God. I feel to be the least of these if one at all.

No wonder the seven women desired to carry this Man's name to take away their reproach. I feel like Jesus has taken away the reproach of His church, and then we are enabled to walk in His paths of His righteousness and I believe this is the reason that I am still standing where I am today.

Now Jesus was not born of the "seven women", but He was born of the "woman," and in like manner, when we are changed from nature's darkness unto His marvelous light, then we are born of Christ, and Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, and not of the seven women. These seven women wanted the man made in their ways. They wanted to hold to the Law and not Christ's ways. We read where He bowed His head and said, "It is finished" and by this He meant that He had put all things in order and there was not anything left undone. He fulfilled all of the Law and set up a new day, and I believe this was the day of His power and not the ways of the seven women. And His way was the

days of the Apostles and the days of the gospel of which He is Lord of Lords and King of Kings. He is the One that we are looking for as our help and all of our needs in this world and the world to come.

Please look over me for my poor writing and my mistakes. May the good Lord bless and keep every one of you and keep the ***Signs of the Times*** coming.

From your afflicted and poor brother in Christ, I hope, from the one that loves the truth if I know anything about what the truth is. Write me, and come to see me.

(Elder) Clyde Caudle

A POEM

NO. 1

Have you ever heard the story?
In the Bible it is told.
How the blessed King of Glory
Came to earth in days of old.

How He came to save His people
From their sins, the story goes;
And to ransom His disciples
From the world and all its woes.

Have you ever heard the story?
Of the sufferings of Christ
And the glory that should follow
When our Lord was sacrificed.

With His garments dyed and gory
When He bowed His head and died;
Have you ever heard the story?
Of a Saviour crucified.

Have you ever heard the story?
How they laid Him in the tomb
How He burst death's bars asunder
And ascended from its gloom.

Have you ever heard the story?
Of the victory He won
As He rose from earth to glory
When His mission here was done.

Have you ever heard the story?
Of a Saviour and His love
Bringing many sons to glory
Have you ever felt that love?
Bringing many sons to glory
How I love that blessed theme.
Have you ever heard the story?
Praise, oh, praise His holy Name.

RESPONSE

NO. 2

Yes, I think I heard the story
When a lad of tender years
When it pleased the Lord of glory
To wipe away my tears.

And I think I heard the angel
When he came to me by night
As I lay upon my pillow
And it filled me with delight.

For His form was robed in glory
And His words were few and sweet
As He told me the story
Of a Saviour good and great.

Lo, thy sins are all forgiven
Were the only words He said;
Then He flew away to Heaven
Yea, the blessed scene had fled.

But it was a wondrous story
Comprehended in that line
All the attributes of glory
Vouchsafed to me as mine.

And it filled my heart with wonder
And I never can forget
And I often sit and ponder
For it lingers with me yet.

More than forty years have drifted
Since that vision came to me;
But my burden has been lifted
And my spirit now is free.

For those blessed words were spoken
And the story sweetly told
And the tidings gently broken
To a sinner lost and cold.

I should love to tell the story
But alas I cannot speak
Yes, my pencil seems to falter
And I find I'm very weak.

It is not for man to utter
Words unspeakable as these
We can only seem to mutter
And our efforts cannot please.

But that angel robed in glory
He has borne the tiding sweet
He has told the blessed story
Which no mortal can repeat.

For that angel, it was Jesus;
He has paid His sacred vow
He has died to save His people
And is crowned with glory now.

Written by Elder L. L. Schenck
(Submitted by Elder W. A. Winfrey)

December 5, 1979

Dear Ones,

I enjoy the writings from the voices of the dead and also the voices of the living, and I did enjoy the "Voices of the Past" written by John McConnell dated February 11, 1918, on "Bible Reading" and how the name Old School Baptist may cease to be the name of our faith.

The reading of the December ***Signs of the Times*** has moved me to write concerning it, as we are admonished to contend for the faith once delivered to the Saints.

I asked for a home with the Primitive Baptist Church at Old Republican on February 19, 1939, and was received by the Pastor, Elder George Dyer, and also Elder John Peter Helms. I do not like the name Primitive Baptist faith denied.

As I travel around I notice the different names of churches; the Church of God, the Church of Christ, and many names of Baptists, First Baptist, Grace Baptist, Free Will Baptist. In John, Chapter 3 Jesus speaking to a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." And then Jesus answered, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

Christ Himself is the tree of life, the bread of life, and the door to the Kingdom of God by the "wills and the shalls" of God. In John Chapter 5, is a very strengthening verse, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.", and then Verse 30, "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just: because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." Christ was not a Free Will.

I believe in the doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by the wills and shalls of God, as being the way of the truth and the life, and the predestination and election of God, yet He is not the author of sin. He does not make people sin, or do wrong, but allows it for the purpose that His Name should be honored and glorified above every name in heaven and in earth.

We read in Ephesians 4:5, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism", and that is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, the three in one.

"Father, what'er of earthly bliss
Thy Sovereign will denies,
Accepted at Thy Throne of Grace
Let this petition rise".

May I remain yours in the faith of God's elect.

Mattie Underwood

Box 48
Duanesburg, New York 12056
November 23, 1979

Dear Editors;

The word Sanctuary brings different mind pictures, thoughts or views to each individual. Faith and Hope are a personal matter and each believer has his or her own reason for their Hope. (1 Peter 3:15)

God in the annals of eternity, before time began, foreknew, elected and Predestinated a People. (Romans 8). He knew the names of each one of His elect and the travels and pitfalls they would have in their life. God laid out the way.

I feel our only Sanctuary is in the arms and bosom of our Lord and

Saviour Jesus Christ. God with his foreknowledge provided Salvation through the death of his Son.

Christ, in the Old Testament is concealed, but revealed in the New. It says in Matthew chapter 1 verse 1. "The book of the Generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham".

There were many generations from Adam down through the Old Testament, but only one in the New, "The Generation of Jesus Christ".

Jesus, in the Old Testament is revealed by types and shadows. All the offerings and formalities have a definite significiance in representing or proclaiming our salvation and sanctuary in Jesus. All the Prophets and others like Joseph, David, Daniel typify Jesus if we are given the knowledge to observe it. (Mark 8:18-19).

I feel that, when God hid Moses in the cleft of the rock while He passed by and showed Moses his hinder parts, Jesus was that Rock. The Rock of our Salvation. The 2nd chapter of Luke verses 25-32 are very beautiful to me. It shows the revelation of Jesus to the old prophet Simeon "who were waiting for the consolation of Israel". Aren't all the elect of God, that Israel of God's election, waiting for that consolation (Sanctuary)?

Ecclesiastes 2nd chapter verses 1 and 2 read "To every thing there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven:

A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted;"

Each of the elect of God was predestinated, of God, to be born at a certain time, be brought into the fold, by the new birth, and return to God at a certain time. It pleased God to have it this way.

Jesus expounded all this to his disciples and they recorded it, by inspiration, for the comfort of the elect in years to come. Jesus told of perilous times to come when brother would rise up against brother and of tares in the wheat, but we are to let them remain with the wheat until the harvest when the tares will be removed and dealt with while the elect are taken into that wonderful Sanctuary of the Arms of Jesus. Jesus states in John 6:39 "and this is the Father's will which sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

Also John 17 is wonderful.

Enclosed is a check to renew my subscription to the ***Signs*** for two years.

In Hope,
Woodrow W. Bellinger

(The following is the closing parts of the Editor's (J. C. Philpot) annual address in the "Gospel Standard", 1848. Although we do not feel capable of writing after such a manner, and in such a gracious spirit, we can say, if not deceived, the writer has expressed our feelings in regard to our own circumstances. Editor)

As dying men, then, speaking to dying men, we would simply mention what blessings we would desire for our spiritual readers and correspondents and for ourselves; and if the Lord has given us eyes to see and hearts to desire those spiritual blessings with which he has blessed the church in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, there is every encouragement for us to plead with his gracious Majesty that He would bestow them upon us.

1. The fear of the Lord, as the beginning of wisdom, we may well place at the head of these spiritual blessings. What a treasure, (Isa. 33:6) what a fountain of life, (Prov. 14:27) what a safeguard from evil, (Prov. 16:6) what a wise and faithful bosom-counsellor should we find this precious fruit of the Spirit through the year! Blessed with this grace in living exercise, we need fear no evil, for it must be "well with them that fear God". (Eccl. 8:12)

2. Living faith, drawn forth by the blessed Spirit, upon the Lord of life and glory, is another blessing which we would desire to be abundantly favoured with. When such blessings are attached to and accompany living faith, when it has such a transforming purifying, world-subduing, sin-vanquishing, lust-mortifying power, well may we sigh after its exercise and increase! And if by being daily plagued with the workings of infidelity and unbelief, and sometimes favoured with a little faith in exercise, we have experimentally learned the amazing contrast, we shall certainly desire to be increasingly favoured with that "gift of God" whereby Jesus becomes dear, near, and precious to the soul.

3. Love to the Lord and his dear people shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost--heaven's crowning gift--that divine grace, without which all attainments are valueless, (I Cor. 13)--what a blessing is this! Love to God! what balm would this be against all the trials, sufferings, and afflictions which we may be called upon to endure during the coming year! The love of the brethren! how many crooked things would it straighten, how many divisions would it remove!

4. A broken and contrite spirit,--that best, that acceptable sacrifice, (Psa. 51:17) we cannot but in our right mind desire. The means indeed whereby that brokenness and contrition are produced, the series of trials and afflictions which may be required to bring it forth, our coward flesh may well shrink from. And yet, when we see and feel the beauty and blessedness of such a frame, what a weanedness it produces from all earthly things, and what union and communion are realized through it with the Man of Sorrows, we are desirous to be favoured with it at almost any cost.

5. Sincerity and simplicity towards God,--that we may be able to lay our hearts bare before him, and say, "Thou God seest me",--how desirable it is in all our dealings Godward, in all our dealings manward, and in all our dealings selfward, to have this grace in living exercise! Carrying, as we do, such a deceitful heart in our bosom, must we not, shall we not, inevitably go astray unless blessed with this divine grace?

Amidst all the turnings and windings of our treacherous heart, is not this conviction still deeply and firmly engraved within, that we cannot deceive nor escape the eye of Omniscience? And yet, left to ourselves, how insincere do we become to God, to man, and to self! God, of his infinite mercy, make and keep us sincere and simple before him, for if wrong there, we are wrong everywhere.

6. A spirit of prayer and supplication poured out upon us, whereby we shall besiege, as it were, the throne of grace night and day,--that effectual fervent prayer which availeth much,--that almost unceasing cry which dwelt in the bosom and came from the lips of Hannah, Hezekiah, David, and the saints of old--that distinguishing feature of the elect, (Luke 18:7)--O may this grace of the Spirit be poured out upon us, and abide in us throughout the year! And in our various trials and afflictions, instead of fleeing to man and leaning upon an arm of flesh, may we look to and lean wholly on the Lord.

7. Patience and resignation under all trials and afflictions--that "meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price", (I Pet. 3:4)--that submission of soul to the righteous dealings of the Lord--that kissing of the rod--that moulding of the will in holy conformity to the will of God--that tender pliancy to the hands of the heavenly Potter--is not this a grace to be coveted more than house or lands, than health and strength, than all the smiles of men? If indulged with this frame, things cannot go wrong with us. Afflictions become blessings, temptations lose their keen edge, and trials are endured as a part of our

allotted portion.

8. A simple, childlike, confiding trust in God of all our mercies, the Object of all our desires, and the Source of all consolations--how precious, how desirable a blessing! Instead of trembling at every leaf, of anxiously fearing approaching trials, of looking droopingly forward to the next day's dawn lest the morn should bring forth some new trial, blessed with this grace, we should trust and not be afraid, we should not be afraid of any evil tidings, (Psa. 112:7) nor add to the real sufferings of the day the imaginary sufferings of the morrow.

9. Communion with the sacred Three-in-One--that only source of all fruitfulness, (John 15:4, 5) that sure pledge of heaven, that antepast and foretaste of rest, peace, and bliss in the bosom of God to all eternity--to be favoured from time to time with a measure of this choice blessing, may well be the object of our earnest desire. To see light in God's light, to feel life flowing into our soul out of the fulness of Jesus, to be of one mind, heart, will, and spirit with the Lamb of God, and thus realize and prove an eternal, spiritual, and inseparable union with him; how this would raise us up above this vain world, fill our souls with humility and love, subdue the unbelief and rebelliousness of our carnal mind, and make us and manifest us Christians indeed!

10. Fruitfulness in every good word and work--that our religion may not be merely on our lips, but be carried out in our life; that we may shine as lights in the world, and make it manifest that God himself is the Author of our faith and that we have something more than a name to live, must in our right mind be earnestly desired by us. Alas, alas! for our barrenness and unfruitfulness, so that often we seem rather to vegetate than live a life of faith, rather to creep and crawl than run the way of God's commandments with an enlarged heart, rather to be cumber-grounds that tress of righteousness which the Lord hath planted. How much we need the Lord to work in us, not only to will, but also to do, of his good pleasure!

Were these blessings more earnestly and intensely desired by us, were we enabled more constantly, believingly, and perseveringly to plead with the Lord for them, and above all, were they bestowed upon us by his bounteous hand, how many snares should we find broken, evils seen and departed from, and that spiritual-mindedness felt which is life and peace! It would make fruitful editors, fruitful correspondents, and fruitful readers.

But we pause; not because our list of desired and desirable blessings is exhausted, but that we may not occupy too much space. We can make no promises what we shall do, or what we shall be in the coming year; but we hope we shall, with increases and increasing sense of our own weakness, and increased and increasing desire for the Lord's strength to be made perfect in that weakness, continue to contend for the truth as it is in Jesus, so far as we are acquainted with it; and may the God of all grace condescend to use our monthly messenger, and bless its pages to his own glory and the church's good.

The Editors
(J. C. Philpot - 1848)

Providence, N.C.

Dear Ones,

Way up on top of a mountain sat a little church called Salem, in the Smith River Association. It was here the Association convened. My husband and I were blessed to attend the entire meeting. You could just feel the sweet love and fellowship for each other that existed throughout the meeting.

As we rode along to the services from the home of the Parsons', where we were so royally taken care of, you could see the fields of grain that stood so erect as if in praise to God, and the blue pine trees that covered the hillsides made it a

setting of beauty. The church was in a beautiful setting, too, with a black top road all around it, and the large well-kept cemetery in the front of it.

There were little streams of water with cattle grazing along side them. We thought it was the most beautiful scenery we had ever seen.

The preaching was so wonderful and sweet. Each Elder came in his own manner yet bringing words of spiritual food, admonition, wisdom, doctrine, and God's love and mercy for us.

Back at the Parsons' home there was singing at night. We never enjoyed an Association more.

A Sister I hope,
Ema Sartin

Kernersville, N.C.

Dear Editors,

I would like to see this letter published in the ***Signs of the Times.***

FALLING AWAY FROM THE TRUTH AS IT IS IN CHRIST JESUS

We have drifted away from what the Apostles taught and preached in their day, and what our forefathers contended for. Some of the Primitive Baptist have left their first love and have taken up with the world and worldly things to please man, and this has caused divisions and separated lovely Brethren. This is a sad situation. If we had the love of God in our hearts we would strive for that which causes peace, love and fellowship. Christ said for His little children to love one another. He also said "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (I John 2:15) The pride of life is not of the Father but is of the world. There is no fear in love. "Perfect love casteth out fear". "But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness". Thanks be unto God that we still have a few Elders who are contending for the faith that was once delivered to the saints, preaching that salvation is by the grace of God and not of man. May God bless us to continue on in the good old way and have everything in common, and hold fast to the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, ever looking to Him in the time of need.

Yours in Bonds of Love,
Gilmer L. Williard

Written by a little brother in Christ I hope. I desire your prayers for I feel the need of them so much.

FROM AN OLD SIGNS

Washington, D.C.
December 29, 1868

My Dear Elder Beebe,

Amid the cheer of the Christmas holidays we send you our greetings. We have been indulging in some reminiscences. Looking back over long years that are gone--happy years that marked the golden age of our country. A past age that will return no more. In the winter of 1856-1857, I found myself a wanderer in this wilderness called Washington City. I wondered if amid so much pomp and display there could be found any traces of that peculiar people, the "Old School Baptists". I found them on Sunday, the 8th day of March, 1857. Their little wooden house was in a place called the Island. It was as simple and unpretending as though it were a thousand miles in the back woods. There were present fifty-three white persons, and in the little gallery I counted twelve black people. The little assembly bore that air of simplicity, earnestness and frankness that I have always found to characterize them wherever I have been. The United States Senator that sat among them and prayed with them was scarcely distinguishable from the plainest artisan. There were no pews. The seats, in the popular phraseology, were all "free". It was a perfect republic. My astonishment was that being here in the Federal Capital made not the slightest difference in the doctrine,

worship, and manners of these people, from those of the same "faith and order", who meet in log school houses in the forests on the Wabash or Cross Timbers of Texas. There is no formality, no peculiar cut of coat, no cut of beard or other fashion to mark them; nothing but the most simple manners and the most frank hospitality. The minister was a young man of thirty-four. He had a friendly, honest face. His style was forcible, earnest, and effecting; a bold, strong advocacy of the doctrine of Grace; terse in statement and fruitful in illustration; identically the same doctrine I had always heard from this peculiar people. The minister was Elder W. J. Purington, since so well known among the Baptist people. The writer has known him in all his walks and ways of life for twelve years, and he never knew a more diligent, earnest, frank, conscientious man, a more pure and faithful minister of Christ. The peace, harmony and union of the little church of Shiloh, and the tender feeling with which they still regard him, attest the truth of these remarks. Long life and peace to him and his devoted wife.

The little church now has no pastor, but like waiting ones, they have a cheerful hope and confidence that all will be well. They have faith that the Lord will in due time send someone to break for them the bread of life. They have had many struggles through the dark days of the past, but such a people are not looking for worldly smiles or sunshine of temporal prosterity.

Just here allow me to mention that the Circular Letter addressed to the churches of the Salisbury Association, October 1867, embraces the most beautiful and sensible summary of Baptist principles that I have met with, and I advise those persons who take pains to criticise their views, to obtain a copy and compare it with the New Testament; especially would I invite those persons who make lords of their ministers, to read the letter on that subject. And here let me thank that excellent pattern of the lady and true christian, Mrs. James Towles, for kindly placing this valuable paper in my hands.

Before closing these remarks about the Shiloh Church in Washington, the writer, an unworthy sinner, but believer in their cardinal doctrines, would be doing injustice not to mention their proverbial hospitality, and to himself personally, to acknowledge the amenities of the twelve years of neighborship; closing with the wish that they may soon have a preacher who may be able and willing to defend these truthful but "unfashionable convictions."

And now a word as to this sect in general. While all the world is run mad after new things, and intoxicated with its notions of progress, and bringing about a millennium by man made missionaries, and a cloud of isms, they affect to ignore the existence of such a people as the Primitive Baptists. But they exist,--they began with John at Jordan, and will continue to the "end". A peculiar people, infallible in their faith, and identical with the "three thousand" that were "pricked in the heart" on the day of Pentecost--identical with the Waldenses of Piedmont, who bravely defied the papal persecution of more than three centuries, and identical with the Bunyans and Roger Williamses, and John Lelands of later times.

Notwithstanding the degeneracy of the age, they scorn to truckle to the blandishments of power; they sternly oppose a union in any way between the church and the State, and view with abhorrence the poison of political corruption. Vigorously maintaining the doctrine of Grace, they turn their backs upon all those religious systems which owe their origin to human traditions.

The mitred priest and the Mother of Harlots have been unable to seduce these people by their gaudy show and

paragraph, "The American world", etc.

In the latter I meant to say: "The Arminian world", etc. In the former, "A peculiar people inflexible in their faith", etc.

The word infallible is a very expressive word in its proper place, but a certain party have misused it so grossly that writers friendly to Baptist principles are generally disposed to avoid its use except when precisely applicable. That Christ and his salvation are infallible is most certainly true, but genuine believers in him, when speaking of themselves claim nothing but dependence, weakness, and frailty. By publishing this note for correction you will place me under renewed obligations. Your obliged friend,

W.

Kenly, N.C.

Dear Editors of the Signs,

I am enclosing a check for $15.00 to bring my subscription up to date and to extend it for one more year. Please use the balance to distribute the ***Signs.*** I am sorry I got behind in my subscription but I am glad that you kept sending us the good news. My wife and I enjoy reading the experiences of the children of God, and we hope we ourselves are one.

I remember how my mother, Peoria Barnes, (deceased two years) enjoyed reading its contents. Long before we could affort to subscribe to it she would borrow copies from other people to read the previous words that made her hope in God stronger. She had a firm belief in predestination and salvation by grace. Her faith was strong and she was always ready to defend her belief.

Mama was a member of Pittman Grove Church for 59 years. She enjoyed going to church and hearing her Pastor, Elder W. E. Turner, preach. She had a deep spiritual love for him and he was the last person she spoke of before she died. We miss Mama and can hardly speak of her without crying, but we have precious memories to cling to. We thank God that she could leave this world without having to linger and suffer as some do.

As some of you already know, Elder Turner has been in poor health for over two years in a rest home, sometimes not knowing anyone. He has meant so much to the church, our family, and to so many others who were blessed to know him. It hurts us deeply to see him in this condition but surely God must have some divine purpose for this to be. Please remember him and his dear wife in your prayers.

I feel so unworthy to write to you but I desired to mention these two saints who have been such an inspiration in our lives. I hope that God will wonderfully bless you for your efforts in the ***Signs.***

A Brother I Hope,
Randolph Barnes
Assistant Clerk, Pittman Grove Church

Bassett, Va.

Dear Editors,

We do hope and trust that you all and your dear loved ones are well and resting in the tender love and sweet mercy of our Great Heavenly King, who is Lord of Lords and King of Kings. Bless His sweet and holy Name. Oh that He in His blessed will would be pleased to bless us all to bow in His sweet Spirit and sincerely thank Him for His great love and tender mercy and watch care.

He has in His loving kindness blessed us to meet with His little ones from time to time in church too and we humbly hope to praise Him and taste of His great love. He has blessed this old sinner all these years to meet with His dear little ones, and Oh, dear Editors, it has been a sweet loving comfort to me, for I don't feel worthy of the least of His tender watch care. But Dear Ones, I long that it may be His holy will to keep me at His blessed feet begging Him for His tender love and mercy and keep me that

for the grace of assurance.

5. He is alive without the law, the sentence of the *moral law having never been sent home to him.

6. The law of Christ was never sealed on him, the law of truth was never received by him, nor the law of liberty proclaimed to him.

7. He was never arraigned at, nor taken from, the throne of judgment.

8. He was never justified at the throne of grace, nor acquitted at the bar of equity.

9. The tremendous attributes of righteousness were never seen nor felt by him.

10. The righteousness of the law was never fulfilled in him, the righteousness of the law was never fulfilled by him, the righteousness of faith was never imputed to, nor the fruits of righteousness brought forth by him.

11. He is an enemy to the power of God, the the experience of the just, and to every minister of the Spirit; and is in union with none but hypocrites, whose uniting ties are the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity.

12. He is one who often changes his opinions, but is never changed in heart.

13. He turns to many sects and parties, but never turns to God. In word he is false to Satan, in heart he is false to God; false to Satan by uttering truth, and false to God by a false profession.

14. He is a false professor in the world, and in the household of faith he is a false brother.

15. He is a child of Satan in the congregation of dissemblers, and a bastard in the congregation of the righteous.

16. By mouth he contends for a covenant that cannot save him, and in heart he hates the one that can.

17. His head is at Mount Calvary, and his heart and soul are at Mount Sinai.

18. He is a Pharisee at Horeb, and a hypocrite in Zion.

19. He is a transgressor of the law of works, a rebel to the law of faith, a sinner by the ministry of the letter, and an unbeliever by the ministry of the Spirit.

20. As a wicked servant, he is cursed by the eternal law; and as an infidel, he is damned by the everlasting gospel. And this is a real Antinomian in the sight of God.

W.H., S.S.

*On this point we would agree with William Gadsby and other Baptist writers of his period that the Bible makes no mention of anything called a "moral law". This expression was gotten up by workmongers to entangle the blind in a duty system based on the ten commandments. (See Gadsby's "Perfect Law of Liberty" for a full treatment of this subject.) We otherwise consider Huntington's 20 marks of an Antinomian as excellent.

Editor

"I will go and return to My place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face; in their affliction they will seek me early." (Hosea 5:15)

The Lord, in His displeasure with Israel, has, through the Prophet Hosea, said to His people that He will return unto His place therefore withdrawing from them until they acknowledge their offence. Yea, in the latter days they will see their condition and will call on Him early, but He will not be there; that is, be present with them. In the Fifth Chapter of Song of Solomon, the Second Verse, "I sleep, but my heart waketh: It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drop of the night." Here, I believe in the wisdom of Solomon, is given a warning to the saints and to the churches that in the latter days they will awake from their slothfulness, lukewarmness, and their lack of love for their lord and will seek Him out, will seek His face, and He will be not there. Oh, how often have we

as a people, even after a feast at the banquet table of the Lord, returned to the way of the world? In our thoughts, conversation, actions, and deeds have we put away the love of Christ and our brethren. Even in our churches have we become complacent, lukewarm, going along satisfied in what we are doing. Yea, even giving an outward appearance of Christianity; tending to the needs of the Church, attending meetings, and offering prayer in public, yet, not having that love of Christ in our heart. How do we know this? Because we do not have that love for the brethren as we ought.

Dear Ones, look at our churches today. There is a falling away, that the Scripture might be fulfilled; however, there is strife and confusion on every hand among our people. When we are blessed to meet together in love, peace, and harmony how sweet the feeling; how bountiful is the table from which the crumbs fall. "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." (Song of Solomon 5:1) Here the Lord is saying if you will note, that I am come into my garden. Does this not say to you without any doubt that it is the Lord speaking? Remember that when Moses asked The Lord, "Whom shall I say sent me?", He said, "Tell them I am sent you, I am the great I am." Yea, The Lord is telling His sister, His spouse, His Church, and the saints that comprise the Church He has already entered the garden; He has already gathered His myrrh; He has already elected His people; He has already annointed them; He has already drunk His wine with His milk; He has already tasted the love of His people because He has already loved His people with an everlasting love, and He bids His Church and the saints to drink, yea drink abundantly. Isn't that a sweet and wonderful bidding? Yea, the world would have you believe that invitation was to all mankind. However, please note who the great I am is addressing this statement to: My sister, My spouse, My Church, which would include all of its members, as no body is complete without all its members.

Now let us turn our attention to the Second Verse of the Fifth Chapter of the Song of Solomon: "I sleep but my heart waketh:" Oh, Dear Ones, this is the sad part of it. It is the answer of the church to the bidding mentioned. How many churches today sleep? They are lulled to sleep by complacency, yea, they meet and there is present enough of the love and crumbs to sustain them for the moment and they are satisfied. They hear the voice and recognize that it is the voice of my beloved Lord and Savior that knocketh, saying "Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled". Oh, how could the Lord of Hosts address this church, this people as undefiled? Thanks be unto God that it is because of His Love for us and by the imputed righteousness of His darling Son that we may be made so, either as a church or as a people. They hear the voice and recognize that He is filled with love for them but here again comes excuse by the church, "I have put off my coat: How shall I put it on?". (Song of Solomon 5:3) In other words, I have removed my garments for the purpose of retiring for the season; shall I dress again to answer the door? Yea, the church again has assumed the prone position, only lying there. "I have washed my feet: how shall I defile them?" Yea, I have washed my feet, removed my garments, and retired for a season; should I arise and dress and dirty my feet by walking across the floor to answer the knock? Oh, what an answer to such a precious knock. Yea, if it could be the will of God that the time is here that the church should rise up, come together in the same oneness as the Father and Son and make manifest the Love of Christ in His people. Here

belies the condition of many of God's people everywhere; here is the condition of churches everywhere that contend for the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. And, what are these things and these Scriptures brought before us for? Dear Ones, if it could cause one to see himself as he is; if it could cause one of the churches to examine itself, ask the question, "is my soul in this condition?", it would be a part of the fulfillment of these Scriptures. Oh, if by the Grace of God we could fill our hearts with the Love of Christ, there would be no room for gossip, for talking about preachers, for talking about brethren, except to praise them as being better than ourselves.

To continue on: Yea, "My beloved put his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved by him." (Song of Solomon 5:4) I would refer you back to the Second Verse where the church says "I sleep, but my heart waketh." Dear Ones, this is to say, I have slipped, I have fallen away, I have done a little backsliding, but not in an eternal sense. No, the heart and mind of a dead alien sinner is always asleep to the teaching of God, and therefore, only hears the voice of satan and his angels. Thanks be unto God, not so with His people. Even though God's people sleep and God turns His face from them from time to time, at His appointed time He puts His hand to the hole of the door. He touches the heart and mind of His people and they are moved. Yea, they are moved to the point of arising and opening the door and they do smell the sweet smelling myrrh left there by the Holy Spirit. They are given to feel for a season the closeness of the Love of God in their hearts. Isn't it a sad awakening to find that when we do open to our beloved that He has withdrawn Himself. Yea, not in a judicial manner as to leave us to everlasting destruction, but as in love as a father applies the rod that his child might be in obedience. Of ourselves we call, we inquire of the Watchman, but He is not to be found. Therefore, our hope comes through faith wherein we remember the former things of old, that in the eons of eternity, before the world was, that God in His infinite Wisdom and for the love and mercy of His people did elect them to be conformed to the image of His Son and gave power to the Son to raise them up in the last day that they might sit together in heavenly places with Christ Jesus.

"All things work together for good to them that love the Lord". May our hope be sustained and our faith strengthened by the Word of the Holy Scriptures; yea, even those that exhort and rebuke as well as those that declare the Power and Mercy of Almighty God is my prayer.

Elder B. J. McLaughlin

PIG RIVER ASSOCIATION CIRCULAR LETTER (1827 & 1828)

Dear Brethren: In persuance of an order of our last association, we present you with this, which is designed, as all our acts should be, for the glory of God and the edification of each other. Knowing of no subject which should stand higher with us than revelation, we have, from among the many subjects thereof, chosen Charity, not that we expect to shed any new light on this great subject; but to exhibit it in its proper or scriptural point of view. It is defined by some to be susceptible of a two-fold interpretation; first, "An alms-giving disposition", and secondly, "In our opinions of others and their actions".

In order fairly to understand this subject, it may not be amiss to notice the light in which it is exhibited in scripture, I Cor. 13:1. "Tho' I speak with the tongue of men and angels and have not 'charity', I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal;" again, verse the 3rd, "And tho' I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing;" from which it is evident that there is a some-

thing going before these offerings, which makes them morally praiseworthy, and that something, it is feared, many are destitute of, a heart renewed by divine grace.

For proof, that bestowing our goods upon any object is not 'charity', but the effects of it, we need but recur to the scripture quoted above; again, that giving alms is not 'charity' in its primary meaning, may be further argued from the fact, that wicked and graceless men and women, may and do give from a variety of motives; some from vanity - some from hope of a reward - and others for the sake of having a name to live while they are dead. Again, if giving of money, goods, &c. to poor persons, beggars, sufferers, missionary societies, tract societies, or education societies, be 'charity' in the legitimate meaning of the word, Paul was mistaken (in our opinion) in the 13th chapter of the Corinthians, & especially in this before recited third verse. Rather may we not conclude that giving bread to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, &c. &c. is the fruit of charity, than the thing itself; or regard these acts of beneficence, in reference to 'charity', in the same light as we do of cause and effect, the latter always following the former?

"In our opinions of others and their actions". Here, if possible, the term is more perverted than in the former case, for a professor of religion, who is the member of one church, whose system of faith or principles are materially different from another, to fellowship or unite with him or them (as the case may be) in acts of apparent devotion, it is regarded as 'charity', and the person so acting is regarded as one in whom 'charity' shines conspicuously; and those who decline a union, are branded with the name of "bigot", or "uncharitable", when 'charity' has nothing to do in the matter. Again, for a preacher, whose principles are predestinarian, to unite hand in hand with one of arminian principles - meet at the same place of preaching - each in his turn occupy the same pulpit - appear well pleased with, or make no objections to, arminians error, he is called a charitable man. The same may be said of baptist and pedo-baptist; likewise for a preacher to contend ernestly for his faith - on all proper occasions to inculcate his principles, whether in a direct way, by summing up the evidence on his side of the question; or indirectly, by fair reasoning, refute the opposite principle; his zeal is too often ascribed to want of charity; when (as we said before) it has no reference to the matter, or bearing on it, would justify him in using all fair means to correct the error of the other, whether it be in faith or practice.

But, we conceive the Apostle takes a view of it, especially and materially different from both of these; I Cor. 13, and last verse, he makes it greater than faith or hope. 'Charity', (says he, verse the 8th) 'never faileth', 'but, whether there be prophecies they shall fail,' &c.; in another place (Col. 3:4) he calls it, 'the bond of perfectness; in another (I Tim. 1:5) 'The end of the commandment, out of a pure heart, and a good conscience and of faith unfeigned! These quotations go to prove it of more importance than is usually attached to it. In comparing 'charity' with the other influences of God's spirit on the soul, we shall in some cases speak of it under the name of LOVE; an interpretation it will very well bear, without disparaging its divine import. The soul in a state of impenitency, unbelief, or enmity with God, is wholly destitute of faith, or hope, or love; things, which all who are Christians are possessed of, and for which they are exclusively indebted to Christ their redeemer, faith being 'the gift of God', Eph. 2:8, a 'faith which works by love', Gal. 5-6, a faith of which 'Jesus is the author and finisher', Heb. 12:2.

Of hope it is said; 'that it maketh not

ashamed for the love of God is shed abroad in the heart,' Rom. 5:4-5; that 'we are saved by hope,' Rom. 8:24; that 'Jesus is their hope,' I Tim. 1:1; that it is an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast.' Heb. 6:19.

Well may it be called great when it has the pre-eminence of such inestimable gifts as faith and hope. By and by hope shall be realized, (that is) the hope of the righteous; faith will be turned into sight - here christians have need of faith, hope and charity; but when they shall have an entrance administered unto them, to the incorruptible and unfading inheritance prepared for the saints in light, they will be done with faith and hope. But love will sway their breasts, while God himself shall live -" 'Charity', never faileth" - that same love, which took possession of their souls at the time of their espousal to the Lamb - now purified from all that's mortal, will pervade their sublimated spirits - Love, divine love, proceeding from God and returning in anthems of eternal praise to God and the Lamb, will be the sensation which shall sway their souls forever and forevermore.

Elder Joseph Pedigo
(Submitted by Elder N. F. Connor)

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It is well for those who are duly sensible of their own weakness and fallibility, and of the difficulties with which they are surrounded in life, that the Lord has promised to guide his people with his eye, and to cause them to hear a word behind them, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it," when they are in danger of turning aside either to the right hand or to the left. For this purpose, he has given us the written Word to be our lamp to our feet, and encouraged us to pray for the teaching of His Holy Spirit, that we may rightly understand and apply it. It is, however, too often seen, that many widely deviate from the path of duty, and commit gross and perplexing mistakes, while they profess a sincere desire to know the will of God, and think they have his warrant and authority. This must certainly be owing to misapplication of the rule by which they judge, since the rule itself is infallible and the promise sure. The Scripture cannot deceive us, if rightly understood; but it may,

if perverted, prove the occasion of confirming us in a mistake. The Holy Spirit cannot mislead those who are under his influence; but we may suppose that we are so, when we are not.

John Newton

EDITORIAL

"BUT WHO AM I"

(Transcribed for publication)

"But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee." (I Chron. 29:14)

Whether I shall be blessed to bring to you the leading thoughts in this scripture, I know not. But I do know that if we are blessed to see them we will find comfort. These were the words of David. They were the words of David before he died, and before the throne was turned over to King Solomon. I think in our ministry and in our preaching we often stress Solomon's building the temple as the type of the church of God. But another point is made and emphasized in David assembling most of the treasure from which the temple was built; precious gold, and if you read it you can find what it is. We understand that Solomon's temple, if we could compare it with today's wealth, was the most expensive building that has ever been erected for its size in all the world. The building was garnished with gold, but the sentiment that brought it into being was David's attitude. The important thing was his attitude.

The most important thing for us tonight is our attitude toward our Creator. We used the song this morning,

"What think ye of Christ is the test,
To try both your state and your scheme.
You cannot be right in the rest,
Unless you think rightly of Him".

I received a gift from a member of this church and she quoted the scripture, "For it is more blessed to give than to receive". And I was filled with joy because of all the things I receive. David wasn't allowed to build the temple because he was a man of war. He was a man who went out and fought. He fought Israel's battles, he overcame their enemies, but God would not allow him to build this temple. But he gathered all the material!

You can read for yourself all the wonderful things that he was blessed to gather, that would go into the temple, and when he offered them willingly he said, "Who am I?" "Who am I?" Do you know what that means? Do you know what it means to ask God, as some token of mercy comes to you, "Who am I, that I should receive such a thing?" Every token of mercy and the grace of God that is bestowed upon a sinner leads them to say, "Who am I, that this thing should come to me? Why am I so drawn? Why am I so inclined to see this thing?" David says, "Who am I?"

But he didn't say that alone. He said also, "And what is my people". The people of God by nature are no better than other people, but God, by His sovereign, immutible, eternal purpose has shed His love upon them. You will not find in the lives and walk of the Israelites that they were, by nature, better than the people around them. The word of God says that He had not sent His love upon them because they were the greatest, but the fewest.

Looking back over their pilgrimage and journey through the wilderness we find them a stiff-necked people, when left to themselves. A brother has been writing me from another state and I was rather disturbed that he suddenly seemed to take the attitude of taking a man by the throat and saying to the man, "Pay me all you owe". You know, Jesus tells us about a man like that. A man owed his master a certain amount and his master forgave all his debts and that man went out and began to collar people who owed him and take them by the throat and say, "Pay me what you

owe me". His attitude was so different from his master's. But thank the Lord, that dear brother I referred to came back with a different tune in another letter and he said, "I know that when we are left to self and to our flesh we will take a man by the throat and we will say, 'Pay me what you owe me'." But back to the text. David said, "What is my people" that God has chosen out of the nations of the earth and given them covenant of promise: a covenant wherein was embraced the promise they were going to have a Saviour coming.

"Who am I?" Who am I? Do you know what I am talking about? Do you know? Do you receive some token from the Lord and then say, "Who am I"? I lay awake many hours of the night in the most pleasant thoughts on the word of God. I used to get up, wander about, drink milk, but thank God, those hours are alright now. Thinking upon the word of God, I say in my mind, "Who am I?" Who am I to have such thoughts. And in time a person that has a knowledge of the truth will have a knowledge of how gracious God has been to them, and they will say, "Thank the Lord." Thank you, Lord....not to anyone aloud, but to God, with the evidence that God has been mindful of you regardless of how you have been. And David said, "Who am I?" What is there about me in any way that with merit what God has blessed me with to bring in all these things together to build the wonderful house of God. "And what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort?"

I like the thought that all that was brought by David and the others of great value, silver, gold, and other things, that he said were willingly brought. I think he could have said, "Were gladly brought". It is a wonderful thing to do things right from your heart, and be glad, isn't it? I am sure our Saviour meant this when He said, "It is more blessed to give", and He said it for the poor, also. It doesn't have to be such a great thing. If it is given in the Name of Jesus, that one receives their reward. I believe with all my heart that the same one inclines our heart unto certain things, and then grants us a willing heart in doing it. I believe He is just as great in one as He is the other. David had no desire to take any honor. David had no desire to say, "Look what we have been doing". That was not his attitude.

That is not the attitude of true believers today as God pours out His mercy upon them. They will say, "Who am I? Why was I not left to go with the world and be sent into hell"? "Why am I not there? Who am I?" But God has so richly bestowed His grace upon you, and caused you to love His Name. "Who am I? What are my people?" A people despised! A people the nations round about them hated. People, if you take them out of the world, the Bible says, the world wasn't worthy of them. Yet, a people left surrounded with enemies all their days and they say, "Who am I?" I think the Lord had a purpose in the man asking me to speak on this subject tonight, because I believe we all know something about the joy in David's heart when he thought, "I am not taking any honor, I am not taking any glory, and who am I".

We never truly worship God until we know He is God of the whole earth. We never truly worship God until we know God said, "If I was hungry I would not tell you." We never truly worship God until we know something of that one who said, "The cattle upon a thousand hills are mine, and the gold of Ophir is mine", and that everything that you have is God's. It belongs to Him. And when men in any realm (it doesn't make any difference what realm they are in) begin to be exalted in themselves, God will cut them down and show them who is in control.

We find a man in the Bible who issued a decree that everyone must fall down and worship the idol he set up. Daniel

was among them. The Hebrew children were among them. And God took him off the throne. God sets men upon the throne and God takes them off the throne. He has a purpose for what time they are there. The Bible says, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will". And He took this man, Nebuchadnezzar, off the throne and caused him to eat grass like an ox, and caused his nails to grow like claws, and He taught him that God does reign in the kingdom of men and gives the kingdom to whomsoever He wills. Nebuchadnezzar was far from David's attitude, wasn't he? He was far from David's attitude when he said, "Who am I?"

David had been blessed to sit upon the throne of Israel and was a wonderful king over the people. God had blessed him in so many ways, and yet as he brought all that he had and God caused him to assemble the material to build the temple he said, "Who am I?" Who am I? A lot of difference between David and Nebuchadnezzar, wasn't there? One said, "Everybody will bow down and worship the god I set up". He exalted himself. But the Bible says, "He that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." How true it is. Who am I?

How many of you listening to me tonight can look back over your journey and see that somewhere the hand of God was in your life; to see somewhere God touched your heart; to see somewhere God showed you what a sinner you are; to see somewhere He opened your heart and showed you the love Christ has for you; and praise went up to God when it did, and you could say, "Who am I?" Who am I?, that I should offer so willingly? Yes, I like the willing part. I like to preach and live among a people you don't have to tell how much they have to give next Sunday. I like to live among a people where God can open their heart for their ministers and their pastors so they won't suffer need. And throughout all our journey here, as we taste the goodness and the mercy of God, we can say, "Who am I?" Who am I? Who are my people that I should give so willingly, that we should be glad to do what we are doing, and the great beauty of it is that all things come of Thee.

"For all things come of Thee." What did he mean? He meant just what he said. He meant that if his heart was inclined, God inclined it. All things come of thee, and the great beauty of the text is, "Of thine own we give you". It was Yours, it wasn't ours. Oh, lovely thing, my hearers tonight, that God moves you to walk in His light and enjoy, and realize that everything you have belongs to God. Yes, everything we have! I know that sometimes in my life God has been good to me and in His graciousness to me I have had prayers, "Oh, Lord keep me, keep me". Keep me. We've heard in the hymn how we are

> "Prone to wonder, Lord, I feel it;
> Prone to leave the God we love,
> Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it.
> Seal it for your courts above".

All things come of thee and though David said that we have all of this great wealth of gold, silver, and jewels to build the temple, it belongs to You. It is still Yours. We just handle it. It still belongs to You. I was hinking just before I came into the building of that scripture in the 50th Psalm, "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills." You know, I have seen some big ranches in Florida and out West, but I never saw one that had a thousand hills on it. But here David just goes beyond all this. This is the same man who said, "Who am I?" And he said, "For every beast of the forest is mine, (that is, God's) and the cattle upon a thousand hills." I know all the fowls of the air and the wild beasts of the field are His. No wonder David said, "Who am I". Who am I compared to God? Who am I that I should be so willing and so glad and yet in giving it, it is God's. It was God's all the time. He just let me use

it and He just caused me to bring it, yet today men go about glorying in what they are doing, and even talk about what they are doing for the Lord. How inconsistent with God's Word. It is inconsistent with those who are heavenly taught. It is so inconsistent with all the Word of God for man to go about with God's breath in his nostrils talking about what he is doing for God. "Who am I?"

Jeremiah says, "Thus sayeth the Lord, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might. Let not the rich man glory in his riches." Those are the things that make up men's lives in nature; wisdom, strength, and riches, and if you take those out of the picture there is nothing left. And God said, "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, let not rich man glory in his riches. Let not the strong man glory in his strength". But let him that glory, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, saith the Lord. "Who am I?" I like that sentiment. I like to know that one of the greatest men that ever lived used it. I like to think that was a man after God's own heart. I like to think that the same man wrote the 23rd Psalm, and said, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want", and he said, "Who am I?" Aren't you glad? Aren't you glad it was the same man? He is my Shepherd, I shall not want. "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul." These very things in David's life are what caused him to say, "Who am I, that I should know Him in such a wonderful way." In the latter part he said, "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me." He is the only One you need tonight, my friends. "Thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou anointest my head with oil. My cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

In closing this subject, my hearers, remember when you read the Psalms of David that most of them point to Christ. In the beginning of the first Psalm, Christ is brought into the picture. "Blessed is the man", not "blessed is a man", but "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the council of the ungodly, or standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful". Who is that? That is not you! That is the One David talks about in this chapter: Christ! "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water,....His leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper". And as you read the Psalms you will find Christ here and there in the language of David, the sweet singer in Israel, and you will remember that whatever he brought, and whatever he was enabled to do in the house of God he said, "Who am I?" We are only bringing to God what God had given to us before. Now in conclusion, take the last book of the Old Testament, and God reminded the people, through Malachi, that they had brought polluted bread into the house of God. They had brought blind lambs into the tabernacle. What did it mean? Just that God had been secondary in their eyes. Oh, my friends, this God should always be first in our lives. Not just part time, but all the time.

End of Taped sermon
Preached at Dan River Church
February 25, 1974
By Elder David Spangler

Denton, N.C.

Dear Editors of the Signs of the Times,

My subscription to the ***Signs of the Times*** expires with the December issue. Enclosed is my check for a two year renewal and use the rest as you see fit. I have been a subscriber for several years and enjoy every issue. Hope you will be blessed to continue publishing the good news in the coming years.

Minnie G. Roberts

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Patterson, Juniata Co., Pa.
January, 1869

Brother Beebe: We would like to have your views on ***Deut. 34:4, "And the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed; I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither".***

Yours in love,
John P. Shitz

Reply: - The Old Testament is replete with types and figures, parables and dark sayings in which are portrayed "good things" which were to come. The imagery was drawn by the Holy Ghost, and in such mystic lines as baffled the wisdom of even the patriarchs and prophets, who searched diligently what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and of the glory that should follow. This cabinet of magnificent types were sealed from human scrutiny, and covered with that cloud in which God has involved his throne, so that men who were used as types, and prophets of our God who spake and wrote as they were inspired, were as dependent on God to unseal the sacred book and disclose to them its hidden treasures, as are the feeblest of the saints at the present time. The handy work of God in the creation, as written by Moses more than two thousand years after the works of creation were finished, which we have in the book of Genesis, contains the outlines of the new creation, in a depth of emblematic beauty too deep and profound for uninspired wisdom to trace, and in ample abundance to fill the enlightened mind of all the saints with glowing admiration while time endures, which shall survive the dissolution of all created things, and be the theme of praise to God in boundless eternity. The sweet singer of Israel, with all his inspiration could not contemplate the glittering hosts of the firmament above without humiliating thoughts of man. He is filled with amazement that so great and glorious a God should be mindful of man. But the infinity of God descends to and embraces the most minute, as well as the most magnificent of all his works. Sparrows are provided for and protected, so that not one of them can fall to the ground without your heavenly Father: the hairs of our head he has numbered, and suns and stars can as soon be hurled from their orbits, as our hairs can fall independently of God. The animalculine tribes that people a single drop of water are as firmly secured in their being and destiny as are angels or men.--But we are wandering from the subject on which our dear old brother desires our views. As in the surpassing glories of the creation, and the inscrutable labyrinths of divine providence, the glory of our God appears in radiant glory to those who are taught of God; so in the refulgent glory of the "New heavens and new earth" as revealed by the Spirit, the saints in rapture cry, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty' just and true are thy ways, thy King of saints".

Of the life and death of Moses, the account given in the scriptures is plain and simple, requiring no explanation from us, but of the typical position which he fills, in all the recorded incidents of his life, an interesting and instructing field is open for the contemplation of all who are quickened and taught by the Spirit. As a prophet and as a leader, he was a type of our Lord Jesus Christ; for he said, "A prophet like unto me shall the Lord your God raise up unto you; him shall ye hear in all things."

But we are to regard him as presented in the text under consideration, as the

impersonation of the law which God gave by him to the children of Israel. In this character he is spoken of by the inspired expounders of the word. See 2 Cor. 3:15, and Heb. 3:5, 6. Representing the law which could make nothing perfect, he held dominion over them in their wilderness state; but he could neither make them perfect, nor give them rest, Yet as the law foreshadowed good things which were to come, so Moses spake to the people of Israel of a land of rest into which God would bring them.

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to whom the oath of God confirmed with infallible certainty the promise that their seed should possess by inheritance the land of Canaan, represent the whole family of God, which under the three dispensations should be gathered according to the oath and promise of God, into the gospel kingdom. Like Noah, Daniel and Job, or like Shadrach, Meshech and Abed-nego, in the burning furnace with the form of the Son of God in their midst, and many other figures, represent the family of God, as brought into manifestation under the several dispensations of the fullness of times. Like the Hebrew children, they are chosen in a furnace of afflictons, yet preserved by the presence of Christ from being utterly consumed. Not only was it true of the patriarchs and Old Testamen saints, that they were held under the dominion of the law until the fullness of time came for their redemption and deliverance, but all the children of God throughout all time and all nations, when quickened by the Spirit, have to make a pilgrimage from Egypt, through the dreary wilderness, under Moses, who holds them under rigorous discipline until they have passed the flaming mountain where the voice of words and the terrific sound of a trumpet fills them with dismay, and makes them feel the need of one to stand between them and the awful majesty of God, and until they come to Mount Nebo, which is as far as Moses can go with them. The reason why Moses was not permitted to go over Jordan and into the promised land with Israel is given, Num. 20:12, because he smote the rock in Horeb, and did not sanctify the Lord in the eyes of the children of Israel. In this transaction we have a rich cluster of the most important types and figures contained in the Old Testament. The chosen tribes of Israel under Moses, or the law, are in the wilderness, far from the land of promise, in a rebellious, murmuring state, and in a dying condition. Neither Moses nor Aaron could supply them with the waters on which their life depended. "For if a law had been given that could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law". Neither the law represented by Moses, nor the priesthood represented by Aaron could give them life. "And God said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel, and thy rod wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand and go. Behold I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it that the people may drink". (Ex. 17:5, 6) And in Num. 20:7-12, "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together; thou and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock; so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink. And Moses took the rod from before the Lord as he commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice; and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts. And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the

eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them."

(Concluded next month.)

Where is the difference between Arminianism and Epicurism? To suppose a fortuitous concourse of incidents is no less Atheistical than to suppose a fortuitous concourse of atoms.

Toplady

The Lord knows what I need, and what I can bear: gladly would I receive, earnestly would I desire, more of comforts while here; but if I mourn now, I hope to be comforted in heaven; in the meantime it is more immediately necessary for me, both as a Christian and as a minister, that I should be humbled; the Lord's will be done. I cannot pretend to determine what ministers or what body of people come nearest the character of the primitive time; but in my judgment they are the happiest who have the lowest thoughts of themselves, and in whose eyes Jesus is most glorious and precious.

John Newton

OBITUARIES

OLLIE S. HOLLANDSWORTH

Sister Ollie was born December 7, 1907, and passed away November 22, 1979, making her stay on earth 71 years, 11 months, and 14 days.

Survivors are three daughters, Sister Fay Quesenberry, Sister Margaret Quesenberry, and Mrs. Neva Shelor; six sisters, Mrs. Ocie Hollandsworth, Mrs. Eva Higgs, Mrs. Gertie Hylton, Mrs. Ella Duncan, Mrs. Verlie Hollandsworth, and Mrs. Mable Hollandsworth; three brothers, Noah, Loman, and Herman Slaughter; and seven grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at Maberry Chapel on Saturday, November 24, 1979, by Elder Hale Terry with interment in Hollandsworth Cemetery in Floyd County, Virginia.

Sister Ollie was preceded in death by her husband, Major Hollandsworth, five years.

She had been in ill health for some time, but she bore it with meekness. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory with shall be revealed in us." (Romans 8:18)

Sister Ollie had been a member of Union Church a little over two years, but had manifested a love for a long time. May God comfort all who mourn her passing.

Written by request of Union Church.

A sister in Hope,
Lessie Cox

SISTER GERTRUDE FOY

As it has been requested, we write our Mother's, Sister Gertrude Foy, obituary, whom the Lord saw fit to call from our midst on August 31, 1979, at the age of 87 years, 10 months, and 20 days.

She was a member of the New Bay Primitive Baptist Church, where she attended for years when her health permitted. She was well acquainted with poor health, pain, and much affliction in body for many years; yet through it all she would say as Job, "Though He slay me yet will I trust Him." We feel Mama welcomed death, as all saints of God would say, "Come welcome death, I'll gladly go with Thee." The day she had waited so long for had come.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Samuel Jones and Elder Oliver Allen, a son-in-law, at Jones Funeral Home, Jacksonville, N.C., with beautiful singing and lovely flowers. Burial was in Hicks Run Cemetery.

We miss Mama so much, yet we feel our loss is her eternal gain. We trust the good Lord will see fit to fill the vacancy in our hearts with His precious love and mercy that our praise might ever be to Him for His blessings and tender mercy to us during her sickness and death. She is survived by two daughters, Louise Baugus, and Alice Allen and two sons, Louie Foy and Hubert Foy. We feel she is at rest in the Paradise of God where she will never know any more pain, heartaches or afflictions.

Written by request of New Bay Primitive Baptist Church in conference on December 1, 1979.

Written and submitted in our love
Her Daughters, Alice Allen & Louise Baugus
Elder Samuel Jones, Moderator
Brother Norman Jenkins, Clerk

Signs of the Times

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 5/80 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS

No. 4

Another objection urged against the doctrine of pedestination is that it would involve the notion of the fatalists, and destroys the free-agency of man, and consequently, his accountability. These notions must arise from ignorance of the true character of God, who as an efficient intelligence governs the world in wisdom and righteousness, causing everything to result in the greatest good. But in answer to the objection, suffice it to say, that the universal experience of man, and the sure word of prophecy, both unite in establishing the fact that man in all his sinful transactions acts freely, and is accountable therefor. I will notice a few instances in which the consciousness of guilt was manifested in persons, relative to transactions, manifestly predestinated of God. We have an instance in the case of Joseph's brethren. Although Joseph declared that it was God who sent him into Egypt, yet when their Father was dead his brethren sent unto him saying, "We pray thee forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy Father". (Gen. 50:17) We have another instance in Judas who though committing the very crime which had long been predicted, and which the Master pointed him out as the one destined to perform; yet when he had committed the base act, he in contrition said, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood". (Matt. 27:7) An instance of acknowledged free-agency we have in the case of the Assyrian, who was the

rod of God's anger against the Jews. God says of him, "I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the King of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks. For he saith, By the strength of my hand I have done it and by my wisdom....". (Isa. 10:12, 13) Thus it is that men and devils instead of frustrating or retarding the righteous government of God by acting out of their enmity, are, in their very acts of sinning against him, made by his wise government to bring about his holy and eternal purposes. This view of the holiness and Majesty of God, manifested in his overruling the sins of men to the promotion of his purpose of grace, whilst it fills his enemies with wrath, constrains the believer to exalt him and to worship at his footstool under a feeling sense that he is holy.

I now pass to the consideration of an objection made by the popular Baptists, more particularly against this doctrine as held by the Old School Baptists. Even those who profess to believe the doctrine of predestination make it, when professed by an Old School Baptist, to be a very Pandora's box, from whence springs Antinomianism, and everything which they are accustomed to consider as evil in us. It is, according to their representation, our belief in the Absolute Predestination of all things that keeps us from engaging in the Benevolent enterprises of the day, and prevents us from preaching repentance and faith as conditions of salvation, and from making any efforts to convert sinners, and in a word that it makes us very idle and wicked professors. This is the most unhallowed of all the objections made against this doctrine. It is the very course pursued by the Jews against our Master, that of raising a prejudice in the public mind against him and his doctrine, that they might more easily accomplish his death. As they thus succeeded against him to do with wicked hands, what the counsel of God had before determined to be done, so will they succeed against the two witnesses.

But let us, dear Brethren, rejoice with his early disciples, in being accounted worthy to suffer persecution for our Lord's name sake. This course pursued by the popular Baptists, in reproaching this doctrine, and us for holding it whilst they admit it, even to be a Bible doctrine, is the most decisive testimony as to what manner of spirit they are of, that could be had. It is, I sometimes think, undeniably an instance of our being reviled and having evil said of us falsely for his sake. The Christian knows that ordinarily, owing to a sense of the corruptions of his heart, the instances are not many, when he can clearly draw the conclusion, that it is for Christ's sake he is reviled. Hence how thankful ought we to be for the privilege granted us, of having such an unequivocal testimony that the blessing recorded in Matthew 5:11 and 12 belongs to us.

It is not in one solitary instance, or two that we are reproached for holding this doctrine. There appears for a few months past, to have been a general concert on the subject. Preachers whilst professing to preach the doctrine of predestination, have in the very same discourses, represented it to be Antinominanism and have the most deadening influence when held by certain Baptists, meaning the Old School Brethren. Others have given the same views of the subject in their publications in the Religions Papers: witness the Letter of a certain celebrated preacher of Virginia, published in the "Religious Herald" of December 20, 1833. But it is perhaps proper to answer the objection, however unprincipled it is. The objection seems to imply that the whole sum of our faith is the doctrine of predestination; that all our religious course is determined by our belief of this one point of revelation.

It is true, that believing in the predestination of God we have no idea of procuring or of being instrumental in producing the salvation of one indivi-

dual, not chosen of God unto salvation; nor that one of the travail of Christ's soul will die, without experiencing the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and thus being prepared for the society of Heaven, whether that individual die in infancy or in old age, whether he was born in New York, or Rome, in Mecca or in Peking. But we as firmly believe that God has "chosen his people to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth:" that "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe," and that whilst the "preaching of the Cross is unto them that perish, foolishness; unto us who are saved it is the power of God."

Let those who think and speak of Tracts and Sunday Schools as the more efficient means of converting the world, ponder this text, and think seriously on the distinction drawn between those who perish and those who are saved. The one class esteem the preaching of the Cross, or Christ crucified, as far surpassing any scheme of men, as the power of God surpasses the weakness of man. But they do not consider the difference between the preaching of the Cross, and Sunday School teaching, or reading of Tracts, to consist so much in any natural superiority of the one over the others, but simply in the fact that the one is the appointment of God delivered to us through the Volume of eternal truth, and that the others are not. Attendance therefore on the one, calls for and authorizes the exercise of faith in God, that he will bless his own appointments, whereas there can be no authorized faith in relation to the others, because God has made no revelation concerning them. And according to the apostles views of the subject, the reason why God has instituted the simple preaching of the Cross, unadorned with wisdom of words, and by that God might make foolish the wisdom of the world, and that the faith of his people should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. (See I Cor. 1:18-29 and 2:4, 5) The above may suffice to show that it is not our belief in the doctrine of predestination alone, that prevents us from uniting in the "Benevolent enterprises" of the day, as they are styled, but the fact that God has appointed the one institution, and but the one has its due weight with us, and ought to have with all who have confidence in the wisdom of God. But again our belief in the predestination of all things gives us confidence to believe that not an instrument shall be wanting, or a circumstance fail, that God ever designed to employ, or ever would own for bringing an individual of the Election of God into the liberty of the Gospel, or for establishing him in the hope and consolations thereof. It also leads us to believe that Christ's people will be willing in the day of his power, according as they are called to believe in him, to confide in him, to profess his name, to enter the ministry, and that with just such gifts as he has bestowed on them, and to go and occupy these gifts wherever he in his providence directs; and that their willingness to these things will be from a manifestation of the day of his power to their souls, and not from any offered worldly accomodations.

Hence we have no confidence in the Divine call of any person to the Ministry, who enters it or goes forward in it, only as some salary or mission fund is proffered for his accommodation. Neither when they go forth from these considerations can we believe that God will make their labors a blessing. Consequently we stand opposed to Missionary and Theological school systems. The preacher made willing in the day of Christ's power to enter the ministry does not need these proffered accommodations to stimulate him to action. Neither does he need, for this end, the notion of becoming popular by a display of school polish or by multiplying converts. He has to preach to answer his own conscience. Being an

ear-bored servant, he will desire to be found faithful. And feeling that he is a servant, he will feel it to be his province to follow the directions of his Lord, to keep strictly to his written orders; to preach the word to be instant in season and out of season, and to leave it to his Master's will to accomplish his own purpose by the word preached. Thus the predestination of God has secured that belief in the Absolute Predestination of all things will not make his servants idle, but on the contrary it becomes an incentive to active obedience. The same is the case, as might be shown from the word, with all his other children, in their several relations.

It is true that the servant of the Lord may sometimes be left to seek his own accommodation, rather than to do his Master's will, but when this is the case, the Lord will assuredly send leanness into his soul, or otherwise, so chastise him as to bring him back to a cheerful discharge of duty.

As to antinomianism, those who know the meaning of the word, when they use it, certainly do know that it is a base calumny upon us. They know that what offends them in our preaching relative to the law is our contending so strongly for the spirituality and unchangeable nature of the Law, and that nothing but that full and perfect righteousness, found in the obedience of Christ as the representative of His people, could release from condemnation. If instead of preaching the Apostles' doctrine which establishes the Law, we preached the abrogation of the eternal law, and that man is as they say, on pleading terms with God and by which many seem to mean that man is on grounds of proposing terms of acceptance with God, we should then in the estimation of the populars be very lawful and holy men.

In reference to the charge that our belief in the doctrine of predestination occasions our not preaching that men should repent and believe, I would remark, in the first place, that according to our understanding of the Scriptures, repentance towards God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ are essential parts of that salvation to which the Elect of God are predestinated. These things therefore we preach. But the repentance to which God has predestinated his people is a heart repentance, a godly sorrow for sin; a turning with heart-loathing from self and all self-doings, as being defiled with sin. We do not therefore and dare not preach a mere Ahab or Ninevite repentance, as that which characterizes persons as entitled to the consolations of the Gospel. There is the same corresponding difference between the one repentance and the other, that there is between the deliverance granted to Ahab and Nineveh, and that salvation which cometh by Christ. It is true, that if we could satisfy our consciences by preaching the word "repent" instead of preaching that repentance which is the result of the regenerating operations of the Holy Ghost, we should much better please the unregenerate, and popular professors, as we should then preach a repentance of which they have some conception.

Again, Christ, by nailing the hand writing of ordinances to his Cross, so took the Sinai covenant, as such, out of the way, that it never after should, by all the contrivances of men, be introduced into the plan of God as any part of the system of salvation. Hence Christ, after his resurrection, made known to his Disciples, that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name, among all nations beginning at Jerusalem. (Luke 24:47) "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." If therefore, there is any meaning in the expression, "In His name", it must mean something very different from preaching repentance and remission of sins in a legal form. So we understand it, as fixed by the predestination of God, and

therefore we do not preach repentance as a condition upon which salvation is suspended. But while we preach the manifested obligation of all, both Jews and Gentiles, as the creatures of God, to return unto him by repentance, or as the Apostle expresses it, "But now commandeth all men everywhere to repent", and whilst we preach the absolute necessity of heart-repentance as a predestinated part of the salvation of God, we preach that Jesus Christ is exalted as a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance to Israel; and that no repentance short of that which he giveth in making his word as a fire and a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces, either manifests the person as entitled to, or capacitates him for receiving the consolations of the Gospel. Hence that no other is of any avail.

Thus far our belief in the predestination of God effects our preaching repentance.

So faith we preach, not as a condition of salvation, but as the gift of God. And the faith we preach is as distinct from any natural belief of the human mind as the internal revelation or testimony of the Spirit of God is distinct from the testimony of men: the one is external and natural, the other is internal and spiritual; the one is comprehended and received by the natural powers of the human mind, the other can be understood and relied on, only by spiritual life imparted. In a word, we believe that the predestination of God has fixed eternally the point that none but that system of salvation, which God has decreed, that truth which God has revealed, and that order which he has established shall stand. We would, therefore, be wholly conformed in understanding, in feeling, and walk to that system, be grounded in that truth, and bounded and defined by that order, which God has revealed. Being thus established in the truth of God and sustained by his word, if persecution come, let it come, we shall feel the assurance that the two Beasts with their image, and all their drilled and mustered forces, can go no farther in their rage than our God has determined to permit them, that they cannot afflict us, only as he has designed the affliction in mercy unto us, that they cannot take our lives one moment before our Father has accomplished his wise purposes with us in this vale of tears.

Such an established belief in the predestination of God serves to preserve us, amidst the various trials of life, and amidst the rage of persecution, from that fretful, sullen, and heart-sunken spirit manifested by Saul when he said, "Hear now, ye Benjamites; will the son of Jesse give everyone of you fields and vineyards, etc.-that all of you have conspired against me, and there is none that sheweth me that my son hath made a league with the son of Jesse, and there is none of you that is sorry for me, etc...." (I Sam. 22:7, 8. But on the contrary it will enable us to manifest that patient, resigned spirit, which David manifested when he said to Saul, "The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee; But mine hand shall not be unto thee", (I Sam. 24:12) and when he said of Shimei, "So let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David, who shall then say wherefore hast thou done so;"...."Let him alone and let him curse for the Lord hath bidden him, it may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day". (II Sam. 16:10, 11, 12) In the case of Saul we see manifested the genuine temper of that spirit which will not have the Lord to reign over him, and which therefore rejects the purpose of God; in the other that humility and meekness which is incident to a belief and acquiescence, in the Sovereignty of God.

But David did not believe that God's having bidden Shimei to curse, or in other words, his having predestinated this act, exhonorated him from guilt.

It was lovely indeed to see the dear faces of the precious saints once again, and how sad it was to miss the dear faces of those that are now at home with the Lord forevermore. I did not express any sorrow at Brother and Sister Fooks being absent--I did express sorrow that they had launched out on the ocean of God's love, leaving us poor way-faring pilgrims still facing the rolling sea of time.

It is so good to have a good hope through grace of a better land. It is a land where

"No chilling winds, or pois'nous breath,
Can reach that healthful shore
Sickness and sorrow, pain and death,
Are felt and feared no more.

When shall I reach that happy place,
And be forever blest;
When shall I see my Father's face,
And in His bosom rest?

Filled with delight, my raptured soul
Can here no longer stay;
Though Jordan's waves around me roll,
Fearless, I'd launch away."

and I think and believe and hope that life's tempestous seas have brought me to the place of a dear Elder in Texas when, as he lay dying, his last words were, "How sweet it is to die and go to my Saviour's arms".

This ungodly world talks much about the second coming of the Lord, but I fear it is lip service. God's dear people will go out of this fleshly cage that is such a burden to them, and it will be with joy unspeakable and full of glory (See Isa. 55:12) that they meet Him in His glory. The wicked will not be ready for Him, and they will cry for the rocks and the mountains to fall on them as His coming approaches. But to those that have been washed from their sins in the blood of the Lamb, when that day comes, when the glorious return of the Saviour, it shall be a delight to them, and they shall say, "Even so, Lord, come quickly". I do not know that I will be in that number. I do not know who will be in it, but I do know by the description of it, that it will be a happy time for the saints of God. the Bible is not silent on it, but since I do not have any impression to preach anything about who is or who is not going to be keenly anticipating His coming, I will leave the speculating to those that speculate.

Now I must run. It has been such a pleasure, and so reassuring to have a few moments with you all in speaking about the love of God to sinners.

If I had a pen of a ready writer, and a thousand tongues of praise I would join you in praise to His high and lofty Name for having brought you to the threshold of a century. May His mercy continue as a bright and shining pearl, to give you light and joy from the rays of that pearl, who is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ.

Once again, we desire to express our appreciation to you for your kindness to us.

The time, I well know, will come when we shall meet no more on this tragic sea of life, but if it ceases now or later, may the love that brought us into sweet union and fellowship never be severed but finally bring us home to the haven of eternal rest.

Lois joins me in love and fellowship,

Yours in that blessed hope,
(Elder) W. D. Griffin

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the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." (Acts 2:23)

Back to Jude. Jude said, "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." These men were certain men, not just men, but certain men. The Virgin Mary was a certain virgin. The elect are a certain people, the house of Jacob, and these are ordained unto eternal life. The others are ordained to everlasting punishment; a certain people fitted to destruction which are the children of wrath. They will fit the place of their destination. The vessels unto mercy fitted or prepared unto eternal glory will fit the place of their destination.

Death is the end of all human nature, and the body returns back to dust from which it came and the spirit back to God from which it came. We receive the Spirit of adoption in the new birth, and as many as have this spirit are waiting for the adopton; to wit, the redemption of our bodies.

"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." (Rom. 8:11) We have received the quickening Spirit. The Apostle was talking about the dead being raised. It is true that we are quickened together with Christ, but the quickening of our mortal bodies will take place in the resurrection when Christ will come to call us from the grave. Notice that he said, "He that raised up Christ will also quicken your mortal bodies". Using the word "also" has reference to the raising up of the dead.

In conclusion, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. (James 1:13, 14)

(Elder) J. R. Hollandsworth

EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER

November 8, 1973
Mount Vernon, Washington

Dear Sister in the Lord,

It was good of you to write us, telling that you are in good health and all was going along quite well with you. We are so glad to learn that you receive such wonderful love and attention from your dear ones, including your grandsons. So many of the youngsters these days seem to have but little actual love for their grandparents and most lose it when they get into their "teens" and far too many do likewise toward their parents. It is good to hear of yours being so good. That is a blessing, indeed.

We had a recent letter from dear Sister Josie, who seems to be holding up so well. She told of dear Sister Daisy and Sister Bowman both being in poor health. We hope both have improved since then. The remaining number of the Lord's little ones is so small in our area that it just seems we can't stand further losses, but the Lord's will must prevail, regardless of how hard it seems to usward.

In past months, while not too active physically, I "got in some licks" reading books and old, old numbers of "Zion's Landmark" and the "Signs", all of which treat on the old "Apostolic Doctrine" and rightly dividing of the Scriptures. I have had quite a few small books (sermons) by Philpot, Gilbert Beebe, Durand, and others, as well as larger books by John Bunyan, John Newton, and others so gifted to write their own experiences and their interpretations of the Holy Writ and all expose the false doctrines of ages past, and of their time. John Bunyan wrote the great allegory of the life of a Christian on earth, beginning with the

time the Lord took over and going on thru this life to that Celestial City which is the destination of all Christians. It was the "Pilgrim's Progress" which he wrote, among other inspired writings, while in English prison some 12 years, at the hands of the Church of England, which controlled the Government, having him imprisoned because he preached the Truth and would not yield to preaching their false doctrine.

Last month, I secured two more books, one of which I have read and the other I'm now reading. The first is the writing of Philip Henry of England, published in 1691 the first time, titled "Christ, All In All", and how I feasted on the wonderful way he brought out so many things most of us would never have enjoyed knowing of, or enlightenment we all seek after. The other book is by Jonathan Edwards of Connecticut, one of the greatest true gospel writers and preachers of that time (the 1700's) and some of his writings have appeared in past issues of the "Signs". His book is titled, "Charity, and Its Fruits", and what great and good reading it is, not only because he was highly educated (a President of Princeton University) but mainly because he was so well schooled (and inspired) in that great "School of the Lord" where Spiritual knowledge is taught and in none other anywhere. Most of us, me particularly, have thought on Charity, mostly as giving something to the poor and of being of the mind and nature of giving to others here on earth, and so on. He starts off with Paul's words in I Cor. 12:1-3, "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor; and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth nothing". He brings it out so clearly that Charity, in its true meaning and existance, stems from that great love of Almighty God for His elect and chosen ones, long 'ere the foundations of the world were laid and it follows that "It is the root, the spring, and as it were, a comprehension of all virtues". Thus God's gift of His Holy Son and His Holy Spirit was that Virtue from which all other gifts and fruits spring, so what Paul wrote is so true, without it,---that virtue being in our heart and soul, what we may do, toward God, as well as toward mankind, "It profiteth nothing". What a treat to read this enlightening book, or recording of the thoughts of that inspired mind long years ago. I likely, later on, will secure other books by him.

I must not tire you with further writings, so I'll end up by saying that we think of all you good people in that area so often and talk of you all, individually, and collectively, often, and so often wish that we could be with you at your meetings. We'll try to be back with you again next spring and summer, the Lord willing.

Our love and affection to you,
Bill & Katherine Hall

Monroe, La.,
March 28, 1954

Dear Sir and Brother (I hope):

Well, Brother----, the Lord willing, I would like to tell you some of the travels of my life which includes nothing but ups and downs, a few pleasant moments at times, and lots of sad hours. I will try only to relate (the Lord being my helper) a few of the things that have taken place since I joined the church, so that you may know what a very sinful and deceiving wretch that I am. I don't know how the good people of the Church put up with me.

Now there was a few years after I joined the Church when I seemed to have lots of pleasant seasons and enjoyed great spiritual blessings which I do thank and praise Almighty God for this wonderful season, which I believe was seen by the brethren to the extent that they gave me liberty to speak concerning the convictings of my heart, and I would like to say here there was an impression of something that I could

not tell just what it was, and I wanted to talk Jesus and Him crucified continually, but I don't know if I ever spoke one word of truth to anyone or not concerning this wonderful salvation. But this did stay with me but did not seem to have enough weight as I felt it should for me to go forth in that Great and Dread Name of the Lord, and I began to feel maybe I should try and exercise what little light did seem to be there and if it pleased God to give me enlightenment I would do the best I could. But, just as this was about to take place, it seemed that all of a sudden all the sins that ever I did came rolling up before me like mountains and I was brought down so low in my feelings that it seemed the Lord was clean gone forever. And I believe right here, if it had not been for the memory of an occasion that took place with me while out in Texas in 1916, when, if ever I was delivered from that bottomless pit of sin, that desert land, and brought into that marvelous light and liberty of God Almighty, it was then at that time. And if it was not for this anchor, may I say, I would have to give up the whole thing. But thanks unto God these memories are still the sweetest of all things that I have ever seen.

Now I went on in this awful and heavy burden of sin and condemnation for several weeks, and I could not talk to anyone, and didn't care to see any of the brethern because I felt too unworthy and torn up and all undone to be in their presence.

Then I had this dream, and I thought I was brought to trial for my sins. It was at Liberty Hill Church and there was a big crowd there and I was called to give an account of all that I had done. There was a Judge in the stand, an old man a little humped and full of wrinkles, very wise and full of power, very lovely and very fearful. I knew he had the power to judge me either on the right hand or on the left, and Oh, how guilty I did feel. In the wrinkles of his face I could see love and mercy, and oh how I did wonder if there was any for me, but I felt I would soon know my sentence, whether I be freed or whether I be condemned to everlasting Hell. Now there was a semicircle in front of the altar, it seemed much larger than it really is, and I was given a seat just a little to right of center, Brother Rhodes was to my right side. He had a big book in his hand and full of writing. You were in the circle two seats from the left side and I don't know the names of the rest that were there, but I thought they were all Brethern and Elders. When all were seated and the Judge was leaning over the pulpit looking direct into my face, then Brother Rhodes opened the book and said, Brother Jasper, tell this body what you have to say for yourself. Then I stood up and began to relate everything that ever I had done in all my life, and the Judge was looking direct into my face and all through me, and I knew I could hide nothing from Him, mattered not if I tried, so I knew I must confess all my sins. And Oh how He did frown on me, and those eyes did burn through me, and I confessed all and didn't try to keep anything back. then, when I had finished relating all of my sins, I did beg for forgiveness of all the sins I had committed, and if possible to have mercy on me. Then I sat down and thought I would not hear the sentence whether I be saved, but no, I did not hear this for He did not say a word. He only smiled and gave three nods, one to the extreme right side, one to the center, and one to the extreme left side, and I thought everybody in the house was smiling. Then Brother Rhodes closed the book, everybody got up and went out, and Lo, I was still left to wonder: did not know and did not feel like this nod was for me for He didn't look direct at me in the nod. I followed them out of the house and everybody was smiling and seemed to be well pleased, but no one said a word. The weather was clear and it was a

wonderful day.

Now Brother ———, this took place with me in the summer of 1949 and I am still in wonderment as to what this all is, and I still don't know if I received the Savior's nod, and the liberty of thought I once had has not returned but just in a faint measure and very brief.

I don't know if I should have written these things or not. There may not be anything to it, but it does still have a great bearing on me, and if you have any comment to make on it I would be glad to hear from you, tho I do not feel worthy of taking up your time, not even to read this.

Remember me when at the throne of Grace, if you see fit.

An unworthy Brother if one at all,
J. H. Calk

(This good letter was sent to us by Brother C. C. Wilbanks of Monroe, Louisiana, with a request that we mention the writer, Brother Calk, consented to its publication, but did not request such. Editor.)

EDITORIAL

THE THEME OF THE GOSPEL

I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and I will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command thee. (Deut. 18:18).

There has never been a mystery in the heart, or on the lips, of mortal man like unto this. Down the steeps of time, even in legend and prose and song, around the smoldering fires of ancient shepherds, and on the rugged mountain sides where sheep and cattle roamed the hills in search for tidbits of forage while their robe wrapped attendant hummed in monologues of the appearing of the promised Messiah. These are they that were waiting in keen anticipation for the coming to pass of this promised Saviour.

As I write, I feel a close kinship with these simple ancient shepherds, for I, too, have watched through many long tedious watches, looking, ever seeking some small ray of light in the wee hours of the morning greatly fearing, as oftimes, they greatly feared, that the prophets had been mistaken about the message having been delivered to them of the coming Day of righteousness. Oftimes, in dismal days in the past, and with such thoughts bringing me up with the horror of such a terror, even in this the advanced evening of my life, I am not free of such experiences, to wit, perhaps I have been mistaken in the whole thing, perhaps I have reached for the substance and only come in contact with the shadow of it. I hope better things, and yet oftimes the feeling of the presence of an abiding hope is so small that I realize it could be imagination. Yet, as it was with those humble shepherds, so it is now with me.

Speaking of looking back, I want to reach back into the history of Israel, of Jacob's family, of each of my readers. As I contemplate the vastness of such an audience, I do hope that you and I may unite in a brotherly embrace and behold the wonders of the gospel of the Son of God. If I read a text and find gossiping in it, I am as a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal; if I read a text, and I find in it and assume my being called to straighten out my brethren at home or abroad I am not only deceived but I am deceiving others. Will you remember me to the King that He give me an unction into divine matters whereby we would be comforted together in the mutual hope of our calling.

The most of us, at least the honest ones among us, are free to admit that we felt as Israel did, to wit, and Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, "All the words which the Lord hath said will we do." Every man of Adam's race is born into the world thinking that it is easy to comply with what the Lord

has commanded. In all the religious bodies under the sun, they claim the ability to get and keep the religion of Jesus Christ, excepting the Primitive or Old School Baptist people. They all claim, without exception, the ability to stop sinning and continue away from it. Let us remember that. And let us remember that all Israel said, "All that he has said, we will do."

How utterly different that it was when they were brought into His presence on the top of Mt. Sinai and heard the thundering voice of the Giver of the law when he said, The soul that sinneth, it shall die (Ezek. 18:3, 20; Rom. 5:12, 21; 6:23). How utterly different it becomes today when Jehovah thunders it into our heart and mind and soul. Certainly our description of it is not a match for the description Inspiration has given us of Israel's pell mell dash down from the presence of that Voice. However, there is not the first one of those that have heard that Voice denounce sin and sinners, that will ever forget it. As our father, Adam, endeavored to do, and as our brethren tried to do at Sinai, even so we desired and tried to get away from it.

What a tragic scene it is today to hear people boasting that they can keep the law and be saved. It has seemed to me that I have felt the depression of mind, and the fatigue of body as he made his way to the debacle which Israel was making of law religion. Unless it was in an Old School Baptist meeting, I have never heard of feigned religion ending like this. Everybody that I have come in contact that have boosted the virtue to be had in the law, and the keeping of it, have been well pleased with the results of that law religion. The evidence is clear that in their case that they had not met the same God that Israel met on Sinai. Every last one of them ran from God that gave them the law. If there is any way to find out whether or not that Israel as a whole, did not flee from that law and the One that gave it I would like to communicate with them.

It is necessary for us to be reminded once again that all of them, each one for himself boasted that everything in that law that was commanded them, that they would do it. Let us find out how well they kept their promise. They thought that they wanted to hear that law; they had no uneasiness about keeping it. Here now, at the foot of this mountain that a Voice thundered death at them, we find this cringing battered nation, begging Moses to shield them from ever hearing it again. I call on those that have an interest in revealed religion, that you notice the difference now in this people, and when they first heard of it by word of mouth. They could keep it, and they would keep every mandate of it. They did not do it; however, there are many in our time that acknowledge the ease with which it may be kept and salvation gained by thus doing.

My leanness, my lack of knowledge, my inability to understand the plain letter of the word is a stumbling block to me. I have always had a tender feeling for Moses. What he represented, and who he represented, early enlisted my utmost sympathy. I have felt to some degree the heavy weight on his mind as he reluctantly agreed to carry their petition to God that they not hear that law again because of their inability to hear it and live. There are times when the fitting of Moses into the panaroma of patterns is puzzling. Me thinks, as I watch him trudging up that fiery, steep mountain to the dwelling place of God as it is under His law, that he knew the futility of going back to God. But with their plea still ringing in his ears that they could not hear it and live, he started out to help if he could.

Usually, the surrounding scene of this momentous event would settle forever any case like it. It does seem, since people talk right much about a reasonable doctrine, that they could see what is transpiring here at the summit and the foot of Mt. Sinai, the welfare of creature religion. It does seem, since this

is the law which they are still depending on for salvation, that their failure here would enable them to read and to see, and thus to abandon it as a means to salvation. I have been hearing for seventy years that confession is good for the soul. They all, that is, all Israel, all those under the law, could not hear it and live. Here they all are sending to God a petition that He spare them hearing it again.

I watch this interview between Moses and the fiery and angry God of the mountain. Just for a fleeting second I would ask my reader to note, that while, as far as the law itself goes, it is an inflexible law; there is not any mercy in it. Yet, notice dear reader, a rich nugget of mercy even here. He did receive Moses. That law, within itself, would not have granted that second hearing. But it always has been that way. God has not dealt with us, as His poor frail people according to what we deserve; there has always been a mixture of mercy in His dealings with us, but it has not been on the basis of law, or in any sense because of a legalistic obligation. It has been because of the flowing fountain that was opened for sin and uncleanness, and the cleansing power of which reached to both the former and the latter sea. Of that cleansing fountain that even there, God did receive Moses. What a difference is manifested as Moses intervenes in behalf of Israel. Moses speaks with Him about the inflexible edict delivered to them, and their feeling that they could not hear it and live. God in justice, could have angerly replied that is good enough for them, for they had formerly pointed out to me that anything that I had said or commanded that they would do. He could have said, from the standpoint of my law, that it was inflexible, that no mercy could ever be expected from it. I am, I humble trust, writing to those that are troubled about lawyers and doctors (of the law) telling them about the law of God. While justice would have demanded ultimate and final death for every violation, yet mercy stepped in, and agreed with what Moses told him. He said, "They have well spoken that which they have spoken." They have spoken well. Strict justice would have stopped there; strict justice, would, then and there, have executed the penalty upon them for their sin. But justice did not prevail on them. Justice was not thwarted at all. The rigid penalty assessed against them was not alleviated or amended in the least degree. The longsuffering of God, the mercy of God, the love of God deferred the execution, but it did not forgo the execution of justice. We hear Him say, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of any brethren, like unto me, unto him shall ye hearken." (Deut. 18:5, 17).

At this time I bring unto you, one and all of the humble children of God, the theme of the gospel. As I approach the Man of the gospel I first would solicit your close attention to this promised Prophet. I realize that to those that are sitting as critics that it is trite, but, since it is my hope to have been wrought upon and within to the extent that I have been given the same determination of the apostle (I Cor. 1:2), I feel, not only to present every man as perfect in Him (Col. 1:28), but to point out and remove every impediment of the law (Gen. 49:10). This promised Prophet was to come among them, but He was to be like unto God. What a mystery is this. Verily, it is a time to be still and to know that He is God, and that He hath done what He pleased in heaven and in earth and in all deep places.

"Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment unto the Gentiles." I do hope that I have been blessed of God to show the utter failure of Israel to keep the law for salvation, to look up, and to feel and experience, as we look, the utter helplessness of any man or woman

obtaining salvation by the deeds of the law. At least by the letter, we have established that God Himself approved of them saying that they could not hear it and live, and further, of the blessed assurance that a good hope was given us through mercy in the raising up of a prophet which we would hearken to. I hope that we have been blessed with an insight into the fitness of this Prophet. He would be a fit Prophet for both of these estranged parties; He would be like unto God that was offended because of our sin, and like unto us, even of us, that had offended by our sin.

Now which one of those two parties brought this divine arrangement about? It is divine, that is assured, and, being divine, it is certain that none of the family of Israel contributed anything to its coming about. Thus, dear brethren, dear wayfaring strangers and pilgrims, it came from God. We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering (Heb. 2:9, 10). Not only did it become him to this for they having been elected to that end, and He elected to do this by Himself, but it was a becoming thing for Him to do. Everything to this end originated in the eternal mind of God. Nor did any earthly or created thing purpose this, neither did any of them bring it about. From God's eternal design in eternity until the last chosen vessel is safely housed in heaven, it is all of grace. Anything less, even one less than the whole, it would not have been becoming in God the Son, God the Father, God the Holy Ghost.

This Saviour to whom the spirit of Inspiration is calling attention to, is truly the Saviour of sinners. Not the first thing about it was secondary with God. It was truly His only begotten Son appointed to this work. God was delighted in Him before, long, long before His incarnation in flesh, as the Saviour was long rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth long before He was made flesh. Too, after the incarnation in flesh God was well pleased in Him more than once. (Matt. 3:17; 17:5). While disturbed in his mind about taking Mary, his wife, unto himself, the problem was all solved by an angel coming from God to Him. As in every step of the way, the Lord went before and had everything ready. Not one hand was lifted to help Him; not one hand was lifted to successfully hinder Him.

Thus I have endeavored to set forth the need for the Saviour, and I have shown to you how that God carried out His pledge to send Him. If the Lord is willing, I will show you how the Son carried out His assignment. Will you please remember me when it goes well with you that I know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and again at the right hand of the Father in glory?

Elder W. D. Griffin

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

(Concluded from last month)

An inspired apostle assures us that that rock was Christ. --I Cor. 10:4, "And did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ." That is, the Rock, in its spiritual signification, was Christ. As Moses in this figure is the law, Aaron, the Levitical priesthood, the congregation of Israel, the chosen or elect people of God. And God himself stood before Moses, on the rock in Horeb; so God was

manifest in the person of his Son, and as Moses smote the rock with his rod, in anger, so fell the rod of the law, the sword of divine justice, in indignant wrath on Christ the Rock of our Salvation. Here all the wrath of Moses which burned against the rebels was exhausted, and he could curse them no longer; so this conflict secured the redemption and deliverance of all the people of God from the dominion of the law, and from the Levitical priesthood, and being so redeemed they all drank of that spiritual water which flows so abundantly from Christ the smitten Rock. And although justly charged by Moses (the law) with rebellion, they are saved from death, delivered from wrath, and cleansed from all pollution by the streaming waters of salvation flowing from the smitten Savior, which stream has followed them with ample supplies into the promised land.

As the wilderness represents the legal state of the people of God, Moses, or the law, never held dominion over them anywhere else, so the land of Canaan represents them in their gospel relation to Christ, who is the Rock of their salvation. We are aware that some have supposed the wilderness state represented the saints in the militant state of the church, and that Jordan signifies the stream of death, through which the saints are to pass when they enter heaven as the place of their ultimate rest and glory: there are many important reasons why we reject that application of the figure. There was much fighting to be done after entering that land, and a certainty that the conflicts of the Israelites should continue as long as Israel dwelt there with the remaining Canaanites; but we know that in the final consummation of the glory of the saints they shall be free from all turmoil and strife.

In the true application of these figures, Canaan represents the gospel state of the church. Jordan dividing that state from the wilderness--of the administration of Moses. The law and the prophets were until John, and John came in the wilderness of Judah, preaching repentance, and baptizing such as brought forth fruits meet for repentance, in the river Jordan, on their profession of faith in him who came after John, to baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Here God was manifest in the flesh, as standing there upon the rock in Horeb, here the Rock which was Christ, in the figure, received the smitings of the rod of the law, met all its requisitions, suffered all its penalties, bore all its wrath and indignation, and obtained eternal redemption for his people; then rising from the dead, as our spiritual Joshua, he calls all his own sheep, or people, by name, and leads them to living fountains of water; receives his kingdom, enters into his glory, ascends his Mediatorial throne, while the eternal Father proclaims, "Moses, my servant, is dead, arise go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel." (Josh. 1:2) Our risen Savior, our antitypical Joshua, rising from the dead, assumes his reigning power, and God the Father from high heaven proclaims his inauguration, saying, "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." (Psa. 2:6) "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever, a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom," etc. (Heb. 1:8)

Now, to return to our text. Moses, for reasons which we have seen, had been previously informed, could hold his dominion no longer; now from the heights of Nebo, from the top of Pisgah, he surveys the landscape, and is assured that this is the inheritance secured by oath and promise to the people of Israel. "And the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed". The gospel kingdom, the gospel state, and all gospel blessings, and gospel privileges

were secured to the heirs of promise "by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie". "Because he could sware by no greater, he swore by himself, saying, (unto Abraham) Blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee." And all this assurance is given, "that we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth in that within the vail, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec". (Heb. 6:18-20) Moses, or the law, certainly foresaw and foreshadowed the glorious kingdom of our spiritual Joshua. All the landmarks of the heavenly Jerusalem, were seen in the distance by the eye of the law; for "his eye was not dim, nor was his natural force abated". But he could not extend his dominion into the gospel precincts. He has smitten the Rock with the rod, and now his mission is fulfilled. Israel is now dead unto the law, to Moses, by the body of Christ, and Israel is married to another, even unto him that is risen from the dead, that they should bring forth fruit unto God, that being dead in which they were held. No more under the law, but under grace; under law not to Moses, but unto Christ. "Thou shalt not go over thither". Blessed prohibition. Neither we nor our fathers were able to bear his yoke. If the law could follow us into the kingdom of our Lord, who could stand before it? Moses is not only dead, but God has buried him, and after the diligent research of all the workmongrel world for nearly four thousand years, his sepulchre has not been found. Satan has long disputed with Michael our prince about the body of Moses, and all the children of the devil still dispute with the subjects of that glorious Prince, on the same subject. They desire to be under the law; because they do not hear the law; but the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death; for what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. Moses' law was a ministration of death; but the gospel is the ministration of life; how then could we be under both at the same time? The precepts of Moses were written and engraven on tables of stone, but the law of the spirit of life is written in our heart. The yoke of Moses is called the yoke of bondage. (Gal. 5:1) But the law of Christ, our spiritual Joshua, is called "The perfect law of liberty". (James 1:25)

Whether we have succeeded in satisfying the inquiries of our aged brother or not, we have so far complied with his request as to give him, at least, some of our views upon the subject. Volumes might be written without exhausting so rich a subject. We hope that none who are dead to the law and married to Christ will feel inclined to dishonor their living Husband, by attempting to search for or dig up the body of Moses, from whom they are redeemed. ***The dead husband when living demanded every thing but furnished nothing; the living husband furnished every thing and demands nothing.*** The former always cursed and never blessed; the latter always blesses but never curses. How unreasonable to give the preference to Moses over Christ.

"Israel rejoice, now Joshua leads,
He'll bring your tribes to rest;
So far the Savior's name exceeds
The ruler and the priest."

Elder Gilbert Beebe

PSALMS 92:12

"The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in

Lebanon."

It is declared in God's word concerning man by nature that none is righteous, no, not one, yet the Lord is graciously pleased to speak of his people, as they stand in our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Righteous. Not because of any righteousness in them, but because the righteousness of Christ is imputed unto them, just as their sins were imputed unto him. He is the one of whom Job says, "The righteous shall hold on his way," and of whom David (Psalm 1.) says, He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water whose leaf also shall not wither. Therefore it is declared (Isaiah 65:22), "As the days of a tree are the days of my people," and they are also spoken of as "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified."-Isaiah 61:3.

Man by nature is like his first parent, Adam, disobedient, conceived in sin. Springing from Adam, he is just Adam multiplied, which is a multiplication of death and desolation. But we would speak of Christ, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, for from him comes life and vigor, even as from the first Adam springs death and desolation. Thus he is truly the righteous that shall flourish as the palm tree. The Jews looked on him as a root out of a dry ground, for he was not of the tribe of Levi, from whom sprang the priesthood. It is true the palm tree seems to grow in a dry ground, for it is often found in a desert land, but there must be water to sustain it. It will not grow there unless there are springs of water, and the water has to be of a certain kind. For instance, when Israel came up out of Egypt, they came to Marah, where the waters were bitter. They found no palm trees there, yet they had to travel that way and know what bitterness was. It is written that they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. The bitterness of this life, which is a living death because of sin to those by whom it is felt, is such that but for Jesus they could not endure it. But let us remember that Jesus was given vinegar mingled with gall, and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink. He tasted death for every man, for Moses (the law) cut down a tree (meaning Christ) and cast it into the waters. Thus bitterness and death were ours until Christ was slain for us. The troubled and polluted springs of this life could be changed only by the death of our Lord and Savior, and when he appears prisons palaces prove, the bitter is sweet, the medicine is food. Jesus cut down by the law sweetens the cup of the Lord's people. The traveler may go for days and not see a palm tree, neither will he find water fit to drink; so we may go days and travel many miles and there may be those (natives of the place who do not taste aright) who will cry, Lo here is water, but how often we prove it is bitter, for it is all what man can or should do and there is no Jesus preached or set forth crucified, so we do not find palm trees there. In the providence of God there are sweet springs, clear as crystal, from the rivers the streams whereof make glad the city of God, and there are the palm trees, for there the Lord has planted grace in the hearts of his people, and here he sends the streams whithersoever he will to water the plants of his grace.

Thus we would say to the wayfaring man, the palm trees are found in the desert, perhaps miles apart, but at certain places, where the traveler finds sustenance, fruit, shelter and rest. We are in a wilderness world, and there are spots today far apart, but receiving sustenance from the same source: plants of God's planting sustained by the pure unadulterated gospel of the Son of God, which is indeed sweet to the taste of God's tried and afflicted people. Thus the palm tree is found by the sweet springs, not by the cisterns, broken cisterns that man may dig, which set forth creature works and man's power. There is nothing in all such doings to comfort or sustain one poor soul. What

do poor souls need? They need Jesus set before them as the way, the truth and the life of all that live. Jesus is the alpha and omega, the beginning and the end, the root and the tree and the fruit. There must be a root before there can be the tree or the fruit, and as is the root so is the fruit.

Now all the flourishing of the palm tree is in the head, so Jesus also is the head, so when brethren are confessing their unworthiness they are speaking the truth in love, and, as Paul says, They grow up into him, in all things, which is the head, even Christ. (Eph. 4:15) Take the head, or top, away from the palm tree and it would leave nothing but a dead stump; take away Jesus from the saints and what is there? One sings,

"Depart from thee, 'tis death, 'tis more;
'Tis endless ruin, deep despair."

So the wayfaring man does not expect to see anything in the stem, but his eyes go up, up unto the head, or top, of the palm tree.

To carry the figure further, one has never heard of the desert traveler carrying a ladder with him, for this tree itself is a ladder, "a ladder from earth to heaven," (Gen. 1:51); for the stem, or trunk, of the palm tree is where the tree has been stripped of its glory, or branches, by man, leaving rough places, setting forth Jesus stripped of his glory, wounded and bruised for our transgressions, and it is with his stripes we are healed. If ever we are to have palms of victory, or have our mouth sweetened by the date which the palm yields, the only way is in and through the wounds of Christ. Our fruit and shelter is in Christ and through him. The church flourishes in Christ, and in him the one becomes a thousand. The temple of Solomon had its doors and walls covered with palm trees within and without (2 Chron. 3:5; 1 Kings 6:29). "Palm trees with open flowers," for under the legal covenant "the time of fruit was not yet come," but the open flowers carry a wonderful truth which we will mention. The palm trees have male and female flowers, and, when fully open, the wind carries the pollen from one flower to another; so the church waited for the descent of the Spirit, as a rushing mighty wind that filled all the house, and the results were soon manifest. Those fearful apostles went forth fearless, preaching a risen Savior, mighty to save. The Spirit of God, the wind that bloweth where it listeth, must take of the things of Jesus and reveal them unto us.

We have been speaking of Jesus as the righteous, but to us our text is setting forth his people, his church, his house where he dwells, and she shows forth the praise of him who has called her out of darkness into his most marvelous light. The fruitful tree was the female, so the Jews looked upon some women as upright and beautiful as the palm tree, and they called them "Tamar." In this spirit the Lord speaks of his bride, the church, in Song of Solomon 7:7, 8: "This thy stature is like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters of grapes. I said, I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof." In the temples of old the palm trees with open flowers were carved on the doors and walls, but in God's spiritual temple, whose temple ye are, his people are living trees, ever green, showing evidence of life at all times, even though it be by a groan or a sigh; trees that cannot bear fruit of themselves, for the Lord saith, "From me is thy fruit found." They grow in the wilderness of this world, subject to wind and storm, growing from within as the palm tree grows from within. That which is nearest the earth looks rough and dark; there is nothing in the stem to desire, so the Lord's people in relation to this world are often avoided, misjudged as unsociable and narrowminded. Yet far above this earth they tower, rightly seen and known by heaven, though misunderstood by earth. They stretch forth their branches toward heaven, showing forth the praises of him who

has redeemed them, for is it not in his love that they rejoice? His mercy and grace cheer and animate them, and when the wind, the Spirit, moves them how gracefully they respond.

Let us here remember that the palm branch denotes victory. In Revelation the saints are clothed with white robes, and have palms in their hands, and cry with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." After Israel had gathered the fruit of the land she was to take the boughs of godly trees, branches of palm trees, to make booths for shelter where they rested and rejoiced in the fullness of the harvest. It is as the things of Jesus are blessed to us, and we handle and taste of the word of life, that we find rest for our souls and we rejoice in Christ, our head. Palm branches are from ten to fourteen feet long and are different from the branches of any other tree. They only move when blown by the wind; and does not the church rejoice and sing the song of victory as she is moved by the Spirit of God? When Jesus rode triumphantly into Jerusalem, did not the multitude take branches of palm trees and cry, "Hosanna! Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord."—John 12:13. The palm tree often reached a hundred feet high, towering above man, yet if man would sweeten his mouth with luscious dates he must look up for them. Does not this bring to our minds the sweetness we have at times enjoyed when resting under the shadow of the Lord Jesus, hearing the saints of God tell of their hopes and fears? How different to the world and worldly things, which often leave an unpleasant taste in the mouth. When we have heard Jesus exalted above puny man our hearts have rejoiced and we have tasted of the heavenly gifts and the good word of God and the powers of the world to come. It is then the palms wave before the Lord as the Holy Spirit warms our hearts and unlooses our tongues. It is then there is a flourishing as the palm tree, a rejoicing in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh.

On one occasion, years ago, when we resided in New York City and were kept busy with our daily labor, we left home one Sunday morning for meeting feeling very downcast, unfit to meet with the brethren, realizing in our soul that we were nothing but a lump of sin. We arrived at the meeting just in time to hear Elder McConnell give out hymn 977 in Beebe's collection:

"I thirst, but not as once I did,
The vain delights of earth to share;
Thy wounds, Emmanuel, all forbid
That I should seek my pleasures there."

And as he outlined the third verse:

"I want that grace that springs from thee,
That quickens all things where it flows,
And makes a wretched thorn like me
Bloom as the myrtle or the rose."

We were moved beyond words to express, and it was, we hope, what Jesus meant to us that moved us. It is this something secret that sweetens our cup even if it is filled with gall. The righteous shall flourish, not in self-righteousness, not in self-praise, not in the world, for in the world ye shall have tribulation. The water of the word shall spring up in them, for Jesus said, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst" (it being from an eternal source); "but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Such will be rooted and grounded in love, in the love of him of whom Paul said, "Who loved me and gave himself for me," and being rooted in his love they will grow up in Christ Jesus in all things; that is, in his teachings and in his doctrine, believing that every word he spoke will stand when this vain world shall pass away. We have said before that all glory and beauty and fruit are in the head, Christ Jesus, and when all around will be dry and burnt up, the palm tree will be fresh and green; and if there be the least

shelter from the storm, or shadow from the heat, it will be from Him.

Now let us look at the latter part of our text: "He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon." Cedar, because of its durability, was used in the building of the temple, and the cedars of Lebanon were the pride of Israel in its most flourishing times. They stood upon the mountain side, deeply rooted in the rocks and receiving continuous watering from the melting snow which capped the mountain all the year round. Thus while the earth beneath them was often dry and parched, they were ever sustained from above. Here again we have a tree that is evergreen, but differing in some respects from the palm, in that it lasts much longer. Its wood is used for building and will last for hundreds of years. It also has branches which hide the trunk that sustains them, yet such is its wonderful growth, that, from the distance, it stands like a monument towering into the heavens. Like a pinnacle of the temple, pointing to heaven, the faith of a child of God as he walks in Christ points away from this world to that which is to come. Its growth is not with haste, but it is a steady growth, and, though it is ever green, it has its seasons.

Sometimes there is a fragrance which is spoken of as the smell of Lebanon; at other times, when winter is over, the winds shake it to its very roots, so that, the earth being soft, the roots spread and push deeper, taking hold of the rock to sustain the new growth of the tree which follows. So the righteous shall take root downward and they shall bear fruit upward. We would mention that these cedars are not planted by man, but by God, and, living for hundreds of years, they set forth the trees of righteousness to the glory of God. There is one thing we have noticed with regard to the cedar: as it grows it gets smaller and smaller, and so we have seen in the testimony of Zion, there is a feeling that He shall increase but I shall decrease. Wherever we see such an one he towers away above a worldling, he is watered from above and is rooted in the rock. The cedar of Lebanon was ultimately to come into the house of the Lord "to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious." —Isaiah 60:13.

Thus his children grow in grace and in the knowledge of God, to fit them for his temple, where they shall live forever. The palm tree may go down into dust, yet it is said another will grow up out of its root. Job 14:7-9, says, "For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. (Jesus is that one that grows up as a tender branch and he will not cease.) Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant." How few such places there are today, where the word of the Lord has free course, without the works of man being mixed in to embitter them, to the sorrow of those who look for better things. Yet today there are a few spots where the people of God are found watered by the unadulterated word of God. Dr. Watts, writing on the latter part of our text, sings,

"Lord, 'tis a pleasant thing to stand
In gardens planted by thy hand;
Let me within thy courts be seen,
Like a young cedar fresh and green.

There grow thy saints in faith and love,
Blessed with thine influence from above;
Not Lebanon with all its trees
Yields such a comely sight as these.

The plants of grace shall ever live;
Nature decays, but grace must thrive;
Time, that doth all things impair,
Still makes them flourish strong and fair.

Laden with fruits of age, they shew
The Lord is holy, just and true;
None that attend his gates shall find
A God unfaithful or unkind."

Elder George Ruston

June 1938

"Salvation is of the Lord."

Jonah

January 10, 1980

Dear Elder and Sister Poole,

I hope this past year has added many beautiful memories for you and your family. One of the sweetest memories to me was one I was privileged to share with you; and that was the fifth Sunday meeting in July at Hopewell Church near Winnsboro, Texas.

There was something special about that three-day meeting. A feeling of humbleness and a feeling of joy seemed to pervade everything that happened.

If a scripture could capture this feeling, it would possibly be Matthew 18:12-13. Here Jesus is speaking in a parable on Himself when He says, "How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray."

Herein is one of the most meaningful, beautiful, and astounding parables in the Bible.

Let's first look at the magnitude of the flock. We know that, compared to the rest of the world, the sheep represent a small proportion (Matt. 7:13-14). Yet the total number of His sheep represents "a great multitude which no man can number." (Rev. 7:9) So the size of His flock is very, very large.

Now let's take a look at your hope. Sometimes that hope is very strong and surely you feel that the Spirit is bearing witness with your spirit that you are the children of God. And at other times, it almost ebbs away. Yet even at that time, you know you wouldn't trade it for all the riches of this world. Then, by the grace of God, all of you are members of that flock.

And all of you have one thing in common as the prophet Isaiah lamented, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." (Isa. 53:6)

Everyone has gone astray at one time or another. Notice that this is in the past tense. It has already happened.

Now we come to the astounding part of the parable. We come to the part that is almost beyond all comprehension. Do you realize what this parable now means to you? This means that He has already done it!! He has left the thousands and thousands and thousands of sheep in the flock behind....left them all behind; and He has gone to get you, and to pick you up in His loving arms, bearing both yourself and your iniquities, and to bring you back to the sweet presence of the flock. Oh, what manner of love is this! What rejoicing in Christ!

If we could only grasp for a fleeting second the full meaning and depth of this parable, it would be sufficient to cause continuous praises and thanksgiving to His Name forever and ever.

It was this same feeling of humbleness and joy in the presence of Christ that was felt at Hopewell Church. Surely we had a season during those three days when that warfare between the flesh and the spirit was made to subside, that we may be raised in the Spirit to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. You could almost see the spirit of love flowing from breast to breast.

All the members of Hopewell Church were happy to hear that you plan to attend this year's fifth Sunday meeting in June, 1980. And we hope to have as many visiting elders and brethren as possible.

For your recollection, last year we had 17 speakers, to include yourself, Elders Lambert, Wall, Haygood, McCool, John Lee Smith, Graydon Smith, Moon, Winfrey, McLaughlin, Daniel, Shipman, Burkhalter; Brothers Lackey, Vaughn, and James Hamrick; and Hopewell's pastor, Elder Joe Hamrick, Sr.

I sincerely hope that the gentle Shepherd will richly bless you and your family for this new year and for many more years to come.

In Hope of Christ,
Joe Hamrick, Jr.

COMPARING THE FLOWERS

My beloved Pastor:

The other day when you asked me about my roses. I have no idea why I answered you in such a foolish way - "that they were like a few Old School Baptists cornered off in a hugh church of the world."

The annuals with their bright colors; gaudy no innate beauty, here today then gone; no life in them to bloom again; they just grow, spreading out to smother the roses if they could.

The roses, with their soft and delicate beauty seem quiet, trusting, and sending up a sweet odor that is pleasing to Him who made them. They bloom; they fade, they bloom and fade again, but life is still in the cane. They come back another year more beautiful than before.

How like our Spiritual life. The annual flowers are so like the one whom God has not touched with His love. They bloom in a fashion and are gone forever. The true Child of God, like the roses, has many enemies, many crosses. Sometimes the blooms are small, but never forgotten by their Gardener. There is still life in the vine, Christ, and it comes forth in His time and in His likeness.

May I thank God for showing me these little Bethels along the way.

With much love,
A Sister in hope,
Maude P. Truitt

A good king carefully observes the law. Christ, the king of Zion, kept the divine law in all respects; and His converted subjects first trust in Him as a law-fulfiller ere they can obey Him acceptably as a law-giver.

Toplady

OBITUARIES

GLADYS CONNER TURNER

Sister Turner was born April 17, 1912 in Patrick County, Va. She died August 29, 1979 being 67 years of age, 51 of which were in marriage to her husband and my pastor, Elder Cecil E. Turner. To this union was born one son, Elbert. She is survived by Brother Turner, Elbert, his wife, Avis and two grandchildren, Mark and Aleta, all of Bassett, Va. She was indeed a genuine helpmeet to her husband and talented much in industry as well as favored with good judgment to the benefit of her brethern and friends.

She enjoyed some 44 years of membership amongst the Old Baptist wherever her lot was cast amongst them. She was well known up and down the East coast and respected by all who knew her. She was baptized in 1935 by Elder Dan Helms and retained her entire membership with the church at Riverview, Bassett, Va. The report of her church, as well as others of like order everywhere, was that she was a sister beloved and a mother in Israel.

She was fortunate to have only a few days illness, less that a week, before her spirit was called away and the report was that she passed gracefully. Her funeral was held at McKee Funeral Home by Elder Donald Smith, Elder James Hollandsworth and Elder Posey Ingram. Her body was left to rest in Roselawn Cemetery in Martinsville where it awaits what every other subject of grace longs for, that is, the coming again of our Savior.

Sister Turner's gift from heaven was multiple but some of the more visible attributes were patience and perseverance. It may have been possible to find her discouraged but never mad or ugly and I'm sure the young of today would do well to glean from her wisdom, experience and memory.

She had a stability that I verily believe was of divine origin. She knew in whom she believed and was pursuaded long ago that he

was able to keep that which she had committed into his hands. She had veins of charity running in her being that made her adaptable to the needs of the day. I'm sure she knew what it meant..."as thy day may demand so shall thy strength be".

Much could be said about this pillar of God's mercy in the earth and still not the half been told but suffice it to say that God sent her here, the church in the earth received her with thanks, she lived and died honorably and may it be our favored lot who are left behind, family and friends, to do likewise by God's grace.

I didn't think I could do an obituary like this at first but I freely say with joy, its been a pleasure. May God's grace preserve us until we go to be with Sister Turner and all others of like precious faith who have gone on before.

Written by request,
James R. Holley

LUCY BOAZE PAYNE

At the request of Old Mountain Church we will try to write a memorial of our dear friend, Lucy Boaze Payne.

Lucy was born September 13, 1907, a daughter of the late Roy P. Boaze and Nora Jackson Boaze.

On June 9, 1923 she married John J. Payne, who survives. Most of her life was spent in Pittsylvania County and for the last 25 years she had lived in Danville, Virginia.

She passed away in Memorial Hospital on March 10, 1979, after several years of declining health. Surviving in addition to her husband of the home are three daughters, Mrs. Katherine P. Rigney, Baltimore, Md., Mrs. Dorothy P. Walton, Dayton, Ohio, and Mrs. Nancy P. Burnett, of Dry Fork, Virginia; three sons, John T. Payne, Morris A. Payne, and Jerry W. Payne, all of Danville, Va.; also five sisters, Mrs. Lula Thomas, Mrs. Annie Mae Ayers. Mrs. Bertie Settle, and Mrs. Mary Christ, all of Lynchburg, Va., and Mrs. Janey McHaney, Naurine; one brother, Garland Boaze of Danville, 14 grandchildren, and 11 great grandchildren.

Although Lucy's name was not written on the visible Church book we feel sure it was written in the Lamb's book of Life before the foundation of the earth was laid. This was observed from her daily walk in life. She dearly loved the Primitive Baptist Doctrine and the brethren and sisters. She loved to hear her husband and others read the Bible and talk on the scriptures, and she went to church as often as her health would permit, and she rejoiced. Her favorite song was "O, How happy are they, Who their Saviour obey." We believe she did obey.

She was much loved by all who knew her. Brother Johnnie, her husband, often said of her, "She is a wonderful companion, a good wife, a good mother, a good cook, and a good housekeeper. What more could you ask."

Her funeral was held in Wrenn and Yeatts Funeral Chapel on March 12, 1979, by Elder H. W. Wray and Elder D. V. Spangler. Her body was laid to rest in Hiland Memorial Burial Park beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the second coming of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Written by order of conference at Old Mountain Church.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
Sarah Barker, Clerk

POSIE LESTER LYNCH

Posie Lester Lynch, the son of Julia Frances and Peter William Lynch, was born January 31, 1890, and passed away February 19, 1978.

Brother Posie married Laura Alice McCall, October 13, 1915. They were blessed with three sons; Cecil D., Guy T., and Posie L. Lynch, Jr., all of Rocky Mount, Va.; three daughters, Mrs. Lorene Thurman, Mrs. Eleanor Woody, both of Rocky Mount, Va., and Mrs. Anne McBride of Roanoke, Va. Also surviving is one sister, Mrs. Pearl Perdue.

Brother Lynch united with the Primitive Baptist Church in Charleston, West Virginia, and was baptized by Elder B. F. Robertson. He was received by letter at Rocky Mount Church on March 24, 1928, and was ordained a deacon on August 24, 1935. He served his church faithfully as long as he was physically able.

His funeral was conducted February 21, 1978, by his Pastor, Elder Cecil E. Turner, who hopes to meet him, together with all the saints, on that great day.

Written by request,
Cecil E. Turner

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 6/80 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

TO THINK OF OTHERS

Lord let me think of others,
And leave myself alone:
To dwell on others comfort,
And never on my own.
Please let me not be selfish,
For that is wrong indeed:
But let me please my neighbors
And think upon their need.

Lord let me help another,
And never cast them down:
But let me spread some sunshine
And never cause a frown.
And if someone is troubled,
Lord let me lift them up.
So that the peace of Heaven,
Will over run their cup.

And when my soul is bowing,
Before Thy Throne above,
Please fill my heart with kindness,
With tenderness and love.
And if a soul is lonely,
And feel there's none to care,
Lord, let me be the someone,
My love with them to share.

By Ethel Gilland

PREDESTINATION

Brother Beebe:--Having understood that several of our Brethren in different places, as well as others, have so construed my pieces on the Absolute Predestination of all things, as to infer that I represent God to be the Author of sin, I have been led to look over those Numbers to see if I did make any slip on that point, and leave any sentence so worded, as to give just ground for their construction. But I did not find a single sentence, which by any fair interpreta-

tion, represents God as being the author of sin in general, or as compelling the creature to a sinful choice by any arbitrary force put upon his mind. I think, if any of our Brethren, who have taken up this wrong idea of those Numbers on Predestination would take the trouble to examine them again impartially, they will find that so far from my representing God as being so the author of sin as to exempt man from guilt in his sinful transactions, I have endeavored particularly to show, whilst the predestination of God determines that sin, and the sinful acts of men and devils shall result in the accomplishment of his own glorious purposes, that this predestination does not destroy the free agency of man, but leaves him free to act, and consequently conscious of his guilt, and justly subject to punishment for his crimes. As in the case of Joseph's Brethren and of the Assyrian (No. 4, Signs No.*) and of Judas and the Jews, (No. 2, Signs No. 5).

Persons who make these objections to my views as published seem to overlook the fact that I speak of God's government in this case, as being a predestination, or pre-determination, to permit such and such acts of depravity to take place, and to cause them to produce certain results, and to transpire under certain circumstances; and not a predestination to compel men to perform those acts.

I know that many persons have, in their minds, so attached to the term predestination, the idea of arbitrary force exerted upon the minds of men compelling them to act as never to attend to any other explanation given to the subject. Whereas by attaching such an idea to the term predestination when spoken of God, they divest him of that infinite wisdom and understanding which belongs to him, and bring him down to a level with us short-sighted mortals. Man when he absolutely predetermines an act or event, acts foolishly, for he knows not what an hour may bring forth. Not so with God. He can, and does declare the end from the beginning with all the attendant circumstances.

Persons who suffer their minds to be thus swayed by their prejudices against a term, can scarcely fail of attaching to the combined terms, absolute predestination, everything awful and tyranical. The plain natural meaning of the term absolute is unconditional, in this sense, and in this sense only is it used in this connection. And whilst we contend for an absolute or unconditional predestination, we deny that there is any thing like an arbitrary purpose or act to be found in the government of God.

In order if possible to be more clearly understood upon this point I will offer a few additional remarks:

1. That such is the depravity of human nature, that so sure as he is given up to the sway of any one of his passions, and comes into contact with circumstances exciting him to the gratification of that passion, so assuredly he perpetrates the crime to which his depraved passion thus urges him. David in the case of Bathsheba and Uriah, being left to the influence of his passion, needed but the exciting circumstance of seeing from the roof of the King's house the woman washing herself, to lead him on to that course which resulted in the consummation of his whole crime. David therefore instead of charging this act upon God, was conscious that it was chargeable only to the depravity of his own heart, and therefore justly says to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord". And yet there is no room left to suppose that this whole affair was not embraced in the predeterminate purpose of God, for it was a very important link in that chain by which Shiloh descended from Judah.

Hence, 2d. That whilst the predestination of God extends to every event which takes place in the universe, it puts no other force upon the minds of sinful agents than that of restraint. God has predestinated that men shall not act

out the depravity of their hearts, any further than he, for wise purposes, has predetermined to let them go in sin. For producing this restraint, he employs various instruments, as education, public opinion, etc., and also frequently causes the various passions of man to counteract the undue influence one of another. In a word, the predestination of God secures that so far as he had determined to leave any one to act out the depravity of his heart, so far attending circumstances shall be favorable thereto; as in the case of Pharoah: "Even for the same purpose have I raised thee up, (that is, by my providence, to the throne of Egypt, that full opportunity may be given thee to show the haughtiness and cruelty of thy heart,) that I might show my power in thee, (in causing thy arrogance and rage to work thy own destruction and my people's deliverance.)" So of Judas, the thirty pieces of silver are secured to him for a bait.--On the other hand wherein God has determined to restrain the wrath of man, or to put restraints upon his depravity, he places him in circumstances calculated to exert the necessary force upon his passions.

But from whence comes depravity and sin? Sin exists in the world in the depravity of man and yet in its origin it was a non-existence; not a creature, nor an eternal existence. God is but the innocent cause, if I may use the expression, of its having an existence. Had not God brought intelligent creatures into existence sin could never have had a being; and if God had not created and placed those creatures under a law, and left them to the free exercise of their own wills whether to obey or not, sin would never have become an existence in the world; and yet not God but angels and men, each in his sphere, brought it into existence.

The existence of sin in the world, may be aptly illustrated by the existence of darkness. Darkness could never have had an existence had not God made creatures needing the medium of material light in order to the exercise of their organs of vision. For in God is no darkness at all. But when creatures were produced needing material light to enable them to see, the absence of that light is what we call darkness. In reference to the statement (Gen. 1:2) "And darkness was upon the face of the deep:" I understand it to be spoken in relation to the progress of creation, and to be an intimation that the material light suiting this material world was not then created, and that this darkness or absence of light was no more a direct production of God than was the formless state of matter in its original production. The one was the absence of that order which was afterwards given to the matter created; the other, the absence of that light which creatures would need to the use of sight. It is true God has given to material darkness a permanent being in relation to creatures on earth, by dividing between the light and between the darkness, instead of giving to the light an entire sway over the earth.

So of sin, to go back no farther than its relation to man, God made man upright, but made him a dependent and an accountable creature and therefore laid him under obligations to be holy in heart and life unto God, or in other words, to be entirely and voluntarily devoted to the will of his Creator. And being thus created God gave him a command as a test by which to prove his voluntary subjection to his Creator or his voluntary holiness. I say to prove whether he would be holy to God. I know the general idea is, even among those who we esteem sound, that God created man a holy being, but this is an idea I have not been able (Perhaps from inferiority of intellect), to comprehend, that is, to say in relation to heart holiness or voluntary devotion to God. I know that the word holy is sometimes used to denote mere freedom from impurity, in this sense I cheerfully give in to

the idea, that man was created holy, that he came from the hands of his Creator pure. Man being thus put to the test, he soon showed a destitution of that voluntary holiness, that self-devotedness to God which, his being a creature, laid him under obligation to exercise. This want of holiness was sin, it was a violation of his obligation and a transgression of the command under which he was placed. And I do not know but that Adam's thus prefering his own gratification to submission to the government of God was as much a natural or necessary consequence of his being left to choose for himself as is the succession of darkness to the withdrawal of light. I know that being thus left to his own choice, the very first occasion finds him choosing to set up for himself, for Adam was not deceived; and I know that God with certainty knew that this would be the course of man; hence the setting up of Christ before the foundation of the world. The act was Adam's own, it was not that Satan infused any evil principle into him. Satan was only an instrument in beguiling Eve, or exciting him to a choice upon the point. Man having made his choice to serve self rather than God; the penalty of the command took immediate effect, and depravity runs through the whole human family, and became from the choice of Adam, the reigning power over the human heart, reigning unto death; the penal requisition of the law giving it that power, for the strength of sin is the law. Hence man exists under the law of sin and death, from which he could be ransomed only by the blood of Christ; and delivered only by being brought into a new existence as a new creature in Christ, and that only by the power of God.

Do any ask what has predestination to do with this? I answer that it has this much to do with it; that God predestinated man to be, or pre-determined to make him just such a creature as he was, and to leave him to encounter the temptation in his own creature weakness, that he might act freely without the restraints of communicated holiness; with the certainty of his falling and becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and thus an occasion should be offered for bringing in the Sun of Righteousness. And here is the counterpart to the figure of darkness. If creatures had not been so formed as to need material light, there would have been no occasion for the sun; if man had not so fallen, as to need a Divine Saviour, the Word had not been made flesh. Hence says Christ, "I come a light into the world". And in the coming of Christ there is "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards man." If glory to God in the highest come through Christ, then predestination has assuredly secured a greater good by man's being left to fall, than could have come to the universe by his being supported and confirmed by the power of God in his original state of uprightness. Thus the predestination of God instead of making God the author of sin, secured that all the glory of redemption should result from the malice of Satan and the native weakness of man.

S. Trott

Fairfax Court House, Virginia
July 7, 1834

RECEIVING MEMBERS

Christ has given commands in regard to the order of his church: who are to be admitted, and who retained in the fellowship of the church. He that believeth and is baptized, whether Jew or Gentile, whatever he may have been; whether a moralist or a murderer, a persecuting Saul or a devout Pharisee; if born again, and recipients of the faith of God's elect, gladly receiving the word, they must be baptized and added to the church, received into the fellowship of the saints, and admitted to all the privileges of God's House.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

708 N. Casa Grande Circle
Duncanville, Texas 75116

CALLING UPON GOD

"And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear."--Isaiah 65:24

If a person is predestinated to be an heir of grace, then he or she will truly call upon God.

There are actually two types of direct calls between God and His elect, one in each direction: (1) God calls His people through Christ's calling them by name (John 10:3), and (2) His people call upon Him and are saved (Acts 2:21, Rom. 10:13, Joel 2:32). Herein let us consider the latter call, the call from God's people to Him, after saying only this about the former call: God does call each of His elect with His effectual, irresistible, direct call before they ever call upon Him. God's call to His child must precede the call of His child to Himself; God is the Prime Mover, the First Cause of all causes and effects, and if He were not pleased to call the sinner to salvation, the sinner would never call upon Him for salvation.

From the dictionary we find that the very definition of an "answer" is linked with a call, a question, a problem, or something else prior to the answer. You answer a call, you answer a question, you find the answer to a problem, you answer a charge or an argument, or whatever. "Answer" implies a previous action by another party. This is the natural order. In nature the call, the problem, the question, or the argument comes before the answer. In the spiritual realm, however, nothing can exist before God's answer because nothing can or does precede God Himself. There is no way a person can call upon the Preexistent, unchangeable God before He answers. He is before all things, and by Him all things consist, including our very calling upon Him. Therefore, as He is before all things, and our call is included in "all things," He is before our call. Also, as He is unchangeable, the answer to His child's call must have always existed with Him and in Him, so He answered before any of His children ever cried out to Him. God, who is before all, of necessity reverses the natural order. It cannot be otherwise. If a person truly calls upon God, God has already answered. If God has not already answered a person's call, He never will, again because He is unchangeable.

In the natural world, most of us have observed people who, when approached with a question, assume they know what an inquirer has in mind and proceed with an "answer" that is totally off of the subject. This is because of the presumption of the finite man's assuming that he knew what was going to be asked before it was asked. "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and a shame unto him (Prov. 18:13)." This is only a problem to natural men, but not to the Almighty One, because He not only both hears and answers prior to one's speaking and calling, but it is said of Him, "Thou understandest my thought afar off...there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether (Psalm 139)."

Isaiah 64:6-7 says, "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee." That is the rule: unclean, unrighteous, filthy, faded as a leaf, taken away by our iniquities; such will never truly stir up himself to call upon Him. Yet, there are exceptions to this rule, in that every one of God's elect does call upon Him, and each of them is saved. However, according to this verse (Isa. 64:7) they do not stir up themselves either to call upon His name or to take hold of God. There are no exceptions to that part of this rule.

Now, as the heirs of God are indeed

stirred up to take hold of God in calling upon Him, yet none stirreth up himself to take hold of Him, it follows that someone else, some outside force, must have stirred them up to do so. Who is it that does the stirring? It is neither self, nor friend, nor preacher, nor parent, nor beloved companion, but it is God Himself who stirs the hearts of His elect. "As the eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him and there was no strange god with him (Deut. 32:11f)."

Before addressing the question of what is God's answer, it would be well to consider briefly what the elect's cry is, or what it is for which they call unto God. Their cry is recorded in many ways in the scriptures: "God be merciful to me a sinner (Lk. 18:13)," "Lord, help me (Mt. 15:25)," "Lord save me (Mt. 14:30)," "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief (Mk. 9:24)," "Lord, save us: we perish (Mt. 8:25)," "Have mercy on us, O Lord (Mt. 20:29)." In a myriad of ways and from countless dark situations they call upon Him. Whatever else may be said about their calling upon Him, it must be said that it is a distress call and a call for help. This is so because the Holy Spirit awakens the elect to their distressful, helpless condition ere He enables them to call upon the name of the Lord for salvation.

Someone may ask, but what if reprobates call upon Him? Will they be saved also? The answer to that question is, they will not call upon Him in the true sense. In a superficial way many people go through the motions: "They cried, but there was none to save them: even unto the Lord, but He answered them not (Psalm 18:41)." Psalm 145:18 tells us, "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him," it is true; but the text continues and qualifies this by adding, "to all that call upon Him in truth." Christ said that many would say unto Him in that day, "Lord, Lord..." but this is not the calling upon the Lord in truth, which Paul meant when he said, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." True calling upon the Lord is further defined and clarified by Paul in II Tim. 2:22: "But follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." The difference between the reprobate and the elect in this instance is that the reprobate calls from an impure heart which is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked (Jer. 17:9), while the elect call upon Him from a pure (purified) heart. And how do their hearts come to be pure? Not by any merit whatsoever in themselves, and it is by the predestinating grace of God in Christ Jesus. God so works in them that their heart is prepared and their tongue answers to this work of God by calling to Him, "Lord, save us: we perish!" For, "the preparations of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord (Prov. 16:1)."

And now, what is God's answer which precedes their call, even as God's existence precedes man's existence? His answer is that of a predestinated, acceptable sacrifice in behalf of His own. His answer is foreordained redemption, "with the blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world... (I Pet. 1:19f)." It was the foreordained Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, who was every bit as much the answer to the distress of Adam, Noah, Abraham and Jacob as He is the answer to the distress of His harassed and troubled children in this present evil age. The blood of the spotless slain Lamb, foreordained before the foundation of the world, eternally antedates them all. Although the timely enactment of the crucifixion of Christ Jesus was accomplished in the days of the Roman Empire, He is nevertheless "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8)." From that same point, the

Lamb slain possessed a book with the names of those for whom He died "written in the book of life from the foundation of the world (Rev. 17:8)." None whose names were written then and there will worship the beast, but they will all be brought to worship the Lamb. It is they who will enter into the new Jerusalem, the holy city (Rev. 21:27).

As God says He will answer before they call, it follows that they will call. If the elect did not call upon Him in time, how then could we be certain that God has already answered them in eternity? Both the eternal answer of God and the elect's calling upon Him in time must stand or fall together, for the same God that promised the one promised the other in this same sentence.

There is no such thing as an answer without a call or its equivalent; but only the God of predestination can and does answer His children before they call!

In that blessed hope,
(Elder) C. C. Morris

Route 1, Box 318
Eustace, Texas 75124
July 31, 1979

Dear Brethern,

Again I would like to say how good it was to have all of you at our meeting. I certainly feel that the Lord has blessed our little Church to have had a wonderful meeting.

As I sat there Sunday morning my mind turned to the Fifteenth Chapter of I Corinthians: As wonderful as it was, what is that compared to eternity? If we be not included in the resurrection then all is for naught. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." (I Corinthians 15:19)

There are those who do not believe in the resurrection of the body. However, I have to accept the teaching of the Scriptures, and the Apostle Paul declares in plain and simple language the body, yea this body, will be raised up in the last day. He did not say that this old flesh as we now know it, but that it would be changed from a mortal body to an immortal body. What is it that each of us are interested in? Wherein lies our hope? I believe that our hope lies in the fact that due to the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ that we will be lifted up with Him and housed in heaven and immortal glory. We are concerned with this body and this soul that we are encased in right now. I feel that he had the wisdom to fashion this old body in the first place, therefore, He has the wisdom to fashion it again, if so be His will, in whatever form that would be pleasing to Him. We trust that the change will be like unto the body of Christ, that we may be like Him.

"As by one man came death, so also by one man came the resurrection of the dead." "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Paul says, "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage is it to me, if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die." He also admonishes them to be not deceived by evil communication, as the foregoing expression is, but natural man will question the wisdom and Will of God. He will inquire as to how that the resurrection can or will come about. The explanation made by the Apostle Paul cannot be improved upon. For he says, "Man can plant a seed and not know what will come up; he only has the bare seed." Therefore, wheat may spring up for oats, or oats for rye, etc. Not so with God. He giveth a seed a body according to His good pleasure and it will be a body according to this Will. Just as sure as He formed the celestial bodies and the terrestial bodies, He will form the bodies of His people after the likeness of His Precious Son, Jesus Christ. Thanks be unto God that there will be nothing in the presence of God in that day like unto this old body of flesh and blood that we know here. Flesh and blood cannot enter

into the Kingdom of Heaven. "It will be sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body." The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. The last man Adam bore the sins of His people on the cruel Tree of Calvary that He might be able to raise them up at the last day; and, He will reign till He has put all enemies under his footstool. The last enemy to conquer being death. When on the last day death and hell, Satan and all his angels have been defeated, then can we say, "Oh death where is thy sting; Oh grave where is thy victory?". Then the Son of God and the son of man shall be glorified and all things committed unto the hand of Almighty God to reign forever in eternal bliss.

I believe our little meeting gave us a little fore-taste of that blessed day.

Hope you had a safe trip home and may the Lord bless you to come our way again.

In Christian Love,
Elder B. J. McLaughlin

Patrick Springs, Va.

Dear Editors of the Signs,

I want to pay for two more years subscription of the ***Signs.*** I am 72 years old and I cannot go to church often, and the paper helps a lot. It is sound doctrine.

I was shocked to read in the December paper a notice that the Editors had been accused of publishing unsound doctrine. The Scriptures will back all I've read in the ***Signs.*** I am going through the Bible my seventh time, and I hope to live to finish this time. I see no unsound doctrine in the ***Signs.*** Keep chopping the wood and let the chips fall where they must.

Thanks for the good work,
Mrs. Aaron Foley

Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Dear Editors,

Thanks so much for reminding me to renew my subscription for the ***Signs of the Times.*** I am enclosing a check for another two year's subscription. The remainder is to be used as you need it. The dear ***Signs*** has been coming to me for a long time, and I enjoy reading the contents so much and look forward to each copy.

May the good Lord bless the Editors and writers to continue sending the good news because we don't have a Primitive Baptist Church here.

In Christian love,
Virginia Blackwell

Mrs. Mamie Rose Ferguson

Dear Sister in Christ,

I realize that I have not answered your number of so good letters before, but (and I like that little three-letter word) but our thoughts and minds are often with you.

You mention that I am a lonely pilgrim; well, I am as far as the world is concerned, but I really am not alone, but my Heavenly Father has shown love, tender care, and exciting my heart in all of nature, and most of all in His blessed Word, to my comfort.

I was glad to hear you could be blessed to hear Elder Donald Smith. I have heard about him in the late past, and also Elder Turner, both of which I would like to hear or if someone has taped their sermons, I would be glad to recompence them for the tape or tapes and postage. I cannot understand why the Elder was so bereaved at the loss of a loved one. That is a physical man, and sorrow for self when our Heavenly Father calls. There is a purpose and the comfort of being at last at rest in the Kingdom that has no end.

I marvelled when I saw the letter published in the ***Signs*** and couldn't believe it sounded so much better. I was crying and brought down in all

humbleness. I am glad, though, that some have enjoyed the message.

I see also you do visiting and I am sure you will find it helpful, joyful and a blessing both received and given freely. I like your reference to Malachi 3:16 and 17. We go to the nursing home two or three times weekly.

Well, Claudia and I have much to be thankful for, though. The leaves that were so beautiful up here in New York State this fall are all gone except the oaks. We have had rains, but no snow as yet and today, Wednesday, November 14, 1979, is quite cold and windy and does feel like snow soon. We have the front of the house and meeting house front cleaned up but the rear of both places have to be finished.

We listened to a minister speak on "Rest" and it so stirred this poor one to search the Word and found much to the glory of our God.

First, there are so many kinds of "Rest" but I would write a little only of only "One Rest". The first "Rest" is found in Gen. 2:1-3. "Thus the heavens (plural) and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." So now turn to Hebrews 3:11 and 4:3-5. Paul in writing to the Hebrews in this chapter was speaking to Holy Brethren, as it reads, "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this man (Christ Jesus) was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded by some man: but he that built all things is God." In reading both chapters we find these words, "Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart: and they have not known my ways." This is so true yet to this day, and then he says, "So I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest." (A promise).

So dearly beloved, what about us, you or I? Let us return to the blessed Word. It says, "Take heed brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called today: lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin". And then this, "For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end".

So let us go to Chapter 4, "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." This is most certainly a cause for us all to fear and tremble. But it says, "For unto us (you and even I) was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."

Now we come to the real matter of "Rest". The third verse says, "For we which have believed do enter into rest". Yes, and by no works that we ever do, for it says, "Although the works were finished from the foundation of the world." For, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, (Christ Jesus) He also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His." In this Christ is exemplified and because of this we can take comfort in that it says, "Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder the soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of

the heart." There is therefore, I feel, in our hearts a desire to press on to that high calling in Christ Jesus, that through His word might enter into rest, into His Kingdom that shall have no end. We but continue to watch and pray and praise Him from whom all blessings flow, He who is the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

May it please our Lord to watch over you and all with you with tender loving care.

Claudia and E. K. Adsit

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PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The One Hundred Fifty-fifth Annual session of the Pigg River District Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Chestnut Church, commencing on Friday before and continuing through the first Sunday in August, 1980. (August 1,2,3).

Chestnut is located near Rocky Mount, Va. Coming from Rocky Mount, go south about three miles, take the left on State Route 619. Then, go three miles and turn right onto State Route 724. From Martinsville, Va., go north on Route 220 approximately 22 miles. Then, turn right off of Route 220 onto State Route 724. Follow the signs.

The brethern ask that every one please bring their folding chairs as there will be none provided.

For more information contact Elder Cecil Turner, Route 3, Bassett, Va., (Phone: 703-629-2286) or Jessie O. Tyree, Route 2, Ferrum, Va., (Phone: 703-365-2509)

All lovers of the truth are invited.

Jamie E. Cooper, Clerk

ORDINATION

"And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." (Isa. 30:21)

At the regular business meeting of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, December, 1979, at Mayfield, N.C., the church voted to call a Presbytery to set apart Brother Reubin French and Brother Bobbie Collie to the office of Deacon, on the fourth Sunday in January, 1980.

On that date a presbytery composed of Elders C. B. Davis, Jr., Leonard Key, Julian Williams, Haywood Wray, and D. V. Spangler proceeded to set apart these brethren to the office of Deacon.

There were twenty visiting Deacons present, from three Associations, and a number of independent churches.

(Elder) D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Boyd Minter, Clerk of Dan River Church

PINE CREEK MEETING

Pine Creek Primitive Baptist Church will again have all-day services on July 4, 1980, the Lord willing. All lovers of the Truth are invited.

Anyone needing information or instructions to the meeting house should contact:

Elder Roy Agee
Route 1
Copper Hill, Virginia 24079

PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF ELDER D. V. SPANGLER

We, the undersigned Committee appointed by the Board of Trustees of the ***Signs of the Times,*** at their meeting in Danville, Virginia, November 23, 1979, have examined the records of the Treasurer from 1941 through November, 1979, and do certify that all transactions to be in order. We forward the records to the new treasurer as correct after an examination conducted to the best of our ability.

(Signed)
Kenneth R. Key, Sr.
Haywood W. Wray
Burnell B. Williams

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The one hundred thirty-ninth session of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, according to appointment, with Mt. Ararat Church on July 11, 12, 13, 1980, which is the second Sunday, Friday and Saturday before.

Mt. Ararat Church is located on Highway 750 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, about 7 miles N.W. of Danville, Virginia. We cordially invite our corresponding brethren and friends for this meeting and all that love the doctrine of salvation by grace.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

(Selected From An Old Gospel Standard)

ON THE PASTORAL OFFICE

Messrs. Editors, - To know and clearly see the truth of the gospel of the Lord Jesus in its genuine harmony and unalloyed purity, is very important and momentous, but to be enabled to claim our own personal interest in it, and to call its sweet promises and invitations ours, is infinitely more important, at least for the present comfort of the soul. The former I have been enabled for some time past to realize, but the latter I verily believe I have never yet been able to come at, but I have often thought my experience was like nobody's else. I can hear some tell with what condemning force and terrifying horrors the law has come home to their conscience, and what deep insufferable convictions they felt when the Lord first began with them, and that they can tell the time and place when he did begin with them, and I am far from saying this is not the way the Lord is pleased to bring some of his children; but if ever the Lord has begun with me, this is not the way I have been led. I cannot tell any particular place, time, or even means by which I was first convinced of my sins, only I remember (it is some years since) I began to feel I was not fit to die, and that I was an unholy creature before God; and I thought some change must take place in me, some way or other, or I could not go to heaven. With these feelings I firmly resolved to be better and holier. Accordingly, I set to praying, as I thought, more fervently and sincerely, and reading my Bible regularly, attending preaching, and attempting to remember all the preacher said, and was determined to practice it. For some time

I followed this course, striving hard to keep up to this standard, but often falling far short, which always gave me great anguish of soul, but would again make fresh resolutions and fresh attempts to be good and holy, and would watch and guard my thoughts and words, but the more holy I strived to get, the oftener I came short, and consequently, felt distressed and grieved in my soul. In this way, striving and doing, I went on about eighteen months or two years, without one particle of gospel hope or peace. I had no more knowledge of the gospel way of salvation, and of Christ as a complete free grace saving Redeemer to poor helpless sinners, than a ranting Arminian has, though at this time I was among the Independents, and with a view that I might get holier, I joined their church; but I was only the more miserable, for I thought they should feel very holy and pious when they received the Lord's supper, and I felt myself really a vile wretched sinner before a heart-searching God, and could not be persuaded but I was an unworthy receiver. I passed amongst them as a very pious young man; whereas, I felt wearied and sick of my filthy corrupt heart, and was burdened and grieved because I could not feel holier and better, according to the preacher's doctrine. Thus it is, if ever the Lord convinced me of my sins it was in this gradual way. Still I am persuaded, if the Holy Ghost ever did convince me, it was in a moment of time, though I knew it not. Some can not only tell the exact time when they were quickened and convinced of sin, but they can tell equally as exactly the time and spot where and when the Lord set their soul at liberty; when they felt justified, pardoned, and accepted of God. Now whether this cut me off as being a Christian or not, solemnly in the sight of a heart-searching God, I can no more tell this than the former; and if none have a right to be called Christians but those who can thus set their seal to their adoption, I frankly confess I have no right to be considered one. When I was in the very height of labouring for inward holiness to fit me for heaven, consequently miserable in my very soul, (because I could not feel I got any better before God,) I met with a friend who held the doctrines of grace, I believe in their purity. He laid them before me very plainly and simply, and I was enabled, without much hesitation or opposition to them, to see them very clearly; and by and bye, with some persuasion, I began to preach them, and have continued so to do ever since, as the Lord has enabled me, (if indeed he has sent me), and since then I have often rejoiced to know the doctrines of sovereign grace. My heart has leaped within me to know there are such glorious truths for poor, helpless sinners, and a clear sight of the harmony of grace sets my soul on wheels up to this time; but mind you, I do not thus rejoice in the truth bcause I see if for myself, and can claim my interest in it. O, no; for I believe I never was solidly able thus to see it. I rejoice simply in the knowledge of the truth itself, and I do love the truth, to hear and see it; but I cannot tell you for why, for I really cannot see my interest in it. When I have been in the pulpit at times, I have said, "I know I am interested in Christ and his finished work", but almost as soon as I have said it, I have keenly questioned whether I was not lying, and afterwards I have thought I said it more by way of bravado in the face of Satan, than from an assurance of the fact. At times I have thought I had a little resting hope on Christ as mine, and just about to cast my soul upon him, and rest with a full assurance in him, when a gust of doubts and fears has come like a whirlwind and blown all away, and left me in misery. This is just as much as I can say respecting my knowledge of my interest in Christ and his gospel. I am indeed very far from being able to tell the time or place when I felt justified, pardoned, and my soul set at liberty. I

cannot say any such thing without making myself a lying hypocrite. Indeed, I cannot say I ever felt my soul thus set at liberty. As I have said before, I feel a pleasure and delight in seeing and knowing the truth, and I feel Christ precious for the sake of his work, but not because I know my interest in that work, for I do not; only I have a longing hope to know it to be mine.

Such has been my conviction of sin, and such is the knowledge I have of the truth for myself; and in this stage of matter I have to preach, or try to preach, Christ crucified.

Now, Messrs. Editors, I have told you as plainly and honestly as I possibly can, a little of my past and present experience, God being my witness, whom from my very heart I solemnly wish to be judged by, for man in general I am afraid of. Still I could wish you, or some of your experienced correspondents, to answer me, and tell me the genuine proofs of a man's being sent to preach the gospel; whether it be, as some say, that a man has no right to preach till he knows Christ assuredly for himself, by the Spirit of adoption, and be able to say, "I am his and he is mine". and to realize his own interest in the gospel; or if feeling preaching heavily impressed on his mind be a proof; or if the Lord owning and blessing his own word by him, with unction and power, to the hearts of his poor broken-hearted children be a proof; or whatever else may be the real proof, to state it. For me to preach, if I thought the Lord had not called me to it, I think I could almost rather suffer death, for false preachers I know are so abominable in God's sight, so hurtful to the church of Christ, and so abundantly at this day. Which ever of you answer me, I hope the Lord will enable you to be faithful, and speak on the subject scripturally, impartially, and plainly; for these are solemn realities, not to be played with; and may the God of never ending mercies be the comfort and consolation of poor mourning souls.

Yours,

Sept. 22, 1837 Worse than Nothing

Carthage, Mississippi

Dear Ones of the Staff,

I hope I can call you my brothers in Christ, although I feel so unworthy to call you my brother in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I see it is time to renew for the ***Signs of the Times.*** I don't want to miss one copy of the good paper. I enjoy its contents more than words can say. I love what you dear ministers of God contend for. I hear so much false, so called preaching until it is sickening. I once enjoyed false preaching for I didn't know anything else, but praise God, who showed me the old paths and led me to the true church. I've loved it above anything this world has to offer.

I feel that we are nearing the end of time so fast, and for my part I hope the end is very near. We are in perilous times that makes me long to see the end of time come.

I love the Lord's people for Christ's sake.

Mrs. Lillian Faulkner

EXPERIENCE

About 3:30 P.M. in March of 1918, I was plowing in the field. I turned at the end of the row, as I had turned many times before that day. I had not gone far when I was burdened with a great depression. I knew something great and terrible had happened. Immediately I saw I was a vile and wretched sinner before the great God of heaven and earth. I saw my sins had reached to heaven, and the Lord had come in rememberance of me and looked down, seeing my wretched state of being, would have nothing more to do with me. I felt He would cast me into eternal darkness and that this condemnation was just and right, for that was where I belonged. It was very grievous, to the

extent my mind was never free of the through, "O my awful, lost, and ruined condition, if I had been better the Lord would not have condemned me, but it's too late now. Nothing can be done about it now, for the Lord has already passed sentence."

As I went on it became more and more grievous, when alone I would cry, on waking up in the night my first thought was "O my awful lost and ruined condition." My mind was never free of that dreadful thought. I would not ask the Lord to have mercy on me because I had read of wicked kings, after having made a decree, then seeing they were wrong, would not retract their decree. For me to ask the true and living God to undo something he had already done would be adding sin on top of sins, of which I already had too many. I absolutely refused to pray to him for my condemnation was just and right. About the month of May, I awoke one morning and looked out the window, it was the most beautiful morning I had ever seen. The sun was almost up, the birds were singing, the cool breeze was blowing, and I thought "O what a beautiful day." I started to say what a beautiful day the Lord has sent us, then I knew the Lord wouldn't send me anything, for I didn't deserve it. Then I said what a beautiful day the Lord has sent somebody.

I went on in grief and sorrow, believing of all the cruel criminals that would be cast into torment I would sink lower than any of them. I thought I would probably live to be an old man, and all of my days and hours would be in that same grief and sorrow, for there was no hope for me. I said "O if I could die while I am young, that I might have a few more days of peace and rest in the grave, before the resurrection when my doom was outer darkness."

I believe it was in the month of June of that same year (1918), one evening I was going from the house down to the field to hoe in a tomato patch. The family was already there. On my way I had a vision. I was standing at the edge of a cemetery and saw the saints after they had been raised from their graves. They were going by me to meet the Lord. I didn't try to go with them because I didn't feel like I belonged with them. They were all happy and rejoicing. They knew I was there and knew I was not going with them, but that was their heavenly Father's will and were satisfied with it.

I came to myself and found I was about fifty yards on down the way. As I went on to the field and went to hoeing with the family soon I was behind. I was so worried, grieved, and condemned it seemed I could no longer take it alone. I had to tell someone, and as I was about to drop my hoe and go to mother to tell her the Lord had condemned me and cast me out, there was nothing to be done about it now, it is too late, my sister came by with a bucket of water and offered me water. I shook my head. She gave the others water that wanted it and set the bucket down nearby. She had not been hoeing but just a minute when Dad, who was ahead of the others, said "What about some water!" Things quit for a while, when sis said "I just brought a bucket from the house", and things quieted for a few seconds, and mother said "and besides we will be through here in another two hours and we will all go get some water" and things quieted for a few seconds, then Dad, in a commanding voice said "Clarence go get some water". I dropped my hoe and started toward the house, Sis said "come back and get this bucket." I went back and got the bucket and she said "pour out that water you will not need that." I dumped the water out and started on.

You can see from the above, I was very confused in mind. I went out to the end of the row and turned toward the house, along the fence row, when I became more worried and grieved, such grief I had not known before. I could no longer cry, but I hurt. I stared into space over the horizon of the hill. That was as far as

I could go. I had come to the end of my road, to the end of all things with me. I couldn't go on so I made a step to the left to fall and give it up. As I made that step I heard a voice to my right and above my head some forty or fifty feet away. The voice said "The Lord has saved many like you". I turned to see the one that spoke to me, I saw no one, but at that very instant the grief, the pain, the misery I was in left me. Then and only then I began to pray. My prayer was this; "Take away my sins O Lord and I will be free, wash me O Lord and I will be clean, turn me around about O' Lord and I will be turned, all the days of my life will I wait until my change come."

I went on to the house praying these same words over and over. I got to the well and drew a bucket of water, and poured it in the bucket that was sitting on the ground. I raised up and looked in a northward direction, over fields, fence rows, timberlands which I had seen many times before, but this time it was different, there was beauty there, there was the glory of the Lord there. I was looking through the air that had been purified by the righteousness of the Lord. I looked up into the sky and said "some day I will live up there". I told no one and went on thinking I was the only one in the world that such things had happened to. I felt nobody had ever been as mean as me, though I had no more tears or pain, or grief because of my awful lost and ruined condition.

I went on through the summer, and into the winter months thinking I was alone in such things as had happened to me. It was Saturday, and must have been the first Saturday in December. The day was cold, cloudy and damp. It was meeting day at the Church, there weren't many that came out that day, they sang a few hymns and as the Pastor, Elder D. W. Stanley, who was advanced in age, started toward the stand, an elderly deacon, old Uncle Jim Burcham, just stood up and began to tell his experience when he was a young man. The few words he said gave me so much comfort and did me so much good I wanted to jump up and holler, but I held quiet. I don't know what the preacher said, but I still remember the words of Uncle Jim. I spent that hour rejoicing in the Lord, that I was not alone in the thing that happened to me. As soon as they said Amen I left the house and went the long way home, I just wanted to be alone.

There have been a few times since then that I have been so happy and that was when I have been under a shower of the gospel message, being delivered by one of God's humble servants, when it seemed that heaven was almost in sight, just around the corner.

I still have trouble with the law of nature, and the law of the Spirit. Yea, I know why John the revelator wept when he saw there was no man worthy to open the book or look thereon. (Rev. 5:4) I know what he meant in Rev. 21, "And I saw a new heaven, and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away". And in verse 4 "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away". I know the above could take some explaining, but I will make it brief. After I heard the voice in the air, I had no more tears, or pain, or crying because of my awful, lost and ruined condition. Death was no more that eternal death that reigned over me before, for the former thing had passed away, behold all things became new. I love the scripture that says "The time is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. Marvel not at this, for the time is coming when they that are in the grave shall hear his voice and come forth. I believe some day I will hear that same voice again, not me only, but all you who are looking and waiting for his coming.

Yours in hope,
C. A. Stegall

EDITORIAL

THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS

"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." (I Timothy 3:15-16)

I would like for us to take note of this fact regarding this chapter, that it, almost exclusively, gives us the qualifications of bishops and deacons, or the elders. For that reason I think it was appropriate for the Apostle Paul to crown the chapter with the last verse. In the 15th verse as he wrote to Timothy he told him that all he had written (before this verse) was to tell him "how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God." Then Paul sets forth six things he calls "the mystery of godliness". One thing I would like to make clear; man has never gone to God of himself. Man goes to God when God bids him come. And when God bids a man come there is nothing that can keep him away. God comes to man and draws man to Him. In all the preaching of the gospel of the Son of God, nothing stands out more than the eternal and everlasting love of God for the Church of God which is the Body of Christ. But Paul with all that had been said in the preceeding verses in this chapter crowned it. "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness".

Now the Bible speaks of wicked mysteries; the mystery of Babylon, the Anti-christ who is in the world today. Paul speaks also of the mystery of the resurrection of the dead. He says, "And behold I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed". That is a mystery. Writing of preaching the gospel he said, "But we preach the wisdom of God in a mystery" Now if God will enable me to bring before you this morning what is contained in the six items in the chapter we will see what is the "mystery of godliness".

Godliness is a great mystery. For when we speak of godliness we have reference to the realm of salvation whereby God saves sinners. I will turn and read Second Peter 1:1, "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:" Now whatever a man has in his life that pertains to life and godliness the Bible says it is according to God's divine power. No wisdom of theirs can obtain it. No zeal of man can obtain it. There is only one way that the godliness of man is set up in a man and that is according to his divine power. And divine power is the power of God. Now what does that divine power do? "According as his divine power hath given unto us". You see who he is talking to? He is talking to "them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." That is who he is talking to. And then he is not leaving any question in the mind as to how people receive Him, and what they receive. "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things (all things; we can't over-stress that) that pertain unto life and godliness."

Now how does it unfold is the next question? "Through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue". To the degree of your knowledge of salvation, no matter who you are or where you are, will depend upon the

revealed knowledge of Christ in your heart. There is power, divine power, in Him. And you have this knowledge through the Holy Ghost working in the the lives of His people. Divine power! There has never been any power except Divine power in all the realm of salvation. There has never been any power except Divine power of God in the world. The power that rules the world, the power that speaks to the winds and they obey, the power that comes to a poor sinner and says, "This is the way". Now, without controversy, this is the real fulness. If we understand it we have no ground for further question. If something is incomplete then there is grounds for controversy. If I should bring out a certain item and leave out one thing then it is open for controversy, isn't it? But if the complete matter is presented and all the details in its fulness, there is no grounds for controversy.

Now let us see what the mystery of godliness is. It is not what the world will tell you. The mystery of godliness is centered alone in the Person and the work of God. The mystery of Godliness. There is nobody on earth who can give a satisfactory reason why God would make His Son, who knew no sin, to be sin for us. But the Bible says that, so it is, "That we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." My hearers, the first phase of the mystery of godliness is, God would send His Son into the world and provide His people a way to heaven by the dying of His own precious Son. I would say ten thousand times ten thousand times, away with any thought that God would send His Son to live and die a life of humiliation in the eyes of men and then fail to land anybody in heaven, and Him be there by Himself with question as to what He had accomplished. If I didn't believe what I do today, I still couldn't accept the theory that Christ went to heaven not knowing how many He saved or what He saved them from. How many of us believe that God, who has provided a way of salvation would do such a thing? Send His Son for all the sins of His people to be borne in the body of His Son, every one of them. If your sins were not in the body of Christ when He died you will never see heaven. Actually in His body! Peter said, "He bare our sins in His own body and put them away on the tree of the cross". How dare man stand up and try to tell you that Christ has gone to heaven to perform the work as far as He can go, and then leave it up to you to finish. Then might heaven be empty and hell overflowing. Do you believe in a salvation like that?

I want to see the way to heaven that reaches even the gates of hell so that none for whom the Lord of glory died will ever land in that place. Any other doctrine is a God-dishonoring doctrine. Somebody said, "Let's move on". I do want to move on. God was manifest in the flesh. It is hard for us to comprehend, and yet it is truth. It is verily true that for the Son of God to reach and deliver us from the curse He had to take a body like ours, with the exception of sin. The question arises, "Why would it be needful to take a body like ours? Because he was made like unto His brethren, sin excepted. Another question then, "Why would He who is the Son of God from all eternity leave heaven and come and live upon the earth, taking a body of humiliation to relieve us from the curse of God? I don't know why. But I know it is true. I know it is the truth. Christ redeemed the Church of God, and the Church of God is the Bride of Christ, and He is the glory of His church.

As I said when I rose up, this is the greatest family reunion I have ever been to, and so it is every Sunday when I meet with the family of God. We never had a family reunion, and I don't object to them, but if we did have one, I would be at meeting that day before I went.

God was manifest in the flesh. Jesus Christ took the likeness of our flesh and

our bone. Jesus Christ took part of the body of His mother, and when He became the Incarnate Son of God, Paul said, "He took not on him the nature of angels, but he took the seed of Abraham and as the children were partakers of flesh and blood He Himself likewise took part of the same; that He might through death destroy him that had the power of death which is the Devil." God was manifest in the flesh. When we go to the root of the matter, when the world was made Christ was with God, and the world was made by Him. This world was created by Jesus Christ. Paul, in the first chapter of Hebrews said, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;" How many of you listening to me believe that God, who made the world, has ever been short of power? The one who made the world (the Word of God) said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and earth."

We turn to the first chapter of the book of John and you will find that Jesus created the world. It says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1:1) "And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." Oh, if you follow this pathway there will be some marks for you along the way. I don't like to start on a journey without a roadmap, yet the roadmap wouldn't do me any good if I couldn't understand it. As I go along a journey with a roadmap I want to find some markers along the way telling me I am on the right road. That is the way it is in preaching the gospel. I want eyes to read and see and then I want a voice to say to me along the way, "This is the way, walk ye in it". And I have had both in my travel. ***There will be a voice behind you also saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it; turn neither to the right or to the left".*** I want some assurance along the way that I am in the highway of holiness and that I am on my way to the celestial city. I know I'll never turn back. I may feel to turn back but we won't turn back from this way. In following this highway we are talking about, Isaiah told us, "Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up a highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people." (Isa. 62:10) This is the highway to heaven. God almighty has ordained this way and He shall never fail. First of all, it is not our way. If you have seen that way the voice has said, "This is the way". The voice, itself is the way. God was manifest in the flesh, and the fullness of the Godhead bodily was in Christ. The fullness of the Godhead ***was*** Jesus Christ. Even so the eternal word of God was made flesh; a flesh that could be wounded as Christ was wounded. His was a flesh that had a brow with great drops of sweat like blood falling on the ground when He prayed in the garden. We are but worms of the dust, and He dwelt among us.

John said, "And we beheld his glory; the glory as of the only begotten of the father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14) This was God manifest in the flesh. A thousand sermons could be preached on that text and then we wouldn't have told the half. God Almighty was made flesh. He came to be under the law for us to be our Saviour; to pay the debt that God demanded for sin. To come under the law He must be born of a woman. An angel couldn't do this. Angels had never been under the law.

He was made sin in the eyes of God, who knew no sin, to reach His people and raise them high. Yes, to raise them high. He was justified in the Spirit. Much has been written about our justification, and here is one scripture where it says Christ was justified. How do we understand that? You mean He needed

justificaton for sin? If we are saved and go to heaven it is because we have been justified by the blood of Christ. So Christ Himself must be justified. We are justified by the blood of Christ, from all things that we couldn't be with the law of Moses. Then Christ Himself must be justified. He was justified in the Spirit. When Jesus said to the Father, "Father, I came to do thy will", this was just as much as saying to God, "Every fiber of my being is in accord with your will." He was justified in that spirit. He came wholly to do the Father's will. That is the way that Jesus was justified. He was justfied when He said to God, "Not my will, but thine be done". And every part of Christ's life and work and deeds was in accord with God's purpose. "Thy will be done"! He was justified in the Spirit in the last moment when He said to God that He had finished the work He gave Him to do. "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." He was justified in the Spirit, and then he was dead. He layed His life down at that moment.

"Seen of angels"; let us not forget, my hearers, this is also a part of the mystery of godliness. "Great is the mystery of godliness". First, God manifest in the flesh, second justified in the Spirit, third, seen of angels. Somebody may say, "Well, why would God show His Son to the angels?" For many reasons. For God was not a man; and as the Son of God He never lacked any power, but He took upon Him our flesh and blood. As He was born in the world God's angels were there to see Him. And the Bible says "Let all the angels of God worship Him." Oh, my friends, this morning, it is a wonderful time in your life if everything fades away but Jesus. It is a wonderful time when Christ gives the evidence of Himself in your soul; when you can say with the poet, "Bring forth the royal diadem and crown Him Lord of all". That is a wonderful time. Do you know anything about it? Does Christ have the pre-eminence in your soul? Does all of mankind fade away? When the wonderful love of God does appear and when the blood of Christ is seen, is it not a wonderful time? "Seen of angels".

Immediately after Christ had been tempted of the devil on the mountain, angels came and ministered unto him. My friends, the angels of God are still in this world. Why do I say that? Because the Bible says the angels are sent forth to be ministering spirits. Do you believe that? I believe it for two reasons. I believe it because the Word of God has said it, and I believe it because I have some evidence in my heart about it.

He was seen of angels, and in the garden He was talking with His Father about paying the debt for sin and the angels came and comforted Him. Also, the Lord had said unto His disciples to not offend one of His little ones, for their angels always appear before His Father's face. There are angels and I believe it. I believe that every child of God has an angel. I don't want to offend a child of God. Of all the people in the world, I would rather have a millstone tied around my neck and be drowned than to offend one of God's little ones. They have angels looking over them. And when Christ was buried an angel came and rolled the stone away, and then sat upon it. The angels do the bidding of God. "He was seen of angels." And when Christ ascended back into heaven, never to be seen by mortal eyes again until He returns, the disciples were gathered together and stood looking up into the clouds into which He had gone. Two men stood by and to my understanding, they were angels. They said, "Ye men of Galilee why stand ye here gazing up into the heavens. This same Jesus whom you have seen go away, in like manner shall come again." Praise the Lord , my dear hearers this morning, if you know what I am talking about. Praise the Lord.

"Believed on in the world." Yes. Who was it that believed while Christ was here? You know, there is a great effort in

the religious world to get people to believe. What do you believe about anything but by the evidence that you have of the truth of it? All the men in the world combined and all the preachers in the U.S. couldn't cause one to believe, because a man cannot believe in Christ without the work of the Holy Spirit. But He was believed on in the world, and who was it that believed on Him? The Bible says, "As many as were ordained unto eternal life believed". (Acts 13:48) That is who it was.

"Preached unto the Gentiles". You know, there is a great effort to raise money. Money! Money! Money! They are trying to gather it up to send the gospel to the heathen. I would say that the heathen are better off than America is today. Men running all over the world with the plea to give to save the heathen! A heathen is anybody who doesn't know the truth. God sent the gospel and in His own time and in His own way He causes it to be preached to the Gentiles. And men can't hinder it and men can't help it. If God was to command me today to go somewhere to preach the Gospel He would open the way for me to go. And if He opened the way for me to go He would open somebody's ears to hear it and they would be alive. God doesn't have any worries. He said, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Read the 55th chapter of Isaiah. God said, "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater."

I remember several years ago going to a church and there was a lady there that morning that had never attended an Old Baptist preaching before. Her husband would go to meetings and come home and she would say, "What did the preacher preach about?" And as he would start telling her she would say, "Stop ! Stop, you just want to start an argument". So he would stop. She had never heard an Old Baptist, and she said she didn't want to hear one. Finally she became dissatisfied with what she was doing and she said one morning, "I am going to hear the Old Baptist preach this morning." Her husband said, "What do you want to go for?" (This was in the State of Maryland.) She said, "I don't know." But that woman's face looked like an angel's as she listened to the gospel. I preached about the Manna that fell in the wilderness and those that God fed had enough and those that gathered much couldn't carry it over. And you know, I baptized that woman a long time before I did her husband.

"Preached unto the Gentiles." God opens the door for His ministers and he doesn't need a mission board to send them out, either. You know, God visited Paul one night and said, "Paul, you testified of me at Jerusalem. You shall also bear witness of me in Rome." Then Paul was put on a ship for his last venture, for he was going to Rome; for God had said he would. He had said before arriving in Rome. "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift." I long to see the people of God, also. I want to live with them, also. I want to die with them, and I don't say that except by the grace of God. "Preached unto the Gentiles". This is the mystery of godliness.

And Paul said, "Without controversy". There can never be a word of controversy about this because this is the only way to heaven. "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness". This is godliness. And last but not least in this text is, "Received up into glory". All I have said about the text would mean nothing if there was doubt on this point. He was received up into glory. Returned unto glory. The glory of Him who performed the will of His Father. The glory of Him who represented His people all the way from

Bethlehem to Calvary. The glory of Him who fills Heaven with His person. The glory is that he was received up into glory. And I am glad to say to you in closing today, my brethren, that if you love Him you shall see Him in glory some day. Thus we see the mystery of godliness. This is His promise to His people, "That where I am there ye may be also". "And they shall behold my glory".

Transcribed from a tape of a sermon preached in Reidsville Church by
July 1973 Elder D. V. Spangler

Shady Spring, W. Va.

Dear Kindred in the Lord,

I see my subscription is past due so please find check enclosed for a renewal of two more years and do with the balance as your conscience dictates to you, and all will be well with me. The January, 1980 number was exceptionally good for it dealt on the old time doctrines of Christ and the Apostles, of which nowadays most have forsaken and went whoring after strange gods. So keep up this good doctrine for it still has a resting place among the called and chosen people of God. And when the whole world turns it down ship all you can by the discretion of Almighty God to me, for it is a doctrine of love, mercy, and truth.

Thanks,
Wallace Harvey

January 8, 1980

Dear Editors,

Enclosed is a check for $10.00 to renew my subscription for two more years. It expires this month. May the New Year be a blessing to all who love the comforts of this paper and bless the Editors for their labor of love in publishing it.

Remember this poor worm of the dust in prayer when at the Throne of Grace.

Your Sister in Hope,
Mae B. Hiatt

OBITUARIES

SISTER SALLIE ENNIS

Sister Ennis was born June 4, 1892. Her parents were Lamm and Sarah Byrd. She joined the Besadia Primitive Baptist Church the first Sunday in August, 1915, at the water and was baptized the same day. she married Donnius Ennis and to this union was born nine children, six boys and three girls. She loved the church and attended as long as her health permitted. She was a faithful member to the church and also to the Association. She is missed by the church and the many friends that knew her. At the time of her death her membership was at Liberty Primitive Baptist Church.

She passed away from this life February 22, 1979. Her funeral was held at West Funeral Home in Benson, N.C. by Elders C. D. Turner, W. D. Godwin, and Allen Johnson. Burial followed in Besadia Church Cemetery beside her husband.

The church agreed for three copies to be made, and one sent to the family, one for church record, and one sent to the ***Signs of the Times.***

Written by Sisters:
Liddie Gart
Lydia Byrd
Magdalene Messer

DUNN HORNE

Brother Dunn Horne was born April 22, 1895 and died August 26, 1979. He was a World War I veteran, having served overseas. Returning home he married Sister Mamie Batchelor who preceeded him in death in 1977. He is survived by 3 daughters, one son, 10 grandchildren, one great grandchild, one brother and one sister.

He was afflicted for several years and asked a home with Cypress Creek Church June 13, 1975. He enjoyed attending meeting whenever he was able, and his favorite hymn "O land of rest for thee I sigh", tells much of his desire. He was a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God. He is missed at church and in the community, but we trust our loss is his gain.

Funeral services were held at Cypress Creek Church by Elders D. B. Stokes and

Harmon Brown. He was laid to rest beside his wife in the family cemetery.

Done by order of November 1979 conference; that three copies be made, one for church records, one given to the family, and one sent to the ***Signs of the Times*** for publication.

Elder Harmon Brown, Mod.
Velma Horne, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

On January 15, 1980, Our Heavenly Father saw fit to call our dear Brother Washburn T. Coker.

He was blessed to join our church 1st Sunday in November 1966. He was a true believer of Salvation by Grace and he praised his Lord until his death. To know Brother Washburn was to love him and it was well shown of his friends and loved ones at his funeral.

He was blessed to have a loving family, as he was well cared for during his illness by all of them.

He was born February 14, 1918 and was blessed to live on earth for almost 62 years.

We the Church at Taroboro send our sympathy to his family and we trust God will send the Comforter, as He has promised not to forsake or leave us. God knows our feelings and without Him we can do nothing.

We also request that three copies of this Resolution to be made:

(1) for the Church
(1) to be sent to the family
(1) to be published in the ***Signs of the Times***

We trust God will bless His family to feel free and welcome to attend His church. We feel also our loss is His eternal gain.

This done by order of conference at the Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church at our February, 1980, meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

MINOR OGDEN

Funeral services for Brother Minor Ogden were held on January 20, 1980, at the New Hope Primitive Baptist Church at Spearsville, La., with Elder David E. Turner officiating. Burial was in cemetery at Spearsville under the direction of Bailey Funeral Home of El Dorado, Arkansas.

Mr. Ogden was born in Union County, Ark., on October 6, 1882 and passed from this life January 18, 1980 at the age of 97 years, 3 months, and 12 days. He was a member of New Hope Primitive Baptist Church and a retired butcher. He leaves behind one sister and several nieces and nephews, plus many friends.

It was my blessed privilege to have visited in the home and in the nursing home of this precious brother for several years. I do believe his mind was as clear on the scriptures along with the doctrine of salvation by Grace as anyone I ever knew even three months before he passed away. He actually preached to me, and his text was, "I am the Lord and change not; therefore you sons of Jacob are not consumed". I have every reason to feel that his soul is in perfect rest and peace right now with God the Father and his body is at rest in the grave now and is awaiting the general resurrection of the which, after the Lord's children shall all hear these words again, "Come ye Blessed of My Father and inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world". It was a great witness to me to have conducted the funeral of such a wonderful brother as Brother Ogden was.

In love, I hope
(Elder) David E. Turner

SISTER OLLIE M. BAREFOOT

With a sad heart I attempt to write of the passing of my dear sister in the flesh, and I hope in the Spirit.

It pleased our Heavenly Father to call Sister Barefoot from this scene of action on April 3, 1979 at the age of 58. Sister Ollie was born to Monroe and Sister Mahalie Webb McLamb on May 22, 1920.

She married Martin B. (Buddy) Barefoot, January 21, 1939. To this union were born one daughter, Edith Gray Johnson, and a son, Bobby Ray Barefoot, of Linden, N.C. also two grandsons. This was a family that was dear and close to each other. Other survivors are three sisters and two brothers.

Sister Ollie was steadfast and faithful supporter of the churches in Seven Miles Association for many years before she joined. Brother and Sister Barefoot, in a

called meeting in their home, joined Liberty Church on August 8, 1978, and were baptized August 10, 1978.

All through a long time of suffering but with meekness she ran with patience the race that was set before her, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of her faith.

Her Pastor, Elder C. D. Turner, and Elder W. D. Godwin conducted her funeral in Liberty Church, and she was laid to rest in the Devotional Garden Cemetery, Harnett County.

Sister Ollie was respected and loved in the family, church, community, and all who knew her. We miss her greatly and hope to meet her again some sweet day.

Written by her sister in the flesh and I hope in the Spirit - also her daughter, Edith Gray Johnson.

Committee: Sister Earlon Flowers
Daughter Edith Gray Johnson

ANNIE LOU BREWER

On November 11, 1979 the Lord called home my dear earthly and spiritual sister, Annie Lou Brewer of Birmingham, Alabama.

She was born in Madison County Alabama on March 7, 1903, the third child of the late Brother G. W. and Sister Price Stone Williams.

Her husband, Brother George Brewer preceded her in death by several years; and her oldest child, a son, preceded her by three years: and although the loss of her loved ones caused her grief, she still could say with much faith, "The Lord gives and the Lord takes away - blessed be His name".

Her membership was at Zion Church in Birmingham and her pastors, Elder Claude Hand and Elder Allen Bailey, conducted the service in the presence of her three surviving sons, Floyd Brewer of Florida; Harold and Curtis Brewer, both of Birmingham; and one daughter, Mrs. Betty Jones of Birmingham; her grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and many other relatives and friends.

Sister Annie Lou was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace and some of her last words to me and another one of our sisters when we visited her in the nursing home a few months prior to her death were, "I'd like to hear the resurrection preached one more time". Now, I am comforted to believe that her soul is in yon paradise, her spirit reclaimed by Him who gave it, her body planted low in the ground awaiting that day when the voice of the Archangel shall declare time to be no more; when it, in dust, shall obey, be raised and reunited with her soul and spirit to dwell forever and eternally with her God -- no more longing to hear the resurrection preached but being a part of it and its reality!

May God bless her children and her grandchildren and cause them to rejoice in the knowledge that their mother and grandmother was not ashamed to own her Lord, and never shunned to declare His goodness towards her.

Written at the request of her devoted daughter and in loving memory of mine own sister, I humbly bow to God's will.

Lavonia W. Lee
P.O. Box 209
Huntland, Tn. 37345

BROTHER HENRY T. BROWN

With a portion of my heart empty forever because God our Heavenly Father called my (our) highly esteemed Brother Henry T. Brown, Deacon of Great Swamp Primitive Baptist Church, home to rest from his labor on January 9, 1980. He was the son of the union of the late John T. and Lydia Corbett Brown. Brother Henry was born October 22, 1897 in Edgecombe County. He was married to Mary Lether Flemings on February 2, 1921, who preceeded him in death March 27, 1964. To this union were born three lovely children, Eleanor B. Cherry, Ruth B. Braddy, and Henry T. Brown, Jr., all of Greenville, N.C. Brother Brown later married Magalene Marshall of Robersonville, N.C., on February 11, 1967, which survive him. He is survived also by three sisters, Miss Sarah Anna Brown, Greenville, N.C., Mrs. Florence B. Brown, Indianapolis, Indiana, Mrs. Rosa B. Mitchiner, Henderson, N.C.; ten grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Brother Brown united with Great Swamp Primitive Baptist Church in May, 1950, and was ordained a deacon in December, 1950. He was a man of deep firm convictions, called of God, steadfast in the gospel of the Son of God, principles of the truth and

practices of the Church of Jesus Christ. His dear family, the membership of Great Swamp Church, all of the brethren of the same faith and order that knew him both far and near, suffers a great void which can never be filled here in this world and especially the writer, his Pastor, who came up under Brother Brown's guidance and care.

Brother Brown was widely known and highly esteemed from the high hills of the mountain, to the Eastern Shores of Maryland and Delaware down the eastern coast to the Keys of Florida. Brother Henry will be missed greatly because he walked about Zion considering her bulwarks, what his hands found to do he did with all his might. He was slow to speak in regard to the doctrine, principles of the church, the welfare of the brethren, but when he did speak, he spoke with power and authority given him by his Heavenly Father and he was heard by all and peace was restored among the brethren.

I would to God that the Lord send forth in our midst more of the old soldiers of the Cross to continue to uphold the doctrine of salvation by Grace, and Grace alone; the Truth, principles and order of the brethren.

Though we mourn his passing, we do fully believe his death brought him into the full realization of God's sweet promises to His children. Brother Brown in his later years suffered much pain and failing strength; but now in the presence of his Saviour, he sings praise to Him who was his strength and salvation. He fought a good fight. He kept the faith.

Funeral services were conducted at Wilkerson Funeral Chapel, Greenville, N.C., by Elder Marvin E. Garner, his pastor, and Elder Joseph A. Leggett, Moderator of the Kehukee Association. His body was placed in that from which he was made and under a mound of beautiful flowers and tears that flowed as the River of Jordan overfloweth it's banks.

Written at the request of the family and by one that loved him very much.

(Elder) Marvin E. Garner

HARRY DEMOSS UNDERWOOD

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst by death our beloved brother, Harry Demoss Underwood. He was born in Franklin County, Virginia, March 23, 1901 and departed this life January 11, 1980, making his stay on earth 78 years, 10 months, and 20 days. He was the son of the late Robert and Allieann Nichols Underwood. He was married to Mattie Hatcher June 22, 1922. To this union four sons were born, James Warren, Ernest, H. D., Jr. and Morris Ray. He leaves behind his wife, four sons, and ten grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. One granddaughter preceded him in death, Vivian Jeanette Underwood. Also, he is survived by one sister, Mrs. Georgia Thompson and two brothers, Charlie Underwood and Frank Underwood.

He was a strong believer in the doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God, a brother who had a wonderful gift to discern the truth from an error. If a minister made a mistake, he could tell him of it in a way not to offend him. I knew him long before either of us had a home in the church. He united with Republician Church September 15, 1973, and was baptized September 23. The day I baptized him he told me, "I have been wanting to have this done for forty years". Many a time have we walked into the house of the Lord and taken sweet counsel together.

My wife and I visited in his home the day he was in the funeral home. From the tears of sorrow that I saw in the eyes of his four sons, I knew he was a father that was going to be missed, not only by his family, but his church and friends as well. We feel we have lost a loving brother, yet believe our loss is his eternal gain.

His funeral was preached at Collins Funeral Chapel, Bassett, Virginia, by Elders Amos Hash, Hale Terry, and J.R. Hollondsworth. His body was laid to rest in Rose Lawn Burial Park, under a mound of beautiful flowers to await the coming of our Blessed Redeemer, who will present His church faultless before the throne of His presence.

Written by his pastor who loved him very much. Done by the order of the church this 16th day of February, 1980. One copy for the church record. One copy for the family. One copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Elder W. M. Holland, Moderator
Grey Ingram, Clerk

Signs of the Times

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 7/80 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

JOHN 15:2

"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

If there was one thing that was consistent with the teaching and preaching by Christ while here on earth that was the simplicity of His speech, the compassion in His tone, and the ability to cause everyone in His hearing to believe that He was describing them in His discourses. There was nothing personal, no harshness, no exageration, or colouring in His descriptions of spiritual dealings with the human conscience. "And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard His parables they perceived that He spake of them." (Matt. 21:45) And again, "and they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last". (John 8:9)

The parable of the vine and the branch is one of the best examples of our Lord's way of instructing. He who formed the human heart, knew how vile and how deep in evil man could and does go in an outward profession of His name, yet live and die without regenerating Grace. In the parable alluded to, He lays bare the evil to which man is exposed; the self-deception, and warns of the dangers of the teaching of false disciples, false prophets and teachers. "I am the true vine, and my father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away."

There can exist a state such as the

fruitless disciple of the Gospel that show how completely degenerate, how vile, and to what depth of deceit lies within the human heart. It is possible for an individual to appear as a believer in Jesus in an external way; such as attending church, etc., in his outward moral appearance and still remain among the dead. Of all the states to be in, in this life, this is the vilest - yet there are thousands of them living in this world now.

May we, if it be the Will of Almighty God, attempt to expound upon the expressions alluded to in this parable. First, the fruitless branch as being united to himself. "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit". We are not to understand this as a vital union, such as a spiritual grafting into Christ. The word of truth does not bear out such interpretation. The word of God declares that living faith brought by the Holy Spirit does bear fruit. We therefore conclude that the attachment here referred to is of external being, by profession of His name, by an outward zeal for His glory. If we, however, graft a dead branch to a live vine we may deceive the casual observer for a short time, but time will show that it is a dead branch and there is no fruit there even though it be externally fastened to the tree. How do we know? Where is the separation between the individual and his own self-righteousness; where is the breaking of the fallow ground of a hard and stony heart? Where is the humbleness; where is the meek and lowly creature; where is the hell deserving sinner? Is it any wonder that when we look for fruit in such a branch, we do not find it. We speak of no special sect, but look at the world today. Look at the case of Simon Magus: he was a fruitless disciple who had neither part nor lot in the matter. Look at Demas; "Demas hath forsaken me" writes the apostle. Judas Iscariot: in reference to whom Jesus prays to his father "all thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition." In these the union in Christ was only external. Once the master of the house has risen up and hath shut to the door and ye stand without. Then will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. And when ye knock upon the door, then will He say "depart from me ye workers of iniquity for I never knew you." The end thereof is to be cut off and cast into the lake of fire.

Now, "Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it". Here we see life; here is true union with Christ. How do we see it? "We shall know them by their fruits." Here we see the fruit bearing branch in Christ, grafted into him, united to him, and dwelling in him. Here we see the humbleness, here we see and feel the contrite heart; here we see the abandonment of all self-righteousness. Here we see a complete dependence upon the Lord God through Jesus Christ wrought by the Holy Spirit. Here we see faith enlarged within us by the pruning of the husbandman. Here we feel the rod of discipline administered justly upon us. Here we see the surety of the eternal covenant of grace made by Christ as the surety and mediator of His people. Here we see His people as a "peculiar people". For "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." (Eph. 1:3-4) Here we are made to hunger and thirst for the righteousness of Christ. Here we are made to feel for a little season the indwelling spirit of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, made to feel "Christ in you the hope of glory"; made to feel to be one in His mystical body. Oh blessed state of being "in Christ". Who would not experience it? Who would not enjoy it? "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." (Rom. 8:1) These are the

living branches united to the true vine which bear fruit. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me." If it were possible for man within himself to continue this feeling or acquire it in the first place, then Armienus was right in his delcaration of doctrine. But, not so. Just as it is continually necessary to prune a fruit tree in a natural sense that it may bear more fruit, in the mind and purpose of God it is necessary that a continual pruning of the spiritual branches be made. The child of God is continually exposed to and confronted by sin and degradation in the ways of this world. And of himself, that is naturally, he cannot at times resist the temptations of Satan and this world. Yea, he must be continually pruned to be able to withstand the trials and tribulations inflicted upon him that he might suffer just as surely as did our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Just as the children of Israel took possession of the land of Canaan and conquered its inhabitants, yet could not entirely remove all the former occupants. Just as the "strong man armed" has been deposed, the natural corrpution of our fallen nature, the evils of the heart, the heathenish lusts, passions, and infirmities that were former occupants of the soil, still dwell there and shall never in this life be entirely disposed. Pruning, however, does not in any way weaken the vine, nay, only to make it stronger and more fruitful. Who in all time could have been pruned more than Job? Yet his faith remained, and yea waxed stronger. Once the seed of grace is planted, it cannot perish. Divine life in the soul is indestructable, it cannot perish nor can it be corrupted. The Apostle Paul was given to pray thrice for the removal of his infirmities and thrice the Lord denied his request saying, "My grace is sufficient for thee". Let us remember, tried believer, that supporting grace, in the season of trials, is a greater mercy than removal of the trial itself.

May the pruning continue, if ever it was, with us. May we be given, by the Grace of God, the faith to carry on throughout the remaining days of our lives in a manner and way that is pleasing in the sight of God is my prayer.

Elder B. J. McLaughlin

ORDINATION OF
BROTHER MICHAEL NEIKIRK

Moved and agreed to go into conference.

Moved and agreed to call Sister Nina Pearson as Clerk.

The following Deacons were called to sit with the Presbytery: Brothers Earl Rudd, George Pearson, George Williford, Leon Griffin, Amos Williams, Marcus Armstrong, Harold Pittman, Johnny Griffin, Elmo Lupton, Ernest Stone, Cleveland Coleman, Aubrey Dickens, Jack Brown, and Odis Daughtridge.

The Presbytery was called, composed of Elder Henry Jones and Elder C. B. Davis. Elder Jones was chosen to act as moderator.

Elder Jones opened conference with hymn 530 and prayer. The ministers and those liberated were asked to sit on the front seat; Elder Reeves Smith, Brother Clyde Debow, and Brother Leroy Arrington.

Brother J. Carroll Williams and Brother Alvin Lancaster, Deacons of Pleasant Hill Church, presented the candidate to the Presbytery. Brother J. Carroll Williams said that they were satisfied with Bro. Neikirk and asked that the Presbytery examine the candidate. Elder Jones had no questions of the Brother as he has proved well and has preached what we believe by the Grace of God. Elder Davis read from the book of First Timothy the qualifications of a Minister. We are qualified by the mercy of the Eternal God. He should take care of the Church of God, and not rule over the flock. Brother Davis charged the brother; there will be times you will feel the Spirit, and other times you will not. Be mindful of how you conduct yourself where ever you go. Be mindful of the needs of the flock. Seek God in all things. Fulfill the duties that are required. Have the

earnest desire to serve rather than to be served. Look to Christ as the Author and Finisher of your faith. To the candidate's companion; if you find him walking and weeping, stick by him and serve him as a help mate.

The Presbytery placed their hands on the candidate in prayer. The Presbytery asked the church if it was satisfied with the work of the presbytery. They were satisfied.

The candidate was returned to Pleasant Hill Church as an ordained Minister of the Gospel. Hymn # 16, 5, and 298 were sung as the family of the Elder, members and friends gave him the right hand of fellowship.

Moved and agreed a copy of these minutes be sent to the ***Signs of the Times,*** and a copy for the church records. Moved and agreed to read the minutes. The minutes were received as read. Moved and agreed the Presbytery be dismissed. Moved and agreed to adjourn conference.

Elder Henry Jones, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

II Corinthians 10:18

For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

In retrospect I see that I have spent most of my life commending myself, for I felt to be "as good as the best and better than the rest." But thanks be unto God, who works all things according to his sovereign will and purpose, He has shown me that I am nothing and less than nothing. May He always keep me humble and begging at His feet and always esteeming my brethern better than self.

I would not dare compare myself with the great apostle Paul who oft admonished the saints because of their errors, but he tells us (Rom. 15:14) that we are able to admonish one another: and I believe we should do so - if we do it in a brotherly way. I pray the Father, who knows our thoughts and intentions from afar, that He remove all malice from my heart and give me grace to write this admonition in love only.

There are many gifts in the Church of God and all are necessary; for we are the body of Christ, and members in particular. "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." (I Cor. 12:28). In Eph. 4:11 we read, "And he gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." You will note that God did the setting and giving and not the church or some individual.

For what purpose did God give these gifts? "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." (Eph. 4:12-13).

Each member of the church of God has a gift differing according to the grace that is given us of God. "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." (Eph. 4:18) "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James. 1:17). Each and every gift is of God; and yet we see in most churches envy, jealousy, variance, boasting, etc. among the members as well as the ministry. Brethern, this should not be; and we should bow our knees daily and continually to the Lord in prayer and supplications that this condition cease. We should esteem our brethern better than self and follow after charity, which is Godly love: and "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."

There is never a need for one to declare that he has a spiritual gift: and most certainly it is not meet for the brethern to try to prove otherwise, even should they believe his declaration to be false.

"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own works, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not another. For every man shall bear his own burden." (Gal. 6:3-5). If a man has a gift it cannot be hid. Paul wrote Timothy, "Some men's sins are open beforehand; going before to judgement; and some men they follow after. Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid." (I Tim. 5:24-25). And Solomon wrote, "A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men." (Pro. 18:17): and he followed with, "He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him."

Brethern, we are approved only if we are commended of God; therefore let us not commend nor exalt ourselves, for we can of ourselves do nothing. Jesus himself said, "I can of mine own self do nothing." And, "For without me ye can do nothing." And on three separate occasions Jesus said, "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." (Luke 14:11 & 18:14 & Matt. 23:12.)

Brethern, let us examine ourselves. Are we envious, jealous? is there variance? Do we boast? We should ask these and many other questions concerning our behavior and then search diligently for the answers. God is the One to whom we must look and the One to whom we must answer. "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." (James 3:14-16). God is not the author of confusion, but of peace; therefore let us look to him and seek peace. "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

Dearly beloved brethern, let us take heed to the scriptures and, "Let nothing be done thru strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themself. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." (Phil 2:3-4). And, "If we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another." (Gal. 5:26).

If we have been born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever; then let us lay aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, and as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby.

Brethern, I greatly need and desire your prayers.

Clifford Wilbanks

Lillie, La.
Aug. 4, 1959

Dear Brother Calk,

I came across your real good and much appreciated letter today and am not sure, but doubt I answered it, so I decided to write you, the Lord willing. Hope you and family are all well. We are about as usual I believe at this time, except my aged mother, who is very feeble, both mentally as well as physically. She will be 93 years old in November if she is with us that long.

Now as to the scripture you asked me about, it is found in Isaiah 4:1 and reads as follows, "And in that day seven women shall take hold on one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name to take away our reproach." And I am of the opinion that this scripture has alusion to the entirety of those who are professors of Religion, but depending on their own Righteousness, which is their own self-righteousness, and their bread, I think, is their

doctrine as is very clearly set forth in Matt. 16:12. So from this direct statement of the Blessed Savior, we can readily conclude that these seven women are not interested in either His righteousness, or His doctrine to be called by His Name (Christian) to take away their reproach by the world. The world professes His name, but substitutes their own righteousness, and then sets forth the doctrines and commandments of men.

So this circumstance is certainly a demonstration of the obnoxious doctrine and commandments of men and devils being all they wanted, and their self-righteousness they felt to be sufficient for them; but the poor Publican, who was not sufficient of himself even to draw near the Lord, and because of his felt sense of sin and condemnation, he would not even look toward Heaven, but stood afar off and smote upon his breast and said, God be merciful to me, a sinner. And Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other. So the seven women stand exactly where the proud Pharisee did when he stood and prayed thus with himself, God I thank thee that I fast twice a week, and pay tithes of all I possess, and I thank thee that I am not as other men, or even as this Publican. So I had rather be the one who did not have any righteousness of his own, or any bread (Doctrine) of his own, but he was the one who went down to his house justified rather than the one who was righteous in his own eyes, and which held to the doctrines and commandments of men. I feel that this is a plain case of the position of the seven women, and I think they represent the fullness of the modern religious combination of Arminian Church professors. They do not care for the Righteousness of Christ, neither for His Doctrine.

So dear brother, Christ the Lord said in the sermon on the mount, Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Now we know anyone who was or is in the position of this vaunted Pharisee could not be poor. He possessed much riches in his own eyes; he even thanked God that he was better than others, even better than this poor Publican who couldn't do anything of himself, and who confessed to be a sinner. So we can see who of these two Bible characters was poor, and we can also see which one of these was wearing his own righteousness, and the one who was satisfied without the Doctrine (bread) of the Lord Jesus Christ.

May the Lord bless us with that Bread which is from Heaven and that Precious Garment of the Righteousness of Jesus Christ our Lord and that Precious Doctrine and commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ, which we find in the new covenant in Heb. 8th chapter, which is written in the hearts and minds of the Lord's people, and His sweet promise is that these Laws are in them, and the Lord alone puts them there, and His promise is, That I will be to them a God and they shall be unto me a people, for I will be merciful unto their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more, saith the Lord.

Now according to the Pharisee he was not poor, he possessed so much righteousness of his own that he did not need anything the Lord had; but on the other hand the poor Publican had no righteousness of his own, but he possessed and confessed his unrighteousness, and that is what the New Covenant promised, that the Lord would be merciful to their unrighteousness; and it seems to me that the Pharisee had no unrighteousness of his own, but was so much better, and that humble, helpless, dependent, unrighteous one is the one who went down to his house justified rather than the other.

Hope this may suffice to at least show what my understanding is on this subject (if it is understanding). I also saw the article in the ***Signs of the***

Times, on this subject, and I do not agree with it at all, but I am truly aware, I hope, that without the Light of God's Holy Spirit we are helpless in our understanding.

Yours in hope,
(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The One Hundred Fifty-fifth Annual session of the Pigg River District Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Chestnut Church, commencing on Friday before and continuing through the first Sunday in August, 1980. (August 1,2,3).

Chestnut is located near Rocky Mount, Va. Coming from Rocky Mount, go south about three miles, take the left on State Route 619. Then, go three miles, and turn right onto State Route 724. From Martinsville, Va., go north on Route 220 approximately 22 miles. Then, turn right, off of Route 220 onto State Route 724. Follow the signs.

The brethern ask that every one please bring their folding chairs as there will be none provided.

For more information contact Elder Cecil Turner, Route 3, Bassett, Va., (Phone: 703-629-2286) or Jessie O. Tyree, Route 2, Ferrum, Va., (Phone: 703-365-2509)

All lovers of the truth are invited.

Jamie E. Cooper, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The one hundred thirty-ninth session of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, according to appointment, with Mt. Ararat Church on July 11, 12, 13, 1980, which is the second Sunday, Friday and Saturday before.

Mt. Ararat Church is located on Highway 750 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, about 7 miles N.W. of Danville, Virginia. We cordially invite our corresponding brethren and friends for this meeting and all that love the doctrine of salvation by grace.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

PINE CREEK MEETING

Pine Creek Primitive Baptist Church will again have all-day services on July 4, 1980, the Lord willing. All lovers of the Truth are invited.

Anyone needing information or instructions to the meeting house should contact:

Elder Roy Agee
Route 1
Copper Hill, Virginia 24079

PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The thirty-fourth annual session of the Pleasant Valley Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Mount Olive Church, Stockdale, Texas, commencing on Friday before, and continuing through the first Sunday in August, 1980. (August 1, 2, 3)

For additional information contact Elder G. D. Shipman, Route 2, Box 128, Von Ormy, Texas 78073. (Telephone 512 624-2148)

Elder G. D. Shipman

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Strong, Ark.

Dear Editors of the Signs,

It is time to renew my subscription, and enclosed you will find a check for one year made out to the ***Signs of the Times.***

I hope the Lord continues to bless you all to publish the gospel, the power of God unto salvation, to His people in the future, as you have in the past. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth. (Isa. 52:7)

Also, this is precious to hear, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" The Apostles wrote in their Epistles to the Churches these lovely words, "Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ!" "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children."

To read, or hear the gospel preached is my meat and drink, when blessed of the Lord with ears to hear and a heart to understand a little portion of His precious truths.

Remember this poor sinful worm of the dust, when at the Throne of Grace, is my prayer.

Love,
Mrs. Lula B. Fox

THE BLOOD AND RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST

How I have felt my soul delighted with the blood and righteousness of Christ! not with the notion and head knowledge of them, as many; not with the distant sight and acknowledgment of them, as Balaam; but with the close feeling sensibly of them.

O! I have felt my sin and destitution to be met by the blood and righteousness of Christ; and what was the effect?--my sin vanished, and my nakedness of soul vanished. And unutterable beauty and a whole world of charms have spiritually come in their place. Then that scripture bloomed: "To the praise of the glory of his grace." Dazzled with the beauty of putting on Christ sensibly, overcome with the dress of his blood and righteousness, as my wedding-dress or marriage garment, I have said, "Where am I?" Then I felt my soul as naturally to fall to Christ as lead falls to the ground. Then I felt the sweetness of that scripture, "Ye are not your own." "No, Lord," said I, "I am dazzled and afraid of looking at myself". And, dressed in the wedding garment of Christ's active and passive righteousness, the beauty of the soul then is such that it is overpowering. At least, I have found it so. "O! take me, Lord", said I, "for I cannot bear to look on myself; the glittering grandeur and beauty of thy blood and righteousness on me overpowers me: see, my soul! darest thou look on thyself? O! I swoon, I faint." "To be admired for ever in all them that believe", then was felt. Innocency, truth, wisdom, a single eye, divine honesty, and all manner of excellencies beamed on my soul as being part of the communicable divine nature." "O! where am I?" said I, "it must be heaven, and it is heaven." And let me tell you, when the blood and righteousness of Christ are accompanied, (as they are in the elect,) with the power of the Holy Ghost, it is heaven absolutely in measure. And I doubt not but the kingdom of glory is merely an

enlargement infinitely, as God sees fit, of these surprising joys.

The Holy Ghost, the seven spirits of God, is inseparably annexed to Christ's blood and righteousness, and to nowhere else. (Gal. 3:2) Startle at that, ye Arminians, ye self-righteous. When these seven spirits (that cloven tongue of fire) rest on a soul, and reveal there Christ's blood and righteousness, what surprising effects! Oh! the startling glory! the sweet effects! the wonderful presence of Christ felt! the beauty, the glory, the sweetness! Heirs of another creation! Such souls become bewildered with delight; yea, even the bitter operations of this Testifier of Christ become even sweet in a sense; as it is written, "We glory in tribulations, and take pleasure in distresses." Soul! hast thou received the Holy Ghost? if not, all thy knowledge of Christ is mere Scripture without power. If thou hast received the Holy Ghost, he will dig into those heavenly mines, the Scriptures, for thee; he will open streams in the desert for thee. Scriptural knowledge under his divine influences will breathe. Then, thou wilt know somewhat of Him that garnished the heavens testifying to thee of Christ. Enwrapt in beauty, grandeur, and wonder, thou wilt see the blood of Christ and his preceptive obedience to the law to be worth ten thousand worlds, and infinitely more. Confined to the elect, and being absolutely efficacious, the blood and righteousness of Christ thus assumes ten thousand beauties; and when thou seest thyself to be one of the elect,--wonder-struck, thou hearest the Holy Ghost, that garnished the heavens with inimitable beauty, say to thy soul, "Sinner! this is thine; the blood and righteousness of the Second Person in the Trinity incarnate! Will not this do? See thy sins vanish under his blood, and thy destitute nakedness enrobed in his positive deeds, all wrought out for thee; made over to thee as thy own by imputation from God to thee? Will not this do?" Then the soul, fainting with rapture, gratitude, and a strange compound of feelings, says, "But is it true? can it be ture?" "Yes," says the Testifier of Jesus. And with that gradually, and more or less, faith baffles, through the Spirit's power, unbelief. And a whole train of consequences, more or less, begin to arise in the soul. Godly fear, sweet peace, happy hope, comfortable joy, begin to spread their wings, and scatter away misery, woe, and sorrow. As we read, "Healing in his wings." And no tongue can tell all that follows. Gospel obedience will begin to bud. Tenderness of conscience will begin to shine. The indwelling of Christ's Spirit will begin to be felt. Happy sensations as to future bliss will begin to be felt. The poverty and suspicious happiness arising from creatures will begin to be felt. The superiority of the happiness arising from God in Christ will begin to be felt. The sweetness of God in Christ will begin to be felt. These, and a thousand nameless sweets will begin to spread their mild tranquillity through the soul. Now you will begin to call yourself a thousand fools for having been cheated so with earthly things, to think of making happiness out of them which are part of the bondage of corruption, and, in a sense, so under God's curse. Now, you will see that the world is fallen, and that your first-Adam nature is in that fall. Now, you will begin to see and feel that there is a certain feverishness in terrestrialism, of whatever sort it is. Now, as Hart says, you will thus see this feverishness.

> "This lurking leaven ferments the mass;
> All nature's sick; creation's spoil'd."

Now you will see what fools all men are, as Solomon's Proverbs show, building for happiness beneath the skies. Now you will see this world is a pro-tempore building, hastily run up to be pulled down again; that God has made terrestrial things of a feeble texture; that God intends to burn up the world; that this world is not our rest; that through

the fall it is polluted thoroughly. Crucifixion to the world and the world unto you, and crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts, begin to be and shine as something desirable. Now to "tough a dead body and be unclean," is antitypically fulfilled to you in a thousand different ways. You can scarcely think, speak, act, or look, etc., but you contract guilt. All is death, vanity, and vexation out of Christ. Now, hearkening through grace to Christ's Spirit who "leads" you is your glory. He tells you, "love not the things that are in the world; die daily." Which, says the worldling, is no doubt the essence of melacholy. It is not so. Partaker of a better creation in Christ through his blood and righteousness, you are new-created in Him thus. You begin to taste the nature of the new creation in Christ; and you gradually begin to say, "What intolerable deformity! what poor empty work! what an unsatisfying want of solidity there is in this world I am now living in! I would not live always. I suffer the most from my own heart, wherein is the cruel and incurable poison of asps." You become weaned from the world. One touch of carnality in you brings up a whole troop of things friendly to the devil. You see the flesh is corrupt. All things, decay, wax old, and are ready to vanish away.

Now you turn your mind to the last scene of Christ, as your Resurrection; when redemption will wave its last and final flag of immeasurable triumph over every foe. I mean the last general resurrection of all the celestial bodies of saints. Now, when God has turned the world into a ruin, and swept it with the besom of destruction, "Now," say you, "interested in the blood and righteousness of the great Redeemer, I, with the spirits of all justified men made complete,--now we shall be clothed upon with our heavenly houses, our bodies of glory." Say you again, what intolerable imperfection our present stay on earch is much and oft! Interested in the blood and righteousness of the great Redeemer, and with his sweet Spirit indwelling in me, turning all my soul by springs of fear and love into somewhat like a healthly garden, you say, "How happy I am!"

Watching the hand of God, waiting on him, hearkening to him, you must be builded together, by the Spirit, in Christ by the predestinated method, sorrow and joy. You must not pick and choose. You must say in a gospel sense,

"Whatever is, is right."

Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long. Have no communion so far with men who profess they can grow in Christ without the Spirit's influences sensibly enabling. Take heed what thou hearest. And may the blood and righteousness thou hast had from necessity to trust to, shine more and more to thee, till thy whole soul created therein (in this blood and righteousness) cries out, "I know that all that the Scriptures speak of the blood and righteousness of Christ is true. For I have got the springs on happiness arising therefrom in my own soul, and which I believe will arise there to a never-ending eternity, as sure as there is a God.

Abingdon, 1847 I. K.

(I. K. were the initials of John Kay, minister of the gospel among the Particular Baptists in England. After seceding from the Church of England he was taken into the home of William Tiptaft and there he spent most of the remainder of his life. He was rejected by his former friends and family, and being very sickly, he could only supply the pulpit occasionally. His short articles show the deep, Spirit-taught feelings he possessed. Editor)

February 22, 1980

To the Signs of the Times,

Greetings to you, and to our loved ones that have passed on and to the living.

I received the March issue and enjoyed its contents from the beginning to the end - which is sweet to my taste.

The price is paid and the victory has been won. Now let us praise Him for all He has done; to God for sending His own

Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Galatians 5:1 says, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." And in Luke 12:31-32, "But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

There is quite a difference between the Kingdom of God and the kingdoms of the world. (Notice the plural.)

In Matthew 4:8-10 it says, "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." I have heard it over the television from some and read it in other writings that God had sent them to preach, telling the people to accept Christ and be saved before it was too late. Also, they say that now was possibly their last chance. Away with such doctrine. We Primitive Baptists don't believe in a chance system. But we go by the wills and shalls of God. Nothing is too late. Nothing is too hard to be accepted of Him. Eph. 4:4-6 says, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

May God continue His love and mercy on all of His children and loved ones, "Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life." (Matt. 7:13-14), and may He keep us from evil.

Mattie Underwood

January 26, 1980

Dear Brother Williams,

I am enclosing $2.00 for contribution to the ***Signs of the Times.*** Keep the good work up. The truth shall hold on its way and I was so glad to see the names that are standing for the truth of absolute predestination. I believe in it all the way and hope and pray that I am one of His children. I love God's people, if I know my heart, and hope to stand up for the truth as long as I live.

We had wonderful preaching at Pleasantville Church the first Sunday in this month and I really enjoyed the service at Reidsville Church, and am happy to be a member there. May God bless each and every member and editors of the ***Signs of the Times.*** It is a wonderful book to read and have in my home. I hope you all will pray for all of God's people everywhere and myself, too.

Brother and Sister Spangler had lunch with me in November and I enjoyed them very much. He is a wonderful pastor, and if he doesn't preach the truth, I don't know anything about the truth. I like a plain person with no put-on and no big style. We don't have anything in this world, only what is loaned to us while we are here.

I would like to visit all the churches more but my husband is not a member, but is a strong believer and has a wonderful experience and reads the Bible a lot. He is good to take me the first, second, and fourth Sunday. I hope I am thankful for all the blessings I have.

In love,
Sister Reva Smith

EDITORIAL

ANNOINTING JESUS

And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head. And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her. And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good; but me ye have not always, she hath done what she could: she is come afore hand to anoint my body to the burying. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her. (Mark 14:3-9).

It has been said by critics that this lesson was limited to the Jews only. The critics do not have any right to interpret, change, misapply, take away, from the Gentile churches, what the Spirit saith to them. To me, this is a part of the inspired Scriptures, and, while I do not, nor have not, intended to toot my horn as being a man of God, I do have a hope to that end, and I do believe with all of my mind that the Gentiles are men of God when brought into that divine relationship by the New Birth. Believing this, I will not, God being my upholder and present help, be deterred from applying it to the church today.

This is an episode in the life of sinners, and it is a thing of interest to sinners. Inasmuch as the Comforter was promised to take the things of Christ and show them unto us (John 14:26; 16:14, 15), and this being a part of those things, a part of the life of Christ, it necessarily follows that it will be shown to all those that this Comforter is sent to. I am not pointing my finger at anyone, decision making having been left out of my hands (Mat. 29:23).

The setting for this lesson is certainly encouraging to poor ruined sinners. The apostle Paul, with all of his eminence as a learned man, would have enjoyed being in attendance at this meeting. The discussion of these sacred things would have been uplifting when he was inspired to write Romans 7:18. It was not by chance that this meeting was in a sinners home, even a leperous sinner. Doubtless there are nice people today that would say this woman should have waited until a more opportune time to have poured the ointment of the Saviour; it is certain that some found fault with her having wasted such precious ointment on what they thought was a harlot's son. That kind of people are not acquainted with the urgency of serving the Saviour, for, to those with whom the Spirit is working, there is no time like now. Putting off or putting on the work of grace in the heart, as well as into action, in not handled as men handle commodities like turnips and potatoes. This woman was not moved on, but she was moved to have a will, and the movement caused her to break the box and to pour the precious and costly ointment upon the head of her Maker.

Imagine someone being filled with indignation at such devotion. It is not a matter that we must let our imagination play about, but we are seeing cases wherein men having given many long years in service to the Lord and to the brethren, are being made the object of brutal challenge, are being subjected to cruel gossip and adverse publicity because that they have done what they could. This woman was indeed highly favored of the Lord. She had done what she could. He did nor arraign her before the bar of Satanic humanity and ridicule her for not having done better.

No, no, that kind of treatment comes to those that toot their horn to a gainsaying world. The Pharisees (and they are many in this nation, as well as surrounding nations) hurled vile epithets at this poor, certain woman on every occasion. They did not give the virgin a moment's rest from their vile tongue nor pen; these on this occasion taunted her, and reviled the Saviour for allowing her to do what she could; another poor woman, whom men (and how cruel men, even professing men, can be) was castigated before men, and the same was attempted before the Saviour, but it did not take. She complied with the Saviour--she did what she could.

Me thinks that time will often reveal the indignation of divine Justice because of the putting of something other than Jesus as being worthy of the great price. The poor were ever at hand, and doing something to relieve the poverty-stricken is certainly commendable, unless service is rendered the poor, which are always present, rather than the blessed Saviour who was working before night came, the works that would be accepted in behalf of elect sinners. We must always remember that in service, which is acceptable with God, that it must be His kingdom first. There is not to be a second choice, a secondary work. Both His doing that acceptable work, as well as our walking in those things of the kingdom, that they must be done. We do them because we are able through the strengthening of the Lord Jesus Christ. We do all that is thus wrought in us--we all do what we can.

Another outstanding fact is that the grace of God prompts us to do good. We do all the good that we can do. If we could do more, and did not do it, then it could not be said that we did what we could. We can do, we do do, all that Christ enables us to do. If He enables us to do more, and we did not do it, then it could not be said of us, as it was said of her, that we had done what we could.

The reason for us not doing more than we do is simple; it is because He has not enabled us to do more. We cannot do anything without him (John 15:1-5) The argument is over; the discussion is ended. It is not that I desire to appear that I have a closed mind, and yet, I do that. My Master closed the discussion; there is not anything more that can be said. What He says concludes all arguing, reasoning, closes all mouths--and minds. My mind is closed. It is not open for further discussion. Only God is good, therefore He alone must make the true good, only He can plant a righteous branch in a righteous Vine; only in and through and by the miracle of God's grace can we ever get into the Vine, to abide in Him. No branch has ever produced good fruit save in Him, for without Him we can do nothing. The Son could do nothing of Himself; the apostle, while the chief of the apostles, could not, nor did not, know but in part, and while he did not know, within himself, how to perform that which is good, yet, by the grace of God he did what he did, and what he could, and ended up in the faith of the woman in our text, that did what she could, having fought a good fight.

What a great contrast in the life of poor sinners. How they deplore their leanness, their barrenness, yet a man or woman can not do any better than they do, but they do all that they can. The argument is also over about whether we can do more than we do. Paul closed it more than nineteen hundred years ago. Let him talk to us. By the grace of God, let us listen to his experience of grace. In his experimental work of telling us about his, and our travel he clinches everything in favor of poor sinners, and in his describing this condition in the lives of poor sinners, he does not take a run out powder, nor does he make any exceptions for himself or anyone else. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lascivious-

ness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, sedictions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of which I tell you before as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." (Gal. 5:19-23)

Unless the Saviour was mistaken (but he was not) a natural man is inclined and bent and is in subjection to these works of the flesh. Regardless of how many are tossing pitchforks and barbs, it is still true that no man can rise above these works of the flesh. He cannot turn and do anything good within himself. His heart is desperately wicked, and that coupled to its deceitfulness, places it in a state to where it cannot be known. this being true, this kind of a heart does all of the wickedness that it can do. It is utterly impossible for this kind of heart to do anything else, for it is evil continually. Not only does it have a continual tendency to do evil, but, being accustomed to doing what it can, it will continue to do just that, no more, no less. This being the state of mankind at the beginning (Gen. 6:5) it follows that the state of the woman in our text was such that she was doing what she could do of the works of the flesh. Will you please advise me by what spirit or by what power she could have or would have done otherwise? The studying of the catechisms, the fathers in Israel, being under tutors and governors would never have taught her to leave her waterpot at Jacob's well; all of the doctors and lawyers under the law could not have enabled her to even know who Jesus was much less to worship Him by pouring costly spices and ointment on Him. But she did do what she could. Without a knowledge of sin under the law, but now, under the teaching of the lowly Galilaean she is now taught and enabled to do that which she could.

Ah, what warfare comes into our lives at the beginning of our first lessons at His feet. It seems that we are a helpless and hopeless case. Sin is still mixed in all that we do and say. We cannot go forward, we cannot turn back. It looks like to us that in spite of all His care, and in spite of all the interest of the family of God, we cannot do as we would desire. Do not give up, dear child. He is patient, He is kind. His teaching, like His yoke, is easy. Only when we try to do as we would, only when we try the teaching, do we find terror. But as line upon line, as precept upon precept, as a little comes in this little visit, as a little more next time, even so we learn of Him and by Him. In this we do what we can. It is a predestined journey all of the way. He goes before us and we follow Him, we do what we can. However this "can" will stand a close scrutiny. It is not a conditional can, we do what we can, and we can because he works mightily in us both to will and to do His pleasure. In this the opposition of our flesh is subdued, brought under subjection to every commandment given us, thus, when our course is finished, and we come to leave this world, we will have done all that we could do, and we will have left undone every sinful word and way and deed that is derogatory or impairing to the walk of a child of grace.

Her act of breaking the box of ointment and pouring it on His head was a good, commendable act. It was an act that was good to do to the poor at any time they were present, but this was the appointed time for her to do it to Him. He was there for that time, and she came along at the time in which she could do what she could. There is not any difficulty thrown in her way, although the Pharisees tried to make it difficult for her. Christ Jesus thwarted one, and blessed the other. The unbelieving Jews could not prevent the costly spiknard being poured on Him, and He enabled

her to do it, thus she did what she could. The fruits of the Spirit had no law against her doing it, and the works of the flesh were thwarted to where not anything was present to keep her from doing it, therefore she did what she could. Her whole being was absorbed in worshipping her Master; of following Him through thick adversaries or legions of devils. It was easy and delightful for her to do what she was enabled to do; to do what she could.

The faithfulness of this poor sinful woman is preached today when the gospel is preached. He that wrought effectually in her, enabling her to do what she could, sets an example for the household of faith. It is not her so much that is always mentioned, but her faith. She was a blessed woman, a faithful woman. The evidence of acceptance was not in her having acquired faith, or sought faith, or exercised faith, for, if so, the acceptance of her would have never been made manifest, but to the contrary, she would have been commanded to depart from Him as a worker of iniquity. One thing we can be sure of, God has never given His approval to, nor accepted any work save that which He has wrought (Job 14:15/Luke 13:27).

The secret of all acceptable services is found in the difference that grace makes in the lives of God's children. It is His grace that enables one and all to do what they do in following Him, in doing all they have done, in doing all that they do in serving Him. Once again, at the expense of being called trite, let me urge that all of this result in this poor woman, and the poor sinner, is the direct and immediate work of God. It is not nine tenths His work and one tenth ours. It is by grace from the beginning to the end; it is by grace that we do what we can, all that we can.

He works in His children. His work is an effectual work. I used to work at getting my little pupils to behave; years later I worked at getting my offsprings to behave themselves; and I do believe that was a good work, and that it was the best, and all, that I could do. This is the gift of parents for their loved ones, but, bless His holy and righteous name, He works and gives much better things and gifts. He works in them all righteousness by which they are able to do His commandments, which is all that they can do.

(Elder) W. D. Griffin

THE SAMARITAN

We have been asked what we understand is taught in the parable of the Samaritan and are glad to give such views as we have.

In this connection, we remember a paragraph in an Editorial by Elder Chick in the Signs of August 15, 1887 which reads as follows: "Almost all the discourses of our Saviour grew out of certain circumstances which had occured, or were replies to things said or done by others; and if we would at any time know the real drift and bearing of his words, we must know the circumstances and ascertain the thoughts, ideas and words of those to whom he spoke. This is the only safe way of interpreting anybody's words; and it is very manifest that the same words spoken under different circumstances may bear a great diversity of meaning. In the words of Jesus under consideration it is therefore needful that we know the occasion of their utterance, and to whom they were spoken."

Elder Chick here expressed our own thoughts on these matters so well that we feel to quote him; and, although he was not writing on our subject, what he said is so very true that we would do well to heed these particulars whenever we are considering any portion of the Scriptures. How true it is that a jewel of gold in a swine's snout is out of place, for it's beauty and value is utilized only when it is properly set. (see Prov. 11:22)

A careful reading of Luke 10:21-37, is necessary for an understanding of the

circumstances which gave occasion for the utterance of the parable of the Samaritan; and it would be impossible to understand the parable if we should fail to note two things especially. First, that the parable was addressed to the Lawyer; and second, the concluding remark by the Saviour: "Go, and do thou likewise." It was not addressed to the disciples; and the conclusion, though simply stated, no doubt stopped the mouth of the gainsayer.

Several important matters are disclosed in the parable, chiefly the contrast between the actions of the priest and Levite, on one hand, and the Samaritan, on the other. But it is noted that this difference is directed to the lawyer and, of course, to those whom he represents.

Jesus was talking to his disciples concerning many wonderful and glorious things which they were blessed to see and hear, which prophets and kings in other ages had not seen, though they desired them. Then the lawyer, who no doubt had heard him talking, "stood up" to tempt or provoke him, and asked, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

It was so characteristic of the lawyer and his kind, in their feelings and deportment, to stand above and apart from those who believed in and followed Jesus, for they knew nothing of the need of grace and redemption. Being a son of Abraham and keeper of the law, as he thought, his conscience did not question his righteousness. Desiring, therefore, to tempt or entangle Jesus, he would boldly have Jesus know his position, and demanded to know what else was necessary; for, to him, Jesus was teaching a strange and ridiculous doctrine. Therefore, in the question, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life," we can almost hear him putting emphasis on "I", for he was so very complacent about it.

How easy it was for Jesus to be master of every situation. He simply asked the lawyer, "What is written in the law? How readet thou?" It was easy for the lawyer to reply to this since he was acquainted with the letter. He quoted, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." Then Jesus said, "Thou hast answered right; this do and thou shalt live."

Any difficulty in this answer of Jesus is resolved if we bear in mind that Jesus was, for the moment, taking a stand on the lawyer's own ground, allowing him to "dig his own pit" and unwarily to fall into it.

By this time the lawyer felt that he was doing quite well for himself in the conversation; so he continued by asking, "And who is my neighbor?" This was a further effort to tempt Jesus, and was his downfall, since it gave proof on the very face of the question that his religion lacked vitality, — an outward appearing with no inward marrow. If indeed and in truth he had loved the Lord his God with all his heart, soul, strength and mind, he would have likewise loved his neighbor as himself; for it is to be noted that the loving his neighbor as himself is connected with loving his God. The question need not, therefore, have been asked.

Though men may say, "These things have I kept from my youth up," there is a "One thing thou lackest." Jesus said on another occasion, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not leave the others undone." How true it is as said a poet, "Long sanctimoneous faces oft hide hearts that are foul."

The purpose of the parable which followed was evidently to portray the difference between the fruits of a naturally religious man and the fruits of a spiritually religious man; that is, the fruits of one unregenerated and one

regenerated. In all his teaching Jesus had declared the necessity of a change in heart, — a being born again. The change is within, and is acquired when a new covenant is made with the sinner; or rather, when it is manifested to the sinner that the new covenant is made with him, the laws thereof being written in his heart and put in his mind. This, and this alone, produces new "externals", as shown by the new walk, new talk and new actions. The "externals" of an ascetic life, the pretensions of piety, evidenced by routine fastings and prayers, can never change the heart; yet these are the ways in which men would acquire righteousness, and are quite satisfied with this appeasing balm in their un-broken hearts.

When the priest and the Levite "passed by" the man half-dead, neither were moved with any degree of compassion. They no doubt saw his condition and his need, but had no "fellowship" for it. Without a doubt neither had ever been left for dead, or robbed, or wounded experimentally: nor felt the need of comforting ministrations of a fellow traveler. They probably felt they were glad they were not as this publican, as one did on another occasion; so they passed by. They were entirely self-centered, and strict in their deportment; they felt that if others would do as they, others would not fall into divers straits as this man had. This seems to represent the feeling of carnal security; and self sufficiency to be righteous in the sight of God, which is inherent in all who have eyes and see not, ears and hear not, and hearts and understand not. These characters are vividly portrayed in the Gospels and in the Acts; they are as much among us today as they were then, for none can show forth the fruits of any spirit except that which they have; and these have only the spirit of man.

There comes another man upon the scene, however, whose spirit is entirely different. He shows it by his actions, though he was practically an "untouchable", being a Samaritan. There was an immediate response from his heart, half-dead man's troubles became his troubles, his wounds became his wounds. A fellowship for the sufferings of the wounded one was quickly apparent, — was he not a sufferer, too. His understanding and feeling for his fellow took not just a mere form of wellwishing, but there was a giving of his all. Love, a heart felt love, prompts a laying down of our lives for our brethren. And we cannot but understand that this is what the Samaritan had. He is typical of all those who are brought to know themselves as they are in the sight of God, and who have felt and experienced the love and mercy of God shed abroad in their hearts, and a forgiveness of their sins. In this there springs up a real loving of the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, soul, strength and mind, and our neighbors as ourselves. We do not have to inquire "who is our neighbor." There is an attraction of kindred spirits to each other, and a going forth of love and fellowship, so that there is not only a rejoicing with those who rejoice, but a weeping with those who weep, and a mourning with those who mourn. The poet wrote:

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love:
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

Before our Father's throne
We pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
Our comforts and our cares.

We share our mutual woes;
Our mutual burdens bear:
And often for each others flows
The sympathizing tear."

When this so great a contrast was shown the lawyer in the parable, he could but say that the neighbor was the one who showed mercy. Then Jesus said, "Go, and do thou likewise." We see in this a plain and severe rebuke to the lawyer, just as he had rebuked others of his kind on other occasions for their

pretensions of religious zeal and piety. It was the same as saying to him, if your religion were not vain, you would show the fruits of it as the Samaritan did.

It is not difficult to see that this stopped the questioning of Jesus by the lawyer, for the rebuke was so pointed that he probably was glad to end the conversation.

From the above we will be understood to see in this parable a showing of the works of the flesh and the extent or limit of those who are working under the law for righteousness, as it is contrasted with the fruits manifested by those who, by grace, are delivered from the futility of self righteousness into the righteousness which is imputed. This is the difference between law and grace; between those who are dead and those who are quickened. The actions of the priest and Levite show the very best which may be found in anyone yet under the bondage of the law of sin and death; while the Samaritan shows the fruits of the Spirit in those quickened ones who have the love of God in them, which fruits are manifest in the love and compassion one toward another.

The half-dead one represents any with whom we come in contact in our journey of life who is in need of succor, whether a word of comfort to a troubled soul, or assistance in the necessities of life. Jesus is, of course, the true neighbor, for he came to minister and not to be ministered unto; but his brethren who walk in the Spirit, through grace follow in his footsteps.

Are we not all concerned often as to whether we too are but mere pretenders, seeing that we walk in the flesh much of the time. But what a blessing it is to know the difference and to feel so condemned for our carnality. Do we not oftimes examine ourselves whether we be in the faith, and seek at the throne grace and wisdom that we may walk worthy of our profession in quietness, meekness and humbleness? If we think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think, and esteem any of our brethren less; if we shut up the bowels of our compassion and with covetousness seek our own rather than our brother's welfare; if we are right and everybody else is wrong, and we would rather have our own way than to see the brethren at peace; or if we are fault finders and busybodies, then we are walking in the flesh and shall of these things reap corruption. But, if we are blessed to remember that it is by grace that we are saved, and that we have nothing but what is given us of the Lord, and have nothing to boast of ourselves; and feel the love flowing out to the brethren which makes us esteem them far better than ourselves, and feel that we could not live without them, but must have some humble place among them, then we are "clothed in our right mind". This is the fruit of the Spirit.

That brother who is greatly concerned whether he is a deceiver, and is afraid he will do or say something to offend, proves by his very anxiety that he is not a deciever. As long as he is thus afraid, he will not cause trouble.

Nov. 1952 Elder John D. Wood

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

FROM AN OLD SIGNS

Montgomery Co., Ind.
June 15, 1863

Dear Brother Beebe:--I have only been a subscriber for the ***Signs of the Times*** since last January, and I am well pleased with them. They afford a medium of communication through which God's children, or many of them, are still permitted to commune, and in them can give an account of their travels while in the house of their pilgrimage, and through which, I also, will drop a few lines in regard to my own experience.

I was born and raised in Montgomery County, Kentucky, until I was about

twenty-one years old. My mother was a member of the Mt. Carmel Particular Baptist Church in Clark County, Kentucky. And my father, before my rememberance joined the same order; but not receiving the doctrine, he left them and joined the Arminian Baptists at Mt. Stearling and continued with them until about 1825 at which time Alexander Campbell's theory began to be taught by the Arminian Baptist, which resulted in a large number going into what was called Campbellism, and my father was one of that number. He had become an ordained preacher previous to that time. As I, like all of Adam's posterity by nature, was dead in sins, I thought but little about religion; but being the youngest son, it was my lot to accompany my mother to her meeting; and from some cause I could often find myself shedding tears under the preaching. But my father having embraced Campbellism, and many of the Arminian Baptist ministers were preaching it, I was induced to believe it was the true doctrine. We lived in a Campbellite neighborhood, and my associates were mostly of that faith; I was surrounded by that influence.

When I grew to manhood I became a warm advocate for that doctrine, and took much delight in throwing stumbling blocks, and putting naughty questions to those whom I called Antinomian Baptist. It gave me pleasure to ask questions they could not answer. In the fall of 1831 we came West and settled in Hancock County, Ind., where we found Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Campbellites, and as I was an especial hater of the Baptists and Methodists, I sought every opportunity to argue with them. Although I hated the Baptists, I loved my mother, yet I abominated her doctrine, and the people she was united with. My venom was so great, that I thought, and frequently said, if I had a cause to try in court, I would, under no circumstance, permit one of them to sit on the jury; for I believed they were the most ignorant of creation, and so contrary and head strong, that they would contend against reason, knowledge, and common sense, and that they were always wrong.

In the spring of 1834, I went to Kentucky and married. My wife was under the Methodist influence. My regard for her caused me, in a great measure, to drop my opposition to the Methodist; but I retained the same malignant spirit against the Baptists, up to February 1842, at which time I was coming, one evening, from my brother-in-law's about one mile from my house when the impression came to me, "You must die. What is your condition? Are you ready for death?" Brother Beebe, I had often thought of death, and of dying, and of how I wanted to arrange my affairs, and of how I expected to prepare for death, perhaps a thousand times; but never in all my life did the thought strike me with such awful force before, as these words; "You must die! Are you prepared", etc. My mind at that instant became restless, and uneasy. I began to ask myself what I must do to prepare myself. My natural mind seemed to reply, go to the church and tell them, you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and be baptized in his name, and spend the remnant of your days in piety, and you will have a sure promise of heaven. For although I was such a Campbellite, I had never taken initiating steps to go to heaven. But while I was meditating about going to the church something said to me: Do not do it: for that is not the way to heaven. This made my mind still more restless and uneasy; and I began to search the scriptures to learn what I must do to be saved; for I verily thought my salvation depended on something that I must do. The more I read my Bible, the more restless I became, for I could not find what I must do to be saved. I then concluded to go and hear all the preaching I could, for I thought all of God's ministries knew all about it; so I

went to hear the Campbellites, Methodists, Presbyterians, Middleground and Arminian or Missionary Baptists, there being no Old School Baptists nearer than twenty miles, but all the preaching gave me no relief.

I had been somewhat of a politician, and on third Saturday in April, 1842, I was nominated as candidate for the State Senate. At first I thought I would decline the nomination, but through the urgent persuasion of friends, I consented, hoping that it would draw my mind away from what was troubling me, and relieve me from any uneasy feelings. I tried to turn my attention to politics, and made appointments for speeches, and filled them.

On the second Sunday in June, 1842, I went to hear one of the Middleground Baptists preach. After preaching, a door was opened for reception of members. A woman came forward and told her experience. I was anxious to hear it, and unconsciously pressed in the crowd. While she, in relating her exercise, was telling what a vile sinner she was, it seemed to me that a brilliant light shone into my inmost soul; and seemed to manifest to my view all the sins I ever committed. I was uneasy and restless before, but I had never known what trouble was before. I thought the earth would open and swallow me, that I must sink into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone--that I had sinned away the day of grace, and now it was everlastingly too late for me. I thought that this light which had appeared to me, had made known to all the congregation what a sinner I was.

As I went home, something said to me, Go to the woods and pray God for mercy: but another thought occurred, What is the use, for God is a just God, and can not look on sin with allowance? and you are a mass of sin. Still I felt urged to go to some secret place and ask God for mercy, and I went into the woods and there fell upon my knees, and tried to pray. As I arose, it seemed to me that if there had been any chance of acceptance for me before, it was now out of the question. That I, a mass of sin, had now attempted to pray to a holy and just God, in which I had committed the unpardonable sin, for I had taken the name of God in vain. All nature seemed to be in mourning, even the trees of the forest seemed to hang their leaves in gloom.

I started for home, meditating on my condition. I thought if I had sought religion when I was young, I might have obtained it; but as I had grown old in sin, there was no hope for me. When I got home, I found my wife in tears, but dared not ask her the cause for I thought she knew my condition, and was grieving on account of my wickedness. That night I had a serious time in meditation. Among other things, I was standing as a candidate for the State Senate. Althought my chance for election was considered sure, since I was such a sinner, I had no confidence in myself, and as everybody knew what a wicked heart I had, they, of course, could have no confidence in me. I determined to go to those who had put me on the ticket, and withdraw my name, and get them to select some one else, which I did on the next day. This I thought would afford me some relief. But, alas! it seemed there was no relief for me.

When I returned home, I again found my wife in tears, but still I could not ask her what was the matter. This produced much serious reflection for some time, in so often finding her in a flood of tears. Some times I thought she was grieving because she had married one whose heart was so sinful, at other times I feared that I had, at some unthinking moment, said something that had hurt her feelings. Sometimes I would wish that I had died in infancy, or that I were like the brute creation, that death might be the last of me. I often went to some secret place to try to pray, but all seemed to be to no purpose. Many times I would think of the worst of men, the thief, the

robber, and the murderer; but I could think God could be just in saving them, as their sins were outward practices, but could see no hope for me; for my wickedness was in my heart, the seat of vitality and affection. I now believed my case was sealed, and that I must be banished from the presence of God, and his people, and sink down in torment, with wicked men and devils, for evermore. Still I did not feel willing to commit another sin against God. But how could I avoid it, as all that I thought, said or did, was wicked, for it all proceeded from a heart which was a fountain of wickedness and sin. And--

"If my soul were sent to hell,
The righteous law approves it well."

It then occurred to me, as hell was my portion, to try to reconcile myself to it as best I might. While thus meditating, a portion of a hymn came to my mind, which was thus--

"When any turn from Zion's ways,
Alas, what numbers do,
Me thinks I hear my Saviour say,
Will thou forsake me too?"

And with this, something said to me, Go once more and try to pray. I thought of a place, and went to it, but could not make the attempt--then I thought of another, but, as at the first, my heart failed me; at last I concluded I should never get back to the house; I was just ready to drop into hell, with this thought I fell upon my knees, and I think I said: "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner". At that moment these word came to me: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." My burden was gone! My heart was made to leap for joy. My soul was filled with wonder, joy, and love, and praise to God for his wonderful works and ways in bringing rebel sinners home to himself. I could then view all the providential dealings of God with me through the course of my life, and that, had it not been for his almighty power and grace, I should still have been left to perish in my sins; but his almighty power and grace were more than a match for my stubborn will, and he, therefore, brought me into subjection to him in the day of his power. This scripture came to my mind, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God: speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem; cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." But I can not now speak of this and other passages, which have come to my mind; but I may at some future time. Suffice it to say, I thought I saw my way so clear, through the merits of Christ's blood, that I thought I could show it to others. I wondered why I had not discovered it before. I desired to see my mother, and all my christian acquaintances, and even those who did not profess religion, for I thought I could make it so plain that they could not help seeing it.

But I particularly desired to tell God's people what the Lord had done for my poor soul. This manifestation occurred December 12, 1842, in the afternoon. I then thought I should never doubt any more. I loved God, his cause, and his people; and I loved sinners too; for I thought they were of his good creation, and shewed forth his work. This illumination continued until after I went to bed. I told my wife about it, and that I had a mind to join the church. She burst into tears, and said she did not want me to do so, but she said no more. While I was reflecting on her objecting, a dark cloud came over my mind, and I began to fear that I had been deceived in thinking my sins were forgiven, but it might be a delusion. This threw me into trouble. I began to hunt for my burden, but it was gone. I sought it with prayers and tears. I thought if I could have it again I would know the next time how it would leave me, and then I would be sure. But it was gone, and I could not get it back. This dark cloud continued until some time the next day, when, I trust, my soul was again illuminated with the

light of the Sun of Righteousness. O, I was happy then, and could sing--

"Tongue can not express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

I had found the pearl of great price. Yes, I had found in Jesus a full and complete Saviour, and sweet to my soul, just such a Saviour as my poor soul needed. It was impressed on my mind to follow his footsteps.

I began again to go to the meetings to seek for a home. I went to hear the Methodists, Presbyterians, and the Missionary and Middleground Baptists, and the Campbellites, but none of them now suited me; for they did not give all the glory to God. I heard of an Old School Baptist that was going to preach about twelve miles off, and I went to hear him. He preached Jesus as a full and complete Saviour, and this suited me. I then determined to cast in my lot with that people, which I had once so much hated, for my hatred was changed for love. On the fourth Saturday in July, 1843, my wife, and myself went twenty miles to an Old School Baptist church, (for my wife had also obtained a hope). We talked to the church that day, and on the next day, we, with several others, were baptized by Elder William Hogan, since which time the Old School Baptists have been my people.

But I must stop for the present. I have written a much longer letter than I expected to; but still I have only given a sketch; for there are many incidents connected with my experience that I can not now speak of without making my letter too long. Brother Beebe, is this the travel of christians, or is it some strange phantom of the brain? Some there are who tell us that what is called christian experience is all but a whim of the brain, but I can not believe them. If you think the foregoing worthy of a place in your excellent paper, you can put it in, but do not exclude better matter, or if you disapprove, throw it aside, and I will be content. I am, as I hope, your sincere brother, in gospel bonds.

William H. Darnall

My Dear Brother and Sister Spangler,

First, I would like to say that I have had a very painful back problem for almost a month - which explains why I have been unable to attend this area church meeting. I would be remiss, however, if I did not acknowledge our Lord's goodness unto me. This year has brought with it much physical suffering, but I have been given such sweet assurances and lovely meditations on Christ and His wonderful love and goodness - these previous things have much, much more than compensated for all the sufferings which was appointed unto me!

While writing, let me tell you dear folks a little experience I had at our October meeting. My soul had rejoiced as you preached so beautifully about the "fulness and glory of Christ". As we were singing the last song, "Home, Sweet Home", suddenly my dear departed son's characteristically smiling face appeared before me which said to me, "I am safe at home", and he seemed to be beckoning me on, saying, "This is the way home, by the way of the Cross". (Suffering and heartbreak) Needless to say, my poor heart soared away, and my very soul longed to go to that beautiful Home of rest. I thought that surely this is my Lord speaking through him.

The 22nd Chapter of Second Samuel has meant much to me in recent days. It seems to be a message expecially befitting to us in these troubled times.

May God's Holy Spirit permeate our lives in a manifest sense is my prayer for Christ's sake.

With fervent love,
Mamie P. Aldridge

Pray without ceasing.

1 Thess. 5:17

OBITUARIES

SISTER BUENA WHITE

"The righteous perisheth and no man layeth it to heart. . . none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come" Isaiah 57:1

It has pleased the Lord to take unto Himself one of His faithful, Sister Buena White, my aunt, who passed away recently. After being stricken two years ago with a long seige of pneumonia she was raised up for a short time but quickly then began to fail. Thus the Lord in mercy gently took her body down until she peacefully fell asleep December 18, 1979 at the age of 90 years.

In her notes she wrote of her own life:

"In all my travels along this uneven, and eventful, journey of life the Lord has led me on--sometimes over rough and stony places, at other times thru pleasant and prosperous places. No matter how stormy or tiresome, it has all been for my good and God's glory, I hope. My pathway was laid out in the beginning of time and I was not consulted as to what way I had rather go, and even though I have been very rebellious, at times, I was none the less encouraged to keep plodding on until I have almost reached the end of my sojourn here...My mother has told me when I was but a few hours old they closed my eyes the third time for dead and yet I am still here through the Grace and Mercy of an all wise and merciful God. Just why He saw fit to restore me to life and keep me here these many years is known only to Him and it is not for me to question Him about it."

It was this quiet simple faith which graced her long life and served her so well through many afflictions.

Her moment in time began April 24, 1889 in a one room log house near Quitman, Texas where she was born Buena Ann Eliza Wright. She was one of seven living children born to Jeptha Monroe and Sarah Elizabeth Wright, early settlers of the small Wood County community and, of these, three sisters and one brother survive her. Some of her fondest memories were of her carefree childhood when she roamed fields and woods in search of flowers and bird nests all under the loving discipline of godly parents.

In 1910 she married Oscar White and to them were born four daughters and one son, one daughter dying in infancy. But faith must be tried, and the Lord saw fit to take her husband in 1931 at a time when seemingly he was needed most, and left her to raise her baby son alone. Thus she was brought to quietly trust in Him who is as much Husband and Father to His people in their material needs as He is Redeemer of their souls. She is survived by her four children, nine grand children, eighteen great grandchildren and one great-great grandchild.

Aunt Buena was blessed at an early age to believe in the free grace and electing love of a Sovereign God. She joined Cana Primitive Baptist Church on the day of its organization October 29, 1915 and was baptized the following day by the late Elder R. E. White (no relation). Her daddy was elected clerk of the newly formed church and served until his death in 1941. At that time Aunt Buena accepted the office and faithfully executed its duties until the church disbanded in September, 1977. She had a ready pen and a love of poetry and sometimes wrote poems of her own.

As I thought upon her long widowhood, I remembered the words of Paul as he spoke of the widows who are an honor to the church and whom the church is to honor (I Tim. 5:3, 9, 10) and I was struck by the appropriateness of these words to her own life as her years were spent in the devoted care of her family and of the saints of God, all with love and warm good humor. As her long years of service came to an end, being the last remaining charter member, her own infirmity seemingly marked the end of her church also. Once the scene of large congregations and joyful gatherings of the whole community, it at last succumbed to the changing times and a dwindling membership, and, with the recent disposal of house and land, Cana church was also laid to rest.

Aunt Buena was buried at Myrtle Springs Baptist Church cemetery not far from where she was born. Her faithful pastor, Elder John L. Smith, was unable through infirmity to attend, and her funeral was conducted by Elder Lloyd Wall, assisted by Elder Joe L. Hamrick, both of whom extolled not the virtues of the creature but of Him in whose sight her death was precious, and comforted the living with the greatest of all comforts, the hope of the Resurrection which anchored her soul throughout her long journey in this life.

So in the presence of many friends and

family members her body was tenderly laid in the grave beside her loved ones who had gone before. Her gentle kindness and wise counsel shall be greatly missed. The fruits of a godly upbringing, piety of daily walk and unworthiness testifying to a love of God within are not much witnessed in the present generation, and their loss to the church of God is keenly felt; nevertheless, we mourn not as those who have no hope, and through the sadness and tears what a mercy and rejoicing to know her spirit has flown to the long awaited call "Child, come home."

Written by her niece at the request of her loving family.

Respectfully,
Kelsay Wright Swain

BROTHER A. MORDICA PERKINS

It was with sad hearts that we at Old Mountain Church received the news of our beloved Brother Mordica Perkins' death. Brother Perkins was born September 30, 1902, in Caswell County, N.C., and he was a son of the late William A. Perkins and Lucy Strader Perkins. He was married to Matty V. Perkins.

Brother Perkins, Rt. 1, Dry Fork, died at his residence on Saturday, August 25, 1979. In addition to his wife of the home, Brother Perkins is survived by one son, William Perkins, Dry Fork, VA., two daughters, Mrs. Willie Gibson, Yanceyville, N.C., and Mrs. Marshal Johnson, Danville, Va.,; two brothers, John Perkins, Elon College, N.C., and Doyl Perkins, Danville, Va.,; one sister, Mrs. Esta Lovelace, Reidsville, N.C.; five grandchildren, and ten great grandchildren.

Brother Perkins joined Old Mountain Church on September 14, 1968. He was a faithful and devoted member until his health failed, and then he attended when ever possible. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace and grace alone. The writer has enjoyed hearing him tell some beautiful experiences, and talking on the Scriptures in his home. He was very humble and loved by all who knew him. He was a retired Dan River, Inc., employee, and he was also a farmer.

The funeral was held August 27, 1979, in Towns Funeral Home Chapel by Elder H. W. Wray, Elder Wallis Smith, and Garland Chenault.

His sleeping body was laid to rest in Danville Memorial Gardens, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to wait the second coming of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We hope our loss is his gain.

Be it resolved that a copy be sent to the family, a copy be sent to the ***Signs of the Times,*** and a copy be kept in the church records. Done in order of conference at Old Mountain Church.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
Sarah H. Barker, Clerk

BROTHER HARVEY R. PASCHAL

Brother Harvey R. Paschal was born Sept. 7, 1900. He departed this life on December 31, 1979.

Brother Paschal joined the Bunker Hill Primitive Baptist Church on the fourth Saturday in September, 1970, and was baptized on the following Sunday. The gift of a deacon was seen and felt by the church in Bro. Paschal. In January, 1972, the church called for a Presbytery to examine and ordain to the office of a deacon. He served the office well. He was a humble man, slow to speak, but when he spoke, he was blessed to speak wisely.

Brother Paschal is survived by his wife, Nona Murphy Paschal, who was a kind and loving wife to him, who was always ready to serve when duty called. Also, one brother, Brother Roy Paschal, survives, along with one sister, Mrs. Myrtle Carter, several nieces and nephews, and many friends.

We, the Church at Bunker Hill, feel our loss of him very keenly, but realize our loss is eternal rest for him. May the Church be blessed to bow in humble submission to thy will, O God, and thank Him, the Giver of every good and perfect gift, for His mercy given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.

This church, while seated in our January conference, appointed the Moderator, and Clerk to write this memorial of Brother Harvey Paschal, and one copy to be recorded on our church book, one given to his wife, and one to be sent to the ***Signs of the Times*** for publication.

Elder Z. L. Rhue, Moderator
Sister Lillian Rhue, Church Clerk
Brother H. B. Briggs, Assistant Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 8/80 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

GENESIS 2:16-17

"And the Lord commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth and everything therein. He spake it into existance by the word of His power. "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good." (Gen. 1:31). And he said, "Remember the former things of old for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." (Isa. 46:8-11). "For of him, and thru him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen." (Rom. 11:30) "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." (Rev. 4:11).

This is the God in whom I hope I trust; the One who hath loved me with an everlasting love, and hath taught me thru the Holy Ghost all things that I may know of Him; if indeed I know anything. And if I do know anything, I am sure that it was not taught me by the wisdom of man: for it is the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory: which none of the

princes of this world knew: for if they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit. (I Cor. 2:7-9)

God has at least one purpose for everything in the world; and they show forth His glory and praise Him, and are for His pleasure; even the wrath of man praises Him and the remainder He restrains. (Ps. 76:10). By this we know that God is the first cause of all causes; but that does not remove the second causes. When God formed man from the dust of the ground, he was a creature made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope. (Rom. 8:20). For one to be subject to anyone or anything, one must of necessity be under the power or authority of someone or something. If Adam, the creature, could have successfully resisted vanity, it could not be said that he was ever under its power; but we know he fell, and all his posterity with him. Some will say, "Since He has made us subject to vanity, why doth he yet find fault? For we have not resisted His will." Paul answers, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay; of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another to dishonor?" (Rom. 9:20-21). In other words, does He not have the right to do with His own as it pleases Him? Who would deny Him this right?

Adam ate of the forbidden fruit willingly, and therefore transgressed the only law God had given. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." (I John 3:4). "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. 5:12). By this we see the entering of sin into the world, and it was by man. As I said before, God has a purpose in all things, even sin and the devil. If God had no purpose of sin or the devil, surely He would not have created the devil, and surely He has the power to keep sin out. If He does not have such power to keep sin out of the world, then how can He keep it out of heaven? But God overrules sin to the good of His children. A good example of this was the selling of Joseph by his brethern into Egypt. "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." (Gen. 50:20)

"For in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Although the Arminian says that Adam had a choice of eating or not eating, God did not say, if thou eatest, but, in the day thou eatest: for God knew he would; else God did not know and was ignorant of something that would come to pass. (I shudder at the thought.) And, the Arminian says, Adam did not die in that day; but, as I heard one say, he was only made very sick. In so saying, they declare God a liar. But it is impossible for God to lie, (Heb. 6:8), therefore they died in that selfsame day. No, they did not die a corporeal death; but a spiritual death. Death means, to be separated from; therefore they were separated or cut off spiritually from their Creator and driven from the garden of Eden.

Had Adam never sinned he would yet be in the garden of Eden; because it is sin that brings forth death, (Jas. 1:15), and he still would not be a fit subject for heaven and immortal glory; for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. (I Cor. 15:50). And Jesus said, "Verily, verily I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (St. John 12:24). Therefore we conclude that it was necessary for Adam to die; that the

world might be populated, and that he might be born again.

Brethern, there is no end to this great text, but I feel to stop here. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scriptures is of any private interpretation," (II Pet. 1:20), and knowing the weakness of my flesh, I cannot declare with any certainty, as have some, that this writing is in perfect harmony with the Holy Scriptures; but I exhort each and every one of you to search the scriptures to see if these things be so; and may God grant you wisdom and knowledge to discern between truth and error, and also rightly divide the word of truth.

I greatly need and desire your prayers of faith.

Clifford Wilbanks

SERMON ON HABAKKUK 3:13 AT NASSAONGA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH BY ELDER C. C. MORRIS

(Edited for publication)

It seems that since I have been going before God's children I have been made to walk with a limp, spiritually speaking, feeling my weakness when I come to this place, but never more so than at the time when the communion, or the Lord's Supper, is observed. I don't know that it should be that way, because each time we come together should be equally sacred and holy. Yet, the Lord did give us this memorial with tangible elements, the bread and the fruit of the vine, to observe His death and to do this in remembrance of Him until He comes. I hope that, whether our words be many or few, what is said and done here today would be in remembrance of Him.

The text I have turned to is found in the prophet Habakkuk, the third chapter, verse 13, at least as a starting point. Being timely creatures we need a starting point, but there is no beginning or no ending of the One with Whom we profess to have to do. There is no beginning or ending of His eternal Being. Habakkuk makes that abundantly clear. The text says, "Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed; thou woundedst the head out of the house of the wicked, by discovering the foundation unto the neck. Selah." The first portion of this text is what I would have before our minds. Of course, the latter portion of it, "Thou woundedst the head out of the house of the wicked, by discovering the foundation unto the neck," ties in with the destruction of Satan. It is linked with the prophecy that was given to Eve in the garden of Eden. "Thou woundest the head out of the house of the wicked," and who would be the head out of the house of the wicked if it were not the one who is referred to as the deceiver, Satan, that old serpent? God had told Eve the prophecy of the seed of the woman which was to be Christ Jesus, and said that he would be the seed, the woman's seed, who would bruise the head of the seed of the serpent, and that the serpent would bruise His heel. This is where Habakkuk touches on the same subject, "Thou woundedst the head out of the house of the wicked, by discovering the foundation unto the neck." The serpent's head is crushed, his neck is broken by the power of the One who is referred to in the opening statement, "Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed."

Here we have a reference to the Triune God who has a people referred to here and elsewhere (as we have attempted to bring to the remembrance of many of you these past few days), referred to throughout the Scriptures as "Thy people." They are the sheep of His pasture. They are not self-made people, but they are His people, His sheep, who confess, "It is He that hath made us and not we ourselves (Psalm 100:3)." These people are the objects of God's grace,

love, mercy, and salvation, and here God is represented as going forth with the intention and for the purpose of the salvation of these people. We trust we are speaking to a people who have some hope that they are a part of these people, who do have part and lot in this matter. This three-one God is spoken of as going forth for the salvation of these people, even for salvation "with thine anointed." And this Anointed One is the One that we have uppermost in our minds today. He is the One whom Elder Poole mentioned in the opening words of his prayer (which we trust and believe was indited by the Spirit of Almighty God), mentioning His everlastingness, His eternality. Habakkuk referred to Him in the first chapter, saying, "Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? We shall not die. O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction," as he looked for a moment at the enemy that oppressed national Israel in his day. But his eyes looked past the temporal difficulties and the sorrows that nation was going through, the sorrows that made Jeremiah lament and mourn and say, "Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" His eyes looked beyond these things to the One of whom he said, "Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One?" He was looking beyond any temporal thing in this life, whether it be what we are prone to call good or evil, or whatever it might be; he looked to the everlasting One, "O Lord my God." He continued, and in the third chapter he said, "O Lord, I have heard they speech, and was afraid." The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the wisdom of God is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ, who, the Apostle Paul says, "is the power of God and the wisdom of God (I Cor. 1:24)." And Habakkuk said, "I have heard thy speech, and was afraid." There is no spiritual fear until a person has been brought to the place where they have heard the voice of the Lord. He said, "Oh Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy." Such an one had been made to touch and to taste the wrath of Almighty God; at least in some measure they have been brought close to it; to feel, and to understand, and to see the justice of the wrath of Almighty God against them. He continues in his description of the mighty power of this three-one God as He comes in His vengeance, in His glory, and in His power, and he says, "And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand: and there was the hiding of his power. Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet. He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways are everlasting." Adam and his fallen race are only "come-lately" on the scene. This God is the One who is from everlasting, whose ways are perfect. And this everlasting and eternal God came forth, not as though in some way there was an abstract God out there in the universe, ruling over all things (as indeed the true and living God does, but not remaining is some far-distant way); but He came for salvation, and He came with the one that He refers to as "Thine Anointed." It was not that God remained, as it were, at a distance in some place which Paul vaguely referred to as the third heaven; but this is the one who took upon Himself flesh and was found in fashion as a man, and He humbled Himself, taking upon Himself the form of a servant. He tabernacled among men, and we beheld His glory as of the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. And of His fulness have we all received, and grace for grace. You see, in this matter

which we have before us that it takes grace multiplied, it takes grace compounded. It is not just an offer of grace, it is not grace just laid out on the table or laid out upon an altar, or laid out in some sort of a vague offer, that 'God had done His part, now you must do yours; you must avail yourself of this grace.' But he says, "And we have all received of this, and grace for grace." In other words, it is grace multiplied, and grace effectuating or making effectual the grace of God as it is in Christ Jesus, and applying that grace, else it would never be applied. And in this Anointed One whom we have before us, the salvation of these, "Thy people," is all wrapped up in Him. Twice in this little phrase he has mentioned this salvation: "Thou went forth for the Salvation of thy people, ever for Salvation with thine anointed."

We now think of the anointing of the Lord Jesus Christ, going back in the Old Testament (and I am well confident that your pastor has called to your attention the doctrine, the teaching of the Old Testament of the anointing, which sets forth in types and shadows Jesus Christ, so we will only refer to it here in passing and we trust briefly). There were three offices in Old Testament times that received the anointing. They were the prophets, the priests and the kings, and each one was anointed in a particular way, by having oil poured upon his head. We have these three offices set before us in the very word "anointed," because Jesus Christ is to His people, as you sang this day, your "Prophet, Priest, and King." And the anointing in the Old Testament times was an official recognition and inauguration of the person to that office.

The office of a prophet, a priest, or a king, was not something in any case that was lightly to be taken unto oneself. A person just didn't wake up one morning and decide, "I want to be a king," and set out to become a king--or for that matter, a prophet or a priest. As Paul said in Hebrews 5:4, "And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." They were called to these offices, selected by God Almighty, whether it was prophet, or priest, or king. And each of these were anointed, or publicly touched in some way with this oil which was placed upon them in a public inauguration which set them apart before the people.

Such was the case of our Lord Jesus Christ. Not with anointing oil as in Old Testament times, which only spoke of the Holy Spirit, but rather God Himself poured out His Spirit upon Him to anoint Him as Prophet, Priest, and King of His people. John tells us, "God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him (Christ)." There was no limit to the power, the grace, and the glory of the Spirit of the Almighty God that was put upon the Anointed of God, Jesus of Nazareth.

Here, may we briefly touch upon these offices of Jesus Christ. As Prophet we think of the Old Testament prophet in one peculiar way, in that primarily he was a man sent from God and bearing the message of God to the people. That was primarily a one-way trip from God to men. And he came bearing a message. More than anything else associated with the Old Testament prophets, perhaps, was this phrase which they would come saying, "Thus saith the Lord." They set forth and told the message of the Lord for the hour, for the day, for the situation. But Jesus Christ, the fulness of all in all, was the One who came forth and comes forth speaking to His people and bringing, in His own voice--that still, small voice which speaks in the depths of our hearts and soul--His words of comfort. He speaks in our mind and conscience where the audible voice of your friends and your elders can never reach. That still, small voice, speaking in the depths of where you really live; that is where Jesus Christ speaks His words of comfort and

peace.

It is there that He speaks as He goes before His sheep, calling them by name, with the God-given assurance that "they shall hear my voice and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd." When He calls them as He called Zacchaeus, to name no other (we would turn briefly to the account of Zacchaeus) -- I believe it was in Luke the 19th chapter where Jesus was passing through Jericho; and, Zacchaeus was a man little in stature, perhaps identifying somewhat with the lowliness of God's children. And yet, no matter how low you are in your own circumstances and how low you have been made to feel, nevertheless there is also that tendency within our nature, like Zacchaeus, to exalt ourselves and climb up. And when Zacchaeus heard that Jesus was coming, this stuck a responsive note within his heart. Who knows why Zacchaeus, of all the publicans, wanted to see Him, to see this Jesus? Who can explain it from natural reasons? It cannot be done. But there was something that had been at work in the heart of Zacchaeus. It was the Spirit of Almighty God preparing him for the occasion which was about to transpire. So, he ran down the road before where Jesus Christ was to come, to get a good seat, we might say, to get a good station, a good place from which to observe. He climbed up into a sycamore tree because he was so short he couldn't see through the crowd, so he took a seat up somewhere in a sycamore tree, and when Jesus came to the place, Jesus looked up and saw him, and he said unto him, "Zacchaeus," (always calling His people by name; not just some blanket, generalized invitation as it were, but always calling His sheep by name) "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must abide at thy house." Here again is one of those "musts" that must be accomplished. And you know, Zacchaeus did not come back at Jesus Christ and say, "No, you must not!" If I, a mere human being, come as a stranger into your midst, and if I were to come to any one of you and say I "must" go home with you, you have (speaking as the manner of men) the freedom under the providence of Almighty God, that there would be nothing to prohibit you from saying, "No, you must not!" But that was not the case here, and it never is when the words of Jesus Christ come in Spirit and in power. And He said, "Make haste and come down, for today I must abide at thy house." "And he made haste and came down, and received him joyfully." When Jesus Christ speaks as the Prophet of Almighty God to His people, then certainly they do respond just exactly like Zacchaeus did. Using him as that one example, we would go ahead and think of the priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

If a prophet came from God to the people, the priest went the other direction, as it were. This may be an over-simplification when you get down to the details of their lives, but nevertheless, primarily the priest was the representative of the people, going toward God. He was the representative because the individual could not, according to the Old Testament economy, the people could not go into the presence of God by themselves, and go directly; but they must have a priesthood, a fit representative to go into the presence of God for them. The book of Hebrews points out that even the priest must abide by all of the law's requirements; he must be a fit representative of the people. He could not be ceremonially unclean. He could not be unrighteous in any way according to the Old Testament law which God had set up. But here, Paul was talking in Hebrews the 9th chapter of the high preist who would go once a year into the holy of holies. And he said, "Now when these things were thus ordained, the priest went always into the first tabernacle accomplishing the service of God." The

tabernacle was divided into a holy place (referred to here as "the first tabernacle") and the holy of holies. And in that holy place was the table of shewbread which spoke of Jesus Christ as the bread and food of His people. In there also was the golden candlestick, which spoke of Jesus Christ as the light of the world, and the light of His people. And the third article in the holy place was the golden altar of incense which typified His intercessory prayer and approach unto God in behalf of the people. But of the holy of holies it says, "But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing." That is, in Old Testament times the way into the presence of God was never open, and it remained that way until the time of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. This Prophet, Priest, and King of His people, He went as the High Priest, alone, from the people and into the presence of His God and their God, not without blood. The blood He carried was not the blood of bulls and goats, which Paul said in this same chapter, "could never take away sin," but it was the blood as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. It was His own precious blood as of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. And He went into the presence of His own Father, and there received the vengeance which justly would have fallen upon all of the elect family of God and which would have destroyed them for all eternity, if it were not for the grace of God shed abroad in their lives by the Saviour, and His shedding of His precious blood in their behalf. Because without the shedding of blood, again this chapter tells us, there is no remission. There can be no remission of sins without the shedding of blood. This, of course, requires, in effect, the death of the sinner. This is, as Elder Poole set forth so simply and so elequently and so beautifully, the actual, the literal swap, as it were, Jesus Christ stepping into the law room and stead of His bride, His body, the church of the living God, and placing her in that glorified position that He had occupied in all eternity. Lifting her up without spot, without blemish, or any such thing, that she should be holy and without blemish before God, and He taking upon Himself the sins of the multitude that no man can number, he went down under all of the sins of countless millions. Sins that cannot be numbered. Sins beyond number in their own individual lives. Jesus Christ took the sins of millions like me, if not mine unto Himself, and went down in all of the sufferings that man and God combined heaped upon Him. Men, by wicked hands, took Him, according to Peter, and crucified and slew Him. It was not anything that man could do, ultimately, however, for this was a covenant action being acted out in agreement between the Father and the Son, and Jesus Christ said, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." This was something strictly between Him and His Father. And Peter on the day of Pentecost, that opening day of the church age as we now know it, in his keynote address said, "Him," (because "Him" is the only subject we have before us, after all is said and done) "Him, being delivered"–by what? By the wicked hands of Judas, and by Caiaphas, the High Priest? No! "Him being delivered by the determinate council and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."

And then, just a few chapters later in the book of Acts, after they had undergone some persecution, Peter and some of the other apostles being let go, went back to their own brethren. We have the first recorded prayer that is in the book of Acts after the day of Pentecost, and they came together amd they said, "Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against His Christ" (this quote is from the second Psalm. You will recall in the second Psalm it says, "against His anointed"--His Prophet, His Priest, and His King.) "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together"--they did not gather themselves, but they were gathered together--"for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." And what was it that was determined before to be done, and enacted on the cross of Calvary? It was this: That the High Priest would go alone into the presence of God; not without blood, but with His own precious blood; that He would stand good for all the sins of the people; that He would fulfill all of the types and shadows; that He would be the sacrificial lamb; He would be the altar that would sanctify the gifts; He would be the High Priest that would carry it out; He would be the scape goat which assumed the blame and carried the sins of the people out into the wilderness, and He would be that fit man that led the scape goat out there. He would be the All in all. This was all determined before by God's hand and His counsel to be done. A Prophet, coming to the people with the message of God, and a Priest coming from the people with their sins, going to God and answering for every one of them.

The third office is that of the King. He is not only the King of some little nation over there, postage-stamp size on your globe; but rather He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and He receives the worship of men and angels. He sits exalted at the right hand of the Majesty on high where He from eternity belongs. May the Lord enable us to rejoice in His finished work, and to rest only there, and to worship Him both in time and eternity. This is, as one of old has said, "For this is all my salvation, and all my desire." May that be our salvation and our desire this afternoon. May God bless you, and may He bless His truth, is my sincere desire.

(Edited for publication from a sermon by Elder C. C. Morris, tape-recorded at Nassaonga Old School Baptist Church on June 17, 1979)

Deatsville, Alabama

Dear Brethren,

I am enclosing a check for $12.00 to extend my subscription and that of my son, Mike H. Carter, for one more year each. Use the balance as you see fit.

On March 9, 1980, we had a program at my home Church, Elam, to dedicate a historical marker commemorating the 150th anniversary of the constitution of the Church. The church is among the oldest institutions in Pike County, having been constituted not too long after the Indians were moved West following the War of 1812.

My Mother, Ruby R. Carter, Age 92, passed away March 10, 1980. Some of the brethren from other parts of the country will remember visiting in her home. She was a member at Elam Church.

Sister Minnie Lee Godwin, age 93, passed away on March 20, 1980. At the time of her death she was the oldest member of Elam Church in point of membership, having joined there May

13, 1911.

You may publish this as information to the brethren if you see fit.

A Brother in Faith, I hope,
A. C. Carter

FROM AN OLD SIGNS

Box 275, San Juan, Texas

I, James B. Reid, the subject of this sketch, began my career July 24, 1871. I was born in Miss. and was nine years old when my father moved to Texas in 1880. As a small boy in Miss. mother would take us to meeting, the Primitive Baptist, she being a member of the Primitive Baptist before I can remember. Father never united with the church or any order, but was a strong believer in salvation by grace. They never taught their children any kind of religion, but did try to teach us good morals. Father being a poor man we labored hard for our sustenance.

At the age of thirteen or fourteen I began to have serious doubts about my hereafter. I had never heard a Primitive Baptist preach, in spirit of course. There were Old Baptist ministers in the country, but nothing for me. I being the oldest of seventeen children very soon father looked to me as leader. We would go to Sunday School I suppose more to be with young folks than anything else, and in my boyhood days I could see nothing good in it. Father and mother did not object to our going, neither did they compel us to go. I began to have serious thoughts concerning my future condition and I really thought, as others, that I could do something pertaining to a better life, but it seemed the more I tried the worse I got. I would go to what they called the mourner's bench. I heard others say they had gotten religion, and now, as I look back over the scene, with the most of them it seemed to last only through the summer time. The preacher would say, "give your heart to Jesus," but even in my youth I did not believe that God needed anything I could give him. I believed he was the giver and not I. I could see my doom and it was sealed and I thought it just and right. I thought how could he be so good as to save one like me; I was mourning and I did not know what to do, having made every effort possible but all in vain. Once in a while I would try to read the Bible, but I did not want any one to see me reading it. Down into the pit of sin and condemnation it seemed I had gone. I did not know how to pray, but would say, Lord be merciful to me, a vile sinner, save or I perish. I hope in July 1885 the dark clouds of gloom rolled away, and O what a dear Savior had found me in that wilderness of woe and shame. Then shone all about me the brightest light that I had ever seen. It being night and I away from home my first thought was I will go home and tell mother for I did confide in her, but before I got home something within me said, hold on now you are going to deceive your dear old mother so I did not tell her. Looking back on it it seemed mother knew there had been a change in me. I went on in this condition until I was nearly twenty-two years of age.

I married one of the fair girls of the South and we raised seven children. She was taken from me in Oct. 1918. The Lord directed me to another dear companion. I united with the Primitive Baptists fifty-five years ago. On what little I told them they took me in, and it seemed when I came up out of the water I left something behind. I felt to be the happiest mortal in the world, I said, "now my trials are all over." Dear friends, it was then I wanted to be as good as I saw my brethren, and I had not been a member very long until something else came my way, yes, worse than the first, and that was to try and tell what great things the dear Lord had done for me and all the blessed people of God. Yes, I thought then if I could just tell it like they did I would never quit. I was so wearied I could hardly sleep at night and even lost my appetite. Could

not eat and my wife would ask me what was the matter and I would tell her a falsehood, saying there was nothing wrong with me. I was then twenty-eight years old and I said, "Lord I will never preach, I said Lord I know you can kill me but you cannot make me preach." I read in the Bible where he made the dumb beast speak with man's voice and forbade the madness of the prophet. I then said, "Lord if you can make the dumb beast talk you can make a poor sinner man talk" and this coming July fifty years ago I made my first attempt before an intelligent congregation of people. I remember the first text I used on Sunday at our regular meeting. It was the language of David, "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?"

Dear friends, I got up and forgot myself for awhile, but when I came to myself I saw the poeple all over the house shedding tears so I said when I left the house "I'll never do that again." I thought the people were sorry for me and were pitying me and were crying. Just one month from that I was just as anxious, if not more so, to go back to the meeting again and that day they liberated me to preach against my will.

Not long after that they ordained me and now I thought I knew they had made a mistake. Dear brethren, I know if the Lord don't keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain, and in my tottering condition I look back on my past and say my days have been few and evil, and we will soon have to go hence, but I do hope I can say with Paul, "I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God." Paul said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." I hope and believe I have contended for the doctrine of God our Savior. Dear friends, I have told more falsehoods about preaching than everything else put together. I would say I was through, I did not intend to go any more, but the old prophet Jeremiah said about the same thing. He said, "I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His name," but later he said, "His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with foreboding, and I could not stay." Many have been the times when I would leave my wife and children to do the work at home and I would go to my regular appointments to meet with those that I love, and try to comfort some one; but, dear friends, it was sometimes a hard go with me financially, but I have been blessed beyond my comprehension.

In looking back over my past experience, my blunders, and my short comings it looks like I could have done better than I have, but it has been one continual blunder.

I will go back to my young ministry if I dare call it that. I got very rebellious. I was determined that I would quit trying to preach; I would leave the country and go where I was not known; I would leave these Old Baptists and forget it. I chartered a car and moved to the north plains of Texas. The first thing I knew I had met the same kind of folks spiritually that I had left. I stayed one year and came back to North Central Texas and yet I was not satisfied. I made another trip to west Texas, thinking to get away where no one would ever find me. I lost all I had except my wife and children. I drove to the little city of Childress, Tex. I walked up the street and saw two men about fifteen feet away from me talking, one of them seemed to be very highly wrought up and was a Campbellite. I walked to within six feet of them not saying anything at the time. Very soon this Campbellite said he did not want to talk to a man like that and left. I stepped up to the man that was left and asked him, "Do you believe what you were telling that man?" He said "I most certainly

do." Then I asked him, "Are there any more of your kind here?" He said, "Yes, there are a few of us scattered around. We have a church about twenty miles from here, down on Peas River." He told me his name but it is so long I have forgotten it. I told him my name and he said, "Our preacher will be here in a few minutes and I would like you to meet him." He came, we were introduced, and it was dear old Elder Harris, Elder W. N. Green's father-in-law. Elder Harris said, "Next Saturday and Sunday are our meeting days and asked me to go with him about twenty miles ride in a wagon." They had found out some way that I had tried to preach. Again the Lord had followed me. I found out that I could not hide from an all seeing God. Like Jonah I was thrown overboard, I was found out. Again I moved back to North Central Texas, and now it came to me, go preach that preaching that I bid thee. But, O Lord, I am still too ignorant and unlearned. I found the same God was ruling there, and now realized that God was everywhere present and nowhere absent, the same God yesterday, today and forever; "He is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." I had made two long trips to try to get out of preaching, but when I returned home the second time I said, "I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord."

Now dear friends, you that chance to read this can see just a part of my travels, and many times in my career I was like those two kines (or cows) that had the yoke upon their necks which I understand to be a yoke of duty. They left their calves at home shut up, carrying the ark along the highway which we understand is a type (or a figure) of the duty upon the new cart, and they went lowing. Yes, it is typical of the poor, old preacher mourning, and he does not know when he gets there what he is there for, but sometimes we hope that it pleases the Lord to stop the ark in Beulah Land which we sometimes understand to be the proclamation of the gospel which is glad tidings to the beloved children of God. We never know whether it is of the Lord or not, we only hope He has directed our steps and so far He had made a way for our escape. A few more days on earth to spend and all troubles and sorrows will end, and we only hope to be carried where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary will be at rest. We are now living in a house our good son-in-law built for us on his lot in San Juan, Texas. He is so good to us, treating us like we were his own mother and father for which I hope we are thankful to the giver of every good and perfect gift. Many things have been left out but we will bid you all farewell for now. Your unworthy brother.

July, 1950 (Elder JAMES B. REID

March 4, 1980

Dear Editors,

I notice my subscription to the ***Signs of the Times*** expired in November. I thank you for continuing to send it although you had no obligation to do so. I am enclosing a check for $25.00. Please renew my subscription for a period of two years. Also, please send the ***Signs*** Willie J. Smith, for a period of two years. The balance is to be used as you see fit.

I look forward each month for the ***Signs*** and enjoy reading all the articles and letters. Willie Smith is my Aunt (My Mother's sister) by natural ties and my sister in Christ (If I am one of His). She is also the daughter of the late Elder W. N. Green (my grandfather). She has been a precious source of comfort and strength to me all of my life by exemplifing great faith, humility, and unswerving devotion to her God. She has been in poor health for a long time but by the grace of God still maintains her home and is able to live alone. She loves to read the ***Signs*** and we were both thrilled to read an article in the February issue written by Elder Green.

May the Lord bless you Editors to continue in this labor of love for the edification and consolation of God's believing children.

Yours in hope,
Bob Champeau

CIRCULAR LETTER

Dear Brethren,

Greetings.

It is that *time* of year again in which we meet in the associational capacity for worship and fellowship. We trust that our coming is of peace and our voices are in harmonious praise unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins.

Now you will note that I have emphasized the word *Time*. "It is that time of the year again, etc., etc."

As believers we are concerned with time. We are students of Divine Providence and its application to us in this time would. In addition, the Bible speaks extensively on the subject.

> "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:
> A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;
> A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;
> A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
> A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together, a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
> A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;
> A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
> A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace."
> (Eccl. 3:1-8)

In the above text, Solomon acknowledged that we live and move in terms of time, and that we are subject to its measurements, limitations, and dimensions. And of course, all of us will ultimately fall victim to it in the aging process.

Now because we are predisposed, we invariably accomodate its demands by adopting ingenious devices for measuring our "goings" and "comings". Such devices are of utmost necessity for the regulation of an orderly life style.

But the most repulsive and repugnant regulatory system suggested by men and imposed upon a child of God is that concept which teaches that our salvation is subject to *time*. For the sake of brevity, I shall refer to it as *"Time Salvation."*

Proponents of this system advocate two salvations: (1) eternal and (2) time. The one is predestinated and secured in Christ while the other is obtained by the merits of the creature. One is said to be of faith, while the other is by works.

Now I whole-heartedly endorse the concept of eternal salvation which is predestinated and secured in Christ by faith, but the works system confuses me.

"Whatsoever is not of faith is SIN."
(Rom. 14:23B).

While I endorse "good works" and believe the Bible teaches such, I have been shown that it is not the works and merits of the creature, but God's.

> "For it is God which worketh *in* you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:13).

> "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh *in* us." (Eph. 3:20).

Note: God works both *to will* and *to do,* and in view of Scripture, I will boldly declare that I believe in works for salvation. But it is God's works and not the labours of man.

Advocates of Time Salvation suggest that believers merit or forfeit the attendant blessings and fruits of the Divine Covenant made in Christ before the world began, and that our blessings are contingent upon a responsive act of obedience toward the overtures of the gospel, and forfeiture of these blessings is the result of our "sins of disobedience." My dear brethren, I trust we shall not be swept away in a flood of erroneous rationale as that. We know that our obedience is in Christ and we reap the blessings of the Covenant because of His grace. Moreover we know that our "sins of disobedience" were dealt with in Christ and will never rise to haunt us again.

> "The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me." (Rom. 15:3).

"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. 8:12).

Is it the wisdom of flesh or spirit that would suggest that a mortal man can disannul and thwart that which God has ordered in an everlasting Covenant? "Ordered in all things and sure."—(II Sam. 23:5). Evidently those who embrace this *time salvation* and its applicability have a greater understanding and depth than the inspired Apostle Paul. He advocated one salvation (an eternal one) and declared this great salvation to be in Christ before the world began, and that there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings *in* heavenly places *in* Christ:

According as he hath chosen us *in* him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him *in* love:

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children *by* Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted *in* the beloved.

In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed *in* himself:

That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things *in* Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even *in* him:

In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."—(Eph. 1:3-7, 9-11).

"Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together *with* Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

And hath raised us up together in heavenly places *in* Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace *in* his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus:

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and not of yourselves: it is the *gift* of God:

For we are his workmanship created *in* Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2:5-8, 10).

Note: our salvation and the fruits thereof are said to be a product of Christ no less than *15* times in the above quoted text.

Thanks be unto God that our salvation is *in* Christ. Not in the wisdom of flesh (lest we be puffed up), nor of the will (lest we vacilate and waver), nor is it subject to time (lest it fade when the Angel cries out "Time shall be no more"), but in Christ who is neither susceptible nor vulnerable for He is a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.

"Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of god; abideth a priest continually." (Heb. 7:3).

In hope of the Gospel,
Jack H. Dawsey

FROM AN OLD SIGNS

Michigan
August 9, 1863

Brother Beebe:--If I may so address you, although we are strangers in the flesh, I have felt impressed to write you of some of my religious exercises, and if we have been born of the same Spirit we can soon become acquainted, by hearing of the dealings of the Lord with our souls. Although I feel very incompetent to write any thing to be sent abroad, I still feel it to be a duty to relate the reason of my little hope, and cast it in with others; and I desire, above all things, to be found on the Lord's side, and on the side of truth; although I hardly dare open my mouth to claim any right to the tree of life. I feel so very unworthy, for my whole life is sinful, and when I would do good, evil is present with me. But yet I think I love God, and love his people. I love to try to serve him, and I love his precious cause; and there is, I hope, in my heart a spark which lights up at times, and causes me to rejoice in God

my Saviour; and to hope that I shall one day bask in the smiles of his face.

I was but ten years old when I trust the Lord began to show me that I was a sinner. It was at a Presbyterian Sunday School, the school house was in a bush lot in which there were many wild flowers. I had got there before the school commenced, and so I walked out among the wild flowers. The sun was shinning brightly, and while amusing myself among the flowers, all at once the sun, and all nature, looked gloomy: and a small still voice said to me that I was a sinner, and sinning against a holy God. I had never seen myself a sinner before, and hardly knew what sin was. But now something told me, I must be born of the Spirit, or be forever lost. I went into the school, but did not enjoy it as formerly. There seemed to be a load of guilt resting on my mind. I returned home, feeling very sad. The poet expresses my state better than I can--

"Awak'd by Sinai's awful sound,
My soul in guilt and thral I found,
And knew not where to go.

O'erwhelmed with sin, with anguish slain,
The sinner must be born again,
Or sink in endless wo."

The sun being nearly set, I thought I would take a walk, and I walked on until I thought I was where none but the eye of God could see me, and knelt down, and in my childish way, tried to pour out my soul in prayer to God; but Satan seemed to be there, and seemed to say if I did not leave that place, I would be torn to pieces. I rose up, and walked to the house, and it appeared to me I could hear footsteps behind me. I went to bed, and wept myself to sleep; and when the morning came my load of guilt remained. All nature seemed to be right before heaven, but it seemed that God looked on me with a frowning face. From day to day I went mourning with a heavy heart.

Soon after this, I went to a Baptist meeting, this was the first time I remember of ever hearing Baptist preaching, and it seemed all to be preached for me. The preacher said, "The sinner must be born again, and born of the Spirit, or he could never enter the kingdom of God." I wept all through the meeting, but tried to hide it from every one as much as I could. I attended meetings as often as my parents would allow me to; we generally had to go three miles on foot, but I was willing to undergo any hardship for the sake of meeting with christians. I thought they were happy people, and I desired to be one of them. When Sundays came, if I could not go to meeting, I chose to take my Testament or some good book, and go away by myself and spend the day in reading, and in mourning over my wicked heart, hoping that God would in some favored hour meet me, and cause my poor soul to rejoice in his love and mercy. I took no comfort in youthful sports, like others.

When I was in my twelfth year, my mother united with the Baptist church by baptism, and I then felt that she was going to heaven, and I alas, was left behind. There was a great revival among the Baptists. I desired to attend the day she was baptized, but could not. I felt that I was alone, and forsaken, and that God had forsaken and cast me off forever. I went out in the garden and spent the most of the time. That day all nature seemed to be praising God, all but me: even the little birds seemed to make the air resound with the praise of God: but poor me--I could not so much as look up--could only cry, O Lord have mercy! O, the thoughts of everlasting banishment from the presence of so just and holy a God, and of the blessed Redeemer on Calvary!

"I saw my sins his blood had spilt,
And help'd to nail him there."

Thus I was led along through many changes, which time would fail to mention them all. When I was sixteen years old, my parents, brothers and sisters, moved from New York State to Michigan, where my mother united with the Old School Baptists, and I attended

their meetings every Sunday, unless away from home. They had a good preacher, and good meetings; but they afforded no comfort to me. I wanted to be with them, and often wished that I were a little fly that I might see and hear, and not be perceived. I found that all the christian admonitions, and all the preacher said, only increased my grief.

"The saints I heard with rapture tell
How Jesus conquered death and hell,
And broke the fowler's snare;
But when I found this truth remain,
The sinner must be born again,
I sank in deep despair."

When I was returning from the meetings, and feeling my grief to be so great I often resorted to the woods, or to some lonely place, where no eye but that of God could see me, and there I would implore the mercy of God: for I felt myself to be totally lost. It seemed to me that I had sinned away the day of grace, and was given over to hardness of heart; and that there was no mercy for me. In this way I was led along a year or two longer; all the time trying to do better, and trying to work myself into the favor of God.

When I was in my eighteenth year, the Baptists held a protracted meeting, in this place, where I hope the Lord had mercy on many poor souls. I attended, but did not go expecting to find mercy for me; but I wanted to see and hear what the Lord had done for others. I attended night after night, until my grief became so great I could hardly endure it. Every night they invited all who wished to be prayed for to come forward; but I kept concealed as much as I could. ***I felt that if the Lord could have mercy on me he could find me anywhere,*** and I did not want any one to know that I had anything on my mind. Sunday morning came, and I went to meeting, desiring and praying that God would meet me there, and set my soul at liberty, or strike me out of existence; for I felt that everlasting banishment was my doom. While the preacher was telling of the blessed inheritance of the righteous in heaven, and of the doom of the wicked, if they did not repent, and turn to the Lord, I felt that I had never repented, and that I could not; for I could do nothing but cry, Lord have mercy on me. I felt to say--

"Here Lord, I give myself away,
'Tis all that I can do."

Hell seemed to me to be my portion, and that God would be just in sending me there. I felt as though I never wanted to rise from my seat again, but that I might sink into the earth, where no human eye could see me again; for I felt sure that my doom was with the wicked. But I returned home, and went again that evening. I made up my mind, during the meeting, that I would arise and be prayed for, and not hide myself any longer; for I had read that the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous availeth much. And when the sermon was over, a call was made for all who desired to be prayed for to arise, I rose up, for the first time, and that moment my burden of guilt was gone, I felt calm. They were singing the hymn--

"O, how happy are they,
Who their Saviour obey," etc.

It seemed as though the house was lit up with the Glory of God's countenance, and resounded with the praise of the Redeemer. I felt that I could sing with them, Oh, what a happy change! I now felt that God was my God, and I desired to live, and love, and serve him, all my days. I felt that I could fall down at my Saviour's feet, and wash them with my tears, and wipe them with the hair of my head. I felt that I could look christians in the face, and take them by the hand, and go with them heart and hand in trying to serve our Lord and Master.

Soon after this, I went to a Baptist church meeting, which was the first I ever attended, a number related their experience, and my brother, and myself, among them, and we were received for baptism, and on the next day, after

hearing an excellent sermon, we repaired to the water, where we were buried with our Lord in baptism, and it was the happiest day I ever enjoyed. I felt as though there was no more trouble for me. We had good meetings, and on church meeting days a common house would not be large enough to hold us all. Sometimes this wilderness land, as it was then, seemed to bud and blossom like a rose. But, ah! the scene has changed! Many of us have sat down by the cold river of Babylon, and hung our harps on the willows, and myself for one. God's people have been scattered to and fro, up and down, in the earth, and you can judge of the cause. We have had some times of rejoicing, and others of mourning. I mourn that true religion is no more sought for, nor looked up to. I feel that there is a great lack in me; but still I can but hope in the mercy of God. There is no merit in me. To me, the true followers of the Lord seem to be very few; but I must not be their judge. The Lord knoweth them that are his, and the foundation of God standeth sure. God's people are a tried people; but though we pass through the furnace of affliction, and meet with many difficulties by the way, if we are his, he will take care of us, and bring us off more than conquerors through him that hath loved us, and given himself for us.

It is a happy thought that when all the ransomed family of God shall be brought home, we shall receive a crown of righteousness, and have palms of victory in our hands, and shout thanksgiving to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, and dwell forever in the New Jerusalem, and eat of the tree of life, and drink full draughts of the water of the river whose streams make glad the city of God, and sing of redeeming grace and dying love forever more. The happy thought brings joy and gladness to those who have the faith of God's elect to the poor tempest tossed and afflicted saint amidst the cares and fiery trials incidental to the christian warfare.

But I must close, lest I weary you. When I began I did not think of sending this to you for publication, but designed only to write my experience to leave behind for some of my relations, as a witness of what the Lord had done for me: hoping it might be made of use to some of them. My health is poor, and I feel as though I have but a little more time to spend in this world. I have been a Baptist member twenty-seven years. My faith has ever been firm and unshaken in my Saviour, and in the doctrine of the Bible. As I have learned Christ Jesus my Lord, so, in my feeble way, I have tried to walk in him. I like your paper very much. They contain the best preaching we have here. I threw in my mite this year, and I think I shall send for them next year. If you see anything in this worthy of a place in your paper, you can publish it. If not, do with it as you think best, and all will be right with your poor unworthy sister, if one at all. Excuse me for withholding my name this time.

(Since there was no name on this when originally published, we cannot furnish one now. We hope we will not be accused of sinisterism or secrecy for reprinting this excellent piece. Editor)

Tennessee Ridge, Tennessee

Dear Editors,

As my subscription for the ***Signs of the Times*** expires with the April issue and I am past my 85th birthday, I do consider it one of the many more blessings that our Lord and Saviour has blessed me to continue on one more year. So please renew my subscription for one more year, too.

I would also like for you to send the ***Signs*** to a new subscriber I have listed below. Enclosed is my check to cover both subscriptions and use the balance as you will.

Yours in hope,
Harvey Vick

EDITORIAL

"And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant."—Ezek. 20:37

I received a request some time ago from W. A. Chandler, Jonesboro, La. to write upon the text of scripture quoted above. I undertake to do so fully aware of my inability, trusting that God will grace us with his Spirit to illuminate the mind with spiritual meditations. I have found by sad experience that I cannot command the Spirit at my will.

We desire to consider first, the people to whom this is addressed. — the "You" in the text. We find this addressed only to the house of Israel. God spake through the prophets in olden times to the Israelites—national Israel. These same words are now applicable to spiritual Israel, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God." Spiritual Israel is now scattered in every nation, kindred, tongue and people throughout the earth. God is not speaking to every one of Adam's race, only to the Israelites. All the scriptures, both Old and New Testaments are addressed to God's children. They are the only ones who can receive them. You will note that all letters recorded in the New Testament are written to a people of certain characteristics. There is not a command, exhortation, invitation or promise recorded in the Bible without a character description attached thereto. I feel that I would be guilty of high treason before Almighty God should I attempt to apply any of the Scriptures as addressed to all of Adam's race. So, in this treatise I want the readers to consider that the "You" in the text applies to all who are included in the *everlasting covenant,* all those who shall finally be saved in heaven and immortal glory. Sometimes I think it may be boresome or monotonous to those who sit under the sound of my voice, or read my writings for me to stress the fact that all Scriptures contained in the Bible are written to God's people only.

Let us notice next, the "I" in the text. As stated above it is God speaking. The One who created the heavens and the earth makes these assertions. The One who worked all things after the counsel of his own will is the author of these expressions. The One who doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth decreed these things. The One who said, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it," spake these words. He that speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast made these declarations. He has spoken it; he will also do it; he has purposed it; he will also bring it to pass!

Jehovah says, "I will cause you to pass under the rod." What does he mean by this statement? What is the rod, anyway? When I think of a rod I am reminded of the adage "Spare the rod and spoil the child." I think of the proverb, "He that spareth his rod hateth his son." The Lord chasteneth and scourgeth every son that he receiveth according to Hebrew 12:6. When I think of a rod I think of a whip. I think that troubles, trials, temptations, afflictions, tribulations, and all things that sorely oppress God's children are the smartings of the rod. These things do not come about accidentally. They do not occur haphazardly because God caused you to pass under them. They are in your path and you cannot escape them. God has ordained them for your good and even though they are not good to you they are good for you. Some people would have you believe that trouble is solely of the devil, but I am persuaded that it is a blessing of God. He says through the Psalmist, "I will be with him in trouble." I dare say that your brightest experience immediately

followed your greatest distress. According to the Psalmist, He makes the clouds his chariot. It is in the darkest hours that he appears to his people as their deliverer. We would not appreciate the bond were it not for the rod. We would not appreciate the staff were it not for the rod. David said, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." The rod beats us down to lean upon the staff, Christ Jesus. The chastening rod of Almighty God causes us to know the filthiness of our own righteousness, and how destitute we are of ability thus fitting us to call upon him. When we are given to trust in him, our past troubles then become a comfort to us for we learn that God used even these as means to bring us unto this trust in him. Paul said, "We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience experience," etc. Paul realized that these tribulations were necessary means that God used in bringing us into that hope that maketh not ashamed. The rod is not applied to us in order to punish us for our sins because Christ paid the penalty. This penalty is not against those who are encouched in the covenant for Jesus satisfied the law in our stead. The rod is applied to us in order to *make right*. It is applied to us to whip us into the right path. It beats pride out of us and makes us humble. The effect of the rod is that we learn obedience. Paul told the Hebrews that Jesus learned obedience by the things he suffered. If Jesus was taught obedience by the things he suffered is it a terrible thing that we should learn obedience the same way? Then surely it is a wonderful blessing indeed that he causes you to pass under the rod!

The last portion of the text is "I will bring you into the bond of the covenant." You will notice that our Lord said, "I will bring you into the bond of the covenant," Not into the covenant. I think all God's children were in the covenant in eternity before time. They have always been embraced and included in the covenant, having been chosen in Christ Jesus from before the foundation of the world, but they must pass under the rod before they can embrace the covenant and come into its relationship. You were chosen into the covenant but you must be brought into the bond of the covenant by the power of Almighty God.

What is the bond of the covenant? Could it be that precious hope that is experienced by you? When hungry and thirsty your soul fainted in you and you were without hope and felt hell would be your just doom, God was gracious to you, he restored your soul and spoke sweet peace to you. Could the bond be that personal stamp of mercy and grace that is imprinted in your heart? Could the bond be the fruits of the spirit that characterizes God's children such as: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance? Could it be the *shalls* and *wills* of Jehovah that makes the covenant sure and certain to all those embraced therein?

I like to think of the *shalls* and *wills* of Jehovah. It is expressed in this covenant that "I *will* be to them a God, and they *shall* be to me a people." God says in Psalm 91, I *will* set him on high. *****He *shall* call upon me, and I *will* answer him: I *will* be with him in trouble; I *will* deliver him, and honour him. With long life *will* I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation." Jehovah promises, "I *will* put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." Space will not permit me to list the many *shalls* and *wills* of Jehovah that is now flooding my mind. Suffice it to say that there is not a single condition left for man to perform. Could the setting on high be the *bond of the covenant?* The rod brings us low and makes us to realize that we are in the miry pit sinking down, seemingly, into perdition. All our feeble attempts sink us deeper and deeper. He comes to our

rescue, takes us up out of the pit and sets our feet upon the rock, Christ Jesus. Is it not a setting on high to see Jesus as our Savior? Is it not an elevation to be raised from the fellowship of this world to the fellowship of the children of God? I well remember the joy experienced by me when the church received me into their fellowship. It is indeed a high place to be graced by the Spirit to sing praises unto him, to pray to him, to meditate upon his wonderful promises to the children of men, to write and preach his wonderful doctrine of love and grace! Could the *bond of the covenant* be the full fruition of it? Could it be heaven and immortal glory that awaits you who are kept by the power of God? Could it be the final fulfillment of all the obligations and vows expressed in the covenant that will be experienced in eternity after this time world?

I am persuaded that the *bond of the covenant* is the *earnest* of the inheritance that is experienced by God's children here in time. This foretaste of his love is sweet. The experiences of these many deliverances are wonderful. The few moments spent in prayer are sacred. The joy of His fellowship is sublime. The tie that binds us together in sweet fellowship one with another is great. All his gifts are matchless. These fleeting moments of enjoyment make us yearn and look forward toward the prize of the high calling when we shall quit the walks of men and be received into the full fellowship of God and all his dear little children.

I submit these few columns over my signature to the readers of the ***Signs*** trusting that God will bless as he sees fit. May I add that I have been much concerned about this periodical. I feel it a high honor to be on the editorial staff because I feel that God has blessed it to the comfort of Zion for more than a century. Its writers are contending for the same things that the writers were is 1832. May God bless us to make an attempt to enlarge its circulation. God has blessed it to be the oldest and best periodical of its kind among us and I deem it worthy of our support.

Now may the grace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, the sweet communion of the Holy Spirit, be ours to grace us with a godly walk in this life, choosing our changes in this life, and making us submissive to his choice. May he comfort us across the chilly waters of death and finally receive us up into that better clime where no sin or shame shall be is my prayer if not deceived.

Sept. 1950 Elder E. J. Lambert

Alum Ridge, Va.

Dear Editors,

I received my ***Signs of the Times*** today and it is the last one I will get until I renew. I am sending a check for another year. I don't want to miss any issues.

I live alone and I get so much comfort out of my paper. I am now 83 years old. I joined the church when I was 19 years old and I am still a strong believer of the Primitive Baptist doctrine. I go to church when I can.

May God bless each and every one. Thank you all for your kindness and my love to all.

Mrs. Lena Akers

Castor, La.

Dear Editors of the Signs,

I am enclosing a check for $7.00 to renew my subscription for the ***Signs of the Times*** for one year and use the balance to distribute the ***Signs.***

I don't get to go to church very often and I really enjoy the ***Signs of the Times.*** I can't write very well about the way I feel, so I like to read the letters of able writers in the ***Signs.***

A little Sister in hope,
Mabel Thomas

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

EDITORIALS OF ELDER GILBERT BEEBE

Elder Beebe:--Please give your views on Luke 16:9. There is a command given by Christ to make friends with the "Mammon of unrighteousness", and when they fail, these receive them "Into everlasting habitations." Who are those that are to make friends with the "mammon of unrighteousness"? What are the "everlasting habitations"? You will greatly oblige by giving your views on the above mentioned verse.

Port Fear, August, 1863 Philos

REPLY TO PHILOS

Mammon, according to Webster, signifies riches, wealth, or the god of riches, and in this signification the term seems to be used in this text, as also in the sermon on the mount. The unjust steward in the parable, had charge, so long as he held the stewardship, of his master's goods, and was empowered legally to appropriate them. He was unjust, first, because he had wasted what he was in duty bound to faithfully take care of, and secondly, in making a fradulent settlement with his master's debtors: but he manifested a commendable wisdom in so using his office while he held it, as to secure the permanent friendship of those on whom he was soon to become dependent. We presume this parable, as well as that of the Prodigal son, which immediately preceded it, had a primary reference to the Jewish nation, which was very soon to fail, and loose its nationality, and be removed from its special stewardship of the oracles, covenants, worldly sanctuary, carnal ordinances, etc., but the special admonition to the disciples has a much broader application. God has made his children stewards of so much of the riches, or mammon, of this world, as lawfully belongs to us, and Paul says: "Moreover, it is required of stewards that a man be found faithful." God in his wisdom, knows--and in his providence, commits to us the exact amount of worldly wealth, of which it is his pleasure to make us stewards, and it is not wrong for us to hold it in charge, as faithful stewards, to be disbursed by us as his word and Spirit shall dictate. But we are restricted as stewards, and solemnly charged to use these things as not abusing them, knowing that their fashion passes away. We really possess nothing independently of God, for the world and the fulness thereof, are his, and we ourselves are not our own, we are Christ's and Christ is God's.

Now then, as the unjust steward was commended by his lord, in that he acted wisely, in disposing of the goods entrusted to him in such a manner as to secure the good will and permanent friendship of those on whom he was so soon to become dependent; so it would have been wise in the Jews to have secured, as far as possible, the friendship of the Gentiles, among whom they were so soon to be dispersed, and on whose favor they were soon to become dependent. And the disciples of Christ should receive from the parable a lesson of wisdom in regard to their stewardship of the riches of this world, and so use the uncertain and transcient things of this world, as to secure a reciprocity of kindness, when they should themselves become poor, and destitute. So Jesus taught his disciples on the mount, saying unto them: "Give, and it shall be given unto you: good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom: for with the same measure that ye mete out withal it shall be measured to you again." (Luke 6:38, Matt. 5:42.)

Our stewardship over, and possession of worldly treasure, is brief at the least; but, we are liable at any and every moment to fail, or to be deprived of it all, and then to become dependent on the charity of those who have the means to relieve our necessities. Therefore, as we would that others should do to us, we are told to do even so unto them. That when

ye fail, when your stewardship of the things of this world shall fail, and yourselves become needy and destitute, your deeds of hospitality will be remembered, and your bread cast on the waters shall be gathered after many days.

Perhaps we have our best illustration of this subject in the course pursued by the saints at Pentecost. Their persecution was raging against christianity at that time, and all who confessed their faith in Jesus were liable to loose their property, and we are told that all them who had possessions sold them and brought the proceeds and laid it down at the feet of the apostles. "And all that believed were together, and had all things common, and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need". Acts 2:44, 45. Thus as their stewardship of their own possessions and goods was to be taken from them, they acted wisely, in making provision, while it was their undisputed right to do so, for their future support. That when they failed, or were reduced to dependence they were receied into everlasting or a permanent and reliable home.

We, therefore, conclude that the mammon of unrighteousness, is the wealth, or possessions of this world. Mammon not of righteousness, or to those who righteously possess and use them, but mammon or idolatrous, when unrighteously held, desired or used.

That the disciples of Christ were those commanded by him to make to themselves friends of the mamon of unrighteousness.

That their failing was when they should be deprived of the treasures of this world, and become dependent.

That their reception into everlasting habitation, is their being received into permanent homes, after the manner of those disciples at Pentecost.

We have thus briefly answered the several interrogatories of Philos. If what we have written shall be of any use to him, and others, we shall have cause for humble gratitude to the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning.

Before dismissing this subject, we feel constrained to call the attention of the saints to some further considerations having a bearing on this subject:

In his sermon on the mount, and in the thirteenth verse of this sixteenth chapter of Luke, Jesus distinctly tells his disciples that they can not serve God and mammon, and by the repetition of this instruction, almost in the same words, in Matthew 6:24, and Luke 16:13, we may infer its weighty importance, and in order that we may clearly understand and duly obey this divine instruction, and at the same time make to ourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, we must carefully mark the difference between the one and the other.

It is one thing to make to ourselves friends of the riches or treasures of this world, and quite another to serve them as idols. If, in the providence of God, we are put in possession of earthly treasures, we would make friends of them, we should use them as not abusing them, knowing that their fashion passeth away: "Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving". I Timothy 4:4.

Receiving them with thanksgiving is an acknowledgement that we regard them as the gifts of God, for which we are obligated to thank him, and to use them in his fear. But to set our affections on the things of the earth, and forego our religious duties and privileges for their acquisition, and make them the paramount object of our pursuit, is to serve them as a mammon, or idol of unrighteousness. Then they cease to be our friends, but become our idols. The loving apostle John, in his last admonition, said, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols". With such an earthly nature as we possess, we need the admonition, for we are informed that

covetousness is idolatry.

Look to this, brethren, and sisters. Have you not some times been so eager for obtaining riches, as to sacrifice some religious principle for their attainment? Have you at no time absented yourself from the house of prayer, or from some of the solemn feasts of Zion, to serve this mammon? If so, this mammon has, so far, become your master, not your friend; for his servant ye are to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey. Paul charges the saints to avoid the example of Esau, who, for a morsel of meat, sold his birthright. We have precious birthright privileges in the church of God, which we should not barter away for carnal gratifications lest we be found servants of the mammon of unrighteousness. Have there not been cases where brethren in comfortable circumstances, and living in the bounds of a gospel church, for the sake of making a little more money, or of accumulating more wealth, have pulled up stakes and moved to some country where they could gain more wealth, but lose all the social privileges of religious society? Do such brethren serve, or make a friend of the mammon of unrighteousness?

Brethren, except when compelled by actual want, who relinguish spiritual privileges for worldly gain, forget, or at least neglect the instruction which Christ gave the disciples in his sermon on the mount:

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures on the earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven; for where your treasure is there will your heart be also."

"No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other; ye can not serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meant, and the body more than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air", etc. Matt. 6:19-21, 24-26. We read also to the end of the chapter. Here we have the commentary of our Lord upon the text, and the text also.

We do not understand, however, that our Lord commands his servants to be indolent, neglectful, or lazy; for Paul commands the saints to be "Diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord". Not serving mammon, but the Lord. By serving him as our Master, and making friends of the good things of this world, which, under his blessing, crowns our labors, we shall make the discrimination required. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness". These are of the first and highest importance to christians. "And all these things shall be added unto you." All these things, such as food and raiment, or whatever our Heavenly Father knoweth that we have need of. Relying on this gracious promise, trust all consequences to him, only see that he is our supreme Master, and he will make these earthly things our friends.

There are many ways in which the fidelity of christians are tried as to their choice of masters. The poor, the sick, the destitute, the widow, the orphan, ask for our sympathy; the Saviour says, Give to him that asketh. Mammon says, You had better hold on to what you have, you may need it. Which master will you serve? Can you obey both? Jesus says, and you find the saying true, Ye can not serve God and mammon.

Again: If we would make friends instead of masters of what is called the mammon, or god, of unrighteousness, we should regard ourselves as stewards of those things, that they occupy a position of equality with us, inasmuch as both we and they are the creatures and property of God, only temporarily entrusted to our stewardship for a trial of our fidelity; both we and they are our Lord's goods, and if we would have them for our friends, let us so use them that

when we fail, or become destitute, those who have shared in our bounty will be ready to reciprocate the favors they have received at our hands. This we will do, not by defrauding our Lord, as the unjust steward did his lord, but by using our stewardship as our Lord has commanded us, by holding all his goods as only entrusted to us, and at all times subject to his order.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

Middletown, N.Y.
September 15, 1863

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Seven Mile Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, at Liberty Meeting House in Harnett County, North Carolina, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in September (September 19, 20, 21, 1980).

Liberty Meeting House is located 3 miles north of Dunn, North Carolina at junction of State Roads No. 1822 and 1705. State Roads 1822 and 1705 lead off from 301 between Dunn and Benson, N.C. Those coming on Highway 13 to Newton Grove take Highway #55 to Dunn then to 301 North and look for signs. Those coming from West on Highway #50 take Highway 301 South and look for signs.

All lovers of the Truth are invited to attend.

Elder W. D. Godwin, Moderator
Route 1, Box 98
Wade, North Carolina 28395

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Smith River Primitive Baptist Association will convene with Paynes Creek Church, located in Floyd County, Virginia, on September 5, 6, 7, 1980. Services will begin at 11:00 A.M. on Friday.

Paynes Creek Church is located just off Blue Ridge Parkway between Mile Marker 150 and 151. Those comming on 221 South from Roanoke, just beyond Check turn on #664 and about 1½ miles to Church.

We invite all that have a mind to come and be with us.

James Agee

ORIGINAL SOUTH ARKANSAS ASSN.

The next session of the Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing with Pilgrim Rest Church on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1980 (Sept. 19, 20, 21). Pilgrim Rest Church is located off Highway 167 North of Fordyce, Arkansas. Take Highway 273 about ½ mile to the church.

We dropped the business part of the Association and hold three days meeting at this same time each year.

Elder J. C. Townley
Route 2, Box 245
Fordyce, Arkansas 71742

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the South Ouachita Association is to convene, the Lord willing, with New Hope Church, located near Spearsville, La., commencing on Friday before the 4th Sunday in September, 1980, and continuing three days (Sept. 26, 26, 28).

All who love the true Gospel of Jesus Christ are welcome.

C. C. Wilbanks, Clerk
217 Bastrop Drive
Monroe, La. 71203

PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The thirty-fourth annual session of the Pleasant Valley Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Mount Olive Church, Stockdale, Texas, commencing on Friday, before, and continuing through the first Sunday in August, 1980. (August 1, 2, 3)

For additional information contact Elder G. D. Shipman, Route 2, Box 128, Von Ormy, Texas 78073. (Telephone 512-624-2148).

Elder G. D. Shipman

FIVE MILE CREEK ASSOCIATION

The One Hundred Thirteenth Annual Session of the Five Mile Creek Old School Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Shady Grove Church, located in Cullman County, Alabama, on Friday, Saturday, and third Sunday in September, 1980 (Sept. 19, 20, 21).

To get to Shady Grove Church, going south on Highway 69, turn left at Wilburn, turn right at the first road to the right, go to the second church on the right of the road.

All lovers of the truth are welcome.

Elder H. C. Moon, Moderator
Route 1, Box 167A
Breman, Alabama
Phone 205-287-1603

NOTICE TO READERS OF
THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Calion, Arkansas

Dear Editors of the Signs,

It is with a sad heart I am writing. We have had two great losses this month. On Tuesday night, May 6, our beloved Bethel Primitive Baptist Church burned down. It was built in 1903. It can never be replaced in our hearts, because it held so many precious memories. Then on May 11, Brother Clyde Copeland passed away. This only added to our sorrow.

We are few in membership at Bethel, but we are going to build another Church, God willing. There have been three buildings there in the almost 138 years the church has been in existance, and we hope to have a fourth one.

If there are any who wish to help us, it will be greatly appreciated. Make checks to:

Bethel Primitive Baptist Church

and mail to any of the following:

J. A. Davis
P.O. Box 306
Calion, Arkansas 71724

Barney Evers
Box 116
Norphlet, Arkansas 71759

Doyle O. Murphy
Route 1, Box 86A
Smackover, Arkansas 71762

A brother & sister in hope of life eternal,
J. A. and Annie L. Davis

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April, 1980

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Hurricane, West Virginia

Dear Editors,

I am enclosing a check for two more years subscription to the ***Signs of the Times,*** and use the balance as you wish.

I enjoy the ***Signs*** very much and they give me comfort and hope. I hope you will be blessed to continue publishing the good news in the coming years.

Yeoman W. Wade

We cannot heartily love the distinguishing truths of the gospel, without experiencing them, and we cannot experience them without loving them.

Toplady

The word of God will not avail to salvation without the Spirit of God A compass is of no use to a mariner unless he has light to see it by.

Toplady

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 65 Keeling, Va. 24566

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 9/80 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"BROTHERLY LOVE"

Let brotherly love continue.

After a long and careful summing up of the two covenants and their respective priesthoods, and the fullness of Christ as the satisfaction of the one and the perfect embodiment of the other, and his people as perfect in him, the apostle comes to the simplest and only gospel conclusion, to which our minds are directed, that receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God with reverence and godly fear, because our God is a consuming fire. The fact that our God is a consuming fire is evidence conclusive that we must have grace whereby to serve him, besides he must be served with reverence and godly fear. In this reverence and service nothing is seen or known on the one hand but Him whose name is holy and reverened, the sole and everlasting inhabitant of eternity, and upon the other hand the one rendering service who, apart from the sufficiency of the grace of him whom he serves, stands empty, naked, and without strength; hence the necessity for grace for acceptance with him and acceptable service before him and of him. How wonderful is this grace in all of its provisions! With what perfect security does it shield the heirs of promise from the consequences of sin, and enables them to stand justified before God, who, though he is a consuming fire, does not therefor consume them, but their sins and iniquities, their righteousness and self-sufficiency he purges away and consumes, and instead imputes to them the righteousness, strength and

sufficiency of his Son in whom and by whom they do the thing enjoined upon them to love one another and to let that love continue.

In Egyptian bondage the Israelites had to furnish the material with which to serve the king, and under the law of Moses that which they brought could not make their service acceptable nor obtain their release from the bondage of sin, but under the reign of the King of righteousness, by his rich and justifying grace, the subjects of whom he requires allegiance and service are made perfect in the King and by him their service is full and complete, their hearts being filled with the most wonder-working and effective principle of divine substance known to existence, the everlasting love of Almighty God, producing in their hearts an exercise most glorious, revealing an unction more sublime than is known by seraphs, an intelligence superior to that conferred upon angels, a simplicity never conceived by the wisest men of earth, a virtue which science nor sages never knew, and yet the only and simple requirement of them by the gracious giver of this blessed earnest is that they let it continue. This divine inheritance is a joint heirship possessed and enjoyed by each and every one alike, and therefore it must and should continue. It is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God. These streams are to be kept flowing. They must not be checked. Consolation should flow without hindrence to every inhabitant of this heavenly city.

The children of God are born of him and are therefore brethren. They have upon them and in their hearts the love of God with which they love God with all their heart, and with it they are to love one another with a pure heart fervently. In it they recognize and feel flowing from heart to heart this blessed heaven-born, God-given love, and in it is revealed the sacred kinship which makes them brethren, hence it is a brotherly love. "We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren". It is in this knowledge that we are to let this ever continue. Its continuation consist in the transmission of the knowledge of its existence, character and objects. See that ye love one another. It is brotherly love, let it flow in a brotherly manner, let brotherly love continue. What a gracious privilege. How blessed this letting. There is no labor in it, nor burdens attached to it, but its possession is a blessing, its exercise a privilege and the sweetness of its consolations a most gracious favor. How would one go about taxing up cost or expense supposed to accrue in that peculiar service by which we let brotherly love continue? There cannot possible be any loss whatever sustained in this service, but on the contrary there is an increase of strength, and enlargement of our comforts, and we become more decided in our privileges, established in our hope, confirmed in our faith, and our communication becomes more ready and easy, and our mutual joys more abound, and in the pleasure of the Lord we prosper and sit under his shadow with great delight. This is a service in which there are no degrees, but all are alike qualified for letting brotherly love continue. One does not have to be wise, nor rich, nor great in this world to be able to love his brother, nor to let brotherly love continue.

Love, uncommunicated, like faith without works, is dead. There can be no fruitful results of undeclared love. Purposes cannot ripen, anticipations cannot be realized, nor can the mutual pleasures of reciprocation be brought within the scope of real joy unless we reveal the emotions of our hearts to those, the thoughts of whom, and whose presence arouse these emotions in our hearts and move us to declare them. What real good could accrue from the fact that I love the children of God--the brethren, if I do not let them know it in the sense of the text? My purposes,

desires and anticipations would become like plants growing in the cool cheer-less shade, and what might amount to much in my brother's heart with respect to me can but lie dormant, but if I tell them there is a pleasure in it to me and to them, and to find in response that they love me is a far greater pleasure in some respects, and thus our pleasure increases, our joys abound, and brotherly love continues.

The communication of the knowledge of this love does not consist altogether in word, but in deed as well. For a confirmation of this love there must be action according to the word, and there are things which should be shown as tokens of this love in order to a suitable, reasonable, consistant, continuation thereof.

In the true relations of husband and wife what would all the husband might possess amount to toward the happiness of the wife if she did not know in some way that he loved her? If he should tell her that he does is well enough if his conduct towards her is such as to confirm it. If she is made to feel that he is happy in making her happy or that his happiness consists in her happiness then she is indeed happy. Show me a husband who belongs to various secret orders and clubs and spends much of his time in their gathering places and I will show you a wife in that community who can by no means swear by the love of her husband. I can think of no one more destitute of the real virtue of domestic life than the wife whose heart is made to ache and suffer hunger for the love of her husband. If a man loves his wife there is no reason nor excuse for his not keeping her mind well and constantly refreshed by assurances in every reasonable way that he does love her. Even so ought the brethren to see that there is no lack of assurances by word, act and deed that they love one-another.

It is not enough for one born of God to profess to love the brethren, but he should as surely and substantially love them as he feels that the Lord loves him, and thus let brotherly love continue.

What is a mere profession worth? Are you satisfied with having been baptized and having your name enrolled in the church book? Do you not feel to go to your church meetings and that you ought to attend them, that you want to see the brethren and take some pledge of them of their love to you, and to show some token to them of your love for them?

As a good way to let brotherly love continue, Paul, we suppose, suggests the entertainment of strangers. But some will say "we do not take in strangers". Well what have you accomplished by taking in anyone else? The stranger is without a home or the knowledge of one at hand, therefore he comes to you. He knows there are those of whom it is said: "I was a stranger and you took me in," and he thinks perhaps that you are one of those, but how sad must be his heart as he turns from your door, not simply because he failed to find lodging with you but because he mistook your character, as shown by your announcement that you do not entertain strangers. Shall it come to pass some day that you shall have to enquire: "Lord when saw we thou thus, and did not minister unto thee?" If so, he might say never according to any good you have done but one of my little ones whom you professed to love, and thus to love me, came that way, and you took him not in, you gave him no meat, you did not wash his feet, you gave him no medicine, not even a cup of cold water did you give him, but turned him away, and thus did you do unto me and turned me away. This seems to me to be a strait gate at which we are to strive to enter in. If we really love the brethren we ought to prove it according to the scriptures, and if we are of a contrary spirit the church ought to know it, and does know it according to our conduct oftimes, and it may be all the time.

Another way to let brotherly love

continue is to remember them that are in bonds. How shall we do this? As being in bonds with them. If we love a brother and he is in distress we must necessarially be in distress with him, because we love him, and in that love we are bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. He is our brother, we must love him and must suffer with him, and should visit him and show to him to his satisfaction that we are bound together with him in his afflictions, which will give him to feel that according as he loves us he is bound together with us in the bundle of life, and thus brotherly love continues to his joy, which when we see we can but repeat with him. We should be as ready to share of the poor man's poverty as we find ourselves ready to share of the rich man's wealth. We should be the same in the adversity as the prosperity of our brethren. We should weep with those who weep as well as to rejoice with those who rejoice. We should visit our brother when he is well and not forget him when he is sick to specially visit him then.

We are to let our conversation, turn or manner, be without covetousness. That is we should do nothing grudgingly. Our actions should be clear of hesitancy or halting, as though by our words we say we will do so and so while our actions show that we are not hearty in it. It is bad enough indeed when covetousness dominates our feelings which should be to our shame, but it is worse when our actions advertise the fact to the marring of the peace and good will of our brethren. Covetousness is a species of idolatry and is, in my opinion, the accursed thing in our camps today. There is nothing more blinding to our eyes, more chilling to our sensibilities, more benumbing to our privileges and liberality than is this spirit or principle of greed. If our hearts were open and naked before each other and the world as they are before him with whom we have to do, what kind of a spectacle do you suppose they would present? We may withhold that which should be a blessing to our brother and our hearts through much persuasion may not condemn us, but there is one who shall judge that heart who will not be thus persuaded, but who will most certainly render to every man according as his work shall be.

P.G.L.

Zion's Landmark, April 15, 1902

(Submitted by Sister Catherine A. Houchins)

SERMON STEALERS

About the close of the year 1801, I visited Kingsbridge, to see some of my relations; and by their influence I was invited to preach at the chapel in Lady Huntington's connexion, and I found no reluctance on my part; for I had been somewhat favoured in my meditations as I walked thither. At the time appointed, I went to preach to a much larger congregation that I had been accustomed to preach to, yet my great natural timidity was removed, and I found much freedom of speech, and I think I felt much pleasure in my own soul in showing to my hearers how we stood righteous before God, and the blessed safety of those who were accepted in the Beloved. Many of the people expressed much satisfaction; and I was, by the leading men of the chapel, pressed to preach again; and in the warmth of the moment, I consented. Thus far, all went on well; but losing by degrees my enjoyments, I fell into a reasoning spirit; and under a strong temptation, I said to myself, "I have been carried through my last exercise much to my own satisfaction, and to the people's, but what shall I do for the matter the next time? I have said all that I can say." I laboured and toiled in my mind, sometimes at old texts, and at other times at new texts, to see if I could pick up anything; but the more I toiled the greater was my embarrassment and confusion, so that I knew not what to do. I had made a promise, and, therefore, it was too late to say Nay. In this state I

was tossed about like a vessel in a high sea, until I was happily relieved by a sudden thought. It was this, "I have heard Mr. Jones preach from this text, 'With loving-kindness have I drawn thee;' why, I had better preach as much as I can recollect of his sermon. It is sound truth, and much better than I can produce." I found, it is true, a questioning in my mind whether it was right for me to preach Mr. Jones' sermon; but I soon silenced the clamour in my conscience by saying, "What am I to do? I have nothing of my own. And if I attempt to take a text, and preach from it of my own devising, I shall be put to confusion; and what will the people think and say of me? Will it not be much better for me to preach a good sermon, though another man's than darken counsel by words without knowledge?" Thus I settled the business; and to call into action all the powers of my memory. I had good ground to hope for success, because I had heard Mr. Jones preach the above sermon, first, in London; second, at Bristol, and third, at Davonport; so that I suppose it was an old favorite of the preacher's; and my memory, as well as Mr. Jones', being pretty strong, I recollected that he delivered the whole of his four heads with about sixteen subdivisions, nearly word for word every time, which I thought much to my advantage. Thus furnished, (and well, too, I thought, for if the sermon would do for London, Bristol, and Devonport, surely it will do for Kingsbridge!) I mounted the pulpit at the given time. If I recollect right, I was rather confused in my prayer. I had been in the habit, from the commencement of my preaching, to entreat the Lord to assist me, both as to matter and manner; but having a sermon already made, as I thought, I could not honestly beg for God's assistance; neither could I beg of the Lord to assist my memory; for that would have discovered me to the people at once. I therefore got through my prayer as well as I could, and, perhaps, the hearers saw nothing amiss. After the people had sung, I gave out my text with a tolerable emphasis, and proceeded, after a short introduction, to divide my text in the same order as laid down by the aforesaid Mr. Jones. You will observe, reader, that I had four heads, and about sixteen divisions to get through. The number of hearers happened to far exceed the former time of my preaching and several classical men, I understood, were to be present, as well as the regular minister, who had been polished at Cheshunt Academy; so that I had quite work enough before me. Well, with all these difficulties before my eyes, I get to work as well as I could. But, alas, for me! I had not spoken long before the most dreadful guilt, hypocrisy, pride, and confusion possessed my mind. Mr. Jones' sermon was completely taken from my memory, and though I used every artifice to recover, at least some part of it, I could not; and after labouring like a thresher, for I should suppose not more than 15 minutes, quite exhausted, I sat down in confusion, not knowing where to hide my head. After the conclusion, several persons came round me to encourage me not to be dispirited on account of my embarassment, and they expressed such sympathy for me, seeing that I was but a stripling, and young in the ministry; but I was sensible I deserved no pity. I, however, concealed the cause of my embarrassment and acknowledged my error before God in secret. I was ashamed of my unbelief, that I could not depend upon the Lord, as he had been my help. I was condemned for my pride in attempting to raise myself high by another man's stilts. This mortification of my pride taught me a lesson that I have not forgotten yet. I said to myself, "I will never attempt to preach Jones's sermon, nor any other man's, any more as long as I live!" I am persuaded, that if sermon stealers were served as I was on this occasion, they would be of my opinion.

yet you have solid ground of complaint. Now what do you do with your grievance? Do you nurse it? Do you brood over it? Do you press it close to your bosom to keep it warm? Do you listen to its cries and complaints, and do you continually feed it that it may not die away, but thrive and grow, and get stronger and stronger? But be honest with yourself, and see how matters really stand between the Lord and your soul. Do you not find that this overgrown child which you so carefully nurse, which is scarcely ever out of your arms and never out of your mind, which you show about so much to all your friends and visitors, is secretly draining away all the life of your soul. Where is your patience, your forbearance, your broken contrite heart, your submission to the will of God, your love to the brethren, your meekness and quietness, your forgiving spirit, your godly fear of displeasing the Lord by hating your brother, your obedience to gospel precept and walking after gospel practice? You have been wronged, grievously wronged, cruelly and unjustly treated. Well, all the more reason why you should shew your Christian spirit by forgiving those who have wronged you. Will you never forgive? Will you go down to the grave in your unforgiving spirit? Will you nurse your grievance till, like a spoiled child, it becomes your master, and ends in robbing you of all you possess worth having? Do you not see how lean you are getting, wasting away like a youth in consumption? Do not you find how barren your soul is, what little access you have to God in prayer, what little enjoyment of his presence and the smiles of his face? Do you not feel how dark your mind is, and how long it is since you had a visit from Jesus? But why all this darkness, barrenness, and death? Is there not a cause? Do not these increase the more you brood over your wrongs? And should not this lead you to fear lest you be holding an enemy to God to your bosom? In nursing your grievance, could you see the real state of the case, you would find that you are nursing enmity, pride, and self-righteousness; that you are walking contrary to the spirit and the precepts of the gospel; that you are acting against the mind and example of Christ who forgave his murderers; and yet you who call yourself a Christian cannot forgive your brother! "Yes, but he has treated me so unkindly, so cruelly, so unjustly." All the more reason why you should forgive him. "But he has acted so inconsistently". Well, reprove him for it; but let not his sin be an occasion for you to sin, too. I dare say you think you have more grace than he, for you are sure you would not have treated him as he has treated you. Then show the superiority of your grace by freely forgiving him, if you believe him to be a brother. But whether you have sufficient grace for this or not, take this friendly piece of advice, if you can--do not nurse your grievance; for depend upon it you can only do so to the eventual grief of your own soul, and to the inflicting upon yourself of a deeper wrong than that from which you are suffering, and an injury worse than any that your worst enemy could inflict upon you.

A well-wisher to the Church of God.

FROM NORTH CAROLINA

Burlington, N.C.

Dear Editors,

I see that my subscription to the ***Signs of the Times*** is due at this time, so you will find a check for another year, and use the balance as you see fit.

I love the writings of the good people in the ***Signs,*** and I don't want to miss one copy. I believe the doctrine if I believe anything, and hope to be able to take it as long as I live.

May the good Lord bless all of you is my prayers.

Sincerely,

Mrs. J. F. Thompson

May 4, 1980

Dear Elder Spangler and Wife,

I hope you both are well. I thought to try to write a little about my brother. He was not a member of the church here, but I do believe he is with his Lord now. He went to church as long as he was able. He quit school in the third grade, but he could read his Bible. He would read it until he got to feeling so convicted of his sins, and then he would get in his old truck and ride down to see us. He did this as long as he was able to go. He sure did suffer but he didn't complain. He talked much about going home. Someone told him it was to damp and cold to go to his home but he said, "I don't mean that home".

He had lots of troubles in his lifetime. His wife died and left him with two children still in school. He was sick a lot, but the nurses at the hospital said he was the best patient they had ever had. Just before he died he asked one of them to rub his shoulders, and then he said, "I've got to go home now".

We miss him, but the good Lord knows best. He knows all things and He controls all things.

Brother Spangler, I hope I love you both for Christ's sake.

My brother's name was Ray Smith, and he died October 25, 1979. Please put this in the Signs, if you have room.

From a Sister in Christ, I hope,
Rosa S. Page

Atlantic, Va.

Dear Editors,

I believe that it is time to renew my subscription to the ***Signs,*** so enclosed please find my check for two years and use the balance as you see fit. It is my sincere desire and prayer that a way will be made for the continuance of this dear paper, for surely it has been a source of sweet comfort so many times for myself and so many others. Yet we do know that this publication has come under severe persecution and attack lately, as seems the case with so many of the brethren near and far. There are distresses and troubles on every hand, confusion and even indifference. We do not understand these things of ourselves and at times feel hurt and bewildered, but we do know, having been taught, that He has a good purpose in all of this, and pray that we may be blessed with patience to wait and see what His hand hath wrought.

With many personal woes of late, I feel to say, "It is well", for indeed my precious Saviour has been and is the source of all my comfort and I have been made to rejoice in the midst of storms and distresses and could never tell even a part of what He has done for me. Words fail me to express the thankfulness I feel in my heart and praise sits silent on my lips.

May our all-wise Father keep you in that perfect peace, which passeth understanding, and bless you in all your efforts.

In bonds of His love,
Sister Dixie Davis

Gladehill, Va.

Dear Editors,

Enclosed is a little check to use to help send the ***Signs of the Times*** to some one. Would you also change my box number, as the post office has changed the numbers on my route.

I hope everyone is in good health.

I wonder if anyone in California knows of Mrs. Ethelene McCullough, of 5250 Palm Avenue, Riverside, California 92506. I had the ***Signs of the Times*** sent to her for two years in the mid 1970's. She called me on the phone and said she had enjoyed reading them so much. We wrote to each other for a couple of years, but the last I wrote her I didn't get an answer to my letter, so I called her on the phone. She was sick in bed and couldn't see to write. She was also weak and was going into the hospital shortly. I haven't heard anything

else, but would love to hear of her if anyone knows about her. I never met this lovely lady but love her from her talk and writing. I hope God continues to bless you editors to keep publishing the good ***Signs of the Times.*** It is so good to read. I enjoy it and my Bible, too.

May God bless you all with good health.

Nannie P. Arrington

May 4, 1980

Dear Brother Williams,

Praise to our great God and Saviour; to Him be glory and honor forever and ever. I find my words inadequate to render to Jesus the glory that belongs to His Name.

This past month has been so wonderful for me. I talk so selfishly, but our God has blessed me beyond measure. The first Sunday in March, 1980, I asked for a home among the Old Baptist at Little Flock Church at Polk City, Fla. The first Sunday in April, 1980, I followed my Lord in the liquid grave. It was a delightful experience for me. On the day that many remember the holy resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, I experienced a spiritual resurrection (deliverance) of all free will, work system religion. A great load was lifted from me and a blessed peace flooded my whole being. If I have a little hope for only a moment, what a precious moment it is to me. After almost fourteen years walking in the Missionary maze and serving as a minister in that order, the reality of free grace is so sweet to reflect upon.

Today, the first Sunday in May, 1980, was our Annual Meeting at Little Flock Church. The meeting house was filled and several standing outside. Oh, how sweet and refreshing was the presence of our King and how humble did the little lambs partake of the bread and wine and then bowing at another's feet to wash them as our Servant-King, Jesus, exampled us to do. The Holy Spirit was so near and as our friends and loved ones sang the old songs of Zion, sweet fellowship was enjoyed by all. The day was enjoyed by all and many commented that visions of the "good old days" were seen. I cannot praise Him enough, who has all power and authority over all things!

Enclosed is my money order in the amount of $15.00 to pay the two year subscription for my uncle, C. E. Futch, of Plant City, Florida, who has been ill, but I am thankful to report that he is some improved. Use the balance as you see fit. I enjoy the Signs so much. It is wonderful to know that there are many throughout the land who proclaim the Sovereignty of our God and His absolute predestination of all things and are faithfully contending for the faith and doctrine once delivered to the saints.

May God bless your work and endeavor to His glory. Please remember this undeserving worm of the dust that is made to believe he has a little hope from time to time.

Pray for our little churches in this state. There are so many running after popular religion, but our great Lord has promised to never leave His poor little ones. Pray for us.

Yours in blessed hope,
Jesse A. Albritton

FROM ALABAMA

Mt. Meigs, Alabama

Dear Elder Williams,

Enclosed is a check to renew my subscription for two more years. The extra is to be used in any way that you deem it to be a help in publishing our much treasured ***Signs of the Times.***

I read and enjoy every word of this dear paper; the old as well as the new. May the Editors be blessed for their labor of love in publishing such a marvelous paper to so many who have a little hope.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Roma H. Smith

Arab, Alabama

Dear Editors:

Enclosed you will find a check for one year renewal for the ***Signs of the Times.*** The balance is to be used as you wish.

I want to say I enjoy the ***Signs*** very much and would not want to be without it.

I have not been very well over the last year and have had heartaches over the loss of loved ones. I have not been able to go as much as I once did and now can see why I made all these tape recordings several years ago. I have spent a lot of time this winter listening to them, and I re-live each of the occasions of each recording. I have many, many tapes and of several of our greatly blessed preachers that are no longer with us, such as Elders Matt Brock, Biggs, Darnell, Rhodes, Norris, Wilder, and others. Too, I have several sermons of Elders Griffin, Lambert, Poole, Spangler, Morgan, Moon, McCool, Turner, Jones, Hudson, and others.

You see, I live alone and get very lonely, but I realize I am not as thankful for my many blessings as I should be. I find myself wishing for more. No one, surely, has been as wonderfully blessed as I have. What a great blessing it is to be able, or made to believe the wonderful doctrine the Old Baptist teach! What a privilege!, and to be blessed to attend all the wonderful Associations, and meetings I have since I was united with the Church on the second Sunday in June, 1945. Even it pleased God to show my husband the Truth, and he was deep in the Bible, until his passing in May, 1966. We were not blessed to have children, but that too was in God's hands.

I have no close relatives near me. I have only two brothers left, and they are far away, but I feel God directed me here, and do not feel He has directed me to leave. It is all in His hands.

I was so proud to see the re-assertion of the truths Old Baptist stand for in the ***Signs.*** I sometimes go to some of these so called "Old Baptist" meetings and sometimes they preach a real good sermon that I could find no fault with, but it is sad to say that most of the time they ruin what they have said before they stop. But, too, God has a place for them to fill.

May God bless each of the Editors. I wish Elder Lambert would write more for the ***Signs.***

May it please God to bless the Editors and the whole staff of the ***Signs*** and keep the paper coming for many years to come.

Love and best wishes to all Old Baptists everywhere.

Unworthly yours,
Fannie R. Hyatt

A good king carefully observes the law. Christ, the king of Zion, kept the divine law in all respects; and His converted subjects first trust in Him as a law-fulfiller ere they can obey Him acceptably as a law-giver.

Toplady

SEPTEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

ORIGINAL SOUTH ARKANSAS ASSO.

The next session of the Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing with Pilgrim Rest Church on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1980 (Sept. 19, 20, 21). Pilgrim Rest Church is located off Highway 167 North of Fordyce, Arkansas. Take Highway 273 about 1/2 mile to the church.

We dropped the business part of the Association and hold three days meeting at this same time each year.

Elder J. C. Townley
Route 2, Box 245
Fordyce, Arkansas 71742

FIVE MILE CREEK ASSOCIATION

The One Hundred Thirteenth Annual Session of the Five Mile Creek Old School Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Shady Grove Church, located in

Cullman County, Alabama, on Friday, Saturday, and third Sunday in September, 1980 (Sept. 19, 20, 21).

To get to Shady Grove Church, going south on Highway 69, turn left at Wilburn, turn right at the first road to the right, go to the second church on the right of the road.

All lovers of the truth are welcome.

Elder H. C. Moon, Moderator
Route 1, Box 167A
Breman, Alabama
Phone 205-287-1603

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Smith River Primitive Baptist Association will convene with Paynes Creek Church, located in Floyd County, Virginia, on September 5, 6, 7, 1980. Services will begin at 11:00 A.M. on Friday.

Paynes Creek Church is located just off Blue Ridge Parkway between Mile Marker 150 and 151. Those coming on 221 South from Roanoke, just beyond Check turn on #664 and about 1½ miles to Church.

We invite all that have a mind to come and be with us.

James Agee

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the South Ouachita Association is to convene, the Lord willing, with New Hope Church, located near Spearsville, La., commencing on Friday before the 4th Sunday in September, 1980, and continuing three days (Sept. 26, 27, 28).

All who love the true Gospel of Jesus Christ are welcome.

C. C. Wilbanks, Clerk
217 Bastrop Drive
Monroe, La. 71203

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Seven Mile Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, at Liberty Meeting House in Harnett County, North Carolina, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in September (September 19, 20, 21, 1980).

Liberty Meeting House is located 3 miles north of Dunn, North Carolina at junction of State Roads No. 1822 and 1705. State Roads 1822 and 1705 lead off from 301 between Dunn and Benson, N.C. Those coming on Highway 13 to Newton Grove take Highway #55 to Dunn then 301 North and look for signs. Those coming from West on Highway #50 take Highway 301 South and look for signs.

All lovers of the Truth are invited to attend.

Elder W. D. Godwin, Moderator
Route 1, Box 98
Wade, North Carolina 28395

OCTOBER ASSOCIATIONS

SULPHUR FORK ASSOCIATION

The One Hundred thirty-fifth session of the Sulpher Fork Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Providence Church, on Friday and Saturday before the first Sunday in October. (October 3, 4, 5) Providence Church is located 5 miles south of Mt. Vernon, Texas, on Highway 37 at sign.

All lovers of the truth are welcome.

Elder Loyd Wall, Moderator
Route 1
Bivins, Texas

BUTTAHATCHIE ASSOCIATION

The One Hundred Fifty-fifth Session of the Buttahatchie Old School Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Bethel Church, Steens, Mississippi, the Second Sunday in October, Friday and Saturday before (October 10, 11, 12, 1980). For information and directions to the church contact the Moderator.

All lovers of the Truth are invited to attend.

Elder Eulie McCool, Moderator
Route 1
Steens, Mississippi 39766

HOPEWELL ASSOCIATION

The Hopewell Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Salem Church the third Sunday in October, Friday and Saturday before (October 17, 18, 19, 1980).

Directions are as follow: From U. S. Highway 82 east of Gordo, Alabama (just inside Police Jurisdiction), turn south on

Pickens County Road 86. Travel approximately 4 miles and turn left onto gravel road. Go approximately 2 miles to church which is located on right side of road. Signs will be posted.

Elder A. H. Brock
13 Bariwood
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35406

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The one hundred fourth session of the Black Creek Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Old Beulah, the fourth Sunday, Friday and Saturday before in October, 1980. (Oct. 24, 25, and 26).

The Church is located on State Road 2143, about 4 miles S.W. of Kenly, N.C. The Saturday and Sunday meetings will be held at North Johnston High School which is located on Highway 301 about 3 miles South of Kenly, N.C.

KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Two Hundred Fifteenth annual session of the Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association is to be held, the Lord willing, at Smithwick Creek Church, Martin County, North Carolina, the first Sunday in October, Saturday before and Monday following (October 4, 5, 6, 1980). The church is located at the intersection of SR No. 1106 and SR No. 1516, Martin County, North Carolina. Those coming from the north traveling U.S. 17 & 13 to Williamston, N.C., turn left on U.S. 17; travel seven and one-half miles to Corys Cross Road (SR No. 1106); turn left on SR No. 1106 and go two and nine-tenths miles to Church. Those coming from the west traveling U.S. 64 & 13 to Williamston, N.C., turn right on U.S. 17 South, travel seven and one-half miles to Corys Cross Road (SR No. 1106) turn left on SR No. 1106; go two and nine-tenths miles to Church. Coming from the south and east traveling U.S. 17 to Washington, N.C., continue on U.S. 17 north fifteen and one-half miles to Corys Cross Road (SR No. 1106) turn right, two and nine-tenths miles to church.

All the brethren of the same faith and order, who are in peace at home are invited to meet with us. All friends who love the Truth of salvation of Grace and Grace alone we extend to you an invitation to come and be with us.

Elder Marvin E. Garner
Association Clerk

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Contentnea Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Pleasant Hill Church on Friday, October 10, 1980 and Saturday and Sunday following.

The Friday meeting will be held at the meeting house beginning at 11:00 a.m. and the Saturday and Sunday meeting will be held at West Edgecombe School.

From Rocky Mount, N.C. to the meeting house take N.C. 43 South approximately five miles from the city, turn right at caution lights onto rural road 1144, meeting house is located about one-fourth mile on left.

Those coming through Pinetops will travel N.C. 43 North approximately ten miles to caution lights, turn left onto rural road 1144, meeting house one-fourth mile on left.

From Rocky Mount to West Edgecombe School take N.C. 43 South approximately two miles from city, turn left directly in front of West Edgecombe Baptist Church onto rural road 1224, school will be two-tenths mile on right.

Those coming through Pinetops travel N.C. 43 North approximately twelve miles, turn right directly in front of West Edgecombe Baptist Church on rural road 1224. School is two-tenths mile on right.

Anyone arriving in Rocky Mount needing assistance may call J. Carroll Williams, 442-8886; Marvin Joyner, 446-7543 or Elder Henry Jones, 446-7370.

All who have an interest in our meeting are cordially invited to come and be with us.

(Elder) W. W. Stallings, Clerk

EDITORIAL

THE VALLEY OF DRY BONES

(Text: Ezek. 37:1-14)

The first application of a text should generally be its natural meaning and we do not view this text as an exception. Israel had long been captives in Babylon and the prospects of their deliverance was as dim as the prospects

of these bones having life once again. But what was impossible with men was no task for the Lord, and He being sure to His promise, did bring them to their land again. We would look, however, beyond the first application of this text to show how great are the prospects of the elect, or spiritual Israel when God breathes life into them.

Ezekiel was taken by the hand of the Lord. He had not gotten up the desire himself, probably not even knowing that there was such a place as this valley of bones. He had not casually strolled into the midst of them, but rather God took him there, as the following shows; "The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me". (Verse 1) No mission board sent him out to secure the bones he would see. No religious enterprise financed his way in the manner hirlings are sent out. God took him. It says He set him down in the midst of the valley, which was full of dry bones.

There are several things of major importance to be seen in these Scriptures. It would not be practical, or even possible, to cover all. First, observe the expression, ***"The valley"***. At the outset there comes to mind several prominent valleys in the Word of God. (1) There is the Valley of Baca David speaks of, which is the valley of tears; a place of sorrow. (Psalms 84:6) (2) There is the valley Hosea spoke of called the Valley of Achor. That means the valley of trouble. (Hosea 2:15) (3) There is another valley David speaks of; the valley of the shadow of death. (Psalms 23:4) Three prominent valleys, and all of them speak sadness to us. We would consider then, the valley of bones would also represent a dismal scene. There is little question the key to understanding all this is found in Verse 11, "These bones are the whole house of Israel". That is what the bones represent - the whole house of Israel.

Were we to take the strange view held by some that the word "Israel" here means restored Jews of the now dispersed nation of Israel in some future day we would have to literalize and carnalize a great deal of the word of God. We understand Ezekiel's use of the word Israel in the same light that the Apostle spoke to the Roman brethren, "They are not all Israel which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but in Isaac shall thy seed be called". (Rom. 9: 6, 7) Thus we view this Israel as the Israel of God, spiritually, and not the descendants of the twelve tribes. These bones figure the whole elect house of Israel. There will be no Israelites left out of this house. All spiritual Israel, not Israel after the flesh, is represented in these bones.

When Ezekiel is set down in the midst of the bones, one prominent feature he sees is their dryness. "Lo, they were very dry". (V-2) They are all spread out in this great valley with no discernable order. That, however, was to come shortly. You will notice, too, it was an open valley. It is impressive that he uses the expression, "open valley". Usually we think of a valley as a recessed place with mountains or hills surrounding it. This is, rather, a valley in an open area, as it were in a desert or waste land. This suitably describes the environment where Ezekiel is made to view the bones. The bones here are many, and they are open, or naked before God. The valley is full of bones. This is an open area where they are exposed to the elements; the winds, the sun, the rain, whatever, so that they may be dried and bleached, and come to desolation and waste. Imagine, if walking along somewhere you find an old bone that had been there for years. You might pick it up, look at it, and then with little concern toss it aside, and the bone will soon be forgotten. That is the end of that. But Ezekiel looks at these many bones, and as the text says, "He caused me to pass by them round about". (V. 2) He was not permitted to look and run, to look and flee, but rather to circle them with

serious observance. He went round about, observing the bones, noticing the lack of life, and viewing the complete absence of any hope that they may be restored. The bones represented, no doubt to him, life that was past. There is nothing about the bones to speak of life present, or life to come. Every bone suggests the same theme to Ezekiel, ".....behold they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off from our parts." (V. 11)

It might be well in this connection to consider several other scriptures in relation to bones, that we might more carefully identify them. You will recall in the second chapter of Genesis. God took a rib out of Adam after He caused a deep sleep to come upon him. Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones". (Gen. 2:23) He was, of course, speaking of Eve, the mother of our race. Out of Adam, the first man, came all of the rest of the family of man. Every bone that ever came after that was Adam's bones. You can trace every bone of humanity back to Adam. That is the beginning. Next, we read the Psalmist David speaking in prophecy of our Saviour in Psalm 22, "They pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me". (Vs. 15, 16) "I may tell all my bones". Truly, a prophesy of our Lord dying upon the tree, and yet saying, "I may tell all my bones", for he was to live again and gather all his bones (children). Adam had a family, "bone of his bone" beginning with Eve. Our Lord has a family, and He says, "I may tell them all", yes, every one of them. In a later Psalm (Psa. 34:20), David prophetically speaking again says, "He keepeth all his bones", "not a bone of him shall be broken"; signifying that Jesus not only had no literal bones broken in His fleshly body, but that when He died none of his spiritual bones (His elect children) suffered or were harmed. A broken body would separate its members, and that could not be.

Another remarkable text on the subject of bones is as follows: "And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence. So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt." (Gen. 50:24-26) How touching to hear Joseph say, "I die". But then he relates to them God's promise to deliver them and takes of them an oath to "carry up my bones from hence" (Egypt). We surely see a figure of God's full deliverance in their oath. Though dead, Joseph, soon to be reduced to mere bones, would be carried away to his promised land with his brethren. It is striking to see the book of Genesis close with these words, "A coffin in Egypt" 2300 years before, (approximately) man was in the paradise of Eden. Genesis begins with God in eternity and closes with a coffin full of bones in Egypt. Sin, it would appear, had abounded. (See also Heb. 11:22)

"But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." (Rom. 5:21) Summing up these things we may say that the dry bones in this valley were a figure of the family of the election of grace - the whole house of Israel. But we see them initially in their dry, barren state. We see them without life, or the hope of it. Ezekiel walks round about them - there were very many of them. He sees them all together in one place. This tells us something, also. The bones were all together and jumbled up, no doubt, so that Ezekiel could only gaze in wonder. He couldn't put bone to bone, or bring them back together like they once were, but they were all every one there. They were countless in number; not a bone was missing, but alas, what can Ezekiel do with or for these bones, for they are all dead! "As in Adam all die." (I Cor.

15:22) so every bone here was dead. As every bone of Adam has gone back to the ground from which it came, even so did all these bones lay in ruin.

Compare now Paul's next words to the Corinthians, "Even so in Christ shall all (his bones) be made alive". (I Cor. 15:22) There is a family which has come from Adam - all the human race, and they all must die. There is a family which stems from Christ - all the chosen family. All the chosen family are figured here in these bones. They died in Adam, but in Christ they shall all be made alive. God then asks this question of Ezekiel, ***"Son of man, can these bones live?"*** Must not Ezekiel be staggered by such a question? He sees their condition. For his part it is absolutely hopeless. Can they live? Not if it is left up to Ezekiel.

As God queries Ezekiel regarding these bones, let us consider the question as if it was asked of us. "Son of man can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest". That is a beautiful expression, "O Lord God, thou knowest". Ezekiel takes nothing upon himself, nor does he afford us room to do so. "Lord God, thou knowest". He didn't know if they could live, nor could we unless God instruct us, but he knew he was speaking to One who did know. He knew that he was in the presence of his God, who had taken a rib from Adam and made Eve. He knew he was standing before Him who had taken him out in the spirit and set him down in the midst of the valley of bones by the word of His power. He dare not place a limit on God. Ezekiel could not answer the question, but it is plain to see Ezekiel believed God knew the answer.

Around the world today you can find swarms of what might be called seminary-manufactured preachers. They have no such reluctance as Ezekiel had, and are most eager to answer this vital question. Filled with pride and bloated with presumption they proceed to reply, "Of course these bones can live, if they will just obey". These lucid little angels of light would continue: "All the dry bones have a chance to live, provided we can reach them with the free-will gospel. However, this takes a lot of money. Give us money and we will save every bone in existance. And God is just waiting to save them." That is not the language of Ezekiel, is it? Ezekiel knew no doctrine as this, and brethren, is it not a blessing that we don't. Is it not a comfort to realize that He has given us a sweeter hope than to assume that we knew that these bones can live by any power other than the power of God. ***"Oh, Lord God, thou knowest".***

When God asked Ezekiel, "Can these bones live", they surely were dead. Just so is the elect family of God, or Spiritual Israel dead in sin until God the Spirit quickens them. The Elect have always been safe, as regards God's purpose, but they have not always been saved. The bones Ezekiel saw were all safe, for God had purposed to raise them up, but when he saw them they surely were dead, very dead (dry, as Ezekiel expressed it). Nothing but bone, no life, no visible sign of life about them, and yet God shall quicken them. Very similar are the words of Paul where it says, "And you hath He quickened who were dead". (Eph. 2:1)

God says, "Son of man, prophesy". Now the next word is as important as any word in all the text. We must not mistake the text to say, "Prophesy unto these bones", for it doesn't say that. It says, "Prophesy ***upon*** these bones". Can you see the difference between "prophesy unto" and "upon"? Later on He does say "unto", but at the outset it is "Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord." (V. 4) At this stage of events Ezekiel could prophesy upon these bones, but only God could prophesy unto.

Think now of the everlasting love of God. "Dry bones", God says, "hear the word of the Lord". God loved these bones before the breath of life came to

them and He sends His Prophet Ezekiel to prophesy upon them, and his message was, "Hear". John, in writing the fourth Gospel said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." (John 5:25) Now who was going to hear the voice of the Son of God? The dead. Make no mistake about this. As regards this text, only the dead hear the voice of the Son of God. They must be dead to hear it. And as soon as they hear it they live. This may appear to be backwards, but it isn't. Dead in sins precedes life in Christ. The same voice that spoke the universe in existance from nothing, speaks life into existance from death. They that hear the voice of the Son of God live. And as soon as they hear His voice and live, then they are capable of hearing other voices that can prophesy to them concerning Him who liveth evermore. Ezekiel was not prophesying life into these bones. Ezekiel was prophesying to them that they would (certainly) hear the word of the Lord. Listen to Ezekiel, carefully. He does not say, "O ye dry bones, hear the voice of Ezekiel". "O ye dry bones, listen to this prophet". "O ye dry bones let me tell you how to be saved". No, he says, "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord". How satisfying to believe that our King has spoken and where the word of a king is, there is power: power to hear and power to live. "Hear the word of the Lord". "Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones". God is speaking to the bones and Ezekiel is the mouthpiece to foretell or prophesy that the Lord God shall speak life into these bones. "Behold I will cause breath". Ezekiel prophesies what God says, but Ezekiel does not say it of himself, or for himself. "Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live". (v-5) This is God speaking.

From our text we see first the bones, next the purpose of God to revive them, and now the promise to make them live with His breath. (See Psa. 139:13-16) "Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live". The prophesy is that they shall live for God shall cause the breath to enter them. Is there any other power that can give them breath? As yet they don't have any breathing facilities. Nothing but bone. Ezekiel's breath won't help them. Only such breath as God puts into them will do. Do we not rejoice in the sweet truth that however dry and dead we may be in sin and the world, if we are bone of His bone, and embraced in the everlasting covenant, God will cause breath to enter into us? "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul". (Gen. 2:7) Of the first creation the order was first, forming man of the dust, and second breathing the breath of life into him. Only then would he become a living soul. So in the new creation the requirement is that God breathe into the elect the breath of life, as we find in the figure represented by the bones.

About 150 years ago our people divided from the Fullerites (advocates of the missionary, soul-saving scheme) over this very point; is God or man the agency of the breath of life? The lie was being propagated among the people of God everywhere, that poor perishing man had no hope of life unless a preacher came to his assistance; unless evangelists covered the territories of the globe, and preached the "offer gospel" whereby dead sinners might live, if they would accept it. The people of the living God stood against such doctrines as that, for they knew the same thing that Ezekiel knew - that only God could breathe the breath of life into a poor dry bone and cause that bone to live. "Son of man can these bones live? Oh, Lord God, thou knowest."

Next we find Ezekiel in verse 7 doing as he was told. ***"So I prophesied as I was commanded"***. Ezekiel, Jeremiah,

Isaiah, and all other called ministers never prophesied but as they were commanded. They never added to, and they never took away from the commandment of the Lord. They had nothing to say but that which God bid them say. Ezekiel prophesied as he was commanded, and as he prophesied there was a noise. There was a shaking. The bones came together, bone to his bone. What an amazing sight it must have been. There in an open valley full of dry bones Ezekiel prophesied, and Ezekiel knew he had no power. Ezekiel knew he was but a man; he was but a sinner like others, but as he prophesies there is a rattling, there is a shaking. An amazing thing begins to take place here; bones moving one toward another, a bone here and a bone there, and they form a skeleton. What a great noise, a great sight. Bone to his bone. Is it not a wonder to see here not just any bone going to another bone. They didn't decide for themselves where they would go, but each bone went where it belonged. Every bone was in place. Every bone had its location. It could not have been otherwise. There was order and there was government, invisible though it might have been. Bone to his bone. It was a solemn marvel.

"And when I beheld, lo the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above." (Verse 8) They began to take shape. They had a bodily form, but there was yet no breath in them. They had everything, yet they had nothing. One thing more was needful. What good was a mere skeleton? What good was all the sinews and skin upon these bones if there was no breath in the body? When someone dies, the mortician may prepare the corpse so well that you are made to feel if they could open their eyes they surely would live. But there is one thing we know, positively; the dead have no breath in them. We cannot communicate with them. There is no warmth, and we no longer have any relationship with them. It has been severed by death. The breath of life is absent. Until God breathed the breath of life in him, Adam was but dirt. He had a form, and an appearance, but he had not life. So these bones, representing the whole house of Israel, had a form and they had a promise, but until God breathed the breath of life in them they were yet helpless.

"Then he said unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." If any honest being reads verse 9 and reads it with an open heart, he could never again subscribe to the system of soul winning, free will, Arminianism, works, or any other creature effort doctrine. God's plain word will always drive away error. Ezekiel's business now was to prophesy to the wind that the Lord God was bidding it (the wind) to "come". Ezekiel does not say "come", nor do the dry bones say, "come to us". It is God Himself that says to the wind, "Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live". There they are in the open valley slain. They are dead, and Ezekiel is little more than an observer until God instructs him to prophesy to the wind. His prophesy is that the Lord God has said to the breath, "Come". You will note, too, that it is not the other way around. He did not say to the bones "go to the Lord for breath", but rather, for the wind to come to these bones, and breathe upon these slain, that they might live. The reason the message from the Lord God is "come" is plain to see. God has always been with the bones. He has never forsaken His people (in our text, the bones) even while they were dead in sin. When we were dry (dead in sin) as the bleached out bones of the open valley, God was with us to uphold and protect us. He preserves His people with His very presence, even in the

waste howling wilderness.

God does not say to the breath "go", but He says "come", because He is there. Can you see the difference? There is a difference, isn't there? "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live". All that is necessary for life for a poor sinner is for God to breathe on them. But what is that breath? There is really no question what the breath is when we compare scripture with scripture. "Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." (John 20:21-22) "Receive ye the Holy Ghost". The breath is the Spirit of God. When breathed upon by the Holy Ghost we then are partakers of the life of Christ.

"O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live". Every bone there in the open valley had been slain, and well may we ask, what slew them? Sin! Sin had dominion over them. But now the breath came, and they lived, and sin no longer had dominion over them. "So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them". (Verse 10) Now here is another word worthy of our attention. "I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them". If it said "unto" them it would leave some room for us to wonder if they were going to receive the breath or not. The doctrine of the world is "if you will accept; if you will receive; if you will open up your heart, God, or Jesus or the Holy Ghost will come in". But the breath from God's command came to them, and came "into" them; "and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army".

"Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel:" (Verse 11) Sufficient proof may be found in John's Gospel that Ezekiel was speaking of spiritual, not natural Israel in this text. "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled." (John 17:12) There was one, natural Israelite, if there never was another, that won't be in heaven, and that was Judas. He went to his appointed place, a place of torment. The whole natural house of Israel won't be in heaven, for we know Judas won't be there. He was born a natural Israelite, but having never been born again, he was never a spiritual Israelite. But the whole house of spiritual Israel will be there. Paul wrote the Romans that, "So all Israel shall be saved". (Rom. 11:26) All Israel; the Israel of God, the Israel of Spirit, the Israel that is born of the Spirit of God. "Son of man these bones are the whole house of Israel". Well then, it is just as certain as God is honest and true, if He has recorded your name in the book of Life of the Lamb from the foundation of the world, you shall be saved. All of your sins, all of your wickedness, and all of your failings and faults notwithstanding, you shall be saved, for He will give life to the whole house of Israel.

"Behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts". It is a lovely thing there; that is, the groanings and burdens of Israel. It always has been, "Our bones are dry, our hope is lost." Sometimes we would scarcely wonder if we have a hope at all. "We are cut off for our parts". We seem to be cut off from the whole house of Israel. "Therefore prophesy and say unto them Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people". Is there not a precious thought there? "O My people". God is mindful of them while they are yet bleached out in the desert. "O my people, I will open your graves." He did not send Ezekiel to do that. We cannot overemphasize that.

Much more might be said on this lovely scripture, but here we shall conclude.

(Elder) James F. Poole

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

EDITORIALS OF ELDER GILBERT BEEBE

You are also requested to re-publish the following Riddle, which appeared in your ninth volume, for 1841.

A constant reader

A RIDDLE

We have for many years been partially acquainted with the inmates of a house, whose history, if we were able to do justice to the work, would be interesting and perhaps profitable to some portion of our readers. The house itself is fearfully and wonderfully made, and has stood in its present form a little more than forty years. The materials of which the house is made were originally very good, but now appear to be in rather dilapidated state. It has been thought by good judges that there is contagion in the building; and this conclusion has been confirmed by the appearance of "spots of leprosy in the walls", like fretting sores. Now what we wish to relate is in reference to the tenants of this house. And what think you of two families occupying one house? You know unless they agree pretty well they must live very uncomfortable together. Well, we know this to be the case; for although the house is inhabited by but two individuals, it frequently seems to contain, as it were, the company of two armies. We have known them to be engaged in such deadly strife that, without foreign interference, they would certainly have destroyed each other.

It will answer our present purpose, without calling names, to designate these fighting neighbors the Old man and the New man; for the eldest tenant of the house has in reality had possession of the premises ever since the house was built; but the other took his residence in the same house some years afterward, having the consent of the builder and owner of the house. On the occasion of the new man moving into the house, we shall never forget what a dreadful uproar took place.--The old man is not only old, but he is a strong man, and being armed had kept his palace and his goods were in safety until that memorable struggle took place. No tongue can tell nor pen describe with what awful desperation that battle was fought. It was the most sanguine and dreadful conflict, between the most powerful disputants, and attended with the most thrilling and effecting circumstances that we ever witnessed. Incredible as our description of this scene may appear, we do assure our readers that the very heavens grew dark on that occasion! Loud thunders shook the world, and vivid lightnings played around!! The voice of words was heard, until the reeling walls of the disputed house seemed ready to dash into a thousand pieces, like a potter's vessel.

The old man contended for the exclusive possession of the house, and set up a plea that as he had held a peaceable possession so long, it was his lawful property. Moreover he found certain passages of law which he interpreted to mean that no such tenant should be allowed to occupy any part of the premises; from ancient records he also showed that the house had been mortgaged to his king, whose name was Death, and by his will, he claimed the exclusive right to the house; but he was foiled by the Wonderful Councellor for the other, who proved beyond dispute that the bond was cancelled and the property redeemed from all incumbrance, excepting that he, the old man, might by the suffrage of the proprietor remain in the basement story for a short time. He also contended that he was able to defend his right and that he would never go out alive. But as the result of the struggle has abundantly proved, the old man was mistaken; for one, stronger than he, came and the old man was

bound and his goods spoiled. The victorious warrior, (for he was a man of war) who had made bare his arm in vanquishing this potent enemy, claimed the right to dispose of the premises as he pleased, and he assigned to the new man all the upper part of the house, to have and to hold from that day forth, during the pleasure of the landlord or as long as the house should stand. When the new man entered his mansion, how different was the scene! The conflict was over, the old man was in chains; and it was whispered that he was dead, and the new man made great reckoning on having the house completely purged, purified, set in order, made pleasant, peaceable and beautiful: but scarcely had the work of reform and improvement commenced when the new comer thought he could perceive signs of life in the carcass of the old vanquished foe; nor was he at all deceived in his apprehensions, for suddenly the old man revived and in a most surly, insolent and quarrelsome manner, bid the new man leave the house. The new man trembled convulsively at this treatment; plead that he had been put in possession by the lawful owner of the property, and that he had obtained liberty to hold possession of all the upper part of the house as long as it should stand; and that when this earthly house should be dissolved, he had a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. But the old man disputed his plea, and insinuated that he was laboring under a delusion, in regard to having been put in possession of the house or any part of it; and declared that the new man had not been put into the possession, and that he could not in justice be. Finally the artful language of the old man was such that the new man began to fear exceedingly that he was truly under some dreadful delusion.--Under these impressions he wept, and prayed and fasted, and labored, and struggled for many days, until his Lord again appeared for his deliverance, and gave him a renewed evidence of his goodness and mercy. After this conflict was over, things went smoothly on for a short time; but after certain days, the old man brought home with him some old comrads, (among whom was a celebrated and ardently pious Mr. Charity, D.D., and a few of his neighbors, Good Works, Carnal Mind, Law Righteousness, and one very shrewd old fellow called Human Reason, A.M.) and insisted on entertaining them in the upper part of the house, as they were all used to high living. At first the new man objected; but seeing that the company were all very pious and being fond of religious company, and fearing that he would be thought uncharitable if he should reject them he consented, and they all came in, and seemed to enjoy a merry time;--indeed, the old man himself began to be very religious, and he and his guests, soon found occasion to chide the new man for backwardness, inertness, a want of zeal, and activity, etc., and he, poor fellow, began to feel something of his leanness and barrenness; he confessed the justness of their censure, and begged them to aid him in an attempt at reformation: to this, they being of the benevolent order, readily consented, and forthwith began a course of lectures, in which they told him that he was entirely too tight laced, in his religious principles; that he was trusting too much to grace, and that he did not lay a sufficient stress upon good works; they read off to him a long chapter upon duty religion, duty faith, and duty prayer, etc., and urged that he must be up and doing, that he must use the means of grace. They told him moreover that thousands, by tight lacing had become sickly, had brought on consumption and even death.

It was the unanimous opinion of the gang that the New man must make brick without straw, and when he complained they told him he was idle, and they applied the lash until his

groans and sighs became indescribably dreadful; and it is our sincere opinion these thievish imps would have worked the poor distressed New man to death if it had not been for an interposition of the Lord; for they had already got him to consent to change apartments with his fellow tenant, and he had moved down stairs, quite into the cellar. The new man had been persuaded to believe that for and in consideration of his kindness in changing rooms with his neighbor, he would be exceedingly happy and enjoy great peace of mind, etc.; but to his mortification he found the rooms very dark, the light and warmth of the sun being shut out; and he had only light enough to preceive that the room was dreadful filthy, and that it contained innumerable reptiles, serpents and scorpions. This exercise threw him into a cold sweat, and he was dreadfully tried to his mind to account for his troubles: he made some attempts to maul these serpents with carnal weapons, such a good resolutions, large quantities of formal prayer, and many other weapons of the same kind that he found among the lumber of the old man--all to no effect; for he found himself only beating the air. In this dreary condition he remained until the next visit of his Lord and Master, who came to his relief, opened the prison door, took his feet out of the stocks, set him in a large place, thrust the old man down into the nether apartment and raised him (the new man) again to the enjoyment of former light, life, and liberty.

We might continue our parable ad infinitum for the old man and the new man can not get along peaceable together, the new man having received an order from the court of King's bench to crucify the old man with all his comrades; and in his attempt to execute this sentence they have had some awful combats, and the old fox has often played the possum and made his antagonist think he was dead; but as soon as a favorable opportunity presented, he would revive, and in many instances bring the other into subjection to the law of sin, that was written on the walls of the house. The new man in some of his struggle has been heard to cry out, "Oh, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But we are credibly informed that he has received assurance from his Lord that a few more struggles will end the strife,--when the old crazy walls of the disputed tenement shall be torn down, and he shall then inhabit an incorruptable building far from the noise and rage of the old man.

Reader, do you understand the riddle?

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OBITUARIES

JAMES A. ROEBUCK

In loving memory of our brother James A. Roebuck, who was born in Martin County on February 15, 1896. He was the son of the late Samuel H. and Sallie Blount Roebuck who

were also faithful members of the Flat Swamp Church.

He died at the age of 83 on January 6, 1980 in the Pitt Memorial Hospital after being in declining health for several years.

Brother Jim made his confession and sweet hope in the Lord Jesus Christ and united with the Flat Swamp Church, the Saturday before the first Sunday in August in the year 1932 and was baptized the following Sunday by the Elder John N. Rogers.

He was a faithful member to his Church and all the Sister Churches. Association with him will be greatly missed by all who knew him but his memory will forever remain with us.

He was married to Ella Taylor Roebuck who preceeded him in death.

Left to mourn his passing are two sons, Clifton and Curtis Roebuck, two daughters, Ruth Murrell Gasbout and Jannice Hubber, two sisters, Ethel Roebuck and Johnnie Gray Everett, several grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held from Flat Swamp Church on Monday, January 9, 1980, at two o'clock in the afternoon by his Pastor Elder Reeves Smith who was assisted by Elder J. T. Prescott and Elder Joseph Leggett. He was laid to rest in the Robersonville cemetery under a mound of beautiful flowers and in the presence of a host of friends and relatives.

The Flat Swamp Church extends deepest sympathy to his dear family and friends and prays God's richest blessings. May he rest in peace.

Done by the order of the Church on Saturday before the first Sunday in February, 1980.

Elder Reeves Smith, Moderator
Hassel Allen, Clerk
Ethel Roebuck and Johnnie Gray Everett
Committee

GEORGE THOMAS WEBB

Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church acknowledges the death of our dear Brother in Christ, George Thomas Webb. Brother Webb was 88 years of age when he passed away on October 23, 1979 in Annie Penn Hospital, Reidsville, North Carolina. His funeral was held in Pleasantville Churchhouse and burial was in the cemetery there. Elder Haywood Wray and Preacher Robert Turner officiated.

Surviving are his wife, Mrs. Maud Carter Webb; daughters, Mrs. Myrtle Dye of the home, Mrs. Pete Hall and Mrs. Gertrude Lynn of Greensboro, N.C., Mrs. Elbert Humphrey of Summerfield, N.C., Mrs. William Sharron, Reidsville, N. C.; son, Woodrow Webb, Summerfield, N.C.; 11 grandchildren; 16 great grandchildren; one sister, Mrs. Lizzie Carter, Madison, N.C.; brother C. K. Webb, Wentworth, N.C.

Brother Webb spent his life in Rockingham County near Madison, N.C. He was a farmer. He served the office of Deacon until his health failed during the last few years. He was a member of Pleasantville Church over 30 years. He was blessed to manifest the love and grace of our Lord in his walk of life. He was faithful and devoted to his lovely family and Church, and through all trials and afflictions he showed great patience and love. It can be truly said, "A good name is better than great riches." "Blessed are those who die in the Lord."

Written by request of Pleasantville Church.

Sister Rachel P. Wray

ROY HARRISON

It is with sadness of heart I attempt to write this obituary of our beloved Deacon Roy Harrison who departed this life January 18, 1980. Brother Harrison was born October 2, 1902 in Martin County, Bear Grass Township, the son of the late William Reuben and Sallie Ann Gurganus Harrison.

He was married to Lavinia Cowin January 23, 1923 and to this union four children were born: Benjamin Harrison, Rachel Coltrain, Vader Hodges and Rebecca Boyd, all whom survive along with his widow, Sister Harrison.

Brother Harrison was baptized in the fellowship of the Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church third Sunday in August 1958 having joined at the waters edge. He was

chosen Deacon in 1959 and served his church well. He was sound in the faith and enjoyed the sweet fellowship of the brethren. His home was a haven for visiting brothers and sisters.

Funeral services were held in Biggs Funeral Chapel by Elder Noah L. Ambrose, Elder Billy Everett and Elder Reeves Smith on third Sunday in January 1980 with interment in Martin Memorial Gardens near Everetts.

By order of the Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church while in conference Saturday before third Sunday in February 1980.

Elder Noah L. Ambrose, Moderator
Maggie Harrison and
Theresa R. Ayers, Committee

ELDER HOMER LUTHER BALLARD

Elder Homer Luther Ballard was born February 25, 1899 at Princeton, West Virginia and died December 10, 1979 at Sequin, Texas, which made his stay here 80 years, 9 months, and 15 days. Elder Ballard was married to Rachel Angle in Fayette County, Indiana on January 4, 1937. He had two sons; John D. of San Antonio, Texas and Don J. of Bryan, Texas; one daughter Mrs. Linda Lundquist of New Braunfels, Texas; five grandsons and two granddaughters; and two sisters (surviving); Mrs. Esther Williams of Thorntown, Indiana and Mrs. Edith Shockley of Camden, Ohio.

Brother Ballard joined Mount Olive Primitive Baptist Church of Christ on Third Sunday in April 1954 and was baptized by Elder E. B. Ault. On third Sunday in June 1954, he was licensed to preach and in December 1955 was ordained to the full work of the Gospel Ministry. He served as pastor or co-pastor of Mount Olive Church between July 1956 and January 1965. His entire church life was spent in Mount Olive Church except for one year when he was lettered out to Fellowship Church in East Texas.

Elder Ballard's favorite points of doctrine were: the Sovereignty of God, predestination of all things, and the total depravity of man. How many times have we heard him say how he wished that he could be a good man but knew not how. Brother Ballard believed in the resurrection of the dead both the just and the unjust. His hope being that Jesus had paid the price for his sins and transgressions and that he would be housed in Heaven for ever more with the Son of God.

Done by order of conference on third Sunday in December 1979. This obituary to be recorded in the church book, send to the ***Signs of the Times,*** and a copy be given to the family.

Elder G. D. Shipman, Moderator
Sister Eva Lee Souter, Clerk

SISTER PEARL HOLLAND DUDLEY

Pearl Thelma Holland was born in Franklin County, February 3, 1901. She was the daughter of the late S. Thomas and Alice Smith Holland. She was married to Walter D. Dudley of Hardy, Virginia, on May 20, 1921, and to this union was born 8 children. She was left a widow at the age of 34, with 7 living children.

She is survived by 3 daughters, Mrs. Cora Dudley Berger, Union Hall, Va., Mrs. Ruthie Dudley Walker, Rocky Mount, Va., and Mrs. Mary Anne Dudley Berry, of Roanoke, Va.; 2 sons at home, Paul D. and Charlie D. Dudley, of Hardy, Va.; 3 grandchildren, and 1 great grandchild; 4 sisters, Mrs. Ethel Belcher, and Mrs. Hattie Holland, Rocky Mount, Va., Mrs. Gladys Arrington and Mrs. Helen Altice, Sarasota, Florida; two brothers, Nelson Holland, of Rocky Mount, Va., and Norris Holland, Bassett, Va.

She united with Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church on October 4, 1936, and was baptized by the late Elder James F. Stegall the same day. She was a true and faithful member and came to Church as long as she was able. The last time she was there her son, Charlie, a member of Roanoke, brought the car around to the door to pick her up. She was so crippled with arthritis it was all she could do to get in the car. Her Pastor, Elder Cecil E. Turner, watched her and remarked, "That is faith in action". She had faith to believe she could come again.

Sister Pearl was a kind and loving mother and bore her affliction without complaining, even though she couldn't walk for more than five years. She loved company and was always interested in the welfare of the Church.

Her house caught on fire February 10, 1980, and she and her daughter, Lorene Dudley Heck, age 51, suffocated from the smoke. The house was burned to the gound in just a few minutes.

A double funeral was held at Lynch's Funeral Home, Rocky Mount, Va., by her Pastor, Elder Cecil E. Turner, and Lorene's pastor, Mr. W. Carlton Smith. They were buried beside their husbands in the Dudley Cemetery near their home. The graves were covered with a mound of flowers.

Sister Pearl will always be missed by the members of her church. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." Our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by a Sister-in-Law,
Florence Maxey
and Hassel A. Hale
Clerk of Roanoke Primitive
Baptist Church

ELDER ERNEST BREEDLOVE

It is with a very sad heart that we try to write of the death of our dearly beloved husband and father.

Elder Ernest Breedlove was born February 26, 1907 and God saw fit to call him home August 3, 1979, at the age of 72 years.

He is survived by his wife, Okley, and seven children; sons, William Allen, Giles Edward, Paul Dwight, Kenneth David, and Ralph Breedlove; two daughters, Mrs. Doris Jean Harr and Mrs. Mary Rose Henson; fifteen grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

He united with the Old Regular Primitive Baptist Church in the year of 1932. He felt the call to the ministry and was ordained to preach in the year of December, 1953.

He was loyal to these churches, and always filled his seat. He loved to be among the brothers and sisters.

Later in the year of 1973 he moved his membership to the Fairview Primitive Baptist Church in Teays Valley and remained there until he was called home to be with our blessed Lord.

He loved the Church and was a faithful member. I have often heard him say that he would love to take the Church in his arms, if he could.

He was a true believer in salvation by the grace of God, also that God has all power in Heaven and on earth. Elder Allen Smith conducted his funeral services, and his body was laid to rest in Valley View Cemetery at Hurricane, West Virginia, there to wait for the great resurrection call when his soul, body, and spirit will be reunited to live with God in that blissful home for ever more where there will be no more sorrow, and all will be peace and joy.

May God bless all the little churches he loved so well, and children, remember Daddy and his love he had for his little family will always be around about us.

May God bless you all.

Written by his wife and children,
Mrs. Ernest Breedlove

SISTER CALLIE CARTER

On the 4th day of March, 1980, our dear Sister Callie Carter passed away. We trust it has pleased our Heavenly Father to take her from our midst. We trust she has been called home to our dear God and her trials and suffering here on earth is over.

Sister Carter was born February 28, 1909, making her stay here on earth 71 years. She was blessed to ask for a home in our church on June 1, 1956. She was a faithful member until her death. We miss Sister Callie so much, as she had a certain place in church to sit, and now that seat is empty. She was a great believer of salvation by grace, and she always praised her God for all the blessings He had bestowed upon her. To know her was to love her, as she was always willing to give a helping hand in everything the church would undertake to do.

Now to Sister Callie Carter, we trust she is resting in peace and love. We feel she has done her duty here on earth as God has purposed for her to do.

Now may it be resolved: That three copies of this resolution be made: one to be put in our church record, one to be published in the ***Signs of the Times,*** and one to be sent to her family.

We send our sincere sympathy to her family and trust God will bless them to carry on as she would have wished for them to do.

This done by order of conference at our April meeting at the Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 10/80 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ELDER E. J. LAMBERT

It is with much sadness that we announce the death of Elder E. J. Lambert, of Winnsboro, Tx.

Elder Lambert was for many years Associate Editor of the ***Signs of the Times.*** He was Pastor of several churches in Arkansas and Texas and was widely travelled.

A suitable obituary will appear in the November issue of the ***Signs of the Times.***

The Editors

I'D RATHER BE A HARDSHELL

I'd rather be a Hardshell, than anything I know,
A band of holy brethren, they love each other so.

I'd rather be a Hardshell, because in them I find
A lovely, happy people, all of the same mind.

I'd rather be a Hardshell, and with the gospel fed,
Than be the King of England with a crown upon my head.

I'd rather be a Hardshell, and hear the gospel sound,
Than be the greatest statesman that walks upon the ground.

I'd rather be a Hardshell, and suffer all reproach,
Than be a railroad president, and riding in his coach.

I'd rather be a Hardshell, and suffer scorn and shame,
Than to be a dandy preacher, with D. D. to my name.

I'd rather be a Hardshell, and live from hand to mouth,
Than to be all the Right Rev. D.D.'s either North or South.

I'd rather be a Hardshell, and live on bread and water,
Than to be a fancy preacher to please Old Babylon's daughter.

I'd rather be a Hardshell, and be behind the times,
Than have my pockets full of husks, feeding to the swine.

I'd rather be a Hardshell, and wear a ragged coat,
Than to be a swine feeder and milker of the goats.

I'd rather be a Hardshell, and labor for my bread,
Than to have all the gold of Ophir to leave when I am dead.

I'd rather be a Hardshell the balance of my life,
Than go down into Babylon to seek my master's wife.

I'd rather be a Hardshell, and with a little few,
Than to be a high tide Baptist, hunting something new.

I'd rather be a Hardshell and grub for my living,
Than to be always a blowing about the spirit of giving.

I'd rather be a Hardshell, and live on locusts and honey,
Than to be always begging the poor people for their money.

I'd rather be a hardshell, the Bible for my guide,
Than to be the Czar of Russia, and all the world beside.

I'd rather be a Hardshell, and be esteemed a fool,
Than to be a false religionist, brought up in a Sunday School.

I'd rather be a Hardshell, even from my very youth,
Than be brought up in a Sunday School ,and learn to hate the truth.

I'd rather be a Hardshell, and see my children die,
Than send them to Sunday School to learn to love a lie.

Hardshell, Hardshell, I glory in the name;
I'd rather be a Hardshell, than have all Passha's fame.

I've been a Hardshell seven years, a Hardshell I'll remain;
I want to live a Hardshell, I want to die the same.

I'd rather be a Hardshell, than to have all this world's goods;
I don't want to be anything else, nor couldn't if I would.

I'd rather be a Hardshell, and eat that living bread,
These be the sentiments of H. J. Redd.

Submitted by Elder E. J. Lambert

(This Poem was not printed to promote the expression "Hardshell", but rather to set forth the writer's sentiment, with which we agree. Editor)

June 16, 1980

Dear Editors of the Signs,

I am sending a check for renewal of my paper. I am 79 years old and can't get around much so I don't want to miss one paper. I enjoy the paper so much. The writings are so good. Elder Spangler's article was extra good.

I was blessed to attend Durham Church last meeting day and it was wonderful. I now live in Morehead City with my daughter and don't get out much, so you know we appreciate things more, especially the Editors getting out the papers and the good writings.

I hope I'm not late with my renewal. I am so forgetful. Excuse the bad writing and the mistakes.

Humbly,
Narcissus J. Barbow

It is a difficult thing for us to keep the doctrines of the gospel always in view; and harder still to make use of them, and live up to them, when we want them most.

Gill

Route 4, Box 21A
Winnsboro, TX 75494

"WHO THEN CAN BE SAVED?"

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." Matthew 19:23-26. The above scripture is also recorded in Mark 10:23-27. Luke 18:25-27.

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Job were all blessed with an abundance of material riches. No wonder the disciples of Christ asked, "Who then can be saved?" However, the love of the patriarchs and Job settled not upon the riches, but upon their source: God, from whom all blessings flow. It is therefore not riches, but the love of them which is the root of all evil. Some men who have riches have used them for the cause of truth and show fruits of being born of the Spirit of God, viewing their riches strictly as a gift of God and are thankful unto Him for them. Other men in selfish love cling to their riches and these will never enter into the kingdom unless given a new heart with a new love.

There appears in this scripture a deeper spiritual meaning beyond the natural one. The spiritual meaning seems to be refering to such as are rich in their own opinion, rich in self-righteousness, self wisdom, creature strength feeling to stand in need of nothing as to their eternal salvation. They knoweth not that they are wretched and miserable, poor, blind and naked. "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life and few there be that find it." Matthew 7:14. Strait means tight, close, limited in space and restricted. A person who is wearing a robe of self-righteousness, a robe of creature wisdom, a robe of creature strength and all the other robes of the carnal flesh cannot enter in through this strait gate. Before entering we must by the Spirit of God be stripped of all our fleshly filthy rags as conversion and regeneration must take place before entering through this gate. It is impossible for man to come here under his own strength. He must be drawn by the Holy Spirit, for this is the way to Christ and "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." To come out of a state of being dead in trespasses and sins, into a state of grace we must be quickened and drawn. There must be a new heart, and a new spirit, and old things must pass away. You must come in as a little child. The gate is strait and the way is narrow and leads through a wilderness. This involves enduring many trials and tribulations, hardships and difficulties yet one hour in heaven will more than compensate for forty years in the wilderness.

"Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, ana said unto them, with man this is impossible; but with God all things are possible." Let us view three examples of how God manifested that all things are possible through Him. First: David going against the giant Goliath, a Philistine. "And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for thou art but a youth, and he is a man of war from his youth." 1st Samuel 17:33. David related to Saul the times that God had delivered him from the paw of a lion and the paw of a bear and said, "He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine." 1st Samuel 17:37. King Saul armed David with his own armour but David could not use Saul's armour. The apostle Paul likens the pathway of a child of God to a wrestling match. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against rulers of the darkness of

this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Ephesians 6:12. He also likens this to a battle and a footrace: but we must use the armour that God has given each of us. We cannot fight with another man's armour. Wherefore "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand against the wiles of the devil." Ephesians 6:11. If we read the seventeenth chapter of 1st Samuel, we find how David slew the giant after taking his sling and five smooth stones. David said, "I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts: This day will the Lord deliver thee into my hand." 1st Samuel 17:45, 46. With David this would have been impossible, but with God all things are possible.

Another example is when Daniel was cast into the den of lions. This act under normal conditions would have meant sudden death, but as king Darius spoke and said unto Daniel, "Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee." Daniel 6:16. The next morning when the king spoke to Daniel while still in the lion's den, Daniel said, "My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions mouths, that they have not hurt me." Daniel 6:22. With Daniel this would have been impossible. "But not with God: for with God all things are possible."

The third example is found in Daniel 3:20. "And Nebuchadnezzar commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrack, Meshack, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace." The furnace was made so exceedingly hot that the flame and intense heat slew those men who threw them in. The king said, "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." Daniel 3:24, 25. When the three men were called forth by the king, it was found that "the fire had no power, nor was a hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor smell of fire had passed on them." Daniel 3:27. "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Why is it so impossible with man? Scripture tells us in Romans 5:12 "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." What was the consequence of this original sin of our first parents? Alienation from God. A breach was made so wide and so deep that no man can pass over it. Adam fell not alone as a single solitary individual, for the whole human race was in his loins and fell with him. We read in the scriptures that Adam "begat a son in his own image, after his own likeness." All beget after their kind, and a sinner begets a sinner. Job asked "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" No one, for "a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit." Matthew 7:17. Thus we are born into this world alienated from the image and likeness of God, and this alienation is our birthright, our miserable inheritance. Being alienated from God, we are alienated from all spiritual things, spiritual knowledge, fear, faith, love, and hope. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." I Corinthians 2:14. There can be no way to measure the depth of man's fall. Let us not think there is such a thing as a half or partial fall. The fall of Adam and his posterity was to the lowest depth of ruined human nature, for he lost the image of God and became a slave to Satan. "And you, that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works," Colossians 1:21. Man coming into this world is not only alienated and separated from God, but dead in trespasses and sins. How is he to be saved? If a person is dead how can he be a partaker to something he is dead to? If a person is dead in body void of natural life, how can he perform natural acts such as walking, talking, eating, or

drinking? We all know this is impossible. Though a person is alive naturally and may have much worldly wisdom, he is just as unable to perform in a spiritual sphere as a naturally dead man can perform in a natural sphere. "Who then can be saved?" "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." Jeremiah 13:23. For when "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Psalms 14:2, 3. "For there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good, and sinneth not." Ecclesiastes 7:20. God's holy and just law requires perfect obedience. What man can render this perfect obedience? "With man it is impossible." And it is written, "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things with are written in the book of the law to do them." Galatians 3:10. If man is dead in trespasses and sins, cursed by the law, standing under the wrath of God's justice, how can he be saved? "With man it is impossible." but thanks be unto Christ "all things are possible."

Regeneration is a necessity which must take place in fallen man if he is to be saved. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John 3:5. How can man give himself spiritual life or cause himself to be born again of the Spirit of God when he is completely void and dead to all spiritual acts? How can a man give himself natural life if he is dead and completely void of natural life? "With man it is impossible; but with God all things are possible." "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickened them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." John 5:21. If man is ever to be quickened the Lord, and the Lord alone, must do it through his Holy Spirit, for it is Christ that gives sight to the blind. "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God our Father. Galatians 1:4.

"Thou shall call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21. All that the Father chose and gave to his son from before the foundation of the world shall be saved in Christ Jesus, for it was for them and them alone that he came into the world. Therefore, "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isaiah 53:6. For all of the Adamic race are powerless and incapable to deliver themselves from the power of sin and Satan. If we are given by the grace of God to see our lost, ruined condition and our own inability to perform one good act, then we can say from the depth of our hearts, "with man it is impossible." Have we been blessed by the grace of God to experience this truth in our hearts? Have we been given Divine knowledge to know the necessity of being quickened by the Holy Spirit for a blessed hope of eternal salvation? Those whom the Spirit of God has not quickened and made alive to see their ruined lost condition will "know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness." Psalms 82:5. They do not feel themselves to be spiritually dead. They believe what the Devil said in the garden not what God said. God said, "in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shall surely die." The Devil said thou shall not surely die but your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. Most people seem to believe this lie today. They are not dead but alive to accept, reject, or whatever their wishes may be concerning their salvation. They are rich. "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God." Luke 18:24. A man's riches are his own self-righteousness which amounts to nothing. Yea, less than nothing. His old religion produces work and duties which are as filthy rags in God's sight. But this

"son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman" Galatians 4:30.

All of God's ways and all His dealings in the salvation of His people are impossible with man, everything that is done in the salvation of a sinner is done by the triune Godhead. It was God the Father who chose a people in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and placed their names in the Lamb's Book of Life. It was God the Son who fulfilled God's Just and Holy Law to a jot and tittle, satisfying justice and bringing in mercy. It was Christ who died upon the cross, pouring out his precious blood to redeem all those given him of the Father. It was Christ who rose again the third day and ascended up to heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father making daily intercessions for his people having completed the full work necessary for their eternal salvation. It was the Father who sent the Holy Spirit down to quicken those dead in trespasses and sins, chosen of the Father and redeemed by the Son. "And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever. But the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your rememberance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John 14:16, 26. It is the Holy Spirit and He alone who quickens God's people. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth: the flesh profiteth nothing." John 6:63. "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." Ephesians 2:1.

After being born of the Spirit of God and having his Divine Light to shine into your hearts, can you not say with Paul, "For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present within me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. Romans 7:18, with the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner", and with Isaiah, "Woe is me for I am undone." "I am a man of unclean lips." Can we obtain faith whenever we desire it? Can we cause our hope to flourish, our love to abound, pray with a good heart, or be a partaker of any of the fruits of the Spirit at our own desiring? No, it is beyond man's reach in and of himself. "With man it is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

In hope of mercy,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Fulton, Ky.

Dear Brother Williams,

Thank you so much for your nice letter and the happiness it brought me to know you will continue to send me the ***Signs of the Times.*** My father, John W. Moon, was a Primitive Baptist Preacher and he was a subscriber as long as he lived, and then our Mother continued to subscribe.

I will be 90 years old in August, and in a Nursing Home and can't go to church, and the ***Signs*** will be a great blessing to me. I love everything in it.

Truly,
Mrs. Lola Howard

Route 2, 312
Dittmer, Mo.

Dear Editors of the Signs,

I am sending my check for two more years subscription for the ***Signs of the Times.*** I notice it will expire next month. I enjoy reading the ***Signs*** very much. I feel it is a help to me and a great comfort. I am thankful to the Lord to be able to receive this wonderful paper. I still remember some of the things I read in the ***Signs*** when I was just a boy growing up. My Dad always received the ***Signs of the Times*** until he passed away in 1963. I have some of his copies that he sent me back in 1952 and 1953.

That was in his latter years. I remember reading the ***Signs*** in the 1920's and 1930's.

It seems like I have come to a place where life is more bitter than sweet to me anymore. I just don't hardly know what to do or which way to go to do anything about it. I don't know if anybody else feels that way or not. I seem to be troubled on all sides. I am a widower with five children in school yet. I sure do have my ups and downs, and it seems there are more downs than ups. I would appreciate any letters from any of you people there that might be of some help to me.

From your Brother in Christ, I hope,
Hugh C. Harwell

EDITORIAL

And now hath God set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased him (I Cor. 12:8).

I had been in a low state of mind, somewhat in a murmuring and complaining frame of mind. As I went about my morning tasks out of my melancholic meditations a voice spoke to me. While I do not claim to know anything as I ought, much less as I desire, yet I say with conviction that it was not in a faltering, listless, unconcerned voice, but a power that arrested my mind so that from then on I performed my work involentary, even as an automatan. In the outset, I confess to having used the wrong word for the most of people's set of religious principles, for they, so they say, have command of themselves, having a freewill and power to perform the will. I speak not derogatively alone of the world at large, for in the nominal household of faith there are many that do not know the difference between law and grace.

This voice does not have any counterpart on earth. He speaks from heaven about heavenly matters. It is the God of all grace, the One from everlasting to everlasting, the first and the last, that is the Creator of all things and the disposer of all that He created. This voice that spoke, and yet speaks, as man never has and never can speak, also now takes the things of Himself and declares and shows them unto us. My soul would mount up and praise His high and lofty name for bringing to me in my low state the things of Christ, that is, that He has done, and yet makes manifest, that the members are set (lithema) in the body as it pleases Him.

It is much too late for any fallen creature to participate in the setting of these members in the body. It is useless for any voice to speak about helping in this pleasant work. It was pleasant to Him to do the setting up in purpose of His body before fumbling man arrived on the scene. Paul declares by inspiration that it has been done before His day. In the glorious hymns or songs of Solomon we have a complete record of the house of the Lord. The house, the subjects of it, and an outline of the language and doings of those subjects or members, and in the manifestation of that body of the Lord in New Testament days, it is reckoned as already in existence, with every member of the body set in it according to the pleasure of God. He had, at the time of the apostle, already set every member in it according to His own will. In the time of Israel, and in the life of Samuel, the Lord had made with him an everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, a covenant set, established, and the outstanding feature of it was that it was not to grow from the time of its being made or ordered or set. In union with His divine purpose, every member of the mystical body of Christ was then there, set by divine decree. How mistaken we are when we limit God's predestination to the eighth chapter of Romans and the first chapter of Ephesians. The eternal fixedness of all things is written on

every page of the Bible, and the law of it is indelibly written in the hearts of believers in every age.

Paul assures us that God had, in his day, set every member in the body as it pleased Him. As already established, this setting of these members in the body is a sure work. In connection with this setting of these members in the body, there was not one set more than was pleasing to God; furthermore, there was not, nor never has been, any power but of God (Rom. 13:1), and not anything or anyone could keep the least one of the elect vessels of mercy from being set in this sacred body. He declared the end from the beginning (to put before) the things not yet done (how many things?), saying--now what did He declare? Did He declare that He would try to get His counsel to stand? Did He say that there were enemies that might complicate matters to where He might not have a perfect body?--no, no, not that. If the body of Christ was predicated on such a weak counsel as that, instead of writing to you about the sure mercies of God, I would be hustling around trying to get ahead of Satan and in the good graces of God so as to get set in His body. Furthermore, not only has God declared the end from the beginning, but He has done whatsoever hath pleased Him (Psa. 115:3). He was pleased when He set the members in the body, and since he does not change, He is still pleased with His work, and the love that was set or fixed upon His people in Christ before times curtains were let down. How precious is the setting by God of each member in the body before the world. Thus, may God give us to speak a wholesome gospel, even to assign us a hiding place, a place for the setting of us in Him before time. Regardless of who carps about this sure assignment, this sure setting, it is the foundation, the backbone of the child of God. How uniform this setting of every member in the body becomes as we are led to reap the benefits of this glorious work. It is perfect, it is fitting, it takes care of the functioning of the whole body, and that body, from the least member, to the most needed and useful, is in lofty praise to Him that gave each their assignment in the body.

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant." The apostle is writing as he was inspired. He would not have these members to be ignorant. We must remember that this is inspired man, writing to the body of Christ, those who are members in particular. Is it presumed by men that inferior members are set in the body? Are we supposed to believe that He set them in the body as it pleased Him, and are we supposed to believe that he does in heaven and earth what pleases Him, and then have to fall back on the man created doctrine that He set inferior members in the body? No, they were, and are, all perfect members in Christ. Those Corinthians, as all other Gentiles, were unbelievers in themselves, and all carried away with dumb idols. It is utterly impossible to visualize men and women of Adam's race as able to say that Jesus is the Lord, save by the Holy Ghost. Solomon tells us in no uncertain terms that "as we do not have power over death, neither do we have any power to retain the spirit (Eccl. 8:8)". The issue is closed. There is not anything else to be said--the thing being born is entirely passive in getting into the kingdom of heaven--in fact, they were not contributing factors in getting into it, for they were born of the Spirit, delivered by the Spirit, have their beings, and every movement, yea, their living in Him, is altogether of God. Our text is based on the sovereign work of God. Every gift that is acceptable is from above; from God.

As far as I am aware, no genuine taught child of God has advocated that all of these members are gifted alike. In the first place, the members are not set in the body and cast on their own resources to become deacons or ministers, or this or that or the other.

The members in the body are not of One, and the gifts of those members something that they decide on and prepare themselves for. Again, all the gifts, callings are of God that repenteth not, changes not, is not on an uncharted sea or course in the wilderness. Rest assured that there is a diversity of gifts. Rest assured that they all were given by the Spirit of God. To those thus taught of God, they are resting in the finished work of the Three-in-One God, that is perfect in all of His ways. They fret in their flesh; they worry in times of adversity, but I have something precious to tell you--in the day of prosperity rejoice, in the day of adversity consider. Consider what? Ah, consider Job, and every other troubled sinner: stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God (Job 37:14), and may it ever please Him to keep us reminded that we receive both adversity and prosperity from the hands of our heavenly Father (Job 2:10).

Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. How foolish and absurd it is to attribute these gifts as being products of the earth, of the flesh, of the hard and stony heart, and equally so is it foolish and absurd for us to say the works of the flesh come from the fountain that flows sweet water. May the Lord bless us to discern the difference between the things of the flesh and the things of the Spirit. The diversity in the gifts of God is equally as broad and complete in Him, as are the diversities in the works of the flesh; however, one set of gifts is from above, the other comes from below; one set is good and perfect, the other is sensual, earthly, fleshly.

For the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the self same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

It is not any wonder that the Queen of Sheba was charmed by the house of Solomon. It is a house of precision with everything in its place, and a place for everything. It is a house of consistency; it is a house wherein the silken tapestry does not have any dropped stitches and every board is in place (Exo. 36:30, 34) And here we see displayed to our astonished gaze every gift displayed by James (James 1:17), and each set member in the body with such a fulness in the Spirit that are displayed to our enraptured mind the true pearls of service displayed by the glorious liberty in the Spirit.

The meat on the table (I Kings 1:5; Pro. 9:2, 5), the sitting of each servant and member, the attendance of the ministers and their apparel (garments of salvation) and especially that they are all reaching upwards, going up to and in the building of the Lord, each serving according to their own gift, and the desire to go up to His house, and desiring to walk in His statutes and commandments; here is the most beautiful building, the most glorious site wherein Zion is builded (Psa. 4:1, 2).

"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jew or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink in one Spirit for the body is not one member, but many."

Here is a description of the functioning of the church of Christ which is His body. May God enable us to

ever retain this glorious picture of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ in action. If so, we will ever be free from idolatrous practices. It is the body of Christ; if we have relationship, any connection, any part in the service of our Lord and Saviour, certainly, for it to be approved, it will have to be authorized, and us enabled to walk in the precepts and examples by the Spirit of our Head and Husband; for if we are members, we are set in His body according to His will and pleasure, and if his work in establishing us in the body is not satisfactory to Him, me thinks that He does not get pleasure out of the setting of us in Him.

How blessed indeed is that nation whose God is the Lord, who has taught them that their union with Him, their dwelling in the body with fellow members, is the most wonderful work that has ever united the voices of Jews and Gentiles, of the bond and the free, in hymns of praise and adoration to His great name. And I tell you fearlessly that a realization of our weakness and sinfulness, proneness to do evil, would not cause brethren to be attacking brethren from afar, they would not be sold on themselves and their ability to destroy the usefulness of brethren nor to pull down periodicals or faithful work of many days and years. Rather, every member set in this body of Christ would be constantly inquiring as to whether they themselves were in the body or not. It is a strange matter that those who were set in this royal body of believers, and confess their dependence on the being preserved in Christ Jesus by the mercy of God, can forget from whence they are digged and hewn, and suddenly turn on fellow members and seek their destruction. Without fear of contradiction I say boldly and unabashed, and that without reservation, that one who is conscious of having been set in the body of Christ will not do that way.

There are poor afflicted club footed members, there are those without an eye, or even with either eye, there are those who cannot hear, would you, if you were in that condition physically, how would you like it for those that are not thus afflicted to destroy you because of your handicap? Come on now, for you know that I have your number, and you also know that I am writing to the right number. Just because that you are sold on the idea that you have stood, and still able to stand (I Cor. 10:12) for the sake of Zion, do not force your way on the poor, the weak, the helpless.

Now a word in general to our dear people. As given grace let us sue at the throne of grace that the Lord send forth laborers into the field, but should it be His will to leave us destitute in this way, let us still abide and wait His turning and coming and tarrying. Remember that He that set us, as we hope, in the body, even His body, will not, nor cannot, deny Himself, and that He will come again with quickening and energizing power and will undertake for you, His body, ever keeping in mind that not only has He set every member in His body as it has pleased Him; that He hath done whatsoever he hath pleased (Psa. 115:3). May God bless us to tarry at the mercy seat in prayer and in thanksgiving--in thanksgiving that He has set every member in His body, and that every visit to us in this low estate is by set times; that He has set these times according to His eternal purpose which He purposes in Himself in eternity.

W.D.G.

Crandall, Georgia

Dear Brother Williams,

I see that it is time to renew my subscription to the ***Signs of the Times.*** I have enclosed a check to renew it for another year.

I have been taking the ***Signs*** for two years and I have enjoyed it greatly. It is worthwhile literature for God's people,

and there is so little of that in this day and age. Of course, I understand that the Scriptures are sufficient in every way and for every need of God's little children, but I believe that such papers as the ***Signs*** are also profitable for God's little flock to comfort one another and to be comforted by His ministering servants - especially for those who by reason of infirmity or age are no longer able to attend meetings as they once did.

May God bless your efforts to continue to publish the truth in the ***Signs***. Thank you for your kind attention.

Your little brother in hope,
J. L. Herr

FROM LOUISIANA

Ruston, La.

Dear Editors,

I am sorry to be late with my renewal subscription, but I am away so much and I just overlooked the expiration date.

I enjoy the ***Signs*** and look forward to reading each number. Please find a check enclosed for a renewal. Keep up your good work. It is so soothing to read and feel to have a part of the experience similar to our dear writers.

In Hope,
Rosa R. Patterson

Palmer, Texas

Dear Editors, and dear people in Christ,

Enclosed is a check to renew the ***Signs of the Times*** for two more years, and use the balance as you see fit.

My wife and I enjoy the paper very much. We have been reading it for some time, and we want it to continue on. May our heavenly Father continue to uphold you all with the power of His love and mercy.

A Brother in Hope,
A. B. Hones

Williamstown, Kansas
Jan. 28, 1952

Dear Brother Winfrey:

I am writing you my views on the absolute predestination of all things.

We are living in an evil age and a terribly disrupted world. Wars and rumors of more wars. Blood shed and all manner of debauchery, graft, and corruption is being practiced on every hand from our highest public officials and down to men and women of low rank. Truly it was foretold in the Scripture, — "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse deceiving and being deceived." And again, "Now the spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter day perilous times shall come." One need not be a sage to see the development of these divine prophesies. Recently the doctrine of God's absolute Predestination has been assailed. And having a faint hope that God has placed me as a watchman upon the walls of Zion, I feel it is my duty to at least sound a warning and to offer what defense God will enable me to render. I feel it is no small matter when God's wisdom and power are assailed for these are some of the very attributes of God.

His very name, "God Almighty" implies there is no power but of God, and I find this agreeable to Scripture testimony, to wit: "There is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God." I can find no exception to this divine expression. Therefore the influence of these powers, whether it be for good or evil, it is irrefutable, they were ordained of God. But though evil is everywhere extant there is no danger that it will ever get beyond the control of God who ordained it. These ordained powers are limited while the power of God knows no limit. Thus He has ordained that "The wrath of man shall praise Him and the remainder of wrath thou shalt restrain." Just why one should doubt or deny the absolute government of God is beyond me. Indeed, one cannot deny this without

acknowledging another power somewhere that controls that part that is not controlled of God, or else to say a certain part just goes at random, which, of course, would be the height of absurdity; or to say God has a superior rival. I would say Superior rival from the fact there is a great deal more wickedness extant in the world than there is good. Therefore, this fancied power, whatever or wherever it may be has great superiority over God Almighty. This idea is no less absurd than the other and it is easily defeated by a thus saith the Lord. "I am God, and besides me there is none else, I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." "Yea, thou art worthy, oh Lord, to receive glory and honor and power for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created." Who would dare make the claim that these things, or any of these which are and which were created for His pleasure should react to the contrary.

Satan, the serpent, is a conspicious element in God's creation. God endowed him with a power and subtility such as none of the beasts of the field possessed. He was ordained to perform his work which none other could perform and all of his devilish work from Eden down through the ages responded to the eternal purpose for which he was created. Through his influence, man sinned, but consider well. Was this a sign of laxity in the government of God; Was it the part of wisdom or lack of wisdom on the part of God when He placed these elements all in the garden of Eden; Did the serpent sneak in unawares to God; Was God disappointed in the outcome of this venture; If so, then we must yield the point and confess that God is not absolute. We must confess that matters begin to go awry right from the start and that God had created a something that he could not control.

Such a conclusion is worse than folly. God is absolute. His purposes are laid deep in divine wisdom. The devil and all his creation cannot thwart Him in one of His purposes. He created the devil and He created man and made him susceptible to the wiles of the devil that in the end Jesus should be glorified in saving His people from their sins. To say that man, or Adam, was made able to stand but liable to fall would be equal in substance that God willed that he should stand but the devil overruled Him in that purpose. Why did the law enter; Does this betray a lack of foresight in God: Was it not that the offense might abound? And why should the offense abound only for the paving the way for the operation of sovereign grace. It is written, "The law entered that the offense might abound but where sin abounded grace did much more abound." It is therefore quite evident that God had a purpose even in the entrance of sin into the world. How could Jesus have been glorified otherwise? One might inquire, Why did God create an evil nation. Was it not that His power over evil should be made manifest? His decree to Abraham was that his seed should serve an evil nation 400 years. Their bondage was timed, I should dare say, to the very momemt when they should be liberated. Was this Predestination? What power but that of God was at the controls in this affair. It was no accident that the seed of Abraham came down to this evil nation, for inasmuch as God had decreed it everything else must of necessity work in harmony with that decree. It necessitated suffering on the part of Israel to bring them to this evil nation but their deliverance was also predestinated just as surely as their bondage.

The arrangement for their sustenance while they were there was also fixed and this involved suffering on the part of

Joseph. It was not a voluntary act of Joseph that he dreamed dreams that caused his brethren to hate him. But as a brilliant type of Jesus they hated him without a cause. They abused him and they meant it for evil but God meant it for good. Why did God harden Pharaoh's heart repeatedly and effect his final destruction in the Red Sea? God, Himself, gives the answer: "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up that I might show My power in thee and that My name might be declared throughout all the earth." Israel could not come forth until their bondage was complete. They were a long time in bondage but God is not slack concerning His promise; 400 years and after that they shall come out with great substance. "To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven."

Why did not David allow his servant to slay Shimei as he cast stones at David and cursed him as he went along? David said let him alone. God hath commanded him to curse. Should one question the justice of God in this and similar acts? God is absolute. His decree and His government, His predestination and indeed, all the attributes of God are absolute. He governs the movements of all His creatures yet He Himself is above reproach. All creation is His and He holds the undisputed right to use His creatures and dispose of them in any way as it may seem good unto Him.

Why should anyone heap this indignity on His pure and holy name by saying, "If you say that God predestinated the evil acts of man you make Him the author of sin." Since God is under no law by what law can He be judged and tried? By the law, no man, of course. But this verdict will not stand in the court of divine justice. He has declared, "I am the Lord. That is My name and I will not give My glory to another, neither My praise to graven images." God has reserved unto Himself the right to do His will and this He doeth "In the armies of heaven and amongst the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay His hand or say unto Him, what doest Thou?" "Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor." "What if God willing to show His wrath and make His power known endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction or that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy which He afore prepared unto glory;" What if God does this? Must His divine wisdom suffer impeachment in the laws of puny man?

It cannot be questioned but that God could have softened the heart of Pharoah just as well as to have hardened it if that had been agreeable to His will. But it pleased Him to harden his heart because His decree must be fulfilled. Some will say God is unjust if He has not given every one an equal chance to be saved. But the Scripture answers this contention: "Nay but oh man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, Why hast Thou made me thus?" God has declared "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and whom I will I hardeneth." Does this make God the author of sin? The deeds of a man do not make him either good or bad but they reveal the true character of the man. His deeds are commensurate with his nature whether they be good or evil. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Jacob and Esau, which is Israel and Edom, God loved and hated respectively before they were born. Thus it cannot be established that their works were a factor in shaping their final destiny. Their destinies were sealed before they were born," neither having done any good or evil that the purpose of God according to election might stand. It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger." The purpose of God in this as in all cases is preeminent. No power but of God was employed in

shaping this allegory. So may I repeat, their works are merely commensurate with the nature God has given them.

Now to the climax of the whole story culminating in the crucifixion of our Lord. God has said "Awake oh sword against My shepherd. Against the man that is my fellow. Smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered and I will turn My hand upon the little ones." The wicked are designated as His sword. Hence the wicked come and go at His command and are made just as subservient to the will of God as the weakest saint. So in response to this divine command, wicked men led Jesus as a lamb to the slaughter. Hence it is recorded: "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God Ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." And again, "For as a truth against thy Holy child Jesus whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the people of Israel were gathered together for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. They could do no more and they could do no less, for in the words of Jesus, "How could the Scripture be fulfilled, that thus it must be."

Thus we see a glorious triumph for the complete Absolute Predestination of God, overruling the powers of darkness to His glory and ultimate salvation of all His elect people. Jesus died but it was not possible that He should be holden of death. He is risen from the dead, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who through the fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage. He thus addressed His elect, saying, "I am He that was dead but behold I am alive forevermore and because I live ye shall live, also." So to the wicked all down the line it may be said as it was said to Pharaoh: "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up that I might show My power in thee and that My name might be declared throughout all the earth." Christ crucified is our theme. Nothing but the blood of Jesus can do helpless sinners any good.

I have by no means exhausted the great array of testimony relating to the Absolute Predestination of all things, but this may suffice for the time being. Thanks be unto God "who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."

L. L. Schenck

Mayfield, Ky.

To the Editors of the Signs of the Times,

If my memory is right my time was out last November, but I am still getting the paper and I sure do enjoy reading it. I do not get to go to Church to hear what I believe in, and my hearing is so weak I seldom hear any thing but the singing.

I was born December 27, 1894, so I am going on my 86th year, if the dear Lord sees fit for me to live the year out. The way my health is, I doubt if you will ever be able to read my handwriting.

I am enclosing money to finish up 1980 and go into 1981, if I live that long. Do as you see best with the rest.

If the Old Baptist is not right then I am surely lost. The older I get the plainer they are to me, if a child of grace at all. The Bible and the ***Signs of the Times*** tells of my hope.

Farewell,
Acton Perkins

Selma, Alabama

Dear Elder Williams,

I am enclosing a check for my subscription to the ***Signs of the Times,*** enough to pay for the past due and also some future. I'll try not to let it get behind again.

Also, if you would care to print this, it might be of help to someone who has

Star City, Arkansas

Dear Editors,

I am sending my renewal to the ***Signs.*** I am sorry I am a bit late. Please renew it for one year and use the extra as you see fit.

At times the way seems very dark, but it is all in God's hands. May we be reconciled to His will, for His will shall be done, on earth as it is in Heaven.

May He keep us in that strait and narrow way.

In bonds of love, I hope,
Mrs. Havis Donaldson

Salem, Virginia

Dear Editors of the Signs,

I am sorry I am late on renewing my subscription. I want to renew my subscription for two years. I am sending a money order and hope this will take care of this.

I enjoy reading the ***Signs*** and hope the Lord will bless you to continue to publish the ***Signs*** for many years to come.

Mrs. Dorothy Craighead

SELECTED FROM AN OLD GOSPEL STANDARD

INQUIRY

Dear Sir, - Will you have the kindness to give your opinion on the following questions: Is it strictly in accordance with the rules given by Christ and his apostles to suspend any member of a Christian church for immoral conduct? If so, should it be for a given time, say 10 to 12 months, just as the church might think proper to decide? Or should suspension be until the disorderly member makes confession of his faults and repents of such conduct? Would the church do right in then permitting him to fill up his place in the church as before? Or would it be more proper, or consistent with church discipline, not to hear any confession, nor yet to receive such member until the expiration of the time for which such member has been suspended?

By giving through the "Gospel Standard" your opinion, you will greatly oblige.

A Constant Reader

ANSWER

As four or five distinct questions are here asked, thought they have all a bearing on each other, we shall endeavour, according to the ability which may be given us, to answer them separately.

1. "Is it strictly in accordance with the rules given by Christ and his apostles, to suspend any member of a Christian church for immoral conduct?"

A Christian church has undoubtedly a right to separate or suspend any member for immoral conduct. The church at Corinth, for instance, was expressly commanded by Paul, "to put away from among them"--that is, separate from their body, "that wicked person", who had taken his father's wife. (I Cor. 5:13). And that the whole church took part in it, is plain from the words, "Sufficient for such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many", that is, it was not inflicted upon the offender by the authority of a few in the church, whether deacons, or leading men, but by the "many", in their corporate capacity as a church. But upon the man's sorrow and repentance, which had come to Paul's ears, they were bidden to forgive and comfort him. (2 Cor. 2:7) From this we clearly gather the power of a church to restore a member as well as separate him. Thus, also, the apostle speaks: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. (Gal. 6:1) These, then, are general principles, from

which may be drawn particular rules for our guidance; for here, as elsewhere, the Scripture gives us only general principles, leaving us at liberty to deduce rules from them. But these two rules are subject to these two restrictions:

1. They must be fully in harmony with these general principles; and 2, they must be thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the gospel.

Now applying these general principles to the other questions before us, let us seek to answer them scripturally.

2. Separation, the severer punishment, implies suspension, the minor, on this simple ground, that the same legislature which has authority to punish a heinous crime, say murder, with death, has authority to punish a less crime, say robbery, with imprisonment. We therefore fairly assume that a church has power to suspend a member for inconsistent conduct, as well as "put him away", that is, separate him, though the Scripture does not expressly name suspension as a church punishment, or give us an instance of it.

But now the question arises. Should this suspension be definite or indefinite--that is, for a fixed time, or until the disorderly member be brought to repentance and confession? We certainly think it should be for a fixed, definite period; for suspension is a "punishment" as well as a "censure" (2 Cor. 2:6, text and margin;) and on the same principle that the judge sentences the convicted criminal to a fixed period of imprisonment, so should the church define the time of the suspension. This view, then, of the case, if correct will furnish the answer to the next question.

3. "Would the church do right in permitting the member to fill up the place as before, if he repent and make confession before the time fixed is expired?" To this we answer, that no rules can be laid down to meet extreme cases. The suspended member might be "swallowed up with over much sorrow", as was the case with the member at Corinth; (2 Cor. 2:7) and the church, feeling for his distress and trouble, might wish to restore him, as a brotherly act, before the time was fully elapsed. None could blame this act of brotherly sympathy and love, for it would be carrying out the spirit of the gospel even at the expense of strict church discipline. But such cases would be rare, and can only be met as they occur. It would be better, therefore, in our judgment, in all but this extreme instance, to let the original sentence remain until the time be fully expired, and that for the following reasons.

Church censures are painful things, and they are meant to be painful things; they are punishments, and are intended as punishments. They should therefore be well weighed before administered; but when once determined on, they should remain unaltered. It is good for the suspended member that he should feel the guilt of his sin, and the weight of his punishment. Let him see and feel what an evil and bitter thing it is to sin against the Lord, and that the church is determined to mark its sense of inconsistent conduct, and not dally or trifle with the honour and glory of God. It is besides good for the church itself, as a warning to all the other members, to let them see there is a weight in church censures, and that they are not lightly to be repealed. It is good for the congregation which will thus see that the church does not wink at sin, which it might readily suppose was the case if almost as soon as a punishment was inflicted, it was removed. No; let all see that the church does not think lightly of sin, but observes a strict impartiality in censuring and punishing it.

It is so generally understood that the member should, before his restoration, acknowledge his sin before the church, that we need not enter upon that point. The Lord keep us from ever incurring church censures, or bringing any reproach on his holy and blessed name.

March 1, 1864

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BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Pittmans Grove, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in November, 1980. (November 29 and 30)

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and worship with us.

The Lord hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death. (Ps. 118:18)

HOPEWELL ASSOCIATION

The Hopewell Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Salem Church the third Sunday in October, Friday and Saturday before (Oct. 17, 18, 19, 1980).

Directions are as follow: From U.S. Highway 82 east of Gordo, Alabama (just inside Police Jurisdiction), turn south on Pickens County Road 86. Travel approximately 4 miles and turn left onto gravel road. Go approximately 2 miles to church which is located on right side of road. Signs will be posted.

Elder A. H. Brock
13 Bariwood
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35406

KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Two Hundred Fifteenth annual session of the Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association is to be held, the Lord willing, at Smithwick Creek Church, Martin County, North Carolina, the first Sunday in October, Saturday before and Monday following (October 4, 5, 6, 1980). The church is located at the intersection of SR No. 1106 and SR No. 1516, Martin County, North Carolina. Those coming from the north traveling U.S. 17 & 13 to Williamston, N.C., turn left on U.S. 17; travel seven and one-half miles to Corys Cross Road (SR No. 1106); turn left on SR No. 1106 and go two and nine-tenths miles to Church. Those coming from the west traveling U.S. 64 & 13 to Williamston, N.C., turn right on U.S. 17 South, travel seven and one-half miles to Corys Cross Road (SR No. 1106) turn left on SR No. 1106; go two and nine-tenth miles to Church. Coming from the south and east traveling U.S. 17 to Washington, N.C., continue on U.S. 17 north fifteen and one-half miles to Corys Cross Road (SR No. 1106) turn right, two and nine-tenths miles to church.

All the brethren on the same faith and order, who are in peace at home are invited to meet with us. All friends who love the Truth of salvation of Grace and Grace alone we extend to you an invitation to come and be with us.

Elder Marvin E. Garner
Association Clerk

much she was loved. She will be missed not only by her family, but by those of us who loved her in the Spirit of the Lord.

She is at peace resting in the arms of Jesus waiting for the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Resolved: A copy of these resolutions be sent to the family; a copy to the ***Signs of the Times,*** and a copy for the Church records. Done in conference on June 7, 1980.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

IN MEMORIAM

Since our last report our Heavenly Father has called from this life of sin and sorrow seven of our beloved members.

So be it resolved that we the members of Dan River Church hold in sacred memory our dear beloved ones that have departed this life and have shown by their walk and testimony that they sought that city whose Builder and Maker is God, therefore we bow in humble submission to His Divine will, thanking Him for these gifts which have so enriched our lives and inspired us to press onward to the mark of the prize of the high calling as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We pray that our Heavenly Father will be with the families of each departed member. May His richest blessings ever be with them who so keenly miss their departed, and they grieve not as them that have no hope, but look unto Him who by His grace is able to reconcile them to His eternal will.

The deceased are:

Sister Delia Phillips 10/17/78
Brother James P. Carter 3/3/79
Sister Nannie Vipperman 3/27/79
Sister Viola Walker 4/30/79
Brother Harley C. Woods 10/3/79
Brother Percy M. Strader 10/20/79
Sister Beaulah Weatherford 4/3/80

Be it resolved that a copy be sent to the ***Signs of the Times*** for publication, and a copy be retained for Church records.

Written by order of the church at our conference meeting May 24, 1980.

Written by:
Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Brother Boyd Minter, Clerk
Brother Harold Weatherford, Deacon

Stockdale, Texas
August 2, 1975

Dear Brethern and Sisters of the Pleasant Valley Association:

I'm so sorry I can't be with you for this meeting, but I know it is the best for you - I am just a blot on the scene when there. I have been blessed far beyond what I deserve to attend every session since it was first constituted. Please accept this small check and use it as you need it. Remember me in your prayers and come to see me and visit our little church when you can. May the dear Lord bless and keep everyone of you. We are all in His care. now and always.

Lela Culpepper

Note: This is the last letter Sister Culpepper wrote to church people.

SISTER LELA MYRTLE CULPEPPER

Our beloved mother in Israel, Sister Lela Myrtle Culpepper passed away at age of 88 years on October 1, 1975 at the Stockdale Nursing home. Sister Culpepper was born April 6, 1887 at Martindale, Texas to William Lafayette and Martha S. (Dykes) Hawk. Sister Lela married Mathew John Culpepper at her home in Lockhart, Texas on December 19, 1908. He preceded her in death (March 19, 1959). To this union were born nine children of which a daughter, Norma Fay and two sons, Winston A. and Francis G. preceded them in death. The other children were three sons Ira Lee of Pleasanton, Nebraska; Matthew Vernon of San Antonio, Texas; and James Lloyd of Refugion, Texas and three daughters: Mrs. Roy Ermine Meek of Houston, Texas; Mrs. Nina Luker of Pharr, Texas; and Mrs. Malcoln (Joy) Welch of Pharr, Texas. Sister Culpepper had 20 surviving grandchildren, 30 great grandchildren, one brother (Murphy Hawk of Stockdale), three sisters Mrs. V. O. (Edna) Hatcher of Abiline, Texas; Mrs. William H. (Nan) Milligan of Cuero, Texas; and Mrs Virgie Roberson of Stockdale, and many nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Sister Culpeppers funeral was conducted by her co-pastors Elders W. M. Burkhalter and G. D. Shipman and was buried in the Stockdale City Cemetery beside her husband.

Sister Lela Culpepper joined the Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church at Martindale, Texas in April 1912 and was baptized by the late Elder J. B. Bowden. In March 1921, transferred her membership to the Mt. Olive Church. This dear Sister was a member of the Primitive Baptist church for over 63 years. Sister Lela became clerk of the church in April 1925 and served in this position until her death which was over fifty years. Mt. Olive Church services were held in her home for many of these years.

This lovely sister saw many times the high of Zion when blessed with the Spirit of God and also, saw the gloom of despair when down in the valley but even then trusted only in the great God of Israel. This dear one wrote many obituaries, church letters to the association, and several letters to the ***Signs of the Times.*** Her experience was published in the ***Signs.*** Her many kind and thoughtful words and letters has lifted me (G. D. Shipman) from the depth of despair. This mother in Israel entertained many of the Primitive Baptist people in her home which was always open to any wayfaring stranger who believed in Salvation by Grace. Her greatest joy was attending church services and always attended her association except for the last one before her death which she wrote a special letter to the brethern attending the association expressing her grief in not being able to attend. Her heart was very sad when she was no longer able to maintain her home because of the fact she could not entertain the Old School Baptists there.

Sister Culpepper believed in a God of love who had all power in Heaven and on the earth and a God who asked no one for advice. She loved the singing of the Old Baptist Hymns and the preaching of salvation by Grace. How sweet the name of Jesus was to this dear sweet sister. This writer can not express in words what this dear one meant to him and others who knew her. Yes, she has been missed and will continue to be but our loss is her gain. Our hope is to meet her on that great day when Jesus shall come to claim His bride. Yes, she surely believed in the resurrection of the dead and her hope was to be one of them which were given to Jesus in covenant before the world was.

Written by one who loved her,
Elder Gerald D. Shipman

SISTER JOSIE ISABELL PITTS

Sister Josie Isabell Pitts, age 77, passed away Saturday, February 2, 1980, at the Lamar County General Hospital in Vernon, Alabama. Funeral services were held at Macedonia Primitive Baptist Church with burial in the adjoining cemetery. Officiating ministers were Elder Eulie McCool, Elder W. D. Griffin, and Mr. Bob Spiegel.

She was a dear sister and sweet mother. She left four sons and three daughters.

She believed in the only true and living God, the Father, and that God chose His people in Christ before the foundation of the world. She believed, "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling; not according to our own works but according to his purpose and grace which were given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." "Whom he did predestinate them he also called, and whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified."

Written by her daughter

SISTER
NANNIE BELLE DAVIS PARSON

Sister Nannie Belle Davis Parson died in the Roman Eagle Nursing Home on March 23, 1980, at the age of 101.

She was married to James Allen Parson who died April 4, 1960.

She joined the Danville Primitive Baptist Church the fifth Sunday in September, 1918, and was baptized by Elder J. F. Spangler. She was faithful to the church and attended regularly until she was prevented by ill health. She never lost patience in all of her afflictions. She enjoyed the sweet fellowship of the people from the church, and loved to talk of how good God had been to her. So often she would raise her right hand, look up and say, "I do not pray to die, but I am ready any time it is the Lord's will to call me". I truly feel that she could say, "Come welcome death, I will gladly go with thee".

Her funeral was conducted at Swicegood Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder H. W. Wray, whom she dearly loved. Her body was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park, Danville, Virginia.

Written by one who loved her,
Nettie Rice
Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator

SISTER NELLIE TART

Sister Nellie May Tart was born April 28, 1905, to Jessie Martin Tart and Kizzie Barefoot who lived in Harnett County. She has three sisters living and two brothers who are dead.

On November 9, 1924, she was married to Z. M. (Mac) Tart. To this union was born three daughters, Willa May Tart, Sarah Autry, and Barbara Tart; two sons, Rayvon and Sherwood Tart, and one son is deceased, Robert Leon Tart.

Sister Tart joined Liberty Church in June, 1963. She was a faithful member as long as she was able to go. God called her from our midst on March 19, 1980. Our lost is her eternal gain. Funeral services were conducted in Roses Funeral Chapel by Elder C. D. Turner, Elder T. Allen Johnson, and Mr. Jim Bost. She was laid to rest under a beautiful mound of flowers.

Committee:
Brother James Young
Sister Bessie Hall
Sister Dorothy Barefoot

BROTHER CLYDE BANKS ROGERS

Brother Clyde Banks Rogers, who was born to Cary R. Rogers and Edna Berry Rogers in Person County on July 20, 1900, departed this life on February 25, 1980. He was married to Myrtle Blaylock on January 31, 1932, and to this union were born four children, Curtis, Carl, Richard, and Mrs. Edith Pelmon, all of which survive along with seven grandchildren.

Brother Rogers ran a general merchandise store which caused him to move to Yanceyville, N.C., in Caswell County. He served as County Commissioner for ten years. He was well esteemed in Yanceyville and throughout the counties of Person and Caswell.

Brother Clyde and his wife attended Primitive Baptist Churches for many years and seldom missed a meeting at Moons Creek Primitive Baptist Church. He spoke of the burden he had for so long while talking to the Church, and what he said caused us to feel he was a true believer in salvation by grace and grace alone. Sister Nellie Key, our Pastor's wife, burst into tears, and I believe they were of joy at his coming. He was recieved into the church and arrangements were made for his baptism at Greensboro Church pool.

When we gathered for the baptism his wife, Myrtle Rogers, came forth and said she loved the church and its members and desired a home there. She had shown her faith by her works. She had invited the members of Moons Creek Church to her home for meals with her, and for singings. They were both baptized at the same time and always occupied their usual seats in the church until Brother Roger's health failed him and he was unable to attend. He was sick several years, and eventually he had to be put in Evergreen Nursing Home. All that loving hands could do had been done by his wife and children. He enjoyed the members of not only Moons Creek, but other churches visiting him, along with his Pastor, Elder Kenneth Key, who was a frequent visitor. who was a frequent visitor.

Brother Clyde and his wife supported Moons Creek Church, and helped with the cleaning of the church and yard. When we started remodeling, Brother Clyde rode his car soliciting and raising money to help do the job. He was the first one to do any real work towards the remodeling. He was blessed to attend some after the remodeling was completed.

His funeral was preached by his Pastor, Elder Kenneth Key. Two songs were sung. They were "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" and "How Great Thou Art". Brother Key was blessed to say such beatiful things that were true and comforting to the family. His body was laid to rest beneath a mound of beautiful flowers in a Greensboro cemetary, there to await the resurrection morn.

Written by Ema Sartin

ELDER BENJAMIN H. MARTIN

Whereas, it seemed good in the sight of Almighty God to remove from our midst our dear brother, Elder Ben Martin, and:

Whereas, we desire to manifest our respect for the sweet memory of Brother Martin and our sympathy for his family and loved ones;

We do hereby publish the following record of his life and labors in the ministry and

declare our intention as to the disposition of that record.

Elder Benjamin Harrison Martin was born to Green M. and Martha Shelton Martin on February 24, 1890, near the community of Critz, in Patrick County Virginia. As a very young man he was united in marriage to Mary Susan Hopkins. To their union of 37 years were born six children; Willie H., King E. (who preceded him in death), Harrm M., one infant son who died at birth, Sister Ellen Adams, and Sister Dora Adams.

During the lifetime of Sister Mary Musan Martin, Brother Ben moved to Henry County, Virginia, and settled a few miles from Xassett, where he operated a country store for several years. Sister Martin, after a lengthy illness, was called out of this life on December 28, 1943. Brother Ben was not left comfortless. The kind Providence of God moved in his behalf. In April of 1944 he united in marriage to Sister Dovie Cox of Patrick County. To their union were born two sons: Benjamin F. and Jerry L. Martin.

Early in life Brother Martin was taught of God to know that he was a sinner and that he must look to an omnipotent God for all of his salvation. He received a hope in Christ and a strong impression that he must declare the whole counsel of God among the ranks of Old Baptists, and he joined at Old Spoon Creek Church. Being led about in a way he could not see the outcome of, he obtained a letter of dismission and placed his membership at Liberty Church on the first Saturday in July, 1920. The following month he was given liberty to exercise publicly at his home church, and in November of that year was licensed to preach wheresoever God cast his lot.

Brother Martin was large in stature, little in his feelings, and blessed with a tremendous speaking voice. He strived deligently to "make his calling and election sure", and he spoke boldly and plainly "The Word" of God and admonished his brethren to do likewise. On the first Saturday in October 1923 his qualifications for the full work of the ministry were examined by a presbytery consisting of the following Elders: Lemuel Gilbert, J. G. L. Hash, J. D. Cockram, John Cassell, Samuel Koger, Dan P. Helms, James Creed, and W. M. Conner. Being found qualified he was set apart and ordained as an elder in the Smith River Association.

In the years that followed Elder Martin traveled far and wide among Old Baptists, preaching the Gospel and "doing the work of an evangelist". He visited churches in Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, and Florida. For brief periods of time he was called to serve various churches as pastor, but he soon gave them up because he felt his calling was to the Lord's people scattered abroad.

During the last several years of his life Brother Martin was afflicted with poor health. The time came when he was no longer able to get out and go to the churches as was his longstanding custom. He was at length confined at home, where he was faithfully attended by his wife, children, and grandchildren. He suffered very little pain, as he confessed on many occasions, but he strongly felt that his earthly frame was "wore out" and he wanted to go home. On February 28, 1980, the God of Glory granted his desire at Patrick Reynolds Hospital at Stuart, Virginia. Truly could it be said of him as it was said of King David - "He served his generation by the will of God and fell on sleep".

By request of his family Brother Martin's funeral was conducted at Center Church on March 2nd by his Pastor, Elder Bennie Clifton, assisted by Elders Thomas Brammer, Leonard Cassell, and Calvert Fulcher. He was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the second coming of the One he loved and tried to serve with all his house.

Be it now resolved that: We the Primitive Baptist Church of Christ at Liberty, acknowledge the gracious designs of our Heavenly Father in removing from among us our beloved brother and elder, Ben Martin.

Be it further resolved, that we publish a copy of this memorial in our church records; that we give a copy to his companion and each of his children; and that we submit a copy to "Zion's Landmark" and the ***Signs of the Times*** for publication.

Done by request of Liberty Church in conference the 5th day of April, 1980. Read and approved in conference May 3rd, 1980.

Elder Bennie Clifton, Moderator
Elder John Wingfield, Moderator
Clara Freeman, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 65 Keeling, Va. 24566

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 11/80 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

FAREWELL TO TIME

(Supposed to have been uttered by a dying Christian, at the close of the year 1827.)

Farewell, old Time: ere thou hast reached the morn,
Thy sun shall gild his wings in Capricorn;
Life's narrow, stormy frith I shall pass o'er,
And cast my anchor on the eternal shore,
Where all is dateless, endless, infinite,
And being has no measure but delight!
Farewell thou sun, and yon bright planets, all
That roll in silent beauty round this ball;
I go, I go to that celestial sphere,
Where Jesus shines through one eternal year!
Farewell thou earth and all that earth contains,
Thy graceful hills, green meadows, flowery plains,
I leave thy wave-worn shores without a sigh,
A Father's mansion house, a Master's joy,
Invite me hence; I unreluctant go
Where pleasure never wear a fringe of wo!
Farewell to gold and silver,--wealth adieu;
Ye fly from others but I fly from you.
Farewell to honour,--I'm enrolled above,
My plume, my crest, is love redeeming love;
By his dear hand that bled, I read my name
Wrote 'mong the living in Jerusalem.
Farewell to houses, gardens, orchards, lands,
I have a house above not made with hands;
A spotless mansion, built of precious stone,
A crown of living light, a Jasper throne.
Farewell to knowledge, first of earthly things,
I go to drink it where the fountain springs
Clear from its source, pellucid and refined,
The dregs of muddy error left behind.
Farewell to death, I shall forever bloom
In youth's fresh loveliness beyond the tomb.
Farewell to sickness, all the aches and pains,
That crowd my vitals and consume my reins;

for situation, the joy of the whole earth, the city of the great King, surrounded with walls and bulwarks. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.

Nowadays, the walls of our homes and buildings are barriers which form a place of retreat and protection for those within. Protecting us from cold, heat, dust, rain, wind, and snow, as well as from poisonous insects and snakes and beasts of prey, walls form a refuge from thieves and other criminals who would do violence to others. Much of what the walls of our homes do for us now, the walls of ancient towns and cities did for their entire citizenry in the days of antiquity. And what the walls did for people then, and what they do now, in a natural sense, shows forth what God's walls of salvation do for His people in a spiritual way in every age.

The stone walls around Zion were magnificently high and perhaps fifteen or more feet thick in places, with battlements and towers in strategic locations. The only means of entering or leaving the city were the gates through these walls--heavy wood and metal gates which were shut and locked each night and whenever danger threatened. At each gate watchmen were stationed to guard against an enemy's approaching under the cover of darkness. The watchmen were not only to guard against foes who would come from the outside seeking entry to the city at night, but also they were required to guard against any enemy who, disguised as a citizen or a traveller, might have entered the city during the day with the intention of unlocking the gate at night so that alien armies might enter while the citizens were asleep.

The Lord said, "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night; ye that make mention of the Lord keep not silence..." (Isaiah 62:6). He also said in Isaiah 52:8, "Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion."

Thus, in addition to the watchmen stationed by the gates of the city, other watchmen patrolled the tops of the walls where, from far above, they could look down and clearly see any movement or activity either inside or outside the city walls. In times of peace these men would cry out to each other at regular intervals that all was well, each one passing the good word along. Far from being a disturbance to a sleeping city, these familiar voices were comforting and reassuring to the drowsy people who knew that faithful men were guarding them, watching protectively over their city both day and night.

Then, beyond the walls, a network of other watchmen were stationed on vantage points from which they could see approaching danger throughout the entire countryside and sound the alarm to their neighbors, to the other watchmen, and to the residents of the city. In times of peace and safety these men, too, would regularly sound the good news that all was well; but they were to spread the alarm whenever they saw any danger approaching or when they heard the warning cry of another watchman. In biblical days there was such an effective network of these watchmen that it was impossible for a person or a group to approach the city from any direction without their being observed along their entire route by a series of watchmen who constantly monitored and reported their exact location and progress. And, where the view of one watchman ended--whether from sheer distance or from its being blocked by a forest, a mountain, or some other obstacle--another watchman was placed to supplement the entire system. No one man could see everything, but together all of the watchmen could see the entire countryside. This is what is meant by their seeing "eye to eye"; where the eye of one man failed, the eye of another man took over.

These Old Testament watchmen typify the New Testament gospel ministry, the overseers of the flock of God which He hath purchased with His own blood. From their vantage-points upon the walls of salvation, these overseers whom the Holy Spirit has called and qualified are enabled to be watchmen over the spiritual city, the church. God said, "Ye that make mention of the Lord keep not silence..." This symbolism goes beyond the secular watchmen of olden days who either reported that "all is well" or sounded the alarm at the approach of danger. The watchmen on Zion's walls, nowadays and in every age, are those who make mention of the Lord, whose desire is to say continually: "My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day...My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long..." (Psalm 71:15, 24).

In relation to the walls, people could be either inside the city, surrounded and protected by the walls; outside the city and its walls; or upon the tops of the walls. Since these latter men upon the walls were watchmen of and for the city, they would be counted as being within the city's walls. Therefore, there are two locations of the people to be considered: those within the city and those outside it.

The inhabitants or citizens of the city were those who permanently lived there (typifying the member-residents of the New Testatment church, those who have professed that their only refuge is within the walls of the salvation provided in and by Christ Jesus), and their guests--those travellers who temporarily sought the refuge, protection and safety of the city's walls.

If the old city of Zion typifies the church, then the enemies of Zion typify the enemies of the church. It must be clearly realized that, whether we are speaking of the enemies of Zion or those of the church, there are always two basic types of foes who use two entirely different methods of attack. The external enemies of Zion were those invading armies of aliens who through open warfare sought to destroy the city and its inhabitants. Using any means available, the attackers would attempt to destroy the walls, or scale and cross them, in order to kill or capture the inhabitants of the walled and fortified city. The walls that successfully withstood the alien attacks were truly the city's salvation in a natural sense, by the protecting providence of God.

On the other hand, the internal enemies of Zion were those who, having gained access to the city and having been accepted by its people, would subvert and destroy the city, its government and its people from within. Of the two types of enemies, external and internal, the internal foes were the more devastating if successful; for, as long as the walls withstood the attacks of the external enemies, the people inside were safe and were only drawn closer together in bonds of friendship and love as they stood against a common enemy; but in times of peace when no outside attack was threatened, the internal enemies would cause strife, envy, jealousy, dissention, and treason. Whereas an external war unites people against a common foe, an internal strife will divide the same people by subtle whispering campaigns. "...a whisperer separateth chief friends...he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends (Prov. 16:28, 17:9)."

Applying the strategical truths of the old walled cities to the experience of the church, it is clear that spiritual enemies also attack it from without and from within.

Paul, in his farewell address to the Ephesian elders, warned them of these two groups of adversaries. In Acts 20:29 he spoke of the external attacks which would come: "After my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock." In Acts 20:30 he then spoke of the internal attacks: "Also of

your own selves (that is, from among the elders themselves) shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."

The former, the grievous wolves, typify the persecutors who would literally destroy, maim and kill the followers of Christ, doing violence to them with the same ferociousness of a wolf pack descending upon helpless sheep. No deception is here involved; war to the death is declared by those who, in the spirit of Saul of Tarsus, would hale men and women into prison, persecuting them even to the death (Acts 9:1f, 22; 26:9ff). History has only demonstrated the truth of Paul's prophecy: the attacks upon the early church by the fanatical pharisees; Herod's killing James with the sword; the banishment of the apostle John by the emporer Domitian to the Isle of Patmos; the ten waves of persecution lasting almost 250 years under the Roman emporers Nero, Domitian, Trajan, Marcas, Aurelius Antonius, Severus, Decius, Maximus, Valerian, Aurelian, and Ciocletian; the terrors of the Dark Ages; these all demonstrate the horrible hatred of Satan and his followers against Christ and His people, a hatred which by divine inspiration is typified by the fierce destruction of wolves against a helpless flock of sheep.

Another group of wolves of which Paul speaks is every bit as destructive and dangerous to the peace of Zion as the first group. They are those who would arise from among the elders themselves. Jesus Christ Himself warned of them, stating that one of the chief dangers would be their appearing to be prophets while actually being false prophets. They "come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves (Matt. 7:15)," He said, indicating that although their approach is different from those who openly attack and destroy, their inward natures are identical. By representing themselves as prophets, they gain entry and acceptance inside the walls of the church because outwardly they appear to be Christ's sheep. But this, their temporarily being accepted within a local church, does not mean that they are surrounded by the true salvation of God in the spriritual sense, any more than a wolf would receive the shepherd's blessing by loping about inside the sheepfold for a few minutes. This merely signifies that from time to time in God's wisdom and providence He has a purpose and reason for wolves to attack or to infiltrate His sheepfold. Of this there will be more said, later. For now, it possibly can be said that Christ and His apostles warned more about these latter wolves than about the former kind. Christ said, "There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Paul said, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."

Peter and Paul likened Satan, as chief over these two bands of wolves, to two other figures: As chief over the ravening, grievous wolves, Peter said that Satan, "Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." Paul, showing Satan as the chief of the wolves in sheep's clothing, said, "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness.

When Paul described to the Ephesian elders those who would arise from among them, he said they would be "speaking perverse things." The very word "arise" indicates that such men would be elevating themselves, attempting to appear higher than their brethren. Their method of speaking

perverse things is something which would not be expected of a true minister of righteousness. This being so, the perverse things they say and do readily cause such destroyers of the flock to standout in the sight of discerning spiritual eyes. By calling to the church's attention this one characteristic of **perverseness,** Paul at once also gives a chief indication of how the wolves would be made manifest to God's children.

The word "perverse," then, sets forth the characteristics of those infiltrators of the Kingdom. In fact, that single word summarizes a remarkable set of related words which describe the behavior and attitude of those who are intent upon drawing any disciples after themselves. "Perverse," according to Webster, means "turned away from what is right, or good; obstinate in opposing what is right, reasonable or accepted; wrongheaded; arising from or indicative of stubbornness or obstinacy; marked by peevishness or petulance; cranky, contrary."

"Obstinacy," or "obstinate," used in defining "perverse" means, "pertinaciously adhering to an opinion, purpose or course in spite of reason, arguments or persuation; not easily subdued, remedied or removed."

"Peevishness" is "querulous in temperament or mood; fretful. Perversely obstinate; marked by ill temper."

"Petulant" means "insolent or rude in speech or behavior. Characterized by temporary or capricious ill humor."

"Capricious," finally, means "apt to change suddenly or unpredictably; inconstant."

Paul says these who rise up from among "your own selves" in such perverse behavior do so with one purpose uppermost in mind: to draw away disciples after themselves. When a man draws away disciples after himself, a sect or party (in the political sense) is formed. Where a (political) party exists, whether in the church or not, there is always a partisan spirit or attitude among the followers of such a man. Sectarianism in the local church is not so much the denominating of groups such as "Baptists," "Methodists," and "Lutherans," as it is a rivalry within a local church itself, and the "I am of Paul," "I am of Apollos," "I am of Cephas," and "I am of Christ" variations of groups within a church or an association, which would pit ministers and brethren against one another, if possible.

Of exactly such a spirit was Diotrephes, mentioned in III John, who loved to have the preeminence among the church to the extent that he would not receive the apostle John. John said Diotrephes was so taken up with this love of preeminence that we was "prating" (talking long and idly; babbling) against the apostle with malicious words. Not content with this, Diotrephes would not receive visiting brethren, and, forbidding those who would, he cast them out of the church (excluded them). He could scarcely have done so, had he not had the support of a sizeable following.

To see this trend and to warn against it whenever and wherever it manifests itself is part of the responsibility of the watchmen upon Zion's walls.

When, in the context of the doctrine of Christ and His church one is perverse or opposed to that which is right, it will be found that he is opposed to one or more facets of the gospel of our Lord. In the early church several other men besides Diotrephes were named in connection with doctrinal error and factionalism within congregations: Alexander, Phygellus, Hermogenes, Philetus and Hymenaeus--these last two said that the resurrection was past already and thereby overthrew the faith of some. Paul, the good watchman that he was (by God's grace--I Cor. 15:10), plainly and publicy identified these men and their erroneous teachings. He made the point that doctrinal errors (heresies) are evil communications, and evil communications corrupt good manners

(behavior). Specifically, he cited the error of non-resurrectionism in I Cor. 15:32f. There Paul exposes the heresy that says the dead rise not, and the behavioral error to which it leads--that of saying, "Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die." In modern language this is exactly the world's attitude which says, "In this life you only go around once, so you should grab for all the 'gusto' you can." Paul says this attitude corrupts good behavior.

Some people ask, why doesn't God do something about false prophets if He can? The atheistic attitude is, "Surely, if there is a God, he could do better if he would," and the Arminian says, "Surely, God would do better if he could." Both attitudes are the product of depraved human reasoning which assumes it could counsel the God of Israel and instruct the Holy One in righteousness. Few people know that whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He, in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places. "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge (I Cor. 8:6f)."

Actually, God is doing something about it all. He directs the wolves' steps no less that He leads His sheep in paths of righteousness for His name's sake; if a false prophet is a man that walketh, then he is not exempted from Jer. 10:23, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

Earlier, it was said that God has a purpose in wolves attacking or infiltrating His sheepfold. In I Cor. 11:19 Paul explains: "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." God's purpose is to use the wolf to purge His church. When the wolf in sheep's clothing introduces his heresy, the false professors rally around his false doctrine, while God's children are made increasingly concerned and wary, and opposed to it. If at this point God raises up a watchman to cry out against the wolf, often times that false prophet will try to convince to sheep that the watchman is really the wolf.

The net result is, in God's providence, a separation must take place, for, can two walk together, except they be agreed? The separation brings about the recognition by the brethren abroad of "they which are approved," that is, those who are identified with scriptural doctrine and practice, because they have been made manifest through their ordeal. And, through the strong contrast brought about by truth and error coming together to do battle, also made manifest are the false prophet, the false doctrine, and the false professors who fulfill Acts 20:30 by becoming disciples of those men who arose speaking of perverse things: "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be manifest that they were not all of us (I John 2:19)."

Nothing herein is meant to imply that any specific individual who has gone out from among the Old Baptists is definitely a false prophet or a false professor of Christ. No one should pass judgment upon individuals in such cases. In the heat of controversy some of God's children may be confused temporarily, and some may follow error for a time. Two cases in point are Peter, whom Paul publicly rebuked at Antioch, because he was blameworthy (Gal. 2:11), and Barnabas, who "also was carried away with their dissimulation (Gal. 2:13)." It is the glory of the Lord Himself to seek His straying sheep in such cases and bring them back. I John 2:19, cited above, leaves room for hope when John at first says, "they were not of us," but later modifies this by saying, "...they were not all of us." This allows for some of those who "went out from us" to yet be "of us."

External persecutions only draw the Lord's people closer to one another, strengthening and unifying them while driving false professors away. The heresies which arise betimes also serve God's purpose in manifesting His approved ones while leading away those to whom God sends strong delusion that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness (II Thess. 2:11f). Hereby the Christians' confidence is vindicated that the phrase, "all things," in Romans 8:28 means all things, including wolves, persecutions, false doctrine, heresies and divisions--they all work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.

Paul says, "There must be heresies." "Must" is a word of necessity, and the doctrine of necessity is the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things.

To deny these truths is to deny (1) that God has a purpose in the existence and activities of the wolves and the false professors; (2) that they are as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed (II Peter 2:12); (3) that they were before of old ordained to this condemnation (Jude 4); (4) that they were appointed to being disobedient (I Peter 2:8), and (5) that they will keep their appointments in what God says is due time (Deut. 32:35); (6) that, as God raised up Pharaoh for the express purpose of showing His power in him, and that His name might be declared throughout all the earth, even so God raises up those twin harlot daughters of Babylon--the heresies of Arminianism and conditionalism--to position them so that Christ Jesus may manifestly tread them under His feet, and that He will indeed do so when it serves His purpose; (7) that His fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, gathering His wheat unto the garner but burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire (Matt. 3:12); (8) that He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What does thou? (Dan. 4:35); (9) that He has any purpose in placing His watchmen upon the walls of salvation as it hath pleased Him (I Cor. 12:18); (10) indeed, it would be a denial that God had any purpose in the walls of salvation in the first place.

Now, one additional thought before closing: Except the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain (Psalm 127:1). Salvation is of the Lord; He can keep the city without the watchmen, but the watchmen cannot keep the city without the Lord. If He does not bless them with seeing eyes, hearing ears, understanding hearts and perceptive spirits, then all of their efforts are altogether vanity.

In summary, God Himself calls, qualifies and places His watchmen throughout His spiritual kingdom. "With the voice together shall they sing" the good news of the gospel, that all is well. The church, like a walled city, may be attacked from without or from within; God's watchmen guard against both types of attack. God Himself sits, the sovereign in control, not only of the church, but His kingdom ruleth over all. Surely the wrath of man shall praise Him; the remainder of wrath He restrains as it pleases him. He controls and restrains His enemies including Satan himself, in such a way that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ cannot be charged with folly or blamed for the sins of the creature.

The walls of salvation not only protect the people they surround, but they support and uphold the watchmen, furnishing a vantage point from which they can better see approaching danger and from which they can better warn the people under their care. Every wall has a foundation, but the walls of salvation are themselves the foundation and support of these watchmen! Who could hope for a better foundation than

salvation in Christ Jesus?

Part of the eternal bliss of God's children will be: "Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation and thy gates Praise (Isaiah 60:18)."

In this present evil age may it be our happy lot to anticipate that day, and to experience Psalm 48:12-14: "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever: He will be our guide even unto death."

In that blessed hope,
(Elder) C.C. Morris

EXPERIENCE

Eden, N.C.

Dear Elder Williams,

I would like to tell some of my travels which I hope is of the Lord. Back in my late twenties, these awful feelings came over me that I was an outcast, different from anyone else. No one liked me because I could see myself as a terrible wretch. I didn't want to be left alone, but yet I was afraid to go anywhere. I was so afraid everytime I got in a car. I just knew I would be killed and hell would be my home. I knew I was the biggest sinner in the whole world. I tried to pray for months for this awful burden to be lifted. It kept getting harder and harder to bear. I can't remember dates like some, but it went on for a good while.

My neighbors asked me to go to their revival at a little Missionary Baptist Church. I went, hoping to get some relief. I even went to the alter for prayer, but no relief came. I don't mean to offend these people. We only believe what the Lord teaches us. Nevertheless, to hear them talk, they were so good and sinless, and I among them so full of sin that I wanted to slip out before the meeting was over. They preached drinking, smoking, or using tobacco in any way, or cosmetics were the only sins. The only thing I did that they called sin was use make-up. I stopped using it, hoping to feel better, but nothing I had done helped. My sins were forever before me. I knew the Lord couldn't love such a sinner as I.

I could feel the Lord aiming an arrow to shoot me down, so I could go to my doom, which was hell. No one can ever know what trouble I went through until they travel the same road.

One night while lying in bed burdened over sin and asking the Lord, "What can I do?", a great light came into the room and hovered around me. That was the brightest and most beautiful light I have ever seen. If not deceived, God showed me then how blind and helpless I was. A voice spoke to me and said, "You cannot save yourself". I wish I had words to tell what a wonderful peace came in my heart knowing God is the Saviour. My works were over. It is all in God's hand. I had a peaceful sleep that night. The next morning everything was so beautiful. It seemed like everything was praising God. I couldn't go back to my neighbors' church anymore, where they were giving man more power than God.

My neighbors told me that I would never be anything but an "Old Hardshell". One told me Rosa Stultz is a "Hardshell". (She is Sister Rosa Cox, now.) Oh! how I yearned to talk with her, but never could when I was with her. The time had not come. There is a time and a purpose for all things.

My Mother told me they were coming by for me to go with them to Dan River Church, which my neighbors called "Old Hardshells". I didn't care what people said, I rejoiced in having a way there. I kept my feelings to myself. As we entered the church door the hymn, "Rejoice, the Lord is King" was being sung. If not deceived, I was really rejoicing. It seemed like I floated into my seat. I don't have words to tell what that song

until touched by the hand of God, travel this way. These people are at enmity with God, have no true knowledge of Him, nor sincere desire for Him. They will not have this Man rule over them. All people are in this condition by nature. They have a heart that is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked and who can know it. This heart is all that a man, by nature, has to go with and the Bible tells us that "Out of the heart are the issues of life."

Jesus tells us that he that does not forsake all, including himself, is not worthy to be His disciple. He tells us to take up our cross daily and follow Him. Man by nature cannot and will not do this, because this is in direct contrast to the desires of the natural heart. Who by nature would choose afflictions, sorrow, and heartaches? We desire and do directly opposite to this except led by the Spirit of God. The scriptures say that God seeks those with a broken and contrite heart and we, naturally speaking, would run as hard as we could from such a condition.

Thanks be unto God, His little ones don't travel this road. Theirs is called "the way of holiness". Nothing foul or unclean shall travel this way, but the redeemed of the Lord shall walk this road.

As I said before, out of the heart are the issues of life. When God, at His appointed time, sees fit to take away this naturally hard and stony heart and gives a heart of flesh, He implants new desires and new thoughts in this man. The scriptures tell us in Proverbs that the preparations of the heart and the answer of the tongue is of the Lord. He does not leave it up to us whether we travel this way of holiness. He goes before His sheep and leads them in paths of righteousness for His name sake. He calls His sheep by name and His sheep do follow Him. In the Songs it tells us He brings His people into the banqueting house and His banner over them is love.

Isn't it wonderful when we consider that our travels on this road are not left to us. The scriptures tell us we are the husbandry of God. As clay in the hands of the Heavenly Potter, He molds His little ones as He sees fit; conforms them by trials, afflictions, and sorrows to a vessel of honor: causes them to walk this way of holiness in such a manner as is well pleasing in His sight. He gives His little ones this quiet still voice, which I believe is the work of the Spirit in the heart of all His chosen people. In this way we do learn to follow on to know the Lord. We learn by our trials this way of holiness. Now we run from all the things we at one time ran after. May it be the Lord's will to keep us always on this road that is called "The Way of Holiness".

In that Blessed Hope,
Graydon R. Smith
Minden, LA. 71055

Chestertown, Maryland

EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER

Dearest Ones:

This has been such a lovely day, and I've thought of you all, down on the Shore, so much, knowing that you have met together in song and worship on this day, and long to be with you more often.

A few days ago I felt to sit down and read more in my Bible than usual and the expression "It came to pass" caught my eye. I pursued it further. When we really stop and think of life, we see this great truth, "It came to pass!"

Even the joys of life come to pass. All the miseries of life come to pass. All the heartaches, troubles, wars, the crime - all come to pass. Our children are born, grow up into men and women, and "It came to pass". I began to think of some of the happenings in my own life, that I worried about, and thought I would never get over. Now I look back and I realize, "They came to pass". Some of the things we thought were so terribly

was his duty to bear all, he remained firm, and determined to endure those difficulties to which God in his providence had called him. For many years the troubles she raised in the family, through her implacable hatred to religion, were repeatedly the subject of remark among the surrounding families.

After they had been married thirty-three years, she, unknown to any person, resolved that she would at some time hear what it was that made her husband for so many years endure so patiently such unparalleled persecution as she had by her conduct made him experience. Accordingly she determined to set out from her home one Sabbath evening, without dressing herself in her best clothes, that none in the house should suspect her intention, but suppose that she was going, in her idle and wicked manner, to spend an hour with some of her old companions in the neighbourhood.

When she arrived at the meeting house, she soon spied a dark corner, in which she was persuaded she could hear and not be noticed by any of the constant hearers. In this respect she obtained all her wish, for not one of the hearers knew of her being there; and as for her husband, he ever imagined he should ever see the day that his persecuting wife would so much as hear one gospel sermon. She said not a word for some time of her visit to the meeting house, though an arrow had been shot so deep into her soul, that all the art and violence of her temper could not extract it. He that guided the arrow which wounded Ahab, sent an arrow of conviction into such an unerring manner, that it sank deeper and deeper every day.

The next public sermon, who should be there--and that not clandestinely, but openly--but this poor trembling sinner, under the most distressing apprehension that all was over with her? And as she knew she had not only exceeded the whole town for rage and enmity against the gospel, (as she thought,) but the whole country, she could not prevent herself from drawing the most dreadful conclusions, namely, that her punishment in hell would as far exceed that of others as her sins had rendered her notorious in this world.

Under this intolerable pressure of spirit she resolved that, while God spared her life, she would neglect no means, either public or private. The husband looked on this unexpected change with both hope and fear. He now had a companion with him in public worship and at every prayer meeting; and her distress was so great, that though the eyes of great numbers were looking on her with astonishment and wonder, nothing had weight enough to hinder her attention to the word. She now heard for eternity; this swallowed up every other consideration.

When I had observed her for some time to attend so very constantly, I spoke to her at a private meeting, and intimated both my pleasure and surprise to see her there, and I asked her the reason. She said little, but repeated the words of David: "Is there not a cause?"

As her understanding opened to take in the nature of divine things, and to see more and more of their everlasting importance, her spirits were the more depressed, so that in about twenty weeks' time her natural frame was so much exhausted as to bring on a nervous fever, in which state she was for a short time confined to her bed.

At last she was brought so low that the person who attended her thought she could not continue alive many hours; accordingly her nurse sent in great haste to the warehouse, requesting her husband to come home immediately and take leave of his wife, desiring the messenger to inform him that she was dying. He hastened from the warehouse stricken as with a thunderbolt, dreading the idea of

persuaded in my own mind I should see her soon convinced of this mistake, but knew it was not proper to speak one word to her at that time.

She soon recovered, and was restored to her usual health; and it might be said of her, that for seven years she ran in the ways of the Lord with unabating zeal. Her husband, however, after this change was made in her, was not so dilligent in the ways of God as before. She had many fears that, after all he had suffered for religion, it should be proved at last he was a castaway.

After having walked in the ways of the Lord about seven years, it pleased God to call her to that state of happiness which she now enjoys above. She bore a tedious and painful illness with patience and fortitute. The last time I saw her was some days before her death. After speaking for some time in the most animating manner of the immutable love and kindness of God, which she had experienced for seven years, she said to me, "You have been witness to those great trials with which it has pleased God to exercise me and try my faith; and you remember how I told you on that remarkable day of my deliverance from that dreadful guilt and horror of mind which had brought me to the very gates of the grave, that I should never doubt of the love of God to my soul to my dying day; and I now tell you, though you know how greatly I have been tried by a variety of things, that I have never been left to doubt one single moment."

I do not remember ever to have either read or heard anything like this from any other person; all I have been acquainted with have been frequently exercised with doubts and fears. But as her conversion was remarkable, so were the dealings of God with her. She at the same time told me she knew that such a day, mentioning the day, was to be the day when her corpse was to be interred, and desired me to promise her that I would walk before her coffin up the churchyard on that day. I told her, if I was well, and that should be the day, I would be sure to be there. She said, "I want you to give me your promise, that on that day you will walk before my corpse". She was in great pain when she spoke to me; and some of her last words to me were, "Now I am going to appear, as I told you, one of the greatest monuments of mercy that surround the throne above." She was buried on the day she mentioned to me.

Selected from the "Gospel Standard" 1849

Richmond, Virginia

My dear brethren,

I have enjoyed many meetings and I think of how I go my way rejoicing in the good news and seldom tell you that I enjoyed what you were blessed to say. The dear Lord willing, I would like to say a few words to you. Our fifth Sunday meeting was so good. I thank the dear Lord for His blessings but I think it will be all right to say to you that I enjoyed the good news and I hope the dear Lord will continue His blessings upon us all.

Elder Tench, I know you were very uncomfortable on Sunday and hope you will soon feel much better. You had to leave before the meeting closed and I was sorry you did not hear Elder Spangler say a few more words about the question you asked him. He quoted from John I, and from Hebrews I, speaking of our manner of communicating with one another by "words" and the only way of communication that we have with God is by the Word. I wish so much that I had ability to remember more of the good news I hear. I love to hear the brethren talk one with the other about the Scriptures. I'm not blessed to read and understand the Scriptures but I have read both of these chapters and do read texts that I hear one expound. I hope the dear Lord will bless you with answers to your questions.

Elder Spangler, last August, after learning that I would have to enter the hospital for doctors to determine whether I had cancer, I wrote a letter as

EDITORIAL

CHRIST BEFORE PILATE
John 19:10, 11

"Then saith Pilate unto him, speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above; therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin."

These words are taken from the time our Lord stood before Pilate, who was at that time governor over the Jewish people. Pilate, from the record, obviously knew a great deal more than he was willing to publicly concede. He, like most natural beings, (those who have not been moved by the Spirit of Grace), sought to prefer himself before doing that which was right and proper, and this account of our Lord standing before him is among the clearest displays of God's sovereign government over humans you will read. Continually, throughout this account, Pilate sought to release Jesus, and he was extremely reluctant to lay his hand of Him either physically or in a legal manner. But there was another element there at that time - the religious element. If we're honest with ourselves, we must confess that there is nothing uglier than ugly religion, no matter whose it is - ours or theirs. When religious people want their way, nothing will stand in their way. Caiaphas, the high priest, and all the rulers of the Jews, saw in Jesus an obstacle to their religious authority and rule over the people. To their minds, at all cost He must be taken out of the way, so that they could continue to project themselves as the spiritual rulers of the people.

The priests, Levites, scribes, and so on in that day left their mark on the people. And those of today are no different. There have always been those who aspire to dominate over the spiritual lives of their associates, and if they must go to the legal authorities and press their issue they will do so. Nothing has changed except the calendar. Religion is still the greatest force in opposition to the Kingdom of God that ever existed, and the Pilates of this world are nothing more than tools in the hands of religionists. Our Lord used His most bitter language against the Pharisees who governed the people at that time. "Woe, unto you scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte...." and so on. "Woe, unto you", and other denounciations were leveled against the religious leaders and accepted spiritual guides of that day by the Lord.

The Kingdom of God has always been and always shall be a spiritual and an inward kingdom. The outward kingdom is always a great, flourishing, visible display of human ingenuity filled up with pomp, pride, and ceremony. Scattered among the religious of the world, however, there has always been that little flock who seeks to meet in the name of their Lord and Master, not for anything that it would bring them materially or naturally, but for the inward peace, the comfort, the joy, and the satisfaction that is gleaned from gathering in His glorious Name.

In this last scene of our Lord's life, we find that Caiaphas and the religious rulers sought for political help to be rid of Jesus of Nazareth. As before noted, Pilate attempted as best he could to wiggle out of the situation. In this chapter, (18th of John,) there are several verses of scripture that introduce the thought that Pilate was not interested in getting involved in the conflict between Christ and the religious leaders. In verse 29 it says, "Pilate then went out unto them, and said, what accusation bring ye against this man?" As a ruler of the Romans he attempted to make this scene legal. "Do you have an accusation

against Him?" We have the blessed privilege of looking back on that scene and knowing that there was no accusation that could be leveled against the Son of God. All He had ever done had been good. All He had ever done was for the glory of His Father and the comfort of the poor and the afflicted. Pilate didn't ask this question in order that he might clear Jesus in His claims, but rather because it was the legal thing to do. Then in verse 31, "Then said Pilate unto them, take ye him and judge him according to your law...." Pilate wanted nothing to do with this matter, so he says, "You take him and you judge him according to your law." Now listen very carefully to what the Jews therefore, said unto him, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death". Pilate hadn't said anything about taking him and killing him, but in their mind nothing short of death itself, would satisfy them in regard to Jesus of Nazareth.

Now then, may we pause here just a moment. Can you not see that in the hearts of the religious mob was an aim to take the life of this innocent man? On the part of Pilate there was the aim to free Him from the probabilities of what the mob would do to Him. Pilate and the Jewish leaders were working counter to one another. The legal government wanted to free Him; the religious government wanted to crucify Him. Now which one will win out? Will religion gain sway or will politics win the day? Unless we look at this as God-taught children of truth, we cannot know the answer. Neither the religious nor the political leaders can do any more or any less than the determinate council and purpose of God intended for them to do. The Jews wanted His death but not in order to fulfill God's plan. They had no knowledge that God had a plan concerning Jesus. Pilate was the legal government and wanted to free Him, but all of the power he had could not frustrate the secret council of God, that He be delivered into the hands of wicked man and taken and slain. If this is not a display of God's holy government, where in all of the Bible would one look to find it? Herod pulling in one direction, Pilate in another, the religious leaders in another. The little band of disciples wishing they could pull, and helpless to do anything. But above all of the scene of confusion, there was the order of God's holy purpose. The Jews said, "We have a law. It is not lawful for us to use it in putting a man to death". That is what they were interested in. We might look forward just a little and read another scripture; verse 7 of chapter 19, "The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God." You would think the religious leaders were contradicting themselves, wouldn't you? We just read, "The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death". (V. 31) But then in verse 7 of the 19th Chapter, "We have a law and by our law he ought to die". Which time did they lie? Do you see that religion knows no limits, when it comes to applying their laws? They will use them to the satisfaction of their own carnal purpose.

Going on with Pilate here - in Verse 33, he goes in to Jesus and says, "Art thou the King of Jews?" This is more than the religious leaders at the time would do. They denied flatly that He was, but Pilate, at least, asked the question, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Our Lord answered him, "Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?" Pilate retorts, "Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done?" At least in semblance it appears the Lord is getting a fair interrogation before Pilate. Pilate appears ready to find reason to set him free. But God has decreed that He must die. (The wicked Jews want to see Him dead but not because of the decree.)

So Pilate asks, "What hast thou done?" Pilate had heard all of the infor-

mation. He knew generally what was going on. You might say he was at least a partially competent governor. He kept his finger on the pulse of the populace. He knew what the rumors were. He had heard about the multitudes being fed, and that people had been raised from the dead. Stories, too, of people who were blind and then made to see. Also, he had heard of how great multitudes of people had been gathered by this lowly son of a carpenter. He heard too how He had performed miracles, and that never a man had spake like this. But still in his interrogation he says, "What hast thou done?" Listen now to the answer, (Chapter 18:36) "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews...." You will observe that He did not say, "That I be not delivered to thee....", but rather He said, "Then should my servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence." (Vs. 37) "Pilate therefore said unto him, art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world that I should bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice." Such truth as He set before Pilate! "My kingdom is not of this world...." He was not endangering anybody's political power. He was not directly a hazard to the rulers and leaders, of whatever sort they might be. Our Lord had come lowly, and meekly, He had come in the name of His Father, and His mission and purpose was to gather sinners. Such as were desperately in need of that which they could not provide for themselves. He came to the lowly and to the meek, and He did deliver them and He did accomplish the will of the Father to a jot and a tittle. He had not in any way and under any circumstance violated either the religious or the political laws of that day. He stood as the only true witness to all eternal and living truth to say that, "My kingdom is not of this world." There was not any laws that could interfere with His kingdom because His kingdom had not been established under earthly laws. Pilate couldn't understand these things. Pilate couldn't comprehend them. The Lord said, "To this end was I born"; this was the very purpose for which He came into the world. Oh, how Pilate must have been confused to hear that. The Jews didn't want to hear it, either. It would have done them no good. It would have only hindered their purposes because, if He had been born to this end, then the sooner He was dead the better as far as they were concerned.

Then Pilate asked one of the most outstanding questions a natural man ever asked. (Verse 38) "Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again....." Pilate didn't ask that question out of ignorance. Pilate cared not to know what truth is. The wording of the text is such that it leads one to believe that Pilate asked the question in contempt. He said it like this: "What is truth?" "You speak about the truth; what is truth to me?" The only thing that was truth to Pilate, or men like him, is their own ambition. Truth is nothing but another tool in their hands to use, lawfully or unlawfully, as it pleases them. And to hear the lowly One speaking, "Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice" means nothing to the Pilates of this world. He exemplified those who have a total disregard for all truth, and particularly divine truth, because he had no interest in truth. He was interested in furthering his own cause and preventing any sort of calamity arising in his governmental reign so there might be no dispatch of critical information to Caesar that would jeopardize his position as governor of the Jews. He wasn't concerned if Jesus was the truth from God. He was concerned that the One

who spoke of truth would be of some hinderance to the furtherance of his plans, and so he says, "What is truth? What do I care for truth? Why should I be concerned about your testimony?"

On saying this he went out again. He left the presence of Jesus as he had done on times before. But when he went out to the Jews again, listen to what he says to them: "I find in him no fault at all". You remember that John the Baptist spoke to the religious leaders just before our Lord's baptism and said that God would make even the rocks to cry out to His presence. He told them God could raise up stones to testify to His glory. And here we find a man who has nothing but contempt for the truth, and yet he is obligated by the eternal wisdom of God to stand before those that sought Jesus's death and say, "I find no fault at all in him." None whatsoever! The man did not care about the life of Jesus, he cared about the life of himself. But he was obligated to confess that which was the truth and even though he was contemptous of the truth, he must tell the truth: he must tell the truth in the face of the greatest obstacle he ever had to his own governmental power. "I find no fault in him" (whatsoever.)

Then he says (verse 39) "Will ye therefore that I release unto you the king of the Jews?" Why, he wanted to see Jesus go free. But they wanted Barabbas. So after the scourging and smiting, we find in verse 4 of the 19th Chapter, "Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him." Again he is obligated to testify he finds no fault in Jesus. "Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man." (V. 5) Do you think the religious leaders were stirred? Do you think they were moved? They saw him after he had been scourged. There was now the crown of thorns on his head and he was wearing the dirty purple garment, bleeding, probably profusely, in a great state of humiliation and disgrace, publicly at least. And Pilate points to him as if to say, "Have I not done enough now? Are you not satisfied that we turn him loose?" He says, "Behold the man"! Yet all the Jews could see was a man they held in contempt. All Pilate could see was an obstacle in the way of his government. But those who walk by faith can see in the lowly, dispised, and persecuted suffering One the very purposes and plan of God to redeem the world of His chosen people. And they rejoice that the Man Christ Jesus stood there at that time. Though all these things would seem to be counter to human nature and contrary to the wisdom of a holy God, they were but the furtherances of every link in the chain of divine providence and predestination, to bring to pass the greatest event that ever occurred in Heaven or earth; the redemption of sinners, saved by grace.

When the man, Christ, stood there He stood there in shame, but it again was a portion of the holy plan of God to thwart the purpose, both of the Jews and Pilate that God would be exalted; and Him alone. As mentioned earlier, Pilate didn't want to release Him because of his fondness for Him, and the Jews certainly didn't want to kill Him because of God's plan. Yet, it worked out that way. "Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him; for I find no fault in him." (V. 6) This is an amazing statement. That a human being (who in this case was governor) could say of another human being, to a mob of madmen religionists, "Take him and crucify him. I find no fault in him," is nearly beyond belief. You could go into the average tavern across this land today and find people with more integrity than was displayed by either crowd here. The average drunkard that sits on a bar stool drinking beer has more regard for humanity than either Pilate or the religious mob displayed

here. An innocent man, one who was an acknowledged innocent being, was to be thrown to a mob to be crucified, and the man in authority, with the power to prevent it says, "I find no fault in him". This is enough to anger and inflame the feelings of most any human being of even sub-normal intellect. But again we must recognize that despite all of the intense feelings that we have over this incident, God's purpose was yet to be accomplished, and so nothing could hinder it, and so this makes it all the more amazing. It is an amazing thing that the ruler of the people, the governor of that time, could say, "Take him and crucify him. I find no fault in him."

If there was one thing in those days that the Romans prided themselves in, it was that they were a just people. They required strict application of the law before any man was put to death. Yet here was a man who had the authority of life and death, and here was a group, religious rabble rousers, who did not have the authority of life and death, and he gave an innocent man to them and said, "Take him and crucify him. I find no fault in him." Never has a man acted more the part of a weasel than Pilate acted at that time. You would feel like human nature would dictate to him, at least to some degree, to have made a pretense of defense for a man who obviously was not guilty of any crime or charge brought against him. This shows, at least from the natural part, how much influence the religious rabble rousers have. They will gain their way if they can.

Ask yourself this question. Was the religion of that day any worse than ours today? No, by no means! It would be better to stand with Pilate than to stand with the Pharisees who wanted the life of our Lord. He didn't pretend to be religious. Oh, may God bless us to know, and may He enable us to see, that there is but one course of action for those who believe the truth and love the Lord of glory, and that is to come out from among all religious enterprises of every fashion that does not bow the knee to Jesus and His Father. May we acknowledge that God is supreme in all things; that Pilate and religion and all of the rest together are nothing but the implements of God's holy divine will. He will accomplish His purpose in them just as surely as He will in the falling of the sparrow, or the moving of a mighty mountain.

Pilate went out and said, "I find no fault in him." They said, "We have a law". He went in again, and said, "Whence are thou?" And then the text, "Then saith Pilate unto him, speakest thou not unto me? Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?" Pilate says, "Do you not know that I have power." "I have power!" Why, who was Pilate? Pilate was another lump of clay; another of the insignificant worms of the dust of God's creation, and yet he stood in the face of a man whom he knew to be innocent, and he says, "I have power against thee. I have power to crucify thee and I have the power to release thee." In the jargon of today's language, you might say he was afflicted with a case of the "Imies". I am this, and I am that. I've got this and I've got that. He may say, "I have power to crucify thee", but did he have any power?

Our Lord, though He was bleeding and suffering, could answer him with great authority. "Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." (V. 11) "No power, Pilate--you couldn't have power against me except it were given thee from above." "Therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." (V. 11) Several things may be noticed there. One is that Pilate's sin was great; but there was a greater one. This leads to a conclusion that is unavoidable. If there is such a thing as one sin being greater than another sin, then there is greater

punishment than other punishment. Now someone may ask, is that consistant? Yes, it is. If there is a greater sin; if one sin is greater than another sin, then does not God have the right to do with one as it pleases Him and then another as it pleases Him? We cannot contend that hell would be any hotter in one spot than it would in another, or that the torment would be any greater in one spot than it would be in another, but we can content that if it pleases God to extend the awareness or knowledge of the darkness and blackness of hell and show the hopelessness and abandonment of eternity to one more than another, then who should we be to discredit God's wisdom in doing so? It is God in the voice His Son that says, "He hath the greater sin". All we can go by is what the testimony is, and so long as the testimony is there, may we rejoice that it is so! Pilate's sin was great but Caiaphas, (not Judas) had the greater sin. Our Lord was not talking about Judas when He said, "he that delivered me". It was not Judas that delivered Him to Pilate. It was the high priest. It was religion that delivered Him there, and religion is yet today at this very moment attempting to deliver our Lord up to judgment and to condemnation. But may our God be praised, the Pilates then and the governments today have no power, even when our religious leaders would deliver Him up to be crucified, unless God gives them that power. And though the Church of Jesus Christ might in this day seem to be insignificant, and the numbers dwindling away and the hearts of many are growing cold and the true ways are being abandoned, recognize this one thing. The powers that be are still ordained by God. All of these things are still, to the jot and the tittle, fulfilling the eternal purpose of God. Ultimately Jesus will be lifted up above the sight of all of His people, that He might be praised, world without end and the anguish and the grief of those that know Him not and despise the truth will be to the fullest in the final day.

"Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above; therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." Listen, "And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release Him; but the Jews cried out, saying, "If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend; whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar:" (V. 12) Why, those Jews weren't concerned about what Caesar and Pilate did or didn't do. They were concerned about what Pilate would do in their behalf to get rid of this one called Jesus of Nazareth. And so they threw this in his teeth; "Why, if he is making himself to be a king and you side with him and turn him loose then you have sided against Caesar". That was more than Pilate could hear. "When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Golgatha. And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour; and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your king! But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them; shall I crucify your king? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar." (V. 13-15) Do you think anything has changed? "We have no king but Caesar." That was religion speaking. And today, Pharasee religion still knows no king but Caesar. They weren't in love with Caesar but they loved Caesar's world, and the things of Caesar's world far greater than they did the things of the glory of God. Yet in all of this they did nothing, absolutely nothing, but fulfill the eternal design of God that Jesus would die. And in that they would be accountable. Why, Pilate even went so far as to wash his hands. He took water, and washed his hands, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it." (Matt.

27:14) But do you think that eliminated his crime? No! His sin remained. In these things they together wrought out the grand, wonderful purpose of God which was to be fulfilled. "The kings of the earth stood up and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against his Christ. For of a truth against the Holy Child Jesus who thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy council determined before to be done." (Acts 4:26-28) "For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy council determined before to be done." May the Lord bless us to recognize that Pilate, Herod, the Jews, and all of the rest did fulfill God's council and yet they were ignorant in it all.

Elder James F. Poole

PRAYER OF THANKS

As the old year ebbs away
And the new comes into sight
I thank Thee, Lord for granting me
Another year of life.

Not one of mere existence
But one filled to the brim
With all the joys - the precious joys
We find in knowing Him.

Julia Ada

Christiansburg, VA.

Dear Elder Spangler,

This money is for another year of the ***Signs of the Times.*** I am 85 years old and I think every year that this is the last, but the Lord only knows that.

I always look forward to the ***Signs*** coming. Most of the time I read it through before I put it up. I am blessed with good eye sight so far. Several of my children take the ***Signs,*** and I am thankful for that, too. I always enjoy reading the "Voices of the Past". That is always good.

I just wanted you to know that I enjoy reading the ***Signs*** very much.

In Hope,
Mrs. F. S. Agee

OBITUARIES

ELDER E. J. LAMBERT

Words cannot be written to express our sincere feelings of loss over the passing of our beloved friend and Elder, E. J. Lambert. Our precious friend and fellow yoke minister in the Gospel of Jesus Christ was called from his earthly journey August 14, 1980, in Hot Springs, Arkansas. He was born September 28, 1906 in Amity, Arkansas to Charles B. and Ida M. Burchfield Lambert. He was married to Willie Myrtle Hancock on November 17, 1928. A son, Charles, was born to this union on April 6, 1930. His wife, afflicted with pneumonia, departed her life May 3, 1930. The next four years of his life were spent wholly in the college of tribulations located in the furnace of affliction, as stated in his book, *Tried in the Furnace.* He met and married Dessie May Williams November 18, 1934. Sister Dessie May departed her life January 4, 1973.

Elder Lambert was ordained to the office of elder by order of Cedar Hill Church of Arkansas while the South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association was in session September 15, 1934. His wife, Dessie May, was the first one that he baptized.

Elder Lambert was weakened much in body the past four years, yet he was given enough strength to serve (up until six weeks before his death) the five churches he was called to serve. He could hardly enter the stand on many occasions because of weakness of body; but as he read a text and began to speak, he received the needed strength and wisdom from on high to proclaim Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Jesus said, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." This was truly manifested in Elder Lambert.

May I make a following quotation from his book, *Tried in the Furnace*?

"I have traveled among this people in the different sections of the country and find such unity in belief that I am persuaded that all are taught by the same Teacher. I am determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. He is

our salvation both for time and eternity. God has taught me in His wonderful dealings with me the doctrine of salvation solely upon the merits of Jesus Christ to such extent that any other doctrine is strange to my ears. I believe Jesus Christ accomplished the law to a jot and a tittle, and His accomplishments were accredited to the account of the people who were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. His blood covered all the sins that God's people have ever committed, are committing now, or ever shall commit. This is not proclaimed because of any theory advanced by anyone but because of the things that I have experienced."

His experiences were such that made him feel his complete dependency upon God. Once when he was feeling so low and cast down, he prayed for relief but none came. Finally he prayed, "God, I'll be your anything," yet no relief. He poured out his soul from the very depth of his heart in prayer, and begged, "God, I'll be your nothing." And God whose mighty arms were always underneath him raised him up in spirit and feelings. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."

He was always willing and enjoyed talking on doctrine and religious matters. He was given an abundance of wisdom therefore many brethren went to him for counsel. The writer was given the sweet privilege of spending many wonderful hours conversing with him. Our son, Jimmy Hamrick, became very close to him and loved to talk with him on spiritual things, spending a few nights each month in his home. Elder Lambert showed a great interest to the young in the ministry and was ready to share with them the things he had learned and experienced during his ministry.

Elder Lambert was an associate editor of the "Signs of the Times" for many years. Our great loss is his eternal gain. His soul and spirit are now with the Great God that he was given wisdom and strength to serve and proclaim for 46 years.

Survivors include one son, Charles T. Lambert, Hot Springs, Ark.; mother, Mrs. Ida Lambert, Hot Springs, Ark.; and one brother, Ernest Lambert, Haworth, Okla.

His funeral services were conducted August 17th by the writer and assisted by the following brethren in the ministry: Elders C. M. Haygood, B. J. McLaughlin, Lloyd Wall, W. W. Taylor, Paul Daniel, C. C. Morris, and Brother Jimmy Hamrick. His body was laid to rest in Good Hope Cemetery, beneath a mound of beautiful flowers to await the resurrection when Jesus will come to call him to his eternal home in heaven.

Written by order of conference, Good Hope Church, Winnsboro, Texas, August 23, 1980. One copy be sent to the ***Signs of the Times*** for publication.

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

SISTER BERTHA WHITE JOHNSON

A dear Mother in Israel, Sister Bertha White Johnson, was called home on June 14, 1980, in the Roanoke Chowan Hospital in Ahoskie, N.C., at the age of 99 years.

Sister Bertha was born in Martin County, North Carolina on July 31, 1880, the daughter of Mack and Belle White and spent her life in Martin County until 1973 when she moved to the Pinewood Manor Rest Home in Ahoskie, N.C.

She was married to Charlie Sylvester Johnson in February, 1902, who preceded her in death in 1964. To this union seven children were born. Surviving is one son, Joshua Mack Johnson of Baltimore, Md., three daughters, Mrs. Nina Belle Rogerson of Salisbury, N.C., Mrs. Bertha Gray of Bethel, N.C., and Mrs. Nellie Faye Savage of Williamston, N.C.; 17 grandchildren, 24 great grandchildren, and 5 great great grandchildren.

Sister Bertha united with the Spring Green Primitive Baptist Church over 50 years ago and remained a steadfast loving member until her death, always filling her seat as long as she was able to attend.

Funeral services were conducted in the Biggs Funeral Chapel in Robersonville, N.C. on Monday, June 16, 1980, by her Pastor, Elder Joseph A. Leggett. Her body was laid to rest in the Robersonville Cemetery, there to await the coming of her blessed Saviour.

The Spring Green Church extends their deepest sympathy to Sister Bertha's family.

Done by order of conference Saturday before the fourth Sunday in June, 1980.

Elder Joseph A. Leggett, Moderator
Mary J. Jenkins, Clerk

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 12/80 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Danville, Virginia

August 20, 1980

To the Upper Country Line Association in session with Moon Creek Church, Caswell County, N.C., July 14, 15, and 16, 1979.

Dear Brethren,

After due deliberations the Church at Dan River has decided to request that our Church be dropped from the roll of churches of the Upper Country Line Association and become an independent church.

We raise no question of fellowship, esteeming highly the brethren and sisters of this Association.

We are sending $100.00 to help defray the expenses of the ministers who visit during the Association. We also hope to visit with you, and help entertain the visitors who attend the Association.

Done by order of the Church in conference.

D. V. Spangler, Moderator

Boyd Minter, Clerk

The above copy of the letter to the Upper Country Line Association in 1979 is printed at the request of Brethren, that no one be confused in regard to these matters.

D. V. Spangler, Editor

June 23, 1980

Dear Elders of the Signs,

I am sorry to be late renewing my subscription to the ***Signs of the Times.*** Due to illness I have not been able to conduct my business since May 23, 1979. I have been a patient here at Roman Eagle Nursing Home since Sept. 8, 1979. I have not been without pain since

October. However, no matter how much I suffer down here or how hard the cross is to bear, my Lord and Saviour has told me in His Word that He would never put more on me than I could bear, nor would He ever leave or forsake me, but would go with me all the way even unto the end. I live daily by that scripture and I realize no matter how much suffering I do down here, I can never in a million years suffer what Christ my Saviour suffered when He bled and died for me on the old cruel cross. I feel He suffered and died in my room and stead, but truly I am the worst of sinners.

It is sweet to know the Truth, and to know that the Truth will make you whole.

My eyes are bad and I can't read very well, but I do enjoy so very much the scriptures I am able to read, and the ***Signs,*** too. It is food for my soul, as I am unable to get to church services. I do enjoy visits from members of like precious fellowship and faith. The home here is a nice place for older people who have no one to look after them.

I am enclosing a check to renew my subscription for one year. May our Lord and Saviour bless each of you editors to continue to set forth the doctrine of truth as it is set forth in the scriptures.

This is poorly written, but I hope I have not written anything amiss. I am a little sister in Hope of eternal life, if one at all. If you are so led to pray for me when at the Throne of Grace I will appreciate it.

Lillian H. Holt

SERMON ON AMOS 7:8
BY
ELDER LOYD WALL

A few weeks ago I read a verse of scripture and have had some meditations on it. This morning it is back again. There is no way to get it out of my mind because I stayed awake this morning until 20 minutes until 2 o'clock. I got up and turned the light on to see what time it was. I took a nap after that. I don't believe there is any way in the world to get away from the Lord. And I am going to tell you also that the devil can't get away from the Lord, either. And I will tell you the reason why I can't get away from Him. Because if I am not altogether deceived He gave me a thorn in the flesh. Since I was 11 years old, old Satan has really been a thorn to me. He goes everywhere I go. He gets ugly. And I have done more than Paul did, if I am not over-judging. Paul prayed twice for God to remove his thorn. And the answer was everytime "My grace is sufficient for thee".

Brother John Bain, who we laid back to the dust a few days ago, said he didn't know if he had ever prayed in his life, but he had done a lot of begging. That is what I am saying. I've done a lot of begging God to remove this thorn out of my flesh; this messenger of Satan that buffets me. But I never have gotten God to trade with me. Never have. He never would. And right now I want to say that I am thankful that He doesn't trade any. Because if I could get Him to trade one time I know by experience, I would lose every bit of confidence that I have in Him. God's confidence is all we need. And the reason why that God the Lord didn't save the Apostle Paul from this thorn is because He is an unchanging God. The Bible says that. "I am the Lord and I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

I don't desire to hurt the feelings of any human being. But more especially here of late I hear so much about accepting the Lord, and God wanting people to be saved. I don't want to hurt those people's feelings that advocate that. They believe that because they can't help it. But I am going to tell you that according to the teachings of the scriptures that is not the way it is. God's people accept the Lord because they can't help it. One might ask the question, "Well, do they accept Him contrary

to their will?" No, that is not so. They are always willing to accept Him and yet it is not of them voluntarily to do so. They are made accepted in the Beloved.

Now I want to give you something else. It is not left up to you to acquaint yourself with the Lord. And according to the text that is on my mind you don't have to get out and look Him up. We are going to prove that by the scriptures. I would like to call your attention to the last verse of the 46th chapter of Isaiah, and I want you to pay close attention to my reading if it be God's will. I am a very poor reader. Isaiah speaking out here, he said, "I bring near my righteousness". Now the book plainly teaches that "except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and the pharasees you have no part with God". And we know what the scribes and pharasees were. They fasted twice a week and payed tithes of all that they possessed and they were not like other people. Now I didn't write that, and you didn't either, but that is the truth. Do you find anybody doing that? Do you? I want to ask you a question. Do you find people out paying a tenth of all that they earn, regardless of how much it is needed at home? My book says charity should begin at home. Do you find people that fast? Do you find people that say that they are not like other people? That they are better than so and so? Do you find them? I want to ask you. I am just asking you a simple question. I think you do.

Now he says, "I bring near my righteousness". Not yours, but his. And He didn't leave us to guess how near He brought it. "It shall not be far off and my salvation shall not tarry; and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory." Now what is He saying? Zion is the church of the Living God. So I want to ask you a question, dear hearers. What did it leave for you to do when He places salvation in Zion? I want to ask you. What in the world has the poor creature of the dust to do? What in the world did it leave Him to do when He said that He placed salvation in Zion, and then I want to tell you that you don't need to guess where salvation is, because the Apostle Paul says, "In Him." In who? In Christ is salvation. Neither is there salvation in any other. Now I want to ask you one more question, and that is, doesn't that cut out all hardshell preaching, too? I mean preaching about bringing salvation to anybody. What is the reason why a hardshell preacher can't bring salvation to anybody? It is because they can't bring it to themselves. They don't need to bring it. They don't have to, because God places it there in Zion.

I would like to call your attention to a scripture that I read a few days ago, because it is in harmony with that one that I just read; it is found in the 7th chapter of Amos, verse 8. I believe again that it says what it means and it means just exactly what it says. The Lord here asked Amos something. We read, "And the Lord said unto me, Amos, what seeth thou?" Now we don't have to guess who asked Amos that, do we? The Lord asked Amos that. Not a preacher, not a deacon, not a lay member, not an organization, but the Lord asked Amos, "What are you seeing?" Amos saw something, or the Lord wouldn't have asked him. He would have told him what He wanted him to see. "What thou seeth, Amos?" "And I said, A plumbline". Amos told the Lord just what he saw, "A plumbline". "Then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumbline in the midst of my people Israel: I will not again pass by them any more." My dear hearers, we know that a plumbline is what carpenters use in building a building. And we know that a natural plumbline does not make a crooked wall. But I tell you what you can do. You can take a building after it has settled and after it has been built for some time and you can stretch that plumbline to the plummet and it will show you every crook and every flat place that is in the

building, and I want to tell you that a natural plumbline will do that. And I want to tell you dear children of the Heavenly King, until Israel has a plumbline placed in the midst of them, they won't know anything about their crooked ways. And I want to tell you, dear children, that the Lord has just one plumbline and that plumbline is His Darling Son, for in Him is salvation, neither is there salvation in any other. When He places that plumbline within your very being, that plumbline, which if Christ Jesus, shows you every crook and every turn that is in your very being. And it makes the individual to confess that sin is mixed with all that he does. Why does it make him confess that sin is mixed with all that he does? It is because there is no sin about this plumbline, as sure as you live.

And now too, I want to tell you one more thing. I am going to have to preach what I believe this morning, if I preach at all. Now children of God, if you stretch a plumbline down the side of this building and I want to tell you, it shows you where it is crooked, and where the crooked places are in this building. That plumbline will not make the building straight, by no means. And I want to tell you something, dear children of the Heavenly King. When Christ is born in you, the hope of glory, that doesn't make you to quit sinning. It just shows you what a sinner you are and it makes you to hate sin. It makes you to wish that you could never sin again, as sure as you live. Now as the plumbline does not straighten up the building, but only tells you there is a little crook here, and a crook there; there is no perfection in them. I'm talking about that place, now. I want to prove that. Even though after Christ is born in them the Hope of Glory, because the Apostle Paul said, "In me is no good thing, that is in my flesh." And you know, He said, "I thank God that with my mind I serve the law of God, but with my flesh the law of sin."

I want to ask you, my dear hearers, would you have known anything about your crooked ways until the plumbline was placed by you? You didn't reach up and get it and you didn't go to where it was. It came to you, as sure as you live, and you know the reason why it came to you? It came because in the beginning your mother, Eve, transgressed. She transgressed in that home back yonder in the garden, so she was separated from her head. There wasn't a way in the world that poor Eve could go to Adam. Why? Because she had fallen in sin. And what caused her to commit that sin? She transgressed the holy law God had given, and you know, where there is no law, there is no sin. So did Sister Eve. She violated the law. She fell under sin, and when she fell under sin her whole being ultimately became crooked. And I am going to have to preach this hard doctrine, as sure as you live.

Solomon said in Ecclesiastes, "Consider the work of God; who can make that straight which God has made crooked." I want to tell you, there is not enough preachers in the United States or in the whole world, to make one perfect in this time world, as sure as you live. So Eve was separated from her husband and there wasn't a way in the world that poor old Mother Eve could go back to Adam. You know that Adam had to go to Eve, as sure as you live, and because of the love he had for that woman, he was willing to go down in sin, knowing what the results would be. And he took of that fruit, as sure as you live, because of the love he had for her. He was willing to die for her and that is exactly what he did. And when he did, that put every one of his posterity into sin; every last one of them.

Now, if you know any human beings who came from anyone except Adam, then you might get them out of the condition that they are in. But everyone that is his offspring, that is, everyone that came from Adam and Eve was born in this horrible condition. They were born in sin, and a destitute condition,

and there is nothing they can do about it. They could not, and we cannot go to Christ, just as Eve could not go back to Adam after she fell. We are just as helpless to go to Christ as Eve was to go to Adam. I am going to prove that by the Bible, and don't make me out a horrible person if I fail to do that. Now, they both have transgressed the law, and God put a curse on the earth, and I want to tell you that He used different language when He cursed the earth, because curse means death with God. You know, we might use the same language and call that cursing, but that is not. A curse means death, as sure as you live. And so God cursed the earth for man's sake and it brought forth thorns and thistles. And then God drove man out of the garden, and his wife with him.

And you know, the tree of life represented Christ Jesus, and it was also in the midst of that garden. The Godhead then said, "Man has become as one of us to know good and evil." And lest they reach forth and take of the tree of life and live forever, they were forbidden to stay. I want to prove that to you by the Bible. "And he placed a Cherubim and a flaming sword which turned every way", not to keep them away from the tree of life, no, because that tree of life didn't need such. But that which I want to get to is to keep the way of the tree of life; lest man reach forth and partake and live forever. And I want you to tell me where in the word of God it says that sword has ever been taken down from around that tree that keeps the way of the tree of life. As sure as you live, it never has been taken down. I want to prove that to you, because Jesus said in the 6th chapter of John that "No man can come to me except my father who sent me draw him". You know the reason they can't come? Because there is a flaming sword turning every way which keeps the way of the tree of life. The tree doesn't need keeping, itself, because it is the way of life, as sure as you live. And as long as eternity remains it will keep the way of the tree of life.

I want to tell you something, brethren, when I started on this subject, I said he would place salvation in Zion forever more. He said, "I will place a plumbline among Israel, and I will place it there." And in the land of Eden He put His only begotten Son in the person of Jesus Christ, here upon this low ground of sin and sorrow. And the Bible says He was born on this wise. "And when Joseph was espoused to Mary before He knew her he found her with child", and you know, he being a just man, he thought to put her away privately. But while he thought on these things, behold the angel of the Lord appeared to him in his sleep and said to him, "Fear not Joseph, to take unto thee Mary, thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. For she shall bring forth a Son and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." Isn't that what Isaiah has said, when he said, "I place salvation in Israel," and isn't that what Amos saw when he saw that plumbline and God told him, "I will place a plumbline in the midst of Israel. I will not pass them by any more." And then when that plumbline came, it was Jesus, and he gives proof. And I want to tell you one thing. There is no crook in the person of Jesus. He is the plumbline, as sure as you live. And I want to tell you something else, He is not only straight, but He is strait. And He said for all His people, "Strait is the way, and few be that go that way". "Strait is the gate, that leads to life everlasting, and few there be that find it." I will tell you just how many are going to find it; yes, everyone that had that way placed in them, as sure as you live. In every one that believes has that plumbline been placed there. He says, "I go before my sheep. I put them forth and they do follow me. And a stranger they will not follow because they know not the voice

of a stranger."

You know, children, I want to preach now what I believe. You never would have given your heart and life to Christ. No. No. But Christ was given to you in eternity. As sure as you live. I want to prove that by the Bible. "No man is able to pluck them out of my hand, for my Father who gaveth them me is greater than all". Oh, yes! No man is able to pluck them out of My hand. The Lord told Amos, "I will put a plumbline in the midst of Israel. And I will not again pass by them any more". And you know, Paul said, "I am persuaded that things present, or things to come, or height or depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord." Oh, that is a sweet promise to me, that He won't pass us by any more. And now Jesus, who was born in Bethlehem of Judah and was born of a virgin, and with all those miracles He did, it didn't cause people to move toward Him. Oh, no! But let me tell you, the only ones who did believe were His sheep, as sure as you live.

You can't find in all the pages of the Bible that everything doesn't happen just like He planned it. No where is there any goats made into sheep. It didn't even make them want to be a sheep. They didn't have the want-to. And I will tell you the reason why they didn't have the want-to, because He said, "For this cause I will send them a strong delusion that they should believe a lie and be damned, who receive not the love of the truth, but have faith in their own righteousness." The next verse says, "We are bound to give thanks always for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, for God hath from the beginning chosen you into salvation through sanctification and belief of the truth." Are you not for all eternity, to give thanks for it? I will tell you also, dear brethren, if there was something we could do, we would do it, but Paul said, "Brethren, we are bound to give thanks always to the preacher? Oh, no, no. Give thanks unto the church? Oh, no no., but we are bound to give thanks always unto God for you brethren, beloved of the Lord, for God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth." Now then, do you know Him, who for something like 33 years went about preaching, and then was crucified? Before they crucified Him, He said, "But it is needful that I go away. For if I go not away, the comforter shall not come." And brethren, I want to tell you something else. He didn't send it to the non-elect. But He said, "I will place a plumbline among Israel", and Israel is His people. And He said, "I will place salvation in Zion", and not in the world, but in Zion. As sure as you live.

Now I want to prove to you that when God sent out His twelve, He didn't say, "Go among the goats". Oh, no, no. But they were sent to one people. And you know, when He sent the twelve, He told them not to go to the general public, but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. I want to tell you dear hearers, they never were sent among the non elect. And they never will be sent unto the non elect. God sends them, as sure as you live, not to do their own will, but the will of Him that sends them. And He told the twelve, "Go not in the way of the Gentiles, but rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." And while Christ was preaching to those lost sheep of the house of Israel to whom He was sent, He said, "Other sheep have I which are not of this fold. But them must I also bring. I want to tell you one thing, if He hadn't brought the Gentiles to that fold, the plumbline would never have been among them. As sure as you live. Why? Because the Gentiles couldn't go to Him. That is why! They know that no one can go to Him except the Father which sent Him draw them. And He said "Other sheep have I which are not of this fold. Them I must also bring. And there shall be one shepherd and one fold." Oh, dear

children, have you ever felt the plumbline? It doesn't vary. It doesn't turn, either to the right or to the left. It is straightway, as sure as you live. It doesn't wait for me and you to decide to have everlasting life.

But there is a way opened. And that is the way that Isaiah spoke of in the 35th chapter when he said, "And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness: The unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools shall not err therein." You know the reason why those that err are not there? You would have to turn aside to get in this way should you err, and that is why there is no erring in that way, because there are no errors in that way. That is a straight way. That is a plumbline. There is no error in the plumbline, which is Christ Jesus, as sure as you live.

Now He said, "I will place a plumbline among Israel, and my people, and I won't pass them by any more." And also He said, "I will bring near my righteousness and it shall not tarry. I will place salvation in Zion, among my people for my glory, saith the Lord." Now then for the Jews I will preach, "Other sheep have I which are not of this fold, them also will I bring, and there shall be one shepherd and one fold." And you know, He said then, "It need be that I go away, for if I go not away, the comforter will not come. But if I go away, I will pray the Father and he will send you the Spirit, which the world cannot see." It has been there a long time, and that is another sermon, as sure as you live. He said, "I will send to you another spirit, which the world cannot receive, and it shall take the things of mine and try to show them unto you? No, no. And it shall take the things of mine and show them unto you." I want to tell you, my little children, that He will save you from sin unto Himself. That is the plumbline, because God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, these three are One, as sure as you live. And you know, He told them to go to Jerusalem, and there came unto them a message from on high. And the number was about 120, and out of every nation, kindred, tongue, they were assembled at that place when the Holy Ghost came. I heard a man this morning over the radio, I won't call a name, but I heard the man say as he was preaching on Holy Ghost baptism, that you can go to the altar and say, "Lord, Lord" until the Holy Ghost comes. And that, I want to tell you, is making fun of the Holy Ghost. I believe that is blaspheming the Holy Ghost. I want to preach what I believe, now, if God will allow me to do so. They were told of God to go to Jerusalem and there tarry until visited from on high, and it came upon the group, like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the whole house. What was it He said for them to do? He said to go there and tarry. And the Bible says in another place, "Be still and know that I am God." Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. I want to tell you one thing. You don't have to go anywhere, or to any altar. Why? Because He said, "I will place a plumbline among Israel, my people. And I will place salvation in Zion." I will tell you, brethren, you don't have to go anywhere. And He told them at Jerusalem, "And there tarry." Stand still. Stop your works. And there tarry until you are endowed from on high. And it came a rushing and mighty wind, and it filled the whole house. Everyone there spoke in his own tongue and everyone understood the words of God. You can take a man, I don't care how able he is and you can send him to preach all over the United States over the radio and over the TV and every church house, and I guarantee you, it won't profit anything unless that plumbline has already got there before the peacher gets there, as sure as you live. Why? Because they won't understand it, and I am going to prove that by the Scriptures. Paul didn't know who the children of God were; I know he didn't. Only the

Lord knew who they were. Paul and Barnabas preached, and they didn't know who was and who wasn't. And they said, "Seeing that you put it from you, and count yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo we turn to the Gentiles. When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the name of the Lord." Did everyone of them do that? No. The book tells us just how many were glorifying the Lord, and how many weren't. "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the name of the Lord, and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." I want to tell you that ordained means set apart. Everyone that the plumbline had been placed in, that one is the one that salvation had been placed in. And I want to tell you, they can't help glorifying the name of the Lord.

Transcribed from a recorded sermon by Elder Loyd Wall, Bivins, TX.

Elizabeth City, N.C.

Dear Brethren:

I am enclosing a check to renew my subscription for two years. Please use the balance as you see fit.

I don't get to go to church very often any more. I do enjoy the ***Signs of the Times.*** I hope I can be blessed to have it as long as I can see how to read it. I can't write very well about the way I feel, but the Lord knows my heart and how much I have enjoyed going to the churches far and near. I have been blessed to hear most of you ministers from time to time.

I can't drive for long trips any more, and therefore I have to stay home most of the time. It is a comfort to have the ***Signs of the Times*** to read. I feel that most of you will remember me, although how unworthy I am.

May God bless each and every one and my love to all. I greatly need and desire your prayers.

In hope of a better life,
Catherine Vass

A GOOD JOURNEY

Dear Elder Poole,

On July 8th Elder and Sister Shipman, their daughter, Denise, Sister Joyce Pittman, my parents, Elder and Sister Joe L. Hamrick, and myself departed Winnsboro, Texas and headed for the Staunton River Association in Virginia. We spent the first night at Elder and Sister McCool's home in Steens, Mississippi, where we received a warm welcome. The next morning, we went to pick up Elder and Sister Griffin at their home just outside of Crossville, Alabama. Elder Griffin requested Elder Shipman to offer prayer for a safe and prosperous journey. A beautiful prayer having been offered, we headed our fully loaded van towards Virginia. Singing the sweet hymns of Zion made the time go by faster. Even when we weren't singing, time and miles quickly passed by, as Elder Griffin's presence ensured there would be no dull moments.

Before we hit the Virginia line, we stopped at Elder and Sister Berry's home for a lovely visit. Elder and Sister Griffin also visited Sister Bellows, Elder Gilbert Beebe's granddaughter and I understand, only surviving direct descendent. Having squeezed in some good free grace books we bought from Elder Berry, we headed on our way.

The surprise element in the trip was that Sister Joyce Pittman had not informed her parents, Elder and Sister Julian Williams, that she was coming along with us. Needless to say, after arriving at the Williams' home, the surprise reunion of daughter and family presented a most joyous scene, and was very heartwarming to all who witnessed it.

To those of us from Texas, the open air Staunton River Association was a new experience. In Texas, our numbers are few enough to where the Association can be accommodated within the church building. Thus, for we Texans, seeing a vast array of people sitting in folding chairs on bare ground, with beautiful

trees all around and the singing of the birds in the background, proved to be a different, and altogether beautiful setting for the preached word to fall upon hungry souls. The Prince of Peace seemed pleased to bless all three days of the Association with His sweet presence. We can all say that it was good to be there.

There is nothing like visiting among God's people, for surely Christ reveals a measure of Himself in each one of His little ones. They are able to comfort one another and edify one another with the comfort and edification they themselves have received from above. Thus, the visitation proved to be one of the crowning joys of the whole trip.

Having personally visited the North Carolina - Virginia area with Elder Lambert a few months before, I had enjoyed listening to the spiritual conversation between Elder Spangler and Elder Lambert at Brother and Sister French's home. I was now blessed at Brother Burnell Williams' home to hear Elder Spangler and Elder Griffin speak concerning their precious Lord and Saviour. We never truly appreciate our wise aged Elders until they've left this old world. Then we begin to sorrow not only our great loss, but the fact that we did not show enough appreciation for their long labor in the Word and doctrine, while we were blessed to have them in our midsts. We may even have said things to them that we would to God and we could have apologized for, but we usually wait until they pass away, and then it is too late. While at Brother and Sister Burnell Williams' home, Elder Spangler spoke a few words of comfort to Elder Lambert on a cassette recorder. Brother and Sister Wells later spoke a few words on the cassette, as did Elder Griffin. Elder Lambert had been invited to come on this trip, but due to his health and other reasons, he felt that he shouldn't try to make it.

Leaving Sister Joyce Pittman with her family, we headed for Maryland and your home where we enjoyed the same wonderful Christian fellowship. For Elder and Sister Griffin, it was like a homecoming to visit the area where they used to live. You and your wife were very thoughtful to show us around Welsh Tract and London Tract Churches. If those old church walls could speak, what stories they'd be able to tell! We were certainly made to feel at home up your way and please give our love and regards to the brethren.

Leaving your home to begin our return trip, we stopped at Brother and Sister Bill Davis' home where Elder Griffin made some very touching remarks to Beth Davis, exhorting her to never forget that her parents are Old School Baptists, and giving her some of the characteristics of Old School Baptists. I wish I could get the spirit of his remarks down, but I believe that it will suffice to say that all were in tears. when Elder Griffin finished speaking.

We later arrived back at Elder Williams' home where we picked up Sister Joyce and continued on our journey South. We stopped at Lookout Mountain along the way, to view God's marvelous handiwork upon seven states.

Returning through Alabama, we stopped and ate at Elder and Sister Griffin's home. It was difficult saying goodby, as we had enjoyed their fellowship on the trip immensely. We next arrived at Elder and Sister McCool's home where we received word that Elder Lambert had been admitted to the hospital in Hot Springs, Ark.

While with the brethren in Mississippi and Alabama, we experienced the same warm fellowship.

We then headed West, reaching Winnsboro, Texas on July 21st. Sister Joyce Pittman immediately drove on to Dallas to be with her husband, Phil, on their first wedding anniversary. The next morning, Elder and Sister Shipman and their daughter headed further south

for their home just south of San Antonio.

Words cannot express our feelings concerning the love shown us. We all have returned with a large store of good memories. One of my father's more pleasant memories center around meeting Elder Spangler for the first time and visiting with him and his wife.

Later, we called up Elder Lambert and replayed the tape cassette messages from back East. He enjoyed them very much and received them as messages of love. One of the more unforgettable remarks made on the trip was by Elder Griffin, who said that we are all on a good journey, hoping the same things, believing the same things, and looking forward to the same things. Elder Lambert just ended his journey last August 14th. It was indeed a good journey since it had such a good destination. He is now with the Christ he loved so well, with the Christ he traveled on so many trips as ours, to preach. He has indeed reached his final journey's end. He has arrived home.

In one precious Hope,
Jimmy Hamrick

Bassett, Va.

Dear ***Editors of the Signs of the Times,***

It is time again to renew my subscription for the ***Signs of the Times.*** I am sending $10.00 for two more years. I do not agree with every point of view that goes into the paper, but I cannot remember anything written by the Editors being contrary to the scriptures. I don't like so many old articles being republished, but of all the writings of Elder Beebe I have never read anything unsound. When the paper becomes perfect, then it will be time for my cancellation. I beg the readers to have patience and not expect to find perfection only in our Lord Jesus Christ. There are many errors spoken in the pulpit and we overlook it and cast a mantle of charity that peace may prevail. May God be with us altogether with the Editors.

(Elder) J. R. Hollandsworth

FROM AN OLD SIGNS

COUNT THEM OUT

The following extract from the "National Baptist", of Philadelphia, we copy from the "Baptist Watchman", of Nashville, Tenn.:

"Why should the Anti-Mission Baptists be numbered among us? The fact of their practicing immersion does not make them Baptists. If they denied the divinity of the Lord, we should not reckon them among us. Why, then, do we include them, while they repudiate his last command–the great commission? By enumerating them we put ourselves in a false and most unfavorable position. A comparision of our numbers with our contributions does us injustice. The avowed drones should be counted out; and we hope that our brother, the careful compiler of the Year Book, will leave them out of the Baptist table next year, putting them, if so disposed, in a separate head under different denominations."

"And how about the drones that are not avowed? How about the Omission Baptists? And in what relation do the Associations stand to those do-nothing churches? Suppose that a church, year after year, reports no contributions to christian benevolence; is it not the duty of the Association to inquire into the matter, just as much as though the church were unsound in doctrine? We believe that it is the duty of the Association. A church that sets at naught Christ's commands, has and ought to have no place among Baptist Churches."

REMARKS: Yes, O yes, count them out, by all means; if any of the Old Primitive Order of Baptists who repudiate modern unscriptural missionary plans for fleecing and deceiving the people have become mixed up with your national religious organizations, cast them out, by all means, and as soon as possible; for it is written of the Lord's chosen people, "Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations." (Num. 23:9) "My kingdom", saith Christ, "is not of this world", nor does it require human power or policy to sustain it; for, "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the

bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about and instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." (Deut. 33:8-12) "Israel then shall dwell in safety alone". "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee? O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency, and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places." (Deut. 33:28, 29)

If the National Baptists then have hitherto counted any of the Lord's Israel in to swell their number, let them now count them out. Let them remember how it fared with the Philistines, when they had taken the ark of the Lord and set it up in the house of Dagon, how soon they discovered the necessity of counting it out, for Dagan could not stand before it. Egypt also had to count the Hebrews out, when the time had come for their deliverance.

Count them out, ye National Missionary Baptist, just as your missionary brethren who compassed sea and land with their missionary operations counted out the disciples of Christ, when they agreed that if any among them should confess him, they should be counted out of their synagogues.

The "National Baptist" says. "If they", the Anti-Mission Baptists, "denied the divinitv of the Lord. we should not reckon them among us." Why not? Do you refuse any who pay the initiation fee in current money? Your constitution, unless it has been changed, will admit to membership, life membership or directorship, any who will pay the stipulated sum required, without inquiring concerning their faith.

"You imply a charge, that those whom you wish to count out as Anti-Mission Baptists repudiate the last command of Christ, the great commission. This charge we peremptorily deny, and challenge the author of the slander to the proof. What was the last command of Christ in the commission? Was it, "Send ye into all the world--send ye and teach all nations, and teach them to observe all things which the President, Directors, and Co. of the Mission Societies shall command you?" Or did he command his diciples the apostles, saying, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Teaching them--what? Were they to teach them to institute Mission Societies, collect funds, establish Theological Schools, heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and send them to all nations? If so, we have read the word to no profit. As we read the Savior's command, it was that the apostles of the Lamb should go (not send) and teach all nations, baptizing them, etc., teaching them to observe all things whatsoever Christ had commanded them, (the apostles) to whom this command was given. They were not to teach for doctrines the commandments of men, but the commandments of Christ; no more, no less. Who then are they that repudiate the Savior's instructions and commands in the commission? Let the accuser of our brethren how a single percept of our Savior's commands that we repudiate, or cease to accuse us of disloyalty to the King of Zion.

We can conceive of no reason the New Order of Church and State, National, or Missionary Baptists have for including the Bible Baptists in their annual reports, but that suggested by the "National Baptist", namely, to swell

their number, or to take away their reproach; but as there is no concord between Christ and Belial--no agreement between the temple of God and idols, we second the motion that the Anti-Missionary Baptists be counted out from the fraternity of the Nationals; for as the Nationals despair of making any money out of us, we shall be as unpalatable to them as the prophet of the Lord was to the whale, and they will be quite as ready to count us out, as the monster of the deep was to count out poor old Jonah.

It seems from the wailings of the "National" that the New School Baptists are annoyed by drones in their hive; which, being interpreted, means that they have members who do not contribute freely to their filthy lucre to fill the bag of those Judases who have charge of the funds. Now we ask, "Of what use can they be to a missionary organization, if the institution can make no money out of them?" In the church of the living God the poor have the gospel preached unto them; but in a modern mission establishment they are drones, and must be counted out of the missionary hive. Suppose they are sound in the doctrine of the Bible, what will that avail if they cannot or will not contribute freely to swell the income of a bloated, anti-christian clergy? Well, put on the last, and count out the drones. Let their names, with those of the anti-missionaries, be cast out as evil.

April 15, 1875

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May 4, 1980

Dearly Beloved Brethern,

I would like to express a few thoughts on the law and justice for your consideration.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth and all things therein. They were created by him and for him. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." (Rev. 4:11). It is for his honor, glory and

pleasure that all things exist; yet there are those who say that he did not create the devil and that he did not want sin in the world. Both of these contentions are disproved by Job. "His hand hath formed the crooked serpent." (Job 26:13). And, "What his soul desireth, even that he doeth." (Job 23:13). If God had desired to keep sin out of the world I am sure he has the power to do so, for, "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? (Dan. 4:35). Not only did God form the crooked serpent, he gave Satan all the power he possesses: "For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." (Rom. 13:1). But it is very comforting to the children of God to know that Satan can go no further than permitted of God, for he has put a hedge around his children that cannot be penetrated (Job 1:10), but according to the will of God. Satan does torment, afflict and use every vice against us to try our faith, as he did Job, but he can never take our life: for it is eternal and hid with Christ in God. In this, Satan is doing the will of God, for all these trials and afflictions work together for our good. This is the furnace thru which we must pass: the trial of our faith. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." (I Pet. 4:12-13).

God has a purpose for sin in the world, but he is not the author of it: for sin is the transgression of the law (I John 3:4); and entered the world by man: "Wherefore, by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." When God formed man of the dust of the earth he made him upright, but subject to vanity. And being made subject to vanity, man fell from his lofty estate into a state of sin; from whence he had no power to recover. I am sure that had God desired to do so he would have made man in some other fashion: but who is man that he should question why God made him thus? "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"

The purpose of sin in the world and the salvation of God's children from its curse is co-existant with God: andChrist stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world as that salvation. God's law is just and holy, and his justice demands the death of every transgressor. Christ paid justice all her due when he hung on the cross of Calvary, bled and died for the transgressions of his children, the ones chosen in him before the foundation of the world. He was made a curse for us, for, "Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree."

But how can justice be satisfied if the just suffer the penalty of the unjust? We know of no law that would allow anyone to be put to death in the room and stead of someone else who has been found guilty of offence worthy of death. Be they father, mother, brother, sister, or friend, and regardless of their desire to do so, they could never truly serve justice by dying for the guilty. Should one be put to death in such a case murder would be the result and the guilty one would still be deserving of death.

When God formed Adam and placed him in the garden of Eden Eve was in him. God took a rib from Adam and made a woman. "And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her to the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man." Eve was deceived by the crooked serpent and ate of the forbidden fruit. Adam was not deceived, but because of his great love for his bride he also ate of the forbidden fruit: and both

died. To deny this would be to proclaim God a liar; for he said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Death means to be separated from or cut off, therefore they surely were separated from their fellowship and standing with God, and cast out of the garden.

Adam is a type or shadow of Jesus Christ, the image of him who is to come. As Eve was in Adam, so is Christ's bride in him; the bride being the church, "which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." (Eph. 1:23). Christ is the head of the body, the church; and we are the body, and "members in particular." (I Cor. 12:27). Jesus loved his bride with an everlasting love and would die for her that he might redeem her from the curse of the law. But in his Godhead he could not die, therefore he became incarnate. He took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham and was born of the virgin Mary who was overshadowed by the Holy Ghost. Therefore he was verily God and verily man. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that thru death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. (Heb. 2:14-15). We read in Heb. 10:5, "Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, "Sacrifice and offerings thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me." Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin; and Christ was the sacrifice, the body prepared, that he might shed his blood on the tree of Calvary and perfect forever them that are sanctified. Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one. They are one body: "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." (Eph. 5:30).

When Christ was nailed to the cross, his people were in him, and they died in him. Therefore we see now how justice was satisfied when the Just was slain for the unjust; and prove that he did not die for all the Adamic race as is taught by the Arminian people. His people died in him, were buried in him, and they arose in him. And when he shall come again, without sin unto salvation, these vile bodies shall be changed like unto his glorious body. Then shall we see him as he is and be with him forever.

The soldiers broke the legs of the two thieves who were crucified with him, but they did not break the legs of Christ. This was done that the scripture might be fulfilled, "A bone of him shall not be broken." I believe this is significant, in that had they broken his bones they would have broken the children of God. Glory be unto God, this cannot be done!

Dearly Beloved Brethern, knowing that the scriptures are of no private interpretation, and knowing my great weakness, I can only pray that these scriptures have been rightly divided and hope that I am included in those for whom the Lord shed his precious blood. Cast a mantle of charity over my errors and may God grant that you remember me when at the throne of Grace.

Clifford Wilbanks

2764 Clifton Ave., N.W.
Roanoke, Va. 24017
June 20, 1980

Dear Editors of the ***Signs of the Times***:

It is my privilege to send in, at this time, articles for your consideration. Each one of the contributors have had articles in the ***Signs,*** except Sister Myrtle Thomas, who is a member of County Line, and in her 80th year, we have communicated by pen for many years. I have enjoyed same, I copied her last to me, let her read it, and she, tho reluctantly, because of her poor expressions, of so great a subject as "Salvation by Grace", gave her permission to send same for your consideration. Dear Brother; may He that

said to Peter, "what is that to thee? follow thou me", in these perilous times, strengthen you. When so many are saying, I'm of this one and I'm of that one. May I ask, Who has delivered. Whom do we trust that will yet deliver, and who is he that has made all things beautiful in his time but he that still says, with power, "What is that to thee? follow thou me". May we be given a humble heart and lowly mind, that we could say, with those of old, "For our conversation is in heaven", then I would not have the thought I am of this one or that one, but that my trust is in him, that bear the earths huge pillars up, Ps. 75:3 that a poor sinner such as I, am yet suffered to grace the stage of action, says "he has not changed". He that gave me sight to see my lost and ruined condition more than 50 years ago, still reigns in righteousness, and;

1 There's not a sparrow nor a worm
But's found in God's decrees;
He raises Monarchs to their thrones,
And sinks them if he please.

2 If light attend the course I run
'Tis he provides those rays;
And 'tis his hand that hides my sun,
If darkness cloud my days.

3 When he reveals the Book of Life
O may I read my name
Among the chosen of his love,
The followers of the Lamb?

63 Gadsby's Selections

After these many years, tho so often feeling out of the good way and so utterly unworthy in self, I still have hope there was a work within that says "Follow me" that He begun and still carries on; Even this morning, by faith in Him, I in a moment was back in Botetourt County, where I first felt His delivering hand and saw the beauty of his whole creation praising Him, which was a melting of heart this day, and as then I was speechless, at the glory of the Lord.

He is all I have that shall remain, should I know any other name. May each ask ourselves, What have we but what we have received and if we have of Him received all that is of worth to us, is it not of worth, to yet follow "Him".

Please excuse the poor arranging and small words that point out such a great subject. Which brought to mind a book by Elder John Rowe on the, Sovereignty of God, Which had a quotation on the fly, "I think I love the doctrine this book points out better than my own life" and was signed by my great grandmother, Violet Turner, one of the charter members of County Line. What a living union I felt to her, tho at that date I had known so little of her. Again may we humbly hear, "What is that to thee, follow thou me".

Farewell,
Noel F. Conner

(We hope to print the articles Bro. Conner mentions shortly. Editor)

Olympia, Washington

To the Signs of the Times:

I am enclosing a check for two years subscription to the ***Signs of the Times.*** Use the balance as you see fit.

I enjoy the paper very much. I don't get to go to church very often due to health conditions. It is good to have the paper to read. I am 85 years old.

In Christian Hope,
Maude Schwartz

FOR THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Near Waynesborgh
Nov. 6, 1835

Dear Brother Beebe: I have just returned from a short, but laborious tour in the edge of West Virginia, among a few of the scattered sheep and lambs of the Redeemer, and among whom I enjoyed a considerable degree of satisfaction, as I believe they are lovers of Truth. Two of them joined to obtain one copy of your worthy paper, and I have also two other subscribers. Dear Brother, from reading your paper, I have been much encouraged to stand fast in the liberty of

the gospel and face my opposers with christian fortitude, altho' the religious world is in utter confusion. For while the multitude of professors are fondly dreaming of the early dawn of a glorious millennium, to be ushered in by human effort, and in which all mankind are to have a true knowledge of Christ, and all act in consert with each other in all things pertaining to the Redeemer's Kingdom; a little despised few are often found weeping over the declension of vital piety and extensive apostacy from the faith once delivered to the saints; viewing the spirit of the day as pregnant with fatal consequences to the cause of godliness and truth. And from the persecuting taunts, connected with the bold attempts to brake up the churches and change the theology of the Baptists, they are looking forward on the day, when they, as the last witnesses of gospel truth, must bring up the rear of martyrdom, and seal with their own blood their valor for the truth which shall remain on the earth.

But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself; so that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify of the grace of God. Yet these things trouble me, for this is a day of peculiar trial to the saints--a day in which light is called darkness, and darkness light; truth is called error, and error is abundantly propagated for truth; the doctrine of grace blasphemously called antinomianism, and the delusive whims of Fuller and Hopkins, thundering from most of our pulpits; that is to say, the Atonement of Christ is general to all and special to part, and efficacious to none until they do their part--and for want of new plans and cash to drive on, millions of souls redeemed by Christ must go to hell; but, say they, at our protracted meetings we will raise a great storm and convert all the sinners while their passions are warm. It is true they proselyte considerable numbers, and thereby fill up their churches with graceless professors; and like priest-like people, "they are heady, high minded lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God--having a form of godliness and denying the power thereof"; from such I am bound to turn away. I am often pained to see many, who appear to be christians, following their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth is evil spoken of; and even many who profess to believe our doctrine will say, It is not profitable to preach the doctrine of the gospel given us, as practical preaching. But, Brethren, with equal propriety Christ may be charged with preaching an unprofitable sermon, (John 6), when in reply to the caviling of the Jews, he says, "Murmur not among yourselves, no man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day"; and he continued his sermon in a glorious development of the way of life and salvation through the sacrifice of himself, so that many of his soft-mouthed, world-loving disciples began to baul out, "It is a hard saying, who can hear it?" and turned backward and walked no more with him. Yet this sermon only tended to expose their hypocrisy, and like the cask of new wine which through fermentation casts out its dregs and renders the body more pure; but, brethren, "mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them, for they that are such serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple". Such men are very numerous among us; but we must expect them, for the Scripture tells us they shall arise, and if the prophetic part fail, why not the promises which are yea and amen.

But I must conclude my epistle; I have not written because I thought myself capable of writing for public inspection, but because I thought it might be strengthening to my dear brethren

or heart, sending its vitality to every member. This heart was to be assailed by a dreadful trial which was now about to fall with such crushing weight upon them. But, as though at once to let them know that he was fully aware of the approaching trial, and to give them a comforting assurance that it should result in their good and his glory, the kind, sympathetic words of encouragement are graciously spoken, "Yield not to despair; let not your heart be troubled.

"Ye believe in God, believe also in me." The trial now approaching was peculiarly calculated to test their faith in him as the true Messiah that was to come. Although it might not shake their confidence in God, or lead them to fear that there is no God, was it not calculated to make them fear that Jesus was not the Son of God and Savior of his people, as they had understood him to be? It certainly did have the effect. They said, despairingly, "We verily thought it was he that should redeem Israel;" but alas! that confidence was shaken when they saw him crucified, and his lifeless body laid in the grave. Still though fearing that they had been mistaken in regarding him as the Son of God, they betrayed no lack of faith in God. Now these words of assurance seem to imply that there was in all they should witness, if properly understood, nothing that ought any sooner to be allowed to shake their confidence in him as the Meditorial Head of the church, than to shake their faith in the eternal Father.

Again, the same faith which recognized the Father, also must necessarily recognize the Son of God as one with the Father, for none can know the Father but by revelation of Christ, and none can come unto the Father but by him. Our faith cannot be so divided as to believe in God and disbelieve in Christ, for there is but one faith, as we have proved, and he that has by that one faith seen the Son, hath seen the Father also. For the Father is in him, and he is in the Father; he and the Father are one.

"In my Father's house are many mansions." This is the affirmation of an existing truth, and a most glorious truth. And his ability to describe his Father's house was as evidence that he was the Son of God. A stranger could not describe that house which is made without hands, and which is eternal in the heavens. But Jesus is the Faithful and true Witness. No man hath ascended up into heaven; but the Son of God has come down from heaven, and reveals all that is necessary for us to know of the house of God, and if there were anything more concerning his Father's house which his children ought to know, he would have told them. The house of God is his dwelling place - his place of permanent abode, where he makes his home. His house is figuratively set forth in types and shadows of the Old Testament, as the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, as the Temple in Jerusalem; and in a more spiritual manifestation made to the partiarch Jacob, when in rapture he exclaimed, "Verily, God was in this place, and I knew it not; this is none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven." The gospel church and kingdom of Christ is called the house of God. Ye are God's building. — I Cor. iii. 9. "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ." — 1 Pet. ii. 5. The house of God is frequently mentioned in the Old Testament scriptures, as Gen. xxviii. 17, Josh, ix. 23, Judg. xviii. 31, and xx. 18, Psa. xlii. 4, lv. 14, lii. 8, lxxxiv. 10, Isa. ii. 3, Mic. iv. 2, and in very many other passages. And yet we are informed that the Lord dwelleth not in houses made with hands. Figuratively he was said to dwell in the tabernacle in the wilderness, in the temple at Jerusalem, but all these were types, pointing to Christ and his church, or body, as the true spiritual dwelling place of our God. "For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever;

here will I dwell, for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her poor with bread."—Psa. cxxxii. 13-15. "His foundation is in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God." — Psa. ixxxvii. 1-3. Therefore the holy psalmist could say, "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord."—Psa. cxxi. 1. "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee"—Psa. lxxxiv. 1 & 5. The psalmist exulted in the certainty of dwelling in the house of the Lord forever, because the Lord was his Shepherd.—Psa. xxiii. 6. This was the fullness of his aspiration. "One thing have I desired of the Lord; that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple."—Psa. xxvii. 4. This is the house which our Redeemer calls "My Father's house," in which he says, "are many mansions." Many opinions have been expressed in regard to the figurative import of the many mansions here spoken of, and to our mind the precise meaning is not so clear as we could desire. The true meaning, whatever it be, must be important, as we infer from the words of our Lord, "If it were not so, I would have told you." A mansion, in the modern application of the word, is a dwelling place, sometimes applied to a house, and sometimes to apartments or rooms of a house. In our text a distinction is implied between the house and the mansions. "In my Father's house are many mansions." The mansions are many, but the house of God is but one. So when other figures are used to express the same idea - one body and many members, or one city and many inhabitants, "There is a river, the steams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High."— Psa. xlvi. 4. In the text last named the city of God, which is but one, contains many tabernacles of the Most High. The same idea is expressed 1 Cor. xii. 12 - 14. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit, for the body is not one member, but many." "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. — I Cor. xii 18-20. In changing the figures which represent the same kingdom or church, from a house to a city, what in the former would be appropriately called mansions, in the latter would be more clearly expressed as houses, or tabernacles, and when a body is the figure, members of that body convey the same meaning. This to every citizen of the city of God is an appropriate dwelling, for Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together; whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord. For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David."—Psa. cxxii. 3-5. There is in the house of God a place or mansion for every member of the household of God; thrones of judgment to be occupied by the apostles to sit upon, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. The sons of Zebedee could not change their allotted mansions or positions, so as to sit one on the right and the other on the left hand of the king, when he should come into his kingdom. And as members of Christ, God has set each one in its appropriate place in the body of Christ as it hath pleased him. In the types of the ceremonial law the inheritance of each tribe was distinctly marked out and secured to each by an inalienable title.

And so also in the positions assigned officially to patriarchs, prophets, priests, levites, captains, kings and subjects. These types all pointed to the order of the house of God under the gospel dispensation, for in them were exhibited the patterns of the things of the heavenly kingdom, and although they were all confined to the worldly sanctuary and carnal ordinances of a fleshly or carnal Israel under the law, undoubtedly prefigured the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, under the gospel dispensation in the true tabernacle which God has pitched and not man.

The question may very naturally arise, if this be the sense in which our Lord spake of the many mansions of his Father's house, why this special mention should be made of them on this most solemn occasion? All the words of our divine Lord were fitly spoken, well timed, and full of vital interest to the saints. The organization of the gospel kingdom was now very soon to be manifested. The law and the prophets were until John; from the coming of John the kingdom of Christ was preached, that it was at hand, but the places in the gospel kingdom could not be attained until the last jot and tittle of the law should be fulfilled, until Christ should do and suffer all that was written of him in the law and in the prophets and in the psalms; for he must suffer and then enter into his glory, in coming into which he would ascend his Mediatorial throne, and when the Son of man should sit on the throne of his glory, the apostles who had followed him in the regeneration should also sit upon their twelve thrones. The deliverance of all his people should then be effected, and each should receive the mansion which was prepared for him in the house of God. Fully with Christ in his death, all his members were quickened together with him, and they raised up together and made to sit together in Christ Jesus. But, in all this, as in all things, Christ must have the pre-eminence. He must go before them in sufferings and death, must be the first fruits of them that slept in his resurrection, yet by vital union and identity of spirit "bearing his sheaves with him." Hence the suitableness of this solemn occasion to speak to them of the mansions, or heavenly places so soon to be occupied by them, when he should remove the bars of death by abolishing death, and bring immortality to light in his resurrection — when at his command the everlasting doors should be opened, and the everlasting gates should lift up their heads, and the king of glory should come in with all the trophies of his deathless victory, and by his triumph prove that to believe in God, is to believe also in him, and that the throne of his kingdom should be as firmly established and forever continue as unshaken as the throne of his eternal Father.

"If it were not so, I would have told you." They had been led to expect this, and he would certainly have undeceived them if it were not so. Notwithstanding the terrible scenes immediately before them, which should so much try their confidence in him, the gloomy night of trial would soon be terminated, and the sable shades of darkness should be driven from their skies by the bursting light of his resurrection and the establishment of his kingdom and government as the Prince of Peace.

"I go to prepare a place for you." From the explanation which he gave the disciples in this connection, we learn that he was going to his Father; for he said to them, "And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." And in reply to the inquiry of Thomas he said, "I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." This agrees with what he said unto Mary after his resurrection, and commanded her to tell the same to his brethren: "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and to your God."—John xx. 17. He had also informed them that he was going to

receive a kingdom, and to return again unto them. "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on the thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."—Luke xxii. 29, 30. This kingdom, which was appointed unto him of his Father, is the place which, according to our understanding, he was going to prepare for his disciples. Although as an inheritance of the heirs of God, and joint heirs of Christ, the kingdom of heaven was prepared for them from the foundation of the world, according to Matt. xxv. 34, yet its manifest redemption and gospel organization awaited the resurrection and ascension of Christ. The God of heaven was to set it up in the days of those kings of whom Daniel had prophesied. "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."—Psa. ii. 8. "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee," &c. "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore God, even thy God hath annointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."—Heb i. 5, 8, 9; Psa. xlv. 6, 7. Thus it was written, and thus it behooved him to suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and then to enter into his Mediatorial glory, as the King eternal, immortal and invisible, the only wise God our Savior.

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." The if in this case is not to express doubt or uncertainty, for he had told the disciples that it was expedient for them, and that he would soon go away, and that his object in going away was to prepare a place for them where he would dwell with them uniterruptedly forever. "Yet a little while and ye shall see me no more; and again a little while and ye shall see me." Whither I go thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me hereafter. It was necessary that he should first suffer, and be the first to rise from the dead, but he assures them that he will come again and receive them unto himself, that where he is there should they also be. True and faithful to his words of promise, he came again unto them, after his resurrection, and abode with them a sufficient length of time to demonstrate his resurrection, and after his ascension he came unto them by his Spirit, on the day of Pentecost, organized his kingdom in its gospel order, and into it received his disciples to go no more out forever. And again will he come to them in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory; and, in their final resurrection in his image will he receive them to himself, that where he is there they may be also. It is the will of the Father, that of all he has given to Christ he should loose nothing, but that he should raise them up again at the last day. And this is also the will of the son, who in his intercession has said, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory," &c.—John xvii. 24.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe May 1, 1865)

FROM GEORGIA

Monticello, Georgia

Dear Elder Williams,

Please renew my ***Signs*** subscription, using the balance as needed.

I love the ***Signs of the Times.*** I cannot remember a time in my life when it was not in our home. Recent baseless persecution hurts me and I pray that God will lend strength to endure and bring the dear Editors and publisher through to the praise of His dear Name. The Lord is ever with His own.

The valley He has promised to exalt;

She is survived by her husband, Bradley N. Vasser, two sons, Felix Vasser of Gretna, Virginia and George Vasser of Hurt, Virginia, two daughters, Mrs. Clara Brumfield of Gretna, Virginia, and Mrs. Odessa Hill of Timberlake, North Carolina; three brothers, Roy C. Dalton and Bethel Dalton, both of Gretna and Gladdy Dalton of Danville, Virginia, also one sister Nettie D. Vasser of Gretna, Virginia, fourteen grandchildren and fourteen great-grandchildren.

Sister Bessie was received into the fellowship of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on September 24, 1933, and was baptized by her beloved pastor Elder C. T. Evans the same day. She was a faithful member as long as her health permitted, but had been unable to attend her meetings for some time.

Funeral services were conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on May 7, 1980, by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and her body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in the church cemetery.

Sister Bessie will be greatly missed by her family, brethren, and friends, but may the family and we at Weatherford Church be reconciled to our loss and to God's will.

Written by: Marvin Brumfield
Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. H. Doss, Clerk

RUBY DALTON BRUMFIELD

With a heart pained with sorrow and filled with grief, I humbly attempt to write an obituary for my beloved Mother, and your beloved sister in Weatherford Church, Mrs. Ruby Dalton Brumfield.

Born January 2, 1908, and passing on April 13, 1980, made her stay on earth 72 years, 3 months and 11 days. It seems such a short time since I attempted to write an obituary for her beloved husband, my Father, and your brother in Weatherford Church, Mr. O. R. (Doc) Brumfield, who preceeded her in death March 29, 1979.

She was faithful to the church until the day of her death. On the day of her passing on, she enjoyed so much the fellowship of the brothers and sisters at the services at Springfield Church.

She was a firm believer in salvation by Grace, believing the Lord has fixed all things. It is well said that a man's days are numbered, and his time appointed, and his bounds are with the Lord, and he cannot pass them.

She was received into the fellowship of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church December 31, 1966, and was baptized by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, April 23, 1967.

She leaves to mourn their loss, two daughters, Shirley Dalton and Sylvia Hughes, four sons; Calvin, Carvel, Donnie, and Billy Brumfield, eight grandchildren, two brothers and four sisters.

Her funeral was held at Weatherford Church by Elders O. K. Tench, Raymond Goad, and Denver Simpson. Her body was laid to rest beside her husband of neary 54 years, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Weatherford Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord and Savior.

May God enable us to be reconciled to his will, to be thankful for the time he gave her on earth, and to say, not my will, but thine be done.

Written by her son,
Billy W. Brumfield

SISTER FANNIE DAVIS JOYNER

By the request of the Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church, I would like to attempt to write a few lines in memory of Sister Fannie Davis Joyner, though I feel my unworthiness for this task.

Sister Joyner was born on September 1, 1892, and passed from this life on September 9, 1979 in Nash General Hospital. She was the last survivor of the family of Henderson A. Davis and Bid Davis.

Sister Joyner was the widow of Elder Johnnie Joyner. She is survived by three sons, William Fred, Meedy B., and Willie Marvin Joyner; also two daughters, Mattie Ruth Barnes and Fannie Estelle Williford, all of Rocky Mount, North Carolina. Also she had several grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Sister Joyner was united with the Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church in October 1915, and was baptized by Elder Meedy B. Williford. She was a member of our church for nearly 64 years. We of the Church found Sister Joyner to be such a dear person. She was loved by everyone that knew her. She loved her church and family and was

faithful to the church always. As long as she was able she enjoyed entertaining the brothers and sisters and their friends in her home. It is a great loss for us here on earth, but a great gain for her, for I feel that she is one of God's chosen little ones called by His grace.

Sister Joyner's funeral was conducted at Johnson's Funeral Home by the Pastor, Elder Harvey Holland, and Elder Henry Jones. She was laid to rest at the family cemetery in Nash County.

We at Mill Branch Church wish to extend our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Sister Joyner.

Read and approved in conference the first week-end in August, 1980. And agreed to send a copy to the ***Signs of the Times,*** a copy recorded on our church book, and a copy to the family.

Written by Sister Elsie V. Baker
Elder Harvey Holland, Moderator
Sister Estelle Joyner Williford, Clerk

SISTER MYRTLE WOOD ALEXANDER

Sister Myrtle Wood Alexander was born October 13, 1901. Her parents were John and Sallie (Proffitt) Wood.

She joined the Antioch Primitive Baptist Church the first Sunday in April, 1933.

She married Louie R. Alexander, June 5, 1920. To this union was born six daughters, Miss Sallie Alexander of the home, Mrs. Ruby Kelsto, Houston, Texas, Mrs. Iris Butler of Camden, Ark., Mrs. Billie Gorman of Foreman, Ark., Mrs. Dixie Reed, Alvin, Texas, and Mrs. Arma Mata, Larido, Texas.

She passed away from this life October 26, 1979. Her funeral was held at Camden Funeral Home by Elder E. J. Lambert. Burial followed in Lakeside Cemetery near Camden, Arkansas.

She was a firm believer in salvation by grace. We miss her and hope to meet her again some sweet day.

Written by her daughter,
Iris Butler
Camden, Arkansas

NEAOMIA ACKER RHOADES

Another one of the Lord's saints has been called home. Sister Neaomia Rhoades of 619 Autumn Drive, Winnsboro, Texas was born April 6, 1892 in Hopkins County, Texas to Cap Fuller and Mary Huckaby Fuller and departed her life here July 24, 1980.

She was first married to Daniel Webster Acker in 1910. Mr. Acker died April 21, 1931. To this union was born two sons and two daughters. She married Jacob Murphy Rhoades in 1943. Mr. Rhoades died October 26, 1961. One son, Willie B. Acker, proceeded her in death. She is survived by the following, one son Travis Acker of Dallas, two daughters, Mrs. Almedia Speight of Winnsboro and Mrs. Johnnie Rhoades of Athen, Texas, four stepsons, Earl, Clyde, Arnold, and Troy Rhoades, three step daughters, Mrs. Ivy Elledge, Mrs. Ila Fay Black and Mrs. Cary Lee Gilbert, ten grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren, and one great-greatgrandchild.

Sister Rhoades wrote the writer of this obituary a long letter relating some of her many experiences. During one period of time she went for a long time with a cast down feeling and felt if she were to die that she would go to hell. She would attempt to pray but no relief came. One day a voice spoke to her and said, "Stand still and wait on the Lord." This she was given to do with some peace of mind.

She was preparing to attend the association at Hopewell church when a voice spoke and said, "Get in the church." She related to me the following: "The next morning on our way to church the trees, the grass, everything looked so beautiful and when I entered chruch, I saw a beautiful light, the whole building shown so bright. It was the most beautiful sight I have ever seen." She asked for a home with Good Hope Church, was received, and baptized.

She remained a faithful member, a lovely and gracious sister who loved her church and all those who believed in the God she was given to love.

Her sweet face will be missed by all who knew her. We feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer with internment at Harmony Cemetery to await the call from Jesus Christ, "Child come home".

Good Hope Church, while in conference August 23, 1980, requested the above obituary be written and one copy be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Elder Joe Hamrick, Moderator

Signs of the Times

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All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Keeling, Virginia, as shown below. All notices of meetings and obituaries should be mailed directly to P.O. Box 1250, Salisbury, Md. 21801. Articles for publication may be mailed to either address.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 65 Keeling, Va. 24566

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 1/81 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean
Matt. 8:2

Oh! the pangs by Christians felt,
When their eyes are open;
When they see the gulfs of guilt
They must wade and grope in;
When the hell appears within,
Causing bitter anguish;
And the loathsome stench of sin
Makes the spirits languish.

Now the heart disclos'd betrays
All its hid disorders;
Enmity to God's right ways,
Blasphemies and murders,
Malice, envy, lust, and pride,
Thoughts obscene and filthy;
Sores corrupt and putrefied;
No part sound or healthy.

All things to promote our fall
Show a mighty fitness.
Satan will accuse withal;
And the conscience witness.
Foes within, and foes without,
Wrath, and law, and terrors,
Rash presumption, timid doubt,
Coldness, deadness, errors!

Brethren, in a state so sad,
When temptations seize us,
When our hearts we feel thus bad,
Let us look to Jesus.
He that hung upon the cross
For His people bleeding,
Now in heaven sits for us
Always interceding.

Vengeance, when the Saviour died,
Quitted the believer.
Justice cried, "I'm satisfied
Now henceforth for ever."
It is finish'd, said the Lord,
In his dying minute:
Holy Ghost, repeat that word;
Full salvation's in it.

Leprous soul, press thro' the crowd,
In thy foul condition;
Struggle hard and call aloud
On the great Physician.
Wait till thy disease He cleanse,
Begging, trusting, cleaving;
When, and where, and by what means,
To His wisdom leaving.

Joseph Hart

Swansboro, N.C.
Rt. 2, Box 142

Dear Editor:

I wish to extend my deepest sense of thanksgiving and gratitude to our brethren and friends in all parts of the country. I was made to feel the need of prayer during my recent illness and if I'm not completely deceived I felt prayers did go up on my behalf. I expressed my feelings to my family that if this was my time to pass from this life I was ready to go, I did not know of anyway to prepare myself, only the Lord's will could be done and I felt submissive to whatever was in store for me.

My stay in the hospital and convalescing at home made me feel a renewed love for Old Baptist everywhere. My first experience of the doctrine came in 1962. Elder Zennie Rhue's message that Sunday morning in September was on the 25th Chapter of Matthew beginning with the 31st verse thru the end of the chapter. This was inspired in wisdom of salvation by grace. In my hope that was given to me at that time comes back to me from time to time, how on this morning I saw Jesus in a vision with a halo around him in the pulpit and every person in the building was on their knees with outstretched arms with this love for Christ as I felt that was the truth in the true and living God and we were in that blessed hope of eternal life to be with the Lord after death.

My husband, Elder J. T. Prescott, joins me in appreciation for your prayers, cards, phone calls, messages, inquires and all other genuine warmth and concerns shown us.

Not who I can fellowship, but
who can fellowship me?
Mary R. Prescott

NOTICE

In keeping of the will of the late Samuel B. Milford and published in the ***Signs*** in previous years, a bequest for the following was left to the ***Signs,*** as trustee, to administer such.

"My said trustee, through his publication, make it known to the various Primitive Baptist Churches throughout the land that he holds said funds as trustee for the benefit of poor and unfortunate persons needing financial help, and upon the recommendation of the Elders of any of such churches my said trustee may give from the trust fund held by him such amounts as to him may seem proper to such poor and unfortunate persons."

The balance remains approximately $2,000 to be distributed.

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Monroe, La.
July 23rd, 1955

Elder E. J. Lambert
Winnsboro, Texas

Dear Brother Lambert (I trust in the Lord),

I have been wanting to write you since you finished your book and get you to send me a copy, and I believe the price is $3.00, so will send a check for that amount plus 25¢ to cover postage.

Brother, the dream I wrote you about worried me quite a lot till after I wrote you about it, then later I was relieved of it and am sure it was just a dream and had no spiritual significance about it, and am glad you had no comment.

I will soon be 61 years old, and it seems my vision on things is not as clear as it has been in the past, and I see more and more of the sins of this old man every day that I live and still don't know how to get away from any of them. Sure wish someone would tell me if they know, so that I may try in that way too, but at times I am made to thank Almighty God that He has led me through some very sweet and comforting experiences, which, if the Lord will strengthen me to that end, I would like to mention a few of very comforting and outstanding blessings that I know could come from no other source except through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is through His great love and mercy that I have been brought thus far, shown the things that I believe I have seen.

The things I have in mind at this time are concerning my oldest son. I believe I will drop back to the time just before he was born into this world; that was when his mother had been in hard labor for some 12 to 18 hours and it seemed her strength was completely gone and she was gone too. The doctor and all our help had completely failed to accomplish anything. The doctor said he saw no other chance except a forced birth, so he began to sterilize his instruments. It seemed all this time my whole supplication had gone out for her, but on this wise there seemed such a great load came down on me I could not bare it, so I walked out of the house, not knowing if I would see her alive again when I returned or not. I went behind the garden, sat down on the ground, buried my head in my lap, and if not deceived, uttered a prayer to God. I don't know what all I said, but on the completion was, "Lord let the child be born, that it be a normal child and that it might live and do well. If this be not possible with Thee, then save my wife and I will still trust in thee." Now as these words were finished I felt completely relieved. I felt light as a feather and I felt perfectly sure he would be born and that everything would be perfectly alright. So I got up, hurried back to the house through the kitchen where the doctor was. And when I entered the room where she was, she smiled at me very beautifully, and I saw new life in her, and the moment I touched her a son was born and a great alarm went up from the ones that were in the room. We called the doctor to come quick, but he did not need any tools. I could give a lot more details, but this is the main event that is so outstanding with me, though it may not be worth anything to anyone who may read it.

There are two other outstanding events I would like to mention while it seems to be fresh on my mind, and that is, while my boy was in the Army, what

warning I felt and the experience he had of two very close calls. The first was on his way overseas to Africa. Some of the ships were sank and the Army announced 1000 of our boys were lost. The ship he was on was badly damaged, but managed to get into harbor. Now after he came home I never questioned him about the things he went through with over there, but just recently he sat down and told me of these events which linked in with all the things I had seen and felt, (I say that I saw and I believe that Porter you wrote so beautifully about in the July Signs did open the door and Christ showed me these things,) one morning around nine or ten o'clock. I saw him in great danger, and this same load that I had felt several times before came down over me and I was much in distress and grieved, so I was minded to pray for him, which I stole away to myself and did as the Lord enabled me to do. So after this I felt he was safe and that fear was gone, though we did not hear from him for a long time. But I had a feeling he was alright, even after the report came out. Of course I did not know positively but what he was lost in that 1000 of our boys. I never did know just what took place until some two months ago, but this feeling I had had remained the same with me, and when he told me of the event I knew it was at the same time I had received the warning, and it did make my very soul rejoice to know of the wonderful demonstration of His love and mercy.

Now I will try to mention one other very outstanding experience that took place while he was in the jungles of India, which proves to me beyond any shadow of doubt that that All Wise and Powerful God never makes a mistake and is never to early nor to late, but exactly on time and at the right place. Now this took place some 10 or 12 months later. He was in the Airborne Corp of Engineers, and it was their duty to build air bases for our planes to land and take off. They had just finished one base, and that morning there was a Jap plane spotted them, so they got orders to move everything off the field so many hundred yards back in the jungle, which they did as fast as they could, for they knew the Japs would be back to bomb them soon. They got everything off the base except one thing that was forgotten, and his commanding officer sent him back to get it. Before he got there, running as fast as he could, he heard the planes coming, but he got what he was sent after and started back. The Japs spotted him and took after him. They were flying several abreast and all putting out a stream of exploding shells that were so thick a man could not pass between them. They were so close he knew there was no chance for him, so he fell to the ground with his face down. Just as he hit the ground he heard a clear voice speak to him, saying, Divine love has all power. Divine love will save. On hearing this voice he was perfectly calm and not afraid at all; and by now those shells were kicking dust in his face, so they came within a few inches of him and all shut off at once. He lay there until they got out of sight, then got up thanking God for His love and mercy, took up what he was sent after and walked calmly on to where the others were; which they could hardly believe, for they felt sure he had been killed. So after this he was always very calm in everything that took place, always trusting in that one God that does all things well; and would take over at times the control of things when all the others in his bunch would go so frantic they could do nothing.

Now the part with me in this event was about six o'clock in the evening. There was such a heavy burden came over me it looked like I could not stand it. I was alone at the time, or there was no other person near me, and the tears did flow from my eyes, for I saw him in exceeding great danger. Of course I did not know what was taking place, but for

about 30 minutes I feel that I prayed to God with groanings which words cannot utter. Now after this I felt perfectly at ease. This trouble was taken from me and I felt light as a feather as if I was floating around, and I could see him perfectly safe and not a hair of his head harmed, (which was not, for he went through the whole thing for two years and came home without a scratch).

I did not know, as I said, just what took place till a short time ago when he told me about it; which all linked in with the exact time that I had these experiences.

Both of my sons and my daughter were in the service at the same time. The younger son was in the Navy, and he had it pretty rough at times, and I did have similar experiences about him, but not so vivid and outstanding as the older one; neither were his calls nearly so close.

Now the wonderful and precious blessings of God our Savior toward me and mine are much too numerous to mention, for which I feel very unworthy, but so very,very thankful for all of them. These are some of the things that strengthen my very being and I truly hope they will never be taken from my memory, for these things are food for my soul; and when I am given to joy, I feel to join David and say, Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me. Bless His Holy name. Praise the Lord and forget not all His benefits.

I have written much more than may be of interest, but it will give you an idea of the things I live on.

Now I hope this finds you and yours enjoying good health which is God's blessings.

I surely enjoy all your articles in the Signs of the Times, and if you have a mind and can find the time, I would be glad to have a letter from you. When at the throne of grace, please remember me, a sinner.

Your unworthy Brother, if one at all,
J. H. Calk

Meadow Grove, Nebraska

Dear Editor and all the dear ones who are responsible for our good paper:

When the ***Signs*** came yesterday, I leafed through to see who might have written and imagine my surprise and delight to see an article entitled "The Valley of Dry Bones". I have long been hoping someone would either write or speak on that subject, for a good many years ago that was the subject of the first sermon I ever really heard. I was 9 or 10 years old then, and although I had heard many sermons, none had so impressed me with God's great power, and day after tomorrow I will be 89 years old, and I still cherish that memory. How I did enjoy that article. In fact, I had a nap when I first retired last night, then lay awake for hours thinking of the article and continuing to enjoy it.

And now today I have read all the ***Signs*** but one article, smiling over the "Riddle". The "Sermon Stealer" and the "Grievance" were also good.

My parents and grandparents on both sides of the house were Primitive Baptists, for which I feel to be so thankful. Also two of my Uncles, Elder John Q. Jones, and Elder George J. Jones were Primitive Baptist ministers, but all are gone on to their rest in Him. How I did enjoy sitting near when they all discussed the many phases of the Bible. My folks took the ***Signs*** for many years, as did my husband and I, and now I take it. My dear husband has been gone since 1971, and he was a firm believer in its principles, as I and our three daughters and one son are. Sure hope and pray you will continue to edit the paper; we need it badly, especially in these troubled times. Again thank you, Elder Poole.

Humbly,
Myrtle Black

December 7, 1980

WORD OF THANKS

Elder Eulie McCool, and his wife, Annie, wish to express their heartfelt thanks to all the brothers, sisters, and friends across the country as well as at home for the many kindnesses shown them recently. It is not possible for them to respond to each one personally at this time.

Elder McCool is presently in the hospital at Columbus, Miss. receiving treatment for a serious illness. We hope the Lord's people everywhere will be blessed to remember them in their prayers.

Editor

FOR THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Philadelphia
December 15, 1835

Dear Brother Beebe: The Philadelphia Baptist Conference met with the first Baptist Church at Hopewell, N.J., according to their previous appointment, on the first Tuesday of this month; public service commenced at 11 o'clock in the morning. We had a very agreeable and highly interesting meeting, and had every reason to believe that God was in the midst of us, and that the interview with that estimable church may be blessed. The religious services continued for three days with increasing interest; deep attention and solemnity prevaded the whole assembly, and strong indications were manifested by many of the most tender, pathetic and contrite feelings; affording a hope that they were pricked to the heart, and anxiously concerned about the interest of their immortal souls, and may it prove the commencement of a special work of the Holy Spirit, among the dear people.

Our beloved Brother Elder Boggs, the Pastor of the church, has been confined by severe indisposition for nearly three months, so as to be unable to attend to his ministerial labours; which, from his approved talents, long experience and correct views of divine truth, has been no small loss to that church and congregation. It appears to be deeply felt by many, and would have been much more so, were it not for the orthodox services of our excellent brother, Elder C. Suydam, who is a member of that church. We were highly gratified to find brother Boggs, towards the close of the meeting, so far convalescent as to be able to meet with us, and take part in our services, although he appeared very feeble. May the Lord restore him to the dear people of his charge.

On the last day of the meeting, at the unanimous desire of the Church signified to the Ministers present, Alfred Earl, a valuable and gifted young brother, licensed about twelve months since, an approved and highly acceptable member of the church was set apart to the work of an evangelist by solemn ordination, imposition of hands and prayer, according to the practice general among Particular Baptists. The services were peculiarly solemn and refreshing. The ordination service was as follows: Introductory prayer and sermon by Elder Theophilus Harris, Pastor of the North Seventh Street Baptist Church, Philadelphia, from Acts 25:17, 18; Examination of candidate by Elder John Boggs, Pastor of the first Hopewell Church, N.J.; Ordaining Prayer by Elder James Osbourne, of Baltimore, Md., and the Imposition of Hands and Charge to the candidate by Elder James P. Bowen, Pastor of the Baptist Church at Southampton, Buck's County, Pa. After singing, Benediction was pronounced by the Candidate. The audience manifested a deep interest on the occasion, and many were greatly affected during the different exercises--especially at the relation of Brother Earl's religious exercises and experience--his call to the work of the ministry, and his evangelical views of the glorious doctrine of Free and Sover-

eign Grace. A number of the members of the Second Baptist Church attended on the occasion; and we were rejoiced to learn that the members of this church as well as those of First Hopewell, are firmly grounded and established in the faith and hope of the Gospel, and that the vain and deceptive inventions of misguided zealots, or corrupt fallacies of designing men, have not drawn them aside from the ancient Baptist platform, or caused them to swerve from the Truth of God either in doctrine or practice. On the contrary, they appear zealously disposed to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. May the Lord dispose many of our Baptist churches to follow the example of these precious sons of Zion, as far as they have followed Christ.

Yours in Gospel Bonds,
Theo Harris

Signs of the Times
January 15, 1836

FROM KENTUCKY

Madisonville, Ky.

Dear Editors,

Find enclosed a check for two years renewal for the ***Signs of the Times.*** Use the remainder as you see fit.

I enjoy the paper so very much. I look forward to it coming each month. It contends for the truth that I believe. I especially enjoyed Elder Poole's article in the September number.

I need the prayers of God's children everywhere. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Mrs. S. G. Harralson

Elders Gold and Lester,
Dear Brethren:

I have a desire to write to you and the readers of your paper concerning our faith; for it is said that Jesus is the Author and Finisher of our faith. This faith is the faith of God's elect. It is also the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have received faith as an inheritance by being created in Christ Jesus or adopted into the family of God. Paul said, "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his son, made of woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father;". And this makes us new creatures in Christ. Old things are passed away; behold all things are become new. I do not know how much these all things embrace, but I think they embrace the whole creation of God, both of nature and of grace. And why? Because when the creature is made new he can for the first time see the world and the fulness thereof, praising God. David said, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmanent showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge." So the whole creation is praising God, but we do not see it until we are brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. For it is said, "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord: and thy saints shall bless thee," showing very clearly that all things that were made or created were for the glory of His Name.

It seems to me that faith connects us to Christ, or makes known all of the divine knowledge we ever receive. That faith in a sense, is ours, yet it is the product of the Lord and closely related to Him and cannot be separated from Him. Daniel said, "My God has sent his angel and hath shut the lions' mouths." One said, "Lo, I see four men loose walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt, and the form of the fourth one is like the Son of God." Paul said, "It was faith that quenched the violence of fire". This shows very clearly that faith is the very authority of God, and in every instance it executes the work of God. For we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

We might with propriety call faith the messenger of God. It is said that Moses wrote the first five books of the Old Testament which include the creation of the world and the fulness thereof. It is thought that he had nothing of an earthly character to go by. Then it is evidently by faith that Moses gave the account of the creation of the world. For it is said, "Through faith we understand the world was framed by the word of God." So faith was in the world almost from the beginning of the world, though the word "faith" occurs but twice in the Old Testament. The first manifestation of faith was in Abel, and it was manifested time and again all through the days of the Prophets until the coming of Christ, and he was the very embodiment of faith, and faith makes known every thing that pertains to our salvation. The Spirit of Christ or faith that was in the Prophets brought everything to their understanding that was necessary for them to know. The Prophets made no mistake, for the Lord was the author of their prophecy, so it had to be fulfilled in time and place in order to show that the Lord is upright, for it is said, "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne."

It seems to me that the throne of God is established here in the church, not only collectively but individually. So the judgment is here, and it is going on daily, and we realize it in our experience. The reason we are not consumed is because Jesus is our Advocate, for it is said, "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." So in a divine sense there is none of the church righteous. For the Lord is our righteousness. So we are made righteous in Jesus, then we have nothing to glory in of ourselves; but we glory in the Lord. Paul said, "By the grace of God I am what I am", so by grace we are the manifest children of God, so grace makes the difference between the children of men; for it is said, "For who maketh thee to differ from another, and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" It is also said that we receive grace for grace. Grace is favor; so this grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. It is manifested to us in time. Because this grace was given us in Jesus before time began is the prime reason why we receive it in time. Then we are indebted to the Lord for His mercy. We have nothing on our part to pay with, but the Lord sometimes gives us hearts of thankfulness for his mercy, and then we can render the tribute of praise to His great Name, which is a sweet savor unto the name of Jesus. For at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that he is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Jesus is our great Spiritual Joseph; for the children of Israel bowed to Joseph, for he was the glory of Pharaoh, and his kingdom. Much more is Jesus the glory of His Father, and if we be the children of God, we are the glory of Jesus. "And as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee, and that rejoicing will never cease, but will continue forever." The Apostle said, "And it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he it." For we only see Jesus in part while we remain here in this life, but the complete knowledge of Jesus and His salvation will be fully realized when we quit the stage of action.

It is thought by some that we will not only be like Jesus in appearance, but like Him in knowledge. If we be like Jesus in knowledge, we will know Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the redeemed of the earth. I think we will not only know them to be saints, but we will know them by name, though the ties of nature will be dissolved; for the question was asked of Jesus, "Whose wife shall she be of the seven. But in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels of God in heaven."

God is reconciled to us by the death of his Son, but we are only in part reconciled to the will of God in this life. When we die we will be fully reconciled to the will of God, and the condemnation of the wicked will not annoy us in the least.

Asa D. Shortt

January 2, 1903
(Submitted by Elder N. F. Connor)

FROM FLORIDA

Tampa, Fla. 33604

Dear Elder Williams,

I greet you in the name of our Sovereign Lord.

I have read the ***Signs of the Times*** and articles by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe in the "Old Faith Contender" and in your paper. These were handed down by friends such as Elder Glen Shoults, a friend of Elder Fulton, and other Old School brethren.

I have always enjoyed the ***Signs of the Times,*** but I have just now got around to writing for a subscription. A check is enclosed for a subscription.

I thank God for leading me by His grace to the ***Signs of the Times*** and all it means to me.

(Elder) Charles W. Mount, Jr.

Lillie, La.
Sept. 28th, 1955

Dear Brother Calk,

I received your real good and highly appreciated letter yesterday with your contribution to me, and I feel to thank you for your kind remembrance of me, and I do not feel in the least worthy of your thoughtfulness and kindness at all, and yet I desire to thank you for your great kindness to me. I hope that you and your family are well, and continue to be blessed of the Lord in health, and every other way according to His Holy will and purpose. We are all very well I believe at this time. I have just attended our Association, and I must tell you I certainly felt that we were wonderfully blessed with good, humble and comforting preaching, if I know anything about it. Wish you could have been there with us.

We had people from 8 different states, ranging from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific, and we had 14 or 15 preachers, I believe, including our home preachers. I am sure you would have greatly enjoyed being there with us, and still I know that you have to try to hold your job to earn a living for yourself and family. May be that when you reach retirement you can have an opportunity to be with our church people more, at least I hope so. I think of you and many others who are not privileged to be with us regular, and I hope it may please the Lord to strengthen you, comfort and lead you through all the dark trials and afflictions of this low ground of sin and sorrow, and bless you to look away from this present evil world, and to look to the Lord who has so sweetly and comfortingly said, "I will be with thee always even unto the end of the world, and I will never leave nor forsake thee." All such sacred and sublime promises are sweet and comforting to the Lord's little children here below.

It is so dark and dreary at times here with the Lord's people. We are told that the Lord chose His people in the furnace of afflictions; and Jesus said in one place, "In the world ye shall have tribulations", so we are sure if we are what we hope we are that we are to have much and great tribulations. So if we are just blessed with small tokens of evidence and hope that we are of that sweet and precious number who are chosen in the furnace, then we are made to rejoice and trust in Him who is able to save us to the utmost. So, Dear Brother Calk, isn't it a sweet and precious heritage indeed to hope in one who is able to save, does save and has and will save His little humble and trembling ones who have been made to know their dependance, depravity and sinful condition. If it were

churches, is calculated to give "strong consolation", and full assurance of hope even to the end, to those followers of the Lamb who, by grace, are taught to yield obedience to the doctrines of the cross.

I should certainly be the last person in the world to detract one iota from the assurance, or confidence, of the strongest believer; but I would humbly suggest that, having a strong faith in the testimony of God is one thing, and boasting of our individual confidence and security is another. Of late years, I have been especially disposed to think with great caution respecting those persons who make this boasting, or vaunting, or talking with dogmatical confidence, about their certainty of salvation, as the reward of their strong faith; and I have met with many who make no scruple about dooming the whole human race to eternal damnation, except the few who are disposed to adopt their own peculiar strong language. It is true, that Job is represented as being enabled to say, whilst suffering under the severest agony of mind and body, magnified into torture by the keen reproaches of his friends, in spite of his accumulated sufferings, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and not another", etc. It is true also, that the Apostle Paul, in the probable prospect of being torn in pieces by wild beasts, for bearing testimony in support of the truths of the gospel, in the immediate prospect of a cruel death, was enabled to say, "I am now ready to be offered, and the hour of my departure is at hand: I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day", etc. These are glorious examples, and calculated to encourage the weak believer to emulate the Apostle's faith, and practice of obedience; that he also may be able to look death in the face with humble resignation, and say, "Welcome, thou king of terrors". The enthusiasm of these inspired writers is most sublime; but it is humble. None of that bombastic vapouring that would attempt to crush and trample upon the more timorous of Christ's flock. None of that "man-glorifying" spirit which would say, "Stand by, for I am holier than thou"; or, what is, if possible, more wicked; "Stand by, for my faith is stronger than thine". It is the privilege of every Christian to believe implicitly in the testimony of Jesus; to rely with confidence of the fulfilment of his promises; and to be ready at all times to give a reason to every man that asketh him, of the hope that is in him, with meekness and with fear. The stronger that a Christian's faith really is, the less will he be disposed to boast of it; but he will become the more disposed to manifest, by its effect upon his conduct, that faith is not with him a mere profession. Alas for them who say, "Lord, Lord, and do not those things which he has commanded."

Liverpool, August 1835 J. Woodrow

EDITORIAL

"Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy. The king of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more. In that day it shall be said unto Jerusalem, Fear thou not: and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save thee; he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with

the whole assembly of the first born, what could occur to cause the saints misery and unrest? It being God with them (us), yea, it having been God there in a body of flesh, what would have kept Him in the thousands of years, and the myriad and sundry events of all that time from resting in His love? It was He who was there; certainly God had not sent an emissary on this important work; He came Himself, and He was One with us. How conclusively He sealed the destiny of all those that boast of their power, of what they can do. All free-willism, all self-righteousness coming from wherever it may, received a death blow. "Thou couldst not have any power against me save it be given thee from above." (John 19:10, 11) Talk to me about God resting in His love, but every blood-bought sinner is resting in His love; not in their love, nor in any other of the many works of faith, but in God's love.

Thousands of years ago God came down and wrought salvation in the earth. Ever after the saints rested in that love. Abraham saw and rejoiced in it; the Hebrew children had Him with them in the fiery furnace and rested through all of that fiery persecution; Job received from his Redeemer sustenance and a reconciled waiting and resting in hope of seeing Him for himself and not another.

When this Saviour was born of His mother by the work of the Holy Ghost, He tarried with her about twelve years. Did you ever notice that He rested that early in what He came to do? He forgot His mother. Have you noticed that she forgot Him for three days journey? Did you notice, after He began doing that which He came to do, that He did not rest in her, but His rest was in doing the things that He was born to do; the things that He came to do? When His mother came back seeking Him, He did not say to her, "Mother, I am safe," but He spoke to them on that occasion, as He did on other occasions, as though she was a stranger. Even then, as the Christ lad, He was resting in His Father's business. His meat (food), His delight, His rest, was to be about the work that He came to do.

As He engaged in this work, it was a matter of necessity with Him. "I must work the works of God, while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work". The whole work of God in salvation was in His hands. I am not afraid to be positive about this. I find no objective that would be served by me being anything less than positive about this important matter. If, in preaching Jesus as the Way, the Truth, and the Life; if, in coming to you in the ***Signs*** for nearly fifty years, I had presented a number of secondary matters to you in addition to Christ, there would have been no truth in it; there would have been no gospel in it; yea, there would have been no rest in it. Had He left off the least thing in His work which His Father sent Him to do, I seriously doubt that He would have gotten back to His Father. I do not want to sound off on that, but His father was well pleased in Christ; He was trusting in Him, if you please; He was resting in Him, and He did receive Him back into His bosom. I do not know whether He would have received Him back had He failed to do His will, but I do say that had He failed His Father would not have been pleased, and God's displeasure would have been everlastingly known in heaven. You say as to whether it would be restful to look forward to, or as to whether it would be restful for a poor sinner to spend eternity in an unrestful atmosphere.

In conclusion, I know that such cannot be. Let me change that phraseology, and say that it could not be that way. It was fixed, predestinated, purposed in Christ, that He finish the work which His Father gave Him to do for therein He (Christ) found meat, food, delight, rest, and His Father has rested in His eternal love for His children,

which love was manifested in Him sending Christ into the world, and verified by His dying words, to wit, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

There is no other doctrine that sets Him forth as the God of poor sinners Anything short of this in what is called time means that we do not have any dependable rest here, and it means that God never has, and never will rest in His love concerning the salvation of His elect people.

Now a word to one and all. My wholehearted support of this restful God honoring doctrine does not mean that I expect to use predestination as a text every time that I write or preach. It does not mean that I am endorsing everything that is called Absolute Predestination. I never have done that, and God willing, I never will do that, but it does mean that wholeheartedly I do endorse that the Bible abundantly teaches what I prefer to call the sovereignty of God over all His creation, but if you had rather call it Absolute Predestination, then I wholeheartedly endorse your right to do so, and you are my brother and my sister, if, indeed, I am a brother.

Furthermore, my unlimited endorsement of the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty or predestination does not mean three things, to wit:

1. I do not declare non-fellowship for any dear brother and sister that is not able to see and understand predestination as I have outlined in this article.

2. This does not mean in any sense that I believe or condone the doctrine that God is the Author of my sins.

3. This does not mean that I will not quote, believe, or even use as the best I can, any text that is in the Bible, going so far as to say that all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and that all of it is profitable, and that God has said what He meant to say.

Now in conclusion let me say that for fifty years I have read the ***Signs,*** and for nearly that many years I have been writing for its pages. I do not think that I am wrong when I say that I have examined ninety percent of the issues that have been published since that memorable day in October, 1832. During that time the editors and contributors have differed on various portions of the Bible. However, with but a couple of times nobody has run off home with the only glove that we had to play with, saying, "If you do not play according to my rules, you will not be able to play at all."

Dearly beloved brethren, none of us are perfect (or am I mistaken in my assumption)? This is our only paper. Will you stand by and see it destroyed? For years I have solicited subscribers for it; for years I have solicited brethren and sisters writing for it. In the last thirty seven years I have, by the grace of God and by His tender mercy, been closely associated with Elder Spangler. Not the first time has he reprimanded me for not writing, nor has he found fault with what I did write. Elder Dodson told me when I joined the staff of the ***Signs*** at his earnest solicitation, that my writing would never have an editing pencil used on it unless it was a grammatical mistake that I had made. No one has ordered me around in these fifty years of reading its pages and writing for them. Nor has anybody been sending out guidelines for me to follow in my writings. As far as I know, I have not been denied access to all business matters pertaining to the ***Signs.*** I have not been to any meetings, nor have I sought to be. At the outset, Elder Dodson told me that all that he expected of me was to keep them supplied with copy for the ***Signs.*** I have tried to do that, and God being my helper, I will continue to do that.

I did not always agree with Elder Dodson, but we had a kind brotherly agreement in the beginning and our relationship was as pleasant as it has been with any minister among us about anything. For forty years I have been

intimately and familiarly acquainted with Elder David Spangler. We agreed years ago that we would be frank and cooperative about any matters concerning the ***Signs.*** I feel sure that no friction has entered into our relationship, and we have served churches together; I have baptized candidates for him at Dan River when he was unable, physically, to do so; we have jointly served two churches for a number of years; we have officiated at communions together; we have both gone into the water together and have both in joint action baptized candidates together. To be sure, we have not always seen everything just alike, and in those cases I would say to him, "David, I do not see that like you do," or he has said to me, "Dorris, I think this is a better way", and my testimony today after this close laboring together in the common cause of the churches and the paper, let us all lay down our bickering and let us go on to perfection.

Your little brother, trembling,
but pursuing,
Elder W. D. Griffin

FROM WASHINGTON

Olympia, Washington

Dear Editors of the Signs,

Enclosed is a check for a two-year renewal subscription to the ***Signs of the Times,*** and please use the balance as you see fit.

I so enjoy reading the wonderful articles written by so many dear ones who are given such depth and insight into scriptural messages. I am surely blessed beyond words to know the fellowship of this spiritual communion with these dear ones of like Faith.

May you be blessed continually to feed those who hunger after righteousness through the columns of the ***Signs.***

A Sister in Hope,
Alma F. Coate
(Mrs. Gilbert L.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

The following article published in The Lone Pilgrim, Vol. 6, Selma, N.C. May, 1928, No. 64.

Dear Brother Hutchens:

I am sending you the first article I ever wrote on the subject of Predestination. It was published in The Gospel News, April 1900. I have never changed in the least from the position I then held on this doctrine. J. C. Sikes

PREDESTINATION

By Elder Jonas C. Sikes
Sulphur Bluff, Texas

I think it is hurtful and wrong to make a hobby of any one point of doctrine (even though it be the truth) to the exclusion of all others, yet I think we should preach a full gospel and not shun to declare the whole counsel of God. But I think it is the best, yea, the wisest and only scriptural course, when speaking on this or any other subject (and especially when we know that some of the dear saints differ from us), to be kind and gentle and meekly instruct them. It has been said that "good words do more than hard speeches." The warm sunshine on a spring morning will make the farmer pull off his overcoat, while all the blustering winds of winter will only make him draw it closer to him. If we would do like Solomon, we would seek to find out acceptable words, yet we should not go so far in that direction as to forsake the truth. He says, "The preacher sought to find out acceptable words, and that which is written is upright, even words of truth". I think this would be a wise course for all of God's ministers, and I desire to follow it.

With this much said, I now desire to say something on the subject of predestination. I desire that after my departure my friends may have my views on this all-important subject. I think that the statement in the London Confession of Faith with reference to this subject is

would have been so? It is a self evident fact that needs no argument to prove it, that either the introduction of sin into the world was according to God's purpose, or else the whole covenant plan of redemption, the advent of Christ into the world, all of his righteous life, all his sufferings and death, His resurrection and ascension are not the result of God's free and independent purpose, for it was to redeem man from the consequences of this act and its outgrowth that all the above took place. Hence, if the transgression was not a part of God's eternal purpose then it follows that the covenant of redemption owes its existence (not to the free and independent purpose of God outside of any extraneous influence, but) to the act of a man by which it was made necessary and a way opened up for it to enter. So in order of thought it would stand thus: 1st. God determined to make a man. 2nd. He saw that man would transgress. 3rd. He devised a plan of redemption. This cuts God's purpose in two, and sets them thus: 1st. God's free and independent purpose to create man. 2nd. God's knowledge of man's independent act in transgression. 3rd. God's necessitated purpose to redeem man, influenced by what he foresaw. If we followthis stream to its end where will it empty? If God had rather sin had not entered the world then it follows that there has never been one single act, or creature, or thing, in this universe that has been as God originally would rather have had it; because, every act, creature, or thing, has been in some way affected by sin, which God had rather had never existed. Even the earth, with which every living things has to do, was cursed because of transgression, which God would rather have had different. Not even one act of the holy son of God was as God would rather have had it for His acts were to redeem sinners, when God had rather there had been no sinners to redeem. Nor throughout all eternity can anything be as it would have pleased God to have had it, for it will be one eternal song and shouts from redeemed sinners praising Him for their redemption, when God had rather that man had not sinned, then there would have been no redemption from sin and no shouting of praises by redeemed sinners. I shall trace this stream no farther at present, for I see from its course that it empties into the broad ocean of infidelity.

But all of the above is true and much more that might be said, if God did not purpose that sin should enter the world. It is said that God foreknew that man would sin and he therefore made arrangements to meet it. But stop, my brother, this "therefore" is what I object to. It says that the foreseen act of man was the cause of God making the covenant, so you see at once that if this act of man was not embraced in God's purpose then the origin of the covenent is owing partly (to say the least of it) to something outside of God, or His purpose. This branch empties into the stream which we have just left, so we will quit it. You say God foreknew that man would sin, so say I. But I would ask upon whom did this foreseen act of man then depend? Man as not yet created, and his existance depended yet wholly upon God and the fulfillment of His purpose and surely none can think that man's act could ever have been had there been no man to act. So then, this foreseen act of man could not have been any less dependent upon the fulfillment of God's purpose for existance than was the man by whom it was to come.

Having thus far confined myself to what seems to be self-evident facts and irresistible conclusions, I will now notice some scripture on the subject.

I will first call attention to Gen. 1:28 "And God blessed them and God said unto them, be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it." Now, the word replenish means to fill up. From this it will be seen that instead of God meaning for them to remain in the

garden, He meant for them to fill up and inhabit the entire earth. To this we will add the 29th verse. "And God said, Behold I have given you every herb-bearing seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed, it shall be to you for meat." In the first place, we see from this, that man was intended to inhabit the entire earth, from the fact that the fruits that grow on all the face of the earth were to be for meat to him. And in the second place, we see that the fruit of every tree on earth was to be to them for meat. Some questions might arise in our minds right here. Was there any such a tree in all the earth that yielded fruit as the tree of knowledge of good and evil? If so, was it to be for them for meat? If not, what does the above language mean? But I will pass this for the present.

We next call the attention to Acts 17:24-26. "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands, neither is worshipped with man's hands, as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth to all life and breath and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth and hath determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitation." It is clearly seen from this as well as from Genesis, that God's purpose was (not that man should remain in the garden, but) that he should dwell on all the face of the earth. This is what Paul says that he made them for. Much might be said right here, but this article is going to grow lengthy, so I must pass on. I will now call your attention to Gen. 2:5. "And there was not a man to till the ground." The next verse tells of God watering the earth and making man. Now, what would we reasonably conclude from the above scripture, was God's purpose for making man. I think all reasonable men would say, "to till the ground." The other passages referred to show that God purposed that man should dwell on all the face of the earth and all of the fruits of the various trees thereof should be to them for meat, while this one shows that God purposed that man should till the ground. Some say, "O, yes, this is all true, but it is because God foresaw that man would transgress, that he purposed to scatter them on all the face of the earth and have them till the ground." But then we would be forced to admit one of two things, i.e., that this forseen transgression was a part of God's original purpose, or else the cause of this purpose to scatter them on all the face of the earth and that they should till the ground, was outside of both God and His original purpose to make man. This again resolves itself into the absurd position which we have already noticed; 1st. That God freely and independently purposed to make man. 2nd. That he foresaw that man would not do as he wanted him to. 3rd. That God was governed in all of His other purposes concerning man, both for time and eternity, by the foreseen act of man rather than his own sovereign and independent will and choice. But I must quit this part of the subject and notice for awhile the reason why God created all things. It is said by Solomon that "the Lord has made all things for himself, yea even the wicked for the day of evil." From this we learn that he made all things for himself. It is said in Revelations that "Thou hast made all things for thyself and for thy pleasure they are (now exist) and were created." From this we find that they were all created for His pleasure, and they are still existing for the same purpose. In Colossians it is said "All things were created by Him and for Him." This is enough to prove that God had a use for all that He created. Now it is admitted by all that some men come into the world sinners, they live in sin and they die in sin and go to eternal perdition.

Will someone please tell me whether or not God's purpose in creating them is or will be fulfilled in them?

God's purpose in time and all created things is, I think, for the manifestations of His own glory. In other words, to manifest Himself in all of His divine perfections and manifestly glory Himself in all of His attributes. Now, we read of His own eternal purpose, His immutable counsel, the counsel of His will, etc., so in order of thought we say that God held a council in eternity. He was guided by wisdom, and consulted His own will. In this council was considered all things that He now works after the counsel of His will. As a result of that council the world was created and all things therein. Now look at this creation as it fell from the plastic hand of the creator. Is it not wonderful? Yea, marvelous? But how many of the attributes of the Deity do you see manifested in this wonderful work? Only two, wisdom and power. Wisdom to contrive this wonderful plan and power to perform it. Wisdom and power are here manifested as being infinitely great, but love, mercy, justice, wrath, and His immortal purity is yet unknown to man and must remain so as long as man remains in his state of innocence. He can love man just the same in his upright as in his fallen state, but love cannot be manifested in its fullness so as to glorify God in this attribute. "If ye love them that love you what reward have ye: do not even the publicans the same?" So God's love could not be manifested in its fullness on them that loved Him. "Peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die," so if Christ had died for a good man it would have manifested no more love than perhaps some men would have done, so then it must be true that for God's love to be manifested in its fullness man must fall from his good and upright state. Man fell, and it is said that "God commendeth His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us," also, that "God who is rich in mercy, for His great love where with He loved us even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us together with Christ." Here we have His great love most gloriously manifested on fallen man. Next we come to mercy. The above text says, "But God who is rich in mercy" Yes, He is rich in mercy, but how can mercy be bestowed on one who is not a sinner? How could the great richness of God's mercy ever have been manifested without a transgressor? But man transgressed and now God can make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory. Yet notwithstanding the greatness of God's love, and the richness of His mercy, they must have been forever unknown and unappreciated if man had not become a sinner. These two most glorious attributes, however, could not reach the case of, nor benefit, a sinner at the expense, or exclusion, of justice. Justice, in its greatness could not be manifested in a world of sinless, upright beings, but when man transgressed she laid her iron hand upon him; love nor mercy cannot reach him only through justice. Behold what unrelenting justice. Before she will swerve one jot or one tittle she will take the heir of heaven, the only son of the supreme judge, who sits upon the great white throne, and slay him for the crime.

Love and mercy, guided by wisdom, offers him as a ransom. Justice guided by wisdom, accepts him in behalf of all for whom he became surety. But God continues to show His wrath and make His power known on the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. Through all of this we can see God in His true character. His attributes are most gloriously manifested in the creation of the world and His dealings with sinners, and I feel sure that this course has been no second choice with Him. Man may determine to do a thing and seeing that it will not work out as He desired it should, make

some subsequent arrangements to meet and rectify in measure this foreseen, yet undesirable event. But the all-glorious eternal. "I am," has never been so hardpressed as that. But this is exactly the light He must be held in by all who hold that He did not purpose that sin should exist. They must divide His purposes into two sets, anterior and posterior. His anterior purpose being His purpose to create all things, which purposes would be absolutely free from, and independent of, and in no way influenced, or hampered by, any unpleasant foreseen event, which was coming up outside of His purposes. His posterior purposes being all such as relate to man as a sinner. The covenant of redemption. The punishment of sin. In fact, all of His dealings with man as a sinner from the morn of transgression to the eve of eternity would come under the head of His posterior purposes, being made as the result of, and to meet and deal with, an unpleasant foreseen event, which was coming up outside of, and in no way attributable to His purpose. Such a petty God may do to speculate upon, but it is not the God before whom the four and twenty elders fell down in wonder and admiration, and cast their glittering crowns before His throne, shouting, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." The man who believes that the transgression was a foreseen event not embraced in God's eternal purpose, and that the covenant was made to meet this exterior foreseen event, must admit that God has anterior and posterior purposes. And that His anterior purposes are based on an interior cause (the counsel of His will), and His posterior purposes are based on an exterior cause (an unpurposed foreseen event). We are all bound to admit that in the order of thought God's knowledge of man's transgression was based on His determination to make man, for had there been no determination to make man there would have been no knowledge that there would be a man to transgress, and if there had been no knowledge that there would be a man to transgress there would have been no covenant made to redeem man for transgression. So we are forced to either take the position that it was all from start to finish embraced in God's eternal and unchangeable purpose, or that He has anterior purposes based upon interior causes, and posterior purposes based upon exterior causes. The latter is Arminianism straight, so you can see at a glance that I believe in the predestination of all things. I shall not try to add to the strength of this doctrine by the use of the term "Absolute", nor diminish its force by the use of the term "Permissive".

I have neither time nor inclination at present to enlarge upon this subject, for my article has grown too lengthy already. But I will say this much more, if the logic contained herein is true with reference to the first transgression, it is also true with reference to every other event of time. This is my first, and may be my last, upon this subject, but I desired to record my views upon it before I go hence. With me it is either an Almighty God who works all things after the counsel of His will, or no God at all. I fail to find any standing room between this and atheism.

If this scribble should help any poor, halting child to a better understanding of this profoundly deep and mysterious subject I would be glad to hear from them.

With love to all the household of faith I remain a poor, unworthy sinner, saved by grace if saved at all.

Elder J. C. Sikes

We can never by truly easy and happy until we are enabled to trust God for all things: and the more we are enabled to trust

Him, the more gracious and faithful we shall find Him.

Toplady

OBITUARIES

CLARA BROWN

Sister Clara Brown was born in Johnston County, North Carolina, October 7, 1903, the daughter of the late Samuel Edward and Minnie Lee Thorton and departed this life September 9, 1979 after several years of declining health.

She married Chester Brown December 19, 1926. Along with her faithful husband, she leaves many relatives and friends to mourn her loss.

Sister Clara Brown asked for a home with Creeches Primitive Baptist Church, March 3, 1973 and was received and baptised by Elder D. B. Stokes. We felt so thankful that God had brought her to us. She attended the Church for many years before He saw fit to bring her into the Militant Church and continued faithful to attend as long as her health permitted her to do so.

She loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace of God and to hear God's name praised above all else. Her walk on earth was that of loving, humbleness before God and man. We miss her but feel our loss to be her gain.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes at Parrish's Funeral Home, Selma, North Carolina and she was laid to rest in the family cemetery.

Written by: Sister Mavis P. Pope
Elder D. B. Stokes - Moderator
Jeffrey O. Creech - Clerk

SHERMAN LIGHT

By request of Valley View Primitive Baptist Church, I am writing the memorial of our dear Brother, Sherman Light. During the early twenties, he joined River Hill Primitive Baptist Church in Floyd County and was baptized by Elder John Sumner.

When River Hill Church dissolved in 1951, Brother Light carried a letter to Valley View Primitive Baptist Church in Montgomery County. On September 15, 1951 he was received in full fellowship. He believed in salvation by grace and enjoyed the fellowship with the brethren. He rejoiced in hearing the old hymns of Zion. He was an old soldier of the cross and loved to attend the meetings.

For several years his health prevented him from coming to the meetings. On several occasions I visited him. When talking with him, playing tapes of services and songs, he seemed to rejoice in them.

Brother Sherman Light was born September 27, 1902 and passed away on June 19, 1980.

Be it resolved that a copy be placed on our church record and one sent to the ***Signs of the Times.***

Written in love and humbleness by one who loved him in Christ.

Brother Donald Agee
Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
Kathleen Martin, Clerk

ROBERSON DILLIARD WOODARD

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call Brother Roberson Dillard Woodard from our midst, on February 25, 1979.

He was born September 23, 1887 in Johnston County, the son of the late Borna and Mary Thompson Woodard, making his stay on earth 91 years.

Brother Woodard was a firm believer of Salvation by the grace of God. He attended his church regularly until the last two years of his life. Due to his illness, he was unable to attend, but each time we visited he would always ask about the brethren, and always had a desire to relate how good the Lord had been to him.

Funeral services were conducted at Parrish Funeral Home in Selma, by his pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes. He is survived by his wife, Sena Moore Woodard; one son, Roland Woodard of Raleigh; one daughter, Virginia W. Wilder of Middlesex, North Carolina; one stepson, Rudolph Baily of Selma; two stepdaughters, Mildred Woodard of Selma, Ethel Smith of Richmond, Virginia; a sister, Mary W. Stancil; seven grand-children and three great grandchildren.

Brother Woodard shall be missed. It is our prayer that the family and the Creeches Church be submissive to the Will of God.

The Lord that giveth and the Lord that

taketh away, may the name of the Lord be praised both now and forever.

May the spirit of our dear Brother rest in peace to wait; to wit, the Redemption of his body in the resurrection, where we can be like the Lord our Savior and be satisfied in that Kingdom that Jesus has promised his people.

Done by order of Conference of Creeches Church, June 21, 1980.

Elder D. B. Stokes Moderator
Brother Jeffery Creech Clerk

LEAH ATKINSON CREECH

It was the request of Cheech's Church for me to write an obituary in memory of my mama, Leah Atkinson Creech and our dear sister. With a very heavy heart by nature, I attempt to write about one whom I loved so much and whose memory I will always cherish and love.

Mama was born in Johnston County on January 27, 1912; the daughter of the late Charlie and Allie Evans Atkinson. She was married to Rodney Lee Creech on January 10, 1931. To this union was born four children, three boys and one girl. Left to mourn her passing are her husband, Rodney Lee Creech; three sons, Thel of Selma, N.C.; Glen of Richmond, Va.; Jerry of Garner, N.C.; and one daughter, Mrs. Joyce Creech of Kenly, N.C.; ten grandchildren, all of whom were very precious to her; and four sisters.

Mama and Daddy together united with Creech's Church on April 21, 1962, and were baptized the following Sunday afternoon by Elder D. B. Stokes, Jr., our pastor. I know she was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace. Mama and Daddy attended church faithfully many years before uniting with the church and continued to be faithful church members. There were very few weekends that they did not attend either their home church or visit a sister church until Mama had a stroke on March 6, 1975, which left her an invalid. She was completely paralized on her right side and was never able to speak to us again.

Although Mama was right-handed, she learned to write with her left hand. This is the way we communicated with her for about three years until she became too weak to write. In so many ways, Mama did talk to me these years - by the expression on her face, shaking her head, smiling, crying or just by the look in her eyes.

Mama could not even eat for almost three years; and we tube fed her. Then she began swallowing milk and a few other liquids which we fed to her with a small syringe until her death.

Mama showed very little discouragement or complaints. There were even times when we laughed together and were made to rejoice in the comfort she gave to all of us. I feel she took her burden of afflictions with an abundance of patience, understanding and a faith that the Lord would reward her one day.

Mama truly enjoyed her many visitors and cards during her sickness. She also enjoyed listening to sermons and songs which we taped for her. Many Sunday mornings when others were gone to church, she and Daddy had church at home by listening to the taped sermons. Before Mama was sick she always enjoyed visiting with the sick and shut-ins. This she did faithfully and was so graciously repaid because Mama had many visitors which she was a shut-in.

Mama was bedridden for four years and eight months. All this time, Daddy cared for Mama at home with help from family members.

The Lord saw fit to call Mama to her Heavenly home on November 23, 1979. With no sign of pain, she left this life very peacefully.

Mama lived a rich and happy life up until she had a stroke. I know Mama thanked the Lord for this and also the many blessings bestowed upon her while she was sick. She was a great wife, mother, grandmother, and a loving friend to all who knew her.

Her funeral was conducted at Creech's Church, Route 2, Kenly, N.C. by Elder D. B. Stokes, Jr., Elder Oliver V. Allen, and Mr. William Weaver. Mama was laid to rest in the church cemetery with a beautiful array of flowers and in the company of many friends and relatives.

May we who love her be submissive to our Lord's will for I know our loss is Mama's gain.

Her daughter, Joyce Creech Creech
Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Jeffrey O. Creech, Clerk

(We find this to be a very touching obituary and hope others will feel what we did in it. Editor)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 65 Keeling, Va. 24566

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 2/81 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"WE ARE THE CLAY, AND THOU OUR POTTER"

Oft has my soul in secret pour'd
Her earnest breathings to the Lord,
That he would visit my poor heart
And bid my idols thence depart.

O wondrous love that he should smile
On one so filthy, base, and vile!
Should break my chains and set me free,
And once again deliver me.

The gates of brass my Jesus broke
When to my soul he sweetly spoke;
The iron bars asunder flew
When my Beloved came in view.

I cried, "The favour seems too great
For me in such a low estate
Dear Lord, I've oft forgotten thee,
And dost thou still remember me?"

"Yes, thou art mine, poor soul", he said,
"Thou needest not mine anger dread;
Thy wand'rings well deserve my rod,
But I am still thy faithful God."

"Thy base backslidings I will heal,
And thou shalt sweet contrition feel;
Mourn o'er the sins that made thee stray,
And from thine idols turn away."

Dear Saviour, while I bless thy name
My soul is fill'd with holy shame;
O take my heart and let it be
Content and pleased with nought but thee.

Although thou hast my soul restored,
I cannot stand one moment, Lord,
Unless thou dost support me still,
And give me grace to do thy will.

Thy presence does my spirit cheer,
And makes me hope thou wilt appear
In every future trying case,
Till I behold thee face to face.

Sarah

November 25, 1842

FROM MAINE

Newcastle, Maine

Dear Elders,

I am sorry to have waited for the ***Signs*** to expire with this month's issue. I have loved the ***Signs*** for years, as my family did before me for two generations, at least, if not more. But life moves so quickly, it seems, and I can only send in the enclosed check for two more years. The ***Signs*** always has some message that renews my faith and hope and the familiar communications, though the names are not familiar, bring warmth to my heart because the doctrine doesn't change.

In Love and Hope,
Sister Ruth Clark

EXPERIENCE

Dear Brother Poole:

The other day I received a letter from one of our sisters in the South and the content of it was, of various ways we experience the many things in our life. It gave me much food for thought and I would like to share those thoughts for what they might be worth.

Isn't life itself, one great experience after another? I believe so. Some are more important than others, and as we grow older, we attach more importance to some than to others. I will use my own life as an example, and it seemed to be filled with experiences of all kinds, good and not so good.

When I left home to be married, against the wishes of my parents, that was an experience, and when I found out, a few months later that my parents were right in objecting to me marrying the one I did, because they knew and I did not, he had the reputation of alcholism, that was a very bad experience, in awakening to the results of being disobedient. But since I had made the step and my husband was a fi e man, well liked, a hard worker and loved his family, when he was not drinking, no one even knew how many hardships we suffered when he did drink and caused trouble to me. He never mistreated the children, nor had disturbances outside the home, for which I was thankful. After 16 years of married life, my husband died of pneumonia, leaving me with 7 children, ages 3 to 16 years old. One period of my life ended and a new experience began. A step into a more stable life, knowing now, what we were doing and how our small finances would be used, wisely and well, from necessity. After 8 years we left the farm we were on. But in that period of time, much had taken place. In 1942 War was declared. Young men drafted. My son just turning 17 wanted to go into the Navy, instead of the Army draft. I signed for him. He was gone 4½ years. That left me and the girls. First I sprained an ankle, then had a nervous breakdown, because I was badly rundown in health. My mother died in 1938 leaving my Dad alone, with my oldest brother and wife, and he often came to see me, for a week at a time. We were always very close to each other and he felt I understood him better than all the rest of his 8 children. During my illness, I had begun to feel the need of something greater in my life than what I had. I had always known and loved the Lord in an ordinary casual way, but I felt a longing for more depth to it. The Methodist Church we had attended all our lives just did not feed me as I needed to be fed; Spiritual Food, from the Master's table. But I was not getting it and I hungered. When Dad visited me, he would bring me copies of the ***Signs of The Times.*** The first one I read was a real eye opener to me. I never knew anyone preached such beautiful words, just as the Bible said. In language plain enough that even a child could understand. I feasted upon each article. Dad was so pleased, because, he said, "I was the only one in the family that enjoyed the ***Signs,*** besides him."

And he had taken it with him to another sister's home. But each time he went back, the copy still lay where he had left it. Well, that opened up a grand new experience to me! The way grows brighter!

When I recovered from my illness, Dad wanted me to go with him to the Needmore-Sidling Hill Association, in Pennsylvania. He had to stop going, because he was not able to go so far alone, anymore by bus. As we had responsible work on the farm of making sure the stock was fed and cared for, besides 30 cows to milk, morning and night, I was not certain how our boss would take it, if I asked to go away for a week. But his reply was typical of his fine nature. He told me that the girls had kept everything going while I was ill, those 2 or 3 weeks, and the milk was always ready on time; all the work finished before they got the bus ¼ mile away for school. And in the evening, did it all over again, before his son came to get the milk to take to his farm for cooling. He said he knew they would be able to do it alone, for a week, so go ahead and it would do me good. We did go, and I did enjoy every minute of it. We stayed with elderly cousins of Dad's, for we were in his home country! I heard beautiful preaching, such as I had never heard before; Elders Walker, Vaughn, Bellows, Lefferts, and others, each one preaching in pure harmony with the Bible and with each other. Such fellowship and love, I had never experienced! I just couldn't seem to hear enough and what lovely singing of hymns! The week was soon over. A beautiful experience, right from Heaven! Everything and everyone was fine when we got home again. I was much stronger and able to do my share again. But the Lord was busy working with me. Stirring me up as nothing ever did before.

In October there was a 2 day Association at Welsh Tract, where Dad's membership was. Elder Eubanks had baptized him in 1914. We attended that. There were services Saturday evening in the home of Deacon Charles Jarmon and I heard Elders Jones and Rhodes for the first time. The same doctrine of Salvation by Grace was preached as before. I feasted again. Elder Lefferts was there also. I felt so blest to be there.

In 1943 my brother decided to move away from Dad, onto a farm, and he asked me if I would leave the farm and move in with Dad. That was a great decision for me to make and required much prayer. Since my illness, I had been unable to work in the field as usual, and husk corn and pick tomatoes as I had done every year. One daughter had graduated and another ready to graduate the following year. One was fulltime working on the farm, as it was war time and women were taking men's places on the farms. I knew I wanted a change for us all, as I wanted each one to have the same advantages, with the same education. In my Mother-heart, I prayed to be shown what to do and how I could do it. I could see no answer. We had good benefits on the farm. All the milk we needed, flour to bake bread, 2 hogs each year, a portion of beef, and I raised chickens for half. So we had eggs and poultry, and I had a small sum for taking care of the stock, besides free rent, etc. But all we made extra was always needed for clothing and groceries. So none could be saved. I knew that, and I prayed.

I visited Dad 2 weeks later, after telling my brother I couldn't begin to think of it. As Dad and I visited, he quietly asked me how I would like to come and live with him. There it was again! I had to have an answer. I gave Dad my "excuses" and when I said, if I ever left the farm it would be when I could start to buy a home, not rent, he said, "that's what I mean." He said he would sell me the home place for what he had paid for it in 1920, and he could carry the mortgage. I had no more excuses to give. That floored me. He had

paid $1,900.00 for it. Now I had the very unhappy job of telling our boss and his son we were moving in three months. I prayed again, for words to use for they were fine people. We were there eight years.

They had several meetings with me, asking if they had done anything to cause us to want to move, and offering more money, more advantages, etc. And I just prayed I would not weaken in my resolve to leave, because I had begun to see that it was God's answer to my prayers. Finally, when the son came to me, separate, to see if I would change my mind, I told him, "Albert, you are young and you can understand how I feel about the girls. One is working on the farm and loves it. Another wants to go into Civil Service in D.C., when she graduates. They both have the same education and I want them to have the same advantages. And now that I cannot do my part to earn money, I do not feel it's fair to them to do it all." Praise God he understood, and no more was said.

We did move. Dad had been entirely alone for a week. And so we began a whole new experience in life, but this time I felt the leading of the Lord in a much greater way. I was beginning to be aware of Him in my every day affairs. Dad was ill for a while and Elder and Mrs. Lefferts paid us a visit on their way to Welsh Tract, and I did so much enjoy them. Later, I got a precious letter from him. The first letter of many he later wrote to me encouraging me. He seemed to see in me, what I felt, and I thought I was the only one aware of how I felt!

On Dad's 80th birthday, my cousin from Virginia came for a visit and she promised Dad she would see that he and I got to Welsh Tract each meeting day. And she kept that promise until after she got married and had children. Then she seemed to fall away and didn't go any more.

The Lord was working strongly within me and would give me no rest night or day. After the children left for work or school, I would take the Bible, read, and pray and it seemed the turmoil inside would never end. Then one week, when Dad had gone to spend the week with my sister, I had a final battle and Jesus Christ won. By Thursday I was not able to rest at night, and as I lay in bed, not asleep, it seemed I was in a hospital corridor, walking or pacing up and down, trying to sing to patients on cots on either side. I had no tune. I was trying to sing Rock of Ages, but the tune was way off key, and I could not sing right. With head bowed and hands behind my back, I paced toward a light at the far end. The patients were making fun of my singing, but I continued on, not heeding, till as I neared the light, my tune began to ring out true and clear, "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy Cross I cling, etc." and I awoke singing that verse, with a light, happy heart. I felt all was now well and I would not be burdened any more.

But the next day, Friday, I was again filled with doubts and fears. Was I trying to make myself believe I was something I was not? I did not want to deceive the dear people of the Church, nor did I want to delude myself, and most of all, I did not want to appear as a hypocrite before God. I knew God would know, so again I went to Him in prayer, to show me what to do and how to do it. That night I again dreamed and awoke singing "Helpless I am and full of guilt, But that for me thy Blood was spilt, O cleanse and make me what thou wilt, And take me as I am." And again I felt that renewal of hope. That priceless hope only God can give.

Dad came home on Saturday and, as I usually did when we had our little chats together, I put a stool near his feet and I showed him the last letters I had that week from Elder Lefferts. He had written many and this last one, he told me if I could find anywhere in the Bible, where anyone was saved by being worthy, he wanted me to show it to him.

I gave Dad this letter and as he read, tears came into his eyes. Looking up, he said, "well?" I said, "Dad, what would you say if I told you I want to be baptized tomorrow?" Tears streaming down, he said he would be the happiest man in the world. Arriving at Church next morning, we were met at the end of the walk by Elder Lefferts. After greeting Dad, he looked at me and said, "Well, Ruth?" My reply was, "I am ready, I am tired of going it alone." It was very humbling to be gathered in loving arms and see tears of joy shed by both he and my Dad. That morning a powerful message was heard, an open door was seen and I entered, and was beautifully, lovingly received. The Baptism was that afternoon in the pond back of Sister Lydia Rittenhouse's home. Hymn page 124 was sung. "How Firm A Foundation" will always be precious to me, as it was sung during and after the baptizing. Full of God's promises to His people (Isaiah 43). An experience never to be forgotten and truly blest of God; An experience of God's marvelous Grace to a sinner. From there, as I looked back, I could see the many ways the Lord had been with me and my family, even when I knew it not, and I've been blest to enjoy many rich crumbs from the Master's Banquet table, sitting as did Mephibosheth, lame in both feet, at the Master's table. He it is that sees the beginning and knows the ending.

Dad fell and broke his hip and no one thought he would ever walk again, but God knew better. Again Elder Lefferts visited. Another blessing. But Dad was determined he would walk and after 6 months, he told us so. My oldest brother went to Sears for a walker, and Dad soon was up and on the move. Later, when he was 84 years old, he had a heart attack, sawing wood. He lived a week, and the Lord called him Home. I missed him very much, but was thankful he did not linger on to suffer.

Just one year, exactly, after I was baptized, Elder Lefferts was in Heaven, with his Heavenly Father. It was a real shock, and I felt I would not want to go to Welsh Tract anymore! But praise the Lord, I soon saw that I was not worshipping the man, but God, when I found I was just as hungry to hear more the next meeting day, as I ever had been, and I did not ever know who would preach. Elder Berry preached and I was fed by the same manna exactly as at other times, by the Hand of God.

There is a scripture in Romans, that comes to mind as I write. Romans 5:1-5, "We glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience, experience, and experience, hope." This scripture opens up another area of thought, and in my imperfect thoughts, it seems rich in substance. I hope I do not take too long to dwell upon it. Here we find three very necessary attributes a believer must have to lead a full life in Christ. When we consider each one, we know they are often gained thru tribulation and reverses of all kinds. Experiences cover a large area of our lives. Some are best buried deep and never remembered again. In our home, we had resolved in our hearts to be happy, work hard and keep our home together and the Lord did indeed bless us to do so in many wonderful ways. Each move we made was in prayer. A separate experience, and a richer one. We never had material riches, nor did we ever covet such, appreciating each blessing from God as a treasure.

After Dad's hip healed and he got about with a cane, we made many trips to Associations, both to the Virginia Corresponding Meeting in Virginia, and to Salisbury Association, and in May and October, for a week, up in Pennsylvania to the Sidling Hill Meetings. Yes, God was good to us. Precious memories, beautiful experiences, sweet fellowships.

God has many ways of dealing with His people. Some one way, some

another. Sometimes we are brought down deep in illness and/or affliction, and when we are made to see His hand in it, we come up singing Hallelujah to His Name, and praising God, giving Him all the glory. We know it was the Lord's hand that guided the surgeon's knife. We know it was our prayers that kept the surgeon awake all night as he reviewed our desperate case, and later, when it was all over, we give God all the praise and glory. We give the surgeon our blessing for being a channel thru which the Lord could work. Faith and hope go together and work toward praise and glory. We have our hope. That is a beautiful word. Our hope and God's perfect salvation. We know hope springs eternal in the human breast. A believer's hope carried him thru many trying times. The non-believer goes thru these times and calls it "luck" or the "man upstairs". But that shows no knowledge or respect of an to our God in Heaven, nor does it give Him any praise and glory. Ah, my precious Brother, we speak of experiences. Our entire life is full of them! But the greatest one of all is the blessed experience of Grace we have when we come to know Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour, our Everything!

For many years I had to depend upon myself for so many things in our everyday living and I was so used to having to plan and work out the necessary chores or whatever. But finally, I found there were so many areas in living that were of more importance than just living. The life of living is Christ, and without Him as the center, we just exist. So many people prefer to live that way! In my younger years I was not aware of how my Creator worked in lives. We "hope" the weather will be good. We "hope" nothing will happen to spoil a party for the children, etc. We "hope" as ones not aware. Then as we grow older, things change and we change. Our "hope" is stronger, but still has no real basis. When we become awakened and begin to take notice of what is causing the change in us, we experience surprises of all kinds. One of these surprises is, we find God's grace and mercy are boundless, His love is all encompassing. No words can describe that, because it is felt, not described. God's love is measureless, and meaningful. There is a depth and fullness to His mercy. He has endless patience. As He gathers us into His enfolding arms, His love reaches thru us, and beyond us to all our associations with our fellowman. I've felt it so strong as I mingle with my brethren everywhere I go. And with believers, wherever I find them. It seems like speaks to like. I've known the love of my parents, especially my Dad, as I grew older, and of all my children. Elder Horace Lefferts was my first spiritual love here on earth. His was a love spiritually that cared for my salvation, and it was a sweet Godly love. I could never feel I was in the least worthy of that love. I knew what I was!

There were many others, of which I will only mention Elders Spangler and Wood and they will always remain very precious to me. It would take too much time and space to mention all the other dear ones. Then in these later years, I've been so blest to number Elder James Poole among those whose love and respect I treasure, knowing my unworthiness to be loved by such saints of God. I do not merit any of it, but it is sweet to experience and I do not ever want to be disloyal or unfaithful to the One who is the embodiment of such love, Christ Jesus my Lord and Saviour.

Another experience in my life. I await with great expectancy and with patience the last and final experience God has for me. That will be when He sends His angels to escort me home to be with Him in Glory! That Home He has prepared for me, not made with hands, forever to be with Him.

"Jesus, the very thought of thee, With sweetness fills my breast,

But sweeter far thy face to see, And in thy presence rest."

Summing up my lifetime of experiences, I see many, and they are varied, but each one special in its own way and purpose in God's plan for me and my loved ones.

"God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform.
He plants His footsteps in the sea, and rides upon the storm.

Yes-
He treasures up His bright designs and works His Soverign will

And-
His purposes will ripen fast, Unfolding every hour
The bud may have a bitter taste But sweet will be the flower.

Finally-
God is His own Interpreter
And He will make it plain.

Praise the Lord.

One last scripture comes to mind - Psalm 40:5
"Many O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts to usward. They cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee! If I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered."

Amen!
Lovingly yours,
Sister Ruth Lucht

---

301 Rives Road
Martinsville, Va. 24112

To the Editors of the Signs of the Times,

Enclosed is a copy of a Circular Letter of the Pigg River Association written by Elder J. L. Bocock in 1973.

When I read this letter my eyes overflowed with tears. So many sweet memories filled my heart as I recalled the many seasons of rejoicing while in company with this dear Brother.

This dear Brother has dropped from our midst and his whereabouts is unknown to us. We would like to hear from anyone that knows; who may know if he is living, and if living, his state. Please write. If living, we want him to know that all that ever loved him, loves him still and want to help him if he is in need.

Elder P. E. Ingram

CIRCULAR LETTER

Dear Brethren:

Since the God of all grace has loved us from eternity with an everlasting love, and has manifested this by making us new creatures in Christ Jesus, may we, even here in this Association, give unto Him the glory due His Name.

It was God that began the good work in us, and as sure as He has begun it, so surely will He complete it-in His own way and time. Our God is for us, and this is our consolation under all circumstances.

We shall soon pass through Jordan to the blissful shores of our heavenly Canaan. Our Leader, Jesus, has taken possession of that inheritance for us: He has gone to come again for us. This should cheer us to the lot of our inheritance in this vale of tears, assured that He will lead us on safely until we enter into that rest where none of the inhabitants will say, "I am sick". Then the days of our mourning will be ended.

It is this we are hoping for; it is this we are waiting for; it is the anticipation of this that sometimes causes us to rejoice. How delightful it is to the mind of a believer, to think that this inheritance is infallibly secured to all the family of God. Brethren, how bright are your prospects: Your Sun is rising to set no more. Soon you will receive a palm of victory and a crown of glory.

You ought to rejoice, though now, if need be, ye are in manifold temptations. You may be poor, you may be tried in body and in mind, you may be sorrowing, but look up, your redemption draweth nigh.

"A few more rolling suns at most
Will land us safe on Canaan's coast:
Where we shall sing the song of grace,
And see our glorious Hiding Place."

In bonds,
J. L. Bocock

Tyler, Texas

Dear Editors:

Forgive me. I am such a poor writer, but I want to write a few lines to try to

ask for some of the ***Signs of the Times,*** especially the late ones of Elder Lambert's sermons. We missed the August volume of his last sermon that was published before he was taken from us. If August is the only one we can get, we would love to receive that one. We want to send you money to take care of the cost.

My husband and I just subscribed for the ***Signs of the Times,*** the first time this year. But for years my husband, James W. Burgin has been reading them. His family passed them on to him to read. But they have other loved ones to pass them on to, also. He enjoys reading and studying them so much, and I love to hear him explain the sermons to me. We will hope to subscribe for them as long as we may live.

I have always gone to church, and I believe or hope to believe, that I have been born again. I was baptized into a Southern Baptist Church when I was very young. I just didn't understand the truth of the Bible, or why I was a Southern Baptist, and I am so glad I didn't, because in 1941 the good Lord gave me a wonderful husband from a wonderful family. The G. C. Burgin family are Primitive Baptists, and Elder Lambert was the Pastor of the little church out from Big Sandy and Hawkins, Texas.

Elder Lambert published the most wonderful book in 1955, "Tried in the Furnace". A copy was presented to my husband, and it really touched his heart. The way he believed and the trials he had gone through were so much like Elder Lambert's. He has read, studied, and almost memorized the sermons. Every Sunday he either reads the book or the Bible, and explains it all to me. He has been such a wonderful teacher, teaching me the truth of the Bible. By the grace of the Lord we both learn together.

In 1970 Elder Lambert baptized both of us into the Parion Primitive Baptist Church, where he was the pastor. We feel we have certainly lost a jewel when he passed away.

We are blessed to have Elder Joe Hamrick to take his place. We believe if not deceived, he will be almost another Elder Lambert. He has such a wonderful family. His wife to me is another beautiful jewel.

My husband and I pray the Lord will bless all of you who have a part in the ***Signs of the Times.*** I hope and pray, if it is the good Lord's will, by His grace and tender mercy that He will enable me to continue to be edified by His leading me in the way of all truths. May God bless all of you and have mercy is our prayers.

From a sister in hope,
Mrs. Marcy Burgin

FROM CANADA

N. Delta, B.C., Canada

Dear Elder Williams,

As you will know from my uncle's last letter, he has been recuperating from his illness and operation in our Regina home.

We have now moved to British Columbia, and are happy that Uncle Ken has accepted our offer to live in our home in British Columbia, also. He has made an easy adjustment and is quite well now - walking fair distances daily and eating well.

Please change his address for his subscription of the ***Signs of the Times*** to our British Columbia address. His subscription is carried in the name of Kenneth L. Black.

Uncle's older brother, James W. Black, was my Father. My Mother, Annie Louise McColl Black, was great-granddaughter of Elder Gilbert Beebe. Her Mother, Ella V. Beebe McColl was raised in her grandfather, Elder Gilbert Beebe's home after her Mother died when she was very young. Grandma Ella's Father, Elder William Beebe

remarried and his youngest daughter, my very dear Great Aunt Florence Beebe Bellows (widow of Elder Arnold Bellows), now ninety-five years old, lives in a suite in Elder and Mrs. W. J. Berry's home in Elon College, North Carolina. It was my great joy to visit them last February.

Uncle Ken enjoys reading his ***Signs of the Times.***

Thank you for changing his subscription address.

Sincerely,
Mrs. E. Lloyd Blackman

LEGAL AND EVANGELICAL REPENTANCE

Dear Messrs. Editors,--I beg to hand you a letter of Mr. Huntington's, as introductory to some others which I hope to send.

Yours in everlasting bonds, in sure and certain hope of eternal life,

A.N.

Dear Sister in Christ,--Yours came safe to hand, and I have considered it. I will by no means say that the Lord God of Israel had no hand in the work described in your narrative; but this I must confess, that evangelical repentance, which, to my view, is essential to salvation, is not in the account. The new wine was put into an old bottle, and where this is the case, pride will burst the bottle, and the wine will run out, and the old bottle must perish. I mean that your joys were not received into a humble, broken, and contrite heart. God hath promised to give us a new heart, as well as a new spirit, and when the new wine is put into a new bottle both are preserved. However, the stony heart shall be taken away, and it shall be destroyed, as well as the other parts of the body of sin; for our old man was crucified with Christ, and, under the operation of the Spirit's renewing power, the body of sin shall be put off.

Repentance is two-fold, legal and evangelical. The former is extorted by fears, terrors, and torment, and is always attended with hard thoughts of God and self-pity. This is all the repentance that can be produced in us under the law, where we have nothing before our eyes but our own sins and a sin-avenging God. Evangelical repentance is drawn forth and flows out under the sweet operations of pardoning love, and is attended with a believing view of him whom we have pierced, and with mourning for him; and this is accompanied with a justifying of God, and sympathizing with and condoling a suffering Saviour, and with self-abhorrence; and so it is written: "From all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you; a new heart will I give unto you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and then ye shall remember your own evil ways, which were not good, and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities, when I am pacified toward you." God appearing pacified, and we filled with self-loathing, is the finishing work. When God brings a soul in covenant with him, he accepts us in the Beloved; the atonement applied purges us from our filthiness, and God shines, pacified, reconciled, and well-pleased, in the face of Jesus Christ. All repentance but this needs to be repented of, but this never does; for Christ is exalted to give this repentance to Israel, and the forgiveness of sins; and this repentance is unto life, and is attended with purifying faith. The very text that was sent to you informed you that the humbling rod and the bond of the covenant were wanting in your experience. The rod of God is smiting us with terrors, horrors, flashes of divine anger, reproofs, rebukes, the lashes of conscience, bitter reflections, and smiting us with the application of the threatenings and sentence of a broken law, and with the sore buffetings of Satan, and the killing stings and remorse of guilt.

To come into the bond of the covenant is to have the law of God shed abroad in

our heart by the Holy Ghost given unto us. The work on you seems to be very much like that of Hezekiah, much joy and confidence. And no wonder, for at that time he knew nothing of the plague of his own heart; but when God showed him this, his joy, confidence, and hopes all sunk together: "I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord, in the land of the living; I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world; he will cut me off with pining sickness; from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me." (Isa. 38:11, 12) And indeed, nothing will hide pride from our eyes but an abiding sense of our own depravity, and of the superabounding and undeserved mercy of God in Christ Jesus to us. May this religion ever rest with thee and me. So prays thy friend and servant in Christ Jesus.

William Huntington

The Gospel Standard
March, 1843

REQUESTS ARTICLE

Route 5, Box 73
Reidsville, North Carolina

Dear Brother Williams,

When you have room and time, please print this for me.

My Daddy's brother's experience was put in the "Landmark" by old Elder Burch. He was pastor at Pleasant Grove Church at the time of Uncle Walter Cobb's death. He went to see my uncle and talked to him before he passed away and he had the prettiest experience I most ever read. We had it and it got lost. My uncle died December 16, 1896, and I think Brother Burch put it in the "Landmark" shortly after he died. I sure would like to get a copy of it if anyone has one they would share with me, I certainly will appreciate it.

Keep up the good work you are doing. I love the ***Signs*** better every month.

Yours truly,
Sister Rena Smith

Tuesday 25th

Dear Sister Catherine:

I have had an envelope addressed to you for a week or two. Just kept allowing other things to come in the way. I went to Laurel Creek Sunday. It was good to be there. No visiting Elder. I enjoyed Bro. Roy's sermon. I hope to go to Mountain View this Sunday. I look forward to going church from one Sunday to the next. Going in hope I may be blessed to get a crumb. If in Peter's day prophecy came not by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, is it not true today? God does not change. I say, "It is true".

Romans 5:1 "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." I hope you may read the whole chapter. When I can read it is precious, O so precious. I mean by the expression when I can read when it pleases the Lord to give me a little understanding. O how I prize just a little understanding!

John, 16:15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of mine and shall shew it unto you.

Do we need be afraid of going too far on two points of truth-revealed truth? One of these points is the helpless, depraved condition of the condemned sinner, in themselves considered, under the law and under the curse. The other point is the superlative power, grace, truth and attribute and perfection of the eternal power and Godhead of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He took on a body of flesh like unto his people, sin excepted.

It is too much for one so sinful and undone as I feel to be to claim any part of it, however I feel, by the grace of God to say with one of old, Lord I believe, help thou mine unbelief?

I am far from being in the frame of mind I was in when I wrote you, last. How can I sing the songs of Zion in a

strange land?

Sister Catherine, I enjoyed having you spend the day with me, recently, so much. Please hurry back, and do it again.

I hope you can read this, I have sat on couch with work on my lap. I can never write well that way. Would like to close with this thought - Romans 6:8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

I would like to witness with John Grace be with you, mercy and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

Love,
Gaye

EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER

Wheelersburg, Ohio

Dear Editors,

I see that my subscription to the ***Signs of the Times*** is due at this time. I started taking the ***Signs of the Times*** in 1939 and then the depression came along and it stopped coming to me for I did not have a job and had a wife sick and children to feed. As soon as I got able I sent in my subscription to the ***Signs.*** I am now enclosing a check.

I will be 82 years old on September 27th, and I only went to school for a short time. When I was 15 years old I worked in the coal mines at Holden, West Virginia. I am a old time Baptist of that number when 3,000 joined the Church in one day. That will be the Old Primitive Baptist. I believe in the old Primitive Baptist. I never have been a hypocrite. I never joined any church on this earth. I have always loved the ***Signs of the Times.*** I find a lot of absolute predestination and it is all in God's wisdom before the morning stars sang together and all sons of God shouted together.

If I could only spell the words I would write to this God-fearing people, my kinfolks. There is about one Baptist out of 500 people. I have been studying Old Baptists for many years. My Grandfather was a Baptist preacher. My Father was a Baptist preacher, so I am in the Baptist family, but I haven't never made a fool out of myself. But I still stick to the Old Primitive Baptists doctrine for I don't know any better.

May God bless all of my people. They are a people hated by all the religious sects, but that doesn't bother me.

May God bless the ***Signs of the Times.*** Please overlook my mistakes. Farewell all my friends. I am your friend.

William Sparks

EXPERIENCE

Tarboro, N.C. 27889

Dear Brother Griffin,

You asked me some time ago at the Staunton River Association to write my experience for publication in the ***Signs of the Times,*** but I seem unable to find the right words to put on paper. I have loved the Old Baptists all of my life from the earliest of my years until the present time. I have faithfully attended Old Baptist Church, and I have loved these with a special love for as long as I can remember.

I cannot truthfully say I have always believed the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists, for as a child I did not understand it. When I did start to believing the doctrine of the Bible I cannot pinpoint that either. My parents would carry my brothers and sisters and me to church, and sometimes it seemed as though the preacher would stand all day. We children would begin to twist in our seats and I would say to myself, "I am not going to church on the next Sunday". But as always, the next Sunday would come and I was back on those hard benches. I could not

gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

Lord help us to be gentle and full of mercy, for he shall have judgment without mercy that has shown no mercy.

Beloved, let us love one another and pray for Zion everywhere. The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few. How our hearts yearn for our children, our friends. We are troubled, burdened, as we try to look upward and wait.

Wait on the Lord. He alone is able to save. We wait and weep.

(Even though this letter was not signed, we felt it expressed love and some precious thoughts we wanted to share with the readers. Editors)

Fremont, N.C.

Dear Brother Williams,

I am enclosing my check for the renewal of my subscription to the ***Signs of the Times.***

I still enjoy the publication and look forward to each issue.

I will soon be 84 years old and don't get to go to the distant places that I used to visit. I do have good sight, though, for which I am thankful. I have had cataract surgery, but I see well. I don't drive much any more, so I enjoy passing some of the time by reading.

I have a son who is a member who takes me to church with him on many occasions.

I hope you will continue to be blessed in your publication of the ***Signs.*** I have been reading it for 40 years.

Your brother in hope,
Eli T. Smith, Sr.

SELECTED FROM HUNTINGTON

A minister of the letter stands in his chains, and in the bondage of his corruption; and he savours of sin and wrath, and nothing else; for the shew of his countenance proclaims it, and testifies against him.

The presumptuous sinner, that runs into the ministry unsent of God, stands in pride, arrogance, and false confidence, and hardens and emboldens the wicked.

The heretic, who holds damnable heresies, is a minister of Satan, and stands in the father of lies, actuated and influenced by him.

The arminian stands in the flesh, trusts in his own heart, leans to his own understanding, and makes flesh his arm. He is not emptied from vessel to vessel; he is settled on his lees; his scent is not changed; he savours not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

But the minister of Christ stands fast in the Lord; he stands in the Lord's strength, in his grace and favour, in his righteousness, in his truth, in the peace that he has made, and in the liberty that he has proclaimed. He stands as his ambassador and his mouth to the people, shining in his light and burning with his love, seeking his honour and glory, and the welfare of all his seed. For such "to live is Christ, and to die is gain".

EDITORIAL

TRANSCRIBED FROM A SERMON PREACHED BY ELDER D. V. SPANGLER

Snow Hill Church, October 23, 1975

May we turn to page 156. I would like for us to think about the sentiment of this hymn as we sing it. If you sing it without taking note of what it says, it is worthless:

Come, thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing thy grace!
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet,
Sung by flaming tongues above:
Praise the mount! O, fix me on it!
Mount of God's unchanging love.

Here I raise my Ebenezer;
Hither by thy help I'm come;
And I hope, by thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me, when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God;
He, to save my soul from danger,
Interposed his precious blood!

O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be:
Let thy grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it!
Prone to leave the God I love!
Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it;
Seal it for thy courts above!

I am thankful to be with you. We had two things happen since arriving that has, you might say, made my trip worthwhile; if there was nothing else. Some time ago I received an invitation to spend our time at this meeting in the home of one of the young members, Linda Adkins. Now I have a reputation in this country of writing short letters, when I write. So I wrote, she said, in maybe two lines, "The Lord willing, I'm coming". As I said to her yesterday morning, "I am going to write you a long letter now, and the letter will say this, that if I hadn't received your letter, I don't think I would have come." So you all might take that as you want to. The other thing is I visited an old friend in the nursing home yesterday morning, Mr. Clarence Robinson, who attended my services many years ago. He is blind now and he didn't recognize my voice. When I told him who I was, the reaction was worth my whole trip. Oh, the reaction of joy he showed for a poor sinner like I am. It surely meant something to me.

In the 17th chapter of the book of John, I shall begin reading with the first verse.

"These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

These are the words of Jesus. And the occasion was the approach to the cross and the laying down of His life for His people. I think the message begins with His summing up in the 14th Chapter of John. You know, Matthew, Mark and Luke tell us about the birth of Christ, the virgin birth, the geneology and the events surrounding His natural birth. But the Apostle John soars away in his bringing Him to us. He loses sight, you might say, of His humble birth, His geneology, as he said, "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God and the word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." All the ministers here and elsewhere could never expound the expression, "The same was in the beginning with God." For the unity of the Godhead is there. The covenant relationship is there, in the description, "The same was in the beginning with God." And much of this chapter is bringing to us the relationship and the unity of God the Father and God the Son in the realm of salvation. Embraced in that unity is the people of God. Jesus in God and God in Jesus, and He in them, and them in Him, etc.

In the 14th Chapter of John, Jesus begins to tell His disciples that He is going away. They are puzzled often concerning His going away. In the 14th Chapter He tells them, "If ye believe in God, believe also in me. Let not your hearts be troubled. In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you". As the time would open and develop and be brought to pass they would see and know more about it. "I go and prepare a place for you, and I will

come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there you may be also." He tells them they know the way. Yet there is an inquiry in the mind of Phillip, and he said to Jesus, "Show us the Father". Show us the Father. You have talked about HIm. Jesus said, "Have I been so long with you and yet thou hast not known me, Phillip?" "Has all the work that I have unfolded as the eternal will of God in my life been unnoticed and unknown?" "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

The word of God says, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." How many? Everyone! Everyone under consideration. So the 14th Chapter is laying the foundation of His coming again. We are still holding that forth to the people. If it has not become the key to hold, it never will be. I am looking for the coming of our Lord. If I wasn't, I wouldn't be here this morning. I anticipate the event because He said, "I'm coming again." You can say it in the gospel, or however you please, but there is a second coming of the Lord.

Then Jesus brings the matter a little closer as He comes to the 15th Chapter of John regarding the unity of the Father and the Son. He said, "I am the true vine. My Father is the Husbandman." And He didn't forget to say in that chapter, "Ye are the branches". That is bringing into view in a lovely way, the unity of the Father and of the Son and with His people. "Branches". And in connection with that expression He said, "As I live, ye shall live." Just as certainly as I am alive, there is your life. "Ye shall live". There are about five occasions where the expression is used in these three chapters, "These words spake Jesus". It seems that there was a special significance in what He was saying at certain times. "These words spake Jesus" unto them.

I especially delight in the 15th Chapter in the words of Jesus when He said, "These words have I spoken unto you that my joy might remain in you; that your joy might be full." We will never know what salvation really is until we know the joy of our Saviour in saving us. Our cup will never be full. It will be half empty, until there is in our heart the knowledge that it was just as great a joy for Christ to save us as it is for us to be saved. Paul said, "For the joy set before him". It was always set before Him, and every movement of His life, He endured the cross despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God. God has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name that is above every name. Not only while Christ walked upon the earth, but in every phase of the salvation of His people did He have the preeminence in all things. But His place in heaven now, this morning, is as our Intercessor. He appears in the presence of God for us.

I remember the time I read that scripture in the 15th Chapter. It was at night and I was setting in my room. Whatever He had been telling in the 14th Chapter, and coming on down to the 15th, "Ye are the branches," etc., it seems now, He said, "These words He spake". He says, "I spake these words unto you that my joy might remain in you; that your joy might be full." I don't think that we would detract anywhere from God's grace and His mercy and His everlasting love for His people to say that even the Father in bringing many sons to glory throught the work of His son will take pleasure in it, also. And in connection with that; there is something about the doctrine of grace and the wonders of God's grace that presents these two thoughts. When this world has been brought to a conclusion, and is over, there will be a people in heaven that God won't be ashamed of. And the only reason there will be a people that He won't be ashamed of is because He will prepare them for it. And we also, my hearers, won't be ashamed. Christ was not ashamed to call His people, "Brethren". God was not

ashamed to be called our God, He says that in the book of Hebrews. God was not ashamed to be called the God of the people pictured in the 11th chapter of Hebrews. It is the only way God could have a people in heaven that He wouldn't be ashamed of. He prepares them for it. And one of the great blessings of Grace is that God prepares us for what He has prepared for us. Have you learned that in your life? That same hand must prepare you for what God has prepared for you? Whether it is either joy or sorrow, it is the same thing. One is no different than the other. God must prepare us for joy as well as sorrow.

And now, Jesus in the 14th and 15th chapters has been preparing them for His going away. He has stressed to them that "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name it shall be given to you". That used to be a great puzzle to me. But when I found that the various names of Christ and the titles of Christ was found over 100 times in the Bible, I said, "His name must embrace every need of His people." Whether He is the Advocate, the Intercessor, or whoever He is, it must embrace it all. His Name! These Great Right Reverends, so and so's might think they have a right long handle when they have two or three words attached to their names. But think of the Lord Jesus Christ having over 100 names and titles in the word of God, and each one suited to each characteristic of Him. Oh, my friend, isn't it a wonderful thing? I would travel thousands of miles to see Him one moment. He is the Kings of Kings. He is the Lord of Lords. Everywhere!

I have been in the city of Washington a few times, and they say every avenue leads to the Capitol. You go down Pennsylvania Avenue or Massachusetts Avenue, or any other, and they lead to the Capitol. But think here, every name of salvation, every phase of salvation of the people of God embodied in the Name of Christ that leads to Him! You can have a dozen avenues in the city of Washington, and they would be crowded thoroughfares, wouldn't they? But there can be over a hundred names and title of Christ pointing to Him and the virtue of Him and there is never any congestion in the way. There is always a way to see Him, and there is always a desire in the heart of those at the throne of God to say, "I would see Jesus."

Paul admonished Timothv to preach the word: to reprove, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine. I said not long ago that if the doctrine of exhortation wasn't in the New Testament I had been preaching a lie over 50 years. It is there and it is for the minister as God directs him. If it is preached in blind zeal it is just as terrible as he is, but if it is through the constraining grace of God, then it is, as recorded in the New Testament, "Exhort the church of God with all longsuffering, and doctrine." "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but they will heap to themselves teachers having itching ears". You know, I used to wonder what that was, "Teachers having itching ears". I said, "I have heard of the nose itching, but not the ears itching". Probably I shouldn't say this, but I say a lots of things I wish I hadn't said, and lots of things I don't say that I wish I had said. But not long ago I heard a minister speak, and when he got through he took out of the pulpit like he was in a race with somebody. And he looked like he was itching to hear what somebody was going to say about the sermon he had preached. He must have had itching ears, do you suppose? I don't know. I will leave that for you to decide.

But these words, now we are coming to the hour of Christ. We are coming to Him and the hour appointed in eternity that our Saviour must die for us. And now His prayer. His people come first. The awful hour is approaching that He must pay the debt that all mankind couldn't pay. All the blood of all Adam's

race from Adam's day to today couldn't pay it. The blood of the Son of God only, could. And the hour, He recognizes very well. He says, "Father". "These words spake Jesus and lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour is come. Glorify thy son that thy son may also glorify thee." That is the unity of the Godhead. There is the husbandman and the true vine. "As thou has given him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." That's what we preach! Christ had power over all flesh for one end. To give eternal life to as many as thou has given Him. "And this is life eternal; that they might know him". That is what it is. God has a sure and certain and definite way of bringing that life to them. The only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. "And now, O Father". There was a time that our Saviour couldn't call God His Father. There was a time when in His humiliation His judgment was taken away. There was a time that the literal words that were in the 22nd Psalm must be brought out of the lips of Christ. "My God; My God, why hast thou forsaken me." Now what was He asking God for? He calls Him Father, and I like the expression. "And now, Oh Father." We only hint at what is involved. We can't tell it. What is He asking for now? What is the special request of Christ? "Glorify thou me with thine own self". That is what He wanted. That is what He was asking for. And the kind of glory that He asked God to give Him was the kind that He had with Him before the world was. Could He have asked anything greater? That in the hour of departure, the wonders of the covenant might be brought truly into view; that He who He entered into covenant with before this world was, there would be a continuation and a fulfilling of it in bringing Him from the dead. Paul said in the last chapter of the book of Hebrews, "The God of peace"; "The God of Peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, through the blood of the everlasting covenant." The blood of the everlasting covenant! Make you perfect, etc., and in every good work it was good. And now He asked God to glorify Him with His presence. That the fulness of the love of God in the moment when the covenant was entered into, and God's love for His Son and His Son for Him, and the love for His people and the love of the people of God for them. "With thine own self". That is the glory Christ is asking for. There is no question, is it? That is the glory He has asked God for. Glorify Him with Himself. "With the same glory I had with you before the world was."

Some try to tell us now and try to bring us a saviour like one peddling something on the street. That isn't the God I worship. Our Lord Jesus Christ stresses in these chapters in John that though He was going away, He wasn't going to leave them comfortless. "I will send the Comforter, the Holy Spirit in my name, and he shall take the things of mine and show them unto you." That work is still going on. You talk about experiences of grace. Every time the Holy Spirit brings to the heart of a sinner the assurances of Christ's work and their need of it, it is an experience of grace. It is of grace, however it may come, and that which doesn't come by grace isn't of the Holy Spirit. It is of the flesh, whatever it might be. The Holy Spirit doesn't wander around at random looking for something to bring to the people of God. He doesn't bring just any thing. He brings the things of Christ. He applies every promise that a sinner has ever received in his heart of heaven and immortal glory. The Holy Spirit brings it. And there is no substitute for it. You can have a lots of substitutes, but not the Holy Spirit because He is equal with Jesus Christ, Himself. "And now, Oh Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the same glory I had with you before the world." And an answer was given Jesus on one occasion from the

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VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

October 1939

JAMES 2:26

"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

The chapter from which the above verse is taken is very plain, and simple, so that a child might understand it. This is one of many Scriptures that deal with practical religion, teaching that there is something else beside a belief in, or assent to, the word. While in this chapter James says that one is doing well if he believes there is one God, yet he tells us that devils also believe and tremble. Not all that hear the word do it, therefore James also said, "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." - James 1:22-25.

It is true that faith does come by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, but there is as decided a difference between a living faith and a dead faith as there is between a living child and a doll. The doll can be dressed up with dress, shoes and hat, as the living child, but it is still a doll, it is dead. In the child is life, and life must always be there before any evidence of life can be manifested. The heart beats, breathing and movement of limbs, the crying, hearing and seeing are evidence of life which, as others see them, cause them to conclude that this is a living child.

True faith is a living principle in the soul, that works by love, causing the possessor to do the word of God, as well as to hear it, while false faith stalks about in an empty profession. Paul says, "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." - Titus 1:16.

To some, perhaps, as they read these things, it will seem hard to reconcile them with the utterance of Paul in Romans 3:28, where he tells "That a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law," using the testimony concerning Abraham as a proof, but does not James also use the same testimony in the chapter before us to prove his assertion that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only? Paul refers to works of the law; James is referring to very different works, as we shall try to

prove.

We fully believe that Paul and James were agreed, for the Holy Spirit inspired their testimony, and neither of them would have been faithful had he tried to mix works and grace, or law and gospel. One who has never been delivered from the law by the body of Christ does works which he, in his own mind, feels will help him to get to heaven and God's presence with a "WELL DONE." Working for a blessing.

One under the gospel, led by the Holy Spirit, and blessed with a living faith, which is the fruit of the Spirit, will do those things that are well-pleasing unto God, and such an one is blest in his deed. We would have our readers note that he is blest, not for his deed, but in his deed. How strange that we should find such unruly characters in the church even in the apostles' days, who were so high-minded and indifferent as to their walk and conversation. They had "crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation."—Jude 4. It was so that God's servants should contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

There have always been those who seem to have a strong faith, a faith that could move mountains, and have not charity, and Paul says of such, they are nothing. They can speak with tongues of men and of angels, yet they know not how to bridle their tongues; they deceive their own hearts, and their religion is vain. Paul and James were both agreed in the cardinal truth of justification by faith. In Hebrews Paul tells us of the works of those who walked by faith, while James in the afore mentioned chapter is insisting upon the evidence of true faith in the everyday life of the brethren. He would not have them rest in a head knowledge, which they might call faith, and reckon that such is sufficient for salvation, when it does not affect the heart, nor influence the walk and conversation. Thus he first mentions "respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool." - James 2:1-3. "If ye fulfill the royal law, according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors."-James 2:8, 9. Again, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can such faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew my thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only thing that can make us acceptable unto God, but such a faith proves itself true and genuine, for it works by love and is accompanied by every good work.

As faith in the Lord Jesus Christ makes us acceptable unto God, so the works of faith make us acceptable unto the brethren. A person professing that faith, yet who is at home in the world, having little or no care for better things, while he is enslaved by the love of money, and under the dominion of sin, his religion is vain. No doubt it was such people that James had seen. He noticed that in their excitement to bestow attention upon the man with the gold ring and goodly apparel, that they would slight God's humble poor. As an example of a true and living faith, James takes our father Abraham, who

is called the father of the faithful. He says, "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God." "Faith wrought with his works." Though he knew that in Isaac his seed should be called, and was told by God that that seed would be innumerable, yet he believed God, and went to offer up Isaac, doing the work, going under the power of faith, or, as James says, faith wrought in what he did. Such a work was to be fulfilled of the Scripture. Every word of God shall come to pass, the things that God has said his people will do, faith will work in them, enabling them to work out those things well-pleasing unto God. This is what Paul meant when he said to the Philippian Church, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."-Phil. 2:12, 13.

Many who believe that there is one God, creator and disposer of all things, who has planned and purposed all things whatsoever come to pass, reason with a carnal mind, and say, that seeing that God has declared the end from the beginning, etc., and that his people are to be blessed, then why pray for a blessing which is purposed for us? With the same reasoning, Why go to meeting? Why read the Scriptures? Why try to influence our young to attend where the truth is preached, for if they are to be saved they will be saved? Why ask God for anything when he knows what we need, and in asking we might ask amiss? Why profess his name, or strive to live godly, for if we are to be saved we will be saved anyhow? We call all such reasoning carnal reasoning, and it is from our carnality it springs, and it is God-dishonoring, resulting in this day from ignorance of the Scripture and of the power of God. There is a place for prayer in God's purpose, a very special place, it is called a throne of grace, and God's children rejoice that there is a throne of grace, and they know that praise is comely to the upright, and it is said that "God inhabiteth the praises of Israel." - Psalms 22:3. God has not only purposed the end, but every link in the chain of events, and his worship is in his appointments.

The woman of Canaan was in trouble, her daughter was vexed with a devil. The Lord had sent this trouble, other women, perhaps, had the same trouble, but God's Spirit was in her, and a God-given faith was there also, and she pushed aside every obstacle. So mightily did faith work in her that she faced a rebuff from Jesus, and opposition from his disciples, and she worshipped him (what a work of faith), saying, Lord, help me. (Matt. 15:22-28).

Public worship is also of God's appointment, and it is longed for by those who are deeply tried, to them it is a relief to leave the world and its noise; they often have a gladness of heart, as when David said, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."-Psalms 122:1. Where true faith is there will be an exercise or work that will redound to the good of the soul and the glory of God. In the preacher, it will prompt him to go, leaving his home, and, if necessary, suffer privation for the cause of truth, he will endure the cross and despise the shame. He will lose sight of the gold ring and goodly apparel as in his heart he feels to be at the footstool of God's humble poor, and he is blest in his deed. Although he may feel that he cannot pray, yet many will desire an interest in his prayers, and it is good when his faith is exercised in the word of God to the comfort and edification of the saints.

It is in faith and by faith that brethren will esteem others better than themselves, it will enable those who

have it to choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. What sweet fellowship there is enjoyed in the church of God when brethren are doers of the word as well as hearers. It was a work of faith when the jailer took Paul and Silas and washed their stripes, when he submitted to the believer's baptism and received them into his house and set meat before them. (Acts 16:33, 34.) What a work of faith was Abraham's and Isaac's as they journeyed into the mount. Isaac said, My father, behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And faith working in him mightily, Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb. What a blessed road, and what solemn thoughts were theirs as they journeyed. James not only gives us Abraham as an example, but he seems to go from the greatest to the least, bringing in the harlot Rahab, the last one that man would expect to look to for an example of good works. A fallen creature, like ourselves, who had done nothing good, and of herself could do nothing good, yet it is said "she believed in God." The proof of that was her works. She received the spies into her house, and sent them out another way, and she perished not with them that believed not, when she received the spies with peace. Her faith did not fail, for after she had sent the spies out another way, she confessed her belief in the God of heaven and earth, and she displayed the scarlet thread in her window. Steadfast in the faith, she waited until she was taken by the spies, with all that she had, into Israel's camp in peace.

We cannot possibly see how our subject can be twisted to strengthen a system of duty religion in which the soul would build up a store of works which would force God to change his mind. "He is in one mind, and who can change him?" There is no way of acceptance with God but in Jesus Christ our Lord. The creature by nature has no righteousness acceptable unto God, all he may have is a righteousness of the flesh, which Paul had made much of, but of which he spoke when he said, "Yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."-Phil. 3:8, 9.

To those who have another and different way to that which Paul had, in which they would set up the old creatures to work for heaven, we would say, should God, who is rich in mercy, lay judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, "hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place."-Isaiah 28:17. Then they would confess themselves vile, without ability to do any good things. Jesus, the Savior of sinners, would then be the one thing needful and they would want to feel the word with power. It was the word with power that enabled Abram to leave his father's house and go to a land that God would show unto him. This word with power is "a springing well," within the person to whom it comes, enabling them to walk and do those things that are acceptable unto God.

Faith embraces the beginning and the end, and every step of the way, it believes God and embraces the faith once delivered unto the saints. It enables the possessor to "hold fast the form of sound words," and accounts that "the words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times."-Psalms 12:6. A respect unto the word will often bring about a self-examination, while a neglect of the word in its precepts and exhortations will result in a coldness, and the soul will soon find itself lusting

after, and minding the things of the flesh. The carnal mind ever results in death, a death to all joy and peace in believing, but it is a work of faith, a faith of the operation of God, that makes one remember God and be troubled. Those precepts and exhortations are given that we may see our shortcomings and realize that only by faith, which is the fruit of God's Spirit, can we do them. They are given by inspiration of God, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Some, of course, will say that it is a lack of faith when one is troubled. We do not think so. True faith lives and labors under loads, though damped it never dies. It, like a star, shines brightest in the darkest night. There may be a fearfulness lest we slip, yet such are kept by the power of God. It is through much tribulation, yet faith enables them to wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. While passing through trouble, Job, a possessor of faith, could say, "The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure; into whose hand God bringeth abundantly," as much as to say that there are no bounds in their death, their strength is firm, while the child of God seems often ready to slip. Surely this is for the trial of faith, which is more precious than of gold, though it be tried by fire.

Many of us can look back to the time when we knew the Lord helped us, but this is not sufficient, faith wants a present help, past helps will encourage us to wait upon the Lord, knowing that he who has promised is able to perform. It will cause us not to despise the chastisement of the Lord, nor to faint when we are rebuked of him. We may not be able to say that our prayer is a prayer of faith, and we know that whatsoever is not of faith is sin, but our needs will be such that pray we must, it will seem to be our life's breath, and whether we are answered or not, we know at such times it is right to pray.

The same applies to all our ways: if it is going to meeting we do not know that there will be a blessing for us, but the word saith, "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is," and we know it is right to go, and wrong to absent ourselves. If it is not our pleasure to go, it is our duty, for we should not please ourselves. If we are concerned as to our duty to the Lord and to those who have offended against us, the word of God is plain and will be followed if we walk in the faith, though often such work will be very unpleasant to the flesh. It is not easy to pray for our enemies, to do good to those who despitefully use us, yet it becomes us so to do, even though it is a painful work.

Much could be said bearing on this subject, but we close with the observation that in the foregoing chapter James tells us in the last ten verses no less than three times that faith without works is dead.

Elder George Ruston

OBITUARIES

ALVIE WILLIAMS

Who was that man -- the one in the overalls who sat in the corner so close to the pulpit where the minister stands? The one with tears running down his cheeks and wiping them away with the blue bandana handkerchief? The one who kept nodding his head in emphatic agreement with the gospel and doctrines of Christ that were being preached? The meek and lowly one who sat there mourning?

These questions were asked many times by visitors at Mountain Fork Primitive Baptist Church in Madison County Alabama -- and this writer was proud to answer, "Who was that man - why, that was my brother" (both in nature and in Church fellowship).

Brother Alvie Williams, age 75, departed this life August 24, 1980. He was the fourth child and the first son born to the late Brother G. W. and Sister Price Stone Williams.

His last thirty-one years were spent as a member in the Church of the Lord with the Mountain Fork assembly. He was a true believer in Salvation by Grace and Grace alone.

His immediate survivors include his widow, Annie Roberts Williams, one daughter, Mrs. Maris Chapman; one son, Humes Williams; five grandchildren and six great grandchildren. Also surviving Brother Alvie are three brothers and four sisters.

He loved his family dearly and expressed regret in leaving them, but as his days grew shorter and the pain racked his mortal body, he remarked to me on one of my visits to see him that he was ready and would be glad to see "the morning".

The funeral service was conducted by Elder R. H. Hale at Moore-Cortner funeral home in Winchester, Tennessee and his body was laid to rest beside that of our parents in the Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Huntland, Tennessee where they all wait that great day -- the second coming of the Lord when He will gather the saints together to reign forever with Him throughout eternity -- O my soul!

Written with a tearful prayer for submission and in loving memory of my oldest brother.

Lavonia W. Lee
P.O. Box 209
Huntland, Tennessee 37345

SISTER LILLIAN HOLT

It has pleased God to remove another dear Sister of ours from this world of woe. Sister Holt loved her church and was faithful to attend as long as she was able. When it became a chore for her to get to church, services were held several times in her home. After her confinement to the nursing home she still requested her pastor and assistant pastor have services there at the chapel, which they did. This was just another way she showed her desire to hear the gospel and to fellowship with the brethren. For a number of years she provided the transportation to church for four of our widowed members. She was well acquainted with trials and afflictions here, but I believe she was made submissive to God's will.

Sister Holt was born March 1, 1908, and departed this life July 9, 1980. She was a daughter of the late Walter and Sallie Bryant Hall. Surviving are three sisters, Frances Terry Link, Mary Riddle, and Ruth Parcell. The funeral was held at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church where she was a member for 28 years. Conducting the service was her Pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Elder Julian Williams. Burial was in Danville Memorial Gardens.

Submitted by one who loved her,
I trust for Christ's sake,
Peggy Wells

BROTHER ARTHUR MITCHELL

We are again saddened by the death of another dear member, Brother Arthur Mitchell. God blessed him to be a humble, honest, and sober man, respected by his friends and neighbors. He loved the brethren and his mind seemed to dwell constantly on heavenly things. He and Sister Mitchell were a most devoted couple.

"By their fruits ye shall know them." Brother Mitchell bore the fruits of the Spirit as much as anyone I ever knew.

He was born January 21, 1898, and departed this life August 8, 1980. Surviving are his wife, Sister Frances Mitchell; two daughers, Agnes Carbin of Alexandria and Celia Branch of Charlottesville; two sons, Arthur Lee Mitchell, Jr. of Richmond and Clintner Mitchell of Pleasant Lake, Mich.; one sister, Mrs. J. L. Oakes of Dry Fork.

His funeral was held at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church where he had been a member for 16 years. Conducting the service was his pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Elders Julian Williams and Haywood Wray. Burial was in the Boage family cemetery.

Humbly Submitted,
Peggy Wells

Signs of the Times

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 3/81 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The Staunton River Union meeting will convene with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in March 1981.

NOTICE

We expect, the Lord willing, to reprint several articles in the May, 1981, issue of the ***Signs of the Times*** from the May, 1881, issue.

This will mark the 100th anniversary of Elder Gilbert Beebe's death, and we feel some very interesting history is contained in these articles.

Editors

If Jehovah is infinite in all His ways,
Giving life to man and numbering his days,
Who dares to impeach Him, if, in His wise plan,
He gave shape and direction to the ways of man?

If he, in His wisdom, did all things create,
Should He turn loose the helm and leave things to fate?
Did He not have the right in His sinless decree
To mark out the way, both for you and for me?

If He did decree just what we should do,
I cannot arraign Him--say, brother, can you?
Before whom will you try Him as judge of your court?
Who will act as your clerk and make your report?

If all things are in the decree of His will,
And all things are working the same to fulfill,
Who but a vile sinner too wicked to bow,
Would call Him in question, or say what doest thou?

If He decreed the death of His Son,
The sinless, the righteous, the most holy One,
And this did not make Him the author of sin,
To make Him the author, where would you begin?

Will you begin with Judas, whose act was foretold,
And as was determined, his Master he sold?
Did not the dear Saviour say, woe to that man,
I go as determined in God's holy plan?

If Pharaoh you think would, no doubt,
Prove that God's purpose was not carried out,
Did not God command him, by Moses, you know,
Saying, "thus sayeth Jehovah, Let my people go?"

"Yet, I will harden," yes, harden, "his heart,
That he shall refuse, and not let them depart,
Till I bring my just plagues on all of your foes,
And thus get me honor on him and all his host?"

Yet sinners most wicked will oft Him arraign,
Against His just counsel they often complain,
And say, if He decreed all things unto the end,
Then He is unjust and the author of sin.

The heathen may rage and imagine vain things,
The lowest, the highest, yea, even their kings,
And shout till the world hear the sound of their din,
The author, the author, the author, of sin.

His saints will still praise Him, and shout as they go,
Jehovah, most holy, doth all things foreknow;
His counsel did settle just how they should be;
So, shout on, ye heathen, you don't disturb me.

We learn from an angel that time shall soon end,
And saints shall be welcomed by Jesus their friend;
This all is established by His holy decree,
For thus it is written, and thus it shall be.

If all things are certain, then how came them so?
If things were not certain, how could God foreknow?
Were all things to which foreknowledge relate
Made certain by the old heathen goddess of fate?

We surely all know, at a thought or a glance,
That things are not left to haphazard or chance;
Will one please tell me, that I may once see,
How things can be certain yet uncertain be?

Now, while you are thinking, I'll come to a halt,
If you don't see the point it isn't my fault;
But, brother, please tell me how this thing can be,
All things were made certain without a decree?

Elder J. C. Sikes

EXPERIENCE

In the year 1915 I was about 12 years old, and I was walking a farm road reading Revelations 21:8. Many of the things mentioned in this passage of scripture I have never put into action, but I, for the first time in my life, knew what it meant to be guilty of the whole. As I walked along the road I was crying out, "God have mercy on me". I came to the place that I thought I had made my last step on earth. I went down on my face thinking that I would never get up again; that was the place that I would die and awake in hell, knowing that God was just in doing so. I feel that was the place where heaven and earth kissed. I felt that my sins were pardoned and

forgiven. I arose to my feet praising God. Everything that I could see seemed to be praising the Lord. I could not believe that I would have any more troubles. Little did I know about the tribulations that were before me.

I went about 14 or more years before I ever had a desire to ask the church for a home. I was so depressed that I thought I was losing my mind. I went this way for about two and a half years. During this time I had a double burden because also I had a weight to go and preach the gospel. I vowed that I would never do it for the people would not want to hear me. Yet I had rather preach than anything. I knew that I could not of myself preach the gospel, or I would be preaching only to myself.

In the year of 1935, the fourth Saturday in May, I went before the church and asked for a home and was received. I was baptized the next day. I did not say anything about my feeling I thought I would have to go to the pulpit, but Sister John Ramsey said, "A minister has joined the church today, and I want to hear him when he first speaks". I was liberated in 1937, and ordained in 1941.

Now I want to come to some of my visions and revelations. Before I ever went to the pulpit I had this double vision in a dream. I was walking in a forest of woods, and I saw a tree about 20 feet high, with blue flashes of lightening coming down to about knee high. I had to walk through it. I had a great fear, thinking that no man could go through this and live without the faith of God. I went through and was not harmed. Then I heard these words coming from the tree, "Surely Jim has seen the hand of God". And in the same night, I saw myself standing in a field, and two men came before me, looked me over, and then they went back from whence they came. Then I heard the same voice say to me, "Thou shalt have two children before that you can see my face". There was one daughter born, and after that my wife died. I went about thirty years puzzled over the meaning of this dream. It caused me much trouble. In 1972 I was hunting in the woods, and as I was walking by the trees, this dream came to me with the interpretation, and I saw that my two grandchildren were the two children. I believe that was the meaning of that dream. I came down with a gall operation, and was very nervous. I thought that my time was nigh at hand; the two children had been born. I wanted to die and be out of my troubles, but I could not die. I have been from coast to coast more than once since that time and have met a good many of the faithful of God.

Now another vision before that I ever began to speak in public. I was standing in a field looking at a hill covered with oak trees. From my right I heard a sound like a mighty rushing wind and a sweet rumbling sound. As it went through the trees every tree bowed under the pressure of it, but not even a leaf fell. Then I heard these words coming from the trees, "A God-born man can not sin. You know not who they are, but I do". Now when I go into the stand I never try to be the judge of the people, but try to preach the truth and let the chips fall where they will.

This vision was about 1962. I was troubled about what to do. I begged the Lord to tell me what to do. I prayed nearly three days and nights over this matter. The third night at 12:25 A.M. I heard these words so sweet and loud that the earth rang, "Be still and know that I am God". I awoke thanking the Lord. I looked it up in the Bible, and it was found in the book of Psalms 46:10.

I have seen myself ascending upward toward heaven shouting praise to God. I have seen behind the gloomy cloud, and what a beautiful blue sky, with a golden Sun in the midst of it.

After all of these visions it seems that I would not be so depressed as much of the time as I am.

Dear readers, please join in and let us

burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian."—
Isa. 9:3, 4.

Such rejoicing and praise reminds me of the heavenly joy in the Church over one sinner that repents (Lk. 15:7), or the woman who, upon finding her lost coin, rejoiced among friends and neighbors (Lk. 15:9), and the exultant father of the prodigal.

As mentioned previously, the prophecy was naturally and historically fulfilled in Cyrus and Israel's return from the seventy years of captivity. More important however, the Spirit of faith was testifying beforehand the birth of Jesus and the fact of His Kingdom. The prophet Isaiah was enabled to scan the work of God and see Jesus coming into the world and in the affairs of God's elect. He witnessed the Messiah delivering them from Babylon (the world of confusion) and ushering in a government of peace which there shall be no end. The Spirit testifies of a Kingdom established in judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever (Isa. 9:7).

My dear friend, it is a mercy that we have a Sovereign Potentate, the Mighty God who sits upon the throne of David, and upon His Kingdom, to order it and all subsequent events for our good (Rom. 8:28), and for His own glory. He is the Governor among the nations: (Psa. 22:28) and he doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?

"For I am persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

Nor heights, nor depths, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."
Romans 8:38, 39

Now in speaking of this deliverance, I must impress upon the reader's mind that this is but the beginning of a series of deliverances which will culminate when the Kingdom of Grace is delivered unto the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and authority and power, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

Until the consumation of all things, when all shall be subdued unto Him, we shall experience a paradoxical life. A life and profession composed of liberty and bondage, darkness and light, vexations and joys. And as Bunyan described it:

"A christian man is n'er long at ease;
When one's fright's gone, another doeth him seize."—Bunyun.

Lord willing, a second installment, examining the eternal Son-ship of the Man-Child, will be forth-coming.

(Elder) Jack H. Dawsey

FROM KANSAS

Wichita, Kansas

Dear Editors,

Please find enclosed a check for $25.00 for two years subscription to the ***Signs of the Times.*** Use the rest as needed.

There are times when this person feels to be without the presence of the Holy Spirit, and left entirely on his own. It is then he sees his own corruption, his helplessness, and total inability to return or to change his condition. Surely he is "poor in spirit". It is here that his hope sustains his spirit that God is unchangeable, and that the work of Christ in forgiving his sins will appear again to his relief and joy.

Some have departed from the truth at this point. It appears that they believe that after regeneration the person has the power at his discretion to obey or disobey the commandments of God.

I guess all the preaching I will be able to hear from now on will be reading the ***Signs of the Times.*** The Bible says, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her

iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins". (Isa. 40:1, 2)

This makes her safe in His almighty power, for she is "kept by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last day".

I cannot express the food I get from the writings of you dear Editors. If you all have a time of prayer, please pray for me. I am eighty-five and my mind is not so good any more. I am getting as a little child. I mourn the death of Elder Lambert.

I would love to see some writings on the thousand years reign with Christ.

If I have written anything to offend, please write me and correct me, for I do love God, if my heart is not deceiving.

A sinner,
Fred Winfrey

To the Signs of the Times,
Dear Ones,

I have just received the October issue of the ***Signs,*** and I enjoyed the writings and its contents very much.

My daughter-in-law gave me a clipping from the newspaper where someone was offering a reward for anyone who can find the verse where the Bible says there is salvation in or through a Baptist Church. They knew these things are being taught.

I don't want his money. I read in Matthew Chapter 3, verses 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and also Chapter 21, verses 24, 25, 26; some deny the truth through ignorance, while some do for worldly gain. I agree with Elder Poole when he said it will cause some to read the Bible more, and not to listen to false prophets who deny the truth. Read Matt. 24:24, Mark 13:5, I John 3:7, and II Timothy 3:13.

I agree with Elder Poole saying in his writings about Christ before Pilate (John 19:10-11), that the average drunkard that sits on a bar stool drinking beer has more regard for humanity than either Pilate or the religious mob. It reminded me of what I heard over the radio some time ago from a preacher in Collinsville. He said God's people were saved when Jesus died on the cross for the sins of His people, nothing they had done, or could do to save themselves, and if anyone didn't believe it they were going to hell. Here he denied his own words, because he went on to say that a fellow at his church accepted Christ and was saved. But this fellow had some beer at home and he was going to pour it out, but instead he drank it, and now he was going to hell. That fellow accepted a false Christ, and preached his own funeral, for he said anyone who didn't believe Christ died for the sins of His people and had finished His word was going to hell.

Yours in the faith of God's elect.
Mattie Underwood

FROM ARKANSAS

Danville, Arkansas

Dear Editors of the ***Signs of the Times,***

I haven't received my October ***Signs,*** so I guess by subscription has run out. I have let other members have all this year's ***Signs.*** I don't have any of them back to check. I'll send a check for mine and two others.

I enjoy the ***Signs*** so much. At times I don't get to go to our meetings on Church days. I read them, and then re-read a lot.

We lost our dear Pastor, Elder E. J. Lambert, August 14, 1980. He had been in declining health for a few years. We sure miss his, his singing, prayers, and sermons. He could tell us so much in a short time. I feel he was waiting his call and that he is now at rest. He was pastor at Rehobath Church, El Dorado, Ark., where my membership is.

We are thankful the Lord sent us two able ministers, Elder David Turner and Elder Graydon Smith, both of Louisiana.

Last weekend (Sept. 26, 27, 28) I with my sisters, attended our Association in Spearsville, La. We sure enjoyed it. We had a good Association, and meeting friends.

Dear Editors, I am so glad you are still able to put the ***Signs*** out in this trying time. May the Lord bless and keep you all, and all others of like faith.

A Sister in hope,
Jane Carroll

Lucama, N.C.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed you will find my check to renew my subscription to the ***Signs of the Times*** for two more years. It expired in October, 1980. Use the balance to help out for the ***Signs.***

I do enjoy reading the ***Signs of the Times,*** and I hope it will keep being sent out. It is so much comfort for all of us, especially for people who are sick and can't get out.

C. D. Scott

EXTRACT ON SERMONS

And here we see the delusive effect of all preaching that does not flow from an exercised and feeling heart. The very truth itself, when not preached under the solemn unction and power of the Spirit, hardens instead of softens, and deludes instead of saves. The thick veil of self-deceit and hypocrisy is not to be rent asunder by such gentle hands as traced the sermon now under review. A more searching, cutting, stripping ministry is now required. A mere unexceptionable statement of doctrinal truth is not suited to the present state of the churches. Something more is wanted than a quiet sail in a pleasure boat on a summer evening upon the sea of truth. The insidious current is hurrying the vessel on towards the rapids, and nervous arms are needed to pull against the stream. How many young people are entrapped, we can call it by no other terms, into a Calvinistic profession, without any work of grace upon their hearts, by smooth statements of doctrinal truth! And when thus launched, how awfully are they carried on in presumption, made members of churches, and borne up by the good opinion of others, until some dreadful fall, or a death-bed makes known to them the fatal secret, that they had lamps and wicks, but no oil. What lightness, too, is often propagated from the pulpit to the pew by the unhallowed levity of many Calvinistic preachers; and what a sad tendency has all this rash meddling with holy things to harden the consciences of their hearers, until sin loses all its hideousness, and they are landed in open or secret Antinomianism! A hard, dry statement of truth differs almost as much from God's mode of revealing truth in the Scriptures as it does from error itself. Truth, as God has revealed it, is clothed with experience, and mingled with precepts, warnings, and promises, so as to render it an appeal to the heart and conscience. There are in the Bible no dry, theoretical statements, no elaborate systems drawn out with mathematical precision, no amusing anecdotes, no jibes and jests, no ridicule poured on doubts and fears, no encouragement given to self-deceivers; in a word, nothing in the lease resembling what is heard in many Calvinistic chapels. Let a poor child of God quietly read, under the blessed Spirit's sacred unction, a chapter of John's Gospel or Paul's Epistles, and compare the sweet emotions, the soft yet comforting sensations, the goings forth of his soul upwards to the Lord in faith, hope and love, or, it may be, the piercing convictions that wound his conscience as to his own baseness and vileness--let him, we say, compare the feelings of sorrow or joy created in his soul by the word of God with the effect produced on his spirit by the noisy rant, foolish anecdotes, trifling manner, light jests,

and occasional attempted flights of eloquence to be witnessed in many places, and under many ministers, who boast as though they had a monopoly of truth, letters patent from the court of heaven exclusively to preach the gospel. Will he not come away either wounded in spirit at the unhallowed lightness with which divine things have been handled? Or if he has been at all caught by the wildfire so liberally scattered, will not his conscience be afterwards grieved at his sin and folly? Will he find humility, filial fear, godly sorrow, tenderness of conscience, communion with Jesus, deadness to the world deepened in his soul? Or will his evidences be brightened, his faith strengthened, his hope enlarged, or his love to God and his saints sensibly increased?

Children of God, try the ministry under which you sit by these tests. It is not of God if it produce not good effects. It may be the gospel in the letter, but it is not the gospel in the spirit if it does not produce the spirit of the gospel. The tree is to be known by the effects; and if the fruit be bad, depend upon it the tree is bad also.

The Gospel Standard
February, 1843

FROM ARKANSAS

Calion, Arkansas

Dear Editors of the Signs of the Times,

As you know, our church building burned May 6, 1980. We are happy to report our progress of building our new Bethel Meetinghouse.

It was finished October 22, 1980; painted inside and out. We still need pews. However, Rehobeth members were kind enough to let us meet with them for four months. Our building was finished except for painting, so we had our first meeting the Saturday before the third Sunday in September. We had the dedication on Sunday, October 19, 1980.

We thank the readers of the ***Signs of the Times*** who contributed to our building fund. May God bless each of you, and we thank you Editors for printing our letter in the ***Signs.***

Rehobeth members also were good to give us seven of their pews, and a Methodist church loaned us chairs until we can get pews.

Thanks again for your help and may God bless you all.

In bonds of love in the Lord
Jesus Christ,
J. A. & Annie Lee Davis

September 14, 1980

FALLS OF TAR RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH ROCKY MOUNT, N.C. ORDINATION OF BROTHER DANNY TURNER TO THE FULL WORK OF THE GOSPEL MINISTRY

A Presbytery was called consisting of the following: Elder D. B. Stokes, Elder W. L. Everett, Bro. Clyde Debow, Bro. Leroy Arrington: Deacons: Odis Daughtridge, J. W. Whitfield, Laurence Holloway, Marcus Armstrong, Stedman Brown, E. D. Ward, W. E. Bland, Leon Griffin, Clyde Pridgen, Thelbert Hocutt, George Pearson, M. D. Simmons, Jr.

The Presbytery was called into conference. Conference was opened with Praise and Prayer by Elder D. B. Stokes. A motion was made and carried for Elder Stokes to sit as moderator. A motion was made and carried to call Sister Nina Pearson as clerk. The candidate was presented to the Presbytery by Deacons Odis Daughtridge and Marcus Armstrong of The Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder Stokes asked the church if it was unanimously agreed to set Bro. Turner apart as a Minister. It was unanimously agreed. Elder Stokes asked for any questions from the Presbytery. Elder Everett said he had ridden with Bro. Turner many times and discussed many things of the Church at length. He said he seemed to be a thinking person. Elder Everett asked, "Do you believe in the total complete sovereignty of God as He deals with His creatures, on this earth"?

Answer: "Yes, I do, I can not believe otherwise." Brother Clyde Debow said Bro. Danny had been called to a precious and Holy Call. "Our blessings go with him. Let us not take this lightly. He asked, "Did God know us before we were born; that the Lord prepared our steps; that the Lord called us; the Lord touches our lips and brings from our hearts what He wants us to proclaim?" The answer to all was "yes".

Bro. Turner is asked if he had anything to say, "I know I am just a man and by myself I can do nothing. I know God called me. Have patience with me. Love me and my wife. My road will be rocky. I love you."

Elder Everett said "What is said today will be forgotten. What you learn will not be forgotten. The Church will be patient. Sometimes it seems everyone is against you. This is not true. Remember when a decision is to be made, go to God. It may or may not be when or what you want. Lean on the Lord first and then your companion. You must have her support. Godspeed to you both."

Elder Stokes read from Timothy the qualifications of a Bishop. "I cannot describe what you will experience. A life of joy, sorrow, and being constantly criticized. Remember this is because they love you. Criticism is not to hurt you. There are many dark hours before you. Pam, his life belongs to Christ and those he serves. The more you do the less respect you get. It's easy to forget what man wants done, but you can not forget what God wants. You are a servant. Do not tell the Church what to do. You will go to places and won't receive any thanks. If God called you, it will come back to you from the least expected source. Be patient, do not preach for money, but the relief of your soul. People will misuse you and talk about you, these people don't love you. Do not satisfy people, satisfy your conscience. Do not let criticizm bother you. Go as you are led. Go and baptize in the name of the Lord, not the name of the Church. Be satisfied with yourself. Obey no man, but the one who called you. You will be critized but remember, He was also."

The Elders laid hands on the candidate in prayer; asking God to take his life and use it; be with him and strengthen him. Give him faith and accompany his companion. Grace abound in his life. Stand still and wait. Have a "Thus saith the Lord" and the Bible. The Presbytery presented Elder Turner back to the church as an ordained minister.

Moved and agreed the minutes be read. Moved and agreed the minutes be received. Moved and agreed; one copy be reserved for the Church records; one copy to the "Signs of the Times." Conference was closed with prayer by Elder Stokes. Moved and agreed conference adjourn.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

FROM LOUISIANA

Rayville, La.

Dear Editors,

Another year is almost gone and it is time to renew our subscription to the dear ***Signs of the Times.*** We look forward to reading it each month.

May the good Lord continue to bless the writers and you Editors to get the paper out to us.

Mrs. Earl Wilson

REPORT OF HOPEWELL MEETING 5th SUNDAY IN JUNE, 1980

Dear Elder Poole,

The good Lord saw fit to seal a three-day meeting at Hopewell Church, Winnsboro, Texas, with His divine blessings. The meeting took place the 5th weekend in June and the ministers present included Elders Morris, Wall, Shipman, Hamrick (present Pastor of Hopewell Church), Burkhalter, Haygood, and McLaughlin, from Texas; Elders Turner, and Grayden Smith from Louisiana; Elder C. Moon from Alabama; Elder Townley from Arkansas; Elder Winfrey from Kansas; yourself from Maryland; and Elder Lambert who has recently departed to be with Christ. Licentiates present included Brothers Vaughn and myself from Texas; Brother Lackey from Oklahoma, and Brother B. Moon from Alabama. Collectively, these ministers delivered 22 sermons.

Though some may feel that 22 sermons in three days is somewhat excessive, the Lord so blessed the speakers and the congregation to where all present were given to rejoice in the blessed truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Whenever this is the case, time and sermons seem to pass quickly. Before we knew it, we were saddened by the fact that the meeting was ending, yet comforted by the prospects of many more such meetings in the future.

In an age when Primitive Baptists are fewer and farther between, it is a mark of God's mercy that He has seen fit to bless us with modes of transportation whereby we can travel long distances in a short time and still be with one another in person, though never separated in spirit. Thus at the Hopewell meeting, we were providentially blessed to have believers from afar, as well as from near. At such times, we are reminded that although God's people may have different natural backgrounds, they have the same spiritual background, as reflected by their common spiritual beliefs, one of which is that salvation is solely of the Lord. There are many people who say they believe that salvation is of the Lord, but by the time they get through explaining their views of it, man's hand has gotten into the act, and their religion is proved to be of the earth, earthy. On the other hand, God's people who have been taught not to rely on the arm of flesh but solely on the mighty arm of the Lord do not say they believe that salvation is of the Lord, but then in the same breath as it were, explain it away. Instead, they not only believe it, then in no uncertain terms proclaim, sing, and live it! They will also travel long distances to be with those who do likewise.

Thus, at the Hopewell meeting all seemed blessed to speak, sing, and live upon the same truths. The blessed truth that salvation is of the Lord is music indeed to the ears of those who have learned by experience that the arm of flesh, instead of helping to save, can only help condemn. These same people are given to seek salvation solely from Jesus, whose very name means "Jehovah saves". The last sermon preached was most fitting in that it brought out the extent of the love Jesus has for His bride, a love so great that He was willing to do whatever was necessary to save her and to present her as an appropriate spouse, without spot or blemish.

It was also most fitting that right after this sermon and before services ended, the Lord was pleased to present two dear sisters as candidates for baptism. They were Sisters Welch and Sparkman from Houston. Members of Shepherd Fold Church who were present at the Hopewell meeting voted unanimously to receive them. These dear sisters were later baptized in Houston by Elder Haygood.

Each time the Lord is pleased to draw His people together and to bless their meeting, it is but one meeting closer to the time when they will meet to part no more. That future meeting will contain the fulness of what can now be enjoyed only in part. May we ever be given to yearn for that meeting.

In One Precious Hope,
Jimmy Hamrick

THE GAIN OF GODLINESS, OR THE BEGGAR'S PROFIT

Proverbs 18:20

"A man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; and with the increase of his lips shall he be filled."

By the belly, here, I presume, is meant the heart or the soul. It is said that the prodigal would fain have filled his belly with husks: but a better banquet was provided for him; namely, the fatted calf and best robe, which is Christ crucified, and his imputed righteousness; neither of which are food for the bowels, but for the soul. Again, Elihu, who declares that he was inspired, and that the Spirit

of God had given him understanding, finding the Spirit to operate strongly upon Him, says, that his belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burst like new bottles. (Job 32:19) And so the Saviour says, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water; but this spake he of the Spirit." But it must mean the heart, for it is the heart, and not the bowels, that is the seat of divine inspiration. "I will give them a new heart and a new spirit".

This heavenly merchant in my text, whose belly is to be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth, and to be filled with the increase of his lips, cannot be the person that the wise man calls a prating fool that shall fall; for a fool is not a praying man, and he that falls can never be said to be satisfied; nor can this merchant be a man employed in temporal concerns, for it is not by talking, but by working with the hands, that the generality of men are fed and filled in a temporal sense. "He that laboureth, laboureth for himself, for his mouth craveth it of him". This is working for the belly, not talking. Hence it appears that this trader in my text is not an earthly trader, for in the general they live by labour, not by talk, no, nor a prating fool about religion, for the kingdom is not in word; "In all labour there is profit but the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury". But this man that I am describing hath his belly satisfied by the fruit of his mouth, and filled by the increase of his lips.

Again, this trader must be a hungry man, a man that hath an appetite, for he cannot be said to be filled if he is not in some measure empty; for God filled the hungry with good things, but as for the rich, he sends them empty away: it is they that hunger and thirst after righteousness that are blessed, and they shall be filled: But, "Wo unto you that are full, for ye shall hunger" Furthermore, this empty man is one that is empty of good, empty of righteousness, of the bread of life, and of the satisfying grace of God in Christ: and he must be in a good measure emptied of self, or selfsufficiency, or selfrighteousness, of human confidence, and of all satisfaction in and from dead works and a form of godliness: for the worldlywise sinner is too proud to hear the gospel, and the selfrighteous too rich to beg a covering, and the full soul loatheth the honey-comb, and therefore will hardly beg for that which his soul hateth.

This man in my text is a praying soul, not a hearer of the word only; for, if his belly be filled by hearing only, and not by praying, his belly must be satisfied with the fruit of another's mouth, and not with his own: but my text says that a man's belly shall be satisfied by the fruit of his mouth; that is, his own belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his own mouth. I know that there is no satisfaction, nor fulness, for a sensible sinner, but in Christ Jesus. I know that in him pardon and peace, regeneration and adoption, are promised, a new heart and a new spirit is to be given, and everything else, both spiritual and temporal; but then it is added, "For all these things I will be inquired of by the house of Israel, that I may do these things for them." So that without prayer nothing can be expected. The prodigal wanted bread, and he begged it; the publican wanted mercy, and he craved it by prayer; Hannah wanted a son, and she begged for one and got him; David wanted pardon, and he prayed and obtained it: the belly of all these were satisfied by the fruit of their mouth. And how can a man's belly be filled without it, when God declares that he will pour out his fury upon the heathen that know him not, and upon the families of the earth that call not upon his name?

Besides, can a man belong to the house of David, and not have the spirit of grace and supplication poured out upon him, which is promised to all the

royal family? No, by no means. Again, can I conclude that I belong to God if I have no communion with him in prayer, or that I am a believer, if my prayer brings nothing in from him? "Verily God hath heard me", saith the Psalmist, "And not turned away my prayers, not his mercy from me". "This is the confidence that we have in him," says John, "that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us; and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him".

An hungry man's belly is to be satisfied by the fruit of his mouth, for he draws this conclusion; if I am an enemy to God, he will not regard me; if I worship him not in the spirit, I cannot be accepted; if I pray not in faith, I cannot expect an answer: but God hath heard me, and therefore regards me, respects me, relieves me, and accepts me in his dear Son; and therefore he must be my friend, not my enemy; my father, and not my angry judge; my God in covenant, and not a consuming fire to me. The apostles prayed till the place was shook where they were assembled, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost. And thus Cornelius prayed till he was ordered to send for Peter, through whose ministry the word of life and Spirit of God came upon him and his. "Ask", saith the Lord, "and you shall receive, that your joy may be full"; for a man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth. David prayed for pardon, peace, and life; Jabez to be kept from evil; Jacob for a blessing; and Paul for the removal of Satan's buffetings. And all of them prevailed; they got their doubts and fears removed, their minds settled, their evidences brightened, and their interests in the Lord made clear and plain to them; and these things satisfied them, and they found quietness in their belly. (Job 20:20)

"By the increase of his lips shall he be filled". "Godliness with contentment is great gain, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come". Solomon prayed for wisdom, and he got riches and honour into the bargain, which is what he did not ask for. This increase of the lips mentioned in my text is answers to prayer; which consists in an increase of knowledge, of experience, of faith, of life, of peace, and of love, comfort, joy, and strength. Some folks make many long prayers, and thing that they shall be heard for their much speaking; but, if God gives no answer, there is no increase; and, if no increase, how can they be filled? Great is the delight of the Lord in the prayers of the faithful. "Let me hear thy voice, let me see thy face, sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely". The prayer of the upright is the Lord's delight. "Ask and ye shall have, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you; for he that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth", etc. etc. And again, "Call upon me in the time of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it". O how great is the condescension of God to listen to the prayers of such poor rebels! And how sweet and savoury are those blessings and gracious answers that are obtained by much importunity in prayer! Reader, as long as one doubt remains touching the goodness and safety of thy state, if suspicions are working, if any fears are cherished, if any pro and con in the court of conscience, if any jealousies; let these things be manifested, let them be sifted to the bottom. Let them be canvassed over, and set to rights; make straight paths for thy feet; remember that thy belly is to be filled, and thou art to be satisfied with the fruit of thy mouth, and with the increase of thy lips, there is a great gain in godliness, a choice revenue in wisdom, and a blessed increase in prayer. Begging in the most profitable branch of all the heavenly trade. "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make

and teaching of the Holy Spirit, have been made alive to our sinful and corrupt nature, our weakness and inability to alter our condition; we are then ready to cry out with the Apostle Paul, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death." Romans 7:24. If this be so with us, then my beloved friends, I believe this is true evidence that we are live sinners.

Your interest is sparked with Nicodemus when Jesus tells him, "Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3. Then you realize that you have no more power over this second birth than you have over your first birth. The quickening power is completely and totally out of your hands.

And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins...." Eph. 2:1. You cannot quicken yourself. If you are born again, it is "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:13.

So then you are condemned in a corner from which there is seemingly no escape. But this corner acts as the most important turning point of your life. It turns you from self to Savior.

Remember in your schooldays when someone who broke the school's laws had to go sit in a corner? It could be a sorrowful place, but usually a lesson was learned. "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ..." Gal. 3:24. This process may unfold rapidly as it did with Paul on the road to Damascus, or it may be very gradual over a period of many months and even years. But the results are the same: you are turned away from self to Savior.

And, oh what a turning away! When Jesus shines his countenance upon your soul and implants an earnest hope in your heart, the whole world seems to take on a new glow! You see Jesus everywhere! His is your all in all! Many of the beautiful old songs come to life because they echo your experience:

"Jesus! my Shepherd, Husband, Friend,
My Prophet, Priest, and King,
My Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,
Accept the praise I bring."
(From "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds")

"On the wings of his love
I was carried above
Ev'ry sin, and temptation, and pain!
I could scarcely believe
That I ever should grieve,
That I ever should suffer again."
(From "O how happy are they")

"Bright garlands of immortal joy
Shall bloom on ev'ry head;
While sorrow, sighing, and distress,
Like shadows, all are fled."
(From "Sing, all ye ransomed of the Lord")

Now our scriptural text leaps alive with power and beauty. The meaning of gospel as good news is clearly evident. It is exceedingly good news to your soul that "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." You feel to be in Christ Jesus; you have no desire to walk after the flesh; your overwhelming desire is to worship the Lord in Spirit and in truth forever and ever.

But eventually, the rich fullness of your experience seems to slip away. Cares of this world creep in. That once solid faith is being attacked by its counterpart, unbelief. And you begin to think, how could such a sinner as I really expect to be included in that precious flock?

Again, some of the old songs seem to express your sentiments as if they were written especially for you:

"Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I saw the Lord?
Where is the soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus and his word?"
(from "O for a closer walk with God.")

"I find myself out of the way;
My thoughts are often gone astray;
Like one alone I seem to be:
Oh! is there any one like me?"
(from "I am a stranger here below")

It is a wonderful source of comfort to find that there are truly others like you, others who believe and feel the

sovereignty of God and the depravity of man. You find considerable comfort in the companionship they give, in the songs you sing, in the preaching you hear, and in the Word you read.

You feel certain that surely these people are the children of God. And your certainty is anchored in scripture when you read, "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." John 15:5. You see that this fruit is brought forth not in order to have union with Christ, but because of a union with Christ. You have no spiritual independent existence out of him. Thus without a union with Christ, you cannot be a partaker of any spiritual fruit. So all the fruit of the Spirit, your faith, hope, love and the other graces flow out of a personal spiritual and experimental union with the Lord Jesus Christ. Every quickened child of God is to bring forth fruit. "For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10.

But sometimes you wonder if you have any of these fruits. What are they? Some, for example, include fear, faith, love, and hope.

One of the first fruits ripened by the Spirit is that of fear. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.-- When you first understand the consequences of being condemned, it can be exeeedingly fearful. Yet the Lord sees fit to make fear a fruitful attribute. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Psalm 11:10.

As the fruit of faith comes to mind, we can only think of the Savior. He is the author and finisher of our faith. We firmly believe that he is indeed our only way, truth, and life. And this faith must be alive. It gives us access to the promises of the gospel and at the same time, it demands fruitful works. "Faith without works is dead." James 2:20.

Love toward God's people is a fruit that seems to give strength to my hope more than any other. A special love for the brethren seems to flow from breast to breast. There are no strangers. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren...." I John 3:14. What a comforting scripture!

Hope is a fruit I believe we feel most of the time. Sometimes it seems to sink out of sight, yet even then you would not trade it for all the riches of this world. Even then, it is the "hope we have as an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast...." Heb. 6:19. It is an earnest expectation of gospel promises yet unseen.

"Who walk not after the flesh" We may all feel to walk after the flesh most of our time, but what is it to walk in this way? They that are led, or walk, after the flesh will never be led to the sight of their sins; for to walk after the flesh is to walk in darkness of this world, in ignorance of Christ and his grace, walking according to the course of this world. To walk after the flesh is to be continually pursuing and doing the things that pleases the flesh -- whether it includes the profane things of the world or whether it is a more refined and deceptive form of godliness under a robe of worldly religion that glorifies the flesh by works and limits God's power in the work of eternal salvation. "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." II Tim. 3:5.

"But after the Spirit." To walk after the Spirit is to walk in "newness of life." He will lead you to a sight of your sins and misery, to a clear understanding of your fallen nature. He will lead you out of self and to a crucified Christ. He will lead you into a love for the truth and a love for those who have had like experiences. He will lead you into this gospel truth. "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit,

and rejoice in Jesus Christ, and have no confidence in the flesh." Phil. 3:3.

If the Holy Spirit has brought divine life and light into your soul and feeling into your conscience, you will be made to realize that you of yourself have no way of putting away sin, nothing to bring you close to God, no way to fulfill the demands of his righteous law, nothing to deliver you from condemnation, nothing to remove your doubts and fears and nothing to make you meet for heaven. The grand truth is we are just as helpless to partake of divine things after regeneration as we were before.

"But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." Gal. 4:4. Jesus Christ came into this world for your sake, to save his people from their sins. To fulfill the law to a jot and tittle, to satisfy justice and bring in mercy, he paid double for all the sins of his people. He is the end of the law for righteousness for you. His stripes heal you. His blood cleanseth you from all your sins. His righteousness delivered you from the curse and wrath of God. You are in a sanctuary in Christ. Your sins were condemned in the flesh of Christ and punishment fully rendered. Justice being once satisfied cannot demand a second satisfaction. Therefore there is no sentence of condemnation against you from the mouth of God because you are in Christ Jesus.

May we be forever thankful for blessed evidences, whose certainty is encouched in an all-powerful, unchangeable God. "Being confident of this very thing, that he who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil. 1:6. "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." John 10:28. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:38, 39.

Three words out of our text embody a force sufficiently strong to carry you past the chilly waters of death and into life everlasting. These three words are "in Christ Jesus" He is the resurrection, the truth, and the life. And when your time comes to face the sting of death, may that sting be removed by the loving presence of the Savior. May you truly feel to be in Christ Jesus, where there is victory over sin and the grave.

(Elder) Joe L. Hamrick

Dear Editors and all,

Please excuse me being late. My 92nd birthday is only two months away. My eyesight is so weak I can only read a little.

I have enjoyed this blessed Book of Truth a goodly portion of my life! The dear Lord has been so merciful to this unworthy one through all these years. Oh, may I sing praises to His great Holy Name to the end of the way and with the songwriter,

"Be life's future bright or stormy,
O, my Father, lead thou me".

Thank you, A check is enclosed for my renewal.

In love and sweet hope,
Ela R. Watson

FROM ALABAMA

Jasper, Alabama

Dear Editors and all of like precious faith:

Enclosed find a check for two years subscription of the ***Signs of the Times,*** and use the balance as you see fit.

I enjoy the ***Signs*** very much and am made to rejoice in the finished work of the Almighty God.

I have just returned from attending

the Powell Valley Association. Much joy was experienced, and I was made to believe "The Lord was truly in that place".

May God be with you all and us; lead, guide, and direct us all the days we spend here.

Yours in bonds of love,
C. I. Randolph

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

FOR THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES NUMBER 1

Harrisburgh, Ia.
January 25, 1836

Brother Beebe: We are in a world of conflicting interests and contending parties. These act as causes, producing fudes and turmoils. These imbitter the sweets of social life, and blend their unhallowed influence in almost every circle of community. This bane of social harmony, not only infects the political and fraternal associations; but too often, like an evil genus, are seen exhibiting their many magic and enticing forms in the theological departments, alluring the weak and unwary, and thus producing division in the ranks of that once united band, which like an army with banners, marching in the strength of the Lord, have struck with terror and dismay, every opposing foe, and filled the hearts of aliens with appalling consternation.

I have not been altogether an indifferent or idle spectator, while these tragical scenes have been passing before the ordeal of the public. I have seen much to admire, and much to deplore. I have observed truth and error in contrast, and while some of the partially concealed beauties of the former, and many of the partially covered deformities of the latter have been exhibited by the comparison; I have believed an increase of knowledge, under the divine control, would be the result.

From the earliest ages of christianity, up to the present time, men, even christians, have been prone to be diverted from gospel simplicity, by will-worship, feigned words, vain philosophy, and worldly policy. Spacious displays of these have perverted many, and the glossy and sophistical covering, has so effectually consealed the deformity of the fraud, that for a time it was nourished as virtue, and extolled as holy benevolence. Under these expanded appearances of charity and disinterested philanthrophy, many, no doubt, who love the truth and wish to walk in it, have inadvertently been engaged with all their energies, not seeing the evil tendency of their course.

While we consider all these disguises, and the various seducing schemes in which error intrudes itself upon the child of grace, and our own weakness and imperfection; let us learn with meekness and patience to bear with each other. Have we always escaped the snare?--Have our feet well nigh slipped?--If not, give God the glory; but if we have--and this is most likely--let us with patient forbearance, brotherly love, and long suffering, endeavour to convince others of their error, from which we have but just escaped, and give them time to repent; yet while we thus act, let plain faithfulness mark every step, and a zeal for truth prompt all our actions. While we earnestly contend for the faith and order of the gospel, we shall not be crowned except we strive lawfully--let us endeavour so to run that we may obtain. The Baptist Church, as their history shows, was set up at the day of Penticost. Their history from that time to this, is correctly traced among the Waldenses in the valleys of Piedmont, and not through the Papal See, or in the church of Rome. Taking this for granted, as all Baptists do; it follows of course, that they are intruding on the

privileges of the Romish church, when they claim those plans of which she is the proprietor. It will be vain to pretend that those schemes, which of late have so generally spoiled the peace and divided the ranks of the Baptist, was first invented by the Church of Rome. I well remember when the missionary plan was first put into operation among the Baptists of the west, the advocates of it would argue that the church of Rome subdued nations by this plan and converted multitudes to her views in this way, and if error was so successfully propagated by this plan, truth could be spread with equal success. This is, then, a scheme of Rome, which to say the least of it, the Baptists have seized upon in order to extend truth, by the same means which anti-christ had employed for the spread of error. There are two schemes exerted for the introduction of the millennial glory: one is to amalgamate all sects irrespective of any principles, and by this "modus operandi", to destroy all party names, and so effect an universal harmony and communion, and then all party strife and confusion must die, and the millennial glories will blaze forth in all its translucent splendour on every nation, expelling every shade of Papel and Pagan superstition from the religious hemisphere and burn like a flaming beacon on every hill; and the benighted heathen will come from all the habitations of cruelty, and pay the tribute of their grateful hearts, at the shrine of the King of kings. Others with as much zeal and knowledge suppose this latter day glory, with all its hallowed splendour, will be ushered in by a different policy. These have observed that wealth and learning give power--these being the two greater engines of human policy, and the possession of these gives influence, and facilitates enterprize; and knowing how the Pope extended his holy sovereignty and dominion by these agents, combined with a show of benevolence and divine philanthrophy, they have seized upon the same combination, and with equal zeal have engaged in a similar enterprize. To obtain learning seminaries and theological schools for religious instruction are got up to prepare men for missionary labours; and then send these to the heathen and destitute, to instruct them; and to give children the proper bias in infancy, to patronize this plan after their maturity. Sunday Schools are employed; and as common school books, or the Scriptures, will not give these young twigs the proper bend to suit the plan, tracts must be printed, suitable to effect this end, and a library of these be procured for the Sunday Schools.

To complete this well organized train of events, much wealth is indispensible; hence agents must be sent out to extoll this benevolent enterprize, take up collections, obtain donations, establish auxiliary branch societies, and employ every other means compatible with the end, which may best secure the two great agents--money and learning. In this way children are deprived of the freedom of thought, and in their tender infancy, are made to subserve these plans. The votaries of this scheme of operation form different societies to conduct the affairs of the different branches of the scheme; all must have money--all must have agents and auxiliaries--all must have a share of power; thus room is made for their preachers; some as agents for some one of these societies--some as domestic and some as foreign missionaries--some to conduct the different schools; and others to edit their journals, and all in their different ways, to enlist the youth in their enterprise, and obtain money and learning. The Pope subdued Africa by the plan of a monk, who sprinkled the children and when these came to maturity, they were Catholic subjects, and Africa was subdued. Now Sunday and Catechism schools are for the same end, and if all our children are taught to

read and believe tracts, and admire the benevolence of these societies, who with half an eye cannot see that the whole reins of government, of both Church and State, so far as human agency is concerned, will be in the hands and at the control of this great monopoly,--and like Africa, our freedom is gone like a pleasing dream. The complete and universal success of this scheme is what its friends are avowedly laboring for; it is what they are praying for, and it is what they are grasping wealth and learning for; and when they shall have accomplished their design, they expect the halcyon day to break with divine brightness and lock the jaws and palsey every arm and tongue that would refuse a tribute to this hallowed flame.

Now, sir, suppose the first of these plans should succeed, and all parties with their names should be forever lost in one great body, including all who now fill the ranks of the sects that now exist; and by this amalgamation, the millennium should be ushered in; in that case the Catholics and all reformers and protestants of every grade, with all their diversity of opinions, would be combined--all would have but one interest, and their numbers would be sufficient to control all nations. Why should we now hear the alarm sounded of Roman Catholic influence in America, and yet see without suspicion the exertions now making by many reformers, to identify themselves and their interest with the Catholic Church. Who cannot see what the glories of this millennium would consist of? And who does not know that Constatine established such an one long ago!! If either of these plans should suceed, our liberties are jeopardized, and the nation will be governed by the will of the church. If both should succeed, and this is most likely, for in the management of most of those societies, they are united already, and in doctrine and practice, they rapidly approximate each other; then wealth, learning, numbers, and minds inclined in youth and well prepared to act in consert, our liberties are gone at their will. These plans may thus succeed, and just as sure as either, or both of them should, our liberties as a nation and as christians are lost. The Church of Christ have been a sect, as we have seen above, which have every where been spoken against, while Rome and all her daughters have been inventing and prosecuting these plans, and must suffer if ever they are consummated; and I believe that it is the spirit, and children of mystery Babylon that is now working, and many of these have crept in among the Baptists, and under the specious pretext of benevolence, many lovers of truth are spoiled through this disguise. As a christian, as a politician, as a citizen of the world, or a friend of the Baptists; I stand pledged to oppose with religious firmness, all these plans; and as many of my old friends have manifested a strong solicitude to know my views of these subjects, who live too remote to know by word of mouth, I send you this sheet for their perusal.

The plans above described are not in vogue among us. I have not seen or heard of a missionary, or a tract, or a Sunday School, or known of any exertions in favor of them in this place, since we have lived in Indiana. Our churches stand on the old predestinarian Baptist platform. We have, therefore, no division amongst us on these subjects, but stand prepared to oppose it if it should appear; and some of our churches have passed a resolution to prevent all hired agents or missionaries from preaching in their pulpits. The above is at your disposal; if it should appear on your pages as No. 1, I shall wish to follow this subject with some future numbers.

Yours,
(Elder) Wilson Thompson

Signs of the Times
March 25, 1836

Signs of the Times

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 4/81 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

SPECIAL NOTICE

Again we wish to thank all the supporters of the ***Signs of the Times*** for their help in every way in the year 1980, as in other years.

Despite many difficulties and opposition from unexpected quarters, we feel our Lord graciously preserved the ***Signs*** for another year. We had several large legacies come to us, notice of which will appear shortly; many good articles were sent in; two new Associates were added; and in general, the help and encouragement from brethren from all areas has been more than we could expect. Thank you, one and all.

If we could plead your continued support for our family paper, we would especially point out four areas for your consideration.

1. Please send in your renewals on time. Our circulation office has to spend many, many hours each year sending out late notices and purging the subscription list, not to mention the expense involved. Please look at your mailing label and help us avoid this extra effort.

2. Continue sending in your Association and other meeting notices early. Many have done a splendid job in the past, and it is not to early now to send in those notices.

3. The Board of Trustees voted unanimously in November, 1980, to hold our current subscription price of $5.00 for one year and $9.00 for two years. This can only be done because of the gifts and contributions we have received along with renewals. If you can afford a contribution, please remember it will help keep the ***Signs*** going out while

costs continue to climb. Send in those new subscriptions, too.

4. More than all else, remember the ***Signs*** and its Staff when blessed to go before God's throne. Everyone involved in getting out the ***Signs*** does so with personal sacrifice. But what are our efforts when we consider that the only purpose of sending out the paper is to tell of the great sacrifice of the Son of God for His people. May His Name ever be adored.

We would mention in parting our solemn feeling of submission to the wise purpose of our God in removing our beloved Elder E. J. Lambert from our midst. The Lord gave; He took away.

The Editors

SELECTED

FRUITS OF THE FURNACE

Dear Brother,--Your last came duly to hand, and its contents gave me much pain. You are now, I perceive, in the furnace of affliction. Perhaps the heaviest temporal affliction is that of the body, and of which you complain. I am, as you well know, no stranger to this trying dispensation, and am, therefore, the better able to sympathize with you. This is a path in which it has been my lot to travel for some years past, and a thorny path I have found it to be; and though I would not swell my sorrows, yet the Lord only knows what I have undergone. But, though a rough way, I have sometimes seen it to be a right way, that leads to a city of habitation.

You complain, too, of sore soul trouble on account of the circumstances in which God has seen fit to place you; of a rebellious spirit; and of murmurings and fretfulness against the dealings of the Lord, and you contrast your own impatience in trouble with the patient endurance of Christ Jesus under the most extreme suffering, that God the Father might be glorified. O what poor, what base returns we make for so much love bestowed upon us, for so much mercy manifested to us! It is, however, a mercy to see that "afflictions do not spring out of the dust;" that God doth not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men, and that there is a "needs be" for them. O how sweet it is to be enabled to see by faith that the sorrows, griefs, and perplexities which may attend us in our pilgrimage

"To Canaan's fair and happy land,"

are among those things that "work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose". (Rom. 8:28) I sometimes enter a little into the blessedness of the consideration that "our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory", (II Cor. 4:17) "if so be that we suffer with him, (Jesus) that we may be also glorified together". (Rom. 8:17) When the Spirit of the living God is pleased to pour a little prayer into my soul, I beg of the dear Lord not only for a sweet acquiescence in all his dealings with me, but also, being ashamed of my rebellion and unbelief, that I may be enabled to approve of the same. Sometimes, when borne down with sorrow and weariness of body, I am ready to exclaim, "What should I do if I had no Jesus for my support, no God to whom I could tell my sorrows, no throne of grace to supplicate, and no soul-cheering prospect of endless rest in that blissful place where Jesus dwells? That dear place above the starry skies, into which unnumbered millions of happy blood-washed spirits have entered who were once poor sinners like myself; who, when in the body, were afflicted, tempest-tossed, and travelled in a path of tribulation, as followers of the once poor, lowly, suffering, but now exalted, princely, and immortally-glorious Jesus. They have received a hearty welcome home! They now occupy the mansion prepared for them! They have experienced a blessed transition into a

solemn eternity, and are swallowed up in that profound abyss of love which no eye can fathom! O the amazing blessedness of having a sweet welcome home to the bosom of Jesus Christ, and a dear embrace in the everlasting arms of a faithful, covenant-keeping, and eternal God! They now sing in holy, lofty, solemn, and adoring strains of the omnipotent deeds of Christ, their Captain; of the matchless majesty of Almighty grace; and of the eternal efficacy of the blood of sprinkling! They worship their God, 'saying, Amen! blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, be unto our God for ever and ever! Amen.' (Rev. 7:12) They have an everlasting, beatific sight of the blazing glory of God the Father; they gaze with unspeakable rapture on the regal grandeur of Christ the Son; while the ever-blessed Spirit, God the Holy Ghost, is loved and adored as one with the Father and the Son, co-equal and co-eternal! 'These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb'!" (Rev. 7:14)

But to return. The Captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings, and waded through sorrows and blood to the throne which he now fills in glory. So, also, there is a measure of suffering for the church, which is his body, to "fill up", or experience. It would appear exceedingly strange for the head to be crowned with thorns, and the feet to stand upon roses. To be vitally united to Christ, to become part of his bones, of his flesh, and of his blood, is to be unspeakably blessed. But this union cannot subsist without "fellowship of his sufferings: in a greater or less degree; hence, therefore, we suffer with him and rejoice with him, and it is sweet to be coming "up from the wilderness leaning upon the Beloved". (Song 8:5) Dear Hart sings very sweetly in the following lines:

"A faithful Friend of grief partakes
But union can be none
Between a heart of melting wax,
And hearts as hard as stone."

Whatever sufferings Jesus endured in the world, in the garden of Gethsemane or on Mount Calvary, whether from men, from devils, or from God, were wholly and solely from the church; for as many as He in the councils of eternity became surety for. "He suffered, just for the unjust, to bring us to God". He drank the cup of trembling, dregs, and damnation, that we might "feast on fat things", partake of living waters, and "take the cup of salvation." He

".....toil'd for our ease,
and for our safety bled"

O to have a personal interest in his expiatory death, precious blood-shedding and absolute redemption! O may God sanctify his dealings to our souls, and give us such a measure of grace as shall enable us to remain passive in his hands, comply with his will, and do and suffer all his good pleasure!

Afflictions are not joyous, but grievous, to our flesh and blood. We all love ease; and I have often felt, when sharply tried, as if I could sacrifice every honest principle to possess ease. The day of adversity and suffering is a solemn time. "I will (saith God) bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried. They shall call on my name, and I will hear them. I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God." (Zech. 13:9) I have sometimes trembled at these words, and have shrunk from the heavy trials here implied; and when in the furnace, and to my own views and feelings about to be consumed; when my life was almost insupportable, I have had such hard thoughts of God, and have felt so brimful of enmity, rebellion, and desperation, that I am astonished at the patience and long-suffering of God. No lost soul that now groans in hell more

deserves such a fate than I! Frequently have I murmured, "Lord, I cannot bear this hot furnace; have mercy on me, O God! have pity on me; remember I am but dust! Give me ease or cut me off; my soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than life! Hast thou given me grace and faith only to try me? Why am I dealt with so severely, while others tread a smoother path? 'Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke. Turn thou me and I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God'." (Jer. 31:18) Blessed be God, he hath not left me here, but hath mercifully intermixed his comforts with my sorrows; hath held up my head above the raging billows and swelling waves of tribulation, and hath supported my poor sinking soul with his grace. My poor parched heart hath he moistened and refreshed with a distilling of spiritual rain and dew. He hath shed abroad his all-conquering, sin-subduing love in my heaving breast; and while I have adored his sovereignty, I have triumphed in his mercy, and been brought by a sweet sense of his goodness to adoring wonder and holy admiration, deep abasement and solemn prostration of spirit. I have sometimes said, "Welcome afflictions, welcome sorrows, welcome death; 'for this God is my God for ever and ever, and he will be my guide even unto death'." Thus have I experienced a sweetness in affliction; and when, by faith, I am enabled to see that my own good and the glory of God are inseparable my soul thus pours itself out in prayer: "Lord, give me patience; thou art the God of patience, I have none without thou art pleased to give it me. O bless me with humility, and with an abiding sense of thy amazing mercies to me, the chief of sinners; and since thou hast pardoned all my sins, and art become my salvation, may I be well content to do and suffer the good pleasure of thy solemn Majesty!"

Sometimes, when reflecting upon the penal sufferings of Jesus, and contrasting the unspeakable difference between my sorrows and the sorrows, groans, and throes, burning agonies, and horrows of the poor suffering Saviour, I am ashamed of myself that a murmur should ever escape my lips. An eternity of hopeless misery must I have endured in hell but for Jesus Christ, who bore the punishment I deserved.

A further view of these things will humble us before God, and make us walk humbly with God. O how sweet to be led to see that from aforetime God blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Jesus Christ! There is indeed, an everlasting solemnity in the cross of Christ. The immutable counsels and glorious designs of God hinge (if I may so express myself) upon the doing and the dying of God's incarnate Son. If I boast at all, let it be in the cross of Christ. If I glory at all, let it be in God; that I know something of him as a God pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin, through the blood of Christ my Lord, to whom be glory in the church. Amen.

Yours affectionately,
P. R.

London, Oct. 7, 1842

Kalamazoo, Mich.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I am writing to you because my Mother always wrote to you. The ***Signs of the Times*** printed an article written by my Mother, Mary M. Pearson, in the April issue of 1975.

As you can tell by the enclosed letter, my Mother has passed away. I'm sorry I am so late with the notice. I went away after the Lord called her home. She was my Mother, Sister in the church, and a wonderful friend. She was a faithful soldier of the Cross and she fought a good fight. Her Lord was always first and foremost in her life. She had been blessed by God to the enlightenment of the Scriptures.

Enclosed is an Obituary written by

will go there solely by the grace of a Sovereign God and not by any deed that they have done or left undone.

May it please God to bless, guide, and keep you all in such a way that the ***Signs*** can keep coming to the homes of those to whom it means so much.

I am, I hope, a brother in Christ,
Frank Hunt

AT THE APPOINTED TIME

I believe that all things come to pass exactly at the time appointed of God. The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand. (Isa. 14:15). Did God fail to think of anything? If so, then He would not be a perfect God, and surely He would not be the God in whom I hope to trust. Solomon says, "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." And God declared the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Also, "yea, I have spoken it, I will also do it." (Isa. 46:9-10).

God appeared unto Abraham and promised him an heir. Sarah laughed within herself, but the Lord replied, "Is anything to hard for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son." (Gen. 18:14). Did God fail to return at the appointed time? or did Abraham fail to receive the promise of God? "And the Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as he promised. For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the time set of which God had spoken to him." (Gen. 21:1-3). God also told Abram that his seed would be servants in a strange land and would be afflicted by the people of the land 400 years. Then God raised up Moses and at the appointed time sent him to deliver the children of Israel, the seed of Abraham, after the 400 years of bondage.

In the seventh chapter of Job we find: "Is there not an appointed time to man upon the earth? are not his days also like the days of an hireling? As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow, and as the hireling looketh for the reward of his work: so am I made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me." Also Job 14:14, "If a man dies, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." Surely if Job's days and wearisome nights were appointed to him, are not ours also appointed to us? Yes, we will live out all our appointed time, suffer all things appointed to us; and also rejoicing, if we believe in him, with joy unspeakable and full of glory. (I Peter 1:8).

Jesus stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8) and when the fullness of the time (appointed time) was come, God sent forth his son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. (Gal. 4:4-5). Yes, there was a time appointed that Christ should become incarnate, suffer, and die on the cross for the children chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Though the people sought many times to kill him before the appointed time, they could not because his time was not yet come. Jesus said, "My time is not yet come." (John 7:6). And at another time, "My time is at hand." (Matt. 26:18). But at the apponted time, "both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." (Acts 4:27-28). Yes, our blessed Savior was slain at the appointed time according to the determinate counsel of God.

There is a time and purpose for everyone born into this world: a time to be born, a time to die, and a time to fulfill

every purpose appointed to us; and when it pleases God to reveal His Son in one who has everlasting life then is that one born again; the time of the spiritual birth being just as certain as the time of the natural birth, and is in no way controlled by man, as is preached in most pulpits today. For this birth is not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 1:12). And, "Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever. Nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it; and God doeth it, that men should fear before him." And, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."

The word predestination is not found in the holy scriptures, and predestinate and predestinated are found only four times, but it gives me great comfort in times of affliction and stress to know that God has predestinated all things, as the scriptures above clearly indicate to me. Jesus told his disciples, "And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for these things must come to pass." Wars are terrible and fearful things, but they must come in their seasons and God most certainly has a purpose in them. However, one is greatly comforted when he is made to realize that all things, including wars, are in complete control by our all powerful, all knowing God; and that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Not all things are good, neither are all things good to us, all things work together for our good.

Beloved Brethern and Sisters, cast a mantle of charity over my mistakes and remember me when at the throne of grace.

Clifford Wilbanks

Fremont, N.C.

Dear Elders of the Signs,

I am sorry to be late renewing my subscription of the ***Signs of the Times.*** I am enclosing a check to renew it for one year.

May our Lord and Saviour bless each of you Editors to continue to set forth the doctrine of truth as it is set forth in the scriptures.

Use the rest of the check for the distribution of the ***Signs of The Times*** to others.

I am a little sister in hope of eternal life, if one at all.

Mrs. Jilia P. Sauls

SELECTED

THE HILL MIZAR

Messrs. Editors,--It is now some years since it pleased God (after a long struggle in soul feeling, wherein sin and presumption, fear and self-pity, enmity to God, desire of annihilation, unbelief, fear of death and wrath, a terror of God's holiness, and now and then a longing for pardon and reconciliation, with other strange and paradoxical changes had alternately worked) to favour me with his presence whilst I was in a solitary place contemplating the glories of his person as the Saviour of the worst of sinners, longing to know him as mine, and sighing for the inward testimony of the Spirit. I felt, in a measure, that softness which is described by Hart, and an indescribable meekness, humility, and subjection before God come over me. I also felt much contrition, mingled with self-abhorrence, and a wonderful sense of the condescending compassion of Jesus to one so contrary to him. I felt that something great was at hand, and was constrained to ask and receive, that is, by faith. At that moment I preceived an open door, and on going in I saw there was no cloud before the throne of God. On kneeling before him I suddenly found that my burden was gone, and felt such an earnestness, fervour, and confidence as I never had before experienced. I could not help believing. My prayers were turned to praises, and my heart seemed ready to burst. I had no portion

of scripture applied, but the God of the scripture was in my heart; and whilst the mercy and lovingkindness of a dying Redeemer were pouring in, I could not pour out my thankfulness fast enough. I rose from my knees, my eyes streaming with tears, and, finding myself alone with Jesus, felt that I then could have joyfully departed this life. In a few minutes after I was filled with dread that he would soon depart, and tried hard to detain him, but he left me to wonder and adore him as all my salvation. This is my hill Mizar, which the Lord still keeps in my mind, and though Satan has disputed me out of many gleams and rays of warmth and life from the Sun of righteousness, I have felt that he cannot entirely wrest it from me. Many changes have I gone through. Sometimes fervid fits seize me, but they are often followed by coldness and deadness; as other times I am hoping and trusting, doubting and fearing. But this I have often found, and to the Lord's praise be it said, that the sufferings of Christ, whenever spoken of with feeling, always find an avenue to my heart. I feel a love to the speaker, and, when meditating thereon, long to embrace that truth. I would fain love that intense loving One, while admiring, with a mixture of tears of love, grief, and feeling desires, ardent desires, fixing on him who, I hope, loved me and died for me. O how I again long to feel a measure of that unction stealing over my soul, and, taking me away from self and sin, enabling me once more to partake of unspeakable peace and joy! I solemnly declare that I do believe no person has a right notion of what peace and joy mean until they experience this. But how the world allures; how the heart conceives and brings forth thoughts and feelings, all of which tend to dismay and terrify the soul, and if the world cannot understand what true peace and joy mean, I am sure they cannot know what shame and grief are, how the spirits droop, or how the head hangs. O how I have hated myself when death, in the feelings, the sad fruit of sin in the heart, enhanced my memory, recalling the former tenderness, peace, and love felt in secret with an agonizing Saviour, and then to feel careless, thoughtless, and indifferent. I go and hear sound preaching, nothing to offend, perhaps, but I often neither feel contrition nor humility at his feet, for all is winter in my soul. Who can abide his coldness? In the chequered path that I sometimes travel, mistrust and unbelief make me tremble at my anticipated end. When a ray of light, with a little warmth, like a winter sunbeam, causes some hope to spring up, thereby enabling me to read the Bible or one of Hart's hymns, I feel a thankfulness to God in my heart. But yet, after all, I am not satisfied with my state. I want to be more decided; I want to be more dead to the world; I want to feel more hatred to sin, more love to the brethren, more humility in the heart. I want accomplished in me an ability to make a surrender of soul and body into the hands of Christ, even as Peter did. This have I longed for ever since I heard Mr. -----, a little time ago, dwell upon that subject. I was tempted to a legal working to obtain it, but all this turned out to be nothing but "vanity and vexation of spirit." I want to be more dependent on, and more earnest for the sovereign operations of the Holy Spirit, who alone can work this in me, or anything else that is pleasing in the sight of God. He alone can bring anything profitably to my soul concerning Jesus Christ, and him crucified, to whom, with the Father and the Son, be all the praise.

G. C.

Jan. 17, 1843

FROM ALABAMA

Carbon Hill, Alabama

Dear Editors of The ***Signs of the Times,***

We are late, and I am sorry about it. We have had so much sickness and I am so crippled that I suppose my mind is getting weak and forgetful. Please pardon our neglectfulness in getting this in sooner.

We are 85 and 83 years old. My husband is only two years older, but he is getting feeble, too, in mind and body. We do look forward each month for our ***Signs of the Times.*** We are not able to attend Church, so this makes our ***Signs*** mean more to us. All the articles are so wonderful and good. We feel this world has become so wicked that our Lord could come at any time. All we have time for is being ready to meet Him when He comes.

We think of all our good ministers who have passed on and several of whom we know are not well at all. This makes us feel sad, yet we know whose hand we are in, and know we won't leave this world until our time comes and God is ready to call us.

Please pray for us, and we pray if it is God's will to spare all you Editors, give you health and strength to continue the ***Signs of the Times.*** We love all of God's people wherever they are.

We feel this is written in love,
James C. and Lillian Scott

THE UNCHANGEABLENESS AND PERFECTIONS OF GOD

The unchangeableness or immutability of God is a strange stab at the littleness, the contemptibleness, and naughtiness of free will, Fullerism, and all universal redemptionists. And I ask, what is this unchangeableness or immutability? It is the immutability of God. And who is God? The Being whose perfections are himself, and himself his perfections. Thus the perfections of God are searched into by any one in whom, through regeneration, dwells the Spirit of illumination.

When I think of those perfections of God, as, for instance, immutability, I stand back, and tremble, and keep my distance, in reverence and godly fear at a Being possessed of such a tremendous quality as this of unchangeableness. "What" say I, "can it be, that I, -a worm, a creature of a day, a moth, and a shadow, -can ever worship such an amazing Being as one who, infinitely more stable than the mountains, cannot ever be rooted up or altered in the least of his purposes? Can it be that I can worship him?" Thus godly fear and every grace, with reverence and with admiration, take possession of his breast in whom is displayed, by the Spirit's power, this or any other admirable quality in God.

When I consider, also, that to this quality of unchangeableness in God, are added the tremendous perfections of eternity, infinity, self-existence, that he cannot be destroyed, that he never began and never ends, how, at times, the feelings of a sensible sinner tremble and quake!

When I consider, also, that to this unchangeableness are also added the strictest justice, the most rigid justice, the most unalterable justice, the eternal and infinite determination to "bring the wheel over the wicked", and "not to clear the guilty", no, not in the least degree; when I consider a Being armed with such formidable qualities, (formidable to such a guilty wretch as man,) I stand amazed before him! And, feeling my carnal mind enmity against him, I wonder not that the unregenerate priests, and rabble, and religious folks among the Jews, called out and roared out for Barabbas, a miscreant, rather than the God-Man. The beautiful attribute of hatred to sin, the power and determination to punish it, vexed the carnal professors of letter-godliness to distraction, the unchangeableness of God heightening it all, and the even-handed stroke of Infinite Justice blazing before their crooked goings-on. I say, need any one wonder that human nature roared out for Barabbas rather

than Christ, if, in the self-existent light of God in a natural conscience, they saw the unchangeable hatred of God against pride, the show of a mere outward tinsel religion, and his unconquerable power to punish it; when they saw the unchangeable liking to humility which Christ showed; when they saw his unchangeable batterings against the love of the world, against ambition, against laying up money, the modes of life, the wisdom of man, and all the painted drapery of human proceedings?

I declare, for my part, that I have "stood and trembled" when I have thought of even this one attribute, the unchangeableness of this Almighty Being. What! will he not alter? And has he power to execute his purposes too? O the stun that it gives to the little, the great, the serpentine and twisted self-importance of such a wretch as myself! And I find that the patriarch Job shared with me in this; for he felt himself to be a wretch, or else he would never have indulged in that supernatural apostrophe, "I abhor myself". I say that the patriarch Job shared in this, to be brought to a mighty deep, when, in God's regenerating light, he was led to contemplate God's immutability. "For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me; therefore am I troubled at his presence. When I consider, I am afraid of him. (Job 23:14, 15)

When I consider, again, the Lord Jesus Christ, in whose obedience and blood-shedding I stand acquitted and gloriously righteous before God, in which Lord Jesus Christ all the perfections of the Deity centre, harmonize, and shine in behalf of the redeemed; when I think of him, and think of myself, how my heart sinks within me! He steadfast to his purpose, and I timid as a fly. When I think of the difference between him and my fellow-creatures,--he God as well as man, and taking on himself the form of a servant, and being a pennyless carpenter; (for poor women had to minister to his wants;) when I think of him a servant, though he was Lord of all, and contrast this with the blazing haughtiness of man; he a servant, and man galloping with the swiftness of a racer after respectability; he having no where to lay his head, and man cheated with the whim of a fine house; he called "a fellow" by the religious, and swarms of self-made Christians glorying in an honourable name; he crucified, and they stretched on their beds of ease; he almost pennyless, and they with their handsome incomes; he laid in wait for from the cradle by Herod, the slaughterer of innocents; hunted much through life by nominal professors, and stung by the cruel death of the cross; when I think of all his troubles internally, which none scarce but God know anything of; I say, when I thus consider Christ, in whom harmonized and concentred, in behalf of the redeemed, all the perfections of Deity, and contrast him with man or self, how my soul bubbles up with unutterable feelings, and sees the world to be a wilderness, and myself carnally and naturally a fiend! O God! how unsearchable are thy thoughts! how high thy glories swell!

And I would observe that the unchangeableness of God stops in me the mouth of free-will prayer; it shows me that God has a will; it makes me wait for indited prayer; it make me look to the spirit to teach me to pray; it makes me see that all prayer not according to the will of God is wildfire; it makes me feel that I know not what to pray for; and it makes my ransomed soul (in which the Spirit of supplication dwells) look to the Holy Spirit alone, to teach me how to pray.

O blessed and soul-enriching contemplations! My soul as a weaned child waits upon God. I sun myself in the blaze of his unalterable and countless perfections. It makes me feel him to be the habitation also of all amiableness,

as well as of all power; for what is more amiable than perfect godness, and what more beautiful than beauty itself? Gladness, goodness, and beauty are in God's tabernacle. (Joel 1:16; Ps. 96:6) I trust that the furnace of affliction will be sanctified to cleanse my misty eyesight to see more of these things. I trust that I may be brought to say, "My soul fainteth for the living God", the self-existent habitation of all his many excellencies. May I be able even to say, with one of old, "I opened my mouth and panted" for the very fervent desire that I have towards God's ways "at all times".

I. K.

Abingdon
The Gospel Standard
March, 1843

Monday Night 6-2-80

Dear Sister Catherine:

I washed this p.m. and did some other work, therefore I am tired. However I feel impressed to write you a few lines to say, "If you still have the letter I wrote you that you asked for my permission to send for publication in the ***Signs,*** provided the Editor considers it worthy of space, you may send it". Since you wrote me that several had mentioned enjoying reading the one that was published. I have given it more consideration.

Should it please God to enable me to write something that would be of comfort to some of His children I should feel thankful. I fully realize it must be of Him otherwise it would be as sounding brass and tinkling symbol, so to speak.

As a matter of fact, I recall very little the letter contained. I do remember, or think I am right, my subject was faith.

Again, I want to thank you for the good letter and Mother's Day card and note.

I am so unworthy of the consideration you give me.

Just an attempt to hint at the condition I was in, at Laurel Creek the fourth Sunday. I say hint because that is all that I can do. Words are inadequate to express my condition. I left home so happy to get started over there, and came home in such despair and humiliation. What a dolt I was. How doltish and offensive I acted. I couldn't sing. I couldn't hear. No doubt the Brethren preached well; however it was not for me. I was completely cut off. I, told myself as we were driving a short distance from the church, "I wish I could die".

Sister Catherine, I know this was good for me. We must have some bitter along with the sweet. It takes so much to keep me at His feet. O! that He would lay me low and keep me there.

P.S.

Hope you will forbear my weakness.

Hope I may see you. It means a lot to see and hear from you.

It is late bed time. I must go to bed. Remember me when at a throne of grace.

Love and best wishes,
Gaye

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die it bringeth forth much fruit." And He was speaking of the hour in which the Son of Man would be glorified.

Again the Apostle Paul declared, I Cor. 15:20, "But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits: afterward they that are Christ's at his coming". This is indicative of the truth that all that are Christ's ill be a part of that resurrection that will occur at the coming of Christ in all of His glory. This will be at a specific time when the dead in Christ shall arise and it is a great comfort to all who live in hope of being a part of that great event. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the air: And so shall we ever be with the Lord". Wherefore comfort one another with these words. Talk to your brethren about these wonderful and blessed truths that are so dear to our hearts and so strengthening to our hope as we run with patience this race that is set before us.

The saints who came out of the graves went into the Holy City and appeared unto many. In that day when all of the saints of God shall arise from the graves they, too, will go into the Holy City. They shall enter into the new Jerusalem which shall be their eternal dwelling place and there they shall appear amidst the saints from all ages of time around the Throne of God to sing His praises forever. They shall sing a new song that they have learned by their experiences in this life and the revelations of the Spirit that has enabled them to understand truth. Their song shall be, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and open the seals thereof, for thou was slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation: And hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on earth". There they shall dwell in His presence and eternally worship Him whose love and mercy alone has brought them to this place and whose banner over them is love. Oh, glorious thought. Oh, blessed hope. What a wonderful heritage for the weary wanderers in this low ground of sin and sorrows to meditate on as they press on to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

In Bonds of Love,
(Elder) Richard H. Campbell

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

TO WHOM IS THE GOSPEL PREACHED?

Many who are evidently children of God, believe that the gospel is preached to those dead in sin for the purpose of quickening them; that the Lord uses the ministry of the word as the ordinary means of bringing his people from death to life. I believe this to be an error, and, like all error, it tends to the discomfort of those among the living family of God who embrace it.

Throughout the Scriptures, living souls are designated as the subject of gospel address. "He hath annointed me to preach the gospel to the poor"; Luke 4:18. "The poor have the gospel preached to them"; Matt. 11:5. "Children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth the Lord, to you is the word of this salvation sent"; Acts 13:26. "Ho, every one that thirsteth"; Isa. 60:1. "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth"; Rom. 1:16. All these, the

poor, those who fear God, the thirsty, and the believer, are living characters. But when it is said that to such only is the gospel sent, then some will assume that we believe that the minister must be careful to select those whom he knows to be the elect, and speak only to them. The apostles, whom the Savior sent, "into all the world", that is, among Gentile nations as well as to the Jews, could not know the elect, until they were manifest by believing the gospel which they preached. They proclaimed the gospel, the glad tidings of salvation, wherever a door was opened in providence, to all that came within the sound of their voice; and so do all the ministers of Jesus Christ. But none hear it spiritually but those who have spiritual ears; none believe it but those who have faith to believe. Some say it is to be preached to those without faith. In a literal sense, this is true, but not in order to produce faith in them, but to separate from among them those who have faith. Paul tells of some unto whom the gospel was preached, who were not profited by it, because they had no faith; Heb. 4:2.

If one should be sent with a message from a king to all his subjects in a certain distant land, he would not have to inquire out those subjects before delivering it; for the message itself, proclaimed openly among all the people, would find out those in whose native language it was delivered, and thus distinguish them from among all the multitudes as the ones unto whom it was sent. So the gospel is a message of glad tidings, sent in the language of Canaan, and though proclaimed among all people, none hear and understand but those who have been born of God. Unto these he "has turned a pure language", and by hearing and believing that sweet message, they are manifest as those unto whom it was sent by the Great King. These are new creatures in Christ, unto all of whom the gospel is preached.

The Savior said to his apostles, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature". The expression, "every creature", is acknowledged by all to have a limited meaning. Unlimited, it would embrace the animal creation. But all must acknowledge that is is still further limited, for it could not include infants and those not literally capable of hearing and understanding. This shows that the preaching of the gospel is not necessary to eternal salvation, as some ignorantly imagine, for infants of days, removed from this world, sing in glory through Jesus Christ our Savior. But of those who are capable of hearing and understanding naturally, how very few have ever heard the literal sound of the gospel. If, then, we understand the Savior's command to the apostles to be that they should preach the gospel to every one of the race of Adam, who was capable of hearing and understanding the words, we must conclude that his command has not been obeyed, and that the will of God has not been done. But this can not be, for many scriptures declare that all of his will is done in heaven and on earth; that "whatsoever his soul desireth even that he doeth". Also, he declared that "The poor have the gospel preached to them". And an inspired apostle has said that this gospel of the kingdom was preached to every creature which is under heaven; Col. 1:23. It has been asserted that the expression, "every creature", as used by the apostle, does not mean the same as when used by the Savior. But to prove this assertion, the very point in controversy is assumed. It is said that the apostle could not have meant that the Savior's command was fulfilled, because the gospel had not then been preached very far from the Mediterranean Sea. But the apostle is authority for believing the gospel was preached to every creature which is under heaven in that age, and has been ever since, in full obedience to the Savior's command, which embraced every creature only in a spiritual sense, every one who is created in Jesus Christ.

These only have ears to hear, and the Savior said, "Let them hear". These only hunger and thrist after righteousness, and the Savior said, "They shall be filled". These only are poor in spirit and the Savior said, "Unto the poor the gospel is preached".

How often it is said that the preaching of the gospel is the means of quickening dead sinners. But it is not so said in the Bible. Our Savior said, "As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whomsoever he will". And again, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing". And again, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live". "Yes", it is replied, "this is true, but the Spirit sends that life or quickening power through the preaching of the word; the dead hear the voice of the Son of God in the gospel, believe, and live". A little more thoughtful attention would cause them to reverse the order of those words, remembering that life must precede both hearing and believing. And in considering all the scriptures, which are presented to sustain the idea that the preaching is instrumental in bringing the dead to life, such as the command to teach all nations, and the apostles' obedience to that command, and the declaration that many hearing the preaching believed, we must bear in mind that none but the living can be taught, or can believe.

There are no instances recorded where eternal life is said to have been communicated through the preaching of the gospel. But there are instances where it is known to have been possessed by those who had not heard the preaching by human lips, as the eunuch, the jailor, Saul of Tarsus, and Cornelius with all his house; and in the case of Lydia the power of God is expressly declared as preparing her to attend the things spoken, while Paul was preaching. In my mind, this is expressly to teach that the preaching, and the preparation to hear and receive the preaching, are to be considered as distinct from each other. It was not said that the Lord opened Lydia's heart through Paul's preaching. I must, therefore, believe that not only in some, but in all cases, spiritual life is communicated before there is power to hear and believe, instead of being given through and by the hearing. The life must precede the hearing, though it be but for an instant.

It is very often the case that condemnation on account of sin is first felt, when not under the sound of preaching, and often by those that never heard the truth preached. Also deliverance from that condemnation is experienced most generally, perhaps, when the poor soul is in secret, trying to cry and beg for mercy. Now, the preaching of the gospel can be heard and understood by that one. If he has set under the sound of it before, it now has a new sound. It tells what he has felt. He believes because he has the witness in his own heart to prove the truth of what the preacher says. It is to him the power of God unto salvation, because that power has been experienced within him. "This gospel of the kingdom", the Savior said, "must be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come"; Matt. 24:14. This was done before the apostles had fully finished their work in declaring the end of that dispensation, and establishing the gospel church in all its order in obedience to the command of Christ. Must be preached, not to quicken dead sinners, but for a witness, manifesting those unto whom the dear Savior has communicated eternal life and the glad tidings of salvation. The preacher can tell no one any thing which has not already been taught him by that anointing, which he has received of Jesus, and which teaches of all things: I John 2:27. And it is only concerning the work of God's

grace and his power unto salvation, experienced in the heart, that any one is fed with knowledge and understanding by the pastors after God's own heart, whom he sends unto them. It is supposed by some, that "Feed my sheep", is not the limit of the Savior's command to the apostles, and of the apostles directions to ministers; that when Paul said to Timothy, "Preach the word", he opened up a larger field of labor, that when he said to the elders of Ephesus, "Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood". But did the apostles or ministers ever preach any thing in obedience to his command but the truth as it is in Jesus? And is not every part of that truth always the food which is to be ministered to the sheep and lambs, to the church of God? Did any one but the sheep ever profit by the preaching of the gospel? Then it must be acknowledged that neither apostle nor prophet can go beyond the command given to Peter, "Feed my lambs".

To speak of the Lord using means and instrumentalities to bring his people from death to life, appears to me derogatory to his majesty and power. It seems like limiting the Holy One of Israel. Although many who believe this would not limit him, but wish to honor his name. If such a thing were expressly declared in the Scriptures that would settle it as the truth, but since it is not, it is always an inference. In defending the doctrine of means, one says, "The tool of the mechanic will of itself never accomplish any thing, yet in all the mechanic's purposes the tool and its uses are included". And with this he illustrates how he supposes the gospel ministry has been appointed by God as instruments to be used in severing the stones from the rocks, and in building up the church. But the mechanic is dependent upon the tool. Is the Lord dependent upon the ministry to do that work? The very thought is limiting him. I know it is said that he has ordained the means with the end. But when the Bible talks that way, I will receive it. He has ordained everything, in a certain absolute sense. Nothing transpires but is in accordance with his eternal purpose. He has chosen to feed his people by the hand of poor sinners saved by grace, but he does not speak of them as means and instrumentalities. This is the inference of men, and is calculated to make them appear of some importance. And generally the means are said to be in men's hands, as though the Lord worked by means, but men used the means. He works in and through them by his controlling and directing Spirit, causing them to preach in such a way that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of man; but not to give life through them or through their preaching.

The same author just alluded to, speaks of the ram's horns as the means by which the walls of Jericho fell down, and implies that the preaching of the gospel is thus represented as the means of quickening dead sinners. But Paul, in presenting the truth concerning this subject, does not even allude to the blowing of the ram's horns, but says, "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were compassed about seven days". One might reply that faith enabled them to use the means. Then we must refer to some of the other examples which the apostle gives in the same connection of the character and power of faith to see if this is to be so understood. "By faith Enoch was translated, that he should not see death". "By faith women received their dead raised to life". Were any means used here? Were the empty pitchers, and lamps, and trumpets in the hands of Gideon's little army means by which the Midianites were overthrown, or were they dispersed by the sword of the Lord and of Gideon? the word of God, which by faith the little company believed. In all these instances the apostle is showing examples of faith as the

substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen. Faith is the knowledge of God's will and purpose which he gives to his people according to his own pleasure, causing them to desire and pray for the very things he has foreordained for them, and to be absolutely assured of them, so that they will move on in obedience to his commands against impassible barriers, against all the dictates of worldly wisdom, not to effect the fulfillment of his purposes, but to display the power of that faith of which he is the author and finisher, by holding the pitchers and lamps, compassing the walls, blowing the ram's horns, and even sounding the trumpet of victory before the enemy knows of defeat. Joshua did not say, "Shout, that the Lord may give you the city"; but, "Shout, for the Lord hath given you the city"; and after that the walls fell down. The Lord threw them down without the aid of the ram's horns. He overthrew the armies of the aliens. He raised the dead to life, and translated Enoch that he should not see death. And he gave his people faith as the substance and evidence of these things before they were seen, and by that faith made them overcome the world. They were witnesses of his work. And so are all the Lord's servants witnesses of his work. He sent Paul as a witness both of the things he had seen, and of those things in which he would appear unto him; Act. 26:16. If any insist that the Lord Jesus opened the eyes of the heathen, and turned them from darkness to light through the preaching of Paul, they must still remember that only the living are blind. That the Pharisees, our Savior said, were not blind in the sense that those were whose eyes he came to open. Those who experience a hope are often left long in the bondage of error and delusion, before the Lord sends the truth home to them, opening their eyes to see it as in accordance with what they have experienced. So when they hear the truth preached, and the Lord manifests its power to them as living souls, their eyes are opened to see it, they believe it, they are turned from the darkness of error to the light of it, and as sheep they feed upon it.

"Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures"; James 1:18. This is regarded by some as a declaration that the preaching of the word quickened those alluded to. But the apostle James includes himself with those of whom he speaks. What he says of them was true in his case. But we know he was not made alive by means of preaching, for the Savior called him by his own voice, saying, "Follow me". That same voice is heard by all his sheep. By him as the word they are begotten and born; for Peter says, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever". He does not say they are born again by the preaching of the gospel, but he says that this word of God by which they are born again, and which endures forever, is the word which by the gospel is preached unto them;" I Peter 1:23-25. That word is Jesus, whose name in salvation is called the Word of God. "This is the word which was in the beginning with God, and which was God, and which was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth"; John 1. The gospel is not this word, but is glad tidings of it. This word by the gospel is preached unto the saints who have felt the glorious power thereof, as the apostle John says, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that

your fellowship may be with us"; I John 1:1-3. Here is the word of truth, the word of life, the word of God, the eternal life, by which the saints are all begotten and born again. This is the word of God by which hearing and faith come. If that word of God be not in the heart, there can be no power to hear, nor can the faith or truth of the gospel be received. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who hath believed our report". They all heard literally, for "their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world". But only those who had been begotten by the word of truth could hear and understand"; Rom. 10:15-20.

The gospel stands contrasted with the law. A little consideration of this point will show that the gospel can not be to the dead, but to the living. The Lord's people must first know the law in its condemning power before they can receive the gospel, the glad tidings of salvation. But none can know himself to be a lost sinner, justly condemned by the holy law of God, until he has been made alive by the quickening Spirit of God. Only by the light of divine life can one see himself dead in trespasses and sin. Paul was alive spiritually, or the coming of the commandment would not have caused sin to revive and him to die. It is only to the living soul that the law is felt to be a ministration of condemnation and death. On the day of pentecost there were many living souls, who, up to that time, had been working under the law. When Peter was inspired by the Holy Ghost to proclaim the end of that dispensation, and the abrogation of all its ritual service by the death of Christ whom they had crucified, and to proclaim him as having been made both Lord and Christ, this word that he preached pricked them in the heart, inflicting a death wound, killing them to all hope of ever again approaching a holy God by the works of the law. Only those who had spiritual life, and were by that enabled to see the just demands of the law, making its service a heavy yoke to them, and yet knowing no other way of pleasing God but by striving to keep it, only those could be pricked in the heart. No natural man was thus made to feel the sword of the spirit which is the word of God. But those who had seen a necessity for a sacrifice for sin, as Abel did, and who had heretofore known no other than that which pertained to the worldly sanctuary and Levitical priesthood, were made to feel the hopelessness of their case when the end of that dispensation of legal sacrifices was announced, and they were assured that God would never accept them again. That was fulfilled in their experience the words of Joel, the prophet. The sun, representing all natural wisdom and knowledge, was turned into darkness, the moon, representing the law, was turned into blood, demanding the death of the sinner, and they saw signs of death, destruction, and desolation in those legal heavens and in that legal earth, blood and fire, and pillars of smoke, and cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter proclaimed to them the gospel, and its blessings and privileges, and they gladly received his word.

This was apostolic work. Since the last word by the apostles was spoken and written, none can ever do apostolic work again. They are still on the twelve thrones, but it is by the words left on record that they judge the church of God.

But, in the experience of the saints, the same order still prevails. First, a knowledge of the law by the light of divine life, then a knowledge of the death it demands, then an experience of salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord. In this experience the preacher can render no help. But his preaching follows on in the path the Savior leads. He tells the story to the hearer no faster that it is told in his soul by the Savior. His preaching of the truth is sweet, for

received into fellowship there August 27, 1927.

He was something special to those who knew him best and were able to communicate with him. Brother Luper was born with a severe hearing defect that affected his speeech and his ability to communicate with those who were not accustomed to his handicaps. Though he heard and understood very little that was said around him, he was as strong as anyone in his belief of Salvation by the Grace of God, and the weakness of man.

It wasn't unusual for Brother Luper to express his feelings in his own way that would reflect his learnings from the All Wise and Powerful Teacher who never fails to reach His children -- old or young, handicapped or normal. Since his hearing was so extremely impaired we knew he felt things and had an understanding of things that had to come from God.

The writer recalls from time to time of having been to meeting someplace once when Brother Luper was among his carload. On the return trip home everyone in the car was so elated at having heard such good preaching and were expressing their feelings about such a special day. Brother Luper, unaware of what all the clatter was related to, looked around and said, "That was some good preaching today, I don't know what they said", but with a clinched fist and a shutter of his body, he added, "I just felt it, I just felt it!" This my friends said to me he had been given a hearing ear even though his natural ears were near completely deaf.

His funeral was conducted from Johnson Funeral Home in Rocky Mount, N.C. November 16, 1980 by his beloved pastor, Elder Henry Jones, assisted by Elder Michael Neikirk and he was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery in Rocky Mount where we have a hope that he will hear the Father's call to come home.

While we miss him at Pleasant Hill and sympathize with his family at their great loss, we do not wish him back into this world of trials and tribulations.

Written by order of conference at Pleasant Hill Church, by one who loved him and enjoyed his company many many times.

Resolved that a copy of this obituary be placed on the church records, one sent to the family and one to the ***"Signs of the Times"***.

J. Carroll Williams

Elder Henry Jones, Moderator
J. Carroll Williams, Clerk

SISTER MINNIE PASCHAL LOFTIS

Our dear Sister (and church clerk) was born July 25, 1893 and was numbered (by experience) with (27) twenty-seven organizing members when New Hope Primitive Baptist Church was constituted by presbytery May 10, 1913, a charter member, and was chosen church clerk May 8, 1948 and served active until January 1972. Sister Minnie remained a faithful member and honorary clerk until her death April 21, 1980. We, who hope we are, the Church at New Hope, Rockingham County, North Carolina, will miss Sister Minnie in our midst, yet cannot mourn her enter into eternal rest.

Sister Loftis is survived by four daughters, Sister Hessie L. Barber, Metra L. Boyd, Gladys L. Myers and Bailey L. Craddock. Three sons Joe T. Jr., Vance and Melvin Loftis; 23 grandchildren and 35 great grandchildren. Five sisters, Cassie P. Williams, Sister Della P. Mangum, Ada P. Williams, Onie P. Isley and Ruby P. Hammock. Five brothers, Jesse, Arther, Richard, Brother Loxley and Roy Paschal.

Weep no more dear children
No need for a sad heart
It is only a brief time
We will have to be apart

God with His everlasting mercy
Can dry each and every tear
He has and will foerver
Take care, so have no fear

T'was His own will and purpose
The appointed time for my stay
Eighty-six years on this earth
And now, to take me away

Away from the children I love
Only God can know how dear
In His great and loving kindness
I'll still to you feel near

Brothers and Sisters of the Church
To you I bid farewell
If it be God's will to continue
In your memory may I dwell

It has been so very wonderful
The past sixty-seven years
To be a part of your joys at New Hope
Your love, your hope and your tears

Each tear was for a purpose
As was each glorious appointment we shared

It was all in His arrangement
Foreordained and perfectly prepared

The spiritual knowledge He gives us
So little and yet so great
He knows just what we need
And the exact time to relate

He knows just when to rekindle
A seemingly abated spark
To a beautiful brilliant glow
To light to our heavenly Ark

If it be the gracious Lord's will
The church body, in peace, to abide
May we look to Him for guidance
He's our joy and glorious pride

He is the only one we have to look to
The only one we truly adore
The one and only to call to
To "Please preach some more"

Life here was peacefully ended
April the twenty-first day
Was laid to rest in New Hope cemetery
Under a beautiful floral array

Four lovely Elders relate a God given
And in His predetermined way
Elders Kiser, Hutchens, Gates and Spencer
So perfectly ended the day.

Written by Fannie Sue Ware, as requested by the Church.

Ordered one copy to ***The Signs of the Times,*** one copy to the family and one copy to the Church records.

Elder Clyde M. Kiser, Moderator
Dixie A. Kiser, Clerk

SISTER MARY MAGDALENE PEARSON

"...weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." (Psalm 30:5)

Only through and by the tender mercies granted unto us by our Heavenly Father, might we rejoice in the passing of our dear sister in Christ, Sister Mary Magdalene Pearson, knowing that she lies resting in God's care.

Born in Fulton County, Hickman, Kentucky, Sister Pearson fell asleep in Jesus on March 5, 1980 at the age of 78.

Daughter of Arnold Ralph and Lennie Sledge Green, Sister Pearson resided in Kalamazoo, Michigan for more than 50 years.

Following the death of her first husband, Sister Mary was united in marriage on September 19, 1930, with Alfred Pearson Sr., who also preceded her in death, on March 24, 1967. Three children were born to this union: Mr. Alfred Pearson, Jr., Mrs. Max (Mary J.) Doolittle, and Miss Anne M. Pearson, all residents of Kalamazoo. Survivors from her first marriage are one son, Michael L. Harris of Southfield, Michigan, and also three grandchildren: Steven L. and Judy R. Harris, both of Detroit, Michigan, and Mark A. Doolittle of Kalamazoo. Also surviving are two sisters, Mrs. Odelia Laird of Mayfield, Kentucky and Mrs. Louise Belt of Hickman, Kentucky, as well as several nieces and nephews.

Sister Mary first united with the Zion Primitive Baptist Church A.D. 1819 in Mayfield, Kentucky in March 1926, baptized by the Pastor, Elder O. W. Perkins. A devoted member, Sister Mary transferred her membership by way of letter to the Shiloh Church in Elkhart, Indiana and again in August 1969 to Little Zion Primitive Baptist Church in Dearborn, Michigan, where she remained a devoted member until the time of her passing.

All those who knew and loved her so, would agree that Sister Pearson was truly a "soldier of the cross and follower of the Lamb", only by the grace of The Almighty God. Sister Pearson loved to proclaim the Goodness of God, often for hours at a time, and her mind was centered almost continually on the scriptures and on the many hymns which she loved so well. On the Sunday preceding her passing, the members of Little Zion sang, by request, "O When Shall I See Jesus", over long distance telephone to our dear sister.

Sister Mary's funeral was preached by Elder Howard Edwards at the Langeland Memorial Chapel in Kalamazoo, Michigan, on Saturday March 8th. She was laid to rest in the Mount Ever-Rest Cemetery, also located in Kalamazoo, there to await the second coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Thanks be to God, that He has caused us to understand that our loss of Sister Mary Pearson, is truly her eternal gain.

We respectfully request that a copy of this memorial be sent to the family of the departed, to each of the various church papers, and also for a copy to be retained in our church records.

Written by Brother Richard Patton
Accepted As Written By Little Zion
Primitive Baptist Church, Dearborn, MI

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 5/81 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

NOTE

The articles beginning here on Page 97 and continuing thru Page 107 are reprinted from the ***Signs of the Times,*** May, 1881.

This marks the one hundredth anniversary of the death of Elder Gilbert Beebe, founder and sole editor of the ***Signs*** for nearly fifty years. We hope the readers will find this profitable.

Thank you,
Editors

SUDDEN DEATH OF THE SENIOR EDITOR

At ten minutes before four o'clock P.M. on Monday, May 2nd, 1881, Elder Gilbert Beebe received his discharge and was called home to receive the crown laid up for those who have fought the good fight. While our hearts are thus bowed down with grief we do not feel able to write an extended obituary, but knowing the anxiety that will be felt by our brethren, friends, and readers in general to learn every particular attending his last hours, we will, God giving us the strength, attempt the painful duty of giving an account of his death.

The cause of his death was apoplexy, from which he suffered but a few hours. He arose, the morning of the day he died, dressed himself, and ate his breakfast, apparently in his usual health, but when he got up from the table complained of a headache, and being advised to lie down, he returned to his room and laid down, and soon fell

a leading exponent, and will be of particular interest to his followers and friends as the only autobiography he has ever written. It is as follows:

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Middletown, N.Y. April 1876

Mr. Slauson: In fulfillment of my promise, I will state some of the most important incidents of my life. I was born in the town (now city) or Norwick, Conn., on the 25th day of November, 1800. At a very early period, and as far back as my memory extends, I was seriously impresed with a solemn conviction of my sinful and lost condition as a sinner, and of the necessity of being "born again", to qualify me to see the kingdom of God. When I think from my best remembrance of the date, I was not more than seven or eight years old, I was made to hope and rejoice in God as my Savior, and to feel his love shed abroad in my heart. I think that at that tender age I was taught of God to know what no other being could teach me, that "Salvation is of the Lord". From that hour I have had no confidence in the power of men to effect or help in the least to effect the salvation of a sinner. In 1811 I was baptized by Elder John Sterry, and received as a member of the Baptist Church in Norwick. This was many years before the division of the Missionary or Fullerite Baptists from the Primitive order, and before any organized religious societies or institutions were known or tolerated in the Baptist denomination in our country.

In 1816, I came to the city of New York, and afterward became identified, by letter, with the Ebenezer Baptist Church, were I was called to exercise my gift, and was finally licensed to preach the gospel, this was about the year 1818. I then traveled in several states as an itinerant preacher, and supplied the Third Baptist Church in Baltimore three or four months in about 1821-2, but it suited my mind better to be traveling. I never failed to find places where I was well received, and without any support from missionary arrangement I was fully sustained, so that I could say as did the disciples whom Jesus sent out without purse or script, when they returned, that I had lacked nothing.

In 1823, February 4, I was married in the city of New York, and in the same year was ordained to the pastoral care of the Baptist Church of Ramapo, in Rockland County, N.Y., and continued with them until May, 1826, when I accepted a call to the pastorate of the Baptist Church at New Vernon, N.Y. This church was constituted about 1786, and my predecessor, Elder Banjamin Montanye, had served them as pastor thirty-three years. He died in December, 1825, and I succeeded him the following May. So it will be seen that this ancient church has been supplied for the last eighty-three (now eighty-eight) years by but two pastors. During the fifty years of my connection I spent the principal part of three years and a half in Alexandria, and Upper Broad Run, Va., and the Shiloh Church in Washington, D.C., but continued to visit New Vernon regularly during the time, and finally removed to New Vernon, in April, 1840.

For about forty years I have also served the Middletown and Wallkill Church, in connection with my labors in and with New Vernon.

During the half century all the members of both churches have been called to their inheritance above with the exception of about four or five. The two churches contain a membership now of about one hundred and eighty, nearly all of whom have been gathered into the fold, besides many others who have been called away, since I have been with them.

The division, or separation, of the Missionary Baptists in these parts, from those of the old order, took place about forty years ago. I stand today rooted and

never rallied, dying about four o'clock, so quitely that the tearful watchers at his bedside hardly knew when time ended and eternity began.

Elder Gilbert Beebe was born in Norwick, Conn., Nov. 25, 1800. When seven years old he embraced religion, was baptized when eleven years old, and joined the Baptist Church at Norwick at the age of sixteen. He began to preach when eighteen in the Ebenezer Church, New York City, then located in Spring Street. For several years he traveled as an itinerant preacher, and in 1823 he was ordained as pastor of the church at Ramapo, Rockland County. In 1826 he became pastor of the church at New Vernon, and a few years afterward he succeeded Elder Terry as pastor of the Wallkill Church, a relation that continued uninterruptedly with both churches until his death. He removed to Middletown in 1847, and about that time began to hold services Sunday afternoons in the Orchard Street Hall, preaching in the mornings on alternate Sundays in the New Vernon and Wallkill churches. When the church in this village was erected in 1871, the services in the Wallkill Church were discontinued and thereafter he preached at New Vernon Sunday mornings and in this village in the afternoons. Although he still remained pastor of the church at New Vernon he had preached there but seldom of late, his assistant, Elder Benton Jenkins, since his ordination in 1879, having relieved him of much of the work.

In September, 1832, he began the publication of the ***Signs of the Times*** at New Vernon. In 1848 the office was removed to this village, or South Middletown, as it was then called, the first number printed here bearing date March 15, 1848. In 1846, after the death of Elder Jewett, of Warwick, the paper published by him, called the "Doctrinal Advocate and Monitor", was merged into the ***Signs,*** and for a time the paper bore both names. The sub-title was, however, soon dropped. The ***Signs*** has been for many years the recognized organ of the Old School Baptist denomination. It circulates in all parts of this country where Old School Baptists live, and also in Canada and England. Through its columns Elder Beebe's vigorous intellect and ready pen controlled the thought of the church, and held the wavering steadfast to the bulwarks of the faith. It is impossible to overestimate the extent and power of the influence that he exerted, and it is safe to say that this great power could have been in no safer hands, for he knew no other motive than the right, and trusted implicitly in God for light and guidance.

His life was wholly consecrated to his Master's service. He was interested in and cared for nothing but the cause of Christ. During all the years of his pastorate he preached without salary, and so thoroughly was he absorbed in his higher and more important duties that his business interests often suffered by neglect. The amount of work that he performed was prodigious. It is estimated that in his ministerial work he traveled at least ten thousand miles a year, attending associations and discharging other duties. For nearly fifty years he preached regularly twice, and often three times, on every Sunday, and often during the week; and for nearly fifty years of this time he was sole editor of the ***Signs,*** preparing for its columns an amount of original matter greater than is published in any other religious paper. He compiled a hymn book, the first edition of which was published in 1859, and which has commanded a sale of 30,000 copies. He also published a number of pamphlets, mostly controversial in their nature. His editorials in the ***Signs*** have been reprinted in book form, two volumes covering fifteen years, from 1832 to 1847, having been published.

Elder Beebe was a man of vigorous and independent habits of thought, and he never hesitated, no matter how

Wilson, N.C.
May 5, 1881

Dear Signs:--I am sad at hearing of the death of Elder Beebe. Old as he was, and on the limit of life, it yet falls heavily on many of us; and as for me, my feeling is one of sadness. I have no doubt of his happy exchange. He has been gathered to his fathers, and has gone from the land of the dying to that of the living. But we shall miss him so much as an editor and able writer. Seldom has one been so favored with long life and usefulness as he has, and wielded the pen and guided a paper so long and ably as he has the ***Signs.***

I tender my sympathies to the bereaved and sorrowing, who are many besides those of his immediate family.

Affectionately,
(Elder) P. D. Gold

Aldie, Virginia
May 3, 1881

Dear Brother Beebe:--Your telegram announcing the death of your beloved father is received. My health just now forbids my attending his funeral. It is a sad blow to us all. "A great man is fallen in Israel". May God reconcile us all to his will. My wife joins me in most earnest, loving sympathy for the afflicted family.

Sincerely your brother,
J. N. Badger

Clay Village, Ky.
May 9, 1881

My Dear Brother Jenkins:--The contents of your note threw a dark gloom over the Baptist community here, and, I suppose, over the entire membership elsewhere. I know not when I heard anything that so discomfited me. It seems to me an almost irreparable loss to the Baptist Church. I write now to ascertain the future prospects of the ***Signs of the Times.*** I hope it will be continued. If so, Brother B. L. Beebe will need an assistant. Who will it be? I have thought propably yourself or Brother William L. Beebe would join with him. I hope the brethren generally will do all they can to support it. If I can do anything to encourage its perpetuity it will be freely rendered.

Please reply at your earliest convenience.

Your brother most truly,
(Elder) J. F. Johnson

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I was about 15 years old when there was a definite turning point in my life toward the person of Jesus Christ. The feeling of my sins being forgiven and the hope of eternal life flooded my soul with great assurance that I was forgiven of my sins and on the road to everlasting peace and happiness. This feeling of peace did not remain with me very long until doubts and fears again became my bread and drink. Until once again I was brought down in suffering and death to the man, Fred Neikirk, and each time this experience has come to me in my poor unworthy life there is this hope which is of Jesus Christ that rises up in my heart... "For by grace are ye saved through faith..." during these unbearable feelings of mine there is this sweet hope that all is well with Jesus Christ and the work of redemption is sure, when the sins of God's people were laid upon Him and He bore them in His own body on the tree, being made a curse for His own people.

It would be presumptious on my part to say I know that I am a child of God and have already been saved to the exclusion of hope that is of Jesus Christ, our blessed Lord. On the other hand, I would have to deny that there is an Almighty God (loving Father), and Jesus Christ (Saviour) and the blessed Spirit (Revelator), and that all my experiences have been for nought; if I have never felt His Grace nor have an interest in the redemption which is in Jesus Christ the Lord. If I be only a grace-less wretch, formed for the purpose of destruction and condemnation, why do I continue to have these feelings of hope in the blessed Lord that thy sins are forgiven thee for His sake?

In my calling from nature's darkness, I felt not only a deliverance from the world of condemnation but a separation from that world to preach the gospel of Grace and redemption through the precious blood of Christ our Lord. As I am made to reflect back on my experiences as a messenger of God in the proclamation of the gospel of Grace, I am humbled before the Heavenly Father in realizing why should I be given to speak in His name of this precious gospel of Grace.

It seemed at the beginning of bearing this message to others that my life would be protected and peaceable, but it was not long until I was made to pass through the furnace of afflictions, the waters of Noah, and the belly of the Whale. This experience of traveling with the Lord has been over a period of many years now and the many things have transpired with me in my experiences as my changes have come from One who never changes. Thank God for every evidence toward hope of eternal life!

I was 18 years old when I first arose to speak in public concerning Jesus Christ and the gospel of Grace. Oh! How I labored and fear gripped my very being and trembling took over my weak knees as I struggled to speak, which I thought was for a long period of time but was only for about 10 minutes. Now this was in a missionary Baptist Church which I joined at the age of 15. I remained with these people for many years. I attended their schools and preached in their churches until 1959, when a final separation came over the doctrine of our blessed Lord. I seem to be getting ahead of myself somewhat. Let me go back and say that since I had the false idea that to be a minister one should go to school and read all the books he could to learn the doctrine, and to become qualified as a minister one would have to be fully instructed in the scriptures...so was the feeling of those with whom I was first identified.

During this time with these people and in the further revelation of Jesus Christ concerning the doctrine of Grace, I was made to pass through deep waters of affliction and trials of fire. I was soon made to see that one could not learn the doctrine of Christ by men nor was there a school set up nor books written which

could make a preacher out of a man. This false idea with which I set out in the beginning was soon taken away and total separation from that idea was given; that one could learn to be a good minister by going to school somewhere that was set up by men. When I was liberated from this idea, the Lord taught me concerning the doctrine of election and predestination, and in good conscience before these people, I began to preach this among the missionaries.

The hatred for this doctrine was immediately displayed among these people until I was forced to flee from one place to another and everywhere I travelled the feeling was the same toward the doctrine, especially the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty and predestination of all things. The suffering was more than one could bear without God's grace but the Lord was merciful to me. My family was also made to suffer with me, and with the withdrawal of friends, relatives and fellow servants with whom we had lived and labored leaving us one by one until there was only one here and there that took comfort in the doctrine of Grace. We had been associated with a large multitude of people and now our name was cast out as evil. My former teachers tried to show me of my error, as they saw it to be, and warned me of the way in which I was headed as being the way of the "hardshells".

To be brief in expressing my final separation from these people, called missionary, I was in Kingsport, Tennessee when some came to my home to inform me of a special meeting, called at the church where I was considered to be their pastor, to take a vote on whether I was to remain there with them or not. I was not at home. My dear wife took the message, with this added message.... Your husband believes that God predestinates all things, so we will see about that. If he is pastor after tonight, then we will go right away and leave you alone.... As if to say, that if he stays then your husband is right and if he goes then he is not right. Needless to say that after their vote, I was gone... but this did not prove nor disprove anything as far as I am concerned. It was at this time that the final separation came from those called Missionary Baptist and I was branded as "hardshell" by them.

Shortly after this experience, I came in contact with others that called themselves Old Baptists or Primitives and Hardshells. Now, I was to be tried again concerning the doctrine of God's absolute predestination, and such questions as "where are the people that believe this doctrine" and "how shall I ever find them"? I talked to some who gave me no comfort at all, speaking of a limited predestination, or that predestination only affects the destiny of people and has nothing to do with time nor events. I also came up against the doctrine of some that proclaimed a time conditional salvation based upon their obedience to God and the co-existence of Satan with God from all eternity. I also heard that God does predestinate time events, and things but not evil things... only good things are predestinated. This also troubled me.

However, there was given to me some comfort at this time concerning the doctrine. I was sent to Memphis, Tenn. to work for a short time. In that city lived an Elder Brown, whom I never met but conversed with him by telephone concerning the doctrine. Here, for the first time, I was speaking to one who affirmed the doctrine that I believed and was openly telling me without being ashamed or trying to explain away the doctrine of God's predestination. What a relief it was to this poor sinner who felt so helpless and so far from home and family, to meet with a kindred spirit, during the night, by conversation over the phone, concerning the doctrine of Grace. I was made to rejoice with anticipation of meeting such a one and to go to meeting with him. But this was not to be nor was I ever to speak with him again.

To me this is the first one of the Primitive Baptist who affirmed this doctrine to me and was not ashamed to speak freely of it.

Also, I must mention that I was to read a writing by Elder Beebe on the subject of God's predestination which was in agreement with my experience. I was made to search the scriptures and to examine my experience and calling over and over again. My experiences were many and at times it seemed that I could never lift my head up again with any joy but here a little and there a little we were given a crumb from the Master's table.

Again, I reflect back upon an experience before being separated from the Missionaries. I was sent into the State of Florida to speak in a Missionary church near Titusville. It was somewhat Calvanistic in persuasion but none-the-less a Missionary church. It was here in this place that the Lord gave to me a vision or dream. As I layed down to sleep that night, feeling a desperation toward almost despair of life, I saw an old man in an old castle which was poorly lit. The old man at first looked to be repulsive to gaze upon, with white hair and stooped in body. I turned to flee from him, up a long stairs; but he seized me in his arms and completely arrested me. His arms were strong and comforting; although at first there was a short feeling of fear, struggle was soon arrested by resting in him and when I beheld his face it was of strong character and wisdom and his words to me were.... "you do not belong in this place". So he delivered me from that place and put me on a bus outside the castle and sent me on my way. My dear brother, and all everywhere who might read this, I have heard men curse this doctrine of election and predestination with a hatred, calling it a damnable doctrine, straight out of the pits of hell, and not of God. If that be so, then I will have to live with it forever and from whence it originated, for not only do I believe it, but having hope of being held in it by the power of God to its expected hope unto the end for that which will be brought by our blessed Lord at His coming. It is one thing to take hold of something that does not belong to you and another thing for someone or something to take hold of you that has existed with God and your Father from all eternity. This someone and something is Jesus Christ and His precious doctrine of Grace, which was bestowed by grace, and is according to the predeterminate counsel and foreknowledge of God. It has been God, according to His loving kindness and tender mercies in grace, that has brought me where I am. Praise His Holy name!

It is my firm belief, by experience, that it takes something other than the scriptures to make one knowledgeable of this God of whom we write. The Scriptures are written to testify of Jesus Christ, but they do not give the life of Christ. The blessed Spirit of God quickens the children of God who were dead in trespasses and sins, and in the birth that is from above, a new man is brought forth.

As I go back to my experience of redemption, this hope in Christ will not be over until the body is resurrected from the grave. You notice that I speak of the experience of it. The redemption is already over as far as the justification and the reconciliation of it is concerned, but the manifestation of it is being brought forth each and every moment.

In August of 1960, I moved to Lexington, Kentucky, and many months passed with nowhere to meet with those who believed this doctrine of Grace. We were without a job, no income to provide for the family for some time, but the Lord, in His mercy, provided for us. Many of those we knew in our former relationship were now looking upon us a as being of those who had lost their senses.

For many years, I longed for the order of the church where the doctrine of God's predestination was upheld,

believed and loved; the ordinances and practices of the church honored, and the manifestation of love among brethren through the Spirit of God which was wrought by an experience of grace, that was a glory to God. At one time I thought I had finally arrived at that place, but once again many hard things were to be my lot.

After many months of being without a place where we could worship with others, we were identified with some called Primitive Baptist. Many years passed during this time and we met many called Primitive Baptist, traveling in several states. In some places we were received and in others we were not because of the particular people that we were with. This was a very sad thing to me, so I was made to examine myself and the doctrine and order again. When the final test came among these people, there was again a separation, especially over the doctrine of predestination and order of the church. It seemed to me that the order was more in question than the doctrine because of secret societies and the like and baptism from other orders, such as Missionary, from which we had come.

After this experience, we were identified briefly with a church in the South, but were soon dismissed by letter to form a church in Kentucky. Again trouble came over doctrine and the order and this came to nought. Another attempt was made to form another church in Kentucky and this also came to nought. It was during this time that I experienced some of the most difficult times of my life. There was sorrow upon sorrow, grief upon grief with tears of anguish flooding my very being to again despair of life, and if it had not been for the Grace of God, surely the waters of Noah would have sunk me into hell itself. My blessed Lord became more real to me than ever and His righteousness was terrible to behold as I was made to feel my own corruption again. I begged for mercy and pleaded with Him day and night during my waking hours. My food was wormwood it seemed. This was the severiest trial that I have ever endured, and it ended in death to this poor wretch of a man. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living God. But to me it is better to be there that to fall into the hands of unjust men.

Through many hard things, we had to suffer with others for many years... before we were finally brought to the Old Baptist Church in western Kentucky, called Soldier's Creek, where Elder Paul Poyner is now pastor. It was through Elder Spangler that we first visited these brethren. Here we found an old church, whose pastor was then close to 90 years of age, that preached the doctrine of Christ in its purity and contended for the order of the church and spoke of an experience of grace which must be given of the Lord through revelation; and a love of God manifested among His children through the Spirit. This was in agreement with my experience. I had thought surely I would perish from the earth before I could ever again be in a church to worship again in peace. In fact, in March of 1979, while in the intensive care unit of the hospital, my heart stopped beating for about a minute. I had to be revived by the attendants of the hospital. My family gathered around me and for a little while I felt death and the termination of life here was very near. The doctor prescribed medicine for me that had an adverse effect upon me and I was forced to give up his medication. Oh! how sweet would have been the messenger of death if only peace could be in Jesus Christ our Lord! At this time the Lord gave me a measure of peace and strength to continue on and to hope for a home with God's people. Brethren in different places were of much comfort to me during this time and the words spoken briefly by Elder Griffin in Alabama last year....that God would hasten the day to bring us to the brethren where we could

have peace...were of much help and encouragement.

Last July, the Soldier's Creek Church receive my wife and I into their fellowship after Elder Paul Poyner baptised us. We are at peace concerning the order of the doctrine of Christ, the practices and ordinances of the church and the love and feeling manifest among God's people. The Soldier's Creek Church liberated me to speak and it has been a joy to meet with brethren in different places and meet so many we never knew before. It was a special time for me, last August, to go to the Memphis Church for the first time, where Elder Brown with whom I had talked so many years before by phone, had been pastor and where Elder Chappell, Elder Campbell, Elder Prince and Elder Young are members. It was also a joy to revisit the churches of Mt. Enon Association in Fla. and be enabled by God to speak before them with their Elders, Elder Stott, and Elder McCormick, last November. These two brothers were of much comfort to me and my wife during our visits with them before being received into the Soldier's Creek Church. It was during the meetings in Soldier's Creek Association that we heard some of those brethren from the Memphis Church and also Elder Cabbage and Elder Hendricks from the Powell Valley Association, Elder Griffin and Elder Brock from the Hopewell Association. We were blessed to visit the Powell Valley Association last September, where we had preciously visited some of the churches there. Their preaching and manner of meeting with the love of God prevailing among them, had been of much comfort to me. Thank God for His wonderful works to the children of men! It was a joy for us to meet with the Hopewell Association in Alabama last October, where we met many from other parts of the country whom we did not previously know.

There is no way for me to express in words how I felt during the times that I have visited with you and Elder Spangler and the churches in North Carolina, Maryland, and other places with those with whom you are in fellowship.

I must close for now and if the Lord has not been my redemption in deliverance from the world of darkness into the Kingdom of His dear son, then I am sorely deceived and am only a miserable wretch set up for the arrows of destruction and condemnation. I cannot deny His Grace, nor can I give up to the thought that there is no hope. I love the people that are called Old Baptist! Farewell for this time and Godspeed!

God be praised for all things!

In Hope,
Fred B. Neikirk

CONCERNING CHURCH ORDER

The order of the church consists not in any forms or ceremonial rites, but in the spirit of love to the Lord, and in one another. God is spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth. Then the order of this spiritual house must consist in something more than a formal observance of duties which may be laid down in rules written on paper. The laws of Christ must be in the heart and the Spirit of Christ must direct every act of obedience in those who follow Him in the order He has appointed unto them.

Love worketh no ill to his neighbor, therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law. (Romans 13:10) Love is of God (John 4:7) This is the spirit in which every action must be performed to be in order which the Lord has commanded. In this spirit every action is in order. Without love all is out of order. Even though the letter of the law of Christ, as recorded in the New Testament, may have been followed in every particular in a case, instead of being in order, it is at best but mockery, if the motive for the action was anything but that love which seeks only

the glory of God and the good of the saints. How inexpressibly beautiful do the courts of Zion appear when the saints walk in this heavenly order and have the same care for one another. Then indeed it is manifest that we are members one of another.

Gilmer L. Williard

THE MAN-CHILD
Part II

"For unto us a child is born,
Unto us a son is given:" - Isa. 9:6A

In the previous installment of this text, I endeavored to measure the background of this prophecy and trace out for the household of faith both the historical and the experimental truth of Isaiah, who prophesied of the grace that should come in Messiah.

While the ancient people of God were in bitter bondage, (some seventy years of Babylonian captivity); nevertheless, they were not without hope of deliverance. And Isaiah, testifying beforehand the sufferings and glory of Christ, confirms the hope and aspiration of these suffering saints through the gospel.

I marvel at the beauty and wisdom of the gospel especially the intent and purpose for which it was ordained. Unlike the enemies of God who have packaged and commercialized its message; and who offer it for sale under the guise and pretex, and gimmickry of "Free Gift" to dead, alien, and unregenerate sinners, its message is directed to the "quickened" family. Intended - not to regenerate but to enlighten (II Tim 1:10), not to offer salvation or a chance for it; but that He really and fully and absolutely accomplishes our salvation. In a word, the message of the gospel declares that the yoke of oppression and bondage is broken. Messiah is come to unlock the prison doors, loosen the two-leaved gates of iron, and set the captives free. Is there any wonder then that the ancient people of God, upon hearing the prophets with liberty of breath and preaching this comforting message, rejoiced in praise and thanksgiving and said,

> "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth!"—Isa. 52:7

For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given. Some seven centuries must elapse before the fulfillment of the prophecy, but the eye of faith views it as though already happened. A child is born, a Son is given. The prophet speaks in the past tense. You see dear brethren, God sees things and declares them not as we see them, (as mortals we are creatures subject to time), and we err whenever we interpret and subject the creator and His works to fit into our framework of time. But God, declares the end from the beginning, and from ancient time the things that are not yet done, saying my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure (Isa. 46:9-10). With God, all things—past, present, and future—are forever settled and done. And may our God enable us to observe His works with the same mind.

> "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."—Phil. 2:5

Now in our text, the prophet accentuates and heightens the mystery of the two natures of Christ. The child is born. This points to His humanity and humiliation. However, the Son is given and this points to His deity. He became the man servant.

> "But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:
> And being formed in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."—Phil. 2:7, 8.

Oh my soul, what humiliation. A human sacrifice was prepared in the womb (Heb. 10:5) (Isa. 44:2). This Man-Child was ordained as the Sin-bearer.

> "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."—II Cor. 5:14.

As it is written, the reproaches of them that reproached God fell on Jesus, the Sacrifice.

For unto us a child is born. This Man-Child must die for unto this end was he born. As the inspired writer declared, a time to be born, and a time to die (Eccl. 3:2). That which is born of the womb must die. While the child is born to die, the Second Person in this glorious unity cannot die for Deity is not subject to death. The one is ordained as the Sacrificial Lamb while the other upholds him in death and serves as the Stone for the Holy Altar.

"Upon this Rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail."

The child that was born, and the Son that was given are two distinct natures but mysteriously in union and accord, emphatically united, that the death of the one is efficacious through the santification of the other.

In some hymn books, there is a phrase used in the singing, which we sometimes use (and I never did like the use of the phrase)—

"When God, the Mighty Maker died, For man the creature's sin."

Now the meaning of the poet might be good and perhaps he meant well, but it is an erroneous way of expressing the Divine truth that I have under consideration presently. Deity did not die, Deity could not die; but it was the man, the child of birth that died in covenant union with the Son that was given. Nevertheless, in all that he did and in all that he suffered, so close and mysterious is the union between the Divine and human natures that the blood spilled is declared to be the blood of God and infallibly secured, the salvation for those for whom it was intended.

"Great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit." I Tim. 3:16A.

In conclusion, I will summarize on the other phrase: A Son is given. The prophet does not say, "unto us a Son is born." The Son (His Divine nature) was not born. As the Son, He has neither beginning of days nor end of life but rather abideth a priest continually (Heb. 7:3) and hath an unchangeable priesthood. He ever liveth to make intercession for them (Heb. 7:25B). He is the Eternal One, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit. As Son He was given and is thus styled in scripture as God's unspeakable Gift. As the Son, He assumes all responsibility of dominion and rule, authority, and power. The government shall be upon His shoulder, and the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, and upon His Kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever.

Thanks be unto God that we have a child that is born of woman, made like unto his brethren, and touched with the feeling of our infirmities. A Man-Child upheld and secured in the given Son. A union indossoluble and that never fadeth away. And because of His atonement we have an inheritance reserved in heaven and kept by the power of the "given Son."

(Elder) Jack H. Dawsey

EDITORIAL

"There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and beseiged it, and built great bulwarks against it; Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man. then said I, Wisdom is better than strength; nevertheless the poor wise man's wisdom is disposed, and his words are not heard. The words of wise men are heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools. Wisdom is better than weapons of war; but one sinner destroyeth much good. (Eccl. 9:14-18)

With much mixture of feeling I come, yet in my bosom lingers a precious hope

of knowing the city, the deliverance of the poor wise Man, the folly of my wisdom and my strength, what the city was delivered from, and the freedom to which the occupants of the city were delivered to. May we feel the warming influence of the Holy Spirit as we endeavor to glean in the garden of the Lord.

In the first place, none of those delivered, nor the things given them in the deliverance, will get any favorable notice from those without the city. To the contrary, although the beseiging king received a fatal bruising and minimizing of his power, he and the members of his corps of beseiging enemies are still alert in their endeavors to destroy the foundations of the city. Those in the city, together with the adornments of it, mean nothing to them; it is the poor wise Man's destruction that they first sought, and it remains the same today. The hatred and the rejection of the poor wise Man has been passed on to those that he has called to assail the city. (John 15:16· I John 3:1)

The smallness of the city, and the minority of numbers in it are utilized by the Holy Spirit to convey to us a comparison of the importance and power of the kingdom of heaven as compared to this kingdom of darkness. To God our Father, the Creator of the world, and the proficient creator and maker of all things, the city is His city. It is not a question of why does deliverance not come; it is not a looking for deliverance, because the question in their mind would be, How could a thing like that be? (Luke 1:34; John 3:9) For they all have, and will, make it manifest that the natural man receives not and knows not the things of the Spirit. No mortal mind could ever conjecture a host of people being delivered by standing still. No rational mind would ever think of a virgin bearing a son who had never known a man, and none of the intellect people would ever hint that a poor wise man, and a few men, could ever raise the seige and onslaught of a great king with power and great weapons of warfare.

Of every member of the Israelitish host, every member of the crew of eight that sailed the flooding waters in Noah's day, and every member of the men in this little city, none expected deliverance. There was in each of the cases (as there is today when the little city is assailed, whether individual or collectively) members who have had to die to themselves as far as deliverance would ever be. This death is a sure to every one as it was to Mephibosheth at the King's table, or as it was to the dying thief on the cross. All, all must cease from their own works.

Have you felt the onslaughts against your trembling frame by this great king? Has the clash of the cutting and destroying of the two-edged sword caused you to shudder and to groan and even to beg for mercy? If these things have been yours to feel, you are on the way to heaven. It is your abode, and your Pilot is guiding you through the sea (troubles) of your life into a haven of rest.

Let us ponder the poor wise Man. He was immensely right; the world was His, and the fulness thereof bowed down in obeisance to Him. The deliverance of this little city was not to be by might nor power nor swiftness. It was declared (predestinated) long before the morning stars sang together, or the sons of God shouted for joy, and how that He rides on the storm, and makes the clouds the dust of His feet, or where He dwells. (Joel 3:17; Zeph. 3:17) It was in existance with the servant Elijah, and equally so in Paul's day, and will be just as precious and sought after by the true Israel of God in the evening of time. (Rom. 11:1-5; Heb. 13:8) No other city has been established on such a foundation; all other cities have been builded on the promises of men, and they all have fallen or will fall. This is the only city built on the wisdom and the power of God. God builds it and keeps it, and not

for the sake of any enemy, however formidable they may seem to be, has He ever left it to men to build or to the enemy's great bulwarks in its destruction. It shall stand forever.

Compared to cities of men's building and preservation, it is a little city; compared to men-made cities, it is the smallest, even in numerical strength, as well as in the demeanor of those called into it. (Deut. 7:7) It was referred to by our Saviour as a little flock. (Luke 12:32) It will be noticed that the Shepherd of this flock was pleased not only to have it denominated as the only flock that He had, but that it pleased Him to have it remain for all time as the little flock, and that He called into this city only a few men. Had it pleased Him to have had a numerically strong city, the beauty of the deliverance would have lost its savoriness. It would not have been astounding to men of nature, for the doctrines of men are all built on the false assumption that numbers is the identifying mark of the Kingdom of Heaven. Notice it carefully, dear reader. It was a little city, and just a few men in it. All the powers of God were engaged in the preservation of the ark of our shadowing character that reaches all the way back to the morning of time. Noah was the guiding creator; measuring it all out, putting every piece of material in place, getting it ready for occupancy before it was occupied, and when ready, only his family was called into it. Equally so, no more, no less, only those chosen for preservation in a covenant of grace before the foundation of the world will ever be found dwelling therein. Furthermore, the listing of those whose citizenship is in this city were entered there in eternity. The mathematician that can tell us how old this world is can tell us how long their names have been inscribed in the Builder's book. Every one of these few were written in the Book of Life before the world had a beginning. There has been no erasure nor an addition from that remote day of writing. Only those whose names were then written therein will ever worship God or feel the cleansing effects of His blood or sing the song of deliverance. All others will join hands with the vanquished king and will be found trying to man some of the mighty weapons of warfare that will never make a dent in the ship of Zion nor will ever rob the poor wise Man of His glory.

What does this mean to us? How does it concern us today? Do we have a place in the divine picture of the redeemed hosts of the Lord? Certainly so. The text has been in the sacred archives long before they were set in modern print. The truth in the text has been the basis of every gospel message down through the ages. In the mind and the purpose of Jehovah God the city was set up from all eternity, but made manifest in time by the appearing of Jesus Christ in every assembly gathered together for the worship of Him. People have been in the city down through the ages. They have longed to cross out of the wilderness into the inner courts of the city since time immemorial, and the borders of the city, the royal subjects therein, and most of all, the seeing of guiding hand of the poor wise Man delivered from His poverty into the glory of a crucified and redeeming Saviour has been viewed in awe and wonder. Me thinks, as I have been separated from nativity, as was Father Abraham, that I have seen with him, by eyes of triumphant faith, His day and have been glad indeed of the sight.

However, it has not all been rapture; it has not all been joy. A feeling of despondency has often been the lot of one and all. A threat of being expelled from the city has been ours to feel, and oftimes abject sorrow has flooded our souls, as the Sun of righteousness was hid from our view. (Isa. 45:15) Murmurers have asked, If He is thus such a Deliverer, why does He allow sorrow? They know not what they

speak. If no danger was ever felt by the occupants of the city, what would the deliverance of the poor wise Man mean to us? This felt danger cometh not by accident nor by observation. The tribulations that assail the feeble flock were as much a part of the deliverance as the deliverance itself. One would not have come, nor would it have been needed, had not the other come. Let us remember the poor wise Man, how that all things, even adversity in its deepest die, are interwoven into the robe of righteousness so intricately that none can weave it, nor put it on save it first be woven for us, and we be given the right to wear it, and the Bridegroom put it on us.

No fault will then be found in the poor man. His wisdom will not be challenged. His delivering hand will not be shortened in the hour of deliverance. There will be nothing lacking; there will be no ifs or buts, or other conjunctions raised about the deliverance. The goodness and the beauty of it belongs right now. It is not in heaven, but is all found in heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord. Our business lies at wisdom's gate; our occupation and our conversation is in heaven, and we are hastening hither, walking in and on the highway that the wisdom of our glorious Benefactor built for the occupants of His city to walk in and over. If walking and traveling the highway they are not telling smutty yarns, they are not exposing the errors of fellow travelers, they are not making brethren an offender for a word, they are not engaged in things like unto that. They are talking and speaking oft to one another about the glory of the Kingdom and the power of His saving and deliverance.

In our personal experience the beginning of the siege against the city will never be forgotten. No enemy caused a dark cloud to enter the horizon of the bounds of our vision. That our citadel was subject to attack had never entered our mind, but if it had I felt sure and I am persuaded that my readers felt fully capable of warding off any attack that could be made against our residing place. But unexpectedly, and thus catching us unprepared, an unlooked for attack came. I was challenged, and I had no answer; the standing of my dwelling was called in question. The building began to quake and tremble. There was no safety except what I could provide, and I couldn't provide the first preliminary defense. I fled to Sinai and the fiery indignation of He whose fiery consumation left all of my building material in flames. I had thought it good; I had laid it up for a day like unto that, but it was consumed as chaff in the purging of the floor. (Matt. 3:12)

Yes, I too had never known the wise Man. I, too, had never heard and listened to His voice. The reason for this was that I had not needed Him. I had plenty to trade and traffic in, and, like my counterparts now scattered in the universe, I thought that my offerings were certainly beneficial to the perpetuation of His affairs, and I did not anticipate any trouble along that line. But how deluded I was. As the seige of that hemmed-in starving grew more intense, the more my concern became that, plug holes as I might, our hiding place would fall to the ravaging power of the great King.

The scenes and feelings of fifty-four years ago become more realistic again as I spend time in reminiscing over the deliverance that I felt to hope then, and still feel to hope, is of the Lord. Ah, the gloom of soul that these few men (as compared to those that are in the seige against the city) always have felt when they had not yet been made acquainted with He who works in a quaint and mysterious and out of date manner. There is no deliverance. They do not look for any. In this deplorable condition, whether it is when we are in the beseiged city or when we are on the sea of destruction, we are brought to our wits end. (Psa. 107:27) In the outset we could

steer our fragile barque in any troubled waters; in the beginning of the seige we could handle any situation. He was despised and rejected by us, as by all natural men; His wisdom and His strength was not needed. But dear brethren, dear sisters, dear readers, one and all, every storm ends in a calm. God raises storms that His glory might be magnified. He brings our strength to a nonetity that His strength might be known. The words of this poor wise Man is only heard in quietude. No one would expect quietness to come from within he or she that is about to perish, therefore the seige is broken by He that has all power in heaven and in earth; the storm itself is made a calm; it is made in solitude and in quietude, and then he or she hears the words of His wisdom and His delivering voice; the same words that before the storm arose, before the seige was started, were without power, and without wisdom, now become the wisdom that gives peace and joy and deliverance to fools that one time thought to rule.

(Elder) W. D. Griffin

WITHDRAWN FELLOWSHIP

"My precious Brethren, these are but a few of the reasons why our Particular Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada has WITHDRAWN FELLOWSHIP from your Pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, the Board of Directors and the Associate Editors of the ***Signs of the Times*** according to the commands of Paul in Ephesians 5:11 and in 2 Thessalonians 3:6".

From page 5, letter of Elder Stewart McColl, addressed to "The Pastor, The Deacons and The Members, Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, N.C. Highway No. 700, U.S.A., Route 2, Ruffin, N.C. 27320: dated R.R. #4, Appin, Ontario, Canada, NOL 1AO, February 26, 1981".

The language is plain enough that no explanation seems necessary.

Editors

Listed as follows are the Trustees and Editors referred to above:

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Salisbury, Md.

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Blairs, Va.

OBITUARIES

CHARLES HUGH GOTT

According to the will of an all wise and merciful God, our precious Brother, Charles H. Gott, was called from this life November 16, 1980. He was born April 15, 1930, in Putnam County, W.V. He was the son of Hugh and Oma Gott.

Brother Gott carried a precious hope in his breast for many years, and on July 17, 1977, he was blessed to ask for a home with the Hopewell Primitive Baptist church while at the waters edge on Leading Creek as two others were led into the watery grave. It was my blessed privilege to administer the ordinance of baptism on that day at his

request.

He was burdened to speak of the goodness of God's grace, love, and mercy to His chosen people and was quickly granted permission to preach within the bounds of the Pocatalico Association and this privilege was extended to all churches with whom we correspond on December 3, 1977.

His expression of God's love was sweetly felt within as he spoke, whether it was from the pulpit or in conversation in his home that was always open to his brethren. To know him was to love him and this was evidenced by the many comforting messages and expressions of sympathy received from coast to coast. We feel it can be said of him, "Well done, good and faithful servant".

On December 24, 1953, he was married to Patsy Slater, who along with the family patiently cared for him during a lingering illness.

He leaves to mourn his wife, Patsy; one daughter, Sharlee; his Mother, Orma; one sister, Lucinda; two grandchildren, and a host of friends.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Willard Bird and Elder V. B. Linn at the Gaten Funeral Home at Poca, W.V. on November 18, 1980. He was laid to rest in the McClanahan Cemetery to await his Heavenly Father's call in that glorious resurrection.

Elder V. B. Linn

BROTHER NOEL J. DALTON

It pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst Brother Noel J. Dalton on Oct. 9, 1980 in Roanoke Hospital at age 74. He was born in Pittsylvania County on April 1, 1906 the son of the late Robert Dalton and Octovia Dalton.

He leaves to mourn his passing one brother, Tillman K. Dalton of Vinton, Va.

Brother Noel was received into the fellowship of Weatherford Primitive Baptist church on April 14, 1974 and was baptized by his beloved pastor, Elder O. K. Tench on April 28, 1974. He was faithful to attend his meeting but had been unable to attend for some time.

Funeral services were conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on October 11, 1980 by his pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and Elder Leonard Brammer.

His body was laid to rest in the Church Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

Brother Noel will be greatly missed by his family and brethern and friends. May we all be reconciled to God's will.

Written by: Marvin Brumfield
Moderator: O. K. Tench
Clerk: L. H. Doss

ROSA HARRELL

We, Old Sparta Primitive Baptist Church, deeply feel the loss of our friend and sister, Rosa Harrell. The Lord called her Spirit home on September 10, 1980.

She was born to the late Wesley Owens and Katie Bridgers on September 20, 1897 in Edgecombe County, making her stay on this earth 83 years. She was married on January 7, 1914, to the late Brother Thomas Harrell. To this union was born 6 children. Two daughters preceded her in death leaving three daughters: Sister Agnes Hathaway, Box 170, Macclesfield, N.C.; Mrs. Beulah Deans, Macclesfield, N.C.; Mrs. Beatrice Owens, Wilson, N.C.; and one son, Lane Harrell, Rocky mount, N.C.

Sister Harrell united with the Church at Old Sparta in April, 1927, and was blessed to be a humble and faithful Sister for 53 years and 4 months. She will be missed by her family, friends, and her church. She attended meetings whenever possible. She was a beloved member and a devoted mother. She had much sufferings and afflictions to bear and bore them patiently.

Funeral services were held at Carlisle Chapel by her Pastor, Elder Joe Sawyer, assisted by Elder Henry Jones. She was laid to rest in Macclesfield Cemetery, beside Brother Harrell, under a mound of beautiful flowers and in the presence of a host of friends and relatives.

Old Sparta Church extends deepest sympathy to the family and friends.

May she rest in peace.

Be it resolved: Three copies of this Resolution be made: one for Church record, one for ***Signs of the Times*** for publication and one to be sent to her family.

Done by order of Conference 4th Saturday in September, 1980.

Elder Joe Sawyer, Moderator
Gladys Edwards, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 65 Keeling, Va. 24566

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 6/81 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING DAN RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

The Lord willing, a fifth Sunday meeting will be held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, near Mayfield, N.C., Sunday, May 31, 1981, beginning at 10:00 A.M.

The meeting, though being held at Dan River, will be participated in by a number of other independent churches.

An invitation is extended to ministers, brethren, and friends to meet with us.

Elder D. V. Spangler
Pastor, Dan River Church

EZEKIEL 37:15-17

"The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions; and join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand".

Let us now consider what has gone before in the preceeding chapters of this book of Ezekiel and see if we, by the grace of God, might see the continuity of the word and covenant of God. Yes, even from the beginning unto the end. In the preceeding chapters the Lord has appeared unto Ezekiel and taught him of the false shepherds; teaching him of

the shepherds who do not feed the flock, but instead feed themselves. In Chapter 34, verse 8 He says, "As I live, saith the Lord God, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock; Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord;" Can we not see in the world today those who, in name only, feed the sheep but actually are feeding themselves? Yea, they feed on providential gain for themselves, they feed upon the weakness of the poor and needy, the widows and the orphans, and any others that will listen to them. Yea, they glory in high living not only providentially, but they glory in their own pride, vanity, and self-righteousness. They are trying to be recognized by man and even trying to leave a legacy for themselves after death. Is it not a sad thing when we see in our churches today these very things happening? Would it not have been sad if the Lord our God had left things right there and there would never have been any other type of shepherd? I trust herein lies the true sweetness of the text of this matter. When He came in the word again to Ezekiel saying, "Take thee one stick for Judah and take thee one stick for Joseph", I believe He was pointing to the great Shepherd to come, yea, the chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ, and the two sticks represent first the old covenant, and the new covenant.

The taking of the two sticks in Ezekiel's hand was a type and shadow of the power invested in the hand of the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ; our Saviour who was yet to come and who fulfilled the old covenant to a jot and a tittle and who was and is the new covenant sure and steadfast. Ah yes, when Ezekiel was given instructions to take the two sticks in one hand and they became one, it was just as Jesus Christ fulfilled the old covenat and is the new covenant fulfilled to a jot and a tittle. Yea, just as sure as the curtain of time was raised, just that sure will every bit of the new covenant be, and in the mind and purpose of God has already been fulfilled according to His own good will and pleasure. Even though Judah and Joseph were both Jews, I believe that the two sticks also represent both the Jew and the Gentile. Why? He says the stick of Judah shall have the children of Israel for his companions. Yes, the natural Jew, the unbelieving Jew, and all the Adamic race of unbelievers because he said that Joseph for his companions would have all the house of Israel. Did not Jesus say, "All that claim to be of Israel are not of Israel"? Does not the all of the house of Israel embrace the same all as was in the election and adoption of His children? In John 10:16 He says, "Other sheep have I which are not of this fold". In Joshua 14:4 He says, "The children of Joseph were two tribes". Not only did the Lord show Ezekiel the false shepherd, but also showed to him the duty of a good shepherd and the power invested in the great Shepherd.

Here we have come through three or four chapters of the Bible relating to the shepherds, both good and bad. Can you not see that in speaking of a chief shepherd that surely there must be under shepherds? Can you not see the power of God manifested before the very eyes of the Prophet when the dry bones assembled themselves and yea, were even covered with flesh, then skin and new life came into them. Now, can you believe for one moment that there would be a shepherd, or any necessity for one without there being a flock of sheep for him to attend? Just as sure as you live the sheep were there and will continue to be there for all time and eternity. Can you not see that the power of God was being manifested before the very eyes of Ezekiel and that power being shown to be placed in the hands of the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ? Wouldn't it have

been sad if the Lord had left it right here? The continuity of the workings of Almighty God does not stop here. These two sticks, Oh, how powerful they are.

To continue the working of the two sticks let us look yet to another incident; that of the cross - two sticks. Yes, the cross of Calvary was composed of two sticks, and the Lord and Saviour was given power over the cross. He says, "They take not my life from me, but I lay down my life" for my sheep. Yea, the same all of the house of Israel spoken about some 570 years or more before to Ezekiel is the same people, His children, His sheep, for which He had laid down His life. He said, "I know my sheep. I call them by name and they do follow me".

To continue on, we find more sticks placed in the hands of the Saviour. Was not love and mercy of God embraced in those two sticks? Aren't you glad that God in His mercy shed His love upon us even before we ever were? And that our hope lies in the sweetness of the fact that God in His time and in His way shows us a little glimpse of the sweetness, if only for a little season. Aren't you glad to believe in, and have a hope in, a God that would not put His people here without a shepherd and that He would have prepared a sanctuary for them. Oh, No! He did not prepare a bed of roses here in this life, but He did prepare a place in the life to come, as we continue on to place the sticks in His hand. We now have the old covenant and the new covenant; and we have the Jew and the Gentile embraced therein. We have the cross of Calvary and we have His love and mercy. You would think that sufficient, but oh, no; we find embraced in the two sticks death and the grave, and thanks be unto God, the same power over death and the grave is in the hand of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. How sad it would have been if He had to wait until some man made up his mind to help Him out of the grave. How sad to think that the world believes God can go only so far and the rest is up to man to accept or reject. Can you not see the power of God in the triumph over death and the grave? Wouldn't it be sad if it were left right there?

The Saviour was given yet another two sticks, the power to ascend into the heavens and to come again to receive His own. Yes, at His appointed time He will return once again to receive His own and to raise them up to be forever with Him in heaven and immortal glory. We can only say that truth and justice was given into His hand at the very same instance. Yea, all power, both in heaven and in earth was given him. Does your hope not lie in the belief that in the last day, when He has triumphed over the last of His enemies, which is death, that He will make manifest to His people that they truly are sheep and not goats. The Shepherd and the under-shepherds were sent to feed the sheep and not to make sheep out of goats. The sheep will be gathered on the right hand and the goats on the left. The sheep will hear the words, "Come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world". As the Psalmist said, "In my father's house are many mansions". Notice that it says there are many mansions. May each of you rest in the hope of this power is my prayer.

(Elder) B. J. McLaughlin

Kernesville, N.C.

UNITY AMONG THE BRETHREN

I desire so much to see all of the Primitive Baptist that love each other, and that stand for discipline and order as practiced by the Apostles show godly sorrow and be humble enough to forgive their brethren for their trespasses and mistakes and take down their bars that have been set up by men to divide lovely brethren. It is wrong, and if we could be blessed to thoroughly examine ourselves and see what we are by nature, and what we must be by the grace of God

to inherit the kingdom of God; we would be willing and glad to forgive our brethren if we have the love of God in our hearts. There will never be any peace among the Primitive Baptist as long as bars are set up to divide them. I understand that there are some claiming to be Primitive Baptists that are going from place to place sowing seeds of discord among the brethren. Some of them are going under the title of an elder. If they had the love of God in their hearts they would be striving for peace instead of discord. The scripture teaches us to mark them that cause division among us and avoid them. Brethren, why can't we live together in peace? Christ said, "Little children, love one another as I have loved you." If we forgive not our brother for his trespasses, neither will our Heavenly Father forgive us for ours in this world or in the world to come.

Therefore we should be careful not to offend one of God's little ones. I hope that I love God's little ones wherever they are.

I desire your prayers and may God bless us to strive for peace.

Gilmer L. Williard

COMMENT

If we understand Brother Williard correctly, we endorse his view that many of the bars that exist among us should come down. We, personally, know of good brethren who are apart and can give ***not one*** reason for it, except that to risk fellowship with those they are divided from might bring censure from theirs, or sister Associations. Brethren, these things ought not to exist. Had we not rather obey God than men?

Our ranks are getting thin. Have we been biting and devouring one another? (Gal. 5:15) See James 4:1, 11; I Pet. 2:21-23; I John 3:11-16.

One of the peculiar things about divisions and bars among us is that very often the parties that set up bars are in some manner guilty of the very things over which they first (supposedly) raised their bars.

We contend that churches ought not recognize ***any*** bar of fellowship unless and until the complaining party can clearly show that the accused party has violated the commands of our Lord as contained in the gospel, and further that the complaining party has exhausted all scriptural means to gain back the accused party.

These are the brief views of only one of the Editors of the ***Signs of the Times*** and should not be understood otherwise. We feel strongly, however, that this is the decided view of the great majority of our brethren everywhere.

We would be glad to hear the view of other brethren on this point.

(Elder) James F. Poole

MR. HUNTINGTON'S EXPLANATION OF Hebrews 6:4-8

Our correspondent having redeemed his pledge to send us Mr. Huntington's explanation of Heb. 6:4-8, we have the pleasure of now inserting it. We believe it is one of "The Epistles of Faith". And we must say that we never read any explanation of the passage so convincing and so satisfactory. The Doctor has handled the subject like a master in Israel, and, in his usual felicitous way, has combined brevity and fulness, strength with clearness scripture with experience, and faithfulness with tenderness.

The Editors of The Gospel Standard

Sir,--I received yours, and, in compliance with your request, I send you my thoughts upon the subject; but at the same time I must inform you, that none but God can give you an answer of peace. The priest's lips are to keep knowledge, and we are to require the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts. (Mal. 2:7) This great High Priest, Prophet, and Apostle of our profession is the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom we are to go, and of whom we are to seek wisdom. He giveth liberally, and

upbraideth not; and there is none that teacheth like him. But now for the words: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened". A man may be enlightened, as Balaam was, who saw the vision of the Almighty, whilst in a trance, having his eyes open. The Lord came to him first at Pethor; and he afterwards saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way with his drawn sword in his hand. He saw likewise the safety of Israel under the blessing of God and his counsel, and that God was not a changeable Being. He saw that Israel should never be reckoned among the nations, but remain a distinct people, even when dispersed throughout the world. He saw the destruction of Amalek, etc., and the blessed death of the righteous, and wished that his last end might be like theirs. The eye of a man's understanding is one thing, and the eye of faith is another. By the former, the rich man in hell saw Abraham afar off, saints are assured of their interest in partakers of the Holy Ghost in no other and embraced them. By the former, a man sees the blessed state of others; by the latter, he sees his own state. Balaam saw God for others, but not for himself. Job says, "I shall see him for myself, and not for another". Balaam never saw the desperate evil that there is in sin, nor the spirituality of the law, nor the Lord as a Saviour, but as an angry Judge with a drawn sword, in which character every eye shall see him in the great day. The Lord shone into Balaam's head, he shone into Paul's heart. He opened the eyes of Balaam, but he opened the heart of Lydia. Balaam saw a sword; Paul saw an atonement. Balaam saw a Judge; Paul saw a Saviour. Balaam and the Egyptians saw God for Israel; Job saw God for himself.

If thou art enlightened, thou hast seen sin; but hast thou ever seen and felt the killing evil of sin? Thou hast been enlightened to see the word, which is a light shining in a dark place, but has the day dawn and day star arisen in thy heart? If enlightened, thou hast seen the spirituality of the law; but hast thou seen and felt the dreadful havock it makes by working wrath in the conscience? and have the sight and sense of this made thee flee to Christ for refuge, in whose face we see the light of the knowledge of the glory of God? If the light of faith shines into a man's heart, whatever that man sees, he applies sooner or later. By faith he sees the promises, and by faith he applies them. By faith he comes to Christ, and by faith he receives him. He views the atonement, and pardon is the effect of the vision. Imputed righteousness is revealed, and peace is the fruit of it as soon as applied. Eternal life is the gift of God, and by the gospel it is brought to light. "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself"; faith applies the word of reconciliation, while friendship and fellowship are felt and enjoyed.

"And have tasted the heavenly gift". By this is meant, not Christ, nor eternal life, nor the gift of faith, nor repentance, for the gifts and calls of God are without repentance, but I think a spiritual gift such as the Corinthians were zealous of (I Cor. 14:12) is chiefly intended, a gift of prophecy, or a ministerial gift to preach, attended with a reformation, zeal, and a gift of utterance, which things have a relish in them for a carnal heart; yea, the possessor of this gift tastes a sweetness in it because it procures much applause from men, which is the sweetest morsel that can be given to an unrenewed, unhumbled man. He delights in his gift because it procures him the praise of men; he tastes the former, and fills his belly with the latter, for he loves the praise of men more than the praise of God. But this tasting differs widely from what is called eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ, which is peculiar to believers, and it is by this they live for ever.

"And were made partakers of the Holy Ghost". Not that the Holy Ghost ever took possession of their hearts, so as to become a spring of living water there; for the above-mentioned persons were not partakers of eternal life; nor had they received the first fruits of the spirit; neither had the testimony of the Spirit been applied to their conscience, nor his grace to their hearts; nor had they received the impression of his ratifying, confirming, sealing power, by which the saints are assured of their interest in Christ. These things accompany salvation, and are the first fruits, pledges, and earnests of future glory. The characters here named are made partakers of the Holy Ghost in no other sense than was Balaam or Saul; the Spirit of God came upon them both, and they both prophesied. This is a spiritual gift; and there are divers spiritual gifts, but all of the Holy Spirit. It is he that divides them to every man severally as he will. He gave utterance both to Saul and Balaam, and it was by him they spoke and prophesied. (I Cor. 12)

"And have tasted the good word of God". As Herod, who heard John gladly; and the Jews, who rejoiced in his light for a season; and the wayside hearers, who hear the word, and anon with joy received it. They were pleased with the sound, amazed at the light and understanding of the preacher, admired the fluency of his speech, and were charmed with the heavenly tidings brought forth; and all this time they found no opposition, either from the law, conscience, Satan, or the carnal enmity of their own hearts, to these things; therefore, they received the word with joy, and sprang up into a warm, zealous, joyful profession. But when temptations and persecutions came because of the word, they withered away as fast as they sprang up, which fulfills the saying of the wise man: "An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning, but the end thereof shall not be blessed". It is not enought to taste the good word of God. Ezekiel ate the roll, John ate the little book; Jeremiah found the word and ate it, and it was to him the rejoicing of his heart. "My word," says Christ, "is spirit, and my word is life". But he says to the Jews, "I know you that my word hath no place in you"; it is not in your heart, affections and conscience. They did not receive the truth in the love of it, nor the love of the truth, and therefore it is no wonder if strong delusions are sent, and they are given up to believe a lie. In short, these persons could have no more than a natural faith, and as to their joy, it sprang from natural affections; for the love of God, the root of the matter, they had not; it was for want of this root that they withered away.

"And the powers of the world to come". By this I understand the power of working miracles. There were in those days numbers of persons who had spiritual gifts of healing, working miracles, speaking with tongues, etc., and the Saviour tells us that many will say unto him in that day, "We have prophecied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and done many wonderful works", but these he will never own as his people. It is not what man does for God that saves him, but what God does for man; not man's wonderful works, but God's free grace. This power of working miracles may be called "the powers of the world to come" because it is a divine power, sent from heaven and from God himself, who displays his power and glory there; and by these wonderful works he displays his power on earth. These miracles produce amazement, astonishment, and wonder in those who see them performed, on which account they may be called "the powers of the world to come"; for in that world everything will appear miraculous, wonderful, and astonishing beyond all conception. Moreover, it was common among the Jews in days of old to call the days of the Messiah "the world to come"; and Isaiah foretold many wonderful things

of a miraculous nature that were to be performed by the Messiah, such as making the lame to leap like a hart, and the tongue of the dumb to sing. These miraculous operations were by the Jews called the powers of the world to come; and these miracles were wrought by many who will not be saved, as I have before shown. True joy springs from the manifestation of Christ in the heart: "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you". This manifestation produces pardon and peace, the experience of which worketh hope, and the soul rejoices in hope of the glory of God; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, which is the root of all real joy.

My dear sir, did you ever know what it was to abhor yourself in dust and ashes? Did you ever mourn in private under a sense of your lost estate, and the wrath to which sin hath exposed you? Were you ever bowed down under the intolerable burden of guilt, and the fear of death? If this ever was your case, to whom did you apply? How did you get rid of your troubles, or where did you leave your burden? Christ says, "I will give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." If this is your experience, your joy is the joy of the Lord. The faith of those who for a while believed, sprang from a conviction in the mind of the supernatural power of Christ, as displayed in his miracles. "When they saw the miracles that he did, many believed in him;" but when those performances were over, their natural convictions sank, and as persecutions attended their profession, their natural conscience failed, and they fell away. The faith of God's elect purifies the heart, by bringing the atonement home; it lays hold of the righteousness of Christ, and puts it on; it leads the soul to Jesus, and works by love to him; it attends prayer, and brings answers from God; it is very busy under a sermon; it mixes faith with the word, and applies the promises; while God fills the soul with joy and peace in believing. In short, if thou art a real believer, thou hast had a share of persecution and temptation, to try thy faith, as well as they; and, if these have not withered thy profession, it is a plain proof that thy faith is not natural. Farewell.

I remain, thy willing servant,
W. H.

The Gospel Standard
August 1843

A COMMENTARY ON THE LIFE OF SISTER MAUD TRUITT LAWS

Ordinarily, the record of one's life and the details thereof are written in the form of an obituary, after the subject has departed this life and gone to his eternal destiny. On this day, February 8, 1981, I would, if the Lord will guide my pen, write such a treatise concerning a precious sister who is very much alive, alert, and reasonably active. The subject is our beloved Sister Maud T. Laws, who as of this day has lived in this world one hundred and one (101) years.

As one who has known and been associated with her rather intimately, I would testify to the assertion that her life has been and is more than remarkable. By any standards, it has been extraordinary.

Sister Maud, as we lovingly call her, was born on February 8, 1880, the daughter of Elisha Sampson and Della Powell Truitt, near Powellville, Wicomico County, Maryland. As a child she attended the local school and after the family moved to Salisbury, she attended and graduated from Wicomico High School. On October 3, 1910, she married Victor H. Laws with Elder Thomas M. Poulson officiating, and from this marriage, a daughter, Margaret (Mrs. George) Engle and a

son, Victor H. Laws, Jr., were born. On August 30, 1946, after nearly thirty-six years of a remarkably happy marriage, their life together was terminated by his death. She has also three devoted grandsons and one granddaughter.

Sister Maud is a very gracious, loving person, and she is surrounded by a most devoted family who counts it a privilege to minister unto her. Her many brethren as well as her present and former pastors hold her in the very highest esteem and although she has outlived just about all of her contemporaries, she has an almost innumerable host of friends, old and young, who treasure her friendship. She truly is an inspiration to many people of all ages and we who have known her so long and so well feel deeply grateful for having been closely associated with her.

But it is not so much Sister Maud's natural qualities, lovely as they are, that I would stress. It is rather of the mighty work wrought within her that I would speak, to the end that He who wrought this great work might be exalted.

Early in life, Sister Maud was blest "to know whom she believed" and to discern between false doctrine and the doctrine of salvation by and through the sacrificial offering of the Saviour of sinners. Around the time of her 26th birthday, she became deeply burdened to confess her Lord to the Church and before men and to cast her lot with them "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt" (the world). She has told me many times that her burden became so heavy that she felt she would die if she continued to tarry. Accordingly, on Saturday afternoon, July 28, 1906, she spoke to the Church at Salisbury, of which her father was a member, asking for an abiding place with them. She related a touching account of the Lord's work within her and she was joyfully received. At this time her mother also asked for a home in the church and was received, and together they were baptized by Elder Silas H. Durand, pastor of the Church at Salisbury.

This memorable event came to pass nearly seventy-five years ago and although she was an attractive and popular young girl of a rather prominent family and undoubtedly had many friends in the more popular churches and probably many temptations, she never for one small moment wavered in "the faith once delivered to the saints" or desired to abandon her affiliation to follow the popular crowd.

Through the years, Sister Maud served the Church at Salisbury at Clerk, as Treasurer, and as a good counsellor. For many years she was clerk of our Association. She was made joyfully thankful when, in July, 1971, her beloved son, Victor, Jr., asked to be and was joyfully received as a member of the Church at Salisbury and baptized by our beloved former pastor, Elder David V. Spangler, Brother Victor was appointed to the office of deacon soon after his reception into the Church. He is an excellent counsellor not only at law but also as a deacon, serving judiciously and as his mother always did, striving for peace. All of us feel very deeply that Margaret, the daughter, is one of us. We firmly believe she loves the truth and its blessed Author, as well as the Church and Her glorious head.

Sister Maud, although her physical hearing is greatly impaired by reason of age, looks forward eagerly to the meetings, and unless she is ill or the weather extreme, she is there. One of her greatest pleasures is in mingling with the brethren and speaking together of the things "most surely believed among us". I recall the many, many sweet visits both in my home and in her beautiful home, whose doors have always opened wide to her brethren and friends. Our

theme was always Jesus - His humiliation, His exaltation, and "His great love wherewith He loved us". The theme of themes!!

I think Sister Maud's most outstanding attributes are love and compassion. A brother recently told a friend that if Sister Maud had an acquaintance who had ninety-five faults and five virtues, she would stress the five and minimize the ninety-five. Another is her contending for peace - peace in the Church, peace in her family, and elsewhere.

A number of outstanding ministers have served the Church at Salisbury during the period of Sister Maud's membership, the first being Elder Silas H. Durand, then Elder Aaron B. Francis, Elder J. Corder Mellott, Elder G. Edwin Coulbourne, Elder David V. Spangler, Elder W. D. Griffin, and presently Elder James F. Poole. Her memory is excellent for her age and she can remember and at times has entertained in her home many of the spiritual stalwarts of our faith and order, such as Elder William Beebe, Elder F. A. Chick, Elders George and Joseph Staton, Elder Silas H. Durand, Elder Eubanks, Elder Horace Lefferts, and others whose names I cannot at the moment recall. Most of these, or a least some of them took part in the momentous division between the Old School or Primitive and the New School or Missionary persuasions.

I may be mistaken, but at least so far as I know, Sister Maud Laws is the only one of our people living today who has lived to reach this age and to have been a member of the church so many years. I might add that there are comparatively few who have lived a more fruitful life than she. Long after she will have departed this life, the memory of her steadfast faith, her clear testimony, and her Christian character will stand as a monument to the mercy and grace of God so freely bestowed on His people. Far, far better such a memorial than any multi-thousand dollar structure of stone or marble that man can erect and which will "perish with the using". Far, far more to be desired the heritage she will leave for her children and grandchildren than a vast fortune consisting of houses and lands, stocks and bonds, or silver and gold, which can and may vanish in a moment of time.

In conclusion, I most emphatically repeat that it is not Sister Maud whom I would revere and extol, dear as she is, nor would she want me to. It is "Christ in her, the Hope of glory." Hallowed forever and forever by His dear Name!

Written at the request of our dear pastor, Elder James F. Poole, by a sister to whom Sister Maud Laws is very dear.

Mildred V. Dykes

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708 N. Casa Grande Circle
Duncanville, Texas 75116
February 4, 1981

THE HORNET

"And I sent the hornet before you, which drave them out from before you, even the two kings of the Amorites, but not with thy sword, nor with thy bow."
--Joshua 24:12

Some critics enjoy calling many of the preacher brethren "extreme" on the doctrine of predestination merely because these minsiters are neither afraid nor ashamed to say publicly that God predestinated and controls the whereabouts and activities of chiggers, fleas, flies, gnats, blades of grass, and fallen leaves. These critics have devoted much time and effort to speculating about where God's predestination begins and ends (as if predestination were a timely thing with a beginning or an end) and whether or not God's knowing about something before it happens is really about all there is to predestination.

Now, dear reader, please think about this for a moment: Shall semi-predestinarians be allowed to speculate and we not? Shall their speculation be

permissible while our speculation must be labeled too speculative? (What is meant by "semi-predestinarian" is this: "Semi-", Webster says, means, "approximately half, partly, not more than half, in low degree, only partly, incompletely." Thus a semi-predestinarian would be the one who is "partly" or approximately--but not more than half--predestinarian. We have all met him. He is the one who says he believes God just predestinated the good things.) Well, what is about to be advanced here is not nearly as speculative as a semi-predestinarian's speculating about what is important enough for God to predestinate and what is so unimportant that God will not predestinate it. The semi-predestinarian critics attack God Himself with their speculations, while the speculations herein will be confined, we trust, to speculating about the conclusions of the semi-predestinarian's speculations.

First, then, is there not cause to wonder if the critics genuinely think it is any more difficult for God to send a chigger crawling up someone's leg nowadays than it was for Him to turn the Egyptian dust into lice in the day of Moses, or for Him to drive out the Canaanites by sending the hornet before Joshua's troops? Indeed, where does the insignificant end and the significant begin? What is important and what is unimportant in this life? Who is to judge, and how are we to know in any given circumstance? Condemned murderers, escaping for their very lives into the Everglades, have been driven back into the waiting arms of the law, not by bloodhounds and shotguns, but by mosquitoes and chiggers. A person could die from the accumulated poison of too many chigger bites or mosquito bites. Some people have died from the stings of bees, wasps and hornets which other people would consider "insignificant." God has appointed each person's time to die; will God consider the details of that death too insignificant to bother about?

But, if God cannot or does not control chiggers (according to the semi-predestinarian's theory) and man certainly cannot control them, then it is very doubtful that angels or devils control them, either. We know that, when given leave by God to do so, devils sometimes control hogs, because of what they did in the case of the demoniac of Gadara; but the critics, bless their hearts, would no doubt say hogs are far more important than chiggers. Being big and important as hogs are, the semi-predestinarian critic would figure God and devils could control hogs, but God would not waste his time controlling a chigger or a hornet, because He is too busy running what the semi-predestinarian considers to be the "important" things and the "good" things in the universe.

The situation reduces to this, then: If the semi-predestinarian's theory is correct, then either chiggers must control themselves or else they must go uncontrolled. But, if either of these positions were correct, there would immediately be serious trouble in the universe.

Suppose it were true that God did not control chiggers and that chiggers controlled themselves. Just for a moment's speculation (we are entitled to it, as we have long endured the speculations of semi-predestinarians), suppose that these chiggers in control of themselves, poison and all, all attacked a man several years before his time to die had come; and they attacked him in sufficient numbers to poison him to death or at least make him scratch himself to death? There would be nothing to prevent millions of chiggers in full control of themselves from killing multitudes of people before their time, would there? For, what could stop them? If you cannot stand on a mountain-side and stop one boulder from rolling over you, how can you control an avalanche of millions of boulders? The problem is the same with the chiggers: If one

chigger cannot be controlled, what is to stop millions of them? All of which would mean that chiggers, billions of chiggers, as "insignificant" as they are individually, could nevertheless collectively cause people to die before their time. This would lead to the conclusion that a man's appointed time to die is very insignificant indeed, less significant than a chigger, if God's appointment could be thrown off schedule by something too insignificant for God to be concerned about while He was busy controlling "the good things" according to the semi-predestinarian's way of looking at things.

Now, if the appointments of God could be thus rendered insignificant, null and void by a few measly chiggers in complete control of themselves, then why would it not make good sense for the semi-predestinarian to worship a chigger as his god? If those semi-predestinarians who are ashamed of the word "absolute-- in the phrase "absolute predestination" would do this, admitting that they worship and serve the creature more than the Creator who is blessed forever, this would be fine, if they would just go on and do it and not try to bother, hinder, attack and criticize the preacher brethren who have the God-given grit, grace and gumption to preach predestination as it is.

Again, if a chigger is too unimportant for God to bother with, but enough of them could upset His appointments, then why could not other unimportant things combine to upset other appointments made by God? Job could never have said that God "performeth the thing that is appointed for me, and many such things are with Him," had he been a semi-predestinarian; nor could Paul have said, "No man should be moved by these afflictions, for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto," if he were of that non-absolute predestination persuasion. The ones to whom Paul wrote knew more than a semi-predestinarian knows, because semi-predestinarians do not know that God has appointed His children to afflictions. Would there be any end to insignificant things interrupting God's appointments, until He could not get anything done, if the critics had their way? So, the semi-predestinarian logically would have to worship only the things which he reasons are too lowly for God's consideration and predestination because in the end it would be these insignificant things which would triumph over God in the end, according to such reasoning.

Pursuing Paul's statement a bit further, would the semi-predestinarian also say that some of God's appointments are important enough that they must be kept, while other appointments of God are not? Because, if such a person exists that could tell a child of grace how to avoid an affliction to which he is appointed (I Thess. 3:3), then he could just as easily show the child of grace how to avoid the salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ to which he is also appointed (I Thess. 5:9); for, how could it be possible to thwart one of God's appointments but not another? The issue is that serious! And, make no mistake about it; we all meet people every day that avow they believe a person can die before his time if he misbehaves, and he can avoid afflictions if he will just behave right. If the market places do not abound with such folks, I have not written a word of truth.

Now, about the hornet. God controls hornets. Joshua said God controls hornets to the extend that God sent the hornet before Israel and the hornet drove out the two kings of the Amorites from before Joshua and Israel. Joshua and Israel did not do it with sword and bow; God did it with the hornets.

We sometimes hear it said that someone "stirred up a hornet's nest." This usually means that someone made

a group of folks angry, angry enough to attack and to sting. It is interesting to see who gets angry when predestination is set forth clearly by our preacher brethren, or who gets their stinger up when someone exposes the semi-predestinarian who says, "I believe in predestination, BUT I don't believe God is concerned with controlling little things like where a leaf falls, or things like chiggers, gnats, fleas and flies."

Now, if pointing out such simple things stirs up a hornet's nest, so be it, but, WHO SENDS THE HORNET? Would God send it in Joshua's day but leave it for others to send in the twentieth century? For my part I thoroughly doubt He would, as I am persuaded that the True and Living God changes not.

It is for reasons like this that I rejoice to meet with others who are of the persuation that GOD DOETH ALL THINGS WELL!

In hope of life in Christ,
(Elder) C. C. Morris

FROM NEW MEXICO

Dear Editors of the Signs,

I am sending the money for another year of the ***Signs.*** I will be 80 years old the 20th of November. It is hard for me to read, I bought a magnifying glass and that helps. I look forward to the ***Signs*** coming each month, and I have for over 50 years. When my husband was here he read the Bible and discussed it, which I enjoyed. I have no one to converse with on the Bible now. There are no Hardshell Baptists in New Mexico. We have gone to different parts of the state after people would tell us that there were Primitive Baptists there, but they were not as we believe. I was so sorry to hear of Brother Lambert's death. We have visited with them in their home, and he has visited with us in our home.

If it be the Lord's will, I will continue to read the ***Signs of the Times.***

Mrs. James A. Bell

And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand and when ye turn to the left. (Isa. 30:21)

As I endeaver to write something from this text, I would pray that the Lord guide my every thought, for I often turn to the left or right and do not follow the straight and narrow path when left to myself: and invariably I go wrong and fall into many traps and errors. I would desire to pray as David, Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.

We know there are many ways to use the word 'walk', but it is my desire to apply it as 'a way of life'. The things that we think, the things we say, the things we do, and the attitude toward these, formulate our walk before men and God. It is of variable importance to each of us what our neighbors and friends think of us, and, because of our vanity, we sometimes say and do things to improve our image or esteem in the eyes of others for false reasons. When we do this, we turn out of the way and are not walking as we should before our Maker. We may deceive our fellowman, but God is never deceived, for He knows our thoughts and intents of our hearts from afar. There is not a word in our tongue that our Lord does not know before we ever speak it. This is what causes the children of the Heavenly Father to fear, and desire to walk before Him in truth and humbleness. It is only His people who desire to walk righteous in His sight, and they are the only ones who hear, "This is the way, walk ye in it." In my youth I was taught that if I would walk in the straight and narrow way I would find Jesus and walk thru those Pearly Gates with him. But I found that I could not walk in a way that I knew nothing about. I did not know Jesus,

therefore I did not know the way, nor the truth, nor the life. It may be that I do not know him now, but at times my heart rejoices in the hope that I believe he has given me. I was also taught a system of works, and I applied myself vigorously, expecting to be saved and blessed for doing these good works. Naturally my efforts were for naught, and eventually I was made to see what a great sinner I am and that all of my works of selfrighteousness is as filthy rags in His sight. Every child of grace is brought to this knowledge at some point in his life; and from that time forward he constantly begs for mercy. He is made to realize that if he is saved it is by grace thru faith; and that if he has this faith it is not of himself, but is a gift of God. Consider the two thieves who were crucified with Christ. Had either done any good thing that he could plead before God? One of them railed on Christ and said, If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us. But the other was made to see in that last hour that he was justly condemned, and pleaded for mercy: Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. You know the answer Christ gave. And this is the way every child of grace feels when he is made to know that he is justly condemned.

But there is a vast difference between selfrighteous works and works of faith. James tells us that faith without works is dead. The work that Abraham did in offering up his son was a work of faith. He believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness. On the other hand, Saul thought he was doing great works for God as he went about persecuting the church. This was the works of the flesh and a carnal mind, but on the road to Damascus he was taught a great lesson. When that light from heaven shined round about him, he fell to the earth and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? He had been working in the name of One he had never known. It seems to me that is what most of the world is doing today. We should never criticize them for their belief, but have compassion. Remember who maketh us to differ. It is these same people, however, that charge that Old School or Hardshell Baptists are a 'do nothing' people; but I do not believe this for one moment. God's people will do every good work appointed unto them; For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. As surely as God hath ordained our works, we will walk in them; for His word returneth not to Him void, but it shall accomplish that which pleases Him, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto he sent it.

God's children walk by faith, not by sight. They are blessed to work, not for working; and they are blessed to hear the joyful sound, 'This is the way, walk ye in it.' And, Blessed is the people that hear the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.

There was a time when you were dead in trespasses and sin, and walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: but God, who is rich in mercy, has quickened you. You are no longer in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. If you are in the spirit, you will walk in the spirit and not in the flesh. Paul tells us, There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. However, there is always conflict between the flesh and the Spirit; they are contrary one to the other so that you cannot do the things that you would. Therefore, as Paul admonishes us, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh. What are the works of the flesh? Adultry, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, emulations,

wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkeness, revellings, and all such things. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, peace, joy, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Brethren, let us heed Paul's admonition: If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

Brethern, I ask you to accept this only as far as you find it to be in accord with the Holy Scriptures. May God bless you to hear His word, This is the way, walk ye in it.

Your prayers of faith are greatly needed and desired.

Clifford Wilbanks

EXPERIENCE

Blaire, Va.
January 17, 1981

For over twenty three years I have had a burden to record for the household of faith and for my children to know what I hope the Lord has caused my very soul to feel and experience. I was highly blessed before I was born for the Lord to predetermine that I would have parents that were of that chosen generation of Jesus Christ. O what principles of moral character, honesty and a Godly walk they did set forth for their seven children to follow. What a blessing to be raised in a home that had as our principle visitors the Lord's people. I then respected these people and admired their sincerity and love for one another but I had not the love for them that I have since I hope I have been taught the truth.

My dear wife joined Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church about two years before me and the most of those two years I was, it seemed, continually under such a strong desire to join that I would cry often when leaving the church without joining and yet could not feel I had enough evidence that I could join without being a deceiver. After 23 years, I still have the fear that I am a mistaken person in my hope of that gift of faith and eternal life in Christ.

My first trouble religiously came as an arrow into my heart when I saw myself as comparable to my swine I was raising. I was shown I was wallowing in mud and filth and in the sight of God was no better than the swine. In trying to live better, I was shown by various experiences that I was weak, very weak, and that all of my efforts were as filthy rags in the sight of a righteous God. I knew that I was undeserving of Grace, yet I saw myself as doomed for eternal destruction unless the Lord intervened in my behalf. In the year 1957 we experienced a drought to the extend that I knew there would not be any profit from my crops, yet the very heat and cloudless skies were praising God. I was made to see His ruling supreme and divine power in every leaf and insect and in all things for all time. As I had begged of the Lord to be shown if I should join the church, He answered, I believe, with a commandment. I was resting on my sofa after the Staunton River Association in July of 1957, when the words that seemed to fill the room said "Be baptized". I had been under so much distress about the matter until I decided that I had imagined I heard those words and would just try to sleep. Suddenly the identical words came again more forcible although they were not spoken as a person would speak. It seemed it was an inward ear that heard. I believe the Lord speaks to the heart and it is always effectual. For the next two weeks, I knew that I must offer to the church on First Saturday night in August if I lived until that day. I was so impressed to do the Lord's bidding that I wanted to ask the church to accept me when the meeting started, but I refrained until the doors were opened. I felt that I would die if I did not offer for membership and yet I felt that I would

delight to do His bidding. Is not the truth and love of God a delight? Are we not extremely glad that we believe in the free grace, predestination, power, love and all of the innumerable attributes of our Heavenly Father? Puny man is as putty in His hands and He causes instant joy and obedience at His bidding. Also, we feel He causes us to be reconciled to our lot and portion in this life realizing that He alone blesses us with all spiritual and natural blessings for all of our days.

A few times I have been a passenger in an airplane and as it flew along at over six miles in height, we could see many, many miles and sights I would have never thought possible for man to behold. I was blessed with wonderful thoughts of what a tiny speck of His creation that I was beholding in comparison with the vastness of His creation. In man's exploration of space, the more he is allowed to discover, the more confused he seems to be as to God's creation. A power that could speak all of this universe into being and see the end from the beginning and yet control it all to the most minute detail could not possibly need or would have the help of sinful flesh. How pathetic and in complete darkness in the world of workers for Christ that we hear of each day. He said when upon the earth that all of the gold of Orpha and the cattle of a thousand hills were His and if He needed anything, He would not tell them. The Potter (God) has and will always have power over the clay (man).

If I have been taught the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and have received grace and favor in His sight, then all praise and glory I wish to ascribe to Him, because I know that my parents didn't teach me, or my pastor, or any other man as I could not believe as I do except I was taught from above. If the Lord's people judge me to be of the chosen few, then I would trust their judgment above all of the earth but I never expect to be without doubts and fears in this life as it would destroy my hope.

I would encourage others to record their experiences for publication in the ***Signs of the Times*** as I now feel great joy and relief and don't feel I have made a mistake in expressing my heartfelt travels. At best, we only hint at the whole of God's dealing with sinners. At times, I can surely say that I love my brethren and desire your prayers continually.

An unworthy creature in hope
of eternal life,
Burnell B. Williams

EDITORIAL

Route 4, Box 21A
Winnsboro, Texas 75494
November 5, 1980

Dear Elder Poole,

During our telephone conversation you asked me to write my experience and send it to you. I attempted to write it at the request of Elder and Sister John D. Wood some twenty-two years ago, but it is just as clear in my mind today as it was then. The Lord willing, I shall attempt to write it again.

EXPERIENCE

After graduating at Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, I was elected head football coach at Winnsboro High School. After serving as coach for nearly two years, I entered into the armed services and was stationed at Portland, Oregon where I met and married my wife in June 1942.

Shortly after my discharge in December 1945, we moved to San Angelo, Texas where I had been elected football line coach for the high school. My wife and I attended a church where continued pressure was put upon us to join. Several members told me it was my duty as a leader of young men to be a member of a church. They fully convinced my wife and I and we both joined in 1946. We later moved to Donna where I had been elected head coach and athletic director. After five years, I was

elected backfield coach at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas. This job required my being away from my family too often so I accepted the head coaching job at Harlingen High School.

We attended church regularly during all this time enjoying and taking part in all the social activities that all these churches sponsored. Yet, I must truthfully say I never was in complete harmony with the type of preaching I heard. I attended mostly for the social life. I felt it was my duty and I wanted to see and be seen.

Around the beginning of the year 1957 something began to come over me. For the first time in my life I began to have a great desire to read the Bible. I would come home for lunch, get my Bible, and read it while eating. The preaching I was hearing now began to take on a new form; it was not in harmony with the reading from my Bible. I could see now that the God I had been worshipping was lacking in power and did not have complete control over the individual. One Sunday while we were attending church during the absence of the regular pastor, the pulpit was filled by a visiting pastor. At the end of his sermon, he began to beg the non-christians to come forward and be saved by accepting Christ: "God wants you to, it's up to you, God can't do anything unless you are willing to let Him." This caused cold chills to run over me, and I told my wife that I just couldn't attend a church any longer where a God was worshipped who depended upon the help of man: who couldn't save man, unless man accepted Him.

My next few months were spent in going from one church to another; but none of them gave me any satisfaction. I kept searching and began to wonder if I knew myself what I was searching for. My mother wrote me and asked me to attend a Primitive Baptist Church near Donna, Texas. After a few weeks, we attended and heard Elder E. B. Ault preach; it was the sweetest preaching that I had ever heard. He preached about an all-powerful God, One who spoke and it was done, commanded, and it stood fast. A feeling of sweetness and brotherly love seemed to flow around those present that even a stranger could comprehend.

One morning just before awakening, I dreamed of seeing myself in the midst of many thousands of sinners. We were all black; but all at once I began to shine like unto a light. I awakened at that instant, but was unable to remove the dream from my mind. During this time, every spare minute I had was taken up in reading the Bible which would continue until one or two o'clock in the morning. For the first time I could see myself as the greatest of all sinners -- all my past sins, which were many, seemed to grow bigger and bigger and I was worrying most of the day and night over them. And as each day passed, my sins seemed to be as the clouds in the sky as they become bigger and thicker. One Sunday afternoon I was sitting in our living room reading while the younger children were in the back room playing and my wife was taking a bath. I look on this now as a perfect, quiet setting for what was to take place. All at once I looked up and saw myself shining in the same way as in my dream, and at the same time all my sins began rapidly to close in on me causing me to become almost hysterical -- jumping up and running into my bedroom, I threw myself across the bed with my head in the corner. By this time my sins were crushing me, I was dying -- I couldn't even call for my wife -- one -- two- three more breaths at the most would be my last -- Oh, what a terrible feeling to die like this -- gasping for breath, I raised up on one elbow and yelled -- "God help me -- God help me!" In an instant, the Lord entered my room, and as He entered, all my sins vanished. He not only entered the room, but He came right on down and got between my head and the floor. Brethren and Sisters, no words can

express the feeling that came over me. The presence of the Lord in my room was almost more than I could bear. My eyes followed Him as He slowly floated across the room. I don't know what He looked like but my eyes followed Him. I felt Him with all my heart and soul. I just lay there on my bed and wept aloud trembling from head to foot. My wife came into the room shortly afterwards and found me weeping like a child. She came over and put her arm around me -- I couldn't understand why, after finding me in my condition, it didn't excite her. She asked me in a few minutes what had happened. I told her, God had saved my life. She said that she had also felt the presence of something in the room. She left the room, and as I was ready to get up a Voice spoke to me with great power and authority and said, ***you will join the church.*** I jumped at the sound of His voice and answered aloud, "I will, I will!" There was no doubt in my mind the church being the Primitive Baptist Church. I was afraid to go to bed that night not knowing what to expect. The next day it was like walking on air, my every thought was on the Lord, in my conversation with other people, my thoughts were always on Him; oh, how close He seemed to be to me. While walking from the High School to the gym, I looked up at the clouds and saw something in them I had never seen before; a bird flew over and as I watched it, I thought God knows even the flight of that bird before the bird does. The trees took on a different aspect. I saw God in all these things; these things I had seen many times before now took on a different glow.

My prayers seemed to flow directly to Him. I wanted to praise Him to everyone I saw, but felt they couldn't understand. This feeling gradually went away and before another week was over, I seemed to have lost everything -- my prayer's didn't seem to get any farther than my lips and sometimes I would give up in shame and dismay. The more I tried to keep from sinning, the more I would sin. I began to worry about joining the church, I felt too unworthy to offer myself to such a sweet people as the Primitive Baptists yet the Lord had spoken that I would join. I prayed that God would tell me when. Several meetings passed, when on the second Sunday in May, 1957, Sister Ault requested that we sing the first three verses of "Children of the Heavenly King." After singing three verses, I started to close my book, while for some reason the congregation continued to sing; during the next verse, that same strong force with all authority spoke once more. I could hardly get to Elder Ault fast enough, but at the same time possessed a feeling of unworthiness. I was taken into the church and baptized that afternoon.

A short time later, my next experience came. Another Sunday afternoon as I was reading, I looked up to see my future pathway of life open up to me and a great pain come over me. The way that the Lord had shown me was more than I felt I could bear. The pathway was full of ups and downs, and the burden that He placed upon my shoulders was more than I felt I could undertake. For a second my thoughts were: Lord, is it too late to turn back and live the life I once lived and walk according to the course of this world fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind? But, oh, how I begged His forgiveness and if this was the way He had chosen for me, it was the way I wanted to go. My prayer was that whatever that pathway might be -- God only give me the courage, strength, and guidance to enable me to walk through it. This burden was very disturbing to me. About a month after this took place, I attended a three day meeting at Cana Church near Winnsboro, Texas. Elder and Sister Wood were there. After lunch on Friday, most everyone had gone back into the church and started singing. I was talking to some one and as he left, I looked over and saw Sister Wood

coming over to me. She said, "Tell me about your experience." I wondered how she knew. I had not told anyone. As I began to relate my experience, I left off about the heavy burden that I felt and she said, "You have not told me everything" This was more than I could stand as I broke down crying. I wondered if Christ had been talking to her.

This burden was revealed when the church asked for my ordination to the ministry. I said over and over I will not go through with it. We left for a visit with my parents a week before the date set by the church. I left with full intentions of not going back. Oh, how I begged God to give me a sign if this was according to His will. My soul was heavy laden and laboring under this burden. Three days before my ordination, the sweetest most wonderful, complete calmness came over me that I have ever felt in my life. A feeling of being completely submissive prevailed over me. I trust this was God's answer to my prayers.

The burden of going before God's people has never completely left me. The dear people I'm attempting to serve show such love and respect towards me. At time I wonder, am I a deceiver to these wonderful people? Yet I feel, that I can truthfully say with Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people," and above all, I want, "thy God, my God."

I was given a wonderful vision one night that occupied my mind much of the time for a long while, and still enters my mind quite often. I saw myself riding in a passenger train which had three coaches and a small coal burning engine pulling it. The three coaches had only a few scattered people in each. I was riding in the last coach sitting on the rear seat next to a window. We were moving along and came to a long steep hill that went straight up. As we started up the hill I was sure the train would tumble over backward and we would all be destroyed. As we reached the halfway point the little engine gathered renewed power and on up we went. I couldn't understand how this could happen. As we were going on we came to a wide body of water. The track ran on across the water on an ill constructed platform with no railings on the sides. When I saw how uneven the tracks were, I felt for sure the train would fall into the water and we would all be drowned. The little train wobbled on across in spite of my inability to understand how. I looked out of the window once more and saw where the track made a 90 degree turn which I felt would be impossible to make. When the little engine made the turn, I saw a form sitting at the controls and a voice came to me saying, no wonder, Jesus Christ is at the controls! "For in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." Isaiah 26:4.

The wonderful feeling of love and compassion that I felt in my heart for all the wonderful people with whom I met while on our trip last July to North Carolina, Virginia and Maryland as well as Alabama and Mississippi, gives me some hope that I have passed from death unto life because I love the brethren. The same holds true with all of God's people in all places where I have had the sweet privilege to be in their midst. I often think of the Lord's great salvation, and ask myself, "Is it possible that our Blessed Redeemer has condescended so low in His amazing love and pity to save me?"

Yes, my dear friends, it is a fact that our God did embrace a people in the everlasting covenant that He made with His Son and Holy Spirit before the foundation of the world; and His truth says, "It was ordered in all things and sure." This God is the same now as He was then or else He has changed. But He says, "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." (Mal. 3:6) He in the most

remote depths of eternity made this covenant of peace and the beauty of it is that He changes not. What sweetness there is in His word when He says, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isa. 46:9, 10) I trust to be thankful that I believe in a God who embraces His people in this covenant that is ordered in all things and sure.

How satisfying it should be to all of us to know that this great God is at the helm of the entire universe, working all things after the counsel of His own will, and who says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." (Jer. 31:3) How comforting when He says, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." (Cor. 12:9) His people are kept as the apple of His eye, and the death of His saints is precious in His sight.

A sinner in hope of mercy,
(Elder) Joe L. Hamrick

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NOTICE

We hope, the Lord willing, to soon reprint in the pages of the ***Signs of the Times*** the small book entitled "The Early Religious Life of Elder David Bartley".

This book is very rare now and we feel the Lord's people will find this opportunity to read it very beneficial. Elder Bartley wrote for the ***Signs*** many years and is remembered chiefly for his book, "The Priesthood of the Son of God."

Editors

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The one hundred fortieth session of the Staunton River Association will convene with the Church at Canaan on July 10, 11, 12th, which is the second weekend.

The church is located in Pittsylvania County, west of Danville, Virginia, on State Road 844. From Danville follow Highway 41 about 12 miles and turn left at Frances Store. The church is located about 3 miles on the right from this store. Watch for signs to direct you from Highway 41.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

CHANGE OF MEETING

The Lebanon Primitive Baptist Church of Bracey, Virginia will change their hours of service on the 2nd Sunday of each month to 2:30 P.M. We cordially invite our brethren and friends to meet with us.

Thomas S. Martin
Clerk

JEHOVAH-JIREH

(The Lord Will Provide)

Recently the ***Signs of the Times*** received twenty-five thousand ($25,000.00) dollars from settlement of Elder Durwood Bradley's estate. In addition, we also received a check from Mrs. Durwood Bradley, Elder Bradley's widow, in the amount of $1,000.00. We trust we are all humbly thankful to God for this timely provision.

Elder Bradley, of Lubbock, Texas, was a faithful minister of our order and a long time supporter of the ***Signs***. Through the kindness and consideration of his wife we were able to receive his gift much earlier than we had expected, and we might add, at a time of need.

By investing the whole sum in an interest bearing certificate we will now receive enough additional revenue to greatly relieve our monthly expenses.

Truly, the Lord does provide.

Editors

FROM LOUISIANA

Ruston, Louisiana

Dear Friends:

Please renew my subscription for the ***Signs of the Times*** for another year. I have grown up with it and am now a senior adult, myself, but I love the articles in the ***Signs*** and the people who write them - also the ones who read them.

Please use the extra money to help send it to some who cannot now afford to pay for it.

With best wishes to you all and love in Christ Jesus.

Mrs. Ruth T. Smith

FROM ALABAMA

Carbon Hill, Alabama

Dear Editors,

We have just received our December ***Signs of the Times*** and due to illness, we have not been able to keep up with our subscription to both our dear papers, the ***Signs*** and the "Old Faith Contender". Due to old age and illness we have let this slip by, for which we are so sorry and hope you can pardon us. We love God's precious words and we know they are His words, and since we can't attend church any more, we look forward to our precious papers each month. Please keep our ***Signs of the Times*** coming to us. We pray for all you Editors, for the precious Lord to spare you and give you health to press on in

these perilous times in which we are living.

We do miss the great privilege of meeting with God's people as we were so blessed to do until the last three years. My health failed so quickly after breaking my hip; then my dear husband, in trying to take care of me and do all the work he could, his health has failed him. His age is now 85 years, but the dear Lord has blessed us so much I do not want to complain. We try to thank Him each day and night and every hour of the day. We live by reading His wonderful word, and enjoying His many blessings.

I wish I could write good sweet articles like so many we read, but it seems I can not find the right words to express my feelings.

We hope Brother Griffin's health is better now. We miss his wonderful articles when they are not in the paper, along with several others. Some of our dear ones have passed on from us.

I hope this has been written in love and thankfulness for all you dear editors. May you be given health to continue, the Lord willing.

We hope in Precious Hope,
Lillian and James C. Scott

FROM OHIO

Franklin, Ohio

Dear Editors of the ***Signs of the Times,***

I look forward to each issue of the ***Signs*** and hardly put it down until I have read it through. I especially love the "Voices of the Past, He being dead yet speaketh". I never tire of reading my old copies of the ***Signs,*** dated back to 1900. In one of my Mom's copies, dated May 15, 1911, she had a piece marked, I assume a favorite of hers, and I've read and re-read it. It was written by Frank McGlade, of Hebron, Ohio, on Mark 5:19, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee". This has been much comfort to me.

I'm sorry I am late with my subscription.

With love to all the precious household of faith, I remain, unworthily,

Yours in hope,
Mrs. James W. (Edith) Johnson

FROM TEXAS

Grand Prairie, Texas

Dear Elder Williams,

Please extend my subscription for another year. Enclosed please find a check to cover this.

Next to the Bible, we couldn't do without it. My wife and I identified ourselves with the Old School Baptists about 10 years ago, coming from the Missionary people.

God has been good to me and my family. We are poor in this world's goods, for which I am thankful, but if not deceived, we are rich, counting what the good Lord has entrusted in our care. My health is not good, yet I am happy with the path the Lord has marked out for me. Whatever befalls us, we are happy, because we feel we are not alone. We pray God's blessings are yours at His good pleasure. Pray for us when you approach the Throne of Grace.

In Hope,
Paul Russell

FROM TENNESSEE

Lenoir City, Tenn.

Dear Editors,

I have received the February issue of the ***Signs of the Times.*** I see it is time for me to renew my subscription. You will find money enclosed to cover two more years.

I enjoy reading every issue and hope I am thankful to God for each of you.

Yours truly,
J. Henry Chamberlain

THE ARTICLES OF FAITH AS THEY ARE IN THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

"We believe there is but one true and living God, and that in the Godhead there are three Persons, the Father, the Word, or Son, and Holy Ghost, and these are One in essence, power, and glory."

"All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made". John 1:3. And in the 14th verse, "And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth."

"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: "Colossians 2:9, 10.

Christ took on Himself a body of flesh like that of ours with sin excepted. Christ did not receive the Spirit by measure, "all of the fulness of the Godhead".

I want to give a few thoughts about the second Article of Faith; that the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written word of God, and the only complete and unerring rule of faith and practice. I will only give my views on the first two Articles, for there are eleven Articles, and as far as I know I am agreed with all them, but it would take up too much space to comment on all of them.

No Church has any right to adopt rules that are unscriptural. Neither does an Association have the right to adopt rules that are unscriptural. Any rule that would serve as a bar against a person who has repented with a godly repentance in having fellowship with the Church is unscriptural. Any rule in turning one out of fellowship without a scriptural cause is a great offense to one of the little ones. Most of the time that one is turned out without a just cause, it is by a head rule of someone trying to get revenge, and the rule is not even on the Church book, but in the head of someone that is being exercised without love.

This is all about the Articles of Faith at this time.

I have been reading the ***Signs*** today. I received much strength from Elder Griffin's article. I also enjoyed Elder Poole's article on the "Valley of Dry Bones". I believe that the Editors and other writers are gifted more than ever, and as long as they continue to do so, I will want the ***Signs*** to continue to come to my box as long as I can read. The ***Signs*** is the best way that I know how to communicate. May God keep us in peace is my prayer.

(Elder) J. R. Hollandsworth

Rutledge, Alabama

Dear Sirs:

Enclosed is $9.00 for two years subscription to the ***Signs of the Times.***

I sure do enjoy reading the ***Signs*** very much and I believe the Old Baptist doctrine.

A Brother in Hope,
Homer Killough

OBITUARIES

ROSA HUMPHREY

It pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst, Sister Rosa Humphrey, Sept. 21, 1980. She was in her early eighties. She was the widow of the late Bro. George Humphrey, who died Jan. 1956. She is survived by six children, three sons, three daughters, and one sister.

She united with Cypress Creek church Feb. 29, 1980 and was baptized by Elders Harmon Brown and D. B. Stokes. She was with us just a short time, but she will be missed. Her appearance always was one of humbleness and meekness. She was afflicted for many years, but was blessed with faith and patience to run the course set before her. We trust she's asleep now, awaiting the Morn of the Resurrection when

our Saviour comes to gather His jewels home.

Her funeral was preached at graveside by Elder Harmon Brown, her pastor, and Mr. C. A. Huneycutt, Jr.

Done by order of November conference that three copies be made; one for the church records, one for the family and one sent to ***Signs of the Times*** for publication.

Velma Horne, Clerk
Elder Harmon Brown, Moderator

OMAR POPE DARROW

Sister Omar Pope Darrow was born the daughter of Bro. James Forsythe and wife, Elizabeth.

On July 24, 1924 she was received into the fellowship of Durham Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized on Friday night, August 1, 1924 by Elder C. B. Hall. She loved the doctrine of salvation by grace and loved to visit among the Old Baptist churches far and near. She was blessed to go among them even in old age and enjoyed entertaining them in her home. It was a source of great pleasure to her that two of her sisters, Zone Forsythe Page and Vera Forsythe Faucette were also members of the Durham Church and they enjoyed a kinship that was deeper than natural ties.

She was married to Robert Pope who preceeded her in death. She was the mother of the following children: Margaret Pope DeMasi, Nannie Pope Bass, Robert H. Pope, Jr., Arthur Benton Pope, Rachel Pope Maillet, and John T. Pope.

She received her education in Durham and for a number of years served in the Library at Oak Grove School in Durham County.

Sister Omar passed from this life on April 20, 1976. Her funeral was conducted by Elder D. V. Spangler and her body was laid to rest to await the Resurrection and the complete fullfillment of her Hope.

Submitted in love and respect,
Catherine M. Humbarger

GUY EZRA CONNER

Guy Ezra Conner was born to George Ben and Ellen Conner on Feb. 8, 1889, and passed away September 14, 1980. He was married to Nellie Francis Poff in 1910. To this union seven children were born. Only three survive; Dessie Conner, Alvin Conner, and Aldine Nichols.

Brother Conner united with Salem Primitive Baptist Church in the year of 1925. He was a faithful member until death. He was ordained Deacon on August 13, 1932, and was chosen Clerk in 1957.

Brother Conner was married to Sister Ora Nichols on September 15, 1961. Sister Ora was a good help mate. She waited on him with patience. He often expressed how thankful he was to have someone to wait on him.

After Brother Conner was old he never tried to run the church. Anything the church did was alright with him. If they needed financial support he was willing to help. He was not like some I have seen. He never complained about the things of the church nor his wife. He was thankful for everything.

When he was in his right mind he was praising the Lord. He loved to sing songs of Zion and to hear preaching. That was his joy.

We at Salem Church will miss Brother Guy. He was good to me, and we believe he is at rest. The Lord knows best.

His funeral was preached at Salem Church on September 16, 1980, by Elder Roy Agee, Elder Lane Carter, Elder Hale Terry. His body was laid to rest by his first wife in Salem Cemetery.

Written by Elder Roy Agee

BROTHER PERCY J. LAWRENCE

In memory of Percy J. Lawrence, who was born in Floyd County, Virginia, March 4, 1893, and pased from this life October 25, 1980, making his stay here 87 years, 6 months and 21 days. He was married to Locie West on December 24, 1919.

Brother and Sister Lawrence united with Salem Primitive Baptist Church on October 16, 1960. They were baptized by Elder B. Odel Thompson.

The Lord blessed Brother Lawrence to live a quite, honest, and peaceful life. He had many friends. He was a good neighbor and he never got too busy to help others.

He was one who never had much to say, but when he spoke it made you stop and think.

He manifested a love for the Lord's people

and was a good judge of the truth, and a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God.

Brother Lawrence was interested in the welfare of the church and was always ready to lend a helping hand and willing to go along with the church in anything they felt was right.

Brother and Sister Lawrence had loved these people for many years, but were not blessed to unite with them until their last days, and when they came there was no questions to be asked.

We loved Brother Lawrence, we hope, for Christ's sake. We miss him in many ways as a neighbor and as a brother in the church. Our heart goes out to Sister Lawrence.

His funeral was conducted by Elder Roy Agee and Elder Lane Carter at Salem Church. His body was laid to rest in Restvale Cemetery.

Written by
Elder Roy Agee

SISTER MAGGIE LEE HAYES

After many months of intense sufferings caused by advancing old age, the death angel visited the home of our sister and called her out of this world to a far better rest in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Sister Hayes was born May 14, 1892, the daughter of the late Elder and Sister C. H. Davis. She was the last member of her generation left. She was married to our good Baptist friend, and we believe by the evidence left by him, our brother in the Lord Jesus Christ, Mr. W. B. Hayes, on July 26, 1912. Mr. Hayes died a few years ago. To this union three children were born, to wit, Charles, William, and Ruth. William was killed several years ago in an automobile accident. Charles is a member of Poplar Springs Church near the hometown of Vernon. Ruth, the daughter, is in the old home, and is a believer in the doctrine of God our Saviour. There are four grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Sister Hayes was a member of Poplar Springs Church here in the Buttahatchie Association, having been baptized by the late Elder E. Z. McCool. She was well posted in the history and the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists. Her grandfather, Elder L. M. Wimberly, and Elder C. H. Davis, were well known Primitive Baptist ministers. She was a keen listener and it was seldom that an elder ever got by with introducing any new departure in doctrine or practice.

She traveled tens of thousands of miles seeking items of church history, and she was able to get information about religious subjects from many places in the world. The history of the Welsh Tract Church was the object of much world research on her part. She would not want me to eulogize her, but just to say to her kindred in the Lord that she was tired and desired to go home. As one closely associated with her and her family, I am free to say that a humble saint has left us, and my testimony of her is that she knew in Whom she had believed and that He was able to keep that which she had committed unto Him until the final and second coming of the Lord.

Funeral services were conducted in Sullivan's Funeral Home in Vernon, Alabama, where she had lived the most of her life. Elder W. D. Griffin spoke in prayer, and her Pastor, Elder H. C. Moon, preached a sermon according to the doctrine of God our Saviour.

(Elder) W. D. Griffin

SISTER LUDDIE HARBOUR

We the Church at Rosemary bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father in taking from us our Sister Harbour.

Sister Harbour was born February 28, 1891, and departed this life October 10, 1980. She was married to Brother E. D. Harbour on January 14, 1922. Brother Harbour departed this life December 5, 1970.

Brother and Sister Harbour joined the Rosemary Primitive Baptist Church in September 1962. They were true and faithful members.

Sister Harbour left to mourn one son, Clarence Harbour, and one daughter, Mrs. Marie Page, and four grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted by Mr. Emmit Thompson, and she was laid to rest in Cedarwood Cemetery. We feel that our loss is her gain.

Done by order of conference in session at Rosemary, Saturday before the first Sunday in December, 1980.

Elder Randall Saunders, Moderator
Eula Johnson, Church Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Keeling, Virginia, as shown below. All notices of meetings and obituaries should be mailed directly to P.O. Box 1250, Salisbury, Md. 21801. Articles for publication may be mailed to either address.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 65 Keeling, Va. 24566

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 7/81 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

Copper Hill, Va.
March 24, 1981

EXPERIENCE

After reading Elder Hollandsworth's experience and his plea to hear what the Lord has done for others, I had a great desire that I might write just a little of how the Lord has brought me along.

Before I was a member of the Salem Baptist Church I took my five little girls and went most every Sunday to a church or a Sunday School. We attended the Brethren, Methodist, Holiness and the Primitive Baptist. My husband would not go with us and this seemed to bother me very much. One morning when I pressed him to come with us, he became angry with me and told me to leave him alone. I went on to church that morning with a heavy heart and the feeling that I was leaving something behind. My heart cried out, "Oh, Lord, does he even believe there is a God?"

Shortly after that, we were sitting at our breakfast table talking and he began to tell me how he had gone out to the barn and got down on his knees and begged God to spare his little sister's life when they thought she was about to die. There was my answer. Thank you, Lord! He does believe there is a God.

During my travel from place to place I promised myself two things. I was not going to join the church until my children were all grown for then I could take them to movies and wherever they wanted to go. Also, I was disgusted with the Primitive Baptist and I was going to quit going there.

Well time rolled on and I was 34 years old, my baby girl was 4. I became very

was made to look around over the audience and what did I see?? The people were the same as the people in the picture worshipping the golden calf and the picture itself was the golden calf. Oh, my dear brethern, I was in that mess.

I became very sick, such a headache I'll never forget. I thought that I would surely die before I ever reached my home but once more, the Lord spared me. When I drove our car into the driveway safe and sound, I thanked God and told my children that I could not go again but if they desired to go, I would not stand in their way for I trusted the same God to guide and direct their footsteps too as He had also recently wrought a most unbelievable change in my husband. He was attending church every weekend with us and was truly enjoying every minute of it. I had so much to be thankful for.

Speaking of being thankful, I would like to tell you of a most thankful day of my life. It was a beautiful Thanksgiving day almost ten years ago. Mother earth was covered with a blanket of snow and there was the stillness that seem to say, "See the beautiful work of God."

I arose early that morning to get our turkey ready for the oven. We had all our children home from school for the holiday and as I placed the turkey in the oven I thought of my mother, as she loved turkey so good. I then had a desire to call and invite both sets of parents, my husband's and mine, to come and have Thanksgiving lunch with us. They both accepted.

When the lunch was ready and everyone began to gather around the table, I believe I was given a truly thankful heart. Those parents all looked so sweet and lovely that my heart filled with love and my eyes with tears. I turned and busied myself with something at the sink so no one could see me. After getting in control of myself, I told the children that they should be thankful for that day for not many children had that many grandparents. In saying this, I did not know that both sets of parents were soon to be broken. My mother passed away with a brain hemorrhage on December 12, 1971 and my father-in-law in the following August through an accident in front of our house. To me that Thanksgiving was a wonderful day of my life to be always remembered. The Lord gave me that day to prepare a Thanksgiving lunch for my loved ones and He gave me the thankful heart at the right moment to realize how gracious He had been to us all.

He had also given me a dream before my mother died in which I believed someone of my family was going to be called away. Later another dream that two more would soon go. That was my father-in-law and then my brother on December 18, 1972. On Friday before my father-in-law's death on Monday, I was given these words very forcefully several times that day, "If God be for you, who can be against you." Brethern and friends, those words were very special to me the following months and still are wonderful in my heart for He truly showed me and my husband the working of His almighty hand. He has power over all things. Not even the sparrow can fall without His knowing. Our earthly and spiritually blessings are all of Him.

Yes, Brother Hollandsworth, I too wonder sometimes why I am thus. Sometimes I feel so far away from God and my brethern and wonder if I have a part in the matter at all. Then sometimes that love is present and all is well. I feel assured at those times that my Jesus reigns in heaven and in earth.

In Bonds of Love,
Mary C. Poff

Dear Brother in Christ Jesus, as we hope,

I see my time is out for the ***Signs.*** I don't want to miss a single copy. I so much enjoy its contents.

I've taken it now for many years and it

have a home not made with hands.

Dear brethren, if it will not crowd out better matter you may publish this in the ***Signs.***

There is a place of peaceful rest,
Where we shall be forever blest;
Our bodies lie beneath the sod,
Our spirits then return to God.

O may I then with them be found,
When the last trump of God shall sound;
And worship at Immanuel's feet,
Where our joys will be complete.

O blessed thought, that we shall rise
To meet our Savior in the skies,
And ever there with him to be,
And peace and joy forever see.

O, Lord of love, look down today,
And guide me in the holy way,
And keep me in the narrow path
That leads to joy and peace at last.

There a place forever blest,
Where all the weary pilgrims rest;
They rest in their eternal home,
And never more on earth shall roam.

O what a meeting that will be,
When we in heaven our God shall see,
And ever there with him shall dwell,
And never hear the sound, farewell.

That awful day is drawing nigh,
When all that are alive must die;
Some go to their immortal home,
And some to their eternal doom.

Now I will close lest I weary you. May God be with you and bless you.

Your unworthy sister, I hope, in Christ,

Elizabeth Phillips

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER THOMAS TIPTON McQUEEN

Dear brethren and sisters, and kind friends: By request I shall attempt to write some of what I humbly hope the Most Holy Lord of all high heaven has been pleased to show me, a poor sinner. Realizing of a certainly that I am not able and unless it is His will on this occasion to be with me as the pen of a ready writer, it will only find it's place in the waste basket.

Jesus says, "Ye must be born again". This applies to all the redeemed of the Lord, and I certainly believe there is a time and that of the Lord, when each and every one that was given Christ Jesus in the glorious covenant before time began, that they be born again, not of corruptible seed, but of an incorruptible, which liveth and abideth forever.

Dear brethren, I can well remember just now and moreover every day of my unprofitable life, where I was standing when I hope Jesus forgave my sins, which were as a great mountain before me. There came a great uneasiness over me some time during the year 1900. I did not know for what cause any more than I just thought that my time probably was very short. I realized in that botherment of burdens that death was appointed unto all men, and I was caused to have many serious thoughts concerning my eternal destination. I was forced to see that all my days had been evil. But I would try to comfort my troubles by stealing off and trying to pray the Lord to forgive me and with promises I would amend my doings for I verily thought I could begin a good work and the Lord would look over my past life, but pretty soon I found out if selfrighteousness was the way of salvation I was not able to be good, and that all that I had done was wrong.

Now in the spring of 1914 or on Saturday before the first Sunday in May, I went down under the hill to offer one more prayer, for I felt just like I wanted to offer one more, and after I arose to my feet, it looked like this had become a sin. I left there wringing my hands and groaning feeling just like I did not have a friend on earth, and that death and destruction was my doom, but I went on to the field to try to plow to keep from going with mother to church, for I felt ashamed to go anywhere. About 9 o'clock there was a light that seemed to light the whole elements and I saw, as it were, a large multitude of the people of God, Primitive Baptists, and they were singing "Amazing Grace", and I was standing before them in the most unworthy manner that could be

Times for a long time.

My grandfather, Elder M. Murphy, preached the unsearchable riches of God for thirty years or more. He was moderator of Chipola Church in Calhoun County Florida for twenty-two years.

I was only a child of 9 years, when one Sunday his son, Elder J. B. Murphy, was down visiting us from Cottonwood, Alabama, on a Second Sunday in the month. There were five of us children (orphans) and I was the one who usually went to meeting with him. My uncle was in the stand and surely God had to be in the picture, for as he was preaching the wonderful gospel of God, I was one step ahead of him in his discourse until the end. It never occurred to me that that incident would ever return to me again, but as life went on with its ups and downs (and seemed mostly downs) and I began to have little experiences of grace. God caused me to know He had His hand on me from my earliest existance until now, for if justice had caught up with Me I would long since have ceased to be. I just can't praise and thank Him enough for all His tender mercies on me and my loved ones.

My experiences seem small when I hear others relate theirs, but oh thank God, I wouldn't exchange them for all the world and the fullness thereof. It was such sweet peace when God in His infinite power came to my rescue. The road had been so long and dark for me for about 13 years. No one can witness the feeling of elation of God's love but one He has spoken sweet peace to their soul. The world can never know its love.

Hymn No. 145 in Lloyd's Hymnal is truly my experience from the time I was baptized until now.

I would just love to say, Elder H. H. Chance of Altha, Fla., Calhoun County, baptized me on second Sunday in March, 1951. What sweet peace when I opened my eyes after being baptized and saw God's great hand reaching down from Heaven for me. It has been such an uplifting of the Spirit when I get down in the valley.

Please keep publishing the ***Signs of the Times.*** They are uplifting to the little ones of which I hope I am one.

Pray for me when before the Throne of Grace.

Your little sister in hope of eternal life.

Edith Sewell

FROM ALABAMA

Greenville, Alabama

Dear Elder Williams,

Please renew my ***Signs*** for two years, and use the rest as needed.

Elder Williams, the Lord has been so good to me. I want to praise His Holy Name. Oh! this wonderful God, who is so good and kind, this great omnipotent God, who is so merciful to me a sinner. I'm not even worthy to call upon His Holy Name. If not deceived, I have a precious hope that He remembered me before the foundation of the world.

I love my Saviour God because He first loved me, even as I was dead in sins. "And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love where with he loved us".

He has blessed me to live among the dear Primitive Baptist, unworthy tho I am. I'd rather be in their midst, than any place on this earth. There abides the sweet love and fellowship that flows from breast to breast. You are blessed to hear the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ preached in all its purity; the sweet message of salvation by grace, a finished work of a great and holy God.

Elder Sam H. Dean baptized a dear brother last September. The next morning I wrote a few words on baptism. Brother Bob Duncan was laid to rest in December. I believe God has prepared for him the best. "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with

hands, eternal in the heavens".

Please remember this worm of the dust before His throne. May God bless you is my prayer.

In bonds of love,
Emmie L. Grayson

PIGG RIVER
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST
ASSOCIATION
1981

The 156th session of the Pigg River Association will convene with the church at Chapel the first Sunday in August, Friday and Saturday before. The dates are July 31, August 1, and August 2, 1981.

Chapel Church is located in Franklin County Virginia. Those coming by and from Martinsville go Route 108 to Route 890 (these merge at Figsboro). Go approximately 22 miles from Martinsville. Church will be on the right side. If coming from the North or East, go Route 40 to Route 890 at Penhook. Go about 10 miles. Watch for the signs.

Jamie E. Cooper
Association Clerk

It is a great mercy to enjoy the gospel of peace, but a greater to enjoy the peace of the gospel.

Dyer

FROM VIRGINIA

Henry, Virginia 24102

Dear Editors,

I am enclosing a check for renewal of the *Signs*. We regret that we are several months late getting it in the mail. However, we appreciate your goodness in permitting us to still receive the paper.

My husband, Elder F. L. Clark, has had a very lengthy illness, for which he was hospitalized three times last year, and finally had surgery before Christmas. Thanks be unto God, he had made a wonderful recovery and has improved in different ways when it had seemed all hopes were gone. That which is impossible with man is possible with God.

Today, February 1st, marks Elder Clark's 89th birthday, which the Heavenly Father has blessed him to live to see. We are hoping if it can be God's will, that he may be able once again to meet with the saints of God; as it has been well over one year since he has been able to be at his home church.

We want to take this opportunity to try to express our appreciation to the brethren, sisters, neighbors, and friends, for the many visits, beautiful cards, gifts of money, and food given during our trying hours. We appreciate the prayers that were made in our behalf, and we feel beyond any doubt they reached Heaven. We find recorded in the Holy Writ where the children of Israel's crys reached Heaven while in bondage under Pharoah's reign. The kindness and love that was manifested meant more than we can ever express. It was felt so wonderful in my breast, I desire to praise the Lord the rest of my days.

We want to extend a special thanks to Elder William Holland, Elder P. E. Ingram, Elder Amos Hash, Elder Roy Agee, Elder Donald Smith and others for the special concern and respect they have shown.

We will say "Farewell" and if my husband or I should meet with you "Highly favored few" no more this side of the grace and never ending eternity, we are living in that blessed hope of joining the number that John saw that

no man could number. Life's sun will soon set for us both, but Oh! what a glorious thought to awake at the dawn of a new day.

Praise the Lord, oh my soul. We desire the prayers of the Saints.

In Bonds of Love,
Elder and Mrs. F. L. Clark

Goldsboro, N.C.

Dear Brother Williams,

I sincerely apoligize for your having to remind me of my subscription. According to the most recent date beside my name and address, the expiration date was 12/80 instead of 12/79. Enclosed is a check for one year renewal. Use the balance as you see fit.

About three weeks ago on a Monday morning I felt impressed to share some thoughts with the household of faith. There were two scriptures on my mind and I remembered having read them recently in the ***Signs.*** One I was able to find readily and it reads thus, "O, Lord God, thou knowest". (Ezekiel 37:3) The other scripture I was able to find several days later with the help of a dear sister. It reads, "Is there not a cause"?

The thought so much on my mind is that God knows all there is to know about us. Whatever the circumstances in our lives, some we rejoice in while others seem to crush us, it is a comfort when we can feel reconciled enough to say, "Is there not a cause?".

I read several comforting scriptures this special Monday. I say special because I believe there was sweet communion with the Lord. My mind was exercised on these topics - (1) The manner of person a child of God should be and desires to be (II Peter 3:11) (2) The stirring up of the pure mind which is the only way to worship God in pureness of heart and mind (II Peter 3:1); (3) the manner of love God has bestowed upon His children and the manner of love that should be expressed by us to God and each other (I John 3:1); (4) Everyone hath a doctrine. I though about the differences of opinions and beliefs concerning the scriptures. All these are not edifying and are different winds of doctrine which the child of God is warned against (I Cor. 14:26 and Eph. 4:14).

God does bless me so bountifully, yet I find myself depressed so much of the time. There are times when I am able to say, "O, Lord, God, thou knowest".

The membership at Pittman Grove has had my name on roll for twenty-nine years. How precious! I trust God has had my name from all eternity.

Love and prayers to you, my Christian friends. Please pray for me.

Dora Ellen Vick

EDITORIAL

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven".

This scripture is one of the most popular and often quoted scriptures to be found in the pages of inspired writing and yet I wonder how often people are blessed to really stop, analyze, and realize the depth of the wisdom contained in this short verse of scripture. It seems that this one verse, if completely expounded, would surely cover the whole of wisdom as revealed unto the saints of God as they journey in this time world. It states as simply and as matter of factly as only Wisdom can, the only way in which the heirs of God can come into possession of the kingdom of God. These are the words of the only begotten of the Father; the only Person born into this world with sufficient wisdom to declare the whole truth and the whole counsel of God. Jesus was speaking to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, who came unto Him in the darkness of human wisdom inquiring of Jesus, who He was; and regarding the kingdom of God. He stated, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a

teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him". And Jesus answered him with the above statement. In nature's darkness man cannot know the things of the kingdom of God.

For man to inhabit the earth he must be born into the world of nature in the way and manner that God has decreed for the population of this planet earth. It is according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of the eternal God of heaven and earth and is true of all except the first two. Adam was created of the dust of the ground and a rib removed from Adam's side was made Eve. When "God created man in His own image, male and female created he them", He said unto them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it". This has continued down thru the annals of time as children are born unto men according to the laws of nature. Each man, at the time appointed of the Father, has a beginning as a creature of flesh in his mother's womb, is separated from her and becomes an individual of the human race. This, in nature, is the way in which man is born into the world.

Man's being born into the world is in such a manner that the most intelligent or the most unlearned of men would concede that it was by no effort, thought or action on the part of the one being born. The one being born has no consciousness or knowledge of the world into which they are being born until they are a part of it. They have no opportunity to decide or to determine any of the circumstances into which they are born, no option as to race, sex, or physical form, and have no prior knowledge upon which to base such a decision if they had the opportunity.

This man that is so born into this world is of the earth, earthy, and has a knowledge only of the earthly kingdom and the things that he can learn by the use of his natural senses. Many are born into this world of the flesh and live few or many years and die having known only those things of this natural physical kingdom of the flesh into which they were born.

I do not believe that Jesus just happened to use this illustration, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God", when talking to Nicodemus on this occasion. He was setting forth that basic truth that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him. Neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned". The things of the spiritual kingdom are in a different realm from the things of the flesh and just as a man must be born of the flesh to be a part of the natural kingdom and know and realize the things pertaining thereto, so he must be born into the spiritual kingdom to see the things of the kingdom of God, and enter into it.

Jesus further tells Nicodemus, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the spirit." Nicodemus replied, "How can these things be." In nature's darkness, with only the wisdom of the world, man cannot understand the mysteries of the spiritual realm. The realization of a spiritual birth can only be known by those who have experienced it, in the same way that the natural man can understand his natural life by the experiencing of it. Until one is quickened by the Spirit and experienced the change of heart and mind his question will be the same as Nicodemus, "How can these things be".

The experiencing of having been born again was for the Apostles, on the day of Pentecost, and again it is referred to as compared to the wind like Jesus has said to Nicodemus. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from

heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the place where they were sitting, and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance". What a wonderful experience of these Apostles and yet every child of God will acknowledge that there is a fellowship for these brethren because there is a degree of this same blessed revelation in their own experience. For the first time they understood the expression, "Ye must be born again". As fearful as it is to claim this precious heritage, you must acknowledge that your whole hope of eternal life is in the fact that you believe that you, too, have been born of the Spirit of God. As the Apostles began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance, so did you. You began to speak of things you had not before. Your mind and your speech was of things that you had no knowledge of before. You may not have thought that you said very much, but those who have been there could see in your countenance, your conversation, and your careful fearful walk that you were alive unto the things of the Spirit. You, as they, no longer ran eagerly in pursuit of the fleshly pleasures of life. You had been born of the Spirit and your whole desire was to show forth the love that you had for God and for those of kindred spirit.

As on the day of Pentecost those round about the Apostles said, "What meaneth this?" They, as Nicodemus could not understand what was happening. Some mocked and some thought they were drunk. This is true today as each tells their experience they will invariably relate how friends and loved ones in nature became estranged and separated from them because they could not understand what had happened to the individual. They were left behind in nature's darkness to question and wonder, "What meanth this". They have no basis for comparison and therefore will never understand unless blessed by God with the same wonderful change from nature's darkness into the marvelous light and life of the children of God. This experience, I believe, is what Jesus is referring to as being born again. They are certainly made alive to the things of the Spirit and immediately have fellowship for all who have been quickened within their very heart and soul.

The Prophet Zephaniah records, "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent". This scripture was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost as the Apostles began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. There was no period of learning for the Apostles, they spoke it as soon as they were filled with the Holy Ghost in the same manner as when God breathed into Adam the breath of life and he became a living soul. It was instantly complete, a finished work, a new beginning, a new birth, if you please, and it is the sovereign work of the God who created the heavens and the earth. The pure language that they speak is the language of love, love for God and all His creation but especially for those who understand the language and speak it also. This is the joyful sound that the saints of God hear. Psa. 89:15, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day; and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted". This is the hertitage of all that are born of God.

If man's being born into this natural realm is the sovereign work of God and Jesus uses this term in stating the only way that man can see kingdom of God is to be born again then it, too, must be the work of God alone. One is just as impossible, for the thing being born, as

the other, since the birth is the beginning and not a transition or transformation. It is the beginning of that which is born. Man will agree with you unanimously as regarding the natural birth and yet deny that this is true regarding the spiritual birth. They do not truly believe in God the Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent Creator of all things that are and do not believe the things that He says. They do not realize that when He speaks it is done and when He commands it stands fast regardless of whether all the wisdom and efforts of man are aligned with or against it. They will not concede that when He says something that it is true, absolute, no variance, and that it will be forever true whether it is believed by all or none of His creatures.

Jesus told the woman at the well, "God is a spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth". This confirms the necessity of all of the saints of God being born of the Spirit, since they were not created with a spiritual nature, originally. This is why it is such a wonderful experience when they are born of the Spirit and simultaneously realize the need and the full meaning of it. At that time they feel that the work is so complete that they will never be in the ruined undone condition again, but will ever praise and adore this Giver of every good and perfect gift for this mercy so graciously bestowed upon them. They learn though by experience that this is not the way that it is to be with them. Just as the baby in nature must experience a long and tedious learning process before it reaches maturity in becoming a man or woman, so must this new born child of grace also experience a long and tedious learning process and it will consume the rest of their natural life. They will grow in grace and in the knowledge of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, but they will never reach full maturity in this life. That will only be realized when they are raised in the likeness of their Elder Brother, when they will know even as they are known. This is reserved until they all come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

They will never reach the fulness of maturity in this life, but this new birth is the beginning of a spiritual life that will reach full maturity in that world that will be. God does not begin a work that He will not finish. He does not quicken one to see it they meet certain standards. His work is only making manifest what was determined before the beginning of time and will stand when time is no more. It is to honor and glorify His Holy Name and to acknowledge the atoning work of the only begotten of the Father, in the sacrifice of Himself for the sins of all that were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world.

The atonement has been made, the bride has been chosen, and being born again is but the manifestation of these truths in the heart of the individuals at the appointed time of the Father. The new birth is manifested in their walk, their talk, and their heart's desire being set on things above. They, for the first time, acknowledge the weakness and unprofitableness of the flesh and long for the time when they will reach maturity in the Spirit and lay aside the vanity and pride of this body of clay and dwell in the presence of God; in the fulness of His love and in the full knowledge of the glory and blessedness of that Kingdom into which they were born, while yet living in the body of flesh.

In bonds of love,
(Elder) Richard H. Campbell

FROM ALABAMA

Opp, Alabama

Dear Editors,

I see my subscription to the ***Signs*** expires with the March issue. Please renew my subscription for two years.

The *Signs* means so much to me since I can't hear the ministers when I go to the meetings, but I do enjoy fellowship with the Old Primitive Baptists. I have been attending their meetings all of my 88 years. I feel at home with them.

Best wishes to all. Use the extra as you see fit.

Eula M. Langford

Studio City, California

Dear Editors of the Signs of the Times:

Enclosed is a check for a two year renewal of the *Signs of the Times.* Use the balance as you see fit.

The monthly arrival of the *Signs* brightens up a somewhat dull life.

My brother is in the hospital dying of cancer. Please pray for him, together with all of like faith.

Love and best wished to all,
Mrs. Olive Moore

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

PREDESTINATION

Brother Lefferts:—I would like to have your views on absolute predestination of all things. If you think it will do no harm, you may answer through the *Signs* if you have time, and if not, all will be right with me.

Your brother, I hope.

J. J. Oakes

Penhook, Va.

Harsh things have been said of those who believe the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things. These harsh things have arisen from misconception of views held by those who believe this doctrine. This doctrine was boldly advocated by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and was one of the several points of the Old School Baptist faith named in the original prospectus of the *Signs,* and for which this paper has always stood as an exponent. Naturally, therefore, it would seem out of order for one to accept a place on the editorial staff on such a paper were he not in full sympathy with all points of doctrine for which the paper stands. On our part, we can say that we believe with all our heart in the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things. Our boyhood and youth, and all our years since being a member of the church, have been spent among those who believe and preach this doctrine, and we have never heard it advocated as a cloak for sin, nor as excusing the sinner in his sins. It has never been preached by any one in our hearing so as to make one shudder with horror, but always as the rock of God's salvation of his people, and as the security of their well-being here and hereafter.

It has been charged against those who believe and preach this doctrine that they make God the author of sin. The advocacy of this doctrine, when rightly understood, does no such thing. Sin is the transgression of law. Where there is no law, there can be no transgression. God is under no law, is accountable to no one; being under no law, cannot transgress law, cannot therefore sin, hence is not the author of sin. Whatsoever God does is right, because he *does* it. We have no right to measure the Almighty by human standards of judgment. We are expressly told that the thoughts and ways of God are not the thoughts and ways of men, but are higher than men as the heavens are higher than the earth. How then can men judge the Lord? How possibly to do so with adequate justice and wisdom? "Thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest." "But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth." Men call the taking of human life by men, murder; they do not call it murder whn God does it. When the Almighty through the activities of the forces of nature causes many human lives to be lost, as in earthquakes, tornadoes, electrical storms, &c., no rational being thinks of charging God

the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, its doctrine interwoven with everything the Scriptures teach.

We mean by the phrase, "absolute predestination of all things," that all things, both what men call good and that which they call evil, were determined beforehand of the Lord, and come to pass in accordance with his will to the fulfillment of his decreed purpose and end, and that anything, either good or evil, which God has not willed, and which he does not want, certainly cannot come to pass. The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain. If there is any of man's wrath which, if released, would not praise God, or which would tend to defeat the purpose of God, rest assured that measure of wrath will never find a vent. Though Paul does not use the words "absolute predestination" in the first chapter of Colossians, he preached it there stronger than any man has preached it since: "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Could anything be stronger? Even the devil himself is a creature of God. For whether he be visible or invisible, a personal devil or merely the spirit of evil; whether he be in heaven or in earth; whether he be a throne, a dominion, a principality or a power, God made him, and made him for himself, that is, to suit his own ends and purposes. In that sense, even the devil is "good" in God's sight; not good in the divine or godly sense, but good for the purpose for which God intended him and for which God uses him. We classify things as being good or evil, but do we know what is really good and what is really evil?

Unless we could from some high pinnacle of omniscience view creation's dawn and its final wind-up, could we be qualified to sit in judgment on any of time's events, condemning this as evil and approving that as good? The trouble with us is we are too entirely short-sighted, prone to jump to conclusions, prone to isolate a given event from all that precedes or follows it, and hastily to say, It is good, or it is bad. Nothing is either good or bad of itself; it is the thing or spirit with which it is associated, the company it keeps, that gives it its true character as being either truly good or wholly evil. Men living at the time that Joseph was sold into Egypt by his brethren, and judging that act by moral standards, would unhesitatingly condemn it as wrong. So it was wrong from the standpoint of Joseph's brethren, for their motive was an evil one, but God meant this very thing for good, "to save much people alive." God's purpose in this transaction was a righteous one; the purpose of Joseph's brethren in that same act was wicked. Therefore, the fact that God "meant" it, or determined it, did not at all make him the author of the sin, nor relieve the brethren from their guilt in it, even though God designed the act to have taken place exactly as it did.

The poet Milton and many others of the world's lights say that Satan is a fallen angel, that he was once in paradise, but fell from it or lost his first estate. Jude does say that there were angels that kept not their first estate, but he does not mean any such thing as this theology of Milton. Satan never was in paradise. He was always crooked. God did not make him straight at first and then he got crooked himself afterward. "His hand has formed the crooked serpent." He was made that way, never was straight. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."—John 8:44. Sometimes

captivity? As a consequence of their disobedience, of course. But was their disobedience an accident? The prophets in Israel and Judah had warned them again and again of their guilt, and called on them to repent, lest the captivity come upon them. But was there at any time a doubt as to whether they would repent or not? Certainly not, for their hearts were hardened, and they should not hear or understand. Who hardened them? The Lord. He has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Therefore, though the Lord hardened them from heeding the warnings of the prophets, did that make them any the less deserving of the ensuing captivity? Certainly not. And when God's will was accomplished in Babylon, he turned it over to Cyrus, that his people should be restored to their own land. Thus is proven how that the Lord forms light and creates darkness, makes peace and creates evil. (Isaiah 45:7). He creates the wicked for the day of evil, as when he before determined the crucifixion of Christ and ordained the wicked hands that did it. Nevertheless, he held them guilty and punished them. Does God bring people into the world with the design that they shall perish without salvation? See Romans 9:22, 23: "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory?" The vessels of wrath were fitted to destruction, were made to be destroyed. Again: "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." Also Jude says: "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men."

From the abundance of scriptural evidence we have cited (and much more could be deduced), we must conclude that both the elect and nonelect are in God's hands, and each go to the place before prepared for them; that both good and evil come from the same omnipotent hand; that neither is subject to chance nor subject to the whim, will or fancy of man. Just as there is nothing either good or ill but has its place in the plan and purpose of God from before the foundation of the world, so there is nothing too big or nothing to little to be comprehended by him. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing (one-fourth cent)? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father." Now, when a sparrow, which is worth only one-eighth of a cent to man, cannot fall on the ground without the Father being concerned in it, we must admit that the providence and divine arrangement of the Almighy does certainly include even those things which we might consider to be of small importance or of no account at all. For our part, we can say with one Young: "There is not a fly but has had infinite wisdom concerned, not only in its structure, but in its destination." And with Toplady we agree: "Not a dust flies in a beaten road, but God raiseth it, conducts its uncertain motion, and, by his particular care conveys it to the certain place he had before appointed for it." We agree that the predestination of God is concerned only with those things that concern (in some way however remotely) the welfare of his people and the declaration of his glory. But how much is there that transpires in the world that is not in some way or other connected with the welfare of the elect, and with the glory of God? We believe that all the events that ever transpire in time are in some way links in the chain of God's predestination to accomplish the good of his children and the declaring of his glory. If all things were created by him and for

Church in May, 1969, but attended regularly for many years before he joined. He was a dear and faithful member and a true believer of the gospel of Salvation by Grace.

He will be sadly missed by all, but we know that our loss is his eternal gain. Our prayers go out for his family. May the Lord bless them and give them comfort in their hour of need.

The funeral service was conducted at Lambeth Troxler Funeral Home by his pastor, Elder David V. Spangler, assisted by Elder Paul Lambe and Mr. Bill Sartin. His body was then laid to rest in Lakeview Memorial Park.

Be it resolved that a copy of this Resolution be sent to the ***Signs of the Times,*** one to his wife and family, and one retained for the church records.

Written at the request of his pastor and church members.

Shirley J. Donovan
Clerk, Monticello Primitive Baptist Church

MARJORIE M. SMITH

OCTOBER 4, 1906 SEPTEMBER 15, 1980

Sister Marjorie M. Smith was born in Pamlico County, North Carolina to W. M. and Barbara Etta Cayton Moreslender. While a young girl they moved to Beaufort County.

On January 10, 1925, she married Clemon W. Smith, Sr., who survives. To this union were born: Mrs. Thelma S. Tinker and Mrs. Vonnie S. Tinker both of RFD, Belhaven, N. C.; C. W. Smith, Jr. of Plymouth, N. C.; Jimmie Smith of RFD, Belhaven, N. C.; and, Mrs. Sallie S. Winstead of Kennewich, Washington all of whom survive.

Sister Marjorie asked for and received a home in North Creek Primitive Baptist Church second Saturday in March, 1967 and was baptized by her pastor, Elder W. E. Grimes.

Sister Marjorie's walk in life was a manifestation of the Godly humility and charitable heart that she was blessed to have. One such as she did not desire praise, nor would she appreciate any eulogy, but her talk was of her God, her family and the bretheren. Her seat was always filled in the church when she was able.

We all miss her very much; her seat is empty, her bereaved husband sits alone, but none of us wish her back because we feel she is at rest with her Savior.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder J. T. Prescott, assisted by Elder Reeves Smith.

The unusually large floral arrangements and the many friends attending the funeral showed the esteem in which she was held.

This obituary written by order of Conference.

J. T. Prescott, Moderator
Reeves Smith, Church Clerk

EMMA A. PARKER

The Lord has called our dear Sister Emma A. Parker home after a brief illness. She passed from among us on January 26, 1981 and was buried in Black Rock Church Cemetery, Butler, Maryland by her pastor, Elder John D. Wood, with the assistance of Elder James F. Poole.

Sister Emma was born 79 years ago, the daughter of the late Alfred and Merab Parker. She joined Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore on June 6, 1926 and was baptized by the late Elder Joshua T. Rowe.

She served as the clerk for Ebenezer and Black Rock Churches for many years and faithfully attended both. She also was a trustee on the board of the Primitive Baptist Home.

Sister Emma is survived by one sister, Sister Evelyn Mason, Topping, Virginia and a niece, Mrs. Elizabeth Shipley of Catonsville.

Her sweet faith and love for the truth were evident to all who knew her and loved her. She will be greatly missed.

Peggy Osborne

OBITUARY

It pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst our husband and father, Harris Donaldson, on February 10. He has gone from his suffering and pain.

It was a sad loss for us left behind, but it was his eternal gain, for now he is free from the pain he suffered for the past several months.

Though he never united with the visible church, he firmly believed in an all Sovereign God, who has power over all on earth as it is

in Heaven. He had a great compassion for his fellowman.

He was afflicted with leukemia. He had been in and out of the Hospital well over a year, and was gradually getting weaker.

Harris was born near Star City, Ark. (Lincoln County) on October 8, 1912, to the late Robert W. and Estell (Majors) Donaldson. He lived most of his life in Lincoln County, where he and his wife were married in 1936. They were married by the late Elder H. H. Phillips, an Old School Baptist Elder.

He was a carpenter by trade until he retired.

His survivors include his wife, Veola (Womack) Donaldson, four sons, Leon and Wayne of Star City, Ark., Richard of Richland, Wa., Larry of Rison, Ark.; two sisters, Mrs. Marilyn Martin of Greer, S.C., Mrs. Margaret Newton of Shreveport, La; a brother, H. D. Donaldson, of Gould, Ark.; three sisters, Mrs. Jewel Owen and Mrs. Jean Kimbrough of Pine Bluff, Ark., Mrs. Corean Gibson of Star City, Ark.; eighteen grandchildren and two great grandchildren; other relatives and a host of friends.

Funeral services were conducted on Friday February 13, at 10:30 A.M. at Holly Springs Church, near Star City, by Elder G. W. Jones, and Elder David Turner, of Lousiana. It was a beautiful service. Burial was in Holly Springs Cemetery. Many many people, family and friends, paid their respect with their presence, their floral arrangements, and food and love gifts, cards, and letters. May we be made submissive to His will.

In hope,
Veola Donaldson & Family

ELIZABETH M. SADLER

AUGUST 15, 1881 JANUARY 26, 1981

Sister Lizzie as she was affectionately known was born in Pamlico County to Charles and Sarah Marslender, and had she lived until August 15th, would have been 100 years old.

Sister Lizzie was married to George Sadler on March 12, 1899 and to this union 12 children were born. Five died in infancy and two sons, Alton and Julian died just a few years prior to their mother. Her husband died December 3, 1966. She is survived by: Durwood Sadler of Williamston, N.C.; four daughters, Mrs. Edna Selby, Mrs. Emma Sparrow, Mrs. Lula Sparrow and Mrs. Dorothy Sparrow all of Route 2, Belhaven, N.C. and a great number of grandchildren, great grandchildren and great great grandchildren.

Sister Lizzie united with North Creek Primitive Baptist Church Saturday before the second Sunday in May, 1949 and she missed very few meetings until about a year or so before her death. This writer along with her pastor visited her and she would always express her love for the brethern and her desire to go back to her meetings. The last few years that she attended church, her hearing became impaired, and so much of the service she could not understand, but her countenance would light up when she entered the church and her smile would tell you that she loved everyone there.

Both Sister Lizzie and her husband were very charitable. I have been told by many there was always room at their table for anyone, especially children who were hungry.

During the last few years of Sister Lizzie's life, she lived mostly with her daughters and more gracious children I have never known. They did all that anyone could possibly do, and while they were not members of their mother's church, they always prepared large lunches for her when lunch was spread at her church.

Her family will miss her; we at church miss her. Her "I am very well, thank you" will not be heard anymore, but her walk in this life and the many years we were blest to be with her seem to proclaim that she has at last arrived in that celestial city whose builder and maker is God.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor Elder J. T. Prescott and the large floral arrangements and many friends present attested to the love that was hers. She was laid to rest beside her husband in the church cemetery, there to await the redemption of these bodies, when she will hear that precious voice saying "Come ye blest of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world".

By order of conference
J. T. Prescott-Moderator
Reeves O. Smith-Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 8/81 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE EARLY RELIGIOUS LIFE OF ELDER DAVID BARTLEY, MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCTION

The Gentle Reader may want to know the motive and aim of the author in offering this humble tribute to the brotherhood; therefore I may briefly say, the motive is neither ambitious nor selfish, but to glorify God; and the aim is, to both admonish and encourage His dear and loving children, especially the young soldiers of the Cross.

I have been moved to write this outline of my early life in testimony of the righteousness, mercifulness and faithfulness of God. His long-suffering and goodness both in Providence and Grace, in His hand-dealings with me, will be plainly seen by the spiritual and observant reader.

Above all, the events herein narrated clearly show that There is A God - the true and living God, they also show that, "if we believe not, yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself".

We may go astray and wander far out of the way, yet never beyond the limit and power of the most High. "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me". Truly did I find it so in my lost estate, and in my wanderings from the footsteps of the good Shepherd; for He went after me, and brought me back to His fold.

The young minister of the gospel, who may be tempted to flee from the cross, should learn from my painful afflictions and merited chastisements, that "to obey is better than sacrifice", and in keeping the Lord's loving commandments there is a blessed reward of comfort and peace and rest to the soul.

Finally, I desire to leave behind me this Ebenezer of praise to the precious Savior and loving Master, as a testimony to my dear family and brethren all, that He is abundantly able and willing and faithful to save them to the uttermost--even from sin and death and the lowest hell--that come unto God by Him; yea, that the Lord Jesus, the faithful and almighty Shepherd, will never suffer one of His little ones to perish, but will in the end bring us all off more than conquerors over the last enemy, and raise us up to His blessed and holy Heaven.

David Bartley

Crawfordsville, Ind. September, 1896

EARLY RELIGIOUS LIFE
CHAPTER I.
EARLY IMPRESSIONS

This is the forty-second return of my spiritual birthday, which gracious and blessed event was on the 25th of April, 1854; therefore, my mind is moved to begin a relation of my early religious life on this memorable anniversary of the happy day when my spirit first rejoiced in God my Savior, who then reconciled me to Himself in Jesus Christ, His beloved Son and my loving Redeemer.

The next day was my twenty-seventh natural birthday. Both events were in the state of Ohio, and near the beautiful Ohio River.

My beloved parents were Elder John P. and Charity Bartley, and I was their ninth child and sixth son, born unto them the 26th of April, 1827, in their farm home, about eighty miles above the city of Cincinnati. My father was then, and until his departure, a highly esteemed Primitive Baptist Elder or minister, and my amiable mother a faithful member. When I was about three years old my parents moved, with their large family of children, to their new farm home in central Indiana, where I grew up to manhood.

My beloved mother, so much like her name (Charity), was taken home to her Father in heaven, after a lingering illness of six months, when I was a little lad. In her sickness I was her daily waiting-boy, as I was too small to work on the farm; and I remember how kind and gentle, affectionate and patient she was in it all.

In my early boyhood days my budding mind was often seriously impressed with thoughts of my future destiny, of God and eternity; and I was wont to look into the starry heavens with wonder and awe; for even then I felt that I was a stranger, in a strange and mysterious world.

One harvest time, at about the age of ten, I fell very sick, and seemed to be gliding down a steep and black mountain, with nothing beneath my feet but moving gravel, carrying me slowly down--down into a yawning abyss as black as night. This would startle and alarm me, for I feared it was my omen of my death, and that I must sink down into the bottomless pit. But as I grew on in years, I regarded death as far in the distance, and flattered myself that I should prepare to meet it and make my peace with God when I grew up and had enjoyed the pleasures of life. My idea was that I was quite a good, moral boy, having a good heart, and only a few outward sins, of small amount, which I could and should leave off before I came up with death, and then God would be pleased with me. As time went on I became somewhat religious--yet let no one else know it. With some small exceptions, I really thought that I was pleasing God. Being subject to occasional headaches, I thought it was a punishment for some little wrong; therefore, I would silently ask Him to let

thus sink down into perdition in the sight of all the congregation; for I felt that God was about to cut me off in my sins and that His just vengeance was burning against me. But He has ever been better than my fears.

The meeting ended and I went out with the rest, but could not raise my head nor speak to any one. As I stood there alone Miss Charlotte Avery laughingly said to a group of young friends: "Just look at David! I do believe he is trying to be religious". Many years afterward she told me that she remembered that event, and how she regretted speaking in jest.

That night I sought the woods, and for the first time in my young life knelt down in prayer, and with many tears implored God to have mercy upon me and pardon my sins. This was only the beginning of soul-trouble and sorrow; for many weeks and months slowly passed, until year after year was numbered, yet I was not pardoned and saved.

Not many days after the Lord thus opened my blind eyes I tried to persuade myself that it was all the work of Satan, and not the work of the Lord. Thus did I reason: "I am quite young and have not been a bad boy; therefore, why should I feel so deeply troubled and miserable? I will banish these gloomly forebodings, be cheerful and lighthearted, as before, and enjoy myself with my young associates again". For I thought that if this was the Lord's work of conversion, I should be made to feel better and that I was getting good instead of so wretched and bad. But I found it impossible for me to be as before that solemn Sunday; for I would forget my surroundings and my work, and would be aroused and startled by the involuntary outcry of my suffering heart: "Oh, my sins! my cruel sins!"

Finding that it was impossible for me to be mirthful and happy again, or to escape from my heavy burden of sin and guilt, I then besought the Lord more earnestly in prayer, going off to myself at every opportunity, both day and night, to pour out my sorrowful complaints in His ears, weepingly confess my sins, and implore His forgiveness and mercy. Yet all my efforts brought no relief. As time thus went mournfully on, and God seemed not to hear me nor answer my heart-breaking cries for mercy, it occurred to me, when in the woods and on my knees, that I had not abased myself sufficiently before Him, and that if I would prostrate my body upon the earth He might hear my prayer and forgive my sins. Then I cast myself on the leaves, wept and prayed in the bitter anguish of my soul, but this gave me no relief. I could not see that in all my efforts I was still trusting in something that I must do, and expecting the God of salvation to reward me for it. How ignorant I was for grace! At times there would be some abatement of my deep trouble and mourning for a season, but only to return, and then I would feel worse, because I had been careless about my lost condition.

My father took the Signs of the Times, in which I often read of others finding pardon and peace, after a short time of sorrow and mourning, and this led me to think there was no forgiveness for me, or God would have heard my cries. Still, I could not help going off alone to weep, lament and pray, for this was the only way that I could give vent to the oppressive burden and sorrow of my heart. Sometimes I would take the Testament with me in the lonely woods on Sundays, and in deep sympathy sit and read the life of the innocent Son of God, and weep over His cruel persecutions and death, and I wondered why it should have been so.

At last it was awfully certain to me that I was hopelessly lost forever, and was a reprobate, for whom there was no salvation. So terrible was this

conviction I would wander away to myself, walk to and fro, wring my hands and lament aloud under the anguish of despair, fearing reason would forsake me. It seemed to me that my time was short, and then to endless woe I must go. I would piteously plead with God to grant me a place there away from the wicked, where I should not hear His Holy Name blasphemed. For O, I was sick of sin, and loathed it and myself! I wished that I had never been born, or had died in infancy. But all my regrets were unavailing, and it was impossible for me to escape from myself, or change my state.

I wish to go back to the autumn of 1846 and speak of a dangerous attack of a malignant fever, which came near carrying me off. The terror of my mind was so intense that I could not conceal it, and my father noticed it and kindly chided my, saying: "David, if you have to die, meet death with fortitude". This only added to my alarm and dismay, for it convinced me that father despaired of my recovery; and to die unprepared, sinful, guilty, and condemned as I was, overwhelmed my soul in horror, and I could have no fortitude to meet a doom so appalling, for the black despair of my soul was unutterable, and piteous my terror. Yet I could not bear the thought of telling my father or anyone of the awful state I was in; for it seemed too horrible for any one to know of it.

One evening, during my convalescence, my older brother John and my step-sister Jane sat in the open door of my room and sang:

"Awakened by Sinai's awful sound,
My soul in guild and thrall I found, " etc.

This hymn seemed to seal my awful state, and I most keenly felt the fearful truth of the last lines of each stanza:

"The sinner must be born again,
Or sink to endless woe".

My soul shuddered at these solemn words, for I well knew that I was not born again, but my brother and sister knew nothing of the torture they innocently inflicted upon me.

My dear brother John peacefully departed in the triumphant faith of Jesus years ago. It was my sadly sweet privilege to preach on the occasion of his funeral, by his request. Before he fell asleep in Jesus, the resurrection and the life, he told our brother Joseph of his abiding faith and hope in the precious Christ, and that he was peacefully reconciled and willing to depart, only he regretted that his feeling of great unworthiness had hindered him from following his Lord and Master in gospel baptism, which he had long desired to do.

(Continued next month)

Dear Brethren Editors:

The time is here for me to renew my subscription to the Signs and I am enclosing amount necessary for one year and a little extra to use as you see fit.

The dear *Signs* has been coming to my family for over a hundred years - my grandfather took it, then my father, and now I have been a subscriber for many years. I have in my home quite a number of old copies that have been handed down to me, in the early 1900's, 1920's and 1930's. Every once in a while I get some of them out and enjoy reading the writers' articles penned down in those years, some of which I met personally in my early childhood, but their memory still lingers with me. Right now I call to mind two in particular of the old writers, Elders I. R. Greathouse, and J. F. Beeman. Both visited in our home from time to time prior to their passing on to their rest. I have just read the April 1926 issue which contained the obituary of my mother, who passed away in 1924 and my brother who passed away in 1925 at the age of 7 years. Elder Greathouse conducted the funeral of my brother and wrote both of the obituaries.

In the late 1940's or early 1950's we were blessed to have dear Elder Lefferts and Elder Spangler and their

companions to visit our church and in our home near Plant City, Florida, where we were living at the time. The sweet talks and messages they were blessed to deliver lingers in our memory to this present time. Brother Spangler, do you recall the appointment you had at Mt. Enon Church? It was such a precious visit. We have moved around quite a bit since that time and as you can see, we now live in Shreveport, La.

While I do not say I am an "old man", I have been on this earth almost 67 years, and this year will observe my 50th year among the Old School Primitive Baptists. I have been through many trails and tribulations, but truly the Lord has been good to me all the days of my life and I hope I can say with the poet

"Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

We hope and trust the dear Lord will continue to enable you to publish the *Signs* and others to follow you. Brother Spangler, I say this to you, personally, because we have met you and though it has been many years we still think about your visit. May the Lord continue to bless you and we ask an interest in your prayers.

Farewell in the Lord.

A poor sinner saved by grace,
Robert L. Miles

S. Charleston, W. Va.

Dear Editors:

Please renew my subscription for another year to the *Signs*. Use the rest as needed.

I wait eagerly each month for my copy to arrive. I feel it is a God sent paper to console the hearts of His poor sinladen people.

I enjoy all the articles but the poem by Elder J. C. Sikes in the March issue of this year is outstanding. It is God's word as a whole wrapped up in one poem. I have read and reread it over many times, getting so much comfort from it each time.

May God bless all of you to continue sending out His blessed truth.

A sister in sweet hope,
Mrs. Lester Haning

A MONUMENT OF GRACE

Messrs. Editors, -- At the age of fourteen I entered a gentleman's service, as foot boy, and afterwards lived in several large families of distinction. I drank deep into all the sin and folly which is too frequently practiced in great families. In 1839, in the 39th year of my age, I was living butler in a gay family in the North Riding of Yorkshire, where I had been ten years. My master was the brother of a noble lord, and my mistress the daughter of a noble duke. Being at this time a tolerably moral man, I thought myself a good man, and regularly attended church and the sacrament. But, as I now believe in my soul, the set time to favour Zion was come. The Lord laid his afflicting hand upon me, by taking from me my wife, during child birth. As I was very much attached to her, this was a heavy blow. I wandered in the woods and fields, grieving, and asking myself what had done that I should be so afflicted. My distress increased; and, for nearly four months, I tried to get rid of it, by going to public houses and frequenting company, but this made me worse. I could not sleep at night, but often got out of bed to pray, but to whom, at that time, I knew not. I became very weak, and my employers and fellow servants looked upon me as an object of pity, thinking that my grief was in consequence of my bereavement. But the arrow of conviction had entered into my soul, and I was driven almost to despair; crying, sighing, groaning, and praying, night and day. At length, on the 4th of August, 1839, (O, never-to-be-forgotten day!) while pacing my room, about ten o'clock in the morning, I heard a voice say to me, "Look unto me, and be ye saved", and, at the same moment, I saw

Jesus upon the cross (We presume with the eye of faith. Editors) as plain as I now see this paper before me. I can affirm that I heard the voice, saw Jesus, and felt the power; and the tears of godly sorrow which followed no tongue can tell or pen describe. I can testify to the truth of this scripture, "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and mourn". I knew my sins were all forgiven through Jesus Christ, and I exclaimed, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted". At this time the parable of the prodigal son broke in upon my soul with almighty power, and I was feasted upon it day and night for a fortnight. I now began to preach Jesus in the house and amongst my neighbours. I thought I was going to convert many of them, and if they appeared serious I considered the work was half done. When the family was from home I got all the servants to prayer, but my mistress soon put a stop to that when she returned, but I continued to pray for them all, in my own bedroom, for hours together. O what a spirit of persecution did my childish folly bring upon me! My mistress cautioned the servants against listening to me, as I was gone mad. My master told me the servants were all complaining that they could not live with me, as I was always talking about religion, and charged me not to do so. I said I was sure that if I held my peace the stones would cry out. Out of fourteen persons in the house, the housekeeper and kitchen maid were the only persons who did not persecute me. I thought they were my converts. At this time all my sins passed before my eyes like a panoramic view, but I felt no guilt. I was now brought into contact with three clergyman. O how the devil raged in them; they called me insane, and told my master that I was gone mad. How these learned parsons did try to confound me with their Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, but all to no purpose, for my new Master gave me, a poor illiterate fool, words and wisdom which all their college wisdom could not resist. One parson asked me why I should flatter myself that God should have conferred such a favour on me more than my neighbours? I went to church a few times after this, and O how these hirelings did level their guns at me. I many times fell flat upon my face, in my bedroom, so astonished that God should enable me to stand fearless in the presence of these parsons and my employers, and put such words into my mouth to speak unto them.

I was next charged by a popish priest with driving one of his followers mad. He said that I ought to be sent to prison, and went to a certain Catholic duchess, to get her to write to my employers, stating that I was mad and a dangerous character. The devil set on me in consequence of this hot persecution, but the dear Lord soon put all to rights with these words, "I have chosen thee out of the world, therefore the world hateth thee". Soon after this the dear Lord gave me these words, with great power, which followed me for several days, "Count the cost". I felt sure that some fresh trial awaited me, but the words gave me such support that I did not fear. But alas! I did not "count the cost", for my religion has cost me much more than I reckoned for. O, this stripping, inside and out, is painful to flesh and blood! In April, 1840, my master called me into his room; he told me that he was sorry to part with me, not having a single fault to find with me, except my new religion. I believe that my employers had some respect for me before the Lord called me, as the day my dear wife was buried, my master and mistress attended her funeral, and my mistress stood sponsor the same day for my dear baby, when the parson gave it the mark of the beast in the forehead. One trial I met with before I left the family, which was, the practice which is followed, in high life, of ordering servants to say the family are not at home when they are. This is what Mrs.

Opie calls white lying, but, to my conscience, now made tender, it appeared very black lying. My mistress having told all the great folks of her acquaintance that I was gone mad, they seemed half afraid of me when I opened the door. How my soul did pity them, in their fine carriages!

In May, my master discharged me, after eleven years' servitude, telling me at the same time I had turned his house and neighbourhood upside down. This scripture came to my mind with power, "They that have turned the world upside down are come here also". I said, "Sir, unless you know something of this turning upside down before you die, where God is you cannot come". I now left the Church, and joined the Primitive Methodists, or free-will ranters, and so jumped out of the frying pan into the fire, for they set me to work for Christian perfection, and to convert the whole world, yes, even the reprobate part. I bless the Lord he soon brought me from amongst them. At this time I thought all who could talk about religion were religious, and so used to cast my precious pearls freely before swine. I now began to be much concerned about my father's soul, and a very popular church parson set me to work to pray for him, saying that God heard the prayers of a son for a father. O, the hours I prayed for him! but alas! he is now eighty years of age, and, I fear, dead in sin.

From August, 1839, to December 1840, I enjoyed much of the dear Lord's presence, and many sweet seasons in prayer, both public and private. But now came the weaning time. One night, when I went to bed, I enjoyed the Lord's presence in prayer, but when I woke the next morning my best and dearest friend was fled, and left an aching void, which the world, or all that man calls great or good, can never fill. O, what distress of soul I was in! I was afraid that I was deluded. I tried to pray many times a day but could not. I had just commenced business, but my distress of soul was so great that I could not attend to it. I sought out many professors of religion, of different denominations, but none of them understood my complaint. I went to two Baptist preachers, and told them my distress. One of these men told me to exercise faith, and to look out of myself unto Christ; the other asked me if I prayed, and when I told him that I tried to pray twenty times a day but could not, he said, "You give place to the devil, and it is written, 'Resist the devil, and he will flee from you'." Thus the devil, in these blind guides, makes use of scripture to distress a poor soul. I thought, as they were preachers, that they must be right, and myself a deluded character. I was next induced to join a class of professors conducted by the before-mentioned popular Church parson. I attended twice, but found only "death in the pot". I knew not what to do, and as I could find no religious professor who understood my complaint, I thought there never was any one like me. It now came into my mind that, four or five years before, I heard of an old acquaintance, a sailor in his early life, who it was reported had gone mad in consequence of religion, and had become a preacher. I thought that perhaps his madness was something like mine, and I endeavoured to find him out, which I soon did, and fell into conversation with him about religion. Indeed I could talk on no other subject. He seemed to eye me with a jealous look, but when I told him my distress of mind, and he heard my suppressed sighs, he said, "I am glad of your soul trouble; I have been in it myself; these are the trials and straits which all the Lord's people are brought into". I found that this poor old sailor understood my complaint, and I felt a union to him. He then began to explain the difference between law and gospel, which I had never heard before, but when he spoke about the doctrine of election, and the safety of the elect, I got

out of his company as soon as I could, ran home, and upon my knees, in my bedroom, I besought the Lord to keep me evermore out of his company, so awful did the doctrine appear to me, but from him I could not keep. Every time he spoke of empty professors, (as I did not think then that there were any) and election, I ran home, praying to be kept from him; yet I loved the man. At length the dear Lord made matters right with these two portions of his holy word being applied with power, "Every imagination of the thought of the heart is evil, and that continually", and "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me". The first cut up all my duties, and showed me they were nothing worth; the latter convinced me of the truth of the glorious doctrine of election, and of the security of the elect.

I desire to praise God the Father for choosing me, a sinful worm, before time; I desire to give equal praise to God the Son for redeeming me; and also to the blessed Spirit for quickening me. I bless the dear Lord for using this poor old sailor as an instrument in removing that heavy burden from my heart, which had so long oppressed me. When I was first called I thought I should have gone smoothly to my grave, but the Lord the Spirit has, in some measure, taught me the plague of my wretched heart. As to the Lord's dealings with me in Providence since my call by grace, my path has been much crossed in all I have put my hand to; my way is hedged up on all sides, and, in fits of rebellion, darkness, and unbelief, I often say, "All these things are against me." Many have been my days of darkness, and often has the devil presented to my mind poverty, a prison, and a workhouse. I do indeed feel myself a poor, blind, ignorant fool, but at the same time there is a secret something which sweetens all my cares. I was soon led to see that believer's baptism was a divine command, and I desired to add my feeble testimony in defence of that much-despised ordinance. The dear Lord met with and blessed my soul while obeying his commands, so that I found that "to obey is better than sacrifice", and "in keeping his commands there is great reward". I am now joined in church fellowship to very few, very poor, much despised, and persecuted people, the old sailor being one of the door-keepers.

May the God of Jacob bless you in your labour of love, and enable you to lift up the "Gospel Standard".

So prays yours in truth alone,
J. W. T.

Feb. 21, 1843
The Gospel Standard, July 1843

ORDINATION

At the request of Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church, a presbytery was called to examine Brother Jesse Foreman and Brother Joshua Potter and if in their judgement they are qualified, to ordain them as deacons.

The presbytery was composed of Elder Oliver Allen, Elder Sam Jones, Elder J. T. Prescott and Elder Reeves Smith. Deacons present were Bretheren Virgil Gaskill, George Willis, Sims Brickhouse, Earna Marslender and Steadman Brown.

Elder Prescott began the services with hymn and prayer, after which Elder Allen was chosen Moderator and Elder Reeves Smith, Clerk. Elder Prescott was appointed to question the candidates; Elder Sam Jones was appointed to give the ordination prayer; Elder Allen was appointed to give the charge; and, Deacons Virgil Gaskill and Earna Marslender were appointed to present the candidates to the presbytery.

Elder Prescott states that he accepts the judgement of the church, along with his personal knowledge of both men, that they are qualified for the office of deacon.

Elder Allen read 1st Timothy 3rd chapter 8th through 13th verse in his charge to the candidates.

The Ordination prayer by Elder Sam Jones was very touching, begging that they be kept by the Holy Spirit.

Their wives were called forth and asked to

support their husbands in what lay ahead.

A motion was made that the minutes of this meeting be read, second and agreed.

A motion was made that the minutes be received as read, second and agreed.

A motion was made to present both men back to the church as duly ordained deacons, second and agreed.

This meeting was dismissed with prayer by Elder Reeves Smith.

Elder Oliver Allen-Moderator
Elder Reeves Smith-Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

On March 22, 1981, pursuant to a call heretofore sent out by Rehobeth Church for a presbytery to meet on this date for the purpose of the ordination of Brother Doyle Murphy to the office of Deacon of Rehobeth Church, the following Elders and Deacons met and organized themselves into a Presbytery: Elder John Lee Smith, Elder Graydon Smith, Elder David Turner and Elder Lloyd Wall; Deacons Fred Murphy, Frank Pilgreen, John Smith, Cisco Barron, Barney Sullivan, Clifford Wilbanks, and Richard Head.

The Presbytery organized itself by electing Elder David Turner Moderator, and Bro. Cisco Barron as Clerk. Brother Fred Murphy was appointed as spokesman for the church, who then presented Brother Doyle Murphy to the Presbytery.

After due examination of said Brother as to deportment, qualifications, and the state of God's gift to them as a Deacon to the satisfaction of the Presbytery, the Presbytery proceeded to ordain him to the office of Deacon by selecting Elder Graydon Smith to word the prayer and Elder Lloyd Wall to deliver the charge.

Whereupon the Presbytery then proceeded with the ordination by the laying on of hands of the Presbytery and with prayer by Elder Graydon Smith and then by charge delivered by Elder Lloyd Wall.

We the members of the Presbytery commend Deacon Doyle Murphy to all orderly orthodox Primitive Baptists of our same Faith and Order as being sound in doctrine, careful in deportment, and humble in the display of God's gift of the office of Deacon.

The right hand of fellowship was given him by the members of the Presbytery, Rehobeth Church, and Brethren of Sister Churches, and delivered back to the Church as a duly ordained Deacon by the Presbytery and received by the church.

Minutes of the proceedings were read and approved and the Presbytery was adjourned in order with prayer by Brother Frank Pilgreen.

Elder David E. Turner, Moderator
C. C. Barron, Clerk

Dear Elder Spangler;

I enjoyed the trip that we took together with Sister Spangler and my Wife, and in your daughter's home, in Sarasota Florida.

I have been thinking about different scriptures, which I will try to give, or write, I hope that the Lord will direct me to write for the benefit of our people.

"And a man's foes shall be they of his own household." Matt. 10:36.

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." II Timothy 3:12.

All scriptures must be fulfilled. Our persecution comes from the foes that are right among us, members of our own order. Since the Bill of Rights other denominations are not allowed to interfere with our way of worship. Let us all examine our own selves whether we be in the faith. I have never heard of you causing trouble among our people, and I don't think that I ever will; and if I have I do not know anything about it.

May God bless our people to look upon the things of others, not the things of our own.

Elder Spangler I believe if a man is inspired to write a letter as directed by the Spirit, it would be as sound as any of the letters that Paul, or any of the other apostles ever wrote in their day.

Elder Spangler I have no ill will against any one. I hope that we will see true repentance among all of our people. May God lead us in the way of Jesus Christ.

I am not asking for this to be published, neither do object, do as you think best.

Yours in sweet fellowship
(Elder) J. R. Hollandsworth

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Union will be held, the Lord willing, with Mt. Ararat Church (better known as Old Mountain Church), the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in August, 1981. Everyone is cordially invited to come and be with us.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
Sarah H. Barker, Clerk

DIFFICULTY AND SWEETNESS OF GOD'S WILL

Never scarce in all my life did I, under God the Spirit, labour under a doctrine of Scripture more than the one just below. If you observe, therein is included all that is or ever was known of experienced Christianity since the creation of the world. Therein you will observe lukewarmness, and rebellion, and all manner of things, good and bad, equally cut at or supported. The text is this: "Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God:. (Col. 4:12)

From this text I gather what has stunned me many a time, namely, that God has a will. And that Will also embraces the minutest circumstance of our lives, both of bitters and sweets, joys and sorrows. If five sparrows are sold for two farthings, and, as we are assured, are not forgotten by the Heavenly Father; if the very hairs of our head are all numbered; if every idle word and every secret thought is taken into account; I gather from this that the Infinite God is no careless Looker-on, observing and regulating the affairs of the sons of men.

The stature is fixed; the number of our days is appointed, also the boundaries of our habitations,--our days of sorrow and joy, our sinkings and risings, our pleasures and pains. And are all these, even to the least, the smallest circumstances, appointed executively or permissively of God, even to the most exact and nice degree? Is it all weighed out unalterably by Him by whom "actions (not notions) are weighed?" O tremendous "deep!"

I have been long convinced of the folly of striving against God. I believe I pass a good part of my time in communion with God, the Appointer of all things executively or permissively? And how do I pass that time in communion? In dictating? No. I know God has a will, as Epaphras says. My employment in the communion with God is, to find out by the Holy Spirit's goings experimentally in my mind, what that will is? Thus, Enoch, Abraham, and Noah "walked" with God. People walking always together are likely to know a good deal of one another. How certain I am that I shall have all the trouble I am to have! How this makes me cleave with purpose of heart to God! "I have stuck unto thy testimonies". Epaphras labours fervently for all the will of God to be done in us. O the terrible deep!

I have known the time when I have been brim-ful of trouble, my heart almost fit to break. And yet I durst not lift up my little finger to alter anything without God. And I have found that God can alter things better than I can. How he can speak to men (and to me too) out of the whirlwind, or melt them sweetly in the sunshine, to mould them to his secret will!

O how my soul trembles with adoration before Him! Now those who tremble at his threatenings, and those who tremble with delight at his consolations; those who tremble at their own ignorance and a sense of God's

superior wisdom, at their own infinitely less than littleness, (for we are five hundred or ten thousand talents terribly in debt!) and at God's unsearchable greatness; those tremblers thus, these are the men, that living so near God get acquainted by secret revelation (in accordance with Scripture) as to what God's will is.

Epaphras laboured fervently to this end in his prayers. As Hart says, "Accomplish in me all thy will".

But it may be objected, if none besides we are elected, bought with a price, and redeemed thus in particular redemption, that it is a needs-be we must fall into all the sin we are redeemed from. ***But does that encourage me in sin? Just the reverse.*** I know I shall have the rod for my sin. I know it killed the Beloved Redeemer. Thus love and fear make me watch, fight, groan, wrestle, and struggle unto blood against sin, and die, in Christ, to it, in evangelical crucifixion and mortification thereto; insomuch so, that Arminians who trust less or more to their own righteousness, and bitterly reject Christ's righteousnesss imputed by gift as the only possible foundation and salvation; these Arminians, I have long perceived, with their wretched self-righteousness, have not a fiftieth part of the tenderness of conscience that I feel.

Epaphras's fervent labouring certainly embraces both the sorrows and joys we are predestinated to go through, before we launch out of time into the next world.

Epaphras's fervent labouring in his prayers embraces all things that the elect have to go through, and must go through, in the time-state of this present world. And who is sufficient for these things? Excruciating bitters and insupportable sweets; "Stay me with flagons; comfort me with apples; for I am sick of love", and "rivers of tears running down one's eyes" spiritually, because of insupportable troubles: every-day trouble less or more: all is included: as is also every-day comfort more or less; which quickened souls must go through, in their being God's "workmanship". All, all the wondrous catalogue is included in the wondrous grasp of Epaphras's ample prayer!

And who, I ask again, is sufficient for these things? God "will spue" (vulgar word for our refined hypocrisy!) lukewarm Christians out of his mouth. (Rev. 3:16) He will fill backsliders with their own ways. He will keep rebels in a dry land. He will let foolish virgins and wise ones slumber together in professedly experimental churches, for some deep purpose. He will maul the head of pride. He will work contrition, poorness, and trembling, into the souls of his people.

And herein let me make a remark or two. Contrition, poverty, and trembling, which spiritually our first Adam's nature huffs at, are in the sight of God of great price. God will "look" at them. When, alas! the brightest mere knowledge shall pass away as of not the slightest account with God, like the idle noise of a jingling bell or a sounding cymbal.

O the glories, beauties, and grace of ripening to stand complete and perfect in all (the whole of) the will of God! O the labour, continuing, and fervency to this wonderful end! The text says, Epaphras was "always" at it, at this prayer. "Thy will be done", is the A and Z of the alphabet. All his modes, etc., in "prayers", he was thus enabled to drive to this end. And O the immortal sweetness of success and triumph herein, in which severity and comeliness shine! He himself was winning the prize, and travailing for it for others of the elect.

Now, any one "saluting" saints with this doctrine is not well received by many. Here were no perversive loopholes for rebellion, carnality, wordliness, free-will, self-righteousness, or antinomianism. Here, like racers running a race, as Paul says, we are reminded that many run in a race who

DELAWARE ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Delaware Old School Baptist Association will meet with Rock Springs Church, Lancaster Co. Pa. the 5th Sunday of August 1981. Singing will begin at 10:30 a.m.

Rock Springs Church is located just North of the Maryland, Pa. line on highway 222, left side of road.

Lovers of the truth are invited.

SOUTH OUACHITA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The next session of the South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association will convene with Rehobeth Church, located at El Dorado, Arkansas, five miles north on Highway 7 and 1/2 mile west of Williams' Store, beginning on Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1981. We cordially invite everyone who loves the truth as it is in Jesus Christ to visit with us.

C. C. Wilbanks

FIVE MILE CREEK ASSOCIATION

The one hundred fourteenth annual session of the Five Mile Creek Old School Primitive Baptist Association will be held with New Hope Church on Friday and Saturday before, and the third Sunday in September, 1981 (Sept. 18, 19, 20).

New Hope Church is located about eleven miles northeast of Jasper, Alabama, to the right off Highway 69 on Sipsey Road.

All lovers of truth are welcome.

Elder H.C. Moon, Moderator
Route 1, Box 167A
Breman, Alabama
Phone (205) 287-1603

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Seven Mile Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Reedy Prong meeting house in Johnston County, N.C. Services are to begin Friday, September 18th at 11:00 A.M., Saturday the 19th at 9:30 P.M., and Sunday the 20th at 10:30 A.M.

The meeting house is located twelve miles southeast of Benson, N.C. on State Road #1124, between 50 and 55 highways. We invite the Elders, brethren, sisters, and friends to meet with us.

Elder W. D. Godwin, Moderator
Brother James G. Young, Clerk

ORIGINAL SOUTH ARKANSAS ASSOCIATION MEETING

The next session of the Original Pilgrim Rest Church on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1981 (Sept. 18, 18, 20). Pilgrim Rest Church is located off Highway 167 five miles north of Fordyce, Arkansas. Take Highway 273 about 1/2 mile to the church.

We dropped the business part of the Association and hold three days meeting at this same time each year.

Elder J. C. Townley
Route 2, Box 245
Fordyce, Arkansas 71742

THE PASSOVER FEAST, AND THE PROPER GUESTS

JOHN 6:54

"Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

At this speech the Jews take very great offence; yea, numbers of the Lord's nominal disciples kick at it, depart from him, and walk no more with him; nor doth it seem that the Lord's true disciples were altogether pleased, but rather disgusted; hence the Lord's inquiry, "Will ye also go away?" The words that the Lord spoke were spirit, and they were life; but the carnal Jews put carnal constructions upon all that he said, and took it for granted that all who thus fed upon Christ must be cannibals.

Bringing divine mysteries down to carnal reason, which can never reach their divine sublimity, is the sole cause of making Christ Jesus a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence; for by carnal reason they cannot comprehend them, therefore they take offence at, and

reject them, and so stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed. The poor woman of Samaria put her constructions upon Christ's living water as these do upon his flesh and blood; for she could not raise one thought above Jacob's well, nor can these raise one thought above eating real flesh, and drinking real blood.

That depth of Satan, called transubstantiation, took its rise from such scriptures as these, by which foolish notion the Saviour, who is the eternal banquet of poor perishing souls, is turned into a morsel for the bowels, which, with all other meats that perish, is cast out into the draught.

But one might think it strange that the Jews, who had been so long under the ceremonial law, and so long accustomed to offer sacrifices, should see no further than the victim and the altar, when their law was so full of accounts about sin offerings, peace offerings, burnt offerings, and atonements; and, above all, the passover offerings, by which, and under the blood of which, Israel escaped the judgments of God in Egypt.

Moreover, under the law some of their sacrifices were variously distributed: one part was for God, which pointed out satisfaction for sins; another part went to the priests, another to the offerer, and another to those who were invited; and thus it is now, Christ our priest delighted in the redemption of our souls; his meat was to do the will of him that sent him, and to finish his work. The royal priesthood, as Peter calls us, and all who are invited and effectually called to the heavenly feast, find nourishment and satisfaction in Christ for their souls.

Why should mystical food seem such a strange thing, when there is scare a person living who doth not feed mystically upon something? The covetous are said to swallow down riches, and to vomit them up again. God shall cast them out of his belly, Job 20:15, as Judas did when he cast the thirty pieces of silver down in the temple, that is, when the wrath of God had made him sick. The whore of Babylon is said to thirst for the blood of the saints, and to be made drunk with it. The destruction of God's people is a sweet entertainment to their revengeful souls. "The mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness". The prodigal would fain have filled his belly with husks, that is, with a form of godliness without the power. The heretic feedeth on ashes; a deceived heart hath turned him aside, so that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand? (Isa. 44:20) Of Ephriam it is said, when he went to idolatry, that he feedeth on wind, and followeth after the east wind, (Hosea 12:1). Those that hate knowledge, and despise reproof, eat the fruit of their own ways, and are filled with their own devices. (Prov. 1:31) And the souls of transgressors eat violence. Now all these feed in a mystical way, and all of this is said to be spending money for that which is not bread, and labour for that which satisfieth not; which food is only to gratify the carnal mind, or the evil desires of the flesh, for it can never satisfy the desires of a soul conscious of guilt and sensible of his lost estate. Nothing but heavenly food will do for such a distressed sinner, who is searching the scriptures earnestly, in which he hopes to find eternal life; and they are they, saith the Saviour, that testify of me. He finds himself, like the Ethiopian eunuch, too ignorant to come to their spiritual sense, except someone guides him. Now, as there are some who perish for lack of knowledge, it follows that knowledge must be food for those who perish not. "My son, eat thou honey, because it is good, and the honeycomb, which is sweet to thy taste: so shall the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul when thou hast found it; then there shall be a reward, and thine expectation shall not be cut off."

Ezekiel eats the roll, and John the little book; and, when they came to learn, mark, and inwardly digest, the things that were contained in them, they found them as sweet as honey. A knowledge of Christ crucified is heavenly food: and God hath promised to send pastors after his own heart, that shall feed his people with knowledge and understanding.

Again, the self-condemned soul, who knows that he hath broken every precept of God's law, and stands condemned by it, being under a sense of God's wrath, he hungers for righteousness, and Christ crucified is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes; and it is in this, and this only, that he can find peace in his conscience, or acceptance with God.

One who labours under the intolerable weight of sin, and hath nothing before his eyes but his own transgressions, with nothing but bitter reflections within, and expecting nothing but torment in the world to come; it is no wonder that such a soul, hearing that the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin, and that the dear Redeemer made peace and reconciliation by the blood of his cross, I say it is no wonder that such a poor soul thirsts for the atonement. "My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." And so it is to those who feel their real need of them; for such a soul by the eye of faith sees Christ under all the sins of his people, bearing the weight of them in his own body on the tree; enduring the wrath of God and the curse of the law, which are due to such transgressors; and as their surety paying the dreadful debt, and delivering them from going down to the pit by laying down his own life, the price of their ransom.

"The words that I speak unto you are spirit, and they are life." They are not to be carnally or literally understood. I lay down my life a ransom for many, and I shall take it again, and ascend into heaven in that human nature, which I shall offer up a sacrifice for sin, and the heavens will receive me till the restitution of all things, and yet, as the omnipresent God, I am with you always to the end of the world; and, though the world sees me no more, yet ye see me, and I will manifest myself to them that the Father hath given me, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him, and I will come with all the benefits of my cross, and will sup with him, and he with me; and such shall know that my word is spirit, and my word is life, for I shall bring my reward with me. I will remove the veil of ignorance, and feed him with the knowledge of myself, and his interest in me; his guilty conscience shall be satisfied with a joyful sense of the remission of all sins; his dead soul shall have the abundance of life; his hard heart shall melt under my dying love to him; and he shall abound in hope toward me. I will satisfy his self-condemned soul with my everlasting righteousness; I will renew his mind and make it heavenly, and keep it in perfect peace stayed upon me, and I will fill him with love, joy, and consolation: he shall see me as his all sufficient Saviour, and shall trust in me as the faithful and true witness; and shall know his election, redemption, and reconciliation; justification, sanctification, and renovation; and have an assurance of his eternal glorification. I will live in him, and he shall live by the faith of me; for I will come to him, and will dwell in him, and he shall be replenished, filled, and infinitely satisfied with my fulness, and with my goodness; and shall see that all those things are procured to him by my sacrifice, and assured to him by the satisfaction I have made, and by the manifestation of myself to him; then shall he know that my flesh is meat indeed, when he sees me to be a sin-offering, and that I was made a curse to save him from eternal death. And he shall know that my blood is drink indeed, when it purges him from all his

sins, redeems him from the wrath to come, and opens a way for him to eternal bliss; to such an one my word is spirit in the application of it to him, and by the experience, power, and accomplishment, of it in him; and my word is life where I thus quicken a soul, and save it from legal, spiritual, and eternal death. And I will raise him up at the last day.

William Huntington

Strong, Ark. 71765

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed you will find a $5.00 check made out to the ***Signs*** by my son, Alvin Fox, for renewal of my subscription. I hope it reaches you in time for the March issue. I do not want to miss one copy. I like to read the truth as it is in Jesus - published, as well as to hear it preached. It is my meat and drink, when blessed of the Lord to rejoice in the only true and living God, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. These three are one. This God is everywhere present, and nowhere absent. He rules the armies of heaven, and works His will amongst the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay His hand, or say what doest thou. Hymn 356 is on my mind to write:

"I'm not ashamed to own my Lord,
Or to defend His cause;
Maintain the honor of His word,
The glory of His cross.

Jesus, my God, I know His name;
His name is all my trust.
Nor will He put my soul to shame,
Nor let my hope be lost.

Firm as His throne, His promise stands
And He can well secure
What I've committed to His hands
Till the decisive hour.

Then will He own my worthless name
Before His Father's face.
And in the new Jerusalem
Appoint my soul a place."

I desire to write a little concerning the Lord's dealings with me, if not deceived. For many years I felt to be a lost condemned sinner before God, and felt hell would be my doom. One night after retiring, I was calling on the Lord to save me. Around midnight, I was awakened out of a deep sleep with these words in a still small voice, "And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and in sins". I rejoiced in the Lord into the late morning. I've had my doubts and fears from time to time of being one of the Lord's little ones. I've also had seasons of rejoicing with words of comfort, or hearing preaching.

I first heard a few Primitive Baptist Elders preach over the radio. I enjoyed hearing them. Then we moved from Rison, Ark. to Strong, Ark., where we were blessed of the Lord to attend Good Hope Church near Strong. We heard able ministers preach there, as well as other churches of the Primitive Baptist faith. I enjoyed hearing all of them. I desired to follow my Lord in baptism, and the watery grave a long time before I did. I hope it was of the Lord. I went before Good Hope Church in 1964 in July, was received by the church, and baptized by Elder Hudson in August of the same year.

When I was baptized I know it was not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God.

Before becoming a member of the church I had a few dreams that was of comfort to me. I will write about one. I dreamed I was walking behind the Lord, in His footsteps. I thought the graves were opening up of the dead. I was made to hope that I was one of the dead that had part in the first resurrection. Even after being quickened, I went through a long period feeling to be under the law and its curse, until Christ was formed in me, "Christ in you, the Hope of glory", and made me to know He was the end of the law unto righteousness to everyone that believeth. These words also came to me, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world". "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of

God, not of works lest any man should boast. We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them".

This is only a few evidences for a reason of a sweet hope in Jesus. I am sometimes made to believe He is my Friend, Husband, Prophet, Priest, King, my all in all. I still feel to be sinful, and wretched, much of the time, full of short comings, and come short of the glory of God.

I'll bring this to a close. With love to all the household of faith.

Mrs. Lula B. Fox

"And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God, for I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified". (I Cor. 1:1,2)

If I am not mistaken, I believe this. My reason for believing this is because that He supplies everything that a poor sinner has or will ever need. But that, within itself, is not enough to preach. I now see the perking up of eyes; I behold the shrug of shoulders.

I have been told repeatedly that I do not have any need to ever mention the devil's name. Let us see. Thousands of years ago there was a servant of God by the name of Job. Ever so often I am reminded that God does not have anything to do with the devil or with wickedness. Is that right? I do hope that I desire to be right. This much I am sure about. The devil had not bothered Job. If God does not in some way beyond my comprehension, carry the history of His people to the devil, then why did God call the attention of the devil to Job? If, as I have heard, God had rather Job not ever been tried as he was tried, why did God endanger poor old Job in this way? From a human standpoint, if God had rather Job not be tried, He acted in such a way that His "rather" was thwarted indeed.

But your uneasiness is out of place. I am not going to place the devil on a parallel with God. He was the Creator when He called the attention of Job to the devil. He was the Potter all of the time and even though God did call attention to the devil of His servant Job, yet Job did not recognize the devil in any of his trials. He knew who was trying him. He knew that with David, "all his times were in God's hands", and ultimately and finally, and to the praise an honor and glory of His majesty, it was He that was praised in it all, and the works of the devil spoiled.

Everything is in the hands of Jehovah-God. And yet I am not the least bit afraid to declare to you that the devil met the Saviour in the wilderness; What love is this; what a glorious doctrine is this. He went willingly for the sake of His people. We all have succumbed to temptation, but He did not. Satan thought that the Saviour could be enticed, but He stood.

Every craftsman counts up the cost before the building or the work is started. The cost of saving God's children has not been left to a lack of discernment in the cost. Every step and every work for the perfecting and bringing home to glory was summed up in the eternal mind of God in eternity and in manifestation perfected by Jesus Christ, and successfully and efficiently the Holy Spirit is now engaged in perfecting that which concerns each heir of promise.

Bless His dear name, He is the Amen of the New Covenant. All of the New Covenant promises are in him yea, and in him amen, to the glory of God.

As Job and David and Paul, and I humbly hope this sinner, are bound to give thanks unto God who broke our being bound unto Satan and that we, together with all those perfected in Him, are now free, which they could not have been by the strength of the law.

Elder W. D. Griffin

BOOK NOTICE

It gives me great pleasure to announce the re-printing of the book ***"TRIED IN THE FURNACE"*** by Elder E. J. Lambert, my Dad.

The book was re-printed from an original book. The hard cover is red with gold lettering. The author's obituary has been added in the back of the book.

The price of each book is $5.00, postage and handling $1.10. Arkansas residents add .15 for sales tax.

BOOKS MAY BE ORDERED FROM:
Charles T. Lambert
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Hot Springs, Arkansas 71901

(The Editors of the ***Signs*** are glad to recommend this book)

EDITORIAL

SERMON BY ELDER D. V. SPANGLER PREACHED AT STAUNTON RIVER UNION NOVEMBER 30, 1980

I've been favored to attend this meeting both days, yesterday and today. Part of the enjoyment of the meeting is to hear our own ministers speak, as well as the visitors. Now would you sing the first and the last verse of Hymn 129:

"How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
When those who love the Lord
In one another's peace delight,
And thus fulfill his word;

Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

If I remember correctly it was 56 years ago this year that I first visited this place, at the Association of 1924. Brother Payne tells me it was then. I remember visiting a home just out of town, and trying to speak to a woman dying with tuberculosis. There probably weren't over half a dozen of us there that evening. I spent the night with Brother Pickrel's father that night. Those are some things I remember of that meeting.

I would like to offer some comments from the 11th chapter of the Book of Hebrews, the Lord willing. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

As we think on this wonderful chapter our mind is moved on to the next chapter, where the apostle Paul refers to the saints being compassed about with so great cloud of witnesses. Now this cloud of witnesses is numbered and identified in the 11th chapter. Paul said, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us,....." (Heb. 12:1). Faith is referred to by Paul as substance; the substance of things hoped for. What do we mean by faith being the substance of things hoped for? What is that substance? It's easier to ask questions than it is to answer them, I have found. But it is the embodiment of God's truth revealed in the heart that embraces all of God's truth in substance. That's faith. It's not spirit, an intangible spirit, it's substance. And it's a substance of things hoped for in the heart of a person. I don't believe people who know this truth will have to die to know about heaven.

The modern doctrine of men is, and it's the dividing line between all truth and error, that we are saved by faith through grace. That sounds simple, doesn't it? But it doesn't ring true. They put faith in front of grace and all false doctrines do that now, just the same as they did centuries ago. But the Bible says, "By grace are you saved through faith". We must never put faith ahead of grace. It would be impossible, wouldn't it? It's a substance, and it's a substance without which a person never will please God. For without faith it is impossible to please God. What is the substance? It is the substance of things hoped for.

I heard a man speak in Alabama this

fall, I can't remember exactly what he said, but I know it left a nice, good feeling in me: That heaven would be just exactly what we had longed for and he couldn't describe what it would be.

"For by it the elders obtained a good report". Are these elders of the Jewish synagogue? No! These elders are the prophets and those ancient ones of old who left upon record the testimony of Christ, because the spirit of Christ is the spirit of prophecy. No one ever prophesied who didn't have the Spirit of Christ, of things that were to come to pass. It's a testimony of Christ. By it the elders obtained a good report.

"Through faith (now this was by faith), we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God". Who is it who knows in this world today, how the world was made? No one except one who has the faith that God has given. The world, by wisdom, knew not God. "The natural man receives not the things of the spirit, neither indeed can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned". All the scientists, all the theologians, all the astronomers, all of those who suppose they know how the world was made, and they are trying to tell us about it; they don't know unless they also have the faith Paul speaks about in this chapter. For Paul said, "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God". Nothing short of that. And I had rather believe a man who hardly knows his right hand from his left hand in whom God had planted a faith in the Lord Jesus Christ than to believe the man who knows it all, hadn't you? They tell us how the world was framed, and how man came from a monkey--that's man's doctrine. But they haven't told us where the monkey came from.

"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God". Yes, it's something within the soul and heart of a poor child of God that knows God made this world and hung it upon nothing. There's something deep in those that have an understanding of our immutable and eternal God that causes them not to question the power that made this world. I don't question it, and I thank God I don't. Do you thank God you don't?

Paul said, "we understand", you can't tell it, you can't explain, but you understand it! The worlds were framed by the word of God. How many worlds? All worlds? The scientists, the astronomers are still finding planets floating around in outer space as they call it. Who made those planets? God Almighty! Who controls those planets? God Almighty! The same power that made all things still controls all things; even from the falling of a sparrow to the dissolution of a world. This blessed truth causes something to well up in the heart that knows the God I'm talking about, to praise and honor and glorify Him, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. Paul says, "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things that are not seen", that which the carnal mind of men can't see. For the things that are visible, in creation, we see them, but the things of faith are things that are invisible. There's an invisible God that is revealed in the heart of sinners. The man next door to that sinner who has such a revelation wouldn't know what was going on if God didn't show him, too.

I remember years ago I was walking up a street in New York City. I was meditating about the things I believe. I thought, "You reckon the Lord knows I'm in New York? You suppose He knows everybody I see going down this street?" The Lord said the sparrow doesn't fall without Him. The very hairs of our head are all numbered. And I said, "Yes, Lord, you know every one that goes down the street".

He hung the world on nothing. He made it out of nothing. And the Bible says so. He didn't need anything to hang the world on. What's it upheld by?

It's upheld by His own power. When it's time to bring it to an end, He'll do so and men won't hasten it nor hinder it one moment.

I'm glad - thankful - I believe this doctrine. I've believed it for nearly sixty years - I think its fifty-six years. I still believe in the doctrine I started out with nearly fifty-six years ago and that's what I try to preach among you brethren. And I'll leave here today believing it. We understand the worlds were framed by the word of God.

"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain". What made the difference? I'll tell you what made the difference. God Almighty giving him faith in Himself (in God) made the difference. He wouldn't have known to bring a lamb to God if God hadn't given him faith to see the true Lamb of God. I said some time ago that it wasn't by chance the lamb had the humility it had. It wasn't just an instinct to come, like an animal's instinct, for God Almighty gave the lamb as a type of His son.

I believe that even the dumb brute, (and probably you won't agree with me and if you don't that's all right) acknowledges God more than man does when left to himself. He (the dumb brute) has an instinct, I don't know what it is, but God gave it to him. And sometimes I wonder, I wonder, I wonder about it. But the poet said:

"All nature owns his guardian care
In Him we live and move;
But nobler benefits declare
The wonders of His love.

Nobler benefits!

Abel brings a lamb. Who told him what to bring? The Almighty God gave him faith to see the lamb and that's why he brought it, as typical of the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. A more excellent sacrifice! Cain made a sacrifice too, but all he had to bring was what he produced with his own hands, and that's all that false religion brings today - that which they produce themselves. God had respect to Abel and He had no respect for Cain or his offering. The dividing line between false religion and true religion is right here. And it still continues that way and will be until God Almighty ends this world.

"....by which he obtained witness that he was righteous." Witness from whom? From God Almighty, that's who. "God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh". What do you mean by Abel being dead, and yet speaking? How could he speak when he's dead? That first cry that ever went from earth to heaven was the cry of blood; and whose blood was it? It was Abel's. Yes, he had a voice: that blood that ran down on the ground cried to heaven. And it was the first cry that went from man to God; the blood of that innocent person. It was the voice of him being dead and yet speaketh. Where did it run to, that blood of Abel? It ran down on the ground. And we are the ground, aren't we? And it cried to heaven. There are two words that are interchangable: one is the word "blood" and the other is the word "life". Where do you find the word "blood" you can say "life" and the life of everything is in its blood.

"By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." He took that man right out of the world and carried him to heaven. I believe when the Lord comes again that those of His people still living, He will take out of the world into heaven. Don't you all believe that? Paul said, "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which

are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Won't that be a wonderful thing? The Lord just takes us up to heaven. He is going to do some that way. It may be me! It may be you! But it is going to happen. But why? Because God Almighty said it would. And we don't need anything else.

"For without faith it is impossible to please God." What does it say? "Without faith it is impossible to please God". All so called preaching, all the revivals in the world, all the scheming of men has never substituted for faith. Somebody says, "How do you get faith?" It is the gift of God. And the next verse--(I don't want to preach too long. These brethren are nice to me, unworthy as I am, and I love them. I love you brethren for Christ's sake--) the next verse says, "He that cometh to God must believe that he is". He is what? That He is God, that's what I'm talking about. There is no such thing as coming to God apart from Christ. Our Saviour said, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."

(And here the tape ended. Elder Spangler spoke for a very few minutes longer and I regret I did not get it all but the words he spoke were so beautiful I wanted others to see them on paper.)

Transcribed by Sister Reidy Pickral

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OBITUARIES

DELLA JESSUP WILLARD

In sadness I attempt to comply with the request that I write in memory of our dear Sister, Della Jessup Willard. She was born July 26, 1892, and passed from this life January 9, 1981, at the age of 88 years. She leaves to mourn her passing her husband, Brother Hobart Willard; five daughters, Mrs. Ollie W. Sharp, Mrs. Belva W. Davis, Mrs. Elsie W. Banks, Mrs. Pauline Hamrick, Mrs. Trudy Cloud; one son, Mr. Lenford Willard; 14 grandchildren and 23 great grandchildren. Sister Willard united with the church on April 29, 1916, and was baptized June 11, 1916, by Elder Jim Dickerson. She attended her church as long as her health permitted.

Her funeral was conducted in Hillsville Funeral Home by Elder Hale Terry, and she was laid to rest in the family cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour.

Sister Willard is greatly missed by her family, brethren, and friends, but may the

family and we at Bell Spur Church be reconciled to our loss and to God's will. Bell Spur Church, while in conference February 14,1981, requested the above be written and a copy be sent to the ***Signs of the Times*** for publication, a copy recorded on our church book, and a copy to the family.

Ilene H. Clifton, Clerk

MURL JONES

Murl Jones, of Nashville, Ark., died December 22, 1979, age 85 years 10 months, and 22 days, in a Hope Hospital. He was not a member of any earthly church, but was a strong believer in the predestination of all things. He attended church as long as he was able and went to all the Associations when possible.

He leaves his wife, 3 sons and 3 daughters and a number of grandchildren and 6 sisters.

I feel he is one of the Lord's chosen and is at rest until the resurrection when he will be with his Lord and Saviour. He loved the old Baptist Church.

Written in hope that I will be among those. Pray for me if you have a mind.

Mrs. Murl Jones

MYRTHA ALTIZER GORDON

Myrtha Altizer Gordon died in the Meadowbrook Nursing Home in Shawsville, Virginia on January 3, 1981. She was 91 years, 7 months, 14 days old.

She was the youngest of six children born to William H. and Angeline Graham Altizer. She was born on May 19, 1889, at their home near Riner in Montgomery County, Virginia.

She was married to Walter Fount Gordon of Christiansburg, Virginia on June 1, 1922. Her husband died January 26, 1958. After his death she lived alone in Riner.

Mrs. Gordon united with the Valley View Primitive Baptist Church in July, 1930, and was baptized by Elder Lonnie Cummings.

Although she was badly crippled with arthritis, she attended church when she was able. She enjoyed the church service and the fellowship of the church meant a great deal to her.

Funeral services were held at the Richardson-Horne Funeral Home Chapel on January 5, 1981. They were conducted by her pastor, Elder Raymond Goad. Her body was laid to rest in Sunset Cemetery in Christiansburg. She is survived by five nieces and four nephews.

We remember her love of God and the Church, her kindness to relatives, friends, and neighbors, and how uncomplaining she was, even though she suffered greatly with arthritis. She is sadly missed.

Written at the request of the Valley View Primitive Baptist Church by her niece.

Reba Grim Rasnic

SISTER EVA ROBERSON LEGGETT

A devout Christian and a believer in the doctrine and faith that was once delivered to the saints, has passed from our midst. She died after a short illness in Martin General Hospital on January 11, 1981, at the age of 86 years. She was born in Pitt County of Orlando and Melissa Moore Roberson, on March 2, 1895.

She was married to W. S. (Jack) Leggett in 1925, who proceded her in death several years. She is survived by one son, W. S. (Jack) Leggett, Jr., and four step-daughers; Mrs. Betty Howard, Mrs. Ruby Smithwick, Mrs. Hattie Taylor, and Miss Eula Mae Leggett. She also leaves to mourn her passing several grandchildren, step grandchildren, step great grandchildren, and one sister, Mrs. Hattie White.

A member of Spring Green Primitive Baptist Church for many years, she was a devoted member, always present at meeting time, ever expressing her love for the brethren. She was loved by those that knew her, especially the members of her church, and the sister churches.

Her funeral was conducted at Bigg's Funeral Home in Williamston, N.C., on January 13, 1981, by Elders Joseph A. Leggett and Marvin E. Garner, also assisting was J. N. Baggett.

She was laid to rest in the church yard cemetery at Spring Green Church, to await the resurrection when the Son of God the blessed Lord Jesus Christ, shall return and take with Himself the jewels of His mercy to that place prepared for them that love Him.

Done by order of conference Saturday before the fourth Sunday in January, 1981.

Elder Joseph A. Leggett, Moderator
Mary J. Jenkins, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 9/81 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE EARLY RELIGIOUS LIFE OF ELDER DAVID BARTLEY MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL

(Continued from last month.)

CHAPTER III.
LOST

As I grew older and mind was more matured, I became deeply exercised about the way of salvation, or how a man can be just with God. For I could see no possible way for the salvation of a guilty sinner, without dishonoring the law and justice of God--and this could not be, I knew. My mind most seriously dwelt upon this about three years, I think. Finally, as I could not understand how it was possible for me to be saved, I wrote a long letter to Elder Wilson Thompson, telling him my troubles (and I think this was the first time I ever told any one of my woeful condition). I told him that I well understood how God, my Creator, Lawgiver, and Judge, was just in my everlasting condemnation, for I was sinful, wicked and guilty in His sight, and also in my own eyes, but how the same God, sitting in judgement upon my case and trying me by His holy law, which I had violated, could pardon and save me and yet remain just, was impossible for me to understand. Therefore, I asked him to tell me how this could be; for I had the greatest confidence in him. That God is holy, just and good, I believed, and His law was holy, therefore, I could not ask nor hope to be saved at the injury of justice.

Dear Elder Thompson sent me a long letter in answer, tenderly and ably setting forth the glorious mystery of

moment, but instead of pardon and peace filling my heart with joy and gladness the hardened indifference of sullen despair and reprobation took possession of me, and I soon felt that I had passed into the hands of Satan, to be buffeted and tormented. Instantly the most horrid and blasphemous thoughts were injected into my mind with the rapidity of lightning, and I was powerless to prevent it. Not for the world would I have told my wife of this dreadful change in my state, and I could not say a word, but soon arose under the awful conviction that I was a vile and hardened reprobate, for whom there was no hope, nor pardon, nor mercy.

CHAPTER IV.

TEMPTATIONS

Now I went forth into life again, but worse than before--alas! into a living torment, worse than death. True, I had ceased to weep and mourn and pray, but so far from being filled with love and peace and praise, my heart was hardened, my life was more bitter than death, and my lips would utter vile curses, for which I would immediately loathe myself.

The former years of deep mourning, heart-penitence and tearful supplications were blessed, when measured by the following months and years of horrible temptations and hardened despair. For now I was doubly sure God had cast me off forever, and that I was a Satan-abandoned reprobate, or given over to him to be tormented, "having no hope, and without God in the world" This was fearful.

Never before had I used profane words, but would have been shocked at the thought of profanity, but now the most horrid curses were darted through my mind, and when vexed, they would break out in words, in spite of my efforts to prevent it, and this caused me to hate myself and my wretched life. Oh! how could I be otherwise than most hateful in the sight of Him who is infinitely holy?

In the time of my mourning over my lost condition I had tried to solace myself with the fact that I had lived a moral life, but now I realized that my very nature was a fountain of iniquity, and this overwhelmed me in the deepest self-abhorrence. For I was made to understand that, by lineal descent from the corrupted head of the human race, there had come down to me a corrupt existence, as a poisoned fountain, so that in every fiber of my being I was vile.

Now all this so embittered my blighted life that I felt it would be better to die, because I was only adding sin and making my deplorable case worse and worse; and my idea was that I should sin no more after being released from mortality; therefore, I was fearfully tempted to seek death. Indeed, on one occasion Satan drove me to the verge of self-destruction. I was plowing in a field of corn, and, becoming fretted at the horse, cursed it bitterly, and then the anguish of my spirit seemed unendurable. So, leaving the field, I entered a grove in the state of distraction, wanting to seek relief in some way; and there I verily felt the presence of Satan at my right hand, and that I was in his hateful power. I piteously asked him to release me from his horrid grasp, and audibly said: "Oh! have you not tormented me long enough?" I shudder to relate that the next moment I was impelled to cast myself on the ground, place the point of my dirk-knife over my heart, with my right hand on the handle, and the thought ran through my mind: "How quick I could end this miserable existence". But at that moment my hand became passive and powerless, as if arrested, and I said: "I cannot now, but I will soon". Never again was I so fearfully tempted. The Lord would suffer the tempter to go no further, but made a way for my escape.

As in the time of my mourning I sought to hide my troubles from those

about me, so now I could not bear the thought of any one knowing what a profane and miserable reprobate I was; therefore, only when alone would I utter the tormenting thoughts of vile profanity which were darted through my tortured mind. So I was greatly mortified on learning from my wife that she had been shocked by overhearing me once. Yet I knew the Omniscient One saw me as I was.

At this time my father preached in the settlement every alternate Sunday, and I usually attended. But I have a vivid remembrance of only one sermon. It was upon God's election and predestination of His people unto holiness and divine sonship. I felt within me a spirit of bitter irreconcilation and anger against this doctrine, and mentally saying, "I cannot and will not hear it", I left the house; for I felt that it was against me and cut me off. My intention was to go home, but while still within hearing of my father's voice my angry spirit gave way, a strong desire to return filled my heart. I halted and listened; I stood irresolute and trembling, and soon felt subdued, and contritely walked back in the house and heard the close of the sermon.

From that time I felt this opposition and hatred to God's righteous will no more; for I knew that He was infinitely wise and holy. But this rebellion in my heart at that time prepared me to ever after bear with and pity those who may feel as I then did, rather than condemn them; for, as Jesus said on the cross, "They know not what they do". By nature we were all the children of wrath, and God only can reconcile the poor, rebellious sinner to Himself, and give him the spirit of peace and a heart to love Him. Jesus alone can say to the angry waves: "Peace, be still".

At last those horrid and fiery temptations were taken away from me at times, and then my hard heart would become tender under a feeling sense of the goodness of God, and my despairing and bitter spirit would be filled with sweet contrition. At such times my soul began again to cry out to God in prayer, and tears once more came to my relief. This was at the breaking of day to my darkened, chilled and famishing soul, after a long and fearful night in a horrible wilderness. O, the day-dawn and the day-star did indeed begin to arise in my hopeless heart! But, like the murmuring children of Israel, I wandered back and forth in the great and terrible wilderness a long time, until my soul was deeply humbled and shown that there was no goodness in me, before the merciful God of salvation delivered me out of the hand of my fierce tormentor, and brought me out of black despair into the light of His sweet and soul-cheering countenance. I can most truly say that my soul longed for His mercy, and I was led to feel that His favor was better than life. Therefore, with my whole heart I again sought the Lord in earnest, fervent supplication and prayer.

CHAPTER V

"THE MORNING COMETH"

At times, when riding alone over the beautiful, wild prairies of Illinois, and beholding the wonderful works of God, as evidences of His Being and power and goodness, my adoring spirit would implore Him aloud to be pleased to mercifully deliver me from the fowler's snare, from the power of the devil, and from the chains of darkness and bonds of sin and guilt, and give me a heart to love Him; that I might spend the rest of my time in His service and the service of His people. And, blessed be His holy name! the Lord out of His holy heaven heard my plaintive cries, pitied my forlorn state, my anguish and groans, rebuked my fierce accuser, and mercifully gave me freedom and rest from my long captivity and bitter temptations.

Yet, for a long time after this, I knew nothing of the way of life and salvation,

for I was as ignorant and helpless as an infant, and, indeed, very much like a passive child, conscious only that it exists. The years of my mourning and the time of my captivity to Satan had passed away, still I was not saved, and had no evidence that God loved me. It is true that I now had a feeling sense of His goodness to me as His unworthy creature, but that I either was or ever should be His child seemed impossible; for while He was infinitely holy, my past terrible experience had convinced me that I was wofully destitute of the least bit of righteousness or goodness. I felt the truth of the Scripture that says, "without holiness no man can see the Lord", therefore I could not hope to ever dwell in His holy presence. The time had been when I vainly hoped to become better by repentance and prayer and ceasing from sin, but all this had fearfully failed me and I had now ceased from my own works, yet was utterly empty, destitute and poor. This I knew and felt. How, then, could I hope to ever dwell with God in holy heaven? Although this was the all-absorbing desire of my heart and dearer than life, yet it seemed impossible to me.

At this time the awful sense and weight of sin and guilt and the fear of torment were gone from me, it is true, although I knew not when or why or how, and instead a spirit and feeling of quiet submission to the will of God filled my heart. If saved, I knew not how, if lost, I felt that it was just. Although I had no hope, yet I was not in the black despair of the fearful past. I may truly say, I wanted to sin no more. My sincere desire was to please and serve God, but I knew not how to do this; neither had I any power. All was mysterious to me, and even myself was a mystery.

With earnest wish to honor God and be useful to my fellow-creatures while I lived, I was led to engage in the study of medicine, and had finally entered a medical college in Cincinnati. While there I wrote a letter to my widowed sister Sophia, relating to her some of my religious exercises and troubles. She read my letter to her pastor, Elder McQueary of the Conn's Creek church, and each of them wrote to me. On our way to the college Tuesday morning, April 25, 1854, I and my room-mates called at the post-office and these letters were received. I felt then I must return to my room and read them alone, and sent in my excuse to the faculty by the others. The letters revived all my past experience and were read with many tears. Elder McQueary advised and exhorted me in a fatherly way to come home to the church, do my duty and let it have my usefulness. He said that I was trying to place my mind and studies upon a vocation that the Lord had not intended me for, but He had another work for me. This came as a prophecy to me, and it deeply affected me; for I was ardently devoted to the healing art, and could not bear the thought of giving it up. I wept and prayed over these things until noon. The students urged me to return with them after dinner, but I again sent in my excuse, for I felt that I must be alone and commune with God. So I turned to the Bible for guidance and help; then knelt in earnest and tearful prayer to Him, beseeching Him to teach me His will. I felt to lie passive in His arms, and was willing to be anything or nothing, just as He would have me. There was nothing else I so desired as that I might be saved, and then be in the church with the Lord's blessed people. Long had I believed that He had a saved people and church in the world; but alas! I also felt that I was far, far away from them, as one alone on earth--an outcast.

So, after much heart-searching, I felt that it was impossible for me to go to the church and ask it to receive and baptize me. Jesus said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved". This shut me out, because I was not a believer in the Lord Jesus; for I was as ignorant of the way of salvation through Him as the benighted heathen, and did not

understand how I could be saved. Therefore, alone in the afternoon, I took up a pen to write to Elder McQueary to tell him that I could not comply with his kind request, and why I could not, although it would be to me the most blessed and happy privilege if I were entitled to it; but I had learned from the blessed Bible that believers in Jesus only had the divine right to this sacred ordinance and membership in the gospel church, and that it was not given me to believe in Him.

CHAPTER VI.
SAVED!

O, how shall I fully set forth the wonderful revelation that the loving Father was pleased to give me just then? For when I was about to write that I could not go to the church because I was not a believer, that moment I did believe! yea, Jesus was revealed to me, the Lord, my righteousness! and with the eyes of my understanding I beheld Him in His holiness and exaltation as my altogether lovely Savior! Sweet peace then filled my entire being and my heart went out in love to God, my adored Father in heaven! O, it was so unlooked for, and so wondrous strange and new and heavenly! God, in Christ, had reconciled me to Himself, and my peace was perfect. Unto me the Sun of righteousness had risen with healing in His wings of life and light, and the long night of darkness was past. His perfect love had cast out all fear. The chief One among ten thousand was my Beloved, and He had loved me and owned me as His. How blessed! Jesus had died on the cross for me, and now He lived in me and I in Him. The salvation that was of Him was complete and glorious.

My loving heart at once went out to His brethren, the dear children of God, and the church that Christ loved and gave Himself for. And so I soon went on with my letter and told my now dear Brother McQueary of this divinely-given faith in Jesus, and that in Him I was justified and saved, for He had covered me with the robe of righteousness and clothed me with the garments of salvation. So I told him that I was now more than willing to comply with his kind appeal to come home to the church, and would be at their May meeting, if it was the will of the Lord. Then I also wrote to my sister and wife of my sweet peace and joy in the Lord, who had saved me from the horrible pit of everlasting destruction. I now felt as a little child in my Father's kingdom, and that it would be my delight to do His righteous will. To Elder McQueary I said, "I am humble enough and willing to be anything or nothing, just as God will".

The ensuing Thursday night, as we were all silently occupied with our class work, Dr. Bland (a student) came in with an old man, and to my glad surprise Elder McQueary stood before me! It had been years since I had seen him--and O, what years they had been to me! He was on his way to a church some miles from the city, and had sought me out. The next morning we found the business place of Brother Howell, and in the evening we rode out home with him to attend the meetings on Saturday and Sunday. As Elder McQueary had not received my letter, I told him of my happy faith in Jesus, and he rejoiced with me.

This was the first time I had been in the country since spring and adorned nature in beauty and loveliness, and when I walked out the next morning at sunrise it seemed that I was in a bright, new world of charming beauty and praise, and my spirit was in a transport of delight and love. Under the preaching that day and the next my faith in the Lord Jesus was made to abound, and my heart was full of comfort, for it was the first time I had ever known the joyful sound of the gospel, the glad tidings of salvation.

But the dear old Elder cast a shadow over the sunlight of my soul by saying to

a company of Baptists at Brother Howell's: "I am neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, yet mark my words, the next time you hear of our young friend David he will be preaching the gospel".

When I returned to the college on Monday and tried to resume my studies it soon became evident to me that my mind and heart and interests were no longer there; that "old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new". In vain I tried to keep up with my class as before, for I could not. The Bible had now become my text-book and the word of God was my meat and drink. So, after a few days' trial and failure, I gave it up and returned home to Illinois. My controlling desire now was to go home to my friends and tell them what great things the Lord had done for me, and how He had had compassion on me when I was ready to perish. But on account of the overflowed Wabash River we could not go until late in May, when I and my wife and little daughter Mary arrived at the home of my sister Sophia, near the dear old home of our departed parents and the church that they loved so well, which our father served as minister many, many years.

(Continued next month)

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ORIGINAL SOUTH ARKANSAS ASSOCIATION MEETING

The next session is to be at Pilgrim Rest Church on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1981 (Sept. 18, 19, 20). Pilgrim Rest Church is located off Highway 167 five miles north of Fordyce, Arkansas. Take Highway 273 about 1/2 mile to the church.

We dropped the business part of the Association and hold three days meeting at this same time each year.

Elder J. C. Townley
Route 2, Box 245
Fordyce, Arkansas 71742

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Seven Mile Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Reedy Prong meeting house in Johnston County, N.C. Services are to begin Friday, September 18th at 11:00 A.M., Saturday the 19th at 9:30 A.M., and Sunday the 20th at 10:30 A.M.

The meeting house is located twelve miles southeast of Benson, N.C. on State Road #1124, between 50 and 55 highways. We invite the Elders, brethren, sisters, and friends to meet with us.

Elder W. D. Godwin, Moderator
Brother James G. Young, Clerk

FIVE MILE CREEK ASSOCIATION

The one hundred fourteenth annual session of the Five Mile Creek Old School Primitive Baptist Association will be held with New Hope Church on Friday and Saturday before, and the third Sunday in September, 1981 (Sept. 18, 19, 20).

debtor to Sovereign Mercy rant about the works, wisdom, power, or merit of the creature!? I may never be able to express myself in a satisfactory manner concerning the grace, mercy, power, wisdom, and glorious Sovereignty of the Eternal Jehovah; but may my hands rot with leprosy and my eyes be eaten by worms before I exalt the creature and give human merit a chance to vie with Divine Grace!

From time to time the Gracious God of Heaven is pleased to shine into this desolate desert and cause it to blossom as the rose - the Rose of Sharon, our Altogether Lovely Lord Jesus Christ. Paul prayed for the Philippians, that they might be "filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." (Phil. 1:11) The fruits (not dead works) of righteousness are "By Jesus Christ," He is the author and finisher of our faith. He is the Rose; and it is He which causes His people (A desert in themselves) to blossom. He, by the power of grace, transforms them and conforms them to His image. O come, Heavenly wind, and blow on this desert. Bring the sweet fragrance of my Beloved to refresh my soul!

"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose." (Isa. 35:1)

God's people - His peculiar people - are described in this verse under three appellations: The wilderness, the solitary place, and the desert.

The sons of grace are by nature and by experience, a wilderness. They find their souls grown up with wild plants, thorn bushes, poison vines, and all manner of worthless confusion. A wilderness is a wild place - a place uninhabitable - a place of confusion. When God gives us light to see ourselves as we are, we cry out at the confusion and wildness of our souls. We see it as an uninhabitable place, and say, "Can the God of grace dwell here?!"

The Lord's peculiar people find themselves to be a solitary place. Instead of being as good as the rest, or even bad like the rest, they feel themselves to be especially hopeless. Their's is a felt misery. All the crutches of self-righteousness which prop up worldly professors can do them no good. They are cut off from the rest and made to cry, "Is there anyone like me?" The saints of God are solitary - separated from the world - alone in their trials, as far as the help of man is concerned. They are a unique people. No one can know or understand them, because they have an experience unknown in nature.

A desert, also, is descriptive of the saints. In themselves they are and feel to be as dry, lifeless, barren and parched as any desert. They are unable to generate life or being forth fruit.

What can be done for such a people? To what can they be pointed for hope? In what can they rejoice or take comfort? Surely not in a self-help program can they find relief! Undoubtedly any exhortations to do better and pattern their lives after any great example will only cause them to rend their garments in frustration. No! The only hope for such desperate creatures is in a free grace gift. "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us." (Isa. 26:12)

The promise to these hopeless creatures is that they shall be glad, shall rejoice, and shall blossom as the rose. Verse two tells us, "the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency or our God." To whom can this be referring but the Lord Jesus Christ?! He is given to His people! "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine." He is the Rose of Sharon! He is the excellency of our God! O, dear saints, what beside Jesus Christ can cause you to rejoice, be glad and blossom when you feel to be a desert solitary wilderness?!

The little flock of Christ is a people of

interposition of the British Crown, and subsequently by the prevalence of more liberal views which were entertained by the patriots of the Revolution, the powers of the Puritians in the East, and of the Episcopalians in the South were so far curtailed as to prevent farther corporal severities; still for many years after the establishment of our federal and state governments, the Puritians of the New England States were patronized by their state legislatures, and allowed to collect their parish tax from all within their parish limits. Afterwards dissenters, by procuring certificates from religious denominations to which they belonged, certifying that they were paying to their own respective orders, were released from the burden of the parish taxes, and finally the whole legal distinction in favor of the Puritians was abolished. Under all the trials and persecutions thus far experienced, the Baptists were a humble, meek, loving and harmoniously-united people throughout our country. But as soon as this oppressive yoke was broken, Satan was ready with other elements of discord to bring trouble and divisions into our churches.

No sooner were the Baptists of America relieved from the galling yoke of Puritanic and Episcoplian priestcraft than the doctrines of Andrew Fuller were introduced, with the professed design to raise up the Baptists from the dung-hill, to rank respectably with other religious denominations. All who were inclined to the doctrine of Arminianism, with many others who had been led but sparingly into an understanding of the cardinal doctrine of salvation alone by grace, were ready to embrace the plausible and deceptive views of Fuller, and became at once ambitious for the promised elevation.

At this period, which is still fresh in the recollection of the editor of the *"Signs of the Times,"* there was not known among the Baptists of America a single organized institution in connection with, or under the patronage of the Baptists. Theological seminaries, on a very small scale, then began to be talked of, and a small school of this kind was started in Philadelphia, under the direction of Dr. Staughton, to give some grammar lessons to a few of our illiterate young preachers, and soon a college was founded in Washington City, and another educational and theological institution at Hamilton, N.Y., and similar schools began to spring up in various directions. Simultaneously with these, missionary enterprises were set on foot, both domestic and foreign, and Sabbath-schools and Sabbath-school unions, in which various denominations were recognized as hand and glove with Baptists in building up these unscriptural nurseries for the church, as they were modestly called. Then followed Bible Societies, to give a semblance of piety to the whole system of religious machinery, followed in turn by Tract Societies, Temperence Societies, Magdaline Societies, Dorcas Societies, and a host of other equally unscriptural institutions under the name of Benevolence and Religion, until, to bring up the rear, the Abolition Society, which had for a time been struggling into life and power under the patronage of a few New England fanatics, was with due ceremony let in and adopted as a pet institution.

While these innovations were being made upon the faith and order of the Baptists, true enough, the Baptists began to rise, according to the prediction of Andrew Fuller, and soon came to be regarded as unsound and as respectable as any other of the worldly churches of this degenerate age. The Baptists were now no longer obliged to pray the Lord of the harvest to furnish preachers; they could supply themselves with a more refined and educated class from their own schools. Converts could now be made to order, and the churches supplied with members from their

nurseries and other institutions. Their machinery was now so complete that grace was no longer needed to make their members orderly; for they were supplied with societies to keep them sober and benevolent; and if perchance many of them should lose their piety, their machinery was so ingeniously geared that they could be run through again, and re-converted as often as might be thought advisable.

It was during the prevalence of these abominations that the ***"Signs of the Times"*** was commenced. The new order of Baptists had many religious newspapers in the field, which without an exception advocated the institutions named in the foregoing, and the general impression was entertained that there were no churches or preachers left that had not enlisted in this new enterprise for worldly popularity and respectability. A few were found here and there, isolated and despised, who sighed and groaned on account of the prevailing abominations. Yet few as we were, and far between, we were denounced violently as illiberal, inert, slothful, behind the spirit of a progressive age, and enemies to the spread of the gospel, and opposed to all that is good.

Feeling deeply the need of a medium of correspondence, and excluded from the columns of the so-called Baptist papers, after much deliberation it was concluded to attempt to make ourselves heard by our brethren scattered abroad, by publishing a paper devoted to the cause of truth, and through which we could enter our solemn protest against all the innovations, new theories and new institutions which, under the name of Baptists, had so greatly prevailed. With these objects in view, in the year 1832, we issued the following prospectus, viz:

Proposals for publishing a semi-monthly paper, to be called the *"Signs of the Times,"* devoted exclusively to the Baptist cause, maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfections of the Great Jehovah — the Revelation which God has given of himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These Three are One." — 1 John 5:8.
2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.
3. Eternal, Unconditional Election.
4. The Total Depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.
5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the Elect only.
6. The Sovereign, Irresistible, and in all cases, Effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in Regenerating and Quickening the Elect of God.
7. The Final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God, by Grace.
8. The Resurrection of the dead, and Eternal Judgement.
9. That the Church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers — that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament: that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God.
10. That there is no connection between Church and State, and as touching the proposition for a marriage between them, the Hon. R. M. Johnson, in his Report on the Sabbath Question, has expressed our faith.

The "Signs of the Times" will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath Schools, &c., &c., making war with the mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of Institutions.

The violent opposition manifested by the New Order of Baptists, when our Prospectus appeared, was overruled to our advantage. Immediately on its appearing the batteries of our opponents were opened against us, through both the pulpit and the press. The papers of the New School sounded the alarm and warned the people to beware of the forthcoming paper; and in the Minutes of many Associations the churches were warned to withhold their support and countenance from us. In the ardor of their zeal portions of our Prospectus were copied to show that we were hostile to their newly-invented institutions; and by this means, instead of retarding, as they designed, their efforts were of great service in letting those who were imprisoned among them know that such a paper was about to be published. The response to our

see no way out. I stepped over to my mother-in-law and asked her to pray for me. She turned and walked away. There I was to perish in those flames of fire, but yet I never felt any heat from the fire. There my dream ended. After this I was so stirred up I was afraid to go to sleep, afraid I would die and go to hell for it looked like hell would be my lot. I was in this condition for quite a while.

Then I had another dream. I was going down the spring path to find a low place to pray to the Lord to have mercy on me or I'd perish. I went down a corn row and dropped on my knees and began praying. All at once I felt as light as a feather. I raised up and looked up in the sky. I saw the most beautiful light. In this light the cross appeared. The light and the cross began moving, going from me. I got so light I floated up in the air. I was following the light and cross. Then my dream ended.

This dream has meant a lot to me in my feelings with many more I've had since.

I've been made to feel so unworthy. I wanted to go to Associations and get there before anyone else got there and crawl up under the stand and bury myself in the dust and hear the elders preach and not be seen.

I believe the reason I had this feeling is because I feel to be the little end of nothing and don't feel worthy of being noticed by the saints of God; the ones I've been made to love, I hope for Christ sake.

After I asked for a home with you dear people at McCray (I don't remember just how long I felt like this), I felt I had deceived God's saints, and I was deceived in myself. I lay on my bed and prayed to God to show me if I was a deceiver. After so long I fell asleep and I dreamed I came out of my bedroom and saw a light shining in the dining room. I said to someone, "I'm going and turn off the lights in the kitchen". But when I reached up to pull the cord the electric lights were not on but the most beautiful light was shining down through the kitchen overhead. I looked all around and everything looked as white as snow, even my clothes and feet were white.

If you will bear with me and this awful writing, I will say a few more words. When the Association was at Mebane the time before last year, I came home from the Association early Saturday. I was so heavily burdened I felt I could hardly stand to live. I thought it was because my two sons were going in the Army. I was standing at my cabinet preparing lunch for the next day and I looked out the window at those two pecan trees. I'll never be able to tell what a beautiful sight I saw. It looked like every leaf was glittering in God's Spirit. I felt so lifted up that I spoke these words, "Praise God. Praise His Holy Name". I felt like it was the tree of life I had received in my soul, but it wasn't long before I was going around with a bowed head again.

Addie Rudd Oakley

EDITORIAL

"PROVE ALL THINGS: HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD"
I Thess. 5:21

Once again through the mercy of God, and according to arrangements made by the editorial staff I come before you to speak of these precious things most surely believed among us.

As far as the apostle speaks concerning God's dear children, it is my mind that he is addressing men of God, and that his command means exactly what he says, no more, and no less. That the command is applicable to men of God, men of faith, and to no one else I doubt not. The things which we are to prove are things related to the doctrine, practice, order, discipline and all other things pertaining to the life of God's humble children. As far as I am concerned, I do not have any assignment from God as a minister of the gospel of grace

to prove the metric system superior over any other system, and thus to hold to one in preference to another. The things under consideration, I am to prove; those things that prove to be good, I am to hold fast to them. The things that I prove, and that prove to be good, I am to approve of them, and I am to hold fast to them.

There are two ways of salvation mentioned in the Bible. One of them is proved and approved by the Bible; like one of them is proved in the experience of God's children and thus approved by them, as the apostle proved and approved by inspiration that only Jesus Christ is the Saviour of sinners. The text tells us to prove this, and to approve of it by holding fast to it. Have you got a better text than that? Is there anything in or out of the Bible that is better to have proved, and then to approve of it by holding fast to it? If we really and truly are in fellowship and in harmony with the apostle Paul, that is the one text that is proved for us and in us by the Holy Ghost taking Paul's language and showing it unto us. It is the truth; the whole truth; in fact it is the only text that we need for time and eternity; it is the only text we need in this world below, and it will be the subject of our eternal praises in that home of the soul, and still further, that we might know the importance of holding on to it, it is the one text that in every detail fulfills the message of the angel to Joseph, to wit, "He shall save His people from their sins."

As far as the established and manifested role of both the truth and falsehood, both the truth in regard to salvation, and falsehood as it relates to the false system, Paul has forever settled that question for us. If the scores of times that he tells us that it is by grace that we are saved does not arrest and convince and settle and establish them in the doctrine of saving grace, what will do it? He is of God, and they that are of God hear him; they that are not of God do not and will not hear him, hence they that are of God proves all things by the written word of God, and rejoice in what they have proven and are holding to it. Those that are not yet brought to see the veracity of God in saving sinners have no proof of salvation, have nothing to hold fast to for this time state or the eternal ages to come.

On the other hand, if the number of times that Paul tells us that it is not by works which we have done does not prove anything to men regardless of their clamoring about it, they have only a shadow to hold to, and that is the weakest and the least beneficial of anything ever advocated for salvation.

From the first words in Genesis to the last word of Revelation there is not an occasion when the creature moved upon God for the purpose of glorying in Him or of praising His great and holy name. The devil and all devilish powers moved upon Him, and upon His little children with destruction and misery, greedy avarice and cruel malice for the purpose of destroying something that God had displayed, but never to come to Him as a needy sinner. This being true and this being our proof that it is thus and so, no man has ever desired and made a Bible effort toward obtaining that salvation that is alone in Jesus Christ. Every time that help has been accorded God's people, it has been because that God first loved them, and that because of His love for them, that He initiated every movement toward rescuing them from the dilemma into which they had plunged themselves by their own transgression.

Some things devolve upon us to prove, and among these things are all of the things that Paul had in mind in the text. However, it is not obligatory on poor sinners, nor do they have a right to prove the truthfulness of His work. One instance of His given word or promise, one display of His efficient work to that end is the proof itself. This proof is

always being brought to the persecuted and afflicted people of God. I cannot prove this to my brethren; it is not left for me to do so. Poor indeed would be the corroborative evidence that we gather up while journeying through this land where Satan is ever suggesting to us that our hope is not worth anything, for, says he, if it was you would not be so often feeling absent from the Lord and at home in the body. Ah, no, dear readers, we have, that is, if it is for a sinner like me, a surer and better word that has ever, or that will ever go forth out of a mortal man.

Yes, I often fear that I know nothing as I ought; yes, I admit to travelling much at night, not having any light, but I do know that the children of God have the truth of God's saving grace proven over time and again to them. The saving grace, and the life giving power that He proved by the spoken word and by demonstration is still in force today. The power in what he said has not diminished one whit; the mighty proof and power in His promises to His sorrowing and faint hearted disciples is still in force. The proof is still in effect; our Intercessor is still at His Father's right hand for the ones that He spoke to nearly two thousand years ago, and the innumerble hosts since then. The Holy Spirit has carried that proof of what He said and did to the hearts of believers. Everything else of time, including all creatures, have failed; they have not proved to this host of saved sinners that they were equal to saving, but Jesus has proven, not only once, but over and over, time after time, that He saves, and being their proof, they are holding fast to that precious proof.

The promise has ever been, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Israel had this proven to them time and again, even down to every single promise (I Kings 8:56). God's dear people have not been forsaken. They never will be forsaken,

Do you want proof of this my love?
Calv'ry survey - then heaven above;
See how the ransomed millions bow:
My grace sufficient is for you.
I'll guide you safely in the way,
Thru life's dark night, to heaven's bright day;
And there with wonder you shall view,
My grace sufficient was for you.

My heart and mind is enraptured at the thought, that while conceding that it was necessary for Him to leave, He would not leave them comfortless, but that He would send them another Comforter. Now what was His work to be? The saving of them with an eternal salvation! I suppose some of us would say was about to begin. Now is that right? If the impending death was to do that it has enough merit about it for it to be said; for it to be proved, and for it to be held fast. If it was to lack anything at all, it surely was important enough for us to know what it lacked of eternally saving us, and surely there is proof somewhere if it lacked. With malice toward none, but without regard to any man's person, I take the position that in His resurrection and ascension, it was proved by all the official power and wisdom of heaven that it was thus proven.

Now when did the work of the Holy Comforter begin? What did we say that work was, yea, what was proven that that work was, and what have the children of God been holding fast to, or, let me change that, to wit; what has been holding them since then? Just what kind of doctrine did He encourage them to rejoice in, to take courage in? Was He leaving them to their own resorts? If so, give chapter and verse. If not, please be quite, for I am asking.

On many sides (I am talking about Primitive Baptists) there is an urgent appeal being made for us to "get on the move, to get better acquainted with God, to stir ourselves into a state of activity, that we might get out of the stagnation that we are in." I heard it recently, among my beloved brethren, in my beloved deep Southland that "our stand

on the doctrine had stagnated us." I have heard it from too many." Let us do more talking about loving one another and less about the mooted questions." Back I go to His death. Did He save us by it? If the weeping disciples came away from His burial because He had failed, we have not got any truth, and we have not got any proof, and we have not got anything to hold to slow or fast.

I take the position that we have been, since His death, under the dominion of the Comforter. Let me ask again: What was His work to be? Was it to comfort, or to comfort at? Beating about the bush is useless, dear readers. He was left in charge of the affairs of God's dear children. If I am not sadly mistaken it has been proven by the evidence furnished by Jesus Christ and that Comforter to my poor heart and soul that the Comforter is to be our guide into all truth. Oh, the comfort and the joy, that this Comforter is going to be exactly like the Father and like the Son. He is not going to do things in a half way measure. Where the work of Christ was finished, the work of the Comforter was to follow, and He was to deal in the same divine blessings that had began in the eternal mind of God (you tell me when they begin, for I shall, with all the proof that heaven affords, tell you how well and how long and how completely that He will take care of the sorrowing disciples that the Saviour left behind when He ascended to glory). The apostle Paul sweetly tells us that He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all (all those sorrowing disciples before and after His crucifixion), and that He cannot do otherwise than give us all things with Him.

This Comforter has been proven the guide into all truth. There is not another way into this truth. There is not a branch of learning into which the human intellect can enter and come to a knowledge of the tried truth. It is hid from the wise as a group, and revealed unto babes in Christ. It can not be attained save at the feet of Christ, and this Holy Comforter guides a sinner into all the truth likewise. Not only does He take the things of Christ and shows them unto you, but he also guides you into all truth. Furthermore, He comes in the Father's name, and teaches you all things, and too, He brings to our remembrance whatsoever He had said unto us.

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Here is your strength, here is your uniform of righteousness, here are the happy moments that He has spent with you in past visits and conversations, and when the days come when the clouds hang heavy, and you are feeling to be a castaway, this inseperable Comforter will bring to fond remembrance His promise never to leave nor forsake you.

As the Lord is pleased to give us to glean the text for a morsel, may we ever remember that it is good when the heart is established in grace, and not in meats. Meats may offend all without the proof of the effectual working and dwelling in us of the Comforter, and will leave us in the clutches of Job's miserable comforters as they peddle their wares that no saint, no Saviour, no divine author ever proved true, but when the Holy spirit, the Comforter, purges us of that which binds, imprisons God's people, that the removal of the dross of the flesh will bring every heir of promise today to say, "I know that my Redeemer lives."

In conclusion, may God illuminate our minds that we might think soberly, walking in the Spirit, as we have been arrested and as we receive it, ever looking to our guide, our Teacher, our Daysman, staying away from and not blowing upon strange fire, and not walking in the sparks which we have made, knowing full well that God will not give His glory to another, but that any, yes, any, that seeks any other

power of all this humanly invented religious machinery, thoroughly drilled in Sunday Schools. We have often been told that when they became old they would be pious christians and good citizens, but what do we see as the result of all this kind of training? A more wicked, murderious, heaven-defying generation probably has never been upon the earth since the deluge. He that sitteth in the heavens has laughed, and God has had them in derision. (Psalms 2:4.) According to his unerring word. "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." But as we object to the use or abuse to which our text is and has been prostituted by ancient and modern Pharisees, we will give our esteemed sister and our readers generally such light as we have upon its true and spiritual meaning.

Understanding Christ as head over all things to his church, as personated by Wisdom, and as such set up from everlasting, or ever the earth was, as the Head of his spiritual family and Husband of his church, or his Jerusalem which is above, which is free and which is the mother of all the legitimate children of wisdom, we shall regard the admonition and instruction of our text as addressed by him to the church, the Lamb's wife, the spiritual mother of the family, directing her to "train up" her children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. None can successfully dispute that this application of our text most fully and beautifully expresses the instruction of Christ to his church, in regard to the discipline of his household. The church of God is under a most solemn charge from him whom her soul loveth, to train up her sons and daughters in the fear of the Lord. She is solemnly charged to see to it that all his laws and ordinances, precepts and examples, doctrine and order, be faithfully taught and constantly observed by all her children, and who has ever known a heaven-born son or daughter of the church of the living God, who has been trained from the infancy of their spiritual experience under the faithful administration of the word of truth, well instructed in the doctrine of Christ and constantly habituated to take the Scriptures as the man of their counsel, standard of their faith and rule of their conduct from their first connection with the church until their heads have whitened with age, that has not become well established in word and doctrine?

In the nature of the figure it is the peculiar office of the wife to instruct her household to honor and obey their father and their mother in all things, and as a mother her children are placed under her peculiar care and instruction; they are directed to look to her for succor, instruction and consolation. She is an helpmeet for him who is the "everlasting Father" of all her children. He bids her train them in the way they should go. To train is to exercise, to instruct, to keep them in the practice, to drill and accustom them to the constant practice of that in which they are to be trained.

Practically, the church of Christ, walking in all the order of the house of God, sees that sin is not suffered to rest unrebuked on any of her children. She has maternal charge as well as love for them all. She receives to her bosom the "newborn babe" as soon as it is born, feeds it with the sincere milk of the word, which flows from the breasts of her consolation; she attends to their numerous wants, hears and understands their cries for bread, or feeds them on milk, as she knows their condition and age can bear, teaches them to talk and turns to them a pure language, that they may not speak in a mongrel or half Ashdod dialect, instructs them how to spell and pronounce Shibboleth and every other password or countersign required of those who are of the household of God. She sees that not a morsel of food from

the pulpit, or elsewhere, goes into the mouth that is unwholesome; she examines well that there be no wild gourds served up by young and inexperienced prophets; that there be no "death in the pot" from which they are to feed. She has a charge to see that their clothing is in good order, white and clean, unspotted from the world, undefiled and unpolluted. Her Husband has stored the wardrobe well. The garments of salvation, the robe of righteousness, garments of praise and raiment of fine needlework are there; she is to see to it that they are seasonably put on, carefully protected from pollution and duly appreciated; she has a special charge in training them, to keep them out of bad company, for her Husband in one of his proverbs of wisdom has told her that "evil communications corrupt good manners." She must not allow them to go after strange women (professed churches); she must teach them to beware of the flattering words of the strange woman (antichrist), and thoroughly warn them against her subtle snares, and tell them plainly that her house is the way to hell, leading down to the chambers of death, lest they should let their heart decline to her ways; for she hath truly cast down many wounded, yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Such are her fascinating charms and seductive devices that many shall follow her pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. She must therefore faithfully warn them to beware of dogs, to beware of evil workers and to beware of the concision. She has a solemn charge to see that the discipline of the house of God is faithfully observed in all cases, and see that the little children love one another. She must in training them see that they are well instructed in all the doctrine of God their Savior, and that they perfectly understand and walk in all the order and ordinances of his house blamelessly and unrebukably until his coming.

Now, my dear sister, do you think a child of God, a son of the church, brought up strictly according to the laws of Christ and duly instructed to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded, from early infancy to old age, will, when old, depart from the doctrine, order or ordinances of his kingdom? Did you ever know such an instance? But even the children of God, who are left, like the few Jews in Jerusalem while the tribes were carried into Babylonish captivity, may forsake the law of the Lord, intermarry with the children of Ashdod, become corrupted, and their very language become confused and incoherent, so that they speak neither language correctly, but a mongrel jargon which betrays their lack of wholesome training. The children of God require the care and counsels of their mother, or they are liable to become as children tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine.

In conclusion, esteemed sister, although you are located somewhat remote from your mother, as to the privileges or frequent social intercourse with the church, and but seldom can hear the preaching of the word in truth and faithfulness, yet as God has graciously trained you himself, weaned you from the vanities of the Gentiles, led you about and instructed you and kept you as the apple of his eye, surely there is no good thing that he will now withhold from you. Where you formerly sought a home, when you asked for bread they gave you a stone; when hunger compelled you to ask for a fish they gave you a serpent, and for an egg they gave you a scorpion. But the Lord heard your groaning and came down and delivered you; he brought you out of the house of bondage with a high hand and an outstretched arm, and he has brought you to his banqueting-house and over your defenseless head has he spread the banner of his love. Now we address to you the inspired admonition which has already been brought home

She is survived by three sons; Russell, J. L. & William E. Williams, one brother, Reuben Everett, all of Robersonville, N. C.

Having united with the church in her early twenties, she remained a faithful member and a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, always ready to help with her share of the church along with her husband, Joseph J. Williams, who served as a deacon for many years. She will be sadly missed by her church, which extends deepest sympathy to her family.

The funeral was conducted at the Robersonville Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Joseph Leggett, Elder Reeves Smith, and Mr. Don McMurray, after which she was laid to rest beside her husband in the Robersonville Cemetery.

Written by request of the church.

Magalene E. Brown

SISTER MYRTLE HUMPHREY

In my weak way, if God will bless me, I will try and write a few lines about our beloved sister; knowing that God does all things well both in heaven and earth.

She was the daughter of Ned and Alice Morton. Myrtle was born November 14, 1914. She lived in Onslow County all of her life. She died November 12, 1980, making her stay on earth sixty-six years lacking two days.

She was married once and to their union was blessed with two children, one boy, one girl, and five grandchildren.

The Lord saw fit to bring her to the church April 28, 1961. She was always a good and faithful member when she was able to be there. She was sick for three years and was stricken to bed for the last six months she lived. She never complained and was always glad to see the Brethren and Sisters and friends visit with her and talk about God's mercy. She was a good wife and mother. We believe she is a mother in Israel; gone to be with God where there is no sickness, sorrow, or pain, or death where all is joy, love, and peace forevermore.

Myrtle was blessed with a wonderful husband. He did everything he could do for her in her sickness. He stood by her to the end with God's help.

She was always blessed to practice the doctrine of our Lord and Savior. She was loved by everyone far and near. We miss her, but we believe that her absence from her family and friends and loved ones is her eternal gain.

Now, to the family, husband and children press on, keep the good faith. Press on to the high calling. I know that you have a vacant place in your home as well as in your hearts. I hope the good Lord will reconcile all of you to your great loss and be a mother to you all.

Done by order of Northeast Church in conference the third Saturday in November 1980.

Written by an unprofitable sinner living in hope of eternal rest in our Lord and Savior.

Sister Effie Morton
Route 2 Box 68
Jacksonville, North Carolina 28540

BERTHA SLONE TROUP

In loving memory of my dear Aunt, Bertha Slone Troup. She was born in Franklin County, Ferrum, Virginia, June 10, 1887, and fell asleep in Jesus the night of September 10, 1980, making her stay on earth 93 years and 3 months. She was the daughter of James Y. and Eliza Hale Slone.

She was married to Tyree M. Troup, November 26, 1908, which made their wedded life together almost 72 years. She was a devoted wife, a good neighbor, and loved by all who knew her.

She united with Pigg River Primitive Baptist Church the 4th Sunday in August, 1947, and was baptized by her pastor at that time, Elder J. P. Helms.

She is survived by her husband, Tyree M. Troup and several nieces and nephews. She was just like a mother to all of us that she came in contact with, especially to me, always wanting to serve rather than be served. We all loved her and miss her, but we feel she is at rest with her Lord and try to be reconciled to Him who doeth all things according to His will. Much could be said about her but all that knew her know what a kind, loving person she was.

Her funeral was conducted by her Pastor, Elder W. M. Holland at Oakey's Chapel, Salem, Virginia. She was laid to rest in Sherwood Memorial Park, on September 12, 1980.

Submitted by her niece,
Jessie Via Minnix

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 10/81 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE EARLY RELIGIOUS LIFE OF ELDER DAVID BARTLEY, MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL (CONTINUED)

Elder McQueary came to see us soon, and he arranged to take me with him in his carriage to the Fayette church the first Saturday in June to attend the ordination of four ministers–brethren Wright, Millspaugh, Carter, and Conner. At that wonderful meeting I again met the eminent Elders Wilson Thompson, Benjamin Jones, an others, my father's companions in the gospel, whom I had known in my boyhood. The meeting was large and was held in a pleasant grove or woodland. One after another the young preachers were called to go upon the platform and relate their religious experience, ministerial call, and views of the doctrine of the gospel. In doing so Brother Millspaugh (long since called to his blessed reward), who was the third speaker, said that he had been much perplexed about faith, as in some sense a condition, or having saving merit; and, notwithstanding the brethren had labored to get him to see it more clearly, as the gift of God and a fruit of the Spirit, and as embracing Christ as our only righteousness and salvation, in whom faith found all its merit and glory; yet, so dull was his mind and hard his heart, he had told them that, unless it pleased the Lord to open it to his understanding, he could not see it as they did. When he said this I at once felt that he had expressed the state of my own relative to the mysterious union between Christ and the Church about which Elder

McQueary had talked much to me since we had been together. I not only had no understanding of it, but no special interest in it; but now my mind was so impressed with the earnest desire to understand this sacred union that I could not think of anything else and my heart was burdened with the unspoken prayer that the Lord might show it to me. While the last of the four, Brother Harvey Wright, talked to us, it was given me to see this blessed union between the heavenly Bridegroom and His bride–Jesus the Holy Head and the church His redeemed and sanctified body. My spirit now rejoiced in this enrapturing covenant-union, which had its rise in the everlasting love of God, and the dear Redeemer was more precious to me than ever.

The large Council of Elders and Deacons soon withdrew some distance, leaving a large congregation at the stand. My soul was so filled with the precious name of Jesus and my heart so burned with love to Him that I wondered why some one was not left at the stand to talk to us of Him; and it was with difficulty that I resisted the strong impression to go upon the stand and talk to them of the preciousness and glory of the beloved Son of God as our Savior; but as I was not a member of the church and a youthful stranger I thought it would not do to yield, and fearing to trust myself there, I walked away and sat down on a log, my heart feeling as if it would almost burst with its pent up emotions. Presently a still voice in my soul said: "Go, preach Jesus and His righteousness". This word was with such power that I could no longer remain silent, so I arose and went up a little valley, behind a hill, where I praised the Lord aloud, and the green trees and blue skies seemed to help me praise Him.

At sunrise the next morning I walked down to the river (Whitewater) at Brother Millspaugh's, and stood in sweet awe beholding the beauties and wonders of nature, when the words of Paul came into my soul with power: "Unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ".

CHAPTER VII

ADDED TO THE CHURCH

The second Saturday in June, 1854, I was gathered with the Conn's Creek Regular Baptist church in a full meeting house. When Elder McQueary arose in the pulpit to preach, old Mr. Jacob Creek stood on the floor just in front of him, because he was hard of hearing, and while the minister preached the gospel in power the tears flowed from the aged man's eyes, the eloquent witnesses of his faith in Jesus and His power to save. He had been a near neighbor to us in my boyhood, an honest farmer, believing in conditional salvation. However, disliking the ways in the Methodist class he quit them, then went to hear my father preach for a time, but quit going. Not long after he came to our house one noontime, while we sat in the shade resting from the farm-work, and said to father: "Mr. Bartley, you know that I went to hear you preach for some time, but have quit going". "Yes", said father. "Well, I have come to tell you why I don't go to hear you any more, for I feared you might think it was because I have something against you as a neighbor, but I have not, for I like you as a neighbor and respect you." Father said: "No, I did not think so, Mr. Creek, for we have always been good neighbors". He then said, "The fact is, Mr. Bartley, your preaching does sap my foundation, and that is the reason why I do not go to hear you preach any more". At that time I was a light-hearted boy and felt no interest in gospel preaching, which this neighbor thought was against him and cut him off from his foundation. My father was now called home, and after many years I thus met his old neighbor again; but oh how changed we both

were! For now we both stood on Christ, the sure foundation, and rejoiced together in the same glad tidings of salvation that my father had faithfully preached.

After the sermon it was my long-wished-for privilege to stand in front of the pulpit and freely tell the church of all the way I had been led since that Sunday in November, 1844, when it was shown me that I was not built on Christ, until the present happy day, and how my heart was drawn to them in love. My tears flowed while I talked, and I think all in the house were in tears, but they were tears of comfort. When I sat down a dear sister told the church her experience of saving grace; then we were both gladly and warmly received into the congregation of the Lord, to be baptized the next day. With my folks and others I went to Brother McQueary's for the night; and before I sat down to the sumptuous dinner my soul was overwhelmed in darkness, doubts, and fears, for the first time since that blessed revelation of Jesus to me in the upper room in Cincinnati, and I could not eat. I asked dear old Brother Caudell, a beloved companion of my father and a pillar in the church, to walk out with me, and we sat on the grass in the shade of a tree while I told him how greatly I feared that I had been deceived, and deceived the church; therefore I entreated him to lay my case before the church on Sunday and ask it to release me, because I was not fit or worthy to be baptized. I said that if I had such an experience as Sister Harlow told the church that day I would feel satisfied. He tried to relieve me, but my case seemed to become worse, and I felt that my situation was desperate, for he refused to submit my case to the church for reconsideration, assuring me that they were all satisfied and felt that I had done only my duty. We both wept and talked, but my deep gloom and trouble remained. On Sunday the congregation was large and the preaching was with power, but for me there was no comfort, for my darkness was fearful, and I wondered why I had been so presumptuous as to offer myself to the church--a step which I had no power to undo. When the people all started to the river, a half-mile northward, I fell behind, turned aside and knelt behind a tree, entreating the Lord to show me what He would have me to do, and not suffer me to dishonor Him, but received no relief. Oh! I felt that this was the worst thing I had ever done, for it would be an unpardonable sin and an awful mockery for me to be baptized, feeling that I had no evidence of the Lord's approval, or that I was a proper subject, and I feared that I should feel condemned forever after. But, alas! it was too late--there was no help for me and I must submit--like one going to his execution. Having asked Elder McQueary some days before to sing at the river--

"Jesus, and shall it ever be,
A mortal man ashamed of Thee".

I arrived too late to hear this touching hymn, and he was praying. I stood trembling and my spirit fervently asked the Lord to give me the evidence in my baptism, if, indeed, it was well-pleasing to Him. The venerable minister led me out quite a distance in the beautiful river (Flatrock), then softly laid me under the water in this solemn burial. That moment all darkness, doubt and fear fled! Heavenly light and peace filled my soul, and it was the most blessed place I had ever been in! It was where Jesus Himself was laid, and when He arose heaven was opened unto Him! It was even so with me, for my whole being was full of divine light, love and gladness, and never had I known such perfect happiness as was mine when I walked up out of the water. The company of saints, too, looked so lovely and happy and the glory of God shone upon us all. I now beheld such an infinite fullness of salvation in the most blessed and lovely Savior that I wanted to speak forth His praises aloud, and could scarely hold my

peace, but as the sister was to be baptized, I did. O, sacred, blessed baptism! Divine emblem of the resurrection of the holy Son of God and of all the redeemed children of God!

Dear Brother Caudell went with me to assist in changing my clothing, and as we went he said: "Brother David, didn't you feel happy as you came up out of the water?" I answered: "Yes, Brother Caudell, very happy". He rejoined, "I thought so, for I never saw as happy a look as there was on your face. Didn't you feel like talking?" "Yes, Brother Caudell, I could hardly keep from talking". "I thought so", he gladly responded. Having witnessed my awful gloom and distress, he now rejoiced with me in my happiness in the Lord. Surely this was a sweet foretaste of the bright resurrection-glory and the joy of heaven, when death shall be swallowed up in victory.

CHAPTER VIII

WHAT IS MY DUTY?

Now my troubles, conflicts and unrest seemed to be at an end, and as we rode home to my sister's my peace was perfect; but when nearly there a still voice within me said, "Now you are in the church, what is your duty; for every one has a place to fill, and what is your place?" This checked my restful peace; but I quickly resolved that as soon as I entered the house I would take up the Bible, close my eyes, and ask the Lord to direct me to a Scripture that would show me the place He designed me to fill in the church. But it opened between the Old Testament and the New, and I felt rebuked, for an inward voice said, "See how forward and presumptuous you are in thinking the Lord had anything for you to do!" Yet I was impressed with a desire to know the Lord's will; so I turned to the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles and read it, and on the fifth, yearning for something to relieve and comfort me; but nothing had any interest for me until I read verse 20: "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life". I could read no farther, nor take my eyes from these words of solemn command, but read them over and over, for it seemed that they were spoken to me, and they deeply affected me. Closing the book, I left the house and walked the yard, mentally saying, "This was spoken by the angel of the Lord to the apostle Peter and John, not to you, and why should you be so exercised about it?" But I could not prevent the angelic words from reverberating with power through the chambers of my soul: "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life". This was the beginning of a new experience and trial, and it came upon me so unlooked for; for I had expected to find the dear church a home of tranquility, peace and rest of soul. Oh! little did I know of the way!

The next day I walked on an errand beyond Brother McQueary's and called to see him on the way and while there a rain set in. He took advantage of this and asked me if I was not exercised about speaking in the name of the Lord. I tried to evade an answer, but he told me that as I was now a member of the church he had a right to ask me and said it was my duty to tell him, either yes or no. So I finally told him of my exercises on the day of the ordination and the day of my baptism. As I returned from the errand, again I called in to see him, asked him to walk out with me and entreated him with tears to say nothing of what he had asked me to tell him, but he said he could make no rash promise and tried to comfort me. Supper being ready, he said, "Brother Bartley, ask a blessing", I tried to do so, but the effort spoiled my appetite, for I felt that he and the rest were ashamed of me as I was of myself! As soon as I was on my way the tempter said to me: "Now look at yourself! You think about preaching and you can't ask a blessing without feeling ashamed of it". As I plodded along darkness soon set in, but the

darkness within was greater and I was very wretched. For on the way home the conviction took possession of my mind that the church would give me license to preach at the next meeting, but my feeling was that I could not submit to this. That night I slept but little. The next two days my conflict and trouble seemed greater than I had ever endured, and I felt that I could scarcely live without relief. I wandered about day and night--tried to search the Scriptures--piteously tried to implore the Lord for relief and release, but cries were shut out, because my spirit was rebellious against the will of the Lord and the church. For while I fully believed the church would license me to preach the gospel at the next conference meeting, my mind was that, rather than submit I would prefer exclusion; therefore I implored the Lord to release me from such an ordeal, relieve me from my crushing trouble and give me peace again. For not only did I feel utterly unfit and insufficient for the gospel ministry, but I also greatly desired to be a successful physician. During this fearful mental conflict I vowed that I would die before I would try to preach, but instantly a silent voice within said: "You shall have to suffer in this body for preaching this doctrine".

On Wednesday afternoon, while lying under a shade tree in the yard, my wife sat down by me and asked me what was the matter. I told her that the church would license me to preach at the next meeting, and I felt as if it would almost kill me. She tried to relieve my distressed mind by assuring me that the church would not do so premature a thing, but I told her it would, and asked her if she thought I could preach. She said, "No, I don't". At this I wept aloud, for I could no longer control the storm of conflicting emotions, yet I felt that she was right, and that I could not preach. But why, then, must I be so troubled about preaching?

That night I went from place to place, first in the orchard, then away in the woods, seeking access to the Lord in prayer, and fearing some one might hear me, but no relief could I find, for my prayers were shut out. The trouble was, I wanted relief in my own way, and my stubborn will would not yield. At last, almost exhausted, I came to an inviting log and sat down to rest. Just then a new train of thought and feeling possessed me, and my unyielding will gave way to a meek spirit of peace and child-like trust, and the fierce struggle ceased! The dear Master so gently gave me to see that the church was His and that my rebellion against it was against Him. Now I was overcome in sweet contrition, and every thought was brought into obedience unto Christ. I then felt a true spirit of prayer, and, kneeling, realized blessed access in the presence of the Lord, for He was very near and precious. In implicit trust I asked Him to bless the church with His mind and wisdom, guide it to do that which would honor and please Him, and give me grace and strength to obediently do His will. It was now late in the night, and my natural strength was nearly exhausted, but I went home so changed and peaceful, retired and slept, and my sleep was as when Jacob said, "The Lord is in this place!" For in a heavenly vision the lovely Savior stood over me in heavenly radiance, and in a moment we were standing before the congregation at the church. He stood at my right hand, placed the open New Testament in my hands, and enabled me to minister to the comfort of His people. While I spoke their faces expressed sympathy, gladness and love. He then gave me to understand that thus it should be and I should go and preach the gospel of salvation; that while I should meet with trials, He would be with me and put it into the hearts of His people to sympathize with and encourage me. That the Lord Jesus gave me this true vision I have had abundant assurance through my ministry for forty-two years.

At the next church-meeting, the second Saturday in July, 1854, the church voted that I should relate my exercises about speaking in the name of the Lord, and the pastor called me forward. I complied, but sat down and wept. Then, with some composure, I related what I have here written. Dear old Elder Nay was present, and on being asked for counsel, said he could witness to what I had related, and that he believed the Lord had called me to preach the gospel. Elder McQueary asked me one question: "Brother Bartley, have you ever seen anything in yourself that looked like a preacher or made you think you could preach?" The answer was in my heart and I said, "No, Brother McQueary, unless the Lord enables me, I know I cannot preach". With a smile he replied: "Well, Brother Bartley, we Old Baptists are a strange sort of people, for if we have a man among us that thinks he can preach and must preach, we will not let him preach; but if we have one who feels the he can't preach, we will make him preach". The church then liberated me to preach the gospel wherever God in His providence might cast my lot.

At the close of the Sunday meeting the pastor said: "Brethren Bartley and Jackson, two young preachers, will preach here next Sunday at 4 o'clock." This was a great shock to me, for no one had spoken to me about it and it troubled me all the week. But as Brother Jackson had been speaking in the church a few months I consoled myself with the thought that I should refuse, and he would speak to the people. At eleven the next Sunday we all went to hear Brother McQueary preach at a meeting house near us, and some of the brethren went home with us for dinner. To my dismay they told me Brother Jackson had gone on a visit to another church. At first I felt that I could not go to the appointment, but they kindly urged me, saying that it would hurt Brother McQueary's feelings if I refused, yet they expressed much sympathy for me. At last they got me started, but we arrived an hour late, and then I went away and tried to pray before going in the well-filled house. Brother McQueary told me to go in the pulpit as the people were waiting. I begged him to preach and let me off, but he refused. Taking me up with him he handed me the Bible and told me to select a text while he introduced for me. He was a man of God, full of earnest and deep feeling, though stern, and he fervently prayed for me. Then I arose and read: "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away". Isa. 35:10. This text, so full of the gospel, had been in my mind all the week, and my thought was that if I had to speak to the congregation I might say something upon it in an experimental way, for its meaning seemed very clear.

First, I stated that the appointment was made without my knowledge; that I feared it was not the Lord, but fleshly and wrong; that if it was not according to His will for me to speak in His name my desire was that He might seal my lips and not suffer me to dishonor His holy name before them; but, if it was His will, I believed He could enable even me to speak in His praise.

Turning to the subject to begin, I again read, "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return", and was about to tell the meaning of "ransomed", when, as quick as one can put out a light, my mind was in awful darkness, and I could not utter a word, but stood dumb and confounded before all! Horror and shame overwhelmed me, for I felt that the Lord had rebuked me before them, according to my word. Oh, why had I thus presumptuously gone into that sacred place, and made myself such a fearful example and warning? I felt that death would have been preferable to

this, and the intensity of my dismay was so crushing it seemed that I must fall, unless I sat down, for it appeared a long time that I had stood there in that mute agony, knowing that all eyes were upon me, beholding how the Lord had condemned me before them. I turned my head over my shoulder, to see the seat and drop back on it--when lo! the horror of darkness fled, and the Sun of righteousness arose unto me with healing in His wings. In an instant all was light and peace in my soul, my thoughts were liberated, my tongue was loosened, and I was enabled to speak about an hour upon the text with freedom and comfort. And as I entered into the divine meaning and blessedness of my text, tears filled the eyes of the brethren, expressive of their relief and comfort of heart, for they had seen my distress, and had felt and prayed for me, as the pastor told me. When I sat down, it was with the quiet peace of a comforted child, and a trusting faith that the Lord was with me.

Looking back through my extended ministerial life and travels and labors, from now until that first sermon, I may truly say that it was a faithful earnest and pattern of all the way in which the Lord has led me, in fulfillment of the heavenly vision He gave me. For in waiting on my ministering, in a large measure light had been sown to me in darkness, and in me the words of the Lord Jesus have been fulfilled: "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light". This has had the effect to teach me my entire insufficiency for so great a work and to abase me before the Most High, that I might have an humble spirit. Indeed, from the time I knew the altogether lovely One as my Savior I have earnestly desired to be meek and lowly in heart as He is, and He has given me this desire through many afflictions and trails, which have bowed my spirit in deep sorrow and caused me to cry unto the Lord for grace to help me in time of need.

(continued next month)

PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The thirty-fifth annual session of the Pleasant Valley Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Shepherd Fold Church of Primitive Predestinarian Baptist Faith and Order, 815 Little York Road, Houston, Texas 77076, commencing on Friday before, and continuing through the first Sunday in November, 1981 (October 30 and 31 and November 1).

Elder C. M. Haygood, Pastor
(Called Feb., 1962)
Sister Robbie Nell Holloway, Clerk
Phone (713) 453-8846

BUTTAHATCHIE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The 156th session of the Buttahatchie Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Macedonia Church, Sulligent, Alabama, on October 9, 10, and 11. The church is located off Highway 278 just west of Sulligent, Alabama.

We wish to invite all of our Brothers and Sisters in Christ to come and be with us at this time.

James McCool
Route 1, Box 96A
Cedar Bluff, Miss. 39741
Phone (601) 328-0532

KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION 1981

The Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association for the year of 1981 will be held at William Primitive Baptist Church in Edgecombe County the first Sunday in October, Saturday before and Monday following. (October 3, 4, 5)

William Primitive Baptist Church is located on Secondary Road No. 1428, three tenths of a mile west of Highway No. N.C. 44. Those coming from the *north* traveling I-95 come to Weldon, N.C., then take U.S. 301 South passing Enfield, N.C., to Whitakers, N.C. to intersection of U.S. 301 and N.C. No. 44, turn left on N.C. 44 (east), go 11.8 miles to

secondary road No. 1428 on right, turn right three-tenths miles to church on right side.

Those coming from the *south* and *east* go to Tarboro, N.C., take N.C. 44 out of Tarboro north to Leggett. Continue on N.C. 44, 1.9 miles to Secondary Road No. 1428, turn left and go 3 tenths mile to church on right.

Those coming from the *southwest* travel I 95 to Rocky Mount, N.C. to intersection of I 95 and N.C. 97. Turn right on N.C. 97 (east) go to Leggett, N.C. to intersection of N.C. 97 and N.C. 44. Turn left on N.C. 44, go 1.9 miles to secondary road No. 1428, turn left and go 3 tenths miles to church on right.

Those coming from the *west* come to Rocky Mount, N.C. In Rocky Mount get on N.C. 97 east and go to Leggett to intersection of N.C. 97 and N.C. 44, turn left on N.C. 44 and go 1.9 miles to secondary road No. 1428. Turn left on secondary road No. 1428 and go 3 tenths miles to church on right.

We extend an invitation to Old School Primitive Baptists who are in peace and order at home and abroad and all the dear friends to come and visit us at our two hundred sixteenth session of the Old Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association.

In bonds and afflictions,
Marvin E. Garner, Clerk

BOOKS WANTED

Elder W. D. Griffin, Route 6, Box 84, Fayette, Alabama, 35555, desires to obtain the following two books:

Fulton Council Meeting (Date-About 1901)
Fort Worth Council Proceedings

Anyone having information on these books will please contact Elder Griffin directly. He is willing to pay a reasonable price for either or both.

Thank you,
Editor

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC. TO JUNE, 1981

Mrs. A. L. Hudson, Va.	1.00
John F. Simpson, Fl.	6.00
Mrs. Carleene Hensley, N.C.	1.00
Victor H. Laws, Md.	50.00
Mrs. Letcher Smith, Fl.	11.00
Mrs. Novaline Stewart, N.C.	11.00
Robert N. Lackey, Ok.	11.00
Mrs. Ivey Kinard, Fl.	1.00
John E. Pace, Sr., Va.	1.00
Mrs. Julia Ada, Md.	1.00
Henry L. Gardner, Ar.	1.00
A. W. Hatcher, Va.	3.00
Mrs. C. E. Glidewell, N.C.	1.00
Mrs. Jennie Denton, Va.	1.00
Mrs. Margie E. Pitts, Al.	1.00
R. O. Smith, N.C.	1.00
J. H. Merrill, Al.	3.00
Buford Thompson, Va.	1.00
Mrs. W. C. Tucker, N.C.	1.00
Mrs. Ila M. Mooney, Tx.	5.00
H. C. Ellwangler, N.C. (In memory of my dear mother)	16.00
Mrs. Maggie Culp, Ky.	15.00
Augustus Webb, N.C.	1.00
Mrs. Martha Prillaman, Va.	1.00
Mrs. Margaret W. Smothers, N.C.	1.00
Mrs. Shirley J. Donovan, N.C.	1.00
A. W. King, N.C.	1.00
Mrs. Lelia Divers, Va.	1.00

Quitman, Mississippi

Dear Elder Poole,

I trust this finds you abounding in the riches of His sovereign grace and mercy, and hopeful that our God will graciously preserve us both in all His path of righteousness.

Elder Poole, it is an amazing thing here to see something I have longed to see, yet barely able even to hope for. Yet, in the past four or five months, most of the churches are in a spiritual awakening which to date continues to increase. Their spiritual state is refreshing, the Scriptures are being read with greater intensity; discussions are taking on a good degree of interest and depth, and greater numbers of visitors are attending regularly with increasing interest and love. Two churches in the Little Zion are not yet affected in this way, yet all across the southern tier of states, this appears very general.

I saw your remarks in the ***Signs***, which echo, surely, the desires of all true spiritual Israelites. I think you know of our meager efforts to pull down the bars

such in our limitations.

In all things that redound to the glory of God and our blessed Redeemer, I bid you God-Speed.

Yours in Hope by free grace only,
Stanley C. Phillips

(In the June, 1981, issue of the ***Signs of the Times*** we asked to hear the views of others regarding bars of fellowship. This letter from Elder Phillips is in response to that request. J.F.P.)

Saltillo, Texas

Dear Elder Williams,

Sister Willie (Green) Smith, daughter of the late Elder W. N. Green, has composed a 60 page booklet of her father's experience and writings on various subjects. She has had 500 copies made and would like to sell them for $2.00 a copy to offset some of the expense.

Would you please print a notice in the *Signs* for her.

Elder Green stood among our able ministers for almost 35 years during the period from 1915 to 1949. I personally knew him. He had a most wonderful personality and the most vital part, an able gift and Godly life. He was a subscriber to the *Signs* throughout his ministry. He lived through a controversial period concerning the sovereignty of God. He preached along this line much of the time.

Also, I notice our subscription expired last month, so I am enclosing a check for two years renewal.

We are looking forward to meeting you at the Fifth Sunday meeting at Hopewell.

Yours in Gospel Bonds,
Elder C. M. Haygood.

P.S. Those desiring a copy of the booklet on Elder Green's writings can contact:

Brother Bob Champeau
803 W. Brooks
Norman, Oklahoma 73069

I CORINTHIANS 9:14

Elder Beebe:-Please give your views on I. Cor. 9:14: ***"Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel".*** I want your views particularly on the ordination of God relative to the Lord's preachers living by the gospel. I presume you believe that what God has ordained comes to pass; if so, why is it that the Old School Baptist preachers generally get little or nothing of a temporal support? Are they not called to preach? Or does the ordination of God fail? By attending to the above request you will much oblige an inquirer after truth.

Isom Cranfill

REPLY

The word "ordain", like many other words in our vocabulary, is used to express more than one idea. Sometimes it is used in the Scriptures to express the determined counsel or decree of God, as in Eph. 2:10. Sometimes it is applied to the setting apart of elders, pastors or apostles to the work whereunto the Holy Ghost has called them, etc; but in the text under consideration, it is, as we understand it, intended to signify that the Lord had instituted or commanded that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel, just as he ordained, instituted or commanded in the ceremonial law, that they which minister about holy things, should live of the things of the temple, and they which waited at the altar should be partakers with the altars. Even so has he given commandment concerning his gospel ministers, who devote themselves to that work, that they shall be sustained by the brethren. They sow to the brethren spiritual things, and receive from them of their carnal things.

But like all the other commands of Christ, this is sometimes disobeyed, and for this very reason the apostle admonished the church in regard to it. In as much as Christ our King has ordained or enacted this as a law or precept, and made it binding, it should

be solemnly regarded by all his loyal subjects.

We certainly believe that the firm decrees of the throne of God shall all be fulfilled. What he predestinates must surely come to pass. As many as were ordained to eternal life believed. And Christ was ordained before the foundation of the world as a Lamb slain for them who, by him, do believe in God, etc. But when the word is used in reference to his laws and ordinances in the church, it does not express what he has promised himself to accomplish, but what he has enjoined on his saints to do in obedience to his commands.

We certainly believe that Old School Baptist preachers are called to preach, for they are the only class of preachers under heaven that we know anything about who do preach the gospel of Christ, but why they, or any of them, fail to receive an adequate support, would be as difficult for us as for brother Cranfill to tell. In some instances it may be that they are located among brethren that are poor, and unable to be as liberal as they wish, and in some cases it may result from a reprehensible negligence, or disregard for the laws of Christ.

But it is possible that the ministers themselves are in fault. When Jesus sent out the seventy as lambs among wolves, he allowed them not to take purse or scrip with them. They were to rest solely on the indemnity of his name, and leave the whole matter of their support to him, and they returned, and reported that they had lacked nothing. Christ's ministers are still required to go in his name, and to rely on his power and providence to sustain them, and if in doing so they lack anything, let them report the matter to him.

Some of our preachers have in protesting against making a trade of divinity, or merchandise of the gospel, been understood to hold that it is wrong for ministers to be supported by the liberality of the saints, and to denounce those who are so sustained, as hirelings. Others have, by an overreaching greediness of filthy lucre, by storming, scolding, fretting and complaining of the meanness and covetousness of their brethren, disheartened them. ***The most liberal hearted christians are, probably, as a general thing, those who are the best fed.*** But there can be no reasonable doubt that too little regard is paid to the authority of Christ by the churches in regard to the obligation laid on them to communicate to the support of those who labor in word and doctrine among them.

Middletown, N.Y.
September 1, 1859

Dear Elder Poole,

I am writing I hope for the sake of peace among our people. I will start with Romans 16:17. "Now I beseech you, Brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which you have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple". The doctrine of God will not separate the sheep, where ever the gospel is preached, there will be a drawing together of believers to feast on the word that is preached, but at the same time it will drive away the goats. The doctrine of God is preached in peace, which is glad tidings to the poor. "Now I beseech you, Brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."

This kind of divisions and offences comes about by those that have not the love of God in their hearts, and they don't care how much it hurts, they are self-willed and stubborn seeking to fulfill the lust of their own fleshly desire. The doctrine will bring about divisions in separating believers from unbelievers.

"Suppose ye that I am come to give

peace on earth? I tell you, Nay but rather division: For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. If God gives three eternal life, these three will be divided against two, and the two will be divided against the three. Many of our people are simple, not looking for the fruit of love. They say, "Well, he sure did preach well", and not comparing the speech with the walk. "Blessed are they that do know the joyful sound, for they shall walk in the light of the countenance of God". The walking in the light of the countenance is just as certain as that he knows the joyful sound. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is to see the brethren dwell together in unity".

Let us look at what Paul tells us. "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for example. For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things. For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself". Phil. 3:17-21.

I am weeping on the inside, praying for unity among our brethren. If I could shed tears I might get along better than I do. I desire the prayers of all the saints. I do not have an ill will against any of my brethren, but the way some are disturbing the peace I cannot want to be with them, yet I am willing to overlook all that they do, if they turn for peace.

Elder J. R. Hollandsworth

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310 Wood St.
Winston Salem, N.C. 27107

Dear Brother Spangler,

Some time back I received a reply from you from a previous letter I had written to you. I certainly enjoy reading the ***Signs*** each month. This paper is about all the contact I have with Old School Baptists around here. There are a number of the "Conditional" churches in the area, of which I do not attend. One of their Elders came for a visit but when he found out I believe absolute predestination of all things I have not seen nor heard from him since. Brother, I do not believe in the way that the conditionals say we do. I believe Gilbert Beebe very clearly set forth this truth in its Biblical perspective in his editorial of October 1, 1880, ***Signs,*** "Absolute Predestination of all Things".

I know who the author of conditional heresy is. None of the old English Strict Baptists ever heard of it. I thought (until a few years back) that all Baptist people who believed in sovereign Grace believed also in absolute predestination of all things. Well, around these parts I am troubled on the one hand with the conditionals and on the other hand with the New School Missionaries. I belong to neither, have no desire to, and am marked by both as being "A Hardshell Heretic". I do not believe that because one believes in the absolute predestination of all things that it causes one to live in open sin. Some may use it as a license but such characters wouldn't need a license anyway. Neither can I, nor do I, charge God with sin. I am responsible for my sin and we "Absoluters" have been charged with this accusation.

As I mentioned in a previous letter, I am not officially connected with the Old School Baptist. I am along the Old English Strict and Particular Baptist lines. I do not believe in offers of grace. I believe regeneration is a direct work of the Holy Spirit, enabling the one quickened to receive the written word. I do not believe in Mission societies, nor Sunday School, or instrumental music, nor a paid (set salary) ministry. People find me more Old Shcool Baptist than

any other kind. I am not ashamed of it, either. I cannot bend so as to get fellowship, esteem, etc. I do not know of a meeting near, though I can attend, I do not drive.

I have thought for awhile about trying to move somewhere near the coast of N.C. or Virginia. Don't care for a large town, but from 2-5,000 population is o.k.

Do you know any brethren of like persuasion around New Bern, Washington, Belhaven, Edenton, Morehead City, Beauford, Elizabeth City, Hertford, or Swansboro, North Carolina? Perhaps you would know someone on the ***Signs*** mailing list from these places. One reason for wanting to move near the coast is that I have a keen interest in boatbuilding and would like to be near at least a large river or sound. And I would want to be able to also be near brethren I could fellowship with.

I went and preached quite regularly in a Sovereign Grace meeting north of town here in 1978. Well, I did not go along with their Sunday School, their musical instruments and clearly denounced it. Needless to say, I was not called upon any more. Also, one night the Lord opened me up and the discourse lasted an hour and 20 minutes. Well, the pastor found great fault with that. He remarked, "You can't hold people for over 30 minutes". In other words, charm them for 30 minutes and they get tired if you go over that and leave off the charming. Such philosophy belongs to the Hindu cobra snake charmer.

Well brother, I suppose I have wearied you. I would also be interested to know if you know anyone in this city here I could contact.

I shall look forward to hearing from you. I am 40 years of age, disabled, and have a dear wife and 14 year old daughter.

Augustus Webb

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2 CHRONICLES 24:8-14

The word here translated chest, in the original, is the same as that, in other places, translated ark and coffin. There are five of these mentioned in the Old Testament. 1st, Noah's ark, denoting salvation. 2nd. The ark of bulrushes in which Moses, when a babe, was laid, denoting preparation. 3rd, The coffin in which Joseph was laid, denoting sanctification or separation, 4th, The ark of the covenant, over which was the mercy seat, denoting acceptance and 5th, The chest in which were placed the offerings of the people, denoting dedication.

It was no accident that these five different arks appeared in their order, for salvation is first in the experience of the believer and the things which accompany salvation follow in their order. Noah's ark was ordained for the salvation of those whom God chose. The Lord shut them in this ark of salvation, they did not shut themselves in. There was but one window, which was in the top. Here we see God's mercy in sparing Noah the sight of the destruction around him; also, to see the light, Noah had to look up. What a mercy in times of stress to be enabled to look away from all that distresses us, all the turmoil around us, and to look up by faith to Jesus. The second ark, in which Moses was laid, was at a time in the history of the Israelites when they were oppressed by the Egyptians. The Hebrews were multiplying so, that the Pharaoh, which knew not Joseph, feared they would revolt. To prevent this, he ordered all male babies to be destroyed. Moses' mother hid her child until he could no longer be hidden, then she made this ark of bulrushes, put her child therein, and laid it in the flags by the river's brink. Pharaoh's daughter, coming to bathe, took the child and he was brought up in Pharaoh's house, as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, where he was educated as a prince. Here was an opportunity for Moses to be a great man in the world, but Moses, by faith, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's

daughter, recognized his own people, and chose rather to suffer with them. The Lord was watching over the infant Moses, preparing him for the work that He had for him to do, in the deliverance of the Israelites. So the Lord watches over his people, preparing their hearts to seek him for deliverance from the bondage of Satan and Sin.

Joseph, before he died, took an oath of the children of Israel, that when the Lord should visit his people with deliverance, they should carry his bones with them; so when he died they embalmed him and put him in a coffin in Egypt, and when their deliverance came, they did as Joseph had commanded, carrying his coffin through the Red Sea and in all their wanderings in the wilderness until they went into the land of Canaan, Joseph was a type of Christ, and Joseph's body journeying with them was a token of their being a people separate unto the Lord. When the Israelites passed through the Red Sea Joseph's body was with them and the Red Sea closed behind them for them never to return to Egyptian bondage, and even though in their hearts they might lust after the things of Egypt, they could not go back to it, even if they would, and in all their murmurings and lustings after the flesh-pots of Egypt, there was Joseph's body, a silent testimony that they were a separate nation, and could not go with the world. What a picture of the believer! Even after experiencing many mercies at the hand of the Lord, our hearts are so desperately wicked that were it not for God's grace we should turn back to the world: but those who are a separate people unto the Lord are dead to sin, so how can they live any longer therein; and if our hearts would turn again unto sin, we cannot live in it, for we are dead to it by the body of Christ. When the believer has the remembrance of His body, His sufferings and death in sight, sin becomes exceeding sinful.

The next ark was the ark of the covenant, over which was the mercy seat, and in which was the pot of manna, the unbroken tables of commandments, and Aaron's rod that budded. This ark was made of shittim-wood, a desert growth. In this ark, being a type of Christ, the wood signified his humanity, and being a desert growth was in accord with Isaiah, who, when prophesying of Jesus, said he should be "as a root out of a dry ground." The over-lay of gold signified his Deity. The unbroken law was laid in this ark, and in Jesus is the only place where the law is kept; here also was the manna which kept alive the Israelites, and in Jesus is the sustenance of his people. Aaron was the High Priest for the Israelites, so Jesus is the High Priest of our profession. Over the ark was the mercy seat. This ark and the mercy seat were in the holiest place, where only the High Priest was allowed to enter to make atonement for the people. The High Priest's garment had bells upon it, and as long as the people heard the bells they knew that the High Priest lived. We, in this age of grace, know that our High Priest still lives, we hear the joyful sound — the proof of it — in the ministry of the gospel. The people also knew, when the High Priest presented himself alive, that his offering had been accepted. All this is symbolical of our great High Priest who still lives to make intercession for us.

The Fifth ark was the chest of the text, which was placed at the gate of the house of the Lord for the reception of the offerings which the people gave willingly, which commandment the Lord laid upon them by Moses in the wilderness, and consisted of such things as the people had to give, not simply money. Turning to the New Testament we find that this was still kept up in the time of Christ, for Jesus watched various ones casting into the treasury: among them was a poor widow who cast in two mites which make a farthing. We hear people speak of giving the widow's mite when they perhaps give five or ten

cents for some purpose, but this is not the widow's mite at all. The Scripture says she "cast in all that she had, even all her living." In so doing she was casting herself wholly in dependance upon her Lord. So, the Lord's people, when moved by the love of God and the remembrance of his mercies to them, surrender their all to him. All they have is willingly given in his service, their joy is to minister to the brethren of their substance, they love to lay aside earthly cares and assemble themselves together to hear Christ preached, sometimes having to make sacrifices to get there, but the love which they have for their Lord makes them do all these things out of a willing heart. In Acts we read of the church having all things in common, not counting anything their own, but Ananias and Sapphira kept something for themselves, and then, lying about it, they were stricken with death. So a deathlike spirit comes upon those who hold back ought that they have, they lose the joy that there is in spending and being spent in God's service. Paul exhorts believers (notice believers, not those dead in sin) that they present their bodies a living sacrifice, which is their reasonable service, their willing service, but as the hymn says, "Yet if I might make some reserve, and duty did not call, I love my God with zeal so great, that I should give him all."

Thus, from these five arks, we see that these blessings are for believers: that their salvation is of God, and comes first, before any of these other things can follow. The ark of dedication was the last, and so it is with believers, their service to the Lord is the result of first, their salvation, second, the preparation of the heart to receive these things, third, the consequent separation from the world, fourth, their acceptance in the Beloved, and fifth, dedication, their sincere desire to show forth by their walk and conversation the praise of him who has called them out of darkness into his most marvelous light.

Notes of a sermon delivered by Elder H.H. Lefferts at Mt. Zion meeting-house June 25, 1933.
(Taken by Sister Grace Aston.)

To the Dear Editors of the Signs:

Orie W. Odom, aged 99 years, enjoys reading the *Signs* very much. She usually reads it through twice. She has been confined to bed and a wheel chair for one year and nine months.

She is often referred to as being an "Association girl" as the doctor was attending as Association at Moriah Church (in 1881), of Ebenezer Association, when they went for him.

She asked for a home with Shiloh Church in June, 1914.

Written by her son.

W. W. Odom

EDITORIAL

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open; and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue for many days." Jeremiah 32:14.

What meaning does this text have for you? Have there been evidences both sealed and open deposited in your earthen vessels? If the Lord Jesus Christ has purchased you by his own precious blood, you will from the time of your holy calling have evidences to show that you are not your own, but bought with a price. Have you experienced these evidences within your own earthen vessels?

First, let us look at some of the natural conditions that existed during the time that Jeremiah penned our text, and later on may it please the Holy Spirit to take us into its spiritual meaning.

Jeremiah was imprisoned because he foretold the captivity of King Zedekiah and the utter destruction of Judah and Jerusalem due to their sins. While Jeremiah was in prison, the Lord spoke to him concerning the buying of his

uncle's field for the right of redemption. Being the next of kin, the right of redemption belonged to Jeremiah. Thus it became him to fulfill all righteousness for it was according to the word of God.

The right of redemption consisted in this: that if anyone was forced through circumstances to sell land, the nearest blood-relation had the right, and was obliged to preserve the possession for the family, through redemption. Jeremiah, being an honest man, was very exact in paying the right amount as it was weighed and came to 17 shekels of silver. The transaction was done before witnesses and he was ordered by God to put the evidences of the purchase into an earthen vessel. It was the custom of the Jews in that day and time to put evidences of the purchase of land in earthen vessels and bury them in a corner of the purchase field. The earthen vessel would preserve the evidence and can we not say that even the most precious treasures are deposited in earthen vessels? An earthen vessel is a vessel made from the earth, made of earth; earthy. It is a vessel in which something is stored for use, as vessels of wrath or mercy.

Dear ones, you may be wondering what Jeremiah's prophecy concerning the Jews and his redeeming of land has to do with us Gentiles this day and time? I am led to believe that the children of Israel after the flesh were a typical people and God's dealings with them after the flesh was typical of His dealing with spiritual Israel today. The Apostle Paul, when referring to the experiences of the children of Israel, says, "These things were for our example." (I Cor. 10:6). The history of the wanderings of God's ancient people is also the history of his people in every age. For "All scripture given by inspiration of God, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." (II Tim. 3:16). Can we not see then that natural dealings are often the foundation on which the spiritual meaning is built?

May God give us divine wisdom to penetrate into the spiritual meaning of this verse of scripture, seeing and feeling the things that are hidden from the wise and prudent, but revealed unto his little ones by the power of His Holy Spirit.

First, let us notice the fallen and terrible condition of the whole Adamic race. A spiritual death, an alienation and separation from God fell upon us all, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. 5:12). "Therefore as by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." (Rom. 5:18). The law saith to all who are under it, "That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." (Rom. 3:19). "Therefore as by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. 3:20). What a terrible condition mankind has fallen into. How do we get out? "With man it is impossible." God's just and holy law requires perfect obedience, and justice must be satisfied. No man can render or meet these demands. This leaves us all laying in the cradle of condemnation. To be saved we must be redeemed from the curse of the law, and justice must have its satisfaction.

Now we come to this important question, who has the right of redeeming the chosen, but fallen family of God? Who is to undertake so great and wonderous work of redemption? Who is qualified for this great assignment? Would it not be our next of kin? Jeremiah, being a type and figure of Christ, was the next of kin; therefore, he had the right of redeeming his next of kin's field or land and the evidences of redemption was put in an earthen vessel.

The incarnation of Christ is an amazing and extraordinary display of

power and wisdom. How the eternal Son of God should become man is beyond human intellect, yet we know "with God all things are possible." (Matt. 10:26). "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God." (John 1:1). "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." (John 1:4). Incarnation, a state of being clothed or manifested in a body of flesh, was a voluntary act on the part of Christ. It was necessary that the Son of God take upon him our nature to put himself in a capacity to purchase redemption for His people. When Christ was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mary, this brought about two perfect and distinct natures: the Godhead and the manhood. These two were joined in one person. Though Christ's birth was in the way of nature, his conception was supernatural by the power of the Holy Ghost; therefore, he was conceived and born without sin. He was the seed of the woman but not the seed of a man. Christ's body was not a body "shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin" as our bodies were. Christ became what he was not, but ceased not to be what he was, even the eternal Son of God.

Being both God and man, Jesus became a fit mediator between God and man. He could mediate with God, as God, and with man, as man, and thus able to lay hands on both. As man he could be made under the law, and as God capable of yielding perfect obedience unto it. As man he had blood to shed in redeeming his people to God. As man he had a life he could lay down, a ransom for his people, making full satisfaction on their behalf. As God, he could support his human nature under the load of sin and suffering while meeting and fulfilling with perfection all requirements of law and justice in bringing everlasting salvation for his people.

Now may we be blessed to see who has the right of redeeming God's fallen family? Who is He that has become our next of kin? Christ is our next of kin, therefore He and He alone had the right of redemption. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also likewise took part of the same that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death. that is the devil." (Heb. 2:14). and "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." (Rom. 8:3).

Christ not only had the right of redemption by being the next of kin, but also because they were his by gift. In speaking to the Father, Jesus says, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." (John 17:6) and "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that, he should give eternal life to as many as thou has given him." (John 17:2). And also, "And this is the Father's will which hast sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." (John 6:39). If you had some stock that got out into a person's cornfield and they did a lot of damage; then the owner of the field penned them up and required a certain price for their redemption, who would have the lawful right to pay the price and redeem them? Would it not be the owner? Therefore, Christ had a double right for redeeming His people: first by becoming the next of kin, and second by ownership. Could this account for the reference to His making a double payment for them. "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." (Isa. 40:2).

Now with regards to our redemption, the scripture says, "Ye are bought with a price." (I Cor. 7:23). If then we have been purchased with a price, we shall have certain evidences, both sealed and open in order to show and prove our title to be legal and good according to God's divine law and custom. Jeremiah, at the

command of God, put the evidences of the purchase in an earthen vessel and buried it in the field. I believe that the field spiritually represents the church of Christ. An earthen vessel represents these old natural bodies of ours that were originally made from the earth and are sometimes referred to in scriptures as vessels. Christ adds these vessels to his Church daily such as should be saved. "And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved." (Acts 2:47). As the earthen vessel with evidence was buried in the field, so our renewed souls when quickened by the Holy Spirit are buried in the mystical Church of Christ. These are the vessels made unto honor and Jesus says to vessels made unto honor, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (John 10:10).

In redemption spiritual as well as in redemption literal, there must be two kinds of evidences: sealed and open. Sealed evidences are those evidences coming from a renewed heart that has been made good ground bringing forth fruit at different folds, some a hundred, some sixty, and some thirty. And these fruits or evidences are sealed, or undisclosed to the world, but known in part to the one in possession of them. Open evidences are those evidences not concealed or hidden, but are uncovered and exposed to the mental view. Spiritual evidences are worked in the quickened family of God by the power of the Holy Spirit and are known as good works. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2:10). Spiritual good works are worked in us by the power of God and it is very difficult at times for the children of God to realize that they possess any good works and are ready to say, "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink" etc. (Matt. 25:37).

If we are among those bought with a price, quickened, and called from darkness into his marvelous light, then my dear friends, we must have evidences, both sealed and open in order to have a clear title. May we be given to truthfully examine ourselves and evaluate with seriousness the feelings that we feel and have felt in our inward parts. Oh, how important it is for us to be vessels of honor and not vessels of dishonor, vessels of mercy and not of wrath. "And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory." (Rom. 9:23.) May the Spirit of God now lead us to view some evidences that are sealed in the hearts of God's quickened family.

It is a blessed truth that until the Holy Spirit calls us with a holy calling out of darkness and ignorance and establishes his kingdom within us, we feel nothing, we know nothing spiritually. We must be quickened from a state of deadness in trespasses and sins. "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." (Eph. 2:1). We must be given spiritual life and light in order to feel our corrupt nature, what a sinful and wretched people we are. We must have spiritual light to shine into our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." (II Cor. 4:6, 7). The only true light comes from God's shining into our soul to see and know "the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent." (John 17:3). If we have spiritual life, we will also have feeling. If we do not have feeling in our hearts and conscience, where is our religion? If we love our brethren, we love in feeling. If we rejoice in hearing God's

word, we rejoice in feeling. If we are given to pray, we pray in feeling. I believe spiritual life and feeling are the first sealed evidences put into our old earthen vessels. Have you experienced different feelings in your heart and conscience at times, causing you to either rejoice in feeling or being cast down in feeling? If you have, this is an evidence that Jesus Christ has purchased you with his own precious blood.

The fear of God -- what brings about this godly fear in our hearts? Is it not a revelation by His divine light to see what we are by nature? That we are the chief among sinners, condemned by God's just and holy law. We feel the wrath and power of God and cry out unclean, unclean. "Woe is me! I am undone: because I am a man of unclean lips." (Isa. 6:5) Have you ever felt this fear with power into your conscience to make you say I exceedingly fear and quake? David says, "My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments." (Psalms 119:120) Fear arises from a sense of sin and guilt in our conscience. Adam and Eve became sensible of their great sin and nakedness and attempted to hide themselves through fear of God. When the law is brought with power into our consciences, does it not bring guilt and a dread of punishment? God is everywhere present and nowhere absent, there is no hiding from him. Do we not read in God's Word how he has dealt with sinful people of old because of their sins? He destroyed all flesh from the earth with the exception of eight souls. He destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. All of the first born of the Egyptians in Egypt were slain. Pharoah's army was swallowed up by the Red Sea.

There are many more incidents of his dealings against sin. Who knows the power of his anger? The mountains quake at him, the hills melt, and the earth is burnt at his presence. Who can stand before his indignation? The law accuses us of sin, pronounces us guilty for the law is a ministration of condemnation, therefore putting a curse upon us all for "cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." (Gal. 3:10) Godly fear in our hearts should cause us to have a sincere desire not to neglect the assembling of ourselves together to worship "God in spirit and in truth." If we have been given this evidence of godly fear it acts as "a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death." (Prov. 14:27). What a terrible feeling this fear brings upon us, yet again we learn that, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." (Prov. 9:10). Fear, then is an evidence of your purchase by the Lord Jesus Christ. This fear is hidden in the heart and lies deep in the soul, yet this fear will act as circumstances to bring it forth.

Faith: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. 11:1). Faith is a "gift of God." He who gives us faith must also keep it for us for we can no more keep it than we can reach out and get it. Faith may often have to struggle through trials, tribulations, and against unbelief. No faith can act on God but that which comes from God. True faith is exercised on God the Father, as having chosen his people in Christ Jesus to grace and glory from everlasting. This election of God of a certain people is brought into our hearts by faith when the gospel comes to us not in word only but in power. "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God." (I Cor. 2:5). The work of faith then is to believe God's word, as he is pleased to commute with power to our soul. One of the special operations of faith then is that it mixes with the word. "Unto us was the gospel preached as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them; not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." (Heb. 4:2) Christ is the object of our faith. True believers are given

through faith to embrace Christ as "the way, the truth, and the life." Faith acts as a light in a sinner's heart to feel himself a miserable, undone sinner and lost without a Saviour. God the Holy Spirit applies God's word to the conscience. He thus raises up the grace of faith and gives us to feast upon the Bread of Life to our comfort and to the glory of God. It is called precious faith because it is so rare and on account of the blessings it put us in possession of. "For we are the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ." (Gal. 3:26). God the Holy Spirit is also an object of our faith. If we are given to trust in Jesus Christ for the salvation of our souls, we must be given to trust in the Holy Spirit to carry on the work of grace in us as long as we journey here below. We must be given faith to believe that the Holy Spirit who "hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. 1:6). We see that the whole world is divided into two classes of people, elect and reprobate. We may often fear to have the marks of a reprobate with a false faith. Yet, the people with false faith will often brag about what they have done for God: but the possessors of true faith can only rejoice in what they trust Christ has done for them. False faith exalts the creature, but true faith exalts the Saviour. The reprobate depends upon himself with a little help from God; but the regenerate elect, by faith, depends upon God for everything. Faith establishes her house upon a rock and despises all human inventions, human works, and houses built upon sand. Dear brethren, does your experience give you some evidences that you have the fruit of faith deposited in your earthen vessel as a sign of your redemption?

Hope. True hope is the "anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." (Heb. 6:19). Christ Jesus in our only hope. The sources that feed our hope are testimonies from God, the application of blood to the conscience and evidences to give us waymarks that we are traveling toward Canaan Land. Has the wrath of God in a holy law ever visited your conscience and felt you feeling in black despair on account of your awful sins and iniquities? Did hope cause you to cry to God for mercy? A hope of God's implanting will in time raise your head above all opposition. "Cast down but not destroyed." It may have appeared at times that eternal burning was your everlasting portion. Yet, when on the border of despair, your hope rose up as a word of Scripture was dropped with power into your conscience bringing joy and peace to your soul. Jonah in the belly of the whale said, "I will look again toward thy holy temple." Because of darkness of mind, hardness of heart, deadness of soul, alluring after things of this world, hope has to labor and endure. It is the patience of hope that proves its reality and genuineness. Hope goes forward with patience, bearing what comes upon it. Patience is needed for hope to endure all despondency brought on by the weapons that Satan uses against us. We may feel to have very little evidences of hope at times, yet it is a sealed evidence of our purchase that we would not exchange for all the world.

Spirit of prayer. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." (Rom. 8:26). There is no real spiritual prayer, no acceptable prayer to the Lord except that which is created by the operation of God the Spirit upon the heart of a believer. We must first feel a need for prayer, certain things must be worked in the soul by the Holy Spirit, such as, a deep sense of our sinfulness, our guilt, our wretchedness and misery. So in true prayer there is a confession of our sins and guilt, a coming before God guilty and condemned and there is a calling upon him for mercy, for help and for deliverance. "God be merciful to me a

sinner." (Luke 18:13). In speaking to God as a man speaketh to his friend, we tell him of our daily shortcomings, we express our thanks for all blessings and we beg for our wants, if it be according to His will. It is a comfort to know that "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers." (I Peter 3:12). Have you ever felt that God has answered your prayers? Not necessarily in the way and time in which you may have wanted, but in His own way and time. His own way and time is always best for our good and to His honor.

A drawing of the soul by the truth. God has a way of causing a born again person to long for the truth. A person will go out in search of the truth and God uses many wonderful ways to guide him there. The gospel of Christ which is truth brings to light the beauty of election, of predestination to eternal life, and the effects of sovereign grace upon a new born soul. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32). Truth is a wonderful evidence lodged in our earthen vessels by the Holy Spirit as another evidence of our being purchased with His atoning blood. We are given to love His precious truth for it is the power of God unto salvation. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3).

There may be many more sealed evidences lodged in a person's soul by the Holy Spirit such as secret supports in time of troubles, secret delights, comfort during deep depression of spirit, strength for things which you alone would be unequal to. Have you felt any of the sealed evidences mentioned above?

We will now notice some open evidences.

Love. I believe that love is both sealed and open. Spiritual love comes from the ever flowing fountain of Christ. "We love him because he first loved us." (I John 4:19). God did not love us because we loved Him, but He loved us long before we ever had a particle of love for Him. His love is not influenced by anything in the creature. His love is immutable, it is holy. It is gracious and from everlasting. No man in a state of nature ever did or can spiritually love God because "The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be." (Rom. 8:7). Flesh is opposed to Spirit as nature is opposed to Grace. Love is also an open evidence as we see it exemplified in Ruth's cleaving to Naomi when Orpah went back to her people. Love for God's people, for the truth's sake is felt and seen, as it flows from breast to breast. How wonderful it is to feel and see this love in action among the family of God. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." (John 3:14). We may not feel the sweetness of this love at all times because love is tried by enmity, its opposite. Satan will at times bring forth envious feelings, jealousy, and suspicions. True divine love will come forth laboring against these weapons of Satan; divine love will spring up again and again. True love originates with the Father, centers in Jesus, and is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. Love is the key that opens the door to the pardoning of all sins, justifying of sinners, and hides a multitude of transgressions. The love of God is found in every promise, every precept, and every declaration concerning the Lord Jesus Christ and all the elect in him. Surely we have felt at times a love for God, for His truth, and for His people. This love is a very precious evidence of our purchase.

A visible change. A visible change takes place in a quickened soul. Have you been turned from darkness to light? Have you been brought from the power of Satan unto God? "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature:

old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new." (II Cor. 5:17). Your stoney heart God has replaced with a heart of flesh and with it an implantation of new principles of grace, a new spirit, new affections and desires, new thoughts, a new course of life. Old things are passed away. Your old religion, your old fig leaf righteousness, creature strength, etc. This is an open evidence in the one experiencing the change, and it is always a joyful sight to the children of God.

Separation from the world. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean things." (II Cor. 6:17). Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers. Be ye not yoked with them in their unfruitful works of darkness, touch not their unclean ways in fulfilling the desires of their flesh and minds. Separation from the world is an open evidence of a child of God. You do not come away from them because you hate these people, but because you cannot approve of their ways. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." (Matt. 6:14) or "Can two walk together, except they be agreed." (Amos 3:3). The word of truth says, "By their fruits ye shall know them." There are other open evidences such as strict honesty, joining the people of God, readiness to forgive, meekness, humbleness, etc.

My dear friends, can you detect any of these evidences that Christ has lodged in your earthen vessels? If you can, you have a blessed evidence that Jesus Christ has paid double for your redemption. You surely have evidence that you are a sinner, and Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. But we must become live sinners, made alive to our sins as being exceedingly sinful. Our Lord Jesus Christ carried evidences of your purchase into heaven with him, for just before he ascended on high, he said to Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side and be not faithless but believing." (John 20:27).

When given to meditate upon our old corrupt nature, our guilt, our sinfulness, our blindness and our helplessness: who can estimate the worth, appreciate the blessing or fully understand the value of the grace of God in the soul? When these precious evidences of our purchase are shed abroad in our earthen vessels by the power of the Holy spirit, never to be lost or taken away, we in turn receive a soft heart for a stoney one, we receive life for death, light for darkness, wisdom for ignorance, faith for unbelief, love for emnity, the kingdom of Christ for the kingdom of Satan, the law of grace in the mind for the law of sin in the members and the prince of peace for the prince of darkness. You may say I believe, for all whom Christ died will be saved and will bear fruits. But my concern is, am I a vessel of honor with true evidences of my having been purchased? Christ's people will be concerned about themselves, you can see these evidences in your brethren but not always in yourself. Yet, your brethren can see them in you. The brethren who have these true evidences will ask when did we do these things, and the people of the world will ask when did we fail to do these things?

Now my dear brethren, may the Lord grant you a heaven upon earth by enabling you to live upon, to look upon, and feed with faith upon a precious Saviour. His person is glorious, for He is God and man united in one Christ, and all the beauties of heaven and earth meet and center in Him. His blood is precious blood. For the very feeling we have of sin should teach us how much we stand in need of that open fountain of Christ's most precious blood. If we look within ourselves, there is a spring and fountain of uncleanness, therefore, we

must look out of ourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ whose blood cleanseth us from all sin. It is a most blessed truth that the precious blood of Jesus Christ hath greater power to save than all our sins together with the law, hath to condemn. It is an evidence that Christ is our exceeding joy when we really long to be with him and see him "face to face." Yet, we long to be reconciled here below until our departure comes.

An unworthy sinner in hope of mercy,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

SPECIAL NOTICE

A SPECIAL MEETING WILL BE HELD, THE LORD WILLING, SATURDAY MORNING BEFORE THE FOURTH SUNDAY (SEPT. 26, 1981) AT DAN RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, MAYFIELD, N.C., BEGINNING PROMPTLY AT 10:00 A.M.

THIS MEETING IS BEING CALLED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC. AND WILL BE MODERATED BY THE SAME.

ONE PURPOSE IS TWO-FOLD:

1st, WE WISH TO GIVE THE BAPTISTS OF THE OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE ORDER AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONFRONT THE BOARD WITH ANY QUESTION THEY MAY HAVE REGARDING RECENT AGITATIONS WHICH HAVE GREATLY DISTURBED THE PEACE OF THE CHURCHES.

2nd, THE BOARD WISHES TO PRESENT INFORMATION THE MAJORITY OF OUR BRETHREN ARE NOT FAMILIAR WITH IN THIS REGARD, AS WELL AS POINT OUT THE DANGEROUS NEW ALLIANCES BEING FORGED BY EXCLUDED MINISTERS.

OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS FROM ANYWHERE IN THE UNITED STATES ARE WELCOME AND URGED TO COME. THE TIMES ARE PERILOUS.

THE EDITORS

OBITUARIES

CARL CLAYSON BISHER

Brother Carl Clayson Bisher was born October 19, 1914 and died December 24, 1979 in Moses Cone Hospital in Greensboro. He was 65 years old. He leaves behind to mourn his loss his wife, Mamie Lanier Bisher, two sons, Gary and Dwight, and five grandchildren. One grandaughter preceded him in death.

He joined Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church in 1979, having had a desire for many years to join. He expressed his love for the people of the Church.

His funeral was preached by his Pastor, Elder Kenneth Key, and opening prayer by Elder Leonard Key. The prayer and many comforting words were said. His body was laid to rest in Lakeview Cemetery, with many beautiful flowers over his grave.

Written By Mamie Bisher

ELDER REGGIE ROSS WOLF

Reggie Ross Wolf was born May 19, 1910 to Sidney Schuyler and Minnie Nita (Smallwood) Wolf in Topeka, Kansas and he passed from this life on April 23, 1981 at the age of 79 years, 11 months, and four days.

His Mother later married W. K. Haygood and moved to New Mexico where he grew up. He married Miss Laura Lewis on November 4, 1935, in Clovis, New Mexico.

He united with the Predestinarian Primitive Baptist in May 1946 in Lawn, Texas, and was baptized by his Brother, Elder C. M. Haywood. He later moved to Oregon and was ordained to the full work of the ministry in September, 1949. Elder Wolf spent most of his ministry among the churches in Oregon and Washington.

He is survived by his faithful wife, one son, Lewis Alan, and one brother, C. M. Haygood, nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were conducted by Brother Jimmy Hamrick and his body was laid to rest in Mountainair Cemetery.

Submitted by request of the family.

Elder C. M. Haygood

RESOLUTION of RESPECT

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst Sister Nannie Mewborn. She was born October 23, 1884 and died March 29, 1981, making her stay on earth 96 years and 5 months.

Sister Mewborn was a faithful member of our church, and attended until her infirmities prevented her from doing so. She was a great supporter of our church and was always willing to do her part.

Sister Mewborn was a dear sister, for to know her was to love her. She was blessed with three children who saw to it that she was well cared for.

Sister Nannie was the oldest member of Tarboro Church and she was proud to tell people that she was an Old Baptist. She was a firm believer of Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. I'm told she died in her sleep and what a blessing it was that God called her at such a peaceful time.

We feel that our loss is her eternal gain, and feel she is resting in peace, waiting for that day when God will call His little ones home to a place were trials and tribulations will be no more.

The church at Tarboro request that four copies of this resolution of respect be made: one for the church records, one for the family and one for publication in both the ***Signs of the Times*** and Zion's Landmark.

This done in order at our April conference meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

MRS. BETTY MAE PAGE BRADNER

I feel totally inadequate to write a suitable memorial to my dear sister (in the flesh), but a compelling force bids me make the attempt.

Betty Mae Page Bradner was born on July 19, 1899 to the late Willard J. and Mary Betty Gwyn Page in Caswell County, North Carolina. She was translated from this life on March 30, 1981 while a patient at Roman Eagle Nursing Home in Danville, Virginia. Her husband, Harry Bradner, preceded her in death January 13, 1980. She is survived by Mrs. Wilma B. Weber of Danville, Virginia; Mrs. Betty B. Henderson of Altamonte Springs, Florida; and Numa P. Bradner of Richmond, Virginia.

Early in life she manifested the unmistakable qualities of a true saint of God and with this evidence came a love for the Lord and His church. She was gladly received into the fellowship of Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church in 1937, where she was baptized by her former pastor, the late Elder O. J. Denny. She remained a loyal and devoted member until passing.

On hearing of her passing I immediately felt that a dear saint had entered into "that land of pure delight where saints immortal reign". Her attributes were many, but her Christlike purity of heart and nobleness of thought, together with her meekness and humility, gave evidence that she had been taught of God. She loved the doctrine of salvation by grace and never wavered from her belief in this doctrine. Her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, so aptly spoke of her "adorning her profession with an orderly walk and a Godly conversation".

Words cannot express how much we miss her, but our grief is tempered by the assurance that her dear spirit is basking in the light of the glorious presence of her Redeemer.

Her body was entombed in Reidlawn Cemetery in Reidsville, North Carolina, on April 2, 1981.

The language of the poet concludes very appropriately:

"The golden gates were opened,
a gentle voice said 'come'
and with farewells unspoken
she calmly entered 'home'."

Submitted by one who loved her as a sister in Christ,
Mamie P. Aldridge

MRS. SALLIE CARTER

Sister Sallie Carter of Route 2, Madison, N.C. died July 20, 1980 at Annie Penn Hospital after a long illness. She attended her meetings regularly until her eyesight failed.

Surviving are daughters, Mrs. Gracie Synder and Mrs. Mabel Trent, Stoneville, N.C., Mrs. Emma Amos, Madison, Mrs. Sarah Carter, Reidsville, Mrs. Nanny Lindsay, and Betty Hubbard, Reidsville, Polly Fraley of Faith, sons Walter, William, Ruben, of Madison, Hugh Carter, Greensboro, Tryee, Reidsville, Harry, Jackson of Salisbury, N.C., 34 grandchildren, and 34 great grandchilren.

Her family cared for her during her long illness. Sister Carter manifested the grace and faith in God thru many trials in her life.

Funeral services were at Pleasantville with her pastor, Elder H. W. Wray officiating. Burial was in the cemetery there.

Written by request of the church in conference, April 4, 1981

Rachel Wray

Signs of the Times

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 11/81 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE EARLY RELIGIOUS LIFE OF ELDER DAVID BARTLEY MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL

(Continued from last month.)

CHAPTER IX
ORDAINED

In September, 1854, we left the kind home of my dear sister and returned to Jasper County, Illinois, where my father had been called to put off his Christian armor about three years before. My membership remained in the old home church by my request. Perhaps twenty or more brethren and sisters were holding church letters, who had emigrated from Indiana, and they would importune me to speak at their frequent meetings, but I refused because of my long distance from the watchcare of the home church. Moreover, my fleshly mind again resisted my impressions to speak to the people in the name of the Lord, and I had stoutly resolved to resume the study of medicine. For I had persuaded myself that the Lord had not called me to preach the gospel, so incompetent and unfit was I, and so I had laid aside the Bible and taken up the medical textbooks.

Thus time went on, and I seemed to be making satisfactory progress in the way of my own choosing and flattered myself that I should succeed. I had reasoned with myself that it was only a waste of time for me to study the Scriptures with the idea of expounding them, because I could do no good in the ministry, while as a physician I might be useful. I did not see then how

ambitious, self-willed and stubborn I was, nor how short-sighted and faithless.

But one evening, near the approach of winter, I took up off the center table the medical book which I was so perseveringly reviewing and turned to sit down, when my eyes were riveted to the Bible on the table; conflicting emotions filled my heart and I stood irresolute and trembling; but the conflict was short, for the power of the Word asserted itself in my heart, and as a subdued child I laid down the coveted book, took up the dear Book of books, which was more precious now for having been neglected. Thus ended my medical reading for all that winter, for the Bible had become my dearest text-book. So I learned, with Jeremiah, "that the way of man is not in himself".

The spring of 1855, it was in the hearts of ten of us to send to our home churches in Indiana, and ask them to send their Elders and Deacons to constitute us into a gospel church. Accordingly, a goodly number of our beloved ministers and brethren came, among them Elder Asa Nay and Ransom Riggs, and the Conn's Creek church sent to me by her messengers a letter in full fellowship to enter into the new church. But dear Elder McQueary came not with them, for the Lord had taken him to Himself.

On Saturday, May 18, 1855, we submitted to the faithful Council our church letters, articles, and rules, and they cordially received us as a gospel church, known as "The Hickory Creek Regular Baptist Church of Christ", and gave us the right hand of fellowship.

Of those ten, seven have fallen asleep, and of all the dear messengers of the churches who thus received and comforted us, not one remains. They had been the beloved companions of my father, and with him they rest from their labors; also, nearly all the ministers whom I knew in the beginning of my ministry.

My trials in the ministry now began anew and in earnest, of which I cannot speak at length, only to say that they were measured to me in the infinite wisdom and mercy of God, and that trails and afflictions are the common heritage of the Lord's servants. "Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us". This is the Divine plan and end, and it is to the glory of God.

The first year of the infant church was a time of severe trail, and no one was added to it. But after the night of weeping, then cometh joy in the morning; for the Master came and said: "Peace be unto you". He gave us joy and gladness, and greatly revived and built us up in the power and comfort of His grace. The second year fifteen, I think, were added by baptism and numbers by letter; the presence of the Lord was often felt in our worshiping assemblies, and we grew in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior.

The brethren now became urgent for my ordination to the full work of the gospel ministry, but I felt that it would be premature, and plead with them against it. For I could not yet feel satisfied that the Lord had put me in the ministry, and it seemed too great and scared a work for me; therefore I looked for the time to come in the near future when I could and should quit trying to preach. Moreover, I feared the brethren wanted me ordained as a matter of convenience, as we had to frequently send to Indiana for a minister to come and baptize our added members; but they kindly assured me that they were satisfied the Lord had called me to the work and felt it their duty to have me ordained to it, or set apart. And so, with fear and trembling, I yielded; for I could not obstinately resist the church. Accordingly, nearly the same Elders

and Deacons who pronounced us the church of Christ again convened in solemn Council with the church the second day of January, 1857, and by laying on of hands and prayer ordained me to the full work of gospel ministry. The ministers officiating were Elders Riggs, Nay and Jackson (who had himself been recently ordained).

The Lord's good work of grace still went on in our midst, and there was much comfort in the church; for believers in Jesus were frequently baptized and added to it. Many of them were heads of families, influential and worthy; some of their children were also gathered into the fold. My eldest brother, Mordecai, was received on his letter from our old home church (Conn's Creek), and his wife by baptism. The wives of my brothers John, Amos, Johnson, and Joseph, and my last named three brothers were all baptized and added to our company in process of time. At the time of my ordination dear Elder Nay baptized sisters Sophia Broderick and Rachel Bartley (John's wife) and our brother Joseph. The thermometer was below zero, and after cutting away the thick ice the water had to be stirred to prevent its freezing; yet there was no harm. This showed strong faith and warm hearts. Later on it was my privilege to baptize my brother John's eldest son, James, the second wife of my brother Amos, my brother Joseph's wife and her sister, and a sister of my brother Mordecai's wife, besides many others. Still later I baptized for this church also the eldest son of my brother Johnson, Marion and his wife and her two sisters.

Many, very many, of all those loved ones have gone on before me to appear with Christ in His glory at the resurrection of all the redeemed--of which gospel baptism is the type and pledge--when death shall be swallowed up in victory. Of my brothers and their wives, Joseph and wife and the wife of Amos only are left, and my nephew, Jimmy, long since fell asleep in Jesus--two, also, of my own little family of four; first our sunny baby boy, when nearly twenty-one, Willett Tyler, and two days later his mother. That they all died in the Lord and live with Him, I have the comforting assurance; and, in the same cemetery with my father, they rest from their labors. A little while before our noble son closed his eyes his brother, Gilbert, asked him: "Tyler, do you feel that Jesus is with you?" He raised and clapped his hands, a heavenly smile lighted up his face and he said, "Yes, and that is why I am so happy".

CHAPTER X
FLEEING, JONAH LIKE

It has been said that we are creatures of circumstances; and the force of circumstances, with our environments, certainly do operate upon us as causes and influences in shaping and directing our course in life.

Having spent my means as a medical student, the necessities of my family pressed upon me, and receiving no aid from the brethren and churches to whom I ministered in the gospel, my lot seemed trying and hard. Thus burdened and discouraged, I was tempted to think that if the Lord had really put me in the ministry and made it my work to preach the gospel of the kingdom, He would also have put in the hearts and minds of His loving disciples, the children of the kingdom, to loosen my hands, by helping me bear this heavy double burden, and that my circumstances would not be so bitterly trying. Trying to make my dubious way under such clouds and darkness, fears and temptations, it often seemed to me scarcely possible that the Lord had put me in the ministry; therefore, much of the time I was strongly tempted to turn away from it and quit trying to preach. In my spirit I chafed and suffered, repined and mourned, and my heart was bowed under its heavy cross. I was doing some practice, but not enough to

keep us out of debt and comfortable; for the country was generally healthy and the practice was divided among several doctors. The abiding conviction was in my mind that the brethren should cheerfully supply the lack in our necessities out of their abundance; but they did not seem to feel so, and I was too timid and cowardly to instruct them in this duty of mutual ministration and service; therefore I was really as remiss as were they. But all my life I had heard our ministers preach against the bishop or shepherd being supported by the flock, and I knew that our people were prejudiced against helping their preachers. Therefore I kept all these things to myself and pondered them in my heart, and my soul was pressed down as a cart beneath its sheaves.

It is due that I say of the brethren of the two churches I served, one about forty miles west of us, that they manifested warm appreciation of my ministry in every way, except this failure to minister to my necessities--and I was at fault in this, in not having the faithful courage to teach them the gospel rule: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ". I should have impressed this "reasonable service" upon them, not more for my sake than theirs, but especially in faithfulness and honor to the Lord, whose servants we are. But I was young and inexperienced in the full work of the gospel minister, and there was no father in the ministry near me to counsel and help me.

The conflict between preaching and praticing medicine would rise again and again, and truly necessity was laid upon me to do both. Yet I felt that I should finally have to give up one or the other. It had seemed to me that if I could go away from the Baptists I might then lay down the ministry, devote myself to the sick and get along better, and I would occasionally talk to some of the home brethren about doing this, but they would laugh at me, and had no idea that I would do such a thing.

Well, after struggling on thus in this unequal warfare about five years, from my ordination until the fall of 1861, the Lord then gave me up to have my own way, and I went away into the hospital service of the federal army as a nurse.

The Sunday before I started we had a blessed meeting, and we all felt the comforting presence of the Lord, causing our hearts to overflow in love to one another, and I felt that, it would be hard for me to leave all that were dear and beloved, I would draw back if I had not already enlisted. For I was leaving the church without a preacher, as a flock without a shepherd, and some of the aged sisters wept when I left them.

Before we had been in camp two months a dear neighbor youth died in the hospital, and I was detailed to take him home for burial. After my arrival home his family (who were Baptists) sent a request for me to preach in our churchhouse at his funeral. This I could not refuse, although it seemed impossible; for the spirit of the ministry was gone from me and I had become as indifferent as any natural person. When the time came, as I walked down the aisle of the crowded house, shaking hands with my neighbors and brethren on the right and left, I was shocked to find that my love for the brethren had grown cold, so that I felt only the same natural regard for them as for the other friends. This made me feel that I was not a Christian, after all, and that it would be hypocrisy and a mockery for me to go in the pulpit and try to preach. But on reaching the front, dear old Brother Jerry Ferguson grasped my hand and wept. My cold indifference was gone the next moment, the love of the brethren rushed in and filled my whole being and I dropped in a seat, overcome with emotion. It was a relief and comfort to me then to preach, and the Lord gave me liberty.

But alas! how could I ever bear to go away and leave the dear children of God

again? For, with a poet, I now deeply felt:

"Here my best friends, my kindred dwell;
Here Christ, my Savior, reigns."

The next day I had to leave for Camp Butler, and sorrowful indeed was the parting with my little family and all. At midnight I re-entered the hospital, crushed and broken in spirit, and from that time on I was a suffering invalid--sick in mind and body. A complication of ailments set in and became chronic, induced by exposure and soul-trouble. For now I sorrowfully felt that I had fled from the commandment of the Lord, as much so as did Jonah, and had rebelled against Him and grieved the Holy Spirit.

The loving Son of God, the Father, had meekly and obediently endured all things and laid down His righteous life for me; but now, because of some sacrifices and trials, I had forsaken Him and His blessed service, in the delusive hope of making the way better and my cross lighter. How terribly deceived by Satan and the flesh! Instead, my troubles were dreadfully increased; for I now endured the hidings of the Lord's countenance, felt that I had sinned against light and knowledge and forsaken my own mercies.

If the South had rebelled against earthly authority, I against Heaven. I had tried to satisfy my conscience with the plea that it was a worthy cause and good work for me to enter the army to minister to the suffering soldiers; but He who saved me from perdition had said to me, "Go, preach Jesus and His righteousness", therefore, I was disobedient, and had denied my Redeemer and Lord. Seeing and feeling this, I was filled with anguish of spirit and deep repentance. My soul was solitary, utterly desolate and comfortless. I preferred to be alone in my cold and dismal tent, where I could read the sorrowful Psalms of David of old, so expressive of the troubles of my own heart--and I could not read any other part of the Bible. For the Lord had taken His Spirit and the light of His countenance from me and left me to my own wretched self. Yet I dared not complain or murmur at this fearful affliction and suffering; for I had willfully turned away from the blessed work of the gospel ministry, forsaken the brethren, and brought all this calamity upon myself. I remembered how good they had been to attend upon my ministry, their Christian confidence in me and loving fellowship for me, so that great had been our mutual comfort and joy in our meetings, for the Lord had blessed us with His heavenly presence. And as all this came back to me in my forlorn camp-life, I most painfully felt that those were heavenly places, when contrasted with these. For, instead of the society of home and spiritual kindred, I was in the midst of the most ungodly and profane men and deprived of almost every comfort. Hence, as the winter slowly advanced, my maladies grew worse, until it was evident that without a change and relief, death must soon take me out of the army.

To die thus was a thought that I could not bear, for I earnestly desired that the Lord might first mercifully heal my backslidings and restore unto me the joy of His salvation, before my departure, and for this blessing my broken and humbled spirit fervently prayed. Yet my prayers seemed shut out from His holy heaven, and I sadly feared that I had too grievously gone astray from Him to hope for the return of His presence and blessing on earth, and must die in this deep affliction and darkness. Still, my trust and hope in God abided with me, and I firmly believed that, though He might suffer me to die in this most wretched state, yet He would raise me up to His holy heaven to suffer, sorrow and weep no more, and to die no more. This was the balm of my heart and solace of my soul--and it was all there was left me.

In February, 1862, we were encamped at Ft. Henry, Tenn., where General

Grant marshaled all the forces under his command, preparatory to transporting them up the river to Pittsburg Landing; therefore the regimental hospitals were abandoned, and the sick and disabled were sent away to the general hospitals, upon the orders of the senior surgeons of the respective regiments, without which no one could have leave of absence. On this account I had to share a wretched little tent with two soldiers, without fire, lying on a thin mattress and it on the wet ground. The season was very rainy, with sleet and snow, and at times the water would run in under my bedding until my garments would be wet, and the only way to either dry or warm was to stand out in the inclement weather before a smoky fire of green timber. Then, the food we had to subsist on was unfit for a sick person, and, moreover, I was suffering greatly from chronic indigestion and dysentery, so that my food was often thrown up, and I was literally both starving and freezing.

(continued next month)

Winston Salem, N.C.

Dear Brother Williams,

I get the ***Signs*** and so much enjoy reading it. I love the Truth it presents. I really loved and praised God for the fine scriptural sermon in the July issue "Predestination" by Elder H. H. Lefferts. That dear brother knew about Bible predestination.

I do not take nor care to take any of the "conditional periodicals". I did take "Old Faith Contender" until Brother Berry stopped publication. The ***Signs*** and "Old Faith Contender" are the only two Old Baptist periodicals I know of that present the truth.

Having never met personally any of you dear brethren on the ***Signs*** staff, I love you for the truth you stand for and love you in the Lord.

Enclosing $1.00 to help. I and my wife are both on a disability income. Hope to be able to send a little more later on.

Remember us poor sinners in prayer. There are three in our family, myself, my wife, and daughter, aged 14.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Augustus Webb

THE SWORD OF THE LORD

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace but a sword." Matt. 10:34

These words were not spoken by some evil spirit, nor yet Satan, but by the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Contrary as this may seem to the natural mind of man, this is truth; for every word spoken by Jesus Christ is truth; for he is the way, the truth and the life.

"For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household."

For many years this scripture caused me to wonder and have many anxious thoughts and questions. Why would the King of Salem, who is the King of peace, set at variance those who we naturally think should be at peace with each other? I believe I can now understand, at least in part, something of which the Lord was saying. In the preceeding portion of this chapter we find a portion of the answer. Christ sent forth his sheep in the midst of wolves and gave them instruction and warning. The warning was, "beware of men." These men will bring you before councils, and they will scourge you, and bring you before governors and kings for his sake; and this shall be a testimony against them. The instruction was that, when they shall deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

We most often think of this as refering to the ones sent forth to preach the

gospel; in other words, the Elders. But I believe this is to every child of God who would speak of the glory of God and his hope in Christ. And to whom do we most often speak of this? Are they not the members of our own house? And what is so often the response we receive? They are set at varience against you: they will fight against you with everything in their power: they will take council with each other and with those with whom they have formed a confederacy, which is the false church. They will hate you and even deliver you unto death. Such are the trails and tribulations of those who would profess their faith in the atoning blood of Christ. But who among the saints of God has not so suffered? "Yea, all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Time and space would not permit, (even if I could,) to name all those mentioned in the scriptures who suffered in the behalf of Christ; but I would like to mention a few. Abel was the first and was slain by his brother Cain; Moses, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, David, Isaiah, Daniel, Jeremiah and even all the rest of God's holy prophets. There is not one found who did not so suffer. And our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ suffered more than all combined. Yes, the persecutions and sufferings began with the very first ones born in this world, and will not cease until our Lord shall return without sin unto salvation, and shall say, "Come,ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." There will be no suffering there, and all our tears and fears shall be wiped away.

These trials, tribulations and persecutions are never good to us, but they are certainly good for us; for they serve God's purpose of trying our faith; and the trial of our faith is more precious than silver and gold. It is not God seeking to find out how much faith we have or how strong it is. Oh, no! if we have faith at all it is His gift to us; but these trials show us just how weak and undone we are, and that all our strength and sufficiency must come from above. I know some of the brethren, and I suppose you do also, who are even now under very great trials and tribulations because of their faith: and it seems to me that our ministers do suffer the greatest. But Christ is faithful, and will not suffer us to be overcome completely. He has suffered everything before us and is become our great High Priest; and we should call upon him in all things in prayer and supplications.

When we are set upon by our families, friends and even our foes, we are not to fear; for Christ said, "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetop. And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Though we have this admonition, there are still many who do not heed it and must suffer the consequences.

When Peter and the other apostles were brought before the council and beaten and threatened and commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, what did they do? They rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name and they went forth daily teaching and preaching Christ. Paul was of the same mind and so were many of the Christians of old who were scattered all over the world, but they also went forth teaching and preaching Christ. May God be pleased to enable us to do likewise.

The same sword that has seperated us from our own household and from our friends is the same sword that has pricked us in the heart, and has cut to the heart those who would oppose us. This sword is the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. The ones who are pricked in the heart are those who

hear the word and believe: the ones who hear the word but believe not are they who are cut to the heart and who take council to slay us: they gnash upon us with their teeth as they did Stephen. May the Lord grant that our prayers be as his: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge": for by nature we were the children of wrath even as others. Therefore let us not be hasty to judge those who now oppose us. Did we not oppose this same doctrine which we now defend. When were we given to believe? Early or late in life? Those who oppose the doctrine of Christ may now in the future be one of its most feverish advocates. We should not strive with them, but against their false doctrines. Let us consider Paul; for hs was given to us as an example. Paul, or Saul of Tarsus, truly believed he was doing the service of God while yet he was breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples. But on his way to Damascus, with letters of authority to bind and bring to Jerusalem all he found who professed faith in Christ, his persecutions of Christ (The church being the body of Christ) were brought to an abrupt end. "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" And he said, "Lord, who art thou?" Until that hour Saul did not truly know the One whom he trusted he was serving. So it is with all the children of God. When Peter answered Jesus and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God", Jesus replied, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Although God chose his children in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world they can not know anything of it until it please the Father. Therefore be not hasty to judge.

This sword, the sword of God, is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged (man made) sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. "Yea, a sword shall pierce thru thy soul that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." With the thoughts and intents of our hearts brought into the light for us to examine, we must fall back in horror; for they reveal unto us just how corrupt and vile they really are before a just and holy God. Heretofore we had supposed something good about us that we could plead before His Majesty, but now we are made to see that our heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; and our whole being, from the top of the head to the sole of the foot, is but wounds, and bruises and putrifying sores. Immediately we turn to the law and seek to justify ourself by our works; but there is no hiding place in this mountain, for our righteousness is as filthy rags unto the one with whom we must plead. Then here again the sword is used to open our eyes that we might see Christ and his righteousness, and that thru his shed blood his righteousness was imputed unto us who are chosen by the Father in Christ before the foundation of the world. By the effectual working of the Holy Spirit we are converted from a state of death to life, from a state of sin to holiness, and from error to the love of truth as it is in our Savior Jesus Christ. Before we were converted we were never disturbed by Satan, for he was content to let us follow our own lusts and pernicious ways: but now he attacks with all the cunning, skill, and fury at his command. He tempts us in many ways as he did the Lord, and causes us to have many doubts and fears that our hope and faith is but imaginary. But with our conversion came faith according to the dispensation of the One who shed his precious blood on the tree of the cross for us. Therefore, above all, take this shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts

of the wicked. Take also the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: praying always with prayer and supplication in the Spirit for all saints; and for this poor worm of the dust, that I might ever glorify His holy name and praise Him eternally.

Beloved saints of the Lord, I knew not where to begin, and I know not where to stop, but I have desired to write some of the thoughts, (scattered though they may be,) that have come to my mind concerning these beautiful scriptures; in hope that they may be blessed to the glorifying of His holy name and comforting and edifying to his beloved children.

Pray for me; for the prayers of a just man availeth much.

Clifford Wilbanks

"And the cup was found in Benjamin's sack." (Genesis 44:12)

The sons of Jacob had already been down to Egypt for corn, and had left Simeon there bound and in prison. When the corn was gone their father said unto them, "Go again, and buy us a little food." Judah assured his father that they could not possibly go unless Benjamin accompanied them. Jacob hesitated, for he had lost Joseph, and Benjamin, the only remaining child of his beloved wife Rachel, was very dear to him; but at last he bade them take of the fruit and carry it down to the man as a present. Also said he, Take double money in your hand, and the money that ye brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand, and take Benjamin; and Jacob concluded, "If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."

They returned to Egypt with Benjamin, and when Joseph saw them, he commanded the ruler of his house to slay and make ready, for these men shall dine with me at noon. The brethren were filled with fear because they were brought into Joseph's house, thinking that Joseph sought occasion against them. They communed with the steward of Joseph's house regarding the money that was returned in their sacks, but he said, "Peace be to you! fear not." When Joseph came home they bowed themselves to him to the earth, and he lifted up his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his own mother's son, and said, "Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son."

Joseph made haste, for his bowels did yearn upon his brother, he sought where to weep, and entered his chamber and wept there. After he had washed his face and refrained himself, he commanded his servants to set on bread. His brethren were then seated before him, the first-born according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth; and the men marvelled one at another, and Joseph sent messes unto them from before him, but Benjamin's mess was five times as much as any of theirs. Then Joseph commanded his steward to fill their sacks with food, as much as they could carry, and to put every man's money in his sack's mouth; and to put his silver cup in the sack's mouth of the youngest, as well as his corn money.

When they were gone out of the city, and not yet far off, Joseph commanded the steward, "Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good?" He overtook them, and spake unto them these words. Then took they down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack. The search began at the eldest and left at the youngest, "and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack."

Here we shall cease to follow the narrative, as our intention is to write of the cup in its spiritual significance; also of the characters with whom this cup is found. Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, bear him two sons: Joseph first and then Benjamin. Jacob loved Joseph more

than all his sons, and Benjamin, being the youngest, was also greatly beloved, for it is written, Jacob's life was bound up in the lad's life. Joseph was therefore Benjamin's elder brother, and Joseph being a lively type of Christ, Benjamin, to our understanding, is a wonderful type of the church in the gospel dispensation. The steward is the servant of Joseph, and represents the gospel ministers, who are stewards of the manifold grace of God.

It was the steward who ministered to the brethren when in distress over their returned money. He said, "Peace be to you! fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks." He it was also who searched the sacks; he stood in Joseph's stead and spoke the words given him by Joseph. He also declared that they had the divining cup, and they denied it, for the thing was impossible with them. So wherever there are those whose iniquities encompass them around, they stand before their Judge self-condemned, depending entirely upon the mercy of him with whom they have to do. Such, in their confession, deny that they have the cup.

The cup represents the sorrows, travail and separation which Joseph experienced while passing through the afflictions that were his lot according to God's purpose. The cup therefore was a type of the cup of our Lord Jesus Christ. He came down to Egypt of this world where he was crucified, was sold by his brethren, and at Gethsemane he said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." He fell on his face and prayed, saying, "Oh my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! never-the-less, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

"How bitter that cup, no heart can conceive.
Which he drank quite up that sinners might live."

As Joseph partook of his cup, he divined the very things transpiring in his life to be according to the purpose of God revealed to him in the two dreams given him long ago. It was in a sense of loneliness he partook of that cup. It could not be shared with the Egyptians: he was alone. As our Lord partook of his cup, he divined, and could say, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." He had a full cup. "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." This blessed Person is none other than our Elder Brother, though we knew it not. We have seen him pierced, and we mourn for him; when brought into judgement, we expect chains and death, and say, "What shall we speak?" We know not what to say, nor how to clear ourselves.

The brethren on their second visit for corn, dined with Joseph; and it is written, "Joseph made haste, for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there." Whilst here on earth our dear Redeemer ate with publicans and sinners, and his bowels of love yearned over them. Often in the secret chamber of his solitary life, he offered supplication with strong cries and tears for them, and for all his brethren. It is said that Joseph took and sent messes unto all of them from before him, but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of their's.

The least notice or favor of our Lord to a poor sinner, is not according to good works, but according to his love, and love is the fulfilling of the law. While the brethren representing the Jews received the law, yet Benjamin (the gospel church) received five times as much: which signifies a fulfilled law. With those who are born of the same mother (Jerusalem above) the cup is found. They say it is not in their sack of life, yet they are grieved for the afflictions of Joseph: they are vile, sinful. When they would do good, evil is present with them. This is my cup. Yet when it is shown to them, they tremble,

for they fear it is stolen, that they are taking that which belongs to another. They feel God-forsaken, are fearful of death and offer supplications with strong cries and tears; they hate sin, but find it in their members, and are made to cry out, "Not my will, but thine be done."

As the steward, or preacher, by the Holy Spirit's guidance, searches, the cup is found: and it is in Benjamin's sack; that is, in his who is the smallest and least in the family. There is little Benjamin with their Ruler, partaking of the same cup. "And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders."

The rest of the brethren could return to their father, but Benjamin shall dwell in safety by him. Only in a realizing sense of our own weakness, is there safety, and then we know we have no righteousness; nevertheless our near kinsman Jesus the Lord shall cover us with his righteousness all the day long, and we shall dwell between his shoulders. What a safe place for poor weak sinners: between his shoulders. He carries the lambs in his bosom. It is also written, "The government shall be upon his shoulder." As partakers of his cup, though babes, they yet divine and see things that are hid from the wise and prudent. They clearly discern that holy men of old wrote as moved by the Holy Ghost. To the Jews under the legal covenant, it was not revealed, but it is revealed unto us. In these things we have fellowship with God, and are partakers of his cup. Not one shall come short of his glory, for if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him. The father's life was bound up in the life of the child. Jesus, our Elder Brother, is God-man, therefore in him God's life is bound up in our life.

As Joseph made himself known unto his brethren, so does our Lord Jesus make himself known with the glory of a risen Lord, who, like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. He showed to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus that his going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it. His blessed presence gives joy and gladness; and the five changes of raiment given Benjamin, are but a faint type of the blessed raiment with which, from time to time, his bride, the gospel church is adorned.

Aug., 1923 Elder George Ruston

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Old Union Primitive Baptist Church Floyd County, VA, a presbytery met April 25, 1981 at Old Union Church for the examination of brother Grover Semones, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgement, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of a Deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder William Holland. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders William Holland, Amos Hash, Leonard Key, Rufus Brown, Larry Hollandsworth, Noel Conner, Willard Cox, Roy Agee and Hale Terry. Deacons-Tiras Conner, Carl Terry, W. R. Bernard, Nelson Reed, Brammer Nichols, and Donald Agee.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Hale Terry as Moderator and Elder Leonard Key as Clerk. Elders Holland and Agee were chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Elder Larry Hollandsworth having been duly appointed by Old Union Church in conference April 25, 1981, spokesman for the church delivered brother Grover Semones to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder Holland and Agee using scripture reference 1st Timothy 3rd Chapter. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Rufus Brown. Elder Amos Hash delivered the charge to the candidate. Scripture reference was 1st Timothy.

The right hand of fellowship and

brotherhood was given. The ordained Deacon was delivered back to the church as an ordained Deacon of Old School, Primitive Baptist Church at Union, Indian Valley, VA.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Noel Conner.

Elder Hale Terry, Moderator
Elder Leonard Key, Clerk

SERMON BY ELDER J. P. HELMS AT THE VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING IN 1959

Brethren and friends I have been enjoying the meeting very much - thankful to be spared to see your faces again, and to see the love and fellowship that is manifest among you. When your Moderator informed me that I would be called on to speak first this morning, I can't find words to describe my feeling, for my very being cried, Impossible: that something is demanded and required of me that is impossible for me to do.

I am before a people I verily believe have been taught of the Lord; and I come before you as the weakest of the weak, and poorest of the poor, with the desire that the Lord of heaven would bless me to bear testimony among his children of the glorious things He has wrought for them, and given them. And what it means to meet together and greet one another as brethren, for often we consider these things lightly. We are all by nature the children of Adam, but we greet each other not as brethren in Adam, but as brethren in the Lord. How this wonderful relationship comes about - the cause of it, and the consequences of it, will at best never be told, but only hinted at.

If there is any scripture resting on my mind more than another at this time, it is, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hast bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God,..." It is the peculiar relationship that exists between God's people here that I desire to speak about. There is certainly a cause beyond the reach of human hand, or human thought, that brings this relationship about. Here we have affirmed something that is the cause. Why this blessing has been poured out and bestowed upon us, passes our understanding.

When did this love that we are told to behold the manner of, have its beginning? How long has this love of God existed towards you and me? It is spoken of as before the world began. And I affirm that the love which is mentioned in this Book, is God himself, and is the love that we would approach with fear and trembling, and desire grace to behold the manner of.

I believe that before the earth had any being; long before the stars which decorate the high dome of the universe - before they ever came into being, that God loved us; and then, because of that love, he made choice of you and me of the posterity of the first man formed of the dust of the earth; and that never one will be added or one taken away from that choice that He made: because it was in keeping with his own eternal will and purpose.

Often during this meeting, (and on and on), it will be mentioned concerning that which was done in eternity: That God predestinated every one who will ever reach the high clime of eternal glory; that He predestinated us unto the adoption of children: not by our efforts or the efforts of any human, but by the Lord Jesus Christ, He predestinated us to be conformed to the image of his Son.

Now in this act of God in eternity that set and sealed the destiny in that wonderful work of His, there was a cup for you and for me - a walk laid out for us in such a wonderful way we will never fail nor falter, but will be found walking, living, and abiding in the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom, and by whom we serve God acceptably. This glorious blessing was made manifest in New Birth in such

a way that we were made to fear and tremble, and to look upward and call the God of the universe, Our Father. No wonder, then, this writer says, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."

I know that the finger of scorn is pointed at us; that we are called old fogies; and this and that, but it matters not when we are given grace to consider what we are by the work of God's grace, and all because of the love he had for us; and that He has placed every blessing we will ever receive here, or in the hereafter, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. For the Lord of glory was made manifest and laid in the manger; and given to you and to me.

When we talk about the Gift of God: what it is, how it is? It is all contained in our Lord, our Elder Brother, who came down and took upon himself our flesh in a wonderful way, and was made a sin-bearer for us: "Behold", indeed, "what manner of love", is this that caused him to lay his head low with the beasts of the stall, yet came with the power with which he made the world. We hear today that He needs help, that he can be hindered, and all this: Away with such untruth!

I stand before witnesses this morning who know something. Though we are called "hope" folks, I want to say that we are the only folks who do know anything. For there are two things that we know: that we are sinners, and that there is only one Saviour, and who He is. You have been taught not by men; for, as with the apostle, we learned it not of man, neither were taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. That is God's gift to you. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us": his own self in the person of his Son. That is what it means: That he gave Jesus not a Saviour of the whole world, but the Saviour of His children, his people; and He came down to be with them.

And so, he has become our brother. Such a wonderful thing is too much for words; too much for us to lay hold of, or to comprehend: It has to be revealed to us, and wrought in us in such a way that we are made to know that we are sinners; and that there is only one Saviour, whose arm is never shortened that he cannot reach the worst case: There is no place too far for him; there is no case too hard for him.

They talk about taking little children when they are infants and putting them in the Cradle Roll, and bringing them up step by step; and of a man getting so old that he has passed the day of grace. Away with such an untruth! I tell you that the love God gave his children, reaches the infant's case, and the old man's and old woman's case. It doesn't make any difference as to age or condition, color or clime, where this love has been given them in eternity, it will be made manifest to them here.

The first thing that is ever made manifest to them, is their condition before a just and holy God. I stood by the bank of a stream and saw my mother immersed into the Old Baptist Church when I was five years old and was seven when my father united with the church. I was born and reared among the Old Baptists, and respected them as honest and honorable people, but there was a thought in me, (and it grew as I grew), that our destiny was in our own hands: that we could work ourselves into the favor of the most high God: I thought it was all in our hands. Talk about Arinianism, I had a full dose of it: It was born in me. Don't tell me you are an Old Baptist because your father or mother was one; I know better than that. I was everything in the world but a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ: I believed in Helms; that he could work himself into the favor of God, and receive every gift for what he did. But, Lo! the difference:

In the seventeenth year of my life, (and if it were not for these things you

would not be my brethren, and this would not be a home for me), in the night time, I saw something. It appeared in the East, and there was a light which no man's eyes could penetrate: and there was a Being in it. And a voice came out of that light - and the graves gave up their dead, and behold, there were only sheep and goats: and I was a goat. I awoke with a prayer for mercy, and tears of sorrow in my eyes, because it was here I found that I was a sinner - a condemned sinner in the sight of God. For seventeen years no man ever undertook more than I to get right with God.

Sometimes I boasted that I had conquered this old flesh: I had laid this thing down, and taken up that. But then I would fall and become ten times worse. I remember, (because profanity was one of the worst things that ever tormented me), that I quit profanity for three months; and I began to look at myself that I was getting better. Then, as I was walking along, I stubbed my toe on a stone: I threw my hat down and stamped it into the ground, and more profanity than ever I had thought of rolled out of me. Then it was that I fell down deeper and deeper. Talk about a man climbing upward, I want to tell you that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. When you walk in these things, you go down, down, unless this that God gave - not offered, in the person of Jesus Christ, is for you.

In my thirty-fourth year, everything had failed: I had sinned away the day of grace; I had gone beyond the reach of God's mercy. But my hope is that He came to a cabin home, and spoke words of life, and brought life and light unto a poor sinner, and raised him up. I was lying on a stone hearth, and he raised me up, and for a few minutes there was no doubt but that He loved me, and that he had given himself for me; for he affirmed to me that, "I made heaven and earth, and I am your Saviour." I walked out of that cabin, and behold everything was perfectly attuned to the praise of the glory of God, who had borne my sins in his own body; died for me upon the cross; and was raised for my justification. He has not left us comfortless, but is with us day after day, and night after night. This is the love of God that passes all understanding. The Lord of glory has done all of this for us.

Then the thought is, if he has done all of this for us, what do we do? I tell you one thing; his children love him. Why do they love him? Because he first loved them, that is why. Do we love one another? Yes; because God has begotten us again and has implanted the love of the brethren in us. Can you keep from loving your father and mother? You can't do it; neither can you keep from loving your brethren in the Lord.

I did not have to learn to love Old Baptists. I thought one time they were the ugliest folks I ever saw, and that every old ugly man and woman in the country joined the Old Baptist Church. But, Lo, something took place! I went to church after this memorable occasion, and I saw them as I had never seen them before: They looked so different - I knew their faces all right, but I saw something shining in their countenances, and they had a different appearance: and I just loved them. I couldn't help it - and I didn't try to help it either.

So what do we do for him? He puts something in us that causes a work. Don't tell me that you won't praise him: Don't tell me that you won't thank him. When he takes you up out of an horrible pit and places your feet upon a rock, and puts a new song in your mouth, don't tell me you won't sing. But when you do all of this, I don't want to hear anyone tell what they have done for the Lord, for when he gives you grace to sing his praise, and when he gives this old sinner grace to testify in his courts, it is a wonderful thing that he does. Preaching is the easiest thing in the world when God gives you something to preach, but it is the hardest thing in the world to try

to preach.

God does everything for his people: He gives them faith. "The life which I now, live in the flesh", said the apostle, "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." So we work by faith through grace that is given us, and we don't claim praise for ourselves, but for Him from whom all blessings come.

The whole thing is stated briefly, "If Christ be in you." If Christ be not in you, you are none of his; you are not akin to him, and you dare not call him brother, or king, nor mention his name, if he is not in you. If He is not in you, you are dead, but when he who is our life appears, then we also appear with him in glory.

If God opens the windows of heaven and feeds you a little bit, you won't go from this association praising these elders who preached; you will go home praising the Lord. "The Lord has done great things for us whereof we are glad." So, "Behold what manner of love." You can't explain why you love your companion; much more, ten thousand times more, the love of God that was given in Christ Jesus. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us," - not offered it to us; not put it somewhere that we have to go to get it, but bestowed upon us. Does it go back to the morning of time? yes, to that one who offered a more acceptable sacrifice than his brother. It reaches on down - it is the same grace; it is the same gift you receive that was given to Elijah of old and those prophets who by faith were imprisoned, or put to death.

I know that we say sometimes that if we had the same evidence that sister or brother so and so has, we would not doubt any more. But if you ever get without doubt, you lose the most precious thing in the world. When you get to the place that you know too much, you can't call a poor old sinner like me brother. And when it comes to the place we can't call each other brethren in the Lord, we are in a terrible condition. It is your weakness and your failings, that, in some wonderful way, I have fellowship for; I have fellowship for your sufferings; I have fellowship for your doubts; I have fellowship for your fears; I have fellowship for your staggerings, and you can't walk to suit yourself. I have fellowship when you can't control your tongue; because that is me! It takes the grace of God to straighten my walk; to control my tongue, and make me live right and do right here in the world. So I haven't a thing in the world to boast of. Only when I glory, may I glory in the Lord.

He's done everything and brought this relationship about. You can't get it by joining the church; you can't get it by baptism, and you can't get it by praying or singing. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This is the only way that you can come into this family of our God: By being born again of incorruptible seed, which liveth and abideth forever.

The whole posterity of Adam was in his loins, and Adam was a figure of him that was to come. And I tell you, children, that the incorruptible seed that is mentioned in the scripture quoted, was in the Lord Jesus Christ in eternity; and everyone that is born again, is born of that seed; and heaven is their home. Nothing can ever be brought against you, for in a wonderful sense, you are already there. The only way we can know them in this world, is that there is something perceived in them that is a mystery to the world. I may never have heard you speak, or sing, or mention these things, but there is something in your face that you can't hide.

I have talked longer than I thought possible. May the Lord keep you, and give your grace that you may realize more and more how dependent you are upon him; and how sure it is that He will supply all your needs.

FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING MOONS CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

The Lord willing, a fifth Sunday meeting will be held with Moons Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Sunday, November 29, 1981, beginning at 10:30 a.m.

Moons Creek is located approximately one mile off Highway #86, midway between Danville, Va., and Yanceyville, N.C., in Caswell Co.

The meeting, though being held at Moons Creek, will be participated in by a number of other independent churches.

An invitation is extended to ministers, brethren, and friends to meet with us.

Elder Kenneth Key, Pastor
Moons Creek Church

Dear Sirs:

A few thoughts came to me on Hebrews 11:1 while I was reading, and I decided to write them to the ***Signs*** hoping someone may get a little comfort from them. After reading, do with them as it pleases you. It will be fine with me.

Hebrews 11:1 said, ***"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."*** Now when you first think about this thing it sounds almost impossible; "The evidence of things not seen". Most of the time it is hard to get evidence of things seen, of things that happen here in this life on a regular basis, but here we are talking or thinking about evidence of things not seen. But what are we really talking about here? Why, faith. Faith is the subject under consideration; God given faith, if you please. For the scripture says, "For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourself, it is a gift of God". This faith we are thinking about, according to scripture, and as all believers know, is a gift of God. It is God given faith.

I am not writing this to ridicule, or condemn the belief of others, but I certainly don't mind comparing some differences between their belief and mine, between the right and the wrong, the fake and the true. The Arminian world will say "Oh, you got to have faith", and we know the scripture says "without faith it is impossible to please God". So we also say that you have to have faith, but they say and think that all one has to do is reach out and get faith, as if it were fruit hanging on a tree, and anyone who would put forth a little effort could get this faith; the more effort, the more faith. But we know it doesn't come that way. I am writing about the faith that God's people have, something that is a gift of God; "The evidence of things not seen". Oh, the countless examples of things we could recall about faith being the evidence of things not seen.

Speaking in a natural way and of natural things, if we went out and bought a car we would be given a title signed in our name. That title would be evidence of our buying and paying for that car. If we bought a home we would be given a deed, in the same manner that deed would prove our ownership of that property. In the courts of our land, the law requires evidence of our being guilty, either with a written document or eye witness; evidence, if you please, to prove a man guilty, or as the case may be, innocent. But these are all examples of natural things as they deal with the material world in which we live, and these things we see or hear about daily. But now we want to consider the word "evidence" as it applies to a believer, in things pertaining to belief, doctrine, and the God in whom we hope and trust we believe, the Great I Am, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Saviour of all who will ever sing the song of redemption in that great and wonderful home prepared by God for His people.

I have written about things seen, now let us consider a few things not seen of

which there are many in the scriptures. Hebrews Chapter 11, "By faith Noah built an ark...." Now as everyone knows, an ark is something like a boat, something that floats on water. Now where did he build this ark? At the water? Oh, no! Noah built this ark on dry ground. And what was the purpose of building this ark? Why, to save him and his family from an awful flood; a flood such as no one living had ever seen. Think how utterly ridiculous and how foolish it must have looked to all the people who saw and heard about it. All these people couldn't see any reason for building an ark. They couldn't see any flood coming. Then we must ask; could Noah see it? Or we ask, how did Noah see it? Why, by faith, of course. Scripture says "By faith" (God given faith) "Noah built an ark". Now is this not the evidence of things not seen?

Now let us think for a minute about Abraham. Remember that after Sarah was past normal child-bearing age, God promised Abraham a son by Sarah. In connection with this promise, God promised Abraham that he would have many seed. Now this seed was to be through the lineage or descendants of this son, Isaac. Now we know that all of God's promises are true and faithful. We know that these things come to pass, because God promised them. God told Abraham to sacrifice Isaac on the altar, but we would say, "Wait, he can't do that, because if he does that, what will happen to all these promises?" Right, we can't see how this could happen. Now let me ask this one question - Could Abraham see? I believe Abraham believed God; the scriptures say so. See where it says in the scriptures that "Abraham by faith.....". This is the thing I am writing about, "The evidence of things not seen".

Now concerning this portion of scripture, there is much food and many wonderful truths contained therein that at this time I will not try to write about, because now I am thinking of faith, "evidence of things not seen". But one thing I would like to mention here before moving on. The thing Abraham did here was something wonderful, a great and wonderful thing. He was a man far greater than I could ever hope to be. But before God, Abraham had nothing to boast in. Remember Abraham did this thing by faith. This faith he had was a gift of God, not something he attained by his own effort, and all who have this faith are not proud and boastful, but humble; those who know within their very being where their help comes from.

Now let us look at this verse, Heb. 11:1, and apply it to ourselves today. II Tim. 3:16 says, "All scripture is given by the inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine...". Since scripture is profitable for doctrine, let us consider our doctrine with this scripture. Do you believe in a sovereign God who works all things after the counsel of His own will, one who speaks and it is done; works in His children both the "will and to do of his good pleasure", one who speaks of His children in this manner, "Those whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate;" "Moreover, whom he did predestinate them he also called", and "Whom he called them he also justified", and glorified. I say if you believe this you have the God-given faith that is "the evidence of things not seen". For we know that the great masses of people in the world today who called themselves believers or christians, don't believe this. They can't see salvation by grace even as plain as it is written in the Bible, and you can't show them these things. How well I know that they are blind about seeing this, even as the people who couldn't see the need of an ark in the days when Noah was building it. In discussing the scriptures with close friends or relatives, I can't show them these things. Any more I don't even try. However, I don't hesitate to defend my belief. But how well I remember when this doctrine was terrible in my sight, but I verily believe

the truth of this doctrine was made sweet to me in such a way that now there is no doubt in my breast but this is the true doctrine. But even as clear and plain as it is to some, it is hidden and repulsive to others. I believe it takes God-given faith, "the evidence of things not seen" to be able to know the sweetness of the doctrine of salvation by grace.

A brother, I hope,
Frank Hunt

SPRINGTIME

I have a little secret,
That I would like to share.
Perhaps you'd like to hear it;
It's something like a prayer.

It's just about the springtime
That means so much to me.
Have you been so busy
That you have failed to see?

The red buds on the hill side;
The dogwoods and the flowers;
The carpet of green grass, the lilacs,
They really form a bower.

Have you heard the robins?
And the mockingbirds at night?
They are telling us, "God is in His heaven,
Cheer up! Will be all right."

Then, why should we feel so discouraged?
Downhearted and blue,
When God is proving His love to us
Though we doubt and worry so!

He proves his love to us
Though we doubt and worry so.
Let's praise Him for His wonderful work
And for the beauty of the earth.

Written by Evelyn Vories

My dear Elder Tench:

We, the brethren and friends of Weatherford Church and brethren and friends of sister churches have gathered together at the invitation of Weatherford Church to thank God for his many blessings; and with the particular thought in mind of the new meeting house Weatherford Church has been blessed to build and call her own, now free and clear from the mortgage of man, we thank God. A brother has asked me to write something to you for this occasion.

So many blessings are represented here today. Each of us can look into our lives and find precious occasions, or events, or trails, that make us thank God for giving us or delivering us from. The dear Lord willing, I would like to tell you of a few pictures I have.

The first is a man, his wife and two small girls. The mother tells the little girls they are going to church and would "Ford the creek."

The second is a young girl who was ashamed when her mother asked the preacher to excuse the girl who wanted to go to a ball game.

The third is a young girl meeting her mother at the front door to learn how many places to set for dinner. As the mother rushed in to take off her hat she said to her husband, "I declare, I believe he's improving."

The fourth is a girl who sits in church beside her mother and says little.

The fifth is a minister who has traveled many miles to visit the lady sitting in the wheel chair.

The sixth is a young woman as she stands outside a church, three dear ones have asked for a home with the church.

The seventh is a baptizing.

Elder Tench, do you see yourself in any of these pictures?

You have baptized many of us who sit here today. You know, we love to hear Elder Plybon tell us of his experience and he gives us several dates. I love to tell that I was baptized the 4th Sunday in April, 1968, in a little creek around the road from Weatherford Church, with three dear ones. Elder Ingram spoke from Gen. 1:1 when we were back in the meeting house for services.

Looking at these pictures in reverse order, I see you in the sixth one. As I stood speaking to Sister Williams who was happy that three had come to church, you spoke to me about coming to

the church. I think I made no reply, my tongue not yet loosened. To this day I thank the dear Lord for encouragement from you and other dear ones. I do not think any encouragement pursuaded me into the church, but all encouragement was soothing to a troubled soul.

And you were the minister in the fifth picture. You came to see my mother when she was no longer able to attend services. Many of us have pictures of this kind.

The fourth picture is the sad one but I believe "must needs be." Yes, Brother Tench, you are certainly in that one. For twenty years my eyes were cast down in burning shame and fear. I just kept wanting to hear that the Lord came into the world to save sinners; and then, was I one that He came to save? And I always loved to hear you pray. I'll try to move along to the next picture.

The third picture. I like this one very much. It's very special. It's revelation. I believe it was before I came to know myself as the sinner. I'm very sure the words were somewhere with me and only given to me years after hearing them. I believe my mother was happy, encouraged, thankful, that the dear Lord she loved had sent you to pastor her church. I just see so much in those words, "I declare, I believe he's improving."

The only thing I can say about the second picture is I hope the dear Lord had started a good work in me. I don't know. I know I've thought of that often. And I can't say much about the first picture except I have it and I believe it was to Weatherford Church we were going. To me it's just a good picture to look upon.

Brother Tench, with each of these pictures, most every one here can tell you of a similar picture, a similar experience. As we come to thank God for our blessings, we would thank Him for you, our Pastor. May He bless us and keep us in His love.

I am told that Weatherford Church called you as her pastor in 1938. The original meeting house was built in 1879 just across the road from the present site.

If the brother who asked I write something wishes to give you these words, he may; if not, that will be all right too. As I write I hope the Lord has blessed me with these words because I have used His name.

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickral

May,1981

EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER

Dear Editors of the Signs,

I did so much enjoy the articles about Elder Beebe. I have read many of his writings and enjoyed them so much. He seemed so deep and settled in his belief and defended it all the way through. I believe that he will always be remembered among the Old Baptists everywhere. He must have had a rough travel at the time when the Missionary came in to cause divisions among them.

It brings to mind the troubles Paul went through with the Galatians when some came in unawares and told them they must be circumcised and live under Moses' law. "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?" Gal. 3:3. "Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" Gal. 4:9 But now after that ye have known God or rather are known of God how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Paul explained all over again that the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ that we might be justified by faith (3:25) "But after that faith is come we are no longer under a schoolmaster".

(3:26) "For ye are all the children

of God by faith in Christ Jesus". Then he goes on to explain in Gal. 4:21 "Tell me ye who desire to be under the law do ye not hear the law. For it is written that Abraham had two sons. The one by a bondmaid; the other by a free woman. He who was born of the bond woman was born after the flesh but he of the free woman was by promise. And these are the two covenants. The bondwoman and her son are in bondage - but the son of the free woman is the child of promise. Paul says in Gal. 4:28, "Now we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise". Read the whole book of Galatians. It explains it all.

Now some report that we are saying "Do evil so good will come of it", but God's children know better because they wish with all their hearts to do good and suffer much because they know not how to perform that which is good. They desire the law of God after the inward man so Paul says in Rom. 7:23, "But I see another law in my members waring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members"; making them to cry "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death". Then he answered his own question with "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord so then with the mind I myself serve the law of God but with the flesh the law of sin." (Rom. 7:14) We know that the law is spiritual but I am carnel, sold under sin, for that which I do I allow not. What I would that I do not, but what I hate that I do. For we hate the sin that so easity besets us and look forward to the time when we can be rid of it. For here we only see in part, just small glimpses of our future life but when our time in this life is past then we won't sin any more and this is our hope. Now is this doing evil so good will come of it?

Romans 7:16 "If then I do that which I would not I consent unto the law that it is good." Romans 7:19 "For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing, for to will is present with me but how to perform that which is good I find not.

Paul said that God gave him a thorn in the flesh and he asked God to remove it. His answer from God was, "My grace is sufficient for thee", and that it was a messenger of Satan to buffet him to keep him from being too highly exalted.

I believe in predestination of all things. God gives us what we need and when we need it. Even the chastenings are given to us because He loves us. He is the Potter and we are the clay, and He can do with us whatever He pleases. He made all things to serve the purpose He wanted it to serve.

I hadn't meant to write so much but these things came to my mind. I believe that for God's chosen elect people that Christ has already paid their debt to God for Heb. 10:14 says, "By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified". I hope that I am among these.

In hope,
Mrs. Eugene Mathews

PLEASANT VALLEY Association

The thirty-fifth annual session of the Pleasant Valley Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Shepherd Fold Church, Houston, Texas commencing on Friday before, and continuing through the first Sunday in November 1981. (30 and 31 October and 1 November)

For additional information contact Elder G. D. Shipman, Route 2 Box 128, Von Ormy, Texas 78073 or in the Houston Area, call Sister Robbie Holloway (Telephone 713-453-8846).

Elder G. D. Shipman, Clerk

FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lord willing, there will be a Fifth Sunday Meeting at the Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church, Snow Hill, Maryland, on November 29, 1981. Elder J.R. Williams, Keeling, Virginia, is to be the guest minister.

We invite all lovers of the truth to be with us for this meeting.

Elder J. F. Poole, Pastor

Dear Editors of the Signs,

Enclosed please find a check to be used as you think best. I enjoy reading the paper so much, especially the May, 1981 issue.

Wishing you Editors the best and may God help you to keep it coming to everyone, especially to the older ones who are not able to go to church.

With my best wishes,
Maggie Culp

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC. TO JULY 1981

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OBITUARIES

LENA HUTCHINS NEAL

Mrs. Lena Hutchins Neal, daughter of John Wesley Hutchins and Charlotte Tempi Hutchins, was born in Patrick County, Virginia, July 24, 1889, and departed this life on August 5, 1980, making her stay on this earth 91 years and 12 days.

She was married to Irving Euster Neal January 15, 1907. She was survived by a granddaughter, Betsy Walker Preston and three great grandchildren of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and a host of friends who loved her. We all miss her but feel she is with her dear ones.

She united with Tate Street Primitive Baptist Church of Greensboro in August 1917. She was a faithful member and never missed until illness kept her away, but she loved her church dearly.

She was Clerk and Treasurer from 1943-1967 of this church. She took over when her beloved husband passed. Ill health caused her to give it up, but served well.

Her funeral was conducted at Lambeth Troxler Funeral Chapel by Elder Kenneth R. Key. Her body was laid to rest in Forest Lawn Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

May God's blessings be upon all who mourn her departure feeling she had fought a good fight and finished her course, and now sweetly rests awaiting to be made life unto her precious Savior, and to her gathered home where she can see her Savior Jesus Christ and be like Him, where sickness, sorrow, and death can never come.

Written By Clara Lee Word

ELDER EUGENE B. AULT

Elder Eugene B. Ault passed from this life on December 8, 1980 at the nursing home at

Weslaco, Texas, at the age of 92 (born 29 April 1888 at San Marcos, Texas). Surviving him were his wife, Sister Opal Ault; two daughters: Mrs. Alyne Little and Mrs. Gordan Boothe; three sons: Irving, Herbert, and Robert Ault; two step daughters: Mrs. Della Hansel and Sister Gwen Kilby; one step son: Henry Johnson; one sister: Mrs. Corina Nation; one brother: Brother Allie B. Ault; and five grandchildren, 29 great grandchildren, and two great-great grandchildren.

Elder Ault joined a Primitive Baptist church sometime before March 1921 (no record). As on this date, Mount Zion Church was constituted at Calallen, Texas and Brother Ault was a charter member. In February 1924, Mount Zion Church was moved to Weslaco, Texas in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Elder Ault served this church as either clerk or pastor for nearly 60 years. Brother Ault attended Mount Zion Primitive Baptist Association at Graham, Texas in August 1921 and has attended many associations since that time. He preached in the San Marcos Association between 1929 and 1931 (only record available). Also, he served as clerk of the association. Brother Eugene B. Ault was ordained to the full work of Gospel Ministry on 28 January 1937 at Mount Zion Church with Elders J. B. Bowden, W. H. Tatum, and J. B. Reid; and Deacon J. W. Culpepper forming the presbytery. In the fall of 1937, Elder Ault was called as co pastor with Elder J. B. Bowden of Mount Olive Church at Stockdale, Texas. He served this church until January 1960 when he requested his release from being pastor so younger elders whom lived in the area could be called. He also served as clerk of the Pleasant Valley Association between 1957 and 1964, stepping down because of age.

Elder Ault was always faithful to attend to the churches he served. He was not considered a powerful preacher but how sweet he spoke of the things he had experienced here and the things that Jesus had done for poor sinners. Little Children in the Lord did love the milk feeding that was provided by God through this Dear Elder. He preached a powerful God that did all His pleasures and a Darling Son Who did all the saving. Just as Jesus loved His Bride, this Elder's heart was full of love for everyone. Brother Ault helped many different individuals naturally with his money, goods, etc. or if they were having trouble with their health he would provide for their need. There is no telling how much of this worldly goods that this dear one gave away.

Graveside service was held by his pastor, Elder W. M. Burkhalter and he was laid to rest in the Weslaco City Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Elder Ault's hope was in the resurrection of the dead and to be housed in Heaven and Immoral Glory with the Savior.

Written by one who loved him,
Gerald D. Shipman

IN MEMORIAM

Once again we have been made to feel that one of Gods chosen children has been called to the home prepared for him.

Walter Claude Tucker was born to Elder Luther T. and Lillie Shelton Tucker, in October 1909 in Stokes County, North Carolina.

He was united in marriage with Mary Nelson, of Patrick County, Virginia on October 19, 1930; Residing at Walker town, N.C. until moving to Clemmons N.C. in 1936. He was employed by R.J. Reynolds in Winston Salem for forty-five years, retiring on disability in 1972.

Brother Walter had been a member of Hillsdale Primitive Baptist Church near Summerfield, N.C., for over twenty years. Though he had a great distance to travel to attend church, he remained a faithful member as long as his health permitted. His condition had grown steadily worse, and though no longer able to attend services, he still proclaimed the mercies of God.

The fellowship of his brothers and sisters in the faith was so dear to him. An humble man, he often remarked on his own unworthiness that God should take notice of him, but felt a divine hope had been given of that blessed kingdom, that can only come from the kind hand of Almighty God. He believed firmly in the doctrine of salvation by Grace. There have been many evidences of this belief through many years of close friendship with the Tucker family. He was a good husband, a kind father, and a good friend to all who knew him.

Brother Tucker departed this earthly life

October 3, 1980. Surviving are his wife, Sister Mary Nelson Tucker, five children: Marie Pegram, Doris Tucker, Betty Huff of Clemmons, N.C., Jerry Tucker of Morristown, Tenn., Jim Tucker of the home, and eight grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted at Hayworth-Miller Chapel in Winston-Salem, N.C. by his pastor, Elder B. D. Hutchens, Jr. He was laid to rest at Clemmons Memorial Gardens, where he awaits to hear the call, "Come Ye blest of my Father, and inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world."

Though hearts are heavy by his absence, we believe to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord, for those who die in Him.

We hope our prayer can be, to make us ever submissive to God's will in all things.

Written by a friend in Christ, (I hope)
Mary C. Knight

SISTER BESSIE LANGDON

God called from our midst Sister Bessie Langdon on February 16, 1981. She was blessed to live 93 years.

Sister Langdon was a member of Bethsada Primitive Baptist Church for many years before she united with Liberty Primitive Baptist Church about 14 years ago. She had been in declining health for several years, but attended services when able.

Funeral services were held at Rose Funeral Home Chapel with Elder C. D. Turner officiating. Burial was in Bethsada Church Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to wait the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to be forever satisfied.

Surviving are five daughters, Mrs. Bertha Byrd, and Mrs. Ollie Renny, of Benson, N.C., Mrs Nora Jones of Durham, N.C., Mrs. Myrtle Broylin, of Hope Mills, N.C., Mrs. Geraldine Stewart, of Buies Creek, N.C.; 6 sons, Talmadge Langdom of Rome, Ga., Alvis, Jarvis, Ralph, Ernest, and Roy Langdon all of Fayetteville, North Carolina; two sisters, Mrs. Vado Hardee, of sons, Talmadge Langdon all of Fayetteville, N.C.; two sisters, Mrs. Vado Hardee, of Benson, N.C., Mrs. Gladys Lassiter, of Smithfield, N.C., 29 grandchildren; 45 great grandchildren, and 15 great-great grandchildren.

May God bless and keep her loved ones is our prayers for Christ's sake.

We agree to send a copy to the family; one for church record and one to the ***Signs of the Times*** for publication.

Committee; Brother James Young
Sister Dorothy Barefoot
Sister Bessie Hall

JASPER CALK

Dear Editors of the ***Signs of the Times***,

Since reading the letters Jasper Calk wrote and received to and from Elder Rhodes and Elder Lambert, I should like the readers to know of his death.

Death came at 9:30 A.M. Sunday, March 9, 1980 in St. Francis Hospital, Monroe, La. His funeral was held in Kilpatrick Funeral Home Chapel at 10:30 A.M. on Tuesday with Elder David E. Turner officiating. He was laid to rest in Riverview Cemetery beside his wife who had preceeded him in death, to await the resurrection morning to be raised up to meet the Lord in the air.

His survivors are one son, Iven Calk, Monroe, La., one brother, James D. Calk of Hamilton, Texas, and one sister, Erie C. Thurston of Downsville, La; also nine grandchildren and nine great grandchildren.

Up to this point the writer was his precious sister, not only in the natural but also in the spiritual world. After hearing and having known Brother Calk about thirty years, we became real close. I read the letter Brother Calk wrote Elder Lambert on March 28, 1954, and has recently been published in the ***Signs,*** May, 1980 issue.

Now as I think about it, my mind goes to the 40th chapter of Psalms. I can see his experience in these few scriptures. "I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God. Many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord."

I believe this scripture fits his experience in 1916 in Texas when he felt to be brought up out of the horrible pit by the great God of the world. I believe also this next scripture

which will be found in First Peter in the first five verses, "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, Elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time". This is the spiritual inheritance of all of God's humble children through the precious blood of the Lamb. Yes, Christ was and is his hope in the deeper sense, which he has an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast.

Written by
Sister Erie C. Thurston
and
Elder David E. Turner

MELBA COBB VAUGHN

It has pleased the God of grace and mercy to call from this earth a beloved sister, Melba Cobb Vaughn. She fell quietly to sleep in Jesus on February 26, 1981. Her voice is stilled but not forgotten. Her presence among the Baptist will long be remembered. She was kind, tenderhearted, thoughtful of others and would carry as many as she could to meeting when she was blessed to go.

Sister Vaughn loved to talk on spiritual things. One of her favorite scriptures was Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." She suffered many afflictions and bore them with patience and a smile.

Sister Melba Cobb Vaughn was born September 20, 1912, in Caswell County, N.C., the daughter of Joe Dill and Sallie French Cobb. She was married to Earl C. Vaughn and moved to Anson County, N.C., living there approximately 31 years prior to her death.

She was a patient at McCain Sanitorium, McCain, N.C., for tuberculosis for many years. After she returned home she called for the membership of Lawyer's Springs Church, Marshville, N.C. on January 24, 1953, to come to her home to have meeting there. It was at this time that she offered to the church; but, due to her physical health, she could not be baptized at that time. On the third Sunday in February, 1954, she was baptized into full fellowship of Lawyer's Springs Church. In the beginning neither her doctor nor her husband were willing for here to go into the water. They did not realize how she had been made to love her God and Creator. Sister Vaughn loved Lawyer's Springs Church and often remarked how good they (the previous members) were to her, including her pastor and his dear companion, Elder James T. and Sister Floy Jones. We never saw anyone more devoted to her church than she was, and also we have never seen a church more devoted to a member than they were to her.

Left to mourn her passing (with her church) are her family, relatives and friends. These include her husband, Earl C. Vaughn, Route 5, Wadesboro, N.C., one son, William Jackson, Reidsville, N.C.; one sister, Sister Rena Cobb Smith, Reidsville; brothers, Floyd Cobb of Newport News, Va., Clifford and Fred of Ruffin, N.C.; Johnnie Cobb, Reidsville, and two grandchildren, Cindy and Dickie Cobb.

Her funeral service was held at Moore's Funeral Home, Wadesboro, N.C., by her pastor, Elder James T. Jones, and Elder W. C. Edwards. Then her body was brought to Wilkerson Funeral Home, Reidsville, to lie in state, after which it was taken to Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery, Caswell County, N.C., for interment where graveside services were conducted by Elder Donald Smith, pastor of Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church, and Pastor Harold Townsend. It was her request for her mortal body to be laid to rest at this church site.

"Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep.
From which none ever wake to weep!
A calm and undisturbed repose,
Unbroken by the last of foes."

Written at the request of Lawyer's Springs Church, Marshville, N.C., by one who loved her dearly.

Mrs. Fred (Louise) Cobb

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 12/81 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE EARLY RELIGIOUS LIFE OF ELDER DAVID BARTLEY MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL

(CONTINUED)

Our senior surgeon was Dr. Edgar, a stranger to me, who, at the time of my enlistment in the hospital service with him, had promised me leave of absence in March, to go home and settle an estate as administrator, on which condition I had enlisted; but he was deaf to both his promise and my almost dying condition, for he coldly refused every appeal to grant me a sick furlough, and would not let me go home. Although he knew my extreme disabilities, which should have moved him to compassion, yet he rudely told me that I should rather leave my bones bleaching on the field of battle than to want to go home before the rebellion was put down. Turning from him, I then applied to the commander of the regiment, Col. Ross, a humane man and a Christian, I trust, who kindly did all in his power to have me sent away where I could be cared for; but every effort failed, for General Grant's order was rigid that no one should be permitted to pass through the lines on leave of absence, except he had a sick furlough from the regimental surgeon. As a last effort, the noble Col. Ross sent a written appeal in my behalf to Gen. Grant himself, but received no answer. Hope now died in my heart, and I sorrowfully felt that I should not be permitted to see my family and kindred, brethren and friends again. While this was painfully trying, I felt that I had brought it all upon myself and could not murmur against the Lord

for it.

As the hard-hearted Pharoah would not let the Children of Israel go, so did my case appear as deplorable as theirs, and there was no escape from my bitter afflictions and cruel bondage--only death.

CHAPTER XI
DELIVERED

On a cold and rainy day an order came that we should put up three days rations in our haversacks, and be ready to strike our tents and embark late that evening to sail up the river; but later a second order came that we could retire and sleep about two hours, and that we would be called up to go on board the boats about midnight to run up to Pittsburg Landing, where a great battle was to be fought. To me this was as a summons unto my speedy death.

In the evening the rain was succeeded by a heavy snow-storm, which continued until late in the night. I was so much debilitated that I would become sick and faint at times, and have to lie down on the wet ground to rest. About 8 o'clock at night, while slowly making my way back to my dismal tent, and meditating the fearful perils which shut me in, a peaceful feeling of resignation and quiet trust filled my heart, and in mind I took a tender leave of all at home, confident that I should not live to return and see them; but was comforted with the heavenly assurance that, although I must die thus painfully, yet the Lord would receive me to Himself, and all my sufferings and sorrows should be ended forever.

But before reaching my tent my mind was impressed with a desire to go beyond it to Col. Ross's office-tent, and see if it was possible for him to send me away that night; but my second thought was that it could avail nothing and would annoy him, and I tried to repress this desire; yet it had taken such possession of my mind that I passively walked on, and the guard passed me in the tent. The colonel kindly saluted me, asked me to be seated and warm myself before the cheerful fireplace, and inquired how I felt. His kindness gave me courage to say: "Colonel, I am worse and growing weaker. If I have to go up on this campaign, and be exposed to the weather and the hardships of the camp, I could be of no service, but would only be in the way, and could not survive long". "I know it, doctor", he replied. "You should have been sent away to a hospital some time ago, but you know every effort has failed". I answered: "Colonel, can't you think of any possible way to send me away?" He paused, then said: "I this moment think of one way; if it fails, then there is no chance. This afternoon three sick soldiers were sent from our regiment on board the steamer Tigress, to go down to a general hospital in Paducah. If you could get Dr. Edgar to detail you as a nurse for them, you could there get a sick furlough to go home". I quickly asked: "Colonel, can't you do it? It would be useless for me to appeal to Dr. Edgar, and I can't do so". He answered: "You know the army regulations and that it would be against the rules, for this authority belongs to him". "Yes, I know, colonel; but then, you are the higher in authority than he is, and will you not take the responsibility?" Dropping his head a moment, he raised it and smilingly said, "I will. If I can't give you a sick furlough to go home, I will do the next best thing--send you where you can get one". He quickly wrote the order, detailing me as a nurse for the three sick soldiers from our regiment on board the Tigress; also stating that I was sick and should be sent home--and he laughed at the idea of sending me as a nurse, remarking that I needed a nurse more than they, no doubt. He told me to take the order to the adjutant's tent and have it recorded, saying that I would have to hurry or I might be too late, as it would soon be time for the Tigress to start.

Inspired with renewed spirit and

hope, I did hurry; for the possibility of returning to home and life again quickened my movements, and lifted me above my suffering and weakness. Hastily making ready my valise and roll of bedding, the good-bys were quickly taken, and I set out for the river, a half-mile or more away, the darkness lighted only by the fast-falling snow, which had covered the ground with a white sheet--wondering the while whether there would be any one at that late hour to set me across the first great bayou, a fourth of a mile wide, perhaps. Just as I reached its bank, lo! John Bartley, a soldier from Alton, Ill., whose division was camped on the island beyond, was pushing off his skiff from shore. By the light of his lantern I knew him--having met him before and ascertained that we were fourth cousins. He gladly took me in, saying that I would have been left in a minute more. This seemed a fortunate hap, but it did not then occur to me that the good hand of God was in it; for I long felt that He had abandoned me to my own way. On the other shore we shook hands, and I hurried on as best I could, on top of the breastworks thrown up across the island. The snowflakes fell thick and fast, adding to my burden, so that I would stop and shake it from my hat and overcoat, wishing that it did not snow so, because it hindered my speed, and I feared my failing strength would not hold out, or that I might be too late; yet but for the light of the snow I could scarcely have made my way for the darkness. Near the river was a narrow but deep bayou, and just as I reached it three or four noisy soldiers walked out of the lower deck of the guard-steamer to put out the lights for the night (about 10 o'clock), and I hailed them with all the voice I could command, but almost despaired of making them hear me--for they were all talking and laughing loudly, and my voice was weak. At last one said, "Hush, boys, isn't some one calling?" Another said, "No, I guess it is the noise of the wind". Then I made a desperate effort and succeeded, to my great relief, for I was in great fear. They crossed the narrow strip of land and came over to me in a flatboat, into which I climbed, and as I did so one said, "Well, comrade, if you had been a minute later you would have been left, for we had come out to put out the lights". They directed me along a line of gangways from one steamer to another (for the river was full of them to carry the entire army up it that night), until I reached the longed-for Tigress, far out and down. At last that most trying march of my life--and for my life--was ended, the goal was reached and I was rescued--mercifully delivered from that awful thraldom. Shaking off the wet snow and ascending to a commodious cabil, I laid down valise and bundle, overcoat and hat, and sank in an arm chair before a red-hot stove, almost completely exhausted, feeling that I could not have held out but little longer.

In a few minutes two well-dressed men came in and sat down on the other side of the large stove, not seeming to notice me, and one said to the other: "Captain, how soon will you pull out of here?" "Just as soon as this snow storm blows over a little, so we can see to pilot the boat. If it had not been for the snow storm we should have been gone two hours ago". Never were words spoken more wonderful to me; for they told me that the merciful God, who rules the storm, had sent down that snow and held the boat, and that He had not forsaken me, as I supposed, but was yet with me and had thus delivered me from so great a peril and death. O how precious the assurance that the Lord cared for me still, and that my life and well-being were precious in His sight! My sweet emotions of love and gratitude to Him who had thus marvelously saved me were too full for utterance in words, and the place seemed a very heaven to me; for I comfortably felt the presence of the Lord, and my meditations of Him

were sweet all that night--for I did not lie down to sleep, being on duty as nurse, but rested in that chair. I soon found my three patients and told them I was there to wait on them until we reached a hospital in Paducah--but they needed very little attention.

About sunrise we landed at this city, and as ambulance carried us to a comfortable hospital, where each of us were taken to neat beds, and I saw the three no more. A kind citizen physician soon came to me, examined me and said, "My friend, I would advise you to go home; for you can't get well here, but with good water and kind attention at home, you might recover. I will give you a sixty days' furlough if you will go home." As I did not like to seem too anxious, I said that I had no money to pay my way home. But he kindly assured me that there would be some way for me to get there; so it was soon settled that I should go, greatly to my joy. That afternoon I was able to walk down to a near store, where I offered a revolver for sale--which a prisoner after the surrender at Ft. Donaldson had begged me to give him a dollar for, and I did so to favor him, having no use for it myself--the only firearm I ever owned. To my glad surprise, a clerk in the store kindly gave me $10 for it, and I heartily thanked him; for this would pay my way home, and I felt wonderfully helped.

The next morning I set out, homewardbound; but as it was Saturday, and the trains did not run on Sunday, I stopped at Jonesboro, Ill., having learned that my friend and brother, Col. True, was there with a new regiment. He very generously lodged me at his headquarters until Monday, and then gave me a free pass on the cars as far as I could go toward home--to Effingham, Ill. He did more; he transferred me to his regiment, and appointed me on his regimental staff as hospital steward, thus rescuing me from the cruel power of Dr. Edgar, who had been bent on sacrificing me--only because he once overheard me condemn the cruelties which some of our marauding soldiers inflicted upon peaceable old men, women and children in the South. Through the merciful hand of God, I was now free from him, and saw him no more. Whether he learned that our humane Col. Ross sent me away from his merciless tyranny, I know not; but I hope that God had mercy upon him, as He was merciful to me.

After my return home I seemed to improve a little at first; so that I made a business trip to central Indiana, near our old home, in the settlement of an estate as administrator--alluded to before. But my diseases again grew worse and brought me very low, insomuch that my recovery was almost despaired of my friends; and at the end of the sixty days I was barely able to be propped up in bed while I wrote a few lines to Col. True, telling him that I would report in person as soon as able; for I believed the Lord would raise me up again to "preach the preaching that He had bidden me", which I was then willing to cheerfully do.

In the time of this long sickness at home, when the kind neighbors and brethren would come in to visit and sit up with me, they often grieved my spirit by their complaints at the weather and backward spring, expressing fears about raising a crop; for this sounded to me like murmuring against the Lord, who was so merciful, kind and good. And for this I would kindly chide them, and remind them how good He was to us all for which we should thankfully trust in Him, knowing that He would provide and care for us.

As soon as able to ride on a bed in a wagon to Olney, twenty-five miles, where I took a train, I reported to Col. True, then encamped at Paducah, who was gladly surprised on seeing me; for he told me that, after getting my letter, he had expected to hear of my death. I at once made application for a discharge from the army, which he kindly assisted

me in obtaining. At the same time he generously offered me the position of second surgeon if I would stay; but I declined it, fearing to go into disobedience again, "lest a worse thing come unto me". I did not tell him this, however, not knowing that he could sympathize with me. But after many years, when he had grown gray, it was my privilege to meet with him as a fellow-preacher, when he told me that he not only understood my troubles in the army and felt a sympathy for me, but that he himself was also troubled then about preaching the gospel, and had been before entering the army, and that he had resisted it for twenty years before yielding. His great kindness and brotherly interest while in the army endeared him to me for life, and I rejoice that the Captain of Salvation and Prince of Peace has made him a true soldier of the cross, to proclaim "on earth peace".

In seeking for a discharge from the war, it was necessary that I should hunt up my former regiment and obtain an official paper from my captain; therefore, I boarded a steamer for Pittsburg Landing, and from there rode on horseback over the fearful battleground on the way to Corinth, where Grant's mighty army was again ready for battle, and there, after a long search, I found the regiment and Capt. English, in whose company was my enrollment. It was Sunday afternoon when I found his division and quarters, and as I slowly walked down the long line of tents, fronting westward, they were opened out to the warm sunshine, and it was a sad sight to see the small remnant of soldiers, looking so dejected, as they reclined in their tents, their ranks terribly thinned by the ravages of was and pestilence. The companies were sorrowfully cut down, one having only about thirty left. At the head of the row was the tent of Capt. English, who kindly received me, and as we talked my eyes fell on the noble saddle horse of Col. Ross among others in a grove a little way from us, and I said, "Captain, where is Col. Ross?" With emotion he told me that he was mortally wounded in the recent battle at Pittsburg Landing, and died three days after. O, how sad! Humane, generous, noble Ross! Me he saved from such a fearful peril and death, but himself he could not save. I believe he was a Christian (He was a Methodist), and that the Lord took him to Himself, where the inhabitants shall no more say, "I am sick", "neither shall they learn war any more".

At last the time came when, with many tender regrets, I took a final leave of the army, at Kenton Station, Tenn., in July, 1862, bade adieu to Brig. Gen. True and my old friends with him, and, with a full and honorable discharge from the army, set out once more for home, now the Lord's freeman, henceforth to serve as a willing soldier in the army of the Captain of Salvation, the all-conquering Prince Immanuel, the triumphant and most glorious King Jesus, until He shall bid me put off my armor, lay down the cross, give me a full and blessed discharge from the good fight of faith, and graciously bestow upon me the blissful and everlasting crown of immortality and eternal life.

(Conclusion)

ELDER BEEBE'S EDITORIALS

The response to our inquiry regarding the possibility of publishing the editorials of Elder Gilbert Beebe in book form was not nearly as good as we had hoped for, but much more than we really expected.

Accordingly, we hope, the Lord willing, to go ahead with Volume Three late this fall or about the time you read this issue. This volume will consist of editorials that for the most part have never been reprinted in the VOICES OF THE PAST and will cover a wide range of subjects. There will be approximately 500 pages of new type and we hope the book will be of the finest quality.

We hope to provide more information in the near future.

J.F.P.

My dear Brother Spangler:

I am enclosing a poem written by my elder brother while away at school in Basset. He was in his seventeenth year at this writing and only found by my mother after his passing in his early twenties. She found much comfort in this poem and it may help some troubled soul if you wish to publish it in the ***Signs***.

We had a wonderful meeting at River View Communion yesterday with Elder Leonard Key as our visiting Minister.

I will not be able to be with you in your meeting in Floyd Co. July 4th as it will conflict with Town Creek meeting. Hope that you and the brethren have a good day.

Come to see us.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Elder P.E. Ingram

LIFE

A wearisome struggle is life
When viewed from the dark side;
And our thoughts bitter with strife,
When we are rowing against the tide.

Sometimes storms visit life's ocean,
And the turbulant billows roll;
But God set the storm in motion,
As trials to the faithful soul.

For those whom he loveth he chasteneth,
And troubles will come without fail'
But whose trust on Jesus fasteneth,
Shall have peace at last in the vale.

Then why complain of your sorrows?
But rather look up with a song,
For joy may come on the morrow,
And the longest life is not long.

We tarry a moment only,
Here on this wild rocky shore;
And people will not be lonely,
When they know us again no more.

But then, if we run the christian races,
And look to the helpless one's needs;
The world may forget our faces,
But it will not forget our deeds.

And while we are marching onward,
To that beautiful city of gold,
There's a brother walking downward,
We may bid him back to the fold.

And though our troubles may not cease,
Not while we here may live;
We often find the sacred peace,
That faith alone can give.

We are walking in the steps of Jesus,
As thousands have done before,
Soon times and places that have known us,
Shall know us again no more.

We soon shall cross to the other shore,
That rises just over beyond life's sea,
There we shall rest forever more,
From our troubles and trials free.

Thomas G. Ingram

Bassett, Virginia

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PLEASE NOTE

The readers of the ***Signs of the Times*** will notice the address labels on their magazine each month as something new. We hope it will help each of you in renewing your ***Signs*** each year. Not only is your address much clearer, but your expiration date is much plainer, also.

With the cost of a First Class stamp now at 20¢ we can no longer afford to send out past due notices to those who are delinquent. If each of you will simply look from time to time at the label and mail in your renewal on time it will greatly help us to keep down the costs and avoid a price increase.

Beginning with this issue we will have to stop mailing the ***Signs*** to anyone over three months past due. Please note, however, that we will be glad to continue sending out the ***Signs*** to any who cannot afford to pay, either on a permanent or temporary bases.

Please direct any questions on this matter to our Circulation Office in Keeling, Virginia.

Editors

FROM OHIO

Randolph, Ohio

Elder D.V. Spangler,
Dear Brother,

Just a few lines this Sunday morning to say hello to you. We have never met each other, but still it seems like I have known you. I hear your name pop up once in a while so I am lookng forward to seeing you sometime.

Dear Brother, I have here a letter from a dear friend that visits the Hopewell Church all the time, and has for years, but just won't join. Well, here is his letter. Would you look it over and see if it might be of any interest to the readers and shut-in people who take the dear old ***Signs of the Times***. Dear Brother, if you ever have a mind to write me, please do so, and if you ever travel through this part of the country, please stop in to see this unworthy one. I have a little church house here on my place. We could stay out there and sing all night. I am writing this at the breakfast table right now, trying to say a few things that are on my heart. Please forgive my weakness.

We feel to be a poor and needy people here. There are just the wife and I in this part of the country that believe the Primitive or Old Baptist way. The closest church is about 220 miles from here. We have church here at Grace Hill Church once a year and would like to invite everyone that believes the truth to come and visit with us. This year it will be, if the Lord wills, September 12 and 13th.

Will close for this time. May God continue to bless you in the stand and in your affairs.

Alpha and Mary Sears

Chestertown, Maryland

Dear Elder Williams,

I seldom ever write you a direct letter, but in my heart I have thought of it many times.

The ***Signs*** is a real mainstream of life for me, alongside of my Bible. I am situated in an area where there are no Old Baptists and my Church, Welsh Tract, is 45 miles away. I have lovely, caring neighbors and a large family of married children and grandchildren who love the Lord and love me. I am not starving for love, by any means, but I am missing the special love and fellowship that comes from associating with my brethren. Their songs are sweet, their love is precious, but it seems the special love I feel for and with our people is different and more satisfying to the soul. I've always been blessed to attend our second Sunday meetings, with no effort. My family enjoys taking me and being there, too. The past couple of years things have changed in my life, healthwise, and travel has become very painful. I've had to forego being at baptisms I longed to attend and share the fellowship with. I've had to miss the Delaware Association held with the Rock Springs Church in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. I missed the

beautiful services at the Southampton Church on the third Sunday in August. This was the first service there in many years, and Brother Jimmy Hamrick of Texas was the preacher there. All these were lovely occasions to praise God for The Lord has certainly been bringing new life into these churches that have been quietly awaiting his touch, to awaken to Spirit that sleeps there. "He speaks, and none can stay his hand".

Brother Williams, the purpose of my letter is to tell you, due to my failing health and the inability to take care of my home as formerly, I've had to leave it and move in with a daughter. Many heart breaking tears were shed in the late hours, but my God knew all about it and after a week of weeping and prayer for guidance, He gave me sweet peace Praise His Name. A grandson and his bride now live in my home. I've put that behind me, with God's help.

I am sending the address for my ***Signs*** to be sent to, and I hope it will continue to come to me. God bless you all. I love you for the truth's sake.

If it would be possible, please print my new address, as I have many dear ones in the South and West who write to me Thanks so much. My new address is:

Ruth Lucht
c/o Mervin Cohey
R. 1, Box 512
Chestertown, Md. 21620

EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER

April 24, 1981

Dear Pa and Ma Parks, (O.W. Parks of Sinton, Texas)

I wanted to write to you and let you know how much we all enjoyed having you up for our fifth Sunday meeting at Shepherd Fold Church. Aunt Mary Barron said she really enjoyed it more than she had for a while. I hope the good Lord blessed it to your hearts, also.

I went to Winnsboro the Second weekend and stayed with the Hamricks. I guess Jimmy (Hamrick) and I stayed up late walking and talking every night. Baptism and uniting with the church had been heavy on my mind ever since the fifth Sunday. The Lord has blessed me to have him as a comforter presently. Jimmy offered me encouragement to join and he had answers to many questions that plagued me. I wanted to join so badly Saturday but I felt so dead, dry, and cold. I knew it would have to be an unction from above for me to go forward and it just wasn't present within me.

I felt Saturday night that after talking some more to Jimmy about my unworthiness to join and feeling so lifeless and how Saturday I kept saying to myself, "You! join the church; after all you've done? Forget it! Just stay in your seat!" But by then I felt tormented by that desire for a home and knew if I felt Sunday like I did then I just couldn't join. I didn't know if I could stand another one or two or three weeks like the previous two. Then Jimmy was talking to me Saturday night and the whole picture seemed to change. I had a new tune to sing, "Oh Lord, please give me the strength to go forward to the honor and glory of Your Name, if it be Thy will!"

Sunday Brother Joe (Elder Hamrick) preached from Matthew 3:1-12. I've never felt a sermon prick my heart as that one did. Brother Joe preached the "whole" doctrine, too. I wish I had taped it so you could have heard it. Before he finished, my heart was just begging him to stop preaching. He had opened with "Amazing Grace" and when Brother Joe closed he asked that we sing it again. That was more than my poor heart could take. I trust and pray it was our Lord that gave me the strength to go forward. I had to go, I had absolutely nowhere else to turn. Those little children of His at Hopewell voted to take me in which upon reflection, was a total miracle. It had to be His love that was present because I can't believe that His children could love plain old Trudy

Pullig.

I hope you can come this first weekend to Shepherd Fold. The baptism is Saturday at 6 P.M. If I say "my baptism" I feel scared to death. If I say "the baptism", well, maybe it won't be just mine but also some of His loveliest children form Sinton. This is in no way meant as pressure, just as encouragement from one who loves you dearly.

I don't guess I should have been the one to write to tell you of this, but you are so dear to me. I hope I didn't write to my honor and glory but only to His. Our Lord is indeed all merciful to have saved the lowest, most sinful wretch like me.

With much love,
Trudy (Pullig)

FROM MISSISSIPPI

Carthage, Mississippi

Dear Editors:

As you can see, I'm late with my renewal and I appreciate you not letting me miss a copy.

I will be 95 years old this November 16, and feel blessed to be able to see well enough to read the *Signs*, but most of all I feel blessed to be able to feast on the writings. This is a blessing that lots of people don't have at my age and I thank my Master for it.

Yours in hope of a better world,
H.S. Richardson

Dear Brother Spangler:

I'll try in my feeble way to write my reason of hope. I feel the Lord has blessed my husband and me all the days of my life and I hope He has given me a sweet hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, althought I have not lived on flowery beds of ease. I have always feared God because I know He has all power and everything is going according to His will. When I was a small girl I'd dream of the end of time coming and I was so afraid, but the fire would burn right over me and not hurt me.

We married in the year 1931. I thought after my second little girl was born that there was more thunder storms that spring than I had ever known. I thought every night when I went to bed I'd never see my husband and children again and I'd die and torment would be my home. One night I dreamed that there was a deep pit in our front yard and I went down to the bottom of it and thought it was torment and I smelled my flesh burn. I couldn't sleep and I couldn't pray. Oh, I was in so much trouble. One night I dreamed that I went to the tobacco barn right close to my house. We had a pig lot there and when I walked up this pretty woman, who looked like an angel, had a huge book in her lap and little children all around her feet. When I walked up she had already written my dear husband's name in that book and was about to write mine. I thought they were written in gold letters. For a long time and up until now even, I don't dread death.

That same year my oldest boy was born. He was very sick and was in the hospital five weeks and three days when he was just two months old. During this time I went to Pleasant Grove Church on the third Saturday in May and Brother Standfield preached from Isaiah, and that was the first sermon I really had ever heard.

I had to go to Reidsville Hospital when this same little boy was about five years old and I was prepared for surgery. I was in a private room all alone and I though about slipping out and going home to my husband and children because I was so afraid to have the operation. The Lord spoke to me in a loud clear voice that rang from one end of the building to the other, and He said, "Fear not, I am with you always, even unto the end of the earth". I didn't fear anything after that. Oh, how I long to hear His voice again.

Sometimes I go to church and come back so blue. If only my companion

could see fit to join, but we have to wait upon the Lord's time. I wanted to join for 32 years before I went, and what a happy day when I was finally given the strength. I hope I am one of His, but feel to be a very poor church member, no good to anyone. I have never felt like I had a home here on earth, and wonder if I have one in heaven. I sure hope and pray that I do.

I hope it is all of your desire to pray for me and mine. Come to see us.

Love,
Sister Rena C. Smith

Dear Brother Poole,

The Lord put some sweet thoughts in my mind at an Association in southern Alabama about three years ago, and I have never forgotten their basic premises. They concern the description given in the Bible of the Lord in two of His many roles as the Son of God. He is referred to in several places as both a "lion" and a "lamb" and it was shown to me by revelation (I trust) on the occasion mentioned that the two roles go hand in hand.

You will recall that when Jacob was dying he called all his sons unto him and prophesied concerning them. When he came to Judah he saw something far in the future concerning the advent of Christ. "Judah, thou art a lion's whelp," etc. Have you ever wondered where we got the idea that the lion is the king of beasts? I may be wrong but I believe that it came from the Bible.

Go to the book of Revelation and read about the occasion when John wept much because no one could unloose the seals on the book in the right hand of Him that sat on the throne, and notice what happened

Revelation 5:5-7 "And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. and he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne."

The Lion of the tribe of Judah (the King) was also the Lamb of God (the Priest), who prevailed to open the Book of Life by suffering and death. In Jesus, the Lion and the Lamb laid down together in death. At that hour the work of the Lamb was completed, witnessed by the fact that when the soldier pierced His side blood and water flowed out; and from that moment the sins of God's people were put away forever!

What about the Lion, however? As the King, Jesus arose triumphant, conquerea all His foes, sat up His spiritual kingdom in the hearts of His people, and began His gospel reign in them. Since that time His people have worshipped Him as both the Lamb who took away their sins and the Lion who rules in them for their eternal good and God's great glory.

Add your own thoughts, dear Brother. This is precious food to the soul.

Humbly in hope,
John Wingfield

THUS SAYS A WRITER CONCERNING MR. BROOK

This faithful servant of Christ, of whom a judicious friend of his remarks, "If ever the Lord made one man more honest than another, it was Mr. Brook", left the Establishment, sacrificing about six hundred pounds a year. Whilst contemplating this step, a singular providence occurred. A person who was returning from India, laden with wealth, plunder, and crimes, had suffered great horrors of mind on his passage. When lying off Brighton, they become so insupportable that he cut his throat. It was discovered before life was extinct, and the wound was sewed up.

Mr. Brook, being the parish clergyman, was sent for to administer the sacrament to him. When he saw this poor wretched being, he told him of his dreadful enormities and iniquities; but in the midst of this horrid detail, the wound broke open, and he instantly died. The corpse was put on shore at Brighton, and Mr. Brook had to read the funeral service over it. When he came to those parts which speak of the certain bliss of the deceased, and give thanks unto God for taking the soul of his brother to himself, such emotions filled his mind, such agitation and trembling came upon him that he thought he should have sunk into the grave. "What", said he, "could I think, but that if I insulted the Almighty, and told lies at this rate, he would cut me down, and send me to hell, as I was fully convinced he had done this miserable man, as surely as ever a soul was sent to perdition". This decided the point. He directly quitted the church, though this blasted all his earthly prospects, left him without any income or earthly prospect of support; and though he endured the greatest trials from his friends, and suffered manifold and grievous afflictions, he never regretted this act. When in church, he had for his hearers his present Majesty (George IV), princes, peers, judges, bishops, deans; soon after he left it, but few constant hearers beyond the rank of day laborers. In the short space of a few weeks he was surrounded with gorgeous arraw, the pride, pomps, and fashion of the world; then nothing before him but smock-flocks, plain countrymen, many of whom came five or ten miles to hear him preach. But this did not last long; his hearers increased, and many in the middle walks of life attended his ministry. When he came to London, which he often did, he had at least 1,500 attentive and admiring hearers. In a few years another change awaited him. The pulpit in which he preached in London became closed against him. Many friends in the country forsook him also. These things came upon him for no fault of him. A few faithful were found amongst the faithless, who clave to him to the last. He was indeed a tree of righteousness of God's own planting, and laden with fruit--a flower of great beauty, and full of fragrance, promising extensive usefulness for many years. But the tree was soon cut down, the flower withered and died, or rather was transplanted into its native region. He died the 23rd of September 1811, in the thirty-seventh year of his age.

The Gospel Standard
January 1, 1856

EDITORIAL

And I, brethren, when I came to you came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of men's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power. (1 Cor. 2:1-4)

As the Saviour came under the law and dwelt among and lived among those under the law, even so, He taught them to pray and His manner of praying while under it. Equally so, when He had finished the days work (John 9:4) He then taught them His prayer (John 17). Thus we find full instruction for every precept and example given in the Bible. This is true in this day of preaching to the Gentiles. The Holy Spirit is our Guide into all truth (John 16:13), and Jesus made the day's journey into this low ground, and then performed the day's work to a jot and a tittle. There is a "thus saith the Lord" for every step of the way, and He hath not left us comfortless.

The manner in which Paul came to Corinth is the only way to be found in the written testimony of Jesus Christ,

and there is no need to seek any other way among the works of men. Dear yoke-fellow in the ministry of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, will you examine with me the manner in which Paul appeared before these brethren? And will you beg the Lord to verify the truth as He leads us into it by leading us to examine ourselves as to whether we have a "thus saith the Lord" for our manner of appearing before the saints of God? There is an injunction to the man of faith for self examination. (1 Cor. 11:28; 2 Cor. 13:9) Who is going to rule out that examination? We must remember that whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Faith causes the children of God to examine themselves to see if they are walking in truth. When not walking by faith, but some other way, (however cleverly or elaborately, or, for that matter, however humbly) it is wrong. It must meet the discerning eye of the Spirit to be right.

Many false doctrines have been spoken and published about Paul's preaching, as well as what he preached. There is not any doubt at all in my mind about what he preached. It was grace every step of the way. He attributed his being born from his mother's womb to the Lord; likewise he attributed his being called to minister to the grace of God. (Gal. 1:15,16) Now I do not know a member of a single faction of our people that claims a call to preach that does not attribute that call to the grace of God. However, I know many excellent men that do not have the same experience as regards his life after the initial call, to the same thing that Paul does. He tells us that what he was, was by the grace of God. However, they utilize the grace, but if business or family or other things come along and get in their way, then the grace is a failure. I have searched as diligently as I know how to ascertain the difference in graces, that is, which and how much is it of effectual grace that saves a man the first time and the grace that he wastes and neglects and because of this, that, and the other, he still doesn't get saved. I have found but one grace that saves sinners, and it is the same kind of grace that saved and called him the first time. It's the same grace from that time to the end of his life.

Paul did not preach one doctrine for time and something else for eternal salvation. It is a good work to be called to preach the gospel (1 Tim. 3:1), and since Paul declared that truth to us, I desire to preach the same doctrine that he did, to wit, not to know anything among my people except Christ and Him crucified! If language means anything, that was all that could be preached o the comfort and edification of the Corinthians.

The prophet declared that a virgin would conceive and bear a Son; that His name would be called Immanuel, which being interpreted, is God with us. (Isa. 7:14) Hundreds of years later an angel announced the same good news. That announcement carried with it the message that Israel had been waiting for, to wit, "He shall save His people from their sins". (Matt. 1:21)

As I look back at the long solitary watches of the shepherds as they tended their flocks, and as I look back and hear the groans of Israel as they sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, waiting and watching for the rays of the Sun of righteousness, I think I feel for them. What a tender fellowship springs up in my trembling bosom for that humble servant of God that had persecuted unto death those that called upon the name of Jesus. He was arrested by that same Jesus and sent to that church with his memory blotted out about that he should have done in the name of Jesus. But now he is determined not to know anything save that same Jesus and Him crucified.

His faith enabled him to overcome the world (1 John 5:4), for there has been no greater faith than the kind with which Paul was possessed. It armed him for

the great conflict before him of going out to face his former associates and preaching so boldly to them the opposite of what he formerly preached. I have not time to, and it is vain and useless to talk about a man-made faith. Faith is a gift of God, and it not only overcomes all fears of the world, but it enables us to overcome ourselves, so that we are made willing to go into the very jaws of death with the determination to follow on through thick and thin, through good report and evil, our blessed Lord and to preach Him as an all sufficient Saviour.

Come poor sin-burdened reader and behold the theme of Paul; Jesus Christ and Him crucified, the Way, the Truth, the Life, yea, the only Name under heaven given among men whereby poor sinners must be saved. At the mention of such a theme my mind is carried to the search that God made for one worthy to bring salvation unto Him. None was found. Ah, dear reader, the world says that we are behind the times, that we are in a worn out rut, because we have depended only on grace, and that we need a modern outlook. Do we? Had an Old Baptist been standing near at hand when the Lord looked and found none to help, we, of all people, would have understood, and would have agreed that there was none able to take the Book and loose the seals thereof (Rev. 5:4), but the world at large (the unborn world) would have persecuted him there as they later did persecute Him on earth, and had the people of God been there in the anals of eternity and have heard the Lord say, "Since among men I find none to help, therefore mine own arm hath brought salvation unto me", we would have heard the same good news that the church has ever heard, to wit, "The strong arm of God has brought salvation unto Him".

My friends sometime say to me, "You have an open mind, so don't you think you might be wrong about salvation being solely and wholly of the Lord?" My reply is always the same; "No sir, I do not. My mind is closed about the way sinners are saved. It is by grace! If it is not by grace, then it is by works, for it cannot be this way or that. It is by grace. Paul was separated from his former way of thinking in regard to salvation. When God called him by His grace, He called him all of the way from works, his own testimony and experience bearing him witness in the Holy Ghost (Rom, 9:1). His mind was closed, and my mind is likewise closed to any conditions and works that I must do in order for me to come before God's people.

For Paul to do that, for me to do that, or for any of the people of the Gentile race to do so is to cast aspersion and reflection on the crucifixion of our Lord, for who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Christ has been crucified--is that not sufficient cause for rejoicing in the kingdom of heaven? Was that not sufficient for Abraham to be glad when he, by faith, saw His day? Was that not sufficient for the angel to say unto the people of God, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord". (Luke 2:10-11)? Was this not reason enough, after Paul had experienced the saving grace of this Saviour applied to him as he journeyed towards Damascus to persecute the saints, for him to have this divine determination not to know anything among the Corinthians save Jesus Christ and Him crucified?

Now let us notice the manner of his coming to them. As we leave the purpose of his coming, let us remember that none of the "lo here and lo there" are to be believed. In fact I have no hesitancy in saying to you that if you have discovered the falsity of Babylon that you come out of her that you be not partakers of her falsehoods and other evil, and that you be partakers with the heirs of the kingdom, Jesus Christ having been crucified for you. That is one of the ways that Paul came to the

brethren. He did not tell them that it did not make any difference if you belong to the church or not; he did not come before them telling them fabulous doctrines such as that God is as well pleased with you staying in a false way as He is when you obey His commandments. Paul did not write nor preach that way. This worm of the dust would beseech Him that wisdom be imparted to come among the churches expounding the full doctrine of God, the whole counsel of God, graced by the Holy Spirit to be able to follow the instructions of this servant. Paul, to his own son in the ministry; not to be afraid, not to please men, not to know any man after the flesh, but to preach the word, to be instant in season, out of season; to reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For (verily, therefore) the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, etc.

"And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling". No man has the authority (nor the ability for long) to be all things to all men. Yet, to be truly and wholly the servant of the Lord, there are times when the servant must be in weakness and in fear, and in much weakness. For a man of Paul's background, the overthrow of his legalistic training and the instilling in him the grace of God was such an experience that he never forgot it. In fact, when a man is spoken to by the power of the Holy Spirit, whatever he does and says in serving God will be in fear and in trembling. The cruelty and audacity of Saul of Tarsus before the Damascus road experience, was such as to make the saints tremble at the mention of his name, but after that experience he, and his former associates, trembled and feared and were abashed in his presence. However, their trembling was not because of the work of God's grace but because of their fear of man.

The demonstration of power of God was such that Paul never did forget it. He worked with the Pharisees before this demonstration of power; even after he openly rebuked them, and the same spirit in one and all that he met afterwards, but also, even after that demonstration, he was filled with a reverential fear of Jesus who demonstrated to him that He was Saviour, and his salutation to all those calling on the name of the Lord was as his brethren in Christ, and when writing or visiting among them, it was in weakness, and in fear and in trembling, and this spirit was accompanied by much humility and self abasement.

"And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power". He separates his speech and his preaching. Putting on in speech is forbidden, and let it be known once and forever that using incorrect language to make it appear that you belong to an ignorant, backwoodsy kind of people is as far from preaching the gospel as it is to make use of a superfluity of words (2 Cor. 9:1) to make people think that you are a learned man. Hypocrisy for either cause is strictly forbidden by common decency (I Cor. 14:40), by the general tenor of the scriptures, but more especially by Paul's appearing before and with the brethren at Corinth. It certainly would take as much forethought and practice to use corny language to create an impression of ignorance, as it would to use too many words to create an impression of learnedness. The instruction of Paul by telling about his appearing among the brethren at Corinth is as much towards too much of a thing as well as to little of it.

He is saying, so it seems to me, that any attempt to be other than what I am, a poor sinner saved by the grace of God, is not according to what was taught me on the Damascus road, and what I learned in solitude in Arabia. It is not too much to say that in this solitude,

being in seclusion with only the Holy Ghost to teach and direct and to bring again to Jerusalem, he was taught what and how to preach, and what his manner before the saints should be. And it is exactly right; not too much, and not to little, of the demeanor, both in what is preached and in how it is preached then, now, and forevermore by everyone that is called of God's grace to minister to the churches.

(Elder) W.D. Griffin

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

NOTES OF A SERMON BY ELDER LEFFERTS AT THE BROAD RUN MEETINGHOUSE, JULY 2, 1933

(Taken by Sister Grace Aston)

"Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Romans (5:20)

Grace abounded! Where? Just in the same place that sin abounded, not somewhere else. Verse 19 tells us, "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Why did Paul say many were made sinners, instead of all? Because it is the same many that shall be made righteous which were under consideration. The one man who was disobedient was Adam, the one who was obedient, the Lord Jesus Christ. Adam was created sinless, and lived in a beautiful paradise. God gave him a law, but Adam broke it, and so lost his paradise. This was no surprise to Adam's Maker. God did not have to change his plan because Adam transgressed, for he knew Adam would do so, and had provided for the salvation of the elect of Adam's posterity. Jesus stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, which was before Adam was created. Although the fall of man was in God's purpose, man is the sinner, and the child of God cannot hide behind predestination as the cause of his sin. Some have sought to prove Cain a child of God, but Cain said after he had killed his brother, "My punishment is greater than I can bear." He thought he was getting more than he deserved, but God's children know that they deserve the pains of hell. When David's sin was discovered to him, he said, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned."

There is such a thing as embracing predestination with the natural understanding without being a partaker of God's grace; but such an understanding is but to allow one to live as one lists. The believer is dead to sin by the dead body of Christ, so how can he live any longer therein? It is true that we do sin, our nature is not changed, but another mind is given us, warring against the old man of sin. The Scripture says, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." But living in sin is very different from being plagued with it. When God spoke to Adam of his transgression, he said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat." Eve said, "The serpent beguiled me and I did eat." Not much repentance there! They had made themselves aprons of fig leaves sewn together to hide their nakedness, but before they transgressed they knew nothing about nakedness. How foolish to think such a garment could hide them: but see the goodness of God: he made coats of skins and clothed them. This meant the shedding of blood, life to be laid down; for "without the shedding of blood there is no remission."

What is grace? We have often heard it said that it is the free unmerited favour of God: but it is much more than that. If a tramp should come to our door, asking for something to eat, there would be no reason why we should give to him. We might give to him, but that would not be grace, but kindness: but should the

tramp beat us and illtreat us, and then we rise up and set a meal before him, that would be gracious, so it is with God's favour. Not only is there no reason, no merit in us, why God should be gracious unto us, but there is every reason why he should not. Not only is there no merit, but positive demerit. Grace did not merely abound where sin abounded. Man lost his earthly paradise through transgression, and had grace only abounded where sin abounded, man would have only been placed from whence he fell, so would still be where he could fall again, but grace much more abounds and places the elect of God beyond the reach of sin, and into the presence of God, to go no more out. This grace abounds unto us through the suffering life and death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Going back to Adam, we find that God told him that because of his transgression, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake." When we view the sufferings of the Son of God, how much more did grace abound than the guilt and consequence of man's sin! Jesus was made a curse for us, for "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Galatians 3:13. Though he knew no sin, yet our sins were imputed unto him, and as such (with all reverence we say it) in the sight of God, Jesus became an "accursed thing." In an agony Jesus cried out, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Some say that God did not really forsake him, that Jesus only felt forsaken; but, for one awful moment, God really did turn his face from him, for Jesus had to endure the hell due to his people, banishment from God, the just desert of their sins. God told Adam, "In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life." Jesus was a "Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

The Scriptures tell us "His visage was so marred more than any man," and that "When we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him." We esteemed him stricken, smitten of God, when all the while he was smitten for us. "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee." When Jesus was delivered to be crucified, they platted a crown of thorns and put it upon his head: oh, what thorns! They also smote him on the head. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground," and Jesus, in the garden of Gethsemane, was in such agony for sinners that his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling on the ground. "For dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return."

You may say, but Jesus' body did not turn to dust. Let us turn to Psalm 22. This Psalm is testifying to the sufferings of Jesus, and verse 15 says, "Thou hast brought me into the dust of death." Those of us who in days gone by went a long way at a funeral with horses in hot dry weather, will remember how we would be covered with dust. It was in our eyes, in our nostrils, in our mouths, and we were covered in it from head to foot. This is nothing compared to the dust of death into which Jesus was brought. Wretches who, but for the suffering and death of Jesus, would have been doomed to eternal torment, were the cause of his suffering, dead in sin, and Jesus was brought into this very dust of death. While the book of Genesis records the beginning of things, Revelation closes the sacred canon with the final consummation of things. Many things in Genesis, the first book, are verified and rounded out in Revelation, the last book; and Revelation closes with this awful warning, "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life." God verily told Adam that in the day that he ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he should surely die. Salvation, or our having a part in writing our name in the

book of life, is not a co-partnership work between the sinner and God. The sinner has no part in it. He is the blessed recipient of it, but has no part at all in its accomplishment. Had Adam and Eve held to the command as God gave it, they might have saved paradise for themselves and so have avoided death, and so have had a part in the book of life, but they lost it, so that salvation is wholly of grace. Our federal head having anything to do with our salvation is blotted out. I would impress on your minds these two words, "much more." Man's sin brought the loss of an earthly paradise, but this grace "much more" abounds, in that God will bring us into his presence with joy, placing us where we cannot lose it.

This sermon was followed by the observance of the Lord's Supper. How fitting! It was as the setting to a precious stone. As never before did one enter in to this ordinance, one's feelings being that of mingled shame, sacred sorrow, and a holy quiet joy.

Grace Aston

PREACHING

The most sacred and most noble profession is that of a gospel preacher, yet it is considered as the poorest trade. The preaching of the gospel is so sacred and great that I am continuously reminded of my weakness and unworthiness to fill such a sacred position. I take comfort in the thought that Paul felt the same: "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should *preach* among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." (Eph. 3:8) Paul considered preaching grace as a mighty and wonderful gift of God. I do not believe that a gospel minister can think too humbly of himself — nor can he think too highly of the Prince who called him into this noble profession. Our felt sense of unworthiness really graces us to bear great treasures to others. Many poor messengers have delivered great treasures to others. I may be an evil messenger but I know that I am not bearing an evil message. I may be as one of Noah's carpenters who helped in building the ark but had no place in it when the floods came; yet, my comfort is that I have part in bearing the message of God's love and grace.

I may be a castaway but I feel that I will be compelled to thank God for having blessed me to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the afflicted and poor people. When you see the despondent ones raised up to the point of rejoicing, it gladdens your heart to see that the Lord has graced your preaching to their comfort. A gospel minister could not conscientiously require a congregation to pay him for his preaching, because, if he has been given preaching grace, he has already received more reward of the Lord than he could possibly receive from the congregation. No true minister will ever complain of the sacrifice he has made in order to pursue this noble ministration. Paul said in 2 Cor. 12:15: "And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved." What great love Paul had for the Lord's people!

Considering the sacredness and the success attached to gospel preaching, we are next inquiring as Paul did: "*Who* is sufficient for these things?" Read the last 6 verses of the 2nd chapter and the 3rd chapter of 2nd Corinthians and you will note the happy success which God gave to Paul's preaching; as well as this success being wholly accredited to God. Paul says, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." We are convinced that God's ministers are called, qualified, sent forth, and used of God for the good of His people, as well as to praise the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The outstanding evidence that God has called one to preach is that he

preaches the power of God, for a person will preach the power that sent him as the excellent power. Listen to one's preaching for he will unconsciously identify his caller; whether it be money, man, the devil, or God. God qualifies his ministers in the furnace of affliction, and they come through great tribulations which burn the dross of pride, selfishness, vain-glory, and any other vice; which makes them beggars at the footstool of God's throne.

God's ministers experience to a greater degree all of the phases of Christian experience, both pleasant and unpleasant, in order to orient them properly for the profession they must fill. God sometimes suffers his ministers to follow the bidding of designing men, and to experience the consequences, in order to make them more willing to heed His commands. The minister must be well taught to go wheresoever and whensoever the Lord sends him. God uses His ministers as message-bearers and they are ordained to go forth in the fear of God — not man; to please God, not as men pleasers.

His ministers must be of good report within as well as without. They may become victims of false brethren and outsiders who give bad report; yet, their lives and conduct should be so that the mouths of gain-sayers may be stopped without the minister having to come to his own rescue. True brethren are always ready to defend their elders from vile effects of erroneous and damaging reports. God blesses the ministers' gifts to find room in the hearts of true brethren sufficiently that it is needless for ministers to use valuable time in self-defense. Offenses must come but the woe is pronounced upon the offender, not the offended. ***A minister must realize that his temptations are more varied, that he is more closely watched, and he is the target of more envy and jealousy than anyone in the church.*** How careful we should be in our deportment.

A minister should be "Apt to teach." He should study to rightly divide the word of truth. He should be one who is given to use simple terms in explaining the scriptures and placing scriptural expressions in their proper settings. When one lifts a scriptural expression out of its context to such an extent that it has a very different meaning, he does violence to the right division. A minister should not take a few words and dwell upon them exclusively to get them all out of proportion, until they become vain imaginations which are foreign to their intended meaning. I have heard much of this, which results only in entertainment and arousing emotions, and the audience dismissed without being edified on the proper meaning of the expression. Sometimes we are tempted to use a few words to this extent in order that the hearers may talk about how wise we are, to get so much out of so little. Let us ask our hearers, who make such expressions, What did you get from it? ***I am convinced that the fact is the congregation was more entertained than edified.***

Meandering preaching generally aims at nothing and hits nothing. I have heard people talk a long time, yet they never did tell me what they were talking about. I cannot tell what purpose they have in saying what they say. A true preacher preaches his convictions and attempts to support them with the scriptures. He does not emphasize his wisdom but his convictions. We read a scripture which says, "We also believe, and therefore speak." (Read 2 Cor. 4:13.) I am becoming very conscious of how precious the time is which is devoted to preaching. This time must not be wasted by idle talking and vain repetitions. Some must travel a long journey to hear preaching and are not privileged to sit more than an hour or two under the audible sound of preaching each month. May God forbid that this precious time be ill-used by a careless person who seeks not to edify his hearers. This time

should be used for the good of others and not for the speaker's own vain-glory. None but those who are as diligent to sow the wheat of good doctrine, as the devil is to sow tares, should occupy the time allotted for preaching. We should seek to use only enough simple words to clothe our thoughts, and only thoughts which tend to promote truth and virtue should be emphasized. Preaching time is too precious to be wasted by saying things without purpose for saying them. Time is too precious for long preliminaries or telling amusing stories. The profession is too sacred to treat lightly and to talk loosely and for any display of ignorance.

God's use for preaching is so important that we should use proper dignity in the pulpit so that what we say may be properly enunciated. Our true hearers are interested in understanding every word spoken, therefore they listen carefully and appreciate it when every word is distinctly spoken. They are not so much interested in *how* we say things as *what* we say. Sometimes peculiar mannerisms of the preacher so attracts the hearer that he loses the thoughts expressed. Sometimes we become so emotional while preaching that our speaking is marred with incoherent sounds and our hearers do not distinctly understand what we say. ***If the things we are speaking are worth the time used in speaking them, surely they are worth being understood by our hearers.***

Proper characteristics and suitable manners of God-called ministers are especially stressed in Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus. These principles, tempers, and proper conduct are minutely named and specifically defined in these books of the New Testament. It would be well for ministers to read them carefully and often as letters of instructions addressed individually to each one of us. Each one of you have Bibles to read so it is not necessary for me to include them in this treatise, but is necessary for me to request you to read both letters to Timothy and the one to Titus as a part of this article. Cataloging scriptures is not preaching. Hearers have Bibles to read, and the earnest hearer reads it often. They are more interested in hearing you expound the scriptures than your precise quotations of them. Interested hearers often check your scriptural references, and, when they get to themselves, read the scriptures which are before and after your quotations. Then, they compare your treatise on them with the context.

Some may ask, Why preach? I have heard it vehemently proclaimed that God saves His people wholly and completely in every sense without the necessity of preaching. I fear that some who fill the pulpit feel exactly that way about it, considering the carelessness manifested while attempting to preach. If our preaching be not necessary, Why preach? I am thoroughly convinced that Paul spoke rightly when he said, "...it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to *save* them that believe." God has use for preaching in saving the believer. What is the central text of Gospel preaching? Paul says, "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Why preach Christ to a believer? Christ said, "...Ye believe in God, believe also in me." The eunuch of Ethiopia as well as Cornelius believed in God before they believed in Jesus Christ. God was pleased to use a minister to effectually preach Jesus Christ to them. In each case God commanded the minister to go, and it pleased God that through these ministers' preaching that these should also believe in Jesus Christ. Let us quote Romans 10:13-14, "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they

be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things."

Our reasons for preaching from the pulpits, by medium of writing, and in private conversations should be for God's glory and for the benefit of hearers and readers. Sometimes it is to stir up pure minds by way of remembrance of the things they have heretofore been told and have experienced. Sometimes it is to inspire a desire for spiritual development that the auditors may pray the Lord to bless them. Sometimes it is to admonish one who has strayed from the becoming walk of the Lord's people. Sometimes it is to unconfuse the confused so that the little bits of beliefs may be unscrambled and placed in an orderly manner to such extent that the hearer is more aware of what he believes. ***Spiritual stimulation and nourishment should be the aim of every minister.***

Yes, preaching comforts the depressed ones, encourages the discouraged, and renews hope, as well as strengthens faith. No minister of God preaches for filthy lucre, nor to gain himself a reputation, nor to get a personal following. His purpose sometimes is to exhort his hearers to righteous and Godly walking; yet, while so doing he does not forget the sacred truths of sovereign grace. Should one treat upon vices and virtues only without the grand principles of grace and the mighty power of God, it would be like placing the wheels properly in a watch, setting the hands, and forgetting to put in the mainspring which makes the watch work. On the other hand, should you preach the sovereignty of God only, it would be as though you observed only the mainspring and paid no attention to the works in the watch, nor the position of the hands on the face of the watch. It is often a vital question to me, What should I preach in order to preach a complete gospel sermon? When I first began to teach in the schools I was told to stress three "R's": 'Riting, Reading, & 'Rithmetic. I am convinced now that ministers should stress five "R's": Ruin, Redemption, Regeneration, Righteousness, and Resurrection. (Also Reconciliation. J.F.P.)

Ministers preach that all of Adam's posterity was *ruined* through the sins of Adam to such extent that man could not reform himself to the original condition of Adam. All who were in the loins of Adam could hope for nothing but eternal death. All who were chosen in Christ were *redeemed* through the righteousness of Jesus Christ to such an extent that God's chosen ones would be delivered from the clutches of eternal death. All who were in the loins of Christ could be assured of eternal life because of this redemption by His life and His death. All those who were redeemed by Jesus Christ are subjects of *regeneration* by mighty power of the Holy Spirit. All the redeemed are born again, being regenerated by eternal life. True ministers preach that *righteousness* being manifested in the walk and conversation of the regenerated ones is the evidence and effect of regeneration. All who are regenerated and have the gift of the living faith will be careful to maintain good works. All God-called ministers will point out to his hearers the goal of the high calling which is the *resurrection*. The crowning work of God's grace is the resurrection from the dead. We point forward to the change when this mortal shall put on immortality; when this natural body shall be raised a spiritual body. We point forward to the prize which will be the transition from time into eternity. When we are under the dew-drippings of God's sanctuary and while feasting upon the gospel of Jesus Christ, we taste a little of Heaven. This makes it easier to endure the tribulations for a season.

Ministers love Jesus Christ and his people better than anything else in the world. The other day I read the first ten

verses of 1st chapter of 1st Corinthians. I noticed that Paul mentioned Jesus Christ ten times in these ten verses. Even though I was alone I said aloud, "Oh! what love Paul had for Jesus Christ!" Dear Ministers, you are promised persecutions and you will go through great tribulations, but God has also promised to be with you unto the end. False brethren may turn their back upon you and attempt to do all the harm they can, but may God bless you to preach Jesus Christ as Lord of the salvation of His people. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 16:22, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha." This means to let him be accursed, suspended, and not worthy of attention.

May our ministration be blessed in our conduct and preaching that we may truthfully say, "But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us. For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God. Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly, and unblameably we behave ourselves among you that believe: and ye know how we exhorted, and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews: Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men." (1st Thess. 2:7-15) The afore-quoted is what Paul, Silvanus, and Timotheus said to the church of the Thessalonians. Can we truthfully say the same things to the churches of our pastorate???

Our sincere prayer is that God will so grace us as ministers to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called.

July 1964 ..... (Elder) E. J. Lambert

OBITUARIES

CARL CLAYSON BISHER

Brother Carl Clayson Bisher was born October 19, 1914 and died December 24, 1979 in Moses Cone Hospital in Greensboro. He was 65 years old. He leaves behind to mourn his loss his wife, Mamie Lanier Bisher, two sons, Gary and Dwight, and five grandchildren. One grandaughter preceded him in his death.

He joined Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church in 1979, having had a desire for many years to join. He expressed his love for the people of the Church.

His funeral was preached by his Pastor, Elder Kenneth Key, and opening prayer by Elder Leonard Key. The prayer and many comforting words were said. His body was laid to rest in Lakeview Cemetery, with many beautiful flowers over his grave.

Written by Mamie Bisher

MARY TALBOT DAUGHTRIDGE

Sister Mary T. Daughtridge, 82 years of age, was blessed by our Heavenly Father to receive her call in her sleep on October 4, 1980. She was loved by all who knew her and her faith and belief in salvation by grace was shown in her walk here in this life. She united with the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church in July 1935, and she filled her seat at her home Church and went to other Churches whenever she had a way to go. There is an empty place in the meeting house and in our hearts. She loved to talk about her love for Jesus and the brethren. A wonderful mother, grand-mother and friend,

was she.

She is survived by two daughters; Mrs. Mary Alice Odom of the home; Mrs. Nona Anderson and three sons; W.G. Daughtridge; L.E. Daughtridge; and D.T. Daughtridge all of Rocky Mount; 29 grandchildren and 21 great-grand-children.

Her funeral was conducted from Johnsons Funeral Home Chapel by her Pastor Elder D.B. Stokes, and Elder W.L. Everett. Burial was in Pineview Cemetery, where we believe she is asleep in the arms of Jesus, waiting for the second coming of our Lord.

The many friends and flowers gave evidence of the love that they felt for her. Our sympathy goes out to her family who will miss her, and those of us who loved her in the Spirit.

Resolved: A copy of these resolutions be sent to the family, a copy to *The Signs of the Times,* and a copy for the Church records.

Conference January 10, 1981
Elder D. B. Stokes - Moderator
Nina Pearson - Clerk

BROTHER JOHN THOMAS "TOMMY" BLANDFORD

Brother Tommy Blandford was called home by our Heavenly Father on Jan. 17, 1981, after a stay on this earth of 74 years. He united with the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church in April 1971. He loved to attend the meetings, coming when his strength was low. He was not well and when sickness prevented him from attending the meetings he would ask about his friends and the message presented. He loved to talk of Salvation by God's mercy and kindness. He will be missed by all of us, but our loss is his eternal gain. We hope to meet him in that glorious city and with him sing praises to our merciful God.

He is survived by his wife, Sister Katie Blandford; one brother, Robert L. Blandford of Rocky Mount; one sister Mrs. Cora Parker of Rocky Mount.

His funeral was conducted from the chapel of Johnson Funeral Home by his Pastor, Elder D.B. Stokes. He was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery, where he awaits the second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Resolved: That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the *Signs of the Times*; one to the family and one for the church as a permanent record.

Done by order of conference June 1981.
Elder D.B. Stokes: Moderator
Patricia Whitley: Asst. Clerk

SISTER MARY LEOTA BRANSCOME

It has pleased God to remove from our midst at Bell Spur another dear sister.

Sister Leota Branscome was born July 31, 1891, and passed from this life June 10, 1981 at age of 89 years. She loved her church and loved to meet among the brethren and sing songs of praise. She had a sweet voice. She attended her church as long as she was able. She had been in a nursing home for some time.

Surviving are one son, E.G. Branscome, Fancy Gap, Va.; one grandson, one sister, three brothers, four step sons, twenty one step grandchildren. It is not known how long Sister Branscome was a member of the church, but she came to Bell Spur Church August 17, 1968.

She had many trials and afflictions here, but I believe she was made submissive to God's will. When we visited her in the nursing home in April she said she was just waiting for God to call her home.

Her funeral was conducted at Sky View Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder Amos Hash and Elder Hale Terry, and she was laid to rest in the Webb Cemetery at Sky View beside her husband, Eli Branscome, who preceded her death, there to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour when He comes to call His children home.

The large floral arrangements and the many friends attending the funeral showed forth the esteem in which she was held.

Written at the request of Bell Spur Church while in conference June 20, 1981.

Ilene Clifton, Clerk

C.M. TOLER

It pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst our beloved Brother Cornelius M. Toler on March 15, 1981. He was born February 9, 1883, in Valley Mills, Texas. His sojourn here in this old world of sin and sorrow was little more than 98 years.

He was married to Minnie Lou Beauchamp on August 3, 1914 in Jones

County, Texas. To this union eleven children were born. His dear companion and two children preceded him in death.

Brother Toler joined Little Flock Church, Altus, Oklahoma on August 29, 1970, by relation, coming to us from Sardias Church, Amarillo, Texas where he had been a member for many years. The Sardias Church had dissolved prior to this.

He was strong in the faith of God our Saviour and a faithful member to attend church when health permitted.

He surely will be missed by his dear children and family. Also, the church has lost a good soldier, but we trust and surely believe our loss to be his eternal gain.

Our dear Brother and Father in Israel leaves to mourn his passing five daughters, four sons, 25 grandchildren, 7 great-grandchildren and a host of relatives and friends.

His funeral services were conducted by his Pastor, Elder C.M. Haygood and he was laid to rest by his precious wife in the Memorial Park Cemetery, Amarillo, Texas, to await the redemption of these bodies, when he will hear that blessed voice, "Come ye blest of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

By request of Little Flock Church and family,

Elder C.M. Haygood

SISTER FLOSSIE PROCTOR STONEMAN CLARK

Our Sister and friend, Flossie Robbins Proctor Stoneman Clark, has departed from this world and was laid to rest in the Nashville Cemetery on September 11, 1980. While we in a sense do regret her passing, we are happy in that we believe that she is now with the Lord: Miss Flossie, as we have always called her, was long a special friend of our family. She had endeared herself to us all by being present just when we needed her, and as she had cared for our needs, or was otherwise visiting with us, she and I had many conversations concerning our love for our Lord Jesus Christ.

Miss Flossie was born in the Rocky Mount, North Carolina area back in 1892. She became a member of the Falls Primitive Baptist Church in July 1919, and remained a faithful and active member as long as she could get around. In these last years, when she was no longer able to travel, she often wrote of her love for Falls Church, and of her desire to be with her brothers and sisters in Christ here. She died in Florida on September 6, 1980, and, as it was her wish, she was brought back to Rocky Mount for her burial services, which were held at Gay-Yost Funeral home, with Elder William L. Everett assisting. The funeral was conducted by her pastor and long time friend, Elder D.B. Stokes, who spoke many words of comfort and peace unto her son, Joe Proctor, and to the many friends and family members who were present. Miss Flossie was also survived by two sisters, Mrs. Katie Latta of Norfolk, Virginia, and Sister Mattie Abrams of Tampa, Florida, who is also a member of the Falls Church.

Written by a friend and sister in Christ

Emily Williford Elmore

These resolutions were received in conference of the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church January 1981.

Elder D.B. Stokes: Moderator

BROTHER LUTHER PASLEY

It is with sadness and a heavy heart that I prepare a brief memorial for our Brother Luther Pasley. Yet God, through His eternal grace makes His people reconciled to His sovereign will. Our Brother believed this statement of truth.

Brother Luther Pasley was born December 25, 1898, in Franklin County, Virginia, to the late William Harrison and Kate Pasley. He married the former Mary Watson and to this union were born two children, Mary Elizabeth and William Harrison. He is survived by his wife, children, and four grandchildren.

Though there are no degrees of stature, spiritually speaking, among brethren, there was a special place in my heart for Brother Pasley. He asked for a home in the church the second Sunday night in September, 1970, along with my wife and me. The three of us were made submissive to burial in the liquid grave the following fourth Sunday morning. There was never a meeting following baptism that our Brother, if favored to be in attendance, did not make a special effort to speak and inquire of our well being.

Brother Pasley was a retired railroad

engineer. Yet, strangely enough, he seldom initiated conversation which pertained to his years with the railroad. He preferred rather to speak of the time he felt he heard the truth preached for the first time and the years of association with his brethren following that occasion.

Brother Pasley has on more than one occasion shared with me an account of his experience of grace. When he first felt he had a desire to hear the truth preached, he traveled extensively visiting churches of various denominations. He could not readily explain what his heart felt or desired, but somehow he knew he had not heard what his heart craved. Then, it was the purpose of God that he attend an Old School Baptist meeting.

On that day he heard a lovely Elder expound upon the riches of God's grace. The words of the Elder struck a responsive chord and he knew the truth had touched his heart. He later learned of Dan River and Elder Spangler. He was given a burden to attend the meetings and later felt he must ask for a home with those he loved. He loved his pastor and felt to be given an ear to continue to hear the precious truth as God Blessed him to preach it.

Our Brother traveled a greater distance to attend his meetings at Dan River than any other member with whom I am familiar. He was a devoted and faithful member. During his last ten years, the church was his life and he was blessed to visit many other churches and associations. He never wanted to inconvenience a brother by accepting overnight lodging. Often, even when other accommodations could be made available, he would make arrangements for lodging at a local motel. Though he had been in declining health the last few years, he did not ponder over his physical condition. Rather, he felt blessed that things were as well with him as they were.

Naturally speaking, our brother loved little children and had a keen interest in watches and clocks. He was intrigued with unusually designed watches and enjoyed explaining the various intricate parts. He became filled with awe as the seemingly unrelated parts would, at their proper time, come together to accomplish the purpose of the watchmaker. Somehow, I feel he drew a parallel between this and the seemingly unrelated events throughout his life, which at God's appointed time, came together to accomplish our Lord's sovereign purpose in his heart.

Our Brother was blessed to be at Dan River just two weeks before he died. He related that he did not expect to be back again. Apparently he felt that the time for his departure was at hand.

Brother Pasley was called from his walk on earth on Sunday evening, November 16, 1980. He has felt the sting of death and now, as countless millions before him, awaits that glorious resurrection day. Hopefully, when our Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven, he, along with other saints of God, shall hear our King say, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

It is respectfully requested that a copy of this memorial be made available to the family and that our Brother be remembered in the ***Signs of the Times*** at the appropriate time.

In Brotherly love,
Bob R. Collie, Deacon

MRS. MAUD CARTER WEBB

Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church, Rockingham County, N.C., acknowledges the passing of our dear sister in Christ. Sister Maud Webb, 93, died July 9, 1980, in Annie Penn Hospital, Reidsville, N.C., after a long illness. She was a loving wife and mother and devoted to her meetings until health failed. She raised flowers to bring to church and fixed the communion bread for her husband, who was a deacon. They had a lovely family who cared for her and her needs in her illness. She manifested the grace and faith in God in her walk of life.

Surviving are daughters, Mrs. Myrtle Dye, of the home, Mrs. Pete Hall, and Mrs. Gertrude Lynn of Greensboro, N.C., Mrs. Albert Humphrey, Summerfield, N.C., Mrs. William Sharron, Wentworth, N.C.; a son, Woodrow Webb, Summerfield, N.C.; and a large number of grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at Pleasantville Church with her Pastor Elder H. W. Wray, and Preacher Robert Turner officiating. She was buried at the cemetery there.

Rachel Wray

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 1/82 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

FEAST OF FAT THINGS

The Signs of the Times, Inc. is pleased to announce that we will have available for purchase the latter part of this month, the book, "Feast of Fat Things."

This book, first published by the Signs some years ago, has now been reprinted. It is rich with doctrine of Old School or Primitive Baptists and should be in the home of every believer.

CONTENTS

1. The Black Rock Address of 1832
2. "Everlasting Task for Arminianism" by William Gadsby
3. "Fatalism" by H. M. Curry
4. "A Dream Tour Through Arminian Heaven" by H. M. Curry
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These articles are all excellent for showing what we believe and the book will make an excellent gift for our children and friends who may inquire of our faith.

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FROM TEXAS

Dear Elder Poole,

I am sending you this letter written by Sister Joyce (Williams) Pittman to her Pastor Elder Joe Hamrick. I feel it is a sweet and wonderful letter and would like to share it with the readers of the *Signs*.

In Gospel bonds
Elder C.M. Haygood

August 9, 1981

My precious Pastor and I hope me Brother,

How your words today struck a chord within me! Oh, Brother Hamrick, I feel like such a hypocrite! As you urged us to not make excuses for not attendng church, I thought of myself-I go to church as often as most and more often than some, but why? Do I go many times because there is nothing else to do or out of habit? After I get there, where are my thoughts? So often they dart back to worldly cares and things of this world; And what kind of life do I live outside of church? You would not recognize me, especially in my own home. How I treat my husband, my parents, my brothers, my parents-in-law? Oh, the hateful words that often come from my lips. Oh, the hard hateful thougths that I have! Oh, how I wish I could put the old man down! How I hate my own wicked nature.

When I came home, I did try to pray to the Lord to enable me to walk in a way that would be pleasing in His sight.

Oh, so often, I waste my time thinking about and readng about worldly things.

Oh, how I wish I could see myself as I attempt to pray! Oh, thank the Lord that He remembers us when we forsake or neglect to praise Him!

Oh, how I wish I could see myself as I am. So often I feel to be lukewarm. I would so much rather even mourn over my sins than to feel nothing at all.

Although the Lord granted me some relief in prayer and I was blessed to read the Song of Solomon with tears often welling up in my eyes, I fear that the Lord will again withdraw His presence. Oh, I dread the return to worldly thoughts and cares. Oh, I wish never to sin again, but I know from past experience that I will never be free from this burden as long as I live. Oh, may He keep me from sin as much as seemeth good in His sight. How I long for the day when this old man shall be left forever and we can praise Him as we ought.

Love,
Joyce

(Sister Joyce is the daughter of Elder J.R. Williams, Keeling Va.)

FROM AN OLD SIGNS OF THE TIMES

AN APPEAL TO THE MINISTRY

Dear Brethren:--To you who are called and chosen of God to preach the gospel, our Macedonian cry is extended. Our cry has been for two years, "Come over and help us", to which all have turned a deaf ear, except one, to wit, Elder David Bartley. He visited us twice last year, and took some of the bleating lambs into the fold. I heard him preach the third Sunday in October last, to a large association of united Baptists, one of the ablest sermons I have heard in thirty years. While some rejoiced and praised the Lord, the Arminian castle quaked and trembled, and the tongue of the gainsayer was hushed in deadly silence, O, my brethren, that day will never be forgotten. It is an evident truth that Arminians cannot bear the light of gospel truth. And how it is that the Lord has called and chosen His ministers to go and preach the gospel to every creature, and they can meet, from twelve to eighteen in number, at an association, and feast upon the rich bounties of gospel truth, and know at the same time there are hundreds, yea, thousands, of their Father's family starving for the crumbs that fall from their table, is

something that the ignorant writer cannot understand. This may all be right, and I may know it in the future, but I confess that I am slow to learn it here. This is the largest field destitute of gospel preaching that I have ever known. There is room for several ministers, if they would come, and this is a healthy country. And, my brethren, to any of you who wish to minister to the needy, this is the place; for we will receive you with open arms and welcome hearts. And may the Lord of the harvest incline you to come, is the prayer of one who loves the truth, for Christ's sake.

William G. Howard

Caledonia, Missouri
Sept. 15, 1876

COMMENTS

Someone might say of now, as then (in 1876), "If God wants ministers in such an area, He will raise them up among them". Very possibly true, yet how often do we see it otherwise to the fulfilling of Scriptures, that God sends His labourers from afar to the needy sheep. (See Acts 13:1-4).

Note well in this regard the following text, "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest". (Matt 9:35-38)

First, our Lord Himself is moved with compassion for the sheep having no shepherd.

Second, he bids us pray for labourers (not supervisors, but labourers) to be sent.

Third, we emphasize the word (in the text, send) "sent". They must not only be sent of God; sent with tidings; sent with the burden of the sheep's welfare; but from the context, they are sent "into" from without. This appears clear as light to us that our Lord does often then raise up messengers in one area to minister in another.

May we soberly ponder the thought.

Editor

EXTRACT

And God forbid that any servant of his should keep back a part of the price, and for the sake of a large church, considerable pew-rents, good collections, wealthy deacons, a flourishing cause, and a respectable congregation--these baubles of Mammon, these God-dishonouring motions so widely prevalent, should so pare down experience and the power of vital godliness, as to flood his church with half and half, soft, undecided, unstripped, unhumbled Pharisees, with Calvinistic heads, and Arminian hearts. Now, the only men who can cut to pieces these Aggas that walk delicately, and that say, "the bitterness of death is past", because professing Sauls have spared their lives--the only men who can hew these Amalekites in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal, are those whose true Jerusalem blades have been heated in the iron furnace, and tempered in the deep waters, and whose edge is kept sharp and fit for service by the grindstone of a daily experience. Power is the only weapon worth a straw. Dry doctrines build up hypocrites, pretty novelties plaster over professors, zeal for ordinances comforts Pharisees, pleasing anecdotes amuse religious newsmongers, and divisions and sub-divisions tickle itching ears. But power

is a sword that reacheth to the very soul. It lays bare the conscience, reveals the secrets of the heart, rends off the unsparing hand, the hoods and the veils, and spreads the soul naked and open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do. And thus those quickened souls who have felt this two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and to be a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, never can be satisfied without the blood of sprinkling, and the revelation of Jesus Christ.

August 24, 1981

Dear Elder Griffin,

My poor heart cannot rest this evening. I must write what you requested of me some months ago, if the dear Lord will bless this poor fool's pen. I pray the few pitiful words that I might write would all be to praise of His dear Name for stooping down into the very depths of hell to bring out this completely undone wretch and not from this deceitful heart of flesh.

As I am given to look back upon this past year, I weep with joy and yet I cannot praise Him as I ought, I cannot be thankful as I ought, for even these blessings are from above. Truly, I am what I am by His grace alone! That was revealed to me when I was at the very bottom of the pit of despair. Early Friday evening on September 12, 1980, I had quite literally reached my wit's end. All the days prior in my worldly life, I had been able to justify my deeds by comparison to others. But on that particular evening, that most precious earthly dream that I possessed was taken from me forever. I was totally undone, totally stripped of every vestige of righteousness. I stood before an all righteous God justly condemned. I wanted to take my gun and end it all, so that I would sin no more, but I knew if I died hell would be my just reward. Oh, my poor heart was broken beyond repair, and I had nowhere to go, nowhere to hide, nowhere at all! My sins were upon me, pressing me to the floor, down to my knees. Oh, I was lost forever! Then as I was weeping quite uncontrollably, the Dear Precious Lord came to me. He comforted my poor heart He dried my weeping eyes. I was quite hysterical. I wanted to laugh and shout for joy and thank God over and over for the blessed peace that was imparted to my poor heart. That peace was with me the entire evening. I called my dear mother, who was quite overjoyed. If I recollect, she said that she had been expecting that call for some time.

Then came the great desire to go to church. But alas, the little church in Houston had just met and had given way in October to the Sulphur Fork Association. Where was I to go? My dear aunt told me of the South Ouachita Association at New Hope Church and that it was less than two weeks away. Oh, how my heart yearned to go! The blessed Redeemer saw that I had the needed Friday off from work and I was enabled to partake of every sermon preached. I rejoiced all the day to hear such precious truths as the dear ministers were given to bring forth. I had been to that little church many times in the past, but with only a head knowledge of our precious doctrine. As one dear elder told me, "You have always believed the doctrine but you have not always loved it!" Oh, the difference in a logical belief to a heart-felt love manifested by His Grace alone. I truly felt that I knew what it was to be cast so far down that only through the sweet deliverance of His Darling Son could I be spared. Only that blessed Holy Spirit could lead me out of the worldly darkness into His glorious Light. Bless his Righteous and Merciful Name!

In November I was at last enabled to go to Shepherd's Fold, the little church in Houston. Oh, the love that flowed

from breast to breast at that first meeting. Surely I was among His little flock! I was in tears of joy most of the time, for His truth was so precious to me and the dear brethren seemed to take me in with such loving kindness. It was more than a poor wretch, such as I could bear.

After the December meeting in Houston, the dear pastor and his wife invited me up to attend Hopewell Church in Winnsboro that next weekend. Oh, I could not go! I could not burden those dear ones with my presence and I did not have money for the gas. So I thanked him for his gracious offer but politely declined. During lunch the desire to be at church the next weekend grew exceedingly, until I had to go and beg Him to let me come after all. He smiled and I believe he was happy to have me. Later in the week, I unexpectedly received some money from my sister, which paid for the gas. The good Lord does indeed provide a way, even for one such as I!

The weekend at Hopewell was just as full as the previous ones. I was blessed to drink from all that was preached and to still thrist for more. It was such a sweet privilege to be among so many of His little ones. I was quite beside myself, for no-one put me from them although I knew that I was quite unfit to be among them. The dear pastor's wife of Hopewell invited me to stay with them the next time I came up. I was so overwhelmed that any of these would dare to bring such an undone wretch into their home, but she was so full of love and was so sincere, that I gladly accepted.

The meetings in January were also filled until overflowing with joy and sweet fellowship with the saints of God. I was exceedingly blessed to have been given a personal spiritual comforter in the form of a dear brother. My aunt had introduced us at the South Ouachita Association, and as the good Lord would have it, he was the son of the pastor at Hopewell. The mercies of the Lord! He blessed me to hear His Word both in church and out of church!

In February, the dear pastor and his companion from Shepherd's Fold came home with me after church Saturday. Oh, what a delightful evening we spent in His precious Word. What a gracious God! He spoke of the ordinance of baptism to me, but I shut my ears up. I did not see how I could ever be baptized. The good Lord had not seen fit to give me all of my legs and I was quite sure that I could never participate in footwashing. I was *firmly* convinced that if I was to have been baptized, I would have received two legs and two feet from the dear Lord.

The next few meetings, I was still blessed to rejoice in the preaching, but could not take anything to heart concerning baptism. In my wretched condition, both spiritually and physically, I was certainly not a worthy candidate! The scripture from Matt. 16:24, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me", began to worry me. Was I denying what the dear Lord had done for this miserable sinner by not taking up my cross and following after Him? I attempted to put my thoughts from my mind, being quite content with that present fellowship of the brethren. That was enough for me, I thought, plus I had no tremendously strong desire to join the visable church.

At the 5th weekend meeting in March at Shepherd's Fold, I experienced yet another change of heart. After the preaching Sunday, I wanted to go forward so badly when the doors of the church were opened, but I could not move. I could only weep in my distress. I could not be comforted during the next two weeks. Baptism was on my mind night and day. Oh, dear Lord I cannot! Oh, my heart was so heavy ladened. I could not rest and had no peace in reflecting upon the past joys that he had

so mercifully given me. Oh, vanity, vanity, surely it was to be my doom!

The next meeting was at Hopewell and I stayed with it's dear pastor's family. I had revealed my burden to the dear brother, but when his father opened the doors of Hopewell that Saturday, I could not go up. I was truly unfit, I could only look within and see that vile, sinful heart. Satan whispered to me, "Who are you to go up there? You of all sinners, the most undone wretch on this earth! Why, if they knew you as you are, they would throw you out right now!" Oh, my poor heart ached and pleaded for deliverance from this heavy burden. But I returned to their home with a still heavy heart and much anguish. During the evening, the dear brother spoke of many precious things that comforted my burdened soul. I still could find no lasting peace and could not sleep that night. I awoke in seemingly the same lifeless condition that I had been in Saturday. Oh, I thought, I cannot continue on like this, I will surely die. We went to church, but I was with much fear and trembling inside. I felt so very dead, so very cold. His father began to preach from Matthew 3. Each word seemed to tear my heart apart. Oh, stop, stop it I cried! I cannot stand anymore! Indeed, I was reduced to a worm of the dust, yea, less than nothing when he finished preaching. Then he opened the doors of the church with Amazing Grace. I was so weak inside. Oh, dear Lord, I prayed, if it be Thy will, please give me strength to go forth in Thy precious Name and beg for a home among these, Your little ones. It was then I had to go. Surely, He answered my prayer and gave me strength, and only by His merciful, free and sovereign Grace! And bless their dear souls, they heard my pitiful story and took this chief of all sinners into their little church, I will never forget the love written upon their faces and their encouraging words to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling. That blessed day in my life was April 12, 1981.

The next three weeks seemed endless to me, for I was to be baptized the first Saturday in May in Houston. The dear ones in Shepherd's Fold took me in with much lovingkindness and I was baptized that afternoon. It was His good pleasure to bring many loved ones and my precious family to be with me at that time. It was a sweet occasion for me. I truly must have an all gracious God! Oh, but the fear and trembling within. My poor mind went to the communion services set for Sunday. I Cor. 11:29 was heavy upon me, "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." How could such an evil, rebellious creature as I partake of such a blessed ordinance? But the good Lord showed me that one was not worthy of himself to partake, only through the imputed righteousness of His Darling Son. Oh, what a peaceful blessing! To be given the knowledge that "our righteousness is as filthy rags" and that we are totally dependent upon Him for all things. What a blessed assurance! But vanity had not yet been conquered within this sinful body. I could not bear the thougth of any of the dear brethren beholding my deformities. A further horror was the thougth of one of the dear sisters humbling herself to wash the feet of such a wretch. I had already told the dear sisters that I desired not to participate in the footwashing, but only in the communion services. Bless His Gracious Name, for when the brethren began to make ready for the communion services, the dear Lord saw fit to remove all vanity from me. I was such a lowly, pathetic creature before an All Righteous God! I was given in my heart to know that I desired to partake of that sweet communion in Christ *and* to wash those dear sisters' feet. It was my humble hope that it would not prove to be more than they could bear to wash

mine. As the Lord saw fit, my dear aunt, who I have previously mentioned, washed my feet. Verily, my own flesh and blood and my precious sister in Christ! I was once again reduced to nothing when she finished with her arduous task. Truly, that first communion will be one of the sweetest that I shall ever experience. Praise the Dear Lord, for He said, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." II Cor 12 9.

Does the Lord's mercy never cease towards this rebellious wretch? No, "His mercy endureth forever." In this mercy, there is yet another miracle to relate. The good Lord saw fit to turn even the natural affections of the dear brother of Hopewell towards me and mine towards him. This dear brother asked me to marry him during the 5th weekend meeting at Hopewell in May. I joyfully accepted, hoping to realize that it was totally by His unmerited Grace. I can only thank God for this gift, He has of a truth blessed this miserable one beyond measure time after time again.

I did not intend to write so much. Please excuse the many errors and the traces of pride and self-glory. I pray to only desire to glorify His Dear, Holy Name forevermore. We have such a loving, gracious, and merciful God! I long for the day when by his free Grace and because of His never-ending Mercy, we can praise Him without sin, without ceasing!

An undeserving sinner in need of His Mercy,
A little sister from Texas

Vernon, Texas

Dear Sir:

My husband really enjoys the ***Signs of the Times*** and looks forward to its arrival. He never lays it aside until he has read it through. Then he reads and re-reads it over and over again.

Thank you,
Mrs. Charlie Rosanbalm

Chapel Hill, N.C.

Dear Editors,

Enclosed is a check for twelve dollars to pay for the ***Signs*** for two years, and the balance is to help toward the distribution of the paper.

In the troublesome world that we are living in, it is the one paper that stands for the truth, and nothing but the truth.

Sincerely yours,
Mrs. Lula N. Daniels

FROM MAINE

Freeport, Maine

Dear Editors of the Signs,

Enclosed is my check in the amount of $5.00 for another year's subscription to the ***Signs of the Times***. I am 91 years old, but still able to read and write.

My father, Joseph Clark took the ***Signs*** for many years before me.

Yours very truly,
Mrs. Ore Packard

LETTER FROM BROTHER T.A. STANFIELD TO BROTHER J.E. SIMMONS

(Published in Landmark, July 15, 1916)

Dear Brother Simmons:

You asked me to write you a long letter some cold day. This is a rainy day, so I'll attempt it today.

As the subject that I used last Saturday at our meeting is still on my mind, if the Lord will, I'll try to use it this morning. I hope the Lord will enable me to bring out something to your comfort and edification.

Luke 13:29, 30, "And they shall come from the East, and from the West, and from the North, and from the South, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last."

These are the words of Jesus, and He says, heaven and earth shall pass away

but my words shall not pass away.

The first point I want to notice is, they shall come from the four corners of the earth. He is speaking of His people that He has in every nation, kindred, and people under the sun. They shall come; no if's and and's about it; and in Matt. 8:11, He says, "They shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven". Jesus broke down the middle wall of partition, hence the Gentiles are brought in. They are to be no more strangers but fellow citizens with the household of faith, heirs and joint heirs.

God gave a promise to Abraham, saying "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed", showing then that He had a chosen people in all nations. Again, when Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt there was a mixed multitude that went out too. They left that land of darkness--the place of bondage--just as much as the Jews did. Then the Lord gave a law, concerning the Passover, for the "stranger"and the "servant" as He did the Jews. Only one law shall be to the home-born, as the stranger that sojourns among you. The hireling and foreigner has no part or lot in this matter.

But all the Lord has cleansed shall come from the East, West, North, and South, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

On the day of Pentecost, they were all assembled in one accord and the Holy Ghost fell upon them and they all spake in the tongue wherein they were born. See the different tongues there on that occasion, speaking in the same tongue, praising God. One says, are not all these Galileeans?

In a spiritual sense they are all telling the same story--saved by grace and grace alone. It is nothing good they have done or can do. Then they are speaking in the same tongue wherein they are born--that spiritual tongue. We see our text fulfilled at this time, and it is still being fulfilled. When that sheet was let down to Peter on the housetop at Joppa, knit together as it were by the four corners, (East, West, North, South) having all manner of creeping things and birds of the air in it, that was to show him that the Lord had a people in every nation of the world. When he was commanded to slay and eat, he said, "Not so Lord. Nothing common or unclean has ever entered my mouth". The Lord told him what He had cleansed call not common or unclean. This sheet was let down three times. This covers the three periods of time, before the flood, prophetic day, and gospel day.

Now there is another phase of the East, West, North, and South that I want to look at. They shall come from the East. The sun rises in the East, and as it begins to rise, a day begins. So that will answer to the infant--beginning of life--it is saved just as an adult (by grace). Then they shall come from infancy up to manhood and womanhood in every age. And from the age--the setting of the sun. Some are not born into God's kingdom until they are real old. There is the man that lay at the pool thirty and eight years. And poor old West. From manhood down to old Simeon in his declining years was permitted to see Jesus. We had one to join at the Grove last year, I think, who was about 65, yet he had just professed a hope.

Now the North side means those that lived a rough life - like Paul, persecuting the church. He was ushered right in from the North side by that mighty hand of Jesus into the kingdom of God. His brethren were afraid of him, the change was so sudden; but after his experience, that was enough. Today we have some that are coming from the North country, and sometimes we almost doubt their case until we see their walk and hear them tell of that light that shined around about them; then we can give them the right hand of fellowship.

Those that come from the South are

those that have lived morally all their lives. They do not need such a bright experience like Paul. The South country is warm, not like the North. But from the East, West, North, and South, they shall come in the same manner, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They shall all be taught of the Lord, and great shall be their peace. They all shall bring fruit meets for repentance, from these four corners of the earth. There are three gates on the East, three on the West, North, and South, and they answer to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Now I'll come to the last part of the 29th verse--"sit down". We "sit down" to rest. We "sit down" to eat. When Jesus fed the multitude, he commanded them to "sit down". Then he fed them. When we "sit down", we come to the end of the law, when we found out all of our works were as filthy rags in His sight, when we could no longer trust in our righteousness for justificaiton. It takes strength to stand alone or to walk, and as long as we feel there is something we can do, we do not come to this "sitting down" place. "Sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. These are three witnesses. "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established". Then Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob came to the end of the law and had to "sit down". ("Be still and know that I am God"). So when we come to the end of the law, and Jesus was manifested to us--the chiefest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely--could rest in the sabbath of His love--then we were "sitting down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" in the kingdom (Canaan's land) of God; that land that flows with milk and honey. Such a peaceful rest! Such a time of rejoicing. The singing of birds is heard in our land, the sun shines brighter and everything bespeaks praises unto our God, who has done so much for us where of we are glad. To Him be all the praise, power and dominion.

My letter is getting lengthy, so I'll bring it to a close. The first that shall be last is the Jews as a nation, and the last that shall be first, is the Gentiles. The Jews were a favored people of God, but now they are scattered people, serving under other nations, while the Gentiles are a favored people, worshipping God under their own vine and fig tree.

The Jew answers to this old flesh--the old man--that has to be put off with his deeds. It has to be made last, after we receive a hope. It used to be first. But we have realized that to live after the flesh brings death; but to live after the spirit brings life and peace. The Gentile answers to our hope which is an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast--unmovable, ever abounding in the works of the Lord.

Now in concusion, I feel like the time is near at hand when we shall have ended our six days of work and shall soon "sit down" with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in that kingdom above, where there is no parting or shedding of tears. All shall be done away.

Your brother in hope,
T.A. Stanfield

(Brother Stanfield was an ordained elder and able minister among our people.)

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC. TO SEPTEMBER, 1981

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FROM NORTH CAROLINA

Ellenboro, N.C.

Dear Editor,

Please renew my subscription to the ***Signs*** for two years. I enjoy the ***Signs*** very much.

I am a widow 78 years old and don't get around very much and the ***Signs*** means a lot to me.

Yours in hope,
Cleavie M. Edwards

FROM GEORGIA

Hahira, Georgia

Dear Brethren of the Signs,

Enclosed you will find a check to cover a year's subscription to the ***Signs*** for Mike McInnis of P.O. Box 183, O'Brien, Florida.

While writing to you, I would like to request a favor of the staff and readers of the paper. I have for some time been exercised on the question of how the gospel ought to be preached before a mixed congregation whose spiritual condition the preacher has no knowledge of and no indication to go by. We find that the Apostles preached wherever they seem to have had the opportunity and utterance to do so, and it seems to me in some places, such as Acts 3:19, 8:21-23; 20:20-21, to address themselves in rather broad terms to their hearers, some of whom, as in the case of Simon Magus, appear to have been destitute of the grace of God. It seems to me also that most of the preaching that I have heard among the Primitive Baptists is addressed only to those that in some manner have already tasted that the Lord is gracious, or who have at least been awakened to an obvious concern about themselves. I would appreciate any comments or light that any of you might have on this subject.

My reason for submitting this for your consideration is not to stir up any controversy, but simply in the hope that God would bless someone to give me some sound scriptural light on this subject. I know that the gospel must be preached in the Spirit if it is to prosper anyone, but it seems that in the times of the Apostles, and among the Old Baptists of the last century and before, there was a greater burden for preaching "where Chirst was not so much as named", whereas most of us that I know about now seem to speak only among those "where prayer was wont to be made". Again, please believe me when I say that I am not, to the best of my knowledge, a "Missionary", or "Fullerite". All I desire to be is a seeker after, and hopefully a receiver, of the truth.

I wish to say that I have been well pleased with the ***Signs*** since I started to receive the paper in 1973 or 1974. Lately, I feel the depth and spirituality of the articles and especially the reprintings of the works of older brethren both in this country and abroad have, if anything, increased. May the Lord continue to bless the Editors in their work. While I am affiliated with an Association that has, I suppose, been more identified with "Time Salvation" than "Absolute Predestination", the expositions of the doctrine as set forth in the paper have been blameless in my judgment. I have seldom read anything in the paper I

even questioned, much less disagreed with. I gather from some remarks in some of your communications that the editorial staff has been subject to some persecution on account of the things published. I hope you will all be given grace to rejoice, for if such is the case, I believe that you are being persecuted for righteousness sake.

I hope that the Lord will bless you all to carry on your work in His Name. When blessed to pray, try to remember this perplexed and doubting sinner.

John Crowley

(We appreciate brother Crowley's remarks and hope someone will write on the question he raises. Editor.)

FROM NEW YORK

Binghamton, New York

Dear Editors,

I am sure it is time for me to renew my subscription to the ***Signs***. I am enclosing an amount for one year and a little extra to use as you see best.

I enjoy so much reading all the wonderful articles that are published and have been written by Old Baptists themselves. May God bless all of you to continue sending out His blessed truth and do remember me in your prayers.

Sincerely,
Ruth Steiner

FROM FLORIDA

Lakeland, Fla.

Dear Editors of the Signs,

I am sending in money to renew my subscription for the ***Signs of the Times*** for two more years and use the balance as you see fit.

Dear Brother, I was talking to a man some time ago who claimed to be an Old Baptist preacher. I heard him say that he would be willing to spend his life where Judas was (the one who betrayed Jesus). That has been on my mind for some time now. If it be the will of the Lord let us talk on the scriptures.

The thing that seems to be on my mind the most is concerning Judas. I have been trying to get it off my mind, but this scripture just seems to keep coming back. The only way to get rid of this cup is to drink it. I know there are some folks who won't say anything about this Judas. It seems like they are afraid, but we have a "thus saith the Lord" for this.

In John 13:2, "And supper being ended the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him:", now it seems like the scripture teaches that when Jesus Christ takes His abode in the heart of one of His children, that Satan or the devil is cast out and the devil is never again able to enter the heart of that child again. In John 6:70-71 it says, "Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve". Now if it is devils who are saved and go to heaven, then you can surely take a goat and make a sheep out of him, but that can't be done. The scripture does not teach that.

Again in John 13:10-11 "Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean." There was one that was not clean among the twelve. Christ was always separating him from the other eleven apostles. In John 6:64 Jesus said, "But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him." So we see very plainly of whom He was talking. I fail to find one word where Jesus ever spoke in favor of Judas or said anything good about him. Jesus knew from the beginning

In 2 Thess. 2:13 it is recorded, "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord

because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:". Here He was speaking of those who were chosen in Christ Jesus, who were in that covenant before the world began and their names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life, and all the rest were blinded.

In Matthew 26:24 it says, "The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born," and here he was speaking of Judas. Now let us look at Luke 6:16, "And Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor," now the word traitor is the word which is uppermost in my mind is this verse. I hope to show what the word traitor means. Notice just how it is spelled - traitor - not trader. Now in 2 Tim. 3:3, 4 it will tell you what a traitor is and was. "Without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors," (That is the word that Christ used to describe Judas) "heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away." Christ plainly tells you what a traitor is, and He plainly told you what Judas was, "The traitor" or "a traitor". Now the Bible tells us it was better if this man had never been born.

Now let us take a look at Romans 8:18. It says, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us". ***Now Brother, let me say right here that I don't believe, regardless of what a child of God has to go through while in this time world, that it had been better if he had never been born.*** For it tells us that whatever trials, sorrows, or sufferings that the child of God has to go through while in this world are not to be compared for what God has in store for His children. The stay here in this world is short, for "A man that is born of woman is but few days and full of trouble. Now John 17:12 says, "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled." Now let us look at the word, perdition, which if given to rightly divide the truth, it is plain to see who the writer was talking about when he said, "none is lost but the son of perdition". Now in 2 Peter 3:7 it explains what the word is and what it means; it says, "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." We cannot judge those who are still here, only those that the Bible plainly tells us about. You wouldn't be afraid to say that Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob were the children of God, would you? No, I don't think you would. Neither would you be afraid to say that Pharaoh and Judas were the children of the devil. Why, because the scripture teaches it so. The scripture is written for the learning of God's people.

This is getting too long, and I will have to close it for now. To hear a lot more about Judas, read the 109th Psalm. It looks like that takes in a lot more than just Judas, but it doesn't leave any doubt about him. I will not quote all that chapter, because it probably takes in all the haters of Christ; especially those who had to do with the death of Christ. But I will try to keep away from that part at this time. For there are many who would not agree. I will quote a few verses of Psalms 109, beginning with the fifth verse, "And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love. Set thou a wicked man over him: and let Satan stand at his right hand. When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin. Let his days be

few; and let another take his office". And also read Acts 1:20 and it will tell you a lot more.

Will just have to stop right here because I see much more than I have been able to write here. Come to see us when you can.

W. C. "Bill" Lake

FROM TENNESSEE

Mountain Home, Tennessee

To the Signs of the Times and Readers thereof,

It is a rare thing that any reader did write his own obituary, but as I am traveling now up my last few miles I want to pause just to tell you I shall soon bid you all farewell. I have enjoyed the moments when we gather around the old pond or river and watch some soul go under the running waters, or gather in the homes and talk about how the Lord has lead each of us in our ways. So after 44 years in the church, and moving from place to place and now being past my 90th year, I will thank you Elders for feeding me the Word. But will shortly leave you. Therefore, I must say farewell to you all, and wish you Godspeed.

Henry Townsend

FROM NEW MEXICO

Mountainair, N. Mexico

To the Editors of the Signs:

I am sending you this experience my husband wrote. I found it in some of his things almost a year ago, and since he died in April I decided to send it to you. He was a man who all his life felt a deep sense of his own unworthiness, but tried to keep it covered up by putting on an outward appearance of being carefree and jolly. He was greatly misunderstood by many people and had many severe trials which caused him great sorrow. There have been a great many experiences which we shared during the many years we spent together which he did not include in his experience that I could have added to it, but felt that perhaps it would not be appropriate to do so, so I have left it just as he wrote it.

If you feel it is worthy of printing in the Signs, please do so, otherwise, just disregard it.

May the Lord bless all those who have a part in publishing the ***Signs of the Times*** that their efforts may be to the glory of God and the benefit of His people in this world.

In love and hope,
Mrs. Laura Wolf

EXPERIENCE

The experience of the glory of my Father's grace, a free gift unto me, this poor mortal of flesh, and the compassion of this grace that saved.

By nature I am nothing, yea less than nothing. But by His grace He found me at the age of fifteen or sixteen and I became much troubled, and until I was eighteen I felt there was no hope for me. I was lost, and felt within my heart that all my efforts to be saved were destroyed. Oh, how could such a merciful God ever have love for a wretch like me, lost without God, gone without end. I cried and prayed "Save by Thy mercy", but seemed not to find an answer until I joined the Primitive Baptists. But my joy was cut short when they began to call on me to talk. Oh, the joy of my heart when I stood before them and saw the love of God in their hearts and felt it in mine, but when I would leave the stand my thoughts returned to "O wretched man that I am" to deceive God's children like this. What was I thinking about to try to preach. My burden became so heavy I left my church, not in membership, but left their location. I thought to hide and never talk again, but He that worketh all things in you would bring me back. But after escaping four times from ordination by not being there, and yearning for something more than God had already given me, I began to go to

the Old Baptists who believed in the predestination of all things. I soon united with them, was baptized into this church by my half brother, and of course, there was no time lost until they were calling on me. I knew I was not worthy of their love, much less their confidence in liberating me to talk. I started all over to escape this burden, but it grew more and more the greater, this desire to stand on the walls of Zion and cry aloud and spare not the whole counsel of God by His grace and revelation to me, but yet, Oh, wretched man that I am to deceive such good God-loving people. I was so ashamed.

So I went to Oregon, but was found out shortly, and soon a member of the church there wrote me a letter where I was working wanting me to fill an appointment the next Sunday. After a while of filling the appointments I joined and about two years later they ordained me to the ministry. Oh! how unworthy I felt and still do.

But again I ran and went to New Mexico thinking of a surety I might escape this office and the work. I would get away from it all and maybe the Lord would forget me and my unworthy feeling would cease. But only after a few months after I had bought my home in New Mexico a dear sister in Christ wanted to hear me talk again as she had heard me when I was nineteen years old. She made me an appointment, and until now we meet once a month by appointment, and the Lord has been good to give the food for the sheep. He giveth it to His ministers or they have it not, especially me.

Still my doubts are many, my fears are great, and without Him I am nothing, yea less than nothing, but Oh, why should He call an ignorant being to preach such a great and wonderful God and His truths.

And even today my unworthiness causes me just sorrow, though this I have found, He has enabled me to say of the truth, "Thy will be done, Oh, Lord and not mine, in all things", and that I do I would not, and that I would not I do, and how to perform that I should I find not.

Oh wretched man of deceit that I am by nature; why should they ever ordain a man as vile as I ?

Elder R. R. Wolf

FROM TEXAS

Big Sandy, Texas

Dear Brethren:

Thanks to God Almighty for my parents who brought me up under the nuture and admonition of a Supreme Being, who rules in the army of Heaven and the inhabitants of the earth. He speaks and it is done; commands and it stands fast.

At the close of World War 1 I married a veteran. In the year 1920 when my first son was a baby the Lord began to deal with me. He made me realize what a wretched sinner I was and He loved me before I loved Him. I did not know how to pray a beautiful worded prayer. It was more like an agonizing pleading for mercy. I knew I was lost without redemption if He did not have mercy on my wretched soul. I knew His grace was sufficient if I was in that number chosen before the foundation of this world.

It seemed there was no peace for me until one night with eyes closed in meditation my dear Lord appeared with a shining light halo around His head For maybe a second, or maybe longer. He spoke peace to my agonizing soul. I would not exchange this experience for all the wealth of this world. It is as new 61 years later as it was that day.

My worldly goods have been few but sufficient. He has never forsaken me or left me alone. My, Oh, My!! I've wondered up the hill and down the valley, sometimes on the mountaintop. It seems too good for me, a sinner. If I am saved at all it is by His grace, and nothing I have ever done. I prayed for a

home, but fearful I was deceived in myself and did not want to deceive His people, His chosen ones. I asked for a home at Paron Church in 1927. Elder S. C. Davenport baptized me in September.

If I ever reach heaven and immortial glory, I can only give God the praise.

Your unworthy sister
In bonds of love,
Ila Mooney

FROM WEST VIRGINIA

Pineville, W. Va.

Dear Editors of the Signs,

I believe my subscription expires with the July issue and I don't want to miss any of the issues. I love the Primitive Baptist doctrine and not being able to get to church, I look forward to it each month.

I am enclosing a check, please renew for two years and use the rest as you wish.

A Friend,
Rachel Green

FROM GEORGIA

Monticello, Georgia

Dear Elder and Sister Spangler:

Loving greetings to you both. I think of you as the days swiftly pass and long to be among those I love there. Is there a love like unto that among the little ones who would follow the footsteps of their elder Brother,the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ? How good it is to hear them spesk of the things one has felt in his heart and thought upon in the daytime and in the dark of night. We hope your health is good and your hearts are at peace. The Lord has given you wisdom and patience. Is that not a great blessing?

Recently, I have thought much about the many fears of God's people. Perhaps they fear more than the world because they have been taught more of the holiness and majesty of God, of the dimension of His power and the brightness of His glory. One of my sweetest memories is of a day when one, called of God, asked for a home in the church and a dear little sister said to me afterward, with tears in her eyes, "O, when I hear one telling the reason for his hope I feel I should get up and cry out to the members, 'Can you still fellowship me? Do you still want me?' ". A sweet humility accompanies the knowledge of the Lord's mercy and their own unworthiness and weakness. They fear they are out of the secret of those for whom the Saviour shed His blood. They see only their unrighteousness, their carnal leanings and truly fear they will be found wanting in that day when he makes up His jewels. Then in their right minds they know that their robes must be washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb, "That he might present it to Himself, a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; that it should be holy and without blemish". (Eph. 5:27) All is of Him!

Their souls tremble and rejoice before the majesty of God. They fear as they worship; is not the fear of the Lord the beginning of wisdom? They cry, "I am all undone"--can any worship God until drained of his own strength? It is His work from beginning to end; a blessed and merceful work which causes trembling and a sacred joy in the hearts of His people. O that the Saviour would often visit His garden, abide in it, cause it to flourish, keep the plants therein near unto Him and give them peace in all His dispensations.

> "I long to hear thy pardoning voice,
> O speak and bid my soul rejoice."

Then there are the fears of suffering and loss in this natural life. Human nature shrinks from pain and there are the fears for the tomorrows, though His little ones search the scriptures for comfort. "Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof". (Matt. 7:34) "As I was with

Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." (Joshua 1:5) Yet they find that as they are unable to walk in the right way of themselves, they are not able to receive the promises, to have even a grain of faith except as it is given them from above.

"In Christ's obedience clothe
And wash me in His blood,
So shall I lift my head with joy
Among the sons of God."

This is the only preparation for heaven and its source is the Son of God.

Then there is that fear which holds us in bondage all our lifetime; the fear of monster death. Man is the only one of God's creatures which knows, almost from his birth, that he must die. Many of the saints of God who have known His keeping all their days and who seek a city which hath foundations have said, as their years accumulated, "I dread from here to the River". They have desired the faith to know that the Saviour will be with them in that day to carry them over. But faith is never given ahead of need. The saints hope---O how all of their lifetime they are sustained by Hope that they are among those whom he has told to fear not, nor be dismayed, for I will be with them. "In that dread moment, O to hide, Beneath His sheltering blood". Their prayer is:

"Prepare me, gracious God,
To stand before Thy face;
Thy Spirit must the work perform.
For it is all of grace."

They fear the separation from this mortal body, though knowledge of its sin and weakness is ever before them. Yes, it is as a garment, tattered, torn, and soiled, which death lays aside, but remember! By God's grace and mercy in the resurrection it is raised and restored to the soul in beauty and perfection, shining, and glorious and immortal. O the robe of His righteousness, the magnitude of His mercy, the scope of His grace. "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body". (1 Cor. 15:42,43,44.)

Nature is sad to leave loved ones; young parents may pray to live to raise their children, ministers may sorrow to leave their churches in a sad state; others may not be given peace at the prospect of dying. "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear". (Isa. 59:1) He will care for them all, according to His purpose. It is God's business, not ours. One has said, "The time I leave behind has nothing to do with me. It isn't mine". Our days are numbered, beginning and end.

Of Jerusalem (Zion) it is written, "All her people sigh....." Thus we see that His flock has fearful hearts. With Jehoshaphat, they pray "Neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon Thee....Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid, nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's.....Ye shall not need to fight in this battle; set yourselves, stand ye still, and see salvation of the Lord with you, O Judah and Jerusalem; fear not, nor be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them: for the Lord will be with thee". (2 Chron. 20:12,15,17). O, Brother Spangler, how lovely it is that the battle is not theirs, but God's! He alone can quiet fears and bring peace; peace in his will, whatever it be, however it grieves the flesh. May His sheep cherish no will but His.

My love and fellowship to the brethren and sisters at Dan River. I am ever thankful for my small place there with them, though, with the little sister, I often feel I should say, "Can you still fellowship me"?

We love you in Christ's Name and for His sake,

Florence A. Gibson

EDITORIAL

"Behold a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly. (Isa. 32:1-4)

These are the words of the Prophet Isaiah, as sent from God. The Lord was pleased to raise up Isaiah to speak against the Egyptians, the Philistines, and the regions of Tyre and Sidon, the Moabites, Edomites, and practically every nation within any distance of His peculiar people. As you read the book of Isaiah, either in the beginning, the middle, or the ending you will discover for the most part that Isaiah was a prophet of condemnation. Yet in every instance when the Lord was pleased to pronounce judgment, he was also pleased to set forth a revelation of the one and only deliverance for poor and needy sinners. The language here is such that it really cannot be mistaken. He starts with an exclamation. "Behold a king shall reign". There is nothing unusual about a king reigning, for kings are in the business of reigning. However this King shall reign in a different manner from other kings.

Israel and Judah both knew all too well what it was like to have kings who reigned in severity, in cruelty, for personal gain, with just pure wickedness, with an eye to self rather than to the good of their subjects. They had lived under many such kings. But Isaiah here says, "A king shall reign in righteousness." Now, the immediate prophesy refers to king Hezekiah, but it is important for us always to look beyond the immediate in the scriptures and see that which all the word of God aims at, and here is the revelation of our King, King Immanuel, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

"Behold a king shall reign in righteousness". Those poor and needy subjects who all their lifetime have been in bondage, and stricken with many infirmities and weaknesses, realize how much they need someone to reign over them, someone who has dominion, and can do for them what they cannot do for themselves.

We wish to set before you, the reader, the importance of the King under consideration being also "a Man". What we have here is one seen as both a king and a man. Now we would assume that in all cases a king would be a man, for all queens are women. So there is nothing unusual in the language there except that we are viewing both an ordinary and an unordinary man. Read the 53rd Chapter of Isaiah where the Prophet begins with this language, "Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not", and so on. The language there conveys the idea that the one the Prophet is speaking of, "The arm of the Lord", was so ordinary, so unacceptable, that to quote the language of David, "But I am a worm and no man" (Psa. 22:6) He could barely rise to meet the standards of manhood, in the estimation of the people of his day. It has always been the feeling of most that in order to be a man, one must prove his manhood. He has to flex his muscles, or do some great feat, like showing strength or bravery, or courage, or something out of the

ordinary. Otherwise, it will be said, "He's not much of a man". But what our Lord did was both so ordinary, and so out of the ordinary that He was mistaken and misunderstood, even to the point when he stood speaking the very words of life before the multitudes his brethren and friends said that he was mad. (Mark 3:21) Others said he was taken of the devil. They could not understand the calming the waves in the storm, and they said, "what manner of man is this"? When they heard his speech, they said, "Never a man spake like this". It was beyond belief that this man was an ordinary man and when they saw Him performing miracles they knew not what to make of it. He spoke a word and caused the deaf to hear. He commanded the man with a withered hand to stretch it forth and he could. He stood at the tomb of Lazareth and said, "Come forth", and he came forth. All these things set Him forth as a man of men; yet he was recognized as being a scourge rather than a blessing and a benefit. He spoke and commanded as a King, yet to all appearance He was but a lowly, common man.

Our subject then touches both a "King" and "Man". He is not only a King, but He is a Man. (Can any doubt here we speak of Jesus as fulfilling our text?) He is a Man subject to feelings; subject to passions, subject to temptations, and in all points tempted like as we, yet without sin. And yet such an one as could say, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest". Oh, who else could speak words like that to poor weary, tired, sin-dragged, devil pestered sinners? This Man can do for us as a man what no other man could do, and as a king, He deals with us in righteousness when others must deal in judgment. It should be worthy of consideration before we would pass from the thought of a king reigning in righteousness, that we touch timely things. We have just passed throught our national election, and as is done every four years, a people made a choice; whether a good choice or a bad one is for others to determine. As soon as the new administration prepares to take office, they begin to tell what they are going to do to better the Nation. Two things they always tell us they are going to do is bring in peace and prosperity, and the two things we are not going to have in this world in peace and prosperity. Would it not be a wonder to see one time a politician run on the platform of righteousness? Not the legal, sentimental righteousness of the world, or of phony religion, but the righteousness of God. We need not look for that, however. My brothers and sisters, the sooner we recognize, realize, believe, and rejoice in the doctrine that our home is not in this world, the happier we will be. Yes, we live in a world, and possessing a righteousness problems, but those are secondary, because we are only passing through this world, being citizens of another world, and possissing a righteousness which cannot be gotten by worldly leaders or kings solving all our earthly problems. It would make no difference if our elected officials were somehow able to right all the wrongs. When they had gotten us into the finest condition we had ever been in, we still would have to die and leave all behind. What good would it then do us? But this King/Man shall reign in righteousness.

"A man shall be as an hiding place". Look at the things this Man (the righteous King) promises to do for a certain people:

1. A man shall be as an hiding place from the wind.
2. A covert from the tempest.
3. As rivers of water in a dry place.
4. As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

You will observe that this King who reigns in righteousness has not promised or even indicated that the winds would ever stop blowing or that

there would be no more tempest, or that there would be no more dry places, and that the weary land would soon cease; but rather He, as the King/Man would do and be for all His people in those circumstances, what would be exactly and perfectly suited to their needs. Now there, my friends, is a doctrine you may live with. And feeling in your souls that this King dwells (and rules) in righteousness, He, as Man, can satisfy and does satisfy you need, whatever it is. You might begin to think in your soul, "Oh, there has never been one who had needs like mine". "My problem is peculiar". "Mine is different". No, it is not! There is not one of us with problems and trials that others of the elect family has not experienced in one fashion or another. And there is, as Solomon says, "No new thing under the sun". However low you might be, out Saviour has an outstretched arm that reaches down and lifts up poor sinners out of the mirey clay and sets their feet upon the solid rock and establishes their goings, and puts a song of praise in their mouth; and puts the desire to sing glory unto His name and shout with the holy ones of heaven, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts". Our Lord is such a King, and reigns in righteousness, in such a manner, and yet is such a man that He can be touched with the feelings of our infirmities to the degree that we can feel a union and a relationship with Him.

"A man shall be as an hiding place from the wind". Notice that it is not that the man shall provide a hiding place from the wind, but this King that dwells in righteousness, who is a man, shall be a hiding place; a place where one might hide. The song, "Hide me, oh, thou Rock of Ages" beautifully expresses our feelings in this regard. We don't ask the Lord to show us a hiding place, but we ask that we might actually hide in Him. Charles Wesley wrote words similar to that in the hymn, "Jesus, Lover of my soul",as well, and what a delight and joy it is when we recognize that our only hiding place is the one Isaiah again speaks of here when he said, "Come my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee."(Isa. 26:20). Where are they to go? Into their chamber. It is inside the chamber that God provides security for us when the winds of false doctrine and the howling scenes of life pass over us.

Do you recall in Genesis Chapter 7 there were eight souls saved by water? Did they swim it out? Did they use life rafts? Arminians sing the song, "Throw out the lifeline" as if sinners were floundering around out in the water, and if someone threw you a lifeline you could grab it, and drag yourself in like a half drownded rat, and get aboard the gospel ship and be saved. That, however, is not the Bible way. You must be in the ship when the storm comes. Noah was in the ark and the Lord shut him in. He was in the right ark, too. "A man shall be as an hiding place". Our hiding place is the Man, Christ Jesus. Noah in the ark was a figure of us hiding in Christ. In the book of Ephesians Chapter 1, the expression "In Him" or equivalent expressions are found about thirteen times. And it doesn't just stop there in those verses but goes on in the second chapter, Verse 10, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them". Do you notice the language there? "In him", "In whom", etc. It is in Christ that we find every need and all our desires of life met. When the soul who is hungry and thirsty is found of Him and finds that he is in Him, "I in them, and they in me", it is then that true life begins to spring up within the soul. They recognize now that they don't want to be anywhere else but "In Him".

"A man shall be an hiding place", but from what? Are we hiding from the judgment of God. No, because that is past. The judgment of God has already passed upon Jesus and He has taken that away. But the language here is that

He shall be an hiding place "from the wind". Paul said, "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; " (Eph. 4:14). It is as if false doctrine was like the wind that blows against us to sweep us away. But truly we can say that so long as one is in Christ as their hiding place they need not worry about false doctrines sweeping them away or being carried off with a doctrine that is contrary to the principles that exalts Jesus.

The second thing in the language here is that, *"The man shall be a covert from the tempest"*. A covert; we hear much about security forces in this nation engaging in covert operations. That is a kind of under cover operation. In other words, it is secret. And may we suggest to you that there are a people who are embraced in a secret that the world knows nothing about. They don't even know the secret exists. But a covert (secret) work has been done for and in the elect of God, and none but those born of the Spirit can know it. It is a covert thing. It is a secret thing. It is impossible for us to give it to someone else. Do you realize that it is not within our power to share the secret of the way of God to those we love? Only God can reveal His secret unto His people. And are you not glad it is that way? Left to ourselves we would go out and attempt to populate heaven with those for whom there have been no mansions prepared. We would attempt to make sheep of our children and bring them all in. We would take our neighbors and bring them all in, and before long we would discover that we had a whole lot more goats on the road to glory than we did sheep. Somewhere along the line they would have to hear the sad words, "Depart form me ye workers of iniquity. I never knew you".

Someone might ask the question, "Do you mean that there are people wanting to go to heaven that cannot go because it wasn't prepared for them?" No, ten thousand times, no! Everyone who has the true and sincere desire to be freed from their sins and carried into the arms of a loving Saviour will be there because only God blesses with such desires and longings. Unsaved sinners have no such desire, despite their religious activities. They have not been to this covert from the tempest and they know nothing of the secret. They do not enter into it. How little or how large the desire might be, it has to be given them from God the Spirit in regeneration, making them alive unto these things. We do not have life giving power. We have none at all. May God deliver us from anyone, whoever they may be that has not been called of God and qualified to bare tidings that Jesus paid it all. May we ever recognize that the only secret there is worth knowing, is the secret that Jesus is the Saviour of sinners. The only one who can tell this secret and deliver us to this hiding place in Jesus Himself. And when He by His power calls us into that hiding place and as a covert from the tempest delivers, then we shall be delivered.

"As rivers of water in a dry place". Some kings would build a lake, put people to work and dam up rivers, but not this King, because He deals in righteousness. Not this Man for He knows what we need. Our Lord knows that we need to wander through dry places seeking rest. Our Saviour knows that it would not be good for us to often sit down by the rivers of water. Soon we would be asleep or idle. We would be at ease in this world and would not be interested in the things to come. But He has set us in dry places that we might thirst after the things of God's glory and righteousness. As the hart panteth after the brooks, so our souls thirst after the living God. If you have not thirsted after the living God it is because you have never been in a dry place. But if you ever had been in a dry place nothing will satisfy you but the pure water of the

river of life that flows from the throne of God. When you find that you may freely drink there you will understand as the woman at the well in Samaria did that you have now drank of the waters of everlasting life. Our Saviour said, "Ye draw water from Jacob's well, and you will have to come again, because it will not satisfy you." And just like this woman who came to Jacob's well, we discover that Jesus is the fountain of life. She threw her water pots away because she did not need them any more. She met in person the One who is the River of Water, Himself.

"As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land". He is the Rock, but He is a shadow casting rock. He is also the rock upon which we stand. He is our rock as a sure defense. He is the rock as the walls of salvation. But we are speaking here about our travels in the kingdom. As we enter into the kingdom through much tribulation we discover that often times we are in a weary land. Ask yourself this question; ask yourself seriously; Do you grow just a little weary at times in life? Are you pleased with just day by day living? Does it ever enter your soul that the only thing, really, that is clearly satisfying any more is the precious moments when the Lord manifests Himself to you; when the shadow of healing casts its glorious cover over you. Do you feel then that you are no longer weary?

"Come unto me and I will give thee rest". Why has He told us to come unto Him? Because we are in a weary land. This world is a weary place, and the children of the heavenly king, as they travel on and on, grow more and more weary and tired. They begin then to look around and notice that they are not only weary themselves, but the land itself is weary. Jesus is the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. The land is weary because it labors and burdens under the curse of sin, and under the dominion of Satan. Without even realizing it, the great rock in a weary land hides us from the burning intensity of the land in which we wander. No longer can its searing rays harm us. When we find coolness, rest, and satisfaction then we begin to realize this rock is "our rock" and though the world recognizes it not, we know that this is our refuge.

Deuteronomy 32:4 says, "He is the rock. His work is perfect", etc. And in Verse 15, "But Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked: Thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation". Oh, my dear readers, be warned there may be a time we lightly esteem the Rock of our salvation! We have all been guilty, and oh, what shame it brings; what disgrace it brings; what coldness; what deadness; what barrenness. There is no light; there is no joy; there is no peace when we see not that our Rock is everything, not just part of our life, but everything in our life. And Verse 18, "Of the Rock that begat thee, thou art unmindful and hast forgotten God that formed thee". Have you ever been there, where you were unmindful of the Rock that formed you? Then in Verse 31, it speaks of another class of people. "For their rock is not as our rock. Even our enemies themselves being judges." (Read Deut. 32, and read it prayerfully.) "As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

Then we come to the concluding two verses of our text. "And the eyes of them that see shall not be dimmed. The ears of them that hear shall harken. The heart of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammers shall be ready to speak plainly." In connection with that, "Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off." (Isa. 33:17) Is that not a sweet promise to those that have eyes to see as well as ears to hear? "Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty." In the 53rd Chapter of Isaiah it says, "And when we shall

see him, there is not beauty that we should desire him." But when our eyes have been opened, when we have eyes to see, we then begin to see that the God-man, the one who was brought to earth to take human form; the one that came a Man subject to infirmities like ours, is our Deliverer, we see then what beauty there is in Him, because He is our King of righteousness, our Elder Brother, our Saviour, our God, our Governor, our All in All. "The eyes of them that see shall not be dim." It will not be a matter of faintly looking and wondering if we see what we think we see, but we can say, "Yea, I behold Him and He is beautiful." Our eyes have been opened, and now we see. Once we were as blind to Jesus as a bat that dwells in a cave. No man told us what we do know today about Him. What little we do know today makes us say, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." But our eyes are not dim to His glory. (We speak of those made alive in Him by free grace.) We may be deceived in many things, and may be wrong about many things, but there is one thing we can stand on until death, itself, and that is that Jesus is king, and that He dwells in righteousness. He is not only a God and not only a King, but He is Man, as God pronounced in the second Psalm, "Yet, have I set my king upon my hold hill of Zion". (Verse 6)

He is the King; He is the Son; and He came to deliver and he came to save. We shall see that King in His beauty and our eyes will not be dimmed and our ears will not be stopped up that we cannot hear the voice, "Ho, everyone that thirsteth,"etc. And when he says, "Come unto me", we will not wonder, "Was that message for us or for someone else?" Also, our text mentions the stammerer, and the one who has been rash. "The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge." What does it mean to be rash? Early judgment. How many of us, oh, how many have been guilty, saying, "There is no hope for me"? "I'm too bad a sinner. I've passed the bounds of God's grace, and the merits in His Son. No hope!" We were rash. The King in His righteousness is our hiding place. He is our covert in the tempest. He is our river in the dry and barren land and He has also become the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. It is one thing to have knowledge, and it is another thing to understand, but to understand knowledge is something, indeed. It is reserved for those to whom it is given. "And the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly." How many of us have been fearful to say, "I know my Redeemer liveth", because we were fearful that someone would say we were presuming? But, ah, when the Redeemer beholds you, and you behold Him and the glory of the person is lifted up before you and you see the King in His beauty; then you mouth is opened and your heart is filled to overflowing with the desire to speak plainly about these things. You long to tell you brethren, and go home to His flock, what great things that God has done for you. All the fear and apprehension is taken away. Now it doesn't matter if others understand, you are so full to the overflowing. You are like new wine in the bottle. It must give vent and you must say the things that God has put in your soul. Though you might abate after a while, at this time, when God had made Himself known, the tongue of the stammerer shall be ready to speak plainly.

Now let me qualify in closing, with this. It doesn't say that you *would* speak plainly, but that you would be ready (Verse 4). The children of God are made ready. They are made ready because of what the King of Righteousness has been made to them - the Son of Man has come in power and He has become everything for them that they could possible have need of. He is the source of our all. In closing we will notice I Cor. 2:30, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus

who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification and redemption that according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord". May God bless you.

(Elder) James F. Poole

FROM VIRGINIA

Richmond, Virginia

Dear Publishers of the ***Signs of the Times*** ,

Enclosed is my check in the amount of $25.00 to cover the cost of renewing my subscription for the next two years; the remainder is for a contribution. It is a small fee to pay for an item that brings so much joy to me and my family, and I eagerly await each splendid issue.

Sincerely,
Ada M. Bond

FROM ALABAMA

Andalusia, Alabama

Dear Editors,

Please find enclosed a check for two more years of the ***Signs of the Times*** . Use the balance as you see fit.

The ***Signs*** is all the preaching we get as my husband isn't able to go to church.

Yours in hope of a better place some day,
Mrs. J. H. Merrill

Dear Elder Poole,

Enclosed is a writing for your consideration. It expresses what I feel to have been taught several years ago in a living experience of the great travail of searching "out by (natrual) wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven" (Ecc. 1:13). As I was directed, I trust by the Lord's mercy, to the book of Ecclesiastes, how surprised I was to find the great and wise Solomon asking the same questions and the Lord mercifully allowed me to find peace in the answers which were given to Solomon also. I have had many occasions since, as the troubles of this life continue, to recall the things I believe the Lord taught me in this experience and continue to find comfort in them. I have also had a desire for some time to share them with your readers if you find them worthy.

Those who have never experienced the rebellion born of grief and affliction will wonder at my "discovery" of such simple truths; and indeed, the belief that all things are in God's hands is something I have long known and professed. But as the word of God was sweet in John's mouth and bitter in his belly, so it is, I believe, that sweet professions in the mouths of His people must sometimes be possessed in their very bowels throught bitter trials. Therefore, I do not wish to instruct the people of God in something they already know, but desire only to comfort someone in trouble with the same comfort wherewith I myself have been comforted.

In the bond of love,
(Mrs.) Kelsay Swain

14002 Alice Road
Tomball, Texas 77375

"Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty men which are in the city."
"...I said, I will be wise; but it was far from me."

Ecc. 7:19 and 23

I believe there are two wisdoms represented in these verses: spiritual wisdom which is given as a wonderful defense to the wise, that is, to those who, by the mercy and enlightening of the Holy Spirit, have discerned spiritual things; and natural wisdom which is burdened to know the mind of God in His dealings with men but finds the end of its searchings but vanity and vexation of spirit.

We are at times enabled to see the reasons for various judgments: "And if they be bound in fetters and be holden in

cords of affliction; then he showeth them their work and their transgressions which they have exceeded." (Job 36:8,9). But I believe that we see only a tiny portion of the reason of things while the deep purposes of God are hidden with Him and will take eternity to reveal.

A sore affliction, one that may be unique or foreign to our way of life, shameful and one we never thought we would have to bear is sure to bring forth cries of "Why, Lord, did this come upon me?" In bitterness of soul, a broken, burdened heart will cast about to see who has been afflicted in this way. If it is something we feel belongs to the wicked, it is a great burden to see the wicked in prosperity and outwardly honored. Unbelief will tempt us to wickedly say, "What does it profit me to be a child of God?"

This rebellion did Solomon, himself, record: "The wise man's eyes are in his head, but the fool walketh in darkness: and I myself perceived also that one event happeneth to them all. Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me; and why was I them more wise?...Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me; for all is vanity and vexation of spirit." (Ecc. 2:14, 15, 17). So that Solomon, to whom the Lord gave great natural wisdom to judge natural things, greater than "all they that have been before me in Jerusalem" (Ecc. 8:16), when he tried to search the mind of God, proclaimed "it was far from me." And to this knowledge does the Lord bring all His people both small and great: "A man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun: because though a man labor to seek it out, yet he shall not find it; yea further; though a wise man think to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it" (Ecc. 8:17).

Thus does the Lord remove the great burden of natural reasoning which can only vex the spirit and cannot arrive at the truth, and imparts to His people a greater wisdom: "For all this I considered in my heart even to declare all this, that the righteous, and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of God...", and as His people are sensitive to their affliction, because Satan tempts them to fear that the Lord has surely turned against them, "...no man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them." (Ecc. 9:1). How mysterious are His judgments and His ways past finding out. No one can measure His thoughts nor judge that High and Lofty One who inhabiteth eternity by these things which happen to the sons of men.

In the troubles of this life we naturally arm ourselves: money, jobs, family, friends, children, the honor of men, all are mighty men of defense against adversity. But when in a great affliction, one by one, these mighty men are slain, this wisdom remains to the Lord's people: wisdom so deep it cannot be searched out by the greatest intellects, yet it is freely given to babes; a defense in which lies their security for time and eternity: "...the righteous and the wise and their works are in the hand of God."

Natural minds cannot attain to this wisdom. Many, religiously inclined, will own it to be so but only while they are reaching out to natural helps. When their arm of flesh fails, "in the time of their visitation they shall perish" for they have no strenghtening wisdom. But to those who possess this knowledge in their very souls, the Lord by His great power brings it to their remembrance to strengthen them in time of affliction, to defend against unbelief, to set at nought natural reasonings and to give peace which passeth all understanding. It enables them in time of trouble to draw near unto God, to, by faith, quietly sit at the feet of Jesus to see what He will do. "Cast all your care upon Him for He careth for you."

Kelsay Swain

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Route 1, Box 65 Keeling, Va. 24566

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 2/82 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

Smackover, Ark.

A HAPPY MEETING TIME AT OUR REHOBETH PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

We wish to express our sincere thanks to a covenant keeping God for blessing us so wonderfully at our August, 1981 meeting.

On the second Sunday in July after Elder Gradon Smith had finished his sermon, he announced that the doors of the church were opened for membership. A very dear one to all of us, Sister Fannie May Perry, came to Elder Smith with tears streaming down her cheeks desiring to join Rehobeth Church. She was unanimously received, and plans were made to baptize her at the next meeting time in August.

On the second Saturday in August after Elder David Turner had finished preaching an opportunity was extended for membership again. This time sister Fannie Perry's husband, Brother Joe Perry, came to Elder Turner desiring a home with the church. He was also precious young believer that we esteem very highly, Brother Charley Fox, came precious young believer that we wsteem bery highly, Brother Charley Fox, came to Elder Gradon Smith desiring church membership. He was also unanimously received.

Plans had already been made by the Deacons of Rehobeth Church for the baptizing to be performed at a very beautiful place about five miles from the church house. The entire church group drove together to the place for baptizing. After the group had sung the sweet old hymn, "How Firm a Foundation" Elder

Gradon Smith led the three candidates into the pool and baptized them. As they came out of the water the group sang, "How Sweet The Name of Jesus sounds in a Believer's Ear".

All three of these precious ones were received into full fellowship of the church. We want to thank God for adding them to our church. We feel that we want to share this joy and pleasure with others.

We read in His written word of those precious promises as "I will never leave you without a witness." "The Lord adds to the church daily such as should be saved". "He that has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ". "He that has an ear to hear let him hear with the Spirit sayeth to the churches". "My sheep hear my voice and they do follow me. A stranger will they not follow; for they know not the voice of strangers". "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness; their sins and iniquities will I remember no more". "Thine they were and thou gavest them me, and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall anyone pluck them out of my hands, for my Father that gave them me is greater than all. No one is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." "Mine own arm hath brought salvation unto them." "I will take away the hard and stony heart, and give them a heart of flesh", one that is tender, kind, and loving, one that will cause them to love one another, love the church, and even to love their neighbor, and also to love their enemies. God is love. This God-given love will cause us to glory in tribulations for tribulations worketh patience, patience experience, and experience hope; and hope maketh us not ashamed; for it is the power of God that worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. We fear him because of His greatness and power. We love him because He first loved us and for His mercies and longsuffering toward us.

From a lover of these promises and Bible principles,

Doyle O. Murphy

Kernesville, N.C.

Dear Elder Williams:

Enclosed please find remittance for renewal of ***Signs of the Times*** for one year.

Many of the sermons it contains are very enlightening. I would appreciate reading more by Elder David Spangler. It has been my good pleasure to hear him preach several sermons. He is a very scholarly gentleman. I have never heard a poor exposition of the scriptures by him.

Very truly yours,
Jerry P. Cockman

(We hope to print more by Elder Spangler soon. Editor.)

FROM FLORIDA

Tallahassee, Fla.

Dear Brothers in Christ,

I have been borrowing from brothers and sisters of our faith this little book called ***Signs of the Times,*** and I have thoroughly enjoyed its contents. Now I think it is about time I subscribed to it, then I won't have to go away from home to enjoy it.

I fully believe the truth of Almighty God will stand when everything else shall fail, and I also believe the doctrine we Primitive Baptists contend for is the only true undiluted doctrine there is in the world today. I realize that some of our churches throughout the land get out of sorts and start practicing things they shouldn't do, but I believe this has been the case ever since there have been militant or visible churches in the land. There are people of God all over the land where ever there are people, and these people "aren't ashamed to own their

God or to defend His cause", in that they give Him all the praise, honor and glory. I am just thankful that God in His loving tender mercy privileged me in this life to hear the truth expounded very ably by some of His servants. At the same time He prepared my mind and heart to understand the gospel as it was unfolded by these servants.

I am privileged now to serve a little church just three miles east of Wausau, Fla., off State Road no.77. We have a very small congregation most of the time, but we are at peace and are privileged to enjoy some real good meetings. The name of the church is Double Ponds Primitive Baptist Church, and our meeting time is first Sunday of each month.

Brethern, I am sending a check to cover subscriptions for myself for two years and for two sisters for one year each. Addresses are on a separate sheet of paper. Please start it coming as soon as is possible.

I remain an unworthy Brother in Christ

Elder Eugene Taylor

MEMORIES

Jan. 27, 1980

Dear Brother Spangler,

Of late so many memories have been with me of years gone by and I treasure some of them oh so much. Other memories bring heartaches and sadness, but without the sweet ones how could I even know of the bitter, and I have to experience the bitter in order to appreciate the sweet ones.

I truly never have had lovely and wonderful experiences of seeing my Lord in a dream as some have been blessed to do, but I can say I have been taught and given some lovely thoughts and felt God was with me and without any doubt in my mind, if God had not held me up and given my grace and strength I would have sunk long ago. I can say, too, I have been brought on so low that I felt I could not ever come up again. If my blessed Lord had not had mercy on one like me, I hate to think just what would have become of this sinner. I have nothing in this wide would to boast of, but I do have so much to be thankful for. I am not yet completely satisfied with my ways and often times I say things I should not say. Yet I know my flesh is weak and prone to sin as long as I have breath. All my life I have desired peace and quiteness, but never have had the real true feelings I would have hoped for, but the Lord has a purpose in that also, for He knows my every thought. I beg most of my time for mercy, the mercy that I need to keep me pushing forth.

Your sermon last night was so precious and comforting to me. I can recall you preached along those lines years ago before Jim and I married and bless his heart, he believed every word of it. He wasn't a member, nor was I at that time. But 34 years ago today I heard you preach for the first time and thought at that time I would not be going much, as I was of another church. But Oh no, it wasn't like that at all. I kept on coming back and each time I was drawn closer, and as I came home last night, I felt so thankful God had led me there, for truly it is a quiet restful place to go and hear the gospel preached.

I am also so thankful that I can witness of how others get along. Each one travels in various walks of life in a different pattern, for God doesn't make any two walk alike, except when God blesses us to believe His word, we all in harmony will walk together. Oh, what a sweet walk to be blessed to have and feel the love and fellowship and feel if we need a friend in this world, then those with whom we have harmony and peace will be our friend. We will never be able to find friends in the world's religion like unto the friends we have found. As you said, the arm of the flesh will fail, and I have experienced that it hurts when we are brought to our wits end and find that the arm of flesh cannot help us. Our

true Friend's arm will also be there to help us.

Now true fellowship is worth more than anything in this would we live in, for if I didn't feel that in my journey here now, it would be so awful. And even with that it is heart breaking to try to walk life's pathways feeling so lonely and feel we need so greatly our companion's presence. God saw fit to take my companion to his resting place, for he had been so tired in body for so long. I can witness that to be with our Heavenly Companion, to be blessed to go home would be most wonderful where all will be peace. Only our life turmoils will soon be over for lots of us, and what will truly count is "What think ye of Christ", and more importantly, what does He think of this poor weak one who is so helpless to accomplish my heart's desire to God who has showed so much mercy toward one so undeserving as I feel to be.

Jim and I treasured the tapes we have and to us "Fellowship" was so precious. Some are real old but I still play them and we got lots of good out of them. I hope God will bless you to preach on "Fellowship" again in the near future. I wish so much I could have taped last night's service. It was similar to the one we heard years ago.

May God ever be with you and yours, and may He wonderfully bless you all your days. I know you know from whom all your blessings come. Remember this one when you feel to pray.

A sinner saved by grace if saved at all,

Nannie Carter

(We apologize for the delay in printing this humble piece. It was misplaced by mistake. Editor.)

SOME OF GOD'S WAYS

I feel the need to leave on record my views on God and some of his ways. Isaiah 55:8 says, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways, my ways sayeth the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Verse 9)

Romans 11:33 says, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements and his ways past finding out."

In the first place, before there were any of them He (God) spoke of having a people before the foundation of the world. Ephesians 1:4 says "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

This people He formed for Himself and promised to save them from their sins. It doesn't make good sense that "per chance" sin might not come.

Ephesians 1:11, "In him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will". If all things are done after the counsel of His own will, we will have to concede that there could be nothing occur that is not according to the counsel of God's will; and somehow even if we don't understand God's way, it doesn't make it any less true. To me just the fact that God works all things after the counsel of His own will is proof enough that God Almighty did indeed arrange all things to come to pass just as they do come to pass whether it pleased the minds of men and devils or not.

Secret things belong to God and revealed things belong to man, so until it pleases God to reveal His secrets to man, he just remains dead to the knowledge of God's ways.

The fact is Christ stood as a Lamb slain from the foundatin of the world for the redemption of lost sinners and did indeed did on the cruel cross and accomplished just exactly what the Truine God in counsel agreed before time to do. Even Pilot questioned the whole thing even to the thought of his Kingly

power. Indeed, Pilot most surely thought he had power to crucify Christ or turn Him loose. Men of today think Pilot had power to turn him loose, but Christ told Pilot that He alone had power to lay down His life and He had power to take it up again. Here God's way is hidden from the eyes of men and devils. The prophet said, "If they could have known the Lord from glory they could not have crucified Christ." (Not exact quote)

Isaiah 52:10 reads thus: "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." The thought I would like to get across is: God's way is perfect and not gauged by the finite thinking of puny man in the least, and God in no way could be charged with guilt or wrong doing. His ways are holy and without blame. Neither do I feel that God had to make the Devil or Satan act in the part he had to do in the crucifiction of Christ, for God being all wise, made the Devil to serve Him in obedience, a ready and waiting, cunning, subtile fallen creature, ready at all times to deceive and destroy, but he didn't even have the keys to his own kingdom, neither can he perform without God suffer it to be so.

Even though Judas Iscariot was a chosen vessel, born to act a devil in the betrayal of Christ, he could not perforn until it pleased God to loose Satan in him. Christ said "It is he to whom I give the sop". Satan entered him to perform the service in betraying Jesus into the hands of the wicked. Jesus said in John 12:27, "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour". Also in Matthew 26:54, speaking of His departure from this world, He said, "But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?"

To try to match arms with God and understand His ways is like trying to span the earth with one stroke of a man's hand.

Just a thought concerning man and sin: God said, "Let us make man". This us to me is God in every sense of the word, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (the Triune).

God having all power agreed to make a man. There was already an earth and no man to till the soil. It is said all over the earth that God meant for man to dress the garden of Eden and keep it and life for him was meant to be easy with no thorns or thistles to be bothered with, but is this so? It seems to me that God created man for one purpose and that is still being fulfilled to this day; some time after God created man. God formed man (still male and female) but the thing I would like to say is this-God formed man from the dust of the ground, and not as so many people like to stress-that God formed man from a hand full of dust. There is quite a difference! He wasn't only formed out of a lifeless material, but formed from dust of the ground, which to me without God and the part God plays with man, he just as dust, remains dust, until God's wisdom is portrayed in every detail. First, God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. Just think! After God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, some believe things concerning man got out of hand and man became a free moral agent, to do as he pleased, doing contrary to God's will. Doesn't this thought reflect power over and above God's power? To me it does.

I want to stress the fact that God being all wise, there could be nothing ever come to pass that he wasn't already 100 per cent familiar with. The formed man with the breath of life breathed into his nostrils didn't of itself teach him the knowledge of good and evil. Neither did it make him able to make a choice other than the one he made in the garden.

I feel God is so great, having all power,

even to all powers that be are ordained of God; to me this is set apart, to every thing that functions on this earth, in heaven, or anywhere else. So the power of love that Adam was endowed with was set apart to accomplish exactly what God had purposed, even before there was an earth with Adam bound up in its bowels.

Just think a little along the line of who became guilty in the fall of Adam. To say that God is all wise and then turn around and say that God had expected Adam to keep the law and obey God and he failed to do so, most surely puts God on the same level as puny man. The fact that man was of this earth is proof to me that man had to go through a great change before he could be ready for Heaven and immortal glory. I can't believe that Adam had an immortal body before the fall. If he did, then being made of the earth (earthly) and being subject to vanity had no real meaning. I have to think that the fall of man was according to the will of an all wise covenant keeping God and through His great wisdom when man failed to keep the commandment He gave him, man became as guilty as if God had no part in it at all. I can easily see if man could have kept the law of himself, therefore, life would have been a heaven on earth for them and man would have had no real reason to have praised God, for he would have been self-sufficient in and of himself; able to make the right decisions in every instance, with never a reason to look to his Maker for anything. If this could have been so, thence, no reason to sing songs of praise and redemption, as it is spoken in the Holy Writ, thus, to sing songs the angels could not sing, seeing the angels were never lost.

God Himself said, "I will not give my honor to another and I will receive all my praise" (to quote in part). I think all of our trouble in our misusing the scriptures stems from one thing and that is: the scriptures were spiritually written by men moved by the Holy Ghost to write things in such a way that when one reads it, without the same Holy Ghost, he most surely will interpret it to suit his carnel mind and the meaning he gets leaves him thinking that a Holy God is pretty much like the many gods spoken of in the Bible. "If it seems evil to worship or serve the true and living God, choose ye this day whom you will serve." It seems to me any of the gods would have filled the bill back then, and most surely men of today haven't advanced any. No wonder men say that God tried to get Adam to live right but he just wouldn't listen. That wouldn't be a true and living God at work, for everything moves at God's command and not until He suffers it to be, according to His will.

This field is so big and I fully realize I am but a worm, so to speak. But if God wills, I would like to write on the subject further. After God had made all the things necessary for the earth to bring forth and produce as He most surely had decreed it to be, even to the seeds of all the herbs that was to come, even the thorns that was to buffet Adam, he said, "It is not good for man to dwell alone." An helpmate could not be found among all the animals for Adam. So God being all wise, did the thing He had purposed from the beginning. He put Adam to sleep and took from him the female that God Himself had formed in Adam. I can easily see if there could have been an helpmate found for Adam among all of the other beings God had created, there could have been quite a different story reported. But God being allwise, did as he purposed, and took from Adam's side the bride God had formed in him. "Bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh," therefore Adam loved her just as dearly as he loved his own life.

Let us look at the things God created before we get too far. For God to create anything it most surely had to be in His mind and purpose before He created it. So if it was in God's mind and purpose to

create a crooked serpent as the scriptures say he did, "with mine own hand I have formed the crooked serpent. I God do all these things", then it would be foolishness to think that God was just fooling around or trying new projects. It is said of the crooked serpent, that he was the most subtile of all the beasts God formed. With this in mind, let us take a look in the Garden of Eden where God said he placed the man and his bride. Up to this time there is no record of any requirements God had made of Adam, but here God gave Adam a commandment to dress and keep the garden. Remember, at this time Adam had no knowledge of good and evil. He only had love for himself and the bride God had given him and she being the weaker vessel was easily beguiled.

It seems to me like of all the trees in the garden, even to the tree of life, that the tree of the knowlede of good and evil was the one that was made attractive, so good to look upon, to make one wise. Could one say God was out of place when He made this kind of tree? No indeed! Could one say God made a mistake when He made a crooked serpent that was a liar and the father of lies and could any think for a minute that God wasn't fully aware that the serpent was there in the garden and that God didn't know full well just what would take place when He gave Adam the command to freely eat of all the trees, and this included the tree of life that stood in the midst of the garden, except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, "For in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die". What I'm saying is God most surely didn't learn anything, nor do I believe that God became guilty of being the author of sin, for He is all wise and everything He does is holy. Neither do I believe that God had to made Adam or Eve or even Satan act their part in the fall.

Satan was smart enough to know that he couldn't deceive Adam, but he went to the weaker vessel, Eve, and he deceived her by just doing what God had purposed him to do. Adam did what came natural for he loved Eve just as dearly as he loved himself. Adam knew full well that death was certain if God's law was broken, so with a power so great in his very being, seeing that Eve would have been banished from him forever and ever, the great love he had for her made it easy for him to partake of the forbidden fruit and go down with her, and to take down all his posterity with him, to till the soil.

Christ could do for His bride what Adam could not do in that Adam was of the earth, earthy. Christ lifted His bride to a plane equal to His. But Adam could only die with his bride and fall with her. So love played the part to cause Adam to sin which when finished brought forth death, and the man to till the soil. "Dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return."

I feel to try to charge God with being the author of sin is dishonoring to His righteousness and His Holy Name. Man most surely fell from the upright innocent state he was in but God suffered sin to come according to His own will, although He hated sin. Man indeed became alienated from God, death and hell became his lot, and without the mercy of God eternal damnation would have been meted out to all of the Adamic race. Sin and death came by Adam and righteousness and salvation came by Jesus Christ. Amen.

Bernard Oxley

(This article was slightly edited, but not so as to alter the writers meaning. Editor.)

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC. TO OCTOBER 1981

J. C. Foster, Al.	1.00
Mrs. Kelly Watson, N.C.	1.00
Mrs. Clyde Rhoades, Tx.	1.00
Elder W. D. Griffin, Al.	1.00
Eld. Henry L. Gardner, AR.	11.00
Mrs. Glen M. Haynes, La.	1.00

beautiful was that I believed his message! I was given belief! Our God will supply our needs.

My dear Sister Mary Frances, it is still good and a happy thought to think that you asked me to be one with your family during the time of our Association. It does not seem to be the will of the dear Lord that I attend this Association. Go, meet, greet, and love the brethren. I think of many by name and have purposely tried to avoid naming any one simply because I do not want to leave one out. I am sorry that I have to send you what is sad news to me, but may the dear Lord make us submissive to His will, may He make us to know that He is God.

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickral
7/2/81

REQUEST FOR BOOK

Bavon, Virginia

Dear Sirs:

I would like to know if anyone has a copy of "Fragments" by the late Elder Durand written so long ago. I am willing to pay whatever they feel it is worth. Please contact me if you have one for sale.

Mrs. James Mason
Star Route, Box 128A
Bavon, Virginia 23013

Danville, Arkansas

Dear Editors:

My subscription to the ***Signs of the Times*** is due again. Enclosed is a check for another year. I enjoy reading the good sermons and other writings very much.

My sister and I went to our Association in September at our home church, Rehobeth, El Dorado, Arkansas. We had a good Association and there were several visiting Elders, which we welcomed.

I don't get to go to church very often as I live so far away. My sister takes me when I do get to go. I always look forward to the ***Signs*** coming, because it keeps me in touch.

The Lord saw fit to bring some more members to the fold at Rehobeth Church, and I hope we are thankful.

I'm glad the Editors are able to continue to get the ***Signs*** out each month. May the Lord enable you to continue.

Yours in hope,
Sister Jane Carroll

Reidsville, N.C.

Dear Brother Williams,

Please renew my subscription to the ***Signs of the Times*** for two more years. I am sending you a check for $25.00. Use the rest of it in memory of my dear Mother who was a member of the Danville, Virginia Primitive Baptist Church for almost 30 years or from 1921 until her death in 1953. I enjoy the ***Signs*** just as she did. I hope some day I can be with her and our Lord in heaven.

I had a most unusual association with the Primitive Baptist Church. My first wife was a Methodist. She forced me to go to her church or lose my family, which I didn't want to do. So I prayed that some day the Lord would return me to the Primitive Church. He answered my prayer by taking my wife after 30 some years, and sending me another wife who would go with me to Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, of which I am now a member. She hasn't joined yet, but some day I know if it is the Lord's will, she will.

But now I am happy. I am were I want be and if it is His will, He will take me home to Heaven still a member of Dan River Church. If you see fit, please publish this in the dear ***Signs of the Times*** at your convenience.

Yours in hope in Christ, if at all,
H.C. Ellwanger

BRUISED REED AND SMOKING FLAX

(Published in "Zion's Landmark" May 15, 1918, and by request of Elder J. W. Gilliam reprinted in November 1, 1948 "Old Faith Contender." Submitted now by Sister Frances Williams, Blairs, Va.)

Dear Brother: At your request I will offer a few thoughts on ***Matt. 12:20, "A bruised reed shall he not break, and a smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory."***

The "bruised reed" and "smoking flax" mean the same (is doubled). You remember Pharoah's dream was doubled. The seven fat kine and the seven good, rank ears of corn on one stalk means the seven years of plenty, representing the child of God before conviction. We are fat (full) of self-righteousness, while in this prolific state; but the famine arises in the land of Canaan and we begin to feel our "leanness". So there is the seven (same number) of lean kine and seven thin ears, blasted (black) by the east wind. No corn on these ears, though there is an imitation. The convicted sinner tries to do good, though to him his works are not good (blasted). Now I want you to notice it was the famine that caused Joseph's brethren to bow down to him, and it was the famine that caused the prodigal son to return to his father's house and it was the famine that caused you and me to go to our spiritual Joseph for bread and also to our Father's house.

The bruised reed means the convicted sinner.

You have plenty of reeds down there where you live and know more about them than I do; but I have heard that a bruised reed is hard to break. Jesus does not cast off the convicted sinner, though at the time he is in this state he feels like God will not have mercy.

Joseph appeared strange to his brethren and acted like he was angry with them and he talked with them through an interpreter--just like he did not understand a word they said, and at the same time he understood every word they said to him, and knew what they had done unto him--he needed not witnesses. But see how he had to turn aside to weep, while they were making their plea. Now, this is a beautiful figure of Jesus and His brethren. God appears angry with us and seems not to hear our prayers, but He does hear us and He is compassionate. It is His will for us to see our poverty and our leanness before He makes Himself known unto His brethren. There was one (Simon) that was kept in prison to prove them until they come again. Just so when God commences a work, He will perform it. "A bruised reed shall he not break".

He loves a broken and contrite heart. "And smoking flax he shall not quench". Flax is a plant that fine linen is made from; but before it is fit for the maker's use, it must be pulled up out of the ground until it begins to rot, or get in such a state so it can be "broke" or "hackeled", etc. This is done so the outside may be gotten off. It is the inside (the fibers) that are good for use. I wish I could tell this as I see it. The Lord uses natural things to prefigure the spiritual things. The workings of the flax shows to us how the outside (self righteousness) must be broken off (left out) before we can see the Kingdom of God. The hackel is an instrument full of sharp nails and flax, while undergoing this, shows what a hard trying time the convicted sinner has to go through, before he is sufficiently abased for the Master's use. Then, too, there are two kinds of goods made from flax -- "tow", and "linen". We are two manner of people after we have been born again. The "tow", I would think, means the old man, and the "linen" the new man. "Smoking flax"; I reckon the time that flax smokes must be when it is undergoing the change so it can be "broke". Smoke goes up. I feel this is a figure of our prayers for mercy, while

undergoing the change. That is not quenched as long as we are under conviction. But when He speaks peace to our troubled souls mourning ceases (quenched) and praises begin.

"Till he send forth judgment unto victory". When we see ourselves sinners, there is a judgment against us. We begin to try to pay it off by doing some good deed. We try time and again, but every time it is put back in the "sack's mouth". We cannot pay for it. It is free grace. But this judgment stands out in front of us and we finally own it is just, "and if we are sent to hell, God's righteous law approves it well".

Then it is the smoking flax is quenched. Our sorrow is turned into joy. We cannot petition when we are praising God. The water was turned to wine,you remember, so our tears are turned to joy unspeakable and full of glory to God in the highest, for having done so much for us.

It is hard to write just like I could tell you. I have written this in the living room, in the presence of the children, and you know what a noise they can make. Excuse mistakes. If there is anything in this that you feel like suits you case, give God the glory.

Your brother,
(Elder) T.A. Stanfield

FROM CALIFORNIA

Laguna Hills, Ca.

Please find enclosed my personal check for $20.00 to renew my subscription for two years and use the balance in any way you see best.

My Father, now deceased, was a member of the Primitive Baptists for many years. I can remember attending foot washings in their meetings when I was a small child. My Father gave me a one year's subscription to the ***Signs*** ten or twelve years ago. I do so enjoy the Editorials, the letters of experience, in fact, the ***Signs*** is to me as God has promised to the poor and needy (such as I feel to be) like rivers of water in high places and fountains in the midst of the valleys. (That is a partial quote of Isaiah 41:17-18).

Sincerely,
Mrs. W. J. Mears

LONDON CONFESSION OF FAITH

We recently received a book called "Systematic Theology" written by an Elder R. V. Sarrels who like many other promoters of duty-faith wishes to be identified with Primitive Baptists. He, however, shows no inclination to hold to the old Primitive doctrine that sets the true church apart from the Harlot's daughters. We offer one morsel of his work as an example.

"And, be it said, the article on the decrees of God in both of these old Confessions is so worded that the Moderate or Non-fatalist Calvinists have felt compelled to defend themselves against the charge that they believe and teach a fatalist doctrine. The *actual* position of true Primitive Baptists regarding the doctrine of the decrees - and I speak specifically for them - is *not* what Chapter III, Article I of the London Confession states." (Chapter Six on the Decrees of God, Page 109)

Quoting now the article in question:

"1. God hath (Isaiah xlvi. 10; Ephesians i.11; Hebrews vi. 17; Romans ix. 15, 18) decreed in Himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever come to pass; yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin (James i. 15, 17; I John i. 5), nor hath fellowship with any therein; nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor yet is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather (Acts iv. 27, 28; John xix. 11) established, in which appears His wisdom in disposing all things, and power and faithfulness (Numbers xxiii. 19; Ephesians i. 3-5) in accomplishing His decree."

Now for a brief little piece of history. The first Association in America was in

Philadelphia, formed in 1707 (Welsh Tract being one of the 5 founding churches). Charleston was the second, founded in 1751; Sandy Creek the third, founded in 1758, and Kehukee in 1765. The churches of Kehukee were gathered, according to Hassel's history, by Elder Paul Palmer, who was baptized by Elder Thomas Owens, Pastor of Welsh Tract Church.

Kehukee, Philadelphia, and Charleston Associations all adopted the London Confession of Faith, and to our knowledge practically all Baptists of the old fashioned order adopted the London Confession, and those who didn't directly were in harmony with its contents. Elder Sarrels may wish to speak for soft-shells and semi-arminian conditionalists but until he can re-write the history of Old School or Primitive Baptists, he cannot speak for us. We suggest Elder Sarrels and all his company abandon their attack on predestination or abandon the name Primitive Baptist. Our history is clear. Our doctrine has not changed. Our *actual* position, as he terms it, contrary to his puffing, still rests in the bed-rock truth contained in the London Confession. We believe it glorifies the Name of our God and honors the Lamb. Indeed our God has "declared (decreed) the end from the beginning".

Editor

RESOLUTION

May God give our beloved Brother, Elder Richard Campbell, and his companion strength to bear up under the loss of their daughter, Celeste Campbell, October 25, 1981. Our prayers go out for you and family in this dark hour.

The Trustees and Editors of
The Signs of the Times

INQUIRY

Mr. Editor,–Is the professing church of God in general in a condition to be addressed from Isaiah 40:1, 2? Do not the comforts contained in the words of that scripture belong to the few that are mourning in Zion? Are not the greater number of professors in a state requiring reproof in the ministry, and to be addressed from Amos 6:1? Are not many ministers preaching comfort, when they should be reproving the carnal, worldly-minded state of the church? Your thoughts on these matters will oblige,

A Mourner in Zion

ANSWER

The work of the ministry is not only the most important that any man in this life can set his hand to, but is of that peculiar nature, that the special grace of God alone can qualify any one rightly to perform it. A man may be a partaker of grace, be well taught in his own soul, and know the things of God for himself; he may have light upon the Scriptures, possess a good share of fluency and utterance, and may much desire the glory of God and the church's good, and yet be utterly unfit for the work of the ministry. It is this want of special qualification for the work which makes such confusion, and causes, amongst other evils, that particular one of which our correspondent complains. As the subject, however, is one which has almost necessarily much come before our mind, we have felt disposed to make some remarks at a little length upon it.

John Newton used to say that "Only He who made the world can make a Christian". We will go a step further, and say, "Only He who makes a Christian can make a minister." And further, he who makes them ministers alone can furnish each with his different gifts, and supply each and all with spiritual qualifications to edify the church of God. Thus though among the servants of God themselves, there is a striking difference, and some are more qualified to comfort the mourners in Zion, and others to reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine; yet every servant of Christ will, to a certain extent, make full proof of his

ministry by doing both.

In the church of God there are those who mourn, who are deeply tried and tempted, distressed and exercised by sin, guilt, and bondage. These need comforting; and the servants of God fulfil their Master's command and will, when they instrumentaly speak comfortably to them. "Comfort Ye, comfort ye, my people", especially belongs to them. This comfort is what they should give, and surely will give as they are taught and led. But in the church or congregation there are others who are sunk into a dead state of soul. Now, if a minister preach nothing but what is called comfort, continually insisting on the safety of the elect and never drops a word to reprove, or even point out the dangers and evils of this sleepy state, he is encouraging such in their carnality and sloth. If alive in his own soul, he will be grieved at seeing those who once were full of life and feeling now so dead, so unexercised, so destitute apparently of spiritual sorrow or joy; and though he will not lash them in a Pharisaic spirit, or scold them angrily as if they could bring themselves out of such a state, yet he will, in fact, he cannot help but warn them of it, and seek to deliver them from it. Indeed the strongest rebuke he can give them, and the surest testimony he can use against such a state, is, the life he manifests in his own soul. But if he himself be sunk into carnality and sloth, how can he bear a testimony against theirs? Are they not all likely, both minister and people, rather to slumber together? And his attempts to arouse them will resemble the efforts of a man half asleep to call up his comrades who are but half awake. Again, there are professors dead altogether, men without grace, but clear in the letter of truth; and these may be living ungodly lives, or be buried wholly in the world. These are to be not so much preached at, as preached unto, by the danger and peril of such a state being pointed out, in the hope that it may please God to fasten a word on their consciences.

In one point we do not agree with our correspondent. He seems to think that ministers should be "reproving the carnal, worldly-minded state of the church". We presume he means not any church in particular, but the church generally. Now, our view is this, that a minister's work lies much nearer home. His work is not to get up into a pulpit, and cut and lash at the same state of the church generally, the tactic meaning of which pretty much is, "I and my people are not so. How exempt you and I, my friends, are from these evils! We are not worldly and carnal-minded, as the professing church is generally". But his business is with the church and congregation immediately before him. If we may use such a figure, he is like the engineer of a locomotive, whose main business is to take care of his own train. It is confided to his care, and his business is to bring it and himself safely to the terminus. But if, instead of seeing to his own train, and his own safety with it, he were to stand on the station-platform, finding fault with every other engineer, denouncing besides the bad state of all the other lines, the unever rails, and the worn-out locomotives, we might be tempted to say, "Friend, would it not be better for the passengers, if you would get on your engine, and take care of your own train?" Or, to use a more Scriptural figure, if a shepherd, instead of giving his special care to his own flock, leaving them to feed where they pleased, were to get on a knoll, and make a long harangue against the ignorance and carelessness of shepherds generally, and the scabby state of most flocks, would not his master justly say to him. "Shepherd, did I give you this work to do? I gave you a flock to feed. Do you attend to the sheep committed to your care; and, instead of finding fault with all other shepherds, tactily thereby praising yourself, show by your care

and attention to your own sheep that you watch for them as one that must give account."

Paul's charge to the Ephesian elders was, "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." (Acts 20:28)

The first person a minister is to take heed to is himself. "Take heed to yourselves." His own state before God, what is or is not going on in his own soul, his progress or decline, growth or decay, trials and temptations, deliverances and mercies--these things should first and foremost exercise his mind. And we will add, it is only as he takes heed to himself, and watches the secret movements in his own soul, that he ever takes heed to the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made him the overseer. But a man may stand up and reprove the carnal state of the church when he himself is the servant of sin, or wrapped up in the vilest rags of Arminianiam. And so the people, instead of hearing for themselves, may make all their religion consist, not in mourning, for they mourn not, but rather in exulting over the denunciations of the fallen state of Zion. Now, we believe, a true servant of God will be far otherwise minded. This will be his feeling. First, there is his own soul; what is going on in his own heart between him and the Lord? Next, the people committed to his charge. And he will find the closest connection between these two things. Thus sometimes his soul is encouraged, watered, and blessed. Then he will bring out comfort for the afflicted family of God, seeking to comfort them by the comfort wherewith he himself is comforted of God. Sometimes he is distressed and exercised, perhaps afflicted, in body, family, or circumstances; then he will speak of things which suit the afflicted, and his word will be for their consolation and salvation. (2 Cor. 1:3-6) Sometimes, after a season of coldness and deadness, he will have a blessed revival in his soul. He will now come forth and show the evil of a carnal, dead state, and how the Lord brings the soul out of it. Here is a word of rebuke and reproof, not to the congregation out of doors, the church of God generally, but to the people before him--to members of the church, for instance, in a cold, sleepy state. At another time, he may be delivered out of a snare of Satan, or have some powerful temptation broken, or a backsliding healed. Now, he will be able to enter into the case of Satan's snares, or particular temptations, of the misery of a backsliding state, and how the soul is brought out and delivered by sovereign, superabounding grace. Again, he will be exercised with fears, and be brought perhaps to question everything he has experienced, perhaps be almost tempted to infidelity or despair. Now, he can enter into the fears that God's people are subject to, and describe how they work, and whence they arise. Thus, as things are opened up to him, he will open them up to the people. Sometimes he will be filled with love to the Lord and his children. Then he will be seeking to encourage and comfort them. Sometimes he will have such blessed views of Christ, that he feels he cannot speak enough of Him. Such a divine fulness will he see and feel in him, such rich beauty and glory in his Person, such efficacy in his blood and righteousness, that he can do nothing else but extol him and hold him up on high. Then he will be tried again; and new trials will form his theme, and he will speak as one in them, and under the weight of them.

But we need not go on unfolding the various ways in which a servant of God feeds the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made him an overseer. It is in this experimental manner of handling

God's sacred truth that the chief value of the ministry consists. Now, this living spring in a minister's soul is a wonderfully different thing from that sleepy state of lifeless indifference–that standing and stagnant pool of carnal ease which our correspondent seems to allude to; and, on the other hand, widely differs from that other kind of preaching which he seems to recommend. If any think that we make a people dependent on a minister's feelings, we say they mistake the matter altogether. We assume that he is a man taught of God, and qualified by the Holy Spirit for the work. What you then call "frames and feelings", we call the movements and influences of the Spirit of God upon his heart; what you call making the church and congregation dependent on his feelings, we call making them dependent on the Holy Ghost speaking in and by him. He and they must depend on the same thing, or they will not agree together long. Now, what shall they mutually depend on? Shall it be his learning, or his knowledge of the letter of truth, his eloquence, gifts, and natural abilities? You surely cannot be so foolish as to make him and them dependent on such poor lifeless things. You must make him dependent on the Blessed Spirit, if he be a minister of Christ at all. And when is he, and when are they, to be most dependent on the Blessed Spirit? Is it not most expecially when he stands up in the Lord's name to preach his truth? Depend upon it, unless he is taught and blessed of the Spirit, he will never be made a blessing to the family of God. You may get up and denounce the carnal state of the church of God without the help of the Spirit; you may preach dry doctrine without the help of the Spirit; you may set forth the fall and the wickedness of the heart without the Spirit. But you cannot upon legal holiness and good works without the Spirit. Sut you cannot preach the gospel effectually without the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; not can you preach experimentally to the profit of the family of God without the blessed Spirit clothing your word with power, and sealing it on their heart with his own witness and divine attestation.

The Gospel Standard
January 1, 1856

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

FROM AN OLD SIGNS

A NEW MISSIONARY WORK

That the "heathen" are not ungrateful for the interest manifested by our orthodox brethren in their souls is now evident from the fact that Mr. Wong Ching Foo, a learned, pious and aristocratic Chinese Buddhist has just arrived in New York to preach the gospel of Buddha to our New York "heathen".

Mr. Wong Ching Foo is under the immediate patronage of the New York Theosophical Society, and a Buddhist temple is to be erected on Fifth Avenue for public worship by their joint labors.

The following extract from one of the New York Dailies, whose reporter interviewed the Buddist missionary, gives an idea of his purpose in coming among us.

"I am a Buddhist and Confucian, and I am anxious to prove to the American people that the Chinese people are intelligent and refined, and have happy homes and high civilization, and, more than all, we have a good religion, and hope for happiness hereafter."

"How is it that the American people have got an opposite impression?"

"Because the missionaries who are sent out there are interested in producing an opposite impression. They go out there and have happy times. On the money they receive from America they can live like princes in China, and they would be working against

themselves to produce a correct impression. So they come here and tell stories about the degradation of the Chinese, and about their "bowing down to stocks and stones", that have no more truth in them than the same stories would have if they were told about the American people. And they bulldoze the people into giving them money enough to go back. It is true that there are people in China who need missionaries, but so there are in America. I do not bow down to stocks and stones, neither do any of the intelligent Chinese. We worship God intelligently. Why do the Christians rage, and your people imagine a vain thing? You talk about the heathen being damned eternally just as you used to talk about infants being damned. I had supposed that all such foolish ideas had been given up, but I see that within a month the Baptist clergy endorse such a view, and I want to show the New Yorkers what the heathens really are. The American people have been very kind to the Chinese. They have been to great expense to send missionaries over to our country, and have taken all possible pains to teach us what Christianity is, and I propose to return this kindness, so far as I am able, by teaching your people what Buddhism is."

As to the prospects of his success, the "Reformer and Jewish Times" says: "It would not be surprising if Mr. Wong Ching Foo should have more success in preaching Buddhism here than American Missionaries have had in preaching Christianity in China; for we learn that one of these located in Wuchu, one of the wealthiest and most important cities in the empire, after five years' labor and an expense of $45,000, succeeded in securing only three converts."

Well, this is a free country, and only those who have so little hold on religion that they fear one Chinaman can blow it loose, will object to Mr. Wong Ching Foo as a missionary among us, for there are thousands among us who would be vastly elevated in moral and religious merit, if they possessed a tithe of either Christianity or Buddhism.

June 1, 1877

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Elder H. C. Ker)

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Snow Hill Church, of Snow Hill, Maryland, October 22nd and 23rd, 1941, to the different associations and meeting with which we correspond, sendeth love in the Lord.

At the time we will call your attention to the following Scripture: "Greet one another with an holy kiss." The longing desire of the apostles for the peace and unity of the church seems to have been unbounded. To that end they prayed, preached, exhorted and wrote, and willingly spent and were spent in the cause of Christ, deeming it of more importance and worth than all the world beside. After the brethren were instructed in the word of God, nothing preceded the desire of the apostles that they might live in peace and unity as brethren should. All fleshly ambition and pride should be sacrificed to that end. The same desire, and delight in it, was in David when he said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

It seems to us that the apostle had several things in mind when he penned the words of our text. Likely he remembered some things of the Old Testament, when kissing was indulged in by some, and not always in a godly way. He may have also remembered the kiss of Judas, and would not have those of his love and care follow such an example, therefore said, "Greet one another with an holy kiss." In ancient times a kiss was a sign of reverence and submission to a superior, also of love and affection. Traitors, however,

practiced deception with kisses, as was the case when Joab kissed Amasa, and slew him, and when Judas kissed Christ and betrayed him. These kisses were anything but "holy," hence could have no place in the kingdom of God. Kissing was not an ordinance in the apostolic age of the church, nor will it ever be, as no such commandment was given by the Builder and Maker of the house, therefore we do not understand this exhortation of the apostle's to mean that the children of God, male and female, young and old, should kiss each other every time they meet, regardless of occasion or circumstances, but that when they do so greet one another to let it be "a holy kiss," and not such as Joab and Judas. Neither did he mean that brethren should kiss the sisters and the sisters kiss one another, but that neither male nor female should be known in this sacred relationship.

The word "holy" means sacred, pure, guiltless,and well did the apostle use the word "holy" in this connection, and all will do well to consider this when greeting with kisses. To convey the thought in our mind with regard to an holy kiss we shall call attention to the father and his prodigal son, not to prove them brethren in the Spirit, but to show, as near as we can, what "a holy kiss" is. The son had sinned against the father and in the sight of heaven; had wasted all his living and become, as it were, a vagabond, but notwithstanding all his faults and short comings his father loved him still, and when he returned home filled with shame and self-loathing his father, full of pity, compassion and forgiveness, and his very being aglow with love, ran to meet him, and fell on his neck and kissed him. That kiss was as near "holy" as anything in this life can be that is not altogether, entirely and absolutely of the Spirit of God. In that kiss was not hypocrisy, no guile, no deceit, no evil surmisings, no selfishness, no thought of vice, no thought of sex. Not another man in all the world could have kissed that boy as his father did. No kiss of men or angels could have meant the same to that son as did the kiss of his father. That kiss spoke louder and said more than all the voices of men combined could have done, and the chief thing it said to the wayward boy was, My son, I love you. That love covered all the boy's faults, and he knew it. The father loved his son because he was bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh.

The children of God are members one of another, and because of this union should love one another with pure hearts fervently, and their kisses should be "holy," embracing every thing, as above illustrated by the father and his prodigal son. There can be no such thing as "an holy kiss" when malice, envy, hatred or pride find place in the feelings of God's children toward one another. Backbiting and fault finding never suggest to those to whom we thus speak that we love the one in whom we see so many faults. When an old lady kisses a young man who is her brother in Christ, it should be an holy kiss of a mother to her son, in it telling him of her love for him in the Lord and her interest in his spiritual welfare. The kiss of a young man upon the lips or cheek of an old woman should be an holy kiss of a son to a mother, recognizing her age, faithfulness and steadfastness in the gospel.

We have wondered that if a kiss is a sign of reverence and affection, is the grasp of the hand or the falling of a tear less so? We feel sure that the same good feeling of love one toward another is made known in the hearty hand shake that is demonstrated by a kiss, and can there be stronger evidence or greater manifestation of affection and good will one toward another in the kingdom of God than when in trouble or distress to see "the sympathizing tear"steal across the cheek of a brother or sister? Sometimes kissing is indulged in perhaps without the slightest thought

of brotherly love; some are naturally more affectionate than others, but those who kiss less do not love less, nor is their desire for the peace and spiritual prosperity of others less. A kind word often means much to a poor, discouraged soul who feels like giving up the race. Is not this, in a sense, greeting one another with an holy kiss? If the widow and fatherless are poor and needy, and we visit them with the necessities of life, watching over them to see they do not suffer, is not such service greeting them with an holy kiss? If a brother be destitute of food and clothing, and makes his needs known to us, and we kiss him, saying, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled, notwithstanding we give him not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit? Was it an holy kiss? We do not mean to spiritualize away the exhortation of the apostle, because there is no doubt that he meant just what he said, but we make these few suggestions as they occur to our mind in connection with brotherly kindness.

May the Lord help us to take heed unto ourselves that we endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

H. C. Ker, Moderator
George F. Adkins, Clerk
H. M. Bennett, Ass't. Clerk

ELDER BEEBE ON MISSIONS FROM AN OLD SIGNS

(Brother Thomas J. Carr, of Lusk, Ill., has sent us a copy of a work published by D.B. Ray, titled, "Baptist Succession," in which the author has given his version of the separation which took place between those who are now known as Missionary and Anti-Missionary Baptists, desiring us to review the same. Having written the following in reply to Brother Carr, we have concluded to publish the same, as it may be interesting to our readers generally.)

Dear Brother Carr:--I have examined the passages to which you called my attention in Mr. Ray's History, and was I less familiar with the cunning craftiness by which the self-styled Missionary Baptists lie in wait to deceive the simple, on the subject of church history, especially when laboring to show the antiquity of their Missionary hobby, I might be surprised at the manner in which they labor to shift the issue in dispute between themselves and the Primitive, or Old School order of Baptists. Much of the labor and argument of Messrs. Ray, Howell, and Benedict has been directed evidently to mislead their readers as to the real grounds of difference which occasioned the separation between the Missionary and Anti-Missionary Baptists in 1932, by attempting to prove many things which were not at that time nor subsequently the subjects of controversy between the separating parties. Thus setting up a man of straw to show how easily they could demolish it, and then with a tremendous shout raise a cry of victory.

I am the only surviving ordained minister that attended and took part at the meeting at Black Rock, Maryland at the time when the separation there took place; but the records of that meeting, and the Address which was then prepared, adopted, and published, setting forth the grounds of disfellowship, are extent, and may be found in the early volumes of the ***Signs of the Times.*** Missionism was but one of a large brood of isms and unscriptural institutions which had occasioned the discord among the Baptists, against which the brethren of the Black Rock meeting protested, as being at that time practiced among the portion of the Baptist denomination which at that time were known as Fullerites.

It was a matter of perfect indifference with the members of the Black Rock Convention how old any or all of those unscriptural institutions were, as long as no example or precept could be found in the New Testament to authorize or

sustain them. That there may have been impurities, irregularities, disorders, and even heresies, in the Baptist Church in ages past, was neither debated nor denied; but the great point considered was, Were these institutions of Heaven or of men? Were they instituted by Christ, and enjoined upon the disciples of Christ by the apostles of the Lamb? If they were, then we who rejected them have departed from the order of the gospel, and have no right to claim recognition as the church of Christ. But if no precept or example can be found for them in the scriptures, though they or any of them may have been practiced from one day after the apostles fell asleep, they who practice them as religious institutions are unknown to the Bible as disciples of Christ. In the primitive organization of the church at Pentecost, they that gladly received the word were baptized and received into the church. And they continued stedfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayer. (Acts 2:42) If in any of these essential points we, the Primitive or Old School Baptists, have departed, let Mr. Ray or his friends show us wherein, and we will regard them as friends for so doing. But suppose we add a few things to these recognized traits of an apostolic church and render the text, And they continued steadfastly in forming, patronizing and supporting Missionary Societies, Sunday Schools, Colleges, and Theological Seminaries, Tract Societies, and a thousand other humanly invented organizations as auxiliaries to the church of Christ, would we not be adding to the words of the book of this prophecy! (See Rev. 22:18)

The argument of Mission Baptists, as they are pleased to call themselves, is, these institutions, as auxiliaries to the church, or something nearly akin to them, have been of long standing with Baptists of former ages. Well, suppose this, though doubted, be admitted, cannot the other denominations adduce the same argument for their perversions of baptism? Cannot the Catholics show their invocation of saints, their purgatory and their triple-crowned pontiff, to be institutions and traditions of many centuries, with as good a grace?

But we do not admit the claim that Missionary Societies, as distinct organizations from the churches, with presidents, vice-presidents, directors, treasurers, collectors and executive boards, have been known, either in our country or any other, for ages past. The cases which they have cited in England and Wales do not show that they were separate from their church organizations, or such Missionism as we have and do repudiate and protest against.

There is an evident design to mislead the readers of Ray's History, in the statement of their third and fourth propositions on Page 23, namely: "From the days of the apostles to the present time, the true, legitimate Baptist Church has ever been a missionary body." And, "The churches founded by Christ and the apostles were Missionary Churches." If by Missionary Churches Mr. Ray means only that these churches were, as churches, engaged in the dissemination of the gospel, through the gifts which God bestowed upon the apostles, evangelists, pastors and teachers whch he himself raised up, called, and qualified, "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ", then we challenge him to show wherein we, the Old School Baptists of the present day, have, or do differ from the primitive order. Without any Missionary Society or Board outside of the organization of the church of God, to guarantee a salary, without purse, scrip or two coats, the Old School Baptists have today more gospel preachers of this description in the field than all the professedly Missionary Baptists in the world can honestly

claim.

But if Mr. Ray means to convey the impression that the churches organized by Christ patronized Missionary societies, outside of her church membership, composed of members admitted at a specified price, organized with presidents, vice-presidents, directors, and a multitude of salaried officers, to employ men, appoint them their field of labor, and pay them their wages, then we demand proof from the scriptures that any such institutions were known or tolerated in the primitive churches.

If the primitive churches founded by Christ and his apostles were Missionary Churches, then so are the so-called Old School Baptists of the present time; for they occupy the same ground, observe the same order and ordinances, and refuse to practice or patronize any religious order other than such as are clearly authorized by the precepts and examples of Christ and his apostles, according to the record of the New Testament. It matters not what were the practices of the Baptists of five hundred or a thousand years ago. We have the laws of Christ as given in the New Testament, for our rule, and the apostles of Christ as expounders of the laws of Christ to us. What they have bound on earth is bound in heaven, and what they have loosed on earth is loosed in heaven.

Brother Carr, when I became a member of the Baptist Church, in 1811, no religious institution was known or patronized, to my knowledge, in connection with the Baptists of the United States. ***Not a College, Theological Seminary, Sunday School, Missionary or Tract Society existed in our country.*** Not long after my membership, the heresy of Andrew Fuller, of England, began to be promulgated among us, and his proposition to change the condition of the Baptists, and to raise them from the "dunghill" to a position of respectability, and his theories were eagerly embraced by all the Arminian elements which had long been hidden among us. Soon after this, Dr. A. Judson and Luther Rice, who had been educated for the ministry by the Presbyterians, were by their denomination sent as missionaries to the East Indies, and on their way on shipboard they agreed to change their profession, and on their arrival in Burmah they were immersed by Dr. Carey, a so-called Baptist missionary from England, and Rice returned to originate a missionary spirit among the Baptists of America. He made a tour through our States and soon originated the American and Foreign Missionary Societies, with numerous auxiliary societies, both Foreign and Domestic, in almost every State of the Union. It was claimed for Judson and Rice that they, while students at College, prayed the mission spirit down. The rapidity with which these movements were followed by the introduction of Theological Schools in which to teach young men the science of preaching, Mission Societies to find employment and pay for these man-made ministers of Fuller's gospel, together with all the machinery of Sunday Schools, and a host of other equally unscriptural inventions, produced such discord and turmoil among the Baptists as could not be reconciled. The old veterans of the cross who had long borne with minor innovations, now being thoroughly conscious that a separation was inevitable, called a convention at Black Rock, in 1832, and published a solemn protest against all the newly introduced innovations upon our former faith and order, and proposed, in a public Circular, to the advocates of the new departure, that if they would renounce their newly adopted, unscriptural inventions, and return to the order from which they had departed, we would still walk together, and hold them in denominational fellowship. But if they persisted in their departures from the

distinguishing doctrine and order of Christ and his apostle, we should drop them from our fellowship, and recognize only such as continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine, as the apostolic Baptist Church of Christ.

To distinguish those who retained the apostolic doctrine, from those who departed from it, we consented to be known by a name which had been given us by our opponents, viz: Old School Baptists. This appellative we agreed to accept, with the express understanding that it referred only to the school of Christ, and not to any humanly devised system of scholastic divinity. It was not that we had changed in any wise from what we had always been either in faith or order, but simply to distinguish us from those who had changed and still chose to be called by our name to take away their reproach.

If Mr. Ray has established his claim that the New School or Missionary Baptists are a regular, unbroken succession from the Primitive Baptists of the apostolic age, upon the ground that they were largely in the majority when the division took place in 1832, will he please tell us why the claim of succession made by Catholics is not equally clear and valid? When Constantine established the Christian religion by law, and flooded the church with graceless converts from the Pagans, those who refused to mingle in the desecration of the sacred name of Christianity were greatly in the minority, and the true church was driven by the violence of persecution into the wilderness; but did she surrender her identity as the true church, because she refused to walk in fellowship with the majority? Christ has commanded his people to come out of Babylon, and to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, and even to withdraw from every brother that walks disorderly. The King of saints has given this distinguishing mark by which we are to know them that are his: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." And he has commanded them to come out and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing. But he has also told us that except we deny ourselves and take up our cross and follow him, we cannot be his disciples.

The Old School Baptists never did consent to any of the antichristian doctrines and institutions of the new order, even when mixed up with them in denominational connection; they protested against every practice for which there was no "Thus saith the Lord," and after laboring to reclaim the disorderly until they found their labors were unavailing, they withdrew fellowship from them.

Mr. Ray has told us that our Lord Jesus Christ was sent a missionary, of the Father, and that the Holy Ghost was sent by the Father and the Son, a missionary, etc. Is this the kind of Missionism that the Old Baptists dispute or object to? It is a mere play upon the word "Missionary", as meaning "sent". We have never disputed that God "sent" his Son into the world, or that Christ "sent" his apostles, and that he still sends laborers into his vineyard. Neither have, or do we, as Old School Baptists, deny that the primitive church set apart to the work of the ministry such as the Holy Ghost had called and qualified for and unto that work. Nor that the church gave to such the right hand of fellowship to go to whatever field the Holy Ghost directed them. Nor do we dispute that the churches and the saints were commanded as stewards of their temporal things to contribute of their earthly substance, as the Lord had prospered them, to the support of God's "sent" ministers. In all their scriptural researches, Mr. Ray and his compeers have found nothing of missionism in the New Testament that is not to be found in our Old School Baptist Churches. But they have utterly failed to find example

or precept for any thing like a modern Missionary Society outside of the organized church of Christ. The blessed truth that God has sent his Son into the world, and that the Holy Spirit has been sent from heaven to dwell in the saints, and that Christ as head of his church has sent his ministers into all the world to preach his gospel; but although the church of Christ has recognized this prerogative of the King of saints, it affords no authority for men to assume the right to transfer the exercise of the authority which is vested alone in Christ, to a Missionary Society composed of members admitted to membership for money, and to places of distinction for more money, and organized in parliamentary form, as the modern Missionary Societies, both Foreign and Domestic, are.

It is admitted that Christ has power on earth to forgive sins; but does it therefore follow that the Pope of Rome or the Popish priesthood have that power? Their claim is equally as good as the claim that modern Missionary Societies adduce for their presumptuous, if not blasphemous assumption of the prerogatives of the Lord of life and glory.

Gilbert Beebe

Middletown, N.Y. May 1, 1877

FEAST OF FAT THINGS

The Signs of the Times, Inc. is pleased to announce that we now have available for purchase, the book "Feast of Fat Things."

This book, first published by the Signs some years ago, has now been reprinted. It is rich with doctrine of Old School or Primitive Baptists and should be in the home of every believer.

CONTENTS

1. The Black Rock Address of 1832
2. "Everlasting Task for Arminians by William Gadsby
3. "Fatalism" by H. M. Curry
4. "A Dream Tour Through Arminian Heaven" by H. M. Curry
5. "The Celestial Railroad" by Hawthorne
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OBITUARIES

CURTIS ROOSEVELT MOBLEY

We, Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church feel the loss of our brother, Curtis R. Mobley, who was removed from our midst on May 25th, 1981.

A native of Martin County, Williamston, North Carolina, he was born October 3,1909 and was the son of the late John and Lucy Peele Mobley.

On the third Saturday in September 1970 he united with the Bear Grass Church and was baptized the following day by his pastor Elder E.C. Harrison.

Survivors include five sons, Dallas, Randy and Ronald Mobley of Williamston, Kenneth Mobley of Panama Canal Zone and Donald Mobley of Tarboro; two daughters, Mrs. Joyce Wiggins of Williamston and Carolyn Watts of Dillon, South Carolina.

Funeral services were held in Biggs Funeral Chapel in Williamston by his pastor Elder Noah L. Ambrose. He was laid to rest in Woodlawn cemetery in the presence of a host of friends and relatives.

Written by request of the church.

Elder Noah L. Ambrose, Moderator
Theresa R. Ayers, Church Clerk

SISTER MATTIE RAYNOR LEWIS

Sister Mattie was born to Elder Roldulph and Tammy Batchelor of Onslow County in the year April 1st, 1912 and died March 26,1981, which gave her 68 years, 11 months, and 17 days on earth.

Sister Mattie was baptised in full fellowship in Cypress Creek church on second Sunday of May, 1934 by Elder R. W. Gurganus. She was married to the late Benny Raynor and to that union were born 5 children, three girls and two boys. Sister Mattie was faithful to her church so long as she lived near enough by that she could. Several years before her death she moved to Elizabethtown, N.C., where she married Wilbur Lewis, who was deceased a few years before her death. Her funeral was preached at the graveside by Mr. Tony Raynor, brother of her first husband.

It was agreed to make three copies, one for the church, one for the family, and one for the ***Signs of the Times***.

Done by order of conference on Saturday before the second Sunday, May, 1981.

Elder Harmon Brown, Mod.
Velma Horne, Clerk
Written by a sister, I hope.
Anna Simpson

BESSIE LILLIAN BIRD

Sister Bessie Lillian Wade was born in Ferrum, Virginia, June 11, 1895. Her parents were Edward Chancler Wade and Mary Elizabeth Hale Wade. She was united in marriage to Harvey Jennings Bird on October 9, 1918. They were the parents of six children; Ruby Naomi Plymale, now deceased; Gertrude Asenith Hoffman and Ferell Greenlief Bird of Ohion, Horace Creed Bird and Lois Lillian Cottrell, of Hurricane, and Isaac Randolph bird, of Huntington. She is also survived by 23 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren.

Harvey and Bessie Bird were both members of the Providence Primitive Baptist Church on Turkey Creek. Elder Bird pastored this Church until his death on March 9, 1968, leaving Bessie many lonely years as his widow. She died August 24, 1981. She was 86 years of age.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Woodrow Lake and she was buried in the Bird Cemetery.

Submitted with love and respect by her daughter.

Lois Lillian Cottrell

SISTER LELIA COLLINS

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write this obituary in memory of Sister Leila Collins. Her heavenly Father called her away from this low ground of sorrow on May 25, 1981.

Sister Leila was born Leila Hattie Kinsaul, on October 29, 1908; the daughter of Bama Windham Kinsaul and Albert Monroe Kinsaul. She had seven brothers, and three sisters, and one half-sister. She was survived by her husband, Deacon Charles T. Collins, one daughter, Charlotte Collins Kirkland, her foster son, Carlton Aycock, five grandchildren, three brothers, three sisters, one half-sister, and her step-mother, Cathern Gill Kinsaul.

She was baptized in September, 1952, by Elder F.A. Collins, as a member of Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church. She was a member at Gilead from then until November 10, 1957, when she and her husband were received as members of Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church, near Malvern, Alabama. Here she remained a faithful member as long as she lived.

She was loved by all who knew her and she was widely known in her community and among the Primitive Baptist people throughout this area. She was a loving companion for her husband, a tender caring mother, and always concerned about and helpful to her host of friends. She loved the church and was faithful always. She rejoiced in the church services and sweet fellowship. Sister Leila was unable to attend church during her last months but she always longed to go and missed it so very much. She was always asking about the church and its members, and always thinking and talking about Christ our Savior.

She will be sorely missed by her church, her family, and all who knew her and loved her so well. We trust that she is resting now in the peace, love, and tender care of Christ.

Her funeral was handled by Ward-Wilson Funeral Home, Dothan, Alabama. Services were conducted at Goodwater Freewill Baptist Church, Wicksburg, Alabama, on May 27, 1981, by Mr. Buddy Hood, and Elder D. W. Collins. Her body was laid to rest in Goodwater Cemetery beneath many beautiful flowers.

Our deepest sympathy goes to her family and all who loved her. We trust God will be with them to bless, comfort, and keep them as they continue on.

Written at the request of her husband by her Pastor.

Elder D.W. Collins

BROTHER JOHN B. O'NEAL

Brother John B. O'Neal was born in Fairfield, N.C., Hyde County, on March 12, 1896. He passed away after a lingering illness at the Beaufort County Hospital on October 18, 1980, age 84 years. He was the son of the late John and Susan Gibbs O'Neal. He married the former, Violet Jennette of Swan Quarter, N.C., on August 25, 1923, who survives. To this union were born three sons, Walter Rex, who died in infancy, Grady M., of Hickory, N.C., Glen B. of Fairfield, N.C.; a daughter, Gretchen O'Neal Cockran of Washington, N.C., and six grandchildren.

Brother O'Neal joined the Rose Bay Primitive Baptist Church in September, 1957. He moved his membership to Singleton Primitive Baptist Church in September 1970. He was a faithful, loyal member as long as he lived. Funeral services were held by his Pastor, Elder Joe Leggett, and Elder Reeves Smith, on October 20, 1980. His body was laid to rest under a beautiful floral offering in Pamlico Memorial Garden in Washington, N.C., to await that great resurrection morning.

Written by the Clerk, Voilet O'Neal

OBITUARY OF HUBERT RUSSELL DALTON

With much sadness and grief in my heart, the Dear Lord willing, I will endeavor to write a few words in memory of one who I love most dearly.

My beloved Father and your Brother and Friend was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia on March 15, 1903, the son of the late Booker and Zolza Love Dalton. He was married to the late Gladys Hines Dalton on December 27, 1929 and to this union four daughters were born; Mrs. Lavona Simpson, Mrs. Patsy Barker, Mrs. Gail Chism and the writer, Mrs. Phyllis Goad, who all survive him. He also leaves one brother, Odie Dalton, four sisters, Mrs. Lois Vaughan, Mrs. Rillma Dalton, Mrs. Sally Barbour, and Sister Ellen Doss, seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Daddy was a stong believer in salvation by grace and visited the churches in the Staunton River Association and Sister Associations as long as I can remember. He had a great love for the Brethren and was always concerned about the welfare of the church. He asked for a home with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on July 22, 1962, and was baptized by his beloved pastor, Elder O.K. Tench on the same day. He would always inquire about the meetings we attended when we returned home if he was not blest to go and was faithful to attend his meetings and was blest to attend church until five weeks prior to his death.

He was a good neighbor, Father, and Husband and always cared for people who were less fortunate than he and acted as Father to several children who lost their parents. Daddy had a great love for children and always had gifts of chewing gum and candy for them. He had a lot of friends, both young and old.

When he was stricken with an incurable disease, he said "I feel it is in the hands of the Lord". He bore his afflictions with much patience and enjoyed the visits of hes Brethren and Friends and refoiced in the prayers of the ministering Brethren who were blest to pray most comforting prayer.

I believe Daddy was made reconciled to his illness and to death, because he told me on several occasions, he was ready to go, but said he knew he could not die before his appointed time. As I sat with him in the Hospital several nights, we were blest to talk on the scriptures, church affairs, and funeral arrangements were made by him in detail, even the songs he would like sung at his funeral. I believe he felt his departure at hand and was ready to be offered. I feel he has fought a good fight and has finished his course and has kept the Faith and henceforth there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the rightious Judge shall give him at that day; not to him only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. He was taken from this world of sin and sorrow on July 13, 1981.

His Funeral was conducted on July 15, 1981 at 3:00 p.m. at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, by his Dear Pastor, Elder O.K. Tench and his son-in-law Elder Raymond L. Goad and his body was laid to rest beneath an array of beautiful flowers in the Dalton Family Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The sweet memory of him remains alive as he was smiling and humming the Songs of Zion when he was about his work. I feel we have been highly favored of God to have been blessed with such wonderful parents. He is greatly missed by his Family, Church, and Friends, but may we all that mourn our loss be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father, who never makes a mistake.

Written by a Daughter who misses him so much.

Phyllis D. Goad

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 3/82 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

PRICE INCREASE FOR SIGNS

We have tried now for five years to avoid a price increase for the *Signs of the Times,* but we find, sadly, that we have no choice in the matter.

We have experienced several cost increases in operations the last several years and also repeated mailing costs. As of January, 1982, however, our mailing costs increased over $100.00 a month above the previous cost. We can no longer carry the burden at the present subscription rate of $5.00 per year.

Accordingly, effective May 1, 1982, we will ask our subscribers to remit $7.00 per year or $13.00 for two years. Please be prompt.

In the interest of fairness, we will accept subscription renewals or new subscribers at the old rate of $5.00 per year or $9.00 per two years until the May 1st change. Therefore, if your subscription comes due in the next few months, you may renew at the old price by doing so now.

Please believe, we regret this action but hope all will understand.

Thank you.

Editors and Trustees for the
Signs of the Times, Inc.

FROM ARKANSAS

Little Rock, Ark.

Dear Elder Williams,

We are mailing our subscription to the *Signs of the Times* for two more years. We really enjoy reading the paper and look forward to each month's arriving. We are donating the balance of the

enclosed check. Do what you want with it.

Elder Williams, we had the privilege of having Elder James Poole and Elder W.D. Griffin to visit in our church at Pilgrim Rest at Fordyce, Ark. during the Association in September. We really enjoyed them. Hope they can come back next year, along with others. You are always welcome, too.

Thank you,
Brother and Sister Archer

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NOTE OF APOLOGY

We regret the many errors contained in the February, 1982 Signs. The problem occurred in the pasteup department of our printer. We are assured things will improve.

The Editors

Kitty Hawk, N.C.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I notice my subscription expires 10/81. Inclosed please find a check for two more years and use the remainder as seems proper. Also inclosed is some writing; do with it as you see fit.

Troy G. Shepard

WHY NOT PRAISE OR HONOR MANKIND, OR MAN OF HIMSELF

Except as it directly applies to the Three in one God in whom lieth any and all pure and holy goodness, there is no name under heaven or given among men deserving of or worthy of any praise, honor, or glory.

We of mankind may and sometimes do say of a particular person, he or she is a good person. But with all that in me is, I say that if I or any one else of mankind has ever or does ever have even one thought or one feeling, or speak one word, or perform just one single act, that be good in the sight of God, then it all in its entirety was and is worked in and out and all around about to this very and only three in one God of all grace, mercy, power, and goodness.

I say this by reason (at least in part), I am willing to accept His words as holy truth, where He said in speaking of mankind, "There are none good, no not one". Though a cup of cool water may be given (by our hand) unto one of His thirsting children and it quinch his or her thirst, and though it even be counted to us for good in His sight, nevertheless, every particle of good pertaining to that performance was and is only and directly from Him. That perfection of mankind lieth wholly and only within that which applies to God having perfectly created man in accordance with His will and purpose, and that He saw His work in all creation as good and very good, and I feel and believe it to be the very same as applying to every good ever to be performed in all time for this world to stand, it was and is wholly and "Holy" His work, and most assuredly not ours.

That very selfish fleshly nature of mankind has never changed. Its every self act has always been and always will be by reason (so far as it pertains to mankind) of a selfish self-centered motive, and is always done with the expectation of some sort of reward for himself for having so done, whether it be praise, honor, or glory, or otherwise. God ever has and ever will do all the good: and mankind ever has and ever shall do all the sinning. It seems just that simple fact of truth to me. Therefore I have no desire to praise or honor any of mankind for himself for any performance ever performed. I feel that any praise or honor I might extend toward any of mankind would to that same degree be an attempt at the dishonoring of His great and Holy Name. I feel that if such were ever possible that even one small good (good in His sight) thing were left to the performance of any one of mankind of himself, then that within itself would deprive God of having looked upon His work in His creation as good and very good. I cannot feel or believe that there were contained within His will, purpose or pleasure any intent to create any little or big "gods" to render Himself any assistance whatsoever. It is said by many, "If we will give, then God will give to us." All I feel to say right now concerning such is--their god of whom they refer is not my God in whom I feel and hope to trust and worship and praise and honor His great and Holy Name. Except my God first give unto me, then I have nothing even for myself, much less to give unto another. In order that I might speak a comforting word unto one of His children I must of absolute necessity first have received a visit from that same Comforter of whom

the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ promised His people He would send when He went away. "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." I feel a sweet and most precious hope in my breast that I have in holy truth praised my God, but only God knows for certain. I will boldly and I hope meekly say that I feel for a certainty that He and He alone in worthy of any and all praise, honor, and glory, both now and forever more. Amen.

I feel absolutely sure of this one thing, if it so be that I have ever rendered praise unto His great and holy Name, that praise came into being only by reason of His working its entirety within me both to will and to do of that very praise which came forth from this poor worm of the dust of the earth. This love I feel for true Old Baptists, I feel and hope is not for anything you have accomplished, oh, no, ten thousand times no, but is what I have seen manifested thru you of His wonderful and beautiful workings within your very heart and soul.

Troubles such as disputings which bring about the separations of militant churches, unions, and associations derive solely from some portion of those groups manifesting that fleshly unprincipled praise for self and or one or more of fleshly mankind, whether he or they hold the name Elder, Deacon, or Lay member. Within that true and holy principle of holiness there just simply is no place or room for the word "Big", as applying to either one or more of His little children, for they each and all are the exact same size. Therefore, that leaves no space or room for big "I's" and little "you's", or big and little preachers and deacons and or lay members. Just as sure as the "All in All" God is merciful, just that sure is it that each and every time the Holy Spirit is working within one, he then knows for a certainty that he is little.

In as much as be in accord with His holy will, may we be kept in such a way as looking upon God's greatness in all things and therein be enabled to refrain from the praise of any of mankind for themselves for anything. This, I hope, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Troy G. Shepherd

WOE IS ME

Woe is me! for I am as when they have gathered the summer fruits, as the grape gleanings of the vintage; there is no cluster to eat: my soul desired the firstripe fruit. Micah 8:1

The vintage glean'd, the summer fruits
Are gathr'd in, and nought but roots;
No cluster on the vine I see
And parch'd with thirst, ah! woe is me.

By justice and by law pursued,
Sin seems to rage, and unsubdued;
I would, but cannot Jesus see,
I am undone; ah! woe is me.

The dragon, Satan, loudly roars,
And points me to my sinful scores:
A painted hypocrite you be;
I fear 'tis true; ah! woe is me.

The grape of Sodom Jonah ate,
The sun sat hot upon his pate;
He had compassion on the gourd,
But still reviled against the Lord.

Like Jonah I in anger sit;
Nothing that seems my mind to fit;
So peevish, fretful, and supine,
O, what a mass of guilt and sin!

Affictions wait of every sort,
I'm but a wreck, in every port;
But unto Jesus I must flee;
Save, save, dear Lord, or woe is me.

I want the precious first ripe fruit--
A precious Christ; none else will suit;
The covenant root, yea, Joseph's bough,
With choicest grapes, and bending low.

I want to have the sheaf of corn;
I want to see the bullock's horn;
I want to hear the trumpet blow
My full release, and pardon know.

I want to smell of Sharon's rose;
His sweet perfume will me compose;
I want his cluster'd grapes to taste;
Upon himself I long to feast.

The grape of love, and grape of fear,
Humility's repenting tear;
A wondrous cluster, special fruit,
All flow from Christ, the living root.

Surprising grace, I see the vine
With sumptuous clusters choice and fine;
Sweet promises, that can produce
The richest, sweetest, choicest juice.

A cordial here for all the faint,
The weak, the feeble, trembling saint;
For hungry souls a rich repast,
When God the Spirit gives the taste.

With this rich juice he touch'd my lips,
Tho' in much wisdom gives but sips;
How this revives, and makes me sing
To Jesus Christ my heavenly king.

J. C.

Westham
The Gospel Standard
January 1838

ACTS 4

Frequently it has been asserted by the unbelieving world that the Primitive Baptist people have the least scriptural evidence of acceptance with God of any professing people.

As we search for accord among professors there is not a chapter in the Bible any more filled with agreement and accord in the doctrines of the Bible than in this noted chapter. Three of the fundamental, outstanding points of the precious things of God are shown to us here by the historian. For the consideration of those that are harassed and ridiculed because of their belief, let us, as blessed of God, note the comfort and edification that God has so graciously and so conspiciously displayed in the testimony that He has left for his little ones to feast upon.

Let it first be noted that publicity seekers need not pay heed nor need they pick up the issue to argue and to display their power nor might, for we do not have time for the casting of pearls before swine. If not mistaken, our desire is toward the pastures and the sheepfolds where the sheep and lambs are gathered. Those that desire to challenge and to villify and to argue, let them argue with their kind. May the Lord bless us to tarry around the sheepfolds.

In the first place, God's children are commanded to be filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18), and a thing which is full does not have room for anything else. Peter was filled with the Holy Ghost. Now he was a competent witness to what he was writing. He was not dealing in fables but in the truth, for a man filled with the Spirit of Truth will not nor cannot lie. I boldly affirm that at this time the apostle Peter had been emptied of all ungodliness, and filled with the truth telling Spirit of God.

Had he been half filled with the Spirit, then it could be said that he told half the truth, and had the children of God, the believers in the Lord Jesus Christ been half filled with the Spirit of Truth, then it might be said that they had half the truth; that they only believed the part of the truth that they chose to believe and discarded the balance. But, if not mistaken, we write to fully born, fully developed children of God who are filled with the Spirit of Truth. Thus it is in the day of this filling, which filling all of the children have received (John I:12, 16).

All unbelievers, all law worshippers, have set Jesus Christ at naught. Every last one of them have rejected Him. The reason of this rejection is because they have no need of Him. They are sufficient of themselves. None of them have received Him; none of them can receive Him, and the reason is found in the solemn truth that none of them have received of the fulness of truth and grace. All of them that have been born of that Spirit which fills them receive Him (John I:12, 13)

Please, dear reader, bear in mind that each of these set at naught this blessed

Jesus. Every last one of them acted the same way. They acted in unison; they acted as one man. He did not become the Saviour of sinners by them helping Him to get to be anything. To the contrary, had they had their way, there would not have been any Saviour.

All of them that receive Him He will, when He comes in His glory and power receive unto Himself everyone of them. All of those that rejected Him, that set Him at naught, that would have been His everlasting destruction, He will, after having received all of His, then He will in turn send the last one of them into everlasting fire prepared (made ready) for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41). Not only is the destiny of each (both those that set Him at naught and those that received Him) sealed, but each is told in irrefutable language the reason of such assignments.

Another glorious feature of the doctrine of sovereign grace is that He alone is the Saviour of His people. He was the only One under heaven given among men whereby the chosen people of God must be saved. Not only is He the Only Saviour under heaven, He is the only One under heaven given among men. He was given a Prince and a Saviour. God the Father gave Him; God the Father sent Him, and He did not duplicate His work. He only gave One to save sinners. This giving of Him, and the added giving to us all things pertaining to life and godliness does a superb, an outstanding, a sure, a complete work. This is all laid down in this wonderful chapter. It is a restful atmosphere to lie down in and rest.

Now another thing. They were in accord. Not a dissenting voice was raised against the various doctrines that were advanced by the apostle Peter. The resurrection of Jesus Christ was set forth. They were all in accord ,thus they all subscribed to that doctrine. Subscribing to the resurrection of the Head, means also the same concerning the body. To join Peter's gospel with Paul's gospel, each of which came about by each of them being filled with the Holy Ghost, it follows that Paul was speaking in unity with Peter's unity, and that not only the Head but also the body shall be raised from the dead.

Now let us remember that these people were in accord. The denial of the doctrine established by the inspiration of God in moving Peter to write is on every side. The intellectuals among all orders of men (including the most verbose among our own people) flagrantly ignore the Bible, the meaning of good language, trying to lead astray the simple people of God, but are determined to misapply the simplicity of Peter's preaching in order to confuse the gauge the why of it all. The whole of the chapter is devoted to the setting forth in undeniable testimony the unchangeableness of His determination including the blessings in Christ that belong exclusively to his people, as well as the punishment for their sins. To make it settled for all time, the whole of the work of each and every one that were gathered together for His crucifixion was irrevocably fixed according to the purpose of He that works all after the counsel of His own will. All of the matter was attested to by an immense group of people filled with the Holy Ghost.

Elder W. D. Griffin

THE CRY OF A WATCHMAN ON A DARK CORNER OF ZION'S WALLS

Brother Watchmen, I know not how it is with you, but as for me, I have hardly an hour to myself; for if at any time I lay down, this part of the city is so infested with thieves that there is no rest; I am obliged to be up and after the king's business again. When I first took my station on this part of the wall, a number of the beasts of the forest came flocking round, but when they found I had no carrion to give away, they began to growl, bark, and bite at me, seizing upon

my father's poor sheep. But I was not much afraid; I picked up a few of the stumbling stones out of the path to prevent the sheep from falling a prey, and gave these evil beasts a few severe pelts with them, and they ran barking away, and we hear them at a distance now, and there they may be, for I will not go after them. I once did go far into the woods after them to my sorrow, fighting dogs and wolves and forgot my poor sheep, and the wolves came upon them another way and rent them shamefully. So now I am learning to act according to the Chief Shepherd's advice, who says, "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep". Sweet lambs, and I love my employment, though some are so weak that I am constrained to ask the Chief Shepherd to lay them in his bosom a while to warm them, and others are lonely feeding in green pastures beside the still waters.

One day the under porter opened the door for a few sheep to come into the fold, and some how there were some dogs and wolves with sheep's skins on them, squeezed into the visible fold, but when they were in, they could not feed upon sheep's food, so they lay sleeping for some time. And as I dare not give holy things unto dogs, they began to bark quite out; and would have devoured the sheep, but I gave them a few hard blows, and they jumped over the wall and ran hastily away.

But beside these thieves and many more I am not able to mention, I have of late been plagued with an "old man" that has been in the city many years, and he claims some relationship with me, so that I cannot always deny him; but I have to watch him very narrowly as you would a thief, for they do say that both thief and murder, and other abominations are in his heart, and I believe it; and I certainly have found him up to many naughty tricks, and he follows me daily, so that I can do scarcely anything but that he will have his old dirty hand in it, and I am fearful he will get his hand into this job, for he is a fool, and will be meddling. He is a proud, deceitful, hypocritical old man. I am compelled to say this of him, that though he is my brother, there is no more union between us than there was between Esau and Jacob; and I do not believe that we ever shall be happy together till he is dead and buried, and raised again, in the likeness of my sweet Saviour in glory.

I think, brethren, you must agree with me, when I say the watchman's charge is great, arduous, and trying; for we have to watch for dear souls under our care; watch the Spirit's motions in our own souls; watch what is of the Lord and what is of Satan; watch to know ambassadors of God from the messengers of Satan; to watch a host of thieves without, and troops of thieves within. Indeed, brethren, I am almost weary of watching, and sometimes feel desirous of a relief from these walls to some other part of the city, or that I may be called home to that city where the walls are "of jasper, and the city is pure gold"; where we shall need no sun, moon, stars, nor the light of a candle; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it, and the glory of God doth lighten it; yea, "where the Lord shall be unto thee everlasting light, and thy God thy glory".

But hush, my soul, be still, and watch and wait the summons from headquarters above. A few more dark, stormy nights--a few more valleys of slander and reproach from the enemy's camp--a little while longer under stripes, painfulness, necessities, labour, and watchfulness; in perils by sea, in perils by land, and perils amongst false brethren, and I shall drop my lantern and trumpet, and these poor mortal remains shall see Jesus in all his Father's glory, and all the happy souls that I knew here, who are gone before me, with all the shining angels attending on the holy court above,

welcoming me there with, "Come, ye blessed of the Lord, and shine, and rest, and sing, and live, and love with us here for ever". Make haste, my beloved, come quickly!

A Watchman on the Walls
Dunmow, Essex
The Gospel Standard, 1838

FROM MAINE

Gardiner, ME

Dear Elder Williams,

My subscription for the ***Signs of the Times*** runs out this month, so I'm sending a check for two years renewal for myself and please use the balance for a brother or sister who cannot afford to take it, but would find comfort and enjoyment in it. My blessings go with it.

I am a member of the Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church in Snow Hill, Maryland, where Elder Poole is pastor. God has shown me evidences of His love and power all through my life and there is no question in my heart that He is the almighty God and that He gave His only begotten Son to redeem all of His children from their sins. He alone can lead us to life everlasting and to reign with Him in eternity. Let us bless His Holy Name.

In hope and spiritual love, I am an unworthy little sister.

Anna M. Dill

SPIRITUAL WANTS

My dear friend,--Since I have been at home I have been so much engaged, that I have not often had an opportunity to write you, and when I have had time, I have had no inclination; for O the deathly coldness, the midnight darkness, and rocky hardness that I have been the subject of since I saw you, I cannot describe; and I feel more confident than ever that when left to myself, the sun never shone on such a beast; and O how certain am I that if salvation is not all of grace from beginning to end, I never shall be saved, for were my hope built on no surer foundation than "ought to pray-- should watch, duty to believe, might live up to gospel privileges," etc., etc., I should as surely be damned, as hell is the habitation of infernals. O I dare not even hint at some of the sensual and vile traffic that has been carried on in my corrupt nature of late; I cannot help thinking that if the children of God knew what I am the subject of, they would certainly shun my company, and forego any correspondence with me. O wretch that I am; Sometimes I have such a sight of my own baseness and villany, that I cannot help confessing before God, that if he were to send me to hell in a moment, I would declare before him, and in the presence of men, angels, and devils, that he was a God of equity, and was just and righteous in my eternal damnation; and then in a few moments such a spirit of self-pity and rebellion has seized me, that I have felt as if he would deal hard with me, if he sent me to hell; and that if I were banished to perdition, I verily believe at such time that I should go down into the pit blaspheming the name of the Judge of quick and dead. But notwithstanding all this, and much more too base to name, I cannot help having a little hope that the Lord is on my side, and that I shall at last come off more than a conqueror through him that was slain. But O I want a lively feeling assurance that this hope is that spiritual hope that is as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and that entereth into that that is within the vail. My wants are generally exactly contrary to my feelings, for I want liberty and feel nothing but bondage; I want nearness at the throne, but am "afar off upon the seas"; I want a melted heart, but feel as hard as a stone; I want a spirit of prayer, but cannot pray; I want to believe, but feel all unbelief; I want to love the word, the people, and worship of God, but often feel no regard for either, and what is worse, I sometimes hate every thing that is loving; I want wisdom, and feel a

complete fool; I want to soar above, but grovel like a muckworm in the earth; I want to say, Abba, Father, but cannot feel the spirit of adoption; I want to feel willing to continue in the work the Lord has put me in, but cannot help wishing I was anything but a preacher, and any where but in a pulpit. but O worse than all, I sometimes feel to have no wants but evil ones; my pride wants gratifying, and my lust wants satisfying. I should be glad to recieve a letter from you, or any lover of truth to whom I desire to be remembered; and am as ever, yours in love,

Jan. 13, 1841 Septimus
The Gospel Standard

Carbon Hill, Alabama

Dear Editors,

I am very sorry to be late again with our subscription to the ***Signs.*** We seem to fail in so many things in the last few years of our lives, for which we feel so sorry. Yet, we know our Lord understands all things. When we grow old and feeble, and are not able to attend our church any more, then we look forward to our ***Signs of the Times*** coming, and enjoy each of them so much. We keep our good books to go back and re-read them over and over. They never grow old and give us so much comfort to try to press onward even though we feel we can't have many more years on this earth due to our age and health. We are waiting now to sell our home and go to live with our daughter in North Carolina, but we will give you our new address when we get there.

Oh, how the doctrine grows dearer all the time to our hearts and I hope we love all of God's children wherever they are. Sometimes we wonder how people can go on in their wicked ways and such times as we are living in today, and they seem so unconcerned. But then we read our Bible and the good papers, and we know that our dear Lord is looking down on this wicked world and He has a set time to come back. So all we can do is to put all our trust in Him and leave all our trials and troubles in His dear hands. Oh how thankful we are to be enabled to do this.

May God bless all of you Editors and give you health and strength to press on and be able to continue publishing the paper for all of His people to read and enjoy while here in this world.

Enclosed is a check for our subscription for another year. Please remember us in your prayers.

In Christian love,
Mr. & Mrs. James C. Scott

(Thank you, Bro. and Sis. Scott. Letters like this is what makes our labor easy and continuing on worthwhile. May the King of Zion attend your every need in old age and finally draw you to Himself. Editors)

THE GOSPEL

"Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed". (Gal. 1:8)

The thorough-bred sons of the ancient Scribes, Pharisees, and mongrel Ashdods in the professing Israel of this day, all claim and quote this text in confirmation of their gospel; and if it be asked them what gospel is meant in the text, the answer is, "The one we preach"; whereas, the gospel here meant is as much opposed to theirs as light is to darkness, truth to lies, or grace to works.

The "anathema", or curse of God, is doubly pronounced upon all who preach any other gospel than that Paul preached to the Galatians; and sure I am this awful curse hangs over the great body of professed gospel preachers in this land at this very moment. It is asked, "What denomination are you alluding to?" I answer, "Not to any one in particular, but to the whole,--Papists, Socinians, the Established Church, Presbyterians, Independents, Wesleyans and Arminians of every

shade, General Baptists, yes, and Particular Baptists too, for many of them call themselves particular, when their conduct shows that they are not very particular. These all come under the curse - - individual exceptions amongst some of them, but they are very rare compared to the mass. Well, but the grand point is, what was the gospel the apostle preached to the Galatians, and of what did it consist--of free grace, free will, a mixture of both, or a medley of neither? Thank the Lord, though Scribes and Pharisees darken counsel, we, under the teachings of the Holy Spirit are at no loss to know what gospel is meant, and of what it consists. If we read verse 6 of the same chapter, it is there stated as plain as language can express it what this gospel is. "I marvel", says the apostle, "that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel". The grace of Christ, then is the gospel here meant, and which the apostle preached unto them. "O", say the Scribes and Pharisees, "this is the gospel we preach". But let me tell you it is no such thing. When you speak about the grace of Christ, you are like Balaam and his parable, you know not what you are saying. I know you can make a mighty clamour in the pulpit about grace; but what of that? It is like the unmeaning mockery of the vain, prating parrot, which learns its speech from hearsay. But what does the word grace in this verse mean? In the Greek Testament it is called charity, which, in plain English, means free gift, free bounty, free, distinguishing love and favour, unmerited kindness. It is the same word as is used in Rom. 11:6, 3:24, Titus 3:7, and Eph. 2:8. "If by grace, (charity) then it is no more of works;" "Being justified freely by his grace", (charity) etc. Seeing, then, that it is the same word as is used in all these Scriptures, it is easy to understand what the apostle means by the term grace of Christ in our text, namely, the free, distinguishing, and unmerited love and favour of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the gift of himself and his fulness to his people, in direct opposition to the works of the law and the creature, in any sense, either conjointly or separately. This is the gospel the apostle meant and preached to the Galatians, which is clear, not only from verse 6, but from the whole epistle.

The marvellous love and unmerited kindness the Father hath to the church is such, that he gave his dearly-beloved Son for her; and as he loves his Son, so he loves her. But this sovereign grace more conspicuously shines and is manifested in the office-work of our glorious Redeemer as Mediator. Such is his love to her, that as the Father hath loved her, so he loves her. (John 15:9) Yea, his heart was so enlarged towards her that he laid down his life for her; he bought her with his own blood, standing as her Bondman and Surety; and now, on the strictest principles of justice and equity, having paid all her debt, he is for ever freed, and has a legitimate right to eternal glory. With an unceasing and perfect obedience, he kept and fulfilled every jot and tittle of the law, magnified and made it honourable for her. He was led forth as a malefactor to the spot of execution, ready and actually bearing every one of the sins of every one of his eternally-beloved children, as really so as I now bear my coat upon my back. "he bare our sins in his own body on the tree." Nay, he was actually made sin for them. (2 Cor. 5:21) With this inconceivable and obnoxious load, he ascended Calvary's hill and Calvary's cross; was numbered with transgressors; suffered the vindictive wrath and unsparing vengeance of God; poured out his soul unto death; was buried and rose the third day, according to the Scriptures. Thus he was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justificaion, and so removed the iniquity

of his people in one day. Their sins are all cast behind his back into the great sea of oblivion and the wilderness of forgetfulness, and if they are sought for they shall never be found. They are redeemed with an "eternal redemption", and saved with an "everlasting salvation."

Now, what the great, unchangeable God has done, he cannot undo, for he has sworn to it by himself, and it is sealed with the blood of Immanuel. Therefore, as his people are forever justified, nothing in heaven, earth, or hell can ever bring them in guilty. God himself, the supreme Judge, has justified them, and neither men nor devils, sin nor self, death nor hell, shall be able to pluck them out of the Lord's hands. They are wrapt up in the bundle of the life of the eternal God, and can never perish. Thanks be to him, by his once offering of himself he hath perfected them (for a week, a month, a year? no, blessed be God) for ever! Mind that, ye scribes and pharisees; the work of our God is a finished one, a perfect one, an eternal one, and one entirely his own. By his own righteous obedience and matchless sufferings he has actually, effectually, and inevitably saved his people, and is therefore called "the Lord our righteousness", "the Lord our Saviour", and "God our Saviour"; and when I say he has saved his people, I do not mean, as the modern, lifeless, lying, Christ-dishonouring, devil-deceived preachers that swarm around us do, that he has placed man in a salvable, redeemable position, and now offers to and gives him a chance of salvation, that he may be saved if he will, and if not it is his own fault; but by his once offering of himself he has actually saved the souls of his people from condemnation to hell, and infallibly secured to them everlasting life and glory, just as certain as if they were now in the actual possession of it, and it is as absolutely impossible for them to be lost as it is for the Lord Jesus himself! And all this accomplished entirely without them, yea, even before millions of them were born. "Wonder, O heavens! and be astonished, O earth! sing and be joyful, for the Lord hath done it." I am as firmly persuaded as I am of my own existence, that the Lord Jesus has thus saved his people, and in this glorious, Christ-honouring, soul-comforting truth, my heart rejoices; no other Christ but this can my soul bear to hear named, and with Paul I could say, "If an angel from heaven preach any other Christ than this, let him be accursed."

This is the glorious gospel the law and prophets prefigured and preached, and which is meant in the text, and which the apostle preached, and which the broken-hearted children of God long after; but which self-righteous, and self-sufficient scribes and pharisees heartily hate and kick at.

Perhaps some poor, sensible sinner will be saying, "This is a precious Christ, and a glorious gospel of rich and free mercy, and I firmly believe it is the real truth, and it is for the Lord's people; but then",—well, what then? "why, I can't think I am one of God's children, I feel so vile, and miserable, and wretched, so unlike a Christian every way, so unholy, guilty, filthy, deceitful, and hypocritical; nay, there is nothing good about me nor in me". Do you indeed feel so? and does your soul mourn over it? and is your heart burdened with it? and does it make you loathe yourself, and appear ugly in your own eyes? does it make you hunger and thirst after a righteousness better than your own? If so, happy are you; you have a bright mark that you are one of the Lord's redeemed jewels. But here is the secret; you want to feel pretty, pious, and holy, in yourself, and this the Lord is determined you shall not feel, for it is one of the plainest marks of an hypocritical reprobate. If you were permitted thus to feel, you would not hunger, thirst, and pant after Christ's

righteousness; but when you feel yourself a lump of corruption, filthy and vile, you are a fit subject for Christ; for his great, finished, and complete salvation is provided for such, and to such it belongs; and to let such feel it is theirs, the Lord speaks to them and calls them by those names and characters which they feel themselves to be. He does not always call his people by those names and titles that they are in his sight, for they are all love and loveliness, pure and perfect, great and glorious in his eyes, as he beholds them in his son; but he names them according to the feeling of their souls, such as "worm Jacob", because Jacob felt himself a poor, helpless, crawling, blind, grovelling worm of the dust; and he calls them "weak things", "foolish things", "base things", "poor in spirit", "hungering and thirsting after righteousness", "mourners", "poor and needy", "weary and heavy laden", "blind, lame, halt, deaf, and dumb", "bitter and barren", "perplexed and distressed", "discontented, and in debt", and many more such poor, beggarly, miserable, helpless, and insolvent titles he calls his children by, because they, in their souls' experience, feel themselves so. Blessed indeed are humble and contrite souls. A bruised reed, a smoking flax, a captive bound, a leper unclean, a prodigal lost, who feel bitterness of soul before God because of their spiritual barrenness, fretting much for the enjoyment of Jesus, but cannot apprehend it, do what he can; blessed are all such, and may the Lord give them the spirit of patience, to wait for him, till he be pleased to apply to their souls, with unction and power, his great and glorious salvation which he has in store for them. Do not forget, kicking and plunging in tribulation is like holding a burn to the fire, or putting pricks to quick raw flesh. Amen.

J. McK.

Preston, Dec. 8, 1837
The Gospel Standard, January 1838

Editors,

Enclosed is a check for two years subscription to the ***Signs of the Times, Inc.*** I am a poor sinner saved by His grace if saved and I believe I do have a hope of better things beyond this timely world.

May God bless you in your unselfish work in keeping the ***Signs*** true to the Primitive doctrine.

Sincerely,
Dannie Strickland

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed herein is a copy of the Minutes of the Presbytery which ordained Brother Fred Neikirk to the office of Elder.

Request was made that a copy of the Minutes be sent to the ***Signs of the Times*** for publication, if the Editors see fit.

If anyone should have a desire to contact Elder Neikirk, his address is 203 Garden Park Drive, Nicholasville, Kentucky, 40356.

Your consideration in publishing this will be appreciated.

Sincerely,
Wayman G. Chapell

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Soldier Creek Primitive Baptist Church of Marshall County, Ky., a presbytery met October 10, 1981, at Salem Church near Benton, Ill. for the examination of Brother Fred Neikirk, and if found qualified in accordance with the written Word of God, to ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Elder.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Richard H. Campbell as Moderator, and Elder Wayman G. Chapell as Clerk. Opening prayer was offered by Elder D. R. Cabbage.

Deacon Warnard Locke, having been duly appointed by Soldier Creek Church while in conference on September 13, 1981 as spokesman for the church, delivered Brother Fred Neikirk to the Presbytery.

The Presbytery, being satisfied with the

examination and answers given by the candidate and spokesman, administered the laying on of hands. The Ordination Prayer was delivered by Elder H. R. Prince. Elder Paul Poyner delivered the charge.

The Moderator asked the Soldier Creek Church if the church approved the work of the Presbytery. The answer was in the affirmative.

The ordained was delivered back to the church as an Elder of the Old Primitive Baptist Church at Soldier Creek.

The minutes of the Presbytery were read and adopted. The Presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder W. E. Prince.

Minutes Signed:

Elders:
W. D. Griffin, W. E. Prince, Herbert R. Prince, D. R. Cabbage, Paul Poyner, Richard H. Campbell, Moderator, Wayman G. Chapell, Clerk

Deacons:
James Cunningham, Burnell B. Williams, Richard L. Stegall, Floir A. Chappell, Warnard Locke

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Gladehill, Va.

Dear Editors:

I see my ***Signs of the Times*** will be due again in January 1982. I enjoy them so much I don't want to miss any copies, so enclosed is a check to pay mine for two more years and use the balance for whatever is needed. My Daddy, W. Lester Perdue, used to receive "Zion's Landmark" years ago, and I would read them both when I was a child at home. My Daddy passed away November 12, 1917. I wonder if he wrote his experience in either of these Baptist papers, if so, I would love to get a copy of it. I will pay whatever the cost might be.

I received my October ***Signs of the Times*** yesterday and read it through before I went to bed. It had so much good reading in it. When I read pieces which people have written and then I hear of any of them passing away I feel like I have known them and that I have lost a friend in Christ. I love the Primitive Baptist doctrine, even though I am not a member, but I go all I can to hear the preaching.

Remember me in your prayers when blessed to feel to do so. The good Lord has been so good to me.

Nannie Arrington

A NOTE TO ELDERS WHO RECEIVE THE SIGNS FREE

For a number of years many Old School or Primitive Baptists Elders have been getting the *Signs* free, with the understanding that they would help in their respective areas to get new subscribers. This policy has been taken up in the most recent meeting of the *Signs* Trustees, and a unanimous vote was cast to discontinue the policy, and ask those Elders who receive the paper free to help bear the burden by sending in the subscripton price.

We feel that it is the privilege of all who love this paper to support it, but not a duty or an obligation. We know the *Signs* is all the preaching many across this land get each month and many aged and poor of the flock put our ministers to shame in their generous support. If the *Signs* had to depend on the efforts of a number of our good brethren in the ministry to keep going, we would soon close up shop.

There are exceptions. We have Elders who continually send in new subscribers. Many who assist in this way are not even in what we call correspondence with those who get the paper out.

If you are receiving the paper free and are unable to send in the price for your subscription, please let us know. You will not be dropped. Otherwise, we expect to hear from you that you will help bear the burden.

Thank you so much for your past help. We still need it. If everyone who takes the *Signs* would make an effort to send in one new subscriber this year, we would be in excellent condition.

Editors

HOPEWELL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH HOPEWELL, NEW JERSEY 1715 - 1973 SPECIAL MEETING 4TH SUNDAY IN MARCH, 1982

The Lord willing, services will be held the fourth Sunday in March, beginning with singing at 10:45 A.M., at the Hopewell Old School Baptist Meetinghouse, downtown Hopewell, New Jersey. (Broad Street)

There have been no meetings at Hopewell since about 1973, and there are now no living members. Services will be conducted for the purpose of worship with members and friends of Sister Churches in the area, as well as local residents expected to be in attendance. Elder James F. Poole will moderate the meeting.

Hopewell was the second oldest Old School Baptist Church in America, being constituted in 1715. Many have felt it to be appropriate to meet once again where God so richly blessed His people for over 250 years.

For information or directions contact:
Elder James F. Poole
P.O. Box 1250
Salisbury, Maryland 21801
1-301-742-6406

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC. TO NOVEMBER 1981

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EDITORIAL

September 28, 1981

The Banner of Love
Elder A. E. Richards, Editor
Box 699
Ralls, Texas 79357

Dear Elder Richards:

After much reluctance I am writing you in regard to an article contained in your August, 1981 issue of "The Banner of Love". The "Banner" title of the article, found beginning on Page 7 is "A Visit to the Oldest Primitive Baptist Church in U.S.A.". This attracted my attention quickly, since for the last ten years I have been pastor of what every historian who has written on the subject says is the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in America, Welsh Tract Old School Baptist.

I hope to address this matter to you in the same spirit that I would want it

addressed to me were the circumstances reversed. I trust I come in a brotherly manner.

I would desire to avoid making your correspondent an offender for a word, as it is known that practically all people professing religion know the difference between the church building (meeting house) and the assembly that meets in the building, but several instances in this article the writer confuses the two. Paragraph 1, Page 7 is one example. Comments under the picture titled "Landmark Church" is another. The most blatant statement, however, is found in Par. 1, Page 8, and I quote - "The Landmark Church was formed by the group which moved away from the Welsh Tract Church because members felt the Welsh Tract Church congregation was becoming believers of what is referred to as "Absolute" Predestination. The *building* was built in 1715 and is the oldest Primitive Baptist Church building in America. The church meets every Sunday except First Sunday, *Thus also making it the oldest continuously active church.* The building is of beautiful native stone and has been well maintained now for the more than 266 years that it has been used." The next bit of confusion on this point is found under the picture titled "Welsh Tract Church", Page 8, and again I quote — "The old Welsh Tract Church is officially the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in America. The church was set up in 1903 (1701-J.F.P.) in Newark, Del. This building, which is now a Delaware historical structure, was the third (second-J.F.P.) building, for the church and was built in 1746. *This is the oldest church but not the oldest continuously used building."* There are other similar references but I will pass them by.

Pray tell me, Elder Richards, if Welsh Tract Church is the oldest church then *at best* is not the headline of this article and other similar references confusing on the surface? I give your writer benefit of the doubt that he was not deliberately misleading.

But now for a few facts on an article that was highly deficient of the same.

The Welsh Tract Church did not split, or divide, in 1715 with anyone over anything. Your correspondent says in Par. 6, Page 7, "The Welsh Tract Church split into two groups in 1715. The group which most people refer to as 'Absoluters' was in the original church building." We are in possession of the *original* records of Welsh Tract written in *Welsh* and *English* and I have gleaned them many times never seeing such information as this. Copies of this original record abound and can be verified by anyone desiring truth. If the writer of this article would carefully identify his source of information we would be very glad for the same. The truth, the simple truth is, dear Brother, no such information exists. Also note well that Welsh Tract Church did not split then or at *any other time over Absolute Predestination* or for that matter, over any other problem.

I will quote now the next sentence of Par. 6, Page 7 - "The other group set up a church about 10 miles north and became known as the Landmark Primitive Baptist Church." I ask pointedly and earnestly for your writer to tell us where he got such information as this. No record on earth exists (which could be considered genuine) of a Landmark Primitive Baptist Church being established in 1715. Even as late as 1832 when the famous Black Rock meeting was held their letters went out with this heading (address) "To the Particular Baptist Churches of the 'Old School' in the United States". Churches in the North then, as now, used the appellation "Old School" but as early as 1715 neither Primitive Baptist or Old School was used. Baptists were Baptists. The point I make is this - who ever is trying to pawn off the notion that a church

known as the Landmark Primitive Baptist Church was constituted in 1715 or anywhere near that date is thoroughly void of any knowledge of Baptist history. I may add that not only was the Landmark Primitive Baptist Church not in existence in 1715, it was not in existance in 1815, nor had it even come into existance in 1915, as I will shortly prove.

Next I want to notice the expression under the picture on Page 7 which reads in part, "The Landmark Church (sometimes called London Tract)....". For those who know their history, the meeting house in question has always been called the London Tract Meeting-house even to this very day. This is according to the records of Welsh Tract Church, London Tract Church, and all official documents whether local or State of Pennsylvania. Also, so long as a congregation existed at the meetinghouse (the last member died in the 1930's), the congregation was *always* known as London Tract Church. Never, ever was such a group as the Landmark Primitive Baptist Church heard of in that part of this Nation. I beg for records that prove otherwise.

For the record, I am sending you a copy of the original constitution of London Tract Church (lately attempted to be called Landmark Primitive Baptist Church) as taken from the record book of that church. You will note that the date is 1780, not 1715. You will note there was no division with Welsh Tract, their mother church. You will note they were dismissed in good standing to constitute the London Tract Church, not the Landmark Primitive Baptist Church. Are we speaking of two different churches? By no means! If so, where was the supposed Landmark Primitive Baptist Church for the 65 years before London Tract Church was duly constituted out of Welsh Tract? Again, we beg for even a scrap of record.

Let it be further known that that great work called "Hassell's History of the Church of God" makes *no record whatever* of any Landmark Primitive Baptist Church constituted in the first half of the 1700's (see Page 552, Hassell) or for that matter, at any other date in history. Hassell and all other historians do say, however, that London Tract was constituted in 1780. Also, in agreement with this is the record of the first one hundred years of the Philadelphia Association. (See A.D. Gillette, "Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association").

Brother Richards, this, to me, blows holes in the notion that Landmark Primitive Baptist Church is the oldest church or church building either. If that building is 266 years old, as your correspondent says, and yet no congregation existed for the 65 years between 1715 and 1780, to what purpose was it built, and for whom? We may err on opinions and interpretation of the scriptures, but we must view history as concrete. What has occurred and is, is a matter of record and cannot be disputed. Records abound on this subject but none to support the article of question. I have wondered if possibly your writer has confused London Tract Church with Hopewell Old School Baptist Church in New Jersey, which was indeed established in 1715 according to Hassell's History, yet I cannot see how such an article as this could be approved by those people who today call themselves the Landmark Primitive Baptist Church.

I submit for your further consideration a document which is a complete contradiction to the article in question. This is the agreement the Landmark Primitive Baptist Church entered into with the Trustees of London Tract Church, agreeing to pay $100.00 annually to rent the London Tract building. It is signed by the President and Secretary of the Trustees of London Tract and also signed by Elder Thompson of Bel Air, Maryland, and others representing the so called

Landmark Primitive Baptist Church. (See Attached)

Only one question need be raised here and it is this: Why would the Landmark Primitive Baptist Church lease a building they claim they built in 1715 and met in continuously for 245 years?

We also have the records stating clearly when the Landmarkers first petitioned the Trustees to use the building and were refused. This was in 1942, two hundred twenty-seven years after the supposed constitution of the Landmark movement.

In December 1945 the Trustees met and voted to let Mt. Carmel Church, Bel Air, Maryland use the building (still known as London Tract meetinghouse) and I am sure not even your correspondent believes two different churches were meeting there. What, then of all these claims?

Fact: Landmark Primitive Baptist Church *did not* exist until the middle of the 20th century, a bit late to be the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in America.

Fact: London Tract *did* exist from 1780 *on the same spot of ground* claimed by the Landmarkers and continued until the last member died in the 1930's.

Fact: Welsh Tract and the *only* church existing at that vicinity (properly called London Tract) were in full fellowship, first in the Philadelphia Association and later in the Delaware Association. This can be established by volumes of Minutes and other records. They were never separated over predestination, as they believed the same thing on the subject.

Brother Richards, I will not burden you with further evidence on this subject. Any fair minded person can see the article in question is without historical or factual basis and is, at best, a loosely gathered compilation of erroneous views.

We intend to publish this letter to you in the "Signs of the Times", and hope you will do the same in the "Banner of Love". If you can send me a response to the same in the next 30 days, we will be glad to submit it also in the interest of fairness.

In closing I will add one further comment. It is lamentable that those holding to the doctrine of Conditional Time Salvation (a doctrine which exists nowhere prior to the middle of the last century) have such a malignant attitude towards those they call "Absoluters". Anyone who traces the history of their Primitive Churches must go back thru the period when *all* Old School or Primitive Baptists were unlimited predestinarians and subscribed to the London confession as written previous to the Fulton Convention mutilation of it in 1900.

Thank you, Brother Richards, for taking the time to read my response to the Landmark issue. Believe me when I say I hold no ill will to you, your paper, or your correspondent.

In hope of life to come,
(Elder) James F. Poole

RESPONSE OF ELDER RICHARDS

Elder Richards answered my letter by saying he had visited Welsh Tract once, but he declined to comment on my letter or give a reason for printing such a garbled attempt at doctoring up history.

Editor

BOOK NOTICE

It gives me great pleasure to announce the re-printing of the book ***"TRIED IN THE FURNACE"*** by Elder E. J. Lambert, my Dad.

The book was re-printed from an original book. The hard cover is red with gold lettering. The author's obituary has been added in the back of the book.

The price of each book is $5.00, postage and handling $1.10. Arkansas residents add .15 for sales tax.

BOOKS MAY BE ORDERED FROM:
Charles T. Lambert
Route 7, Box 25
Hot Springs, Arkansas 71901

(The Editors of the ***Signs*** are glad to recommend this book)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

GIDEON'S ARMY

THREE COMPANIES — EMPTY PITCHERS — LAMPS, &c.

In reply to brother Isaac McCarty, of New London, Iowa, we will give such views as we have upon the figurative import of the text recorded in Judges 7:16, which reads thus: "And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers."

The records of the Old Testament we are informed are given for our instruction, and contain a shadow of good things to come, things in which the saints of the present dispensation have an interest. The people of Israel whom God redeemed from Egypt, and with a strong hand and outstretched arm brought out of the house of bondage and through the sea, and through the wilderness into the promised land, were undisputably typical of the spiritual people which were chosen of God in Christ, and redeemed from the bondage of the law, the pollution and guilt of sin, and brought by his almighty arm into the gospel rest which was prefigured by the land of promise. The propensity of Israel to murmur, fret and rebel, and when not under the chastising hand of God to go into idolatry, clearly portrays the wandering and rebellious propensity of the spiritual tribes of the Lord to depart from his precepts, wax fat and kick, when left to develop their carnal proclivities, for the trial of their faith. As Israel were often chastised for their rebellion and idolatry by being driven before their enemies until thoroughly made sensible of their own weakness and entire dependence on God for deliverance, so the children of God are frequently reduced to the greatest extremities, and with deep contrition to call on God to deliver them from their distress.

The connection of our text shows that Israel had done evil in the sight of the Lord, and had been delivered by the Lord into the hands of Midian for seven years; and when they were sorely oppressed by their enemies, the angel of the Lord appeared unto Gideon, the son of Jonah, and commanded him to demolish the altar of Baal, and cut down the grove; and this exasperated the Midianites and the Amalekites and the children of the east, and they raised a mighty army, and came down upon the people of Israel with a host that was like the sand for number, and encamped against Israel. Israel, now humbled under the chastening hand of God, in their distress called on God for deliverance; and God, by his angel, appeared again unto Gideon, and promised to deliver Israel by his hand; and having strengthened him for the work, gave him special instruction how to proceed. To all human appearance the whole combined forces of all the tribes of Israel could make but a very feeble and fruitless resistance to such a mighty army; but God had determined, instead of augmenting the army of Israel, to reduce the handful which were with Gideon, from thirty-two thousand men to the number of only three hundred, lest Israel should boast that by their power or valor they had achieved the victory. Truly God is jealous for his own glory, which he will not give to another, nor his praise unto graven images. God's method of strengthening the heart and hands of Gideon, and Gideon's misgivings and fearfulness, are well illustrated in his dealings with his children in every age. We all know something of the doubtings, fearings, trembling and slowness of heart to receive and rely upon the kind and gracious promises of our God. But when he strips us for the race, or harnesses us for the battle, then we can, through him, run through a troop or leap over a wall,

and do valiantly.

We may trace this subject far, and compare God's dealings with Gideon and Israel with the experience of all the saints in their numerous conflicts with their enemies and their triumph over them; but there appears to us a still deeper and more striking application of the figurative import of the part of the subject presented in the text proposed for our more especial consideration.

From the allusion to this subject, Isa. 9:4-7, we conclude that Gideon, in leading the little band of God's elect or chosen people to triumph over the Midianitish hosts, was a figure of Christ, as the Captain of our salvation. The removing the yoke and burden and staff and rod of oppression of Israel by Gideon, was attended with confused noise in the Midianitish camp, and garments rolled in blood; not by swords of steel or weapons of carnal slaughter used by Gideon and his men, but by confusion in the enemies' camp, which set every man's sword against his fellow; and this confusion and consternation was occasioned by what was to them the confused noise of three hundred trumpets breaking suddenly upon their astonished ears, and simultaneously with the noise, the fearful glare of light from three hundred lamps, which carried dismay and terror to their quaking hearts. so when our spiritual or anti-typical Gideon, the "child born, the Son given, the Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace," should vanquish all the enemies of his cause and people, it shall answer to the figure and be with burning and fuel of fires. When "that wicked shall be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." — 2 Thess. 2:8.

If we are right in taking Gideon in this figure to represent Christ, then the three hundred chosen men, elected by God himself, may represent the chosen people of God under the three dispensations, including patriarchs and prophets under the two former dispensations, and the apostles and saints of the gospel dispensation. This divides the Lord's host into three companies, as they are represented by a multitude of corresponding figures. When Jacob, on his journey, came to the land of the people of the east, he saw a well in the field, and lo, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it, for out of that well they watered the flocks. But it was a fountain sealed, a spring shut up, so that they could not be watered until the flocks were gathered, and the stone removed. The stone, or tables of the law, shut up from the flocks the waters of life, until Rachel (the figure of the gospel church) brought up her father's flock, and then the stone was removed and the flocks were watered. Gen. 29. The division of the Lord's chosen people is represented in the three companies, by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; by Noah, Daniel and Job; by Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, in the burning furnace, and the form of the fourth in their midst, whose form was like the Son of God; in the sign of the prophet Jonah, the three days and three nights he was in the whale's belly, and the three days in which Christ said he would build the temple, the three days he was in the heart of the earth; with many other parallel figures, all of which show that the great battle of the Lord, in which the mighty hosts of the worshippers of Baal or other idols shall be vanquished and go to confusion together, and the wicked shall be consumed by the spirit of the mouth of our great Captain, and destroyed by the brightness of his coming, as the Midianites were by the sound of the trumpets blown by the mouth of Gideon, and reiterated by those who were with him, who were "called and chosen and faithful," and whom Gideon commanded to look at him, and do as they saw him do, should agree with this figurative number.

"And he put a trumpet in every man's hand." Not in the hand of every man of Midian, or of Amalek, nor even every man of Israel; but every man of the three hundred whom God has chosen for that service. The proclamation of the gospel of the grace of God is often spoken of in the scriptures as the blowing of the trumpet. Two trumpets of silver, of a whole piece, where made at God's command by Moses, to be blown for the gathering of the people of Israel, and for the journeying of the camp. A jubilee trumpet was sounded to announce the year of release to the captives of Israel. "And it shall come to pass in that day that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in his holy mount at Jerusalem." — Isa. 27:13. "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other." — Matt. 24:31. The trumpets used by the three hundred chosen men of Gideon did not divide nor scatter Gideon's men when sounded by command of and in harmony with the sounding of the trumpet of their illustrious leader; but it scattered and confused their enemies. So the gospel of the son of God, when sounded at his command, and precisely as the chosen trumpeters witness the sounding of it by their glorious leader and commander, will always gather those who have an ear to hear what the Spirit saith to the churches; but "if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare for the battle?" The gospel is the sharp sword which proceedeth out of the mouth of him who in righteousness doth judge and make war. This is the "sword of the Lord and of Gideon," and it will surely carry confusion into the camp of the enemies, and ultimately set every man's hand against his fellow, as in the days of Midian. The sword of the Lord, as we have said, is not a carnal weapon made of steel, but it is quick (vital) and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword; it is mighty through God, for it divides asunder between joints and marrow, soul and spirit, and it is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Such a sword, a "Thus saith the Lord God," is put in the hand of every soldier of the cross; but it cannot be used with good effect only at the proper time.

The apostles, after receiving the commission, were commanded to tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. Had some of Gideon's men blown the trumpet before Gideon gave the signal, they might have done mischief; but, "Look on me, and do likewise. When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of the camp, and say, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." So says our spiritual leader: Look on me, observe my example, do as ye see me do, obey my commandments, and follow in my footsteps.

Observe, the trumpets were furnished and put in every man's hand by Gideon, as were also the empty pitchers and the lamps. Trumpets have a variety of sounds; some are shrill and piercing, some are smooth and soft, others are harsh and grating in their sound; some are to announce an approaching conflict, calling the people to arms, and some are to proclaim a jubilee of release to prisoners and captives; but for every purpose the trumpet must give a certain sound. Should every man furnish his own trumpet, they would not be likely to harmonize in sound. Some of those that were used by Israel were made of rams' horns, others of silver, and all adapted to the purpose for which they were to be used. The trumpets put in the hands of Gideon's three hundred men fitly represented the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which our spiritual Gideon has

bestowed on every one whom he has called and chosen to grapple with the powers of darkness, and stand in defense of the faith which was once delivered to the saints. And let it also be well observed that the trumpets in the hands of Gideon's men were only understood by the men of Gideon; but made a confused, unintellgible noise in the ears of the Midianitish camp. The same trumpets that cheered and strengthened the hands and hearts of the men of Gideon, carried consternation and death to their enemies. So the same apostolic gifts that are "a savor of life unto life to them that are saved, are a savor of death unto death to them that perish." "Blessed are they that know the joyful sound." "The preaching of Christ is to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, (as were Gideon's men,) Christ the power of God and the Wisdom of God."

The empty pitchers may represent the servants of God, who in themselves are but dust and ashes, moulded by the potter, and formed into vessels of honor or of dishonor, according to the pleasure of the potter; in themselves empty, and having no power to either cheer Israel or confound the enemy; but he who has formed the vessels to honor has committed to them a sacred treasure, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

The lamps, that were concealed from the view of the enemy by the empty pitchers until the pitchers were broken to let the light shine forth, is clearly illustrated by the apostle, 2 Cor. 4:5-7: "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure (of light) in earthen vessels, (as Gideon's men had their light in earthen vessels, and for the same purpose, too,) that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." And as the mighty hosts of Midian, of Amalek and the people of the east were overwhelmed and destroyed when Gideon caused the light to shine out of the darkness of the empty pitchers, even so will the Lord consume anti-christ or that wicked with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy them with the brightness of his coming. — 2 Thess. 2:8. God's chosen ministers, who take forth the precious from the vile, are "as God's mouth." — Jer. 15:19. Of the Spirit of the Lord, it is said unto the Zion of the Lord, whose light is come, and on whom the glory of the Lord has risen, "My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever." — Isa. 59:21. The light in Gideon's pitchers, and the Spirit and words of the Lord, which are a light to our way and a lamp to our feet, God has put in the mouth of Zion's seed, as Gideon put the lamps into the empty pitchers of his men, and made them to be as his mouth, in declaring his words and in putting forth the precious from the vile.

Although we have extended our remarks to a great length, we cannot well forbear to add a few further reflections on the subject, especially in regard to the useful instruction it presents to the soldiers of the cross of Christ. Neither the pitchers, the lamps or the trumpets, or even the men, had any power to subdue the mighty hosts that were encamped against them. The blowing of the trumpets, the breaking of the pitchers, the shining of the lamps, and the crying, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," all would have been ineffectual, had not God himself directed the whole matter. It was at God's appointed time and in his own way that this great army was to be put to flight, pursued and destroyed. How

often, when Zion appears to languish, and the enemy is spread out like grasshoppers, filling the whole land, that unbelief suggests, "The Lord has forgotten to be gracious," and scoffers say, "He is slack concerning his promises," and our trembling hearts inquire, "By whom shall Jacob rise, for he is small?" But we forget that the battle is the Lord's; and when we are made to triumph it will always be in such a way as shall constrain us to say, "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory throught our Lord Jesus Christ."

See the well-drilled chosen handful of men, receiving from God their instructions through Gideon; how very important that they receive every word of the instruction, and obey to the very letter. "Look on me," said Gideon. Should they for a moment turn their eyes from Gideon, they would be terrified at the sight of their enemies, and if they looked at their own feeble numbers, or to their lamps in empty earthen vessels, the sight would be appalling; but as the eye of the servant is to his master, they were commanded to look alone to their leader, and away from everything else. So we find it enjoined on all the saints to be "Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith." "Behold, when I come to the outside of the camp it shall be that as I do, so shall ye do. When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets on every side of the camp, and say, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon."

To-day hosts of earth and hell are encamped against the little flock of our Immanuel; their number is like the sand for multitude, their implements and munitions of war are cruel and deadly, embracing all that earth and hell can supply, and they defiantly challenge the armies of the living God, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him? And their mouth is open in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." — Rev. 13. Like "the lily among thorns, and as the apple tree among the trees of the wood," the little flock, unto whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom, the church of God is seen. "And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written upon their forehead." "And I saw as it were a sea of glass, mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God, and they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." — Rev. 14:1, and 15:2, 3.

When Gideon required encouragment to allay his fears and inspire him with courage, God sent him to listen to a dream related by a Midianite, and interpreted by his fellow in the camp. But how simple the dream. The dreamer did not relate that he saw in his dream the bright artillery of heaven displayed, and the bolts of vengeance hurled in a storm of awful wrath, no fearful display of superior numbers, or of terrible death-dealing engines of warfare; but a simple, harmless cake of barley bread, which a hungry soldier might welcome with joy; but in the interpretation it was portentous of evil to their hosts; it tumbled into the camp, and came into a tent and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that it laid along. But the interpreter saw in the ominous cake the sword of Gideon and Midian's discomfiture. The little flock of Jesus are

looked upon by their proud and scornful enemies now with as little dread as they would feel at the sight of a barley cake; but God has said,"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

The wisdom of men would suppose the army of the Lord should be greatly augmented, so as to be able to vie with the numerous forces of the enemy; but God in his wisdom caused the number, small as it was, to be reduced from thirty-two thousand to three hundred men, lest they should say, "Mine own hand hath saved me," and thus rob him of the glory of their salvation. So men are now beating up for volunteers to make what they call the Lord's army strong enough to evangelize the heathen and convert the world; but all their volunteer recruits will be dismissed and sent home, like the surplus men of Gideon, before the final triumph shall be accomplished, and the naked arm of God, uncovered by human aid or instrumentalities, shall be made bare in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. — Isa. 53:10.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, June 1, 1876.)

Dear Sirs:

I see my subscription has expired to the ***Signs of the Times,*** and I am enclosing a check for a renewal. We enjoy the ***Signs*** very much, as we are elderly and cannot attend all the meetings we would like tc.

Yours in fellowship, we hope,
Mr. & Mrs. Odis Young

OBITUARIES

ARTHUR R. REED

Arthur R. Reed was born in Floyd County, Virginia on October 24, 1894, and passed away February 12, 1981.

He was married to Burnice Conner in January, 1916. She passed away in May, 1944. On March 9, 1946 he was married to Annie Martin. To this union one son was born. He was Ramond O. Reed.

Brother Reed was a firm believer in salvation by grace. He had a good understanding of the truth, and he loved to meet with the brethren. He followed these people for a good many years before asking for a home with them, and when he did come, there was no questions that needed to be asked. He was baptized by his pastor, Elder Roy Agee.

Brother Reed was sick for several years, but he bore his sickness with patience. We miss Brother Reed, but we know that no one can miss him like his wonderful wife. We met in his home and had preaching a month before he passed away, and we never saw him rejoice any more. We feel our loss is his eternal gain. We are not uneasy about his resting place.

His funeral was preached at Salem Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Roy Agee and Elder Lane Carter. Interment was at Restvale Cemetry.

Written by one who loved him.

Elder Roy Agee

QUINCY A. GLADDING

On June 23, 1981 at age 90, our beloved father, Quincy A. Gladding, was called to his eternal home following a severe stroke. Brother Gladding was laid to rest beside his wife, Alice, who preceded him in death in 1963 at age 70. The burial was at Black Rock Cemetery, Butler, Maryland, with Elders Poole and Wood attending.

Brother Quincy as he was affectionately called by those who knew and loved him, was a faithful member and deacon of Baltimore Ebenezer Church having been baptized in 1920 by Elder Joshua T. Rowe. He also served as deacon at Black Rock Church for many years and was a trustee of the Primitive Baptist Home Fund, Inc.

He leaves two sons, Henry A. (Catonsville); Melvin B. (Westminister); one daughter, Jennye A. Osborne (Westminster); one Sister, Marie Holdefer (Florida); five grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

He will be remembered by many for his love of the doctrine of the saints and his happy countenance when singing the songs of Zion among the brethren.

Written in loving memory,
Jennye (Peggy) Osborne

BROTHER SPENCER SIMPSON

Brother Spencer F. Simpson was born to John W. and Frances Simpson on May 18, 1895. Our Saviour called him home May 30, 1981, making his stay on earth 86 years and 12 days. "Precious

in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints". (Psa. 116:15)

A native of Caswell County, he was married to Sister Mary Moore Simpson on October 21, 1920. to this union were born three daughters, Sister Mary Blalock, Mrs. Nancy Rumble, and Mrs. Betty Burris; four sons, John W., Thomas, James H., and Franklin Simpson; 14 grandchildren, and 8 great grandchildren.

In July, 1928 Brother Simpson came forward and was received into the fellowship of Bush Arbor Church and was baptized by the late Elder W. C. King. He walked humbly and softly for 53 years among his brethren and was loved by all who knew him. His foremost conversation was to talk on the Scriptures. As his body was weakening in his waning years, he was strong in the faith. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." (Rev. 14:13)

His funeral was conducted at Lowes Funeral Home by his Pastor, Elder Wallis Smith, assisted by Mr. Michael Hooper. His body was laid to rest in Alamance Memorial Park beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Written by T. I. Rice as ordered in conference Saturday, June 13, 1981. Be it resolved that one copy be sent to the family, one placed on the church records, and one for publication.

Earl S. Rudd, Clerk
Wallis Smith, Moderator

ELDER EULIE E. McCOOL

Elder Eulie McCool of Steens, Mississippi fell asleep in Jesus Wednesday, February 11, 1981 in a Columbus, Mississippi hospital. His funeral was held at Bethel Primitive Baptist Church near Steens with Elder H. C. Moon officiating. Burial was in Bethel Church cemetery.

Survivors include his wife, Annie McCool of Steens; a son, James W. McCool, Cedar Bluff, Mississippi; two brothers, Gilbert B. McCool, Steens and J. D. McCool, Gordo, Alabama; three grandchildren, Sherry, James M., and Maggie Elizabeth.

Brother McCool married Annie Mullican, and to this union was born one son, James. Brother McCool was ordained to the full gospel ministry on November 16, 1964. He was serving before his death the following churches: Bethel, Macedonia, and Mt. Carmel of the Buttahatchie Association of which he was the moderator: Pleasant Ridge, Zion, Salem, and Mt. Zion churches of the Hopewell Association.

The Lord was pleased in pursuance of His divine purpose to remove from us by the hand of death, a very dear pastor and friend. He who talked to us and preached Jesus from the pulpit will speak to us no more on earth. His grand theme was Jesus; and though he cannot now speak of Jesus any more on earth, I believe with all my heart, his soul and spirit is now singing this song in heaven, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain for us."

The Word of God declares, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." Their death is dear to the Lord, honourable and glorious; and shall be precious in His sight to a never-ending eternity. To all who so dearly loved him, the death of our dear brother is our great loss. His great usefulness, the divine power which attended his ministry, and how it was blessed of God to so many precious souls will always be remembered.

My dear friends, even though his death is our loss, it is his gain. He could adopt the language of the great Apostle Paul when he said, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Brother McCool was ever ready to acknowledge, that whatever he possessed was of grace and grace alone. He derived all his gifts and all his grace from the fountain Head of Life, the Lord Jesus. The extent of his gain we cannot say, we must die to know what heaven is. "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am: that they may behold my glory." When a dear child of God leaves this walk of life, Jesus is present. They fall asleep in Him, and the angelic hosts are present to welcome the entrance of their souls and spirits into mansions of bliss. The time came for our dear brother to depart his life on earth to a far greater union with all the dear saints who have died in the Lord.

Yes, the exact time came for his removal, the Lord had no more work for him to do on earth. His work was finished, the battle was fought and he now possesses the crown. He ran the race and obtained the prize. Even though he fought and ran in much weakness of body, yet he never complained.

Now, O Lord, let thy blessing rest upon his precious widow, defend her in danger, guide her by thy council. May she feel that underneath her are thy everlasting arms. O Lord be her refuge and defense. Let thy blessing rest upon his son and family, upon the dear saints he so faithfully served, and upon all his many brethren and friends.

Our fellow yoke minister was both a doctrinal preacher and an experimental and a practical preacher, and he practiced what he preached. It would be hard to find a more faithful servant of God, than Elder Eulie McCool.

Written by one who loved him, upon request of his family.

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Signs of the Times

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Editors

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MY GOD

"I trusted in thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my God". Ps. 31:14.

O Lord! and art thou not my God?
Though Satan dares suggest.
That I've no claim
My hopes are vain,
And I am sore oppress'd.

O Lord! and art thou not my God?
Though sin and hell agreed,
Thy work deny,
My faith defy,
And gloomy doubts succeed.

O Lord! and art thou not my God?
Though guilty fears arise;
And unbelief,
That cursed thief,
The sacred bond denies?

O Lord! and art thou not my God?
Though darkness intervene,
To hide the grace
Of that dear face
Which I have sometimes seen.

O Lord! and art thou not my God?
E'en though I cannot see
My int'rest clear,
And often fear,
Thou hast not loved me.

O Lord! if thou art not my God,
Why should I grieve and sigh
If thou depart
Or raise my heart
With joy, when thou art nigh?

O Lord! if thou art not my God,
How came this heart to love?
No love but thine
Could kindle mine,
Or raise my soul above.

O Lord! I've said, Thou art my God!
I'll worship at thy throne;
Till thou deny,
My hopes rely
On thee, my God alone.

O Lord! I've said, Thou art my God!
My Father thee I call;
And thee I'll own,
My God alone
My everlasting All.

J.C.

Somers Town
Nov. 1, 1837

FROM TEXAS

Walnut Springs, Texas

Dear Editors,

I am enclosing a check to renew my subscription to the ***Signs.*** I surely do enjoy getting it every month. I do not live close to my church, so I don't get to go back there very often. The ones around me are not like mine.

I have surely enjoyed Elder Beebe's sermons that you have printed. I am looking forward to the publication of his book of sermons.

A little Sister, if one at all,
Neva M. White

Warren, Ark.

To Signs of the Times:

Please renew my subscription for two more years. I am enclosing a check.

I am ninety-three years old and can't see to read very well, but I enjoy hearing the *Signs* read to me. I look forward to each one.

May the good Lord bless each one of you is my prayers.

Sincerely,
Mrs. J.W. Gambill

COMFORTABLE FEELINGS IN RELIGION

"Her ways are ways of pleasantness" has a truth in it; though not as the religionists of the day understand it. The pleasantness of religion is only attained by the elect: the pleasantness of all the mongrel race of Exeter Hall is the infernal tint on the sea before the great shipwreck of damnation swallows them all up. For proselyte-making Fullerism, and Arminianism are the A. and Z. of the Exeter Hall Societies.

The peace and joy, the sweet delights from time to time, and the mystic pleasures (hid from all else) of the Almighty's dealings with elect souls, charm, refresh, and entranze more or less the elect race in this sin-clouded world wherein we live at present. The amazing troubles we have gone through about religion, the freshness of honesty encircling all our connection with religion, encourages us. The mysterious dealings of God with us (such as no Arminian, Fullerite, or head-knowledge Calvinist knows any thing of); the

single eye to God's glory through sincere fear or love; sensible destruction from the law of works; and life sensibly breathed from electing grace on our law killed souls; a tender conscience; and Christ's sensibly imputed righteousness on our feeling souls; give us such a thrill of real, solid hope and faith at times, as to convince us of our own salvation and of the predestinated damnation of all non-elect souls. "Tophet was ordained of old". To see from our own amazing expereince how narrow the road is that leads to glory! And that we are of the number of the highly favoured few predestinated to find it! A sense experimentally of the eternity and unchangeableness of God! That with Him there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. That if we are saints, we were so millions of years ago in God's eye as much as we are now! That Christ was the lamb, verily foreordained before the foundation of the world. That before ever Adam or Eve were created, the elect were as much elected and saved in God's eye as they are now or ever will be. And to feel that we, I say, by the astonishing experience we have gone through, and by the perpetual feelings we have involuntarily about religion, are constrained to feel (whether we will or no) that God has fixed on us as part of the astonishing and small remnant of election; while He has damned all the rest! (Matt. 25:46). These things overcome us! We lay our faces in the dust! We say in the greatness of our confounding humility, "Can these things be so?" While these darting feelings run through our tender conscience, trembling at sin and experimentally trusting on Christ's sensibly imputed righteousness, embroidering, beautifying, and glorifying our souls inwardly; while the very times and ways when the Almighty revealed Christ's righteousness, and sensibly gave it internally to our souls, shine before us; and the renewed persuasion and Almighty feeling that we shall be His at that stormy, yet sunshiny day, when He makes up his jewels and damns the reprobate; this, this is what vessels of wrath hate, and what the vessels of mercy feed on; this is what Cain hated, and what Abel loved; "Having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." (Heb. 11:13)

A union of likes and dislikes with God, as regards both men and things, is a great blessing in the soul. I do not wonder to hear men say religion does not consist in feeling; for most have no feelings of any account as regards religion. But to say that religion does not consist of feeling, I will be bold to say, is doctrine not fit for devils, or men, or angels to hear. It is an affront both to divine and moral truth to hear it. It is an affront even to common sense to say so. For what either in a divine or natural way can we know except by feeling satisfactorily? What of pleasure or pain can we know except by feeling? The angels in heaven know they are happy by feeling. The devils in hell know they are miserable by feeling. Men of common sense know in this world whether they are comfortable or not according to their feelings. And divine men judge whether they are under the clouds or sunshine of God, according to their feelings. And, therefore, what on earth, or in heaven, or hell, men can mean by saying that religion does not consist in feeling, I cannot divide. Neither can any one else, I verily believe, except that it is as dreams, nonsense, and stuff to make such a declaration.

Feeling is the very germ, spark, and kernel of divine life in the soul. Like the pulse, it is the mark of life. When the pulse ceases, a surgeon knows life is fled. When feeling is absent in religion, we know there is nothing but death in the soul. For feeling is the characteristic of life. "For the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a

reward; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun." (Ecc. 9:5, 6)

Divine faith being the substance of things hoped for, we touch the word of life, handle it, taste it. Supernatural faith thus drinks in at times the draught of joy and gladness; making as it were its bones fat. As it is written, "Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works." (Ecc. 9)

This paper is not written professedly on the tribulations of electing religion: I must treat on them, God being my guide, in another paper. Suffice it here to say, that as night is to day, as winter is to summer, as ploughing and harrowing are to agriculture, and as cold weather is the excellent set-off against the cloying warmth; so tribulations are the very nerve and sinew that uphold, build, and alone, under God, render healthy in the world the living fabric of spiritual religion in every elect soul. "In the day of adversity consider". (Ecc. 7:14) Those days of consideration are many. "For the days of darkness shall be many." (Ecc. 9:8) Until the day of eternity dawn; and the shadows of time flee away with all sorrow for evermore.

Spiritual pleasure in this life is taken up in beholding and examining and in contemplating the earnest-penny and the wave sheaf of eternal life which God himself has with his own hands laid up in the treasure-house of our experience. No miser with half such greediness looks on his gold mammon, as the godly man gloats with divine and ineffable gratitude and wonder at seeing his poor name enrolled in the Lamb's book of life; "I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness". "And I will replenish every weary soul." (Jer. 31:14, 25).

To eat hidden manna, and to feel vanity stamped on every creature; to be weaned from every thing but God in any supreme love: to be refreshed in the multitude of peace: to feel how soon every creature will be taken away from us, and that one's everlasting treasure is manifestively in God: to have a sensible feeling that after this short life is ended our poor experience will burst into a triumphant and endless day; and that all hypocrites and pretenders shall come short of that promised rest; and that we, unworthy though we be, have the spark of endless life, integrity, and godly principles within us, implanted there by God's own hands, as it were; these things, I say, are a little of the honey and sweet satisfactions which from day to day regale, freshen, and delight the elect soul who knows that he is at peace with God!

The poor dead stuff which in books, preaching, and conversation is palmed off as religion by the hoards of professors is a burden to a divine man! The obituaries in all the magazines are nine out of ten, says he, of such characters and by such parsons; the experience mentioned in them is so slender, and the parsons they used to be friendly with and under whose preaching they used to sit, are such Samaritans or Hagarenes; that in nine cases out of ten the obituaries are of dead men and all written by dead parsons. For every parson in England almost curses William Huntington, the greatest man of God since the days of the apostles, as his writings show.

Says a divine man, I would not give one pin for talk about religion, unless it is pressed as wine of the finest scent and flavour from the pure and heavenly vineyard of Christ in the soul!

One of the greatest pleasures and comforts of elect religion is the standing on the high ground in sincere experimental real feelings in the soul, mentioned by the psalmist in these words, "There is none upon earth that I desire besides thee." (Ps. 73:25) A sense of all creatures being God's and a sense that he is in the list of the elect and not of the reprobate, makes a godly man, from

varied experience, declare from time to time that there is none upon earth he desires except God. He is experimentally sensible that there is none in heaven but God can help him: but to say in uprightness and simplicity before a heart-searching God, that there is none upon earth that he desires except him: and to have such an experimental series of dealings with God and of his manifestations to him in the use of all creatures is one of the most mild and admirable gems that adorn the coronet of divine wisdom in the soul; throwing a light and lustre over the whole frame of creation itself such as no natural man with the cold moonlight of mere reason or natural religion knows anything of!

To see mercy triumphing against justice in our behalf, and alleviating a little the lot of our condition in this life; to see how God has tied up a little the arm of his wrath against us in temporal things: the delight of thankful hearts; and the restored and subdued use and enjoyment of all the pilgrim-mercies of our earthly and chequered life journey in this world; but almost above all to see our answers to prayer, and that we "Have the ear" of God; all these things spur on our divine loyalty to our electing God, and make us to wish at times we had done with the night of this world! These things increase our thirst for the fulness of those pure, serene, and unsullied delights which will surround our raptured eyesight in the marvellous morn of eternity and of the general resurrection. These are some of the drops that distil as dew from the previous firmament of electing, redeeming, and quickening grace on the chosen race:

Truly, I have a goodly heritage! Truly, the crimson gleams of salvation's summer's day arise in the eastern horizon, blaze, and splendour of my soul! says the godly man at times! "We have seen his star in the east." (Matt. 2:2)

But it may be said that much of our faith is fancy! The dread realities of previous soul-trouble make us deeply to feel that our religion is far removed from fancy! The pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow: with the watchful eye of God's terrible majesty upon us, afflicting us with our sins; is an effectual preventive against us thinking our religion fancy! As, indeed, the damned in hell and the reprobate race on earth shall know that fancy has no part or lot in the sovereign and electing Monarch over all things. A godly man derives his comfort in part from considering all the way that the Lord his God hath led him for many a year in wanderings and in healings, in terrors and in comforts, in unspeakable woe and unspeakable bliss, (2 cor. 12:4) in the path of tribulations and of light, in past times and day by day.

"The frown of God, the sneer of man;
A hedge of providential gloom:
Our pride of years worn to a span;
And stings from sin's deep startling doom:

These madden and destroy our souls,
And wear our lives in woe away.
'Till gladd'ning mercy onward rolls
To fringe our night with gleams of day!"

The purity of our motives: the general uprightness of our life outwardly: the justification by wisdom thus of us as its children: in a blessed purity of heart in the open vision of God by the eye of electing faith through Christ's righteousness, causing to bud forth also the fruits of the Spirit which are in all righteousness and goodness and truth: these, with the whole mystic train of supernatural excellencies planted in the godly man's soul, make him feel with a witness that there is a perfection in his religion, thus bearing the stamp of God on all perfectness. "I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it". (Rev. 3:8)

Besides the varied pleasures which ever and anon will, as at the sight of some unexpected and beautiful landscape, be delighting the spiritual senses sooner or later, and more or less

of every elect man, there will be also a savour on his spirits, a calm serenity, and a healthy and lively blessedness over his feelings, which frowardness sullies or destroys. "With the froward thou wilt show thyself unsavoury." (2 Sam. 22:27) This makes him value a tender conscience. This makes him watchful lest he should lose his delights, lest sin, like a robber, should stop him and rob him of every farthing of the true riches which he sensibly has in his soul. "For love is strong as death; jealously is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame". (Song 8:6)

The pleasing flow thus of a godly man's thoughts from time to time: the swelling gale from time to time that puts into a pleasant commotion both hope and faith, warming them into the genial glow of life, and ornamenting and decorating the sails and canvass of the eternally predestinated vessels of mercy before they are wafted through bodily death into the real (though as yet unseen) harbour of eternal joy, I have thus endeavoured, in a few respects, from my own experience to emblazon and faintly set forth, as a confusion to hypocrites, and as an echo to the sounds of mercy, love, and grace in every law-killed and gospel-charmed soul.

Abingdon I.K.

"The Gospel Standard"
1838

We desire very much to have either the Pastor or Clerk of the various churches to send in to us any announcements you may feel to be of interest to the churches in general. The pages of the *Signs* are open to all of its supporters and we are glad to give space as needed.

We live in trying times; confusion abounds, and the love of many waxes cold. We feel strongly the *Signs* is a good medium of communication between the churches.

Of special interest would be suitable articles from those exercised to write.

May brotherly love continue.

Editors

FIVE MILE CREEK UNION MEETING

The Five Mile Creek Union Meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with New Hope Church, Friday, Saturday, and continuing thru the Second Sunday in April, 1982 (April 9, 10, 11).

New Hope Church is located approximately eleven miles north east of Jasper, Alabama, off Highway 69 to the right on Sipsey Road.

Lovers of the truth are invited to attend.

Elder H. C. Moon, Moderator
Brother Rufus Jacks, Clerk

January, 1982
Perth Amboy, N.J.

AN ANSWER TO A SEEKER IN THE GOSPEL OF PAUL

In the January issue of the *Signs of the Times* one of the readers asked for "light" or "comment" on "the question of how the gospel ought to be preached before a mixed congregation whose spiritual conditions the preacher has no knowledge of and no indication to go by". Whether the answer given here is the truth or amounts to any light is something that will ultimately only be decided by the one to whom the Father in heaven gave all judgment and whom I pray is the one who loved me and gave Himself for me.

The fact is, only one gospel was preached by the Apostles whether to those who professed to be saints or to those who claimed no tender feelings toward Jesus. Any other "gospel" to Paul was not the Gospel. "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But

though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." (Galatians 1:6-8) To distinguish between one message or gospel that is given to regenerates and another given to unregenerates is to say that the new schoolers are right when they say that one must preach "evangelistically" first, "get'em saved", and then later preach the "harsher doctrines of grace" in some back corner of a sermon. All Paul ever preached was the Gospel of Jesus. He had nothing left of himself or anything else to trust in. Paul summarized his apostleship in these words, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect". (I Corinthians 1:17) Paul has been taught of God to determine not to know anything among men save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. (I Corinthians 2:2) This gospel Paul preached to men was not prettily dressed up with its best foot put forward and with philosophies and ideas that would tickle men's ears, as if Paul were trying to make a sale. On the contrary, this gospel was preached in its purest form which emphasized the humiliation required on the natural mind to be able to believe it, "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men". (I Corinthians 1:25) For Paul to have hesitated to preach the *same* gospel before a mixed group, he would have had to deny that "we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life". (II Corinthians 2:16) This group is certainly a mixed group. That Paul was amazed that the same word or gospel could come to some in word only and leave them no better spiritually than they were before, but yet, to others it would come not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost (I Thessalonians 1:5) is certain. To Paul no one was sufficient for these things, "For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ". (II Corinthians 2:17) Paul was not afraid to preach the gospel unto sinners, for he realized that God could turn his worst enemies into His most trusted servants as he himself was who had been "a blasphemer and a persecutor, and injurious", (I Timothy 1:13) one who had "beyond measure persecuted the Church of God, and wasted it". (Galatians 1:13) Yet Paul knew that when it pleased God, who separated him from his mother's womb, and called him by His grace, to reveal His Son in him, that he might preach Him among the heathen, there was no other gospel to be preached. The churches of Judea which were in Christ "heard only that he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which he once destroyed". (Galatians 1:23) Paul's gospel could be summarized in this faithful saying, worthy of all acceptation, "That Christ came into the world to save sinners" of whom Paul believed with all of his heart he was chief. (I Timothy 1:15) Thus, in answer to the question of how the gospel is to be preached in "mixed" company; it is to be preached in the only way that it can be preached in *any* company; it is to be preached for the elect's sake that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. (II Timothy 2:10)

But we have not answered Mr. Crowley's question if we do not touch upon the question of to whom Paul did preach. We know that whatever kind of gospel it was, he preached it the same to all men. Although Paul was all things to all men wherein he adjusted himself to the peculiar customs and lifestyles of both Gentiles and Jews, yet he never changed or "watered down" his message so as to please men for then he

would no longer be the servant of Christ, but of men. (I Corinthians 9:19-22; Galatians 1:10) Notice also Acts 26:16-20) Here a summary of Paul's gospel is given. Paul was promised deliverance by God from whom? He was promised deliverance from "the people, and from the Gentiles". (Vs. 17) This way of dividing mankind is exhaustive, that is, everyone of the elect must fall under the category of either a Gentile or a Jew (which is what the term "people" must mean since it is contrasted to the word "Gentile"). Yet the obvious question is, if Paul was to be delivered from these people, how could they be the chosen people of God? The answer is that they were not. The group of people unto whom God said that He sent him is mentioned in the next verse. These people are those whose eyes will be opened, the ones who will receive light, the ones who will receive the forgiveness of sins, and who will inherit their Father's kingdom which is given to those who are sanctified by the faith that is found in Christ (vs. 18). Now one may truly see a dilemma if he wishes. God said that He would send Paul unto the same group of people from which He promised to deliver him and we must admit that most Jews and Gentiles of that age did not accept the message Paul brought. The only answer I can see is that although Paul was sent unto these two groups in general, the message that Paul had was not for either of these groups in general but for the people of God, the elect that were scattered among them. Thus there are two important points in this passage. Paul went and preached the forgiveness of sins, repentance from sin and faith in God among and to those who had been reprobated from before the foundation of the world. Yet Paul intended his message for those who had ears to hear and eyes to see, who in this case were to be reached by the general scattering of the seed of the gospel to a mixed group of goats and sheep. Although it is not directly said in this text, the distinct assumption made is that the gospel is the instrument used by God to manifest His sheep from the goats. Otherwise, how could God speak of His delivering power from the Jews and Gentiles, which implies rejection of Paul and his gospel, and yet speak of the success Paul would have in turning them from their darkness? Unless some are prepared to say that Paul failed (and thus God who sent him failed) in his mission to these Jews and Gentiles, which I cannot accept, it must be assumed that there was a "remnant according to the election of grace" (Romans 11:5) which through the gospel were *separated* and *manifested out of the group in general, for whom Paul's mission was fully intended* and with whom it was *fully successful.* This idea of Paul preaching to sheep and goats together in order to lead out the sheep fits with his practice of going into the synagogues (Acts 19:8, 18:4, 17:2), as well as the market places (Acts 17:17), where more than just the elect gathered. It would also agree with his own testimony to the gospel as the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth, "To the Jew first, and also to the Greek". (Romans 1:16)

Before we leave this text, one more thing must be noticed. Paul in trying to demonstrate to Agrippa how Christ is nothing more than what the prophets predicted, asks him if he believes the prophets (vs. 27). Agrippa asks Paul if he thinks in such short order (by merely appealing to the prophets) he can persuade him to be a Christian. Before we read what Paul responds, it would do us good to ask ourselves what we would have said. Would we have told Agrippa that our job did not include any attempts at persuasion or exhortation? Would we have simply told him that when God is willing (if he is willing) he will become a Christian? None of these answers would have been wrong. Paul, as well as I myself, would have agreed totally with them. Yet we must be

willing to acknowledge other answers as well as these such as the one Paul himself gave, "And Paul said, I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds". (vs. 29) As far as we know, Festus never came to know Jesus, neither did Agrippa nor Bernice, his wife, nor any of the court officials who might have been there. The text, in fact, seems to draw attention to those who were there by citing them, "the King rose up, and the Governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them." (vs. 30) Are we to understand Paul to say that regardless, he wished that they would be Christians like he, both in short order and to a great measure? What else can Paul be saying? He is answering a question of Agrippa as to whether he thinks that with such a short effort he can persuade him to be a christian. Paul puts the whole matter in the hands of God when he says, "I would to God...". He is only a man. As a man who loves God, he only wishes what God pleases. He does not wish for goats to be regenerated; indeed he knows it is impossible. Yet he as a mere man, wishes all men, both spiritually and physically, that is, he prays to God that not only would Agrippa, but all in the room be like him. Do any think this wrong? Do any of us find great glee in the fact that some whom we know in this life, maybe some of our dear loved ones, may burn in the pits of hell? No doubt we can find real satisfaction and even divine joy and peace in the wise council of a sovereign God. But yet, we have not been taught of God to wish for those we meet the damnation and wrath of God, but the best of God's blessings especially that of being one with Jesus. Some may say that we should not wish that for any but the elect. But if absolute certainty is what they wish for and think it evil for a christian to wish well to men who are not known absolutely to be elect of God, then they may not rest at just refusing well wishes to just those who profess no love for Jesus, but must refuse these well wishes to all the professing saints, for any of these may be deluded. This approach goes against the practice of Paul, both in connection with professing saints, and with those who were not.

One more passage will be brought up in connection with this question of to whom Paul preached. This is Acts 13. Paul had just arrived from the town of Perga to the great city of Antioch of Psidia (vs. 14) and had gone into the synagogue there on the sabbath day. He addresses his hearers as "men of Israel". This appears clearly to mean those who were Jews by birth. The title "ye that fear God" is not as easy to interpret. It is possible that it might refer to those who profess Christ or to the elect saints, but this is highly unlikely, since there is no reason to suppose that no physical Jews have been elect. There were two groups of people mentioned here; and since the first group mentioned does not refer to a group solely classified in spiritual terms because these two groups would not be self-exclusive. When Paul uses the conjunction "and", he is talking of two self-exclusive groups. This interpretation is the simplest and most straightforward one. It may be asked why this question is being made so important? The reason is because once we have determined who Paul was addressing, we will know whether exhortations of repentance and faith were made to mixed groups of elect and non-elect. Notice verse 26, "Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent". Here Paul is definitely addressing Jews who were of the "stock" of Abraham and another group of people, the God-fearers. We have still not answered the question of who these "god-fearers"

were. Most likely they were Gentile religious proselytes who were converted to Judaism. This can be seen in vs. 43, where a very similar classification of the hearers is used by Luke, "Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God." To further support this point, we find this said in the previous verse, "....when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath." Here we see the two groups clearly distinguished Jews and Gentile religious proselytes who were called "those who feared God". This does not mean that everywhere we see the phrase "those who fear God" is always refers to Gentile proselytes. The only way to determine this phrase is by the context it appears in. We should not be surprised that the Jews had proselytes, for Jesus mentions their great "missionary" efforts. (Matthew 23:15) Here are some other passages where these proselytes are called "God fearers", (Acts 10:2, 22; 13:50; 16:14; 17:4, 17: 18:7).

Getting back to the crucial point, Paul told these people in the synagogue that the word of this salvation had now been sent to them. This "word" could either be Jesus himself, or the message about Him. It would more likely be the message about Him that Paul refers to here when we read another passage very similar in expression to this one in Acts 28:28, "Be it known unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it". Paul said of the salvation that was sent to the Jewish leaders who came to see Paul and disbelieved him, "Saying, Go unto this people, and say, hearing ye shall hear and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them". (28:26-27) This prophecy refers clearly to the message sent about Jesus and not to Jesus Himself, though the two cannot be completely separated. Thus, if we see the word here as the spoken word, then Paul himself did not hesitate to preach the gospel to mixed groups of hearers. Paul no doubt made it clear that "through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins", (13:28) and that "by him all that believe are justified from all things" from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses. (vs. 39) Although Luke does not record it, Paul may have been getting some objections and he recorded the somber warning God had given the faithless of old, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you". (vs. 41) Here the gospel is shown to be clearly proclaimed to reprobates, the entire gospel was proclaimed to reprobates, including repentance and faith.

This preaching was not some "universal call" which Paul felt God was sending to all men. Neither was it some true "offer" to reprobates where God offered them life but did not send the Spirit to enable them to believe, as some might think. God never had any intentions of saving these people and Paul never thought He did. Then it may be asked, Why was the gospel preached unto them? There are at least two reasons.

As has been said before, the elect were scattered among the goats and to reach one the other was also to be reached. Yet this is not the whole picture. *It was no accident that the gospel was preached to them.* It was God's full intentions that

they hear the gospel and reject it; He had prophesied it through His prophets long ago. The reason God had the gospel preached unto them was to fully demonstrate the evilness of their hearts, "He came to his own, and his own received him not". (John 1:11) Paul spoke something of this when he spoke of those who despised "the riches of His goodness and forebearance and longsuffering not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance" so that their hard and impenitent hearts would treasure up for themselves wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. (Rom. 2:4-5) This is all part of the absolute predestination of all things on the part of God. Not until the reprobated *treasure* up *all* the wrath intended for them will God strike. If God would have sent out a "universal call" then the Apostles would have reached all the men alive in their day with the word of salvation. God *purposely* kept it from the majority of the Gentiles till Jesus came. (Acts 17:30) Now the Jews have been blinded. (Romans 11:7-8; 15) In all of this it can be said that there was and should be today some outward proclamation and exhortation to mixed groups. Yet this is not the same as an "outward call". That belief asserts that God has called on all men to repent and that He calls goats to come, repent from their sins, and believe in Christ. The promises of the gospel, as well as the exhortations to repentance and faith are meant only for the elect who have ears to hear. Although the gospel may fall on the ears of reprobates, it is only to confirm to them the fact that they will never have part in them. To say anything more is to open up the atonement of Jesus for another beside His bride, because any promise of forgiveness of sins can only be given to those for whom Christ died.

To answer the last question of Mr. Crowley as to why some who he claims to be Old School Baptists do not preach the gospel to mixed groups, is easy. It is possible that God may not have led some to do so. To attempt to preach to anyone whom God has not instructed you to do so is sin. But there may be some who have not done so despite their own consciences (since Old School Baptists have never claimed perfection). In these cases, when I, and hopefully all, use the term "Old School Baptists" in a discussion like this, do not use it in the historical sense, but in the Apostolic sense. We believe that the faith and practice of these Baptists was and is the same as that of the Apostles. If any refuse the follow the Apostles, in so far as they refuse, they are not Old School Baptists.

William Santamaria

Winston Salem, N.C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

In reading through the January 1982 issue of the *Signs of the Times* I notice an inquiry from Brother John Crowley in regards to how the Gospel ought to be preached before a mixed congregation. In my feeble way and by God's grace, I should like to speak upon the subject just a little. I am not speaking as a voice for any religious denomination or any particular group of Baptists. First we must bring the attention of our readers that a vast difference exists between offering the Gospel and preaching the Gospel. Such a difference in fact that one is heretical and the other is Truth. We can search the Scriptures from cover to cover and not find so much as an atom of evidence to support the practice of "offering the Gospel to sinners". It is true that when we get up to preach before the people that we do not know the elect from the reprobate: what are we to do - offer the Gospel to all of them? In no wise, but rather we are to proclaim the whole body of truth to our hearers. We are to expound without any fear or apology the glorious absolute

sovereignty of God in all of His eternal decrees; we are to preach the total ruin of the human race in Adam and God's justice in condemning the wicked to everlasting punishment, and God's rich grace in election. We can, brethren, by the anointing of the Holy Spirit, preach the Gospel and not feel bound, yet preach it without any of the so-called offers and invitations. I believe we have an obligation before God to preach wherever and when ever we have opportunity and utterance to do so. But when one begins to resort to the offers of grace system, you may well mark it down he has joined ranks with the whole Arminian free will system. I know that the "Calvinistic" Missionaries make much over the benefits reaped by use of this offer system, but we are not to use such arguments to support the practice of such a system. We are to go to the Holy Scriptures to get both our doctrine and our practice. Those who advocate the offers of grace system are, for the most part, among that group of deluded souls who also believe the Fullerite heresy of gospel regeneration. When we are given eyes to see the true utility and purpose of the Gospel then we also see the foolishness of offering the gospel to the dead alien sinner. For those who believe that the written Word gives the dead sinner life, we would submit these words as spoken by our Lord in the very context of the subject before us. In John chapter 5, verse 25 our Lord is speaking of the resurrection of dead sinners to life, and this resurrection (or giving of life) is effected only by the voice of the Son of God! Not by His voice or something else in addition to it. A dead sinner cannot hear the Gospel. He must have been given life in order to receive the Gospel. Lazarus did not come forth from the grave in order to get life, but rather he came forth from the grave only after he received life from the life giving Voice, the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore the utility or purpose of preaching the gospel is not to "save" or attempt to "save" all the lost, but rather to call out or convert all the redeemed elect. And to only those who are regenerate is this preaching of the Gospel effectual. To these it is indeed "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth", etc. (Rom. 1:16) Of course, the above text would require a whole discourse also as there is a belief that is not "to the saving of the soul", which is that same hope and belief that the hypocrite has. (Job 8:13, also read Heb. 10:39)

Our Lord forever settled the question as to whether the Gospel was the "means" of regeneration when He answered the Jews in the discourse recorded in John, Chapter 5. In verse 39 He told them, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me". I do not find any Gospel regeneration in that verse.

I got a right good amount of comment a while back when I made the following editorial comment in "Old Truths" paper. I said, "We are not in the 'soul saving' business. That is not our business at all! That power belongs only to a Sovereign God. (N. B. Do not misunderstand us here and charge us with having no concern nor compassion for the lost. We have not either said or thought such a thing.) But we want to be clearly understood! 'Religious' zeal can get them in with buses and candy, the Sunday School, musical instruments, and other enticements, (into the building that is. And a name somewhere on a church roll). But insofar as doing anything towards the salvation of one human soul, that power resides in no mortal man, no ordinance, and no institution." "Salvation is of the Lord". Jonah 2:9

Well for all this we bear up by the grace of God, we are branded Hyper-Calvinists and Antinomian. "But wisdom is justified of all her children". (Luke 7:35) We leave it in the hands of our Lord.

Many brethren are more able to answer this inquiry than I am, but consider this feeble attempt. And pray the Lord will give us yet more light as we walk through this dark and dreary world. May we in truth be able to ask with the faithful, "And confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country". (Heb. 11:13-14)

"Jerusalem, my happy home!
Name ever dear to me;
When shall my labours have an end
In joy, and peace, and thee?"

–Burkitt

(Gadsby's Hymnal, No. 934)

Yours in Hope,
Augustus Webb

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FROM AN OLD SIGNS

January 17,1850

Brother Beebe:–I am sorry to inform you that several of our friends in this vicinity decline continuing to take the *Signs* – and consequently several will return their paper (the first number of the new volume) by mail.

The controversy carried on through the *Signs* during the latter part of the past year has caused much dissatisfaction among your subscribers-- and some complaint has grown out of your not publishing articles and queries for others, and from present appearances I do not know whether I shall be able to induce any of those for whom I forwarded subscriptions last year to continue, but I feel inclined myself to continue another year and do what I can to get others to take the *Signs* this year, but I am afraid that I shall not be able to accomplish much.

We have taken the liberty to extract the above from a private letter of one of our valued agents, in order to show up some of the *Signs of the Times*, which could not be so well illustrated in any other way. As a general thing those who are complaining the most bitterly of controversy, and blaming us the most for a lack of perfect harmony, are those who would themselves involve us in the most vexing and interminable

controversies by their queries and injudicious articles against controversy. If as the publisher and editor of a religious paper we are to be held responsible for all the acrimonious feelings produced by articles which appear in our columns, we must insist on being allowed to decline the publication of such queries and articles as, in our judgement will gender strife and unprofitable contention.

We have been in the field and engaged in combat with the common enemy of the Old School Baptists for many years; our position has exposed us to the most virulent assaults from abroad; *but all the persecution and abuse we have ever been subjected to from the sons of Hagar, are light and trifling compared with the frowns of brethren.* We wish not to complain. It is the privilege of all our subscribers, who are not suited with our paper to decline taking it.

It is our design, as the Lord may give ability to make our paper deserve the patronage of the Old School Baptists, and edifying to those scattered children of our heavenly Father, and if our labors may result in comfort and encouragement to the poor, afflicted, meek, and humble lambs of the flock, we will feel amply remunerated to our toils and reproaches.

Gilbert Beebe

January 1, 1850

(Comment: Things are not a great deal different in 1982 than they were in 1850. Editor)

MORE DOUBLE TALK FROM LANDMARKERS

Since printing our article in last month's *Signs* on London Tract and its detractors, we received this latest exercise in "fence-stradling", double-talk, and confusion from the same fountain from whence the other flowed.

(Copied from "The Banner of Love" December, 1981)

"A very interesting old church in the Atlantic Coast area is a little church located just about a mile from the corner of Maryland, Delaware, and Pennsylvania line, just over in Pennsylvania. The church is known as Landmark. The meeting place is known as London Tract.

The oldest old church in the United States is the Welsh Tract, which was organized in Wales and moved to Delaware in 1701. A few years later a group of people lettered out from that church, and started a congregation four miles away, over in Pennsylvania called London Tract.

Well, the London Tract church is no more. All the members have died out. But a group of people called Landmark Primitive Baptist Church many years ago rented the building, and now hold regular services at London Tract.

We attended services there Saturday night, Nov. 14th. Elder James Bartlebaugh, who lives at Darlington, Maryland is the present pastor of this church.

London Tract is an old pioneer meeting place, the oldest of any church now active and in fellowship with the general body of Primitive Baptists of the United States, and all of our people who visit in that area, like to go out to Landmark."

We will not labor long in this field sown with divers seeds. *"Well, the London Tract church is no more. All the members have died out."* Fine, Mr. Editor, if she is dead and gone, we will leave her to rest. We see, however, you have no inclination to do so. *"London Tract is an old pioneer meeting place, the oldest of any church now active, etc."* Is she dead or not? The editor says she *is* an old pioneer meeting place. We agree; but the oldest of any *church now active?* Is he still confused regarding the difference between a meeting place and a church? We think not. This is pure, simple double-talk to "wiggle out" of a tight spot of his own making. He has to admit the church is dead because it is. But to satisfy the semi-arminians who rent the building, he would pump life into the walls of the meeting house and make it "the oldest of any church now active and in fellowship with the general body of Primitive Baptists of the United States", etc. Those meeting there known as Landmarkers are less than

fifty years old as a church (so called) and all the verbage in the world will never change theirs or London Tract's status. So much for the conditionalist brand of history telling.

Troy, N.C.

Dear Editors,

Please find enclosed check for two years renewal to the ***Signs of the Times.*** Use the extra as needed.

I look forward to receiving the good letters printed in the ***Signs*** each month, which I've been blessed to read for a long time.

May the good Lord continue to bless you in publishing the ***Signs of the Times.***

Most sincerely,
Mrs. Esther B. Cole

EDITORIAL

YET

As I go about my daily tasks the most of the time I am in meditation upon the sacred scriptures; the beauty, the depth, the loftiness of Him with whom we have to do. When blessed with sweet meditation (Psa. 104:14) of His blessedness, the Lord comes, as I hope, and sometimes believe, and plunges me into the ditch (Job 9:30,31), and I am taught to know how frail that I am.

If any one tells me that they never doubt, that they are not at times tantalized by the insulting innuendos of Satan I seriously doubt that they have been where poor old Job was when delivered into the hands of Satan, or that they know anything of the venement desire after Peter that he might lead him astray, or for that matter, that they have any fellowship for the sufferings of their blessed Lord when He cried out in his deserted condition to where He lamented in a loud voice, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?

It is as certain that some will deny the faith as it is certain that the faithful will be saved. So much futile time has been spent trying to reconcile the natural mind of men to the, as they call it, the unjust cruel doctrine of God assigning anybody to hell before the world had a beginning. What in the world would the foundation of God be worth, even trying to force the doctine of fixedness upon the elect, when the fixedness of the non-elect was left uncertain, dangling, swinging back and forth as unfixed things are certain to do. But I am not afraid to say a thing that God has said. It is true that false doctrine overthrows the faith of some, but the faith that can be overthrown is not the faith that makes whole; it is not the faith that saves; it is not the faith that makes ready, and keeps ready, the saints of God (Mat. 9:22; Luke 7:50; 2 Pet. I:5,8; I Pet. 1:3,5). That kind of faith is underpinned by the Nevertheless of God. That nevertheless covers as much ground as any man's predestination. Unbelief belongs to unbelievers, but mark my words well, it does no tarry long where divine love is dwelling. When that love purges one of his load of unbelief, he or she not only believes, but they beg for help to cope with their unbelief (Mark 9:24).

Another thing often overlooked. (True, overlooking this sacred matter is often intentional.) There is a class of people, in fact a goodly number of them, that are compassing land and sea to get people to turn over a new leaf, to make a small start, growing into a state whereby they can become a full fledged Christian. There has never been one that quit sinning by degrees. The apostle Paul was still breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the people, and against the Saviour, when the voice from heaven stopped him. He was stopped at once. It was a sudden work; it could not have been by practice. Every one that ever comes to the Lord Jesus Christ will come suddenly, for that is the way that the Lord manifested pattern to the Gentiles. He was doing

what he had been doing all the time. He could not have been doing otherwise. He was YET doing that when the Lord stopped him.

That little word yet gets in the way sometimes. The reason that it does is because the Spirit of Inspiration put it exactly in the right place. That it is placed where it is in the Bible does not make men stop and think before hand, but afterwards, when they have had the truth shown to them, they are forever afterwards ashamed of themselves.

It looked like Paul came near to forgetting himself. But he had a quick reminder always along with him to keep him straight. "I labored more abundantly than they all, YET not I , but the grace of God which was with me; I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; YET not I, but Christ liveth in me;" (I Cor. 15:10; Gal. 2:20) It just does not correspond with the experience of the apostle Paul to go about preaching our present salvation is a matter left up to us. One thing I am sure of, to wit, it was not true with him. I wonder how many of us would have let the first statements stand above. But Paul could not let them stand. He was not speaking what he thought, but the wording shows how the Holy Spirit moved him to say in each instance, YET not I, but the grace of God in me. No man, nor no set of men, will ever be able to insert a statement that leads God's little children to feel that they have the control of their life. Paul found out better by the YETS of God in his life.

Job is speaking about the days when the ending of time is at hand. He realizes what is going to take place between the time in which he was then living, and the time of the resurrection. By the inspiration of God he describes that which is coming to him as well as others of the human family. His understanding was that his body would be corrupted as such. Verily, dust thou art and to dust thou shalt return. But that faith that Peter had, and that Job had, and that all those that truly love the Lord have, says to death, and to the skin worms, and to death itself, I shall YET see my God in my flesh. If God had not desired this doctrine to be promulgated to us today, He could have YET given Job some other way to have said what He did have in mind for us to know.

For one hundred and forty nine years the *Signs* has been giving a claron call to the poor and needy. That call has always been a dependable trumpet sound. True, it has had falsehood to combat on the home front as well as abroad, but when duty has called, after patience has had her perfect work, the same steady banner has been kept unfurled and the keeping of that welcome sight unfurled has been by the sustaining Hand of Him that wrought a miracle and sent it forth that first November morning in 1832. My mind is delighted that although the Saviour was troubled on every hand, that He did not turn back, that He did not give up. Today, and tomorrow, we will be troubled. Where would we turn for evidence, for strenthening, for comfort? True, being troubled on every hand is not good to the flesh, but if that is what we are seeking, let us furl the banner now, for I assure you that if that was what Elder Beebe was seeking in 1832, or if it is what we are seeking in now, we are not fit recipients of having received the call from those in charge to serve. Our service has been in vain. Dear *Signs* family, let us, by the grace of God, stay with the ship. There has been salvation appointed to us these many long years, let us be patient, but let us be brotherly, and let us by this same grace, earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

True, dear ones, we are troubled on every side, YET we are not distressed. We are perplexed, but not in despair.

He has had mercy, and He will YET have mercy.

Yours in that blessed hope,

Elder W.D. Griffin

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ROMANS 9:6-8.

"They are not all Israel which are of Israel; neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children; but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."

The paramount importance of the doctrine of vital relationship to God in Christ Jesus, and joint heirship with him, as indispensable to salvation, may well be inferred from the indefatigable labor of the apostle in all his epistles, especially those addressed to the churches of Galatia and Rome, in elucidating the doctrine of the new birth, as stated by our Lord to Nicodemus, John 3:3-7. As that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and as only that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, we need not marvel that it is so positively declared, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The first Adam, as the seminal head or progenitor of all his posterity, was of the earth, earthly; and in his first state, before he transgressed, he was not spiritual, but natural. — 1 Cor. 15:46, 47. Consequently he was, even in his best estate, elementally qualfied only for an earthly paradise; for as the things of the Spirit of God can only be spiritually discerned, he could not, without being born of the Spirit, see the kingdom of God, or know the things of the Spirit. No amount of reformation, or of mental or physical improvement, education or moral discipline, can supersede the imperative necessity of a spiritual birth to enable any man to see the kingdom of God, or to develop a spiritual, vital relationship with God. Flesh is not the production of spirit, or of spiritual relationship to God; nor can fleshly or earthly seed produce spiritual or heavenly life, or qualify man for the enjoyment of that which is spiritual.

In all the various branches of antichrist the radical error is cherished and pertinaciously contended for, that natural men possess moral ability to acquire by their persistent efforts, not only a discernment of, but also a participation in the kingdom of God; and that the influence of religious training in Sabbath Schools, Bible classes, protracted meetings, anxious benches, and missionary appliances, can effect or produce all that is essential to make children or adults savingly acquainted with the things of the Spirit of God, and prepare them for heaven and heavenly things. This fatal error is as prevalent to-day among all the Arminian tribes of the earth as it was in former times with the carnal Jews, who thought their fleshly descent from Abraham secured to them eternal life.

The Gentiles churches, beset as they were in the days of Paul by Judaizing teachers, required the labors of the inspired apostles to teach them the way of the Lord more perfectly. In the eighth chapter of John the carnal Jews claimed to be Abraham's seed; this claim Jesus admitted, so far as related to their fleshly relation. He said to them, "I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you....If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." They truly were the lineal descendants of Abraham according to the flesh, but they were not of the faith of Abraham. Religiously, they were of their father of the devil. That is, the spirit of falsehood and murder was the spirit of Satan, not of Abraham. In writing to the Galatians, Paul says, "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Here the apostle evidently alludes to the promise which God made to Abraham: Now to Abraham and to

his seed were the promises made; he saith not unto seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed which is Christ. This covenant was made with Abraham, and confirmed of God in Christ as his seed, four hundred and thirty years before the law was given from Sinai to Israel; and being so confirmed, it could not be disannulled by the Sinai covenant. "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could sware by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, Surely, blessing, I will bless thee, and multiplying, I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise." — Heb. 6:13-15. Observe: this promise, solemnly confirmed by the oath of God, was not only made to Abraham, as a man, but to him as a patriarchal type of Christ, as his seed. "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise" (who being Christ's, are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise) "The immutability of his counsel, confirmed it" (in Christ) "by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we" (who being Christ's and Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise) "might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." — Heb. 6:17, 18.

Now to return to our text — "They are not all Israel which are of Israel." "Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved." — Rom. 9:27. "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace; But if it be of works, it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work." — Rom. 11:5,6. It cannot then be partly of grace and partly of works; if it be on one, it cannot be of the other. Of which then is it? Well, this same apostle tells us, "For by grace are ye saved, through faith: and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." — Eph. 2:8-10. As the number of God's children among the thousands of the carnal Israelites were as a very small remnant compared to the sands of the sea, so is the election of grace at this day compared with the popular multitudes who profess christianity.

"Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children." On this part of our text we have already dwelt. Although they were recognized under the old covenant, in the worldly sanctuary, and in the carnal ordinances, John the Baptist, in the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, drew the line of discrimination, and declared that the axe was laid unto the root of the trees, to cut those fruitless trees off from Abraham as their father, as their root, and refused them the ordinance of baptism on the ground of that relation. Only they who brought forth fruit meet for repentance were accepted, and all others of them were rejected as a generation of vipers.

"But, In Isaac shall thy seed be called." That is, the seed of Abraham should be called in Isaac. Now, "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye hear the law?" If not, listen: "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons; the one by a bond maid, the other by a free woman. But he who was born of the bond woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the Children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." "Which things," says the apostle, "are

an allegory; for these are the two covenants. The one from Mount Sinai, in Arabia, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar," or Hagar, and represents Jerusalem, which then was, in bondage with her children, the carnal Jews, who under the Sinai covenant were in bondage. But the other son, who was born unto Abraham by Sarah the free woman, represents the convenant of promise, which was made with Abraham and his seed, and confirmed of God in Christ as the seed of Abraham, four hundred and thirty years before the Sinai covenant was given. Now, as in the allegory, Hagar represents the legal covenant, so her son represents the children of the flesh. And as Hagar was herself a bond maid, she could no more entail freedom to her children, than the law of a carnal commandment could give spiritual life to those who were under it. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse. And if a law had been given that could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law; but instead of this, it is positively declared that by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified in the sight of God. Therefore the children of the flesh, with all their law-righteousness and legal works, although they, like Ishmael, may for a time dwell in Abraham's house, and be nurtured on the lap of Sarah, cannot be heirs with Isaac, in whom the promised seed is called, because he is a child of the flesh, gendered in bondage, and born a slave, and being a child of the flesh, is not a child of God. He was born after the flesh, and not by the promise which God had made to Abraham, that Sarah should have a son. Neither did God recognize the result of the **means** system devised by Sarah, as the fulfillment of his promise. As a child of the flesh of Abraham, he was an illegitimate, and could not be heir with Isaac, who was the child of promise, the son of the free woman, and the free born son of the Jerusalem which is above, which is the mother of the legitimate heirs of the promise which is confirmed of God in Christ. As Ishmael represents, in this divinely inspired allegory, all the children of the flesh, Isaac represents all the children of God; therefore the apostle says to the saints, as children of the heavenly Jerusalem, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scriptures? Cast out the bond woman and her son; for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. So then we, brethren, are not children of the bond woman, but of the free."

There is then a seed that gendereth to bondage, which seed when gendered, generated and born, is born after and of the flesh; and because it is born after the flesh, and is flesh, in it we cannot please God, because the children of the flesh are not the children of God. "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye (the children of promise) are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead." It is not in our carnal nature, which is born of corruptible, fleshly seed, that the vital relationship of the saints to God consists. For that which is gendered by and born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is produced by any kind of seed, must develop the nature of the seed, of which it is produced. Spiritual seed cannot produce other than spiritual development. Flesh cannot produce spirit, nor can spirit produce flesh. But if the Spirit of God dwells in us, then our vital relation to God, as the children of promise, is not in the flesh, which is the production of a different seed. The incorruptible seed cannot produce corruption, nor anything that is corruptible. Therefore, "Whosoever is

born of God doth not commit sin." Why? "For his (God's) seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." — 1 John 3:9. But still sin dwells in the flesh of those who are born of God. This is indisputable, if Paul was born of God; for he says that when he does that which he would not, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." — Rom. 7:25. Being born of the Spirit, he had the mind of Christ, with which he served the law of God; and also having a carnal, depraved nature, which was born of the flesh, of corruptible seed, with it he himself served the law of sin. This incessant conflict between the flesh, born of corruptible seed, and the spirit, born of the Spirit, of incorruptible seed, made him feel like a wretched man, greatly desiring to be delivered from the body of this death. Still having the Spirit and mind of Christ, his faith rested with assurance upon the hope of eternal life which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began, and that victory which God shall give through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In speaking of this promise to Abraham, confirmed of God in Christ, on which the heirship of the spiritual inheritance is secured, the apostle is very explicit. "He saith not, And unto seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Yet in speaking of the heirs of this same promise, he embraces all who are children of the Jerusalem which is above, as being, as Isaac was, children of promise. Evidently regarding them all as they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and as being included in and one with him, even as he is one with the Father; he the head, and they the body, and all of them required to make up the fullness of him that filleth all in all. — Eph. 1:23. As in Isaac all the seed of Abraham, in the type, was counted, although more numerous than the stars in the firmament, and like the sands of the sea innumerable, still they were all embodied in one man; so the innumerable host of God's children are embodied in Christ, and their development in the fullness of the dispensation of times is not adding to Christ, but multiplying, as God said to Abraham, "Multiplying, I will multiply thee." Christ asks for no more glory than he had with the Father before the world began. When it was promised, "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation," (Psa. 22:30,) he was himself regarded as the seminal Head of that seed, although they were a people that should be born. And as the germ that is to produce a harvest is in the seed, so the eternal life of all the chosen generation of Jesus Christ was secured to them in him from everlasting. None of his seed can be born, as his seed, of any other parentage than himself. None can be recognized as his, except his Spirit dwells in them; and his Spirit only dwells in those who are quickened and born of him. Jesus, in speaking of his death and resurrection, said to Andrew and Philip, "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." This is a beautifully illustrative figure; for as the germ that is to produce the fruit is in the corn of wheat, so the eternal life of all his people was given them in the Son of God. — 1 John 5:11-12. And therefore, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."-Luke 24:46-47. Now in fulfilling the promise to Abraham, which was confirmed of God in Christ, it was necessary that he, as the embodiment of the seed to whom the promise was made, should take on him the seed of Abraham, and be made a little lower than the angels, for the

suffering of death. That is, that in our flesh he should die and expiate our sins, that in his life and immortality, which he brought to light in his resurrection, we might be justified, and presented holy and without blame before him in love. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."—Heb. 2:14-17. He took our flesh, that he might die for us; and we are made partakers of his righteousness, that we may live and reign with him. In no other way could we be made the righteousness of God, and without the righteousness of God we could not be saved. In our flesh he bore our sins, died our death, and met and canceled all the requisitions of the holy law, that we being thus buried with him by baptism into his death, should also be quickened together with him, and raised up together with him in the heavenly places in him. We being thus in him slain by, and dead to the law, by the body of Christ, should be married to him that is risen from the dead, and from under the law, and walk in newness of life, and bring forth fruit unto God. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin." That is, having been put to death in the person of Christ, we are redeemed from the penalty and dominion of that law; and being by the Son made free, are free indeed. "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof."—Rom. 6:6-12.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe May 1, 1877)

We have an excellent article on the book of Job written by Elder C. C. Morris of Duncanville, Texas. Due to its length, we will print the first half in the May issue and the latter part in June.

Editor

MINUTES OF THE PREBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Laurel Ridge Primitive Baptist Church, Roanoke County, Virginia, a presbytery met October 17, 1981, at the church for the examination of Brother W. T. Conner. If found qualified in accordance with the written Word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of a Deacon.

The solmenity was begun with prayer by Elder Willard Cox. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the prebytery. Those present were as follows: Elders Leonard Key, Cecil Turner, Leonard Brammer, Lane Carter, William Holland, Larry Hollandsworth, and Willard Cox.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Leonard J. Brammer as Moderator and H.B. Cannaday as Clark. Elder Cecil E. Turner and Elder William Holland were chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Deacon G.W. Conner, having been duly appointed by Laurel Ridge Church in conference October 17, 1981 as spokesman for the church, delivered Brother W.T. Conner to the presbytery.

Examination was made by Elders Cecil E. Turner and William Holland using scripture reference I Timothy 3:8-13. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands.

The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Leonard Key. Elder Lane Carter delivered the charge to the candidate. Scripture reference was Paul's writings.

The Moderator asked Laurel Ridge Church if the Church approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brother W.T. Conner and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood was given. The ordained W.T. Conner was delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Laurel Ridge.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Lane Carter.

Elder Leonard J. Brammer, Moderator
H.B. Cannaday, Clerk

NOTICE

So that we might familiarize our subscribers with the original Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws of the *Signs of the Times*, we are now putting them before you.

The new Certificate of Incorporation in the State of Virginia was made necessary when we no longer had trustees living in the State of New Jersey and follows the old Certificate as closely as the laws of this State will allow.

Should anyone desire further information or wish to examine the books of the *Signs of the Times*, contact Elder Julian Williams, Keeling, Virginia. Anyone is welcome to such information as we have, providing they are a supporter of this paper.

Editors

CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION
OF THE
SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
ESTABLISHED 1832, AND
DEVOTED TO THE
OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that the undersigned do hereby associate themselves into a corporation, under and by virtue of Title 15 of the Revised Statutes of New Jersey (corporation not for pecuniary profit), and the several supplements thereto and acts amendatory thereof.

FIRST: The name of this corporation is SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC., ESTABLISHED 1832, AND DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

SECOND: The purposes for which this corporation is formed are to perpetuate the publication of the magazine known as "Signs of the Times" which was established in 1832 and is presently being published by Elder R. Lester Dodson and devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause, and to accept subscriptions, bequests, etc. for the purpose of perpetuating the magazine.

THIRD: The location of the principal office of this corporation is at No. 41 Addison Avenue in the Borough of Rutherford, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, and the name of the agent therein and in charge thereof, upon whose process against the corporation may be served, is R. LESTER DODSON.

FOURTH: The number of trustees of this corporation is seven.

FIFTH: The trustees of this corporation shall be members in good standing of the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church in accordance with the recognized order of said Church.

SIXTH: The names and post office addresses of the trustees selected for the first year of the existence of this corporation are:

William D. Chapman, Bloomingburg, New York

David V. Spangler, Route 6, Danville, Virginia

Harold M. Bennett, Mardela Springs, Maryland

Cyrus Risler, 904 Ogden Avenue, New York City, New York

Elsie Loeffel, 1158 Falls Terrace, Union, New Jersey

Gertrude Secor, 233 East 17th Street, New York City, New York

R. Lester Dodson, 41 Addison Avenue, Rutherford, New Jersey

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have hereunto set our hands and the dates set forth in the acknowledgements annexed hereto.

Signed, sealed and delivered in the presence of:

William D. Chapman
David V. Spangler
Harold M. Bennett

Cyrus Risler
Elsie Loeffel
Gertrude Secor
R. Lester Dodson

BY-LAWS of SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC., ESTABLISHED 1832, AND DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

ARTICLE I

The principal office of the Company shall be in the Borough of Rutherford, State of New Jersey, at 41 Addison Avenue, but meetings of the Trustees for the transaction of business, except such as is required by law to be transacted at the principal office, may be held at such place as may be designated by the President of the Association.

ARTICLE II

The Trustees shall consist of seven (7) members, which Board shall have full power and authority to manage and control the affairs of the corporation, and a majority vote of the Trustees, whether by proxy or otherwise, shall be sufficient to pass any measure before such meeting.

ARTICLE III

The Trustees shall hold office for good behavior and so long as they remain a member in good standing of the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church in accordance with the recognized order of said Church.

ARTICLE IV

In the event of any vacancy in the Board of Trustees the surviving Trustees shall, by majority vote, fill the vacancy.

ARTICLE V

Any Trustee may be removed from office upon a two-thirds vote of all of the other Trustees.

ARTICLE VI

The officers of the Corporation shall be the President, Secretary and Treasurer, and their duties shall be such as are usually imposed upon such officials of corporations. The President of this Corporation may be eligible also to be a Treasurer of the Corporation.

ARTICLE VII

Other officers, agents and employees may be appointed and their duties assigned and compensation fixed by the Trustees.

ARTICLE VIII

The corporation seal of the Association shall be a circular seal with the name of the company around the border and the year of incorporation in the center.

ARTICLE IX

These By-Laws may be altered or amended at any time by a majority vote of the Board of Trustees, providing, however, that R. Lester Dodson for the term of his natural life, and so long as he remain a Trustee, vote in favor of such change.

ARTICLE X

This Corporation shall be authorized to accept subscriptions, bequests, etc. for the purpose of perpetuating the magazine known as Signs of the Times, which was established in 1832 and is presently being published by Elder R. Lester Dodson, and devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist Cause.

William D. Chapman
David V. Spangler
Harold M. Bennett
Cyrus Risler
Elsie Loeffel
Gertrude Secor
R. Lester Dodson

OBITUARIES

LLOYD HANDY DOSS

In sadness, I attempt to comply with the request that I write in memory of our Dear Brother Lloyd Doss. He was born July 16, 1911, in Charlottesville, Virginia, a son of the late Coleman A. Doss and Ida Pickeral Doss. He died September 18, 1981 at Baptist Hospital, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, after an illness of five weeks. Survivors include his wife, Sister Latisha Inge Doss; two brothers, Odie F. Doss of Gretna and Clarence D. Doss of Summerfield, North Carolina, three sisters, Mrs. Burton Hall, Mrs. Turner Pickeral, and Mrs. Preston Saunders, all of Danville, Va.; one half-brother, Jesse H. Doss of Danville, Va.; and one half-sister, Mrs. Bessie Milam of Roanoke, Va.

Brother Lloyd was a strong believer in salvation by Grace and visited sister associations for many years. He was faithful to his church, serving humbly, had a calm and gentle manner, and walked softly among his Brethren in Love. He also served in the community in which he lived with love for others.

He asked for a home with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church the first Sunday in July, 1949 and was baptized by his beloved Pastor, Elder O. K. Tench. Brother Doss was appointed clerk of Weatherfold Church September 25, 1949 and was ordained Deacon on June 25, 1978 serving both offices well.

I believe Brother Doss was made reconciled to his illness and to death because he bore his afflictions without murmuring.

His funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on September 20, 1981, by Elders O. K. Tench and Raymond L. Goad and his body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Gretna Burial Park to await the second coming of Lord Jesus Christ. I feel we have been highly favored of God to have had fellowship with such a wonderful Brother.

He is greatly missed by his dear wife, family, church and friends. May we all that mourn our loss be reconciled to God's will.

Written by: Marvin Brunfield
Moderator: Elder O. K. Tench
Asst. Clerk: Raymond Goad

SISTER SARAH MOLLIE SALMONS

"Sister Mollie", as she was known by the church, was born March 7, 1884, and was called out of this life June 14, 1981, having sojourned here for 97 years. Mollie Salmons was the daughter of the late D. G. and Amanda J. Salmons of Woolwine in Patrick County, Virginia. She is survived by one brother, M. S. Salmons, Roanoke, Virginia.

Sister Mollie will be greatly missed from all the churches in this area as her greatest pleasure came from attending the dear Primitive Baptist Churches and was able to attend regularly through the fifth Sunday in May before her death, the second Sunday in June, 1981. The day she died was communion day at her home church, Thomas Grove Primitive Baptist Church.

After professing a hope in Christ in January, 1903, Sister Mollie joined Jack's Creek Church, near Woolwine, Virginia, the fourth Sunday in May 1904, and moved her membership to Thomas Grove in October, 1932. Thomas Grove Church is less than a mile from her home place where she spent 72 years of her life. Sister Mollie was always faithful in attending her church and walked "up the mountain" to the meetings for many years, even into her old age. She remained home with her parents and never married, although she did plan marriage at one time and became spiritually troubled and called it off.

Sister Mollie was blessed to have her mind centered on spiritual concerns most of the time and wrote numerous articles for several Primitive Baptist Publications, as well as some newspapers. All of her writings were of one accord, giving God the honor and praise for all grace toward His people.

Her last few years were apparently her most pleasant ones on earth, as she came to live with her "adopted" family, Brother Noel Tilley and wife, Mertie. This enabled her to attend church almost every Sunday, which was her delight. Brother Tilley served as the Deacon at Thomas Grove for several years, and when her last brother at home became gravely ill, Brother Tilley and his wife were blessed to take her into their home as one of their own and their family responded likewise. She was with them until she fell asleep in Jesus at their home on Sunday, June 14, 1981.

She was laid to rest in the Tilley family plot, as she had requested, at Old Center Cemetery with her Pastor, Elder Frank Pegram, conducting the services, and assisted by Elder Calvert Fulcher and Elder Buddy Crotts. Her church family followed to the graveside and sang her favorite songs until the wreaths were placed upon her grave and most fittingly sang, "Sister, thou wast mild and lovely; Our loss will be felt for a long time to come; But we feel her gain is now eternal peace."

Written by request of Thomas Grove Church by one that counts it a great blessing to have known such a saintly Sister.

Ken Hopkins, Clerk

BROTHER GILMER L. WILLIARD

The Bunker Hill Primitive Baptist Church of Forsyth County, N.C., desires to write this obituary in memory of our dear brother and deacon, Brother Gilmer L. Williard.

He was born on August 12, 1902, and departed this life on May 17, 1981. Brother Williard joined the church in 1966. He loved his church and served the office of deacon well.

Brother Williard is survived by his loving companion, Sister Nera Williard, five daughters, grand children and great grandchildren, two brothers, and one sister. He is greatly missed by his family and brethren in the Lord. The church desires to be reconciled to our loss and to God's will. "Why do we mourn departing friends, or shake at death's alarms? 'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends, to call them to His arms". Death is the gate of endless joy.

Bunker Hill Church requested while in their June conference that this memorial be written, a copy put in the church records, one given to the family, and one be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Elder Z. L. Rhue, Moderator
Lillian M. Rhue, Clerk
H. B. Briggs, Assistant Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Keeling, Virginia, as shown below. All notices of meetings and obituaries should be mailed directly to P.O. Box 1250, Salisbury, Md. 21801. Articles for publication may be mailed to either address.

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Route 1, Box 65 Keeling, Va. 24566

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 5/82 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

708 N. Casa Grande Circle
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JOB VERSUS THE CONDITIONALISTS

By Elder C. C. Morris

The book of Job is in one sense the Galatians of the Old Testament. In New Testament times, the apostle Paul answered forever the folly of conditionalism, legalism, and Phariseeism by writing the epistle to the Galatians; yet the book of Job, as ancient as it is, destroyed the foundations of legalism in the dawn of history, undercut the supports of the law worshipers before Moses was born, and swept away the conditionalists' refuge of lies long before the term "conditionalism" was ever coined to describe that flesh-exalting system.

For the purpose of this writing, conditionalism is defined as any system of religion which advocates (1) that God has established certain "conditions" for men to meet in order for them to earn blessings and rewards or to escape punishments; (2) that man's choices and actions are independent of God's will; (3) that, apart from God, man has the independent ability to follow through with his choice of good or evil; (4) that if a person chooses good and does it, thereby meeting God's "conditions," then God will bless him for it, but if he chooses evil and follows it then God will withhold His blessings and send punishment instead; (5) that if God is in the matter of man's choice at all, He merely exerts external influence upon the person; (6) that the final choice is left to the individual and that God reacts by dispensing blessings or punishments

accordingly; and (7) that, when God has intended to bless or to punish a man or a nation, God's intent may be altered by a change in man's behavior.

Probably no one can summarize the various schools of thought regarding salvation better than Jerome Zanchius did over four hundred years ago:

"Conversion and Salvation must, in the very nature of things, be wrought and effected either by ourselves alone, or by ourselves and God together, or *solely by God Himself.* The Pelagians were for the first. The Arminians are for the second. True believers are for the last, because the last hypothesis, and that only, is built on the strongest evidence of Scripture, reason and experience: it most effectually hides pride from man, and sets the crown of undivided praise upon the head, or rather casts it at the feet, of that glorious *Truine God,* who worketh all in all." (From Jerome Zanchius' *Absolute Predestination;* emphasis his.)

By comparing the position of today's conditionalists with the above definitions, it is evident that conditionalism is Arminianism.

Modern conditionalists inject the unscriptural phrase "time salvation" into their view of the gospel as a contrast to what they call "eternal salvation." This is an artificial division of Christ's one unified salvation into two nonexistent categories, man's attempt to rend Christ's seamless robe. It is an erroneous element, foreign to the gospel of Christ, introduced by wicked men to justify their works system (designed supposedly to earn rewards associated with "time salvation") while yet claiming they believe in "eternal" salvation by grace.

Such is a most blatant attempt to deceive their hearers, for in the scriptural sense salvation is salvation, period. "Eternal salvation" is manifested in time, and "time salvation" is the evidence and manifestation of eternal salvation. Therefore, no contrast exists; the two are one and the same. Salvation--all salvation--is of the Lord.

Conditionalists, however, insist that the two "parts" of salvation are different things, and while saying that "eternal salvation" is of the Lord they insist that this "time salvation" is not. It is of men, ourselves, say they; either wholly of ourselves (Pelagianism), or partly of ourselves and partly of God (Arminianism).

The chief differences between the conditionalist groups which attempt to pass themselves off as Primitive Baptists and the Arminian Missionary groups are:

(1) The Arminian Missionary groups emphasize the idea that man's will and works (including repentance, faith and prayer) are used by "unsaved" sinners to earn or obtain salvation, while the conditionalists transfer the exact same principle up one notch, saying that those who are already the children of God use their will and works (including repentance, faith and prayer) not to earn or obtain eternal salvation, but to earn blessings in this life, which is their "time salvation" defined in a nutshell. While the Arminians (Missionaries) indeed do believe they may earn blessings in this life, their current emphasis seems to be more on their idea of eternal salvation and less on temporal rewards and punishments, compared with the emphasis of the diehard conditionalists.

(2) There are as many species of Arminians as there are of birds. Arminianism's spectrum ranges from the borders of Pelagianism, humanism and universalism up to an amazingly inconsistent encroachment upon large areas of truth. However, all of Arminianism, including the conditionalist "Primitive Baptists," holds this common ground: They all believe that their god can not or will not do violence to the creature's will, as it is sometimes

expressed, in that he is somehow passively and externally dependent upon what his creatures decide to do. Man, therefore, is the Actor, while their god is the reactor.

After an objective and exhaustive consideration of all of the various Arminian religions, one could possible rank each group, ordering them as to how much of the work of conversion and salvation is--according to their doctrinal systems--effected by God and how much is effected by man. When the ordering is done, there will be those found at one end who say that salvation is 99% of man and 1% of God (such as the Freewill Baptists, the disciples of Campbell, and the Papists). At the other end would be those who say salvation is 99% God's work but there is yet 1% left to man which we must do ourselves (such as "five point Calvinist" missionary Baptists and some Presbyterians). With all of the facts before us we would then find that (a) the conditionalists who call themselves Primitive Baptists, in setting forth their Arminianism, are doctrinally much closer to the Freewill Baptists than they are to the predestinarian Primitive Baptists (who are outside of the above ranking, as they earnestly content that salvation is 100% of the Lord); and, (b) there are many missionary Arminian groups which hold to a far higher percentage of sound doctrine than do some of the conditionalists.

In the United States of America, the Arminians were expelled from the orderly Baptist ranks in 1832, but the separation was incomplete. As a perusal of *Hassell's History* and various associational minutes from, say, the 1830's to the 1930's will reveal, the seeds of Arminianism remained and continued to grow until the conditionalist crop ripened in the 1890's and in the early decades of the twentieth century. It was then that several widespread declarations of non-fellowship further defined the doctrinal differences between the absolute predestinarian Primitive Baptists and the conditionalist-Arminians. In terms of history's perspective, the separation from the missionary Arminians in 1832 and the division from the conditional Arminians some sixty to ninety years later were not two operations, but rather two phases of one operation: the complete disassociation and mutual exclusion of the predestinarians and the Arminians from one another.

These introductory and definitional remarks may now be briefly summarized thus: Conditionalism, now commonly associated with the denial of God's unchangeable, absolute predestination of all things, is nothing more nor less than Arminianism itself.

The book of Job is thought to date back long before Moses and the law as it was given by God to Israel at Mount Sinai. Yet, in that early era recorded in the book of Job, Job's friends and Satan himself preached conditionalism, works, and Phariseeism, proving the ancient existence and the universality of these carnal approaches to natural religion. It is impossible to go into detail about everything recorded in the book of Job, but that is not necessary here. Rather, representative texts will be used which seem to clearly set forth the errors both of Satan and of Job's friends. Job's statement must also be considered, and finally the statement of God Himself. Consider first, then,

I. WHAT SATAN SAID

Even before considering what Satan said, it is important to note why he said it. It was God, the Prime Mover, the First Cause, who first called Satan's attention to Job. It was not the other way around; Satan did not attempt to bring Job to God's attention. "The Lord said to Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth

evil?" Satan had indeed considered Job and could do nothing about him.

"Doth Job fear God for nought?" Satan asked. "Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land." Satan had not only considered Job, but he had also considered the protective, providential hedge with which God continually sheltered him, and through which neither Satan nor any other enemy of Job could pass without God's willing such to happen. Also, Satan had considered the fact that within that hedge the Lord had blessed every facet of Job's life.

However, Satan evidently did not consider the fact that Job's fear of the Lord, his hatred of evil, and the unique perfection which God here commended were also the direct blessings of God. Religions inspired and led by Satan never consider the fact that internal blessings of the heart, such as the fear of the Lord, a willing heart and mind, obedience to God's precepts, a reverence for His scriptures, love of the brethren, and specific overt acts such as church attendance, kindness, hospitality, almsgiving and all other "good works" are direct operations of and effectual gifts of God, and as such are every bit as much "blessings" as are the abundance of gold, cattle, wealth, health and safety, and providential hedges of protection around one's family, one's possessions, and one's person.

Satan therefore assumed that Job's fear of the Lord and his perfection of life were Job's way of paying God for His past blessings or of attempting to earn future blessings. Satan's premise was conditionalism. To prove his point, the devil suggested that if God would "touch" all that Job had, in the sense of destroying it, Job would abandon his works-system religion and curse God to His face.

What follows proves that Job was no conditionalist at all, but Satan is. God gave Satan leave to destroy Job's family and possessions, with the only restriction being that Satan could not touch Job himself. At that, the devil then destroyed Job's children and his possessions, but God upheld Job in all of his trials. Satan's theory was disproved.

Returning, Satan revised his theory somewhat, saying in effect that the only reason Job did not curse God now was because God was still protecting his body, his life; if these "conditions" were torn down, Job would consider his works contract with God to be null and void, and he would then curse God, Satan suggested.

God now turned Job's body over to Satan but with this sovereign restriction: "...but save his life" (the keys of death and Hell belong to Jesus Christ and not to Satan). Satan then inflicted what misery he could and retired from the scene as Job gave one of the most sublime testimonies of faith in recorded history. Satan's theory was vanquished by a poor, suffering, lonely, misunderstood man who was sustained only by his God and who found through it all that this was sufficient.

II. WHAT BILDAD SAID

"Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice? IF thy children have sinned against him, and he have cast them away for their transgression; IF thou wouldest seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty; IF thou wert pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous (Job 8:3-6)."

Bildad is typical of the person who seemingly multiplies "conditions" without end. Esteeming the word IF so highly, he uses it overly much. In verse 4 of chapter eight, "if" actually carries the weight of "since". "Since thy children have sinned against him, and he have cast them away for their transgression..." The sense of Bildad's "since" is the conditional proposition,

"IF thy children have sinned...THEN he cast them away..." implying simply that if you sin, then God will cast you away. This is Bildad's principle; it applies to Job's children, it also applies to Job, and it applies to everyone, as far as a Bildad is concerned. But Bildad has a solution: "IF you would seek unto God speedily, IF you make supplication (pray), IF you were pure, IF you were upright, THEN 'surely,' he (God) would awake for thee"——is Bildad's God asleep?--"and THEN he would make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous." That is all you have to do, Job, implies Bildad; but do, you must.

"How," someone asks, "does Bildad's approach differ from other scripture texts which set forth truth directly inspired by God Himself in much the same language--such as, for example, II Chronicles 7:14, which reads: 'IF my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; THEN will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land'? Does not God Himself use the IF-THEN construction which you seem to so despise? How do Bildad's words differ from those of God?"

Actually, in a number of ways:

A. True Bible admonitions are always defined within themselves or in their context as being exclusively for the people of the Lord, His children, His elect, and addressed to them only. The example text, II Chronicles 7:14, says, "If my people, which are called by my name..." Such a text, then, *ipso facto* applies only to those whom God calls "my people, which are called by my name," or else language has no meaning whatsoever. No reprobate can justly find encouragement in this text (or any other) to humble himself, to pray, or to do anything else without first justifying his reading other people's mail and cashing other people's checks. That is to say, he must first prove his right to anything addressed to those whom God calls "my people, which are called by my name."

Bildad knows nothing of the covenant relationship eternally existing between God and those whom He delights to call His people. Bildad is a Universalist. He and his companions and their counterparts from that day until now can make no distinction, other than a superficial one, between a Cain and an Abel, a Pharaoh and an Aaron, or a Matthew and a Judas: "...man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart (I Samuel 16:7)." In their approach to salvation and damnation, blessings and cursings, obedience, disobedience and chastisement, the only difference the Bildads of this world see is not the grace of God in Christ Jesus, but that Abel, Aaron and Matthew obeyed God whereas Cain, Pharaoh and Judas did not.

B. Negatively, God's word nowhere implies that any person has any ability whatsoever to act independently of God in meeting His smallest requirement without its being effectually given to him or her and wrought in him or her to do so. "...it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure (Phil. 2:13)." II Chronicles 7:14 or any other such text in the Old or New Testament does not say or even imply that even those addressed, God's people, have any might or power in or of themselves to do anything which God requires.

C. Positively, God's word elsewhere shows that the things God requires of His people are sovereign gifts from God to His people. Consider from the example text, II Chronicles 7:14: Humility, prayer and seeking of God's face all proceed from a renewed heart which is prepared by the Lord--"The preparations of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord (Prov. 16:1)" True prayer is given by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:26f) who Himself is also a gift from God to His people (Rom. 5:5). As for their seeking God's face He

says, "And ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart (Jer. 29:13)," which again goes back to the preparations of their heart which, as already proved from Proverbs 16:1, is from the Lord. As for their turning from their wicked ways Ephraim, representing God's spiritual Israel, says: "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented (Jer. 31:18f)." Of this repentance the apostolic gospel says of Jesus, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins...(they) glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life (Acts 5:31, 11:18)." And, so it goes; it can be unequivocally said that every grace required by God is also effectually given by Him to His children, being wrought in them by the Holy Ghost who is also given to them. Now, wherein have the little Bildads of this world to glory?

D. The principle of free and sovereign grace is such that a failure on man's part to live up to God's requirements does not, will not, can not hinder God's living up to His promises. In particular, in II Chronicles 7:14, man's failure to humble himself, pray, seek God's face and turn from his wicked ways in no wise can or will prevent God from nevertheless hearing His elect from Heaven, forgiving their sin and healing their land by applying the merits of Christ Jesus to them at the appointed time. Indeed, this is the only way a sinner ever will be blessed: "Not be works of righteousness which we have done"--and humbling oneself, praying, and seeking God's face would most likely be classified as works of righteousness--"but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that being justified by his grace we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:5ff)." Left to themselves, God's own children will not repent, pray, seek His face or turn from their wicked ways until the time appointed in which God works these gifts and graces, the willing and the doing, in their hearts and lives. Then, and only then, they most certainly will do all these things and more, for who hath resisted His will? Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power (Rom. 9:19, Psalm 110:3).

Bildad summarizes his thoughts in verse 20 of chapter eight: "Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will he help the evildoers." He plainly implies: Job, you are a hypocrite and an evildoer. Become perfect and God will bless you for it.

(Continued next month)

FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church hopes to have the Fifth Sunday meeting in May, 1982, if it be the Lord's will.

The Churchhouse is located on Highway 704 near Madison, North Carolina.

We welcome brethren, sisters, and friends of our faith and order to meet with us.

Mrs. Rachel Wray, Clerk

NEW RATES FOR SIGNS

As we announced in the March issue of the *Signs of the Times,* the annual subscription price effective May 1, 1982, is $7.00 per year or $13.00 for two years.

High mailing costs have always been a problem for religious periodicals but they are now to the point that we can no longer hold the line on the subscription rates. We hope this increase will not deter anyone from continuing to renew and send in new subscriptions, and if there is anyone who cannot afford to pay the price, they will not be dropped if they will let us know.

Please look at the date on your label and if it reads 5/82 or earlier, your subscription is now due.

Again, we wish to thank everyone for

their support, contributions, and prayers. We have seen a good increase in new subscriptions lately, and hope this trend continues.

Thank you,
Editors

Dear Brother Williams,

I think it was October that my *Signs* was due. I'm not sure if I paid for one year or two the last time I renewed it. It seems like it has been so long. If I owe you for two years let me know and I will give you the additional when I see you at church.

Sometimes I feel so bad I wonder if I will be here even that long. I am still living alone and pushing along. I am going to church most every Sunday. I hope I can keep going for a while yet, but when you get 83 it is doubtless. I do hope I can continue to go to church.

The Lord has been so good to me. I hope I am thankful I am as well as I am. Everyone is so good to me and I love every one of my church brothers and sisters. My children are good to me, too.

A Sister, I hope,
Sallie Gauldin

VOLUME 3 EDITORIALS OF GILBERT BEEBE

Three years after first entertaining the idea of publishing the complete editorials of Elder Gilbert Beebe, founder of the *Signs of the Times,* we are happy to announce that Volume 3 is completed and available.

Bound in a beautiful library buckram cloth, similar in color to the cover of the *Signs,* this volume contains 480 pages of new, easy to read type and is printed on the finest paper available. The first article was written in January, 1854, and the final one August 1857, so covering a period of about three and one half years. The dimensions of the book are approximately 9 x 6 by 1½" thick, as will be the future volumes.

Much deliberation went into pricing this volume and we feel like we have been fair beyond question. A comparable book could not be purchased for what we have priced this one. Depending on sales, future volumes may be priced differently.

More than all things else, we are delighted to be able to put the works of Beebe into the hands of many who could otherwise only read what could be published in the "Voices of the Past". These are rich writings of the highest spiritual import. We believe you will agree. Every reader of the *Signs* is encouraged to purchase a copy of this work. We fully believe you will be satisfied enough to tell others of it as well. May God be praised if we succeed in this venture.

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Gretna, Virginia

Dear Brother Williams:

I trust you and your family are well. I have been sick but am well again, I hope. Also, I lost my Mother two weeks ago, but we had her a long time. She was 93 years old, and you know, when you watch them gasping for breath, then death is a relief. She looked so peaceful and I hope she is at rest now. We will sorely miss her.

Brother Williams, I wrote my experience about 15 years ago and I never had it put in the paper. I have felt very lonely since Mama passed away, so I got it today and read it again. I also carried it down to let Sister Alice Gibson read it and asked her if she thought it worth publication. She said, "Yes, Send it to Brother Williams". So if you can read it and think it suitable for

publication you can. As I said, I wrote this about 15 years ago, and at this present time I do not get the *Signs*, but would like to have it again. I am enclosing money for two years subscription.

I love you all I hope for Christ's sake.

A Sister in Hope,
Viola V. Amos

Dear Brethren,

My subscription to the *Signs* was out in November and you have been very kind to keep sending it. Thank you so much. Enclosed is a check for two more years.

I enjoy the *Signs* very much. The contents therein is what I hope to believe. The *Signs* has some very able writers.

I have often wanted to write what I believe is some of the Lord's dealings with me, but never have. Now if it is the Lord's will, I will try to pen some of it.

About 26 years ago I was a young mother of two children, and I was given a desire to read the Bible. I didn't go to church any place, but I started reading. The more I read the more I wanted to read, but I didn't have any knowledge of what I was reading. I guess I was searching at that time, and it was more like history to me. I started going to church, first one place and then another, and would listen to every preacher I could find on the radio, but all I would hear was, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved". It sounded so simple, but me–I couldn't believe. I didn't know why, then, but Jesus says "You did not choose me, but I have chosen you", and if I am not deceived I believe that now. But I am getting ahead of myself.

I began to try to pray. Everywhere I would be by myself, in the garden, chicken house, or any place I was alone I would be trying to pray. I wasn't asking God for mercy, though. I just thought you were supposed to get down on your knees and say any form of prayer you had heard or read.

I moved into another neighborhood where most everyone were Missionary Baptists, so I started going there regularly. I joined one night at a revival meeting. The preacher asked me if I believed that Christ died for my sins, and I said I did, but now I don't think I knew what I was saying. I do believe, though, the Lord was dealing with me at that time. By this time I had a third child, and I took them all to Sunday School every Sunday, but this was short lived. I began to become condemned when they would start out with the "money changers". Jesus went into the temple and threw out the "Money changers". I just stopped going there or any place else for a while. When I started going again I started going to the Old Baptist Church. I went to a funeral during Elder Stegall's life time, and I found myself shedding tears. It was not for the deceased, but I believe it was the first time I had ever heard the gospel. I told my husband while we were going home that man cannot teach these preachers what they preach.

One morning I was coming from the barn and the thought struck me with great force, "If you were to die, what have you done to save your soul?" I felt right then the answer was, Nothing! That worried me greatly, and I didn't forget it.

During this time my husband became very ill, and was in the hospital most of the time with a kidney ailment. He entered in August, and they operated on him for stones, but they failed to get one, and they could not let him out of the hospital with that one stone. They tried everything human hands could do to get that stone out. One morning I went to the barn to milk and I was made to fall on my knees and beg God for mercy. I begged Him if it could be His will to spare my husband to come back home to me and the little ones. There was nothing to be seen in that stall but the

old cow and me, but I believe there was an invisible being in there, too. I felt much relieved before I got back to the house. A few days later my brother-in-law came to the house and told me my husband had passed the stone, and the doctors were amazed. They just could not believe it. He was able to come home in November. I believe our God was the Great Physician there.

My husband only lived 2½ years after that and I was left with four children, the youngest only 5 years old, but the way has been provided. I have been richly blessed to raise them all. Three of them are married and have families of their own. So many times I have seen the workings of the Almighty in their lives. Their lives have been spared in car wrecks, from hunger, and nakedness, not for their good works, or the good works of their mother, but according to His eternal purpose. I hope I can see God at the helm, so to speak, bringing to pass everything according to His purpose and pleasures, and not ours, for ours would certainly be no good.

Another experience I had after I had been attending Old Baptist meetings now for some time was I went to visit my sister-in-law who is a Holiness and she had started to a meeting, so I told her I would go along and not hinder her. It was a tent meeting and the preacher came down the aisle playing a banjo and dancing flat foot. I took my four year old and walked out of that tent. I promised myself I would never go to another Holiness meeting, and I never have. I don't think I have ever been so condemned. They talked about the meeting coming home, and I remember telling them that the scripture said that it was a shame for a woman to speak in the church, (The Holiness have women preachers) and I said the scriptures said if the woman didn't understand to go home and ask her husband, and they laughed at me and said, "You sure would find out a lot if you asked your husband."

Needless to say, I went home very upset, and on my bed I tried to pray for God to show me the way, and I believe with all my heart that prayer was answered about two weeks later.

One morning I was about my housework and this dream seemed to hit me in the face. I thought this same group and I went to another Holiness meeting and when we got there I wouldn't go in, but instead went into another room. The preacher's wife came in and started talking to me and I said, "What are you going to say about the women speaking in the church". I don't remember her answer, but this I do remember. I told her. I would go and hear the Old Baptist. Tears of joy began to flow. I said to myself, "God has answered my prayers." I wanted to tell somebody that I thought would understand me. My husband didn't believe the Old Baptist doctrine. I thought that if I could only talk to one of my cousins, who was very close to me, and a member of the Old Baptist Church, that she would understand. I kept wishing she would come, and sure enough, one Sunday night she did come. ("Everything works together for good to them who love the Lord".) I told her of my prayer and I felt sure that God had answered me. We shed tears of joy together. I don't know why I wanted to talk to her first, but I did, and then I wanted to tell it to the church. The second Sunday in August, 1953, I went to Springfield Church and sit down close to the back of the building and Brother Tench took his text, "Come boldly to the Throne of Grace that you may obtain mercy.". To me a sweeter invitation was never spoken. I believed I had been to that Throne and had obtained mercy.

When he finished preaching he selected "Amazing Grace" to close. I have never heard it sung as pretty before nor since. I got up and started down the aisle. I was telling them what I felt the Lord had done for me, and I was telling them how low I had been brought down.

Two more came before the church that same day, and we were baptized the second Sunday in September. I have been satisfied with what I believe the Lord showed me in that dream and on my knees in that old stable beside the old cow while she was eating her hay. I was crying to God for mercy on a poor sinner. I have never doubted since then that salvation is by grace. I doubt myself so much. How could the Lord look down on a poor wretched person like I am, but I am no more tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine. If God isn't praised and man left out, it isn't for me.

I hope I can say with Ruth, "Intreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee". For if I know my heart's desire it is to follow after those of like precious faith, live with them, and die with them. They are closer than natural kinsmen who don't know the joyful sound, if I know myself. My happiest moments are when I am in the company with my sisters and brethren and at a meeting hearing the truth proclaimed.

If you do not find this suitable, please throw it in the trash can.

A Sister in Hope,
Viola V. Amos

Bracey, Virginia

Dear, dear, Sister Maude,

Your letter came today and so much I felt your nearness, your presence, I wanted to sit right down and write to you.

If indeed we be the branches of the Vine, surely we feel the presence of one another from time to time as God sees fit. I too, experienced a feeling of His good pleasure as I read your words written so lovingly and I rejoice and I thank Him and I thank you.

Oh, my dear Sister, life marches on and with it we experience and spend our inheritance and find how blessed we are when we begin the return home to the Father's house - just to know as the scriptures relate so beautifully that the Father knew and saw him afar off. I believe we know something of this experience as I reflect over the land I have traveled. My faith has been tried as with Abraham. I feel I have had the trials and afflictions of Job. I have experienced the doubt of Thomas, the denial of Peter, the betrayal of Judas. Yet have I loved this God, whom I have come to worship, all the days of my life. As with Taylor Caldwell I can say, "He is my all and without Him I would surely die." I see His reflection ever around and about me and of late He causes me to "know thyself" that I might know He lives within my being and in Him I live and move and have my being. Without Him I can do nothing. Now, no matter the walk, the way I travel He makes me to reflect and think until in His perfect time He reveals it is all of Him and He gives me to know His purpose. Then He leads me in His paths of righteousness and He is some Master Teacher. And I marvel and I wonder and I watch and from time to time I walk the deep valleys yet he allows me to partake of His very presence and I feel to sup with Him and to feel His magnificent love and I feel to decrease and am filled with His increase. And I believe you, too, worship this God that I bow before in humility and love.

Just now I am made to realize because of you, your letter, your written words, I have been brought before His throne of grace and love and trust have met together once again. Indeed, we are greater than we think! If God be in us, and I believe He is, then truly all things are possible when our strength is in God. And again I thank you and I sing praises to His Holy Name.

Sister Maude, I hope your health is improved. I do think when God gives us these altered states of consciousness (and it's for sure and positive, we can't do this of ourselves) the body is

completely forgotten and somehow I believe a healing takes place, either in the mind or the physical body.

I know, too, all about those times when He seems to have gone completely and I feel so lost and alone but somehow I know even then He is there. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. Only God knows our needs and His ways are perfect. The low places are needful as the high and I long for the time when I will be made to place my feet on a "level" place and there will be "no more sea".

In His Precious Love,
Tom and Florence

Bassett, Va.

To the dear Editors of the Signs of the Times,

We do hope you dear ones are well, and we hope you will be given strength from the blessed Lord to continue to publish the blessed truth as it is in sweet Jesus our blessed Lord of Lords and King of Kings. He is all in all. Bless His Holy sweet Name.

I do so much love to read the *Signs of the Times*. My subscription will be out in January, so I am sending a check for two more years. The little left over you may use as needed.

I love so much to meet with the blessed Lord's sweet little ones wherever He is pleased to gather His ones at church meetings. I have been blessed to gather with the dear Primitive Baptist all the days of my life. My Mother, Malinda M. Brammer, took me when I was just a small child, to meetings. Even then I respected those dear ones. But it was not until I was blessed to go when I was older that the love was fully manifested. In the year of 1921, the good and blessed Lord gave me a love for them that is so strong. I love my dear children very much, but the love I humbly hope our blessed Lord Jesus gave me for His chosen little ones is and was so much stronger than natural love. I did not then, and I still do not feel worthy to be with His dear loving children, but Oh! dear children of the Loving Lord, it is my heart's desire to be with you all whenever the Lord wills for me to be there. I long to hear the sweet prayers and sweet songs of Zion and the blessed truth as it is in Jesus, sent down from the Father. Oh, may it please Him to draw His chosen people unto Him. May He be pleased to lead, guide, and keep us all more closely to Him in His everlasting love.

Jesus is Lord. I do hope He is mine, and I am His. I seem so far from Him, who is all our hope, grace, mercy, and salvation. I have feared very much in my life that I did not indeed love the blessed Lord. I tried to beg Him that if I truly loved Him and His little ones, to bless me to meet with them the next week-end. Well, I didn't get to go. Oh, how my heart and soul mourned and cried. Then I was, I hope, given to beg Him to bless me to go to meeting when He was willing, and not when I was willing. Oh, Lord. Not my will but thy will be done. At a time when I did not even think I would have a way to get to church, my dear Brother asked me if I would like to go to meeting with him. I was overjoyed. We went to the dear old Primitive Baptist meeting that day. When we walked in the meeting house the congregation was singing

"Tis a point I long to know;
Do I love the Lord or no.
Am I His or am I not."

The sweet love of our blessed Lord Jesus flooded my soul and breast and it seemed the angels were singing. My soul at that point was so full of love to our Lord and His sweet children, I did not have a doubt but that He had blessed me to love Him and His chosen people.

Oh, I can't ever, while in this tabernacle of clay, tell how sweet it was to my poor hungry soul. May it please the blessed Lord to bless you dear Editors to remember my dear daughter who is suffering greatly in her body. She has been in the hospital 8 times this

year. I do hope you dear ones may remember her and me, a poor sinner, in your prayers. I do love sweet prayers, and oh, how I long to pray, but only our blessed Lord can send prayer into our hearts. My daughter's name is Edna Mae Rea.

In Hope,
Callie Clark

THORN-BLOSSOM

How mysterious that the thorn, which is the emblem of the fall of man, should be laden with beauty, teeming with fragrance, abounding with endless profusion of scents and hues, embellishing as it were the whole clime of even uncultivated nature in the month of May! Rich and blooming, the hedge-rows, thorn-bushes, and lanes seem strewed as it were then in that month with flowered walls, clumps, and pictured lines of beauty with what we call "May", thorn-blossom, in pink, lilied, and variegated sweetness and almost enchanting charms! And yet, it is all thorn-blossom still! And the thorn is the emblem, mark, and badge of the curse of God on the whole visible creation wherein we live. "Cursed is the ground", says God; "thorns shall it bring forth". And yet that the badge of God's curse should thus be decorated in the youth of spring and summer with the unnumbered sweet-distilling and balmy beauties I have described, is a mystery. From which I shall draw the following conclusions and inferences.

Thorn-blossom, in the first place, reminds me of the whole body of Arminianism, blooming on the stock of universal redemption, creature-merit, free-will, and the cursed mass of opposition to God's decrees. God says, "His elect are a garden enclosed, a vineyard, a spring shut up; and a fountain sealed". (Songs 4:12). "No", says Arminianism, "all men are equally beloved in God's sight". Thus Arminianism blooms and blossoms nearly on every corner of the world. And why? Because it is pretty, fragrant, and charming to the greatest mass of mankind. For many are in the broad road that leadeth unto destruction, whereunto also they were appointed; (Matt. 7:13; I Peter 2:8); and few are in the narrow way that leadeth unto life. (Matt. 7:14) I say, the thorn-blossom of Arminianism endeavors to bloom out its scents, and says that all men are equally gilded with acceptableness before God. Says Armianianism, Cain might have offered an acceptable offering before God as well as Abel did. It was Cain's own fault, says Arminianism. Thus as Cain tilled the ground which brings forth thorns emblematic of God's curse, so Arminianism thus tills free-will and chance-work, and insists upon it that there is no difference between a thorn and an apple tree. "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons". (Songs 2:3)

That apple tree is the emblemed figure and name of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the remainder of the verse quoted most clearly imports: "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste". And as the fowls of the air pick "hips and haws and bramble-berries", the fruits of the rough, prickly, and disesteemed brier and thorn and such like; so Arminians are under the express and predestinated tuition of the prince of the power of the air; and as all the non-elected part of mankind weather and build their nests from necessity of the thorn-tree of God's rejection and non-election; so, on the contrary, do the whole elect race from among men set down under the Lord Jesus Christ's shadow and the great delight of electing love, particular and special redemption through the quickening love of God's most Holy Spirit.

Further, as the thorn-bush in May bends as it were with the load of blossom, and attracts the gaze of many

a spectator; and as many a tongue might say of it, "See there!" in reference to its beauties; so the Arminian's holiness is the thorn-like, painted, daring, and bold front of creature-holiness, self-righteousness, and Satanical perfection of the flesh. They deny every truth of elect religion. They blaspheme, first, predestination; second, imputed righteousness; third, the final perseverance of the saints. They extol the power of the creature: "Up and be doing!" They say any one may have grace if he will. They say God wishes all to go to heaven, but the goats will not! Wesley and his associates thus deny the doctrine of reprobation; whereas Scripture says expressly, "God hardeneth whom he will". Moreover, Wesley denied the doctrine of unconditional election; thereby making the elect their own electors! Moreover, saying growth in grace is in our power, and his blasphemy against particular redemption and in favour of fleshly sanctification, perfection in the flesh, and what not; all these and various other aggravated marks stamp Wesley in my soul as the greatest enemy of God and of man that has appeared in these latter days. His denial of the cardinal doctrine of Christ's imputed righteousness, if he died in that state, stamps him as a damned man in my soul's thorough judgment; and it is to be feared that he died in all his errors. And, as Huntington says, "If a man dies in his errors he must be damned, if God be true". (Vide his sermon, entitled "The Funeral of Arminianism"). To which judgment I say, Amen.

Christ was made of a woman, and made under the law in behalf and in place of the elect; and he paid their penal debts which were owing, by his blood. And as the law also said, "Do this and live", as well as that "The soul that sinneth shall die": so Christ not only rubbed out with His blood the sentence of death recorded against the elect by the law; but he, also, as a man, kept the law as regards its mandate, "Do this and live". Thus, Christ brought in a divine, perfect, and law-fulfilled righteousness. Thus, His blood wiped out the black catalogue of the transgressions of the elect, the elect thereby being pronounced innocent, through blood, death, and destruction being fully wrung from the illustrious scape-goat as their Surety, Bondsman, and lawcurst Redeemer. The law thus exacted its full penalties. But over and above penalties, death, and the pains of eternal damnation which Christ endured for his spouse the church, he fulfilled, magnified, and made the law honourable by perfect obedience to its eternal mandate which proclaims the path to win endless life: "Do this and live!" Christ did so do it: guile was not found in his mouth. This obedience, then, of His, is the imputed righteousness of the elect. This is their wedding garment of dazzling, bright, and transcendent beauty. This is what fits them to be the guests of God. This is what makes them god-like in his Infinite presence. This is what law and justice delight and smile to see. Did the law say, "Do this and live"? So the divinity of Immanuel clothed itself in the virgin's womb and linked to Him a human body, with a created human soul, in all respects like unto his brethren the elect seed; sin only excepted: and He not only washed them in his blood, but He brought in for them an everlasting righteousness also. This imputed righteousness then, I aver, asseverate, and am as certain in my soul as that breath is in my body, that every man who has it not, is an eternally damned soul. "And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment. And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to his servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and

gnashing of teeth." (Matt. 22:11).

This imputed righteousness then is the bloom, blossom, and fruitbearing richness, grandeur, and ineffable brilliancy of the Tree of Life, the Lord Jesus Christ, unto all the elect seed. This the the blossom of life, perfection, immortality, and neverceasing joy to my ransomed soul. This is the dress which I shall sit in as in wrought gold at the wedding supper of the Lamb. "For thy Maker is thy husband". (Isa. 54:5) This is the fine needle-work, (Ps. 45:14) as it were, which the virgin throng of the ransomed race attend Immanuel the King of Glory in. This imputed righteousness, I say, which the Arminians fight against like tigers; this righteousness is the robe, the diadem of beauty, the ornaments, jewels, rich embroidery, gilded vest, sunny tabernacle, gorgeous grandeur, and laded blossom of paradise that my obedience-crowned, blood-bought soul shall bask in, with the trophies of free grace, without money and without price, for ever and for ever, in that celestial country, which so far must and will eclipse the glories of this terrestial scene, as much as the thorn-blossom of creature-holiness is eclipsed, bedimmed, and out-shown by the infinite, divine, and ineffable righteousness of Immanuel imputed to the elect alone. O heavenly excellencies, hid treasures, and never-ceasing bloom of the Tree of Life, as above described! How different to the painted, patched-up, and rude garb of creature-righteousness! A crab, a thorn, a brier, a nettle, or a thistle, is the God-curst adornment of a true Arminian in the sight of God! "Bind him hand and foot, and take him away."

If it is asked why I take on myself to judge the Arminian crew, it is, I answer, because I know by divine and heaven-sent experience the hollow, shadowy, cob-web, and cockatrice-wreathed fabric of their everlasting cursed religion, Popery and Arminianism are one and the same. I wanted to be a Wesleyan, but the wrath of God tore off the spiders' webs, which their religion was stanching my sin-wounded soul with.

But universal redemption and the denial of Christ's imputed righteousness are villanies one as great as the other. For I know that if Christ's righteousness is for all men that there is no hell! for the wedding garment, like a ship at full sail with a prosperous wind and unerring pilot on a safe sea, will waft every one whom it is for into the joyous harbour of eternal victory over sin, self, death, and hell. But, according to the damnable doctrine of universal redemption, the nullity and non-necessity of Christ's righteousness are hideously set forth; for one might suppose many wedding garments were laid by, as it were, useless in heaven, if Christ wrought out the brilliant vests for those in hell! O, shocking! Christ's blood and imputed righteousness are equally commensurate; and were shed and wrought out alone for the sheep and not for the goats! No goatish back ever was made or created to wear the mantle of Christ's imputed righteousness. No, never! "Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them." (Jer. 6:30)

This is the reason then for the profusion of the thorn-blossom. Many being in the broad way and few in the narrow, we thus see the need, the call, and necessity for thorn-blossom. For we all, alas, by nature, are the children of wrath. But the Holy Ghost regenerates and testifies of Jesus in His blood and righteousness in due time to the elect. Thus the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy to them. After they know Christ's imputed righteousness and blood through the Spirit's revelation thereof to their souls inwardly, in the inward kingdom of God in their souls; lo! they begin each then as kings to say like David, "Come near, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what God hath

done for my soul." This exasperates the devil to the highest pitch. Then the devil sends forth such men as Wesley, to poison the whole atmosphere of the world with false doctrine. Thus the Wesleyans call the unconditional election of the chosen race the horrible decree! Thus they designate election (the grand charter of all the sheep) as the devil's lie. O horrible! I say again, that Wesleyan Methodism is flat high treason against my electing, redeeming, and regenerating God! Of Arminians may be said:

Vain man, forbear! no thorny bloom
Of creature goodness reaches heaven!
Thorn-blossom fails! The Arminian's doom
Is hell, swollen with all such leaven.
They who are dressed in that bright vest,
Imputed Righteousness most pure!
When hell, when death on all else rest,
As Christ's theirs then this dress seals sure!
O brilliant Vest! surpassing far
The richest notions words can paint!
Hid under thee, no saint shall faint,
Though stung with sin's still rankling scar!

For unconditional election, imputed righteousness, particular redemption, God's sovereign election or rejection of men (all which things Wesley denied) go hand in hand, or stand or fall together. The thorn-blossom of creature-merit and human holiness is therefore called in. As the bloom of the Tree of Life is for the elect alone; as the elect are, as it were, a garden walled around, wherin alone the savoury fruit and illustriously glorious buds and blossoms grow that will break forth into the full, unspeakable, and eternal fruition of God; lo! what must the non-elect do but spread forth the gala too, not only of profane pleasure, but also of self-righteousness, free-will, and false religion! All which things then, and the swarms of counterfeits from Satan, imitative of the sublime glories which God has laid up for the elect alone; non-elect religion, and non-elect people, and their efforts, and the painted deceit of Satan toward them, all, all the magic string whereby Satan leads captive the goats at his will; all the spiritual inebriety, varnished cheats, and magic enchantments, and sorceries, and witchcrafts which the prince of the power of the air has, by the permission of God, poured out abroad over this whole fallen world wherein we live, are typified to my eye by "thorn-blossom". "Thorns shall it bring forth, which are near unto cursing". And if thorns are near unto cursing, so is the blossom thereof too, fair though it be! "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully, and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood". (Jer. 48:10)

Having endeavoured to shoot an arrow, not at the upright in heart, but at the skinny phantom called "Arminianism"; I will, the Lord alone being my helper, endeavour at some future time to knock a bough or two off the bramble-bush called "Bastard Calvinism". So be it. For the longer I live and the more that I feel concerning the ever-blessed Almighty, the more am I brought feelingly, sensibly, and in submissive hearkening to rest my everlasting salvation on unconditional eternal election and particular redemption, on the one hand; and on the Spirit's work in me, on the other hand, manifestive of my own election and redemption, who am the unworthiest of men. All which things Arminianism and Calvinism equally fight and war against.

Abington I.K.
The Gospel Standard
January 1838

Cody, Ky.

To the Signs of the Times:

You will find a check enclosed to renew my subscription to the dear old paper, the *Signs of the Times*. It is so

good I hate to miss even one copy. I have been reading it since 1918.

In Hope,
Ella Darnall

Dear Editors:

My subscription to the ***Signs*** expires with the October issue. I want to renew it for two years, and use the balance as you need.

I wait eagerly each month for my copy to arrive. I usually read it through before I lay it down and then reread it. I enjoy it so much as it is what I believe and enjoy reading and hearing preached. I feel at home with the Primitive Baptist people, although I feel to be the least if one at all. Sometimes I don't feel worthy to be among them. But that is the greatest enjoyment I get in this world, just being among God's people. I have a hope that I am one.

May God bless all of you to continue to send out this blessed paper.

A Sister in sweet hope,
Essie Bane

Riner, Va.

Dear Brother Williams,

I am sending money for two years renewal to the *Signs*. Use the balance for distribution of the *Signs*.

I do enjoy reading the *Signs* so very much. It is comforting when we are blue. I hope you and Sister Williams and family are well. I hope to see you soon.

We enjoy the *Signs* so much. The experiences of every age, and the writings and sermons of our dear Elders are always sweet.

I know He will receive the glory in all things, but it is sweet indeed to know that communion with Him. I pray I have known the true power of life and I do not feel worthy to beg Him for His goodness.

Let me say thanks to the Editorial Staff and all other contributors.

In Bonds of Hope and Love,
Beulah Wells

Winston Salem, N.C.

Dear Brother Williams,

As promised some time ago, I am sending something else towards printing and sending out the *Signs of the Times*. I thank the Lord for this publication. I find each issue to be a spiritual feast; nothing superficial or shallow or artificial, just the pure sweet and blessed truth. What a delight it is to read the *Signs* in view of the mountains of other periodicals that pass under the guise of "religious" matter, which for the most part always appeal to that Adam nature in man, and that somehow leaves the impression that though man has some faults he is not so bad as some would be led to believe. Away with such humanistic hypothesis and vain imaginings of totally depraved man.

I was talking with a dear brother a month or so back who also takes the *Signs* and we were talking about reading the letters which are published in each issue of the *Signs*. It used to be that I was in the habit of passing over most of the letters and reading the articles but as if a light shone through and directed me to read some of the letters and a voice as it were from within seemed to tell me that there was so much spiritual food to be had in those letters, I began to read them and now get so much from them. And each person who takes the time to send a letter has much that is of profit to say. We can see in reading these thoughts of others many experiences we have had, many heart aches we have had, many blessings we have received at the hands of our Gracious and Sovereign God. We can see, too, wherein we daily so miserably fail our Lord. We can see in reading these experiences in the lives of these the unmistakable guiding hand of Divine Providence, the Sovereignty, the Love, the Mercy, and the Wrath of our Omnipotent God. Se we learn by reading these experiences of others, as in many of them we can see ourselves; and that

all of us are undeserving of the very least of God's rich mercy. We can but cry when we are made to see our awful nature, "unclean, unclean", and deserving nothing but eternal hell.

Brethren, remember us in prayer, my little family and I, and pray if it please the Lord to continue to reveal yet more of His blessed truth to us and that He will enable me to dispense it with wisdom, and not with enticing words that appeal to the flesh and not the heart.

Having never in person met you dear brethren, yet we are made to feel a close bond of love; that love that only the sheep of God's flock know anything about. May the Lord be pleased to enable the *Signs* to go forth until He returns on that final day.

In that blessed hope,
Augustus Webb

EDITORIAL

Rt. 4, Box 21A
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"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Rev. 1:18.

"I am he that liveth," the great Jehovah who came down to save His people from their sins. Born of the Virgin Mary who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, Jesus fulfilled every requirement of law and justice removing every obstacle on the way to heaven and immortal glory for His redeemed people. Jesus as God always had life in Himself. He is the great fountain and author of life for His people. He is living today at the right hand of God, the Father. "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Rom. 8:34. He ever lives as the Redeemer and Mediator for His people.

"And was dead." He died as man; He died the death of the cross for three days. He says concerning his life and death; "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my father." John 10:18. He also says, "Jesus said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. But he spoke of the temple of his body." John 2:19, 21.

The Apostle Paul said, "For I determine not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." I Cor. 2:2. If we are the children of God, it was our sins that caused the death of Christ. Yet his death was one of the most glorious events ever to take place in the displaying of His love and mercy on behalf of His chosen people. What then has the death of Christ done for poor unworthy sinners? I trust we have been given a blessed hope enabling us to feel His death was on our behalf. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Rom. 5:10. If we have been given to spiritually believe in Jesus Christ, we were once enemies to God, but we are no longer enemies for we have been reconciled to God by the blood of His dear Son. A complete reconciliation has been effected between the offended God and the offending sinner.

If we should live and die under the law, we are damned to a man and to eternity because the law demands perfection. It cannot excuse one single trespass, and our trespasses are innumerable. Oh, what a thick, dark cloud of sins you may feel so much of your time to be between you and God - a dark, black impenetrable cloud! The law can only demand perfection, and curse a man for imperfection. The Lord Jesus fully met that demand, for He was perfect in all His human nature, and in all His holy obedience. What a blessed mercy there is in all of this! He labored

through life to work out a righteousness for His people to wear, and having done that, He died a cursed, suffering death. When poor sinners are convicted of their state, and feel they are condemned under the law, it is fearful to realize their inability to revive themselves. How thankful they are when given to hear the beautiful sound of the gospel trumpet that presents Christ as dying for them!

God elected His people in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, having loved them with an everlasting love. Yet, God, in dealing with His people, being just Himself, must deal with them on the footing of justice itself. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Eze. 18:4. God's wrath due to justice was poised as a terrifying weapon. Christ says, they are mine, I will fulfill the law, I will satisfy justice. I will die and pour out my blood for the sins of my people. Christ met and fulfilled every requirement of law and justice, so that God, the great moral Ruler might be able without violation of His holiness deal in mercy with us poor unworthy sinners. I don't believe that God has or ever will save a poor sinner at the expense of His justice. Justice is one of His glorious attributes which can never be tarnished. Therefore, if we have not a Surety, we must suffer the consequences. Christ in His life and death has given full satisfaction for His chosen people and justice cannot demand more.

The righteous wrath of God was removed by the obedience and death of our Lord Jesus Christ and could not have been removed any other way. God can now be "just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Rom. 3:26. Let us remember my dear brethren, that infinite justice which was due us, spent its full force upon our precious Lord. The debt had to be paid. The cup of wrath must be drained; there was no putting it aside, so Jesus took it and after saying, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." Matt. 26:42. Jesus drank the contents of that fearful cup, for it was necessary that he should suffer the just for the unjust, that we poor sinners might be reconciled to God. Christ came to do his Father's will, and took the cup that was full of penal wrath and drank it all. We can never have a drop of the wrath of God in our cup if Christ drank it all for us. Our cup may be filled with plenty of sorrow, fears, trials and tribulations, but no anger though a broken law.

In verse 17 Jesus speaks words of comfort to John, (these words I trust are for us also, my brethren,) when He says, "Fear not." He took away the slavish fear of His beloved disciple and gave him words of comfort, telling him who he was, "The first and the last" and of his former sufferings "I was dead" as you saw me hanging upon the cross, dying for the sins of my people. But now as you see me, "I am alive forevermore."

"I am alive forevermore, Amen." What a beautiful statement coming from the lips of our Lord Jesus Christ, "I am alive forevermore." Can we imagine how things would be if Christ had not come forth from His grave? Where would our hope be without a living Christ to anchor it to? How could he have been declared the Son of God with power? What proof would we have that the Father was well pleased with His Son's performance here on earth in the redemption and salvation of His people? Thank goodness He did come forth from the grave and "was declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead." Rom. 1:4. There is much more to His resurrection than being declared to be the Son of God with power. When Christ rose from the dead the whole church being in Christ rose with Him in a mystical way. The Church as being members of his mystical body rose with her Head. All his born again members who have been quickened and made alive are alive

because he is alive. The Holy Spirit would not have been sent to quicken and give spiritual life to Christ's body (the church) had he not come forth from the grave.

My dear brethern, why do you have a living hope in your bosom? Don't say you don't have one, for you surely must. Even though you feel so cast down and sinful so much of your time, yet you would not trade your hope for all the riches of this old world. The foundation of our hope is in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Our hope is anchored to Christ who is within the veil. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." I Peter 1:3.

This blessed hope which we trust has been given us is an earnest foretaste of our glorious inheritance. "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Eph. 1:11. Only in Christ Jesus have we obtained this inheritance.

In his resurrection he is also "The life." This life at the exact set time is communicated and breathed into the souls of his people before there can be any union and communion manifested between the Head and the body: a body that was buried in darkness and ignorance, dead in trespasses and sins. "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his son." John 5:11.

As long as we think our salvation can be effected by our own efforts, merits, or anything else that can rise out of ourselves, we are blind and unless given spiritual light to see different, we will all fall into the ditch of eternal damnation. "Can the blind lead the blind? Shall they not both fall into the ditch?" Luke 6:39. Spiritual light and life are not the result of working; how can the dead in trespasses and sins work for life: We must be quickened first then we will work from life, rather than for life. Life must precede action. "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." John 3:14. We could not pass from death if we were not in death. We must all be born of the spirit of God, quickened from a state of deadness before we can ever have spiritual life in Christ. This is bringing us from "death unto life." Everyone must go from natural life to natural death: "For there is a time to be born and a time to die." Eccl. 3:2. But only the elect of God will ever be brought from spiritual death to spiritual life. If we have been given to spiritually believe, then we are one that "hath everlasting life." If we have received life in Christ Jesus, we have received a life that will endure as long as the everlasting covenant, as long as the everlasting God. We may die after the flesh, but never after the Spirit.

Have you ever questioned the possibility of whether you believe in Jesus Christ or not? Or whether you have a grain of grace in your soul? But do you not cling to Jesus with all your might? He would not have turned the devil out of your wicked heart if he was not your Christ. Now you see yourself as a poor unworthy, brokenhearted sinner. He has brought you down to say with the publican, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." Is sin a grief to your soul? If so, it is because he has shown you that sin is an abominable thing. Look back on your life experience. What do you find? If you have been quickened to divine life, you have received many new changes. You were given new perceptions, new emotions, new desires, new eyes to see what was once invisible, yea, the ugliness in yourself and the beauty in Christ Jesus. New ears with which we are given to hear the good news of the

gospel which was once foolishness unto our hearts. We now have a new taste so that we are given to "taste that the Lord is good." This new life ushers us into a new world, new friends, with a new love for them. There are also changes in our hearts that cause us to have many sighs, cries, groans, trials and tribulations. There is no change comparable to that which is wrought in a quickened sinner's heart by the power of the Holy Spirit. This life is fearful much of the time, yet it is the most glorious life ever bestowed upon poor sinners; it is a life that is looking unto Jesus as the author and finisher of our salvation. Do you not find and feel at times that God had given you an understanding heart? That you are not on the same course of ignorance and blindness concerning the truth of God and his dear Son as you once were? Do you not feel and see things now (at times anyway) in his precious word that have a sanctifying power and influence upon your heart? There is no set pathway to cover all the different types of experiences of the Spirit's dealing with the Lord's people. Some he calls one way and some another. Many of the Lord's people when called and quickened, may not be able to point to any certain time or place where they can say this is where my change began. Yet, it is all His work from the first to the last. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." John 3:18.

My dear brethren, there will be more or less a cleaving of sin to us as long as we are in this world, but this is different from our cleaving to sin; for sin must not have dominion over us: it shall not bring us into condemnation if we be in Christ Jesus. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom. 8:1. May we be given to pour out our hearts to God, begging him not to allow us to walk after the flesh, but to lead us in the pathway of His Holy Spirit, to reign and rule in our hearts at all times that we may be nothing and Jesus Christ all in all.

"And have the keys of hell and of death." When we ponder on these two words, hell and death, they may seem like two great monsters ready to grasp us in their deadly claws. Death we must all face, but we trust both these monsters have been conquered on our behalf through the blood and obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ has the key of hell because he has conquered this great enemy. Look back to the garden of Gethsemane where he met hell face to face. Such was the agony he endured, that he sweat, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground. The cup of which he drank all the contents must have included a thousand hells. Look at him hanging upon the cross, how he suffered hell, bled and died. Yet he conquered and glorious was the victory. He conquered hell and destroyed the works of the devil, therefore the gates of hell shall not prevail against his church. The demands of the law requires perfect obedience and curses all who fail to render this obedience. "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written cursed in everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the law to do them." Gal. 3:10. Before sin can be destroyed of its power, the law must be fulfilled for "the strength of sin is the law." I Cor. 15:56. The law is spiritual, and for one example, it says, "Thou shalt not commit adultry." Matt. 5:27. But it also says whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath already committed that sin. So it is not merely the act, it is the thought, it is the very imagination, that is a sin. The law will not give up one tittle of its stern demands. All who

desire to be saved by their works, one sin will spoil the whole lump. Where is, your perfect righteousness now that is required at God's hand? The answer is Christ Jesus. "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures." I Cor. 15:3. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." II Cor. 5:21. "Saying blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." Rom. 4:7. "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Heb. 8:12 And he "that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood." Rev. 1:5. Christ has taken away the strength of sin by fulfilling the law and removing its curse from upon his people. "For ye are not under the law but under grace." Rom. 6:14. Go ye cursed into everlasting punishment" will not be pronounced on his elect for their redemption has been fully paid for. Therefore in fulfilling the law to a jot and tittle, removing the strength of sin, he has conquered hell on behalf of all his elect family. He now has the key to hell to shut its door so that none of his people will ever enter into it. The sad thing is that Christ has the key to open hell to all who have not been made righteous in Christ Jesus. He locks the gates to heaven against all unbelievers and there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth for they shall be shut up in eternal hell and there will be no escaping from this dreadful place of torment for, "he hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." Rev. 3:7. Abraham said to the rich man, "Between us and you, there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come thence." Luke 16:26.

"And hath the key of Death." Ever since righteous Abel led the way, death has been coming as one perpetual stream, never ceasing, day and night. This key of death is used to open and to shut. He unlocks the door of death in trespasses and sins for each of his elect at the exact set time, and quickens them to spiritual life. He opens the door of natural death at the exact appointed time for man to depart this life. He locks the door of spiritual life to all who have not been chosen in Christ Jesus from before the foundation of the world. "But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." I Cor. 15:57.

All whose sins are not forgiven, death will have its sting, for sin lays heavy upon us all and "The sting of death is sin." The scriptures say that "the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." I Cor. 15:26. We may call death an enemy in some respects. Death to the elect family of God seems to be more of an enemy when they see their loved ones overtaken by it than when they have to face it themselves. It is indeed a great grief for the living to see their loved ones taken from them, for the church to see her pastor, her deacon or members removed from their midst. If we are blessed with average health, surely the body and the soul desires to dwell together as long as they may. Sometimes death comes after a long period of grief and pain; yet, death itself is stingless among the Lord's people. Christ removed the sting of death for his people by removing their sins and can now ask, "O death where is thy sting?"

The angels of the Lord, descended from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat upon it. Christ came forth from the sepulchre more than a conqueror. For as his body came forth from the grave so will the bodies of his church whether in the earth or in the sea. We may all have some fear that we will be delirious of death when it comes to us. But remember we don't need a boat until we get to the water, and we won't

need dying grace until we face death. Then I believe that dying grace will be given to all who die in Christ. "To live is Christ and to die is gain." God's covenant promises in Jesus are fixed and sure both in life and death. May we not feel reluctant to go, when, where, and how it pleases Him to open the gates of death to us. We must be willing to go through the grave to Christ. It was through the grave that Christ went to his glory. Christ left his grave clothes in the sepulchre; he laid them neatly aside because he rose to die no more. Death could have no more dominion over him. Now, having the key of death when he opens the graves of his elect, they will not come forth clothed in earthly garments but with his robe of righteousness.

I believe that Christ has purchased the bodies as well as the souls of his people. He has redeemed them by his own precious blood and every part of his purchased possessions shall be h used in heaven and immortal glory. "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise, awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust: for the dew is as the dew of herbs and the earth shall cast out the dead." Isa. 26:18. In the resurrection of the bodies will he again use the key of death, the doors of the grave will be opened and they that have fallen asleep in Christ shall come forth, for that "which is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." "For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality." "O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?" "But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." I Cor. 15:44, 53, 55, 57.

True religion is a very solemn thing. It is the knowledge of self and the knowledge of God in Christ. It is by the grace of God, that we have been give a religion wrought in our souls by the power of God himself, which will not leave us in the agony of death but which will land us safely in heaven. Until death moves us from our walk of life, we are pilgrims surrounded by dangerous foes. We are infected with our old man, tempted by Satan, the things of this world, and tried by many different circumstances, but as Christ now lives in heaven, his people shall live there also. He now has "the keys to hell and death." This should be a message of great comfort to all who have been given a blessed hope in Christ Jesus. His work can never be undone; union to him can never be broken. He liveth to make intercessions for us. "For his mercy endureth forever."

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

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OBITUARIES

SAM HENRY HOLT

Sam Henry Holt was born January 27, 1892 and died January 7, 1982 making his stay on earth 89 years.

He married sister Holt December 22, 1912. To this union were born five sons and two daughters.

Brother Holt united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Bunker Hill Primitive Baptist Church around forty years ago, later to move his membership to Hillsdale Primitive Baptist Church, one of the six churches in the Cross Road Union. He remained a faithful member until the Lord in His appointed time saw fit to call him out of our midst.

In my walk with Brother Holt in this Life, I believe he was sound in the doctrine of God our Saviour contending for salvation by Grace. I believe he fought a good fight, and kept the faith. He surely will be missed in our Cross Road Union and his home church. As one of his neighbors said of the neighborhood in which he lived and raised his family of five honorable children, this was a man of peace. There could be much more said about Brother Holt's Hope, but I would say to his wife Sister Holt and his children that his wishes would be, not to weep for him. I feel he is only sleeping, just awaiting to be raised in his likeness. He told me one time it would be wonderful he believed to just fall asleep in Jesus to be awakened in his image, where there will be no more sorrow, but Peace and happiness in the Holy Kingdom of God. I believe Brother Holt was laid to rest with this hope.

Elder B. D. Hutchens

ISAAC SHAFTER BOND

Brother Bond died suddenly in his home on November 24, 1981. He was born July 16, 1901 to Isaac and Julina Bond of Indian Valley, Virginia.

He is survived by his wife, Ada Marshall Bond, and 5 children, Mrs. Mae Barbour, Mrs. Eva Marshall Bond, Mr. Francis S. Bond, of Richmond, Va., Toby C. Bond of Houston, Texas, Vera B. Harvey of Waynesboro, Virginia. One daughter, Clara B. Barbour died in 1968. There were also nine grandchildren, and one great grand son.

Brother Bond asked for a home in Indian Valley Primitive Baptist Church in 1924. His membership was later reinstated at the Richmond Primitive Baptist Church in 1975 where he became a devoted member and was well loved.

He was a cabinet maker by profession, and was known and respected in Virginia for his splendid craftsmanship in the making of cabinets, and later for his hand-made musical string instruments.

Funeral services were held at Woody's Funeral Home and were conducted by Elder Denver Simpson. The remains were buried at Greenwood Memorial Gardens in Richmond, where a eulogy was delivered by his son, Toby.

Our husband, father, and grandfather will be greatly missed for immeausrable reasons. May his soul be at rest with our Lord and Saviour in his heavenly home is our prayer.

The Bond Family

BROTHER LUTHER PASLEY
SISTER EULA CANNADY

It is with much sorrow that we of the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church submit this memorial of love and respect to two of our beloved members. Brother Luther Pasley passed away September 9, 1980, and Sister Eula Cannady died on August 10, 1981.

Each of these were loved and respected by us all. They showed by their walk and conversation that they sought that city whose Builder and Maker is God.

May the grace of our Heavenly Father be with each of the families to reconcile them to His will.

Done by order of Dan River Church on December 26, 1981.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Brother Boyd Minter, Clerk

BROTHER MARLIN ELLEDGE

On October 19, 1981, it pleased the Lord to remove from our midst Brother Marlin Elledge, beloved member of Good Hope Church. Brother Marlin was born January 15, 1908 in Hopkins County and lived most of his life near Scroggins, Texas. In his experience before joining the church, he had a vision of two paths; one was broad, leading to destruction and the other was narrow, leading to life eternal. He saw himself caught up upon the narrow path. This dream or vision was a great comfort to him. Later, he was greatly burdened about joining the church. He then had the sweet privilege of coming forward right behind his brother, Clive Elledge, and right before his father, Joe Elledge. The three were baptized along with Sister Ollie Rhoades and Sister Alice Robbins by the late Elder E. J. Lambert on November 26, 1967. After joining the church, Brother Marlin's burden was lifted. In later life, Brother Marlin was called upon by the Lord to suffer a long illness due to cancer of the brain. This slowly affected his

speech, and for many days toward the end of his life, he could not make himself understood. One day when Brother Clive Elledge was sitting at his brother's bedside, Brother Marlin suddenly grabbed Brother Clive by the arm and spoke plainly for the first time in several days and said, "I want to talk to you. I want to go to meet my Saviour!" He then stated that he had seen his Saviour in the clouds. He wanted Brother Clive to go with him that night to meet their Saviour. Although Brother Marlin never could speak after this, he had already said more than enough. This deathbed experience was of great comfort to Brother Marlin's loved ones. There was no doubt in anyone's mind that Brother Marlin had seen something very beautiful; indeed, even his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in whose presence he is now rejoicing forevermore. Brother Marlin's funeral was officiated by Elder Joe Hamrick. Survivors include his wife, Mrs. Winnie Elledge; his parents, Brother and Sister Joe Elledge; one brother, Brother Clive Elledge; two sisters, Sister Myrtle Rhoades and Sister Bonnie Fay Gilbert; and several nieces and nephews. Our loss is his eternal gain.

Written by request,
Jimmy Hamrick

TALMAGE J. PITTMAN

Deacon Talmage J. Pittman, a deacon of Paron Primitive Baptist Church, Hawkins, Texas departed his life in a hospital in Tyler, Texas, November 16, 1981. He served his church in humility and love. He was of a meek and quiet spirit. He was a humble, peaceable and God fearing man which his walk, conduct, and conversation abundantly testified; being deeply taught in the things of God.

He was a real lover of the truth and was often given to feel the preached word with power; nothing else would do for him. His illness prevented him from attending church for about two months before his death; not being able to go to the house of God was grievous to him. He could say with the psalmist, "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God." The Sabbath day was his delight, as it presented him the sweet privilege of meeting with the Lord's people and feasting upon the word of God. We believe with all our heart he has entered an eternal Sabbath where congregations never break up and Sabbaths have no end.

Brother T. J. was given the sweet privilege of seeing his son, Phillip Pittman, ordained as deacon of Paron Church. He was appointed clerk for the ordination and was given the necessary strength to read the minutes.

He lingered for several weeks before peacefully expiring in the blessed hope of eternal life and glory. For several days before his passing, it was very difficult for him to raise one hand up to his mouth; but just before his last breath, he raised both arms full length toward heaven and smiled. We believe he saw his Saviour and felt His gracious and sanctifying presence with much assurance of mind and joy of heart.

I frequently visited him during his illness and he always asked for prayer. He had a desire to live but was not afraid to die. "Not my will but thine be done." Our little church at Paron has lost a precious deacon and friend, but we must say with a truth, our loss is his eternal gain.

He is survived by his wife, Sister Helen; one son, Phillip; and a brother, Doris Pittman. His funeral was conducted by the writer assisted by Elders C. M. Haygood, Jimmy Hamrick, and B. J. McLaughlin. His body was laid to rest in the Paron Church Cemetery to await the resurrection call.

Written by his pastor; one who dearly loved him.

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

The church at Tarboro acknowledge the death of our dear Sister Dessie Boswell. Sister Boswell passed away November 19, 1981, at the age of 80 years. She was among the oldest members of our church and she was faithful until her health kept her away in her last days. Sister Dessie was faithful in supporting her church even though she was unable to attend. She was a great believer of Salvation by Grace, and Grace alone. Sister Boswell was blessed to have a sound mind, and she praised her God until the last. She was blessed to hear her pastor preach on the radio after she got unable to attend church. She would always tell him how much it meant to her.

Sister Dessie, along with many more of us, admitted to making mistakes in life, but it was by the Grace of God that brought her through. She was trusting and praising her God most of the time.

To know Sister Dessie was to love her, and we feel she is at rest with God awaiting the day of Resurrection.

Therefore, we the church at Tarboro, resolve: 1. that we send our sympathy to her family for we feel Sister Dessie is resting in peace where trials and tribulations are over; 2. that three copies of this resolution be made, one for the church records, one for the family, and one to be published in the *Signs of the Times*.

This done by order at our December conference.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 6/82 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Strawberry Church, on Friday, Saturday before, and second Sunday in July, 1982. The dates are July 9, 10, and 11.

Strawberry Church is located in Pittsylvania County on State Road 750 about 18 miles west of Danville, Virginia. Highway 750 leaves Highway 41 at Woods' Store. Follow Highway 41 from Danville until reaching Woods' Store. The church is located about one mile on the right from Woods' Store.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

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JOB VERSUS THE CONDITIONALISTS

By Elder C. C. Morris

(Continued from last month)

III. WHAT ZOPHAR SAID

"IF thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands toward him; IF iniquity be in thine hand, put it far

away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles. For THEN shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear: because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away: and thine age shall be clearer than the noonday; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning. And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope; yea, thou shalt dig about thee, and thou shalt take thy rest in safety. Also, thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee afraid; yea, many shall make suit unto thee (Job 11:13ff)."

Zophar, in agreement with Bildad, loves the legalistic approach to religion in general and the word "if" in particular. "IF thou prepare thine heart," Zophar says, not realizing that the preparation of Job's heart is from the Lord, "and stretch out thine hands toward him," which is a gesture associated with prayer. Zophar assumes that a person can take prayer upon himself by merely deciding to do so.

"IF iniquity be in thine hand..." Is there really any doubt in Zophar's mind about Job's iniquity? In verse 3 he has accused Job of lying and mocking. In verse 6 he said God is exacting less than Job's iniquity deserves. Zophar's "if" here carries the weight of a foregone conclusion, "SINCE". "SINCE iniquity is in thine hand." Zophar recommends, since this is Job's case as he sees it, "put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles." Puny man cannot permanently evict the moths from his closets, the spiders from his corners, or the dust from his furniture. If he cannot do these simpler things in nature, how can he displace spiritual wickedness on a far higher plane of life and living? Yet, from that early day until now, the will worship of Bildad, Zophar, and their fellow travellers says that the only tool a man needs to evict iniquity and wickedness is the creature's will simply deciding to do so.

"THEN," Zophar says, IF you will only do those things, THEN look at the blessings you will earn thereby: "THEN shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; thou shalt be steadfast and shalt not fear; thou shalt forget thy misery; thou shalt be secure; and thou shalt take thy rest in safety," among other things.

Before leaving Zophar for the time being, please note these two things: (1) Is it not strange that those who seem to say the most about the "security of the believer" and being "secure" (verse 18) are the ones who are most without grounds to do so, as their "security" is so clearly based upon their own works instead of Christ's finished work? Their glory and their glorying as they themselves express it is, "God has done his part and I have done mine." The true believer's attitude is, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord (I Cor. 1:31)." (2) In the same breath, verse 18, Zophar refers to "hope," but Zophar's hope is as groundless as is his security, being rooted only in creature works, efforts and merits.

IV. WHAT ELIPHAZ SAID

"Is not thy wickedness great? and thine iniquities infinite? For thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their clothing. Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink, and thou hast withholden bread from the hungry...
Thou hast sent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless have been broken. THEREFORE snares are round about thee, and sudden fear troubleth thee; or darkness, that thou canst not see; and abundance of waters cover thee (Job 22:5-10)."

Is it not amazing that of the three times the word "infinite" occurs in the scriptures, one use of it is here by Eliphaz in his frothing attack on Job, in which he attributes infinitude to the creature rather than to the Creator? He says Job's iniquities are infinite, accusing him of sins of omission and sins of commission against the windows

and orphans, the weary and the hungry. THEREFORE, snares, fear, and darkness are on you, Job, Eliphaz concludes. The premises of Eliphaz, the Humanitarian so concerned about the widows and the orphans, are:

1. God punishes the wicked for their wickedness;
2. You, Job, are quite obviously being punished by God; and his conclusion is

   THEREFORE, you are wicked.

Poor Eliphaz was neither doctrinally nor logically sound. He could not see that his reasoning is not valid on at least two counts:

1. His conclusion does not follow from the premises. It would make exactly the same amount of sense to say, "The guard pushes the alarm button every night; last night the guard pushed Ralph; therefore, Ralph is the alarm button"; for, the arguments are parallel and equally (un)sound. Yet, millions of people rest their religion upon such unsound reasoning.

2. There is no proof that Job's misery was indeed God's punishing Job, as it certainly was not; but Eliphaz assumes, as do most perfectionists, that any misery or suffering whatsoever is a punishment from God, a punishment from which the Jobs of this world could escape merely by being nice, like Eliphaz and his friends.

As Eliphaz had no knowledge of the terms of the New Covenant described in Jeremiah 31 ("...they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."), he next tried to teach his neighbor Job to know the Lord: "Acquaint now thyself with him (verse 21)." He then told Job all the blessings he would earn if he would only get acquainted with the Lord: peace, and good shall come to thee; and "IF thou return to the Almighty," look at the blessings Eliphaz says will come! Thou shalt be built up. And God will give you lots of gold and silver. God will, incidentally, also hear your prayers and give you light for your way. Is not all this just what we want, Job? First and foremost, to be built up, puffed up, with lots of gold and silver, and last but not least to have our prayers answered and God's light given to us--and all in that order? Such is the argument and doctrine of Eliphaz. And it is all conditioned on IF Job will return to the Almighty and get himself acquainted with Him. Eliphaz says it is all up to you, Job.

V. WHAT ELIHU SAID

What Elihu says may not be very good, but there certainly is a lot of it. For six full chapters (32 through 37) he demonstrates to us that a person does not necessarily need to speak the truth or even to know anything about the subject in order to talk at length about God and godliness. After taking the entire thirty-second chapter to tell the older men, "You have had your say and failed; now let me speak. I'm about to burst to tell what I know," Elihu then volunteers to stand in for God Almighty (33:5f) so that Job might practice his arguments a bit. For, if young Elihu can answer Job's arguments, he figures, why should Job waste his time trying to use those same arguments with God? Elihu even says that he will go easy on Job (verse 7).

Let us briefly consider three quotes from Elihu, the first one being recorded in Job 33:27-30: "He (God) looketh upon men, and IF any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living." Elihu preaches a bloodless salvation based on a mere confession without an

atonement. IF Job will "just confess" THEN God will deliver his soul. Elihu's god is looking upon men to see if they are going to confess or not. How different, how far removed is Elihu's god from the Psalmist's God, of whom it is recorded, "...thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. (Psalm 139)." Elihu deals in externals as do the others, with man presented as the actor and their God as the reactor.

Elihu's second text we here consider is in Job 34:31f: "Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more: that which I see not teach thou me: if I have done iniquity, I will do no more." To the uncircumcised ear this possibly sounds very similar to Jeremiah 31:18f, where Ephraim bemoans himself thus:

> "Thou hast chastised me and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh; I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth."

If the carnal mind can detect any difference at all between Elihu and Ephraim from these two texts, it would most likely say that Elihu's statement is the better of the two, for he advises to pray for wisdom and promise to do better, whereas Ephraim, bawling like a calf, does neither. He asks for nothing from God; he promises nothing to God; he merely carries on like an emotional teen-ager. Surely, it sounds more reasonable for Elihu to say, "I have been chastised, so I will not offend any more"--that is, "I have learned my lesson"; but that is as unwise and as unholy a boast from a deceived and treacherous heart as was the brag of the mixed multitude who, at the foot of Mount Sinai glibly said, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do," and yet were capering around a golden calf before Moses descended from the mount with the stone tables.

What then is the difference between an Ephraim and an Elihu? Much, in every way: Ephraim's statement shows the attitude of those who are instructed by Jehovah; Elihu's statement does not. Elihu suggests that Job should pray that God would teach him; Ephraim, without any such prayer, has already been taught by the Lord and with good results. Elihu says, promise not to offend again; Ephraim is too ashamed and confounded by the memories of his past to make such a rash promise. The wise man said, "Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than thou shouldest vow and not pay (Eccl. 5:5)." Who can pay such a vow to offend no more or to do iniquity no more? No one, of course, but there are scads of will worshipers presumptuous enough to make both the boast and the attempt.

Elihu's "IF I have done iniquity I will do no more" is an offense even in natural affairs. A man coming to another and saying, "IF I have done you wrong, I am sorry," manifests neither a conviction of wrongdoing on the one hand nor a genuine apology on the other. The reply of the offended party might well be something like, " 'IF'? What do you mean, 'IF'? You know whether or not you have wronged me, and, 'IF' you have, you should say you are sorry, 'IF' indeed you are, with no 'IFs', ands, or buts. And 'IF' you have not wronged me, then there is no need for an apology, is there? Have you wronged me, then, or have you not? Make up your mind, or else begone!" How much more so in spiritual affairs does a person's sly glossing over his iniquity, as Elihu suggests here, offend the Just and Holy God?

Now, consider a final statement of Elihu, found in Job 36:11f: "IF they obey

and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures. But IF they obey not, they shall perish by the sword, and they shall die without knowledge." Here, although he has angrily rebuked his elders--Bildad, Eliphaz and Zophar--for their ineffective attempts to correct Job, Elihu nevertheless blindly continues in their same course of IFs, urging duty, obedience and service in order to earn prosperity and to escape the sword, chastisement, ignorance, and death.

(Continued next month, the Lord willing)

Mocksville, N.C.

Dear Editors,

And to all born again, peace lovers, true worshipping people who have been given a God fearing faith, in whom we have to do. We try to write from what we experience and have experienced, lo these many years. For a subject matter we would point out a few of the divisions amongst our people.

The first division between the Primitive Baptists, that I have any record of, took place back in the 1890's. The Primitive and Missionary split in 1832 was led by many fathers now asleep in Israel. But one stands out in my mind amongst them all, Elder Gilbert Beebe, who had a compelling hand in the Black Rock Address. Up to this time there existed two different beliefs, and it is proclaimed by the Holy writ, "A house divided against itself cannot stand". And in later years this was again proclaimed by President Abraham Lincoln.

The difference between the Primitive and Missionary Baptists was a different belief, or works system. While the Primitive Baptists contended it was through and by grace ye are saved through faith, and it is nothing we have done, but it is by the mercy of a kind and loving Creator. And according to what I hope to believe, this love for His people was given in His darling son even before the world began. Christ, His only Son said, "Father, thine they were and Thou gavest them me". Now here is a people set apart; a choice was made from another people and who has the power to question the one that formed them. "Hath not the potter (God) power of the clay to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor". Now my question is, Why these Primitive Baptists who have been truly washed in the blood of the Lamb of God, and given that sweet faith that was once delivered to the Saints, still go about envying, causing distortion, and divisions amongst God's little few? We are tired and sick of the controversies. Have we got some false shepherds amongst us? But let me counsel anyone to go no further than "Thus saith the Lord", and when we are in this spirit, our foes will disappear and love, mercy, and truth will be our shield and banner. May this be the case until we be called home.

I am sending a check to cover a one year subscription for myself and the sister listed below. Do with the rest as seemeth good in your sight.

Wallace Harvey, Sr.

THE LORD THE STRENGTH OF HIS WEAK PEOPLE

"The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace". Ps. 29:11

The Lord has a people who are not and who shall not be numbered with the nations. They are his peculiar property. He will beautify them with salvation. He will be glorified in them. It is for their good and his glory to be led into circumstances whereby they may feel their entire destitute condition, in order that he may show himself their All in All. This is proved from the unerring word of Scripture, and confirmed by the Spirit's

teachings in the experience of the saints. The passage above is a very sweet, full, and precious promise. It is one of the poor sinner's rich jewels, many of which are recorded in the word of revelation, and occasionally fixed in the heart by almighty power. How blessed it is to be decorated in spirit by such good old fashion ornaments, or, in other words, how good it is to have such promises brought home to the soul by the Holy Ghost, and to realize in the experience the substance contained in the words. The words naturally imply what we daily feel, that the Lord's people are in themselves weak, restless, confused, and that they cannot set matters right by their own exertions. For if they could do these things for themselves, the promise would lose its value. It would be altogether useless. The Lord has made nothing in vain, much less such precious promises as these. There are many circumstances which go to prove the weakness of the Lord's people. Among the many I would observe a few; such as their various captivities. The apostle says, that "the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, so that we cannot do the things that we would", because of the captivity into which we are brought. And here is our weakness displayed, in that we cannot. Although the power of God keeps his children from going actually to an excess of gratification in worldly lusts, yet they display their weakness in even desiring them, and in not being able to turn their back upon them for ever. The course of the world is contrary to the peace of the Lord's people, yet they find they have no strength to withstand. The various troubles also under which the Lord's people labour show their weakness, for truly the very feeling of trouble shows weakness. How do the cares of the world sometimes weigh down the spirits. The fears of these people also show their weakness. They fear death; they fear the devil; they fear sin; they fear themselves; they fear man; they fear providence; they fear the present; they fear the future. Now all and every of these prove weakness, for indeed, rightly viewing matters, there is no well grounded cause for a single fear, and there would be none but for weakness. There is a fear of approaching the mercy-seat. There is a lack of power to go freely and tell the Lord their wants, desires, and necessities with any degree of confidence and faith. There is no power to take God at his word, no strength to obey his word as recorded in the holy Scriptures, no power to take comfort or apply a single promise; yea, such is the excess of weakness sometimes felt, that there is lack of power even to search the records of truth. But it will not suit the sentiments of wooden-gilded professors to expose the weakness of the church of Christ in this manner, although the sensible soul feels it to be the fact. No; where these things are felt in the soul, how can there be any peace? It cannot be under these circumstances and feelings. One says you ought to read more, you ought to pray more, you ought to be more earnest, you ought to believe. And the legality of our nature sanctions the sayings, although experience proves the impossibility. There is, therefore, war, contention, and confusion till the Lord comes and speaks strength, and speaks peace. And he says in his word he will do it; for although it is in these words the pen of David, it is the voice of David's God, and when the voice is heard in the soul, the work is done; there is strength to turn the back, to shut the eyes; to throw down the burden or to run with it, as though it was not. Fears vanish; prayer and praise spring up; confusion ceases; enemies look as small as gnats, and cowardly as they can appear; the death wound is discovered in the devil and sin; death looks pale through the stroke from the Conqueror; yea, no foe is considered an obstacle. That horrid and infernal three, the world, the flesh, and

the devil, with all their company, are under foot; peace and tranquillity of soul are experienced; promises are believed, taken in and digested. There is a standing upright; a walking forward; a challenging all opposition; yea, a taking the whole armour of God; a being strong in the Lord, and the power of his might.

The word says he will bless. The experience of the saints says he has blessed, and faith says he will again and again bless, till finally he will give strength to take leave of all things here, and enter into eternal peace in heaven, where a peaceful Jesus will shed himself by glorious rays into the soul for ever and for ever. Amen

Malmesbury, 1837 T. Ferris

"The Gospel Standard" 1838

Nitro, W. Va.

Dear Sir:

We just received our December issue of the *Signs of the Times,* and it tells how to know when your subscription runs out. According to the label, ours ran out 6/81.

I am very sorry. I couldn't remember when we renewed. We sure don't want to miss any of them because we enjoy them very much.

To read the trials and tribulations and beliefs of others does us a lot of good and makes our belief stronger.

Enclosed you will find a check to renew our subscription for two years. Use the extra for the mailing of the paper to someone else.

May God bless and care for you loved people.

Mrs. R. H. Pennington

Kenly, N.C.

Elder J. R. Williams:

I find my subscription to the *Signs of the Times* expires November, 1981. Enclosed is money to cover the renewal for one year. I enjoy reading it so much, as my health is where I am not able to attend church like I would want to, but my love is there with them and also my prayers.

The *Signs* gives me so much comfort. I feel like someone has had my experience at times.

I hope you will be blessed to keep up the wonderful publication that holds true to the faith in these trying times. Please remember me and my husband in your prayers.

A sister, I hope,
Lessie Davies

Manchester, Ky.

Dear Elders of the Signs,

I am sending a check for renewal of my subscription to the *Signs of the Times,* for two years. I have been reading the *Signs* for many years and read them over and over again since I can't attend my church as regular as I did when I was younger.

I am past 88 years old now, and have been a widow since my husband passed away more than a year ago. I am sending you a copy of my church experience. You may print it in the *Signs of the Times,* if you wish, or at least a part of it. My father was clerk of our church about 75 years. He lived to be 95 years old and attended church until about two months before his death.

Sincerly yours,
Polly Brown

Dear Sir:

The first preacher I can remember hearing preach was Elder Taylor Gilbert, a long tall man. I was too young to understand anything he preached about, but I remember very well about my baby sister, just big enough to walk, toddling up the steps of the stage and crawling between the preacher's legs. He preached right on and didn't seem to know there was a baby in the house.

In the year 1913 I was attending college, a Methodist Institution. The old college professor thought it about time

all his students ought to be saved, so he got a preacher from away down South to hold a revival for us. "Reverend" Dunaway was his name. Every morning for a week we (all the college students) had to sit in that big auditorium for one hour listening to him preach. One sermon I've never forgotten. When he got in a big way preaching, he pointed his finger over our heads and said, "There are some in this congregation whose caskets are already made and if they don't get down on their knees and pray, they are going straight to Hell." Some of those children went wild. Down they went on the floor screaming, praying, rolling and tumbling. It made me sick! I thought, "Well, if that is the way, I'm a lost sinner. I can't save myself or anyone else."

The next week-end we had church down on Rockcastle River where my grandparents, John H. and Nancy Caudill Craft lived. There I went. Elder Jim (J. W.) Anderson preached. When he finished his sermon and extended an opportunity for members, I marched down the aisle and stood there dumb as a sheep in a slaughter house. Elder Anderson asked me a few questions and all I could say was, "I don't know." But to my sweet surprise, they accepted me in the church. That was in the month of May, 1913. And I've been feasting on the crumbs that fell from "The Master's Table" ever since.

Sincerely yours,
Polly Brown

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Ephesians 1:6 "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the beloved."

In the so called religious world of today there is a belief widespread among many people as follows. They believe if you go to church, do the best you can and you will go to heaven when you die. Personally, I think that what a person believes amounts to nothing unless it is the true belief. And if it is true, the scriptures which is the word from the very foundation of truth itself, will verify this belief. So all these people who believe that by and through their own efforts and works will gain access into heaven have a belief different from mine and one that does not agree with what the scripture says.

What do the scriptures say? *He* has *made us accepted* in the *beloved;* notice now, he has made us accepted. It does not say we can, or you can make yourself accepted. It does not say by our works or

our efforts we can make ourselves accepted, but rather it says, "He has made us accepted". I thank the good Lord that it is this way, because were it left to me, I would be a miserable failure. Now let us think on this for a little; "He has made us accepted in the beloved."

The scripture also says in Luke 13:3, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Now this scripture tells us we must repent, so what do we do? Because we read in the scripture that we are supposed to repent, does that mean we will repent? Why, of course not. How could we turn from our life of sin that we are enjoying to the fullest and say we are sorry. What foolishness! We could no more do that than we could love God with all our heart, mind, and soul; which the scripture also says that we should do. A man trying to repent because someone told him to, or because he read somewhere that one should, would be about like a leopard trying to change his spots, or an Ethiopian, his skin. Now since the scripture says to repent, they also say he has made us accepted, so now we look at God's side of the thing, and leave man out of it for a while. Now the appointed time arrives to all of us that are spoken of in this verse of scripture. Behold there came a change. It seems that this man begins to see things a little differently from the way he has been seeing them. He doesn't enjoy things as much as he did. Things he once did and thought nothing of, now look vile and dirty in his sight, and before long he sees himself as a sinner doomed under a load of sin and guilt. Now he has become conscious of sin and his sinful ways, and he will possibly be brought to believe that he has sinned away the day of grace. He doesn't realize it yet, but a work is being done, an operation by the Holy Spirit is being performed. A hard and stony heart is being removed and replaced with a heart of understanding, even more sure than it could be done with a surgeon's knife. Remember, the scripture says to repent, and it also says, "pray without ceasing". Now maybe this man hasn't read the scripture, but no matter. In due time he will repent, willingly, and gladly, just as sure as night follows day. Just as sure as the scripture says "ye must repent", even so you will. Now where does this repentance come from, my beloved brethren? Not from man. Remember Esau was not given a place to repent, although he sought it with tears. We know this repentance came from God, because he had made us accepted in the beloved.

The Bible also says that "without faith it is impossible to please God." To be accepted in the beloved you will have faith. James 4:10 says, "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and He will lift you up." Any man who has just had an experience of repentance is a humble and a praying man, and the scripture says a humble man will be lifted up. So now God is molding this man into something that will be accepted in the beloved, so now he lifts him up. What do we mean by lifting up? This man was under a terrible load of sin and guilt, so by repenting and being made humble, he has been lifted up. He now has a feeling that his sins were forgiven, and not only that, but he has been given to see that the God who removed the load of guilt and took the burden off him was all powerful and able to do His will in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. The Lord uses different means to do this work in man. Sometimes it is a small still voice, or a glimpse of this, or a taste of that, but always with the same result - faith. Faith in God, not in themselves; but faith in God, because that is what is needed for us to be made accepted in the Beloved.

You see, he must repent, and he did. He needed faith, now he has faith. See how sweet it is, this beautiful truth runs throughout the Bible and fitly ties all these wonderful truths together to the

praise of the precious Saviour. These experiences all must have the same result because they show forth the truth and there is no error in truth. Without faith you cannot please God, so these experiences have their desired effect. Now the child has faith.

Romans 5:3,4 says, "And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope." I would like to write on all of these steps, but to prevent being too lengthly, I will just write a brief summary on tribulations and hope. Why I am writing this, I wonder, for all who have this blessed hope have experienced these same things. But somehow I feel I must write a little more. When one has been through a load of guilt, shame, and repentance, then has been lifted up, who can describe the wonderful feeling that is his? The load of guilt has been removed; he has a feeling of being forgiven, then he feels he is being held up by those everlasting arms. He has faith in a God who works all things after the counsel of His own will. How wonderful, but also, it doesn't please the great God in heaven to leave him like this. His work with him is not finished. Should He leave him like this he would become exalted above measure, so he has to be left to himself for a very good reason. Now he is glorying in this wonderful feeling, he is making all kinds of promises to himself and to his God, for the way he feels now, he feels he can keep them. But left to himself awhile, he soon finds out the temptations of Satan, the weakness and lust of the flesh is more than he can handle. Like Paul, he soon says, "Oh, woe is me." The thing I would like to do, that I cannot do. So down he goes and once more he is begging for mercy. On the one hand he sees all the blessings of having his sins forgiven, being lifted up, and made to sit in heavenly places, the joy of his salvation, and the faith that he is a child of Jehovah. On the other hand, he sees himself for what he is, a sinner saved by grace, and not able to do anything on his own. Now he can't even control his thoughts as the flesh battles against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. You see now, there is not one man, but two, and the believer is now going through a time of tribulations completely new to him. You who read this know what I am talking about. But all of this is for a wonderful purpose. Now this man is taught that he is unable to keep himself. Now he sees and knows that his Father in heaven shows strength in his weakness. He now knows that his heavenly Father has all power both in heaven and earth. He now believes that all things are working together for his good, yes, even chastisement, for a father doesn't chastise his son because he has done something bad, but rather so he won't do it again. So through a period of time and a succession of these experiences the believer comes to be blessed with patience. How sweet it is when the child has been treated this way by his Father, all these steps and trials each have their own purpose. It is all being done in such a way to make every believer to fit in his appointed place in the church, in the exact manner that the Master Architect has planned, since the beginning. Just as when Solomon's temple was being built, all the timber was cut at the forest, floated down the river, put in place, and fit perfectly, and the sound of the ax was not heard at the building site. Through all these things the heavenly Father is working out the dross and purifying the gold. In the process we are taught and made to see quite clearly that it is *He* who makes us accepted in the Beloved.

The Apostle Paul said as he faced death, "I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto him until that day." I verily believe that once a man (any man) has been blessed with this type of experience he knows from whence his help cometh, and will not have faith in man, not even himself.

The Lord says, "My sheep hear my voice" and will listen to no other. We know He leads them in such a way as to build confidence and faith in Him, and not in man. We are made to feel like the poet who wrote, "Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing, My dear Redeemer's praise." See, we need these things to be accepted in the beloved.

Who has all these things? Who goes through these experiences? It is the "us" in this verse of scripture, and it is separating the church, His loved ones, from the world. I believe the scripture was written to the believer; that explains the "us" in this verse, of whom I hope I am one, if so it is through His work and grace, and nothing in me or my efforts.

May it please the good Shepherd that these few words may bring comfort to some of His little ones.

A Brother, I hope,
Frank Hunt

Ruffin, N.C.

Dear Brother Williams,

I am enclosing our renewal for another year of the *Signs*. We have had the pleasure even in these lean years to have the *Signs* come to our home. We especially enjoyed the articles by Elder T. A. Stanfield and Elder Lambert recently. The paper has improved, at least both my companion and I enjoy it more than we did at one time. We beg the Lord's continued blessings on this paper, its writers, editors, and circulation manager, and we beg that our hearts will be enabled to receive the truth published in it. When at the throne of grace remember this sinner.

Saved by grace, if saved at all,
Mrs. Fred Cobb

Red Oak, Texas

Dear Editors:

Enclosed you will find a check to cover the renewal of the *Signs of the Times* for two years. I don't want to miss one copy. I enjoy the *Signs* so very much, and I have been taking it for a good many years. Please use the extra for anything you see fit.

Your brother in hope,
A. D. Blevins

FROM AN OLD SIGNS

We copy the following tart article on the "Religious Humbug" Institutions of the day, from the "New York Herald", of May 9, 1862. We are not a little surprised to find so sensible an article on the subject in a secular paper, and we are in hope that the victimized public are beginning to wake up on the subject. The "Herald" will find these modern institutions to be some kin to a certain kind of evil spirits of which we read in the scriptures, which could not be cast out without fasting. Withhold pecuniary patronage and they will die out, but they will never decline until they are starved out. The clerical engineers of those hypocritical organizations, like their prototype Balaam, are remarkably fond of the wages of unrighteousness--they love filthy lucre. They have already fleeced their silly dupes to the tune of many millions of dollars for the ostensible purpose of ameliorating the condition of mankind; and after a trial of nearly fifty years, and at a cost of hundreds of millions, they have succeeded in nearly exterminating peace and prosperity from the earth, and involving our country in blood and ruin. None who have carefully watched their movements can doubt that they have sown the seed of discord and fanaticism which has produced the terrible calamities under which our once happy and prosperous country now groans. But hear what the "Herald says:

"The Religious Anniversaries–The religious anniversaries, with which this city has been blessed for the past few days, are now nearly

concluded. In a pecuniary point of view they have been very, and deservedly, unsuccessful. There is no greater humbug on record than these annual assemblages of vagabondizing parsons and seedy philanthropists, who come here to pray money out of the pockets of simple people. So far from accomplishing any good, the moneys collected at these anniversary meetings support only a set of idle, worthless ranters, who are too lazy to earn their own livelihood, except in this swindling manner. Year after year, these gatherings have been held, and vice and immorality are just about as rampant and prevalent as ever. Ordinarily such a dismal failure to accomplish anything would be the ruin of any organizations; but when the people dabble with religion they seem to lose their common sense; and so they have gone on, giving largely and receiving no returns. This year we are glad to notice that the war has cut off the supplies of the pious anniversary beggars, and we hope that they will suffer accordingly."
Middletown, New York
June 1, 1862

ANSWER TO AN OUTCAST

My dear, anxious, inquiring Friend,--- I hail thee as a favourite of heaven; one that God hath a peculiar love for; therefore grace hath reached thy heart, manifesting itself in the cries of regeneration and divine life in your soul. I think we may gather from the Apostle Peter (see Peter 1:6,7), not only an answer to your question in December "Gospel Standard" (page 277); but a positive proof that the church, in the apostolic age, was the subject of temptations, doubts, and fears, such as yours, that the trial of their faith, being more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ, etc.

The states of mind which you have expressed are the very feelings of the children of the most high God, and are the effects of divine life, light, and teaching; of life, because you mourn, cry, and are uneasy; of light, because you see your state and misery; of teaching because you repeat the lessons learned in the school of tribulation, which is a fore-runner of that hope that will by and by make you not ashamed. But the mistake with me, as well as many others, is that I have been looking to His word, instead of the God of the word, for help and succour, comparing my experience to some of the experiences of the Lord's family, instead of comparing what God the Holy Ghost has wrought upon my heart with his work in the Bible, trying to draw comfort from my frames and feelings, instead of looking solely to the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work. Thus, I have discovered that I have been looking for help where no help was, which has proved my ignorance and foolishness; and I have been led to acknowledge the same, and fled to the throne of divine grace, crying, "Lord, save, or I perish"; for in and of myself, I am like the troubled ocean that casteth up mire and dirt; now so warm and full of zeal, and anon so cold, careless, and indifferent that I often stand amazed at the goodness and mercy of God, in bearing with my perverseness and obduracy, and realizing to my soul's present enjoyment and eternal peace, that my God and Father in Christ Jesus, loveth at all times, and hateth putting away.

Our salvation does not depend on our feelings, but on the finished work of Christ, made known unto us by the Holy Spirit. None that have been regenerated by the Spirit of God ever sink so low as to be without one desire heavenward or Godward; and no one in a nature state ever had, nor can have one real desire towards God, except arising from fear of punishment; and this, evidently, is not the ground of your desire, or you could not subscribe, Amen, halleluja, to your condemnation; and desire is a certain evidence of the work of the Spirit, which will manifest itself under what ever darkness of soul, temptations sins, or fears we may be exercised with; for the Lord is our portion, heaven is our home, and nothing but the things of our Triune

Jehovah, in the covenant of love and mercy, as made known by the Holy Spirit, will ever satisfy the heaven-born soul. And hence arises our conflict; the new man of grace formed in our hearts, by the power of the Holy Ghost, is satisfied with nothing short of the Lord Jesus Christ, in all his fulness, grace, love, and power; and the old man of sin, our nature, is only fond of things that are carnal, sensual, and devilish; and we too frequently find, at least I do, that the old man will have, or does his best to have, his way; but grace must reign, and this is the ground of all our conflict and spiritual warfare. Still we have no real ground to fear, for the Lord is on our side; therefore, there is laid up for poor, mourning, and trembling souls, strong consolation, that hope, as an anchor, may enter in within the vail, and finally fix in Christ, and safely ride on the billows of tribulation throughout our time state. Thus, those feelings with which you are exercised, are, I am persuaded, the evidences of the work of God the Holy Ghost upon your heart, and of which all the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty are the subjects, more or less. Now, may the Lord bless you and me with an appropriating faith in Jesus, that amidst soul-desertion, we may be enabled, by the power of grace, to say, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in him."

An Infant

The Gospel Standard, 1838

THE BEAUTY OF EVENING THE DARKNESS OF NIGHT

While on our way home from Danville to Martinsville driving north at the close of a beautiful day, Jamie and I noticed the beauty in the sky. The clouds, in their many shapes, were illuminated with the rays of the setting sun. This was a beautiful sight that only God can present.

If only I could paint this beautiful picture to share with you! I said, "Do you know, Jamie, that pretty sight reminds me of the Old Baptist. Look at the bright light, how it makes a cloud so pretty. Isn't that the way that we look and shine when the light of the Lord shines within us?" The clouds soon changed shape and color. I said, "See - the light is being withheld, and the brightness has become dimmer. It is beginning to darken. Isn't that like us?" Soon all of the sun reflections were gone. Now, don't forget, the sun was still shining, but it wasn't making the beauty shine as it had earlier. Isn't that, too, like us? We are seeing the black clouds in our lives and churches. God is still there. His light and warmth is still there, but I feel that we are in the time of darkness. Let us all hope and pray for the sun to rise again, and again illuminate our hearts with His love and that fellowship will shine forth like the rays of the sun on a plain cloud, making it a thing of beauty.

I feel to sign this,

Love,
Frances M. Cooper

THE PRODIGAL SON

Jesus spake many parables unto the people when he was here on earth, and his disciples asked him why. He answered, "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but unto them it is not given." The disciples of Christ are the only ones who will ever know and understand any of the mysteries of the kingdom of God. Others may read these parables and the interpretations, yet they will never understand the true meanings, for Jesus said, "Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand."

I do not know that I am a true disciple of Christ, but I believe that I have been given a hope in him. I also believe that one cannot properly understand what he reads until he has experienced it: and

then finding his experience written in the scriptures he will rejoice with joy unspeakable. He may relate in some way a part of his experience, and someone who has had a similar experience will understand and rejoice with him, but those who have not yet had such an experience will find very little or no comfort or joy in it. I said "yet", for it may be a future experience with you or me and then we will also find comfort and sweet fellowship in these experiences.

At times the parable of the prodigal son seems to fit me perfectly and gives me great comfort, but again I find it to be very distressing. For in seasons of darkness and doubt fears flood my poor soul and I can in no way deem myself a son returning to such a glorious welcome. O yes, I see myself as one who has spent all his substance on riotous living: but so much so that the Father could never allow me to return, even if I be a true son.

We may learn a few things from studying this parable in a natural or carnal sense, but to me the spiritual meaning has much more significance. All parables are only shadows or figures and are never the true substance, but only point to it. May God grant us wisdom to seek out and understand the true meaning, for if we fail to see Him in every scripture then we do not see rightly nor understand.

"A certain man had two sons." We will note that he says a "certain" man. Spiritually, could this be considered as anyone but God? I think not. And this man had two sons. We will note that there are two of them and both are sons. By birth only does one become a son. It can be done in no other way. As flesh and blood sons of our earthly fathers, we had nothing whatsoever to do concerning our own birth. We certainly were not able to ask to be born. Neither can we have part in a spiritual birth. In spite of the teachings of modern religion we cannot ask to be born again, for the natural mind receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can it know them; for they are spiritually discerned." The life of every son of God was in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, and at the appointed time that life is made manifest in birth. That life is eternal and therefore can never perish.

These sons were not twins. One was younger than the other, and it was he who asked his father to give him the portion that was to fall to him. He never considered that he might not be worthy to receive such a gift. He had lived under the care and watchful eye of his father and all his need had been fulfilled all his life, yet he was not satisfied. There was a carnal lust in him that must be fulfilled. His desire was to be with the harlots and to live riotously. His father gave him his desire, even as God did the children in the wilderness. He gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul.

As I see it, this younger son represents the Gentile Church, and the older son represents the spiritual Jews. The Jews were the children of the first covenant, the law covenant, and were given the laws and oracles of God. The Gentiles are the children of the second covenant, which is the covenant of grace.

The older son stayed home, working under the law and seeking righteousness by his own works, knowing nothing of the imputed righteousness of Christ and his perfect work of redemption for his chosen children.

Neither did the younger son know before he was born again. He took the portion his father gave him and went into a far country, seeking fun and excitement and knowing nothing of his sinful and lost condition. This is the condition of each child of God, and they must remain in this condition until it please the Lord to reveal it to them. Then when he had spent all, and a mighty famine arises in his heart, he begins to be in want. (This famine always arises,

for it is a part of the path that is laid out to be trod by every child of the Almighty.) He begins to see his destitute, naked, hungry condition and finds that he has no means of improving his condition. He therefore joins himself to a citizen of that country, which I believe represents the false church, the modern Arminian churches of our time. They send him out into the field to feed swine, and he goes; for he is hoping to accomplish his own salvation by his own works. Would this not be as the modern day missionaries? And he would have fain (gladly) fed himself on the husks that the swine did eat: but no man gave unto him. Even if they had given unto him he could not have eaten and survived, for this was only husks that was fed to swine and not that spiritual food that cometh down from above. This is an experience that I feel that I can truly witness to, for I spent many years there.

"And when he cometh to himself-". This "coming to" was not of himself. Had it not been for the mighty workings of God within his heart he would have remained in this fallen, lost and destitute condition. "No man can come unto me, except the Father which sent me draw him." (John 6:44). "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (I Cor. 2:9-10) The Spirit searches our hearts, not to discover something that God does not know, but to reveal to us the condition of our hearts. And when we see this vile, sinful, fallen condition and are made to know that our works of self righteousness are as filthy rags in the sight of Him with which we have to do, then and only then do we cry unto him for mercy. We proclain our unworthiness as his sons and plead to be accepted servants.

The Father already knows this, for He sees our thoughts from afar, and is acquainted with all our ways. (Ps. 139:1-3). Yet He falls upon our necks and kisses us and the kisses of His mouth are sweeter than wine. (S.S. 1:2). Then He strips us of our filthy rags and put on us the best robe. This robe can be no other robe than the robe of righteousness that was wrought for us by Christ on the tree of Calvary. We can never wear this robe till he puts it on us. A ring is put on our hand and this ring is the emblem of His love. It is a complete circle, therefore has no end. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. (Jer. 31:3). Shoes are placed upon our feet, shodding us with the preparation of the gospel of peace. (Eph. 6:15). The fatted calf is brought forth and killed that we may eat and be merry. We feed upon the fat things of the gospel, the manna that is sent down from heaven. The leanness of our soul now becomes fatness and we can dance and make music and sing praises to His holy name. We have been dead in trespasses and sin, but are now alive; we were lost, but now are found. Oh, how glorious this feeling is to the returning son! And what joy to the servants that receive him with the Father. Compare this to the parable of the sheep that left the ninety and nine and went astray. When its master had found it and brought it home, he called his friends and neighbors together, saying, "Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost." And Jesus said, "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." Is not this shepherd Jesus Christ? Is not this straying sheep a poor, lost sinner? Are not these friends and neighbors the members of the true church. I would answer, yes.

But there is one who has no part in this great joy and feast. The elder son was angry and would not go in, though his father entreated him. He claimed he

had served his father many years and neither transgressed his commandments at any time: yet had never been given a kid, that he might make merry with his friends. This elder son was proclaiming his own self righteousness and had not submitted himself to the righteousness of Christ, a righteousness which he knew nothing about. If he does represent the elect Jew he will know nothing concerning our beloved Savior until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. When that is accomplished, then will he be returned to the fold and be made to believe in Christ, for he is a son. "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found."

I realize that I have only touched the surface of this beautiful parable, but what I have written I submit in love. May God bless it to His praise, honor and glory and to the comfort and joy of His beloved children. Put a mantle of charity over my mistakes and pray for this poor sinner when at the throne of grace.

Clifford Wilbanks

1206 S. Oklahoma
Liberal, Kansas 67901

Dear Elder Poole,

I missed you (as well as others) at the 5th Sunday meeting at Hopewell, as I enjoyed your preaching as well as our little visits.

I would like, the Lord willing to refer to Brother John Crowley's query about preachers preaching to mixed gatherings, and point out a scripture or two.

The late Elder J. R. Hardy said to my father after being asked if he (Hardy) would fill an appointment at any other church than Primitive Baptist, to which he answered, "I would preach to the very gate of Hell if asked, but they would hear MY doctrine of the gospel of Jesus Christ, not what they would like to hear, as I DO NOT preach to PLEASE man". End of quote.

I would refer Brother Crowley to Mark 16:15 in particular. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Wherever the preacher goes to preach, or to whom he preaches, I believe the scripture is plain-preach the gospel to everyone under the sound of his voice. Matthew 11:15 says, "He that hath ears to hear let him hear".

Hymn #58 in Lloyd's book I believe does speak to the true ministers of Christ to believe and follow:

"Jesus, and shall it ever be,
A mortal man ashamed of thee!
Ashamed of thee, whom angels praise,
Whose glory shines through endless days.

Ashamed of Jesus! sooner far,
Let evening blush to own a star:
He sheds the beams of light divine
O'er this benighted soul of mine.

Ashamed of Jesus! just as soon
Let midnight be ashamed of noon:
'Tis midnight with my soul till he,
Bright morning star, bid darkness flee.

Ashamed of Jesus! that dear friend
On whom my hopes of heaven depend!
No! when I blush be this my shame,
That I no more revere His name.

Ashamed of Jesus! yes, I may,
When I've no guilt to wash away,
No tear to wipe, no good to crave,
No fear to quell, no soul to save.

Till then, nor is my boasting vain,
Till then I boast a Saviour slain;
And Oh! may this my glory be,
That Christ is not ashamed of me.

(His institutions would I prize,
Take up my cross, and shame despise
Dare to defend his noble cause,
And yield obedience to his laws.)"

Instead of copying these scriptures, I will only refer to them to be read -- Acts 17:3, 4; I Cor. 9:27; 2 Cor. 4:5; 2 Tim. 4:2; Heb. 13:9.

The late Elder R. W. Rhodes wrote and published a book called "Gospel Comments" in which he took the word "gospel" everywhere used in the Bible. Elder Rhodes gave me this book, but I would lend it to Brother Crowley if he would like to read it. It might help to

clear up some of his questions.

I hope to see you at one of the meetings in Texas in the near future. I remain in Christian love.

(Elder) W. A. Winfrey

P.S. Could you Editors please print the addresses of those sending in articles for publication? There are some who would like to write to them. W.A.W.

(We are glad to be reminded to put addresses on articles published in the *Signs*. We encourage those who write to give a full address so that we might comply with this request. Editor.)

Chapel Hill, N.C.

Dear Brother Spangler,

I feel impressed to write a few words in answer to the request made by Brother Crowley in the January issue of the *Signs*.

It is my understanding that whenever the gospel is preached, it matters not what the composition of the audience is; that is to say, whether the minister knows if there are persons present who have not learned that "the Lord is gracious". His mission is not to "bring souls to Christ", but it is to present the truth as it is in the Bible, the truth as it is in Christ, and to expound it with all the light he is given in a manner that the hearers can understand. And whether or not his listeners have ever before heard the gospel, those who are God's children will profit and the others will not, for the gospel is to God's children only, and no amount of any kind of preaching will "convert" a son of Satan.

The minister's mission, as set forth by Christ, is to "feed my sheep". (John 21:15-17) This command is repeated by Paul in Acts 20:28, "Take heed to feed the Church of God", and by Peter in 2 Peter 5:2, "Feed the flock of God which is among you". Perhaps the answer to the question is that, whatever the make-up of the congregation, the minister is to preach milk for the babes, (those "unskilful in the word of righteousness") and meat for those "who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil". (Heb. 5:12-14) He is told not to be a respecter of persons in treatment, (Jas. 2:1-3) nor should he be a respecter of persons in his preaching.

The gospel is the "good news" and has to do with Christ and His teachings, with Christ and His saving grace; so while the minister should admonish his hearers (Rom. 5:14; I Cor. 10:11; Col. 3:16) it seems inappropriate to talk about other religious groups. They are not "the good news".

No prophecy is of any private interpretation (2 Peter 1:20) so what is to be preached is not what one believes, thinks, or supposes, or man-made traditions, but what the Bible says because, as my father used to say, "It says what it means and it means what it says."

It is true that the gospel is to be preached in the Spirit, that is, with firmness and assertiveness, as the minister is witnessing to the truth as it is revealed to him by the Holy Spirit. It is inconceivable to think that "in the Spirit" means delivering a sermon in a hardly understandable sing-song, rhythmic, repeated chanting of mastered phrases which, like the rhythm of dance music, is designed to provoke emotional response.

This method of delivery, sometimes referred to as the Welsh Chant, probably derives from the attempt of early dissenters to continue the style of delivery to which they had been accustomed. It seems logical that the perfect God would deliver a sermon to His servant in a perfect manner. It appears that some of our ministers and members have been schooled to believe that it is wrong or "not Primitive Baptist" for a minister to have, instead of the evangelistic type, a clear, well-modulated delivery. Yet, the Bible says, "study to show thyself approved unto God a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain

babblings, for they will increase unto more ungodliness". (2 Tim. 2:15-16)

Finally, I have not as yet found any reference to Time Salvation and would like for someone to explain what is meant by the term and upon what scripture, if any, the term is based.

My insight into these matters may be faulty. If so, please correct me with a "Thus saith the Lord" and destroy this communication.

In Christ's love,
Mary Faucette Poole

EDITORIAL

"TO EVERYTHING THERE IS A SEASON, AND A TIME TO EVERY PURPOSE UNDER THE HEAVEN: (ECC. 3:1)

This is a very basic truth that is recorded in the Old Testament which is as true today as it was in the day that it was recored by Solomon. It is a point in the lives of each of the children of God that they are brought to time after time where they are made to acknowledge the sovereignty of the Creator and the absolute predestination of all things and realize that this includes every step of their way. They learn by experience that they cannot expedite the seasons of comfort and peace nor can they prolong them when they are at an end. They learn by bitter trial that they cannot delay or avoid the seasons of darkness and coldness that come their way nor can they ease the distress of mind and spirit that they endure. As the children of Israel at the Red Sea, they are made to stand still and behold the deliverance or the bonds of afflictions that are theirs for that particular season.

All of the experiences that occur in the lives of the Lord's people are for their good and will be to the glory of the God of heaven and earth who created them for Himself and who set the bounds of their habitation. They will never exceed those bounds or stray out of the path that is theirs to tread. They are all steps in the race that is set before them that the Apostle Paul said is to be run with patience. They will run the race to the end; they will endure every trial, suffer every affliction and pain that has been appointed to them. Job experienced all of these and they made him, as it does each one, declare, "Oh that I knew where I might find Him! That I might come even to his seat!"

Now they begin to see the purpose for which this time is necessary in their life. They struggle and strive to overcome of their own strength but as Job, they are made to acknowledge, "Behold, I go forward but he is not there: and backward, but I cannot perceive him: On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him." The same position that the children were in at the Red Sea; they could not improve their situation there, or find any solution to the problem. This is when they stand still and realize that they must depend on Him that alone is able to deliver them.

Job said, "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Moses said, "The eternal God is my refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee: and shall say, destroy them." These seasons are for good and bring forth these confessions and make manifest the purpose for which the time was set.

As each one is brought into a living knowledge of God and godly things by the new birth, they can remember events even preceding that quickening that, in retrospect, were as pieces of a puzzle fitting into place. They were all bringing them to that point in their life that they were prepared for that which was to follow, although at the time they were separate events with no meaning. It may have been sickness, a great loss, deep depression, or other great stress

which made them stand still, analyze life, and begin to question the scheme of things that they had taken for granted before. It strips them of their prior sense of values and replaces them with a new set of values and priorities. These are based on a spiritual foundation and causes them to seek and search after more and more knowledge of the reason and purpose of this awakening to walk in a newness of life unknown to them before.

For the Apostle Paul there was a season determined when he was to be shown the true path of righteousness. All of his life he had earnestly believed that he was walking in the paths of righteousness, and according to the law as he understood it, he was. He said, "If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law blameless." This was a season in the life of the Apostle Paul which was just as necessary as any other period. They were all leading toward that special season when he was to see and understand the truth, and, by the way that he had been brought, acknowledge that there is indeed "a time to every purpose under heaven". The purpose as he stated it was, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." This is only known by revelation and this must come from God at His appointed time; the time for one to be made accepted in the Beloved. It is always a perfect work and since the Apostle Paul's experience was "for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting" it follows that all who believe on Him to life everlasting will experience this season and acknowledge that it was the time when the purpose of God in their lives was made manifest.

As His children look back over their lives, after this experience, and view the many seasons and times, they will witness with the prophet of old that God had made everything beautiful in his time. They will acknowledge that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be done forever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before Him. This is wisdom that they would never have attained to in the flesh and they are made to praise the giver of this most precious gift. The fear that they are made to feel in itself is beautiful and comforting unto them because as one writer stated, "The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom", and to realize that this godly fear is the teaching and instruction that God gives only to those which are His and that whatsoever He does is done forever is comfort and peace to their soul. Surely this is the comfort of which Isaiah was speaking when he said, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people saith your God."

Solomon wrote, "I have seen the travail which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it." "And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of men to be exercised therewith." These statements are made as a result of seasons that were appointed unto Solomon to instruct him in the fear of the Lord and the purpose, it seems, is to comfort those who in future times and seasons will need to see that even the travail of soul and trials of life are given unto all and fulfill the purpose that God has in the seasons they experience.

They need to understand that they are not alone in their seasons of trial and afflictions and that these have been the experiences of those in all ages of time who were set apart from their former ways and find themselves walking in a

way that is strange to those around them. Peter, writing to those in this position, said, "Beloved think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." This speaks to their very soul and strengthens them to continue in faith and look not to the carnal man or mind for help, as they can see that comfort can only come from God as He blesses them to receive a little here and a little there of the wisdom that comes down from above.

Man's impatient nature and vanity causes him to strive to improve and increase that which he is given. It is only when he has exhausted all effort and means which he possesses that he is made willing to stand still and see the hand of the Lord in bringing about those things which he really stands in need of and desires. This brings him to a time when the purpose of God is to be made manifest and he is made willing to receive gratefully and acknowledge with the Apostle Paul. "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Jesus Christ throughout all ages, world without end, amen." A lesson learned like this is one that will be long remembered. The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom and is learned by the saints of God as they experience the power in the instruction, and the frailty and futility of their best effort.

The times and seasons in the lives of the children of God are sweet and precious unto them and keeps them pressing on to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. They are reminders along the journey of life that they are in the way. Just as we need signs or evidence as we travel the highways to assure us that we are going the right way, these fearful and trembling children of the heavenly King need assurances along this uneven journey of life that they are in the way that leads to life eternal. Each time and season builds upon those that have been experienced before and refreshes them in their faith that all things work together for good to them that love God. Just as all scripture is given by the inspiration of God and is profitable unto the man of God, these times and seasons are inseparable in their instruction to the children of God and they remember all the way in which their God hath brought them.

May God in His infinite wisdom and mercy lead us in ways that are for our good and His glory. As we are led in dark ways which we do not understand and are seemingly unable to bear, may we be made able to stand still and know that He is God, know that all things are appointed unto man to cleanse and to purify the saints of God and to make them fit subjects who render all praise, honor, and glory unto their heavenly Father. Stand still and remember that it is only through great tribulations that any can enter into the heavenly kingdom. The Apostle Paul wrote, "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peacable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." May we be so exercised that we may indeed receive the peacable fruit of righteousness which is the full realization that these things, seasons, times, and purposes, are working together for good in the glorious salvation of our souls.

In bonds of love,
(Elder) Richard Campbell

(We feel this editorial is especially meaningful since Elder Campbell and his family have recently gone through the severe trial of the prolonged illness and death of their youngest daughter. May our heavenly Father bless both writer and readers to receive the truth contained in this humble article. Editors)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

The following editorial article of Elder Gilbert Beebe is one of 97 such works appearing in our new book, "Editorials of Gilbert Beebe" Volume 3. (See advertisement at front of this issue.) Not only is this an excellent article containing vital truth, but we believe it is the best and only course for any of us in our present or future destresses.

Editors

"DEARLY BELOVED, AVENGE NOT YOURSELVES." Romans 12:19

Who that read the solemn admonitions with which the New Testament abounds, do not feel deeply humbled under a sense of their shortcomings, and propensity to err? Were we not in the flesh, and exposed to temptations, we should not require to be thus frequently admonished; but such is our present exposure to the alluring vanities of the world, the corruptions of our own carnal nature and the temptations of Satan, that we need every admonition that is given us in the Scriptures, and we also need abundance of grace to incline and enable us to heed them. Among other trials which are common to the saints of God, their exposure to unjust injuries in their persons, their reputation, their property, or what is by far more trying to them, in that which brings down on them the unprovoked censure, suspicion and disfellowship of those whom they esteem as the excellent of the earth, among whom is all their delight. This, although more cruel than the grave, is sometimes the lot of the dear children of God, and while called to pass through these bitter waters of Meribah, while chafed and fretted in their feelings, how very apt is their carnal nature to suggest to them the idea of retaliation. Our carnal minds will urge that it is just and right that we should resent the injury done us, and smite those who have wantonly smitten us, and deal to them a just retribution for their wicked assault upon us. Self preservation is said to be among the fixed laws of our nature, and it is sometimes mistaken by even the children of God for a law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. But we, alas, have found it to be a law of our members, warring against the law of our mind. Under no circumstances are the disciples of Christ to administer retribution to those from whom they have received injuries. "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves." Your cause is before the Lord, and perfectly under his control. He will judge his people, and avenge his own elect who cry unto him night and day. There are several good reasons why the saints should not attempt to avenge themselves, of which we will call the attention of our readers to a few; and

1. Because we are forbidden to do so, not only in our text, but also in many other portions of the word. This, in the absence of all other considerations, is a sufficient reason. We cannot avenge ourselves, nor attempt to do so, without involving ourselves in an act of disobedience to our Lord and Master. He has, both by precept and example, pointed out to us the better way. By precept he has commanded us to love our enemies, bless them that curse us, and do good to them who despitefully use and persecute us, and if they smite us on one cheek, turn to them the other also; if they violently take away our coat, give them our cloak also. As we reverence him, let us regard his authority. In his example he was meek and lowly; he gave his back to them who scourged him, and his cheek to them who plucked off the hair. When he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he was reproached, insulted, slandered, rudely led away to be crucified, as a lamb is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep is dumb before his shearers, so he opened not his mouth. And when writhing in agony and blood upon the

cross of Calvary, condemned as a criminal to die a painful and ignominious death, though he could command the hosts of heaven, and had power to summon all the legions of mighty angels, he called not for vengeance, but he cried, "Father, forgive!" Righteous precept; blessed example. Dearly beloved, let us obey the command, and follow the example of our blessed Savior.

2. Another reason why we should not avenge ourselves, is our incompetency to accurately estimate the amount of injury received, the criminality of the motive of the offender, and the amount of retribution due to the transgressor. Both from the world and from brethren, we are liable to receive injuries. From the world we have no right to expect anything less, and from brethren, whom we hold near and dear, we shall sometimes encounter such treatment as is calculated to wound the spirit by which we are sealed, and provoke the corrupt passions of our yet unsubdued and sinful natures. When in conflict with the world, let us remember that our God has said, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," and leave the matter with him who knows how to deliver the tempted, and to reserve the ungodly to be punished. He will preserve his people from the wicked who are his hand and his sword; or, as the poet has said,

"When men of spite against me join,
They are the sword, the hand is thine."

And when from brethren we are made to feel the force of the words of the psalmist, "It was not an enemy that reproached me; then could I have borne it; neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him; but it was thou, a man, mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company," &c.—Psalms lv. 12-14. While in this world of conflicts, sorrows and afflictions, it is impossible but that offenses will come among the disciples. See Luke xvii. 1. But when offended by a brother or sister, instead of laboring for redress, or for the punishment of the offender, the divine rule is clearly given us, and we are commanded by our Lord Jesus to labor according to the rule to reclaim the offending brother. If he hear thee, well, thou hast gained thy brother; but if unsuccessful in laboring to reclaim him, conclude not that his is an hopeless case, for the failure may be in part, or wholly attributable to thyself; take the second step; take with thee two or three faithful brethren, who are prepared to give wholesome advice, and to judge impartially between you; and let it still be the grand object to gain the erring brother, and if this second step should fail to reclaim him, still presume not to decide the case yourself. You can neither search the heart nor try the reins of the delinquent brother. Do as your Lord directs you, tell it to the church. The Lord is there. God is in his holy temple, and he will judge his people. Let all the saints look to him for counsel, and ask of him, and he will give you that wisdom which comes down from heaven, which is pure, peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, without partiality or hypocrisy; such wisdom he will give to his saints, and not upbraid them, and such wisdom we greatly need to direct us in the adjustment of all the difficulties which occur among the saints.

3. We should not avenge ourselves, because to do so would be a usurpation of a prerogative which belongs only to the Lord. It is treason when the subjects of any government usurp the prerogatives of the king or sovereign to whom their obedience is due. None who possess the Spirit of Christ would willingly and understandingly grasp his sceptre, or attempt to seize his crown. But they all, while here in the flesh, possess a fleshly nature, which is full of opposition to that which is good, and it is from the polluted fountain that all our corruptions flow. From whence

come wars and fightings? Come they not of your own lusts? The saints have never been afflicted with any conflicts among themselves, which were not attributable to their own fleshly lust; for that which is born of God cannot commit sin; and if we, as christians, possessed nothing about us that is not born of God, we should neither be disturbed with sins, trials nor conflicts one with another. Under all these considerations it is exceedingly improper that dearly beloved brethren should avenge themselves.

4. Were we allowed to so avenge ourselves, such are our liabilities to err, we might severely injure those for whom Christ has died, without securing to ourselves anything more than the gratification of a vindictive and revengeful feeling of the flesh, which should rather be denied and crucified. It is greatly to be feared that christians sometimes mistake their carnal passions which are aroused to resentment of real or supposed unjuries, for a justifiable grief of spirit, and their attempts to avenge themselves, for an obedience to the divine rule which requires us to labor to reclaim such as have departed from the order of the house of God. Liable, therefore, as we are to err, it becomes us the more earnestly to take heed to the admonition, "Avenge not yourselves."

5. The relationship in which we stand to each other, as dearly beloved brethren, presents another good reason why we should not avenge ourselves. When Moses saw two of the Hebrews striving together, he reproved them, saying, "Sirs, ye are brethren, why do ye wrong one to another?" As a fraternity bound by the most sacred considerations, to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace, we should rather give place to wrath, than attempt to avenge ourselves. The saints of God are not only brethren, but they are dearly beloved. Dearly beloved of God, for, "God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ," &c. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God. Such was his love that he spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. And our Redeemer has also said, when lifting his eyes to heaven and addressing his Father, "That thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me; and, O righteous Father, thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." As God has so loved them before the world began, and given such incontestable evidences of his love towards them, is it meet that we should attempt to retaliate on them, when we feel confident that they have injured us? As we love the Lord supremely, will we not rather for his sake suffer the wrong for a season, until he is pleased to reclaim the wayward? But the saints are not only dearly beloved of God, but they are dearly beloved one of another, and as we love him who begat them, we also love them that are begotten of him, and his solemn charge and new commandment to them was that they should love one another. How can we obey this new and blessed commandment, if we seek to avenge ourselves?

6. Aside from the wickedness of disobeying this command, if there were no law against it, should the saints attempt the administration of retributive justice, they would make wretched work, cause trouble for the saints, and make a thorny pillow to recline their own heads upon. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" But what can be more unchristian, or more unpleasant, than for brethren to indulge in hard feelings, and hard sayings, and unkind actions one towards another?

To the foregoing we might add many other reasons why the saints should not avenge themselves. The whole spirit and letter of the gospel forbids it; the law of Christ written in our hearts forbids it.

Then from all these considerations, dearly beloved brethren, let brotherly love continue; let love be without dissimulation, and love one another with a pure heart fervently. Avenge not yourselves. Grieve not the holy spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice, and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. And while in love we admonish one another, and with much long-suffering reprove those who err, let us at the same time remember how much our brethren have to bear from us, and how much our God has forgiven us. We are not to be remiss in faithfully laboring to reclaim the erring, but let it be in meekness, considering that we also are subject to many temptations.

Middletown, N.Y., May 1, 1856.

Palmer, Texas

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a check for two years' subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. Use the balance as you see fit. We both feel that we can't do without the *Signs*. It is to me like that wonderful song, "Amazing Grace". It never gets old. We enjoy the Editorials, the Voices of the Past, and Elder David Spangler's writings. We enjoy all the other brethren, too.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Your brother and sister in hope,
Lillie and Arthur Jones

ANOTHER BEEBE VOLUME SOON TO BE READY

If the Lord wills, we should have Volume 4 of the Beebe Editorials ready to ship sometime in July. Again it will be 480 pages and will match Volume 3. These Volumes will all be alike, barring unforeseens, making a matching set. The exception will be that Volume 1 and 2 will be 776 pages each, but alike in every other respect. We hope to announce pricing next month for Volume 4, but cannot at this time because the printing and type setting charges are both going up slightly.

It is possible that Volumes 1 and 2 may be ready in the fall, but we will have to say more on that later.

Please pray for us in this matter. The time involved and the costs incurred could be known only by someone who has attempted to undertake such a task. It will, however, be worth it all if our God is honored and His people edified with the writings of Elder Beebe.

A final note of warning. We have heard rumors of those who would "pirate" our work and reprint it at a reduced cost by not having to pay type setting and other charges which were half the cost of production. Be sure, however, that the new copyright laws effective January 1, 1978, protect us fully from such criminal activity. It is true that the writings of Elder Beebe are in the public domain, but our compilation of them belongs exclusively to the Signs of the Times, Inc., and no one may reproduce our new book form of them without our consent. **Any** offer of this book (Volume 3) at a price other than $16.00 each should be reported to us at once. All future volumes will bear the copyright notice.

The Editors

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JOB VERSUS THE CONDITIONALISTS

by Elder C. C. Morris

(Continued from last month)

Having explored the religions of Bildad, Eliphaz, Zophar, and Elihu, let us cease from citing samples of their errors for the time being. Examples could be multiplied by anyone given the enabling light of God's Holy Spirit to see them for what they are, but we forbear for now.

Someone may object that the quotes given are too short to do Elihu and his companions justice; they are taken out

of context; to which we reply: When Elihu, for instance, speaks elsewhere in Job, chapters 32-37, he is either consistent with what he says in the quoted verses, or else he must be inconsistent. Then, being in error in the quoted specimens, and being either consistent or inconsistent, either (a) Elihu is in error and consistent, or else (b) Elihu is in error and is inconsistent. Since God, when He later speaks, gives Elihu and the others no credit whatsoever, we must conclude that Elihu is consistently in error. The brevity of the quoted passages does not detract from this conclusion. What is here said about Elihu and his comments is fully applicable to what was said by all of the others who confronted Job: They were all consistently in error. Under the light of God's Spirit, a close reading of the statements of Bildad, Eliphaz, Zophar, and Elihu will reveal that this is ture. We have God's word in chapter 42 that Bildad and his friends, other than Job himself, are in error. It is true that they each use a somewhat different method to present their views, but we do not intend to examine their individual approaches in this already lengthy writing. What is important is, the IF-THEN argument form is their underlying common bond and the unifying thread running through all of their weavings. For now, we plainly say that their common error is the legalistic will-worship system with the twin heads which are now known as Arminianism and conditionalism.

VI. WHAT JOB SAID

From the beginning of the book, Job manifested toward God a sensitive and tender conscience, not only in his own behalf but also for his children. He offered sacrifices for them daily, saying, "It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts."

When the four messengers announced the total destruction of his children and his wealth, he mourned and grieved about his losses as any normal person would. Yet, with clear spiritual vision and wisdom, he "blamed" neither God nor Satan for his tragic losses. Job obviously did not say, "The Lord gave, but the devil hath taken away." Yet, because God has given us a glimpse behind the scenes, someone will surely say, "But Satan was certainly the destroyer, after God gave him leave, was he not?" Yet Job, ignoring all secondary means and incidentals, said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Job attributed to his God the providential taking of his children's lives, the Sabeans' and Chaldeans' plundering of his livestock, and the fire which fell from heaven destroying his servants and his sheep. The objection that says,

> "Job is wrong; he is bitterly blaming God for the devil's work. We know from the account that it was Satan, not God, who did it",

is in itself wrong. To forever lay that shallow view to rest the inspired narrator plainly states: "In all this Job sinned not nor charged God foolishly." And, as if to doubly emphasize this truth, when Job told his wife, "...shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" the record again states, "In all this did not Job sin with his lips (2:10)."

Continuing to examine Job's stated views, we might consider his words under several headings:

A. What Job said about the sovereignty of God, as contrasted with the limited statements of Bildad and the others:

Job's doctrine of God's sovereignty is refreshing, vital, sincere, straightforward, and without limit. He everywhere acknowledges the absolute, unbounded, supreme and glorious rulership of God and nowhere hints that anything is beyond Jehovah's personal control: "He destroyeth the perfect with the wicked (9:22). The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away (1:21). Shall we receive good at the hand of God and shall we not receive evil (2:10)? Is there not an

appointed time to man upon earth?... wearisome nights are appointed to me (7:1,3)...his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass...all the days of my appointed time will I wait (14:5,14). God hath delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over into the hands of the wicked (16:11). But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him (23:13f). By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are part of his ways (26:13f)...he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder: then did he see it, and declare it; he prepared it, yea, and searched it out (28:26f). Doth not he see my ways, and count all my steps (31:4)? I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee (42:2)." Nothing in the material, spiritual, or any other realm is either too large and powerful for the Almighty to control to the last detail, or too small or insignificant for him to pass by, considering it too unimportant.

Bildad, however, speaks of a god with a vague, unconvincing sovereignty: "Dominion and fear are with him, he maketh peace in his high places. Is there any number of his armies? and upon whom doth not his light arise (25:2f)?" Likewise, Zophar's

> "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea. If he cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him (11:7-10)?"

is empty, lacking the authenticity of experimental knowledge. And in a similar vein in chapters 36 and 37, Elihu says, in effect (may I paraphrase), "God is very big, very smart, and very, very strong. He can do things like move a cloud between us and the sun! And, when he just booms like thunder, I just get very nervous. He just does great things we just cannot understand!" All of which signifies nothing, other than Elihu's youthful inexperience and lack of understanding.

Of the four, perhaps Eliphaz gives the most convincing statement of God's sovereignty (in chapter 5. We will not quote from him here); yet, he too falls short of the driving, poetic power of divine inspiration which moves Job in chapter 12: "With him is wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding. Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again: he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening. Behold, he withholdeth the waters and they dry up: also he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth. With him is strength and wisdom: the deceived and the deceiver are his. He leadeth counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the judges fools. He looseth the bond of kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle. He leadeth princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty. He removeth away the speech of the trusty, and taketh away the understanding of the aged. He poureth contempt upon princes, and weakeneth the strength of the mighty. He discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death. He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations and straiteneth them again. He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, and causeth them to wander in a wilderness where there is no way. They grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man. Lo, mine eye hath seen all this, mine ear hath heard and understood it."

Job's God is the undisputed sovereign, the only God who rules from a genuine

throne. When Bildad tells Job, "God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will he help the evildoers," he is so far from the truth that Job corrects him by saying, "The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure; into whose hand God bringeth abundantly (12:6)." When Zophar says of the wicked, "The heaven shall reveal his iniquity: and the earth shall rise up against him. The increase of his house shall depart, and his goods shall flow away in the day of his wrath. This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed unto him by God," he is so deceived in his conditional beliefs that Job answers him,

> "Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power? Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes. Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them. Their bull gendereth, and faileth not; their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf. They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance. They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ. They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave. Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him (21:7ff)?"

Job's observation is the keener, and it is in harmony with that of the psalmist who saw the wicked spring as the grass and in great power, spreading himself like a green bay tree (Psalms 92:7, 37:35).

Job hears Elihu say, "Behold, God is mighty...in strength and wisdom"; he hears Zophar's "Canst thou by searching find out God?" he hears Bildad's truism, "Doth God pervert judgment?" and Eliphaz's "Is not God in the height of heaven?" and in effect says to them all, "So what?" They are telling Job nothing new; he takes it for granted that everyone knows these basic things, even by natural religion: "Who knoweth not in all these things that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this (12:9)?" What they say along these lines is true as far as they go, but they speak mostly of God's power in nature. Nowhere do they admit of a truly sovereign God who has power to work in the spirit, soul, heart, and mind of a man. These men do not know of a God who works in His people both to will and to do of His good pleasure; they think that God only works ON people, the same as they were working on Job. Consider: How many footsteps has the god of Bildad counted lately? How many deceivers does the god of Eliphaz own? How many judges has the god of Zophar made to be fools, or how many aged people has he relieved of their understanding? How many of the chief people of the earth has the god of Elihu caused to wander in a wilderness? Indeed, when have the gods of these men ever caused anything at all to happen in the internal workings of the heart, spirit, soul, body, or brain of a man?

B. Job's "if's" contrasted with those of his antagonists:

Of the 77 times the word "if" occurs in the book of Job, Eliphaz uses the word only three times, Zophar three times, Bildad four times, and Elihu seventeen times; God uses the word three times, and Job uses "if" forty-seven times. Yet, (1) each of Job's four opponents uses "if" conditionally at least once, and their speeches everywhere reek with the tainted, "IF you will only do this then God will do that" formula; while (2) neither God nor Job in their combined fifty uses of "if" once so speak. When Job uses the word "if",

(a) he often speaks hypothetically ("assumed without proof, for the purpose of reasoning and deducing

proof, or of accounting for some fact"--Webster): "If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong...if I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse (9:19f)";

(b) many of Job's "ifs" are in the form of a hypothetical question ("If I be wicked, why then labor I in vain?");

(c) other statements are the presenting of self-evident facts ("It is evident unto you if I lie.");

(d) a large number of Job's "ifs" set up hypothetical curses upon himself "if" he has done wrong, thereby reinforcing his denial that his sufferings are conditional punishments ("If any blot hath cleaved to mine hands then let me sow and let another eat; yea, let my offspring be rooted out." See the entire thirty-first chapter);

(e) not once does Job hint that "If I have done wrong then God will punish me," or, "If I will do right then God will bless me," with any of his forty-seven "ifs"; and,

(f) when Job says something which might be misconstrued as being conditional ("If God will not withdraw his anger, the proud helpers do stoop under him," or, "He shall surely reprove you, if ye do secretly accept persons," 9:13 and 13:10), rest assured that he is speaking categorical truths and not speaking hypothetically or conditionally. For example, read Job 13:10 as it is actually written, and then compare it with the perverted "If you will only quit secretly accepting persons then God will stop reproving you" approach,to see the difference.

(Concluded next month)

March 12, 1982

Dear Brother Spangler,

For a long time I've wanted to write, but words failed and unless the Lord guides my hand that holds the pen, I won't be able to write anything worth the paper it is written on.

Since my husband breathed his last breath so much I've experienced. The shock of his death struck me with overwhelming grief. It was so sudden. The day of the funeral I thought I couldn't bear, but when we drove into the church yard a peace came over my poor soul. Everything seemed so bright and beautiful. I was surrounded with a people who loved Bill and I believe love me. Bill was not in that casket, but had been caught up to a perfect resting place, a place of perfect love - asleep in Jesus. The Lord of grace and love gave me strength and serenity. Oh the goodness and mercy of our God.

For about forty years I wandered in a wilderness of woe; enjoying friends and religion of the world, yet longing for something more. I was brought up with Primitive Baptist people, attended churches with my parents. I longed to be a Christian, and then I met Bill, married, and joined the Methodist church. The love I felt existed among the Primitive Baptists I could not find there. O how I longed to know the love of God. If not mistaken, I loved His church. I had such a longing, hungering and thirsting to know my God, the Saviour Jesus Christ. I felt so drawn to go home to the church of our blessed Lord-to a people who loved and felt the things I believed that were locked in my heart. I didn't know any doctrine, but it seemed I must know and understand why and what was drawing me to them. I began to search for answers. My sister asked me why I didn't get the address of the *Signs of the Times* and subscribe to that. A dear sister brought me quite a few back copies. No child at Christmas could have anticipated more than I did at those copies. As I read, the windows of heaven seemed to open unto me. Oh how comforting and blessed it is to know His truth. I was blind, but now I see; was lost, but now I'm found. The things locked in my heart were more clearly understood now. But how could a vile

sinner as I go to so great a people and ask anything? I was a stranger, and like the prodigal, I was unworthy of a place among His people.

Bill was treasurer, trustee, custodian, and steward of the Methodist Church. I couldn't ask him to take me to a Primitive Baptist Church. I prayed if it was God's will that I should go, the way would be made. A dear sister called and asked if I would like to go with them to Moon Creek Church. Oh the joy I felt - the way was opening to me. There I found what I had longed for. I asked that my name be removed from the Methodist Church roll. I didn't want to leave Bill to go alone to his church - he always wanted me by his side. I didn't think he would understand my feelings. The first Sunday in October I was received into the fellowship of His dear saints at Malmaison Church. Bill said that a cold chill and shaking went over his body when he was told. He began to go with me to church and longed to join, also. He had a complete turning from his old beliefs. Saturday night six years ago he was received into the fellowship of the church. The world was a beautiful place to me then. Not anything could have made him angry, he said, the morning he went to work. How blessed we were to share six beautiful, wonderful years together with the saints of God.

I do not know what that future holds-
Of joy or pain-
Of loss or Gain-
Along life's untrod way;
But I believe-
I Can believe-
God's promised guidance day by day,
So I securely travel on.

And if at times, the journey lead-
Through waters deep-
Or mountains steep-
I know the unseen Friend;
His love revealing-
His presence healing-
Walks with me to the journey's end.
So I securely travel on.

God bless you, the Editors and writers of the *Signs of the Times*. They are such a blessing to me. God's grace and mercy be with us always.

Love in Christ Jesus,
May Hudson

DELIVERY DELAYS BY U.S. POST OFFICE

Although the *Signs* for May were ALL mailed out April 19, 1982, many subscribers had not received them by the 10th of May. We deeply regret this, but the matter is entirely a postal problem. While mailing costs were doubling, service seems to be cut in half. Nor do we expect any sudden improvement.

We hope everyone will bear with us as the problem is NOT WITH THE SIGNS CIRCULATION OFFICE. If, after several weeks you have not received your *Signs,* we will send another if you will contact the Circulation Office, although this is a very expensive process.

Be assured, the *Signs* ARE mailed in sufficient time each month to arrive by the cover date.

Thank you,
The Staff

REVELATION 16:13-14

"And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." (Rev. 16:13-14)

Let us think about what kind of spirit is in the man that is preaching false doctrine. The scriptures speak of the doctrines of men and devils. We notice that this is in the plural, but the doctrine of God is always in the singular. The doctrine of God is always preached in the Holy Ghost send down from heaven.

All other doctrines are preached from beneath.

"And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men." (Rev. 13:11-13)

The reader may read the remainder of this chapter to see more that is under consideration. The miracles are to deceive the people that are upon the earth. There will be a people that will not worship the beast, even though he makes fire come down from heaven and I am sure he will not be preaching Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He will not be preaching that Jesus is the only name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. We see in Rev. 14:8, "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Here we see that the ones whose names are written in the book of life will not worship the beast, even though they may be put to death. They will not, and cannot worship the beast. He that is born of God cannot sin. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he can not sin, because he is born of God."

God looks at the heart; on the inward part, and not at the flesh. Our flesh would worship nearly anything that is worldly, but not our spirit. If it comes to the point of death, we are no better than the apostles. Every one of us will go in the way, and time that God has appointed for us, and the place, also.

"Is there not an appointed time to man upon the earth? are not his days also like the days of an hireling? As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow, and as an hireling looketh for a reward of his work: So am I made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me. When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise, and the night be gone? and I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day." (Job 7:1-4) Oft times I am anxious for the day to come because of the times that I cannot sleep. The night is wearisome, but some of the nights will be long remembered, because of sweet meditations I have had. The best singing that I ever heard was in my sleep.

One night I thought I was in a large room, and it seemed there was a lion facing me, and my back was to the wall of the building, and the lion was approaching me. I could not see any way of escape. Then I heard three angels singing in the ceiling. I received strength and took the lion by the hind feet, and with ease slew him against the wall of the building. (I speak as a man).

I could go on and tell of many times that I have been blessed to sing in that kind of spirit with great joy. And yet, many other times I cannot have a good thought. I am sure that I am not by myself in these things, so I will close.

(Elder) J. R. Hollandsworth
Bassett, Virginia 24055

SIR, WE WOULD SEE JESUS

Our text for the subject upon which we would offer certain observations is found in the 12th Chapter of John, vs. 20-21, which reads as follows, to wit:

"And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus."

There can be little doubt that during the time of the Lord's sojourning here on earth there were many who desired to see Him for personal and carnal reasons. It is safe to assume that certain

aspects of human nature have not changed in all of history, and every generation has had a certain number of curiosity seekers among it. That was certainly true in the time of His shewing forth unto Israel; for many people heard of His sayings and miracles He performed, as shown below.

"And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them. And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan." (Matthew 4:23-25.)

Moreover, the Apostles who testified of Him to the early church waxed bold in the faith and confirmed with great power the things that were done by Him; in confirmation of which Jesus had said unto them, "Ye are my witnesses." We love to think of the manner in which the Apostle Paul spoke of Him before King Agrippa. "For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner." (Acts 26:26)

We wish we could reach out our hand to him and say, "Amen, Brother Paul. Thank God you are right!"

Now, let us endeavor to place the subject before us in its proper setting. We cannot over emphasize the importance of dealing with the testimonies of God in faithfulness and propriety. At the time of the scripture quoted in our heading Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem for the culmination of His earthly labors, which was at the time of the Feast of the Passover. On His way He stopped at the house of Lazarus, one he dearly loved and had raised from the dead and restored to his kindred. It is written that many of the Jews knew of His presence there and came thither, not only to satisfy their curiosity about Jesus but also to see Lazarus, of whom they had heard much. In fact, a number of the Jews had believed on Jesus because of what He had done for Lazarus, but there were some that believed not. Needless to say, the Lord knew well which was which.

"Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." (Acts 13:41)

Yet, despite all the scoffers and skeptics and false accusers there were still a few who wanted to know more about Him than what they had heard only. We chose our text with the deliberate intention of illustrating what profound and unsearchable truths are often contained in the simplest expressions of true believers. "Sir, we would see Jesus."

Brethren, beloved of the Lord, do you realize all that is embraced in this one simple desire? Is there anything about this that speaks to our feelings now, in this time? Let us venture further into the matter.

Before the Child Jesus was old enough - naturally speaking - to tell anyone who He was, the Holy Ghost appeared unto one named Simeon, a just and devout believer who was waiting for something. The Holy Ghost revealed unto Simeon that he would not feel the sting of death until he had seen the Lord's Christ. The Spirit led him to the temple at Jerusalem where Joseph and Mary had brought Jesus to observe the rites of Jewish law respecting all their male children. Until Simeon saw Jesus, he was not content; he could not depart this life satisfied. But there in the temple when he saw the little Child in its

mother's arms, he knew whom he looked upon and his whole life changed immediately! He had found what he sought for so long; he was then ready to go hence. "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." (Luke 2:29-32)

O, what wondrous knowledge was displayed to the man Simeon! Had he ever before known of a child like this child? Is it any wonder that this dear old saint could depart this life in peace, after having seen Jesus? O, that I might leave this world with the loving face of Jesus before my view!

"Sir, we would see Jesus." There was a man who lived in Jericho named Zacchaeus, a chief among the publicans and one who possessed great wealth. He also wanted to see Jesus and learn of Him, and he heard that Jesus was passing through his city. Therefore, he went out among the multitudes who thronged the wayside, but he could not see the Lord because he was a little man in stature. So, he ran to the front of the crowd and climbed into a sycamore tree in order to see the Lord when He passed by. "And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down: for today I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord: Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." (Luke 19:5-8) As I read these words, a picture came to my mind of another sinner, at whose house the Lord came to be a guest. Like Zacchaeus, he was also a little man; one that not only had gone among the trees of the woods but had also gone to the ends of the earth (in feeling), seeking to see Jesus and to hear Him speak peace and pardon to his perishing soul. Finally, Jesus came to where he was and spoke about the same words He spoke to the woman in Simon's house who washed His feet with tears and dried them with the hairs of her head. "Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven: for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven." (Luke 7:47-48)

Can we say that the Lord brought more to the house of Zacchaeus than just His presence? Was Zacchaeus made glad by the appearing of his Saviour? Consider what a change was made in his feelings, in his desires, in his relationships with his fellow man. He, too, could witness with those Greeks who voiced their feelings to Philip. "Sir, we would see Jesus."

What about the wild Gadarene - did he have a part or lot in this matter? Surely, if there ever was a man whose life was a constant source of sorrow and distress, he was that man; and do not imagine for one moment that he lacked the vain help of man in an effort to deliver his soul from torments. Indeed, man had tried to bind him with chains and fetters and to tame him; had made every effort to rid him of the unclean spirits that dwelled in him, but all to no avail. He was tormented day and night, apparently without rest, and was often heard crying or seen cutting himself with stones.

One day Jesus - whose eye is in every place - came by sea into the country of the Gadarenes. When this poor, demented man saw Jesus afar off he ran to Him and worshipped Him, and cried out unto Him for mercy. "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not." (Mark 5:7)

What a marvelous difference was made in him when he saw Jesus! What a

great change was wrought in him by the appearing of the Lord of Life! The devils that dwelled in him were driven out into a herd of swine feeding nearby, and the swine plunged to their destruction into the sea. Do you suppose there was a reason why the Gadarene had not met a similar fate while he was tormented by the legion of devils? Do you believe that the Lord loved that man?

When the keepers of the swine fled into the surrounding coasts and brought their countrymen to show them what had taken place, what did they see? "And they came to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind; and they were afraid." (Mark 5:15)

When they besought Jesus to depart their country, and the Gadarene manifested a new desire in his heart; he wanted to follow the Lord. O, how we love what Jesus commanded him to do! "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."

Dear brethren, when we would seek to follow the Lord where would we go? Whither would we resort to find ourselves ushered into His presence? I believe that the poet sang to us a sweet song in answer, telling the true feelings of our hearts.

"You may value the friendships of youth and age,
And select for my comrades the noble and sage;
But the friends that most cheer me on life's rugged road
Are the friends of my Master - the children of God."

When I was blessed to go home to my friends bearing the testimony (I honestly hope) of the work of the Lord in my heart, some of them told me later that they had already seen me coming! O, how many times in the fleeting moments of a troubled life here on earth have we been made to cry out of a heart full of love and gratitude to God for the deliverance we experienced:

"Jesus, thou art the sinner's friend,
As such I look to thee:
Now in the bowels of thy love,
O Lord, remember me."

"Sir, we would see Jesus."

We are thinking now of two women, one that was diseased with an issue of blood for twelve years and the other caught in the act of adultery. Surely, if we have ever heard of or known of any poor sinners who were completely beyond the help of man, these two were in that condition. Get your Bible, dear reader, and follow along as we quote from the inspired written testimonies of God. Weigh this matter out in your own mind; ponder it in your own heart. "And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment: for she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. But Jesus turned him (self) about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour." (Matthew 9:20-22)

Who could know the thoughts that coursed through her mind as she went on her way? For one brief, unforgettable moment she had seen Jesus, and she was never the same woman anymore.

O, my precious brethren, what a wonderful, glorious Savior we have! Whenever He looks upon us He knows all the vile things we have ever thought, said, or done; yet, He loved us so well that He paid the full price of our redemption from all iniquity, by sacrificing His own life. Can there be any wonder that we want to see Him face to face, someday?

We mentioned the woman taken in adultery. Let us go back and consider her case. There can be little doubt that she knew the penalty of her act would be death; that had been the law in Israel from the time of Moses. I have often wondered how she felt when she was brought by her accusers into the

presence of Jesus. I cannot help believing that, in a measure, I have also known something of the guilt and shame she must have felt. "And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that such might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." (John 8:3-11)

Brethren, may it be the Lord's will that this lesson should not be lost upon us. Here was one that had sinned against God, knew it, and was rightly condemned to die. The hand of no man (save one) could be lifted in her defense. But, out of Heaven came not the hand of righteous judgment; rather, from the Throne of Grace came the tender hand of mercy. The voice of her Savior spoke two things to her; forgiveness, and repentance. "Go and sin no more."

May I say right here, although she must have sinned in the flesh until the day she died, yet there was something born in her that day that never knew the guilt of sin, and never, never will! Moreover, we have another thought concerning her condition as she turned and went her way. She must have felt that she was a free woman, and that she beheld the Lamb of God who took away all her sins.

"Sir, we would see Jesus." The Apostle Peter addressed himself to the innermost feelings of all those who have been begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. He said they (might it be "we") would have a certain feeling for Jesus. "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." (I Peter 1:8-9)

While we in this day have not seen Jesus (at least, visibly) yet we truly hope that we have felt His presence. Our very souls long for the sight of Him who was delivered for our offenses and was raised for our justification. How truthfully may we plead with the Lord's servant John, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

"Sir, we would see Jesus".....face to face, world without end.

Amen

John T. Wingfield

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PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Pigg River Association will be held, the Lord willing, the first Sunday in August, and Friday and Saturday before. (July 30, 31, and August 1, 1982) Leatherwood Church is the host church and is located in Henry County, Virginia on State Road 657.

Those coming from the South, go to Northside of Martinsville; there take Route 108 for about 8 miles, turn right on Road 657, and keep on this road for about 5 miles to the church.

Those coming from North or East on Route 40, take Route 890 at Penhook. Route 890 merges into Route 108. Go about 1 mile on Route 108 and turn left onto Road 657. Follow above instructions.

Those coming by Route 57 take Route 657 - go about 2 miles to church. At each of these intersections you will probably see a road sign "Leatherwood". Also watch for Association sign.

Brother Jamie Cooper

DELAWARE ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Delaware Association of Old School Baptist will hold their annual session the fifth Sunday in August at the Welsh Tract meetinghouse, Newark Delaware.

Welsh Tract meetinghouse is located on Welsh Tract Road, one block west off State Road 896. Coming from the south, this is just north of the 896 (Newark) exit on Interstate 95.

Services will begin promptly at 10:30 A.M. Lovers of the truth are invited.

Ruth Lucht, Clerk
Welsh Tract Church

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Strawberry Church, on Friday, Saturday before, and second Sunday in July, 1982. The dates are July 9, 10, and 11.

Strawberry Church is located in Pittsylvania County on State Road 750 about 18 miles west of Danville, Virginia. Highway 750 leaves Highway 41 at Woods' Store. Follow Highway 41 from Danville until reaching Woods' Store. The church is located about one mile on the right from Woods' Store.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

THIS JOURNEY IS MINE

I've always believed in a journey
His children must walk thru in life.
I was told as they traveled thru it
They were plagued with trouble and strife.

But never were they alone.....

The road I walked took a turn one time
And the fingers of darkness caressed me.
Ahead I saw nothing but thorns and rocks
No soft green grass to rest me.

And I began to feel alone .....

In my fearful state I wished I knew how
Some poor soul could take my place
And walk thru what I saw ahead of me
And forfeit his gift of grace.

And then I felt so alone .....

Step by step I moved on in shame
And around each turn I could see
That Anger and Bitterness skipped lightly along
And they were smiling at me.

But I was still alone .....

They couldn't bring me comfort
And somewhere along the way
They were joined by a traveling companion
And Doubt intended to stay.

And I never felt this alone .....

For miles it stretched on endlessly
The smell of despair was strong;
And all I could think of as my feet grew tired
Was "why" I felt so alone.

And I "really" felt alone .....

I wished for a way to turn around,
Knowing that it couldn't be done.
My soul searched for a purpose to live;
My body for a place to run.

It's fearful to feel alone .....

Along the way I shook the hand
Of each and all my sins,
They reached for me as I passed by
And I knew we had been friends.

Still I was alone .....

I cried at the top of the mountain
And slept in a valley of tears
But when I stumbled He picked me up
And turned me back to the years,

When I was never alone.....

He led me to the strait path
Where sunshine warmed my face;
And from the darkness where I had toiled
He revealed His gift of grace.

I was not alone .....

I couldn't look into His face
I had not journeyed so well,
And instead of offering me all His blessings
I should be doomed to hell.

And perish there alone .....

But He made my journey easier
And gave me a gift so divine
Of understanding that turn in the road
Then leaving it all behind.

And travel as I will thru life
In darkness many times;
What greater peace could I expect
Than to know this road is mine.

And I was never alone.

Written by Sister Paula Thomas
July 1979

1R—RELIGIOUS ASSOCIATIONS

How good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity and love, but how few there are that in truth, love, and godly fear we can walk and dwell with. Whatever men may say about the great prospects of religion in this day, for my own part I can see but little of them; for where a man is honest and bold enough to open his mouth wide for Christ's true gospel, all the jackadandies, and ape-like parsons, whom the devil hath dressed up as angels of light, are about that poor soul, to slander, injure, and degrade him.

Indeed, my good and godly brethren, I mean no offence to any one in particular, but do speak the truth in Christ Jesus, and in the fear of God; where can you find even five or six ministers (who profess to be ministers of Christ) dwelling together in unity and love? No, are not all desiring to be masters? and should we call any man master? for one is our Master, even Christ. I have been reading the account, this evening, of that blessed servant of Christ, good Rowland Taylor, the martyr, who was burnt near Hadleigh, in Suffolk; and with some tears have I read the account, to see what boldness and holy resolution he stood with before the Papist. And why were a few like him singled out to suffer cruel mockings, and

then the flames? Why, because they were the clearest, boldest, and firmest for Christ's gospel in that age, and refused to call the pope and popish prelates masters, refused to have their souls fettered in the hellish chains of error.

And now, brethren, you see that amongst all this popish gang, these wolves of the devil, there were some who would be masters; and so it is now, not only amongst steeplehouse people, but amongst all denominations of dissenters. For wherever you see what is called an association, immediately there must be some masters; poor, little ignorant, puny creatures begin to puff, swell, and screw their jaws up, squeezing out a few stiff, pedantic words to make them look like consequential master-parsons. One must be chairman, another moderator, secretaries, gentlemen of the commitee, sub-committees, and I know not what, till really my soul has been sick to see the fuss, while the poor toads seemed swelling ready to burst with pride, wind, and puff. I have been at the S----k associations, and E----x association, and there they made a mighty stir about their Articles of Faith, as if they must divide, and did divide. But behold! it came to pass it was not the purity of the faith made the bone of contention; but there were too many masters, and not sufficient honour for them all; so after there were two companies and two sets of masters, like Herod and Pilate, in the crucifixion of Christ, they soon united again, and both began to rail on the poor disciples of Jesus, who were decided for his truth and glory.

I will give you one instance of this unholy mastership. I was at one of those associations, and there was a poor minister, who, I believe, was a true servant of Christ, and for this, and this only, they intended separating him from the holy alliance, the association, only he happened to carry his resignation in his pocket, and so prevented it. Well, I assure you, I felt much for the poor man, for no popish congress that condemned the poor martyrs could ever stand over a poor creature with more masterly, devil-like, and bull-dog-like authority than this set of men did, disdaining him for a vile Antinomian. And I felt truly vexed for the dear man, for he felt timid in himself, though bold for the truth of his Lord.

But, however, the poor man was allowed (as a great favour) to dine with the assembly at the inn. So when dinner was over, the wine was handed round, and a vote of thanks to one, and a vote of thanks to another, for their services, and then all their hands or elbows rapping and roaring upon the table, similar to the noise in a playhouse. Well, I observed this poor minister sat like a speckled bird, and neither rapped the table nor drank to the toast. But when the noise was a little settled, he rose, took up his glass of wine, and said, "Gentlemen, I eat and drink, and desire to praise the Lord; but how can ye believe, who make this unhallowed noise, and receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour which comes from God?" Then he sat down, and a calm silence was observed a short time. At last, a fussy, dandy-like gentleman rose and made some apology, and some looked each other in the face solemnly, while others endeavoured to laugh it away. May the Lord deliver his servants from such worldly, sensual, and popish-like assemblies, and if they can find no better company, let them dwell alone, and, like Enoch, walk with God by faith and prayer, and seek holy communion with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Here are now-a-days many parties, assemblies, societies, and associations; well, what must be done to make the chief and masters conspicuous? Why, a large platform must be erected, like a show stage in a fair; then up comes the

mountebank performers, one with a motion, another with a resolution; then they begin to shout and halloo, vieing with each other for praise, while the ignorant spectators stamp the floor and clap their hands they know not what for. And the key-note of all their orations is the praise of man, and the wonders he has done, and what he still means to do for God; for the work, power, and glory of God in the soul must scarcely be mentioned on such occasions. Brethren, I believe that much of this mountebank work is to show off themselves, and to let the world see how popular they are growing in the religious world's esteem.

A hypocrite signifies a stage-player, one who makes a false and deceitful show; and the devil sees that fire and faggot will not do now, so he gets the world (who must be religious now, in this wonderful day of evangelization) upon the stage of profession, and there they are dancing about like monkies and mountebakes, and mimicing the saints of the Most High, dressed up in the robes of profession, transforming themselves as angels of light.

A Fool for Christ's Sake

Near Tillingham, Essex

The Gospel Standard, 1838

(These associations referred to were associations of ministers, so called, and not associations of churches.)

Dear Editors,

Please send me a subscription for two years of the *Signs of the Times*.

I am an Elder of the Original Primitive Baptists. This is the first I have ever read a magazine put out by Primitive Baptist believers. I am overjoyed. My father was a deacon with the Primitive Baptists in Fitzgerald for about 50 years. I have spent 20 years in the Air Force and am now retired. I work as a security guard for U.S. Steel.

I joined the church of my Father in 1962, while I was still in service. When I retired I moved my membership to Trenton, N.J. I was ordained a Deacon with them, the Northern Eastern Association of Original Primitive Baptists, and was called to the ministry in 1979, and was ordained the same year.

I am founding a church in Willingboro, N.J. Please pray for me.

Yours in Christ,
(Elder) Charlie C. Stewart

Strong, Arkansas

Dear Editors of the Signs of the Times,

It is time to renew my subscription for the *Signs of the Times,* so enclosed you will find a check made out for one year. I hope this reaches you in time for the March issue. May the Lord bless you all to continue publishing the unsearchable riches of Christ in the future as you have in the past.

I have greatly missed the "Voices of the Past" not being published lately. It is so good to read the voices of the past, "He being dead, yet Speaketh", as well as the ones that are living. The Lord has wonderfully blessed you all with an inspired mind in this day and time, as well as the ones who have passed on; different gifts, but all the same Spirit. Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift to the children of men.

It is so precious to this vile and sinful wretch to be blessed of the Lord to read and to hear the joyful sound of the gospel, and to sing praises unto our God. Bless His Holy name from whence cometh all our blessings. In Him we live, and move, and have our being. He makes His little ones to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and to rejoice in Him, the only true and living God, to whom belongs all the praise, honor and glory. Psalms 89:15-16 says, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day; and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted."

We love the Lord, our Righteousness, because we have no righteousness of our own to plead. Our own righteousness is as filthy rags in God's sight. "Nothing in my hand I bring; Simply to thy cross I cling." I hate my sinful flesh, and all the selfrighteous works that belongs to the carnal minded who believe in salvation by their works.

It is so precious to me to hear that "Salvation is of the Lord," to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Many times I have felt to be in darkness, troubled, and in sorrow of mind, feeling the Lord was gone forever. He makes me to know, when it pleases Him, that He is my Saviour and my God, that He will never leave or forsake me. "Lo, I am with you always; even unto the end of the world." "Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

Love to all the dear ones in Christ Jesus. Remember this sinful worm of the dust in your prayers when at the Throne of Grace.

Mrs. Lula B. Fox

THE BRIDE OF THE LAMB CALLED A HARLOT

being
A Defense of the Chastity of the Bride
wherein
Is shown that those who seek to teach religious
Truth, in a regular appointed manner,
To the wives and children of
Others, bypassing the Husband,
Symbollically admit that
The Church which Jesus
Calls His bride is
Really a
Harlot

(Sunday Schools Weighed and Found Wanting.)

"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies." (Ephesians 5:23-27)

It is a comfort to all the saints that have ever walked on this lonesome planet to know that Jesus is their *Prophet, Priest,* and *King.* These three aspects of the greatness of Jesus are clearly seen in this passage. Christ is the *Head* of the Church who leads her and defends her against all her enemies. He is called the *Saviour* of the body who *gave* Himself for her that He might sanctify her, and cleanse her as her *Priest.* He is the *Prophet* in that He brings the word of God His Father to her since it is said He sanctifies her with the washing of water by the word. As a *Priest* His goal is to present her to *Himself* a glorious church arrayed in the precious pearls and jewels of *His* righteousness, which righteousness despondent sinners can be assured has no spot or wrinkle or any such thing. These three aspects of the *Husbandry* of Christ are the three ways in which it is said He loves her. What a great love! From this love there can be no divorce, no annulment, no separation due to death.

The reason why this bride will be beautiful, righteous, holy, and blameless before the eyes of an infinitely righteous and holy Lord is because God Himself will purify her and give her His righteousness. This reason stands out when we examine another wife who was unfaithful in the Old Covenant, namely Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 16 goes into much detail in speaking of what an unfaithful wife is. This bride, unlike the one referred to in Ephesians 5, was a whore. She trusted in her own beauty and played the harlot

because of her renown. (V.15) She solicited everyone who passed by. The gifts she received from her husband she gave to her strange lovers, not realizing that she had no beauty apart from these gifts. Among her lovers were the Egyptians, Assyrians, and Canaanites. (Vs. 26,28,29) She took strangers in instead of her husband. (V. 32) Contrary to most whores, she received no pay but did these things for free. (V. 34) Because of these adulteries, her Husband (God) gathered all her lovers and all her enemies to uncover her nakedness, laugh at her, and mock her. (V. 37) The Lord God, her Husband, in His jealousy and fury gave her blood, removed all her fair jewels and stripped her of her clothes which He had given her. (V. 39) She was stoned with stones and thrust through with swords. (V. 40) Thus the proverb was fulfilled, "As is the mother so is her daughter." Her mother was a Hittite and her father an Amorite; her elder sister was Samaria, and her younger sister was Sodom. (Vs. 45, 46) Yet she, Jerusalem, surpassed her sisters in her adultery. Samaria did not even commit half of her sins. (V. 51) This wife had despised the truth in breaking the covenant of marriage tracable to Mt. Sinai when He came before her in power and majesty. Yet God promised those children who followed Him and not their mother, who were to become His new wife, that there would be an everlasting covenant which He Himself would establish and where His new wife would truly know that he was her Lord. (Vs. 60-63) The crucial difference between these two wives is that one is faithful and the other not.

What does God demand of His wife? He demands faithfulness. This means that the wife is to have no other husbands or lovers. Paul explained to us what God views as the duties of a husband. The husband is to be the *prophet, priest* and *king* of his wife. Thus it must follow that the wife is unfaithful when she seeks after others as her *prophets, priests,* and *kings.* When she seeks others' *leadership* instead of her husband's, when she seeks others to *teach* her apart from her husband, and when she seeks others to *protect* and *save* her apart from her husband.

Not only is this a sure description of God as our Divine Husband, but also a sure description of the human husband spoken about in Ephesians 5. Human husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church and *gave Himself* for it. Even the saving work of Christ on the cross is part of the type the husband is to fulfill. Not that the husband can actually save his wife from her sins, but that under the regular circumstances he is the "under-saviour", who God uses as His appointed means to work out the salvation of his wife. The point is that the husband in his home represents Christ in His church in so far and in every way that a sinful creature can represent God. We must not mistake the type (the husband) for the anti-type (Christ). Christ is to be obeyed totally by His church because He is God and can make no errors or commit sins. Yet the husband is not owed the same quality of authority. He is a creature under Christ who can commit errors and sins. Thus *all his authority exists when he follows his Head, Christ.* The wife is not bound to follow him when she is convinced she would have to disobey God Himself to do so. All must obey God rather than man. Thus there are some cases where the wife and children may be given another *prophet, priest* and *king* because the husband may not be fulling his role, or because he may be sinning by asking them not to follow God. In other situations where the Husband, because of his creaturely limits, may be killed or not be able to be present, the wives and children may have other prophets, priests and kings. In the case of an unbelieving husband the wife and children are to follow him in secular

affairs, but are to follow God directly in matters of religion. To follow the husband in religious matters would most likely lead them against God. This, of course, does not excuse any for treating the husband/father with disrespect or impudence. There is one thing to be said about all these aforementioned situations. They are the exception rather than the rule. The husband is to be the regular appointed prophet, priest, and king of his family. God is not limited to using the husband in these roles, but He normally works with him as His regular appointed means. If this is true, and it is, then the whole idea of "graded Sunday Schools" where others are appointed as teachers besides the father/husband is radicaly wrong.

Some would like to speak in terms of delegation. When one first hears it, it sounds so perfectly legitimate so as not to be even questioned. Why, it is asked, cannot the husband delegate at certain times, in a regular and appointed way, the responsibility of teaching his wife and children to some other (supposedly) responsible individual? Some of the more astute of this group would talk at great lengths that the husband should be aware of what would be taught ahead of time and approve it and that this delegated person would not be intended as an *absolute* substitution of the husband, but in *connection* with the husband, speaking some time with the wife and children himself. This, they say, is not a substitution of the husband, but only a supplement to him.

There are some very serious problems with this position. When one speaks of delegation they are saying that the one to whom the task is delegated is immediately responsible for it. Not only this, but the one to whom the task is delegated is the one to whom, probably, the immediate credit will be given and the one with whom the most immediate and therefore closest relationship formed. From this fact it naturally follows that the closest influence will be had on the people involved, by the one to whom the task is delegated. We concede that delegation is not always wrong, but it is definitely wrong when the one who delegates has not been given authority to do so.

In some situations there are things that cannot be delegated, even once. For instance, would it make any sense for the wife to delegate to someone else the duty of submitting herself to her husband? Would it be proper for the husband even once to delegate to someone else the responsibility of loving his wife? The answer, of course, is no. But why? Because these tasks involve and presuppose a special relationship which the wife and husband have with each other that no one else can have with each of them. It is part and parcel of the marriage bond. This is the same point with Jesus and His church. Neither Jesus nor the church can delegate anyone else to perform their role in their marriage bond because it is an *exclusive* bond. Just as Christ did not his home, then can it be any less true of his role as the *prophet* (or instructor) of his home in the teaching of his wife and task of loving his wife and giving himself for her to anyone else. If this is true of the husband's role as the *priest* of the home, then can it be any less true of his role as the *prophet* (or instructor) of his home in the teaching of his wife and children? If this role as prophet is tied inseparably to the marriage bond, (and it is) then the husband cannot delegate this responsibility to someone else. The responsibility cannot be delegated even once to *anyone* since it would inevitably imply that Christ could delegate His work of sanctification of someone else outside of the church and Himself.

Some would say that this is an oversimplification of the issue. They would say that it is at this very point that the analogy Paul makes breaks down. They would say the reason why the husband *can* delegate this responsibility is

because he is not God and therefore can be prevented by death or necessary absence from carrying on this teaching responsibility, or, maybe, because of disobedience refuse to carry out the task given to him by God to his family.

Even though it be admitted that the husband is not infallible in his teaching and leadership, or that because of providence he *will not* be the only source of learning of religious truth to his family, the whole point of the analogy in Ephesians 5 is that he is obligated to be like Christ and thus not seek to establish or allow a regular violation of the analogy of Jesus and His bride.

Some will say that the gospel minister is one who has the authority to teach the children and wives apart from their husband's presence. This point cannot be sustained from the scriptures and this is never presented as part of his duties. Some might point to Ephesians 4:11 and I Timothy 3:2 where it mentions teaching as one of the roles of the gospel minister. Yet this does not prove much in the issue we are discussing. It does not specify *who* he is to teach. Some might say that this is the very point, that because the *who* is left open, it includes all, children and women, as well as men. This is something that must be *assumed* from these passages since they are silent on either the restrictions of the extension of the "who". These passages, however, do not contribute much to defend our view. Thus they prove nothing either way. There is another passage which bears mentioning. It is I Corinthians 14:34-35. Here the wives are told that if they have any questions or comments to say or ask, to state them at home to their husbands and not to speak publicly in the church. This implies that the primary audience the preacher is to have (the audience which will discuss the message in the church) is to be the husbands or the heads of households. Under normal regular circumstances his role is to address primarily the heads of the households so that they may carry out their roles to their respective families, even though his words may be heard by all in the family. Second, this role of the gospel minister does not fit in Ephesians 5 since the only two groups mentioned are the bride of Christ (which encompasses the entire number of the elect) and also the physical family. The gospel mnister is a servant to the local assembly and only serves indirectly the whole body. Thus to allow him to teach members of a physical family not his own is to assert that someone besides Christ teaches and gives himself for the church. This is to say nothing less than that the church is not chaste, but has other husbands at certain times, comitting spiritual adultery.

Saints of God everywhere ask yourselves, does the church of Christ have any heads over it beside that one sovereign and merciful Head, Jesus? How many husbands does a family have? For any to attempt to teach the wives and children of others apart from the husband in a regular manner and under normal circumstances is an attempt, whether intentional or not, to dislodge the husband from his all-central role of prophet, priest, and king of his home. To do this is, according to the analogy in Ephesians 5, to attempt to dislodge Christ Himself who the husband typically represents, as the one and only Prophet, Priest, and King of His church. To say this about Christ is to say that the bride who He cleansed with His own precious blood is a whore who has many husbands over her. God give us the eyes with which to see this truth. Many points have been left unanswered here, but the general argument, I believe, is sound. The implications of this view of Ephesians 5 will have a radical impact on "graded Sunday Schools", "Ladies Bible Studies", "Youth groups", "Vacation Bible Schools," and any other spiritual religious concoctions of the New School Baptists which seek to reach wives and

children apart from their husbands and fathers.

What more has to be said? Sunday Schools, although they were hailed as a great benefit to the family, were, in reality, one of its greatest enemies and are so to this day. Any thing that seeks to separate the husband from his family stands against the order God has set. It is only expected that so called "churches" which seek after other heads over it besides Christ by following after their own ideas of worshipping God should have families within them with more than one prophet, priest, and king. The unfaithful bride of Ezekiel 16 sought after many husbands and lovers; the pure virgin bride knows only one Husband and Lord. A family that understands the glory and beauty that it typifies will only want one Husband. A family that does not will seek after many.

Let God be true and every man a liar.

William Santamaria
Perth Amboy, N.J.

EDITORIAL

PRELUDE

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." (Romans 11:25)

Who blinded Israel? If they, in and of themselves, had been able to regain their full sight, have you any promise that the fulness of the Gentiles would ever come? If so, give us the source of that fulness ever coming about. It does seem that if any point in which God was slack or amiss in this partial blinding, that some one would show it to us.

God did blind Israel in part. That blinding of them was to be no further than the fulness of the Gentiles. Then, it absolutely and unconditionally follows that God predestinated both the blindness of Israel and the fulness of the Gentiles. In each case, if not, why not?

"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, to the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made know unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ." Ephesians 1:1-12.

Dearly Beloved Children of God, I do hope that I am not coming before you to debate or argue about the gospel of the Son of God. Yet, how true it is that preaching and writing the gospel of the grace of God is an everlasting contention against falsehood. If the truth is to be contended for, then falsehood must be contended against. In the outset I would always like to content earnestly for the truth without being contentious. I would like to preach and write the wholesome doctrine of God our Saviour without being hateful or hating

anyone. The gospel being good news to poor sinners, and my being a poor sinner necessitates that I write to you, my brethren and sisters, in love and sweet fellowship for you. Since no man can take this sacred calling unto himself, only as he is called of God, as was Aaron, I would beseech the Lord for His anointing, and that the anointing cover me and hide the multitude of sin which is such a great burden to me. I beg of you that you make mention of my name to the King of saints to that end.

I desire to write to you on this occasion about the fulness of Christ, which is to and for His chosen people. This is called the gospel of the grace of God. My constant desire, I humbly hope, is to know nothing among you save the gospel of grace. It is indeed edifying and comforting to know that the apostle preached the gospel of the grace of God, that he lived in the spirit of that gospel, that he preached it and wrote it to not only the church at Corinth, but believers in every place. (I Cor. 1:1, 2) It being ministered to them by the Spirit, it was a profitable gospel, enriching them all, even in all utterance, and in all knowledge, being confirmed in them with the same degree of triumph as was the testimony of Christ. How I need this confirming grace in me. How glad that I am, and how I desire to receive it as did these Corinthian brethren. (I Cor. 15:1) That which he preached the first time was what he preached his last sermon on, and what he wrote in his last letter. Without time or inclination to argue and dispute about it, but with a feeling of assurance, I say that he never did cross himself in any of his preaching or writing. He "yet" served the devil until the light shone around him from heaven, and from that time until his writing ended in the New Testament, he was "yet" preaching what he preached the first time. (Acts 9:1; 2 Tim. 4:6, 7)

As I visualize my readers, I beg the Lord to give me an unction from above, "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." In our investigation of the fulness which the Gentiles are to receive it has not been contaminated. There has been no deadly contamination slipped in for poisoning the lambs. There is not, and cannot be, anything hurtful about the predestination of God in His relationship with His people. As we have already found out, He not only fed thousands of Egyptians, but God's sending of Joseph down there in due time saved thousands of the Israelites. This was predestination in action. God had purposed it long before hand, but the actual sending of Joseph down there was, like all of God's ways, at the precise time of need. Here is the full deliverance of Israel. The name of Joseph was lauded by Israel ever after. (See any authentic Jewish history.) How glad I am, and I do hope that I am thankful that all of us poor Gentiles have received of His fulness.

The momentous question about this divine favor is this - Have we aided in bringing this fulness to the Gentile nation? I kindly ask, What part have you had in it? Would you say that any part of this fulness has stemmed from your work? I know that you are not going to say that you have been a contributing factor in this great legacy given us. You just cannot say that, because the apostle is telling us that it comes to the people of God according to the good pleasure of His will. It is all to the praise of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved. It has been with much sorrow that I have heard lovely people say that they did not like to be made to do things. If, indeed, He is mine, then He was made everything to me. My fulness is in the precious thought that of Him am I in Christ Jesus who of God was made unto me (and not only me, but all poor sinners to whom I am writing) wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; He has made us accepted in the Beloved. My trembling hand is too

weak, and my feeble mind is lacking in comprehension of such a legacy as this, of such completeness and such fulness as is in this gospel.

This fulness began in the setting up of His kingdom in the world. Everything that the children of God are, and everything that they are promised originated with and in God. In everything He is first. To Him belongs all honor and adoration for all of our salvation. It was He that saw our fallen and helpless state, and it was He that began the work of rescuing us from the dilemma into which we had fallen.

The awesome lesson that Jeremiah learned is sooner or later going to be brought home to them. How misleading it is when men mistakenly think that they can substitute what God has said with what they think. Jeremiah verily thought that he had within himself a better way than the grace way; Jonah had the same illusion - that he could follow his own course. Peter bacame obsessed with the same affliction, to wit, that he was capable of getting out of the afflictions and death and insurmountable sorrows by charting another course. These examples were given us, as being for our benefit, more as warnings than as examples, because we seldom learn by the other fellow's experience. They all end in disaster for any that hews out cisterns, for rest assured, none of them will hold water in the day of drought, in the day of thirst.

In the glory of His grace we were made accepted. However, that was speaking about the vital life-giving manifestation of this acceptance, for in a covenant sense, in God's wisdom and appointment, we were always acceptable in Him. There has not been a time when the Bride of the Son of God was not precious and honorable and acceptable before and with Him. (Isa. 43:4) Since our Lord Jesus Christ ever stood as a Lamb slain, God held nothing against His people. Therefore, she has ever been acceptable in Him. This acceptable bride He presented to Himself, and He owned her as His. As the good Husband, as the Good Shepherd, He ever watches out for her, directing, guiding, keeping, preserving her unto Himself, a chaste bride.

Since His delights have ever been with her, it is in the safety of this redeeming Saviour that we live, that we move (that is, that we move away from ungodliness, lewdness, worldliness, fleshly lusts, idolatrous practices) and that He that moves us away from one continues to give us directing guidance and initative to move into the opposite, to walk in those things, to talk of His power, to lift up the banner of His love, as He has lifted up our mind. Thus living and moving in Him, this is all of our desire, and it is all of our salvation. We are not, we do not, do anything in order to have an acceptable being, for we are already made a child, and being what we are because of what He is, and because of what He has done for us, all of the praise and honor and glory belongs to Him that has made us.

This continuity of salvation gives us the assurance that all is well. There is no room here for assumption that we have fortified ourselves against temptation, or fleshly lusts, but our confidence is in God who has begun the work of grace in our hearts, and because He lives, we shall live also. It is out of this great love, this work of redemption, that flows all that we are here, and all that we are hoping for. It is in this One who left the abode of His Father and came under a broken law, that came of, and borne by woman, that we have this redemption. It is a salvation sealed with blood, even the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. I have heard heated arguments about the blood of Christ, splitting hairs over it to the hurt, to the extent of heartaches and the breaking of fellowship. I seriously doubt that the faith and the comfort of tried saints has been builded up by the exchange of these hard fleshly sayings. May the Lord bless us to see our need of

redemption and to behold the love that caused Christ to shed His blood to grant unto us redemption, the forgiveness of sins, the giving unto Israel repentance, to the grafting of the Gentile nation into the good olive tree. There is fulness for poor Gentile sinners in this work. That is the kind of gospel that every apostle preached; it is the kind which we preach if we are called to preach the gospel. No man has ever been blessed with the full concept of work of God in calling, qualifying, preserving His people as was Paul. Every syllable being by inspiration, Paul was inspired to write unto the Gentile sinners the full and complete work of saving grace.

Let us look at the conclusion of the Hebrew letter. First, the writer is a poor and needy sinner. He begs of his brethren that they pray for him. I love that. A praying man is a man wrought upon by saving grace; one that prays for others is likewise in the way everlasting, and is on the way to heaven. The Hebrew writer prays for the brethren. Do not be fearful here, dear reader. Here is fulness forevermore; let us come and eat and drink of this storehouse and drink from the fulness of this flowing fountain.

Poor sinner, as you look within you see emptiness and barrenness and unfruitfulness, and you sigh and say, "Ha, me! how could His fulness ever be for one like me?" Listen, dear saint, your fulness is involved here. But let us remember that in this case first things must go before the fulness of better things will ever come. He takes away the first that He might establish the second. The fulness of the flesh never becomes a part of the fulness of the Spirit. Their sources are completely different; one is all from the flesh, the other is all from above. There is nothing in common between them. Neither one enhances the other. God removes the first that there might be room for the second. As what we have is removed, (it being all that we do have) and not knowing of anything else, anything better, we think that we are so worthless, so lean, so barren, so destitute of a single thing worthwhile. We see no hope for ourselves. But let us remember that he who is able to make a light and to walk in it, is destined to lie down in sorrow, but that he and she who feels to have no light, but rather in darkness, they are commanded to trust in God, to stay (be supported by, or lean upon) God. (See Isa. 50:10.) You have the richest, the freest, the fullest promises of God. "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen. (Heb. 13:20-21) May we ever sing,

> "Was ever love so great as this?
> Was ever grace so free?
> This is my glory, joy, and bliss,
> That Jesus died for me."

And may it ever please our gracious Redeemer God to enable us to remember that the fulfilment of this prayer is based on the resurrection from the dead of Jesus Christ. We poor sinners had nothing to do with that. That was solely the work of God, and that following work we are filled with the goodness and mercy of God in such a complete and full way that all things well pleasing to God are wrought in us by the same full power (Eph. 1:20, 23; Heb. 13:20, 21) wherein fulness is yours in the body of Christ; that perfect obedience in every good work.

To the poor beggars for God's mercy, let us notice carefully, there are no merits in the sinner; salvation is not something left for the sinner to do. Had they had any saving power in them, I am sure that God would not have subjected His Son to the suffering of the

cross when they could have saved themselves. What a great fulness that was in Him coming full of that which we did not have any. It is such fruit bearing truth that the Apostle Paul told us (or at least he told the brethren) that they were complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power and in whom dwelleth all fulness of the Godhead bodily. (Col. 2:9,10)

Come hither, poor sinner. Here is the fulness that exceeds all we could think. The giving up of one's blood is a full and complete blessing. He lay down His life for us; He gave up all that He had that we might live with him in glory. He bear our sins in His own body. The sceptic would say, How many sins? The saving grace of God, the full and complete deliverance was wrought by Him for you. It was by Him that had no sin that you who were full of uncleanness, were blessed to have fulness forevermore. And again, we are reminded by the apostle that it is according to the riches of His grace, even eternal life being given you who had no righteousness, that you might be like Him, and receive fulness for us now and forevermore.

Lift up your downcast eyes, little children. The things (fulness) treasured in Him, even the fulness of the Lord Jesus Christ, is being administered to you. The supplies of hope and faith and every good and perfect gift will never diminish, for wisdom treasured enough for this Gentile age, for this grace dispensation. It was, and it is sufficient.

(Elder) W. D. Griffin

OBITUARIES

BROTHER GOVERNOR COMER

Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church regrets to record the death of our dear Brother in Christ, Governor Comer, age 72 years. He was the son of the late Cam and Chaney Comer.

Brother Comer was born and lived in the Pleasantville area of Rockingham County until the last 24 years, when he moved to Goldsboro, N.C., to maintain his work in which he was gifted and prosperous. He and his three sons were in the lumber business.

Brother Comer was a member of the church for 35 years, and served the church as Deacon until his health prevented him from attending meetings the last 10 years.

He died Sept. 5, 1981 in Goldsboro Hospital and his funeral was in Seamore Funeral Home there, with Elder Haywood Wray officiating. Burial was in Wayne County Memorial Park.

Survivors include his wife, Sister Roxie Terry Comer, of the home, Sons, John, Harwold, Wayne of Goldsboro, 11 grandchildren, 5 great grandchildren.

Brother Comer was blessed with grace and patience in his afflictions.

May the Lord comfort his dear family.

Sister Rachel Wray

SISTER EDNA KING COCKRELL

We desire to bow to the will of our Heavenly Father in removing from our midst Sister Edna King Cockrell. She was born July 22, 1898, and departed this life June 11, 1981.

Sister Edna was first married to Henry Edward Starling, who preceded her in death on February 22, 1929. To this union was born five children, of which two, Henry Edward and Ella Murrell, preceded her in death. Mrs. Pearl Weirdt of Swansboro, N.C., Annie Liee Strizell, of Leona, Wisc.; and James Allen Starling of Louisburg, N.C. remain.

In 1933 she married Mathew Cockrell, who also preceded her in death, leaving her with two step children, of which Clyde preceded her in death; leaving Rosa Read of Cary, N.C. She also leaves thirteen grandchildren, two step grandchildren, twenty-one great grandchildren, and seven step great grandchildren.

Sister Edna united with Pleasant Hill Church early in life, where she proved to be a faithful member until moving her membership by letter, to Hadnot Creek Church in November 1976. She was also faithful in attending her meetings as long as she was physically able. She was also a firm believer in salvation by grace.

Her funeral was conducted at Jones Funeral Home in Jacksonville, N.C., by the writer. May God's grace reconcile the family and each of us who miss her here, hoping to join in praise with her, when our Saviour returns.

Written by order of Conference at Hadnot Creek Church, first Saturday in December, 1981, by one who loved her for Christ's sake, I hope.

(Elder) J. T. Prescott

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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JOB VERSUS THE CONDITIONALISTS

by Elder C. C. Morris

(Continued from last month)

C. Job's question which leaves the legalists speechless:

In Job 26:2f, Job asks the question of the ages which leaves the conditionalists without an answer:

> "HOW HAST THOU HELPED HIM THAT IS WITHOUT POWER? HOW SAVEST THOU THE ARM THAT HATH NO STRENGTH? HOW HAST THOU COUNSELLED HIM THAT HATH NO WISDOM? AND HOW HAST THOU PLENTIFULLY DECLARED THE THING AS IT IS?"

In the account of the Pharisee and the publican (Luke 18), the publican could well have been a Job while the Pharisee could have been any of the others. There is neither mercy nor salvation in Phariseeism. There is no help for him

that is without power, no salvation for the arm which is without strength, no counsel for him that has no wisdom. For the will worshiper, conditionalist, Arminian or Pharisee to "help" any person, that person must come already equipped with enough power to do those things required of him by a works system, an arm with enough strength to reach out and take what is "offered", and the carnal wisdom necessary to see that the way of natural religion is reasonable and so simple a child--Satan's child--can understand it. But there is no power for the utterly powerless, no strength for the totally helpless, no wisdom for the complete fool, no genuine help at all except in Christ Jesus, who delights in saving such. From Job's day forward, there is no answer to his question forthcoming from any legalist. Only the gospel of the prophets and the apostles answers Job's question in the legalist's stead: There is no help, there is no saving, there is no counsel from legalism; and the will worshipers have never declared the thing as it is, plentifully or otherwise, and they never will.

D. Job's confession of sin while denying that his suffering is for hypocrisy or secret sin, and his expressed need for the Saviour, and his confidence in Him:

Whatever else Job does or does not know, he is given to realize that his sufferings are not a punishment for wrongdoing. "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him (13:15)." Job is not boasting of a lack of sin, for he everywhere confesses his transgression, iniquity, and sin: "For thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth (13:26). I have sinned (7:20). If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me; if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse (9:20). If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity (10:14). Dost thou not watch over my sin? My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity (14:16f). I am vile (40:4). I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes (42:6). Why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity (7:21)? Thou enquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin (10:6)." No, Job's argument is not that he is not a sinner. When he says, "Thou knowest I am not wicked (10:7)," or, "I am clean without transgression, I am innocent; neither is there iniquity in me (33:9)," he is not saying he is sinlessly righteous, but he is speaking in this context: These afflictions are not God's chastisement for some hidden hypocrisy or sin.

Neither Bildad, Eliphaz, Zophar, nor Elihu speaks of a sinner's need for the atoning blood of the Lamb of God. They present no need for salvation by grace. They see no helpless, hopeless sinner who is both depraved and deprived. Their religion is ever the bloodless religion of the world which says, "God helps them who help themselves." They know of no God who helps the helpless, by His grace; nor do they see any need for such a God, because they have never seen themselves in such an abject condition.

It is Job who speaks of his Redeemer, not Bildad: "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth..." It is Job who has a hope in a future bodily resurrection, not Eliphaz: "...and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God..." It is Job that desires a Mediator (daysman), not Zophar: "Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both." It is Job that offers the bloody sacrifices which typify Jesus Christ's sacrifice of Himself on the cross (1:5). It is Job who has the God-given hope in sovereign grace to say, "Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands," for Job alone knows that his God has no unfulfilled

desires, because "what his soul desireth, even that he doeth (23:13)."

It becomes increasingly obvious, then, that it is not merely conditionalism's denial of predestination which separates the religions of the world from the absolute predestinarian Primitive Baptists, as many have been led to believe. Above all else which separates the two, it is conditionalism's two-fold denial of the all-sufficiency of the blood of Christ to effectually cleanse a sinner from all sin, and the denial of the power of the Holy Spirit to make Christ's atonement a practical reality in the sinner's life, which manifests the great gulf fixed between all conditionalist religions on the one hand and the sovereign-grace predestinarians on the other.

VII. WHAT GOD SAID

We have before mentioned that it was God, the First Cause, who first called Satan's attention to Job (1:8) and let out Satan's tether to the extent that he could then and only then destroy Job's possessions and afflict his body. We cannot here comment in detail on Jehovah's magnificent presentation of His sovereign power in chapters 38 through 41 which quite literally reduced Job to dust and ashes (42:6). For now, we wish only to address

A. what the Lord said about the debate which had raged between Job and the others throughout most of this book:

Whether Job was right, or Eliphaz and the others were right in their views of Job's sufferings, is the crux of the entire account. God Himself does not leave us to guess who is right, but, having called a divine halt to their arguings, He Himself settles the matter for all to hear. Since Eliphaz was the first to accuse Job (4:1), the Lord goes no further than him but addresses the little group of legalists through him. The Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "MY WRATH IS KINDLED AGAINST THEE, AND AGAINST THY TWO FRIENDS: FOR YE HAVE NOT SPOKEN OF ME THE THING THAT IS RIGHT, AS MY SERVANT JOB HATH."

The Almighty has no commendation at all for what Eliphaz and his friends have said; no endorsement whatsoever. God not only vindicates Job and what Job said, but He also sets up Job's words as the very standard by which the others' words are judged and found wanting: "Ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, AS MY SERVANT JOB HATH." There are no less than fifteen chapters filled with the musings of Eliphaz and his companions, fifteen chapters which God entirely dismisses with as many words! The tone of all the attacks upon Job was set by Eliphaz in his opening remarks, almost in his opening words: "Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off (4:7)?" All else he and his friends said was in harmony with this premise and in contrast with the truth which Job spoke. Nor did Eliphaz's pious-sounding "I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause" or anything else he and his friends said receive the slightest word of approval from the Lord; they were totally wrong, from first to last. Here are fifteen chapters of religious sentiment put forth by these four men, statements which sound close to the truth, even seeming to closely parallel other scriptures. But, as it is important to quote the scriptures accurately if at all, so it is just as important to make the proper application of the scripture which is quoted or the Biblical truth to which one refers.

These four men did neither. Even the devil quoted from Psalm 91 during the temptation of Christ, but he hardly made the right application of the text, nor did he quote the text accurately. No matter how much Elihu's "Where is God my maker, who giveth songs in the night" sounds like the Psalmist's "I call

to remembrance my song in the night," Elihu's words are nevertheless counterfeit, his religion is spurious, and his reasoning is in vain. This fact is confirmed by God Himself.

B. what the Lord said about Job's statements:

Job had spoken that which was right about the Lord, God said. How was this so? It was not of Job himself. The divine revelation which God gave to Job in chapters 38 through 41 revealed to him that "this spake he not of himself (John 11:52)," but, "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (II Peter 1:21)." Job spoke by divine inspiration things above and beyond his own natural understanding and knowledge at the time he was speaking. When God gave Job the inner realization of this, Job said, "Therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not." God put the words in the man's mouth; thus God commends what Job has said as being "right."

C. what the Lord said about the blood sacrifices:

The Lord told Eliphaz to bring bullocks and rams to Job, to offer as burnt offerings. The bloody sacrifice, which typifies the atonement of Jesus Christ, is the only thing that will avail Eliphaz in the stead of his worthless religious philosophy.

D. what the Lord said about Job's intercessory prayer:

"Job shall pray for you; for him I will accept." These shalls and wills are certainties, not mere possibilities, for they are ordained in the predestination and purpose of Jehovah. He spake, and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast. The sacrifices were indeed brought and offered; Job did in truth pray for his friends, and Jehovah did accept Job. Again, Job was not accepted in and of himself, but he was made accepted in the Beloved, to the praise of the glory of God the Father's grace (Eph. 1:6).

E. what the Lord said about Eliphaz's religion:

"Lest I deal with you after your folly (42:8)." "Folly" is the one word which describes conditionalism: "State of being foolish; levity or weakness of mind; a foolish act or idea; scandalous crime; sin (Webster)." God then repeats His condemnation of Eliphaz's arguments and His commendation of Job: "YE HAVE NOT SPOKEN OF ME THE THING WHICH IS RIGHT, LIKE MY SERVANT JOB." Surely, the minister is blessed of God who is given to avoid quoting Eliphaz and his friends as Biblical authorities! For, God certainly does not endorse everything He has recorded in the scriptures. Pharaoh's, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go," Judas's, "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor," the Pharisee's, "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are," and the rich fool's, "I will say to my soul, 'Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years,' " are all anathema, recorded by God to show forth the ravings of depraved hearts. In like manner, the teachings of Eliphaz and his friends are recorded, not for any positive good in them, for there is none; but rather so that is His own time and was God would dismiss them with the single word, "folly."

The book of Job is far too great a treasure to pass off as some have done, calling it an allegory on "Why do the righteous suffer?" And, that the depth of this book has scarcely been touched here, if it has been touched here at all, is readily admitted. Although the discussions between God and Satan, and Job and his friends, are on the surface the major subject of the book, Jesus Christ and Him crucified is nevertheless always the supreme subject of any scripture. We see not only Job and his sufferings but also Christ Jesus and His sufferings, or our reading has fallen short of the mark. Of all of the Old Testament types and shadows, there is

perhaps no more startling and uplifting typification of Christ than Job. In chapters 29 and 30 the voice of Jesus Christ is symbolically heard more than the voice of Job himself. Paralleling Wisdom's thrilling profession in Proverbs the eight chapter, Job 29 corresponds to Christ's glory and sovereignty which He had with the Father before the world was, while chapter 30 shows Christ's humiliation at the hands of wicked men for no just cause. May God bless us to reread those chapters with the Savior in mind.

Job's entire story--from the death of his children through Satan's meddling yet simultaneously by God's sovereign will to have it so; through the suffering and afflictions of this "perfect," righteous man through no fault of his own; to his final vindication by God the Father, his intercession for his accusers, and the restoration of his children, his riches, and his glory--all, all speaks to us not only of Job, but also of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Job intimately involves the entire scheme and scope of this great salvation accomplished by Jesus Christ, rejoiced in by Job, misrepresented by the champions of legalism, and vindicated and owned by God Himself.

(Conclusion)

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310 Wood Street
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Dear Brother Spangler:

It is always such a joy to receive the *Signs of the Times* each month and carefully and prayerfully read every article. I deeply appreciate you brethren publishing my feeble attempts at writing. I trust that it will honour and glorify our blessed Lord and will be of some edification to His sheep. The Lord willing, I will send Brother Williams a little more before long to help in getting the *Signs* out.

If you brethren have a mind to pray for us here (my family and self) remember us. We have recently been brought into a trial. As I have stated in previous correspondence, I am on a disability income, but the present Administration is cutting off folk right and left who have been confirmed by their doctors as totally unable to hold up to a regular job. Well, today I received my determination papers which means that I will be sent the complete course of doctors which will determine whether I should be getting any more disability benefits. We are told that 95 per cent of folk receiveing these papers will be cut off; with not so much as a promise of a job for income. And jobs are a scarce item with close to ten million across the U.S.A. already in the streets looking for work. We stand to lose everything in our home, leaving us with no where to go as we rent. Frail and feeble creatures that we are, we cannot but have fears and anxieties even as we experience seasons of hope and trust. Indeed, it is a great sin to be anxious about the watchcare of our blessed Lord, our Sustainer in adversity and in seasons of plenty. May the Lord give us needed faith. (Luke 12:22-32; Matt. 6:30)

I received a copy of the book "Feast of Fat Things" which I ordered from Brother Poole a month or so back and have been reading through it with great delight.

Enclosed is another article for you perusal. It is relative to many of the issues that have of late cropped up. It was typed up in haste and perhaps should have been submitted double spaced. If it is suitable for publication, please feel free to do so. I do not make claim to be a Historian, but have been enabled to see a few things along the way.

We enjoy greatly the letters sent in to the *Signs* from the elderly folk. It is a precious privilege indeed to read how the faith of God's elect has been their portion through valley and over the mountain. "But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and

more unto the perfect day." Prov. 4:18.

We would welcome any correspondence from any of the readers of the *Signs* who care to write.

Our regards to the other brethren on the staff.

Yours in the Blessed Hope,
Augustus Webb

THE CONVENIENCE OF CONCEALING HISTORICAL FACTS, AND THE PROFITS REAPED THEREFROM

It has been my experience for a number of years since becoming acquainted with the true Old School Baptists to observe among many of the other "shades" of christendom a blatant dislike and disregard for all who would strive to follow the "true and living way," and who refuse to bow to the multitude of man-introduced, man-invented, man-motivated machinery which is designed to produce income, but is going under the thinly glossed-over guise of "saving souls."

Whenever some issue arises regarding the Missionary/Anti-Missionary debate we find the Missionary Baptist jumping into the thick of battle and carrying his flag for the cause over to the lines of the Conditional Baptist section. He does this to get the necessary "facts" (so-called) to present his case. But what he gets are not "facts" as to what is believed and practiced among those going under the true banner of "Old School Baptists." What the missionary zealot gets are those doctrines and opinions which are so energetically promulgated by the advocates of a lately come doctrine, "Conditional Time Salvation," the semi-predestinarian heresy. Indeed, although it is quite new among Baptist people, this same heresy has been around since the time that our Lord walked upon the earth.

Over a period of just the past few months I have found in various periodicals contrasting articles as to the beliefs and practices of Missionary-Anti-Missionary Baptists. In every instance the Missionary always appeals to and quotes "Conditional" teaching and makes the claim that "this is what Old School, Primitive Baptists believe." It is not what the Old School Baptists, or Primitive Baptists believe! This convenient concealing of facts on the part of the Missionary Baptist gives him a great advantage over the issues. It is the only way he can win his debate! Quite contrary to what all the Missionaries and the Conditionals would have us believe, neither of them are true Old School, or Primitive Baptists. The very term "Old School" had its beginning at the Black Rock Address, Black Rock, Maryland, September 28, 1832. This term "Old School" was necessitated to show that there yet remained among Baptist people some who still adhered to and followed in that despised company of followers, i.e. in the School of Christ. It is this School that is the only valid religious institution on earth. All others belong in the company of the seven women mentioned in Isaiah 4:1. They desire to wear the name of Christ, and appear respectable but insist upon wearing their own apparel, and eating their own bread. They care nothing for either the robe of righteousness, nor the bread of heaven, but only desire to be called by that blessed Name!

Just recently I read an article by one of the "voices" for the Missionary Baptists entitled, "Why I am not a Hardshell". This article was conveniently followed by yet another "voice" entitled, "Hardshellism Examined by the Bible." And then yet another "voice" wrote a "Postscript" on Hardshells. Neither of the three were honest enough to tell their readers about the company of Conditionals who are all about claiming to represent what Old School Baptists really believe. I do not think that this dishonesty was due to ignorance on the part of these men, as they have been among various people

enough to know the difference. It was a willful scheme of concealing "facts" which would show that those who adhere to Conditional heresy are NOT Old School Baptists. It is doubtful that the average Missionary Baptist really knows the truth about what Old School Baptists really believe. (Or cares. Editor)

In recent months past, a book has been published claiming to be a Systematic Theology of what Old School or Primitive Baptists believe. The author of the book is among the Progressive Primitive Baptists, who love to think of themselves as the Old School or Primitive Baptists. But there were no Conditional Old School Baptists at the Black Rock Address, neither was there any among the membership of the Welsh Tract Church, nor the Hopewell congregation. The author of this self-styled "Systematic Theology," Elder R. V. Sarrels, does not speak for the people who are Old School Baptists, although one would be led to believe this from the style of the book. Elder Sarrels shows what group he is clearly spokesman for when he attempts to refute the truth of Absolute Predestination. Clearly he is not an Old School Baptist, as none of them are limited predestinarians. Suffice it to say, however, that the Missionary Baptists have jumped at the opportunity to use Elder Sarrels' book to prove (at least to their satisfaction) what is believed and practiced by the Old School Baptists.

To my own satisfaction and from what I have read in the *Signs of the Times,* I find the Old School Baptists to not care so much what was believed or practiced one hundere, or even one thousand years ago, but rather their concern is whether a doctrine or a practiced one hundred, or even one teaching and the Apostles' doctrine. Real Old School Baptists know that after all debates are settled, after all breaches have been shored up, after all has been said and done, it is *this* test that will stand tried and true. *Was it in accordance with the commands and teachings of our Lord and His Apostles?* If it was not, then it must have been among the "wood, hay, and stubble" and if it was, then it was tried in the fire and stood the test.

To my own satisfaction it is only the Old School Baptists who have not removed the ancient landmark which our fathers have set. See Proverbs 22:28. Note "landmark", singular, not many landmarks to follow, nor to distinguish between truth and error, but only one, which should simplify what is imitation and what is original.

"Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little: For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people." Isaiah 28:9-11.

Yours in Hope,
Augustus Webb

(This article may appear a little strong for some; a little harsh to others. To our mind these things are things that have needed saying for a long time. Thank you, Brother Webb. Editor)

ACTS 4:34 - 5:11

In those days it seemed the people sold all that they owned and brought the price of the thing that they sold and laid it down at the apostles' feet and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. It did not appear to be compulsory to do this. The thing that was sold belonged to the persons who sold it, so did the money the sale brought.

Ananias and Sapphira sold a possession and together they agreed to tempt the Spirit of the Lord, and they claimed to carry all the money to the Apostles to be distributed among the people. They wanted to make a good

showing before the world, but they did not want to give all that they had. In this I see them as similar to the seven women taking hold of one man, wanting his name but wanting to furnish their own robe and their own food, or wanting to claim Jesus Christ as their Saviour but still wanting to hang on to the world Matthew 6:24 says, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."

When Peter confronted Ananias with the deed, he accused him of lying to the Holy Ghost. Ananias saw he was found out, and he gave up the ghost. The young men carried him out and buried him. About three hours later Sapphira came in and was confronted with the same, and she lied like her husband had before her; and like her husband before her, she "yielded up the ghost." The young men likewise carried her out and buried her beside her husband. It seemed strange they were not confronted together and when Ananias was buried his wife was not called in.

It was done this way because all things that we do are personal between the person and his God. All our trials and tribulations are different, yet all are pointing to the same end.

When we are given to see that we are found out when our sin overtakes us, that brings up a question - Who finds us out? God or Jesus Christ? No. They don't have to find us out. They already know us and what we have done and what we will do. We find ourselves out. By the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts we see what we are, see our filthy thoughts and our filthy sins for what they are, and we know what this makes us - sinners. We know we cannot improve ourselves. We find we are lost sinners with no hope for salvation. We die, not in the way Ananias did, but die to this world. Then we are given to see our Saviour, the Saviour of sinners, like we ourselves are, and we find we have a hope, and we read, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1) If we have a true hope of salvation by the shed blood of Jesus Christ and not of our works, it is by the grace of God, and we can't help it or hinder it. It is a gift of God.

After all this has happened to us we still find ourselves looking back to the world when we know we should always be looking to our Saviour first in everything we do or say, and we should remember what Jesus said in Luke 9:62, "And Jesus said unto him, no man having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Where does that leave us? We know we have always been guilty and always will be guilty and try as we may, there is no improvement. Then we find ourselves praying as the Publican did in Luke 18:13, "And the Publican standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast saying, God be merciful to me a sinner."

In bonds of love and fellowship,
Frank Holland
Pocomoke City, Maryland

Gibsonton, FL. 33534

Dear Brother Williams,

I trust this little note finds you well and contented in the Lord's vineyard. We are in good health, thanks to the good Lord, and are rejoicing from time to time that our great God has blessed us. We feel to be undeserving of even a nod from Him, but His grace is so marvelous to poor sinners.

Enclosed are a few subscriptions to the *Signs* that are from a few of the faithful in Christ Jesus at Little Flock Church, near Polk City, Florida. I attempt to serve this part of the Lord's believing children at this place. We are made to wonder why God, in His great predestination of all things, has caused me to be counted among the brethren, but our little hope is that His grace is sufficient for every thing and need. The Lord has blessed us with two little ones

asking for a home in the church of God these last two months. Also, we are made to feel that more little lambs will be coming to the fold in the near future. We can only praise Him for His great love.

My Brethren, please pray for us as we need so much to be remembered before the throne of mercy. There is so much confusion among the Lord's people in this area. I get so weary of brethren telling me that I am not "in line" with them, or this church is not "in line" with that church. Unless my mind is deceived, I thought that there was but one line and that line was from before eternity through Christ Jesus, who is God our Saviour. If there be but one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, why are the brethren so divided? The God of all grace has ordained all things before time, so we must be living just as He has purposed it! I wonder if Jesus was thinking of this hour when He said, "When the son of man cometh will he find faith on the earth?"

Please forgive me if I have offended and remember that my frame is but dust. We praise our God for His mercy and love. We are made to believe that He does all things well. To Him be honor, praise, and glory for ever and ever.

Your in Hope,
(Elder) Jesse Albritton

"For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Romans 11:29.

Dear Brothers, Sisters, and Friends, how do these words sound to you? Do they fall upon your ears as the drops of dew upon the grass to refresh and renew your faith, or do they have the sound of sounding brass and a tinkling symbol? Do not go away from here and say that "Brother Mac said a sinner need not ever repent." I did not say that nor did I write that scripture. The Apostle Paul wrote the scripture and I believe he said what he meant and meant what he said.

The Lord willing, let us endeavor to understand who the Apostle is speaking to and what he is speaking about. In the first verse of this chapter Paul says, "I say then, hath God cast away His people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin." Paul, therefore, is talking to God's people and is only addressing God's people, not only for that very moment of his speaking, but for all time to come. There may or may not have been many others in the hearing of his voice, but he was not addressing his teaching to them. He removes all doubt as to whom he is speaking in the second verse when he says, "God hath not cast away his people which he *foreknew*." Do you think God *foreknew* His people only after they had repented of their sins here in this timely world? "God forbid", says the Apostle Paul. As further proof as to whom he is speaking, in verse five Paul says, "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the *election* of grace." No where does the Bible ever intimate that election of God's people was because of their repentance. Rather, the terms "elect," "elected," and "election" appears some thirty-seven times in the scriptures from Genesis to Revelation written of over a period of thousands of years by several different writers all declaring that the election of His people was in the aeons of eternity before the dust of the highest hill was ever laid. Do you suppose they were all wrong or in error? Paul says, "God forbid."

The Lord willing, let us attempt to understand what our text is talking about. Here Paul, preaching to the Roman brethren, is bringing before them the power of God unto the salvation of His people. Even in their own nature, due to the fall of Adam, does he not console them that might be increased in faith and be made to realize that their hope was sure and steadfast if

it be in the Lord Jesus Christ. Now one may say, "How do I know that my trust and my hope is in the Lord?" First John 2:3 says, "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." Can you not imagine the perplexity in the minds of those Roman brethren in the hearing of Paul's voice. They were given to realize their own undone condition and knowing of themselves they could do nothing to better themselves. They knew they were as a people who, "Hath killed thy prophets, and digged down thine alters." (Romans 11:3) Yea, they had gone about worshipping idols; they had been guilty of covetousness, and all the other Abominations, even to not believing on the Saviour while He was here on this earth. They were being consoled by Paul that even after, and in spite of , all this, that, "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." I believe that herein Paul is preaching Christ Jesus as their only hope of salvation while he is provoking them to anger and jealousy by preaching the gospel unto the Gentiles. One may say, "Brother Mac, you are bringing in someone else or another people under the hearing of Paul's preaching." Not so. The scripture teaches that God has a people in every nation, kindred, and tongue and that the same election in eternity included these, the Gentiles, as well as the believing Jew that Paul was preaching to at that very time. Now, one would say that these Roman brethren had put up a pretty good argument that they were as a people whom they believed to be lost and they could see no hope for. What does our text say, "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

The world today is preaching *repentance.* Some say that you must repent and be baptized in water or you are forever lost into hell and damnation. Some are preaching that it is up to man to raise himself above this condition and accept Jesus Christ. I noticed some of you to raise up on the edge of their seats when the text was read. I know not what the world does with this text and could care less, but it seems that the sound thereof is as sounding brass and a tinkling symbol to them, but to the child of God it is soothing to the ear. How can we say thus? When we are given to see ourselves as we are and made to feel our undone condition as these Roman brethren surely were, what do we find? We are made to feel that "within ourselves, that is in the flesh, dwelleth no good thing, that we are nothing, yea, less than nothing and altogether vanity." We ask as in Proverbs 20:9, "Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?", or as Job 14:4 says, 'Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." Would not it have been sad if Paul had ended his sermon or writings right there? It would have left the poor Roman brethren with a statement from man and nothing to back it up. Thanks be unto God, Paul continued with his preaching to establish the truth as it is in Christ Jesus without doubt. One would say, "How did he establish this?" Again, let us turn to Proverbs 20:12, "The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, The Lord hath made even both of them." Does that not tell you, dear child of God, where true repentance comes from? Does not that remove forever from the hands of man the ability to hear the truth or see the miracles performed daily by the living God? If you will note the scripture says "The Lord *hath*"; even before His advent into this world he made the hearing ear and the seeing eye. Isn't it a sweet sound when we are given to hear the word of truth with a hearing ear?

Yes, I believe in repentance; the repentance that takes us to the depths of the repentance that brings joy; the repentance that takes up to the depths of the valley; the repentance that takes us to the mountaintops, as I believe all true repentance to do. "O the depth of the riches both of the widom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judg-

ments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?" There goes all the free will of man right out of the truth, as sure as you live. Now if you cannot receive that, just listen to the next verse in Romans 11:36, "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

Do you suppose that Paul meant by these statements that those men who were and are able to lift themselves up are the ones able to know the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God? God forbid. He was and is saying that no man knoweth the depth of the riches, etc., that no man knoweth the mind of the Lord and except by the grace and mercy of God, no man will know. Ecclesiastes 7:20 says, "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." Therefore, that man that declares to know as in First John 2:3 while in a natural state, that is, in the flesh, is treading on some pretty thin ice. For if he says that he knows Him and keeps not His commandments, he is a liar and the truth is not in him. Dear ones, let it rather be heard and declared from the mountaintops that, "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

(Elder) B. J. McLaughlin

Dear Editors of the Signs,

Enclosed please find a check to renew my subscription for the next two years, and the balance to be used as you are guided by our Lord. I and my husband enjoy reading every issue of the *Signs*. When we have completed reading the *Signs*, we pass it to others to read.

Wishing you Editors of the *Signs* the best and may God bless you to keep it going out all across our land.

Our Best Wishes
Catherine and Matthew Wychocke

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Zion Church, Pickens County, Alabama, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in October, 1982. (October 15, 16, 17).

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and worship with us.

Elder A. H. Brock, Moderator
302 Mardis Lane
Montevallo, AL. 35115
Phone (205) 664-1074

DELAWARE ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Delaware Association of Old School Baptist will hold their annual session the fifth Sunday in August at the Welsh Tract meetinghouse, Newark Delaware.

Welsh Tract meetinghouse is located on Welsh Tract Road, one block west off State Road 896. Coming from the south, this is just north of the 896 (Newark) exit on Interstate 95.

Services will begin promptly at 10:30 A.M. Lovers of the truth are invited.

Ruth Lucht, Clerk
Welsh Tract Church

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SMITH RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Smith River Association will be held at Knob Church, located in Franklin County, Virginia, on Road No. 798. Dates will be Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, (Sept. 3, 4, 5) being the first weekend in September, 1982.

We invite all brethren and friends that are in peace and good standing at home to come and worship with us.

Elder Roy Agee
Route 1
Copper Hill, VA 24079

FIVE MILE CREEK ASSOCIATION

The Five Mile Creek Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Dorsey Creek Church, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in September (Sept. 17,18, and 19).

Dorsey Creek Church is located at Breman in Cullman County, Alabama, on Alabama Highway #69, about halfway between Jasper and Cullman.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and worship with us.

Brother Rufus Jacks, Clerk

Route 4 Box 21A
Winnsboro, TX 75494
May 11, 1982

SULPHUR FORK ASSOCIATION

The one hundred thirty-seventh annual session of the Sulphur Fork Primitive Baptist Association will convene, God willing, with Prospect Church, on Friday, Saturday, before and including the first Sunday in October, 1982. (October 1, 2, 3). Prospect Church is located on Highway 67 east of Simms, Texas.

We invite all our Brothers, Sisters, and friends to come and worship with us at this time.

Elder Loyd Wall, Moderator
Route 1
Bivins, Texas
Phone (214) 796-3011

FROM NEBRASKA

Meadow Grove, NE.

Dear Editors,

I recently sent in two subscriptions, and a little later I ordered the book, "Feast of Fat Things", then yesterday I looked at the date on my paper, and was astonished to see it was 3/82. Please pardon me. So now I am enclosing my check for two years. Sorry about the mistake. I surely do not want to miss a copy of the paper.

I'm not sure I can tell what my reaction to the paper is–it seems your editors dig deeper or do they have the God-given ability to glean thoughts from the Scriptures that amaze us who read with their clarity. Are they constantly improving or what? Anyway, I do so enjoy each copy. Many of them require a second reading.

I really get more from reading, as sometimes I nap a little in church. After all, I celebrated my ninetieth birthday last fall.

Also, the letters coming in from all across the U.S. is encouraging to me.

I surely hope I'm one, even the least,

Mrs. Walter Black

Route 4 Box 21A
Winnsboro, TX 75494
January 28, 1982

This letter was written by a Primitive Baptist believer when he was 16 years

old to his girl friend concerning the main obstacle in their relationship: differences in religious beliefs. The writer, John Hamrick, tried to explain to his girl friend what and why he believed as he did. She never understood and he decided it was best to end the relationship.

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?" II Cor. 6:14.

Dear V. _____,

How are you doing? I realize we have so many things in common up to a certain subject. And you guessed it--the subject is religion. We were both brought up under the influences of our respective religions and know quite a bit about them. So, what I really wanted to write you about in this note is our religion. For the past year somethi r has given me a desire to read the Bible and search out the truth. I realize many people will take a scripture and put their own interpretation on the verse. But it seems to me that there can be only one way God meant His scriptures to be understood, therefore, every interpretation cannot be right.

What I want is not to tell you how to believe; God forbid, (even though I do hope you can see some aspects of the way I believe) but I want to give you some aspects of the way I believe and why. If you have a Bible handy it would be good to get it. You know we were looking through the *Handbook of Denominations* and came upon the part where the Primitive Baptists were against missionaries because they did not believe in assessing money from the church for such purposes. Well, from the beginning, I knew the Primitive Baptists did not have missionaries, and I wondered why. I think spreading the word of God is good, so why could the Primitive Baptists be against missionaries? My dad told me that Primitive Baptists could not go along with missionaries attempting to teach heathens to believe, know God, accept God and be saved. Even though Jesus told his disciples to spread His word, it was to feed those who have been called (from death in trespasses and sins) by the Holy Spirit. Jesus told the disciples, "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep." The main thing for man to do concerning the word is to bear witness. This shed a little light to me, but I still wasn't satisfied until my dad quoted me a scripture I later found, and it made me realize why Primitive Baptists are against such a thing. This scripture is the word of God, so I have to go along with it. It is found in Hebrews 8:10-11, and says, "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."

There in another big difference between the Primitive Baptists and First Baptists and this deals with chance, choose, chose, and accepting Christ by man. I wanted to know about these things so I sought them in the scriptures and I looked and looked but I didn't find where it says any man has a chance, chooses Christ, (or accepts Him) or had a choice. In fact, it was the opposite. After reading these scriptures it made me feel that no man by his own free will can come unto Christ, accept Him, or choose Him. The choosing was done beforehand by the Lord. Take for instance John 6:44, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Another scripture I found that deals with choosing is found in John 15:16, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you,

that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, He may give it you." This scripture reveals that He chooses His people, and not the opposite. There are other scriptures stating that God chose His people; 2 Thessalonians 2:13, "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." Look up also Numbers 16:5-7, Deut. 7:6, and Mark 13:20.

Then I searched for the word "chance". Nowhere in the Bible could I find a scripture that says any man has a chance or anything close to it. I realize that many people think that everyone has a chance, but I am led to believe the opposite. Take the scripture found in Romans 9:13, "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Do you think Esau had a chance? I rather doubt it. I don't believe God hated Esau in the sense that we might hate someone today, but I believe that Esau was not in God's purpose. I am led to believe this because of Romans 9:11, "(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth.)" It's obvious that Esau was not one of God's elect. Jacob was one of His chosen few. The elect are the chosen ones.

Now I know by now you are thinking that God could not be a just and loving God if He could send a man to hell without giving him a chance. Well, this makes no sense when you really start thinking about it. I thought about it and came up with some questions of my own. For instance, if God could not justly send a man to hell without giving him a chance to be saved, does it not follow that every man must have an equal chance with those who have the gospel. Do the heathen, without the gospel, have a equal chance with those who have it?

I realize that probably didn't satisfy you as far as God being a just God, but if anyone thinks that God could not be just in sending a man to hell without giving him a chance, then there are several verses in the Bible that may be directly talking to these people. Romans 9:14-23 explains it very clearly to me. If after reading these verses and a person could not see how God could be just in sending a man to hell, then I would ask them if God could not justly send the sinner to hell, or punish him for his sins without giving him a chance to be saved, how could He justly give His Son to be punished for those sins? The main reason I feel that no man has a chance is because the scriptures reveal it this way. Now as far as "accepting Christ", I believe that accepting works in two ways. In a sense, a person can accept Christ, sure, in his mind only, but can he in his heart, where it really counts? I believe accepting of Christ is done by His children *after* they are made to feel how wretched they are and go through trials and tribulations. They feel the need of Christ's mercy so much that they are made willing to accept Him as their Lord and Saviour. Psalms 110:3 says, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power...". John 6:44 tells us that no man can come unto Jesus, therefore, I believe no man by free will can have any say about his salvation. This is where hope comes in, but I'll tell you how I feel about that later. It states in the Bible that Christ does the accepting of His people. In Acts 10:34-35 it states, "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." Other scriptures that deal with the Lord accepting or not accepting ones are in

Jeremiah 14:10, Romans 12:1, and 2 Corinthians 5:9. What else could these scriptures mean?

Some questions came into my mind concerning the accepting of Christ by man. For instance, does the sinner have to accept Christ in order to be saved, and reject Him to be lost; if so is not Christ limited in the work of salvation to what the sinner sees fit to do? If God only wills to save those that are willing to be saved, is not God's will dependent upon man's will? Does not Ephesians 1:11 tell us that God works all things after the counsel of His own will? In the process, can God be changed by the will of the sinner? Malachi 3:6 says, "For I am the Lord, I change not...". The power of God is evident.

I know you've probably had your fill of predestination, but I want to give you some of my views. The Primitive Baptists are probably the strongest group advocating the doctrine of predestination. Some do not go to the lengths of predestination as others, but all seem to have a clear understanding that God knows all things. To start with, I believe predestination means to deliberate beforehand with one's self, how one shall act; and as a result of this deliberation, to constitute, foreordain, and predetermine where, when, how, and by whom anything shall be done and to what end it shall be done. Two main books in the Bible concerning predestination are Romans and Ephesians. They seem to tell it like it is.

It's evident to me that God knows the ones who are going to be saved and gave these to Jesus Christ before the world began. Look at 2 Timothy 1:9. The fact that God knows all things is enough for me.

Now we come to the point of predestination and sin. I believe God's foreknowledge and His purpose in permitting sin into the world does not mean He is the author of it. I believe He could have prevented it, but did not. I believe Satan is the source and cause of sin and man is responsible for his own sins. So, how could God be the author of sin? I believe that God, foreknowing the conditions that His law would not be kept, did not try to prevent sin. We have no right to question why He did not prevent it. He overrules sin in the salvation of His people and to His own glory. I believe predestination applies to sin in a negative or permissive sense rather than active. God's purpose was not to prevent it but for Christ "to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Look at Hebrews 9:26. It seems to me that misunderstanding the meaning and extent of predestination has caused or is the cause of the many different beliefs among the world today. I have to go all the way with predestination because in no way can I see a partial predestination which leads to partial certainty of results, but I see a complete predestination of all things by God in His purpose or will, "according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in himself." Take a look at Ephesians 1:9.

If you remember a while back when we were talking about John 3:16, we never did seem to get straightened out on how we both feel about that Scripture. I want to try to tell you what that scripture means to me. John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." I'll try to take parts of this verse and tell you how I see it. "For God so loved the world",--He did love the world, but who is the world? It cannot be everyone. I believe it is the elect He speaks of throughout the Bible. If you refer back to Romans 9:13, Jacob was one of God's elect and Esau was not. God loved Jacob but He hated Esau, therefore, He has a special love for the elect, which is not everyone. "That He gave His only begotten Son"--Christ is the effect of God's eternal love, God's love gives Christ; because of this we are said to be

elected in Christ, but never for Christ; because Christ is the elect one Himself. Christ was first chosen, then the members. Christ was foreordained to be our Head, and we to be His members. Therefore, we are Christ's, and Christ is God's as the effect of His love to His elect from all eternity. In I Corinthians 3:22-23, "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." The key word in this phrase is "believeth." I believe the word "whosoever" refers to anyone, but at the same time God's elect are the only ones who will believe and I also believe choice and man's will does not come into the picture. Just who can believe? Acts 13:48 states that "....and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Can you see God's predestination in this verse? Is belief a condition of salvation? Or is it an evidence of salvation? I believe it has to be an evidence of salvation. In no way do I believe that belief is a voluntary act of man, but belief is according to the working of God's mighty power. Ephesians 1:19 verifies this. Some will not believe as 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 states, but I believe the one who will believe will not do so according to their will, but according to God's, because He works in us both to will and to do of His own good pleasure.

It seems to me that worldly religions have attempted to put men up to an equal stature with God. In no way do Primitive Baptists' go along with this. They see man in his rightful spot. We both know that good works will not get you to Heaven so I want to ask you why do some preachers preach otherwise? Why do they say, "just do this" or say "accept this and you'll be saved"? Isn't that putting salvation on the works system and by the will of man? I feel that this is wrong. The scriptures say so. How then are we saved? Ephesians 2:8-9: "For by grace are ye saved through faith and not of yourselves; it is a gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Grace is mentioned throughout the Bible. 2 Timothy 1:9 states that, "Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose, and grace which was given us in Christ before the world began." Through this scripture we can see how grace fits in. I see grace as the impulsive cause of all. To me it was an act of grace in God to choose any, when He might have passed all by, it had to be an act of sovereign grace, to choose this man, rather than that, when both were equally undone in themselves. Here is where election comes in. Since election is not of works and does not depend in the least on the worthiness of its subjects, then it must be of free, unbiased grace. Therefore, election must be solely of grace. (See Romans 11:5-6)

Hope is mentioned throughout the Bible and coincides with faith and belief. The main scriptures concerning hope occurs in Romans 8:24-25. These verses state that, "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." I'll try to tell you what I believe this means and I believe it means only one thing. "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" In other words, if we think we have it made, beyond a shadow of a doubt, then that is hope that is seen. The scripture says that hope that is seen is not hope. If a man *knows* he has a place in Heaven what does he need to hope for? Now refer back to the beginning of the scripture where it says, "For we are saved by hope". Is not hope an essential quality of salvation? "But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it". In other words, we hope for that precious grace from God with patience and an understanding that it is this

hope through Jesus Christ that we might be saved. This scripture leads me to believe that all the elect has a hope and his hope is in Jesus Christ. David spoke of this hope in Acts 2:26, "Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope." Jeremiah 17:7, "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." Lamentations 3:24-26, "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in Him. The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." Romans 15:13, "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost." Faith and hope coincide in Galatians 5:5, "For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." Other scriptures that deal with hope are found in Acts 24:15, Romans 5:1-5, 15:4, I Thessalonians 5:8, Hebrews 11:1, I Peter 1:13, and Psalms 146:5.

I was reading through the scriptures and saw where Jesus and the twelve disciples were talking. Jesus had been speaking to the disciples and they were amazed and confounded by His words. The disciples questioned, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus replied, (Matthew 19:26) "...With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible." This shows that we cannot be saved by man; man cannot will it upon himself to go out and save others, because it is impossible. Only through God, who gave His Son, does man have a possibility for eternal salvation. This is not of works but of God's love and grace. Mark 10:27 and Luke 18:27 state that through man salvation is impossible, but through God all things are possible. This puts man where he should be and God where He is--Almighty, All-wise, and All-powerful God. I believe in this God, not a God of want or need but a God that knows all things from the beginning to the end.

I hope you can realize the way I feel--as confusing as it may seem to you. But I see it this way because the scriptures reveal it in such a light that I can see it and believe it to be the truth. I am very grateful if you have had the patience to go this far and try to understand why I believe as I do. It is my hope in the future we can talk about religious matters because there are still many scriptures that I have not come to because I am yet a youth in the knowledge of them. If it be God's will, I hope He will give us thankful hearts and a mind to know right from wrong.

Written by John Hamrick

Eldorado, Ark.

Dear Editors,

I received this God given letter from Sister Fox a few days ago. It was so good and comforting to this poor sinner. I would like to share it with the readers of the *Signs of the Times* and God's elect. I am sure Sister Fox has no objection to me sending it to you. Her son, Charlie Fox, joined our church at Rehobeth in Eldorado, Arkansas. We received three new members last year, Brother Joe Perry and his wife, and Brother Fox. Thanks be to God in heaven, who adds daily such as shall be saved.

For the past two months my stroke and illness has caused me great pain and suffering, but thanks be unto God in heaven for the experience I had. The Lord's Prayer and the 23rd Psalm was on my mind, and I was so low down in the valley, looking up for mercy. I was made to say, "I will be Your anything If I get well." Thank God for so many prayers and friends in my time of need. I had more friends than I ever thought I had. Thanks to God in heaven. My friends and members in Christ increase my hope. I get so low sometimes I am made to wonder if I even have a hope.

May God in heaven bless the

household of faith. When at the Throne of Grace, pray for this poor sinner. If I am saved, then it is by His free grace.

Fred B. Murphy

Strong, Arkansas

Dear Brother Murphy,

I hope this finds you still improving from the stroke and operation you had. It has been on my mind since last Sunday to write you, and I hope the Lord will bless me with a spiritual mind to write a few words of comfort to you. Otherwise it would be of no comfort if I wrote with a carnal mind.

When I spoke to you after the services last Sunday, telling you how I enjoyed hearing you read from the book of the Song of Solomon, and relating your experience of feeling Jesus was at your side while you were in the hospital, you told me you could not help crying while reading and telling the experience. I also shed tears along with you, as well as some of the dear sisters that sat in front of me. We were not ashamed of one another's tears of rejoicing in the Lord. When the Lord blesses us to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth, our minds are set on things above, and not on things of the earth. He blesses us to set together in heavenly places in Christ, and to rejoice in Him, the only true and living God. God is Love. He makes us to know in that still small voice saying unto us, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love. Therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Bless His Holy Name from whom all our blessings flow. When blessed with the Spirit of God to feast on Jesus, the Living Bread that comes down from heaven to us, it is a time of rejoicing with tears of joy. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." If we be little children of God, we know what it is to be filled, with our cup running over at times. We also know about the barren times, when we are hungry and thirsty, and feel to be in a desert land where there is no water. The Lord says, "When the poor and needy seek water, I the Lord will quench their thirst." His people are an afflicted and poor people, feeling to be so wretched, vile and full of sin, knowing they can not do anything good unless the Lord works both the will, and the do. This scripture comes to mind, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." A precious joy it is to feel to be poor in spirit. It is the poor that are weak, helpless, and wholly dependent upon the Lord for all things, both spiritual and natural. "The poor have the gospel preached unto them", said Jesus. In Psalms 89:15,16, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted."

When I am blessed of the Lord to assemble with the people of the living God, I feel to be in the land of the living. How loath we are to leave the place where Jesus shows His smiling face. It is a place of love and sweet fellowship.

May the God of all grace be with you and comfort you, and strengthen you, and fulfill all thy petitions.

In love to you and yours,

Lula Fox

R. D. #3, Box 136
Townline Road
Geneva, N.Y. 14456

Dear Elder Poole,

I feel compelled to write to you folks, even though I am not gifted to write eloquently or with any degree of knowledge. Perhaps being in this state is why I received such a blessing from the third volume of Elder Beebe's Editorials. There always have been many questions which I desired to know the answers to. Evidently in past years others had some of the same questions. When they wrote and desired Elder Beebe's thoughts upon these things, his answers were in depth but very

understandable. His Editorials are as the "sound of a clear trumpet." We want to express our appreciation to you for making it possible (by reprinting) for such as we are to receive the benefit of this godly man's writing.

It is with great anticipation that we look forward to the next volume being reprinted.

We also want to express our gratitude to all the people who publish the *Signs*. It is always a blessing.

Yours in bonds of Christian love,
June and Kenneth Smith

Elgin, Oregon

Dear Brother Williams,

Enclosed is my check to renew my subscription. Use the rest for anything you need.

I received the Volume 3 of Elder Beebe's Editorials. Is it possible to get Volumes one and two also. I would like very much to have them. I feel he was a wonderfully gifted writer and have always enjoyed the Editorials I have been blessed to read.

Thank you,
Elva Spikes

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

FROM AN OLD SIGNS

Lebanon, Ohio
October 9, 1897

Dear Brother Beebe:–I send you a letter written by my request, giving a sister's experience in a New School Baptist college. As I know from personal knowledge the workings of many institutions of learning, I can fully appreciate the letter, and feel that it will be wholesome matter for your excellent columns. I may follow it soon on the same subject.

Yours most truly,

H.M. Curry

September 6, 1897

Brother Beebe:–I have been requested to write for your paper some of the things I have seen in denominational schools.

Why do Old School Baptists send their children to denominational schools? I suppose for the same reason my parents sent me to a school of that kind. Because they are not aware of the influence and of the snares that are laid to bring them into the churches they represent.

Several years ago my parents moved to a college town to educate my brother, sister, and myself. About the same time, two other Old School Baptists moved to the same village with their respective families, for the same purpose. When we entered school we were required to attend church twice on Sunday, and if we attended morning and evening services, we answered "perfect" in chapel, the following morning. Think of it; how degrading to report perfect in their chapel, for attending their church twice on Sunday!

As we did not believe in Sunday Schools, we did not attend their Sunday School. In a short time the president of the school informed us all, in his remarks in chapel, that all those who did not attend the Sunday School must report to him their reasons for not doing so. Immediately after chapel my sister went to the "Doctor's" studio, and told him the reason we did not attend was because our parents did not believe in them. He informed her in his most polite and suave manner, that it was all right. We were astonished that he took it so kindly, but we soon learned that it was a sham, to cover up what was to follow. In a short time he began saying in chapel, "Don't you see how you are crowding yourselves out of society by not attending the Sunday School?" and "I warn you not to associate with those that do not love the church." At different times he repeated these things before the school, and every influence was used to keep them from associating with those who did not do as they wished in these matters. In your studies you are graded

as low as possible, and everything is brought to bear against your advancement, as long as you do not join their church. In fact, it is nearly impossible to go through their schools, and graduate from them, without joining their church. Do not think that money or position will save you from these indignities. What can you do if they choose to hold together and not associate with you, or grade you low in your studies, if you do not join their church? How much more gratifying to their pride to show you that with all your money, and position, you cannot stand against them with their church monopoly. Many times when I have beheld the students in these schools, with their arrogant ways, believing they had a corner on religion, I have thought of the beast mentioned in the Bible, that should come up out of the earth. There was something in the very walk of their president on the street that brought to remembrance the great red dragon spoken of in the Scriptures.

Of the children of the other two families that entered their school about the same time we did, all but one united with their church. Of our own family, no one joined them. I have never known of but one student whose parents were of our denomination who did not unite with their churches during their stay in school.

All Old School Baptists would shrink from sending their children to a Catholic school. Do not think for a moment that they are in less danger in the various Protestant schools. They are surrounded with the same influences to compel them to come into their churches. Is it consistent for Old School Baptists, after declaring non-fellowship for these institutions at the Black Rock Convention, in 1832, to persist in throwing their children in the very jaws of these things, when there are very few of them who have ever attended these schools two years, and some of them a much less time, without joining their churches? When you give them your money you are paying them for teaching your children to disrespect you, and to abhor that doctrine which has taught you to bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

One Who Has Witnessed These Things

EDITOR'S NOTE: Is not this a timely warning to us in 1982 as it was then? Beyond question, we cannot save our children, or acquaint them with the Lord, and yet we turn them over to those very workmongers who promote such doctrine. If God has given us children, be assured He has required us to train them up, (Prov. 22:6) and also given us sufficient instruction in how to do it. We have never known the doctrine of predestination and election, as taught us by our God, to lead us to indifference regarding our children.

More on this later, the Lord Willing.

EXPERIENCE OF A YOUNG MAN

I was alarmed some years ago by hearing a minister of God describe the awful state of the wicked, and determined that I would (as the saying is) turn good. So I set to reading my Bible, saying my prayers, and keeping from bad company; but I found it hard work to forsake it all. A few days after, this alarm was rather abated, and I thought I would have no more to do with it; but it came again into my mind as fresh as ever, so that I could not be easy, and was obliged to separate from the world. At this time I began to doubt the reality of religion, and whether the Bible was true. Then when reading a certain verse, I believed that it must be true, because no man could foretell things as they are foretold in the Bible, without inspiration from above. Then something or another would dart into my mind, and upset it altogether, so that again I disbelieved, and even doubted whether there was a God. I looked at the sun, moon, and stars, and at the other works of creation, and tried to convince myself that there was a God, but I could not. At times a ray of light would break

in, and then I could say from my heart, "Surely there is a God"; but the very next moment I was as bad as ever, or worse, for I doubted the reality of everything, and even doubted that I was a human being. I found this was a miserable state to be in, but I could not help myself, and thanks be to God he brought me out of it. When this was over, I began to find evil thoughts rise up in my mind, and could not avoid them; for the more I tried to get rid of them, the worse I was. This plagued me for six months, till one day the Lord broke into my heart. Then my heart went up to him in prayer, telling him what a sinner I was, and begging him to keep me from sinning against him in the future, so that I might not be grieved, nor dishonour him any more as long as I lived. What sweet moments I found these to be! and yet I grieved that I should have sinned against such a dear Lord. How hateful, then, did sin appear to me! I hated it with a perfect hatred, and felt a love going out to the Lord. About three days after this, evil thoughts and blasphemies rose up against the Holy Ghost. Now, thought I, it is all over; there is no hope for me; I am lost; I wish I had never been born. From my heart I envied the ungodly; for I imagined there was hope for them, but none for me, because I had sinned the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost. I took up my Bible, and read, many times, that verse where it is said, "He that speaketh against the Holy Ghost with his tongue, and from his heart, that was never to be forgiven." Well, thought I, I do not speak it with my tongue, nor do I wish to do so. Then a little hope sprung up, and I thought that yet I might be saved. But this hope was soon gone, and I sunk as low as ever; for I thought it was as bad as though I had spoken it with my tongue. A few days after this I felt a love going out to the Lord, and it increased more and more, and continued for upwards of six months. What a sweet time did I find this! How I longed to go home to my dear Lord, and wished from my heart that the Lord would take me to himself. O, cried I, come, my dear Lord; come, my dear Lord. How gladly would I have lain down and died; for I was sure that I should go to heaven, because I had the testimony within. I shall never forget the sweet meltings which I then had. To dead professors I should just hint, that my confidence in the Lord did not lead me into all manner of wickedness, which they say they should be led to commit, if they were sure of going to heaven. Ah, poor creatures, they give a strong proof that they have not the grace of God in their hearts. When I had the sweet confidence within, I found God's ways to be ways of pleasantness, and all his paths to be paths of peace. How sweetly could I meditate on him and on his works of creation; how beautiful did his handy-works appear to me; what a pleasure did I find in attending on the means of grace, and in reading his word! I did not do these things to merit heaven; it made no matter to me whether there was a heaven or a hell; it was out of love to God. I prayed to him to keep me from all evil, and to prevent me from dishonouring him. I wished to be holy as God is holy. I never hated sin so much as at the time when the love of God was in my heart. I never felt tired of thanking and adoring him, nor considered it a burden to do his commandments. In short, I found the blessed Lord to be all in all to my poor soul. Yours, etc.

Near Devizes, August 3, 1840
The Gospel Standard, 1841

Sulligent, Alabama

Dear Sirs:

I am enclosing a check for the *Signs* for two more years. I do love to read the *Signs of the Times*, but have gotten to where I can't see to read a lot of the time, and thought maybe I should just quit trying, but I can't hardly give it up. I got my daughter to fix it up for me to send

after it, and help me read it. I will be 90 years old May the fourth, but I enjoy the good paper.

Sincerely,
Mertie Pitts

OBITUARIES

JESSIE HOLMAN VERNON

Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church regrets to record the death of our dear brother in Christ, Brother Jessie Holman Vernon, 86, of Greensboro, N.C. Brother Vernon died July 26, 1981 in Annie Penn Hospital, Reidsville, N.C. Funeral services were in Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church with Elder Haywood Wray officiating. Burial was in the cemetery there.

A native of Rockingham County, N.C., he was the son of the late James H. and Ibbie Carter Vernon. Brother Vernon was a retired farmer and saw mill worker.

Surviving are his wife, Sister Nannie Holland Vernon; daughters, Mrs. Janie Brown of Madison, Mrs. Nancy Hutchins, of Greensboro, with whom he made his home for many years; sons, Jessie of Reidsville, and William of Kannapolis; 10 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren.

Brother Vernon always attended his meeting until illness prevented him for the last six years. He was blessed with patience and grace and spoke of longing to go home.

May the Lord comfort his dear family.

Rachel Wray

SISTER MYRTLE COMPTON SHELTON

It is always sad when our brethren pass from us; but it is with sweet memories that I attempt to write the obituary of Sister Myrtle Compton Shelton. She was the wife of Jack Shelton and the daughter of the late George Rison Compton and Sister Anne Brumfield Compton.

Sister Myrtle was born December 8, 1905. She was received into Springfield Primitive Baptist Church by experience September 10, 1938 and was a dear member until her death on January 9, 1982. Sister Myrtle attended meetings as long as she could, ever after her health was so bad, and she always seemed to enjoy meeting with the brethren.

Her funeral was held by her beloved Pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and she was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park.

Sister Myrtle is survived by her husband, Jack Shelton; three sons, Jack, Jr., of Gretna, James C., Danville, and Palmer D., Cumberland, R.I.; two daughters, Doris Davidson, of Gretna, and Geraldine Adams, of Danville; two sisters, Carrie Brown, of Danville, and Lois Pendergrass, of Gretna; 10 grandchildren, and 2 great grandchildren.

Sister Myrtle will be sadly missed by all, but may each one be reconciled to God's will.

Written in love and hope by Sister Carol R. Pickral.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Oscar D. Pickral, Clerk

JOHN H. PASCHAL

Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church, near Madison, N.C., regrets to record the death of our Brother in Christ, John H. (Buster) Paschal. He was born and lived all his life in the Sharon Community of Rockingham County, N.C. He was 72 years of age, and the son of the late John L. and Annie Mae Wall Paschal, and a retired farmer.

Surviving are his wife, Nettie Comer Paschal, of the home; daughter, Mrs. Jack Crowder of Reidsville; a son, David Paschal, of Greensboro; four grandchildren; sisters, Mrs. Lelia Carter of Greensboro, and Mrs. Otha Small of Reidsville.

Funeral services were held June 11, 1981 at Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church with Elder Haywood Wray and preachers, Sandy Brown, Charles Vaughn, and Tommy Wray officiating. Burial was in New Lebanon Church Cemetery.

Brother Paschal was very afflicted and manifested patience and grace in all his trials and walk of life.

May the Lord comfort his dear loved ones.

Sister Rachel Wray

CHARLIE MEEDS WILLIS

My grandfather, Charlie Willis, died Friday, June 12, 1981. He was 82 years old.

He was the first of seven children born to Walter T. Willis and Carrie Dowty. He was born February 13, 1899, at their home in Grantsboro, in Pamlico County.

On the 22nd day of July 1923, he married Beulah Gaskins. To this union were born three children, Charles Meeds Willis, Jr., Ruby Carawan and Stella Burroughs. His wife died August 15, 1973.

They joined Bethel Primitive Baptist Church the second Sunday of September in 1956. The same day they were baptised by Elder W. C. Edwards. He served as clerk protem from 1957 until December 1959, when he became clerk. On September 13, 1958 he was appointed Trustee.

In 1965, a tornado came thru the area flattening the church. He saw a need to rebuild the church even though the membership consisted of only Granddaddy and Grandmother. The foundation was laid, the the community supported this

endeavor by offering their labor free. In September of 1966, they petitioned the Association for help in raising the needed funds of $1,112.87. With the grace of God, they saw this need fulfilled. From this, the membership grew.

During the last six years of declining health, his family cared for him. Even though his health was poor, he attended church far and near. He continued as clerk until September 1980.

Funeral services were held at Bethel Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Sam Jones, Elder J. T. Prescott and Elder Reeves Smith in the presence of an overflowing crowd. During the service his favorite hymn, "Robed and Ready" was sung. Interment was in the Church Cemetery beside his wife. The many beautiful flowers and memorial gifts attested to his love of his community, family and friends. He is survived by three children, thirteen grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, and three brothers and three sisters. He is greatly missed by all.

His Granddaughter,
Delores Brinson

JAMES LUBY ROYAL

It is with sad hearts that we attempt to write the Obituary of our beloved Deacon Brother James Luby Royal, who departed this life October 27, 1981. He was born January 25, 1902 in Sampson County, North Carolina to the late James Madison and Dora Warwick Royal. He was married to Pherby Gertrude Wood in August 1930 who preceded him in death September 17, 1978. To this union were born four children, three sons and one daughter. James Earl, Fernie Lee, Jerry Bruce and Mrs. Doris Frix all survive. Also surviving are ten grandchildren and one great grandchild, four sisters and four brothers.

Brother Royal along with his wife joined Hickory Grove Primitive Baptist Church the third Saturday in August 1966, and were baptized on Sunday before the morning service by their Pastor, Elder Lester E. Lee.

He was chosen Deacon August 1967 and served his church well until his health began to fail which left his seat vacant. He always enjoyed the sweet fellowship with all the Brethren, Sisters and friends of all the churches he visited. He will be missed by all who knew him.

His funeral was held at Rose Funeral Chapel in Benson by His Pastor Elder W. D. Godwin and Minister Rossie Blackman October 29, 1981. He was laid to rest in the Devotional Gardens Cemetery near Dunn under a mound of beautiful flowers.

May it be resolved that three copies of this resolution be made, one to be placed in our church record, one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication and one to his family.

Written by Committee
Sister Kathleen McLamb, Clerk
Sister Cleon Barefoot

JOHNIE MARZE

This is written in memory of my dear husband, Johnie. Just three years and six months ago tonight my dear companion was called away from me. It was June 2, 1978, about 11:00 o'clock at night. It was hard to give my loved one up, but God, who is our Giver of all things, knows best, and as his body is sleeping and resting, his spirit is in the care of his merciful Sinbearer.

He was a good husband, father, and had so many friends. But my hope is so strong that he was one of God's chosen ones for heaven. His walk and talk proved to me that by grace he was saved, and by grace alone.

Written by his lonely wife.

Virgia Marze

SISTER MARY JOHNSON JENKINS
1910-1982

On September 10, 1910, George and Fannie Johnson of Gold Point, Martin County, N.C., were blessed with a daughter whom they named Mary. On October 3, 1931, Mary Johnson was married to H. Vernon Jenkins.

Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1970, Mary and Vernon Jenkins came before Flat Swamp Church asking for a home and were received in full fellowship. They were both baptized that afternoon by Elders N. L. Ambrose and J.T. Prescott.

Sister Mary was a very faithful, loving member and always was willing to help not only her home church but any and all churches of the same faith and order. She made her home a resting and enjoyable place for Primitive Baptists from far and near. She always carried a smile and did so many little things to make you feel welcome and have a desire to visit her again. She loved to share and many who left were given a little gift as a token of her love.

Sister Mary entered the hospital in early July of 1981 and spent most of the last six months of her life there where she passed away on January 7, 1982, making her stay on earth 71 years and 4 months. During her six-month stay in the hospital, her devoted husband stayed with her every night and her loving daughter-in-law, relatives and friends stayed with her during the day. She suffered very much but until near the end she always could greet you with a smile and assure you that she was going to be all right.

Sister Mary leaves to mourn her her faithful and devoted husband, Brother Vernon Jenkins and one very loving son, Davis Jenkins of Robersonville, as well as many of the churches and friends.

Sister Mary will be missed by Flat Swamp Church and all other Primitive Baptist churches in this area as well as many distant churches where she was so well known and loved. Those blessed to visit her in the hospital could see a demonstration of this love as the walls of her room were covered with cards from far and near.

Even though we will miss her very much, we can say, "Thank God who doeth all things well." He has taken Sister Mary to a rest which will be hers forever and ever. We are comforted in the words, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord." We feel assured that she is in that number covered by the scripture, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Our prayer would be that God would comfort Brother Vernon and that He may fill that vacancy in Brother Vernon's life with the presence of His love and tender mercy and that He may comfort the heart of Davis and cause him to be even closer to his daddy.

Sister Mary was laid to rest on Saturday, January 9, in Robersonville Cemetery where again many friends and flowers proved how much she was loved. She suffered much but now it is an everlasting rest for her which only God can give.

May we at Flat Swamp do all we can to comfort Brother Vernon and Davis.

Done by the order of Flat Swamp Church in conference Saturday before first Sunday in February, 1982.

Elder Reeves Smith, Moderator
Hassel Allen, Clerk
Brothers Ruben Everette and
Hassel Allen, Committee

CHARLIE AMOS BUSSEY AND WIFE JULIA PETERS BUSSEY

Julia Peters Bussey passed from this life September 13, 1979. She was 85 years old. Two years and two months later, November 6, 1981, her husband, Charlie Amos Bussey died.

They are survived by two daughters, Mrs. William (Nellie) Holland, Rocky Mount, Virginia, Mrs. Jim (Betty) Kingery, Newport News, Virginia, and five sons, Charlie A., Paul E., Fred L. Bussey, all of Rocky Mount, Virginia; Joe P. Bussey, Chesapeake, Virginia, Lewis F. Bussey, Hagerstown, Maryland, 15 grandchildren, 25 great-grandchildren and 1 great-great-grandchild.

These two dear people were married for 65 years and lived all their lives in Franklin County, Virginia. They were our neighbors, our friends and our church brother and sister.

Sister Bussey was a member of Rocky Mount Primitive Baptist Church for more than fifty years. She and her husband attended meetings at all the Old Baptist Churches nearby. They hardly missed a meeting at one of the churches each Saturday and Sunday. When he gave up driving they would ride to church with their daughter, Nellie, and son-in-law, Elder William Holland.

Sister Bussey became ill in the summer of 1979. The last time she came to church was the first Sunday in September, 1979. It was Communion Day at Little Creek. She was so weak and almost unable to come, but she came for Communion. It seemed as if she came to say goodbye. Our eyes were filled with tears as we shook hands and she kissed each one of us. She knew this would be the last time she would come to church. About a week later she passed away.

Funeral services were held September 15, 1979 by Elder Lane Carter. She was laid to rest in Mountain View Cemetery.

Brother Bussey continued to attend the meetings and he united with the church February 22, 1981. He wanted his membership to be at Little Creek Church. The members were happy to receive him and Elder William Holland baptized him. The last meeting he was able to attend was the first Sunday in September, 1981. It was Communion Day at Little Creek. A few days later, he entered the hospital where he was a patient for several weeks. He died at his home November 6, 1981.

Funeral services were held Sunday, November 8, 1981, by Elder Lane Carter and he was laid to rest beside his dear wife in Mountain View Cemetery.

Though we are deeply saddened and miss them more than we can say, we feel that our loss is their eternal gain.

We extend our sympathy to the family and loved ones.

Written by friends,
Brother Paul Wright
Sister Helen Wright

ALFRED MORGAN HENDRIX

This is written in memory of my Father, Alfred Morgan Hendrix, who died November 27, 1981. He was born January 9, 1905. He was a faithful attender and long time supporter in the Powell Valley Association of East Tennessee. He leaves his dear companion, Sister Ina O'Neal Hendrix and four sons. We now ponder his eternal gain and beg to be reconciled to the loss.

He fought for principles and respectibility in all things. I think the fight was difficult for him, as it is for all who are caused to engage in this battle. He was blessed to fear before God and he believed in the power of God's grace. As he would talk of his experiences his hunger for righteousness was evident.

My Father did not shout from the house tops that his strength was in Christ Jesus, but he was blessed to demonstrate this conviction in his way and walk. Now there has been many like my Father, who are not listed with the (visible) church members. I am blessed to feel that I have a spiritual relationship with them. If I am deceived, it is my station which is in question, and not theirs. When I am given to consider the word "us" in Ephesians 2:6, the evidence is weighed and the meditation is sweet. God is rich in mercy, His love is great and He loved "us", and if God does not know them that are His, I am both dead and wrong. God is praised.

I have said more than I intended, bear with me; while talking about my natural Father, I am describing a brother in Christ Jesus (I hope).

Sincerely submitted,
(Elder) Rush D. Hendrix

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 9/82 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

JESUS WALKING ON THE WATER

Our Jesus has walked on the water;
This truth is most sacred to me.
'Twas sacred to those few disciples
When tossed on that boisterous sea.
Yes, Jesus has walked on the water
An emblem of sorrow and grief
He gave His dear back to the smiter
To bring to His people relief.

Our Jesus has walked on the water
In triumph He suffered and bled;
Was led as a lamb to the slaughter
Even Christ our immaculate Head.
Yes, Jesus has walked on the water
Through great tribulation He came
He sheweth each child how to suffer
Who trusts in His glorious name.

Our Jesus has walked on the water
Time cannot His footprints erase.
Behold it was surely a matter
Of infinite mercy and grace.
I know not a theme that is sweeter
As Jesus has walked on the sea
To save His disciples -- and Peter
He walked on the water for me.

There are seasons when every disciple
Is tossed on a boisterous sea;
But Jesus has walked on the water
His grace is sufficient for thee.
Yes, Jesus has walked on the water
The waves are put under His feet
Though billows our vessel may shatter
They cannot His purpose defeat.

He speaks and His will is accomplished
The waves and the tempest obey
All things are brought into subjection
For Jesus has walked on the sea.
So when we come down to death's river
And dread the dark waters to cross
Our Jesus is there to deliver
He walked on those waters for us.

Written by L. L. Schenck
Sent in by Elder W. A. Winfrey

SERMON PREACHED BY ELDER LOYD WALL

(Taken from a tape recording)

We find in the scriptures these words, "Pray without ceasing", and yet that is just as contrary to the carnal mind and the carnal being as can be. Because before a man or a woman can be blessed to pray he must be overtaken with agony and pain, and then he will have a desire to pray. Therefore, that is not a free will desire and not a volunteer action. I hope I am before a praying people. I want to say this about the people I am identified with, (I am identified with the people called Primitive Baptists) I think I know what the doctrine of the Primitive Baptist is, and if I understand what the worldly religion is proclaiming, and if the worldly theme is right, then the Old Baptist doctrine is as bad wrong as any doctrine as you can imagine.

I want to say and be understood plainly; I don't believe there is a middle ground that is, no halfway ground. I meet people who say to me, I am about half Primitive Baptist; I'm about half hardshell". I don't want to criticize anyone, but I certainly do want to be understood. I don't want to be ugly and take advantage of my brethren in this congregation, but I want to be understood. I don't believe there are any half truths. And the reason why I say that is because there is no half child of God and half child of the Devil. I don't believe God half does anything. If you are a child of God you have been wholly redeemed by the blood of Christ.

I heard it advocated this morning over the radio by a college graduate, (and I'm not criticizing education) but I heard it advocated that God would not sow His grace in a field that hadn't been plowed up, and I could believe that much with all the power of my mind. But then he advocated that it was left up strictly to the individual to prepare their heart (field) for that grace. Now, I know this, that the world by wisdom knows not God. The man who wrote that was Solomon, and that same Solomon said that the preparation of the heart in man, together with the answer of the tongue is alone of the Lord. So to plow up that heart and make it ready for that good seed must be by grace. God will have to plow it up.

You know, I have been preparing land all week. land for the seed bed, and I believe that plowing that land is preparing that land for the seed, and Solomon said the preparation of the heart in man together with the answer of the tongue is alone of the Lord. I want to say again, if Old Baptist doctrine is wrong, we are the worst wrong people upon the face of all the earth. That radio speaker was preaching of trying his "dead level best" to mix words and grace together. And that is all you can make out of it, and you just as well to be plain, because Jude said, "Earnestly contend for the faith that was once delivered to the saints."

I've got a scripture on my mind. I woke up at 1:00 o'clock night before last, and all at once it came before me. I didn't sleep much more. And I am going to say this without fear of being successfully contridicted, that if God would bless me this morning as He did that night, then I wouldn't have any fear. I had some of the sweetest meditations on it that I ever had in my life, and I had some of the newest things that I had ever thought of in all my life. This scripture is used at a lot of funerals but I tell you an experience of my Daddy, when he first bean to preach. There were two women down here who fell out and in a duel one shot the other dead. And Papa helped dig the grave and an old man was out there and said to Papa, "What if you were called on to preach this woman's funeral; how in the world could you do it?" He said, "The only way I know to preach any funeral is to preach Christ Jesus and Him crucified, and then a

funeral would already be preached." I say this, that I read some scriptures at funerals but I believe any scripture would be suitable for a funeral. I want to tell the reason why. A man passed away about 10 or 12 years ago near here. When he died his family requested that I conduct his funeral, and I want you to know this, I had never met his children at that time, but they were some fine children. I've never seen them since, nor before, but they really did treat me nice. However, they put me under about as bad a burden as I have ever been put under. They asked that if I was given a mind, they would like for me to use the scripture of the rich man and Lazareth in preaching their Daddy's funeral. Well, I went to Papa and said," Have you ever heard of that being used at a funeral?" he said, "No". I went to Mr. Will Thompson, my neighbor, and asked him, and I went to Mrs. Patsy Coats, and Mr. Henry Coats, and I went to everybody that I could get to before time to conduct that funeral. There was a large congregation, and when it came time for me to step behind that bookboard, I want to tell you this, I don't believe that any other scripture could have been before me any more than the parable of the rich man and Lazareth. I'm not saying this for boasting, but when I started to the cemetery, my neighbors who had adjoining farms to me, my friends all around me were walking in front of that casket in order to get to shake hands with me. They wouldn't wait until I dismissed the service at the grave, and told me what a wonderful discourse that I was blessed to bring.

So I've got a scripture that I want to read to you this morning, and though you hear it read at lots of funerals, I believe it is proper at any time that we are given a mind to use it. I don't know whether the Lord will give me a mind to interpret these scriptures at all, because I don't know the mind of the Lord. I'm dependent upon Him, and I'm made to wait on Him, and that is the only way I can preach. I get in a hurry sometimes, but I tell you one thing, I never have hurried up the work of God. And I'll tell you something else, I never have hindered any of it, either, because it falls out just as God decreed, and it pleases God.

The scripture that I want to read in your hearing will be found in the 23rd Psalm. "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." The first thing that I would like to call your attention to is the first verse of that chapter, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want". In the 144th Psalm the same writer, David, said, "Happy is that people," that is in such a case; yea "happy is that people, whose God is the Lord." You remember that when Jesus was here upon this earth He chose twleve apostles. One of them was Thomas, and after Jesus arose from the dead He appeared to some of the apostles, and Thomas wasn't there. When he disappeared from among them and they met Thomas, they told him that the Lord has appeared to them; that he arose and had appeared to them. Thomas said, "I will not believe until I see nail prints in his hands and thrust my hands into his side." And on another occasion that the twelve were in the room and the door was shut and Jesus appeared in the room where they were, and he only spoke to Thomas. He had a

purpose in it, as there is a purpose to all things under heaven. He told Thomas to reach forth his hand and to touch Him, and to thrust his hands into His side. And when He told Thomas to reach forth, Thomas said, "My Lord and my God."

Now David said here, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." I want to tell you one thing, that God is the God of the whole universe, and I want to tell you that He is Lord of His people, as sure as you live, and I want to prove that by one more scripture. You know the only time that the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ever rejoiced in spirit while here on this earth, He lifted His eyes up to heaven, and rejoiced in spirit saying, "I thank thee Oh, Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, for thou has hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes." Who was it that He hid them from and who was it that He revealed them to? "I thank thee Oh, Father, Lord of Heaven and earth." I want to tell you that He is the Lord of His people, and every one that His love is made manifest to has been brought into the right knowledge of the truth. Thomas didn't believe until he saw Him. And when Thomas said, "My Lord and my God", then Jesus said, "Blessed art thou Thomas, because thou believed." But He said something else. "Blessed is the people that have not seen but yet believe." And David said, "The Lord is my Shepherd," and I want to tell you one thing, that He is not only David's Shepherd, but He is the Shepherd of all His sheep, and what does the shepherd do? He cares for his sheep. And I want to tell you something else, brethren, that this Shepherd layed down His life for His sheep, as a natural shepherd would over natural sheep.

You remember David went up to the battle where the Philistines sent that great giant out and asked Israel to send a man out to fight with him. Israel didn't have a man to come up against this great Goliath. David asked the question, "What is the reward for the man that would go up against this great Goliath and defeat him?" They told him that the king would give him so much of the kingdom, and his daughter for a wife. David said, "I will go up against him." But his brothers rebuked him and told him, "Thou art but a lad, and this is a man of war from his youth up." David said, "I was watching after my father's sheep," (I want you all to pay close attention to our text, now, if it be God's will.) "and a bear came and caught a ram and I slew the bear and delivered the lamb into my hand." And I believe that a lion came, and he caught the lion by the beard, and God delivered the lion into his hand, and protected his sheep. And He said, "God will deliver this Goliath into my hands." "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want."

I'm going to tell you one thing, brethren, every child of God, that there is nothing that can arise in this world that will harm him, or ever separate the love of God from the child of grace. The Lord is his Shepherd. Now I want to prove that. In the 8th chapter of Romans, and about the last three verses Paul said,"I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Who is the "us"? It is the one that the Lord is their Shepherd, as sure as you live. And who is it that has the Lord for their Shepherd? It is them that He foreknew. It is them that He predestinated. It is them that He called. It is them that He justified, and it is them that He glorified. Those that said,"The Lord is my shepherd, and I shall not want."

I want to tell you little children, I've been working the last few weeks with a man of another order, and he is a good

friend of mine. We quit working together last Monday, and he overtook me when I tied my team down, and he said,"Loyd, I've had lots of pleasure, and I've enjoyed working with you." I want to tell you one thing, brethren we didn't see alike and I had him ask me some questions. Everytime anything would go wrong, or anything was said about someone else he would say, "Well that man is going to have to stand and give account of that in the day of judgement." "He's going to have to give account for it, but I won't. All I will have to give account of is just what I have done." I said, "If that be the case, I wnat to tell you this, if every man is going to have to stand before the judgment seat then every man is going to spend eternity in hell and the Saviour came and suffered in vain. What was the use in Him coming?" He just looked at me. I'm not making fun of the poor man. He is a hard working man, and he is honest in his religion. But honesty, brethren, will not give you grace. That is a pretty hard saying, but honesty won't give you grace because you can do nothing good enough to obligate God to give you grace. I know that is a hard doctrine, but it's the truth, as sure as you live. But I said it, and he looked at me just as hard. I said that my book said it pleased God to bruise Him. Who? The Shepherd of the sheep, that's who it pleased God to bruise. The Shepherd of the sheep. It pleased God to bruise Him, and by his stripes we are healed. Healed from what? Every bit of the sins that you have committed. And what is the wounds that caused those sores in your very being? It is sin, as sure as you live. And by His stripes (not by your obedience), but by His stripes you are healed. And the iniquity of us all was layed upon Him and He bore our sins in the days of old.

Don't tell me that in the final resurrection that I'm going to have to stand up if I am a child of God, and give account for all the things I have done. If I do, bless your soul, hell will be my doom. Now, I don't want you to run away and say, "Well, what are you going to do with the scripture where Paul said, 'Know you not that you shall give account for every idle work that is done in the body in the day of judgment." That's the truth, and I'm not going to run away from that, at all. After you have received a hope (if indeed you do have a hope) --most of you might say, "Brother Loyd, I don't know if I've got a hope, I just have to hope for a hope"-- well, since you've got that thing so weak that you just have "to hope for a hope", then every time you do or say something amiss, or every time you do something that is wrong, after a while when the Lord shows you what you have done, don't you give account? Don't you say, "Lord, forgive me." "Lord be merciful unto me, guide and keep me, Lord, or I will do worse than that." That is the day of judgment. Every child of God that has been born of grace has their sins go to judgment before them. Paul cried out after that he was born of the Spirit, "when I would do good, evil is present. And the things that I would do; I do not. And that I would not, that I do. It is no more I that doeth, but He that dwelleth in me." And what made him say, "Oh, wretched man that I am"? He said, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death." Didn't his judgment come before him? Yes, as sure as you live. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation; that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief." (Continued next month)

Dittmer, MO.

Dear Elder Williams,

I notice my *Signs* will be running out in May, so I am sending a check for two more years. I enjoy reading the *Signs*. I feel that the hands that write the articles for the Signs are guided by the Spirit of the Lord, and I hope He will continue to bless them to continue to

carry on.

Would appreciate your prayers for this old worthless sinner when you come before the Throne of Grace.

Sincerely,
Hugh C. Harwell

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association will convene, God willing, with Union Church, located in Union Parish, near Linville, La., commencing on Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1982. (Sept. 24, 25, 26.)

All who love the gospel truth are invited to meet with us.

Brother Doyle Murphy, Clerk

ORIGINAL SOUTH ARKANSAS ASSOCIATION MEETING

The next session of the Original South Arkansas Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Pilgrim Rest Church on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1982 (Sept. 17, 18, 19). Pilgrim Rest Church is located off Highway 167 five miles north of Fordyce, Arkansas. Take Highway 273 about 1/2 mile to the church.

We dropped the business part of the Association and hold a three days meeting at this same time each year.

Elder J. C. Townley
Route 2, Box 245
Fordyce, Arkansas 71742

To all the Churches that withdrew from the KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION, the Church at North Creek invites all to meet at North Creek on 1st Sunday in October for services.

If enough desire so, we hope to make this an annual event and rotate to various churches.

We plan to spread lunch.

DIRECTIONS TO CHURCH: Take highway #264 from Washington, North Carolina until you come to #92 about 10 miles east of Washington. Take #92 through Bath on to the church.

We invite Bretheren and friends, especially ministers to visit with us at this time.

Reeves O. Smith, Church Clerk
Route 1, Box 232
Pinetown, North Carolina 27865

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES TO MAY 1982

Jewel Pierce, TN.	$2.00
Mrs. Elva Spikes, OR.	3.00
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DeWitt Ray, Sr., MS.	7.00

Mt. Meigs, AL.

Dear Elder Williams,

Enclosed is a check for the renewal of my subscription of the *Signs of the Times* for two years. I look forward to each copy and the interesting writings of the past and of the present. I would say the old writings, and the new, but for the best I can see it all seems to be the same. This I am thankful for.

When our dear Saviour said "It is finished," I believe what He said. We do appreciate all the work that goes into this for all of us who have a little hope to read and enjoy. Do what you think best with the money that is left out of this check.

I am a member and try to attend regularly at Pisgah Primitive Baptist Church, Route 2, Grady, AL., Conecuh River Primitive Baptist Association, and my Pastor is Elder J.P. Morgan. Thanks again for the *Signs of the Times.*

Sincerely,
Mrs. Roma H. Smith

El Dorado, Ark.

Dear Elder Williams,

It is time for me to re-new my subscription to the *Signs*. I look forward each month to the good articles by both our contemporary writers and the writers of earlier times. They all contend for the truth in Christ Jesus once delivered to the saints.

May you and your staff continue to keep the *Signs* coming is my prayer.

Enclosed is a check to re-new two subscriptions (names enclosed) for one year and the additional amount is to be used as needed.

Yours in hope,
Clemmie Bishop

Dear Brother Poole,

I didn't get to attend our Union Meeting (Five Mile Creek) as I had just gotten out of the hospital with a heart attack, but I am feeling better now.

Everyone has told me that we really had a good meeting. The elders who were there were Haygood, Morris, McLaughlin, and Shipman, all from Texas, Leonard Key and Hale Terry from North Carolina and Virginia, (all of whom you know), Elder J. Y. McCormick from Mt. Enon Association of Florida, and Elders Brock, Posey, Griffin, H.C. Moon, and his son, Elder Bernard Moon, from this area. I sure missed getting to go, but look forward to our Association this Fall, and hoping the Lord will send you our way again. I surely enjoyed having you with us last year.

I received my copy of Elder Beebe's Editorials, Volume 3, and I am really enjoying reading them.

My only hope in this world or that one to come lies in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Come to see us any time you can.

With Love,
Rufus L. Jacks

S. Charleston, W. Va.

Dear Editors,

I am enclosing a check for another year of renewal for the *Signs*. Use the balance as needed.

I read in the March issue where you have had to increase the subscription rates. To me the price, whatever it is, can never exceed the worth of this book.

The enjoyment and comfort, I receive from the sweet truth that is written in it is beyond expression. I eagerly await it's arrival each month.

May God bless and enrich the Editors and Brethren to write and send this true doctrine to His people.

A Sister in Hope,
Mrs. Lester Haning

Madison, W. VA.

Dear Editors,

I see my subscription has expired. I am sending a check for two more years, and please use the balance as you see fit. I don't want to miss a single copy, for I enjoy reading them so much. They have been in my family for many years.

Thank you,
Erma Caldwell

FOREIGN MISSIONS

A tract bearing above title, and dated "Chatteris Particular Baptist Committee, October 6, 1840," has been forwarded to us, by a correspondent, for an opinion of it in our pages. It is not indeed our usual practice to travel out of our road to pronounce a judgment on works not sent to us expressly for review, but we feel ourselves justified in this particular instance in departing from our accustomed rule. Our wide circulation amongst the living family, and, we trust we may add, our influence amongst them, have put us into a position which we did not occupy at the outset. If the Lord has set us upon a watch tower, if He has given us any

measure of spiritual discernment, or endowed us with any portion of divine faithfulness, we are called upon by this very position that we are placed in, trying and difficult as it is, to stand forth to oppose error, as well as to defend truth. The children of God are a scattered family, generally very poor and unlearned, and always much despised and hated, but never more so than when mixed up with churches that have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof. Many inwardly possessed of the fear of God are weak in judgment and deficient in spiritual discernment, easily browbeaten and trodden under foot by presumptuous boasters; and being lean, and broken, and sick, and diseased, are thrust at with side and shoulder, and pushed with the horns of the fat and strong cattle, whom the Lord has promised to feed with judgment. (Ezek. 34:16-22) If to such staggering in the wilderness we can be "instead of eyes," (Num. 10:31) and in any measure be instrumental in delivering them from legal taskmasters, we shall cheerfully bear the scourge of the tongue that the lords over God's heritage will surely smite us with. For the sake then of the living children, we drop the following remarks respecting the tract entitled "Foreign Missions", which, we understand, has been very widely diffused through the Particular Baptist churches in the counties of Huntingdon, Cambridge, and Bedford, etc.

But the very nature of an association such as this tract has sprung from, first demands our attention.

We would ask, then, what scriptural precept or precedent there is for a number of ministers to unite in forming an association of this nature? The Lord, indeed, sent out the seventy, two and two; (Luke 10:1) Paul and Barnabas are separated by the Holy Ghost to labour together in the work to which He had called them; (Acts 13:2) and the Apostle speaks of his "fellow-labourers" and "fellow-helpers." (I Thess. 3:2; Phil. 4:3; 2 Cor. 8:23). But these co-labourers widely differed from a body of associated ministers furnished with a committee, a president, a chairman, etc. Such associations, therefore, having no precept nor precedent for their formation in the word of God, we are bound to reject them as unscriptural.

But there are positive evils in these association bodies which arise from their very nature. Union is strength. The sticks that, singly, are easily broken, united into a bundle, receive and confer strength from the union. This is the secret of all confederacies, political or religious. But what strength is thus gained? Spiritual strength that is made perfect in weakness? Ah no. The very strength gained from union precludes this; for if spiritual strength be made perfect in weakness, and can only be made known in weakness, then all strength gained by union is a departure from that weakness in which alone divine strength is made perfect. All such strength is, therefore, carnal strength and, as such, involves a departure from Gospel principles.

But this strength thus gained must be employed against somewhat; for it cannot lie idle. This Joint-stock Company must work their capital. The power thus gained by the ministers is employed and worked against the people, and chiefly against God's people. Such has been, from earliest times, the effect of power grasped by ministers. It was the first step in the Primitive Church to Popery; it is the grand means for holding together the body of the Wesleyans; and it is now the chief instrument in the counties of Suffolk, Essex, Cambridge, Huntingdon, etc., to stifle experimental truth, and bind heavy chains upon the gospel. Its effect is this. A creed is drawn up, or tacitly asserted to by all the ministers of the association; they, naturally, preach for one another; and their pulpits are open only to the associated ministers, or

to those who come with their countenance, or with their shibboleth. A strong party is formed in the churches by the admission of members saturated with similar views. The living family form a small, despised, brow-beaten minority. The leading members of the churches work with the ministers, and all opposition is silenced and put down. Thus, under the noxious shade of these tall interlaced trees, all truth dwindles and dies. The living family are starved, honest men gagged, the faithful witnesses for truth excluded, and a dense crops of weeds grows up under the protecting shadow of the association. The ministers, having no divine acquaintance with the Gospel, gradually depart from the letter of truth, some minister of more talent or more craft, more plausibility or more tact than the rest, leading them forward, like the belwether, into error, until, emboldened by numbers, and mutually encouraged by companionship in belief, the association lands in barefaced Arminianism, like the Midland Association, or into Socinianism, like the old Presbyterians, the constitution of whose church, though in somewhat a different manner, was an associated one.

We would say, then, to all the people of God who have ears to hear, resist where you can, and where you cannot, flee out of Associations. Whatever be their professed object, and this, as in the case of "Foreign Missions" may be put forward with no such apparent and possibly not real design, but, whatever be their proposed object, their termination will be to enslave and fetter you. Like the woodman in the fable, who asked permission of the trees to take a handle to his axe, with which, when granted, he cut the whole forest down; so will these associated ministers, who now ask you to unite in forming a society, cut down your liberties with the handle that you are asked to give them. It is but throwing the net further to catch a few more fish; it is but getting a few more sticks to make the united bundle stronger.

But is not the object of this meditated society so pure and excellent, as to warrant the employment of all the machinery it can set in motion? And if this object is not attainable by any other means, why should those who have it at heart hesitate to employ the instrumentality of an organized society? But its object will be best explained in the words of the tract.

"The design of this address will be at once understood when it is stated, that it may be viewed as another and final effort to effect the formation of a Foreign Missionary Society, for the purpose of diffusing the light of salvation among the heathen."

The main object of the address is to prove, that to the church is committed *the duty* of promulgating the Gospel. The following extract contains the pith of the address:

"We therefore confidently submit our opinion, that the duty arising from the trust reposed in the church is twofold, namely, to defend the purity and to dispense the doctrine of salvation to the whole world. It is the important business of the church to *defend* the gospel, and not only to *defend* but to *diffuse* it; and not only to diffuse it, but to diffuse it in a *pure* state.

"And for these objects she is to employ her resources; for these ends she is to originate and set in motion such measures as in the nature of things, and in subordination to the will of God, the word of Christ, and the witness of the Holy Spirit, shall tend to the furtherance and accomplishment of the Saviour's commission. She is thus exalted in the midst of the earth; established on the top of the mountains. Her elevation is divine. She is the consecrated medium of divine agency; and bears the impressions of a divine stamp. She is a divine result; and is unto God 'for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory in

the earth.'

"Her very duties are her honour, the immediate end of her being and life. Nor can she neglect then without deep dishonour to herself, and insult to her Lord. That very moment she fails in the execution of her trust, that very moment she commences a fatal descent. Her brilliancy declines; the glory of the Lord departs; and Ichabod may be inscribed upon the posts of her doors.

"Serious and humbling as these facts are, we cannot but inquire, though it be with fear and trembling,--Have the societies, composing that part of the Christian church to which we belong, *done their duty?* Have they fulfilled their obligations? Have they--or to speak more directly home--have *we* faithfully and righteously discharged our *trust*? Have we used all our talents for the honour of him who gave them? Is it *evident* that we have acted in accordance with the benevolent spirit of christianity, the genius of the dispensation under which we live, and the design of that trust which the commission to preach the gospel has lodged in the bosom of the church?

"We venture to inquire yet further--if it be not too apparent that notwithstanding the keenness with which we have defended the doctrines of sovereign grace, those very doctrines have been either implicitly or avowedly repudiated by many of our churches? We have looked upon ourselves as being set for the *defense* of the gospel; and so we are; but this is only a *profile* view of the case, and leaves out just one half of the truth, and by consequence, just one half of our duty. For we are not only to *guard* the gospel, but to *give* it; not only to *define* it, but to *diffuse* it; not only to *protect* it, but to *propagate* it. We must *sow*, as well as *sift*, and *distribute*, as well as *divide*. It is not enough that we act as *conservators*, we must appear in the character of *benefactors* also. The lands upon which are seen the implements of moral culture are not sufficient; we must fence off more of the barren heath--enclose more of the old common. The gospel is *aggressive* as well as progressive; and it will not suffice that we *retain* our conquests. The cominions of Christ are to be *enlarged*, and we must make war with all the world.

"Let us then understand our true character, and know our true position. Are we *rivers* as well as *reservoirs*? Benefactors, as well as beneficiaries? Do we *fertilize* as well as fence? and *give* as well as guard? If not, we are in a wrong position; we are occupying untenable ground."

We should almost think, from the tenor of the language here employed, that the Church has been promoted into the place of the Holy Spirit. "Separate me", said that heavenly Teacher, "Barnabus and Saul for the work whereunto I *have called them*." "So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia." (Acts 13:2-4)

This is different language from that of the tract. "Let us then understand our true character, and know our true position. Are we *rivers* as well as *reservoirs*, benefactors as well as beneficiaries? Do we *fertilize* as well as fence, and *give* as well as *guard*"!

In our humble opinion, Messrs, Associated Ministers, you are neither one or the other; neither *"rivers nor reservoirs."* Give you cannot, and guard you do not. You neither sow nor sift, for you have neither seedbasket nor sieve. You neither distribute nor divide; for though you may divide and sub-divide your sermons, you cannot rightly divide the word of truth. You neither fertilize nor fence; for did you possess the former, it would be beyond your power to communicate it to others; and as to the latter, you never yet set up a hedge which a hypocrite could not leap over.

Space will not now permit us to touch upon the subject of missions to the heathen. Our objections are not to the gospel being preached among them, but to the instruments employed--the men

who send them, and the men who are sent. Are the senders men who know and love the truth? Is their ministry received by, or acceptable to, the living family of God? Does the Holy Ghost anoint them or their message with dew, savour, or power? Do they bear scriptural marks of being not only commissioned to preach the gospel themselves, but of being authorized by the Holy Ghost to send out others to preach the gospel also? Let their opposition and enmity to men of truth furnish the answer. Let their expressed or generally understood determination to keep out of their pulpits such men as Gadsby, Warburton, etc., testify what is their real spirit, and what their professed love to the gospel.

And will not the men sent be similar to the senders? Will those who take their stand upon doctrines only, who make oneness in sentiment the basis of union, send men who will contend for an experimental religion? The choice of missionaries, the judgment of their qualifications, and the whole management of affairs will centre in the Committee of the Association. Will the sons do better than their fathers? Will the grafts bear better fruit than the tree from which they are cut?

We know, then, who the missionaries will be even before the Society is formed. We can predict from the features of the parents what will be the countenance of the children, before the progeny comes into existence. The die is too deeply and legibly cut for us to doubt what will be the impress upon the coin. The opinions of the constituents are too well known for us to be ignorant of their representatives. "Without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better"; (Heb. 7:7) and the sender will not pronounce his blessing on the sent, if better than himself.

We therefore strenuously advise the living family of God to stand aloof from the Association. "Whatever is not of faith is sin"; and we feel confident that no well-taught children of God can join themselves to such things in faith.

Were all other evidence wanting that this movement was not of God, the very language employed in this carefully and elaborately written tract would sufficiently prove it.

We think we never read a tract where death was more visibly stamped in every sentence. It is not badly written, as far as natural ability is concerned, but every line smells of the tomb. We cannot trace one footstep of the blessed Spirit; and indeed, the whole appeal is addressed to human exertion and founded on duty. Did the grave-clothes of Lazarus smell of the sepulchre more than the following expressions? "These brilliant prophecies"; "the Gospel, its magna carta"; "the imperial mandate"; "the order issued by Christ constitutes an important document"; "the commission sheds a smiling aspect over the habitable parts of the earth"; "the order we are now examining presents the following interesting form"; "in the following splendid passage"; "the Church is a divine result"; "the benevolent spirit of Christianity"; "the genius of the dispensation under which we live"; "four counties only are visited by the dew and sunlight of Missionary exertion"; "churches of elevated views". The whole tract is a most laboured attempt to reason out the duty of the Church to propogate the Gospel, and, viewed as a piece of argumentative writing, though sadly overlaid with the tawdy ornaments of a meretricious rhetoric, it is not deficient in strength. But savour, power, unction, and feeling, are no more to be found in it than dew upon Mount Gilboa, or mercy from the law of Moses.

We will, therefore, dismiss it with the following extract, calling attention to the absurdity, both naturally and spiritually, of the last sentence, an impossibility in nature and an

impossibility in grace.

"What therefore we propose, as a *basis* of union, are the doctrines of sovereign grace, as summarily comprehended in what are called the five points; namely, eternal and unconditional election - - particular redemption of the substitutionary work and sufferings of Christ the total depravity of human nature--effectual vocation--and the final perseverance of the saints. These doctrines we propose exhibiting through the medium of specific invitations to human sinners, the ordinances of the Lord's house, and the practical duties of Christian life.

"And we submit that a Society thus constituted, differs widely and essentially--theologically considered--from all other existing Societies which have for their object the diffusion of gospel light in the dark counties of heathen gentileism. It contains all the essential elements of gospel truth--it elevates a theological standard around which all our Churches may consistently rally--unfurls a banner under which they may cheerfully unite, and proposes an object in which they may cordially agree.

"A theological system like this will be a centralizing point; because all our Churches will see in its theory the constituents of their own; and all may entertain reserved opinions upon miscellaneous subjects. It will resemble a ledger, containing certain entries, but allowing various private memoranda; or a *human skeleton, containing all the solids, the interstices of which--when nothing better can be obtained--may be filled up by the floating atoms of a delirious speculation or a prosing curiosity.*"

Could it be possible for a human skeleton, containing all the solids, to have the interstices filled up by floating atoms of what should not be there, it would be a mass of disease and death, and have no more life in it naturally, than the Association has spiritually. The skeleton of dry doctrines may have "its interstices filled with the floating atoms of a delirious speculation or a prosing curiosity", but such a monster is unknown in the kingdom of nature and in the kingdom of grace.

The Gospel Standard, 1841

Route 4 Box 21A
Winnsboro, TX 75494
May 11, 1982

Dear Elder Poole,

Thank you for the 3rd volume of EDITORIALS OF GILBERT BEEBE. I have found its contents to be very enjoyable reading. Surely Elder Beebe was one of God's servants who was raised up as a giant to stand up for the blessed truth against those who were departing from the truth, faith, and order of the true church as organized on the day of Pentecost. THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES of which he was founder and editor for some forty-four years has continued to publish the same precious truth as it is in Christ Jesus, to the praise and glory of God and spiritual food for His hungry people.

Elder Poole, I wish to commend you and all who were involved in the publishing of these wonderful editorials. May the Holy Spirit bless your efforts and the contents of this book to the glory and honor of God and to the edification of all the Lord's people who read them.

I highly recommend this book to all lovers of the truth.

In bonds of love,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Willis, VA

Dear Brethren,

Please use the enclosed check to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times* for two years. Use the remainder where needed.

I look forward to getting my *Signs* each month. Since I am afflicted with multiple sclerosis and my activities are limited, I do a lot of reading. I am still able to get around with the help of canes and attend the meetings at my home Church. I am so thankful that God blessed me to come into the Church before I became afflicted. The brethren are so good to me and it makes my burden so much easier to bear.

Remember me when at the Throne of Grace.

With love for Christ's sake,
Margaret H. Quesenberry

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Zion Church, Pickens County, Alabama, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in October, 1982. (October 15, 16, 17).

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and worship with us.

Elder A. H. Brock, Moderator
302 Mardis Lane
Montevallo, AL. 35115
Phone (205) 664-1074

SMITH RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Smith River Association will be held at Knob Church, located in Franklin County, Virginia, on Road No. 798. Dates will be Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, (Sept. 3, 4, 5) being the first weekend in September, 1982.

We invite all brethren and friends that are in peace and good standing at home to come and worship with us.

Elder Roy Agee
Route 1
Copper Hill, VA 24079

SULPHUR FORK ASSOCIATION

The one hundred thirty-seventh annual session of the Sulphur Fork Primitive Baptist Association will convene, God willing, with Prospect Church, on Friday, Saturday, before and including the first Sunday in October, 1982. (October 1, 2, 3). Prospect Church is located on Highway 67 east of Simms, Texas.

We invite all our Brothers, Sisters, and friends to come and worship with us at this time.

Elder Loyd Wall, Moderator
Route 1
Bivins, Texas
Phone (214) 796-3011

FIVE MILE CREEK ASSOCIATION

The Five Mile Creek Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Dorsey Creek Church, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in September (Sept. 17,18, and 19).

Dorsey Creek Church is located at Breman in Cullman County, Alabama, on Alabama Highway #69, about halfway between Jasper and Cullman.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and worship with us.

Brother Rufus Jacks, Clerk

Route 4 Box 21A
Winnsboro, TX 75494
May 11, 1982

EDITORIAL

SERMON BY ELDER D. V. SPANGLER

"Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the Lord thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this land: but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord doth drive them out from before thee. Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their lands: but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Understand therefore, that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness;

for thou art a stiffnecked people. Remember, and forget not, how thou provokedst the Lord thy God to wrath in the wilderness: from the day that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt, until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against the Lord." Deuteronomy 9:4-7.

You will notice in Deut. the 8th chapter where it was the language to Moses for a nation that God had given him to lead out of the land of bondage. They had spent 40 years now in the wilderness. Moses reminded the people chiefly of two things in the 8th and 9th chapters of Deuteronomy. In the 8th chapter Moses said, "Thou shalt remember all the way the Lord thy God has brought thee to humble thee and to prove thee." In other words, Moses was saying to the Israelites, "Look back over your journey, and remember each day of it, how the Lord has brought you." Joshua used somewhat the same expression in his last appearance before the house of Israel when he reminded the nation that God had given them vineyards they didn't plant, lands they didn't labor for. God had driven their enemies out from before them. And then he appeals to them from this standpoint, "If it seems evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose ye this day whom you will serve." In other words, in rehearsing their journey in their own minds, if serving God is an evil thing, or a beggarly thing, they just as well serve one god of the world as another.

"Remember all the way the Lord thy God has brought thee." How many of us tonight can remember this? How many of us can go back through the years and witness with the things God taught His people? If we do not find any witness in our heart for the things of God and the pathway of those who have gone before, we have little evidence we are in the pathway. It is one thing to believe the scripture literally, and it is another thing to have that scripture applied to your heart. It is one thing to assent to something and it is another to have it engraven on your own experience. One of the wonders of grace is that God has led his people throughout all ages so that they have fellowship with believers of all ages. It is called in the New Testament, "Being knitted together". God knits His people together, and there is a relationship in the heart one to the other.

Moses tells the people why God led them as He did. Many are the things that befell the Israelites on their journey for 40 years that they would have bypassed if they could. They would have bypassed all the hardships. They would have bypassed the temptations, wouldn't they? Left to themselves, left to nature, all the people of God would bypass the trials, the conflicts, the cares, the anxieties, the tremblings, and groanings, whereby they have fellowship with God. But God has a way, only of Himself, and to His own glory whereby He had led His own people throughout all the ages. They must not, they will not, and they cannot trust in anything within themselves. One never more truly worships until every prop of their own has been removed. Yet, it isn't pleasant to the flesh.

God, through Moses, said to these people that the reason that God has brought them this way is to humble them. Count it a great blessing of God, my brethren, that God has brought anything into your life to humble you. The unbeliever of the world knows nothing about it. There are two things that will humble a believer, and these two things must be in their eyes. One of them is to discover how sinful they are. The other is to leave them to themselves to find how weak they are. Do you know anything about what I am talking about? So however God left this nation, they were to remember it. "Thou shalt remember." Certain things will make you remember. That is the reason you've come this way; to humble you, and to prove you; to prove to yourself that if you

are kept, you are kept by the power of God. Can you witness with that? If you can, you have something to be thankful for. The worldly carnal mind knows nothing about this. The carnal mind of man knows nothing about what it is to be humble before God. God proves to them that He is a covenant keeping God and proves that His promises are without number. "To humble you and to prove you." Now he shows the other side of it in the 9th chapter. "Speak not thou in thy heart after that the Lord thy God hath cast them out from before thee." (That's the enemy.) "Saying, for my righteousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this land." But what has turned the picture around? First, he said to them that every step of the way they had been brought, God had brought them that way to humble and prove them. And whatever promise He has made, He will keep. Also, in this chapter is the lesson that man shall not live by bread alone. They were to learn that the soul had to be fed as well as the body. This is in the same chapter. And that is the scripture that the Devil quoted to Christ on the mountain when he said, "Command the stones to be made bread", because you've been hungry 40 days. Jesus said, "It is also written that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." So in God's dealings with those who know the truth, there must be the soul feeding as well as the body feeding. We mustn't live by bread alone. That is why living, for the child of grace, by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God will be to their rebuke or it will be to their comfort and their consolation.

He then lays down another line of thought to them. He tells them that God had led them 40 years by the cloud by day, and when they stopped at night, a pillar of fire was behind them. Isn't that a good way to be led? And they had to wait until the cloud moved in front of them before they could move. This is one of the things that God has given for direction by the way; and a way for us to be directed. The cloud speaks of the Spirit. That is what it represents. Take note of how these people traveled. If we know the truth we must have fellowship for them, somewhere. As in the life of the Israelite, we praise God for the christian's pathway, too. Now he tells them that God is going to bring them into the land that He promised to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob. But He isn't going to bring them there for any righteousness in them. He makes that just as clear. Isn't that a wonderful thing? The child of God rejoices in that as much as he does in tracing out the way he has been brought into the truth, he learned the truth in his own heart, that "not for our righteousness, nor for the uprightness of thine heart, doest thou goest to possess your land." But for the wickedness of those nations that were in their promised land, He (God) would rile them up. And don't take one thought in your mind that you are better protected than they are. The Bible plainly teaches that the chosen people of God, His own elect, by nature are children of wrath even as others. That is what Paul said in the second chapter of Ephesians, "You were by nature the children of wrath even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, wherewith his great love he loved us, even when we were dead in sin and hath quickened us together with Christ and raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ." These people had God preserved because it was His sovereign will to do it. These people who were the church of the living God, the election of grace taught in the Bible, were not better than other people, only in the sense that they were the chosen vessels of God's mercy. And He lays it down clearly. Don't think that because of any righteousness of your own you will inherit the land. God has a blessed way of removing props to bring us to

know where our strength is. Thank God if you have learned that, my brethren. Many of you have.

When Paul was caught up into the third heaven, into paradise, the very words he heard weren't lawful for him to utter. He said, "I don't know if I was in the body or in the Spirit. God knows, I don't." It was such a wonderful experience. He didn't know whether he was in the body or out of the body, but he heard words unlawful for man to utter. When he came back to earth he didn't tell it for 14 years. (Until there was some challenge to his apostleship.) Then he said, "I knew a man of Christ Jesus above 14 years ago, caught up into the third heaven." And through the abundance of the revelation, through what wonderful things that God taught him in heaven, yet, he said, "There was given unto me a thorn in the flesh, lest I should be exhalted above measure, to buffet me." So Paul, who wrote most of the Epistles, must have experienced something like we do, didn't he? He asked the Lord to take away the thorn. But the Lord said, "My grace is sufficient for you." It is a wonderful thing, isn't it, my hearers? "My strength is made perfect in weakness." My dear brothers and sisters, do you know what that is? He said, "I will glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ might rest upon me, for when I am weak, then am I strong." The strongest Christian is the one brought to his senses to know his own weakness; not to guess about it. Peter could say, "If any man glory, let him glory in the Lord." Not he that commendeth himself is approved. You don't have any righteousness in your journey to talk to God about. God has brought these people in such a way that they must say, "Not our righteousness, or the uprightness of my work does thou go to possess their land." And...."and that he may perform the word which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Understand therefore, that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiffnecked people." Why would it be repeated? It is worth repeating, isn't it? There are some parts of the scriptures worth repeating a thousand times. This is one of them. It was not their righteousness, for they were a stiffnecked people. He is telling them in this that by nature they were just like the people in the land they went to possess, but God had made a difference. That is why Paul said in the 9th chapter of Romans, "Hath not the potter power over the clay; of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another to dishonor. What if God willing to make his power known endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. That he might make known the riches of his mercy on the vessels he fashioned for glory."

The ones who know this blessed truth will thank God many times that they know it. Peter, I am sure, would thank God for teaching him how weak he was. He, at one time, became a right self-confident person. And if he had done what he said he was going to do, he would have been the greatest Pharisee in all the land, but he began to tell the Lord, "When all men forsake you, I won't. I'll go with you to death. I'll be right there when it all happens." Then God leaves him to himself, and what happens? He begins to curse, and says, "I don't know Him." "I don't know who He is." "I don't know this Man." And the Lord looked at him; a token that He still loved him. God hadn't changed his attitude. And Peter could explain to the church of God, "Ye are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation; ready to be revealed at the last time."

Are we all thankful tonight, that we've all learned something from this message of blessed truth? Two sides to

the question--first, "Thou shalt remember all the ways the Lord thy God has brought thee, to humble thee and to prove thee." The first side is that a sifting must take place. The Lord told Peter, "Satan hath desired thee", but for the grace of God, he would have gotten him, too. "Satan desires thee, that he might sift you as wheat." And then he added, "But I have prayed for you." "I have prayed for you." He prayed for him before he denied Him, didn't he? Prayed for him before the denial. Does that mean anything to you? That God has made ample arrangements for all our sins, and there are so many. "I have prayed for you." I haven't prayed for you that you don't deny Me, because this is the pathway you will have to come to learn how weak you are. I have prayed for you that your faith fail not. And I tell you what is the evidence--his faith never failed him. Thus when Jesus looked at him, he went out the door, weeping. Weeping! I can see that man in my mind going out weeping. He had learned two lessons. I can't walk, and I can't keep myself, but the Lord can keep me. Also, when he tried to walk on the water (I don't know how far he went), but the Lord reached out His hand, and he was close enough to Him to reach him. I heard it said that he said, "Lord save me. I perish." But what he really said was, "Lord save me." I'm sure Peter wouldn't have any self righteousness to brag about, either, but he would have something to glory in. We glory in the righteousness of Christ. We glory in the righteousness that is able to hide our naked souls before a God. We glory in the blood-brought righteousness which is the only thing which will provide our way to heaven and immortal glory. "Don't think; don't ever get into your mind", He says to them, "that you are better, or it is because of anything in you that you are going to that land." It is the sovereign will of God that we go there, if so be we go.

God has never seen anything in a mortal being that would merit one step toward the kingdom of heaven. For if He had, or if He did, it would cease to be free grace of God that saves us. It is all of grace, or it is none of grace. People say, "Oh, yes, it is of grace, but...but...but." if it is of grace, it is of grace alone. And Paul said, "I do not frustrate the grace of God." I don't put any blocks in its way. For if righteousness came by the law, Christ is dead in vain. Remember how the Lord has been gracious to you. He sometimes causes you to pray, sometimes causes you to praise Him. Sometimes He makes you to look into His word; sometimes causes you to know your weakness and then to know His power. And also remember that He has declared that all of our righteousnesses are as filthy rags before Him. He has provided what His people need in this world, and in the world to come. And I can assure you this, when that blood-bought throng surrounds the throne of God, there will be no discord in the triumphant song, "Thou art worthy to receive glory and honor, for thou hast redeemed us unto God. That thy blood out of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people has redeemed us." Thank you.

Elder D. V. Spangler

Preached at Dan River Church, December 22, 1973

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

FROM AN OLD SIGNS

AN INQUIRY CONCERNING THE DUTY OF THE UNREGENERATE TO BELIEVE, REPENT, OR PRAY

Brother Beebe--I will now notice the charge which Brother Meredith has been informed is made against the Old School Baptists that they hold it "not to be the duty of the unregenerate to believe, repent, or pray." I will in my examination of this charge endeavor to show what there is of truth and what of

falsehood in its several items. I will commence with the subject of *belief.*

The charge that we hold it "not to be the duty of the unregenerate to believe" has originated evidently from persons who do not know or distinguish the difference there is between *believing the Son* and *believing on the Son.* See John 3:36 and I John 5:10. Such distinction not only is made in the texts above referred to, but is evidently manifested in christian experience. The one, *the believing on the Son of God,* is no other than the exercise of that faith which is the *gift of God,* and is distinguishingly denominated the *faith of God's elect.* It is a reliance on that obedience which Christ has rendered to law and justice in behalf of his people, as our alone and complete righteousness before God and redemption from under the law, and a trust in Christ, as our whole salvation. But it is evident that from a very early period in the travel of the church on to this day, a great proportion of the professed church of Christ have mistaken a simple *belief of the truth of the record* which God has given of his Son; or indeed a *simple belief in the truth of the scriptures,* for that faith which characterises one as a believer in Christ. That is, the revelation made of Christ in the scriptures has been considered as a proposition presented to the minds of men for their reception; and the reception of this proposition either as dogmatically laid down, or on examination, has been understood as constituting one a believer in Christ, and the rejection of it, the ground of condemnation. Hence the solicitude that has been manifested to instill into the minds of children the knowledge and belief of certain summaries of what was considered essential points to be believed in order to constitute them christians. Hence the catechumenical system in the earlier ages of the church, the Sunday School and Bible class plans of our day. Hence also creeds and catechisms as essential summaries of christian doctrine which must be driven into the minds of children by parental and priestly authority, and often beaten in by the rod of the schoolmaster, in order to make christians of them.

Owing to the mistake which has thus existed when it has been asserted that the natural man is not required of God to exercise that faith which is peculiary *the faith of God's elect,* and is not condemned for not exercising it, it has been construed into a denial of its being his duty to believe, that is, the record which God has given, or the testimony of the scriptures.

The fact is, so far as I understand what is the Old School or apostolic Baptist doctrine on this point, it is this, that the peculiar faith which constitutes one a believer in Christ, in a gospel sense, and which goes out from one's self and from all he has done or felt, to rest upon, and plead Christ's obedience to the law, as his whole righteousness, and ground of acceptance with God, etc.; is a belief which the law knows nothing about; for the *law is not of faith;* and which can in no sense be considered a natural duty, it being not the acting of any natural powers or faculties of man as created of the *earth earthy,* but is the peculiar exercise of that spiritual life which was created in, and is derived from the Son of God as the Head of his people; and which requires that a person be born of God to exercise it. Hence this faith in contradistinction from its being a legal duty, is declared to be *the gift of God.* On the other hand I understand the Old School doctrine to be that it is the duty of all rational beings to believe all God has spoken in the scriptures as they have access to them directly or indirectly, and to believe the testimony of the works of creation and providence, where the scriptures have not come. To disbelieve the record, which God hath given of his Son is to *make God a liar* (I John 5:10); and surely no person can do this and be guiltless. The obligation man is under thus to believe God arises

not from any demand which the gospel as such peculiarly makes upon him, but from the nature and fitness of things, and from what God is. It is a law of our creation.

The "duty of the unregenerate to repent" comes next under consideration.

This owing to the confusion into which it has been thrown by the introduction of the various systems of conditional-ism, and other causes is a difficult subject rightly to understand and explain in all its bearings.My own mind, I confess, has been much difficulted to draw a clear line of distinction between the different relations and senses in which the idea of repentance is presented to our view in the scriptures, and between the idea of its being a duty incumbent on men at large and that of its being a free gospel blessing bestowed by the exalted Savior on the spiritual Israel of God. But as it is highly important that we should understand the true import of the scriptures on this subject, I have at different times elicited considerable enquiry from me; and such as I have, give I unto you. I will add that ever since I knew by experience what repentance is, as given by Christ, (as I have a hope that I do know it to some extent) I have been fully convinced that the manner in which repentance is held and preached by the conditionalists of all grades is altogether foreign from the scriptural view of it. On the other hand, I have never been able to receive in all points as correct, the explanations which Dr. Gill and other sound brethren have given of it. There will be found some difference between the explanation of this subject which I have to give and that given by Brother Beebe in No. 14, more particularly in relation to John's preaching repentance; this difference, I trust, is not such as to break any bones.

I shall lay down the following positions as way marks in the investigation of this subject.

1st. If we suppose that the orginal law of man's creation, or the law as published in the Ten Commands from Sinai, commanded repentance as one of its requisitions, it will lead to the following insuperable difficulties. 1st. Repentance presupposes sin, therefore the law's commanding repentance as one of the conditions of its fulfilment would be to command the previous existence of sin.

2nd. If the law commands repentance, then repentance is essential to that righteousness which the law requires and consequently Christ in bringing in that righteousness and magnifying the law in behalf of his people, must have repented for them, as well as obeyed in their behalf in other respects. This supposition, therefore, I think cannot stand.

3rd. If we suppose that the gospel commands repentance as a condition of acceptance with God, then the gospel must in some sense be a law under which the human family exists. Consequently a failure to obey this command would involve condemnation. And if the gospel thus comes from God who changes not, with its demands upon the human family at large, then from the moment any individual existed as an accountable creature to God, he was obligated to render obedience to this *gospel-law*, and failing at any moment to do it, he incurred condemnation from it. If he lived twenty years or more, or less, in impenitency or in transgression of this command of the gospel, and then became a penitent, his after repentance could not make satisfaction for his former neglect of it. Hence it is evident that all must be viewed as transgressors of this *gospel-law*. Now Christ redeemed his people from the curse of the law; but who is revealed as a redeemer from the condemnation of the gospel? And if not redeemed from it, must we not lie under the condemnation or suffer the penalty? If then no Redeemer is provided to save from gospel condemnation, who can

be saved? If it be said that Christ redeemed from this as from the law, then as before he must have repented for his people. This is but one among several absurdities arising from a supposition of this kind.

4th. If, on the other hand, we suppose that the unregenerate are under no obligations to repent, we must consider them as justifiable in continuing on in their sins of whatever grade they may be. This, I think, none will admit; for there certainly are instances in the scriptures of unregenerated persons being exhorted or admonished to repent. The query then arises, Whence does this obligation to repent arise? This I will endeavor to answer, after a little. The difficulty on this subject has frequently been attempted to be solved by a reference to the fact of there being two kinds of repentance spoken of in the scriptures. There certainly are these different repentances brought to view, designated by different words in the original of the scriptures; but I find there is but the one word in its formations and derivations, used in all those passages of scripture which are immediately connected with our present enquiry; such as Matt. 3:2, 4:17; 11:20,21; Acts 8:22; 17:30; the same also is used in these, and the like texts, viz: Luke 24:47; Acts 5:31; also the word repentance as found in 2 Cor. 7:9, 10. (The word repented in this 10th verse is a different word in the original and of different import.) Hence I think there is but the one kind of repentance we have to do with in this case. And I know not that it is here necessary for our present enquiry to consider this repentance as classed into outward, and heart repentances, or the like. The original word used in the above texts, *metanoco,* according to its etymology, signifies "To reflect on, or to be wise after the act, or to return or come to a right understanding." This repentance therefore imports a change of mind after an act has been committed, and which therefore implies a condemning of the act and of course, sorrow for it, and a change of conduct. This sorrow may be natural or worldly sorrow, or it may be godly or spiritual sorrow, as the act is viewed in the light of reason, or in the light of the Spirit. If the former, it needs to be repented of again.--But the main point in the idea of repentance is I think, altogether missed by conditionalists, and perhaps is frequently overlooked by others, and which in fact, is the substance of the thing. It is this, that as repentance is self-comdemnation, it stands in direct opposition to all self-righteousness, self-justification, or reliance on our own acts for acceptance with God, etc. Hence the utter absurdity of making repentance a condition of salvation.

In pursuing the enquiry concerning the obligation of men to repent, I shall have again to refer to the law of *Ten Commands;* and as I had occasion in the preceding communication and have again in this, to speak of it in distinction from the original law under which man was created, I wish here to guard against being understood as meaning that they are separate laws. I understand them to be in substance the same law, but differently revealed. In the original creation of man the law requiring him to *love God with all his heart,* etc., was not delivered to him verbally in so many words, nor in a series of implied prohibitions as in the Decalogue; but was written in indelible characters upon man.I do not say nor mean in his heart; but upon his existence as a rational being, and upon all by which he was surrounded, for all declared the wisdom, power, and goodness of their Creator, and therefore reflected the obligation of man to love his Creator with all his powers and faculities. Thus it is said in Romans 1:19-20, "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them, For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being

understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse."

Had man continued in the state of uprightness in which he was created, he would not have needed the specifications contained in the Decalogue to show him what was right or wrong. Though a test of his love and subjection to God was needed, and that was given him in the prohibition of the *tree of knowledge of good and evil.* But man *having sinned and come short of the glory of God,* and sunken into a state of condemnation, God in bringing in that dispensation which was particularly designed to typify the salvation in all its parts of spiritual Israel; as well as to prepare the way for the manifestation of the Messiah, saw proper to give a new edition of the law, or to declare it in the Ten Commands from Sinai which commands are but so many specifications by which are showed man's entire departure from the standard of right. Hence says Paul, "I had not known sin but by the law; for I had not known lust except the law had said Thou shalt not covet." Rom. 7:7.

This law was given in the letter of it, in covenant form to national Israel; and was written on *tables of stone* to show that the law in itself cannot give life; that its commands in their outward address to man leave the heart as lifeless and hard as the stones on which they were written.

This law of Ten Commands, in its spirituality and as addressed to all, both Jews and Gentiles, I understand was given expressly to teach repentance. I do not say--to show that repentance was a part of the original requisition of the law, and a part of the righteousness it required; but that it is addressed to man as depraved and condemned, to call him off from self-confidence, and repentance. I feel myself fully supported in this by the declarations of scripture, that the *law was added by reason of transgression; entered that the offense might abound,* etc.; and especially by this text, "What things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law"--for what?--*"that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God."*--What is this but self-condemnation before God, that is designed to be accomplished by the declaration of the law? and what is such self-condemnation, but *repentance* toward God? It is then I think clear that it is the law of Ten Commands in its spirituality that calls for repentance. But it may be asked, Is it the laws thus calling for repentance that makes it the duty of man to repent, or thus to be humbled and abased before God? I answer no; for the law calls for it only as it shows the nature and truth of man's case, that he is a guilty condemned creature, polluted in all his ways. The fitness, propriety and obligation of man to repent arises from the nature and truth of the case. If it is a duty of man to practice turth toward God and toward man, then it is his duty thus to be humble and abased before God and men, because the truth is that he is thus debased by his transgressions of the law; and to plead or trust to his works for justification is to plead and trust a falsehood, as showed by the Decalogue; for his works condemn him. However, I would here remark that I doubt the propriety of using the term duty in a strict sense in relation to repentance, although it may be admitted in a loose sense. Of the fitness of repentance, and of the obligation man is under to exercise it, from his still existing as the creature of God and a subject of his moral government, I have no doubt; that is, so far as the light of reason and external revelation can show them the evil of sin.

Let us now look a little at christian experience on this point; for the Spirit's teaching is truth. When a person is led by the teachings of the Holy Spirit truly to know the law and by it to know his

guilt and depravity, he at once falls prostrate at the footstool of mercy, acknowledging the justice of his condemnation, and feels that from the fitness of things, he cannot be too much abased and humbled before God against whom he has sinned. It is true that in the former stages of his exercises, he may have sought to work himself up to a repentance, as a something that was to make amends for his transgressions and make his peace with God; but he now abhors this attempt to mock God and dishonor his law as much as any of his former open sins. And he would no sooner think of pleading the condemnation and contrition he now feels as a reason why he should escape punishment than the criminal before a court would think of pleading the fact of his being clearly proved guilty as a proper ground for his being cleared. This contrite penitent sees and feels that there is no way by which in justice he can be released from enduring the curse of the law until he is led by faith to behold that saticfaction which Christ has made to the law for such sinners as he. He now feels that there is a natural fitness that he and every other person should be abased and humbled before God as transgressors of his law and abusers of his goodness. But further, being brought into the light of the gospel, he sees that it was sovereign grace alone which brought him thus to repentance, and that the condemnation which man lies under in consequence of his awful departure from God is that he should be given over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient, or fit, or as the Master saith, that he should "love darkness rather than light."

In accordance with what I have above shown as taught by experience, of the fitness and propriety of men's being thus humbled before God, the Apostle speaks of the goodness of God, that is, in the riches of his goodness, forbearance, etc., toward man, leading him to repentance, or in other words, as naturally tending to produce in him humbleness and contrition of heart, if he rightly viewed himself, but that instead of its having this proper effect, he, *after his hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto himself wrath against the day of wrath,* etc. See Rom. 2:4,5.

Now I understand the Old School doctrine thus to teach the natural fitness that all men, to be consistent with truth, should be abased and penitent before God as transgressors of his law. And further, I understand it to be in accordance with Old School doctrine for a person, when he knows of another's committing any sin, whether he be regenerated or not, to exhort him to repent of that sin, as Peter exhorted Simon in Acts 8:22. But this exhortation will, of course with propriety, be nothing other than a persuading of the person to use that light which God has given him, relative to this sin, whether that be the light of reason, or of grace. Such exhortations, however, must not be considered as peculiarly a part of the ministerial office, If the above comes up to what others would import by saying that it is the *duty of the unregenerate to repent,* let them have this phrase, if they prefer it. But if they mean by this phrase to convey the idea that men can or are required of themselves to exercise that repentance which is unto life, or that it is their duty to exercise repentance as a part of legal righteousness, or to make amends for a deficiency in that righteousness, or as a condition proposed by the gospel, in either of these senses the Old School doctrine does not represent it to be the *duty of the unregenerate to repent.*

Although I have already drawn out this subject to what many will think an unprofitable and unreasonable length, yet I cannot as I have entered upon it, feel satisfied without pursuing the enquiry as to what constitutes the preaching of repentance both under the

day spring, and the sun rising of the gospel.

S. Trott

"Signs of the Times"
August 15, 1839

OBITUARIES

RUBY POFF CUSTER

Sister Ruby Custer was born February 15, 1905 to Joseph and Zora Furrow Poff. In 1952 she was married to Elijah Barnard Custer. Sister Ruby died Dec. 4, 1981.

She joined Belview Church (which is now Laurel Ridge) on December 26, 1952. She was a faithful member, and she loved the Church and her Pastor. She was always ready to help whenever the Church needed it. She gave generously to the building of the new meetinghouse at Laurel Ridge.

We have lost a lovely member and a friend, but we feel our loss is her eternal gain. We miss her, as her seat was filled in the church whenever she could.

Her funeral was preached by Elder Lane Carter at Salem Church, and she was laid to rest in the Church Cemetery, to wait the second coming of the Lord.

Be it resolved that we at Laurel Ridge bow in humble submission to the Lord's will.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this be sent to the *Signs of the Times*, and a copy be spread on the Church book at Laurel Ridge.

Done by request of Laurel Ridge Church while in conference, March 13, 1982.

(Elder) Leonard J. Brammer, Moderator
F. A. Sowder, Clerk

BILL HUDSON

"Asleep in Jesus, Blessed sleep," are the words that arrest my mind as I think of our dear departed Brother Bill Hudson. He was taken so suddenly, but we know his time had been fulfilled in this life.

He had endeared himself to the members at Malmaison in the 5 short years with us. He came out from a people among whom he had dwelled for 40 years. He never expressed any hatred for those he left, but remained their friend. As our Pastor said of him, "He had not been cast out from where he had worshipped, but found something closer to his heart's desire and soul's conviction."

Brother Bill was a quiet, soft spoken man, not engaging in gossip nor wanting to spread things that would cause discord. He and his wife, Sister Mae, visited extensively with our sister churches.

We do not mourn for our brother we loved so much as for those who have no hope, although our hearts are sad for Sister Mae and we brethren who feel our loss so greatly.

Brother Hudson was born April 9, 1911, and passed away February 27, 1982. In addition to his wife, he is survived by one son, Charles W. Hudson, Burlington, N.C.; one daughter, Lois H. Elmore, Danville; two sisters, Frances McGhee, Pelham, N.C., and Doris Abernathy, Hickory, N.C.; and two brothers, Howard and Ed Hudson, both of Danville, and three grandchildren.

The funeral was conducted at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church by Elders O. K. Tench, and Julian Williams. His body was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park. "Asleep in Jesus, Blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep."

Humble Submitted,
Peggy Wells

DORA BELL STOUGH

In wisdom and mercy our God has called home another one of His precious jewels. Dora Bell Stough was born on August 12, 1898, to Jafus C. Springer and Etta Gallant Springer near Elrod, Alabama. She died in Seattle, Washington, on February 26, 1982 at the home of her daughter and son-in-law.

She left to mourn the loss of a dear and precious mother, three sons and two daughters; Frank Stoug of Daphne, Ala., Charles E. Stough, Jr., and J. C. Stough and Mary Kyle of Decatur, Alabama, Lucile McGee, of Seattle, Washington. She also had fourteen grandchildren, nineteen great grandchildren, and three great great grandchildren. Also, there were two sisters, Sara McCool, of Gordo, Alabama, and Nan Oswalt of Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

She was a member of Zion Primitive Baptist Church for fifty-six years. She wasn't always able to attend the meetings, but I don't think there was ever a meeting day when her heart and thoughts weren't with them. She was strong in the Primitive doctrine, well read in the scriptures, and able and willing to defend what she believed. Life wasn't easy for this dear one. Her health has been bad for years, and then she had a massive stroke which left her life imprisoned in a helpless body for six months. Few times she wept in sorrow or frustration, but there were times her countenance expressed pure joy. I believe the Saviour manifest His love to her and she could rejoice even in her afflictions.

She had beautiful experiences that gave her precious hope that she was a vessel of mercy. For many years she seemed to have no interest in worldly things. Her desires were heavenly. She walked in relation with our Saviour in that "He was a man of sorrow," meek and lowly, and submissive to the will of the Father.

Her name won't go down in any halls of fame, but we who knew her best will always remember her with love. In that love we could thank God when her spirit was released from this body of death, to go home to the God she loved.

There was a short memorial service in Seattle for the sake of the grandchildren and friends with Elder Ben Preston officiating. Then her body was flown to Alabama and funeral services were held in Zion Primitive Baptist Church with Brother Albert Brock officiating. Her body was laid to rest beside her husband, Charles Ernest Stough, there to await the resurrection. Yes, dear one, you've gone home and our hearts can truly sing, "Oh grave, where is thy victory."

By Her Daughter,
Mrs. Lee McGee

ELDER F. L. CLARK

According to the will of an all wise covenant keeping Jehovah God, my earthly father finished his course in this world at 11:15 P.M. on December 23, 1981. Elder Clark was born in Franklin County on February 1, 1892, to the late Robert F. and Martha Turner Clark, making his stay in his earthly tabernacle 89 years, 10 months, and 23 days.

He left behind to mourn his death his wife, Malissa Parker Clark; one son, Paul M. Clark; three daughters, Mrs. Rachel Purgason, Mrs. Goldie Bryant, and Mrs. Mary France, and two sisters, eight grandchildren, and two great grandchildren.

Elder Clark united with Knob Primitive Baptist Church on October 11, 1919, and was baptized the next day, October 12, 1919, being blessed to be a member for over 62 years. He was ordained to the ministry on October 7, 1938.

I know of no words in the English language that I might use that would in any measure describe the attributes my daddy possessed. He brought us four children up in a God-fearing home, taught us decency, and honesty. His word was his bond, whatever he told us, we could depend on it being the truth.

One of the earliest scriptures I have knowledge of hearing my father quote, when I was a very small child, is recorded in Isaiah 46:10, "Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times, the things that are not yet done, saying My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." He believed in the predestination of all things, and in a God who had a purpose in all things and nothing happened by chance or accident, God being in complete control of all things, leaving man out. I have heard my daddy say that he didn't find any record that God needed any help from a mortal man or ever consulted him for anything. He was blessed so wonderfully to be enabled to speak sound doctrine, never swaying to the right nor the the left to compromise with the truth and upheld the old landmarks our forefathers set.

Elder Clark spend a majority of his life span suffering, as he had been afflicted since a young man returning from World War I. He grew up to know poverty, but was blessed by the God of Heaven with a gift all the world's wealth could not produce. Despite the bitter cup that fell his lot to drink on several occasions, he feasted upon many sweet morsels, when it pleased God to open the windows of Heaven to him.

My father died a most glorious death at his home with his family at his bedside. All that loving hands could do was done, but we saw the hour come when we had to give up and "stand still". As he lay in stillness when he could speak no more, I believe he had "the New Jerusalem" in view, when he started across Jordan's River. As the end drew near he opened his eyes wide and moved his tongue and mouth and spoke, but we could not understand what he said, but I do believe he went out of this world preaching that glorious doctrine of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and praising His Holy Name. My mother and two of my sisters saw a bright beam of light shining over his head and face and when the last breath was drawn, the light faded out. I believe his spirit went on with the light when he received that welcome call, "Arise my love, my fair one, and come away." My brother and I did not see the Glorious Light, as it was not meant for us to see it.

Elder Clark's funeral was conducted by Elder Donald Smith, Elder Amos Hash, and Elder William Holland, three Elders who he esteemed highly and dearly loved, as well as many more.

We have suffered a great loss, and his memory will ever live in our hearts, but oh! how we miss him. May we bow to the One who has never made a mistake and say our father's suffering and trials are over forever. I felt that when I viewed my father's body for the last time, I would never again see him, to know him in the flesh, but I believe the children of God will awake in the likeness of Christ. Psalms 17:15, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness."

Elder Clark's remains were laid to rest on his own land to await his Heavenly Father's call at that glorious resurrection. I feel that no father or husband could have been loved more that we four children and our mother loved him, but God loved him more.

We are all now approaching the chilly waters of death, living with a blessed hope that we may wake at the dawn of that new day, join with the glorified bodies of the saints of God, singing a new song with a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Written by one who loved him,
A Daughter - Rachel Clark Purgason

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 10/82 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

SERMON BY ELDER LOYD WALL
(Continued)

Now I want to call you attention to the 25th chapter of Matthew when he said, "When the son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Oh, brethren! brethren! I see something come up here that is so sweet to my poor soul. He said, "For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?" They didn't say, "We did this", or "We didn't do that," but they said, "Lord when.....". He answers them, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." And you know, He said to them on his left hand, (now here's the ones that their sins do follow after) "Depart ye cursed into everlasting punishment prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and

ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not." And they said, "Lord, when did we fail?" That is the difference in the righteous and the unrighteous. The unrighteous said, "Lord when did we see thee in this distress, and didn't minister unto you"? He said, "As often as you did it not to one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it not unto me." And the Bible says, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me." Brethren, there's a lot of difference in being made and volunteering. There are no volunteers in the kingdom of heaven. They all come stripped and they are all made willing.

Paul said,"comfort ye the brethren with the comfort wherein you have been comforted." My Papa and Brother Hardy's Papa used to spike teams, and go to different Associations, and Papa said Uncle Silas would talk all the way up there and all during the Association, but then when they would start back home on a two day journey in the wagon, he wouldn't say anything until he got home. One day Papa decided Uncle Silas was mad at him and he went over and asked him why he didn't say anything on the way home. He told him, "You talked all the way up there, but you didn't say anything coming home." I want to tell you, Uncle Silas gave Papa a good answer. He said, "Brother Tom, when I got up there and heard all that preaching and started back home, my mind began with the first sermon and what was preached, and I rehearsed everything that was said at that Association." You know what Uncle Silas was doing? He was laying down in green pastures. He was chewing his cud, as the old saying is, and I want to tell you one thing, that cud is sweet to the soul. That cud is good for the life. It doesn't give you life, but it is good for life. Those that have that life are the ones who can lay down in green pastures. They are the only ones that their Lord makes to lay down in green pastures. He said, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures," and He did something else, too. "He leadeth me beside the still waters." I want to take that up for just a few minutes, if it be God's will.

You remember God told Abraham that his seed was going into bondage and be ill treated four hundred years, and He said, "I will bring them out with an uplifted hand, and after I have brought them out, they will know that I am God." God led the children of Israel through the Red Sea by the hand of Moses and they went through dry shod, and the natural waters stood up on either side of them. That was a manifestation of the power of God, as sure as you live. But Brother, I want to tell you something else. The waters that have to stand still have more meaning to me than the Red Sea. The Red Sea stood up on each side. Brother, that was a great miracle, and nothing but the power of God could do that-for the waters to roll up on either side and to stand still while His children crossed over to the other side. If I'm not deceived, some waters that are made to stand still are more contrary than the Red Sea has ever been. And what are the waters that are under consideration now? If I'm not deceived, it is this old tabernacle of clay of mine. It is about 90 percent water. And I want to tell you one thing, Brother, God is the only one who can make these waters stand still, and make these old tabernacles of ours stand still. And Moses said to the children of Israel, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." In another place Isaiah said, "He that waiteth upon the Lord shall renew his strength." Who is it that stands still? David tells us here in our text, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. He leadeth me beside the still waters." Jesus said when He was here upon this earth, "I go before my

sheep. I verily put them forth, and they do follow me. And a stranger they will not follow, because they know not the voice of the stranger." I want to tell you something else in harmony with our text, "As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God." So I want to ask you one thing, Brethren. What is the spirit of God? It is God, Himself, because "God is a spirit, and seeketh such to worship him as do worship him in spirit and in truth."

"He restoreth my soul. He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name sake." Brethren, when your hope is clean gone and you feel like old David did, just one chapter back when he said, "My God, My God, why hath thou forsaken me." I want to tell you, dear hearers, this God is the only one who can restore your soul. This God is the only one who can revive our drooping hands. This God is the only one who can strengthen our feeble knees. He said, "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness." He is the one who does it, and if He leads you in the paths of righteousness, where are you walking? You are walking in the footprints of your Saviour, as sure as you live. And children, when you walk in the footprints of your Saviour, it is not all joy, because He said while He was here that He suffered to leave us an example that we should follow after Him.

He said, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil: my cup runneth over." Oh, brethren, I want to take up that table just for a few moments to time. I wish I had all day long, but I just have to hasten on. He said that He prepared a table before me in the presence of my enemies. He anoineth my head with oil and my cup runneth over. I used to think way back yonder when I thought I could do something for myself that the Lord prepared things for His people in the presence of their neighbors over there in Jerusalem. God's people reaped natural things that their neighbors didn't get. I want to tell you, the enemy of the little child of grace is not his neighbor over there. The worst enemy of the little child of grace is his own self. And David said that "He prepared a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." I want to tell you one thing, Solomon said, in Proverbs that "Wisdom has builded her house. She hath hewn out her seven pillars. She hath killed her beasts, she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table. She hath sent forth her maidens; she crieth upon the highest places of the city." I want to tell you that wisdom that builded her house is nothing else but the Mother Church. And what is the Mother Church? It is the Holy Spirit.

(Here the tape ended)

CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with North River Church, Carteret County, North Carolina, and will begin on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1982. (October 8, 9, 10.)

The church is located about ten miles east of Beaufort, N.C. Just stay on U.S. 70 East to Otway. The church will be off highway to the right about 1/4 mile. Watch for sign.

Jesse A. Foreman
Association Clerk

SPECIAL MEETING

The Lord willing, Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church will commemorate its 100th anniversary the First Sunday in November 1982.

Our ministers, brethren, and friends are invited to this worship service.

Peggy Wells, Clerk

PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The 1982 session of the Pleasant Valley Association will meet, the Lord willing, with Mt. Olive Church, Stockdale, Texas, the First Sunday in November, 1982, and Friday

and Saturday before. (November 5, 6, 7.)
All lovers of the truth are invited.
For directions to the meeting contact:

Elder G. D. Shipman
20567 S.H. 165
Von Ormy, Texas 78073
Phone 1 512 624-2148

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A PARABLE OF THE OYSTER

Let me be a lowly oyster--
Pliant in my Father's hand,
As it creates a jewel lovely,
Of a grain of painful sand.

He would make a lovely jewel,
By His humble creature here;
And they form a lovely necklace
Fit for any Queen to wear!

One by one the pearly layers
Pad the oyster's painful smart;
Finite man, with all his wisdom,
Cannot match the oyster's art!

So would I, when trials beset me,
Sent by my dear Father's hand,
Make bright jewels of my heartaches
To beautify this lowly land.

He gives His child something painful,
To create a jewel rare;
Not merely to cause me suffering,
Which my heart could not bear!

'Tis only His all-wise purpose
To make jewels by my hands--
Lovely pearls of rarest beauty
Wrapped around my painful sands.

One by one, I'd wrap my trials
With an iridescent glow--
Bring them to my loving Father,
From His quarry here below.

Written by Mabel Berry

SELECTED FROM "THE SECTARIAN"

Occoquan,VA., August, 1913

"Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain." Isa. 26:20,21.

No book could ever emanate from the mind of man that could in any possible degree compare with the Bible, which is pre-eminently the Book of Books. Its sacred testimony needs no addition, but it is true and applicable to every age and condition; tracing the travel of the church through all consecutive time: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." Romans 15:4.

July 21, 1861, which was the third Sunday in the month the first battle of Bull Run was fought. This was the first general engagement in the Civil War, and was upon the day of the monthly meeting of the church at Upper Broad Run, Fauquier County, Virginia. The late Elder R.C. Leachman preached on that day in the meeting house of that

church not many miles distant from the battle field.

While Elder Leachman was preaching the roar of the cannon of the opposing armies could be distinctly heard. Elder Leachman preached from the text at the head of this article; a most appropriate discourse indeed, from a most appropriate text.

For four years the churches of Virginia were, to a large extent, deprived of their monthly meetings. Elder Leachman himself being, part of this time, held as a prisoner in Washington, D.C., by the Federal forces; during which time he preached in prison, in his bold and fearless manner, much to the discomfort of his enemies.

Yet during these years of fiery trial the Baptist (Old School) of Virginia were blessed with much spiritual enjoyment. We have heard old members like the late Deacon George Selecman, and others who were detained as prisoners in Alexandria, Virginia (having permission to go at large in the city) tell of the many blessed moments spent with the membership of the church in Alexandria, and at the monthly meeting by brethren thus detained. And we question whether a brighter page adorned the record of that church than her meetings socially and otherwise in the dark days of the Civil War; as the members went about from "house to house" to talk of the wonders of grace; and to experience the precious evidences of fellowship abounding.

From a natural view-point it seems incredible, yet from Bible testimony and from Baptist history it is a fact, that the visible church is much more pure in her doctrine and order in a time of persecution than in a time of outward peace. Worldly ease and luxury begets indifference, and a desire to be conformed to worldly ways.

Elder Leachman's text and sermon at Broad Run certainly seemed prophetic. For four years the saints were hidden from the wrath of their enemies, and when the war had spent its force, the church shone forth with renewed vigor in the beauty and splendor of gospel grace. She came forth from her hiding clothed with renewed strength and zeal; and under the able ministry of Elder R. C. Leachman began a glorious travel, the blessed results of which our churches are realizing today.

Our mind turns to this incident as we pen the text at the head of this article. The Scriptures are as old as eternity, and as new as their latest development. "Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." Matthew 13:52.

God is ever the secure refuge of his people, their Defender, Protector, and Guide in all of their mortal pilgrimage. In the opening of the chapter in which our text occures the prophet speaks of the "strong city" which is the refuge of saints with Salvation for her "walls and bulwarks". Assuredly there could be no greater security surrounding the holy city; her walls and bulwarks are not for salvation, but are the *very thing* itself.

And into this "strong city" "the righteous nation which keepeth the truth" shall enter. Here shall they securely rest from the envenomed shafts of their enemies; yea, when worlds are tumbling down. For "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee."

It has been the good pleasure of Israel's God to open up the pathway of life and light through the dark scenes of sorrow and temptation. The evening comes before the morning, (Genesis 1:5) and behind the morning is the night. In the connection of our text the prophet so describes it. It was a time of great trial "like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O Lord."

Isaiah 26:17.

"Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee." In such a time of great trial assuredly did and will the Lord open a refuge for His afflicted people who cry unto Him in their distresses. "I will", He declares, "turn mind hand upon the little ones." Zechariah 13:7. They shall shelter under the canopy of His o'er-shadowing wings' in the safe enclosure of His eternal arms. "Hide thyself as it were for a little moment." How completely and securely can He hide them from the wrath of their enemies! The case of Elijah recorded in I Kings 17 and 18, is a fitting example. "And the word of the Lord came unto him saying, Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And it shall be that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there." I Kings 17:2-4. And when the brook dried up, "The word of the Lord came unto him saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath which belongeth to Zidon.....I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee." Verses 7,8,9.

The original application of the text we presume notices more especially the sheltering wings of the atonement of Christ; allusion to which is made in verse 19; "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." And did he not open a refuge for his "little ones" (turn his hand upon them) in that dread hour when the shepherd was smitten, and the sheep were scattered. Matthew 26:31. Was there not to them "a covert from the tempest", "the shadow of the great rock in a weary land." Isa. 32:2; and in this secure place of refuge they found rest; fitting testimony, a secure and sacred retreat to saints in all their mortal journey.

But an indirect application of our subject is found all through the mortal pilgrimage of saints, in times of great distress when "The Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity." As Lot was made to flee out of Sodom before the end came; as the children of Gospel grace were called out of Jerusalem, and from Judea (Matthew 24:16) before the destruction of that city, so "the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." 2 Peter 2:9. The Lord will keep His people "As the apple of his eye." Deuteronomy 32:10.

Assuredly does He punish a community for its wickedness, when it rises before Him as a stench in His nostrils. It was thus He punished Babylon and Tyre, and a host of others, and even His own chosen people who had forsaken His covenant, and trampled upon His holy commandments.

We see evidences of the application of this testimony in the special manner in which Elder Leachman evidently applied it upon the occasion referred to. It has been the good pleasure of Israel's God from time to time to open a refuge for His people from the devouring flames and floods of His wrath. It is written in Psalms 91:4,5,6,7; "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night nor for the arrow that flieth by day: nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness: nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee."

Wonderful, precious, and enduring promise is this! to them that trust in the Lord (notice the first three verses) and who are found walking in His holy ordinances. It was of these witnesses that it is written in Revelation 11:5, "And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies; and if any man

will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed." Again in Psalms 27:5, "In the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion; in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me upon a rock." And in Psalms 31:19, 20, "Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men! thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues."

We question whether in any previous age there has been a more marked display of "the pride of man" referred to by the Psalmist than at present. On every wind is borne the proud boast of human achievement; which really is but a mere vain bubble of human folly and conceit. The human family seems intoxicated with the idea of their own importance and ability when in reality "the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance." Isaiah 40:15.

It is evident from Divine testimony that we are reaching the end of all mortality; and in these last days as the wickedness of man becomes more pronounced, and abominations prevail, as the vain human mind inflated with conceit, worshipping the creature more than the Creator, carried away with gross idolatry, must from time to time receive "in themselves that recompense of their error", that punishment for their sins which was meet. Romans 1:27. Rich beyond all comparison of wealth, infinitely beyond the power of man to compute, or the human mind to conceive, would be the party, if such a thing were possible, as purchasing the present generation at what *they are really worth,* and selling them at the estimate the *they put upon themselves!*

In Revelation 16:1-4, we are told of "a noisome and grievous sore" which fell "upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image." The effect of the terrible judgments of Almighty God upon mankind so far as their taking heed to or understanding such things is well described in Revelation 9:20,21; "And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk; Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts."

What a picture all this of present day conditions. "*And all the world wondered after the beast:* and they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast; and they worshipped the beast saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" Revelation 13:3,4. Do we not often stand aghast at the servile worship of a vain, ignorant, and thoughtless world of the inventions of men, as they madly rush from one vile thing to yet another abomination, wondering indeed at the great goodness and mercy of God in sparing, and supplying the temporal needs of a people whose vain, weak, and sinful lives are spent in blaspheming the name of the Most High God; in joining the Babel shout heard upon Shinar's plains (Genesis 11:1-9) whose proud, arrogant spirit, yea, their hard and impentinent heart can be but treasuring up unto themselves "wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgement of God." Rom. 2:5.

"For the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose his blood, and shall no more cover her slain." Without further reference to the first clauses of this verse, we would notice the last clause. When the revelation of the wrath of God is of such a nature that a proper burial is prevented as the wreck of the Titanic, as in the floods of Dayton, we have a

condition described in the declaration the earth *"shall no more cover her slain."*

But the Lord will ever provide for the salvation, preservation, and protection of His people who trust in Him. No matter how fearful the storm; how terrible the tempest how devastating the plague, the flames or the floods, we have the Divine assurance, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." Isaiah 43:2. "Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." Psalms 46:2,3. Therefore, "Fret not thyself because of evil doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.....Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him." For, "The Lord knoweth the days of the upright, and their inheritance shall be forever." Psalms 37:1,2,7,18.

Elder W.M. Smoot

CORRESPONDENCE OF ELDER I.S. CONNER

(See Obituary This Issue)

May 29, 1949

Dear _____

Hope you all had a good meeting at Pine Forest last third Sunday. Sure wish I could have been there, but just can't afford the trip very often.

I have thought very often as I visit other churches how difficult it is for me to visit my home church than to go to these only about one-sixth the distance, and I miss so many meetings I am ashamed of myself and think sometimes that the Brethren and Sisters feel the same way toward me. I think it is our reasonable duty to present our body a living sacrifice on each Church day, and I feel anyone that has felt His great power, His presence, His love, and His precious remembrance of us when we know Him not. He covered our spots with His robe, and made us alive in Him, so that it is our desire above every thing on earth to praise, honor, and glorify God through His Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. If made to feel this power, love, and presence round about us and in the heart, we can't forget. We may become low and feel unworthy but the change that is made in the heart will always be there, and if the body is not in subjection at all times it will be punished for all the misdeeds and great is the sorrow and suffering. It is then that we can say, "Lord, save or I perish," and when we are taken out of the mire and given that new song, even praises to His High and Holy Name, and we can say that He is Lord of Lords and King of Kings, and my redeemed soul will be magnifying Him in whom there is no spot or any such thing.

If we could feel His power and love, and feel His presence, we could meet in songs and praise, and there would not be so many things in this world that would be of interest. We would be of one mind - on our Lord, who is greater than all. Our mind would be on His beauty, love, and power, and our unworthiness would keep us at the feet of our Brethren and peace would reign in all our meetings. And we could say with Jacob, "Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not."

I seldom find myself in the place I desire; even my thoughts are not as I would have them. My prayers and thanksgiving seem to avail nothing. I wonder if I am a child, but sometimes I can say, "I know my Redeemer liveth."

Your brother in hope,
Shelton Conner

April 4, 1951

Dear Noel and Nellie:

Hope all the folks are well with you. I had trouble with my stomach since up there, but am some better now. Have been able to work all the time, for which I am very thankful.

We went to Flatty Creek Church the fourth Saturday and Sunday. Heard real good preaching by Elder Ayers. On the first Sunday we went to Providence Church, Kitty Hawk, N.C., with preaching by Elders Barnes and J. P. Tingle; both seemed inspired.

I feel very much of the time that I am deceived and am deceiving the Brethren, and this would be an offence most horrible, and yet there is a feeling that seems to spring up within me that seems to melt all things that are there and I am found to be melting. It seems the body itself will melt, except there is something being said to praise God and relieve my heart. For me the only rest I seem to get is in the few minutes here and there at the meetings. The days are long to me, and I look forward to Sundays, from one to the next. If we are blessed to worship in peace without none to molest or hinder, it is truly a blessing, for I feel there is no greater blessing for us in this life, after the new birth, to the poor regenerated sinner.

Why do we have these evil thoughts, and why do we seek avenge? Why are we still stubborn and stiffnecked? Because being born of the Spirit did not remodel the flesh, but set up a new camp within to make war with the flesh and to show us our nature - how black. But the warfare will continue until the River of Jordan. Then the same voice that quickened this dead sinner to life will call the sleeping dust in the resurrection. The last obstacle is overcome in the power of His love, and sin is left in the earth, from which man was formed. (Being made of the earth, his body desires the pleasures of the earth.) But if we have been born of the Spirit, the longing of the Spirit in us is to worship the true and living God in spirit and truth. The strong man kept his palace in peace until the stronger bound and cast him out; then the warfare one against the other. In the denying of the desires of the flesh we deny ourselves for His sake, and walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Shelton

(Some personal expressions have been altered, and some omitted.)

Dear Noel:

I hope this meeting is one of many more where we can say, "It is good to be here," and that all can go to their places of abode in peace, and that comfort has replaced the sorrows that dwell in us much of the time.

I can say that I feel there was a lifting up of most all present, and that our Saviour is Love, and if His holy will, He could touch every heart in this world with His love, and not have less love than before He made hearts to feel His great presence, love, and power, for He is God and changes not. But if He has blessed us to see these things, it is a given eye and the beauty is unspeakable. It is unlawful for human beings to utter the things that they feel to see in Him who fills the universe, and has neither beginning or ending of days, whose love is unmerited by any on the face of the earth - even the heart of kings are in His hand as rivers of water and He turns them at will.

On Wednesday night before the third Sunday I dreamed of being asked to open service with prayer. It seemed I went forth and knelt and opened my mouth and words poured forth in such force that I could not close it. The words seemed so small as they came out but seemed to grow so that each one increased in size until they were so large that they seemed to fill the place and there was no space left that was not covered. Even I was covered too.

O! that my going forth may be

approved unto God among His saints on earth. I hope to see you soon. Tell the children hello. I must close and write to Mother.

As ever your Brother, I hope, in peace with God through the love of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Shelton Conner

(Written from Chester, Va., while layed off from the Norfolk Naval Shipyard and was working for a power company, after he had spoken in a private home and at Pine Forest on Saturday and Sunday before he had been liberated to the Elders A. B. Ayers and R. B. Denson.)

GOD'S PROMISE TO DAVID

"And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom forever." II Samuel 7:12,13.

I believe that the house that is under consideration is the church of God. This house is now under construction, and will be completed when our bodies are changed and fashioned like the glorious body of Christ. "And I say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Matt. 16:18.

Jesus did not say that He would build the church if some one would help Him. He said that He would build it Himself. All of the material that will ever go into this building was selected by God before the world began. "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself: that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:2-3. The house is the church, and the mansions are the members that make up the church.

"Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Psalms 27:1. This verse is the same as we have seen in John 14:2-3.

"Know ye that the Lord, he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture." Psalms 100:3. The above is what Christ and the apostles taught here on earth.

I want to prove by the word of God and the apostles that we, the Primitive Baptists hold to the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. I now will point out other scriptures for proof.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:8-10.

In the fourth chapter of the Romans we have proof that all of the righteousness that Abram had was the imputed righteousness of God. The entire church of God was justified by the blood of Christ. "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." Romans 5:9.

While I am on the subject of blood, I want to go to Rev. 17:5-6. "And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration." I believe that this is the spirit of antichrist. We notice that she sitteth upon many people. "And he saith unto me, the waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and

multitudes, and nations, and tongues." Rev. 17:15. The above has reference to false doctrines of men and devils, denying the purpose of the shed blood of Christ, and what it accomplished, as, if one proclaim a doctrine that the blood was offered to sinners, and it is left up to the sinner to let it have it's effect, that man is drunk; he cannot be sober. God, by one offering, hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Many of God's people are mixed up with this doctrine, but God in due time will call them out. It may be in their last moments. I know of one that hated the doctrine of salvation by grace until just a short time before she died. I was standing beside her bed, but she knew nothing of the people standing there watching for the last breath. She said, "If I could get by". She said it the second time, and then the last words were, "I *can* get by"; then she gave up the ghost. God has never forgotten His people, and He will never be late.

"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Rev. 18:4. "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12. When the dead in Christ shall rise, they will be like Jesus, with a glorified body, and all the works that they will have will be what God has wrought in them. I hope that I am one of them. As for sin, the blood of Christ settled it on the cross. I will close for this time.

Elder J. R. Hollandsworth

TO THE EDITORS OF THE GOSPEL STANDARD

Dear Brothers,--Having been a constant reader of your periodical, "The Gospel Standard", from its commencement, and, I hope, a well-wisher to its spiritual utility, I have read and admired many subjects that, according to my judgment, are calculated to diffuse light to the spiritual readers of that little work, the churches of Christ that are in the truth, faith, and order of the glorious gospel of the blessed God. In it the churches have been rebuked, reproved, and exhorted with long suffering and doctrine, from its commencement; but there is one subject which I have never yet seen touched upon, which I think is necessary to be looked at and taken into consideration by the Lord's people, whose judgments are, in a good measure, informed, and whose understandings are pretty well matured in a knowledge of both the law and gospel. These established brethren and sisters in Jesus Christ must, I think, have observed as well as myself, that there have been some men, brethren in the churches, of whom there was no doubt concerning their conversion to God, who were, and who might have been happy and useful in the church, could they have been satisfied with occupying their own place, which appears to have been a regular attendance on the means appointed by the word of God, and by the church, for the edification of the body; such as attending and exercising the talent that God had given them in carrying on prayer meetings, visiting the sick, reading the Scriptures, praying with them in their afflictions, or any other service the church needed, for which God had adapted them. Could they quietly and peaceably have rested here, they would have been a credit to themselves and a comfort to the church; but, alas! alas! either the devil or the pride of their own hearts, or both together, has prompted them so that they would be preachers, not knowing either what they said, or whereof they affirmed experimentally and scripturally; for, although God might have blessed them with faith to believe in Christ, to the manifestation of their own souls, he had never given them ability to teach others experimentally,

doctrinally, and practically, as the oracles of God teach. The apostle says, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God speak, teach, or direct". Paul directs or exhorts Timothy to study to show himself approved of God, a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, not merely dividing truth from error, but rightly dividing the word of truth itself. Will it follow, because God has blessed a vessel of mercy with a manifestation of his own personal interest in Christ, that he has also blessed him with spiritual and with mental powers, illuminated by the Spirit of God to study, and an aptness to think, so as to hold fast the form of sound words that could not be condemned by gainsayers? I think not. Some would be preachers, and apologize for themselves by saying, "I cannot study"; but I am inclined to think that those that God calls to the work of the ministry, according to the order of the gospel, "cannot help but study". By study, I do not mean that a minister whom God has called to the ministry should be shut up as in a nunnery three-fourths of his time; I mean that God so hedges him up with a knowledge of his own ignorance, of the meaning of the Holy Ghost, and the meaning of the inspired writers of the oracles of God, that he reads, studies, and cries to God for divine illumination into an understanding of the scripture from his own personal necessity. It will not satisfy his own mind to tumble out a bundle of scriptural, experimental, and doctrinal truth, that is nothing but an harangue of confusion and disorder, calculated for nothing but darkening ground that is divine, formed by words without knowledge and harmony. I candidly wish to leave others to their own chair; but I would rather lend my ears to an Arminian ranter than a Calvinistic ranter; for the one rants a bundle of error in ignorance, but the other, a bundle of truth in confusion; and I do not believe that either one or the other has a jot or tittle of the spirituality of the worship of God in it; standing up as a professed teacher of a congregation of saints and sinners; reading a portion of the word of God as a professed explainer or expounder of the portion he reads; and after he has read it, never coming near it again, unless sometimes to quote it, where it has no manner of application to what he has been advancing, and only serves to let his audience know that he has not forgotten it. If a ministry of this sort is not a ministry to mock the scriptures and insult the ears and judgment of that part of the congregation that have been taught the scriptural harmony and order of divine truth, I do not know what to call it. But, messrs. Editors, as far as my observation has led me to remark, these kind of preachers are very tickle to meddle with; as Solomon says, "He that reproveth a scorner, getteth to himself a blot"; and it has often seemed to me as if these would be preachers, in spite of God or man, scorning reproof, correction, or advice. If their own minister to whom they profess attachment, and under whose pastoral care they should be, say anything to them, they reply, "O, he thinks no person is called to preach but himself". If an old established member would reprove them, they will say, "O, you are priest-ridden; you can hear no preacher but Mr. Such an one: you despise the day of small things; you cannot hear men of small talent;" but the truth is, not that they cannot hear men of small talent, but that they cannot hear men of no talent at all for the work into which they wish to trust themselves. The Lord's people can do with men of small talent, if that small talent be applied to a purpose for which it is adapted and qualified. A jackass is a very useful animal if used to carry a small burden at a slow pace, but would be ill adapted to be yoked with other animals in a stage wagon or a mail

coach.

These would-be preachers, Messrs. Editors, have been a source of much unhappiness in the churches of Christ, both to ministers and to peaceably disposed members; for depend upon it, if they cannot obtain the affections of the people in their own favour, they will try to alienate them from the minister, without regard to anything but their own self-consequence.

I am yours,
John Higson

Slaithwaite
The Gospel Standard, 1838

EDITORIAL

"And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no." Deuteronomy 8:2.

We have been led to believe that the travels of the children of natural Israel for forty years in the wilderness is very typical of the travels of Spiritual Israel this very day and time. The apostle Paul was inspired to write when referring to the travels and experiences of the children of Israel: "These things were for our example." I Cor. 10:6. For "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." II Tim. 3:16.

Now beloved brethren, what is it that we are commanded to remember? "All the way which the Lord thy God led thee." You may ask, how can I remember all the way? No doubt some of you have been led much longer than forty years and some much less. No, you cannot remember all the way, but only as it pleases the Holy Spirit to teach and bring to your remembrance. "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance." John 14:26. Surely there are many circumstances which you can remember. Can you remember when you first began to feel the grace of fear come into your heart because of the revealing with power of your sins which were piled before your eyes so high that they towered above the highest mountain? What did your sins bring into your conscience? Did you feel your guilt to be a burden that brought on cries, sighs, groans and tears? Have you felt a sincere desire to come out of the world and everything worldly? Has not the Lord appeared for you on many occasions, led you through many dark places, rough passages, crooked paths, and has he not applied sweet promises to your conscience?

First, let us attempt to trace some of the travels and experiences of the children of Israel as recorded in the word of God. May we be given by the Holy Spirit to see and feel that God's dealings with natural Israel after the flesh is typical of His dealings with Spiritual Israel today.

The residence of the children of Israel in Egypt may be likened as an image of our state by nature. Israel was perfectly satisfied in the land of Goshen where they had many possessions and they grew and multiplied. "And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew and multiplied exceedingly." Gen. 47:27. This state of Israel is very typical of the state of the Elect children of God in their state of nature when dead in trespasses and sins. The world is a great dwelling place for the natural man; everything is found here that is exciting and enticing to the carnal mind. "Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Eph. 2:3. The world with its pleasures and delights is a dangerous foe, and holds captive the great mass of mankind. Let us look at

Pharaoh as being a type and figure of Satan in that he will keep mankind in bondage as long as he possibly can. "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace." Luke 11:21. But when the appointed time comes for the Lord to call one of his elect from the bondage of Satan, they will come. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." John 6:37. Why do the unregenerate say it is up to man to come out from a state of deadness in trespasses and sins, accept Christ, believe, and be saved? They do not know that "with man it is impossible." "It is the Spirit that quickeneth: the flesh profiteth nothing." John 6:63. "No man can come to me except the Father which sent me draw him." John 6:44. Just as God brought the children of Israel out and Moses said unto the people: "Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out from this place: there shall no leavened bread be eaten." Ex. 13:3. "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." Eph. 2:1.

In the next experience of the children of Israel let us consider Pharaoh as also being a type of the law, that law which can save no man. Pharaoh began to destroy the happiness which the children of Israel had previously enjoyed in the land of Goshen. He made them miserable by putting such heavy demands upon them that it was utterly impossible for them to deliver. They did not have the necessary materials and they said unto him, "There is no straw given unto thy servants and they say to us, make brick; And, behold, thy servants are beaten, but the fault is in thine own people." Ex. 5:16. Pharaoh's reply is, "Ye are idle, ye are idle: Go therefore now, and work: for there shall no straw be given you, yet shall ye deliver the tale of brick." Ex. 5:17,18. The demand put upon Israel was much more than they could render. Pharaoh intended nothing less than Israel's total destruction ; this was to natural Israel a sentence of death. The Israelites, when they could endure the hard bondage no longer, were by this very means rendered susceptible of deliverance and the oppression they suffered made their deliverance the more glorious to them. They were delivered by the outstretched arm of God while the Egyptians were burying their dead.

Let us look at the above dealing of God with natural Israel and see if our own experience does not harmonize with theirs. In order for us to feel this, it is essential that we first be quickened from a state of deadness in trespasses and sins. We must first be brought out of the land of Goshen. We must have been given spiritual life and light in order to feel and see our undone and lost condition. Our sins must become exceedingly sinful. The law says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." Mark 12:30. Now, what man ever kept this commandment? Surely, none, and no man ever can keep it. Has the "sentence of death" come upon all your power and efforts to keep the law of God? In your failure to do so have you felt you must inevitably perish? "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Ezek. 18:4. And "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of law to do them." Gal. 3:10. When the above killing sentence came into our heart and conscience, it slayed us as to salvation by the works of the law: it condemned us and killed us outright as to any hope that may have sprung from our own righteousness. We could say with the Apostle Paul, "For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me: but how to perform that which is good, I find not." Rom. 7:18. Salvation by the works of the law has proven to us a sure impossibility. O, God, we are guilty and

if Thou should cast us into hell we dare not say otherwise. We have violated Thy law every day and we know that if Thou should lay justice to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, we must be swept away forever. The demands of the law, being beyond our ability to fulfill them, we were as the children of Israel when Pharaoh demanded more that they could deliver. As Pharaoh intended nothing less than Israel's total destruction, thus the law also announces its threatenings, its curses and eternal perdition upon all who disobey it. "Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." Matt. 25:41. We could see no way of escape and may have said (as I did say), O Lord, let me go back into the land of Goshen. This was the feeling of the children of Israel, "O, that we had remained in Egypt." It is hard to describe what distress and anxiety the law causes a soul in which it performs its office as a schoolmaster. "O, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death." Rom. 7:24.

Is there no hope? O yes, my dear ones, the same outstretched arm of God that delivered the children of Israel from the dominion of Pharaoh, (who was a figure of the law) has or will deliver you. "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law; to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Gal. 4:4,5.

The first encampment of the children of Israel after being led out from under the harsh and tormenting demands of Pharaoh was at Rameses. May we notice that the meaning of the name of each encampment has a spiritual significance and likeness to our own experiences as well as theirs. Rameses signifies the thunder of joy. What a great joy fell upon the hearts of the children of Israel when they were delivered from Pharoah and his harsh demands. Is not this in harmony with our own experience? What great joy filled our hearts and souls when by the eyes of faith we were given to see and feel Christ as a source for our deliverance. Was there not a time in our own experience when our agonizing souls finding no escape and thinking deliverance impossible was given by the eyes of faith to look away from self and the harsh demands of the law to Jesus Christ as a source for our deliverance. The whole world took on a different glow, the clouds, the birds, the trees and everything we looked upon, we could see Christ in them. What great joy entered our souls, surely this was heaven on earth! Jesus says,"I am the way, the truth, and the life." John 14:6. We had a hope that this wonderful feeling would continue through life's journey. This joy is not in every instance equally great, even as the work of repentance is not equally painful and the one is usually regulated by the other. Everyone, however, receives some refreshing and gracious communication which remains as precious memories to him.

The next stop was at Succoth, meaning tents. "And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, besides children." Ex. 12:37. Tents signifies something not permanent, moveable. This great joy of deliverance the children of Israel felt and cherished so much was not to last. The joy we felt when first we saw the Lord must also gradually fade away until we cry out with the song writer, "Where are the blessings that once I knew when first I saw the Lord? Where is the soul refreshing view of Jesus and His word?"

From Succoth they journeyed to Etham. "And they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness." Ex. 13:20. The Lord began to lead them by a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire. "And the

Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light." Ex. 13:21. Notice the Lord is leading them toward the Red Sea, with mountains on each side and into a desert land. Had the children of Israel been led by the way of the land of the Philistines, the distance would have taken less than a two week's journey to reach Canaan. Anyone being familiar with the country there would have thought the children of Israel insane for not taking the nearest way. But is not the doctrine of the gospel of Christ, and the way he leads His people looked upon as being foolish by the wise and unregenerate of this world? It pleased their Divine leader not to take the nearest route. The Lord Jesus led the Israelites in a way and to the spot where the hand of God would be most gloriously displayed in their rescue and in the destruction of Pharaoh. Remember they are being led by the Lord. "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with my eyes." Ps. 32:8. The word of God teaches us, there are two roads that lead to an eternity. The one is with a wide gate and broad way that leads to destruction. "And many there be which go in thereat." The other a strait gate and narrow way "which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Matt. 7:13, 14. There are few travelers in the way in which the Lord leads his people, this way is altogether unknown to the unregenerate of this world. We know that the Lord leads in a right way, regardless of how contrary to the ideals of the flesh. "I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go." Isa. 48:17. It is often a rough and rugged way, with many trials and tribulations for "we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." Acts 14:22. Is not the true gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ regarded as dangerous, a stumbling block and foolishness to the people of the world?

The name Etham signifies perfect and sincere. The Lord leads his people in a perfect way and when we feel to be poor in spirit, mourn over our sins, hunger and thirst after righteousness, we feel a warfare going on within us. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Gal. 5:17. The good that we would we do not, the evil which we would not, we do. This feeling is real and sincere; it is not something imaginary or fictitious. The Lord leads his people in a perfect and sincere way, we may not know or understand the meaning of that which may befall us, just as Peter knew not the meaning of the foot washing, but the Lord said, "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." John 13:7.

The children of Israel were led by the pillar of cloud and pillar of fire until they came to the Rea Sea. This was a very critical place for them, the Red Sea in front, lofty and impossible mountains on each side, and Pharaoh's army coming from behind. "And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children cried out unto the Lord." Ex 14:10. Is this not true with us, when at times, our pathway seems impossible for us to continue, cry out unto the Lord, for "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." Psa. 46:1. Pharaoh's great army now stands ready and poised to slay the children of Israel and "Moses said unto the people fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." Ex. 14:13. The Lord brings into great display, how He is our refuge in time of trouble, "And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind

them: And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night." Ex. 14:19,20. Can we not see Pharaoh's army as being figurative of our many sins which seem to be continually following, to destroy us? The Lord commanded Moses to lift up the rod and stretch his hand over the sea and the Lord caused the water to depart. "And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground. And the Egyptians pursued and went in after them to the midst of the sea. And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea. And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them." Ex. 14:22, 23, 28. It is a beautiful picture when given to see the Red Sea as being symbolic of the blood of Christ. It was the Red Sea as that destroyed Pharoah's army which is figurative of our sins. The blood of Jesus Christ (where applied) is sufficient to destroy and cleanse us of all our sins. "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." Rev. 1:5. An elect vessel of God may be as black and dirty with sins as the tents of Kedar, yet that fountain of blood from Immanuel's veins is sufficient to cleanse from all sins however great or small.

"There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged into that flood
Lose all their guilty stains."

"So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea, and they went into the wilderness and found no water." Ex. 15:22. They had journeyed to Marah: Marah meaning bitter. Even in the midst of great thirst, the water was too bitter to drink. "And they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah for they were bitter." Ex. 15:23. After traveling three days and finding no water, they were at the point of dying of thirst, they could go forward no longer. Is this not true in our own experiences? When so many rugged crosses both inward and outward fall upon us and life becomes so bitter and we feel we can go forward no further; then we are compelled to do as Moses did. Attempt to pray and pray unto the Lord. "And he cried unto the Lord; and the Lord shewed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet." Ex. 15:25. This tree is a figurative of the cross of Christ. Even during our most trying and bitter times, when given (by the grace of God) to see that the Lord is leading us, shews us his cross and a blessed hope in it, then does not life take on a much sweeter trend? This wonderous tree can sweeten all the suffering that would otherwise be intolerable. But as the tree was pointed out to Moses, it must also be pointed out to us by the Holy Spirit. "Draw me, and we will run after thee." Song of Solomon 1:4.

The travels of the children of Israel through the wilderness were filled with many trials and tribulations yet it was the Lord's way of leading them into Canaan's land. There was nothing in the wilderness that they could feast upon to sustain their natural bodies.. The wilderness could not grow or produce anything that would feed and satisfy the natural body. It all had to come from above where all good and perfect gifts flow. Manna had to come down from heaven. "Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold I will rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate everyday." Ex. 16:4. The wilderness to natural Israel was symbolic of this world to spiritual Israel today. This world is a wilderness to the spiritual lives of God's people. There is nothing here that can satisfy the new born soul. No food grown here to feast upon, it must come down from above. Do we not

have a sincere desire to feast upon Christ? He says, I am the living bread that cometh down from above. If any man partake of this bread, he shall live forever. We must be given spiritual life to have a spiritual appetite. The world is not a wilderness to the unregenerate. To him it is a beautiful heaven, producing beautiful things laden with golden harvests.

"To humble thee, and to prove thee to know what was in thine heart." It is in the wilderness where the Lord humbles and proves His people. It is here he strips them to the very bone. They lose all goodness, wisdom, strength, creature holiness and all their filthy rags of righteousness. We look upon the world--all is a wilderness, nothing but sin, everything hideous and vile. Nothing but evil without and within. Does this not make one realize to some extent the depth of the fall? All our holiness being gone, our strength turned into weakness, zeal withered and all comeliness turned into corruption, will this not humble you and prove you?

"To know what was in thine heart." When we are given by the grace of God to see what a heart we have; we become desirous for God to speak to and search our hearts. We soon realize that we are helpless to work one grain of true religion in our own hearts. I have no feeling, no life, no faith, love, no holiness, I have nothing except it be given me from above. We can not find one speck of comfort for our souls in this world, except it comes down from above for this world is but a wilderness where nothing grows to comfort the new born soul.

A conflict between nature and grace, between the flesh and the spirit takes place in the wilderness. How thankful we should be if our conflict is grace against nature and not nature against nature...Nature against nature is a worldly religion that depends upon our human works and sin will always win out, for salvation is not of works lest any man should boast. Those who are engaged in a conflict of grace against nature will always win the battle, for the Lord himself fights this battle. The good and comforting news is then that God's family always fights a winning battle. Regardless of what, and how much, may confront us here in this wilderness below, how can that be compared to one minute in heaven?

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

THE CRY OF A WATCHMAN ON A DARK CORNER OF ZION'S WALL

The evil and lamentation of J.G., of Essex, in your last December number is, and has been, a great evil in my sight for many years, inasmuch as I have felt a disposition to seclude myself from almost all the professed truth-preachers within my precincts; for I believe that nine-tenths of the preaching of the present day is only the pride, wind, and puff of poor, vain man, aided by the old, proud, and lying devil to deceive the hearts of the simple. From this sad source arise swarms of these poor dandified, foppish boys from the academies, with their spectacles and hair set up like porcupines' quills, apeing the ministers of the gospel; also from those lecturing and spouting clubs, and conversation-meetings, where the greatest ignorance, pride, and folly is mainfested.

Again, others in common occupations of life get a notion of prattling about Scripture. "O!" says the devil and their own proud hearts, "you can preach". Away they run, anywhere and everywhere where they can be heard to preach! Thus they catch the preaching-fever, and preach they will, and if they can get a people together to be as pleased with their preaching as they are pleased with it themselves, all is right, and they call it prosperity. Then they smile in the faces of their hearers, shake hands, congratulate, and, like Absalom, bless and kiss every one in the gate. And now

the preacher stands tiptoe, looking all around him for admiration, expecting soon to become very popular, and have a very respectable congregation. But now, to prove it to the world that he is called to the work of the ministry, he begins to seek out for converts. And now, if any hypocrites will but come with a sad countenance, and tell him they like him and his preaching, and that they are converted under him, he will bless and caress them, and receive a thousand such if they come. But should a sober-minded soul, "not ignorant of Satan's devices", speak one word to cross him in his own pride and glory, for that's what it is, the pious, smiling preacher turns savage as a bear. "O!" says he, "am not I to do as I please? Am not I the preacher?" Thus the visible church is crowded with formalists, hypocrites, and enemies to the truth of Jesus, and overrunned with "grievous wolves not sparing the poor flock of Christ". For wherever these puffed-up pedantic parsons go preaching, they spare not to belabour and calumniate the poor flock of Christ. And if their professed piety forbids them to speak too much evil of the saints of Jesus, they will shoot out the lip, make a long, sad face, and shake their heads, saying, "Oh, oh! I had rather be silent." And thus, to see their parsonic looks, walks, and would-be-grammatical, pretty, little, nice, fine words, to please the polite hypocrites, is really sickening to a humble, honest soul.

But where is the love, truth, and glory of Jesus preached, and the power of the holy Comforter felt? O tell me, ye shepherds of Israel, where the eternal sun of heaven shines, that I may find some warm sunny bank, where I may lead my poor, weak, sickly lambs to feed, lie down, and rest! O! where are the green gospel pastures and sweet cowslip meads, where I can lead Christ's tender lambs to crop the young virgin-grass, tender herb, and sweet flowers, like those of Sharon's field? Where are the perennial springs, the meandering streams, and still waters, that I may drink my fill and water the flock, and find my poor soul restored to the love, peace, and joy of God's salvation? O! thou dear, good, and chief Shepherd, look down upon thy poor scattered flock, "aid them by thy friendly crook, and cheer their hearts with thy merry gospel-pipe; thy sheep that dwell solitarily in this dark wood, that they may feed in Bashan and in Gilead, as in the days of old." O! Jesus, thou good Shepherd, pity, help, and succour thy poor little flock, according to thy word; lay the lambs in thy bosom, feed the hungry, bind up those that are wounded, and heal those that are rent and torn by the ravening wolves of the wood.

O! thou sweet Shepherd, open the door of mercy that they may find access to thy bleeding heart of love, that they may go in and out and find pasture, and a sanctuary in thee. For though the tabernacle of curtains in the wilderness, and the temple of stone at Jerusalem are deminished, thou wilt "be unto them a little sanctuary wherever they are driven."

A Watchman on the Walls
Dunmow, Essex
The Gospel Standard, 1838

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

FROM AN OLD SIGNS

AN INQUIRY CONCERNING THE DUTY OF THE UNREGENERATE TO BELIEVE, REPENT, OR PRAY

(CONCLUSION)

The branch of the above inquiry now before us is, What constitutes preaching repentance both under the *day spring* and the *sun rising* of the gospel day?

The *day spring*, of course, comes first, and under this we find both John and

Christ preaching, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." In order to come to a proper understanding of the import and design of this preaching, it is necessary to refer back to the peculiar standing of the Jews. I have already remarked on another branch of this inquiry, that the law of Ten Commands in the letter of them, were given in covenant form to national Israel. Connected with these commands and as conditions of the same covenant, was the observance of the whole Jewish ritual as commanded by Moses. In the offering of sacrifices and in other rites, repentance or an acknowledgment of guilt and condemnation was implied and taught; also the hearing and reception of the Messiah, when he would come, was commanded. Deut. 18:15-19. Hence the "foundation of repentance from dead works" is named, Heb. 6:1, 2, among the principles or first rudiments of the doctrine of Christ, which the believers from among the Hebrews were called upon to leave. Hence also when Messiah came, it was according to the Divine and revealed plan of his manifestation, that he should first present himself to the Jews, nationally, for their reception or rejection; on the principles of the Sinai Covenant. Hence it is said Christ "came to his own and they received him not", etc. John 1:11. It was, as I understand it, in accordance with this arrangement, and the provisions of the Sinai Covenant, that John came preaching repentance and that Christ preached it; and also that the seventy were sent two and two to give notice of his coming, or that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. They preached repentance to show that according to the order of Messiah's kingdom, and to what had been figuratively taught in the Sinai ritual, repentance, and not self-righteousness, was requisite to a right reception of the Messiah, and to entering into his kingdom. They called upon them thus to repent upon the principles of that covenant under which they as a nation in a peculiar manner existed, and according to which Christ thus first presented himself to them as a man for their reception or rejection.

It is true, as Brother Beebe said in his remarks on repentance, that a special design of John's being sent preaching repentance was "to make ready a people prepared of the Lord". But still I think John's preaching, saying repent, etc., was addressed to the Jews nationally upon the principles of their covenant; and that it was thus left to the Holy Spirit, whose province it peculiarly is, to make manifest the "people prepared of the Lord", to lead such through John's preaching to be convinced of their sinfulness and just condemnation, and to hope for the immediate manifestation of the Messiah; and as a fruit of their repentance, to renounce their self righteousness and their dependence on, having Abraham for their father, for justification; and were accordingly prepared to come to John's baptism as a baptism--not of self-righteousness for justification--but of "repentance for the remission of sins". Hence in the text already quoted John 1:11, after it is said, "he came to his own, (that is, nationally) and his own received him not", it is further declared that "to as many as received him, to them gave he power" etc., "which were born not of blood", etc. Thus showing that their being distinguished thus from the nation was peculiarly of God.

From this view of this subject, Pedobaptists may think it consistent to preach repentance according to John's manner of preaching, because they imagine their children to have been brought in under the Abrahamic covenant; but surely no consistent Baptist will think of blending the principles of the Sinai covenant with the gospel ministry in calling upon men to repent as a self-preparation for receiving the gospel.

I will now come to the preaching of

repentance under the sun rising of the gospel day. On this point we have a plain direction in Luke 24:47, where Christ, after his resurrection, teaches his disciples that "Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations beginning at Jerusalem." This I understand to be the particular instruction given how repentance is to be preached since the ascension of Christ.

1st. It is to be preached in his (Christ's) name; not in Moses' name; not as a demand of the law; nor as John preached it to the Jews on the principles of the Sinai covenant. Neither does preaching repentance in the name of Christ consist with calling upon men to repent, for this implies that the repentance called for is such as the natural man can exercise, or the reflections of the natural mind will produce. Hence this preaching tends to build men up in the notion of their own ability and to satisfy them with such repentance as they are capable of exercising; and therefore tends to produce in their minds the very reverse to that repentance which Christ gives, a being abased in the dust as guilty, ruined, helpless sinners.

Repentance is truly preached in the name of Christ, when the law in its exceeding broadness, unchangeableness and spirituality as taught and illustrated by Christ, and established by the gospel is preached, as cutting off all human works as the ground of acceptance with God, "Stopping every mouth and presenting all the world as guilty before God". This is the preaching which when the heart is opened by the Holy Ghost to receive it, and by him applied, produces the fruits of genuine repentance, viz: a being stripped of all self glorying and self confidence and an abhorring of one's self and being humbled as in dust and ashes. But further in preaching repentance in the name of Christ, as he is "Exalted as a Prince and a Savior for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins", the sensible sinner, who is mourning over his hardness of heart, should be pointed to Christ as him who alone can melt his heart and give him that repentance which needeth not to be repented of. And the intimate connexion between this repentance and the receiving of the forgiveness of sins must be clearly held forth; so that none, on the one hand shall indulge in the hopes of experiencing pardoning mercy through Christ, unless brought to know and feel the odiousness and exceeding sinfulness of sin; and on the other hand, that those who are mourning over their own vileness and ruin may be encouraged to hope for the forgiveness of their sins through Christ. Now I will leave it to Brother Meredith and others who have been alarmed at the cry against our Old School Preachers, that they do not preach repentance to sinners, to judge whether the above described kind of preaching, or the calling upon the unregenerate to repent and the trying to scare them to it by dwelling on the horrors of hell, and thus leading them to infer that repentance is a bodily exercise, a mere excitement of the passions, appears the most consistent with gospel doctrine and preaching, and the most like preaching true "repentance toward God".

But there is another point which it is incumbent on me to notice before I quit this subject; viz: Acts 17:30. "The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." We must first notice the import of the expression "now commandeth". If the obligation of the Gentiles to repent rests upon this command, as a "new law" then instituted, as those who dwell so much upon this text seem to intimate, then their previously gross idolatry afforded no just ground for repentance, and they were guiltless in practicing it. But such conclusion is entirely inconsistent with Paul's view of their case given, Rom. 1:18-32. The true

import of this expression as connected with the idea that God had heretofore "winked at the times of this ignorance", appears to me to be this, viz: That although hitherto the law of Ten Commands as designed to teach the "knowledge of sin" was confined mostly to the Jews, while the Gentiles were left without any special revelation to teach them their sins, yet now under the gospel dispensation this law as connected with the gospel proclamation, was "To be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations", showing the absurdity and wickedness of idolatry, and the guilt and condemnation of all as transgressors of the divine law. Hence wherever the gospel came among the Gentiles thus accompanied with the proclamation of the law, those Gentiles whose hearts were opened to receive the word were led to renounce all their hopes arising from those idolatrous rites which they had performed and to fall prostrate before God as guilty sinners, needing his pardoning mercy; as were the Jews stripped of their legal righteousness. And not ony this, but God is so revealed in the external testimony of the law and the gospel as that human reason becomes convinced of the absurdity of idolatry; and all where the gospel comes are more or less made to feel that they are dependent on, and accountable to the living God. In accordance with this view of the import of this text, I will add that the primary idea of the word here rendered command, is to "instruct", "teach", "direct", and hence also it came to be used to denote "commanding" as one mode of directing: it further signifies to give notice or warning, etc. Hence I understand the text as designed--not to intimate that under the gospel God had instituted a new command or law for the Gentiles, or laid them under a new obligation to exercise repentance; but to show the bearing and effect the gospel proclamation as embracing an illustration of the spirituality of the law was designed to have upon all people, and that it was thus addressed to all in distinction from what was the case under the former dispensation.

Lastly the subject of prayer, or the enquiry whether it is the "duty of the unregenerate to pray" demands attention. If the charge that Old School Baptists "believe it is not the duty of the unregenerate to pray", is designed to convey the idea that they do not hold or preach that it is the duty of unregenerate persons, or right for them, to read or say over a form of prayer, as a regular or occasional task, and as means of salvation, or a condition of acceptance with God, whilst their hearts are insensible of the wants their words express; every consistent Old School Baptist, and every other person who knows the wickedness of mocking God with lip service while the heart is far from him, must plead guilty to this charge.

But as this charge imports that we do not admit it right for any person, under a sense of his dependence on God and feeling his need of divine mercy or aid in any case to ask God for it; I think the charge is false. I, for one, believe it right for any one to pray God for any aid or mercy that he truly feels the need of, and is authorized by the Scriptures to believe that God bestows upon the sons of men.

To say it is the duty of unregenerate persons to pray as a form of worship is to say that God requires of them that worship which is neither spiritual nor from the heart. But Christ informed the woman of Samaria that "God is a Spirit and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in truth". John 4:24. But for a person to pray not as a form of worship but simply to ask God for mercy because he feels he needs it, is the privilege of any; hence Peter exhorts Simon to "pray God, if perhaps the thought of his heart might be forgiven him"; under the impression, undoubtedly, that Simon from the sharp rebuke and warning he had given him,

would see and feel the wickedness of his thought and the need of forgiveness.

I have thus travelled over a good deal of ground upon these subjects; whether Brother Meredith will be any better satisfied than with Brother Beebe's brief explanation, I know not. The confusion unto which these subjects have been thrown by conditionalists and their use of them, seemed to require a general and particular examination of them. I cannot say that after all I have said, and my anxiety to place the subjects in a clear light I have succeeded in my wishes.

But I leave it, God may enable some others to set the subject in a clearer light, or may lead some to comprehend the ideas I have attempted to convey; and if they are wrong, to show the right.

Yours in the gospel of Christ,
S. Trott

"Signs of the Times"
September 1, 1839

Dearly Beloved,

When reading in the Bible I find myself looking for scriptures that will cause me to hope, to believe and to trust in those things I find there, searching for things in the travels of God's elect or chosen through out the Bible that I can apply to my own experience. The cast down, trodden upon, doubtful, fearful people that make up his elect or chosen. Not doubtful of the doctrine of salvation by grace but of yourself being encouched in this grace. I think his little ones always travel this road.

The scriptures teach that it is through much tribulation that we enter in. That tribulation worketh patience, patience experience and experience hope. That he gives us the valley of trouble for the door to hope. It is only when we are in this valley of trouble that we are taught to follow on to know the Lord, We never, I think, look for him except when we are in dire trouble.

Notice in the 40th Psalm. I waited patiently for the Lord. The reason I believe, David waited on the Lord was because he was in the horrible pit and in the miry clay and there was nothing he could do except wait. He inclined unto me and heard my cry. When in such a condition as this, I think, is the only time we are qualified or want to call upon the Lord. Only when we have no where else to turn.

In the 107th Psalm, 4th verse, these people were wandering in the wilderness in a solitary way. This also is the way his people travel. He always finds them in such situations. Notice in 32nd Deuteronomy verse 10. Jacob was found in a desert land and a waste howling wilderness. 107th Psalm 4th verse, hungry and thirsty their souls fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble and he delivered them out of their distresses. His people are always "brought" to such a point or condition that all that is left is to call on the name of the Lord. Isn't it marvelous tho that he always answers such pleas as this?

In the 40th Psalm, he brought me up out of an horrible pit and the miry clay, set my feet upon a rock and established my going and put a new song in my mouth, even praises to his name. How beautiful such scriptures as these become when brought by the power of the spirit to your heart.

In the 107th Psalm, he led them forth by the right way that they might go to a city of habitation. Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men for he satisfieth the longing soul and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.

Scriptures such as these mean much to me now. If not deceived altogether, I believe I was brought to such a point in my life, to where those things we desire most, in nature as well as spiritual, I had nothing at all to offer to obtain them.

I have hope, tho hard to see most of the time, that he has turned me from the world and worldly things that perish with the using and put this new song in

my heart, even praises to his name. Also a desire to follow after and to know more of him.

In the Songs of Solomon are some of the most beautiful words recorded in the Bible to such a seeking people. Tell me oh! thou whom my soul loveth where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon. Isn't this your desire, to mix and mingle with his sheep? If so the next verse tells us where.

If thou knowest not oh! thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, feed thy kids beside the shepherds tent. Notice he calls them thou fairest among women. The only way this can be, I believe is that he always sees his little ones through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Thou art all fair my love, there is no spot in thee.

Isn't it wonderful to believe in such a God that saves his people, not because of what they are, but in spite of what they are.

May he bless us to lift up our eyes to the everlasting hills from whence cometh our help.

Yours in hope,
Elder Graydon Smith

ELDER IRA SHELTON CONNER
(1906-1981)

He was the second son born to the late Lemuel D. and V. Susie T. Conner, on March 27, 1906, at the home of his grandparents in Floyd County, Va. In 1908 He moved with his parents, brother and sister, to the farm at Hollins, Va. In 1925 he went to work for his grandparents on the very farm where he was born.

In November, 1926, he married Miss Nannie B. Poff. They were received into Pine Forest Church and was baptized by their Pastor, Elder S. L. Moran, in 1927.

He was employed by a tree nursery, then a furniture manufacturer, and then the Virginia Department of Highways. While employed and living in Salem, in March, 1937, his companion died of Pneumonia, leaving four small children. They lived with their grandparents at Hollins, while he continued to work for the Highway Department.

In December, 1938, he married Miss Ida Mae Bowles. He moved his family to the Christiansburgh area of Virginia, but felt drawn to defense work and obtained employment in the Norfolk Naval Shipyard. He worked there until his retirement.

He visited Pine Forest as often as he was able, and began in 1951 to exercise his gift there. He was liberated to his Pastor, Elder B.O. Thompson. In March, 1951 that liberty was extended to the presence of Elders A.B. Ayers and R.B. Denson.

Being drawn by love to the Brethren of Kehukee, he was granted a letter of dismission in April 1955, and later the same month he united by letter to Flatty Creek Church. He was ordained to the full work of the Gospel Ministry on October 28, 1956, by a Presbytery composed of Elders A.B. Ayers, R.B. Denson, and W.E. Grimes. He served Flatty Creek and Robersonville faithfully though his health was declining.

In March, 1978, he came home from meeting to go out among the Brethren no more. He was laid aside in the hospital or at home until Sunday evening, November 22, 1981, when his Saviour said, "Come up hither and behold My face in righteousness," and his body fell asleep in Jesus in hope of a glorious resurrection. On the 24th his earthen vessel was committed to the earth in Greenlawn Memorial Gardens, after Elder Joseph Leggett delivered a comforting discourse to those assembled in the Chapel of Foster Funeral Home in Portsmouth, Va.

Surviving are his wife, Sister Ida Mae Conner; daughters, Mary L.V. Lowe, Chesapeake, Hazel Irene Horne, Salem; sons, Ira Dillon, Winchester, Joseph Arlington, Denver, Colo.; one sister, Lula C. Anderson, Shawsville, Va.; and 4 brothers, Earl A., Fincastle, Va., Noel F. and Aaron J., Roanoke, and Calvin A., Salem; also 12 grandchildren and 15 great grandchildren, and a host of brethren, sisters, and friends.

The Lord giveth and the Lord hath taken, and blessed be His Holy Name.

Noel F. Conner

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 65 Keeling, Va. 24566

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 11/82 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE COMMUNION

The Lord's Supper is commemorative of our blessed Savior's sufferings and death, and is, indeed, a very solemn service. The bread represents His body broken, and the wine typifies His cleansing blood. As to how often this ordinance should be observed is not commanded, but "as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come." I Cor. 11:26 I think Primitive Baptist churches generally have this service twice or four times a year. Only unleavened wheat bread and common wine (fruit of the vine) should be used, because such were the emblems selected by our blessed Lord. Grape juice should not be used until after fermentation has clarified it and it becomes wine. Neither of the emblems should contain leaven. This service is often called a "sacrament," under the mistaken idea that it is a "seal" or "means" of salvation. It is only a commemorative command.

Restrictions must necessarily be placed around the Lord's table if we would keep away those who should not eat; and if any should not eat, we surely could have no right whatever to invite them. Jesus Christ placed this ordinance in the early church and did not give it to the world. What right have we to carry this table out to those who are unwilling to come in and be one with us? We practice what is called "close communion," and do feel that this is the only safe, orderly and consistent way for us to follow, for it is protective in that it is so well calculated to keep us from all those entanglements and awkward positions that "open communion"

surely leads to when carried out in practice. So we only invite to the Lord's table those of our same Faith and Order that we have satisfactory reasons for believing, and who know themselves to be in good standing and fellowship with our Baptist churches. Our invitations cannot possibly extend beyond our recognized baptism. Communion is based upon love, union and church-fellowship, and surely there can be no real church-fellowship between us and those who differ so widely from us in doctrine and practice, because the necessary harmony and equality is quite out of the question. "Open communion," as its name implies, places no restrictions whatever; but plainly says, "Come, everybody." And yet others agree that all those who lead wicked and scandalous lives should be excluded, and thus claim for themselves the right to judge as to who should sit at the table with them. But none should call that "open," which they really do not want open, for it is inconsistent. We surely want to be governed by consistency and orderly practice. While we as individuals can have more or less Christian-fellowship for all those having an experience of grace, but this will not allow us to follow them into church-fellowship, for that will surely lead on into other erroneous practices.

Selected from "Primitive Baptist Faith and Practice" by Elder W. S. Craig. (We feel that this article, though short, is very to the point, and needful in this time. Editors.)

SEALING

"Now, he who hath sealed us is God." 2 Cor. 1:22.

How many different exemplifications, explanations, and opinions have I seen concerning the doctrine of sealing. And empty opinions they only in general seem. For I believe that sealing is the keystone in the great arch of saving religion. It is the secret of the Lord. (Psa. 25:14) It is the mysterious signet. It is the living joint and bands whereby celestial nourishment and activity, whereby heavenly strength and self-evident witness are communicated to the chosen seed. "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater." (I John 5:9)

As clay from the seal, and as the melted wax receives the impression when the hand moves to stamp the impress; as this is true in earthly sealings, so is it true also of that heavenly sealing which is effectual unto the day of eternal redemption by the Holy Ghost on the heirs of heaven who are the seed of promise, "which is true to all the promised seed".

O, the bright and shining impress, glittering far and wide, beaming with living influences when the seal of God hath touched the sin-destroyed anxious wretch who wrestles for hope with the living God! When repentance, guilt, and deceits of the heart, and the malice of the devil have caused a broken and contrite spirit before God, when hyssop (that bitter herb) hath purged the soul in godly sorrow and weeping before God; and when the most flaming self-abhorrence, like Job's, and the most heaven-kindled activity, like the hart panting after the water-brooks, have stirred up a poor self-destroyed, law-destroyed man to seek after God and wait upon Him; if so be there may be hope; I say, for a poor melted wretch like this, waiting at wisdom's gate, through necessity, to be all of a sudden and eternally touched with the seal of God, and to have the living die and lineaments of hope, faith, peace, and heavenly pleasure insensibly creeping over his heart-broken and panting feelings! to have the seal of God in living assurance marking him for God's own in that day when He makes up his jewels, to be touched with the visible mark of God upon him! to feel, handle, and see, and to be delighted with the heavenly feelings, life, spring-time, and summer-dew, accompanying the felt

seal, heaven-bestowed approbation, and living delights of God, on his guilt-broken, and sin-melted spirits! this, this is the sealing of God on a man.

What I speak on this sealing I speak from my own experience. And as I have felt the experience of it and know it to be true, so I believe the explanation I adduce of the doctrine to be true also. But to be more particular.

The two great divisions of sealing, according to my experience, and, as I believe, according to the doctrine of Scripture, are these, viz., melting of the wax; and secondly, the impress of the seal. The wax (so to speak) is our feeling; the seal, impress, and image are the direct operation of God on the feelings.

As the feelings of sorrow and joy too are more weighty, vivid, and self-evident than thoughts, fancies, and opinions concerning sorrow and joy, as feelings of the heart overtop all head-knowledge; so I speak with authority on these subjects; not merely having seen them afar off and being persuaded of them in that way; (although that is very good so far as it goes, if it is a true work, in hope) but having actually gone through this melting and sealing, this softening through the law of terrors, and this divine impress of divine love through the gospel on my poor soul, I may, I say, claim somewhat more attention justly, both in the sight of man and of God. "For out of the mouth of babes God perfecteth strength, to still the avenger, and to show that the lame take the prey". (Isa. 33:23)

"To give one an expected end". And again, "Thine expectation shall not be cut off". These and similar passages of scripture are fulfilled in some satisfactory degree in this holy sealing of the Spirit of promise on the broken and longing soul.

But I have often thought of many who speak of this sealing, that I would not stand in their shoes at death for a thousand worlds! And why not? Because, poor things! They can do impossibilities! They can be sealed without ever having been melted! They talk about being sealed, when I believe their sealing to be a living lie! They never were melted yet! This shakes my confidence concerning the whole of their religion. For if they can be sealed without ever being melted in anguish, I begin to fear whether the father of lies is not the architect throughout of their religion. I say, if they can charge the sealing of God on their unbroken heart, what false thing can they not do?

I say again, as true as God is living, I never knew anything of this divine impress of the living God on my feelings until I had been melted in the fires of misery, condemnation, and such woe as I never could describe. Rolled in the belly of hell a little, I felt the necessity of this divine sealing, image, and superscription, to sustain my soul amid the mingled catalogue of woe, which, like an army of soldiers, stood in battle-array against me. Neither is this seal which I am speaking of a dead stamp, a lifeless security, or a mere picture to look at. But it is a communication from the Prince of life. It opens the sacred treasuries of heaven into the soul. It uplifts the hid repositories of divine grace and glory into the soul's possession a little. It beams with refulgent brightness over the chequered pathway of our mortal pilgrimage as long as we live. And ever and anon, when the seal appears to have slipped out of one's possession, by and by the Holy Spirit of God renews it all up again with a living and refreshing lustre. I say again, the hid treasures concealed, secured, and at times drawn forth with an illustrious glory before the soul's eye through the seal, is what I believe none but those who are finally to be in heaven have the slightest or most distant conception of.

Sealing contains within itself the germ, the foretaste of peace, the small bud of sweetness, the soul-ravishing hope of heaven. It is the earnest and

first-fruits rewarding the regenerate husbandman, and encouraging God's servant to be faithful unto death; the crown of glory being thus perceptibly hung out to the eye of hope under the seal of God himself.

And what lies like a foundation of adamant to it all is that it is a sealed salvation to a lost soul! O, the awful condition of a lost estate before God as regards the never-dying soul before an eternal God! O, solemn sensations! O, heart-melting pangs, racking tortures, dismal blindness and errors, and heart-hardened inability to help one's self or get to the haven where one would be. Previously to when it pleases God to touch one's trouble-dissolved soul with the seal of His infinite love! O, the torturing anguish! O, the law-burning damnation! O, the innumerable troubles that get hold upon one, before we feel the individual and personal touch of God's never-fading seal of eternal redemption gilding with a hope full of immortality. "Ye that know the Lord, make mention of His mighty acts! Sing, rejoice, and make melody! For he turneth the wilderness into beauty, the desert into water-springs, and makes the barren to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children."

The seal of God, I say, generally touches the soul, when all hope, peace, and expectation are about, like the candle in the socket, to go clean out! O, terrible crisis! O, the hair's breadth nearness to giving up all as a bad affair, thinking our religion is some damnable halo or other from the devil! when lo, the seal of God touches in due time the melted wax of our heart; when our captivity seems to take a turn; when, as a tree blasted by the thunder, we die to this world in all our feelings; and, like Abraham, we receive the seal of faith as it were in a resurrection from the dead.

If anyone could certify me of his melting, I could certify him concerning his future sealing. If any one's heart was smitten and cut down like grass from sin, and ready to be gathered into the oven of hell day by day on account of sin; I could give him hope concerning his end, that it would be in mercy. But, never can I bear to see or hear a heart-whole, an un-heart-broken professor talk of Christ, much less of the sacred mystery of binding the heart up anew by the good Samaritan; which binding up anew is couched under the mystic and hid excellence, called sealing.

Planted in the likeness of Christ's death through trouble and guilt, through sin and through the wrath of God bringing us down into the dust of death; there arises hope concerning our end that we shall come again to our border. (Jer. 31:17) We begin in due time to be planted in the likeness of Christ's resurrection. And as death had no more power over Christ after His resurrection; after the eternal Spirit had sealed him with the power of an endless life by the resurrection from the dead; after death, hell, and the grave, along with sin and Satan had as vanquished foes adorned the triumphant chariot of the Lord Jesus Christ by a final resurrection from the dead; after the seal of eternal victory had thus graced the warlike Immanuel; from henceforth expecting until his enemies be made his footstool; so also, I say, likewise does the seal of God on those who bear about in their bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus in order that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in their mortal flesh; so after sin and self-help have given up the ghost under the stroke of God's vengeance in Christ towards the elect soul; so, I say, melted in a fellowship of the sufferings of Christ and dead in communion with Him through the Spirit; I say, if we be dead with Him thus, I believe that we shall also live with Him. We believe Him to be a quickening Spirit. We believe that the Angel of the covenant will unseal our tomb of experimental death; and that, terrible as lightening to look at, the seal of an experimental resurrection from death and ruin shall fray

away our dreadful adversaries; and that we shall know the blissful change, the heavenly assurance, and the joyous victory over our terrible foes; all which blessings are hid under the mystic expression of being sealed by the Holy Spirit of God unto the day of redemption; and that after that ye believed ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise! "Father, I thank Thee that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent". Father, I thank Thee that none of the reprobate (professors, nor profane), shall ever understand these things. None of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand. "The wicked also shall do wickedly." (Dan. 12:10)

And I feel and believe that this seal of God sanctifies, blesses, and sweetens every thing that we receive at God's hands. It casts a hid lustre, a secret pleasure, a divine complacency, a serenity, gratitude, and delight, inexpressibly so at time, in the moderate use of all our temporal mercies! And the whole soul, like the temple of Solomon's dedication, is in spiritual things consecrated through this seal with the most glorious effulgence of the Divine presence. Solemnized, sweetened, and overwhelmed with the blissful grandeur of glory of God's presence, favour, and love everlastingly through this seal the elect priests cannot at times stand to minister with any articulate sounds of either prayer or praise. Overcome with the fixed purpose of eternal love irradiating their souls from the seal of endless joys, tears come to their relief. Secret sobbings of unutterable delight ascend up to the exalted presence of God in the very heaven of heavens. Warm and melting joys through a feeling hope of the forgivenss of sin seize on the delighted mind, refreshed and attuned to melody through this living hope. The seal bursts with greater and greater radiancy on the enraptured eyesight. The soul sees Him that is visible. (Heb. 11:27) And, I say again, that gratitude for temporal mercies, seeing the hand of God in all events, living communion, fear, faith, and love, are all fastened to the soul by this precious mystery called "sealing". Thus, the soul goes out and comes in under the blessing of God thereby. Thus we can get answers to prayer under the seal. We feel after God and find Him in this way, He having sealed us with His own hand. And a morsel of dry bread even in temporal things often tastes sweet to our mortal bodies, receiving it sensibly under the signet of the gift of our dear God, when a banquet of luxuries would not satisfy the unhallowed cravings of a natural man. "The blessing of God is thus sensibly sealed in every way, and it is the habitation of the just alone."

Abingdon I.K.

The Gospel Standard, 1838

Rocky Mount, N.C. 27801

Dear Brother Williams,

Enclosed is my check to renew my Subscription to the *Signs of the Times* for another year. I don't want to miss any of the issues. I love the Primitive Baptist doctrine.

May God bless you Editors to keep on publishing the good news from a far country.

Yours in Hope,
Mrs. Fannie Mae Harper

Binghamton, N.Y.

Dear Editors,

The year is going so fast that it must be time to renew my subscription for another year. Please use the balance where needed most.

I love all the articles published and written by so many people for the *Signs of the Times.*

I had the pleasure of hearing a tape recording of a sermon delivered by Elder Richard Campbell in a church that is very dear to me, and is located just out of Nashville, Tennessee. It was just great

to hear an Old Baptist again. It was sent to me by my niece, Lovenia Biggs, and thanks to you, also.

Do remember me in your prayers.

Sincerely,
Ruth Steiner

BURDENS OF GOD CALLED MINISTERS

(By the late L. L. Schenck)

"So I spoke unto the people in the morning and at even my wife died, and I did in the morning as I was commanded." (Ezekiel 24:18)

Many and varied are the experiences of the called servants of the most high God. All are made to pass under the rod. The priest and the prophet, the apostles and every true servant of God, all and each must come in for their share of afflictions and trials as they go forth in the sacred service of their exalted Master. We read of the experiences of those sages of old, and it lends us strength to know that, although their way was hedged about, beset on every hand with trials and afflictions, often cast down but never destroyed, always fearing yet ever going forward boldly in the work whereunto they were called, for God was with them, having given his promise: "I will be with thee to deliver thee." I say the humble servant of today will be able to glean a little strength from the recorded experiences knowing that God is still able to deliver, and his promise holds good unto this day.

My desire is to call attention to the experience of one of the old prophets and see how well it may fit into the lives of the more modern ministry. For while their gifts may be vividly divergent, they are all of the same spirit. Unto the one it was commanded "Prophesy" and unto another it was commanded "Preach the word." In neither case were excuses acceptable and yet in either case no doubt the same feeling of weakness and inability and unworthiness is felt - expressed by the prophets and no less felt by the humble servant of today. "Lord I am not eloquent neither before nor since thou has spoken unto thy servant, for I am a man slow of speech and of a slow tongue." This was the excuse of Moses whom God had called and ordained to bear his message unto Pharoah, but the Lord said unto him, "Who hath made man's mouth or who maketh the dumb or the deaf, or the seeing or the blind, have not I the Lord?"

The word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah the prophet saying, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee and before thou cameth forth out of the womb I sanctified thee and ordained thee a prophet of the nations." Then said I, ah Lord God, behold I cannot speak for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, "Say not I am a child for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee that thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces for I am with thee to deliver thee." Speaking from a natural impulse it would seem that the excuses of those two old servants of God would be good and valid excuses, but there was one very important truth which they were yet to learn and which we must not overlook, to-wit, their sufficiency was not of themselves but of him who called them to the work. God not only calls his servants but he qualifies them also; and not only so, but he chooses their field of labor and sets the race before them, fixes all their environments and adjusts every circumstance that enters into their career, so that the matter is briefly comprehended in this: "Whether we live, we live unto the Lord and whether we die we die unto the Lord, and whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's." The prophets and apostles were all fitted for their respective fields of labor, and likewise every true servant of God must labor in the field appointed unto him. And without exception it must be "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," and as they go they must preach, saying, "The Kingdom of heaven is at hand." And

oftentimes they will experience the truth of the Master's words: "Behold I send you forth as sheep among wolves."

Thus it fell to the lot of Moses to go to the wicked King Pharaoh and demand of him in the name of the Lord that he let the people (Israel) go. Being informed beforehand however, that God would harden Pharaoh's heart that he would not let the people go, but the command was to "Go", and go again, no matter if your labors may seem to be unfruitful to you. No matter if you receive the jeers of this haughty king, and are made the subject of general ridicule, remember you are now laboring for, and by the instruction of God Almighty, whose ways are not our ways nor his thoughts our thoughts.

It is even so with the poor servants of today. They may review their labors and behold the utter unfruitfulness of their efforts, enough to discourage the strongest heart; and much more one who feels his weakness and inability to speak, as every true servant must feel. But God is not slack concerning his promise. If he has promised, "I will be with thy mouth and I will teach thee what thou shalt say," there should be no fear that the right thing will not be said. He promised Abraham that he would bring this people out of bondage and thus he sanctified and ordained this very Moses to go forth as his mouth piece in this stupendous task; and thus, while Moses was laboring in this capacity under hardships and discouragements, God himself was at work fixing everything against that great day of deliverance which he knew would come. When his afflicted and poor people should receive this blessed instruction from him, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord," and God Almighty himself shall have realized his eternal purpose to get him glory upon Pharaoh. Thus when the whole drama was complete, and Moses is favored to see the complete exodus of the whole house of Israel, and Pharaoh and his host drowned in the Red Sea, the scene is climaxed with this remarkable expression: "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up that I might shew my power in thee and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." Although his way was attended with difficulties, hardships and discouragements, yet in the end he saw the purpose of God fulfilled, and the whole transaction crowned with ultimate glory.

Well might we admonish one another to do as we are commanded and leave the result with the Lord. How often may the poor servants of God go forward in the face of difficulties and adversity. How often our poor efforts may appear to us to be a complete failure, void of everything that is good. We can only do as we are commanded and God will take care of the rest. It was a very remarkable circumstance which led up to the expression of the prophet at the head of this article. "Son of man behold I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: Yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep neither shalt thy tears run down. Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind the tire of thine head upon thee and put on thy shoes upon thy feet and cover not thy lips and eat not the bread of men. So I spake unto the people in the morning and at even my wife died, and I did in the morning as I was commanded." Who but a truly called servant of God could go forward in the face of such a gloomy prospect. Forewarned of God that he would remove from him the desire of his eyes, the very idol of his heart, his wife, yet his vigilance and faithfulness must not relax. Even in the death of his wife, his bosom companion, he is not excused from duty. "Prophesy." "In the day of prosperity rejoice and in the day of adversity consider for the Lord hath set the one over against the other that man should find nothing after him." One of the disciples said unto Jesus, "Lord suffer

me first to go and bury my father." But Jesus said unto him, "Follow me and let the dead bury their dead."

I find it convenient to speak of these things by way of admonition to our brethren, which admonition I also take unto myself. And while we cannot construe these divine words to mean that God's people are forbidden to in any wise give vent to their grief or sorrow or leave their dead unburied, I do hink that, instead of separating us from the service of our Master it should bind us the closer to him. I feel that the commandments of God should surmount every obstacle. Thus, "I will take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke, yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shalt thy tears run down." Surely not to the point of rebellion against God; not to the point or to the extend that we desert or neglect his cause. God's commandments are not toys to be played with and then cast aside; and I feel sure his little ones cannot spurn or disobey his commandments with impunity. Thus when we are stricken with grief, what shall we do? Bind the tire (the attire) of thine head upon thee and put on thy shoes upon thy feet and cover not thy lips and eat not the bread of men. What is the attire of thine head but the crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give at that day to all them that love his appearing; and the helmet of salvation? What is "thy shoes" but the preparation of the gospel with which God's people are shod? And why should we cover our lips since God has put a new song in our mouth, even praise unto our God; and the commandment is to sing. "Sing unto him a new song: play skillfully with a loud noise for the word of the Lord is right and all his works are done in truth."

Therefore when we are bowed down with grief and sorrow, instead of surrendering our sacred privilege, and instead of neglecting our solemn duty, let us remember that our blessed Master himself was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and although it pleased the Lord to bruise him and put him to grief, he failed in nothing that God was pleased to lay upon him. One poet has most beautifully expressed our case for us, "From all their afflictions God's glory shall spring, and the deeper their sorrow the louder they'll sing."

When we are engaged in the service of our Master, should it be done with a view of being recompensed in some literal manner, or should it be through love and fear of him who gave us our command. What think you of these hired singers, or hired mourners, or hired preachers? It is all blasphemy against God, for God has promised no servant of his a recompense of filthy lucre. To the contrary, when he gave unto his disciples their instructions prior to sending them out, he also gave them a brief category of their labors, thus: "As ye go preach saying the Kingdom of heaven is at hand, heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give; provide neither gold nor silver nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes nor yet staves, for the workman is worthy of his meat." How many theological colleges would survive today should they be compelled to depend for their support upon those who are the truly called servants of God? And how many young men with a preaching ambition would really receive a "call to preach" if they really knew what the recompense of a true minister is. It is sadly only too obvious that many have launched upon the occupation of so called preaching with nothing more than a lure for gold, and inclination to make an easy living, and a burning ambition for popularity; and while these may insist upon their call to preach, yet they will not preach unless they are paid in money or its equivalent. The blessed gospel of the Son of God cannot be purchased with money. Its value cannot be reckoned in

dollars and cents. How many of these ambitious young men would be willing, like the Apostle of the Lamb, "To go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto me, so that I might finish my course with joy and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the Grace of God."

I desire now to appeal to every dear child of grace, whether you be called to preach or prophesy, or whether your gift consist of singing; whether it is in counsel or conversation, or whether it be merely filling your seat in the house of God: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God, and if any man minister let him do it as of the ability that God giveth," and we need not expect a worldly recompense.

For when we have done all, we are to say we are unprofitable servants, and have only done that which was my duty to do. I wish we might be enabled to assimilate the thought so deeply expressed by this old prophet when he said, "I will take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke. So I spake unto the people in the morning and at even my wife died and I did in the morning as I was commanded."

We will conclude with this expression, "Fear God and keep his commandments for this is the whole duty of man."

SPIRITUAL WANTS

My dear Friend,--Since I have been at home I have been so much engaged, that I have not often had an opportunity to write to you, and when I have had time, I have had no inclination; for O the deathly coldness, the midnight darkness, and rocky hardness that I have been the subject of since I saw you, I cannot describe; and I feel more confident than ever that when left to myself, the sun never shone on such a beast; and O how certain am I that if salvation is not all of grace from beginning to end, I never shall be saved, for were my hope built on no surer foundation than "*ought* to pray--*should* watch, *duty* to believe, *might* live up to gospel privileges," etc., etc., I should as surely be damned, as hell is the habitation of infernals. O I dare not even hint at some of the sensual and vile traffic that has been carried on in my corrupt nature of late; I cannot help thinking that if the children of God knew what I am the subject of, they would certainly shun my company, and forego any correspondence with me. O wretch that I am! Sometimes I have such a sight of my own baseness and villany, that I cannot help confessing before God that if he were to send me to hell in a moment, I would declare before him, and in the presence of men, angels, and devils, that he was a God of equity, and was just and righteous in my eternal damnation; and then in a few moments such a spirit of self-pity and rebellion has seized me, that I have felt as if he would deal hard with me, if he sent me to hell; and that if I were banished to perdition, I verily believe at such time that I should go down into the pit blaspheming the name of the Judge of quick and dead. But notwithstanding all this, and much more too base to name, I cannot help having a little hope that the Lord is on my side, and that I shall at last come off more than a conqueror through him that was slain. But O I want a lively feeling assurance that this hope is that spiritual hope that is as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and that entereth into that that is within the vail. My wants are generally exactly contrary to my feelings, for I want liberty and feel nothing but bondage; I want nearness at the throne, but am "afar off upon the seas"; I want a melted heart, but feel as hard as a stone; I want a spirit of prayer,

but cannot pray; I want to believe, but feel all unbelief; I want to love the word, the people, and worship of God, but often feel no regard for either, and what is worse, I sometimes hate everything that is loving; I want wisdom, and feel a complete fool; I want to soar above, but grovel like a muckworm in the earth; I want to say Abba, Father, but cannot feel the spirit of adoption; I want to feel willing to continue in the work the Lord has put me in, but cannot help wishing I was anything but a preacher, and anywhere but in a pulpit. But O worse than all, I sometimes feel to have no wants but evil ones; my pride wants gratifying, and my lust wants satisfying. I should be glad to receive a letter from you, or any lover of truth to whom I desire to be remembered; and am as ever, yours in love,

January 13, 1841 Septimus
The Gospel Standard, 1841

Calhoun, LA. 71225

Dear Elder Williams,

I notice my *Signs* expired 12/81, and sure don't want to miss a copy. I get such a comfort from reading the experiences of the brothers and sisters. My Dad always took the *Signs* and it was always in our home. I enjoyed reading the experiences of others even when I was a little girl. Some are still fresh in my memory.

I'm sure my Dad has sent in some writings for your paper, and I sure would love to get a copy with his writings in it. I would treasure it, and would pay anyone for a copy. It probably would be from 1915 or later. His name is W.M. Harwell, and his address would have been either Poplar Bluff, MO., or Hendrickson, MO.

I am not a member of the Primitive Baptist, but am a firm believer in predestination, and salvation by grace if saved at all. I go to every "Hardshell" meeting I can go to, and I get a great comfort from hearing this good doctrine preached.

Am sending a check for renewal for two years, and use the balance as you see fit.

A Sister, I Hope,
Mrs. O.J. Swan

June 25, 1982

Dear Brethren,

I see my subscription is out, so I am sending you a check for renewal of one year, and use the balance for the distribution costs.

I cannot tell you how much rich food I get from the *Signs*.

Here in Illinois in 1900 the flock was scattered, but I do hope we are still the few and peculiar people of the all-wise Creator, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

I do believe God feeds His flock wherever they are in this vast universe, and calls them in His time.

I especially enjoyed Elder Griffin. I am personally acquainted with him, and I also enjoyed the article, "The Bride of the Lamb called a Harlot."

May the Lord lead, guide (go before) and feed us all is my prayer.

In Christian Love, I hope I am one,
Cecil Neal

(That hope we can never lose. It is certainly in good hands.)

DAGON UPON HIS FACE BEFORE THE ARK OF THE LORD

being
a contrast between that will-worship of men seen in the worship of the Dagon and that Highway of Holiness spoken about by the prophet Isaiah shown by the Ark of the Lord, showing God is sovereign in matters of worship, and that God has shown in His scriptures
the all-sufficient
way of
worship.

It is clear from all that God has told us about our wicked hearts in His word that we, when left to ourselves, do not

know how to worship Him. The only way we can know how to worship Him properly is if He tells us how. He must tell us what pleases Him; what we are to say in prayer (although not necessarily the exact words), in our hymns, how we are to celebrate His death and resurrection as well as what motivation is to be in our hearts when we do these things. Yet it is also true that even after God has told us how we are to worship Him, this is not all. His Spirit must *enable* us to worship Him in the way we ought. Without the Spirit making us able we are as hopeless to worship Him aright as if there had never been any of the scriptures given to us. Indeed, without this *continued* ministry of the Spirit in making us able, we would wander away from the true *form* of worship and invent our own ways of worshipping God, who, at this point, would no longer be the true God of the Bible. Knowing this, we can ask a very basic question. What is our standard for the proper worship of God? How shall we determine whether a certain act, ceremony, doctrine, or overall practice is proper to the true worship of God?

There can only be two answers to this question. How this question is answered will, or at least should, have tremendous implications for everything else we say and think about God. Both answers claim to use the Bible as their standard. The first answer we hear is that anything can be done or instituted in the worship of the church that is not forbidden by the scriptures, either through some direct command or some general principle. With this idea, a local church could lawfully institute new religious rites, ceremonies and institutions that were not found in any Apostolic churches. This mentality defends its differences with the Apostolic model on the supposition that with the times new "Ministries" must be developed to deal with new situations which will arise. These new "ministries" are not limited to the advent of new vehicles for proclaiming the gospel message (such as television, radio, telephones, printing press, etc.), but also include new institutions and practices to those found in the New Testament. Once these new practices are labeled "ministries", they are purported to have spiritually edifying power as "instituted means" for the salvation of souls.

The second answer (which is mine) sees things quite differently. The idea here is that the local church has no authority to institute any new religious practice or institution that was not found or practiced in the Apostolic church. This answer says that all the ceremonies, practices, and institutions of the church were instituted by *God Himself, through the Apostles, at the time of their ministry on this earth.* Thus the church has no authority to do anything of any inherent religious significance which is not commanded by scripture, either by direct command or necessary consequence. This answer I believe to be the teaching of the Apostles as well as of the Old School Baptists as a group.

Some who object to this second approach say that we are hiding behind the word "religious" using it in different ways at different times in our argument. They would say that everything in the universe is religious in that it praises God and attests to His power, or that all the acts that men do ought to be done for the glory of God and could, therefore, be called "ministries." One would not wish to argue with this issue since scripture says all of this. (Ps. 19; Romans 1:21; II Cor. 10:17) Yet to leave the matter rest at this point would be wrong. There are matters which are not "religious" in the narrow sense of the term. Paul himself spoke of these matters in I Corinthians 7:32-34 when he said, "He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how

he may please his wife. There is difference also between a wife and virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband." Here Paul makes a distinction between "the things of the Lord" and the "things of the world." When the word "religious" is used here it is being used in the narrow sense of things which are directly related to religion and the local assembly such as prayer, singing of hymns, preaching, etc. Involved in the term "religious" is anything which claims to be a "means" for the edification or salvation of anyone.

This principle of worship is questioned by some who claim to believe in the absolute soveriegnty of God. How this can be is hard to conceive. If they believe that *salvation* is not a combined effort between man and God, but that it is totally unto, of, and from God, how can they believe any less about the *worship* of God? How can they believe that men can contribute anything to the worship of God when it comes to its form? How can such little regard be had for the wisdom of God in thinking that God would not make it clear to His people at all times all that is necessary to worship Him aright? What a high regard for time to think that in some epochs God could be worshipped in a better or lesser way depending upon the recently invented "ministries" that epoch offers! What a high praise to the human mind to think that some men worship God better that others due to their greater imagination in devising new "ministries" and "outreaches"!

Some might try to dull the force of these questions by claiming that it is the Spirit of God which plants these new ideas in the minds of His people and thus that men are not really contributing to the worship of God, but that God working in them does the contributing. Yet this does not void the questions just asked. These so called "spirit planted" ideas are not based upon the word of God but upon the personal feelings of those who believe this teaching which they *attribute* to the Spirit of God. Thus there can be no standard for other christians by which to judge these experiences in a positive manner, as to whether they are according to the will of God or not. All we can do is to make sure it does not violate any Biblical "thou shalt not". Also, these "new ministries" and "outreaches" usually require money and establishment of new positions (youth director, director of christian education, bus captains, minister of visitation, etc.). This would mean that according to this erroneous view the true form of worshipping of God can be established, or at least improved, by more personnel and more money. This is the philosophy of the world. This is the way great corporations are built, but *not* the way the church of Christ is built. If salvation is so exactly worked out by God that it does not depend upon the carnal "imaginative" ideas of men, could God have worked the form of His worship in any less detail? If God has made it clear all that men need to know to be saved (and He has), can He be any less exact when it comes to the essential matter of worshipping His name?

Are the scriptures our all-sufficient guide to faith and practice? Peter thought so when he said that according to Jesus' divine power He had "given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue." (II Peter 1:3) This divine power has been the force which wrought not only the enlightening ministry of the Holy Spirit, but also that "more sure word of prophecy: whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in the dark place, until the day dawn and the day star arise in your hearts." (vs. 19) All things are given to us that are needed for "godliness" and

eternal "life." Paul further made this point clear. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." (II Tim. 3:16) What is the purpose of scripture? "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (vs. 17) If some would question the use of this passage in saying that although the scriptures are profitable, they are not the *only* thing we need, then it must be asked what they will use to supplement the very words of God? If anyone believes that the scriptures are not totally sufficient for all we need know about the true form of the worship of God, then let them cease to call themselves Baptists and go back to the Mother Harlot Rome which has always questioned the total sufficiency of the scriptures and "supplemented" it with relics, the worship of saints, miraculous appearances of Mary, indulgences, confessions to priests, the infallibility of the Pope and all other sorts of priestcraft; because all these objections lead only to mere variations of the papist inventions just mentioned.

Phariseeism is the worst form of false worship. One classic example of this false worship is found in Matthew 15. Here the Pharisees were astonished at the disciples lack of obedience of the "traditions of the Elders". Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for three things. The first was that they violated the commandments of God by *making exceptions* to them that God did not allow, such as the example given by Christ of the refusal to honor their parents by using the excuse that all their extra money had been promised to God as a gift (Corban), (vs. 3-6). The second item was their inner deadness in contrast to their seemingly outer purity, "This people draweth nigh unto me with thier mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me." (vs. 8) The third item, however, is the one that hits closest to the point of this article. They also *interposed their ordinances and rituals in between the commandments of God.* (vs.9) Even though these ordinances did not violate some *specific command* of God and dealt with such seemingly innocent items, such as the washing of cups and hands, they were a great evil. Why? Because their ordinances were given religious meaning by being regarded as ceremonial purificaitions which they contended somehow pleased God. Also, they were being imposed on the consciences of men as if they had been given by God; thus, attempting to endure the words of men with the same power and authority as those of God. Men were being condemned and judged for failure to keep the whim and ideas of other men. What does all this prove? *Simply that Jesus would not have condemned the Scribes and Pharisees for inventing their own commandments, if he had not believed that God had given the Jews all the commandments they needed to worship God aright, up until the time when He was to die and resurrect.* Thus for men to legislate any new laws or practices of their own was a grievous sin.

Some will continue to object to the principle of worship which we and all Old School Baptists hold to by citing that if we limit ourselves to the practice of the Apostles in everything, we might as well ride chariots, disregard all modern conveniences and revert back to first century life in Palestine. *All this objection does is betray a lack of understanding of the principle that has been set forth here.* Technology has never assisted the work of God; otherwise, we would be saying that an educated American has the capability of worshipping God better than some simple African peasant. A distinction must be made between *the message of the gospel and the vehicle which may deliver it,* such as a preacher, a radio, a television, paper, magazine, etc. As long as the *vehicle* is not somehow made into

some sort of "ministry" which implies for it a religious significance in and apart from the gospel message itself, then the principle of worship set forth here has not been violated. Thus a car can be used to take people to church, yet a car in not inherently religious. The *Signs of the Times* can proclaim the gospel, yet remain simply a magazine which, as such, has no religious significance of its own, unable to save a single soul or edify a single believer. God did not begin to use magazines as an instituted means of salvation with the advent of the *Signs of the Times*, or any other magazine devoted to religious truth.

What is the essential distinguishing point between Old and New School Baptists? Is it gospel regeneration? No, because there are men who are in New School churches who deny this doctrine. Is it the doctrines of grace, such as election, particular redemption, total depravity (including a denial of the natural/moral inability distinction)? The answer is again no, because there are churches in the New School group which believe these doctrines. Is it the requirement of baptism when coming from an outside group of a different faith and order? No, because the Landmark Missionary Baptists also require this of those wishing to join their religious organizations. The essential point about Old School Baptists is that they believe all these things from an experiential, as well as a "doctrinal" position, and also that they believe that any religious group that institutes religious acts, ceremonies, doctrines beyond those the Lord has provided in His word are not true churches of Christ. This is why they are called "Primitive" or "Old School", which is intended to refer to the primitive Apostolic model of a local church. With the grace of God, and only by it can we hope to remain in this stand despite the ridicule of the modern religionists.

If any imagine that we here are presenting our own ideas, then let them hear well the words of the Philadelphia Confession of Faith of 1742, which Old School Baptists have regarded as the best *human summary* of the teachings of the scriptures, and which New Schoolers abandoned in 1832, if not in it's letter, certainly in it's spirit. "The acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by Himself, and so limited by His own revealed will, that He may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan under any visible representation, or any other way, not prescribed in the Holy Scriptures." Welsh Tract, the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in America, adopted this Confession in 1742, and has not found reason to abandon it since.

The danger denounced in 1832 is not any weaker today. If anything, it is stronger. We must not ever believe that these things have been denounced enough. Each generation must again take the sword of God, that shining lamp in the darkness, and wield it against the enemy of God until we see our Lord face to face and that one against whom we truly war cast into the bottomless pit reserved for him from eternity past.

Dagon represented, and still represents, a false God and false form of worship. The Ark of the Lord was, and is, the true way. May Dagon always fall prostrate before the Ark of the Lord.

William Santamaria
Perth Amboy, N.J.

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PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The 1982 session of the Pleasant Valley Association will meet, the Lord willing, with Mt. Olive Church, Stockdale, Texas, the First Sunday in November, 1982, and Friday and Saturday before. (November 5,6,7).

All lovers of the truth are invited.

For directions to the meeting contact:

Elder G.D. Shipman
20567 S. H. 165
Von Ormy, Texas 78073
Phone 1-512-624-2148

EDITORIAL

Let us in the outset remember the determination of the apostle as he came before the churches. His doctrine was the same in every letter; his object was the same in every case. He, nor we, nor any other man, could not ever be an efficient apostle to the Gentiles had he been one thing to one church, and something else to the next. If we follow the manner of most Bible students and admit that he was the author of Hebrews, then, in over one hundred cases, he attributed everything to the grace of God. And in prefacing this article let me urge again that there are not two kinds of grace. Grace is alone for sinners, for the guilty. As there is but one kind of grace, and it all stems from God, then, there is no such a thing as conditional grace taught in the Bible. However, if I find a conditional grace in the Bible, I will not be heard in the Old Baptist pulpit anymore, and I will not be caught in the absurb position of having my name seen in grace literature.

Our apostle tells us who that he was, and whose that he was, and straight out in front of him he tells us who he was sent to, and who he is writing to. He tells us that salvation is not by the deeds of the law; that it is not coming from the fleshly, natural or carnal mind of man; that it is not gained by those that will become willing, or those that will run errands for the Lord. It (salvation) does not come by either one of these ways, but that it is by Him that sheweth mercy (Rom. 9:16).

"Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God." That is the inspired testimony of the apostle to the Gentiles. Ah! how effectual is the work of God. He owns his calling; he owns the author, the instigator of that calling. In no sense of the word does he attribute his apostleship to himself, even in the most minute degree. He belongs exclusively to Jesus Christ, and this gift and this calling came about solely and wholly by the will of God. The calling of both him and Timothy (and I hope of this poor sinner) is exclusively according to God's own purpose and grace which was given to us that are saved and called. Here is the calling, the preservation, the predestination of God of His saints unto eternal glory. Here is the manifestation of that purpose and that grace. A vile sinner was purposed to be the apostle to the Gentiles, and he was called in time to that end. God was well pleased with His

purpose. There was coordination between His purpose and His calling to the end that he who had persecuted the saints was now made manifest as their minister and apostle. Let us, without the frivolity of the world ascribe honor and glory and praise unto Him in His greatness. Look and see, lay hold upon Him in the fulness of Himself as we are filled with this fulness that was provided for us before time, and manifested to us in time.

This apostle was chosen in the Christ Man before the world was, and God willed it so, and brought it to pass without consultation, or without any mortal assistance being involved in bringing it about. As we leave that phase of the text, let us, as much as lieth in us look on high. Look up, for from hence cometh all of our help. To one and all, pilgrims and strangers in our midst, let me say to you, as Paul said to the brethren at Corinth, "Be ye reconciled to God," taking up your cross, denying yourself, and follow your Lord and Saviour, and go with us, for, verily, we are on a goodly journey.

This apostle was given to the saints at Ephesus. This gift was not limited to the saints there. It was to the faithful in Christ Jesus, and, as he said in an earlier letter, to all them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus (set apart), that are called saints, to all that call upon the name of Jesus Christ (I Cor. 1:2). If the doctrine of the Primitive Baptist people is better; if it does more for a sinner than the theories of men, the doctrine and commandments of men, then it is in what God has done and is doing for His people. By the admission of the world, what they preach is not going to save all of the human race--in fact, according to what they say, only those that are willing to be saved will be saved, which is in direct opposition to what Paul has declared to us. Again, the fulness that the Gentiles were promised, and made manifested by the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Tim. 1:10), and fulfilled in those that are born of the Spirit is the highest and only God honoring doctrine that has ever been promulgated among men.

"Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ."

Paul was doing the writing, but he was moved by the Holy Ghost to write. Let us be specific, since we are dealing with specific matters, even so specific, that there is not any salvation anywhere else, in any name, in anything, in anybody, save the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, when there is only one salvation and it is only in the Lord Jesus Christ, it must needs be that all of the details be specific. Paul was not moved upon, and cooperated with the movement, but he was moved by the Holy Ghost. There is not any cooperation by the creature with God. The success of this work was not based upon the coordination of the creature with the Creator; not at all; not for a moment; not in the case of one sinner, much less of the family belonging to God. The grace, which saves, was from God to the Ephesians. Who will be the first to bear a torch for God, and a banner heralding that something more is needed? Not only grace is given to sinners from God for their salvation, but great peace shall come to them. Their way shall be marked with a peace-journey and a peaceful atmosphere, but it will be a great peace, and this is in keeping with the ways of God. He teaches all of His children, and as a result of His work, a great peace shall be theirs to enjoy. Dear tried saint, dear afflicted pilgrim, lift up your weeping eyes, your tear stained cheek upwards. Your lovely Redeemer is there as your intercessor, as the only One with authority and power and compassion to wipe the tears from your eyes.

Let not conscience make you linger
Nor of fitness fondly dream,
All the fitness He requireth
Is to feel your need of Him;

This He gives you
'Tis the Spirit's rising beam.

May it be His manifest gift to each of you to realize that not only is the gift of grace and peace from God our Father, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, but that He will be in you and with you to the execution of His will in you.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." We are told that whatsoever God doeth it shall be forever. (Eccl. 3:14) Did God do this in eternity before the foundation of the world? Did He know whether we would accept it or not? The reason I ask such an absurd question is because that it is sometimes declared and affirmed that God knows not all things. Did He know whether we would utilize the blessings that He made available to us or not? If He did not know that, then not only goes predestination down the drain, but also foreknowledge. If He did know that we had to accept and take advantage of what He had blessed us with, then, by all means salvation is a joint affair between God and the sinner, God doing His part in eternity, we doing ours in a time state. But such handling of the sacred Scriptures is, in the first place, a reflection on our natural intelligence, as well as showing forth our lack of having been under the influence of His Spirit as our Teacher. In the first place, the natural mind is not able to comprehend spiritual things. It does not make the least difference how much help is given the natural mind, it will never become able to understand spiritual things. The natural of fleshly or carnal mind is enmity to God, and that enmity cannot be removed by a mind filled with enmity. A mind filled with enmity could never remove enmity from its own domain. A carnal mind is death, and it cannot turn and be peaceable. The fleshly mind is not profitable in the things of the spirit of God. Appealing to the carnal or fleshly mind to improve itself is utterly impossible (Jer. 13:23). They that are in the flesh cannot please God, (Rom. 8:8) therefore, urging carnally minded men and women to turn and do good is not permissable in the realm of the doctrine of saving grace. While there is a daily crucifixion of our sinful nature, yet we are never free of sin. This presense of sin in us causes us to place an interpretation of the promises and commandments of God that they will not stand. One of the most unlawful things that a Christian can do is the placing of private interpretations on the scriptures. That is not permissable; that cannot be scripturally acceptable. How prone some are to do that with the present text.

God has blessed His people with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. How prone some are to say that this passage does not mean what it says. Well, dear brother and sister, what does it mean? Did God stagger at what He was saying, and not say what He meant to say? Did He mean just that, just like He said it, or did He really mean something else but was not able to clarify what He did mean? If the passage quoted did not mean what it said, what did it mean? Would you come to me and tell me that it means that He did bless us with all spiritual blessings, but that it is left up to us to utilize them? Would you do that? Upon what rule would you do that? Would be on the ground that such a meaning would rob sinners of accepting these blessings? If not, Why? Let us remember that the text says as clearly as language can make it that God did, before the world began, bless His people with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. He did do that. He said that He did. But let us pass on.

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Now back to His having blessed us in this signal way: He did bless us with all spiritual

blessings, and this blessing us was not predicated on anything, anything at all, but it was according to His having chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world. Never, never at any time has He blessed us because of our doing right. Men do right because they are righteous in Christ. That is the only wholesome doctrine in the universe. God gives us the kingdom; He has given us all things pertaining to life and godliness; He has given unto us repentance. The pay system in the Bible is limited to sin; it is a universal payment, the wages of sin is death, and it has already paid off; the execution of it was enacted in the garden of Eden, and is culminated when we breathe out our natural life. There is not any logic that can make the blessings He blessed His people with in Christ as conditional on our part without at the same time making our election dependent on what we do with both of them. The blessing us with all spiritual blessings in time were according to His choice of us. If the choice was according to God's eternal purpose, then in every way, and regardless of what disputers may say and do, the having blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ in heavenly places was equally according to God's eternal purpose. On the other hand, if this great blessing in eternity was predicated on us taking advantage of the blessings, then likewise, no more, and no less, was the choice of God's people to glory predicated on conditionalism.

To further aggravate the helplessness of sinners, if just one of these blessings, if any part of what was done for us in covenant, has not been done for us in time, there is not any salvation for us. If one of God's blessings bestowed upon us in covenant does not come to the covenant children, then, God's covenant with David, with Christ, was not ordered in all things and sure, and thus the Covenant of grace has been altered. The promise of God was that the Covenant which He made would not be altered or broken, and now on every side we are being advised that God has kept His part of the Covenant, but that we have neglected our part. When people talk that way, even if they make a Profession of being Old Baptists, they are besmirching the lovely name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In the covenant of grace, which was between God the Father, God the Word, and God the Holy Spirit, the sinner did not have a part. Let me say that again and again. He did not agree to taking a part, neither was a part given him in it. God made a covenant with sinners (Israel), and how many of them kept it? Not one. Not the first one. It was based on that fickle flesh of men and women complying with conditions, to wit, keeping the law. That way, that plan failed. God was not disappointed in that. It was his purpose that it fail. He was and He is a jealous God, and His praise and His glory He will not give to another. Ancient Israel said they could keep the law, keep the covenant of works. The history of Israel as a nation, and of us as individuals proved that it could never be by works of righteousness which we have done, and regardless of how small a part of guilt (as covenant breakers would think) that they have the full force of the penalty of that broken law covenant will be executed upon us in an experience of grace.

Out of God's abundant love He gave us a new Covenant, a better Covenant based entirely on the Three-in-One God keeping it in every detail. The spiritual import of the types and shadows of that better Covenant was shown in glimpses back through the Old Testament. The saints of God fleeing out of the clutches of law Mongers in Egypt, were baptized in a beautiful figure of the Keeper of that New and Living and Better Way at the Red Sea. (I Cor. 10:1, 4), And, as the three Hebrew children were given to experience the preservation that is in the Lord Jesus Christ in a figure in the fiery furnace (Dan. 3:24, 25).

What joy and what keen rapture and

anticipation floods my soul as I sit here at my typewriter and contemplate the intense suffering and agony of the dying Redeemer in His prepared body in which He would appear and put away sin, even hope leans forward, and dares whisper, even my sins, and causes the abounding of every covenant blessing to poor sinners.

O Lord, enable this poor lisping stammering tongue to grasp the joy and the beauty and the fulness of that which was given to us poor rebels through our covenant-keeping God, even to Him that came full of truth and grace, and that every member of His body, every heir of God's electing love, every one given to Christ in Covenant before the world began, has and will receive of that fulness.

Trembling and yet in sweet hope,
Elder W. D. Griffin

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ASSOCIATIONS

REMARKS ON ELDER BLAKESLEE'S LETTER

It is not our desire or intention, either by special or common pleadings, to encourage a controversy on the subject of Associations, as, to our mind, there are many other subjects at this peculiarly trying time of vastly greater importance to the peace, comfort and edification of the people of God, which claim our columns. Especially should we regret to enter the list with a veteran of the cross whom we so highly esteem as our brother Blakeslee. Indeed, had he confined his remarks to the issue, as stated and defined by himself in the closing portion of his article, there would probably have been no room for controversy, but the principal part of his letter is confined to the extravagant proceedings of two New School Baptist associations, which probably all but New School Baptists would blush to be concerned in. Now, in justice to the Old School Baptists, it should be known that no such high-handed proceedings have ever been tolerated among them.

In our reply to brother Ausmus we stated that an association of churches may be anything the associated parties choose to make of them. We admit that brother Blakeslee has given two sad examples of the prostitution of the name, but we cannot perceive that he has even attempted to show that all associations of churches are unscriptural. He says the question at issue is not whether they have been productive of more good than evil, neither is it, we presume, whether there have been instances in which they have been perverted to be the most outrageous instruments of tyranny and oppression. We presumed that the question of brother Ausmus related only to associations of churches as they are recognized by the Old School Baptists. Two questions seem to us to be involved: first, Do the Scriptures warrant any association of gospel churches for any purpose whatever? Second, If they do, are ours such as the Scriptures sanction? If, by a careful and prayerful searching of the Scriptures, we find that the primitive churches did associate together, then we have clearly authority for them by apostolic example, and however much wicked men may pervert them, the example of the primitive churches cannot be thereby invalidated. The pattern and example of primitive saints associating in churches is admitted by brother Blakeslee, although it is known to him that there are very many religious organizations called churches whose practice is as grossly antichristian as that of the two associations instanced by him.

The primitive christians and churches either did or did not, under the direction of the apostles, associate together. We assume that they did, as individual christians, associate in

church relation, and, as churches, so far as to recognize, correspond, and, so far as practicable, unite together for social devotion and for mutual advice and edification, while none were allowed to lord it over God's heritage. Without any kind of association there could be no union, sympathy or identity; but we have palpable evidence that the apostolic churches did maintain a correspondence with each other, and their members met together in such harmony for the worship of God whenever they found opportunity, without regard to what particular branches of the church they belonged. This is evident from the fact that Timothy and Titus, though pastors (or bishops) of particular churches, had a charge to ordain elders and attend to other services in sister churches. All the churches of Galatia were addressed as one community, or association of churches, in one epistle written to them by Paul. Messengers were sometimes sent from one church, or churches, to another church of the same faith and order. It would be difficult to find an instance where christians or churches of the primitive faith and order ever refused to associate together when favored with opportunity because they were members of different branches of the church of Christ. It is not our impression that the churches of the apostles' day were as formal in their distinct organization as they are now, but where two or three were gathered together in Christ's name, there Christ himself was in their midst; and if, as at Pentecost, the number were increased to thousands, they were still of one heart and one mind. Hence we read of "the church in thy house," as well as the church in a city or nation.

None of the branches of the church of Christ can any more be independent of the other branches than any one member of a natural body can be independent of its fellow members. The hand cannot say to the foot, I have no need of thee, nor the eye to the ear. Christ says, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." This figure seems to represent the perfect vine as embracing all the brances which have grown out of it, and all alike invigorated and made fruitful by their common relation to the whole vine. A still stronger figure is used by the apostle, 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." The same apostle also in Ephesians iv. dwells largely on the vital and inseparable unity and fellowship of all the saints at Ephesus, and all the faithful in Christ Jesus, wherever they may be: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all;" and in the twenty-fifth verse he adds, "For we are members one of another." Now can such identity and vital union exist without association, without harmony of action? Can one member be independent, or have no need of all the other members? Can the foot travel on and leave all or any of its fellow-members behind? Can all these members, which make up the perfect and complete body of Christ, being many, keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and yet hold no correspondence or association together? We presume brother Blakeslee will not assume that they can. But still the inquiry returns, Do all these Scriptures justify the association of churches in the manner in which they are held by the Old School Baptists of our day? The affirmative or negative response must depend on how they are held or

practiced by the Old School Baptists. It is more than possible that some of our Old School Baptist associations may practice some things which are not justified by the law of Christ. We would all do well to look at this. Brother Blakeslee found in the New School Baptist associations which he has referred to, "legislative, judicial and executive" powers assumed, none of which have we ever found in any of our Old School Baptist associations. Neither the churches, nor even the apostles, were ever invested with legislative power. Christ has made all the laws his kingdom can ever require. The apostles are enthroned in the church to judge the twelve tribes, but not to make any new laws; nor has the church any judicial or executive power beyond that of strict obedience to the laws of Christ as adjudged and defined by the inspired apostles. In obedience to Christ's laws, as expounded by the apostles, the church, and every member thereof, whether individually or associated, are required to withhold their fellowship from the hidden works of darkness, and to withdraw from every brother that walks disorderly. But the rule of order by which the extension or suspension of fellowship is to be regulated is the law of Christ. Those unassociated churches in the north and northwestern part of this State are only unassociated in form; that is, they reject the name and formalities of associations, because, as we presume, they became so disgusted with the abominations which they have witnessed in the associations in their vicinity that they are jealous of all formal associations; but they are in reality associated in a form of their own, which they consider less objectionable. It is common with them to hold yearly meetings, at which brethren and sisters and Elders come together for social worship and mutual correspondence, and, for aught we could perceive, they really associate freely by meeting and greeting each other in the love and fellowship of the gospel, and they appear to be as fond of associating in their way as those who organize for conducting a more general correspondence with the churches and associations scattered abroad. Our ministering brethren from that vicinity also occasionally visit our associations and associate with us, and we hope enjoy the seasons with us. Now we do not wish to be understood as advocating any of the excesses or abominations which prevail among the New School order, which are complained of by brother Blakeslee, but we wish to discriminate between a christian and an antichristian association. There is something social in the very spirit of christianity which should be cherished by all who can appreciate it. "Let brotherly love continue." "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." These injunctions are not restricted to organized branches of the church of God, but they are addressed to the whole brotherhood, and we believe if ever there was a time when they that fear the Lord should meet frequently and speak often one to another, that time is now. Some have objected to associations because they drop from their connection such churches and associations as they believe have departed from the faith. But do not the unassociated churches do the same? And are not the brethren individually required to do the same? "Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth." When churches depart manifestly from the faith and order on which our fellowship is based, we are bound, individually and collectively, to withhold from them our fellowship, or recognition, until they return to the order of the house of God. Indeed, we are greatly mistaken if we have not witnessed great evils growing out of the oft reiterated cry of the independence of churches. How far is a church independent? It is simply this: A church of Christ in gospel order, governed only by the word and spirit of the gospel, has authority to discipline

her own members without interference from any other organized body, court or council on earth, and her decisions are entitled to be respected by all other churches. But churches, as well as individuals and associations, are liable to err, both in the spirit and letter, and in such cases she has no right to drag other churches or individuals into any disorder or heresy whatever; and any church who feels a consciousness that she has acted in the fear of the Lord, been governed in her actions by the divine rule, will rather court than shun investigation. She will frankly say, Come and behold our order; for if she is governed by the spirit of the gospel she will desire to secure the confidence and fellowship of all her sister churches. We always regard it as a suspicious circumstance when churches, ministers or other individual members put themselves upon their dignity and bid defiance to their sister churches under the plea of independence. It is virtually saying, We regard not your approbation; we do not appreciate your fellowship or care for your correspondence. Certainly such is not the way pointed out in the divine rule for keeping "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." John iii. 20,21. This rule bears the sacred seal of the eternal King, and may be relied on with implicit confidence.

Again in conclusion, we wish to say that our object in this article is not to disagree with the views of brother Blakeslee, for we as decidedly disapprove of the ungodly course which he condemns as he does, but our design is, while we repudiate and condemn the wrong, to discriminate between the right and the wrong, and we trust that he will understand and appreciate our motive. We cannot resist the conviction, from an experience of fifty-two years, that a general meeting of the Elders, brethren and sisters of churches of the same faith and order once a year, or oftener, if convenient, is both lawful and expedient. The primitive churches and members did meet as frequently as possible for mutual edification, without any restriction on account of distinct organization into separate branches, and every expression of admonition recorded, to our understanding, tended to encourage, if not to absolutely enjoin such gathering, as both duty and privilege. If churches are to isolate themselves from each other, pay no regard to the order nor seek the general welfare of the whole body, what is to become of that sympathy, concert and identity which is to distinguish all the members of Christ as one body, animated by one life, fed at one table, on the same food, having but one and the same interest, and all bound to the same destiny? Why should a single branch of the church wish to isolate herself from her fellow-branches and eat her morsel alone? The very spirit of vital christianity calls for association. "Come and hear, all ye that fear God," whether belonging locally to this or that branch. All who fear the Lord and obey the voice of his servant, are members of one Christ, governed by one Head, constituting but one body, and members one of another in union so close, and sympathy so vital, that if one member suffers all the body feels the pain. We do not argue that for such association any distinct organization or written constitution is indispensable, only so far as may be useful to preserve harmony and good order. The yearly meetings in some sections, and conferences, or corresponding meetings, in other sections of the country, may secure all that is desirable, but those who are partial to the one form should be slow to censure their brethren who see cause to promote the same object substantially in another form, unless

such form shall be manifestly subversive of the order of the gospel. Not only the organized associations, but all other forms of meetings are liable to abuses and it becomes the saints to watch diligently, and see that all things be done decently and in order. Let us prove all things and hold fast that which is good.

Middletown, N.Y., December 1, 1863.
Elder Gilbert Beebe

BEEBE EDITORIALS

We are getting many inquiries about Volume 4 of Elder Beebe's Editorials, and a few have even sent in orders for them. Regretably, they are not quiet ready as yet.

Volume 3 has received a very favorable reception, and we have not had even one single complaint regarding it so far. There are, however, a good number of folks who earlier expressed an interest in the work, but have not ordered yet. Please order Volume 3 now, if you intend to, so we may go on with Volume 4.

Our problem is not one of finances nearly so much as it is one of storage. We do not have any place suitable to store all the unsold Volume 3's and then take on Volume 4, also. To be plain, our bedrooms are running over with books. There are many places to put them, such as in church basements, but with humidity and temperature being a problem, we are somewhat reluctant to store them in such a place.

These books would make excellent gifts for graduates, the sick, or for any occasion and will certainly be of more worth and lasting than flowers or other gifts. With a little help from those of you who do enjoy Elder Beebe's writings, we could be greatly relieved.

Now about Volume 4. We have finished the type set. It is now all ready to go to the book manufacturer as soon as we can agree on contractual terms. We had been waiting on signing an agreement until several problems with past work had been satisfied. Hopefully, this is now resolved. If all goes as expected, we can have Volume 4 ready the first of the year.

Again, we urge your early purchase of Volume 3.

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Please - DO NOT order Volume 4 at this time.

(We do expect to bring out Volume 1 and 2 in the near future, also.)

Thank you,
Editor

OBITUARIES

ELLEN HORNE BRYAN

It pleased our loving Heavenly Father to call Sister Ellen Horne Bryan from our midst at Muddy Creek Church to be with Him, July 21, 1981. She was a patient at Elder Lodge Nursing Home, Jacksonville, N.C., when her call came.

A life-long resident of Onslow County, she was the youngest child and only daughter in a family of six children. Her parents were Willouby and Luke Horne. She was born December 5, 1887, making her stay here 93 years, 4 months, and 14 days.

She married William B. Bryan on April 19, 1908, and this union was blessed with three children. Her husband and a son preceded her in death. Two daughters, Mrs. Albert (Eva) Lanier, Mrs. Jessie (Lucille) Lowe, a host of grandchildren, great grandchildren, as well as nieces and nephews survive.

Sister Ellen Bryan asked for a home with Muddy Creek Church on April 21, 1951, at her home. She was received and baptized later on. She loved her church and was faithful to attend as long as health permitted. Her love for the doctrine of salvation by grace, those dear old hymns, and the brethren and sisters never diminished in the least.

Her funeral was conducted at Johnson's Funeral Home Chapel, Richlands, N.C., on July 23, by Elder D. B. Stokes, of Jacksonville, N.C. Her body was taken to Bryan Cemetery where she was placed beside her loving companion. The beautiful floral arrangements showed the love that family,

church, and friends felt for her.

We miss her very much, but feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by one who
loved her very much,
Arlene Williams

JUNE HUDSON

June Hudson departed this life on May 16, 1982, at the age of 75 years. He was a lover of the truth and very seldom missed attending services at Liberty Hill Church. Uncle "Bud" and Aunt Lurline had their home open for visitors and also had preaching services at their home at times.

Since Uncle Bud loved to travel, he has visited some churches in Arkansas, Texas, and Alabama.

He was blessed to visit the sick at the hospitals in Farmerville and Monroe, La., and also in the nursing homes in Farmerville and Marion. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (James 1:27)

Uncle Bud will be missed by the brethren of Liberty Hill Church. He was free hearted and was good to help out with the expenses of the church.

His only daughter, Mrs. Vivian Gray, and her three sons, Wayne, Charles, and David Gray will really miss their father and grandfather especially since he spent so much time with them.

His other survivors are his wife Mrs. Lurline Hudson; two brothers, John and Woodrow W. Hudson, Sr., both of Farmerville; three sisters, Mrs. Ruth Miller of Marion, Mrs. Lelia Harper of Springhill, La., Mrs. Evaline Hall of Jackson, Ms.; and two greatgrandchildren. (One of his sisters, Mrs. Reita Carmack of Farmerville, departed this life on May 19--three days after her brother's death.)

The funeral services were conducted by the writer and assisted by Elder David E. Turner. His body was laid to rest in Liberty Hill Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

Elder W.W. Hudson, Jr.

FLORENCE SCOTT (BEEBE) BELLOWS

Florence (Beebe) Bellows was born April 18, 1884, in Warwick, New York, and went home to be with her Lord on February 25, 1982. She passed away in the Skilled Nursing Unit of Memorial Hospital, in Burlington, North Carolina.

Sister Florence was a grand daughter of Elder Gilbert Beebe, founder and publisher of the *Signs of the Times*. Her father, Elder William L. Beebe, a son of Gilbert, followed his father in editing and publishing the *Signs*.

Sister Bellows was the daughter of Matilda Ann (Scott) Beebe, the third wife of Elder William Beebe, and Florence was her only daughter. She had older half-sisters, daughters of her father by previous marriage.

Sister Bellows was united in marriage first, to Samuel B. Paxson of Leesburg, Va., where they resided during their years together. Bro. Paxson, being much older than she, passed away after about fourteen years together. She lived in widowhood for about ten years, when she was united in marriage to Elder Arnold H. Bellows, of Roxbury, N.Y. They made their home in West Hurley, N.Y., until his death, February 7, 1957.

She maintained her home in her beloved Catskill Mountains, but came South for the winter seasons for several years. She spent two or three winters with Sister Mamie Rowe, widow of Elder J. T. Rowe, in Baltimore, MD. After Sister Rowe passed away, she spent her winters in our home in N.C., until 1973, after which she was not strong enough to return to her beloved mountains again.

In North Carolina she made new and gracious friends, who mourn her passing. She attended the meetings here as long as she felt strong enough, enjoying nothing better than hearing the truth of God proclaimed. When she could no longer go out, she greatly enjoyed spiritual conversation, and the fellowship with those who visited her.

Sister Bellows lived simply and quietly, enjoying her spiritual reading and meditation, until her vision failed. She made no complaints as she must be deprived of these blessings.

The latter part of October, 1980, she became bedfast. It was her desire, and ours, that she remain in the home. But though we had the kind and efficient help of a Nurse's Aid, it soon became imperative that she receive more professional care. She entered Alamance Memorial Hospital on December 8, 1980, and was later transferred to their Skilled Nursing Unit. She remained there except as she was from time to time again in the main hospital. In the Nursing Unit she received excellent and tender care. We might say, loving care, for she endeared herself to the entire staff there.

It was Sister Bellow's wish that there be no regular funeral service, but only the simplest service at her burial. She wished no flowers, no eulogies. This was most consistent with her simple godly life. She was laid to rest in the mausoleum at Memorial Park, near Elon College, N.C. Elder D. V. Spangler and Elder W. J. Berry spoke a few words with prayer.

There is no immediate family, and she is survived by great nieces, nephews, and cousins; also step-grandchildren, all of whom she loved very much.

Sister Florence is greatly missed here. But we are comforted by the precious hope that as we must say, "She's gone!" on that blessed "other side," her precious Lord would say, "She's home!"

By one who loved her.

Mabel Berry

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VIRTUE OF KEEPING QUIET

Covin, Alabama
June 15, 1955

Elder and Mrs. C. M. Haygood,
Ballenger, Texas

Dearly Beloved Brother and Sister;

If I know my heart I would always do those things that are well-pleasing to our heavenly Father. Thus we feel a desire to communicate with you two dear pilgrims. "For to do good and to

communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." (Heb. 13:16) I want to keep in contact with the children of God, for we are on a long journey in a long, wearisome wilderness road. How sad and weary it can become when we are left to travel alone without the companionship of our blessed Redeemer and his chosen people.

I do not believe that a child of God can hate his brother or sister. Hatred of sin wherever found is right, for every quality of God is to be found in his offspring. Likeness begets likeness. God has eternally hated sin, and every son and daughter that has ever been begotten by him, has had instilled in them a hatred of every evil and lustful principle. The thought that God's people love sin as well as they ever did, is not only of the devil, but it is repulsive to every heaven born soul. The Spirit has not given us directions to let our sins be an excuse to wink at the sins of our kindred in the Lord. We have all heard it put this way: "I can not afford to raise any charge against my brethren because I am so sinful myself." Did the apostle use that as an excuse? No! No, not at all. He said that he was the chief of sinners, but he never did use that as a deterrent to severely rebuking sin wherever he found it among the churches. But this hatred of sin in our brethren will not cause us to hate them. Our efforts to discipline erring members of the church must be done in love for them.

We love one another for we are born from above. God is love and we cannot help but love him that has begotten us from the dead to life in Christ; neither can we help loving our Father's children, our brethren and sisters in the Lord. This kind of "can't-help-it" doctrine will never harm anyone. If this love of God is born in us as fruit of His spirit, it will show. You cannot hide love. You may try to hide it, but it will show in your eyes, your words, your actions. A love that can be suppressed is of the earth, for the love of earthly things, including men and women, can be broken by other earthly things, but not so with the love of God. It is from above, and things below cannot stop or deter things from above. The Bible decree is "that the elder shall serve the younger" and it has not been abrogated by the Lord, much less by earthly vessels of wrath.

If I know my heart I desire to love my Father's children. I am sometimes afraid that I do not love them with that devoted, fervent, enduring love of God; and then again I feel that "I have passed from death to life because I do love the brethren," and that I desire them before myself: that I desire their welfare and happiness ahead of my own. Joseph has ever been intent on the welfare of his brethren, even though they have ever been intent to destroy him and his possessions. (Gen. 37) And the true Israel of God have ever loved one another and have ever endeavored to serve one another.

It was soothing and relaxing to sit down together and talk of the things of the kingdom. I hope that I did not come among you sowing any discord in doctrine and practice, neither to lay waste the borders of the kingdom by slaying her watchmen. I do not remember of a single conversation on the whole trip that was derogatory in any way to a child of the heavenly Father. It should always be thus, but I am guilty of it not always being so.

I may be wrong in what I think that I see, but right at this time I think that the ministry in the lower Southeast and Westward is at a oneness in the things pertaining to the Old Baptist church. It is true that things have happened that are unpleasant, and things that ought not to be among the saints, but it appears that the brethren are showing themselves to be good soldiers of Jesus Christ and are bearing hardness for his name's sake. I well remember our old

father in Israel here in the Hopewell Association, Elder G. W. Berry, who told us boys in the ministry one time, "Boys do not fight when you are evil spoken of. If somebody tells the truth on you about your wrong conduct, quit whatever you are doing that is wrong, and be quiet. If they tell a falsehood on you, just live quietly and peaceably with one and all, and prove that it is a falsehood. If you are a fighter, you must remember that the goat gets his head down in the mud to attack. Keep your heads up, boys, keep your heads up." I feel that I have too often talked back when I have been falsely accused, but I hope that I have been given a stronger desire of late "to keep my head up" and let things go as they are, if I am sure that I am not guilty of the accusation.

Dear ones, we have something to be joyful about, and it is so wonderful that the Lord God Almighty, the Holy One in Israel, imputed our sin to Jesus Christ our Redeemer. It is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them"; and surely, surely, none of us have done that, all having sinned and come short of the glory of God, but let not your heart be troubled about this, for verily God has raised up a Prophet of ourselves and every child of God has heard him. (Deut. 18:15) It was an awful night when Sinai was shrouded in smoke and flames and the Lord God of heaven and earth thundered his righteous and holy law in our frightened ears. We knew that it was more than we could measure up to. We said so, and entreated Moses to go and hear and receive it for us. God told Moses, "They have well said, they cannot hear it and live." Isn't it something to be glad about that we are the anti-type of that people that said well, and that our saying received the approval of God Almighty. The curse never was on us; the sins of a broken law never were imputed to us; our sins and iniquities never were remembered against us. Our Prophet was made a curse for us. He, being made a curse for us, has redeemed us from the curse of the law. We were due by the law to be forever cursed; he by transgression was not due to be thus cursed. It is thus so wonderful: the just dying and becoming a curse for us, the unjust; and we going free. It was us that were due to hang in ignomy on a tree, vile transgressors to be ridiculed and made a public gazing-stock; it was he that inhabited eternity as the eternal Son of God, that, in a prepared body of flesh and blood, pulsating with the life and blood of the heirs of promise, suffered the pangs and agony of a broken law, hanging in our place, bearing all of our jeers, our tauntings, our railings.

Every pain that we have ever had; every falsehood that was ever told on us; every loss and cross that we have had to count before him and in his presence, is in no sense worthy to be compared to the suffering of the lowly Christ Jesus. My, dear companion in the ministry, and your helpmeet in this world and in the church, suffer a word of exhortation: Never open your mouth when you are evily spoken to, or about, for there is no sin as the sin of retaliation and vengeance taking. The creature is to be replied to, and will be replied to, in every petition at a throne of grace, or every departure from the truth, or every step in wrong doing, by our God; but there is never, never at all, a time when we are to reply against the trials that we are brought through; against the providential and parental care of our heavenly Father; against those that persecute us for Jesus's sake. Before we can have a good case for replying to those that despitefully use us, we must remove from the Bible the fact that he opened not his mouth. I have never known a case where a persecuted child of God held his peace that it did not bring him or her in sweeter fellowship among the saints. It will never get you in trouble, dear brother, to keep quiet, but it

will always increase your trouble to do a lot of talking in defense of yourself in the midst of persecution. I have always felt that the child of God that made a lot of noise when persecution came (as he or she would call it), was not being persecuted at all for righteousness sake, but that his or her sin had found them out.

Dear saints let us press on and up. The children of God must go on to perfection. Where else is there to go? Surely we do not need to go towards imperfection, for if we are what we sometimes hope, we are imperfect in all of our ways, and have had a fill of that.

We hope that you all can come to see us at some future date.

Write when you have time and a fruitful mind.

Your brother and sister in precious hope,

Elder W. D. Griffin

---

240 Lake of the Woods
Gig Harbor, WA. 98335

Dear Elder Williams,

I am renewing my *Signs* subscription for another two years. What a blessing the Lord is bestowing upon us each month. It seems He is pouring out His Spirit upon the Elders who are contributing articles for the *Signs*. My soul has been edified and made to rejoice in my precious Saviour, Priest and King. May He continue to bless His ministers and all of you who are laboring to publish this periodical - the Truth which is truly "The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon".

I cherish the memory of my visit to Danville, Virginia and attending Association meetings in Virginia and North Carolina. We celebrated the 50th anniversary in honor of Elder Spangler and Dan River Church. I was so priviledged to meet all of the ministers present, many of whom write for the *Signs*. This was in 1978. Since then I moved up to Washington State (from Glendale, Calif.). I get to attend Bethel Church at Mossy Rock, near Mt. St. Helens. It is quite a distance from where I am living, but the Lord has provided a way for me to attend church. What a joy to be able to meet with my spiritual kindred! They are such a lovely little church, earnestly contending for the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

I recall you and your lovely family. I wish to commend you and to thank you for all your labors in getting the *Signs* to us so efficiently - "A workman that needeth not be ashamed."

Enclosed is a check for two years subscription. Kindly use the balance as you see fit.

In bonds of love in Christ Jesus,
Sister Ruby Gilbert

HEAR YE HIM

Jesus took three of his desciples up into a high mountain and was there transfigured before them. And there appeared unto them Moses and Elias. Not knowing what he was saying, Peter desired to build three tabernacles, one for Jesus, one for Moses and one for Elias. But, "While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud, overshadowed them; and, behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."

Hear ye him. Many people would have us believe this to be an invitation, that Jesus is pleading for us to open our heart and let him come in and save us: just open your ears and hear and answer his call and everything will be great with your soul. I have no stones to throw at these people, for I was among them in time past, and many of them are still my friends; but their doctrine is a false doctrine, and there is not a speck of truth to it. If Jesus must plead with puny man in this way, and we have the power to accept or reject his call, then we have no need of him whatsoever; for we would have power within ourselves to save

ourselves; for if we have the power to reject his salvation then we also have the power to keep him from casting us into hell. But, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." If his people are not now willing, and if this is not the day of his power, please advise us as to when this will be. We will note the scripture says, "Thy people." These are the ones to and for whom the scriptures are written, and not to the world at large. These are the ones chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world. Jesus prayed, "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thy hast given me, that they may be one, as we are one. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scriptures might be fulfilled." When Jesus shed his precious blood on the cross of Calvary for the sins of his fallen people, the debt was fully paid, justice was satisfied and their salvation was secured forever. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."

Hear ye him. Before the coming of Christ, the Jewish people had only the law and the prophets. Moses represented the law, for by him it was given to the people; and Elias represented the holy prophets of God. The Jews' were unable to keep God's holy laws: but under the law they were required to make sacrifice offerings for sins yearly; which made none of them perfect; for if the blood of sheep, bulls, goats, etc. could have accomplished this, there would have been no need for Christ to have suffered. These sacrifices were only emblems or types of the perfect sacrifice that was to come. The law could make nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better covenant did; Jesus Christ being that better covenant. He kept the law, and fulfilled it to a jot and a tittle, blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. By this he broke down the middle wall of partition between the Jews and the Gentiles: for until that time the Gentiles were without hope, and without God in the world. Not only did he fulfill the law, but all the prophecies of old that were written in the holy scriptures by God's holy prophets and in the Psalms. Now that Jesus was come, there was no further need of handwritten ordinances nor the prophets, therefore they were taken away. They did not just die or fade away. Remember that Moses, being the embodiment of the law, was buried of God that he was found no more; and Elias, representing the holy prophets, was taken away in a chariot of fire in a whirlwind. These were taken away of God for they were no longer in force nor needed, Christ is the end of the law for everyone that believeth, and it is him that we must now hear. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by His Son."

Hear ye him. He who hath an ear to hear let him hear. All men have natural ears, though some be naturally deaf. When Jesus was on earth he made the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk, and the poor had the gospel preached to them. And even now is Christ performing these same miracles for his bride, the church. Yet for those who are blind but say, "We see," their sins remaineth; the deaf hear not, for they are not his sheep; the lame walk not in the way of righteousness, for they hear not the voice behind them saying, "This is the way. Walk ye in it;" and they do not hear the gospel, for they are not poor in spirit, but rich in self-righteousness and the gospel is foolishness unto them. Some of the Pharisees said unto Jesus, "Are we also blind?" Jesus said unto them, If ye were

blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sins remaineth." (Jn. 9:40-41). Certain of the Jews said unto Jesus, "How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly." Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you believed not, because ye are not my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (Jn. 10:24-28) "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way which leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth to life, and few there be that find it." (Matt. 7:13-14) Left to themselves, all men would enter the wide gate and walk the broad road to destruction: but God's children are blessed to hear that voice behind them saying, "This is the way. Walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." (Isa. 30:21) There are also those poor, deluded souls who believe that their works will get them, as well as others who are enticed to follow them, to heaven. These are the ones who are rich in self-righteousness, and are not poor in spirit nor broken-hearted. "They profess they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." (Titus 1:16). "Many shall say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" But how did Jesus answer their boasts of self-righteousness? "And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity." (Matt. 7:22-23).

"Natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned." How then does one hear the beloved Son, for all we are natural men, descendants of our federal head Adam, who fell into a state of condemnation and death by transgression of God's holy law, and all of his posterity fell with him? Therefore all of us were at some time dead in trespasses and sin and were the children of wrath even as others. Since natural man cannot receive the things of the spirit of God, there must be a new birth, a spiritual birth: "Ye must be born again." Every child of God has an everlasting life. This life is in Jesus Christ, but it is not made manifest until a man is born again. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." (Jn. 5:24). Everyone with a sound natural mind understands that we must pass from life to death in this world, but there are few who understand the passing from death unto life; for they do not know they are spiritually dead. Jesus is the way, the Truth, and the Life, and he gives life to as many as the Father hast given him. Though they be dead when their Lord speaks to them, they hear and live. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." (Jn. 5-24) The dead cannot go forth seeking Christ, neither can they reject his heavenly call; "For in him we live and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring." "Without me ye can do nothing."

Hear ye him. Hear ye also the parable. Jesus spake many parables to the people, but only unto his disciples did he expound them, His disciples asked him why, and he answered, "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but unto them it is not given." We find here a division of the people: to his disciples an

understanding is given, but to all others it is not given. "Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand." Many prophets and righteous men have desired to see what you see and hear what you hear, but have not heard them. They prophesied of the salvation that should come unto you, and they searched and inquired diligently for "what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory of Christ. But unto them it was only revealed that it was not unto themselves, but unto us did they minister these things." But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. You who are the sons of God, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, are the ones commanded to hear His son. You will always hear him, though you may feel much of the time that you do not: "For in a dream, in a vision of the night, when sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instructions, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man." (Job 33:15-17). Though man may believe that he is working all things according to his own will and purpose, he is in truth fulfilling God's will and purpose; for God worketh all things after the counsel of His own will. Did He not say, "I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it?" Yes, we hear and do every commandment of our Lord and Master, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Truly, if we love him and keep his commandments we are born of God: "For love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God."

When this poor sinner asked for a home with the children of God, the only thing I remember telling them was that I was beginning to hear. I do hope that I have not deceived those wonderful people and that I myself am not totally deceived. Though these thoughts that I write unto you be very scattered, very imperfect, and far from complete, I submit them in love; trusting that our God will use them to his praise, honor and glory, and that He will bless them to your comfort and edification. I would pray that He give you eyes to see, ears to hear and a heart to understand what the Spirit sayeth to the churches. All errors herein are mine. Your prayers of faith are greatly needed and desired.

Clifford Wilbanks

The *Signs of the Times* needs your help. We do hope you agree.

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With the close of this volume the *Signs* has now been in continuous circulation for 150 years. Please join us in continuing this work in days to come.

Thank you,
Editors

THE WORD OF GOD IN THE HEART OF A KING

"Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath given me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king. And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the law, that he rent his clothes. And the king commanded Hilkiah, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Abdon the son of Micah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the

king's, saying, Go, enquire of the Lord for me, and for them that are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found: for great is the wrath of the Lord that is poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the Lord, to do after all that is written in this book." (II Chronicles 34:18-21)

Whatever negative qualifications Josiah had, he had one overwhelmingly good quality. He loved his God and took very seriously the words that came out of His mouth. The text says that when he heard the words of the book of the Law, he rent his clothes as a sign of his sadness and humiliation. What went on in his mind to produce such behavior? When those words hit his ears his heart was pierced and his conscience was pricked, because he knew that both he and his people had been and were at that very moment disobedient to the words that had come forth from God. This may seem amazing to some of us, but Josiah was actually affected by what God said. He cared. The reason why this seems amazing to me is because of the contrast I see between Josiah and those religionists I have observed in my life. I have seen men who claimed to be ministers of the word who had no interest in what God said in His Scriptures. These men used the Bible. But they used it *deceitfully* to manipulate people and to cover their sinful deeds by abusing and misinterpreting the Scriptures to fit their own conceptions.

I have met others who claimed to be much concerned about what God said. These men at first seemed to be very holy men who believed in principles and ideals, in right and wrong. Yet I saw these same men when it came to a matter that demanded a stand for the truth, change their talk. When these matters came up, these men no longer spoke of obedience to the commands of God, but instead began to speak of "unity" and "toleration." They argued that "love" ought to prevail over these "minor" differences over doctrine. They spoke in quite democratic terms. They viewed themselves as a tolerant group who were "level-headed" and who were not intimidated by others who might disagree with them. They seemed not to be bothered by the idea that some of their sheep might be disobeying the commands of the Scriptures. Yet as I observed these ministers, they seemed very happy and contented.

At first I saw nothing wrong with the things they said, although something inside me bothered me. I began to think to myself that nothing was more important than truth. I began to think that any talk of "unity" and "toleration" which somehow didn't allow room for all truth, including even the smallest grain of divine truth, was *satanic* unity which was not based on the law of God, but on the only thing left after God's commands have been rejected - the whims of men. Once the Word was abandoned, I began to see then that men removed from the common ground upon which they all stood as creatures of God under His authority, or, as sinners who all needed equally the enlightenment of the Spirit. When God's standards are abandoned, then it is certain that some men will arise to lead, whose wishes acquire total authority and, others to follow these men and their wishes usually without question. Josiah was the King of Judah, yet when the words of his God were read they humiliated him, as well as the common people. *To be bound to the Law of God is the only hope any man has not to be enslaved to another man.*

These same ministers and people who spoke of moderation and toleration reacted very immoderately and intolerantly towards me when I questioned them as to their actions. I was called a "radical," "troublemaker," "intolerant," "unloving," "dogmatic," and more such terms. When so many people spoke in this way I began to wonder if they were not all right and I wrong. I began to look inside myself to

see what my heart motivation was for my objections. The most depressing factor of the whole situation was what I found inside myself. I found that in my heart there *was* a certain amount of intolerance, hatred, and dissensions. I realized that their charges were not totally false; and the more I looked inside me the less I liked what I saw. What was I to do? Could I deny their charges fully with a clear conscience before God? Because of my guilty conscience I then tried to convince myself that I was over-zealous for the truth. I tried to convince myself that I was not so much interested in the honor of God as I was in being always right. Yet, this also gave me no peace with my God. I still believed that God's truth as found in His word was too important to be sacrificed for the sake of "unity." I still believed that these men were wrong and compromisers; betraying God for the sake of expediency and filthy lucre as Judas had done to his Lord. Listening to their conversation only confirmed my opinion. It seemed that they could talk of football, baseball, finances, etc., but that they did not seem to enjoy talking of spiritual things. Once in a while they would speak of Jesus or of "witnessing" yet, when a soul who was hungering for the bread of God's word came to them, he might as well have not. They could not feed him, neither were they interested in doing so. These poor hungering sinners were made to feel that they were the ones who were strange for being interested in things like the atonement of Christ, the doctrines of free grace, the proper form of a church of Christ, etc. I quickly realized that my conversation would bore them, and theirs, in turn, bore me. They saw me as a "superpious fraud" who was always with his head in the clouds and never "practical" or "realistic" (which was another way of saying that I would not betray the word of God for convenience's sake). If I spoke my feelings I was labelled "self-righteous," one who thought that he was holier than anyone else, a spiritual snob, who looked down his nose at everyone else. I knew my heart to some extent. I knew that there was some pride in it, yet I believed that God was the one who was making me feel so out of place among these people. Among them there were some who cared, some who at times had the same thoughts and whom I felt had the same Spirit as I. Yet these were somehow lulled to sleep, or at other times intimidated into silence by the treatment they saw afforded me. When I spoke of my suffering, I was told I had a "martyr complex" and verged on some sort of "spiritual paranoia." I finally came to a hard realization. I determined that if this was the way of Christians, then I wanted nothing of Christianity or of Christ. I saw that no matter who was right, I did not belong with these people and that neither of us would be happy as long as I dwelt among them. When the time came to leave them, many thoughts went through my mind. I thought that I understood some of Abraham's feelings when God told him to leave his home, parents, and all he knew, to go to a place where God would tell him. I thought I understood what Job felt like when even his own wife told him to curse God and die. I had friends left there like Lot had in Sodom. Yet the decision boiled down to an amazingly simple choice, either follow the Word of God, or follow men.

To all that have ears to hear, listen. To refuse to follow the Word of God, because the cost will be high is a terrible sin. It is the essence of unbelief. It is a sin that will damn if characteristic of a person. *There is no unity that is worth any truth.* Without our allegiance to the Word of God there is no value to any of our religious activity. We must ask the Lord to do to us what He did to Josiah, "Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest His words against

this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thyself before me, and didst rend thy clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard thee also, saith the Lord." (II Chronicles 34:27) Think of it! Josiah had a "tender heart." Let us beg God to give us such a tender heart that we too may not be able to rest with a lie at our throat. Let us beg God to give us the courage to denounce what we believe to be against His Word no matter what the cost, or what misery it will bring down upon our heads. *Let God be true and every man a liar.*

No doubt what we may denounce may, in fact, be the truth and we be in the error. If this be the case, we must repent and humble ourselves. If this be the case we will still be in quite a different situation than those who are deceitful when it comes to the Word. Paul himself spoke of his past, saying that although he had been in gross error, he obtained mercy because he persecuted the church *ignorantly* and in *unbelief.* (I Timothy 1:13) What Paul did he did honestly, thinking that he was serving God in doing it. Any of Christ's disciples who are not willing to abandon all they thought was right should they be shown it to be wrong, are not true disciples of Christ. This willingness may not be immediate; there may be temporary rebellion, yet within a reasonable amount of time the Spirit ought to convict those that are His. Jesus put it quite simply, "No man having put his hand to the plow, and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:62) Jesus faced again this mentality so prevalent in many of the so-called churches in America in Luke 11:27-28. There a woman was blessing Jesus, the Person, but, obviously from Jesus' response she was blessing Him without regarding His Word. "A certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. But he said, Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it." So many people are ready to praise Jesus and magnify Him but really they are not prepared to accept the Jesus of the Bible, The One who rejoiced in that God had not revealed Himself to the wise and prudent, but unto babes. When Jesus utters those difficult commands that force us to make difficult decisions, will this woman and her religionist friends be as happy about Jesus then, and still praise the breasts that gave Him milk, or will they say, like some others of Jesus' disciples, that these are hard sayings that can not be followed? Jesus put paramount importance on *keeping* the Word of God and not on playing the game of religion.

The bottom line on this whole matter is the word that Jesus spoke, "I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him." (Luke 12:4-5) Whenever we neglect the words of God in any situation, it is always because we fear (or believe) the words of a man more than His, whether it is our own word or that of another.

Well does John warn us that among this list of people who will be cast into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone will be the "fearful" (cowards). (Revelation 21:8) Yes, it is a truth, that whosoever will not confess the name of the Son before men, him will the Son not confess before the Father who is in heaven.

There will be situations where one will not be sure of what the Bible teaches on a specific subject. Yet the essential point here is that there should be an *attitude* of learning that will allow us to adjust ourselves to what God says. The greatest danger is that of making our customs equivalent to the Law of God. Since all men are sinners, all the churches composed of sinners will have

sin and therefore a certain amount of disorder. We are guaranteed by the promise of God that He will not abandon His people to apostasy, but will preserve them unto the end. Yet this promise must not be allowed by us to become an excuse for having hard hearts. "Take heed brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." (Hebrews 3:12-13)

The question that each of us, brethren, must ask ourselves anew each day is simple, yet profound. Will we beg God to give us a tender heart like He gave His servant, Josiah, to be willing to turn our backs on all the traditions that our fathers followed because we believe them to be against the Word of God, or shall we harden our hearts and our ways despite how our own consciences may condemn us? In 1832 Old School Baptists were willing to turn their backs on a powerful religious movement because they believed it to be against the Law of God. May they never abandon that same courageous position now.

William Santamaria
Perth Amboy, N.J.
May 11, 1982

EDITORIAL

"And Moses said unto the Lord, See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people; and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight. Now therefore, I pray thee, If I have found grace in they sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people. And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. And he said unto him, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? Is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth. And the Lord said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken; for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name." Exodus 33:12-17.

If the Lord gave us sufficient liberty to tell what is contained in these verses, eternity would not be long enough to tell it all. For the purpose of reviewing the circumstances, let us show you just a little of what had occurred at this particular time in the book of Exodus. The Lord had summoned Moses to the Mountain - Mount Sinai. He was on the mountain for 40 days and 40 nights. During that time the Israelites, under the leadership or Aaron, committed a terrible crime against God. The Israelites had begun to murmur. They came to Aaron, and this was their language, "Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him." (Exodus 32:1)

How quickly they had lost sight. How quickly the flesh showed itself. It had been but a short while that they had seen the hand of God parting the waters of the Red Sea, and all of them going across in a great deliverance; God showing Himself to be their God; destroying Pharaoh and all of his army, and now they say to Aaron, the very man that God would annoint a priest, "Make us gods." So Aaron instructed them to take their earrings, their gold, and their jewels and bring them to him, and he fashioned a calf, a golden calf, as the scripture calls it. And the text says, "The children of Israel rose up to play." They declared a feast day, and they frolicked, and they made themselves naked. They worshipped and adored, and idolized the calf that Aaron had made.

So the forty days and nights being ended, Moses and Joshua, as they descended the mountain, heard a great

noise. Joshua thinks there is a war in the camp. Moses says that this is not the noise of warfare, nor is it the voice of singing, and so on, but he recognized that this was the voice of those that were frolicking before the Lord. In verse 19 of chapter 32 we read, "And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing; and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount." Moses confronted the people and Aaron. He asked Aaron, "What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them?" Aaron was a lot like his distant relative, Eve. He wanted to pass the buck. "And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my lord wax hot: thou knowest the people, that they are set on mischief." Isn't that just like human nature? "Moses, it wasn't my fault. These are a mischieveous people. They got up this idea." "For they said unto me, Make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him." So it says that he told him, "Whosoever hath any gold, let them break it off. So they gave it me; then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf." A bigger lie was never told. "And when Moses saw that the people were naked; (for Aaron had made them naked unto their shame among their enemies:) Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp and said, Who is on the Lord's side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses; and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men." It is interesting to observe, (and mark this well, this is not idle history, but this is the beginning of the legal dispensation;) God had written on the tables of stone. The Israelites were about to engage in a legal covenant with God. As His people (and before Moses could come down from the mountain,) they were already whoring after other gods.

Moses said, "Who is on the Lord's side." That's a solemn expression, isn't it? Who responded to Moses? Only the Levites. Now the Levites were the tribe from whence Moses came. But even more important than this is what occurred. They took their swords, and by the instruction of God, they went through the camp and they slew a great number which the scripture says was about three thousand souls.

We learn sometimes by comparison, and other times we learn by contrast. This was the beginning, as I said, of the legal day. Let us travel in time, you might say, 3500 years, (or however many years it might have been, depending on which chronology you read.) Let us go from the time of Moses to the time where rather than Moses coming down off the mountain of the law, we see our resurrected Saviour ascending up off of the Mount of Olives, and this you may say, was the end of the legal day, and the beginning of the gospel day. And whereas at the beginning of the legal day with moses, and because of transgression, there were 3000 souls put to death; at the beginning of the legal day with Moses, ascends up (as Moses came down) and there were 3000 souls brought into life and liberty and freedom. The Lord added unto the church and blessed 3000 to be baptized in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Can you not see how the one ended and the other began with the same number of people? Three thousand died here under Moses, and three thousand were brought into a living union with Jesus the Lord at the other end of the day. God's people can learn much from such examples and

comparisons, and contrasts as this.

After the slaying then, the anger of God continued to kindle against the people. The Lord told them to strip off the orniments from them. (They had ornimented themselves very well.) Now, do you know what they were wearing? They were wearing silver and gold and jewelry, and all sorts of fine garments. You recall that the Lord had told Israelites the night of the Passover that they were to spoil the Egyptians. They were to borrow of the Egyptians, and God put it in the heart of the Egyptians to give them what they asked for. Now the Lord was not instructing them this for the purpose of enriching them, because they didn't have any need of gold, silver, diamonds, jewelry, and fine garments. God was going to take care of them in the wilderness in His miraculous way. All of this material business was for the purpose of ultimately constructing the tabernacle where God's glory would dwell while they wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. You see the abuse that they put these things to. They had a piece of gold, or they had a bracelet, or they had whatever it might have been, and they adorned themselves with it. These things were for the adornment of the glory of God. Now may we be blessed to learn a lesson in that.

"Then Moses went out." He left Israel's camp. Moses was distraught. Moses had seen the people of the living God sin the gravest sin, and he was distressed. Verse 7 of this 33rd chapter says, "And Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp afar off from the camp, and called it the Tabernacle of the congregation." And you know what someone would say if that occurred today? They would say, "Brother Moses split the church." Moses took the tabernacle and went outside the camp, "afar off." "And he called it the Tabernacle of the congregation." The congregation was not the twelve tribes of Israel in the mind of Moses at that moment, but those that would come to the tabernacle outside the camp. "And it came to pass, that every one which sought the Lord went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation, which was without the camp." (If you would like to learn more about being without the camp, read the latter verses of the book of Hebrews.)

"And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses." Here Moses talked with the Lord face to face. "And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle."

After God spoke to Moses face to face, what did he do? "And he turned again into the camp." Moses had gotten his tabernacle and moved out. He left the camp. He went without the camp, and when God came and spoke to him face to face, his heart was drawn back to the people once again, because he said that though God was vexed with His people, He had not forsaken them. And Moses' heart was drawn back out to the people of God. Now let me ask you. Put yourself in Moses' shoes. Have you not been at one time or another, (if you were honest about it,) where you had come to the place where you said, "I'm not going back." Most of you have. Something didn't suit, but Oh, when God comes to us and speaks to us face to face, and we learn that God is in heaven and we are on earth, and only God in heaven is holy and we are no better than the Israelites who bowed before the calf, we no longer have any desire to be separated from our brethren.

And then this brings us to the text. "And Moses said unto the Lord, See, thou sayest." Moses had some questions, and Moses desired some answers. "You've told me to bring up this people, and you've not let me know

whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight." Moses didn't understand this. This was his petition, "Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people." What is Moses saying? Oh, how profound it is. "Lord, if I have found grace in thy sight." This stems not so much from doubt as it does from an honest inquiry after a further knowledge of the situation. "Lord, if I've found grace in thy sight." If what you have said is so, then show me now thy way. Now someone might say that Moses was a little impatient. "Show me now thy way." Not at all. We cannot but believe that every one of those who have been washed in the blood of the Lamb desire to know, not tomorrow, but today, the way of God, but even one day in walking in our own paths, in the footsteps of our own designing, is enough to distress and vex us to no end. It's not sufficient for God's children to be like those of the world and go in any direction and not be bothered about where it is they are going. They want nothing more and nothing less than the guidance and the direction of God in their lives at all times.

Moses says, "If I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way." Do you believe the Lord was going to show him? Do you believe He did show him? What was the way that He showed him? The only way that there ever was, and we will see that in just a moment. Now there is some language in this that we wish to point out, also. "Shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight." It is a wonderful thing to feel that the Lord is gracious to us now. But there is a longing in the heart of the people of God that God will not only be gracious today, but that they may, by faith, lay claim to the promise, "I'll never leave thee nor forsake thee," and that they may find grace tomorrow, also. There is in our breast from time to time an apprehension that tomorrow may not be as good as today. We know this is wrong because our Heavenly Father has instructed us to take no thought for tomorrow; but that we must stand on sufficient things for today, and yet we recognize the same thing in the mind of Moses when he said, "If I have."

"That I may consider that this nation is thy people." This is what Moses was really concerned about; that God still owned these people; that God's favor would be with them, and as He led them through the wilderness that he could have the assurance and comfort of knowing he was leading the people of God. We can say this with all sincerity, and believe it from the depths of our soul, that if we could be convinved this day that you people were not the church of Jesus Christ, we would leave you just as suddenly as we came. It's too important! We don't know the uncertainties of life, but we know this one thing, that we want to be in the right way. "Show me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight; and consider that this nation is thy people." If there was a people on this earth that were nearer to being the church than these people, we should be there with them. We are not wedded to the name, "Old School Baptist" and we are not wedded to the name "Primitive Baptists." That which is of the utmost importance is if "I have found grace in thy sight", that He would show me now His way, and that in showing me His way, we might continue to find grace and that we might consider that this nation is His people.

It is His people that we want to be with, to live with, and to die with; and no other people on the face of the earth. But let me ask you, unless your natural family that you meet with are believers of free grace like you, can you have the same union and feeling with them as

you can with these spiritual people? When we gather after our meetings, and partake of natural food and sit around the tables, is there not a bond there that cannot be had at the table of our mothers, or natural families? Is it not a bond that says to us, "This is the people of the living way?" Dear readers, let us tell you there is nothing more precious in this world than the thought of sitting together around the table which is the Lord's and taking of those emblems of His body, and His blood, eating with the very people we expect to rejoice with in heaven. That knowing and that feeling, and that satisfaction will take away loneliness; it will take away gloom; it will take away everything in this world that would distress one as regards union with other things.

There have been times that the Lord has left us to ourselves that we were so miserable, so desperately miserable, that if we thought we could not regain the communion with our Heavenly Father, that we could not go on. Have you ever been that miserable? If you have ever been in that way, you will ask again, "Lord, show me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight, and consider that this nation is thy people."

And then, the grandest portion of all the text, "And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." "My presence shall go with thee." Whose presence? The presence of God. Oh, could the world believe such a doctrine as this? The presence of God. We hear men say, "Oh, God has not the time to be worried about the minor or little things in the world. He is more engaged in the big things." Let us tell you, our God is just as mindful of His dear little lambs, each one of them in their various problems and trials, as He is in the moving of great nations. God speaks to Moses, and He says, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."

Let us ask you, and consider it well, Do you long for the presence of God? Not just when you meet; not just when you read the Bible; or when you pray, but do you long to have the presence of God with you all the time? We don't feel it to the same degree at one moment as we might, another, but isn't it a comforting thing to think that God's presence is with us? God's holy angels are around about us, and that come what may in this world, dangers, and trials, the assaults of Satan, devils, and wicked men, and all other things combined, if the presence of God is with us, we are secure. We are on a solid rock. Our standing is sure, and though we might not be blessed to feel it nor understand it as we would desire to, we know that if the presence of God is with us, then all is well! And the further along we go, the more we desire the presence of God; particularly in the light of the certain knowledge we are not going to be here much longer. Life will shortly be over. Dear brothers and sisters, when we look at our congregations, and see those old grey heads; those that are bowed down, ready for the harvest, we think, "Oh, what a blessed thing it is to see in their faces and in their deportment that God is with them. His presence is with them." It is a great blessing to know that in the moment that the Lord calls them to come to Jordan and walk down quietly and gently into the stream of death, the chilly waters of the passing from this life to the next, that the presence of God would be with them. A greater blessing could not be imagined. Nothing could surpass the hope that "My presence shall go with thee." By having that, what difference would it make if that moment was now? The dread of it is if we don't have such a hope. Sometimes when we look at those that are near to, and ready to pass that way, we could almost wish we could go before them, lest we see them depart from our company in death.

When the children of the Heavenly King pass from our camp, we sorely

miss them. We realize we will never see their smiling faces again on the shores of this life, but it is a comfort and a consolation to believe that the voice that spoke to Moses has spoken to them. He says, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." Why? Why, they've already heard that other voice before they hear the summons of death, and that is the voice of the Son of God when He says, "Come unto me all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give thee rest." Such a rest that it is that the world knows nothing of. And worldly people know nothing of it. But those who have heard it can lay down their labors, and lay down all of their griefs, and cast their cares before the Lord. They have ceased from their labors, and they have ceased from their earthly toils, that they might rest in the sure promise of God that "My presence shall go with thee." We spoke of the dear saints as they pass through life, journeying down into Jordan. We don't know who originated the comparison that Jordan River was the symbol of death, but the illustration does fit. We must pass through it (Jordan) to come out on the other side. There is also a death that we experience when the Lord kills us to this world. We die to the world when we are made alive in Christ. And when we have been made alive in Christ and are dead to the world, then we are ready to be buried. We are ready to be buried, not actually, because the physical body is not dead. We are dead as regards the world and sin. We are ready then to be buried in the waters of Jordan, like Jesus was, or we are ready to be baptized. And then we come up on the other side in the newness of life and the presence of God goes with His people in that death, burial, and resurrection.

Many people today are being buried who haven't died yet. Many religious institutions the world over are wholesale baptizing people (so called) and it is supposed to be a figure of death, burial, and resurrection, but the people haven't died yet. They are still alive to the world and still alive to the flesh, and still alive to the things of human nature, and until God has killed them and slain them by the law and brought them in dead and guilty before God with the sentence of condemnation upon them, they are not prepared for these things. But then when God does work the work of Grace upon their souls and kills them to all hope of heaven by any means except the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ, then being dead, it is suitable for them to be baptized, like being buried, because then like as our Saviour was resurrected, they come forth in newness of life, not an actual life as the world knows it, but a spiritual life, as only the elect family may know.

The Lord willing, we shall continue this later.

Elder J. F. Poole

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THE MYSTIC CRUCIBLE OF DEATH

Many people think that if a person's religion will stand the crucible of death it must needs be a good one. Say they, "Give us a religion to die by"; which, as a test *infallibly* to try truth and falsehood in religion by, will not *universally* hold. I have been led to consider this by reading the triumphant and happy obituaries in the *Methodist Magazine;* and I am well persuaded that persons dying in the Methodistical denial of imputed righteousness and personal election, and in the blazing advocacy of duty faith, free will, and man's power, *cannot* be saved. The devil himself, as far as I can see, might as well go into heaven as such a person. Thus, "the vitals" of Methodism are a total disqualification for heaven. And are not the general Dissenters refined Arminians? Secondly, I have been led into a persuasion that a happy death (as it is nicknamed) is no *sure* manifestation of a person's going to heaven. And why? First, for this and other reasons, because the devil "has the power of death" by God's permission. (Heb. 2:14) And I believe that the father of lies, that old magician, uses death as his fearful subject to still further blind the eyes of those who believe not with the faith of God's elect. And when people can cant and say of any notorious opponent against the truth, "Ah! what a happy death such a one died," the true-born child of God says, "If he died happily, and *truly* happily, I am deceived altogether; for the very *vitals* of that man's (the happy dier's) religion and mine are *totally* contrary; so that his heaven cannot be my heaven; for there was no change in him before he died, and scripture assures me there is no change to be effected after death; so that I am wrong or he is wrong; and I have the internal witness, supernaturally felt, of God and of my own conscience, with that of holy Scripture, that I am right." Therefore, according to the measure distributed to me of God, I cut off all these diers-happy with their doctrinal and unrepented-of lies; for, as Huntington says, a saved man's repentance shall be as public as his villainies. Therefore, we must look to what a man was in his life (in doctrine and practice, *experimentally*) before we can draw any conclusion from his *dying happy,* as the term is. Again, thirdly, Does not Asaph say that the carnally and profanely wicked have no bands in their death? (Psa. 73:4) And will a dead professor of Christianity be better thus than the profane? Will not an empty profession rather strengthen the draught of opium administered by "him that has the power of death, that is, the devil?" Will not even the profane be eclipsed by the false light in the dead or false doctrinalist? Will not death be gilded to those who are "twice dead"? Will not, as I have said, the opium be the *stronger?* A double death in sin and false religion bears away the palm thus from even the profane. Hence the happy obituaries in the Methodist and other magazines.

As for my part, I can only pronounce happiness in death to the perfect and upright. (Psa. 37:37) "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace." A sensible union with God, thereby feeling our perfection; a supernatural religion; truth, and not lies; repentance for sin; the beauty-producing imputation of Christ's righteousness, internally and externally; the innocency-producing blood of Christ; these things felt; thus being the workmanship, husbandry, habitation, and building of God, "builded for an habitation of God through the Spirit" experiencedly in the soul; these are the things, *more or less felt,* by which alone I can allow of happiness truly in death to a man.

The devil lurks "in secret places", in the villages of undefended religion; he boweth down with his eyes to the ground; he croucheth; he humbleth himself. And why? To catch those who

cannot pray with the spirit and with the understanding. He gets them in his net. He points them to the false crackle and blaze of a falsely happy death; and when he has lulled people, by God's permission, into the doubly deathful sleep of sin, and of a corpse-like dead religion, he then bows down, with his eyes behind the bulrushes of bodily death, (soothed and inflamed with his infernal opium and "false light",) and thus he devours hundreds. Thus, many that sleep in the dust of this earthly religion shall awake to everlasting shame and contempt. And, as Paul says, "It is high time to *awake* out of the sleep of confusion. (Rom. 13:11)

Abingdon I.K.
The Gospel Standard, 1841

SAUL AND PAUL: LESSONS FROM HIS LIFE

How wonderful and mysterious are the workings of Sovereign Grace! (Romans 11:33). How marvellous to trace the lines of Divine providence in our lives, and see yet here a bend, there an incline, here an ascent, and there a descent, a turn and a crook, and a straight line. And wonder of wonders even through the intricacies of such a maze all lines lead us into the fullness of life. And if one of the redeemed, then finally to that city that hath foundations. In all of these workings of providence in the lives of the Lord's people, our blessed Lord in every warp and woof works out the design according to His eternal purpose. (Romans 8:28). And so we see a glimpse of these lines of providence in the inspired record on the life of Saul.

Holy Scripture traces and records for our edification and for history the tapestry weavings in the life of Saul of Tarsus, later called of God to take the Gospel to the Gentiles, and after this divine call was known as Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ.

In the early record of this great Apostle's life we do not see any trace of humility, abasement or any other characteristic grace which would give a hint of hope that Saul was among that company eternally united to the Great Shepherd of the sheep. Quite the contrary, and more so if we take into consideration our tendency to look upon the outward appearance, which indeed is all that finite man is able to see. "But the Lord looketh on the heart." (1st Samuel 16:7). Not only did our Lord see all of the intricate patterns in the weavings of Saul's life, He ordained them!

Saul was born in the city of Tarsus, chief town of Cilicia a Roman province. And is is thought by some that the city was populated with no less than half a million people in Roman times. It was both a trade center and celebrated seat of learning and was considered superior to Athens and Alexanderia in its educational institutions. We can with pretty good authority conclude that Saul's family was wealthy and a part of the higher social caste. Our conclusion is drawn from the fact that only people of wealth and standing in the community were allowed Roman citizenship in Tarsus. This would explain Paul's statement in Philippians 3:8 and 4:12.

The degree of education that Saul received under the Sanhedrin, school of Gamaliel, and his contact in Tarsus with the Greek and Roman Philosophies, were viewed in different light after Saul's quickening and conversion on the road to Damascus. It was only after this Holy Spirit quickening that he was enabled to see the vanity of a philosophy that surmised that vain man could attain unto Divine Wisdom and eternal life and justification with God through a system of works and knowledge. (The free will system). Hence Paul was inspired to pen this truth, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, because they are spiritually discerned." (1st Cor.

2:14). There is no system of learning that can give natural man the ability to claw himself out of Adam's casket!

In his unregenerate state Saul had a very high opinion of himself, even as all who are yet in a state of nature have. Saul even supposed that his persecution unto death of Christians was a service unto God. What deception natural man is under!

In Philippians 3:4-10, Paul catalogs his credentials, not in the unregenerate manner as he formally would have done, but rather he does this here so as to compare and expose the fallacy that secular education, a ritual, outward religion, a pretended righteousness, member of a race, or anything else conceived in the depraved heart of man can add one atom of weight so as to balance the scales and put man in a favorable standing with God. Paul is in effect saying; "You want to boast, you feel as though you have somewhat to glory in? Well I the more! If such attainments gain favor with God and give joy and peace and the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, you have somewhat in which to glory but I the more, etc., etc. but what things were gain to me, (esteemed by men, in titles and traditions and socially acceptable), those I counted loss for Christ. (Phil. 3:7).

In the life of Paul we find exemplified the heart of all Gospel Truth. The discriminating grace of God stripped Paul of his humanism and his self-righteousness and self esteem, his great dependence on human learning and crowned him with "that wisdom that cometh from above."

God's rich grace reveals unto His own that apart from that vital eternal Union in Christ all men regardless of outward religion, education, wealth, health or anything else are but dross from the Refiner's fire and of no value but to be cast out. "Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them." (Jer. 6:30).

This one truth stands in the forefront as we conclude this brief sketch of the life of Saul of Tarsus, later called Paul. His lesson is to be sooner or later experienced by and engraved upon the fleshly tables of the heart of all the Lord's redeemed, "that if any man hath wherewith to glory, let him glory in the Lord." It can be no other way! "Salvation is of the lord." (Jonah 2:9).

Augustus Webb

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

I KINGS XVII. 6

"And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening: and he drank of the brook."

A brother living in New Jersey has written to us asking that we write something on the above passage of Scripture. We shall try to do so, but feel that he himself could better have done so, inasmuch as his mind seems to have been exercised upon it. In the law of Moses there were certain things named which were to be considered by Israel as abominable things, things which should not be eaten. The abominable or unclean things among the fowls included the raven, the flesh of which was never to be eaten by Israel. It is said that the smell of death is so grateful to ravens that when, in passing over a sheep, they perceive a tainted smell they will cry and croak loudly. Also, in passing over a human habitation, if they detect a sickly or deathly odor they make it known by their cries. Thus the croaking of ravens has come to mean a sign of death. For three years and six months it rained not in Israel. During this time death was plentifully in evidence and the ravens were abundant. These birds fed on death. Dead things pleased them. Nevertheless, contrary to the raven's nature, God made them carry bread and meat to his servant, the prophet Elijah.

However, it was impossible for the servant to eat aught but what was clean. In having the ravens to carry this clean food of bread and meat to Elijah God showed his power, in causing the ravens to do that which their nature contradicted, in order to feed the prophet.

Through all the wonderful way in which the Lord provided for Elijah during that long drought we see confirmed the promise that God will never suffer the righteous to fail, nor allow his children to beg their bread. The Lord will provide. Not in our own time and way, but in his own good time and according to his pleasure, the Lord will feed the souls of his famished saints. Though Elijah was all alone, so far as human or spiritual companionship was concerned, yet the Lord caused unclean birds to feed him.

Now, to draw a spiritual lesson from this, let us first note that the doctrine of salvation as preached by worldly religionists is the doctrine of death. Salvation by works, based on the merit of man, is a corrupt doctrine. Unclean birds feed upon it. Ravens love it, doves hate it. All the works of fallen man are dead works. Any tower of Babel erected out of the brick and slime of man's ingenuity in order to get into God's favor by their own good works, is doomed to end in failure and a temple in ruins. We know that God has people scattered everywhere, they are in every nation under heaven. Among the ranks of the Arminians God has his people. These are in captivity to Babylon, but the root of the matter of a gracious experience is in their souls. We believe that true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are scattered among the various religious denominations of men; many perhaps have never heard the true gospel fall from the lips of men truly called to the ministry. These are alone, as Elijah was alone, in the midst of a spiritual drought. Yet they must be fed, and God sees that they are fed, even if he has to compel the ravens to carry them food. By the ravens we mean so-called preachers, men not called and qualified by the Holy Ghost to preach, but men who are the product of the colleges and schools endowed by worldly wealth to turn out these duly certified preachers: preachers who preach their own righteousness and that of their fellow-men, but who are entire strangers to the righteousness of God by faith. Now, it so occurs at times that these "ravens," who love "dead works" and dead doctrines, do unwittingly preach the truth. The reason of this is because God has some of his sheep ensnared in Babylon and he compels these "ravens" unconsciously to themselves to carry clean food to his isolated and lonely children in the midst of the drought spiritually prevailing in the world.

Several years ago, while living in the city of Philadelphia, a brother in the church and ourself took ourselves one night to a church service in one of the largest edifices in that city. The congregation thronged it to the doors. Seats were hardly to be had, and many stood. The minister arose to preach, and we expected to hear nothing but the usual exhortation to creature works in order to obtain the favor of God. He read for his text in the Lamentations of Jeremiah, first chapter, twelfth verse, what startled us as being a very strange text for an Arminian to select, and we asked ourself how he expected to preach salvation by works from such a Scripture: "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger." He started in, not preaching Jeremiah, but Christ, and kept on preaching Christ from first to last. Not once, that we remember, did he refer his text to Jeremiah, but throughout expounded the text as a prophetic portrayal of the sufferings of Christ that were to come. He showed how that Christ's sufferings were not like any

other suffering, that those sufferings of his were all for sins, not his own, but those of his people. He traced the path of the Savior from the manger to the cross, showing the burden becoming greater and the pain more terrible the nearer the end came. The day of God's fierce anger was the day that Jesus hanged upon the cross, nailed there through hands and feet, paying the penalty of his people's transgressions. The day of vengeance was in his heart, he was repaying to his Father all our debt. Nowhere through all the sermon did this preacher have anything to say about what sinners must do to be saved. He told simply and beautifully and with power the old yet ever new story of redeeming love. Yet, notwithstanding all this, we happen to know that this preacher was a full-fledged Arminian. He did not always preach as he did that night. He was telling the truth, but did not realize the full meaning of what he said. Had he done so, he could have never again preached any but that doctrine the rest of his life. Our explanation of this remarkable occurrence is that God had some of his sheep in that corner of Babylon and he was causing that raven to carry bread and meat to them that night. The preacher was declaring what his own nature, and what his own preaching at other times, contradicted. God will see to it that his people shall be fed, and, when necessary, will feed them by the ravens, as he did Elijah. On the other hand, if we consider the prophet Elijah as a type of Jesus in his humiliation while here below, then we shall conclude that though the world was a most unfriendly place to him, and while all the dominant powers of earth were against him, yet all things and all persons among whom he moved were being bent to his will and were serving his purpose, even though in their own natures they were opposed to him. Men and devils were made to minister to the accomplishment of his purpose in the work of salvation, though being unconscious of it themselves all the time. And as Elijah drank of the brook, so it is declared of Jesus that he drank of the brook in the way. (Psalms cx. 7.) As a brook is a stream of running or living water, so the river of water of life flows from the throne of God. By this river of God, this living water, the tree of life (Jesus) is established. Because it never goes dry his leaf never withers. He brings forth his fruit in his season. Then Jesus, though in the midst of a cold, unfriendly world, a world in which of itself there was no room for him, was fed continually by the supplies which omnipotence afforded: the living water of life from the throne of God, and the bowing to his will of all things in earth and under the earth, unclean as ravens though they might be.

H. H. Lefferts

BRIEF REPLIES

Brother S. L. Dupree, of Lampasa, Texas, asks, "Is it heresy to believe in the purpose of God in all eternity, respecting all events?" We answer, that if any call this heresy, we are free to admit that after this manner we worship God. Every prophecy of future events proves to us the purpose of God in all that is prophesied of. In prophecy we always find the "wills" and the "shalls" of Jehovah, and "will" and "shall" always fix the certainty of things when used by Jehovah; and all that is certain, is so because fixed upon the will of God, and determined by his pupose; and as Jehovah is unchangeable, his will cannot change. There can be no change in his knowledge, either by increase or by decrease; and therefore nothing can occur in all the universe that he has not been fully cognizant of from all eternity. To say that anything was not known of God from all eternity, is to limit him. One of the grievous sins charged upon Israel was, that they limited God. It is heresy to limit either the power, wisdom or purpose of God. We several times

heard the late Elder Wm. J. Purington say that he had counted the "wills" and the "shalls" of the Bible, and that there were upwards of fourteen thousand of them in the word of God. What a ragged book the Bible would be were all the "wills" and "shalls" cut out of it! Thank God, the Bible is full of these words in connection with the purpose of God.

Some one unknown to us, whose letter was postmarked Baltimore, has written us a letter which bears testimony to a christian experience, and has asked our views upon several portions of Scripture. The writer speaks about being among the fearful, doubting and troubled one; and the Scriptures referred to seem to present things that the doubting hearts of the Lord's people might be distressed by. Our mind is led to say a few words about one expression that the writer especially referred to, found in Revelation xxi. 8. There it is said that among those who have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone are the "fearful." To this word the writer calls special attention. We suppose that the writer feels afraid that this word applies to that kind of fear and doubting which is common to the Lord's people, and by which they often complain of being oppressed. It seems to us evident that the word has no reference whatever to what the Lord's people often speak of as doubt and fear of their acceptance in Christ, but rather to that fear which leads to a denial of the Lord. This fear actuated Peter when with cursing he thrice denied his Master, and again when he dissembled, refusing to eat with the Gentiles in the presence of the Jews, and for which Paul testifies that he sharply rebuked him, because he was to be blamed. It seems evident to us that had Peter felt more doubt and fear of himself, and less of the spirit of self-confidence, he would not have been so easily driven by the fear of man, which bringeth a snare. Those fears concerning our personal acceptance in Christ, and those doubts about it, which arise out of a humbling sense of our own shortcomings, and sinfulness in heart and life, cannot class those who feel them among the unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and all liars, which are named in this verse. Such doubting souls fear God. The fear of the Lord is enjoined upon believers everywhere in the word, and is said to be the beginning of wisdom. The fear named in the text is such fear as is hateful to God, and which is cast out by his perfect love. We feel sure, therefore, that there is nothing in the word "fearful" to discourage our correspondent, or to cause trouble to any doubting child of God. Those who fear men rather than God are meant. The Lord's own people may, by the weakness of the flesh and through temptation, be overcome and led off into fearfulness, as well as into the other grievous sins named in the text; but this is a very different thing from that solemn fear and doubt which arises in the heart because the child of God feels to come so far short of being what he thinks a believer must and ought to be.

Brother H. M. Pitts, of Gate City, Alabama, asks, "Do the following texts refute predestination?" "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," &c.—Mark xvi. 15. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not."—Matt. xxiii. 37. "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."—Rev. xxii. 17. "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve," &c.—Joshua xxiv. 15. We suppose that our brother has special reference, in his question concerning these Scriptures, to the predestination of God as seen in the election of some of the sons and daughters of Adam to everlasting life. We presume that he has heard these and other Scriptures quoted as proof that the

gospel offers salvation to every creature; that Jesus desires and strives to save every child of Adam, that it is the right and privilege of all men to take the water of life which is held out to them; that men are left to choose either salvation or sin; either God or idols. It might be sufficient for us to enter a simple denial that these Scriptures refute the doctrine of election; but in response to our brother we will say a few words about each of them. As he will no doubt understand, space would forbid our writing lengthily concerning them. First, the commission to go into all the world and preach the gospel, only proves that our God has an elect people in all the world, whom he will call by grace, and who shall be known and recognized as his people, by the fact that they believe the gospel when they hear it, and are ready and willing to follow the Lamb in baptism, and wheresoever he goes. Belief of the truth distinguishes the chosen of God from the world of the ungodly always. Believing does not come by the will or choice of man. The Lord's people are known by their glad receiving of the word always. But they gladly receive the word because they are already born of God. Hitherto Jesus had preached among the Jews only; now the gospel was to be preached abroad; and being preached, it would find its own. Gospel subjects would respond to it. All who believed it should be saved. Salvation is evidenced by belief.

Second. The Savior's lament over Jerusalem had no reference to final redemption or glory whatever. He refers to his dealings with them as a nation in all the centuries of their history in the past. He had sent them prophets, wise men and scribes, by whom he had rebuked and reproved and warned them. But their heart had been set to do evil, and to follow after idols. They had no will to heed his word. Their will was to follow their own ways, which were evil and folly. As he had thus dealt with them as a nation, so would he continue to deal with them as a nation. He does not in this Scripture refer to individual salvation or destruction; but as a nation the judgments of God should fall upon them. Their house should be left unto them desolate. This was fulfilled less than forty years afterward, when under the Roman general Titus the legions of Rome besieged and destroyed Jerusalem; at which time, Josephus tells us, one million, one hundred thousand souls perished or were carried into captivity. There is positively no reference here to what we speak of as the salvation of the soul; therefore it cannot touch the doctrine of election or predestination.

Third. The words, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely," contain a blessed assurance to those who desire this water of life. It is given for them; it belongs to them. But nothing is here held out to those who have not will or desire for such things. Those to whom divine life has been imparted must hunger after that which nourishes this life; and all such are made welcome, in these words, to take the water of life freely. But only the election obtain this grace of life, and only the living thirst for this water of life. Manifestly this text supports election instead of refuting it.

Fourth. When Joshua said to Israel, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve," &c., the choice was not between God and idols, but solely between different sorts of idols. Our God does not stoop from his majesty on high to enter into competition with idol gods for dominion over the hearts of men; but he speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast. Men are never bidden to choose between Jehovah and idols. That they are not, in the text to which our brother refers, appears upon the very face of it. We will just quote the text, and leave it with our brother: "And if it seem evil to you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, or

the gods of the Amorities, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Our brother also refers to the old, stale charge, that we believe that there are unborn infants in hell; for this is what the expression, "Infants not a span long," means. It would be the height of folly for one to assert that such a thing is true, seeing that there is not one word to this effect in the Scriptures; and those who assert that we believe this, betray an entire ignorance of what we as a people do believe. The doctrine of personal election and salvation by grace is the only thing that can secure the salvation of any one, infant or adult; and we do not know, and none but God can know, the extent of the election of his grace. Personally, our view is that the election of grace is designed to take in all those whom God has purposed to call away from earth in infancy. We think that we have warrant for this belief. We emphatically deny that any genuine Old School Baptist will make any such unguarded and extreme assetion as that to which our brother alludes. We have heard it said of Old School Baptists all our life, that they believed this, but we have never met one who did.

We trust that what we have written may be of some satisfaction to those who have proposed these questions.

Elder F. A. Chick

Athens, Texas

Dear Editors and contributors to the *Signs of the Times,*

I see that my subscription expired in July. I am sorry we are a month late in sending this in, but God called home a dear sweet granddaughter of ours in July, and in nature we are grieved, although we know that it was His will. "Thy will be done" O Lord. Still, with the hope that we have, we are still weak in the flesh, and will be as long as we live on this earth.

The letters we read in the *Signs* are a big inspiration to us, if we are not deceived, as we seldom ever get to go to church any more. We especially enjoy such writers as was Elder E. J. Lambert, Sister Minnie Foley, and William O. Hall, from Washington State, just to name a few. They have all been most comforting in the past 25 years that we have been reading the *Signs*. Also, we enjoy the letters that are written now. They are just as good.

We hope we can say along with the Apostle Paul in this quotation of 2 Thessalonians 2:13, "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth."

Enclosed please find a check for renewal for two years, and use the rest as you see fit.

May God richly bless all of you who are so faithful to keep the *Signs* coming to all the poor ones that enjoy reading it.

May God bless all His people wherever and whoever they are, the world over.

In hope of eternal life,
Mr. & Mrs. J. C. Allen

Benton, KY.

Dear Editors,

Enclosed please find a check to be used as you think best. Words cannot tell how much I enjoy your paper and hope I can be able to read it as long as I live. My hearing and eyes seems to be getting weaker all the time, as I will soon be eighty-eight years old in November of this year.

May God bless and help you to keep the paper coming. Please remember me in your prayers.

Maggie Culp

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FOREKNOWLEDGE

"Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate;" "and whom he did predestinate them he also glorified", etc. (Rom. 8:29, 30)

This word "foreknowledge" is one of the deepest and most mysterious words throughout the whole of the Scriptures. The miser Tomline, the Arminian bishop, who passed his life in raking money together and in persecuting Calvinists, and who therefore was an idolator through love of money, and is a beloved head of the Arminian enemies of God, mistook this passage, "Whom he did foreknow", etc. The treasonable Arminians make this passage to show that God is the servant and man the master. "O my soul, come not thou into their secret!" "For their rock is not as our Rock, our enemies themselves being judges." (Deut. 32:31) They say God foreknew who would be so good as to accept of Christ, and therefore predestinated them; and if that is not high treason, I do not know what is. For it denies Christ to be the "Alpha", the beginning and first cause, effectively, discriminatingly, sovereignly, and finally, of the elect getting to heaven. Thus Tomline and the Arminians "wrest Jesus' sceptre from his hand"; stamp in the dust his Godhead as being the sovereign, discriminating, and effectual cause of his people's salvation; and bring the cobwebs of freewill in man to be the most ornamental elegance and efficiency in the edifice of salvation! Thus, I do not mind who it is, neither do the elect of God, for both they and I are certain of it, that no Arminian, *professedly as such,* can be saved. There may be much Arminianism cleaving to a quickened man; but all Arminianism will fly away some day, like the morning clouds before the substantial power of the glorious orb of day. So will all Arminianism cleaving to the elect finally be melted away sometime or other before ever they get into the proper daylight of God; for "God is light". For "now it is high time to awake out of sleep; the night is far spent, the day is at hand."

Let us then see what this "foreknowledge" of God is; (blessed be His name!) "For whom he foreknew them he also predestinated", etc. And if there is one point more than another in all Scripture which shows the needs be for the Spirit in experience to open Scripture, this is the point.

This word "knowledge" refers to the everlasting love of God towards his people. "O the depth of the riches of the knowledge of God!" "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." "The Lord knoweth the righteous"; but "thorns and snares are in the way of the froward". And who are the froward but the advocates of free will and licentiousness? Free will is the swelling lungs of an unregenerate man; "for perverse things are in his vitals". And what so perverse a thing as free will? "For the race is not to the swift." "Therefore a froward heart shall depart from me", says an elect man through God's grace. Therefore, Tomline's and the Arminian's "foreknowledge" shall depart from me. "I will walk within my house with a perfect heart"; for he that speaketh the truth *(supernaturally)* from his heart, and in whose eyes a vile person (that speaketh Arminian lies) is condemned, even he shall abide in God's tabernacle, and dwell in his holy hill of supernatural knowledge; "he that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not."

Foreknowledge, then, is explained by this, as well as many and many another passage of Scripture; "If any man love God, the same is known of him." (I Cor. 8:3)

The eternal union of Christ and the elect is a doctrine everywhere manifest in Scripture to the illuminated eye; "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." "Thy Maker is thine Husband". (Isa. 54:5) "Thou shalt call me Ishi, (my Husband) and shalt call me no more

Baali (my Lord)". (Hos. 2:16) "Thy land shall be married". (Isa. 62:4) "I will betroth thee unto me, and thou shalt know the Lord. I will betroth thee unto me for ever. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, saith the Lord." (Hos. 2:16, 19, 20, etc.) "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." (Eph. 5:30)

Men are greatly deceived in religion. They think thus that there is no mystery in religion; whereas, true religion is the very mystery of God. "The mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." (Rev. 10:7) "It is given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom." (Matt. 13:11; Luke 8:10) For my part, I bless God that it was early in my religion laid on my mind to pray; to pray in reading the Scriptures; to pray in everything; for I became gradually persuaded that there was a secret, a mystery, "a deep couching beneath"; something hidden; something the non-elect were never to know; something hidden from the eyes of all naturally living; something "sealed"; something running under ground, as it were, in religion. And O the deeps! for who hath known the mind of the Lord? "Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun (of righteousness); because, though a man labour to seek it out, yet he shall not find it; yea, farther, though a (supernaturally) wise man think to know it, yet shall not he be able to find it," (Eccl. 8:17) by thinking merely, reading, hearing, or speculation. It is "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."

Ignorance, then, is a thing greatly complained of for a long time by the manifested elect of God. They see the bare knowledge of the letter of Scripture is of no use by itself. Thus, they set out thence hunting after the Incarnate Word; "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." "In my flesh I shall see God", said Job. O the glories of the incarnation of Christ in the heart! "We are members of his flesh, of his body, and of his bones." "All my bones (supernaturally) shall say, Who is like unto thee?" "If any man eateth not the flesh of Christ, and drinketh not his blood, he hath no life in him." Thus, true religion is something "more than notion."

But this I will be bound to say, that "the heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge". (Prov. 15:14) Heart-felt fear and understanding through the new birth in true religion, in hating evil, in hating pride and arrogancy, and "the evil way and the froward mouth", are the beginning and progress of infinite results. To depart from evil is understanding, and therefore Solomon says, "The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge", of which the everlasting foreknowledge of God was the everlasting spring from all eternity! "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate", etc. Solomon declares (as I have twice quoted) that "the heart of him (mark that, not the head) that hath understanding, (and not merely talketh of it) seeketh knowledge." The deeps of this subject I believe neither I nor any man can perfectly fathom. This knowledge is neither more nor less than felt union. As it is written, "And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." "And they that were *ready went in with him to the marriage; and the door was shut*". Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened thereto. The "wedding garment", the "marriage supper", and indissoluble union are the crowning points with those who have divine understanding in the heart. "With all thy getting, get understanding." Through wisdom is a house builded; and by understanding it is established; and by knowledge (mark that) shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches." (Prov. 24:3, 4) Knowledge, then, is the antitype

of God's foreknowledge. The Lord knoweth the righteous. That foundation standeth sure, for there is a seal upon it, even the seal of spiritual wedlock; "I am married unto you, saith the Lord." (Jer. 3:14) "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." "And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come higher, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife; and he carried me away in the spirit." "For the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." "Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, *These* are the true sayings of God." (Rev. 19:21)

I adduce these passages to show that the God-Man, "having loved his own, he loved them unto the end." The final consummation of love is marriage. "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." Hence the severe threatenings of God in holy Scripture against fornicators, as desecrating the ordinance of marriage! Hence the solemness and sacredness of marriage! Hence its typical and mystic tie! Hence how all whoremongers and adulterers are thundered at with God's highest reprehension! "Without are dogs, whoremongers", etc. Love, verily, is perfected in marriage, and not till then. "Marriage is *honourable",* and the breach of it is branded with God's execration. All false religion is called whoredom throughout the whole of the Bible; as all true religion is figured throughout the whole of Scripture as a marriage, as I have stated at length.

I trust that I have for years been brought into a sense of this unutterable relationship with God, who is my fear and my dread. The religion that fear through regeneration begins union-love will complete. "And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bride-chamber fast while the Bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the Bridegroom with them they cannot fast." Soothed, solaced, and overjoyed, I have for years known my adorable, sin-hating Saviour in this glorious character, as in the new creation the Husband of my soul. "But I would have you know that the Head (spiritually) of every man (In the regeneration) is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God." (I Cor. 11:3) O surprising mystery! O "unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter!" (2 Cor. 12:4) Those who are joined in earthly matrimony are "one flesh". (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5) Those who are joined in spiritual matrimony, under the authority of God in the regeneration, are "one spirit". (I Cor. 6:17) The Last Adam is ever called the Bridegroom of the church spiritually, as the first Adam was the husband of Eve. O stupendous mysteries! Here is where the religion of the mere letter of Scripture breaks down and is distanced. Here is where the chief priests (those bitter enemies of the true Christ) of all denominations, with the elders, scribes, pharisees, lawyers, and sadducees of a natural Christianity are lost to the true apprehension of Christ. Here it is that the princes of this world's wisdom in the letter fail. Here it is that "hidden wisdom" is a barrier against all but the elect. Here it is that God has put bars and bolts to hinder the sea of head-knowledge from rushing into the internal kingdom of heaven in the soul. Here are the springs of vital knowledge; "milk and honey" come "under the tongue" of the soul that has these springs; "My springs are in God." Here is the well of water springing up unto endless life. Here is the engrafted word. Here is the vital sap springing from the engraftiture. Here is the Tree of Life and the branches, verdant, bending with fruit, and, as it were, "clapping their hands for joy"; for all the trees of this field of foreknowledge shall clap their

hands for joy. O blessed relationship! O divine glee ensuing therefrom! "I know my sheep, and am known of mine." "I never knew you", is the answer of the divine Judge to all non-elect strangers. But the dignity and glory of this subject cannot be exhausted in a few pages; I shall therefore, God willing, treat of it in another paper; and shall only add, that foreknowledge on God's part issues in regeneration and vital union, to the elect body of Christ, the church. Hence the "partaking of the divine nature". And never dying streams of never dying bliss soothe, assuage, lull, and becalm with eternal quietude and rest the church, the bride of Christ; refreshed thus by foreknowledge in predestination and by vital knowledge, in felt love, from that river (or rather ocean) of love, the streams whereof make glad the city of the living God.

Abingdon I. K.
The Gospel Standard, 1841

Fairfax County, VA.
Jan. 22, 1851

RELATION OF MY EXPERIENCE

No. 1

Brother Beebe:--I have for some years thought of giving a relation of my experience through the Signs, as a testimony to the condescension of our God and Savior, who as our Great High Priest, *can and does have compassion on the ignorant and on them that are out of the way;* but have been hitherto deterred by various considerations. But having been called on to do it, both by sister Izor and brother Conklin, I will now undertake it, if brother Beebe will grant me room in the *Signs* for it; (and it will occupy several numbers); though it is with fears that I commence it, that it may not be kindly received by many; and may not be useful perhaps to but few. I admit with brother Barton that all who we believe are christians cannot give a circumstantial detail of all the way in which the Lord has led them to the hope of the gospel; but where they can give such detail, I like to hear it, and therefore wish now to give it.

I think for myself that our brother Hall's relation would have been still more interesting had he related *those somethings before and after he obtained mercy* which he speaks of. There is nothing in God's teaching nor in his revelation that is not worthy of our special notice. I have thought that those which some would call *little circumstances,* in which God's hand is manifested, appear more lovely than the more important exercises, as illustrative of the great, condescension, compassion and faithfulness of him with whom we have to do. As I am giving my thoughts, I will further say that I *think* our object in writing out our experience ought not to be simply to declare ourselves to be believers, but to show in our individual experience God's sovereignly various ways of leading his children to the knowledge of the same truths.

As an introduction to my religious experience I wish to give a sketch of my early life, both as in some measure accounting for the extreme ignorance and stupidity concerning everything spiritual which my experience will show me to have possessed, and also as showing God's special providential watch over me in my vile untoward course in nature. Hence I shall probably be as much too tedious as brother Hall was too brief.

I was born in Walpole, New Hampshire, was one of three children my mother had. My mother died when I was eight years old. My sister died before my mother, and my brother was borned up with the house in which he lived a year or two after. My father, who had been for several years riding as sheriff and had thereby become involved, was about this time broken up as to property, and shortly after broke up housekeeping. From that early period in life, though my father lived several years after, I never knew the

comforts of a parent's home, nor the solace of a brother or sister's society. I had no near relatives on my father's side, and none that I knew; but on my mother's side I had several, but circumstances about the above time caused me to become estranged from them. My father procured a kind and comfortable home for me, where I enjoyed all the advantages of a common school education, usual for boys in New England to have.

I continued in this family until I was nearly fifteen, when I went as an apprentice to a trade, to an unmarried gentleman, and who therefore boarded out his hands, and who had two shops, one in my native village, and the other sixty miles from there in Vermont: at each of which I was occasionally.

Thus excepting in shop hours I was thrown loose to my passions in villages, where gambling, drunkenness, and every species of fashionable vice was prevalent.

When about twelve a gentleman of the family in which I lived, who owned a right in a public library in the village, granted me the use of his right to draw and read what books I pleased. My attention in this way was soon turned to novels and romances, pretty much to the exclusion of other reading until I was upwards of twenty, when a circumstance occurred which so disgusted me with novel reading that from that time I declared off from them. Thus instead of acquiring useful knowledge during my youth, I was filling my mind with romance. In addition to this, when I was a child, Winchester the Universalist, came into that region and discipled to his faith the settled minister of the town. Hence I was brought up under that kind of preaching, and early imbibed the idea of universal salvation, and of the propriety of professors of religion participating in the amusements of the world such as dancing, card playing, etc., from being accustomed to seeing those things among them.

Before going to a trade I had occasionally on Sundays to read a chapter or two in the Bible to please the old lady with whom I lived; but from that time I know not that I read a single chapter until I became religiously exercised. When I was nearly twenty, my boss changed his business, and gave me my time. I was now in more unpleasant circumstances than before, having no relations to visit, no home to retreat to for rest, when out of employment. I had no alternative, when one job was done, but to travel in pursuit of another. In this way the first year I was free, I traveled through most of the New England States and a part of New York; sometimes by stage, or by water, but more generally on foot, according as my funds were.

The second year I engaged for a year in Massachusetts to take charge of a shop. During the first year one circumstance occurred which I wish particularly to notice, and I wish to record my testimony to the kindness of a restraining providence; for I was truly a child of Providence; in that whilst others of my early associates who had parents to watch over them, fell over the gambling table, or the cup, or other vices, I, though possessing as strong passions and appetites as either of them, was restrained from dipping deeply into any of those vices, and was permitted throughout to enjoy a respectable standing in society. The particular circumstance referred to was this: In common with perhaps most Universalists, I was inclined to deistical notions, but feeling an inward consciousness that there was a hereafter, I at times felt some anxiety to know whether there was a reality in religion or not.

In the summer of 1805, being in Providence, R. I., I was one day in the front shop at work by myself, and I got to reflecting on this subject, and my mind being wrought up to considerable anxiety about it, I exclaimed to myself,

"If there is a reality in religion, O, that God would give me some test by which I might know it." I said this, I think, more in a spirit of complaining than of supplication, but as soon as I had made the exclamation, with all the distinctness and force as if some one had spoken to me from above, these words fell upon my mind, "Read the Bible." Though I was at the time, as I still am confident that this was supernatural, for I cannot account for the impression on any natural principles, being so different from the bent or any reflections of my mind, yet I felt no disposition to obey; my mind seemed to revolt at the idea of such a gloomy task as that of pondering over the Bible. Still however it had an effect, it silenced my infidelity, and led me to feel more of a respect for religion than I had been accustomed to. During the next year I was one day when by myself led to reflection on the difference between the Universalists and other religionists, and came to the conclusion that it was of no use to believe in universalism, for if the Universalists were correct, those who believed in a special salvation of individuals were equally as safe as they were, else the salvation would not be universal. On the other hand, if salvation was special and particular, and I was trusting in a general universal salvation, I should find myself deceived, I therefore gave it up. Still I had no idea of becoming religious.

At the end of this second year, finding myself a little before hand as to funds, I determined to commence the pursuit of what I had long wished for, an education. As the minister of the adjoining town kept a boarding school for young men, in the fall of 1806, I entered his school. I had not been there over six weeks, had barely revised my early studies of arithmetic, grammar, etc., before, through the recommendation of this gentleman, I was offered the public school in the village for the winter, which I accepted. As I concluded the only way for me, situated as I was, to get along with my studies, would be to teach school and study in my spare hours, and as they did not in that county employ male teachers in the summer months, I determined when my school was out in the spring, to go into the State of New York and obtain a school. I accordingly started early in May, went to Albany, thence westwardly, but soon found I was too late in the season in starting, that the schools were taken up for the season. I, however, proceeded onward, until I got about thirty miles west of Utica. There through my inconsiderateness and the rascality of others, I got into a difficulty which was like to involve me in a serious loss, considering my situation. Being detained for a day or two, and being among strangers, I felt sensibly the need of divine interposition. In my straits I retired to the woods and implored God's aid, and like other natural persons, I supposed I must promise something in return. I promised that in case he could deliver me, I would never again indulge in profane swearing. I had at one time been much addicted to it, but for two years before I had in some measure left it off, not on account of its sinfulness, but on account of its being disrespectable in good society. Still, when much excited I was liable to give way to it. But now I renounced it as a sinful act. And God to my full belief did interpose, friends appeared on my behalf, and as warm friends as I could have had, if I could have given the masonic sign or that of any secret society, and I was delivered. My purse which was getting rather low, being somewhat replenished by the transaction, I turned my course backward to Albany, thence to my native place, and after spending some days there and in other places, I went again into Massachusetts, and engaged in Northampton for a time at my trade.

From the above transaction I became more impressed with the sense of an overruling Providence, and the expression of Pope, "Whatsoever is, is

right," became a favorite one with me. Also from that event, I have been led to the conclusion that although in reference to salvation there is no approaching God, with acceptance but through faith in Christ, yet that in reference to providential dealing, unregenerate persons, being brought to feel their dependence on God for aid, may in their straits supplicate his throne and be heard. While at Northampton, and at work one day in August, 1807, in the shop by myself, I was reflecting on the providential dealings of God with me from a child up, having been a child of disappointments and sorrow, the enquiry arose in my mind, which I perhaps expressed, Why is it that God has thus persued me from my childhood with crosses and troubles? Immediately again, as at Providence two years before, as if spoken from above, these words struck my mind with force, "It is to teach you the vanity of earthly hopes and things, and to lead you to seek your happiness in God." My whole heart seemed now at once to acquiesce in it; and I cheerfully promised that from that time I would seek the knowledge of God and his ways and seek my happiness in him. As David says, Psa. 27:8, "When thou saidst unto me, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face Lord will I seek," so verily I think at that time it was my case.

From the different effect produced by the two addresses to me; this at Northampton, and that two years before in Providence, both having alike the same appearance of being supernaturally spoken to me, and both so viewed by me at the times, I am constrained to believe that even when God speaks, there will not be heart obedience, unless the heart is first opened to receive the word, and unless regeneration has taken place, and spiritual life is imparted. As this life is love to God, then there will be obedience to his word and not before. Hence from the lasting effect produced at that time upon me, leading me immediately to procure a Bible and to commence the study of it, as also to engage in religious exercises, and producing a desire after God which I trust still continues with me, I am led, from that time to date my regeneration, (if indeed I am regenerated.) As a further confirmation of this, as I was walking the street one evening by myself, a few weeks after, meditating on this subject and enquiring with some anxiety whether I should be able to hold out in my resolution, this word was applied with force to me, "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." I know not that I had ever read that text, though probably I had in my boyhood, but I received it as the word of God, and was comforted and strengthened by it. And I therefore concluded that God had then begun a work in me.

S. Trott

(To be continued)

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My Dear Sister Maude (Truitt),

Grace, peace, and comfort be unto you in this trying time from our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who performs all things according to the perfect counsel of His Father. As He gives utterance may we be blessed to pray for you, your health, and your spirit.

We enjoyed a most blessed meeting yesterday at Welsh Tract Church and the Lord was pleased to dwell in the midst of His people. Elder Poole spoke kindly of you as he relayed to us your condition. Brother Lackey spoke well and the Spirit used him to speak on prayer for the saints and utterances for the Lord's people, which is only possible when the Lord gives His people a heart to do so. He used the text in Ephesians 6, where we are admonished to stand firm in the Lord, which he properly balanced by showing our total weakness and inability to do such a thing but rather our total reliance on His strength, which is Jesus Christ.

He was followed by Elder C. C. Morris, who spake boldly and was also used by the Spirit to proclaim the word of the Lord. He was blessed to speak from Isaiah 59 and spoke clearly to my heart of the times of darkness which we experience from time to time as the Lord, as it were, hiding Himself from us and causing us to grope as if we were blind, not seeing the glory of His countenance nor the light of His smile. Elder Morris also dwelt on the blessed fact that when the Lord looked He saw no man to intercede and when He called there was none that could answer. He (the Lord) then marvelled as how in all of humanity, with its great men and vast numbers throughout all the ages, there was not one found that could help the Lord God Almighty save His precious Son. How blessed to know that we could not help and that we cannot hinder the Holy One Of Israel from doing His will and good pleasure!

Elder Morris was once again called on to preach in the afternoon. He opened the text of the 89th Psalm beautifully and then he was followed by Elder Poole, who continued there, consentrating on the 15th - 17th verses. There is a people who hear the joyful sound and delight in it.

I was blessed greatly in the presence of the Lord's people, and we all missed you greatly. Marie, my wife, was not able to attend either, as she was at home attending to the needs of our new baby. She was born on Monday, September 16, and her name is Sarah Marie. As soon as pictures are available, I shall send you one. I look forward to communing again with you if the Lord so wills.

In love,
Chet Dirkes

SERMON BY ELDER JIMMY HAMRICK

(From a Tape Recording)

I certainly enjoyed what has gone before in this place. God's people indeed are no longer strangers. They experience the same things to varying degrees. Perhaps outside of Christ, as far as tribulation is concerned, no man experienced any greater degree of tribulation than Job. The whole book of Job centers around the tribulation that was sent upon him of God, and his response to it, and the consideration of God in the end.

We find a wonderful testimony of Job at the beginning of the book, "There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job, and that man was perfect and upright and one that feared God and eschewed evil." We see clearly that Job was a man of God, taught of God. We see that he was a man of great substance; a very rich man. Blessed in all that he had

done, we see that he was a kind man, a loving man, a man who loved his family; who, at the beginning of this book, was offering sacrifices on behalf of his sons. He thought perhaps his sons had cursed God in their hearts. So here he was even making sacrifices to Jehovah God on behalf of his sons. It all seems to be in harmony. All seems to be bright, and no doubt Job, after experiencing all these many blessings at the hand of God, thought only more good was in store for him.

I don't believe he was prepared for what came upon him; and who is? Then we find all these calamities, as it were. There was a snowballing effect, because no sooner had one servant finished with bad news than another came behind with more bad news, and in the first three we find all his worldly substance taken away from him; all of his riches. And when the fourth bad news came we find that even his sons experienced death because of a great wind which smote the four corners of the building in which they were feasting. Here we find his response, and this is indeed a source of marvel to me every time I read it. Job's response shows once again that he was indeed a man of God.

"Then Job arose and rent his mantle, (This was an expression of grief in those days) and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped." I believe that is the difference between God's people, or the household of faith, and the non-elect. When tribulations come upon God's people they are given to look unto God, and those who believe in the sovereign hand of God and realize where their tribulations come from, especially are brought to bow ever lower unto Him in adoration. And what does Job say? "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

It is wonderful that Job could see behind all the outward evidences that were before him. It was the Sabeans that had reportedly come down and slain many of his servants with the sword, and then left but one to bring the bad news to Job. And it was a great wind that had smote the house, and in another instance it was lightening that came down from heaven and caused a fire that destroyed his sheep, but Job could see beyond all of this to his God. And he could say that the Lord hath taken this away. And "In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly."

There would be those who would say that Job had charged God foolishly by saying that the Lord hath taken away, but he said it without charging God foolishly. And that was just phase one, as it were. Job was still healthy, and we find Satan let loose a little bit more on Job, and we find his very body smitten down. Satan said, "But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face." So Job found himself covered with boils.

During this time it seems like the Lord was pleased not to bless Job with the feeling of His presence. And who can truly comfort us but God in our misery. Who can we turn to but God? And we find that after the boils came up, even his wife told him, "Curse God and die." She said, "That is the only honorable thing you can do. You've been good, you've been upright, and where did it get you? You feared God and eschewed evil, and where did it get you? Our family is gone. Our goods are gone. You are sick. The only thing left to do is to curse God and die." But he told her that she spoke as did the foolish women. "What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Shall we not receive chastisement; judgment? And this is indeed what he received.

And then came three comforters, so called. No doubt these were three of the best friends that Job ever had, and they came to him and sat with him in silence for weeks, but once again the only comfort that we can truly receive is from

the hand of Almighty God and from His people. His people do indeed comfort one another, but the comfort that comes down from above they cannot give. That comfort is the comfort that they themselves had received. And apparently these three friends of Job's had not received comfort from the hand of Almighty God, otherwise they would have had something to comfort Job with. They told him that he had done something evil. "Surely you have done some great sin in order to bring upon you the judgment of God." But we find once again, as at the beginning, that Job was perfect, not sinless in the sense of being perfect, but was sincere and upright, and one that feared God and eschewed evil. He had the grace of God moving in him with force and with power. This trial was not because of some great sin which he had committed, for it was once again as at the beginning, that God Himself is the one who brought Satan's attention unto Job. God Himself was directing all of this.

It goes on, and the three comforters come in with their report, and Job comes back with his report. It seems like Job, after having set down in ashes and with these boils on his body from the crown of his head to the sole of his feet, and not receiving comfort from above concerning his situation, began to declare that he was righteous and all that he desired was to talk to God. If only he could see Him. If only he could declare his case to Him. He declared his innocence time, and time, and time again, and focused more and more on that instead of focusing on the fact that God knows what He is doing, and that He has a certain amount of tribulations layed up in store for each of His people, and these are tribulations set apart for them, and can thus be called "Sanctified tribulations." (And they are indeed for their good.) But he did not focus upon that.

We find next that there was another man who came, and he had been listening to the conversations that had gone on. That was Elihu. He, in almost the similar office as John the Baptist (the forerunner of Christ) then declares the truth, and right after this we find God, Himself, speaking out of the whirlwind. Then we find Job repenting in sackcloth and ashes. All of God's people must come through tribulations; all of them! The way must be dark for all of them at times. That is a wonderful blessing when they are indeed given to realize that though they cannot commune with God at all times, though they cannot see His face, though they cannot feel His presence whenever they would like, yet they know that He lives. Even Job declared that. In the midst of all this he said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." That is a wonderful thing. We know however dark the clouds may appear, the sun is still back there. Job knew that his Redeemer lives. He knew that He was behind it all. He knew, too, that in time He would manifest Himself.

Job knew more than that, even. He knew about the resurrection of the dead; that these bodies, indeed, will be raised again, for he said, "With these eyes I will behold thee in that day." May we be given tribulations. I know that doesn't sound correct, but I believe God's people can indeed pray for tribulations. And whether or not they realize it, whenever we pray for patience we are praying for tribulations, for the scriptures declare that "Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope." God's people are strengthened by tribulations. Their faith is exercised by tribulations. And in another place it says something even more amazing, "Rejoice in tribulations." These old bodies get arthritis, and all sorts of disease and pain. Are we to murmer? Are we to feel sorry for ourselves? By God's grace we are to rejoice in such. It is only through His grace that we will ever rejoice in such. It is only through His

grace that we will see things by faith, and not be sight, and look beyond all the outward evidences to the God Himself who sits upon the throne and who rules and who rules as a Sovereign God, an Almighty God, and a Holy God. He indeed does know what is best for His people.

Ah, the power of God is a beautiful thing! The sovereignty of God is declared throughout the book of Job, and I trust we believe in the sovereignty of God. It is one thing to talk about the sovereignty of God, and it is another thing to feel it. I believe only those who have felt the sovereignty of God are qualified to speak concerning the same. We have thousands of people in this world who say they believe in the sovereignty of God. The Islamic nations believe in the almighty will of God, but it is a dead letter; it is fatalism and there is nothing more to it. They are not qualified to talk about the sovereignty of God. They have no desire to please God. It says concerning the power of God that "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." They are willing because it is the power of God that seizes them by their hearts and turns them. Those are the people who are ever ready to talk about the sovereignty of God, and those are the people who display the sovereignty of God in their lives, and who seek to do those things which are declared to be pleasing in His sight. They seek to do those things by faith, and they seek the grace of God in it all, realizing that everything coming out of themselves is but filthy rags in His sight, and only through Christ can they do anything pleasing and that these things do not account one iota for their salvation, but it is because of Him that they are saved. It is because of Him that the power of God has already seized them and turned them around and set them on the road of praise to God and to glorify His Name in all things whatsoever that happens to them, realizing that He indeed does know what is best.

A flower when it is crushed issues forth a sweet fragrance. I believe this is the case with God's people. In the midst of tribulation they turn unto the Lord. They cry unto Him. There are some things that when you squash them they stink. There are two peoples in this world. There are two responses to tribulation. I would to God that we may ever manifest the work of God upon our hearts and our souls in the midst of tribulation; that we may be given patience; that we may be given worship; that we may be given the word of praise to our Almighty God who knows what is best for us. No doubt, if we would have our carnal way, I don't think any of us would be here tonight. I don't think I would be here. We would have destroyed ourselves long ago. But the Lord brings His people in the way that He knows best, and it is through tribulations. There is no circumventing it, because tribulations are best for them; so they must enter therein time, and time, and time again, and they must even be falsely accused, for their Saviour was falsely accused. So may we be given to praise Almighty God because He knows what is best for us.

Elizabeth City, N.C.

Dear Editors of the Signs,

Enclosed you will find a check for the *Signs* for two years, and the balance is to be used as you need it. I enjoy reading the *Signs* so much, although I can't see to read very long at the time, and I do want to keep it as long as I can. I have had it for so many years.

I don't get to go to church very often any more. I miss not being able to go and see all the dear people that I was so blessed years ago to see. I beg the Lord to keep me and make me contented with whatever I have to bear.

I do hope each of you dear ones are well, and the Lord will bless you all to keep the work up for years to come. If you could have a mind to pray, I ask for you to pray for me. I feel so unworthy of

all the blessings He has blessed me with all the days of my life.

If I am one of His dear children, (I sure hope I am) then I am the least of all. May God bless and keep the *Signs* going many more years.

Love to all in Christ Jesus,
Catherine Vass

EDITORIAL

SERMON BY ELDER D. V. SPANGLER

(Tape Recorded and Edited)

Last evening I read and commented from the 5th chapter of II Corinthians, and I will read that again this morning, as I have not expounded that scripture fully. We will begin reading in the 17th verse, "Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

It is a blessing that God has described the pathway of the sinner. We are told in the word of God that the spirit in the heart of those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious will cause them to hear a voice behind them saying, "This is the way; walk ye in it." Though we assent unto a truth, that which makes the word of God precious is the application of it to our heart. All the promises of God in the Bible would mean little to us if we hadn't had somewhere along the way these promises applied to us. When our Master said to His disciples, "I will be with you always, even to the end of the world," that promise is precious to all who have had that said to them in the inward man.

Paul, in using the expression, "Therefore" in the 17th verse, had reference to the things contained in the former verses in this 5th chapter of II Corinthians. "If any man be in Christ." He now describes the effect of it. Sometime ago I spoke in connection with the subject of a person being in Christ, which is an endless subject. Paul, in the first chapter of Ephesians, said to the church, "He has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Paul is not talking about the eternal vital union of Christ and His people before the world began in this scripture. He, in this scripture, was talking about the manifestation of that union that Christ had with His people before the world began. Christ is formed in their heart, "The hope of glory." I would never belittle the doctrine of hope religion, as some do. The scripture teaches that we have a hope in Christ, as Christ Himself formed in us, the hope of glory. So if a person ever has an inclination to speak lightly or belittle the doctrine of hope religion, you will just have to take Christ out of the picture. There are a lot of people who say, "I just don't believe in that kind of religion." I have no quarrel with them. But the precious thing that we want to keep in mind is that if you have a hope of heaven when you die, that hope is Christ formed in you, and it is the hope of glory. That's what Paul is talking about in this chapter. "If any man be in Christ."

If there is a manifestation in the life of a person that Christ has been formed in them, that is the hope of glory, and they are new creatures. Paul speaks of this as the new man. (The old man is the outer man.) He speaks of the effects of regeneration, and I want to emphasize that, though the world is full of conversions (so called) of people, it isn't full of regenerations of people. There is a difference in being converted and being regenerated. Conversion is substituted today by man, by saying that is all you need. Just change your opinion about a thing. Regeneration is the work in the heart, and the other is in the head. A man can be converted a lot of times, but he is only regenerated one time. You may have to be converted after you are born again. Jesus told

Peter "And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." If it has been manifested that Christ has been formed in one's heart, (and there will be a manifestation of it, for the tree is known by the fruit it bears,) he is a new creature.

This "new creature" is then brought to understand something of the new covenant. One cannot really understand and get any comfort from what is called the new covenant in the Bible unless he knows something about being made a new creature in Christ. The new covenant which God said He would make with the house of Israel after the days of the law was, "I will write my laws in their heart." That's being made a new creature, isn't it? "I will write my laws in their heart." I used to think that read, "I will write my law in their heart," but it doesn't. What does it mean? I will write the law of Moses in their heart? No! I will write the laws of Christ in their heart; the general principles that brings truth into their hearts. The laws - "I will write my laws" - the laws are the new covenant, "in their heart." And no more shall a man teach his neighbor or his brother saying, "Know the Lord; for they all shall know me from the least of them to the greatest." That sets aside men teaching men to know Christ, doesn't it? I would feel right guilty this morning if I had started out here to make christians in the face of that scripture. God said that no more it is to be that men teach his neighbor; men teaching men to know God.

If any man be in Christ there will be a manifestation of it. There will be a manifestation of new life in that person where the work of grace has been wrought. One of the manifestations of the child when it is born into the world do you know one of the first things that happens to a baby when it is born? Most of the time a cry goes up. They begin to cry. And it isn't but a little while until they are hungry. They begin to hunger. These are some of the evidences that they are a new creature, (and they can be classed as one). In the Book of Matthew it is recorded "Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." And then they can adopt the sentiment of the hymn on page 179, as they are brought to know these things in their own heart;

"O that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still!
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will!

O send thy spirit down to write
Thy law upon my heart!
Nor let my tongue indulge deceit,
Nor act the liar's part.

From vanity turn off my eyes;
Let no corrupt design,
Nor covetous desires arise
Within this soul of mine."

Did you ever pray that God would turn your eyes from vanity? And then the next verse says

"Order my footsteps by thy word,
And make my heart sincere;
Let sin have no dominion, Lord,
But keep my conscience clear."

Read that hymn sometime. It's wonderful. If any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away, and all his old views of God are passed away.

I can't have much hope in any person's profession of religion, regardless of who they are, if I don't find Christ in him. I must see Christ in him. The keynote of all their hope must be in the Person of Jesus. Regardless of what we may claim is the ground of our hope when we die, if Christ isn't in it, don't count on it too much. Discard it! The poet knew what I'm talking about when he said

"On Christ the solid rock I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.
I dare not trust the sweetest frame....."

How true that is. You know, people can get emotional and trust the frame sometimes instead of the grace of God. Somebody can get up and tell you about their grandmother dying and touch your heart, but I want to be touched by the gospel of the Son of God. That's what I want to be touched with; not

sentimentality, not emotionalism! Oh, no! I want, and you want, to rest on something else, not anything attached to this world. "I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus name."

Isn't that wonderful, that there is a place of rest for those who are brought into this new relationship; that they need rest? All of us in the kingdom of heaven, if we know the truth, find there are places and times that we need rest. Where will we find it? Can you find it in your zeal? Can you find it in your wisdom? Can you find it anywhere in yourself? If you can, you don't know the wonderful rest that comes to the people of God through our Saviour, who said, "Come unto me all ye." How many? "All ye that labor." The laboring is the evidence of life, isn't it? It is the evidence of the new creature in Christ. "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Don't tell me that in the christian experience there aren't places of rest for the soul. "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart." That's how He describes Himself. "And you shall find rest for your soul." So with the newborn child. At times they need rest; regardless of their outward situation, they need rest. God has provided one place for it - in Christ. Well, somebody said, "Just how can I rest in Christ?" You rest in His blood. You rest in His righteousness. You rest in everything He has wrought for you. You are a new creature; old things have passed away.

There was a man on the Eastern Shore of Maryland years ago who carried the mail, and he was teaching Sunday School, trying to teach people to know God, and become the children of God. He was a leader in his church. One day that man began to tell them that salvation was of God. He began to tell them that all the salvation they had, God gave them, and that they had no part in producing it. They told him, "You're an Old School Baptist." He said, "Who are they?" The man had never heard one of them preach. He said, "Who are they?" They said, "They are people who preach about what you are talking about. We don't need you any longer." Why? Because all things had become new with him when God gave him a view that all he needed was Christ. All things had become new with him when the time came that He showed him in his flesh there was not anything good, and he couldn't teach other people to know God. He just started teaching the true way, and they got rid of him. I was up there later on and met the man who carried the mail, and you know, I said to him, "Have you heard from the King, lately?" I wanted to get his reaction. "Have you heard from the King, lately?" And he said, "I hope I hear something every day from Him." He told me a dream he had. He said, "I dreamed I was by a stream, and I looked over and there were lots of sheep across that stream, and I wanted to get over and I couldn't find a place to pass. I kept looking, and looking, and there was a shepherd over there with that flock of sheep, and I wanted to move over to where they were." And he said, "Suddenly, I was there. I didn't find the passageway across by myself." "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away." The former things are passed away in God's working with us, and God through the work of His Son does everything needful for the sinner, and his view of God is different when Christ is revealed in his heart. All things do become new.

Somebody would say in listening to me this morning, "Does everything become new with me? Tell me that I might have some evidence that everything is become new with me." You know, all people's experiences are different. Some are gradually brought to see Christ by faith. Some can't tell when the burden fell off their back. Some are lead one way, and some another, but in substance, the leading is the same way. And we are inquiring now, "Just what is

the ground of my hope that I have passed from death to life; have all things been made new with me?" Let's examine a few things the word of God says. John said, "By this ye may know you have passed from death unto life because you love the brethren." Religion isn't sociability. No, no, it is founded upon Christian love. And a man can love a man that maybe some way in nature he doesn't care too much for, but if he bears the mark of Christ he will love that man in his heart. He said, "By this ye may know you have passed from death unto life because you love the brethren." And that love was so great that when Ananias heard about Paul, he said, "I'm afraid of him. I'm afraid of that man." And when he met him, he said, "Brother Saul." "Brother Saul." That's what the grace of God does for a man.

In the 89th Psalm it is recorded, "Blessed is the people that do know the joyful sound. They shall walk, Oh, Lord, in the light of thy countenance, and in thy name shall they rejoice all the day." One of the marks of a new creature is that they know the joyful sound. The gospel of Christ has a joyful sound. Oh, my friends, I mentioned last night when I first heard it, it seemed like something gradually going through my very being at the name of Christ. And I have searched everything else for heavens ways, and I haven't found it. All things pass away! Old things pass away, and all things become new. These all things - (I like that expression, don't you?) are of God. Every one of them are of God; not half of them, not 99% of them, but they are all of God.

Now let us move on. I don't want to take too much time with this. "And all things are of God." What does he mean? He means what he said. That the conviction, the conversion, the regeneration, and everything that is wrought in the sinner's heart is of God, because of Christ's work. "Who hath reconciled us to himself." It is an endless subject–the union of Christ with His people and God Himself. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. That's the spiritual, heavenly world, those people. "Who have reconciled us to Himself by Christ Jesus." There is no sinner who has ever stood on the face of the earth who has ever had what is needful to reconcile himself to God. What is reconciliation? It is to remove whatever has separated. That's simple - bring them into union. We are reconciled to God by the death of His Son. There has never been a substitute for that. If Jesus Christ in His death didn't reconcile us to God, we will never be reconciled in this life or in the one to come. "And hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation." What does he mean by that? He means absolutely what he said. God has given to the church the ministry of preaching the reconciliation between God and man by His Son. That's the one He reconciled. That's what He teaches. To wit, that God was in Christ. If you follow the pathway of our Saviour through Bethlehem, you will see God there. Christ said, "The Father worketh, and I work. I and the Father are one." This is reconciliation, that God was in Christ. He was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, and what's more, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and has committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Not charging the sins of His people, but laying them on His Son, and then commits to us the ministry, the word of reconciliation.

How many of you, this morning, are glad there has been a reconciliation made between God and man, and that your hope is in that? And in that alone, and nothing else? And He has committed to us in the gospel, wherever it is preached, he has committed the word of reconciliation that the death of Christ paid all the debt for His people, and justified them with His blood, brought them to God.

Paul, as he entered Athens, preached God as sufficient, who made all things, and he said, "He's not far from any of us." "In Him we live, and move, and have our being." Now then, we are

ambassadors of Christ. A minister is an ambassador for Christ. "As though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ stead, be ye reconciled to God." A minister is an ambassador from heaven. If I am preaching the gospel to you, I hold the highest office that ever a man held in this world. They bring a message from God to man, and we pray you in Christ's stead, as Paul said, be ye reconciled to go. What does he mean? A believer here has lots of trials the world knows nothing about. He examines the things that come to him in life, whether the hand of God is in it. He will ask during the hours of night, "Is this the hand of the Lord in my life?" Is this some trial that has come to me to bring me closer to God? I never fear trials, if they bring me closer to my Master. Do you know what I mean? In the nature of believers, they wrestle with themselves and with their imperfections in the flesh. That the world knows nothing about. Sometimes they are on bended knee because of indwelling sin, and their life isn't what they would have it.

Sometimes they find themselves under God's chastening hand. If God loves you, He is going to chasten you somewhere along the way. The Bible says that if you be without chastisement, of whom all are partakers, ye are bastards and not sons. I heard the doctrine preached that we can so live that God will not chastise us. That hasn't been my experience, my dear brethren. It hasn't been my lot. And yet it said, "Whom the Lord loveth, he chastens, and he scourgeth every son that he receives." Be ye reconciled to God, and when trouble comes, remember my friends, they are always for your good.

"Trials make the promise sweet;
Trials give new life to prayer.
Trials bring us to His feet,
Lays us low and keeps us there.

Did I meet no trials here;
No chastisement by the way;
May I not by reason fear
I should be a castaway."

Hart

I remember many years ago, one night, I had a great burden. I had a burden I didn't know whether I could carry or not. I remember a spot I went to that night, and the hymn sweetly began to sink like rain into my heart, and that song was,

"If God is mine, then present things,
And things to come are mine;
Yea, Christ, his word, and spirit, too
And glory all divine.

If he is mine, let friends forsake,
Let wealth and honors flee:
Sure, he who giveth me himself,
Is more than these to me.

If he is mine, I'll boldly pass
Through death's tremendous vale;
He is a solid comfort, when
All other comforts fail."

I will never forget on that dark night that He showed me He is mine, and "I'll boldly pass through death's tremendous vale." I believe that. "He is a solid comfort, when all other comforts fail."

"Oh, tell me, Lord! that thou art mine;
What can I wish beside?
My soul shall at the fountain live,
When all the streams are dryed."

"For he hath made him to be sin for us." It is hard for us to comprehend that wonderful truth, but it is truth. Not to be made a sinner for us, but to be made, in the eyes of God, sin for us, as our sins imputed and charged to Jesus Christ, in the eyes of God He was made to be sin for us. He was born of a woman, to redeem His people under the law. Paul said, "Sent he forth his son, made of a woman." And he was not a sinner, but a sinless, holy person, and yet He was made to be sin for us. God imputed or charged the sins of His people to His Son. Did He take them? Yes, He did. Yes, He did. How many? All of them! It wouldn't do you any good if He hadn't taken them all. One single sin will sink you into hell. You wouldn't need but one. How many? All of them! What did Peter say about it? "He bare our sins in his own body on the tree of the cross and put them away by the sacrifice of himself," and when he comes they will all be in that great assembly of the saints. I don't

know how it will be over there, and you don't either. But I've had a foretaste of it, and if it's like the foretaste I've had, it is indescribable. The few moments of praise to God and with all the work of Christ is all I need for heaven, and it would make a heaven below, the Redeemer to know.

I well remember the hymn being sung when I was baptized. They gathered at Dan River, on the bank of Dan River, and we sang that hymn,

"O how happy are they
Who their Saviour obey,
And whose treasures are laid up above!
Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

And as I walked down into that water beside my dear natural father, on the bank the dear people were singing

"Now my remnant of days
Would I spend to his praise,
Who hath died my poor soul to redeem;
Whether many or few,
All my years are his due,
May they all be devoted to him."

My dear brethren and sisters and kind friends, this morning, what few days I have I want to be devoted to my Master. May He bless you is my prayer.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

A WORD TO THE DRY BAPTISTS

In our recent travels we were introduced to many persons as "Dry Baptists;" and as we have found them to be quite numerous it has occurred to us that some notice should be taken of this hitherto neglected portion of our friends. But first, it may be proper for us to give a brief description of them. They are not called Baptists to signify that they baptize, as did John the Baptist, nor that they have themselves been baptized, as were John's disciples, or the primitive disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ; they are not therefore entitled to the name of Baptists in any scriptural sense of the word; for practically they are not Baptists at all. Nevertheless by a sort of common consent the term, as qualified by the adjective dry, has been used to denote a peculiar description of persons who evince a strong attachment to the people of God, attend strictly on the public ministry of the word, seem to receive the testimony of truth with avidity, are always ready to defend the cause of truth, so far as words or arguments are concerned, can tell what is regarded by saints as a christian experience, and can be satisfied with nothing short of the children's bread, and yet manage so as to keep out of the water. In their walk and conversation, and in all respects except the ordinance of baptism and those privileges to which gospel baptism is a prerequisite, they are agreed in sentiment, sympathy and feelings with the Baptists. They are somewhat deficient in confidence in regard to their vital interest in the blood and righteousness of the Son of God. They firmly believe that it is the privilege and duty of all who love our Lord Jesus Christ to be "buried with him by baptism," and really feel that it would be a delightful privilege to them if they could only see their way clear; but alas! when they would do good, evil is present with them, and how to perform that which is good they find not; but they find a law in their members warring against the law of their minds, and bringing them into captivity; and from all that we can learn from them we are led to conclude that if they could be perfectly satisfied that this law of their members were slain, and that they should never be plagued any more with it, and that they were truly subjects of grace, and that they could do honor to a christian profession, they would gladly obey the command of Zion's King, and be baptized and unite with his church.

Having thus briefly described the characters to whom the appellation at the head of this article is given, and informed our readers that there are

many of them scattered all over our country, we will say something of the advantages and disadvantages of their rebellious course. They are not subjected to so much persecution and reproach for righteousness' sake as they would be if they were obedient to the commands of Jesus Christ. For if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus he shall suffer persecution; and, of course, as they are living in disobedience it is reasonable to conclude that they will escape at least some of the persecutions which the saints are subjected to. The faithful admonitions of the saints to church members, when they walk disorderly, are rather mortifying to the flesh; but all such mortification the "Dry Baptists" escape, as they are not under the watchcare of the church; and even the world will look very differently on their foibles if they make no public profession of religion. They will also be very likely to escape the charge of hypocrisy, and of having a name to live when they are dead. These are some of the advantages, if they may be called, which the "Dry Baptists" enjoy; but against these there may be some offset in the disadvantages of this rebellious course.

In contemplating the disadvantages we shall find that the way of the transgressor is hard; for rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and idolatry. He that knoweth his master's will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes; and we conclude that God's children who have experienced the quickening power of the Holy Spirit, who have felt the bitterness of sin, the fiery indignation and wrath of the law, and the efficacy of the Savior's blood applied for the remission of sin--those who have felt the joys of salvation and the love of God shed abroad in their souls, do know from painful experience something about the stripes and chastisements which the faithful God inflicts on his children when they forsake his law and walk not in his commandments. They feel an uncomfortable consciousness that all is not right; something whispers to them that their course betrays a want of gratitude to God their Savior; and when they mingle with the children of God they manifest a shyness, as though they were intruding; yet their hearts seem to go out after the society of God's people. The language of their hearts is, "Entreat me not to go back;" but the language of their practice is, "Urge me not to go forward;" and so between a will to do and a want of confidence or energy to obey the commands of Christ, they tarry long in their disobedience. As their rebellion is in Scripture compared to the sin of witchcraft, it often brings them on a sort of "enchanted ground," where they spend their money for that which is not bread, and labor for that which satisfieth not, instead of hearkening diligently unto the authority of Christ, eating that which is good, and enjoying the sure mercies of David.--See Isa. 55:2, 3. What they are vainly laboring for they can never attain unto; for they seem determined to walk by sight, whereas God has ordained that his followers shall walk by faith. If they could see their way clear, that is, if their natural judgment could be convinced that there were no impediments in the way, that they would never meet with anything to cause them to regret it, they would at once ease their consciences by taking Christ's yoke on them.

What we have written above is about the "Dry Baptists;" our intention was to address a few words to them. And as we feel in duty bound to preach to sinners, we know of no class of sinners to whom we can address ourselves with more propriety than those described above. But how shall we address them? Shall we call them brethren? We hope they are born of God; but Jesus has said, "Except a man deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me, he cannot be my disciple:" and, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." We doubt the propriety of calling them brethren, so

long as they disown Sarah as their mother. We do not find it in our heart to call them reprobates, for we believe they are bought with a price, and will ultimately reign with Christ in immortal glory. Well, for want of a more appropriate name we will call them by the name by which they are frequently designated.

Ye "Dry Baptists," are you satisfied with the leeks and onions of Egypt? Are you willing to live and die in disobedience to him who has loved you and given himself for you? Have you ever reflected that Jesus your King has placed the ordinance of baptism as the very first command that is binding on heaven-born souls? This command being the very first enjoined, must be obeyed before you can obey any other. It is in baptism that the children of God take on them his yoke; and until they are yoked, they are not qualified to serve him. Nothing that you can do religiously, before you are baptized, can be in order, for in the order of his government that ordinance stands first; so long, therefore, as you neglect it, after having passed from death unto life, you are living in a state of open rebellion. May we not say to you as Laban said to Abraham's servant, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without?" Gen. 24:31. If you have passed from death unto life, you belong to the household of God, and the church has a claim on you; whatever gift or talent for usefulness you may possess, is the property of the church; why, then, will you persist in your wicked course, and rob the church of what belongs to her, and your own souls of the privileges which are prepared for you in the Zion of our God? And, above all, why will you transgress the law which your covenant God has written in your hearts, and rank yourselves with the enemies of the cross of Christ? "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city; for without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." Rev. 22:14, 15. Will you, can you, dare you, say that those who are without are your companions, your associates, your chosen company? Your practice says all this; let your practice, then, no longer belie the language of your hearts.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

New Vernon, N.Y.
October 15, 1847

A MYSTERY

There was a mystery which was kept secret from the foundation of the world, "hid in God," a mystery which was revealed to none of the sons of God before the gospel age, a mystery of which Paul alone of all the apostles was made a minister. This dispensation of the gospel was committed unto him, that whether he preached willingly or by constraint, still it had to be preached. Necessity was laid upon him, and there was a woe unto him if he preached it not. The whole work of salvation is a mystery, and no part of it can be understood with the natural mind. But there was a special feature of this great work of salvation which had been hidden until the gospel age, and this special feature of the work of grace was given to Paul to preach unto the Gentiles. It was for the Gentiles' sake that Paul was a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and while there were twelve apostles unto the Jews, we, the Gentiles, have Paul, who is the thirteenth apostle.

This mystery of which Paul was made a minister he tells us about in his letter to the church at Ephesus. Now, the church at Ephesus was a Gentile church and Paul was a Jew. The same truth which was revealed in Paul was also revealed in these Gentile brethren. These Gentiles knew nothing about Judaism, and were strangers to that covenant which God gave Israel by the

hand of Moses. This Mosaic covenant forbade the Jews to deal with the Gentiles. According to that covenant no Gentiles had any right to the feasts or the solemn assemblies of the Jews; they could not partake in the temple service, nor in any of the sacrifices or holy things. From all these the Gentiles were shut out. He did not have the oracles of God, he did not have the prophets, none of the types or shadows, was indeed barred from all the blessings and privileges of the Israelites. Consequently the Mosaic law constituted a barrier between Jew and Gentile, it was a "middle wall of partition" forbidding intercourse and fellowship between them. It was a handwriting of legal ordinances enjoined upon Israel for their obedience, carrying with it blessings for the observance and punishments for the breach. But none of these blessings or punishments could ever be the lot of the Gentiles, for the Gentiles were never under the Mosaic law. If Jesus, therefore, were made under the Mosaic law he would be the Savior of none but Jews, no Gentile could ever benefit by the shedding of Jesus' blood.

When the Scripture says that Jesus was made of a woman, made under the law, it is not the Mosaic law which is meant, but the law under which Adam fell in condemnation, which fall embraced all the elect of God in Adam. This fall embraced both Jew and Gentile, for there was yet no difference between Jew and Gentile when Adam transgressed. The obedience of Jesus was not confined to the law of Moses, but his obedience was unto the law of God, of which law of God the law of Moses was but a faint shadow, portraying in the temporal blessings which fell to the lot of Israel the spiritual blessings which under the new covenant fall to the lot of spiritual Israel.

Indeed, literally, Jesus did not keep the Mosaic law at all. That law forbade any work whatsoever on the sabbath day, and Jesus did pluck ears of corn on that day. That law said, Honor thy father and mother, and Jesus never did honor Mary as his mother nor Joseph as his father. That law said that any man calling himself equal with God was a blasphemer and was to be put to death, and Jesus did say, I and my Father are one. All these, and other acts which Jesus did, were looked upon as literal breaches of the law. But in the spirit Jesus did keep the law, and fulfilled to every jot and tittle its spiritual import; but he did far more, he obeyed the law and the will of God, so that his salvation is not confined to Jews, which it would have been had he obeyed merely the law of Moses, but reaches out and takes in both Jew and Gentile: all his people from the four winds of heaven and from the four corners of the earth, in every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue.

Thus we see that the Mosaic law comprised a "handwriting of ordinances" which was against the Gentiles, being contrary to them, because they were barred from the observance of it and from the blessings or privileges or punishments of it.

This Mosaic covenant made an enmity between Jew and Gentile. So when Jesus died it ended the old covenant. He took away the handwriting of ordinances, nailing them to his cross, thus abolishing the enmity. This expression, "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity," and that other expression, "Having slain the enmity" by the cross, both found in the second chapter of Ephesians, do not refer at all to the enmity of the carnal mind and the mind of Christ, nor to the enmity between the flesh and the Spirit, but to the enmity between Jew and Gentile, which enmity arose from the makeup of the Mosaic covenant which excluded Gentiles from participating in it. This enmity, this old covenant, had to be abolished before Gentiles could come into the kingdom of God. This abolition

Jesus performed by the death of the cross.

Resulting from this death of Jesus comes the revelation of the mystery kept hid from the foundation of the world, and it is thus: the church, or body of Christ, composed of both Jews and Gentiles, are one in the kingdom of God. Having broken down the middle wall of partition Christ made of the twain one new man. The "twain" means two, and the two are Jew and the Gentile. Of these two he makes one new man, or one new body, the body of Christ. All are members of his flesh and of his bones, all fitly joined together, growing unto a holy temple in the Lord, builded through the Spirit for the habitation of his honor and glory. The children of God are not destined to become perfect men and perfect women. No, never. The gospel holds forth no such promise, but we all shall, that is, all his people from among both Jews and Gentiles, shall ultimately come unto the one perfect man, and that one perfect man is the measure of stature of the fullness of Christ. We shall all become as we already are, molded into one body, the body of our Lord.

Paul says somewhere in writing to the church at Corinth, Ye are all one bread. No loaf of bread can by any possibility be resolved back into its original grains of wheat. Each grain and all the grains lose their separateness when in the loaf of bread. Just so, only infinitely more so, the body of Christ while composed of redeemed sinners of Adam's fallen race can never be resolved back again into the individual men and women whence it came. Now this is the mystery which Paul particularly refers to in his letter to the church at Ephesus: "That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body (with the Jews), and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel." This doctrine of the new man; that is, of the body of Christ, made of Jew and Gentile, a wholly new thing until the resurrection of Christ, that is the special dispensation which was committed unto Paul to preach. It was not in other ages made known unto the sons of men, but it is now in the gospel age revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.

In some of the prophecies of the Old Testament, to be sure, there is abundant evidence of the bringing of the Gentiles to the light of the truth. Especially is this true of the prophecies of Isaiah. But that One body, or one new man, was to be formed of the hosts of the redeemed from among both Jews and Gentiles that both were to be quickened together with Christ and to be raised up together with Christ, and both to be made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ; we say all this had been kept hid throughout all the ages heretofore to be revealed and made known in these last times, and was first made known in the ministry of Paul, the Gentiles' apostle, and was the special dispensation of the gospel committed unto him. This, the unity of the whole church of God in the one body of the new man, Christ Jesus, is the "unsearchable riches of Christ" which Paul says he was especially called to preach among the Gentiles. This oneness of Christ and his people, whosoever they may be in the flesh, whether Jew or Gentile, bond or free, Greek or barbarian, is the gist and kernel of the whole gospel matter. It is the fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined, on which God feasts his children in his holy mount.

Elder H. H. Lefferts
Nov. 1, 1920

(We question if Paul was the 13th Apostle. Ed.)

OBITUARIES

CHRISTENA McFEETERS

Christena McFetters, daughter of John and Clara Fike Sweeney, was born February 21, 1893 in Kingman, Kansas and passed away August 14, 1982 in the Lester E. Cox Medical Center, Springfield, Missouri at the age of 89 years, 5 months, and 23 days.

She is survived by two sons, Owen and Lawrence McFeeters, both of Route #3, Seymour, Missouri; one daughter, Mrs. Martha Milford, also of Route #3, Seymour, Missouri; one sister, Mrs. Ola Bair of Agra, Oklahoma; 10 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren.

Sister McFeeters was baptized into membership of the Pleasant Valley Church in Kingman, Kansas by the late Elder J. R. Hardy. She remained a loyal member and a true believer of Salvation by Grace and attended meetings regularly with her husband, Lewis McFeeters, who preceded her in death and until they moved to Seymour, Missouri where she lived with her son, Owen, until her death.

Sister McFeeters kept in touch with the church by correspondence and expressed her sorrow at not being able to attend her home church, but as her health was never the best and the distance well over 400 miles, she was kept isolated from her church affiliation, and no church of the same faith and order was found in her area in Missouri.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer who had known Sister McFeeters in the church at Kingman, Kansas in his youth, but who had never been privileged to preach in her hearing since she moved to Missouri while Elder Hardy was serving the church. However, in later years, they kept up a regular correspondence which was a source of comfort to both.

Elder W. A. Winfrey

ELDER JAMES WILLIAM JOHNSON

The Ebenezer Baptist Association of the Primitive faith and order feel so keenly the loss of its beloved brother, Elder James William Johnson, that we the messengers of the district meeting authorize the following obituary and tribute of respect recorded in the minutes of the Association.

It has pleased our God to take from this life our beloved Brother James W. Johnson on May 6, 1982, at the age of forty two. He was born July 11, 1939. On April 28, 1959, he united in marriage to Virginia Funderburke. To this union was born one daughter, Shellia Rebecca. His wife, daughter, Mother, Connie Johnson, sister, Rebecca Sexton, two nephews and a host of other relatives and friends survive to mourn his passing.

Elder Johnson united with the Ivey Creek Primitive Baptist Church on November 7, 1963. He was baptized by Elder E. D. Gofford the same day. He preached his first sermon at Ivey Creek Church on January 2, 1966. He was ordained to the work of the ministry on July 31, 1966. Elders E. J. Lambert, W. F. Beauford, Sam H. Dean, J. P. Morgan, and Warren King formed the presbytery.

Six churches called him as Pastor. God blessed Elder Johnson to feed them with wisdom and understanding as well as to faithfully lead them in all paths of truth and righteousness until God called him to depart this natural life. Often when Elder Johnson held a funeral he would quote Revelation 14:13; "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, yea henceforth sayeth the Spirit, they do rest from their labors and their works do follow them." Now we believe he has entered into this rest.

Although we can never see this brother again in this world, we look hopefully to join him in heaven's court in glory there to sing praise to God in His Kingdom that shall never end.

The church at Ivey Creek request that a copy of this obituary be recorded in the church records, one sent to the local paper and one to the Association.

Written by Eleanor Dixon

SISTER IDA COX WILLIAMS

Sister Ida Cox Williams was born March 6, 1886, the daughter of Albert C. Cox and Sallie Williams Cox and was called away from earthly toils April 20, 1982, making her journey here nearly 96 years.

The church at Malmaison, Virginia received her into their fellowship in 1938. Her husband, Mr. Bernard Williams, came with her as long as he was able, after which she attended with her daughter, Mrs. Ruby Collie, until poor health prevented.

In the many years of confinement she was still faithful to support her church and their needs.

Graveside services were conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Mr. Ronald Crawford.

May His grace comfort each heart that mourns and give us faith to say, "Thy will be done."

Written by request,
Elder J. R. Williams

SISTER ALENE STEWART McDONALD

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst Sister Alene S. McDonald. She passed from this life June 7, 1982. She was born December 16, 1908, which made her stay on earth 73 years. A native of Harnett County, she was the daughter of the late James A. and Ida Jackson Stewart.

Surviving are one daughter, Mrs. Ida K. Godwin and one grandson, of Dunn, N.C. Graveside services were held at 3 P.M. on June 8, 1982 at the Bethsaida Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery by Preacher Brent Carpenter.

Sister Alene joined Liberty Primitive Baptist Church on June 30, 1973, and was baptized by her Pastor, Elder C. D. Turner. She was a believer in salvation by the grace of God and attended church services when her health permitted. The church feels the loss of this sister, but believe it is her eternal gain. May God bless and comfort her loved

ones.

It was agreed that a copy be sent to the family, a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and a copy be placed on our church record.

Committee:
Brother James Young
Sister Dorothy Barefoot

DEACON WALTER G. WRIGHT

Deacon Walter Greenland Wright of Cassville, Pa. died July 24, 1981. He was born October 11, 1902 in Bellwood, Pa., the son of William and Margery Greenland Wright.

He is survived by his wife, Gladys Wilson Wright, and three sons, Bernard of Calvin, Pa., W. Glen and Gene T. of Cassville, Pa. He is also survived by eight grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and a sister, Mrs. Fred Corbin of Huntingdon, Pa.

Brother Wright was a member and Deacon of Trough Creek Valley Old School Baptist Church for thirty-one years and was a Trustee of the Trough Creek Valley Cemetery Association. He was very active in the civic affairs of his community.

Elder Alex McColl of Canada conducted the funeral at the McClain Funeral Home in Cassville. Brother Wright was interred in the Trough Creek Valley Cemetery.

WILLIAM HOLLIE SEXTON

Our beloved father and husband, William Hollie Sexton, passed away on June 5, 1982. Daddy was born November 4, 1903, in Crenshaw County, Alabama, to Idelle Reeves and Hubbert Lonzie Sexton. He married Eva Lucille Sexton on Feb. 20, 1927, who survives him. To this union was born two daughters, Sister Emmie L. Grayson, and Sister Margaret Herring; three sons, William Orden, Mitchell Van, and Willie Hue (who died at 21 months). He also leaves to mourn him 10 grandchildren, 2 great grandchildren, 5 sisters and 1 brother.

Daddy united with Cool Springs Primitive Baptist Church in the Ebenezer Association, in September, 1930. He was baptized by the late Elder E. D. Gafford. A few years later he moved his membership to New Providence Church in Greenville, Alabama. On June 22, 1951, Daddy was ordained a deacon, an office for which he was well qualified and he faithfully carried out his duties. Daddy loved the doctrine of salvation by the sovereign grace of God. He loved to hear the gospel proclaimed and to sing the songs of Zion in praise to our great Redeemer's Name. He loved the fellowship of the dear Brethren, Sisters, and Friends.

His funeral was conducted by Elder Sam H. Dean, Elder Clyde Barton, and Elder Allen Bailey. He was laid to rest in Cool Springs Cemetery, to await the resurrection, when Jesus is coming to carry His children home.

Written in love,
Emmie L. Grayson

BAMA POE UTLEY

I would like, if the Lord wills, to pen a few words concerning my Mother, Bama Poe Utley, who passed away December 20, 1978. She was born December 21, 1882. United in marriage to Elder W. R. Utley December 25, 1904, Papa preceded her in death 23 years later. To this union were born three sons, Theron, Lee and Howard Utley, all too preceded her in death, three daughters, Mrs. Ralph (Agnes) Hocutt, Mrs. Howard (Viva Dean) Poe, and Mrs. William (Christine) Ramsey.

Mama united with the Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church at Liberty Hill, Tuscaloosa County, Alabama, June 8, 1908 and was baptized by the late Elder J. S. Norris.

Mother united with the church several years before I was born, so all I have ever known was seeing her enjoying a salvation given her of that God who works and none can hinder.

I firmly believe she has entered into that rest that remaineth to the people of God, and being firmly persuaded of this, I can truthfully say to those who are left behind that our loss is her eternal gain. So let us not weep as those that have no hope, but rather let us rejoice in Christ Jesus through whom we too, shall in due time be brought forth more than conquerers if we, indeed be among those who love our Lord in sincerity and in truth.

Her love for the church and the doctrine of the Predestinarian Primitive Baptist was one of her outstanding qualities and she never missed a meeting of her faith when she was able to attend. After her health was too poorly for her to attend, we had preaching services at her home. By precept and example, by humility, self sacrifice, by sublime patience in affliction and trouble, her life reflected the true christian.

She evidenced her faith by her works and leaves to those that knew her a legacy of precious memories.

Services were held by her pastor Elder A. H. Brock. Interment was made in Liberty Hill Cemetery beside her husband to await the resurrection morn when the dead in Christ shall be raised to life everlasting and she will ever be with the Lord.

She was my Mother and I hope a sister in the Lord.

Written by a daughter,
Mrs. Ralph Hocutt

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Enclosed is my check for a two year subscription renewal to the *Signs of the Times* for me, and also a new subscription to be sent as indicated. Use the balance of the check as you see fit.

The *Signs of the Times* is such an important part of my reading and if I could wish for anything more for it, it would be for it to be larger. But I praise the Lord for it, as it is exactly. We who are faithful readers and followers of God's "precepts and commandments" love to hear and see the truth printed and preached - not diluted by the world in any way.

May the Lord continue to bless all the Editors and writers to continue faithful to the end.

Your Sister in Hope,
Ruth Lucht

RELATION OF MY EXPERIENCE

No. 2

Brother Beebe:--At the close of the first Number, I stated what I consider my first exercise after regeneration. Shortly after that exercise occurred, I went to Wilbraham where I had spent the preceding winter, but had not long been there before by a special providential interposition as I consider it, an application was made to me to go into Otsego Co., New York and take charge of a school, from the fact that a friend rode upwards of forty miles to give me notice of the application, I unhesitatingly went on immediately, and engaged in the school for one quarter. This school being located in a new and rough settlement, I did not like the situation, but whilst there I was informed that Mr. Neal, the Presbyterian minister in Copperstown in that county, (since known as Dr. Neal of Philadelphia) who had charge of the Academy in that place, wished to employ a teacher in the English department. I called on him; he after examination, engaged me to come on when my quarter in the other situation ended; and also engaged to give me instructions in the languages. There was but one circumstance in my experience during that quarter worth relating, and that perhaps, only as showing how I was led on not by man, but by an invisible teacher step by step, to renounce my early prejudices concerning religion. I had not as yet seen the error of my early impressions, that dancing was quite consistant with religion; and being one night in a company where dancing was introduced, I without hesitancy engaged in it. But one dance was enough for me, a sense of guilt and condemnation so seized my mind as to stop my sport, and I could not tell why; I then saw no evil in dancing.

I soon left the company, but the distress of mind followed me without being able to comprehend why. I awoke the next morning with my mind in the same situation. Before entering my school, I retired to enquire why it was so. My mind was soon opened to see that dancing was inconsistant with my promise to seek my happiness in God; for I was thereby seeking it in worldly amusements, besides the very idea of these amusements was to pass time lightly away, whereas I was under obligation and engagement to spend my time to the glory of God. I from that time cheerfully renounced worldly amusement.

From my first religious exercise I thought it important that I should, on the first opportunity, join some church, as a part of my religious service to God, and as calculated more to establish me in my resolution to seek God. When I became located in Copperstown I thought this opportunity was afforded me. There was, however, one difficulty in the way: the Presbyterians I had understood professed to believe in the doctrine of election, that I could not profess as my heart was bitter against it, so much so that as I was one night in

my room reading the 8th and 9th chapters of Romans, I was so incensed against those chapters because of their containing so fully the doctrine of election and predestination, that I actually thought of cutting them out of my Bible and casting them into the fire. Nothing but a sense of its being God's word prevented me.

This difficulty, however, was soon removed, for shortly after some persons were received into the church and I had an opportunity of hearing the church covenant to which they were to assent read, and found to my joy that election and predestination were not named in it. The next month I applied to the session, and was received into the church.

In the spring a young Presbyterian came to study with Mr. Neal with a view to the ministry, who was better indoctrinated in the Presbyterian faith than I was. As he boarded and roomed with me he soon found out my opposition to election, and set about reforming me from that error. By his reasoning from the Scriptures, and by reading certain writers on the subject to which he referred me, I was convinced that election was a Scriptural doctrine, and became a strenuous advocate for it, that is, as held generally by the Presbyterians in connection with general atonement, general offers, invitations, etc.

Having joined the Presbyterian Church in March, I think, 1808, I was strict in observing the sabbath, as I considered it, in reading a certain portion of the scriptures daily, in prayer, and in morality, was during that year a pretty strict formalist, and got along comfortably. Not that I thought I had attained a safe state, this was what I was labouring for, and I hoped that God had began the work in me, and therefore that I should be able to persevere and attain to a safe state before I died. This, as nigh and I can recollect, was about my views.

In the early part of 1809 I got hold of Doddridge's, "Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul." I undertook to carry out his directions for progressing religion in my soul. I added more praying as well as occasional fastings to my tasks, and devoted Saturday nights to prayer and self examination, preparatory to the "Duties of the sanctuary," as they were called. The test whether a work of grace was begun in me was whether I loved God. I from this time became about as laborious a legalist as was to be found among the Presbyterians; so much so that my religious duties very much retarded my studies, although for a time I confined myself to six hours sleep, out of twenty four; until my constitution not being strong enough to bear that deprivation, was completely overcome by the want of sleep. As a part of the Doddridge discipline I kept a diary of my experience. In looking over it through this year, I find that I made frequent complaints of my want of zeal and devotion in my religious exercises, but very little of my corruptions, or the plague of my heart.

Mr. Neal, about the time I joined the church, persuaded me that it was my duty to turn my attention to the ministry. Although I had not before thought of that, yet on reflecting I assented to it, and ultimatly I became so devoted to the idea that nothing else seemed worth living for. This was frequently brought to the test in 1809 and 10, by the various difficulties which interposed to my obtaining a suitable preparatory education. Amid these difficulties I could not think of turning my attention to anything else; and I really felt that life was of no value to me if I could not spend it in the ministry. I mention not this as an evidence of my call to the ministry, for whatever purpose God may have had in it, in reference to my after being called to the ministry, I consider it not in that light, but as showing the great zeal the natural mind may be wrought up to in

religion, and in reference to the ministry.

Mr. Neil, in view of the difficulties in the way of my obtaining a collegiate education, advised me not to aim at it, as the Western Presbytery of New York, at that time, would admit persons into the ministry without their having graduated. Following his advice, I soon turned from the Latin to the study of the Greek and other studies which he thought more useful. Though I thus conformed to Mr. Neil's direction, and notwithstanding my zeal for the ministry, I had no notion of entering it, without such qualifications as would give me a pretty fair standing in it.

Mr. Neil, having received a call to the Presbyterian Church in Albany, left Copperstown in Sept. of 1809. I therefore concluded as soon as the school closed in which I was then engaged, to leave that region also. Just before this the Theological School at Andover, Mass., had been established. I thought if I was in that region I might gain admittance to that School without going through college, and that the course of studies there would make up for any deficiency in my scientific studies. I accordingly left Copperstown early in October, went into Mass., and succeeded in getting the school in the village of Watertown, seven miles from Boston. Here I found myself in the midst of Unitarianism. The minister and people in Watertown were of the looser class, and I therefore had no religious society here. But there being an orthordox minister, so called, who preached in Newtown, four or five miles distant, I principally attended meeting there. In the latter part of the winter a young lady of Boston, a member of the First Baptist Church there, came out on a visit to the family where I boarded and spent several weeks. As we pretty much agreed on doctrinal points, I had a good deal of satisfaction in her society, and became quite attached to her. I mention this because I shall have occasion to refer to her again. I, a short time before my engagement in the school was out, called on Dr. Griffin, one of the principal professors in Andover School, who then resided in Boston, to enquire as to the terms of admittance into the School. He informed me that their rules were to admit none but graduates into the school, and that they could not depart from them. This was a sore disappointment to my hopes of attaining to the ministry. But he kindly informed me that the Presbytery in New Jersey, from whence he was, had funds for assisting poor young men to obtain an education for the ministry, and he thought if I was there I might obtain assistance. My attention was next turned toward New Jersey.

I will here relate a rather singular exercise I had a little before this. It was the Lord's day, March 11th, and I had attended meeting at Newtown, but had felt very cold and dull. On returning to my boarding house, I concluded to retire to my room and spend a season in prayer. I had not been long thus engaged before there appeared before me two lights, and the suggestion was made to my mind that these were the Father and Son, and that they had manifested themselves thus to me as a token of God's love to me, and that he was going to make me happy. Immediately my passions were raised to an ecstasy of joy and love to God indescribable; I even imagined that my soul was leaving the body and was going to heaven. I thought I felt it rising up in me, and as being just ready to depart, and the delight I felt at the idea, and the praises I poured forth on account of it I cannot describe. After a while, I thought I felt my soul sinking down into my body, but I would have given the world for it not to return back and I have to go again into the world. From this the ecstasy subsided, and when I attempted to rise off my knees, I found myself so exhausted by the excitement that I could not do it, I had just to prostrate myself

on the floor and lie for some time before I recovered strength to get up. On reflecting on this, the idea arose that it might have been a delusion of Satan, but immediately the suggestion was made, "Satan cannot love," and that as I felt such love to God, it must have been from God. It was thus kindly overruled to be quite a support to me under the disappointments I shortly after had to meet. But I have long since known it to have been a delusion of Satan practiced upon me; for there was in it no view of the mediation and atonement of Christ, the only medium of a sinner's acceptance with God. Of this I was at that time ignorant. The love was nothing but a natural love arising from the imagination that God was going to make me happy. The lights arise from some natural cause, I have frequently seen them since, probably in consequence of the position my eyes were in toward the window. From having experienced this exercise and known its delusion, *I have no confidence in those relations we frequently hear of great lights, and great excitements of love to God where there is no view of Christ as the medium of acceptance with God.*

After closing my engagements at Watertown, I went to Newport, R.I., thence by water to New York, and from thence into New Jersey. At Morristown I engaged for a few weeks as an assistant in one of the academies there, when I obtained a school in Hanover, and had the opportunity of boarding with the Presbyterian minister of the place and of receiving some instruction from him in my studies.

On my way to Morristown I called upon the Presbyterian minister in Newark, New Jersey, to make some enquiries about schools. While there two or three other ministers called, and the mention was made of a new work on infant baptism by Dr. Porter. All united in speaking of it as a master piece on the subject. Immediately the idea suggested itself to me that I would purchase one and send one to my Baptist friend in Boston, hoping it might convince her of her error on that subject. Not in reference to the mode of baptism, for I had been convinced from my study of Greek, and of Ecclesiastical History that immersion was the original and proper mode, and had felt sorry that it had been changed. But in reference to the subjects: for I was a strenuous advocate for the seal of the covenant, as baptism was considered, being put on infants. Whilst at Morristown, I procured one of those books, but concluded before sending it on, I would read it myself. I did so. I found Dr. Porter's position to be that the Abrahamic covenant was still in force under the gospel, that the children of believers under it, now stood in the same relation to their parents, as formerly the Israelitish children did to their parents; that only the seals of the covenant were changed, that baptism had been substituted in the place of circumcision, and the Lord's Supper in the place of the Passover. On reading this, the idea struck me that if this position was correct, that, as formerly every circumcised child had a right to eat of the passover, so now every baptized child must have a right to eat of the Lord's Supper. I could see no consistent way to avoid this conclusion. But the conclusion I was not willing to admit; for I believed there was an experimental change necessary to a person's being a proper subject for partaking of the Lord's Supper. I thought rather than submit to such an inconsistency, I would examine the Baptist ground. But again it occurred to me that if I should become a Baptist, all my hopes of obtaining assistance to prosecute my studies would be frustrated. In this dilemma, I soothed my conscience by solemnly promising the Lord that if my hopes of obtaining assistance to pursue my studies were cut off I would then examine the ground for believer's baptism. The book I laid aside, without sending it as before

designed.

In Hanover, I found myself in the enjoyment of what I esteemed religious privileges, such as I had not before enjoyed. There had been a revival there a year or two before, and a number of young persons had joined the church. Their zeal had not yet died away, so that they kept up frequent prayer meetings. I was soon introduced among them, and put forward to take a leading part in these meetings. But whilst this was the case on the one hand, I on the other was made to feel the corruptions of my nature, far more than I ever had before, causing me much to doubt whether there was any reality in my religion. In looking at some of the entries in my diary during this summer, I should think that they had been penned by a tempted, doubting believer, were it not for the legality so apparent in them. I speak in them about my inability to do anything, that God must do all for me by His grace, and of my entire dependance on Christ for acceptance, etc., and yet there is a rotten legal self doing spirit runs through the whole. My reading was of the more evangelical class of authors, as they are called, such as John Newton, and even Dr. Hawkers "Zion's Pilgrim" was a favorite book with me. I no doubt imbibed their mode of expression. I mention these things to show how the natural mind may be molded into a gospel mode of thinking and expression, whilst we are ignorant of our helplessness, though I was being taught that by being made to feel the power of my corruptions and ignorance of Christ. In reference to my corruptions, in order to get relief, I occasionally, on Saturdays when I had no school, retired to the woods and spent the day in fasting and prayer that God would relieve me from them. I would write solemn covenants that I would not indulge in any evil thought or propensity nor indulge in any trifling conversation, etc., and sign my name to them. I find two or three such in my diary. I think I once or twice, in order to make it more solemn, drew blood from my finger and wrote on loose paper covenants on this kind. But all would not do; my corruptions still appeared to triumph. One night returning from school, borne down with a sense of my corruptions, I went into my room and threw myself upon my bed, and whilst there, drew the conclusion that all I had experienced was from Satan, that he had been working upon me to make a polished hypocrite of me. Immediately therefore, the charge was made against me; Now you have committed the sin against the Holy Ghost; for the Spirit of God has been at work with you, and you have now ascribed his work to Satan. I immediately sprang upon my feet and walked my room for some time in a complete despair, as I believe a living man is capable of. At length I was relieved by the thought, that if the work was Satan's I had committed no sin in charging it to him, if it was the work of the Holy Ghost, I could not commit the unpardonable sin, for he would CARRY IT ON UNTIL THE DAY OF JESUS CHRIST.

I went on in this way, attending zealously to the forms of religion both public and private, but thus harassed with corruptions, temptations of various kinds, and doubts, until in September I got hold of a work of Dr. Bellamy's entitled, "True Religion Deliniated." I determinated at once to read it, and test myself carefully by it. This book commenced with a representation of God and of his attributes, and of the fitness that he should be loved and obeyed; and goes on to describe the requisitions of the law, that we should love God with all our heart, etc. I was one day sitting in my room reading this part, when I felt the enmity of my heart so rise against the requisition, that I went on in the flowing out of this enmity, to say to myself, IT IS UNJUST IN GOD TO REQUIRE THAT WE SHOULD THUS LOVE

HIM, THAT THERE IS NO FITNESS IN IT; THAT I CAN SEE NOTHING IN THE WORKS OF CREATION THAT SHOWS HIM WORTHY TO BE LOVED, YEA, SAID I, I CANNOT SEE ANY EVIDENCE THAT THERE IS A GOD. As I uttered this last expression, I involuntarily raised my eyes toward the window, and a handsome red apple hanging on a tree near by, met them, and I so saw the wisdom and goodness of God manifested, in causing that apple to grow there, that at once all my atheism was knocked in the head, and with it, all my religion that I had been nourishing and building up for three years was prostrated in the dust. I had, I saw, all that time been worshipping an unknown God; had mocked God with a form of Godliness, whilst my heart retained such enmity to him as to deny his right to require me to love him, and even as to deny his existence. My past religious performances now appeared as in the sight of God, the most odious of all the sins I had ever committed.

S. Trott

(To be continued)

Olympia, Washington

Dear Editors,

I have just realized that my subscription to the dear *Signs* is about to expire, so the enclosed check is for a two year renewal; and do please accept the balance to help as you choose.

My husband and I were privileged to attend a portion of the August three-day meeting in the Bethel Primitive Baptist Church at Mossyrock, WA., at which Elder James Hollandsworth of Bassett, VA., was guest minister. It was such pure joy to once again experience the loving fellowship with those of like faith. Sister Hollandsworth, her sister and husband, and niece (the Turners') were guests, also. It is a real privilege to know that we "little ones" here in the far Northwest are so well remembered by periodic visits of loved ones from across this continent. Elder Ben Preston ministers to the three little churches in this general area; and though they are located many miles apart, he is a faithful and wonderful shepherd to his little flock. It, therefore, is such a special blessing when the Lord sees fit to send guest ministers to meet with us. We have become especially endeared to all those who, in the past, have come so far to meet with us here.

I so enjoy the present day sermons in each *Signs,* as well as writings from the previous century. It is very interesting to note that the same sound doctrine has remained strong and undiluted over the years. In these perilous days, "His truth shall be thy shield and buckler." (Ps. 91:4)

I am so poor at writing, but I felt I wanted to share what has been in my heart recently.

May God continue to bless you dear Editors who know and speak the truth.

In hope of grace,
Alma F. Coate

I PETER 2:1-8

I want to read to you this morning from the 2nd Chapter of First Peter beginning at the first verse. "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which

the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed." I've read eight verses of the scripture and there's one letter that impressed me while reading. You know, a stone is s-t-o-n-e, and stones s-t-o-n-e-s meaning more than one, are precious in His sight. I feel this is referring to the Lord's people; s-t-o-n-e-s, stones are living.

The third verse says, "If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." Do you feel in your heart this morning that you have tasted that the Lord is gracious? And do you feel in your heart this morning that the Lord Jesus Christ has planted in your heart that love and fellowship toward your brethren and towards the whole household of faith and called you with a holy calling? If you believe that and if you have tasted that, my friends, so then it's addressed to you. You are one of those stones that the Lord Jesus Christ came to save. It says, "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." That's talking to you and to you. I have a hope in my breast that it's referring to me. I feel this morning the glorious doctrine of God our Saviour is something precious, glorious and wonderful.

And it says in the 9th verse, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." That's wonderful reading, isn't it? They are not my words, but they are the words of the Holy Writ.

"Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." We have the feeling many times in our lives of obtaining something. In my life many years ago, (thirty-odd years ago,) I didn't feel like I had ever obtained the love of God and the fellowship, and what it means among His people. But I feel when this was made known to us it brought something. It brought peace and joy, and it brought fellowship among our brethren and our sisters and friends. I think so much about the glorious doctrine of God our Saviour and what it means to us. If the doctrine of God our Saviour doesn't mean anything to you, you don't have anything. I feel like all of us in this room this morning, if not deceived, have tasted something along life's way that caused us to think more and more as we go down life's way.

It says in the last verse of this Chapter, "For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls." I feel like all of us have gone astray at times. Have you ever felt in your heart that you had gone astray? Do you feel in your heart that you've gone astray and partook of things that didn't pertain to the way of salvation and the way of truth and love? I feel like, my friends, that we have tasted something. This morning I partook of a piece of candy out of a dish and it tasted sweet to my tongue. Very seldom do I eat a piece of candy. But my friends, that's a natural thing, and I hope by the grace of Almighty God, when these spiritual things come to us we taste of them and we feel them and show forth the praise of God. When the spirit of God is manifested in our souls, it does something for us. And I love this verse of scripture; (I've never read this chapter, as I know anything about, in public, but that matters not about that)–"For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the.....Bishop." What is the Bishop of our soul? That's talking to the household of faith, it matters not where you are or who you are, it's talking to you, not to the world at large. No. But to the world of believers, that's who this scriptures is addressed to; the

world of believers.

And it also says in the 23rd verse, "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." When God Almighty judges, He judges, and the scripture says He knows the very intents of our hearts. I feel sometimes to say to you--and I feel it's your experience--that the Lord tends my heart. Sometimes I get a little off the track, I think evil things. But when it (my heart) returns to the Bishop of my soul, that love and fellowship of the Spirit is something sweet that won't turn loose and let me go because this glorious doctrine of God our Saviour does something for us. It brings us low at times.

Here in this chapter it says Christ is the living stone. Yes, He's the living stone. The other stones refer to His people; those for whom He went to the tree of the cross and died and suffered for. He forgave us all our sins and all our iniquities and washed us in His blood. It calls us right here in this book "God's own people." God's own people! I love these expressions in the King James Bible. I feel like they mean much to us.

It tells us in the second verse, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word." My friends, when we first tasted of the Lord and Him being gracious to us, we were like a newborn babe. I certainly was. The time I heard the gospel of God our Saviour preached from old Elder Wyatt's lips I feel like I left the meeting house that evening a newborn babe. I tasted something which I had never tasted before and I feel like it was the sincere word of life everlasting: something sure.

The word of God goes out to His people. You know what the word of God is, my friends, and it's sharper than any two-edge sword. It cuts, sometimes it hews, it hews this old body sometimes, and it slices here and it slices there, but I tell you, my friends, it's good for us to be hewn down a little bit. Yes, it is. And I feel like there is no man or woman on the face of the earth who hasn't gone astray at times, but above all this, when God Almighty calls one and manifests His love in his heart it is something that is pure and that is why this thing won't let us go, because God Almighty has implanted it in our hearts and causes us to think more and more each day that is allotted to us in this life, on this royal priesthood. It says, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation."

A lot of folks say you have to go to heaven before you can be holy; a lot of folks will tell you you've got to be holy here before you can go to heaven; and a lot of folks will tell you it's after this life you will be holy, but you know what the scripture says about "holy?" It says, "Be ye holy as I am holy." That's talking about the inner man; it's not talking about this old outer man. My friends, this outer man is perishing day by day. There's nothing good or holy in this body except the inner man. The outer man is only a vessel of the inner man.

My friends, if you have ever tasted that the Lord is gracious in this life, there's something in your heart as holy as the Lord Jesus Christ is. You may not believe it like I do, my friends, but there's something in my heart as holy as the Lord Jesus Christ is, because God Almighty created it there. I didn't do anything to bring it about, or cause God Almighty to speak to my soul and make me to think more and more upon His goodness and His mercy. God Almighty gave me this hope as a free gift. And what God Almighty gives in this life is holy and righteous and it is building up to His kingdom. I feel that very keenly today. I don't want to stress the point that this body you see standing before you this morning is holy. No. No, I haven't said that. But I have said if the Lord Jesus Christ is born in you the

hope of glory, that which is born of God is as holy as the Lord Jesus Christ is.

You know, my friends, I love to think on the Lord Jesus Christ and what He's done for His people. He's the only perfect man that's ever walked the face of this earth and that's the way I want to put it. I feel like if He's revealed something in your heart this morning, it's something that is pure, and white as snow, and washed in His blood. You know when John spoke of coming out of great tribulation, he was speaking of us being washed white as snow in the blood of the Lamb. It didn't say anything about John washing us. But the Lord Jesus Christ has washed our robes white as snow in His blood and that is the reason why they came up out of great tribulation, having their robes already washed white as snow in the blood of the Lamb.

I was called to a funeral last week for a man that I worked with for years. I read the 50th Psalm. It tells about the cattle upon a thousand hills. As I began to speak at the funeral, I felt like I saw Jesus standing on the hill where the multitude gathered and the Lord Jesus Christ ministred unto them.

And I feel like this morning, as we come as ministers, we can't minister as the Lord Jesus Christ did, but I'll tell you, my friends, what we say and what we do, if it's from heaven, it's of the truth. And you know, my friends, no truth is a lie and a lie is no truth. If God Almighty gives us a mind this morning to preach Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and uphold all His righteousness in this life, it will be the truth.

I thought to myself while speaking at that funeral–I had only seen two of the people who were there, and the chapel was full–Oh, if I could speak something in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, and cause these people to think more and more about salvation and more and more about the love of the Lord Jesus Christ. My friends, I feel like this morning you know what religion is based on, it's not based on a thing in the world but love and truth. That's all it is based on. If you have the love of Christ in your heart this morning, you are a chosen generation; you are a royal priesthood; you are a holy nation. Oh, my friends, don't be ashamed of the word "holy" in this life, if you put it in the right perspective. This body is not holy but if the Lord Jesus Christ has revealed something in your heart it's something that's pure and He just gives us enough to carry us on through this life. Oh, do you think the Lord Jesus Christ would feed you something that is not pure? I don't believe it; I don't believe a word of it, because what God has cleansed no man can defile because He cleansed them and made them white as snow in His blood.

I may be a little scattering in this thing but I want to talk about something that's solid and sure as the Stone, and the chosen of God, and precious. These stones refer to you and your children, and to them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord God shall call, and I tell you, my friends, the Lord Jesus is calling some in this life.

I heard it said one time that the God of heaven was dead and folks were just going out and getting their fill of sin. I feel like Old Baptists are going to be a witness in this world one day, they're going to be a witness to God as long as time is. What is the truth? The truth is going to set us free this Book says, and that's what we are looking forward to.

It says many things in this Book: "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims." I feel like I'm a stranger and pilgrim in this life, don't you? Many times I do; I feel like I'm a stranger among my kindred at times; I think I'm a stranger and pilgrim around my fellow-worker. And sometimes I feel like I'm embraced in this thing. I know what I believe because God Almighty gave it to me.

The Bible says, "As free, and not

using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king." Are you doing that this morning? Ask yourself this morning, are you honoring all men, loving the brotherhood, fearing God, and honoring the king? I ask myself many questions. I ask myself questions every day I live, am I doing thus and so right? Am I walking as I should walk? Am I setting an example as I should set before God's people? Am I looking to Jesus for all sustenance in this life and the life to come? Have you ever asked yourself that question?

If you have this hope in your breast, that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming again and that the spirit and the body will reunite, you have a precious hope. It is an anchor to the soul, something that is sure and steadfast. You know, I love the anchors. I have never seen many ships in my life; I've seen one or two beside the water, and I am made to think of the anchor of the soul of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord Jesus Christ, this Stone, is a precious stone. "Chosen of God, and precious." This thing is a chosen thing. The Lord Jesus Christ was chosen of the Father. He was chosen to come to this world and to live thirty and three years and return to the Father. And I feel this same witness is with us. Every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is a testimony to this thing in this life. If you don't have a testimony in this life, a witness within this life, within that inner man, I'm going to say I doubt anything will be hereafter. But I feel that every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ will have tasted something in this life. I would like to put it just like this: I'm glad it's on record that religion is an indiviudal matter. I can't go for you and you can't go for me, and I'm glad it's like that because God Almighty made it so. Religion is an individual thing, and the baptism of water is not going to save you because this Book teaches that just as plain as anything can. It's a command that you be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost in this liquid grave. It's a command that you do that. The baptism of water is not putting away the filth of the flesh but is an answer of a good conscious. I love that word "good."

I love many things that are recorded in this Book. This 9th verse is so precious to a believer. "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." There's a calling to this thing, it's a holy calling, not of our works but according to the Lord Jesus Christ's plan and purpose. When the Lord and the Father in heaven call somebody it's not as you and I would call them. My friends, the Lord Jesus Christ doesn't have to do anything like that. It's already prepared of the Father and He's making intercession for the saints according to the Father's will. I believe this thing wholeheartedly. Do you believe it? Do you believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is making intercession for His saints according to the Father's will? The Father didn't make but one will. It's wonderful, it's glorious, and wonderful to think on these things.

I thought of a verse of scripture in John, "There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true. Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved. He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light." I feel like this shining light of God our Saviour is something wonderful; and it's glorious to think of Him who came to save us and call with a holy calling, not of our works, but according to the Lord Jesus Christ.

What I've said is what I've said.

I thank you for your attention.

Transcribed from a tape of a sermon by
Elder Denver L. Simpson, Pastor
Richmond Primitive Baptist Church
November 1, 1981
(Slightly condensed for publication)

Indian Harbour Beach, FL.

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is my check to renew my subscription and my Mother's for another year.

I have been subscribing to the *Signs* for several years now, and I find it is still such enjoyable reading. The articles are consistently good and I look forward to receiving it every month.

May God bless you all to continue in this effort.

Sincerely,
Vera N. Potter

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The following article is a reprint from "The Primitive Baptist Library Quarterly." We feel that the readers of the Signs will find this interesting.

THE FORT PARKER MASSACRE

Following is a brief account of a tragic bit of history that should not be forgotten. We hope to see a more detailed history published later, God willing.

Daniel Parker was born in Culpepper County, Virginia, April, 1781. He professed a hope in Christ and received into the fellowship of Nail Creek Church, Franklin County, Georgia, and was soon set apart to the ministry. He moved to Illinois and became a "charter" member of believers called Pilgrim Church. It was this body, with members of the Parker family, who were to suffer in an Indian Massacre.

While Texas was still the Republic of Mexico, Daniel Parker went there to establish a Baptist Church; this was not permitted by the (Catholic) Mexican Government. He did obtain permission from Stephen Austin to bring his church (Pilgrim) from Illinois. Daniel Parker led this church, with a colony of twenty-five wagons through Louisana into Texas. After several meetings in the home of Elder Parker the colony built a fort called Fort Parker, consisting of log cabins. The fort stood on a hill overlooking the fertile valley of Navasota River.

The families were peacefully engaged in their farm work, when, on the 18th day of May, 1836, while the men were in

their fields, there appeared on the hill some five hundred Comanche and Kiowa Indians. The frightened children flew to their mothers; the men on guard seized their guns, but the tricky Indians raised a white flag as a token of peace and friendship. Ben Parker (son of Daniel Parker) went out to see what the Indians wanted. They professed to be very friendly and asked him to show them a good camping place next to the spring, and for a beef as they were very hungry. Ben fearing to offend them promised what they wanted. Returning to the Fort, he told the trembling women what the Indians said, but added, "I fear they intend to fight, but by kindness I will try to dissuade them from fighting." His brother Silas and all the women begged him not to go out to them again, but he went, and immediately the bloody monsters surrounded and murdered him. Then with horrid yells and death dealing clubs, axes and tomahawks, they rushed upon the fort, and battered down the doors. Then began one of the bloodiest tragedies known even in Texas Indian warfare.

Silas Parker was murdered trying to rescue his sister, Mrs. Palmer. She made a desperate effort but was knocked down with a hoe and captured. Sam Frost and his son were killed while heroically defending the women and children inside the fort. Old Grandmother Parker was stabbed and left dead. Elder John Parker (aged 79), his wife and Mrs. Kellogg were making their escape but were overtaken and brutally murdered, scalped and horribly mutilated.

Thus, in one short hour the happy colony was deluged in blood and filled with desolation and mourning. Elder John Parker, Silas Parker, Samuel M. Frost and his son were killed; Mrs. John Parker, Grandma Parker and Mrs. Duty, were dangerously wounded; Mrs. Rachel Plummer, daughter of James Parker, her two year old son, James, Mrs. Elizabeth Kellogg, and Cynthia Ann Parker, age eight, were all taken into captivity as prizes to be redeemed later, by loving and sorrowing friends. After murdering Silas Parker, some Indians overtook his wife, fleeing with her four children, compelled the terror-stricken mother to lift her daughter Cynthia Ann and her son John, upon horseback behind two mounted Indians. The Indians on foot drove the mother and her two children back into the fort, but they were rescued by the men who rushed from the fields as soon as they had heard the screams of the women and children. The remaining terror stricken men, women and children, seeing their homes in possession of the bloody Indian murderers, escaped to the dense timber of the Navasota bottoms.

When night came Abraham Anglin and Faulkinberry, started back to see if they could give any succor to the wounded and determine the extend of the ruins of their colony. The only living being they could see was old Grandma Parker, whom the Indians had speared and stripped and left for dead on the ground. She had crawled to a deserted cabin and concealed herself. They carried her to a place of concealment until they could return from the Fort. On reaching the Fort no living human sound could be heard. The dogs were barking furiously; the cattle were lowing, the horses neighing and the hogs squeeling, making a hideous sound.

The next morning, Bater, Anglin and Falkenberry went back to the Fort to get some provisions and look after the dead. On reaching the Fort they found five or six horses, and some venison, bacon and honey, but fearing another attack from the Indians still lurking in the thickets they left without burying the dead. They concealed themselves in the thick timbers in the Navasota bottom until they could set out for Fort Houston ninety miles away, near the present town of Palestine. We give the description of the mournful description of the journey in the language of James

W. Parker, who says, "We were truly a forlorn set, many of us barefoot and bareheaded, with a relentless foe on one hand, and on the other a trackless and uninhabited wilderness infested with reptiles and wild beasts, entirely destitute of food and no means of procuring it. Added to this the agonizing grief of the death and capture of our dear relatives and expectation of meeting at any moment a like fate. Utter despair almost seized us. I took one of my children on my shoulders and led the other, the other men followed my example. Our mournful party consisting of eighteen persons, left for Fort Houston.

"Our journey lay through thick tangled briars and underbrush. My wife was in bad health, Mrs. Frost was in deep distress for the loss of her husband and son, all were bitterly mourning for the loss of loved ones, and being barefoot, except my wife and Mrs. Frost, our progress was very slow. Many of the children had nothing on but their shirts, suffering from the briars tearing their little legs and feet were beyond human endurance. We traveled until about 3 o'clock in the morning, when the women and children became worn out with hunger and fatigue. We lay down on the grass and slept 'til daylight. When we resumed our perilous journey the briars tore the legs until we could be tracked by the blood that flowed from the wounds.

"At dark of the second day after leaving the Fort the children and especially the women who were nursing infants began to suffer intensely from hunger, but had not a morsel of food. But providentially a polecat came near us. I immediately pursued him and caught him just as he jumped into the river. The only way I could kill it was by holding it under the water until it drowned. We soon had it cooked and equally divided between the women and children, each share being small indeed. ...On the fifth day I found that the women and children were so exhausted it would be impossible for them to travel farther. After holding a consultation it was agreed that I should hurry on to Fort Houston for aid. Leaving Mr. DeWight in charge, early next morning I started for Fort Houston, which I reached in the afternoon. I have often looked back and wondered how I was able to accomplish this extraordinary feat. I had not eaten a mouthful for six days, having always given my share of the polecats and terrapins to the women and children; yet I walked thirty-five miles in about eight hours. The thought of the suffering women and children I had left behind inspired me with strength and perseverance and above all, God in His bountiful providence upheld me in that trying hour.

"The first person I met on reaching Fort Houston was the generous and brave Captain Carter. He soon had five horses saddled and other means of conveyance; he had Jeremiah Courtney go with us to meet our little band of starving, bleeding women and children. We met them just at dark, and placing them on the horses, we reached Captain Carter's home about midnight...

"After so many years I look back over that scene of suffering and inexpressible horror, yet with devout thanksgiving and praises to God for His merciful support and protection...The Indians who had taken Mrs. Kellogg sold her to the Kaskaschias and Delawares, who after six months sold her to General Sam Houston for $150.00, and he conveyed her immediately to her sorrowing relatives. Mrs. Plummer remained a captive about eighteen months, and we find the following extract from her diary:

'In July and a portion of August we were in some very high mountains on which the snow remained for the greater part of the year, and I suffered more than ever in my life. It was very seldom I had any covering over my feet and but little clothing for my body. I had a certain number of Buffalo skins to dress and the horses to mind at night. My feet

would often be frostbitten. In October I gave birth to my second baby; but it was impossible for me to secure suitable nourishment for myself and infant. I had been with them six months and would often beseech my mistress to advise me what to do to save my child, but she turned a deaf ear to my supplications. My child was six months old when my master, thinking it interfered with my work determined to put it out of the way. One cold morning five or six Indians came to where I was suckling my baby. As soon as they came I felt sick at heart; my fears more aroused for the safety of my child. My whole frame convulsed with sudden dread. My fears were not ill-founded. One of the Indians caught hold of my child by the throat and strangled it until by all appearance it was dead. I exerted my feeble strength to save my child, but the other Indians held me fast. The Indian who had strangled my child then threw it up into the air repeatedly and let it fall to the frozen ground until life seemed to be extinct. I had been weeping incessantly while they were murdering my child; but now my grief was so great the fountain of tears dried up as I gazed on the blue cheek of my darling. I discovered some symptoms of returning life. I hoped that if it could be resuscitated they would allow me to keep it. I washed the blood from its face and after a time it began to breathe; but a more heart-rending scene ensued. As soon as the Indians ascertained that the child was alive they tied a rope around its neck and threw it into a bunch of prickly pears and then pulled it back and forth until its tender flesh was literally torn from its body. One of the Indians who was mounted on a horse then tied the end of the rope to his saddle and galloped around in a circle until my little innocent child was not only dead but torn to pieces. One of them untied the rope and threw the remains of my child into my lap. I took a butcher knife and dug a hole in the earth and buried my child after performing the last rites for my dear baby. I sat down and gazed with a feeling of relief on the little grave I had made for it in the wilderness; and I could say with David, 'you cannot come to me, but I can go to you.' Then, and even now, as I recall the dreadful scene, I rejoice that my baby passed from the sorrowing and suffering of this world. I shall hear its dying cries no more; and relying on the righteousness of Christ, I feel that my child is with kinder spirits in the world of joy.

'After the death of my child I was given to be the servant to a very cruel squaw, who treated me in a most brutal manner. My other son had been carried off by another party to the far West. I supposed my father and husband were killed at the massacre of Fort Parker. Death seemed to me but a sweet relief. Life was a burden and driven to desperation I resolved no longer to endure the cruel treatment of the intolerable old squaw. One day she and I were some distance from, but in sight of the camp, she attempted to beat me with a club. I wrenched the club from her hand and knocked her down. The Indians who had witnessed the proceeding from the camp came running up and shouting at the top of their voices. I expected to be killed immediately, but they patted me on my shoulder crying 'Bueno, Bueno good, well done.' I now faired much better and soon became a great favorite and known as the Fighting Squaw."

Mrs. Plummer was afterward ransomed through the assistance of some Mexican Santa Fe traders by a noble hearted American, Mr. Donahue. She was then made a member of the benefactor's family and later brought back to her people in Texas. Her son James was ransomed six years after her death in 1839. Cynthia Ann Parker and her brother were held by separate bands. After a long search, sums of money were offered for the lost children. In 1840 Colonel Len Williams and Mr. Stout, and Indian guide, when they fell

in with Pohonka's band of Comanches, and Cynthia Ann was with this tribe; Colonel Williams proposed to redeem her, but the Comanches replied that all the gold of the white man could not ransom her. Her brother John Parker married an Indian maiden and settled on a cattle ranch in the West.

The Pilgrim Church was the first Primitive Baptist Church to settle in what later became the Lone Star State of Texas. This must be recounted in the life of Daniel Parker.

September 16, 1982

To the Writers of the *Signs of the Times,*

I have read and re-read the issues of the *Signs of the Times,* and enjoyed them very much. I just finished reading the August and September issues and have been given a mind to write, as you give God all the praise, leaving man out of the picture.

I have been down in the valley for some time, and I felt to be forsaken of the Lord. My husband passed away a few months ago, and then almost immediately after my son, his wife, and daughter, and her boyfriend were in a car wreck. A teenager ran into them, and it left my son paralyzed from the shoulders down. He was completely helpless.

My son lived fifteen months and passed away in 1981. He had many friends to visit him and prayer was made for him. One fellow asked him if he would accept Christ as his personal Saviour. His answer was, "I don't know if He will accept me." I told them, "It's not sacrifice or justice we need, but mercy."

Some time after that a patient in my son's room said to us, "You should have heard James singing last night." I asked him what he was singing, and he said, "Amazing Grace." That helped my feelings a lot. He had told one of the Primitive Baptist ministers he wanted him to preach his funeral.

I was at a funeral some years ago, and heard it told that this preacher had asked the man if he would accept Christ as his personal Saviour. He said he would, and that preacher said if he had not gone and talked with that man he would have gone to hell. It is very plain that he wanted the honour for what he had done, not what Christ had done when dying on the cross for sinners, and had finished the work His Father sent him to do. (What a difference.) Isaiah 42:8 says, "I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." Also Jude 17-19, "But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit."

The doctrine Primitive Baptist contend for is the faith once delivered to the saints, honouring our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gives God all the praise. Christ went to John to be baptized of him. John forbade Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and cometh thou to me; and Jesus answered saying unto him, suffer it to be so now for it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness."

The Apostle Paul is a God called minister. In I Timothy 1:12 it is recorded, "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." The Apostle Paul was a chosen vessel from his mother's womb. He had not been to a college or theological school to learn how to preach.

II Timothy 1:7-9, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not

thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." God suffers these things to be so, and they are so.

After giving up my husband and son I had a nervous breakdown, feeling the Lord had forsaken me. I was not able to keep my house or to stay alone. My son took me to his home in Aiken, S.C., and I spent seven months with him. I was so upset. I couldn't eat, thinking I would not be able to stay in my house anymore or to attend my home church and go to other meetings. In January of 1982 I had gained some strength, both naturally and spiritually, feeling the presence of the Lord with me, hearing from God's called ministers at our meetings, and reading through the *Signs*.

In 1939 the song came to me, "How firm a foundation." I read all the words then and was strengthened some, but after experiencing all these things more fully, the song sounds much sweeter to me now. And again, thanks be to God, Who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. If I could have felt this in 1981, I would have shouted instead of shedding tears.

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him ye creatures here below.
Praise him above ye heavenly host;
Praise Father Son and Holy Ghost."

Yours in the faith of God's elect,
Mattie Underwood

Kenly, N.C.

Dear Editors,

I am enclosing money for the *Signs* for one more year. My eyes are failing me, so I can't see to read very well.

I have Leukemia and cannot go to church very often, as I stay so weak. I sure do look forward to getting the *Signs*. I enjoy reading it so much. It tells my experience so much of the time.

I want to wish you Editors of the *Signs* the best, and may God bless you to keep it going out all across our land. Please remember me in your prayers.

Mrs. Lessie Davis

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

VITAL UNITY

"And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man."-Genesis ii.23.

"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"-Luke xxiv. 26.

Having been requested to write upon the subject embraced in the above Scripture, we shall endeavor to do so with such ability as the Lord may give us. The subject is vast, sublime and of the greatest importance to the Lord's children, though many of his children have failed to see clearly this vital relationship between Christ and his people, so wonderfully set forth in the Scripture at the head of this article. That lack of sight, however, does not make them less the children of God, nor does it make this point of doctrine less God's eternal truth. The truth of God is an endless chain, so to speak, taking in every point of doctrine, order and practice. Anything, therefore, outside of this chain cannot be connected thereto, nor can anything of the chain be taken from it. It is just as the Lord made it, and will stand as made.

Adam was created and made according to God's purpose and plan, regardless of desire, willingness or objection upon his part. He was "the figure of him that was to come"-Christ. It is perfectly understood that Adam in his creation and formation knew nothing of Christ, hence it was not by choice upon his part that he was the figure of Christ. It should be

remembered that the definite article (the) is used in that record of him; not a figure, as one of many, but "the figure." "So God created man in his own image, in the likeness of God created he him; male and female created he them," "and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created."

There has been much discussion with reference as to the image of God in which man was created and made, but there seems no room for debate on that subject, as the Scriptures just quoted declare plainly that the union between Adam and Eve was the likeness of God, and in that union, or unity, was Adam, male and female, the likeness of Him that was to come. In their creation they were one, and their name one - "Adam." In formation they were one, male and female, or, in other words, Eve was in Adam; hence one life, making separation between them impossible, either in life or death. Eve being in Adam when the law was given, received that law and was as much accountable to the law as was Adam. When she, therefore, ate of the forbidden fruit she transgressed the law. The unity between Adam and Eve, his wife, was so complete that her sin was his sin, and had not Adam partaken of the fruit personally he would have been responsible for her sin and one with her in the transgression. The union between Adam and his posterity was such that his sin was their sin, or, in other words, when he transgressed all his children transgressed in him and all were under the same curse. Adam and Eve were one in creation, one in formation, one in life, one in receiving the law, one in transgression and one in death, hence the figure of Him that was to come. God, the eternal Spirit, had chosen in Christ his people, or bride, before the world began, unto salvation, that they should live with him in glory, rather than in Eden. The choice of God of his people in Christ, thus giving them to Christ in union, to be his bride, made them one. In order that the world be peopled and the choice of God be manifested, the creation of Adam and Eve was necessary. In order that those ordained unto eternal life be saved and become manifestly the sons and daughters of God, sin must enter the world and death by sin. Hence the law was given, temptation came, the law was transgressed and in consequence the bride, or God's chosen people in Christ, were condemned and the children of wrath, by nature, even as others.

These things are all links in that endless chain mentioned already. The unity of Christ and the church (bride) as between Adam and Eve, was so complete, inseparable, that her sin was his sin, though he personally sinned not, and was responsible to the law for her debt. This we have shown in "the figure," that had Adam not partaken of the fruit himself, he would have been responsible for the sin of Eve. The law demanded perfect satisfaction for the transgression. That satisfaction meant perfect obedience to the law, even unto death. Adam transgressed and brought death to his race, or children; Christ was obedient even unto death, the death of the cross, and brought life and immortality to the chosen of God. He was made of a woman and made under the law of sin and death, to redeem them that were under the same law. In the coming of Christ the love of God was made manifest, yes, love to sinners, not because they were sinners, but because he loved them in Christ before the world began, and his love changed not when they were dead in trespasses and sins. Inasmuch as the children of God were sinners, the law demanded the life of Christ, the husband. Paul, in speaking of the unity of Christ and the church, calls attention to the union of husband and wife, the two being one, then adds, This is a great mystery, but I speak of Christ and the church. We are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. At the appointed time of the Father

Jesus came to do the will of him that sent him, and that will was that of all which he had given him he should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day. Therefore because of the unity of Christ and the church, and in obedience to the law, Jesus died upon the cross, paid the debt his bride owed to both law and justice with his own life, or blood, was buried and arose for their justification, and presented them without spot, blemish, wrinkle or any such thing to God the Father. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" It was his obligation as the husband of the church, it was the Father's purpose, plan and will. Inasmuch therefore as it was according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, the whole church must answer his question and say, Yes, Christ ought to have suffered and to enter into his glory. The church is the glory of Christ, and in the midst of her he sings praises to God for the gift and for the purpose he purposed in himself before the world was, that through his blood she should be holy and without blame before the Father in love. These glorious matters of redemption were not revealed to Moses, the Israelites and their children, but were secret things known to God in that age of the world. They had the law, and legal things were revealed that they should do all the works of that law, but the redeemed bride has the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It was because the old covenant did not have and reveal gospel things that the disciples were fools and slow of heart to believe what the Scriptures declared, in prophecy, of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. The term "fools" means without understanding. After saying these things to them, Jesus began with Moses and opened the Scriptures, which had been hid from the beginning, to their understanding. In this he made darkness light, crooked things straight and rough places smooth.

Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways. How good it is to see the life-standing of the Lord's people in Christ, while in Adam they die.

Elder H. C. Ker

FROM AN OLD SIGNS

The Elders and messengers of the First Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association called Kansas, unto the churches composing her body, greeting and christian salutation.

Beloved Brethren:—In presenting this, our annual Circular Letter, we hope we do it in the fear and love of Israel's God, whom we presume to worship. We can feel within us no inclination to depart from our former custom or doctrine, which we have practiced and preached ever since our organization as an Association, to wit, the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things, of eternal union of Christ and his people, of election, of salvation by grace, and all other principles of Bible doctrine, as have been promulgated by Old School Baptists throughout all ages.

As a starting point we will refer to the language of the apostle Paul in the first chapter of his letter to the church which is at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children."—Eph. i. 3-5. The doctrine afore mentioned is all set forth in this Scripture, and is clearly borne out by other and corroborating expressions of prophets and apostles, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Let us notice briefly each expression of the apostle herein set forth. He breaks forth with an

expression of praise and gratitude to God for the blessings he hath so freely bestowed on us. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." In addressing the Corinthian brethren he speaks of him as "The Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort,"—2 Cor. i. 3, and again bursts forth with, "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. 1. 3. The apostle Peter in speaking of his abundant mercy is also filled with the same spirit of praise, and uses the same words to express his feelings: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Peter i. 3. These apostles are voicing the feelings of every heaven-born child when led to meditate upon the blessings and the unspeakable mercies of our God, and in effect are speaking as the psalmist when he said, "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad."—Psalms cxxvi. 3. The mode of the apostle in treating upon this point is conspicuous in the fact that he is telling the brethren, not what he has done for the Lord, but what the Lord has done for us: "Blessed us with all spiritual blessings." This means that there is not one blessing overlooked or omitted which God the Father saw was for the good of his people whom he loves. All blessings, all things, he says are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. The blessings of life and salvation, the blessing of liberty to speak forth his praise, of preaching his everlasting gospel, the privilege of worshipping him under our vine and fig tree. These are not all, but they are some of the blessings with which God's people are blessed. The "all" may be briefly comprehended in the word of Jesus, when he said, "All thou gavest me," for he is our all.

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." The word "according" no doubt signifies, "in accord." All of God's works are in sweet accord. All things must work in perfect accord in order to fulfill God's eternal purpose. There can be no jar, no discord, no miscarriage in the purpose of God, else it forever disproves his claim to omniscience and omnipotence. How unseemly it would be if one of God's works should be out of harmony with his other works. The salvation and calling of his people are in accord with, or according to, his own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. They are "the called according to his purpose." - Rom. viii. 28. "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world." —Acts xv. 18. His works in this present day are the fulfillment of, or according to, his eternal purpose. Hence the "all spiritual blessings" of which the apostle speaks are in accord with God's eternal choice, "not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ."—2 Tim. i. 9, 10. God blessed his people with spiritual blessings because they are a spiritual people. It would be out of harmony with infinite wisdom to say a natural man is blessed with spiritual blessings. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—2 Cor. i. 14. They, the spiritual people, are in union with their spiritual head, Christ. In him and of him, and as a spiritual house are built upon him, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. (1 Peter ii. 5) Time cannot record the choosing of this people. They were chosen before time began. Eternal union and eternal election are in evidence here, and are in accord with God's eternal purpose. It is indisputable that if there be any union between Christ and his people it must be an eternal union or a time union. If it be a time union, it began in time and must also end with time. If it

be an eternal union, it originated in eternity and it will endure throughout eternity.

"Chosen us." The field is too great to dwell in full upon the election of God in the limits of a Circular Letter, but from this apostolic phrase it is evident that God has chosen his people, and that in so doing he acted independent of any human means or instrumentalities, as has been said before, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace. This is the elect. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."—1 Peter i. 2. "Sanctified;" that is, set apart by the Spirit. This alone is sufficient proof that the choosing of this people is alone through the wisdom and mercy of God. The obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ has effected the salvation of all his elect, for he was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. The sprinkling of his blood upon them is a token of their ultimate safety. "And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are."—Exodus xii. 13. The destroying angel can never enter where the blood of Jesus is in evidence.

"That we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Wonder of wonders, that we, a sinful race, should be accounted holy and without blame! We are not so vain as to suppose this is because we are better by nature than others, but contrariwise, we were by nature the children of wrath, even as others, but God, who is rich in mercy (here is the secret, brethren, God's mercy,) even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved). The washing of water by the word has made his elect clean, that he might present them unto himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. (Eph. v. 27.) "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow."—Isaiah i. 18. It is alone through the efficacy of his shed blood that his people are accounted holy and without blame before him in love. In this light the apostle addresses some as "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus."—Heb. iii. 1. Why should they not be accounted holy and without blame, since Christ, the anti-typical scapegoat, has borne their sins quite away, and declared he would remember them against his people no more forever? O the wondrous display of love! "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."—John xv. 13.

"Predestinated us unto the adoption of children." In this expression is the indisputable evidence of God's predestination, setting forth in a word his foreknowledge and almighty power. All things were predestinated, because all things are foreknown of him, and he works all things after the counsel of his own will. It is not given to finite man to know the workings of infinite wisdom, only as

> "His providence unfolds the book,
> And makes his counsels shine;
> Each opening leaf, and every stroke
> Fulfills some deep design."

Each day brings its own developments. Thus "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge."—Psalms xix. 2. To predestinate is to predetermine or prearrange any time or event. Adoption is the process of making one an heir that is not born into the family. One that is a natural heir requires no adoption, and indeed the law would recognize no effort on the part of a father adopting his own child. "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."—Rom. ix. 8. The fleshly man then being not a child of

God, is not an heir to his kingdom. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."—1 Cor. xv. 50. Briefly stated then, this adoption applies to the bodies of the saints of God. They are born of the flesh and are flesh. They can be made heirs only by adoption. The consummation of this event is predestinated. It is fixed for some future time, and we are "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."—Rom. viii. 23. It is then when our vile body shall be redeemed from the grave, and it will be redeemed. As well might we expect the wheels of time to turn backward as to presume that God's predestination can be thwarted. The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. Then this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. xv. 52-57.)

L. L. Schenck, Moderator
Mary Ellison, Clerk
Oct. 1920

OBITUARIES

SISTER HATTIE WOOD DENNING

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst Sister Hattie Denning.

Sister Denning was born August 12, 1892, departed from this life July 10, 1982, which made her almost ninety years of age. Survivors are a daughter, Mrs. Rosalie Stephenson; two sons, Charles Denning and Jerry Denning; two stepdaughters, Mrs. Anna Ennis, and Mrs. Ruth Burton; eight grandchildren; three great grandchildren; fourteen step-grandchildren, and twenty step great grandchildren.

This sister had been in declining health for several years. She leaves a host of relatives and friends to mourn her departure. Her funeral was held Monday, July 12, 1982, at Rose Funeral Chapel, Benson, N.C., with her Pastor, Elder C. D. Turner, officiating. Her body was laid to rest in Dennings' Family Cemetery.

Sister Denning joined Bethsaida Primitive Baptist Church on the 1st Sunday in June 1933; on Saturday before the 1st Sunday in September 1956, she was received into Liberty Primitive Baptist Church on confession of faith. She was appointed clerk of Liberty Church on Saturday before the 1st Sunday in November, 1956. She filled this place very well as active clerk until March 1968. She was inactive clerk until her passing. She filled her place at church as long as health permitted. She was supportive and helped as she felt it was her reasonable service. She was a firm believer in the salvation by the grace of God and had faith as once delivered unto the saints of God.

We of Liberty Church extend to the family our deepest heart felt sympathy and hope they may be strengthened by remembering the faith and hope their Mother had.

We agree a copy to be put on our Church record; one to the family; and one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Committee:
Brother James Young
Sister Dorothy Barefoot

ELDER MAON JONES

The sovereign God of all graces has called home another faithful servant.

On the 27th of August 1982, Elder Maon Jones passed into eternal bliss to be with his Savior forever.

"There is a land,
a golden strand,
Where saints and angels,
robed in white,
Are singing praise,
thru' endless days.
In shining worlds,
of pure delight."

Elder Maon Jasper Jones was born the 7th of June 1910 in Wayne County, Iowa, the son of Elder Newton Jasper and Clara Adams Jones. Brother Jones was of Welsh and American Indian ancestry, both of which he was very proud.

On the 16th of June 1945 Brother Jones married the former Miss Marie Hart.

Although Brother Jones was raised in a Primitive Baptist home, after he reached manhood he went to sample some of the world's religions. After years of wandering he offered himself to the Chicago Primitive Baptist Church on 10th of June 1956. Shortly after his baptism he began to

exercise in the ministry. He was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry on the 26th of May 1966. Brother Jones faithfully served his home church as moderator since 1963.

On the 30th of April 1975 Brother Jones organized the Primitive Baptist Library in his home at 107 Elm Lane, Streamwood, Illinois. Under his direction, the Primitive Baptist Library has been meeting the reading needs of all Primitive Baptists all over the world.

Elder Jones was survived by his widow, Marie Hart Jones, and three daughters, Mrs. Barbara Jones Choquette, Mrs. Linda Jones Perkins, and Mrs. Clara Jones Lay. Brother Jones also has two sisters still living; Mrs. Ruby Davis and Mrs. Naomi Wahl.

Our loss is his gain. Tho' the earth mourns, the heavens rejoice.

Prepared at the request of the congragation and members of the Chicago Primitive Baptist Church.

by Sister Arlene Holtet
Brother Alvie L. Davidson

"HE HATH DONE ALL THINGS WELL"

Sister Effie Jane Greer went to meeting at Paynes Creek June 6, 1982, helped with the hymns, appeared in better health than for some time, enjoyed the preaching and when the lunch that had been brought was spread, ate well. Shortly thereafter she was seized with what appeared to be a severe Asthma attack, within minutes the life that was lent to Mr. and Sister Blanche Greer, December 21, 1912, a few miles from Paynes Creek Church, was called home while in the midst of those that the Lord had blessed her to love.

Early in life, alone after Sister Greer, her mother, was put in a hospital, Sister Effie took up a life of servitude by staying in homes with the feeble, afflicted and aged.

In March 1933 she united to County Line by experience, and was baptized April 1933, by Elder J. G. L. Hash. All her 49 years with County Line she attended regularly and having no place to call her home, she treasured her meeting place her home. She was a strong believer in salvation by grace alone. Sister Effie sang well, and delighted to sing the hymns of Zion, often leading the hymns at meetings in church and in the homes where we met. Her health started failing for a time and was in the hospital this Spring.

When unemployed or ill she would stay with her brother, Mr. B. G. Greer in Roanoke or her sister, Mrs. Sadie Wright, Floyd, Co. Also, a brother, Mr. Jesse Greer, and step mother, Sister Loula N. Greer, with nieces and nephews, survive.

Memorial services were held June 8, 1982 at Woods Funeral Chapel Floyd, by Elder J. L. Agee and myself, with remarks also at the Cannady Cemetery, Floyd Co., where her tabernacle that fell asleep in Jesus was laid to rest in hope of a glorious resurrection.

We have missed and will continue to miss our precious Sister at County Line but believe our loss is her great gain.

Noel F. Conner

SISTER LIDDIE TART

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst Sister Liddie Tart.

Sister Tart was born April 29, 1896; her parents were Brother Lamb Byrd and Sister Sarah Honeycutt Byrd. She was the widow of Robert Lester Tart. She departed this life August 12, 1982, in Charles Parrish Nursing Center in Dunn.

Surviving are one daughter, Mrs. Victor E. Tart; two sons, Paul E., and William H; seventeen grandchildren; twenty-eight great grandchildren; and three great great grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted by her Pastor, Elder C. D. Turner, assisted by Elder W. D. Godwin, and Preacher Thomas Melvin, on August 15, 1982, at Liberty Primitive Baptist Church. She was laid to rest in Bethsaida Church Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

Sister Tart joined Bethsaida Primitive Baptist Church on confession of faith Saturday before the 1st Sunday in August 1916. On July 22, 1955, she was one of several who joined an arm of Mingo Church, became as Liberty Church, where she remained a faithful member until her death. She loved to attend the meetings and be with her beloved brethren, sisters and friends, as long as health permitted. She stood for the faith, and supported the church. She praised God from Whom all blessings flow.

We believe our loss is her eternal gain. May God bless and comfort her family whom she loved dearly.

It is agreed to send a copy to the family, a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and a copy for our church records.

Committee:
Sister Lovie Young
Brother James Young

SISTER DEAN GOODWIN

We the members of Cedar Island Primitive Church bow in humble submission to the will of God, who called from our midst Sister Flora Dean Goodwin on Sunday, September 12, 1982, at the home.

Sister Dean was born February 15, 1897, on Cedar Island, Carteret County, N.C., making her stay on earth 85 years, 5 months, and 12 days. She

was married to John H. Goodwin, April 11, 1923. To this union were born 4 children, one of which died in infancy.

Surviving are Hazel Goodwin, of the home, Grace Styron, of Atlantic, N.C., and Alton, of the home, along with her husband, John H. Goodwin. Four grandchildren and five great granchildren also survive.

Sister Dean united with the Church on Cedar Island in April, 1971, and was baptized by Elder Dewey Humphrey in July, 1971. She always attended her meetings as long as her health permitted.

Her funeral was conducted at the Cedar Island Church by her Pastor, Elder J. T. Prescott. Burial was in the Goodwin family cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

Be it resolved that a copy of this obituary be sent to "Zion's Landmark" and *Signs of the Times* for publication, and a copy be recorded on the church book.

Done by order of the Church November 7, 1982.

Written by her son, Alton Goodwin, Clerk
Elder J. T. Prescott, Pastor

WALTER JOHNSON

Walter Irvin Johnson, born in Franklin County, Virginia, February 22, 1888, departed from this world, November 7, 1981. Age 93 years, 9 months and 15 days. He was married to Cora Ann Powell, November 16, 1909. To this union was born seven sons and two daughters. He was preceded in death by his wife Cora Ann Powell Johnson, and one son, William Paul Johnson. Surviving are six sons, Claud, Hughs, Harry, Troy, Tom, and Clyde, Two daughters, Mary Boone and Mrs. Posie Elsie J. Poindexter, all of Virginia, 27 grand children, and 37 great grand children, 3 great great grand children, one sister Mary J. Perdue.

He was united with Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, September 3, 1961 and faithfully attended until health prevented.

Funeral was conducted at Arrington Bussey Chapel in Rocky Mount, Va. by his pastor James R. Hollandsworth, and by his grandson Mr. James W. Johnson. Burial in Franklin Memorial Park. Our loss was his eternal gain.

Brother Johnson was greatly afflicted, with both legs amputated. He was often heard praying to his maker and I believe that he was made ready to be offered. I believe that his spirit is asleep in Jesus until the resurrection day.

Written by request of the family
J. R. Hollandsworth

SISTER VALLIE CRISMON

After much thought and prayer I will attempt to write a few words on the death of our dear sister, Vallie Crismon, who passed from this world on March 16, 1982. We the members and friends of Monticello Primitive Baptist Church do humbly submit to our Father's will in this, as in all matters.

Sister Vallie who was a devoted member and true believer in the Old School doctrine joined the church at Monticello in July, 1929 and served as our clerk from May, 1949 until December, 1975 when her health failed her, and then served as Honorary Clerk until her death. Her husband, Bro. Scott Crismon preceded her in death in January of last year. Brother and Sister Crismon were unable to attend church regularly their last years here on earth due to poor health, but were faithful members, showing their love for their Church and they are sadly missed by all who loved them and most especially by their children: Pauline, Eleanor, Frances, Elmo, Thomas and Dwight. We pray the Lord will be with them in the hour of need as they mourn their loss.

Sister Crismon was laid to rest at Lakeview Memorial Park. The service was conducted by Elders David Spangler and Paul Lambe.

Humbly submitted by,
Shirley Donovan, Clerk

SISTER ANNIE JOHNSON

We, the church at Hickory Grove deeply feel the loss of our dear friend, Sister Annie Johnson. It pleased our Heavenly Father to remove her from our midst June 8, 1982. She was very faithful to fill her seat at Hickory Grove, and also visited the Sister Churches as long as her eye sight permitted her to drive, and at other times when she could get to go with others. We miss her very much and know that the Sister Churches miss her also.

Sister Annie was born March 9, 1901 and was the daughter of Elder Perry Johnson, who was also a former teacher and Amanda Lee Johnson. She is survived by one sister, Mrs. Verna Graham, several nieces and nephews.

She united with the church at Hickory Grove October 1945.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder W. D. Godwin and was held at the Minshew Funeral Home Chapel which was carried out very nicely by the directors.

She was laid to rest in the Rose Lawn Cemetery in Benson under a mound of beautiful flowers to await the day of the resurrection call.

Therefore, we the church at Hickory Grove resolve that three copies of this resolution be made, one for the church records, one for the family and one to be published in the Signs of the Times.

Committee
Sister Kathleen McLamb, Clerk
Sister Cleon Barefoot

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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Route 1, Box 65 Keeling, Va. 24566

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 3/83 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

RELATION OF MY EXPERIENCE

No. 3

Brother Beebe:--I closed my last number with an account of the blasting of all my former hopes, by a discovery of the awful enmity of my heart to God. But distressed as I was, I did not at that time sink into despair. A glimmering hope arose in my mind that as the Lord had been pleased to show me my true situation, he perhaps intended to appear for my deliverance. I felt to praise him that he had not suffered me to continue longer in my ignorance, and that he had suffered me still to have a being on the earth. He left me to go on bowed down as a very wretch upon earth, for upwards of two weeks, when on Saturday night October 13, 1810, I concluded I would once more retire to my room, and examine myself to see if there was any evidence of God's having begun a good work in me, any evidence of my having any love to God.

As I entered my room I knelt down and tried to pray. I could not, my mind seemed entirely shut up. I arose, took my Bible and turned to certain passages and tried to read and reflect on them. I could not. I was unable to trace any reflection, to connect two ideas. My mind seemed a perfect blank. I again kneeled down and tried to pray with no better success; again arose and opened my Bible. It was the same, almost frantic with distress, I again kneeled, and finding myself no more able to pray than before, the suggestion was made to me, "You now see that there is no hope for you; God has evidently given you up to hardness of heart, and blindness of mind. I felt it was true, all hope

vanished, I sprang to my feet and walked the room, I judged for fifteen or twenty minutes in absolute despair, when at length without thinking what I was doing, I turned to the table, took up my Bible, and as I took it up, it opened in my hands to the 99th Psalm, and the 5th verse met my eyes, "Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool, for he is holy." With this a sense of the sovereign majesty and holiness of God filled my mind, I felt to praise and exalt him; felt a deep reverence for his majesty and greatness; felt the fitness that myself and all creatures should be at his disposal, that we were as nothing before him; that it was his sovereign right to save whom he pleased, and leave to perish whom he pleased. There was no excitement of feelings, no thoughts about my individual salvation; but there was a sense of my nothingness before him, and a submitting of myself into his hands to do with me as he pleased. My mind was principally occupied with a view of the exalted character, and of the universal and rightful sovereignty of God over all things.

I slept but little that night, as it was the happiest night I ever have experienced, and probably the happiest season I shall experience in time. Hence I have sometimes taken occasion to say that the happiest moments of a christian's life are those in which God is the most exalted in his view, and he most humbled in the dust before him.

The next morning I concluded that the experience of the past night was an evidence of God's love to me, and that he would save me. I was therefore quite comfortable in mind, and remained so until the Wednesday following. I concluded in the evening after school to go to Morristown. I had before, through a friend, applied to the Presbyterian minister of Morristown to lay my case before the Presbytery then about to set, and to see what encouragement they could give me of assistance in prosecuting my studies, and expected, by going that evening, to receive an answer. On arriving at my friends, I learned that there was no encouragement for me, that the Presbytery had then under their charge more young men than they had funds to support, and that there were other applications before mine.

Although this was a death blow to my hopes in reference to the ministry, yet being in company with Presbyterian friends with whom I had formed an intimacy, the evening passed pleasantly off. Upon retiring to bed, when I got into my room my disappointment rushed upon my mind with such force that the heavens over my head appeared as brass, and the earth under my feet as iron. I said to myself--I can see nothing to hope for either in heaven or on earth. I stood in this forlorn state of mind but a minute or two, when these feelings subsided, I went to bed and slept.

The next morning I arose and started early in order to get back to my school in season. On my way back, I got to reflecting on my sad disappointment, when this question was pressed upon my mind. What will you do now with the promise you made the Lord last spring to examine the Baptist ground in case certain circumstances occurred? I immediately saw that the very circumstance on which I had predicated my promise had now occurred, that all hopes were now gone of obtaining an education for the ministry, I concluded at once to fulfill my promise.

I went on to my school and in the short recess for play in the forenoon, the examination I was about to undertake being on my mind, I concluded that I would muster up my principal arguments for infant baptism, preparatory to the examination so that if I was convinced against infant baptism, it should be fairly done. I thought over one which had been a favorite argument with me, viz., that the

Jews as a people were remarkably tenacious of the religious privileges they enjoyed under the provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant; that among these privileges was that of bringing their children under the blessing of that covenant by circumcision. Hence that if this privilege had been abrogated under the gospel, we should have heard of their finding fault therewith. My thoughts had no sooner passed over this argument than the troubles which had been occasioned in the churches of Galatia by Judaizing teachers relative to circumcision, and Paul's argument on that subject, as also what had occurred in the church at Antioch, and the decision of the Apostles and elders at Jerusalem on the same subject, all rushed at once upon my mind. And I saw that all this arose from the Jews partiality to the provisions of the Abrahamic covenant, and hence their contending for circumcision; and also that if baptism had come in the room of circumcision, as a seal of that covenant, how easy it would have been for the apostle to have satisfied the minds of the Jews by stating that fact, thus showing the baptized Gentile stood exactly on the same ground as though he had been circumcised; the form of the seal only having been changed from circumcision to baptism, a milder form, but of the same effect. But neither Paul nor the Apostles at Jerusalem, I saw, had hinted at any such idea. Indeed upon the ground of baptism having come in the room of circumcision, there could have been no possible excuse for the Jewish disciples still to contend for circumcision, seeing he whom they received as the Messiah had instituted the change. Of course not only was my argument prostrated, but the whole foundation on which infant baptism in my estimation stood, and on which it alone can be made to stand, was demolished at once, and my mind was prepared to go and receive what the New Testament said on the subject of baptism as a gospel institution, disentangled from the Abrahamic covenant. I accordingly as soon as I was out of school commenced in good earnest reading the various passages in the New Testament in which reference was made to baptism, they were all new to me. Texts which I had formerly thought favored infant baptism now appeared decidedly against it. Many texts now appeared so clearly to point out believers as the only proper subjects of baptism, that I wondered whether the Baptists had ever seen those texts as I then viewed them, for I thought if they had, they would have been able to have convinced the whole world on that subject. For the sake of satisfying my curiosity, I sent into New York and procured a work on baptism, but found the Baptists had had the same views of those texts I then had, and had contended for those views. Not only this, but I wrote off my views and exercises on this subject, and showed them to some of my Presbyterian friends, but instead of convincing them on the subject, I found it was like casting pearls before swine. They had no heart to receive those views; but turned to rend me, by representing that I was turning Baptist in order the more easily to get into the ministry. Whereas my anxiety to get into the ministry was what had kept me for the last five months from examining this subject.

I here learned an important lesson, that the prejudices of education may so blind our minds against the light even on so plain an external ordinance as is baptism, that we cannot see the truth, only as the Lord is pleased to open our eyes to see. Having my mind somewhat exercised with the subject of baptism, I went on tolerably comfortable in mind until near the last of the month, when one night being in company with several Presbyterian friends, the subject of christian experience was introduced and one gentleman took occasion to remark that true christian experience

must embrace in it faith in Christ, and therefore a revelation of Christ crucified as the way of acceptance with God. I at once fully consented to the truth of this remark, but I was as fully satisfied that it was something I had never experienced; hence all my hope of being a christian was again taken from me.

For two days I stood in my own view as a condemned and hopeless wretch. On the 31st of October at night I concluded that I would go up into my room and once more try to pray. As I was going up the stairs, this question arose in my mind; what are you going to pray for; there is no possible hope of your ever being saved? I stopped for a moment or two, when this thought arose in my mind; I can pray that if God is pleased to send me to hell, instead of blaspheming his name, I may be permitted to praise his justice in sending me there. I then went on with the intention of putting up this petition. As I went into my room and knelt down, at first there came over me a drawing back of feeling, a want of an entire cordial acknowledgement of the justice of God in sending me to hell, but this soon gave way and I felt cordially to acknowledge his justice in my final condemnation, and to put up the petition that I might through eternity praise his justice in sending me to hell. Immediately upon this, as I was there on my knees, the account of Abraham's offering of his son, Isaac, as in Gen. 22, was brought to my view. Isaac, as bound and laid upon the altar, appeared as representing the case of the heirs of promise, and as fully representing my then case as bound by the law and doomed by its condemnatory sentence to death. As Abraham knew nothing but to inflict the death blow, so the law knew nothing but to inflict the curse upon the sinner. My attention was then turned to Abraham's arm, being arrested by the angel's call to him, and the ram caught in the thicket by his horns being taken by him and sacrificed in the place of Isaac. This ram appeared to represent Christ as involved in the demands of the law, in the power of his Godhead, by virtue of his headship and union with his people, and therefore as made to suffer the penalty of the law in their stead.

My views then were not as distinct on all these points as I have here given them; but the substitution of Christ in the place of the condemned sinner was fully presented to view. And the atonement of Christ appeared so full and so exactly adapted to my helpless, guilty, and condemned case that surely, I said to myself as I viewed it, God must have had me in view when he made this rich provision in his Son. I was therefore enabled confidently to rely on his atonement for pardon, and to plead it for my acceptance with God, and the sense of condemnation was gone.

I was, of course, filled with gratitude and praise for this wonderful display of God's love and grace to a wretch like me, but still this happiness was not like that I experienced on the night of the 13th. That was something peculiar; self was in a great measure lost sight of, and God in his glorious character and sovereignty occupied my view. Now I felt a deep sense of my own vileness. I do not know whether it is common or not. Few, at any rate, speak of this exercise in relating their deliverance. But for myself, I had never before felt such meltings of heart on account of sin, nor had seen sin to be so vile as now; - not as contrasted with the demands of the law, but as contrasted with the goodness and mercy of God.

I pled that the Lord would henceforth rule over me and in me, and that he would take me out of the world, rather than leave me ever again to sin against such goodness. It is true I have been accustomed from all I had read and also heard to consider Isaac as a type of Christ, but the view given at this time was so clear, and came with such power that I unhesitatingly received it as the

truth of God. And I afterwards found that the Scriptures represent Isaac as the figure of those born after the Spirit, and of the children of promise. (Ga. 4:28, 29.)

Strange as it may appear, I did not once think of this being the new birth, or of being born into gospel liberty through faith now given me in Christ. I had no idea of what christian experience, or the new birth, was other than that God must implant his love in the heart, and that be carried out in our exercises and obedience. I had never heard experience preached. I had read of some persons having extraordinary exercises, but I had been led, particularly by the ministry, to think that if any had these exercises, it was not prudent to speak of them, as it would tend to discourage others who had not had such exercises. I viewed each of the exercises above related as they severally occurred, as manifestations of God's special favor to me, but I did not feel free to speak of them, not only on account of its being as above remarked, not prudent, but I also felt it would be presuming in me to tell of having such exercises. Yet from the facts that from the time I had the discovery of the enmity of my heart on, I had felt myself helpless and laying at the mercy of God; and that but two days before this last exercise, I had been led to consider a revelation of Christ and faith in his atonement an essential part of Christian experience; and further that from this time I could never bring back that legal bondage and those terrors I had felt before, though I often tried hard for it. I cannot satisfactorily account for my great stupidity in having no adequate idea of the import and place of these exercises in christian experience, only that my eyes were holden, as were the eyes of the two disciples who journeyed to Emmaus.

Having a comfortable hope now of acceptance with God, I felt desirous of being baptized. I knew there was an Old Baptist meetinghouse in Morristown, and had been told there were a people who occasionally met there for worship. After some enquiry, I found where two of the members lived, a man and his wife. I went one evening to see them, and informed them of my situation and wish to be baptized. They informed me that they had no preacher at that time, but that Elder Parkinson of New York had promised to visit them, and that if word could be got to him, he no doubt would come out and baptize me. I offered, with their approbation, to go and invite him out. Knowing that my Boston friend was at that time in New York on a visit, I in a few days after, went and through her got an introduction to Elder Parkinson, who after questioning me somewhat on my exercises, gave me an appoinment for Morristown.

On my return I gave those members information of the appointment; a church meeting was called for that time. I went before the church, and was examined, for I did not relate any of the particular points of my experience excepting that on baptism, so ignorant was I of their special importance to evidence my being born of God, but still after Elder Parkinson had questioned me pretty closely as to my reliance on Christ, etc., I was received and baptized at Morristown the same day, Saturday, December 22, 1810. But instead of going on my way rejoicing, while at the water, a heavy dark cloud came over my mind, which with the exception of occasionally some little break and manifestation of divine favor, lasted me about fourteen months.

S. Trott

(To be continued)

Greenville, Alabama

Dear Elder Williams,

I am sending you my Daddy's obituary. Would you please print it in the *Signs* for me.

My Daddy was really extra special to me. There was a bond between us, this

being the church. We both loved the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God. We could talk for hours about the God we loved and the things concerning the church. We have travelled many miles together in visiting different churches and associations. I have indeed lost a dear friend as well as a wonderful, loving father.

May the Lord bless you Editors and please remember my family at the Throne of Grace.

In Bonds of Love,
Emmie L. Grayson

BISHOPS - DEACONS

At the request of a dear brother and fellow soldier in the Lord, I am attempting to write concerning the delicate subject of Bishops, Deacons, and their functions in the House of God (The Church of God, the pillar and ground of the Truth). As I attempt to comply with this request, I do so with much fear and holy apprehension because I desire neither to add or to subtract, or modify those things that the Divine Logos has given us pertaining to this important subject. At the same time, and in many cases, it seems to me that the passage of time, together with other things, has carved out certain practices and customs that are not becoming to the word of God. Things that must be cast in the mold of humanistic, man-made traditions that will not measure up to nor correlate with the plumbline of God's divine truth. So to those who differ with us, I hope you will do so with as much magnanimity as possible and in the same spirit of fear and apprehension in which I have written this.

To begin with, in those nostalgic days of the past when the Church of the Firstborn was still in its infancy, "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul...," and "...great grace was upon them all," to the extend that, "They had all things common...", and in having all things common, there wasn't anyone among them that said ought of the things which he possessed was his own, "...for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet. And distribution was made unto every man according as he had need." Acts 2:45; Acts 4:32-35.

But then, with such a multitude of believers, both men and women being added to the Lord (Acts 5:14), a problem arose in the daily DIAKONIA, translated ministration, which literally means SERVICE.

Now the problem was the Grecians (i.e., the Greek speaking Jews, or those people of the dispersion better known as Hellenistic) murmured against the native Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily service.

What then was the daily ministration or service? The daily service primarily involved two things:

1. A daily provision of necessities including bread and meat which was provided from the common fund to all of those who had need. Acts 2:43-46.

2. The daily services of ministering the word, together with prayer in the temple and in every house whereby they, the apostles, ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ. Acts 5:42. Furthermore, in determining the daily ministration, it should be noted that these two services are the only things mentioned by way of daily occurrences in the whole context of Acts, Chapter Six. Therefore, the term daily ministration simply means the daily teaching and preaching of Jesus Christ together with a daily service of necessities according as every man had need.

The phrase, "it is not reason," in verse two is an expression which means this is no cause or is not right that we, the Twelve, should leave (give up) the Word of God, and DIA-KON-EIN, or serve tables, Acts 6:2. Here the verb DIA-

KON-EIN, means to serve. These things reveal the high priority, and the great importance which the apostles placed upon their continuing service of the word compared to their continued serving of tables. It is also evident that the murmuring of neglect brought by the Grecians against the native Hebrews was not so much of, if any, a negligence in the service of the word, but rather in the serving of their tables, Acts 4:35. It is of further evidence that even though the apostles gave first priority to their continued preaching of the word, at the same time, they were not insensitive to the complaints of the Grecians and the plight of their widows. They, humanly speaking, acted in a very responsible and affirmative way which pleased the whole multitude, Acts 6:5. They said, "Wherefore, Brethren, look ye out among you seven men...whom we may appoint over this business," Acts 6:3. Here the word business denotes exclusively the serving of tables and attending their carnal needs. The ministry of the word, to my knowledge, is never used in the scriptures with any connotation of business attached to it. The twelve said, "But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the DIA-KON-IA, or ministry, of the word." Acts 6:4. This is the same rendering as in verse 1. With this change about to take place, the apostles were to relinquish, in a measure, the business part of the daily ministration; namely, that of serving the tables. At the same time they were to retain to themselves that part of the daily ministration that appertained to prayer and to the service of the word, called also DIA-KON-IA of the word. In my judgment, these things teach invariably that in those days of great grace, the apostles, themselves, were the chief instruments in providing the multitude with both spiritual and natural sustenances. They provided spiritual sustenance by preaching the word and in prayer and natural sustenance by distributing to the necessities of the saints.

"But with the number of the disciples multiplying in Jerusalem greatly," Acts 6:7, the function of keeping up both sides of the daily service was becoming too great and too much for the apostles to continue to do them by themselves. Therefore, the apostles needed assistance (someone to assist them) in whatever capacity needed. These assistants to have certain and specific duties assigned to them, with their chief function being that of DIAKONEIN, or to serve the tables.

The installation of the first seven men in their official capacity as servants to assist the apostles and attend to the tables was done on a bilateral basis. The multitude chose and set them before the apostles, and the apostles appointed them by laying on of their hands, Acts 6:3, 5, 6. Thus, they were fully commissioned to function as authorized DIAKONOIS, or servants, assistants, attendants, or deacons (Phil. 1:1, and 1st Tim. 3:8) to DIAKONEIN, or to serve the tables, Acts 6:2.

There are those who contend that the word Deacons - DIAKONOIS is nowhere to be found in Acts, Chapter Six, and according to the common version, this is correct. Again, a careful study of the Greek text reveals that the word DIAKONOIS is most certainly inferentially present in this text based upon the following considerations:

1. *DIAKONIA* translated *ministration* in Acts 6:1, and the same word translated *ministry* in Acts 6:4 means SERVICE, is therefore a thing and a common noun.

2. *DIAKONOIS - DIAKONOUS* translated *deacons* in Phil. 1:1; 1st Tim. 3:8, and other places, has for its basic meaning the word, SERVANTS, and can mean only a person(s).

3. *DIAKONEIN* translated *to serve* in Acts 6:2 means just that, *TO SERVE,* and is an infinitive or a form of a verb modifying a noun. In this case, whether absent or present in the text, it must

modify the noun *"SERVANTS - DIAKONOIS"*. These facts are self evident. The infinitive "to serve - DIAKONEIN" in the phrase, "And to serve tables" must modify the noun Deacons, Servants. Therefore, it must be a person because a place or thing could not possibly SERVE the tables. Therefore, the infinitive to serve infers the noun DIAKONOIS — SERVANTS, translated DEACONS in Phil. 1:1 and 1st Tim. 3:8. The very nature of the word serve implies servant, or someone to serve. This is apparent everywhere in the Greek text and we should not be misled into thinking the word Deacon is not inferentially present in Acts, Chapter Six. A truth taught by inference is just as much truth as truth taught by direct expression, sometimes more difficult to prove, but nonetheless the truth.

Another thing that we should not be misdirected in is to suppose those first seven Deacons chosen and appointed were confined to just putting bread and meat on the tables. While this was their primary function, it is quite obvious that in the performance of their work, incidents arose which required their attention, things that they attended to in a most miraculous immediate fashion. Stephen, the first Deacon chosen, "..did great wonders and miracles among the people" Acts 6:8. And when those disputers arose against him, he silenced the gainsayers and stopped the mouths of the adversaries. "...They were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake" Acts 6:10. This man, Stephen, became the central figure in one of the greatest house to house saint hunts and persecution ever levelled against the church. It was greatly intensified by a man whose name was Saul, who afterwards was made a preacher of the same faith he had sought to destroy. This persecution terminated in two great notable events. The first event was the death of Stephen, that great defender of the faith, the first deacon chosen by the church and appointed by the twelve. Acts 7:58-60. The second event was the giving of life to that great offender of the faith and chief of sinners, Saul of Tarsus. First Tim. 1:15. After the death of Stephen, through the unbelief and ignorance of Saul, 1st Tim. 1:13, the persecution intensified to the point where they were all scattred abroad except the apostles. Acts 8:1.

Then Philip, the second DIAKONOIS or servant chosen, went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them. Acts 8:5. Believers were baptised and many were miraculously healed. Acts 8:6, 7, 12. Then the angel of the Lord sent him unto the desert of Gaza where he preached Jesus unto a eunuch and, subsequent to the eunuch's confession, he baptised him. Acts 8:26-38. Then the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, and the eunuch went on his way rejoicing, Acts 8:39, no doubt saying, 'I am no longer a dry tree'. Isaiah 56:3. but Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea. Acts 8:40.

At first glance, these facts may seem startling and somewhat removed from the present day order and arrangement of things until one might be tempted to even deny the sixth chapter of Acts as having anything to do with deacons. But if we do that, we are left without a single guideline as to what the function of the deacon is. For while we know their qualification, 1st Tim. 3:8-10, and they were officials in the early church, Phil. 1:1, without Acts 6 the church has no way of knowing what their official function was.

But now, consider, at the present time when a church chooses a man to serve as deacon, the Elders appoint him to assist them in serving tables, attending to business, and in other things. But what if this servant, in the performance of his service, aspires through the aspiration of the Spirit to the higher office of overseer and feeder? What do we do?

Why, of course, we afford him the privilege and opportunity for a time, even an intermediate time, to function in the DIA-KON-IA, service of the word. This allows the church the opportunity to ascertain whether or not the aspirant has the necessary requirement to oversee and feed the House of God. If not, then he remains a deacon. If he does, then the Holy Ghost has made him an overseer to feed the church, and the church should act accordingly. Acts 20:28.

Elder R. H. Hale

(To be continued)

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Oct. 7, 1982

Dear Brethren,

Having just received the current number of the *Signs*, I notice that my subscription was due in August. Enclosed please find payment for another year and please accept my apologies for my carelessness.

I wish to express thanks to the readers of the *Signs* who were kind enough to comment on the questions I raised in a letter some time ago. The remarks were very helpful, and the knowledge that others had devoted thought to the same subject was very encouraging to me. I have especially enjoyed the reprint of Elder Trott's inquiry into the duty of the unregenerate to believe, etc.

From time to time I see mention in the paper of the doctrine of "conditional

time salvation", and one sister, if I recall correctly, expressed an interest to know what that teaching consists of. My first thought on reading that was "Happy the soul who has never heard of it." However, since I have sat under the preaching of it many times and have read quite a few of its leading advocates, I feel I might have an interesting vantage point: an inside view, so to speak.

Briefly, the conditionalist doctrine denies the absolute predestination of all things and says that between regeneration and death the child of God may enjoy or lose a "time salvation," conditioned on his "obedience". Time Salvation they hold to consist of pleasurable, felt communion with God, and "obedience" generally amounts to joining the church, being baptized, attending regularly (contributing generously?), and avoiding gross sin. This is a sketch which I think captures the chief points of the system although it varies widely from preacher to preacher and place to place. It should be said to their credit that most of them firmly advocate unconditional election, final perseverance, and the predestination of the saints to glory, though not the predestination of all events. Thus, their preaching, along with some notable errors, does contain significant truths. Also, in areas where there is no local body of "Absoluters" to contend with, they tend not to harp on the two salvations all the time and do some excellent preaching.

I am sure that I have already said any number of things which many "Conditionalists" would hotly dispute. If any of them read this, I can only beg their patience and candid consideration, for I am only trying to describe not what every one of them believes, but what all of them averaged together tend to believe.

There are several other errors which are not perhaps the direct consequence of the conditional doctrine but are sometimes found in connection with it. Many of these beliefs are strongly condemned by the conditionalists themselves, but tend to crop up among them in any case. Most of these result from the extremely loose way in which conditionalists interpret the scriptures. Any reference to salvation, for instance, must be pigeon-holed as either "time" or "eternal" salvation. Thus, when Jonah said "salvation is of the Lord," he meant eternal salvation in heaven. However, when Luke tells us, "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved," he meant saved here in time only. Once a person becomes used to treating the scriptures like a ball of wax in this manner, he eventually reaches the point where there are very few outrages in the field of biblical interpretation he is unwilling to commit. A dear soul a few days ago informed me that the many mansions of John 14 were here on earth because Jesus said "I go to prepare a place for you that where I am there ye may be also." She concluded that the "may be" made our occupancy of the mansions conditional and that therefore they had to refer to the church here on earth, not heaven itself. The word predestination is similarly handled, some claiming that since it says "destination" it only refers to where we're going, not what happens along the way as we're getting there. To any of you who may be about to throw the paper in the fire, let me assure you that I have not made up one syllable of this, but that these two ideas have been seriously presented to me within the last six months by persons to whom I could introduce you in the very flesh.

At any rate, tendencies like this, coupled with the tendency that exists among nearly all Old Baptist groups to excessively "spiritualize" the scriptures, have resulted in near chaos in some places. One idea that has become prevalent in many areas is that the Bible contains little or no reference to the non-elect or to the natural man.

The result of this is that you hear preachers trying to populate heaven with some of the most unlikely characters, such as Judas and King Saul. After all, they weren't reprobates, just disobedient children of God who missed their "time salvation", but nonetheless went straight from the noose and the swords point to the bosom of Abraham. The ultimate fruit of this particular opinion is the denial of hell, the resurrection, and the loss of any soul, all of which heresies I have either personally encountered or heard reports of in the southern part of Georgia alone. To bring home the sadness of this situation, I will relate a personal experience. I once sat, as a visitor only, in a meetinghouse which had behind the pulpit a portrait of Elder Prior Lewis, a faithful old soldier of the cross during pioneer days who had planted that church in the 1840's, I believe. Under his now mercifully sightless gaze stood and preached men who I know from their own frank testimony deny the bodily resurrection of the dead and apparently the last judgement also. Thus we see that one error often paves the way for another until we see brought to pass Paul's warning: "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

Having described the disease and what it can lead to, it remains to show its cause and what the great physician is hopefully doing to cure it. This, like all other heresy, stems from "not knowing the scriptures or the power of God." Since it would be impossible for one of us to ordain all that comes to pass without being involved in sin, weak persons tend to suppose that it would also be impossible for God to be involved in all things and yet be without sin. This is simply to err in supposing him to be one of ourselves, or at least like us. While it is true that the scriptures use the word predestinate in connection with persons, such passages as Eph. 1:11, with its reference to "the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," should make plain to anyone who can understand English that the overrulling and controlling power of God extends to everything. How else could "all things work together for good to them that love God?" (Rom. 8:28). Some fear lest they make God the author of evil, but, leaving scripture, reason alone would show us that God, being almighty, must be involved in all things that come to pass. For example, if I foresee a crime or an accident, and have the power to prevent it, and yet do not, am I not therefore responsible for it after a fashion? God foreknows all things and has all power. Therefore, simple reason must refer back to him all things that happen. Even the heathen, with their concept of fate, dimly grasped that all events were disposed of by unseen forces. It would seem therefore that it takes a modern Christian to know less about the ways of God than either a pagan or a philosopher. So much for the silly notion that if we will only deny absolute predestination, we can still leave God his power and foreknowledge and yet excuse him from sin. The very idea of our "excusing" him, when all our hope hangs upon His acquiting us for the sake of his son! In this connection ponder Is. 63:17.

As for the concept of obedience and enjoyments, no one would deny that when we obey God we derive benefit from it, and when we disobey we are chastened. However, what the conditionalist tends to lose sight of, is that good works are themselves the gifts of God and blessings from his hand. We are accepted both now and later in heaven on the basis of Christ's merits alone and all our obedience and our suffering will neither merit nor atone for one blessing or one sin. All comes from the grace of God and the working of his power, both here and yonder. Phil. 2:12-13, with Eph. 2:10 ought to convince anyone where all our good works come from. And further, it should be borne in mind that "good works" is only a

courtesy title when applied to our best and most spiritual performances, for our fallen nature so infects our very best performance that even with God's gracious working in us, our works are only accepted because we are accepted in the beloved. In short, I fear that conditionalism is in some respects guilty of losing sight of one of the foundational principles of our faith: Justification by imputed righteousness alone. The believer is not just entitled to heaven later because of the righteousness of Christ, but rather, right now God accepts him, on that basis and without works. I concede that exhortation has its place, but an exhortation which gives the impression that we have some native power to please God is calculated to lift up the proud and crush the humble, whereas the true gospel does exactly the opposite. I also concede that good works have their place, but do we not often find that those who accomplish most lean most on God and have the least confidence in the flesh? So much for the causes of conditionalism among the Old Baptists.

I belong to what is known as the "Peace" faction of the Union Association of South Georgia. Our only sister association is the San Pedro Association of north Florida (not to be confused with the "original" San Pedro in the same area). As is obvious, the Baptists in these parts are as quarrelsome and fragmented as they are everywhere else. The conditionalist doctrine was introduced down here by a group of anxious meddlesome young preachers in the 1890's. Since most of the "big guns" got infected with it right away, the old faith in an absolute God has mostly survived among "Bush" preachers and in the private opinions of the members. Whatever their official pronouncements, I have noticed that most of the people in this group of churches recognize God's hand in most things and feel their utter dependence upon him. I think that conditionalism clouded their minds but never really penetrated their hearts.

In the last several years several hopeful signs have appeared in our body. Many of our younger members are much stronger on predestination than some of the older ones, and many of the older members, if not most of them, are much more receptive than formerly. I showed Elder David Bartley's excellent piece on Time Salvation (in the July, 1979 Signs) to one of our hottest two salvation preachers recently, and he not only agreed with most of it but also has altered the tone of his preaching on that subject. In general, I think it is recognized by all our people that blessings in this life are the fruit of grace as much as anything in the world to come, and also that God's superintendence is firmly established over all persons and events. This might seem insignificant to many readers of the Signs, but it represents a tremendous improvement over what went before.

What would really finally cure the malady of conditionalism would be a great outpouring of the Spirit, leading all God's people deeper in the secret of his covenant and showing them the greatness and breadth of his power and grace. Before such a sight as this, conditionalism, indifference, fractionalism, and every other evil that besets the Old Baptists would be swept away like cobwebs before a hurricane. Let us try to pray that God would pour out upon us the spirit of grace and supplications for this.

I did not intend when I started to get so wound up on this subject. I have not really dealt with it at all, although many would be ready to say that I have said far too much about it already. I don't think that anyone has written a work solely on this subject, but I very much wish that an able, dispassionate writer could be led into a full investigation of the nature, origins and progress of this particular set of ideas.

Brethren, pray for us that the truth

might have a free course among us and all the Israel of God.

Your servant in hope,
John Crowley

P.S.

Sometime ago, I talked with an Elder affiliated with the majority of the churches in this area, but not connected with myself in the church. I asked him how the conditional doctrine fared in other churches with which he was familiar and I am not. His exact reply was: "About half the preachers preach a conditional time salvation and the other half have got enough sense to know there ain't no such thing." Perhaps things are looking up.

EDITORIAL

"And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. Awake, O Sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." (Zechariah 13:6-7.)

Zechariah is a book with many figures and types in it. The language here, however, is very plain. There is very little question that this is a prophesy of the redemptive work of Jesus our Lord. You can see in verse 6 that someone asks the question, "What are these wounds in thine hands?" And it gives the answer, "Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends." Then in verse 7 another voice is heard to speak to a sword, instructing the sword to awake. The sword is to awake against his shepherd, "Against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow." There is no question as to who is speaking here because it says, "Saith the Lord of hosts." And then the direct command, "Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered." Then the results of this, "And I will turn mine hand upon the little ones."

In the 6th verse our Saviour is speaking, "These wounds are the wounds that I received in the house of my friends." Whoever asked the question regarding the wounds could see there were wounds in His hands. They were not there before Jesus was nailed to the tree, so this must be a question asked after His resurrection. After His resurrection we know that He instructed Thomas to reach forth his hand, and he was enabled to see with his own eyes that Jesus had been pierced by nails in His hands and feet and a spear had entered into His side.

These were wounds that he received, not from His enemies, but He was wounded in the house of His friends. We understand His friends to be His family, His church, His people. It is for them that He came to receive the wounds.

"What are these wounds?" A wound is something that we generally feel will heal and repair, and He answers, "I was wounded in the house of my friends." Bear that in mind as you look at the 7th verse. That which afflicted Him in the house of His friends was called a wound. His hands were wounded, as were His feet, and His side, and upon His head a crown of thorns was pressed down upon it and that was certainly wounded, as well. Then a command is issued, unlike any that you would expect to hear. The command is to the sword, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd." Note this well. The Lord of Hosts speaks to a sword, instructing it to awake! We have just read that He was wounded in the house of His friends. You would think that if God's ways were as our ways, that He would instruct the sword to smite those who wounded His well Beloved Son. We might well have called upon the sword this way; "Awake O sword, and smite those vicious people. Cut them off." That would not harmonize with the language, however, of Daniel, where he prophesied that the

Messiah must be cut off, but not for Himself. "Awake, O sword against my shepherd;" not for the shepherd, or in His defense, but against Him. And, "Against the man that is my fellow."

Look at the word "fellow" and think of it in our common usage. Do we not often speak about the fellowship in the church being love and sweet communion? Probably the most correct interpretation of the word "fellow" would be *mine equal.* Equal! "Against the man that is mine equal, saith the Lord." "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd." "Smite the shepherd."

There is no question about the summons here. God in His infinite wisdom has seen fit to call forth the slumbering sword to awaken. The word "awake" there leads us to feel that until this time the sword had no authority to act upon the man which was God's fellow, or against His shepherd. Until the appointed time, God did not summons the sword. But when He does, the expression is used very forcefully, "Awake!" The sleeping sword is now brought forth, and brandished for the purpose of smiting the shepherd. Many people have had hard feelings in reading the New Testament when they see the cruel way in which Judas betrayed the Saviour - seeing the evil mob with hatred as they came out to Him at night in the garden; the despicable manner in which Caiaphas, the High Priest, treated our Lord; and then reading of Herod and his soldiers abusing Him. Pontius Pilate, in his pompous hypocrisy, washes his hands and tells them, "I'm innocent." Then observe the Roman soldiers as they drive the nails in Him, fastening Him to the tree. There must be hard thoughts about what wicked and evil people they were. We know that if the grace of God has not touched our hearts, we are equally as evil as they were, but we would pull the sword as quickly as Peter did, and prepare for war.

You will recall that night the mob came, and the first thing Peter could think of was the sword. To Peter's way of thinking, they could not do this. He drew the sword and cut off the ear of one there in the crowd, and as the Lord restored the man's ear, He told Peter to put up the sword. Peter knew little about the vengeance of God, but he would soon learn. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay." There is more contained in that verse of scripture than just a message to us that God will take care of our enemies. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay." God will take care of the debts, and resolve them as it please Him. Our Lord was nailed to the tree, true enough; the wicked hands of the Romans and the mob literally nailed Him, and by the determinate council and foreknowledge of God these men with wicked hands did this. But our Lord in prophesy says that He was wounded in the house of His friends. Now look at that carefully. We don't see in the text where His friends did it, but that's where He says He was wounded. He had come from the world of glory and was abiding in their house, and they fearfully abandoned Him and He was wounded.

Will you notice that when our Lord was nailed to the tree there was nothing in the scripture that says that he cried out. There was no agonizing sighs, or groans, rather as the Prophet Isaiah says, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." These were nothing more than wounds that He was receiving in the house of his friends. Our Lord opened not His mouth. You will go back, however, to the night before in the garden, and when the sword was about to be awakened over Him, He said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." We preceive that this was not nearly so much the physical sufferings that our Lord was preparing to endure, but the soul suffering. It was not the nails and the sword or the spear that our Lord was dreading, for all men must die

in some fashion, but rather it was the sword of God's justice. That is what this sword was - "Awake Oh sword," the sword of God's holy, perfect, pure, and everlasting justice was now about to be brought into action. Who could summons it? Pilate couldn't do it! Herod couldn't! Only God could summons the sword. The sword has been asleep.

We learn from this that it was a lively, and a living sword, however. For as the scripture says, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." May we tell you here that Jesus Christ fell into the hands of the living God. He fell there for His friends. If He would, by grace, show us what a narrow escape we have had, we would be happier in soul than before such knowledge. The appointed time had come. There had always been the sword. This was not something new that was gotten up by God. The sword had always been whetted and prepared. It was not rusty. It was not dulled through the ages. The sword was plenty sharp and fully prepared. It was a holy sword, and it belonged to God, and God summonsed it. "Awake, Oh sword."

We see the sword the first time in the Bible when God drove man out of the garden. He put there a flaming sword. What did He put it there for? "To keep the way of the tree of life." The flaming sword was first seen in the garden; was set there by appointment, and would remain there until such time as God would call it forth, and all His holy vengeance fulfill the certain promise that He made to Adam, "In the day that thou eatest, thou shalt surely die." The sentence would be executed. We see the sword also in the end of the Word of God, the book of Revelation. The last time the sword is mentioned is when the beast and the false prophet were thrown into the lake of fire. "And the reminent was slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth, and all fowls were filled with their flesh." That's the last execution of the enemies of God, and they are executed by the sword; by the sword that proceeded out of the mouth of the mighty Conqueror, Jesus Christ, who rides upon the white horse in absolute conquest and victory and universal government.

It was halfway between the first mention of the sword of God in the book of Genesis and the sword of God in the book of Revelation, almost to the day, (three thousand years between the two) that David in these words (prophetic of our Lord hanging on the tree) cries out and says, "Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog." (Psa. 22:20) You will observe that in verse 16 of this same chapter he has just said, "For dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me; they have pierced my hands and my feet." Our Lord did not ask to be delivered from the piercing of His hands and His feet, but He did say, "Deliver my soul from the sword." Similar language to this is what our Lord meant when He said to the Father in prayer, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." The cup which our Saviour was about to drink was the cup of God's indignation and wrath.

Symbolically, He was not to take an actual cup. Neither was He actually about to be run through with a literal sword. This is descriptive language, or figurative speech. The cup that He drank from and the sword that He sought to be delivered from was one and the same - the execution of God's everlasting judgment upon sinners. We can rest assured of this; when God said, "Awake, Oh sword," it would certainly come into play. "Awake, Oh sword against my shepherd." Is this not what the Lord said in this same Psalm 22, just quoted from, when He cried, "My God, My God, why has thou forsaken me." (Vs. 1) The Father was now against the Shepherd. Isn't it a tale of marvel and wonder that God would use such language, "Against my shepherd." The

23rd Psalm, those beautiful and lovely words of David, says, "The Lord is my shepherd." And yet God the Father said that He was His shepherd, too. God looks at Him in ownership, "He is my shepherd." He is the shepherd that I have sent, the everlasting and good shepherd; the shepherd of the sheep. But isn't it an amazing thing to see that the one who was sent to be shepherd was wounded in the house of His friends, of which David was a part? And He was struck with the sword of the judgment of His Father, though both parties had called Him, "My shepherd," and afflicted Him. He was afflicted because of His friends who had sinned, and He was afflicted because of His Father who could countenance no sin. (He came to bear up all our sins.)

"Against my shepherd." No language in the world is like this, "Against my shepherd." God would turn His back upon Him and summons His justice, and His judgment, and His holiness, and compel it to smite Him.

"And against the man." It is a wonder of wonders that continually in the prophesies and the fulfillment of the same we see Jesus as a Man. It was imperative that He be a Man. If all the angels in heaven had been smitten by the sword, it wouldn't redeem a sinner. If all the sinners who are considered "the house of his friends" were smitten, it would do them no good. But a man - a man - must come and die as a man.

Much has been said about that, and we will not go into that point, but observe that he twice said, "Against my shepherd, and against the man." There is one thing of great importance to see, "Against the man that is my fellow;" "The man that is my equal." You cannot even begin to see the truth of salvation by grace unless you can see that Jesus was the *equal* of God. He thought it not robbery to be equal with God, for He was equal with God. (Phil. 2:6) We see in the very beginning of creation where the scripture says, "All things were made by him and without him was not anything made that was made." We see that in the construction of the first man, Adam, he was equal with the Father, "His fellow." "Let *us* make man after *our* image." Not in *my* image, but "Let *us*," "After *our*."

He was equal with God in power. (Matt. 28:18) "All power is given unto me both in heaven and in earth." He was equal to God in will. "Not my will, but thine be done." "This is the father's will; of all that he has given me, I have lost nothing." He was equal with God in fulness, for the scriptures says, "He is the fulness of God." (Col. 2:9) He was equal to God in glory; equal to God in His sovereignty; equal to God in all things. The equality of existence between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost could not be denied. One in all things, and yet separate and distinct in personality.

God the Father from everlasting had purposed that His everlasting Son would have a bride, but before that bride could come to the home in heaven and there reside, before she could be presented in her royal robes, she had to be purified and washed, (as she had fallen in Adam) and God the Son came for that purpose to this earth, *as a man.* God the Holy Ghost, equal as the third person of the Truine God, instructs and teaches, and vitalizes and gives life to all of those that God has chosen from everlasting. It is no wonder, no slip of the pen, then that the Father says, "And against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Host."

Then the next verse, in language that can only be God's, "Smite the shepherd." Do you remember when Moses took the rod and smote the rock, and smote it the second time, and in so doing, he forfeited his right to enter into the Land of Canaan? Moses, being a figure of the Law, had done all he could do against the rock, which was Christ. (I Cor. 10:4) And now he had no more work to do, and Joshua must lead them into the Land of Promise, not Moses, the

figure of the Law. Do you see then that the rock must be smitten? "Smite the shepherd."

How serious a blow is this that He must be smitten with? It is not possible for us to contrive in our minds an understanding of the depths of God's justice and judgment, but if you can perceive such language that is contained in the New Testament, such as "Where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quinched;" "Where the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever;" "Cast alive into the lake of fire," and etc., you can get some little glimpse of the judgment that awaits all of those outside of Christ when this world shall be no more. All of those that shall be in Christ; all of those who have been called by the election of grace; all of those that make up His household, whose house He was wounded in, all of those who are His friends will escape that awful judgment. But upon what basis will they escape it? Consider this. When a sinner offends God, he has offended an eternal being. He couldn't in billions and billions of years in repentance and remorse and sufferings do so long enough to satisfy God's judgment. In an instant we sin against an infinite being. God will hold that against a sinner just as long as God exists unless there is some satisfaction rendered. How long do you think God will punish the wicked? By His word, it says everlasting punishment awaits them. These shall go away into everlasting punishment, in the lake of fire prepared for the Devil and his angels. Forever, and forever, and forever, they will be punished.

His elect, however, get off free! We say, *they get off free!* On what basis? On the basis that another received the fatal blow from this sword. Rather than God saying, "Smite the wicked; smite the friends; smite the elect," He says, "Smite the shepherd!" "Smite the Shepherd!" When our Lord hung on the tree we don't hear of Him grieving, nor mourning, over the bodily afflictions. Oh, what a grief and affliction it must have been that the everlasting sword of God's vengeance pierced Him thru.

When God's judgment in the form of this sword pierced our Lord and entered into His soul, it was an equal for the everlasting punishment due us. Every sin, every evil thought, every transgression, every crime that you and all the family of God have ever been guilty of, all together He had assumed as His own when the sword pierced Him. When He died there at the hands of wicked men, and in the house of His fellows; when He died an everlasting death; (if we may use the expression) when the sword of God's judgment pierced Him, God was punishing all of us *in* Him.

Let us ask you this. If this is so, if what we write this day, if what we think you believe is the truth, then is there anything that needs to be added to the wonderous plan of God's salvation? Would God raise the sword and say, "Smite the shepherd" and then come back to you at a later time and say there was a sin or two that you must account for and render payment? No, my dear readers. We set before you with boldness that Jesus paid the *whole* debt. The sword of justice fell upon Him and no one else. As the Shepherd of the sheep He solely was responsible for them. When all the vengeance of God fell, it fell upon Him, and not a one of His sheep ever received even a glancing blow of the sword of God's justice. It all was His and none of it was ours. "Smite the shepherd."

The language which follows has been greatly misunderstood. "And the sheep shall be scattered." Probably the initial fulfillment of that was when the sheep (His disciples) were scattered the night our Saviour was taken in the garden. Our Lord so quoted from this text in Matthew and Mark. However, there was another sense in which they were scattered. They were scattered to be regathered again. Up until this time the sheep were bound together under the

curse. The sword of justice had just as much claim against them as the rest of the world because they were sinners equal with all the rest of the human race. There was no diffrence between them and the non-elect as regarded justice. When the stroke of justice fell upon Jesus, when the Shepherd was smitten, then the sheep were freed, and released, and were no longer bound up. Consequently, they being scattered over the world, then the amazing language follows, "And I will turn mine hand upon the little ones."

Oh, the glory of it all is that the whole thing was planned in the everlasting councils of God's love that He would smite the Shepherd, release the sheep, and then gather each one of them. And His language is so tender, "I will turn my hand again towards the little ones." All the little sheep, wherever they might be, all of those who were embraced in the everlasting council and covenant of God will be gathered up, one by one. God will turn His hand towards them. *He will not send someone else after them.* He will not send someone out to tell them, "You have an invitation, if you come now, you can be received in this great number which will make up heaven's host." Oh, no, a thousand times no! "And I will turn my hand upon the little ones."

Brethren, where did your salvation really begin? Oh, you say, it begins with the new birth. Not at all. Or you say, It begins when Christ died upon the cross. Not at all! You will have to go back to when God, in His eternal council, proposed to send the sword into the soul of Jesus. It was all planned. It was all prepared. There was not a detail left out. There were no contingencies. There was no possibility that things could run afoul somehow.

When Jesus came into the world, the scriptures already had Him declared as the Lamb slain - the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. For whom then would He die? Would He die for Himself? No! He was innocent. He died as the Shepherd, and He died as the man who was God's fellow. He died that the sheep might be released. He died that the sheep might be scattered. He died that the same sheep that would be scattered might be also gathered by God when He would turn His hand again toward the little ones. What an encouragement that ought to be to the elect family today. We need not worry, nor fear and fret about the welfare of those we love who do not seem to be in the grace and the love of God, who manifest no characteristics of a christian, for we know for a certainty that if they are one of His, if God has chosen them, if God has purposed to redeem them, before they leave this world *He will* turn His hand to them. He will gather His little ones - every one of them.

Would it be possible to believe that when this world is finished, when heaven is housed with God's family, there could be one missing, and someone inquire, "Where is that one?" Could that little sheep go to hell? Sooner God Himself could lie than one of His sheep not be gathered into the fold. "I will turn my hand upon the little ones."

When Jesus went up to the tree of the cross, God had already appointed Him to suffer, to bleed, and die in the place of all the sheep that would be scattered. Oh, the wounds, no doubt, were terrible. Those things that He was afflicted with at the hands of His friends, must have grieved Him sorely, and hurt Him physically. The agony would have been intense. But they were nothing, nothing, compared to the sword that would smite Him. Can you see the difference between the wounds and the smiting? Oh, the sword of justice pierced Him clean through. It didn't stop with His hands, His feet, and His side. It consumed his whole soul. Jesus suffered the everlasting and eternal agony that every one of the little sheep should have suffered there. And in a few hours time He suffered sufficiently that the eternal

God His Father could be satisfied. "Smite the shepherd." "Smite the shepherd."

No, brethren, don't let anyone tell you that we nailed Jesus to the cross. It was for our sins He was nailed, true enough, but it was by God's eternal council and foreknowledge. The instruments were there that were supposed to be there. The sheep were set free. Our sins were certainly accounted to Him, but it was in order that He might carry our sins away, and all the burdens and griefs. And any human being who ever had eyes to see, spiritually, could read this in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, and could not possibly believe that the sheep had ever suffered a thing in order to bring about their eternal redemption. It has all been worked out.

Do you see the message here? Jesus suffered as a man. He suffered as the shepherd. He suffered from the wounds, but He suffered the utmost agony of the sword. Consider one further thing. The criminal being put to death may grieve over dying and agonize in dying, but if there is an ounce of honesty, he must admit that he has it coming. Jesus, however, was wounded as an innocent man, and as a perfect shepherd. and the sword of God's justice pierced Him through, not because He had done anything wrong, but because He had done everything right. Do you see that? It wasn't for anything wrong that Jesus had done, but it was because of all the right He had done. He was the only one who ever existed to qualify to receive the stroke of God's justice and survive it, because even God's justice could not require more than equity.

The only way the sword could smite Jesus was for Him to be a man. It had no claim against Him as God. And the only way it could have a claim against Him as a man was as a sinful man. And since He had no sins of His own, He assumed our place and substituted Himself for us, and then the sword of justice could be drawn. So all the while that Jesus walked upon this earth as the godly perfect example, as the Son of God, as the Son of Joseph, the carpenter's Son, the sword had no claim. But just as soon a Christ ascended the cross; as soon as the nails were put into His hands; as soon as the nails pierced His feet, it was then that He assumed our place. And then the sword could be summonsed. Then God's justice had a claim upon Him. It had no claim before that time because He was innocent, He was holy, He was harmless, He was undefiled. But now that He hangs upon the tree, the scripture says, "Cursed is everyone that hangeth upon a tree." And while He hangs upon the tree He is hanging there in our place, and the sword of justice falls.

To what extent does it fall? To the full extent of all the sins that were there on the tree. And when was that sin satisfied? When it had brought from Him all the sufferings due to us it must release Him because it then no longer had any claim upon Him. Because He was the God/Man, He could agonize and at the same time rejoice. And this is what the Apostle Paul meant when in the Book of Hebrews, he said, "He endured the cross, despised the shame." Previous to that it was said, "For the joy set before him." "For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross ,and despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the father." The sword can no longer call for His blood. The sword could no longer smite Him as soon as He paid our debt. He then must be released. Then He fully and freely died, a complete and full, and absolute sacrifice, yielding up His own life to the Father by saying, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." And He died! Since death no longer had any power either, death must release Him. After three days and three nights He came forth, the mighty Conqueror.

The sword is put away, and shall never be used except by Him who has conquered by the sword. And now His

enemies shall die of the sword, but the little ones will have the hand of God turned to them. We, therefore, cannot believe in creature effort, or human endeavor. For someone to tell us there is something we can do to assure our position in heaven is the same as saying that Jesus died in vain. To say that we must "accept," "believe," "receive," "work," or do anything else that we might dwell everlastingly in heaven is an insult to God's justice, and Christ's blood, as well. May we be blessed to see the glory of all this.

Elder James F. Poole

To the beloved brethren in Jesus Christ,

I desire to tell the truth and to rightly divide the word of truth. I know that of myself I can do nothing, but I can do all things thru Christ the Lord. May he give me every thought as I attempt to write to you, his beloved children, that his name may be glorified and you edified and comforted.

I am black, vile, filthy, vulgar, corrupt and putrifying sores from the top of my head to the soles of my feet, and anything else you might add along this line. This is truth. I know it to be truth; yet there was a time when I would have vigorously denied it. At that time I felt to be as good as the best and better than the rest: a devout christian, attending church, Sunday School and prayer meetings faithfully; and doing my very best to draw or entice others into the church or accept Christ as their personal Savior. I had gone before the church professing to accept Christ as my Savior, when as yet I had not been made to know that I was even in need of being saved. Yet from that very day, even before I got home, I was given doubts about what I had done, and to some extent realized I had done nothing toward my own salvation. Notwithstanding that, I worked zealously for several years. Then abruptly I left that church and never returned to it. Then at God's appointed time many years later I was made to see just how great a sinner I am. Paul had nothing on me. This came on slowly, not abruptly, but it had its effects. I began to look for ways to justify myself, but found none. I read the Bible, but it did nothing for me but condemn. I sought help in several churches, but found none. During much of that time I had visited Old Primitive Baptist churches with my wife and her parents for about twenty five years, yet I knew nothing of what they preached or believed. But then I began to want to go among them, not because of someone else, but because there was something drawing me that I could not understand. Then the time arrived when I heard a sermon that I at least partically understood and rejoiced in. More time passed, but my burden of sin had not been removed when I was made to beg God to give me a home among these lovely people. My prayer was answered two months later when I went before the people I believe are numbered among the saints of God. Oh, what a glorious time that was for me! I was accepted, and at the same time this great black cloud of sin rolled away. I had a wonderful foretaste of heaven.

I do not know why I have written of my own experience above except to show that I believe salvation is by grace alone and not by the works of the creature. I do not say that I know that I am included in this great salvation, but I believe I have been given a hope in Christ. At least there was a change in me that I was not seeking. Something had been done for me that I could not do for myself. But even if I am not included, I know that salvation is of the Lord, and there is no other name under heaven whereby we must be saved. (Acts 4:12, Jonah 2:9). It is not even in man that walketh to direct his own steps. His heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. (Jer. 17:19). There is not a just man upon the earth that doeth good and sinneth not. (Ecc. 7:20). There

are many scriptures to prove that all men are sinners - but who believes he is a sinner? Only those who have been taught of God. Man cannot make you believe this, though he preaches it every day, for this is the work of the Holy Ghost upon the heart.

If you have been convicted in heart of your sins and your experience is anything like unto mine, you turned to the law and tried to justify yourself by the works of the law. But, alas, you find only condemnation and no mercy there, and are finally brought to the point where you cry with the poor publican, Lord have mercy on me, a sinner. It was the work of Christ that brought you here. He worked upon your consciousness of guilt and proved to you what by nature you are, and that you have nothing with which to pay the debt. You were made to see hell as your final destination, and justly so. Without this conviction you would feel no need for repentance or the work of grace upon your heart, but the goodness of God leads you to repentance, and repentance turns you from your own works to the wonderful works of Jesus Christ. You were given a hope that he had shed his precious blood for you, and love is shed into your heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto you.

Hope alone is not enough. We must have faith; for faith is the substance of the things we hope for, the evidence we have of things not seen. (Heb. 11:1). Without faith it is impossible to please him: and he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. (Heb. 11:6). Belief, or faith, implies trust and confidence, and I have been told many times that all I need do is have faith, or believe; but I have found that I can do nothing without him. Then how am I to believe? The scriptures plainly tell us: it is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he has sent. (John 6:25). We are saved by the grace of God thru faith; and that not of ourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. (Eph. 2:8-9). I have boasted many times that I knew the Lord, had accepted him, and that I knew heaven would be my final home. But O how wrong I was! The light that was in me was darkness and how great was that darkness!

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding. (Prov. 9:10). Once we have been given a view of Christ as our Savior and given faith to trust in him, fear will follow as surely as day follows night. This fear is not a slavish fear as one would fear the devil, but a filial fear. This is a fear that is full of love and devotion, but there are many more people today who fear Satan than God. I hope that you and I can say as David, But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple. (Ps. 5:7).

Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world, (Acts 15:18), and his works were finished from the foundation of the world. (Heb. 4:3). God is the eternal being. With him there is no time: a thousand years is as one day and one day as a thousand years. Christ stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, a sacrifice unto God for his people, yet this was only made manifest unto man in time, as were all his works. Christ finished all the works which the Father sent him to do. (John 17:4). He died upon the cross in agony and shame that sinners such as you and I might live. If we are what we hope to be, we are the ones chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Until recently I believed that the good works we were ordained to walk in are only the works that God has wrought in us to do, for he worketh in us to will and

to do of his good pleasure. Yet this gave me no comfort, for I could see nothing good that I had ever done. I could see the good work in others, but not in myself. But praise his holy name, I was finally given to see this scripture in a new light. Perhaps it was already obvious to you, but it had to be shown unto me that the good works we were ordained to walk in are the works of Jesus Christ. (Amen! Editor.) The works that any child of grace may perform are but manifestations of the works of the Holy Spirit within him. Like Paul I can say that, In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. (Rom. 7:8). Man's natural propensities are continually evil and will never change, for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. (I Cor. 2:14). In order for a man to receive the things of the Spirit he must be born again. He must be born of the water and the Spirit: for that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Paul truly believed he was doing good works when in effect he was persecuting Christ: and when in the flesh we do the same. But Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus changed that and he was made to say, Lord what wilt thou have me to do? And Jesus replied, Arise, and go into the city and it shall be told thee what thou MUST do. Perhaps not so dramatically, but each child of grace is given this same command, and will obey it. Paul felt to be the least of the apostles because he had persecuted the church of Christ, but said, By the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain: but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. (I Cor. 15:11). And again he said, Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily. (Col. 1:20).

James tells us that faith without works is dead, therefore we must work if we have a living faith. In the 25th chapter of Matthew we find a good description of the works of the righteous and what they know of these works. Jesus said, I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger and ye took me in: etc. And they said, Lord, when did we do these things unto you? Is this not your experience?

I will close with this truth: man is not blessed for his works, but to work and in his works and in the works of Jesus Christ the blessed Savior.

May God ever bless us to walk in good works. Please remember this poor sinner when at the throne of grace. If you believe me to be in error in any part that is written here, approach me in love and not in contention and show me the errors. It will not break my bones, but will be like a good oil poured on my head.

Clifford Wilbanks
217 Bastrop Dr.
Monroe, La. 71203

Dear Brother Poole,

I am sending you this notice of the passing of my beloved companion of almost fifty years. Will you please publish same in the *Signs*.

My dear sister (in the flesh) expressed a desire to write this memorial to him. I feel truly thankful to her. She is a gifted writer. She spoke so fittingly of his travels here after God so wonderfully revealed this precious truth to him.

Words will never be able to express the loneliness I feel since God called him home to be with Him. I have been comforted by that blessed assurance that his Saviour had a wise purpose in releasing him from this wearisome journey to that fair city where he is now resting in the everlasting arms of his blessed Redeemer whom he loved.

Blessed thought! Leon spoke so often of the total depravity of mortal man and the rich and reigning grace of almighty God; this God who rules the universe, who is all wise, all powerful, immutable. He speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast, and none can stay His hand or say, Why doest Thou.

I shall always be thankful to God that both Leon and I believe this blessed truth!

My dear companion lived quietly and unpretentiously here. He didn't covet the beggerly treasures of this world, but rather looked far beyond this terrestrial realm, to that celestial city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God - to that inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away; reserved in heaven for the saints in all ages who look for and love His appearing.

Oh, what fervent love, what rapture we feel when, by an eye of faith, we are given a glimpse of heaven and Divine things. No tongue will ever be able to express it. It has to be felt.

If it could be in accord with God's will I, too, long to depart this rugged pathway and be at home with my blessed Saviour to ever sing praises to His glorious Name throughout all eternity.

I do hope both you and Sister Poole are getting along alright. Please extend our love to her. Come to see us when you are in this area.

May God bless your labor of love in getting the dear old *Signs* to His humble poor who enjoy reading it so much.

Please remember us in your petitions.

With love,
Janie P. Trent

(See obituary in this issue.)

Bavon, VA. 23013

Dear Elder Williams,

Enclosed please find money order for another years of the *Signs of the Times*. How thankful I am the Lord has put it in the hearts of all who give so willingly of their time not only to write, but also to hear from loved ones in other sections who have been spiritually blessed to share their experience with others.

Love to all, and God's blessings on everyone.

Mrs. James Mason

Madisonville, KY. 42431

Dear Editors,

Please find enclosed a check for my renewal for one year to the *Signs of the Times*. Use the remainder as you see fit.

I have been a subscriber since 1948 and have never failed to receive my paper each month on time. Thanks so much for all your work and kindness in getting the good paper out.

I enjoy the paper so much and look forward to it coming. I read it over and over. The truth never gets old. I enjoy the Editorials and all the good writing.

Thank you for the work you put into this good paper. I need your prayers.

Mrs. S. G. Harralson

LEONARD L. TRENT, JR.

The spirit of our dear brother in Christ has gone from the land of the dying to the land of the living. Brother Leonard L. Trent, Jr. was born December 25, 1907 and passed from this life July 18, 1982 while a patient at Cone Memorial Hospital, Greensboro, NC. He is survived by his dear wife Sister Janie P. Trent, and two daughters: Mrs. Jean T. Williams of Reidsville, NC and Mrs. Jane T. Fagan of Charlotte, NC. He is also survived by five grandchildren.

Brother Trent was a very dedicated reader of the scriptures, and we all were amazed at his perception of the written word. His deep understanding of these precious truths brought with it his unshakable belief in the total sovereignty of the God whom he loved.

Some twenty-five years ago, for the first time, he was given to hear with a "hearing ear" a gospel sermon from the scripture, "I will fasten Him as a Nail in a sure place." The great assurance he was given permeated his whole being and was as "the rushing of a mighty wind" which enabled him to

"rejoice with joy unspeakable!" Following this experience he expressed a desire to be numbered with the Lord's people. He and his dear wife were received into the fellowship of Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church on the second Sunday in March, 1972.

When his health became poor, he longed to be taken from this strife-filled existence. The Lord granted his request by taking him to the peaceful climes of eternity.

A beautiful graveside service was held in Reidlawn Cemetery, Reidsville, NC where his body was entombed. His pastor, Elder Spangler, spoke very feelingly from the scripture that Bro. Trent had first feasted on, Isa. 22:23. Elder W. J. Berry also spoke of the confidence he had in Bro. Trent's hope, which of course was a comfort to the family. We miss him, O so much, but we cannot grieve as those who have no hope.

I feel to conclude this letter memorial with the words of the poet:

"It is not death to die,
To leave this weary road,
Amids't the brotherhood on high,
To be at home with God."

Written by one who loved him as a brother in Christ.

Mamie P. Aldridge

FEAST OF FAT THINGS

The *Signs of the Times, Inc.,* is pleased to announce that we still have available for purchase the book "Feast of Fat Things."

This book, first published by the *Signs* some years ago, was reprinted last year. It is rich with doctrine of Old School or Primitive Baptists and should be in the home of every believer.

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1. The Black Rock Address of 1832.
2. "Everlasting Task for Arminians" by William Gadsby
3. "Fatalism" by H. M. Curry
4. "A Dream Tour Through Arminian Heaven" by H. M. Curry
5. "The Celestial Railroad" by Hawthorne
6. "A Riddle" by Gilbert Beebe

These articles are all excellent for showing what we believe and the book will make an excellent gift for our children and friends who may inquire of our faith.

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SPECIAL NOTICE

Elder Durwood B. Stokes of Jacksonville, N.C. has been invited to join the staff of the Signs of the Times, Inc. as an Associate Editor. He has accepted the invitation. Elder Stokes is well known throughout the Eastern States among the Old School Baptists, and also in Canada.

His name will appear on the cover beginning with the next issue.

Also, Elder J. T. Prescott has accepted the invitation to join the Board of Trustees, and we look forward to serving with each.

Elder D. V. Spangler
President
Board of Trustees

Signs of the Times

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 4/83 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

RELATION OF MY EXPERIENCE

No. 4

Brother Beebe:--It is not that I take any pleasure in aggravating the feelings of those brethren who are so tired of seeing my name in the *Signs,* and of my *long pieces,* as they call them, that I thus protract this relation of my experience, but it is that I think the relation would be deficient without extending it to my deliverance from under that cloud I spoke of in my last. Perhaps, however, some may think I am under it yet.

I will go back and relate one exercise which I passed over previous to my being baptized. After the arrangement had been made for a church meeting and for my coming before the church, as I was sitting in my room one night reflecting on the subject, all at once the view rushed upon my mind of the host of learned, and as I thought, pious men, and of Doctors of Divinity which were on the side of the Paedo Baptists, together with the Reformers; and the thought that I, an ignorant youth, should turn from them, and in effect, pronounce them all in error, was overwhelming; and I was nearly ready to form the conclusion to draw back from what I had undertaken when this expression of Paul's came with power to my relief, "Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." Gal. 1:16. My mind was again calmed. Paul, when God was pleased to reveal his Son in him and to call him to preach him, had to leave all whom he had esteemed as the learned Doctors of the law and the most religious of the Jews. Immediately he conferred not with flesh and blood, but alone obeyed God. So I felt that in this case it

was my duty to do so, also. I learned a lesson then which I have not yet forgotten, viz: that whenever the Scriptures have been opened up to my view, so that my mind has been convinced of the truth of any subject as taught in the Scriptures, I have felt constrained to advance and advocate it, without *conferring with flesh and blood,* whoever might oppose. In no instance have I, in reference to the great leading points I have discussed through the *Signs,* been led to being forward a sentiment that is a *newer thing* than was believers' baptism to me. And in no instance have I, in advocating any of those sentiments, had to depart from a greater host of esteemed standard writers than in leaving the ranks of infant baptism. I might go further on this point in reference to Scriptural authority, but I will forbear.

To pursue my experience under that dark cloud, it was soon accompanied with an awful war of the elements within me. I recollect having said in writing to a friend shortly after my baptism that I had thought the summer before I had a full view of my corruptions, but that I then only saw the surface of them, but now, like the billows of the ocean, they came foaming up from a unfathomable depth. Soon therefore did I most seriously regret that I had ever been baptized, for I was most sure that my corruptions would overcome me, and I should bring reproach upon the Baptist Church and cause; which I now believed was the cause of Christ. My first plan to avoid the insufferable evil was to put an end to my existence. But I reflected that if it should be discovered that I had killed myself, the reproach would be equally as bad upon the cause as in the other case. I, therefore, set my mind to work to devise a plan how I could do it, and not have it discovered. When, however, I had the plan arranged so that I thought it would answer, I was suddenly reminded of the rightful sovereignty of God over his creatures, as I had seen it in October before, and felt that if it was his pleasure to make use of me as a rod to chastise and humble his people by leaving me to fall under my corruptions, I ought to submit to his sovereignty in this, as well as in other things. This drove the thoughts of suicide from my mind for a time.

Still my corruptions raged and the thoughts of falling and bringing reproach upon the cause, I dreaded. My next resort to save the cause was to have my name crossed off from the church book. Accordingly, one night after school, though there was a deep snow on the ground, I walked eight miles to the brother's on whom I had first called, to get them to have my name taken off the book. In the course of the evening after I got there, having occasion to turn to a Concordance, I opened it, and this part of the text, 1 Kings 8:23 met my eye, "Which shall know every man the plague of his own heart." Surely, thought I, this is my case, for I do know the plague of my own heart. And if such characters, I thought, were included in Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the Temple, then they must be included in Christ's intercession. I was relieved for the time, and went back to my school the next morning concluding to let my name remain on the church book.

As the Presbyterians had charged me with joining the Baptists in order more easily to get into the ministry, I had concluded that I would not think of engaging in the ministry for a year or two at least. But it was now suggested to me that it was wrong to take that resolution from fear of the reproaches of the Presbyterians, and that God was leaving me to suffer these trials in consequence of it. I now concluded that I would go to the church and mention the case to them, and if they saw fit to give me an opportunity to exercise my gift, I would do it. They very readily consented, having indeed anticipated it. A special meeting of the church was appointed to give me a hearing. No sooner was this

done that it was worse with me than before. It was bad enough I thought to impose myself upon the church as a member and I was going to impose myself upon them with all my corruptions as a preacher.

I went back again in a few days to see some of the members, and get the appointment recalled, but was persuaded out of it. On March 17, 1811, I went before the church and tried to speak from a text; was almost entirely shut up, and but very little, and when I retired for the brethren to consult, I concluded the matter was now decided, that they would not encourage me any further; but they otherwise decided, and made another appointment for me, and I consented to it. I was again distressed because I had done so; but having more liberty the next time, I consented to another appointment.

I thus went on having appointments made for me, and in the meantime harrassed so with my corruptions and doubts whether it was possible I could be a subject of grace, and repeatedly concluded when the pending appointment was filled I would consent to no more. On June 17th the church licensed me as a preacher. Why the church was satisfied to license me, I can account for only on the ground of their being so accustomed to hearing Presbyterian preaching, for mine was of that same formal kind.

My being licensed made my case no better; it was no relief from the strong workings of my corruptions, and therefore not from my darkness, nor from my doubts, but as to the propriety of my attempting to preach, and of my being a child of God. It is true I had a hope which I could not renounce, that I was a subject of grace, but instead of being unwilling to part with it for the world-as many say- I often felt that if it was any thing tangible, I would tear it from my breast, and cast it from me with a determination no more to indulge in it until I experienced a new work. I, however, went on trying to preach from time to time; could not muster resolution to give it up, though often determined to do it.

In the fall some of the brethren made arrangements with Elder Parkinson for me to go and spend three or four months with him; that I might have access to his library. And in view of his instructing me in Hebrew, of which I wished to obtain a knowledge, I consented to the arrangement. But again this was a fresh source of distress to me, so much so that I one day retired to the woods to spend the day in seeking direction of God, both as to the ministry, and as to going into New York. Wilst thus waiting upon God I had a text given me which gave me considerable encouragement in reference to the ministry; and in reference to going to Elder Parkinson's. This text was given me and applied with some power, "Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." Acts 6:6. I accordingly went, but I carried the cloud and my depravity with me.

I had not been there long before, if I had had the means at command, I would have taken the stage and gone where I would not be known or heard of by any who had known me as a professor of religion, and where I could therefore pass as a non-professor. But adequate means were wanting, and I had to remain. I thought at times it was impossible such a wretch as I could be a subject of grace, and concluded the longer I lived I was but aggravating my final condemnation the more by my pretensions of preaching and to religion, and repeatedly prayed God to cut me off at once, let what would be my final portion, rather than leave me longer to deceive his people, and expose his cause to reproach by that probability of my being overcome by my corruptions.

Elder Parkinson occasionally required me to preach for him on Lordsday mornings, as I was also frequently called on to go to other places

and preach. But being under the cloud as well as far from being satisfied that I was called to preach, my preaching was, of course, dull and formal. I thought that my preaching in Elder Parkinson's church was not very acceptable, as taking his place. I inferred from it that the brethren did not think me called to preach. His custom was, when he wished me to preach on Lord's day, to give me notice on Saturday morning that I might study a discourse. Such was his practice, and I had borrowed the same from him. This practice I continued to some extent for several years after; that is, when I had opportunity, and could find texts beforehand. I finally was led to drop the practice for these reasons. 1st., I frequently could not obtain a text from which to preach in time for study, often not till I got to the place of preaching. 2nd. I found by experience that the Lord could give me at the time as clear views of a text as he could beforehand. And 3dly, I found that when it was his pleasure to give at the time clear views of the subject, I enjoyed the preaching more myself, and therefore felt more animation in speaking than when I had studied the subject beforehand.

I once at the commencement of my speaking in public, tried carrying notes with me into the pulpit, but I found myself so embarrassed with them that I never tried it afterwards. In consequence of the opinion I had formed as above mentioned of the reception of my preaching, I began to desire that Elder Parkinson would not ask me any more to preach for him.

One Saturday morning, my mind being much oppressed with doubts, I hesitated somewhat about going into the study, lest he should tell me I must preach the next morning; and when I went in I thought I earnestly desired he would not. On going in, he observed to me that as he had been absent considerably of late (which had been the case) he would preach all day on the morrow, to prevent the complaints of brethren. Although this was just what I had wished, the moment he said it, the suggestion arose in my mind, now Elder Parkinson, as well as the brethren, believes I am not called to preach and that I am a base hypocrite. This created a storm in my breast indescribable, and I could hardly contain myself. But I sat down to my table and tried to compose my mind to study. It was of no use. I shoved my books from me, and at once concluded I would go over onto Long Island where I knew there then were retired places, within convenient distance, and spend the day in supplicating God in mercy to direct me to what was duty. As I took my hat to go, I had the precaution to take my knife out of my pocket, and leave it on the table, least if I did not obtain relief, I might be tempted to commit suicide. As I went out of the study door, the thought occurred to me that I would go into my lodging room and pray to the Lord to go with me and direct me. Whilst there thus engaged, my mind became somewhat composed, and the idea was suggested to me that I had better go back into the study and read a certain pamphlet which had been laid on Elder Parkinson's table a few days before. I went back and took up the book. It was the experience of a person in England written by himself in a letter to William Huntington, and was by him thus published. As I read it, I saw the path in which the Lord had led me delineated step by step. Like myself, this man had been a professor for some years previous to his being brought into gospel liberty, and had been a zealous legalist; had had his foundation suddenly all knocked from under him, as mine was, and afterwards, Christ had been revealed to him as the substitute of the sinner, and the end of the law for righteousness. As he described these exercises as a being killed by the law, and a being born again, born into gospel liberty, I was led to understand such to have been the

nature of the exercises I passed through during the months of September and October of 1810, as before described, that then is was, I was slain by the law, and then that I became a believer in Christ, and was born of God.

The cloud that I had been so long under now in some measure broke; and I enjoyed a comfortable hope of being a *new creature.* From this I was led to see what a galling yoke of bondage the law and legal religion was; and how lovely and glorious was gospel liberty and gospel grace as contrasted with legal service. Still the cloud was not altogether dissipated; the doubts as to my call to the ministry were as great as ever. At length in hopes that the Lord would decide the point for me, I pleaded with him, that if he had not designed me for the ministry, I might not be called on to preach for four weeks, and I solemnly promised that if this should be the case, I would not again attempt it. I passed over that week, the next Lordsday, and most of the week after, without being called on to preach, excepting at one night meeting where the preacher expected, disappointed, and that I set down for nothing. I began therefore to conclude that the Lord was about now to decide the case for me. I felt somewhat composed waiting the result, and satisfied to abide by whatever the Lord should decide in the case, whether to preach, or to give it up.

On the Friday night of this second week, at the hour of retiring, Elder Parkinson started to go to bed, and I immediately followed. I had to pass his room door in going to my room. He opened his door and went partly into his room, and as I was passing his door, he turned back, and said to me in a very decided tone, "Brother Trott, you must preach on Lordsday morning, and you may prepare yourself for it as soon as you please." I have never been able to devise any reason he could have had for giving me that early notice, and for speaking in that abrupt manner. But if a clap of thunder had burst over my head, it would not have astonished me more. As soon as I could think, I turned to beg of him to recall it, and let me pass without preaching, and lo, he had retired into his room, and shut his door upon me. I then immediately went into my room and threw myself upon my knees or perhaps prostrate on the floor, to intreat of the Lord to interpose and decide the case for me. Whilst there, my mind received the impression that it was my duty to go forward and preach; a text was impressed on my mind from which to preach on Lordsday morning, and so clearly opened up to my view, that there was no need of further study to prepare me for preaching from it. This was on the 8th of Feb. 1812.

S. Trott

(To Be Continued)

WORDS OF ADVICE FROM A CORRESPONDENT

Elder Poole,

I'm enclosing a check for Volume 4 of the Editorials. I hope the people are taking advantage of the opportunity to collect these Beebe editorials. It is easy to neglect ordering, even though the firm intention and desire is to have them. Keep reminding us!

Florence W. Gibson

(We appreciate the advice and are glad to do so. Editor.)

BISHOPS - DEACONS
(Continued from last Month)

In my view, Acts Chapter Six is not strange language to these things considering the common fund and the daily serving of tables seems to have ceased during the great persecution. The general havoc of the church, the invasion of privacy, the committal to prison, and the scattering abroad except the apostles (Acts 8:1, 3) made it all but

impossible to continue according to the original order of things. Now they which were scattered abroad, Acts 11:19, (this includes six of the first seven deacons with others) went everywhere preaching the word. Acts 8:4 Whether these preachers were spiritually aspiring or desiring the office of a Bishop is a question not easily answered. 1st. Tim. 3:1. One thing for sure, they were doing a good work, and there is no better way to make full proof of a man's ministry than doing the work of an evangelist. 2nd Tim. 4:5; Acts 21:8.

These were the intermediate days or the time span between Acts 6:7 and Acts 9:31. Let us look at the following references within the time span:

1. Scattered abroad except the *apostles* (Acts 8:1)
2. *Apostles* which were at Jerusalem (Acts 8:14)
3. And brought him to the *apostles* (Acts 9:27)
4. Sent by the *brethren* to Tarsus (Acts 9:30)

Then the end came to this period of great persecutions culminating in, "Then had the churches rest...and were edified...walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied," - Acts 9:31. Up to this point in time, based upon the foregoing references it doesn't appear the church at Jerusalem had ordained Elders, except of course, the apostles who were from the beginning Apostolic Bishops - Acts 1:20. In Acts 11:1 it was still apostles and brethren, and no mention made of elders. But then, when Agabus came from Jerusalem to Antioch and signified by the Spirit the coming of the great dearth, the disciples determined to send relief unto the brethren in Judah, which they did, and sent it to the *PRESBUTEROUS, ELDERS* by the hands of Barnabas and Saul - Acts 11:30. This is the first mention made of Elders in the church at Jerusalem. But look again at the references made hereafter.

1. Apostles and Elders (Acts 15:2)
2. Apostles and Elders (Acts 15:4)
3. Apostles and Elders (Acts 15:6)
4. Apostles and Elders (Acts 15:22)
5. Apostles and Elders (Acts 15:23)
6. Apostles and Elders (Acts 16:4)
7. James and Elders (Acts 21:18)

In all of this a pattern emerges which reveals the following: In the beginning the twelve served the Church as Apostles, Bishops, and Deacons - Acts 1:2, 6, 20; Acts 4:35. The office of apostolast bishop and deacon did not continue beyond the death of the apostles...the office of bishop and deacon did. The best estimate seems to be deacons were chosen and appointed some five to seven years, more or less, before Elders were ordained. These deacons not only served tables but also assisted the apostles in preaching Jesus.

Six deacons with an undetermined number of others went everywhere preaching the word - Acts 8:4. Apparently the first Elders ordained in Jerusalem were from among these six deacons and the undetermined number of other preachers. The Bishops, after the death of the apostles, succeeded them in the stewardship and care of the church - 1st Cor. 4:1 ,2; Titus 1:7, in oversight and overseeing as pastors or feeders - 1st Peter 5:2; Acts 20:28, as shepherds to lead in counterdistinction to the Chief Shepherd - 1st Peter 5:4, as rulers to rule over; governing the church of God - Heb. 13:7, 17, 24; 1st Thess. 5:12; 1st Tim. 5:17, not as lords but ensamples to the flock giving themselves continually to prayer and ministry of the word - 1st Peter 5:3; Acts 6:4.

As stewards of God, chiefs of the mysteries, and watchers of souls, they must give account of their stewardship to God as to how they have ruled, managed, governed, and superintended the spiritual affairs and holy behavior in the house of God, with the "Elders who rule well being counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine" - 1st Tim. 5:17. From this some have

supposed two distinct rulers ... one who rules and governs only ... the other rules and governs together with preaching, labouring in the word and doctrine. In my judgment I see no validity for ruling Elders distinct from preaching Elders. For while one may excel in governing the affairs of the church and the other excel in preaching and teaching the word; nevertheless, both are made by the Holy Spirit overseers to feed the Church of God - Acts 20:28. Both are to feed ... taking the oversight - 1st Peter 5:2. I know of no example where the Holy Spirit made one to oversee and not to feed, and conversely to feed and not to oversee. As to honour, he who rules well is to have double but the preference is given to him who not only rules well but excels in preaching and teaching or labours in the word and doctrine.

The deacons, after the death of the apostles, succeeded as assistants to the Elders to serve tables, attend to business, to run errands, and to serve in whatever capacity he is capable. Of course the service of the deacon is not independent of the Elder's oversight and overseeing. He is under the watch care of the Bishop as is every other member and ought to recognize his subordinate position to him at all times. Likewise, the Bishop should be aware of his subordinate position to Christ ... that Christ is the Bishop of souls including his own; thereby forsaking his self-willism of will worship.

As previously stated, the first deacons chosen in the early church were appointed to assist in serving tables, attending to business, etc. and those deacons had the capability of preaching the word. However, "apt to teach" is not a part of the qualification of the deacon - 1st Tim. 3:8-13, and in my judgment is not a mandatory requirement. A deacon who does not possess the gift of teaching, preaching, exhorting, etc., but does a good work in assisting, attending, and serving, as the scriptures have said, will purchase to himself a good degree and great boldness in the faith - 1st Tim. 3:13. While at the same time, a deacon who is a good servant and does possess the gift to teach and exhort may be a blessed utility to the furtherance of the gospel, the Church of Christ, and especially to the Bishops, and should be recognized as such and utilized by the Elders as much as possible.

There is in the New Testament order of Bishops and Deacons a stark similarity to the Old Testament order of Priests and Levites. The Levites were the descendants of Levi through three sons, Gershon, Kohath and Merari - Numbers 3:12-17. Kohath, the son of Levi, was the father of Amram and the sons of Amram - Moses and Aaron - 1st Chron. 6:1-3. God chose the house of Aaron to minister unto Him in the Priest's office - Exodus 28:1, and then gave the descendants of Gershon and Merari charges and custody of certain things as helpers and assistants to the Priests (the house of Aaron) with the Kohathites being given the privileges of bearing the most sacred parts of the tabernacle - Numbers, Chapters 3, 4. But it was the Priests, Aaron and his sons, that were given the oversight to oversee the rest of the Levites - Numbers 3:32. It was Aaron and his sons who appointed them everyone to his service and his burden - Numbers 4:16, 19, 27, 28. The difference between Priests and Levites ... all Levites were from the tribe of Levi; all Priests were out of the house of Aaron. All Priests were Levites, but not all Levites were Priests. Even so with Bishops and Deacons ... all Bishops are Deacons but not all Deacons are Bishops. Christ is said to be the Bishop of souls - 1st Peter 5:25, and Deacon-DIAKONON "minister of the circumcision" - Rom. 15:8. Paul and Barnabas was said to have fulfilled the service of deacons - DIAKONIAN-ministry - Acts 11:30, 12:25. Upon their return to Antioch they were sent forth again; this time by the Holy Ghost - Acts 13:4, preaching in all the cities from

Seleucia to Derbe - Acts 14:20, 21. "And when they had ordained them Elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed" - Acts 14:23. Here the word PRESBUTEROUS ELDERS is the same word used for Elders in Acts 11:30.

We have already said Acts 11:30 is the first mention of Elders in Jerusalem, whereupon Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch. The very next journey they ordained Elders in every church. These facts strongly suggest the Mother Church at Jerusalem set the example and all other churches followed the example.

Much controversy has centered around the word CHEIROTONESANTES-ORDAINED - Acts 14:23; some contending the word means a show of hands, others the laying on of hands. In my judgment the word means both a show of hands and the laying on of hands...a show of hands as chosen by the church and the laying on of hands as appointed by the PRESBUTERIOU-ELDERSHIP - 1st Tim. 4:14. This is in total agreement with the multitude's choice of the seven and the Apostles' appointment by the laying on of hands. Any Elder thus chosen and appointed having "budded and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds" - Numbers 17:8, is none other than the Lord chosen - Numbers 16:5, and should cause all murmurings, bickerings, and questions to cease pertaining to his rule over them among whom he has the oversight - Numbers 17:5; 1st Peter 5:2.

After all is said and done, the bottom line is Elders are over brethren in the Lord ... they labour among and admonish them, and brethren are commanded by the inerrant word of God to *know and acknowledge* them, *to esteem them very highly in love* for their work's sake - 1st Thess. 5:12, 13. The rulers are to be obeyed and submitted to - Heb. 13:17, given double honour - 1st Tim. 5:17, not accused but before two or three witnesses - 1st Tim. 5:19, and certainly not rebuked - 1st Tim. 5:1 except, of course, they sin and then only after it has been proven before two or three witnesses. Then, and only then is the Elder to be rebuked before all that others also may fear - 1st Tim. 5:18, 20. Any other procedure is sin itself, a strict violation and transgression of the word.

For a deacon to think he has jurisdiction over the Elder, what he preaches and the pulpit is a bit like Simon the sorcerer - Acts 8:9. He has neither part nor lot in the matters, his heart is not right and may still be in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity - Acts 8:21-23.

As it was with Christ, our High Priest, and his apostles, so it is with Elders at present. "No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as Aaron" - Heb. 5:4. Those who say we "Elders" take too much upon us ... why then lift *ye* up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord - Numbers 16:1-3, should carefully consider the sins and judgment of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. It is not *ye* but *He* that places the Elders as overseers and *He* that gives deacons as serving assistants to attend to business and to help in every way wherein he is able according to the measure of the Gift of Grace which God has given him.

I have believed and will continue to believe the Church of the First Born to be the highest court under the sun. In every irreconcilable confrontation between brethren the church is the court of last appeal. It's judgments are final and binding upon all parties, both defender and plaintiff. Every saint is a justice and should, at all times, and in every case, through prayerful solicitation pray that righteous judgments be rendered. In speaking of supremacy, do we not know the saints shall judge the world? Know we not that we shall judge angels?...How much more things that pertain to this life - 1st Cor. 6:2, 3.

In this supreme court Bishops and Deacons do not occupy civil but ecclesiastical offices. Their law book is the inspired word of God which is their thorough furnisher unto all good works - 2nd Tim. 3:16, 17, which they should study along with all the brethren to shew themselves approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth - 2nd Tim. 2:15.

In writing this I didn't purpose to deal in technicalities as much as I have, but found it somewhat necessary in order to better prove all things and hold fast that which is good. I haven't written this to make things seem better than they are, but rather that things appear as they are.

By comparing the old Welch brethren in their day who were willing, because of variances among the Baptist, to come and reason together resolving, in spite of differences, to sit in occasional communion for the sake of Sion, how can we in our day point with pride to the state of Sion when there are so many divisions among God's people and so much jealousy between Bishops and rivalry among Deacons and Bishops? When princes are hanged by their hands: the faces of the Elders will not be honoured; when the Elders cease from the gate, the young men will cease from their music. When the crown is fallen from our head, then woe unto us that we have sinned! Lam. 5:12, 14, 16. As James said, "Brethren, these things ought not to be".

My dear Brethren, as I said at the outset, I was requested to write this for publication, and if it be deemed worthy of publication, some may cast a suspicious eye of criticism, some of consideration, and possibly a few of appreciation. Whichever; whether suspicious criticism, consideration, or appreciation, my benediction remains the same ... if I haven't said it, then I will surely say it, *"I speak not this to condemn you, for you are in our hearts to die and live with you".*

The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen; and Amen.

Elder R. H. Hale

10220 Ridgely Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70809
October 28, 1982

Dear Brother Joe,

After hearing your sermon on "Go home and tell what great things the Lord has done for you", I wanted very much to tell the church all He had done for me. I was given to say but a little at that time, so I am writing what I believe He has done for me.

What I trust to be an experience of grace began when I was 11 or 12 years old after my granddaddy's death. I had never really given thought to life after death until then. All my friends were accepting the Lord and joining churches. I started reading the Bible and was shown what a horrible sinner I was.

I was so afraid I would die and I knew I was justly condemned to hell if I did. I thought I was praying to God promising I would live the life He wanted me to if He wouldn't let me die. This went on what seemed an endless period of time. I finally was shown there was no hope for me; my sins grew blacker an blacker. The better I tried to be the worse I was. There was not one thing I could do to save myself. Going to revivals as my friends were doing just condemned me more.

We had no church of my parents' belief near enough for us to attend. Elder Rhodes has started making special appointments at Mt. Olive Church. Mother and Daddy asked me if I wouldn't like to attend with them. I didn't think anyone knew about my feelings as I hadn't told anyone. I didn't want anyone to know what a horrible person I was. I had respect for Mother and Daddy's beliefs, but thought they

believed as they did because they were old fashioned. I didn't think it would do me any more good than going to the other churches. I though I was going out of respect for them.

Little did I know what was in store for me that day. It seemed the sermon was preached right to me to show me all I had been trying to do for myself Jesus had done for me. I was given a precious hope I was included in the elect He had died for. That awful burden and fear were taken away. They sang "Amazing Grace" that day which seemed to fit my experience perfectly.

After this I looked forward to each time we were enabled to attend church. It seemed I was given to rejoice in each sermon. Then at a District Meeting at Rehobeth the doors of the church were opened. I wanted to go so badly, but I told myself Mother and Daddy weren't members. If they weren't worthy surely this was of myself and not the Holy Spirit. This I used to justify to myself my disobedience to His command to follow Him.

After this I started college and was going to church less. The things of this world and my plans became more important. After college I married and things seemed to be going smoothly.

It was at the birth of our daughter that I believed God had turned His face from me. We were living in Germany and were away from any church. Our daughter was born crippled. I felt her crippled condition was my chastisement for turning away after being given a hope. I truly believed God could make her crippled feet and legs whole then as in the time Jesus was here. I thought I was truly asking God to make her whole and put my chastisement on me and cripple me. My problem was that I was asking my will be done and not God's will be done.

It was at this time I was made to confess to God the true reason I had turned away from His command to follow Him in baptism. It was vain pride---I was ashamed of the example of foot washing our precious Lord had given. I had heard Mother tell of all the fun poking at foot washing when she was young. I believed then and still believe it is wrong for such to be allowed. It is "casting His pearls before swine" in my opinion. I believe that foot washing should be done in an "upper room" with only members present--as when Christ washed his disciples' feet.

It was for a number of years that I seemed to get very little from the sermons I was able to hear. I believed what was preached, but it was not the rejoicing as before. Through all this I was not left completely without, as the *Signs of the Times* gave me much comfort.

I have been shown over and over I know not what to pray for. I could see nothing in our daughter's future except misery once she was old enough to start school. We loved her so much and I thought I would rather give her up than for her to go through what I felt to be before her. I asked the Lord a number of times to take her unto Himself while she was small. Then when she started school, she became ill. I remembered what I had asked years before and thought surely she would be taken. How I begged her life would be spared. I was shown I did not love her enough to give her up. This was answered and was the first time in years I felt He had heard me.

I was shown at this time how horrible it was to even think that God had ever made anything that wasn't exactly as He wanted. I was also given to believe God has a special reason and work for her. I hope I was reconciled at this time.

For a number of years I longed to be given to rejoice in the preached word as I had at first, to feel God was hearing and answering me, to show me clearly what He would have me do. When my father-in-law, his body cancer ridden, lay on his death bed, I believe I was given to beg Him to have mercy and take him to Himself quickly. I believe I was shown

He still hears and answers, as minutes later we received a call that my father-in-law was dying; shortly it was all over. I thank God I was bessed with this answer and truly believe that he is now in peace with Jesus.

Another time I was given evidence of His answering my prayers was when our daughter was in such spiritual trials. I have never felt like this before—grieved with her as I felt what she was going through. I remember reading one of her letters and begging Him in my heart to have mercy on her and to give her a direction for her life. I believe He was hearing and answered at the time as minutes later she called and was telling my how happy she was. I was so happy for her and was given such assurance that prayers given from above are surely answered.

I had wanted a home in the church long before our daughter joined. I thought at her baptism I could ask for a home but I could not. I couldn't truly believe our Lord wanted one who had turned away after being given such a precious hope to be added to His church. I wanted so much to hear my Lord say "Come" with such power I could believe it was surely from Him and not of myself.

After this I believe my husband was very much under conviction of his sins and was as much a running Jonah as I. It seemed there should be something I should do. I asked the Lord to show me what He would have me do. I believe He revealed to me in a dream that everything I did would be of myself, that I must wait on Him. For some time I was content after this.

Then the past few months it seemed we would never get back to church. It was very much on my mind what was the Lord's will concerning me. The scripture, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" came to my mind. I found it exactly like this in John 14:15. I believed I must be baptised. I thought surely I must be baptised as the eunuch because I could never go before any church and speak to them. "My strength is sufficient for you," came to my mind. I tried to find this in the Bible but could not in those words but found many places where He was the strength of His people. I did find where Paul was told, "My grace is sufficient for thee." This was enough for me.

This was constantly on my mind. I tried to ask Him to show me where He would have me go. I wanted to be shown in a dream what church and minister because I loved those at New Hope, Mt. Olive and Hopewell. Instead of a dream I believe my answer was given in the form of taking away our means of attending New Hope ant Mt. Olive. Our trailer in which we stayed to attend New Hope and Mt. Olive was robbed and we could no longer use it as before.

Now it seemed I knew what I must do. I asked the Lord if this truly was His will to give me strength, to stop my tears and give me what He would have me say to ask a home at Hopewell and be baptized that weekend.

Then I talked to my husband about it. I had asked the Lord many times if it could be His will that he would be brought forward with me. This did not appear to be His will as he told me he was so unfit he shouldn't be allowed to attend church much less be a member. He said he wouldn't stand in my way but he doubted if I would be able to attend very much.

This was all this Jonah needed to think, "I can't, I must wait until we live closer.

All this was changed that Saturday morning when our Lord enabled his minister to speak just the words to show this Jonah it was the tribulations I was running from. Then when the doors were opened with singing of "Amazing Grace" and I did not break into tears but could sing, I knew my Lord was giving me strength and I remembered my

prayer. I had to go and ask for a home with those dear people.

As I started forward I realized my husband was coming also. It was almost more than I could believe! I was fully convinced that he wouldn't be brought with me and now my Lord was granting this also! I can not express the joy I felt at this time!

The peace of mind I have been given compares to, but does not equal the peace I was given when I was first given that precious hope.

I hope our Lord will keep us from ever giving the brethren reason to regret giving us a home. May He give us strength to endure every tribulation and persecution that is ours to endure for His sake.

One who has been shown a little of the meaning of, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power", and "Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine and we shall be saved."

Nancy Pullig

What a wonderful, sweet privilege it was to see the workings of the Lord's hand in the heart and soul of this precious one, along with her companion. There was great joy in the hearts of the members and friends of Hopewell Church as they asked for a home expressing a desire to follow their Saviour in baptism. They were received and baptized on September 12, 1982 by their son-in-law, Elder James D. Hamrick, who is the husband of the little daughter mentioned in her experience. How precious are the workings of the Lord in the souls of His people.

Her Pastor,
(Elder) Joe L. Hamrick

January 27, 1983

Greetings to the Editors, Board of Directors and subscribers of the *Signs of the Times:*

I am grateful to the Board of Directors who have shown confidence in me to appoint me to serve as Associate Editor to the *Signs*. It is true that I have maintained an interest in the *Signs* throughout my ministry because I feel that it is a profitable medium to offer succor to those who would be comforted by reading the experiences of those of like precious faith, both past and present. Yet, I am fearful of my own inabilities and feel that there are so many others who are far more capable than I. Having been taught that "With God all things are possible," I pray that God may use me in the execution of these duties to His honor and praise and that through Him some of His little ones may be reassured of His "sure mercies."

It is with anticipation that I look forward to working with the Editors and all who are involved in publishing the *Signs*. I trust that God will bless all of us to work together in love and harmony, having as our aim to write, by God's grace, "That which is sound and comforting to God's people throughout the land." If we are blessed to this end, then our efforts will be to His honor, praise, and glory.

In love and fellowship,
(Elder) D. B. Stokes

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EDITORIAL

EPHESIANS 1:1, 13

Having found in our last the family of God as they were chosen in Christ, we now come to the delightful theme of what they were chosen to. The contrast between what we were by nature and practice, to what we were chosen to, is so great our finite minds are carried away in wonder and holy ecstasy. All of the skill of linguists cannot describe the gloom and despair of a soul when sin is revealed in us. Sin, when it is finished, brings forth death, and there is a death at the manifest entrance of sin into our consciousness that cannot be described by tongue or pen. The effort to describe it to one to whom sin has not been revealed, is one of the most futile things among men. The love of God now takes on a meaning that we have never contemplated before. What we were chosen to, and the suffering of the precious Saviour to bring this delightful state about is more that a match for our dull comprehension.

Look upon the theme in our text. The height and length, the breadth and the depth of the love of Christ for His church passes all understanding. Well might the apostle say, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God, how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out". (Romans 11:33). The love of God as manifested in the love of Christ for the church, can never be described by mortal man - in fact, it is past finding out. The choosing of His people in Christ before the world began is full of nutrition for the hungering and thirsting children of the kingdom. No other name would do; no other personage could measure up to our sin. My soul is astounded as I stand before the bar of God's judgment. Out of Christ there is not any salvation. Only the righteous have an acceptable standing where sin has abounded. The costliness of our salvation is seen in the crucifixion of our Master. Pilate, in answer the demands of the high priest for the crucifixion of the Saviour said, "Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him" (John 10:6). If there has ever been an execution like unto that, the pages of history are silent about it. That is understandable because He needed only once to die; the offering had to be a perfect one. We, like Barabbas, were guilty, and we the guilty went free, but although Christ had no fault, He was a fit offering for our sins. He did not have any sin, but we did, and He loved us and made our cause as His cause. May the Spirit of the Lord arise in our being, that we understand and be blessed to praise His high and lofty name for coming to earth in a body to suffer, to be mangled, spit upon. Being the son of Mary, who had fallen into sin, being under the rigid, death dealing law of God He came in a body to meet and endure the penalty for our sin, and yet He was God the conquerer of all the enemies.

Let it be remembered that these things must needs be. The rites and ceremonies and ordinances had to be fulfilled. They could not be passed by. How weak and trifling is that doctine that would leave one thing missing, one thing unfulfilled, one step, one journey missing from His travels here below. Could it be so, my soul knows, that there being no acceptable sacrifice for sin since He

gave up the ghost and died, that the portion of His mission's work unfulfilled would still be charged to me. How beautiful, how gracious, how kind that if I am not deceived, He made my cause as His cause. He came to earth to solve a case that hopelessly involved the sinner, you and I, as each of us hopes, even a case that we never could have won and never could have extricated ourselves from out of it. What a beautiful doctrine. To this end was the covenant of redemption set up from all eternity. That covenant involved Him in coming and making the sinner's cause as His. Whatever our transgression brought upon us, He took that upon Himself; all privation, all sorrow, all His being cut off out of the land of the living. All His coming to the ignominious end that He did was for the purpose of giving poor covenant children a home beyond this vale of sorrow.

However, let me retrogress backwards. In the annals of eternity, His love was so great, so strong, so lasting, that He was ever rejoicing among the inhabitants of the earth, ever delighting in this people, in this family that God chose in Him in eternity and that He was so in agreement and in unity with every single individual of that family, and in support of, and a part of every stipulation of that Covenant that He delighted always in the beneficiaries of that covenant. How my poor heart leaps for joy that such a Being is on the side of sinners (Psa. 124); that this is not something that had its beginning among the sons of Adam, but that this is an old arrangement, as old a covenant, as ageless a purpose, as the eternal predestination of God to the end that His Son came down from heaven in behalf of His bride, his people, and that he came down from heaven as God's free gift to the children of men, and that He came to do what He did do, that His life from conception in Mary's womb was laid out, appointed for Him from the cradle to the grave.

My soul is astonished at such a display of sovereign mercy, and to see the eternal fixedness of God in us being chosen in Him, and as a result of that choice of the Father of us in Him, the arrangements of every step, every thought, every action, every bitter draught of vinegar, every taunting and sneering insinuation and reflection on Him and His mother, all, all was for the lifting of Him on high, and that it was for the bringing of poor sinners into such a manifest relationship that they be brought before Him holy without blame in love.

"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will." O my dear children of God, there are not any dropped stitches or broken links in the salvation of God's people. He made the world and the fulness of it. Now who will dispute that? It is still His world. That likewise is indisputable. He does His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. That is indisputable. He declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure (Isa. 46:10). This is Israel's God and Saviour speaking. Let us keep the record straight; let us settle every doctrinal tenet of faith by His word, for it is forever settled in heaven (Psa. 119:9). When I survey the vast degree of difference betweeen me and my God in the dispensation of His purposes, I am thrown upon His mercy time and time again. I need His counselling grace to teach me that as high as the heavens are above the earth, even so are His ways above my ways. There is a tendency in all of the roving around of my mind, to mark out a way and a channel in which my God can consistently work. If He does not stay in the channel that I have

marked out for him, He immediately crosses me. His doctrine becomes heretical; His ways become austere; His ways become partial and tyrannical. This is universal among the children of men, some even going so far, when they read of His ways in the Bible, or hear the rich gospel of grace preached by the hearing of the natural ear, that if He is that kind of God, that they do not want any part of Him. At this juncture of my investigation of God's fulness, let me note this thought, to wit, It may be thought that only dyed-in-the-wool Arminians would say such hard things about God. How wrong we are. The hardest things said about God, about His doctrine, about His children that trust in the arm of Jehovah God, are said by those that come the nearest to saying that God is a Sovereign over all things, worlds, and times.

At every step of the way, in all kinds of situations, under all kinds of circumstances, I need the leadership, the guidance, the superintendence, the keeping power of God's Holy Spirit to keep me meek, submissive, graciously reconciled to His way and His will. No mother's knee is sufficient, no fatherly elder in the church can do it, but enabling us to say, "Have thine own way Lord," is taught alone by the Spirit of God. It is the same fleshly lusting and workings of the nature of men that objects to God choosing one and leaving the other that is to say that He cannot raise up and bring together the mob that crucified our Saviour. The flesh has always objected to God's way, whether it has to do with some being elected to glory or to His having wicked men do His will. Both are objecting to His right to do what He wills with that which is His alone (Matt. 20:15). Since this question did not stop the carping objections of unbelievers, I am not expecting my expounding of these things to make objecters to the glorious doctrine of God's Sovereignty to suddenly turn and give credence to it. I do not expect it, nor am I out to overcome the objections of creatures that are at variance with God over His ways, but I do write, and I humbly trust that I speak the truth in Christ Jesus our Lord that they, one and all, even everyone that is called by His great name be reconciled to God.

Perhaps I will be criticized for using the word, but I do hope that I am not amendable to men for the words that I use. I use many words not in the King James version of the Bible. And those that object to me using the word theory are just as guilty of using other words not in the lids of the Bible. Thus, the doctrine of God's election is as much spoken against as is His unlimited doctrine of predestination. Anything said against God's predestination of anything is equally to be said against His election of some of Adam's race to eternal glory. Our text tells us so clearly that God had predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to good pleasure of his will.

Undoubtedly, and without reservation, I declare unto you that God's determining act of predestination of some unto the adoption of children, and the leaving out of some who were not adopted, that if it is unfair to predestinate and determine to leave them out, and yet hold them accountable for being left out, that there is not any difference in doing that, and in predestinating the act of men in wickedness and charging their sin to them. I have read all of the sob sister stories that God did not predestinate the wicked going to hell. Whoever heard of God preparing an abode for a class of people and He did not know whether He would have anybody to send there or not? When God chose a certain number to be saved of Adam's race, the very fact that He did not choose them left them for the devil, in the relationship that each of them bore to their earthly father, they were all children of wrath, all exactly alike, the

only difference in the two portions of the race of Adam was in the fact that one portion of that race had an everlasting place of rest prepared for them, and the other portion of that race of Adam had a place prepared in the abode of Satan and his angels.

It does not make any difference how much name calling is indulged in, it is still solidly established that there is a great gulf fixed between those for whom the adoption was not carried out for, and no man has ever crossed that gulf and got in among the redeemed of the Lord. When some are predestinated to a certain end, that end is just as certain as a thing can be, if those that are left out of God's predestination to the adoption of children, or to a home in heaven. Nothing, not one thing at all, be that thing whatever you desire to call it, that can be sure of the outcome of His predestination concerning it, unless the whereabouts, the coming, the going, the movements in every way of the thing left out of the predestination is secured in some way. Yes, I realize what men say. They say, since God foreknows all things, He is able to avert disaster by outwitting the devil. But let us see. If God only foreknew what any given part of His creation knows, if only some things are predestinated, who is establishing the other things which, it is said, God foreknows alright, but that He did not declare, fix, ordain or predestinate. Have we got a third party that makes the things foreknown a certainty? Who is it that makes these things certain? They must be certain by someone because God does not foreknow anything except certainties.

Furthermore, if it was according to the good will of God to predestinate the chosen of God unto the adoption of sons, was it not equally according to the good pleasure of God to leave the others out. What kind of God have we before us? Is He so weak, or so unconcerned or so helpless that really and truly He had rather have predestinated all of them unto the adoption of children, but that His hands were tied? Is that what you are preaching for gospel? Is that kind of spurious fulness to be preached to the Gentiles? The limiting of God as to what and when He does a thing, the sitting in judgment on what He is involved in, and how entangled and involved He becomes if He does things this way instead of that way, is not the fulness that satisfies a poor sinner.

What God does he does it freely. No creature can say unto Him, You doing this or that or the other is wrong. He is under no restraint, nor is He constrained by any of His creation from doing His will in heaven or in earth. He does as He pleases and He is pleased with what He does. I do not blush when I say it; I do not apologize to Him for preaching it, but, by the grace of God, as I humbly hope, I preach that the acts of Joseph's brethren, the acts of Potiphar's wife, and everything else connected with getting Joseph down to Egypt was from God--it all was the direct, the moving, the intentional work and purpose of God. It may be said that I am being childish--and I hope that is true, for the brethren of Joseph, the brethren of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ acknowledged the salvation that they were given came immediately from God meaning it, intending it, to be for their good. Every hungry destitute Israelite in that day, and every hungry and destitute Israelite today rises up and pays homage and adoration to the God of Israel that according to the good pleasure of His will He sent Joseph a man of sorrow, a man who was hated and persecuted in his own household to save much people alive by the sacrifice of Himself to the evil caprices of those for whom He was laboring in order for them to have bread, even the fulness of life forevermore.

May the Lord enable Israel to know that all of our blessings here, and the precious and waiting things ahead for them comes as the fulness of the gospel

of the grace of God. God forbid that any one of the family of God ever again raise their voice or lift their pen to ascribe this fulness as coming from us that are filled from time to time on these things. The man of God was received without grumbling by the poor widow woman. They, (she and her son) with Elijah, ate what she had. He was willing to eat the last she had, and she was willing for him to eat the last she had. When he left a promise of fulness was left with her. The barrel of meal wasted not (was not consumed), and the cruise of oil continued. Elijah (God sent or God Himself) promised her that kind of sufficiency, that kind of fulness. I humbly trust that, by the grace of God, I have known that fulness, even that fulness which is in the Lord Jesus Christ among you for more than fifty years, and I hope that as long as I am on this time journey not to know anything more among you other than the fulness, other than the salvation that is in Him, and that of Him and by Him each of us will be brought to His table and fed on it.

Elder W. D. Griffin

Walnut Springs, Texas

Dear Editors of the Signs,

I am enclosing my check to renew my subscription for another year. Please use the balance to help in any way that is needful.

I have just received my December issue of the *Signs*. I don't remember ever getting a copy that held more sermons that fitted my need as much as this copy. I especially needed and enjoyed Elder Griffin's comments on "The Virtue of Keeping Quiet." I also enjoyed Elder Lefferts' sermon about the ravens in I Kings 17:6. I do believe that the "ravens" can and do drop a few morsels for God's humble poor. But, of course, they are not aware that they are doing so.

I received my copy of Elder Beebe's Editorials, Number 3. I am enjoying it very much. In the near future I hope to order Volume 4 also.

In trials,
Sister Neva M. White

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

AUTHORITY OF CHURCHES

In determining the effect of any action of an individual church, it must necessarily be considered by what law the church was governed in the particular action under investigation. Upon the assumption that sovereignty rightfully belongs to every organized church, the most erroneous and conflicting decisions have been promulgated in all ages, even before the apostles were taken from personal supervision of the administration of the affairs of the kingdom of Christ. Certainly in the perfect law of our King there is definite provision for determining every question which can arise in practical obedience to the directions which he has given. Whatever of difficulty may appear to be involved in the application of his complete law to any circumstances surrounding a church, there can be no defect in that law; the darkness is in our own ignorance of the things which God has revealed. It is of great importance, therefore, to carefully examine the subject in the light of that only standard of infallible direction, the law of the kingdom of Christ, as written in the New Testament.

The first certain and essential fact to be observed in this investigation, is that the exclusive source of authority, and the only power in the church, is that which is immediately derived from her omnipotent King. However the system of popular sovereignty may be adapted to the government of the nations of this world, it can never be recognized in the kingdom of Jesus, which is not of this

world. This is plainly asserted by our risen Lord himself; and is by him assigned as the ground upon which his inspired apostles were to go and teach all nations. He does not bid them rely upon the support of created beings, whose breath is in their nostrils. Such dependence might fail them in the trying hour. Trusting exclusively in the presence of their Lord, they obeyed his direction; and in all subsequent ages they have gone in their recorded judgment, according to his commandment; and he has not failed to verify his word by manifesting himself with them alway, even unto the end of the world. When the words which they were inspired to write are taken by the Spirit of truth and shown to his saints, they never fail to recognize in them the testimony of Jesus, and thus he is with his witnesses. Without this divine revelation of Jesus in those writings, the most earnest efforts of inspired apostles could never give the knowledge of God. Much less could they give instruction in the things of the kingdom to those who were dead in the sin under which all men are already condemned by nature. Jesus Christ is the only absolute Sovereign. From him comes every blessing to each of his saints; and his faithfulness must fail before any good thing can be withheld from one of his little ones. It should never be forgotten that in the gospel kingdom, the new Jerusalem, "there shall be no more curse." The gracious law of liberty is fulfilled only by that perfect love which casteth out fear. In the gospel kingdom no slavish terror enforces unwilling obedience to the inflexible demands of a fiery law. Those who are governed by the Spirit of Christ are judged alone by the law of liberty. This principle shines in every ordinance of our king, since the admonition speaks to the saints expressly, saying, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; *for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*"—Phil. ii. 12, 13. He has given no commandment but that he has made his people willing to obey. None can know of the doctrine of Jesus, except they have the desire to do his will; and all such are included in the blessing written in the last chapter of the inspired record. To those who do not love him, Jesus has given no commandment. This principle is inseparably identified with the whole system of the kingdom of divine grace. There can be no room in this kingdom of love for discord and jealousies to find entrance. This is as true of separate church organizations as of individual members. Fellowship and love cannot be enforced under penalties. It is not an oversight on the part of the Lord that no direction is given by which the church may enforce the respect due to her dignity when her decisions are not recognized. There can be no disobedience to the law of Christ but that which is rendered as the most joyous privilege of those who hear his commandment. Evidently such obedience cannot be rendered under the prompting of any other power but divine love.

As in the primitive churches, wars and fightings among them originated in their lusts that warred in their members, so it has been in all ages since. It is impossible that such works of the flesh should be found among the gracious fruits of the Spirit. "For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work; but the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality (or wrangling,) and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."—James ii. 16-18. It is well for all who love our Lord to carefully examine themselves by this infallible test; and whatever is condemned, must be rejected, even

though it should manifest carnality in what we had supposed to be zeal of God. It is of himself and the saints to whom he writes, that James speaks in asking, "Do ye think that the Scripture saith in vain, *The spirit that dwelleth in us* lusteth to envy?" Surely there can be no difficulty in discerning the difference between this work of the flesh, and the love which is the fruit of the Spirit. Crafty workers of iniquity may bewilder the unwary by a form of compliance with the letter of the discipline of the gospel, while in spirit they violate the law of Christ. Such evil workers are very earnest in claiming respect for their decisions; and they complain bitterly of all who prefer implicit obedience to the commandment of Jesus. Having secured from some organized church such action as sustains their carnal notions, they are very intolerant of all who question the authority which they have supposed to be thus established. In support of decisions attained by adroit management, the dignity of the church is cited, and if opposing decisions are obtained in sister churches, these enemies of real peace are ready to proclaim war; and when sustained by civil power they have enforced their authority by the sword. According to the most reliable records of history, by far the greater part of the bloodshed in the last nineteen centuries may be traced to the maintenance of the dignity of professed churches. Surely no subject of divine instruction can accept as truth the theory which makes the law of Christ the source of such abominable works of iniquity. The true church of Christ never did, and she never can, depend upon any earthly power for the maintenance of her dignity. When her King was nailed to the bloody tree, her dignity was not sacrificed. Even the accursed cross was glorified by the blood of that suffering Lamb of God, in whose death the sins of his chosen peope were blotted out. It is the only ground of boasting with the saints that the grace of God in Jesus Christ has given them all the worthiness in which they can glory. This is universally understood by those who hope in the salvation of God which is in Jesus. None dare claim any personal merit or dignity. The song of the glorified myriads ascribes all worthiness to the name of Jesus exclusively. As the only Sovereign of heaven and earth, he reigns supreme. He has never delegated any of his honor to creatures, whether they be called popes, or bishops, or independent churches. All dignity and power are still in the hands of our divine King. His law is perfect; and no circumstances can arise for which that law has not provided. There is therefore no need that churches should have any authority committed to them. Nor has it been revealed that such power has ever been bestowed upon any company of mortals.

The only authority which can be justly recognized in any local company of believers, or individual church, is the power and privilege of implicit obedience to the word and spirit of the law of Christ. While acting under such direction, the authority of her King makes every word infallible as his own immediate decree. Certainly the correctness of such action does not depend upon the number of members by whom it has been adopted; nor can the validity of any doctrine or practice be derived from age or established custom of uninspired believers. While courtesy concedes the recognition of all actions of a sister church as presumably conformed to this supreme law of Christ, it is an unjustifiable extension of courtesy by which any church demands that other churches regard her action as above questioning. Only direct inspiration can be so received. Under the guidance of the Spirit of truth, every church will sincerely wish all her steps to be critically compared with the perfect law of Christ; and with humble submission to the word of the Lord she will gladly receive correction whenever

her decisions have been without the warrant of inspired direction. The only and exclusive authority of individual saints, or churches, is the authority to hear and obey the word of the Lord. All other actions are in contempt of the law of the only King and Lawgiver in Zion; and it is rebellion against him for his saints to render obedience to such decrees as have no higher authority than the commandments of men. They are not less guilty of idolatry in honoring such decisions of churches, than in giving heed to decrees of popes and ecclesiastical councils. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man; for God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."—Eccl. xii. 13. 14.

WM. L. Beebe

Warwick, N.Y. March 15, 1897

FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The 9th annual 5th Sunday meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with Hopewell Church, Winnsboro, Texas, beginning on Friday, May 27, 28th, and 29th. Hopewell Church is located about six miles west of Winnsboro. Go west on Coke Road about 4½ miles and follow signs.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

There will be no business, just preaching and singing.

Elder Joe Hamrick, Pastor
Hopewell Church

ASSOCIATION NOTICES

If the clerks of the associations would send in their notices now, we would be relieved of having to contact them at the last moment.

Please, if you want them in the *Signs,* send them in early so we can prepare them in advance.

Thank you, Editors

BOOK NOTICE

To those of you who live in the North Carolina and Virginia area - Brother Reubin French, Deacon of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, has agreed to act for us as agent to distribute the Beebe Editorials.

Anyone wishing to purchase Volume 3 or 4 may see him in person and purchase them, thereby saving mailing costs.

Editors

PREDESTINATION

I am sending you a short article on the following text: "And he wept aloud."—Gen. xlv. 2. This is the language concerning Joseph, after all the bitter experiences he had undergone, from the humble shepherd boy to the place where he was exalted by the power of God. Is it any wonder that he should weep aloud? Joseph said, Cause every man to go out from me. The time had now come when he was going to manifest himself unto his brethren, and it was no wonder that he should want to be alone. God had brought him through all of the dangers and troubles to a place that he could now no longer refrain from telling his brethren who he was, and he said unto his brethren, I am Joseph, doth my father yet live? His brethren could not answer him. No wonder, for we must know that all their wicked conspiracies against him came again to their mind. They remembered of lowering him into the pit, of stripping him of his coat of many colors, dipping it in the blood of the kid and then showing it to their father to deceive him. The struggles of Joseph's resistance from being lowered into the pit, as well as all his wails and cries when being sold to the Midianite merchantmen, and being separated from his relatives whom he loved, now all came afresh to their minds, and we cannot wonder that they should be troubled at his presence. Joseph said

unto his brethren, Be not grieved nor angry with yourselves. It would be very strange according to natural reason that he should use such language, but the natural man cannot understand it, and so he says to them again, For God did send me before you to preserve life. This was the truth of the matter, God had been using these brethren of Joseph's to accomplish his plan. They did not know it. They had no knowledge that Joseph was yet alive, but now after he tells them who he is, he says, God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth.

The years of plenty had preceded the years of famine, the dreams of Pharaoh had been interpreted by Joseph, enough was stored up that all should have a sustenance; God was causing all this to come to pass. Shall not the God of the earth do right? There can be no doubt that all this was predestinated, and all came to pass just as it had been foreordained. It is very hard for us to reconcile ourselves to God's power; in fact, of ourselves we cannot, but when taught by the Spirit of God we can then see the beauty of all his wondrous works, and are made to exclaim, as did the apostle, He doeth all things well, also, He ruleth in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

I am inclined to ask, Was it possible for this deliverance to be brought about without these wicked acts, these evil conspiracies of Joseph's brethren? Was there some other way that Joseph could have been exalted? In fact, we are made to wonder why the famine should have taken place, just the same as we are made to wonder at God's dealings with his people in the work of salvation. Was there some other way? The natural mind says there is another way; in fact, many other ways: develop the will, strengthen the judgment, cultivate the reason, lay hold upon God, and you will be saved. We as a people in nature are inclined to ignore God's work in salvation and come to the conclusion that it might have been some other way, and yet He says, I am the way. He has predestinated from all eternity the salvation of his people, just as he has predestinated all things that have already, or ever will, come to pass, and now he is manifesting unto them their deliverance.

When holy men of God spake they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and they told of things certain to come to pass. This deliverance is according to the counsel of his own will. He says, I will work and who shall let it? Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or being his counselor hath taught him? Not one atom of the entire universe but what fulfills the exact sphere for which it was predestinated. You may call it purpose if it breaks easier with the brethren, as a Presbyterian minister once said to the writer, but it is predestination just the same. "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."—Acts iv. 26-28.

Joseph's rule was revealed by dreams, Christ's rule is made known unto us by the sure word of prophecy. I heartily agree with brother Adams that we cannot unify any doctrine that denies God's sovereignty. I was much pleased with his and brother Vail's letters; in fact, they are all good. Let me say, brethren, Cry aloud and spare not. Deceivers are waxing worse and worse, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

If it seems this article is worthy to be used in the *Signs* and may be of comfort to the brotherhood you may publish it. Spread the mantle of charity over the writer, for I realize my own imperfections. May God bless you, with all of like

precious faith.

Respectfully,
E. D. Elder
Nov. 1, 1920

OBITUARIES

BROTHER CLIFFORD SHARP DANIEL

It is with a heavy heart I attempt to write a tribute to the last surviving child of a family of ten children of my grandfather, Thomas Abel Daniel, and grandmother, Martha Joiner Daniel.

I grew from a toddler to the present holding Brother Daniel in the highest esteem. I must say that his counsel and judgment has had a great influence on me all of my life and especially in recent years when he served Shady Grove Church as Deacon and I as moderator.

Brother Daniel was deeply established in the knowledge, doctrine, and order of the church, and served the church in the highest honor.

Brother Daniel was born in Crenshaw County, Alabama, on July 3, 1898, where he grew to manhood and married Myrtle Thagard on January 31, 1925. To this union was born five daughters who join their mother and grandchildren in the sorrow of this great loss, along with many relatives, friends, and acquaintances. They are Mrs. Charles (Gladys) Settles, Madison, TN.; Mrs. Sam (Evelyn) Furguson, New Port Richey, FL.; Mrs. Earl (Joan) Woodard, Winter Haven, FL.; Mrs. Milton (Jean) Kent, Mulberry, FL.; Mrs. Bill (Joy) Dougherty, Jacksonville, IL.

Brother Daniel moved to Eagle Lake, FL. in 1939 and later to Wahneta, where he spent the remainder of his life. He was baptized into the membership of Black Rock Church in Alabama, by Elder E. D. Gafford, in July, 1946. In August 1950, he joined Shady Grove Church by letter, in order to be with his wife, who had her membership there.

In June of 1966 Brother Daniel was ordained to the office of Deacon. His father, grandfather, and great grandfather served as deacons in Sweetwater Church in Alabama, going back to the 1830's. He passed away on February 21, 1981, after attending church that day.

His funeral was conducted in Ott Laughlin Funeral Home by Elder E. P. Stott; his grandson, Michael Woodard; and his Pastor, Elder J. Y. McCormick. Uncle Clifford told me several times he was not afraid to die. We feel our loss is his Heavenly gain.

The following was a tribute to his birthday several years ago, and was written by one of his daughters:

Seventy-four years ago today
A child was born on Alabama clay;
To Martha and Thomas Daniel's home
Another son to call their own.
He joined the group of
Five brothers, one sister,
And they chose the name of Johnny Clifford.
The doctor came and fell in love
With Johnny Clifford - sweet as a dove.
Martha smiled as the doctor harped
And they changed his name to Clifford Sharp.
They say it's a bad omen to change your name.
But don't you believe it;
For I'm here to claim,
One of the greatest men that ever lived
Is Clifford Sharp from the Crenshaw Hills!
Have a Happy Birthday!!!

(Clifford Sharp was a well-known and highly respected educator in Crenshaw County Alabama in the 1890's.)

WILLIE FOSTER SMITH

It has pleased our Heavenly Father, by His tender love and mercy, to call home one of His precious saints, Sister Willie Foster Smith. At the time of her death she was hospitalized in Amarillo, Texas and lovingly cared for by her only daughter Ela Simpson, of Amarillo.

Sister Willie was born July 19, 1901 and departed this life October 4, 1982 making her walk upon this earth 81 years, 2 months, 15 days. She was preceded in death by her husband, M. R. Foster and later by Brother D. A. Smith. She is survived by her daughter, 2 grandchildren, several great grandchildren and a host of nieces and nephews.

Sister Willie asked for a home and after relating her experience was received into Little Flock Primitive Baptist Church, Altus, Oklahoma on May 12, 1934. She was baptized the same afternoon by her father, the late Elder W. N. Green. She remained a member until her death.

Sister Willie loved the church and she believed very strongly in the absolute predestination of all things. Her poor health prevented her from attending church during the last years of her life but her faith and strong belief in the doctrine never wavered and was exemplified by her daily walk and talk with those about her.

She loved nothing more than to have brethren and sisters visit in her home, to sing the dear old hymns and to hear the truth proclaimed.

Sister Willie endured much pain and suffering during the last years of her life but her prayers were never to seek relief but rather to be made submissive to the will of her Heavenly Father. She was made willing to suffer for Christ's sake.

Her funeral was conducted at Tims Funeral Home Chapel, Altus, Oklahoma on October 6, 1982

by her Pastor, Elder C. M. Haygood of Saltillo, Texas. Her body was laid to rest at Altus Cemetery to await the second coming of her Lord and the final resurrection.

Those of us who are left mourn her passing for we miss her presence among us but we are thankful to God for His loving kindness and tender mercy. We know our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by one who loved her very much,
her nephew,
Bob Champeau

MOLLIE BELLE CLARK

Mollie Belle Clark was born on November 12, 1892, the daughter of Henry K. and Bannie Cash, and was called away to her heavenly home on March 30, 1982. On December 15, 1914 she was married to Clem J. Clark who preceded her in death. Six children were born to them, one of whom, Tommy Clark, died at the age of four. The children who survive her are: C. J. Clark, Jr., Mrs. Elizabeth Hunt, William L. Clark, Fred C. Clark, and Mrs. Bobbie Riggs.

On April 18, 1959 she joined the Durham Primitive Baptist Church and lived out her life there as a lovely and faithful member. She was a quiet, thoughtful person – a woman of few words with a kind and compassionate heart – and greatly loved by the people in her community. She was rooted and grounded in the doctrine of salvation by grace and was constant in her love and attendance to her church -- walking softly before the Lord -- and she was blessed with a lovely family who respected her belief and love for her church.

Elder C. B. Davis conducted her funeral at the Durham Church and her body was laid to rest beside her husband and little son in the cemetery at Rose of Sharon Baptist Church. Shortly before her passing she had talked with a close friend concerning her feelings about Paradise and we feel that the poet who wrote this hymn beautifully expressed the longing for Paradise which God's people often feel:

"There is a land mine eye hath seen
In visions of enraptured thought
So bright that all which spreads between
Is with a radiant glory fraught.

A Land upon whose blissful shore
There rests no shadow – falls no stain
There those who meet shall part no more
And those long parted meet again.

Its skies are not like earthly skies
With varying hues of shade and light;
It hath no need of suns to rise
To dissipate the gloom of night.

There sweeps no desolating wind
Across that calm serene abode:
The wanderer there a home shall find
Within the Paradise of God."

DURHAM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH
Catherine M. Humbarger, Clerk

SISTER TESSIE IRENE HARRIS

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst a very sweet sister in Christ, Sister Tessie Harris. She departed her life on earth in a Tyler hospital, August 17, 1982. Sister Harris was born August 30, 1902. Survivors include a brother, Joe Smith Harris of White Oak; a sister, Opal Bergin of Hawkins, Texas; and a number of nieces and nephews.

She was deeply interested in the truth and through sovereign grace she adorned the gospel of Jesus Christ, her Saviour. She depended upon the Lord for temporal mercies, as well as for spiritual blessings.

In her last few weeks she had sorrow and suffering; but neither the bitter sorrows of life nor the suffering of death could separate her from the love of God which was blessedly manifested in supporting and comforting her during the last few weeks of her life when she could say; Dear Lord, come, and take me to thyself, I am quite ready. Her great God who has been her refuge and strength during many weeks of suffering and trial was the same to her in the end. Her love to the Lord, his truth and to his people continued to the end. That well of water in her heart kept springing up into everlasting life.

Sister Harris had no fear of her soul departing from her body for she was given a precious hope of joining the godly departed souls to join them around the throne of God and the Lamb, to sing "worthy is the Lamb to receive honor and power and glory, for thou hast created all things for the glory of thy great name."

We miss her greatly at Paran Church and so do the neighboring churches. We feel we have lost a precious member. Her mortal remains was committed to the earth in Paran Cemetery there to await the resurrection morn when the dead in Christ shall rise first to meet the Lord in the air so shall they ever be with the Lord.

Written by one who loved her,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

WILMOTH WARD DALTON

In my weak way, if God will bless me, I will write a few words in memory of our beloved Sister. Knowing that God does all things well both in

Heaven and earth, he called her from this life on October 20, 1982, in Virginia Baptist Hospital, Lynchburg, Virginia.

Sister Wilmoth was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, to the late William Tazewell Ward and Etta Hammock Ward, who survives her. She is also survived by six brothers, Addison Ward, Hurt; Stuart Ward, Altavista; Austin Ward, Mount Airy, N.C.; Woodrow N. Ward, Rocky Mount; Ernest Ward, Danville; and Isaac Ward, Gretna; and one sister, Doris Dearing, Lynchburg. She was married to the late Acie Brown Dalton.

Sister Wilmoth was received into the fellowship of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on May 23, 1970, and was a faithful member. She was not permitted to attend her meetings several months prior to her death, due to her health.

She bore her afflictions with much patience and enjoyed the visits of her Brethren and friends. I believe Sister Wilmoth was made reconciled to her illness and to death. She will be greatly missed by her church, family, and friends. May we all be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father, who does all things well and never makes a mistake.

Her funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on October 23, 1982, by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and Elder Raymond Goad and Mr. John Johnson. Her body was laid to rest in the Dalton Family Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the call of her Heavenly Father.

O. K. Tench, Moderator
Raymond Goad, Assistant Clerk
Written by, Marvin Brumfield

SARAH ELIZABETH HAMMOCK WORLEY

As requested by Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing, I will write a few words in memory of our Dear Sister. It pleased our Heavenly Father to remove Sister Worley from our midst on July 9, 1982, at the age of 75 on arrival at Ramsey Memorial Medical Center, Gretna, Virginia. Sister Worley was born December 15, 1906, in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, to the late Raleigh Thomas Hammock and Emma Reynolds Hammock. Survivors are one daughter, Gladys Light of Roanoke, eight sons, Wilford, Dave, James, Sam, and Oscar all of Gretna, Virginia, Douglas of Mount Pleasant, North Carolina, Clay of Lynchburg, and Charlie Worley of Alexandria. One stepson, Robert Price Worley, Montvale; two stepdaughters, Roberta Brumfield and Annie Dalton, both of Gretna; three brothers, J. T. Hammock, Gretna; Henry Hammock, Concord, and Ollie Hammock, Appomattox; two sisters, Snowie Shelton, Gretna and Kate Bingley, Providence Forge.

Sister Worley was received into the fellowship of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on May 28, 1950. Due to Sister Worley's health, she was not permitted to attend her meetings several months prior to her death.

We will all miss her, but most of all, she will be missed by the family and friends. I feel our loss is her eternal gain and may we all be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father who does all things well and never makes a mistake.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and James Worley at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church. Her body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in the family cemetery.

O. K. Tench, Moderator
Raymond Goad, Assistant Clerk
Written by, Marvin Brumfield

MAMIE E. WILLIAMS

The former Mamie Canterberry was born April 2, 1903, in Lamar County, Alabama, the daughter of James and Hester Otts Canterbury. She was married to Louis W. Williams on November 14, 1918, in Gattman, Mississippi. She moved to the Quad-City area in 1952.

Sister Williams was a member of the Macedonia Primitive Baptist Church in Sulligent, Ala. Her body was laid to rest in the Pleasant Ridge Cemetery.

Surviving are her husband; three daughters, Mrs. Earl Newton, of New Boston, Mrs. Troy Morris, of Aberdeen, Miss., and Mrs. Bob Ingvall of Moline; two sons, Arnold of East Moline, and Ira of Moline; 24 grandchildren, 26 great-grandchildren; and two sisters, Mrs. Houston Pitts, and Mrs. Tommie Williams, both of Sulligent.

She was preceded in death by three sons.

Taken from a Newspaper Obituary

FIVE MILE CREEK UNION MEETING

The Five Mile Creek Union Meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with Dorsey Creek Church, Friday, Saturday, and continuing thru the Fourth Sunday in April. (April 22, 23, 24.)

Dorsey Creek Church is located at Breman, Alabama, Highway 69, about halfway between Jasper and Cullman, Alabama.

Elder H. C. Moon, Moderator
Rt. 1, Box 167A, Breman, AL.
Phone (205) 287-1603
Rufus L. Jacks, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 5/83 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The 9th annual 5th Sunday meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with Hopewell Church, Winnsboro, Texas, beginning on Friday, May 27, 28th, and 29th. Hopewell Church is located about six miles west of Winnsboro. Go west on Coke Road about 4½ miles and follow signs.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

There will be no business, just preaching and singing.

Elder Joe Hamrick, Pastor
Hopewell Church

RELATION OF MY EXPERIENCE
No. 5

Brother Beebe:-Here I come with another *yarn,* though I think I will wind up with this. On the Lordsday morning I preached from the text given me, as mentioned at the conclusion of my last. My preaching, to me, was entirely different from any of my former preaching. Before my preaching was a formal thing, but now I preached in faith, felt that I *spake that I did know, and testified that I had seen.* From that period (if sent at all) I date my being sent of God to preach. Whatever purpose God may have had in my former exercises on the subject, relative to my being sent into the ministry, all my former preaching I consider as a running before I was sent. The cloud seemed now to depart and thus I conceive was fulfilled the declaration made to me the fall before, "Go into the city and it shall be told thee what thou must do." But it was not long before I was as much troubled with the calm as I had been before with

the tempest.

I do not wish to be understood by what I have said above about preaching in faith, that I am always enabled to preach in faith any more than I can always pray in faith. But I wish to say that with the gospel preacher, as with the gospel hearer, there is a preaching in faith, as there is a hearing in faith; and there is by the same preacher, a preaching at times, when only the powers of his own mind, enlightened to be sure, as they have been in the knowledge of spiritual things, are engaged in bearing testimony to the truth, as there are times in which the believer only hears with his natural understanding. In this case he judges of the truth, but he does not feel it or feed on it. If the experience of others agree with me on this point, they must also agree that faith is distinct from the exercises of any of the faculties of the human soul, that it is *fruit of the spirit.* Further in reference to my preaching, there have been times when I felt comfortable on going into the pulpit, and all at once a dark cloud has come over my mind, or the subject, which seemed to cast a mist all around me, so as to effect my powers of vision in looking at the congregation. Again there have been seasons when for months I have enjoyed none of the comforts of religion, only when I was preaching, and then I was almost uniformly enabled to preach in faith, could in faith point out the experience and trials peculiar to the christian, and in faith hold forth the fulness of Christ, and the consolations suiting the case of such. And when I have closed, and thought of what I had been preaching, I could no more apply it to myself than I could clear away the clouds from the natural sky. At times I have viewed this as according to scripture, that the *witnesses* instead of retaining the *golden oil,* were to *empty it out of themselves through the golden pipes* of ministerial gifts. See Zech. 4, and Rev. 11:4. The business of a *servant* also corresponds with the above, though he may at times eat of what is left. But it is good for him at times to be taught his business, viz, to set forth the provisions to the family and guests instead of eating them himself. At other times this experience in reference to preaching has been a source of much doubting and distress.

Soon after my mind received satisfaction in reference to the ministry, I returned to the vicinity of Morristown, with the expectation of preaching for that church. But I went not with my mind impressed with a desire to convert souls. I went deeply impressed with the evil of that *legal bondage* which I knew by past experience was so prevalent in that region among the Presbyterians and others. I went therefore with the design of bearing my testimony against it, and to hold forth salvation as being of rich, free, and sovereign grace reigning through the righteousness of Christ. I soon, by that kind of preaching, aroused a pretty severe opposition against me, both in and out of the church. I was charged freely with being an *antinomian,* with bringing forward *new things,* and with *creating divisions,* etc. This drove me to search the Scriptures and to enquire more earnestly at the *mouth of the Lord,* and resulted in my becoming stronger in my views and in the defense of them.

From that day to this, the most aid I have received from man in forming my religious views has been through their opposition; thereby driving me from men to look to God and the Scriptures for my guidance. I have learned in my early experience many ideas from men, but have had again in many instances to unlearn them. I know that it has been my desire to learn of God and not of man, and he, I think, taught me that desire in my early experience. Whether I have learned of him, or deceived myself with my own fancies, it is not necessary for me to say. I am in God's hands, he knows me, and knows what to do with

me. And brethren will, as is their right, judge for themselves whether to fellowship what I have related as my experience, as the teachings of God, or to reject it as delusion.

I will add that these charges which commenced at Morristown, have been continued unto this day. They were made against me in Kentucky, and when I came into Virginia, I found Luther Rice had brought from Kentucky and other places, and circulated here the charge of my being a *pestilent fellow,* and a mover of divisions in churches. Hence those of the Old School who are keeping up the cry against me of bringing in *new things,* and causing divisions, etc., may see that they are but walking, in this thing, in the steps of the missionists. Whether this is evidence against me of being a disciple of Christ, I will not say. I know that neither Christ nor his apostles in their day had the reputation of being very subservient or accommodating to the opinions and dogmas of the great and learned Doctors of Divinity, or of the law, of that and the preceding ages.

I have had an impression on my mind since 1816 that I should live to see this *land plucked up,* that is, to see our liberties overturned, and the church brought into captivity or under oppression. As it is somewhat connected with my experience, in reference to what I have above been noticing, I will state the ground of it. Where I lived at that time in the State of Ohio, bordering in Indiana, the country I considered considerably destitute of preaching, and being confined to a school for support, I of course could not travel and preach as I wished. As I had not then seen the inconsistency of the mission plan of sending out preachers, with the New Testament order, I was thinking of writing on to New York to obtain an appointment to travel and preach in that region as a missionary, when this text was so applied as to make an impression on my mind, "The Lord saith thus, Behold that which I have built will I break down; and that which I have planted will I pluck up, even this whole land. And seekest thou great things for thyself; seek them not; for behold I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the Lord; but thy life will I give thee for a prey in all places, whither thou goest." Jer. 45:4 and 5. I have, it is true, never felt very confident of living to see this government broken down, and our liberties plucked up. But as far as to seeking great things for myself, it has been prophetically true. In reference to engaging in business for the purpose of acquiring property, I have been invariably held back from it. And I have never been able to engage in those measures or advocate any system that was popular with the multitude; but have been constrained by a regard to what I believed to be truth, in my preaching, and in my intercourse with brethren, to advocate that doctrine and cause which has left me in the background among the few. I have been glad to retire to the *cave Adullam,* with that *distressed, indebted, and discontented* little company. I Sam. 22:1, 2. It was so when we were altogether as Baptists, and it seems it must be so among the Old School Baptists. My life also so far has been given me for a prey, both temporally and in reference to enjoying the fellowship of those whom I have esteemed as knowing the truth. I feel confident that our government will be broken down, and the church in her present privileges be plucked up, whether I live to see it or not. Though if brother Calvert is correct, and the church has passed her last fiery ordeal, and got into the Philadelphian state, the *state of brotherly love,* as *Philadelphia* signified, and has *an open door which no man can shut,* Rev. 3:7, 8, then it will not be so.

In reference to seeking to be distinguished as the leader of a party, I confidently say I never have had any ambition for it. Never have I taken any

steps calculated to accomplish it. Whenever the Lord has been pleased to give me to see the error of any views which I in common with others have held, and also to understand the Scriptures as clearly revealing other views of the subject, instead of seeking to form a party by trying to disciple the members of churches to which I preached to my new views, I have in the first instance thrown them out broadcast, in preaching at Associations, or published them through the *Signs,* where they were sure to be canvassed before they were received. Or if in any instance I have first spoken of them in private, it has been in a company of ministers. I made this statement, believing that some who have made the above charge against me ought to know from circumstances, that the statement cannot be contradicted. I now make it, not so much to vindicate myself from the charge, for it cannot be long that the reproach will effect me, as to guard the minds of brethren from the prejudice attempted to be raised against the views I have advanced, by representing me as influenced by such motives in advancing them; views which I have thus advanced because I believed them, and still believe them, to be according to God's revealed word.

Nothwithstanding the opposition raised against my preaching at Morristown, the church in the course of the summer called me to ordination. And I was ordained August 30, 1812, not as the pastor of that church, for that I declined, finding no Scriptural authority for it, but to the gospel ministry.

I wish to offer one remark before closing. I think it will be admitted by many that some of the exercises which I have related have been deep, and strongly marked. I call attention to this because so many brethren and sisters complain that theirs were not so, and think that if their exercises had been thus strongly marked, they should not doubt so much. Yet there are perhaps more of these who have been more severely handled with doubts than I have; thus showing that it is not any past testimony we have received of acceptance, that can produce present faith, or relieve from present doubts, unless the Lord is pleased to give us a fresh realizing of those doubts. Whenever the Lord enables us to *walk by faith,* we enjoy a comfortable hope. But when he leaves us to encounter the assaults of the adversary, and the corruptions of our own hearts, and with nothing but our reasoning powers to combat them, however much our reason or souls have been enlightened in the knowledge of spiritual things, we have but a sorry, gloomy, doubting time of it; and we are made to know that it is not by any power that we have that faith can be brought to our rescue. Surely those who think that faith is merely the result of testimony, and that their souls have been renovated, and changed from natural to spiritual and heavenly souls, can never have been under that fourteen months cloud which I had to pass through, in which time I could so calmly and deliberately reason on putting an end to my existence; nor under many trials and dark seasons, such as I have had since to pass. I can as soon believe that darkness is light as I can believe that my soul with any powers it now has, though I hope I am born of God in a new and distinct life, can of itself exercise a comfortable trust in Christ and reliance on God. If they have experienced a different change from me, I of course can know nothing of that. But I am transgressing those rules which brother Beebe has found it necessary to adopt in order to sustain the publication of the *Signs.* This shows the propriety of what I am now in closing about to do; for I do not believe it is in me to write one of those kind of neutral communications which shall interfere with no one's expressed opinions.

In winding up, then, after acknowledging I think with gratitude, the many

and great indulgences brother Beebe has extended to me, in publishing my communications, I now take farewell of the *Signs,* not as a supporter and promoter of them and their circulation; and not, as not publishing through them such notices as I may have occasion to publish, but as a correspondent of the *Signs.* I do not this from opposition to the course adopted by brother Beebe in reference to the present volume, but as acquiescing in it. I know the turn which has been given to my mind in writing, and I know not that I can change it. And it appears quite manifest that we cannot have discussion through the *Signs* without controversy; and if controversy is further admitted, it seems, or has been thought the *Signs* could not be supported in the publication of them. This, by the by, does not look as though the church is now in the *state of brotherly love.* I wish I could see it in that state. As I wish the publication to continue even under the present arrangements, for two reasons, I draw back. 1st. I wish them continued, because they are so welcome a messenger and so comforting to many of the brethren and sisters who are so scattered as not to enjoy the privilege of hearing much gospel preaching, or of much personal intercourse with brethren. 2nd. Brother Beebe commenced the publication of the *Signs,* as a pioneer in the Old School cause and under many difficult and discouraging circumstances; and has valiently, laboriously, and successfully, battled the whole New School phalanx. Now after enduring the burden and heat of the day, it would be truly a matter of grief to see him suffering defeat and loss through the Old School.

But in acquiescing in the neutrality of the *Signs,* that is in reference to the differences of sentiment among Old School Baptists, I must be allowed to say that for myself I can consent to no neutrality, or armistice in reference to what has been so much the subject of controversy in the *Signs,* viz; what is called *soul regeneration.* For myself, I would as soon ground arms in reference to Fullerism as to that. The more I look at it the more I am convinced that it strikes as directly at the ground work of salvation as does Fullerism, though more covertly.

My reasons for occupying this decided stand against this sentiment, I probably shall, if providence permits, hereafter publish in pamphlet or circular form, and distribute as I have opportunity.

Farewell.

S. Trott

P.S. Brother Beebe, on reading over the third number of my experience in the *Signs,* I feel a desire to make a few additional remarks on one point. I mentioned that when faith was given me in Christ, it produced in me a deeper sense of my own vileness, and of the vileness of sin than I ever had felt before, etc., etc. From my experience I have been led to think that the repentance which Christ is exalted as a Prince and a Savior to give, consists in that sorrow for sin in itself considered, and contrasted with God's love, which flows from faith in Christ, in distinction from that sense of just condemnation arising from the application of the law. I used to insist in preaching that genuine faith in Christ would be accompanied with this loathing of self and of sin, in distinction from that Campmeeting kind of faith, in which the mind of the individual seems altogether engrossed with joy and shouting. But finding so few mentioning this as connected with faith, I have thought it might be making my own experience too much a test. Still finding that those who give their experience through the *Signs,* mention nothing of this increased sorrow for sin flowing from their faith, the query has arisen in my mind, whether it is because they did not think it important to notice it, or whether their experience was not so; and that it was and still is, in every fresh manifestation, thus connected in

my experience in consequence of my peculiar vileness; for I know that I am and have been the vilest of the vile. There are some ancient worthies with whose experience mine seems to have accorded, Job in particular. See Job 43:5 & 6, Isaiah and Daniel. Isa. 6:5, Dan. 10:8. On the other hand, I know the declaration is, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." The question therefore again arises, whether this believing on the Son does, or does not, uniformly produce this self abasement and sorrow for sin? I would be pleased to hear, throught the *Signs,* the minds of brethren on this point. Not to participate with them in any discussion on it.

S. T.

Monticello, Georgia

Dear Brother and Sister Spangler,

I was busy talking to the brethren tonight and forgot to give you this little contribution.

It is a blessing to visit the Dan River brethren - and even when I am at home 400 miles from church, my thoughts are with you on meeting days.

I have enjoyed this visit very much, and Neal has, too. This has been a special visit for us both. I am glad we were able to be together at the French home on Friday night. We always enjoy being with you both.

Brother and Sister Minter are so good to us and make us feel so welcome. We're thankful to them for their kindness.

I will miss not being with you for the Sunday morning services, but I will have much to reflect on. I have enjoyed all the sermons. It is good to be with those of like faith and hear the truth, as we know it in our hearts, proclaimed.

Thursday evening you spoke of praise and prayer. You said the two are closely related. This is a beautiful thought. (Psalm 107)

Tonight you spoke of the power of God and of the meaning of the word "let" (Psalm 40) In all of the scriptures man's frailty is contrasted to God's power - His sovereignty.

Indeed we are weak. May we ever look up for strength and strive continually to magnify Him.

You've given me much to meditate on. I have truly been fed.

We love you both,
Katie and Neal (Kilby)

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708 N. Casa Grande Circle
Duncanville, Texas 75116

GOD'S PUNISHMENT FOR HIS CHILDREN WHO FORSAKE HIS LAW

"If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes."

--Psalm 89:30-32

There is nothing more "conditional" than an "if-then" statement. "Conditional" is the very word logicians use to describe any two sentences or ideas joined together by the if-then connective. Some may wonder, then, how can anyone deny that the scriptures teach conditionalism regarding obedience, disobedience, punishments, and rewards? Are not the scriptures full of ifs and thens? Is not this very text an example of such? Does it not say that *if* God's children forsake His law and walk not in His judgments, and if they break His statutes and keep not His commandments, *then* He will punish them with the rod and with stripes? Read the text again before proceeding. Does it not plainly say that?

No, it plainly does not say that. One of the problems in discussing the scriptures with those whose citizenship is below is that things which the Bible plainly says, according to the natural mind, simply are not so.

"His children" mentioned in these verses are Christ's covenant children and are considered to be the children of God the Son as distinguished from being children of God the Father. While it is true that those who are children of the One are the children of the Other (for the Son is one with the Father, John 10:30), the contrast is nevertheless here emphasized because the relationship spoken of here is a covenant relationship. The ones spoken of here are Christ's children, one and the same with those glorified saints with whom Christ identifies Himself in Hebrews 2:13 in these words: "Behold I and the children which God hath given me." In this text Christ Himself makes the distinction between Himself, as recipient of those children who are identified with him, and God the giver. So, they are children of the covenant which is prominent throughout the 89th Psalm: "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, 'Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations.' Selah (verses 3-4)." "My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him (verse 28)." "My covenant will I not break nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips (verse 34)."

What is said of Abraham's seed in Galatians 3 may doubtless be applied to David's seed mentioned in Psalm 89:4, for David's seed and Abraham's seed are one and the same in Christ Jesus by virtue of the truth expressed in Matthew 1:1. "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." And what is said of Abraham's seed? "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, 'And to seeds,' as of many; but as of one, 'And to thy seed,' which is Christ (Galatians 3:16)." God's promises were made primarily to Christ, not to Christ's children, except as they were secondarily beneficiaries of His will and His covenant.

Christ the promised seed Himself owns a uniplural seed, his elect: "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise (Galatians 3:29)"; "But ye are all one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28)." So, the children of the covenant are one in Him, and as such they are not viewed as separate individuals or as being separate from Him. It is not they, but Jesus Christ, who is spoken of in Galatians, being acted upon and acting in all ways and in all things as their Covenant Head, Mediator, and Representative before God the Father.

It is in this regard, then, with Christ as their representative, that "His children" are discussed in Psalm 89:30-32. In their Adamic nature His children are prone to forsake God's law, break His statutes, walk not in His judgments, and keep not His commandments. In connection with such depravity on the elect's part, God said He will visit their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with stripes. The natural mind of course assumes this visitation of divine wrath logically must fall upon those who are the guilty individuals; but if that were the case, why would not the next verse then say, "Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from THEM?" It should indeed say this, if His children were the ones who received the punishment, because this verse is designed to give assurance to the recipient of the punishment, that, although the punishment is severe to the extreme, nevertheless the punishment is no indication that God's lovingkindness will be taken from the receiver. And the receiver is not "them", but it is HIM. No, it is not the children who receive divine wrath. They stand or fall, not in their own righteousness, but in their Representative and His righteousness. In the context of this Psalm, verse 16 truly might be paraphrased, "In Christ's name shall His covenant children rejoice all the day; and in

Christ's righteousness shall they be exalted."

Then, the question arises, who received the rod and the stripes mentioned in verse 32, if "God's disobedient children" did not and do not? The answer is on every page of the sacred scriptures: Christ Jesus Himself, ever the Representative of His people, received the rod and the stripes. "He was wounded for our transgressions (Isaiah 53:5)"--the transgressions of Psalm 89:32. "He was bruised for our iniquities"--the iniquities of Psalm 89:32. "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him." There is the chastisement which is so richly deserved by His "disobedient children" and which was so exquisitely endured by their Saviour. "And with His stripes we are healed." There are the stripes of Psalm 89:32, in Isaiah 53 along with the transgression, the iniquity, the wounding, the Saviour, His children, of Psalm 89.

"Where is the rod, then, where is the rod of Psalm 89:32?" someone asks. We counter: How else was he bruised for our iniquities, if not with a rod? Let no one doubt that the rod fell on the Saviour any less than did the stripes! The prophet Micah by inspiration links the rod and the One who was smitten by it with the eternal decrees of God Himself; "Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us: they shall smite the Judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek. But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting (Micah 5:1-2)."

In the latter part of Psalm 89 the sufferings of Jesus are then detailed. The covenant between Father and Son is again mentioned, but this time the God-man says, "Thou hast made void the covenant of thy servant"; this was His feeling as a man, this was His experience, as He bore the chastisement of His people and bore their sins in His own body on the tree, that they, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose STRIPES they were healed (See I Peter 2:24). As the Psalmist views the awesome crucifixion he says to God the Father, "Thou hast broken down all His hedges; thou hast brought His strongholds to ruin. All that pass by the way spoil Him: He is a reproach to His neighbours. Thou hast set up the right hand of His adversaries; thou hast made all His enemies to rejoice. Thou hast also turned the edge of His sword, and hast not made Him to stand in the battle. Thou hast made His glory to cease, and cast His throne down to the ground. The days of His youth hast thou shortened: thou hast covered Him with shame. Selah."

Ah, Selah! Pause. Pause, and think about it! May we never, by God's grace, lose sight of the fact that this was the fulfillment by the Father and the Son of their eternal decree. This was not a battle between the Jews and the carpenter's son, nor between the prophet of Galilee and the Roman Empire, for He told the Emporer's lawful representative, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above." It was not Pilate who broke down His hedges and turned the edge of His sword, but it was the Father Himself. No man or group of men from Adam's fallen race could perfectly offer a perfect sacrifice to satisfy perfectly the perfect God. He must do it Himself. And, when He had done so, He announced that it was done: "It is finished."

A God-blessed meditation on that fact should lead any living child of God to despise the horribly carnal idea that man's suffering a few "chastisements" while here below can equal the life, the sufferings of the cross, the death, burial, resurrection, ascension and intercession of Christ in behalf of the sinner. Yet, millions swear by such a blasphemous idea that by enduring chastise-

ment and by obedience in the flesh we yet can escape further punishments and earn temporal or eternal blessings. But if Christ did not deliver His people from punishment by bearing it Himself, and if He did not give them all spiritual blessings including His own righteousness, beauty, and adornments of soul and spirit all as a free gift by grace, then where is the gospel, and what did He accomplish?

In the face of the cross of Christ, all man's obedience on the one hand and his suffering of chastisement and punishment on the other pale into insignificance. All these things remain to this day what Isaiah said they are: filthy rags.

The sacred scriptures and the Holy Spirit's sure witness only sustain the free grace position. That is all that ultimately matters. The free grace of God in Christ Jesus and His finished work are the only things which have proved to be a resting place for a poor, sin-sick soul. May He grant rest in Christ to both the reader and the writer is my sincere desire, if not deceived.

Unworthily
Elder C. C. Morris

January 12, 1982

Dear Elder and Sister Hamrick,

I thought of you all during the ordination of your son and his and Trudy Jeroline's wedding. I know it was a beautiful page in your memory-book of life, which, no doubt, was ordained by God ever since the world began. May he lead them over the rough places as well as the flower-strewn path to the very end that leads to life everlasting.

You are all so dear to my heart. I feel that God has blessed me far beyond my greatest expectations. Who am I, that He should manifest so much love and compassion for me? We are told that He gave His only begotten son to live and die, to redeem the sins of us, unworthy sinners.

"Behold, God is my salvation. I will trust and not be afraid for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song: he also is become my salvation." Isa. 12:2, Psalm 143:8-10. "Cause me to hear thy loving kindness in the morning: for in thee do I trust: Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk for I lift up my soul unto thee." "Teach me to do thy will for thou art my God: thy spirit is good: lead me into the land of uprightness."

How well we know how David felt when he cried these words to God in prayer. How often we cry to God in the same way! I have felt His presence and power and love, ever since I was a teenager.

My first real experience, I think, started while on my way to a Primitive Baptist meeting. I had ridden my bicycle four miles into Gardiner where I was supposed to meet several southern members at the railroad station; and I was to follow them almost 10 miles, mostly through a wooded area to the home of one of the Whitefield Church members. However, I missed the train that had come in and the folks had already gone, so I tried to catch up with them. After I had traveled a few miles in the wooded area, a car pulled up in front of me and the driver ordered me to get into his car. I resisted but knew that if I screamed, no one could hear me. He forced me into the front seat and threw my bicycle in the back of the car.

It was still quite a ways 'til we were through the woods and came to a fork in the road. Meanwhile he threatened my life and pointed toward a distant hill were the autumn leaves were falling and said he could bury me there and no one would be the wiser! Oh, how I prayed to God! I had never felt the need so greatly! I told the man that God was watching over us, and I prayed to God to put words into my mouth that he would understand so he would set me free. I don't know yet what I said because they

were God-given. I was, as not! Then I heard the words, "I can't harm one hair of your head!"

God delivered me and I felt His presence profoundly! I cried all the rest of the way, only stopping once at a farm house to enquire the way. The lady was so sweet to me. She took me in and laid me on a couch, washed my tear and dust stained face and gave me a glass of milk and some cookies. Then she told me that her husband would take me the rest of the way! Needless to say, I have never forgotten that day! God delivered me out of Satan's hand and "led me to the house of my Master's brethren."

I think I was about seventeen or eighteen years old at that time and soon after that, I asked for a home in the Primitive Baptist Church. My mother and some of her people founded the South Gardiner Church at about the turn of the century. God has surely dealth with me many, many times since then and has manifested Himself to me!

He has led me in a beautiful way among wonderful people! I often think of the words, "behold the lily and how it grows, it toils not neither doth it spin, yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these!" I have found that our trust in God in powerful! With faith we could remove mountains and just leaning on His arm carries us safely on our way!

He has given me a beautiful life on this earth and I hope it will lead me into life everlasting.

May God continue to bless you and keep you, and if it is His will, may we meet again. It's my prayer! I love you all, so much!

Your little sister in hope,
Anna Dill
202 Maine Avenue
Gardiner, Maine 04345

BOOK NOTICE

To those of you who live in the North Carolina and Virginia area - Brother Reubin French, Deacon of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, has agreed to act for us as agent to distribute the Beebe Editorials.

Anyone wishing to purchase Volume 3 or 4 may see him in person and purchase them, thereby saving mailing costs.

Editors

SCRIPTURE THOUGHTS FROM SISTER RUTH LUCHT

Dear Ones,

It has been a long time since I have written to you, but I've been enjoying the many fine articles and letters in the *Signs*. Being alone much, and so far from any of my brethren and others of our churches, I spend more time with my Bible, and the *Signs* and Volume 3 of Beebe's editorials. These all give me food for meditation upon the word of God and our wonderful Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Our fulness is in Him. Without Him we are as empty vessels.

Lately I've thought much on the mystery of the great love of God for His chosen people. How we feel to be so blessed far above what we deserve in the flesh. We know how unworthy and unfit we are to receive so much at His hand. We know He knew us from before the world began and before we were ever thought of (except in His mind). (Ps. 139:14, 15, 16) He knew all our failings even them, and knew those people that were His. (Eph. 1:4, John 15:16-19) He knows our hearts, our minds, and how sincere we are in our speech and actions. Knowing all of this, He continues to love us even more because we are His children and He loves us. He knows all our needs and supplies as He sees fit, even before we are aware of our need.

"Ask and it shall be given you." (Matt. 7:7, 8) Our cup is filled to the full and running over, even more than we can think or ask for so many, many times

These things are what amazes me! He speaks and it is done! His promises are sure and steadfast! His word is "Yea" and "Amen", never "perhaps or maybe!" His voice is like thunder and yet it is soft as falling dew; like nothing we've ever heard before. His wrath is terrible and yet His love is warm and comforting. His touch is gentle and loving. His compassion and understanding are not to be compared to, for there is none like Him. But the most amazing part of it all - He looked down and saw me, and of all there are in the world, I was chosen as one of His children! The many years of growing up under His watchful eye, when I was not aware of His guidance and love, He was teaching and correcting, chastising, and being patient with me. Finally he brought me into a felt knowledge of my need of His saving grace.

These last thoughts were brought to my mind again not too long ago on a beautiful Sunday afternoon when Elder and Sister Poole visited in our home. It was so good to welcome them here, but we only had a brief visit, and much that I wanted to speak of remained unsaid, because it just seemed to me I couldn't believe they had taken time from a long trip they had before them to stop by and visit me. I thought of how humble it has always made me when lovely brethren would visit in my home. All else is completely forgotten until later. Now I look forward to another visit, in the not too distant future, and I believe I will have to write a note to myself, not to get so carried away in wonder at the goodness of God.

Anyway, as I rested later, I thought of the way the Lord has always seemed to be with us, as a family, and watched over us during the many years of trials and blessings. Another daughter and husband dropped by later and I shared my thoughts with my two girls. They were speaking of the many sinful practices among the people today and especially of several of the most highly respected people in the business world. I listened as they spoke of their teenage years and of the dates they had; of experimenting with a cigarette and not wanting it, while friends smoked all around them; and of schoolmates who drank and went out with strange people. They told of how the thought always went thru their minds of what I would think of them if they did this or that, and they did not partake of those things and even avoided ones who did, by not going with them. I had always left them in the Lord's hand. He could see them, and I could not. I told both girls that I had always felt the Lord was taking care of them, even before they had become believers. Now they can see that, too. They have their own families, who are under His care. Praise God for such a Saviour as our blessed Saviour, Lord, and Redeemer. They knew I trusted them and wanted to live up to that trust. Now they know they trust in the Lord, and He is faithful. Our Heavenly Father never ceases to watch over His children.

Tonight as I've been here alone and finding the beautiful treasures buried in our Bible, I think of so many ways it speaks to me. I will only name a few because it could get lengthy and I am certain these things are not new to the believing readers.

I think of Peter and Christ as recorded in Luke 22:31-32. Christ told Peter, "Satan hath desired you, that he might sift you as wheat; But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Peter was tempted of Satan and he denied Christ three times. Looking into the eyes of Christ, Peter felt condemned and knew the great sin of denying his Lord. "Peter wept bitterly, and went out." (Luke 22:61-62) Now after the crucifixion and burial, the disciples were sadly fishing. Their nets were as empty as their lives without their Master. He had been crucified and was buried. As they neared the shore they heard a voice calling them, but they

knew not that it was the Lord. He instructed them to cast the net on the right side of the ship, and they were not able to draw it for the great multitude of fishes. Then John said, "It is the Lord." He had prepared a breakfast of fish for them, and after they ate Jesus turned to Peter and asked the question, "Do you love Me?" He asked it not once but three times! (John 21:15-17)

Once I wondered why the question was asked three times, then I was given to remember - three denials, and 3 questions. Peter denied Christ three times. Now there by the sea Peter felt deep remorse at his denial, and each time Jesus asked the question he emphatically replied, "Yes, I do." One time for each denial. Then Jesus Christ told him "Feed my sheep," and I am certain Peter felt a burden of guilt removed! How lovely and complete was God's healing! As love replaced sin and Peter was told to "Feed my lambs" and "feed my sheep," what a great trust was given him, and in later years Peter fulfilled the trust His Lord had in him. If we will just pause and listen, we will note the mystery and beauty of that question that came thru the misty dawn of that long ago morning is still echoing in the world again and again. My own life has seemed to catch its fine vibrations. Each time I feel I have failed my Lord, in my sad and low moments of reflection and remorse, I seem to hear His voice within me, "Do you love me?" Then in a great rush of healing, I feel I can truly answer, "Yea, Lord, Oh, yes, I do!"

Another beautiful scripture I love to think upon is John 4:14, "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Though it is a spiritual spring, I like to think of it as an actual spring bubbling forth with life in my heart. At times, when I feel a weight of guilt because I do not feel to have been true to what God requires of me, then I like to turn to that spring, asking forgiveness, and its crystal waters seem to flow over me, washing away those guilty feelings, then I feel all fresh and renewed again. When I feel lonely or sad, I go to it as an empty vessel, asking to be filled, and as I patiently wait at His feet, the One who is Love fills me again to overflowing and I go away with my cup full and running over and to spare. That well never runs dry. In physical pain this living water flows over the painful area, comforting, soothing, and restoring. When I feel too arid and cannot seem to utter words of prayer, then I know I must go again to that living water and be refreshed. I never have to wonder when I turn to that well, because there is always that 7th chapter of John to reassure me of promises Jesus made to the thirsting ones. He said, "If anyone thirst, let him come unto me, and be filled." And He is always there; praise His Name.

These beautiful things I see in my Bible and feel deeply within me as I read. They give such comfort and peace because Christ has said them, and I know they are true for it came from God thru Jesus Christ our dear Redeemer. Just to know that well of water is always within and never dries up fills me with a deep assurance of my security in Him.

There is yet another scripture that has a lot of meaning and I love to remember. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee." (Isa. 26:3)

This is a favorite verse of mine and as I get older it means more to me, for I know all my peace is in Him. He is the Prince of Peace. We are told "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of Jesus." Col. 3 speaks of the peace of Christ, "Let the peace of God rule in your heart." (Verse 15) And "Let the word of God dwell in you richly in all wisdom." (Verse 16) John 14:27 says, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I

unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Then again in John 16:33, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." When we think these verses over and are given to meditate deeply upon them, we will see the all-sufficiency of Christ. The Peace of Christ, Word of Christ, and the NAME of Christ all emphasize the completeness "In Him." "In Him we live and move and have our being."

Oh, my precious brethren and sisters, Isn't it lovely to be given a mind to think upon these blessed truths? Think of how the very name of Christ means authority to resist the devil! Peter says, "Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour, whom resist steadfast in the faith." You cannot help but see and be impressed by how Christ is in control in everything that has to do with us and our spiritual lives. His peace rules in our hearts: His word is our basic rule for growth, spiritually, and the Name of Christ identifies us as His. "Christ is all and in all." (Col. 3:11)

I know I've jumped about as I write this as it comes to me. But our thoughts do not always line up in a proper manner, waiting to be written. One thought leads to another, and on and on. I enjoy the book of Isaiah for a special reason. I see the prophesies of Christ all the way through and it is beautiful to read and compare, when given a mind to do so. It is not often I feel up to it, but when I do, I cannot seem to lay it aside until my eyes ache, and my head aches in sympathy, and then my whole body cries out for rest. But it is so interesting, as is all scripture. Woven throughout the New Testament we see that golden thread of Hope. Blessed Hope of life eternal with Jesus our Redeemer! That blessed God-given hope is a flame that burns brightly in the heart of a believer and as long as I live I want to have that hope within me, always alive and bright. One sweet day that hope will become real and my Lord will come down from glory and take me home. O blessed day!

Precious brethren, I do not write often. Some of you know of the illness that caused me to give up my home and live with one of my daughters, until Jesus comes in all His glory for His chosen ones. I am alone a good bit and my Jesus seems nearer and dearer as I have more time to read and meditate upon His word and upon His goodness and mercy to such as I am.

The *Signs of the Times* is such a God-send to all who are given a mind to read and understand what is being said. We are richly blessed to have faithful ministers whose only desire is to carry out the word of God, to preach the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth! Paul said (Col. 4:17) "Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it." And I am certain the dear stewards of God's word are careful to "examine the Spirits" and see if they be true. It is a God-given responsibility, a trust, and is to be honored as such. We, as hungering, thirsting sheep, come to the church to be fed, and these same faithful under-shepherds, when blessed of God to speak, never send us away empty. There are times when we aren't receptive to a special message, but there is always someone there that it is meant for, and is blessed. It is not of man to be fed, but of God. I well remember an evening service I attended many years ago in Baltimore. Elder Spangler spoke upon "Apples of gold and pictures of silver." After the service I spoke to him of how I had enjoyed it so much. I have never heard that text used. Elder Spangler said, "Sister Ruth, if only one person hears a message I preach, it's worth it all." And I never forgot that. The *Signs* and all the staff are faithful in their "Watching upon the walls of Zion" that no termites

may enter the walls and destroy. The Editors carefully sort and sift. Our God needs no defender. His word goes out in power that no one can deny. Those who were against Him in the past are gone and His word still rings out loud and clear. We who believe and trust await the trumpet call of victory.

May His word abide always in your hearts.

Sister Ruth Lucht

EDITORIAL

"These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me." "Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. (John 16:1-3, 32-33)

You will note, if you observe carefully, that the first verse in our text reads this way, "These things have I spoken unto you." The last verse also reads, "These things I have spoken unto you." Our Lord was always instructing His little flock. He was instructing them about things they knew not of, though often times they thought they did. In the first verse, He said He spoke these things unto them that they *would not* be offended. In connection with that, compare a verse of scripture in the gospel of Matthew. There is no contradiction there, but things seem to be quite opposite. Shortly before the Lord went to His cruel death, He says this to His disciples, "Then saith Jesus unto them, all ye *shall* be offended, because of me this night. For it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad." (Matthew 26:31) Now He plainly told them that they *would be* offended, and yet our text above says, "These things have I spoken unto you that you *should not* be offended."

The Lord's instruction is beneficial to us only when it is applied by the Spirit of God. So many times we may read the instructions of our Lord as it is contained in the Bible, and we are not blessed with the feeling sense of it, and as a result we do not see its beauty, nor feel its power. The Lord not only instructed His disciples who were with Him then, but these instructions are just as suitable to His little flock today. In the first instance He was speaking about these disciples who followed Him in His ministry, that He desired not that they would be offended, yet they would soon be offended, and they would soon be scattered. And then the time would shortly come that the people who considered themselves very religious, would put the disciples out of their synagogues. And for what reason? Nothing other than that they followed Jesus. That is the only reason.

Jesus told the disciples in the 15th chapter of John to not marvel that the world hated them, because the world had first hated Him. He said the world hated Him without a cause. It's not a thing that we should marvel at, as some unusual circumstances had befallen us, whatever form it might take. Now in His introductory remarks here to them in this 16th chapter, He warns them about religious persecution. They would not only put them out of the synagogue, but the day would come that they would think they did God service by taking their life! Riding the other day to a meeting with Elder Spangler, he made a remark that startled me so that I didn't know what he meant until he explained himself. He

said, "I had to flee from the church for my life two times." Why, that took me back. I didn't know that anyone had ever threatened his life. And I asked him when in the world did anything like that occur. He said, "I didn't mean my natural life. I mean my church life." He said, "Twice in my travels there were those who would have excluded me and put me out of my home church, but for warnings which were given to me, and I was blessed to escape the snare." So he was talking in figurative language. He had to flee for his life. And there is the time in the lives of the disciples, that those who would kill you (in a spiritual way) think they do God a service. Even at this very hour, multitudes of well-meaning people in high political places really feel that they would be doing a service to humanity to exterminate the bulk of religion, except for those who would conform to State standards. And they think it would be beneficial to all concerned. (The little flock of Jesus Christ knows better.)

There has always, and there always will be until the end of time, religious and political tyranny, in which the church of Jesus Christ will be caught up. Our Lord said on another occasion (in this same book) to Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world." Have you been blessed to receive the lovely words of that expression? If we are partakers of the grace of God, we have been brought into His kingdom, then though we live in the world, though we are involved in its commerce, it's activities, there are many obligations that we owe to Caesar, but we are not *of* the world. There are two separate worlds - the world and the kingdom of Christ. The kingdom of Christ is in the world, and the world would do its best to get into the kingdom of Christ, but our Lord has a way of purging that. The kingdom of Christ will stand when the world is on fire. But just so long as the subjects of His kingdom live in this world, they are going to be subjected to tribulations, persecutions, afflictions, trials, darkness of mind, fears, etc. This is the general lot of the children of God to some extent or another. One thing not mentioned, above all others which is not pertinent to this, but is equally important, is that aspect of our life called coldness. However, in fairness to the subject, we might say the chief way to eliminate the coldness of our life is when the Lord is pleased for us to suffer persecution, tribulation, afflictions, and distresses. The Lord will not long leave us in the barren lands where we may grow cold. He will, rather, lead us like He did Shadrack, Meshach, and Abednego to the furnace. And in the furnace there we will see the fourth Man - Jesus, the Son of God, who is in our midst.

While things are smooth sailing, we don't look up, but we look out. While things are going well, we might be self-satisfied, but when the storms of life begin to rage, we, like the disciples on the little bark on the Sea of Galilee, will attempt to arouse the Master, and say, "Master, careth thou not that we perish?" It needs not be said, though we shall say it - everyone who calls upon the Name of God needs, and must have tribulations and afflictions, in whatever form they take. Whether they come from the highest levels of government, or the deepest recesses of their own inward being, they all work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose. (Rom. 8:28)

How many of you over the last year or so have, at some moment in your spiritual experience, been brought to grief? The bitter tears of sorrow flowed down your cheeks; the piercing of your heart because of some trial seemed almost more than you could bear, and yet what is always the inevitable results of such circumstances as these? They drive us to God's throne. Our Lord has said, "Come boldly to the throne." And those who are in pain get bold, don't they? Now let us use, if we may, a

worldly illustration. There is not a person reading this piece that, under normal circumstances, would pick up your phone and call your dentist. Everybody dislikes dentists. But if you were in enough pain with a wisdom tooth throbbing out of your head, you would boldly call him, if you had to get him off the golf course, out of bed, or wherever; necessity being upon you. A desire for relief would impel you to do what was necessary to gain it. Is that not so? How much more then when the aching heart, the groaning spirit, and all the inward being combined is heaving under duress, trial, and tribulation, do we come boldly to the Throne of Grace, pleading our cause?

How often are we going to have these troubles, you might ask? We don't have to tell you. Did your troubles just begin today? Or did they begin back sometime ago? We sing the song

"How strange is the course that a Christian must steer!
How perplexed is the path he must tread."

Oh, what truth is in those words. And then the last verse says

"When his pardon is signed, and his peace is procured,
From that moment his conflict begins."

When one is brought into the light and blessed with a lively hope; when one first feels that blessed hope that Jesus is theirs, it is then that the real trials begin! All before that were really just the ordinary things of the flesh. But when one is brought into a knowledge of saving life, and then the temper (Satan) sets in upon him, the old man begins to rise up against him, and enemies are found in quarters they knew not even existed. Then they begin to see that this business is not some minor thing. It is a real part of our life. Tribulations take many forms. Many of them are the results of our worldly troubles. The greatest anxieties that we observe in most believers is worry and distress about things going on politically, or economically. And isn't it an irony that that is the area where we have the least control? We worry about most everything going on. We listen to news casts and get ourselves all upset in a fever pitch wondering, how can these things be? Isn't it a comfort if the Lord draws your mind back again to spiritual things; to realize and believe that God yet sets upon the throne and reigns supreme, and that the powers that be are ordained of God? And this all is but falling out to His glory, and to our good.

In the closing words of our Lord in our text, He told them that they were all going to leave Him alone. All of His disciples would abandon Him, and still He said, "And yet I am not alone." Why was that? He was not alone because the Father was with Him. Now ask yourself this question. Do you believe that Jesus felt as comfortable with His Father as He could have been if 10,000 legions of men and angels had gathered to rally to His support? Our Saviour was as fully satisfied with the solitary presence of His Father in His hour of grief as He could have been if all the world had come to His aid. His Father was sufficient for Him. He said, "I and the Father are one," and the next chapter says in the prayer of our Lord, "...That they (His disciples) may be one." That we might be in Him, as He was in the Father, and that we might commune together. One cannot fully appreciate what our Lord said in the 16th chapter of John unless he reads the 17th in associaton with it. But confining ourself to the verses of the 16th chapter, He said He was not alone because His Father was with Him. That was enough. Even so today. Listen. Did not our Lord say before He ascended back to glory that, "I am with you alway, even to the end of the world?" Did he not say previous to that, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee?" Many times we may question that. In ourselves we cannot feel His presence, but He is here. We may be like the one in the Song of Songs, which was Solomons', "Tell me O, thou whom my

soul loveth, where thou feedest thy flock." We might say, like her, "By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth, and I found him not." And yet He's not gone. He may be withdrawn from our presence, but He is there. Why? If we are His, and He is ours; if we are one with Him, He is one with us. We have a duel relationship with Christ, and one is as true as the other. Christ *in us,* the hope of glory; but we are equally *in Him,* and it is this expression that should be so vital to us at this time.

"These things have I spoken unto you that *in me* ye might have peace." Will you find it anywhere else? Is it available in the marketplace? Can peace be obtained through political process, or will fighting wars bring about peace? Can we buy peace, or do we even want that kind of peace, or should it rather be we want the peace that is in Him?

Now let us then address ourselves to this subject of peace. "These things have I spoken unto you." Who is the *you?* Why, the *you* is His disciples! Our Lord shall not bring peace to all the world. Though he is the Prince of Peace, He said, "Think not that I am come to send peace, but a sword." And He will set family against family, friend against friend, and nation against nation, and all this is within His sovereign prerogative. But He does come as the Prince of peace for His children, His disciples. "These things I have spoken unto you that in me ye might have peace." But He goes on, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." There are two *ins'* there. *In me.* And *in the world.* And He governs both of them. We are in both of them. We are in the world, aren't we? Whether we like it or not, we are here until our Lord calls us out. And by His marvelous grace, we are *in Him.* We are in Him because of *His* free choice. In the chapter previous to the 16th, He says, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." And then further in that chapter He said, "I have chosen you out of the world." Now mark you well. He says, "I have chosen you *out of* the world," and yet He prayed the Father that He would *not* take us out of the world, but that we might remain here, and that He would protect us. Listen. "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." *"In me* ye shall have peace." *"In the world* ye shall have tribulation." "I have chosen you out of the world." And then He says that He prays to the Father that He would not take them out of the world. They have been called out of the world, and yet they remain in the world. And yet they remain in Him as well.

Is this a mystery? It is not a mystery to any of you that love the Lord, the Saviour. You understand His language in your inward being, though the world might think it is strange doctrine. Now, which is it? Are we *in Him,* or are we *in the world?* Why, we are in *both* of them. Well then, what will our lot be? Will it be peace or will it be tribulation? Some, many in fact, may want to teach us that we can rise above the things of the world. There is no need to suffer, they say. There is no need to be sick. There is no need to have fears; and many go so far as to say that God doesn't want you to be broke. On more than one occasion many of us have heard so called radio and TV evangelists widely proclaim the idea that if you will but contribute to God's cause, (and what they mean by that is their particular little ministry) then God is obliged to repay you a hundred fold, and that you can just get rich by contributing. And a lot of folks have found out that "that just ain't so." Aside from that, though, we know that those things are not so. We know there is no escaping tribulations, trials, or infirmaties of the flesh, or the warfare within.

We are in Christ, and we are in the world, and the Lord wills to have it that

way, and we shall experience the being in both of them. When we have fully experienced the both of them and the Lord begins to ripen us for glory, there is no question in the mind of the true believer which he would prefer to stay in. Many of you reading this have been in the world a long time. Some above 80 years. Most of you can safely say that you are getting a little weary with this present evil world. The sooner the Lord calls us to our happy home, the better, when we shall there stand before Him to have all our tears wiped away. No more groaning with the old man; no more wrestling with evil thoughts; no more coldness and deadness, lifelessness in prayer and study; no more hard thoughts toward our brethren. All of the things of this world will then be gone, and we will enter into the full glory of the kingdom, world without end, ages forevermore, if our hope be not vain.

What a blissful anticipation to leave this world that we are in. Why? Because in the world ye shall have tribulation! Our Lord said it is so. *It will be so!* The tribulations take varied forms, but they are all real, none the less. In the 5th chapter of the book of Romans, the Apostle Paul said, "Tribulation worketh patience." Most every one would like to be patient. You would like to heed the admonition of the Psalmist as he uttered (by the Spirit) "Be still and know that I am God." How can you be still unless God stills you? It is tribulation that worketh patience. Would you be patient? Then prepare for tribulation! But, you say, I am a coward. You are no bigger coward than anyone else. Some have dared to bargain with the Lord, saying, "Lord, if I do this again, send a certain tribulation upon me." Brethren, be fearful when you do things like that, for you know that you can't keep bargains. It is better that we don't make vows and promises to God that we know we can't keep. May we rather spiritually acquiesce, and bow submissive to the determinant will of God that His people endure tribulation. Though the tribulation might at times seem to be severe, it worketh patience.

It is needful that the saint of God be tempered with tribulation because if he is a genuine child, true born, home born heir, the tribulations will only further stimulate him to disavow this world that he is in and direct his allegiance towards the Christ he is in. *"In me* ye shall have peace. *In the world* ye shall have tribulation." We will have them both at the same time. Did you know that? Have you even been calmed in a storm? Have you ever been placid in the tempest? Have you ever felt comforted in the furnace? The three Hebrew children are a good example of tribulations the saints can expect. They were in a furnace heated seven times over, and yet their clothing was not singed. Not even the smell of smoke was upon them. In tribulation they were blessed to experience ultimate peace, walking with Jesus, because in the tribulation He was with them. He was their God and their Master in the flame, and over the king who had thrown them in the furnace, and all of this only served to show them that their allegiance *to Him whom they were in* was far superior to the trials and tribulations of the furnace *they were in* at the same time. They were *in peace* because they were *in Him,* and they were *in the furnace* because they were *in the world.* At once they experienced the both because they were two men, and not one. They were a new man and an old.

"These things have I spoken unto you that in me ye might have peace." Shall you find it anywhere else? Need you look for it in any other quarter? It was as if the Lord was warning His disciples. "You will not find peace in the world; look where you may, cry as you will. It is not there." Even in His departing discourse to the disciples He said, "There shall be wars and rumors of wars. These are the beginning of sorrows." Why, if wars and rumors of wars be the

beginning of sorrows, what must be the climax? "In the world ye shall have tribulation."

Turning now to I Thessalonians, Chapter 3, "Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone; and sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith: That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that *we are appointed* thereunto. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know." Why, the minister was sent for their comfort and their strength because they knew that they were *appointed* to tribulation and afflictions. It says, "As ye know." The children of God know that just as surely as the sun rises in the east that there will be sorrows before the sun sets in the west that day. There is not a day going by in the lives of any of us, however good we might feel in the morning, but what before the day is over we have our share of bitterness and anguish, trial, and affliction. We find that without are fightings, and within are fears. We find that we are cast down. We find that there are many adversaries, many woes. The Apostle Paul even said on one occasion that he had to fight the wild beasts of Ephesus.

One of the most grievous trials, the sorest trial of all is the frowns of our own brethren. When we feel we have lost the fellowship, or the comfort, or the union of brothers and sisters in Christ, what a lonely, lonely world it is to believers: to find that they cannot associate themselves with those of like precious faith. What a horrible loss it is when we become so wrapped up in the world and suffer tribulation at the expense of the joy in the kingdom. My dear readers, this world holds nothing for us; none of us. The only joy, naturally, that you shall know in this world (apart from being in Christ) is the peace that is ours in the kingdom of God, wherein He has called you, which kingdom we call the church of God. You may forsake it for a season; you may grow cold and might find brethren distant there. You may think, "Well, I'll just drift away." But be assured of this - God has set the church as a city upon a hill, and this is our refuge. Christ is here. He is the King in Zion. And yet, He says that we through much tribulation enter this kingdom. No, it is no easy road into or traveling with the church of the living God.

"These things have I spoken unto you that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation." (Are you not glad that verse didn't end there?) "But be of good cheer." Oh, it is enough to make you want to shout. Why, He just told us how *bad* things were going to be. He forewarned us "In the world ye shall have tribulation," but He knows His disciples better than they know themselves, and He said, "Be of good cheer." Did He say we *ought* to be of good cheer? No. He said, "Be of good cheer." And it does cheer the hearts of every little disciple to hear these words. These are the words from the lips of our Lord. "But be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." "I have overcome the world." And the Lord overcame the world all by Himself, and He did not ask us to overcome it with Him. He bore the cross alone. He endured the anguish, the suffering, and even the frowns of His Father from heaven. He endured to the going down into the regions of woe. He agonized on the cross alone; suffered the horrors of death. All of these things He did that He might say to His disciples, "But be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world." Why then, the world is not the master, but He is the Master of the world. Whatever tribulations come our way come by His *direct appointment.*

Look at one illustration in closing. We consider the servant of God, a man

called Job, as Satan pitched in upon him with all the fierceness of tribulation that any man ever endured. But all of that was under the direct dispensation of God's eternal purpose; to the point that even in all the suffering, death in his family, loss of his prosperity, sudden departure of his health, wife abandoning him, friends ridiculing him, misunderstanding him, he said, "The Lord gave and the Lord took away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." Is not that true faith? James says, "Consider the patience of Job." Where did Job get his patience? "Tribulation worketh patience." "In me ye shall have peace." You will have peace in the Lord, but you shall not fully appreciate that *peace in the Lord* until *in the world* you have tribulation. "But be of good cheer. I have overcome the world." The victory is His and the joy is ours. The warfare was His and the spoils are ours. What He has done was not for Himself, because He needed nothing. He did it because He loved His children. "I have overcome the world." And immediately after He said that to His disciples, He offered the most solemn, God-honoring, wonderful prayer ever uttered in eternity or time - the 17th chapter of John. May God bless you to think on these things.

James F. Poole

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To January, 1983

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CONTROVERSY

There is truly a diversity of opinion among brethren on the subject of *religious controversy.* Some of our brethren have expressed a great aversion to the discussion of important and deep subjects, on which our correspondents do not fully agree, while others profess to be greatly edified and comforted by hearing and comparing the conflicting views of those who differ on such disputed points. Under such circumstances, what course should we, as the editor of this paper, take? A venerable and dear brother writes us from Warwick, N.Y. that our readers in his vicinity are tired of the discussion on *Justification;* another brother writes from Troy, N.Y. that he is pleased with the idea of discussion through the *Signs,* when such discussion is conducted in the spirit of the gospel, with a desire to instruct. A third published a pamphlet in Maryland in opposition to our views on Justification, and says he is *no sectarian,* and hints that until the Old School Baptists can see eye to eye in every particular, that he judges it an unauspicious time for uniting with us. Again we ask, what course should we pursue? It is our desire (as far as we can do so without sacrificing truth) to please all our brethren; but we have a still

greater desire to edify, instruct, comfort and build up the sheep and lambs of our Heavenly Father's flock.

From a conviction in our own mind that well written discussions, in a spirit of kindness, on various subjects, will contribute to the interest and usefulness of the *Signs,* we have concluded to ask the indulgence of such of our brethren as do not see with us the propriety of such a course, while we will promise, on our part, to reject all such communications on controverted points as are written in an all-natured or unbecoming spirit or style. Why should we be afraid to discuss what we hold to be the truth? Nothing but error can suffer from investigation; the more closely the truth is scrutinized, the more brilliantly it will shine.

On the discussion of the subject of Justification, much has been written, and of that *much, some* has not been in that brotherly edifying manner that we could wish; but we conceive that more remains to be said, and more can be said to great advantage on the subject. We are persuaded that very little difference would remain among our Old School Brethren, could they understand each other, and each feel willing to yield to the word and testimony of Holy Writ. The communication of brother Goldsmith, in this number, appears to us to be written in a proper tone; we therefore cheerfully admit it. Let those who wish to reply to him, or otherwise to shew their opinion, avoid harsh expressions, and manifest at once in their writings their love for the truth, and their desire that all the purchased possession of Christ may know and be set free by the truth. Remember we are brethren.

Alexandria, D.C.
January 15, 1839

Elder Gilbert Beebe

CORRECTION

It has been brought to our attention that an article we printed some time back contained an erroneous statement. We wish at this time to correct it.

In the August, 1982, issue (Volume 150, No. 8) on page 175, left hand column, paragraph 1, beginning with line 5 the incorrect sentence is as follows: "The author of the book is among the Progressive Primitive Baptists, who love to think of themselves as the Old School or Primitive Baptists."

We have been informed that Elder Sorrels, the author in question, is, in fact, not connected with the Progressive group, but rather, he is with the semi-arminian, limited predestinarian, conditional time salvation, Old Line Primitives.

We regret not correcting Brother Webb's otherwise excellent article.

Editor

Eden, N.C. 27288

Dear Brother Williams,

I am so sorry my subscription has expired, but appreciate you sending it on until I got around to renewing it. This human flesh is so unperfect and we manifest this every day. While raking leaves in my yard the other day, my thoughts rambled to the human flesh and its dying daily. If we ever have a good thought, it comes from God. Within ourselves no good thing ever is manifested without Him. I believe in a God who is all powerful and does His pleasure in Heaven and on earth and among the inhabitants thereof.

Going back to the leaves - Brother Williams, as I raked, each leaf seemed to say something. There has been a dying in me since the day I first became a bud on the tree in the spring, (relating this to the child of God.). If I be one of His, we are brought alive when God reveals Himself to us. On the mountaintop we seem to be for a while, and then we find ourselves in a bottomless pit. There is no way out until God gives us enough faith to believe again. Sometimes it seems gone. We go to church and wonder if we're deceiving someone or all. Why am I here? If these people knew me like I

know me, they wouldn't want me to be numbered with them. When our dear saints come to ask for a home in the church, I just want to ask, "Do you still want me?" I feel so barren and dry - wanting to forget outside worldly and transitory things while at church, but sometimes it is not possible. I hear the minister saying the words. I know he's telling the truth because it is what I believe, and at the same time asking God to give me a little crumb and to renew the faith I hope He has given me.

There are things that happen in our daily lives of which we have no control. Sometimes we can't handle these burdens and worries, and I believe that is God bringing us to know to whom we should turn in time of need. I hope I've done that in the recent past. If everything went as planned every day, according to ourselves, we'd soon get so puffed up and full of vanity that we would be downright hateful. I don't want to deceive anyone, but I can only manifest what faith God gives me. If my portion is small, it's enough. If it is large, I hope I'm thankful. We can't carry any of it over for another day. How I wish we could because some days there doesn't seem to be enough to go through the day.

Each morning recently, I thank God for bringing me through the night and for strength to do what I have done the day before, and for what I have ahead of me that day, and for health to stay on my feet.

The past Thanksgiving holiday was a joyous and happy occasion for our family. We are thankful that all were well and everyone was together. There have been times in my past life when I took these things for granted. I hope I haven't worried you with my thoughts.

Hope you and Sister Mae and all your family are well. We love you all for Christ's sake.

A Sister in hope,
Bea French

FAREWELL

With this the May issue I now complete six years as one of the editors of the Signs of the Times. To serve the people of God in this manner is a great blessing and I trust I am thankful for the privilege.

I have submitted my resignation to Elder Spangler as President of the Board of Trustees, and he graciously accepted the same. I hope to continue my support of the paper.

To one and all, our faithful subscribers, I thank you for your support.

Humbly and in love,
Elder James F. Poole

February 7, 1983

Dear Editors:

My subscription to the *Signs* expired with this February issue. I am enclosing a check to cover another year.

I have always enjoyed the pages of the *Signs* and hope we'll be blessed to have it for many years to come.

I hope you editors (and also even more of our good spiritual writers) will have a mind to give us more of your views and comments thru the *Signs*.

We are so wonderfully blessed of our God to have so many such people among us. It seems we have more of the young ones everywhere we go to church. "Oh, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out."

A little sister in hope,
Ella Pearl Lee
Niceville, Florida

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It was on October 12, 1982, that we were made to feel God's blessings on Brother Irvin Ange. We feel that God called him to a better home, and he is now

resting in peace with his Saviour.

Brother Ange was born November 30, 1924, making his stay on earth almost 58 years. He was blessed, along with his wife, to join our church September 2, 1973 and baptised the same day.

He was a faithful member, and even though he suffered a lot the last year he lived, you never heard him complain. Brother Irvin was always praising his God, and giving thanks for all his blessings. To know him was to love him, for he dearly loved his brethern.

Therefore, we at the Tarboro Church, resolve that three copies of this resolution be made. One copy for the church records, one copy for his family and one copy to be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

We also send our sympathy to Brother Ange's family, for we feel he is resting in peace where trials and suffering are no more. We will miss Brother Ange, but we feel that God's will has been done.

This done in conference at our November meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

SISTER ORIE WILLIAMSON ODOM

In wisdom and mercy our God has called home another one of His precious jewels, our dear Mother, Orie Williamson Odom. She lived to be 100 years and 10 months here in this world. She was born in Butler County, Alabama, October 2, 1881. She was the daughter of James I. and Mary T. Williamson.

She was a member of Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church for 67 years and was often called the "Association girl," as they had to get the doctor, who was attending the Association at Moriah Church. She loved her church and the Primitive Baptist doctrine. She was a faithful member and always there when the church doors were open, as long as her health permitted. She had beautiful experiences that gave her precious hope that she was a vessel of mercy.

For several years she seemed to have no interest in worldly things. Her desires were heavenly and she walked in relation with our Saviour, in that He was a Man of sorrow, meek, and lowly, and submissive to the will of God the Father.

She was laid to rest, to await the resurrection, in Shiloh Church cemetery beside her husband, Jacob Benjimen Odom, on August 2, 1982. She leaves one son, Woodrow W. Odom, and one daughter, Grace O. Jones, both of Greenville, Alabama; also one brother, Martin R. Williamson, of St. Petersburg, Fl.; 22 grandchildren, 60 great grandchildren, and 23 great-great grandchildren.

God was merciful to our beloved Mother. She did not suffer and breathed her last breath easy. We do miss her.

Grace O. Jones and
Woodrow W. Odom

SISTER ATWOOD DALTON VEDDER

Sister Atwood Dalton Vedder was born August 31, 1888 in Pittsylvania County. She was the daughter of the late Lewis and Emma Zell Dalton. Survivors include four daughters, Sister Viola Amos and Juanita Wilks, both of Gretna, VA., Myrtle Beagly, Baltimore, Maryland, and Frances Beane, Harrisburg, N.C.; 6 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren.

Sister Vedder was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, and she was received by experience and baptized September 9, 1951.

Sister Vedder was loved by many. She spent some time with us before my mother died and we enjoyed her very much. My husband loved to hear her tell of olden times. She was faithful to fill her seat in church as long as she was able. She spent three years in Liberty Nursing Home, Lynchburg, Va., where she died September 27, 1981. She was tenderly cared for, especially by Sister Viola, who lived closer than the others.

Sister Vedder's funeral was held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by Elders O. K. Tench, Raymond Goad, and Denver Simpson; with burial in the church cemetery. We at Springfield miss her. At the ripe old age of 93, we should feel relieved she is at rest.

Written by one who loved her,
Sister Annie Tosh

SPECIAL APPOINTMENTS
FOR ELDER W. D. GRIFFIN AND
ELDER RICHARD CAMPBELL

Thursday, May 26 at 7 P.M.
Malmaison
Friday, May 27 at 7 P.M.
Dan River
Saturday, May 28
Staunton River Union
Saturday, May 28 at 7 P.M.
Reed Creek Church
Sunday, May 29
West Country Line Union at
Greensboro, N.C.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/83
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

In the May issue is the announcement of the resignation of Elder James Poole, as Editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Last July, Elder Poole handed me his resignation as editor. I prevailed upon him to reconsider and he withdrew his resignation. After receiving his recent resignation, I contacted him by telephone and asked him to reconsider the matter, but he informed me that his decision was final.

As President of the Board of Trustees, I believe I am expressing the sentiment of the entire Board, in expressing the Boards appreciation for his excellent work in carrying on this work.

I have contacted all the Members of the Board of Trustees in regards to some one taking up the work where Elder Poole has left off. It was the unanimous mind of the Board that Elder Kenneth Key, of Greensboro, be appointed as Joint Editor with me. Elder Key has accepted the appointment.

I am now eighty-one years old and am not physically able to carry on this work. No one knows the amount of work involved in getting out each issue of the paper.

Some write in to tell the editor that they enjoy the VOICES OF THE PAST most and others say they desire the current writings most. You cannot please all. We can't publish current articles unless we have them.

May I suggest to our elders that they do more writing. Especially, we desire that our elders write articles on the Prospectus Of The Signs.

Above all, we ask an interest in your prayers in our undertaking.

D. V. S.

September 1, 1982

To my Brethren everywhere:

I would like to tell a little of the dealings of the Lord with me. I was born in a family of ten – eight lived to adulthood, and two died in infancy. We all had to work hard to live.

Things began to happen to me at an early age. My mother was baptized into the Primitive Baptist Church when I was six months old. I remember when I was a few years old, she took me by the hand and led me to the old Indian Creek Church. Church was a serious thing for me from that day forward. As I grew into manhood, many things happened. When I was eleven years old, I was talking to my father. I walked out, and in about 10 minutes, I went back and found him hanging by the neck. I verily though that would be the worst thing I would ever have to see, but to my surprise, there have been many more. After this my other brother came back home to help take care of us.

I became ill one winter and during this illness the Lord of all glory seemed to appear to me, convicting me of my sins. There I was, condemned to die and go to hell, and rightly so. I lived in this terrible condition for a few years. When I was 18 years old, I was called up and entered military service. The morning I left home I thought I was leaving for good; that I would be killed and hell would be my home. But to my surprise, again the Lord had some beautiful things in store for me.

I was sent to a camp in Florida, and while there in came a tropical storm, and I had never seen anything like it. Up until this time, I had always felt that if I was near to mother, everything would be alright. There was as a voice spoke to me out of that cloud and said, "You are 700 miles from your mother. Who will take care of you now?" That same voice said, "There is a God in heaven, and He will take care of you." I found peace and relief from the things that had been bothering me.

Shortly after this, I dreamed a dream, and in it I thought I was at home. Then in about two weeks, I was on a five mile hike with full pack and rifle. I fell beside the road, and two days later I was discharged and sent home. That was the 22nd. of December, 1944. I had promised the Lord that if I got home, I would tell the church about all the things the Lord had shown me, but I could not until 1949.

My brother joined at old Indian Creek Church in 1948. I got up to go with him, but I couldn't go. I had to wait another year. When I asked for a home in the church, I could not see anything but a lovely group of people. That was the first love for the church. I was received and baptized by Elder L. A. Harris. Two years later, I was involved in a church split and an association split. Then I saw that people were not as lovely as they had first appeared. Elder L. A. Harris was taken from me, also. After the division, we were recognized by Smith River and Pigg River and their correspondence, and have remained that way ever since.

There have been many things happen to me at Union Church where my membership is now. Most of the brethren who came to Union with me are passed on. There has been twelve join since then. Elder Odell Thompson served us for 18 years. At his passing, I was much distressed and troubled. Elder Hale Terry came to serve us and is our present pastor.

I will try to relate a little about my call to the ministry, if indeed I have one. When I was in my teens, I was mocking a minister, pretending to have a funeral, and the thought came to me, "Some day you will have to stand, and you will be ashamed of this." I was troubled from that day on. To the best of my memory, it was about 20 years ago that I tried to speak for the first time. As I tried to speak, there was some sort of commotion among some of the brethren,and I told Elder Thompson before I left the church that day, that if it had to be that way, I would not try again.

Shortly after this I became sick. I had a complete nervous breakdown. I stayed in a Virginia hospital nearly twelve months and became withdrawn and did not know anyone for about 30 days. I also had double pneumonia. I suffered

in this state and did not go before the church again until twelve years later. I feel I have been the poorest excuse that has ever been before the Lord's people, but it came to the place that it was death if I did, and death if I didn't. After much suffering and affliction that I will not go into, Piney Union Church asked for my ordination. It was set for the fifth Sunday in April, 1978. On Wednesday came 18 inches of snow, and I didn't see any way we could get in the church lot. I was troubled very much. When I arrived on the grounds on Saturday morning, the people came, got out in the snow and mud, and everyone was smiling and happy. There have not been many times I more felt the love that was manifested there that day. I have been going everywhere that the Lord has blessed me with strength and ability ever since. There are many things I don't understand that have taken place among the brethren, but I would like to use, in closing, some scripture that has been precious to me.

"We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." I love my brethren. "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God has shined." That is the church in its beauty.

Love to Zion everywhere,
If saved at all, it is by grace.
(Elder) Willard Cox

302-A E. Lawson Street
Hahira, Ga. 31632
December 8, 1982

Dear Brethren,

Enclosed please find a check to cover the cost of one year's subscription to the *Signs* for the enclosed name.

I hope the Lord will bless you in your endeavors to proclaim the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. I believe the paper either becomes better as time goes by, or else I receive more discernment to see how rich its writings are as time passes. Much of the time I find myself involved in the description in Isaiah 59:9, "We wait for light, but behold obscurity." I sometimes think that I have never had the slightest taste of genuine communion with God and that all of my religion is merely the stirrings of the flesh as it contemplates the wrath and judgements of God with the dim light of nature. Yet, as that same passage in the prophet points out, this was the just desert of their sins and departures from God, and if I were to be left in such condition, both in this world and in the world to come, I would have no just cause for complaint. My condition and actions never cease to astound me. For one little season I am hot and heavy after the things of God and a brighter evidence of some interest in Christ; then with the rapidity of lightning, I find myself in a state of such deadness and dryness that I become almost indifferent to the whole matter and would think myself fortunate to be in the grip of the most desponding terror, since then, at least my attention would be fixed upon God and not on the trifles of this world. In short, I seem to spend nearly all my time alternating between terror and indifference, and my brightest hope seems to amount only to,"Who can tell?"

On the other hand, Paul warns us to be, "Giving thanks always for all things," (Eph. 5:20) and even in the above melancholy and self pitying account, I have been, I hope, shown many things to be thankful for. First, even if I do not see Christ as I would, I see something of myself, which is a necessary knowledge which only God can give, though not as a pleasant thing. Secondly, my terrors have never yet given away to final despair, nor has my indifference yet issued in final apostacy. Thirdly, there have been from time to time a few glimmers and hints of light along the way, though I have often feared that they were only sparks of my own kindling. Forthly, in the midst of my bitterest doubts and terrors, I have known a sudden sense of great thankfulness to God to rise up in my heart for having led me into the darkness, since many walk in darkness but think they are in the light, as one young man was who once informed me that he was glad that he was not bound up in such a system of belief as I was. Lastly, I hope I am thankful that although these exercises seem to me not to have all the essential marks of grace about them,

yet they are perhaps not unlike the beginning of a genuine conversion, which, if God has truly begun in the soul, He will bring to completion.

Nonetheless, I will share with the readers of the *Signs* a few things which mainly trouble me about myself, desiring their prayers on my behalf. First, I find no convincing evidence of having received from God a full and complete sense of pardon. I realize that this differs in degree from one to another, and I hope that I am not limiting the Holy One of Israel by demanding that He work in me according to some preconceived notion of my own, but my deadness, dryness, terrors, etc. seldom or never seem to be varied with any sense of what I would guess that the true children of God feel from time to time, namely, a felt sense of pardon, acceptance, and communion with God.

Secondly, I fear that my convictions arise more from the fear of punishment than from a genuine sense of having offended God and having wounded Christ. The experience so beautifully described in Zech. 12:10 seems to have never been mine. In consequence, I fear that my sorrow is not that Godly one which worketh repentance.

Thirdly, even the effort to think some appropriate thought or meditation upon God, Christ, Heaven, etc., is like trying to speak in a language that I never learned. I find any endeavor at spiritual mindedness to be as gruelling a task as ever was undertaken. Paul tells us that to be spiritually minded is life and peace. The difficulties that I have with the same are such that I know I have little peace, and strongly suspect whether I have any life.

Forthly, my convictions and serious concerns usually spring from having read some close and searching old writer. This makes me wonder if Isaiah 29:13, "Their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men," might not have some application to my case. If it doesn't, I'm afraid James is more to the point when he speaks of those who are "Forgetful hearers." (James 1:22-25)

Lastly, I, like Saul, discover a constant tendency to hold back the best of the cattle, and not give up all to the disposal of God. No haughty defeated king ever signed articles of unconditional surrender more reluctantly than I acknowledge the right of God to all that I have or am. Usually, I try to nicely calculate just how much of the world I can hold onto and still pretend to have a hope in God. The rich young ruler is a subject of solemn contemplation in this connection.

There have been times when I have been tempted, usually under the guise of impartial examination, to seek out some more agreeable and less terrifying belief. Atheism has, at times, seemed rather a charming alternative, except for the fact that I cannot believe it, nor deny the truth of Christianity even on a rational grounds. Another alternative has been to embrace some more agreeable form of Christianity. Roman Catholicism has a lot to be said for it under this head. However, it appears to me that any one who could deny the sufficiency of Scripture could deny the existence of God about as easily. In addition to these considerations, I find something that draws me to the truth even when I seem to make little progress in it and derive little comfort from it. Also, as I hinted before, I find a little hope-springing up from time to time that these reflections are indeed from God, and when this winter has subdued the old man to some extent, a springtime will follow.

I enclose a copy of a letter I sent to a Strict Baptist Pastor in Michigan who had asked me for a reason of my hope. I sent this letter, and I never heard from him again. If you see fit to publish it and any of the above lamentation, or any portions thereof, feel free to do so. Feel equally free to discard it, all or in part. Also, if any readers of the paper wish to make any comments to me on any of this, I would be glad to hear from them, and answer them at the above address.

Yours in such hopes as I have,
Elder John Crowley

(The letter alluded to will follow in a future no. of the *Signs*. Editor)

SANCTIFIED AFFLICTIONS

Dear Brother Chick:

Your letter came as a comfort to my chastened spirit, and I am grateful that such helpful words were in your heart. Our King says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Let me speak to you of my experience in this affliction, hoping it will minister to your spirit. Two hours before my hurt, in closing a letter to brother Hite, of Nashville, Tenn., I said, "Cast down, but not destroyed." This word seemed so prophetic and true in the extreme suffering that so soon came upon me. When the doctors told me that my case was serious, and that I could never have good use of the arm again, it seemed that such restraint must cause me much impatience and worry, for I had been quite active till then, and had thought to so continue. How quickly and painfully all was changed with me. Was it a sad accident, which should have been avoided by greater caution, or was it in the purpose of God, "Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will"? Faith in him led me to believe the latter. This soothed and quieted me, and it was not in my heart to murmur or fret. Trust and hope in God sustained me. His goodness and mercy through all my long life passed in review before me, and I was often moved to tears of peace and solace. Even through the many nights of great pain, so unrestful, a spirit of peace was given me, and with the early dawn the birds of song would cheer me, and my spirit would join them in praising God. To comfort and help me the more, the mails brought to us letters full of faith and love. These my wife would read to me, while I would try to keep back the tears of gratitude and comfort. So, my dear brother, I was sweetly constrained to both feel and believe that all this affliction, and its results, were in the counsel and love of God. To suppose I might have escaped injury would have changed all this experience that has come to me through the hurt. My deliverance from a violent death was a little less than miraculous, as a train of cars was near when I arose. But if I had been killed, then again the results must have been different we know, yet, unless the counsel and purpose of God established the certainty of all things, then all might have been different. Let me mention a few things to show you this. My son wrote:"If father could only have been a little more careful, how much better it would have been."But I was trying to be careful, and the thought in my mind (with my sight on the rails) was, "I must step carefully, and not stumble and fall before the onrushing train. Just then my right foot struck an unseen wire, and the force of the fall was fearful, and for the moment I was stunned. The next thought in my mind was, the train is near, I must get up quick. I do not know how I arose, but found myself on my feet, out of the way of the train, and badly hurt, but felt that the Lord had delivered me from so terrible a death. My right arm hung powerless at my side, and with my left hand I felt that it was partially dislocated at the shoulder, and I hope that was the worst, though a long gash was cut in the bridge of my nose, in which the doctors took seven stitches to close the wound. They found the arm broken at the shoulder, and set it, but would not admit the dislocation, to which I called their attention. O how grateful I felt, even then, that my life was precious in the sight of God.

Dr. Wilcox, who attended me, said the arm could not be put in place unless I took chloroform, which at my age would be at the risk of my life. We then decided to leave St. Paul, Ind., and see Dr. Bedford, of Indianapolis, and did so June 18th. He called Dr. Haggard, Professor of Surgery, in consultation. They said there would be no risk in the chloroform, but the risk would be of breaking the arm again, or of rupturing a blood vessel. So they declined to operate on me, advised me to let well enough alone, and told me I had come off well at my age.

The next day we went to Olney, Ill., to visit my granddaughters, and to consult Dr. Webber at his sanitarium, for he had sent me word to come there and he would put my arm in place. He did this safely on June 21st. Trusting in the Lord and without fear, I laid down on the op-

erating table and inhaled chloroform. The next thing I knew I found myself lying on a sofa in another room, with acute pain in my shoulder. Soon Dr. Webber came in and asked how I felt. I told him, and said, "Doctor, you haven't put my arm in place, have you?" With a smile he answered, "Yes, my friend, your arm is all right."

O, brother Chick, the relief and gratitude I felt was too deep for utterance. About forty days my suffering had been severe, in which time the broken arm had firmly united and my lacerated nose was nicely healed, and most admiringly and thankfully had I watched this good physician , which the all-wise and benef icent One had placed within me, and now, by the skill of a kind surgeon, my helpless arm would again help its fellow arm. O how wonderful are the provisions of God in nature! How could I have realized all this goodness of mercy and comfort of love in the absence of the attendant suffering and need? How otherwise could the Head of the church perfect his body, and enter into his glory, only through suffering? He must first drink the bitter cup his Father gave him, and be baptized into death. He thus fulfilled all righteousness for his members, and is in oneness with them. So likewise must we be made partakers of his sufferings in the flesh, that we may also be glorified together with him; and so the reproaches and sufferings of Christ have been my consolation in affliction. God is rich in mercy, but only through suffering do we need his mercy and bless him for it. He ordained both the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we die, we shall also live with him. Surely then these are sanctified afflictions. I would not have chosen them, but God hath chosen us in the furnace of affliction, and in his son, and thus through the suffering of Christ he refines us.

"Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will."

My spirit rejoices in him that it is so, and that none can stay his hand. Now I am in his hand, waiting his will, and praying, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" I have wanted to write to you and the beloved in the Lord of these trials and consolations, and testify that "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble." To his suffering and buffeted servant Paul he said, "My grace is sufficient for thee," &c. This is true of us also; it is Christ's strength in our weakness.

Now, with love to all the saints, farewell.

D. BARTLEY

Willow Hill, Ill. July 18, 1904.

November 15, 1982

DAN RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH - 1982 IN RETROSPECT

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." (Acts 2:41)

As a year draws to a close, man typically, whether from habit or expectation, reflects upon the more vivid events of the past twelve-month period. Certainly, without divine intervention and guidance we would, by nature, recall only those worldly occurrences which seemingly have a special appeal to the carnal mind. Even the November holiday set aside (by man) for "Thanksgiving" can only follow the pharisaical way without God instilling in us, through His grace, a heart of true "Thanksgiving." When the latter occurs, we are not restricted to a "day" or even a "season" of "Thanksgiving," but rather——as it pleaseth the Lord!

If God would bless me with a spiritual mind, I would like to reflect briefly upon a subject which is no stranger to the believer who has followed the command of God and who has been made submissive to go down in the liquid grave. From November 21, 1981, to present, it has pleased God, for reasons known only unto Himself, to lead fifteen lovely believers before the church to ask for a home with those of like precious faith. Each believer sweetly expressed his or her love for the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Though the expressions varied according to experience, there was always evidence of a oneness of mind and

heart.

In my years of being blessed to go in and out among Old School Baptists, I cannot recall so many being led in this manner in a period of somewhat less than a year. Of the fifteen asking for a home, eight were baptized on a single occasion. It was for me a blessed privilege to assist my pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, as this ordinance was administered to the eight. The experience was humbling and one which, through God's grace, shall ever remain dear to me. Surely, God does move in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform!

God forbid that either our ministers, deacons, or members should ever become haughty or "puffed up" over the witnessing of increased numbers. Rather, shall our hearts be ever thankful for the manifestation of the love and power of our Lord as He makes His truth known to His little ones in such a way that they are made to willingly take His cross and follow Him. I believe the scripture quoted under the title line above (Acts 2:41) attests to these truths. I do not believe that the written account of the three thousand souls being added on the same day is included in this scripture to boast of the effect of Peter's work. Rather, it upholds the precious truth that God does indeed move as it pleaseth Him.

I feel a desire to list below the names of those who so sweetly professed the name of Jesus along with the date each was moved to ask for a home. May God continue to richly bless them, not only in their moments of joy and praise but also during those times when trials and tribulation are to be their lot.

Thomas W. Jackson	November 21, 1981
Bettie Southard	November 22, 1981
Frank Miller	May 23, 1982
Beatrice Miller	May 23, 1982
Linda Joyce Spangler	May 23, 1982
Frank T. Simpkins	August 21, 1982
Ella C. Simpkins	Ausgust 21, 1982
Weldon Strader	September 12, 1982
Irene Setliff	September 12, 1982
Connie Page	September 12, 1982
Roxie Strader	September 12, 1982
Muriel Strader	September 12, 1982
Theodore C. Austin	September 25, 1982
Ira G. Strader	September 25, 1982
Leonard O. Foster	September 26, 1982

Submitted in Love,
Bob R. Collie, Deacon

Dear Brethren,

To you who feel a sweet and precious hope in your breast of a place in heaven and immortal glory after this sin cursed earth has passed away, I, in fear and trembling, write unto you in love. I feel to hope it is that same love wherewith He first loved us, and worked that love within my very heart and soul for Christ Jesus the Head and every member of His body, the Church of the living God. I fervently hope I could, by His grace, be a member thereof. That, my dear friends, is the uppermost of my interest.

In the searching of my innermost desires while attempting this writing, I detect no desire to please the flesh by fancy words or otherwise, but desire that if it could be in accord with His holy will and pleasure, I might be enabled by His grace to write only those words that would be some comfort unto His children, and therein praise only unto His great and holy Name. I feel to realize His is the only Name given in heaven or amongst the inhabitants of the earth, ever to be worthy of any and all praise, honor and glory. If we be His children and are taught of the Lord, we surely know full well that every portion of what we are is only and entirely by His grace to usward, and most assuredly not by any means of our own selves. Are we not fully aware of what takes place every time our fleshly way and manner are let go to exercise itself; it is always to the praising and puffing-up of that very flesh of mankind.

Brethren, that perfect and unbreakable circle encompasses all – all worlds, all heights, all depths, all breadths, all times, and all eternity. Within it lies all the "I will's" and "You shall's" of Almighty God, the Creator of all things, the Father of His afore chosen children. Dear and precious little children of your (and I hope my) Heavenly Father, that perfect circle is wherein lieth any and all holy truth, and any and all that be outside that perfect circle is folly and lies.

It seems to me that if I did not feel for sure that absolute predestination were an absolute fact of Holy truth, as having if even one grain of sand, or one leaf of a tree could fall outside that perfect circle

wherein lieth the unhindered fore ordination of the Almighty God, then all my desire to trust and hope in Him and worship Him and praise His great and Holy Name would be completely gone, and of all men I surely would be most miserable. It seems to me that for even one minute particle or thing to take place in all time for this world to stand that was not already foreseen, foreknown, foreordained, fixed, and established, and absolutely predestinated to be to exactness in time, place, and manner, as it does come, and that to include every thought of every brain, every action or movement of every body, and this to most assuredly include every iota that has to do with the devil, Satan, and his angels; if any portion or particle of the above mentioned were not an absolute certainty with God from before the foundation of the world, then it's entirety would be and come by chance only.

Some speak of God having predestinated some things, but not some other things. I do not believe, cannot believe, nor do I desire to believe there could possibly be any such thing as partial or part predestination and part chance with Almighty Three-One God. The God and Lord in whom I feel and hope is my trust is in no wise limited upon the whims of any or all of mankind. That true and holy principle in which God is declared as having absolutely predestinated all things contains not even one small portion of even a hint at God being the author of sin; but rather declares that this great and merciful God does all the good, and that all of mankind does all the sinning. It seems to me that any less is an attempt at taking glory from God and giving it to puny, filthy mankind. Dear children of the Most High and Merciful God, there is no doubt in my mind or heart at this present time but that such attempts at taking from God and giving to mankind is in every instance at the very root and bottom of all disputings and trouble within and among churches of the Old School or Primitive Baptists. It is my understanding that whenever the true Old Baptists meet together at a meeting, the thing of uppermost importance to them is that they might be enabled to worship and praise their God and Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and therein refrain from even a hint at the praising of any one or more of finite and puny mankind. I think and feel about the absolute predestination of all things by Almighty God as being no more and no less than the absolute certainty of God. The very fact of His existance does in itself unquestionably confirm and establish that very fact of Holy truth, that all existance in all times and worlds and eternity must and shall be and is and ever was known and seen and fixed and unchangeably established by this great Almighty and Merciful God. To me the very word "God" verily and unequivocally stamps the seal of folly upon every thought or work or saying or writing that is outside that direct leading and guiding and directing by the Holy Spirit. Though some of those thoughts and sayings and writings might be a natural time and worldly truth, and yet still they are folly by reason of the fact that they are in nature's worldly form, and therefore shall surely fade or pass away as shall this earthly world and every stubble therein. But not so with every thought and word and action of God the Creator, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit, the Three in One. For they are from and unto everlasting.

And so it seems to me that a denial of any portion of God's almighty power in foresight, foreknowledge, foreordination, predestination and its absolute certainty, is not less than a denial of His very existance. I feel no desire that my hope and trust be in one with any less power of certainty of the workings and outcome of all things. For were less the case, then the reaching of my poor depraved case could never be reached, and I surely would be lost, worlds without end. I desire to be, and hope I am, a begger of mercy and grace from God through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, but never, no never, from poor and puny mankind, for he has neither to give. If I, or any other of mankind, have ever had even one unselfish thought or feeling concerning anything during our entire stay here upon this earth, then it has

every part and portion come into being entirely by the working of the Holy Spirit.It is not in mankind of himself to function in such unselfish and unfleshly like manner.

Brethren, God willing, let us think about these things earnestly and in His truth ask ourselves these questions – when first we were shown exactly what man was and is in his own nature, and how ultra void he is of any good thing, and his complete and total self helplessness to acquire any good way or mannerism that would be good in the sight of God, is this one enlightenment not sufficient evidence for us to know full well that it is entirely impossible for us to rightfully place even one iota of our trust in any one or more of mankind of himself for anything as concerning the holy way of doing things in the church of this Living God and Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? I feel and believe so. The flesh always loves the things of the flesh; but that God given Spirit always loves only those things that be of the Holy Spirit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It seems to me that if I know anything as I ought, then surely without any doubt in my mind, I know for a certainty that of my fleshly self I am nothing and less than nothing, and that any and all my fleshly self has or does perform in either words or actions, are no more than filthy rags in the sight of God. And (save Jesus Christ) this same applies in worth to every creature ever born of a woman. The Holy Spirit, while working within anyone, will surely hinder that person from giving any particle of praise unto any of mankind for anything. The flesh praises only the things of the flesh, while the Spirit of Holiness only praises the things of the Holy Spirit of God.

Dear Brethren, I do not claim to know very much, but I do not feel it to be amiss to make this next statement–you may mark this down as an infallible truth–to in truth praise God is also to in truth deny any self-sufficiency in mankind to perform even one single thing that could possibly be embraced within that Holy principle of good in the sight of God. Brethren, if this writing be copied in the *Signs*, some of its readers may say or feel that I am repeating some things to the extreme, but I tell you what is the truth from my heart, what the fleshly man or woman may feel or think or say along those lines is of absolutely no concern to me at this point in time, for there are at least two things which I truly feel cannot possibly be repeated too ften or too much. One is the praising of God's greatness and goodness, and the other is the denial of any of that same goodness in fleshly mankind of himself for either is conformation of the other. If I praise one or more members of a church, be he either a lay member, a deacon, or an elder, for what they accomplished, then I most assuredly am withholding and all praise, honor and glory from Christ the Head of the church. Dear and precious ones, if such praise of one or more (as if they themselves had accomplished some great thing) be a true expression of one brother's love toward another, then this love I feel for the brethren is entirely amiss. Brethren, I feel and believe with all my heart and soul that just as sure as one be under the influence of the Holy Spirit, just that sure is it that one will have no desire for any praise or honor for themself. I feel of a certainty that the Holy Spirit has never and will never contradict nor disagree with Itself, but instead is always in complete and toal harmony. With that in mind, from where does all disagreements and word fightings among the Old Baptists come? Does it not come from such things as jealousy, selfishness, and the false praising of one by the very workings of Satan or the devil? I believe so. Further, is it not that very same thing if I wantingly accept such praise for myself? I surely believe so, for it is assuredly false pride on my part. In my heart I know full well that I am not deserving of any part of it, for His furnishings supplied all the strength to make possible whatsoever was performed. So dear Brethren, let us ask ourselves this question – had we not just as well praise Satan as to praise each other? I feel and believe so, for all praise and glory belongeth to the Lord, for He is all our strength, not only for earning our daily bread, but much more so for receiving

our Spiritual food, and even our very existance is wholly dependent upon Him. There just simply is no power for any strength except that it be ordained of God. By the grace of God (and His grace alone) are you saved. And dear Brethren, it is not oh so great a blessing to be given to realize for a truth that grace is not only given freely, but is totally and completely free and that salvation (both in time and eternity) is of the Lord.

Dear Children of your Father, trials and troubles in and among the militant churches, and the heartaches derived therefrom, are oh so hurtful, but from time to time whenever we are blessed for even just a moment to remember His promises, we then know that all these things are necessary for our good if we (by the grace of God) are what we hope to be and can remember His words, "My grace is suffieient for thee." We are also taught this very thing – Satan was put here for a definite purpose, and just as sure as he is here, he shall serve that very purpose for which he was put here, and none other. But thanks be unto God, we also (as a gift from God) have a Holy hatred for him (Satan) and all his cohorts. That is the same hatred (I feel) as when Christ said, "Esau have I hated." Dear ones, you are still His little children. You are still precious to Him. You are still His same love wherewith He spoke and said, "Jacob have I loved." It seems to me that were I given a heart to pray, my prayer would be, "O Merciful God, in as much as be in accord with Thou holy will, give us Thy perfect willingness that Thy will be done in all things, and as Thou said, 'Go and tell John again these things that I have said unto you,' remind us, O Lord that Thy love and kindness toward us and Thy children everywhere, and show us our weakness, and helplessness, that in so seeing, we migh be enabled, O Lord, to once again view Thy greatness and goodness and mercy, and grace, that is suffieient for us all in our every need. O Lord God, we do hope to have asked these things in the name of Thou beloved Son Christ Jesus and for His sake. Amen."

Brethren, it seems that surely there has been times with me that truly I could say, "I'm not ashamed to own my Lord, nor to defend His cause," but also from time to time I am reminded of that certain time with Peter, when not only did he deny knowing Jesus Christ, but did also curse in the process. That is just one more witness or evidence to me that any time I am not kept from such things, I am always subject to Satan's ways, I tell you Brethren, even he has more power that this poor worm of the dust of the earth. What I feel I am trying to say here is – Though we have no doubt as to Peter being a child of God, even he of himself could not be trusted, only as he was led and guided by the Holy Spirit.

So Dear Ones, God wiling, let us try those spirits that are working in the Peters' (members) of the church, and decide which are we to trust, – the Peters' or rather the Holy Spirit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In other words, let us not (in our minds) raise man above what is his rightful stance or place, for have we not been shown what man of himself really is. Was it not an awful filthy sight? Was it not at the very center and bottom of the dung hill? Is this sight not very clear evidence as to whom our trust and hope and love ought to be in? Is not that manifestation we see come forth out from our Brethren of the working within them of the Holy Spirit, our one and only Guide, not only of our love for them, but also as to what degree of trust we may have in what they might say concerning the inner workings of the church of the living God. I feel and believe so. Brethren, whenever or wherever we gather together in His Name, though there may only be few, there He is in our midst, for that He promised. So dear and precious ones, may it be our hearts desire to meet together only in such manner of brotherly love of union and communion, ever looking upward to our Lord and Saviour from whom all our help comes.Let us not follow after any man, but rather our one and only Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and what He stands for. But let us not follow after any one or more who manifests that their greatest desire is to

gather together great numbers of people and churches within their own fold. Now I say to one and all, whatsoever you find in this writing to be amiss, lay it all at my door. But whatsoever you may find as a comfort, or as being in accord with the Holy truth, render any and all praise unto the Lord for it so being.

Your brother (I hope) in Christ
Jesus our Lord,
Troy G. Shepard
SR 28
Kitty Hawk, N.C. 27949

Memphis, TN 38112

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I hope the Editors and readers of the *Signs* will bear with me one more time.

This morning, after having attended the Soldier Creek Association in Benton, KY., and the Hopewell Association in Fayette, Alabama, I am so caught up in thought I feel I will burst if I don't try to say the things going through my mind. I have told it so many times, but being a witness among these two gatherings of God's children, and the power of God sent down to the ministers and servants to feed them, giving them proof (scriptural) that he is the same God He was in the days of the prophets and apostles, and will ever be, it has stirred and filled me to tell it again. It has made me go back and relive my experience all over again, and each time I meditate upon it, I go back a little further in my life. I don't want to be tedious, so will tell of the most precious part.

I had desired this thing – this hope and belief and knowledge of God – a long while, but did not know how, or where, to get it. At one time I thought maybe I could join a church, any church, and maybe it would bring about what I wanted. Only that would mean I would have to say, or pretend to believe, God had saved me. That thought was too horrible for consideration at all.

Finally I came to the conclusion that I was an alien, a black sheep, and would always be. I was as sure of it as one can be. I was sad and fearful, but condident that it was that way. In a way I was more or less reconciled and seemingly at ease in this thought.

One morning I was aware of a feeling of joy, a feeling I hardly understood. I couldn't tell from whence it came, but knew it was different to anything I had ever felt. I pondered it in my heart as to what it was. I wasn't expecting anything new for the house, nor any coming event that could cause this kind of feeling.

I somehow think of three days in connection with this, though it may have been more. Anyway, the next morning this joy and light feeling within me was still there. I'd rather not take the space to tell all the thoughts that went through my mind, but the third morning it was there and with more power. I found myself so lost in thought, wandering from room to room trying to do my household chores, and finally realizing I was just standing in one place, not doing anything. I questioned, "What on earth is this feeling?" I walked into a room and sat down to think about it. I thought of God, and immediately I felt to say, "That's what it is." I felt a presence around me and thought if I reached out my hand I would touch Him, but I didn't dare try it. I was spellbound, afraid to move, but such joy.

I thought to myself, "There's something changed. There must be." I thought of going to the door and looking out, maybe there was something outside to be shown me. Softly and fearfully (and feeling a little foolish), I walked to the door and looked across the field and trees and viewed the sky, hoping there was something that would be evidence that this was truly of God. I saw nothing, and my heart sank and I was sad. While I was gazing at the scenery these words flashed in my mind (not by an audible voice but) as though indellibly printed there, "My child, the change is not out there, but within you. You've been baptized with the Holy Spirit and your heart has been washed in the blood of the Lamb." Such a joy more powerful than ever rushed over me and I was so condident that It was God. I had not a doubt and that sweet confidence stayed with me a long while.

I could write a book of all the things which led up to this experience, and the forty odd years since, but it might not be prudent. It seems I have been emptied from vessel to vessel many times. This may not make sense to anyone else, but it does to me. There are times I feel I've been emptied into this vessel of carnatity, and in this state I find myself thinking, "I may lose sight of that glorious and all powerful God," and with a zeal (probably carnal) I want to go out and gather all the precious souls who are indeed followers, but do not come into the visible church here, and bring them in. Not wanting to wait for God's time and purpose, I want to see them added to our little membership here and now.

Sometimes He leaves me in this state so long. I once fould myself saying, "Oh, Lord, you know how weak I am, and it's dangerous to leave me too long, and I am without strenght to remove myself from it, forgetting the great power and mercy with which He brought me up before Him in the first place. Oh, how weak we mortals are.

And I hope He then from time to time lifts me out of that vessel into that spiritual vessel, or place. I for a while can view Him in all His perfection and I'm so at peace, and I fall, I hope at His feet and rest there, knowing all things are in His hands. He is the Rock, His work is perfect; just and right is He. And when it is His will that we be gathered together and hear words of wisdom fall from the lips fo His servants or ministers here, we feel so blessed, though poor and weak we be.

I trust I have not written this out of the vanity of my own mind, and I trust whosoever's hands this falls into will dispose of it anyway they see fit.

Mrs. James E. (Lucille) Young

EDITORIAL

"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." (Isa. 54:17)

The prophet was blessed in this one verse of scripture to condense into a very few words a truth that is as basic to the doctrine of salvation by the sovereign grace of an almighty and merciful God as is to be found in the printed word. It sets forth the complete security of the servants of the Lord and the absolute assurance that their righteousness before a just and holy god will ever remain sure and steadfast. The Apostle Paul expressed the same sentiment this way, "If God be for us, who can be against us." Just think for a moment of the awesome majesty and power of these statements: who is making them and to whom the statements are directed. They are from the infinite wisdom and power of a loving and merciful Heavenly Father and they are directed to a specif-people who are the objects of His love and care that He created for Himself to show forth His glory.

The scripture does not say that no weapon shall be formed against His servants, but that "No weapon shall be formed against thee' *shall prosper* or be successful in overcoming them and separating them from their Father's care. Actually the servants of God are confronted daily by weapons that are formed against them and tongues that rise up against them in judgment, and this has been true since the beginning of time. This began in the Garden of Eden when the serpent beguiled Eve and the judgment was pronounced. God said, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head and thou shall bruise his heel." Ever since that time the seed of the serpent has been making war against the seed of the woman and is continually forming weapons against the seed of the woman but the scripture above promises that the seed of the serpent shall never overcome. It will continue to attack because it hates everything that the servants of the Lord stand for and uses every weapon it can devise to hurt them.

The beautiful and comforting thought in the above scripture is the fact that there is no possibility that these weapons and tongues can prosper. If they

could prosper or the promise and power supporting the promise could fail, then the children of Israel would have perished at the Red Sea; the three Hebrew children would have burned in the fiery furnace; Daniel would have been eaten by the lions; Isaac would have been slain by Abraham, and Joseph would have been killed by his brethren. If any of these could have happened, It would have changed the entire course of the world. The certainty of all things in the future rests in the hands of the same power that has determined all things in the past and not one in either category did or can fail. The hope of all who declare that if they have any righteousness it can only be by the imputed righteousness of Christ, acknowledge that all of their salvation depends upon the fact that the adversary cannot prosper in his attacks on them by the same power that has supported those in ages past. They realize that but for promises such as the one above, and the continuous demonstration of this care and lovingkindness in their lives that they could not stand for a moment.

The prophet says that the fact that God is fighting their battles for them and that their righteousness is of Him is the heritage of all of those who were choses in Him before the foundation of the world. In the song that God gave to Moses to teach to the people, He refers to this choosing of His people as a separation of the sons of Adam and a setting of the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. "For the Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance." These and many other scriptures speak of the way and maner in which the Lord's people were called out from among the nations of the earth. They are given a knowledge of God through faith, which is the sovereign gift of God, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The song of Moses began, "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." This is the solemn and mysterious way in which the truth is instilled into the heart and soul of man. It is the gracious and majestic work of the God who created the world by the word of His power, the One who speaks and it is done; the One who commands and it stands fast. Oh, the beauty and the glory of this God and all His work, and the comfort to those who have been exercised and can claim these promises as their own because of a work of grace in their heart.

Man who will declare that God wants things a certain way but must have the cooperation of the creatures has never known God; has never been changed from the natural into which he was born; has never been born of the Spirit of which all must be born before they can see God and the glories of His kingdom. He is the one that raised up His voice in judgment against the Lord's servants and is condemned by them because they realize where the judgment is coming from, for they were also once in that condition. He is in the same place that the Apostle Paul was before the light shined around him and Jesus revealed Himself to the Apostle. This experience is a part of the lives of all of the children of the Almighty God of heaven and of earth and regardless of how and when it happens, it is sufficient. They then have fellowship for the Apostle Paul when he said, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves: but our sufficiency is of God." It is a wonderful and glorious heritage to live among and enjoy the fellowship of a people who have been made to acknowledge that their righteousness is of God because they are not sufficient of themselves.

Jude is speaking of this heritage when he said, "To them that are sanctified by God the Father, and perserved in Christ Jesus, and called." This is declaring the absolute safety and security of the salvation of all the saints of God and it involves all of the Godhead. God the Father sanctified them, before the world was, unto His glory; Jesus the Son preserved them, His death atoning for all of their sins and making them accepted in the Beloved and the Holy Spirit

calls them in this life and reveals to them that they are indeed a chosen vessel of the Most High God and heirs of the fulness of His kingdom.

Speak of a heritage! Can you imagine a more grand and glorious heritage that could belong to a people and all because it was their Father's good pleasure to give it to them. It seems that they would never doubt or question their experience or fear anything that might confront them in this life with such evidence that cannot be denied. The Apostle Paul must have been thinking on these things when he wrote, "Wherefore seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." There is a race that is set and it includes every weapon that shall be formed against them and every tongue that shall be raised against them in judgment. They are all for a specific purpose and they shall fulfill that purpose, but Isaiah says they shall not prosper. The cloud of witnesses that encompasses the children of God are their brethren from former generations who have left on record their travels that those that were to follow would be encouraged as they learn that the trials and afflictions that they are suffering have ever been the footsteps that the redeemed of the Lord have walked in. They will see and bear witness that these truths are eternal and are a heritage that all of creation does not possess. They strengthen the hope of the weary pilgrim that theirs is the journey of the people that are called "A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people." They witness with David who said, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea I have a goodly heritage."

In Bonds of love,
(Elder) Richard Campbell

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MATTHEW XVIII

BROTHER BEEBE:—Will you please give your views on the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, particularly on the subject of church discipline? Can a member of the church be lawfully excluded, except in be done according to the rule laid down in that chapter? Some think it unnecessary to take labor in all cases, especially cases where the offence is committed in the presence of the church. Your views on the subject will be kindly received.

Yours, with esteem,

C. B. FULLER

Roxbury, N. Y., January 17, 1862.

REPLY

We do not feel competent to explain all the questions which may be suggested upon the subject of church discipline, still it appears to us that the subject is very clearly laid down in the New Testament. We have observed in our fifty years membership in the church of Christ, that as a general thing the greatest discrepance in opiniion in regard to the laws of Christ have been where churches have been least inclined to be governed by the work and Spirit of our divine Lord and Master. We do not feel sure that what is said by our Lord on the subject in this chapter (Matthew xviii) was designed to embrace all cases of discipline that should ever occur, but rather to cover the ground embraced in the subject on which our Lord was at that time instructing his disciples, for we find other portions of the New Testament devoted to an extended view of the same subject,and particularizing many cases in which individual christians and whole churches are required to act in obedience to the laws of Christ. Still, it seems to us that no action of a church or of a member of the church can be valid where the general instructions of this chapter are not observed and practiced.

The time and circumstances attending this instruction, show that an unbecoming ambition to excel each other was betrayed by at least some of the disciples, and to settle the matter they brought the subject to Jesus, and put the question in undisguised terms to him, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" This kind of ambition lies generally at the bottom of most, if not all, the dissensions which divide churches, and individual saints, and is

prolific in the production of disaffection and alienation; and as that ambitious fiend is still alive, and sometimes harbored in the breasts of christians, it will be well for us all to observe carefully the instructions given in this case. Jesus set a little child in the midst of them, What an example! What a volume of much needed instruction is here! "And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And who shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea."

Here are the primary instructions in regard to discipline. Deep humility is the very first requisite, and it is indispensable as a qualification to transact the business of Christ's kingdom. Without this childlike spirit the gates of the kingdom are barred against us. The profession of this meek and humble spirit is a passport to the kingdom, and such an humble little child that believes in Christ cannot be rejected or excluded without rejecting and excluding Christ himself. How fearful, too, to offend one of those little ones who believe in Jesus. The term here rendered, offend, has a broader signification than merely to ruffle the feelings or excite the resentment. We understand it to be in the sense that Peter was on one occasion an offense to Jesus; that is, when he savored the things which be of men, and not the things which be of God. To offend may be understood to mean to lay a stumblingblock in their way, to deprive them of their sacred rights in the house of God; to grieve their childlike spirit by unbrotherly conduct, or to overturn their faith, as did Philetus and Hymeneus the faith of some. The church as a body, and every member should be solemnly impressed with the weight of these instructions, or they cannot be competent to administer the discipline of the church of the living God. Beware then, brethren, how you attempt to meddle with the discipline of the church if actuated or even influenced by a haughty spirit that would strive for the mastery. We answer, therefore, one of brother Fuller's question. No member of the church can be lawfully excluded from the church without a strict conformity to this rule. Where the supremacy of this rule enjoining a childlike humility on each acting member of the church is not regarded, it were better that they were drowned in the sea, than under any other rule to expel from the privileges of the church of God one of his humblest disciples. Where this rule is observed, and the church is solemnly impressed with a sense of their responsibility, they feel that to expel from communion any who should be retained in fellowship, is to reject the Lord Jesus; there will be no room for thrusting with side and shoulder, but an ardent desire to restore the erring in the spirit of meekness, and in the bowels of Christ.

This consideration is enforced on our minds by a beautiful illustration in the same connection: "How think ye? If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, He rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." A brother who has given us the evidence that he has been converted and becomes as a little child has been accordingly received into fellowship, but subsequently he is overtaken in a fault. Shall he at once be killed? Shall he be rudely thrust out? No, "Ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."—Gal. vi.1, 2. Go in the spirit of humility into the mountain an search diligently for the strayed sheep, remember that it is the will of your heavenly Father that he shall not perish. You can-

not fulfill the law of Christ if you do not desire his restoration to the fold, and after all your toil and labor in searching the mountain, if you succeed in reclaiming the wanderer, if you possess the Spirit of Christ, it will afford you more joy to see him reclaimed and brought back to his privileges in the church, than to see all the other members, which have not strayed, in their place in the church. It is not the will of God our Father which is in heaven that he shall perish, and should it be your will to consign him to perish in the wilderness? "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones." Christ would not charge us to take heed if there were no liability of our doing so. Do not underrate them, they are precious in the eyes of him who came from heaven to save that which was lost; and in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. Yet, notwithstanding the full force of all this admonition, there are cases in which exclusions are unavoidable. Woe unto that man by whom the offense cometh! "Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee." "And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee." We are the mystical body of Christ, and members one of another. No sane man would consent to the amputation of a healthy and sound member of his body, for no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ does the church, Should a hand, or foot, or any other member become diseased, bruised or painful, all the sound members would sympathize with the diseased member, and before we could consent to amputation we would exhaust all the healing medicines within our reach; but if mortification sets in, and the inflammation is actually spreading to the center of vitality, to the heart, as a last painful and dreaded resort we apply the surgical knive. So in the church, if the hand or foot, or even the eye, however useful these members may have been, or may be deemed, as indispensable for usefulness or convenience, if the law of Christ requires us to cut them off and cast them from the body, it must be done, for it is better to enter into life halt, maimed, or with but one eye, than, retaining all these disordered and incurable members, to be cast into hell fire. That is, into confusion, in the sense in which James speaks of the tongue as an unruly member, setting on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell. The discipline of the church of God must be enforced strictly according to the law of Christ, without partiality; but it must be done as well in the Spirit of Christ as in strict obedience to the letter of his precepts, for his word and his Spirit always harmonize and go together. The most essential point is to be guided by his Spirit, for that Spirit will lead us into the truth. Whenever we are led by the humble, loving, tender, forgiving Spirit of Christ, and the law of Christ and health of the church demand that we should pluck out right eyes, or cut off right hands, there will be deep lamentation and mourning, certainly not exulting, and boasting, that we have carried our points. Who ever exulted that he had lost an eye, or suffered the amputation of a hand or a foot? When we see brethren or churches exulting that they hve carried their points, and procured the expulsion of any of their members, we feel confident that the law of Christ has been violated.

Brother Fuller asked our views on this chapter, and we have endeavored to state as plainly as possible what are our views on the first fourteen verses, for we do not believe any brother or any church can possibly obey the remaining part of the instructions unless they are governed by the instructions thus far considered.

We now come to the portion of the chapter to which we suppose Elder Fuller more particularly refers, in which our Lord says, "Moreover," that is, what he is now about to say is added to what he has said, and is to be taken in the same connection; these instructions are not to be separated, divided, garbled, nor handled deceitfully: "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee." Let us observe as we read, he is thy brother who has trespassed, he is still to be recognized in that relation until the whole course of discipline has been faithfully pursued; under no circumstances then is the la-

boring brother or the church at liberty to apply to him offensive epithets, such as heretic, drunard, liar, thief, fox, crafty, disorderly, &c., terms which are only calculated to excite angry passions and render a reclaimation more difficult, if not impossible. Although you feel certain he has trespassed against thee, still regard and treat him as a brother, and as a brother dearly beloved, whom you desire above all things to reclaim. Keeping this in view, you cannot go to any one else without trespassing against him, and becoming guilty of the same wrong which you hold against him. Nothing can more clearly violate the laws of Christ than to publish your complaints to others before you have pursued the course here enjoined. Under no pretence are you at liberty to get up a prejudice against him, by whispering, hinting, or in any way insinuating your complaint to others. The instruction is plain: "Go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." If you succeed in gaining him, no other person under heaven should ever know that he has ever trespassed against thee. How often have the churches been thrown into disorder and confusion by an aggrieved or an offended brother disregarding and disobeying this divine rule. Instead of going to the erring brother alone, how frequently nearly the whole church, and perhaps the world, become familiar with the matter before the offending brother has been visited alone. After going to A, B and C, asking their opinion on the merits of the case, relating to them the circumstances, exciting their suspicions against the brother, under the pretence perhaps of asking their advice, it is too late to go to the offending brother alone, unless it be to confess your own wickedness in divulging the matter. The object of the private interview is thwarted by your own disobedience to the law of Christ. But supposing you have not communicated the matter to any one, now you are required to go to him. Your errand is to reclaim him in the spirit of meekness; you are not to go as a lion, but as a little child, considering your own infirmities and liability to err. And as old father Thomas used to tell us, "Mind and go alone. Try and leave the old man behind, he will be greatly in your way." You are on the King's business, therefore put off the old man with his affections and lusts, and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness; then you will not seize the offending brother by the throat and demand immediate payment, but you will remember how much your Lord has forgiven you, and how much your brethren have to forgive you; then will ye be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you. If you fail to gain your brother, then take the next step, in the same kind and humble spirit, and if in this the brother cannot be reclaimed, tell it to the church. There leave it with the church, do not try to raise an unjust prejudice against the brother, but let the church carefully investigate the matter, and in the spirit and temper of the gospel make a decision. If all this be done in the manner directed, what the church shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and what she shall loose on earth is loosed in heaven. Heaven has ratified and established this course. But it is wicked and impious to pretend to administer the discipline of the house of God in any other way, or when influenced by any other spirit. We conclude, therefore, and answer brother Fuller, that no member can be lawfully excluded from a church, except it be in conformity to this rule. But while we say this, we do not intend to be understood that private steps of labor are by this rule required in taking cognizance of offences which take place in open church meeting. A disorderly member is to be called to order by the church, when he acts disorderly in the presence of the church, as we understand this rule. But this must be done between him and the church alone. No member is at liberty to publish or even menton it out of the church; and the same childlike meekness is to be felt and exercised by the church as is required by the individual member. As we have before said, there are further instructions contained in the New Testament on the subject of discipline beside those in

this chapter, but none which are not in perfect harmony with what Christ has here given. The apostles were inspired to set all these things in order, and to sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. It is perfectly safe then to follow their directions, and not only safe, but imperative; we cannot disregard them without involving disobedience to our King. Every instruction we can require is clearly presented by Christ and his apostles, to apply to all cases that can possibly call for the exercise of gospel discipline among the children of God. The greatest difficulties we meet arise from a lack of that childlike spirit which is enjoined by Christ in this eighteenth chapter, rather than from any lack of clearness in the law of Christ; for when christians are in that humble and spiritual frame they seldom, if ever, fail to settle all their differences; but in absence of that spirit their efforts are vain, for holiness becomes the house of the Lord forever.

The point on which we understand brother Fuller to desire us to be more definite is, whether there are any cases in which exclusion of members is lawful, where private labor is the first and second steps, according to the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, have not been formally taken. We answer, We think there are. For instance, "A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself."—Titus iii. 10, 11. An heretic is one who holds and utters heresy. The church is authorized to judge in this matter. One member shall speak in the church at a time, and the rest shall judge. That is, the church shall judge of what is said by each one, whether it be sustained by the Scriptures and by the experience of the saints; if it be contrary to the word and spirit of truth, admonish him. The church should admonish him, and all who hear him utter heresy should admonish him, tenderly and in love; and if he heed not the admonition, admonish him again, labor to convince him of his error; but after the first and second admonition reject him, if he be not reclaimed. A man that is an heretic may be a preacher, or he may be a private member in the church, but in either case he should be first admonished faithfully twice, and then if not reclaimed, reject him. We do not suppose that each member of the church should be required to go personally and separately to tell him of his faults between the two alone. If the heresy be known only to one, then let that one take the first, and if need be, the second step of gospel labor, and then tell it to the church. But if the heresy be uttered before the whole church, then let the whole church admonish him, between her and him alone, once, and then again, and if he persists in his heresy, reject or expel him from fellowship.

Further examples may be found: 1 Corinthians fifth and sixth chapters. If it be known that a member be an adulterer, a fornicator, an idolator, a thief, a drunkard, a reviler, or an extortioner, or covetous, we are required to at once withdraw all association with such; and Paul commands, in the name of the Lord Jesus, that such be delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. "Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." But it is to be done when the church is gathered together, "and my spirit." Let us be sure that the Spirit of Christ, which inspired Paul to lay down this rule, is with us, pervading the whole church; and he adds, "with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ." If we have and are actuated by that Spirit that inspired Paul, we may feel an assurance that we have the power of Christ, the authoritaive power of Christ, in delivering such unto Satan, or in other words, in putting such manifestly wicked persons away from among ourselves.

Finally, whenever a christian is offended or aggrieved with his fellow christian, so that his fellowship is marred, he is bound to regard it as a personal matter, and go privately and tell him his fault, between him and the offending brother alone, and labor to gain, not to destroy, his brother, and pursue in the subsequent steps laid down, let the offence or trespass be what it may; and if a brother bring his gift to the altar, and

there remember that his brother has aught against him, let him leave there his gift, (unoffered) before the altar, and go and first be reconciled to his brother, and then come and offer his gift. Christians and churches are sometimes too backward in attending to what they may regard as but small matters, and allow them to grow and feter until they learn, by painful experience, how great a fire a little matter kindleth. A faultfinding spirit is unbecoming our holy profession, but christian faithfulness is indispensable to the peace of the church, and as members we are required to watch over one another, to exhort and to admonish one another in love. Nor is this obligation limited to any particular branch of the church of God. Although the church is scattered in her locality, and there are many organizations, yet they are all branches of the one church which is the body of Christ. Much is said of the independence of churches; that is, of their independence of each other, and of any ecclesiastical court above the church. This independence should be carefully considered, for although we acknowledge no pope, or bishop, no synod or association, as having a right to lord it over the churches, we must contend that the whole church is the body of Christ; all who are members of that one body are members one of another, so that the hand cannot say to the foot, We have no need of thee. It takes every member to make the body, and all the branches of the church to constitute the bride of Christ; and although all the several branches, if on gospel ground, have equal rights, still these rights are limited, for no church has a right to do wrong. All are bound to be governed by the law of Christ, and the several branches of the church are as vitally connected to each other as the members of a particular branch are one to another. Hence the duties of the churches of the same faith and order toward each other as churches do not differ essentially in this respect from the relative duties of members in a church. To illustrate: My two feet, though members alike of my body, claim to be independent of each other; one of them resolves to travel eastwardly, the other is eqully determined to go the the west, how long can they maintain their independence and pursue their respective courses without dividing the body to which they both belong? A house or a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. How can two walk together except they are agreed? To maintain fellowship and harmony among the several branches of the church of God they all should be willing to compare notes together, to communicate with each other freely, to behold each other's order, and their steadfastness in the faith. Our real fellowship demands that we should be fully satisfied that we are all led by the same Spirit, that we are pursuing the same course, that we, as one body, are of one heart and one mind; for what use has one body of more than one heart or one mind? When churches become reckless of the esteem and fellowship of sister churches, they speak loudly of their independence, and seem to have forgotten that a naughty spirit goeth before a fall; while churches walking more cautiously in the valley of humiliation feel that they need the fellowship, the sympathy and the prayers of all their sister churches.

But as we have already extended this article to considerable length, we will submit what we have written to brother Fuller, apologizing to him at the same time for delaying so long to answer his request.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 15,1862.

SANTA MONICA, California, Oct. 31,1932.

MY PRECIOUS FATHER AND MOTHER:—I have for some days suppressed the desire to tell you some of what I trust I have been made to see and feel, by divine love. I do not know that I can lead you into the pastures on which I humbly hope I have feasted, but I know you have traveled the same road before, and by experience will be able to grasp what I fail to tell. Words, used to the very best advantage, are very weak to convey these precious things, and I am very ignorant of language, so I will ask you in the beginning to bear with my

weakness. If I had command of the finest language, and did not have the Holy Spirit's guidance, it would be only a mass of confusion; but if he will lend me his sweet presence for a while, what I say may be a little comfort to you.

I hardly know where to begin, for I cannot remember when I did not realize, in a measure, that I was a vile sinner in the sight of the holy God. That, I suppose, was due to your teaching. You taught me the letter (all you could do), but I hope that God has applied it to my heart; and here is the reason of my hope: A little less than four years ago I began to see myself as I really was: a vile sinner. I thought I had always seen myself thus, but it did not bear so heavily upon my heart. Then I realized that I had never really known it. Once in a while I felt that I was the most sinful one of your children, but generally I thought I was quite a good girl, which, as you know, I was speaking after the manner of the world. But when, as I hope, the light shone into my heart I saw it filled with every unclean thing. I thought for a long while that I was getting to be the most sinful being alive. Everything I did seemed awful. I wanted every one to think I was good, especially the Old Baptist. I wanted them to love me, and I thought that if I was good they would love me, and oh, how I tried to raise myself in their esteem. But far above this, I wanted to appear good before God. I had a longing to be holy, and would say, I will not do such and such a thing again, only to turn right around and do it again. Then I would try to pray to God and beg him to give me strength to do good. I seemed willing, even anxious, to be what is called good, but how to get the ability I knew not. I struggled along this way for months, trying to do good, and always found that when I would do good evil was present, and oh the agony I have endured. Every day my mountain of sin was increasing in size and getting darker and darker. It was as a wilderness, dense and deep. Still I labored on, trying to do some good thing to decrease the size of this enormous mountain of sin, and still it continued to grow.

One time, about two years ago, I had several days of bemoaning my condition, and it seemed that I would just give up. I would not try to pray any more, for every time I went to my knees I would think, "The prayer of the righteous availeth much," but I am not righteous; no, no, I am vile, vile and unclean. So I would only say, O God, if thou wilt, have mercy on me. Like the beautiful words of Hart,

> "I could only sigh with sore contrition,
> Begging mercy every hour."

About this time, as you know, my health was very poorly, and I had gone to bed deeply groaning and sighing in weariness of body, mind and soul. Winford said, "Can't you rest, darling?" Then the words seem to come from the very center of my heart, Oh I need rest for my poor weary soul. Then the words came so plainly for me, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I was amazed for a time. I thought, It may be that God will have mercy on me yet. So for a while I seemed to be relieved of that constant burden, though once in a while it would return heavier than ever before, until the past summer. When I had come to the very end of the way, it seemed, I was made to realize that it was the Holy Spirit within showing me the depravity of my heart, and then, I trust, came more hope. I realized that I could do nothing, because I was vainly trying to struggle along and do something that was done and finished when our blessed Savior expired on the rugged cross of Calvary, and said, "It is finished." I found, by the light of his countenance, that I was trying to do the very thing that he had declared finished. I was trying to bring myself into favor with God by poor, puny works of mine,not realizing that I was trying to drag a pile of filthy rags to his righteous throne to make him look upon me in mercy. Poor presumptuous wretch! trying to present One so divinely fair with such a gift. No wonder I was having such a hard time making him accept it. But when I was brought to where I had no works of my own to offer, when I could plead merit only through what Jesus had done, then, I trust, I received

a token of his acceptance, and oh the sweet peace that filled my heart. There was nothing for me to do but lean on him. I had such a sweet period all alone I cried for joy and my heart was filled with love for God and everything. I sang, and these words flowed from my heart,

"Oh to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be;
Let that grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee.

Prone to wander. Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it,
Seal it for thy courts above."

A sweet peace has filled my life a part of the time this summer. Oh the indescribable peace when our affections are placed on things above; when we can look up; when we no longer struggle with the vanities of life, but just look to theloving Father, and trust him for his grace, believing that "behind a frowning providence he hides a smiling face." By his grace to say, no matter what may come, what hardships or pain, what trials or persecutions. No matter, all is well. Oh it is a sweet feeling just to know that all is well; to not be wearied by time-things and fretting about frivolous things, but to just trust him, knowing that

"Not a single shaft can hit
Till the God of love sees fit."

Oh that he will go with me all along the way and guide my feet in that strait and narrow way. If his presence is for a moment withdrawn all is dark and I begin to fret about everything, a little pain, or some other little care. If we could but realize at all times that we really deserve nothing, that all we receive is in mercy sent, we would not expect so much of this world. I long to praise him for what he has done for me, the weakest,frailest, most sinful one of the fold, but I am utterly helpless to give the praise that is due. It would seem that after such unmerited blessings my days would be filled with praise, but alas, I find still many things to take up my mind and my time. What manner of life should we live, seeing from what we have been delivered? Let no one say to me, If I believed in predestination I would take my fill of sin. It seems that I have had more than my fill of it already. How can one who is killed to the love of sin roll it under their tongue like a sweet morsel? Every sinful act causes me much grief and lamentation. I long to be what I cannot be, but trust I appear before Him as spotless through Christ's redeeming blood. For, far from rolling sin under my tongue as a sweet morsel, it is most distasteful to me. But I am still in the flesh, and the warfare will continue until we conquer through Jesus' blood. "We shall be conquerors ere long, and more than conquerors, too." Since, I trust the light and love of God have shone into my sinful heart it has shown me many things from which I have been delivered. As dear Elder Durand says in his "Fragments," It seems that a light shines back over my past life revealing many things to me that when they occurred seemed of little consequence. I can see God's hand guiding me all through my youthful days, and realize now that I was not allowed to go in the paths of sin only because his grace restrained me. You, my dear father and mother, taught me to walk uprightly at all times, but when I was tempted to do wrong it was not this that stopped me. It was the knowledge of the fact that God's all-seeing eye was upon me, and, if I did not love him then, I feared him. I cannot remember when I did not fear him more than you, even as a small child. Sometimes in my latter youth I have gone out to behold some lovely scene of nature, and have looked and listened, and a solemn awe has fallen upon me. I have realized the power and the wisdom of God and felt a longing to live a holy life, for I thought then that I must live holy before he would love me. At such times I have felt that I would live to express my feelings to some one, but even as near and dear as you were to me I could not utter a word. It seemed so solemn, so sacred. I could only gaze on the wonderful work of his hand, and many times I have uncontrollably sobbed out my feelings for no other reason than just the greatness of God and his creation. I cannot tell you of these times even yet. I cannot get into the sweetness of it either by tongue or pen; but just the memory of these times now, as I write at my desk, blind my eyes with tears and fill my heart with love and

fear of this great Being.

I must stop this part of my letter, and tell you what happened yesterday. Our (oh the sweet realization that now I can say "our") little church met an dear sister Miller's, and when dear brother G. O. Walker said the door of the church stands open, my darling husband stepped out over all opposition of the flesh and related his experience and was accepted. I followed him, trembling with joy and fear, feeling my unfitness very keenly, and tried to tell them some of my experience, but it seemed that I utterly failed. But in their love and forbearance they accepted me. Oh if I could but tell you how utterly unworthy I feel to be among them. Oh that my God will keep me where I belong: at their feet at all times. The Lord willing, we will meet at Ontario next second Sunday and go five miles to Santa Ana River and then folour dear Lord in baptism. Oh such a feeling of peace rests in my heart this morning! I wish I could describe it. It seems that I am resting from a long and hard day's labor.

I will close, asking you both to pray for your poor little girl, that she may always live to serve the brethren and sisters in meekness and humility. I wish I could go into your loving arms this mornin, and there sob out my feelings on your breast, but God has seen fit to place many hills and valleys between us.

Your loving, and only daughter,

MABEL BERRY.

ASSOCIATION NOTICES

The Smith River Association is scheduled to be held with Charity Church, in Patrick County, Virginia. On State Route 40 between Ferrum and Woolwine, on First Sunday, Friday & Saturday before in September 1983, the Lord willing.

We look forward to meeting many of the Saints then.

Yours in Hope of Eternal Life.

Amos I Hash

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, for its one hundred, forty-second session at the Danville Primitive Baptist Church, July 8, 9, & 10, 1983.

Directions to the Church at Danville follows: Traveling from all directions, you will come to Danville, Virginia, located in Pittsylvania County. Upon reaching the intersection of north-south highway #29 and #41, follow highway # 41 about one mile, turn left and follow signs to Road 1515.

We invite visitors of our faith and order and especially the various ministers of our correspondence.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

The Pigg River Association will be held, the Lord Willing, the first Sunday in August, Friday and Saturday before. (August 5, 6, and 7, 1983). Martinsville Church is the host for this setting of the Association. The meeting place will be on the grounds and the meeting house at Leatherwood Church, this is the same location as 1982.

Leatherwood Church is located in Henry County, Virginia, on State Road 657. Those coming from the south on Route 220, and those coming from the east on Route 58, go the the north side of Martinsville, there take Route 108 N. for about 8 miles, turn right on Route 657, and keep on this road for about 5 miles to the church.

Those coming from the North or East on Route 40, take Route 890 at Penhook. Route 890 goes to the Henry County line, then go 2 miles to Route 657, turn left on Route 675. Follow above instructions.

Those coming by Route 57, take Route 657, go about 2 miles to church. At each of these intersections, you will probably see a road sign "Leatherwood". Also watch for Association sign.

Jamie E. Cooper
Association Clerk

OBITUARIES

In Loving Memory of Dad

Lewis Moses Johnson was born Feb. 8, 1897 in Putnam County,West Virginia, and died Feb. 8, 1983, making his stay upon earth 86 years.

He was married to Mary Belle Young who preceded him in death June 7, 1933. To this union was born one son Silas Eldon Johnson of Hurricane. He then married Nancy E. (Lizzie) Bird, to this union were born nine children, six boys and three girls. Willard A. of St. Marys, West Virginia, William, Lewis, Harold, of Hurricane, Mamie Crouch, Arbutis Carpenter, of Hurricane, and Mae McCoy of Sod, West Virginia. Two sons preceding him in death.

Daddy was a Primitive Baptist for over forty years, he lived a life in front of his children and the world, that I believe was pleasing in the sight of God.

His funeral service was conducted by Elder Amos Hash of Virginia. He took the 15th chapter of 1st. Cor. and read from these scriptures and spoke comforting words to his family and friends. I believe that God directed his speech in such a manner for the comfort of his children.

I have wondered in time past why Dad and Mom traveled this country over to hear preaching, and I believe that God has given me the answer to this question. It is because of the great love that has been given them from above that only God can give.

It says in the 104th. Psalms, verses 33 and 34, "I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. My meditation of him shall be sweet; I will be glad in the Lord."

Dad would always rejoice when he heard the sweet songs of Zion. Before his death, he woulld sit in his chair and sing or hum these beautiful songs he loved so much , I truly believe that Dad was praising God, until the good Lord said it is enough and called him home, to ever be in the presence of Jesus, the One who gave his life for his children, the ones that were given him in covenant before the foundation of the world.

Dad,we will miss you so much and we love you dearly.

Your unworthy son, Harold

SISTER GRACE SHORT KEEN

Sister Keen was the daughter of the late Parker Fields Short and Nannie Gosney Short. She was born January 11, 1896 in Gretna, Virginia. She was the widow of John C. Keen. Sister Keen was received by conference in Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, Gretna, Virginia on August 14, 1966. She passed away May 23, 1980 in Danville Memorial Hospital.

Sister Keen is survived by two sons, John C. Keen, Chatham, Virginia, and Carroll E. Keen, Smithfield, Virginia; one daughter, Esther K. Adkins, Chatham, Virginia; one stepson, Morris C. Keen, Danville, Virginia; two sisters, Mary S. Fox, Richmond, Virginia, and Nannie S. Smith, St. Augustine, Florida; and 14 grandchildren.

She was a very meek and quiet person and never had much to say, but attended her meetings when possible. She was in bad health for many years and not able to go very much, but we feel she is resting in that better home prepared for God's people.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench at Scott's Funeral Home in Chatham, Virginia, and burial was in Highland Burial Park, Danville, Virginia.

May we all of Springfield Church bow in humble submission to God's will.

Written by one who loved her,
Sister Annie Tosh

SISTER MARY HARSLEY MINTER

Sister Mary Harsley Minter was our dear sister in the church for many years. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church

at Camp Branch and was a faithful member and she loved the doctrine of Jesus Christ. When she got to where she didn't have transportation to attend her home church she asked for a letter and came to Leatherwood Church. She enjoyed going to hear preaching as long as her health would allow her to go.

Sister Minter was born October 5, 1900 and died January 6, 1982. We all miss her so much, but the Lord saw fit to call her home to the place she had so long waited for. She is, we feel, there resting where there will be no more suffering or pain.

Written by a little Brother and Sister in hope.

Mr. & Mrs. W. E. Brown

DEACON NOBLE E. SMITH,SR.

The Lord has called from our midst my Dad and Brother in hope, Noble E. Smith, Sr. He died January 4, 1983. He was born March 5, 1908 in West Virginia, and had been a member of the church since around 1935. He was baptized by Elder Harvey Bird at Providence Church in West Virginia, and at his death he was a member of Seclusia Primitive Baptist Church.

He is survived by his wife, Mary Jane Smith; his father, Elder John J. Smith, Sr.; two sons, Elder B. K. Smith, and Noble E. Smith, Jr.; four daughters, Lila A. Osborne, Nancy J. Clay, Lois J. Thaxton, and Linda L. Milam; 26 grandchildren, and 16 great grandchildren; four brothers and two sisters.

Funeral services were held in the Rose Hills Memorial Chapel in Whittier, California, with Elder B. K. Smith officiating. His body was laid to rest in Rose Hills Memorial Park.

He loved the Old Baptists because he considered them to be a manifest portion of the children of God, whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. He would not have me sing praises to him, nor is it my desire. He manifested a hope in the Lord Jesus Christ that fadeth not away. He believed that the Lord called His people out of nature's darkness into His marvelous light, according to the measure of His grace in the appointed time.

Dad was a subscriber to the *Signs of the Times* for many years. I cannot remember when a *Signs* could not be found in his home.

May the Lord bless and keep all who mourn his passing.

Bud Smith

TO OUR READERS

WE HAVE HAD AN OVERWHELMING RESPONSE FROM OUR READERS IN OUR APPEAL FOR NEW SUBSCRIBERS. WE HAVE RECEIVED OVER ONE HUNDRED NEW SUBSCRIBERS. HAVE YOU SENT IN YOURS?

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Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/83
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS"

The existence, sovereignty, immutability omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah–the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the attonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistable, and in all cases. effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers–that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

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Jesse Edward Lang
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EDITORIALS

PREDESTINATION

Attempting to write on this subject, I do so in fear, knowing it is a cardinal point of doctrine about which many have set forth their views; and in doing one is left to wonder what is meant by predestination. Some say absolute, some eternal, and others limited predestination. I do not believe that a cardinal point of God's decree has to have absolute or eternal in front of it, or in other words a handle. I firmly believe that it is strong enough to stand for itself. We do not find the word "predestination" used in the Old Testament, nor the New Testament. But we do find the word "predestinate." Predestination is derived from the Latin word "praedestinore" which means to predestine, to determine beforehand, to settle in advance. In modern English, Webster, a writer of dictionaries and a very learned man, says that predestination is: "the act of predestinating or the state of being predestinated: the theological doctrine that all events throughout eternity have been foreordained by divine decree or purpose: the foreordination by God of each individual's ultimate destiny particularly to eternal life."

By God's grace, let us look in the Book of *Acts 15:18, "Known unto God are all of his works from the beginning of the world."* and *Isaiah 46:10, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all of my pleasures."* These two verses of scripture are sufficient to settle our minds concerning the sovereignty of God's power. That is to say that God even before the world began set the things that have been, and the things that are, and the things that will be in motion, and declared that they would be as He did foresee them. I will admit that this point of doctrine is hard to be understood, and that all of God's people are not favored by the Heavenly Master to see or to understand it. Peter said concerning Paul, *II Peter3:16, "As also in all of his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which that they are unlearned and unstable, wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."* Yet, if we have a belief in God, we have to admit that the things that are here are by God's purpose.

There is an order in the sovereignty of God, first His foreknowledge. Surely we will all say that God did foreknow all things, and when I say all things, this I mean—the good as

well as the evil. He knew Adam would fall, and in that fall God had a purpose as He does in all things. There was a purpose in Joseph's being hated by his brethren. He was given a dream; that dream came when he was asleep. He had no physical knowledge or mental capacity to stop it from coming, but it was sent by the Divine Providence of God. Do you know what the purpose was? Surely all will say, "Yes, I know what the purpose of that was." Joseph was a type of the Saviour. He was to be sent down into Egypt by his brethren; however, we find when Joseph's brethren who had done this thing in malice, with evil intentions in their hearts, were brought to the true understanding, Joseph embraced them and said, "You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good."

Do you not believe that God knew what would happen to his Son when He was born of a virgin and was sent into this world? Jesus himself says, for this cause came I unto this world and for this end was I born. He was to lay down His life; and, yet, it was wicked hands whom God did before ordain that should take Him and crucify Him that the will and the purposes of God might be made manifest. In that wicked act alone came the salvation of the Church.

Surely there is beauty in the doctrine of predestination. There are some points on which I feel all of God's people are agreed.

Now let us go further into the matter, if the Lord is willing, concerning God's foreknowledge and predestination. *Proverbs 16:4 "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."* This verse of scripture says he hath made, not going to, but already has. We not only find that the good things in life are made by God but also the wicked. Now may we consider that the sovereignty of God is in control of one as much as the other. Look in *Acts 17:26* again as the Apostle speaks: *"And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."*

I find there is a spirit of truth that comes from God which is Jesus Christ, our Lord, because He is true. He says *"I am the way, the truth, and the life."* Also, I find there is a lying spirit. Read *II Chronicles 18:22* concerning Ahab, the king of Israel. *"Now, therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil against thee."* Only God is able to do these things; yet, some will say this is a fatalistic doctrine. This is fatalism only if you can't believe. Not only are the righteous in His hands; but the wicked as well, even as the sun and the moon are under His decree. And they move in the predestined course that God did determine they would move in. So does all of creation. The birds, the insects, the fish, the creatures, and even man move in the course that God, even before He created the heaven and the earth, saw that they would. Even our steps are numbered, even the hairs of our head; and we are told that even a sparrow cannot fall without thy Heavenly Father. If God knows and controls the minute things, how much more so the large obstacles that are in our life, that are there by the decree of God.

The condition of the world that we are in now comes as no surprise to God because He has created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. The wars, the contention, the hate, and the condition of world orders are as God would have them to be. Some will say, "No, this is not God's way." Oh, man, who art thou that replies against thy maker. He maketh one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. Let it be known here and now, God

by justice owes no man anything but hell and damnation. Paul also says, "Who has known the mind of the Lord?" Truly, it would be more simple to humanity if we did know the mind of God. But we cannot find out the works of God from the beginning until the end, for we find in the *Book of Proverbs* that He has made all things beautiful in His day. He has put the world in the heart of man that no man can find out the works of God from the beginning until the end. God is supreme in all of the things that He has made and created. He governs them by a decree and a control. He did foreknow what they would do in the time and in the seasons that He has appointed here in this world. If these times and seasons were not in the sovereignty of God, then everything would be chaos. If there be a part of it of which He has no knowledge, there is a part over which He has no control. The scriptures that have been laid down for our learning have told us that God has fixed all things, that He has ordained the righteous unto everlasting joy in heaven and immortal glory, and that the others He has seen fit, by the sovereignty of His own will, to leave in their sins and damnation even by sending them a strong delusion that they should believe a lie and not be brought to the knowledge of the truth. Let us also know this one thing, that the powers that be are the powers that are ordained of God, and there are no powers in this world or in the world to come but those which are of God.

Oh, my loved ones, if we could understand the beauty of the doctrine of God's forknowledge, of God's election, of God's predestination, that all things hang on a firm decree and that He sits on no precarious throne. As we wrote in the beginning from *Isaiah,* He declared the end from the beginning. In our manner of speaking, we mortals would start at the beginning and go to the end. We start at birth, and we go to death not knowing what one moment of time in advance will bring, but hoping. But God in His sovereignty has declared this one event that God went to the end—the final consummation of all things—and came back to the beginning, declaring the end from the beginning, not the beginning to the end. And the things that have taken place are the things that have been, the things that will be are the things that were ordained of God. This is proved again and again in prophecy, for instance when the Lord said unto Peter, before the cock crows thou shalt deny me thrice. Here is a point of predestination. Peter declared that he would not do this thing, yet, the Lord knew that he would. And when it came to pass, it brought repentance unto the heart of Peter when the Lord looked at him. You know we find many things in the scriptures that foretell future events and when they come to pass, God doesn't look down and say, "I told you so." Jesus, when Peter had denied him, didn't look at him and say, "Well, I told you about it." No, He smiled at him as if to say, "Peter, I know you are of the flesh, you are weak; but remember, Peter, I have told you that I have prayed for thee."

This doctrine of foreknowledge is the effectual cause, predestination is the power of God to make His foreknowledge come to pass. He said, "As I have thought so shall it be, as I have purposed so shall it stand." Remember, what God did foreknow moreover He did predestinate. Not only the heirs of heaven and immortal glory conformed to the image of His only begotten Son, but also those who did not receive the imputed righteousness of the blood of Jesus Christ are under the decree of God. Yea, the wicked are in His hands. He has made them for the day of evil, as we quoted out of the 16th

chapter of *Proverbs*. And yet God in his infinite wisdom has placed in man a mind, a will, and an understanding which conforms man unknowingly to the decree of God.

There is a doctrine that says man is free with the ability to choose right from wrong. Do we mortals really know what is right and wrong? We do things in the most sincere manner of our heart, sometimes thinking that they are right, and later we find those things were wrong. We find that the Apostle Paul thought he was fulfilling the will of God concerning salvation. He went about in his manner shutting up those who called upon the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and Paul says for this ignorance God winked. Paul did it in ignorance, not knowing. When he was brought to the knowledge of this beautiful truth, he was a strong advocate of predestination and of the sovereignty of God controlling all events.

We are told that God in His infinite wisdom has set the times that are in this world and in the world to come; He has also placed all things in the hollow of His hand in a manner that will work to the glory of Him and to the glory and to the admiration of the Church. He holds the issues of life and death in His hands.

Solomon, who was a wise man, wrote in the third chapter of *Ecclesiastes*, *"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven."* Solomon went on to say there is, "A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to reap, and a time to sow; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace."

Does not this embrace the beauty of the sovereignty of God in that He has made all things? Some have said, "Well, the Lord has let the wicked go in such a manner that He is not watching over them as well as He does those that belong to Him by the blood of Jesus Christ." But even the wicked, as we have stated already, are in the hands of God. Their steps are ordered as much so as the steps of the righteous because the ways of a man are not hid from Him, but the Lord delights in His way. Man cannot conceive or perceive of His ways, for he knows nothing as he ought. Thanks be unto God; all of these things are in the hands of God.

Surely in this doctrine of the sovereignty of God's elect and love, He looked down from heaven and out of this chaos, He has picked a few to embrace life eternal through the suffering of His Son, Jesus, and He has brought them to the knowledge that of themselves they can do nothing. That embraces creation as well as the mortal things upon earth. All creation, of themselves, can do nothing; but by the spirit of the Son of God that strengthens them, they are able to do all things. Surely one would say, "Well, why does God do this?" We cannot always give an answer that would satisfy all of the minds of all individuals concerning why God does these things, why He had created the devil, and why He made him more subtle than any beast of the field. Why these things are we cannot truly say. Some day, I believe, we shall know when we are gathered around the blood-washed throne if we are His children. Only God, in all of this, is able to bring good out of evil. God said of the evil He sent in the life of Jacob, "I will surely do

thee good all the days of thy life."

In every war that we have seen upon the face of the earth, if we could see the hatred and malice that has been and the destruction of humanity, we could say, if God would give us the spirit and the understanding, that in each one there has come some good. In World War II thousands and thousands were killed. I believe that this war was by the decree of God. Some have allocated this to Hitler, and to the Japanese Emperor, and to Mussolini, and to Stalin; but out ot that war came the technology that we are living with in this day and age. The modern techniques of medicine and modern equipment for operations which have eased the sufferings of thousands and thousands of lives came out of that war.

Man is only able to produce something worth while when he has been tried by serious afflictions which come from God on High. Not only does this relate in the spiritual realm when we are enabled to call upon God, but also in the physical realm. There are always things that come out of it that are good. If this were not true, how could the Apostle Paul say that; "All things work together to good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Paul on one occasion had a messenger of Satan, and Paul said the Lord gave it to him. I have no reason to doubt Paul. Though Paul did not charge God foolishly by saying, "Now, Lord, you made me thus. That is the reason I am as I am." Paul could not charge God in such a manner. Some would say, "Well, by predestination God has purposed our sins and our iniquities." True, there is a purpose in it. But whether it is God's purpose to send us to hell or to make us suffer hell here on earth in the knowledge of knowing godly sorrow and repentance in our hearts of the things which have been done in our body, we do not know. That we are unable to say. We do know this one thing, there is a purpose in every event, in every action. There have been actions which have hurt many people. We believe that those things had to be simply because they have been. We could not say they should not have happened.

During World War II, two men were discussing the doctrine of predestination, and one believed it and one didn't. One said, "Oh, that ship that sunk had many hundred boys on it. They all drowned. You know that was not God's will."The other one looked at him and said, "I hope it was His will, and I firmly believe that it was. For if it had not been God's will, God would not have known anything about it; and not knowing anything about it He might not have been there to be a present help in the time of trouble and in the time of death."

In our feelings we believe that the end has been fixed, that the beginning has been fixed, and that everything in between has been decreed. We believe that our station of life is fixed, that what we will be tomorrow, where we will be, and even when our death bed has been prepared for us. Some say, "I do not like that kind of a doctrine." Oh' I revel in that kind of a doctrine. I have been taught that I am not able to direct my own steps. There were times in life when I felt that I could do this; but the time came when God made me realize what a mess I had made of it. Then I was glad that someone else had directed my steps, that someone else was watching over me, and that someone else had been with me–even when I knew it not. Jacob said the Lord was in this place and I knew it not. That is to say, God's providence, God's purposes, or God's decree was with him when he knew it not.

Therefore, it is God's foreknowl-

edge that causes predestination to be. Since predestination is the power causing God's foreknowledge to come to pass, it is always looking towards the final consummation of all things. It is the active will of God concerning the events that are in this world; therefore, we would say, "I am glad that God knows this." It is comforting to know that God has already prepared our death bed. We, some day, will be brought to the death bed by the motivating cause of life itself, the spirit that God has placed in man. That spirit belongs to God. It moves and motivates the body to the will of God concerning the providence wherein God has decreed. That will applies to one individual, or to one nation, or to the whole world. Some would say that it seems strange that war could be to the good of God's people. Do you not realize, dear children of God, that God has given nations for the benefit of the children of Israel. Some would say that it was not good that the whole host of Egypt and Pharoah were destroyed by God for persecuting His children. Oh, dear children of God, this was God's way of delivering His children. It was God who hardened Pharoah's heart. It has been said that God left Pharoah alone and that Pharoah hardened his own heart. I am told by the scriptures that He said unto Moses, "I will harden Pharoah's heart." This is the sovereignty of God concerning the events in this life and in the world to come. This is the doctrine that our forefathers have advocated. This is the doctrine that nothing has transpired or ever will transpire without the will of God in direct control of the events.

David said, "Is there not a cause?" May God enable us by His grace to look around and say, "Is there not a cause?" Surely there is a cause. What is the cause? We are not always able to see or understand. Therefore, the scripture says, "The revealed things belong to us but the hidden things belong to God." May God enable us all to see the beauty of the sovereignty of predestination in all things and in all events that are in this world that are under the direct control of the Almighty God. Isn't it wonderful to think about, that our Heavenly Master did foreknow, did foresee, and did declare all of the things that are here and has made us to rejoice in them concerning the doctrine of predestination. No wonder that the Apostle Paul could speak concerning this doctrine as a doctrine that is surely a doctrine that is able to stand without the inventions of man but a doctrine that God had decreed within himself that He is able to deliver us from the power of darkness and translate us unto the kingdom of His dear Son. And Paul goes on to say that by Jesus Christ, "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell."

Think about this beautiful doctrine of God's everlasting predestination that governs and controls the mind, not only of the animals and the fish of the sea and the fowls of the air but also the minds and the actions of every human, preordained of God and declared to be. This same power controls the stars and heavenly constellations and governs even the grain of sand upon the sea shore. I am assured in my closing remarks

that it would be easier for heaven and earth to fall away than for one decree of God to ever fail. All of them shall take place accordingly as He has purposed and declared that they shall be.

Elder D.B. Stokes

CORRESPONDENCE

JUSTICE

"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." (Gal. 2:16)

We know that the word justice has more than one meaning, but it is our intent to use it only as it applies to the law. Without justice under the law, the law would be dead: no one would benefit from it nor be punished by it: but God's law is holy, just and good, and justice must be rendered under it. The only plea is "guilty" and the only sentence "death". That all men are sinners and deserving of death and everlasting damnation we feel no need to prove here.

To be justified means that one has been freed from the law, and God's law does not free anyone until the penalty of transgression has been paid in full. There are many people today, as there has always been, who do not yet know that a man is not justified by the works of the law and are constantly striving to effect their own salvation. I have been listed among these people, and still have many friends there. But we know (I hope that I am included) that our justification is only in Jesus Christ in whom we believe. Jesus suffered shame, agony and death on the cross of Calvary that sinners such as you and I might live. He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us now ask the question, how is it possible for Jesus to satisfy the law and justice by dying in our room and stead? Is there a law anywhere that would allow an innocent person to be slain for the guilty one? If such a law exists, can it be just? If a man be executed for a friend who is worthy of death, would his friend be any less guilty or less worthy of death? Would justice be served by slaying the innocent? Would not the executioners be guilty of murder? I believe justice would be perverted in such a case, yet we see Christ dying for us, the Just for the unjust.

God created man in his own image. Male and female created he them. And he called the man Adam. Adam was a figure of Him or an image of him that was to come, or Christ. An image or figure is an exact likness. It may be made of wood, iron, clay, dust or some other material, and it may be smaller or larger, but it must portray the true body exactly. Therefore Adam was an exact likness of Christ, and should be viewed in that perspective. Eve was created in Adam and is a type of the church, showing that the church was in Christ before the foundation of the world. God took a rib from Adam and made it a woman, this representing the church being given to Christ for his bride. And Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." The church is the mystical body of Christ, "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of

his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall be joined unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church." (Eph. 5:30).

Exactly as Eve was to Adam so is the church to Christ, for the image must be perfect. Eve, the church, was deceived by the crooked serpent, ate of the forbidden fruit, and fell under the curse of the law. Adam, the figure of Christ, was not deceived, for that was not possible, but because of his great love for her, he partook of the forbidden fruit. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. The first Adam had no power to redeem his bride nor himself from the curse, therefore they must die, for God had said, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Jesus Christ also loved his bride and would die with her, but in his Godhead he could not die, therefore he became incarnate. "But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal. 4:4). "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil." (Heb. 2:14). In his flesh, Christ could and did suffer and die to pay the penalty for his bride and redeem her from the curse of the law. Christ was righteous, he knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth and he kept the law to a jot and to a tittle, therefore the law had no claim against him, and in his righteousness he was the perfect sacrifice for his fallen bride. In a mystical sense she died with him and was buried with him by baptism into death. Jesus Christ, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens, the only begotten Son of the Father, took all our sins upon himself and suffered the penalty of death in our stead. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." Read the whole 53rd chapter of Isaiah: it is so beautiful. Can any man comprehend the beauty of such a love as Christ bestowed upon his chosen people? Surely not! We may view it through a glass darkly, but we will never understand it fully in this sinfilled life, because sin so dulls our vision.

"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident; for the just shall live by faith." If we could attain unto righteousness by the works of the law, then Christ died in vain; the old covenant would still be in force, and there would be no new covenant of grace; but God has made a new covenant with the house of Israel, saying, "I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." If we live, we must live by faith, and the law is not of faith. "Christ has redeemed us from the

curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." If we are what we hope to be, we can witness to this with faithful Paul. We are told by many that all we need do is have faith. This is true, but faith is not something we can take hold on at our leisure, as they would have us believe; for faith is a gift of God. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." As our sins and iniquities were charged unto our Savior, so is his righteousness imputed unto us who believe in him. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Abraham believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and if we walk in that same faith, righteousness shall also be imputed unto us, for we are his seed. "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Why must it be by faith and not by the law? Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. We are no longer under the law, for Christ is the end of the law to all who believeth. Therefore righteousness is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed. Is this not beautiful? Can a poor sinner find a better promise than this?

Abraham was strong in faith, and was fully persuaded, that what God had promised, he was able to perform, therefore his faith was imputed unto him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.

Brethren, if we believe in Jesus Christ, then we are in him and he is in us, and we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world.

I realize that I have only touched this vast subject, and it seems that my thoughts have been very scattered, but I trust they are of the Lord, and that he might use them to glorify his gracious and holy name, and comfort and edify some of his blessed little children. Charge all errors to my account, and when at the throne of grace, may it be God's holy will that you remember this poor sinner.

Clifford Wilbanks

Louisiana

GENESIS 4:2-5, 8.

"Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground and offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had no respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. .. And it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him."

Much time and effort has been set forth dealing with the offerings of both Cain and Abel and the recep-

tion of one by the Lord and the rejection of the other. I mean not to improve on these but to reiterate some key points. First, why was Cain angry? Some would quickly answer that it was because God did not have respect for his offering and they would be partially correct. For it was also due to the fact that God had respect for Abel's offering and had blessed him for it. This enangered Cain greatly – which brings me to my second point. Toward whom was Cain wrothed? To Abel? Initially I think not. Even though Abel did bear the manifestation of that anger, he was not the one who passed the judgment for or against either of the offerings. It was not to him that the offerings were made but, in fact, he and Cain entered in as equals to making offerings before God. Therefore, I conclude that it was toward God that Cain was wrothed because He had chosen Abel's offerings as being in keeping with His commands and blessed him for it. How tragic the results of this man's anger because of God blessing another; the death, yea murder, of his brother.

Again we find a similar experience in the 18th chapter of I Samuel. Saul was king and had brought Israel many victories and had slain thousands for the cause of God and Israel. Yet when he saw that the Lord had seen fit to bless David with greater victories and the slaying of tens of thousands, his anger waxed great against David and he sought to kill him. Again – why was he acting this way toward David? Had he not done great things for the cause of God and Israel? Was not his anger toward God for he "....saw and knew that the Lord was with David...and Saul became David's enemy continually?"

The prophet Jonah was not immune to this carnal feeling – for when he saw that God had given Ninevah grace to repent "..it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry...I beseech thee now, oh Lord, take my life from me for it is better for me to die than to live."

Habakkuk was perplexed at how the Holy One who is "...of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity" could use, let alone bless, evil Babylon in her iniquity. Although his feelings did not progress to the point of violence, he did cry out to the Lord. "O Lord, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear? Even cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save." Surely these accusations are untrue, yet the perplexity of seeing someone else blessed, who was deemed unworthy or at least less worthy than ourselves, can drive one to shake a fist of accusation at the Almighty or even to the murdering of a brother–physically or in character assassination. When Nehemiah returned to rebuild the walls of the city, those on the outside accused him of being a traitor to the king and sent correspondence to the king stating such. All this because it was apparent that the hand of the Lord was good toward Nehemiah and his efforts.

Now the spiritual status of each of these examples need not be evaluated—for jealousy is a basic human characteristic which does not know the difference between regenerate or unregenerate and is present in the sinful world as well as the local militant church. We of the Old School Baptist, while dispising Arminianism, may be very prone to accuse one of our own ministers of dabbling in an Arminian work system when the Lord sees fit to bless the congregation under his service, rather than ascribing all glory and honor to Him to Whom it is due. This is not to say that any of the Lord's people are free from the contemptable disgusting frailties of the carnal man but rather should alarm us to their intrusions into all we do. Our earthen vessels

are full of corruption and decay, which shall be with us until the day of grace, when they shall be laid aside and be replaced with incorruption that fadeth not away. We should, therefore, give serious consideration and examine ourselves to see that our inner feelings not be motivated by a jealousy for what God sees fit to do in others. Let us heed the admonishment of Paul to the Romans to "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep." Is it not enough that the Almighty God, who "....hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry...." should, according to His good pleasure, show to wretched vile creatures like us just a glimpse of His holiness. But "God who at sundry times and diverse manners spoke in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds; who, being the brightness of (God's) glory, and the express image of (God's) person...." The very Son of God was made flesh and dwelt among us, became sin for us, "...endued the cross despining the shame and is set down at the right hand of God...." there to make intercession for His people. And should we begin to compete for His blessings, comparing gift to gift and servant to servant or should we rejoice in the blessedness of the grace of God in whatever degree? I am persuaded that if we be given a heart to examine ourselves, we should find a storehouse of the grace of God to the fullest measure, packed down, shaken and running over.

May this prompt us to thankfulness of the God of Heaven for His great love, His people, and His church.

Chet Dirkes

Barrington, N.J. 08007

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of Gold in pictures of silver."

Proverbs 10:11

Elgin, Oregon

Dear Editors:

My subscription is due. I didn't intend for it to slip up on me but it usually does and you are so good to keep sending the *"Signs"* to me. It is getting more difficult for me to read as times passes, but I pray the Lord will give me enough eyesight to read as long as my stay here on earth.

We don't meet often here. I have been able to attend only a few times this year. I am still able to read the *"Signs"* and have enjoyed the wonderful editorials of Elder Beebee in Nos. 3 and 4, although I have had to lay aside No. 4 until I can get someone to read to me.

You will find a check for $13.00 in this letter for continuing my subscription.

Yours of a little hope
unworthy as I am
Elva C. Spikes

Dear Subscribers:

I have fearfully accepted the task as an editor of the "Signs Of The Times" along with Elder David V. Spangler and the associate editiors. I appreciate the confidence placed in me by Elder Spangler, the President, and all the other members of

the Board. I pledge to you my best efforts and beg when you have a mind to pray, remember me.

We welcome any comments concerning the "Signs," whether they be good or bad. We shall hope to receive either in a most gracious manner. The "Signs" belong to you, of the household of faith. We want to continue it in such a way that it will be something for you to look forward to each month.

We would like to hear from you the readers. I think it would be strength to someone, if you feel to write and SHARE the reason for your hope. Let us know how you have been brought along. We would like to realize that out there are fellow travelers and that we are not alone in our experience.

May we work together and may God bless us to run the race that is set before us with patience; may we be grateful for whatever our portion in life might be, not asking of Him to change that which He has purposed for us, whatever the cross, but give us courage and grace sufficient as we press on and as the "signs of the times" come into focus.

Humbly yours,

Kenneth R. Key

VOICES OF THE PAST

(Excerps from a sermon by Elder W. C. King at McCray Church, N.C. on third Sunday in September, 1970. This was his last service at McCray Church, he died about three weeks later. Elder King served McCray Church for forty-six years, longer than any of the other churches he served.)

I hope that I may have the prayers of each of you that we may be able in the time that we may spend here to be spent in praise and in honor and glory to God. We hear Jesus speaking, "If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things." And no man has ascended up to heaven but he that come down from heaven even the son of man which is in heaven. And that Moses lifted up his serpent in the wilderness even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whomsoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Jesus has just been conversing with Nickodemous. This man who was a teacher and ruler of the Jews who had come to Jesus by night and had expressed his knowledge of Him by saying that we know that Thou art one sent from heaven, for no man can do the miracles that we see you perform. No man can do the things that we see you do except he be from God. This man went to Jesus by night. I know that some writers have said that Jesus, being known by Nickodemous as he was, who sought Him and desired to inquire of Him some of the things that he was concerned about felt ashamed to be seen going to Jesus in the day time and, therefore, he sought the opportunity to contact Christ by night. I do not know whether that interpretation is good or bad, but I am persuaded that Nickodemous sought Jesus in the night and I am persuaded that you and I have done likewise. We are prone in ourselves to forget God or to be unmindful of His mercy and of His benefits and often become more involved and so engulfed in the things of this life that we almost shudder when we stop to take inventory of ourselves and to think how little and how seldom we have been meditating upon God and upon His mercy and upon His grace with us. And so when we come into the valley of despair, when we find ourselves

engulfed in trials and in afflictions and in trouble and in sorrow, and we have used every means at our command and every resource that we have and yet find that we are helpless, that we are needy, and that nothing that we can produce has been able to bring that peace and that joy into our souls that we find ourselves seeking and longing for and so when Nickodemous had come to Jesus and he told him that ye must be born again. Nickodemous applying natural thoughts to this matter, said, how can we be born again at this adult life, enter into our mothers womb and be born again? He tells him that he must be born of the spirit. He must be born from above. He says that the wind bloweth where it listeth, but canst not tell from whence it cometh and where it goeth, so is everyone that is born of the spirit. Now, He said, if I have told you these earthly things and you believe not, how shall you believe if I tell you of heavenly things? And I feel that you long since have learned as well as I that when we learn these heavenly things, we will learn them by the spirit of God. When Jesus made inquiry as to whom do men say that I the Son of man am, some said that Thou art John the Baptist, some Elias, some one and some another. But when Jesus asked Peter, but whom say ye that I am? He said Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." We take the position that if God had revealed this knowledge into the hearts and minds of His people when He was here upon the earth, then the same power would be needed to reveal His love and His mercy unto each of us as the generations have come and gone until this very present day. The scriptures tell us that we shall all be known of the Lord, from the least unto the greatest, they shall all be taught of the Lord. Now is there any other teacher that teaches men to know God whom to know is life eternal? The scripture says that there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby that we must be saved. Now if there is no other name, no other way, no other means under heaven whereby that we must be saved, we are going to conclude that salvation, preservation, and the final glorification of the Church of God is still in the Lord, Jesus Christ, and that is the only way that it ever has been or ever will be. And so He tells him that no man has ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven. Now Jesus came, born of the virgin, conceived of the Holy Ghost, therefore, having of his earthly mother and divinely a father from heaven and so when we think of this union, when we think of this condescending and this coming into the world and to this virgin that which God conceived of the Holy Ghost, she was pondering these things in her mind saying that I know not a man. The Angel of Heaven would tell her that this thing is of the Holy Ghost and that it was propheticized hundreds of years before, that she would bring forth a son and His name shall be called Jesus for He shall save His people from their sins and then He tells us here that as Moses lifted up his serpent in the wilderness even so must the Son Of man be lifted up. Now, we know when we read this parable and prevail into the souls of those who God hath brought forth by the hand of Moses, out of the Egyptian bondage we find that they were just as people are today. They sang the songs of Moses and the lamb when they were delivered across the Red Sea. That is the first time we find singing recorded in the scriptures. And we have found singing recorded throughout the Bible. It has been as-

sociated with the Lords heritage. Singing is associated with Gods People. It was characteristic to the Church of God and, therefore, they sing the song of Moses and the lamb, but they had not journeyed but three days into the wilderness until they began to complain. I often think of poor Moses and Aaron. I think of them often in my feelings. When the people complained to them to their faces, why has thou brought us out? Do you ever ask yourself sometimes why are you not content to receive that which God has dealt to you? Are you asking yourself the question, why? They asked the question, why hast thou brought us out of this land where that we are hungry, where we have no water to drink? We are no more faithful and we have no greater faith than our forefathers had. We are the same Adam multiplied and when left to ourselves we are going to ask God why. Sometimes I have been made to feel that I would not ask God to change one thing that he proposed for me to endure in this life. The only thing that I would desire of God that he give me grace to accept it, that he give me faith to stand faithful and that I might know that He is God. Even through my tears and through my bowed head and my bended knees and with bleeding heart, I would still recognize that God is too wise to err and too good to be unkind and my portion and my lot was due me and that I should be faithful and accept it. But when these people complained to Moses and to Aaron of the condition in which they felt they were in, the scriptures tell us that Moses and Aaron left the assembly, the congregation of people, and they went out, the two of them, and they fell to the earth upon their faces. Do you ever feel like sometimes that you have come short? Do you ever feel like sometimes that you just can't face it? But there is a way. They went out to themselves and fell upon their faces, and God, whose eyes have never been dim and whose knowledge has never been surpassed, knew their position.

He knew how they felt. He knew their leadership. He knew He had commanded them to go and lead these people out. He knew that He had sent them to do this task. And O you feel for one moment that He is now going to forget them and leave them there to be crushed. Oh, how typical it is to your experience this morning. How typical it is in your own experience many times when you are just made to feel to almost give up the ghost and you can feel that my feet is almost gone, but God heard their cry and he told Moses to rise up. He said take the rod that is in thy hand and smite the rock and it shall bring forth water. What a great miracle was performed. What a great display, of the power of God was made manifest there to those doubting and murmuring and complaining people. And the scripture says that Moses prayed for the people. Sometimes we wonder why people will call you, maybe on the telephone, or come to see you or meet you on the street or wherever they may be and say pray for us. Moses prayed for the people, and I believe that God has put it in the hearts of many of His dear people in this world to pray for one another. But you know what God did, He sent a serpent among those people and they were bitten, not only were they bitten, but they died. And now we find Israel coming to repentance. We find them coming to Moses and saying unto him that we have talked about God and we have said this and that about God and about you because we have sinned and we come asking forgiveness. It has takenmuch more for the people to come and acknowledge their sin than it does to sin. It takes a great person to

admit their sins and that they have mistreated you. They had seen the hand of God so strong. They had seen the hand of God as supplying them with the manna from heaven. They had seen them supplied with water. They had seen them supplied with every needed blessing that they needed and now we look back and see how short-sighted that I was. How faithless that I was, and how sinful in my poor heart I have been to complain about my lot and my portion in life. Aren't you sometimes ashamed of your complaints? Aren't you sometimes ashamed to raise your voice in complaining about your condition and circumstances in life when you can behold the great blessings and the great mercies of God that He so blessed you with and so surrounded and cared for you when your eyes were closed and you were slumbering in sleep. Watched over by God who neither sleeps nor slumbereds, but preserving you and keeping you as an apple of his eye. What did the Lord do? The Lord knew something to do for those people. He had not forgotten them, though in all their backsliding and all of their complaining and all their murmuring, He still loved them and He told Moses what to do. He said make a brazen serpent and place it upon a poll where it can be seen and, He said, all who look upon this brazen serpent shall be healed. Moses provided that serpent and placed it there and he told him to make it of brass. It was not to be made of gold or made of silver, but to be made of brass that could be seen from afar. How precious it is this morning, I am trying to leave, if I can, from personal experience in these scriptures. I am trying to find a Christian experience in your poor soul, tho you go lame and halt and go complaining and murmuring and unfaithful in so many things in this world.

I want, if I can, to draw a picture of what has gone before and how God has dealt too faithfully with people who complain and murmur. God did not remove the serpent out of the wilderness. They were in the wilderness land. A land, a lonely road, but I will tell you what He did do. He provided a cure as the type of the Lord Jesus Christ. As the type the Lord Jesus Christ, those who look upon this serpent lives. This morning this Christ that was crucified, this Christ that must be lifted up. He must be lifted up though He was upon the cross, crucified, put to death for you and me, if indeed we are embraced in that great covenant of grace. The serpent is still out there. The devil is still out there. That is what it is. It is a type of satan still out there in the world and I want to tell sinners that there is no other place to look and I want to tell sinners there is no where else to go, that there is no other power but the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanses from all sins. And when somebody's eyes have been opened, there is somebody who has been attracted to this thing. They are the ones who by faith have been given to look to Jesus as the author and finisher of their faith, has been healed by the one offering that God has made who spared not His own Son but delivered him up for us all. So freely gave us all things. Everything that you need today and everything that you will need tomorrow and all the days to come is treasured in that great God head that has loved you. That who so ever believeth in Him should not perish. Who ever and whereever they are, I don't care, Jews or Gentiles. Let us be straight. Let us know where we stand if we can. Who is going to believe in Jesus Christ? None but those who have been touched by the blood of Jesus Christ. Touched by His prayers and by His power and with the heart man be-

lieveth unto righteousness and with the tongue confession is made.

To tell people to believe in Jesus Christ and accept Him as your Saviour and be saved who have not been touched by the finger of God's love, Whose eyes have not been opened to see their sinfulness and who have been able to recognize and realize their loss and ruined condition before God, is as casting your pearls before swine, is as sounding brass and tinkling symbols. It has no meaning and no power but when God has opened the eyes and given an understanding heart to His precious ones here in this world. He has told them to look unto me all the ends of the earth. Those who have gone to the full extremities as far as they can go in their own works and righteousness and look to Him and they are going to look. There is no question in my mind, they are going to look. There is no where else to go. We tell many people that are lying flat on their backs in bed that there is no other way to look but up when you are in that condition. How true and how true it is that there is no where else to look when you have come to the end. This is the God I'm trying to tell you about. God said,"That whoever believeth in Him shall not perish." Now they are going to get hungry, God's people are. Christ said I give them eternal life and He said they shall never perish. I give them eternal life, everlasting life, and they shall never perish. And we hear Christ say that no man can come to me except my father which sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day. And sometimes we feel the last day here in the world, sometimes we may feel in our own pilgrimage here that we live in the last days. Some of you may have had the experience like that, you felt so cast down and so blue and so forsaken and so lost that you would never see the dawning of another day when you retired to your bed or room for the night. That has been my experience. I don't know whether it has been yours or not, but I have felt so keenly and so forceable in my mind. I remember when I was but a lad of a boy that I would never see the dawning of another day and that God was going to send my soul to an everlasting and an endless destruction. And if He did it, He was a just and a holy and righteous God. And while I was lying with uplifted hands in our humble home on the second floor in a room all by myself that night that I shall never forget as long as my memory serves me. I somehow or another, as I laid there praying to God to have mercy upon a poor, lost sinner that I felt to be. My earthly father had just departed this life. He had just died and left me as a lad of fourteen years old any my life seemingly could mean nothing. I had nothing to live for and I had nothing to die for. I had less to die for and I had nothing to live for, but somehow or another I found out I was deceived in the whole matter, but there was a power that was made manifest to me. I could not see how that I could go on in this life without my earthly father and being so condemned and so crushed, I remember the morning that he departed that I went out into a lonely place in the darkness of the night and I fell upon the ground and I asked God to take me and leave him. I felt with all my soul that he was a father and a husband and a member of that family who would be of more use than I could ever be and I asked God not to take him but let me go in his place. It did not please God to have it that way. I walked back in the room, and I assume in a few moments time, I saw the last breath leave his body.

I want to tell you, my dear people, why this is the God, this is the power that I want to bring to you that God can reconcile and can make you to

feel as I did on that memorable night that a voice came to me as plain as I've ever seemingly heard anything in my soul and He said, I will be a father to the fatherless and a husband to the widowed and some how or another I felt from that moment until this time that I have a heavenly father. I have a father that neither sleeps nor slumbers. I have one that will never die and I have one I can pour out my soul to and I can tell Him my needs and I can tell Him my feelings and He always has a listening ear. I want to tell you, my dear people, if you don't find in your daily vocation of life that you want to talk to God, I don't understand it. I feel like that I just want to talk with God sometimes. I want Him to know that I appreciate His kindness, and His love, and His mercies to me in praising His name. And then I am so childish to bring my complaints to Him. Yes, I am so childish to bring my complaints. O Lord, why does it have to be this way? Why do we have to be this way? Solve the great problems, sooth the aching hearts, bind up those who, O Lord, who go lame and limp. As Moses lifted up a serpent in the wilderness, even so the Son of man must be lifted up. And who so believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." There was a man, the scriptures tells us and I feel this morning this world is saddening with all its sorrow, with all its turmoil, and difficulty in nations over the earth. This world is standing because of the elect of God. It is standing because of His promise to His people and I feel with every assurance when we read in the scripture it tells us when we hear of wars and rumors of wars, it is not a sign of the end of time but a beginning. My doctrine shall be preached in all the world. What for? For a witness and I feel when that gospel has been preached in every nation, every kindred, and every people in all the world, I believe the sun is going to cease to shine and the moon is going to be turned to blood and this world shall be rolled together as a scroll and time shall be no more. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son and who so ever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life. I hope that we have tried to cover that there are those who would believe and there are those who God had given forth to look to Him and how He promises all the way throughout the scriptures, not a broken link anywhere but that God has promised to be with his people. They that could say, though I walk through the valley and shadow of death, I will fear no evil, because Thou are with me. The Lord is my shepherd and I shall not want. How precious indeed that it is when we are made to feel as though we have to go in the places that are so adverse to our feelings and such a warfare to our flesh and how crushing indeed many times it is, yet to feel that God's hand is there. The poor jailers, I think often of the great patriots of God when they had faith of God who were placed in the inner prision and when the shackles were placed upon them and they were told to make sure that they did not escape. There, when the midnight hour arose, they began to sing. They began to praise God and the jailers heard, the earthquake came and shakes the place, and the doors were all opened and when the jailers came in, he told them to do thyself no harm that we are all here. Oh, how necessary it was for those people to be put in prison in order that the jailers might hear. They would not have heard the voice of Paul and Silas had it not been for the fact that they were put in jail down there and their serv-

ice aroused the jailers attention. Their service aroused a miracle of miraculous things that were done there that night when the foundation of the very jail was shaking and trembling there and when the doors were opening there to them. These jailers were astonished, something new and something different that we have never seen and known anything about was taking place. They went down and talked to these men and I want to tell you the scriptures tell us they washed their stripes. They had been beaten with forty-nine stripes before they were placed in the jail.

Why were they there? Because they were preaching the doctrine of salvation by grace, ascribing all honor and glory to Jesus, and they felt that they were disturbing the peace of that country and they did not want them preaching it there but that did not change their lives. They went down there in their stripes and their bloody backs but still singing His praises and the jailer and his family were baptized at the midnight hour. What a great place it must have been. What a great and glorious scene that it must have been for them to be down there and when they were set free, they went back to their company and they praised God that we have been counted worthy to be persecuted. We just thank God that we have been counted worthy to be persecuted. Sometimes we may thank and praise God that we are counted strange. We sometimes can thank God that we have counted different from the world. That we can be said of the world how strange a doctrine they believe and how strange things they contend for. Sometimes I thing that we can count a blessing to be numbered with that few that believe in the sovereignty of God, determined, everlasting, and unshameful things that God has decreed for these people. Those that believeth in Him are not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he had not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. Now there is, therefore, no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. There is, therefore, now no condemnation.

I would like to, if I may talk about it just for a moment. Therefore, now at this time, no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. Not only that but He says they walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. Now there is somebody walking after the spirit, is somebody walking after the inner teaching of the Holy Spirit of God, teaching them how they aught to live, that they aught to live soberly, righteously and Godly here in this present evil world. Christ said that it is necessary that I should go away that the Holy Comforter may come, that shall keep you and bring you in remembrance of all things whatsoever that I have commanded and, therefore, this unseen power, this spirit of God, has taken up its abode in the hearts of His people and is teaching them how they ought to live and how they ought to conduct themselves here in this world and if you do not believe it is so, you find yourself going contrary to that which you feel, know which is right and see how you are chastened for what you have said or actions in which you have committed or something that you have done and how that God has chastened you and the Lord chastens all of his people. He that receiveth not chastisements, they are bastards and not sons. How precious indeed it is to feel that we have a Father that knows when the rod of chastisement needs to be placed upon us. and He knows how to use us and to bring us into the knowledge of this truth and to bring us to honor and to glorify Him. The weapon of His warfare is not carnal but they are mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.

bringing under submission every high thought into the obedience of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. He brings us unto obedience to Him. He brings us to be obedient children. He brings us to acknowledge Him as Lord of lords and God of gods and ascribing honor and glory to His great and matchless name. May the Lord bless you, may he keep you ever that you will never in time or eternity be condemned because your condemnation and your sins have been washed away by the blood of Jesus Christ and you stand in His righteousness, in His justification, and in His holiness and not in your righteousness and not in your own strength, but in Him that we live and we move and we have our being. May God bless you!

(The above was taken from a tape recording of the service and edited for publication. It was sent to us by Sister Ruth Jeffres with the consent of Elder King's wife, Sister Bronna King. We wish to thank Sister King for sharing this with our readers. We, who knew Elder King have fond and precious memories of our association with him.)

Editors

MEETINGS

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Smith River Primitive Baptist Association, the Lord willing, will convene with Charity Church the 2, 3, and 4 of September, 1983. The church is located in Patrick county on state route 40 between Ferrum and Woolwine, Virginia. Those coming on 220, take route 40 west at Rocky Mount, come through Ferrum by Lawn Branch Church and Charity is about eight miles on the left.

We invite all our brethren and sisters that are in peace and good standing at home to seat with us.

Elder Roy Agee, Moderator
Elder Amos Hash, Clerk

ORDINATION PROPOSED

The Lord willing, Welsh Tract Old School Baptist Church will call for a presbytery to form on Sunday afternoon, August 14, 1983. This will correspond with our regular second Sunday meeting for worship.

Our purpose is that Brother Robert N. Lackey, a member of Welsh Tract, may be examined, and if found acceptable and qualified, be ordained to the full work of an Old School Baptist Minister. He has been called to serve the Little Creek Church near Laurel, Delaware.

Any who plan to come please contact Elder James F. Poole as soon as possible for lodging and directions. His address is P. O. Box 1250, Salisbury, Maryland 21801, and the phone number is 1-301-741-6406.

Sister Ruth Lucht, Church Clerk

GREENSBORO PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God, Greensboro and Big Meadows Church looked out among themselves and recognized certain gifts. They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed Sunday afternoon April 3, 1983 at three o'clock at Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church, Greensboro, N. C., for the purpose of examination of these gifts, brother Wilson King of Greensboro Church and brother Casey Johnson of Big Meadows Church to be ordained, if found qualified, to the full work and service of deacons.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to set together. The meeting was opened by prayer by Elder Larry Hollandsworth. Elder Kenneth R. Key was elected as moderator and Elder Paul Lambe to serve as clerk. Brother Batts acting as spokesman for the churches, delivered the candidates to the presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon was read as set forth in scriptures, third chapter, of First Timothy by Elder Raymond Goad. Examination followed by Elder O. K. Tench and Elder H. W. Wray. The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of these candidates, proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder Leonard Key. The charge was delivered to brothers King and Johnson by Elder David Spangler. After assurnace from the churches that they were

satisfied with the work of the presbytery, they were delivered back to the church as ordained deacons.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery was read and adopted. A copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to be sent to the *Signs of The Times* for publication and a copy to be given to brothers King and Johnson, along with a certificate of ordination.

Presbytery was dismissed by Prayer by Elder O. K. Tench.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Elder Paul Lambe, Clerk

FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lord willing, Bethel Church of the Buttahatchie Old School Primitive Baptist Association will have a two day meeting the fifth week-end of July. (July 30 and 31, 1983.) Services will begin at 9:30 a.m on Saturday morning.

Bethel Church is located about 2½ miles from Steens, Mississippi, or about 12 miles from Millport, Alabama.

We would like to invite all of the Old Baptist faith to attend this meeting, and we invite all lovers of the truth, also.

For more information or directions please call one of the following:

Mrs. Eulie McCool	1 (601) 328-0532
James McCool	1 (601) 494-6694
DeWitt Ray	1 (601) 328-9115
C. W. Baines	1 (205) 662-4462

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will hold a tw day meeting at Dan River Church on the Fifth Sunday in July and Saturday before. All churches of the West Country Line Union will host this meeting. We invite all of our faith and order to meet with us.

Elder D. V. Spangler

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

Phil. 1:6

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR MARCH 1983

Mrs. W.W. Haynes, AR.	$ 7.00
C.L.F Fowler, TX.	9.00
Mrs. Pauline Shelton, VA.	5.00
Harvey Vick, TN.	1.00
Mrs. Pearl Law, VA.	2.00
Mrs. W.C. Sutherland, VA.	10.00
Mrs. Lelah Hill, CA.	3.00
Mrs. William Griffith, N.Y.	4.00
David Harrell, TX.	2.00
Bill G. Clinton, CA.	3.00
Vermell Beech, MS.	5.00
Mrs. Mary Benton, TX.	20.00
Mrs. Vickie Barrett, TX.	20.00
Frank P. Wall, AL.	10.00
Mrs. Florence A. Gibson, GA.	13.00
Mrs. Glen H. Bremer, TN.	2.00
Mrs. Robert Hunter, KY.	3.00
Millard S. Griffin, TN.	3.00
Mrs. Hazel Garland, MD.	10.00
Mrs. Lessie Jones, VA.	25.00
Mrs. Mabel Ellis, VA.	14.00
Mrs. Novaline Stewart, N.C.	10.00
Charles Alders, TX.	50.00
Mrs. Flora C. Vest, VA.	5.00
Paul Wright, VA.	3.00
Victor H. Laws, MD.	18.00
Mrs. Donald E. Attebery, WA.	15.00
Mrs. Lester Haning, WV.	13.00
Mrs. Rena Smith, N.C.	3.00
Mrs. Sarah E. West, MD.	2.00
Mrs. Maude Pruitt, N.C.	6.00

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR APRIL 1983

H.B. Rhoades, TX.	$ 7.00
R.D. Smothers, N.C.	2.00
Lonzie W. Nichols, VA.	3.00
Mrs. Nannie Carter, N.C.	6.00
Mrs. W.B. Humphreys, VA.	2.00
Peter M. Vliestra, N.J.	2.00
Mrs. Frances M. Thorpe, VA.	7.00
Mrs. Priddy L. Shaw, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Alice Lemons, MD.	12.00
Mrs. Charles H. Allen, N.C.	15.00
Homer L. Hudson, AL.	100.00
Mrs. Flora Stutts, TX.	7.00
W.L. Harrell, TX.	3.00
Eld. Paul Lambe, N.C.	7.00
Mrs. Ruth T. Hyler, N.C.	2.00
Mrs.Claude Mann, FL.	11.00
J.O. Harrod, AR.	7.00
Claude S. Brown, N.C.	20.00
Mrs. H.D. Underwood, VA.	5.00
W.B. East, MD.	3.00
J.R. Roberts, FL.	5.00
Mrs. Ada Campbell, VA.	25.00
Mrs. Julia Hinson, N.C.	3.00

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

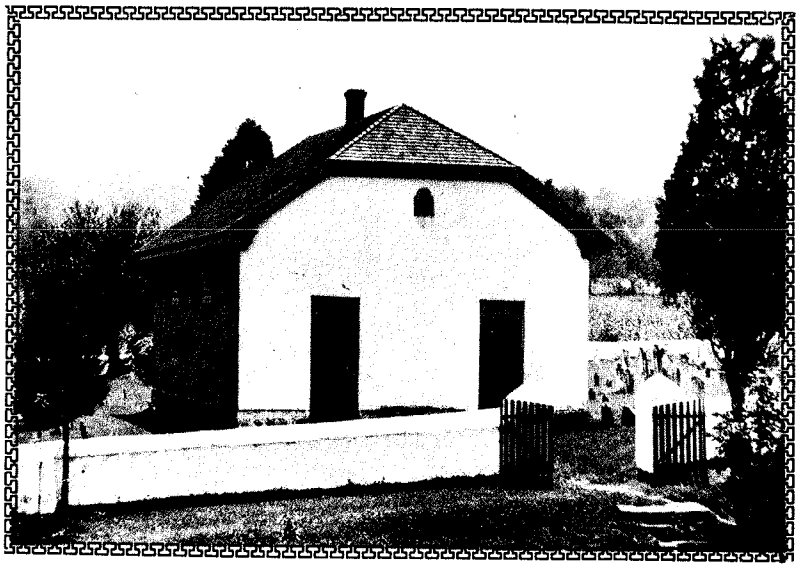

In the month of June, 1701, this body of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ, later to be called *The Welsh Tract Church,* sailed from Milford-haven, South Wales, in Great Britain. The number was sixteen including their pastor.

They landed in Philadelphia, September 8 of the same year, and continued in that vicinity for about a year and a half.

Early in the eighteenth century William Penn granted to David Evans and William Davis a track of land, thirty thousand acres. This tract has since been known as "The Welsh Tract." This land was to be divided and deeded to settlers from South Wales.

To this place moved the Welsh Baptist church, and in 1703 built a log meeting house in which they worshipped until the present structure was erected in 1746. The first house occupied the same location as this present building.

The brick in the present house were brought from England and carried by muleback from Newcastle to the present location. It is reported that these mules were led by women members of the congregation.

As the Church was composed of Welsh people, the preaching for about one hundred years was in the Welsh language.

Buried in the church cemetary are nine former pastors as follows: M. E. Thomas, David Davis, John Boggs, Gideon Farrell, Enoch Morgan, William K. Robinson, G. W. Staton, Joseph Staton and John Eubanks.

On September 3, 1777, the meeting house took part in a military engagement. The Americans after being driven from Cooch's bridge retreated along Christiana and made their last stand under the shelter of the church walls. At this time a cannon ball is said to have passed through the building.

Meeting time at Welsh Tract is second Sunday of each month. Their present pastor is Elder James F. Poole.

(We would like to introduce by way of the "Signs" a church of our faith each month. We invite our subscribers who would like to do so, to send a black and white glossy snap shot of your church along with a brief history, Sunday of your meetings and geographic location. We will publish them in the order they are received.)

Editors

BOOK NOTICES

EDITORIAL WRITINGS
ELDER GILBERT BEEBE
(Founder and Editor of the *Signs of The Times*)
1832-1881

Volume 3 - 480 pages $16.00 each
Volume 4 - 512 pages $16.00 each
(Add $2.00 each for mailing)
(Maryland residents add 5% Sales Tax)

The large, beautiful books (6 x 9 in. trim size) are bound in heavy D Grade Library Buckram cloth in silk screen finish. The type is school book text and is large and very readable; even for older persons. We have used the finest paper available and can say these books are of excellent quality throughout.

We are very pleased with the response on both these volumes. If you have not ordered as yet, we hope you will do so soon. Later this year we hope to reprint Volume 1 and then Volume 2 to match Volume 3 and 4. If the sales continue to make it possilbe, we will continue to bring out future volumes. We estimate there are sufficient editorials by Elder Beebe to make a set of 10 and possibly 12 volumes when all are published.

These books will make excellent gifts and should be in the library of each of our churches. *Please be sure to specify the volume number or numbers when you order these.*

Again, we thank you for your support.

Send orders to:
Elder James F. Poole
P. O. Box 1250
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

To those of you who live in the North Carolina and Virginia area – Brother Reubin French, Deacon of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, has agreed to act for us as agent to distribute the Beebe Editorials.

Anyone wishing to purchase Volume 3 or 4 may see him in person and purchase them, thereby saving mailing costs.

FEAST OF FAT THINGS

The *Signs of the Times, Inc.,* is pleased to announce that we still have available for purchase the book "Feast of Fat Things."

This book, first published by the *Signs* some years ago, was reprinted last year. It is rich with doctrine of Old School or Primitive Baptists and should be in the home of every believer.

CONTENTS

1. The Black Rock Address of 1832.
2. "Everlasting Task for Arminians" by William Gadsby
3. "Fatalism" by H. M. Curry
4. "A Dream Tour Through Arminian Heaven" by H. M. Curry
5. "The Celestial Railroad" by Hawthorne
6. "A Riddle" by Gilbert Beebe

These articles are all excellent for showing what we believe and the book will make an excellent gift for our children and friends who may inquire of our faith.

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OBITUARIES

ESTHER L. MCLAWHORN

Esther L. McLawhorn, daughter of the late M. Thomas McLawhorn and Bessie L. Robinson McLawhorn, was born June 4, 1911, and died May 29, 1982. She is survived by a sister, Mrs. Irma Lang.

Esther was a lovely, gracious lady, one of compassion and integrity. She was frank but goodhearted and was very accommodating, ever ready to lend a helping hand whenever and wherever she saw the need. Her walk in life was that of a christian. She was a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God and she loved the church and was a faithful attendant from youth until death. She loved to mingle and converse with the church members. Her concern for the welfare of the church was manifested in the many ways in which she contributed to it. Esther, like the lovely flowers she loved so well, was here for only a season, then gone, leaving with us beautiful memories that linger on and on. We shall miss her but trust that our loss is her eternal gain.

Done by order of conference while in regular session.

Elder Joseph Sawyer, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

JESSE EDWARD LANG

Once again death has claimed one of our members, our beloved and highly esteemed brother, Jesse Edward Lang. He was born September 11, 1907, and died April 1, 1982, after a long illness. He was married to Irma McLawhorn on December 24, 1927, and to this union was born two sons. They were a loving and happy family.

He is survived by his wife, two sons, Eugene and Melvin, a sister, Mrs. Cora Lee Morris, and seven grandchildren.

Brother Jesse was a man of good report, one who led an exemplary life. He was a man of strength and integrity; one when confronted with making an important decision, he would carefully think the matter through before forming an opinion and when convinced of what was right, he took a firm stand. He was a firm and steadfast believer in salvation by the grace of God, and on a confesssion of faith he united with Handcocks Primitive Baptist Church February 18, 1958. He was a faithful member until death. He often visited many other churches of the same faith and order. He was a regular attendant of the Union and Association meetings. He loved his church and contributed to its welfare.

On the third Sunday in December, 1964, he was ordained a deacon of Handcocks Church and on August 15, 1971, he was chosen as the church treasurer. God blessed him with the qualities to fill both offices well. Brother Jesse conducted himself in the manner that befitted a christian hearted man.

He is sorely missed, but we feel that our loss has been his eternal gain.

Done by order of conference while in regular session.

Elder Joseph Sawyer, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

ELMER FRANCIS HASTINGS

Brother Elmer F. Hastings of Parsonburg, Maryland, was born April 4, 1889, and died at his home December 19, 1982 of a stroke at age 93. He was the son of Levin and Caroline Holloway Hastings. Services were conducted in the Holloway Funeral Home, Salisbury, Maryland by Elder David Spangler of Danville, Virginia, assisted by Elder James Poole of Salisbury. Burial was in Forest Grove Cemetery.

Brother Elmer was a pioneer in the hatchery business. In 1919 he and his first wife, Agnes Laws Hastings, who died in 1961, founded Hastings Hatchery in Parsonsburg, later expanding to Bishopville, Maryland, Rogers,. Arkansas, and Gainsville, Georgia. He retired in 1962. He was also past president of the Parsonsburg Fire Department.

Brother Elmer was baptized June 7, 1964, by Elder David Spangler as a member of Forest Grove Old School Baptist Church. His grandparents and parents were charter members of this church which was organized in 1886. He served as deacon and trustee of the church and traveled to Washington State, Canada and many southern states for church related meetings.

Surviving are his wife, Oliver Miller Hastings; a daughter, Mary Belle Holland, Ocean City, Md.; a son, Henry L. Vinyard, Salisbury, Md.; four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Brother Elmer was a firm believer in the doctrines taught by our Lord. He enjoyed the fellowship of the brethren and particularly enjoyed sharing his lovely home with friends and brethren far and near. In his last years of decline, his mind wavered, but he still would recall the joys of fellowship in years gone by. Brother Elmer in his last few days seemed unaware of those around him. But about a week before he died, he had a very clear evening and knew his wife and neighbors well calling them by name. He said, "I want to be home by Christmas." We fully believe that by God's grace he made it home by Christmas.

Written at the request of the Church
Elbert Robbins, Church Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8/83
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS"

The existence, sovereignty, immutability omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah–the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the attonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistable, and in all cases. effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers–that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

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EDITORIAL

I therefore the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. With lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, when he ascended upon high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Eph. 4: 1,8.

Without perfection no man will see God in peace. There is not any in and among the children of men. It must come from God. All of it is from and of God. It will not mix with the imperfections of mankind. The man is described as being in a sinful state. Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: They have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy one of Israel into anger, they are gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken anymore? Ye will revolt more and more: The whole head is sick, the whole heart is faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it, but woulds and bruises,petrifying sores; they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment. (Isa. 1:4,6). This is a good description of a man in his natural habitat. The apostle and the Psalmist joins in this wholesale description of us as related to our Father, Adam. (Rom. 3:16,18; Psa. 14: 1,3).

If I could move out of this sinful body that I dwell in, I'd gladly take up lodging in the fourth chapter of Ephesians for it is a land and a place wherein love abounds and the superlative blessings of our covenant keeping God never cease nor diminish nor are curtailed because of any shortage of failure in heaven or in earth. In the first palce, I desire to take one moment of the readers time to go over something that has been affirmed time and time again since our Saviour returned to His Father.

Those that believe in God testifying to what Paul declared as the lasting truth of God, with a still greater train of witnesses claiming that those things which was promised the chosen vessels of mercy at the time of His choice were not really fixed or established every jot and tittle; that we either had to behave a certain good way for them to really be effective, or that we had to refrain

from this or that or another. If need be, we would have to use a combination of both in order for them to become effective. It does not matter in the least who says that is the doctrine of grace, there still is not a word of truth in it. Such a doctrine. If one iota of it was ever made manifest as being the truth, would certainly have been God fighting against the very thing he has determined and promised His elect.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.

I pause here that we might explore what the apostle has said. In all Christendom none of us believe that they were then blessed to any of these embraced in the promise in a manifest sense. Christ was yet to come, the chosen of God were yet to be made manifest. Every reader is aware of that. Yet God being from everlasting to everlasting, all things were then open and naked before Him. Thus He blessed every one of them in His Son before the world began. What was the basis or the foundation of this blessing? What was it upon? Those that hate and despise the eternal fixedness of God and hate those that are established in it, answer me. If Paul had of said that God blessed them in eternity according to their conduct here in this time state, we would have never heard the last of it, but he did not say it. Since Paul did not say it, then, God giving me grace, I will never say it. God did bless people in Christ with every spiritual blessing in Christ in heavenly places, but not according to what we would do with His commandments, but according to something that He was then doing. God is not a conditionalist, none lay down to Him any conditions. Any ifs, any ands, any buts, any conjuctive propositions whereby He must connect with or cooperate with in order to bring about. That God is not the God of Israel; that God is not able to save without a combination of His prowess with Satan's cunning to establish salvation. Away with such moles and bats, for wherever they infest the kindgom of heaven, there is languor, wanness, sickness, instability.

I do not doubt but that some would have, had they been there (and I confess my own weakness there) offered help in wisdom and in power in electing the heirs of salvation, the chosen of God, but none of us were there. The election of God stemmed only from God. None were there to meddle nor to suggest. His choice was that of a Sovereign, Eternal, unchangeable God. Ah, how my poor heart is comforted by such abounding good news. God has acted in behalf of that which belongs to Him, acted towards and upon that which belongs to Him by right or ownership that existed from all eternity, and that He had a perfect right to do with what was His without having to answer any carping questions or criticism from those that have ever been replying against God. This blessing of them (all of them) in Christ was according as He chose them. Now if there is one loose link, one dropped stitch, one poor sinner in hell that died for his sins after having been chosen in Christ, then, THEN, but not until then will there ever be a condition in our spiritual blessings that we were blessed with in Christ before the world was. Of Course, if there has been discovered a rule up until now unknown, whereby fleshly obedience is acceptable to God, we then will deal with that matter when it is thus proven. Until that time, speculation and private interpretations will not be noticed.

In the fullness of time (all according; even as, like as) as He chose us in Him before the world began, the time came for Christ to make His advent into the world. He did not

come and spend thirty-three years as God in the flesh, to see the blessings treasured in Himself in eternity scorned, evaded, disobeyed, but as always in regard to His purpose in eternity, He came to excute it, to order it, to establish it, to carry it out to a jot and to a tittle. He came to save His people from their sins. And I say, and I preach (if I preach the gospel) that He had all power in heaven and in earth; that not a power was before Him to create, or to destroy His creation, not a power to save, or to keep Him from saving, thus His saving of them is His predestination being made manifest. He being before all things; He creating all things, and all things having been made by Him and for Him, all things were then present that would ever rise against the children, and that in order for no enemy to ever rob them of their inheritance which God gave them, and blessed them with the joys of it forever. Then all of the enemies, be them powers, men, events, things present, things to come, principalities, whether visible or invisible, all were gathered together to do no more, nor not a whit less, than would constitute the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.

As men and devils have ever thought, the more ignominy and shame that they heaped upon Him, the nearer, ever nearer, He was coming to have sealed the destiny of elect and non elect. Yet neither one of them was aware of what was transpiring around them. His people sinned and fell in their father, Adam. I go no further than the Bible goes in that, to wit, they sinned and fell in their father, Adam. By man came sin, but I am not losing sight of the willingness, the cunning of the fowler that caught them in the snare. (Psa. 124:7.) We were tempted into following him, but we could not get out, and he has never done anything but mock us in our captivity. Do not let me lead you unawares; do not listen to me or to any other man unless we bring the good news of the gospel. We were caught in the snare of captivity and there was none to help us as far as we knew. As far as the childrn of God knew, there was no help, there was none on our side, there was no man that cared for our soul. We were sinking down, held bound by the strong power of he that held us captive. I am sure, and being sure (at least by the letter) that there was none to help among the sons of Adam, that our case was hopeless and we were helplessly bound in well forged chains of our captivity.

However, one had been on our side from all eternity. We did not know about it, therefore, we could not have been a link in providing help for our deliverance. As far as we knew, and as far as we could do about deliverance there was not any help for us. The eons of time, of eternity, had not been long enough to dull nor dim the memory of He that had been from all eternity on our side. Ah, dear bretheren, this is all that we need, yea, it is all that we needed to break the snare, to lead captivity captive, to let us go free. This is the free deliverance of He that has ever been on our side, and that is as faithful for the future as He has been in the past. His memory did not forget us when in the dungeon of captivity not knowing that release was only a hand breadth away. (1 Kings 18:44). He did not forget us on the instant of waking after crucifixion, and methinks--ah, no,I do not think, I know, dear little ones, that He will never forget us as long as the curtain of time is hanging, and I even know if we lie in a dust bound grave a thousand years, that He will know as much about where our dust lies as He did in the antiquities of time when He formed us from the dust in our natural creation. Yes, you may be assured that sometimes unbelief

staggers me, but I do hope that I am thankful that for the most part I am waiting patiently and yet longingly for Him to appear and to give me release to go hence to see Him that led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men.

There were not any exceptions when we were captivated and captured soul and body and spirit, held in bondage by that enemy, Satan. I would at all times beg for divine guidance that I might present all of God's people perfect in Christ. I do not preach any man perfect in the flesh, nor do I preach the Adamic race ever to be perfect in Christ, but, if I preach the gospel, I do preach every man of the family of Christ as perfect in Christ (Col. 1:28). Each and every one of the chosen vessels of mercy are perfect in Christ. There is no spot in thee my love, thou art all fair (S. S. 1:6). They had been in abject captivity so long without the light of His countenance to shine upon them.

Come hither dear reader, dear sorrowing disciple, wayworn pilgrim, come and dine. Wisdom has set her table well. After the fare on the table of the custodian of the flesh bound bars of prison, the table is set with dainties that the weak, the wan, the afflicted, the poor, the ones that do not know, the ones that are simple, the ones that desire more understanding of the great love wherewith He loved us while we were still prison bound. Yes, come one and come all, eat, drink, and joy in the opening of the bound doors of captivity.

As we deed and muse on the goodness of mother wisdom, let us behold Him coming down from God His Father, to earth where Satan was, and where he had them all in obeisance to him. Here Wisdom had already gone before. The cost had already been counted; the waters of adversity had already been measured in the hollow of His hand, incidentally, the same hand measured them while manifested in the flesh that weathered the awful agony and intense suffering as the nails were driven through them. Furthermore, lest we forget it, this hand, the right hand of deliverance, the right hand on which the sheep which had been captured by sin and released from that captivity, as we shall shortly see, which right hand is the source of the victory that God had gotten over the enemy which had captivated His children.

There never has been such a display of love and compassion as Christ manifested for His bride, for His elect people. No husband has ever had as faithless a wife as He has had; no wife has ever had as faithful a husband as she has had. He went under the law, which we had broken, for us. He has made of the woman that broke the first commandment that her Maker gave her. He was made a curse for His bride. He made her cause, which she dragged through the slime of our sins, as His cause. All of her debts He assumed and paid for her breaking them. All of His credit (righteousness) was credited to her account. And how His excellence shines as we see Him taking on the flesh and assuming a husband's obligation to pay her indebtedness, although it entailed Him laying down His life to take care of her sin, and the consequences of His having steptoed into the breaches of the law which she had made.

Only in the power and the glory of His Godhead could He become marked for captivity, and yet break the bars of that captivity, and come off conquerer over captivity itself forever bringing him into captivity in which a way that He has revieved a deadly wound, even now is always relegated behind the back of Him that let captivity captive. May His dear name be honored and adored in our lives by our walk and our talk, in songs of praise, in harmonious preach-

ing, and victorious death.

But that is not all. In the consummation of Satan being brought into subjection to the King of saints, we find that we have one of doubles given the children of the kingdon. I ask that you turn back to the beginning of this Ephesian letter and find out who it is for. There is not a second letter coming to these people. This is the first and only one to them. It is to all of the family of God; the things written to them then, are ours as much as they belong to them. These same promises will belong to all that ever are brought in, and I assure you that not one will ever be brought in that Christ did not die for, and redeem from their sin, and I likewise urge that He did not forget, or miss, or fail one that were chosen in Him before the world was, and now remember this: To every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. No other people thus blessed, and none of that elect people left out of this blessing. I must urge also that Peter wrote a valuable treatise on the same subject, and to the same elect people, that God had given them all things pertaining to life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3). Furthermore, I must insist that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth, and that all we have received of that fulness. (John 1:14,16).

Not only did He save us by overcoming Satan who had us in captivity, but He gave gifts unto men, and the gift in each case was commensurate with the gift of Christ, that is, that the same measure of gift is given to one and all.

This leading captivity captive for each of them (that is, these elect people) is doing the first work for them, that is the imparting unto them eternal life, but then, after saving them with eternal salvation, He gave every one of them grace and gifts, and keeps right on down life's journey giving the people of God grace and gifts to the end that they be perfected, that they be edified, that we be unified into the perfect body of Christ in a manifest and glorified sense.

Dear brethren, this is the gospel day. This is the day wherein we receive a kingdom which cannot be moved. We need these gifts, we need this saving grace, whereby we may serve God addeptably with reverence, realizing that He is a consuming fire, and that every idol, man made or imagined immage, will be removed from us, that all strange fire will be put out which we have kindled, That all of our sparks, and all of the lights that we have lighted will be extinguished by His severe wrath at His visitations among us. On the other hand, the gifts, the callings of God will suffice at all times to enable us to stem every rising tide of criticism, every wave of persecution, to silence every enticing and cunningly devised voice hailing to the little ones of the kingdom to come over here with us.

This way of Grace was conceived in God's eternal mind. It saves to the uttermost every poor sinner that is brought as a begger to Him. This uttermost saving is the only kind of salvation that will reach my case, for I am a poor sinner, weak and wounded, sick of the tiresome journey, have no lasting resort nere, feel desperately the need of one as evening approaches closer and closer, and feel to hope through divine grace and effectual calling that in and through and because of the uttermost purpose of God (that is, that covered every created thing) without one thought or one pulse beat effort by me that He has prepared a home for me and all.

In that blessed hope,

Elder W. D. Griffin

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

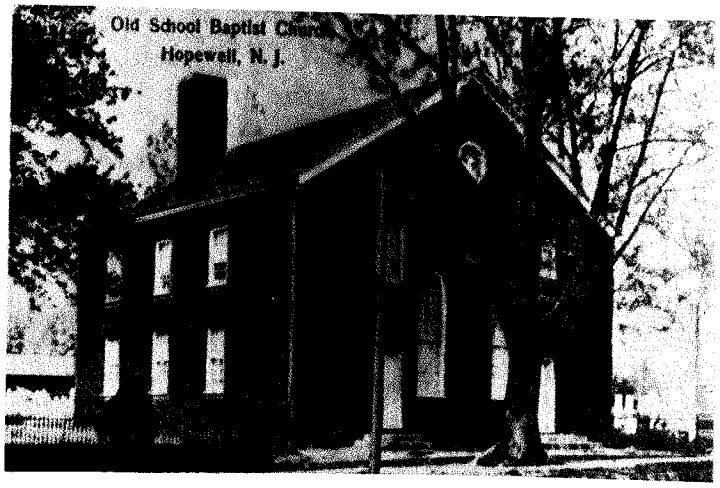

The Hopewell Church, Hopewell, New Jersey was constituted in 1715, the oldest Primitive Baptist Church, constituted in America. (The oldest, Welsh, Newark, Delaware, constituted in Wales 1701).

To the right of the meetinghouse is a tall monument, erected to the memory of John Hart, a member of the Hopewell Church, and a signer of the Declaration of Independence.

CORRESPONDENCE

Route 5, Box 220
Bassett, Virginia 24055

Dear Elder Spangler:

I want to write a little on some of my thoughts on the 10th chapter of St. John. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.* **St. John 10: 1-2.**

Verse seven explains what the door is. Then said Jesus unto them again, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.* **In this we see that Jesus is both the shepherd and the door, and if the shepherd brings them into the fold, then they have not climbed up another way.**

I hope that I am thankful that Jesus said into the fold, and not into the kingdom. The only way into the Kingdom is to be born into it. Jesus answered, *"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."*

Many do climb up another way, for there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now I beseech you brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and avoid them. They that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the

simple. Romans 16: 17-18.

Here are some of their fruits; loving the most high seats, greed of filthy lucre, hatred of them that are orderly, railers, untruthful -- by their fruits ye shall know them. Those that the Shepherd brings in, these are the fruits they bring forth; love, humility, long forbearing, striving for peace in the house of God. Let us not fear them that would destroy us for Christ sake, for Jesus said, *if serpents bite you, or if yo drink any deadly poison it shall not hurt you.* Remember that the weapons of our warfare is not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds. Let us all watch and pray.

Elder J. R. Hollandsworth

Route 2, Box 920
Bassett, Virginia 24055

Dear Editors:

I do so much love to get and read the "Signs". The May and June issues has the most sweet reading in them. I enjoyed the sweet and wonderful experience of Sister Mable Berry. In reading her experience I can see my own better than I could tell it myself. I also enjoyed the article on church discipline. I have read it over and over again. I am so pleased and I hope grateful that the Lord blessed dear Elder Beebe to write that article.

I will soon be 79 and the good Lord has been so tenderly and good to me all the days of my life. Sweet Jesus blessed me while in the hospital some time back to see His smiling dear face in a cloud. It was so bright that the cloud shined like the sun. He spake these words to me; "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." I can not express the sweetness I felt in those dear words. I was on my bed in the hospital, I know not whether I was asleep or awake. I only know those words were so sweet to me who feel to be a vile sinner and not worthy of the breath the good Lord gives me to breathe.

I do want to send some money to help with the dear "Signs". I know it takes a lot of hard work and expense to publish it.

May God bless and comfort all the dear editors and all those who love His appearing. I have enjoyed the books of Elder Beebe, especially book number three is so sweet to read.

Your little sister in hope
Collie Clark

Route 2, Box 1095
Umatillla, Florida 32748

Dear Elder Williams:

I am sending you part of my experience written a long time ago. If you think it worthy of space in the "Signs", please print it. I am now eighty-six years of age. I hope I am thankful to God I believe as I do, feeling that God has all power in Heaven and in earth. He works and none can hinder, He hinders and none can work. If not deceived I feel that God has shown me this, how weak I am and can do nothing good. When I was about fourteen years old, I found myself deeply concerned about my soul, at times more than others, thinking there was work for me to do, and I would soon give up the pleasures of this world and live a christian life. I would promise myself this, then would find myself doing worse, would feel condemned and promise again. I went on this way for several years. My burden got so heavy I thought it would get me down, some times I thought I was really sick.

Sometimes I tried to pray, Lord

have mercy on me, Lord what is wrong with me? One day I found myself on the ground, a short distance from the house, dying, I knew this. I can never forget that awful death chill, it seemed to start at my feet and creep up my body. I knew when it reached my heart I would be gone. This was sure death, I can not describe this as I felt it. While in this condition my first thought was, I must live for the sake of my children, and tried to open my eyes and found I had not strength to lift my eye lids. At this time a voice seem to say, just what are you any way. I had thought for a long time I was a sinner but I had never realized it to the fullest as I did now. The things I had boasted of doing were before me now. I saw I had not even done my duty to my family, much less any thing good as I had thought I had done, and now it was too late. I was dying, I tried to pray, Lord save me or I am gone was all I could say. Then this terrible death chill seem to stop about my waist line, I got up from the ground with a humble feeling. I had never before realized how God had all power. Until this I could not accept the thought that I could not accomplish something with the work of my own hands.

Here I was willing to give it up, I had not done anything but sin. I went about groaning to myself, Lord will thou be merciful to me a sinner, Lord what will become of me. Some times I tried to pray for my brothers, Lord keep them from the sinful things of this world. I seem to worry most about my father, he was getting old and gray, had not told us of a hope. One evening I called my sister, told her I was coming to her house to spend the night. I had not been in her house but a few minutes when I told her I was worried about Papa. She said well how is his foot (he had recently mashed his foot), I said very well I guess, but if Papa dies without giving us a reason for a hope, I cannot live through the funeral. I can not describe my feelings when she answered me thus; I don't see why Papa don't join the church and live a christian life. This was not food to me. I was ready to return home but stayed the night. A short time after this I became so miserable I complained of headache and went to bed early, cried until my pillow was wet with tears. After some time I went to sleep and dreamed I went to my fathers home. As I drove up near the house I saw my father, I thought there to meet me. As I got near him I saw he had turned to a white stone, except his eyes moved and I thought of Lots wife and I said to myself, dead but yet alive, this is the Lords work.

As I got out of the car I saw that my father was gone and a wild beast was near me. I became afraid and started running back up the road. I looked and saw this beast running after me. I ran for some distance, almost out of breath and thought of turning off to escape this monster. I looked to my right, there seemed to be a dark wall and on my left also. I ran on to where the road got to be a narrow path with this dark wall on both sides and suddenly this path ended. I said to myself only God can save me now. I felt He could if it were His will, even if the beast had his mouth on me. I turned around with the thought I would fall before the beast and ask God to save me. When I turned around the beast was gone and Jesus stood there. I felt ashamed I had run, and fell at His feet, and said Lord have mercy on me a sinner. Suddenly I came straight up on my feet without any effort of my own or any one, face to face with Jesus. He smiled and a beautiful light shone around and He started walking from me. He was clothed in a white robe, no seams or wrinkles. The earth seemed soft as He walked, no trees,

no hills, a level beautiful place. I woke up and got out of bed. It was four o'clock in the morning. I hardly could keep from waking up some one and tell them my dream. It was a beautiful spring morning, birds were singing, every thing seemed to be praising God. Leaves on the trees not full grown seemed to be waving at the command of God. I was so happy all day, I felt I would never doubt again. These words were with me throughout the day; *what more can He say than to you He hath said, you who unto Jesus for refuge have fled.*

When I woke on the following morning, doubts arose again, I felt so fearful and was glad I had not told any one.

After several years a heavy burden came on me to join the church and be baptized. I felt I could not offer to the church, unworthy as I felt myself to be. I felt the Primitive Baptists people were such good people. What could I tell them, they would not believe me. I felt they could look at me and know that I didn't belong with them. On the second Sunday in September, 1933 I went before the church at Basham and was received. I was baptized on the second Sunday in October by Elder J. P. Helms, and this has given me great joy. Not being able to express my feelings to the church at the time has given me a lot of trouble. Afraid I might have deceived the church and feeling if this people could see me as I see myself they could not fellowship me. If I know my heart, I desire to live with the Primitive Baptist and to die with them.

Sincerely,

Ida E. Palmer

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want."
Psalm 23:1

VOICES OF THE PAST

BELIEVERS BAPTISM

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:16)

Article 9 of *Signs of the Times'* "PROSPECTUS" says: "That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers – that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God."

The purpose of this Article 9 is to briefly state the position of the SIGNS relative to the members, ministers, and rule of the Church of Christ. We pray God to enable us to more fully define the term, BAPTIZED BELIEVERS, in this treatise. We are deeply impressed of the necessity of this endeavor because of so many varied and conflicting opinions confusing our people this day on the subject of VALID BAPTISM. Lack of information often causes misunderstanding. Misunderstanding begets confusion. Confusion leads to errors. Errors often results in strife. Strife breeds hatred. Hatred breeds malicious actions. Malicious actions cause divisions. Divisions in churches result in each faction declaring null and void all actions of others. For this cause the Lord removes *candlesticks* and *spues* churches and ministers *out of His mouth.* We desire to carefully examine this vital subject and consider prevalent questions.

Primitive Baptists are careful relative to the mode or manner of baptism; that is, the method in which the act is performed. Proper qualifications of the person receiving baptism

is important. The administrator of the ordinance of baptism must be properly authorized before the baptism could be considered valid. Proper ceremony connected with this act is worthy of consideration. Different elements are mentioned in the Scriptures in connection with baptism; so, we must ascertain when *water* is the *element* under consideration. We want to reconcile the expression: "One baptism", in Ephesians 4:5, and "The doctrine of baptisms", in Hebrews 6:2. We shall define the word, *baptism.*

The shortest and most comprehensive definition of the word from which baptism is derived is: *To dip.* This *dipping* includes casting down, submerging, and raising up. When this process is followed it is rightly called *baptism.* The administrator puts his subject into the element, causes this element to completely engross, and then raise the subject up. There is always a change in status by the subjects being baptized with the baptism spoken of in the Scriptures. We shall now take up the baptisms which are administered by the Holy Ghost in face of this definition.

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?;; To sum this up, it means that we were baptized into the *death* of Jesus Christ, being chosen in Him. It means that we who were chosen in Him, were in Him, while He was dying, engrossed in death, and raised up in Him from death. The changed status was that Jesus having been cast down and engulfed in suffering and death arose to die no more. The changed status of His people who were in Him was; — the dying, the death, and the raising of Jesus from death, made certain eternal life for all who were in Him. No man can perform this baptism of which Paul speaks. Yet, Paul uses this baptism to show what water baptism protrays. Paul speaks of the baptism in Jesus' *death,* which was two thousand years ago, to preface a baptism of the present day. Paul further reasons: "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from death by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Water baptism is the "Likeness" of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul emphasizes that this baptism is but ONCE. Then he adds: "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (v. 11) When you obey from the heart that *form* of doctrine you become free from sin to become the servants of righteousness. The carnal man is a servant of lust. This man has no knowledge of the law, and is alive without it. God causes His Holy law to be written in the mind and heart of this carnal man. This servant of carnality has been thus brought under the dominion of the law, consequently he tries to be a *servant of the law.* His failure in every attempt to serve the law makes him to know that he is in every case a *servant of sin* because he has disobeyed the holy law. This *servant of sin* despairs of life to such extent that his soul faints. (What a terrible death!) Sin has reigned unto death. The spirit of grace and truth raises this servant of sin from death to become a *servant of our Lord Jesus Christ* who accomplished the law for us, and died for us! The killing and making alive is a baptism God administers.

God administers the *baptism of repentance of heart.* Repentance means turning. If we were immersed in repentance and left there, we would forever be turning in a circle. The godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto salvationneed not to be repented of according to 2 Cor. 7:10. There is a turning from error to truth, from darkness to light, from law to Gospel; from which there is no need

of further turning.

John *preached* the baptism of repentance, and baptized in water all who gave evidence that they had been given repentance by the Lord. He would not baptize those who came to him for baptism unless they brought forth the evidence that they had repented. See Luke 3:7-8. John was a qualified judge of the ones worthy of water baptism. The administrator is the Spirit — not man — in the expression: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body..." (1 Cor. 12:13) These baptisms that God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost performs are essential unto eternal Life. Water baptism is the only baptism that is to be performed by man as the administrator. This baptism is essential unto obedience as it is *the* answer to a *good* conscience toward God. Scriptural water baptism changes the classification of the one baptized. Before baptism one is classed with those who "walked according to this world". After baptism one is classed with "fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God". (Eph. 2) Paul was told to, "Purify thyself with them." (Acts 21:24) This was necessary because of so many mis-representations concerning Paul which had caused the Jews to be very angry with him. The actions and explanatios of Paul in response to this request did not make him more pure to himself or God; but it did make him more pure in the sight of the Jews. The sins they had against him were washed away. While in the process of telling his experience in order to abate the anger of the Jews, Paul quoted Ananias: "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." The water baptism *purified* Paul in the sight of the brethren whom he had before persecuted. Before baptism he persecuted Jesus Christ. It took baptism to wash away the accusation of persecution of Jesus Christ and bring him into a new status as a proclaimer of Jesus Christ.

John, the Baptist, and Jesus, the Saviour, were both named by the angel Gabriel. Both had miraculous births in that one was born of a virgin; the other was born to a barren woman well stricken in years. John was filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb. John was termed by Jesus as "More than a prophet." John had the authority from Heaven to baptize with water. Jesus was sent to baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. John instituted water baptism and had no authority to baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Jesus did not baptize with water but submitted to baptism of John in water, making manifest that John had this special authority. John was the first preacher in the gospel dispensation.

Facing the fact that a great majority of professed Christians of this age consider that a little water sprinkled or poured upon a person constitute baptism, it becomes necessary to point out a few expressions of Scripture that prove otherwise. One who has never heard of baptism can take the New Testament, begin reading, soon simple language will convince the reader of proper mode. The first chapter in which baptism is mentioned is 3rd. chapter of Matthew. Verse 16 says: "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water." This statement would simply prove that Jesus himself was *in the water* when He was baptized. The reader will find in the second book of the New Testament, Mark 1:5, "...and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins." The simple expression, *In the river of Jordan,* convinces the reader that the baptism was performed in the river, not by a little water taken from the river. Mark says, "And it came to pass in those days, that

Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit Like a dove descending upon Him." This shows simply that the baptism was *in Jordan,* the river, and that He came up out of the water. John 3:23 says, "And John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salem, because there was much water there, and they came and were baptized." Why the necessity of *much water?* The unprejudiced reader would by now know that the ones John baptized were in the river at a place in the river where there was more water than at other places of the same river. According to these expressions much water is necessary to perform baptism. As Philip and the eunuch were riding along in the chariot, "they came unto a certain water." This must have been a place where there was *much water.* Enough water for both of them, Philip and the eunuch, to go down into the water, Philip to baptize the eunuch, and both of them to come up out of the water."

Let us quote acts 8:38-39: "and he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. We have already quoted Romans 6:4 elsewhere in this treatise which shows baptism to include *burial.* The person uninformed of the meaning of the word *baptize,* would gather the meaning of it by the time he read the New Testament to include the 6th chapter of Romans. We now understand that baptism in water means that the one doing the baptizing takes the one to be baptized down into much water, buries him in water, raises him up out of the watery grave, and brings him completely out of it by bringing him to the shore. Sprinkling or pouring a little water upon a subject is not Scriptural Baptism. The administrator really baptizes part of his finger, or hand, by dipping it into the water. He does not baptize the subject upon whom the water is sprinkled or poured. Burying one in water is not baptism until the buried is raised up. Baptism pictures the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We shall next consider the question, Who is qualified to be baptized?

Scriptures plainly show that John baptized persons who confessed their sins, brought forth evidence worthy of repentance, and professed belief in Jesus Christ the Saviour. The same qualifications are necessary now. Last Sunday afternoon I led a brother down into the water and baptized him. My ceremony was something like this: "Upon confession of your sins and your admission that you cannot save yourself from this condition in any sense by your own merit; and, upon confession of your faith in Jesus Christ being the complete and perfect Saviour of His people; and upon the evidence of your trust in Jesus Christ, your perfect Saviour; and, upon expression of your desire to follow the commandments of Jesus Christ, — depending upon Him for imputed strength and, in obedience to the command of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ: —I baptize you, Brother P_____, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."As I raised him up I concluded the ceremony with, "Amen". This is the longest baptismal ceremony I have ever spoken. This is not a model ceremony but it does give in essence the requirements of one qualified for baptism.

We next refer to Acts, 2nd chapter, 37th verse, to show that those who were qualified to be baptized were first, "Pricked in their heart." They were undoubtedly terribly upset by

these pricking sensations caused by the working of the Holy Ghost. Peter's sermon had brought condemnation to their hearts. The last words of Peter's sermon must have pierced them sharply. "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." (Acts 2:36) I have wondered if their thoughts were: I crucified Him! I crucified Him!! What Guilt! No wonder they said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" They had undergone such remorse in their hearts toward themselves for having part in such terrible crime! It did not take an altar call to entice them to respond. The Holy Ghost pricking their hearts with condemnation and guilt of the crucifixion of Jesus was enough to make them ask the question: What shall we *do?* "Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Scholarly men fed by pride have argued over the term, *for the remission of sins,* used in this expression which *greatly* confuses the readers and hearers. Let us look to Matthew 27:24; "When Pilot saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it." He washed his hands in the presence of the people there to prove his abhorence of the crucifixion of Jesus. This act of washing his hands in water is the presence of this people with the expression, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person," cleared Pilate in the sight of the people. The people responded, "...His blood be on us, and on our children." (v. 25) These people who were pricked in heart on the day of Pentecost, as well as all of us who feel that our sins crucified this Jesus, are, and were, willing to *do anything* to prove our sorrow for such crime. They, as well as we, respond to that command: Repent, be baptized, save yourselves from this untoward generation: calling upon the Lord.

First, these were pricked in heart by the Holy Ghost. Next, their cases were presented before men and brethren. Thirdly, they wished to know what to do. Next, they received special instructions consisting of definite commands, promises of gracious gifts of God, the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost; testimonies, exhortations of many words; all added up to:– "Save yourselves from this untoward generation." Fifthly: "They that gladly received his word were baptized." Sixthly, they were added to the Church. This is the order of procedure which is given in the second chapter of Acts. This proves that one must be a *Baptized Believer* before becoming a member of the Church. We have no Scriptural evidence that this order has ever been changed.

We next consider: *Who is a Believer?*

"And when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Acts 8:12) We ask, what was Philip's subject on this occasion? We read Acts 8:5; "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached CHRIST unto them." We read again in the same chapter of Philip preaching to the eunuch: "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." (v. 35) When the eunuch asked, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? Phillip said, if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." The eunuch answered, *I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."* This testimony was sufficient to satisfy Philip that the eunuch was a *believer.* It was enough to prove that he was a proper subject for baptism. The case of the

eunuch's baptism gives proof that the baptism may be administered before taking the matter up with the church. Of course the church must be consuled before one could become a member of a certain church. He must be baptized before a church could consider him as a member. According to the scriptures we have no precept given which necessitates one subscribing to a list of doctrinal theological ideas before one could be baptized. A true believer in Jesus Christ the Saviour, plus a desire to be baptized is sufficient. A proper administrator who is properly ordained and set apart by a presbytery, is qualified to preach the gospel and baptize believers. If one is not qualified to properly judge who the true believers in Jesus Christ the Saviour are, he should not be *set apart* by a presbytery to preach the gospel and baptize believers. We shall quote a portion of *Church Covenant* as recorded in "Hassell's History of the Church of God," page 695: "Forasmuch as Almighty God by His grace, has been pleased to call us (whose names are underneath subscribed) out of darkness into His marvelous light, and all of us have been regularly baptized upon profession of our faith in Christ Jesus, and have given up ourselves to the Lord, and to one another..." This quotation shows that in the 18th century that *the baptism was based upon profession of their faith in Christ Jesus.* It shows that they were batized before constituting themselves into a church by covenant. These were already baptized when they composed this covenant. The specifics in this covenant was by the mutual consent of the members. Mutual agreement is necessary on many things in order that brethren may agreeably walk together in church capacity. Because of the many and varied opinions expressed by professed Christians relative to *faith in Christ Jesus;* it need be that we clarify our position upon this.

A mere assent to the fact that they believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God is not sufficient proof that they believe in him. I must first be convinced that an inquirer does not have faith in himself to save himself form his sins confessed. My reasoning is that the person who thinks he can merit salvation does not actually feel the need of salvation. Next, I must be convinced of his vehement desire for salvation. Then, I want to know whether or not he has been made to trust in Jesus Christ only for salvation from his sins. I want to be further persuaded that his desire is to keep the commandments of Jesus Christ. I want to be convinced that he looks only to Jesus Christ to strengthen him to perform works of righteousness. Lastly, I want evidence that he has the God-given, God pleasing faith without which it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. 11:6) Upon satisfactory evidence of these facts, I gladly baptize anyone in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and leave it to the judgment of the church concerning their membership. We shall conclude this installment on Believer's Baptism by quoting the last paragraph of the last *editorial* prepared by Elder Gilber Beebe as recorded on page 941 of "Hassell's Church History."

"In more than three score years of our labors in the gospel ministry we have never demanded or required of any candidate for baptism that they should sign any pledge to adhere to any other standard of faith or practice than that which is given in the Scriptures. We have said to them, 'If thou believest in the Lord Jesus Christ with all thy heart, thou mayest.' After hearing from them a satisfactory relation of what we believe to be a genuine experience of the new birth, we

have usually asked them if they believe the doctrine and order held and preached by the Old or Primitive Baptist, so far as they understand it, and if their experience is in harmony with it. Upon receiving an affirmative reply, we bid them welcome to the ordinance, and hold ourselves ready, if need be in the same hour of the night or of the day, to administer that sacred ordinance. We know of no divine authority for delaying the administration for a more convenient season, or to first bury a father, or take leave of those we are to leave behind us. As every one who is born from above, and who loves the precious Saviour, is commanded to take his yoke, bear his cross and follow Him, and as baptism is fhe first act of obedience of the Heavenborn child, no other duty or religious privilege can be in order until this is performed.

May the Lord bless this attempt to your edification. Amen.

ELDER E. J. LAMBERT

Reprint-from "Signs" 1968

PSALM 100

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.

Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

Know ye that the lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise; be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

THE SEVENTH DAY

I have had some desire in the last few hours, to write a few thoughts, that have been presented to my mind relative to the subject, as presented in Exodus 20:8, 9, 10, and 11. Please read these scriptures, before proceeding to read this writing.

The Sabbath Day, literally in this instance, no doubt, is the remaining day of rest, after all the work was finished. It would readily stand to reason, that if the Lord had finished all his work, there was nothing else for him to do but to rest or to cease from his labor, as is stated here and elsewhere in the scriptures.

Human minds, unless divinely enlightened, cannot begin to conceive of the greatness, glory and wonderfulness of all God's work in creation; of Heaven and earth and all the hosts thereof, to say nothing of the righteous, holy, divine and wise purpose for which they were created, and which they all fulfill to a jot and tittle, to his glory and praise, and to the good of his people.

God gave his people the seventh day, as a day of rest, but gave them six days, before the day of rest, and commanded them to do all their work in these six days and to do no work on the seventh, but to rest or keep it holy; even as He had finished all his work in six days and rested the seventh. They were commanded under strict penalty of death, if they were found doing any work on that day, even as much as gathering sticks to kindle a fire.

Now, dear reader, I am sure our finite minds are far too inferior, and our understanding is insufficient, to be able to express this wonderful, deep and solemn subject, but I desire to say, that I believe that every phase of each commandment and ordinance, was written aforetime, and was written for our learning, that we

(even at the present) might have hope and consolation. Therefore, there is a sense in which all these scriptural laws and ordinances are applicable now, or at least, that is my humble opinion. For example, the Ten Commandments were spoken by the Lord, himself, in fact they are his word. The scriptures say the word of the Lord endureth forever, from generation to generation.

In another place it says, whatsoever he doeth it shall be forever. Then his words, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," is as much in effect today, in an anti-typical sense, as it was in the typical sense, when commanded by the Lord of Israel.

I want to be understood. I don't feel that we are under the literal commandment to abstain from all literal physical labor on the Sabbath day, as the Jews then were. We are not faced with that punishment of death in the literal sense as they were. There is a sense through Christ, after the inward man, that the children of God are still under command to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. It is always after they have done fully six days' work, after which they are always weary, faint or tired. In other words, it is after they have worked themselves out of tools and timber, and have fallen flat on the mercies of God, who through Jesus, has finished the work of redemption and salvation.

Now, it seems clear to me, that this great subject is amply verified in the old and new covenants as expressed in the 8th chapter of Hebrews; (read it). In the old covenant it is implied that they were taken by the hand to be led out of literal Egypt. They transgressed and were subject to the most serious punishment as a consequence. The new covenant was not according to the old. The Lord gives them a new and soft heart, and He makes a new covenant with them. He writes his law in their hearts and puts it in their minds in such a way, that they are safe from violation. They are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

Also, in John's language it says, "He that is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." Then if it was sin for the children of Israel to work on the Sabbath day literally, so it also would be, for God's people to work in this Gospel Sabbath day. Wherein Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost (not lost now, but is saved), so Jesus finished the work which his Father gave him to do. It has been the Sabbath of rest, from that day till now and ever will be to his people, because the work is finished.

When the Light of God's blessed Spirit is revealed from Heaven, in our poor benighted souls, then we are brought to see our lost and ruined condition before him. After six days of hard work, we are brought to our wits end, or to the ends of the earth. Then the blessed Saviour says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." Mark the word rest in this text. The six days are over, when the blessed Lord gives us this sweet rest, in foretaste.

The opposite doctrine to this is that Jesus gives poor sinners a job; but not so. He gives them rest. At his command, they take his yoke upon them, not voluntarily, as all legalists believe, but through the constraining love of Christ which is shed abroad in their hearts. And Oh, dear reader, how easy is that blessed yoke that Jesus gives his poor, humble and bewildered ones, who are weary from a full week's work!

This yoke Jesus gives them, yokes them off from their own works and constrains them to cease from them and their burdens. They learn of Him, that He finished all the work of their

salvation, and their entire six days' work is in vain, so far as saving them is concerned. How light is the burden of the precious Saviour to a poor, wayworn pilgrim. His thoughts and burden have been that he must do something. When he learns of Jesus that the work is finished, Oh, how light is this precious burden and how easy is this yoke. The customary way to fit an animal for work is to yoke him to it, but in this case they are yoked off from their works, and are given to rest. It is the Sabbath and they are yoked to keep it. That yoke is quite different from any yoke formed by earthly wisdom and skill, for they are yoked to rest. David described this when he said, "He leadeth me beside the still waters; He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." Many others also described this beautiful, easy yoke and light burden of Jesus, the blessed Saviour.

In the 4th Chapter of Hebrews it is said, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Just the opposite to what blind nature believes and advocates. They all believe and advocate works as essential to salvation. It is positively declared that it is rest that remaineth to the people of God. When you see people working in order to save themselves, or someone else, you may know they are not remembering the Sabbath day; and by this you may know, it is Monday, so to speak, with them. And to clearly show this same doctrine, it is almost universally believed that anyone can help in the salvation of sinners. It must be remembered in the anti-type, no man, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, his son nor his daughter, nor his ox nor his ass, is to do any work on this holy day. That is why we advocate that the sinner cannot do any work for himself, neither can all his closest relatives, nor his ox, which all have their anti-typical place and meaning.

Now there is quite a difference in the old and new covenants. Under the old so far as Abraham and his seed were concerned, after the flesh, it was impossible for them to keep the law. The new covenant is exactly opposite. He that is born of God doth not commit sin. He remembers that Sabbath day to keep it holy, not through the carnal or Adamic efforts of nature, but after the inward man or the new man. "For if any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature." He has the new covenant of Grace. He has the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus and is made free from the law of sin and death.

He believes in his heart, although when delivered to the fleshly mind, he will at least to some extent, practice works just like anyone else. But as Paul said, "It is no longer I that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in me." So then, the being, soul or spirit that is in the child of God, or that he possesses, sins not, and he always remembers the Sabbath day and keeps it holy, through the light and influence and yoke of the blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, who works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. "They are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God before ordained that they should walk in them." So it is a good work that is worked in them to remember the Holy Sabbath of rest, of the finished work of redemption and salvation.

Christ said, "I have finished the work." Then the six days are over, and when the light of the Saviour reveals this to us, we cease from our works. We enter into that rest the Saviour gives. How sweet it is to the poor, humble child of God, when this beautiful Sabbath begins to dawn from the darkness and toil to a full week's work, which has been all in vain. When the Sun is above all the timber, and shining above the brightness of the noonday; when the blessed Saviour gives us that rest and

trust in him as the Lamb that taketh away our sins, we are overcome with joy and gladness; and this is truly the Sabbath of the Lord.

The work is over, sweet rest is ours to enjoy. But as long as we are in the flesh, there will come other days of the week and we will still find ourselves entangled, through our fleshly mind. The light of this beautiful Sabbath will often be obscured and we will, to some extent, become burdened in our experience. The blessed Saviour visits us again and again and restores the joys of our salvation, and gives us rest and peace and blessed satisfaction in him.

The eternal Sabbath is in existence, so to speak, even as all the host of Heaven and earth are finished, but we are only given the earnest of our inheritance here below, which means the interest on the whole. So if the little seasons of rest that are manifested or given to us, are so sweet and glorious and precious here in time, what will the principal or the fullness of this inheritance be in that rest beyond the shades of death and the shores of time, when we shall have laid down this vile, corrupt and sinful body, wherein we groan and weep and mourn?

When we come forth formed and fashioned like our blessed Saviour, without sin and corruption, then we will always live, body and soul, in that eternal Sabbath. No more of the toil, groans and afflictions, as we are subject to in the flesh, but eternal, glorious and peaceful rest, as is expressed in Revelation 14:13, "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, sayeth the Spirit, they shall rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." The works which follow them, are the works that God works in them, both to will and to do his own good pleasure.

Also in Revelation 7th chapter we find that John saw these same people (who are given to remember the Sabbath to keep it holy) stand before God in white raiment. So they have kept the Sabbath in the Spirit of Christ, and all the other commandments, and they have cried salvation be unto our God and unto him that sitteth on the throne. Notice what they cried; and look around and see who they are. They also have washed their robes, not in literal water nor human cleansing, nor in their own works, because they have remembered the Sabbath day and kept it holy. Therefore, they have ceased from their own works as God did from his. (See Hebrews 4th chapter.)

The best of Revelation 7 is where He said, "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Oh, dear child of the heavenly kingdom, how I do humbly hope at times, if not decieved, that I am one of those that have been brought into that blessed Sabbath and have ceased from my own works, and have been made to feel the sweet yoke and burden and rest of Christ the Saviour. And that some day all tears of sorow shall be wiped away and I may be given to praise and glorify the blessed Saviour forever and ever, with all those who have come out of tribulations.

Your brother in hope,
R. W. Rhodes

Reprint-from "Signs" 1965

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."
Mat. 7:12

MEETINGS

KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

The Kehukee Association, composed of the following churches: Bethlehem, Beulah, Flat Swamp, North Creek, Old Sparta, Singleton, Shewarky, Smithwick Creek and Tarboro, will be held the first Sunday and Saturday before in October. It will be held at Flat Swamp Church, located between Bethel and Robersonville on the Big Oaks road. We invite visitors to come and worship with us.

Hassell Allen, Clerk
Flat Swamp Church

SOUTH ARKANSAS ASSOC.

Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association Meeting:

The next session of the Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association will convene with Pilgrim Rest Church, Septembe 16th, 17th, and 18th 1983.

Take highway 167, five miles north of Fordyce, Arkansas, turn left on 273, and the Church is located one-half mile on left.

Frances Townley, Clerk

FIVE MILE CREEK ASSOC.

The Five Mile Creek Association will convene, the Lord willing, at the Shady Grove Church, the third Sunday in September and Friday and Saturday before. (September 16, 17, and 18, 1983)

This Church is located off highway 69, between Cullman and Jasper, Alabama. Turn east at Bugtussle and go to top of hill, turn right and it is about three miles to the church. You may also turn east off 69 at Wilburn and go south to the church on Ridge road.

Elder H. C. Moon, Moderator
Phone (205) 287-1603
Rufus L. Jacks, Association Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOC.

We wish to announce that the Ninety Third annual session of the "South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association" will convene with Smyrna Church on Friday before the fourth Sunday in September 1983.

The Church is located six miles south of Eldorado, Arkansas, and one half mile east of highway 167.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

Elder David Turner, Moderator
Doyle Murphy, Clerk

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Pigg River Association will be held, the Lord Willing, the first Sunday in August, Friday and Saturday before. (August 5, 6, and 7, 1983). Martinsville Church is the host for this setting of the Association. The meeting place will be on the grounds of the meeting house at Leatherwood Church, this is the same location as 1982.

Leatherwood Church is located in Henry County, Virginia, on State Road 657. Those coming from the south on Route 220, and those coming from the east on Route 58, go to the north side of Martinsville, there take Route 108 N. for about 8 miles, turn right on Route 657, and keep on this road for about 5 miles to the church.

Those coming from the North or East on Route 40, take Route 890 at Penhook. Route 890 goes to the Henry County line, then go 2 miles to Route 657, turn left on Route 657.

Follow above instructions

Those coming by Route 57, take Route 657, go about 2 miles to church. At each of these intersections, you will probably see a road sign "Leatherwood". Also watch for Association sign.

Jamie E. Cooper
Association Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Smith River Primitive Baptist Association, the Lord willing, will convene with Charity Church the 2nd, 3rd and 4th of September 1983.

The church is located in Patrick County, on state route 40 between Ferrum and Woolwine, Virginia. Those coming on 220, take route 40 west at Rocky Mount, come through Ferrum by Lawn Branch Church and Charity is about eight miles on left.

We invite all our brethren and sisters that are in peace and good standing at home to seat with us.

Elder Roy Agee, Moderator
Elder Amos Hash, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR APRIL 1983

Mrs. Elma Griffin, VA.	3.00
Mrs. Dixie Davis, VA.	12.00
Eld. W.D. Griffin, AL.	50.00
Mrs. Shelby R. Stratton, MS.	10.00
Frank Hunt, VA.	6.00
William L. Neal, N.C.	50.00
Miss Myrtle Thomas, VA.	10.00
Mrs. Ethel Viers, WV.	21.00
Miss Reidy Pickeral, VA.	50.00
F.L. Shortt, VA.	3.00
U.H. Alverson, N.C.	2.00
Mrs. Carla Smith, TX.	8.00
John F. Simpson, FL.	19.00
Mrs. Elsie B. Houchins, VA.	6.00
Mr. & Mrs. Ira L. Bell, VA.	6.00
Andrew Agee, VA.	1.00
Mrs. James diZerega, VA.	7.00

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR MAY 1983

Julian Noland, S.C.	1.00
Tim Barron, Tx.	12.00
Mrs. Ruby Gilbert, WA.	4.00
W. E. Mitchell, VA.	3.00
Elder Amos Hash, VA.	2.00
Elder R. H. Pennington, WV.	10.00
Mrs. James F. Tompson, N.C.	3.00
Mrs. Olive F. Hastings, ND.	3.00
W. D. Godwin, LA.	2.00
Mrs. Letcher Smith, FL.	7.00
Whitney Mobley, N.C.	25.00
J. J. Bird, WV.	1.00
T. R. Pulling, CA.	2.00
Milton S. Harrell, CA.	7.00
Mrs. Amy D. Heppler, AZ	12.00
Mrs. Leroy Jones, TX.	2.00
Mrs. Bernice Greer, VA.	2.00
Fred C. Winfrey, KS.	12.00
Henry Shockley, MD.	7.00
Mrs. Susan Chandler, FL.	3.00
Mrs. O. E. Bishop, AR.	6.00
Mrs. Lual E. Anderson, VA.,	1.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER EVA EGGLESTON
(1900-1983)

Sister Eggleston was born July 4, 1900, and departed this life February 1, 1983, at the age of 83. She was the daughter of the late W.F. and Carolyn Ward Pruitt. She was married to Elder Frank F. Eggleston who died in July, 1965.

She joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in 1915 and remained a loyal member, and attended church service regular, as long as her health would perit.

Her illness was long drawn out, but she bore her suffering with great fortitude, until God in His infinite wisdom saw fit to remove from our midst our beloved Sister.

She is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Lucile Humphries of Roanoke, Mrs. Lorene Garrett of Collinsville, with whom she made her home. Sisters, Mrs. Bell Martin, Mrs. Mary Motsinger, Mrs. Nettie Richmond, one brother, Allen Pruitt, five grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Sister Eggleston will be greatly missed, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints."

In the absence of our pastor, Elder J. R. Hollandsworth, Elder Haywood Wray along with Mr. Glenn Voss and J.A. Eggleston had charge of the service.

We wish to extend to the bereaved family our heart felt sympathy.

Done by order of Dan River Church while in conference, Saturday night March 27, 1983.

Written by one who loved her very much.

Maude Pruitt

SISTER SOPHIA MARSHALL ALDERMAN (1897-1982)

Sister Sophia Marshall Alderman was born November 9, 1897 in Carroll County, Virginia. She died February 10, 1982. Her funeral service was held February 12, 1982 at Swicegood Chapel, Danville, Va., conducted by her pastor Elder D. V. Spangler. She was burried in Mountain View Cemetery, Danville, Virginia.

Sister Alderman united with Dan River Church on March 26, 1978 and was a faithful member until her death.

She leaves to mourn her passing one daughter, Mrs. Naoma Scarboro, one son, Marvin E. Alderman. Brothers, Graham Marshall and H. S. Marshall, two grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

We the members of Dan River Church will miss her presence with us. May the Grace of our Heavenly Father be with each of the family, to reconcile them to His will.

Done by order of Dan River Church, February 26, 1983.

Elder D.V. Spangler, Moderator
Brother Boyd Minter, Clerk

SISTER MOLLIE KELLUM

By the request of the North East Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing, I will attempt to write a few words in memory of Sister Mollie Kellum, whom the Lord saw fit to take from our midst to be at Home with Him.

She departed this life Jan. 9, 1982. She was born Nov. 23, 1902. She was married to Brother Willie Kellum on May 2, 1921. She is survived by her husband and three children, one son, James Kellum and two daughters, Glenda Bright and Dorothy Williams, ten grand children and five great grandchildren, one brother, Eddie Humphrey and three sisters, Effie Morton, Bessie Morton and Emma Kellum.

She joined the church Feb. 1937 ans was a faithful believer in predestination and attended church as long as her health would permit. We, the Church at North East will greatly miss her along with her family, friends and all who knew her.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor Elder J. T. Prescott. She was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in the family cemetery.

This being done by the request of the Church, three copies being made, one to be published in the *Signs of the Times*, one sent to the family and one sent to the Church Record.

Moderator: Elder J. T. Prescott
Written by Clerk: L. J. Sammons

OBITUARY OF PEARLIE BILLINGS

As requested by Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing I will endeavor to write a few words in memory of our Sister Pearlie Billings. It pleased our Heavenly Father to call her from our midst on January 23, 1983 at the age of 79. She died at Memorial Hospital, Danville, Virginia.

She was received into the fellowship of Weatherford Church on August 28, 1949 and was baptized the same day by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench.

Sister Pearlie was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, and was the daughter of the late Charlie Billings and Eliza Kate Dalton Billings. Sister Pearlie was a faithful member of Weatherford Church, always filling her seat. I believe Sister Billings was made reconciled to her illness and to death because she bore her afflictions without mumuring.

Her funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on Jan. 25, 1983 by Elder O. K. Tench and her body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in the church cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Written By: Marvin Brumfield

GEORGE HOWARD TAFT

George Howard Taft passed from this life on August 26, 1982, making his stay on earth eighty years. He was a native of Tyrell County and the Son of George and Laura Taft.

Brother Howard united with Bethleham Primitive Baptist Church on the third Sunday in April, 1981, while in Guardian Care Nursing Home in Elizabeth City, N. C. He was baptized by Elder Reeves Smith in the home. He was never able to attend any more meetings at his church, which was in his native county, although that was his hearts desire.

His mother and father were faithful members of Bethlehem Church, and he said that was the doctrine he had always believed. He had never united with any other church. He and his brother Jimmy were faithful in taking their mother to church after their father passed away, when old enough to have a car and drive. He told me he had walked with his mother to church, which was about three miles and waded through water when it would be over the road in places. He loved to talk about these things.

He was well known throughout the county and liked by the people.

Brother Howard never married. He left behind one sister in her nineties, nieces, nephews and

other relatives.

Grave side services were conducted by his pastor, Elder Reeves Smith, in his home town of Columbia, N. C.

Nellie H. Barnes, Church Clerk
Columbia, North Carolina

SISTER MARY MOORE SIMPSON

It has pleased our Heavenly father in His infinite wisdom to call sister Simpson from this world of woe on November 29, 1982, to be with Him in paradise. She was born in Rockingham County, N. C. on March 21, 1896, to James W. and Mary Moore. She was married to Brother Spencer Simpson, October 21, 1920 and to this union were born three daughters; Sister Mary Simpson Blalock, Mrs. Nancy Simpson Rumble, and Mrs. Bettie Simpson Burris. Four sons; John W., Thomas M., James H. and S. Franklin Simpson. Fifteen grand-children, ten great grand-children and two great great grand-children.

Sister Simpson united with the church at Bush Arbor in July, 1937 and was baptized by her pastor, the late Elder W. C. King. She walked in humbleness and love for more than 45 years with her church. *A good name is better than precious ointment: and the day of death than the day of ones birth. Ecl. 7:1.*

Her funeral was conducted at Lowe's Funeral Home Chapel by her paster, Elder Wallis Smith, asssted by Mr. Michael Hooper. Her body was laid to rest in the Alamance Memorial Park, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, there to be with Him and be forever satisfied.

Written by Thomas I. Rice as ordered in conference by Bush Arbor Church, January 8, 1983.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

JESSE W. RAY
(1915-1983)

Brother Jesse W. Ray was born March 30, 1915 in Danville, Virginia. He was the son of the late William Louis and Naomi Spangler Ray. On November 23, 1934, he was married to the former Mabel York and to this union were born two children, Jesse W. Ray, Jr., and Martha Davisson who, along with our Brother's dear wife, are left to mourn his death. There are also nine grandchildren to whom our Brother was so tenderly attached. Additional family members include two sisters, Lillian Guzzo and Helen Shane; three brothers, Herman, Julian, and William Ray.

Brother Jesse Ray joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in May, 1965 and was a devoted and faithful member until his death. He was blessed in that his dear wife along with other family members were also believers and members of Dan river. He so keenly believed the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus and loved to mingle among those of like precious faith. He indeed worshipped the God he loved and loved the God he Worshipped. He so often related to this writer that his entire life revolved around being with and talking to his brethren at the church meetings. I think it only fitting that one of Brother Jesse's favorite songs was *"My Dearest Friends in Bonds of Love."*

Our Brother completed his purpose in life to a "jot and a tittle" and on February 3, 1983, received the call of the Father making his stay on earth nearly 68 years. His funeral was held at Dan River on Saturday, February 5, 1983 with two lovely Elders, Haywood Wray and Kenneth Key, conducting the service. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the Glorious Resurrection Day.

This memorial is written by order of Church Conference on March 26, 1983. It is respectfully requested that a copy be made available to the family and that one be forwarded for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Written in Love,
Rob R. Collie, Deacon

MRS. MYRTLE VELES

Shepherd Fold Church grieves the passing of our precious sister Myrtle Veles who was born February 26, 1905 and departed this life January 30, 1983. She was the niece of Elder John Lee Smith and the grand-daughter of the late Elder Woody K. Smith, who served our brethren in Louisiana and Arkansas for over fifty years.

She was a humble sister who loved her Lord and attended her Church meetings regularly. She traveled among the old Baptist from the days of her youth and as long as her Lord enabled her to do so. She is survived by her husband of 48 years, Brother Ramon Veles and of this marriage there were born four daughters: Mrs. Hannah French of Seattle, Washington; Mrs. Ramona Sikes of Houston, Texas; Mrs. Betty Ann Webb of Houston, Texas and Mrs. Alicia Nilson of Biloxi, Mississippi; one sister, Mrs. Mary Berkley; twelve grand-children and seven great grand-children.

Funeral services were conducted by Glen Dale Funeral Home in Houston, Texas on January 31, 1983.

One copy of this memorial is encouched in the February 5, 1983 minutes. Done by order of the Church while in conference.

Written by Robbie Holloway
247 Blue Castle Lane
Houston, Texas 77060

BOOK NOTICES

EDITORIAL WRITINGS
ELDER GILBERT BEEBE

(Founder and Editor of the *Signs of The Times*)
1832-1881

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The large, beautiful books (6 x 9 in. trim size) are bound in heavy D Grade Library Buckram cloth in silk screen finish. The type is school book text and is large and very readable; even for older persons. We have used the finest paper available and can say these books are of excellent quality throughout.

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Salisbury, Maryland 21801

To those of you who live in the North Carolina and Virginia area – Brother Reubin French, Deacon of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, has agreed to act for us as agent to distribute the Beebe Editorials.

Anyone wishing to purchase Volume 3 or 4 may see him in person and purchase them, thereby saving mailing costs.

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The *Signs of the Times, Inc.*, is pleased to announce that we still have available for purchase the book "Feast of Fat Things."

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2. "Everlasting Task for Arminians" by William Gadsby
3. "Fatalism" by H. M. Curry
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Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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Rt. 1, Box 65 Keeling, Virginia 24566

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS"

The existence, sovereignty, immutability omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah–the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the attonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistable, and in all cases. effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers–that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

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"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."
Mat. 7:12

EDITORIAL

Then said Boaz unto Ruth, hearest thou not my daughters? Go thou not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens: Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them; have I not charged the young men that they shall not thouch thee? When thou art athirst go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn. Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing that I am a stranger? Ruth 2:9, 10.

May I come in and tarry with you, and go over the Christian's pathway once again? Yes, I know that this is ground that we have been over time and again. But the man who was, and is, a man after God's own heart needed to be shown again these things. Mat. 11:4. There is not any doubt but that the Master and the servant loved one another devotedly, but the servant needed to be shown again and again. Do you need this kind of care? Does it delight your soul to go over the way again, and even again the ground over which you have tread? If so, I hope to write to you the good news of the gospel of peace, even the gospel of the grace of God. If you get wearied with repetitions of these sacred matters, why act as though you do not? 1 Cor. 4:7.

Sound doctrine is of primary importance; it is the foundation, the framework that holds all other basic truths of the gospel together. However, that alone does not give us a heritage among the family of God. Close to a million people profess to believe in what we call the sovereignty of God, but have no conception whatever of a profession, let alone the possession of the Lord Jesus Christ in their life. It stands out that ever so strong a profession of faith is present, without the love of God in our hearts that the thing of which we have professed becomes as a tinkling cymbal and as sounding brass.

Before we venture into the text, let us always remember that everything in which the Lord was not in, always sounded much louder than the speech of the Lord. 1 Kings 19. God is love. His love was bestowed upon His children in Christ in eternity. Eph. 1:l, 7. The Text starts there. Have any of my readers got an earlier text than that? Did any of my readers supply anything that was needed at that time, or that has been needed since in order for the test to be ful-

filled? The answer being, in both cases, no. I will proceed as blessed of God. to write on the beauties of it. This love of God did not have a beginning; it did not have a place nor a time in which it came into existance. As long as God has been, this love has been in Him, and as long as it has been since His creation of man, that love has been flowing from that cleansing fountain of love into His children. In the day of the Apostle he tells us that this love is the love of God; that we have been justified by Him, even manifestly by the rich gift of faith, gift of God; that both the fruit of faith and love is fruits growing on trees which He has planted, and that this love is shed abroad in our hearts by another gift of God, to wit the Holy Spirit. Rom. 5:1, 5. This love is an abounding love; it is shed abroad love, it is something that moves all to whom it is sent; it is always an effectual love, working in whom it is sent that which is well pleasing to the Giver.

This love is not made manifest in a debauchery of polygamous atmosphere. There has never been a case where one was under the law, marmied to the law, could ever be married to Christ. There is not any exception to this. One that is under the law, that is married to the law as their first husband, that can ever be married to Christ while the law still lives. Ruth had been married to the son of Naomi, and the Moabitish people were under the condemnation of the law. Moreover, they all were wicked and idolatrous. While unaware of it, the law had them under condemnation. How clearly we see that all around us, people of every denomination claiming that by keeping the law there is salvation to be had, when, as a matter of fact, the law condemns all that are under it.

Not anything at all can stay the hand of God in saving His people. God puts to death the law; He robs it of its power. Moses is not permitted to enter Cannan; one who is a chosen vessel fo God's mercy is not given any option in continuing to live under the dominion of the law. The law is put to death and removed out of the way before one is married to it can ever come into the organic body of Christ. Thus we have three widow women before us, and each of their husbands have died. They have been living off from the provisions of the law relationship. Time, that does not bring about, nor deter, gives away to He that gave us time, and it comes to time of entrance for the reign of the Spirit. The law, which is represented by their husbands, is put to death, lo and behold starvation sets in. The wives, including our subject, does not have a livelihood any longer. There is not anything in the experience of grace that approaches as relentlessly as does hunger. Reading about it is one thing; observing the suffering of those that have fallen victim to it is another, but no observation teaches as does experience. The sudden hunger of the thief on the cross made him cry out for that which Christ alone gives; the giving out of the rioteous living carried the prodigal back to his father's full house. No Adam creature has ever been deluded as has the man or woman that thinks that it is optional with them.

For centuries after this episode in the life of God's People the name Old Baptist had not been mentioned, but if I have ever read the history of a destitute beggar here it is before us. I do hope precious saints that we can travel together as we explore the goodness of our Boaz as He deals with His people. Truly, here is Godliness in the way of a man with a maid. Pro. 30:19.

Let us digress backwards and see if we can find any marks of our past

history. Let us see if there is one thing that we contributed to the union between Christ and His bride. Let us look a long time back into the eons of time, even before the world had a beginning. He loved His people before the dust of the highest hills were laid. You will hear nearly all God called ministers refer to that. Why? Because they, like Ruth, know that God loved us before time, and blessed us in His Son with every timely blessing needed. Moreover, that no one will ever know the sweetness of rest until they have known the futility of laboring to satisfy a broken law. God was good to us in that. Look at those still laboring to satisfy a law that can never be satisfied. Ah, how bright His determinate counsel shines. Ponder well my dear readers what a great mercy it is to hear Boaz say, stay in this field. Oh, yes, we were all strangers, as Ruth was; we were all trespassers, as Ruth was; we were all of a sinful race, as Ruth was; we were all destitute, as Ruth was, and we were all hungry as Ruth was, and this destitution and this hunger brought us out of the land of Moab seeking Christ or Boaz.

It has ever been that way; those that came to Him came because of hunger, of destitution, of nakedness. Not one that has ever come to Him but that has been filled. John 1:14, 16. No one has ever come to Him for dress that was not given a change of raiment.

Ruth did not advertize her skill or aptness as she ventured toward the field. She did not ask for the harvested wheat; she did not take a grain of the wheat that they had planned for the barn. She was, as the poor woman of Cannan that came begging for help from the Master's hand. He called her a dog, but she resented it not, but acknowledged it, only saying that the dogs ate the crumbs from their master's table. The Lord recognized her and helped her. She did not have a legitimate plea that could be made. Had it not been for the mercy of Christ, she would have been sent empty away. Nor Ruth had no plea to make, nothing to pay with, and, lo and behold, she had nothing to pay. Of one thing we may take refuge in, and that is that no sinner has ever been empty sent away that came begging for mercy for Jesus' sake. There is not any reference in the Bible of a case of this kind, but there are many scriptural lessons and examples where He has had mercy on such a sinner as Ruth was, and as you and I are if so be that we have come to Him begging mercy.

The Lord sent her there right in the harvest time. It is always at that time. The law husband was put to death in time for her to get to the kingdom of Boaz. Boaz had been blessed in basket and in store, with rich fields, lovely harvest laborers, the grain was ripe when she arrived.

Come hither poor sinner. Let's look the situation over once more. Boaz owned the field before she needed it; Boaz fell in love with her before she knew him. She did not pay a farthing on the farm; she did not dig up the field for seeding it down; she did not furnish the seed; she did not turn her hand to produce the ripe grain. She did not go to where she gleaned by arrangement of her own. It was a happen so with her, but there is not any happening with the owner of the field. One of the most lovely Elders I have known in the fifty years has often said to me. Elder Griffin, watch the hand of the Lord, for it will go before you and will settle you on the lees of His choice. Let us dear brethren, watch for that hand and be found ever listening for His instruction as to what to do, where to go, and above all else to wait, ever be found watching and waiting and listening for His voice at

our back saying in our ear, this is the way, walk ye in it

As Boaz came from Bethlehem he found Ruth gleaning in His field. Who is she, he asked of his laborers? Ah dear doubting child, let us look in upon the scene. The words of our text fill our minds with delight as we hear him address her. How precious! How delightful to those longing for words of comfort from the Saviour of sinners. How moving, yea, O Lord how fitting to our hungry soul as we hear Him address this trespassing damsel, this transgressing Moabitish woman. How full and rich and complete is the good news of the gospel. Go not into another field; this is the field that has every needed thing in it; take, eat, thy fulness, even to the satisfying of thy soul.

O, Lord our precious Master, ever give us this bread, even the bread that is in the prepared field for us when we are brought into thy Kingdom, ever make us satisfied with that bread that was made fit for our consumption by the hot wrath and fury of our God that was poured out on thy Son and our Saviour, making Him palatable and nourishing to every destitute sinner brought to this fertile field. Tell us no more of any other field, make us satisfied to abide here where both bread and water is administered to us from the hand of the inmates of His household.

How overwhelming it is to a poor stranger in a strange land to have riches of that land bestowed upon us. Our cup runs over. Our soul is flooded with the love of our Lovely One. To me the coming of Ruth to Boaz, the going of Paul to Ananias, the long barefooted journey of the prodigal, the cry of the church, look not upon me for I am black, All these journeyings of the children of God are but steps that wayward lambs take into the corral or sheepfold, for we sing:

Courage my soul, on God rely,
Deliverance soon will come;
A thousand ways has Providence
To bring believers home.
Ere first I drew this vital breath,
From nature's prison free,
Crosses in number, measure, weight,
Were written Lord for me.

And I hope that the rich fields of sovereign grace will furnish us green and shady places to lie down in, cooling fountains of water to drink from and new and living bread to feast on in Immanuel's land and while waiting for the glorious day of keen anticipation that I will have my eyes on Boaz my lovely kinsman who has entered into that Holy Place, after having fulfilled His royal pledge to redeem all of the poor sinners.

In the meantime, pray for me, pray that Boaz guides my pen and my tongue, if indeed, I am a laborer in His field. Pray for me that I might be day and night about my Father's business, and that He ever keeps me regulated, but that He never allows me to become a regulator in His field.

Elder W. D. Griffin

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."
Mat. 11:28

"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters: These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep."
Psalm 107:23, 24

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, whence cometh my help."
Psalm 121:1

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

In the year of 1830, Moons Creek Primitive Baptist Church was organized; this being an arm of Country Line Church.

The meeting house is located on Parks Springs Road near Providence, N. C., about one half mile east of Highway number 86.

The present building was built in the year of 1890 and remodeled as you see it today in 1974.

Meeting time at Moons Creek is eleven o'clock on the third Sunday morning of each month.

Their present pastor is Elder Kenneth R. Key.

Surely this church is a planting of Gods hand and for more than 150 years He has kept it watered with the dews of Heaven.

NOTE: To introduce your church, please send a snap shot along with brief history, Sunday of your meetings, geographic location and name of present pastor.

Editors

CORRESPONDENCE

Elgin, Oregon 97827

Dear Beloved of the Lord;

For some reason I feel a desire to write you a few lines today, trusting in the Lord to guide our mind and hand, as we pen a few thoughts concerning this scripture:

"Let no man deceive you by any means; for the day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the timple of God, shewing himself that he is God." II Thessalonians 2:3-4.

We shall long remember the significance of Geneses 1:5 wherein our attention was called to the fact that the evening and morning were the first day. This denotes and places emphasis on the fact that man is of the earth and as such cannot see God as his creator or Christ as his

Redeemer for he came into the world in the state of darkness.

But thanks be unto God who did predestine, elect, and create in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, to eternal life, a chosen people, whom are called out of natures darkness and are given a hope in Christ Jesus whereby they become the children of light.

In Phil. 1:6, we read, "He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ," showing that there is an appointed time for each and every child of God, as he sojourns in this world of toil and strife for a work to begin that will lead him to the knowledge that his salvation lies in none other than our blessed Redeemer Jesus Christ.

By nature man, not having been born of the Spirit, by his own works seeks to obtain salvation and most oftern deems himself worthy as did the Pharisee in Luke 18:11-12. Among such God has a people who are called out of nature's darkness and in whom he does begin a good work that brings them to the knowledge of Christ Jesus. In some, they are brought down to their knees as was Saul when on the way to Damascus to persecute the children of God. While in others we are reminded of the eaglet spoken of in Deut. 32:11, who in comfort rested in a nest, lined with feathers, and high upon a cliff only to have its parent stir up the nest; then finding itself resting upon the sticks and thorns. (The beginning of doubts.)

John 9:41 reads, "Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth." All the posterity of Adam came into the world under the curse of sin and by nature are totally depraved, yet there is a sense wherein the unregenerated who have not as yet come under conviction are without a knowledge of sin; they not yet having felt guilty and rely upon their own works to obtain salvation. Such as these may from birth until death go through life never feeling in their minds and hearts their unworthyness, and in their natural minds (for they have no spiritual mind) opposeth all things pertaining to God and Godliness, and exalt themselves above all that is called God, or that is worshipped.

"Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." I Cor.15:50.

"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" Rom. 9:21. We might say that one vessel shall be filled with oil of grace, and the other void of the blessings of God.

We did so enjoy the few moments that we got to spend with Elder Hollingsworth when he visited among us. We had so hoped that you and Sister Spangler would be able to accompany them. We hope that this finds you both feeling better.

Give our love to all the brethren. Florence sends her love.

In hope, your unworthy brother'

Lloyd C. Spikes

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33 Hillcrest Ave. N. E.
Roanoke, Virginia 24012

To the Editors of the
SIGNS OF THE TIMES,
To those who proclaim
full glory to a just
Savior and the total
depravity of mankind:

I enjoyed reading Elder Trott's

writings in the three last issues of THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES because they helped me to see how subtile self righteousness is. It showed how mankind does have a zeal, but cannot be saved any way but through the mercies of a merciful Savior.

Yes, we desire a closer walk with our Savior, but it is only he who is the atonement. How very precious was his experience of having seen the ram caught in the thicket to save him as He saved Isaac, the type of the crucified Savior.

After he was brought to know that his rituals and laboring for perfection could not save him, how sweet to know there was atonement of Christ.

I have been so foolish and doubting in my time. I hope I can apply the scriptures as applicable to my case of where John was shut up in prison and in doubt and Christ said go show John again these things, and so it was to me that the rewriting of that old servant of God long ago showed me spiritual error and the subtile error of thinking we can work favor with God. I want God's favor and we hope we hate evil and oh to God that we might love good. We recall the scriptures telling us there's none good but one. Only God is good, and indeed God is love. The only source of true love, which again brings us to the atonement and the son of God as our mediator, we hope, to save us from hell, if we are saved.

How good to read of God's precious relief to him as he said; as I was there upon my knees, the account of Abraham's offering of his son, Isaac, as in Genesis 22, was brought to my view.

Isaac was bound and laid upon the altar, appeared as representing the care of the heirs of promise, and as fully representing my case as bound by the law and doomed by its condemnary sentence of death. As Abraham knew nothing but to inflict the death blow so the law knew nothing but to inflict the curse upon the sinner. My attention then turned to Abraham's arm, being arrested by the angel's call to him, and the ram caught in the thicket by his horns being taken by him and sacrificed in the place of Isaac. This ram appears to represent Christ as involved in the demands of the law, in the power of His Godhead, by virture of His headship and union with His people, and therefore as made to suffer the penalty of the law in their stead.

Elder Trott went on to say; my views then were not as distinct on all these points as I have here given them, but the substitution of Christ in the place of the condemned sinner was fully presented to view. And the atonement of Christ appeared so full and so exactly adapted to my helpless, guilty and condemned case that surely, I said to myself, as I viewed it, God must have had me in view when he made this rich provision in His son. I was therefore enabled confidentially to rely on His atonement for pardon, and to plead for it for my acceptance with God, and the sense of condemnation was gone. He went on to say how he was filled with gratitude and praise. It seems to me all believers in the Lord our Savior should enjoy the article the above writing appeared in.

Even copying and rewriting an article requires a lot of labor as well as publishing and mailing. May God continue to be your guide and help, yes, all who labor and love in Him everywhere.

May we be kept in humbleness and love for another and before our Savior all through life's journey, if it can be His will.

Humbly

Mamie Rose Ferguson

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

THE HOUSE OF WORSHIP

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the House of the Lord."
Psalms 122:1

My soul leaped with joy from its fainted condition the other day when an Elder softly said to me, "Let us go into the house." I was within the city limits of one of the largest cities in our nation. Everyone on the streets and highways seemed to be in such a hurry. I was meditating upon the fact that things are so swiftly coming to pass that it is very difficult to believe such drastic changes are taking place. I began to realize that I was so heavily involved in this great turmoil of swift and rapid events to such an extent that my mind was in a whirl, my heart was troubled, and my soul was fainted—all because I could not keep up. What great relief of mind to enter upon the grounds of this house of worship and to be warmly invited into the house for the purpose of pausing in our hurryings to worship God. How good it is when you feel so cast down, unworthy, and unfit to be noticed by anyone, to hear them say, "Let us go into the House of the Lord." Aren't you glad that they even remember to invite you into such scared place as the Place of Praises. Aren't you glad, also, that others have a desire to go into the House of Prayer and Praise.

Get your Bible and turn to the 122nd Psalm and read with us as we meditate upon some of the glorious expressions of the Psalmist. The second verse reads: "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem." We recall that in Psalms 100:4 it says, "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise . . ." Jesus said, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

When I entered the door of this building and beheld such smiling peaceful expressions on the faces of those who so joyfully greeted me, I felt to be standing within the gates of the City of God with a number of its citizens. No one there needed to say to any other, "I love you." The love of God was so manifest in each and every face, word, handshake, and embrace that we all had a foretaste of Heaven. When we had settled down to singing hymns of thanksgiving to God even for the tribulations that had been ours to endure, I gazed at the open door through which we had entered. Then I thought of the gates through which we had come to this place of joy and peace. I thought of the first gate that leadeth unto life, to wit: tribulations. Peace, joy, and happiness cannot be experienced while in confusion, sadness and misery; but after being exercised by these tribulations, we experience the peaceable fruits of righteousness which are patience, faith, hope, love, and joy of life. "Go through, go through the gates . . ." is an expression found in Isaiah 62:10. It must be through the gate of tribulations and persecutions that we learn to be submissive and to rely upon God for all things pertaining to God and godliness. This painful gate could be termed the gate of *regeneration.* You can not climb over the wall to avoid this gate. If one gets into the position of indulging in special favors peculiar to the afflicted and poor people of God, this one

would be classed as a thief and a robber. The walls are too thick to be penetrated; too high to be climbed over; and too strong to be overthrown. You must enter through the gate of tribulations which is the gate of regeneration. This is the evidence that brethren look for in listening to the experience of candidates for church membership. This being "born again" is manifest when their testimony proves that they have suffered to the extent of being brought into the knowledge of being unable to do anything of themselves to merit any blessing from God.

I went back into my experience and was given to re-live for a moment the period in my life when it seemed the mountains of my many sins were crushing me to death. The gates of hell seemed to be opened unto me and that I was being swallowed into its clutches. Every straw to which I so greedily clung could not so much as slow down my descent into the depths of such horrible pit. I re-lived for a moment my cries out of the depth of hell. I remembered the groans, the fastings, and the awful miseries of hell with all the doors closed and locked fast. I could not open any door of faith or hope. How I did knock and seek and ask but I had no faith. I wept bitterly with no hope for mercy because my sins demanded that I should forever be in misery. While in this awful condition and after I had exhausted all of my strength and energy it pleased God in his gracious providence toward me to put it into the mind of one of my friends to invite me into a house of worship. He kept insisting against my wishes that I should accompany him to a place of worship to hear a certain minister preach. I had read the Bible: it had condemned. I had listened at preachers: they had condemned me. I talked to my close associates: they all thought I was crazy when I would tell them of my hopeless condition. I learned in the pit that God was sovereign and holy and that no man could come unto Him. I felt that I had blasphemed against God under the cloak of a gospel minister in declaring the power of man unto salvation to such extent that I could never have forgiveness here nor in the world to come. This man who said unto me, "Let us go to meeting," saw something in me that I could not see. This is why he kept insisting that I go. His care concerning my spiritual welfare astonished me. I shall forever be thankful to God for that man who kept insisting, "Let us go to meeting." I had thought that I knew how to read and interpret the Holy scriptures.

God opened the second gate unto me when He opened the "door of faith" thru the preaching of the gospel of this minister that night. "And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how *he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.*" (Acts 14:27) "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching" to set before me an open door. God opened this minister's mouth to preach this precious faith. God opened my heart to understand it. As soon as it was opened unto me I gladly went through it to such extent as to receive and embrace it with all my heart. I did not have to go to Heaven after it. I did not have to go across the seas and oceans to get it. You cannot open the door of faith yourself. It must be opened to you. Paul says, "A great door and effectual is opened unto me." (1 Cor. 16:9) When the door of faith is opened how devotedly we cling to the Lord Jesus Christ. The gate of faith being opened I saw the maneuverings of my Saviour. I saw him come through the gate of

Heaven. I saw him descend toward the pit. I saw Him descend low enough to reach me who was the vilest of the vile. I saw Him wash me whiter than snow with his blood. I saw Him pay my penalty by His dying in my stead. I saw Him merit a home in Heaven for me with His life. I heard Him plead in my behalf before the Father. All of this led me to the door of Hope. In Hosea 2:15 we read of a door of hope." On that memorable night for a fleeting time this gate of Hope was swung wide open and I was blessed to experience the entrance to that within the veil: "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, *we might have a strong consolation* who have fled for refuge to *lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil."* (Heb. 6:17-20)

The opening of the gate of hope gave me to see that within the veil. The opening of the gate of faith gave me to believe in Jesus, the perfect and powerful Saviour of His people. The opening of the gate of hope gave me to trust that I was one of His people and that all of the benefits He merited would be mine to experience in the future. These gates lead into the inner place of the King. The most inner-gate, or door, must be the gate of Love. In the Song of Songs we read, "My Beloved put in His hand by the hole of the door." (Solomon 5:4) We read in Revelations, *"After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven. . . ."* (Rev. 4:1) When this gate of love is opened in Heaven to us our hearts overflow with this Love of God. Perfect love casteth out fear. O what joy, what peace, and happiness we do experience as a result of the foretaste of Heaven itself. It is too wonderful to tell. It is too much for poor earthly creatures to experience but for short seasons. I am made to believe that God has ordained these wonderful banquets of the King to be participated in most gloriously here in His banqueting houses of worship. God's children will travel thousands of miles to one of these banquets. God meets His people with the gifts of love within these Houses of praises. Sometimes we hear the voices of angels coming from the mouths of men as we worship God together.

While meditating in this meeting-house on the gates of tribulations, (or regeneration), faith, hope, and love, my question was, Are there any other gates? John gave me the answer in 1st John 4:16: "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him." There is no gate beyond the gate of love.

When I came to the reality of my surroundings I felt that God had cemented everyone present in that congregation together so firmly with a heavenly mixture of grace and love that nothing could break fellowship. I felt that everyone there including the many young people were lively stones, made to be lively by the love of God and washed clean in the blood of the Lamb. I saw the manifestation of their labor of love as I gazed upon the newly finished walls, furniture, and fixtures of this House of Worship. I knew that it had taken many hours and dollars to bring this into reality. I said in my heart, "Thank God for such evidences of a God-loving people who will gladly sacrifice their bodies and earthly treasures in providing a meeting place for the members and friends to worship God together." Recall that the 3rd and 4th verses of the 122nd Psalms says: "Jerusalem

is builded as a city that is *compact together:* Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord unto the testimony of Israel, to *give thanks unto the name of the Lord."* A company of believers blessed to worship God in unison in prayer, praise, and preaching is a wonderful experience of being compacted together both in body and Spirit.

I saw the Heavens open unto me a book of remembrances of the testimony of God's love and mercy. I remembered the 1st Heaven which was a paradise when the Lord first remembered me as related in this treatise. I called to remembrance the 2nd Heaven when a door was opened to me to be baptized and to be married to the particular church in covenant-relationship which holds to the Gospel Faith and Practice. I had been given the wonderful relationship to trust that God would providentially care for me and finally save me in that eternal abode because of His love and through the merits of Jesus Christ. Yet, I thought that I had so blasphemed His power to such degree that none would receive me into their fellowship here on earth. How glad I was when they received me and welcomed me into their fellowship. My joys in participating in the special privileges and ordinances allowed only to members of the church are considered as precious and sacred. Being caught up in the third Heaven for moments is enough fortaste to make me yearn to live there eternally with the redeemed of the Lord.

It is wonderful in this church relationship to be compacted together to mourn with those who mourn; to rejoice with those who rejoice: to be so united in affections one for the other that each one will be willing to make great sacrifices for the other ones' good. It is wonderful to be united in agreement upon religious beliefs. Being "Compact together" in love, belief, experience, and hope: all this causes a yearning to meet often together in worship of God for His benefits to us. All this causes the lovers of the truth to be glad when someone suggests, "Let us to into the House of the Lord."

We go to the House of God in unison to give thanks for His wonderful works. We listen prayerfully as the minister of the Gospel gives testimony of the will of God, the word of God, and the simple commandments of our Lord, Jesus Christ. The minister comforts us as he is blessed to speak of the sovereign God who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will. We experience a feeling of security as the minister brings testimony after testimony from the Holy Scriptures to prove that God's will of purpose is solely, wholely, perfectly, and completely worked by Him, to the praise of His own glory and to the completion of salvation of each and every one of His children, without a hint of any jot or tittle of His will of purpose being disobeyed because He works it himself; and, it embraces all times, events, words, thoughts, actions, and all creatures and things both visible and invisible. We are edified as the minister preaches the Word of God bringing a multiplicity of testimonies from the Book of books, proving that the will of God relative to the salvation of God's elect is because of God's great love for us through the merits of Jesus Christ, Who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. We eagerly listen as the minister preaches to us God's will of precept as he rightly divides the word of truth in warning the Lord's people of dangers and exhorting them to keep the commandments of Jesus, and to be fervent in charity.

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us to into the House of the

Lord."

I wanted to praise Him publicly for His divine providence, amazing grace, gifts of the Spirit, His great love, and gospel of Jesus Christ. I wanted to participate in the ordinances of Jesus Christ and His Church. There are two kinds of extremists relative to public praise. One is the child of God who is fearful of man to the extent that he will not participate in public praise. The hypocrite will engage in public praise to be commemded by men. The proper Christian is not fearful of the frowns of the world, nor is he a public worshipper in order to be commended by those who profess to be Christians.

David said, "Give unto the Lord glory due unto his name: *bring an offering and come into his courts.*" You may ask, "What shall we bring? Our strength will not help Him for He is all-powerful. Our wisdom will not direct Him for He is all-wise. Our God is so great that he does not require our wisdom to direct Him nor our power to assist Him. He owns all things; therefore, He does not require our wealth to enrich Him. He is so effectual in His works and so convincing relative to His greatness that He does not need our reputation to advance Him. What does He require of us? He requires us to fear Him because of His greatness, He requires us to love Him because of His goodness. "What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits towards me?" (Psalms 116:12) What offering shall I bring? The sacrifice that the Lord loves is a broken heart and a contrite spirit. The word contrite means bruised. Paul says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you *present your bodies as living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*" (Romans 12:1) God does not need our help in any but we certainly need His strength in all of our affairs. It pleases Him that we are to help one another in word, deed, and prayer. Bring an offering of your material possessions for the support of the ministry, maintenance of the house of worship, and the poor of the flock. The Scriptural rule for this is called an order to the churches which is plainly and simply stated in 1st Corinthians 16:1-3. (Read, if interested in giving according to this rule.)

"I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving." (Psalms 116:17). I will thank Him for His deliverance from death; for His deliverance of me from the cluthces of law and death; for His setting before me the open doors of faith and hope; and, for His love that flooded my soul through the open door of Heaven. I will thank Him for Jesus Christ, my King, Saviour, Friend, Priest, Way, Truth, and Life.

When I come to the courts of the Lord and in the midst of His people, I pray that I will be given to remember my vows. May I be given to say as David when I am inside the place of worship: "I will pay my vows unto the Lord *now* in the presence of all His people." David said, "God is the Lord which hath shewed us light: *Bind the sacrifice with cords even unto the horns of the altar.*" (Psalm 118:27) Unless these instructions can be experienced, none of our sacrifices will be acceptable to God. All acceptable *sacrifce* is fervent constant confident *devotion.* That which *binds* is *faith. Streams of God's love* are the *cords.* The *altar* is *Christ. Christ's merit* and *power* are the *horns* of the altar. I find it to be more blessed to try and fail than not to try. I find that my conscience is more at ease when I go to the House of God and fail in my attempts at worship than when I fail to present my body. O that our people would more often say to their chil-

dren, relatives, and friends, "Let us go into the House of the Lord."

It is very encouraging to see parents bring their children to church meetings. A greater percent of our church meeting congregations are young people now than when I first united with the Primitive Baptist Church. Let us bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Let us teach them to obey their parents, speak the truth, read good literature, to behave themselves conformable to high morals, and to respect the elderly. We know that it is God's work to regenerate and save eternally each and everyone of his people; yet, it is our obligation as Christian parents to discourage our children from becoming involved in religious organizations whose object is to work zealously to influence young minds to embrace their doctrines and practices which you know to be false and erroneous. It is your duty to encourage them to consider the Bible as the Book of books worthy of their reading. It is your duty to encourage their attendance at the place where you go to worship. You consider your particular church of your membership as being more right in its doctrine and practices than any of the organizations whose main purposes are to convince the young and to convert them to their ideas and doings.

The minds of children are very easily impressed and they are prone to follow anyone who takes a great interest in them. Take care that your children be not as those referred to by David in his prayer: "Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children whose mouth speaketh vanity and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood." May we do our duty and pray God: "That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as cornerstones, polished after the similitude of a palace: that our garners may be full, affording all manner of store: that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets: that our oxen may be strong to labour: that there be no breaking in, nor going out: that there be no complaining in our streets. HAPPY IS THAT PEOPLE THAT IS IN SUCH A CASE; yea, HAPPY IS THAT PEOPLE, WHOSE GOD IS THE LORD." (Psalm 144:11-15) May we assemble ourselves together more often, and often say, "LET US GO INTO THE HOUSE OF THE LORD." MAY GOD BLESS YOU. AMEN.

Elder E. J. Lambert
(From the "Signs" 1965)

MATTHEW V. 16.

Editorial of Elder Beebe as it appeared in the "Signs" 140 years ago.

New Vernon, N. Y.
Sept. 15, 1843

"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

—Matt. v. 16.

This exhortation was addressed to the disciples by our Lord Jesus Christ in the course of his discourse upon the mount. Retiring from the multitude that had gathered round him, Jesus withdrew to a mountain with the little group of his disciples, and sat down and instructed them. First in regard to the blessings of God which rest upon all such as possess the characteristics of true discipleship, which are these: poor in spirit, mourners, meek, hungering and thirsting after righteousness,

yet a proscribed, persecuted, suffering and reviled people for Jesus' sake. That the development of these characteristics is to distinguish the children of God as the blessed of the Lord throughout all time, there can be no doubt; so that in the absence of these there are no marks by which we are at liberty to recognize them from the unregenerated mass of mankind. The children of God are not blessed for possessing these discriminating qualities, for that would imply that they were chosen on account of some personal excellency in themselves, which God has said is not the case; but the possession of them is the evidence of their being blessed, the effect and consequence of their having been previously blessed. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has blessed his people with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.—Eph. i. 3,4. Thus we see that all spiritual blessings were prior to our personal holiness and exemption from blame, and our holiness and deliverance from guilt result from and are in accordance with his blessing upon and choice of us before the foundation of the world; and this choice and provision of grace and mercy had in view, as its ultimate object, and did secure to God's chosen people holiness and deliverance from blame. For the encouragement of this distinguished and blessed people, Christ has, in this chapter, given exceeding great and precious promises for their faith to live upon, viz.: 1st, the kingdom of heaven is theirs; 2d, they shall be comforted; 3d, they whall inherit the earth; 4th, they shall be filled with righteousness; 5th, they whall obtain mercy; 6th, they shall see God; 7th, they shall be called the children of God; 8th, theirs is the kingdom of heaven; 9th, great is their reward in heaven. What a glorious catalogue of *shalls* are strung together like a chain of gold to comfort, adorn and sustain the people of God.

"Each of them powerful as that sound
That bid the new made world go round,
And stronger than the solid pole
On which the wheels of nature roll.
The voice that rolls the stars along
Speaks all the promises."

Such a people, thus distinguished in the eternal choice of God, thus chosen of God unto holiness and ordained to eternal life, Jesus separated from the multitude, and sat down upon the mountain to teach as never man taught; and unto this people the exhortation placed at the head of this article is addressed. To no other people under heaven can this admonition apply. No other people are in possession of this light, nor can any other people let is shine, or aid in the diffusion of it. To this distinguished people Jesus said, Ye are the light of the world: a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Then follows the word of command: Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. That the disciples to whom these words were immediately addressed were designed in a special manner to diffuse the light of divine truth, as ministers of the gospel, we shall not dispute; but we must at the same time contend that the gospel church, embracing all the subjects of his kingdom, is included with them, as the city set upon a hill; and each member of the gospel church is addressed, and in these words commanded to let his

light so shine. The testimony which the sons of God are called to bear, is something more than can be borne by a mere articulation of sounds, and in the spirit of the admonition before us, it is to be borne by a display of works, at the development of which God is to be glorified, and all that are in the house of God are to be illuminated.

It is of vital importance that we should understand by what description of works God is to be glorified; for we live in a day in which there is great confusion and error upon this subject. For this very reason we have called the attention of our Old School Baptist readers to the consideration of this important subject, and we wish to be very particular in defining the nature and description of the works by which our testimony of Jesus is to be uttered. In order that we may be the more distinctly understood, we will first state some kinds of work by which a correct, true and faithful testimony cannot be borne and consequently, by which the declarative glory of God cannot be advanced by us. And first, the works of the flesh have nothing to do with the diffusion of the light of Zion. By the works of the flesh, we understand all such works as the children of men, in an unregenerate state are capable of performing. All our powers, whether physical or mental, are by nature depraved; so that all the emanations from our fleshly powers are earthly, sensual and devilish. The thoughts and devices of the unrenewed heart are evil, and that continually. The carnal, or fleshly mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Christ has informed us that it is as impossible for man in his unregenerate state to perform that which is acceptable to God, as it is for a corrupt fountain to send forth pure water. The fountain must first be made pure, and then, but not until then, will the streams be pure. The tree must be first made good, and then its fruit will be good. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest; which are these:" (disguise, modify, or shape them as you may, still they are there). "Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like."—Gal. v. 19-24. Consequently the works of the flesh are not the works by which the children of the kingdom of Christ are to glorify God. The declarative glory of God cannot result from our works, as the apostle clearly testifies to Titus, iii. 4,5:"But after the kindness and love of God our Savior towards men appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done," &c. All the works which we as creatures can do, whether good or bad, can never make the kindness or love of God appear, or in anywise develop the glory of our Father which is in heaven: therefore, such works as can be planned by our mental, and executed by our physical powers, are not the works intended in our text.

Second. The works of the law are not intended: "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse."—Gal. iii. 10. And the works required in the text are from such as are under the blessing, and not under the curse. Works which are wrought by us, however unexceptionable, if wrought in obedience to the Sinai covenant can never show forth our redemption from the law, or our translation into the kingdom of Jesus Christ. So very far are we from glorifying our Father in heaven, when we attempt to liquidate the demands of the Sinai law, and by obediance to its precepts render ourselves acceptable unto God, we in-

sult the divine Majesty, and count the blood of the covenant wherewith Christ was sanctified, (or set apart as the law fulfiller) an unholy thing. A thing of itself insufficient for the perfect accomplishment of the complete salvation of his people. None who have faith in the perfect work of Christ will ever think it necessary for them to do his work over again, or to offer any amendment upon what Christ has done; but rather rest their whole soul on that finished salvatioin which Christ has effected by his perfect obedience to the requisitions of the law, and his suffering of the penalty due for the transgressions of his people.

If then, as we have proved by the testimony of the scriptures, the works required of the children of God, whereby they shall show forth the praise of him that has called them out of darkness into his marvelous light, are not those which are of the flesh, nor even our works of obedience to the holy law of God, by what works, our readers may inquire shall let our light so shine before men that they may glorify our Father which is in heaven?

The light which the saints are to let shine is that which God lighted up in our souls, when he communicated to us the light of spiritual life; of vital union to Jesus, as our Head by which we are enabled to see the kingdom of God.—John iii. 3. And the only works by which that light can be made manifest to all that are in the house, are those works which God has wrougt in us.—Isa. xxvi. 12. "For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." —Phil. ii. 13. The works intended in our subject, are those wherein we have our fruit unto holiness, and the end therof is everlasting life. They are those whereof we are born of God. They are defined by Paul as the fruits of the Spirit, viz: Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, &c.—Gal. iii. 22,23. As also defined and enjoined by Peter, thus, "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity; for if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."—2 Peter i. 5-9. Those, therefore, who obey the injunction of Jesus, in our text, are those in whom these things, mentioned by Peter, abound and by the abounding of these things they let their light shine; for they, in whom these things do not abound are blind, cannot see afar off, and have forgotten that they were purged from their old sins; while they who do those things, viz: the things which are to be added to their faith; do walk in the light—do let their light shine, and are not barren nor unfruitful, are not blind, they can see afar off, and do remember that they have been purged from their old sins.

No man can add to his faith, virtue, until he is in possession of faith; and faith is the fruit of the Spirit, and the gift of God, and without it we cannot please God. No man can let his light shine who has no light to shine. The breaking of the pitchers of Gideon's three hundred men could have produced no light, if the lamps had not been in the pitchers. We were sometimes darkness, but God has delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son; has given us an inheritance among the saints in light;

constituted us children of the light; commanded us to walk in the light, and to let our light shine. "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. iv. 6.

Christians, Old School Baptists, readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, has the Sun of Righteousness arisen upon you with healing in his wings? Do you know him as the Fountain and Fullness of light, life and blessedness? How is it with you at this time? Are you reflecting that light, by walking in the light as the children of the day? Are you adding to your faith, virtue, and to virtue all those excellencies made manifest by the refulgent radiance of that light? Or have you forgotten that you have been purged from your old sins? If this is your situation, may not the apostolic admonition be applicable in your cse? "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise."—Eph.v.14,15. Would you, as the disciples of Jesus Christ, let your light shine, remember that this can only be done by walking worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called of God. We are not to sleep, as do others; there are foes for us to face, conflicts to be endured, enemies to be encountered, errors to be exposed, truth to be set forth, sheep and lambs to be fed, brethren to be exhorted, heresy to be resisted, persecution to be suffered, a cross to be borne, a warfare to be engaged in, a good fight to be fought, a course to be finished, and a crown to be received and worn in heaven. Each oher's burdens are to be born, and we are to watch over each other, detect sin and reprove it, both in ourselves and in others; a world to be renounced and its vanities to be laid aside. Besides all this, there are mourning Christians to be looked up and comforted, strayed sheep and lambs to be restored; lions, wolves, dragons and devils to be subdued; and God has given us a banner to be displayed because of the truth. Sons of Zion, purhcase of the Redeemer's blood, can you discover nothing in all these considerations which requires you to "Let your light shine?"

But do we hear one say, "My hope is in the Lord, I do not expect to be saved by my works!" If your hope is good for anything it must be in the Lord; and if you look to works for salvation you will be awfully disappointed. But have you indeed a hope in God, and is it true that you rely on him and him alone for salvation? How will you make this known without faith and obedience? If your faith is of God, it will manifest itself by obedience. The very confidence which the Christian has in God as a whole Savior, swells his expanding heart with love and gratitude, and awakens every heaven-born sensibility of his soul with ardent desires to glorify him in his body and spirit which are Christ's.

Few, feeble, weak and persecuted as we may seem to be in this day of rebuke and blasphemy, we ask for no accession to our ranks, but such as love our Lord Jesus Christ, and are willing to suffer the loss of all things for his sake. A very orthodox theory of faith and loud professions of attachment to the doctrine which sustains and comforts our souls are not enough. That faith only is genuine which works by love and purifies the heart. It is true, the old order of Baptists have been in some cases imposed on by persons professing our faith, who have proved (but too painfully to us) spots in our feasts of charity—men who cannot let their light shine because they have none; all they deem necessary is to sign

with their hand our creed, and surname themselves Israel, and then make the livery of the Old School serve them as a cloak for their ungodly corruption of life and deportment.

Should we attempt a delineation of the characters to whom we allude, we might be thought quite too personal; we will leave our brethren and our churches to look around them, letting their own light shine at the same time, and drag into the light those who have crept in among them unawares. Those who can find hours to spend in the merry circle of the graceless and profane, and can find some trivial excuse for absenting themselves from the house of prayer, those who can find the time and the means to fill a whole community of Christians with tumult, bickerings, jealousies, contentions and disorder, but have no disposition to weep with those who weep and mourn with those who mourn; though they may boast of volumes of head-religion imported from neighboring countries or can give but poor evidence of a lighted lamp within their earthen pitcher. There may be preachers who can boast of preaching in the name of Jesus, and of casting out devils, and working miracles, and in their own estimation, giants among dwarfs, yet in the diffusion of the light they shall be detected, and should be put away. Those who are careless concerning what figure they make in the world, can join with the jovial and eat and drink with the drunken, cannot be at the same time shunning the appearance of evil, or letting the light of life, derived from Jesus, shine before men, that they may see their good works and glorify God.

Many of the dear saints of God may feel convicted of having been too remiss in regard to a circumspect walk and conversation. Alas! How much we all have to lament of our shortcoming; but the apparent severity of our remarks in this article will not break their bones, they will not be offended, but they will acknowledge with the writer,

> Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
> Prone to leave the God I love."

The stand which we as old School Baptists have taken, the sacrifices we have been called to make for the sake of purity in faith and practice, and above all, our love of holiness, our allegiance to Jesus as our King, our sense of the immaculate purity of his precious cause, will not allow us to walk in fellowship with those, under any name whatever, who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. On the one hand, we should withhold our countenance from the heretics, and on the other, from all who hold the truth in unrighteousness; and so from every brother that walketh disorderly withdraw ourselves.

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association wishes to announce their annual association meeting, which will be held on Friday the 7th, Saturday the 8th, and Sunday the 9th of October 1983, the Lord willing.

The meeting is to be at New Bay Church in Onslow County, Near Jacksonville, N. C. Directions: After ariving at Jacksonville, go to the intersection of highways 24 and 17 just south of town. From this point, go south on 17 for 5 miles (about 100 yds. past MacMillan Furniture Store) and turn right on local road 1107. Go 2 miles and you will be at the church.

All sovereign grace believers are invited to come and be with us.

Norma Jenkins, Clerk
Phone (919) 285-4319
Rt. 2, Wallace, N. C. 28466

SULPHUR FORK ASSOCIATION

The one hundred thirty-eighth annual session of the Sulphur Fork Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Hopewell Church, Winnsboro, Texas, beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1983 (Sept. 30, Oct. 1 & 2). Hopewell Church is located about six miles west of Winnsboro. Go west on Coke Road from Winnsboro about 4½ miles and follow signs.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and worship with us at this time.

If further information is needed, call 214-629-3561.

Hopewell Church

KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

The Kehukee Association, composed of the following churches: Bethlehem, Beulah, Flat Swamp, North Creek, Old Sparta, Singleton, Skewarky, Smithwick Creek and Tarbaro, will be held the first Sunday and Saturday before in October. It wil be held at Flat Swamp Church located between Bethel and Robersonville on the Big Oaks road.

We invite visitors to come and worship with us.

Hassel Allen, Clerk
Flat Swamp Church

HOPEWELL ASSOCIATION

The Hopewell Association of Alabama will meet with Little Hope Church, in Lamar County, on the third Sunday in October; Friday and Saturday before; October 14, 15, and 16, 1983; God willing.

The meeting house is ten miles west of Fayette on Alabama Highway 18.

Levert Howell
Association Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

In accordance with the request of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, a presbytery met June 26, 1983 at three o'clock p.m. for the examination of Brother Stafford Houston, to be, if found qualified, ordained to the office of deacon.

Those who constituted the presbytery were as follows: Elders O. K. Tench, C. B. Davis, J. R. Williams and Raymond Goad. Deacons Richard Stegall, Silas Payne, Homie Dalton, Walter Hamlett, Marvin Brumfield, Vance Duncan, Burnell Williams, Robert Shelton, Albert Hudson and Claude Johnson.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder O. K. Tench, moderator and deacon Burnell Williams, clerk.

Elder C. B. Davis was chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Deacon Marvin Brumfield was appointed as church spokesman. Elder J. R. Williams was chosen to deliver the charge and Elder Raymond Goad was chosen for the ordination prayer. After examination of the candidate by Elder C. B. Davis with the 3rd chapter of Timothy as reference, the church spokesman stated he was satisfied with the examination and answers of the candidate and the presbytery administered the laying on of hands at which time Elder Raymond Goad asked for divine guidance in prayer and Elder J. R. Williams delivered the charge.

The candidate was delivered back to the Church as an ordained deacon. The presbytery was concluded with the reading of the minutes of the work of the presbytery and a dismissal prayer by Elder O. K. Tench.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Deacon Burnell B. Williams, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR JUNE 1983

Mrs. W.W. Lillard, N.C.	$ 2.00
Maye Otts, AL.	1.00
Mrs. Selma Strawbridge, N.C.	3.00
G. R. Slate, VA.	5.00
James A. Avera Sr., Fl.	2.00
A. Golden, AL.	1.00
C. M. Straughn, N.C.	3.00
Mr. & Mrs.John Collie, N.C.	20.00
H. Carroll Ellwanger, N.C.	7.00
Mrs. W.C. Sutherland, VA.	1.00
Mrs. Lucy W. Brown, AR.	3.00
Mrs. Maye G. Bissette, N.C.	3.00
W. C. Lake, FL.	12.00
Mrs. Julia H. Ada, MD.	2.00
Cecil Neal, IL.	7.00
Lester H. Haymes, AL.	2.00
Mrs. P. G. Divers, VA.	3.00
Elder Kenneth Key, N.C.	7.00
A. W. King, N. C.	7.00
Elder C. B. Davis, N.C.	3.00
Hartzel B. Nelson, WV.	3.00
Mrs. Joyce Farley, TX.	8.00
Nolan Lanier, N.C.	7.00
Doris Rivard, TX.	23.00
Mrs. Jennie Denton, VA.	7.00
Mrs. Margaret Smothers, N.C.	7.00

OBITUARIES

ROSEVELT "RUZIE" KENDRICK

Our hearts are saddened, the Lord has removed from our midst another lovely member. Brother Kendrick passed away January 27, 1983 in Memorial Hospital at the age of 80. He had been in declining health several years. Born March 26, 1902, at Callands, Va., son of the late James Kendrick and Alice Haskins Kendrick. He spent most of his life in Callands, before moving to Danville, fourteen years ago. He was a farmer and was married to Lizzie Gibson Kendrick.

Brother Kendrick joined Old Mt. Church April 14, 1973. He was a lovely and faithful member and attended regular as long as his health permitted. A firm believer of salvation by Grace and Grace alone and loved to talk on the scriptures.

He was very humble and bore his afflictions with patience. His lovely wife and family attended to his every wish and need as much as love, kindness and loving hands could. We at Old Mt. miss him, but our loss is his gain.

Survivors are his wife, and two sons, Obie Kendrick of Danville, Va., Bobby Kendrick of Martinsville, Va.; three sister, Mary Blair, of the Roman Eagle Memorial Home, Effie Wells Callands and Alice Holland of Franklin Turn Pike. Four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

The fuenral was held at Old Mt. Church Sunday, January 30, 1983, by his pastor Elder H. W. Wray, Elder Julian R. Williams and Mr. James Penticost. His body was laid to rest in the Kendrick family cemetery at Callands, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to wait the resurrection morn, when the dead in Christ shall rise first to meet the Lord in the air, to ever be with Him.

Done in conference June 18, 1983.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
Sarah Barker, Clerk

SISTER KATE DODD
(1897 - 1983)

When my mind is carried back to the memory of our dear beloved Sister Kate Dodd, these words seem appropriate. She fought a good fight, she finished her course, she kept the faith. Sister Dodd united with Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church in 1916 and served as church clerk for eighteen years. Her special seat was always filled until recently when her health began to fail, then she came in a wheelchair or with a walker when able. It was never too hot, or cold, or wet for her to go to meetings, because it came first in her life. Her love for the church was shown more in deed rather than words. It was her contribution to the church that was one of the deciding factors in our building this new meeting house, and later the gift of an air conditioner for our comfort.

Sister Dodd was born July 1, 1897 and was called from this world of woe April 6, 1983. She was the natural mother of 14 children, and also mothered 5 stepsons, a son in-law, several grandchildren and a brother.

Surviving are 3 daughters, 5 sons, 2 sisters, 1 brother, 2 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren, 13 step grandchildren and 21 step great-grandchildren.

Her funeral was held April 8, 1983 at Malmaison Church by her pastor Elder O. K. Tench and assistant pastor Elder Julian Williams. Interment was in Highland Burial Park.

By the grace of God "she kept the faith".

Written by one who loved her
I hope for Christ sake,

Peggy Wells

SISTER MAUD TRUITT LAWS

It pleased our Heavenly Father to call home one of His dear children, Maud Truitt Laws, on Friday, April 22, 1983 after a brief illness. She was 103 years of age and had been an active member of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church, Salisbury, Maryland, since June of 1906 when Elder Silas Durand baptized both Sister Laws and her mother.

She is survived by one son, Victor Laws, Jr., of Salisbury, a member and deacon of her home church; one daughter, Margaret Engle, with whom she lived, as well as four grandchildren and one great-granddaughter and several nieces and nephews. Sister Laws' husband, Victor, Sr., also a member of the church, preceeded her in death in 1946.

All the churches of our area will sadly miss our beloved Sister in the Lord. She served her generation well and was greatly respected as a peacemaker among our people. To sit and talk with her was to engage in spiritual conversation for she had little else to spend her time on. It can be fully asserted that a few moments in her presence left one feeling that they had been in the presence of a favored child of God.

Sister Laws' funeral service was conducted in the Salisbury meeting house by her pastor, Elder James F. Poole, and was solemnly attended by a very large gathering. The hymn read was "How Tedious and Tasteless the Hour" by John Newton, and the text (her favorite) was Rom. 8:28. Burial followed at the Laws Family Cemetery near Wango, Wicomico County, Maryland.

We fully believe her hope was realized in death and that her spirit now rests with her dear Saviour.

Resolved, that one copy of this obituary be recorded in our church records, one be given to the family, and one be sent to the "Signs of the Times" for publication.

Done by request of the family and church.

Moderator, Elder James F. Poole

Clerk, Sister Phyllis Key

RACHEL RUTH BALLARD

Our beloved Sister Rachel Ruth Ballard passed from this life February 2, 1983 at McKenna Hospital, New Braunfels, Texas. She was born December 28, 1908 in West Virginia, the daughter of Elder Silas E. Angle and Edith Campbell Angle. Sister Ballard was married to Elder Homer Luther Ballard on January 4, 1937 in Connersville, Indiana. He preceded her in death on December 10, 1979. Sister Rachel leaves one daughter, Linda Lundquist, New Braunfels; two step-sons, John Dodge Ballard of San Antonio, Texas and Donald J. Ballard of Bryan, Texas; three brothers, Edward Angle, Elkview, West Virginia, Russel Angle, Canton, Ohio and Robert Angle of San Antonio, Texas. Three sisters, Mrs. Jessie Snavely Loyd, Kentucky, Mrs. Gladys Cottle, San Marcos, Texas, and Mrs. Mary Miller, San Antonio, Texas. Five grandsons and two granddaughters.

Sister Ballard joined Mount Olive Primitive Baptist Church in August, 1957 and was baptized by her husband, Elder H. L.Ballard. She was a faithful member of Mount Olive Church and attended regularly except for about one year when they lived in East Texas, and her membership was in Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church. God granted Sister Ballard a fighting spirit, especially the last three years as she had cancer during this time, she was very cheerful and a pleasure to be around.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder G. D. Shipman and W. M. Burkhalter. She was laid to rest beside her husband in the Stockdale City Cemetery, to await the coming of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Approved in conference

Elder G. D. Shipman, Moderator

Sister Iva Lee Sowter, Clerk

ALMA SCEARCE BURNETT

It has pleased our Heavenly Father by His love and mercy to call home one of our lovely members.

Sister Alma passed away in Memorial Hospital December 13, 1982. She was born in Pittsylvania, the daughter of the late Sidney S. Scearce and Mageline Shelton Scearce. She was married to Arthur G. "Jack" Burnett who died in 1977. Sister Alma joined Old Mt. Church February 25, 1939. Her church was her life. She was a faithful, devoted and lovely member, never missed a meeting unless she was too sick to get there. We loved her and she was loved by all that knew her. We feel our loss is great but her gain is much greater.

She leaves to mourn, one daughter, Deane B. Batterman, two sons, Arthur G. Burnett, Jr.of Danville, Virginia and Bobby P. Burnett of Dry Fork, Virginia. Also five brothers, Beauford, Leland and Harold Scearce, all of Danville, Wayne Scearce of Raleigh, N. C., and Melvin Scearce of Norfolk. Five sisters; Marie Farthin, Thelma Adkins and Linda Brewer, all of Danville, Virginia, Frances Bass of Ringold amd Catherine Trent of Texas. Four Grandchildren and one great grandchild.

The funeral was held December 15, 1982, at Wrenn Yeatts Feneral Home by Elder H. W. Wray, Elder O. K. Tench and Elder Wallis Smith. Her body was laid to rest by her husbands body in Highland Burial Park, beneath a beautiful mound flowers to await the call of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. "Come ye blessed of my father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Done in church conference at Old Mt., June 18, 1983.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator

Sarah Barker, Clerk

GLENN HORTON STUART

"O Land of rest, for thee I sigh,
When will the moment come,
When I shall lay my armor by,
And dwell with Christ at Home?"

After a long illness that saw him in the hospital twice, the Lord in His infinite wisdom and loving mercy saw fit to answer this oft asked question on May 5, 1983. Mr. Stuart was born October 31, 1906 at Grassy Creek, N. C. but lived most of his life near West Chester, Pa. He was one of twelve children born to A. Mitchell and Minnie Blevins Stuart.

He was married to Beulah Anderson Stuart on August 17, 1932. To this union eight children were born. His widow and seven children survive. Three daughters, Mrs. Clara Chelland and Patricia Stuart of West Chester, Pa., Mrs. Helen Wright, Coatesville, Pa., Four sons, Glenn H. Stuart, Jr. and David of West Chester, Pa., William R. of Pottstown, Pa. and James A. of State College, Pa. Another daughter, Mrs. Ruth Wagoner passed away in 1975. Also surviving is one sister, Mrs. Ruby Ballou of West Jefferson, N. C. and three brothers, Gaither of Wilmington, Delaware, Worth and Earl, near Lansing, N. C.; eleven grand children and one great-grandchild.

Mr. Stuart, a retired farmer, was a firm believer in and a lover of the Old School Baptist doctrine. This love was manifested by his meek and quiet life among the brethren at Rock Springs, Pa. and Welch Tract, Del. Old School Baptist Churches for over thirty years.

Many are the lovely memories I have of visiting in the home of Mr. Stuart and his family, this being the first home I had stayed after being given a hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. As Sister Stuart and I talked for hours it seemed Mr. Stuart would sit quietly by and listen, Seldom would he speak but when he did it was words fitly spoken and words of love and peace.

As I visited him in the hospital shortly before he passed away his desire was for peace and rest, yes the eternal peace for he told me he wanted to go home. Even as I believe he was made willing, yea, even longed to cross over Jordan into the promised land. His thoughts for those who remained were for peace as he spoke ever so sweetly of his desire for peace in the church.

His body was laid to rest, until the coming again of our Lord, in the cemetery at Rock Springs Old School Baptist Church. The service was conducted ever so sweetly and out of love for him by Elder D. B. Stokes.

We have a sweet hope that when our alloted time shall come that we may also enter into this land of rest for which we sigh. While that we remain in this time world may we be blessed with the same spirit of love as was this my spiritual brother is the prayer of

Barnabas J. Brammer

BOOK NOTICES

EDITORIAL WRITINGS ELDER GILBERT BEEBE

(Founder and Editor of the *Signs of The Times*)
1832-1881

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"Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart."
Psalm 73:1

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."
Eph. 2:8

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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**IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
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PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS"

The existence, sovereignty, immutability omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah–the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the attonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistable, and in all cases. effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers–that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

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EDITORIAL

"Know ye not, brethren (for I speak to them that know the law) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?

For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.

So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Romans 7: 1-4.

Mr dear brethren:

I don't know why my mind seems to be led to write upon the above verses of scripture. They seem so deep, and I feel so weak and ignorant. I hope and trust the Holy Spirit will enable me to write in a way that would be to the honor of His precious name and of some comfort to you dear saints of God.

I believe the law of Moses is particularly in view in this text. It seems the apostle Paul is referring to both Jews and Gentiles, for in the beginning of his letter to the Romans, he says, "To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints...", and "Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was led hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles." Rom. 1:7,13.

Let me ask how many of you dear ones have been given to meditate upon the terrible wrath of God, due to sin, through his fiery law? May our minds be brought to view this awful sight. The same pillar of cloud that led the children of Israel in the wilderness led them to Mt. Sinai, where the Lord descended on the mount to deliver the law. So terrible were the effects that it shook the earth, causing Mt. Sinai to shake and quake from its foundation. All the terrors of fire, smoke, thunder, and lightening all together composed a scene that nothing on earth has ever equaled. God's firey law displayed its fury, consuming all before it, scorching the ground and causing the mountain to smoke all over. All this was expressive of God's gloriour presence, and of his judgment upon all transgressors against his holy law. Stop and consider: we

are all guilty and deserve within ourselves to be included in this terrible wrath of God against our sins.

This terrible scene caused all the people in their camp to tremble, and Moses cried out, "I exceedingly fear and quake." Are we ready to stand before this great God in our own sins, in our own self-righteousness? We must stand either in our sins and self-righteousness or in Christ's righteousness. We will either hear Jesus himself saying unto us, "...come, ye blessed of my Father..." or "...Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire..." Can we imagine that the Lord Jesus Christ endured this terrible wrath of God on behalf of his people in the garden of Gethsemane and upon the cross of Calvary? Did Christ endure all on our behalf? If Christ died under the law on our behalf, and if we be in union with him, we must also experience a dying under the law. Have you experienced this death?

The apostle Paul says, "...I speak to them that know the law..." I believe the apostle is speaking concerning the law of Moses. The first Adam plunged us all into the sea of death, in sins and trespasses. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned..." Rom. 5:12.

Being in this fallen condition, how could man keep this law of Moses? With man it is impossible. The law could not give us eternal life; it was not given for this purpose; it could only curse us for disobeying. "... Man is not justified by the works of the law...for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." Gal. 2:16 - 3:21.

I believe that all of God's creatures are under the law to him. The apostle Paul speaks through the Holy Spirit and says, "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? Gal. 4:21. Surely all that desire to be under the law must be ignorant of its nature, for it demands what they cannot pay. The law requires perfect obedience to it, both in thought and action. And the very least offence brings with it this fearful sentence, "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Gal. 3:10. Not one of us has ever continued in all things which are written in the law, and no one ever will. "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." Eccl. 7:20. The law will always be to us the administrator of condemnation and the minister of death. It cannot justify. "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight..." Rom. 3:20.

The apostle Paul felt alive once without the law. He had not yet felt its killing effects. This may also have been the experience of many of us. He knew the letter of the law, but not its spirit. This comes only after being quickened to spiritual life by the Holy Spirit.

Christ, as a substitute and surety for his church (for the law was broken by the church), stood under its curse, and its curse was death. Christ was "...made a curse for us: for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree..." Gal. 3:13. The original penalty was, "...In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen. 2:17. Not only did Jesus satisfy the moral law, he also endured that original penalty of death. He did all this to redeem his people. "But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law..." Gal. 4:4-5.

A child of God, while yet in a state

of being dead in trespasses and sins, may even confess to be religious, and may attempt (in many cases) to actually keep the law. He fancies it to be in his own power to obtain eternal life in this way, and feels he can merit it by his own works. This legal spirit reigns over all men in their natural state who feel to be religious as the apostle Paul did while he was persecuting the children of God.

In many instances, when the soul is first quickened, it may continue to seek deliverance by the works of the law. But the law can do nothing more than bring him to the knowledge of his exceeding sinfulness and the punishment which he deserves. He soon finds that the harder he tries to do good, the worse he becomes. While in this state, he feels as the song writer, "So by experience I do know there's nothing good that I can do; I cannot satisfy the law, nor hope nor comfort from it draw."

Will present obedience (if it could be rendered) atone for our past disobedience? Will God's just and holy law accept partial obedience for the whole? No, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." James 2:10.

In the mind and purpose of God (as recorded in scripture), we were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. But it is not made manifest until we are implanted or ingrafted into Christ by faith, through the power of the Holy Spirit. If we are among the elect of God whom he foreknew as his own, we shall also be conformed to the image of his son. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren." Rom. 8:29. To be conformed to his image begins here below, but is completed above. Christ was made to resemble us by partaking of our nature (for he came in the likeness of sinful flesh, yet without sin), and we were made to resemble him by partaking of his spirit. "And as we have born the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." I Cor. 15:49.

"How that Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures, and that he was buried and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." I Cor. 15:3,4. If we are to die with Christ, and without dying with him we shall not live with him, we must also die under God's just and holy law. As Christ died actually under the law, we must die inwardly and experimentally. We cannot set up a certain inflexible standard of experimentally dying under the law. The law must kill us by a sentence of condemnation in our souls. So as Christ died actually under the law, we must die inwardly and experimentally. Each of us must experience the sentence of death in our souls, and feel to be as effectually slain experimentally in our conscience as Christ died under the weight of the law upon the cross of Calvary.

What is it for us to die under the law? The law must curse us as it cursed him. It must bring guilt and condemnation to our hearts and souls. We die to our own self-righteousness, creature strength and wisdom. "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass." Isa. 40:6. All that we are or have, yea even our highest accomplishments, are but as the grass that fadeth and all our self-righteousness is soon nipped and brought to nothing. Unless we have a better righteousness than our own, we shall neither see nor enter into

the kingdon of heaven. All our fleshly holiness, righteousness, riches, honors, strength, beauty, wisdom, and knowledge must fade and perish. Why? Because the spirit of God "bloweth upon it." We soon are made to realize that all these things cannot recommend us to God. Does this not show the perishing nature of our fleshly works? We feel to be without God and without hope. We can only say, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." Rom. 7:18.

Does not the conviction of our sins, our trouble of mind, our distress of soul and our guilt of conscience, bring us to see how wretched and poor we are? Can we not say with the apostle Paul, "O, wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. 7: 24. When we are brought here in our dying under the law, do we have anything to offer for our salvation? Do we not feel that all our works, merits, goodness and self righteousness are as filthy rags in the sight of God? Some dear children of God may not be able to trace this death in themselves as clearly as others they have heard or read after. But have you come to the place where sin is a great grief and burden to your soul and conscience? There is a great difference in being a dead sinner (dead in treapasses and sins) and in being a live sinner, having been quickened to spiritual life. A dead sinner is a sinner but his sins are not so disturbing to him, they do not cause him to repent in sackcloth and ashes. But the live sinner, having been given spiritual life, is made to mourn, cry, and sigh over his sinful condition. Have your sins brought guilt and distress upon your conscience? Have you felt that unless you are saved by grace and grace alone, you have no hope of eternal life? If you have truly felt this in your heart and soul, it must surely be because you have experienced dying under the law. The carnal flesh does not feel these things. It must come from the Holy Spirit and once he has begun a good work in you, he will continue it. Remember that the babe is as much a member of the family as the grown-up son, but not with the same understanding.

I believe that the apostle Paul's main purpose in verses 2 and 3 is to bring forth a principle showing that we are freed by the death of Christ from our obligation to the law as a covenant husband when a death occurs. Our first marriage was to the law, and the marriage is binding until the death of one of the parties. We believe from the standpoint of nature there are exceptions according to the scriptures in the case of adultery (Matt. 19:9) and desertion (I Cor. 7:15.) We only want to consider the spiritual meaning of these scriptures. If a person has not experienced an inward experimental death under the law, yet says I know I'm a child of God, I know I'm saved, and yet has not been separated from his first husband (the law) by an inward, experimental death, is this not spiritual adultery? Can a spiritual adulteress enter into the kingdon of God? "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers." I Cor. 6:9.

After dying under the law, we are then delivered from the curse and dominion of the law. "For he that is dead is freed from the law. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him" Rom. 6: 7,8. We may go for some length of time, before we can feel any deliverance from the curse of the law. Fear is so saturated in our hearts and consciences until we can't see or feel anything beyond our hopeless condi-

tion. We may go mourning in this condition for many days before any kind of deliverance comes to us. We must truly see and feel the ugliness in ourselves before we are given to see any beauty in Christ Jesus. The time will come when we will be given to serve in newness of life and spirit. "But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit and not in the oldness of the letter." Rom. 7:6.

"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Rom. 7:4.

Now my dear brethren, you that have experienced a dying under the law, are dead to the law, and are loosed from it, that you may be, and are lawfully married to Christ. By the grace of God, we may now bring forth fruits unto God. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10. Not in order to obtain righteousness and eternal life by them, but because God worketh in us both to will and to do, to the glory and honor of Him.

"Therefore if any be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away, behold, all things become new." 2 Cor. 5:17. This brings about the greatest change imaginable, when we become new creatures in Christ. Do we not experience new affections and new desires? New delights and joys, new friends, new love for the precious truth as it is in Christ Jesus? All these spring forth from a new heart and spirit. We have been turned to go in the opposite direction, "Turn me, O Lord and I shall be turned." Jer. 31:18. We are turned from the love we once had of the things of this old world. We are still sinners and we are daily conscious of our many sins in a sinful world. Though we die daily, yet behold we live. The more we die to nature, the more we live in grace. Nature must die that grace may live. The more we die to the world, the more we live for heaven. The nearer we are drawn to God, the less we feel of earthly things. The thorns and weeds must be plucked up that the fruit may come forth. Yes, my dear ones, when the Lord begins this new work in our hearts and soulls, what a strange thing it seems to be, it is like waking up in a new world, or from a long sleep. Yea, what is this strange thing that is coming over me? What am I? Where am I? What must I do to be saved?

"Old things are passed away." Our old world is beginning to pass from us along with its delights and glory. We can no longer take part in the things we once delighted in. Our old religion (if we had one) even our old friends and old desires begin to fade in value to us. Why? Because "Old things are passed away" and "Behold, all things become new."

A self-righteous person who has never experienced what it is to die under the law, feels that God cannot be just without giving everyone a chance of being saved according to his own free will. The poor child of God who has experienced an inward death under the law wants to know how God can be just without damning him. Don't we all feel God would be just in damning us all? The law only acts as a schoolmaster to draw us to Christ. "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. Gal. 3:24. The law in the hands of the Holy Spirit showed us the absolute need of a mediator, just as it showed us sin, accused and condemned us for it. It seem then that the design of

the law is to make us sick of self and fond of Christ, to condemn us that we may cherish the gift of free grace, to empty us that God may fill us, to strip us that God may clothe us. Yea, to kill us that Christ may make us alive. Christ's blood is precious in regards to the virtue and the effects of it. By his precious blood, a complete reconciliation has been wrought out; the church redeemed and the sins of God's elect have been expiated and fully done away with. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."I John 1:7. It cleanseth perfectly and it cleanseth eternally. It is by the grace of believing that we experience its everlasting virtue and efficacy: and every true believer is as perfectly healed by the blood of Christ as if he had never been wounded under the law. His blood is sufficient to cleanse us of all original sins that we brought with us when we were born into this world, and all sins we have committed in this world; yea, all the sins that are still engulfed in our hearts. The very feeling we have of sin should teach us how much we stand in need of that open fountain of Christ's most precious blood.

May we all be given by the grace of God to always continue "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." May God bless you all.

A poor sinner in hope of mercy.

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

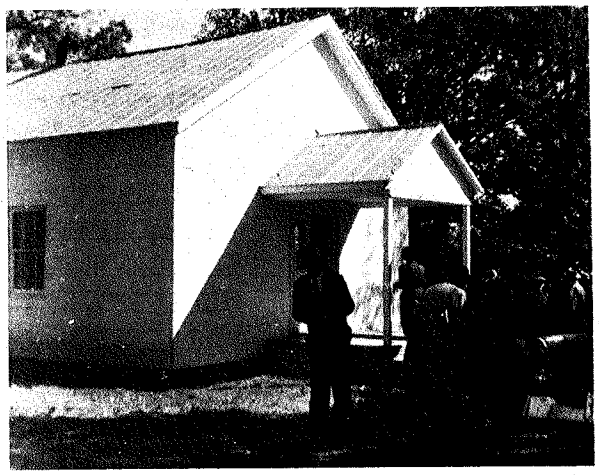

Chapel Church was organized in 1823. The church building was built in 1769 by the British before this country was freed from England. The older people called it the King's house because it was here that they stored the tithes. It was purchased by the Primitive Baptist in 1825. They named the church Chapel because while under the English it was called a Chapple. In the same year Chapel joined the Pigg River Association.

The church is located in Franklin County, Virginia about 10 miles west of Penhook on route 890.

Their meeting day is the third Sunday of each month and their present pastor is Elder O.K. Tench.

CORRESPONDENCE

2029-D Via Mariposa E.
Laguna Hills, Ca. 92653
August 3, 1983

Dear Elder Williams:

I sent the contribution because of a deep and true desire to help support the SIGNS. I wish I could put into words just what the paper means to me. I have been a subscriber for many years. I united with the Missionary Baptist Church at the age of twenty, (I will be eighty years old my next birthday). I was a zealous worker in the church, however some twenty years ago I became dissatisfied with the church, with myself, and everything. The things I had workd so hard for in the church, suddenly became a mockery. I could no longer carry on, so I stopped attending regularly. When I did go to service I always came home feeling so empty and bereft, and my sinful nature weighed heavily on me. About this time my natural father who lived in Arkansas, and who was a member of the Primitive Baptist sent me a years subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I wondered why he did that. It was years later that I was made to know why. He knew nothing about my problems concerning the church or my forlone condition, and I might add here, that in all my adult life have heard a Primitive Baptist preacher in person only one time. That was once many years ago while visiting my folks in Arkansas my father had a meeting at his home one evening. At that time I was still an ardent church worker so I evidently didn't really hear the sermon. Any way, that first copy of the SIGNS was like Manna from Heaven to my sick and hungry soul and I have renewed my subscription each time it came due since. I also purchased volumes three and four of the Beebe books, A FEAST OF FAT THINGS, and Elder Lambert's book TRIED IN THE FURNACE. I enjoy all of these good writings. Four or five years ago I picked up my Bible and opened it at the forty-first chapter of Isaiah and read: "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the Lord of Israel will not forsake them." And the eighteenth, "I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water and the dry land springs of water."

As I finished reading these verses tears of joy were streaming from my eyes, some how it seemed to tell me that the Dear God who doeth all things well had surely led my natural father to send me that gift subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. There are no Primitive Baptist Churches any where near me, but I am blest with all these wonderful writings by writers led and inspired of God and I trust that this great paper and all these good writings can continue on and on.

Sorry if I have taken too much of your time but wanted to try to explain a little of how I feel about the good paper . . . SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Sincerely
A sinner saved by grace if at all,
Geneva Meara

Cramer, Ala.
July 8, 1905

EXPERIENCE

In the year 1868 I read for the first time the Bible. I was then seventeen years old. I did not commence reading with the intention of reading it

through, but just thought I would read some in it for the sake of improving my limited education, and just to see what it spoke of in the book of Genesis. I had not read far before I became deeply interested in the historical facts therein recorded; and the more I read the more I became interested in the wonderful things related in the Scriptures, and so continued to read till I had read to the last of Revelation. I thought the Bible was a wonderfully good book, and if any one had told me that I did not believe the doctrine set forth there I would have felt sure that they told a falsehood. I think I read it with as unprejudiced a mind as any natural man ever did, for at that time I knew but little about the differences existing among various denominations, and liked one as well as another. I thought that everybody believed the Bible, and did not think that any one had a different notion from me as to what it taught. I was astonished at the stubbornness and rebellion of national Israel, and horrified at the blindness and cruelty of the Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees, and thought that if I had been on earth in the days of the Savior, I would have followed and obeyed and adored him. When I read of the wicked, profane and unbelieving, it did not once occur to my mind that I was one of them, for I was considered a moral boy, and thought that the wickedness of the human family consisted in immorality.

Upon a certain occasion I went to hear my aged grandfather, a Primitive Baptist, preach. when he took his text I did not dream of his preaching anything contrary to what I believed, and hence was not prejudiced against him and as I had come to be very much interested in the Bible I was anxious to hear him. But he did not say much before he crossed my notions, and I soon became astonished, and, as it were, shocked at the doctrine he advanced, and was really anxious for him to hush. I thought, Is it possible for a man as old as you are, and who has read the Bible as much as you have, not to know any better than that? I felt sure I could convince him directly that he was wrong; and accordingly we had not gone further than half a mile from the house after preaching before I attacked him about what he had preached, which only made him smile, and tell me that I was blind, and did not understand; but I did not believe a word of it, for I thought that I could see and understand just as well as he could.

The more I reflected upon the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists, or "Hardshells," as they were called, the more I became embittered against it, because I fancied that I could clearly see it was contrary to the teachings of the Bible, and my desire to convince them of what I supposed to be the error of their way was so strong that whenever I chanced to meet them a controversy ensued. I now paid more attention to the preaching of other orders, and found the doctrine of the Missionary Baptists suited me precisely, and in defense of their doctrine and practice I labored with as much zeal, I reckon, as any nonprofessor ever did. When I looked around me and compared notes with the Primitive Baptists I discovered that nearly everybody was on my side of the controversy, and this fact was very encouraging to me at that time, and after carefully considering and investigating the matter I came to the conclusion that the doctrine contended for by the "Hardshells" was one of the most unreasonable, hateful and God-dishonoring systems of religion ever advocated in the world, and hence the Primitive Baptists were the most contemptible sect on earth.

Can it be possible, thought I, that these few despised, illiterate people are right, and the great mass of the

people wrong? No indeed; and I would dismiss such an idea as utterly incompatible with common sense. I thought they were the most self-righteous, conceited, stubborn and bigoted people on earth, because they set up their opinion and judgement against the majority of the intelligent and educated people of the world, together with the great D.D.'s, and to do that was, in my judgement, the height of ignorance, folly and presumption. When I argued with them it was not with the view of investigating the matter in order to arrive at the truth, for I felt sure that I understood that, but my sole object was to convince them of what I considered their error. Some of my near and dear relatives were Primitive Baptists, but that had no tendency to abate my enmity against them, and I said that if the world believed their doctrine, I, for one, would not, as I did not want to believe it, and was fully determined that I would not believe it.

In the fall of 1870, that beloved minister and servant of the Lord, Elder J. T. Allen, had an appointment at my old settlement in the Missionary meeting-house, and I went to hear him. On Saturday night he preached at my father's, and after he dismissed the people I attcked him before he took his seat, and soon got the Bible and referred to the law to prove that eternal salvation was conditional. He admitted the conditionality of the law, but showed that there was no eternal life in it, and proceeded to show the distinction between the law and the gospel so clearly that I could not gainsay his argument. For the first time in my life I saw that I as mistaken in that one important point, and I humbly hope that it pleased God to open my heart that I might understand some of the things spoken by him. My Arminian platform was shaken from center to circumference. Still however, I had many props upon which I relied with great confidence, but in process of time they fell one by one, till my last prop was gone, and the whole concern, with all its props and stays and braces, fell to rise no more. In sentiment I was turned right about.

On a certain Sunday night, directly after gone to bed, my repose was disturbed by a sudden and peculiarly dangerous sensation about my heart, which caused me to turn almost instantly in bed, and after lying there awhile it appeared to me that my breath was getting shorter and shorter, and that if I lay there I would die; I got up and went out into the yard, and looking about wondered what was the matter. I went back to bed, and after a time dropped off to sleep. During the week I felt about as usual, except that my feelings were somewhat disturbed on account of what had occured on Sunday night. On the next Sunday night the same awfully dangerous and indescribable sensation returned. I concluded it was merely imagination, and decided that I would lie still and try to wear it off, but I could not; on the contrary, it seemed to wear on, and I felt that I would die if I lay there, and so I got up, and when I touched the floor I was in a tremble, and could hardly stand. I walked out into the yard and tried to examine myself, and in doing so I felt to be the most wretched sinner on earth, knowing full well that I was not suffering bodily pain, and I felt as I never had before, that the awful hour of death had come and that there was no remedy on earth for me. I felt that I was an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, a stranger to the covenants of promise, without hope and without God in the world. No pen can describe the agony of my soul that night, my distress was so great that I could not conceal it. I kindled a light, and walked the floor in extreme anguish, and in answer to

the inquiries of my friends I told them that I could not tell what was the matter with me. I did not tell them that I thought I was going to die, as I did not wish to alarm them. Very little did I sleep that night, and the next day was a dark one to me, and I felt as though it would be my last on earth, but to my surprise I continued to live from day to day, though in much distress of mind. If I could have believed that this was conviction for sin it would have afforded me much comfort, but this I could not believe, yet hoped against hope that it was. In this state I remained several months, In the spring of 1873 there came up a shower of rain, and I lay across a little bed and was meditating upon my desolate, forlorn and hopeless condition when the following Scriptures occured to my mind: "Blessed are thay which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." It then occurred to me that I had already passed from death unto life, and hope sprang up and I felt relieved. I went to the door and looked around, and with a feeling calm and serene I felt to hope and rejoice in God as my Savior. Still I was not satisfied, for I greatly desired a greater manifestation of love, and a stronger evidence of my acceptance with God. The light afforded was so dim that I was afraid to claim it as a reason of my hope, and I was fully determined that I would never offer myself to the church without a brighter and more glorious manfestation of God's love and mercy. I desired to feel sure beyond a doubt that the Lord had pardoned my sins, and to have his love and mercy so clearly revealed to me that I would be perfectly satisfied, and others convinced that I had been born again. I saw, after this, that the Primitive Baptists had confidence in me as a christian, which made me feel sad indeed, for I thought, if they knew my wretched condition, and how little my hope was, they would not have any confidence in me. In this way I continued for more than two years, desiring all along, however, to live with the despised few, but my sense of unworthiness kept me from attempting such a thing. In the fall of 1874 my desire to go to the church was so strong that I as not satisfied anywhere, and before the regular meeting at Mt. Nebo, Bibb Co., in November, I became really anxious to go to the church and tell them the reason of my little hope, and when the time arrived, with my wife and some others I did go forward, and we were received into the fellowhsip of the church, and with some of the others I was baptized on Sunday by Elder J. T. Allen. My doubts and fears continue with me to this day, often causing me to exclaim in the language of Paul, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Yours in hope of eternal life in and through the meritorious sufferings of the Son of God,

G. W. Stewart

EXPERIENCE

Although many times I have been requested to write my experience in full, yet it is with a feeling of great hesitancy that I am now making the attempt, for I have so many weaknesses and imperfections; but since it has been said to me, This is not your own, I feel that I have no right to refuse to try to tell my feelings

when (as I hope) God saw fit to manifest me as a child of his, and if a child, then an heir, and a joint heir with Christ Jesus our Lord.

I had the usual run of happy, care free childhood, surrounded by my friends and loved ones, although from my eighth year (when I lost my eldest brother) death was a mystery to me. I was in the habit of attending the meetings of various denominations of religion and hearing them speak of the line of accountability; I set about trying to figure out whether I had passed it or not, but could never decide it to my satisfaction. Even then I think religion was sacred to me; and from that time on the thought of death troubled me. But during my sixteenth year my troubles suddenly became much worse. The places of amusement I had been in the habit of attending with my brothers and young friends, all at once grew distasteful to me, and though I still continued to attend them, I took no pleasure in them, and felt convinced I would have enjoyed myself better had I remained at home. My young companions noticed this, and chided me for a lack of interest in their sports, and though I tried very hard to take part in their amusements, the more I attended them the less interesting they became. From this time until my twentieth year things gradually grew worse, until at last I had reached the very depths; I saw myself as I was, a poor, lost, ruined sinner, without God and without hope in the world. I was powerless to help my self, and knew there was not one hope for me; I knew my doom, and knew, too, that it was merited. Often I wished for death, yet at the same time when I began to think of eternity my fears cannot be described. It seemed that I could do nothing but beg for mercy, mercy for a wretch that did not deserve it, and my constant prayer was, Lord, have mercy on me.

So things went on for several months; then our Saturday meeting was held in August, 1902. There was a visiting minister with us, and he had asked to hear some of the experiences related, and my dear mother in relating hers, told of her great sinfulness, her great trials. O how sweetly she told of the pardoning grace of her Savior, his loving mercy to her and of the little hope that she might be an heir of the home above. As she was speaking the great burden rolled away from my tired heart, a voice was speaking directly to me saying, "Lo, I am with you always," and I was left rejoicing "with joy unspeakable and full of glory." O the perfect peace of that moment! O that sweet, sweet rest! I was like a tired child that had traveled a long way and this was my first sweet rest. Surely I can never forget the perfect harmony in heart and soul when

"On the wings of his love
I was carried above
All sin and temptation and pain."

There was such a beautiful light surrounding everybody and everything, and O it seemed I was so near the dear Father,even in his arms. All nature was changed, and all faces wore a different expression. It seemed there was never so goodly a company as had gathered at church that day; the mark was in all their foreheads, and God's love was so sweetly surrounding them, and when they sang the following, my joy was inexpressible:

"O how happy are they,
Who their Savior obey,
And whose treasures are laid
up above;
Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love.

That sweet comfort was mine
When the favor divine
I first found in the blood of the

Lamb:
When my heart first believed,
O what joy I received,
What a heaven in Jesus' name."

I wished very much to be with such a lovely band of his followers, but hesitated until too late. Can I ever describe that beautiful drive homeward? I had gone to church with a storm raging in my heart and soul, and now all was changed, and I felt so sweetly loved and protected by one who was able to piot me through all future storms, by one who had so lovingly said, "Lo, I am with you always."

"And I could not believe
That I ever should grieve,
That I ever should suffer again."

Ah yes, it seemed that I would evermnore rest in the sweet security of his everlasting arms, that I should always be soothed and comforted by those tender words, "Lo, I am with you always." Ah, blessed promise to cheer me through all the dark days of the future, for my gloom partially returned after a time, but never quite so deep and overwhelming as at first. Sometimes there was sunshine, sometimes shadow, but round about all (I hope) the strength of his everlasting arms. I told no one of my feelings then, and after awhile I desired to conceal them. This continued for about a year, then I became sick, and all my friends thought I must surely die. I became better, however, and was constantly worried by such Scriptures as these: "He that denieth me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God." "Let your light so shine," &c. My mind was continually worried, for I felt I had left a duty unperformed, yet when I thought of asking for a home among God's dear people, the thought of my own imperfections seemed to make this an impossibility, and so I determined to keep the whole thing to myself; but one day when I lay so sick, the physician who was attending me, and who, by the way, is a brother in Christ, came in, and during my unconscious moments heard me express some of my feelings (which I had meant to conceal). As soon as I recovered consciousness he told me of what I had been talking, asked me several questions which I could not deny,a nd which seemed to please him. Later we had conversations on the same subject, and he quoted to me the same Scriptures which had been puzzling me, and said to me, Ask for a home among the brethren. I replied that they would not think of admitting me, but his only answer was, Ask and see.

One night in my sick room, after I had suffered terribly and was completely exhausted, I had fallen into a troubled sleep, when O such a bright, glorious light illimined my room, and there was a sweet presence near saying, "Peace be still," and O the beautiful calm which followed the storm which had been raging in my soul but a moment before; I was left thankful and happy for many days. So many of these bright seasons have come to my sick room and though to some they may have no meaning, yet to me they were a great comfort and consolation, for it was then God seemed so near and hope so bright.

About a month after I had this dream they held meeting at the home of my childhood. Besides the church members there were my brothers, my husband and my sweet little four months old girl present. We listened to such a sweet discourse by D.B. Nowels, (now an Elder) followed by Elder W. C. Perdue, from Luke viii. 43-48. O how clearly brother Nowels spoke of our God as being a refuge, a God of last resort; how after we had sed every available means of our own to save ourselves, we would turn as did the woman, to one who is

able to heal, comfort and soothe our every heart-ache; to one who would not turn us empty away, but would say, "Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole." O what a comforting sermon, and it seemed appropriate. They had sung that ol, old song, "Amazing grace!" and now selected the song of which I had such sweet memories: "O how happy are they;" and though I hesitated until they were almost ready to close, I felt that I could not allow them to go away without first asking for a home among them. I would not have been surprised had they refused me then and there, but instead they asked me to relate the Lord's dealings with me. It is one of my characteristics to say the least when I feel the most, but in all my like I had never been as such a loss for words. I told such a little in such a stammering way I did not see how they could understand me, but I was received. how unworthy I felt of this blessing, this place among his children, and O how incomparably unworthy I felt of a home with God himself. I often feel that I have deceived all these good people, and feel tempted to tell them so, yet when a suitable opportunity presents itself I do not, and although I have not been baptized as yet, (my health remaining poor) I hope soon to be buried with him in baptism. My experience and my sufferings bring to mind that sorrowful scene in the garden when he cried,"Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! (yet with sweet submission) nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." and that cruel death of the cross when he cried, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" O how ashamed I grow of my complaints and murmurings when I think of his great agony. O glorious, O perfect work of redemption, when he set his people free from this terrible curse of sin. O how God must have loved the poor, lost sinners to send his only begotten Son to suffer and die that we might live. after the toil and turmoil of this tempestuous life, which is painful at present, we shall mount to the heavens above to see our blessed Redeemer and be like him, where we are arrayed in spotless purity and made to sit down in the throne and forever sing praises to our blessed Redeemer. O what a beautiful thought it is, this life beyond the grave, where there is "no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there by any more pain;" for God shall be with us and be our God. O when the summons comes to each of us may we be prepared to say,

"It is not death to die,
To leave this weary load,
And, 'midst the brotherhood on high,
To be at home with God."

Dessie S. Perdue

FROM THE EDITORS

We want to thank those who have responded to our request for new subscribers. The following is a list of those who have sent in one or more new subscriptions:

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There are many young people among us, new members and friends who would be glad to receive the SIGNS if they knew about it. We are asking that each of you show your copy to some one and tell them about it. If each subscriber would get one new subscription or more we could easily double our subscription list. Will you do this for us? We will work hard on this end to make each copy more enjoyable than the last.

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES have been published for over one hundred and fifty one years. The Lord has wonderfully blest it and it humbles us to be able to serve for so great a cause.

The Editors

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

"let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth." (Songs 1:2)

The first words of the Song of Songs which was Solomon's as he penned them has this day become MY song of songs. Never before have I been carried into the sweet ecstacy of His wondrous love as I experience this moment. I can now more fully understand why such highly allegorical and symbolic language is used in this dialogue between Christ and His bride, the church. Nothing but an ardent, passionate, and tender love affair could well describe the intimate relationship of the Lover and the beloved. No wonder Solomon said, "Thy love is better than wine." No wonder Solomon named it THE SONG OF SONGS. I term the experience THE

LOVE OF LOVES.

Ben Jonson said, "Leave but a kiss in the cup, and I'll not look for wine." Wine only stimulates the power within and causes stored energy to be used up which leaves the body weaker: whereas, the kiss of the King of Kings graces with energy poured forth, which gives new strength that lasts. Wine exhilarates for but a moment then leaves you despondent; yet, His kisses give enduring joy which makes glad the heart and you treasure their memory. Surely Solomon's cup had already been filled with the wine of the kingdom poured forth by the kisses of His mouth, in order to write of such passionate and tender love as is so wonderfully stated in the Song of Songs. His heart was overflowing with love as a result of his mind being kissed with the inspiration to pen poetical allegorical truths. Once you have been kissed with the kiss of Christ's love, you will ever realize that His kisses are better than wine. His kisses are like drops of honey; they linger long and leave a sweetness that does not soon disappear. His kisses of gifts and grace to poor trembling sinners are His words of love in action.

A kiss is an expression and the symbol of affection. It is the language of love that knows no barriers. It is the action of affection which is fully understood and needs no interpreter to make it plain to all people speaking the many different natural languages. Even brute beasts understand the kiss. The little baby in its mother's arms understands and responds to its mother's tender kisses. Even though birds have long beaks, they kiss each more than any other creatures. A kiss shows regard, respect, reverence, tenderness, and intimate relationship.

The kiss has been desired and practiced throughout all ages. We read in Genesis 27:26-27 "And his father, Isaac, said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son. And he came near and kissed him. . .." A real kiss has always resulted in the kiss being responded to by a kiss from the one who has been kissed. When Jacob met Rachel at the well of Haran who came with her father's sheep: "Jacob *kissed* Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept." (Gen. 29:11) Not long ago I heard a person exclaim after being greeted by a kiss from one whom she esteemed so highly; "He *kissed* me!" Her voice was trembling with surprise, high-regard, and humility. This must have been the case of Rachel. Jacob surely felt at ease and experienced contentment and peace of mind when Laban, ". . . Ran to meet him, and embraced him, and *kissed* him, and brought him to his house." (Gen. 29:13) When Joseph revealed himself to the brethren who had treated him so terribly, nothing but a *kiss* could seal complete reconciliation in the minds of these brethren and remove the guilty feeling so that they could freely walk with Joseph. Gen. 45:15 "Moreover he *kissed* all his brethren, and wept upon them; and after that his brethren talked with him." A kiss was used in the anointing of Saul by Samuel: "Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and *kissed* him, and said, Is it not because the Lord hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance." (1st Samuel 10:1)

A kiss sealed the oath knitting Jonathan and David together during the time Saul's envy was so enraged against David. We read in 1 Samuel 20:41-2, ". . . David arose out of a place toward the south, and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times: and they *kissed* one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded. And Jonathan said to David, Go in peace,

forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord saying, The Lord be between thee and me, and between my seed and thy seed forever." What a contrast between Jonathan's love for David and Saul's envy. Elisha wanted only to kiss his father and mother before following Elijah.

Luke gives an account of the sinful woman who kissed the feet of Jesus and how the Lord had compassion upon her. We want you to note that she *was* a sinner: surely, now she is not. She would not be showering kisses on His feet if her kisses had been for lustful purposes as before. Her presence in the same house with the Saviour proved that it was for a different purpose that her kisses were given. Heretofore she had used her lips upon the lips of other men to cause them to yield to her lustful passioin: but now, she uses these same lips lavishly upon the feet of this man, Jesus, to prove her adoration and reverence. The same eyes that had been flames of fire coming from lust is now become a fountain of tears to such degree that her tears provide sufficient water to wash the feet of Jesus. The same hair that she had before used as nets to catch foolish lovers, is now being used as a towel for her Saviour's feet. Even though she has been changed she still carries the scars. She is yet called and considered to be a sinner. The same costly ointment she used to put upon herself to attract men is now used to put upon the Saviour's feet. We do not find on record where this woman ever uttered a work, yet her actions spoke louder than a thousand tongues.

The Pharisee who used his tongue to invite Jesus into his house as a guest brought condemnation to himself from Jesus because he spake words of condemnation against the woman. Her eyes, hands, hair, and bowed body together with her lips showed greater affection than the Pharisee did with words. Jesus said: "Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet." (Luke 7:45) Jesus showed that where there was much forgiven there is much love. Jesus cared more for a true humiliation of sin than He did for a false pretense of respect and innocence. Smiles must have replaced the look of guilt upon the woman when Jesus said: "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." (Luke 7:50) These words were kisses from the Saviour's mouth. They were much sweeter and more to be desired than the natural wines she had before drunk from the cups of her former lustful lovers. She had stood behind Him; now, He gives her the kiss of peace. No doubt she feels that she must do something for the One Who has done so much for her! Now, I pray, Lord, empower me to do something for Thee. Satisfy my conscience. I know that my glorious Head is such magnificent goodness that my goodness could never reach Thee. I could never help the Head, Lord, enable me to do as the woman. Let me wash Thy feet, Thy poor members here below. Empower me to know the sweetness of kissing Thee by administering to poor trembling penitent sinners here below. Let us bestow our tears of sympathy, upon the troubled. Let us do good with our hands to wayfaring pilgrims in need. Let us greet each other with the holy kiss of charity in doing unto others as we would have them do unto us. Lord, I know that without Thy kiss of power I could never do that which is pleasing to Thee. I know that I could never lift my bowed head without Thy kiss of mercy. I could never stand without Thy kiss of faith. I can never run the race without Thy kiss of patience. I could never preach,

sing, nor serve Thee without Thy kiss of gifts.

Surely the precious words of Jesus are the kisses of His mouth. It seems that Psalms 45 is a condensed version of the Song of Songs which is Solomons. We read in Psalms 56:2: "Thou are fairer than the children of men: *grace is poured into thy lips:* therefore God hath blessed thee forever." If Jesus speaks to you, all other men's words go into the background. Jesus only can speak words of life. No other character has the authority or power to give life to words. His disciples recognized it because they said, "Thou hast the words of eternal life." There is no one to go to but to Jesus for living words. I have books by many authors, and if it were necessary for me to dispose of all books but one; I would keep the Bible. There are many person's words quoted in the Bible; if it were necessary for me to dispose of all person's words but one man: I would keep the words of Jesus. The reason I prefer the red-letter edition of the Bible is because Jesus' words are more easily found.

Have His words *kissed* you? Have they become more precious than the words of others? If they have, you are ready to listen to HIM. You will not subscribe wholeheartedly to the words of any other man. You are ready and anxious to search for the instructions Jesus gave rather than to follow the opinions of any other man as your rule of conduct. If I had to discard all sections of the Bible with exception of one, I would select the section of the Gospel as recorded by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; because they give the actual words of Jesus. I want to become more acquainted with His words. I want to base my conduct and doctrine upon what Jesus actually taught. I do not care to become involved over words and expressions that have caused strife and divisions among us, which have originated from some preacher or great gift, whose contentions have become an offense to some little lambs. Men often make expressions that are not easy to be understood. Jesus used very simple language in His instructions. Jesus' words of doctrine and practice are so simple that even a child born of the Spirit can understand.

Have you ever picked up the Bible and read only the words of Jesus as recorded by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John? May the Lord bless you to do it, realizing that each word becomes a kiss to His own people, yet a stumbling block and foolishness to those who know Him not. His words of warning, encouragement, promises, providences, and rule of conduct; all are kisses of grace to God's little children. We cannot do more than just hint at the glory of Christ's kisses in this article.

The first quotation that Matthew gives of Jesus is found in Matthew 3:15: "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." This statement was made to John by Jesus to convince him that it was necessary for Jesus to be baptized by John in the river, Jordan. What a statement!! "IT BECOMETH US TO FULFIL ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS." Even though Jesus baptized with the Holy Ghost, John baptized with water only: yet, Jesus respected John by submitting to his baptism and proved thereby that He was not initiating something entirely new, separate, and apart from that which already existed. Instead of beginning a new sect Jesus was numbered with the many whom John had already baptized. Baptism was the ceremony, oath, or vow, or THE answer to a good conscience toward God, which brought even Jesus in unity with all whom John had baptized. What a *kiss* Jesus received from His

Father in the climax of Jesus' baptism in water!! The heavens kissed the act of Jesus as they were opened to Him. The Holy Spirit kissed this noble act by descending like a dove and lighting upon Him. What a kiss came from the mouth of the Father as He audibly said, *"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."* (Matthew 3:16-17) What a sacrament is baptism! If Jesus practiced it as well as commanded it, do you not think that true believers in Jesus Christ will gladly be baptized and be numbered with those followers of Christ??

As you are baptized in water in partaking of this sacrament, —you, also, shall be kissed by Him with the kisses of approval, peace of mind, joy, and happiness for having participated in this righteous act. When you have been baptized upon profession of your faith in Jesus Christ, the way, the truth, the life, and light; you can look to Him with full confidence that He is not only your righteousness but also your sanctification.

The second quotation of Jesus that Matthew records is: "It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by *every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."* (Matthew 4:4) These words were spoken while He was being tempted of the devil. This statement proves that there are no idle or un-important words spoken by Him. Each and every one of His words swells in magnitude and lingers long and becomes as many kisses from the mouth of Him who spoke them. These first words spoken to the tempter gave the written Word as authoritative, and sufficient proof to stop the mouth of the gainsayer. You must be kissed with the importance of the Bible in order to be given to use it as your only rule of faith and practice. Those who lived two thousand years ago had only the word of the prophets: What greater circumstance now exists than then? We have the words of the only begotten Son of God as He spake them here upon earth: — greater still, we have them as kisses that reach the soul when applied there by the Holy Spirit.

We had rather stop this article short and point you to the words of Jesus as recorded in the Gospels than to weary you with further meditations here. "Let him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth: for Thy love is better than wine." May His kisses reach your inner-most soul and give spiritual strength sufficient for the day, is our sincere prayer.

Elder E.J. Lambert

MEETINGS

BUTTAHATCHIE ASSOCIATION

The Buttahatchie Association, the Lord willing, will convene with Poplar Springs Church the 7th, 8th, and 9th of October 1983. The church is located off the Vernon-Millport Road.

We invite all lovers of the Old School Baptist to visit with us. For further information or directions, call or write Charles P. Hayes, 9 Vestavia Hills, North-port, Alabama 35476. Phone (205) 339-7382.

Charles P. Hayes

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will meet with Monticello Church on the fifth Sunday in October.

All churches of the West Country Line Union will host this meeting.

We invite all of our faith and order to meet with us.

Elder D.V. Spangler

CONTRIBUTIONS

Remaining List Of Contributions For March

Mrs. Betty H. Lovitte, NC	$ 7.00
C.C. Borron, LA	7.00
Mrs. Oza Hill, TX	15.00
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In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand.

Ecclesiastes 11:6

OBITUARIES

GUY BERNARD PHILLIPS

At the request of Union Primitive Baptist Church in conference fourth Saturday in June, 1983, I will attempt to write the memorial in tribute to our beloved brother. Brother Guy Bernard Phillips was born October 19, 1893 and passed away May 19, 1983. Services were held at Maberry Chapel at 1 o'clock Saturday May 21, 1983. Conducted by Elder Hale Terry, Elder Roy Agee and interment was in Indian Creek Cemetary. He left to survive him, his wife, four sons, three daughters, one sister, twenty two grandchildren, thirty nine great grandchildren and lovely brethren through-out this part of the country.

I have known Brother Guy all of my life as we did not live far apart. He was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church around sixty years. He served as clerk of Old Indian Creek Church several years and as clerk of New River Association several years. He had many things that troubled him along with the rest of us. As he suffered in his afflictions

for many years he became more humble and begged there might be peace in all the churches. We were blessed to talk on the goodness and mercy of a covenant keeping God and rejoiced together. I would go visit him and he would ask me to have prayer with him. The last three times I visited him we held hands and prayed together, I thank God for this to remember. He made his funeral arrangements about two years prior to his death and they were carried out to his wishes. Both Elder Terry and Elder Agee spoke very comforting and edifying at his funeral. He chose the ones he wanted for his pallbearers. He said he wanted the ones he had lived in the church with to carry him to his final resting place. There has been few people lived so long as he did that the brethren everywhere inquired and ask about as much as they did him. I will close by saying blessed in the eyes of the Lord is the death of the saints.

Submitted by Willard Cox
Elder Hale Terry, Moderator
Sister Lessie Cox, Clerk

SISTER LOTTIE MINTER LAW

It is with a heavy heart I attempt to write the obituary of our niece whom I esteemed highly, yet I'm thankful to our Lord for one whom the Lord gave a precious hope in Him and to have the privilege to see her ask for a home in the church at Dan River.

She joined august 27, 1961, and was faithful to attend when she was able. She seemed reconciled to her illness and mentioned the presence of the Lord during her affliction. I think she could truly say "Come Lord Jesus."

She was born May 19, 1924, the daughter of Paul and Annie S. Minter. Married to Roy E. Law July 26, 1945.

Besides her husban she leaves to mourn her passing, a daughter, Linda L. Craft of Jamestown, N.C. A son, Larry E. Law of Kernersville, N.C. and three grandchildren. I hope I can truly say the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh, blessed be his holy name.

Her funeral was held at Dan River Church by her pastor Elder D.V. Spangler, assisted by Elder H.W. Wray. Her body was laid to rest in Dan View Cemetery, Eden, N.C.

May we all be reconciled to His Holy will. It is better to depart from this life to be with the Lord.

Written by request of one who loved her dearly.

Elder D.V. Spangler, Moderator
Lottie Minter (Aunt)

SISTER ANNIE OWEN

It is with sadness that we write the obituary of Sister Annie Owen. Sister Owen was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, December 13, 1898. Her parents were John Henry Powell and Laura Scearce Powell. She grew up in Pittsylvania County and married Brother Hezzie Owen in December, 1922. Brother and Sister Owen had two sons, Melvin Owen and Stafford Owen.

She joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church August 23, 1975 and was a faithful member until her death March 27, 1982. Sister Owen

enjoyed meeting with her brethren and friends and having them visit in her home.

Sister Owen is survived by her husband, Brother Hezzie Owen, two sons, Melvin Owen of Dallas, Texas and Stafford Owen of North Bend, Oregon. Also, four grandchildren, four brothers and three sisters.

Her funeral was conducted at Townes Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler and she was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park. Sister Owen will be greatly missed by her family and friends but we feel our loss is her gain.

Written by the request of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, April 23, 1983.

Harold Weatherford

LELIA BLACKWELL

We have been given the sad task of writting the obituary of Sister Lelia Blackwell. Sister Blackwell was born July 3, 1904, a daughter of Larkin and Molly McKinney Dix. She grew up in the Mayfield community of Rockingham County, N.C. and married John Raymond Blackwell April 19, 1925. They lived in Ruffin, N.C. and were the parents of four children. Brother Blackwell died in October 1951.

Sister Blackwell joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized August 27, 1938. She loved the church and was a faithful member until her death June 18, 1983.

She is survived by one son, John Raymond Blackwell, Jr. of Richmond, Va.; three daughters, Dorothy Callahan of Spartanburg, S.C.; Jean Moran, Ruffin, N.C. and Barbara Morris, Nashville, Tenn. Also, three sisters, Mary Brinegar, Spencer, Va.; Nellie Collie, Ruffin, N.C. and Essie Moose, Reidsville, N.C. She also leaves seven grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

Sister Blackwell's funeral was conducted at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church June 21, 1983 by her pastor Elder D. V. Spangler and Elder Julian Williams, also Elder Haywood Wray. One of her favorite hymns "When Thou My Righteous Judge Shall Come" was read by Elder Spangler. At the conclusion of the service, Sister Blackwell was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await a coming of our righteous judge. She will be greatly missed but may we all be comforted to know that our loss is her gain.

Written by request of the church in conference.

Harold D. Weatherford

Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it . . .
Thou crownest the year with thy goodness;
and thy paths drop fatness.

Psalms 65:9,11.

. . .a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together.

Psalms 55:13
Psalms 55:13,14

POETRY

"Since thy Father's arm sustains thee,
Peaceful be;
When a chastening hand restrains thee,
It is he.
Know his love in full completeness,
Feel the measure of thy weakness;
If he wound thy spirit sore,
Trust him more.

Without murmur, uncomplaining,
In his hand
Leave whatever things thou canst not
Understand;
Though the world thy folly spurneth,
From thy faith in pity turneth,
Peace thy inmost soul shall fill,
Being still.

Fearest sometimes that thy Father
Hath forgot?
Though the clouds around thee gather,
Doubt him not.
Always hath the daylight broken,
Always hath he comfort spoken;
Better hath he been for years
Than thy fears.

Therefore whatsoe'er betideth
Night or day,
Know his love for thee provideth
Good always.
Crown of sorrows gladly take,
Grateful wear if for his sake,
Sweetly bending to his will,
Being still.

To his own thy Savior giveth
Daily strength;
To each troubled soul that
To each troubled soul that liveth,
Peace at length.
Weakest lambs have largest share
Of the tender Shepherd's care;
Ask him not then when or how?
Only bow."

Author Unknown

BOOK NOTICES

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Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.
John 1:27

The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; But the word of God shall stand forever.
Isaiah 40:8

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS"

The existence, sovereignty, immutability omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah–the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the attonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistable, and in all cases. effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers–that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 11/83 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

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RECOGNITION

On behalf of all the subscribers and the entire staff of the *Signs Of The Times,* we want to thank Elder Poole for his service as editor for the past six years. We realize now more than ever the great responsibility and the work he did so well. We want to recognize and thank Sister Peggy also for her assistance and untiring efforts. To both of them again we say thanks for a job well done and may God continue to bless you.

The Editors

EDITORIAL

SALVATION

Man fell in this time state. Seeing that he was not capacitated to stand, but that he did fall, it seems a futile effort to advocate that he would ever be able to save himself from his fallen condition.

During a lifetime I have been trying, as best that I could to show the source of a man's salvation. At first, when I was requested to write one more article on this important subject, I had my doubt about it being expedient for me to do so. But the desire of my inquirer has not been satisfied with that answer. If it seems trite for me to write on the subject again, please bear with me, for I write by request of one that has read the Signs as long as I have.

I do not expect to write to the satisfaction of everybody, for oftimes I am not satisfied with my own writing and preaching. Of one thing I am sure, no babe in Christ can ever grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth by being fed on an unstable diet. Balanced diets are best for babes and for those that have grown into men.

If there is a better dietitian than Wisdom, I have not met up with them. If you have, it is best to examine what is given for the growth and sustenance of the children of wisdom. If the house (dwelling place) that wisdom built is lacking in supplying a shelter for the children which she is justified in, please tell me where are these children to turn for that which wisdom was lacking in supplying? Please do not show your lack of confidence in her supplies in calling me vile names because that it seems

best to say that my supplies for this time journey come alone from the fulness and the perfection of her house.

Not only has she builded her house, but she has builded it well. The situation is beautiful (Psa. 48:2), and the foundation and the underpinning, was all completed for her children before there were any children. If there is anything to be added to the situation or to the foundation of this building, what is the name of the builder that we will go to? Please do not call me by brutal, cruel names if you are not able to name her helper in this vital building.

I would ask you as my fellow traveller, soon to go the way of all the earth, if this house and this Builder is not able in every way and at all times and under all circumstances to save these children, which one of them is going to grid up themselves and help their Mother to save her family? Among all of the other works of our mother, she has furnished her table. Please be kind to a poor worn out sinner and tell me the name of the dietitian that was her co-helper in providing the table and what is so plentifully supplied for this table. Instead of pouring out your venom on a poor way faring pilgrim, please pour in the consoling thoughts that you have found out is in the work of helping Wisdom to shelter and feed her children.

For these many years we have been reading about the determination of Paul not to know anything other than Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Is there something to preach that Paul had not been taught about? To what extent did Jesus fail him? Where and when did he need salvation and not find in Jesus of Nazareth the supplying of that need?

What would have become of our dear fellow companion, the apostle Peter, had his salvation from the first history of him in the relationship of being a chosen vessel not been according to the mercy of his Saviour? Time and time again that Saviour plucked him out of the fire as a brand. If the Saviour had waited on the apostle to turn and repent before He saved him from himself, He would have waited in vain; there would have been no salvation for Peter. As I look back on the apostle's experience, and as I look back over my travels for the last fifty six years, I am sure that neither one of us would have ever lived to tell what Peter told us. He talked much about election, but there came so many weary hours with him, as there has been so many times in my life when I felt that He had hid His face from me forever (Isa. 45:15). According to what I hear at times, it seems that some have the mistaken idea that it is easier for one of His children to find Him than it was for Jacob to find him in the beginning. However, that is a deception, for when God hides Himself from His children, He is hid from them just as completely after having been born again as before they were born. If no, let it be forever posted in the streets of Zion that when Isaiah declared that He hid His face, that it really was not hid, for he could have found Him if he had tried. And if His children can find Him in and of themselves, that poor old Job spent a lot of needless sorrow when he cried out, Oh, that I knew where I might find him.

I am sure that had the Lord not looked upon Peter, that had He not had compassion on him time and again that he never would have recorded the language that he later left on record for us. To wit; That He had begotten us again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the

power of God through faith ready to be revealed at the last time (I Pet. 1:3,5). If ever there was a disciple of the Lord that believed in that salvation that is in Jesus Christ, it was Peter.He had given Peter a hope of better things to come, the things to come were reserved in heaven for him, and he was being kept while he remained on earth. Ah, what a complete work. The Lord knew the weakness of Peter, as He did of us all. He did not leave the things held in readiness for us with a poor profligate like me and Peter, but he reserved it in heaven for us, and keeps us ready for it while we stay here.

Oh, dear brethren and sisters, all ye, that fear God, come and hear what the Lord has done, and is now doing, and will yet do for poor sinners. I am aware that I am not a fit character to be associated with Peter, but I am sure about this much of what I write. To wit, This Jesus is the same stone that would be builders and saviours have been rejecting all of the time, and I tell you without fear of contradiction that either before this, or sometime before they leave this vale of tears, that He will become to one and all as the only name given under heaven or among men whereby we shall be saved. If Peter could come and verify with this poor sinner, as I am verifying with him, that our impulsiveness, our talking without thinking of the consequences, would have forever ruined us both, had not His mercy continued with us during his lifetime and mine thus far. Time and again Peter strayed; time and again he was brought back; this frail beggar has strayed time and again, and my only hope for the balance of the journey is that the precious Saviour will bring me back again and again, as He brought the poor sinner, Peter.

Blessed by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of His grace wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved (Eph. 1:1, 6). There is not a portion of Holy Writ between the first word in Genesis and the Amen in Revelation that has been as denied as this, unless it is the 18th chapter of Matthew.

Are there any blessings of a fleshly or a worldly or a carnal nature that will be beneficial to the child of God? As far as I remember, there is not one reference to the work of the flesh being helpful in any way to our salvation. If I have overlooked anything that springs from our first nature that is beneficial in promoting our welfare in time or eternal salvation, will you please refresh my memory about it? My remembrance is that the deeds of the flesh are to be crucified, not made an ally in salvation. If I remember correctly, it seems to me that we are to flee from every lust of the flesh, not embrace them as partners in salvation.

The whole family of God was chosen in Christ according to God's sovereign right to do so. Simultaneously with God making this choice of His people, He blessed these people in Christ with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. I did not make that up. Elder Gilbert Beebe did not make that up. God said by Inspiration that he blessed this chosen people with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. This blessing of these chosen vessels of mercy was not reckoned on the reception that they made of these blessings. This blessing was made according as He chose them in Christ before the world

began. If the choice of them to salvation was predicated on the manner in which they would receive and dispose of the choice thus made for them, then the spiritual blessings will be disposed of in the same manner. However, that is not the truth. God did not consult with the yet unborn creature about accepting the choice. HE DID NOT DO THAT. And I declare to you my beloved brethren and sisters in Christ, that the blessing of God's people with all spiritual blessings was not according to that legal covenant wherein God would do for us if we would do for ourselves, which covenant did not, nor cannot, save and justify a sinner (Acts 13:39). God chose His peole in Christ according to the good pleasure of His own will, and the blessing of His chosen race with all spiritual blessings before the world began, was done according to that which governed God in choosing His people before time. There is not a single conditional idea about God's choice of His people in Christ, and His blessing of them with all spiritual blessings was just like the choice. It was done according to the way the choice was made. Each of these acts were done at the same time by the same God. I believe both of them. Do you?

These spiritual blessings only come to he and she that is born of the Spirit. That which is born of the flesh is flesh. It cannot change its nature. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit. The spiritual blessings are never made manifest until after the second birth. Then these blessings with which His chosen people were blessed in Christ is made manifest after birth. How many? Who wants to place a limitation on them? The apostle Paul, writing as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, left it on record that God blessed His chosen people with all spiritual blessings in Christ in heavenly places. Now Paul said that as God moved him to say it. I believe that. Do you?

The apostle Peter waxed bold to say that the divine power of Jesus Christ, had given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us unto glory and virtue (2nd Peter 1:3). Now I beseech you, dear brethren, not to place a burden on me so that I must place a limitation on these gifts. If it does not mean that God has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness, why did He say so? The Lord Jesus Christ DID give him a sufficiency of saving grace that he had been brought triumphantly off more than conquerer over all of the enemies, both inwardly and outwardly, that he is now telling us that the Lord has given us, the whole elect family, to which he was writing (1 Peter 1:2), that He hath given us all things that pertain to life and godliness. Over nineteen hundred years ago, that poor old weak unstable sinner was established on the solid Rock of divine truth to boldly tell us that this outstanding gift was given us, the family of God, in Christ before we ever knew about them or ever needed them.

This unspeakable gift is an abounding gift. It originated in the eternal counsel of God's mind, was made manifest by the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ, and it has, and it is, abounding to our good and God's eternal glory. It is such a gift that it abounds in us, causing us to have faith, and all other fruits of the Spirit are added together in us (because of the gifts) and are (now) abounding in such a way that we are neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord.

Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? May I pause there? May I use the pronoun 'who'? May I apply it to you? Are you going to question and cast doubt and as-

persion on the inspired question of Paul? According to the inspired language of Paul, not one voice, not one testimony objected to Paul's challenging question. The Holy Spirit did not inspire another writer to accept Paul's challenge, and bring forward a witness that could lay a charge to God's elect.

I preach, if I preach the gospel, that God's people are complete in Christ; that they have a perfect standing in Him. In short, I do hope that I have living faith that leaps out in power and comfort to me, and in great glory to Christ my Saviour, who abundantly comforts the church of the living God by saying, thou art all fair my love, there is no spot in thee. I do hope that I realize my shortcomings and my deficiencies in my relationship with the earth, but that I am blessed to stand boldly and yet humbly in the pulpit and preach the inexhaustible and unsearchable riches of Christ, and that God has given us Him, and having given us such an abounding gift, that He freely gives us all things.

The record is that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son (1 John 5:10). This choice of us to eternal life was made by God. I am not uneasy that any eye witness or an assistant in this work will ever be found. May God separate us as far from such a blasphemous thought as that as far as the east is from the west. Those thus chosen were chosen in Christ Jesus, being preserved in Jesus Christ (Jude 1:1). I have no hesitancy in writing it far and wide, in standing wherever the Lord opens a door of utterance to me and declaring that the preservation of the saints unto glory is a Bible doctrine; that it is fundamental; that without it, there is not any salvation for any of God's little children. This is preaching and writing about Jesus, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; that every God called minister is blessed with a determination to know nothing short of Him crucified, and not one of them thus called will ever preach Him as a failure, as a loser of the sheep given Him.

As this Saviour was teaching that which the Father had given to speak, He was telling them about His coming departure. Not once did He point out a failure in the Father's choice. Not once did He point out a failure of His in redeeming, preserving, saving those thus given to Him. The work of His Father in choosing was perfect. There was not a failure of His own that He paraded before them. They were not reminded of a single promise given them by God the Father, nor by Himself as the Saviour, wherein there was a shadow of a failure to disturb them, to make them shudder with fear, to make them doubt the veracity of His own word to them.

But His work as Saviour was coming to an end. It was necessary that He go away, for He had a work assigned Him in eternity. The Saviour ascribed honor and glory unto the Comforter. When He is come. Let us stop there. Let us contemplate the beauty of the whole. Every promise made in eternity concerning God's people in time had been fulfilled up to that time. Every single promise fulfilled. What more is to be said. Truly, praise waiteth for thee O God.

There is to be no period of time when these chosen people will be without God being on their side (Psa. 1:24). He has ever been on their side. Being unchangeable, He will always be on their side. He has ever been with them, that God being for us, hell and natural passion and unbelief has never thwarted God and robbed Him nor them of one thing promised them in Christ.

The Saviour said, When He is come, He will testify of me, and because of that testimony, ye shall also

witness of me. The same care, the same love, the same everlasting and tender compassion is still in force. Furthermore, when He comes, He will guide you into all truth. The bringing of conditions, the adding of anything by creature effort, is an abomination to God. The same God that chose His people before the world was; the same efficacious death of our Saviour on the rugged tree, will bring you into all truth. When this Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in His name, shall teach you all things. Will you ever need anything more? With Him on your side, will you ever fall short of anything He has promised you? Moreover, He will bring to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you.

My lamentation is that I am not sufficient of myself for these things. I know so little, that I fear I do not know anything. Yet, I am glad that another poor sinner had the same lamentation. He did not feel sufficient of himself. Pity the poor fellow that confesses to being a sinner, and yet that he is able of himself to walk in these things. May the Comforting influence of the Holy Ghost lead us into all truth, and teach us that our sufficiency is God. Herein, that is, in this doctrine of God our Saviour, is salvation, now, henceforth, and forever.

Elder W. D. Griffin

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

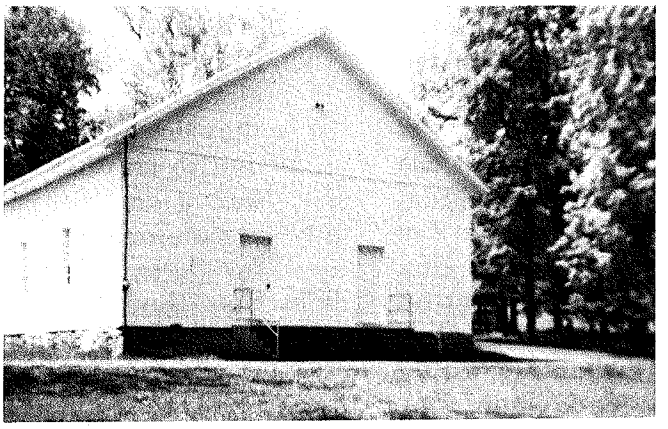

Salem Primitive Baptist Church also known as "Head of the River," was established in 1784. The meeting house is located on 221, three miles south of Copper Hill, Virginia.

The present building is believed to have been built in 1876. All of the older records were destroyed by fire, so there is no definite record, however the church is in progress of raising funds for a new building, hoping, if God be willing, to start in Spring 1984.

Their present pastor is Elder J.L. Agee of Copper Hill, Virginia. Meeting time at Salem is eleven o'clock on the second Sunday morning of each month and the Saturday before at the same time.

NOTE: May God bless their efforts in building a new building. Anyone desiring to help with their building fund may do so by sending your remittance to:

Salem Primitive Baptist Church
Rt. 1 Box 173
Copper Hill, Virginia 24079

The Editors

CORRESPONDENCE

1884

To the Churches of the Smith River District Primitive Baptist Association:

We once more make the feeble attempt to address you with a Circular Letter. We call your attention to the Gospel recorded by St. Luke, 21st chapter and part of the 36th verse. "Watch ye, therefore, and pray always." We understand this as addressed to the Church of God; we learn that God is the same yesterday, today and forevermore. In ancient times the Lord was sought unto for his blessings by some of his people, seeing the need of the same. Not only national but individual blessings. The children of God have been a dependent people in all ages of the world, and this is the reason why they go to the Lord for blessings. As far back as the days of Daniel the prophet, when the children of Isreal were in bondage and he sought the Lord to bless that people, and God heard his supplication and sent an angel to inform Daniel that the time was drawing near when He would deliver his people and when they returned to Jerusalem God was glorified. Dear brethren and sisters this ought with many other things that we find in the Scriptures encourage us to go to the Lord when we feel cast down and forsaken. God's people does not only seek in word but in deed and in truth. Christ said unto his disciples, "seek and ye shall find." We believe one cause of the Church being established in her militant form is to show forth the praise of the Lord. Saints oftimes feel like they can't praise the Lord. The Lord is not only praised in word but in deed, and one of the deeds is to assemble ourselves together. When the Church is in peace each one filling their seats there is no greater praise that ever ascends to the Lord. We believe that many of the chastisements of the Church is for neglect of assembling together in order to worship God. Dear brethren and sisters we remember the time when we thought our souls must go for our sins, and we hope the mercy of the Lord came to our relief at a time unexpected to us. Then we desired to tell God's people what the Lord has done for us. Let us call these things to our minds and not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another. When God's love dwells in our hearts our love is strong toward the union of God's people, and it does not stop here, for we desire to live peaceable with all men. When the love of the Lord sways our feelings then we can do as God's people anciently done, where it is said. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name." So God's care is the same towards them that think upon His name as it is towards them that speak. So dear saints let us try to honor God both in our bodies and our spirits which are his. So the saints don't feel worthy to walk in the foot-steps of Jesus. The worthiness is not in the saints, but in Christ; for thou art worthy who hast redeemed us from every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

May the God of peace be with us while we remain here on our pilgrimage, and at last bring us off more than conquerors through him that loved us, where God will be praised in a world that shall never end. Amen.

Asa D. Shortt

Steens, Miss.

Elder R. P. Hendrix: Dear Brother in the Lord, as I humbly hope:

It is with fear that I undertake to respond to your request for an account of my spiritual exercise of mind. But if it is the Lord's will to give me a travel of mind in that direction at this time I will endeavor to give you a reason of my hope.

I was born in the year 1892, and reared in a Primitive Baptist home. My father was a minister. Although as a child I loved the pleasures of the world, yet from my youth I maintained the highest regard for this people. But perhaps this was to be contributed to the great love and confidence I had for Daddy. I was happy; nothing seemed to trouble me. The first sorrow I knew was the death of Father; this was the beginning of my troubles. He died in 1920; in 1921 I became burdened. I felt that I was a sinner without hope, and without God, I would try to beg for mercy, but it seemed there was no relief. I had never read the Bible, but during that same year I began to read; it seemed that it only condemned me. I felt more and more that I was a sinner.

If I remember correctly, it was in the spring of 1922 that I had a dream; I thought it was the resurrection day, and that the world was coming to an end. The following words were spoken: "Be ye ready, watch ye and pray: for He comes as a thief in the night, lest He find you sleeping; for you shall see Him coming in a cloud, with power and glory." The dream was so plain that I awoke and got up and went to the window, but did not see Him. I felt tc know in my poor heart that I was not prepared to meet Him, and to die unprepared I would be lost. I went on in this condition for some time. All I could say was, "Lord have mercy on me."

There were no Old Baptists here then, and we were poor and had no way to go to meeting. My eyes and health were bad, but I felt that I must do something; some way I felt a duty upon me. I desired to belong to the church; and I thought because Father and Mother were Old Baptists that I would be one, too.

In the year 1923 mother died and I was left alone; my husband was a Methodist. In 1924 I lost my eyesight, and I now felt that the wrath of the Lord was poured upon me. I was filled with despondency. I often dreamed of death. Because I had not been baptised I had much trouble of mind. I dreamed that I was at Zion church (Pikins County). In my dream my sister, Ruth, was with me. We wanted to join the church, but for some reason the audience left the house. There were two preachers in the stand, and they began to scuffle. I said to Sister Ruth, "We must search the Scripture." The Bible was laying on our laps; on the right was red print and on the left black print. We were reading concerning baptism. I was thirsty, and went to the table where a bucket was sitting. Someone gave me a beautiful cup; I took it but did not drink. I then walked out the door.

I hope, dear brother, that you can interpret my walking out. Oh blind and could not see; deaf and could not hear the joyful bells of salvation by grace; for in 1927 I joined the free-will Baptists here, and baptised the same day. I felt comforted to think that I obeyed Jesus by being baptised and that if I lived right I would be saved.

Two weeks later I found myself questioning what these people believed and practiced. I desired to be loyal to the church. One day I asked my husband to read to me the 13th chapter of John. I was lying on the bed, and fell asleep while he was

reading. I dreamed that I was baptised; it was the same place, and the same free-will minister that had baptised me into this order. I saw nothing as we went into the water, but when he raised me I noticed that the water was muddy; the surface was covered with trash. This troubled me, and I said to the preacher: "Just look at this water." He handed me a broken piece of an ear of corn; the cob was red and had just a few grains of corn. I took it and held it up; I could see the place of all the missing grains, and said to the preacher: "What in the name of the Lord is this?" He said as long as you eat this you will be alright.

I tried for three years to believe the doctrine of the free-moral-agent. Many times I was made to fall upon my knees and ask the Lord to have mercy on me; that I might not be deceived, that I might hear with the right ear and understand with a true heart. I tell you the truth: there was always a doubt; there was always a doubt with me whether this was the true church; but, Oh, I was blind to the knowledge of the truth. Like a drowning child, I would grasp a straw for help. When works were preached it would condemn me; yet I believed that I must work in order to live in the presence of God. But being condemned already, how could I be saved?

My eyes and health continued to get worse; I suffered continually. In 1930 they carried me to the hospital (September 1) to have my eyes removed. O dear people of God, I thought I could never endure this: the last hope of my seeing taken away. I cannot describe my feelings at that time; only those who have suffered in this way can witness with me. The doctors said I could not live long. But I was made to say: Thy will be done, O Lord. I cannot tell why, but as I thus resigned myself in the hands of the Lord, there was a calm came over me, and I felt myself in the hands of Him who does all things well. They put me to sleep, and I felt sinking down; I called for Jesus. I thought I was lost in a wilderness and trying to find my way out. I came to a class of people and stood among them. There was an altar there, and just a natural-looking man standing there. The whole congregation looked natural. Their faces were turned in different directions, and there was not brightness, as it was a cloudy day. I was troubled and wondered who this people were. Then these words were written: "These are they who trust in the deeds done in the flesh; these are self-righteous people."

I was then greatly troubled and wanted to get away from them, but knew not how to go, nor do I know how I did get away; but I found myself standing by a beautiful class of people: the most beautiful I ever saw. They were all dressed in robes of white. They were all one size. Every face was turned in the same direction; they were looking at a beautiful altar; in that altar was the Lamb of God, and the light was brighter than the noonday sun. I loved those people, and wanted to stay with them. I said: "Oh, what are these?" Then these words were written: "These are they that have come through great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." I felt to know that tribulation was what I had come through.

When I awoke I was praising the Lord; I felt a love in my poor heart that I had never felt. It seemed that dear Jesus was in the room, and I was trying to show Him to my doctor. I was quoting this scripture: "Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and none can come to me except the Father which sent me draw him.

All the time I remained at the hos-

pital I was made to forget all my sorrow over the loss of my eyes as much as I think any poor one could under the same circumstances. When I came away I felt to be a different person, although I was like one in a dream.

"When trouble like a gloomy cloud
Has gathered thick and thundered loud:
He near my soul has always stood;
His loving-kindness, O how good."

For five weeks those beautiful people in robes of white stayed before me. I felt assured that this was the bride of the Lamb of God.

I shall never forget the second Sunday morning in October, 1930. Neither can I forget the awful feeling I experienced as they led me across the yard at Mount Carmel Church on that morning. I felt just like all of you could read the expression of my face, and see what a vile, and helpless sinner I was. I was led as one blind and dumb, and I did wish myself at home, where I would not be exposed to the people but Jesus said, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the son of Man, and they that hear shall live." When you arose in the stand that morning it seemed to me that every word you spoke you said them to me. Never had I heard before such comforting words, and for the first time, I could hear the truth, and believe every word you said. I felt the same love for you people that I had felt at the hospital, and that same desire to love with you all. I felt to realize what I was however. Yes, what I had thought to be unto life, I found to be unto death. And I saw what a helpless, vile sinner I was. I also saw that I was a different creature and that the way was too high for me to reach. All that I had ever done rose before me. Words cannot describe my feelings. I felt like I must hasten on, for I fear I have already written enough to weary your patience, but desire to go on a little further, and hope you can bear with me.

On that second Sunday night after reaching home from the association at Mount Carmel, I lay down on my bed, and could not keep back my tears. I did not want my husband and children to see me weeping. But as I lay there my pillow wet with tears, there was a voice began preaching to me. This is a mystery to me. This voice I heard in the right ear, preaching the unsearchable riches of His grace. Oh why, when I felt so condemned? I turned over on my back, the voice ceased, and I saw Jesus expanded above me. He was on the cross. I felt like my sins had put him there, and Oh, that hell would be my doom, but here I hope I felt the precious mercy of God measure out to poor me, for there I heard these sweet words spoken to me: "He did it all, He paid the debt, He suffered for your sins."

O dear friends, if I can call you such, had I had ten thousand tongues they would have all been engaged in praise to the eternal King. I felt my burden of sin gone, and that heaven would be my home. Never had such joy filled my soul. I could hear the hooting of the owls, and even they sang sweet to me. I fell asleep, the sweetest sleep I ever had. When I arose the next morning I thought I never would have another doubt, or feel another burden, that I would be happy the rest of my days, and for some time I felt no burden, but alas! I had the burden of desire to ask the dear Old Primitive Baptist for a home as this desire grew stronger, I felt more unworthy to approach them. So I would go to meeting, and enjoy the sermon, but when an opportunity was extended, I would tremble like a leaf shaken by the wind. When I would get home, I was so miserable. I would think I will go the next time.

So on the third Sunday morning in November, 1931, I arose from a sleepless night, with a feeling of great unworthiness. I felt like one alone and that I had not a friend in this world. Had I followed my mind I would have gone home rather than to meeting, or any where else. There was to be a baptising that morning. I began to think that I was barred from the people I loved for when an opportunity was extended for members, I had no thought of going. My will was swallowed up by what I hope was the will of God, and I asked the dear people (at Zion Church) for a home, and to my surprise they received me. For a few moments I felt relieved but as you know, I was not baptised that day. I did not go prepared for baptism. You were my choice to officiate in this work. This also worried me, and I thought to pass it off, but the more I tried the stronger the desire grew. I had seen you so many times in my dreams, but I did not tell this to the Church when I joined, and this also worried me. So at last I sat down and wrote the Church, and tried to tell them my desire. This they granted, but still I was worried in mind with the burden of asking you to come such a long distance to baptise such a one as I, but the Lord is our Comforter in time of need, and he comforts us when no one else can. In a dream I saw my father. I asked him if it was right to ask you to come and baptise me. And he said it was. I saw you dressed in a long white robe, with silver slippers on your feet, and you took me by the arm and led me into the water. Many other dreams I will not mention now. But my mind has been relieved of a great burden to find others, as I hope, drawn by the same power of love as I hope I was. And but for the great power of the love of Jesus and His kingdom and His mercy which has followed me thus far, I would have given it all up, for there are so many doubts and fears to arise and cast me down, but dear ones, these words will express my feelings more than any I could say, I am wearied and worn, I want to go home. My journey has been long, and the voyage stormy. My road has been hard and there are many thorns in my path, but I hope to find rest on Jesus' sweet breast. I feel that my faith is founded on the rock and I hope to be one of His chosen flock. When Jesus shall come to carry home His bride, I hope to be one to make up that bride. This I know, if I was redeemed on that day when He expired on the cross, I shall wear a robe that is fit for a bride.

I believe our goings are all appointed, and we cannot hasten His appointed times. I feel that my experience has taught me this, and that we are going to meet all that is in store for us. We will suffer every pain and heartache, and I know that I justly deserve all that He sees fit to put on me, and I feel ever more; for I feel that if strict justice had been meted out to me that I would have been where mercy could never reach, among the nations that forget God. But I feel a hope that His mercy has been extended to me, and has brought me down at His feet, and to the feet of His dear saints. During the eight months from the time I asked the Church at Zion for a home, until the day I was baptised, I thought many times of the children of Israel, when they were led out of Egypt. They came to the Red Sea, they could neither turn to the right or left. But Moses commanded them to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. On the sixteenth day of July, 1932, as I stood at the water's edge I was far from feeling like I thought one should feel when in the act of being baptised, for I always thought one should feel good. I would like to know if there is any one that felt as I

did? My burden of unworthiness grew to be so great that my body trembled as if I had a chill, and there was before such a great people in the presence of God, to represent the death, burial and ressurection of the blessed Savior, and oh, what was I? Had I, after all, been deceived, and deceived others? But as you led me into the water the clouds of the morning vanished from the sky, the sun shown brightly on me. When you raised me out of the water, I felt as light as a feather. My burden was gone, and once more again I felt the sweet assurance that heaven was my home. I thought I could never doubt again, nor fear, but in conclusion I must say I have my ups and downs, and it seems to me that I have more downs than ups.

I must close, and if the above is not an experience of grace, I must confess that I have none. I have tried as best I could to give you a hint at what I hope the Lord has done for me. I have been very scattering, but hope the Lord may enable you to understand what I have tried to tell. Should you see anything in this worthy of acceptance among God's humble poor, give God all the power and praise. If not, cast it aside, and remember me in your prayers.

Your little unworthy sister saved by grace if saved at all.

Balma Callahan

Turtle Rock, Va.
June, 1898

Dear Brethren:

Now I will give some of the reasons why I attempt to preach. The first impression that I had to try to preach was a few minutes after I received a hope. I cannot tell the full particulars of the impression, but my mind was impressed that I had to preach, and also the reproach that is connected with the ministry was impressed upon my mind, and I was made willing to bear the reproach, and I promised to be obedient to the Lord. From then until I joined the church I thought but little about what I had been impressed with, though my mind was somewhat exercised in the Scriptures, and when I went to the church I did not think anything about what I had been impressed with, therefore I said nothing about it. I was baptized the next day, and I think in two or three days that my mind began to be impressed with the Scriptures more or less daily, and sometimes in my sleep.

I remember of having two dreams. In one of the dreams I was sitting and talking to a person of another denomination, and in our talk this person remarked that there would be vacant seats in heaven, and from that my mind was impressed, and I talked with great freedom. The other dream was - I was standing and talking to one individual about Jonah. The subject that I was talking about seemed to be plain, and I talked with as much ease, perhaps, as ever I did when I was awake. Sometimes a scripture would be offered to my mind, and the light of the same with a considerable feeling. I remember once when I was thus exercised I was plowing, and when I noticed myself I had the plow handles gripped very tight, which I knew was unusual. When my mind was thus exercised I desired to be like God's servants, for I believed that they were right. Few months before this time I heard Elder Howery say when he was impressed to preach he prayed as earnest as he ever did for the impression to be removed, and I tried to pray like he did; but I could not. My mind would be directed back to that time when I was made willing. The prayer that I had to pray was, if the impression was not of the Lord it might be removed. I desired to be obedient,

but feared I was deceived. I was impressed to go and talk with Elder Howery, and thought that I could not wait until the next meeting but I did. And when I got there I was afraid to tell him for fear he would ask me to talk some publicly. After the meeting was dismissed I thought that I would go home and say nothing about it, but I become fearful to disobey my feelings, and said, brother Howery, I wish to talk some with you, and I did so, and he said, if you had told me before preaching commenced I would have asked you to open the service. I told him that was the reason that I did not tell him. I went to preaching the next day, and there were two other preachers there, and Elder Howery preached last, and I did not enjoy the preaching like I would wish to do, and the reason was that something seemed to be saying to me that brother Howery is going to ask you to conclude the meeting. My mind was in a strait all the time of the service. Sometimes I would think that I could not say anything, and would not make the attempt. When brother Howery got through preaching he looked at me and said, brother Shortt, will you come up and dismiss, and I got up and went into the pulpit as though I had been accustomed to ti, and talked some, and lined a hymn and it was sung at the conclusion of the meeting. And I never had as yet confessed that I was impressed to preach, nor did I desire to preach, though my mind was led into the doctrine of salvation by grace alone. I only desired when there was room to say something in the way of exhortation. When I would attempt to talk the things that would mostly impress my mind I was afraid to utter. Something would seem to say that it would not do, for brother Howery was a very able minister, and he would know I was wrong. So I remained in this condition for nearly two years before I was enabled to express my mind, and then I received a little strength. A portion of this time I was very much cast down, and thought that God never intended that I should preach, and I thought that I would be certain to make shipwreck. A song would often come into my mind which reads thus: "No vessel built by human skill has ever sailed so far. But at last I was found aground on some dreadful sandy bar." There were several other persons that had commenced trying to preach a short time before I commenced, and I thought they were all right but myself. But some of them did prove to be wrong. A great many of the preachers that I have heard talk said that they greatly suffered before they commenced trying to preach, but my greatest suffering was after I commenced. At one time when I was much cast down I commenced feeling sick, and the thought was maybe you will die, and it was consolation to me, and why, because I thought I had brought a reproach upon my family, and also upon the church. I thought then if I had had these feelings before I commenced trying to preach I never would have commenced, but if the Lord had any hand in it he knew what was best. I have been often disheartened when I would hear some of the brethren tell so great a call to the ministry. I have decided mine if a call, to be weak, but every time I felt the manifestation of the Spirit when I am trying to preach it establishes me that I am required to preach. I have never desired to work on, or to arouse the natural minds of the people, but desire to declare the truth as it is in Jesus. I said I thought God never intended that I should preach, and one of the pressing reasons was that my grandfather was an old Baptist preacher, and left the Baptists, and joined another denomination, and something seemed to say

that you will be like him. My grandfather at one time attented the church at Salem. When I first commenced going to that church something seemed to say they will not hear you, and it was a disagreeable place to me, notwithstanding the church was in a prosperous condition, and had Elder John C. Hall for its pastor. And he is its pastor at the present time. I have been attending there with him for several years, and of late it is a very pleasant place for me to visit. I have been exercising in public twenty-nine years. I commenced in four weeks after I was Baptized. I was licensed to preach in three years, and ordained September, 1873, by the following Elders: Daniel Conner, G.L. Tuggle, and W.H. Dodd.

I can say a truth that I never sought to be set forward either directly or indirectly. Each time when it was named before the church to set me forward I never opened my mouth, though I felt a fear within. If I could have known that the Lord, directed the church I think I would have been reconciled. I knew the church had made mistakes, and it might be one again. If I have a gift in the ministry it is hard for me to tell the extent of the gift, though I am satisfied it is small compared with many of my brethren, but I feel a degree of contentment with such things as I have. There are some embarrassments for I have to contend with in trying to preach that many of my brethren are not encumbered with. Some of my words I cannot pronounce plain, for I have an impediment in my speech which makes me often dread to face a congregation, though occasionally from some cause I am made to forget the faces of the congregation, and when I would set down I would think that I would not be so timid any more; but they have in part followed me up to the present time. I am one that believes that when preaching is effectual that the Holy Ghost directs the mind of the preacher, and also the hearer. I reckon it is well that I should feel my weakness in order that I might trust in the Lord. I think it is right for the preacher to be well posted in the Scriptures, but if the Lord don't give him the Spirit of preaching he will not preach to the edification of God's children. Preachers are sometimes exercised with the Spirit of preaching when there is no congregation present in order to establish them in the power of the Lord. I remember several years ago that I went to the field to pull fodder, and feeling unwell, and directly my mind was exercised in the Scripture, and when I noticed myself I was working as fast as I could, and I felt as well as ever I did; and it is a consolation to me yet. Not only at that time, but occasionally ever since I was first impressed to speak in public I have been exercised, I trust, with the Spirit of preaching. God's ministry receive the power of preaching. For the very power that Moses received when he came to the mountain of God afterwards manifested in the presence of Pharaoh and his wise men, and that to their astonishment. It is the case even to the present day when God moves the minds of His ministers they preach to the confounding of the wise and prudent of this world, and also to the building up of God's children.

Asa D. Shortt

NOTE: Above articles by Elder Shortt were sent in by his granddaughter, Catherine A. Houchins of Roanoke, Va. The Elder Howery referred to in the article is Elder Spanglers grandfather.

The Editors

EXPERIENCE

209 Taylor Rd.
Collinsville, Virginia

I received the *Signs of The Times* yesterday with much comfort and joy. Elder Gilberts editorial is so precious, just like the third and fourth volume of his books, which gives more understanding of other scriptures in the New Testament.

The last letter I wrote that I enjoyed the writings for they left man out of the picture. I am putting man and men in the picture, those who believe in the works of God through our Lord Jesus Christ and are contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Those chosen in Christ before the world began and not because of anything that they have done or can do to merit eternal life; through the washing and regeneration through our Lord and savior Jesus Christ, who died on the cross for His elect people, the chosen ones, finished the work the Father sent Him to do and set us free.

I thought one time we had to keep the commandments of God. After asking a home with the Primitive Baptist at Republican Church I was asked if I could keep the commandments and at that time I did not understand them. I left there with a burden and was not going to be baptized. My husband wanted to send for my mother to talk with me. I told him that she could not help me with this matter. On his way to work on Monday morning he was praying for me, and at that time he saw the blackest cloud in the East and it disappeared and a beautiful white cloud arose. I believe the black cloud represented the old law covenant of works. The white cloud represented the new covenant, grace covenant, Christ covenant.

Soon after my husband left for work, I was alone and had gone upstairs to make the boys bed. I knelt beside the bed to pray and couldn't move my tongue to speak. I came down stairs and was sitting in my chair with my hands over my face saying Lord have mercy, why did I join the church, if it be thy will please remove me from this burden.

The next thing I remember I was going from one room to another singing. The title of the song was "O Land of Rest." I was only singing the chorus, "This world is a wilderness of woe, this world is not my home." I especially like one verse of this song, "To Jesus Christ I sought for rest, He bade me cease to roam, and fly for succor to His breast and he'd conduct me home."

I can truthfully say I have found that rest here going through great tribulations, rejoicing in God my savior through the Lord Jesus Christ, having no confidence in the flesh, salvation is of the Lord.

Yours in fellowship of
the Holy Spirit
Mattie Underwood

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD

Editorial of Elder Beebe as it appeared in the "Signs" 138 years ago.

New Vernon, N. Y.
November 1, 1845

Thus spake the Son of God when, mantled in the flesh, he stood arraigned at the bar of Pilate; and when, if there had been anything in

the elements of this world which could contribute to the defence or benefit of his kingdom, they must have been called forth into action. All the interests of the kingdom which he claimed as his own, centered in him, and the destiny of that kingdom, for weal or woe, was at that important moment hinged upon the result of what was at that time progressing. None of the princes of this world knew him; he had not made a revelation of what he was, even to those who sat empowered to deliver him to death. He had not labored in his ministry to make himself familiar to the crowned heads of the nations of the earth; he had proposed no treaties or terms of alliance with them; nor had he called on them, or any of them, to propose terms for his acceptance; for the nature of his kingdom was so radically different from every kingdom under heaven, that it was not possible that an alliance could be entered into that could subserve the true interests of either party. His kingdom truly was destined to encounter the violence, enmity, wrath, strife, and persecution of kingdoms and men, both in her King, and in the subjects of her government. The powers which should oppose him in person and in his people, were not such as he was compelled to succumb to for want of power to resist, for he reminded Pilate that he would not have had any power if it had not been given him; and on another occasion he declared that he was able to call on his Father, who would instantly honor his requisition for more than twelve legions of angels—a force sufficient to overwhelm all earthly powers engaged against him; but how, in that case, could the scriptures be fulfilled? Not an intimation was made of raising up an earthly force to resist the assaults of the enemies of his kingdom, even if a force had been requisite, he would have called them from the heavenly world. We may well conclude that if in that most trying hour, when his holy soul was pressed within him, he had nothing to ask of the rulers of this world, there could a period arrive when the powers of earthly princes should be required to defend him or his cause. To those who tempted him with their questions concerning tribute money, he said, Render unto Caesar the things which belong to Caesar, and unto God the things which belong to God; thus clearly intimating that the governments were not only distinct from each other, but that the distinction should be perpetual; and that the requisitions of Caesar, or of the governments of the nations, had to do with men, as citizens of the world, and that their obligation to earthly magistrates and rulers was not relaxed nor abolished by the administration of his laws. And again, that the things of God were not to be rendered to Caesar, but unto God.

Things of a civil nature, relating to the natural rights of men, were to be settled by God's own providential appointment, by human legislation; but the things set aside from a respect for and obedience to earthly potentates, in natural matters, belonging to God, such as matters of faith, of conscience, of religion, were not things over which the kings of the earth had any supervision or power, and things in which his subjects were not at liberty, under any circumstances, to submit to the dictation or legislation of any other than God himself.

The kingdom of Jesus is not of this world, in its origin, elements, provisions, policy, protection, government or destiny. Its origin is heaven—it is a heavenly kingdom. The King is the Lord from heaven; he said, I proceeded forth and came out from

the Father; and again, "What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before," &c. The subjects of his kingdom are of the same origin; for, "Both he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren;" and he said, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world," &c. The laws for the regulation of this heavenly kingdom are not of earthly enactment. Christ, the annointed of the Father, is the sole Legislator, and he, by his Spirit, writes his law upon, and sets it up in the hearts of his children. The elements, or component parts, viewed separately or collectively, are all of God, and every plant that the heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up. The provisions on which this kingdom is sustained, were given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and being prior to, could not be of the world. Grace, mercy, peace, righteousness, and truth, with all things else necessary for the consummation of the everlasting and unchanging decree of God, were treasured up in the Head of the church before the world began; and all the provisions of his spiritual house on which his poor are fed, were brought down from the abounding and overflowing fountain from which every good and perfect gift cometh. And he will abundantly bless her provisions and fill her poor with bread.

The policy of this kingdom is from above, "For our conversation is in heaven," and it is therefore as becometh the children of God. All earthly religions have to depend on human policy, human wisdom, and humanely devised *means:* but not so with the kingdom which no man can see except he be born again.

The protection of that kindgom is of him who is a wall of fire around about it, and the glory in its midst. All anti-christian religious establishments desire the arm of human government—regal power and human means, for their protection; but not so wih the kingdom of Jesus Christ—the eternal God is the refuge of his people and underneath them are the everlasting arms.

All provision on which the subjects of the kingdom of our Lord are fed, comforted, instructed, and secured, are spiritual, and therefore cannot emanate from any other than a spiritual fountain. Although the world, the flesh and Satan have volunteered, like the aliens about Jerusalem in the days of Nehemiah, to furnish God's people with food, the order of the government forbids the traffic with them; and it is impossible that the children of the kingdom should be fed with any other food than that which God has graciously provided, and abundantly blessed.

Should the government of the kingdom of our Redeemer be to any extent divided with angels or men, whatsoever part or portion these should administer, must necessarily detract so much from the power and glory of Christ. "The government shall be upon his shoulder; and of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." So stands the record of the Holy One. The subjects of his government are forbidden to call any man *master,* or *father,* as their Master and spiritual Progenitor is in heaven, and nothing can be born of the flesh but flesh; so that without being *born again* no man can see the kingdom of God. A legislature of unregenerate men who cannot see the kingdom, would be very poorly qualified to legislate for a kingdom which is to them absolutely invisible; and if there were none but regenerated men seated in legislation,

they being by the new birth qualified to see the kingdom of God, would to a man, know the the same illuminating work of the Spirit, that they could do nothing to aid in the legislative or executive departments of the Messiah's kingdom.

The destiny of the kingdom of which we write, differs essentially from that of all other kingdoms. The best systems of human government are destined to crumble to the ground. In the providence of God, empires are founded, kingdoms and republics are raised up, they reach their climax, and then decline, and finally cease to be reckoned among the things that be; but the kingdom of Jesus is an everlasting kingdom, and a dominion that shall never end. It shall never be changed, superceded, or transferred to other hands. The mountains shall depart, the hills shall be removed, the earth and sea shall pass away, and all the elements of this world shall be dissolved; but the kingdom of our God shall survive them all, and flourish in eternal bloom. How presumptuous, then, for monarchs of the earth, whose transient glory is as a withering flower, or human legislatures, which God shall obliterate, to prepare the way of the rising empire of his Son, to reach forth the guilt-polluted fingers of their power, to point out the course in which God requires his children to move.

Seeing, then, that we look for such things—seeing that we have received a kingdom which is not of this world, which cannot be moved—let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire.

I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.
John 10:11

MEETINGS

The Lord willing, there will be a fifth Sunday meeting in January 1984 at Good Hope Primitive Baptist meeting house, near Strong, Ark. Go about 1 mile out of Strong on highway 275, 6 miles to the meeting house. The church is located about 100 yards off the road to the left.

We invite all lovers of the truth and those of like precious faith to come and meet with us.

Lula Fox, clerk
Good Hope Church

CONTRIBUTIONS

Contribution List For August 1983

Mrs. Frances Thorpe, VA	$ 3.00
Mrs. Virginia Conner, VA	2.00
Robert L. Fekote, NY	7.00
Buford Holland, VA	7.00
Howard L. Peters, VA	2.00
C.R. Peters, VA	1.00
Mrs. N. Hunt, VA	2.00
Frank Hunt, VA	7.00
C.B. Crotts, VA	7.00
Mrs. Ruth Steiner, NY	3.00
Kenneth L. Black, B.C. CAN	7.00
H.M. Pullig, LA	2.00
Ms. Martha Williams, MO	30.00
Mrs. Ila F. Herbin, NC	3.00
Mrs. H.H. Blanton, MS	3.00
Zeno McKinney, NC	2.00
James W. Burgin, TX	2.00
Jesse Ramsey, VA	7.00
Eld. C.M. Haygood, TX	2.00
Ralph Horne, NC	13.00
Mrs. Lucile McGee, WA	7.00
Mrs. Geneva W. Meara, CA	50.00
Mrs. Aleveta Hopkins, VA	2.00
K.J. Carter, MD	2.00
Rufus L. Jacks, AL	12.00
Mrs. H.D. Underwood, VA	2.00
Paul D. Smith, NC	7.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER MABLE DAWKINS HATAWAY

We bow in humble submission to the Divine will of our Heavenly Father who in his infinite wisdom and mercy called one of his precious jewels, our dear Mother Mable Dawkins Hataway. She was born in Montgomery County, Alabama 10 March 1890 and departed this life 29 December 1982. She was the daughter of Washington and Frances Ellen Dawkins. She married Luther L. Hataway 7 September 1907, who preceded her in death by 20 years. She was a member of Pisgah Primitive Baptist Church, Montgomery County, Alabama. She had been a member of this Faith and Order since June 1909, 73 years and 6 months. She loved her church and the Primitive Baptist doctrine that it stands for. She had a wonderful experience that gave her a precious hope that she might be a vessel of Mercy. She was a faithful and devoted member, never missing a service unless providentially hindered. She desired that the peace and sweet fellowship of Christ the Savior dwell within our hearts. She was an inspiration to all who knew her. We feel that we can say she kept the faith, and there is laid up for her a crown of righteousness. Although her work on earth is finished her memory lingers with all who knew her.

Funeral service was conducted at Pisgah Primitive Baptist Church 31 December 1982 by her beloved Pastor Elder J.P. Morgan. He told so beautifully of the things she believed. The hymn "Amazing Grace" was sung by a few of her friends, this being her favorite song. She believed that there was no other way to obtain Salvation but Through Grace. She was laid to rest in the church Cemetery beside her husband.

Left to mourn her passing are three daughters, all of whom are members of Pisgah Church, and 6 sons, 18 Grandchildren, 25 Great Grandchildren and 8 Great Great Grandchildren.

God was Merciful to our dear Mother. She did not suffer Physically. We all miss her so very much, but have so many sweet memories. We feel the loss deeply, yet all must submit to the will of God, and believe that our loss is her eternal gain.

Roma H. Smith, daughter
Church Clerk

SISTER TOIA EMMA MARSHALL ALDERMAN (1897-1982)

Sister Toia Emma Marshall Alderman died in the Danville Memorial Hospital February 12, 1982.

She was born in Carroll County, December 9, 1897; she was the daughter of Mary-Ellen Quesenberry and Elbert A. Marshall.

She is survived by a daughter, Naomi Alderman Scarboro of Danville, Virginia; a son, Marvin E. Alderman of Richmond, Virginia; two grandchildren; and one great grandchild; one full-sister, Ada Marshall Bond of Richmond, Virginia; one half-sister, Lillie Campell of Danville, Virginia; two half-brothers: Graham Marshall of Danville, Virginia, and Simon (Jack) Marshall of Durham, North Carolina.

Sister Alderman united with Dan River Church on March 26, 1978 and was a faithful member until her death.

She left to her family and friends many precious memories of joy for which we shall always be grateful.

CLARENCE G. STEGALL

We at Old Mt. Church bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father who in His divine wisdom and mercy removed from our midst our dear beloved deacon and brother, Clarence G. Stegall, March 20, 1983.

Brother Clarence had been in declining health a number of years, and confined to bed several months, in much pain, yet never complained, bore his afflictions with patience, always smiling when his many friends and relatives came to visit. Brother Clarence often spoke of wanting to go home, and was not afraid to die. We feel that he felt as the poet; "If Heaven be then so glorious, Lord, why should I stay from thense?"

He lived and died with one hope, a hope in the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, which is the anchor of the soul both sure and stead fast.

He was so quietly taken in his sleep that his son Richard and his wife that was with him never noticed until they saw that he was not making the usual sounds. Sweet is the sleep of God's dear children.

Brother Stegall was born August 11, 1899, in Pittsylvania County, a son of the late Thomas Stegall and Mary Bishop Stegall.

On September 23, 1917, he was married to Hattie Holly Stegall, who survives. He was a retired farmer and deacon of Old Mt. Primitive Baptist Church. He filled the office of deacon well, and was loved by all that knew him.

He leaves to mourn, his wife Sister Hattie, three daughters, Janie Wyatt of Danville, Virginia Turner of Rt. 1, Danville and Irene Oaks of Rt. 3, Chatham; four sons, Charlie Stegall of Whitmell, Percy Stegall of Hurt, Richard Stegall and William Stegall of Danville; one sister, Edna Powell of Danville; thirteen grandchildren and nineteen great grandchildren.

The funeral was held at Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Chapel by Elder Walace Smith and Elder H.W. Wray. The body was layed to rest in Highland Burial Park beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the coming of his Lord and savior Jesus Christ.

May the family be reconciled to His will.
Done in church conference September 17, 1983.

Elder H.W. Wray, moderator
Sarah H. Barker, clerk

SISTER MINNIE F. WEAVER

On May 22, 1983, Sister Minnie F. Weaver was called away at the age of eighty-eight. She was a member of Liberty Church of the Seven Mile Association. We feel that she was blessed to live a very full life here and was blessed with good health to work and help others. Through much sickness in her home she was a wonderful helpmate to three husbands. Sister Weaver was the wife of the late Junius J. Weaver, also a member at Liberty Church, who passed away December 20, 1971.

She enjoyed being at church with Brother Weaver during the years that they were married. They both joined the church on April 3, 1966. They have been missed very much at Liberty Church, by everyone.

Sister Weaver is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Lizzie Horton of Fuquay-Varina, Maybell Johnson of Angier; a brother Frank Cates of Fuquay-Varina; three stepdaughters, Effie Clayton of Willow Springs, Mrs. Maude Parker of Dunn, Betty

Sue Wilkins of Enka, N.C.; four stepsons, H.T. Weaver and Wade Weaver of Dunn, Granville Weaver of Benson, Coolidge Weaver of Spring Lake; seven grandchildren; thirteen great grandchildren and two great, great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at Kennevec Baptist Church on Tuesday, May 24, 1983.

Commitee:
Sister Bessie Hall
Brother Wade Weaver
Brother James G. Young

IRA CALDWELL

It has pleased our heavenly Father to call home a loved one, Ira Caldwell, a dear husband and dad. He was a firm believer in the predestination of all things. Born June 7, 1904 and departed this life September 4, 1983.

Surviving is his lovely wife Erma and three daughters, Freda Alice Daniels of Oceana, West Virginia, Dorothy Foster of Cedar Grove and Patsy Chambers of Danville, Virginia.

He was laid to rest to await the coming again of our Lord and Savior.

The beautiful service was conducted by our moderator Elder William Bird. He will be sadly missed by his family and friends.

Written by his daughter
Dorothy Foster

I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.
John 8:12

POETRY

What a glorious feeling from within,
Wrought by Our heavenly King.
He brings Us comfort, faith, and hope,
That We might praise His name.

He came to earth by the will of God,
To die upon a tree,
Redeemed His own, the church,
His Bride,
His blood has made Us free.

By grace He circumcised Our heart,
By faith We'll ever stand.
Following His footsteps day by day,
Sustained by His loving kindness.

Dear seeking Children Of His Grace,
Who receive a spiritual ear,
Give thanks to God for His dear son,
For He is always near.

How sweet it is to feel enshrined,
In the mantle of His Love,
Some day He'll call Us to that home,
To live with Him above.

By George N. Lee
2414 Buena Dr.
Mobile, AL

I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.
John 10:9

BOOK NOTICES

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POETRY

A PSALM OF PRAISE

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands.

Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

Psalm 100

THE BEATITUDES

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Matthew 5

Signs of the Times

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PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS"

The existence, sovereignty, immutability omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah–the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the attonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistable, and in all cases. effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers–that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12/83
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

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EDITORIAL

PROVERBS IX:I, 6

Wisdom hath builded her house; she hath hewn out her seven pillars; she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table. She hath sent forth her maidens; she crieth upon the highest places of the city, who so is simple, let him turn in hither: as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled. Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding.

The wisdom of this world did not have anything to do with this work. Every step in this work was, and is, performed by wisdom. It cannot be otherwise, seeing that every good and perfect gift come from above (James I:17).

Come hither, dear reader, and let us, by the effectual calling of God, glean in the gospel field. It is the only good field for a poor sinner to glean in. We gleaned in the earthern field in the morning. Wisdom spoke to us of the blessings in that field, and we set forth to have our way and we lost our standing, we lost our footing, we all fell. Wisdom, which is from above, designed a far better piece of work from which we would gain a standing in her house, in the building not made with hands. As to the origin of sin, I feel to leave that where Paul left it, exactly where it shoud be left, ledged against us (See Romans 5). Wisdom was in charge from all eternity, and the events in the early morning of creation did not cause her to destroy her blueprint, but rather she was the Masterbuilder all the while.

At the time of this writing she had already designed, laid the foundation and finished her house. As far as chronology goes it is not worthwhile for me to know the year and date of this building. In my Book, it was designed and finished before there were manifested anyone to need or to dwell in this building. To me, it was built in eternity, and thus the time is dateless with God and man.

How little wisdom is displayed by man, and what is displayed is that which has been given to him, to us. As long as mortal man is left to himself, he is ever learning and he never will be able to come to a knowledge of the truth. What a wonderful doctrine it is that this wisdom was on the side of God's dear family, thus enabling them to escape the snare

laid for them (Psa. 124). So poor is the kind of house that the wisdom of men would build that the Lord came down and confounded them. How great and marvelous is that wisdom which is from above; even that wisdom that built her house before one of her children ever needed it. Every situation that has arisen in the travel of the family of God was builded, made ready for occupancy before there was anyone of God's family to need housing.

Mothers in a greater degree, perhaps, than fathers, would have a suitable abode for her coming children. Mothers and fathers do have a desire to provide good gifts for their children, and that is the usual custom among us all. However, we are earthly, mothers forget her suckling child; fathers leave them to their own resources but wisdom provides first and always for her children. This is certainly exemplified in the building of her house. She is justified of all her children, not too large a house, not cramped quarters.

Wisdom begins the work; she finishes the work. Fathers and mothers of the earth oft times do as best they can in teaching and providing for the welfare of their offspring, but oft times fails to give wisdom to them and they stray afar. But not so with the mother of the children of the kingdom of heaven.

It has been said that order is the first law of heaven. It is true. May God impart wisdom to both writer and reader that we may be blessed as a pair of travellers to sit at the feet of Jesus and to ever be found learning that wisdom from whence true contentment springs.

These seven pillars claim our attention. To all building contractors that would be one too many. Who would know how to build a building with an odd pillar? Who of all the earthly teachers and people of wisdom would look any further for an odd number of pillars? Do we have any use for this odd one? Does it have a place of usefulness in the whole. In the field of religion odd things are out. An odd pillar and an odd doctrine must not be had. Even things, to them are better. Each of these things must be compatible to human nature, therefore no oddities, no perplexities; no, not for a moment must there be such a thing as the purpose of God. That is not the seventh pillar, but it is the first pillar. It has been said that the cause purposeless is without a foundation. That is true in God's building as well as man's. Therefore in building the world, the house of wisdom, there must be a good and wholesome start, even a purpose that covers in detail all powers that be. A man that designs a house, or God that designs a world without a purpose is doomed to failure. To the amazement of the world at large, God counted up the cost to begin with; purposed in Himself all things, and, consequently, made the world and the fullness thereof. The world, still without wisdom, still learning, but never able to get a knowledge of the truth, is still in their pristine ignorance.

Since the Lord of wisdom has declared that He would pluck up every plant which the heavenly Father had not planted, I am equally sure that the removal (the attempt of removal) of anyone of the seven pillars or the attempt to add any pillars to the house of the Lord will meet with instant upheavel in the plans of those thus occupied.

In the providing for our families of te earth there is much vital labor necessary more than the mere building of a home. We are well aware of the difficulties involved for our unborn children if we left them unprovided for at their arrival in this earthy kingdom. It would be demoralizing

to children to be brought up under such rigid circumstances as that, to say nothing at all in regard to the contempt of our fellow citizens. Yet, they advocate such a hard doctrine as that, to wit, that the decision to be born is left up to them, an in addition that the food they get, and care that a babe must have in its infantile state is left up to them.

Come, dear children, gather around, and let us rejoice in the work our mother that begot us to better things than that, even a mother that builded her family a house before they arrived, and in addition had furnished the table to which each child is drawn by hunger and nature, and is made to know, and to hear and to heed Mother's voice, come and eat.

If not mistaken I write to you, that is, to the hungry and the destitute. Let us go up to the banqueting house which our Mother built, and to the table which her hand, even the hand of mercy dripping with her own blood, as she comes from Golgotha's Hill after having achieved victory over our adversary.

The soul feeding dainties on this table originated by purpose in the eternal mind of Wisdom. Every heir of hers were chosen in Her Son before the dust of the hills was laid. Not only were they chosen in Him before the curtains of time were let down, but every blessing from Him were according to that time of choice, and according to the purpose (or, if you prefer, predestination) of Him that chose them in Him. What a blessing indeed to be born with an appetite for these spiritual dainties, but what glories are concealed from the fancies of men, and are revealed by the Spirit of Wisdom. Thrice blessed art thou O Israel. Wisdom built you a dwelling, Wisdom furnished the table, and Wisdom wrought all of our works in us, even forgetting not to give us an appetite for such heavenly furnishings.

My dear readers, there is another doctrine. It is not from heaven; it is not to heaven born citizens; it is not the doctrine of Wisdom. In our relationship with the earth, the hostess of party functions request the attendin parties to contribute dish to help out. I do not object to that until it is brought in (or rather attempted to be brought into the house of Wisdom) to augment and to stretch out or increase or make up the lack in the furnishings of our Mother. That does not comfort; it has not any strengthening to a poor destitute sinner. This doctrine originated or was made manifest in a lie. Satan lied to our parents, he was, and is, a liar from the beginning. His doctrine was the doctrine of substitution. Substituting something else that was just as good and maybe better. It is not true doctrine; it is a fabrication, a conglomeration of partial truths close kin of Job's miserable comforters. When it is proclaimed today it sounds as out of place to the dear family of our mother Wisdom as it did to another of her sons in his day (See the testimony of Job).

So often the doctrine of God our Saviour is called a hard and offensive doctrine. Wisdom does not say so. Ignorant men say so. On one occasion the Saviour asked the question, to wit, The Saviour asked, Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? In His glorious ministry he asked that question several times. Not the first time did one ever answer Him. Thus it stands that not one in Bible days, nor in the days since then including the present day, has any one answered in the negative to His question. He does have that right.

Wisdom hath killed her beasts. She killed all of the beasts assigned to her, for her use. It was as much the work of Wisdom to give us the rigid law of Moses as it was the gift of the

grace or gospel dispensation. Every dove and pigeon, bullock and heifer were slain by Mother wisdom. That was the execution of the mandates of the law, and the law was given that the offense might abound. That Wisdom was designed that the offence might abound for where that offence abounded, grace did much more abound. Where that law was executed, it did of necessity, bring death to all that was used, either in the typical use of doves and pigeons and bullocks and heifers, or in the ultimate putting to death of the beast, the Lion of the tribe of Judea. What a display of mercy is this to poor sinners, and how free to them it was both in type and in the dying of the Lion of the tribe of Judea. My heart and mind and sould is given a respite from the burden of my guilt, of the burden of my many sins.

Not the first poor sinner could design such a glorious truth as this much less could they carry it out. It originated in the eternal mind of wisdom and she put the typical beasts, and the anti-typical Lion of the tribe of Judea to death. Poor sinner come drink deep of the ever flowing, ever free fountain of living waters.

The casual observer will say, There is not much wisdom in having the Lamb of God put to death for sinners that will never make a payment on the cost. Ah, come and listen closely little children. See the mighty display of that wisdom in saving the bride of Christ. She was ten thousand talents in debt and not a fathing to pay *with.* She was depraved within and without, and could not come into the nuptials of marriage. She could not do this. She never was seen as being able of herself to make a token payment. Now listen dear bankrupt saint. Listen at the work of Wisdom. She set Christ up in eternity as a Lamb slain for the sins of that bride. Time, even as tempetuous as it gets to be, will not have an interrupting sound as this good news sounds in the ears of poor sinful creatures. Eternity, with all of its coroding influence on created things will never keep a hearing ear from hearing the good news in such a rich, such a complete, such uplifting gospel truth as this. Wisdom arraigned all things in such a transcending manner that she had nothing to pay *with,* but there is still more of the work of grace displayed in the glory of it all. She purposed in eternity that she would have *nothing to pay.*

She hath mingled her wine. The wine was hers. She did not buy this at the local dispensary, nor does she have a particular location among the deacons of the church from which she keeps a supply on hand for emergencies. It does not have anything to do with alcoholic beverages, and yet these mingled wines of wisdom will give you a feeling that is produced only by this mixture of wines well mingled.

Weak, trembling, undone men in nature also mingle wine. Some of the weaker of these weak men try with all of their wisdom to take this wine as a beverage to assuage natural thirst in the kingdom of heaven. The two do not have anything in common, and will not mix anymore than will any other fleshly works of men and the grace of God mix. The attempt to mix any part of the life of natural living with spiritual living which Mother wisdom gives, ends in ignomy and shame to the user thereof.

But what exhileration there is in the joys of the wine of peace and humility of good works and humbly seeking to know the commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ and frequently gathering at the mercy seat seeking aid to walk therein. And what humiliation, and what trembling, and what contriteness of spirit in one that is made to drink of land of

Lodebar, and to look up to our mother Wisdom in thankfulness that the things which we so much fear of losing are hid from all the powers of darkness; that they cannot destroy them from us, that which they would take from us is hid with Christ in God, and not one thing of that which was treasured in the bosom of our Mother Wisdom can ever be destroyed, seeing that those powers does not know what it is that you have been given in Christ, nor do they know, the Giver of it all.

The table thus furnished and every morsel on it is unknown to them that would, if they could, destroy it. This table at which Wisdom's children dine is hid from ungodly men, and the taste and pleasant nourishment that the food gives is unknown as to source and effects that it produces to the recipients of it.

The ignorant would destroy that which feeds and causes prosperity in the kingdom of heaven if they knew what it was and where it could be encountered. Thus there is not any danger of this ignorant nation ever laying a hand on this table, nor of ever partaking of the riches the Wisdom has placed thereon for her little ones.

ELDER W. D. GRIFFIN

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

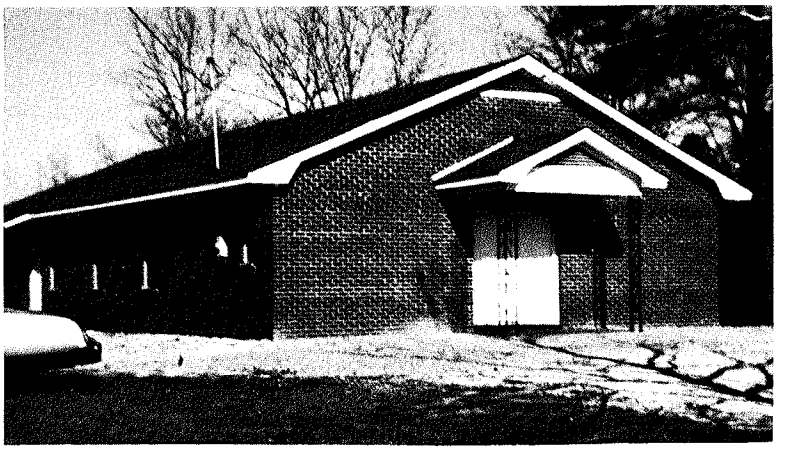

Bethel Church was constituted in 1937 and was built on the land given by Gedie and Ruth Blalock who were members there. The new and present building was built in 1980 at which time the name was changed from "New Home", the name used from the time it was constituted. Bethel is located between Steens, Miss. and Milport, Alabama and their meeting time is two o'clock on the third Sunday of each month. Their present pastor is Elder H.C. Moon.

NOTE: To introduce your church, please send a snap shot (preferably black and white) along with brief history, Sunday of your meeting, geographic location and name of present pastor.

CORRESPONDENCE

When my husband and I got to Monticello Church the fifth Sunday in October where the West Country Line Union was being held, Elder Spangler was opening the service with song and prayer. He called on Brother Cleo Roberson first and though, he hasn't been speaking long, he was blessed to preach so sweetly from one verse that reads, "the Lord is our strength and a very present help in the time of trouble." I feel he has been called, surely, and the Lord will bless him to preach the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Elder Wray was asked to preach next and he used scripture from the old part of the Bible, Isaiah, and spoke to our comfort and what he was blessed to read and say was food for our, I hope hungry souls.

Elder Kenneth Key was called on then, and he read from Hebrews twelth chapter, first and second verses. Now it was what he read and a dream I had early Sunday morning just before I woke up that I believe caused me to try to write these few words. I have always enjoyed hearing our pastor, but to me, and for me, he was blessed with this scripture to speak from so wonderfully well. I dreamed my dear mother, who has been dead for eight years, made the bed I slept in, and I walked in the room as she was finishing putting the bedspread on, stepped toward the bed and started to redo or fix the head and foot of the bed over, when she said, "is it not alright?" I couldn't touch it for I felt so strongly if I did, it would be wrong, so I said, "It will be alright", and we both walked out of the bedroom. I have a habit of doing things over that others do for me or asking them to do it a little better and it has condemned me until I feel it has become a sin. I do lots of other sins that I wish I didn't, but this has been and still is one of my worst sins, I feel, too hard to please, about little triffle things. Brother Key did not dwell on what I felt was for me. In the first verse, "let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doeth so easily beset us" but he expounded on all the good things that are written in both verses. I wouldn't have been anywhere else and how I enjoyed every word he said. I think what I quoted was a reproof for me, from the first verse. He didn't know I received it that way but I was given to think later that day that the Lord showed me in the dream how wrong and sinful I was acting, and then gave Brother Key scripture that fitted my condition so well. With the Lord's help I am going to try to lay aside this sin, harder than I ever have.

After a bountiful lunch, the meeting continued. My husband asked that we have the next Union meeting which will be in January, at Moons Creek Church. Elder Leonard Key was blessed to preach about, a child of grace has to be hewed as a little piece of rock, cut off here and a little there, making them fit for the Kingdom, using the temple that Solomon built out of a special kind of wood and material, as an example, making it so easy to understand.

Elder Spangler spoke last and he said if he had a text it would be one word, "anoint". I think he must have read from Samuel. He said the Lord told Samuel to anoint Saul a king over Israel and when Saul refused to obey the words of the Lord, Samuel was told to go to Jesse's house to find a king. After seeing all his sons that Jesse thought were alright or qualified, Samuel asked, are here all thy children? And he said, there remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel

said unto Jesse, send and fetch him. And the Lord said arise and anoint him, for this is he. I'm sure we all enjoyed Brother Spangler's preaching.

I believe the Lord was in our midst and I hope all there, were spiritually fed.

In Hope,
EMA SARTIN

Topeka, Kanas

I was so overwhelmed by distracting sorrow and distress I seemed to have forgotten the omnipresent God, and had no thought to call upon him as an ever-present help in time of trouble. But while so forgetful of him, he showed me, as I humbly hope, that he had not forgotten me, by speaking these words in my ear: As the days of a tree so shall the days of my people be. Then, in the midnight darkness and loneliness, in the midst of an ever-changing throng of a speeding train, I lay back in my seat, and with closed eyes, oblivious to all about me, a picture was spread before me such as I have never been able to portray with tongue or pen. The winter just passed has been another continuous siege of distracting grief and tribulation, and my mind reverts to the view I then had, and I have wished I might express to those of "like precious faith," and also of like trials and conflicts, some of the thoughts those words have brought to my mind. Being spoken to me as they were, I thought they were Scripture, but the only text I can find is in Isaiah XV: 22: "They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." No doubt the connecting sentences have a deep signifigance, and I would love to read after the pen of some one who is given understanding of them. As for me, if I attempt to search and find out God, I am apt to find that his judgments are unsearchable and his ways past finding out, and can only speak of the things which are given and revealed to me, as I humbly hope, by his Spirit, and leave them to his elect, precious, to judge whether they are of him, or only the emanations of fleshly imagination. If it was not a token of remembrance from a compassionate, unchanging God, then I fear I have never received a seal of his love, as he sometimes allows me to dare hope he has given me. I was often made to reflect on the words, "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness." It seemed that in this the Lord quickened again my slothful, forgetful heart, and for a little while my troubles were put in the background and I was given a little surcease from the tempest raging in my mind, and instead thereof a season of refreshing from his very presence, which he made me feel was going with me.

I have thought that the "tree" here spoken of represents Christ, who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and as his days so shall the days of his people be. As I lay back, with closed eyes, I seemed to see a little tree in all its verdant, springtime beauty, clothed with leaves and blossoms. In the warm sunshine and gentle breeze it waved and beckoned with its spreading branches, and how sweet to rest beneath its shade, enjoy its fragrant bloom, and reflect on the prospect of fruit to follow. So shall the days of my people be. Where is the similitude of the days of a tree and the days of the Lord's people? Let us go back to the early experience of a child of God,

"When converts first begin to sing,
Their happy sould are on the wing;
Their theme is all redeeming love,
Fain would they be with Christ above."

Oh what lovely blossoms, and what a sweet savor of Christ they send forth as they call and beckon to us to "come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." "Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein." The trees of the field do clap their hands, the cedars of Lebanon (the older brethern) bow at his feet, and praise him in fullness of joy, resting in the blessed promise that the Lord will not leave himself without witnesses. Perhaps the little tree had stood unnoticed, apparently dead, until the little leaves began to grow and the signs of life involuntarily began to appear. What rejoicing now that we see it is not dead, as it appeared, and now we hope to see the sweet fruits of the Spirit evidenced later on, for they shall take root downward and bear fruit upward. But, as the days of a tree, by and by the sun does not shine so brightly, clouds appear, and oh how dark it becomes. A storm arises, and in the raging the poor little tree sways and bends, the lovely bloom is beaten off and swept away, or covered with earth. The storm passes, and the little tree is left standing, not so proudly, perhaps, but of a more sober dignity, as, the promising bloom gone, the fruit buds begin to appear, and as the fruit increases in the upward branches the root is taking deeper hold in the earth. So are the days of my people.

"It is not long before they feel
Their feeble sould begin to reel;
They think their former hopes are vain,
They're filled with sorrow, grief and pain."

Cannot every child of God go back in memory to the time they thought they would always go on their way rejoicing in the bloom of their earliest love, believing the enemies of their carnal nature were all slain, and would never vex or annoy them any more? But alas, the little clouds begin to arise, vexations come, and the lovely bloom is beaten off as the sorrows of the world worketh death to the sweet spiritual enjoyment, perhaps leading them as far as Peter, to even deny the Lord, saying in doubt and unbelief, that after all it is only a delusion, and they were deceived and had deceived others. Where now is the blessedness ye spake of? The beautiful promising bloom which looked so pleasant is gone from their view, swept away and buried in the storm of earthly cares and sorrows that has so unexpectedly fallen upon them. "But the root of the righteous shall not be moved." The storm passes, and they find themselves still standing in the faith of God's elect, cast down, but not destroyed. Oh then the fruit buds begin to appear, as in humbleness they are brought to see that it is not in their own strength they stand. "I am the root and the offspring of David." This is the Root that extends downward in the earthern vessel of mercy. Each can say, O Lord, "my goodness extendeth not to thee," but his goodness does reach down to every vessel of mercy. The strong downward Root holds firm, and will not let them be overwhelmed. They are made to realize that "the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit," which is borne upward in praise and thanksgiving to God for deliverance from the storm. The many storms of affliction and sorrow, trials and tribulations, perils and persecutions break and beat upon the "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord," until they bow and bend, so shaken in mind they fear they cannot stand; no, not another day.

"I fear at last that I shall fall,
For if a saint, the least of all."

Yet when the storm passes, and the Sun of righteousness once more beams

forth, then in this light, and not their own feeble sight, they see it is not in their own strength they still stand, but the Strength of Israel has held them. Not by works of righteousness which they have done, not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord. Much more of the cherished fruit is gone. But when blooming youth is gone, and old age comes on, we are made to realize that it is the bitter, gnarly fruit of self-confidence and fleshly ambition that is being beaten off. It came from earth, and must fall back from whence it came, for "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up," but the "tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord," its fruit shall remain. One by one we see every earthy hope and joy beaten off and swept away, but the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace and fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, oh nothing shall ever be able to separate us from that. How gladly we should have the gnarly, poisonous fruits of the flesh pruned away, so that we might shine forth as the morning, with not a cloud to intervene between us and our Rock, who shelters us in this weary land of storms and trouble. As the tree grows older, as the growth in grace and in the knowledge of truth increases, the poor tempest-tossed child of God seems to gain strength in the storms, often stands more firm, and is not so easily tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine; does not so lightly bow and bend to the lo heres and lo theres, but the sweet fruits of the Spirit are borne upward to him, the Strength of Israel, the Root of David, in the earthen vessel, has kept him from falling, and enables him to say, I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me. If it is his will that I shall weather another storm he will give the old trunk, stripped of all the foliage of youthful hopes and ambitions, every branch of earthly aspirations and joys broken off, strength to endure. But oh the weakness of the flesh. How we do shrink and dread when we see the storm coming, though there is a "needs be" for it all, and we know that

"Not a single shaft can hit,
Until the God of love sees fit."

How we do feel the need of the prayers of all saints, for it does seem at times that this flesh and heart will surely fail. Oh may he, by the power of his might, when the adverse winds do blow, give me strength to still stand in the way, ready for whatever is in the counsel of his will to come next.

"As the days of a tree." How often have we seen the tall cedars, the sturdy oaks, beaten by the storms of many seasons almost to the ground, nothing left but their bare old trunks, and to all appearance have lived their time and served their purpose, yet they do not quite fall; not yet, their downward roots have not yet parted from the earth, they must wait the appointed time to fall. So shall the days of my people be. Old age is come, the bare old trunk is stripped of every alluring earthly joy, until there is nothing left to live for, and "I long to lay my armor by, and dwell with Christ at home," for

"Surely like a withered tree,
No fruit to me is found,
Why do I live, O Lord, I cry,
A cumberer of the ground!"

"When a few more days I've wasted,
When a few more scence are o'er,
When a few more griefs I've tasted,
I shall fall, to bloom no more."

But not yet. The downward Root has not yet parted from the earthen vessel, and though I often feel, especially in the heart-rendering trials I have endured of late, that there is no fruit borne upward from such a withered and weather-beaten old trunk, yet

all the days of my appointed time I must wait until my change come.

One night as I lay thinking of the trials and conflicts of the Lord's peculiar people these words came to my mind with force, "I see men as trees, walking," and I thought how like a tree is the walk of the Lord's people. None can see men, nor the people of God, walking as trees, until led out of the town, or world, as was the blind man, by God's own hand, and how short the time until made to see that as the days of a tree, so are the days of the Lord's people. He sometimes lays his hand heavily upon us, showing us what great things we must suffer for his sake, until we cry, "Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me." Whom he loves he rebukes and chastens, and it is his chastening hand that makes us look up, until we see clearly every man, every child of God, walking the same path, every one enduring the same storms and afflictions, for if ye be without chastisement, then are ye bastards and not sons. There is no place of rest for us in the town, or world; we cannot go back there, or tell to any in the town of the things we see clearly. They know nothing of the reproach of the cross, and have no sympathy for the mourning people of God. But to our own house, there we may freely go, sure to find there the sympathy and fellowship we crave. There all speak the same language, weeping with those who weep and rejoicing with those who do rejoice. Here we see men as trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, walking the same road, buffeted on every hand by storms without and within. The same storms that beat and bend one old tree beat upon all, and though one may feel that the storm has brought him a little lower than the rest ever get, yet all the rest feel the same way; less than the least of all saints. But in this our fellowship and our love made perfect, and we often find the lowest tree among the trees of the wood. What a comparison. The low apple-tree is the one that bears the fruit. The ones that stand the highest are not always the most fruitful. But "as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons." "Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly. A proud look he hates and abominates. The proud he knoweth afar off. But the fruit of his love on the lowly trees is sweet to our taste; yes, sweet, because when we are made to look up we see that his banner over us is love, and know that, "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me." "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

As the days of a tree, so are my people. As the tree falls, there shall it lie. It falls to earth, and returns to the dust as it was, and so shall it be until the bright morning of the resurrection, when the Lord shall bring again in power that which fell in weakness, and will clothe it again in the beauty of holiness, then shall we be satisfied. Every idol that now intervenes between us and our love will be swept away, and we shall see his face, and never, never sin. No more storms of darkness and sorrow falling upon us, no more crying of pain and anguish, no more griefs and heartaches, no more trouble and mourning, no more losses and crosses, no more wars and fightings, the conflict will be over, our warfare ended, and God himself shall wipe the tears from off all faces, for, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." Then shall we see him as he is, and be like him. "As the days of a tree [He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief] are the days of my people."

Submitted to the discretion of the editors, and through them to the

people of God, walking as trees, toiling, sorrowing, rejoicing, the half of which can never be told.

One of the least,
MARY ELLISON

EXPERIENCE

Danville, Virginia
June, 1926

To Elder W.R. Dodd:

It is with fear and trembling that I make this attempt to comply with your request that I write you my experience. It makes me indescribably humble that you should desire such a thing of poor insignificant me. You said if I had a mind. I have for a long time felt that I would love to leave behind me a written testimony of some of God's wonderful love, mercy, and tender care for me, a wretched hell-deserving sinner; yet, to this time I have never before ventured to try to pen any part of it, realizing that tongue nor pen can express what I have seen, felt, and handled of His goodness. I shrink from this attempt, feeling that those who know me best are ready to say (and truthfully) "She does not live up to her profession." Alas,

"I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I am not born again."

Yet, as I go back, as it were, to Bethel, and feel surely there has been some kind of change;since the things I once loved I now hate, and the things I once hated I now love; yet I don't know how to tell about it. When I can exclaim with the poet, "I once was lost but now I'm found, was blind, but now I see," the whole story is told.

In my nineteenth year I attended an association at Senaca meeting house in Campbell County, Virginia. I was having quite a nice time with the young folks (according to my raising). When services began I would find a seat and listen to the preaching. I got a close seat in the afternoon on Sunday, and heard, as I had never heard before, the closing sermon delivered by Elder E.V. White. The text was "But it has happened unto them, according to the true proverb: The dog is returned to his vomit again, and the sow that is washed to her wallowing in the mire." Oh! how plainly I could see that my profession at a Methodist Camp Meeting six years before was but filthy rags, and that I was a vile, helpless sinner. I found myself so miserable and undone. As they sung the last song and took the parting hand, I would have given all the world had it been mine, to have been one with them. Plainly did I see myself on the "left hand", with not one ray of hope. My sins, like mountains, rose before me, and I could see no way of escape from the justice of a sin-avenging God. I went home with a burdened heart, which seemed unbearable; but would not for anything have let my people know that I had had a serious thought.

I often read the Bible for my mother, always finding it a dull, tiresome task, and would feel much relieved when she would say, "Daughter, that will do for this time." But now I had a desire to read it in search of some promise for a vile, penitent wretch. I would steal my chance to read it after this manner: I kept a novel on the same table with the Bible; the novel I kept laying open, while I intently searched the Scriptures. But if I heard foot-steps down would go the closed Bible, and I would appear much interested in my novel. This searching continued almost three years; and instead of promises I found condemnation everywhere. The promises were there, but I could not claim them.

A few months after the association referred to above I was (in the abscence of my mother) entertaining a Primitive friend. Elder Wright was having an appointment at Whitehorn, three miles from home. I really wanted her to want to go, so there would be no suspicion that I cared anything about it (it being in the week at a busy time). No arrangement could be made for us to ride so I casually suggested that if she cared to go I would be glad to walk with her (fearing that she wuld not go). But God gave her a mind to say, "Alright." There were just a few old brothers and sisters present; the preacher, an ordinary looking stranger, came forward, and to me preached a wonderful sermon along the line of experience. While he described conviction, I could but wonder how that stranger could tell exactly how I felt; but alas, when he began to describe deliverance I again saw myself "cut off." None of that fit my case. My burden of sin grew heavier all the time, as I journeyed on, trying to do something to induce God to be merciful to me.

But by and by the secret of my soul trouble leaked out, (It was in God's time). People would talk to me on the subject of religion and before I would hardly be aware of it, I would be preacing a sovereign God; that though He sent my soul to hell, His righteous law approved it well. In my poor heart there was a constant yearning that God would have mercy, and not mete out to me justice. I firmly believed that He had a chosen people; and that all for whom Christ died, would be everlastingly saved; but did He die for me? No not for so hell-deserving a sinner as me (words fail me here). Sinking, yes sinking into utter despair, there came into my mind a blessed hymn (I knew but little about singing, but this one line). I must have sung with the "Spirit and understanding." I sung as I had never sung before, and have never sung since, - that pleading hymn, "Father, I stretch my hand to thee, etc." I did not finish all the words, for my soul burst forth in such rapturous adoration to Him, who I then felt had, for Christ's sake, heard and answered my fervent prayer. I could not see then, as it were by an eye of faith, how our dear Redeemer had (before I drew my breath) with His precious blood, paid all that justice claimed. In the place of dispair, there sprang up in my breast a hope that has been an anchor to my poor tempest-tossed soul on to this present time. Many the times I have felt that the anchor was gone and the old vessel must sink, each time to find it still there, only down under the deep water just out of sight. On that memorable day, with my burden gone I knew not where or how, I enjoyed undisturbed bliss of mind for just a few hours. After which period God, for a purpose of His own, let the Devil say to me "You are deceived, there is nothing to it." Then doubts, yes doubts that have followed me on and on, sprang up within me. What? hope all the way and doubt all the way? yet not contradictory, but too deep for finite minds. Now when I read the Bible, I dare claim those sweet promises as mine too.

I soon was given a desire to follow my Lord and Master in the ordinance of baptism (the form of which I had never a doubt). To do this I must ask a home with the people of God. I dearly loved them, and desired to be with them; but the feeling of unworthiness that followed me I cannot describe; neither can I describe my longing to be with them.

It was in the month of July, 1886, that my hope of deliverence came. The third Saturday of that year I went before the church at Whitethorne; could not tell them anything, only that I wanted to live with them,

but was too unworthy. Oh, how deeply I felt it. They received me, and I was baptised the next day, with a sister who had freely talked to the church before me. As our pastor, Elder G.W. Hundley, raised me from the watery grave, I strangled just a little, but gave it no thought in my happiness, for this happiness was to be mine for only a few minutes. As we went up from the water to the mill-house to change our clothing the other sister just behind me remarked (it was thoughtlessly, I am sure) to a friend: "I am so glad I did not strangle; I have always heard that it was a sign they were not changed." Dear old sister Hodnett, who walked beside, lovingly put her arm around me, saying, "Don't let that bother you." But alas, it had taken hold on my very heartstrings. I saw myself deceived; and I had a public manifestion of it to so large a crowd of people. I was a reproach to the Church of God; and many other similar things I felt. But there was a deep yearning of heart that God in Mercy would (in His own way) show me clearly if I was deceived, that I might have my name removed from the church book and turn back from it all. My eyes closed in slumber that night with that petition in my soul. God gave me a dream, (you see it is said we cannot get along without a dream) of a most beautiful baptism and I the candidate. I awoke with a feeling of satisfaction concerning my baptism. I might write on and on but half wuld not be told of how God, in His love and tender mercy, has brought me on these many years. Sometimes on the mountain-top, but more frequently deep down in the valley, sometimes the deeper down the more beautiful the Lily I see. I am still clinging to that little hope, be it imaginary, or be it real, it is mine for God gave it to me.

Pardon me. I have written too much. May God give you, and all the household of faith a mantle of charity to cover my imperfection.

That means me.

BELLE NEAL

The above experience is of the mother of Brother Willie Neal - - -The Editors

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

August 1, 1898

"But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt." Before beginning our remarks upon this sentence, we will call attention to the fact that the blessed Redeemer is recorded in the seventeenth chapter of Luke, as referring to this narrative, and as enforcing his warnings to his disciples then, by the reference to it.In what we shall have to say concerning the text, we desire to also call attention to the use of it made by the Savior. We need not narrate the whole story recorded in this nineteenth chapter of Genesis, as it is familiar to all Bible readers, and as any one can turn to the narrative and read for themselves. The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were devoted to destruction, for their great wickedness. Lot and his family dwelt in Sodom. Out of his divine compassion for them God had commanded Lot to depart from the devoted city, that he should not partake of her plagues, and her destruction. The righteous soul of Lot had been vexed at the wickedness of the city, as we are told elsewhere. Abraham, when told of the impending destruction of the city, had interceded for them before the Lord, and had received the promise that if ten righteous men could be found therein, the city should be spared. But

when the angels of God had come to the city and tried it, there were not found even ten righteous men. The condition of the city with regard to its wickedness is plainly discovered by what they tried to do to the two angels. Even the sons-in-law of Lot were involved in the general iniquity which abounded; and even Lot was of such a worldly mind that he and his wife and daughters lingered, loath to leave such a pleasant home in the plain. But the Lord had such compassion upon them, that the angels laid hold upon their hands, and drew them out in haste. How sad it is that not only the world loves wickedness, but that the people of God themselves, so much love the ease and pleasures of the world, that they are slow to leave the evil land, and would still linger there, and though vexed with the evil conduct of the wicked, yet would continue to live in intimate association with them, were it not that the Lord has more compassion upon them, than they have upon themselves, and lays hold upon them and draws them out.

Every believer has to confess with shame, his love of pleasure, and folly, and ease, and that nothing but sovereign grace has constrained him to go out from these things. Even though he can but vex his soul at all the wickedness of the world, yet he lingers near, finding that all the desires of the flesh, and of the mind, go after that which delights the wicked. Therefore he takes great shame to himself, and only praises grace which has saved him. Even when his face is Zionward, and he steadfastly is minded to go forward, with sorrow and shame he finds a deceitful heart inclined to all the evil when he would leave behind. If he does not look back indeed, he finds a law in his members which constantly would induce him to look back. And so he cries out against himself, "I cannot do the good that it would." He feels that his best obedience is marred by the evil heart within him, which makes his service but partial, and nothing to be boasted of. While this is true of all the people of God, as they all will confess to their shame, and while each one feels to praise unfailing love and care, that they are still pressing on to the better land, and are still going out from the cities of the plain, to the mountains of God, yet it is sorrowfully true of some, that they are found, like Lot's wife, looking back.

First, we are told in the narrative that they lingered, even though that night they had had proof of how great the wickedness of the city was. That night Lot had interceded in vain for the safety of the guests whom the Lord had sent him. He had full proof that he had nothing in common with those among whom he dwelt. Yet his foolish heart was so enamored of the place, that he lingered. But let us not be found judging Lot, lest we judge also our own selves. We know that this world is not our home, that as believers we have nothing in common with it. It does not believe what we do; it does not love what we do; we have visitors which it does not, and for which it does not care, and it despises the heavenly guests, which have come to abide with us. O what a wretched heart that will still linger amid such senses. How little, after all, we are weaned from the world. How much we love it still. But by all this, how is the compassion and mercy of God toward us magnified. Surely there is nothing in us that can merit esteem, or give the Creator delight. Yet he loves us; he loves us without any reason that exists within ourselves. He loves us freely, and because he wills, there is, there can be no other reason. His is the only free love in the universe. How great was the

mercy that could pardon the lingering of Lot, and lay hold upon the hands of him, and his, and draw them out, and hasten their going.

Second, we are told in the narrative that Lot still so much loved the cities of the plain that he could not bear to think of going to the mountains, to which he had been bidden to flee. We recall that when the land was before Abraham and Lot, to choose between them, there was so much of a worldly spirit in Lot, and so little of that which possessed Abraham, that he chose the plain where there appeared to be a prospect of an easy life, rather than submit the choice to God, and that Abraham took that country which Lot had rejected. And now, in the time of the destruction of the city, we find his heart lingering around these same pleasures. So he asked of the angels of God that they would not send him out to the mountains, lest he should meet some evil and die. There was a little city called Zoar, near by, and he asked that instead of departing to the mountain, he might turn aside there and abide. His heart was much in the world of wickedness yet. He could not give up all, and dwell in the mountains which God had chosen for him. How slow we are to learn that God's way is best. How much, even the best of those who love ad serve God, live in the world. We excuse many things upon the ground that "it is such a little one." We know and say that this world with all its glory, honor, fame, position and wealth, is doomed to destruction. At the best it can abide but for a little time. Still more we confess that its cares, and pleasures, and ambitions, keep us from the enjoyment of the best, the everlasting things. Yet we are so wedded to it, that when we are bidden to flee to the mountains, where we shall be carried above the plain of this world, and which is our proper abode, we still cling to the world. We do not obey the injuction of the apostle in full measure when he says, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." On the contrary, we do set our affection on things below, and grovel in the earth. O how great the mercy of God, that we are not left to perish in Sodom, but are hastened out.

Nothing describes the experience of us all, and the confession which we must make, better than the testimony of one who when asked, What part he had done in his salvation? said, "The Lord determined to save me, and I did all I could against it." There is not a foot of the road which has not witnessed a warfare. The flesh striving against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. How many little cities of the plain we dwell in. How many worldly things claim our affection, and our attention. How loath we are to leave the world. We do not mean how loath we are to die, as we must when the end of life's journey is reached, but how loath we are to be separated from the world in our love, and in our life, day by day. How often the deceitful heart says, "Is it not a little one?" And yet Lot disobeyed God in this thing. The little city was of the plain, as much as was Sodom. Ah, wretched, vile, deceitful heart, that can still cling to what belongs to the world. In this city of the world, Lot found a snare, and through drunkenness was led into grievous sin with his daughters. And Moab and Ammon, deadly foes of Israel in all their history afterwards, were the fruits of this sin. Are not these things written for our learning, upon whom the ends of the world have come? O, that we might be shown the right way, and earnestly abide and walk in it.

In the third place, we are called to

contemplate a still more open violation of the word of the Lord. They have been forbidden to look behind them. Permission had been granted to the weakness of Lot to turn aside into the little city, but no permission had been granted to look behind. If still there is a lingering in the world for a little, thre is not to be a looking back. To look back would show that the heart was not in the matter of escape from the sin of the world, with its destruction. Lingering and turning aside into the little city, is from the weakness of the flesh, which the Lord pities, as a father pities his children, because he knows our frame, and remembers that we are dust; but to look back, while the angels of God are hastening us away, is the result of willful perverseness. There is, according to the testimony of the apostle, such a thing as sinning willfully, after we know the truth, and this is an altogether different thing from being overtaken in a fault. For this willful sinning there remains no more sacrifice, but on the contrary, "A certain fearful looking for a judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." When Lot's wife looked back, it seems to us that her sin came under this head. There was no sacrifice for it. The chastisemen must be inflicted, both to vindicate the commandments of God, and as a warning to his people during all ages. So the Lord himself said to his disciples, "Remember Lot's wife." We believe that Lot's wife must represent one who truly belongs to the family of God, and it seems to us to be an undoubted truth that some of the Lord's own people do look back to the world of sin and folly from which they had escaped, and are engulfed in it, and become so much like the world, that the eye of man cannot tell the difference between them. But how glorious the consideration that, "The foundation of God stands sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." The Lord knows, if we do not.

Lot's wife, looking back, was turned into a pillar of salt. In other words, she became like the world around her. In all the plain of Sodom, there rained down fire and brimstone, and the plain was incrusted with elements, which would not suffer any green thing to grow, and where nothing could live, of bird, or beast, or fish. Salt is the sure destruction of all where it falls. We use it to preserve meat, and other things, but we must remember that it does so through the destruction of all life, which would feed upon that which we wish to preserve. It preserves one thing by destroying other things. It is therefore primarily the agent of death and destruction. The region of the Dead Sea is today desolate, by reason of the exceeding saltness of the sea, and of salt mingled in the land around. There is a solemn meaning then in the turning of Lot's wife into a pillar of salt. It signified that she had become filled with the elements of the world around her. She had so lived after the flesh that she had died. While she was so much of the world, no spiritual emotion or exercise could live in her. In the Bible sense of the word she was dead. She was identified with the world around her. She stood as a monument of the evil of looking back to the world, and living after the flesh. In all ages of the history of the church, some who have once loved God and his cause, have become enamored of the world so much that they have lost all spiritual interests in the things of the kingdom of God. They have wandered off so far as to never attend the ministry of the word, or upon the services of the sancturary. They have lived in the company of carnal men, and have enjoyed the pleasures of the world, and have loved pleasure more than God. Some

are in our mind as we write, of whom we believe this to be true. They are pillars, but not pillars of the truth. They are monuments, but not monuments of grace, so far as their daily life is concerned. When they shall be awakened to the knowledge of their sins, and their backslidings shall be healed, as they shall be some day, they will mourn, and will feel that none are such monuments of grace as are they.

We may all, if the words of the Master are true, and of this we must not doubt, become pillars of salt. We may become monuments of God's anger against sin. We may sow to the world and reap corruption. We may so look back to the world that we shall become as the world, and none can see aught that differs from the world. The light within has not died, but it has become concealed. It has been put under a bushel. How terrible are the effects of sin. How much must Abraham have felt to praise that God who had given him such faith that he had not chosen the country of the plain. How great must have been his estimation of that grace which had kept him from looking back, when he was bidden to go out from his own country, and from his own kin, to a land which he did not know of then, but which should afterwards be shown him.

While Lot must have afterwards bemoaned his unbelief and half-heartedness, in the obedience which he had rendered to God. On the other hand, Abraham could not praise himself for his obedience, but must ever praise that grace which had wrought in him to the end that he might believe and render the obedience of faith. Sin has its wages, but obedience has no wages of eternal life, for this is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. If any of those who love and serve God, are now dwelling in the heavenly land that was promised to them through Jesus Christ, and dwelling there in peace, they cannot say it is because of their obedience. They must and do praise the sovereign grace of God, in it. This we know by experience. We have never felt that we could attribute any spiritual blessing which we had received to any merit of ours; but we have ever felt when darkness and sorrow have been ours, we have deserved it all. We have had the wages of sin, but we have never found any wages of righteousness. Here all, all, is of grace. If we have in anything obeyed, while others have not, this we know is not to our credit, but to the praise of grace. From us then must all boasting be excluded. The peace and the obedience which leads to peace are alike to the praise of the glory of his grace. We repeat the words of the Savior, "Remember Lot's wife." We trust that in the hearts of many of our readers, he has spoken these words, and if not the very words themselves, yet the substance and meaning of them. It is noteworthy that when the Savior used these words, he was speaking also of destruction which should come upon the people, as it had come upon Sodom . The hearts of men are not changed with the advancing centuries. Men are no better now than when Sodom was consumed. It is still true that the hearts of disciples are deceitful, and cling to the world, and so the blessed Master implies, when he bids the disciples learn from Lot's wife. For ourselves, and our readers, we could desire nothing better than that the lessons of this narrative might abide with us. O, that our separation from the world might be more complete. O, that the disposition of heart which would lead us to look back, might be so bound, and kept in subjection, that we might be daily, monuments of the grace which teaches us that denying ungodliness,

and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present evil world.

When we began this article, we expected to write but briefly upon this matter, but the subject had enlarged, and we have written as it has been opened to us. We shall be compelled to leave some other things, of which we expected to write at this time, until a later date. The subject has been to us a very solemn one. We trust that it may not be wholly without profit to others.

ELDER F. A. CHICK

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

At the request of Little Creek Old School Baptist Church, near Delmar, Delaware, for the purpose of calling a pastor, Welsh Tract Old School Baptist Church, Newark, Delaware, in the afternoon session on August 14, 1983 passed a motion to call a Presbytery consisting of the Deacons and Elders present who were in good standing at home and who were in fellowship with the churches involved. All present were considered to be qualified. The function of the Presbytery was to examine Brother Robert N. Lackey and, if found to be qualified in accordance with the written word of God to the satisfaction and discretion of its collective judgment, to ordain him to the full work of the gospel ministery.

The Presbytery was convened with Elder James F. Poole of Welsh Tract Church chosen moderator, Elder C. C. Morris of Saints Rest Church , Dallas, Texas, Deacons Clarence Huston of Little Creek Church, William S. Adkins, Willie A. Davis and Frank A. Holland, all of Snow Hill Church, Snow Hill, Maryland, and Francis A. Adkins of Welsh Tract Church, the latter chosen clerk of the Presbytery. Welsh Tract Church, at Brother Lackey's request, had specifically askd Elder Morris to participate in the Presbytery.

Elder Poole noted that the Presbytery had no function or power but to carry out the wishes of the church and the existence of the Presbytery was only for the duration that the church was in conference.

After the candidate was presented to the Presbytery, on motion by Elder Morris, second by Brother Huston, Licentiate Lackey was asked to relate his experience and call to the ministery. The moderator asked that the qualifications of a minister in 2nd Timothy be read so Brother Lackey's experience and call could be judged. The Presbytery was satistied with Brother Lackey's testimony.

The candidate was then examined concerning his doctrinal stand. In response to a question about the desire to speak, Brother Lackey stated that his desire was to be with the people of God, to be a part of them, and, if it be the Lord's will, to speak. He was asked if there was any conflict in that and the verse, "He that desireth the office of bishop desireth a good work". He stated that if the desire to speak is a good work, being placed there by the Almighty God, God makes it a good work.

Brother Lackey was asked by Elder Morris to express his feelings regarding "foot washing" and if it should be a test of fellowship. He replied that if the Lord would give him grace to say what he believes, it will never be made a test of fellowship.

Brother Lackey was asked if, when he goes out among the Baptist people and feels pledged to support the Articles of Faith of his church, Welsh Tract, there is any way in which he could compromise the article con-

cerning the decrees of God. He responded that before being excluded from the limited predestarians in Gore, Oklahoma, he had quoted Article IV of the Philadelphia Confession of Faith, which had been adopted by them. He further stated that he believed the article before he was a member a Welsh Tract and has since read nothing in the Scriptures which would change his mind.

From the questions and responses and prior knowledge of Brother Lackey's stand on issues, the Presbytery was satisfied with his doctrinal stand.

The Presbytery proceeded with the charge. Elder Morris delivered the charge using the following Scriptural references: Acts 20:28, Isaiah 40:1-2, Isaiah 58:1, and Jude 3-4. Elder Poole followed with additional comments using references from 2nd Timothy 4:1-5 and the 20th chapter of Acts.

Elder Morris and Elder Poole proceeded with the observance of "Laying on of Hands" with Elder Morris speaking in prayer.

The minutes consisting of the work of the Presbytery were read and adopted.

Brother Lackey was then returned to the church as a duly ordained Elder, the Presbytery recommending Elder Robert N. Lackey to the Church of God of the Old School, Absolute Predestinarian Primitive faith and order. The church approved the work of the Presbytery unaminously. Afterward, following the dissolving of the Presbytery, the brethern and friends of the church extended the Right Hand of Fellowship to Elder Lackey. The Afternoon session concluded with prayer by Elder Lackey.

By order of the Presbytery and the church,

FRANCIS A. ADKINS - Clerk
ELDER JAMES F. POOLE - Moderator

CONTRIBUTIONS

Contribution List For July 1983

Mrs. William Griffith, NY $7.00
Mrs. Nellie Bunn, VA 5.00
Mrs. Nellie Bunn, VA 5.00
Mrs. Susan H. Smith, NC 3.00
Mrs. Havis Donaldson, AR 1.00
Cleavie M. Edwards, NC 3.00
Rufus L. Jacks, AL 50.00
Mrs. Mary H. Brooks, AL 12.00
James L. Howell, AL 5.00
Clyde M. Haynes, NC 3.00
Mrs. William L. Lee, VA 7.00
Irvin L. Slaughter, NC 3.00
Mrs. Pattie B. Krewatch, DE ... 23.00
Mrs. W.N. Tilley, NC 3.00
Mrs. Ruth Vick, TN 3.00
Mrs. Gladys Todd, MS 3.00
Mrs. Verdie Wheeler, NC 7.00
Mrs. Eliz. T. Barnes, OR 7.00
Mrs. Celeste Welch, NC 2.00
Mrs. E.S. Thompson, VA 3.00
Mrs. E.A. Collins, FL 3.00

Contribution List For September 1983

B.F. Poindexter, VA $1.00
J.J. Monroe, IL 2.00
J.D. Whaley, Sr., NC 2.00
Mrs. Ruth Sparkman, TX 3.00
Mrs. Essie Bane, WV 2.00
F.L. Short, VA 1.00
Coy J. Whitfield, NC 3.00
Mrs. Maude Spencer, VA 3.00
Mrs. S.G. Harrolson, KY 3.00
Hobart M. Stallard, KS 2.00
R.M. Burnette, NC 3.00
Jimmy & Sue Hamm, TX 18.00
Mrs. Jenny Osborne, MD 7.00
Paul W. Hopkins, NC 3.00
Mrs. Bertha Summers, NC 7.00
Mrs. Mamie Moran, VA 1.00
Ernest Dotson, Sr., TX 3.00
Aubrey Oakes, VA 7.00
Mrs. Maria Adams, VA 12.00
A.E. Moran, VA 25.00

Mrs. Roma H.C. Smith, AL .....
In memory of Mrs. Mable D. Hataway 25.00
Miss Willye Mae Warren, MD .....
Bequeathed To
Signs Of The Times 100.00

George N. Lee, AL..... 1.00
Mrs. Ernest Blair, VA 7.00
Mrs. Ray Watson, AR..... 2.00
C.I. Randolph, AL 5.00
Mrs. Maggie Culp, KY 23.00
Mrs. Clarence Baublitz, MD ... 7.00
Miss Eva Hollar, NC..... 2.00
Mrs. Thelma Dickerson, NC... 2.00
Babs Lee Hagar, LA..... 87.00
Jerry P. Cockman, NC..... 18.00
A.J. Griffin, AL 3.00
Mrs. Kelly Watson, NC..... 2.00
Mrs. Audrey Dyer, VA 3.00
William L. Midkiff, Sr., VA.... 2.00
Mrs. Ester B. Cole, NC..... 1.00
Mrs. W.J. Thompson, VA 3.00
Mrs. Clyde Rhoades, TX 1.00

OBITUARIES

GARY E. AKERS

Bother Gary E. Akers, son of the late Samuel Henry Akers and Eliza Jane Akers, was born in Franklin County, Va., on July 18, 1894, and passed away in a Wilson, N.C., hospital on May 19, 1983. He was married to the former Bertha Cummings in 1912 and the Lord blessed them with a few months more than 66 years of marriage. Mrs. Bertha passed away on October 10, 1982. She was a very dedicated companion to Brother Gary, and although she was not a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, she attended the church faithfully with him. He was in the hospital at the time of her death and could not attend her funeral.

He is survived by one son, Fred Akers of Atlanta, Ga.; one daughter, Mrs. Judy Butner of Wilson, N.C. (in whose home he spent the last few months of his life); one son died in infancy; four grandchildren; one brother, Auborn L. Akers of Roanoke, Va.; two sisters, Sister Pearl Law of Roanoke, Va. and Mrs Grace Waddell of Richmond, Va.

Brother Gary joined the Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church on September 24, 1922 and was baptized by the late Elder George Dyer on October 1, 1922.

So much could be said about our brother in Christ, but words fail me. He loved to sing and was called so often to lead the singing at funerals of his brethren and friends and in the Church he attended. He will be long remembered for visiting the hospitals and the afflicted. He was highly esteemed because of his orderly walk here in this life, doing deeds of kindness, ever ready to help any when his services were needed.

It was more than a year before his passing that he was unable to attend his church, but when we visited him, he always enquired about the meetings. His faith in Christ was strong, which was manifested in his quiet, kind manner-he lived a full and rich life, one that his family can look back upon with pride.

His funeral was conducted at Oakeys Funeral Home on May 21, 1983 by Elder O. K. Tench, who spoke so comforting to the many brethren, sisters and friends that filled the chapel, after which he was laid to rest in Fairview Cemetery under a beautiful blanket of flowers, there to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

May we bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, feeling surely our loss is his eternal gain.

At the request of Sister Law, this memorial was written and humbly submitted by an unworthy sister.

MRS. L. C. (RLEE) HOUCHINS

HESTER HOLLAND VERNON

Plesantville Primitive Baptist Church is sad at the passing of our dear sister in Christ, Hester Vernon at the age of eighty-five. She and her husband, Brother Holman Vernon were baptised the same day by their pastor Elder H.W. Wray over twenty years ago. He passed away in 1981. Sister Hester was a devoted member and attended her meetings regularly until two months before her death. We miss her very much. She was blessed with grace to endure all things to the end.

She was born in Patrick County, Virginia. She was the daughter of the late William L. and Sarah Lou Gilley Holland and had lived in Rockingham County most of her life. For some years they had made their home with a daughter, Mrs. Nancy Huchens, Greensboro, N.C. Surviving are daughters, Mrs. Janie Brown, Rt. 2 Madison, N.C., Billie Lee Vernon, Madison, N.C. Ten grandchildren, seventeen great-grandchildren.

Sister Vernon died May 4, 1983 in Moses Cone Hospital, Greensboro, N.C. Her funeral was held at Plesantville Primitive Baptist Church May 6, 1983 by her pastor Elder H. W. Wray. Burial was in the church cemetery.

May the Lord comfort her dear family.

Written by RACHEL WRAY

SISTER MARY LOUISE TAYLOR EVERETT

The death of our dear sister, Louise Taylor Everett brings the painful duty of writing an obituary of her death. It was the mind of Flat Swamp Church to appoint me as this committee, but I feel so weak in attempting to write of one I feel was so humble and so strong in her faith.

Sister Louise was born September 24, 1905, the daughter of the late Gilbert and Betty Jones Taylor. She passed away August 2, 1983, in Martin General Hospital, making her stay on earth almost 78 years. She was married to William A. Everett on June 6, 1923, who died on October 28, 1973. She was laid to rest in Martin Memorial Gardens. Her funeral was conducted by Elder Reeves Smith and Elder J.T. Prescott.

Sister Louise and Brother Bill were blessed with four children: Elizabeth Bailey of Raleigh, Mary Louise White of Windsor, William Everett of Raleigh, and Maurice Everett of Winston-Salem.

Sister Louise was blessed to unite with Flat Swamp Primitive Baptist Church the first Sunday in July 1971, along with her husband, Brother Bill Everett. They were baptized by Elders J.T. Prescott and E.C. Harrison that same day.

Sister Louise was afflicted physically the years of her membership, but this never caused her to be slack in her duties to her church. She was always willing to do her part and push herself to do lots of things it looked as is she was not physically able to do. She was blessed to show the love she manifested for her church and the bretheren and sisters. She offered a home for her pastor and other members away from home and always made them feel welcome.

I was blessed to be with her on three occasions before she had surgery and I don't think I ever saw anyone with more faith and trust in their God. She always desired to have prayer and seemed so appreciative of what one was blessed to say and she would always add, "I feel that I know the Lord has been with me so far and He will continue

to be with me."

Her four children were very attentive to her during her sickness. I know they will miss her, but they have no regrets that they did not do everything they could for her comfort.

We at Flat Swamp will miss her very much, but we feel she has gone to that rest prepared for her and all that love the Lord. Now she will sleep that peaceful sleep to await the words of her Savior saying, "Come inherit that everlasting home prepared for you before the foundation of the world."

We express our deepest sympathy to her children and all who were near and dear to her. We extend to them a desire to have them visit us at Flat Swamp at any time.

Done by the order of conference first Sunday in August, 1983.

ELDER REEVES SMITH, Moderator
HASSEL ALLEN, Clerk
HASSEL ALLEN, Committee

FANNIE LESTER THOMASON

It pleased our Heavenly Father to call home one of His dear children, Fannie Lester Thomason, August 13, 1983 in Southside Community Hospital in Farmville, Virginia.

She was the daughter of Rufus Lester and Lillie Thompson Lester. Her stepfather was Elder Lonnie Cummings. She was born April 2, 1899 making her stay on earth 84 years, 4 months, and 10 days.

She is survived by one daughter, Virginia Thomason McGlynn; Kissimmee, Florida; one son, Ralph Thomason, Amelia, Virginia; four grandchildren; seven great grandchildren and one great great grandchild; one sister, Mrs. Randal Lester; Roanoke, Virginia; one brother Woodson Cummings; Pulaski, Virginia; a host of cousins and friends.

She united with Valley View Primitive Baptist Church May 16, 1948. She always attended Church when she was able. It was one of her greatest pleasures to entertain the Ministers, Bretheren and Friends in her home.

Sister Thomason truly demonstrated her unselfish love and devotion when she left her home and went to live with her son to help care for his three small boys. They loved her like a mother and she loved them like her own children.

About five years ago she became ill and was hospitalized several times with a bone deterioration of her spine. Her family was very protective of her after she became unable to do physical work. Her love and influence meant so much to them. She read her Bible faithfully and corresponded with her many friends and relatives.

She attended the Richmond Primitive Baptist Church as long as she was able. Elder Denver Simpson and wife visited her each First Sunday on their way to Church. She cherished their visits and prayers.

Her funeral was held August 15, 1983 at Richardson and Horn Funeral Home, Christiansbury, Virginia by Elder Roy Agee and Elder Denver Simpson. Her body was laid to rest in Sunset Cemetary, Christiansbury, Virginia beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the call of her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the

Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the World."

Written by one who loved her dearly,

FANNIE SUE LUCAS

EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

Available to you for $1.00 per copy as long as supply last. Send your order with remittance to:

Signs Of The Times, Inc.
Rt. 1, Box 65
Keeling, Virginia 24566

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:
And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

John 10:27, 28

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace.
In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer;
I have overcome the world.

John 16:33

BOOK NOTICES

BOOKS AVAILABLE

Editorials by Elder Beebe Vol. 3 & 4 $16.00 each plus $2.00 for mailing.

The Priesthood Of The Son Of God, $5.00 each plus $1.00 for mailing.

Feast of Fat Things, $5.00 each plus $1.00 for mailing.

SEND ORDERS TO:

Elder James F. Poole
P.O. Box 1250
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

Having been requested by different people, at different times to leave upon record my various experiences i the ministry for the last sixty years I am sending forth this book.

Included in the Book first, is my personal experiences among the churches, including baptizings, serving of churches, and the experiences of a number of people in being brought to the church.

Also, a number of editorials that I wrote for the Signs Of The Times years ago, on the subjects of the various practices of the old school Baptist, duty of deacons, and other subjects.

The book should be available by Jan. 1st, 1984. The price will be $5.00 postpaid. All orders will be mailed in the order that they are received. It will be approximately 128 pages, paperback.

SEND ORDERS TO:
Rt. 6, Box 270
Danville, Va. 24541

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
Rt. 1, Box 65 Keeling, Virginia 24566

PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS"

The existence, sovereignty, immutability omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah–the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the attonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistable, and in all cases. effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers–that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 1/84 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

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EDITORIAL

With this issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we start another volume, ending one hundred and fifty years of continuous publication.

We want to thank the God of all grace, the giver of every good and perfect gift, who has blessed the editors to send forth to the readers that which is most surely believed among God's people and that which is both comforting and edifying.

In the July issue we started printing the prospectus of the "Signs" and have continued it each month. Some have asked where did this come from and who is its author. It was composed by Elder Gilbert Beebe who established the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in 1832 and was printed in the first copy. Its purpose is to set forth the doctrine for it to uphold and as a guide line for the material to go forth in its pages.

Some querys have been made concerning articles number two and number nine. Number two "The absolute predestination of all things". To me the word absolute does not add to that which God has decreed, purposed, or that which He foresaw. It only accents that the wills and shalls of God are sure and steadfast and that which He predestinated will surely come to pass. God is unchangeable and is still at the helm, reigning and ruling in heaven and amongst the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay His hand. He works and none can hinder and He hinders and none can work.

Article number nine states that "The church of Jesus Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers". This is not referring to the militant churches and their members but the church of Jesus Christ, the body that is fitly framed together and groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. The baptism in mind is the baptism of fire and the holy ghost, the spiritual baptism. The ordinance of water baptism which is required to become a member of our churches here is only an act of an acquitted conscientous toward God, and is not essential for eternal life.

As we enter into the one hundred and fifty second year we pledge our best efforts and pray God's continued

blessings to be with us.

We want to thank all of you who have written or sent in articles for publication. We encourage you to keep this up. Don't forget "The Church Of Our Faith", send us a picture of your church, brief history, location, time of meetings and name of present pastor. We especially want to thank our associate editors for their editorials. Some have been writing for more than forty years. What a blessing it must be to be able to write and to be of so much comfort to the household of faith.

Then there is Elder Williams who keeps up with the subscription list and mails your "Signs" each month. You may not realize it but this is a big task and we think he is doing a fine job. If any of you fail to get your "SIGNS", please let him know. He doesn't want you to miss a single copy.

We have extra copies of the Signs printed each month. These are available to you for one dollar per copy. There may be family members who would like to have a copy to keep containing obituaries of their loved ones.

We are resolving to try and double our subscription list this year. With your help we think this is possible. PLEASE, just one new subscription sent in by each subscriber would meet our goal.

Now may God bless us to run with patience the race He has set before us, ever looking unto Him, the author and finisher of our faith. We pray not for Him to change that which He has purposed, but as the signs of the times come into focus, give us grace and courage to accept it and press on.

A little brother in hope,
Kenneth R. Key

How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

Singing many times is the most beautiful and inspiring part of the worship service as voices and hearts are freed to express, with unbounding love, the praise and adoration felt for a sovreign Creator God who gives mercy and grace unto all His children. The songs, when sung from a heart unfettered by the cares and trials of this earthly life, express more love and honor unto God than any other form of praise. Singing with melody in the heart manifests in purer form the sentiment of the writer and the singer ads more meaning as he joins in the worship with his fellowship for the experience being told. It has always been a most beautiful way in which the Saints of God have expressed thanksgiving for their many deliverances and the pure joy for the gifts of mercy and grace bestowed upon them in their journey through this vale of tears. It is a form of worship that can be expressed by one alone or a group of people together with all of the love and fervor the hearts are capable of expressing.

Some of the most precious and pleasant memories of the earliest days of my experience, which I trust was an experience of grace, was driving down the highway with my song book on the wheel and singing the songs of zion at the top of my voice. I was happy beyond measure and I believe that I was enjoying the peace that Jesus spoke of leaving with his people. It seems that I understood clearer the message of the hymn and had a beautiful fellowship for the writer as he told of the Lords dealings with him that impressed him so that he desired to leave it on record for future generations who would pass

this way in their journey. There they would stop and have a drink of cool water from one who had gone on before and remember who the blessing is from in truth. Anyone, in nature, observing me, sometimes weeping so I could hardly see would have been concerned to see a grown man crying but it was from sheer joy and I can truthfully say that these were some of the sweetest seasons that I have ever experienced in my life. This season lasted for three years or more and I can't imagine anyone being blessed with more joy and constancy of mind to read, hear preaching and retain and meditate upon in days ahead of the beauty and comfort than I was at that time. I hardly had time to devote to my work or anything else as my mind was constantly remembering last Sunday's sermon or scriptures that I had read recently that were opened up to me in a way and manner that has since ceased to be.

It seems that now and for a long time I have been in the same condition that is described in the 137th Psalm. The children of Israel were in bondage in the land of Babylon and therefore were not free to do those things that were the desires of their heart. They had once enjoyed freedom to dwell in the land of Canaan and were blessed with grace to worship God in song and prayer as they were led in ways pleasing unto Him and pleasing and precious indeed unto them. Now, in captivity in this strange land they can no longer sing with joy in their heart and praise God from a pure conscience, and they wept as they remembered zion and the joys of their life there. It is because of their sins that they are in captivity, and justly so, but this takes away their ability to sing the songs of zion with joy and peace. This has been my dwelling place for a long season now and I mourn as I remember the times of refreshing that I have had. I feel to be in captivity under the beggarly elements of the world and it is consuming all my time, demands my allegiance and deprives me of the freedom to sing with melody in my heart unto the Lord. I try to pray and words seem to never leave the room and when I try to speak it seems that I am but speaking with a natural understanding and it seems to be mockery indeed. Surely those referred to in the 137th Psalm could have been in no more desolate a condition than I feel to be in at the present time.

We read the scripture that says, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," but we sometimes are made to wonder just how things being with us as they are can possibly be for our good. God's work is a perfect work, he is just as complete in his withdrawing from them for a season to make them to know how frail they are as he is in appearing to them in a season of mercy. These two extremes in his dealings with them cause them to realize their own inability to do anything of themselves but in each condition they cannot know that things will change because they try with all of their ability to help change them or to keep them from changing but at the time appointed of the Father the change comes. They are made time after time to stand still and behold the work of the Lord. This was true of the Children of Israel when they were in bondage under the king of Babylon.

They wept because they feared

they would never again sing those songs of praise and joy in the presence of their Lord. They could feel the barren state that they were in, They were taunted by their captors and demanded to sing them one of the songs of zion. Their captors were commanding that they present a song, which was so precious and sacred to the children of Israel, as an entertainment for the Babylonians. This they cound not do and yet they were under the control of the enemy. This was a very distressing experience for the children of Israel, at the time, as it is for all when they are in a strange land and are not free to sing of the beauties of their homeland. They must have the inspiration of the spirit to sing with understanding of the beauties of the kingdom of their heavenly father. Out of zion the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. They long to behold this perfection of beauty but it is back in their homeland and they are in a strange land separated from it.

In speaking of the experiences of Gods children, in one place, the Apostle Paul said, "Now all these things happened unto them for examples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." And again, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." These and other scriptures causes ones who are in the strange land to have hope that as the Lord brought his children out of captivity so will he deliver those in future generations from bondage and free them so that they can once again enjoy singing the songs of zion and worship God in spirit and in truth. When one has been blessed to walk about zion, behold her bulwarks, mark her towers and view the glory of her palaces, they will never be comfortable and feel at home when left to the elemets of this time world. It will always be a strange land unto them and they cannot sing and make melody in their hearts while in this state of bondage. The world including very dear friends, family and loved ones invites and expects them to join with them and sing along with them, but there is no comfort there for those who have been blessed to know the joyful sound of singing the songs of zion.

The Lord's Children will ever remember zion long for the peace and joy of its courts. They will ever desire the manifest presence of the Holy Ghost in their hearts, as it assures them of their kinship with God the Father and God the Son and the surety that their eternal home will be in heaven. It enables them to rest in the knowledge that the eternal God is their refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms. What a wonderful, secure and blessed haven of peace for those who return from their seasons of captivity in strange lands. This hope is what sustains them in the barren and desolate times that the scriptures tell us is experienced by all of the elect and chosen Saints of God in their travels here on earth.

"Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." This is the heritage of all of the singers of the songs of zion and they can but press on here in time and run with patience the race that is set before them, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. This is the highway, this is the way of holiness, it is for those the redeemed of the Lord. "And the ransomed of

the Lord shall return, and come to zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." If these are precious words to you, remember they are the words of the songs of zion and only the singers recognize them.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

TO OUR READERS

Our goal is to double our list of subscribers. Please resolve that you will obtain at least one new subscription. Many have already sent theirs in. If you haven't done so yet, please try to do so in January. We will advise you when we have reached our goal.

The Editors

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

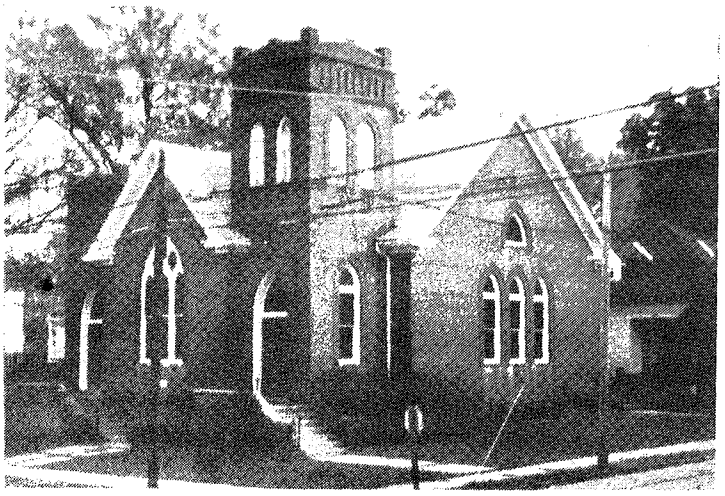

Lindsey Street (Reidsville) Primitive Baptist Church was constituted in 1904. The church is located on Lindsey Street in Reidsville, N. C.

Their meeting time is on second Sunday of each month at eleven o'clock a. m.

Their present pastor is Elder D. V. Spangler.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life.

John 6:47, 48

I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

John 14:6

CORRESPONDENCE

HUMILITY

It seems very strange to me that my mind should be impressed to write on the subject of humility, when I cannot find one particle of it in myself, and when I firmly believe we cannot tell anything to profit except we have learned it by experience, and that the revelation of Jesus Christ as our Savior comes to us through the exercise of divine grace in our hearts, which is christian experience. Yet being impressed, I feel it a solemn duty. If I have an earthly master, and he tells me to do certain things, I have no right to question, and ask the reason why, but my duty is to obey. And now as I start out in this task I am already encouraged and comforted, because as I hope my Master has at this moment caused me to perceive that he does not require humility at my hands; that HE is my humility, and he graciously and in mercy supplies every want and deficiency in me. If I have quit the service of my former master, whose reign over me was in darkness unto death wherein sin prevailed, calling forth every lust of the flesh, and have entered the service of him who reigneth in righteousness, then would I yield my "members servants to righteousness unto holiness." For the apostle tell us, "When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness." There is no fruit yielded in our service as servants under sin. The end thereof is death. "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life." Humility is not one of the results of any of the works of the flesh. "The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkeness, revellings and such like." Is it any wonder then when I search in my own flesh for humility, that I find it not? Every possible emanation from the flesh is in direct opposition to an humble and contrite heart. The natural heart is filed with pride and self-esteem. It is continually in conflict and in battle for supremacy. It even presumes to say that the arm of God is shortened that he cannot save, unless mighty man humbles himself and accepts the proffered salvation. When I deplore in myself the absence of humility, and grieve and mourn because of the presence of every opposition to it, I discover I am not looking for it in the right direction. I want to do something that will ape humility, and try to deceive myself into thinking it is the real thing. In other words, I am trying all the time to get religion, and I am proud (not humble) to think how well I get along. I search out my brother's faults, and talk to others about him in an ugly way, saying, (if not in words) in my arrogance, if he would do as I do he would be above reproach. Is that humility? When the tree is corrupt, the fruit must of necessity be corrupt also. A clean thing cannot come out of an unclean. Of the olden time before the flood we read this Scripture: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." So also throughout all the Scriptures the same truth is set forth; that man is totally depraved

good thing. Again it is written, "God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Now when the children of God look to themselves for good deeds, looking away from Christ, and depending upon the deeds done in their body, they find the filthy self-righteousness of the proud spirit of the pharisee. Hide thy drooping head, O humility, thou hast no place there. And yet it is in this very proud pharisaic heart that the sweet spirit of grace takes up its abode, and causes the lofty head to bow low, the proud body to fall prostrate in the dust in humble acknowledgment and gratitude to a covemant-keeping God for his gracious and tender mercy. When we discover the superabounding of grace where sin did abound, what a change has taken place. The poor child HAS HAD his fill of sin; that which he once loved he now abhors.

He sees himself as he never saw himself before; a vile and depraved sinner. From the moment this work of grace begins, we observe the fruit that is yielded. The growth of the old, corrupt tree has ceased, its leaves faded, its beauty gone, its force abated, "a corn of wheat" has fallen into the ground, an incorruptible seed "by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever."This seed takes root in the corrupt soil of the heart. The Husbandman careth for it in such a way that soon is manifested the upward growth: "First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." The foul growths and evil weeds so conspicuous before, are cut down and dug up by the roots, by the hand of him whose Spirit worketh grace in the heart. How interesting to watch the growth of the tender plants, from the time they begin the christian journey, and how anxious we are for them, and how careful of them when they have entered the warfare. The nursing mothers in Israel bathe their scars, and pour oil into the bleeding wounds. And then we rejoice as we see tribulation working patience. The frequent conflicts cause them to endure hardness as good soldiers. Now the work of the Spirit in this earthly soil, what does it produce? The apostle tells us, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, and goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against which there is no law." But one might ask; Can a clean thing come out of an unclean? We answer, no, emphatically no. Well, that one may say, you have been comparing this fruit-yielding work of the Spirit to natural seed sown in the earth. Has the earth been changed,that it should bring forth "bread to the eater," when before it brought forth briars and thorns? No, the earth has not been changed, but it has been subdued, and the briars and thorns have been plowed under, and they die, and the soil is prepared and made ready for the sower. So this corrupt heart of ours. The plow and harrow of divine grace is set to work by the spiritual Husbandman, causing death to the unwholesome and corrupt works of the flesh. They are trodden under foot, they die. "Our old man is crucified with him, (Christ) that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Christ died; by His death the law which condemned us was satisfied, the sword of justice was removed from the way of the "tree of life." Christ arose from

the dead, and all the Father had given him arose with him to newness of life. And this is what the work of the Spirit now makes manifest. The saints of God, as such, are pure and holy, as He is pure and holy. The bodies were prepared for the sowing of the seed. The incorruptible seed has been sown; it has taken root downward, and bears fruit upward. And now we enter the vineyard of our Lord, and eat his pleasant fruits. Again the apostle tells us, "The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth." Well, what of the production? The first thing we discover in this new conception an birth is, that the Lord has fulfilled his promise that he would "take the stony heart out of their flesh,and give them an heart of flesh." They manifest a broken heart, which is an humble heart and a contrite spirit. So the very first result of fruit yielding in the new born soul is humility; and what did the man do toward bringing about that result? I will tell you what he did, he fought against it with all the power of all the pride of his natural heart. But glorious news, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Ever afterward when you meet and talk with that child, you will discover the meek and humble spirit. As the garden needs the hoe to keep down the weeds of evil growth, so also there is a needs be that the spirit be in continuous exercise. The law of God is written in our heart, and when we violate that law we are chastised, which chastisements in the end "yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Each one of us remembers the humility of soul we have felt after a spiritual whipping; how we were ready to crawl in the very dust to the feet of our brethren, imploring forgiveness. O humility, thou canst now raise thy bowed head, for now thy light shineth, and the angels of God rejoice. Wisdom tells us, "Before honor is humility." Also, "By humility are riches and honor and life." And the apostle warns you to "Let no man beguile you in a voluntary humility." And he also admonishes you to "Be subject to one another, clothed with humility." How rich the clothing, wrought gold, as the clothing of the daughter of the King. If you ask me if I ever knew a time when I realized that I was truly humble, I would answer, no, and I would tell you, too, that the times when I thought I was humble, I found it to be pride of the worst sort. The natural man for his own ends will sometimes sham humility; the truly penitent child of God never. The power of God which works humility caused the persecuting Saul of Tarsus to become Paul (the little). The same power also filled the mouth of the psalmist with these words: "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Now, O humility, blessed is thy condition; salvation has entered thy portals; thou art clothed with righteousness. The mighty man of war is brought low, behold him now, a child of peace. Jesus, clothed in thy habiliments, has set up his temple in the hearts of the inhabitants of Zion, and great is the joy and rejoicing in Jerusalem.

B. F. Coulter

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."
Mat. 7:12

Route 2, Box 920
Bassett, Virginia 24055

Dear Elder Key and all the editors of the "Signs".

I want to thank you for sending me a picture of Elder Gilbert Beebe. I am enjoying so much reading the books of his editorials. I think all Primitive Baptist should have these in their homes to read. He was wonderfully blessed to write the truth as is in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The Lord has given me a sweet hope that I am His and He is mine. He lead me up a very steep mountain and showed me a stream of pure water coming down that mountain and He blessed me to drink until I did not thirst any more. I was very low with pneumonia, given up by two doctors, and my blessed Lord healed me, a poor vile and wreatched sinner. It was all because of His tender love and mercy and not for anything that I had done. I feel to be less than the least but have been given a great love for Him and His dear little ones. It is a blessing to be able to meet with them here on earth as we hope to praise and adore His holy name.

I am seventy-nine years old and have been blessed to meet with His beloved people for over fifty-eight years.

May the blessed Lord continue to lead and bless you editors, is my hearts desire and may the Lord bless you to pray for me.

Your little sister,
Callie Clark

Summerfield, N. C.
May, 1936

Dear Mr. Gold:

What a joy it is to me to read such good pieces and to hear such good preaching as your father, Elder P. D. Gold, Elder Isaac Jones and Elder O. J.Denny did and Elder Denny does yet. I don't feel worthy of being so wonderfully blessed. And when I read the good experiences of the good brothers and sisters, my mind goes back to the days when I was a young man (I am past 75 now), when I was made to see myself a ruined and lost sinner, did not know what to do, would get the Testament and read it by myself, did not want any one to see me reading. I would get the song book and read, would try to pray, was trying to get good by doing good, but the more I did, the worse I got. My case seemed to be an outside case. How often have I wet my pillow with my tears, trying to ask the good Lord to have mercy on me, a poor sinner, and to pardon my many sins, but I got worse and worse all the time until it seemed to me that I could not live much longer. So one day I went out in my father's horse pasture to get a horse to do some work and while out there in that open field not a living soul in sight, all the time trying to ask the good Lord to pardon my many sins and at the same time I did not see how one so Godly as He was could condescend to have mercy on one so sinful as I was. So, while in this condition, my mind in a dazed condition, became impaired, my tongue clave to the roof of my mouth and I was not permitted to have a good thought or to speak a word. While in this fix I heard a still small voice say, "Thy sins are pardoned." My mind was restored, my tongue let loose and I was praising the Lord for His goodness and mercy to all men. I must have been the happiest one. I felt so good, light and free, my burden all gone. I was not only praising the Lord, but

the grass of the fields and leaves of the trees all seemed to be praising Him for His goodness and mercy.

All went well with me for two days and nights, then the tempter came in the way, "You have not met a change. It's all a delusion, it is stuff, all a myth. You have only caught at the substance and caught the shadow." I was in a bad fix to think all of my rejoicing was of no avail. So while in trouble about my condition the same sweet voice said, "My grace is sufficient for you."My doubts and fears were all gone and I was praising the good Lord again for His goodness and mercy. So it has been with me ever since, sometimes rejoicing sometimes in "Doubting Castle."

So after all this had taken place with me I would sometimes think about the Church, but never could feel good enough to ask a home with them. But one morning while I was plowing two horses (that were not very gentle at that time) with a two horse plow and at the same time asking the good Lord about my condition —Had I caught at the substance and only got the shadow?—this came to me as a command, "Why don't you go to the church of the true and living God, at Greensboro, and tell them what the good Lord has done for you and let them decide for you as to whether you have caught at the substance and only got the shadow." And then I was taken away from the things of this world, whether in the Spirit or out of it I can't tell, but there I saw myself in front of them, trying to tell them what the good Lord had done for me. And when I came to myself I was standing between those plowshares and the horses were standing still. Can't tell you how long that might have been, only a few minutes, or longer, but after all this I felt so little and sinful, so unworthy, how could I go, but the burden of duty was on me. So late one evening when I was feeding the cattle my burden seemed like it would crush me in the ground. I said, "I'll go! I'll go!" Then a sweet small voice said, "My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power." I was not only made willing to go, but now I wanted to go, could not wait until preaching day.

I went to the pastor of the church, O. J. Denny, of Winston-Salem, and asked him to make an appointment that I might go, which he did. Then I asked the good Lord if it was His will for me to go to the church, to go with me and enable me to tell a part of the many good things He had done for me, but I have often thought since joining the church, how well they could make out without me, but oh how could I make out without them.

A few months ago while I was about my work, (think I told Sister and Brother Neal about this), I heard a still small voice say to me, "Child of God." What a wonderful thing it is to be a child of God. I looked around me, saw no one, then different passages of scripture were presented to my mind, with understanding; then the blessed promises that are made to the children of God. Oh, Mr. Gold, I can't tell it, it is better felt than told.

I have told Brother Neal that I wanted to live at the feet of the brothers and sisters, did not want to do or say anything that would bring reproach upon the church. I feel that I am just a drone in the hive and can't help out like I want to. I have lost all I had except my farm, but if not deceived, I have a good hope that I would not exchange for ten thousand worlds like this.

Since the death of Mrs. L. A. Walker, who before our marriage was Miss

Lizzie Long, occured on the 19th of July, 1935, I want to say, just here, that a good woman has gone home to live with the true and living God, the One she loved to worship in Spirit and in truth, and sing songs to His holy and good name. But in her passing she has left an aching void that never can be filled. But I thank the good Lord for our four children and their husbands and wives. They are so good and kind to me in my old age, (believe I told you that I was past 75). I could not ask them to be any better, and I pray the good Lord to be with them, guide and direct them in the ways of all truth that they may earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to saints, ever giving God the glory; ever realizing that it is the Spirit that quickens, the flesh profiteth nothing and that they may so live that their last days will be their best days and they will be prepared to die the death of the righteous and may the dear Lord hover around their dying couch wherever that may be and be with them in the trying hour of death, and when their time is no more on earth that He will be pleased to waft their souls home to God who gave them, there to sing praises to His holy and good name forever. Then at that time we will see Him as He is and be like Him and be satisfied, and that will be enough.

Yours in hope of a home with our good Lord beyond the grave.

L. A. Walker

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VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE LATE ELDER JOSEPH L. STATON

I was born in Worcester County, Maryland, in the year 1836, on the 18th day of June. My parents were both Old School or Primitive Baptists before I was born, my father preaching the gospel before my memory commences, and likely before I was born. I have heard him say he was a bound boy in the State of Virginia, raised at hard work, with but a little to eat, and no education. When he was eighteen years old he came to Maryland and soon after married my mother, Mary Givin. He worked in pleasant weather and, when it was not fit to work, he went to school or studied reading and writing at home, until he could attend to almost any business and was elected to some prominent and important offices and entrusted with some very important business. He was of a bright, cheerful disposition and was an able, sound gospel preacher. He died in May 1854, being fifty-six years old. My mother was a quiet, unassuming woman. She lived twenty years after my father's death and died in her eighty-fifth year.

My first thought of leaving this world and of an existence beyond and after this for those who lived in this world was and is the first thing of interest my mind goes back to, and perhaps as early in life as I was capable of retaining anything. My older brothers and sisters say I was not over three or four years old; at least, my eldest sister says she carried me in her arms. One of our

neighbors was buried and my father preached the funeral discourse, or I suppose he did; but I remember nothing till we went to the grave and the coffin was lowered down into the grave. A strange, lonely, desolate feeling came over me and I wondered what would become of that man if they covered him up in the ground and left him there. I seemed to have some idea that the man would be very lonely and desolate there, covered in that dark cell and the people all going away to leave him. I wonderd how he would ever get out of there. Also, a verse of poetry that my father read or quoted at the grave made a lasting impression, indeed sufficient never to leave me. I did not see it or know it was in print for many years after. It was this, "Hark! from the tomb a doleful sound; mine ears attend the cry; Ye living men, come view the ground, Where you must shortly lie."

I seemed to realize then and there that it was the way of all the earth and that there must be another world, another place of existence, somewhere, for human beings who left this world. Many, many times has my mind gone back to that time and place and I remember as well today how things appeared to me that day as how they appear to me today; the resurrection of the body is as great a mystery to me today as it was that day, although I do hope I have learned many things since then. I have learned in part to obey through the things I have suffered. My life since has been a mixture of joy and sorrow; of sorrow because of my wickedness; of joy because sometimes I am enabed by faith to believe that my eyes have been opened to see good from evil and to know that in me, that is, in my flesh, there dwells no good thing.

I have nothing special to say of many years of my life; only one continually wicked and seemingly careless, profane, thoughtless life; but, as I now look back in my mind, I know that there were many dark and sorrowful hours, even in my wildest and most thoughtless days and years; That I was constantly doing, saying, and thinking things that in themselves appeared hateful, which sometimes gives me the hope that in my youth I partook of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and became a sensible sinner or transgressor, and that I had a desire even then to do the things that I found I knew not how to perform.

You will see by the dates that I was not eighteen years old when my father died. Notwithstanding all my disobedience and wickedness as a child to my father, his death fell heavily upon me. I then knew that a great blessing to me was gone, never to return, a blessing which I did not appreciate rightly while he was living. I still lived with my mother and can recall many things in my wicked career that I am ashamed to speak of. Even then they gave me much trouble and I made resolutions that if I lived to be older and settled in life that I would reform and live differently; I even made calculations that a reformation would make me a different man, not only in the sight of man, but also in the sight of God; for I yet believed that Christians were good people, or at least they were not sinners transgressing the law of God daily, as I was. I wonder yet sometimes how the good Master above can be reconciled to, and with, such a sinner as I am, so unreconciled to Him and sometimes almost rebellious. It is indeed a great mystery,

God made manifest in the flesh. I forget sometimes that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, and that He has only given us the word or spirit of reconciliation. We have received the spirit of adoption and, by that Spirit comes or springs the desire to be reconciled and to say "Thy will be done." The Saviour, whilst here, had a mind or will which He says He did not come to do, but the will of Him that sent Him.

After living with my mother five years, giving her a great deal of trouble and, I must think, not much pleasure, my mind seemed settled to try and get a companion to share with me the sorrows and trials of life, and the joys if there should be any in store for me. In this I was wonderfully blessed in a true companion and helpmate in life. Her name was Louisa J. Tilghman, a true-hearted, noble woman. Her mother was a Methodist; her father made no profession, but seemed to have an understanding of the truth. Not long after a great event in my life, my wife began at intervals to tell me her experience, which I am now satisfied was the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing her a knowledge of the truth. She soon became in sentiment a Baptist, received them gladly, loved to see them and hear them preach and talk. It seems to me now that my nature was such that I could not be as kind to her as I should have been; but the longer we lived together the stronger the tie that bound us seemed to become. We struggled hard together for many years, being blessed with eight children, of which five still live. Our experience seemed to be almost the same as we journeyed in life for years; but we could say but little to each other about the things of the Spirit. For myself, I could say almost nothing to her of any trouble or sorrow on account of sin, for I thought she would have no confidence in my sincerity.

For the most part of the time, we kept going to Old Baptist meetings, and but little anywhere else; not knowing why we went or what we went for. I remember one morning we went twelve miles to meeting, when the forest was on fire and the smoke and sea fog were so thick it was necessary for me to walk ahead of the horse for miles, to feel the road, and my wife, sitting in the carriage, could not see me part of the time, although I had on a light coat. I have never seen so dark a time, before or since, day or night. When we got to the meeting, neither of us could tell any one why we were so anxious to go. We knew we loved to see them and to hear the preaching, but neither of us yet dared claim a hope in the mercy of God.

We continued to go to meeting and our interest seemed to get deeper and more heartfelt. I was looking forward to the time when we should be given a hope; for I did not once think of having a hope, only (as I would express it sometimes) a hope for a hope. I had a strong desire and a good hope that we should sometimes become Christians and fit subjects for baptism and make a profession of Christianity. I do not remember, in all these years, from 1840 to 1873, that I ever had a single doubt about who or where the church was, or of having a single suggestion to my mind as to joining any other persuasion or of making any profession, but having the hope of sometime being numbered with believers and, of course, was looking ahead with some anxiety as to when the time would come.

During these long, weary years we had many trials to endure, losses, crosses, and disappointments, los-

ing two of our children in the time; but we enjoyed many blessings also. We had reasonable health, success in business, and had accumulated something of this world's goods, for all of which we felt unworthy of and thankful for. It seemed to me that, of all men, I should be the most thankful, and never murmur again at disappointment or loss; but all at once it seemed that the greatest and saddest disappointment of all that ever had been or could come into my life was coming,or had already come. I had been hoping these many years that I should one day be a Christian and such an one as would be blessed with a name and place among them; but, instead of getting nearer the church, as I supposed I should, I was getting further away all the time and I had just now come to see it.

That was the way things appeared to me; for my idea was to get better by littles, until the fitness appeared for membership and I would make application for membership and be received; but to my astonishment, surprise, and disappointment, I had been, and was, going backward all the time, and here I seemed to lose all hope of ever being what I had hoped for so long; for I saw the perfect righteousness and holiness was required to see the Lord or to make a profession in His Name and, as I was all unrighteousness, even much worse than I ever imagined before this view of things; and my sad disappointments, as I remember them, seemed to destroy all hope either in this world or in eternity; yet the desire for holiness remained. If there could be any justification and forgiveness for such sins, I longed to know of it.

These exercises, I think were in the year 1871. About that time, I trust, the eyes of my understanding were opened more clearly to see how sinners could be and were saved, or how the sinner could be and was justified before God and still be a sinner, even such as I was. I thought then that God could be just and also the destroyer of the ungodly. His righteousness seemed perfect and perfected in us. It exceeded the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees; for they only obey in the letter, while He obeyed in the Spirit and became our Saviour. There was really hope for sinners, and it was a lively or living hope; for, because He lives, we hope.

About this time, my mind was more particularly directed to the Scriptures; not so much to reading them as to meditating on what I had read, as they would come to my mind, so that I had read and did not understand and had uttered things too wonderful for me, although it seemed to me I could not make a profession, for I might be deceived; yet there was reason to hope for salvation from sin and for the vilest of the vile. "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." My mind, for about two years, was almost constantly on the Scriptures, and my own duty concerning them and, whilst I was not ready or willing to make a profession, I found myself exhorting and advising others who seemed troubled as I was. I never shall be able to tell of my deep concern for two years, not only for myself, but also for others. The great moving cause of all things in the truth seemed dear to me and I was constantly trying to tell, in my blundering way, how things appeared to me. I frequently thought of preaching the gospel; not with any idea that I should ever be enabled to preach. Really, I do not think I had any idea

what preaching was; but I kept thinking about it and of what a glorious calling to be called to comfort those that mourned, and to open the prison doors to them that were bound. Everything else seemed to lose its beauty and interest to me. In my zeal I corresponded with some of the preachers, asking questions about the Scriptures until they would occasionally say something about my way of preaching, which made me think more seriously about what preaching really was. I soon began to think it was explaining the Scriptures and applying them in the promises to those who were in trouble and concerned about themselves and what the Scriptures contained; to speak comfortingly to anyone who was lost, was to speak of salvation for such; point them to the Lamb of God; tell them of the way I had found that sinners could be and were saved. I would have liked ever so much to do that, but I could not, for they seemed mysterious. I was constantly making inquiry myself and could not understand; certainly what seemed so mysterious to me, I could not explain to others. It seemed to me then that the ministers of the gospel understood perfectly all the Scriptures and that it was necessary that they should; but I fail to remember the questionings that were in my mind. Many of them have followed me until now, more perhaps than would be interesting in this narrative.

I shall lnow speak more particularly of my baptism and of the difficulties and trials after about the first of July 1873. While reading one evening in the hymn book, my mind seemed particularly drawn to the world:

> "Dear Lord, the ardor of thy love
> Reproves my cold delays."

I was made willing then and there to ask a place with those that I fully believed to be His followers. The time was fixed, that the first opportunity should not pass; but I was disappointed in my first attempt, one of my children being so sick that it was imprudent to leave him. For two weeks the subject of baptism was on my mind and then I was privileged to go. I was received and baptized and became a member of a church that had no stated preaching, but which met once a month for prayer and praise.

Now came one of the most severe trials of my life, There seemed to be no gift in that church; at least, if there was, it was not manifest. Some of them would read a chapter; sing some hymns; then go home. Here my mind was directed to prayer. Many times have I prayed that my mouth might be opened to speak in prayer. I would have given anything and everything for strength to make the attempt, for I wanted to say something; but the meeting would be opened by prayer and that I could not do, for I felt sure that such an effort would prove such a failure as to mortify me and the brethren and tend to destroy their love and confidence in me, which love and confidence was very dear to me. Worst of all, it would be but mockery in the sightof God.

For about two years, I continued to go, hoping all the time to be strengthened to do what seemed my duty and a great privilege and relief. During this time some of the brethren in the ministry advised me to make the attempt, as the only source of relief. About this time, six members, including myself, organized, and a church was constituted in Snow Hill, Worcester County, Maryland;

Some of them from Salisbury, where my membership was, and some from other churches. We immediately called Elder T. M. Poulson, of Virginia, as our pastor. He accepted the call and appointed to meet with us one Sunday in each month. He served us as faithfully as possible, but, living a distance of twenty miles, occasionally he failed to come. At such times, I generally read a chapter and talked a few minutes, but never attempted to speak in prayer until the church made an appointment for me and urged me to comply with their request.

When I consented to do so, it was with a vow, if permitted to do so, to open my mouth in prayer. Then came a very severe trial for a short time in reference to my duty. I could think of but little else until the time came, when my mouth was opened and one of the most sincere, heartfelt, earnest prayers I ever uttered was then, and I found such relief that I hoped the trial was over; but I was sadly mistaken. I have yet many misgivings and trials in speaking in prayer.

The church continued the appointments for me and proffered me liberty to go wherever and whenever called by other churches. This was in the spring of 1879; and during the following summer, by request, some days I attended three appointments, two in the daytime and one in the evening. During this entire year my family was more or less sick and, on the twelfth day of August, my dear companion in life was called home, which seemed for the time more than I could bear up under; but the Lord sustained me by His grace, for He had not yet called for me. I was very often sick through the week, but always able to go to meeting when Sunday came. As I remember, I did not miss an appointment on account of my own sickness.

In the fall of 1879 the Salisbury Association met with the church at Snow Hill, where my membership was, and I heeded a previous call from the church for my ordination. The presbytery was composed of a number of brethren and the following ministers; Elders Gilbert Beebe, William J. Purrington, S. H. Durand, A. B. Francis, E. Rittenhouse, and T. M. Poulson. I was then and there regularily set apart by prayer and laying on of hands to the work of the ministry and immediately called by the church at Fishing Creek (near Cambridge, Maryland) to serve them as pastor and to preach for them once in two months; which call I accepted and have served them as the Lord has been with me since.

In the Spring of 1880, the church near Newark, New Castle County, Delaware, called Welsh Tract, sent me an invitation to visit them once a month; also, the London Tract Church, Chester County, Pennsylvania, sent me the same invitation, both of which I accepted. I visited them several months, when both churches expressed a desire for me to move my family to Delaware and become pastor of those two churches. In the spring of 1881 myself and family moved to New Castle County, Delaware and settled on a little farm near Newark and I began serving those two churches regularly, in addition to serving the church at Fishing Creek, Dorchester County, Maryland.

During this time, or in the fall of 1880, the Lord blessed me with another companion in life, a good Christian woman and an established Old School Baptist, which has proved a helpmate indeed. I am at this writing, June 1, 1883, just forty-seven years

old, with a family of six children and a second wife, the youngest child being hers. Three of my first wife's children have passed away to be with their dear mother in the immediate presence of the great Judge of all things and the Giver of all good. I am yet serving the three churches from time to time as the Lord is pleased to be with me.

After speaking somewhat of the churches I serve and of their present condition, I propose to go back in my mind and speak somewhat of my trials, difficulties and deliverances in the ministry.

The Welsh Tract Church is the first Baptist church organized in America, and at one time before the division and separation, I think it numbered two hundred members. Since then the church and congregation has been much smaller. When I came here there were fifty-seven members. Since then three have passed away and three have been baptized, leaving the number the same, but very much scattered, several old and infirmed. Our communicants at our quarterly meetings seldom exceed thirty-seven and the congregation from one hundred to one hundred and twenty-five.

The London Tract Church, also organized a great many years ago, has always been small, the present membership only seventeen, the congregation from seventy-five to one hundred. Many in each congregation seem to love the truth.

The Fishing Creek Church is very small, having since my recollection been sustained with from seven to twelve members and a congregation of seventy-five to one hundred, generally very attentive to the Word. The mercy of the Lord and the power of His grace have been wonderfully manifest in sustaining this church under many discouraging circumstances, for years at a time with no male member or deacon, one of the sisters acting as clerk; yet they never failed to correspond with the sister church and to keep up their regular church meetings.

One of my greatest conflicts through life has been with my own evil heart of unbelief. I have often thought if sufficient evidence was given me that I was qualified to preach the gospel of the grace of God, it would be a great privilege and I have often said to myself that I had rather be a gospel minister to the children of God than the chief magistrate of the United States. Indeed, I never have desired any office in the gift of the people. I have always felt incapable of serving them well in any important office and hence have had no desire for them. The same feeling of insufficiency to serve the church has made me all through life very timid and backward. Whilst I remember and know that our sufficiency is of God, my nature has seemed to forbid me to trust; hence, the conflicts, and slow to believe what I knew must really be so. There is to my mind a great mystery in this, that whilst we know that salvation is of the Lord, yet we are constantly looking for something in ourselves to recommend us to God, and can scarcely understand how a helpless sinner can be saved, when they are the only ones that can be saved, as others have nothing to be saved from.

Just so it has been with me in reference to preaching the gospel. While I know that the Lord must fill my mouth, if it is profitable to His redeemed, yet I am always wanting something on hand to say, for fear He will not give it to me when the

time comes; but I think this all comes from that evil heart of unbelief and the doubt that remains in my mind as to whether the Lord has required this at my hands. I have never felt to sensure poor old Jonah much for trying to get away. I guess he was honest and conscientious in what he did and needed that much more experience to prepare him to pay his vows. In short, I will say that the subject of prayer and praise to God has been a very solemn subject and I have had a great struggle with myself, both in commencing the work and in keeping it up. I have spent many sleepless hours and sweated many big drops, and yet self seems uppermost in the very best of my performances. I know that, unless obedience is in the heart, the act is but mere mockery in the sight of God.

July 19, 1884

On the 17th of this month the good Lord gave us the care of a very promising little boy for a while; we know not for how long. This is the second child by my second wife.

Since the last writing in this book, I have had many conflicts, many dark hours, and some very bright and pleasant ones. The mercy of the Lord still endureth and my unworthiness is still the same. The brethren seem to understand what I mean to say and do not expect anything of me, only as the good Master above is pleased to grant them through me. If He opens, no man can shut; truly, if He shuts, no man can open. The Lord is good to them who put their trust in Him; but alas, man is so prone to err.

At present there are eight regular appointments for me to meet in each month, to preach as the Lord may enable me, and it is a blessing to me that no more is expected of me by the brethren than what He is pleased to give. It is always a blessed privilege to me to deliver a message if I can feel that it comes from the Lord; otherwise, it is a hard, laborious task. The engagement in spiritual things, if indeed that engagement is mine, is more in feeling the power of the Spirit in my own soul than anything else. The company of the saints is very precious at such times, but sometimes the flesh so shuts out the light that I prefer to be alone.

Since the last writing, I have accepted the call of the Salem Church of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to meet with them every fifth Sunday, or four times a year.

July 27, 1888

There has been nothing of special note since the last writing. I am still serving the four churches at stated times, with such ability as the good Lord is pleased to give me. In these churches there is an ingathering, we believe, according as God is pleased to constrain by His almighty Grace.

September 20, 1889

Many days have passed since I wrote in this book. Very much of the time has been spent in dolitary idleness, seemingly for want of ambition. The congregations and churches I am serving have kept up the usual interest. There have been occasional additions to them, the one in Philadelphia of which I see the least manifests the most zeal of any, having the most additions to their number, assuring me more and more that the good Master above is adding to the church daily such as shall be saved; that it does not in any sense depend upon my feeble efforts.

Joseph L. Staton

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, Franklin County, Virginia, a presbytery met November 5, 1983 at the church for the examination of Brother Clyde Johnson, if found qualified with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgement, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of a deacon.

The solemity was begun with prayer by Elder Willard Cox. All Elders of our faith and order present cnstituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders O. K. Tench, Rufus Brown, Larry Hollandsworth, Noel Conners, Willard Cox and J. R. Hollandsworth.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder J. R. Hollandsworth as moderator and brother Harry B. Cannady as clerk. Elder O. K. Tench was chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Deacon Posey Poindexter having beging duly appointed by Bethel Church as spokesman for the church delivered brother Clyde Johnson to the presbytery.

Examination was made by Elder O. K. Tench. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answere given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Larry Hollandsworth and Elder Noel Conner delivered the charge to the candidate.

The moderator asked Bethel Church if they approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmitive.

The right hand of fellowship and brotherhood was given to Brother Johnson and he was delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder O. K. Tench.

Elder James R. Hollandsworth, Moderator

Brother Harry. B. Cannady, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR October, 1983

J. E. Mosley, Al.	$ 3.00
Mrs. Dorothy L. Foster, WV.	10.00
Mrs. Luther Procter, NC.	1.00
Mrs. Mary H. Stratton, VA.	2.00
W. D. Brown, VA.	3.00
Mrs. P. J. Lawrence, VA.	3.00
Mrs. W. S. Shepherd, NC.	6.00
Mrs. Nannie A. Carter, NC.	7.00
Elder G. R. Smith, LA.	7.00
Mrs. O. W. Parks, TX.	7.00
John W. Payne, NC.	2.00
A Friend, VA.	5.00
A friend, VA.	7.00
Mrs. C.R. Hollandwsorth, VA.	3.00
Ernest Stone, NC.	2.00
Elder Paul Poyner, KY.	3.00
H. M. Summerlin, Jr. GA. In memory of Mrs. H. M. Summerlin	20.00
Mrs. Hixie Guest, AR.	3.00
Mrs. Irene Setliff, NC.	5.00
Mrs. John Brown, VA.	12.00
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Mrs. Jean B. Moran, NC.	7.00
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Mrs. Agnes L. Truitt, MD.	2.00
Elder Hassel Allen, NC.	5.00
Mrs. Susie Williamson, NC.	2.00
Mrs. L. C. Watson, TN.	3.00

THE LOVELYNESS OF THE LORD

Our Lord's more lovely than the beautiful rose of sharon
More than the lily of the valley doeth He shine.
Into Our heart and mind He sends His holy spirit,
To cleanse Our soul by His grace, and love divine.
As we live and breath the essence of His holy power,
Bringing comfort to Our heart with peace and rest.
Faith lets Us feel the effectual love of His calling,
With a hope that We now live among the Blessed.
We pray Thee Lord to guide Our feet and keep Us humble,
May we help some Lamb of thine Who show Thy grace.
May Thy spirit lead Our mind that We may know Them,
By the spiritual light of love upon their face.
In Thy book We find sweet promise to Thy children,
If some burdened Soul in trouble We should see.
It is Our duty to give comfort and relieve Them,
Thus We give honor, bringing glory unto Thee.
O' precious Lord, Thou art Our King, Our loving Shepherd,
Ever tending Thy sacred office at the door.
One by one Thy Lambs go in and find green pastures,
To live with Thee in love and bliss, forevermore.

George N. Lee
2414 Buena Drive
Mobile, Alabama

OBITUARIES

ELDER WILLIAM ELMER PRINCE

Elder William Elmer Prince was given good liberty to praise God and to edify the congregation when he visited the Union Meeting of the Soldiers Creek Association this spring. It was his last time to fill the stand. His sojourn in this earthly wilderness was ended on May 17, 1983. He was a long standing member of Cane Creek Church. He was much appreciated for his gentle and patient manner, both as an Elder and as a church member.

Although Elder Prince was seventy eight years old, he traveled considerably among the churches in Tennessee, Kentucky and south Illinois. He will be greatly missed. He is survived by his wife Dovie, two sons, three grandchildren and other close family members.

Respectfully submitted,
Wayman Chapell

BROTHER GEORGE E. JOYCE

It has pleased our heavenly Father to call from our midst Brother George E. Joyce. Brother Joyce was born January 2, 1918 in Patrick County, Virginia and departed from this life August 14, 1983. His parents were the late Deacon Brother Rufus Monroe and Sister Mary King Joyce.

Surviving are his wife, Ollie May Joyce of the home, two daughters, Mrs. Shirley Littles, and Mrs. Mary Weiss, both of Patrick Springs and one son, Jimmy Joyce of Stuart. One son, Everett Cuper Joyce preceded him in death on October 22, 1978. Also surviving are two sisters, Mrs. Annie Lou Foley, Patrick Springs, and Mrs. Revie Sawyers, Stuart, and two brothers, Mr. Rufus Joyce, and Mr. Guy Joyce of Stuart and six grandchildren.

Brother Joyce united with Liberty

Primitive Baptist Church in July 1960 by experience. Appointed trustee in March 1961 and ordained as deacon on May 6, 1961. He was faithful to attend his church and the sister churches, too.

Brother Joyce was wounded during World War II in France, and lost a leg. He received several metals of honour, including the Purple Heart.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder Bennie Clifton and was assisted by Elder John Wingfield. It was held at Moody Funeral Home Chapel in Stuart and burial was in the Adams' Cemetery at Patrick Springs, Virginia.

We of the Liberty Primitive Baptist Church extend to the family our deepest heart-felt sympathy and hope they may be strengthened by remembering the faith and hope their husband and father had. We of the church will also miss him.

Done by order of the church September 3, 1983.

Submitted by: Paul Puckett, Clerk

BROTHER LEON THOMASSON

Whereas, by the request and common consent of the Liberty Primitive Baptist Church, it being our desire to render a written tribute of respect to the memory of our brother and friend, Leon Thomasson, we do hereby publish the following account of is life.

Brother Thomasson was born August 20, 1907 near Leatherwood, in Henry County, Virginia, being one of the seven children of Jesse B. and Ellen Eggleston Thomasson. On June 30, 1942 he was united in marriage to Sister Mildred Adkins Thomasson, who survives. To this union the Lord granted seven children, the six now living who are as follows: two sons, Jerry Wayne and Wesley Damon Thomasson; and four daughters, Mrs. Marcella Dyer, Mrs. Evelyn Eggleston, Mrs. Brenda Bowles, and Mrs. Dale Burnette. He was also survived by seven grandchildren and two sisters; Mrs. Doris Gregery and Sister Nannie W. Rickman.

Brother Thomasson settled near the rural Henry County community of Preston around 30 years ago, where he and his wife brought up their fine family. He and his companion were blessed to live together for a space of 41 years. He made his living by working for several area furniture manufacturers, and after retirement, he worked as a security guard until the last illness which preceded his death.

For many years before joining the church Brother Leon went among the Old Baptists and was known as a firm friend of this people and their cause, in general. Some time after his sister and his wife joined, he asked for a home with Liberty Church in June, 1967, was received and baptized by Elder Bennie Clifton and Elder Ben Martin. He remained a loyal member the balance of his earthly life, and went in and out among us quietly and peaceably until the Lord called him away on August 2, 1983. Without being aware of it Brother Leon was blessed to faithfully apply the inspired teaching of the Apostle Paul, who wrote, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." (Romans 12:18)

After several months of declining health Brother Leon was admitted to Martinsville Hospital the last Friday in July and passed away on the following Tuesday. Funeral services were conducted at Roselawn Chapel

by Elders Bennie Clifton, Paul Hopkins, and John Wingfield, burial followed in the Roselawn Burial Park, where Brother Thomasson's body awaits the final glorious appearing of His Saviour.

Now, therefore, be it resolved:

First: That we acknowledge the wisdom and mercy of God in Brother Leon Thomasson from this world to one far better, and

Second: That we extend our sincere sympathy to his family and all near and dear unto him, and

Third: That we submit three copies of this memorial, one to be included in our church record, one to be presented to his family, and one to be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

Done by order of the Liberty Church in conference, the third day of September, 1983.

Elder Bennie Clifton, Moderator
Deacon Paul Pucket, Clerk
Submitted by: John T. Wingfield

RETHA B SMITH

I hold it true whatever befall;
I feel it when I sorrow most;
Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.
Tennyson

The above quote has meant much to me in the past ten months. Although at times it is difficult for me to agree with Alfred Lord Tennyson, especially when I think of all the beautiful memories I hold dear of my mother, Retha B. Smith, and the joys that filled our lives.

Sister Smith was born on April 16, 1900, in Wayne County, the daughter of S. H. and Margaret Sauls Blow.

She is survived by her husband, Eli T. Smith, Sr.; two sons, Eli T. Smith, Jr. and W. H. Smith; a daughter, Mrs. Sedalia Smith Green—all of Fremont, North Carolina. Four grandchildren, three great grandchildren; a half sister, Mrs. Margaret Coker; and stepmother, Mrs. Estelle Gooch.

Sister Smith united with the Aycock's Primitive Baptist Church in March, 1930, and as health permitted, was faithful until her death. Her father served as deacon of Aycock's Church longer than any other person. Her husband and son, Eli, Jr. are both active deacons.

For many years Sister Smith opened her home to friends, not only from her church but from many churches, to enjoy good food and fellowship. There were but few weekends that she did not have guests which were a joy to her because she was a gracious hostess and an excellent cook.

Sister Smith's funeral was conducted on Wednesday, January 26, 1983, at the Fremont Feneral Home Chapel by her pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes.

At the conclusion of a most beautiful and appropriate service, Sister Smith was laid to rest in Elwood Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, symbolic of friendships and love through the years.

Written by her daugther
Sedalia S. Greene

SISTER ANNIE MAYHEW TOSH

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write the obituary of Sister

Annie Mayhew Tosh; born April 6, 1896. She was the daughter of the late Robert Hill Mayhew and Laura Elizabeth West Mayhew. She was the widow of Willie Bennette Tosh.

Sister Tosh was a dear and faithful member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by Experience and baptized July 11, 1937. Sister Tosh loved her church and brethren. She attended meetings regularly as long as her health permitted. I have sweet memories of Sister Tosh–I saw her many places and she was never ashamed to embrace and call me Sister–though I felt very unworthy, it made me feel a special love for her.

Sister Tosh passed from this life August 7, 1983. Her funeral was held by her beloved pastor, Elder O. K. Tench. She was layed to rest in Highland Burial Park, Danville, Virginia. She leaves to mourn her, one foster daughter, Elizabeth Mayhew Jones, Euclid, Ohio, one foster grandchild and many friends. May each one be reconciled to her passing and say, Thy Will Be Done.

Written in love and hope,
Sister Carol R. Pickral
Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Oscar D. Pickral, Clerk

BOOK NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

Having been requested by brethren and friends to leave upon record some of my experiences in the ministry, especially in relation to many of God's people being led to His house.

The book will have the following contents:

The testimony of many of God's people, in their exercises of Soul in being brought into the church.
My personal experiences.
Past Editorials written years ago on the following texts.

- Various customs and practices among Old School Baptist.
- The relationship between Pastors and Deacons.
- Churches and Associations, and a number of other subjects relating to the Doctrine and Practices of Old School Baptist.

Record of the churches I serve becoming independent churches.

This paper back book will have approximate 128 pages.

Price $5.00 per copy postpaid.

SEND ORDERS TO:

Elder D. V. Spangler
Route 6, Box 270
Danville, Va. 24541

BOOKS AVAILABLE

Editorials by Elder Beebe Vol. 3 & 4 $16.00 each plus $2.00 for mailing.

The Priesthood Of The Son Of God, $5.00 each plus $1.00 for mailing.

Feast of Fat Things, $5.00 each plus $1.00 for mailing.

SEND ORDERS TO:

Elder James F. Poole
P.O. Box 1250
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

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YE SHALL HAVE TRIBULATION

We stagger neath our heavy crosses,
Each one feels his own the worst;
We mourn and grieve our bitter losses,
And at times our hearts near burst.

On every hand we see around us
Heads bowed down with grief or pain,
Should these things greatly astound us?
We must suffer, rest to gain.

If we knew not pain or sorrow,
If we suffered not at all,
Would we then some glad tomorrow
Hail with joy our Father's call?

When He calls to all His treasures,
Rise my fair one and my love'
Come and share eternal pleasures
Praising God in heaven above.

Oh! call me soon my blessed master
From this cross, to claim my crown;
Speed the days and hours far faster
Till my armor I'll lay down.

Haste the day when pain is ended
When cross-bearing all shall cease;
When with Christ my spirit's blended
Eternally to rest in peace.

(Mrs.) EFFIE PARKE

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 2/84 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

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EDITORIAL

ISAIAH 46: 9, 10

Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is none else, I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.

The above text of Holy Writ has been passed on to me for exposition. Although I have been writing on this text (in substance) for fifty years, I confess my weakness, both in a natural as well as a spiritual sense to the extent that I have never been satisfied about what I have said. The subject is vast, for it covers the creation of the world, the supreme ruling of it by He that created it, to the last disposition of it.

The subject is so sublime that it covers every thing pertaining to time. That is, if inspiration is to be credited with giving us a clear picture of time. Now the question that we are called upon to settle is this, to wit: Has God declared the end from the beginning? Strictly speaking, I am not capable of answering a question like unto that. Yet, as one that has professed before men and before Him, I am qualified to say, and to declare with all of the mind and strength that I possess that God has declared the end from the beginning. I do not need to qualify my declaration of this vital truth. It is the most God dishonoring doctrine that has ever passed mortal man's lips to say otherwise. God has said that He did declare the end from the beginning.

I am treating on this matter by request (as the most of my writing is in answer to requests, but not to argumentation), and unless I am woefully deceived, I am led to a throne of grace to beseech my heavenly Father to tether my mind and my tongue that I not know anything save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. God sent Him into the world to save sinners. In doing that He covered the ground completely. Not one word nor one step was in jest or in vain. He came according to divine prophecy; He lived and acted out His assignment from His Father. He declared while enduring the anguish of that work, that to this end was I born and for this purpose came I into the world. The purpose in Him coming was that He might bear testimony to the truth. Every step that he walked, every word that He said, all was de-

clared of Him before He was formed in the womb of the virgin. Verily, as it was said of Him, He ever was about His Father's business. Everything that was declared of Him in prophecy He had to endure. If He did not overcome everything related and connected with His people's warfare then He did not overcome all things for them.

In brotherly love I present to you that God declared the end from the beginning. The only reason for this statement is the plain unequivocal statement that He said that He did. Did He not do that? He said that He did. I have not got any reason whatever to argue the matter. The text at the head of this article tells us that He declared the end from the beginning. Can that be explained away? What will be your argument? Is it said anywhere in Holy Writ that he did not do that? The language expresses God as declaring the end from the end. Will ridicule do away with God's declaration? It does seem that if I could not answer God's sovereigntyany better than that, I would leave it off. Perhaps this ridicule would sometime do that if it was not that their ridiculing God's statement that He did declare the end from the beginning also embraced their doing it.

According to the text God has been declaring this doctrine from ancient times. How far back? How remote has this declaration been made? If language means anything, and it does, then from all ancient times God has been declaring it. Not just at one period, or at one time, but from ancient times. Do you know how far back that goes? Do you know at what period, in dealing with His children, that He did not do that? If language means anything, and it does to those taught of God, then the ancient times are limitless, and without number, and these declarations cover all times. This declaration of the things, all of the things, not yet done, is now and continually.

Very well, if you do not believe this, what do you believe? If you do not believe this truth that God has declared so clearly, where does the doctrine that you do believe come from? It does not come from God, even the God of the Bible, because He has said in His Bible, which is the source of His doctrine, that He has declared from ancient times the end from the beginning. There is not any that can do this. He is the only being that can declare the end from the beginning. Is that denied? Has there ever been a creature that could do this? Well, can He do it? His comprehension was such that he declared all of the things not yet done. The important question, yea, the pertinent question is this: Did He declare the things not yet done? Let us remember that He said that from ancient times He had declared the things (how many things?) not yet done.

Let us look back in retrospection at the divine prophecy of God. Let us call upon the individuals of the present day. The many prophetical announcements concerning the Son of God's advent into the world. Those prophecies were all His divine declarations. Did one of them fail? Come dear readers, come and tell us one single declaration concerning the advent and departure of Jesus Christ that failed to come to pass. Remember that God declared before He came how He would arrive. how He would be treated, how and by whom He would be crucified. Did one event fail to come to pass? One important declaration made by God was that the wicked would do wickedly. Did they ever do a good deed toward Him? Did they ever receive Him with peace and joy? You may take each and every prophecy, or if you please, every declaration that God made in the life of Jesus Christ, follow it from its appearance until His rising from the dead, and the only answer you will ever get from Holy Writ is that it came to pass.

Come with me to Holy Writ. Let us

pick at random any Bible character. God sent each of them into the world to fill a certain purpose. In each case God laid out the events that would take place in their lives. Did each episode allotted or declared to follow him take place? In each and every case it is the same divine path laid out for the servant. Which one, in each of their lives, failed of occurring. Follow Joseph from birth to death, the things that God declared would occur did occur. Take any of the saints of old, and in the most minute detail every item declared as being a part of his life came to pass. How wonderful it is that in our searching of the Bible that not only are all things declared before they come to pass, but even the individuals of the Bible that God has declared the events of their life before hand, and that they come out and are displayed in the Bible from birth to death.

Now have you noticed the wonderful culmination of this declaration before of the events of time? God assigns His reason or purpose in this. It is that my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. Whether it is God or man that has determined a thing that God meant it all for good, even the wickedness of Joseph's brethren. How often, how often in the last one hundred and fifty years have professed followers of the Lord Jesus Christ have pictured the scriptural writers of the maligned writers in this periodical for saying that evil things wrought good for the cause of Christ. Yet, Joseph comforted his guilty brethren by telling them that although they meant it for evil that God meant it for good. There is not a logician on the face of the globe that could get Joseph down into Egypt after taking out one of the events in that of getting him down there. God sent Joseph down there. He selected and declared before hand how that he would go.

Did God determine the going down into Egypt of Joseph and not determine the way that he would go? Did He? This was one of the most important events in the history of Israel. From a human reckoning, I would venture to suggest that it was second to the sending of Jesus Christ into the world. In fact, the first is a figure of the second. The certain outcome of each event was as much as the other. The same Being declared the coming of one that declared if of the other. There were saints and the vilest of sinful wretched involved in each event, the first meaning it for good, the latter meaning it for evil, and the Declarer of both meaning it all for the good of God's people and the others meaning it for evil.

One thing in particular about the predestination of all things that you will not notice among the family of God. Not a member of that family is going to lay their sins on God. It is true, I am sorry to say, some of the professing members of the body of Christ will do that way. Some of them will be so destitute of a wrought in experience of grace that they will boldly attempt to lay the blame on God; that He is to be blamed, that He is the cause of their wrong doing. David did not lay the blame on God when he was caught in a scheme to get Uriah's wife. Instead of shifting his sin off on God, he humbly confessed his guilt, saying, my sin is ever before me. Yet, it is expressly declared that God declared the end from the beginning, and there is not a pen of God, nor a tongue that the Holy Spirit has loosed, that wants to, nor that can tell who would have been the father of Solomon, or that can even tell whether he would have ever been on the face of the earth, or that he would have ever been born had David not got her to wife. David did not, and I do not, and no man or woman under the divine leadership of the Spirit is going to condone David's sin.

When God says a thing, that should (and it does) settle the matter. God's

taught children abide by what God said about it. God sent Joseph down into Egypt. He said that He did. He further told his brethren what actuated them in selling him into Egypt. They meant it for evil. What was it that they meant for evil? It was not for a righteous deed, but it was for their evil acts. Joseph told them, and thus God tells us that God meant it for good. That which they meant for evil God meant it for good. It was the same in both cases. The "it" that they meant for evil, the same "it" God meant for good. I have heard ninty five per cent of the predestinarian ministers in my life time, and with two or three exceptions I have not heard any of them say anything stronger about evil works than what Joseph said about his evil brethren.

God has declared the end from the beginning of all such matters. He clearly and emphatically and time and again said that He sent Israel down into Egypt and brougth them out again. I am sure of how and by whom God opened up the way for them all to go, and I am likewise sure of how that He brought them out. I glory in this glorious work of God. All the bitter writing and pulpit ranting by the enemies of God's doctrine hasn't made a dent in The declaration of God of things not yet done, saying that my councel shall stand and that I will do all of my pleasure.

Let us, dear brethren, do the best that we can to ignore the cursing of those that know not David, that know nothing of the journey into Egypt, nor less of the deliverance from there, and let us by the grace of God do as our blessed Master, and as our dear fellow traveller, to wit, David, let us say nothing against them that would malign us, for we must ever recognize that we must expect that for if they do these things to the green tree we certainly cannot expect any less in dry branches.

His declaration of the end from the beginning will at a time unexpected and unlooked for, the Lord shall come again, and that those that have turned a deaf ear to the cry of the poor and afflicted people of God, will all be begging for the mountains to fall upon them.

In love and fellowship to the poor,
Elder W.D. Griffin

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

Dan River Primitive Baptist Church was constitited in the year 1884. It is located on N.C. Highway 700 and Route 2, Ruffin, N. C. Their services are on Fourth Sunday mornings and Saturday night before and on second Sunday nights of each month. They also meet together and sing every first Sunday night. Their present pastor is Elder David Spangler who has served this church for the past sixty years. This is also Elder Spangler's home church.

CORRESPONDENCE

There has been a lot of Scriptures that have crossed my mind that I thought I would like to talk about. But the time is passing on. Maybe I will talk to you a little while. The brethren were preaching this morning concerning Jacob and Esau. I could not help but remember that I heard a man trying to tell the difference between the two sons, the two brothers and he said after he talked a long time on the matter concerning Cain and Abel. He said he just did not know why that God chose the offerings of Abel and rejected the offerings of Cain, unless He liked lambs better than He did vegetables. The man had a point. If he had confessed God made choice between the two offerings it would have ruined everything he had peached all these years. If he had said God had elected one over the other it would have still ruined and destroyed everything he had been standing for and praching all had been standing for and preaching all those years.

I want to talk to you just a little bit about the fellowship that God has blessed us with, a fellowship that Paul expressed as a mystery, and it is a mystery. It is a great mystery how the Lord has chosen the people in the flesh and put His spirit in them to see one another as the angels of God and look at one another as the children of God and not after the flesh. Can you think of a greater mystery than that? We are all made of the same lump, naturally speaking, clothed and robed in the same robe of flesh. If one disagreed with the other then he would say that there is nothing to you anyway and they would go their way and never speak again to one another. If these brethren at my back and if you fell out with all the ones that disagreed with you in your walk of life and what you believed pertaining to the Scriptures, where would you be? Would you be here today? I tell you of a truth that if we should fall out with everyone that disagreed with us on any particular, then we would all go our way and none of us would be here.

But think of it, what a mystery it is that God would bless us to overcome. That's wherein God blesseth his people to overcome that, that dewlls in us in nature and seek after those things that are of the spirit. We see one another as the children of God, a great mystery. Blessed, blessed is the people that know the joyful sound. I believe my dear hearers, that there is no people on the face of the earth that know the joyful sound as those who have been given to die to the things of the flesh. That's wherein the fellowship comes in. Paul said that I am crucified to the world and the world is crucified to me. What's he saying? He is saying that I am dead to the world and the world is dead to me. Our life is meeting Christ with God and he goes further. He says when He shall appear, then shall we appear with Him in glory. What a wonderful thing! Your life, my life, that we live in Christ is His promise. We walk by faith; we walk not by sight. That's why that in this fellowship of the spirit, fellowship of the suffering and that's where God brings His people to in that very avenue. I fine no other source in this Book, and you won't either, that God has brought His people together in this fellowship that we have been so blessed with during this association. By no other avenue can one enter into it except by the putting away of those things that pertain to the flesh. Our fellowship is in the spirit of God and the love of God is manifest. That's where God shows His smiling face upon us.

I have been trying to serve the spirit for about 21 years and I try to remind the folks that I speak to, of the peace that God has blessed us with and make

them realize that we are not to take our fellowship or our peace for granted. It is God Himself that keeps us in this unity, in this love, that we might seek the same thing through the love of God. Nevertheless, I believe that God brings things among us to stir us up sometimes that we may be more careful pertaining to this peace that God has blessed us with. Do you believe that? I do. He brings things. He sends things that make us to realize how precious that our fellowship is that we have to enjoy. Let us not my dear brethren and sisters and kind friends take what God has blessed us with for granted.

Two weeks ago I talked in a home for just a little while about us being together. This is the same thing, it's all together, the fellowship of the saints of God, their being brought together. He raised us up together and He has made us to sit together in a heavenly place in Christ Jesus our Lord. This meaning that there is no other way that one could ever be able to sit in a heavenly place in Christ unless He made us. I know that's contrary to the doctrine of the world but oh my friends, that's why Paul spoke about fellowship as being a mystery. Yet it is as plain as your nose on your face to us who are blessed with it. It seems like the whole world could see it. When Christ was talking to His disciples of His death and resurrection, He told them that the world would see Him no more but they would see Him. He was asked how He was going to manifest Himself to them and not unto the world? How is it that you can do this thing? He said We will just come and take up our abode with you.

Oh,my dear hearers, we are blessed with the greatest treasure, the greatest blessing that ny people could ever have on the face of the earth. That's why I believe that among our folks that you will find the carefulness, that we are careful as to what we say; we are careful as to what we do lest it be offensive to our brethren. Those principles are made to abound in our hearts when these things come our way and we are blessed. Principles that you don't have to go and ask somebody if this is right or if that's wrong. It's laid there. That's why you'll find the tongues of His people are bridled by the spirit of God. What a wonderful thing, that's to the keeping of this beautiful fellowship that we have one with another, the family of God. Oh, how beautiful it is. Do you know what fellowship is? Fellowship, it's fellows in the same ship that share the same things that are given a oneness of mind by the same spirit, not different spirits but of the same spirit. This is why my dear hearers that we are made to be careful. Oh, my friends let us walk softly; let us be mindful to maintain this peace through our Lord Jesus Christ that he so wonderfully blessed us with.

There are brethren and sisters that have come from thousnads of miles away and yet we can come together. I am not talking about this togetherness as we are here together under these trees. I am not talking about that kind of togetherness. I am talking about a togetherness that is invisible to the natural eye. I am talking about the shedding forth from one to the other the greatness of the love of God. When we shake one anothers hands, do you think that it is just a habit that we have? Is it? When we meet with one another is it just a habit that we want to shake one anothers hand? Oh no! I go outdoors sometimes and I walk out in the yard. My neighbor will come over and I don't even think that I want to shake hands with him. I just don't. But when I meet with those that have been brought the same way that I feel the Lord has taught us, I want to shake his hand. There is an extension there from one to the other of the wonderful fellowship. That's what it is.

I remember years ago I went out into

the yard one day and my neighbor came over. We were talking about the church. He said, "You know we had our fellowship meeting at our church last night."

I said, "Oh you did."

"Yes we did and I thoroughly enjoyed the fellowship."

And I said, "That's good, that's good, what did you talk about?"

"We talked about what we had done in the past several weeks and what we planned to do in the weeks to come. Oh, it was just a lovely fellowship meeting."

Is that what you call fellowship? If it is my dear hearers, you know nothing about the fellowship that I'm talking about. It's a complete mystery to you if you have never entered into the realms of the sweetness of the love of God. Neither do you know anything about the rest that He has given to His people

Oh, my dear hearers, I think of it so many times when I meet brethren from afar off. The first thing I want to know is the welfare of their salvation. I think that is our chief concern. You know I think some get the idea that they are just members of the church and are free to say what they want to. It's up to the pastor and to the deacons to keep peace in the church. It's good to look to your pastor and to your deacons. But let me tell you something my dear friends, this thing lies with the duty of every member that composes the body that we be careful not to be offensive to the church. That's the thing, think about it my friends that this fellowship and this love may continue and that we might live together in peace. Just let something come along and let some brother or sister set forth something that he wants not having the welfare of the church in mind but something he wants and he has already caused trouble. I hope these things will sink down into the ears of every one of you that we might live by them and that we might live in peace. I don't know of a time in all the world that we need one another more than we need one another now. That's why I say let us be careful to maintain this fellowship that we have existing one to the other. Oh, what a wonderful thing it is. Just let us get in the flesh and we have already caused trouble with ourselves and with the church, but may it be the will of our heavenly Father that He may continue to bless us with those things that will give us peace with one another and with Him. When He gives us peace with Him, we are going to have peace with our brethren. How many times have you seen the love of God separate brethren? How many times have you seen that happen? None, but just let the flesh begin to work and already there is something working. Oh, my friends, I thank my heavenly Father for the peace that we have and I feel that all you visitors here have certainly found the hearts of this association open to you in peace. That's all we want to have among us is peace. Let us be careful.

ELDER H. W. WRAY

REPENTANCE

Repent or repentance is regret and sorrow for having done some deed. It is not always used for Godly repentance, which means such sorrow as shall cause a complete change of action.

If by the grace of God we are convicted by our own conscience, which is the Spirit of God in a poor sinner's heart, then repentance, which is Godly sorrow for his children, must suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

I Peter 4:15; "But let none of you suffer as murderers, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters."

Jesus said unto the pharisees in St. Luke 16:15; "Ye are they which justify

yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts:for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."

I know I have had an experience, and I hope it was of God. I find recorded in I John 4:1; "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

I remember when I was a lad of a boy working alone in my daddy's tobacco field, I believe I was given to see myself a sinner naked before an allwise God; and I was walking according to the course of this world, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind and was by nature a child of wrath.

I believe, by the grace of God, I was blessed to fear the Lord in fear and trembling, with repentance in my heart and not from lying lips. II Corinthians 7:10; "For Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of, but the sorrow of the world worketh death."

I have walked many times with a bowed head and heavy heart. I believe I have been blessed to know the meaning of repentance, and I hope I am thankful for this blessing. Hebrews 12:6; "For whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."

I feel that where there is no chastisement there is no repentance, and where there is no repentance, there is no evidence that the spirit of God dwelleth in one's heart.

I feel, if not deceived, I have been blessed with many precious experiences along life's pathway that I would not trade for the treasures of this world. St. Mark 3:36; "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

Sometimes I feel blessed to glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulations worketh patience and patience,experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed. I am not ashamed of my hope, Those who have no hope have no conscience and those who have no conscience have no repentance. For repentance is Godly sorrow and does not come from lying lips. God is the God of love and peace, and not the author of confusion.

I find recorded in Proverbs 6:16; "These six things doth the Lord hate; yea, seven are an abomination unto him."

Proverbs 6:17; "A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood; 6:18; "An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief; 6:19; "A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren."

Ezekiel 14:6; "Therefore, say unto the house of Israel, thus saith the Lord God; repent, and turn yourselves from you idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations."

St.Matthew 10:16; "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." 10:17; "But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues."

Hebres 13:1; "Let brotherly love continue." I believe that repentance and forgiveness are inseparable, if they are of the Lord. Where there is Godly sorrow, there is Godly forgiveness, and brotherly love will continue.

St. Luke 17:3; "Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him."

St. Luke 17:4; "And if he treapass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shall forgive him."

John 4:20; "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar."

I Kings 22:36; "And there went a proclamation throughout the host about the

going down of the sun, saying, "Every man to his city, and every man to his own country."

St. Luke 15:7; "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nie just persons, which need no repentance." For he that is wise in his own conceit knoweth no repentance.

Clifton Robertson
Rt. l, Reidsville, N. C.

Dear Brother and Sister Spangler:

In thinking over the experience given me recently I write: This to all who may read these lines from the pen of a poor and afflicted sinner, in hope of the finished work of the blessed Redeemer, when He hang on the cross saying, "It is finished." What is finished? The work given Him of the Father to do here on earth. I speak of the God of heaven and earth. He gave this work to his Son Jesus Christ to do. To save His people from their sins is what He was given to do and finished here on earth. I do not understand that all of His work is completed. He is now seated at the right hand of the Father making intercession for Gods humble poor and suffering little ones. Oh, how they do groan within themselves and often fearful to cast their eyes upward, feeling to know the God who has all power is able to cut their puny life off in one moments time. This work will not be completed until Jesus presents His bride, or all of Gods children to God without spot, wrinkle or blemish.

Now I want to pen down something as I hope was given me recently, just two or three weeks ago or just before the third week of November, 1983, I was given this dream.

I was before this huge mountain and as I started to ascend the mountain, there before me was this narrow path and in the ascention, I was carried in a way it appeared as a winding stair. When the summit was reached, there I saw people I knew, two dear sisters and this dear Elder whom I have known and loved for thirty-three years, and who preaches the whole council of God, one who has been persecuted in many ways and yet Jesus shines in his countenance. If I know what this spirit looks like, it causes one of Gods ministers to change appearance before the congregation. When Jesus speaks in them and they give to the ones before them the food they are hungering for. Oh, how it causes the hearers to rejoice. This food comes from a storehouse that never gives out. If not deceived we are given a love for all of God's humble ministers. This golden chain of love is precious indeed to ones who are made to feel it. While on this mountain top, I was given a view of Heaven just beyond the top of the mountain. It appeared to the right of the mountain as pure gold and so beautiful my poor tongue or pen could never describe it. I asked the dear sisters who were putting food on this long table, "Oh, don't you see what I see?" and they said, "No, we don't see it." This dear Elder D. V. Spangler stood smiling and nodding his head in agreement that this was also in his view. I then started off the side of the mountain with no fear of the distance down. It was rocky and rough, yet on down I went to the foot of the mountain. There was this river clear as could be and my feet were in the edge of that river. Then back on the mountain top I was carried in a flash of time, and the beautiufl view of Heaven was again just beyond where we stood on this mountain.

I awoke with a feeling of love in my breast for all the household of faith. Where ever you may be, dear child of God, I hope I love you with a God given

love and when I am called to leave this world of woe, I hope there will be a feeling in me that I experience from time to time of having nothing against one of God's humble poor, what ever faction they be in, I hope I am given the fruit of the spirit to love you. Perfect love casteth out all fear.

We hope there will be a day of rejoicing as we felt on that mountain top, when hope turns into reality and we are carreid home where there will be no more sorrow, heartaches and tears. May God continue his blessings on you, and you and I hope poor and sinful me.

Your little one in hope,

Mrs. Fred (Louise) Cobb

Camden, N. J., June 29, 1901

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:

Feeling in the mood for writing, and my mind reverting continually to you, once more I address you as above, for what purpose I know not, only that I desire to hear from you, and take this means of getting a thought or two from your pen. Were you to meet me on the highway and greet me with the usual salutation, "How are you?" I scarcely know how I would answer you. No very deep trials, spiritually or otherwise, have stirred my mind since coming within the portals of the Zion of our God. My chief uneasiness is felt when I am brought in contact with the world around me. This hurts me. Imagine how sensitive the body would be were the outer or scarf skin removed, and you will have a very clear idea of my state of mind when in the course of my daily walk, I am brought in contact with unbelievers, or what is worse, the adherents of popular religion. I think it would be more in conformity with the experience of the saints, were I to realize more intensely that my worst enemies are "those of my own household." The children of God seem to talk more of their peculiar trials of mind while I have none. Surely there is a lost chord somewhere. "If ye be without chastisements, thereof all be without chastisements, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons." Do such Scriptures as these apply to me? Evidence seems to point that way, yet something within me thrusts them from me, and will not accept them.

Both of my parents were Old School Baptists before I was born. As soon as I knew anything at all, I was taken by them to Old Baptist meetings. Every Sunday found them in their place, and of course, I with them, for none of us children were permitted to stay away unless in the event of its being dire necessity. Now, under such training as this, how could I turn out to be anything but an Old School Baptist? I sometimes fear my knowledge of their doctrine is all in the head and not in the heart, where it ought to be. In a very weak and unsatisfactory manner I will endeavor to lay before you what I hope has been an experience of grace in me, but will leave you to decide whether such is the case, or if it be but a wild fancy of the imagination.

To the best of my recollection, I never heard any other than Old Baptist preaching until about fifteen years old. Naturally, having never heard any other, I thought the Old Baptists were all right, but I could not comprehend them. While I thought their religion was a mighty good thing for them, it was not for me. They seemed above me, exalted to heights that I could never reach, nor did I care to reach them at that time. I was satisfied with myself as I was. My parents being

blest with the gift of hospitality, our home was always open to the brethren far and near, so that from hearing their conversation I became intellectually familiar with the various points of their belief.

Just when I began to think of eternity and the life hereafter,I cannot say. I sometimes feared that I would die in the night. At such times I would not go to sleep, lying face upward, thinking this position more than any other favored death, and might tempt the "Black Angel" to visit me. Such superstitions would haunt me at times, but would all vanish with day-dawn, and not for some time later would I have such thoughts again.

Desiring from early years to become a teacher, I began attending a normal school in my native State, to prepare myself for the work. Here the rules were such that every student must of necessity attend service in one of the many churches of that vicinity, every Sunday morning. No Old Baptist church existed in that place, I was forced to attend other denominations, and here for the first time I heard other preaching. I recognized a difference in the preaching almost as soon as I heard it, not that I thought it wa contrary to Bible teaching, but that it was more interesting to listen to, and more calculated to keep one from sleeping, than what I had formerly been accustomed to.

Unevertfully my student days passed on until the "week of prayer" in the fall. The cards issued as invitations to the meetings and scattered promiscuously among the students, bore this inscription at the top: "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good."—Numbers 10:29. Suddenly a determination to attend these meetings seized me. The motive that prompted me was possibly one of curiosity, as I wanted to see what effect such meetings would have upon me. Not because I realized the need for salvation did I attend these meetings, but as I have said, simply to see how such meetings were conducted, and whether I would be in any way affected by such proceedings. Thus I began attending the sessions of the so called "week of prayer." At the close of the first meeting all who desired to be saved were asked to stand up. Immediately I asked myself, Shall I stand or not? Do I want to be saved or not? Why certainly, what sensible man would not want to be saved? Therefore I stood with the others. At the second meeting all who stood at the first meeting were requested to remain at the close and consult with the professor who had the matter in charge. Feeling that I now had gone too far to draw back, I remained in my place at the close of the meeting. When all who were not interested had left the room, the professor made a prayer and talked to us about what we should do to be saved. Belief, he said, was the only necessary qualification for salvation, and it was for us to say whether or not we would be saved. I was willing, I thought, to be saved, but how to make myself believe in something that I knew nothing about, I could not understand. However we were requested to sing a hymn. The one selected had for its theme the giving of one's self to Christ, inviting him to enter and make our heart his home, &c. "I bleieve," "I trust," "I own," "I want," and other like expressions were scattered throughout the hymn. How can I ever express my feelings while singing this selection? Here my pen fails when it attempts to portray in black and white the revelation manifested in my soul at this time. Something said to me, "You are lying, yes, lying, and that in the face of a just and mighty God. You say you trust in his name. You do not. You say you believe that Christ died for you. You do not. You are standing up boldly in the sight of God and telling a bare faced lie." Such agony as filled my soul I can never express. Hitherto my dealings had been between man and

man. Now, in the twinkling of an eye, the scene was shifted, and my dealings were between God and man. He was just and mighty, true and tood, holy and undefiled. But I, what was I? Alas, a poor, wretched worm of the dust, crawling on the earth, striving in vain to seek a hole to creep into away from the fierce outburst of God's righteous indignation that had suddenly engulfed me, and was sweeping me to everlasting destruction. Yet I said it was righteous and just. I was the one that was altogether out of the way.

"And though my soul were sent to hell,
His righteous law approves it well."

Just how long I was in this state of anguish I have never been able to remember. How I managed to get out of that meeting and to my room, I do not know, but when I did get there I threw myself upon my bed and wept long and bitterly, much to the surprise of my roommate, who became much alarmed, thinking that the meetings had worked me up to such a pitch that I was going crazy over religion. He advised me not to attend any more of the meetings, and I did not; not because I feared insanity, but because I could get no comfort there. Gradually time wore on. Instead of getting better,I got worse, and my burden was fast becoming more than I could bear. The professor before mentioned, seeing I was under convition, kept telling me that if I would but give myself up and believe on the name of Jesus, I would be saved. He asked me what I was waiting for? I said, "A revelation. When I see Christ and know that he died for me, then I can believe, not before." He then accused me of stubbornness, and so we parted, and never again came together in any other relation save that of teacher and pupil. At last I thought, what would I not do to be rid of this burden? O, if only Christ was my Savior. O, if he only had died for me. "Lord, thou canst if thou wilt make me clean." Now, to my mind, if relief were to come, it seemed to me it must come by a revelation, and that so vivid and so startling that I never could doubt my being saved. I had come to the place where I ceased to work, or to try to rise from the depths to which I had fallen. All my efforts had availed me nothing, so I ceased to do anything, and was waiting; waiting for what? For that revelation so startling and so sure that it would dispel all my gloom and save my soul from hell. While watching for this vision, I opened the Bible, and my eye fell upon these words, "Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision: and it shall be dark unto you that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets and the day shall be dark over them." Alas, I was waiting for something that was not to come. I wanted a vision; I would have none, because the word of God coming to me with power told me I would not. Thrown down from this hope, vain as it had proved to be, I now suffered more than ever.

One night, laying upon my bed, I could not sleep. My troubles were fast getting too severe, and I verly thought they would be the death of me. They were gripping me by the throat, and I could feel my breath fast leaving me; I was dying. My mental anguish had brought on bodily suffering, and I had a raging fever. Now, surely, unless relief came, and that quickly, I should perish, and with that it seemed to me I or something within me cried, "Peace!" In the twinkling of an eye I was at rest. All my burden had gone. Hardly realizing my state, I tried to bring back my troubles, but could not. They were gone, thank God, for ever. Happy and as free as a bird, I fell asleep and slept till morning. And now again I cannot express my joy upon awaking. The sun never shone so brightly: all nature was at her best and rejoicing with me; I felt the power of the resurrection within and around me, and

that the gift of eternal life was mine through the blessed sacrifice of God's only begotten Son, who was offered up for me. Shout, ye heavens, and listen, O earth, Christ died for *me.* Such were my feelings at that time. Now I was not aware that there was another being on earth that had passed through what I had. Upon going home to spend a few days at Thanksgiving, I talked all the time to my parents of my feelings, and they rejoiced to see me rejoice. I soon saw that they had experienced the same things that I had. When I returned to school, I took with me a book written by our beloved pastor, Elder S. H. Durand, entitled, "Meditations on Portions of the Word." For weeks this was all the preaching I had. I soon saw from his writings that he knew all about my feelings from having experienced the same, and I loved him. It was in this way, through hearing them preach, and reading their writings, with the understanding that I now had given me, that I came to see the Old School Baptists as the only and true church of the living God, because it all corresponded with holy writ. Knowing this I loved them because I could not help it. No other people that I have ever met could understand my feelings. Loving them, I knew I had experienced the new birth, for "We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." I did not go before the church at this time. Had I been near them when in the first flush of love, I know not what might have been the consequence, but, as I have said, I was not near any of them, and when I did get back to where they were, doubts and fears had so assailed me that I verily thought I had been deceived, and as for being baptized, I had not thought of it. The very idea was absurd. Nevertheless I have always attended Old Baptis meetings whenever an opportunity presented itself, never having attended regular service in any other denomination since leaving school, but my unworthiness was the barrier that separated me from them. However, in the fall, while attending a yearly meeting, I lost sight of my unworthiness, and longed all at once to be baptized. This desire kept increasing in spite of the temptations Satan put in my way until at the regular meeting at Southampton, Pa., I related my state of mind to the church. To my surprise they received me, and on the third Sunday I was baptized. Thus far the Lord hath led me on, as to the next step, I know not what it will be. I look to him to be my Guide. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

Yours in hope of eternal life

HORACE H. LEFFERTS

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VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

TO THE DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:

Heb. 2: 10-12, which reads as follows: *"For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both He that sanctified are all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren, Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."*

I am well aware that this, as well as all other of God's holy inspired word, is a very great text, and I know that I am not in any sense of the word capacitated to understand this great and glorious subject without the divine light of God's Holy Spirit. I desire that the Giver of every good and perfect gift will enable me to see, understand and write of some of the glorious doctrinal and experimental phases that are taught in this scripture.

First, I will say that the stern, inflexible sovereignty of God is taught, and there is no mincing of words in it for he says, "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things." I feel that the promoun HIM is applicable to the Father, God, the Creator. The word became, means becoming to him in his glorious and perfect character, so it was becoming to God to have all things as they are, to properly and perfectly bring out and reveal his glory, and not only so, but it also was becoming to make the captain of these many son's salvation perfect through sufferings. So with all that is connected with, and that caused and brought forth his great sufferings, there can be no doubt that it was becoming to the revelation of his glory to have it this way. However, I feel sure that no ome would think for a moment that I am trying to justify the wicked and heimous crimes committed by the betrayers and murderers that killed the Prince of Life as is set forth in the Acts of the Apostles 3:15. Jesus also said, "The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It had been good for that man if he had not been born," and there are other numerous scriptural witnesses to these things. The prophet also said, "It pleased the Lord to bruise him," so it must have been becoming to God to have it that way, or it would not have pleased him to bruise him. When the blessed Savior fell upon his meek and lowly face in that humble petition of sweat and tears and said, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," do you not feel that it would have passed, had it not become him for Jesus to suffer as the perfect captain of their salvation? When it was becoming to God for him to suffer.

There are so many things relative to this subject that it is impossible to mention all of them for the lack of time and space. What was the cause of his sufferings? Would we not most assuredly have to say from a Bible standpoint that it was for sin that he suffered, then had there been no sin there would have been no suffering and no need for salvation, no need for that great Captain of salvation, but it became him that it be this way because he plainly and emphatically said so in this text. Some would say, well it was becoming to God that sin enter into the world, and death by sin. I am quite sure had it not been, there would not have been any sin in this world. Let me ask the question, if it was not becoming for it to enter, then does it glorify God to contend that it would have been better for it not to have entered? It seems to me that this would place God in the position that he was helpless against sin's entrance into the world. Do you think, dear reader, it would become the glorious character of God to show him helpless in anything even the entrance of sin into the world or any other circumstance, thing, being or creature? Would it become God in his perfection and glory to have to say he could not have prevented sin's entrance? You might as well join the arminian and say, God wants every one to be saved but he is helpless to do it. It would be no different to say that God was helpless in the beginning of this world than to say he is helpless now, so let us examine ourselves whether we are in the faith or not, as Paul admonished.

In order to prove that there was a pur-

pose for the entrance of sin into this world we have only to refer you to Paul's language in Rom. 5:20, "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound." Whose purpose was it for the offence to abound? I am sure you will admit that it was God's purpose, for he was the giver of the law to Moses as well as to Adam and Eve in the garden. In Revelations 5:6 it reads, "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain," and in chapter 13, verse 8 it says, "All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." These two passages prove that Jesus actually stood in the mind and purpose of God, as he had already been slain even from the foundation of the world. What for? For sin that was to enter in through the transgression of Adam. God's holy purpose in it dit not cause Adam's sin in the immediate sense of the word, but the serpent and his beguiling influence, and the appetizing influence of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil was the moving cause of it, and Adam and Eve and all their posteritly were and are held accountable for it, because they are and were guilty and will ever be except through the sufferings of the blessed Savior of sinners, the Captain of their salvation. Certainly you could not say there would have been anything if there had been no God, but because of this fact there is no room to say that God is the author of sin if we will read Romans 5:12, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the worls, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." The disobedience of one man, not by one God. Let us not run off into arminianism and deny the truth concerning God's sovereignty in order not to be accused by them of believing that God is the author of sin. We do not believe it, neither do we teach it, but that does not keep us from being accused of it, neither did it keep the apostle Paul from being accused ot it. You will note in Romans 3:8 it reads, "And not rather,(as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just."

I am sure that no one would accuse us of believing that God's purpose was the immediate cause of Judas Iscariot's betrayal of the Savior, but all can readily see the thirty pieces of silver as the cause, amd no wonder Jesus said, "He that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." It was sin to betray the Savior and Judas was under its penalty even though it became God to have it that way as he said in this text. I am sure it was wrong and wicked on the part of Ahab's prophets to wickedly deceive Ahab by their falsehoods and lies as they prophesied victory and prosperity and caused Ahab to go into battle. (Read 1 Kings 22:23) It must have become God to have it that way because it reads, "Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee." The Lord told the lying spirit to go forth and sew this wickedness. Had it not been becoming to the revelation of God's glory to command, and use this lying spirit in this manner I am sure it would not have occured as you will see by reading his holy inspired word. This is the doctrine that is taught and that is and has been believed by our people all the way down, even the ancient confessons of faith show this very clearly. I ask the reader to read the London, Fulton and Philadelphia confessions, as well as the Bible, and let us not vary to the right nor the left from the doctrine in all of its phases of it, the Lord willing. I do not want any one of God's dear children to be offended at me, but I feel that I must contend

earnestly for the faith that was once delivered to the saints.

Pharaoh, King of Egypt, was very wicked and oppressive to the children of Israel, bitterly bound them in slavery, evilly and cruelly treated them, murdered them and destroyed their young through their midwives. In all this if we believe God's holy word and teachings we must assuredly believe that it was becoming in God to have it this way. He says in Romans 9:17, "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout the earth." If it was not becoming in God to have it this way why did God command Moses to say, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go," Ex. 5:1, yet he hardened his heart so that he should not let them go. "And he hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said. And the Lord said unto Moses, Pharaoh's heart is hardened, he refuseth to let the people go." Ex. 7:13-14. If it was not becoming to God to have Pharaoh's heart hardened, why did God harden it? Certainly no one would say that it was unbecoming to God to do this, except those that will say that he is unjust, that he is the author of sin if he does these things; let us not charge God with being unjust and the author of sin, but let us not deny his holy word in order to keep from being accused of these things.

Joseph's brethren sold him wickedly into Egypt, deceived their father, making him think his son was dead, and the evil and wicked lie of Potiphar's wife caused him to be so unjustly and wickedly cast into prison. Were not these things according to the purpose of God, and is so was it not becoming to God to have it this way? "God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance." Gen. 45:7. Do you think it was becoming to God for him to use such wicked things as these to fulfill his purpose and to save and preserve their lives in Joseph's wicked and heinous abuses by his brethren, and Potiphar's wife's lies and all the wickedness that was done? The Bible says these things were done and said. Were they becoming to God or were they unbecoming? God forbid that I should say they were unbecoming, but that it was a most glorious and blessed token of God's power, wisdom, righteousness and also of his mercy, his justice and the preservation and deliverance of his people by his miraculous power.

Everything that God has ever done in all his holy purposes is most certainly becoming to God, and he is righteous and just in manifesting his purposes either in wrath and justice, or in righteousness and mercy. Each attribute must shine in the revelation of his holy nature and character in all things, and it is all becoming to him in every detail as is shown in Rom. 9:22 where Paul asks the question on this very subject. "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." As hard as this does seem God is perfectly righteous, and it is most certainly becoming for him to have it this way. Who would rebel and say this thing is unbecoming to God in his righteous character? Those who have never known him in all his goodness and mercy; those who are born truly of God, and have been made to see their just condemnation before God. How dare they make any plea except that he is altogether righteousness and if he in justice should send their soul to hell, his righteous law approves it well. Then all things appointed, purposed or predestinated of God, and they are becoming to him.

On the other hand I desire to call your attention to the truth as I see it. Sin is

never becoming to any one from the standpoint that it is right. Certainly not, it is the transgression of God's holy law, and it would still be wrong even though there was no law. Could any one doubt that the crucifixion of the Savior was purposed, predestinated, appointed, ordained or ordered of God? From a scriptural standpoint I cannot see how any one could deny this as it is said, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." Zech. 13:7.

This sword was commanded to awake and it did awake, and it did smite that great shepherd of the sheep. David tells us who that sword is. It is the wicked, the men of the world. Was it becoming on their part to crucify the Lord? No, in no wise, it was sin in the very deepest dye. They desired to do this wicked thing, their hearts were hardened by the brightness and glory of God made manifest in the ministry and miracles of the blessed Lord and they selfishly hated him without a cause. They wanted to do away with him because he righteously rebuked them in their wickedness, and because God gave him the Spirit without measure and they could not resist his words and doctrine: they lay in wait to deceive on every hand, they were selling sheep oxen, doves and pigeons, and had in their employ the money changers. Jesus had made a whip of small cords and drove them out of the temple and their deepest wrath was stirred. They did not know him is cited as the reason they crucified him, or rather it is stated that had they known him they would not have crucified him, or rather it is stated that had they known him they would not have crucified him. All this wickedness and sin was very treacherous and wicked on their part, and it was very unbecoming in them who did it, but I think it was all righteous, just and holy on the part of God in the righteous revelation of his wrath on such wickedness, and such sin and treachery as they carried on in his crucifixion and death. It was sin without justification on their part because they all knew that it was wrong to do these wicked things as it was the very essence of their law that they professed to know and keep, as it is said, "Thou shalt not kill." Ex. 20:13.

It was unbecoming that Judas betray the Savior for thirty pieces of silver, but God had said by inspiration that he would do it, and had even said it would be thirty pieces of silver that he would get. It also showed that Judas would hang himself and what the thirty pieces of silver would be used for. Was it not becoming to God's glory that he suffered Judas to do this wicked thing after God had showed it beforehand? Who could say that it was becoming and right on the part of Judas? Also who could say that it was unbecoming on God's part when the text we are writing from says, "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." That was what the wicked act of Judas and the crucifiers of Jesus were doing, they were bringing his suffering that God had purposed, and God was rendering his righteous judgment upon them for their wickedness.

The sufferings of Christ were for every sin that his people has or will ever commit. God's goodness and mercy was manifest towards the vesels of mercy, was being extended through his sufferings and on the other hand his wrath was being displayed upon them who were wicked, treacherous in physically wallowing their hands in the precious blood of the Savior. No wonder Paul said, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How

unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Rom. 11:33.

Then all things are for God and all things exist by him. There is no way around it. No matter what kind of a so-called theologian you might be, but because all things are for him and by him, in some respect, as this text says, that should be no encouragement to any God fearing, God loving child of God to sin, no a thousand times no. My experience is that I have sinned so long and so much I would give everything under the shining heavens, if it were mine, if I could know that I would never sin any more. Oh, that I could know I have that new covenant in my heart the stipulations of which are, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."Dear and precious brethren and sisters, it is so wonderful and glorious just to hope to reach that righteous and peaceful shore where sin and all of its horrible consequences are no more, and to be like Jesus, the great Captain of our salvation to see him as he is and to be at his precious feet: to feel his blesssed and glorious presence in that bright and eternal home where all the saints of all ages will be around that great white throne of God: and where the eternal anthems of his worthy praise shall engulf all the redeemed before God and the Lamb. What a wonderful hope is this for a poor sinner to have. All this is brought about through the suffering of Christ, and it was becoming to God's glory to have it this way.

Another comment that I would like to make concerning this text is on the words BRINGING MY SONS UNTO GLORY. It is very comforting and assuring to the hope of God's children to notice the significance of this language. It does not in any way signify failure or uncertainty. Neither are we left to think, according to this language, that the sons have anything to do within and of themselves in going to glory, but this language says what God does in bringing them to glory. Then according to this language God is bringing many sons unto glory. Not that he is trying to bring them, neither is it in any way intimated that he is helping to bring them, nor that he desires to bring them, but that he is bringing them and will bring them unto glory. No help nor partnership in the matter, no agency or organization is depended upon, just what God himself does in bringing them. Another thing is that they are not brought just half way unto glory according to this language, but all the way unto glory, and God is the only one known in their bringing. No room for that doctrine and commandment of men and devils that God just helps so far and then we are dependent upon conditions the rest of the way.

I feel there is not a more comforting phase implied in this text than where it is acknowledged that all things are God's or that they are for him. Then if everything is for him, for him IN BRINGING MY SONS UNTO GLORY, there is nothing that is against that bringing them unto glory. No wonder Paul said, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Rom. 8:28. Because all things are becoming to God in bringing the many sons unto glory Paul said again. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" God is for bringing these many sons unto glory and he is for them and nothing can be against them, but all is for their good, and all things are becomeing to the glory, majesty and dominion of the God who is all powerful, eternal, all wise and who never sleeps nor slumbers, but "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Eph. 1:11. Then is it not most wonderful indeed to contemplate the glorious consequences that are expressed in these wonderful things?

Dear child of God, truly that scripture is correct where it says, "Happy art

thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." Deut. 33:29. They are saved by him alone, and all things are for him and by him in bringing them unto glory. Then, dear child of God, frar not, all things are in his hands and he will do all his pleasure "in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doeth thou?" All things are for him in bringing many sons to glory, and all things work together for the good of these many sons. Oh that I could have that blessed assurance that I am one of those many sons that are under consideration. If I but knew then would I know all things are for my good.

One might say, but I am such a sinner, so am I truly as Paul said, "O wretched man that I am!" but that is why Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, suffered on Calvary's cross, that poor sinners be free and that they be brought unto glory. This is the only hope that I have of entering that peaceful home of everlasting bliss and felicity. It was becoming to the glory, mercy and peace of Almight God that Christ Jesus suffer for his people, that he cleanse them with his precious blood, that he wash them and redeem them from all iniquity. Oh, the ravishing thought and hope of being as though we had never sinned. Oh, the precious anticipation that we be like the precious Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, that the Father spoke from heaven and declared, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."I am so tired of myself in my sins. I long to be free from them. I long to see his blessed face in peace. I long for that blessed abode where no sorrow can come, no pain, sickness or death, but where that blessed love of God will swallow us up, where we will ever sing his eternal and worthy praise forever and ever around that eternal throne with all his saints of all ages. Amen. (Elder) R. W. RHODES

TO OUR READERS

Our goal is to double our list of subscribers. Please resolve that you will obtain at least one new subscription. Many have already sent theirs in. If you haven't done so yet, please try to do so in February. We will advise you when we have reached our goal.

The Editors

NOTE: See Elder David Spangler's Book, Page 48 in this issue.

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CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR NOVEMBER 1983

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"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."
Mat. 7:12

OBITUARIES

JOHN EDGAR NEWNAM

God in His infinite wisdom saw fit to remove from our midst one of our oldest members, John Edgar Newnam. Brother Newnam was born December 21, 1884 in Eden, N. C. to the late Suzie Angeline Williams and George Peyton Newnam. He was the oldest of eigt children, 6 boys and 2 girls, of whom only one sister, Clara Saunders, survives. On November 4, 1908 he married Bulah Glass who preceded him in death October 14, 1959. From this union Brother Newnam is survived by sons: John Walter, Sr., Gaither T. and George E. Newnam and daughters: Mrs. Suzie White and Mrs. Hugh S. Pryor. In March, 1960 he married Gracie Price who preceded him in death in 1965. On August 11, 1965 he married Lillie Mabe Robertson who is left to mourn Brother Newnam's death along with five step-sons, three step-daughters, three half sisters, 16 grandchildren, 29 great-grandchildren, and 4 great-great-grandchildren.

Brother Newnam was a firm believer in salvation by Grace. He loved, stongly advocated and was blessed to be willing to defend this doctrine. Nothing pleased him more than hearing the Sovereignty of God and total depravity of man expounded upon. He was also blessed with a great love for the brethren of like precious faith. On August 10, 1958 he was united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church.

Brother Newnam died at his home in Pelham, N. C. on August 30, 1983 making his pilgrimage here 98 years, 8 months and 9 days. We will greatly miss our brother in Christ, but I am made to feel our lose is his eternal gain. May we all be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father who does all things well and makes no mistakes.

His funeral was conducted at Dan River Church by Elder David Spangler and Elder Wallis Smith. His body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Dan River Church cemetery to await the glorious Resurrection.

Written by Sister Sara Collie at the request of Dan River Church in conference held October 29, 1983.

Moderator: Elder D. V. Spangler
Clerk: Boyd Minter

SISTER HILLIE ADKINS WADE

Our beloved Sister Hillie Adkins Wade was born in Henry County, Virginia, August 21st 1898. She died

August 11th 1983 at Memorial Hospital in Martinsville, Virginia.

Funeral Service was held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, conducted by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler and H. W. Wray. She was buried in the Church Cemetery.

Sister Wade joined Dan River Church July 7th 1929. She was married to Ben Wade. Brother Ben Wadw was a former Deacon of Dan River Church, Brother Wade Died Oct. 7th 1956. One son James Wade preceeded her in death.

Sister Wade was a pleasent Woman and enjoyed meeting her brethren and friends and having them visit in her home.

Sister Wade is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Dover of Reidsville, N.C. One son B. F. (Binky) Wade of Eden, N. C. Four brothers; Rorer, Clyde, Andrew and Frank Adkins all of Eden, N. C.

Sister Wade was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace.

She will be greatly missed by her family and friends, but we feel that our loss is her gain.

Written by order of Dan River Church October 22, 1983.

Elder D. V. Spangler (Mod.)
Boyd Minter (Clerk)

GARDNER BRYANT HOUSTON

God saw fit to call from our midst the beloved husband and father Gardner Bryant Houston, to his eternal home. He was the son of Chancey and Emmer Houston. He was born January 28th, 1905. He departed from this earth on March 6th, 1983. He was married to Nora Summer Houston, who survived him along with three sons, Tyson, Bryson, and Rickie, and four grandchildren.

He joined Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church on November 10th, 1946, and was a true and faithful member until his death. He loved his church and manifested it in many ways. His walk in life was softly and humble. He believed in the soverign power and grace of our Heavenly Father. He served the household of faith with love, grace and humility.

His funeral was conducted at Edgerton Funeral Home, by Elder D.B. Stokes and Elder Mike Nikirk. He was laid to rest at East Duplin Memorial Garden beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the return of our Lord and Savior.

The family, church and community will miss him; but we hope to be submissive to God's will and made to feel our loss is his eternal gain.

Written by his son and daughter-in-law
Tyson and Lillian Houston

WOODIE C. SMITH

The Paran Primitive Baptist Church near Hawkins, Texas sustained a great loss in the death on October 15, 1983 of this longstanding and highly respected member.

Brother Smith was born February 19, 1903 in Louisiana. He was married to Collena Love in 1927. To this union were born the following four sons and two daughters: Paul, Kenneth, Daniel, David, Mrs. Marie Rufener and Mrs. Jean Mailanen. He also leaves behind the following three brothers and two

sisters: Jimmy, John, Louie, Mrs. Nora Phillips and Christine Cartledge all of Louisiana.

Brother Smith united with the Primitive Baptist Church in 1920 being a faithful member for sixty years. He moved his membership to Paran Church November 30, 1968. Details are not available of the beginning of a work of grace in his soul but it must have been from a young age.

He had a keen appetite for spiritual things. He was a quiet, humble, sober man; a great lover of the truth. He was never absent from church except through some real hindrance. He was often called on for prayer and his prayers were always sweet and humble.

The preciousness and suitability of the Lord Jesus Christ was a very sweet theme of his; indeed the enjoyment of his soul therein was often portrayed in his countenance. His humble, meek, and gentle countenance will live with us as long as memory serves us. We feel our loss is great, but his gain is greater, for we believe he is with Christ which is far better. He was a constant reader of the *Signs Of The Times* and fully enjoyed its contents. His mortal body was committed to the silent tomb in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection unto eternal life.

Written by his pastor and one who loved him.

ELDER JOE L. HAMRICK

SISTER
MARTHA MADELINE LILLARD

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write this memorial of Sister Madeline Lillard.

Her heavenly Father called her away from her sufferings on September 24, 1983.

Sister Madeline was born Martha Madeline McKinney, May 6, 1917, the daughter of David and Lillie Dix McKinney.

She had three brothers, Woodrow, Lafette, and Bruce. She was survived by her husband, Willie W. Lillard, one daughter, Beveraly Lillard Paschal, one son, Allen, also five grandchildren.

She joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, June 9, 1963 and remained a lovely member until her death.

She was loved by all who knew her, and was widely known in her community for her thoughtfulness of others. She was a loving companion for her husband, a tender caring mother, and always concerned about and helpful to her host of friends.

Sister Madeline was unable to attend church during her last months but she always longed to go.

She was always asking about the church and its members, and wanting to know if there was anything that she or Willie could do to help financially or otherwise.

She will be sorely missed by her church, her family and all who knew her and loved her so much. We trust that she is resting now in the peace, love and tender care of Christ.

Her funeral was conducted at her Church, Dan River Primitive Baptist, September 26, 1983, and was buried in the church cemetery.

Written at request of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in her conference, October 22, 1983.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Written by a brother, in hope
Coley S. Strader

BOOK NOTICES

ELDER DAVID SPANGLER'S BOOK

Elder David Spangler has published a book containing approximately 128 pages and is now ready for distribution.

It contains his own personal experience in life and the ministry; also the experience of others as they were brought into the church. There will be several of his editorials as they have appeared in the *"Signs Of The Times"*; articles of various customs and practices among Old School Baptists.

Elder Spangler has been blessed to serve in the ministry for over 60 years and editor of the *Signs Of The Times* for 40 years. He has visited among the Primitive Baptist churches from the mountains to the sea shore and from the east to the west. He is loved and held in high esteem by all those whose lives he has touched. He has a good report without as well as within the household of faith.

I have agreed to help in the distribution of these books. They are available for $5.00 each to cover cost of printing and mailing. Please send your orders to me:

Kenneth R. Key
721 Willard St.
Greensboro, N. C. 27405

A list of all purchasers will be forwarded to him.

P.S. Elder Spangler has recently had surgery and hopefully by the time you read this will be home from the hospital. I'm sure a note from his many friends will be appreciated. His mailing address is RFD #6, Box 270 Beechwood Lane, Danville, Virginia 24541.

Editors

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"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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A SUBJECT OF GRACE

A child of Jehova, a subject of grace,
I'm of the seed royal, a dignified race;
An heir of salvation, redeemed with blood,
I'll own my relation, my Father is God!

He loved me of old, and he loveth me still;
Before the creation, he gave me my will,
A portion worth more than the Indies of gold,
Which cannot be wasted, nor mortgaged, nor sold.

He gave me a Surety, a covenant Head,
To live in my name, and to die in my stead;
He gave me a righteousness wholly divine,
And viewed all the merits of Jesus as mine.

He gave a Preceptor infallibly wise,
And treasures of grace to be sent in supplies;
Yea, all that I ask for, my father hath given,
To help me on earth, and to crown me in heaven.

He gave me a will to accept what he gave,
Though I was adverse to his purpose to save;
He wrote in his will my repentance and faith,
And all my enjoyments for life and for death.

My trials and sorrows, my conflicts and cares,
The spirit of prayer and the answer of prayers,
The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will.

My cross and my crown are both willed by my God,
He swore to his will and then sealed it with blood;
Tis proved by the Spirit, the witness within;
Tis mine to inherit; I'll glory begin.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 3/84 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

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ELDER JOE L. HAMRICK
At Hopewell Church, October 9, 1983

I'd like to read some in the book of James. I feel like the book of James may be neglected to some extent. I trust that I believe in predistination of all things and I can add the word absolute to it. I don't think that it makes it any stronger because God's predestination is just as strong as it can be because it is of God. But I think it helps to identify it maybe from some of the others who claim to believe in predestination and yet have a tendency to weaken it some in their estimation of it. So the word absolute more or less identifies or shows a person exactly where you stand on predestination. I think predestination is beautiful. I think foreknowledge, I think election, I think the sovereignty of God is the backbone of our doctrine. I also believe there was many other phases of our doctrine that are very important, or should be, to the Lord's people. I feel maybe some of these areas have been somewhat neglected, even though all areas of true doctrine are engulfed in God's sovereignty. The Apostle Paul charges Timothy to "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth," and that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness."

I pray to God that He would give us light to see the precious food that is couched beneath these verses of scripture. I'd like to read one verse, the twenty-second verse of the first chapter of James. *"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your ownselves."* Notice what it says, Now let us read the twenty-fourth verse of the second chapter of James. It says, *"Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."* You might say, well, how about the Apostle Paul? What did Paul say about works? I want you to realize one thing that Paul and the Apostle James are absolutely in complete harmony with each other because they were both inspired by the same Holy Spirit to write. Therefore, they are in complete harmony with one another. The fact is, James and Paul are perfectly reconcilable, and they are viewing truth from different standpoints. Surely James does not intend to lead us to such a belief that there can be any merit whatever in any good works of our own.

What seems to be the difference is that the Apostle Paul is speaking of

works before a man has been quickened to divine life, and a man still in his natural state. Paul says, *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast."* There is no such thing as good works in order to gain salvation. I don't care what a man does, I don't care how he may be esteemed in the sight of society, in the sight of man, as far as his works are concerned towards his salvation, they are all as filthy rags in the eyes of Almighty God. They can't be anything but that because "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." And we know also that "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." "Not of works lest any man should boast." In other words, these works we have tried to do and people by the milions are trying to do this very day and time for their salvation, these works are as "filthy rags in the eyes of God." These works are what I believe the Apostle Paul was speaking of, the works of man, unregenerate man. These works cannot and are not of any benefit towards his own salvation.

Now I will admit that they are beneficial as far as society is concerned. We would much rather live next door to a man who is a good neighbor, whose walk and conversation is good in the eyes of man. But as far as these works toward his eternal salvation are concerned, if he is in his natural state still dead in trespasses and sin, all his works again are as filthy rags in the eyes of God toward his own eternal salvation, not in the eyes of society, but in the eyes of God (according to scripture) toward his own salvation. This is the reason why the scripture says "with man it is impossible." It is impossible to work for, merit, and secure his own salvation, it is all in the blood and righteousness of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. So I believe these are the works the Apostle Paul was bringing forth.

James is looking at man in a completely different state here now from the Apostle Paul. He is looking at the man who has been quickened by the Spirit of God. He is looking at the man whom "God is working in both to will and to do of His own good pleasure." Now I know and you know by our own experiences and by the word of God that we can not ourselves, independent of God, do these good works. We may try with all our might to do them but fall far short. This is why the Apostle Paul says in the seventh chapter of Romans, "For that which I do I allow not; for what I would, that do I not/ but what I hate, that do I. For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Now that is the creature alone, that's the creature within himself. But my dear ones, those that are born of the Spirit of God, God moves them, and that's the reason the Apostle Paul was able to say, "But I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." That's the reason why the Apostle Paul said, (and I believe that this same thing applies to all of God's quickened family, maybe not at all times) "I can do all things." Well, now this same Paul says that I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not.." This same Paul now says, "I can do all things." How? "Through Christ who strengthened me." My dear ones, I believe this is what Paul taught. I believe the scriptures teach this and I believe our own experiences have taught us that. I believe in good works, but I believe that these good works come by the grace of God through faith and this is not of

ourselves but it is the gift of God, not through our own efforts. We have neither power nor knowledge to do good; but faith gives us both and faith is a gift of God. James by no means says by works faith is created, but faith becomes perfectly manifested in the works.

Now let's go on. What does this twenty-second verse of the first chapter say? "But be ye doers of the word," what does that mean? You are doers of the word. Does that mean you are sitting down upon what you have been accused of by some, upon the stool of do-nothing? No, it doesn't say do-nothing; it says "doers of the Word" so it must have some meaning there. What is the meaning of that? You know a lot of people this very day and time are taking this passage of scripture and they are attempting to lead the blind, "the blind leading the blind." This work belongs to the Holy Spirit of God. "For with man, it is impossible." You may ask did not these all work? Yes, as thieves and robbers, aiming at heaven; not by the door of mercy opened by the blood and righteousness of Christ; but who are attempting to climb up another way, which is the way the blind are leading the blind, the way of eternal death. Did God work in them by faith? No! Do these legal workers submit to the sovereign and good will of God? No! They blasphened the counsel of his will, they are still dead in trespasses and sins, and contend for their own dead works. When James refers to "Doers of the word", he is speaking of a people who have been given spiritual life, people who have been quickened by the Holy Spirit. "Of his own will begat he us with the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruit of his creatures." So do we not see that this begetting the Word, "is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." James speaks here in the twenty-first verse, "As receiving with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls." Does this not show how the word must be received? Not by the wayside, or upon stony places or among thorns but upon ground that had been made good by the Holy Spirit. None but the divine husbandman can engraft the word into our hearts. Then if we have been given by the grace of God to be "doers of the word" it is because "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." The Lord's people are engrafted into Him by the Holy Spirit. The Lord Jesus was pierced by the sword, yes, he was cut, His precious blood came forth from His wounded side. He was pierced and also His people are pierced. They are pierced by His holy and just law. They are brought down, they are killed and brought down to nothing, yea, less than nothing. This is shaping them to become lively brances being enfrafted into our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In the mind and purpose of God, this was done from all eternity but is made manifest in the life of his people, This is being in Christ Jesus and "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away; behold all things become new." According to scripture, the children of God are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Surely good works should be of great concern to us. We read in the twenty-sixth verse of the second chapter: "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead." Also in verse seventeen it says, "Even so faith, if it has not works, is dead being alone."

Let's look at a few examples here. This is in the second chapter of Joshua. I would like to read while I am speaking. I think I can give you examples from the Bible a little better. "And Joshua, the son of Nun, sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, go view the land, even Jericho." Now these two men were sent out. They were of the Lord, remember this. Now remember that the Lord

promised Abraham that his seed would inherit this country, this kingdom, this land of Canaan, even Jericho. "And they went, and came into an harlot's house named Rahab, and lodged there." I want you to notice here how faith is given unto Rahab. Now faith is a gift of God. We cannot reach out and catch ahold of faith anytime we so desire. It is a fruit of the Spirit and it is a gift of God. But God gives His people faith. He gives them faith according to the measure that is needful in whatever circumstances it is His will for them to be involved in. So He gives that amount of faith. And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, "Behold, there came men in hither..." See these men came to Rahab, the harlot. They came to her house. "And it was told the king of Jericho saying, Behold, there came men in hither tonight of the children of Israel to search out the country." They were sent there by Joshua.

Now put yourself in Rahab's condition for just a moment. Here she is a native of this country and the two men have come into her home and they are spying out the land. What if two men had come into the United States spying it out and they were going to overrun your land and your people? Now that's the position that Rahab is in here at this time. But there is something greater to her than all that. Now let's see what it is. She was given faith to believe in her God, that whatever her Lord's work consisted of, it would work for the good of his people. It surely seems that the Lord's favored people had become more important to her than the people of her own native land. "And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which are intered into thine house; for they come to search out all the country. And the woman took the two men, and hid them." In place of exposing them, in place of turning them over to the king and maybe receiving a reward from the king for doing so. No, she hides the men, and says this, "there came men unto me, but I wist not whence they were." Well, she is telling a little story here. "And it came to pass about the time of the shutting of the gate when it was dark, that the men went out; whither the men went I wot not; pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them." She's still putting them on the wrong course. "But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof. And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan unto the fords; and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate. And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof. And she said unto the men, I know that the Lord hath given you the land.."

Now how did she know? Of course, it was revealed to her and she was given what? She was given faith to see. Why was just one person in all this land, a harlot at that, given faith here to believe in her Lord and Savior, to believe in Almighty God, to believe that this land had been given? She had heard, no doubt, of the children of Israel being delivered from the Egyptians and how they were saved at the Red Sea. She had heard about this and she was given faith to believe. Now if she had not believed it, she would not have acted. Now faith without works is dead. Her faith was alive because of what? Here are her works demonstrated. Are they not? She took the men, she hid them, and later on she let them out and doing all this she exposed her life because if she had been caught, no doubt, she would have been murdered by the king. Here are works of faith, are they not?

No wonder James could say, faith without works is dead. What if she had been given faith and no works. She would have sat down there; she would not have received the men at all in her

house, she would not have hidden them. Don't you see here what we are speaking of now when we say that faith without works is dead being alone. Will faith without works save you? No, it will not. If it is dead, how can a dead thing do you any good? Therefore, don't you see how it takes action along with this faith and that is the reason why the Apostle Paul could say, "I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I but the grace of God which is in me." If we are given faith and grace, my dear ones, are we to sit down and do nothing, or are we to go forward and attempt all that is within us to do that which is God's revealed will? Are we to do these things? Are we to attempt to do these things? Do we know when we attempt them, we can do them? But should that keep us from it? Did Rahab know that she was going to succeed in hiding the men where they couldn't be found? I don't know if she knew or not, but did that keep her from striving to do it? No! God gave her the success of it, did He not? And that's where your success will come from, too, when you have been given successfully to do the works.

Let's go on. I would like to bring forth another one, Abraham. Abraham was a man of great faith. He was the father of the faithful. God gave him faith. He had promised Abraham that in his seed, and Isaac was his seed, would be multiplied as the stars of heaven. And yet this very same lad that the promise was given, Abraham was told to do what? To sacrifice him! What did Abraham do, did he sit down and not do it? No! he took the lad to the place that God designated for him to take him. He was about to sacrifice the lad when the angel spoke to him and stopped him. But look what faith he had. Did that faith produce works? Yes, it produced every step he took in the attempting of the sacrificing of Isaac. Everything that he did, the wood that he carried, everything that he did my dear ones was consisting of works that he was doing. Works, and faith without these works is dead. Abraham's faith was not a dead faith, was it? He had faith in his Almighty God. This faith was given him from above and this faith was so strong that he believed the promise of God. He believed that his seed would be multiplied as the stars of heaven through his son Isaac and yet he was here to sacrifice him. But he told the ones who were in attendance down there holding the mules that I and the lad will return. So he was given faith my dear dear ones that if the lad was sacrificed, God would bring him back to life. Abraham was given real faith from God. If there were no faith, whence could the works come? We have neither desire nor power within ourselves to do good; faith gives us both. James by no means says by works faith is created, but faith is shown to be perfect in the works. Therefore Abraham's faith was the faith of God's elect. This faith is the only faith that springs from saving grace. It is a lively faith, produces good works, and comes from God, both to will and to do. "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." What was Abraham's works? The work of Abraham was his obedience of faith. Abraham obeyed God, and went out at God's call not knowing where he was going. He walked by faith and not by sight. Was his going according to his own free will? No! He depended on the wisdom of God.

We have others. Let's turn to the fourth chapter of John. Let's begin with the forty-sixth verse. "So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where He made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum." The son was sick and if you read more about it, you will find out that his son had been given up by all of the other doctors. All the others had given him up as dying. He wasn't dead yet but they had given him up, all but his father. Now we find faith working in different degrees here. When this man heard that

Jesus had come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him. Now, why did he go? Faith! His faith was not a dead faith. It was live faith and live faith brings forth action. Does it not? Faith by his works, his going to Jesus shows that his faith was not dead. Live faith comes from Almighty God: it produces. "When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death." I think according to history, it is about fifteen miles from Cana to Capernaum. I don't know how he went, but he went. "Then said Jesus unto him, except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. The noblelman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die. Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed..." Here again is faith in action. "And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him..." Now it doesn't seem like he was nearly in as big a hurry to get back as he was to go. Here we see a little faith move him enough to go to Jesus. Now it seems like he has more faith because he believed his son is healed and he is evidently taking his time in going back. "And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him saying, Thy son liveth. Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth; and himself believed, and his whole house." This my dear ones, is faith with works and that's what James is bringing forth, faith with works. "But be ye doers of the Word..." Again we saw these examples, did we not, Abraham, we saw Rahab, we saw the man here with his sick son and we can find many, many more through the scriptures where He said thy faith has made thee whole. The woman who touched the hem of His garment. All these are examples, my dear ones of what I believe James is bringing out, and remember now these don't only apply to these people but they apply to God's people in all ages of time, those that are given true faith.

Oh, I look at myself; sometimes you may look at yourself in all these things and say, oh me of little faith, poor me of little faith. I don't even have faith enough that when I see promises of God in his written Word that it has much meaning for me because I have so little faith in His Word toward me. All through the scriptures you can read in every letter of Paul's written to the different churches you will find promises all through them. Read them. Do we have any faith in these promises and commandments? You might say again, well how do you get faith? Well, all I can say is faith is a gift of God. Does that mean that we should attempt to do His revealed Word and keep His commandments? I say we should attempt to do them. I am not saying it will be accomplished. If God blesses us by giving us strength, we will do them. Has He not promised us "My grace is sufficient for you" "My strength is made perfect in weakness."

"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only deceiving your ownselves." There are many different types of "doers" as recorded in scripture, but the word of God divides them into two classes. One is called a saint separated to do God's service, to grace here upon earth and to glory hereafter, according to the purpose of God. God preserves them because they are washed in the blood of Jesus Christ. This man is a doer of the word in true faith and is blessed in his deed, not for it, for all that are of true faith" are blessed with faithful Abraham." His ears have been circumcised to hear the word, believe it, and hold fast to it. This man

sees and feels his self-righteousness to be an old filthy garment, he "has no confidence in the flesh and rejoices in Jesus Christ." He is one called out of the world by God, given to walk by faith and not by sight, and given that blessed hope of eternal salvation. His heart has been circumcised to love God and His precious truth. He is a tree planted by the Lord, purified by faith and he brings forth good fruit. He has been given by grace to see his ruined, lost condition and begs his God "to be merciful to me a sinner." He can never see himself as doing good and is ready to ask, "Lord, when did I do these good things?" Look at the seventeenth verse of James and remember that "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of light."

The other class is like the proud Pharisee, 'who stood and prayed thus with himself." He told God of the many wonderful deeds he had done. This man walks in craftiness and handles the word of God deceitfully. "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully." This man works to be seen of men and you will hear him boasting of the many good things he has done, as did the Pharisees. He is in bondage to sin, Satan, and the world despising both the true gospel as it is in Christ Jesus and the heirs of promise. he expects to go to heaven by legal works, works of the law, dead works and is usually very proud of all his accomplishments assuring him of his salvation. He will be ready to say, When did I fail to do all these things?

But by the grace of God, we would all be in this same class, if we profess to be religious at all. I just hope that God has given me the grace to bring forth the truth. If it's not this way, I don't know which way it is, I'm in error and I apologize. All I know is what I believe the scriptures bring forth and I trust God has given me light to see. I want to know nothing else. I am full of error. I can only speak truth as the Spirit guides me, and if so, may it all be to his honor and glory. I won't have time to get into the other verse at this time. Read the second chapter of James. May God bless the truth and pardon any error is my prayer. May God bless you all. Thank you.

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

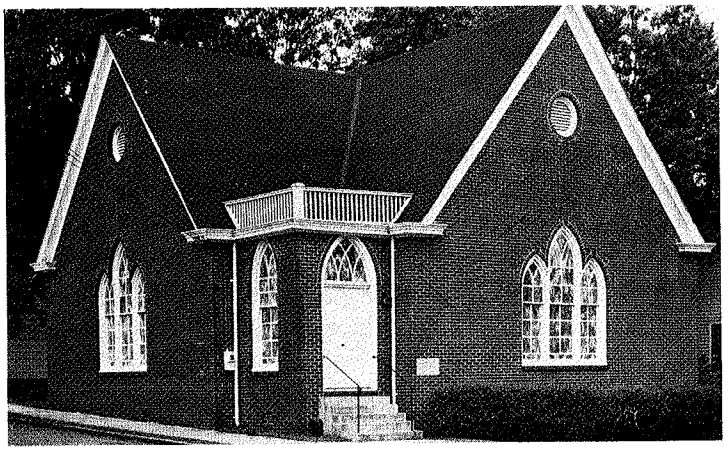

Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church was constituted in the year of 1907. It is located on the corner of Tate and Carr Streets in Greensboro, N.C. Their services are on the first Sunday morning of each month. Their present pastor is Elder Kenneth R. Key and associate pastor Elder Leonard Key.

ELDER DAVID SPANGLER

"Through the years of my ministry, if I am in it, I have had great wrestling with the flesh, and but for His great grace would have fallen by the way, yet I have that blessed hope that I will some day see the King in his beauty, and praise Him as I ought." **(A quote from Elder Spangler's book.)**

Elder Spangler, at the request of so many of his friends, has published a book containing 132 pages and it is now ready for distribution. It contains his own personal experience in life and in the ministry; also the experience of others as they were brought into the church. There is several of his editorials as they have appeared in the "*SIGNS OF THE TIMES*", and articles of various customs and practices among Old School Baptists.

Elder Spangler has been blessed to serve in the ministry for over sixty years and has been editor of the *SIGNS OF THE TIMES* for forty years. He has visited among the Primitive Baptist Churches all over the United States and Canada. He is loved and held in high esteem by all those whose lives he has touched, and has a good report without as well as within the household of Faith.

His book is available for $5.00 each to cover cost of printing and mailing. Please send your remittance with order to:

Elder Kenneth R. Key
721 Willard Street
Greensboro, N.C. 27405

CORRESPONDENCE

Castor, La.
November 2, 1983

Dear Elder Spangler:

Hope this finds you and your folks well. My wife and I arrived home safely from the meeting in Alabama. I came home feeling that you had been made to be a fisher of men and I was given a great love for you. I have written the following for publication if you see fit.

I hope it is His will to enable me to write some of the thoughts and revelations given me about Him and His doctrine as recorded in St. Mark 10: 17-27. I have had a few impressions that this one may have been one of those that the scripture speaks of in the Psalms, 107: 23-24. They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, these see the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep.

The scripture says, there came one running and kneeled to Him and asked Him, good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? In another place the scripture says no man can come unto me except my Father who sent me draw him. And another reads that all the Father giveth me shall come to me and he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

According to these scriptures, I believe there was good evidence that he was a child of God and that he was drawn to Jesus by the Father, even though at this time he just thought he knew something (of a spiritual nature) but actually he knew nothing yet as he ought. I believe he had been smitten of God and caused to run in his heart to Jesus. He had great possessions, was rich in what he thought was good works, hence him calling him good master was in the flesh, but Jesus who was talking with him was as Peter said of him, thou knowest all things.

When the one that came running said that he had observed or kept the commandments from his youth, this was just some more of these possessions that he was trying to bring forth as trading material, but the way we see it and try to describe it to you is that he was only getting himself ready for a real God given chastisement. Oh yes, there was much he ought to know, but he was talking with one that teaches.

Then Jesus beholding this one loved him and must chastise him for the scriptures says, whom he loves he chastens. This he did when he said unto him, one thing thou lackest. This was for his own good, this sinner as he stood there in his carnal nature, Then Jesus said unto him, and I believe it was a command and must be obeyed, go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor and thou shall have treasures in heaven, and come take up thy cross and follow me. Now let us come to the meaning ot this. Jesus himself is the way and in order to obey this, one must go in the spirit. We find him in many places in the scriptures telling his chosen ones to go thy way. My belief is that Christ was in him causing him to sell all, take up the cross that his children all have, and they also give to the poor. Its like the Lords servants who go forth and are caused to preach a much edifying sermon. About all he can remember is that it was the power of God and he cannot retain any of it for futher use.

The one that has to sell out, soon finds his former love for many worldly things is gone and what he formerly hated, he is now made to love. He feels there has actually been a selling out, and also he begins to feel a touch of sorrow and grief which makes him wonder if he has taken up the cross that he was commanded to take up. The scripture says, Jesus whom he was commanded to fol-

low, was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief.

It is recorded in the scripture that the one that received these commands went away sad, and grieved for he had great possessions. The statement that he went away does not tell us where he went. It just is a statement that he departed or went from something. What was it that he went away from? It was not from the Lord. Let us quote the 13th Psalm, 7th verse. "Whither shall I go from the spirit or whither shall I flee from thy presence: If I ascend up into heaven thou art there, If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there." He could not go away from the Lord. He did not have any desire to go from the Lord or his teaching, but he was forced by that higher power to go away from that man made religion with no tools to work with. Jesus had made him to sell out. He went away from those things he once loved and had no more desire for them.

All of what I have written of this one in Mark 10, came to me about 1928 when I was about twenty-four years old and I will state here that I walked directly in this ones tracks. I can truthfully say that I am one that went away sorrowful. I can therefore tell you that at that time I knew nothing about what I have been trying to write. All this was to be taught me later and I was in so much trouble that in the morning I wished for evening, at night I would wish for day and in the day time I would wish for night. I was continually being shown my sins and vileness, and also my weakness, for I was still trying to perform something good of myself, but this time I was being prepared for something better.

I went to bed and dreamed I was in a low swampy place near our home and I was lying on the ground and I felt like I had not a friend. I was in a very low state and I spoke these words very plain, Lord, I just cannot stand it any longer. I was then picked up and stood on the ground and was caused to look toward the sky and saw what looked like a dove very high coming toward the earth and it came straight to the top of my head, fluttered a little and disappeared. I felt something invisible like a clear plastic sack coming down over me. I was raised off the ground about six inches and there was what seemed like a sealing operation. This was to represent (I believe) being baptised with the Holy Ghost, and I being completely enclosed said, how sweet is Jesus. I was then gradually released from this and woke up.

It was a little over forty years before it was revealed to me the meaning of, "go thy way". My wife and I united with the Primitive Baptist about fifty three years ago and we are nearing our seventy-ninth birthday. If it should be the Lord's will I would like to at a later date take up from this and tell some of my experiences these last fifty-three years.

Your little brother,

James D. White

SPACEMEN FIND UNIVERSE'S LOST DAY-IN BEGINNING OF PROGRAM

Mysterious events in space exploration found a missing day on the universe to prove supernatural phenomena, reported in the Bible but classified as myths by many scientists and students of religion, according to a long-term space program consultant.

Space program consultants in orbital mechanics for 11 years—since the Mercury-Gemini program began, said God gave the missing day to Joshua and Isaih.

Mysterious events took place as astronauts and space scientists in the space Astronomy Laboratory at the University

of Wisconsin, checked positions of the sun, moon and planets 100 and 1,000 years from now.

"WE HAVE TO KNOW THIS, so we don't send a satellite up and have it bump into something later on its orbits. We have to lay out the orbits in terms of the life of the satellite and where the planets will be, so the whole thing will not bog down."

Astronauts and space scientists reportedly ran the computer measurement back and forth over the centuries and it came to a halt, then the computer stopped and a red signal indicated something was wrong, either with information fed into the computer or the results as compared with the standards.

The service department checked out the computer and computer programming by the space team, then reported, "Its perfect."

Nobody was able to explain "a day missing in space in elapsed time," but a space team member referred them to Joshua 10: 12-13 in the Bible. The biblical reference tells of God stopping the onslaught of the nightfall to give Joshua "about a day" of extra daylight to help his army overpower the enemy.

SPACEMEN CHECKED the computers, going back into the time of Joshua and found their calculations were close—but not close enough. The elapsed time missing in Joshua's day was 23 hours and 20 minutes—not a whole day.

The space consultant said astronauts and scientists remained puzzled and "still in trouble because if you can't account for 40 minutes in space science, you'll be in trouble 1,000 years from now; 40 minutes had to be found because it can be multiplied many times over in orbits." The space team was then referred to II Kings 20: 3-10 when God "Let the shadow return backward 10 degrees for Isaiah". Ten degrees is exactly 40 minutes. Twenty-three hours and twenty minutes in Joshua, plus forty minutes in II Kings make the missing twenty-four hours the space travelers had to log in the log-book as the missing day on the universe.

EXPERIENCE

"Man, said a thoughtless, ungodly English traveler, to a North American Indian convert, -- "Man, what is the reason that you make so much of Christ, and talk so much about Him?"

The converted Indian did not answer him in words. He gathered together some dry leaves and moss and made a ring with them on the ground. He picked up a live worm and put it in the middle of the ring. He struck a light and set the moss and leaves on fire. The flames soon rose, and scorched the worm. It writhed in agony, and after trying in vain to escape on every side, curled itself up in the middle, as if about to die in despair. At last the Indian reached forth his hand, took up the worm gently and placed it on his bosom. "Stranger," he said to the Englishman, "Do you see that worm? I was that perishing creature. I was dying in my sins, hopeless, and helpless, and on the brink of eternal fire. It was Jesus Christ who put forth the arm of His power. It was Jesus Christ who delivered me with the hand of His grace, and plucked me from everlasting burnings. It was Jesus Christ who placed me, a poor sinful worm, near the heart of His love. Stranger, that is the reason why I talk of Jesus Christ, and make much of Him. I am not ashamed of it, because I love Him."

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."
Mat. 7:12

PROPHETSTOWN, Il.

It is written in the book of Isaiah ix. 6, 7, *"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdon, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."*

O, how precious are the gifts of a sovereign God to fallen man. We are the creatures of his care; he sent the light to shine in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.

In beginning my story about this marvelous light shining into the heart of lost and sinful man, my mind is carried back to a scene when I was a little child not many months over three years old, it being the only thing I seem to remember at that age. It was at the meeting-house of the Old School Baptists in Olive, N.Y. I remember sitting on my mother's lap, and afterward on the seat. My eyes seemed riveted on the minister, and after the sermon he came down from the pulpit and began breaking bread, the emblem of the bruised and crushed body of the Lord Jesus; also pouring out the wine, the emblem of his blood so freely shed for the sins of his people. My parents were members at that time, and when the deacon passed the cup to mother she looked down at her child and then at the deacon, mother-like, as if asking if it would be right to give it a sip, but the deacon shook his head. Then of course it appeared it would be wrong for me to taste. That must have been the first dawn of the bright and glorious day of the Lord. I do not remember any other events connected with my early days in regard to the progress of the light growing in my heart till I was old enough to read the Bible and other books. The Bible and Pilgrim's Progress were always interesting to me, and when visiting my young friends I would hunt around the house for the last named book, although told by them that it was nothing but an old dream. To me it seemed a revelation from God, put by him in the form of a dream. Now in reading of the creation of the world, and then the destruction by flood of all but Noah and his family, because he called on the name of the Lord by reason of the sin of the people, and found favor with God, it began to be plain to me that I was always a sinner, and that I must begin to do something to gain the favor of the great God of the universe. So I read very carefully the law of Moses, and did really think I would have to live in that way to gain the favor of God. But where is the man, I would think, to teach me to do them? Surely, I thought, there must be some person somewhere, who understood these things, and then I would think I was too young to do them, and would try to put away the feeling, and think of other things, but very often my thoughts would return to God and his greatness. Then I began to fear I would not grow to be a man to do these things. So my trouble grew from day to day. My thougths would be on God, and I desired to become good and be found in his favor. Often when my parents and the others would go to church I would ask to stay at home alone so I might read the Bible and pray in my childish way to God, for I began to see that I was a great sinner, far from God, and no way to find favor with him but through the law of Moses. All this was yet when I was very young, under thirteen years, and attending school about six months a year. As I grew older my trouble became worse, and my sins worse. Often, I thought I did not care to live, and would seek death to hide myself from God and his

wrath. But I was very careful to hide all my sufferings from every one. Many mornings, after lying awake all night, thinking of my lost condition, my pillow would be wet with tears, and I would fear that my sister would see it when making the bed. In about my twelfth year my trouble and exercise of mind came oftener, and I was led to read of the coming of John the Baptist; how he preached in the wilderness, "The axe is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast in the fire."

I remember well one day I delayed starting for school till after all had gone, for that morning I wanted to be alone to meditate on my God. It was a most lovely morning in the month of June. There was a stretch of woods on the road to school, and about half way through I had laid a flat rock on which to kneel and there try to offer up myself to God, for I thought I must have some form, like Abraham and the prophets of old. When I came to that place everything in nature was so fair and beautiful, but I was feeling in such distress of soul that I thought I would never be permitted to reach the school-house. I must sop there once more to pray God for his mercy. As I knelt on the rock it seemed that I was such an awful sinner that this would be my last, God would take no notice of me, and it seemed I would sink into the ground. I was so overcome with my dreadful condition I could say nothing. My mind was all taken away, and I became as it were dissolved in darkness, In a twinkling all things flew away, and I felt as though I were borne up from the earth, and instantly there was a brightness more than the sun, although it was shining in all its splendor. All things now seemed to be praising God. The trees, all covered with a brightness, were waving toward the tree at which I knelt. A great calmness and peace of mind settled over me, whether in myself or out I could not tell, but surely, I thought, this is the glory of God. Presently I arose and made my way into the road; as I went the great brightness seemed to pass away, but my sorrow was all gone; God was making the sufferings of Christ appear pain, for the remission of my sins; the love of God was revealed to my soul, and all things seemed new. Then a voice seemed to come with these words, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." And it surely seemed as if I was filled, for I felt so happy I could not stir from the spot, till all at once the tempter came as if from my heart, saying, "You are just imagining all this you have seen, and the voice you heard was your father's, who is behind the stone fence." I immediately got on the wall to see if any one was there, but though I saw no one, the doubt would not down, so strong was the impression that the voice was father's. I determined to satisfy myself, as I knew where father was at work ploughing corn when I left the house. It was more than a hundred rods from where I then was, in the opposite direction from the voice I heard. I went back until I could see him at work, then I was satisfied it was not him. Then I thought it was none other than the voice of Jesus, for with the thought came again the words, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thist after righteousness, for they shall be filled," and now the whole sermon passed before my mind, and a great peace was with me. I thought, How can all this be; such a sinful creature as I saw myself to be a short time ago, when as it appeared I had done nothing to be worthy of all this peace and joy? I went in at the school and took my seat as usual with my back to the whole school. Joy and fear passed alternately through my mind, and I had to get away or expose myself to the school, so I got permission to go out till my mind was more settled.

Now, this was on one of the meeting days of the church, and I had a great desire to tell what the Lord had done for me, and as at noon some of the old church members passed by I thought first I would ask them if I might not go along, but something held me back, although now it seemed as if I must follow my Lord in all his commandments. It was plain to me now that Jesus had fulfilled all the law, and magnified it. The thirty-fifth chapter of Isaiah tells a great deal of my experience.

I know I am a sinner, and if saved at all it is by the grace of God, who first loved us, and gave his Son for the ransom of his people.

Yours in hope of everlasting life,

HIRIM BOGART

Nitro, West Virginia
September 14, 1983

It is on my mind to write a few lines. When I was a boy about ten years old, my father or mother would correct me for some mean thing I had done and I would go out in the woods and get down on my little knees and promise God I would be a better boy.

The next day I would do something just as bad or worse. About that time I was seeking relief for my troubled soul. One day stands out in my mind. When I got on my knees a great load was lifted off me and I felt like shouting for joy.

I went on sinning and begging for mercy. I would do all I could to be good but felt worse all the time. It seems I was without hope and without God in the world. In 1930 there was a light in the heavens and it was shinning brightly on me and my father and mother. I saw this in the night. The next morning, I praised God, my troubles were gone. It seemed to me that the leaves on the trees and the birds were praising God. Everything that moved, even the rocks and streams of water were praising God.

That lasted for about seven days, then I was back to trouble again. Some thing within my soul was telling me I would have to preach God a sovereign God in all things. How could I do that, I was too bad a sinner to do it, didn't have book learning to preach; and not worthy even to be with the good people of God. Yet I was going to the mountain and praying to God and preaching to those trees that were praising God in my experience, I have had some good meetings with my God, He and I all alone.

Then I had a great burden in my heart to join the church, but felt not worthy to be with Gods good people. I would worry from one meeting to the next and say to myself, the next time I will offer to the church. But when I got there something would keep me away. I was like Jonah, trying to go the other way; but the time that God had ordained before I was born for me to join that church, I could not stay away any longer.

Some people say that God made sin, I dare not say that. How could a righteous and holy God make me do the things that I have done. James 1:3, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God can not be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man, but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed." When lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin. Genesis 3:13, "And the Lord God said unto the woman, what is this that thou hast done?" The woman said the serpent beguiled me and I did eat. She did not say that God beguiled her.

When Peter denied the son of God, he did not say God made him sin. Romans 7:16, "If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law, that it is good. Now it is no more I that does it, but sin that dwelleth in me."

Luke 15:14 (this is some of my experience) "And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land and he began to be in want and he woud fain

have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat and no man gave unto him." No man could give me anything. I was perishing in that land until God showed me my Fathers house. I was like the dear one, "Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before Thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." Oh, I felt so unworthy. I didn't even feel worthy to ask God for mercy. This is what did me good, gave me hope. "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

When we can stop laboring and feel assured that our soul is in the hand of God, that is surely rest for our soul. Praise His holy name.

Elder R. H. Pennengton

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VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

THE OLD AND THE NEW

Beloved In The Lord:—

In the word and in the works of the Creator, there are many twos or couplets, and almost all things are in pairs; but others are in triplets. So there are three that bear record in heaven; and three that bear witness in earth; yet these are one, and agree in one. Thus we are presented with ones, twos and threes. Besides these, both nature and grace are shown to us in sevens. There are the seven prismatic colors, as shown in the bow in the cloud, the seven spirits of God, and time is measured by sevens. So seven is full and perfect measure, embracing all. True, seven is repeated many times, but it is still seven in all.

But let us here go back to the simplest division, and consider the twos. These are presented in many simple forms of expression in the two books, the natural and the spiritual, both of which are of God, who is one. The simplest and final is, the first and the last. So we have day and night, and next to these, light and darkness. So we have sunshine and clouds; heat and cold; also solids and fluids. Then there is strength and weakness; health and sickness; life and death.

Coming to the book of Revelation, its Author has given us first, the old, last, the new. In these there are the two most prominent of all else, "the first man," and "the last Man." The first is earthly, and the second is heavenly. So, in the very beginning "God created the heaven and the earth." Thus heaven occupies the first place, being the most important, and the earth is last and least. And so it is written, "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the last Man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." This shows clearly that all other men are included with either the first or the last of these two men, and are either earthly or heavenly, as they are related to the first or the last, to Adam or to Christ. The first man is the figure of the last Man. But the last is as high above the first as heaven is above the earth; and yet the first is taken up into the last, and changed into the image of the heavenly Man, so the two become one. "This is a great mystery."

Following on, we are presented with a group of twos: Moses and Jesus, Mount Sinai and Mount Calvary, the law and the gospel, works and grace, the old covenant and the new covenant, condemnation and justification, the ministration

of life. All these sum up the old and the new. The old began with the first man Adam, and concentrates in Moses; the new began with God, and concentrates in Jesus. "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." So Moses is the greatest man in the Old Testament, but Jesus is the greatest man in the New Testament, and he is as much exalted above Moses as the Son and heir of God is above the servant of God. Yet Moses was the chosen and honored servant in the house of God; and the law of God, which was given by Moses, had its honored place, and it reflected God's glory. The law of God is both the measure and the ministration of his strict and perfect justice. It demands no more than this, but will accept no less. Perfection is its measure, and this it must have. So it marks every failure against man, and charges all sin to him. The law justifies God as holy, but it condemns man as guilty. This is his province and mission. And it can do neither more nor less than this. It protects the righteous, but it justly punishes the guilty. The law of God cannot accept of any imperfect or faulty act or deed, because then the law itself would be imperfect and faulty. For this reason the wicked must be punished, and the punishment must continue until the law is fulfilled and justice satisfied. If this were not required, then God, who gave the law, would cease to maintain the righteous claims of his holy law, which he cannot cease to do, because he is holy. Jesus therefore said that the law shall not pass away until all be fulfilled. But no sinful man can fulfill it. "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin," says the word.

Now, let us remember the first man Adam is under the law of God, and is held by it in all his powers and faculties until it be fulfilled. And man is natural as born of the flesh, and is only natural and fleshly in all his attributes and being. For Adam and his family are not spiritual, but natural. So all the deeds of man are fleshly, and they are measured and tried by the law of God, under which God made man. And so the first man is only natural and fleshly and legal in all his life and deeds, in all of which he ever comes short of the perfection of the law, and therefore the law marks him as faulty and sinful in all his works; "For by the law is the knowledge of sin." Paul therefore again says, "For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." This includes all men in the flesh, and all their fleshly works. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh," or through the sinful weakness of the flesh, etc. All this shows the hopeless helplessness of the first man. He is not only condemned already as sinful in all his nature, but is under death, and all his works are "dead works." The righteous sentence of the Judge is, "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." "There is none good but one, that is, God." "He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works." But as to man, "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." There is no hope, then, for man in man, nor in his works.

All this is the woeful truth concerning the first man, and the first covenant. These are "the old." "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." This is the word of the Lord, who himself "hath made the first old." There are but the two covenants, the old and the new. So there are but the two headships, Adam and Christ. The first is the *creature* of God, the last is the *Son* of God. Adam is the natural head, Christ is the spiritual Head. All human life is from the first man; all spiritual life is from the second Man, the Lord from heaven. The natural life is received in the first birth, which is of the flesh; the spiritual life is received

in the second birth, which is of the Spirit. These are the old and the new, but both are united in every son of God, and every one of his children is as really one with Christ as with Adam. So the word tells us of the flesh and of the Spirit, of the outward man and the inward man, and of the old man and the new man. Yet the son of God is but one person, being one with Christ in his life, and one with Adam in his life and death—and Christ is but one. Therefore, his brethren are the many members in him—in his one body, the church. His word to them is, "Because I live, ye shall live also." He lives, to die no more, and their life is hid with Christ in God. Yea, Christ lives in them, and they live in him.

Thus the people of the new covenant and the children of God are not only partakers of the flesh and blood, as born of the flesh, but they are also made partakers of the divine nature, as born of the Spirit, and the life of the holy Son of God is made manifest in their mortal flesh, as says Paul in 2 Cor. iv. Now, therefore, the flesh and the Spirit are the only two sources of all religion and religious works among men. Paul most forcibly expresses this truth in Gal. v., enumerating first the works of the flesh, all of which are corrupt; and then the fruit of the Spirit, namely, "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." How blessed is the state of those in whom the fruit of the Spirit is manifested, for Paul says of them, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." But of those in whom the works of the flesh rule, he says, "that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." This shows the impossibility of any one obtaining any favor of God by his fleshly works, all of which are legal, conditional and rejected as sinful by the perfect law.

All that any man is capable of religiously, must arise either from the life of Adam in him, or from the life of Christ in him, because it cannot be in part a work of the flesh, and in part a fruit of the Spirit. For of these two opposites Paul says, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary, the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that you would." This one text entirely demolishes the flesh-pleasing notion of free will and free moral agency. And to show that the flesh does not aid the christian at all, Jesus said to his apostles, who could not watch with him one hour, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." So the Scriptures make a clear distinction and a strong contrast between the flesh and the Spirit, as between Adam and Christ; and also between the old covenant and the new covenant, the law and the gospel, the works of man and the grace of God. For none of these are mixed and blended, neither is there any similarity or harmony between them. Earth and heaven, sin and holiness, death and life, are not farther apart in their character or nature than these.

It need only be asked, Is obedience by Adam, or by Christ? Is salvation in Adam, or in Jesus? Are we saved by the works of the law, or by the grace of the gospel? Are christians under the old covenant, or the new? Is condemnation by the law of Moses, or by the gospel of Jesus? Does the law of works save, and the gospel of grace condemn? Which way is it? A babe in Christ can answer. The Spirit of truth testifies of Christ, saying, "Neither is there salvation in any other."So then, our salvation comes to us in Christ. Of God's people it is written, "And their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous." This proves that all

disobedience is in Adam, in the sinful flesh, and that all obedience is in Christ, even as all righteousness is in him. and all redemption unto salvation. Another simple question: Have we any gospel of salvtion out of him? Is Christ the Mediator of the old covenant, or of the new covenant? One answer only can be given. All spiritual blessings are in Christ; out of him there is no gospel; and he is the Mediator of the new covenant; ye, God said, "I will give him for a covenant of the people."

Now we are brought to this one strong and clear point, from which there is no evasion or turning away; Christ and his new covenant are yea and amen, positive and sure, and absolutely unconditional; and the gospel of Christ, which is the gospel of salvation, belongs entirely to the new covenant, but in no sense to the old covenant; therefore there is no conditional gospel, and no conditional righteousness and salvation. The new covenant is one of mercy and grace alone, and it is from all conditions clear; but the old covenant was legal and conditional, and it depended upon the people who were under it to keep it, or suffer its penalties, and the whole house of Israel broke it, with one exception; the Son of Mary kept it, fulfilled it, and took it out of the way. "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." This second and new covenant in Christ is established upon better promises than that first and old covenant with Moses, by how much also Jesus is the Mediator of a better testament. The old was weak and faulty, because it was conditional and its people were sinful. So they broke the covenant, as was indicated by Moses breaking the two tables of stone on which the covenant was written, for their works were sinful, like themselves, and the Lord regarded them not. So it is yet with all fleshly, legal and conditional works, not only of the Jews, but also of the Gentiles. Paul confessed that in his flesh dwelt nothing good, and that with the flesh he served the law of sin. As a believer and minister of the gospel he therefore said, "By the grace of God I am what I am." Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law." "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." So faith is of grace, but not of works, and both are of the new covenant, but not of the old, and the three are of Christ, but not of Moses. "Not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." In this righteousness only will God accept us. but not in our own, nor in our legal works, which are in their very nature always conditional.

All conditional salvation and its benefits, depend necessarily upon conditional works of righteousness, which are essentially legal and selfish in their nature, and, when done, the doer is of right lawfully entitled to such salvation as a reward for his works. Conditionalists are consistent and honest, therefore, in holding to the principle of rewards for works of righteousness, and in claiming that conditional salvation and its blessings are received by them as such conditional rewards. But in doing so, they are fallen from grace, or have gone back from the new covenant of grace to the old covenant of works. "This only would I learn of you, received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" Paul here pre-

sents this whole issue, and states it truly and just as it is. There are but the two doctrines and ways, he shows; and the Spirit and faith are the way of the new covenant in Christ; but the works of the law and the deeds of the flesh are the way of the old covenant in Moses. "For these are the two covenants the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage.* * * But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."

Paul, the apostle of grace and faith, presents the two in very forcible contrast, saying, "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant accordig to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." Besides these two, there is no other principle, doctrine or way of salvation; and between these two there is no union or harmony, but one excludes the other altogether. The words of Paul are so positive and plain they can neither be mistaken nor perverted. Grace only, grace without works; or works only, works without grace, is the only principle and way of salvation. It would be foolish to say, that salvation by works is certain and unconditional; and it would be equally foolish to say, salvation by grace is conditional and uncertain. All know that grace means salvation, sovereign, full or free. All as well know that works mean conditional and uncertain salvation, according to the righteousness of him that worketh. His reward is of debt. Grace is not in his works. He and his works are outside of the new covenant, and if he is saved, it is by works of righteousness which he must do. His conditional covenant has no mercy for his unrighteousness, and he receives only so much of salvation as his good works entitle him to. He has turned away from the new covenant, which overflows with mercy and grace for the unworthy, and turned to the old covenant, which rewards none but the good and worthy. His boasted free will has led him to the law of works, so by the law must he stand or fall. He is flattered by that conditional hope of reward in the old covenant of works, which tells him, "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land." This suits the fleshly mind and legal spirit much better than to be a beggar at the door of Mercy and cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." But Jesus says that this poor sinner was justified, rather than the self-righteous man, who made mention of his works as the ground of his exalted standing before God. These two are typical men, and they truly represent the two classes of professed worshipers of God that are now in the world, and have ever been since Cain and Abel. Cain brought his own works as an offering, on which to obtain the favor and blessing of God; but Abel offered the lamb which God had provided for him, an through it his faith embraced the Lamb of God as his salvation. The religion of Cain is the religion of all who work and worship that they may be saved; but the religion of Abel is the religion of all who work and worship because the Lord has blessed them with his salvation.

The old legal way says, "The man that doeth these things shall live by them." The new gospel says, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." The old talks much of man's ability to do the conditional works of salvation; the new tells of Christ's power to save to the uttermost. The old proclaims aloud that great things we are doing for the Lord; the new delights to sing and preach what great things the Lord has done, is doing and will do for us, thereof we are glad. The old glorifies the conditional works of the so-called church; the new is to the praise of the glory of God's grace. Such is the difference.

O, ye people of the new covenant of grace, let us rejoice in the gospel of Paul. who said, "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." This one in Christ has been born anew, has been given a new life, a new heart, a new spirit, and has entered into a new kingdom, a new home, and his people and kindred are all new. His home henceforth is the New Jerusalem, the Holy City of our God, and this new man in Christ Jesus has come to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant. The Lord has made this new covenant with him, even in his heart, and says, I will be his God, and he shall be my son. And now, that all things are new, this new man no longer serves God in the oldness of the letter, but in newness of spirit. "Ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all."

O how beautiful and lovely, holy and good and blessed is *the new way!* May our new Master and Leader and Brother ever say to us, "This is the way, walk ye in it." *"I am the way."*

Your brother in the bonds of the new covenant,

DAVID BARTLEY

MEETINGS

The Lord willing on Sunday, April 15, 1984 at 3:00 p.m., an ordination service to set apart Brother Cleo Robertson to the work of the ministry is to be held at the Durham Primitive Baptist Church on Pacific Avenue, Durham, North Carolina.

All ministers and friends of our Faith and order are invited.

D.V. SPANGLER - Moderator
CATHERINE HUMBAGER - Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST

December, 1983

Mrs. Norma Smith, VA.	$ 4.00
Jim Cunningham, MD.	7.00
Mrs. Louis Holloway, MD.	1.00
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TO OUR READERS

Our goal is to double our list of subscribers. Please resolve that you will obtain at least one new subscription. Many have already sent theirs in. If you haven't done so yet, please try to do so in March. We will advise you when we have reached our goal.

The Editors

NOTE: See Elder David Spangler's Book, Page 57 in this issue.

OBITUARIES

OREN MINTER

In writing this memorial to our deceased Brother Oren Minter, our minds dwell more upon the work of grace wrought in his heart, and manifested in his life, than upon his earthly life, and career.

He was born March 16, 1900 in the community of Sandy Level, Virginia. He lived and died in the same community where he was born.

He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Leff Minter.

On May 6, 1925, he was united in marriage to Miss Jesse Inman, who survives him.

To this union was born three children, two daughters who survive are, Mrs. Frances Whyte of Wilmington, Del. and Mrs. Jo Anne Burnette of Stuart, Va. His son, Oren Minter, Jr. is deceased.

Though his father was a devout member of the Old School Baptist Church and would spend his last dollar in obtaining a way to his meetings, this did not impress our Brother, though they lived in the same home.

Brother Oren united with a church near his home, not of the Old School Baptist, and became an active member. When the church decided to build a parsonage, he agreed to furnish one half the rough lumber for it. (Later when he left them to unite with the Old School Baptist, he still agreed for them to have the lumber.)

One night God showed him his standing before him, and the power of that experience was so great, and convincing, that he began to inquire where the Old School Baptist Churches was, as he had not had enough interest before to even know their locations.

One night he called a neighbor, Reubin Davis, (not giving his name) and inquired where there would be an Old School Baptist meeting the next day.

From that day forward, he began attending the services at various churches and receiving the doctrine of Grace, as a thirsty man to quenche his thirst.

We believe that divine providence led him to Dan River Church. It did not take years for God to establish him in the doctrine of grace. Our dear brother and his dear wife were led to become members and were baptized at the same time.

His illness confined him to his home a long time, and he was the most hungry person to talk and hear the word of God talked in his home I have ever seen, while confined in his illness.

May we bow in submission to the will of God, and look forward to that blessed day when all the redeemed shall awake in the likeness of our blessed Lord.

D. V. Spangler

SISTER IDA MAE THOMPSON

Sister Ida Mae departed this life August 15, 1983 in a nursing

home in Jackson County, Altus, Okla. She was born September 18, 1908 to Franklin and Laura Burkhalter. Sister Ida Mae was united in marriage to Herman Thompson, October 3, 1943 at Livingston, New Mexico.

Sister Ida Mae joined Little Flock Church in Altus, Okla. June 22, 1968. Was baptized by her pastor Elder C. M. Haygood. She was a faithful member as long as her health permitted. She lived all her married life in Tipton, Okla. Surviving are her husband, Bro. Herman Thompson, one brother and four sisters.

Funeral service was at Tipton Methodist Church with Elder Joe Hamrick officiating.

She was laid to rest in Hess Cemetery near Tipton, Okla.

Written by Church Clerk

Sister Ava Stewart
Little Flock Church, Altus, Okla.

VIVA SURFACE WADE

Sister Viva Surface Wade, daughter of the late Fletcher J. and Mary Elizabeth Keffer Surface, was born April 14, 1907 in Catawba, Virginia, and passed away in a Salem, Va. hospital November 8, 1983. Making her stay her on earth a few months more than 76 years.

We feel she has been called to her eternal and long awaited Home, "Where congregations ne'er break up, and Sabbaths never end."

She is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Ruth Beheler, Roanoke, Va.; four sons, Clifton L. Wade, John E. Wade, Leonard J. Wade, all of Roanoke, Va., Haden E. Wade, Salem, Va.: Seventeen Grandchildren and seventeen Great-grandchildren. A twin Sister, Mrs. Iva S. Dunton, Hampden, Maine.

Sister Wade joined the Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church June 3, 1945 and was baptized by the late Elder J. F. Stegall on July 22, 1945. She remained a very devoted and faithful member. Not only to her home church was she faithful, but attended faithfully the nearby sister churches.

The last year of her life was of afflictions and she only attended her church a few times. One year to the day from the time she first entered the hospital, she was taken by the Heavenly Father from this time world.

Her funeral was conducted at Oakey's Funeral Home November 10, 1983 by her pastor, Elder Cecil E. Turner, who spoke so comforting to the family, brethren, sisters and friends. After which she was laid to rest in Evergreen Cemetery by the side of her husband. There together with Brother Wade, she sleeps, to await that bright and glorious day when Christ shall descend from heaven and take them home to Glory.

May her beloved family be blessed to feel that their loss is her eternal gain.

Submitted by Mrs. H.C. (Rlee) Houchins

TIBBIE JANE MILLER

In love and memory of sister Tibbie Jane Miller. She was born February 24, 1905 and departed this life August 3, 1983. She was the daughter of William Brantley Houston and Octavious Kennedy Houston of Duplin County. She Joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Sand Hills of the White Oak Association on September 13, 1931 and was sound in the doctoring of salvation by grace. She married John Ander Miller on March 13, 1926 and to this union was

born nine children I dearly love. They were all obedient to her. She ruled her house well, seven sons and two daughters; William Rue Miller, Brantley Roe Miller, Robby Lee Turner, John Issac Miller, Kermit Edward Miller, George Washington Miller, Furnie Alton Miller, Carol Jane Williams and Bobby Ray Miller; Nineteen grand-children and three great grand-children.

Her funeral service was conducted on Friday, August 5, by Elder Owen Kennedy and her grandson, Woodrow Miller. Her body was laid to rest in the Sand Hill Cemetery under a mound of beautiful flowers to awake the morning of the resurrection when all the Saints shall rise and their bodies change and be fashioned like the glorious body of Christ to be in the presence of God and at the right hand of God where there is peace forever more.

Written by her sister, Kathleen Johnson

ADDIE K. KENNEDY

She was born September 8, 1918 to Ashlely and Laura H. Kennedy. And departed this life August 2, 1983.

She was married November 6, 1937 to Jim Kennedy. And to this union was born two Daughter's, Lois and Mavis Kennedy.

She united with San Hill Primitive Baptist Church, November 28, 1963 and was baptized by her Pastor Elder L.L. Yopp.

She united with Sand Hill Primitive as long as God saw fit for her to go. But when illness kept her home, she never lost faith in God. And endured her sickness with patience. Willing to accept God's Will.

Funeral services were held in Community Funeral Home with Elder Mike Niekirk officiating. Assisted by Tommy Tripp. Her body was laid to rest in Oak Ridge Cemetery, Pink Hill, N. C.

Written by her Husband,
Jim Kennedy

BOOK NOTICES

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We are now accepting orders for Volume 1 of the Beebe Editorials. This Volume contains almost 800 pages and covers the years 1832 thru 1842. This book contains the most important history that can be found regarding the early Primitive Baptists and every believer should have a copy.

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Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 152 KEELING, VA., APRIL 1984 NO. 04

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If I could sing, I'd sing of grace
that saved me from the fall,
Maintain the honor of His word,
And crown Him Lord of all.

He came to me in the mid of night
when trouble around me rolled,
And said fear not for I am with you
And eased my weary soul.

If I am His and He is mine,
I'll be in heaven on high,
When I close my eyes to this sinfull
World, and bid my friends good-bye.

I hope that when my savior comes,
and calls His elect home,
That I will be in that number
And see Him on His throne.

Jessie W. Ray

Sister Mabel found this poem, believed to have been written by Brother Jessie during his illness.

The Editors

TO OUR READERS

Our goal is to double our list of subscribers. Please resolve that you will obtain at least one new subscription. Many have already sent theirs in. If you haven't done so yet, please try to do so in April. We will advise you when we have reached our goal.

The Editors

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 4/84 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

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EDITORIAL

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Whether this is the time or a likely subject for thought I know not, but as there seems to be a burden for me to express my feelings on the above, I'll attempt to write as my mind leads, if not directed.

I believe we with the apostle Paul at times do see all things working together for good to His people. Let us notice this *all* which denotes to me nothing under God's creation that is not included, and also working, not happening. As much as natural work requires effort on the creature, God is the source of all the energy that makes the all things come into play or action, the moving force that brings the working together of all things.

We know that all things could be working, and not together, or working together but not for good. Can we not see His hand a must in all this from beginning to end according to His purpose and pleasure. Whom does it effect, but them that love God, the called according to His purpose. The called will surely declare that all are not called therefore this work is good only to those intended.

Them who will dare deny that He yet rules and reigns in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. What could be beyond His control, if this scripture is true, and it is, but we as carnal beings can't see the good or even the working together for good to any things or person, yet we know it is or the record would be incorrect.

Did not all the travels of the children of Israel work for their eternal good, even down in Egypt the burdens laid on by the taskmasters made them willing to leave at the appointed time of God. As also the apostle Paul being struck down, Job's afflictions, Jonah's travels, Naomi losing her Son-in-laws and so many other instances. These all working together for good.

It took every happening, no more or less to bring about the purpose of God in the end.

We believe that is the case today. We are made to act as all events are constrained, to bring about the working together of all things for good to them that love God, whether we be one of that number this work is for, we know not.

The strongest bond of this text seems to be that its all based upon them who are "the called", not just a called group but the called according to His purpose, let us realize that all of the foregoing comes about to accomplish the deter-

mined purpose of God for His people.

We know not at the time or even of the many trials and sorrows among those that show the mark of being His people, why they have to be, other than we truly believe to accomplish His purpose which in the end, if not at present, working together for good to you, if you are one of the Elect.

Even the work of death on these bodies, will bring the uniting of His people with Him, which is good.

Elder J.R. Williams

2nd Corinthians I:17, 22

When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? Or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea and nay nay? But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay. For the Son of God Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

There is not any place for mirth in presenting the lovely doctrine of grace. Illustrations that tend to tickle the fancy of sinners does not belong in the Bible, nor do they belong on the printed pages of our periodicals. Telling anecdotes or illustrations in the pulpit in order to gain attention of gainsaying humanity shows our lack of knowledge of the serious frame of mind that a born again sinner is in. I am glad that Paul is careful to disabuse the mind of readers or listeners in regard to mirth and lightness and flippancy in the sacred pulpit. In this concise and clear presenting of the gospel truths there will be at least a true regard for the better things of the gospel.

Every phase of gospel truth is to be presented in an atmosphere of a broken and a contrite heart. Any effort to disregard the solid and fundamental principles of the doctrine of God our Saviour is an effort to confuse, and then take advantage of the confusion that is made by wresting the true facts in the case. Let us rest assured that any obstruent placed in among the beauties of the gospel will readily be seen and discarded by the hearer.

Everything that God has given or promised to give is in the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. In his preaching of the gospel the apostle did not make a single reservation as to anything coming from him. I call your attention, dear people of God to the careful presentation of the gospel of Christ. Did I use lightness? There is not a sin practiced in the pulpit like unto a misleading of the hearers. Did I use lightness in presenting to you the precious truth of He that overtook me on the Damascus Road? Did I come before you making my arguments based upon flesh? Did I leave any of the truths attended with my knowledge of language that would lead you to think that anything I am preaching is that way because of what I have done. Have I presented the gospel of the grace of God in such a subverting way so that my preaching and my writing sound as yea and nay?

These cogitations are recorded here to comfort and instruct the poor servants of God today. The apostle's reflections of mind are the same as ours are today, that is, if we are called of God. How wonderful that the Spirit moved him to say, But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus. It was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. For all the promises of God in him

are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.

God's promises in Christ are all yea. The things of God's all belongs to the children of God. Their coming into possession of them are based on Jesus Christ, even upon His work here in the world. His finishing of the work assigned to Him forever forbids any negative promises to His brethren. The glorious caption to what Jesus accomplished in His coming to this world is entitled The Finished Work of Jesus Christ. This promise of the finishing of His work was promised before the world was, and fulfilled when He spent His life here. I must urge that the law His people were placed under was a holy law. Not a single word of criticism can any bring against that law. It was holy and just and good, but none were able to keep that law. We all sinned and come short of the glory of God. As far as the Israelite nation were concerned or able, they could not redeem themselves from the curse of the law. Partial payments would not be acceptable in the court of divine justice. Once in the end of world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself (Heb. 9:26). As Israel could not make partial payments on their indebtedness, just so the whole indebtedness had to be paid in full. Every nay against the church of God had to be removed. It took the death (sacrifice) of the One that was both the Offering and the Offerer. This Offering was complete in every detail. Every promise of death was removed by the death of the One Offering. Not a promise that God had made could be denied now.

Come near dear brethren and sisters, here is an everlasting boon for the guilty. He fulfilled every single obligation that you did not nor could not fill. Our text becomes precious to poor sinners. Every child of God had forfeited every promised blessing in keeping the law. There was not anything left, there was not any yea promise available to any of the sons of Adam. Let us lift our feeble voices in lofty praise to God, let us tell it on the housetop that the broken commandments by us brought the nay doctrine against every member of the body of Christ. Then let us speak in every nook and corner of the New Jerusalem that One was ever with the Father rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth and that he was even delighted with the sons of men, yea, even then delighted that He was the one to give to his brethren not only the yea to every promise that God had made to His chosen people and that eternity echoes with His well pleased Amen to the giving of every promised end.

The Saviour openly and freely declares in a positive manner that I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. If there ever was a case of perfect unity it was between the Father and the Son (See John 10). The Saviour, in describing their relationship said, I and my Father are one (verse 30).

Not only were they, Father and Son, forever together, but they were equal in power and glory. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of the Father (Phil. 2:5, II).

How vain is the learning of men to describe this glorious unfolding of God's irrifutable yea and Amen promises to the children of God. However, one might read time and time again of these promises and there would not be anything spectacular about them to the carnal professor. It is when they become ours, when we are led into deep experiences of life as it is lived as a follower of the precious Son of God that they become meaningful to us. As we rest in the promises of God, let us look at them once more, for they never grow old, and they never get out of date.

If all of these promises were established but one time or for one event, it would be a constant source of worry and uncertainty to the poor and needy, to all of those that felt unworthy of the fulfillment of even one promise. But what is that promise that I hear falling so gently from heaven? Let us listen: For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us (Cor. I:20). But is it true? Are these promises really and truly carried out like unto this? Are these things true in the experiences of God's dear children? Will you rest in the word of the chiefest of sinners? Would you receive comfort and joy and peace from the testimony of he who is the apostle to the Gentiles?

Let us see if the promises of God were yea and Amen to the glory of God. Let us remember that all of the promises of God are in him yea and Amen. That is a good testimony to comfort a poor feeble sinner. That is the fountain source of the yea and Amen promises. It is much better to go to the beginning of the fountain of water or truth or anything issuing forth to the poor and needy.

"Now he which stablish us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God." Go over the journeys step by step with the apostle. Who was it that plucked him as a brand out of the seething furnace of condemnation and placed him as the bearer of the good news of the gospel? What a high display of the yea and Amen promises of God. God was in every nook and corner of the globe making arrangments (always according to purpose) for the preaching of the cross of Christ. Everywhere that God sent Paul, everywhere that He established him, He previously had established a place for him to preach and to be heard. Take a journey on paper, following Paul everywhere that he went. A place for meeting was established for him before he got there. This promise, each time it was verified, was always in Christ. He went before; He opened the door. He promised to be with the apostle, God said Amen.

He that anointed him to preach was God. No man can preach the gospel without his anointing as was Aaron. This anointing is only done acceptably by Jesus Christ; it is a promise made for the benefit of God's people both under the law and under the grace dispensation. This promise of God is yea and Amen to the glory of God. This blessing is in God and in His Son, each equal with the other in the giving of the gifts of stablishing and anointing.

These yea and Amen promises never end. They will run the length of the journey of the New Jerusalem church through this time state. This time state is the setting of these promises that keep us hoping and looking for that day wherein time and timely things will be done away, but the final two yea and Amen gifts insures the whole harvest. One that is to be gathered before Him in the final day are sealed for that time. There is not any breaking of the seal, for all the promises are yea and Amen. All sealed, all ready, all washed in the blood of the Lamb all being kept in a state of readiness.

To put the final glorious capstone to all of these promises is the giving of the sealing of the blood bought children. All of the promises come through Christ.

Each promise is yea, and God being in agreement with the Son and the Son thinking it not robbery to be equal with God, how could it ever be otherwise than Amen. Men may, and do seal things, but not having the power, they do not stay sealed. Whatever the promise contains it will stay sealed. Why? Because the promise is yea and Amen to both of them, and there not being ANYTHING before God, therefore, there is not anything to cause the unsealing of every heir of promise home to glory.

When God purposed to choose and save a definite number of the race of Adam, He gave a pledge for them, and that pledge or earnest was Christ. The family of God is safe in Him, for He is the earnest of the inheritance. That promise is still good, and it is yea and Amen to the glory of God.

In much weakness but in hope,
Elder W. D. Griffin

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

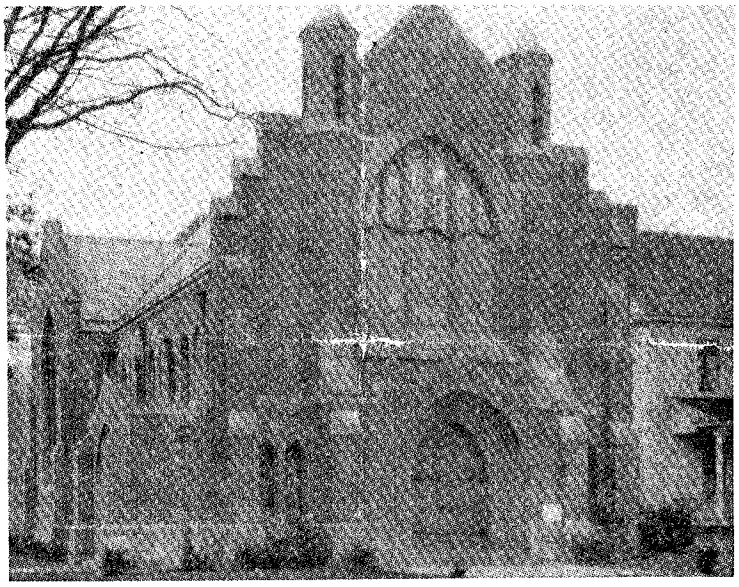

Wilson Primitive Baptist Church was organized 1756 with Elder John Thomas as its first pastor. It is located on Tarboro St. in Wilson, N.C. Their sevices there are on the second Sunday afternoon at two-thirty o'clock and Saturday night before. Elder D.B. Stokes is the present pastor.

CORRESPONDENCE

January 24, 1984
Route 1,
Reidsville, N.C.

THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM

Psalm 111:10: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth forever."

Hebrews 12:28: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and Godly fear."

Job 4:17: "Shall mortal man be more just than God? Shall a man be more pure than his maker?" Job 4:21: "Doth not their excellency which is in them go away? They die, even without wisdom."

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. This wisdom is a spiritual insight. I Corinthians 3:19: "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. It is written, "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." I Corinthians 3:20: "And again, the Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain." I Corinthains 3:21: "Therefore, let no man glory in men."

I John 4:4: "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: (Them is referring to the spirit of the antichrist) because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." I John 4:5: "They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them." I John 4:7: "Beloved, let us love one another: (Note this does not say each other but one another), for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God and koweth God." I John 4:8: "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."

This does not mean to love disorder and ungodliness. Proverbs 3:13: "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the forward mouth do I hate."

Revelations 2:9: "I know thy works, and tribulations, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. Revelations 2:10: For none of those things which thou shall suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life."

Hebrews 11:24: "By faith Moses, when he was come to years refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter." Hebrews 11:25: "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."

St. Luke 6:44:"For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes." St. Luke 6:45: "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh."

Proverbs 20:17: "Bread of deceit is sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel."

I have heard that some who bear the name Primitive Baptist are campaigning for membership and evidently more financial support. They are advertising to join the church and your troubles will all be over. This is not in accord with my experience, nor do I find any scripture to support it. How weak can one get? The things money can buy are the things that are seen with the natural eye, and some day these things will be seen forever no more by those who have no confidence in the flesh.

Titus 1:7: "For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, not striker, not given to filthy lucre;" Titus 1:8: "But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;" Titus 1:9: "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." Titus 1:10: "For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision:" Titus 1:11: "Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake."

The definition of filthy lucre is dishonest gain, whether it be not paying your honest debts, or lying to gain popularity.

I feel I can witness with Jonah: Jonah 2:6: "I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me forever; yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God." Jonah 2:7: "When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine Holy temple." Jonah 2:9: "But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord."

I ofttimes feel so low and lonely and so far off that I wonder if I have a friend on earth or one in Heaven. I try to pray as we find in Psalms 51:12: "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit."

I Peter 4:1: "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin." I Peter 4:2: "That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lust of men, but to the will of God."

St. Matthew 24:24: "For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

I know the elect has to suffer many false accusations and insinuations. Revelation 12:10: "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night."

Romans 8:35: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" Romans 8:36: "As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Romans 8:37: "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

St. Matthews 5:10: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven." St. Matthews 5:11: "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." St. Matthew 5:12: "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in Heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

The second epistle of Peter 1:20: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." II Peter 1:21: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

II Thessolonians 2:15: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the tradition which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle." I John 1:3: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

Romans 8:18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Romans 8:30: "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Romans 8:31: "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

I know that we can not separate the tares from the wheat, for that will be done at the day of harvest.

St. Matthew 6:24: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

If we are blessed to serve God, we serve his people in love and fellowship. If we serve mammon, we are as Saul in Acts 8:3: "As for Saul, he made havock of the church entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison."

Shadrack, Meshack, and Abednego were cast into the burning, fiery furnace because they were blessed with wisdom to worship God in Spirit and truth. Not a hair on their head was singed.

The fear of the Lord is and endless subject that cannot be put on paper in its fullness. I John 1:7: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin."

Clifton Robertson

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER D. R. CABBAGE
Part 1

Maynardsville, Tenn.

Brother and Sister Hocutt:

Will try, if it is God's will, to put a few words on tape. We received the anniversary gift. Made our hearts rejoice. And when I saw the blank tapes, tears began to flow. I have had meditations for some time about making an attempt to put some of my experience, if it be Gods will, on tape. It might be of some interest to the children of God scattered abroad.

The things that we feel that God has blessed us with. We have many experiences, but would like, if God will enable us to go back to the beginning of our early childhood.

I was raised and brought up in the Missionary Baptist Church. I love the people and esteem them very highly. I understand as they do on many of the scriptures. That is where I was taken to church and carried there before I could walk. And I might say that I am thankful for parents that are interested in taking their children to the house of the Lord.

I began somewhere, I don't know what age, very young. Up until that time, I don't remember that I had any fear of the hereafter or had never been into the trouble that I was in at this time.

It seemed to be like the scripture that Christ quoted to Nicodemus, I couldn't tell from whence it came or where it went, but that it rolled up on me, just a little boy. It does me good sometimes when I go to thinking about a God that is able to work in the hearts of children as well as he is able to work in the hearts of elderly people, to teach them and cause them to know that he is God. There is none like Him. He does his will in the army of Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. He works and none can stay his hand. While this trouble was upon me, or this great burden, as we lived in Black Fox Valley out the road just a little way from where Dotson Creek Primitive Baptist Church is now located, there was a little cove, a grove of trees back behind the house. On the hill there and through the day, I would slip out there and call on God to have

mercy on me, the one that instructed me. I hadn't told anyone that I was in this condition. I believe that the same God that found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness lead him about, and instructed him. I believe that He was the same God that found this little boy and lead him about and instructed him and caused him to feel that he was weak and undone, and as far as I felt, forever gone, if the mercy of God didn't reach my case. I tried everything that come into my mind to get relief from that burden. I felt like, as I heard Elder Hollandsworth say in Alabama one time, I felt like at that time, there was a hell. I felt like that without the mercy of the almighty God arrest my case, that hell would be my home. I feared that was where my destiny would be and I called up on God as much as he would enable me. I believe that God leads one in such a way that he realizes his helpless condition and that he is made to put his trust in one that is able.

I don't know how long a period of time that this went on, it seemed like a long time. But the Bible says work out your own salvation with fear and trembling for it is God that worketh in you both the will and the do. I believe that God put the fear there and caused me to tremble and caused me to do and to try all these things which as far as I am concerned, it never brought relief. No, I tried every last one of them that come into my mind to get relief from that burden but I come to a place that I was at the end of my wits. I couldn't go any further, yet in the dead hours of the night, when all the family seemed to be asleep, here was a little boy that was in sorrow, here's a little boy that was in trouble, yes, Dad and Mother didn't know anything about what I was going through, at least I never told them. But along in the dead hours of the night I heard a sweet voice that I had never heard before, speak unto me and said, you are saved, your sins are forgiven. I want to say to you I believe I was like Israel was when they came to the Red Sea, they couldn't go any further. They had to stand still and see. Moses said stand still and see the salvation of God. When the old servant of God stretched the rod of God across the sea, the water rolled back and Israel walked through on dry land. Here is a God that said, "I'll never leave you. I'll never forsake you. But I'll go with you all the way even into the end of the world." Bear with me. I don't want to worry you. I want to get on with the experience. My mind goes back to the scriptures. I can't help it, they are founded there. They are a comfort unto me. Because I find my experience along the travel of God's children. I find them in the travels of the servants of the Almighty God. But I never told any body about that experience for many years. I grew up into teenage, yet never owned I had a hope in the Lord. I went out into the world. As I grew up into teenage and into the 20's, I went out into the world, as far as anyone could go. I strayed in, I believe into that far country where the prodical son was. A certain man had two sons and the youngest said, father give me a portion of my inheritance, and the father divided them their inheritace. Many days after the younger one took all he had and went into a far country and there he wasted it. I believe that I have been in that country to where this man was, I believe that I experienced the famine there that he was in. I want to say to you, I believe that man was out in the world. I don't believe he can come back by himself. I believe he has to be brought back to the fold. I believe the Prodical Son stayed down there in that country until the famine came, and I believe he got hungry.

He had once ate at the father's table. That has been my experience, I had tasted God was gracious. I believe that the Prodical Son had once eat at his fathers table and it well set with food.

But now he said. I will arise and go to my father. Why did he say that? Because he came to himself, his mind was carried back to his father's house. Then he said, I will arise and go to my father and say to him, I have sinned, against heaven and in thy sight. I am no more worthy to be called thy son, make me one of thy hired servants. I want to say to you that his mind had been carried back there, and a child of God out yonder in the world has stayed there until his mind returns back, he will stay there, but God loved him. His father saw him afar off and ran and met him and kissed him and fell on his neck and said, "I will go kill the fatted calf, lut us make merry, this my son was dead and is alive, lost and is found." The father said unto his servants, "Bring forth the best robe and put it on him and put shoes on his feet, put a ring on his hand." Here was one that was helpless. The robe had to be brought for him. It had to be put on him. Shoes had to be put on his feet. How helpless are the children of God?

I want to say to you the ring represented the Love of God. It is round, no end to it. There is no end to God's love. God loved his children in the annuals of eternity before the world began. God loved them when he sent Christ to die for them and God still loves them and watches over them.

God found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness; led him about, instructed him, kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them upon her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him and there was no strange God with him. I don't believe one ever gets out of the sight of God. That old mother eagle represented God. Her eyes are sharp, she watcheth over them when they are in trouble. She comes down with those great wings and picks them up and lifts them up and carries them on the Love of God. His wings represents love to me. If God will enable us, let's go on a little further with this travel. I got ahead of myself there.

I went on for years out there in sin before my mind was carried back to my father's house. I went out so far in sin, I forgot that I had ever been purged from my old sins. But I believe that God still loved me. God still knew where I was, God still knew all about me, all the wicked things that I had done.

The time come when I had to have a back operation. It was in 1957 when I was in the hospital suffering from the operation. I believed it was there that my mind was carried back where I felt that God had blessed me with spiritual blessings. I had a desire to return unto the Lord. I had a desire to live a Christian life, to live a different life. I'd had all of that I wanted. I had gone as far as I could go. I didn't want anymore of it. The nature had been torn down and taken from me. I began once more as Jonah said, "I will look again toward thy Holy Temple. I will pay that I have vowed, Salvation is of the Lord." I tried with all my might, my experience just don't add up with the doctrine of the world that you hear said, if you want to, you can but I am going to tell you that here is a man that wanted to. He wanted to return back to Zion. Back to the Bethel spot and be a different man, but I couldn't, I tried. I tried these things. I know how far a man can go. I know that it is not in man to direct his steps. I know I tried. I went so far that I forgot I had been purged from my old sin. That I even had a hope. I prayed to the Lord to give me one. Everytime I prayed for God to give me a hope that my mind would go back to the same spot where I heard that voice speak to me. I don't believe it will ever leave you. It will get weak, it will get little, you'll get low. But I want to say it will always be there. I don't believe it will ever leave you.

When I began begging for renewal of my hope, I could see a little spark begin to rise back there at the same place where God said, "You are saved, your sins are forgiven." There was something spoke to me in that hospital and said "you can't go now," Now I know this is contrary to the doctrine of the world, or other doctrine that says you can if you want to. I believe, God is my witness, with all my heart, I wanted to... I wanted to be a Christian. I wanted to live a different life. But something spoke to me while in that hospital bed and said. "You can't go now!" Have you ever been there? Is there anyone like me? Have you ever walked that road? I came up against a wall, I couldn't go any farther. Why? Don't ask me, I don't know. But I know what I believe. I believe in God almighty from the annuals of eternity, that timed every step I'll ever take in this time world and everything that I will do. A time that we'll have to wait, a time when God teaches us. I believe that I came to that place that I couldn't go any farther. Something said, "You can't go now." This scripture is sweet to me. "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings as eagles; They shall walk and not faint."

I believe I had to wait upon the Lord until the appointed time; that God himself appointed.

(To be continued)

Greenville, Ala.

Dear Elder Williams,

Please renew the Signs for me and use the rest as needed.

The January Editorial written by Elder Richard H. Campbell were sweet precious words to me. I had to drive to work alone on the morning of Feb. 18, 1983. The 25 mile drive was spent singing praises to a Great and Holy God. I sang one verse all the way. It just seemed to be what I needed at that time.

Come, thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet,
Sung by flaming tongues above;
Praise the mount, I'm fixed upon it,
Mount of thy redeeming love.

I received the word of my precious sons death in Memphis, Tenn. that morning around 11 o'clock. In our grief and haste to leave, I forgot my address book. It seemed almost hopeless that we would reach Elder Campbell. God, who is so rich in mercy, heard my prayer from the depths of my soul as I cried "Oh dear God please don't let me leave Tenn. without hearing what I love and believe. I need it so." The two beautiful hours we spent with Elder Campbell were of much comfort to us. Isaiah 54 - 7 and 8— 7. For a small moment have I forsaken thee but with great mercies will I gather thee. 8. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer."

I've missed the trips to Memphis. It was always such a joy for me to visit a precious son and the dear Brethren and sisters of Memphis church. I always received such a spiritual uplift in being in their midst.

Dear Brethren, The Streams of God's Mercy never cease. Remember us in your prayers and visit us in the Ebenezer Association. We love you.

In Bonds of Love,
Emmie L. Grayson

TO OUR READERS:

Some of our readers will probably wonder why I have not kept up my personal correspondence. I underwent major surgery the latter part of December, and I have not been able to keep up my correspondence.

I have received cards, letters, gifts

and other communications, (over two hundred and fifty) and each have been appreciated more than I can tell you.

This will acknowledge all, and I thank you from the depths of my heart.

Elder D. V. Spangler

EXPERIENCE

I am very fearful when it comes to relating my experience. I will have to go back when I was about eleven or twelve years of age. One night just after everyone had retired, something struck me like a bolt of lightning. I cannot describe what happened but I know sin was made exceedingly sinful. I called everyone in the house and made them promise they would live a better life that hell was an awful place. They said they would try; no one ever said anything about this as I remember. I drifted away from this experience but never did I forget it. I tried to be like other young people but this experience always stood in my mind. Later after I married, my husband came in at lunch and said a boy wanted to sell him a Bible. I said all right if we can afford it. It was hard times then. So he brought the Bible home. We were not concerned at that time but later I became very concerned about my soul. I had thought I was as good a person as any but as I began to read the Bible, everything I read condemned me. I began to think I was going to die and didn't have long. In mid October 1928, I came to my wit's end. Today I must die. I think I saw death, hell, and the grave and I wasn't fit for anything but hell and God's righteous law approved it well. I was lying face down on the floor; all my strength was gone, I could not move even one of my fingers. I was sure I was dying, when I was given to hear a voice. I said Lord, have mercy on me a sinner. This I repeated three times when I heard a voice from heaven saying, arise and take your Bible for you shall find relief today. I arose and took my Bible but the thought came to me that always before it had condemned me. I just let it open where it may and my eyes fell upon where Daniel was cast into the den of lions and how the Lord had kept him safe. I heard the same voice again saying if I can go with Daniel in the den of lions, surely I can help you in your little troubles. I will never be able to describe the feeling that came over me. I, for the first time, praised God with all my heart. It reminded me of a poor wayfaring stranger out in a hot desert with no food or water, facing death; when all at once, a fountain of water flowed freely out to him. What a relief! After this, my Bible seemed like a new book. What great promises for God's children! I read about the false prophets who would arise and deceive many. This concerned me greatly. I had a thought that I could never go to the Primitive Baptists, I could never be good enough to measure up to have a home with them. (Even now I feel undeserving.) Then I tried to pray for God to show me where to go to church. I had a night vision, I thought I was in a large church of another faith. I had given some thought of going there and I was there this night in my vision. They were playing the piano singing their songs with their bright lights. A voice spoke to me and said you can call this any church except Primitive Baptist, they are not here. Then all the lights went out and this voice spoke again saying their lights will never shine again. I was praying for God to show me the true church when I was carried out of that church as the wind carries a leaf through the air. I was shown a lighted path so narrow I could only put one foot in front of the other. It led me to the church I joined in 1942.

Minney L. Foley

THE MIRACLE OF THE INCARNATION
From Thomas Watson (c. 1620-1686)

Behold here a sacred riddle or paradox: "God manifest in the flesh." That man should be made in God's image was a wonder, but that God should be made in man's image is a greater wonder. That the Ancient of Days should be born; that He who thunders in the heavens should cry in the cradle; that He who rules the stars should suck the breast; that a virgin should conceive; that Christ should be made of a woman, and of that woman which Himself made; that the branch should bear the vine; that the mother should be younger than the child she bare, and the child in the womb bigger than the mother; that the human nature should not be God, yet one with God; this was not only mirum but miraculum (i.e. not only wonderful but a miracle). Christ taking flesh is a mystery we shall never fully understand till we come to heaven when our light shall be clear, as well as our love perfect.

From hence, "God manifest in the flesh," Christ born of a virgin, a thing not only strange in nature but impossible, learn that there are no impossibilities with God. God can bring about things which are not within the sphere of nature to produce; as that iron should swim that the rock should gush out water, and that the fire should lick up the water in the trenches (I Ki. 18:38). It is natural for water to quench fire, but for fire to comsume water is impossible in the course of nature; but God can bring about all this. "There is nothing too hard for Thee." "If it be marvellous in your eyes, should it be marvellous in My eyes? saith the Lord."

How should God be united to our flesh? It is impossible to us, but not with God; He can do what transcends reason, and exceeds faith. He would not be our God if He could not do more than we can think.

He can reconcile contraries. How apt are we to discouraged with seeming impossibilities! How do our hearts die within us when things go cross to sense and reason! We are apt to say as that prince in 2 Kings 7. 2, "If the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be!" It was a time of famine, and now that a measure of wheat, which was a good part of a bushel, should be sold for a shekel, half an ounce of silver, how can this be? So, when things are cross, or strange, God's own people are apt to question, how they should be brought about with success.

Moses, who was a man of God, and one of the brightest stars that ever shone in the firmament of God's church, was apt to be discouraged with seeming impossibilities. "And Moses said, The people among whom I am are six hundred thousand footmen; and Thou hast said, I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month. Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them, to suffice them? or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to suffice them?" (Num. 11. 21, 22). As if he had said, in plain language, he did not see how the people of Israel, being so numerous, could be fed for a month. "And the Lord said, Is the Lord's hand waxed short?" (verse 23).

That God who brought Isaac out of a dead womb, and the Messiah out of a virgin's womb, what cannot He do? O let us rest upon the arm of God's power, and believe in Him, in the midst of seeming impossibilities! Remember, there are no impossibilities with God. He can subdue a proud heart. He can raise a dying church. Christ born of a virgin! The wonder-working God that wrought this can bring to pass the greatest seeming impossibility.

For Christ to be made flesh was more humility than for the angels to be made worms.

Thomas Watson

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

"IN CHRIST SHALL ALL BE MADE ALIVE."

(1 Corinthians xv. 22.)

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

Inspiration reveals the truth and the work of God. Not one word of all that he has declared shall fail. The reason is, the Holy One is the I AM, the Almighty. Both is wisdom and power the Most High is unlimited. With Him is absolute sovereignty. In all his attributes God is limitless, perfect and sovereign. To deny this is a denial of both his sovereignty and his Godhead.

It is an absolute truth, therefore, that the omnipotence of the Almighty is equal to and co-extensive with his omniscience. So not one thing of all that God hath spoken shall fail to come to pass. For his power is infinitely above and greater than all other powers. His kingdom ruleth over all, and his dominion subjects all beings and things to his "eternal purpose." This was fully proved in the person of his incarnate Son, whose voice at once subdued and controlled all creatures and things to whom he spoke, whether animate or inanimate, raving devils and men, warring seas and winds, hopeless maladies and remorseless death, all yielded at once to his simple word. Jesus spoke but once, the Lord makes no efforts—never tries. Of himself he says, "I will." To his people he says, "You shall." "He speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast." "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." This is our God, the God of Israel his people, the Lord God omnipotent. He is the Rock, his work is perfect. He is our refuge, our salvation, our defense. O how safe and good it is to be sheltered under his almighty wing!

How fearful and woeful to us is our relationship in Adam! Our whole lifetime in the flesh is but the realization and experience of the solemn fact that we are in Adam. Here we sow in tears. Thorns and thistles abound. All the mighty works of merciful power which Jesus wrought, blessedly healing all the afflicted and raising up the dead, were overcoming and removing the ruin that is ours in Adam. So all these gracious miracles of the second man are typical of his mighty work of redemption. To his wondering disciples he said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." "And thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."

Salvation, therefore, is the work of Jesus—the salvation of his people. They are his people in every dear and sacred relation and meaning of the term "his people;" yet they are sinners. The text shows that their sins and death are because they are in Adam. Therefore they are born of the flesh, and are flesh. So Jesus taught. All in Adam die. Here none are exempt. "By man came death." "Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." All sinned in the one man Adam. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." "For the wages of sin is death." "That as sin hath reigned unto death." All this solemn fact is positive and absolute, unconditional and irresistible. This is the dominion of sin by man and in Adam. "There is no discharge in that war." "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

Whence, then, cometh obedience and righteousness, salvation and life? Not from Adam, nor from any who are in Adam, nor from the flesh; for in the flesh dwelleth no good thing, said Paul. Jesus

who spake as no other man, makes a clear distinction between "that which is born of the flesh," and "that which is born of the Spirit;"for he says the one "is flesh," and the other "is spirit." Therefore, that we may have life and obedience, righteousness and salvation, we must be in Christ. It is a divine mystery, not known to the wise of the world, that we who now dwell in the flesh are in Christ Jesus and he lives in us. Paul thus states this truth: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." All this we need, and need it because "In Adam all die;" but this is all we need and shall receive. Our God has made his and our Christ all this to us, and it is of the Father that we are in Christ. Chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and blessed in him with all spiritual blessings according as we were chosen in him. This choice and these blessings are positive and sure, therefore, because they were vouchsafed to all the chosen of God in Christ before the world was. This blessed fact places all spiritual blessings infinitely above every conditional principle and basis, and secures them to us, "not according to our works" or obedience, but according to God's choice. And since all apiritual blessings were given us in Christ according as God hath chosen us in him, these blessings are no more conditional or contingent on our part than the choice itself. And more than all spiritual blessings we do not need nor shall ever receive. Where, then, is there any place or need for conditional spiritual blessings? And since all spiritual blessings are ours in Christ according to the will and choice of God, why should it be thought that God bestows them upon us according to our will and choice? In this connection Paul goes on and says, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of Children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." In all this way of life and salvation unto sinners, the sovereign choice and pleasure and power of God supremely prevail, and all "according to the riches of his grace." In the wisdom and love of God he ordained it thus, because "so it seemed good in his sight,"and he saw that there was no other way that would glorify him and bring them into the blessing of life.

"In Christ shall all be made alive." But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." The clause"in Christ," qualifies and limits the "all" that shall be made alive. It is because they are in Christ that they shall be made alive. None who are not in Christ shall be made alive. All die in Adam because they are in him. They could not die in Adam unless they first lived or had their being in him. When a living tree dies, all in it die, because the life of the tree is the life of all its members. So it is with all in Adam. "Even so shall all in Christ be made alive." In Christ is perfect obedience, holiness and life. So all in him shall be made righteous by his obedience. All sin and death shall be separated from them, and they shall be perfected in the holiness and life of Christ. His unfailing word to them is, "Because I live, ye shall live also." "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." "He that believeth on me hath everlasting live." This one falls asleep in Christ, but is not dead. For in Christ is no sin nor unrighteousness nor death, but righteousness and life and peace. The sin and curse and death are in Adam—in our mortal flesh. So for the sins of his people Christ was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, to die no more. Thus our

risen Lord made an end of sin, and abolished death, for his people.

In his resurrection Christ was the firstborn from the dead among many brethren. "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept." He was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Now, all that Christ is in holiness and life and power, he is all this to all in him, and they shall know the power of his resurrection, shall be perfectly conformed to his divine image, and shall know the glory of his ascension into heaven. All this is by the power of the Lord God Almighty and the riches of his grace.

The death of all in Adam is the time present—"all die;" but the text and its connection show clearly that the resurrection unto the life in Christ, of all who sleep in him, is in the future time—"shall all be made alive."

"We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." In our mortal flesh we cannot thus see the glorified man Christ Jesus. John was given a glimpse of him in his glory; but he said, "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead." Paul said, "knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. * * * For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." For this the holy Son of God prayed, saying, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou has given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundatin of the world." "Afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." When they die in Adam, at the dissolution of their mortal man or body, they fall asleep in Christ, and in him they shall be made alive when he shall come the second time without sin unto salvation. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." This will be the perfect fulfillment of the Lord's prayer for us, and we shall be with him where he is and behold his glory. "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." "Have borne," is past, "shall also bear," is to come. We now bear the image of Adam after the outward man, and the image of Jesus after the inward man; so we now, in part, bear the image of the two heads, the earthy and the heavenly. But God has predestinated his foreknown and chosen people to be entirely conformed to the image of his Son, whom he raised up from the dead. This good work of grace in us shall be gloriously finished in us when we shall receive the adoption, for which we now wait in hope, "to wit, the redemption of our body." This will be our change, of which Paul says, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O

grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Then, *O then!* "In Christ shall all be made alive." "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed in death." The infinite and almighty wisdom and power of God in Christ Jesus our risen and glorified Redeemer, shall gloriously triumph in the fulfillment of all this great and wonderful mystery of godliness, according to his own will, notwithstanding the opposition of all the wicked, who hate God and his sovereign power, and the unbelief of some of his own people. "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself." Paul again says, "For our conversation" (our citizenship and inheritance) "is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." In the divine assurance of this faith and hope, afflicted Job said, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." And David said, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." So shall we all.

Hoping to "attain unto the resurrection of the dead," yours in Jesus,

D. Bartley.

July 1, 1932
Elder O. J. Denny

COUNCILS-CHURCH SOVEREIGN

Council. "1. The great council of the Sanhedrim, which sat at Jerusalem. 2d. The lesser courts (Matthew 10:17: Mark 13:9) of which there were two at Jerusalem, and one in each town of Palestine.

It will be seen from the Bible references to councils they were what we call courts for the trial of cases or charges vs. the people.

In sending forth the apostles, Jesus said, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men; for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; etc. Matthew 10:17-17.

Benedict, historian, say Councils (presming to regulate the affairs of assemblies of the saints) commenced in Greece in the second century. They were first local, and rather offensive when first adopted. As they became entrenched with power, and their numbers grew into hundreds and thousands, in some cases their findings became binding on their subjects, and their enemies or those who would not bow to their edicts were sorely persecuted, and many of them were put to death.

The poor people in all ages who have believed in the sovereignty of their local assemblies or churches, have been sorely persecuted, and yet through it all, many of them, to this day, refuse to be bound by the laws of councils by whatever name they are called.

Councils and other groups have from time to time dared to assume very dictatorial attitude toward individual churches or assemblies, and such attempts have usually met with much opposition and the result has been more and more confusion. Religion, pure and undefiled, cannot be legislated into nor taken out of the hearts of the Lord's people by those who assume the role of dictators, let it be one, or many combined to the same end.

The first council of Nice was held in

the year 325 had in it 300 bishops and the meeting held for a year.

The Council of Placentia was held in the open fields, and there were present 200 bishops, 4000 other ecclesiastics, and three hundred thousand laymen. The council of Constance began in 1414 and lasted for four years. The famous Council of Trent lasted for 18 years.

One might think that with such vast numbers, in council, and with such long deliberation that nothing but good could come out of such meetings. History shows that the Christians were slain by the hundreds of thousands who failed to abide by the laws and regulations imposed upon them.

Historians say the Romans borrowed the Council idea from the Greeks, and later the Protestants borrowed it from the Romans.

Benedict, after reviewing the history of Councils, said, "Churches founded on congregational or independent principles, cannot consistently have much use for councils and I think the fewer there are among the Baptists the better."

Mosheim, a Lutheran historian, while not friendly to the Baptist people, though in his day they were called by other names, He said. "The assemblies, were intensely and entirely independent, each one being governed by its own rules, and had no sort of supremacy over others, not the least right to enact laws for them. He says further that Bishops as they were then called, (now called Elders) acted not with the authority of masters; but with the diligence and the zeal of faithful servants."

We might well consider the prudence of these early servants of the Lord, and it ought to put to shame trouble hunters, and trouble makers who run to and from trying to look after everybodys business but their own.

Let us see what the scriptures say of such. Proverbs 20:3 "It is an honour for a man to cease from strife; but every fool will be meddling." Proverbs 26:17 "He that passeth by, and meddleth with strife not belonging to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ear." 1st Thes. 4:11: "We beseech you brethren, that ye increase more and more. And that you study to be quiet, and to do (attend to) your own business, and to work with your hands, as we command you, that you may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may lack nothing."

We seem to have tose who have little following at home and therefore little of their own business to attend to unless they were to go to work, who cannot stay away from trouble and usually leave it far worse scattered when they go hence than it would have been if left to local people to settle local troubles. How long, oh, how long will we suffer in silence, the work of such trouble makers. 2nd Thes. 3:11: For we hear there are some which walk disorderly, among you, working not at all, "but are busybodies. Is not history repeating itself. Have we not, now in the world, much of the spirit of intolerance, and oppression so evident in former centuries? How often we see it manifest that if you are one of our crowd you are all right, and minor departures from the straight and the narrow path of rectitude matters little, is of little concern; but presto; let the same man fail to trail in their wake, and lo, he becomes all that is undesirable, and should be put out of the running. Or to be more specific he should be excluded or withdrawn from.

The early Christians are called by various names, and we read, that the beginning of the thirteenth century saw thousands of them burned or hanged whose whole crime was that they believed in and trusted the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, and renounced all the vain hopes of self righteousness and idolatry.

Of these early churches, or assemblies as they were called, Robinson says, "When

congregations multiplied so that they became too numerous to assemble at one place, they parted into seperate companies and so again and again; but there was no schism, and a member of one assembly was a member of all." Should it not be so today?

He says further: "One assembly never pretended to inspect the affairs of another nor was any dominion over the consciences of others. The only discepline was the exclusion of those who committed overt acts considered unbecoming of al follower of Christ.

The religious world persecuted those who would not bow to their acts, forms or regulations,and said of these early Christians, that they had neither head nor tail, neither princes nor legislators, and consequently no slaves, "all being equal. As a reproach, they were called 'Melchisdecians' for like Melchisedec they were without father, mother, and without beginning of days for end of life."

We have often been approached in regard to the advisability of our calling a council meeting in order to reach a better understanding among our people. If the Lord is in the move it would be all right; but if it is for the purpose of passing on fellowships, and abridging the rights of the independent churches to regulate their own affairs and discipline its own members, or to outline the times and places where gospel ministes may preach the word, saying in substance, go here and not go there, lest you bring down upon your head our displeasure, or to say in substance your gift and preaching must conform to our liking or we will call for your credentials, if such is the attempt thus putting to naught the commands of the Lord Jesus Christ as recorded in Matthew 28: 19-20. Go ye therefore (only where the councils say you can go) no, not that; but obeying the divine head of the church of God. "Go ye therefore, and teach all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe" (the rules of the council or association) No. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of thee world."

If a church is composed of baptized believers in Christ, it is, with few exceptions, able to attend to its own affairs; but if those from without go and meddle, with their business, usually the trouble spreads far and near, like an old sore, trouble makers keep scratching around, and will not let local troubles heal. I had rather risk any individual church to settle its troubles alone, if left alone, than to risk a council of hundreds from without.

I am not empowered to act for my church, and certainly not for any association, in the absence of definite instructions and for me to go far afield and take part in divisions, set up one party to a local trouble must be so regarded by other churches or associations, and even so far forget my true position in the church as to say come on and I will see that you and your faction is received and seated, thus presuming to speak for my church or association, should at once disqualify me for leadership in any group of old Baptists.

Such things are being done, if correctly reported, without any labor whatever with those supposed to have been withdrawn from. Is not such proceeding disprderly on its face, and one error is never corrected by continuing to do other acts which are unauthorized and thus can but be classed as disorderly acts.

David said, "Walk about Zion, and go around about her; tell the towers thereof, Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generations following. For God is our strength; He will be our guide even unto

death."

Brethren everywhere, let us plead with you to stop the troubles so often caused by our people trying to attend everybody's business but their own.

O. J. Denny

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MEETINGS

The West Country Line Union will hold a two day meeting, the fifth Sunday in April 1983, and on Saturday before. Services will begin at 10:30 AM each day.

Dan River Church who are celebrating their 100th anniversary this year will be host.

All lovers of the truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder D. V. Spangler
Pastor

ORDINATION OF A MINISTER

The Durham Primitive Baptist Church Durham, N.C., in their conference on Saturday before the third Sunday in December, unamiously agreed to request a Presbytery of Elders to meet with the Durham Church, the third Sunday in April, 1984, to inquire into the qualifications of licentiate Cleo Robertson, and if found qualified, to set him apart to the full function of the gospel ministry.

The hour of the ordination has been set for three o'clock at the Durham meeting house on Pacific Ave., Durham, N.C.

This will be an all day service beginning at 10:30 A.M.

A general invitation is extended to our brethren to attend, expecially our ministers.

Elder D. V. Spangler
Pastor

APPOINTMENTS FOR ELDER JOE HAMRICK OF WINNSBORO, TEXAS

Wednesday Night April 25 at Greensboro Church.

Thursday Night April 26 at Malmaison Church.

Friday Night April 27 at Laurel Ridge Church. Supper will be served at the meeting house at five o'clock– The public is invited.

Saturday April 28 at Staunton River Union Meeting.

Sunday April 29 at West Country Line Union Meeting.

Sunday Night April 29 at Reed Creek Church – Service at seven o'clock.

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR JANUARY 1984

Mrs. Arless Hiatt, VA	$7.00
A Friend, NC	13.00
Mrs. Claudene B. Conner, VA	2.00
Mrs. Oza Hill, TX	7.00
Davis Mordecai, AL	7.00
Mrs. Cliff Weaver, WA	8.00
Mrs. Ruby Feltman, WA	3.00
Mrs. Joyce Farley, TX	7.00
Jasper Oxley, WV	2.00
E.C. Redman, AL	2.00
Calvin F. Jones, DE	3.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER EUGIE KATE WORLEY TUCK

Our hearts are saddened by the passing of a dear Sister, Eugie Kate Worley Tuck. Sister Tuck was born July 14, 1895, a daughter of the late Drew Worley and Pattie Shelton Worley. She was married to Anderson C. Tuck, who survives her. Sister Tuck's survivors include one daughter, Margaret DuBose, Danville, Va.; two brothers, Edward Worley, Fort Pierce, Fla. and Victor Worley, Newport News, Va.; one sister, Sister Jennie Denton of Gretna, Va.; three grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Sister Tuck was a dear and faithful member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by experience and baptized September 11, 1937. She enjoyed attending meetings as long as her health permitted.

Sister Tuck passed from this life December 25, 1983. Her funeral was held by Elder O. K. Tench and W. D. Lilly. She was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park.

Sister Tuck will be sadly missed by her Bretheren, friends and family. May God reconcile all who mourn her.

Written in love and hope by
Sister Carol R. Pickral
Modrator: O. K. Tench
Clerk: Oscar D. Pickral

RAMON VELES

Shepherd Fold Church sadly grieves the passing of our precious brother, Ramon Veles, who was born in Madrid, Spain, March 26, 1894 and departed this life November 16, 1983. He was the only surviving offspring of his immediate family and a descendant of Spanish royalty. His father was Juan Veles and his mother was a Franco (first name unknown). At 3 years of age, while fleeing Spain during a conflict involving the Franco family, Brother Veles and his parents boarded a ship unaware of it's destination. The ship was sunk in a storm in 1897.

Upon arrival in the United States, he was a child and alone. He was put into a Catholic orphanage in San Francisco. A man by the name of John Beatly adopted him and that is where he resided until he was about 11 years of age. Again, alone and no money, his Lord enabled him to build a good life.

Brother Veles served in World War I in 1917 in the Ambulance Corps. He was disabled in LaManns, France in 1918 driving an Ambulance. The Lord continued to direct his steps and lead him into the love of the old Baptist and their doctrine. Each time it was my priviledge to converse with him he always mentioned the leading hand of his Lord in all his trials and travels throughout his lifetime.

Brother Veles was thoughtfully intuitive of the Churches' needs; he was outspoken and most helpful during Church conference; he also held the office of Trustee and did the work of a deacon, although he was never ordained to that office.

Brother Veles married Myrtle Smith on March 24, 1934 in Conroe, Texas. They had 48 years of marrieage that was sanctified by their Lord. Brother Veles' wife, Myrtle, preceded him in death by 10 months. They are survived by four beautiful daughters; Mrs. Hannah French of Seattle, Washington; Mrs. Romona Sikes of Channelview, Texas; Mrs. Betty Anne Webb of Houston, Texas; and Mrs. Alicia Nilson of Biloxi, Mississippi. Twelve grand-children and seven great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted at Glen Dale Funeral Home in Houston,

Texas, November 18, 1983. Attending ministers were Elder C. M. Haygood, Elder Gerald Shipman, and Elder Jim Hamrick.

Written by
Robbie Holloway

ZACK C. NORRIS

By the request of Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church. The Lord willing, I will try to write a few words in memory of our brother in Christ, Brother Zack C. Norris. It pleased our heavenly Father to call him from our midst on August 15, 1983. Age 96 years, 8 months and 27 days.

Brother Norris was born November 19, 1987, in Macon County, Georgia.

He died in a nursing home in Arlington, Texas, August 15, 1983. He joined Pilgrim Rest Church in March 1965 by letter from Macedonia Church. He was a strong believer in predestination of all things. He confessed the love for his church so many times. Our little church loved him and will miss him. He was married to Stella May Dean in 1915. Mrs. Norris passed away in 1945.

To this union six children were born. One child died in infancy. He is survived by three daughters; Ethel Thrash Davis of Mineral Springs, Ark., Sarah Cullum of Fort Worth, Texas, May Johnson of Duncan, Oklahoma. Two sons: Jack Norris of Venus, Texas; Joe Norris of Anchorage, Alaska. Nine grandchildren and thirteen great-grandchildren.

Brother Norris was laid to rest at Duncan Oklahoma.

Benjamin Lloyd of Lloyd Baptist Hymn Book was his great-grandfather, or great-great-grandfather.

Elder J.C. Townley, Moderator
Frances Townly, Church Clerk

DURANT HASSELL BROWN

Brother Durant Hassell Brown, born September 15, 1923, Duplin County, N.C., passed into the presence of his Heavenly Father, October 4, 1983 at the age of 60.

Uniting with Muddy Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Duplin County, September 1978, Brother Brown was ordained to the office of deacon in December of the same year. His love and concern for his church had been manifested many years earlier, and his leadership proved dynamic during his latter years.

Tennyson's words *"I am a part of all that I have met"* aptly describes the life of Brother Brown. He truly remains a part of his family, his church and his community. The impact of his life will always be a significant inspiration in their meories.

Surviving are his wife, Blanche E. Brown; brothers, Woodrow and Stedman Brown; sisters, Hazel B. Grady, Madelyn B. Fuch, Luvene B. Hart and Annia Ruth Brown.

The Muddy Creek Primitive Baptist Church is thankful to her Sovereign Lord for the high privilege of having had Brother Hassell Brown to love, and in sorrow yields to God's wisdom, as exercised in the affairs of men.

Accepted in conference the 25th day of February, 1984.

Elder W.L. Everett, Moderator
Douglas Brown, Clerk

JAMES RUFUS MUNDY

It was our heavenly Fathers will to call from this life Brother James Rufus Mundy March 24, 1983. Brother

Mundy was born February 1, 1906, son of James Talmage and Abigal Mundy. His father was a Primitive Baptist Elder for many years.

Brother Mundy united with Richmond Church June 7, 1981 and was baptized the first Sunday in July. His sense of hearing was bad and he would sit on the front row to try to grasp every word that came from his pastor's lips. Elder Simpson would visit him in his home and he would tell him of his love that he felt within his breast for God and His people.

Brother Mundy is survived by his wife, Mrs. Nellie Croah Mundy and two daughters; Mrs. Linda M. Downey and Mrs. Helen M. Greene of Richmond. Also four sisters; Mrs. Emma Stewart, Mrs. Lila James, Mrs. Frances Towe, and Mrs. Alice Ellige. Five brothers; Lucas, Allen, Ophir, Zepher, and Walter Mundy.

Brother Mundy's funeral was conducted at Woody's Hoguenot Chapel by his pastor, Elder D.L. Simpson. His mortal body was laid to rest in Dale Memorial Park with a precious hope in a glorious resurrection.

Elder D.L. Simpson, Moderator
Sister Azalie Lee, Clerk

BRADY ROSS WATSON

Brother Ross Watson departed this life January 24, 1983. He was a deacon of Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church near Fordyce, Arkansas. Brother Watson was not only a faithful member of Pilgrim Rest Church, but he loved to visit other churches of the same faith. He was a very humble brother who had a great love for spiritual things. He rejoiced so often in hearing the truth preached that it caused him to shed tears.

He is survived by his wife, Sister Floriece Thompson Watson, two sons, Pete of Memphis, Tenn. and Charles Ross of Tinsman. Three daughters, Mrs. Sarah Eubanks of St. Louis, Mo., Mrs. Elsie Ashcraft of Pine Bluff, Ark., and Mrs. Peggy Gavan of Memphis, Tenn.; A brother, Ray Watson of Tinsman, Ark. and a sister, Mrs. Bertie Johnston of El Dorado, Arkansas.

His funeral was conducted at White Water Primitive Baptist Church near Tinsman, Ark. by his pastor, Elder John C. Townley and Elder Henry Gardner.

Burial was in the family cemetery known as Watson Cemetery near Tinsman, Ark.

Done by request while in conference, Saturday February 19, 1983.

Elder John C. Townley, Moderator
Frances Townley, Church Clerk
Written by Erma Broach

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POETRY

NEVER ALONE

"How many times discouraged
We sink beside the way;
About us all is darkness,
We hardly dare to pray;
Then through the mists and shadows,
The sweetest voice e'er known,
Says, Child, am I not with thee,
Never to leave thee alone?

O soul, hast thou forgotten
The tender word and sweet,
Of him who left behind him
The print of bleeding feet?
I never will forsake hee,
O Child, so weary grown;
Remember I have promised
Never to leave thee alone.

Take courage, way-worn pilgrim,
Though mists and shadows hide
The face of him thou lovest,
He's ever at thy side;
Reach out thy hands unto him,
And lo, the clouds have flown;
He smiles on thee who promised
Never to leave thee alone."

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EDITORIAL

You will find recorded in the 19th verse of the 7th Chapter of Hebrews this reading: "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God." The 25th verse reads: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

I believe I attended the last Association which was held here in 1924. A man who had been a member of this church signed my credentials. He was the clerk of the church at Spray, North Carolina, A. T. Robertson.

The Lord willing, I would like to speak to you a short while on the subject of the laws of the Bible. Though I have been speaking many years, I do not remember ever speaking on the Ten Commandments until last Sunday. Seems like I would have gotten around to that in all those years, doesn't it? And the various laws I would like to present to you and the purpose of God in these laws. Whatever law is under consideration that I have read, Paul said, it made nothing perfect. This is in accordance with the scripture in the Bible where it is said that if there had been a law given that could have given life, righteousness would have been by the law. Paul has reference in this scripture to the ceremonial and sacrificial law, the law that the priest and the high priest administered in the House of God. Yet, in all the hundreds of years of legal service, all the lambs that were offered on Jewish alters or ceremonial services rendered by Israelites, nothing was made perfect by them. But Paul said, "The bringing in of a better hope did."

What was the better hope? Christ was the better hope, something better than all legal services has ever been able to accomplish. And the effect of this bringing in of a better hope was that we might have an approach to God in the name of our Lord "by the which we draw nigh to God." This law was effectual in two ways. One of them was, it was renewal every time the high priest went into the most holy place that they were still sinners, the other purpose was, the promise that a saviour was coming and God compelled and required this of the Israelites to continue year after year, and the comers thereof were not made perfect.

And we take the first law that God gave man, in the Garden, when He placed him in the Garden and gave him right to every tree of the Garden except one, the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and Adam violated that law. The violation of that law made every person that's ever been born in the world a sinner.

People don't talk much about original sin any more. They are rather hesitant, I think we should talk about it because it removes man out of the picture.

By the disobedience of one man, sin entered into the world and death by sin for they all have sinned. Every human being who has been and ever will live sinned in the first man and fell, and man has never been able to redeem himself from that condemnation. Somebody said, did that include everybody? Some of you tell me one that was left out of it. All have sinned, not all will sin. All have sinned. YOU sinned in Adam, and YOU sinned in Adam, and YOU sinned in Adam. And YOU FELL.

And Paul in the 8th chapter of Romans said, what the law could not do in that it was weak, God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to redeem his people. From Adam to Moses death reigned, the Bible says, over all who have not sinned after similitude of Adam's transgression. All of them from Adam to Moses were dead sinners, falling in Adam, lost and ruined, not able to extricate themselves from a lost and ruined state.

The Ten Commandments protrays two things: Mt. Sinai protrays, what does it speak to you of, it speaks of God's justice and His holiness. When God called Moses upon Mt. Sinai to deliver unto the people—God prepared the stone and He also prepared the writing on it and delivered it to Moses. It was a terrible place to stand, at Mt. Sinai, smoke covered the mountain. A man could not touch, or a beast couldn't touch the mountain unless it had to die. God's justice and His holiness were being brought to view. These laws were given and written by the finger of God. Moses returned from the mountain and he found the people he had left worshiping a gold calf. Somebody said: Was that God's people? If I had an opinion I'd tell you all of them weren't. Some of these brethren might disagree with me but I read in the Bible where all are not Israel that are of Israel. So to tell you that all of those people were God's chosen people in the realm of grace, I can't do it. It was a mixed multitude. That's what it was.

But for the grace of God we wouldn't have a God to worship today. None of us. None of us! Moses took the first tables of stone and he threw them down, THREW THEM DOWN. What does it represent? The first covenant. A broken covenant. He was full of righteous indignation, I might call it. And God called him back upon Mt. Siani, a terrible place, and then told Moses to take the tables of stone and I'll do the writing on them; and then you take these two tables of stone, the law which is called in the Book of Corinthians the administration of condemnation and the administration of death, that's what it's called, the law of Moses, written on tables of stone. And God had a place for them when Moses returned, there was an ark they were to be placed in and that ark is a type of Jesus. Moses didn't break the last one, did he? And God put them in a safe place for keeping too, didn't he! The side of Jesus was opened for our sins.

Noah entered, the door of the ark was in the side, and God had Noah to prepare the ark for his own protection–from God's own wrath, that's what it was. There were seven days from the time that Noah and others were brought into the ark until it started to rain. Somebody said, that looked foolish didn't it. He had said, Noah, come thou and thy house into the ark. Our God's word, and hope I received it when he said to me "come", and if He never says "come" to us we'll never come. And if He says "come" we will come. Come thou and thy house into the ark. And the Lord SHUT HIM IN. Seven days! Why would the ark stand there seven days and it not raining? It shows the safety of God's people in Christ before they need it. That's what it

shows. They were just as safe when God closed the door and sat there seven days —and then it begins to rain. It didn't just rain down from heaven, the depths were broken up, water was everywhere. Talk about stopping it, we can't start it and we can't stop it. But God opened the windows of heaven and He opened the fountains of the deep. And the earth was swallowed up. And there did come a time when upon all that vast water nothing could be seen but a lone ark–floating there.

There was a time my friends in the judgment of God when He judged our sins in His own Son, when none could be seen except Him before the Father, who died in our room and stead. I'm sure that as the Israelites journeyed the most precious possession they had was their ark, the type of Jesus. I remember when Eli died—when Eli the priest died, he had two sons in battle and they brought Eli the word that your sons are dead and what happened. It grieved Eli that his sons had been killed in the battle but when they told him the ark had been taken he falls over dead. The ark was more important to him than his sons. If Jesus isn't more important to all of us today, where will we land when we leave this world? My Prophet, Priest, my Lord, my King.

I remember one night waking up singing the hymn–

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole,
And calms the troubled breast;
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary, rest.

When I came to that verse where it said–

'Till then I would thy love proclaim
With every fleeting breath;
And may the music of thy name
Refresh my soul in death.

I woke up weeping loud, I couldn't stop.

What is it that takes care of the law of sin and death? Has man ever taken care of it? Has he redeemed himself? Is there any law that man can perform of works that will save his soul from hell? Any? Then if righteousness came by the law, Christ is dead in vain. The law of the spirit of life in Christ. What was that spirit that did such a wonderful work? The law of the spirit of life in Christ, the Bible said, has made me free from the law of sin and death. If Christ left one sin of yours unatoned for, hell will be your home when you die. If you transgress in one point, you are guilty of the whole. He stood in the judgement of God for us. To me there will be no judgement for YOU, and YOU, and YOU, after death if Christ stood in the judgement for you. How many sins will it take to land us in an eternal woe? Only one! Only one! But, He has redeemed His people by His precious blood.

He fulfilled the law while He lived. He obeyed every precept and the one blessed thing in it all: His obedience was a delightful work of His. I like to think, a poor sinner like I am, that it is as much pleasure for Christ to save me and joy as it will be for me to be in heaven, for I've sinned. Do you believe that? That's the way it is, my brethren.

And another thing I want to tell you, I don't think I'll ever stand in this association again. If we have been taught and reared by the spirit of Almighty God, God will be glad to receive us in heaven because it is the work of His Son, who lived in our room and He died in our stead. It took both of them. And He could say, I delight to do thy will, Oh God. The law of the spirit of life–life in it

was what it was–made us free from the law of sin and death. Law is a rule or judgement and God said in His Word when he was to administer His justice, He said, Judgment will I lay to the line. What did He mean? He meant what He said. He meant that every sin must be attoned for for one will land us in hell. That's what He meant. He lays His judgment to the line in His own Son.

The laws of God. Paul had a law that he had learned and he didn't learn it from men. I delight in the law of God after the inward man. You couldn't delight in it unless there is an inward man.

The laws of God. The law made nothing perfect but the bringing in of a better hope whereby we draw nigh unto God. Jesus is the better hope—maybe I just as well quit. I want to leave you with this thought. I shall soon close my eyes in death. Whatever I have preached stands for itself. I have no apologies. I have preached a sovereign God as best I could, who brings the administration of the law to the life of His people to show them their just condenmation and in His own way He rolls away the burden of sin by giving us a view by faith of Christ's blood and that faith that He alone can give us.

Transcribed from tape of sermon preached by Elder David V. Spangler at Smith River Association, Sept. 3, 1983

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

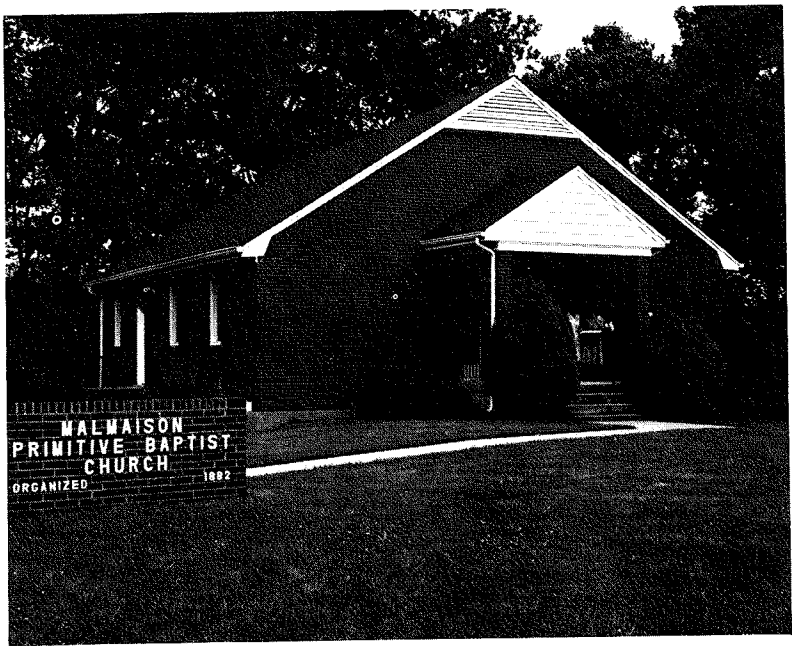

Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church was constituted in 1882. It is located near Blairs, Virginia. They meet for service on the first Sunday of each month and Saturday before. Also song service each third Sunday night at seven o'clock.

Their present pastor is Elder O. K. Tench and Elder J. R. Williams is associate pastor.

CORRESPONDENCE

EXPERIENCE

12 Country Manor Apts.
Mebane, North Carolina
June 18, 1983

Dearest Brother Spangler,

I just received the news of Sister Blackwell's death today from my grandmother. She has always been a lovely sister to me and I truly believe that she lived her belief. As I think back over the years since I was blessed with a home in the church, eleven years in July, I think of the many precious brethren who have departed this life. It is a very humbling thought to realize that the Lord would allow me to be numbered with His people. I do not know that I am among that blood-bought number who will someday be with Christ and be forever satisfied, therefore, to attempt to pen what I hope is an experience of grace is a fearful thing. As I begin, my prayer is that whatever I write might be in keeping with the truth and if it is His most holy will, that it might be to His glory.

I remember, as a child, going to church with my grandparents and thinking, sometimes, that the day was very long. Whenever they would ask me to go, I usually would go even though I didn't really understand anything that was said. I did begin to do some reading at an early age which caused me to begin to have some concern about death and thereafter. For Christmas on year, I requested a bible story book which my mother bought for me. I read this before I ever started reading the Bible. One of my favorite chapters was the one about Joseph. I remember distinctly thinking as I read how Joseph treated his brothers with kindness, that I wouldn't have done that. What a blessing that the day did come when I trust that the Lord showd me that Joseph is a type of Him and that if He has not that compassion for me, then my soul is doomed to hell and His righteous law approves it well! Shortly thereafter I did begin reading in the New Testament, mostly in the first four chapters because they seemed easier to comprehend than some of the latter chapters especially Revelations. I think during this time I started to become a very staunch Arminian, which is the natural tendacy of the carnal mind. I remember asking my grandfather one day, as he drew water from the well, if he thought the Lord heard all prayers. His answer was that if it is a prayer from the heart, then the Lord hears it. I thought my grandfather's answer had solved my problem because it was it this time that I had begun to fear hell and I wanted desperately to find a way to avoid it. So I felt that surely if I read my Bible and abided by the commandments there and prayed earnestly, that all would be well with me. I went through a period of time when I thought I was doing that. I allotted a certain amount of my time every day to reading the Bible. One of my favorite passages of scripture at that time was the description of Christ's baptism particularly the words, "And lo a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Whether my attraction to that scripture at that time was of a spiritual nature or simply a recognition of the beauty of the language in which it is written, I know not. I also found myself drawn to the first Psalm:

> "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.
>
> But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.
>
> And he shall be like a tree planted

by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season, his leaf also shall not whither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish."

What a different view of this scripture I came to have! I at this time, thought it a description of how I must be to inherit the kingdom. The day came, however, when I trust I was blessed to see the Lord there, that it is He and He alone who has fulfilled the requirements.

My readings at this time also included the *Autobiography of Elder Wilson Thompson* which you and Sister Spangler gave me at the age of thirteen. It, along with an old copy of *Pilgrim's Progress* which my grandmother had, made a distinct impression on my mind and later, I hope, on my heart. I remember remarking in a high school English class that I had read and enjoyed *Pilgrim's Progress* after which a visiting college graduate remarked that she didn't see how anyone could enjoy it. Well, she's right, they can't if they're not given to understand.

Many times in high school, a friend, whose parents are members at Dan River, and I would defend the beliefs of the Primitive Baptists in the face of the opposition of an entire class and the teacher. I don't know if either of us at that time fully understood what we were defending, but I do know that even then I recognized that the Bible unquestionably supported these beliefs and that the scriptures when properly interpreted are evidence that the Primitive Baptist beliefs can not be refuted.

It was while in high school that I first had an exercise of heart. if indeed the Lord has dealt with me. My grandfather became ill and had to go to the hospital. It was the first time I ever remember his being in the hospital. To me this is an example of how the Lord knows exactly how to deal with individuals. Had I been touched bodily with an illness, it could not possibly have hurt me to the very heart as it did to see my grandfather in that hospital bed. I began to fear that I was being punished for not asking a home in the church and I tried to pray diligently that the Lord would bring my grandfather back home to us. During this time I attended a union meeting at Pleasantville Church. Elder John Lee Smith used the text, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." This was the first time that I felt any strand of hope, any bit of assurance that the worthless worm of the dust that I saw myself to be, might be included in that number who had found grace in His sight. I visited my grandfather that day at the hospital. Before I left, you arrived, Brother Spangler, and you greeted me with such warmth. I remember feeling the desire to stay and listen to you talk and the fear of staying and telling you what I had felt that morning. So I left. My grandfather told me later that you had told him that you didn't think it would be long before I asked for a home in the church.

The Lord did bring my grandfather back home to us and it was one of those blessings in my life that I have never felt I have been able to be thankful enough for. As for going before the church, I still did not go. At this time in 1972 I graduated from high school and I remember your making a point of telling me that you and Sister Spangler would not be able to be there because one of your grandchildren would graduate the same night. It meant a great deal to me that you cared enough to tell me and at the

same time because of the wretch I knew myself to be, it was very humbling to me to think that you would even consider coming. I'm a very shy person by nature and I was very nervous that night as I arose to deliver the valedictory speech, but I distinctly remember seeing Brother Coley Strader and Sister Mildred and other Dan River members in the audience and I felt no nervousness or fear while speaking because I felt that my friends and I hope my brethren were there. In that speech I quoted the scripture, Psalms 30:5, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Little did I know that the time was drawing nigh in which I would feel the inexpressible joy of going home to my brethren.

On the fourth of July, 1972, I went to the Pine Creek meeting for the first time. It was a very beautiful day for me. Your text that day was Hebrews 12:2, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." I was overwhelmed with the picture of Christ that the Lord blessed you to portray—such compassion and such love and I felt some hope that perhaps He had compassion on me, because I knew at that point that there was no other way.

That very same month I attended the Upper Country Line Association with my grandmother–my grandfather was unable to attend. The preaching touched my heart to such an extent that I desired to go before the church but felt surely I could not in such a multitude of people. We went home Saturday evening as we were riding with Brother Boyd Minter. I asked my grandmother to go back with me that night and we did. The next morning I could not control my tears as the different ministers spoke. That afternoon as the service was ending and we were singing "How firm a foundation", you announced an open door of the church and you looked at me and then you cast your eyes downward. I could not hold back any longer. I don't remember everything I said, but I do remember calling on the words of Ruth to plead my case, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and their God my God." I felt then as I feel now that it would have been perfectly understandable had the church seen fit to deny my request for membership. I was not then what I would desire to be, and I'm not any closer to it in my carnal nature now. If there is any reason for me to believe that I might someday see the Lord as He is and be satisfied, then it is He and only He.

At the time I asked for a home in the church, I was seeing a young man whose mother was very much against my associating with Primitive Baptists. But that day I cared not what others thought. I felt that surely if he chose to turn his back on me when he learned that I had joined the church, that it mattered not, because I knew what was most important to me. As it turned out, he did make an effort to accept the fact that I believe as I do.

One of the precious memories of that third Sunday in July is of a precious Brother who was the first to address me as Sister Mary, a word that I feel very unworthy of having precede my name even now. That was Brother Tilley. I'll never as long as I live forget the smile on his face as he shook my hand. Later on when I was in college at East Carolina, I was at home on a fourth weekend and Brother Tilley was in the hospital after suffering a heart attack. I drove back to Greenville that Sunday feeling surely he was going to be all right as there had been good reports. However, my grandmother called to let me know that the Lord had taken him. I drove back home

for the funeral on the day before exams for that quarter. It was late when I returned to Greenville that day so I did little studying for the English history exam scheduled for the next day. I've always believed that a person should not waste what the Lord has blessed him with, particularly the mind. And for that reason, I felt badly because I knew my work on that exam was not up to the previous work in the course, and yet, I had no regrets for making the trip home. I had to go because of my love for Brother Tilley. I wrote a note on the exam and apologized to the instructor for not doing as well as I should have and I told her that I had gone home for a funeral. I feel the Lord softened her heart and she had compassion on me because my grade could have been much lower than it was. But, had I failed, I feel I still would have had to go the same way if I had it to do over again.

On the fourth Sunday in July, 1972, I was baptized. The young man, of whom I wrote earlier, was there and I remember seeing tears in his eyes as I went into the water. Not long after that we agreed to be married and, as you know, we asked that you perform the ceremony but that you not mention it to anyone as we didn't feel our parents would agree to it since we would both be starting college in the fall. As it turned out later on, however, we both agreed that we would not be married because he was unable to accept my beliefs. Though that was a difficult time for me, I feel the Lord blessed me in not making a serious mistake. I was made to feel that I could say with the hymn writer:

"Father, whate'er of earthly bliss
Thy sovereign will denies,
Accepted at thy throne of Grace,
Let this petition rise.

Give me a calm and thankful heart,
From every murmur free;
The blessing of thy grace impart,
And make me live in thee.

Let the sweet hope that thou are mine,
My life and death attend;
Thy presence through my journey shine,
And crown my journey's end."

For the two years after I was baptized, I attended Rockingham Community College and was able to attend meetings regularly. Those were two of the best years of my life. I feel that the Lord blessed me to grow in the knowledge of Him during that time. There were so many beautiful themes in your sermons and in the sermons of others. The portrayal of Christ as the Son of Man and the Son of God was one of those themes that has been precious to me. He must be the Son of God to redeem His people and yet He must be the Son of man to be "Touched with the feeling of our infirmities." I think also at this time that it amazed me how plain it became that the scriptures unquestionably support the doctrine of predestination even in the very first chapter of Matthew where the lineage of Christ is given and Esau is not mentioned.

When the time came to choose a university, the overriding factor was where can I go and still be with the Lords people. I attended East Carolina University and met with the Lord's people in that area for two years. I can never be thankful enough for the many kindnesses shown me while I was there especially by Brother Mark and Sister Grace Garner. Surely, I was a stranger and they took me in. The time spent in Greenville also taught me how thankful on chould be to be able to attend meetings and to be with the Lord's people.

After completing college, I worked for two years in Caswell County. During that time I met my husband. I remember the day I came to your home to ask that

you perform the ceremony and you said to me that I must follow my heart in the matter when I told you that I knew that some of the brethren were concerned about my marrying someone who did not believe as I do. As I left that day Sister Spangler said to me, "Remember, Mary, that we've always loved you, since you were just a child." Tears still come to my eyes when I think of the look on her face when she said that. It was very humbling as I have always esteemed the two of you very highly.

I'd like to mention one last experience that occurred not long after John and I were married. I was driving to Mebane from Yanceyville because the snow and ice caused the school officials to close the schools early. Just outside of Mebane I skidded on the ice and I knew right away that the car was going to flip over. I remember feeling very calm and thinking that if this were my last day, it would be all right. I also remember trying to remember if I had told John I loved him that morning. I feel very strongly that it's important to let those people, whom you care for, know how you feel, because when I breathe my last, I want to feel assured that even though I may not be able to say good-bye, the people whom I love will know that I love them. The car did turn over in the air and landed back on the tires. An approaching car from the other direction just missed being hit by my car. I was unharmed. The Lord surely was with me, but I thank Him most for that calmness which He granted because only faith in Him can cause a person to be prepared for death.

Mary Hawkins

EXPERIENCES OF ELDER D.R. CABBAGE

Part 2 of 4 Maynardsville, Tenn.

A few years later I moved back to the same house that I heard God speak peace to my soul. Unable to work, I had to move back to the country, the same church I was telling you about where I was raised in. They had a revival meeting, and I attended it. I didn't go to any other churches. I didn't know anything about Primitive Baptist at that time. I was in trouble. One of them made a statement as he left the church house that God showed him a mans face. A few nights after that, I stepped out and owned my hope. The preacher said I was the man that God had showed him. I can't deny that. God works in mysterious ways. But I did own my hope that I had kept hid for so many years. A great burden lifted again. I went on and became more interested in church. Went on until another year and they had another revival. The same two preachers. One of them asked me, "Did you ever join the church?" I said, "No, I hold toward the Primitive Baptist people." He said, "The Primitive Baptist has got some good people. They just get it down to the very number." I can't see that. But he said, "My advice to you is to follow the spirit of the Lord." I went on for sometime, I can't explain all of this, I was more or less given that I was lead to a chuch. But at the same time, I felt like this, that God has a people in every nation under heaven, every kindred, tongue, and people. For some reason, I wanted God to lead me to the church that he wanted me in. Yes, I was weighted down again, another burden. I went out before I went to bed, I tried to pray. I said, "Oh Lord, I believe that you have a people in all these churches around here, all these denominations, that your people are a scattered people. Heavenly Father, I can go to anyone of them and tell an experience of Grace, and no doubt they would accept me as a member, Oh, Lord, if thou want me in a church, show me where to go." Have you ever been to a place that you didn't know where to go? I've been there. But

God said he would never leave us.

We get down in these places and feel we are foresaken, God still loves us and watches over us. That night, after I went back in the house and went to bed, went to sleep, I reckon, sometime during that night, I saw in a vision an old church house, I had never been in before. It had a row of lights down through the center of it. Closer to the pulpit the brighter they got, I saw myself sitting there. But, yet I didn't know just where it was.

My neighbor used to come down and stay awhile at night until bedtime and we would visit him, I like that way of life. He was a Missionary Baptist preacher. I love him, I think very much of him. We were talking one night about different churches and preachers we like to hear. Something was said about Brother Wilder and Brother Davis. (These were Primitive Baptist Ministers) I said, "I don't believe I know where Union Church is," (Primitive Baptist Church) He said, "I'll go with you, we'll go over there." A few Sundays after that, he went with me. He hasn't been back since. I found something there that fed my soul, I began to attend regular. Each time I seemed to be getting something, strength, food. I believe that was the place that God lead me. I felt like waiting upon the Lord for him to lead me. If he wanted me in a church, I mentioned a whild ago, I tried to pray for God to show me and to lead me. I know that prayer don't change God. I believe that from the annuals of eternity, God has heard and answered every prayer that will ever be prayed in this time world. But here in time they are made manifest down throught time. God's people have always had to call upon him and I will have to say that I believe in prayer. But I believe that it comes from God and it goes back to God. The Bible says, "Ye know not how to pray as ye ought, but the spirit itself maketh intersessions and that according to the will of God. I believe that God leads his people in such a way that from time to time they are made to realize that they are helpless, that they cannot do these things that they desire to do. They desire His leadership. He shows them and teaches them that He is God, that He has all power in Heaven and in earth.

I'd go to church, I recall this occasion that I'd been filled with spiritual food, my cup runneth over. Walking through the yard toward mother's house, she came to the door and said, "Did you enjoy it?" I began to cry because I had made the statement, I was like one of old, searching for a city when I got there, the watchman, the keeper of the walls found me, took away myself. I believe that's the church that God sent me to or lead me to. I went on and attended for some few years. I don't recall just how many, but a number of years. The time came when I desired a home with these people. These people that God had caused me to love. I began to think about, I believe it was Abraham, God said, "Get thee out from thy land and from thy kindred, into a land, I will show thee." I believe that it was the work of God, and God's will.

I know that some people did not understand why I did not go back to the church I was raised in. The only thing I know as I've said before God had a people in all the churches and I wanted to be where God wanted me to be. I desired a home with them, I'd go and set there and yea when Elder Wilder and Elder Davis would be blessed with the Holy Spirit. I'd sit back there and shed tears, I could not go forward. But I believe that God had appointed a time, God had drawn a line from the foundation of the world. I hadn't been brought to that line yet.

At the end of Job's afflictions, you know how Job was brought down in afflictions, how all he had, had been taken from him, I won't go into that. But at the end of his afflictions there God spoke to

the servant. Job said, "Gird up thy loins like a man, for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundation of the earth? Who hath laid the measures if thou knoweth? Who brought fourth measurements? Or who hath stretched the line upon it? Where upon are the foundations thereof fastened? Or if thou knoweth who laid the cornerstones thereof. When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

I believe God brought forth the measurements and stretched the lines and I believe his people will be brought to them, every one that's in their path.

I went on a long time, I'd go to church and one occasion, I recall, I walked up in the yard, singing had already began, I was filled with joy from them old songs of Zion, being sung inside. Here is a God that leads his people by still waters. Here is a God that maketh them to lie down in green pastures. Here is a God that restoreth their soul when they are weak, when they are faint. Here is a God that said I'll never leave you, I'll never forsake you, but I will go with you all the way even unto the end of the world. These are wonderful promises that God has made to his people, but back to my experience.

Back to the time I was wanting to join the church and couldn't. All the times I would go before him, praying for God to show me, Oh Lord, if this is what you want me to do, show me Lord, God gave me evidence. I was like old Gideon back yonder, I laid the fleece out and said, "Oh Lord, let the ground be wet around it and the fleece dry," and it was. Every time that I asked God for evidence, God gave it to me. God gave it to Gideon. God is a wonderful God. But I went on, one night, a week before I joined the church, I dreamed of being baptized.I dreamed of changing clothes, going into the church house and after I got in some of the people in this dream (or vision) was friendly and some turned cold shoulders to me. Caused me to stop, caused me to wonder. In the dream, that I was in, I don't know, I was turned around, looked down the hill, here come a crowd of people, coming in where I was. I was blessed to ask for a home, they received me. I told what little of my experience that come to my mind, I couldn't tell them much. They took me anyway, George Davis, an elderly man, lived out the road a little way from me came up to shake hands with me. He joined the church, while he was up there. Sister Barnes from Taswell came from across the other way, she joined. What a wonderful meeting. They are both deceased and gone on now. Many more of my travels, but this seems to be getting weaker, scattered. I believe God does show his people things in visions.

On the day of Pentecost, when they were all gathered there in one accord, one mind and one strength. The Holy Ghost came and filled the house, lit upon each of them and they began to speak in other tongues as the spirit gave them utterance. Some people today don't understand what we are talking about. They don't understand this language. I don't feel hard at them and I don't criticize them.

The Apostle Peter stood up with the eleven and said, "Those are not drunk men as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour. But this is that which was spoken by Joel the prophet. In the last days, God will pour out his spirit on all flesh and sons and daughters will prophecy and so on; your old men shall dream dreams; your young men shall see visions."

I don't believe the Apostle Peter was talking about any natural dreams, but he was talking about spiritual visions, spiritual dreams. God is able to carry your mind out while you sleep and show you wonderful things. I have been just as happy in the spirit of the Lord in the

dead hours of the night as I ever have been in the pulpit.

I went on, God has showed me many things concerning the work of the ministry. But I don't know where I will be able to go into any of that or not, but I had a desire to preach and again I'll say, I don't know where it came from, it just moved upon me. To be continued

Elder D.R. Cabbage

217 Bastrop Dr.
Monroe, La. 71203
March 1983

ISIAH 65:24

"And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear."

This scripture has been on my mind for some time and I have a desire to write something concerning it. I trust that this desire is God given, and pray that He will guide my every thought. I do not know much, if anything, about prayer, and I surely do not know to pray as I would. It seems that most of my attempts to pray are but words that reach no higher than my head; yet there are times when I feel greatly blessed to approach unto His mercy seat and pour out the thoughts of my heart unto Him. And there was a time or two when I felt that my prayers were answered immediately and I greatly rejoiced. All true prayers are answered; not according to our wills, but His. True prayers proceed from the heart and, "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." Paul prayed for the thorn to be removed from his flesh and he was answered. The thorn was not removed, because it was there to serve God's purpose, which was to keep Paul from being exaulted beyond measure. Then what was the answer to Paul's prayer? "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." What a wonderful answer from above, from whence cometh all good gifts, and all perfect gifts. They come down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. We see bumper stickers, signs, etc., and sometimes hear it on the radio or TV that 'prayer changes things'. There was a time when I believed this was possible, but this cannot be true according to the above scripture. If there be no variableness nor even a shadow of turning with God, then how can puny, sinful man persuade Him to change His mind and do something for us that He has not already purposed to do? Job said, "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? And what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me; and many such things are with him."

Man is a sinful, corrupt being who would never turn to God if left to himself. Not even one. "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is not one that doeth good, no, not one." Remember the Isrealites. Are we any different? God led them out of bondage, out of the land of Egypt; they crossed the Red Sea dry shod, but their enemies were drowned; they ate manna from heaven, the food of angels; they drank water from the rock; their clothes and shoes waxed not old, etc., and yet when God called Moses upon the mountain they immediately forgot God and made their own golden images to worship. And when God turns His face from us for but a moment we immediately go astray, seeking to fulfill the desires of the flesh; seeking those things which are of the world and do perish, such as wealth, power, popularity, the praises of men rather than God, and all such

things as these. In our carnal nature we would be happy and content with these things and we would have no reason to call upon God; but thanks to His holy name we do not live to ourselves in ease and contentment but in Him, if we be what we hope to be. When we forget God and do not seek Him in prayer, we are soon separated from Jerusalem and carcied away unto Babylon as were the Israelites. We suffer bondage, afflictions, persecutions, darkness of soul, etc. until we see the errors of our ways and return again unto our Savior. These are a part of the 'all things' that work together for our good, for, "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisment, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." Even Jesus, "though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things he suffered." We must suffer, if we follow in the footsteps of our Savior, before we learn obedience. "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." And, being the fain creatures which we are, we must be taught again and again. We must be brought to the end of the road where there is no place to turn, and to the end of our strength, before we turn again unto Him in prayer who is our High Priest, the One who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities because He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. He is a very merciful God, therefore let us come boldly before His throne that we may obtain mercy, and find grace in times of our needs.

We find in Jeremiah 29: "For I know the thoughts that I have toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." What a glorious promise this is: ye SHALL and I WILL. We shall pray and He will answer. Can anyone doubt this? Yes we can and do - many times - when He turns His glorious face from us for a moment and leaves us to ourselves in total darkness; yet our faith is restored when it pleases Him to indite a prayer into us that is according to His gracious will. There are those who pray in pretense only, as did the Pharisee, and when in the flesh we do the same, because we do not know how or for what to pray as we should, but the spirit helps our infirmities by making intercession for us according to the will of God. (Rom. 8:26-27). Again we see that all true prayer must be according to the will of God. If we approach the mercy seat it must be by faith; "But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." That we must have faith is agreed to by all, but by many we are admonished to have faith as though it were something we can reach out and take hold on ourselves; but from where does this faith come? It is the gift of God: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." The grace and the faith are gifts from above and we surely cannot go up and get them: they must come down to us. These blessings were given to us before the foundation of the world, for, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." We shall not fail to receive even one of these spiritual blessings, for God hath already blessed us with them. In eternity He gave them to us, but it is only in the dispensation of time that we receive them; yet it is the will of God that we should

pray for the very blessings that He has already given. The answers to our prayers have already been accomplished also, for, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world," and, "The works were finished from the foundation of the world." (Acts 15:18 & Heb. 4:3)

"It shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking I will hear." Do we not see that it is already done? Is not answering prayer a work? And if it is, did not God know it and finish it in the beginning? Does He not hear even while we are speaking? If He does not hear while we are speaking, then when? God forbid that we deny what the scriptures affirm.

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to the fruit of his doing." The works, or fruits, of the flesh are adultry, fornication, uncleanliness, lasciviousness, idolatry, etc. If God gave to us according to our fleshly fruits we would utterly perish. But if we be the children of Christ, then the Spirit dwells within our hearts and produces the fruits of righteousness which are joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. Our own righteousness is as filthy rags before our holy God, but Christ is our righteousness, for his righteousness has been imputed unto us who believe. (At least I have a hope that I believe.) Without Christ we can do nothing, but with him we can do all things. The Father knows what we have need of before we ask, but we are instructed by Jesus to "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

Volumes could be written on this text, but if what I have written is enough to stir up your pure minds to think further on these things I am well rewarded, though I seek nothing but to praise and glorify God. I trust that you will accept this only as far as it is confirmed by the scriptures.

Brethren, may God grant that you remember this poor worm of the dust when at the throne of grace, and may He forbid that I should sin against Him in ceasing to pray for you, if indeed I pray at all.

C. C. Wilbanks

Route 1
Reidsville, N. C.

THE COUNSELLOR

Isaiah 9:6, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wondeful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

These are but a few of the titles that honor the name of Jesus, above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. For it pleased the Father that in him shall all fulness dwell, and He hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body.

Oftimes I feel so low and far away that I feel to walk alone, without a friend on earth or one in Heaven, and it seems there is no way. Yet, I have been blessed to receive consulation in prayer and supplication when I felt constrained to consult the heavenly Counsellor in prayer and humiliation and flet to walk in the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

Many times in my 66 years in this low ground of sin and sorrow, I have suffered humiliation. Yet, it is nothing to be compared with the humiliation Jesus suffered on the cross. About the ninth

hour, he cried with a loud voice saying, "My God, my god, why hast thou forsaken me."

I have, if not deceived, called upon this Counsellor in my distress, and I believe he made a way when there was no way. For he will surely hear the cries of his people, and he makes a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert, and this is where we journey this day.

The righteous shall be in everlasting rememberance, and I feel I shall never forget as long as I have mind to remember two precious Elders for their labor in love and fellowship. While I walked in humiliation as a begger, pleading for counseling from the all-wise Counsellor that I be blesses to walk in the truth as it is in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and stand for and in the faith once delivered to the Saints, I hope I have been blessed to be not ashamed to own my Lord or to defend his cause.

Elder David V. Spangler, born January 9, 1902, and of this writing is past 82 years old, has been blessed to preach the gospel to the poor for 64 years over the 48 states wherever Primitive Baptist are found.

Elder Spangler is a brother in Christ, I hope, and a father in Israel to many precious ones. He is one who has been blessed by this precious Counsellor to endure and run the race that was set before him, which is an evidence of his calling, for his Counsellor endured all things. Also, I feel that this one called Wonderful and Counsellor blessed him with a devoted wife for 62 years who would not deny the principals for which he stands.

Elder W.C. King was my pastor for 15 years. I loved him, I hope for Christ sake. I was deeply saddened when I learned of his death on October 17, 1970. I wrote many articles about him that were published in the Signs Of The Times expressing the love and fellowship I was blessed to have for him. His first concern was peace at home. Elder Spangler said at his funeral that he and Elder King had lived in gospel fellowship for 50 years. I knew them both from the days of my youth. I never knew them to decree unrighteous decrees. They have been precious to me. Their hearts were so filled with that love that flows from heart to heart and breast that there was no room for jealousy or envy, which is evidence they were counseled by the heavenly counsellor. If there were any differences, they were blessed to reason together in brotherly love.

I remember when Elder George Ruston from the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada visited with the Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association in 1955. He came in a humble spirit, and his mission was for the sake of peace and brotherly love, and I believe he found it was mutual among the brethren.

Elder Ruston, Elder Spangler, and Elder King were blessed to live in brotherly love, peace, and fellowship for many years along with many other ministers and brethren from the two countries.

I believe that when Jesus comes to call his jewels home, there will be some faith found on earth, though Paul the Apostle foretelleth a departure from the faith. I Timothy 4-1, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils."

I believe that every purpose of the Lord shall be performed, and if so be ye have tasted that God is gracious, then you have been counseled by the heavenly counsellor according to the eternal purpose which be purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. Ephesians 4:14, "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed too and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

St. John 5:30-31, "I can of mine own self do nothing; as I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will but the will of the Father which hath sent me. If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true." St. John 5:44, "How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?"

John was counseled by the heavenly Counsellor and not by worldly counselors.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20, "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God,and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

Now, to those chosen of God and precious, have peace one with another. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit. For ye are counseled by the heavenly Counsellor.

Clifton Robertson

Denton, N. C
March 9, 1984

To Elder Kenneth R. Key;

Enclosed is check for $5.00 for the book that Elder Spangler has published. I have never seen him but one time, that was when he was young. He was visiting the Abbotts Creek Association near Star, N. C. When I received the Signs of The Times this week, I recognized the picture before I saw his name.

Don't remember much about his sermon, only do remember his text was first verse of the second chapter of Ephesians.

I have been a subscriber to The Signs for several years and enjoy it so much.

Hope you and all the others that publish The Signs will be blessed to keep on. It is a great source of comfort to so many.

Minnie G. Roberts

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VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

THE UPPER AND NETHER SPRINGS

April 1, 1937

Dear Sister Coleman:

I'll endeavor to comply with your request in regard to the upper and nether springs found in Judges 1:15. I hope the Lord has shown me some of the beautiful meaning. I have dreamed of it twice, and preached from it today.

Caleb was the one that gave these springs. You remember there were twelve spies sent by Moses to spy out the land of Canaan. Ten of them said there are giants there, we cannot take it. As representing the law (10 commandments) that was the truth. Joshua and Caleb said we can take it. They represent Jesus and the Holy Ghost. They are the only ones that can take it. The power is vested in the God-head. At the first of this chapter it says Joshua is dead. Jesus said before He was crucified, it is needful that I go away. If I go not away the Comforter will not come. But I will send the Comforter and He will take the things of mine and show them unto you. The Father, Son and the Holy Spirit

have their office work, but no disagreement. God does the convicting, Jesus does the pardoning, and the Holy Ghost takes the things of Jesus and shows them unto us.

Caleb now takes the place of the Holy Spirit. He made a promise to the one that took Kirjath Sephor (a city of books), he would give Achsak, his daughter to wife. His youngest brother took it. Here is a beautiful picture of Christ and His church. Note the near relationship—younger brother. The flesh is first with us. The evening comes first, then the morning. Abraham told his servants not to go among strangers but among his kin. So they go with ten camels—representing the law and she rides upon the camel till she sees Isaac, then she alights off the camel. The law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. When we view Him, we cease to trust in the law.

Achsak asked her husband to take of Caleb a field. He gave her a South land—a balmy field—a good field—the field the church occupies. See, she asked her husband to do this. How beautiful of her to trust in her husband. What a good husband we have in Jesus to give us such a good and pleasant field. Solomon speaks of the south wind.

When Eve was given to Adam, he said: This is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. The church was created in Jesus before the world. So you see the relationship. Achsak married her uncle.

After this request of hers was granted, she alights off the ass. I feel like this represents human nature. She alights. Jesus rode one into Jerusalem, upon which no man had ever sat, and He did not need bridle or saddle. He is the only one that can subdue our old nature and bring it into subjection.

She says, thou hast given me a field, now give me springs; see he gave her the upper and nether springs. Nether means lower–that which is beneath.

There are the upper and nether mill stones. It takes them both to grind our wheat into flour of food fit to eat.

The springs are gifts from the Lord. We need them both. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, the author and finisher of our faith. The springs are generally found in the valley–between two hills. So it is in these valleys that we sup from the fountain of life that comes down from that pure river of water of life as clear as crystal.

It is all from above, whether it is upper or nether. When Jacob was in the wilderness he took the stones (plural) and made pillows. But in his dream he saw a ladder that reached from earth to heaven and angels ascending and descending upon it. This ladder is Christ that came down from heaven to earth to do the will of His Father. Jacob says how dreadful is this place. This is none other than the gate of heaven. Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not —none other than the house of God. He saw Jesus and the church, for the house of God is the church.

In the darkness, he took the stones—representing the law, but by the light of day, he took the stone (singular) and made a pillar—not pillow. A pillar is a foundation—something to build upon. This was the beginning of his experience—the nether spring, yet it was from above. Every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down from above. It is all of Him. It is God that sheweth mercy.

When David went to meet Goliath, as he went down to the brook (going down) he took five smooth stones, which shadows forth a crucified Jesus, and he was able to kill him.

He was going right, for he was going in the mane of the Lord. Don't you think that was a wonderful spring for him to drink from? This sword of Goliath's was put away–not to be forgotten–as evidence of the battle. An epha of manna

was put away in the tabernacle of testimony of what the children of Israel ate while in the wilderness. They were drinking at that time from what they thought was the nether spring, but afterwards they can see it also was from the upper springs.

Jesus drank from both, for He says, in the garden of Gethsemane, "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass". That was the flesh. The Spirit says,"Not my will, but Thine be done".

Sampson as he went down to Timnath, a young lion roared against him. He killed the lion without a weapon. When he comes back, he steps aside to see the sight, and behold a swarm of bees and honey was in the carcass. There is the sweetness when we are coming back–after there has been a killing. The law having been satisfied, we can lay hold of the sweet promises now, and drink from the wells of salvation.

Sister Coleman, I feel like you may know more about these springs than I do. I am aware that you are a blest child of God, and that He has revealed a lot of the scriptures to you. If you see different from me, I believe you will throw the mantle of charity over it, and still esteem me as a brother. It takes so much space to try to explain myself, I am afraid you will not see some of the points I have tried to make.

Now Isaiah 7:20. To be brief, I think that hired razor was Judas, when he was hired for thirty pieces of silver, to betray Jesus into the hands of sinful men. And He made a clean shave of it—subdued all His enemies. As Sampson killed more enemies in his death, just so Jesus killed or overcame all of them. He came forth a conqueror over death, hell, and the grave.

I have written this since supper and it is now 7:45. So you see I write as I preach. May you look over this and correct all mistakes. I have written hurriedly, trying to keep up with my thoughts. We still think of that good visit you all made up. Come again soon.

Your brother, I hope,
Elder T. A. Stanfield

P.S.–*When you read my letter, keep in mind that Joshua and Caleb are types of Jesus and the Holy Ghost all the way. It was after Jesus had died that the Holy Spirit come, and it was after Joshua had died that Caleb comes forth. Moses died before Joshua took command. Don't you see?*

T.A.S.

McIver, N. C.
1913

ESAU AND JACOB

Dear Brother Gold:

Before Esau and Jacob were born, they struggle together. It seems to me that is a type of the soul when it travails. When we are under conviction, there is a struggling—trying to go back to the world and it's pleasures, and trying to do better. For proof of this, let us see how the Israelites did, when in the wilderness. They wanted to go back to the flesh pots of Egypt. This shows they wanted to go back about as bad as they wanted to press forward. When they started on this journey the Lord told them that in the evening they should eat flesh, and in the morning eat bread. The evening answers to the first part of our life and the morning the last part. They ate and lived on manna in the wilderness. Manna means, what is it? That is a good name for conviction. We certainly do not know what it is while eating it. We eat it—complain—wander around—want flesh, still we continue eating it. The Lord caused an east wind to blow from the sea and carried quails to the Isrealites, a day's journey. And they loathed them while it (the flesh) was still

between their teeth. If we try to eat flesh (go back in our old ways, it makes us sick) and we are in a worse condition than before.

All the men of war that left Egypt died in that wilderness except two That answers to the flesh.

The young men that were born in the wilderness, go into the land of Cannan, which as a figure of the gospel land—spiritual land. Young men, the spiritual men are the ones that possess this land. When they reached the land of Canaan they ceased eating manna; but on the morrow after partaking the passover, they eat the old corn of the land (Canaan). They lived on what that land produced that year. The Lord commanded that an Omer of manna be put away for testimony of what they ate while in the wilderness. We do not forget the time when we were under conviction. It is kept for a testimony. We cannot forget it. Rebekah was told two manner of people were in her womb, and the elder should serve the younger.

Esau came from the field (world) faint. Let us notice this a moment. Was faint. That means ready to fall–a dizziness–weak. (I fainted once and I know something of this.) He was hungry and at the point to die. It seems to me he is getting to the end of the law, and this is a type of us when we thirsted after our younger brother's pottage. Save Lord or I perish! Jacob fed him by buying his birthright. Do we not give up all before we can eat spiritually? We have to give up our standing, before we can eat of our younger (spiritual) brother's pottage.

The world thinks Jacob took advantage of Esau. Don't think so. He was not sick, if he was he would not have been hungry. Esau was called Edom. That means faint, and I might add weak. That is the way of the flesh. Jacob gets the blessing. A person told me Jacob lied. Let us see. When he goes to Isaac, he puts on Esau's garments, and kid skins on his hands and neck. He tells his father this is Esau thy first born. When we go to our heavenly father for a blessing, do we not say we are sinful and are not worthy, that we are the first born? And he was told to do this by his mother, who is a figure of the church. The church will admonish those that have a hope how to do to get a blessing–offer to the church; but they had better come owning they are sinners (the very Esau) or they will not get it. "Come near me my son, and let me feel thee."

That was a trying time on Jacob. He was afraid he would appear as a deceiver. That is our experience. When we had impressions to offer to the church, we were afraid we might decieve them. And when the church tells one today to do his duty on this line, what is their answer? When Joseph's brethren went to him to buy corn, he appeared angry with them. He was trying them—to humble them. They sold him into Egypt. But he was not angry. He wanted to prove them, just as Isaac tried Jacob. Isaac did not eat of Jacob's venison until a full confession was made, and Jacob did not get the blessing till he told this. As Jacob left, in comes Esau and asked his father to arise, eat of my venison and bless me.

Jacob came in Esau's name prompted by (the spirit) his mother. "The spirit and the bride say come." Esau came in his name only, and his venison was from the field (world), while Jacob's was of the flock. Isaac told Esau he had given his blessing to his brother, and that he (Esau) would have to live by the sword and serve his brother. That is very typical of the flesh. We must live by the sword (the word of God) and serve the new man.

"The elder shall serve the younger." The blessings Isaac gave his two sons fulfilled what the Lord said. The flesh shall serve the spirit. But there is a continual warfare going on. The flesh

against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh.

Come near now, and kiss me. The demands have been satisfied, and mercy and justice kiss each other.

Isaac smelled Jacob's raiment and said, "See, the smell of my son is as a field the Lord has blessed". Moses was commanded to take off his shoes, for the ground he stood on was Holy. This field that was blessed is the gospel field we live in, it seems to me. If we can drive out the Canaanites and have a peaceable reign, what a blessed land. But the spirit and flesh have to live in the same house, and a fight is going on most of the time. Jacob is afraid of Esau and flees from him. Just as David tried and did keep out of the way of Saul, just as we try to keep the flesh (the old man) in subjection. But we are afraid we will some day fall by him.

As Jacob went in his elder brother's name to get the blessing from his father, we today go in our Elder Brother's name, who is Christ Jesus our Lord, to our heavenly Father for all blessings. There is no other name under heaven whereby we must be saved. He is the only mediator. We have to go in His standing, for the birthright belongs to Him.

He bought us with his own precious blood, hence we go in his name, and wear his goodly garment.

Your humble brother in a sweet hope.

Elder T. A. Stanfield

TO OUR READERS

Our goal is to double our list of subscribers. Please resolve that you will obtain at least one new subscription. Many have already sent theirs in. If you haven't done so yet, please try to do so in May. We will advise you when we have reached our goal.

The Editors

MEETINGS

The West Country Line Union will hold a two day meeting, the fifth Sunday in April 1983, and on Saturday before. Services will begin at 10:30 AM each day.

Dan River Church who are celebrating their 100th anniversary this year will be host.

All lovers of the truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder D. V. Spangler
Pastor

APPOINTMENTS FOR ELDER JOE HAMRICK OF WINNSBORO, TEXAS

Wednesday Night April 25 at Greensboro Church.
Thursday Night April 26 at Malmaison Church.
Friday Night April 27 at Laurel Ridge Church. Supper will be served at the meeting house at five o'clock– The public is invited.
Saturday April 28 at Staunton River Union Meeting.
Sunday April 29 at West Country Line Union Meeting.
Sunday Night April 29 at Reed Creek Church – Service at seven o'clock.

CONTRIBUTIONS

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OBITUARIES

MARY FANNIE CARTER CUNDIFF

Mary Fannie Carter Cundiff departed this life on January 17, 1984.

She was born June 23, 1899 in "Slabtown" Pittsylvania County, Va. She was the daughter of John Thomas and Mary Sue Carter. Her husband Robert Hampton Cundiff and two children, a daughter Racheal Guilliams and a son Joseph Allen Cundiff preceded her is death.

She is survived by three daughters—Aurie C. Poindexter of Union Hall, Dorothy C. Thacker of Collinsville and Shirley C. David of Martinsville. Two sons Thomas Calvin Cundiff of Pen Hook and Robert Malcolm Cundiff of Moneta,. Eighteen grandchildren , twenty-eight great-grandchildren and one great-great-granddaughter.

Chapel Church

SISTER SUE DAVIS

It is with sadness that I attempt to write the obituary of Sister Sue Davis, my sister-in-law. Sister Davis was born May 25, 1894 in Carroll County, Virginia. Most of her life was spent in the Mayfield Community of Rockingham County, North Carolina. She was the daughter of Cyrus and Laura A. Ayers. Sister Davis was married to James Robert Davis on March 29, 1911. Brother Davis predeceased her January 27, 1974.

To this union was born four children, two of which survive, Asyline D. Hershman and Hazel D. Turlington. She is also survived by four grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, one sister and two brothers.

Sister Davis joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church April 27, 1941 and was a faithful member till death, January 1, 1984. She loved the church but was unable to attend during the last few years due to her afflictions.

Her funeral was held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church by Elder H.W. Wray. Her body was laid to rest by her

husband, in the church cemetery, to await the coming of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Done by request of the Church in Conference on January 24th, 1984.

Written by one who loved her.

Lucy H. Davis

SISTER KATE DODD
(1897-1983)

When my mind is carried back to the memory of our dear beloved Sister Kate Dodd, these words seem appropriate. She fought a good fight, she finished her course. she kept the faith. Sister Dodd united with Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church in 1916 and served as church clerk for eighteen years. Her special seat was always filled until recently when her health began to fail, then she came in a wheelchair or with a walker when able. It was never too hot, or cold, or wet for her to go to meetings, because it came first in her life. Her love for the church was shown more in deed rather than words. It was her contribution to the church that was one of the deciding factors in our building this new meeting house, and later the gift of an air conditioner for our comfort.

Sister Dodd was born July 1, 1897 and was called from this world of woe April 6, 1983. She was the natural mother of 14 children and also mothered five stepsons, a son in-law, several grandchildren and a brother.

Surviving are 3 daughters, 5 sons, 2 sisters, 1 brother, 2 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren, 13 step grandchildren and 21 step great-grandchildren.

Her funeral was held April 8,1983 at Malmaison Church by her pastor Elder O.K. Tench and assistant pastor Elder Julian Williams. Interment was in Highland Burial Park.

By the grace of God "she kept the faith".

Written by one who loved her
I hope for Christ sake,

Peggy Wells

MAUDE B. HYLER

It was our heavenly Fathers will to remove from our midst another of our faithful members, Sister Maude Hyler. She joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church May 24, 1964, and died December 2, 1983.

She was a faithful member until her health failed her. She was so reconciled and would always say when visiting her, I am all right. I know it is Gods will, never complaining. Her husband Robert D. Hyler deceased, was blind for many years. She was so faithful in caring for him.

She leaves to mourn her passing, a daughter, Kathleen H. Gillie, Smithfield, N. C., a son, Paul E. Hyler of Eden, N. C. Ten grandchildren, eleven great-grandchildren; two sisters, Mrs. Fracie Newby, and Mrs. Peggy Fulton of Eden, N. C.

Her funeral was held at Fair's Funeral Home, Eden, by her pastor Elder D. V. Spangler and Elder H. W. Wray.

We bow in humble submission to Gods Holy will that our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by request of Dan River Church in conference.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Littie Minter

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Psalm 116:15

SISTER DOROTHY JESSUP TERRY

In sadness I attempt to write in memory of our dear sister, Dorothy Jessup Terry.

She was born April 5, 1904, passed from this life February 10, 1984, age 79 years, 10 months and 5 days. She was the daughter of the late Elijah Jessup and Sally Cruise Jessup Barnard.

Surviving are three daughters: Mrs. Evelyn Slusher, Floyd, Virginia, Mrs. Frances Cock, Meadows of Dan, Virginia and Mrs. Lois Dalton, Meadows of Dan, Virginia. Six sons: Marvin E. Terry from Meadows of Dan, Virginia; Reubin Y. Terry, Raleigh, N. C.; Wesley E. Terry, Christiansburg, Virginia; Samuel E. Terry, Meadows of Dan, Virginia; Hubert J. Terry, Pulaskia, Virginia, and David L. Terry, Meadows of Dan, Virginia. Two sisters: Mrs. Delcie Conway, Stuart, Virginia and Mrs. Ralph Durham, Meadows of Dan, Virginia. Twenty-eight grandchildren and eighteen great-grandchildren.

She was married to the late Elder Samuel E. Terry on April 3, 1921 by Elder C. A. Vipperman.

She united with Bell Spur Primitive Baptish Church, May 3, 1924 and was baptized along with her husband in June 1924, by Elder C. A. Vipperman, and was a member nearly sixty years. She attended churches far and near. After suffering a stroke nearly four years ago, she was well enough to come back to church.

To my knowledge she didn't miss a week in filling her seat at Bell Spur. She was a good wife, devoted mother, good neighbor, and a kind and gracious friend to everyone.

Her funeral was conducted February 12, 1984 at Bell Spur Church by Elder Amos Hash and Elder Hale Terry. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, beside her husband who preceded her in death in August, 1964. To await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

May her beloved family land we at Bell Spur Church be blessed to feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Done by order of the Church while in Conference, February 18, 1984.

Ilene Clifton, Clerk

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"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."
Mat. 7:12

Signs of the Times

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"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS"

The existence, sovereignty, immutability omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah–the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the attonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistable, and in all cases. effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers–that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

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EDITORIALS

PREDESTINATION

Attempting to write on this subject, I do so in fear, knowing it is a cardinal point of doctrine about which many have set forth their views; and in doing one is left to wonder what is meant by predestination. Some say absolute, some eternal, and others limited predestination. I do not believe that a cardinal point of God's decree has to have absolute or eternal in front of it, or in other words a handle. I firmly believe that it is strong enough to stand for itself. We do not find the word "predestination" used in the Old Testament, nor the New Testament. But we do find the word "predestinate." Predestination is derived from the Latin word "praedestinore" which means to predestine, to determine beforehand, to settle in advance. In modern English, Webster, a writer of dictionaries and a very learned man, says that predestination is: "the act of predestinating or the state of being predestinated: the theological doctrine that all events throughout eternity have been foreordained by divine decree or purpose: the foreordination by God of each individual's ultimate destiny particularly to eternal life."

By God's grace, let us look in the Book of *Acts 15:18, "Known unto God are all of his works from the beginning of the world."* and *Isaiah 46:10, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all of my pleasures."* These two verses of scripture are sufficient to settle our minds concerning the sovereignty of God's power. That is to say that God even before the world began set the things that have been, and the things that are, and the things that will be in motion, and declared that they would be as He did foresee them. I will admit that this point of doctrine is hard to be understood, and that all of God's people are not favored by the Heavenly Master to see or to understand it. Peter said concerning Paul, *II Peter3:16, "As also in all of his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which that they are unlearned and unstable, wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."* Yet, if we have a belief in God, we have to admit that the things that are here are by God's purpose.

There is an order in the sovereignty of God, first His foreknowledge. Surely we will all say that God did foreknow all things, and when I say all things, this I mean—the good as

well as the evil. He knew Adam would fall, and in that fall God had a purpose as He does in all things. There was a purpose in Joseph's being hated by his brethren. He was given a dream; that dream came when he was asleep. He had no physical knowledge or mental capacity to stop it from coming, but it was sent by the Divine Providence of God. Do you know what the purpose was? Surely all will say, "Yes, I know what the purpose of that was." Joseph was a type of the Saviour. He was to be sent down into Egypt by his brethren; however, we find when Joseph's brethren who had done this thing in malice, with evil intentions in their hearts, were brought to the true understanding, Joseph embraced them and said, "You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good."

Do you not believe that God knew what would happen to his Son when He was born of a virgin and was sent into this world? Jesus himself says, for this cause came I unto this world and for this end was I born. He was to lay down His life; and, yet, it was wicked hands whom God did before ordain that should take Him and crucify Him that the will and the purposes of God might be made manifest. In that wicked act alone came the salvation of the Church.

Surely there is beauty in the doctrine of predestination. There are some points on which I feel all of God's people are agreed.

Now let us go further into the matter, if the Lord is willing, concerning God's foreknowledge and predestination. *Proverbs 16:4 "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."* This verse of scripture says he hath made, not going to, but already has. We not only find that the good things in life are made by God but also the wicked. Now may we consider that the sovereignty of God is in control of one as much as the other. Look in *Acts 17: 26* again as the Apostle speaks: *"And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."*

I find there is a spirit of truth that comes from God which is Jesus Christ, our Lord, because He is true. He says *"I am the way, the truth, and the life."* Also, I find there is a lying spirit. Read *II Chronicles 18:22* concerning Ahab, the king of Israel. *"Now, therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil against thee."* Only God is able to do these things; yet, some will say this is a fatalistic doctrine. This is fatalism only if you can't believe. Not only are the righteous in His hands; but the wicked as well, even as the sun and the moon are under His decree. And they move in the predestined course that God did determine they would move in. So does all of creation. The birds, the insects, the fish, the creatures, and even man move in the course that God, even before He created the heaven and the earth, saw that they would. Even our steps are numbered, even the hairs of our head; and we are told that even a sparrow cannot fall without thy Heavenly Father. If God knows and controls the minute things, how much more so the large obstacles that are in our life, that are there by the decree of God.

The condition of the world that we are in now comes as no surprise to God because He has created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. The wars, the contention, the hate, and the condition of world orders are as God would have them to be. Some will say, "No, this is not God's way." Oh, man, who art thou that replies against thy maker. He maketh one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. Let it be known here and now, God

by justice owes no man anything but hell and damnation. Paul also says, "Who has known the mind of the Lord?" Truly, it would be more simple to humanity if we did know the mind of God. But we cannot find out the works of God from the beginning until the end, for we find in the *Book of Proverbs* that He has made all things beautiful in His day. He has put the world in the heart of man that no man can find out the works of God from the beginning until the end. God is supreme in all of the things that He has made and created. He governs them by a decree and a control. He did foreknow what they would do in the time and in the seasons that He has appointed here in this world. If these times and seasons were not in the sovereignty of God, then everything would be chaos. If there be a part of it of which He has no knowledge, there is a part over which He has no control. The scriptures that have been laid down for our learning have told us that God has fixed all things, that He has ordained the righteous unto everlasting joy in heaven and immortal glory, and that the others He has seen fit, by the sovereignty of His own will, to leave in their sins and damnation even by sending them a strong delusion that they should believe a lie and not be brought to the knowledge of the truth. Let us also know this one thing, that the powers that be are the powers that are ordained of God, and there are no powers in this world or in the world to come but those which are of God.

Oh, my loved ones, if we could understand the beauty of the doctrine of God's forknowledge, of God's election, of God's predestination, that all things hang on a firm decree and that He sits on no precarious throne. As we wrote in the beginning from *Isaiah,* He declared the end from the beginning. In our manner of speaking, we mortals would start at the beginning and go to the end. We start at birth, and we go to death not knowing what one moment of time in advance will bring, but hoping. But God in His sovereignty has declared this one event that God went to the end—the final consummation of all things—and came back to the beginning, declaring the end from the beginning, not the beginning to the end. And the things that have taken place are the things that have been, the things that will be are the things that were ordained of God. This is proved again and again in prophecy, for instance when the Lord said unto Peter, before the cock crows thou shalt deny me thrice. Here is a point of predestination. Peter declared that he would not do this thing, yet, the Lord knew that he would. And when it came to pass, it brought repentance unto the heart of Peter when the Lord looked at him. You know we find many things in the scriptures that foretell future events and when they come to pass, God doesn't look down and say, "I told you so." Jesus, when Peter had denied him, didn't look at him and say, "Well, I told you about it." No, He smiled at him as if to say, "Peter, I know you are of the flesh, you are weak; but remember, Peter, I have told you that I have prayed for thee."

This doctrine of foreknowledge is the effectual cause, predestination is the power of God to make His foreknowledge come to pass. He said, "As I have thought so shall it be, as I have purposed so shall it stand." Remember, what God did foreknow moreover He did predestinate. Not only the heirs of heaven and immortal glory conformed to the image of His only begotten Son, but also those who did not receive the imputed righteousness of the blood of Jesus Christ are under the decree of God. Yea, the wicked are in His hands. He has made them for the day of evil, as we quoted out of the 16th

chapter of *Proverbs*. And yet God in his infinite wisdom has placed in man a mind, a will, and an understanding which conforms man unknowingly to the decree of God.

There is a doctrine that says man is free with the ability to choose right from wrong. Do we mortals really know what is right and wrong? We do things in the most sincere manner of our heart, sometimes thinking that they are right, and later we find those things were wrong. We find that the Apostle Paul thought he was fulfilling the will of God concerning salvation. He went about in his manner shutting up those who called upon the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and Paul says for this ignorance God winked. Paul did it in ignorance, not knowing. When he was brought to the knowledge of this beautiful truth, he was a strong advocate of predestination and of the sovereignty of God controlling all events.

We are told that God in His infinite wisdom has set the times that are in this world and in the world to come; He has also placed all things in the hollow of His hand in a manner that will work to the glory of Him and to the glory and to the admiration of the Church. He holds the issues of life and death in His hands.

Solomon, who was a wise man, wrote in the third chapter of *Ecclesiastes*, *"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven."* Solomon went on to say there is, "A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to reap, and a time to sow; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace."

Does not this embrace the beauty of the sovereignty of God in that He has made all things? Some have said, "Well, the Lord has let the wicked go in such a manner that He is not watching over them as well as He does those that belong to Him by the blood of Jesus Christ." But even the wicked, as we have stated already, are in the hands of God. Their steps are ordered as much so as the steps of the righteous because the ways of a man are not hid from Him, but the Lord delights in His way. Man cannot conceive or perceive of His ways, for he knows nothing as he ought. Thanks be unto God; all of these things are in the hands of God.

Surely in this doctrine of the sovereignty of God's elect and love, He looked down from heaven and out of this chaos, He has picked a few to embrace life eternal through the suffering of His Son, Jesus, and He has brought them to the knowledge that of themselves they can do nothing. That embraces creation as well as the mortal things upon earth. All creation, of themselves, can do nothing; but by the spirit of the Son of God that strengthens them, they are able to do all things. Surely one would say, "Well, why does God do this?" We cannot always give an answer that would satisfy all of the minds of all individuals concerning why God does these things, why He had created the devil, and why He made him more subtle than any beast of the field. Why these things are we cannot truly say. Some day, I believe, we shall know when we are gathered around the blood-washed throne if we are His children. Only God, in all of this, is able to bring good out of evil. God said of the evil He sent in the life of Jacob, "I will surely do

thee good all the days of thy life."

In every war that we have seen upon the face of the earth, if we could see the hatred and malice that has been and the destruction of humanity, we could say, if God would give us the spirit and the understanding, that in each one there has come some good. In World War II thousands and thousands were killed. I believe that this war was by the decree of God. Some have allocated this to Hitler, and to the Japanese Emperor, and to Mussolini, and to Stalin; but out ot that war came the technology that we are living with in this day and age. The modern techniques of medicine and modern equipment for operations which have eased the sufferings of thousands and thousands of lives came out of that war.

Man is only able to produce something worth while when he has been tried by serious afflictions which come from God on High. Not only does this relate in the spiritual realm when we are enabled to call upon God, but also in the physical realm. There are always things that come out of it that are good. If this were not true, how could the Apostle Paul say that; "All things work together to good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Paul on one occasion had a messenger of Satan, and Paul said the Lord gave it to him. I have no reason to doubt Paul. Though Paul did not charge God foolishly by saying, "Now, Lord, you made me thus. That is the reason I am as I am." Paul could not charge God in such a manner. Some would say, "Well, by predestination God has purposed our sins and our iniquities." True, there is a purpose in it. But whether it is God's purpose to send us to hell or to make us suffer hell here on earth in the knowledge of knowing godly sorrow and repentance in our hearts of the things which have been done in our body, we do not know. That we are unable to say. We do know this one thing, there is a purpose in every event, in every action. There have been actions which have hurt many people. We believe that those things had to be simply because they have been. We could not say they should not have happened.

During World War II, two men were discussing the doctrine of predestination, and one believed it and one didn't. One said, "Oh, that ship that sunk had many hundred boys on it. They all drowned. You know that was not God's will."The other one looked at him and said, "I hope it was His will, and I firmly believe that it was. For if it had not been God's will, God would not have known anything about it; and not knowing anything about it He might not have been there to be a present help in the time of trouble and in the time of death."

In our feelings we believe that the end has been fixed, that the beginning has been fixed, and that everything in between has been decreed. We believe that our station of life is fixed, that what we will be tomorrow, where we will be, and even when our death bed has been prepared for us. Some say, "I do not like that kind of a doctrine." Oh' I revel in that kind of a doctrine. I have been taught that I am not able to direct my own steps. There were times in life when I felt that I could do this; but the time came when God made me realize what a mess I had made of it. Then I was glad that someone else had directed my steps, that someone else was watching over me, and that someone else had been with me–even when I knew it not. Jacob said the Lord was in this place and I knew it not. That is to say, God's providence, God's purposes, or God's decree was with him when he knew it not.

Therefore, it is God's foreknowl-

edge that causes predestination to be. Since predestination is the power causing God's foreknowledge to come to pass, it is always looking towards the final consummation of all things. It is the active will of God concerning the events that are in this world; therefore, we would say, "I am glad that God knows this." It is comforting to know that God has already prepared our death bed. We, some day, will be brought to the death bed by the motivating cause of life itself, the spirit that God has placed in man. That spirit belongs to God. It moves and motivates the body to the will of God concerning the providence wherein God has decreed. That will applies to one individual, or to one nation, or to the whole world. Some would say that it seems strange that war could be to the good of God's people. Do you not realize, dear children of God, that God has given nations for the benefit of the children of Israel. Some would say that it was not good that the whole host of Egypt and Pharoah were destroyed by God for persecuting His children. Oh, dear children of God, this was God's way of delivering His children. It was God who hardened Pharoah's heart. It has been said that God left Pharoah alone and that Pharoah hardened his own heart. I am told by the scriptures that He said unto Moses, "I will harden Pharoah's heart." This is the sovereignty of God concerning the events in this life and in the world to come. This is the doctrine that our forefathers have advocated. This is the doctrine that nothing has transpired or ever will transpire without the will of God in direct control of the events.

David said, "Is there not a cause?" May God enable us by His grace to look around and say, "Is there not a cause?" Surely there is a cause. What is the cause? We are not always able to see or understand. Therefore, the scripture says, "The revealed things belong to us but the hidden things belong to God." May God enable us all to see the beauty of the sovereignty of predestination in all things and in all events that are in this world that are under the direct control of the Almighty God. Isn't it wonderful to think about, that our Heavenly Master did foreknow, did foresee, and did declare all of the things that are here and has made us to rejoice in them concerning the doctrine of predestination. No wonder that the Apostle Paul could speak concerning this doctrine as a doctrine that is surely a doctrine that is able to stand without the inventions of man but a doctrine that God had decreed within himself that He is able to deliver us from the power of darkness and translate us unto the kingdom of His dear Son. And Paul goes on to say that by Jesus Christ, "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell."

Think about this beautiful doctrine of God's everlasting predestination that governs and controls the mind, not only of the animals and the fish of the sea and the fowls of the air but also the minds and the actions of every human, preordained of God and declared to be. This same power controls the stars and heavenly constellations and governs even the grain of sand upon the sea shore. I am assured in my closing remarks

that it would be easier for heaven and earth to fall away than for one decree of God to ever fail. All of them shall take place accordingly as He has purposed and declared that they shall be.

Elder D.B. Stokes

CORRESPONDENCE

JUSTICE

"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." (Gal. 2:16)

We know that the word justice has more than one meaning, but it is our intent to use it only as it applies to the law. Without justice under the law, the law would be dead: no one would benefit from it nor be punished by it: but God's law is holy, just and good, and justice must be rendered under it. The only plea is "guilty" and the only sentence "death". That all men are sinners and deserving of death and everlasting damnation we feel no need to prove here.

To be justified means that one has been freed from the law, and God's law does not free anyone until the penalty of transgression has been paid in full. There are many people today, as there has always been, who do not yet know that a man is not justified by the works of the law and are constantly striving to effect their own salvation. I have been listed among these people, and still have many friends there. But we know (I hope that I am included) that our justification is only in Jesus Christ in whom we believe. Jesus suffered shame, agony and death on the cross of Calvary that sinners such as you and I might live. He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us now ask the question, how is it possible for Jesus to satisfy the law and justice by dying in our room and stead? Is there a law anywhere that would allow an innocent person to be slain for the guilty one? If such a law exists, can it be just? If a man be executed for a friend who is worthy of death, would his friend be any less guilty or less worthy of death? Would justice be served by slaying the innocent? Would not the executioners be guilty of murder? I believe justice would be perverted in such a case, yet we see Christ dying for us, the Just for the unjust.

God created man in his own image. Male and female created he them. And he called the man Adam. Adam was a figure of Him or an image of him that was to come, or Christ. An image or figure is an exact likness. It may be made of wood, iron, clay, dust or some other material, and it may be smaller or larger, but it must portray the true body exactly. Therefore Adam was an exact likness of Christ, and should be viewed in that perspective. Eve was created in Adam and is a type of the church, showing that the church was in Christ before the foundation of the world. God took a rib from Adam and made it a woman, this representing the church being given to Christ for his bride. And Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." The church is the mystical body of Christ, "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of

his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall be joined unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church." (Eph. 5:30).

Exactly as Eve was to Adam so is the church to Christ, for the image must be perfect. Eve, the church, was deceived by the crooked serpent, ate of the forbidden fruit, and fell under the curse of the law. Adam, the figure of Christ, was not deceived, for that was not possible, but because of his great love for her, he partook of the forbidden fruit. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. The first Adam had no power to redeem his bride nor himself from the curse, therefore they must die, for God had said, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Jesus Christ also loved his bride and would die with her, but in his Godhead he could not die, therefore he became incarnate. "But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal. 4:4). "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil." (Heb. 2:14). In his flesh, Christ could and did suffer and die to pay the penalty for his bride and redeem her from the curse of the law. Christ was righteous, he knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth and he kept the law to a jot and to a tittle, therefore the law had no claim against him, and in his righteousness he was the perfect sacrifice for his fallen bride. In a mystical sense she died with him and was buried with him by baptism into death. Jesus Christ, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens, the only begotten Son of the Father, took all our sins upon himself and suffered the penalty of death in our stead. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." Read the whole 53rd chapter of Isaiah: it is so beautiful. Can any man comprehend the beauty of such a love as Christ bestowed upon his chosen people? Surely not! We may view it through a glass darkly, but we will never understand it fully in this sinfilled life, because sin so dulls our vision.

"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident; for the just shall live by faith." If we could attain unto righteousness by the works of the law, then Christ died in vain; the old covenant would still be in force, and there would be no new covenant of grace; but God has made a new covenant with the house of Israel, saying, "I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." If we live, we must live by faith, and the law is not of faith. "Christ has redeemed us from the

curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." If we are what we hope to be, we can witness to this with faithful Paul. We are told by many that all we need do is have faith. This is true, but faith is not something we can take hold on at our leisure, as they would have us believe; for faith is a gift of God. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." As our sins and iniquities were charged unto our Savior, so is his righteousness imputed unto us who believe in him. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Abraham believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and if we walk in that same faith, righteousness shall also be imputed unto us, for we are his seed. "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Why must it be by faith and not by the law? Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. We are no longer under the law, for Christ is the end of the law to all who believeth. Therefore righteousness is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed. Is this not beautiful? Can a poor sinner find a better promise than this?

Abraham was strong in faith, and was fully persuaded, that what God had promised, he was able to perform, therefore his faith was imputed unto him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.

Brethren, if we believe in Jesus Christ, then we are in him and he is in us, and we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world.

I realize that I have only touched this vast subject, and it seems that my thoughts have been very scattered, but I trust they are of the Lord, and that he might use them to glorify his gracious and holy name, and comfort and edify some of his blessed little children. Charge all errors to my account, and when at the throne of grace, may it be God's holy will that you remember this poor sinner.

Clifford Wilbanks

Louisiana

GENESIS 4:2-5, 8.

"Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground and offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had no respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. .. And it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him."

Much time and effort has been set forth dealing with the offerings of both Cain and Abel and the recep-

it occurred to me that I was an awful sinner. My weight of trouble was more than I can express. On being called to breakfast I refused, saying I did not wish to eat. Mother asked if I were sick. I replied in the negative, but stated that I felt very badly. I tried to keep out of sight as much as I could, for, being but a child, I did not wish any one to know what a condition I was in. My playmates, who had heretofore afforded much pleasure, were now no company for me. The United Baptists were holding a meeting near father's residence. With a troubled mind I went to the meeting, and the preacher, after finishing his discourse, invited all those who desired an interest in their prayers to come forward. I felt to be one, though I did not make it manifest, and after meeting went home with a heavy load of sin. Mother by this time saw I was in trouble, and asked what was the matter, and with much embarrassment I told her. She advised me to pray the Lord for forgiveness of all my sins. That was what I had been trying to do, but had received no relief. She further said, that if I desired the prayers of those people, to make it manifest and they would assist me all they could. I seemed that I grew worse and worse in spite of all I could do, and that my prayers were an empty sound that could not be heard or noticed. I decided to go forward to be prayed for, hoping the prayers of the people might be heard in my case and that the Lord would undertake for me. Finally I tried to shake off my troubles, but the more I strove to get rid of them the worse they got and the more guilt-stricken and sin-sick I became. My very breathings were, Lord, be merciful to me, a poor helpless sinner. I had by this time lost all hope of God hearing or answering prayer in my behalf. All you who have realized this moment of despair can better imagine my feelings than I can express them. In this sad condition and distress of mind I was sitting on the mourners' bench, as it was called, my prayers were hushed, my tears were dried. Just here for a short space of time I have no recollection of what took place. The first thing I remember after this state of my mind was praise to God. My burden was gone, and I though the sun shone with more brilliancy than ever before. I loved every one and wanted to tell them of my feelings, but being only a child, only eleven years of age, thought it would not do for me to utter a word in public, so I sat there thinking I would never see any more trouble, and thinking how good the Lord had been to remember me. But I must tell you that before I left the church-house I began to fear that I was deceived. I tried to get my burden back, but never have as yet. I tried to pray God that if I were deceived he would make it known to me in some way. The members asked me if I had a hope. I was afraid to say yes, but could not say no, for I felt that God had been merciful to me. I was then informed that it was my duty to be baptized. This to me was a solemn thing, but I felt that if I knew it was my Master's will I would be willing to perform my duty as best I could, notwithstanding my unworthiness. I had never heard a Primitive Baptist preacher, as there were none in our immediate vicinity, but I had heard the old people say the "Hard-shells" were a selfish people and that they preached infants into hell, which was enough to turn the mind of a young person such as I was against them, so I thought the United Baptists was the church of Christ. Of course I was too young to know and understand the doctrine, and united with them, and remained with them about eighteen years. I was married at the age of nineteen, and shortly afterward my husband bought a small farm in the northern part of Pope County, Illinois, to which farm we moved, and near it was an Old Baptist Church, Grand Pier, where I heard Elder Richard Fulkerson preach every

month. His preaching truly attracted my attention, and I soon began to see the difference in the preaching. Some said there was but little difference, but that was not the way it appeared to me. Elder Fulkerson preached that Jesus Christ came into this world to save his people from their sins (not to try and fail), and that he accomplished the work he came to do; that he bore the sins of his own people in his own body when he was nailed to the tree; that he redeemed them, being made a cure for them; that redemption is eternal, and that he now makes it manifest by revelation by his Spirit to the poor lost sinner that he washed all their sins away. Yes, Elder Fulkerson told us that God Almighty loved his people with an everlasting love, and notwithstanding they were led captive by the devil at his will, had fallen under the condemning sentence of His law he yet loved them; that Jesus paid all the demands of the law, took the sins of his people upon himself and bore them on the tree, and that by the blood of the everlasting covenant the prisoner shall come forth out of the pit wherein is no water. He also told us that it was not yet manifest to all his people that their sins had been taken away, but that it would be, and that not one of them would be left behind, and that all his children should know him, from the least even unto the greatest. Elder Fulkerson further told us that he professed to be a hunter hunting for the lost sheep on every high hill and mountain and the holes in the rocks, and O, brethren and sisters, I believe he found poor unworthy me, pent up on a high hill, and that while he was distributing his Master's goods to his flock I was feasting upon the scattering blades that chanced to fall near me. When praching upon experimental religion, or the change from nature to grace, how a person was made acquainted with his heirship to that rich inheritance for those who were given to Christ, he told my travel so much better than I could that, as before stated, it truly attracted my attention, and although that kind of preaching was new to me, yet it fed my hungry soul. I have already mentioned that I was willing to do my Master's will if I knew it, but am bound to acknowledge that after seeing plainly, to my understanding, the Old Baptists to be the church of God there was something that hindered me from discharging what I at that time felt to be my duty. I thought there was an indication that the United Baptists would return and take their position in the Old Baptist ranks again, and as I felt to be the least and most ignorant among them thought I would wait. But I knew no peace day or night, oppression weighed me down; I thought I was getting sick and commenced taking medicine, but it did me no good. My friends asked what was the matter with me, but I could not tell them. I felt my strength giving way. I was at meeting one night and a United Baptist preacher was present and was requested to open services. He did so, and talked about the "old path" which is the "good old way." I shall not undertake to describe my feelings at that time. Elder Fulkerson spoke a few words, then proclaimed the doors of the church open, and called upon the doubting ones who felt little and poor and unworthy, those who were troubled and distressed, who had a little hope, but were afraid they were mistaken, to come and go with them. I felt to say, Hinder me not; I will go with this happy band. I seemed that I could see the footprints of my Master in the good old way so plainly that I was compelled to obey the call. I calmly arose and started, but my strength gave way, insomuch that had it not been for the aid of a bench I believe I would have sunk to the floor. I tried in my weak and stammering manner to tell the church some of my travels, and while doing so my mind

became so transplanted that I have no recollection as to whether the church received me or not, but was told on the road home that I had been received with gladness. I have no doubt the Old Baptist is the church of Christ, but feel too unworthy to belong to it, to be identified with that peculiar people, yet I do desire to be with them. Tongue cannot express the liberty and freedom I have realized since I attached myself to them. I believe I have been made to realize that passage of Scripture which reads: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." I hope the Lord will be with me and guide my footsteps aright, and that he will enable me to discharge my duty while traveling through this world of sorrow and distress.

If you will not consider me tedious, I will relate a dream I had a short time after I professed a hope in Christ. I dreamed I was standing by a smooth wall, which was on my left hand, and on my right was a dark, yawning, bottomless pit. There was only room between the wall and pit for one foot to stand on. I thought I was bound to go home, but felt afraid I would fall into that awful abyss. Before I attempted to read that narrow path I thought of my Savior, and called upon him to assist me. He appeared in the form of an angel, braced me up and kept me from falling. He promised me a safe journey, and took his leave. I started on, but soon began to tremble and fear, which caused me again to cry unto him for help. He again appeared to me and caused me to stand, upheld by his righteous, omnipotent hand. Oh I felt to praise his matchless name! When I arrived at the end of that narrow path there were so many roads I did not know which one to take; I thought I knew the direction. Finally I took the left hand road, and had not gone far when I came to an old house. I called on the lady of the house to direct me home, but she gave me little satisfaction, so I started on and soon arrived at a very deep watercourse through which I was necessitated to pass. I started in with much fear; the water became deeper and deeper, until I was almost gone. I cried to the Lord to save me or I would perish, and at that moment he appeared to me and raised me out of the water. Again thanking him for his mercies I started on, and walked smoothly upon the surface until I reached dry land, when I was in sight of my father's house. I stopped to thank God for remembering me through all my dangerous travel, and felt to trust him. Just at that moment I awoke. I have often wished that my dream had continued until I reached father's house. But without stopping to venture an interpretation, I say I have always found God a present help, a shadow of a great rock in a weary land, to brace me up while on my journey through this low ground of sorrow and distress, and my prayer is that he may continue to be with me and not suffer me to be tempted more than I am able, but with every temptation make a way for my escape.

I will now close my already too lengthy letter. I could say a great deal more, but it might crowd out matter that would be of more interest.

Farewell,

KATE CARR

TO OUR READERS

Our goal is to double our list of subscribers. Please resolve that you will obtain at least one new subscription. Many have already sent theirs in. If you haven't done so yet, please try to do so in June. We will advise you when we have reached our goal.

Editors

Dear Editors:

As my subscription is due for the dear old *Signs*, and I am sending my remittance, my mind and heart go out to the little ones scattered throughout this broad land of, shall I say, ours? No, not ours, for this is not our home; we are pilgrims and strangers, yes, wayfarers, seeking a country, longing for home, but only finding the earnest, or foretaste, of it along this rugged path; sometimes running, sometimes groping in the dark and stumbling, sometimes deep in the slough of despond, thinking that our God, in whom we trust, is clean gone forever, but still praying for deliverance from this sticky, miry clay which holds us so firmly in its grasp, and from which it is impossible for us in and of ourselves to extricate ourselves; and here it is, my dear, precious brethren and sisters, when we look around about us and view our filthy garments, spotted with the sins of self-righteousness, that we take root downward and bear fruit upward, for here we are able by grace divine to see our King in his beauty and holiness, and ourselves, as Solomon describes us, as nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity. It is then we ascribe praise, honor and glory unto our God; and there is no God like our God, for he is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent, ruling in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and none can stay his hand, nor say unto him, What doest thou? And from everlasting to everlasting he is God, and beside him there is no Savior. What a strong tower we have. He is a sure covert from all the storms of life, and he tempers the winds to the shorn lambs. Yes, shorn of all boasted power and self-righteousness, and made to know there is no power but his. Then when we are sent forth as sheep among wolves he still guards us with his eye and there can no temptation befall us, only such as is common to man, and with the temptation he makes a way of escape, which is the love and fear of God in our hearts, which is our present help in every time of need, and without his Spirit working in us we are as sounding brass or a tinkling symbal, for in us (that is, in our flesh,) dwells no good thing. It is sweet to trust Him; to feel that restful assurnace that he is at all times and in every trial and danger very near us; it is his everlasting arms that are underneath us bearing us up, and his almighty power and his great love, wherewith he loves us even while we were dead in sin, that saves us, both in time and in eternity. How void of spiritual life we are when left to ourselves and the evil one, for he is always present with us, tempting us in the lusts of the flesh, and lusts of the eye, and the pride of life, which things are first and foremost in the estimation of the world to-day, which things we should fight against in our own sinful hearts, and crucify the old man with his affections and lusts, for if we live after the flesh we shall die, but if we through the Spirit do mortify (or keep under) the deeds of the body we shall live. Romans 6:16, reads, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" Paul says, Ye were once the servants of sin, but being made free from sin ye become the servants of righteousness; but when ye were the servant of sin ye were free from righteousness; dead to the knowledge of God or his love or mercy. What fruit, or, in other words, what did it profit you, then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. We look back at them and wish we could blot them from our memory, but cannot. What grieves me most is my present evil nature, which is ever present with me, and overwhelms me, making me loathe myself, causing me much deep searching of the heart, and causing me to cry out in my agony, "O wretched man

that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Or, in other words, this body, which has no life other than natural in and of itself, which is at war with the Spirit; this body we so much long to lay down, because we are so tired carrying it around, because there is no good thing in it, unless the Spirit of God dwells in it richly in all wisdom, causing us to hope that we have been made free from sin, and been made servants of God, having our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life, for this is the full consummation of our hope, that this body, sinful as it is, which will be sown in corruption will be raised in incorruption; will be sown a natural body, but raised a spiritual body; sown in weakness, but raised in power; for since we have been quickened to life by the same power that raised up Christ from the dead, and are kept by that same power, we are made to believe in Christ as our Savior, both in time and in eternity, without any condition or qualification on our part; and, believing Him, we have hope in His promises, because we know Him to be full of love and mercy, and one with God, so there is no doubt in our minds but what he will fulfill all his promises. Paul tells us in his letter to the Corinthian brethren, "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep (or die), but we shall all be changed." Yes, indeed this is a mystery, but no greater than the mystery of taking a dead body and putting life in it and causing it to sing praises of God, all contrary to nature, with an eye of faith and a heart and mind enlightened by the new covenant of God's love and mercy written and imprinted upon it, it is made very plain. With men this change would be impossible, but God spoke this world into existence and formed every living creature, giving each one its intelligence and form and habits according to its place of abode, and causing all necessary food and maintenance to exist within its reach, whether fish or beast, whether man or fowl, all are provided alike by the great God of the universe, not only when they were created and made, but he continuously provides for them, as well as us. God formed them all for his glory, and this change, which is the final of the manifestation of his magnificent works of glory, is not beyond the limits of our faith, for with the eye of faith we all with open faces behold, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, and we rest in this feeling of security, and do with patience wait for the fulfillment of this promise, and while it doth not yet appear what we shall be, we are willing to leave it to our God, who doeth all things well, and he has told us that we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is, and be satisfied. Now what more should we want to know? The one and all-important question with this poor old sinner is, Am I embraced in that blessed number that shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord?

Please find enclosed a money order for the dear old *Signs* another year, for it, and my Bible and hymn book, are about all the company I have, as I am not able to go away from home much, but have sweet communion with my dear Savior, which encourages me to press on with my face set toward Jerusalem, where I hope to meet you all.

DAVIS BURCH

Route 4, Box 86
Rocky Mount, Va.

March 30, 1984

Dear Editors and Beloved Brethren of the Signs of The Times:

As I have had some thought for some time to try to write some of my experience on the doctrine of that which I feel

the Lord has predestinated.

A dear Sister heard me speak on the subject and said to me, why not send it to the Signs. I realize there has been much written on this subject. I write this with no thought of improving on what has already been written by some of our dear Elders. If anyone believes the doctrine of God our Saviour, I love to hear a spirited reason why.

In Ephesians first Chapter 17th verse it reads, The God of our Lord Jesus Christ the Father of Glory may give unto you the spirit of WISDOM and REVELATION in the knowledge of Him.

I could find many more scriptures to support this, but this is enough for them that know the truth. The word predestinate is in the Bible twice, Romans 8: 29 and 30. In whom we also have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will, this is found in Ephesians, first chapter and 11th verse and in the 5th verse, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.

Now, if the Lord is working all things, what could be any stronger doctrine? If he did not predestinate all things, then he would be working something that he didn't know what he was going to work. Then since all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose, then in some wonderful way, all things apply to his people. Now if the word ordained means the same as the word predestinated and I believe it does. For there were certain men crept in unawares who were before of old; ordained to this condemnation. Ungodly men turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness and denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jude 4th verse Act.chapter 13 verse 48, and when the Gentiles heard this they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord as many that were ordained to eteranl life believe. I believe that the wicked were as much predestinated unto eternal woe and misery as the children of God was predestinated unto eternal life because God is equal in all his ways. Now the Lord willing I will try to tell why and if the Lord wills, give a reason I believe this glorious doctrine. In a dream or vision of the night it was showed to me, I beheld a great object that was going from the east to the west and when it got as far as I could see it opened up as a great vail and as it came back it covered everything under it, then a voice spoke in my breast predestinated, so I felt that it was all things.

The second night from that time I was awaken out of my sleep by a voice which spoke in my breast predesinated and sovereignty of all things. This voice spoke three times as clear as any voice I had ever heard. The voice said all things, so I will say all things, the thing that makes the difference among the Old School Baptist is some are not able to know the difference between things and or the act of a creature for the transgression of the law is sin yet I would not want to preach God works all things after the council of his own will then deny the predestination of the same. To me that would be the most contradicted doctrine that could be preached. I do not believe a man has to use the word predestinate to preach the doctrine of predestination. The Bible says things in an indirect way if we are just given to see it. That great vail that covered all things and the voice that spoke in me. There is no way that I could cause any one to feel what I felt, now with all due respect I would be afraid to deny that, for that goes with me as I go through this troublesome world.

That is all I have, no man gave me this and I do not believe any man can take it away. I feel I can say as Paul did; I

learned it not of man, neither was I taught it of man, but by the revelation of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Elder William M. Holland

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

SALVATION IS BY GRACE
(EPHESIANS II: 5-8.)

Before God made man he prepared a way to save him. When man sinned, God knew before that he was going to sin, so he had prepared to save him. Christ was as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Isaac represented Christ. Before Abraham went upon the mountain to offer his son for a sacrifice, or to slay him as such, God had prepared a sacrifice in the bushes of the mountain, of which Abraham did not know, to take Isaac's place. With God there is no past or future. He knew the end from the beginning. He knew all that had happened and all that would happen. From the fact that he knew all of this, it had to happen just as it did. Nothing happens by accident. It may be accidental to man, but to God it is not. Christ told Judas that he was going to betray him. He told Peter that he was going to deny him thrice. What if Judas had been such a free agent that he had changed his mind and failed to betray Christ as he said he would? What condition would the world be in to-day? What if Peter had not denied Christ as he said he would, what would that have made Christ? What if he only denied him once, that would have been bad enough; and what if he had been such a free moral agent that he decided not to deny him at all? This would have been awful for Christ. These free moral agents do not know what an awful fix the world would have been in if man had as much power of choice as they say he has. It is not in man to order his steps. His bounds are set and he cannot pass them. He cometh forth as a flower and as the grass he is cut down. The young die as well as the old. His days are numbered. He cannot make one hair white or black. Man is the clay. God is the great potter. He maketh one vessel to honor and one to dishonor. Man is frail, God is all-powerful. God can do with man whatsoever he desires. God is either stronger than man or weaker than man. The way the free moral agents have man is that God can only do with man what man lets him do with him. This looks as though man is just as strong as God, and stronger.

What is grace? Most all believers, learned and unlearned, say it is the unmerited favor of God bestowed on some one an object. If it is bestowed on man it is unmerited. If we say it is unmerited, why do we say man has to do something to get God to bestow it upon him? They say if you do not believe, God will not save you. How inconsistent this is with the true teaching of the Bible, which says that by grace ye are saved, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. While we were yet sinners, or even dead in sins, God quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved). Christ's shed blood saved all that are saved and all that ever will be. Visibly this was done nineteen hundred or more years ago, but in the mind of God it was done before the world was made. They say you have to believe to be saved. Christ died before any of the people who are here now could believe. They could not believe in him because they were not here. Furthermore, if the baby had been here he could not believe, because he would not have known enough to do so. Christ did not come to save the

righteous people, but sinners. For who would die for a righteous person? It was said, In sin did my mother conceive me, and I was shapen in iniquity. They go forth as soon as they are born speaking lies. When we have done our best as servants of God, our righteousness is as filthy rags. Because we are sons, he has sent forth his Spirit in us crying, "Abba, Father." Because we are sons of his choice he has given us his Spirit. Not because we were so good, but because we were his sons. God is all-wise and independent and happy. He was this before he made man, and if he change not,he is still the same, and ever will be while the years of eternity roll. It is said that in order that the purpose of election might stand, the children had neither done good nor evil. Esau have I hated, Jacob have I loved. Whom he will he hardeneth and on whom he will have mercy. Man cannot make God do anything and he cannot keep him from doing anything that he wills to do. God made choice of Abel over Cain, because this was his way and according to his plan. By faith Abel was made to offer a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. How did he get this faith? Faith is the fruit of the Spirit. It is one of God's gifts. The Spirit itself is a gift. Man cannot pay for the Spirit by repentance. The gifts and the calling of God are without repentance. Man cannot repent with godly sorrow without the Spirit. Anything man may do that will be accepted by God as righteousness must be worked in him by the Spirit of Christ. Before the ascent of Christ to heaven and under the law, God had some mysterious way of making his will known to man. His Spirit will guide us into the ways of all truth that he would have us to know. He knows what we want and what we need before we ask him. Man cannot say that Jesus is the Christ but by the Spirit. Man does not know what to ask for only by the Spirit, or as the Spirit given him utterance. God made choice of Noah because he wanted to. Not because he was so good, but because he was on the program of his choice. There must have been many more people there in that country besides Noah and his family, but these eight are the only ones that went into the ark. God chose Abraham from among his own people and said he would show him a land that he did not know and he would give it to him, not because he was such a good fellow, but because this was God's way and in his plan of redemption. God made choice of Joseph and let his brothers sell him down into Egypt, that life might be preserved. This looks very bad for Mr. Moral Agent. But Joseph told them they meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. These boys had to do just what they did not seem to have any desire to do. God's people and the devil's people are always willing to do just what they are to do to serve their masters—God or the devil. God's ways are not our ways, neither are his thoughts our thoughts. His thoughts are as high above our thoughts as the heavens are about the earth, and his ways above our ways as the east from the west. His ways are past finding out, but his secrets are with them that love him and keep his commandments. It was said that Abraham was God's friend. He said, how can I hide this from Abraham? God reveals many things to his faithful servants that he never lets others know. God has two kinds of calls: a general and a special. All men are in the general call. Only a few answer the special call. Many are called, but few are chosen. The gospel is to be preached to all, but only those are going to hear it and answer its call whom the Spirit pricks in the heart and causes to repent. They cannot repent in the spiritual sense of the word until the Spirit quickens them into life. God quickens whom he will and whom he will he hardeneth. God is not like man. Some rich men build large houses with

rooms that likely no one ever uses, but God has better judgment than that. He made heaven and hell. He has a use for both. When the last saint gets into heaven, wherever it is, then heaven will have its portion of man's generation of the redeemed whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world, and who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. The same will be true with the devil and his followers who have done evil. When the last one is in this lake of fire, then will the door of hell be closed for evermore, and Christ, who has the keys of death and hell, will need no more to let any into hell or death. The free moral agents say you can go to heaven if you want to, or you can go to hell. How foolish this sounds to one who has read the Scriptures carefully and prayerfully.

If you were working in a bank and no one carried the keys to the vault but the president of the bank, would it be wise to say to the employees that they could get into that vault any time they wanted to, knowing at the same time that the president was the only one who had a key or who could work the combination? The doors of heaven and hell are not to be compared with even the best of vaults in strength and durability, not even a United States Government vault. Christ said he had the keys of death and hell. He further said that he was the door to heaven. In the last case, he not only has the key, but he is the door and the key. In other words, he is the whole thing. Now let us use a little common sense. If what I have said above is true, you cannot get into hell unless Christ lets you in, and you cannot get into death unless he premits you to do so. Ye shall seek death and it will flee from you. Many have wanted to die at times and could not, or did not. Many children are coming into the world without their consent, and many are going out in the same way. Life is no chance work. Life is real and sure. God did not ask Adam to let him make him. Adam had nothing to do with God making him, neither did he have any choice as to staying in the garden when God was ready to drive him out. God does not take a man by the hair of his head and pull him into heaven, nor take a club and drive him into heaven, but when he determines that a sinner is to come into the fold the things that he does are just as strong and forcible as the two things just mentioned, and more so. When a big engine is standing on the track with steam up to the moving or running point, it may have a long string of cars attached to it and when the steam is turned on, the driving wheels may turn around several times in one place, the engineer puts a little sand on the track, and although it looks as though it did not want to go, soon it is thundering down the track at high speed. The prodigal son may not have wanted to come home, but when hunger began to pinch him very soon he was found on his homeward march, and he did not stop until he was in his father's arms. The king may not have wanted to serve Daniel's God, but when the Son of God turned the light on him he came down off his royal throne. Abraham might not have wanted to leave his folks, but when God called him he was soon found stepping out upon the plains. Lazarus had been dead four days, and even stinketh, but when Christ called him he came out with his gravecloths on. The people who were in their graves when Christ was hanging on the cross may have been resting easy in their graves, and may have wanted to remain there, but when the Son of God was raised from the dead they came walking forth into the city. God does not have to take a man by the hair or drive him with a club, but only call him, create a condition or turn on the search-light. Anything that God does to bring a sinner to him is just as forcible as this club and hair of the head proposition. His arm is

not short. He spoke the worlds into existence. He said, Let there be light, and there was light. He has counted the sands of the seashore and had weighed the earth in his scales. He can dip the sea dry with a spoon. Before the hills in order stood, or earth recieved her frame, from everlasting to everlasting thou art God. From eternal years the same. What is man that thou are mindful of him? Man is never willing to come into the fold of God until the Spirit makes him willing. For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. God may save a man without his will, but he does not reveal himself to man against his will, for he says, My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power. My sheep hear my voice and a stranger they will not follow. My word is gone forth out of my mouth and it will not return unto me void, but will accomplish the thing whereunto I have sent it. When Paul was holding the clothes of the men that stoned Stephen to death, he was just as much saved, as far as his eternal salvation was concerned, as he was when he stood before King Agrippa. The difference was he had not been converted and the knowledge that Christ had died for him had not been made known to him. He said that God had chosen him from his mother's womb to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. As it was with Paul's conversion, so it is with every sinner that is or ever will be converted. He was saved by Christ's shed blood. All men were benefited by Christ's death, but the Bible says he shed his blood for many. It may have been just as easy for the apostle to have said "all" as it was to say "many," but being guided by the Spirit, he said just what the Spirit wanted him to say. He did not talk as Mr. Free Moral Agent. He said what he meant and meant what he said. He shed his blood for many because many have been saved by his shed blood. All for whom his blood was shed will be saved, for while he was yet dead in sins he quickened us together with Christ, (for by grace are ye saved). Many will go to heaven if only here and there a traveler. Thousands are finding their way to hell and many go in thereat. Heaven is made for all who have gone there and for all who will ever go there. On the other hand, hell is made for all who have gone there and for all who ever will go there. All who were in the house of the Israelites the night the angel passed over were benefited by the blood on the door post, and the death of the lamb, but all of them did not enter the promised land. Christ told Nicodemus he must be born again. He did not understand what Christ meant. Many leaders and lay members of the church do not know any more about the new birth now than they did in the time of Nicodemus. All who are born of the Spirit, or ever will be, are saved. What had John the Baptist's mother done that was so good to cause God to honor her with the birth of John? What had Christ's mother done that was so good to cause God to honor her with the birth of our Savior? This is God's way, and it is according to his plan. These two women were not even asked to be willing to such an arrangement. They were told what was going to happen and both of them seemed to be willing to the plan. My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power. Every sinner that is truly born of God is born somewhat similar to Christ. The Spirit overshadows him and quickens him into spiritual life and he comes forth a new creature. We had nothing to do with our natural birth, and it is more reasonable to believe we will have less to do with our spiritual birth. We know so little about our natural birth that we did not even know when or how we were born. We could not even choose the family we were born in. When we found ourselves ten or fifteen years after our birth, we

had to even be told the name of the family we were born in. How little man knows, even about himself. How can he know the mind of God? Even God's humblest servants are not permitted to know the mind of God. Whom he will he quickens, and whom he will he hardens. He told Moses to go and tell Pharaoh to let his people go, but he said he was going to harden Pharaoh's heart so he would let his people go. He said he would send strong delusions on some that they might believe a lie; that they might be damned who believed not the truth. Man is God's creature. He made him and can do with him whatsoever he desires to. He can take him to heaven or send him to hell. God has just as much power over Satan as he has over man. Christ has chained Satan for a thousand years, and it is reasonable to believe that he could have chained him for a thousand years longer had he so desired. Man never was, and never will be while on earth, his own free moral agent. The devil himself is not his own free agent to do just as he pleases respecting right or wrong. No agent is free to do as he pleases with the company's business. The word "agent" itself suggests a person ruled by a higher power than himself. It is supposed that an agent will do whatever his employer or master tells him to do. Jonah did not seem to be his own free agent; the Lord told him to go to Ninevah. He did not go at once, but he went. Paul was on his way to Damascus to arrest God's people, but when the Lord struck him down, and turned him around, he was glad to do what the Lord wanted him to do. God does not have to reveal himself to his people against their will, for they are all willing in the day of his power. They may seem to draw back as did our Saviour, but he said, Not my will but Thine be done. Every true child of God has this same will in him. If man cannot be saved unless he believes, he is in a bad fix, for Christ has died once for all. He has made one offering, and all who were not included in that offering are forever lost. Many were in that sacrifice who have not known it, yet. They will all come in, in the dispensation of time, each one in his own time as God sees fit to reveal himself to them. The free moral agent says that if Christ has saved the sinner there is no use preaching to him. Christ did not tell Peter to make any sheep, but he said, feed my sheep. A shepherd is not to make sheep, but to feed them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few. He did not tell the preacher, or any one else, to scare the laborers into the field, but, pray ye to the Lord of the harvest that he may send forth laborers in the field. We get in a hurry for people to come into the church, and they come in without being sent in by the Lord of the harvest, and they do not stay. The preacher is to preach to all, but the Spirit is to do the bringing into the church. We have many in the churches that man has brought in, and they are two-fold worse than the child of hell himself. They are in man's church, not God's church. To get into God's church one has to be born in it, and this birth must be brought about by the Holy Ghost. Not of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of the will of God. These births cannot be hurried. The preacher has much to do if he preach the gospel as it should be preached. He should feed God's lambs and his sheep. If he does this as it should be done, he will not have time to make any sheep.

Christ is a great magnet. He said if he be lifted up he would draw all men unto him. This certainly did not mean he would take or draw all men into heaven, or that all would be saved. If a man come to Christ at all he must be drawn. So all who come to Christ at all are drawn to him by himself, through the Holy Spirit. God has elected all who have been saved and all who will be. He is an everlasting Father, so he must always have some

children, and these children are everlasting children. Their lives were hid with Christ in God before the world was made. Those he foreknew he also called, and those he called he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. God has always had a people by choice. They have been stepping on the stage of action as we know since the days of Abel. Abel was God's first martyr.

A. E. CLARK

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MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER MEETING

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, for its one hundred, forty-third session, with the Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church July 6, 7, and 8, 1984.

Directions to the church are: Travel to the town of Gretna, Virginia located in Pittsylvania County on business U.S. Highway 29. Go into the town of Gretna and turn on to State Rd. 763, go until it intersects with State Rd. 760. The church is located at this intersection.

We invite all of our faith and order to join with us in this three day worship service.

Burnell B. Williams,Assoc. Clerk

DURHAM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

The Durham Primitive Baptist Church in Durham, N. C., feeling they were blessed an honored with the gift of an Elder among them, called for a presbytery to be formed Sunday afternoon at three o'clock, April 15, 1984, for the purpose of examination of this gift, Brother Cleo Robertson, and to be ordained, if found qualified, to the full work of the Gospel Minestry.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together. Elder D. V. Spangler was elected to serve as moderator and Elder Kenneth R. Key to serve as clerk. Brothers Whaley and Brinkley, deacons of Dur-Church, acting as spokesmen for the church, delivered the candidate to the presbytery.

The qualifications for an Elder was read from the third Chapter of First Timothy by Elder J. R. Hollandsworth. Examination followed by Elders Hollandsworth, Agee and Prescott. Brother Robertson after being asked, expressed some of his feelings concerning his call to the ministry. The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of the candidate, proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder Julian Williams. The charge was delivered by Elder Spangler. After the right hand of fellowship was extended by the presbytery, brother Robertson was delivered back to the church as an ordained minister.

The presbytery was composed of the following Elders: Elder Agee, Davis, Daniels, Hollandsworth, Kenneth Key, Leonard Key, Lamb, Prescott, Spangler and Williams.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Elder Kenneth R. Key, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR MARCH 1984

Rober Miles, LA.	$ 3..00
Mrs. Virgie Withers, TX	2.00
R.L. Stegall, VA.	2.00
Mrs. May Hudson, VA.	12.00
B.B. Williams, VA.	7.00
Mrs. Sallie L. Gauldin, NC.	6.00
Mrs. W.H. Spires, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Julia R. Garner, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Janie Fanning, AL.	2.00
Dan Anders, AL.	7.00
Dolphus Hall, FL.	3.00
Mrs. Edith Sewell, FL.	1.00
Mrs. Eva Daffin, GA.	3.00
Joshua E. Potter, NC.	2.00
Mrs. L.A. Stratton, MS.	3.00
Roy S. Oxley, WV.	2.00
William T. Giles, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Lloyd Delp, VA.	3.00
Harvey Blalock, NC.	3.00
B.L. Cockran, NC.	3.00
Mrs. James D. Marze, LA.	1.00
Mrs. John L. Marze, LA.	9.00
O.P. Murphy, TX.	100.00
C.M. Coates, VA.	7.00
Mrs. J.H. O'Bryant, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Flora B. Berry, NC.	2.00
M. Bernard Schuster, France	10.00
Mrs. Mary N. Phillips, TN.	2.00
Mrs. H.D. Underwood, VA.	2.00
Mrs. J.D. Neely, AR.	3.00
Mrs. Edgar L. Bolejack, Va. In memory of husband	25.00
James T. Howard, AL.	2.00
Kineth Hollandsworth, VA.	2.00
M.H. Houston, NC.	1.00
Mrs. Erby Dalton, VA.	2.00

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."
Mat. 7:12

OBITUARIES

SISTER ODELL COMPTON

I'm writing this about our dear Sister who passed away some time ago, Sister Odell Compton. Her membership was at Norfolk Church. She was the Clerk there. Our hearts are still sadden to see the vacant seat, where she always sat.

She loved the doctrine of Jesus Christ and she wasn't only a sister, she was a good friend.

The good Lord had a better home for her so he called her away, and I feel she is in the arms of Jesus where she will never have any more pain or sorrow. She would come to Leatherwood Church with her sisters to hear some more good preaching. Our pastor is Elder Julian Williams, she loved his preaching, and she loved our good singing when we would have our good brother Herbert Dodson to help us. She and I were real close and I miss her.

Her pastor at Norfolk was Elder Payne.

Your little sister in hope, at Leatherwood Church.

Lizzie H. Brown

LULA BELINDA F. LANCASTER

In memory of Lula Belinda F. Lancaster who passed from this earth December 8, 1983. She was born October 14,1899, daughter of the late John D. and Lannie W. Flood, making her stay on earth some 84 years. She was married to Sam Thomas Lancaster on December 5, 1917. He died October 16, 1951. There were ten children born to this union, nine of whom survive: Thelma L. Harris of Rockville, Va.; Ida Mae L. Johnson and Tilda L. Jones of Rock Mount, N. C.; Lizzie L. Abrams and Gary A. Lancaster of Pinetops,

N. C.; Doris L. Letchworth, L. Ray Lancaster and Wilda L. Harrell of Tarboro, N. C.; and Shirley L. Renfrow of Zebulon.

They were a close and loving family. Even though widowed, she maintained a home for herself and for her family to visit when they could, keeping them close as long as she lived. They will miss her, as will all of us who knew and loved her.

She united with the church at Pleasant Hill on August 22, 1931. She was a faithful member, attending church when it was possible for her to do so. She was strong in her faith and belief. When I think of her the scripture of the virtuous woman in the Bible comes to my mind.

Her funeral was preached by Elder C. B. Davis of Roxboro, N. C. In his remarks he said that he could not preach her funeral, that she had already done that by the life she had lived. He could not add to it or take from it.

Her body was laid to rest in the Williams Family Cemetery in Edgecombe County, North Carolina beneath a beautiful display of flowers with her family and friends gathered around.

Written by order of conference, Pleasant Hill Church, February 25, 1984, by:

Lessie L. Lancaster

JOHN HESSIE OWENS

Brother Owens was born November 30, 1889 to Tom and Sallie Owens in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. Spending most of his life in and around Danville, Virginia. In Decmeber, 1922, Brother Owens married Annie Powell who preceded him in death. He was called from this life November 5, 1983, leaving to mourn two sons: Melvin Owens, Dallas, Texas and Stafford Owens of Northbend, Oregon; four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Brother Owens was received into Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on August 23, 1975. He filled his seat whenever able and was a faithful member and a firm believer in salvation by Grace. He would not want praise nor would he desire to be lifted above his brethren, but believed that there is no better evidence on earth of being a child of God in spirit and in truth, than for one to love and hold in high esteem the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor and he was laid to rest to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Written by Sister Bea French at the request of Dan River Church while in conference.

Moderator, Elder D.V. Spangler
Clerk, Boyd Minter

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Psalm 116:15

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POETRY

Am I or Am I Not

I often wonder, what's my lot
Am I God's or am I not
Sometimes I think I am a-kin
When peace and love doth enter in
Tis then I know my redeemer lives
For such precious love only God can give
No words can ever, ever tell
The things to me he doth reveal

And then I wonder if I fall
Back to the wars of Satan's call
Tis then I feel so black with sin
I'm so ashamed of what I am
It seems to hell I'll surely go
I've reached the bottom, am so low
No matter how loud I cry
I feel that I will surely die

But if it be, the will of God
No matter what the road I trod
If I be seed of Abraham
Twas God that made me what I am
My Lord walks softly before me
To clear the way, so I might see
And even though thorns prick my flesh
I still have hope I'm his elect

Kate Matthews

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EDITORIAL

John 15:5

I am the vine, ye are the branches. It is alot for me to ask, but I desire to ask it of Editors and readers that I may come before you and speak of the precious and adorable things that are suggested in these few words. I feel that volumes are expressed by the Saviour, by He who is the Vine. To get to the extended depths of this beauty and the adorable matter before us, let us also note that in the beginning of this lovely lesson we will find that Father is the husbandman. To begin with we have placed before us the garden of the Lord, who are in it, who their husbandmen and caretaker is that is interested in their welfare and in what they are doing.

Some people despise a garden, at times despising what lives and grows there, and resents being told how to have a good garden and how to enjoy working in it, and reaping the benefits from the Caretaker. A garden is a place where beneficial plants are grown. Our experience and our observation teaches very clearly that an enemy always sows undesirable plants in this lovely planting of the Gardener.

Naturally speaking, a lot of people shun garden making. I feel sorry for people that insist in running to the corner grocery for everything that they eat. In the outset, I feel sure that Paul's rule about eating and working was a good one. However, we are writing to the children of the kingdom of heaven. The text is the best kind in teaching the glorious union of Christ and His kingdom. It draws out attention to the strongest union between Christ and His subjects of anything in the Bible. Let us quote it again. I am the vine, ye are the branches. There is not a way in all of the world for a branch to become a part of the vine that is not already a part of it. Think of it, dear readers. The branch comes from the vine. There is not such a thing in all of the intricacies of agriculture that a branch is a vine in its own right. There is not a way regardless of what men of agriculture might say about it, for the branch to exist before it is a part of the Vine. Neither is there any way, any way at all, for the dead sinner to act in order to be a live plant in the garden of the Lord.

Think about it, the Vine is first. That is the law of nature, and it is the law of the kingdom of heaven. The beginning of that was necessary for the Vine. Did it begin in its entirety from the action of the Creator? its entirety from the action of the Creator? In our efforts to find out the beauty and the sweetness of the garden of the Lord, the kingdom of heaven, the Vine of renown, where are we to start? Only God could make the seed, plant it, cause it to germinate and make a vine. It is early to our dealing with the origon of the first vine, and the following development of

that planted vine, thus causing the asertion by our Saviour about His being the vine. Since it is not of any value to talk about Him being the true Vine unless we have proof to that end. We are to prove all things; we are to hold fast to that which is true. He made all things, He said that He did. All things are here, and there is not any gospel save that which He declared. Therefore no heed will be given to any doctrine that ascribes the Vine as being of divine origon save the God of the Bible.

I am taking the position that of all people that has ever been,or that is now living on the earth, had anything to do with He being the Vine. He said that He was, He went further and said that His Father was the husbandman. That is the way that it is; that it has ever been that way, and that there will not ever be any living Vine save this.

This plant or Vine of renown came down from heaven. I desire to note this fact time and again. The true Vine came from heaven, from the abode of God and godliness. I also desire to assert in as strict a way as can be ascertained from the scriptures, that every branch or elect child of God has come from Him the one and only Vine.

He came from God and He was God in the flesh, and out from Him proceeded every branch, and that except for those that he denominated as branches, they are not children of God. These branches were people, men and women of Adam's fallen race. Their origon was long before Adam and his offspring had a day in time. They were chosen in Christ in eternity, and they were manifested in time. Come, dear readers; take a written New Testament view of them being made manifest, being these and acclaimed as branches of the one and only divine Vine. In our text our blessed Master, who here is setting Himself up as the one Vine, and that out of Him as the only Vine that they have branched forth out of Him.

How precious it is that He came to His own in the flesh and his own knew Him not, but as many as did know Him, to them gave He power to become the children of God. Seeing that they could never have known Him how could they have ever become the branches? Let us as fellow travellers, and as we hope, living branches from the Vine, come to Mt. Zion the city of our Gardener. The dwelling place of He who is the creator the upholder and the final disposer of all things.

This entails salvation by the grace of God. Let us always remember that where there is salvation that there is purpose and sovereign grace. God has declared that He is the Saviour, and that beside Him there is not any Saviour. (Isa. 43:II, oz. 13:4). It is beyond me as to how that I am to deal with that astounding fact, to wit, that God is the only Saviour and that beside Him there is not any Saviour. The precious Saviour tells us in our subject matter that He is the Vine, and that sinners born again by the Spirit of God makes them branches. These branches came from the Vine. Or do they? If they do not come from the Vine; if they are not the result of His life giving work how is it that they are branches? The Vine is first, then the branches proceed from the first Vine. Is that right now? If it is not right, may God grant us sovereign grace to tarry around the text until we do find how it is that he (Christ) is the first Vine and how that the elect vessels of mercy are the branches.

According to the pattern given us, these branches were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. Here is a beautiful picture of election. I would not think that any one would claim that we were actually branches then, as we are now branches having come out of Him as branches come out of a tree, and yet I must say that we had a standing in Him then, and that from that which we had in Him then that we now are branches from the one Vine. According to God's

purpose, yea, even in Him, we were as sure of being branches in the developmen of those purposes, as it was sure that we were purposed in Him. If the language of the apostle is read carefully, it will teach us that at the time of god's choice of us in Christ that He had predestinated us unto the adoption of children (branches) by Jesus Christ by himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.

These branches bear fruit. Yes, I am aware that He said, Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. I believe that He deals with these branches as He says, He does. These supposedly fruit bearing branches do not ever begin in a genuine realistic way to bear fruit. These are seen and mixed in the real followers or branches of the Lord. They are mere professors, never having been born of the Spirit, never having been brought to a state of bearing fruit. They are normally in fellowship with fruitful branches, but are called among those that seem to bear fruit (Luke 8:18). Those that have seemed to be branches have been removed and destroyed as far as being among the harvest hands, but all of those chosen in Christ before the world had a beginning, and have been called and have answered the heavenly calling, are called to the harvest field for their life time. It is to be understood that we are dwelling on the sure call of the elect branches. This is a heavenly calling and does not give out with old age or bad health.

All branches, both those that are only nominally, seemingly called are dealt with in purging. This is the seperation that shows forth the true branches, the true disciples, the true laborers in the gospel field. This is the testing ground for both they that have and they that seem to have. To those that only seem to have, they will soon be separated from the laborers in the kingdom. To both the grace called and to those that have run without having been sent, it is impossible to bring forth fruit without the grace of God, without a divine call and leadership of the Vine.

Not for long will there be an abiding in Him unless he abides in us. He came to do that abiding thing for His people. He came to abide with them, and His abiding with the branches is a sure soul cherishing doctrine that will abide with them. How glad, and I hope thankful that He abides with each and every branch, every season of experience He abides with them, abetting them in every approved growth and activity, rebuking, instructing in every mistaken growth and activity forbidden.

What beauties are involved in such a sublime relationship. Not only is this a beautiful doctrine but how secure that it is for the welfare of the branches. Every doctrine that I have ever heard about is upheld and supported by the support of the branches, but how different is this my soul. The branches, the little ones, the weak, the poor, all, all are dependent on the wisdom of the Vine. It is not the branches that is upholding the Vine, but it is the Vine that gives life and strength, fruit-bearing qualities to the branches. Life is in the Vine, and through the Spirit every life giving, fruit-bearing quality stems from the Vine.

This supreme blessing is the theme of the Scriptures from one beginning in Genesis to a majestic glorified ending in the Revelation. God was in supreme command at the beginning; His outstretched arm rules then, and it will be in supreme command when he declares that time will be no more.

This plant of renown (Ezek. 34:29) will send forth every branch and will attend their every growth to the good of the whole heavenly planting. Every

visitation of the God of all grace, the Caretaker of the Garden, the church of the Lord Jesus Christ in every dispensation of time, during what is called bad times as well as good. This kingdom, this well protected city, this abiding place of the lovely Lord Jesus Christ will give rest to the weary traveller and food and water to every branch of the whole workmanship of God.

It is a sad day to every citizen of the city of God. The love of many waxes cold. I once was young but now I am old. I live much of my time in looking back. The day of my going before the church is vivid and clear. Not a one of those there on this day soon to be fifty seven years ago are in the land of the living now. But I look back with fond recollection that they were rooted and grounded in the lovely doctrine so firmly that they have all finished their travel here, having been rooted and grounded as a lovely and active branch in the Garden of the Lord always having been blessed to take root doward and to bring forth fruit upwards to His honor and glory. I am thankful for each for them, and now as the far advances of evening have come to me, I am not left to an entire looking backward but rather to a joyous looking forward. If not mistaken, we have enjoyed the years together, as grace and love and godly zeal was administered to us as branches and now, standing on the threshold of eternity, I would bear testimony in my feeble way that I have never seen the righteous forsaken nor His seed begging bread. The Vine has flourished a living and a perpetual Vine of living satisfying nutrition to every branch that is attached by being rooted and grounded in the merits of the true living Vine.

Elder W. D. Griffin

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

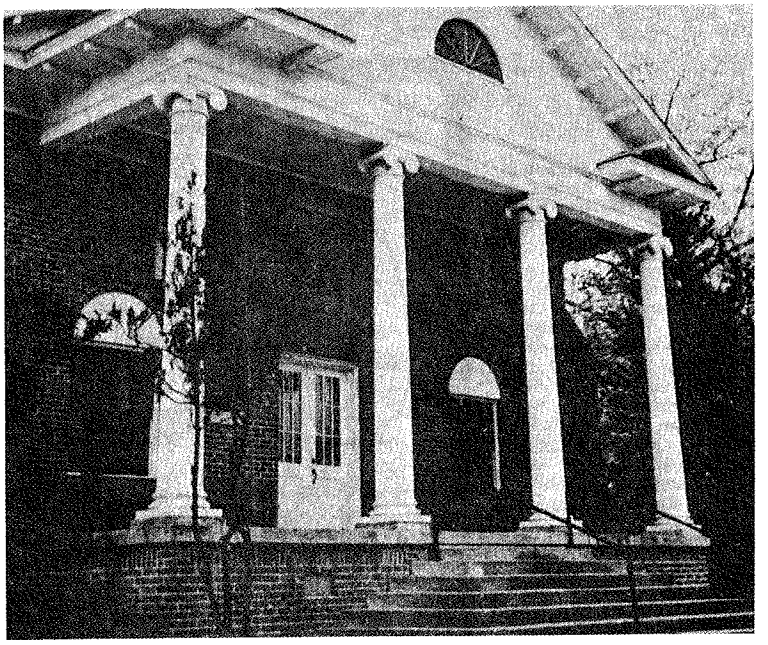

The Tar Primitive Baptist Church was founded in 1757. It is located in Rocky Mount, N.C. Their meeting time is every second Sunday morning and Saturday morning before. Elder D. B. Stokes is their pastor.

CORRESPONDENCE

Maynardsville, TN.

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER D. R. CABBAGE
Conclusion

Many more things concerning God shows his servants things that they don't understand. I remember again in another vision I don't understand all these things, nevertheless, they are in my experience. Most of the time, in many of these visions, Brother Wilder, would be in them. In another vision, me, Elder Wilder, and Elder Garrett Wilson were out on a sea of water in a boat. Away over there on an island was a people. These people were in some sort of trouble. They needed help. Elder Wilder and Elder Wilson told me to go to them. I said, "I can't help them." Elder Wilder said in this vision, "You can sweeten the water until they can drink it."

I believe that God showed me that Elder Wilder, one I had depended on so much and fell back on him so many times, I'd get up and say a few words, sit down and turn the service over to him. I believe God Almighty showed me right there that Elder Wilder and Elder Garret Wilson couldn't do what God had ordained for me to do.

God shows his servants these things, they may not understand them, but anyway, I began to try to talk a little at White Pine Church. Used to ride over there with Elder Wilder. That was my first attempt I ever made to talk in public. I couldn't say much, a few words, nevertheless, I feel that this desire that God puts in the church or this gift. God places the gifts in the church. I do believe those gifts will shine out. I believe that when one is called, he has fear there. But at the same time this desire is so strong he is anxious to try out that gift he feels that he has. I have thought about the old servant Elijah and Elisha. How that Eisha seemed to be coming up under Elijah. Time was growing nigh that old Elijah was going to have to leave this world. How that he knew he was? I believe that he loved this young servant Elisha. Just before his time came to go up into Heaven he asked Elisha, "What can I do for thee?" In other words, what is the last thing I can do for you? Elisha said grant me a double portion of thy spirit (II Kings 2:9). Old Elijah said, "Thou has ask a hard thing. Nevertheless, if thou see me when I go up, it shall be." While in the whirlwind, chariots and horses of fire parted them asunder. Elijah went up and dropped his mantel - yes, Elisha picked it up. The people did not understand, they wanted to go look for the old servant Elijah. They said maybe he had landed on the mountain over there somewhere. Elisha knew better for he told them to go ahead and look They looked and never found him. I believe that old Elijah went straight into heaven. I believe he went through that change somewhere that the Bible talks about. We'll be changed in a moment, in the twinkle of an eye.

Elisha picked up this mantel. He walked along and came to this river of water and stretched the rod across it. The water rolled back for him. Yes, God places the gifts in the church and they do shine out from time to time.

Every since I've been ordained, I've been trying to go. There have been times when I've been low, times when I'd think I wouldn't go anymore. But Jeremiah made the statement that it was shut up in his bones as a burning fire he could not forebear.

I believe they will preach every sermon that God Almighty ordained before the world began, I believe God leads them to the place where he had ordained for them to go. Sometimes, he might lead them into a country they are not ac-

quainted with or places perhaps they had never dreamed about being. One time it got on my mind to go to North Carolina to Upper County Line Association, I'd read about it in the Signs of the Times. I wasn't acquainted with them. But it bore on my mind so heavy to go to that association several years back. They had the association near Burlington, North Carolina. I borrowed my wife's car and I started. Got there somewhere around 12 o'clock.

I can't explain why I went other than I had a desire to go. It wouldn't leave me and I believe God lead me to that place. As I said, I didn't know the people, wasn't acquainted with them and they didn't know me.

I believe they have a light. They can't see themselves but it shines out in such a way that other people can see it, not only the servants of God but his sheep. I was walking around over there in the large crowd, the largest I've ever seen at an association. A man walked up to me and said,"You are about the most humble looking man I have ever seen." I didn't know him, but I made the statement I didn't know how I looked but I felt awful bad. I drove a long ways, I was tired, it was just before I had my gall bladder taken out, and I wasn't feeling good. But anyway, they had service that evening and that night. I took my seat down toward the stand they had built at the foot of this hill. Those scattered oak trees over that hill were a beautiful sight, a beautiful place. I sat there that night and listened at the preaching and singing.

I didn't go over there saying I am a preacher or that I had come to talk. I didn't know why I was there. That night at the close of the service when they began to sing "How Firm a Foundation", I couldn't set there. I went into the stand; shaking hands with them. The next day, on Sunday, I took my seat at the same place. I saw two or three men gathered together outside the stand...standing there talking. One turned and motioned for me to come down there. I went down and he said, "I want to apologize for not putting you in the stand yesterday," I said, "That's alright, you didn't know me." He said, "Get up there and sit down."

There were thirty-two Elders there at that association. Heard many wonderful things preached.

On Sunday night, I believe it was, they put me up to talk. I feel that God gave me a little bit of his Holy Spirit. After service that night as I went to my car, there was a man walked up to me. He said something about some of my experiences, he gave me $2.00, we talked a few minutes. This man was under the impression of joining the church. He had a desire to join the church. I often wondered since then about him. I don't know his name but I wondered if he ever joined the church. I believe he carried the ice around in the mornings for the coolers. I'm not sure, but I'd like to hear from him. The crowd was seated there on that hill was most beautiful. People scattered out on that hill there listening at the service. From the pulpit seemed like their faces were shining like gold. I believe they were being fed from Heaven reminded me, I thought about when Christ was walking this earth. A great multitude of people following him. Time came for them to eat. One said, "Is there anything that these people might eat?" One said 20 pennies worth of bread is not sufficient that everyone may eat. One said, "There is a lad here that has two small fish and five barley loaves." I believe it was, Jesus took those loaves and fishes, blessed them. As they were setting there, grouped out. I believe 50 to a group sat down on the grass there to eat the food that the Lord had blessed. Blessed them to eat, gathered up more than they had after they all ate than they had to begin with. I'm sure that Jesus

knew all about that lad, all about the fishes and the bread.

I believe that God still has those lads standing around with the loaves and the fishes. But they can't feed you until God takes it and blesses it. Blesses them to preach the everlasting gospel of the Son of God. Then God's people can eat. I have wondered about these experiences. Whether I ought to make an attempt to try to put them on tape. I know that this all did come to my mind and I know that this is scattering.

I fought this but felt that I should do it for some reason or other. While I was thinking about whether I should try to put my experience on tape or not. A man came to the building where I worked the other night, called me in the office, said, "I want to talk to you." He said, "How can a back slider return to God?" He was in trouble. He wasn't satisfied in that condition. He said, "I'll be back at 9 o'clock when we get our break." He did come back and we went up stairs in the office and talked. Then I got to thinking about these experiences. What else could you tell anybody but your own experiences.

I realize I am scattering around. I remember one time, while going through all this trouble, all this about preaching, I dreamed or had a vision that I had been somewhere down the otherside of Nashville. Had been down in a wilderness working all day, and as I came back out, there was a gate there. Elder R.L. Biggs was on one side and his wife on the other. I had to walk between them. She turned to Elder Biggs and said, "Cabbage has been down there working all day." I didn't know what that was, I didn't know what it meant. I named it to Elder Wilder, this is what he told me. "When the streams in the desert are opened up, you will probably be there." Well I didn't think much about it. Several years after that, after I had been ordained, I got ahead of myself there but, nevertheless, after my son got drowned I said I would never go anymore.

Yes, I was like Jeremiah. I said, "I will never speak again in the name of the Lord." But since I have mentioned that let's go on with it a little. How good God has been to me.

At the time that happened, I can't explain this, but I had a feeling that something was going to happen to him. Stayed on my mind all day. I went to town and got some hog feed, came back home, stopped down at the foot of the driveway, saw strange cars up here, my sister-in-law came out on the porch, said, "Come up here." Well, I just said it out loud, "Lord whatever it is, it has already happened." When I got in the yard my granddaughter met me. She said Gary had been drowned. Well I thought I had been low before, but that was the lowest I have ever been. I lay across the bed that night while they dragged the river. I said how many times I have stood in the pulpit and said god will walk with you, God will talk with you. I said where is my God, I feel no presence of him. I felt like God had completely withdrew himself from me. I lay there, suffered, wondered about many things, "I'll never go to church anymore," I said. All that, but the next morning I got out of bed, stepped out in the hall, there was something spoke to me, I can't explain that voice. If you have ever heard the voice of the Lord, you know what I am talking about. The voice said, "This is the day the Lord has made."

For three days when I would get out of bed, step out in the hall, that voice would say, "This is the day that the Lord has made." That may sound strange to somebody that is the God that has held me up that's the God that come down once more on those great wings of love and picked me up and carried me through all that. But anyway, back to my

subject.

After that happened, it got on my mind to go to Illinois to an association. It kept bearing on my mind and I went to the Soldier Creek Association, which was held in Benton, Illinois. God blessed us to have a wonderful meeting, a good association, felt his presence and his love.

On my way back home, traveling by myself from Benton toward Lexington, Kentucky on this new highway. Returning back from the association, all that vision that I was talking about came back to my mind. I believe I can say with Ezekiel that, "This is that, that I saw down by the river upon my bed at night." God has showed me that, in other words, he must have had a purpose in me being in that area and I believe that wilderness that I was working in was in the church. God found Jacob in a waste howling. Lead him about and instructed him. Kept him as the apple of his eye but never did take him out of that wilderness. At the time Ezekiel saw things down by the river, four living creatures. I believe four faces, four wings and so on. Can't hardly quote that word for word what he saw there. But anyway, they had four wings, two wings pointed upward and two outward. As they moved they moved straight forward with their wings joined together. I don't think that God has showed me,I haven't understood fully. But I have saw many of them come to pass. Yes, there was a spirit that lead those living creatures as they moved forward, a wheel in the middle of a wheel. And I want to say to you, the spirit was in the wheel that lead those living creatures. When the spirit moved, they moved.

What did Ezekial see there? I know that is deep waters, much too deep for me. But I believe that those wings represented God's love, as they moved forward represented Gods people when they are joined together in the love of God and lead by the spirit followed. Whenever God blesses them to meet with one mind with all things in common. They can join together, join their hearts together, praise God and worship him in one accord and one mind. But the spirit lead them and later on in Ezekial's work he said this is that, that I saw down by the river. I believe that I can say with Old Ezekial that on many occasions, this is that, that I saw down by the river, or upon my bed at night. I do believe that God is able to show his people these things and cause them to trust in him and to lead them in to water up to the ankles, in the water up to the knees and so on.

I know this has been scattering. This is the first attempt I have ever made to do anything like this. Yet I have felt for a long time that if I could write, I would like to send some of them sometime or other to the "Signs". That God's people scattered abroad might mean something to somebody. I don't know. I know I used to enjoy reading peoples experiences in the Signs of The Times, back there when I was in all that trouble. God works in mysterious ways.

So we are going to quit taping. It has quit coming to my mind, that's all I can do. We have to depend on God for this just like anything else. God said, "I compared thee to a company of horses in Pharos Chariots." The horses have to be hooked up to the chariot. He has to be unhooked, put up and fed, hooked back to the chariot. The king holds the lines in his hands, when he says, go, you go. When he says stop, you stop.

Brother Ralph, Sister Agnes, you mean so much to me. I love you. I love all you people down in Alabama. I desire to visit you. Maybe in the future God will bless me to where I can travel more. So for now, I want to say good night. May God Bless You.

Elder D. R. Cabbage

Dear Mother:

I received your most kind and welcome letter the other day, and surely was glad to hear from you, and to date those clippings from The Signs of The Times. They are plain words, and in them is a world of wisdom that everybody does not know. I read them over and over; they are food to me. I want to take the *Signs*, so tell me where I can write to subscribe. It will be of much comfort to me to read the unsearchable riches of God, which he has shed upon his dear children. I do like to read such truth as it contains, for I believe in the very things the writers say; they leave the world out and give the God of heaven the credit, to whom the credit is due, even to Jesus Christ. The holy Comforter, sent by God, testifies of the loving grace of Christ Jesus. My dear mother, this is the kind of a God I want to worship. Before I received the letter I was bothered some about the many sins of my fleshly mind, and how often I was turned off, but, as the dear brother says, God has his strong arms over and all around, and makes me sit in heavenly places in true communion that is in Christ Jesus. He told the truth about the saving of the Lord. He does his will and his own good pleasure, without the puny help of man. Man has nothing to do with it. The God of heaven is all-wise and righteous, and sheds the unsearchable riches of his grace over his people, for whom Christ shed his precious blood. By experience I feel out of my place when I go to some of the so-called churches. I can have more blessings in the corner reading the truth of the word of God than I can by hearing them preach. But I do get a revealation in hearing the preachers that cast the net on the right side of the ship, and they are the ones who through God's plan preach the gospel to his dear people. I am going to keep these clippings and reread them. Sometimes in reading them the love of truth makes me shed tears. I want to protect the banner of God's love. I know he is righteous and does no sin. But my sinful life, the flesh, works against the Spirit and makes me feel I am doing something out of the way. I cannot help temptations, but I believe the Lord will look after me, a poor miserable creature, as I feel myself to be. He knows my faults and searches my heart. All to him I owe. Sin was a crimson stain, he washed it white as snow. If the people knew how he only helps the poor needy sinner who is in the mire they would leave off the fake religions of man. You say the word "christian" means a true follower of Christ. If we follow him, we will lose all pride, and will not think about living in society and joining the fine churches of this earth, and will have the precious Savior to keep us from these things, for he will supply us with the riches of his grace. The Scripture says, Grace and truth come by Jesus Christ, but the law came by Moses. This grace does not have to be renewed year by year, for it stands forever. The man was right when he said, Good thoughts and desires never grow in nature's garden. Mother, I read, and think I understand, precious letters the Primitive Baptists have written. Please write and tell me where to get the Signs of The Times.

Pray for me, that I might have strength to stand on the firm foundation of the truth, and for help to bear me up in my weakness.

Your son,
JEWELL CROCKER

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Dear Elder Kenneth R. Key,

It has been requested by some of the Dear one's, that I write again to The Signs Of The Times. It is with fear and trembling, that I attempt to write. I feel to be weak, and poor in Spirit, knowing that in my flesh dwells no good thing, feeling to be a vile sinful wretch, much of my time, crying unto the Lord, to have mercy on me a sinner. My thoughts are often gone astray. I can't even think a good thought, unless the Lord is the giver. I am hoping the Lord will bless me with a Spiritual mind. Apostle Paul said a carnal mind is not subject to the laws of God, neither indeed can be, for to be carnal minded is death, but to be Spiritual minded is life and peace. It is so precious to me, when the Lord pours out his spirit up on all flesh. The ministers of the living god, wherever they are sent to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom, like the prophets of old, they spake as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance. The speakers and hearers alike, are made to sit together in heavenly place in Christ, worshipping the only true and living God, giving him all the honor, praise and glory. He is our law giver, they are all taught of God. He puts his laws in their hearts, and writes them in their minds, some times in the Lord are unspeakable and full of glory. At times our cup runneth over with joy. Then there are times, when we are full of doubts and fears, of being one of the Lords little children. Am I his, or am I not, is he clean gone forever, how sweet to our souls when the Lord blesses us with the spirit of comfort, saying to us yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love. Therefore with loving kindness, I have drawn thee. Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom. He makes those that are his, to know the mystery of the Kingdom. Christ in you, the hope of glory, Daniel 2:44 and in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a Kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the Kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these Kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. That is so precious to believe, the Kingdom that God set up, in the hearts of his children, Christ in you, The hope of glory shall stand forever. I believe when Christ comes the second time, He will destroy all the earthly kingdoms and comsume them by the brightness of his coming. It is so wonderful to me, when the blessed of the Lord, to hear the true doctrine preached by our home ministers, and also by the visiting ministers. They all preach the doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, having different gifts, but the same spirit. The Lord saw fit by the foolishness of preaching, to save those that believe. After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise. David said in Ps. 27:4 one thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple. 1 Peter 2:5 ye also as lively stones, are built up a spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Heb. 3:4-6 For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things, which were to be spoken after, but Christ as a Son over his own house. Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing firm unto the end. Dear ones I believe all the ones, that the Lord blesses to hear the truth as it is in him declared, does dwell in the spiritual house of the Lord, like David that is my desire, that the Lord will bless me to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple. Like Moses said, I would rather suffer

the afflictions with the righteous, than to enjoy sin for a season. One place in the scriptures it says, to keep yourselfs unspoted from the world. I love not the worldly doctrines and commandments of men, nor the pleasures of this world. I love the Lord and his people in the Spiritual world, that he prayed for. I hope that I am one of that blessed number whose god is the Lord. Praise the Lord, from whom all our blessings flow. In bonds of love,

Lula Fox

URGENT!

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7/84

it will expire with this issue. Please send renewal in the mail today.

Dear Grandpa, (Elder Spangler)

I read your book AMAZINE GRACE last Sat. night. It grabbed me by the heart and squeezed me hard. The motions stirred in me were so powerful and deep, they hurt. I couldn't let go. I slept with it under my pillow.

I was deeply moved. Thank you for sharing yourself. A part of you was revealed to me that I never knew. I'm glad that I have your book. I'll treasure it always. I regret that it wasn't longer. You must have experienced so many wonderful things. I envy you in some ways. You have searched and found so many answers. Answers to questions I still ask.

I felt compelled to write and tell you how much your book meant to me.

I hope that you are getting along well. Give my love to Grandma.

Love,
Beverlee

April 2, 1984

Dear Grandpa & Grandma,

This is an account of my spiritual awakening. I knew at the time I should write it down yet I didn't feel worthy and actually did not have an idea of the total impact it would have on me. Time sequences may be a little off, but as God is my witness, the rest is accurate to my ability.

Life has always tormented me for I have never understood the warp of mankind. Everywhere I look there is pain and deception brought on by man. It is not enough that our bodies are imperfect and we suffer ill health–but our minds are so imperfect too and we afflict needless pain on others through our actions and our words. This has always been a source of great sorrow for me and has caused me great mental anguish. During the days I believed, so foolheartedly, of control of my own destiny, I struck out at unkind people by withdrawing from them. Finally I developed hostility and callousness for these people. This reaction has only caused me–not them–a great deal more suffering, and I do believe this has been the largest part of my spiritual trials.

As I look back to those days from where I am now–I understand that you can not put trust in man–but should only have compassion for I am no worse and no better than anyone else. This aspect of God's powers has brought me some of the greatest comfort I have ever experienced.

I will not try to tell you of the years preceeding my spiritual change because there is too much pain in remembering and I can not describe it well to people. I have always had much to be grateful for and have always known this. Yet it seems as though my sadness and suffering brought on by misunderstanding of the ways of man have brought me more pain and suffering than I could bear–I believe now this was a vital part of God's way to

make me see His warp. All I can say is I can not be too grateful to God for His mercy. I beg that He will keep me and not forsake me.

One day I felt totally at the end of my mental resources, control and power. I don't recall ever feeling that frustrated. I was filled inside with anger and hostility.I thought I was going to burst open. Life was totally unbearable at that moment. I ran into my room and threw myself on my bed screaming and pounding my fists–"I need help"–in my mind I meant psychiatric help.

All of a sudden a peace came over my entire being–I felt nothing but peace and joy–my anger was gone–my worries were gone.

I knew at that instant it was God. I cried, I laid on the floor afraid to look to heaven, afraid God might see me as I saw myself now. Yet I wanted to thank God as much as I could. I begged Him to please let me be with Him and come to know His ways.

Many thoughts raced through my mind in a matter of minutes. I saw for the first time what a wretch I was. I had been living for the flesh not the spirit. I had believed in the power of man. Now I knew why I had been suffering so much, and I was ready to give my physical life up–to keep this peace that only God could give. I knew living without God in your life is punishment and hell on earth.

I was afraid to tell anyone of my experience–afraid they would think I was trying to be something I wasn't. I see now my trials are with God not mankind and I care not what they think of my experience.

I was also, because of my human wretchness, afraid of what this peace and belief might mean–afraid God would surely come to punish me for my life.

So I went about my business acting like nothing had happened yet feeling so different. I want to point out too that Grandpa and Grandma had only extended an invitation to me to come to church, they have never tried to make me believe their ways. They have only offered me love and kindness and company.

I had been going to the Durham Church two or three months before my experience took place.

Then one Sunday following my experience of God's peace I went to Church. My Grandfather preached one of his beautiful sermons that was so similar to my experience. My ears began to buzz and my head felt dizzy–and my heart felt full of praise and joy. I was hearing the words of God and they were the sweetest words I had ever heard. These words suddenly had meaning as my Grandfather spoke them so clearly (I believe he has been given one of life's greatest gifts–the ability to preach God's words from his heart.) Grandpa was preaching about people reaching the end of their wits and how God brings people to Him when they reach this point. I was overpowered with compassion and love. I felt like singing out and crying out for God's blessed mercy.

After this experience I was scared. Why should a person such as myself be blessed with this peace? I was still scared to be amongst these church people as well.

Then one night I was out with a friend and we were in a car wreck. I thought for an instant we were to be killed, but we were spared. I saw even more clearly my wretched life. This accident caused me great distress and I asked God for help in coming to terms with it and He gave me the ability to forget the emotional impact of it. I knew then I was powerless and needed a spiritual friend–God.

The next third Sunday went to Durham again and Grandpa was blessed again to preach a moving and glorious sermon. He spoke about how there comes a time

to take the cross upon your back when you hear the words of God. He said that no one ever feels worthy to be baptized. I knew what my heart was telling me to do but my mind was very troubled. The church people had made me feel so welcome yet I didn't feel worthy of them. I was troubled for weeks with this idea.

During these weeks I saw my life changing and the preaching was becoming clearer and clearer to me. I knew in my heart I wanted to thank God for his mercy. I was finally moved to reveal my burdens to my Grandparents. What about my sins I asked. Grandpa replied that all sin is the same. Oh what mercy.

For the first time in my life I felt like I shared a belief with people - the Primitive Baptist people. I hoped and prayed they would forgive me for who I was and let me thank God with them. They did accept me into their church. It was a month now until I would be buried in the watery grave and I prayed that Grandpa would baptize me and that God would bring me to the grave in good health.

The Sat. night before my baptism we were all riding home from church. I was trying to find out the name of the Hymn that was surely the most beautiful Hymn I had heard - but we couldn't come up with the name because I could not sing the tune.

The next morning I was baptized. I couldn't control my crying for I was overcome by God's compassion and mercy for allowing me to be baptized. After the baptism we went inside and the first hymn Grandpa called for was Hymn 386 page 156—"Come Thou found of every blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace." I burst into tears for this was the Hymn I spoke of Sat. night. My brothers and sisters sang that hymn as beautiful as anything I have ever heard. I knew it was all right for me to be there, finally I had been offerred a safe place to be - a home.

It has been a long road - and I have a long road still to go in my understanding of God yet I pray that God will "Bind my wandering Heart to Thee."

One of my truest blessings has been knowing my beloved Grandparents. They have lived their lives for and by God and have thus given quality to all life around them. I feel God acted through my Grandfather to reach me and it is a blessing that will carry me through my life. I can only pray that by some miracle I should be with my Grandparents in the afterlife. I love them with all my heart through the abounding Grace of God.

That is the way my spiritual change unfolded - it feels better to reveal it.

After beloved Brother Minter's funeral, I was thinking that I had never thanked all you people for providing lost souls with a home. You two, and the Minter's and sister Davis and others whose names I am not familiar, have given us a place to worship God. The lives you have lived have blessed everyone around you with goodness. And you have created a home for the spirit and the worship of God. Bless you all for eternity.

Love, Your Granddaughter
Linda

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301 Rives Rd.
Martinsville, Va. 24112

Dear Grand-daughter:

Your sweet letter deserves a reply, and lest we procrastinate, we will get at it. The pictures were lifelike and full of animation. Years from now they will bring back fond recollections of bygone days when you had your children around your feet.

Your grandmother has about recovered from a bout with "inner ear trouble". The symptoms were confusing with a possible brain tumor. Therefore we had numerous tests made including a brain scan. All the tests came out negative so she takes medication for high blood and

cholesterol only.

In your letter we were interested in your exposition of "christian loving." Why were the deciples first called Christians at Antioc?

Because Paul was preaching Christ Jesus and Him crucified. On one occasion he declared that he was " . . . determined to know nothing else . . ."

Was he paid to carry the message? No. Rather the Lord said to Annais, a deciple, 'I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. Paul bore the message before the Gentiles (that's us) and Kings and the children of Israel, thru much suffering the rest of his life. He wrote 13 books of the New Testament for our learning in christian behavior as well as the doctrine of Sovereign Grace. Read the 8th chapter of Romans. It is a classic. Paul verifies what Jesus had to say about the certainty of the salvation of "his people." Who are His people? Those that the Father gave Him in covenant before the world began. The angel told Joseph in a dream, " . . . He shall save His people from their sins." Jesus said, "All that the Father gave me shall come to me." Why must they come to Jesus? Because He is the way "No man cometh to the Father but by me" "I will raise them up at the last day."

There are only two peoples of Adam's race and two places fixed for their eternal destiny,heaven and hell. All human beings are headed that way now; to one or the other. God's people, after their hearts are changed have no fear of hell or the devil. Rather they fear Him who has power over Satan.

When does this change of heart take place? When it pleases God to give of His Spirit in a new birth. This new birth produces a spiritual man, often referred to as the inner man.

This inner man doesn't like the first man Adam. There is continual warfare going on between them. Paul was disturbed about this. He said when I would do good, evil is present with me. This condition caused him to cry out, saying "O whetched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"Then by the spirit he answers, "I thank God thru Jesus the Lord." There is Salvation in no other. Praise His holy name. We are saved by grace thru faith, not of works lest any man should boast, it is the gift of God. What about good works? They are produced by the inner man. The tree having been made good produces good gruit. Praise the Lord!

Dear Child, I had not intended to write so much but it kept coming, leading me to believe that it is falling on good ground and is sheep food. A goat would probably turn up his nose at it.

In conclusion let me warn you as you seek for truth, to beware of " . . . dogs beware of evil workers." Phil. 3-5. " . . . because your adversary, the Devil is as a roaring lion, walking about seeking whom he may devour." 1st Pet. 5-8. Satan is also described as being transformed into an angel of light . . . So beware of counterfitters. An artificial flower may even look better than a natural blossom but it cannot reproduce or give off a sweet perfume.

With love to you and yours,
Grand Dad and Grand-mother

(Elder & Sister P.E. Ingram)

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS:

Due to rising cost in publishing the Signs, we must increase the subscription price beginning July 1, 1984 to $10.00 per year and $18.00 for two years. We will honor all renewals at the old price until that date. We regret this increase but our cost now is a little over $1.00 per copy.

Editors

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

"THE SCARLETT LINE."

"She bound the scarlet line in the window," Joshus ii, 21.

That exceeding riches of grace are exhibited in the narrative centering around this scarlet line. Most preciously is this discovered when we see pictured forth the marvelous kindness of God to poor, perishing sinners. The twelve tribes of Israel with Joshua at their head are now entering into the possession of the land of promise. "And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and came into an harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there."

Look not so disdainfully upon this scene, ye self-rightous, for this is of the Lord. A vessel of mercy whose name is in the Lamb's book of life, an object of Jehovah's everlasting love, is being sought out. (Isaiah 1xii.12.) One who to the end of time is set forth an object of God's distinguishing grace, Rahab the harlot. When the Son of God was in the world in the likeness of sinful flesh, those who highly esteemed themselves murmured that Jesus was gone to be the guest of one that was a sinner, and they contemptuously designated him the friend of publicans and sinners. It is one of the surpassing glories of the gospel that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. (1 Tim. i.15.)

Before the coming of these men Rahab had been much disturbed in her soul. She contemplated the entering in of God's host into Canaan as the massengers of his righteous vengeance. She believed that her people and her city were doomed to destruction. Then might Rahab say within herself, How shall one so wicked as I escape? The day declines, and the mantle of night begins to shade the doomed city, and there in the twilight enter two strangers, men of the children of Israel. It is not so dark but that they are seen of many, and tidings of their presence in the city are taken to the king of Jericho. They are seen of Rahab the harlot,she knows them, too. Who can portray her emotions of soul as she beheld them? O, not with the eyes and emotions of an harlot does she look upon them. Others look upon these messengers with enmity, and would take hold of them with violent hands and slay them. But this woman is moved by a gracious and divine power, and is in exercise before the Lord. She believes that he is, and unholy, a sinner, she trembles before him, but trembling and contrite she is drawn to him; her heart craves his indulgent mercy, and those two men are his, his sacred ones, for Jehovah is the God of Israel. She is moved toward these men because of their God with all graciousness of spirit. "She received the spies with peace."—Heb. xi. 31. No doubt she felt unworthy to lodge the representatives of the favored nation of the Almighty, but an inward satisfaction glowed within in the honor conferred upon her that they should seek shelter under her roof. "He that receiveth you receiveth me." In some little measure no doubt she tasted this blessedness. "She received the spies with peace." But her comfort of mind in her graciousness of heart toward these Israelites is soon disturbed; it has been told the king of this doomed city, "Behold, there came men in hither to-night of the children of Israel, to search out the country. And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which are entered into thine house: for they be come to search out all the country." Will Rahab surrender them a prey to their ravening foes? No, she will

show by her works her faith in god, who is the King of kings. "she brought them up to the roof of her house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof." "Wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" This woman's faith was a living faith, and her faith moved her to shield, to save these spies from the vengeance of the king of Jericho. Her works of faith were thus evidencing her justification. "Was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?" —James ii. 25. The woman took the two men and hid them; she comes down from the roof to face the officers of the king of Jericho, and said thus: "There came men unto me, but I wist not whence they were: and it came to pass, about the time of the shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out: whither the men went I wot not: pursue after them quickly: for ye shall overtake them." What is this? Is this the fruit of faith? Never. Faith in the Lord is a good tree that is planted and grows by the operation of God, and cannot bring forth evil fruit. No lie is of the truth. Let us ponder upon this scene of light and darkness, there is profitable instruction in it to those who fear the Lord. Say not, I would never do so. Child of God, you know not how weak you are, unless kept by the power of God the next moment you will sink in the depravity of your sinful heart into all wickedness. Rahab to shield these hidden spies resorts to her deceiving tongue, and pours forth lies to the men of Jericho. They believe her lies and hasten, as they imagine, in pursuit of the fugitive spies without the gates of Jericho. The spies were beneficial by Rahab's lies. Was this lying excusable? jesuitism might answer affirmatively, saying, the end justifies the means. But an inspired apostle of Jesus Christ has declared the just damnation of all such who slanderously reported and affirmed that he said, "Let us do evil that good may come."—Romans iii. 8 How valiantly, with what holy majesty this holy apostle utterly repudiates such a doctrine. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?"—Romans vi. 1,2. If Rahab was one that was born of the Spirit, in whose heart was that faith in God which is the fruit of the Spirit, is it not a very paradox that she should upon the roof of her house be moved by faith in the Lord to acts of goodness toward these spies, and then descending to the threshold face the officers with cunning falsehoods? Is this something to be winked at and passed over as a trifle? To the child of God no sin is a trifle, but is grievous, damnable. If you are one to who the Lord has given a new heart, all iniquity will be hateful, and sin not only in words and deeds, but in thy thoughts, will make thee heavy and sad, and thy heart will sigh and mourn over it unto thy God.Those who are born of god have a nature imparted to them akin to the nature of God and as exercised by this nature, (2 Peter i. 4,) the new man, which is creatd after the image of him that created him in righteousness and true holiness, (Eph. iv. 24,) they hunger and thirst after righteousness. They cannot feast their eyes upon sin. This being so the question still presents itself, How is it that a child of God can this moment be exercised in love and faith worshiping the Lord, and in a small moment be exercised in matters the most sinful? Can such a state of affairs exist and one in very truth be born of the Spirit, a child of God? And if it be so how do such opposites have subsistence in them? These are momentous inquiries. This is that which is so mysterious, that often causes so much misgiving of heart to those who fear the Lord: that one moment exercised graciously toward God with humble contriteness of heart, or in

grateful praises, and then all is suspended and to our bitter dismay find there is in us a heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. O, the grief of mind that is ours, how discouraged, how we have to blush when once more our thoughts, our faces are turned toward our holy and gracious God. The mystery of these conflicting emotions and sometimes contradictory behavior felt and exhibited in the people of God is that they are the subjects of two natures described in the scriptures as the flesh and the Spirit, (Gal. v. 16,) the old and the new man, (Ephesians iv. 22-24,) and perhaps no clearer statement of these diverse principles can be found than that given in Romans vii. 14-25. All our emotions of contrition of heart, of faith and love and praise in which we worship the Lord, are put forth in us by the operations of God's gracious power. The arising and intrusion of iniquity is from our corrupt Adamic nature, which ever is the heartsaddening, burdensome load of the children of God while they are in this world. The bitter consciousness of indwelling sin forbids us to glory in ourselves before God. O, the mercifulness of the Lord; he pities us in our low estate, and by his gracious teachings we are melted before him in repentance, and we are drawn to cleave alone to the sacrifice and righteousness of Jesus Christ as our only hope of acceptance before the throne of God. It is a most humiliating thing in the lives of the saints that their most blessed and sacred moments may suddenly be defiled by sinful thoughts, and unless kept by the power of God in the sanctuary of his gracious felt presence, so powerful and ensnaring is the depravity of our fleshly heart we shall as suddenly fall into outward iniquities. How much it becomes us then to cry continually for mercy to be kept from the paths of sin. "Hold thou me up and I shall be safe."

The men of Jericho are gone from the door of Rahab's house in hot pursuit of the spies elsewhere, and Rahab instantly ascends to the roof of her house. "Before the spies were laid down, she came unto them upon the roof." Did she then, or in after days, chuckle over the deception she practiced upon her fellow citizens? Ah, memories of sinfulness are not cherished by the pure in heart. What gratification can the remembrance of transgressions afford a believer in Jesus? They are ashamed of all iniquity. (Rom. vi. 21.) The grace of God in them forbids that they should glory in their shame.

"Rahab said unto the men, I know that the Lord hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon, Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you; for the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath."

What changes take place in this woman all within a little space of time. Moved with faith in God she received the spies with peace, and sought to hide them from their foes; then with lies she barricades the entrance of her house and turns away the men of Jericho; now upon the roof this Gentile woman is discoursing most learnedly (as one surely taught of the Lord) concerning God, her faith in him, and breathes forth her longings that Israel, the people of God, would deal friendly with her and her father's house. It was Peter, and Peter's same natural tongue that said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." —John vi. 68,69, and who with oaths and cursing denied Jesus

saying, "I know not the man."—Matt. xxvi. 74, and afterward said, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."—John xxi.17. "Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be."—James iii.10. Ponder these things in thy heart.

Tidings of the onward march of the tribes of Israel, and of God's interposition in their behalf preceded their entrance into Canaan. If the waters of the Red Sea could not impede their way, if Jehovah dried up the sea for them, and they marched through the deep dry shod, if Israel is triumphant over both the kings of the Amorites, who then can withstand this invincible host? Terror fell upon the inhabitants of the land; their courage fled away and all hearts did melt. No one felt these things more deeply than Rahab, and only she of all the city of Jericho was exercised graciously toward the Lord amidst these distressing forebodings. This monument of God's grace is so affected by his gracious power that she attributes the invincible progress of the chosen nation to the Lord, and she believes that their God who has hitherto wrought so effectually in their behalf will yet go on to display his grace unto his beloved people in fulfilling the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. "I know that the Lord hath given you the land." Israel got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither, did their own arm save them, but the Lord's right hand, the light of his countenance and his kingly favor put them in possession of their inheritance. All this is believed in the heart of Rahab, and in her recital of God's grace and power in behalf of Israel she crowns it all with the acknowledgement that "the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in the earth beneath." In Rahab's view, all the Canaanitish gods are famished out of the land; she has cast their images to the moles and to the bats, and the Lord alone is exalted. How divine is that work in a sinner that brings him to that reverend and affectionate recognition of the living and true God. Then, though a sinner, worthy only of his wrath, he is moved to fall down and kneel before the Lord our Maker.

Rahab says, "Our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man." This spiritually is realized by the vessels of mercy who are called unto the knowledge of themselves before the Almighty. All our courage sinks within us when we are apprehended by the Lord to face the curse of the law. Our sins and just comdemnation are brought home to us, and we tremble in apprehension of the execution of his coming judgement. "Because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained." The risen and ascended Savior is that man who is ordained to judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and kingdom. (Acts xvii, 31; 2 Tim. iv. 1.)

Now, when the harlot Rahab had confessed to the spies her belief in God, her terror, the loss of her courage, her meltings of heart in apprehension of coming judgements, her belief in the power and graciousness of the Lord unto Israel, and crowned the whole with declaring that he only was God, then she pours forth her entreaties that kindness might be shewn unto her and to her father's house: "Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the Lord, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token: and that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death." Thus she craved their friendship and deliverance from death. So quickened sinners make

supplication unto the Lord for salvation, that they may not perish in their sins, and the Holy Ghost moves them to crave the friendship of the everlasting God. This is a miracle of God's grace, that a sinner, a creature who in his nature is unholy, enmity against God, should be found thirsting for God, the living God. His compassionate mercy is so sought after. O, to be freed from sin, to be holy, that I might live forever with the Lord. God becomes so lovely and so loved that our heart exclaims, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."

"Give me a true token." How descriptive is this language of that life of entreaty in which those who are born again live before God. Give me a true token of the forgiveness of my sins, cries the mourning soul. Give me a true token that thou art my Savior, of my acceptance in thy sight, O God. Give me a true token of thy covenant, everlasting love. Give me a true token that I am one of thy chosen, that I am a child of God. Thus with fervency the child of God pours forth his supplications, and sometimes like Gideon, (Judges vi.) we feel we must have token upon token to satisfy us. O, to find a quiet resting-place in the sure mercies of our God. Give a true token, one that will not fail me, that will be honored and accepted in that day before the throne of God. Give me the earnest of Spirit in my heart of that inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. Let the beloved Savior kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for his love is better than wine; let him speak to my heart of his dying love. O, that on me might be put the best robe of the righteousness of the Son of God; that on my hand might be put the ring of the Father's everlasting love; the ring that should be the true token that I am still and forever his child; the ring of espousal, of eternal wedlock to the fairest among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely.

Rahab's entreaty was heard, the spies made a covenant of life and kindness with her, saying, "Our life for yours." Your life shall be more precious than our own; we will give our lives a sacrifice "instead of you to die." "Our life for your if ye utter not this our business. And it shall be, when the Lord hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee." It is a gracious mystery that a sinner should be so wrought upon that he is moved, with a weeping heart over his sins, to sue for tokens of the Lord's tender mercy, and it is very wonderful indeed, and surpassingly gracious that the Almighty inclines his ear and hears our cry. O, he hears the sighing of the needy, he will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. He forgetteth not the cry of the humble. What encouragement is this for needy souls to wait upon the Lord. "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." So innumerable are our weaknesses, temptations and necessities, and for myself I confess that as the days and the years pass by they become no less, and I should be utterly discouraged and faint indeed were it not that in prayer to the Lord I am enabled to cast all my care upon him who careth for me. But to do this I need the gracious operations of the Comforter to bring my heart to the persuasion that the Lord forgetteth not the cry of the humble, and thus I am divinely constrained to come boldly to the throne of grace to obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Rahab believes the spies; their covenant promises are inspiring and satisfying, and she manifests her grateful acquiescence by facilitating their escape from Jericho. "Then she let them down by a cord through the window: for her house was upon the

town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall. And she said unto them, Get you to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you; and hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers be returned; and afterward may ye go your way. And the men said unto her, We will be blameless of this thine oath which thou hast made us swear. Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by; and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee. And it shall be, that whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head, and we will be guiltless: and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him. And if thou utter this our business, then we will be quit of thine oath which thou hast made us to swear. And she said, According unto your words, so be it. And she sent them away, and they departed: and she bound the scarlet line in the window."

Fred W. Keene

(Continued next month)

MEETINGS

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Pigg River Association will be held, the Lord willing, the first Sunday in August, Friday and Saturday before (Aug. 3,4,5). Roanoke Church is the host for this setting of the Association. The meeting place will be on the grounds and the meeting house at Pigg River Church.

To get to the Pigg River Meeting House those coming from the North on U.S. 220 turn right on to State Route 919 (which is three-quarters of a mile south of Boones Mill, Va.) Follow 919 to State Route 641 and turn right on 641 to Calloway, Va. Turn left in Calloway on State Route 602, and follow signs to Meeting House.

Those coming from the South, go Route 220 to Rocky Mount, take route 40 West to Ferrum, Va. At Ferrum turn right on Route 602 (Ferrum College will be on left immediately on 602) Go 6 1/2 miles on 602, turn left on 752 (you will be going straight as 602 courses here.) Go 1/2 mile on 752. Turn right on 750-go 1 1/2 miles to church.

Brother Jamie Cooper
Association Clerk

An annual all day meeting will be held, the Lord willing, at Old Pine creek church on the 4th of July, 1984. The church is located off highway #221, five miles north of Floyd, Virginia. Those coming from Floyd turn left onto road #682. Those coming from Roanoke, turn right onto road #682. All lovers of the Truth are invited and expecially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Roy Agee

The tenth annual fifth Sunday meeting consisting of four churches will meet, the Lord willing, with Hopewell Church, July 27th, 28th and 29th. We invite all lovers of the Truth to meet with us. Hopewell Church is located about five miles west of Winnsboro, Texas. For further information call 214-629-3561.

Elder Joe L. Hamrick, Pastor

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR APRIL 1984

S.H. Wood, VA. $6.00
Mrs. Cascyle Bagwell, TX. 7.00
Mrs. Martha L. Newnan, NC..... 2.00
Mrs. M.E. Womble, NC..... 2.00
Mrs. H.D. Underwood, VA..... 2.00
Mrs. Amie Benson, NC 2.00
Eld. John Wingfield, VA..... 5.00
Mrs. Emodell Murphy, AR..... 7.00
Mrs. Erma Broach, AR. 2.00
Mrs. Rita A. Paschal, NC..... 2.00
Mrs. Sara Cody, AR..... 18.00
Mrs. Nilie Brown, NC 2.00
Eld. Fred Neikirk, FL 2.00
Mrs. H.A. Harlow, TX..... 18.00
Mrs. Wm. A. Jewett, Jr., OH 7.00
Mrs. Betty Lovelace, NC 7.00
A.E. Moran, VA..... 15.00
Mrs. Peal H. Pendleton, VA 7.00
Mrs. Flora C. Vest, VA 2.00
Ora R. Poff, Va..... 1.00
A Friend, VA..... 7.00
Mrs. A.C. Sweeney, WV..... 50.00
Mrs. Roma H.C. Smith, AL..... 10.00
Mrs. James A. Smith, TX..... 3.00
L.W. Myers, VA 2.00
Miss Reidy Pickral, VA 50.00
Mrs. Joe Kee, TX 2.00
Barney Evers, AR 3.00
Mrs. Olive F. Hastings, MD 8.00
Mrs. David M. Spangler, VA 1.00
Mrs. Minnie Barrett, AL..... 3.00
Mrs. Sarah H. Barker, VA 25.00
Eld. J.A. Albritton, FL 12.00
Barnabas J. Brammer, MD..... 2.00

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."
Mat. 7:12

OBITUARIES

LENA ALTIZER AKERS

Sister Lena Akers was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for 70 years. She loved her church dearly. Due to poor health in her last years she was unable to attend as often as she would have liked. Throughout her life she walked with God and loved her family and friends very much.

Born in Montgomery County on April 9, 1896 to Merritt Caroline Altizer. she married Chymer Akers on June 19, 1917. her husband died December 19, 1966 after long suffering with arthritis. Sister Lena died March 13, 1984. They had four children. She is survived by one son, J.T. Akers, two daughters, Mrs. Marvin (Lucille) Duncan and Mrs. Posey (Frances) Weeks. There are also twelve grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren and her sister, Glenna Yeatts.

Her funeral service was held at Pleasant Valley Church at Alum Ridge, Virginia, by Mr. Everett Reed and Elder Roy Agee. She was laid to rest at the Akers Cemetery.

Written by her daughter,

Frances Weeks
By request of the clerk of
Valley View Primitive Baptist Church

ERIC CALK THURSTON

1896-1984

I hope that I believe the things I'm about to write.

It pleased our Heavenly Father to call home one of His dear children, Erie Calk Thurston, Mar. 12, 1984 in her home in

Downsville, La. making her stay on earth 87 yrs. 2 months and 25 days.

I was truly blessed to be with her on many visits in her home and never saw anyone with more faith and trust in her God. She was a very faithful and devoted member of Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church near Farmerville, La. never missing a service unless sickness hindered her from going. She was an inspiration for anyone who knew her since she wanted the peace and sweet fellowship of Christ the Savior that dwell within our hearts.

To sit and talk with Sister Erie was a feeling of being in the presence of one of the God's little children. She was a true devout believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace and was truly blessed to have a lovely family that respected her belief and love for the church very highly.

Sister Erie leaves three daughters, Mrs. Ethel Mae Pardue, Shreveport, La.; Mrs. Cascyle Bagwell, Weatherford, Tex.; Mrs. Martin G. Reade, Sedona, Arizona. Three sons, H.W. Thurston, Farmerville, La.; Egbert Thurston, Jackson, Miss.; Ferrel Thurston, Farmerville, La.; one brother J.D. Calk, Hamilton, Tex.; thirteen grandchildren and 20 great grandchildren.

Her funeral was held Mar. 13, 1984 at Mt. Nebo Church in Downsville, La. by Elder David E. Turner. Her body was laid to rest by her husband's body in Mt. Nebo cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the coming of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the Great Resurrection.

Written by the request of
her children and family,
Elder David E. Turner

BUELAH ALTIZER WELLS

In loving memory and humbliness these words are written of our beloved Sister Buelah Wells. Sister Wells was born December 4, 1907. She was the twin daughter of Merritt and Caroline Altizer. She marriedj Asa Wells on June 3, 1933.

Sister Wells united with Valley View Church in July, 1931 with three of her sisters. She died December 17, 1983. Her love of the church was shown through th years by her attendance, devotion and thoughts of others never of herself. She was so comforting to others. She was blessed to receive a wonderful gift of wisdom and understanding of the words of Christ. She fought a good fight, she finished her course, she kept the faith.

She was a faithful member until her sudden death. Her husband, Asa Wells, preceded her. She was so faithful in caring for him. She was a good wife, devoted mother, kind friend and neighbor and loving sister.

Surviving her are one daughter, one sister, Glenna Yeatts, and two grandchildren, Angela and Caroline.

Her funeral was held on December 20, 1983 at Valley View Church by her pastor Elder Raymond Goad and assistant pastor Elder Roy Agee. Interment was in Roselawn Memory Gardens.

Written by request of the clerk of Valley View Church. In loving memory,
Her daughter,

Naomi W. Agee

ANNIE K. WOOD

It has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst our dearly beloved Sister Annie Wood.

She was born April 9, 1900 to the late Spencer and Minnie Scott King of Edgecombe County, North Carolina. Her first marriage was to Luther Flood in 1918. To this union was born two boys, John and Edward.

Sister Annie united with the Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist church on Saturday, May 21, 1921 and was baptized on Sunday. She told the church of her travels that day. She said she walked one mile carrying her nine month old baby in her arms, but related to them that some power greater than any man had carried her that day. Sister Annie remained a dear and faithful sister as long as she lived and attended meetings as long as she was able.

Mr. Flood Died in 1927 and she was married to Cicero E. Williams in 1929. After the death of brother Williams in 1956, she was married to Harvey Wood in 1963 who also preceded her in death. She lived with her oldest son and his wife several years before her death and they so lovingly cared for her and helped her as often as she was able to meet with the brethren of her faith.

Sister Annie was called home on February 25, 1982 at the age of 81. Her pastor was ill at the time and Elder J. T. Prescott conducted her funeral at Gay Yost Funeral Home in Rocky Mount, N. C., after which she was buried in the Williams Family Cemetery, Edgecombe County, North Carolina beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

She is survived by two sons, John and Edward Flood, twelve grandchildren, twelve great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild, and a host of brethren and friends who will long miss her.

Written by one who sincerely loved her:

Fannie Mae Harper

Done by order of the church while in conference, February 25, 1984.

Elder Henry C. Jones, Moderator
J. Carroll Williams, Clerk

BOOK NOTICES

BEEBE EDITORIALS

VOLUMES
ONE - THREE - FOUR

These three volumes of the editorial writings of Elder Gilbert Beebe are all available from us for immediate delivery. If the Lord wills we expect to have Volume two out in the next few months. This will give us a matching set of the first four volumes of his writings from the years 1832 to 1862.

These books are bound in a beautiful Library Buckram, silk screen finish and have the finest paper and binding available. Volume One contains 768 pages and Volumes 3 and 4 approximately 500 pages each. Your satisfaction is guaranteed by us.

We very much appreciate the help so many have given to make it possible to go this far. While we are very aware also that the price of the books might seem high to some, we have kept the price as low as possible and still be able to print further volumes. We make nothing for ourselves in this except the pleasure of making good reading available to our friends. All proceeds are put back into additional books, except for actual expenses.

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P.S. If you have ordered and have not received your book, please let us know.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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POETRY

MY HEAVENLY HOME

To the sweet heavenly home above
My longing spirit soars;
I long to see the God I love,
The Savior I adore.

I long to see His smiling face,
And in His presence dwell,
Forever in His kind embrace,
And of His glory tell.

I'm weary of this sin and strife;
I long for perfect peace,
When I shall leave this mortal life,
Then sin and strife will cease.

I long for rest, sweet rest in Thee,
In that dear heavenly home;
Thy glorious beauties there to see,
Where my Redeemer's gone.

But must be paid sin's wages here,
Before release can come;
Must travel on in doubts and fear,
Until our race is run.

The race Thou hath ordained for me,
With patience let me run;
And give me grace to follow Thee,
And say, Thy will be done.

Mrs. M.N. Griffin

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EDITORIAL

COMMUNION SERVICES

"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." (I Cor. 11: 23-29.)

"I received of the Lord." The Apostle Paul received it because the Lord appointed it. It was from the Lord, the King, the Head of the Church. He is our lawgiver and ruler who has appointed this service and has required it of His church. We should remember that the ordinance of the Lord's supper is a commemoration, a declaration, a proclamation of the death of Christ and is to be observed by His Church till He comes. There seems to be no set time for this duty in the Scriptues that we can determine; neither as to the day, week, or month; neither as to the beginning or ending of it. However, we do find in Acts 20:7 which says: "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." I truly feel that this blessed ordinance should be observed more often than most of our churches observe it, including the ones I attempt to serve. Once a year can hardly be considered sufficiently frequent for a memorial of one who should be so dear and precious to the hearts of us all. But the duty itself is commanded; the time of its observance seems to be left to the liberty of the individual churches.

Jesus Christ saw where all his chosen people would end up, due to the fall of Adam and Eve. But the Son of God offered himself and said, "Lo, I come." this was a voluntary substitution of Jesus Christ in his person, on behalf of his people. Did Christ know all that would be involved? Yes, from all eternity. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of

us all." The curse being upon his people, the wrath of God being upon them, they were all doomed. God's holiness, faithfulness, righteousness and truth were all engaged. Yet, saith Christ, "Lo, I come." "For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will that sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Christ was engaged in a glorious cause, a great undertaking, to deliver all the elect of God from death, hell, Satan and sin; to answer to the law, to justice, to undergo the curse, and bring his people into glory. "Who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." Our Lord came to suffer and to die.He suffered that which answered to the law of God; he suffered that which answered to the justice of God.

I am God and besides me there is no Saviour." Divinity cannot die, the Godhead cannot die, but the Lord had two natures. The eternal Son of God assumed in union with Himself a perfect manhood, He represented all His people, who are the objects of God's love. They are bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. The sins of his people were all laid upon Him. "Who His own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree." "The Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all." Moreover, when God the Father laid all the sins of His people upon our blessed Mediator; He so washed his people in His own precious blood, that they are presented spotless and faultless before the throne of God, free of any condemnation. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."

"The Lord Jesus, before ascending up to heaven, left two ordinances to be observed by his people until he comes again: Believers' Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The ordinance of believers' baptism: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." This ordinance consists of the immersion of the believer in water, which is a token of his death, burial, and resurrection with Christ. "Buried with him by baptism, into death, even so we should walk in newness of life." Going into the water and being baptized does not save us, but is only a symbol of the new birth, which does save us. "Ye must be born again."

The Lord's Supper is the second ordinance: "As often as ye eat the bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He comes." This ordinance should require our most earnest attention.

"For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." May we be given to investigate, involving our past experiences in what we trust the Holy Spirit has performed in us, and examine the way in which we trust the Lord has led us. Our ways may have many different aspects to them, but we must all come to a similiar experience in our lives, regardless of how we were led there. This experience involves an inward death. The Lord's people know nothing of this inward death while in their natural unconverted state." "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." We must first be quickened by the Holy Spirit before being able to feel, know, or experience anything about this inward death in our conscience and feelings. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespases and sins." The Apostle Paul says, "For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment

came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death." We must be given spiritual life and light before we can ever sincerely feel and see our dead, lost condition. Our sins must become "exceedingly sinful."

What mortal man has ever kept the Holy Law of God? Not one, no not one. "For all have sinned." Has the sentence of death ever come in you with power and with its condemning curse? "The soul that sinneth it shall die." "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." When the above killing sentence came into your heart and conscience, did it not slay you as to salvation by the works of the law? Did it not cause all your works, efforts, and self-righteousness to become as filthy rags? Yea, was not all your old natural religion (if you had any) turned into garbage? Did it not condemn you and kill you outright as to any assurance that may have sprung from your own righteousness? You could now say with the Apostle Paul, "For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." So in a sense you die an inward experencial death in your experience, under the wrath of God. You are made to see and feel what a holy, powerful, yet terrible God you have to deal with; and due to all your many, many sins, you feel to be justly doomed to die and enter into eternal damnation. As you feel, and fear the terrors of God, you die to all legal hope, feeling there is nothing in you to save you from the lowest hell. So when the law is applied to your conscience by the power of God, it kills, it slays, it condemns. For it is a sentence of death and causes you to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death." Does this experience not bring you to the foot of the cross of Christ, naked and empty-handed? The song writer said, "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling." Have you been fully convinced that unless the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ is shed and given to you, you have no hope at all for heaven and immortal glory? If so, come to the Lord's table, eat and drink worthily, not in your own self, but in Christ.

There must have been a time in your experience when your agonizing soul, finding no escape and thinking deliverance to be impossible, was given by the eyes of faith to look away from self, and the harsh demands of the law, to Jesus Christ as the only source of your deliverance. If so, come, eat and drink worthily. Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." If you go to the table with any feeling that you must by your own works and merits have even a little part in your salvation, you come eating and drinking unworthily and shall be quilty of the body and blood of Christ.

Taking part in the Lord's supper should be a very serious and solemn occasion. The Lord's supper is nothing to us unless we partake of it as spiritual persons in a spiritual way. We must understand what we are doing in coming to the communion table, for the mere mechanical celebration will be vanity.

O, pray that the Spirit of God come and put life into our communion; that we may be given to feel real fellowship with Christ in breaking and eating the bread, and drinking of the wine. We must first remember that the Lord's supper is first of all a memorial, an exhibition, a setting forth, a proclamation of his death. "The just for the unjust that he might bring us to God" for"Without the shedding of blood is no remission for sins." The end of Christ's death was that dying for us, by the shedding of his blood, there is the remission of sins, for which we are to give thanks. There would be no need of giving thanks for the death of Christ

unless it was an atoning death, and a propitiation for sin. We are commanded to set forth in a symbolic manner the death of Christ, "Till he come."

"Do this in remembrance of me." The bread must be broken; and what better emblem of suffering can you have than that? The bread is a symbol of that dear body, broken with stripes and crimson with his own precious blood. Look at the wine in the cup, does not that also indicate pain and suffering? It cost our Lord untold agony to redeem us from the lowest hell. So can you ever imagine that any man is fit person to participate in the emblems which set forth that suffering and agony if he has never felt, in his own soul, any agony on account of his many sins? If your eyes have wept no tears of repentance, how can you properly remember him whose broken flesh and poured out blood was for you sins?

You may say, O, I find myself so forgetful of Jesus, something seems to steal away my heart, and I'm so unmindful of him upon whom my affections ought to be set. Do you feel to be too negligent in the holy exercise of prayer? Do you feel in your heart that your love towards him has grown cold? Earthly business seems to engross my mind too much: idols, foolishness and many other things seem to take my soul and mind away from Christ. I forget Christ because there are so many other things around me to attract my attention. "So that we cannot do the things that we would." Yes, but why is this? Is it not because we carry about with us the old Adam of sin and death? We have an old man too vile to have a parallel "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." If we were purely and entirely regenerated beings, we would be enabled to sit down and mediate on all our Saviour died and suffered. You may have many different feelings within you to cause you to be fearful to partake of the Lord's supper. Sometimes you may even have a fear of being lost, "Christ came to seek and to save them that are lost." Sometimes you may feel to be such a terrible hypocrite and sinner until you feel unworthy to partake of the Lord's supper. "Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Doubts about yourself is no bar; feeling to be unworthy is more of a qualification than a bar. Feeling to be sick of your sins and your sincere need of Christ is good. "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Do we mourn over our felt condition? "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced and mourn." There is a habitual mourning frame of spirit required in us, may we all be given to mourn our felt sinfulness. "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

When you come to the communion table and do not find him as you would, if in eating of the bread, he is not manifested to you; and if drinking of the wine, you get no taste of his love as you would like, do you not still trust in him for your only hope of salvation? Do not depend so much on outward signs and visible evidence, but say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." O, that I may be given to feast upon but one small crumb from his precious table.

The right spirit of communion services has about it something so pathetic, so tender, so touching, so full of fellowship, that it seems to bring us so near to Christ and Christ so near to us. We so much feel our love for him and his dear people until we can say surely this is holy ground because of his felt presence. Surely we can feel this is a little taste of of heaven here on earth. May we always have a silent prayer in our hearts that this may be our feelings and experience during communion service.

In Bonds of love, Elder Joe L. Hamrick

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church was constituted June 11, 1884. It is located on 704 near Madison, N.C. Their meeting time is the first Sunday of each month. Their present Pastor is Elder H.W. Wray.

CORRESPONDENCE

803 West Brooks
Norman, Oklahoma 73069
May 18, 1984

Dear Elder Key:

I am enclosing an account of my experience or at least what I believe to be my experience. If you consider it to be suitable for printing in The Signs you have my permission to do so.

I want to express my gratitude to the editors, contributing editors and the associate editors for the time, effort and love put forth each month in sending out The Signs. I look forward to its arrival in the mail each month and always enjoy reading the editorials, experiences and articles.

It is amazing to me that this periodical established in 1832 is still going strong and continues to declare the truth. Surely God's guiding and directing Hand is in the matter.

In love,
Bob Champeau

EXPERIENCE

I was raised on a small farm near Norman, Oklahoma during the 1930's and early 40's. My mother and father were deaf, which made the task of raising a family during those hard times even more difficult. There were the never ending chores to be done each day, crops and livestock to be tended, and school to attend. There was also time for fun such as fishing, hunting, swimming, pitching horseshoes, etc.

Those years were filled with growing, working, playing and schooling but very little thought concerning God or my eternal destiny. There were no churches

nearby and even if there had been my parents could not have enjoyed the preaching and singing because of their handicap.

Occasionally my grandfather, Elder W. N. Green, would come to our home from his home in western Oklahoma at Altus for a short visit. I knew he was a preacher and a man that was very much respected, but the subject of the church or religion was seldom discussed. I do remember one time when I went to Oklahoma City with my mother to visit her sister and an appointment was made for my grandfather to preach before a small number of people in a small rented room in the downtown Municipal Auditorium building. That is my earliest recollection of hearing a man preach. Later, I recall going with my mother and my aunt to Altus to visit my grandfather and we attended a little church. I remember thinking the singing and preaching lasted too long because I wanted to go outside to play.

My pursuit of the world and worldly pleasures continued through my elementary and high school days and during my service in the Army after graduation from High School. After my discharge from the Army I began to attend a Missionary Baptist Church, more from a moral standpoint than because of any religious conviction. I later accepted the invitation of the pastor to come forward, to "accept Christ" and be baptized.

Soon afterward I was married and my young bride and I moved to California to seek our fortune. We transferred our church membership by letter to a church in California but attended only a few times. We were more interested in worldly pleasures than in going to church.

After four and a half years in California and the birth of our first two children we moved back to Oklahoma in order for me to pursue a college education. During this time we attended a series of classes conducted by the rector (pastor) of a local Episcopal Church. We later became members of this church. My wife took an active interest in women's activities and our children were membrs of the children's choir. I began to teach a Sunday School class and was later elected to the Vestry (the lay council of the church). I also served as an usher at Sunday morning services. I began to think of what a great work I was doing for the Lord.

As time passed I began to become dissatisfied with my activities and the church services. In the Episcopal church much of the worship service is read or sung from the Book of Common Prayer. In the beginning these ritualistic services were meaningful and beautiful to me and I felt to be worshiping and praising God. However, as time passed and my dissatisfaction grew the services became more of a cold formality rather than an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. I began to be aware of a growing need and desire to hear the Gospel preached in power and in the spirit. The preaching I heard seemed to have little substance to satisfy my hungry soul and there was too much talking of social and political issues. I was hungry but I was not being fed.

At last I found the courage to go to the pastor and inform him of my feelings. He did not seem to understand my misery or what I was going through and offered no words of comfort or consolation.

I finally came to the conclusion that my work and former zeal in that church was not praise, honor and glorify God but to satisfy the flesh. I wanted the applause of men. I wanted to satisfy my own ego and I wanted that feeling of importance.

I resigned my elected position of Vestryman and I resigned as a Sunday School teacher and I did not attend that church anymore. The pastor could not understand these actions. I did not fully understand my feelings at the time either but I knew I could not continue walking

that path.

For a long period of time I did not attend or visit any church. Eventually, on a weekend visit to western Oklahoma with my family to visit my aunt we attended Sunday services with her at Little Flock Primitive Baptist church in Altus, Oklahoma. My Grandfather Green, now deceased, had been the pastor of that church for well over 30 years.

As we sat down near the rear of the little frame church and the few members present started singing "Amazing Grace" my heart was stirred and my eyes filled with tears. I had not heard those old hymns that were sung that day in so long and they sounded so beautiful to my ears.

Not long afterward Aunt Willie (Willie Foster Smith, daughter of Elder W.N. Green) and her husband, D.A. Smith, came to visit in our home. Late one night, after the rest of my family had gone to bed, we began to discuss religious matters. As a result of this discussion a disagreement developed over the free will of man and the free and sovereign grace of God and which is instrumental in the eternal salvation of the sinner. The subject of predestination was also discussed at some length. My position was that man's free will enabled him to determine his eternal destiny. I believe so strongly that I was right that I became quite angry when the opposing view was expressed.

The following morning we all expressed our misgivings at what had transpired the night before and regardless of our differing viewpoints on the points of doctrine in question there was no question concerning the mutual love and respect we had for one another. We did not discuss it further during their visit.

During the following weeks my mind was constantly on the subject and I began to search the scriptures. I also had a desire to attend services at Little Flock Church again.

In May, 1970 I drove to Altus to attend the annual three days meeting at the church. I greatly enjoyed the singing, preaching and fellowship and witnessed the love the people had for each other. On Sunday morning a man that I had not heard before was invited to take the stand to preach. This man, Elder W. W. Taylor, from Arkansas, began to preach and my ears became finely tuned to his every work. I do not remember his text or even the words he spoke that day but I know they were delivered with power from on high and it seemed every word was delivered directly to me. I suddenly saw myself for what I really was; a quilty sinner in the sight of a Holy and Righteous God. All of my self-righteousness, my ego, my self-esteem was stripped away and my guilty, sinful, vile nature revealed.

By the time Elder Taylor had finished his sermon I was reduced to a flood of tears and on my knees. When the invitation was extended for church membership I could not hold back. After relating my experience to the church and asking for a home I was accepted as a candidate for baptism and was baptised the following month at our regular fourth Sunday meeting by our pastor, Elder C. M. Haygood.

At the time of this writing I have driven the 135 miles to Altus for our monthly meetings for the past 14 years and I hope I have the privilege of attending for many more years to come.

I cannot say that I KNOW I am a child of God and that my eternal destiny is secure. Only God knows whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. God has given me hope and some evidence that I might be one of His and I wouldn't trade my hope and my little bit of faith for all gold and silver and kingdoms of this world.

It seems so much of my time is spent in a lukewarm condition or in the valley. The cares of this world seem to take

precedence over spiritual matters. I am made to wonder so much of the time, "Am I His or am I not?"

Occasionally I feel to be lifted to the mountain top and made to sit in heavenly places and to rejoice in a loving Saviour. If I know my heart I am most thankful for these seasons of unmerited favor and can say with Job, "I know that my Redeember liveth."

In Love,
Bob Champeau

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May 2, 1984

Dear Elder Williams:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my many brethren throughout this part of the country for their many acts of kindness bestowed upon me during my stay in the hospital and since I came home. According to the medical staff at V.A. Hospital at Salem, VA. I was walking in the shadow of death when I went in. It says in the 23 Psalm of David "Yea, though I walk in the valley and shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou are with me; thy rod and thy staff, they do comfort me.

Elder Williams, I have been blessed of the Lord to see everything in a light that I have not been able to see for 25 years.

I am happy and I know the Lord does wonderful & gracious things for His people. Wishing you & Sister Williams the best in your work & efforts.

In Bonds of Love
Eld. Jock W. Cox

P.O. Box 65
Mt. Meigs, AL 36057

Dear Elder Williams:

Enclosed is a check for $13.00 to renew my subscription to the Signs of The Times for 2 years. It is with great pleasure and much enjoyment for me to be able to receive and read such words as are printed in it. Even that we never see or hear some of the writers, I feel very close when reading and trying to understand the message they have so ably put in print for me and so many others to enjoy. May the Good Lord's richest blessings be with each one of you that has any part in the printing or work on the Signs of The Times. Keep up the good work.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Roma H. Smith

Sunday April 29, 1984

Dear Bro. Key,

I enjoyed the Union meeting this weekend very much. I feel we had a wonderful meeting. The preaching was so uplifting for me. I feel the sermons were surely as the voice of one man. I can't be thankful enough, unworthy as I am, to be allowed to be numbered with such dear people. I love them all. The words spoken were the things I love to hear (and needed to hear this weekend). I'm glad I was able to tape a portion of it so I can enjoy it again.

Bro. Key, I had mean't to write you all week but didn't get it done. When looking through some of my things, I ran across the attached poem which my dear Mom wrote some years ago. If you find it worthy of publication, I would like to share it with her many friends and family who read the "Signs of The Times." It is a treasure to me, but then she was very dear to me. For some time

before God called her home, at the meetings she would ask for the Hymn 517 on page 206 of the Hymn and Tune Book—"Why should we start and fear to die, what tim'rous worms we mortals are! . . .

On the 18th of June, 1983 the summons came from on high. She told me "I'm not going to make it . . . Goodbye." She then closed her eyes to this world and I feel she surely "rested her head upon His breast and breathed her life out sweetly there." She left us very quietly and peaceably. Though I miss her so very much, I know my loss is her eternal gain. Some time before she departed this life to be with her Lord, the words it is "joy unspeakable to be with the Lord," were given her one night. When she would ask a table grace, she would almost always ask the Lord to prepare us for what the day might bring or for what he had in store for us. She asked him before breakfast that last morning and I feel he surely prepared her.

I'm sorry to take up so much of your time but I felt I wanted to share this with you all. May God continue His blessings on you.

Your unworthy sister in Christ, I hope,
Jean Moran

Dear precious brethren in Christ
I want to talk to you
To try to tell in my simple way
Of the trials I've been through.

I cannot name a definite place
Nor a specific date,
When Christ began His work in me
As some of you relate.

When I was a little girl
Under six years old,
I began to worry deeply
About the welfare of my soul.

I felt to be so sinful,
The worst child my mother had;
While the others enjoyed childhood,
I was cast down and sad.

I thought that I was going to die,
And hell would be my doom.
I wondered why I was ever born,
Since I had to die so young.

I know I worried my dear Mother,
With questions that I asked.
But little did she know the trouble
That was raging in my breast.

She was oh so very patient
And consoled me as best she could.
But as my thoughts go back to the time
and place,
I think, and feel she understood.

I could not know that Jesus cared,
The devil and hell was all my dread.
But after awhile this seemed to pass,
And I had other interests instead.

I then passed through a period,
Seemingly unconcerned,
Til gradually in the future
Those tormenting fears returned.

I would go to the movies
And wish I hadn't gone.
Because I didn't want to be found there
Should Jesus call me home.

When I was twenty-eight years old
I lost my only son.
Our family circle on earth was broken
But I hope in Heaven had begun

One day when I was so very lonely,
Feeling in the sight of God condemned,
I, in search for consolation,
Tried to find a certain hymn.

I was searching for assurance
That the promise was to me.
That He would never leave nor forsake

me
But forever with me be.

But on opening my hymn book,
My eyes fell upon the following verse,
Then instead of findng comfort,
I felt my condemnation just.

"Oh, Lord, it has seemed good to Thee
To take my infant dear.
I hope it will work good for me
And cause me Thee to fear."

"To show me that I should not prize
Nothing on earth so high,
As Thee the Sovereign Lord of all
Who rules the earth and sky."

One night I dreamed I saw my mother
Just as happy as she could be.
She and all the saints were singing,
"Rock of Ages cleft for me."

Then one night I saw my Saviour
As he hung upon the tree;
This was witnessed by my pastor,
Several others, and by me.

I no longer fear the devil,
Tis my precious Lord I fear.
I feel he has my sins forgiven
And tenderly keep me in His care.

Now when my Savior calls me home,
This is my sincere prayer.
To rest my head upon His breast
And breathe my life out sweetly there.

Lelia Blackwell

URGENT!

Look on your address label.
If the expiration date is
8/84
it will expire with this issue. Please send renewal in the mail today.

Perfection

The Lord took them by the hand,
To lead them to a better land
But they began to dance and laugh
And even worshipped a golden Calf
Perfection wasn't in this sect
Their love was cold and they had no respect
So God made a new covenant with His clan
And they're kept by the Power of His loving hand
He sent His Son, as a Babe
It was His will for him to stay
On this earth a little while
He suffered much, had many trials
But He came here to save His Bride
From the sins that surrounded her on every side
He submitted Himself, to be nailed to the cross
Thus paying the price that His elect wasn't lost
Twas the will of God, twas His preperation
For God willed that His Son, was the way to perfection
And its took the blood shed of Jesus Christ
To redeem His elect and give them life
Thus had to be a testatoe for this tribe
So He made testimony through the wound in His side
And paid our debts with the blood He shed
So no more price for sin is in our debt
God wasn't satisfied with the ones before
So He made a new covenant, that opened the door
The old law wasn't perfect, so He made instead
One that brought in a better hope as He said
He put His laws into their hearts
He wrote them in the minds of His elect
And all of His Children shall give him respect
For they are to Him a people of love

He protects for He is their God
Nothing can pluck them, out of His hand
They are His and His shall forever stand
It is the spirit within them, that God has given
To those God elected to go to Heaven
And that is where the perfection lies
through the blood of the Lamb, twas God's will He died
But he didn't leave His Bride, without a hope
He sent her the Comforter the Holy Ghost
Which eases her miseries from suffering and shame
They've made to know that sin in the flesh is to blame
But if sin is condemned in the flesh we know
That the spirit is perfect, the Lord told us so
And all who are God's Children are akin
They've forgiven all their iniquities even though thy sin
But they still have a fearful look for the day
Of that eternal judgement, let Come what may

Kate Mathews

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Whereas, Elder David V. Spangler served Durham Primitive Baptist Church faithfully as Pastor for 32 years, preaching the Gospel, baptizing belivers in Christ, conducting numerous funerals, and visiting the sick and shut-in; therefore; Resolved that the members of Durham Primitive Baptist Church express their love, respect, and appreciation to Elder Spangler and his helpmate, Sister Nannie Spangler.

Read and approved by the members of Durham Primitive Church assembled in conference May 18, 1984.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Catherine Humbarger, Clerk

JOHN 14:6

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

This was the answer given by Jesus unto Thomas when he asked, How can we know the way? Jesus had just promised that he would go to prepare a place for his disciples, and that he would come again and receive them unto himself. He was not speaking to a crowd of unbelievers, but to his disciples with whom he had just eaten the last supper and after Judas had gone out.

"I am the way." Jesus spake these graceful words, yet there are many graceless professors who claim to know the way and are always trying to show others, but they know not our Lord and Savior, because, "no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him." When Peter said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," Jesus said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." No man can reveal the way unto another, and even if he knew him he would not be trying to teach others to know him, because God hath said, "And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for all shall know me from the least to the greatest." They be the blind leading the blind and both shall fall in the ditch. They would deceive the very elect if it were possible, saying, behold, he is in the secret chamber, or here, or some place else. This is impossible however

for the elect shall all be taught of God Himself. (John 24:24 & John 6:45). Every man that has heard and learned of the Father comes to Christ, and no man can come to him except the Father draw him.

Christ is the way, not a way, but the only way any poor, helpless sinner will ever enter heaven and immortal glory. He was the way before the foundation of the world, for he stood as a lamb slain even then in the mind and purpose of God and this was brought to pass in time. Why was it necessary that he should be slain? Because his children would sin and fall under the curse of the law and he was the only one who could redeem them. God's law is just and holy and its penalty is death, for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. Christ, who knew no sin, must take our sins upon himself and shed his precious and holy blood, for the blood of heifers, bulls and goats, etc., under the old Levitical law could in no way atone for sin. Neither could the blood of any man, save Jesus, atone for the sins of another because of his own sins. All men are the progeny of Adam in the flesh. They were in his loins when he ate the forbidden fruit, therefore his sin became theirs. "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all sinned." Adam was a figure of Christ and Eve was a figure or type of the church. She was in Adam when he was formed of the dust of the earth and this was to indicate that the elect were in Christ in eternity. They were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. As Adam is the head of all the earthly family, so is Christ the head of his church. Christ is the head and the church is his body. We are bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. Being a type of Christ, Adam was not deceived as was Eve, but because of his love for her he followed her into death, though he had no power to redeem her. Christ also loves his bride and would die to redeem her. It was possible for him to do this because he had no sin of his own, but in his Godhead it was impossible for him to die, therefore he must become incarnate. "Forasmuch then as the children (the children which God had given him) are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil." (Heb. 2:13-14). In his flesh Christ could and did shed his blood and die on the cross of Calvary for his children; not all the children of the world as some proclaim, but the ones God had given him. If he had shed his precious blood for everyone then everyone is saved and there is no need of hell and everlasting damnation, for by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.

Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you." This is often misquoted when "away" is added. He was not to go away to prepare a place in heaven for us, because that was prepared in eternity. "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." No, Jesus did not go away to prepare a place for us, but he was the way when he went to Calvary and shed his blood for us. (I only hope that I am included). This is the way, the only way, poor, helpless sinners are cleansed and redeemed from the curse of the law. When Christ died his children died with him, for the body must die when the head dies. The body cannot live without the head, and Christ is our head. Christ has risen from the dead however, and because he lives we shall also live. This is our blessed hope, and how sweet it does seem at times.

Jesus is the way and the truth, He is the Word of God and is God. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." That which is not truth is a lie, and God

cannot lie. That is the only thing which he cannot do. Every man is a liar, but God is true. We come forth from the womb speaking lies, but he is just and holy and no guile was found in his mouth. In his prayer to the Father as recorded in the seventeenth chapter of St. John, Jesus said, "Thy word is truth." The words which God spake are truth, and Jesus being the Word is the Truth."

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." There are those who deny this, for they say some scriptures are contradictory and that God would be the author of sin if the scriptures mean what they say. In denying this they make God a liar (in their own hearts), because they have not believed the record that God gave of his Son. But we that believe on the Son of God have the witness within ourselves, for he has promised to send the Holy Spirit who will guide us into all truth. Peter tells us, and I know from experience, that many scriptures are hard to be understood. The unlearned and unstable wrest these scriptures (change them to suit their own carnal mind) to their own destruction. Peter warns us to beware lest we be led astray with the errors of the wicked. If we do not understand a particular scripture we should leave it be, for no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. If we need an interpretation, God will give it to us in his own appointed time through the Hold Spirit which is given unto us.

Not only is Jesus the way and the truth, but he is also the life. "And this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then ye also shall appear with him in glory." O what a joyous blessing it is to receive a sweet hope that we shall some day appear in glory with our blessed Redeemer. How sweet it is to be given a glimpse of him thru the eye of faith and believe we shall some day live in glory with him. It truly makes our spirits soar into the heavens. Jesus said unto Martha, the sister of Lazarus whom he had raised from the dead, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." How can a man who is dead in trespasses and sin believe? We know a dead man can do nothing of himself, therefore we conclude that it is impossible for him to believe and impossible for him to save himself; but with God all things are possible. Jesus said, "Though a man die, yet shall he live." Also, "Ye must be born again." You must be born of the water and the Spirit. This is the new birth. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Therefore though we be dead, yet do we live through Christ, the power of God. Our flesh shall die and return to the dust from whence it came, but this life shall never die, for it is Christ which liveth in us. God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Anything eternal has no beginning nor end. This life has ever been in Christ, but is only made manifest to us mortal creatures at the appointed time of God.

"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." If a man has nothing more than his natural life it is foolishness to believe that he can have faith in God who he cannot possibly know, regardless of what the graceless professors preach: but if he has received this spiritual life then is he in Christ and Christ in him. If we live in him, and believe in him, it is because we have ever been in him, and there is nothing that one can do to get into him. The graceless professors tell us that we must

do something; that we must believe and accept him as our Savior: but Jesus said, "Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is everyone that is born of the Spirit." It is not in the power of man to cause himself to be born nor born again. It is all a gift of God.

Brethren, I have only offered a few remarks here for your consideration. Read your bible, meditate on it, and pray. As James says, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." My prayer, if I truly pray, is that he will give us grace to grow in the knowledge and wisdom of him who is the way, the truth and the life.

Clifford Wilbanks

NOTE

The article or letter written by Linda in the July issue should have read - - Linda Spangler - 108 A Todd St., Carboro, N.C. 27510. (Linda is the granddaughter of Elder D.V. Spangler.)

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

Mat. 7:12

Dear Editors:

I have a great desire to give my views on what the work of the deacons are. I am fully agreed with Elder Spangler on what he wrote on this subject. We have some that think that a deacon has the right to administer the ordinance of baptism, some say that Phillip a deacon did when he baptised the eunuch, but at this time Philip was holding a different office. And the next day we that were of Pauls company departed, and came unto Cae-sa-re-a and entered into the house of Philip the evangelist; which was one of the seven; and abode with him. Acts 21:8 v.

The churches some of the times think that they see the qualification of a deacon and later it proves to be for the ministry, so was Philip and Stephen; read the Acts 7th chapter. I think that I can see more of the work of Philip the evangelist than I can in the work of the apostle Philip. Let us notice that the deacon Philip was an evangelist at the time that he was baptizing members into the fellowship of the church, and we have no record where deacons holds such an office. A Deacon can assist his pastor by helping to lower them in the water and raising them up; this is part of serving the tables of the ministery, their work is to serve tables of the poor, tables of the church. I also appreciate seeing the deacons visiting the sick and if they are called on to offer prayer, I think that would be proper. I think the work of a minister or a deacon is a seven day a week job and should be twenty-four hours every day. I realize much of the time is a battle between the flesh and the spirit. I have so much tossing to and fro, and in deep meditations, and much of the time in prayer for the Lord to keep me, and not me only but Zion the world over. I want to thank God for the kind fellowship that the brethren and sisters has shown my wife and me, this means you in many of the states that we have traveled. I remember that we spent a night in Sister Josie Mitchell's home in the state of Washington. I can almost in my mind see her sitting in front of me, looking me in the eyes, telling what the Lord had done for her: That was in the year of 1974. In the spring of 76 about April, something seemed to tell me that

she had bid us fare well. I later learned that it was about that time that she had gone on to her resting place, what a precious memory.

Elder J.R. Hollandsworth

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS:

Due to rising cost in publishing the Signs, we increased the subscription price beginning July 1, 1984 to $10.00 per year and $18.00 for two years. We regret this increase, but our cost now is a little over $1.00 per copy.

Editors

Rt. 1 Box 10
Parsonsburg, MD 21849
June 10, 1984

Dear Editors,

Since I read the January issue of the Signs of The Times I have wanted to write and tell you how very much I enjoyed it. I was so glad Elder Key explains article number nine of the prospectus. I agree with what he wrote.

Elder Campbell's editoral was a great comfort to me. Before I was taken in the Forest Grove Chruch and for a number of years I kept my hymn book in front of me as I did my work and sang to myself. Lately I seem to have no desire to sing as I work and it has worried me.

I have enjoyed each issue this year more than I had for a long time. I pray the good Lord will continue to bless you to write the good editorals and the Brethren to send in their experiences.

I want to express our gratitude to the ministers who have come to preach for us these several years since we have not had a Pastor at Forest Grove Church. They have come preaching Jesus Christ and Him crucified. We feel the Lord has blessed us and we would praise His holy name if we could find the right words.

Many thanks for the comfort you bring us each month when the "Signs" arrives.

Yours in hope,
Ethel Halloway

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

THE SCARLETT LINE
Part II

Rahab received and sent away the spies in peace. They are her friends, her sworn friends, for they have sworn unto her by the Lord, calling upon him to witness and to establish the covenant between them. When in dire needs, when in the deeps, when as outcasts, as the vilest, the chief of sinners, distracted with hellish temptations, what shall satisfy us, lift us up, inspire us once more to hope for salvation? If for help we must look to our creature resources, then we must despair, for we have learned and are still learning in our soul's humiliations that we are without strength. Must then the chief of sinners perish? Our hope is in the new covenant, in Jesus' precious blood. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant." O, a sight of this by faith will be as streams in the desert; here we shall find our strong consolations. Hearken to one of the ambassadors of God, "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it

was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."—Heb. vi. 17-20. O, ye tried ones, here we have the sworn, the sure mercies of the Lord. This is admitting us into the secret of his presence, this is opening to us the bosom thoughts of the everlasting God. Here the Lord is revealed contemplating all the woes and weaknesses of his people, and he is overflowing in his love and pity towards them. O, ponder each word: "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it with an oath."

The two spies are a lively representation of the ministers of Christ. "Behold, when we come into the land thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window." This O, Rahab, shall be the true token unto thee that thou shalt not perish, and that we will deal kindly and truly with thee. Rahab has faith in the God of Israel, she has faith in these two spies, and she has faith in the token they have given her, and obedient to their faith "she bound the scarlet line in the window." No doubt she often looked upon this scarlet line with tears of gratitude to the Lord. This true token quieted her fears, and was her support until the day of her salvation, and thus within her heart she might speak, Who am I that I should be singled out to be remembered with the favor that the Lord bears unto his peopole, that I should be saved, that I shall rejoice with the gladness of thy nation, and glory with thine inheritance? O Jericho! fair and beautiful in thy situation, thou city of palm trees. No longer I love thee, city of my nativity, city of my harlotry. Thou art an offense unto me; O let mine eyes be turned from thee, let mine eyes feast upon this scarlet line, true token of the covenant of life and friendship with the Lord, and with his chosen. My heart is toward thee, O Israel, beloved of the Lord. O, mine eyes and my yearning heart are unto thee, O Lord God of Israel.

"Witness, all ye host of heaven,
My Redeemer's tenderness;
Love I much?–I've much forgiven
I'm a miracle of grace."

The line of scarlet thread was the true token of the covenant between Rahab and the Israelites. Let us now consider its signification unto us in the gospel. The scarlet line is a figure of the blood of Christ, the Lamb of God. This scarlet line of Jesus' blood runs all through the book of Revelation, from Genesis to Revelation, and has been, and will be to the end of time ever gloriously manifested in the faith God's elect. By faith in the revelation of God, Abel offered unto God of the firstlings of his flock. (Gen. iv. 4) The Lord thus early gave the scarlet line of blood unto his people, who through the grace given unto them, worship him in Spirit and in truth. Noah displayed the scarlet line when on coming out of the ark he builded an altar unto the Lord, and took of everv clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. (Gen. viii. 20,21) This was all acceptable unto God, and was fragrant as sweet flowers. The sacrifice of Christ is of a sweet smelling savor unto God, and to sinners called by grace. (Ephesians v. 2) Job presented continually before the Lord the scarlet line, in behalf of himself and his family. (Job i. 5.) Abraham often shed the red blood in his sacrifices to the Lord, (Gen. xii. 8,) and he gave utterance to a glorious prophesy concerning the true scarlet line, saying, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering."–Gen. xxii.8. Issac and Jacob displayed in their worship the scarlet line of blood (Gen. xxvi.25; xxxi. 54.) Then

Israel and his household went down into Egypt and sojourned there, but during the long night of the bondage of the twelve tribes the scarlet line was only dimly seen, the Israelites were generally sunken in idolatry, and when they would have worshiped the Lord with the scarlet line, it was not meet to do so in Egypt, for the Egyptians would slay them. (Exodus viii. 26.) But on the last night of their bondage in the land, a night to be much remembered, behold on all the houses of Israel the token of the scarlet line of the Passover blood! "The blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will passover you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt."–Exodus xii. 13. Thenceforth in that favored nation how magnificently the scarlet line is exhibited. Every day, in the morning and in the evening, a lamb was slain. (Exodus xxix. 38,39.) In the yearly commemoration of the Passover, on the great day of atonement, (Lev. xvi.) in all the multitude of personal offerings, in all this typical worship of the Almighty so signally prominent is the scarlet line of the blood of beasts. Now we come to God by the blood drawn from Emmanuel's veins, by this precious blood we are made nigh to God. (Ephesians ii. 13.) We are come to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

But that scarlet line bound in the window of Rahab, the harlot, was unintelligible to the inhabitants of Jericho, it had no voice to them. All the tribes of Israel that encompassed the city could read its meaning, and thus they interpreted that line of scarlet thread, "There upon the wall is the house of the blessed, while all the rest of Jericho are accursed. This is the household to whom we are related in covenant bonds, and in the day of Jericho's doom this house shall stand. Thou, O Rahab, and all thine, shall be saved, and we will deal kindly and truly with thee. So to multitudes to-day the scarlet line of Christ's blood has no signification, they turn aside from it as from a thing of naught, but to believers Jesus' blood is exceeding precious. Have our hearts heard the voice of Jesus? His blood speaks so blessedly to the children of God; it declares their at-one-ment with God. This then is the signification of the scarlet line of blood that runs all through the Scriptures. "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."–Lev. xvii. 11. In our earthly standing we are far off from God, depraved and vile, outcasts, for we are alienated and enemies in our minds by wicked works. (Col. i. 21.) Is this an overdrawn picture? Ah no, as you are taught of God your eyes will be opened to see, and your heart will most painfully feel that the description is so dreadfully true, and then with what heartfelt appreciation you will cleave to blood of atonement.Christ Jesus in his great love hath reconciled us to God in the body of his flesh through death, to present us holy, unblamable and unreprovable in his sight. (Col. i.22.) Could anything be better? No wonder that we cleave to the scarlet line and bind it fast in the window. Our gracious God laid all our iniquities upon his dear Son, and he gave himself a sacrifice for our sin, and poured out his soul unto death; thus he put away all our sins, shedding for us his reconciling blood. (2 Chron. xxix. 24; Heb. ii. 17.) O,it is so comforting to look upon the scarlet line, and its voice is most sweet to a poor sinner's heart. Do you believe in the scarlet line of Jesus' blood? It speaks to the believer of his redemption, and that all his sins are forgiven. (Ephesians i. 7.) The blood of God's dear Son cleanses from all sin, and in this fountain opened for sin and uncleanness we are washed and made whiter than snow. (Psalms li. 7.) We are justifid by his blood, and we shall be saved from wrath through him. The

saved from wrath through him. The scarlet line gives us the victory over all the powers of darkness, it stops the mouth of our accuser. (Rev. xii, 11.) The scarlet line of Jesus' blood is faith's song in the believer's heart, and it will be our theme in glory. This line of scarlet thread lines all the way from sin to holiness and God, from bondage to eternal liberty. O, Emmanuel's precious blood has consecrated all the way from earth to heaven, (Heb. x. 19,) and thus we draw nigh to God, ever looking with all affection to this scarlet line. If the scarlet line is so significant, what shall the child of God do with it? Look once more at the picture portrayed upon the wall of Jericho. There stands the house of the one who received and sent away in peace the two spies; at the window she stands, Rahab the harlot, with hope welling up in her heart, with eager hands of faith and love she binds the scarlet line in the window.

Daniel kneeled down upon his knees three times a day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem. (Dan. vi. 10.) There was a window in the ark, (Gen. vi. 16,) and the ransomed of the Lord fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows. (Isaiah lx. 8.) Shall we look upon this window in Rahab's house as expressive of the worship of God? Whenever Rahab looked forth, there to her heart's comfort and delight she beheld the scarlet line bound in the window. So in the window of the believers praises and prayers unto God the scarlet line is seen. In seasons when guilt is so conscious to our spirit, when accusations roll in upon us like a flood, when sin-stained, with a wounded heart and with a blushing face, how shall we look forth at the window unto God? Ah, when in my soul's conflicts, when so buffeted by sin and Satan, imploringly I would look to the Lord, let the holy Spirit ever instruct me to bind the scarlet line in the window. Let others aspire after the fleeting things of earth, if thou wilt reach forth thine hands after wealth and fame, but give, O give to me, a perishing sinner, a true token of thy everlasting love; give me, O lord, the scarlet line, the priceless token, the blood of the new testament shed for the remission of sin.

"She bound the scarlet line in the window." God commanded Israel to bind his words for a sign upon their hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. (Deut. vi. 9.) Solomon says, "My son, keep they father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest it shall talk with thee."–Prov. vi. 20-22. So the called of god are effectually taught to bind in their window the scarlet line of the Saviour's blood. Examine yourself whether you have the scarlet line bound in the window, for the religion which lacks that personal, experimental knowledge of the blood of Christ, is valueless before God. The elect are chosen unto the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ (1 Peter i. 2.) Without this scarlet line we cannot know our election of God. What have you bound in your window? Is it your self-righteousness? What! filthy rags? (Isaiah lxiv. 6.) Some bind in the window of their religious profession their supposed work for the Lord, the many wonderful works, which they declare they have done for Christ. Such religionists very fitly sing to themselves,

"A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify,
A never dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky."

But Christ will say in that day, "Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity."–Luke xiii. 27.

Others display in their windows the doctrines of men, and the doctrines of devils, some in the bare theory may mention Christ's blood, but their non-experimental, heartless religion will avail them nothing in the day of God's wrath. But you, poor souls, who feel so unworthy, sinful, polluted, who long for freedom from all sin, whose hearts crave reconciliation with God in the free remission of all your sins, to you how sacred is the scarlet line. With all desire you contemplate Emmanuel's blood, and muse with affection upon its efficacious fruits, (yielding to believers so richly redemption and forgiveness of sins, and everlasting peace with God) so with believing hands you bind the scarlet line in the window. "Wash me Savior, or I die."

That language in Leviticus i.3, is very descriptive of the spirit in which God's people worship him in the shedding of blood. "He shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord." It is written, 'Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."–Psalm ex.3. So we are brought with all willingness of heart to bind the scarlet line in the window.

Day by day in our journey we are being wounded and bruised by temptations and sins; it is therefore needful for such poor ones as we are to constantly have in our sight the cleansing blood of the Lamb, the precious scarlet line. And as we look again and again upon the Savior's blood, all is well, we have a comfortable trust and taste the sweetness of the atonement, Jesus' reconciling blood heals all our disorders, and sheds upon us its consoling fragrance, our hope is renewed, and our hearts are inspired with sweet gratitude to him who remembered us in our low estate, and gave us the true token of the everlasting covenant, the scarlet line. The scarlet line also very beautifully presents to our faith all the blessed revelations of Christ's gospel, all so gloriously, divinely interwoven, and made so infinitely strong by the immuntable decrees, the promises and oath of God, and all scarlet colored with the precious blood of the Lamb.

Let us return to Jericho, and glance again at what is transacting there. "Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in."–Joshua vi.1. Once a day for six days the men of war compassed the city, following the seven priests with trumpets of rams horns, and the ark of the Lord; on the seventh day they compassed the city seven times. During these days there streams from the window of Rahab's house, upon the wall, the significant scarlet line. All Israel took affectionate notice of it, and of the house upon which was this mark. (Ezek. ix. 4-6.) While all the inhabitants of Jericho are in restless suspense, and their spirits faint within them in apprehension of their coming doom, in Rahab's house there is supporting hope, her house upon the wall is sanctified by the scarlet line, all within that house are in covenant safety, and shall be saved in that day. "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not." She looks forth upon the host of Israel, but she fears no evil of them, for her heart is toward them, and toward their God, and if at any time her heart wavered, and unbelief and fears intruded, there, to strengthen her hope, she sees that true token of the sworn friendship between herself and Israel, the scarlet line bound in the window. One affectionate glance at this and her hope revives, and all is blissful peace, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."

At length the day of Jericho's doom is come. "And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed

the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the Lord hath given you the city.★★★So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword." When the noise of the tumbling walls is hushed, and the dust of the ruins is fanned away, there unshaken stands the house upon the wall, that monument of God's sovereign grace, the sanctuary of the saved ones, the house of Rahab the harlot.

"And in the window still bound fast,
Above the fatal ram's horns blast,
There streams the precious covenant sign,
The token true, the scarlet line."

"But Joshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, as ye sware unto her. And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel. And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein; only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord. And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the messengers which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho."

Thus Rahab came forth in sacred blessedness, with gratitude filling her heart, and then in due time she is adopted into the family of Israel, for she is united in marriage to Salmon, a prince of the house of Judah, by whom she gave birth to Boaz, who married Ruth, the Moabitess, who gave birth to Obed, and Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David, of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all God blessed forever. Amen. (Matt. i.5; Ruth iv. 21,22.)

The grace of our God is exceeding abundant, for it lifts up the poor from the dust, the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, causing them to inherit the throne of glory. Our Savior hath washed his people from all their pollutions, in his own blood, and his church is without blame in his sight. Who shall lay anything to the charge of Rahab, the wife of Salmon, the prince of the house of David? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

May this, dear reader, be our consolation, and when we draw near our journey's end, and our exodus from the earthly house of this tabernacle is at hand; when the things of time, our dearest earthly friends, and all nature swoon away, recede and fade from our view around our dying bed, what then? Then, O thou gracious Redeemer, give me a true token, hold thou before mine eyes the scarlet line; enable me with eyes of faith and love to look upon thy precious atoning blood. O Lamb of God, smile upon me; then with this true token a passport into heaven's glories shall be mine, and everlasting praises shall be thine.

Fred W. Keene

MEETINGS

SOUTH ARKANSAS ASSOCIATION

One hundred forty second session original south Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association will convene with Pilgrim Rest Church. Spetember 14, 15, 16, 1984.

Take highway 167, five miles north of Fordyce, Arkansas. Turn left on 273 and the church is located one half mile on left.

We invite all lovers of the Truth to come and be with us.

Elder John C. Townley
Moderator
Frances Townley
Church Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union is appointed to be held with Pleasantville Primitive Baptist church the fifth Sunday in July. If it be the Lord's Will.

The church house is located on 704 near Madison, N.C.

We welcome the ministers, brethern and sisters and friends of our faith and order to meet with us.

Rachel Wray
Church Clerk

SMITH RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Smith River Primitive Baptist Association, the Lord willing, will convene with Bell Spur Church the 1st Sunday in September, 1984 and Friday and Saturday before. The church is located just off the Blue Ridge Parkway. Those traveling south turn just before mile post 184. Those traveling north turn just after you pass mile post 184.

Elder Amos Hash - Association Clerk

LITTLE HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God, Little Hope Church looked out among themselves and recognized certain gifts. They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed Saturday May 26, 1984 at two o'clock at Little Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Route 1, Elliston, Virginia, for the purpose of examination of these gifts, Brother Junior Conner as Elder and Brother Lawrence Myers as Deacon and if found qualified be ordained to the full work and service of elder and deacon. The church had invited Elders William Holland, Raymond Goad, Willard Cox, and Rufus Brown to sit in the presbytery and all other ministers present were invited to sit with them.

The meeting was opened by prayer by Elder Denver Simpson. Elder Lane Carter pastor of Little Hope Church, was elected as moderator and Elder Kenneth R. Key to serve as clerk. Elder Noel Conner delivered the candidates to the presbytery and Deacon Hancel Conner was asked to be spokesman for the church.

The qualification for Elder and Deacon was read by Elder Lane Carter from the third chapter of First Timothy. Examinations followed by Elders Willard Cox, Rufus Brown, William Holland and Roy Agee. Brother Conner was asked to express some of his feelings as to his call to the ministry and did so to the satisfaction of the presbytery. The presbytery being satisfied proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder Raymond Goad. The charge was delivered to Brother Conner by Elder Amos Hash and to Brother Myers by Elder William Holland. They were then delivered back to the church

as an ordained Elder and Deacon.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery was read and adopted. Dismissed by prayer by Elder Roy Agee. The presbytery was composed of the following ministers: Elder Lane Carter, Elder Rufus Brown, Elder William Holland, Elder Amos Hash, Elder Raymond Goad, Elder Denver Simpson, Elder Willard Cox, Elder Noel Conner, Elder Roy Agee and Elder Kenneth R. Key. The following deacons were present: Deacon Nelson Reid, Lonzie Nichols, Donald Agee, Vance Duncan, W. T. Conner, Hassell Hale, Jessie Tyree, Tiras Conner, Bobby Bernard, Wilson King, Harry Cannady, Chester Haygood, C. T. Abshire, Guy Holley, Clay Brown, Fred Murphy, Claude Johnson, John Plunket, Lewis C. Aker, W. W. Abshire, Edwin Dyer and Hancel Conner.

Elder Lane Carter - Moderator
Elder Kenneth R. Key - Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR MAY 1984

Mrs. Fannie Wiles, VA $8.00
Mrs. Maggie Culp, KY 10.00
Mrs. Mary Stanfield, VA 3.00
H.C. Harwell, MO 2.00
Eli T. Smith, NC 7.00
Mrs. Kathleen Martin, VA 3.00
Eld. Jack W. Cox, VA 2.00
Mrs. W.R. Pullig, LA 3.00
Mrs. J.F. Thompson, NC 7.00
W.F. Griffith, NC 6.00
Mrs. Susan Chandler, FL 3.00
Mrs. John Philpott, VA 1.00
Mrs. Berdie S. Hall, NC 2.00
Mrs. Ernestine Sharp, LA 7.00
Mrs. Clemmie Bishop, AR 6.00
Mrs. A.R. Patterson, LA 25.00
J.P. Steward, MS 7.00
Mrs. L.W. Warren, MD 7.00
Mrs. Maude Wallace, TX 3.00
Mrs. G.B. McAdams, MS 10.00
Eld. Harold A. Janes, CA 3.00
Eld. P.E. Ingram, VA 7.00
Mrs. Rolla E. Mallott, PA 4.00
Mrs. French C. Hogan, VA 2.00
Claude McKinney, NC 3.00
Eld. Bennie Clifton, VA 2.00
Mrs. Alice Johnson, TX 2.00
Mrs. Ernestine Mann, FL 7.00
Mrs. R.M. Lester, VA 5.00
Mrs. Nannie W. Wiggins, NC 2.00
Mrs. Ollie C. Gauldin, NC 3.00
Mrs. W.C. Sutherland, VA 1.00
Mrs. Maye C. Bissette, NC 3.00

OBITUARIES

Drucilla Frances Denny Evans

Drucilla Evans born April 18, 1906 and departed this life on April 25, 1984. She was a native of Rockingham County. She was the daughter of the late Thomas J. and India Gauldin Denny and had lived in the Pelham community most of her life. She was a retired employee of the Danville knitting company. She joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church August 24, 1958. She was a faithful member until death. A firm believer of salvation by Grace. She was loved by all who knew her. Surviving are husband Raleigh Evans; Sons- Malton Evans of Springfield, VA, Raleigh Evans Jr. of Route 1 Pelham; Brothers Russell Denny of Danville, Va; Herman Denny of Route 2 Ruffin, Wilford Denny of Stoneville. Sisters Mrs. Bessie D. Curry of Eden, Mrs. Odessa D. Williams and Mrs. Hazel Farbes of Danville, VA, Mrs. Doris Neighbors of Ruffin. Five grandchildren; three great grandchildren. Funeral services was held at Dan River Primitive

Baptist church by her pastor Elder David Spangler. She was buried in the church cemetery beneath beautiful mound of flowers to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Done by the order of Dan River Church in conference.

D.V. Spangler - Moderator
Boyd Minter - Clerk

Lynwood C. Dorman

Lynwood C. Dorman, son of the late Luther Dorman and Maymie Galbraith Dorman was born July 2, 1913 and died April 13, 1983. He is survived by his wife, Maidline McLawhorn Dorman, a son, Robert L. Dorman and a daughter Frances E. Tripp, two grandsons, two granddaughters, a great granddaughter - Also a great grandson born since Lynwood's death.

Lynwood was a man of integrity with an out going personality and a keen sense of humor and was always ready with an answer. He had a zest for life and was always cheerful, whether sick or well, never complaining. He was free hearted and always ready to share. He was aware of the frailty of man and that he was totality dependent on God for his Grace and mercy. For many years he was a regular church attendant, and he loved to mingle and talk with the brethren.

We miss him, but trust that our loss was his eternal gain.

Done by order of conference at Hancocks Church.

Elder Joseph L. Sawyer - Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn - Clerk
Mabel C. McLawhorn - Ass't Clerk

BOOK NOTICES

BEEBE EDITORIALS

VOLUMES
ONE - THREE - FOUR

These three volumes of the editorial writings of Elder Gilbert Beebe are all available from us for immediate delivery. If the Lord wills we expect to have Volume two out in the next few months. This will give us a matching set of the first four volumes of his writings from the years 1832 to 1862.

These books are bound in a beautiful Library Buckram, silk screen finish and have the finest paper and binding available. Volume One contains 768 pages and Volumes 3 and 4 approximately 500 pages each. Your satisfaction is guaranteed by us.

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P.S. If you have ordered and have not received your book, please let us know.

Signs of the Times

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POETRY

Eternal Power! whose high abode
Becomes the grandeur of a God;
Infinite lengths, beyond the bounds
Where stars revolve their little rounds.

The lowest step around thy seat,
Rises too high for Gabriel's feet;
In vain the favored angel tries
To reach thine height with wond'ring eyes.

Lord, what shall earth and ashes do!
We would adore our Maker, too;
From sin and dust to thee we cry,
The Great, the Holy, and the High!

Earth from afar has heard thy fame,
And worms have learned to lisp thy name;
But, O! the glories of thy mind
Leave all our soaring thoughts behind

God is in heaven, but man below;
Be short our tunes; our words be few;
A sacred reverence checks our songs,
And praise sits silent on our tongues.

"And lie hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord."

Psalms 40:3

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EDITORIAL

In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

The apostle Paul was blessed in his writings to the churches and brethren of his day to leave on record more words of comfort and encouragement to the household of faith than any of the other writers of the new testament. His special calling and experience is reflected in all of his writings and they are especially beautiful and strengthening to other way worn pilgrims as they run the race that is set before them, those who also have been turned from their headlong pursuit of the vanities and pleasures of the flesh and made, in a moment of time to love and seek after the joy and peace that only the spiritual realm affords. All of his writings bear witness of the sovreignty and mercy of a holy and righteous God who manifests himself to his children in ways and manners known only to him. If you removed these experiences and the mystery surrounding them there would be nothing that would cause his letters to be read and cherished two thousand years later with the same interest and intense longing that they were by those who lived in that day. Those who are born of the spirit in this the twentieth century are as concerned and involved in the truths set forth in these writings as the writer and the fellowship that they feel for him is as strong and present in their heart as that for their brethren who live in this day. The first verse in Paul's epistle is addressed to the saints which are at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, so, evidently the Apostle realized that this would be true and felt that he was indeed addressing the saints of all future ages who were called out of natures darkness into the marvelous light of revelation.

Surely Paul must have been remembering his conversion on the road to Damascus as he wrote to his brethren stating again and again that his salvation, the salvation of the saints at Ephesus and the salvation of the faithful in Christ Jesus is sure simply because it is predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. He must have been remembering the way and manner in which his salvation was manifested to him and is acknowledging that it was only because of this sovreign mercy of God that he did not continue as a persecuter of the church. He could find nothing that would account for his sudden miraculous change except that it was the good pleasure of God and for purposes known only to him.

This is the experience that caused Paul to state emphatically several times

in this epistle that the salvation of the saints is absolute because it was predestinated of God and that before the foundation of the world. In the verse above he carries it even further by stating that this predestination is according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. I do not know of anything that is not included in this. "All things: if there is something that is not included then the statement is false. Isiah says, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God and there is none else: I am God and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done saying my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." I firmly believe that the, "All things." in Paul's epistle to the Ephesians and "the things that are not yet done," in Isaiah's writing include the same things and both of the writers refer to the "things" being according to the will or the pleasure of God. The will and the pleasure of God are the absolute assurance that the "things" will come to pass and they will work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. If I have a hope it is in the sure and certain mercy of God who blesses his children with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ because it is his own good pleasure to do so. The way that I claim as a reason for the hope that is within teaches me that these things are true and that only such a plan of salvation would answer my need, then, now and in the future.

In his letter to the Galatian Church the Apostle Paul wrote of persecuting the Church, wasting it, profiting in the Jewish religion above many his equal, being more exceeding zealous of the traditions of the fathers or in other words, glorying in his own achievements in the religion of his fathers, enjoying the prestige and honor they bestowed on him. He was satisfied and did not desire to change and certainly not to follow after the faith that he then despised, therefore would if left to him self continued in that way. He speaks of his change as being completely of God and that according to his own pleasure, "But when it pleased God who separated me from my mothers womb and called me by his grace, to reveal his son in me that I might preach him among the gentiles; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." No boasting or self esteem here, solely a work of Grace according to the good pleasure of God the Father in manifesting his love and mercy to one even when they were dead in trespasses and in sin and setting them about his business and manifesting the purpose and power of the calling. All whose experience causes them to fellowship Paul will ever confess that their salvation is of God and is a work wrought in them and not by them and rejoice in scriptures that declare the absolute certainty of the results of this work that has begun in them.

This doctrine has ever been declared by the Lord's people. They have ever referred to the Lord's people as a blessed people and this blessing is always because of a particular love that the Father had for them before time began, reserved for them in Christ and made manifest in time according to divine appointment. In the song that Moses was given as a witness against Israel it is recorded, "When the most high divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's people is his portion. Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." This is the whole household of faith, there will be none added to it and there will be none removed from it but rather each at the appointed time of the Father will come forth making manifest that they are

children of God and acknowledging their claim to this inheritance and singing praises for his wonderful display of Love and mercy to such undeserving creatures as they now see themselves to be. David wrote, "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord, and all thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom and talk of thy power." They all do come forth proclaiming the wonder and the perfection of this miracle of Grace that has wrought such a change in their heart and soul. It is beautiful to behold as one you have known for many years begins to manifest this change from the darkness of sin and fleshly pursuits to speaking of the power and the glory of the kingdom of God.

Anyone that does not love this doctrine and praise God that the salvation of all of his saints is assured by the perfect work of Christ has never been made to see and feel the exceeding sinfulness of the creature and realize the weakness and powerlessness to deliver themselves from their condition. When one does see and realize this they will never question the fact that all things are ordained of God but will daily praise him for his wisdom and mercy in causing it to be this way. The natural man delights in the earthly pleasures of the flesh and would be content to ever dwell in that state. Only the coming in of a stronger than they, by force, will disrupt this state of contentment and make them realize what they actually are in nature and what they must be by grace. If the salvation of the saints was not predestinated performed and perfected by the birth death and resurrection of Christ, all men would be born, live and die in their lost and sinful condition. This doctrine is not hard, unjust, unfair or fatalistic in fact it is actually the direct opposite. It is the work of a God of love and mercy performing everything that is needful to assure that all of those for whom his only begotten Son died will dwell with them in heaven throughout eternity. There is purpose, direction and complete control exercised every step of the way in this plan of salvation. Fatalism has none of these characteristics. God's love and mercy for his chosen did nothing, for or against those whom he did not love, it left them as they were, in their sins, with no atonement for them. This is not a popular subject but it is the truth as set forth in the scriptures.

For by Grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works lest any man should boast: For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." This sets aside any legitimate claim that any man can make, of having anything to do in working out his salvation, except the experiencing of that which God hath ordained should be. They have nothing to boast of since it is all of grace and grace is of God as he exercises the heirs of mercy in his ways for their teaching and instruction. It is not to reveal to God what is in man but rather to reveal God and his ways to man and to work out the salvation that has been their heritage since before the foundation of the world.

O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements and his ways past finding out. Man with all of the accumulated wisdom of the flesh down through the ages of time can never fathom the depths of this wisdom or come to a knowledge of God and his ways. God dwells in a spiritual realm and man is born into a natural realm with no knowledge or ability to transcend the great gulf that separates the two. God moves freely within either and therefore he alone must perform all of the changes to this earthly natural man to make him a fit subject for the spiritual realm. This he did by sending his only begotten Son into the natural realm in a

natural body to break down the middle wall of partition that would have forever barred all men from the spiritual realm. This Jesus did in his death, burial and resurrection when he fulfilled his promise to his disciples when he told them he was going to prepare a place for them. He did not tell this to the world, but was speaking to those he loved, those with whom he had desired to eat this last passover and those whom he loved to the end.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

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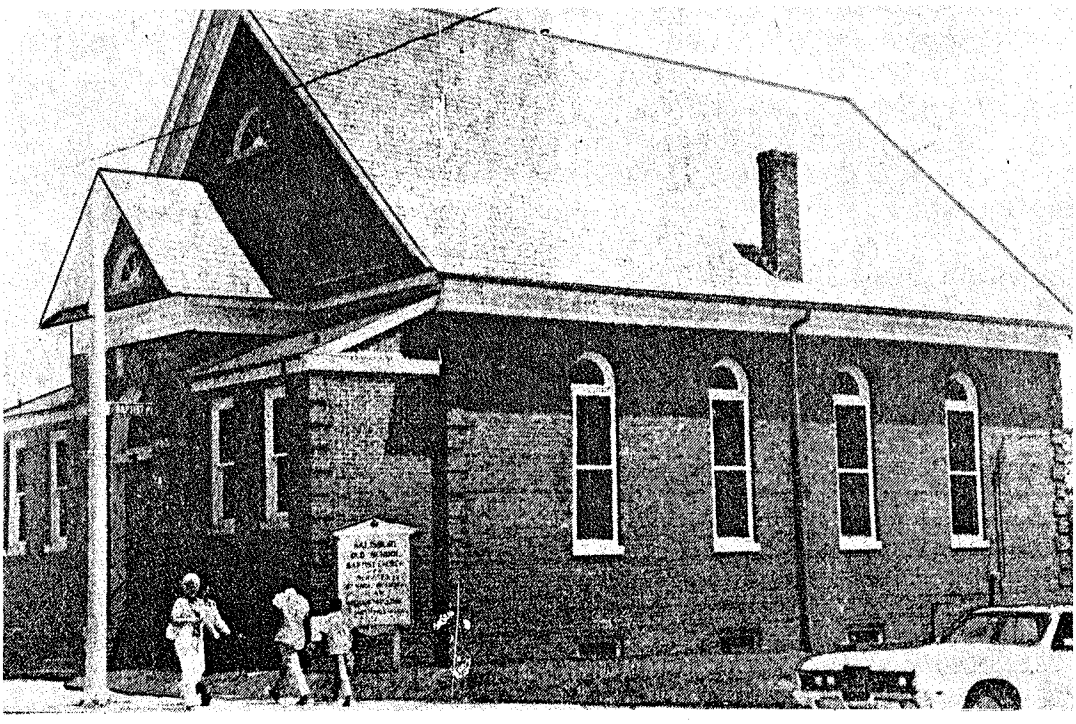

The Salisbury Primitive Baptist Church is located on the corner of Church and Baptist St., in Salisbury, Maryland. The Church was established around 1780, being the first Baptist church on the Eastern Shore. They meet for worship services on the first Sunday of each month at eleven o'clock. Elder James F. Poole was the last full time pastor of Salisbury Church.

CORRESPONDENCE

1116 Chester Ave.
Nashville, TN 37206
Nov. 27, 1983

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1) In order for one to believe something, one must first be given evidence upon which to base that belief. The natural man obtains evidence upon which he bases belief through his natural sences consisting of sight, hearing, feeling, smelling and tasting. By these natural senses all the members of Adam's race know from a natural or carnal observance that God does exist as is stated in the following scripture: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:" (Roman 1:20) This knowledge of god is not by faith for it belongs to the natural man who does not, will not and cannot receive the things of the spirit of God for they are foolishness to him.

Now in as much as faith is a fruit of the spirit of God we again are reminded that the carnal man is not the recipient of it. Therefore one must conclude that the new man, new creature or spiritual man is the recipient of faith. The carnal man has no understanding of the eternal Godhead, only the evidence of His existence as is seen by the things God has made, so the carnal has no excuse for his denial of God's existence and power. But the spiritual man through faith receives understanding of God, because faith is the evidence of the invisible Godhead to the spiritual man. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things, which do appear." (Hebrews 11:3) If the spiritual things of God were made tangible objects so that they could be felt, tasted, smelt, heard, or seen then faith would be useless. Since the spiritual things of God are not tangible we need another foundation upon which to build our belief and that other is faith, the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. Faith is to the spiritual man as the senses are to the carnal man. The spiritual man is able to "see as through a glass darkly," the ortherwise invisible things of the spiritual realm through faith which is the evidence of those things which are not seen by the natural eye. God's children are quickened into spiritual life here in this timely world but they will not receive the spiritual body with its spiritual senses until they are resurrected in Jesus' likeness. As the natural man equipped with the five senses has no need of faith in the comprehension of natural things, neither will the spiritual man equipped with that perfect spiritual body have any need of faith in the comprehension of heavenly bliss, in the eternal presence of our God and Savior. "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even or also I am known." (I Cor. 13:12) Since we see the spiritual things darkly and have knowledge of them only in part, we are in constant need of evidence of these spiritual blessings for which we hope and this evidence is faith. If it were not for this faith which gives evidence, God's elect would utterly despair for lack of spiritual support for their hope of eternal bliss with their Creator. Then it is said they "are kept by the power of God through faith, unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." God's people are dead and their life is hid with Christ in God; the life that they now live in the flesh, as they live by faith which is evidence enough to cause them to "believe to the saving of the Soul."

(Hebrews 10: 38-39) It is the same faith that enabled those recorded in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews to forfeit all carnal desires, resist all opposition and even perform super human feats. By faith they desired to be in possession of that which they had seen and tasted of by faith and that to the exclusion of all things which opposed their possession of it. Inasmuch as they had seen it by faith it was theirs. God does not reveal to one the things of the spiritual realm which does not belong to him. The knowledge of these spiritual things obtained by faith is what gives God's children the drive to seek a more complete possession of them. This is a progressive experience in that the more they taste of heaven, the more intense their desire becomes to be in full possession of it, although they realize this is possible only in eternity. Therefore it is said that they are dead and their life is hid with Christ in God. And they are saved by grace through faith which is not their own faith, but a gift of God, not of works lest any of them should boast. "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three: but the greatest of these is charity." (I Cor. 13:13) Of the three charity or love is eternal. When we are in the eternal state with our Savior our hopes and faith will have been fulfilled, but love for our Savior shall forever be the theme of our songs of praise in that heavenly choir.

It is my sincere desire that this has been written by faith, for "without faith it is impossible to please God."

In bonds of love,
Gregory Duren

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."
Mat. 7:12

WHERE THE DOVE DWELLS
(Song of Solomon ii. 14.)

"O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock." The Savior thus addresses his church in her present state of existence, and thus presents her condition of safety. The dove, pursued by birds of prey, would seek and enter into one of the clefts or fissures in the rocks, where she was safe from her enemy. This figure is used by the heavenly Lover to show in what consists the safety of his bride. He himself is the Rock, and the clefts of the rock represent the sufferings and death which he endured by the stroke of the law for the salvation of his people. When Moses struck the rock waters gushed out; so when the law struck Jesus waters of salvation came forth for all his people. At the second time that Moses struck a rock, in the desert of Zin, which was nearly forty years after he struck the first rock, he spake unadvisedly with his lips, and the Lord told him that he could not go over into the promised land. (Num. xx. 12.) So when the law struck Jesus, the Rock of salvation, its work was done, and it must die. The law could not take the Lord's people into the gospel land; its work ends with the crucifixion of Christ.

When the Lord would show Moses his glory, and cause all his goodness to pass before him, he put Moses in a cleft of the rock on which he stood, and covered him with his hand while his glory passed by. A cleft in a rock is not a pleasant place to be forced into, but it is safe.

"I am crucified with Christ," Paul says. He says, "We which live [a spiritual life] are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."—2 Cor. iv. He says, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made comformable unto

his death." Here are the clefts of the rock where the dove is, where the Lord's people find their salvation. It is not in peace and quiet of mind, not while lying on beds of ivory and stretching themselves on their couches, that they find safety, but in affliction and trouble; in suffering with Christ; in "bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus." Here is Moses, held in a close, rough, unpleasant cleft of the flinty rock, trying to get out into liberty and see what is passing by; but for his salvation he is held down in a place he does not like, and covered with the Lord's hand. This is his salvation. If he had been outside of that rock he would have been destroyed. The power of the Lord's name which he pronounced would have been his destruction. No man could endure the last syllable of that name; it would destroy any of Adam's race: "And that will by no means clear the guilty." The Rock only could endure it. No man can see God's face and live, but hidden in Christ, in the cleft of the Rock, we can see his back parts; can see the glory after the Lord has passed by; can see the goodness and blessedness of what he has done.

How we fret, and worry, and complain at this constant trouble; this cutting off and hedging in; this daily crossing of our worldly desires, or the greater sorrow and shame when our fleshly desires are fulfilled; this constant dissatisfaction with ourselves and our works; this self-abhorrence and self-loathing; this "great tribulation;" this withering of the glory and goodness of man like the grass; this lack of joy and comfort in worldly things, and often such questioning as to our interest in heavenly things. But in this is our safety. Through great tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of heaven. All of those who stand before the great white throne have come out of great tribulation.

The dear Savior recognizes his people in this condition, and calls to them, as his dove, seeing them in the clefts of the Rock. Also he speaks of them as "in the secret places of the stairs." The stairs were in the right side of the temple, and it was by winding stairs that the people went up out of the first into the second story, and out of the second into the third story, winding about, hardly knowing whether they are going up or down, often in a dark, secret place of the winding way. But he tells them where they are, they are in the stairs all the time. Every change, every turn, every new trouble and affliction, however it appears to oppress them and sink them down, is really lifting them higher. They are rising, they are in a secret place, hidden from the world, who cannot see them as the Lord's people, and who cannot understand the Lord's way of taking his people up from the world, up from self, up from legal works; but they are still going up by winding stairs out of the legal into the gospel dispensation, and out of the things that are seen from day to day into "the downward, and bear fruit upward."

The soil for plants generally must be broken up and rendered soft and fine, so that the roots can easily work into it. The soil for lilies of some kinds needs much softening by water, and in some kinds to be covered by it. There are a great many things of a most obnoxious kind that need to be gotten together to make a good rich soil for the lily. We speak of the soil as "good," and "rich," but put some of it out of place, on the face or on a white garment, and we pronounce it vile and loathsome.

What a sad, dark, fearful time that is for the poor soul when his thoughts are engaged day and night in searching his own vile heart and finding nothing but evil there. He cannot tell how he first came to see himself so sinful, cannot tell how his thoughts first began to be engaged in such a doleful search, in which he finds no good, but deeper and darker

depths of evil.

This broken heart, this depraved and sinful nature, this mass of corruption felt in the soul, is the soil which the Lord has prepared. It is he, the heavenly Husbandman, who has broken up the heart, who has made its corruption appear to our startled view, who has made us sick of sin, and sick of self because of sin.

Into this vile soil our thoughts are working downward, like roots from a good seed which the Lord has planted. This vile nature, this corrupt heart, is the "good ground" into which the good seed has fallen. It is "good ground" because it is well broken up and pulverized and made soft and tender. It is not the corruption, the sinfulness, which makes it good ground, but the knowledge of that corruption and sin, and the hatred of it. All men are corrupt and sinful, but until the law of god enters into the heart no one can know and feel it, and until that knowledge of one's just condemnation comes to him by the quickening power of God his heart is hard like the rock, the wayside or the thorny ground.

When the thoughts are working down in the darkness of our heart, and observing the sinfulness of all our life, trying if they can find some good thing there, what terrible anxiety and distress we feel. We cannot give up the search for something to give us hope, some good thing to relieve our anguish, some way of escape from the sin and evil that everywhere so afflict us. But we can find no relief, no way of escape from evil, for we seem to be all evil. Think of the roots that are working downward and abroad in the depth of the earth; what hopelessness we may imagine is theirs as they work in the darkness, the mass of fine, minute rootlets struggling, pushing themselves down into the soil, which grows more and more mellow, creeping and forcing themselves outward, to find they know not what. But they are doing the work appointed for them, and it is through the work done by them that the tender blade finally appears in sight.

It is through the work done by the thoughts down in the broken soil of the heart that finally the tender hope appears. The thoughts have been working downward, but the hope is reaching upward. In proportion to the thoroughness of that search downward is the strength and beauty of that blade looking upward. The search must be exhaustive and in vain. Again and again we must learn the sad truth: no light, no hope, no good thing down there in the earth; in the flesh no good thing. That must be learned deeply again and again.

But the tender roots with their mysterious, delicate life-power are taking up something from that dark, obnoxious soil which will be conveyed by the miraculous processes of nature upward and cause the appearance of the blade, the flower and the fruit. So the thoughts have gathered the sad assurance that there is nothing but evil in us, and because there is left no question of that truth, and because we are cut off from all hope in ourselves, we are prepared to wonder and adore when a blessed hope is given unto us reaching upward instead of downward. What a glorious surprise when the hope in Jesus appears to us! What thanksgiving and praise fill our poor hearts!

So the lilies grow, and the corn and the vine. "They shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine." "I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon." —Hosea xiv. 5, 7.

When at any time the roots cease to be sent forth downward and outward in the soil, then the plant or the tree will cease to grow. When the thoughts cease to work in the soil of a sinful, broken heart then the growth in grace ceases. When we lose sight of our sinfulness in any degree, and begin to feel some con-

tentment and satisfaction with our own condition, then we may think that we have attained to some excellent growth. But we have truly not grown at all in a spiritual sense; we have really diminished. "Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent form the Lord."

So from time to time the Lord sends a winter time upon us, when we can only send roots downward; when we can only think of our vileness; when our life looks to us utterly unworthy; when we can hardly see anything in our heart and life in which to take any comfort. The things that we have been enabled to do in obedience to the Lord we are thankful to him for, but we have still to think of our own unprofitableness as servants. All that was of ourselves in every work seems to display our own weakness and sinfulness. We feel a tender thankfulness to the Lord for his goodness in leading us in the paths of righteousness, but we feel also that "the sins of one most righteous day might sink us in despair."

How many a time I have seemed to be at the point of giving up, assured that my hope was not good, because for days I could seem to think of nothing but my own sinfulness and depravity. It was not long ago that while in this dark state of mind, my thoughts active, but active in a downward direction, all at once I saw them as the roots of a plant working downward that the plant might grow upward. What a sweet comfort that was.

Think of the pure, white flower of the lily looking downward at the black mud out of which it has grown! Think of the Spirit contrasted with the flesh. In the same person the flesh is felt lusting "against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." No wonder that the Lord's people feel conflicts within themselves. There must be a warfare where there are two contrary principles. None but quickened souls can feel that warfare.

The lilies, how wonderfully beautiful they are. Do they know of their beauty? do they not feel ashamed as they look down at that black, uncomely soil where they live? Could they grow otherwise or elsewhere than they do? Could they transfer themselves to some whiter, cleaner ground? Can they be exerting some power of their own grow more rapidly, or by neglect can they cease to grow? Can they cause themselves to be more or less pure and fair and lovely? Consider them, how they grow, and then you will see how the Lord's children grow in grace. It is by no effort or power of their own, and yet they are constantly, when exercised by the Spirit, anxious to grow, and feeling that something depends upon them, and are chiding and condemning themselves for their lack of growth. But all their efforts are vain, and only show them how helpless they are, how unable to make themselves any more worthy in the sight of God. Then they come again to the knowledge that all their goodness and power are in Jesus; that he is their righteousness. Then they truly grow, not in themselves, but in Jesus. Then they grow, not in their own works, but in grace. Then it can be said of them:

Blessed are you when you strive in vain
  And all your works no comfort yield;
For when you cease to toil and spin,
  You are as lilies of the field.
And he who richly clothes the flower,
  Which passes almost as a breath,
Will show his richer grace and power
  In you, O ye of little faith.

The plants in nature grow in the night. I have measured the growth of corn. Once from six at night to six in the morning it grew thirteen inches, and only an inch during the following day. It is authoritatively said that corn will sometimes, under most favorable circumstances, grow sixteen inches in one night. It is in the night time of sorrow and affliction that the

Lord's plants grow in the knowledge and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is while under a distressing sense of their own weakness that they grow in the knowledge of Jesus as their Strength. It is through an especially dark and oppressive experience of their own sinfulness and depravity that they grow in the knowledge of Jesus as their Righteousness. When their thoughts have long been working and groping, like the roots of plants, in the dark depths of their earthly nature, and have found no good thing dwelling there, but only evil, then with what glad surprise they see the same thoughts reaching upward and coming beautifully into flower, and rejoicing in the pure light of the Sun of Righteousness. Then they learn that all their sad and weary night work has not been in vain. Those creeping, searching roots, those struggling, groping thoughts, have brought up into the soul something that was necessary to the real growth of the true plant of grace. Their work down there in the darkness has caused the growth to be away from the earth, away from self-confidence, and has caused the blade to reach upward, and the flower to bloom in the sunlit atmosphere of grace. The poor souls can now see that by the faith and hope and love that are at last blooming in their hearts, and filling them with the beauty and perfume of Jesus' blessed name, they are even more gloriously clothed than are the lilies of the field.

Elder Silas Durand

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Sing, O barren, thou that dids't not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that dids't not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord. Isaiah 54:1.

I have given much thought on this subject, I believe that this woman is the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, and all of the redeemed of the Lord are members of this body and every one of these are the children of God. This woman has never given birth to be added to the number that God chose in Christ before the foundation of the world, none of the prophets, or the apostles, or the ministers have ever caused one spiritual birth into the kingdom of God.

Jesus Christ said, I will build my church upon this Rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Do not we see that this woman has something to cry aloud for. A child was given to her. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsler, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of the government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgement and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. Isaiah 9: 6-7.

Jesus answered, Verily verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. St. John 3: 6-7.

And again, I will put my trust in him, And again, behold I and the children which God hath given me.

Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that

had power over death, that is the devil. Heb. 2: 13-14.

Jesus was both man and God, so the ones that have the Spirit of God they are both man and spirit. He was without sin, yet Jesus was made sin for us, yet he knew no sin. But after we receive the spirit, then we are half dead and half alive. Paul said, if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness.

I want to prove that Jesus Christ came to save his people from their sins, Not to save righteous spirits, nor to change spirits, but to redeem his elect people, and in the ressurrection he will change our vile bodies and fashion us like unto his own glorious body.

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins. Matt. 1:21.

In all of the scriptures, I cannot find that anything will be changed but our vile bodies, I can not find that Jesus redeemed any thing but his elect people. And no spirit will ascend into heaven but that which came down from heaven, read St. John 3:13.

But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you, Romans 8:11.

It is said that he that has received another spirit you may bear well with him. I ask you dear readers do you mourn because of your sins, no spirit can mourn or hate sin other than the Spirit of God, this is he that is called the hidden man of the heart, this is he that is born of God that can not sin because he is born of God.

I only feel to write briefly, I do not want to be boresome. I do hope that the editors of the Signs will continue to publish sound reading for our hungry people in such a way we may continue to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Yours in bonds,
Elder J. R. Hollandsworth

THE NEW TESTAMENT
(Hebrews ix. (16, 27, 28.)

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die." The inspired writer is not here merely stating the fact that all men must die; he is not impressing upon the mind the truth that is is appointed unto men to die. The whole force of this sentence is that it is appointed unto men to die once, not twice, not many times, but only once. The apostle has been speaking of the work of Moses and Aaron in the worldly sanctuary in accomplishing the service of God. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins; that is, the death of the sinner is necessary to satisfy the claims of justice. The high priest, in this ceremonial service, represented death when he entered into the second tabernacle alone once every year, not without blood. This "was a figure for the time then present." Of course the high priest could not offer his own blood, for then he could not make another offering the next year. But Christ entered once into the holy place, even into heaven itself, by his own blood. He could not offer himself often, as the high priest did, "for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world [the Jewish world] hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." He could not die often, for it is appointed unto men to die only once.

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Here is the first part of a comparison introduced by the word "as," and intended to illustrate and open up some important thing concerning the sacrifice

of Christ and the manifestation of those for whom he died. The second part of this comparison is introduced by the word "so": "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." The apostle has in this chapter introduced the figure of a man's will or testament, to illustrate the mediatorial work of Christ, and to show how by means of death he brought the New Testament into force, and secured to them that are called, the promise of eternal inheritance. He says: "And for this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." The next expression proves that the apostle has in view as a figure the will or testament which a man makes, by which he bequeathes an inheritance. "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."

Now it seems to me that the apostle still has this figure in view in the comparison presented in my text. It is important to consider that a man's testament is of no force while yet he lives. He may say to me, I have made my will, and have given to you ten thousand acres of land, and I have given that will into the custody of a bank, and it is safely locked up, and so you are sure of the property. But I do not own a rod of that land. He may make another will the next day and devise the land to another. Also it is necessary to consider that as soon as a man is dead all that was his now belongs to others. But how shall it be decided who are the heirs? It must be by the judgment of the government under which the man lived and held the title to his possessions. It is in this sense that I understand the apostle to use the expression, "but after this the judgement."

We are to keep in mind that the apostle is not merely stating the fact that it is appointed unto men to die once, only once; but he is using this as a comparison. "As"—"so." "As it is appointed unto men *once* to die, but after this the judgment so Christ was *once* offered," &c.

Earthly inheritances are greatly sought after by many. And the judgement of the government must be carefully rendered before any one can claim them, but this heavenly inheritance is not desired by any but the true heirs; they do desire it, and earnestly long for it, and seek for evidences that it is theirs.

Now all the blood that was used in the works of the law, "sprinkling the unclean," could not wash away one sin, nor could all the legal work cleanse the conscience of one sinner. But when Christ shed his precious blood he thereby obtained eternal redemption for all his people, and secured unto them the eternal inheritance promised in the New Testament, which is the new and "everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure."

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." Who are they whose sins he bore? What is the judgment which has been rendered upon this subject? This same Jesus who died to bear the sins of many is now risen again, and is at the right hand of God, and is our Judge, our Lawgiver and our King. He has rendered the judgment: "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." The heirs of this spiritual inheritance, then, are those that look for him. This is the judgment concerning the heirs of God by this new testament.

But to know that we are looking for Jesus Christ! O, if we can only be sure of that. But so often we find our minds and our expectations fixed, apparently, upon worldly things. So often we feel

ourselves too depraved, too sinful, too vile, too full of transgressions, to dare to think that we are among those who are looking for him. What right have such as we to look for him to come to us? How dare we say to him, "Come"? yet he has said with divine and loving authority, "Let him that heareth say, Come." And we are sometimes assured that we have heard his voice saying, "Come unto me." We have heard his words of love to the poor and needy, his words of sweet command to those who labor and are heavy laden. We have from time to time received evidences that he has given us rest. We have at times felt "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding," keeping our hearts and minds. His words have at times dropped into our hearts with holy power, and our hearts have been drawn out to him in love and praise. The doctrine that declares the name of the Lord as our only Savior has sometimes dropped upon us like the rain, and has distilled as the dew; "as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass." Yes, at times we do feel assured that we are looking for him. We can do nothing of ourselves. When we look at ourselves we have to cry, Unclean. We are vile, we abhor ourselves; we have "the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead." But we do trust in him, Jesus is our only trust, our only hope, he is our righteousness, our life; yes, we look for him.

And what is the inheritance we are heirs of? Himself. "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." His appearing so far, and always while we are in the body, has been and shall yet be with sin, as our Sin-bearer, as having borne our sins. In our most exalted moments, while rejoicing in him, we remember him as having borne our griefs, as having suffered for our sins, and we thus know him in measure as having the fellowship of his sufferings, "being made conformable unto his death." We must always while in this mortal state bear "about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our body." As the Savior while in the flesh was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, so must his followers be. It is in sorrow, in temptation, in affliction, that we know him while here; it is as having been tempted in all points like unto us that we know him as thus able to succor us who are tempted. But when he appears the second time it will be without sin unto salvation. That salvation, Peter says, is "ready to be revealed in the last time." That second appearing will be with no remembrance of sin; it will be to deliver us "from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." It will be the end of mortality with us. When he appears the second time "we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." He will be admired in all them that love him. Our vile body shall be changed then that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. We do not know what we shall be, nor do we in the spirit want to know. It is enough to know that we shall be conformed to his image, and shall appear with him in glory.

Elder Silas Durand

JOHN 12:32

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

It is not needful perhaps to say that these are the words of the blessed Savior, and they were spoken concerning the death which he should die, as the inspired apostle tells us in verse thirty-three. The expression "lifted up," as applied to the blessed Redeemer, is

used several times in the word of God, and relates always to the crucifixion upon the cross; it always signifies what death he should die. He must die, not the death of ordinary men upon their beds, neither could he die by beheading, or drowning, or by anyother manner of violence, he must be "lifted up," he must be crucified. This he himself knew, and more than once did he testify of this manner of death before it came. Thus the types of the Old Testament Scripture were fulfilled; thus only could they be fulfilled. The manner of his death was not uncertain, all that pertained to it was declared beforehand by the words of holy men of old; there was no room for chance in this greatest of all events that the world ever saw. "The Son of man goeth as it is written of him," was his own testimony.

The same expression is used elsewhere concerning him: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up," &c. "When ye have lifted up the Son of man." "The Son of man must be lifted up." In all these places Jesus sets forth the same truth as is contained in the Scripture written at the beginning of this article. Twice it is said, "The Son of man must be lifted up." There was no other way by which redemption could be completed and all his people drawn to himself, he must thus suffer in order to enter into his glory. He ought to thus suffer, because he bare the sins of his people, and because it was so written. This last expression does not mean that because it was so written therefore he was under necessity of suffering, but because his death was ordained of God it had been declared beforehand, and as all the words of God were true words, so must they be fulfilled. The declaration did not create the purpose, but the purpose of God caused the declaration of that purpose.

While we do not at all object to the expression which we have heard all our life more or less, that Jesus "must be held up upon the pole of the gospel," because the meaning of it is that Jesus must be set forth, or held up, in all our preaching, yet the words "lifted up" in the gospel, as used by the Savior, do not at all refer to that, but solely to the actual crucifixion upon the tree. Jesus, in the text, does not say, And I, if I be preached, will draw all men unto me, but, "If I be lifted up," (crucified.) True the crucified Savior must be preached as the sum and substance of the gospel, but Jesus is to be preached as not only the crucified, but also the risen Redeemer. Yet this is not that which draws all men, in the sense of the text, unto him, it is the work of the atonement itself that redeems and saves; it is to Calvary, and not to any preaching of the scenes that took place on Calvary, that we must look for all the blessings of grace. Sermons may be true and clear, but they do not save men; they do not bring men from the ends of the earth to Christ, this work results from the power of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and which by the Spirit is applied in the time of condemnation to the heart of a sinner. Not to him who preaches Christ must the convicted sinner look for healing, nor yet to the preaching, but to Christ himself, who was crucified.

There seems to us great force in the expression "lifted up." Jesus was literally lifted up from the earth in the hour of his crucifixion. It was the hour and power of darkness; it was the hour of his greatest humiliation, and yet he was exalted high above all that was earthly in the work that he came to do. In the sight of men he was humiliated, but in deed and in truth, he was glorified. As he had glorified the Father, so now he must be shown to be, not of the earth, but lifted up above it. The literal lifting up of the body of the Savior was symbolical of that other lifting up, which is his,

and which was always his, even when he was in the flesh. In the cross of Jesus, Paul therefore gloried, and that which was regarded as the most shameful thing among men, because Jesus hung there became the most glorious thing in all the world. Jesus used these words, "lifted up," the five times to which we have referred, advisedly. He did not say, If I be abased, but "If I be lifted up." Although it was the path of sorrow and shame that he trod, yet it was the path to glory, and in the spirit by which he came to the cross at last, he was separated from the world, and lifted up above it, up above all its worldliness, and sin, and folly, and selfishness, and enmity, up to that which was holy, and pure, and heavenly. The crucifixion to him was not a shame, but the humble fulfilling of the will of his Father, and in it, as well as in all his life, he had the assurance of the Holy Spirit, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Drawing all men unto him, does not mean each and every individual of the human race. If indeed Jesus did intend this, then his death has proven a most miserable failure. We speak here with reverence. Jesus declared, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." And at the last he said, "It is finished." And it was declared of him in prophecy, "He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." If indeed the coming of the Son of man was intended to redeem the whole family of man, then the purpose of God has utterly failed. To-day, with the utmost stretch of charity in our judgment of men we must confess that not one in a hundred of the race of Adam believe savingly in Christ. The vast multitudes of men are repelled from him rather than drawn to him. Jesus means by this language that just as Jews will some of them be drawn to him, so will some out of all Gentile nations be drawn to him; Gentiles should be sharers in this grace as well as Jews. This has been fulfilled, and it is being fulfilled now. If Jesus meant this, then his words have been shown to be true; if he intended more than this, then his words have proven untrue. But Jesus was and is truth itself, and all his words are true. Also, drawing does not mean driving or compelling, in the sense of bringing in the unwilling. The word draw is a mild and gentle word, but it is also a powerful word. It is not said that he will try to draw, but will draw. Jesus does not try to do, but he does things.

When Jesus said, If I be lifted up, I will draw all men to me, it implied, as it seems to us, that he would draw men up from the earth also. His people are not only redeemed from death and sin, but from the earth. Through his atonement they are lifted up from themselves, from worldliness, from all that is low and groveling, up unto all heavenly things; they are redeemed from sin, and death, and hell; they are redeemed, not only in the sense that they shall not be condemned, but in the sense that sin shall not have dominion over them. Paul expressed this in Romans 5:9, 10: "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." A present salvation is ours, as well as a final world of glory through the lifting up of Jesus from the earth, and so Paul could say in Colossians, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." This signifies in brief, as it seems to us, that as believers are risen with Christ, so should their affections be set on the things whereto they have arisen. Let us love the things which are where we dwell, at the right hand of

God, rather than the old, groveling, earthly things, from which believers have been raised; believers are thus raised through the death and resurrection of Christ. In other words, as he, their Redeemer, has been lifted up, so have they been exalted in him at the right hand of God, and as children of God a godly life becomes them.

In John iii. Jesus himself has told us what being lifted up means, and what being drawn to him also means: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." The Old Testament narrative of the fiery, flying serpents, and the brazen serpent, which Moses commanded to be made and set up upon a pole, is familiar to all. We do not need to do more than state its most prominent features. First, the Israelites had sinned, and because of this the Lord sent these fiery, flying serpents to bite them. All that were bitten, unless a remedy should be found, must die. The bite of these serpents was not their sins, but wrought conviction for their sins; they had already sinned; now judgment fell upon them, and these fiery serpents were the judgment of God; they represent the fiery and forceful nature of the law of God when it comes to a man as it did to Paul, and that man, as did Paul, dies. The biting and the pain that followed well represent the sting and pain of conviction in the conscience, wrought through the just and holy law of God. All Israel had sinned, as we are told, but not all Israel were bitten. Some were bitten and were sore distressed; to what shall they flee? Where is there for them any remedy? Now grace and mercy appear in the brazen serpent for the bitten Israelites. It is erected in the camp of Israel, and the word is, That whosoever is bitten, and looks, shall live. No others save the bitten ones felt any need of looking to the brazen serpent: all who were bitten did feel the need of salvation, the message concerning the brazen serpent would have no interest to those who were not bitten. So all man have sinned, but all men do not feel the need of salvation, only those to whom conviction has come, by way of the fiery law, do feel their need of salvation; the dear Redeemer came for just such as these. "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Jesus came to heal the sick; he healed the sick by himself taking their sicknesses; he cleansed from sin by himself taking our sins; he was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Serpents bit the Israelites, a serpent brought to the bitten ones healing. Sin destroyed us, and Jesus was made sin for us that we might be righteous and live. The brazen serpent was provided for the bitten ones, not for all who had sinned; so Jesus was provided for the convicted ones, not for all who had sinned in Adam, and in person also. The fiery, flying serpents were sent of God, and they did God's bidding, and went where they were sent. So the arrow of conviction finds every heart where God sends it, and whom the dear Lord thus wounds, he wounds to heal, where he sends the fiery, flying serpents, there also he has provided the brazen serpent for salvation. All these things we have thus briefly referred to, but the one thing which we had in view was this, that Jesus here shows that "looking" means "believing." The Israelites looked to the brazen serpent, and just so men believe on him. There must have been belief in the brazen serpent before any poor bitten soul would look, and so faith in Jesus leads men to look to him for salvation, and that means that they have turned away from every other source of help. It is thus then that Jesus draws men unto him. First, they have sinned. Second, they have been convicted of

their sins, and are pained and grieved, and ready to die, and then Jesus is presented as the one way of life and salvation, and the faith which God has given them looks to Christ, and rests in Christ entirely for redemption and eternal life, and all who have come to trust alone in this crucified Savior live, and live forever. Thus are they drawn to him, thus they come to live by him and in him, and thus they come to serve him in newness of spirit, thus making manifest in their mortal flesh the healing which has been wrought in them, and so Jesus comes to be all and in all to every such seeking soul.

Lastly, we feel there is nothing that can or will draw the people of God together like being drawn to Christ first. If there be dissension anywhere among those who love the Lord, to hold up Christ in his salvation is the best antidote of which we have any knowledge. If preaching Christ, if feeling the power of his salvation in the heart, if loving, living communtion with him will not heal all breaches and soothe all soreness one toward another, we know of nothing that will do these things. The best way to heal any dissension is to keep right on preaching Christ, and as men are drawn to him, so will they perforce be drawn nearer and nearer to each other in him, and as Christ is magnified before their view, all lesser things will grow smaller and smaller, until they will disappear, and we shall wonder that they could ever have seemed so vast in our view.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

ROMANS IV. 8.

"Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."

This a wonderful consolation to a poor wayworn child of God who has been made to see and feel that he is a vile, wretched and undone sinner. In the face of ample scriptural proof that there is not, nor has ever been a single Adamic being on earth who did not and does not sin, as is evidenced in Romans iii.10, "There is none righteous, no, not one," then surely every one who is not righteousness is certainly sinful. There is no escape from this conclusion. Read Romans 4:8. Now that we have reached the pointed and scriptural conclusion that there is not, nor has ever been, one on earth (except Jesus) who is not a sinner, let us see who it is that the Lord will not impute sin to. Certainly there could be no misunderstanding as to what the text means. If it means blessed is the man who does not sin, or has not sinned, or will not sin, the text would not read as it does. But blessed is the man unto whom the Lord will not impute sin. *Impute means to charge to,* so there are some even though they are sinners, it will not be charged to. The question might arise, Are all men in this category? I say, No. If they were who would have sin to account for? Universal salvation would be the ultimate result. Is there any room for a scriptural proof of universal salvation of all Adam's race? No, I have but to cite you to one passage of Scripture to prove this point: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment."—Matt. xxv. 46. This proves that their sins were charged to them, and as a result they received everlasting punishment. On the other hand, if you will read the rest of this verse you will find a good Scripture on which to base a good conclusion as to whom it is the Lord will not impute sin. I quote, "But the righteous into life everlasting." So you see there are two different peoples in the world. We cannot escape this conclusion scripturally, no matter how hard we try, nor how intelligent we may be. In the beginning, with the first two boys born in the world, this very subject we are discussing was thoroughly de-

monstrated. Read the fourth chapter of Genesis, all of it, and you will find where Cain sinned and was punished. Surely he would not have been punished as he was if his sins had not been charged to him. Jacob and Esau are another shining example, and even though Jacob was worse, from a human standpoint, than Esau, we have the language of the Lord himself, in Romans ix. 13, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Now it is not only reasonable but scriptural to believe that the Lord did impute Esau's sins to him and they were visited upon him insomuch that in Hebrews xii. 17, Esau sought repentance from his sins and found no place, though he sought it carefully with tears? There is extensive effort on the part of almost all creeds (except the Old Baptists) to prove that the Lord's attitude towards Jacob was affected by conditions performed by the creatures, but this is so positively denied I cannot see how any one can fail to see it. "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." —Rom. ix, 11. It is perfectly true that both were sinners, even in conception and immediately afterwards, but the one unto whom the Lord will not impute sin is the blessed one. Then I might also mention Issac and Ishamael, and so on down through the Bible. In short, before there was a world, or even the foundation of it, the all-wise, all-powerful, self-existent, perfect and unchangeable God determined to create and bring into existence a world, just as it is, was and shall be. he also determined, or purposed, that sin should enter into it. He also made choice of and determined to save some of this race of people. Let me quote one verse, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." — Eph. i. 4. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, acaccording to the good pleasure of his will."Eph. i. 5. Therefore, we see from these passages that they were chosen in Christ, the Savior, the Sinbearer, who stood in the mind and purpose of God before the foundation of the world. Who was he the sin-bearer for? The whole Adamic race? No, but for those whom the Father chose in him before the world began; those to whom the Lord will not impute sin, or those of whom the angel said, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." Made the words, "His people," and you will see there is certainly quite a significant meaning in those two words. Then one who does not believe this doctrine might say, is not everybody his people? If so, then universal salvation will be the result, unless Jesus failed to do what he came to do. If he failed having all power in heaven and earth (Matt. xxviii. 18), holding the keys of death and hell (Rev. i. 18) and working all things after the counsel of his will, then what hope have we? There could be no hope at all for a sinner if his Sinbearer failed, but we would ask this question. How could one fail who has all power, the will, and who holds the keys of death? Another question that could be asked is. If he came to save his people from their sins, and our text says the Lord will not impute (or charge) their sins, how is he to save them from their sins? Well, here is the point: their sins were charged to Jesus by decree, or purpose, for him to atone for with his precious blood. The text does not for a moment in the least imply the idea that the sins of every one are not charged to some one. They are, and they must be satisfactorily and completely atoned for. That is why he came, and that is what he accomplished when he said, "It is finished." Now that this is done, the only way we are ever entitled to forgiveness

is by grace and mercy. All the gifts and graces and callings of our gracious heavenly Father are because all our sins were charged to Him who is mighty to save, and they were NOT charged, or imputed, to the Lord's people, but to Christ the Savior, the High Priest, the Prince of Peace. Let us see if we can find a suitable portion of Scripture which will prove this. "All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." All who? All unto whom the Lord will not impute sin; all who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world that they should be holy and without blame before him in love (Eph. i. 4), all that he came to save, his people. As he said in John xvii. 2, "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." As many, and no more. I will admit they are all his by creation, but not as his chosen people. If this were not so, then again universal salvation would be so. But to prove there is a sense in which they are not his people, read what St. John records in the tenth chapter: "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." The sheep are all his but the goats were not his in a covenant sense. You will find in the end the sheep are all still his, and he says to them, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom," etc.—Matt. xxv, 34. I want you to note the word "blessed" in the last verse quoted. Remember that is the man unto whom the Lord will not impute sin.

Dear child of God, what a wonderful consolation that our sins were never charged to us (because we would not have been able to pay), but to our blessed Redeemer and Savior, who came traveling in the greatness of his strength and mighty to save. He paid the redemption price and delivered us from our sins with his precious blood, out of every nation, kindred and tongue under heaven. No doubt every child of God would love to know that he is embraced in these precious and glorious promises of the Lord. We only have hope, yet we have abundance of evidence in our experience which, if the Lord blesses us to recall, gives us great hope, comfort and encouragement. Let me relate some of the identities of the blessed. Jesus said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Do you ever feel hungry and thirst after righteousness? If so, you are one of those to whom the Lord will not impute sin. "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." Dear child of God, do you not often mourn because of your felt sense of sin? Then you are one of the blessed unto whom the Lord will not impute sin. Then Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." Dear ones, do you ever feel so low and destitute that you almost despair? Then you are in the kingdom of heaven. What a glorious and precious hope! It is worth more than all the vain treasures of this earth or all the glory of vain man. The hope of heaven shines in my poor mind and heart above all that I have ever thought of. I had rather dream of it, if the Lord will bless the dream to my comfort, than anything else I have dreamed of. Once I dreamed of the resurrection, and I can never express the beauties and glories to my satisfaction that I was blessed to see, say and feel at the time. I saw the graves burst asunder and those who were in them come forth dressed in the most beautiful white. They were ascending slowly toward heaven as I looked on in wonder and amazement, There was a voice that spoke to me that affected me to the extent that I was completely changed. I was dressed in the most beautiful white and ascended with them as long as the dream lasted. It was a glorious and blessed sight. and I was filled with praise as I saw, felt and heard. I felt free from

sin dressed in that beautiful white. I joined in the sweet anthems of praise, that I fully felt and understood at that time, but truly I am now, and have been, unable to relate much of it since I awoke at the time. Truly I saw, heard and felt "things unlawful to be uttered." I ascended until about fifteen feet from the earth and it seemed that a dark shroud of a cloud came between us and the earth. The elements were as white as the most beautiful snow, and white clouds were around as we were ascending heavenward shouting and singing praise to His blessed name. This Scripture came to me and seemed to awaken me, Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurretion: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be kings and priests, and they shall reign with him on the earth. Oh how light I felt, but how I have wept that it was not a reality instead of a dream, yet I have often been made to shed tears of joy that I was given this beautiful experience, which I feel so unworthy of.

Dear children, I have digressed long enough to tell you a part of my dream. I desire to say that if you mourn, hunger and thirst, weep and cry, long and crave to be embraced in these blessed things, you are one of those to whom the Lord will not impute sin, and some sweet and blessed day you, together with the redeemed family of God, will ascend to meet the Lord in the air. Your soul, body and spirit will be quickened into the glorious likeness of the precious Redeemer and Savior, no more to hunger or thirst, mourn or weep, no more to find yourself a sinner in the flesh. Pain, death, sickness and sorrow will be felt and feared no more, but praise, glory and honor to His blessed name will be yours to sing and shout for evermore. Oh may this be the lot of every one who loves these things; yea, and it will be. May the Lord bless and keep every one who loves these blessed truths, is my prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen. Beloved, pray for me, a poor and often cast down sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all.

Your unworthy brother, in hope of continued mercy and great goodness.

Elder R. W. Rhodes

MEETINGS

FIVE MILE CREEK OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Five Mile Creek Old School Primitive Baptist Association will convene the Lord willing on Friday before the 3rd Sunday in Sept (14-15-16) 1984. At New Hope Church. This Church is located on Sipsey Road just off Hwy. 69 between Cullman and Jasper, Ala. We invite all of our faith and order to join us in this meeting.

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ORDINATION

Pursuant to a request by Goose Creek Island Church, a presbetery was called to examine Brother Jesse Foreman and if in their judgment is qualified, be ordained to the full work of the ministry.

Ministers composing the presbytery were Elders Oliver Allen, J.T. Prescott, Harmon Brown and Reeves Smith. Deacons present were Virgil Gaskill, Simey Brickhouse, Clayton Brown, E.J. Marslender, Joe Morton, Albert Manning, Ervin Futrell and H.W. Brinkley.

Service was opened by singing hymn number 704 and prayer by Elder Pre-

scott. Elder Allen was chosen moderator and Elder Reeves Smith was chosen clerk.

The candidate was presented to the presbytery by Deacons Earna Marslender and Virgil Gaskill. The moderator asked all the Elders if they had any questions to ask the candidate. All present declined any questions. Elder Prescott was chosen to give the charge. He spoke very comforting, yet emphasizing the problems and heartaches that would be encountered. He used 1st Timothy 3rd Chapter. Elder Allen also spoke of some things to be expected in his ministry.

With the laying on of hands by the presbetery, Elder Reeves Smith gave the ordination prayer after which the church was asked if it was satisfied with the work of the presbetery. The church answered yes.

Deacons then presented the candidate back to the church, an ordained Elder.

Minutes were read and approved and Conference was dismissed with prayer by Elder Harmon Brown.

Oliver Allen
Moderator
Reeves Smith
Clerk
January 21, 1984

SULPHUR FORK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The one hundred thirty-nineth annual session of the Sulphur Fork Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Pleasant Hope Church, Cass County, Texas, October 5th, 6th, and 7th, 1984. Pleasant Hope Church is located 7 miles south of Atlanta, Texas on Highway 251 at sign. For further information call 214-796-3011.

SALEM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Salem Primitive Baptist Church also known as "Head of the River," will have an all day meeting the fifth Sunday in September. This will also note their two hundreth anniversary and dedication of their new church building which is now being completed. We invite all of our faith and order to meet with us and we welcome all of our corresponding ministers.

The meeting house is located on highway #221, three miles south of Copper Hill, Va.

Elder A. J. (Roy) Agee
Pastor

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The ninety-fourth annual session of The South Ouachita Association will convene with Rehobith Church, located at Eldorado, Arkansas five (5) miles north on Hwy. 7 and ½ mile west on Hwy. 335. Beginning on Friday before the fourth (4th) Sunday in September, 1984.

Doyle Murphy
Association Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR JUNE 1984

Orville Beatty, PA $1.00
Mrs. E.W. Gibson, GA..... 5.00
Mrs. Lelah Hill, CA 2.00
Harold T. Clayton, NC 3.00

Bryan L. Shockley, MD 7.00
Hartzel B. Nelson, WV..... 3.00
Mrs. Connie M. Page, NC 3.00
Mrs. Era Barber, AL..... 3.00
Mrs. T.H. Graham, TX..... 7.00
W.B. Aaron, NC 12.00
In Memory of
William P. Lewis, PA 7.00
Eld. C.B. Davis, NC..... 3.00
I.T. Wood, VA 12.00
Mrs. Myrtle Thomas, VA..... 10.00
Mrs. D.J. Wright, VA 3.00
Mrs. Ada Campbell, VA..... 2.00
Mrs. Jewel Pierce, TN 2.00
Mrs. Ila F. Herbin, NC..... 1.00
H.C. Brown, VA..... 3.00
Mrs. Roberta Womack, MO 3.00
Wiley S. Taylor, AL..... 2.00
Mrs. Harold May, AL 7.00
Y.W. Wade, WV..... 2.00
William L. Neal, NC 12.00
John T. Brooks, CA..... 3.00
Eld. R.H. Pennington, WV 3.00
Miss Ruth Fleming, NC 2.00
Mr. & Mrs. Ira L. Bell, VA 6.00
A.S. Blalock, NC..... 4.00
Raymond Clayton, KY..... 7.00
B.T. Sowers, VA 2.00
W.W. Abshire, VA..... 2.00
Mrs. Clara Cumbo, VA..... 7.00
Mrs. B.T. Hollandsworth, VA ... 8.00
C.M. Straughan, NC 3.00
T.D. Quesenberry, VA..... 7.00
DeWitt Ray Sr., MS..... 12.00
Mrs. Opel E. Hiatt, VA..... 2.00
Eld. William M. Holland, VA 5.00
Mrs. Mamie L. Bisher, NC 3.00
Mrs. J.C. Macks, AR..... 2.00
Mrs. J.M. Jenkins, TN 1.00
Mrs. Amanda S. Saunders, NC ... 3.00
E.R. Graves, AL..... 5.00
L.T. Sadler, NC 2.00
M.M. Richardson, MS..... 1.00
Mrs. Frank Scearce, VA 2.00
Mrs. Fay H. Quesenberry, VA... 3.00
H.R. Toney, MS..... 2.00
Mrs. Rachel Green, WV 2.00
Norman N. Bird, WV..... 2.00
Mrs. Priddy L. Shaw, VA..... 2.00

OBITUARIES

STEFANA GEARHEART AGEE

It is with a feeling of much unworthiness and sadness that I attempt to comply with Salem Church's request to write the obituary of our dear loved one.

Sister Stefana Gearheart Agee was born May 18, 1916 and passed away February 12, 1984. She was the daughter of the late D.A. and Lidy Conner. She was first married to Brother Roy Gearheart who served Salem Church as deacon and assistant clerk. He passed away March 22, 1970. She then married Elder James Leroy Agee September 13, 1975, whom she is survived by. She is also survived by three sons and wives, Melvin, Donald, and Larry Gearheart, two stepsons and wives, Donald and Larry Agee, three sisters, one brother, seven grandchildren and four stepgrandchildren.

Sister Stefana was laid to rest on February 14, 1984 with her funeral being held at the Copper Hill Brethren Church due to her church being in the process of constructing a new building which she supported greatly. Elders Amos Hash and William Holland conducted the service with Elder Kenneth Key dismissing the service at the Restvale Cemetery.

Sister Stefana fought a good fight, she finished her course and she kept the faith. Her love for her church was manifested in many ways. She joined the church September 12, 1959 and served her church the past ten years as assistant clerk. May we all be reconciled to His Holy will and be comforted to know that our loss is her eternal gain.

Approved in conference June 9, 1984 by Salem Primitive Baptist Church and agreed to send copies to the Signs of The Times and the family.

Submitted by Mary Poff—Clerk
J.L. Agee—Moderator
Willie Ratliff—Assistant Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT SISTER MARTHA LYNCH

By the request of Tarboro Church, I attempt to write this resolution of respect in loving memory of Sister Martha Lynch.

Sister Lynch was born on December 2, 1904 and died June 23, 1984, making her stay on earth 80 years.

She was blessed to join Tarboro Church, July 7, 1968, after attending our church for over forty years. Most of the congregation thought she was already a member when she joined that day! Her husband, Brother Frank Lynch, was blessed to join at the water, and they were baptized together. He passed away ten years ago.

To know Sister Lynch was to love her, for she always carried a smiling face wherever she went. She was a faithful member and attended her church even when she really didn't feel like going. Sister Martha was always praising her God and she was a great believer of Salvation by Grace. She enjoyed her pastor's visits and would tell him about the goodness and mercy of her God.

The Church at Tarboro resolve that our loss is her eternal gain, for we feel she is resting in peace and love of our dear Savior. We send our sympathy to her family and trust God will comfort them and bless them to follow the path their Mother had set forth.

The church request that three copies of this resolution be made: one for the family, one for the church records, and one to be published in the Signs of The Times.

This done by order of conference at our July meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes
Moderator
John H. Coker
Clerk

ROSA MAY (SMITH) PAGE

Mrs. Rosa Page was born May 20, 1905; she passed away at her home Route Two, Elon College April 25, 1984.

She had a hard life, Daddy dying in 1945 leaving five children to provide for. I was only three years old at that time.

She loved her Bible, and her church, and her family. It was my blessed privilege to be at her bedside almost constantly the last four months of her life. She suffered greatly of lung cancer, but she never complained, saying "I am in the Lord's hands." These hours and days will always be some of my most precious memories.

She is survived by four of her children, the oldest Odell had passed away a few years ago, of heart attack: leaving Winford, Mrs. Nellie Reid, and Mrs. Rovena Ward, along with myself, William Page to mourn her loss. Also she leaves two brothers, Julius and Robert Smith; three sisters, Mrs. Ola Paschal, Mrs. Ara Terrell, and Mrs. Rena Loftis.

Her funeral was conducted at her church, Pleasant Grove, by her pastor, Elder Donald Smith, assisted by Elder Wallis Smith, and a former pastor, Elder W.J. Berry.

Written by her sorrowing son,
William Page

BOOK NOTICES

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Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
Route l, Box 65 Keeling, Virginia 24566

WAS IT FOR ME?

Did the Savior die for me,
When He hung there on the tree?
I'm not worthy to even claim a part.
Was that grace for me applied,
When they pierced His bleeding side?
Oh, it causes such great anguish in my heart!

Could my sins have caused one groan,
As He prayed out there alone?
Could one so vile have been remembered there?
Was the chaff taken from the wheat,
When nails were driven in His feet,
The crown of thorns placed on His head so fair?

Then while hanging on the cross,
Did He separate the dross,
When He asked His heavenly Father to forgive?
Did He give His life divine,
Just to make the gold to shine?
Did He die there on the cross that I might live?

Jesus heard the dying thief,
And that promise brought relief,
He said, "Today thy soul shall be with me."
First a cross we here must bear,
E'er the crown of life shall wear,
But He said, My grace shall all-sufficient be.

Just a sunset, then the dawn,
And the resurrection morn,
For He said, I'm coming back to earth someday.
So He will come and claim His own,
When our work on earth is done.
Each jot and tittle complete, they heard Him say.

Though these bodies they may hide
'Neath the mighty ocean's tide,
Yet His voice can still the murmur of the sea.
All His work was nobly done,
And the heavenly victory won,
For He died there just to set the captive free.

Sister Evelyn Walker

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Thomas Lee Sawyer
Nannie E. Guy Varnier
Deacon Gold Minter

EDITORIAL

I SEE A PICTURE

With such fear as I usually experience when called to speak to the Lord's peolpe, I feel to-day as I attempt to write to a group wise in the knowledge of the truth.

We don't desire to correct, admonish or in any way declare the lord has favored us beyond others, but be allowed to bring to your mind some thoughts, we trust will present a view of God's work with His people.

In 2nd Tim. 2nd Chapter, 19th verse, we find "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

Can we not see a great picture is unfolding, before our very eyes, ordered in all things and sure, a picture as it were painted by the finger of God's love, for the viewing of His people alone. The world at large will never see it or for that matter, know it exists. 2nd Cor. 4th Chapter, 4th verse "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, less the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

What beauty, as He gives a glimpse to His people, but only a small portion at a time as He unfolds it bit by bit, fold by fold as spiritual eyes search out the characters it portrays. We know natural man could never endure the entire picture at any one time.

We see a picture, of God being the foundation of all things, from the creation of the earth and all things therein until every timber as it were, is laid upon that foundation that composes the building of God, a tried stone.

I can not see God in the picture being disappointed in any way. He being the foundation and having sealed the work. Even in nature, as we all are, we know from a letter, to a King's decree, when something is sealed, it is after it is completed, nothing else to be added or taken from it.

The Foundation, the Rock, Jesus Christ, the Revelator, all one and the same, all standing sure was the only source Christ could have declared He would build His Church upon and the gates of hell would not prevail against it. Do we not believe all the building is as sure to stand as the foundation and His people have this seal, and are as secure as all the building having been sealed to It, through It, and by It.

And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. Do we believe that God is asking any one to

do better, to leave sin and iniquity behind so he can bless them more. Has not He declared He would be to them a God and they shall be to me a people? Did He not promise I'll separate their sin and iniquity from them as far as the east is from the west and remember them against them no more.

God speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast, so when He speaks to that inner man, that man begotten of God, that one that nameth the name of Christ, that one that knows God for He is known of His, for to such He has revealed Himself. To these, His elect, from the foundation of the world, when He says and let everyone that nameth the name of Christ etc., I see it as a Command, and if so, it shall be obeyed. The ones called by His name, His children, begotten of Him, and have departed from sin, in as far as God had delivered them from such.

Notwithstanding, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God in the flesh.

Do we ever suppose God is waiting for obedience from us before granting a blessing or wondering how we'll measure up to the situation? If this is true we must act first and God knows not what to grant us until we act. He could not have declared I'm the Lord, I change not; therefore, ye sons of Jacob are not consumed, if this were true.

We read His people shall be a willing people in the day of His power, and all days from beginning to end are days of His power, so He has determined before time was, what He would give to all and what they needed, not that we deserve anything.

Isa. 65th Chap., 6th verse, "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." We can not see any one that is left out of this condition or being worthy of the least of God's notice. How can any that God has given an insight of their condition, try to tell His people how to live to obtain a blessing, much more soul searching to hear, God will do if you make the first move. Some even claim the true Churches would prosper more if we acted differently.

Thanks be to God, we see in this great picture that He unfolds before us, the picture has already been drawn, and as we read He never changes, then how could the picture. We see just as much as He reveals or never more than is unfolded.

The complete picture will be seen some day, I believe, but until we are made ready, our eyes can not behold Him in His glory.

By one that knows little but desires more.

Elder J. R. Williams

FOR SPECIAL NOTICE

RULES OF DECORUM

1. The association shall be opened and closed by prayer.

2. Only one person shall speak at a time, who shall rise from his seat and address the Moderator in beginning his speech.

3. EVERY BROTHER SPEAKING SHALL ADHERE STRICTLY TO THE SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION AND SHALL IN NO WAY REFLECT ON ANY OTHER BROTHER.

4. No Messenger shall absent himself from the Association while in conference, without permission.

5. No Messenger shall speak more than three times on the same subject without permission from the Association.

6. Messengers shall keep strict order while the business of the Association is being transacted.

7. No Messenger shall be interrupted while speaking, unless he violates the rules of this decorulm.

8. No Messenger shall address another in any other term or application than the title of brother.

9. The names of the members composing the Association shall be enrolled by the Clerk and called over as often as the Association requires.

10. The Moderator shall not speak on any question before the Association until all the other Messengers are through speaking, when he may give his views, after which any Messenger having a right to speak, may reply to any new matter introduced by the Moderator.

11. Any member sho shall violate any rules of the Association shall be dealt with by the Association as it deems proper.

ARTICLES OF FAITH

We, the messengers of the several churches composing the upper Country Line Association agree, for the satisfaction of our brethren and friends, to publish an abstract of the principles of faith upon which we unit and will endeavor with the help of the Lord to maintain.

1. We believe in the being of God as Almighty, eternal unchangeable of infinite wisdom, power Justice, Holiness, Goodness, Mercy and Truth, and that this God has revealed himself in his word, under the character of Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

2. We believe that Almighty God has made known His mind and will to the children of men in His word which word we believe to be of divine authority and contains all things necessary to be known for the salvation of man. The same is comprehended or contained in the Books of the Old and New Testament.

3. We believe that God before the foundation of the world, for a purpose of His own glory, did elect a certain number of men and Angels to eternal life, and that this election is particular eternal, and unconditional on the creature's part.

4. We believe that when God made man he was good and upright, but by his own transgression he fell from that good and upright state, and being the head and representative of the whole human race, they being his natural offspring, he involved all of them in the same ruined state with himself, and they were partakers of, an exposed to, the miseries which sprang from his disobedience.

5. We believe that it is utterly out of the power of man as a fallen creature to keep the law of God perfectly, or to truly repent of his sins, or believe in Christ, except he be drawn by the Holy Spirit.

6. We believe in God's own appointed time and way, the elect will be called, justified, pardoned and sanctified, and that it is impossible that they can utterly refuse the call, but shall be willing by divine grace to receive mercy.

7. We believe that justification in the sight of God is only by the imputed rigteousness of Jesus Christ, received and applied by faith.

8. We believe that God's elect will be converted and born again by the effectual work of the Holy Spirit.

9. We believe that those that are called by grace and born again will persevere in holiness and never fall finally away.

10. We believe it to be a duty incumbent on all God's people to walk religiously in all God's works, not in the old covenant way of seeking life and the favor of the Lord by it, but only as a duty from a principal of love.

11. We believe baptism, and the Lord's supper are gospel ordinances, both belonging to the converted or true believer.

12. WE BELIEVE THAT EVERY CHURCH IS INDEPENDENT IN MATTERS OF DISCIPLINE AND THAT ASSOCIATIONS, COUNCILS AND CONFERENCES OF MINISTERS OR CHURCHES, ARE NOT TO IMPOSE ON THE CHURCH THE KEEPING, HOLDING OR MAINTAINING ANY PRINCIPLE OR PRACTICE CONTRARY TO THE CHURCHES' JUDGMENT.

13. We believe in the general resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust, and final judgment.

14. We believe the punishment of the wicked is everlasting and the joys of the righteous eternal.

17. We believe that no minister has a right to administer the ordinances unless called and comes under the imposition of hands by the presbytery.

16. Lastly, we believe that for the mutual comfort, union and satisfaction of the several churches of the aforesaid faith and order that we ought to meet in an Association capacity wherein each church ought to be represented by their messengers to advise with each other in conference.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT

1. The Association shall be composed of members chosen by the churches in Upper Country Line Association, who shall be members supposed to be best qualified for that purpose, and thos producing letters from their respective churches, certifying their appointment, shall be entitled to seats in the Association, provided the church is in peace at the time appointment is made.

2. In the letters from the churches shall be expressed the number of members in full fellowship, the number received by experience and baptism, the number received by letter, the number dismissed by letter, and the number excommunicated, and those who died since the last Association was held.

3. Members thus chosen and convened shall be denominated the United Primitive Baptists, known as the Upper Country Line Association, being composed of churches in the counties of Rockingham, Orange, Chatham and Granville, North Carolina, WHICH SHALL HAVE NO POWER TO LORD IT OVER THE CHURCHES COMPOSING IT; NOR SHALL IT HAVE ANY POWER OVER ANY CHURCH OR INFRINGE UPON THE RIGHTS OF ANY CHURCH IN THE UNION.

4. The Association, when convened, shall be governed and ruled by a regular and proper decorum.

5. The Association shall have a Moderator and Clerk, who shall be chosen by members composing it. The Moderator to be chosen annually at each Association; the Clerk to continue in office during his pleasure or the pleasure of the Association.

6. New churches may be admitted into the union by a written petition presented by Messengers with letter, and upon examination if found orthodox and orderly, it may be manifested by the Moderator giving the Messenger the right hand of fellowship.

7. Every church in the union shall be entitled to representation in the Association, but shall have only three messengers from each church.

8. EVERY QUERY PRESENTED BY ANY MESSENGER OF THE ASSOCIATION SHALL BE READ AND BEFORE IT SHALL BE DEBATED, THE MODERATOR SHALL PUT IT TO A VOTE AS TO WHETHER OR NOT IT SHALL BE DEBATED, AND IF A MAJORITY VOTES FOR DEBATING, THE QUERY SHALL BE DEBATED, OTHE-

WISE THE QUERY MUST BE WITHDRAWN.

9. Every motion made by any Messenger which receives a second shall be considered by the Association, unless it be withdrawn by the Messenger offering it.

10. The Association shall furnish the churches in the union with minutes of its proceedings.

11. We believe it to be absolutely necessary to have a fund for defraying the necessary expenses of the Association, and recommend that each church composing it voluntarily contribute such sum as they think proper, and send by their Messenger to the Association, which money shall be placed in the hands of the Clerk, who shall account for the same, and pay it out as directed by the Association.

12. The Clerk shall have a book, wherein shall be recorded the proceedings of each Association, as well as a record of the dates of each Association and each section meeting, and when Associations and section meetings are held at the different churches in the Union, for which he shall receive a yearly compensation.

13. The Association shall provide for the general union of churches, and shall preserve inviolably a chain of communion among the same; shall give churches all necessary advice WHEN CALLED UPON TO DO SO; shall inquire into the cause of failure on the part of any church not represented at each Association; shall appropriate the money contributed by the church for association fund to any purpose it deems proper; may appoint any member or members BY AND WITH THEIR CONSENT to transact any business connected with the Association; SHALL HAVE POWER TO WITHDRAW FROM ANY CHURCH COMPOSING THE UNION WHICH VIOLATES THE RULES OF THE ASSOCIATION, OR DEVIATES FROM THE ORTHODOX PRINCIPLES OF OUR FAITH.

14. Visiting brethren may be invited to assist in the Association in every way except to vote.

15. Amendments may be made to this form of Government at any time by a majority vote.

16. The minutes of the Association shall be read and approved and signed by the Moderator and Clerk before adjournment.

The above article was a part of the Kehukee and Upper Country Line Association for many years, yet speaks for associations and churches in Gospel order today.

Editors

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

Hillsdale Primitive Baptist Church was established in the year 1784. Making this our 200th anniversary.

The church was established near Haw River-Crossroads, and known as Crossroads Church until the name was changed to Hillsdale.

The meeting house is located about three miles north of Summerfield, N.C. on the Scalesville road.

The meeting time is second Sunday in each month at eleven o'clock and Saturday before.

Our present Pastor is Elder B. D. Hutchens Jr.

CORRESPONDENCE

Cozad, Nebr.
Dear Editors:

I feel a desire to call you all brethren, and truly hope, by the grace of God, I am related to all of his redeemed. I have often called the Baptist people my brothers and sisters, as you know it is customary among some of our people to do so, and I think it is right, but I have often wondered if it is as often felt as it is spoken. To feel indeed to belong to the heavenly family and to be able by the same experience to say brother or sister is a gracious state, if we were made to view it as it is, but I am so often in doubt as to the relationship that exists between me and the dear ones. I read their experiecnes in many of the good papers published by the Baptist editors, and also listen to many tell their travels in life, and am made to feel that we are traveling the same lonesome

road, but I see them so bright in their experience of grace, that to me there is no doubt in their case, for they have the seal in their foreheads, and it is so distinct that we feel to know them to be of the fold; but for myself, I cannot tell of anything so sure, I am only hoping to be one, but this I really feel to know: that if I am one, and he is pleased to call me by his own power and grace, I am the least of the whole family, for oh how blind, how helpless I am. I am always full of sin, and can never feel to be free from it as I wish I could. I am not able to be what I desire to be, or what I hope I desire to be. The Lord alone knows whether I desire anything as I ought, but if I am not deceived in myself I think I desire to live an upright life that I can feel is pleasing to my Creator, and most of all I desire to know of a truth that I am one of the blessed number for whom it pleased the dear Savior to suffer and die. It seems that if I could be sure, or have positive knowledge that I am his, so that there could never be a fear or doubt arise, I would enjoy the hope better. But we are told that we hope for the things not seen, and our hope is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, for Christ is our hope. When we feel too weak to even cry we are made to view him as the Rock for which we long, and as our strength to deliver us. I realize I am in a hopeless condition if it is left to me, for I have lived thirty-six years, and as far as I can remember I have longed to live a christian life, but my whole life has been full of sin and darkness, and fears as touching the hereafter. I have, it seemed to me, ever since I can remember desired to be saved in the glory world. I sometimes fear it might be only of nature, for I have always desired it, but there was a time in my life when I was just like a child, that I felt to know I certainly was a sinner, lost in sin, and could not go to heaven in my sinful condition, so I began to cry to him to save me. Of course I felt the debt, and tried to do something to make my condition better. I tried to pray, to see if I would be better. I thought I would have to do something good if I ever went to heavan, would have to live a perfect life. This began when I was seven years old, and as there was at that time, or very near it, a few days meeting going on; I went up to be prayed for, but it did not seem to help me at all, I only felt to be a worse sinner. Finally, in God's own good time, I received a hope. I was then between seven and eight years of age, and was made so happy I could not help shouting his praises aloud. So for a while I felt good and free, with nothing to grieve or distress me at all. I then wanted to join the church and be baptized, but at the time many of the Baptist people did not believe in children's experience at all; but the church received me, and I was baptized, so I felt good and thought I had done as I should. I did not even feel to be a sinner for a long time after that; then I began to doubt, and was in much fear. I knew I was still a sinner, but wanted so much to be a christian. I had thought that after sinners received a hope they were not sinners, but christians, and would not feel again to be sinners, but my feelings were telling me differently. I truly knew I still was a helpless sinner, depending upon the mercy of a loving Savior if I ever was permitted to enter heaven. Little by little I received a foretaste of his love, and was made at times to rejoice above my own control, and would shout his praises until I was made to feel it was enough. I was truly satisfied, and felt to know at the time that I was his child, but as soon as it was withdrawn I began to doubt, and such thoughts would arise: Now what have you done? There is no use in that, you could have helped that. Then I began to study over it and to think it might be as the world and those who have never tasted his love or the power of the world to come

believe it is; that it was just a weak mind, or of nature, and maybe there was nothing in shouting or rejoicing in his love, but just an imaginary mind, and I felt badly.In doubt I said, I never will shout or show any sign again, if I can help it. I will know next time whether I can help it or not. It it is of myself I know I can help it, and will. These were my thoughts, and are yet. Then sometimes I would be so cold in spiritual life and enjoyment I would begin to desire to feel again some spiritual life and ask Him to fill me with his love and cause me to rejoice once more, that I could feel to not be left alone in a desert land, such as I felt to be in, for it seemed that the streams were dried up and I was dying spiritually for food and drink from that good land where all is peace, love and happiness. In his own good time he fed me, and I sometimes am made to feel that he is a God at hand, but I am often wondering in mind whether or not it is of the Spirit. I know this, that there are times with me when I am desiring a better country, and I have feelings concerning all things, and his work and my condition as a sinner, that the world nor I cannot control; whether it is of God, or not, I certainly am not able to tell, but I hope it is. I know at times I am so disgusted with wordly foolishness I just do not want to hear it talked, and then again, I am found in their company, joking and laughing and enjoying life here, but I cannot enjoy false doctrine at any time, for my experience (if I have one) teaches me that there is only one way, and Christ is the way; only one truth, and he is the truth; only one life, and he is the life; he is all and in all, from eternity to eternity; we are dead and our lives are hid with Christ in God. Thus we are (if children) in a safe place. How sweet to feel his love burning upon the altar of our sinful lives, for he is as a consuming fire. Consuming what? The sinner? No, but consuming our sinful lusts, destroying the work of Satan, and forever perfecting them that are his, sanctifying them; the flaming sword is ever keeping the way of the tree of life. Men would love to have the honor of keeping it, but it is not left to them, for we are kept by the power of God, and we are not our own keepers. I am glad it is on a sure foundation, and Christ is the chief corner-stone; he is also the topmost stone, the beginning and the end, for it is Christ formed in us the hope of glory. There is never a doubt in my mind concerning his kingdom, as to the surety of it, for the one that created and made all things, and controls all things, is able and will bring out his bride, the Lamb's wife, more than conqueror over all evil, for even the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. He has already conquered all for his chosen people, and is only manifesting it as the pages of time unfold his purposes. He is not deceived in anything for all things were and are open before his face and he is not failing in any of his work. Neither can Satan deceive him and get or destroy one soul of his chosen people, for their deliverance is in Christ, their eternal head, and his will and pleasure is being manifested as time rolls on. Neither is he disappointed concerning anything, but has told us in his word, or in his testimony, that these things will come. Read Jude, the fourth verse. He was admonishing the church in the first of the chapter, and on to the fourth verse, to write unto them of the common salvation, and to exhort them and us, that we should earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. It never has been delivered to any but his saints. Thus he tells us in the fourth verse of a certain people who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, they were undodly men. Also read Romans ix. 21-24, and 1 Peter ii. 8; Exodus ix 16; xiv. 17, and many others I could mention, but these are enough to get us started reading.

Well, I do not know whether I have said anything that is worth your notice or not. If you feel it is as worthless as the writer feels to be just cast it aside. I have told a few of my feelings as I have gone along in life, and if you can witness with what I have written you many publish it, if not, please do not. You know it does us little ones good to find that the strong able ministers and soldiers of Christ have the same to battle with, but my feeling is (O you of little faith) sometimes I am afraid I have not any God-given faith, but hope I have. If you are ever given a mind to turn your thoughts towards me in asking for his mercy to his lettle weak ones, please do so.

Your little sister in the grace given his people in Christ, I hope,

(Mrs.) Will Mathis

Topeka, Kans.

Dear Brother Sawin:

Brother in that blessed relationship which teaches us to "be pitiful, be courteous," to have compassion one of another, even as God for Christ's sake hath had compassion on us. Knowing that you have been deeply taught in these things gives me courage to try to address you. I well remember the kind words of comfort and encouragement sent me by you a few years ago, when I was feeling cast down, which I tried to acknowledge, but do not know if my letter ever reached you. Many times since then I have wished to commune with you, but a sense of deep unworthiness to intrude myself upon your notice, and fear that it was only fleshly impressions, hindered me; and neither do I feel any more deserving of an audience with you now, but a very kind letter recently from a dear sister, hitherto unknown to me, contained a request that I should write to you, hence this effort, which I make with the knowledge that of myself I can do nothing, and without the guidance of One who is able to help I know I can write nothing of any value to one who knows all things so much better than I. But to hear of the love the little band at Cave City has for you, as expressed by sister Owens, stirred anew, I hope the same love in my heart, and I took courage in the words, "He made the stars also." He made the greater lights, and he made the little lights also, and set them in the firmament of the heaven, and they are for signs and for seasons. I have thought much on this, and know I never can portray the beauty I hope I see, and in an attempt to mention a few things I do not expect to speak a word you do not already know. I think we all agree that the moon, with her borrowed light, is a sign of the law. All the light it has is reflected from the sun, and represents the law, with its dim light reflected from the gospel day. It was the only light of that dark time, coming of the greater light. I have often wondered why it was written, "The evening and the morning were the first day," and so on, instead of saying the morning and the evening, but was it not so written because the evening, or night of the law dispensation, came first, before the morning of the gospel day. The law was our schoolmaster, not to bring us unto Christ as the supplied words make it read, but unto Christ. We were under its dominion unto Christ until he came and fulfilled it for us, blotting out the handwriting of ordinances which was against us and taking them away. None were left, so that if now we feel bound by one item of it we are debtors to do the whole law. But we are told to touch not, taste not, handle not any of these dead things, for they all perished with the using of them. The moon was a fit type, or sign, of that long, dark season of the law's dominion. The translators tell us that the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, which is

another fallacy, for the law did perfect the very thing which it was ordained to do. Leave off the supplied word and read: The law made nothing perfect but the bringing in of a better hope, or perfected nothing except the bringing in of a better hope, for by its thunderous exactions the one atoning sacrifice was made, whereby was perfected and brought in a better hope than the law itself could ever give. The moon gives light enough by which we may grope our way until the dawning of the morning. The law gave such a dim light that only a few could see the end of the law in its workings, as Abraham. He could see, and rejoiced in the view he had of the day of Jesus Christ. "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." After the rising of that Sun, John saw the vision of the "woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet." The woman, the church, the new Jerusalem, clothed with the imputed righteousness of this glorious risen Sun. In the brightness of that Sun, the moon sinks into oblivion. The old types and shadows flee away, and as long as this day lasts, as long as the Sun of righteousness continues to shine, we have no further use of the moon. "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." "Behold now," (leave out the supplied word "is"), and , "Behold now the day of salvation." "Arise, shine; for thy light is come," and the Sun of righteousness rules this long looked for day. What a brilliant sign is the Sun of this glorious gospel day. We cannot steadfastly behold it for the brightness of it. The glories of the Sun of righteousness can only be seen through a glass darkly. While in this mortal frame we could not bear the dazzling brightness of a view of him without the vail of flesh between. He shall arise with healing in his wings. It is as though the prophet had said, He shall arise with healing in his rising. His wings signify his rising, and in his rising is our healing, our hope, not only in his appearing in this glorious morning, but in his rising from the tomb when the law could no longer hold him, for if he be not risen he is yet held by the law, and we are yet in our sins, our hope is vain and our preaching vain, for the bringing in of that better hope is not yet perfected if he be not risen from under the law. But glory to his name, the name of Jesus, which means he shall save his people from their sins, he is risen and ascended up on high and led captive the captivity of his people who were held under the law, and "he made the stars also." I had no thought of writing as I have. My mind was on the little lights and I wished to speak of them, for they seem to me to represent the little individual hopes of each one of the Lord's people. He set them in the firmament of the heaven. There is the place where our hopes are stayed, and, dear brother, have you not seen times when the darker the night, when the moon gives no light, the brighter the stars shine? When the moon shines clearly, or when we get to looking back to the law and see how condemned we are by its ministrations, its mandates eclipsing our better hope, and all seems so dark and vain and wild, then our hope almost fades away, but soon amid all the surrounding darkness the one little star of hope that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren stands out with a vivid brightness that never quite fades away. The wise men followed the star until it came and stood over where the young child lay, and so if we follow the leadings of our hope it will always lead us to Jesus, and not to our loathsome self-righteousness for justification. Again, dear brother, have you not seen nights so dark that gloomy clouds of doubt and unbelief, sorrows and tribulations, perils and persecutions, have gathered so thick that the little star is hidden from view, and you felt that these

things were against you, and feared his mercy was clean gone forever? When truly it seemed that the heavens above us is iron. Oh what a hard place to be in! Our prayers cannot penetrate the heavens; they seem to fall at our feet as empty sounds. There is no rest or comfort to be found in this hard old earth. Our cry is, "Oh that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence." He alone is able to rend the barriers that separate between us and him. O, Lord, "my goodness extendeth not to thee." In us there is no merit, but his goodness does reach down to poor finite worms of the dust. "I was brought low, and he helped me."

"A glimpse, a single glimpse of thee,
Would more delight my soul,
This vain world, with all its toys,
Could I possess the whole."

With a view of him and a manifestation of his presence the mountains of trouble and distresses which had weighed so heavily upon us melt away and flow down at his presence. There is a rift in the clouds, a little gleam of light breaks through, we look, and there is the little star of hope still shining, sure and steadfast. It never entirely fades away, but with darkest clouds all about it looks the brighter. The darker it is the more we prize the light of hope. Sometimes as we gaze at a star it twinkles out of sight for a moment, and seems to vanish away, but soon twinkles back again. So does our hope in the perplexing vicissitudes of life, it twinkles and shines, and twinkles, but always there, whether we keep it in sight or not. Sometimes it seems to little we almost lay it by. But it will be sufficient when we are called to die. But perhaps a lurking enemy suggests that in some way we have merited the little light we have. Our hands have gotten us this. Fleshly pride is stirred, and we forget the greater Light from which all the little lights obtain their brightness, and ere we are aware our little star has twinkled away in darkness. Sometimes for days we sit in darkness and eat no pleasant bread; we are looking only at earth and see nothing but gloom, and oh for me the way is dark, and I am often sighing for the dear Sun of righteousness to rise. It is to thee, dear Lord, that I am crying. Illumine with righteousness my darkened skies. But the stars are set in the firmament of the heaven, and are for signs and for seasons. We must look above for our hope.

"Sorrows like a surge may roll,
And wild the storms may be;
Look above, O trembling soul,
The sun still shines for thee."

We long for the companionship of those of like precious faith, and also of like trials and conflicts, and in our longing comes with renewed sweetness the one ever-abiding hope that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. In our abstraction we had for a little while forgotten that sweet assurance, but in that love for each other we see a reflection of the greater love of the Father of light for his afflicted and poor people. In great mercy he has returned unto us, the mountains flow down, and, lo, our little star has twinkled back again. What true typical signs the little stars are of our seasons of darkness and of light. These are the morning stars that sang together, saying, The Lord hath done great things for us whereof we are glad. "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul," for we are saved by hope. Oh give thanks unto the Lord, for his mercy endureth forever, for he made the stars also. But one star differeth from another star in glory. We see that it is so. Some shine so brightly and some are so dim we can scarcely see them, yet, though their brightness may be partly hidden under a bushel, still we do discern them, and long to see them shine that God may be

glorified. The command to let your light shine is unheeded. They do not glorify our Father in heaven by keeping concealed the good work he has done for them, because they feel that the bushel or measure of themselves shows them to come far short of what they think the measure of a christian should be, so it is hidden under the vail of flesh and never mentioned. But glory to his name, whether we ever see the outward evidence of their little hope or not, they are of that innumerable host that no man can number, and none of them is lost for whom that better hope is perfected, for the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.

"There all together we shall meet,
Together we shall sing;
A countless throng to swell the song,
Of Moses and the Lamb."

I know I should apologize for this long letter, but that is my failing. If it is of God and of the truth you will enjoy it; if not, it will fall to the earth from which it sprung. In that case, then I ask you to think with charity of a poor weak creature who has tried only to show remembrance to a precious old servant of the Lord. Do not let what I have written do any harm. I often feel that I should not send my imperfect thoughts to those young in experience and perhaps not fully established in the truth, lest I should lead them astray, while in my great unworthiness and ignorance I feel diffident in approaching those whom I esteem great in the kingdom of heaven, yet I feel that it is safer for me, for they will more surely detect my errors, and correct me as I need. So I am trusting you to not let pass any thing that seems to you as idle speculation, or contrary to sound doctrine. I greatly need the prayers and loving watchcare of all saints. Dear old soldier, you will soon be discharged. The bounty which has been dealt out to you so plenteously here will be enlarged. The night is far spent and joy cometh in the morning. I, myself, am in my seventieth year, and will not be far behind you, if ineed I do not go on before.

"Oh may we meet and be complete,
And long together dwell,
And serve the Lord with one accord,
And so I bid farewell."

Pardon if you can, and remember at the throne of grace the least of all, your unworthy sister.

MARY ELLISON

Dear Brethren:-The apostle says, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are seen," &c. The poet wrote,

"Dark and thorny is the desert,
Through which pilgrims make their way
But beyond this vale of sorrows
Lie the fields of endless day;
Fiends loud howling o'er the desert,
Make them tremble as they go,
Often bring their courage low."

In Deuteronomy xxxii. 9, 10, it is writen, "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, in a waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." So it is with every one born from above. They find themselves in a desert land, in a far worse waste howling wilderness and desert land than a natural one. A natural desert has no water for miles and miles, no grass, no shade trees, burning sands, piercing thorns. Many poisonous reptiles and creeping things whose bite and sting are dangerous to life, and some said to be fatal if one is bitten or stung by them. You find all of these in your flesh and in the world in human shape. You have met some who were members in the church.

John the Baptist called some people a generation of vipers. Sometimes we get in a hurry for members and get some of these vipers in the church, then we have sorrow, pain and death. When you received a hope, you thought all the sin and sorrow was gone, and you never expected to have an enemy. So bright and glorious was the sight, you said, I am the rose of Sharon, the lily of the valley, the beauty and fragrance was so plain, and you, seemed so white and clean, like the lily, but in a short time all the beauty and fragrance was gone that came from the Savior, and only the thorny bush was left, for every petal had withered and fallen off. The lily only blooms and remains for a few days then droops and dies. Solomon says, "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters." Again, ii. 16, 17, "My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away." The lilies are his loved ones. The shadows are the law dispensation. Paul says, Heb. x. 1, "For the law, having a shadow of good things to come," &c. Again, Col. ii. 16, 17, "Let no man before judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of any holy day, or of the new room, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come."

When "the day break" is the third morning, when the Savior arose. So the prophet said, Hosea vi. 2, "After two days he will revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." But alas how soon you found you were still in a world of sin, and a desert land, and "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing," and the piercing thorns of the flesh were there to cause you pain. Paul says, because of the abundance of the revelation there was given me a thorn in the flesh, &c., and was told, My grace shall be sufficient for thee. When the Lord put the curse on the earth he said, "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee." Gen. iii. 18. As sure as the natural earth brings forth thorns and thistles to all the sons and daughters of Adam, just that sure the flesh brings forth thorns and thistles to all the children of God. So the poet says,

"But of all the foes we meet,
None so oft mislead our feet,
None betray us into sin
Like the foes that dwell within."

"The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."-Gal. v. 17. Jesus said, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace. All of you little ones have found this true, not only natural worries, pains and losses, but anguish of soul, fightings without and foes within. Oh the horrid desert, the blasting, blighting, withering winds that sweep over the hot sands, the fearful howling wilderness, the awful thirst and fainting by the way, the dark and cloudy days, the long nights, and tears shed over and over on account of sin. Jesus is a covert from the tempest, an hiding-place from the wind, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, as rivers of water in a dry place,(Isaiah xxxii. 2,) but when he "holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it," Job xxvi. 9, you cannot find the covert, rock, or the rivers of water. Job x. 10, 11, "Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese? Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews." Little mourning one, you will have to wait and suffer on and on until the Lord takes down the fence and calls you home. "All the days of my apointed time will I wait, till my change come." Then he wrote that all of our afflictions were light, and but for a moment compared to the glory of eternity. Paul says, For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be

revealed in us. Not to us, but in us. Then you will "be filled with all the fullness of God"-Eph. iii. 19. God has not forgotten to provide for you in this awful desert land and waste howling wilderness. He says, Isaiah xliii. 20, "I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen." Again, Isaiah xxxv. 3-7, "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you, then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped: then shall the lame man leap in his heart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass, with reeds and rushes." Jesus says, Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. The children of God have sorrows and trembling the world knows nothing of. Psalm lxi. 2: "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I." Again, 1 Cor. xv. 9: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." The wicked are the ungodly. Psalms lxxiii. 12: "Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches." James says, "Hath not God chosen the poor of his world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" No wonder Paul was full of sadness, and had a desire to depart and be with Christ. Listen to what he says, 2 Cor. xii. 15, "Though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved." Haved not some of you met this on this rough, sad and weary way? Have you not sometimes had to sweat drops of blood, as it were? Have you had the flesh to crawl on your cheek bones on account of the slaps you have received, both in the world and among false brethren? Is it not written, "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." The Book says so, Matthew xxiv. 12. So often your burden seems so heavy when some great wave of sorrow comes sweeping and rolling over you, and you say with David, The waters are come in unto my soul. So heavy was the burden you were ready to give up all hope. Little one, this was only perparing you to leave this land of disappointment. Every sigh the people of God ever uttered every pain, sorrow of distress they have borne Jesus held them up, they could not sink to rise no more, for "He is set for the fall and rise again of many in Israel."-Luke ii. 34. He suffers with you. Isaiah lxiii. 9: "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them: and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." The poet says,

"I feel at my heart all thy sighs and thy groans,
For thou art most near me, my flesh and my bones;
In all thy distresses thy head feels the pain,
Yet all are most needful, not one is in vain."

Hear Jonah in the whale say, "The earth with her bars was about me for ever." No way of escape. Then he says, "Salvation is of the Lord," and God caused the whale to spew him out on the land. Look, little distressed one, see the patriarchs, they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain by the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom the world was not worthy); they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens, and caves of the earth. You have never passed through such awful trials as these.

Many have been burned at the stake, and smothered to death by fire in caves, &c. Then think of the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace. Look there, who is that in the fire with them? Hear the king say, "Did we not throw three into the fire and lo! there are four, and one like unto the son of God." See Daniel in the lion's den. Lions' mouths all shut. So God will shut every enemy's mouth except such as are to afflict you for your good. David says, "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word."-Psalms cxix. 67. A sad countenance maketh the heart better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, and "blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." Then do not forget Jesus in the garden for you. So precious blessed of God are you. Now dry your tears and remember Solomon says, Better is the day of one's death than the day of one's birth. All of your sorrows, distresses, pains, heart-aches and tremblings are only for a moment compared to eternity, and is for your good, and works for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. It was not an accident sin entered into this world, but was to cause you to rejoice when you were delivered from the power of darkness and translated unto the kingdom of his dear Son, but when you reach the eternal deliverance you will find Paul told the truth when he said, our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works (produces) for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Here you have the foretaste, there you will have all the fullness.

Your brother in hope of mercy,

I.R. Greathouse

HOW THEY GROW

"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow." To his disciples the Savior thus taught precious things concerning his people, how they are manifested, how they are provided for, how they are clothed in beauty and purity by no power of their own, and how their confidence and trust must be alone in the Lord.

The church is called a lily by her heavenly Husband, and is distinguished from all other religious organizations "as the lily among thorns."

The Lord says of Israel that he shall grow as the lily. Therefore we are sure that when we consider how the lilies of the field grow we shall be considering in this beautiful and striking figure that peculiar experience and doctrine of the Lord's people which distinguish them as a "peculiar people."

Growth in vegetable or animal is a great mystery. We cannot fully understand *why* things grow, for it is a part of the unsearchable mystery of life; but we can consider, and in some measure understand, *how* they grow. Growth cannot be regarded as an act, for that would imply that it depended upon an exercise of will. It is not an act of the thing growing, but it is a movement which is a necessary consequent of life. The will of the person or thing growing has nothing to do with the growth. It is an experience. The plant grows because of the life that is in it, not because it wills to grow. If that growth is to be increased it must be by the work of the one attending it in enriching and stirring the soil and giving it water and light and warmth. A man may affect his own natural growth, under certain circumstnces, by attention of food and drink, while the principle of life that causes growth remains beyond the possible power of his will or his understanding.

In the figure of the lily in the text, and in similar figures throughout the Scriptures, the subject of God's spiritual work is regarded as a plant or tree, moved and controlled and exercised by

the power of the life within, but not exercising in the least degree any power over that life.

When a poor sinner, "who knows the plague of his own heart," considers the lilies of the field, so white, so pure, so beautiful, and then looks into his own heart, so sinful, so full of evil, how can he think of himself as one of those whom the dear Savior would represent by the lily? With what grief and consternation he sees the absolute contrast between the lily in its unspeakable loveliness, and himself. Where can he see in himself any principle or feature which can answer to the purity of the lily? In every respect they seem to him to be "contrary the one to the other." The poor soul cannot realize at such a time that only by the power of the Spirit can he see and feel the evil of the flesh. The natural man does not receive the truth that he is sinful and depraved; that is one of those things which can only be known by the revelation of the Spirit of God. That sad knowledge is an evidence of life, but the Spirit alone can make the poor soul see that evidence. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."—John i: 4, 5. "All things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light."—Eph. v: 13.

But let us consider how the lilies grow. The first work in order to the growth of a plant is the preparation of the soil. This is the work of the gardener. The first movement made by the seed after it has been put into the soil prepared for it is to send roots downward. The roots will be working and extending into the ground for several days before the plant appears. This order in the work of growing, both in natural plants and in the Lord's plants which grow in the garden of grace, is recognized in the words of the Lord by Isaiah: "And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root of things which are not seen," into the building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

So Jesus, the hevenly Lover, speaks to his dear people as an afflicted and poor people, and tells them where they are. He recognizes them as suffering with him, as crucified with him, and lets them know while in the furnace of affliction that "as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."—2 Cor. i: 5. In their feeling of self-abhorrence and humiliation their faces are in the dust; they would not dare to speak to him except in a cry for mercy, nor even lift up their eyes to him; but in infinitely tender and prevailing love he calls to them by this endearing name, and says, "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." That voice is expressive of mourning on account of a sinful heart, but how sweetly it comes up into his ears on that account; that face is full of sorrow, and their eyes are pouring out tears unto God; but the sadness and the tears make the countenance comely in the sight of the dear Savior; for there are expressed a hunger and thirst after righteousness, and a hatred of all sin. That is what makes the face of a poor sinner lovely in the Lords sight. And when they hear the loving accents of his voice speaking unto them, and with tender power acknowledging them as his dove, his bride, whom he has redeemed from all iniquity, and when they see, by faith, his face looking upon them in love, with "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God" shining in it, how it makes their own sad faces lose the look of sadness and shine with holy and solemn joy because of his love to them. Then are they thankful that they have a dwelling place in the clefts of the Rock, and in the secret places of the stairs, and glad that it is their blessed

privilege to suffer with Christ, that they may by that fellowship of his sufferings be more effectually separated from the world, and glorified together with him.

ELDER SILAS DURAND

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

HEBREWS X. 23-25

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) and let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching."

A member asked us about six months ago to write using as our subject the words: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is." This member having observed some whose attitude towards attending their meetings seemed of more or less secondary consideration was rightfully deeply concerned. It is a matter which calls for self-examination on the part of each and every member of every true Old School Baptist Church throughout our entire country. The life of each member of the visible church should be as a lighted candle placed on the candlestick; it should not be put under a bushel, or submerged beneath the things of this world, all of which do but perish with the using. The kernel, or substance of the teaching of our Lord and Savior, both by word of mouth and the life that he lived while here in the flesh, was "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." In that great and wonderful address, his sermon on the Mount, the place where he had gone apart from the multitudes, "when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them," saying, "Be not ye therefore like unto them [the heathen]: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him." How prone we are to forget that the hand of Providence supplies our temporal needs. We have to be reminded from time to time that the gold and the silver are his; that the cattle which graze upon a thousand hills are the Lord's; yea, the world and all that in it is, and that it is he who clothes the lilies of the field, whose hand feeds the lone sparrow upon the housetop; and, if not a sparrow can fall without him, will he not give his children bread? The great apostle declares in our text that "he is faithful that promised." Do we really believe and act out the belief that the Lord is our shepherd? The good Shepherd will surely provide for his sheep; he will cause them to lie down in green pastures and lead them beside the still waters. But, those of us who profess to love the Lord in sincerity and in truth, are we holding fast the profession of our faith without wavering? Do we show by a well ordered walk and godly conversation that we are the Lord's, or is our service only of the lip? Is it consistent to say, Lord, Lord, in the meetinghouse and then engage in worldly conversation and jesting until meeting time again? Do we live daily so as to prove that we have been with and learned of Jesus and that our treasure is in heaven? How searching and solemn should these questions be. And do we consider one another to prove unto love and to good works? The apostle says we should do these things. Jesus said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." What was under consideration was, "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me

drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me." These things are accomplished among the saints when they are assembled together and communicating one with another, as those who receive can well testify, even though those who give or minister are unaware of it. The servant which Abraham sent to take a wife unto his son, Isaac, went questioning and praying, but when he was convinced that the Lord had prospered his journey, "he bowed down his head, and worshipped the Lord," saying, "Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." "I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." This deserves to be repeated again and again. Only those who have been in the way and have experienced it know of a truth the joy which is inexpressible and full of glory that is witnessed by those who are raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord. Such characters were said to have been quickened, made alive; their affection was set on things above, not on things on the earth, and they were seeking, yea, as for hidden treasure, those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. The psalmist said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Where such scenes are beheld there is no lack of the brethren assembling themselves together; meeting time does not come too often, but rather it seems Sundays are too far apart, even when they are privleged to have meeting every sunday. Is not the true test of the fruit of the Spirit a considering one another and provoking unto love and to good works? Let us pause for a moment and analyze the definition of the word "consider." Does it not mean that we are constantly, yea, every waking moment, as it were, thinking good concerning those we love and endeavoring in every way to show them kindness and manifest our affection? Such provokes unto love and to good works, for love begets love, and the brethren would do well to remember this and bridle their tongues lest they poison the mind of one another against a brother, at the same time walking so as not to offend a weak brother, Paul says, "Let us [the household of faith] consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is." So we are not only told what to do, but what not to do, thus showing that the holy Scriptures, which were given by inspiration of God, throughly and throughly furnish unto all good works. While the manner of some is indifference, coldness, walking in the course of this world, the riches whereof choke out the good seed, the exhortation is not to be as they are, but rather to live righteously, soberly, to visit the fatherless and the widows and to keep ourself unspotted from the world. This, James says, is pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father. Old Baptists of all people, need to study to show themselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. They should search the Scriptures, to know what they teach, both as to doctrine and order, which go hand in hand. David said, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful: but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." It is truly good to think and talk upon the things of the upper kingdom. One said, "My heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue,

Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am." We often think of a band of brethren, three churches composing an association, where they have no regular pastor or minister, only a visitor usually once a year, and yet these brethren are very much alive; they assemble themselves together and talk and sing of the things of Jesus; the theme of their conversation is truly heavenly, and the Lord is wonderfully blessing them with an outpouring of his Holy Spirit, which has been evidenced by an ingathering of twelve during the past three years. This is referred to by way of encouraging churches that may be without undershepherds or supplies. By way of contrast, we would also call attention to another band of most lovely brethren, among them being (we think) a gifted brother, and yet they seldom meet. Is it not a mistake? Are they not forsaking the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is? This the apostle says they should not do. These things are referred to for the earnest consideration of the brethren. We like to see the brethren holding fast the profession of their faith without wavering. We can never tell what time or by whom the Lord will send a message. It is not always necessary for one ordained of men to be present. At best man is but anearthen vessel and the Lord must fill the mouth before it can speak forth his praise, and "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." Therefore let us be found in the way; who can tell but what the Lord will lead us to the house of our Master's brethren? Let us be found assembling ourselves together, exhorting one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching. If we rightly discern "the signs of the times," there is no mistaking that these are the days prophesied of "when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." It is the time when God's called and qualified ministers should "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine." The true soldier must stand his ground and meet the enemies of truth; he must put on the whole armor of God and that he may be able to stand the wiles of the devil. The warfare in which he is engaged calls for the helmet of salvation, the breastplate of righteousness, the girdle of truth, the shield of faith, and his feet to be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, for the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; it is not by might, nor by power, "but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Let us, therefore take "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," and go forth to victory. If we are ever brought forth more than conquerors it will be through him that loved us and gave himself for us. That is that "new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh," that the apostle is writing to the Hebrews about in the chapter wherein is found our text. He begins his epistle by saying, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son." He was the true substance of all the law had shadowed forth. It was not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin, so the Lamb of God was slain from the foundation of the world, in the purpose of god, as a propitiation for the sins of his people and by this "one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." This is all our hope and we are determined not to know anything "among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life."

Again, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." God forbid that we should be as Ananias and Sapphira, who "kept back part of the price." There are those in the world today who are professing to love the Lord with all their heart, &c., who declare boldly they have forsaken the world for the "pearl of great price," and almost with the same breath contend that only eternal salvation is of God, and that salvation in time is of men. In the apostle Peter's day those who were guilty of such had to give up the ghost and were carried out and buried. These are perilous times and there are many who are departing from the way of the Lord, but the faithful in Christ Jesus will not be found among the number, they are to hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering. Therefore let the pastors be ensamples to the flock over which God hath made them the overseers; let them be faithful in doctrine, in order, in practice, and shun not to declare unto them all the counsel of God. Likewise, members, be faithful in holding up the hands of your servant; support him in the manner set forth in the Scriptures and encourage him by your presence at meeting; let it be seen that you do delight in the law of God after the inward man. We can speak feelingly from experience and say that we thank God continually for having surrounded us with faithful brethren, who have not forsaken the assembling of themselves together. Many, many times have we wondered that they should continue to come out, but therein their faithfulness has been manifested. We do not know how we could have gotten along thus far without them. Surely God has been better to us than all our fears. May he give us all to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Finally, brethren, Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhort one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching.

Elder R.L. Dodson

MEETINGS

HOPEWELL ASSOCIATION MEETING

The 100 session of the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Association will convene, God willing, with Pleasant Ridge Church on Friday, October 19, 1984, to continue thru Sunday.

The meeting house is two miles west of Moore's Bridge about midway between Alabama highways 171 and 159.

All lovers of the truth will be welcomed. For further information, call (205) 556-5157.

Levert Howell, Clerk

CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association, the Lord willing, will convene at North East Primitive Baptist Church in Onslow county the second week in October, starting Friday October 12th through Sunday, October 14th.

Visitors coming from the south traveling through Jacksonville, N.C., follow highway # 17 north about 4 miles to Moore Buick-Pontiac on left, turn right across railroad track and travel about 4 miles to church.

Visitors coming from the north travel- # 17 from New Bern, N.C., continue # 17 until you come to Moore Buick-Pontiac on right, turn left at stop light, cross railroad track and travel about 4 miles to church.

We invite all ministers of our faith and order and all brothers and sisters and friends to meet with us.

Elder J. T. Prescott, Pastor
L. J. Sammons, Clerk

ORDINATION OF DEACON GLENN SLATE

According to the expressed desire of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church by a unanimous vote June 23, 1984, a Presbytery was requested to meet with the Dan River Church Saturday evening, July the 21st, 1984, at 6:30 p.m. and set apart the aforesaid Brother Glenn Slate to the office of Deacon of Dan River Church.

The Presbytery was formed by electing Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator, and Boyd Minter, Clerk.

Deacon Bob R. Collie was elected spokesman for the Church.

The moderator appointed Elder Haywood Wray, to read the first six verses of the sixth chapter of Acts of The Apostles, with stress being laid on verse three.

The moderator appointed Elder Kenneth Key to offer the ordination prayer.

The moderator appointed Elder D. V. Spangler, to deliver the charge to Brother Slate.

After the charge, Deacon Glenn Slate was declared to officially become a member of the Board of Deacons of the said Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, and as a seal of their work was given the right hand of fellowship.

This work now completed, as requested by Dan River Church, being wintessed by the signatures of the following Elders: Elder H. W. Wray
Elder Kenneth R. Key
Elder D. V. Spangler

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR JULY, 1984

Mr. & Mrs. C.N. Barron, TX....	$ 7.00
Mrs. Bertie F. Brown, NC.....	4.00
Mrs. Ruby Gilbert, WA.....	10.00
Mrs. Frances T. Jarvis, MD....	2.00
Wayne Germany, TX.....	7.00
Julian L. Ray, NC.....	2.00
Eugene Osborne, MD.....	20.00
Mrs. Ruth Steiner, NY.....	2.00
Mrs. Catherine M. Vass, NC....	7.00
Mrs. Tom Strickland, AL.....	2.00
Mrs. A.H. Shortt (deceased), VA..	10.00
Harry Troutt, NC.....	2.00
Mrs. Havis Donaldon, AR.....	6.00
In Memory of Mr. & Mrs. W.A. Womack	
T.C. Austin, NC.....	2.00
Otis Hyler, NC.....	2.00

OBITUARIES

MRS. L. M. JOHNSON

In memory of our mother, the wife of L. M. Johnson (deceased). Mother was born January 1908, died April 1984, making her stay on earth 76 years. She was married to her husband in April, 1935. To this union were born nine children; six sons, three daughters, and she had one stepson. Two of her sons preceded her in death.

She received a hope in Christ several years ago and she united with the Primi-

tive Baptist Church some forty-four years ago. The hope given her was a comfort to her as long as she lived.

She made her home with her son Lewis after the death of our dad. They attended to her every need as much as possible. She bore her afflictions well with no complaint. She was made willing to accept these things until the Lord said it is enough.

Her funeral was preached at Allen's Funeral Home, and she was laid to rest beside her husband, in Carpenter Cemetery. Elder Amos Hash preached from the 23rd Psalm of David, and spoke words of comfort to family and friends.

We shall miss our mother but we would not wish her back for we believe our loss is her eternal gain, and believe she is at rest in Jesus.

Her son
Harold

THOMAS LEE SAWYER

ON December 21st, 1983, our father Thomas Lee Sawyer passed from this life. After much suffering and afflictions the Lord took him home.

He joined the Handcock's Primitive Baptist Church on May 11th, 1958. He was ordained a deacon the 3rd Sunday of December, 1964 and served as deacon until his deathis e had a vast knowledge of the scriptures, and the Primitive Baptist doctrine. He loved to read the bible and was blind for several years before his death. He loved the church and the brethren and enjoyed the fellowship with the brethren. He was a devoted father, teaching us much about the old baptists. We will miss him greatly for we loved him very much.

He is survived by his wife, Minnie Sawyer, a son Elder Joseph Lee Sawyer, three daughters; Phoebe Cannon, Ruth Gupton and Shirley Robinson. He has eleven grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Daddy, we will miss you,
May you rest in peace,
Until the day you arise anew.
For when he is tired,
He shall receive the crown of life,
Washing away all your tears and strife.

In loving memory,
Your daughter,
Phoebe Cannon

NANNIE E. GUY VARNIER

It was one year ago to-day the writer visited this dear old Sister, Nannie Varnier, in Chesterfield County Nursing home near Richmond. Almost immediately, she began to tell me of her funeral plans and asked me if I would see that they were carried out as requested. In less than three months, our God of all Grace called her from her world of much pain and sufferings.

"Now cometh rest," came to Sister Varnier November 3, 1983 at Chippenham Hospital in Richmond, Virginia. She was born September 25, 1891 and having lived her allotted time, being 92 years, 1 month and 9 days.

Sister Varnier united with Richmond Primitive Baptist Church May 2, 1965 in the home of the writer and was baptized the same day along with another Sister, by her pastor, Elder C.N. Bunn. She loved her church and was a faithful member. She served as treasurer for many years, as long as her health permitted. She enjoyed so much attending her Association and the Sister Churches, as well as others from afar.

Sister Varnier leaves to mourn one daughter, Mrs. Ethel Malloy of Miami, Florida; one son, Oscar Jr. Guy of Richmond and one sister, Mrs. Lena Butterworth also of Richmond. Four grandchildren, five great grandchildren, and two great-great grandchildren also survive.

Grave side services were held by Elder J.R. Gardner and her pastor, Elder D.L. Simpson. Her request was for Brother Gardner to sing a hymn that she loved dearly, *"Angel Bands"*. Amazing Grace has never sounded much more beautiful that it did by the little congretation on this chilly, crisp, November morning in Maury Cemetery.

Written by one who loved her and misses her.

By request of the Richmond Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder D.L. Simpson, Moderator
Sister Lee, Clerk

DEACON GOLD MINTER

Only those ministers who have lost a faithful deacon of almost fifty years of service and spiritual association can understand my feelings in the passing of Deacon Gold Minter, deacon of Dan River Church, Mayfield, N.C. My heart reaches out for him yet, though he has been called away months ago.

Gold Minter son of Joseph W. Minter and Lucy Franklin Minter, was born June 7, 1904 in Henry County, Virginia died March 29th 1984.

He presented himself before the Dan River Church for membership in October 1931, and was joyfully received. This was the second time he had attended service at this church. He was baptised fourth Sunday morning in October, with Harry Weatherford, who later was ordained a Deacon, and his wife Beulah Weatherford.

Brother Minter was united in wedlock to Lottie Riddle November 9th, 1925. To this union was born one daughter Juanita M. Law, who survives. One grandaughter, Delores L. Sanders, two great grand children. A niece, Lottie M. Law was reared in the home of Brother Minter, and was loved as his own daughter.

Also surviving are three sisters, Mrs. Bertha Horsley, Eden, N.C. Mrs. Virgie Wyatt Martinsville, VA. Mrs. Estelle Wells, Martinsville, VA. and Mrs. Clara McGee, Martinsville, VA.

It was not too long after Brother Minter was received as a member until the church recognized that God had blessed the church with a gift, and in 1934, Brother Minter was ordained a Deacon of Dan River Church, which office he honored with faithfulness and stability. He gave himself fully and often went far and near in his work as deacon, often not able physically to carry on. I felt that our relationship was similiar to that of David and Jonothan.

Deacon Minter was blessed with a deacons wife, who was blessed to enter the church fold soon after his uniting.

I was on a bed of affliction when he passed, and unable to visit him. When the news came of his passing, I phoned the family that though absent in body when he passed, "I was there."

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, assisted by Elder Haywood Wray, and Elder Kenneth Key.

In loving memory,
D.V. Spangler, His Pastor

Signs of the Times

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POETRY

Sometimes things in life become
burdensome to bear

We get all involved with too
much worry and care.

We try once again to solve problems
in our own way

When we hear within a quiet,
still voice say

Cast all your burdens on me:
I care for you,

We feel that He will enable us
this to do.

Then a prayer flows freely
and a load is lifted

As on to our dear Lord our
cares are shifted

The true peace that follows is
hard to describe

Again, all the glory we must
to our lord ascribe!

I Peter 5:6-7

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EDITORIAL

ALL THESE THINGS ARE AGAINST ME (Gen. 42: 36)

Draw near dear readers. the test has been impressed upon your mind many times. In fact, among the humble followers of the Lamb there isn't one but what the text when spoken to their heart will be brougt in sweet submission to the will of God in their lives. Thus it arms me with great boldness to proclaim to every heaven taught sout that here is the experience of a man that God is visiting. Here is a man that has been where every child of God has been or will be brought (Isa. 54: 13). I hope that this kind of doctrine strikes a chord of harmony in the breast of every professed follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. If not, what we are to do with all of the array of testimony of the saints of yesterday, including all of them that are mentioned by name in the Bible. It seems that it is a pertinent question dealing with an important fellow traveller. At least it seems to be that the history of Jacob is mentioned in the Bible enough times to cause all of us to sit up and take notice of his history.

It besets me with many problems when I hear the testimony of such imminent brethren as was Jacob besmirched by men denying the sacred word of God. Let us take a look at the things that were against Jacob. What things were they? Were they things that God did not have anything to do with? Were any of them pleasant things? I have said before, and I now say again, that all of these things are related to the same history. They were all things that God had a hand in, that God had a purpose in. I have said, and I do say, that God did get Joseph down to Egypt with each event coming to pass as it did. God used the simpliest of language in dealing with the subject matter all the way through. He did not mince words; He did not dodge the issue that He was talking about. There is not a man living, or that ever has lived, that can get Joseph down in Egypt at the head of the government by taking out a single event. In each event, regardless of how much of what men are pleased to call evil, Joseph is put nearer the head of the government. It is the heighth of ignorance to say that it could have happened some other way. Time and chance happeneth to men, but there is not the first happening in this array of events. Too, God did not send him part of the way and he walked the balance of it. It was not that God purposed for him to go, and something caused his way to fail or falter and he finished the way by his ingenuity or by happen so.

Now the question comes up, what was it that caused Jacob to exclaim, all of these things are against me? What was he talking about? Who was he talking about? What things was it that gave him such deep concern? In the first place, the dreams of Joseph. What about them? We that are parents know how weary we would be if one of our children dreamed such unheard of dreams. We would watch such a child with the deepest concern. Our minds would be in a whirl as to what it portended. What about us? Would the taking place of things in the life of a child be disturbing to us? Would it? I am asking every reader of these lines. Would spectres rising in the life of a son of ours be for us, or would it be something that we would know not how to handle? Let me ask once again, what would deep mysterious things in the life of a child do for you? What if God had gone before you, and before your child with an awe in his demeanor about your favored son? What would it do? If you were a believer in God, if he had guided you through misfortune, through dark and perilous times what would be your attitude? I can tell you what you would do. You would be like poor old Jacob. You would be casting anxious inquiries to a throne of grace. Anxiety would overpower you and the lamentations of your mind would be, O Lord, all of these things are against me.

In the midst of my reflections on the text, I do hope that our minds are staid on divine and heavenly things. I do not have any excuse for my sins. I am a sinner, and I know that I am, and I have a sublime and precious hope that my sins were all covered by that crimson flow from the pierced side of my redeemer God. I also have a precious and an abiding hope that I am an object of God's eternal love having been applied to me in such a way, in such a wonderful and delightful way, that I am trusting in that love and blood and grace; that the sin is all mine. I do not have anything to hide--in fact, if I was trying to hide my sins, as Joseph's brethren tried to hide their's, it would soon be revealed, as was theirs. do hope that I am not seeking a cover for my shortcomings. My disappointments at not having been better able to withstand the nature of us all is keen, but I am not looking for the evil in the case of Joseph being sent to Egypt to shield me from guilt. However, an evil is evil, and I do not think that one sin is more grevious than another, therefore I believe with all of my heart and mind and soul that God sent Joseph to Egypt the way that he would have him to go.

That way or route entailed him going the way that he did go. I have been reading after the pen of men from various quarters of the United States that have talked right much about the sovereignty of God in a general way but have denied it in Joseph being sent to Egypt. God sent him. God sent Jesus into the world. God sent Jonah to Nineveh. God sent Moses also into Egypt. The Bible has sent any number of servants to certain places in the Bible. In many, if not the most, of cases wicked men were utilized in getting them where He would have them be. Especially do I urge that God had every step of the way planned, who would make those steps, and how much further, that they would get Joseph towards the work that he had to do down there. I do not think that I am being unreasonable, nor unbrotherly, nor inconsistent, when I ask my brethren that call the doctrine false, unneeded, ungodly, that I am advocating for them to take our of this account of the things that Jacob found against him, and give us an account of how God got Joseph to the right place and the right time. I know that this is unreasonable, I know that it cannot be done, but they are acting as though it can be done. They are accusing us of advocating that God is the instigator of all of the unrighteousness in

the world, and I am begging them to set the record straight, and if they can fathom the deep things of God and can find a better way of saving much people alive, as God did in doing it His way, then I promise never to say a word in the future about God sending Joseph by the hands of his wicked brethren and the wicked wife of the great man. If any of our brethren can do this miracle, they they are heavily obligated to get it done, and they need to petition the Lord that he confess to His people that He made a mistake in sending Joseph to Egypt the way that He did.

You may think that I am writing in the wrong spirit. I do not intend it that way. I am trying to obtain redress for poor old Jacob's years of useless worry, I am trying to remove the blasphemy from the name of my precious God, for if, as my brethren claim, it is a blasphemous doctrine to advocate that evil works good, and I find upon careful examination, that in a number of cases that the evil deeds of a number of people did that very thing, then I desire to remove that stigma from His precious name.

Now let us sum up the whole journey. The evidence is overwhelming that God did send Joseph all of the way from the midst of his brethren to the uniting of the family together again. The situation was perfectly solved, everybody was fed, the poor old worn out servant Jacob is united with his family once again, and the guilty brethren are all found out, and they have all acknowledged their guilt from beginning to end.

Now what are we to say? Are we to listen to those fault finders, and say with them that God did not send them by wicked hands. I desire the truth just here. I desire to know whether God sent Joseph to Egypt by wicked hands, or have I been wrong all of the time about all things working together for good to them that love God? The wicked brethren thought to get rid of their brother. Now that is right, isn't it? That is what Joseph told the brethren. That is exactly what the people of God have been preaching from the day of Paul's ministry until now, to wit, all things work together for good to them that love God. Now what did Joseph say to his brethren? What did he say? It seems to me that he said, to wit, come near me, I pray you. And they came near, and he said, I am Joseph your brother whom ye sold into Egypt. Now did you get that? They were wicked and they sold their brother Joseph into Egypt. That links them with the whole transaction. That puts them forward as instigator and the culminator of the whole scheme. Further, I want it definitely understood that at no time did God nor Joseph absolve them of the sin. However, let it be remembered that God did have mercy upon them all of the way through the whole of it. How wonderful that mercy was to them. What good news it was to them that God is so wonderful, so good, so merciful that he was able, and not only able but he did, take the whole of it, which they meant for evil and worked it for the good of His people.

I do not believe that any Bible character, nor, for that matter, anybody that has been made alive to righteousness, has ever made any attempt to minimize sin. Yet, listen at Joseph talk to his brethren. Listen at his kindness. Pay close attention dear brethren as to what he said to them. Now, therefore, be not grieved nor angry with yourself, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve life, for these two years hath the famine been in the land; and yet there are five years in which there neither be earing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your life by a great deliverance (Gen. 45: 4;7).

Now Joseph has been sent to Egypt. God has done the sending. There is not any need for anyone to dispute about who sent him. The brethren did not.

They done all that they could to get rid of their brother. What they intended, and what God intended are two different things. The object that they had and the object that God had was different. They did not have in mind saving a posterity to themselves; they did not have in mind the glory of God. IT WAS GOD THAT SENT JOSEPH DOWN INTO EGYPT.

Jacob did not know anything about what was going on. He was the son that he loved so well. The wicked lying brothers told one untruth and then told another to make the first one reasonable. He thought that it was all against him. No doubt he despaired of ever seeing his son again. In his case, as well as in the case of the apostle Paul and in the case of every reader that has learned what these brethren did, have all travelled the road that our father Jacob travelled.

Now I beg the Lord to teach all of us, and make us alive and conscious of the fact that none of us have said any more about the evil that these brethren were caght in, than what Joseph said to his brethren, to wit, you meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. What good? To save much people alive.

May the Lord teach us and make us submissive and reconciled to the will of God.

Tremblingly,
Elder W. D. Griffin
Route 6, Box 84
Fayette, Alabama.

R. LESTER DODSON.

In collecting and publishing the material contained in this pamphlet, it has been the sincere desire of the undersigned to advance the cause of truth. The doctrine of Predestination, rightly understood, is God-honoring and most glorious of contemplation by his saints.

It has been suggested that the record be presented century by century, but this is out of the question at this time, for various reasons. It is believed, however, that the data here presented will suffice to show: (1) What the doctrine of Predestination is, and (2) that it has been regarded as a fundamental point of doctrine by true Baptists since the organization of the first church in this country, the same being attested to by the evidence supplied from Hassell's Church History, as well as the various American authors, whose writings appear. It will be readily agreed by all who know the truth that the knowledge of it did not come by man, and it is not expected, for a moment, that the mere reading of this little book will remove the scales from the eyes of those who see not the deep things of our God, but, rather is it hoped that those whose eyes have been opened may see and admire with wonder and amazement how the Lord has not left himself without witnesses in every age of the world. That this has been one of the essential points of doctrine to distinguish between Old School, or Primitive Baptists, and all other denominations, from the time the first band came to America from Wales, cannot be denied, and it is still firmly believed by many that there will ever be a remnant who shall ascribe greatness unto our God, for "He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."

The writer has purposely refrained from publishing articles by men who are living today, feeling they are fully capable of speaking for themselves; however, he would acknowledge his gratitude for the assistance rendered by a number of his brethren in this work, as well as the encouragement afforded him by their approval and moral support. May the blessings of the Most High rest upon this work, if consistent with his holy and divine will.

December 15th, 1926.

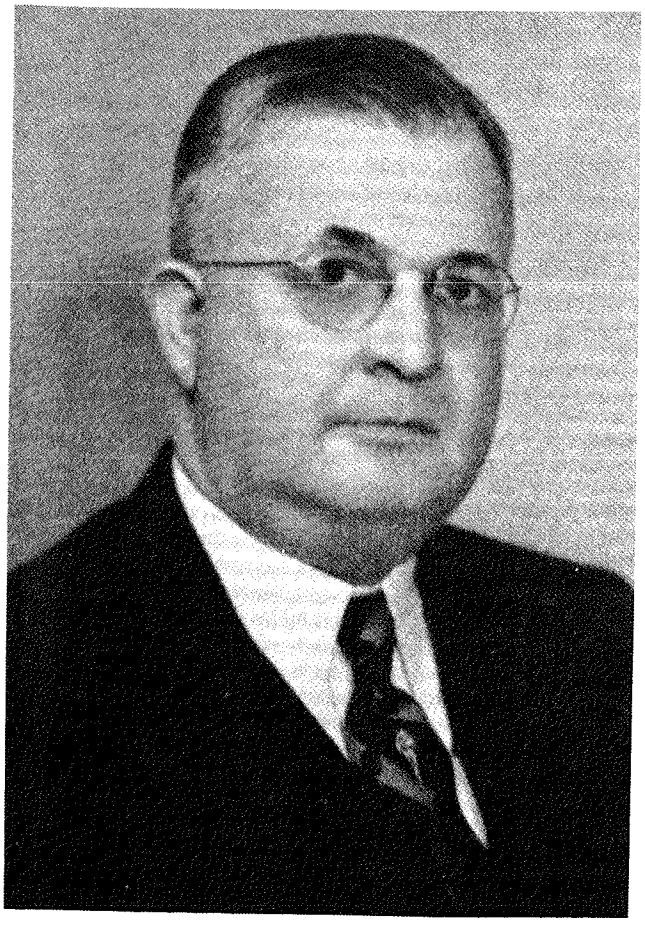

R. LESTER DODSON

Born in Virginia May 12, 1886

Elder Dodson was a former editor and owner of "The Signs of the Times". He purchased it from the Beebee family in the early forties. The paper was incorporated in 1949, and Elder Dodson had control until he died in December 1950. He loved the "Signs" and left in his will two thousand dollars to the paper.

The following articles by Elders F.A. Chick and Silas H. Durand are excerpts from a book, "Predestination", compiled and published by Elder Dodson in December 1926. An article from the same book by Augustus M. Toplady will follow next month.

Editors

PREDESTINATION

By

ELDER F. A. CHICK

(1845-1914)

Elder Chick was widely known through his able writings, having been on the editorial staff of the Signs of the Times from November 28, 1894, to the time of his death. It is said of him that he was looked up to by his brethren far and near as being a standard of soundness in doctrine and church order, and that his views on the scripture and church affairs were sought after by inquirers all over the country. Under the caption of "PREDESTINATION" he had the following to say in the December 1, 1897, issue of the Signs of the Times:

PREDESTINATION

We have never had any disposition to make a belief in the doctrine of the predestination of all things, a test of fellowship among those who may and do differ upon this subject; but still we have, and do believe the doctrine, and to us it has seemed from our earliest knowledge of the Bible, to be a most God-honoring and self-abasing doctrine. We have never been able to see how we could believe in the existence of an infinite God, without also believing in the eternity, and all comprehensiveness, of his purposes. We have not often made it a subject of discussion in our preaching or writing. We have not desired to provoke controversy or strife upon this theme, and we think that those who have heard us preach for the last thirty years, will acquit us of making a hobby of it at any time. We suppose however that those among whom we have labored, have known all along that this was our faith. We remember the time when we had never met or heard of any one who bore the name of Old School Baptist, who did not believe this doctrine as earnestly as we ourself did. The denial of it among our people, is a thing of recent date. All our life we have heard the doctrine abused by those who laid no claim to being anything else but open Arminians. Our position, and the position of the SIGNS, has not changed in the least, from the first moment of our recollection, as regards this doctrine. We have been sorry to see, and to hear the most violent and bitter denunciations of this doctrine of late years, among those who are associated with our people, in different parts of the country. Some whom we have known as good and spiritual-minded brethren, seem to have been disturbed by the clamor against it, until they have come to think that it is a doctrine calculated to destroy all vitality in religion, and fraught with the most awful consequences to the name and honor of the God whom we worship. As long as such things were said by open Arminians, we did not feel troubled by them, but we must confess we are troubled when the people of God say such things. It is because we are troubled in this way, that we have concluded to respond to some questions which have been urged of late by brethren, upon our attention. It seems to us that the very being and immutability of our God is involved in this truth, so that if we deny this doctrine, we deny logically that there is an overruling power at all. It seems to us that this matter ought to be well considered, since such consequences are involved in it. Still further, this matter, as well as all that pertains to the character and attributes of the God whom we worship, should always be spoken of with the deepest and most solemn reverence. Nothing light of feeling or manner should be allowed to intrude when we speak of such vast and solemn things.

Firt question: Is the doctrine of the predestination of all things fatalism? If not, wherein do they differ? Those who assert that they are the same, certainly betray an entire lack of understanding of the meaning of words, or of their uses; and beside, they are certainly ignorant of what the doctrine of fatalism is. They are not in the slightest degree the same. Fatalism was held by some in the past centuries, and we are informed by writers, that some people in the east hold this dogma still. It means that there is an indefinite something which has no consciousness, and therefore no will, and which is blind, which fixes the destiny of God, as well as of men. It is a dumb and deaf power that is supreme, and from which the divine powers can no more escape than can men. In heathen ideas, the many gods whom they wor-

shipped, were all subject to this intangible, indefinable power, as completely as were men. On the other hand, the doctrine of predestination declares that there is a supreme being, who ever lives and reigns, and whose purpose is eternal, and who governs all things, and moves all things, and is moved by none. This God is the Sovereign arbiter of all, and all things must bow to his sway. There is no power back of him, but he is himself the source of all power, and being, and life. We trust that those who have been saying that predestination was fatalism, have been ignorant of the difference, for if they have not been, they have been guilty of willingly deceiving, or trying to deceive the people, by saying that they were the same. All things are fixed, but not as fatalism claims, by a dumb, dead power, above and beyond Diety, but by the sovereign will and power of the all-wise God himself.

Second question: Can anything be foreknown without also being foreordained? We have stated this question as it has been stated to us, and we have no hesitancy in replying, No. To say that anything can be foreknown, and yet not be foreordained, is to state an inconceivable proposition. The human mind, by the very law of its existence, refuses to entertain so incongruous a proposition. Nothing can be clearer than that if a given event or thing was known before it took place, or had an existence, that thing or event must have been appointed and fixed in its place, in order that it could be known. If out of his infinite foreknowledge, our God has told us that any given event will take place in the future, then we know that that thing must take place, or that it is fixed to take place, so that nothing can by any possibility hinder it. If our God foreknows anything whatever, then it follows that either he or some other being has immutably foreordained that thing. No matter what the intermediate causes may be, the very moment that any act in the life of any man is foreknown, (not supposed, nor guessed at, but foreknown,) from that moment it is impossible that he should escape that act. Some who deny the doctrine of predestination, have come to see this, and therefore are saying nothing about the attribute of the foreknowledge of God. Ten years ago it seemed clear to our mind that the denial of predestination was but the entering wedge, from which would soon follow a denial of foreknowledge, and of the divine sovereignty and immutability of Jehovah. We are sorry to say, that among those who deny the doctrine of predestination, we do not now hear much said about these other principles of truth. We say this in sorrow, for if there is anything which has always been dear to our heart, and upon which we have delighted to dwell, and which has given assurance to our hope, these have been the chief things. How can any one feel a sure and abiding hope of everlasting life beyond the grave, and of perfect safety while on the road, if they believe at the same time that some things were not embraced in the infinite foreknowledge and predestination of God?

Third question: Does predestination destroy human accountability? We reply that if it does, then we must deny all predestination of events in which the element of human accountability enters. Arminians can make this assertion consistently, because they deny the predestination of anything whatever. But those who believe in the predestination of some things, canot use this objection, because it would have the same force against the things which they do believe were predestinated, that it would against other things which they assert were not predestinated. If any one act of men, good or bad, has been predestinated, and the accountability of the doer of that act has not been destroyed, then all acts

of men may have been predestinated, and their accountability not be destroyed. There is no more difficulty involved in believing in the predestination of all things, than there is in believing in the predestination of some things. It seems sure as anything can be, that if the good acts of men are predestinated, and yet men are to be approved for them, so also the evil acts of men can be predestinated, and yet they be reproved for them. We have not yet found any Old School Baptist who will say that no act of man, good or bad, was ever predestinated. But he who admits the predestination of one act of men, will find himself as much put to it to answer questions that may be asked, as though he asserted the predestination of all things; and some questions occur that would not, if he asserted the predestination of all things. We will just simply call attention to the fact that the predestination of the man Judas to betray the Savior, did not destroy his accountability. The immediate cause of this act was his own wicked heart. But yet the act was prophesied of hundreds of years before, and he was accountable for it, and received the due reward of his deeds. We would never say any more concerning the predestination of any other thing, than was true of this act. This is a sort of key which will serve in all other cases. Man is most certainly accountable for his sins, and predestination does not destroy this in the least, though to our short sight it may seem to do so. In our own experience, we have never felt that we could take shelter behind the predestination of God. Only an unhallowed heart and mind would ever think of doing so. Arminians say so, and the devil would suggest to the Lord's people that they can do so, but the grace of God in the heart forbids it.

Fourth question: Does predestination destroy the idea of prayer? We answer, that on the contrary it assures the value of prayer. The objection supposed in this question, cuts like a two-edged sword. If it be said to be of no use to pray against evil, which is embraced in the predestination of God, then it can be said with equal force, that it is of no use to pray for the good that he has predestinated. It may be said that the evil will come anyway, whether we pray for deliverance or not, but so may it be said that the good will come anyhow, whether we pray or not. This argument pursued to its conclusion, would drive all predestination out of the universe, or else it would drive all prayer out of the universe. It says that prayer and predestination cannot occupy the same ground. We are told that Elijah prayed for the very thing that God had determined should come upon the land, and which had been revealed to the prophet. The fact that it was in the predetermination of God, acted as an incentive for prayer, rather than as a deterrent, and it will ever be found to be so. We are sure that our God has never bestowed upon us any but predetermined blessings, and yet we have not felt restrained in prayer.

Fifth question: Would not the foreknowledge of God, and the doctrine of his immutability, destroy all accountability, and all prayer, as well as his predestination? It seems clear to our mind, that if one will do this, then the others will also. But we do not believe that either, or all these principles of truth, have any such result. Perhaps the best test of any doctrine, is the results in the lives of men; and we know that in the circle of our acquaintance, the brethren who have held most strongly to the doctrine of God's foreknowledge and predestination, and immutability, have been at the same time most jealous and careful of their lives and conduct. We have never met one yet who would say, when convinced of sin, I could not help it, for it was predestinated to be so; and,

as said before, this has never entered our mind, that we could excuse ourself for sin, because we have belived so firmly the universal predestination of God, as well as his foreknowledge and immutability. But we repeat, that it is sure that according to all known principles of human reason, foreknowledge, and the immutability of God, would do away with prayer and human accountability, as certainly as would predestination. But neither of these principles of truth are fraught with such results in the case of any who love the doctrine.

Sixth question: Can personal election be true, unless the doctrine of the predestination of all things be also true? Until of late we have never heard nor read of any one who denied the one doctrine, unless they denied the other. They have in all past ages been thought to be cognate truths. They have stood or fallen in the minds of men together. He that fought predestination, also fought election. It has seemed to the minds of men incontrovertible, that if the person of any man has been elected to life and salvation before the foundation of the world, then all the multiplied millions of things, and people, and events, which all from the beginning had their bearing upon the coming into the world of that man, were also predestinated and set in train, to bring him into the world just as the Maker of all intended he should come, and just when he would be needed as a vessel of mercy, to receive the spirit which God had appointed for him to receive at the set time. It is sure that if our God be unchangeable, he does nothing that he has not determined from the foundation of the world. Each of us may say with full assurnace of its truth, as did Job, "He performeth the thing that he hath appointed for me." He works, but he works always according to his eternal purpose. And so every elect vessel of mercy comes to his first and second birth just as God has purpose from all eternity.

Seventh question: Can prophecy be depended upon as a certain thing, unless predestination be true? We must confess that it is far beyond our comprehension to understand how a thing can be declared as sure to take place, with truth, unless that thing is so fixed upon some ground, that it must be; and the fixing of that thing is predestination. It is sure that if we are to have any reverence for the work of God, we must believe that all the prophesies are fixed things. Every event there declared must take place, otherwise the prophieies are of no more value as predictions, than prognostications from the weather bureau. We would not speak lightly here, and we do not, for this seems like solemn truth to us. It seems sure to us that every special prophesy does prove that that special thing was predestinated.

Eighth question: Does not predestination conflict with the revealed law of God? That is, as we understand is meant by the question. Can it be true that our God has predestinated anything that would be a violation of his revealed law? The best answer to this question we think is the fact that we know from the word, that he has predestinated some things which were in entire violation of his commandments. It is a violation of his commandment that one man should kill another; and yet some men have reached the bound that has been set to their lives in that way. It is a violation of his commandments to bear false witness, and yet Peter, to whom the Lord had said several hours before, that before the cock crew he should deny him thrice, and who from the moment that word was spoken at least, was coming to fixed action in his life, did deny his Lord, which was the utterance of a falsehood; and all falsehood is a violation of the command of God. It is forbidden to condemn the innocent, and yet it was predestinated that men should condemn

and kill the most innocent and righteous man that the world has ever seen. In all these cases the law of God was violated, and yet the predestination of God was in it. Since these things are true, there really can be no conflict, though to our short sight there may seem to be. Our human judgment cannot measure the infinite judgment of God. We catch a glimpse here and there, and we vainly imagine that we are qualified to say to God what is right, and what is not right for him to do. We presumptuously say, that if he does so and so, and then does another thing, it is inconsistent, and not right. "Nay but, O man," does he not say to our presumption still, "who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" The ninth chapter of the Romans has ever been the most hateful of chapters to those who would set themselves upon an equality with God, and who would presume to judge his ways as an equal might do. But as long as this chapter shall be held in reverence as the word of God, there will be one witness to the perfect right of God to do with all his creatures exactly as he pleases. When any man would say in reply to the predestination of God, concerning his wicked acts, "Why doth he yet find fault, for who hath resisted his will?" Paul, inspired of God to answer, says only this, "Who art thou that repliest against God?" When men bring up the same subject today, as all do, who would say that it is unjust to condemn those who have done what has been predestinated for them to do, let this be our answer. If they have any quarrel, it is not with us, but with the inspired Paul; nay rather, it is with the Spirit which spake through Paul, that they have their quarrel.

We have thus tried to present such answers to these questions as we could, because they have been pressed upon our attention. The constant thought in our mind as we have written, has been this: How hard it is for the pride of man to confess his dependence upon God, or to acknowledge his perfect right to do with us all as it shall please him.

"THOUGHTS ABOUT PREDESTINATION"
By
ELDER SILAS H. DURAND
(1833-1918)

Elder Durand Needs no introduction to most of the readers of this pamphlet, having travelled extensively, from Canada to Florida and from the Atlantic Coast to the Mississippi River, and being known throughout the country by his able writings in the Signs of the Times, as well as other writings published in book form. He studied law, but after being admitted to the bar, felt so strongly the call be be about his Master's business, that he gave up the practice of law and devoted his life to the work of the ministry. Under date of December 7th, 1910, he wrote the following:

When the Lord made the world and created man upon it he foreknew that this man would sin, and that by this sin death would enter into the world. So far as I know, all of our brethren believe this. Having this foreknowledge that man would sin, and still going on in the work of creation, does it not necessarily follow that the Lord's purpose included the entrance of sin and death into the world? Can any one think that when the infinitely wise and omnipotent God created man it was his wish and purpose that he might not sin? Could he not have so arranged that man should not sin? Why may we not think that the eternal God, in his infinite wisdom, purposed thus to display the principles of his infinite justice and judg-

ment, which are the habitation of his throne, and the glorious riches of his love and mercy? Why may we not think that "it was all for the lifting of Jesus on high"? I cannot see anything in these thoughts that should cause one to be offended at them, or at him who utters them, especially one who loves the blessed doctrine of salvation by grace, and this grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

Of course the Lord does not regard sin in the same way that he regards holiness. Of course his attidude towards it is not the same. How could one have such a thought? He hates and abhors sin; his in-finitely holy nature is absolutely and forever opposed to it; it is obnoxious to him and abominable in his sight. The thoughts I have expressed are not contrary to this truth, although they present a deep mystery which human intelligence cannot fathom. The Lord has power and control over sin, instead of being in any sense controlled by it. It could not have entered into the world if it had been his will and purpose that it should not, and after sin came into the world, and ever since, his control over it has been absolute. Men of the world and wicked men are his hand and sword. Psalm 17: 13, 14. The wicked can go no farther in executing their wicked designs than will be for the fulfilling of his decrees concerning them. To them, as to the sea, he says, "Hitherto shall thou come, and no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." He must have had a purpose concerning all sin and wickedness, and does overrule all the wicked devices of men to the fulfillment of that purpose. Would not any other consideration of this subject force the conclusion that the Lord was in some degree limited in power and wisdom? The devil can do nothing only as the Lord gives him the power; he cannot even drown a herd of swine without the permission of Jesus. "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."–Pro. 16:4. Could it possibly be that God was ever disappointed or disconcerted? Could anything ever occur contrary to his purpose?

"I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."—Isaiah 46: 9-11. How clearly this Scripture, as also many other portions of the inspired Scriptures of truth, declares the sovereign counsel, purpose and power of God.

In opposing the doctrine of the predestination of all things, some, not many, I hope, constantly repeat a list of the vilest crimes and then ask, Did the Lord predestinate these? When Scriptures are quoted to them which declare plainly that God did predestinate some wicked actions of men, and that he did before of old ordain certain men "to this condemnation," and they are asked to explain such Scriptures, they return to the same line of argument, and repeat again the list of horrible crimes, and speak harshly in denunciation of those who can even think that a holy God could predestinate that such things should be done. But few, I think, venture to deny that all the wicked acts of the men who crucified the dear Savior were predestinated by the Lord. Several years ago I asked a dear, good brother in the ministry how it was that he could believe that all of this wickedness manifested in the crucifixion of Christ was predestinated, and that no other wicked actions were. His reply was, "That was different." Jesus was delivered to those wicked men "by the determinate coun-

sel and foreknowledge of God;" they were gathered together to do what God's "hand and counsel determined before to be done." What God had declared by all the prophets "he hath so fulfilled." The Lord is under no law but his own will; whatever he does is right in him. His will is the only criterion by which to judge of hat he does. His command is the only criterion by which to judge of what is right for any man to do. One says, if God predestinated any evil thing to be done by a wicked man, then he is responsible, and the man is not to blame. This is the reasoning of the carnal mind with regard to the doctrine of election and predestination. But the Bible does not say so. The nonelect feel the blame of their sinful acts, but do not hate the sin, and perish in their wickedness, having not the love of God in their hearts. The elect take blame to themselves for all their sins and sinfulness, and abhor themselves. They hunger and thirst after righteousness, but acknowledge God's justice in their condemnation, and love him. In his own time the Lord reveals to them Jesus as their righteousness and salvation.

The Lord put a lying spirit in the mouths of Ahab's prophets for a purpose. Dare we question him as to that act? (1 Kings 22: 23.) We are not qualified to judge of the Lord's work by our natural reasoning powers, we must simply take his word. He works, and none can hinder, and he causes all things to work together for good to them that love him; to them who are called according to his purpose. Many dear timid souls are often silenced by the effrontery of those who arrogantly denounce both the doctrine of predestination and those who believe it to be taught in the Bible, so that they almost fear and hesitate to mention certain portions of Scripture, even without comment, for fear of being sharply denounced. But the Scriptures are there, and there they will ever remain; they read the same today as they did in Paul's day, and mean the same, and declare as comfortingly now as they did then the infinite sovereignty of God. The natural man is still saying, as in Paul's day, "Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" And Paul is still replying with apostolic authority and boldness: "Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with such longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."–Romans 9: 19-23. It cannot be denied that our carnal nature is strongly opposed to this doctrine of personal election and of predestination. The carnal mind is felt by quickened souls to be "enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." How keenly and bitterly I have felt at times, this opposition in my own natural mind and heart. It has caused me many deep inward trials as to the Lord's ways and thoughts, trying to understand them, though the Lord tells us that they are higher than the earth. I have been tempted sometimes to listen to those who say of certain clearly expressed Scriptures that they do not mean as they read, because the Lord would not do that way; but there has so far been raised up in my soul a power that has delivered me from these temptations, and has told me to "hold fast the form of sound words," whether I understand them or not, and has shown me a beauty and power and sweetness in the

words of truth as given us by the Holy Spirit, and has caused me to feel an unspeakable joy in the truth that "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth," and that "he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" He doeth his will in heaven, and in earth, and in all deep places."

When I first wrote upon this subject, more than forty years ago, I was not familiar with the London Confession of Faith. I was then reading the Bible constantly; it was my soul's delight to read it. I was thankful to the Lord then, I truly think, for this desire, and I have been more thankful since for that desire and privilege then, when at times my mind has been to me like a desert and a wilderness. But I understood at that time that the London Confession of Faith expressed the sentiments of the Old School Baptists in this country and in England. Since then I have become more familiar with the language of that Confession, and I have to say that I do not see how my sentiments upon this subject could be more clearly and fully expressed outside of the Bible than they are in that Confession of Faith. This doctrine has been called a heresy by some. But why call one a hertic for expressing the doctrine that for two hundred years has been distinguished as the doctrine of the Baptist Church? The Scriptures there referred to are unanswerable.

Suppose that Stephen when suffering the agony of that terrible death at the hands of wicked men could have been made to believe that the Lord had not embraced that wickedness of his enemies in his eternal purpose; would there have been any comfort for him? If he had thought that this act of theirs was not the Lord's will and purpose, could he have been submissive and restful, trusting in the Lord? Could he have had the infinite comfort of saying, "Thy will be done"? Could he have said, in the abiding trust and confidence of heavenly love, assured of the wisdom, power and mercy of God. "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge?" When sorely tried by affliction, or persecuted by wicked men, could the saints endure it if they did not believe in a God of purpose, "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," in whom they can absolutely trust? Could the poor tried souls endure one stroke which they believed was not purposed bythe God of love and power? How good to feel assured that:

"Not a single shaft can hit,
Till the God of love sees fit."

How can any one approach such a subject as this, concerning the purposes and work of the eternal God, in a light and trifling manner? While in a state of mind suitable to the contemplation and discussion of so awful and sublime a subject as that of the eternal purpose which God purposed in himself before the world began, we can hardly think of one being able to bandy epithets with an opponent in debate, and use harsh terms and coarse language, and bitter denunciations, such as might be expected from rough men disputing in the streets. I do not see why these deeply mysterious and glorious things may not be the subjects of kind, frank and brotherly conversation, without any rancor or ill-feeling. When we are in intimate conversation with a brother whom we dearly love, if there appears a difference of understanding on any point, how carefully we try to see alike, and to avoid any serious difference, and if we cannot see alike how careful we desire to be that no root of bitterness shall spring up; nothing to cause any disturbance of love and fellowship between us. Upon the subject of predestination I have never considered that there should be a breaking or disturbance of fellowship. If it is to be made a bar of fellowship it must be done by the other party. My fellowship for one whom

I esteem and love as a subject of grace cannot be broken or disturbed because he differs with me on that subject, but it may be broken by the manner in which one expresses his difference, and the kind of spirit he manifests in doing so.

December 7, 1910.

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

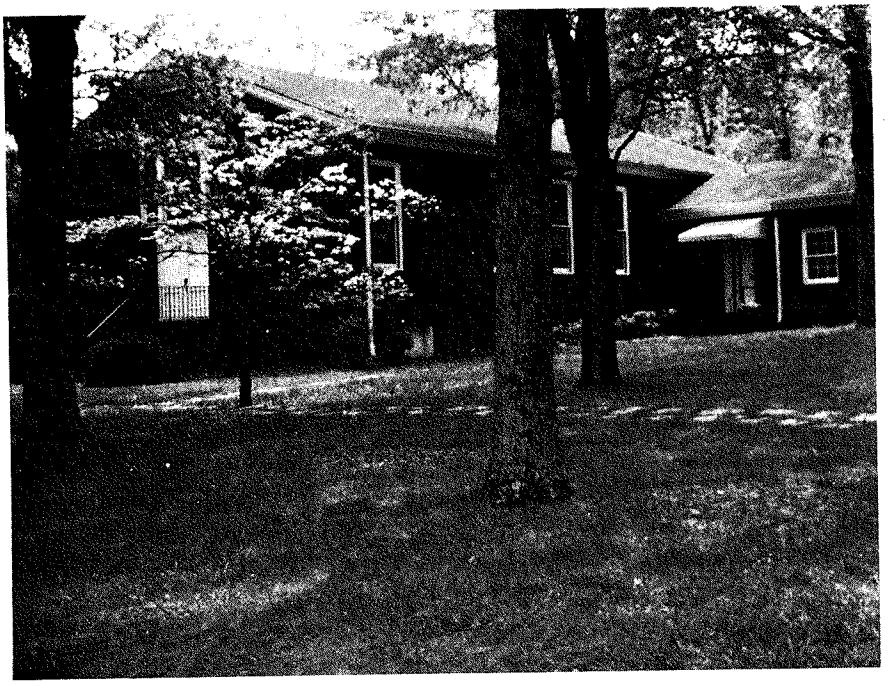

DURHAM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

The Durham Primitive Baptist Church was organized in 1885 and is located on Pacific Avenue in north Durham, N. C.

They meet for service the Third Sunday of each month. Elder Cleo Robertson is their pastor.

CORRESPONDENCE

Eustace. Texas
August 21, 1984

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS;

Ever since the departure of my loved one from this world, I have wished from the depths of my heart that there was some way I might convey to the dear saints scattered abroad, the deep and lingering thanks for "every remembrance" during his illness and death. How overwhelming it was to both of us to see and feel the love of God which was so richly manifested through the concern, the comfort, and support given to us by His precious people in so many, many ways. Feeling so inadequate for words to express my heartfelt feelings and also realizing my weakness and unworthiness of such love, I have hesitated to make known in this manner the deep

and abiding thanks to such precious, humble, and God-fearing people. How I do desire, if not deceived, to know more of the depths of this sweet doctrine of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus and which my dear husband loved so much, and is so sweetly proclaimed by His servants far and near.

For many years I was a stranger to these dear people (and in God's sight, I may still be) but oh, I do hope and believe that somehow my eyes and ears have been opened to some understanding of the truth and my heart made to rejoice as I have experienced a portion of His grace and mercy. How I desire to know more of the wondrous love of such an all-wise, all-powerful God in Heaven who gave His only begotten Son to suffer, bleed, and die to redeem His people from their sins. How my heart cries out, "Lord be merciful to me a sinner" since the day I feel I was surely made to realize that I could do nothing of myself and it was ALL in His hands. These words of that precious old hymn came into my heart so forcefully and continued with me for many days: *"Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling. Black I to the fountain fly, wash me Saviour or I die. All for sin could not atone, thou must save and THOU ALONE. NOT the labor of MY hands can fulfill the laws demands."* Oh, how different that is from the teaching I had received of men, that I must do something or I could not be saved. Dear precious brethren, I do hope and feel I was MADE to realize that in my weak and sinful self lies no good thing and as nothing I surely am at the mercies of a gracious all-power-ful God who promises His children, "My grace is sufficient," and "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy," Romans 9:16. How I do long to know how to give Him thanks and praise, not only for His goodness to me in so many other ways, but most of all for "turning me" to what I surely believe to be the true doctrine as taught in His Holy word.

I am enclosing a beautiful writing from the pen of a dear sister in Christ (I hope) who means so much to me and at her request, name to be withheld. If I am not deceived, this is from her heart and she was led by the Holy Spirit to expound upon this precious truth found in I Peter 5: 6-7, as she has been such an inspiration and comfort to me and to my dear husband so many times. Oh, how wonderful it is to feel the beautiful love that flows from God to us and then to see it flow from breast to breast among the brethren. How graciously this was manifested to us throughout my dear companion's few short years of proclaiming the truth to God's little ones, and how NEVER-ENDING is that wondrous love! May each of you know (especially those we were privileged to travel among) the love he felt in his heart and I'm let to believe he gave thanks and praise to Almighty God for His great blessings. Tho I do miss his sweet presence so much, I hope and pray to be reconciled as Job, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." If I know my heart, I do beg from the Lord above for the sweet peace that seemed so real to my loved one before his departure. How my heart was filled with comfort and praise to our kind and loving Heavenly Father as Elder Hamrick so beautifully proclaimed the truth concerning that peace in John 14:27 and as he spoke so sweetly from Ecc. 7:1 "A good name is better than precious ointment, and the day of death than the day of one's birth." Also how sweet and consoling were the deep expressions of love and truth by Elder Haygood and Elder Daniel. May it be our Heavenly Father's will to gather us together in that world that shall never end, where, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more sorrow, no crying, neither shall there be

any pain for the former things are passed away," Rev. 21:4. How my dear one loved and dwelt on that portion of God's Holy word, as well as all the truth's therein.

I realize this is lengthy and I feel so inadequate for words to express my feelings and if you feel my scattering remarks to be unworthy of space in the precious Signs which I enjoy so much, please don't hesitate to discard it.

I do hope and pray (in my weak way) it may be God's will for me to be blessed to continue among these brethren of like precious faith, and to be led to know more and more of God's great love and mercy, unworthy tho' I be. And oh, may I be led to say from my heart, "Give joy or grief, give ease or pain, take life or friends away, but let me with my Saviour reign in that eternal day," for this world holds nothing of lasting value.

Of the many precious memories the Lord in Heaven has so richly blessed me with, the most outstanding and joyous experience of my life occured on the day, when, at the close of three days of listening (I do hope with understanding) to the precious gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and His redeeming love so beautifully proclaimed by His able servants, it seemed "my cup runneth over" and I could no longer refrain from asking for a home (unworthy tho' I felt to be) with those precious people at Hopewell Church. After being so graciously received I was baptized that afternoon (October 1, 1978) by my precious husband. Oh, may I ever be given to praise the matchless and adorable name of Christ the Redeemer of His people, for His is surely our all in all.

A Weak and unworthy one,
Cloma McLaughlin
(Widow of Elder McLaughlin)

See obituary for Elder B.J. McLaughlin in this issue.

THE ORIGIN OF THE HYMN, "AMAZING GRACE"

John Newton, the celebrated English preacher and hymn writer, realized that he was a trophy of divine grace. A while before his death, a brother minister came to have breakfast with him. Family prayers followed the meal. Mr. Newton's sight had almost failed him, and he was unable to read. He sat and listened to his friend as he read the 15th chapter of I Corinthians. When the tenth verse was read, "By the Grace of God I am what I am," Mr. Newton began to speak: "I am not what I ought to be. Ah! How imperfect and deficient! I am not what I wish to be. I abhor what is evil, and I would cleave to what is good. I am not what I hope to be soon. Soon I shall put off, with mortality, all sin and imperfection. Though I am not what I ought to be, nor what I wish to be, nor what I hope to be; I can truly say that I am not what I once was, a slave to sin and Satan; and I can heartily join with the apostle, and acknowledge, by the grace of God I am what I am."

John Newton could say that with conviction and joy. What had he once been? When he was seven years old, he lost his mother. A little later, he went to sea with his dad and learned all the evils of the seaman's life. Still later, he was forced into the Navy. He deserted, but was caught and stripped and beaten until the blood flowed from his wounds. He had now become a hardened infidel. He fell in with African slave traders. He went from bad to worse until he himself was sold as a slave. It was a Negro woman who bought him, and she gloried in her power over him. She made him depend for his food on the crusts she tossed under the table. He had fallen to the depths of human degradation. And yet the grace of God found him, and saved him, and made him one of the greatest ministers of Christ, and a writer

of hymns that have stirred the hearts of men the world over. Truly, he could say, "I am not what I once was." And truly he could say, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

Knowing this do you wonder at John Newton's message in the grand old hymn:

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound.
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."

When we read this account of John Newton's life, we can understand why he wrote the nine verses (along with the regularly sung verses) which are so seldom used today.

EPHESIANS I; 3-6

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

This letter of Paul's is addressed "to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus." All those saints at Ephesus which Paul had in mind have long since been removed from time, but the letter and its words are still in effect, and to a people even to-day, for there are yet some "faithful in Christ Jesus," who love this doctrine as did our eminent apostle Paul, who so earnestly contended for the truth as he had been taught it, giving God preeminence in all things. Man of himself has never believed the truth, never will. The vital truth of God and the fundamental principle on which it is founded have ever been distasteful to man, for one prime reason: it robs man of any glory and places the invisible God preeminent in all things. Of all creatures and things in existence man has the least right to boast or array himself in any way as prominent in the least things, or capable of even thinking a thought, much less putting one into execution, for man was the last manifestation in creation. Even the beasts of the field, grass and herbs, were brought into a manifest existence before man was, and man after being formed of earth was an inanimated lump of clay until the Lord God breathed the breath of life into his nostrils and he, man, became a living soul. Now since he has become a living soul by reason of the God-given breath he exalts himself above the Creator and limits the Holy One, circumscribes his movememts and places him in an inferior position to man. If there is one thing God wishes to do or have done and he cannot do it or cause it to be done then he is not omnipotent. If there is anything, even the minutest detail that his all-seeing eye has not seen, even "from ancient times," then he is not omniscient. If there is any vacuum in space that is not filled with his presence at any and all times, then he is not omnipresent, and many have borne false witness, for Bible writers declare these three attributes as belonging to him, and to no other. They who feel they can keep the law, or even a part of it, and reap a reward, in claiming this ability to procure a benefit for doing righteous acts and receiving blessings thereby, either in time or eternity, have broken the commandment that reads, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." For to say that salvation, all of it, or any part of it, for time or eternity is in any way conditional is bearing false witness against Christ and overthrowing the testimony of the holy men of old who

spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The teachings of Christ are in no uncertain terms. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Here is a positive declaration of Christ that forever bars man coming of his own free will: he must be drawn. They are not drawn against their will, as some affirm that we believe. The psalmist says, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." God's ways are equal. When he draws one he makes that one willing. There is much could be written about one's willingness and acceptance. Of course God's people accept him and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. The "elect according to the foreknowledge of God" are the only people that do, ever have or shall accept God the Father and his Son, or the salvation which he has wrought. When one talks about accepting Christ as his Savior and feels he can do something to aid his redemption or final preservation in glory, he has not accepted Christ, but he who is wholly and solely dependent upon Christ for salvation, both now and forever, does accept him as his Savior. There is not a text in the whole Bible that can be claimed as foundation for conditionalism that is not to their destruction, for such "they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." Scripture means what it says; if not, it would say what it means. No mortal hated this doctrine more than the writer, but by hard and trying experiences, both in providence and grace, he learned that all power in heaven and earth is of God, and was given unto Jesus Christ, who is God manifest in the flesh, for the accomplishment of God's purpose in earth. Then if all power in heaven and earth, which is time or eternity, the church or the world, providence or grace, is in him it is a foregone conclusion, an undeniable fact, that there is none in man. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Are we going to doubt Jeremiah's word, "the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath?" who said, "He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light." Would any walk in sadness and affliction if it could be avoided? It was by faith that Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the peole of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Faith is the gift of God, therefore it was of God, and not of Moses, that he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Would Paul have been struck down and turned about in a career of which he was so zealous if left to his own will? Most assuredly not, for his will was to go to Damascus, but like all other of God's chosen, elect and precious, he was made willing in the day of God's power. This power revealed Jesus Christ, whom he was persecuting as an impostor, and now he sees "Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor," as his Savior, and accepts him whom he had rejected, because a power over which he had no control smote him to the ground and blinded him. By the power and magnificence of "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" he was now willing to accept God the Father and God the Son. Now it was no wonder Paul could write the words at the beginning of our writing: "To the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus." Who are the faithful? They who are full of faith. These are the people to whom this writing is addressed and for whom it is kept, and it does not apply to the ones who feel they can help the Lord in his work, either for time or eternity. In sending this message to the faithful he could boldly and freely speak of them as being chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. It is useless for man to speculate on such solemn truths, or expect to reconcile them to reason. It

is a senseless undertaking for one to try to make God's ways plain to any natural mind. Our finite mind cannot grasp the nearly six thousand years of time, then why dispute or attempt to explain away the mystery of that which took place before time began? There is no measure in eternity. Time and time things alone are measurable. As God is immeasurable, so are all his ways and attributes. Were his mercy or love measurable, we would sometimes come to the limit and be without the mercy and law of God, but his mercy endureth forever and his love never fails. Because we cannot measure and understand God is no reason why we should deny the testimony of Paul, this faithful witness, who declares that God chose certain ones in Christ before the world was. It is essential that he did, and this being true there is a living unity between Christ and his people, for he was with the Father before the world was, and we were chosen in him. Then we must have been alive through him, or else he was then composed of dead members. It is not incredible then to one who sees God as sovereign to believe that all his people were foreknown and chosen in Christ Jesus before the world was, for when Christ came in the flesh he was just as verily God as he was verily man, God manifest in the flesh, otherwise he could not be seen, could not suffer, bleed and die; neither could he have been born of a virgin except in the flesh. When man starts out to make the Scripture plain and understandable to natural reason he has reached the height of folly. No man dares question the prerogative of God, for all he does is right. The very fact that he does it is positive proof it is right. It is according to the blessing of spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ that he chose us. It is a blessing, and not a recompense due us. "For the children (Esau and Jacob) being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." It was said unto her (Rebecca), "The elder shall serve the younger." "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." One would necessarily have to blot out such Scriptures as these in order to establish a conditional salvation for either time or eternity, and when he has eliminated this truth he has no foundation on which to stand, much less to build. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." The foundation of God is sure and unless we build on this foundation our building must surely fall, so why try to remove some of the foundation which God has laid and eliminate a timber or stone that is objectionable to the natural mind, or try to smooth over a rough place, or make this hard and unendurable doctrine a soft, pliant thing that any man can bend about his finger to suit his own taste? Having faith in God no doctrine is too hard, and we glory in it because it abases man and exalts God. Makes us dependent creatures upon an independent God. By reason of the fact that God chose us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and predestinated us unto the adoption of children of Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will, we were appointed to be children of God before time, and the appointing or choosing is done, the election is past. By an unchangeable purpose, irrevocable, impossible of change, sure and certain, all that were thus chosen are surely safe in him. Nothing that I can do can make me any other than the son of my father. Yet not for one moment does one of God's children wish to take advantage of this truth, or use it as a cloak for sin to excuse his wrong doing. Being children there is a law and reverence and a desire to do that which is pleasing in his sight. Having seen his holiness we long to be holy as he is holy; we long to live right,

being dead to sin, or separated from sin, by the blood of Jesus Christ which cleanseth us from all sin. We hate sin and hunger and thirst after righteousness. He saw all from the beginning, even the behavior of all men, nothing is hung on a contingency and nothing comes as a surprise, for each event is so fitted as to be in perfect harmony with its predecessor and successor, all things going along in the stupendous plan that God alone saw and determined, and he executes his decree according to the good pleasure of his unchangeable will. The doctrine of perdestination of all things is so clear that it seems all could see it, but God did not determine that all should see. This doctrine does not in any way charge God with being the author of sin, for how can he who is above any law commit sin? For sin is the transgression of the law. Further, the fact that man is not able to resist sin is not a misdemeanor chargeable to the Creator, for even in this his purpose is so far beyond our finitemess we are lost in the infiniteness of his plan. He had as rich a purpose in the transgression of our foreparents as he had and has in everything else. In speaking of Pharaoh the wicked king, it is written, "And in every deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." To which Paul also refers in Romans. If God sees fit to manifest his power in this way, what right has man to interfere? All the acts of God are alike good. Also we read of the suffering of Christ in which Peter says, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." In type Joseph was also taken in the same way and sold into Egypt where he was evil treated, but afterwards he could look at his brethren who had sold him and say, Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good, to save much people alive. It is because we cannot see far enough into God's plan, and lack of faith, that we cannot see and believe in the predestination of all things. God had some wise purpose in sin coming into the world, and remember this, had he not seen the awful consequences of sin, that it would condemn the whole world by the act of one man, he would not have prepared the antidote for Adam's transgression. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made right righteous." This is not contingent upon the act of any mortal, Christ alone could and did atone for all sin. "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." The atonement has been made by one offering by Christ hilself without blemish or spot unto God, which is the only acceptable sacrificial offering for sin. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." The perfect gift is Christ, the good gifts refers to the temporal blessings we enjoy in nature. God's plans are as unalterable as they are unchangeable; he having designed from all eternity the course of events as they come along. Knowing exactly what Adam would do, to prepare for this he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. As we were in Adam, so also then were all that ever should be born of the Spirit in Christ. We may take two apples, and before they were ever opened there are just so many seeds in each one. Manifesting them does not add nor dimish the number. The number is fixed. As in Adam there is a fixed number of people to be born on the earth, so there is also a fixed and certain number in Christ. There is not one thing by chance. No event too large to have been managed, designed and planned by him, nothing too finite to escape his decree. It is a truth that he will be glorified in all he does and in all that is done. "Surely

the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." There are no teachings in the Bible to warrant the assertion that salvation for either time or eternity is contingent, or conditional, or that God is not sovereign, all-powerful, all-knowing, all-seeing. It is an admissible fact that if we do certain things the result will be so and so. If we fall into the water we shall get wet. If we put our hand into the fie we shall be burned. "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." No one denies the "if" in this, but this does not alter the predetermined act, step or thought of any man, being or thing; neither do we have the ability to alter our course, and the fact that one does or does not do a thing is proof positive that they were to have done or refrained from doing, the thing. If by the grace of God we refrain from an evil act, it is done by his grace, and we are not rewarded for doing, but in the doing we have our reward; and, further, this does not frustrate the eternal plan of God. It is the only sure foundation upon which one can rest. Inasmuch as God saw and foreknew all things and determined this course, he saw who would and who would not live a godly life and walk carefully. There is no disposition on the part of a child of God to enjoy the pleasures of sin, for being made dead to sin he has no desire to live any longer therein, but longs to depart and be with Christ, which is far beter. Even while in this ungodly world he longs to keep unspotted by its evils, even though he be ostracized and have to live alone. There is no pleasure in the transient things of this existence, for there is a continual longing of the heart, soul and mind to be at rest. The only support we have here is the hope that is in mercy given us in Christ Jesus, that we are children, and if children, heirs, joint-heirs with Christ. The plan of God is so sure and certain that all hell, with its legions of tormenting devils, can never pluck us out of his hand, but all for whom he died, which were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, are eternally safe. This, then, is our rest, our only rest in this life. May the Lord enlighten his people that they be not entangled with unsound doctrine.

F. S. FISHER

MEETINGS

ORDINATION

Pursuant to a request by Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, a Presbytery was called to examine Brother W. R. Mumford and if in their judgement he is qualified, to ordain to the office of deacon.

Members of the presbytery were Elders Jesse Foreman, O. V. Allen, J. T. Prescott, Harmon Bowen and Reeves Smith. Elder Jesse Foreman was chosen Moderator and Elder Reeves Smith was chosen clerk. Deacons present were Joe Morton, Ervin Futrell, Clayton Bowen and Virgil Gaskill.

Deacon Virgil Gaskill presented the candidate to the presbytery. Elder Prescott was consen to question the candidate. He asked the candidate if he understood the necessity of the close relationship of deacon and pastor and also that he should understand the mind and feelings of the church in all church matters. The candidate answered satisfactorily. Elder Allen gave the charge to the candidate using 1st Timothy, 3rd Chapter. With the laying on of hands by all ministers present, Elder Prescott gave the ordination prayer.

The moderator asked the church if it was satisfied with the work of the

presberty and the church answered yes. The candidate was then presented back to the church a duly ordained deacon. He was then given the right hand of fellowship. Minutes were read and approved.

Elder Jesse Foreman, Moderator
Elder Reeves Smith, Clerk, Pro-Tem

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR AUGUST 1984

J. L. Proctor, NC.	$ 7.00
Milton D. Houston, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Nellie Collie, NC.	2.00
Mrs. J. T. Flippen, NC.	2.00
Elder G. W. Jones, LA.	2.00
B. T. Jeter, VA.	2.00
Mrs. A. H. Davidson, LA.	7.00
Mrs. Shirley DeBow, NC.	2.00
C. W. Wood, VA.	2.00
Raymond L. Brammer, VA.	2.00
Ira G. Strader, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Marjorie Cook, TN.	10.00
Hassell A. Hale, VA.	7.00
Mrs. W. W. Stutts, TX.	2.00
Mrs. Robert E. Smith, NC.	2.00

OBITUARIES

ELDER B. J. McLAUGHLIN

Elder B.J. McLaughlin ceased his life on earth March 9, 1984, at his home following a lengthy illness.

Many close friends and loved ones met together on March 12th in the Eubanks Funeral Chapel in Mabank, Texas to pay their last respects to Elder McLaughlin. Members from six different states plus nine ministers were present.

He was born November 28, 1921 to the union of Austin C. and Willie Kate McLaughlin. He graduated from Athens High School and was a road construction contractor while living in Dallas and later at Clear Creek Resort near Eustace. He was an Army Air Force veteran of World War II.

He is survived by his wife, Cloma McLaughlin, of Eustace; two daughters: Anita Scott of Garland, Texas and Sheryl Jackson of Carrollton, Texas; two brothers: Earl H. McLaughlin of Eustace and Jack C. McLaughlin of Bryan; one sister: Annyce Morrison of Houston; three grandchildren and several nieces and nephews.

Brother McLaughlin was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry at Hopewell Church, Saturday morning, September 9, 1978 and had the sweet privilege of baptizing his daughter, Sheryl, that afternoon. He was also privileged to baptize his devoted wife, Cloma, October 1, 1978.

Brother McLaughlin was a great lover of the truth. He was given grace and knowledge to preach with power, "Jesus Christ and him crucified." He was always willing and ready to go where he was needed and asked for. After his surgery, the doctors gave him no hopes of living but only a few months. After being given this sad news, he told his wife that the greatest peace of mind and soul came over him that he had ever experienced in his entire life. This peace remained with him until the very end. John 14:27 was a great comfort to him. "Peace I leave with you, peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Brother Mac was not afraid to die, his only regret concerning his death was leaving his precious wife, children, and loved ones. "Lord now lettest thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word," Luke 2:

29. His greatest desire during his remaining days was to be able to spend as much time as possible among the people he so dearly loved. We believe with all our heart, his soul and spirit is now in heaven rejoicing in the sunshine of God's love and mercy toward him. "He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me: for there were many with me," Psalm 55:18. We have all felt a great loss, but we sincerely believe our loss is his eternal gain.

His funeral was conducted by the writer assisted by Elder C.M. Haygood and Elder Paul Daniel. Interment was in Moorehead Melton Cemetery near Eustace.

Written by one who loved him,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

SISTER SABRA CONNER SHORT

Once more it has fallen my lot to write a memorial for one of our dear sisters in Christ at Roanoke Church.

Sister Sabra Jean Conner Short was born August 28, 1909 and fell asleep in Jesus at Lewis Gale Hospital June 10, 1984. She was united in marriage to Mr. Andrew Short on May 2, 1927, who survives her.

She is also survived by her mother, sister Marcella Conner, Salem, Va; One son, Robert Henderson Short, Montvale, Va; Three grandchildren and one great-grandchild. One sister, Mrs. Ada Lynn Bohon, Salem, VA; three Brothers, Mr. Estral Conner and Brother Hansel Conner, Salem, VA; Mr. Bacil Conner, Chino Valley, Ariz.

Sister Sabra joined the Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church November 1, 1953 and was baptized by Elder Cecil E. Turner on November 29, 1953.

She died as she lived, a faithful and lovely sister in Christ, always walking softly and in humbleness, always desiring to meet with the brethren and sisters, many times when it seemed physically impossible for her to go.

All was done for her that human hands could do, but the Lord has done more. She was removed from her pain and suffering in this world to rest in the bosom of her blessed Lord Jesus.

My own personal loss is great, but cannot grieve, feeling only gratitude for the priviledge of knowing such a lovely sister, of having her fellowship and love these many years.

Her funeral was conducted June 13, 1984 at Lotz-Salem Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder Cecil E. Turner and Mr. Short's pastor, D. M. McGrady, after which she was laid to rest in Evergreen Cemetery. There to sleep until the coming again of her blessed Lord Jesus whom she adored.

Then all will be well.

Written and humbly submitted by,
Mrs. H. C. (Rlee) Houchins

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POETRY

ROCK OF AGES

Rock of Ages, shelter me,
Let me hide myself in thee!
Let the water and the blood,
From thy wounded side which flow'd,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.

(Not the labors of my hands,
Can fulfill thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears for ever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and thou alone.)

(Nothing in my hand I bring!
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace'
Black, I to the fountain fly;
Wassh me, Savior, or I die!)

While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eye-strings break in death,
When I soar to worlds unknown.
See thee on thy judgment throne.
Rock of Ages, shelter me,
Let me hid myself in thee!

Augustus M. Toplady

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EDITORIAL

"Be still and know that I am God, I will be exhalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. The Lord of hosts is with us: the God of Jacob is our refuge."

There are many experiences in the lives of God's Children, in all ages of time, which are common to all and which create a bond of fellowship among them that is stronger and more enduring than any of their ties in nature. These experiences make them aware that there is a difference between them and their neighbors or even very near and dear friends or loved ones with whom they have so much in common in the things of the world. It is sad when they begin to realize that these experiences are separating them from their friends, family and loved ones and they cannot even explain how, what or why it is happening to them. Any attempt to explain only accelerates the growing apart and stresses the differences more. It is sad, in a way, but not to the extent that you would desire to return but you would love for them to understand. The command in the above scripture is the way in which these experiences begin. It is known and lived by all who have been called out of natures darkness into the marvelous light of revelation and made to realize, for the first time, that the Lord of hosts is with them. They would not turn back to the dark and beggarly elements of nature if it was their choice, but alas, they find that return they must. They find that after the lesson of the moment is learned and the season of rejoicing in this new found love passes, they find the captivity of their carnal nature taking them back into its fold and they are again subject to its demands. They are back in nature but it is not the same as they will always have this hope and live in the flesh in anticipation of new manifestations of the spirit of God in their lives.

The Apostle Paul experienced this command in his journey on the road to Damascus when the light shined around him brighter than the noon day sun, he was struck blind and fell to the ground. Certainly he was made to be still and know the only true and living God. In natural terms we would say that only such an experience as this and the power that accompanied it would cause Saul of Tarsus to halt in his zeal and determination to rid the world of all who called upon God in the name of Jesus Christ and listen to the voice that spoke to him. It certainly got his attention and made him be still and hear the Lord speaking to him. With all of the evidence that he had at the monent he could not deny that this was a power that he had never known before and he could but say, "Who art thou Lord," and "What wilt

thou have me to do?" The man who asked these questions was a completley different person from the Saul of Tarsus who began this journey and so it is with all who are brought to this point in their life and made to be still and know. There is no scripture, that Paul ever returned again to his former way of life after the truth was revealed to him and neither do any of the others return to their former ways in which the gods of this world has their allegiance, willingly as in former days. They are powerless to retain the spirit but the fact that they know the truth of its existance and have experienced its indwelling they will live in hope of its return and the time when they will be released from nature and live in the spirit in its fullness around their Fathers throne.

It would take an extreme exaggeration of the facts and distortion of the truth for anyone to read these scriptures of Paul's conversion and proclaim that the coming to a knowledge of the truth is of the creature or is in any way a result of any favorable characteristics that are found in the creature. There was nothing in the life or actions of Saul of Tarsus that would cause God to have mercy on him and yet he did and Paul declared in his epistle to Timothy that he obtained mercy that in him first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering for a pattern to them which should thereafter believe on him to life everlasting. The scriptures on the conversion of the Apostle Paul and his writings of being turned from darkness to light have strengthened and caused more rejoicing in the hearts of wayworn pilgrims in their travels in this vale of tears than the writing of any other. This is because that all can relate to his experiences by the similiarities that each fellowships from their own travels.

Moses was commanded to stand still and to take his shoes off his feet as God made himself known to the prophet and told him the things that would be required of him and the things he must suffer. Each time that one is made to be still they are taught something that they had not known or understood before and are made aware that the eternal God is their God and is leading them in ways that are pleasing to him and that are for their eternal good and his eternal glory. Just as Moses responded by saying that he could not go, could not speak, each will feel their inability in doing that which is required of them but I have never read where Moses or anyone else was released from the command because they did not feel worthy or capable of doing those things that they were commanded to do. The command is always, do, not will you do.

I know of several who believe the truth and have manifested it in their conversations and actions over a period of many years and yet they do not come forward and confess their hope because they do not feel worthy to ask for a home with the saints of God. They use this as a reason for not asking for a home in the church and yet this is the only reason that the church will accept as a cause to receive them into fellowship with brethren, the fact that they realize their unworthiness by having been made to know the only one who is worthy. My prayer for such is that God will make them to stand still and judge with righteous judgement their own situation and respond according to the longing in their heart and the hope that they cannot deny that dwells in their innermost being. May he make them to realize that they have been added to the church, but just have not come inside and may he grant them grace to do so. It is a step that I have never heard of being regretted by anyone who has taken it. They will always feel their unworthiness in and of themselves but not regretful of having confessed the hope that is in them unto their brethren. It brings a

peace of mind and comfort to the soul that is sacred and precious to them and will be as long as they live. I do not say they will never have any doubts and fears, but regret, NEVER. This is the beautiful step of that perfect work that is being manifested in their lives and it will be completed on schedule. It is difficult at times to be still and wait upon the Lord, but how the church does rejoice to behold the work unfold and the beauty and majesty of His power made known.

It was hard for the children of Israel to stand still at the Red Sea as the Egyptians approached from the rear, the sea ahead and the mountains on either side, yet, the command was, "Fear ye not, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." So it is many times in the lives of the children of God as they journey thru life. They are brought to places where it seems that there is no possible solution, no way that they can be delivered and indeed according to nature there is not. That is why it is so sweet to be blessed, to stand still and behold your God as he works out your deliverance and places you again on solid ground as another trial of your faith is proven more precious than gold, tried by fire and renders praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. You feel at that moment in time that surely you will never question again the fact that you are a chosen vessel unto him but nature being what it is and the weakness of the flesh finds you again and again in need of this wonderful demonstration of his mercy and loving care for you. But right now you can say with David, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." At this point in your experience, your faith is strong and you are confident that you will be kept by this mighty power. You can say with Paul, "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

Surely Paul must have been at such a point in his experience as he wrote the fifth chapter of his letter to the Church of Rome. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience; and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us." When one has been made to stand still for a brief moment in time, know God and be made aware of and see their salvation, the beauty, the surety, peace, glory, love and the tender mercy that is their heritage, then the confidence that all the powers of this world, the forces of satan and his kingdom cannot take it from them, is their refuge as stated in the about scripture. Yes, they will even glory in tribulations because in being blessed to see their salvation, they can see that even these work for good in manifesting patience, experience, hope and even God's love shed abroad in their hearts.

All of the blessings of God in the lives of his elect are experienced at times when their minds and attentions are turned away from the stress and turmoil of this life and they are made to stand still, cease their eforts and know that God is in control. He is in control all of the time, but man will only realize and acknowledge it when they are made to do so. Of themselves they would always wait for a more convenient time or make it conform to their schedule and whims, and by so doing would miss the most precious mements and experiences that they will ever know in this life.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

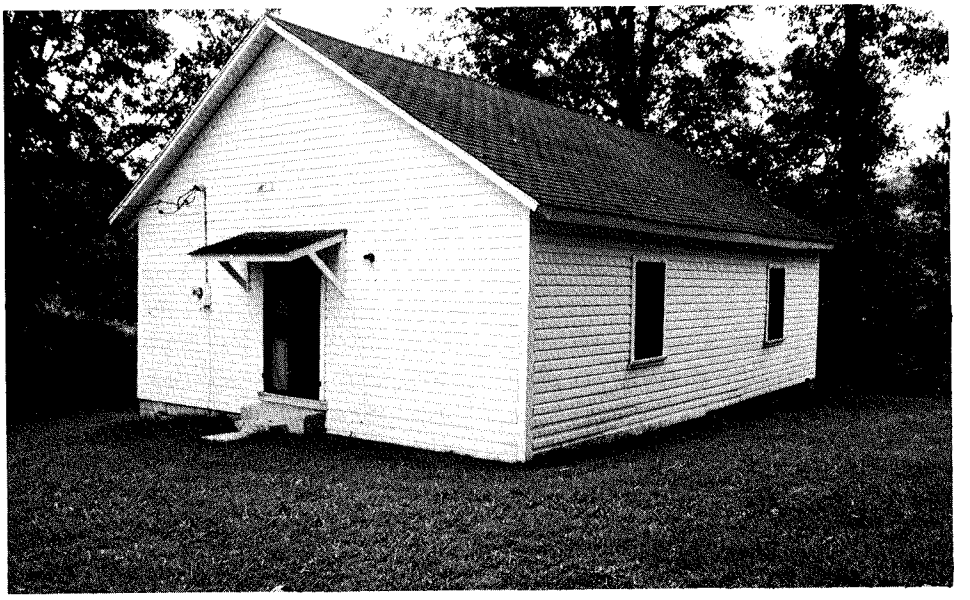

LIBERTY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

In the year 1892, Liberty Primitive Baptist Church was organized, and remodeled many years later. The house is located about one mile west of Manchester, Ky., on Hooker Road.

Meeting time is 10 o'clock a.m. on 4th unday of each month. The present pastor is Elder Arnold O. Thompson, from Tipp City, Ohio.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

OBSERVATIONS ON THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES

BY

AUGUSTUS M. TOPLADY

1740-1778

Toplady flashed upon and past the world like a meteor. A brilliant streak of light, and he was gone. But he will ever live in the affections of all who love pure religion, and scorn every touchstone save the Holy Scriptures. To have produced the greatest hymn in the English language—"ROCK OF AGES" has, by general consent, been assigned the place of honour—would alone have earned him the gratitude of the churches. So remarkable, indeed, has been its vogue that the public are apt to overlook the fact that he was the author of many other hymns, some of which—for example, *"Deathless Principle,"* and *"What Though My Frail Eyelids Refuse"*—surpass in euphony and ethereal beauty, though not in depth and intensity of feeling, his acknowledged masterpiece. In these hymns, written in rapturous moments that come only to the privileged few, and to them but rarely, the ardent soul dissevers itself from earth, mounts on eager and confident pinions, and flutters ecstasied before its God. But it is

not as a hymn-writer only that Toplady excels. The best of his essays are studded with vitalizing thoughts expressed in noble and virile English. His sermons, which contain many magnificent passages, are storehouses of sound and lucid divinity."

Necessary to be premised, in order to our better understanding the Doctrine of Predestination.

Although the great and ever Blessed God is a Being absolutely simply, and infinitely remote from all shadow of composition; he is, nevertheless, in condescension to our weak and contracted faculties, represented in Scripture as possessed of divers properties, or attributes, which, though seemingly different from his essence, are in reality, essential to him, and constitutive of his very nature.

Of these attributes, those on which we shall now particularly descant (as being more immediately concerned in the ensuing subject), are the following ones; 1. His eternal wisdom and foreknowledge. 2. The absolute freedom and liberty of his will. 3. The perpetuity and unchangeableness both of himself and his decrees. 4. His omnipotence. 5. His justice. 6. His mercy.

Without an explication of these, the doctrine of predestination cannot be so well understood: we shall, therefore, briefly consider them, by way of preliminary to the main subject.

1. With respect to the divine wisdom and foreknowledge, I shall lay down the following positions:

Pos. 1. God is, and always was, so perfectly wise that nothing ever did, or does, or can, elude his knowledge. He knew, from all eternity, not only what he himself intended to do, but also what he would incline and permit others to do, "Known unto God are all his work, from eternity."

Pos. 2. Consequently, God knows nothing now, nor will know any thing hereafter, which he did not know and foresee from everlasting: his forknowledge being co-eternal with himself, and extending to every thing that is or shall be done. All things, which comprise past, present, and future, are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

Pos. 3. This foreknowledge of God is not conjectural and uncertain, (for then it would not be foreknowledge) but most sure and infallible; so that whatever he foreknows to be future shall necessarily and undoubtedly come to pass. For his knowledge can be no more frustrated, or his wisdom be deceived, than he can cease to be God. Nay, could either of these be the case, he actually would cease to be God; all mistakes and disappointment being absolutely incompatible with the divine nature.

Pos. 4. The influence which the divine foreknowledge has on the certain futurition of the things foreknown does not render the intervention of second causes needless, nor destroy the nature of the things themselves.

My meaning is that the prescience of God does not lay any coercive necessity on the wills of beings naturally free. For instance, man, even in his fallen state, is endued with a natural freedom of will; yet he acts, from the first to the last moment of his life, in absolute subserviency (though perhaps, he does not know it nor design it) to the purposes and decrees of God concerning him; notwithstanding which he is sensible of no compulsion, but acts as freely and voluntarily as if he was, subject to no control, and absolutely lord of himself. This made Luther, after he had shewn how all things necessary and inevitably come to pass, in consequence of the sovereign will and infallible foreknowledge of God, say that "We shall carefully distinguish between a necessity of infallibility and a

necessity of co-action; since both good and evil men, though by their actions they fulfil the decree and appointment of God, yet are not forcibly constrained to do any thing but act willingly."

Pos. 5. God's foreknowledge, taken abstractedly, is not the sole cause of beings and events; but his will and foreknowledge together. Hence we find, Acts ii. 23, that his determinate counsel and foreknowledge act in concert; the latter resulting from, and being founded on, the former.

We pass on.

II. To consider the will of God; with regard to which we assert as follows:

Pos. 1. The Deity is possessed not only of infinite knowledge, but likewise of absolute liberty of will; so that whatever he does, or permits to be done, he does and permits freely, and of his own good pleasure.

Consequently, it is his free pleasure to permit sin; since, without his permission, neither men nor devils can do any thing. Now, to permit is, at least, the same as not to hinder, though it be in our power to hinder if we please; and this permission or non hindrance, is certainly an act of the divine will. Hence, Austin says, "Those things which seemingly thwart the divine will are, nevertheless, agreeable to it; for if God did not permit them, they could not be done, and whatever God permits, he permits freely and willingly. He does nothing, neither suffers any thing to be done, against his own will." And Luther observes that "God permitted Adam to fall into sin, because he willed that he should so fall."

Pos. 2. Although the will of God, considered in itself, is simply one and the same; yet in condescension to the present capacities of men, the divine will is very properly distinguished into secret and revealed. Thus it was his revealed will that Pharaoh should let the Isrealites go; that Abraham should sacrifice his son; and that Peter should not deny Christ: but as proved by the event, it was his secret will that Pharaoh should not let Israel go, Ex. iv. 21, that Abraham should not sacrifice Isaac, Gen. xxii. 12, and that Peter should deny his Lord, Matt. xxvi. 34.

Pos. 3. The will of God, respecting the salvation and condemnation of men, is never contrary to itself; he immutably wills the salvation of the elect, and *vice versa:* nor can he ever vary or deviate from his own will in any instance whatever, so as that should be done which he willeth not; or that not be brought to pass which he willeth. Isaiah xlvi. 10. My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure—Psalm xxxiii.11. The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations. Job xxiii.13, 14. He is in one mind, who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth; for he performeth the thing that is appointed for me; and many such things are with him. Eph. i. 11. Being predestinated, according to the purpose of him, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

Thus, for instance, Hophni and Phineas hearkened not to the voice of their father, who reproved them for their wickedness, because the Lord would slay them, 1 Sam. ii. 25. And Sihon, king of Heshbon, would not receive the peaceable message sent him by Moses, because the Lord God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into the hand of Israel, Deut. ii 26, 30. Thus also, to add no more, we find that there have been, and ever will be some, whose eyes God blindeth, and whose hearts he hardeneth, i.e. whom God permits to continue blind and hardened, on purpose to prevent their seeing with their eyes, and understanding with their hearts, and to hinder their conversion to God, and spiritual healing by him, Isa. vi. 9. John xii. 39-40.

Pos. 4. Because God's will of precept

may, in some instances, appear to thwart his will of determination, it does not follow either, 1. That he mocks his creatures, or 2. That they are excusable for neglecting to observe his will of command.

1. He does not hereby mock his creatures; for if men do not believe his word, nor observe his precepts, the fault is not in him, but in themselves; their unbelief and disobedience are not owing to any ill infused into them by God, but to the vitiosity of their depraved nature, and the perverseness of their own wills. Now, if God invited all men to come to him, and then shut the door of mercy against any who were desirous of entering; his invitation would be a mockery, and unworthy of himself; but we insist on it, that he does not invite all men to come to him in a saving way; and that every individual person, who is, through his gracious influence on his heart, made willing to come to him shall, sooner or later, be surely saved by him, and that with an everlasting salvation. 2. Man is not excusable for neglecting God's will of command. Pharaoh was faulty, and therefore justly punishable, for not obeying God's revealed will, though God's secret will rendered that obedience impossible. Abraham would have committed sin, had he refused to sacrifice Isaac; and, in looking to God's secret will, would have acted counter to his revealed one. So Herod, Pontius Pilot, and the reprobate Jews, were justly condemned for putting Christ to death, inasmuch as it was a most notorious breach of God's revealed will. "Thou shalt do no murder;" yet, in slaying the Messiah, they did no more than God's hand and his counsel, i. e. his secret ordaining will, determined before should be done, Acts iv. 27, 28; and Judas is justly punished for perfidiously and wickedly betraying Christ, though his perfidy and wickedness were (but not with his design) subservient to the accomplishment of the decree and word of God.

The brief of the matter is this; secret things belong to God, and those that are revealed belong to us; therefore, when we meet with a plain precept, we should simply endeavour to obey it, without tarrying to inquire into God's hidden purpose. Venerable Bucer, after taking notice how God hardened Pharaoh's heart, and making some observations on the apostle's simile of a potter and his clay, adds that, "though God has at least the same right over his creatures, and is at liberty to make them what he will, and direct them to the end that pleaseth himself, according to his sovereign and secret determination, yet it by no means follows that they do not act freely and spontaneously, or that the evil they commit is to be charged on God."

Pos. 5. God's hidden will is peremptory and absolute; and, therefore, cannot be hindered from taking effect.

God's will is nothing else than God himself willing: consequently it is omnipotent and unfrustratable. Hence we find it termed by Austin and the schoolmen, *voluntas omnipotentissima* because, whatever God wills cannot fail of being effected. This made Austin say, "Evil men do many things contrary to God's revealed will; but so great is his wisdom, and so inviolable his truth, that he directs all things into those channels which he foreknew." And again "No free-will of the creature can resist the will of God; for man cannot so will, or nill, as to obstruct the divine determination, or overcome the divine power." Once more "It cannot be questioned, but God does all things, and ever did, according to his own purpose: the human will cannot resist him, so as to make him do more or less than it is his pleasure to do; *quandoquidem etiam de ipsis hominum voluntatibus quod vult facit* since he does what he pleases even with the wills of men."

Pos. 6. Whatever comes to pass comes

to pass by virtue of this absolute, omnipotent will of God, which is the primary and supreme cause of all things. Rev. ix. 11. Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created. Psalm cxv. 3. Our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he pleased. Dan. iv. 35. He doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou? Psalm cxxxv. 6. Whatsoever the Lord pleased that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places. Mat. x. 29. Are not two sparrows sold for a farhing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father. To all which, Austin subscribes, when he says, "Nothing is done but what the Almighty wills should be done, either efficiently or permissively." As does Luther, whose words are these, "This, therefore, must stand; to wit, the unsearchable will of God, without which nothing exists or acts." And again, "God would not be much, if he was not almighty, and if any thing could be done without him." And elsewhere, he quotes these words of Erasmus: "Supposing there was an earthly prince who could do whatever he would and none were able to resist him, we might safely say of such a one, that he would certainly fulfill his own desire, in like manner, the will of God, which is the first cause of all things, should seem to lay a kind of necessity upon our wills." This Luther approves of, and subjoins, "Thanks be to God, for this orthodox passage in Erasmus's discourse! but, if this be true, what becomes of his doctrine of free-will, which he at other times so strenuously contends for?"

Pos. 7. The will of God is so the cause of all things as to be itself without cause; for nothing can be the cause of that which is the cause of every thing.

So that the divine will is the *ne plus ultra* of all our inquiries; when we ascend to that, we can go no farther. Hence we find every matter resolved untimately into the mere sovereign pleasure of God, as the spring and occasion of whatsoever is done in heaven and earth. Matt. xi. 25. Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. Luke xii. 32. It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Matt. viii. 3. I will: be thou clean. Mark iii. 13. He went up into a mountain, and called unto him whom he would. Jam. i. 18. Of his own will begat he us, with the word of truth. John i. 13. Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Rom. ix. 15, 18. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. Therefore, he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. And no wonder that the will of God should be the main spring that sets all inferior wheels in motion, and should likewise be the rule by which he goes in all his dealings with his creatures; since nothing out of God, i. e. exterior to himself can possibly induce him to will or nill one thing rather than another. Deny this, and you, at one stroke, destroy his immutability and independency; since he can never be independent who acts *pro re nata,* as emergency requires, and whose will is suspended on that of others; nor unchangeable, whose purposes vary and take all shapes, according as the persons or things vary who are the objects of those purposes. The only reason, then, that can be assigned why the Deity does this, or omits that, is because it is his own free pleasure. Luther, in answer to that question, "Whence it was that Adam was permitted to fall, and corrupt his whole posterity; when God could have prevented his falling, &c., says, "God is a being whose will acknowledges no

cause: neither is it for us to prescribe rules to his sovereign pleasure, or call him to account for what he does. He has neither superior nor equal; and his will is the rule of all things. He did not, therefore, will such and such things because they were in themselves right, and he was bound to will them; but they are therefore equitable and right because he wills them. The will of man, indeed, may be influenced and moved; but God's will never can. To assert the contrary is to undefy him." Bucer likewise observes, "God has no other motive for what he does than *ipsa voluntas* his own mere will; which will is so far from being unrighteous, that it is justice itself."

Pos. 8. Since, as was lately observed, the determining will of God, being omnipotent, cannot be obstructed or made void; it follows that he never did, nor does he now, will that every individual of mankind should be saved.

If this was his will, not one single soul could ever be lost; (for who hath resisted his will?) and he would surely afford all men those effectual means of salvation without which it cannot be had. Now, God could afford these means as easily to all mankind, as to some only; but experience proves that he does not; and the reason is equally plain, namely, that he will not; for whatsoever the Lord pleaseth, that does he in heaven and on earth. It is said, indeed, by the apostle, that God would have all men saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth; i. e. as Austin, consistently with other Scriptures, explains the passage, "God will save some out of the whole race of mankind," that is, persons of all nations, kindreds and tongues. Nay, he will save all men, i. e. as the same father observes, "every kind of men, or men of every kind," namely, the whole election of grace, be they bond or free, noble or ignoble, rich or poor, male or female. Add to this, that it evidently militates against the majesty, omnipotence, and supremacy of God, to suppose that he can either will any thing in vain, or that any thing can take effect against his will; therefore, Bucer observes very rightly, ad Rom. ix. "God doth not will the salvation of reprobates, seeing he hath not chosen them neither created them to that end." Consonant to which are those words of Luther, "This mightily offends our rational nature, that God should, of his own mere unbiasedwill, leave some men to themselves, harden them, and then condemn them; but he has given abundant demonstration, and does continually, that this is really the case; namely, that the sole cause why some are saved, and others perish, proceeds from his willing the salvation of the former, and the perdition of the latter, according to that of Paul, He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."

Pos. 9. As God doth not will that each individual of mankind should be saved, so neither did he will that Christ should properly and immediately die for each individual of mankind; whence it follows that, though the blood of Christ, from its own intrinsic dignity, was sufficient for the redemption of all men; yet, in consequence of his Father's appointment, he shed it intentionally, and, therefore, effectually and immediately, for the elect only.

This is self evident. God, as we have before proved, wills not the salvation of every man; but he gave his Son to die for them whose salvation he willed; therefore, his Son did not die for every man. All those for whom Christ died are saved; and the divine justice indispensably requires that to them the benefits of his death should be imparted; but only the elect are saved; they only partake of those benefits; consequently for them only he died and intercedes. The apostle, Rom. viii. asks, Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies, i. e. his elect, exclusively

of others; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died for them, exclusively of others. The plain meaning of the passage is that those whom God justifies, and for whom Christ died (justification and redemption being of exactly the same extent), cannot be condemned. These privileges are expressly restrained to the elect; therefore, God justifies and Christ died for them alone.

In the same chapter Paul asks; "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all,(i. e. for all us elect persons) how shall he not, with him, also freely give us all things? i. e. salvation, and all things necessary to it. Now, it is certain that these are not given to every individual; and yet, if Paul says true, they are given to all those for whom Christ was delivered to death; consequently, he was not delivered to death for every individual. To the same purpose St. Austin argues, in Johan. 45. col. 335. Hence that sayin of Ambrose, *si non credis non tibi passus est, ie* "if you are an unbeliever, Christ did not die for you." Meaning, that whoever is left under the power of final unbelief, is thereby evidenced to be one of those for whom Christ did not die; but that all for whom he suffered shall be, in this life, sooner or later, endued with faith. The Church of Smyrna, in their letter to the dioceses of Pontus, insist every where on the doctrine of special redemption. Bucer, in all parts of his works, observes, that "Christ died restrictively for the elect only; but for them universally."

Pos. 10. From what has been laid down it follows that Austin, Luther, Bucer, the scholastic divines, and other learned writers, are not to be blamed for asserting that "God may, in some sense, be said to will the being and commission of sin." For was this contrary to his determining will of permission, either he would not be omnipotent, and sin has place in the world; which it could not have, if God willed otherwise; for who hath resisted his will? Rom. ix. No one can deny that God permits sin; but he neither permits it ignorantly, nor unwillingly; therefore, knowingly and willingly. Vid. Aust. Enchir. c. 96. Luther steadfastly maintains this in his bood *De Serv Arbitr* and Bucer in Rom. i. However, it should be carefully noticed, 1. That God's permission of sin does not arise from his taking delight in it; on the contrary, sin, as sin, is the abominable thing that his soul hateth; and his efficacious permission of it is for wise and good purposes. Whence that observation of Austin, "God, who is no less omnipotent than he is supremely and perfectly holy, would never have permitted evil to enter among his works, but in order that he might do good even with that evil," i. e. over-rule it for good in the end. 2. That God's free and voluntary permission of sin lays no man under any forcible or compulsive necessity of committing it; consequently, the Deity can by no means be termed the author of moral evil; to which he is not, in the proper sense of the word, accessary, but only remotely or negatively so, inasmuch as he could, if he pleased, absolutely prevent it.

We should, therefore, be careful not to give up the omnipotence of God, under a pretence of exalting his holiness; his is infinite in both, and therefore, neither should be set aside nor obscured. To say that God absolutely nills the being and commission of sin, while experience convinces us that sin is acted every day, is to represent the Deity as a weak, imnpotent being, who would fain have things go otherwise that they do, but cannot accomplish his desire. On the other hand, to say that he willeth sin doth not in the least detract from the holiness and rectitude of his nature; because, whatever God wills, as well as whatever he does, cannot be eventually evil: materially evil it may be; but, as was just said, it must ultimately be di-

rected to some wise and just end, otherwise he could not will it; for his will is righteous and good, and the sole rule of right and wrong, as is often observed by Austin, Luther, and others.

Pos. 11. In consequence of God's immutable will and infallible foreknowledge, whatever things come to pass come to pass necessarily; though, with respect to second causes, and us men, many things are contignet; i. e. unexpected, and seemingly accidental.

That this was the doctrine of Luther, none can deny, who are in any measure acquainted with his works: particularly with his treatise, *De Serva Arbitrio,* or free-will a slave; the main drift of which book is to prove that the will of man is by nature enslaved to evil only, and, because it is fond of that slavery, is therefore said to be free. Among other matters, he proves there that "whatever man does he does necessarily, though not with any sensible compulsion; and that we can only do what God from eternity willed and foreknew we should; which will of God must be effectual, and his foresight must be certain." Hence we find him saying, "It is most necessary and salutary for a Christian to be assured that God foreknows nothing uncertainly; but that he determines, and forsees, and acts, in all things, according to his own eternal, immutable, and infallible will; adding, Hereby, as with a thunderbolt, is man's freewill thrown down and destroyed." A little after, he shews in what sense he took the word necessity; "by it," says he, "I do not mean that the will suffers any focible constraint, or coaction; but the infallible accomplishment of those things which the immutable God decreed and foreknew concerning us." He goes on: "Neither the divine nor human will does any thing by constraint; but, whatever man does, be it good or bad, he does with as much appetite and willingness as if his will was really free. But, after all, the will of God is certain and unalterable, and is the governess of ours." Exactly consonant to all which are those words of Luther's friend and fellow-labourer, Melancthon: "All things turn out according to divine predestination; not only the works we do outwardly, but even the thoughts we think inwardly:" adding in the same place, "There is no such a thing as chance, or fortune; nor is there a readier way to gain the fear of God, and to put our whole trust in Him, than to be thoroughly versed in the doctrine of predestination." I could cite, to the same purpose, Austin, Aquinas, and many other learned men; but for brevity's sake, forbear. That this is the doctrine of Scripture very adapt in those sacred books cannot but acknowledge.—See, particularly, Psalm cxxxv. 6. Matt. x. 29. Prov. xvi. 1. Matt. xxve. 54. Luke xxii. 22. Acts iv. 28. Eph. i 11. Isa. xlvi. 10.

Pos. 12. As God knows nothing now which he did not know from all eternity; so he wills nothing now which he did not will from everlasting.

This position needs no explanation nor enforcement; it being self-evident that, if any thing can accede to God, *de novo i. e.* if he can at any time be wiser than he always was, or will that at one time which he did not will from all eternity, these dreadful consequences must ensue: 1. That the knowledge of God is not perfect, since what is absolutely perfect, *non recipit magis et minus,* cannot admit either of addition or detraction. If I add to any thing, it is from a supposal that that thing was not complete before; if I detract from it, it is supposed that that detraction renders it less perfect than it was. But the knowledge of God, being infinitely perfect, cannot, consistently with that perfection, be either increased or lessened. 2. That the will of God is fluctuating, mutable, and unsteady; consequently that God himself is so, his will coinciding

with his essence, contrary to the avowed assurances of Scripture and the strongest dictates of reason, as we shall presently shew, when we come to treat of the divine immutability.

Pos. 13. The absolute will of God is the original spring and efficient cause of his people's salvation.

I say the original and efficient; for, *sensu complexo,* there are other intermediate causes of their salvation, which, however, all result from, and are subservient to, this primary one, the will of God. Such are his everlasting choice of them to eternal life: the eternal covenant of grace entered into by the Trinity on behalf of the elect; the incarnation, obedience, death, and intercession of Christ for them; a;; which are so many links in the great chain of causes; and not one of these can be taken away without marring and subverting the whole gospel plan of salvation by Jesus Christ. We see, then, that the free, unbiassed, sovereign will of God is the root of this tree of life, which bears so many glorious branches, and yields such salutary fruits: he therefore loved the elect, and ordained them to life, because he would; according to that of the apostle, having predestinated us according to the good pleasure of his will; Eph. i. 5. Then, next after God's covenant for his people and promises to them, comes in the infinite merit of Christ's righteousness and atonement; for we were chosen to salvation in him as members of his mystic body, and through him, as our surety, and substitute, by whose vicarious obedience to the moral law, and submission to its curse and penalty, all we, whose names are in the book of life, should never incur the divine hatred or be punished for our sins, but continue to eternity as we were from eternity, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. But still the divine grace and favour (and God extends these to whom he will) must be considered as what gave birth to the glorious scheme of redemption, according to what our Lord himself teaches us, John iii. 16. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, &c.; and that of the apostle, 1 John iv. 9. In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that he sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him.

Pos. 14. Since this absolute will of God is both immutable and omnipotent, we infer that the slvation of every one of the elect is most infallibly certain, and can by no means be prevented. This necessarily follows from what we have already asserted and proved concerning the divine will, which, as it cannot be disappointed or made void, must undoubtedly secure the salvation of all whom God wills should be saved.

From the whole of what has been delivered under this second head, I would observe that the genuine tendency of these truths is, not to make men indolent and careless, or lull them to sleep on the lap of presumption and carnal security, but, 1. To fortify the people of Christ against the attacks of unbelief and the insults of their spiritual enemies. And what is so fit to guard them against these as the comfortable persuasion of God's unalterable will to save them, and of their unalienable interest in the sure mercies of David? 2. To withdraw them entirely from all dependence, whether on themselves or any creature whatever; to make them renounce their own righteousness no less than their sins, in point of reliance, and to acquiesce sweetly and safely in the certain perpetuity of his rich favour. 3. To excite them, from a trust of his goodwill towards them, to love that God who hath given such great and numberless proofs of his love to men; and in all their thoughts, words, and works, to aim, as much as possible, at his honour and glory. We were to consider.

III. The unchangeableness which is

essential to himself and his decrees.

Pos. 1. God is essentially unchangeable in himself. Were he otherwise, he would be confessedly imperfect; sicne whoever changes must change either for the better or for the worse: whatever alteration any being undergoes, that being must, *ipso facto,* either become more excellent than it was, or lose some of the excellency, which it had. But neither of these can be the case with the Deity: he cannot change for the better, for that would necessarily imply that he was not perfectly good before; he cannot change for the worst, for then he could not be perfectly good after that change. *Ergo,* God is unchangeable. And this is the uniform voice of Scripture. Mal. iii. 6. I am the Lord: I change not. James i. 17. With him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Psalm cii. 27. Thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.

Pos. 2. God is likewise absolutely unchangeable with regard to his purposes and promises. Numb. xxiii. 19. God is not a man that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it; or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? 1 Sam. xv. 29. The strength of Israel will not lie nor repent; for he is not a man that he should repent. Job xxiii. 13. He is in one mind, and who can turn him? Exek. xxiv. 14. I, the Lord, have spoken it; it shall come to pass, and I will do it: I will not go back, neither will I spare, neither will I repent. Rom. xi. 29. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance. 2 Tim. ii. 13. He abideth faithful, and cannot deny himself.

By the purpose of decree of God we mean his determinate counsel, whereby he did from all eternity pre-ordain whatever he should do, or what permit to be done, in time. In particular, it signifies his everlasting appointment of some men to life and of others to death; which appointment flows entirely from his own free and sovereign will. Rom. ix. The children not yet being born, neither having done any good or evil (that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth), it was said, the elder shall serve the younger; as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

The apostle then, in the very next words, anticipates an objection which he foresaw men of corrupt minds would make to this: What shall we say, then? is there unrighteousness with God? which he answerw with, God forbid! and resolves the whole of God's precedure with his creatures into his own sovereign and independent will: for he said to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

We assert that the decrees of God are not only immutable as to himself, it being inconsistent with his nature to alter in his purposes or change his mind, but that they are immuable likewise with respect to the objects of those decrees; so that whatsoever God hath determined concerning every individual person or thing shall surely and infallibly be accomplished in and upon them. Hence we find that he actually sheweth mercy on whom he decreed to shew mercy, and hardeneth whom he resolved to harden: Rom. ix. 18. For his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure: Isa. xlvi. 10. Consequently his eternal predestination of men and things must be immutable as himself, and, so far from being reversible, can never admit of the least variation.

Pos. 3. "Although," to use the words of Gregory, "God never swerves from his decree, yet he often varies in his declarations:" That is always sure and immoveable; these are sometimes seemingly discordant. So when he gave sentence against the Ninevites by Jonah, saying, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown," the meaning of

the words is, not that God absolutely intended, at the end of that space, to destroy the city, but that, should God deal with those people according to their deserts, they would be totally extirpated from the earth; and should be so extirpated unless they repented speedily.

Likewise when he told king Hezekiah, by the prophet Isaiah, "Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live;" the meaning was that, with respect to second causes, and considering the king's bad state of health and emiciated constitution, he could not, humanly speaking, live much longer. But still the event shewed that God had immutably determined that he should live fifteen years more; and, in order to that, had put it into his heart to pray for the blessing decreed; just as in the case of Nineveh lately mentioned, God had resolved not to overthrow that city then; and, in order to the accomplishment of his own purpose in a way worthy of himself, amde the ministry of Jonah the means of leading that people to repentance. All which, as it shews that God's absolute predestination does not set aside the use of means, so does it likewise prove that, however various the declaration of God may appear (to wit, when they proceed on a regard had to natural causes), his counsels and designs stand firm and immoveable, and can neither admit of alteration in themselves, nor hindrance in their execution. See this farther explained by Bucer, in Rom. ix., where you will find the certainty of the divine appointments solidly asserted and unanswerably vindicated. We now come,

IV. To consider the omnipotence of God.

Pos. 1. God is, in the most unlimited and absolute sense of the word, Almighty. Jer. xxxii. 17. Behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee. Mat. xix. 26. With God all things are possible. The schoolmen very properly distinguish the omnipotence of God into absolute and actual: by the former, God might do many things which he does not; by the latter, he actually does whatever he will. For instance, God might, by virtue of his absolute power, have made more worlds than he has. He might have eternally saved every individual of mankind, without reprobating any: on the other hand he might, and that with the strictest justice, have condemned all men, and saved none. He could, had it been his pleasure, have prevented the fall of angels and men, and thereby have hindred sin from having footing in and among his creatures. By virtue of this actul power he made the universe; executes the whole counsel of his will both in heaven and earth; governs and influences both men and things, according to his own pleasure; fixes the bounds which they shall not pass; and, in a word, worketh all in all: Isa. xlv. 7. Amos iii. 6. John v. 17. Acts xvii. 26. 1 Cor. xii. 6.

Pos. 2. Hence it follows that, since all things are subject to the divine control, God not only works efficaciously on his elect, in order that they may will and do that which is pleasing in his sight; but does likewise frequently and powerfully suffer the wicked to fill up the measure of their iniquities by committing fresh sins. Nay, he sometimes, but for wise and gracious ends, permits his own people to transgress; for he has the hearts and wills of all men in his hand, and inclines them to good, or delivers them up to evil, as he sees fit: yet without being the author of sin; as Luther, Bucer, Austin, and others have piously and scripturally taught.

This position consist of two parts: (1.) That God efficaciously operates on the hearts of his elect, and is thereby the sole author of all the good they do. See

Eph. iii. 20. Phil. ii. 13. 1 Thes. ii. 13. Heb. xiii. 21. St. Austin takes up no fewer than nineteen chapters in proving that whatever good is in men, and whatever good they are enabled to do is solely and entirely of God; who, says he, "works in holy persons, all their good desires, their pious thoughts, and their righteous actions; and yet these holy persons, though thus wrought upon by God, will and do all these things freely: for it is he who rectifies their wills which, being originally evil, are made good by him; and whcih wills, after he hath set them right and made them good, he directs to good actions and to eternal life; wherein he does not force their wills but makes them willing." (2.) That God often lets the wicked go on to more ungodliness: which he does, 1. Negatively, by withholding that grace which alone can restrain them from evil. 2. Remotely, by the providential concourse and meditation of second causes; which second causes, meeting and acting in concert with the corruption of the probate's unregenerate nature, produce sinful effects. 3. Judically, or in a way of Judgment. Prov. xxi. 1. The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of waters; he turneth it whither-soever he will; and if the king's heart, why not the hearts of all men? Lam. iii. 38. Out of the mouth of the Most High proceeded not evil and good? Hence we find that the Lord bid Shimei curse David, 2 Sam. xvi. 10. That he moved David himself to number the people, compare 1 Chron. xxi. 1 with 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. Stirred up Joseph's brethren to sell him into Egypt, Gen. 34, 20. Positively and immediately hardened the heart of Pharaoh, Ex. iv. 21. Delivered up David's wives to be defiled to Absalom, 2 Sam. xii. 11. and xvi. 22. Sent a lying spirit to deceive Ahab, 1 Kings xxii. 20-23. And mingled a perverse spirit in the midst of Egypt, i. e. made that nation perverse, obdurate and stiff-necked, Isa. xix. 14. To cite other instances would be almost endless, and, after these, quite unnecessary; all being summed up in that express passage, Isaiah xlv. 7. I make peace and create evil; I the Lord do all these things. See farther 1 Sam. xvi. 14. Psalm cv. 25. Jer. xiii.12, 13. Acts ii. 23 and iv. 28. Rom. xi. 8. 2 Thess. ii. 11. Every one of which implies more than a bare permission of sin. Bucer asserts this, not only in the place referred to below, but continually throughout his works: particularly on Matt. vi. 2, where this is the sense of his comments on that petition, Lead us not into temptation; "It is abundantly evident, from most express testimonies of Scripture, that God occasionally in the course of his providence, puts both elect and reprobate persons into circumstances of temptation: by which temptation are meant, not only those trials that are of an outward, afflictive nature; but those also that are inward and spiritual; even such as shall cause the persons so tempted actually to turn aside from the path of duty, to commit sin, and involve both themselves and others in evil. Hence we find the elect complaining, Isa. lxiii. 17. O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, an hardened our hearts from thy fear? But there is also a kind of temptation which is peculiar to the non-elect; whereby God, in a way of just judgment, makes them totally blind and obdurate: inasmuch as they are vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." See also his exposition of Rom. ix.

Luther reasons to the very same effect; some of his words are these; "It may seem absurd to human wisdom that God should harden, blind, and deliver up some men to a reprobate sense; that he should first deliver them over to evil, and then condemn them for that evil: but the believing spiritual man sees no absurdity at all in this; knowing that God would be never a whit less good, even though he should destroy all men." and

again; "God worketh all things in all men; even wickedness in the wicked: for this is one branch of his own omnipotence." He very properly explains how God may be said to harden men, &c. and yet not be the author of their sin: "It is not to be understood," says he, "as if God found men good, wise and tractable, and then made them wicked, foolish and obdurate, but God, finding them depraved, judically and powerfully excites them just as they are (unless it is his will to regenerate any of them) and, by thus exciting them, they become more blind and obstinate than they were before." See this whole subject debated at large in the places last referred to.

Pos. 3. God, as the primary and efficient cause of all things, is not only the author of those actions done by his elect as actions, but also as they are good actions; whereas, on the other hand, though he may be said to be the author of all the actions done by the wicked, yet he is not the author of them in a moral and compound sense, as they are sinful; but physically, simply, and, *sensu diviso,* as they are mere actions, abstractedly from all consideration of the goodness or badness of them.

Although there is no action whatever which is not in some sense either good or bad, yet we can easily conceive of an action purely as such without adverting to the quality of it; so that the distinction between an action itself, and its denomination of good or evil, is very obvious and natural.

In and by the elect, therefore, God not only produces works and actions through his almighty power, but likewise through the salutary influences of his Spirit, first makes their persons good, and then their actions so too; but in and by the reprobate he produces actions by his power alone; which actions, as neither issuing from faith, nor being wrought with a view to the divine glory, nor done in the manner prescribed by the divine word, are, on these accounts, properly denominated evil. Hence we see that God does not immediately and *per se,* infuse iniquity into the wicked; but, as luther expresses it, powerfully excites them to action, and withholds those gracious influences of his Spirit, without which every action is necessarily evil. That God, either directly or remotely, excites bad men as well as good ones to action, cannot be denied by any but atheists, or by those who carry their notions of freewill and human independency so high as to exclude the Deity from all actual operation in and among his creatures, which is little short of atheism. Every work performed, whether good or evil, is done in strength and by the power derived immediately from God himself, in whom all men live, move, and have their being, Acts xvii. 28. As at first without him was not any thing made which was made; so now without him is not any thing done which is done. We have no power or faculty, whether corporeal or intellectual, but what we received from God, subsists by him, and is exercised in subserviency to his will and appointment. It is he who created, preserves, actuates and directs all things. But it by no means follows from these premises that God is therefore the cause of sin; for sin is nothing but illegality, want of conformity to the divine law, 1 John iii. 4, a mere privation of rectitude: consequently, being itself a thing purely negative, it can have no positive or efficient cause, but only a negative and deficient one, as several learned men have observed.

Every action, as such, is undoubtedly good; it being an actual exertion of those operative powers given us by God for that very end; God therefore may be the author of all actions (as he undoubtedly is), and yet not be the author of evil. An action is constituted evil three ways; by proceeding from a wrong principle, by being directed to a wrong end, and by being done in a wrong manner. Now, though God, as we

have said, is the efficient cause of our actions, as actions, yet if these actions commence sinful, that sinfulness arises from ourselves. Suppose a boy who knows not how to write has his hand guided by his master, and nevertheless makes false letters, quite unlike the copy set him; though his preceptor who guides his hand is the cause of his writing at all, yet his own ignorance and unskilfulness are the cause of his writing so badly. Just so, God is the supreme author of our action, abstractedly taken; but our own vitiosity is the cause of our acting amiss.

I shall conclude this article with two or three observations. And, (1) I would infer that if we would maintain the doctrine of God's omnipotence we must insist upon that of his universal agency: the latter cannot be denied without giving up the former. Disprove that he is almighty, and then we will grant that his influence and operations are limited and circumscribed. Luther says "God would not be a respectable being, if he were not almighty, and the doer of all things that are done; or if any thing could come to pass in which he had no hand." God has at least a physical influence on whatsoever is done by his creatures, whether trivial or important, good or evil. Judas as truly lived, moved, and had his being from God as Peter; and Satan himself as much as Gabriel; for to say that sin exempts the sinner from the divine government and jurisdiction is abridging the power of God with a witness; nay, is raising it from its very foundation.

(2) This doctrine of God's omnipotence has a native tendency to awaken in our hearts that reverence for, and fear of, the divine majesty which none can either receive or retain but those who believe him to be infinitely powerful, and to work all things after the counsel of his own will. This godly fear is a sovereign antidote against sin; for if I really believe that God by his unintermitted operation upon my soul produces actions in me, which, being simply good, receive their malignancy from the corruption of my nature (and even those works that stand opposed to sins are more or less infected with this moral leprosy); and if I consider that, should I yield myself a slave to actual iniquity, God can, and justly might, as he has frequently done by others, give me up to a reprobate mind and punish one sin by leaving me to the commission of another; surely such reflections as these must fill me with awful apprehensions of the divine purity, power and greatness, and make me watch continually, as well against the inward risings as the outward appearance of evil.

(3) This doctrine is also useful as it tends to inspire us with true humility of soul; and to lay us as impotent dust and ashes at the feet of sovereign omnipotence. It teaches us, what too many are ignorant of, the blessed lesson of self-despair; i. e. that in a state of unregeneracy our wisdom is folly, our strength weakness, and our righteousness nothing worth: that therefore we can do nothing either to the glory of God or the spiritual benefit of ourselves and others but through the ability which he giveth; that in him our strength lieth, and from him all our help must come. Supposing we believe that whatsoever is done below or above God doeth it himself; that all things depend, both as to their being and operation, upon his omnipotent arm and mighty support; that we cannot even sin, much less do any good thing, if he withdraw his aid; and that all men are in his hand, as clay in the hand of the potter; I say, did we really believe all these points, and see them in the light of the Divine Spirit, how can it be reasonably supposed that we could wax insolent against this great God, behave contemptuously and superciliously in the world, or boast of anything we have or do? Luther informs us, that he, "used to be frequently much offended at this doctrine because it drove him to self-despair; but that he afterwards found that this sort of despair

was salutary and profitable, and near akin to divine grace."

(4) We are hereby taught not only humility before God, but likewise dependence on him, and resignation to him. For if we are thoroughly persuaded that of ourselves, and in our own strength, we cannot do either good or evil; but that being originally created by God we are incessantly supported, moved, influenced and directed by him, this way or that, as he pleases; the natural inference hence will be that with simple faith we cast ourselves entirely, as on the bosom of his providence, commit all our care and solicitude to his hand; praying without hesitation or reserve that his will may be done in us, on us, and by us, and that in all his dealings with us he may consult his own glory alone. This holy passiveness is the very apex of Christianity. All the desires of our great Redeemer himself were reducible to these two; that the will of God might be done, and that the glory of God might be displayed. These were the highest and supreme marks at which he aimed throughout the whole course of his spotless life and inconceivably tremendous sufferings. Happy, thrice happy that man, who hath thus far attained the mind that was in Christ.

(5) The comfortable belief of this doctrine has a tendency to excite and keep alive within us that fortitude which is so ornamental to, and necessary for, us while we abide in this wilderness. For if I believe with the apostle that all things are of God. 2 Cor. v. 18, I shall be less liable to perturbation when afflicted, and learn more easily to possess my soul in patience. This was Job's support: he was not overcome with rage and despair when he received news that the Sabeans had carried off his cattle and slain his servants, and that the remainder of both were consuned with fire; that the Chaldeans had robbed him of his camels; and that his seven sons were crushed to death by the falling of the house where they were sitting: he resolved all these misfortunes into the agency of God, his power and sovereignty, and even thanked him for doing what he would with his own, Job. i. 21. If another should slander me in word, or injure me in deed, I shall not be prone to anger when, with David, I consider that the Lord hath bidden him, 2 Sam. xvi. 10.

(6) This should stir us up to fervent and incessant prayer. For does God work powerfully and benignly in the hearts of his elect? and is he the sole cause of every action they do, which is truly and spiritually good? Then it should be our prayer that he would work in us likewise both to will and to do of his good pleasure: and if, on self-examination, we find reason to trust that some good thing is wrought in us, it should put us upon thankfulness unfeigned, and cause us to glory, not in ourselves, but in him. On the other hand, does God manifest his displeasure against the wicked by blinding, hardening, and giving them up to perpetrate iniquity with greediness? Which judicial acts of God are both a punishment for their sin and also eventual additions to it? We should be the more incited to deprecate these tremendous evils, and to beseech the king of heaven that he would not thus lead us into temptation. So much concerning the omnipotnce of God. I shall now,

V. Take notice of his justice.

Pos. 1. God is infinitely, absolutely and unchangeably just.

The justice of God may be considered either immanently, as it is in himself, which is, properly speaking, the same with his holiness; or transiently and relatively, as it respects his right conduct towards his creatures, which is properly justice. By the former he is all that is holy, just and good; by the latter he is manifested to be so in all his dealings with angels and men. For the first see Deut. xxxii. 4. Psa. xcii. 15; for the

second, Job viii. 3. Psa. cxlv. 17. Hence it follows that whatever God either wills or does, however it may at first sight seem to clash with our ideas or right and wrong, cannot really be unjust. It is certain that for a season he sorely afflicted his righteous servant Job; and on the other hand enriched the Sabeans, an infidel and lawless nation, with a profusion of wealth and a series of success; before Jacob and Esau were born, or had done either good or evil, he loved and chose the former and reprobated the latter; He gave repentance to Peter and left Judas to perish in his sin: and as in all ages, so to this day he hath mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth. In all which he acts most justly and righteously, and there is no iniquity with him.

Pos. 2. The Deity may be considered in a threefold view: as God of all, as Lord of all, and as Judge of all.

(1) As God of all, he created, sustains, and exhilarates the whole universe; causes his sun to shine, and his rain to fall upon the evil and the good, Matt. v. and is the preserver of all men, 1 Tim. iv. 19. For as he is infinitely and supremely good, so also is he comminicative of his goodness; as appears not only from his creation of all things, but especially from his providential benignity. Every thing has its being from him, as Creator; and its well-being from him as a bountiful preserver. (2) As Lord or sovereign of all, he does as he will (and has a most unquestionable right to do so) with his own; and in particular fixes and determines the everlasting state of every individual person as he sees fit. It is essential to absolute sovereignty that the sovereign have it in his power to dispose of those over whom his jurisdiction extends just as he pleases, without being accountable to any; and God, whose authority is unbounded, none being exempt from it, may, with the strictest holiness and justice, love or hate, elect or reprobate, save or destroy any of his creatures whether human or angelic, according to his own free pleasure and sovereign purpose. (3) As Judge of all he ratifies what he does as Lord, by rendering to all according to their works; by punishing the wicked, and rewarding those whom it was his will to esteem reigheous and to make holy.

Pos. 3. Whatever things God wills or does, are not willed and done by him because they were, in their own nature, and previously to his willing them, just and right; or because, from their intrinsic fitness, he ought to will and do them; but they are therefore just, right and proper, because He who is holiness itself wills and does them.

Hence Abraham looked upon it as a righteous action to slay his innocent son. Why did he so esteem it? Because the law of God authorized murder? No; for on the contrary both the law of God, and the law of nature peremptorily forbad it: but the holy patriarch well knew that the will of God is the only rule of justice, and that what he pleases to command is on that very account just and righteous. It follows:

Pos. 4. That although our works are to be examined by the revealed will of God and be denominate materially good or evil, as they agree or disagree with it; yet the works of God himself cannot be brought to any test whatever; for his will being the grand univesal law, he himself cannot be, properly speaking, subject to, or obliged by, any law superior to that. Many things are done by him (such as choosing and reprobating men) without any respect had to their works; suffering people to fall into sin, when if it so pleased him, he might prevent it; leaving many backsliding professors to go on and perish in their apostacy, when it is in the divine power to sanctify and set them right; drawing some of his grace, and permitting many others to future misery whom, if he

pleased, he could undoubtedly save, with innumerable instances of the like nature (which might be mentioned), and which, if done by us, would be apparently unjust, inasmuch as they would not square with the revealed will of God, which is the great and only safe rule of our practice. But, when he does these and such like things, they cannot but be holy, equitable, and worthy of himself; for since his will is essentially and unchangeably just, whatever he does in consequence of that will must be just and good likewise. From what has been delivered under this fifth head I would infer, that they who deny the power God has of doing as he will with his creatures, and exclaim against unconditional decrees, as cruel, tyrannical, and unjust; either know not what they say nor whereof they affirm; or are wilful blasphemers of his name, and perverse rebels against his sovereignty: to which at last, however unwillingly, they will be forced to submit.

I shall conclude this introduction with briefly considering in the,

Sixth and last place, the mercy of God.

Pos. 1. The Deity is throughout the Scriptures represented as infinitely gracious and merciful. Exod. xxxiv. y. Mehem. ix. 17. Psalm ciii. 8. 1 Pet. i. 3.

When we call the divine mercy infinite, we do not mean that it is in a way of grace extended to all men without exception (and supposing it was, even then it would be very improperly denominated infinite on that account, since the objects of it, though all men taken together, would not amount to a multitude strictly and properly infinite), but that his mercy towards his own elect, as it knew no beginning, so is it infinite in duration, and shall know neither period nor intermission.

Pos. 2. Mercy is not in the Deity as it is in us, a passion, or affection; every thing of that kind being incompatible with the purity, perfection, independency and unchangeableness of his nature; but, when this attribute is predicated of him, it only notes his free and eternal will or purpose of making some of the fallen race happy, by delivering them from the guilt and dominion of sin, and communicating himself to them in a way consistent with his own inviolable justice, truth and holiness. This seems to be the proper definition of mercy, as it relates to the spiritual and eternal good of those who are its objects. But it should be observed.

Pos. 3. That the mercy of God, taken in its more large and indefinite sense, may be considered, (1) as general, (2) as special.

His general mercy is no other than what we commonly call his bounty, by which he is more or less providentially good to all mankind, both elect and non-elect: Matt. v. 45. Luke vi. 35. Acts xiv. 17; and xvii. 25, 28. By his special mercy, he, as Lord of all, hath in a spiritual sense compassion on as many of the fallen race as are the objects of his free and eternal favour: the effects of which special mercy are the redemption and justification of their persons, through the satisfaction of Christ; the effectual vocation, regeneration and sanctification of them by his Spirit; the infallible and final preservation of them in a state of grace on earth; and their everlasting glorification in heaven.

Pos. 4. There is no contridiction, whether real or seeming, between these two assertions, (1) That the blessings of grace and glory are peculiar to those whom God hath in his decree of predestination set apart for himself; and (2) That the gospel declaration runs that whosoever willeth may take of the water of life freely, Rev. xxii. 17. Since, in the first place, none can will or unfeignedly and spiritually desire a part in these privilege but those whom God previously makes willing and desirous; and secondly, that he gives this will to, and excites

this desire in, none but his own elect.

Pos. 5. Since ungodly men, who are totally and finally destitute of divine grace, cannot know what this mercy is, nor form andy proper apprehensions of it, much less by faith embrace and rely upon it, for themselves; and since daily experience, as well as the Scriptures of truth, teaches us, that God doth not open the eyes of the reprobate as he doth the eyes of his elect, nor savingly enlighten their understandings; it evidently follows that his mercy was never, from the very first, designed for them, neither will it be applied to them: but, both in designation and application, is proper and peculiar to those only who are predestinated to life; as it is written, the election hath obtained, and the rest were blinded, Rom. xi. 7.

Pos. 6. The whole work of salvation, together with every thing that is in oder to it, or stands in connection with it, is sometimes in scripture comprised under the single term mercy; to shew that mere love and absolute grace were the grand cause why the elect are saved, and that all merit, worthiness and good qualifications of theirs were entirely excluded from having any influence on the divine will, why they should be chosen, redeemed, and glorified, above all others. When it is said, Rom. ix. He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, it is as much as if the apostle had said, "God elected, ransomed, justified, regenerates, sanctifies and glorifies whom he pleases:" every one of these great privileges being briefly summed up, and virtually included in that comprehensive phrase, "He hath mercy."

Pos. 7. It follows that whatever favour is bestowed on us; whatever good thing is in us, or wrought by us; whether in will, word, or deed: and whatever blessings else we receive from God, from election quite home to glorification, all proceed, merely an entirely, from the good pleasure of his will, and his mercy towards us in Christ Jesus, To him, therefore, the praise is due, who putteth the difference between man and man, by having compassion on some and not on others.

Though a member of the Church of England, are there any who will deny that he was most deeply taught of the Lord?

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brethren, Sisters and Friends:

We want to thank you for the prayers, visits, telephone calls, letters, candy, food and flowers yousent us during our surgery and stay in the hospital and recovery at home. It meant so much to us. Yes, for one to say I thought about you was a great comfort. We have to be there to know how much our Brothers, Sisters and kind friends mean to us.

We do thank you.

Most of all we thank our Heavenly Father.

In Bonds of Love,
Ellen & Frank Simpkins

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

Next session of the Staunton River Union is to be held, the Lord willing, with Malmaison Church, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before, in December.

A cordial invitation is extended to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Peggy Wells, Clerk

The West CountryLine Union meeting will be held the 5th Sunday in December at Dan River Church with Big Meadows Church as host.

Brother Casey Johnson, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR SEPTEMBER 1984

J. E. Mosley, AL.	$ 2.00
Ervin Holley, VA.	2.00
F. G. Bird, OH.	5.00
Eld. J. T. Prescott, NC.	7.00
T. L. Batts, NC.	10.00
Billy F. Poindexter, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Lovie A. Thompson, NC.	2.00
Eld. A. T. Hash, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Christine Shelton, VA.	5.00
Alonzo Davis, VA.	2.00
Reuben French, NC.	5.00
Mrs. G. G. Fralin, VA.	7.00
Mrs. Fred A. Baker, AL.	7.00
James L. Howell, AL.	17.00
Mrs. Maggie Culp, KY.	5.00
Mrs. John Hudson, VA.	2.00
Bill & Wanda Boatman, NM.	8.00
Mr. & Mrs. Dave Honeycutt, TX.	2.00
Marvin J. Clay, OH.	7.00
E. B. Dotson, TX.	2.00
Ms. Lavenia Biggs, TN.	7.00
D. H. Sartin, NC.	2.00
F. K. Morgan, AR.	2.00

OBITUARIES

GEORGIE HAWTHORNE

Sister Georgie Otto Josey was born April 2, 1889 in Bivins, Texas. Her dad was working at a sawmill there, but soon left Bivins and bought a farm in the Huffines Community. She and her parents attended the Pleasant Hope Primitive Baptist Church which was near their farm. When Sister Georgie was about nineteen, she joined that church and was a devoted member for seventy-five years and never missed a meeting when she was able to go.

Sister Georgie Married Brother Fred Hawthrone in 1927 becoming a loving step-mother to his children. Brother Fred joined the Pleasant Hope Primitive Baptist Church and together they worshiped there for about twenty-three years or until Brother Fred's death in 1951.

Sister Georgie's friends could be numbered by the people who knew her because to know her was to love her. She lived a rich, active and useful life until she was ninety-five years old. She died April 11, 1984 and is buried in the Linden, Texas cemetery where her husband is buried.

The above was written by one of her step-daughters. Pleasant Hope Church would like to acknowledge that her step-children were devoted to her as if she had been their own mother.

Service was held at Pleasant Hope Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder Loyd Wall.

JOHN L. HOUSTON

In loving memory of John L. Houston. John L. Houston was born June 27, 1909. He was the son of Chancy and Emma Jackson Houston. He was born in Duplin County where he spent all his life as a farmer.

He married Sudie Brown on December 21, 1930, from this union came five sons; Linwood, Wesley, Chesley, Sherwood, Johnny and eight grandchildren.

He joined Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church October 14, 1946, where he served as a faithful and dedicated mem-

ber. Brother John was elected as a Deacon to serve his church on March 13, 1947. He filled this position well and to the best of his ability for 37 years, until his death on February 17, 1984. He was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace. He would not want praise nor would he want to be lifted above his brethren. He loved all his brethren and showed it by visiting his sister churches.

We miss him as our song leader, by his vacant seat in the church and by the warm welcome he always greeted us with.

His funeral was conducted by Elder D. B. Stokes and Elder Oliver Allen. He was laid to rest under a mound of beautiful flowers at Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery, to awake the morning of the resurrection where all the Saints shall rise and their bodies change and be fashioned like the glorious body of Christ to be in the presence of God and at the right hand of God where there is peace forever more.

Written by Chesley and Linda Houston

MARY INEZ NASH

In my weak way, if God will bless me, I will write a few words in memory of our dear beloved Sister.

Sister Nash departed her life on earth at Union Memorial Hospital in El Dorado, Ark. on October 12, 1983. Making her stay here on earth 75 years, 9 months and 8 days. She joined the Smyrna Primitive Baptist Church near El Dorado, Ark. and lived her life there as a lovely and faithful member.

The Lord wrote all his elect family a letter about 2,000 years ago and I quote a portion of this letter.

"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

She was preceded in death by her husband, Thomas Cleg Nash, whom she married on May 25, 1924. From this union God blessed them with four daughters: Melba Sullivan, Lois Snowden, Laverne Breazeal and Linda Means. Eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren, also two brothers and two sisters.

Her funeral was conducted in Youngs Chapel in El Dorado, Ark. on October 15, 1983 by her pastor Elder David E. Turner. She was laid to rest by her husband beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the second coming of her Lord and final resurrection.

Written by the request of
her children and family
Elder David E. Turner

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EDITORIAL

This marks the beginning of 153 years of continuous publishing of the Signs of The Times. We want to thank God for His blessings in preserving the "Signs" for this many years, for giving us writers who have been blessed to se forth the things that are most surely believed among God's people and that which is edifying and comforting.

We thank you the readers for your continued support and we reaffirm our support of the Prospectus of the paper as set forth in 1832, and our associate editors.

We did not double our subscription list as we set out to do last year but we are pleased with the new ones you sent in. It incourages us to work harder to send forth writings you may receive comfort from and enjoy and that which exalts the name of Jesus.

May God bless all for whom it is our duty and priviledge to pray.

Editors

EDITORIAL

In the 25th verse of St. John, the 5th Chapter, you will find these words: *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."*

He is speaking of that day--Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when they that hear the voice of God shall live and we believe that it is this day, that now they are hearing the voice of the Son of God.

As you have sat here on this hillside throughout this day and throughout this meeting, you have been hearing the voice of the Son of God as He spake to you through his ministers that He has called and qualified and brought and filled their mouths with words that would be comforting unto your soul. The hour is coming, and now is that every heir of God will hear His voice. He speaks to his sheep, and they hear His voice and a stranger they will not follow. We know there are some who say that you don't hear the voice of God, but I believe with all of my heart that He speaks to his sheep and they hear his voice. It might not be an audible voice as you are hearing me this afternoon, but it could be a small still voice as He speaks to you. And when He speaks to you, I believe you know his voice. I believe you know the one that is speaking to you. I believe that every heir of promise, everyone whose name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life, that sometime between the cradle and the grave they shall hear His voice and will heed His call. We who were born in sin and trespasses, we who were lost in trespasses and in sin, children of wrath even as others; we who this day profess a hope in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. There is a reason that you have a profession of this hope. There is a reason that you come to believe in Him. There is a reason that you

look unto Him as your Shepherd. He has stirred up your pure minds, and manifested within you that spirit that has given you life, has given you to hunger and to thirst after righteousness here in this world, has caused you to drive for many miles to come and be with those of like precious faith that you might speak one to another, that you might hear the experiences of those of your brethren, that you might find that you have something in common with them, and know that you are not traveling this way alone, but find there are fellow travelers traveling along with you.

Dear beloved, the time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God. I believe that every heir of promise does hear this voice and they do follow Him. You will leave whatever you are doing when He says, "Take up thy cross and follow me."

If we are partakers of the Spirit of God, if we are one of the heirs of promise, we must partake of the suffering of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We must take up the cross with Him, and suffer with Him here in this world if we are to reign with Him in that world to come. It is our precious hope, as we heard the dear Elder who stood before you, standing and trembling, coming as it were down to the end of the sunset of life, yet triumphant in that faith, speaking of how good that God has been to him, He has fought the battles for him.

Haven't you learned already that you don't have to fight these battles, that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. He fights the battles for his children. We have worked out of tools and timbers, and have nothing to fight with, we stand as little children, come humble, being cast down sometimes, but thanks be unto God we are not destroyed. The precious hope is that He that has begun a work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. What a glorious way it is. How thankful we are for the blessed hope within our breast, that He has stirred up our pure mind, given us to feel that He is our heavenly Father, caused us to seek that which is food for our hungry souls, given us to hunger and thirst for something, that is better than this time world could ever give, given us to hunger and thirst for something that can only come from His storehouse of mercy. Aren't you glad that the provisions have already been made for you, stored up in His storehouse of mercy, His grace sufficient for all your needs while here in this world. He that has called you from nature's darkness, brought you into the fellowship and the light with those of like faith and taught you to know that He will supply every needed blessing.

Haven't you learned already, as He said unto the Apostle Paul, "My grace is sufficient." Haven't you learned already these things? How gracious and how good God is? And that His mercy is from everlasting to everlasting. Through every trial you have ever had in this world, He has been there with you to comfort you: A VERY PRESENT HELP IN THE TIME OF NEED. What a gracious heavenly Father we have. How thankful we are that He has promised never to leave us, never to forsake us, but be with us always, even unto the end of the world. Isn't it a precious promise, dear mothers and fathers of Israel, that He has promised these things and you who have lived longer than some, how you have been made to know these precious truths, how comforting they are to you when you come to travel through the valleys and shadows of death, and to feel His presence with you. The power to lift you up when you come to the end of your way when you felt there was no way to turn, that you couldn't go on, the burden is too great, you just couldn't stand up. And yet, in some miraculous way you felt strength, you felt at ease,

you felt that peace that passeth all understanding.

Yes, I believe the time is coming, and now is, when the children of God shall hear His voice and they know from whence it comes, and they will be given to trust in Him as they journey from day to day as One who will go with them. Oh, how wonderful it is. I want to tell you if you are His, you are not walking alone because He is with you. He ascended back to the Father. He said it is necessary that I go away but if I go away, I will send the holy comforter and he shall abide with you always. Oh, what a blessing this is! As we journey along, and the older we get the more we realize that this world—as the dear brother said a moment ago, this world is not my home. Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble and we are journeying through a desert land while here. We are suffering with Him if we are to reign with him. As we journey on, as the trials and afflictions of life rain upon you, and as the times come when you feel you can't stand up and you can't go on, this God makes a way for you when it seems there is no way.

Mary and Martha as they went to the tomb to see the Saviour, they went along the journey no doubt they pondered in their minds, who shall roll the stone away? Sometimes the burden becomes so great that we wish we could roll the stone away, we wish we could roll the burden away, but when tomorrow comes we find the way has been opened up.

This God of heaven who promised never to leave you and never to forsake you, knows all of your circumstances. There's nothing that we can acquaint Him with that He doesn't already know. You, who may be feeling that surely there is none like you, that your trials and your afflictions and your sorrows are greater than any. And you begin to worry as Gideon of old, as he asked of the Lord if indeed I have found grace in thy sight, why have these things befallen me? And yet we feel to know that if we are to reign with Him we must suffer with Him. And in this life He said, ye shall have trials and tribulations. I don't want to preach to you, I would love to, but the Bible doesn't teach it, and I haven't learned it from experience, that this would be an easy way for He said, in this world you shall have trials and tribulations. He said that your bread, the bread I will feed you is the bread of adversity, and ye shall drink the waters of affliction. That is your food, that is your drink as you journey here. But it is not all sorrow, it's not all down in the valley, there are times of being upon the mountain top. There are times when we want to sing praises unto His great and matchless name for the things that He has done for us. Oh, how good He is!

We heard this morning, He doesn't withhold any good thing from Israel. Sometimes our greatest blessings come in the trials of afflictions. If we are never brought down, if there is never a famine in our lives, I doubt if we would be here today, I doubt if we would know any of the joys of the fellowship and the love of God's children. But through these trials, through the afflictions, through the famine that we have to come through, we are brought down to the feet of Jesus and from there we can look up and praise His great and matchless name and know it's from Him that every good and every perfect gift comes.

When you were cast down, He stirred up your pure minds. You didn't know what was the matter with you, you didn't know and you went from day to day, one brother, I believe he said he went for three years under the burden of the ministry.

I went for three years under the burden that some day I would have to come and to stand before God's people and it came to me in a dream at night and I could see myself standing before the

pulpit speaking to God's people and the text that He gave me then was "Fear not him that is able to destroy the body, but to fear Him who is able to destroy both the body and soul." I woke up troubled. Troubled, troubled was I! Never was there any one who felt as unworthy as I. I was so bashful in my boyhood days. I couldn't stand before my school class and speak unto them. It just scared me to death. And when this came unto me, I felt that I couldn't go. Surely this dream will pass and I can find relief. But it didn't pass. It was on my mind every day. Every hour! I tried to get involved in work. I tried to pass it away. I tried to think of everything else but it would come back again. It troubled me.

I can tell you this afternoon, I can fellowship some of the experiences of Jonah as I had to go down to the depths as he went. This went on for several months and the Lord, I hope it was the Lord, visited me again in a dream and it stirred me up even more. And I began to get sick, I began to be so troubled. I began to go to doctors. I didn't seek the help of the Lord. I didn't cry unto Him. It seems that I was seeking the help of man. I went to many doctors. I went to a chiropractor doctor for nine months for three nights a week. Someone told me that they would be good for your nerves, that they could help you but the last trip I went, I left his office as miserable as ever before. As I found only temporary relief. I finally decided--I was going to a medical doctor and I told him, I have no physical pain, but I feel I am going to die. I feel that I can't live. He told me that this is something that you have inherited. You will just have to live with it.

How many nights I have had to rise from my bed and sit in the living room by myself in a chair, just sitting and waiting to die. This was a miserable condition and a horrible pit. As time passed on I got no relief, but got worse and worse. My wife would have to get up at night and carry me to the doctor. I hope you can bear with me, as I look back upon it. You have heard so much here today as the dear elders have looked back in their book of remembrances that the Lord has written for them to talk of these things, to tell you just a little bit of the journey and the way that we've come.

And as time went on and finally one night, after a period of three years, I was awakened in another dream. But before this time—I felt that I didn't know the letter of the Bible. I didn't know anything about the Bible and I knew that our people didn't believe in seminaries. They didn't believe in going to school (to learn to preach). I just thought if I would slip out at night and attend this bibical college, I would learn the letter and if it pleased God He would reveal it to me.

And this time I awoke, my pillow was wet with tears, I had been crying. I saw myself again standing in this place. And the scripture that was given to me for a text that night was, they shall all be taught of the Lord.

I had been begging for more evidence as I went along in this trial of three years, I begged for more evidence and finally I went to my pastor, (Elder Curry King) I told him of my troubles and I told him of the experiences I had been having. He said, I appreciate your coming to me but I have been looking for this for a long time. He asked me if I would came and take a part in the next service. I told him I couldn't do that, I want more evidence, I want to be more sure of this. I don't want to do that yet. Let's just wait a while. And that's when the dream was given to me: "They shall all be taught of the Lord," and the congregation was singing "How Firm a Foundation Ye Saints Of The Lord." When they came to the verse in the song: "What more can he say than to you he hath said," it was like a record stuck. It was over and over, What more can he

say than to you he hath said? I awoke from my dream and it was then I was given to go talk to my pastor.

And a few months after that the deacons came to my home. They wanted me to open service next meeting. I said, no, no, I want more evidence and finally one Sunday when our pastor was away and we had a visiting elder, Elder Ingram was there, and they called on me again. They didn't ask me if I would take part, but the deacon asked me to open service. Elder Ingram invited me into the stand with him and I went and there attempted my first time to speak in public. From that time until now that burden, that feeling that I was dying, was taken away from me. My nerves were strengthened. I have had no more trouble with it until this day, but I don't thank the doctors because I believe I know from whence my help comes.

I believe I know that my help come from the Lord. Before this came to the end I was at an Association and the Elder was speaking from the 121st Psalm where David is saying, "I will lift mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help" and I believe if I've ever heard the voice of God, I believe it spoke to me and it was like a voice saying, you've been going to the wrong doctor and if I've ever tried to pray in my life, I tried to pray then, but it was to a different doctor. It was to the heavenly Physician. One that is able and does heal all manner of sickness. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.

If you hear these blessed truths, if you've been taught in your heart, and these things have been written in your mind, you shall live. Jesus said I give unto you everlasting life and ye shall never perish. You can be cast down but you are not destroyed. You are in a safe place as you've heard today, that our lives are hid with Christ, in God. It's in a save place. And He knows your circumstances here in this life and He'll be with you all of the way. I believe I know from experience these things. I can testify to you, and if I had only read of these things or someone had told me of them I'd be a false witness as I stand before you. I believe these are some of the things that God has shown me, that God has taught me and I believe that they that hear the voice of the Son of God SHALL LIVE. The children of the world don't hear His voice. They are the ones that make fun when you try to tell them of your experience. They are the ones who these things have been hid from and it pleased the heavenly Father to do so. We don't understand it, we don't know why these things are hid from them, but Christ said, "I thank thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

Dear beloved, you have something precious, and is worth more to you than all the gold of Ophir or the cattle of a thousand hills. It's worth more than all of the money in this world. It's the only thing you've got that doesn't perish with the using.

This is everlasting life, this is something that is with you through this life, it is an anchor to your soul both sure and steadfast. It's with you here for all of your needs. It's a stay, it's a rod, it's something to hold you up, it's something to keep you pressing on through all your trials and afflictions. It's something that's precious, it gives you fellowship one with the other, it gives you that love that flows from heart to heart and from breast to breast. Oh, what joy it is! Yea, it's not all in sorrow, it's not all in distress, it's not all cast down. There are times of joy, there are times when we can rejoice together as we talk of these blessed truths. This heavenly Father

has called us with an heavenly calling and how precious it is. AND THEY SHALL HEAR THE SON OF GOD AND THEY THAT HEAR SHALL LIVE, and then He says: "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice." Yes, the time is coming when they that are in the grave shall hear His voice. The graves shall not hold the children of God. If in this life only, you had hope, you would be of all men most miserable.

But dear beloved, there is something better awaiting you. Here you have had only a little tast, it's been sweet to your taste and you desire more of it and you would get more of it if you could but He gives it to you daily, that daily bread -- that which He would have you to have. He drops it down as handsfull of purpose. It's not accidently that you get it, but it's by purpose that you get it. Every heir of promise is going to get everything that God has in store for him. It's going to come down as handsfull of purpose.

I want to tell of a little experience that I had a few days ago as we stood one night in the bedroom of this loved one. He seemingly had a few days to live and is now passed on. He asked that we have prayer together. And while we were there in prayer in this room I witnessed there a light with my eyes closed -- that room lit up brighter than any light I have ever seen. I asked my wife and those that were with me when we left his home, did you see any light? Was there a light turned on while I was bowed in prayer? There was none they said. But it was the brightest light that I've ever seen and I believe surely that the Lord was present there with us.

Oh, how these things humble us, how they cause us to fear and to tremble. It's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Just a few days after that, he was called home.

These blessed things, these little experiences we have, they are they which keep us pressing on through all of the trials and all of the troubles that we have here, yet not to be compared with that joy God has in store for you. We wouldn't ask Him to change that which He has ordained or purposed. No, it's never been my prayer to ask Him to change that which he has purposed for me. I want to suffer with Him, I want to suffer with Him because I know we must if we are to reign with Him. And it is our precious hope that we some day shall see Him, be made like Him and there be satisfied.

The time is coming that they that are in the grave shall hear. One day He's going to call those from the sleeping dust wherever they are. The final end of time and when that resurrection day comes, He's going to call all of those and it's going to be the ones I believe John saw on the Isle of Patmos. He inquired who they were, and they were those that have come through great trials and tribulations. You have to go through them, there is no detour. There's no way around them. Those who have come through great trials and tribulations and their robes had been washed in the blood of the Lamb and made white as snow. It is our hope and through the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ that we do have this precious hope. If the grave had been able to hold Him, we would have no hope beyond the grave, BUT HE AROSE FROM THE GRAVE. He arose, ascended back to the Father and is there making intercession for you and He knows everything that you need and He will not withhold any good thing from you. May God bless you, may He give you encouragement to press on when your troubles come. Don't think it's because He has forsaken you because your Saviour suffered for you, He paid the redemption price, He suffered, He was acquainted with grief, and knew much sorrow. May we continue to jour-

ney in the oneness of faith, in that unity of the spirit, and may we continue to enjoy the sweet fellowship and have the desire that we might meet together from time to time, one with another.

A dear sister came to me at the lunch hour who I met probably some thirty years ago in this Association. She said, most of all I desired that I might see you today and that I might hear you, not that she was looking to me as a man but I hope it was because of the sweet fellowship that we had had in Christ in days gone by. She said, "Now I'm blind, I can't see you, I wouldn't know who you are if someone hadn't lead me to you, and it's good to see you." And there we talked of the things God had written in that book of Remembrance. That book of Remembrance has been so precious to me. We've heard so much of it here today as the old elders have gone back in their experiences. There's a Book of Remembrance—written in Malachi, I believe it is. He has written a Book of Remembrance for those who fear the Lord. There is a book of Remembrance written for each of you. How many times we see dear mothers and fathers in Israel come down, maybe shut in, in the nursing home, places where they can't come out and have the privileges that we have enjoyed today. But there they can go back in their Book of Remembrance, still precious and sweet to them as they remember the good times they've had together with those of like precious faith. Some day we shall look back upon this meeting, and the joys we've received here today in our Book of Remembrance.

May God continue to record these blessed things that we might look back upon them when we travel through the barron lands. We have to look back to yesterday to those things. We have to go back and we find David, I believe it was, there were times when he felt to be in a barron land and he ask the Lord to "Restore unto me the joys of Thy salvation." Yes, we are made to cry unto Him from time to time that He might restore unto us again the joys of His salvation, not another, but His salvation. May God bless you is my prayer.

Transcribed from tapes of Sermon Preached by Elder Kenneth R. Key at Staunton River Association July 7, 1984.

Elder Kenneth R. Key

CORRESPONDENCE

MY DREAMS AND TRAVELS

Dear Brother Kenneth:

I hope I can write you some of the things you and I have talked about for some time back. I don't want to write anything to turn any ones head in my direction for flesh sake. I can't think of anything so ashame.

I would like to go back in my childhood days and write a letter. Mama told me so many things that I think of now. She told me when I was six or seven that the world would be burned up and time would be ended. This froze my soul, I could not think of such a thing. About that time I dreamed I was standing down behind our neighbors house, looking over the hills. I saw a wall of fire come rolling down the hill in front of me, coming my way. I said to myself, Oh! I'll be burned up. It came close but stopped short of me. I didn't feel any heat. I was so happy I was saved.

About seventeen years of age, one morning standing in front of the mirror, fixing to go to school when the thought come to me. I was looking at my face, the thought come all at once. The end of time. All at once I saw nothing, nothing, black blackness. Have you ever seen nothing? My hands drew back as if it

were hot. I don't know what would have happened if I were left in this condition.

Some time "years" later, just before my husband and I were married, I dreamed of going to the beach with he and his sister. At that point I had never seen the beach. We were walking down an old country road. We came to an old hole, an ugly place beside the road. It was full of water black as ink and real rough, about 20 feet wide. There was so many in having a good time. They said, come in its fun. I looked at that awful stuff and said no. I told them I had heard of a pretty beach some place. They insisted so I thought I'd test it with one toe, before I knew what was happening, I was in over my head. I fought with all my power and could not over come the powerful force. I thought I was gone for good. When a hand and an arm came down and lifted me out and set my feet on dry ground. I was so thankful. I saw a path about a foot wide, I started walking alone, it went bias across a feild. Walking bias across corn rows is almost impossible without stumbling. This path went into the woods, down across a little stream of water and up on to the most beautiful beach. I've been on beaches from Florida to Deleware since, but none compared to this one. The sand was white as snow. The water was clear as glass. I looked down at my feet in this water thinking, Oh! if those people knew or got word that this place was here. I was so anxious about them, I didn't pay any attention to a voice calling me. He called my name so plain, Hallie! I didn't look up. He called the second time. On the third call, I looked over my right shoulder and saw the most beautiful person. He was dressed in snow white, standing some distance from me. The sun was going down behind his head, a gold cross was in the sun. He said, there's nothing for you to worry about, everything's been taken care of. This made me so happy for I was burdened down. I was lifted up from the earth and carried up so high, I left all care behind as if there had never been any. When I come to myself, I was back in my room over my bed. I knew my body was on the bed but I was floating in the air over it. The most Heavenly Place I can think of. All at once I was let down in my body. Then I was awaken. I wanted to go back where there was no worry or sorrow. I think of how it will be to be absent from this body of clay. I hope I've had a slight taste, I hope so.

The fourth Sunday in May, 1942, I joined Prospect Hill Church. I didn't think of such a thing when I left home. I loved the place from childhood, my grandmother, granddad and great aunt were members there. I loved the place and still do. Going home that evening, I thought I'd done the wrong thing. I felt so deceiving. I wanted to be with them. I thought surely they wouldn't want me. I felt to be a nothing. I didn't know then but I know now what I saw in the mirror that morning before going to school. "I saw myself." I thought I saw the end of time. Who said, he was nothing and less than nothing? I would go to church and feel so much like a worm. I would sit in the car until the last minute, dreading to go in, thinking maybe I'd feel better if I asked them to take my name off. Then when communion days come, I was horrified thinking of what the scripture says "He that eat and drink unworthly." I dreaded to go the the communion table. Then one night I dreamed, I was pulling an old cart up a rough hill. It was so heavy, I pulled until all my strength was gone. I stopped and asked some people coming up behind, what could be on this thing making it so heavy and hard to pull? Some one said, "Christs body." I raised up a white cloth and there laid the most pitiful body that could ever be. He was nothing but bones with skin stretched over them. He was crumpled up and drawn into every

shape. I looked on with such a hurt, I began to cry so hard, I said Oh! look what my sins have done to the Lord, waking up sobbing out loud.

Communion Services, written by Elder Joe Hamrick filled my soul in the "Signs" I feel like it took all of His blood for my sins.

There is an experience I had when I was not asleep. I worked at May's Hosiery Mill in the 40's. I ran a full fashion knitting machine for five years. One night my work was running fine, I was not bothered with anything to speak of. All at once a voice inside my being or soul said, you have got to die. This knocked me almost down, my hands drew back from the machine as if it was red hot. I thought I can't stand this. This thing left as fast as it came! The same thing happened about three weeks later, I ran from the alley, by the time I got to the end of the machine, this feeling was gone. It was such a blow, it left me shaking with a chill, I went to the Doctor, he said I was having a nervous breakdown. One Saturday morning sometime later, it was raining as hard as I ever saw it rain. This same thing, you have got to die hit me, I thought I was dying then and there. I was at home and ran out in the rain with my face turned up to the rain. I screamed, "Oh! Lord, have mercy on me." All this time from the first of this feeling, "you have got to die," to that day, I slept very little. This prayer came with such a force, as if it was bottled up and had to come out. From that day until now, I've not heard this voice again. I believe I did die that day to this worlds lust and things I see and hear every day. It made me hate myself and all flesh, "for," I know in my flesh dwells no good thing.

All these years, months and days since, its been a long ways but I don't want to go back. Something makes me look forward.

"Come see a man who told me all things I ever did."

All through these experiences, I dream a lot, one of those I want to share with you. Time after time I would dream of living in an old apartment house. It was always three or four stories high. A lot of people lived all over it, but my apartment was always on the ground floor. I would ramble all over, up in other apartments looking. They always looked pretty, well kept and neat. I would go back and fix and fix, I'd work so hard but I never could get my apartment to look pretty, it was always tangled or messy. It worried me so bad.

There was a room up high in this building that I was not allowed in. It had a mystery about it. One time I went up, I opened the door and went in. I knew I should not go, but I did. It had the most beautiful rugs, and all the things in there was soft to look at and touch. There was an old organ over to one side. I went over and began to press the notes and no sound came. I kept pushing and pulling buttons and stops until I got the most horrible sound I ever heard. No one could live long under such a noise. It put such a heavy burden on me, I was forced to run from the room. I can't forget how pretty this room was. This room to me is the world. We can't live in it any more after we see the light. I don't think Paul could go back after this light shined around him.

I don't want to be tiresome, I do remember a lot more but I'll tell just one more.

This last June, my son called me on Saturday before father's day and asked us to come up on Sunday for lunch. I told him I wanted to go to Moons Creek. It would be hard to go to both places. On thinking, I said we wouldn't go to church and just go to his house. Ralph and I spoke about it Saturday night on retiring and said we would not go to church. Sunday morning I awoke at six o'clock, thinking of all this, I thought I'll take an-

other nap. I dreamed of seeing a house about four or five rooms, with no window panes or shut doors. It was stacked full to the top with pretty loaves of bread and every room was full. I looked in every room and thought this is the prettiest bread I ever saw. Then these words came to me, "You can't live by bread alone." I cooked breakfast, and still thought we'd go to our son's. Ralph said, "Lets go to church first." These loaves of bread came in front of me again and the same words, "You can't live by bread alone," I said to him "lets go." I enjoyed the service that day, I knew it was the truth but the climax of that dream didn't come to me until the third Sunday in July. It seemed that all the bread was served that day.

And Jesus said unto them, "I am the bread of life: He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

I'm so thankful we've got a place in out of the storms of life. Sundays are so short and the weeks are long and hard.

I'm also thankful for Greensboro "Giving me a home." I've loved you folks a long time. I find myself far from living by the things I've written. That's what worries me.

A Sister in hope, if one at all.
Hallie O. Griswald

Dear Elder Williams:

Elder E. E. Burgess, served Camp Branch Church, in the Pigg River Association for a menber of years. He died in 1963, at the age of 86 years. His daughter, Mrs. Louis (Nina) Koogler found this letter that he had written to brother Perdue. At the time of this writing his eye sight had failed and he was trembly, so he dictated this letter to his wife to write for him. Nina knowing that Jamie and I knew her daddy so well thought that we would enjoy his writing, we did as have some others, and thought that we would pass it along to you, and if you see fit to use it in the Signs for others to enjoy it is in agreement with his daughter.

Love to you and your family,
Frances M. Cooper

Martinsville, Va.
January 12, 1952

Elder J. A. Perude:

Dear Brother, your good letter came as a surprise, but a most precious one. I fully endorsed every word you have written which is to the praise of Gods glorious grace. My hope is, I have been taught by the same power you have. It seems to me we are sitting together in a heavenly place. I have been believing in a sovereigh God that rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth in all events from the chigger to the elephant. To me He is God Almighty, none like Him, and none beside Him. I hope my trust is in this God of power, it would be folly to trust in any other. I have preached the gospel as being the power of God unto salvation to the believers (if I have preached), with the ability my God has given me, not shunning to declare what my experience has taught me, I hope not to please man but to glorify God. My efforts began near forty years ago, some of the old brethern preachers told me it never would be popular, but to continue to contend for the doctrine and if I went down they would go down with me. They have gone to their reward, I have been feeling I was almost alone in believing in a Sovereign God over all worlds, principalities, and powers, yet I fee He will have some faithful witness here when He comes again, I deem you one of those witnesses, not afraid to declare the truth. The doctrine of absolute predestination of all things is the most glorious doctrine on earth to me. It certainly

does not make God the author of sin. The testimony is sin entered the world by the transgression of Adam, just one man, the devil was the cause of that. God is under no law, and can not do wrong, man alone is the sinner and God is the only Savior, does not need the help of man. He is the salvation of the elect for time and eternity, He keeps them as the apple of His eye, all this great salvation came to us and the blessings we are recipients of through the mercy and grace of God.

Grace is a free favor, no worth or merit on the part of the creature. I have not written as I thought I would, I aimed to say in the beginning, you said too many good things about me, I am not worthy of such things, it humbles me. I fear I am mistaken, and that you are mistaken in me. We were at Rocky Mount last meeting and hope to be there next meeting and hope to see you there. Do hope your wife has fully recovered. May the Lord bless you and family. Come to see us and write often, I love you and your writing.

Your brother in hope.
Elder J. E. Burgess

My dear ones:

I come back from our Association thinking of you. When I return home and attempt to write one who has been kind and given me a place to rest, my first line is usually, I had a safe trip home and am thankful for this blessing. I can say that after this trip. In these days I'm always tired and unually rest very quickly upon getting home. Not this time.

There was a pressing desire to see if a certain sermon was on any of the tapes I had because a little sister had asked if I had that one on tape. I doubted it because I remembered turning the tape prior to the beginning of that sermon. I found the sermon on Sunday night and began listening with pen and paper in hand. Two elders spoke before this one. I stopped after about two hours—there was still tape to be plalyed before it gave out. Three nights I worked that tape, always with pen and paper in hand and when the Elder finished speaking with "May God Bless You Is My Prayer" being his last words there was about half minute on the tape!

Having worked all my life transcribing and other office duties, I knew there were good words in the work I had been taking from the tape and desired very much to see them on paper (typed, that is) (I always write first in shorthand). I used to tell some of my bosses after taking dictation that I would hurry and type it so I'd know what they'd said.

Oh, me, what I saw when I began typing (after office hours and one Sunday afternoon). I believed. I believed the report of this dear Elder. A few years ago I heard a little sister tell a most peculiar experience. It was so peculiar I went back to see her and told her I wanted to hear it again. Later I was impressed to write her and did, addressing her and one other sister, my message to both being, I believe.

I've often thought of the word "believe." With my natural mind it seems so easy to believe, but, if not deceived, there is a power in the belief spoken of in John 3:16 and power is not of us, is it, dear ones? If indeed and in truth I have belief, God himself gave it to me. I do hope sometimes that all within me is not sin. I just hope, I don't know. But you know I don't care to talk of my sins.

I'm thinking of some of you who were not with us at this meeting. Brother Jones and Tilda, we missed you and hope that the dear Lord shall be pleased to restore some health to your body and again send you to be with us. Elder Wray, I missed you and Sister Wray. I heard you are improving and we hope you

shall be blessed to meet with us soon. And Elder Griffin, I don't know that we expected you and Sister Griffin, but we just kind of hoped you might be with us. I hope God may be pleased to again send you to us.

We were blessed with the nicest weather I remember seeing at an Association. I was so thankful for this. Elders Shipman, Cabbage, R. Smith, Agee, Spangler, L. & K. Key, L. & J. Hollingsworth, C. Robertson, Carters were some of the elders I think of now who were with us. And Elder Brown, it was good to again hear him tell of the little man Jesus who came to his trundle bed when he was a child. I believe Elder Brown's report. Isn't it wonderful to believe? To be given belief.

My dear Sister Doss and Sister Susie, I just wanted to say I was happy to see you and hope you are feeling better, Sister Susie. And Sister Dalton, I missed seeing you. I hope I can see you again soon. You know the Union Meeting is to be at Springfield this month, the dear Lord willing.

I have almost spoken to all of you who have been with me these days. Sister Phyllis and Brother Raymond, yes, I thank the dear Lord for a safe trip home. I've had many good things to think upon these days. I enjoyed being with you and thank you for kindness to me.

Sister Blaylock, does not the God of heaven work in a mysterious way? Your feeling, love and desire were conveyed straight to me. Several things I should have done these weeks but I wanted so much to work on that sermon. I enjoyed doing it. I saw things not seen when hearing it at the meeting. And I yet hope to make corrections and send a draft to Elder Key.

Dear ones, I've enjoyed thinking of you in these days. I know I've put many words on paper and said very little. But to me you are that little world of mine, untouched by the things I see and hear every day. May the dear Lord give us belief.

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickral
7-25-84

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102 Lake Ave.
Salem, Va. 24153
August, 1984

MATTHEW 23:37

Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathered her chickens under her wing, and ye would not.

We all know the history of these people concerning the way they dealt with prophets of the past. Down through the years they had repeatedly rejected any and all messages or prophets sent unto them. All this is stated very plainly in these verses. What we want to consider here is the last part of these verses. How often would I have gathered thy children together but ye would not. Now think about that thing for a minute. Jesus, the Son of God is telling these people that He would have gathered them together as a chicken does her young, but they would not. Now, I believe that had He gathered them together, there would have been more than just physical gathering or natural food and such. But, had He gathered them in the way He was talking about, I believe it would have meant many blessings, spiritual blessings, fellowship, etc. Now think about this for a minute. Jesus is saying I would have done all of this had you but come unto me. Now mind you, He did not call them, had they been called, they would have come, much the same as did Lazarus, but He said I would have gathered, but you would not.

Does this not sound like the doctrine

of the world today? How many times have you heard it said. If you will turn from your ways, accept the Lord, etc. you will be saved. It sounds like here it is a matter of will, because Jesus said, but ye would not. Now let us consider this will a little and see some of the reasons why they would not.

1. PS. 110-3 *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.*

Look for a minute at the great King Nebuchadnezzar when he took the three Hebrew children to bow before his image. He was a mighty man among men and when he gave an order, people obeyed. But, who, or what are great men in the sight of God, less than nothing. When he told the three Hebrew children to bow, he didn't care whether or not they were willing. It seems he was only interested in having his way, exercising his power. But, see the great difference between the way man thinks and the way God thinks. The scripture says thy people are willing in the day of thy power. To keep from getting too lengthy I will not attempt to show how these people would be made willing. I avidly believe all the brethren have experienced this already. For now, suffice it to say, had they been His children they would have been willing.

2. Phillip 2:3 *He works in you both the will and the do of His good pleasure.*

He plainly states that he came to do the will of his Father, and had it been the will of the Father for these men to come unto him they would have come. Don't the scripture say he works in his children both the will and the do? And we can clearly see here that the will to come had not been worked in these rebellious people.

3. John 8:43-44 *Why do ye not understand my speech, even because you cannot understand my words, ye are of your father the devil and the lusts of him you will do.*

See how plain it is, there is absolutely no guess work or chance in the decree of God. Does he not say that he knows the end from the beginning, and works all things after the counsel of his own will. Of a truth he had compassion on these people and he expressed it. Does the scripture not say, he came unto his own and his own received him not.

4. John 6:44 *No man can come unto me, except the Father which sent me draw him.*

Now, I ask you, were these men drawn? Of course not. Jesus goes on to say "...and any man who comes unto me I will in no wise cast out..." How can it be made any plainer, there is no contradiction in the scriptures. Any time it seems to contradict is simply the way men see it. If one is the child of Jehovah, he will be called, it will be worked in him the will and the do, he will be drawn, and, he will not be cast out. If one is not a child of promise, he is of his father the devil and the lusts of him him he will do. Now to clinch the point a little further, let's say that these people did try to exercise their own will and try to accept God as the great multitudes do today. What do you say about that? Simply this 2 Peter 2:22 *"The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."* Or to put it another way, clouds they would be without water.

If left o himself his will most surely will be the path and ways of darkness because in him there is no light. But one of God's children is never moved against his will in the way that Nebuchanezzer tried to force his will on men. But, the Great God of Heaven and Earth makes you willing, works in you both the WILL and the DO of his good pleasure. How many times have you seen someone who was physically handicapped, sick, crippled and in pain, go sometimes great distances just to see and be with the brethren to hear one of God's humble servants speak of the great things God had done

for his people? How many times have you worked hard all week and your body really needed to rest on Sunday, but you were more than willing to force yourself to get up to go to meeting? I tell you, those who have had the blessed God of Heaven work in them through the Holy Spirit know what I am talking about. They know how their will, wants and desires have been changed, instead of wanting the things of sin as they once did, now they despise them. Furthermore, they hate the part of themselves (the carnal man) that still drags them down and causes them to do things they shouldn't and even don't want to. They say with the Apostle Paul, oh woe is me. But even with all of this, his children are made to praise his great and glorious name to give him the praise and thanks for everything, for they know from where their help cometh.

They know they are being held up with those everlasting arms and have a faith that is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. May it please the good Lord for these few words to bring a little comfort to some of his little ones.

Frank C. Hunt

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

SALEM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Salem Primitive Baptist Church, also known as "Head of the River", was established in 1784. The meeting house is located on 221, three miles south of Copper Hill, Virginia.

In November of 1983 we introduced in the Signs, Salem Church showing their meeting house which was built in 1876, along with a notice of their hopes for building a new building in 1984.

God so wonderfully blessed their efforts and under the ministry of Elder Roy Agee, they now have the new building shown above. A beautiful new church and pleasingly decorated. Elder Agee was so pleased to see it finished, never realizing his funeral would be the first service to be held in the new church. (See his obituary in this issue).

Their meeting time is eleven o'clock on the second Sunday morning of each month and Saturday before at the same time.

The church has recently called Elder Hale Terry as their new pastor.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

SORROW UNTO DEATH

The loneliest thing that can be imagined in all the world was the ark as it went upon the face of the waters. Not another object to be seen on all that wide and dismal waste of water that covered the earth, not even a mountain top. "The waters prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered." Alone upon that dark and dreary expanse, tossed upon that heaving, shoreless flood, with the terrible rain still falling from the black and angry heavens, what scene of greater and more awful desolation can be pictured to the mind; what lonelier object can be imagined?

But there is a scene of greater desolation, of more utter and hopeless loneliness in sorrow and suffering, as the reality is greater than the type. It is Jesus in the wilderness, in the garden, on the cross. When the great deep of God's judgements was broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened to pour out the just wrath of God against sin, only One felt the full power ot that terrible flood. It fell upon Jesus the Son of God, and he was alone in bearing it. He was appointed unto this suffering and prepared for it. The infinite wisdom and power of God in this mystery are "unsearchable and past finding out."

All flesh upon the earth died while the rain was falling, but the ark was prepared to feel the full force and terror of the storm to the end. In that was the salvation of those within the ark. So while death was passed upon all men because of sin, Jesus was prepared to feel all the terrors and pains of that death, and to bear all the curse of that law which condemns all flesh to death, until every jot and tittle of it should be fulfilled, until the last drop of the rain of God's wrath had fallen. It must all fall upon him while in our flesh. His sorrow was unto death while he was yet in this mortal life. He must taste all the bitterness of death before he died. Unconsciousness could not come to relieve him of one pang.

And he was as absolutely alone in that suffering as the ark was alone in the flood. In a wonderful and mysterious sense the life of all his people was in him, and they were "preserved in" him, as all those who were to people the earth after the flood were preserved in the ark. But in his suffering and sorrow while under the curse of the law, he was alone. His disciples could go with him to the garden, but not the the place where extremity of sorrow brought him down to the ground. Three of them, who seemed more closely his companions on special occasions than the rest, could be with him a little farther, but could not yet follow him in his great sorrow. "Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here and watch with me." But they could not watch at that time. They slept for sorrow. The sorrow that prevents sleep was not yet upon them. That sorrow was his. He had looked forward to this hour, for he had come into the world for the suffering of this hour; yet now that it had come, "he began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy." No matter how certain our expectation of any affliction may be, yet we cannot feel it before the time, and then it will appear almost as though we had not foreseen it. This sorrow of Jesus was the greatest and most bitter sorrow and grief that ever

was felt by man. It was by his Spirit, and concerning his suffering, that Jeremiah said, "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger." And again, "I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath," (Lam. i. 12; iii. 1.) Now that the hour had come, his own will as a man, weak before the law because of others' sins, full of terror of soul on account of death under the curse of the law, caused him to cry unto his Father to save him from that hour, and to cause the cup to pass from him if it were possible. So great was his suffering that "an angel appeared unto him from heaven, strengthening him." And even then, "being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." But the strength that the angel brought prevailed. He came down from heaven to do his Father's will, not his own, and his prayer was, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." He must bear the suffering alone. His people cannot share the burden of sorrow, pain and death, with him. It is their salvation that he, the pure and holy Son of God, a spotless sacrifice, bears the awful suffering alone. If that death that fell on him had touched one of them, that one must have suffered an everlasting death. If any of the water of the flood could have broken through the ark to touch one of those within, then the ark, with all it held, must have sunk forever. But it "was pitched within and without," so that it alone should bear the beating of the storm from which the eight souls within are securely shielded.

So Jesus was prepared to suffer to the full alone, and to die alone, in this sense, as a sacrifice. The part his people have in that suffering and death is not with him, but in him.

In the ark the eight souls were saved by water. (1 Peter iii. 20.) The water that drowned all flesh upon the earth lifted the ark and those within it above its own destroying power. So the death that Jesus died raised him and all who were in him above the power of death forever. Death was all that was due for their sin. When he died the wages were fully paid, and when he arose by the power of God, the dominion of death is at an end. Death is abolished, and life and immortality brought to light.

Those who saw the rainbow on Mount Ararat had all been in the ark, and had felt the terror and buffetings of the storm which fell upon the ark, though they had not at the time known what it all was. So those who are able to see the everlasting covenant of grace are manifest as having been saved in Christ

This wonderful story of the sufferings of the dear Savior can never be told to the understanding of any one who had not been already made to feel it in his own experience. It is not by the application of our mental powers that we come to know what Jesus suffered, but by experience. It is a revelation. The disciples, who loved him, and were near him in the garden, could not then know what he was suffering. How much less is our ability to enter into that awful and solemn mystery by our own efforts. It is one thing to have our natural sympathies stirred by reading the inspired recital of his pains and sorrows, and meditating upon them, and quite another thing to feel a measure of those same pains and sorrows within our own souls. In the latter case the poor soul that is experiencing the fellowship of Jesus' sufferings never knows at the time that it is the fellowship of his sufferings that is felt. Those who were in the ark must have been in great terror and perplexity much of the time while they felt the tossing and shaking of the ark, not knowing what was going to become of them. They could not look out around them, for there was only one window, and that

was above. But after the covering was removed from the ark, and they came out on the new earth, then they understood what had been done, and knew the meaning of their strange experience.

In coming into the knowledge of Jesus' sufferings each one is alone. It is so in the beginning of this necessary knowledge, and at every farther advance into this awful mystery the learner is alone. They are led by a solitary way. "They shall mourn apart; every family apart, and their wives apart." Each one says to himself, "No one can be as vile in heart as I." Each one feels his own to be an especial case of depravity. If he has been kept from outbreaking sins, and has not forfeited the respect of men, yet he sees that evil in his heart and in his thoughts which appears to him to set him apart as especially vile. He has to say with Job, "Behold, I am vile, I abhor myself." Yet he cannot feel that he stands where Job was when he said those words.

It is wonderful how this sense of being alone in all our troubles on account of our special sinfulness attends all of the Lord's people, and follows them in a measure all the way through. And yet how seldom it is that during the time of the especial tribulation they ever think that in this they are following the dear Savior. Just what his sufferings were they must know, though only in measure, for it was for them he suffered, and they suffer in him. As soon as the thought come to them that the great tribulation on account of sin that is pressing them down into the depths is because Jesus suffered for that very sin, and that they are mourning "for him whom they have pierced," then the trouble is lifted and they rejoice, though still mourning on accont of sin, and being in bitterness because their sins caused him such awful sorrow and anguish.

What cries for mercy go up from the poor soul while being tossed as it were on the waves of that desolate, shoreless sea. The cries may be unspoken, silent to the ear of any but the Lord, but O, how bitter, how full of anguish they are. Truly they are "groanings that cannot be uttered." What a tender, quieted feeling takes possession of our souls when we first feel a hope that peradventure the Lord hears us. And who can tell the deep joy when we first get a glimpse of the beautiful bow of promise in the cloud, the everlasting covenant of grace, and feel in our souls the blessed promise of the Lord that "the waters shall no more go over the earth," and "that the Lord will no more be wroth with us nor rebuke us." How many a time since that blessed experience we have feared his wrath and felt the rebukes of the gospel, yet that promise has held good, and will be good unto the end, for it is "Yea and amen in Christ Jesus to the glory of God by us."

"As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."—2 Cor. i. 5. So we learn that suffering is the experience of the Lord's people all through their pilgrimage. They have consolation, but it is only according to the suffering of Christ in them, and as the result of those sufferings. When they stand before the throne, beholding the power of God with praise, it is as having come out of great tribulation. When the life of Jesus is made manifest in their mortal flesh, it is because they bear about in their body the dying of the Lord Jesus. (2 Cor. iv. 10) When they are favored to lean upon their Beloved, it is as they are "coming up out of the wilderness."

Now this suffering is not some exalted, holy feeling, such as you, my brother or sister, have imagined belongs only to those who are far above you in purity and goodness, but it is just what you feel of sorrow, shame and self-loathing while you see the evils of your corrupt nature, and the sins and sinful-

ness of your heart and life. This is sometimes proved to you while in humble contrition and selfabasement before God when you are enabled humbly to confess them, and are given the soul-surprising assurance that these very evils and transgressions in thought and word and deed that have made you hate yourself, are the ones that were laid upon the dear Son of God, the very sins for which he died. While in the darkness, with only your sinful flesh in sight, how very much alone you felt, and how your soul was tossed about, and buffeted, and almost overwhelmed, like a ship on the stormy sea; but now as your soul gets a sweet view of Jesus, and rises to a blessed hope that you are feeling the fellowship of his sufferings, you feel like singing praises to his name, and telling to all that fear God what he has done for your soul.

At such times his service is very sweet and comforting. We count it a blessing to feel the Spirit of obedience, and to be enabled to act out that obedience. But how often we are tempted to doubt our motives in our religious works, and fear that we are prompted by the vanity of the flesh. From first to last the experience of the exercised soul leads him to doubt the movements of the flesh, and to earnestly seek unto the Lord to be led by his holy Spirit.

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." When the Spirit of the Lord is searching and probing our hearts, what anxiety, what jealousy we feel lest it be the flesh instead of the Spirit which is leading us, even when we are doing what we know it is the privilege of the Lord's people to do. We question sharply our motives, fearing they are selfish, and that we are not doing all to the glory of God." We are sometimes told that we ought to obey in order that we may feel better, but the word of God and his Spirit do not teach us that, but that "whatsoever we do we should do all to the glory of God." The Spirit alone can lead us in that holy way. Every fleshly motive is selfish, and hence our fear and anxiety.

It does not help and encourage a poor soul who is tried in this way to say to him, "You ought to obey in order that you may feel better." The Saviour's obedience did not make him feel better, but brought him into darkness and into the depths, and filled his soul with bitterness. But what he did was for the glory of God. We may say to one in whom we have seen an experience of grace, "You ought to be baptized; it is your duty. If you obey you will feel better." But his reply may be, "I fear that such a holy privilege is not for such as I. I fear it would not be obedience, but presumption in me to receive that ordinance which belongs to the Lord's people." Now it is for us not to urge such an one forward while his conscience, which is very tender in the fear of the Lord, is filled with such solemn questionings. We can show to him, as we may be enabled, the scriptural marks of those to whom that ordinance belongs, but we must all remember that the assurance in his soul that the sweet command rests upon him must come from the Lord.

Brethren in the ministry, if your obedience to the call which you have felt in your souls to preach the gospel was in order that you might feel better, how many of you would or could go on in that solemn work? Think over your experience in that business which you did not seek, but into which you were thrust. What shrinkings and sinkings of soul you have felt as you have approached the time when you must stand before the people of God, and have tried to begin to try to preach in the name of Jesus, the gospel of his grace. Sometimes your trembling sense of unworthiness, inability and unfitness for that great work have continued through the sermon, and sometimes you have been lifted above yourself,

and you have been filled with the sweetest, holiest joy a poor mortal can feel as you declared, in the power of the spirit, the glad tidings of salvation. Sometimes it has been quiet work, and you have felt thankful that you were in any degree enabled to speak a word in season to him that is weary.

But oh, the trials, the misgivings, the wretched, wearying doubts after your work for the time is done, and you are alone again. What heart-searchings, what questionings whether you have not been preaching yourself more than Christ, whether your glorying was not more in yourself than in the Lord. How many a time you have said to yourself, "Surely I must never undertake to preach again." Well, the Lord knows how to deal with his servants. You have not quit the work yet, nor will you until you have fulfilled the work unto which he has called you. You are not preaching in order that you may feel better, but for the glory of God. You cannot stop, though you feel as though you could not go on. There is a blessedness in the work, even in the sufferings and sinkings down, for in it all Christ is exalted.

And you, poor soul, who look with love and longing upon the ordinances and privileges of the church, and wish that they might be yours, in the Lord's own time the sweet persuasion will be yours that they belong to all who want them. In the Lord's good time the power of his word of sweed command as written in the Scriptures will be felt in your heart: "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her."—Isa. lxvi. 10. We must all wait for the Lord, and, blessed be his name, he always comes "right early." All our times are in his hand, and they can neither be hastened or delayed.

We all see in ourselves enough of disobedience, and enough of sin in the best obedience of our hands, to give us daily errands at the throne of grace, and to bring out of our souls the publican's cry for mercy.

How many of the Lord's dear people go far in disobedience, living after the flesh until they die away from spiritual things. How often we feel that in faithfulness we ought to exhort, reprove or rebuke them, but are held back for fear we are not spiritual, and therefore are not qualified to restore such ones, or thinking that we ourselves need the reproof as much as they, if not more. But we must try to do our duty; yet if it is only as a duty we do anything it is of but little account before God; and if it is only to relieve ourselves of responsibility, and "to feel better," that we do anything, the motive is only a fleshly one.

When the love of Christ constrains us, then love to the erring or needy one will prompt what we do or say, and while we do our work faithfully, and in the fear of the Lord, we shall remember that the Lord only can give repentance. Scolding never restored a wanderer, nor ever honored the Lord. The fire which the Lord kindles on the altar of the heart will never quiet go out. The Lord will brighten it in his own time. He and not man, give the stripes which bring back the children who forsake his law. However far they wander, he knows where they are, and is visiting their transgressions with the rod, as he said he would, and they are often feeling that rod most when to us they appear most defiant and stubborn.

The salvation of God which grace brought to us in our first experience of a hope, is the same salvation which that grace bringeth through all our earthly pilgrimage in every time of need. That grace which bringeth this salvation teaches all the various subjects of it all things in their walk and life which become sound doctrine, and in which that salvation is manifested unto them from day to day, in all the various circum-

stances of their life, and that grace will keep them through faith unto the full and glorious revelation of that salvation in the last time. (1 Peter i. 5.) It is that salvation which the psalmist prays may set him up on high. It is that salvation that appears in all the beautiful order of the church, and which the saints minister to each other while walking in the commands of Jesus. It is the salvation of God of which the apostle speaks when he says to Timothy. "In so doing thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee," and which appears in the faithful ministration of him who converteth a sinning brother from the error of his ways, when he thus "saves a soul from death and hides a multitude of sins." The saints have no salvation of their own to handle, and deal in, and minister, separate from the salvation of God. Jesus is our salvation, and to him the poor soul cries in time of darkness and distress, "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." Without Jesus, our salvation, we can do nothing. He is our Sun, and his salvation, like the sunlight, reaches "to the ends of the heaven, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof." That salvation will not fail any of the saints. Who speaks of another salvation which is not of grace, but of works? That salvation, and the grace that brings it, are sufficient for us in all our times of need. They appear in the obedient walk of the faithful people of God, who walking in his fear and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost are edified and multiplied, (Acts ix. 3) and also in the rod and the stripes with which our faithful and loving Saviour visits his erring children, and restores them to the joys of his salvation. All our times are in his hand, and provisions of grace and salvation are made for each of them. The child of God who has gone farthest in rebellion and sin, when, restored to his right mind, feeble and sore broken, humble and contrite, crying bitterly, he feels the sweet and compassionate and loving beams of salvation falling softly into his sorrowing soul, has to say, "Behold, what wondrous grace and mercy that could save such a sinner as I." And the most obedient child of God, as he looks over his life, and contemplates his labors in the Lord, and the love and fellowship which the brethren have manifested to him, and then sees in his own heart and life such evidences of a depraved nature as sink him into the dust, wonders at the mercy which, like Paul, he has obtained of the Lord to be faithful, is astonished that he has been kept in the comfort of obedience while others have been suffered to wander far away, and suffer much for disobedience, and instead of feeling that any praise or reward is due to him, he says, "What have I that I did not receive? If God had dealt with me according to my deserts, I should not have stood. To him be all the praise. It was not I that did these works of obedience, 'but the grace of God which was with me'." So the most faithful saint on earth, joins with the worst backslider when restored to the manifest favor of and says, "By the grace of God I am what I am," and there is no one left out of that heavenly choir when they sing in perfect accord, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake."

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND

MEETINGS

CANAAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God, Canaan looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift. They, therefore, called for a presbytery to be formed the 14th day of October,

1984 at 2:30 p.m at Canaan Primitive Baptist Church, Pittsylvania County, Virginia, for the purpose of examination of this gift, brother Harvey Wood and if found qualified, be ordained to the full work and service of deacon.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together. The meeting was opened by prayer by Elder O. K. Tench. Elder J. R. Williams was elected as moderator and Deacon B. B. Williams to serve as clerk. Brother Richard Stegall, acting as spokesman for the church, delivered Brother Harvey Wood to the presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon was read as set forth in scriptures in the third chapter of Timothy, verses one through eight by Elder O. K. Tench. Examinations followed by Elders Lane Carter and Haywood Wray. The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of this candidate proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder Leonard Key. The charge was delivered to Brother Harvey Wood by Elder J. R. Williams and Elder Noel Conner. He was then delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon.

Participating in the presbytery were the following Elders and Deacons:

Elders: J. R. Williams, O. K. Tench, Lane Carter, Haywood Wray, Leonard Key, and Noel Conner.

Deacons: Richard Stegall, Raymond May, Fred Murphy, Claude Hopins, Wilson King, Clay Brown, Russell Holley, Marvin Brumfield, Stafford Houston, Coley Strader, Silas Payne and B. B. Williams.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. A copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to be sent to the Signs of The Times for publication and a copy to be given to Deacon Harvey Wood.

The presbytery was dismissed by prayer by Elder O. K. Tench.

Elder J. R. Williams, Moderator
Deacon B. B. Williams, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR OCTOBER 1984

Mrs. Donald Arne, SD.	$15.00
Mrs. Donald Arne, SD.	$15.00
Ora S. Conner, VA.	2.00
Lee Gooch, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Gilbert L. Coate, WA.	2.00
Mrs. Luther Procter, NC.	1.00
Elder Gerald Shipman, TX.	2.00
Fred Murphy, AR.	2.00
Mrs. Mamie Moran, VA.	1.00
Frank & Ella Simpkins, VA.	12.00
Marjorie Harris, CA.	2.00
Mrs. Doris Rowland, VA.	2.00
Raymond C. May, VA.	5.00
R. L. Fleenor, TN.	7.00

OBITUARIES

ELDER JAMES LEROY (ROY) AGEE

It is with a feeling of much sadness that I attempt to comply with Salem Churches request to write an obituary of our dear belated pastor whom we feel is at rest.

Elder James LeRoy (Roy) Agee, age 71, died August 6, 1984. He was a member and pastor of Salem Primitive Baptist Church, also pastor of Paynes Creek and Laurel Creek, all of Floyd Virginia. He served as co-pastor of Valley View Church of Riner, Virginia. For the past eleven years, he had served as moderator of the Smith River Association.

Survivors include two sons, Donald L. Agee, Christiansburg, Virginia and Larry J. Agee of King, North Carolina; three step-sons, Melvin and Donald Gearhart, both of Copper Hill, Virginia and Larry Gearhart of Salem, Virginia; his mother, Sarah Moran Agee, Christiansburg, Virginia; six sisters, Ruie Poff, Ruby Hawley, Doris Hawley, Frances Lewis, Madeline Bonham and three brothers, Rosco, Andrew and Floyd Jr.; four grandchildren and seven step-grandchildren.

Brother Roy walked humbly and softly among his brethren preaching most firmly that Salvation is by Grace and Grace is a gift of God. His foremost conversation was to talk on the scriptures. The Lord's exact time had come for Brother Roy's departure. His work on earth was finished, the battle was fought and though he had fought in much weakness of body, he was blessed by the grace of God to serve his churches faithfully, visiting the sick, his brethren, friends and neighbors. He was loved by many as proof of the host who filled the Salem Church on August 9th for his funeral. Elders Amos Hash and Raymond Goad conducted his funeral with many comforting words, afterwhich he was laid to rest in the Restvale Cemetery. May we all who mourn his departure be reconciled to His Holy Will and be comforted to know that our loss is his eternal gain.

Approved in conference October 13, 1984 by the church that a copy be made in the church records, one sent to the Signs of The Times, one for the Smith River Association Minutes and a copy be sent to the family.

Submitted in loving memory of our dear pastor.

Mary Poff, Clerk
Willie Ratliff, Asst. Clerk

IRMA L. MESSICK

Our Heavenly Father caller from our midst a dear sister and friend, Sister Irma L. Messick on June 20, 1984 at the age of eighty-two.

She was born April 30, 1902 in Whitesvillel, Delaware, the daughter of Smiley and Hannah Birttingham. Sister Irma united with Little Creek Church, Delmar, Delaware and was baptized May 11, 1968. She was a faithful member and is sadly missed.

Her late husband Edmund P. Messick, Sr. died in 1966. She is survived by five sons; Edmund P. Jr. of Minquadale, Howard T., Robert J. and Donald H. all of Delmar and James A. of Salisbury, Maryland. One brother, Reese Brittingham of Delmar and a sister Doris H. Simion of Detroit, Michigan. Three grandchildren and a great-grandchild.

Services were held at Marvel-Short Funeral Home in Delmar with the Elders Robert N. Lackey, James F. Poole and Lou G. Bradly all of Salisbury, Maryland officiating with burial in Little Creek Church cemetery in Delmar.

Maggie M. Jones, Clerk

SISTER ETHEL V. ROEBUCK

Sister Ethel V. Roebuck was born September 23, 1893, in Martin County, N. C., the daughter of Samuel and Sally Blount Roebuck. She departed this life on May 9, 1984, making her life on earth almost 91 years. She was married to Connor Roebuck who preceded her in death. She was blessed with six children and four of these preceded her in death.

Sister Ethel asked for a home with Flat Swamp Primitive Baptist Church,

first Saturday in March, 1961, and was baptized the following Wednesday in Rogers Pond by Elder W. E. Grimes. She remained a loving and humble member as long as she lived. She attended church regularly until she became unable to attend the last three years of her life. After she became unable to live alone, her two sons provided a home for her and looked after her welfare.

We realize her two sons will miss her very much, but we Pray God may comfort them, the grandchildren and her sister with the presence of His love and tender mercy.

Flat Swamp Church will miss her, and we express deepest sympathy to her family. We extend to them a desire to have them visit us at Flat Swamp Church at any time. We feel she has gone to that rest prepared for God's children to await that final call.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Reeves Smith, at Biggs Funeral Home in Robersonville, N.C. She was laid to rest under beautiful flowers in Robersonville Cemetery in the presence of her family and many friends.

Done by the order of Conference, Saturday before the first Sunday in May, 1984.

Elder Reeves Smith, Moderator
Hassel Allen, Clerk
Sister Johnnie Gray Everett
Hassel Allen, Committee

LELIA ODELLE WELLS

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write the obituary of my sister in the flesh and I hope sister in Christ. Sister Odelle was the daughter of Eugene and Mae Compton, she was born July 29, 1909, and departed this life December 23rd, 1983. She was married to John Edward Wells, to this union was born one son, John Edward Jr. Her husband passed away three years after their marriage. She leaves to mourn her, her only son John Edward, and two granddaughters, Mrs. Cathie Hunt of Connecticut and Ms. Caroline Wells of Roanoke. She also leaves six sisters and three brothers and numerous neices and nephews.

Sister Odelle spent most of her young life caring for her son and her small sisters and brothers that were left when her mother died at the early age of forty-six. She cared for them until they were all married even though her father remarried.

Sister Odelle united with North Fork Church and proved to be a faithful member. Her Pastor was Elder Raymond Payne. Elder Rufus Brown baptized her. She was chosen Clerk of her Church soon after she joined and filled her seat as long as she was able until she became ill. She was a devoted sister and a good neighbor. The greatest tribute she left in her memory was her love for her church and the Lord and Savior.

She was laid to rest in North Fork Cemetery to await the Glorious coming of our Lord and Savior. Truly it can be said she was willing to spend all and be spent for those she loved.

Written by a loving sister,
Ada Campbell

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POETRY

Could we with ink the ocean fill,
And were the skies of parchment made;
Were every stalk on earth a quill,
And every man a scribe by trade.
To write the love of God above,
Would drain the ocean dry.
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky.

From the collection of J. Burch Blaylock

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Dellie Pickeral
Oscar Lee Presley
Maude T. Pruitt

EDITORIAL

"For by grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." **Ephesians 2:8-10.**

All people receive what we may term a grace in a natural way, in having a being, a life, and the preservation of it with the mercies of life such as food and raiment, yea, even the very air that we breathe which man is unworthy of. But the special or particular grace of God which is applied to some people only such as electing, redeeming, justifying, pardoning, adopting, calling, and sanctifying grace is what we are, I hope, interested in.

May we now look at the grace of God as displayed in acts of goodness toward his people. The grace of God when displayed toward his people is an act of love, mercy, and goodness bestowed upon them. It is no other than love unmerited and undeserved, exercising and communicating itself to them by Christ in a free and generous manner. The grace of God arises from the goodness of His nature and not from anything in the creature; and is exercised according to His own sovereign will and pleasure. *"I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy."* **Exodus 33:19.**

First, the grace of God appears in the election of His people to everlasting life and is therefore called the election of grace and is denied to be of works. *"Even so then at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work."* **Romans 11:5-6. This act of the grace of God was passed on in His eternal mind before any works were done, good or evil, and without any consideration of them.** *"For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth."* **Romans 9'11.**

May we at this time view some cases of God's dealings with His people as recorded in the word of truth. First, let us view the case of Rahab, the harlot. *"And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and came into an harlot's house, named Rahab and lodged there."* **Joshua 2:1. I believe they were divinely directed to Rahab's house even though it was not likely the two spies were personally conscious of it, at least, until after they had arrived there. God's providence sometimes acts silently by working in us** *"Both to will and*

to do of His good pleasure." **Phil. 2:13. The two spies may have thought they acted freely in going to Rahab's house, yet their steps were "ordered by the Lord."**

It seems clear from the scriptures that Rahab was converted before the two spies entered her home, for she said unto the two men: *"I know that the Lord hath given you the land." "For the Lord, your God, He is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath."* **Joshua 2:9, 11. Surely the language is that of a believer.** *"By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she received the spies with peace."* **Heb. 11:31. It is indeed a rare sight to see one stand alone for a righteous cause when surrounded by her own idolatrous people who believed not. This change in Rahab's heart came about only by the operation of God's divine grace. Rahab, being a Canaanite was a complete "stranger to the covenant of promise." There were no scriptures for her to read, no preachers so as to hear the gospel. She had been playing the role of a harlot, and was "by nature a child of wrath, even as others." There was nothing in this poor sinful woman to commend her to God. By her own choice she was given up to the vilest of sins. But by the divine mercy of God, she was predestinated a chosen vessel in Christ Jesus from all eternity.** *"Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."* **Romans 5:20.** *"But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love, wherewith he loved us. Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved.)"* **Ephesians 2:4-5. Do we not see in Rahab's case (as well as our own) the wondrous workings of God's power in His exercise of divine sovereignty and the manifestation of divine grace? God being the Supreme Judge is not bound by any law other than his own free will, and therefore he will** *"have mercy on whom he will have mercy and on whom he will he hardeneth."*

The great Apostle Paul whose name was changed from Saul to Paul is another example of *"By grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." "Not of works."* **Saul was in authority when Stephen was stoned to death.** *"And cast him out of the city and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul."* **Acts 7:58.** *"And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem." "As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and hailing men and women committing them to prison."* **Acts 8: 1, 3. Saul was filled with fury against the church up to the very moment of his conversion, and believed that in persecuting them he was rendering the highest service to God. He did not seem to doubt that what he was doing was of a righteous nature. Saul was a religious man who believed in the works of the law as a means of his salvation. He fully despised the new sect and their crucified Messiah and regarded them as religiously dangerous. How many people in this world today, who profess to be religious, consider the blessed truth (as it is in Christ Jesus) to be dangerous? Paul was, by the grace of God, called from the darkness and ignorance which he was dead in, into the marvelous light of God's grace.**

After Paul's conversion, he was a new man and was shown what he must do which was a spiritual work the ages would bless. He was "baptized" and was with the Lord's disciples several days at Damascus. He became a member of a noble brotherhood of Christians. The lion had become a lamb. Why? Because of his good works? No, because he was a chosen vessel unto the Lord and was ordained for a great work unto the Lord. He bore the name of the Lord to the Gentiles. When we look at Paul's conversion, can we not say that it was from

first to last the work of the Lord, the work of His grace and mercy toward Paul? *"I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy."* Can we not look back on our own experience (if we have experienced a change and have been given a blessed hope) and say the same? Paul by his sudden transition was made to realize the impossibility of man saving himself or to have any part in his eternal salvation. He was given to see his total dependence upon the sovereign grace of God and the redeeming work of Jesus Christ through his death and resurrection. I trust we have all (by the grace of God) been shown the same.

The conversion of the thief upon the cross was indeed a great display of divine grace and mercy. The cross of Christ is to some a saviour of life unto life and to others death unto death. To them that perish it is foolishness, but to them that are saved, it is the wisdom of God and the power of God. Matthew and Mark both record that they who were crucified with Jesus, reviled him which seems that both may have reviled him at first while hanging on their crosses. But by the grace of God, the heart of one was changed in a moment. The one changed when ready to fall into the hands of Satan was plucked as a brand out of the fire and made a monument of divine grace and mercy.

The thief was given faith to believe that the kingdom of Christ was of a spiritual nature and not of this world. He was also given faith to believe that Christ was the Messiah and was without doubt that Christ would enter into his kingdom and glory after death. The thief said to our Lord Jesus, *"Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."* Luke 23:42. This was a prayer of a dying sinner to a dying saviour. Jesus grants a blessed favor to him. *"This day thou shalt be with me in paradise."* (verse 43) What a glorious display of God's grace, love, and mercy rendered to one of his elect vessels in the last few minutes of his natural life. *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast."*

"By grace are ye saved." This is a spiritual salvation contrived and secured in the covenant of grace for those who are of Christ's love. It is applied to His people by the Holy Spirit who applies it in faith and hope. Because of the certainty of it, they are said to be already saved through Christ their head. It is a salvation from sin, Satan, the law, its curse, justice, and from death and the wrath to come. It includes all the blessings of grace and glory and is entirely owing to free and sovereign grace.

This grace involves all the three persons in the Godhead, for men are saved by the grace of the Father who drew the plan of salvation. The Father made a covenant with the Son, in which it is provided and secured, and sent him into the world to obtain it. By the grace of the Son it is provided and secured. The grace of the Holy Spirit makes his people sensible of the need of it and supplies it to them giving them faith to hope in it. For it says, *"through faith and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God."* Salvation is through faith, not as a cause or condition of salvation, or as what adds anything to the blessing itself, but is the way, or means, or instrument which God has appointed for the receiving and enjoyment of it. Faith is not the product of man's free will, but is is the gift of God. Salvation through faith is consistent with salvation by grace.

The elect of God were chosen in Christ Jesus from all eternity. They were given to Christ as his bride, as his church. The death of Christ was the means set apart from before the foundation of the world for the saving of them. Christ died as a sponsor *"For when we were without strength in due time, Christ died for the ungodly."* Romans 5:6. The grace of God toward

his people is independent of all merit and worth in them. *"Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."* 2 Tim. 1:9. Grace is not grace unless it is altogether free.

The very statement that we are saved bygrace implies that we are fit subjects for grace; and who are fit subjects for grace but the guilty, the wretched, the condemned? When the law of God condemns us and brings us guilty before God and like an iron bolt, closes the gates of heaven against us in our feelings; yet this cannot be so if salvation be of grace. Whatever our many sins may be, their greatness will only serve to illustrate the greatness of God's grace, for *"Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound,"* Rom. 5:20. Undeserved mercy can pardon one sin as well as another. If God acted on the rule of merit with us, then no sin would be pardonable; but when God deals with us in a way of grace, he can pass by any offence as seeing us in Christ Jesus, for *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."* Rom. 8:1.

If salvation be of pure mercy only, why should not God forgive ten thousand sins as well as one? To blot out ten thousand sins is with him no effort of grace, for *"He is plenteous in mercy,"* Psa. 86:5. The Lord's mercy is an ocean which cannot be filled though mountains of sins be cast into it. You may say, I believe God can save me but my nature is so inclined to sin, especially inclined to certain kinds of sins; but remember God does not deal with his people according to nature. *"For we were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."* God does not deal with us on the grounds of our nature, but upon the blood and righteousness of his only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus. Why should the harlot perish? Why should the thief perish? Why should the murderer perish? For thus saith the Lord, *"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red as crimson, they shall be as wool."* Isa. 1:18.

You may feel as I so often do and say, why do my thoughts and even my acts be so involved in worldly things? O, Lord, teach me to pray, let me not pray as the Pharisee offering up a legal plea that is based upon self. There is nothing in me, O, Lord, but sins and corruption. My sins are laid before thy all seeing eyes as the grains of sand on the seashore. My words are laid bare before thee. Lord, save me from these black and foul things for thy infinite mercy's sake. Lord, thou art merciful, thy mercy will find ample scope in me. Lord, thou are the great physician, I'm sick through and through of my sins. Lord, is not thy mercy free? Come to me, O, Lord, for thy mercy will find a grievousness of misery in me. Lord, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgression. *"Have mercy upon me, O, God, according to thy lovingkindness. According unto the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin."* Psa. 51: 1, 2.

"By grace are ye saved." The statement of the text means that all his people need saving. Saving from our sins, and from the consequences of them: And if we are saved, it is not because of any works which we have already performed. Neither are we saved on account of any works foreseen which are yet to be performed by us. Who among his quickened children, upon looking back on his past life, would dare say that he deserves salvation? Thank God that *"Christ died for the ungodly"* and that *"He came into the world to save sinners. By grace are ye saved."* This is true of every saint on earth and every saint in heaven. May

God have mercy upon us all is my prayer.

In bonds of love,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Psalm 116:15

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

REED CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Reed Creek Primitive Baptist Church was constituted December 4, 1823 in Henry County, Virginia, being a charter church of the Pig River Association which was organized in 1825. The Church is located on Reed Creek Rd., off highway 220 North, two miles beyond Bassett Forks, Bassett, Virginia.

Their meeting time is eleven o'clock every second Sunday morning. Elder J. R. Hollingsworth is their present pastor.

CORRESPONDENCE

EXPERIENCE

I have always thought that the hardest thing in Scripture to believe is that God sent his Son down from heaven to save sinners; to fetch home again his banished; that his banished be not expelled from him, (2 Sam. xiv. 13, 14; Gen.

iii. 23, 24) the more especially if they are or were as great sinners as the record in my conscience reports of me. The Bible is and always has been easy of belief with me, the story of creation, of the flood, of Sodom and Gomorrah, the Exodus, the Jews and the history of Jesus our Lord, all is easy reading until I come to his laying down his life and taking it again to save ungodly sinners, unspeakably vile as I know mankind to be. Well, yes, it may be so, I assent, the Scripture says it is that way; perhaps he wanted to save people not for what they are as worth saving, but for the educational possibilities in them as vessels of mercy. Yes, I could follow that far, but there came a time when discussions of the extent of the atonement, and of the mercy of God, ceased to charm me in sermon, book or sweet conversation, and a new question startled me, Was I embraced in the plan of salvation? Did Christ love me and give himself for me? That was Paul's limitation of the atonement. The audacity of the man's faith, as I thought of it, and spoke of it. There was another me that I was carrying about with me. This me, to me the most important me in all the world and the most hateful, for in me there was no good thing, not one, only sin. I saw no door of hope, no way of escape for this me, nor from this me. It would exhaust the plan of salvation to save me. Anybody else might in mercy be reached, but mine was an outside case. But this train of reflection was not so appalling when I was young, a lad, a youth, for in those bright, halcyon days I was taught and believed unquestioningly that sincere people could join the church by complying with certain conditions that entitled them to claim the promise. "Do your part and God will do his," was the formula. I accepted the contract when I was nearly seventeen years old, and tried to believe I had the remission of my past sins. There was something akin to comfort in that frame of mind, but what the readers of this experience understand by "the joy of salvation," "joy unspeakable and full of glory," I had no conception until forty-seven years later, when it pleased God to show me his salvation, (there is but one,) and call me by his grace out of marvelous darkness into his marvelous light. For which I hope to thank and praise him ten thousand years from now.

As I was saying, the time came after forty years wandering in the wilderness of theological controversy and confusion, when I saw there was no salvation for me in the plans expounded from the various pulpits and presses of the times. I felt that I was lost, had sinned beyond possibility of forgiveness. I had no doubt of it, and so I told Elders and brethren and sisters in Tennessee and Georgia, and finally in despair one night in Columbus, Ga., I prayed God to relieve me or kill me, for I was utterly unworthy to live longer in his world. I felt to be the worst and most inexcusable sinner that did ever live. Mine was the misery of remorse, and the goadings and stings and tauntings of a wounded spirit. I had sinned against light and knowledge, not merely the sin of nature, that our preachers speak of as inherited from Adam, but sure enough sins, for I had broken the commandments again and again, and so I said to God, always adding, "Is there not one crumb left for me on thy table, or under it?" I had in other years often made and prayed fashionable prayers, but in these four dismal years of trouble and woe and sorrow I had to pray a prayer borrowed from a despised publican, who stood afar off, and would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner."

There comes times when that same prayer wells up in my heart, bubbles from my lips and streams from my eyes. Yet tears of contrition, but not of despair, fill my eyes as I write.

To begin at the beginning, I was born of wealthy parentage, grew up proud and wayward, went to school ten or twelve years, was in two colleges, joined a new church in my seventeenth year, (there have been seven new churches come in since my arrival,) and was ordained to preach the doctrine of the new church when I was turned twenty-one, and preached it twenty-five years. Then I studied, and I may say became proficient in a church newer by eight years, and preached its doctrines fourteen years, when it pleased God that I should see that there was no salvation for me in either of these splendid organizations. Then the darkness of Egypt fell upon me. I knew that I was a doomed and damned man "without hope and without God in the world." I then undertook a review of all current theologies, designing to pick out the good, the beautiful and true in each, and construct a composite theology, a mosaic system, that would wash. I went deep into the mines of comparative theology, and found wood, hay and stubble in abundance, but of gold, silver and precious stones not a gem. Chaff and trash in plenty, but of the "corn of heaven" not a grain. Meantime my sins were crushing my poor soul with mountain weight. Whither should I fly for refuge? The Arminian cities of refuge I had thoroughly explored. There was no safety there for me, this me, the only me, of all the me's in the world, that I was especially concerned for, what is to become of me?

My concern about myself came of certain events prearranged in the providence, and as I now have the happiness to think of them as the predestination of God, who works all things together for good to them that love him, and are called according to his purpose in Christ Jesus, before the sun began to shine, or ever the world was. In those dateless depths there was a book written containing the names of the future citizens of Messiah's kingdom and given to him and called most significantly "the Lamb's book of life," because he, as a condition of his inheriting the headship over them, collectively called "the city of God," must wash them from their sins in his own blood and purify them for himself a peculiar people, the word "peculiar" meaning a purchased possession. Happy they whose names were written in that book. Whatever may betide them in "this time world," as brethren speak, "they shall never perish." Alleluia and Amen, world without end, they shall never perish! O, in those dark days of my trouble of which I have told you, my dread and fear and horror was that I should without doubt perish forever.

My father and mother of God's own choosing, joined the Old Baptist church the Sunday I was just six weeks old. When I was about four years I heard my first sermon; it was preached by Elder Russian, at old Mars Hill Church, in Williamson Co., Tenn. I sat by mother and was very happy. I do not remember a word he said, but I have the pleasant picture of him on my heart, and I caught his delightful solemn tone of voice, and when a little older in that same tone used to climb the dogwood trees and preach to the negroes as they were clearing new ground. One night there was a meeting at our house, and my blessed Old Baptist mother shouted, (she was about twenty-eight or thirty then) and you see I have not forgotten that shouting. I might go back, if you can bear so tedious a narrative, and say that Dr. John M. Watson was our family physician, and was present the Sunday morning when I was born. When I was grown and preaching the most brilliant of the varieties of Arminianism, he told me that he had dandled me on his knees many a time. He was the greatest Old Baptist minister of his day. His last words were, "I am going in peace." O, that God would give me to go that way!

Me again. Yes, and you and all our brethren and sisters.

One morning when I was about ten years old I stood before my mother; she was sitting on the lower step of the stairway, and told her that last night I dreamed of seeing the Savior. I had jumped off the hill back of our house and lit in an open plain, and there stood the Lord. With his right hand he smote me on the left cheek about as my mother might smite me when she was vexed, (though I remember nothing of that sort from her) and then said, "Now, Sheppard, be a better boy." Mother turned pale and went up stairs, I now think to weep and pray and rejoice at the visitation of her Lord to her boy, who, she told one of her lady visitors, she thought "would be a mighty good man, or a mighty bad one." The Lord appeared to me in that dream. I shall know him when I see him again. His tall figure, his kingly, benevolent, concerned look as he said those words to me, will never fade from memory. When in my trouble I related this part of my experience to a company of Old Baptist preachers, in Butler, Ga., Elder Respess said, "Brethren the Lord has been working with this man from his childhood." When I related it in Elder Veach's house he said, "That is when you were quickened into life."

"Now, Sheppard, be a better boy." That was my authoritative conviction of sin, to be followed by conviction of righteousness, and then of judgment. But I did not become a better boy. I was a bad boy; conscience smote me day and night. "Conscience of sin" followed Sheppard, always at his heels, giving him no rest except such as Arminian opiates afford, and they, you know, only make the case worse, as our Savior pointed out in the case of a certain woman who spent her all paying physicians, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse. There is only one physician for a sin-sick soul, and by his knowledge he justifies and cures, "for he bears their iniquities."

"Now Sheppard, be a better boy," has been ringing in the chambers of my soul through all my pilgrimage, over three oceans, in foreign lands, on the Rocky Mountains, and I hope in company with mother to thank the Redeemer for that first visitation.

The next time I saw him, the same Jesus, was in vision, 9 o'clock Tuesday morning, Sept. 28th, 1886, in an upper room in a young banker's house, Fort Valley, Ga. There deploring my woeful condition, reading Romans six, a chapter or two in Galatians and Philippians, all of a sudden, in the twinkling of an eye, from feeling that I was the greatest sinner in the world, I was made to feel that I was no sinner at all. Christ whom I saw in the vision, the scene was as plain as was the original reality. He was there dead on his cross, having borne all my sins away 1789 years before I was born. From being the most miserable of all born of woman, I was given to feel the happiest man that ever lived. That very hour, as many a time since, I called on the angels to help me praise God for sending his son to save sinners. I wanted to fill the vaulted dome of the eternal mansions with hallelujahs. At last my burden was gone, and conscience free from guilt. Christ had died for me. I saw him there that hour seeming to hold himself on the cross. You know he had to lay down his life. "No man taketh it from me. I lay it down of myself." All that scene is as plain to me now as it was that Tuesday, 28th of September, 1886, seventeen years ago. But it was with me as in the call of the chief of sinners on his way to Damascus; there was a light above the brightness of the sun laid down upon the bright light of that morning, and it was all over the face of the world eight hours, whichever way I looked. Whether that light was in the body or out of the body, I have never felt to inquire; one thing I do know, that light was there, a

soft, benevolent, heavenly, restful light, and it was spread over a vast plane. On that plane there was nothing to break the level seemingly ninety miles in its sweep, saving the projection of a large rock, mostly buried in the ground, like the church I was destined to join, most of its members in the dust of the earth, waiting for the "better resurrection." Only a small portion of this church visible now. And I was to live alone on this wide plane. So it has so far turned out, only now and then finding rest in "the shadow of the great Rock in a weary land." I have not known how otherwise to interpret this part of the vision. O, I was so glad that day, so happy, so full of joy, words fail me to describe it to you.

Next thing in order I knew I must be baptized by somebody that knew how it was done, and what for. I had, as I thought, been baptized already not once but twice before. There must be no mistake about the matter this time. The oldest church without a historical founder was the Old Baptist; they were the humblest of religious folk; they were sweethearted, no big I's nor little u's among them. I was on all sides descended of Old Baptist stock. I always venerated the Old Baptist church and people.

The next spring after the marvelous light into which I was delivered, out of the marvelous darkness, at Fort Valley, as above narrated, I went before the tribunal of God at Butler, Ga., was received and baptized by order of the church, by Elder John Rowe, lately deceased, and I was again as happy as a soul overwhelmed with the love of God could be. O, I was so happy. Soon after this I had to endure the trial of permitting a brother to wash my feet in church. I submitted with what grace I could, but when I got down on my knees to wash his feet, I was in heavenly places in Christ then; I felt like a big lump of nothing. When you want to get close to God, you must descend the depths of humility, as indeed you had to do when you joined the Old Baptist church. Whatever you may think of them, there is no people like them on the face of the earth. They are the only people I know that believe their own religion. They worship in spirit, and live by the faith of the Son of God, who loves them now, and loved them before all time, and to the ages of the ages. The Spirit of God in their hearts enables them to bow at his feet to lay hold of the robe of the eternal Majesty, look up into his face, and with the feeling of little children cry, "Abba, Father," confident that he knows what they want. Their only fear is that they do not behave themselves as prettily as his children ought. What a joy it is to me to be one in the unity of the Spirit with them; to be recognized by even one of them.

This poor relation of my sweet experience admits of a word of comment. I submit to your judgment whether the history of it from "Now, Sheppard, be a better boy," to the vision of the Redeemer on his cross, and the great light laid down above the brightness of that bright Tuesday's scene, and the inward feeling of peace and joy, was not the work of the divine Spirit. What but the holy Spirit's power could possibly make a sinner knowing himself vile and guilty feel that he was no sinner at all, Christ having suffered for him the just for the unjust, and this relief coming on him not gradually, not by a course of reasoning, but suddenly and abiding to comfort him with hope as one of the heirs of salvation? O, it must have been the operation of God. I was a saved man, saved, yes, that is the word. I know my unworthiness before and since, but am afraid to lay anything to the charge of God's elect. See Romans viii. 32-39. O, let me rejoice in hope of the grace to be brought to his people at the coming of the Lord in that day.

In another dream or vision, glorious beyond words to tell, I saw for the third

time the Lord, the same that appeared to me at first, on the Mount Zion, surrounded by the thousands of thousands of his saints in white robes, and golden girdles, and he was placing diadems upon their heads, with a word of welcome to each one. Thus in my case the holy Spirit, may I not believe, convinced me of sin, "Now, Sheppard, be a better boy," then of righteousness, Jesus by his death having fulfilled the righteousness of the law in my stead, and then of judgment when he received and crowned his purchased ones with the immortal life? Yea, let me believe and cherish all this; I can, I do, and fall at his feet a sinner saved by grace, amen and amen.

Yours in hope of a better life,

WM. S. SPEER

Benton, Ark., June 8, 1903.

"THOU SHALT CALL HIS NAME JESUS."

NAME divinely given, coined in heaven's mint, and then brought to earth and given to an infant lying in a manger. Emmanuel, God with us. Divinity and humanity form an alliance never to be served again. God and man one for evermore. The highest glory of God made manifest in the depths of humility, poverty and weakness. Extremes are blended in one person, and he the sinner's only friend. No wonder many were astonished at the birth of him who was set for the falling and rising again of many in Israel. "He shall save his people from their sins." And he said, "I will redeem them from death."

Here reason fails, princes are turned backwards, and the mighty are fallen to the earth, their crowns are laid down, and their honor perisheth, for this is the King of Nations, and the Lord of heaven; the wise seek to him for wisdom, and princes pay him homage at his feet. Truly, God's strength is made perfect in weakness, weakness of the Lord Christ, that infant wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laying in a manger. Did two such extremes ever thus meet before, and blend together in such harmonious unity? No, and they never will again, save in the salvation of sinners, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. No wonder that the angels desire to look into this mystery: God manifest in the flesh. He who flung abroad the heavens, and hung abroad the stars as chandeliers of light, dwelt in the babe of Bethlehem, and became a man too poor to pay his taxes.

Did ever such wealth and poverty meet? Yes, here it is in the Lord of glory without where to lay his head; the foxes were richer than he, in whom it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell. He who was rich, for our sakes, became poor, that we through his poverty, might be made rich. All is yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. For this he wept and prayed, died, and purchased all things with his blood, which was more precious than gold. O, righteous Father, the glory thou hast given unto me, I have given unto them. O, peerless boon of eternal joy, and sinner, it is thine through the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and by faith in his name, who died and rose again. For by faith we enter into this grace, wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

I'm rich to all intents of bliss
If Christ the Lord be mine.

Art thou poor, without house or home or shelter, wandering in deserts, and mountains, and caves of the earth? He had not where to lay his head. Do the tax gleaners vex thy soul, and cast thee into prison for debt? He wrought a miracle to pay his own tax, and in his poverty thou art rich, rich in faith, and heir to an immortal throne within the jasper walls of

the heavenly Jerusalem which is above, and is the mother of us all. Hast thou no friends? Thou shalt find them there. Hast thou no home? Thou shalt own a mansion there bought with the blood of Jesus, and garnished with all the graces of everlasting love. Yea, God is thy Rock and Portion forever. Are thy garments vile and filthy? His spotless robe of righteousness shall cover thee. Is thy body misshapen and earthy? Thou shalt be like him, in the image of his glorious body, wearing that glory which was his before the world began. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." "We through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." These are the words of the Holy Ghost, by the lips of an apostle of the Lamb of God, whose blood cleanseth from all sin. Art thou a sinner then, and believest in his name? Then his blood avails for thee, and even death is thine, as the passage way to mansions in the skies. This is a present salvation, and that not on conditions of subsequent obedience, which Jesus wrought out and finished when he died, for what God hath promised, he is able also to perform through the cross of Christ, for the cross of Christ is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us who are saved, it is the power of God and the wisdom of God.

"And thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." This is the word of promise, which is embraced in the oath of God to Abraham and to his seed. Ye are saved by faith now, and shall be to all eternity, and though the earth be removed and cast into the depths of the sea, I will not fear nor be troubled. God is my Rock and portion forever, and underneath are the everlasting arms. The divinity of Christ in humanity is embosomed forever in the eternal God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was "Crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but shall live with him by the power of God toward you," says Paul, who was at the head of the saints of God in weakness. So much I have written for the babe in the manger.

Your brother,
I. N. NEWKIRK

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102 Lake Ave.
Salem, Va. 24153
August, 1984

Mark 15:34

At the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice saying, *"My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?"* Brethren, I must admit that this is a deep subject, and I might say, what does man know about such a great, terrible and glorious thing as this. Terrible, because such a deed was done by wicked men, glorious in the fact that God loved His people with such a deep love that He made this great sacrifice that His people could stand before Him holy and without spot or blemish. Let me be the first to say that myself, the worm that I am, the least of the least should not be trying to write on such a subject. I will not try to make any excuses, but suffice it to say, I must write on it. This scripture has been on my mind, I do believe for a peroid of perhaps a year. I do believe I must write, so we will take it from there. May the comforter who leads us into all truth direct this pen to the extent that this may be a comfort to some of God's poor people.

Many times I have heard our own ministers speak of the terrible physical pain that was suffered in a death by crucifixion, and speak of how our Saviour must have suffered. Please don't get me wrong, I agree that it must have been

terrible. The very thought of such a death proves to me over and over again of what an awful coward I am. I believe our Saviour suffered all those physical pains that accompanied that awful act, however, that was only a part of it. Can you imagine for one instant the Son of God, the one who spoke this great world into existence, the one who breathed life into our very being and made us a living soul, can you see or understand how he humbled himself and allowed sinful, proud and boastful men to spit on Him, ridicule, taunt, mock and treat him in such a terrible manner. Oh! The shame of it all. The scripture says, he endured the cross, despising the shame. But, these things I have mentioned, are they all of it? No! No! A thousand times no! The things I have mentioned did not cause our Saviour to sweat as great drops of blood and pray in anguish and say, *"If it by thy will, let this cup pass from me."*

Let us look now at the time when Stephen was facing death, after he told this crowd of people about their many sinful ways and acts, including killing the Prince of Peace, this angry mob took up stones and were in the act of stoning him to death. What did he do? He raised his eyes to heaven and calmly said. "I see the Son of Man standing on the right side of God." Then, praying he said, "Lay not this sin to their charge."

The Apostle Paul as he was about to face death said, "I am now ready to be offered. I have kept the faith, I have fought a good fight." Look at the numerous times he faced an angry mob and was whipped or starved nigh unto death.

Look now back through the years and see the three Hebrew children as they heard the great King Nebuchadnezzar issue the order, throw them in the furnace. I ask you, what could be worse than facing something so horrible as being thrown into such a fire?

But, look at these instances I have mentioned and you will see that as bad, or as horrible or painful as they were, did you hear or see where anyone prayed with such an anguish, let this cup pass from me. Where did these men get such courage, to face these terrible situations in such a calm manner? Why we all know it was given them by this very Son of God that I am now writing about. By this we can see, the terrible thing he faced was far worse than any of these examples we have just mentioned.

Look now at the Gosp. of St. John 1:1 - *"In the beginning was the word and the word was with God, and the word was God."* Now, we all know the word that is spoken of here is not the written word, the Bible. I believe the Bible is the written word of God but this was ages before the bible was ever written. So we see that the word here means the Son of God, as it does in many other places in the scriptures. See what the scripture is saying here, the WORD was with GOD and the WORD was God. What does that tell you? There was a unity, a oneness, a togetherness, a band, a fellowship, a closeness that the world cannot see or ever understand. Does not the scripture say the three are one, Father, Son & Spirit?

I can't write and describe that closeness, neither can anyone else, but I will give a feeble example.

Phil. 4:7 *"The peace of God which passeth all understanding."* This is a small example of what I am writing about brethren. Has not the great God of Peace and Love blessed and even for only a brief moment to experience that most wonderful sense of peace. Now, since the scripture says it passeth understanding we know that there are no words in the English language that will describe it, and by an ignorant man like me especially. But, when a man has been given to experience that wonderful thing, it won't last that long, but you never forget it. It is a sweet taste of heavenly glory and the memory of it will swell up within your very soul and then you can speak of the sweet

hope within your breast and the great desire to see the fullness thereof. Maybe you aren't given the power and ability to speak of and tell about it like some are, but it works in you exactly what is needed and what the great God of Peace desires. See each child is treated in just such a manner to bring him to fit into the entire building just exactly as it was seen in the mind and purpose of God throughout eternity. Now, as much as this means to a child, as sweet as it is, it, I must say, is nothing to be compared to the sweet fellowship, the holy bond that existed throughout all ages between the Father and Son.

Now, we look at St. Luke 22:42-44. *"Father if thou be willing, remove this cup from me, nevertheless not my will but thine be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven strengthening him. And being in agony he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."*

Brethren, what do we say now? Do you believe Jesus feared death this much? The scripture says He took upon himself this body of flesh that he may lay it down. Was it the thought of pain that caused Him such anguish? Was He not stronger, greater than Stephen, Paul, 3 Hebrew children? We know for sure that Jesus, the Son of the Living God, gave all the men we have mentioned here and countless millions more a peaceful time to depart this sin cursed life of time here on earth, and even more than that, He has given His children such faith and hope that they in confidence pray "Oh God in Heaven, if it be thy will give me a peaceful time to depart, knowing by faith that he is able."

Now, let us go back to this cup. The scripture says, "He that knew no sin was made sin for us." Yes, brethren, that is exactly what was in that cup. The sins of all the chosen people of God. Can you imagine how awful, how dreadful they must have looked in his most Holy sight. Just think what a terrible thing it must have been, one who knew no sin, one who had never committed a sin, had no unclean thoughts, lived in complete fellowship with the Holy Father. Brethren, just the thought of all my many sins make me shudder when I think of it. I do believe and I think very strongly so, that although your sins be as scarlet, they shall be washed white as snow. I do believe, and do not hesitate to stand up and admit in salvation by grace, that is, if I am saved, it was and is all by grace and through all of the work done by the blessed Savior, the Son of God. In any and all of my best efforts there was nothing to help but only to hinder on my part. But, brethren, let us all stop and think about this thing of sin, we should think on these things I have just written, and let us view this thing called sin as the hideous thing that it is. I am not saying for you, or me, or us to keep ourselves. I know we can't. But, brethren, I do believe that once we view sin in the light we should see it as it is. Then let us lay aside the sin that doth so easily beset us. Earnestly ask our God and Saviour to lead, guide and direct our footsteps ever thinking about the great price that was paid for our redemption. Because we were not redeemed with such filthy things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, Is. 53:11.

When speaking of this great redemption, Isaiah, the prophet said, He saw the travail of his soul and was satisfied. Just think about this thing.

"My God! My God why has thou forsaken me?" Why did He feel forsaken? Why, after all He had done, feel so alone, and for the first time, feel forsaken by the Father? Isn't this what was meant when the prophet said, he saw the travail of his soul and was satisfied. The sin that Jesus took on himself, in our stead, to redeem us, to make us acceptable caused this anguish on the part of the Saviour. I

believe this was what caused the sweating as of great drops of blood, and the anguish praying, because sin was so dreadful in His sight.

Frank C. Hunt

The order of the church consists not in any mere external forms or ceremonial rites, but in the spirit of love to the Lord and to one another. "God is Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Then the order of this spiritual house must consist in something more than a mere formal observance of duties which may be laid down in rules written on paper. The law of Christ must be in the heart, and the Spirit of Christ must direct every act of obedience in those who follow Him in the order He has appointed....

"Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." (Rom. 13:10) "Love is of God." (Jn. 2:7) This is the spirit in which every action must be performed to be in the order which the Lord has commanded. In this spirit every action is in order, with out love all is out of order.

Even though the letter of the law of Christ, as recorded in the New Testament, may have been followed in every particular in a case, instead of being in order, it is at best but mockery, if the motive for action was anything but that love which seeks only the glory of God and the good of the saints.

Wm. L. Beebe

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."
Mat. 7:12

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

EDITORIAL OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE

ROMANS IX. 22
"What if God, willing to show his wrath?"

It is not strange that men should contemplate the mercy and grace of God with satisfaction, while they dread his awful wrath, for we have all sinned against him, and should he display on us his wrath, as we have displayed our rebellion against him, no flesh could endure the weight of vengeance under which we should be crushed. The greatest Arminians we have met with, seem perfectly willing that God should show his mercy, his long-suffering and kindness to the children of men, while they deny his right, in justice, to show his wrath, but how few consider that eternal justice calls for wrath, and when justice calls for wrath, that justice would be violated, outraged and trampled upon, if mercy should take the place of wrath. Depraved men, in their unregenerated state, find it hard to conceive how the holy God can pour his wrath on them without violation of his justice, especially if he has made any discrimination, and saved some from wrath, and consigned others who are only of equal guilt, to wrath. But quickened sinners, when under his mighty hand, convinced of their own lost and helpless condition, wonder with much greater admiration, how God can be just, and yet the justifier of any of the guilty sons of men.

Whatever, however, may be the views or speculations of men upon this subject, God has on various occasions shown his wrath in his providential government of

the world. In bringing the flood upon the ungodly in the days of Noah, and sweeping the guilty race from his footstool; in the case of Pharaoh, Amalek, Moab, and upon the heathen nations of the earth, and that he has done it demonstrates that he did it willingly, or willed to do it, for he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. For his pleasure, we are told, the earth and heavens are and were created, and that he doeth his pleasure in the army of heaven and among men, and none can turn him. Had God been unwilling to show his wrath, who could force him to do it against his will? And had he not been willing to show his wrath; when the Son of God hung writhing on the cross, by what door could grace and salvation have entered for any of the guilty sons of men? But, was God willing to show his wrath, and to pour his vengeance upon the suffering, bleeding Lamb who died on Calvary? *"It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief."*—Isaiah liii. 10. He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. For this very purpose came he into the world. *"Then, said I, Lo, I came to do thy will, O God."*—Psalm xl. 7, 8; Hebrews x. 7, 10. And when the dreadful hour had arrived for which he came, he was seen crushed with agony in the garden, sweating, as it were, great drops of blood, and praying, *"O, my God, if it be possible, let this cup pass."* But no other way was possible. *"The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."*—Isaiah liii. 6. And where iniquity was found, the bolts of justice must fall. The doleful prayer wrung from the agonizing heart of the suffering Saviour, fully establishes the doctrine for which we contend. *"If it be possible, let this cup pass; nevertheless, not my will, but thy will be done."* Could wicked Romans or spiteful Jews, could earth or hell inflict on him one pang beyond what was the will of God? Never, we confidently affirm, from the creation of the world to the great burning day, has wickedness of men or devils been so fearfully developed, never has hell belched forth so much spite at any time, as when the immaculate Lamb of God, loaded with the iniquity of all his people, stood the victim. Truly against thy holy child, Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determines before to be done."—Acts iv. 27, 28. *What if God willing?* Does that make him the author of sin, or does it afford the man a just cause to blaspheme his holy name? God forbid. Because God has power and wisdom to control, restrain, permit, overrule, and even to make use of the wicked acts of men and devils, just as he pleases, does that imply that he is himself a sinner, or that sin flows from, or is compatible with his nature? Absurd and preposterous. Nay, wicked and blasphemous as such conclusions are, the charges are often belched forth from infidel lips, and alas! must we add, that some of God's dear children have thoughtlessly, or carelessly indorsed the horrid blasphemy, by arguing that if he absolutely governs and controls all beings, all worlds, and all events, then he is, or must be the author of sin? But, be entreated, dear child of God, to pause and consider this matter a moment. Must God lay aside his crown, must he yield some part of his governing power, in order to escape your charge? But you say you admit that he has all power, and that he controls all events and all worlds. But, forget not that he is the infinite God; of one mind, and none can turn him; what he wills to allow to-day, was his will yesterday, and from everlasting. You cannot believe that he has found out anything new, that he did not have in his mind and will before he made this world. One of two things you must admit, either that Jehovah knew precisely what kind of a world he was about to make, and

that he made it just as he intended to, or else that he has been disappointed in his purpose. You dare not deny that this world with all its vast machinery, is precisely as the omniscient eye of God saw it, before the days of creation: peopled with all its infinite variety of men, and beasts, of birds, of fishes, of serpents and of worms, from the grosser objects down to the myraids of animalcule which people a single drop of water. What part of the history of the world have we a right to believe God did not know from everlasting, and what may we presume he knew, and yet had not in his inscrutable wisdom determined? Is there a sparrow or a worm, by him created, for which he has no use? True, we may not know or comprehend the use of many of his creatures, but we are finite, and have only that measure of intelligence which he has appointed and provided for us, and beyond that measure who can go?

But, once more. What if God be willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known? The apostle anticipates the ranking venom of the depraved hearts of men, and says, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault; for who hath resisted his will?" In one general sense, every carnal man has and does resist the will of God, they are not reconciled to it; they hate it, and emloy all their depraved powers in opposing it, as Stephen charged the persecuting Jews, "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did, so do ye." But how vain is their resistance? All the powers of earth and hell combined cannot prevent the execution of his purpose so as to cause a sparrow to fall, or bring even a single hair of our heads prematurely to the ground. But in the sense evidently intended, the apostle does not say that any have or can successfully resist the will of God. Woe to the world, if they could. What then would it avail us to know that it is our Father's good will or pleasure to give us the kingdom, if he were unable to execute his will? But must it be inferred that if God is so infinitely wise and omnipotent, that he executeth his pleasure in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, that he has therefore no right to punish men for their wickedness which he overrules for his own glory? This is strange logic for infidels, but stranger still for christians. "Nay, but O, man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed, say unto him that formed it, why has thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known?" Has he not an undoubted right to do so? Are any of his creatures able to give a reason why his will shall not be the supreme rule of his government? If any of us feel that it would be unsafe for us, why do we mock him by praying, "Thy will be done," and then object to his universal control and government of all beings, and of all events, according to his own sovereign will?

But, instead of the frightful images painted in the vain imagination of men, as to the consequences of his wearing the crown, bearing the sceptre, and occupying the eternal throne, let us consider how he shows his wrath, and how he makes his power known on the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.

If it were his sovereign pleasure to show his wrath and to make his power known upon the vessels of his wrath, by crushing them to atoms, or by such signal displays of his power and wrath as when he destroyed Sodom, or when he deluged the world in the days of Noah, his right to do so could not be contested. But it is his will to show his wrath and display his power in a very different form. By *enduring with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction.*

By allowing them to pursue their own course, act out the enmity of their own wicked nature, walk in the light of their own eyes, and to fancy themselves the masters of their own destiny. Long has he suffered them to dispute his reigning power, and to call his sovereign government unjust. With much long-suffering has he spared their lives, afforded them health and strength to fill up their cup of iniquity, by stoning his prophets, killing his messengers, under the old dispensation, and with what endurance and long-suffering has he allowed them to drench the earth with the blood of his saints, and even to stain their guilty hands with the blood of his dear Son. With what forbearance did he wink at the idolatry of the Gentile world before the advent of the Redeemer, and how has he, for purposes of righteous wrath, allowed the anti-christian powers of iniquity to make drunk the nations of the earth with the wine of Babel's intoxicating cup. Even now, what more awfully retributive judgment of God can we contemplate, than to be suffered to reject and defy his government, and to pursue our own course, the course of this world, under the power of darkness, in the pride and vanity of our own hearts treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath? Why has he suffered the wicked to prosper, or seem to prosper, in their abominable wickedness? Had he no power to restrain them? He had, for he has all power. But it is because in his inscrutable wisdom he saw fit thus to show his wrath, and to make his power known on them.

How, or why is it that unto his chosen, redeemed, regenerated children, it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, and from all others this knowledge is withheld? Because, in this very way it is his sovereign will to show his wrath and make his power known. Nor is this a matter for his saints to regret or deplore. Having the mind and spirit of Christ, we will rather with him rejoice and thank God that he has hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes, because so it seemed good in his sight. If our Lord Jesus Christ rejoiced in spirit at the accomplishment of the sovereign will of his Father, can we possess his Spirit, and yet desire that it should be otherwise? If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

We do not say that God could not display his mercy without also making a display of his wrath, for we dare not limit his power and wisdom, but the Scriptures teach us that it is in wrath, that he remembers mercy. (Hebrews iii. 2; Isaiah lxi. 2; lxiii. 1, 6.) The very first intimation of mercy made to fallen man fully expressed this doctrine. The seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent. God's people were preserved by the destruction of their enemies. Egypt must suffer the wrath of God, that the Hebrews might be mercifully released from bondage. The same miraculous display of power which wrought the salvation of Israel at the Red Sea, overwhelmed in wrath, and utterly destroyed their pursuing enemies. The everlasting salvation of the church of God, from sin, death and hell, was made manifest by the wrath which her sin-bearing Savior endured, when he carreid her sorrows and bore her griefs, when the chastisement of her peace was laid on him, by whose stripes she is healed. And the final triumph which awaits the saints at the resurrection, their bodies will be raised simultaneously with the destruction of the last enemy which is death. What then, we once more inquire, "If God, willing to show his wrath and make his power known,"

"Shall man reply against his God,
And call his Maker's ways unjust?"

"Shall mortal man presume to be
More holy, just or good, than he?"

Does it not rather become us to be still and know that he is God?

The will of God being the only recognized standard of holiness in heaven, whatever that will dictates, whether of wrath or grace, is right, and just, and harmonious with all the eternal perfections of Jehovah. If then it be his will to launch the fiery bolts of vengeance down upon the ungodly, or even to bruise his only beloved Son, when the guilt of his people was laid on him, or if he choose to redeem from sin, and death, and hell, millions of the chief of sinners, and ultimately to raise them up to crowns and seats at his right hand, all, all we need to know is, that it is the will of God, and then we know it is all right, for that will is the true standard of righteousness. High as the heavens rise above the earth, are God's ways and thoughts transcending our ways and our thoughts. Therefore, with the apostles, we beseech the saints to be reconciled to God. Our brightest, our only hopes of heaven, rest on the complete and perfect execution of the will of God in all things. If in a single thing it could possibly fail, that failure would shake the very foundation of our hope. It is because he is God, because as God he changeth not, the sons of Jacob are not consumed. O, may we then in sincerity and truth pray, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is done in heaven."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.
August 1, 1860.

MEETINGS

The West Country Line Union Meeting will be held with Dan River Church the fifth Sunday in March, 1985.

All lovers of the Truth are invited and all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Brother Boyd Minter, Clerk

CIRCULAR LETTER

To the Brethren and friends of the Pigg River Association with our correspondents, thus assembled at Pigg River Church, Roanoke Church being the Host Church, 3, 4, 5 of August, 1984. We greet you in the name of the Lord our God. Happy is the man that can truthfully sing all my trust on Thee is staid for God will keep them in perfect peace. Well did the Poet say, Once there was a Precious season when my Saviour smiled on me, every groan His grace did sweeten, every bond His love set free. We thank God that He has preserved our Association that we might come together and worship Him and sing praises unto His Holy Name. We would invite our Sister Associations, Sister Churches, and friends to gather with us in this meeting and hope God would make you all feel welcome. What shall we then say to these things, if God be for us who can be against us? As we gather for this meeting may God give us to look one to the other in love and our coming together will not be in vain. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. May God bless us to the end.

Elder Rufus Brown

NOTICE TO CHURCH CLERKS OR PASTORS

All notices for publication should be sent in 60 days prior to the time of your meetings. Also, if you haven't already done so, we would like for you to send us a picture of your meeting house along with a brief history of same, regular meeting time and name of present pastor.

Editors

CONTRIBUTIONS

DONATION LIST FOR NOVEMBER, 1984

Mrs. James M. Hawley, VA.	$ 8.00
W. H. Norman, NC.	2.00
H. B. Cannaday, VA.	2.00
Mrs. D. M. Radford, VA.	2.00
Eld. Amos Hash, VA.	10.00
R. M. Burnette, NC.	2.00
Mrs. H. C. Houchins, VA.	1.00
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Mrs. Nellie Fuller, TX.	2.00
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P. M. Vlietstra, NJ.	2.00
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F. J. Plaster, VA.	2.00
Mrs. J. W. Andress, AL.	1.00
Mrs. Lula E. Anderson, VA.	7.00
Mrs. Elizabeth , VA.	2.00
Mrs. William Sladky, NC.	7.00
Buford Thompson, VA.	1.00

OBITUARIES

JOHN RICHMON BURNS

John Richmon Burns was born in Leesville, Louisiana on July 9, 1894. Making his stay here on earth 89 years, 10 months and 28 days. He was affiliated with Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church in El Dorado, Arkansas. Survived by his wife Mattie Lou Harris Burns, two sons, Richard H. Burns, and Billy J. Burns, one daughter, Bobbie J. Adcox all of El Dorado, Ark. Also two brothers, Clifford C. Burns of El Dorado and Gilbert Burns of California. Two sisters, Ruby Gilchrist of Center, Texas and Lidy Brown of Houston, Texas. Five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

I had several long visits with Brother Burns the last five years of his life and found him to be well read in the bible together with a good memory. He loved the things which I quoted from the Bible at his funeral. The very facts of one loving the doctrine of Salvation by Grace is one of the best evidence of one being borned again, not reborned, but borned again such as Romans 8:28-39.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

Who is he that condemnth? It is Christ that died, ye rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or perils, or sword?

As it is written, For thy sake we are

killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus Our Lord.

This is a chain of events ordained of God that no man will ever break.

His funeral was held July 9, 1984 at Resthaven Memorial Gardens in El Dorado, Arkansas by Eld. David E. Turner, and laid to rest in Resthaven Cemetery.

Written by the request of
his children and family
Elder David E. Turner

ESTELLE CORUM DIX

Estelle Corum Dix, daughter of the late Eddie Rain and Betty Gammon Corum, was born March 26, 1905 in Rockingham County. She was married to the late Dillard Dix on July 2, 1942. On May 24, 1958, Sister Estelle asked for a home in Dan River Primitive Baptist Church where she remained a loyal member, attending her meetings regularly, for as long as her health permitted. She loved her Church and the doctrine it stands for and always enjoyed meeting with her beloved brethren.

Siste Estelle was in failing health for several years before God, in his infinite wisdom, called her home on July 30, 1984. Though we shall miss her here below, we are comforted in knowing her suffering and afflictions are ended and she is now asleep in Jesus. Funeral services were held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, on August 2, 1984. Her body was laid to rest in the Church cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, when He shall bid his children rise to meet Him in the air and ever be with Him.

She is survived by three brothers, Irvin Corum of Eden, Marvin Corum of Reidsville, Spencer Corum of Ruffin and one sister, Mrs. Rosa French of Eden. May we be blessed to know that our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by request of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in conference on August 5, 1948.

Jean Moran

MARY V. FLOOD

God, in His Infinite Wisdom, called Sister Mary V. Flood from this life August 6, 1984. She was born Sept. 16, 1892, the daughter of Bryant and Jennie Vick. Her stay on this earth was ninety-one years, ten months and twenty-one days.

Sister Flood was married to Lonnie R. Flood of Edgecombe County. He died in 1960. Ten children were born to this union. Two of her children preceded her in death. Surviving are two sons; Johnny and Solomon of Rocky Mount, NC. Six daughters; Edna Browder of Lawrenceville, VA., Josephine Creech of Wilson, NC., Dorothy Turner, Mae Lancaster, Louise Perry and Virginia Traxler, all of Rocky Mount, NC.

Sister Flood united with Pleasant Hill Church Sept. 25, 1938. She was faithful to attend meetings as long as she was physically able. Due to declining health the last two years of her life, she was not able to meet with the brethren and friends. She believed strongly in Salvation by

Grace and that Jesus was the Author and Finisher of her Faith.

Her funeral was held at Johnson Funeral Home by her Pastor, Elder Henry Jones, who was assisted by Elder C. B. Davis and Rev. Ashby Browder. She was laid to rest in Williams Cemetery beneath a beautiful display of flowers.

She will be missed by those who loved her, but we must be submissive to God's Will for we know that He does all things well.

Written by order of Pleasant Hill Church in Conference, Sept. 22, 1984.

Alvin Lancaster
Elder Henry Jones, Moderator
J. Carroll Williams, Clerk

LANNIE HUGHES

A dear member of Little Flock Church, Altus, Okla., Brother Lannie Hughes, was called to rest by our Heavenly Father August 31, 1984 at Jackson County Memorial Hospital.

Services were held at Tim's Chapel of Memories, with Elder C. C. Morris of Dallas, Texas officiating. Burial was in Altus Cemetery under the direction of Tim's Funeral Home.

He was born April 12, 1896 near Altus. A son of pioneer parents, the late John and Kizzie Hughes. Was married to Alice Mae Thrush March 22, 1914. She preceded him in death on December 22, 1978. A son, Steve, also preceded him in death in 1943.

He is survived by one son, Jack Hughes of Fredricksburg, Texas, two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Brother Hughes joined Little Flock Church on May 27, 1968 by experience and baptism. He was baptized by Elder W. W. Taylor.

We wish to bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Fathers Will at his passing.

Ava Stewart, Church Clerk
Altus, Oklahoma
Little Flock Church Little Flock Church

SISTER BESSIE MAE EDMONDSON NORWOOD
November 1892 - April 1984

As a Committee appointed by Flat Swamp Primitive Baptist Church, I will attempt to write the obituary of our dear deceased sister, Bessie Mae Norwood.

She was born the daughter of Nathan Thomas Edmondson and Harriet Louise Griffin Edmondson on November 28, 1892, in Robersonville. Most of her life was spent in the Robersonville community. She was married to Thomas Coffield Norwood on January 27, 1909. The Lord blessed this union with two sons, Paul Turner and Thomas Edward. Her Husband and son Paul preceded her in death, but Thomas was blessed to care for his mother in her latter days. When she became unable to maintain her home in Robersonville, he moved her to his home in Chesapeake, Virginia, where he and his wife gave her special care and love she could not have received anywhere else. Three of us from the church were blessed to visit her shortly before her passing on April 4, 1984. We found the home very warm and comfortable for her, with all conveniences near her room. A short time before her death, she was placed in a nursing home near Thomas's home, and he checked on her every day. May God's blessings continue with Thomas and his companion

for their devotion to her.

Sister Bessie felt the Lord was dealing with her, and she asked for a home with Spring Green Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by Elder B. S. Cowan the fourth Saturday in September, 1914. She was a true and devoted lover of the Primitive doctrine and her church. Her membership remained at Spring Green until June, 1973, when she mover her membership to Flat Swamp for the convenience of attending service. She attended her church regularly as long as she could, and then she was thoughtful in writing and supporting the church.

We of Flat Swamp extend our deepest sympathy to Thomas and his companion and to the two grandchildren. We along with them will miss her, but we feel she has gone to that rest that only God can give. We pray the vacancy of her passing may be filled with the presence of God's love and tender care. We extend to the family a desire to have them visit us at any time.

Her funeral was conducted at Flat Swamp Church by her pastor, Elder Reeves Smith. She was laid to rest in Robersonville Cemenery under beautiful flowers in the presence of many relatives and friends. May she sleep in peace until she hears her heavenly Father call, "Child, come home".

Done by order of conference, Saturday before the first Sunday in May, 1984.

Elder Reeves Smith, Moderator
Hassel Allen, Clerk
Hassel Allen, Committee

SISTER DELLIE PICKERAL

The Lord called home Sister Dellie Keese Pickeral. She was the daughter of the late Alonza B. Keese and Sally Holly Keese. Sister Pickeral was born August 29, 1901. She was the widow of the late Norman H. Pickeral.

Sister Dellie Pickeral's survivors are six daughters: Alease Creasy of Chatham, Becky Turner, Mag Mayhew, and Joyce Brumfield all of Gretna, Jean Ware of Providence, N.C.. and Libby Hedrick of Altavista. One sister: Bertha K. Bowen, Burkesville. Seventeen grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Sister Dellie was a dear and faithful member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by experience and baptism, September 12, 1937. Sister Dellie loved her church and brethren and came to meetings as long as she was able. She passed from this life, July 2, 1984. Her funeral was conducted by her beloved pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and Earnest Roebuck. Her body was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park.

We pray God will reconcile all to his will. Sister Dellie will be sadly missed.

Written in love and hope,
Sister Carol R. Pickral
Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Oscar D. Pickral, Clerk

OSCAR LEE PRESLEY

Brother Oscar Lee Presley, a beloved member of Little Flock Church, Altus, Okla. passed from this life to his eternal rest July 13, 1984, lacking 15 days of reaching the age of 101 years.

He was born July 28, 1883 in Holly Springs, Miss. to John and Adelle Presley. Was married to Mattie Maud Redden January 6, 1909.

Survivors are 3 sons, 3 daughters, 13 grandchildren, 24 great-grandchildren,

3 great-great-grandchildren, 2 sisters and 1 brother.

Brother Presley joined Little Flock Church August 24, 1968 by experience and baptism. He was baptized by his pastor, Elder C. M. Haygood.

Services were held at First Baptist Church in Mangum, Okla. with Preacher Sikes officiating. Interment was in Riverside Cemetery under the direction of Greer Funeral Home.

He was preceded in death by his wife in1959.

Brother Presley was a faithful member. Brotherly love was manifested in his daily life and we feel our loss is his eternal gain.

Ava Stewart, Church Clerk
Altus, Oklahoma

SISTER MAUDE T. PRUITT

Sister Maude Pruitt, at the age of 92, was called home by her Lord on August 7, 1984. She was the daughter of the late James S. and Fannie Griggs Taylor. Even though she lived most of her life in Ruffin, N.C., she was originally from Patrick County, Virginia. Her husband, George T. Pruitt, died in 1963. She is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Irene Pruitt of the home and Mrs. Hazel Wall of Reidsville, and two grandchildren.

Sister Pruitt united with the Dan River Church on July 23, 1950. Her funeral was conducted there by her pastor, Elder David Spangler, and Elder H. W. Wray, after which, she was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

Sister Pruitt loved her church dearly and was faithful to fill her seat. Even though we recognize that our loss is her eternal gain, we will miss her greatly. Her gentleness and her kindness will be etched in the momory of this writer for as long as I live. At her request on the day of her funeral, her favorite hymn, "How Sweet The Name of Jesus Sounds" was sung. This hymn leaves no doubt as to from whence came her strength. "Jesus, my Shepherd, Husband, Friend, my Prophet, Priest, and King, My Lord, my life, my Way, my End." She was a lovely sister and her memory and the path the Lord blessed her to walk and the example He blessed her to set will not be forgotten. Although we are saddened by her death, we would, if we know our hearts, thank the Lord for blessing us to commune with her, and to see the Lord in her countenance and in her life. I believe that in her request for the fifteenth chapter of I Corinthinas to be read, she left with us a message, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." She was not the kind of person who would wish to be eulogized or grieved over but would rather the praise be rendered to her Lord. May the Lord bless us to witness with Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord," and may He bless her family with the peace of mind of knowing that she has gone home to be with her Lord, which though, she loved them, is where she most wished to be.

Humbly submitted by one
who loved her dearly,
Mary L. Hawkins

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"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

Mat. 7:12

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EDITORIAL

And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding His twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities. Now when John had heard in prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, and said unto him, art thou he that should come or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again these things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

Mat. 11:1-6.

I had come to the conclusion that I was going to lay my cover over my typewriter, and that I too was going to quit writing. I wandered out into my garden firmly convinced that I had been too active, too long, with my writing. But few mortals enjoy getting their hands dirty in garden work. I salved my feelings with the ointment of the flesh. I would also quit my activities in the garden of the Lord, because (so I told myself,) let somebody else write.

My feelings had been ruffled by an anonymous critic, and set out to leave the writing to somebody that had told me that they knew now and what to write. I soon found out that I had gone to the wrong place for placating my ruffled feelings. It was too cold and too wet to garden; it was not warm enough to have put out tender plants that had to be sturdy and strong in order to survive. At the beginning I had more compassion on the tender plants than I did on poor frail critics.

As I gently stirred the soil, making every effort to gather some dry twigs of grass to protect the tender plants, my mind was caught away from my own grasp and I was immediately carried in mind to prison where John was incarcerated behind bars. I truly believed that my mind was removed from the weak and cold plants before I had really thought about the sad condition that John was in, but be that as it may, I was soon removed from the garden of this world into what I believe was the garden of the Lord.

I love my garden work. Working there is profitable to me from a monetary standpoint as well as from the standpoint of health. I get a lot of benefit from taking care of this earthly garden. Just so is it in the garden of the Lord. Handling and working in a garden of the earth is much like that in the kingdom of heaven.

The Saviour, even God, is the Husbandman. He often goes down into his garden to see how the plants do grow. At times he finds them ailing. His skill at taking care of individual plants is amazing in-

deed, and how like the plants in the kingdom or garden of the Lord are the natural plants in an earthly garden.

All of the plants in the garden of the Lord are like unto the experience of John. So often the query comes up in our daily experience that the feelings of John on this sad occasion is feeling of them all. The manner of John's coming, his experience on every occasion was surely, in times of tranquillity, given to enable him to bear conflicts as a soldier of Jesus Christ. The most of us, including subjects of grace like unto Job, would be able to bear up under persecution, trials and tribulations, but in hours of distress it causes us anxious inquiry, as to reason for the distress.

The manner of conception, the strange assets of his deliverance and life, would cause strong reflections on our being here and while the sun was shining, it would give us more age than when the sun goes down or in other words, when our God hides His face, then dark, and maybe, mooted questions would appear to cause our soul to tremble, and anxious inquiries to be found escaping our lips in groans and sorrow. In order that we may be at home in this investigation, isn't it that way with you? Is this our state, when even though we have had bright evidences of acceptance with Him, yet when the clouds arise and the face of the Lord is seen no more, and the cold bleak wind begins to blow, we wonder right off, has he clean gone forever? Has he hid His face from us, has He forgot his sacred promise never to leave nor farsake us?

I write to my dear kindred in the Lord. Is this a mutual feeling in your trembling bosom when His nearness is not felt; when his tender arm is not felt nor seen in action. If you know what I am writing about from an experimental standpoint, then we are fit subjects to examine John's inquiry.

Unless we have learned our earthly lessons first and well, we will not find any joy with John as he humbly makes this petition. Think about what is being said. Look back at the dark seasons that you have passed through. Remember dear little one the enormous burden that you were laboring under when you were also inquiring of Him, Art thou the One, or shall we look for another?

Draw near to our little band of inquirers. Listen to John. You have been there. Your soul has been ready to give up because your hope seemed so worthless. Yes, you too had thought that he was the one, that he was yours. But now, where is he now? And come with me, let us get close to John as his query is answered. All of the family has asked this question, and all the family has leaned forward in earnest hope that we will get consolation from the answer.

As He begins the answer, we sink in despair. Our troubled heart tells us that he did not understand our query, that he is ignoring our question. Then suddenly scales fall from our eyes and we understand the deftness and the discerning mind behind the answer. Let us listen, dear readers.

First, John had already been told that He was the One. How weak we all are. How poor our memory is. Being this frail, the likelihood is that we would not be pert with the Saviour.

The wonderful things that had been done and were still being done were things that sinners cannot do for one another. The characters thus being so tenderly considered and dealt with in their afflictions were all helpless. If my object was to prove the helplessness of poor sinners, I would not go a step further. These are all people helpless to render to themselves the necessary help to enjoy and participate in the blessings of the Kingdom of God. These are the usual afflictions in a natural way that attack sinners along life's journey. There is a spiritual counterpart that all

sinners are partaker of and it is primarily these afflictions that we are all afflicted with.

Every poor sinner that has been born of God finds out in the outset of his or her journey in the kingdom of heaven that they right early come in contact with them, and, as of now, and as far as I have come, I have come in contact with these poor frail decrepit beings, and each one of them have been helpless in the receipt of these blessings from His kind and gracious hand. Let us take an inventory of these afflictions, as laid down by Jesus of Nazereth.

Before we examine ourselves, and before we join in with John in taking hope, and enjoying in him as the Saviour in each of these dire afflictions, let us listen to the angel of the Lord as he spoke to Joseph (Mat. 1:21). This was and it still is a momentous declaration from heaven to poor sinners. It is a promise of salvation to poor wretched sinners. The sun and substance of that message is unique. There has never been a declaration as full and complete and that covered every inch of the uneasy travel of a child of God from nature to spiritual life in Christ Jesus the Lord.

When one is born of the Spirit of God that poor sinner finds themsleves unable to see, unable to walk, unable to avoid sin (leprosy), unable to hear, unable to get out of a dead state. How circumspectly we can be in dealing with one another's faults and failings. In connection with the treatment of the Saviour with John, let me insert this word of testimony. The report of those without is that we are so brotherly and so kind to one another when the sun is shining but that if trouble comes there is not anything that we will not do to one another. What a sad reputation. Further, how sad it is that the most important commandment that we ever received from our Saviour was this: If thy brother offend thee go to him alone and make reconciliation. It does not make any difference what I am called, nor does it make any difference how much abuse is heaped upon me, nor does it make any difference how many call me weak in the doctrine, I know and I know that you know, that there is not a passage of scripture that is any more fragrantly violated than that. Go tell it to him privately first. That is the Saviour's command.

Another thing, how often have we all been forgiven of our wrongs, our flagrant violations of the scriptures? Yet, YET, I have heard it said from sanctimonious lips "that I can forgive the matter if they will forgive me, but I cannot forget how they treated me. That is the hard demanding talk of nature and how nauseating it is to a tender spiritual minded child of God.

Bless his gentle and holy name, he did not reprimand John for his forgetfulness. The exact wording is precious to a tender weak trembling saint of God. The Saviour did not only say go tell John again, but go show him again. The thing to be shown was what the Saviour had said, but this time show the discouraged again. Go show him again. This is Jesus the Saviour that we are writing about.

Yes, yes, I know that it is often that we cannot hear; that we are unable to hear the gospel with a hearing ear. Every reader has had this deplorable condition to pass through, I hear it said that the first blessing, the first saving out of this ruined condition, is of grace and that the further blessings of being rid of these afflictions is of our own efforts. I do not believe a word of it. Notice that this is what was said at first, and remember that we all are ready to ascertain that the first deliverance is by redeeming grace. Now remember something else. When John asked the Saviour if he (and us) were to be saved, how was it to be. His reply for the continued saving was

to be like the first, to wit, it is again. It is not that it is similiar; it is not that it is something nearly like it was the first time. None of that. It is the 'again' salvation that John is to be shown again.

If we have forgotten (as we all do forget) then we need to be shown again that it is all the work of Jesus Christ.

Your afflicted brother in Christ,
Elder W. D. Griffin

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Romans 8:28

Yesterday we tried to speak from this Scripture, and as our mind is on the matter yet, we will try and pen a few thoughts in connection with it.

The apostle, in addressing the church of God at Rome, uses the expression, "And we know," showing that the knowledge he speaks of is not known by him alone, but also by those he was addressing, as he says in another place, We do not tell you these things because you do not know them, but because ye know them. Amidst a world of confusion and strife, where nations are falling right and left, where men's hearts are failing them, where fear is in the hearts of man, it is a comforting thought that God is Lord of heaven and earth, and all things are in his hand, from the falling of a sparrow to the heart of kings, and are in his hands as rivers of water and he turns them withersoever he will. God works all things after the counsel of his will, and none can stay his hand. If we could feel as sure that we are the ones who love God and are the called according to his purpose, as we do that he works all things for the good of such ones, it would suit our feelings better, but God has so arranged that our walk should be a walk of faith, and not by sight. No doubt the apostle Paul, as he reviewed his journey from Jerusalem to Rome, could certainly realize that all things had worked together for his good. God appeared unto him before he started from Jerusalem to go to Rome, and told him that he should bear witness of him at Rome. When we examine the journey to Rome we find Paul traveling in the hands of his enemies. They were carrying him to Rome to preach the gospel, yet they did not know what purpose the Lord had in the matter. Today wicked men, and the wars that are raging, are fulfilling some wise design, and all these things shall work together for good to the chosen of God, yet the wicked know not anything about his wise purpose, and their wickedness shall fall upon their own heads. God punishes not only his people for sin, but also nations, and often the wicked are used as a sword to punish them. His people often need purging and humbling. We are often brought in these times to repeat the hymn:

"When thou, my righteous Judge, shalt come
To fetch thy ransomed people home,
  Shall I among them stand?
Shall such a worthless worm as I,
Who sometimes am afraid to die,
  Be found at thy right hand?

I love to meet among them now,
Before thy gracious feet to bow,
  Though vilest of them all;
But can I bear the piercing thought,
What if my name should be left out?
  When thou for them shalt call."

No doubt the reason men reject the idea that all things are being worked together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to his pur-

pose, is because they only see the act, and cannot behold the purpose.

"Blind unbelief is SURE to err,
And scan his works in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

His providence unfolds the book,
And makes his counsel shine;
Each opening leaf, and every stroke,
fulfills some deep design."

Even the apostles of our Lord when he was being crucified did not understand the purpose of God in it. They did not know it was necessary that Christ must suffer and enter into his glory. They had earthly hopes of the restoration of an earthly kingdom. It would appear to human reasoning that with the prophecy concerning the suffering of Christ, the prophets declaring before his birth the place of it, the foretelling the manner of his death, that a bone of him should not be broken, that they should look on him whom they had pierced, that for his garments they should cast lots, etc., that they would have understood these things. But the Holy Ghost must reveal these things. The reasoning of the carnal mind is always contrary to truth. Peter was a stronger predestinarian on the day of Pentecost than he was in the judgement hall, and so are we all. As he stood in the judgement hall and bitterly denied that he knew the Lord, he knew not the purpose of God in the matter. The Savior had told him that before the cock crow this night thou shalt deny me thrice, yet it took the completion of the denials for him to remember the word of the Lord. All this was working together for his good. He had declared that he would not forsake the Lord, even though others did. Now he had learned how weak he was, and had been converted, and sifted as wheat, so that he could strengthen the brethren with the doctrine that, You are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation. None know their weakness as those God has left to try themselves, and have found they are not their own keepers. Through such experiences we learn that our only hope is that underneath are the everlasting arms.

From the creating of the garden of Eden, placing man there, giving him a law, unto the crucifixion of Christ, or in other words, all things in time, from the beginning to the end, work for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose, and God so worketh all things that his word declares. Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shall thou restrain.

As we close this article, we would say unto the beloved of God, you unto whom his word is precious, that in every dispensation the darkest times are always before the dawning of a new day. We know not how much trouble is in store for us, how many heartaches and sorrows the world of strife may bring to us, yet if it does we need them. Lift up your heads, for your redemption is drawing nigh. May we as a people, separate from all the people of the earth, seek the welfare of one another, the things that edify one another, and love one another with pure hearts fervently.

Elder D. V. Spangler

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CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

LITTLE HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Little Hope Primitive Baptist Church is located at Route 1, Elliston, Va. Their meeting time is at 11:00 a.m. every fourth Sunday and 2:00 p.m. on Saturday before. Little Hope is the home church of Elder Junior Conner. Elder Lane Carter is their present pastor.

CORRESPONDENCE

December 3, 1984

Dear brother Williams,

I believe my subscrition to the Signs expired with the December issue. I am sending you a check for ten dollars ($10.00) to continue my subscription for another year.

It is comforting to read the beautiful articles and to realize this periodical stands for and upholds the same precious truth upon which it was founded back in 1832.

It is such a blessing to be given to realize that there is an all wise, unchangeable, Merciful God who has a purpose in all things and will surely bring it to pass for the good of His people and for His ultimate glory.

May God continue to bless you editors and all who are instrumental in getting

the Signs to His dear people.

Please extend my love to sister Williams. We miss seeing you dear people so much.

In bonds of love,
Janie P. Trent

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102 Lake Ave
Salem, Va. 23153
August, 1984

Heb. 4:10

"For he that is entered unto his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."

Can you think for a minute what has been said here. Oh! If only the blessed Saviour in Heaven would bless us to the extent of allowing us to glimpse even a little of the mighty things that are contained in these few words. But, even were we allowed to see in them their full meaning, we could never write them down here nor could we tell them to anyone because we as mortal men couldn't put words together to convey such a wonderful message. Just as the Apostle Paul was taken up into the third heaven, he was given such marvelous revelations that it was unlawful for him to try to explain it. I believe one reason it was unlawful is that it was beyond explaining by mere words. Just as Jesus said that eye has not seen, ear has not heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man the things that Jesus has prepared for them that love him. I know these are a little different subjects or a little off from our text, but I am using them as examples, to show faith or illustrate what a wonderful truth is in these words. He that had entered into his rest. We are in a sense speaking of the peace that passeth understanding, for isn't that what we are talking about? How many times have God's little ones heard their pastor, or some other servant of God in whom they trust tell of the many times and days, that they through their work and efforts have spent many endless days and sometimes sleepless nights trying to work their way into a blessed hope or peaceful relationship with their God. While listening to the preacher tell of his experience along these lines, and of these mighty efforts and struggling done by them, the brethren who heard him could say "Why he is talking about my own experience." Why, of course it seems that way. Does not a just God and God of Peace bring all his children along the same pathway but yet in different ways.

Brethren, we are speaking of something here that the world knows nothing about. For, while they are working in their zeal, and their efforts and intentions are to make God indebted to them to the extent that they have earned their salvation. Romans 10:2 & 3 They have a zeal of God, and they are trying to work our their own salvation. That is what the Apostle Paul said of these brethren, isn't that what we have all tried to do until it pleased our blessed Saviour to bring us into knowledge enough and lead us in such a way that we could behold, accept and believe through faith the work of Christ for us, seeing our righteousness as filthy rags, but seeing that the work of Christ was our imputed righteousness. Then and only then were we permitted or given to enter into His rest.

But, read the scripture as they may, they seem to be blinded to the verse that says, "It is not of works lest any man should boast...". Yes, and all the many more verses that are just as sweet to one who has been blessed spiritually to see and understand what the spirit has revealed to those who have ears to hear. But, to go back to our rest, oh what a miserable condition we were in when we were going through this period of

trying to be reconciled to God through our puny works and efforts. It seems that the harder we run the slower we go, the things we think that help us the most, seem to hurt or do us the most harm. But, still we continue, because you see, that is the only way we know, in our pitiful condition, that is the only thing we can do. Until, yes at last, when we have grasped at every straw, worked to our complete wits end and we sink down and pray Oh Lord, help or I perish. Then it seems that our blessed Redeemer has brought us to the very spot he had been leading us to all along the way. Then we hear, or we are given to see, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Then, overpowered by the mighty spirit of God, (for the work must the Spirit perform) we are led, or blessed to feel the wonderful love and fellowship whereby we are enabled to cry Abba Father. Then we came to see by and through a wonderful revelation that God has the work performed, and the peace that a little one feels at this time is truly called the peace that passeth understanding. No need to try to explain it, those who read this know what I am talking about and words can't explain it anyway. Then the little one is able to enter into that rest, not to stay in that perfect state of rest, yet. But a little here, and yet a little more there, enough to keep that blessed hope which is an anchor of the soul most sure and steadfast. Enough for him to know from whom all his help cometh, and to make him know that surely the flesh profiteth nothing. What did the Psalmist say - "He leadeth me beside the still waters, he restoreth my soul." He had entered into his rest. What a wonderful and blessed Saviour we have.

Frank C. Hunt

GLASGOW, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITORS:

Jesus Christ saves us, not our doings, our character, our works, our obedience, our reputations, our prayers, our tears, our penance nor alms. All these qualities are good and commendable, but none of them separately, nor all of them together, will save a man. It needs to be said over and over again that Jesus Christ saves. Christ in you the hope of glory. When we receive Christ we are justified, are sanctified, are adopted, are born from above, are children of God, have everlasting life. We pass from death unto life when we receive him, and have God with us, have the Holy Spirit with us and are saved and safe forever. He that hath the Son hath life, hath love, hath truth, hath immortality, hath the divine nature and hath light. The nature of that light is to make manifest the things which by the power of darkness had been concealed from us before being quickened by Christ, the second Adam, who is a quickening Spirit. We are made to see and feel our sinfulness and our lost and helpless condition, and the same light which reveals these things also shows us the enormity of our guilt, the justice of our condemnation and the impossibility of salvation by the law. The light of life now begotten in us reveals the holy God, a new relationship, Christ, who is our life, is formed in us, and his sonship, his heirship, his inheritance of glory and immortality are born in us and we are one with him, even as he is one with the Father. From this heaven-born Spirit flow all the fruits of the Spirit, which testify that we are born of God. "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end."—John xiii. 1. "His own!" What a blessed expression! We belong to the Lord Jesus in a three-fold way. First, by the Father's eternal election, we are the Father's love gift to the Son, "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world." Second, we are his by his own redemptive rights. He paid the pur-

chase price; he bought us for himself. "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." Third, we are his by the effectual call of the Holy Spirit. If any man be in Christ he is a new creature, and we are created anew by the Holy Spirit, "born of the Spirit." What a precious promise: "I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye."—Psalms xxxii. 8. How thankful we christians should be that the One who guided Israel by day and by night across the tractless desert is the One who is our God and is guiding us, and makes no mistakes. "He led them forth by the right way."—Psalms cvii. 7.

Submitted in love.
C. W. FRODGE.

GENESIS XII. 1-3.

"Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

The language of the word of the Lord of Abram, as recorded above, we feel to call your attention to its wording and meaning with such ability as the Lord will give us understanding. We must know something of the meaning of words before we can grasp the expressions. The word "Abram" in its original language signifies an high father; the father of elevation. We note Abram was the son of Terah, and only one brother lived and was married, which was Nahor, but Nahor was not in this command of the Lord to Abram. We are not to question why, but note the purpose of his commanding Abram, and in the command of the Lord he separated him from all his country, kindred and father's house, unto a land he had not seen. The outstanding feature was to elect Abram unto the purpose of the Lord, which was in the eternal mind and purpose of God before the world began, for of the seed of Abram, according to the flesh, Jesus was born. We see Abram raised above those of his own flesh to the wonderful purpose of God in salvation to all families of the earth. In his purpose we see he (God) would make of him a great nation, which was manifested as God testified to Abraham, that in Isaac shall thy seed be called. God spoke to Abram, saying, "I am the Almighty God: walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee."—Gen. xvii. 1-5. At the time of Abram's life when this was brought to his realization he was ninety and nine years. We know that according to the flesh of our day Abram was a very old man, and also that God's purposes must be fulfilled, and that his power is over all flesh. Abram was not limited to the meaning of the name, but God added to that by which he was made the father of many nations. As is recorded in the twenty-fifth chapter of Genesis, all the days of Abraham's life were one hundred and seventy-five years, and his sons buried him in the cave Machpelah. As we pass on, God did not cast off all men except Abraham and Isaac, but in the line of Isaac shall the seed of Abraham be called. And God inspired men to write of his dealings with Isaac and his

sons, and here we hear the word of God testifying that Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated, but according to the flesh Isaac loved Esau, but God's purpose was in Jacob, and he changed Jacob's name to Israel, which signifies power. God had prospered Jacob, that he was the possessor of much wealth and was the father of a great multitude. The name Israel signifies that Jacob as a prince had much power with God and men. (Gen. xxxii. 38.) We hope to call special attention to man having power with God and man later on.

We have God's word to Abram that he would bring him into a land that he would show him, which was the land of Canaan, which was to him and his seed. After Abraham passed away there came in the family of Jacob strange dreams, which were given to Joseph, as you are familiar with the reading, and also they caused an uprising in the flesh against God's servant Joseph, which brings us on through the life of Joseph in the house of Israel and the fulfillment of God's word in a natural sense dealing with men. This Israel was brought down to Egypt naturally to manifest that the God of Israel was almighty. The travel of Israel down to Egypt their bondage and deliverance from the Egyptians through the Red Sea, the teaching they received by the triumphant power of almighty God, by which he had destroyed both horse and rider in the sea, and by the Spirit of the living God with them they sang the song of Moses and the Lamb. We do believe that the Spirit of the living God teaches his ways by the demonstration of his power. We read from the Scriptures of God's working among the sons of men bringing them into the fulfillment of his divine purpose. God inspired Moses to write the first five books of the Bible, and then the record of the Kings in Israel, then the prophets that received the word of the Lord and held up to Israel as a nation the Lord Jehovah. All that is testified in the Old Testament shows the triumphant power of God, by which all things were made to bow to him. Jesus said, search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, but they are they that testify of me. So all the dealings of God with the seed of Abraham were, to our mind, to prove his electing love, and his power to separate from the world his elect and appoint their way, that no man, or men, could hinder him. This seed of Abram is one nation, and Isaac is the chosen out of that nation, but th show Isaac was yet fleshly as a man was proven in the case of Esau, and on through we find similar relations proving God's purposed Israel as a nation was dissolved. For there must be that which is holy set up, and that was the kingdom of God's dear Son, and the peace and increase thereof shall know no end. When the time appointed of God for greater things to be manifested than that of Israel according to the flesh Elizabeth conceived and the power of the Most High God overshadowed Mary, and by the Holy Ghost she conceived and bare a son, and before either of these two sons were born Mary visited Elizabeth, "and it came to pass, that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: and she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy."—Luke i. 41-44. What glorious things were appearing? It was the dawn of a new day, and the dark shadows of the law and prophets were being ended and entirely new realizations were testified. We do not want you, dear reader, to think that we would infer that it was not the same Spirit that was making manifest these things that rested

with Abraham and all his seed, for it was the same God. Abraham and all his seed were the creation of God, and Jesus and his Kingdom were not of the seed of Abraham, but He was none other than the Son of God, and all who are born of him are of that incorruptible seed by the word of God, and are not of flesh and blood, for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. In Jesus Christ the one born of the seed of Abraham all families of the earth are blessed. And God gave of the multitude or great nation of Abraham the disciples as well as the prophets, and they each testified according to the measure the gift of God, and Jesus the Son of God, as the fulfiller of all God's will that all families are blessed, declared, other sheep I have, which are not of this fold, I shall also bring. We do believe that God chose in Christ Jesus his elect from before the foundation of the world out of every land, kindred and tongue, and all men are born of the first Adam and are by nature the children of wrath, the elect included, but by the imputed righteousness of God the elect of God are justified. John preached the kindgom of heaven is at hand, and was by the Holy Ghost given to discern between flesh and Spirit, and he commanded those to whom he preached to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and those who did not bear that fruit he called a generation of vipers. We do not give any distinction between Jews and Gentiles according to the flesh, as Jesus broke down the legalities of law worship and all that worship God must worship him in spirit and in truth, for he doth seek such to worship him. The Spirit abode upon Jesus that identified Jesus as Son of God, and when John beheld him coming where he was baptizing, he exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Jesus demanded baptism of John, but John, feeling the weakness and depravity of his flesh, testified that he had needs to be baptized of Jesus, and asked, Why comest thou to me? Jesus commanded and John baptized him, and as he came up straightway out of the water the Spirit abode in a body liken to a dove and said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. After Jesus' baptism by John he called his disciples to be with and bear record of him. So we have the New Testament testifying of the man Christ Jesus and the power of the Father that was with him, and the way by which he offered himself without spot to God for the sins of his elect. The apostles declare that which they tasted and handled of the word of life, and were not commissioned any further, and the power of God that rested with them forbid all fleshly relations of men, and they were led by the Spirit, as Paul declares they should know nothing among them but Jesus Christ and him crucified. The Spirit teaches that denying of ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly and righteously in this world.

There were others born of the first Adam besides those who were of Abraham's seed, and are united in God's salvation of sinners as much as those of the multitide herein mentioned. As is recorded, "The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."—Acts ii. 39. We are minded to call your attention to the power of almighty God that rested with Abraham as he was commanded to take the lad, the one God told him should be called his seed, and go yonder and worship. In which he offered up Isaac for a sacrifice, and God stayed his hand and presented the offering He had prepared, and not as Abraham had thought. The offering herein presented is a type of our blessed Savior that should be offered for sin, and by this offering sin was put away for all that were embraced in the offering, which cannot be changed for it is God's work.

"In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." The connecting link in this sentence binds Abraham's seed to all families of the earth, and as Jesus was born of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, and was none other than the Son of God that should redeem out of every land, kindred and tongue under heaven, and bring them off more than conquerors, and the called of God contend for the same faith that was the moving power in Abraham, and all the way down the line from a righteous Abel to the present time. Shall men speak that God was not just in not choosing other men as he did Abraham? Or that other womem were unjustly used because Mary was the chosen virgin that should bear the Son of God? No. The Spirit of God in his people makes them thank and bless his holy name and feel that just and true are all his ways, and to realize that he is the almighty God and Jesus Christ is the Son of God. These virtures of his power separate men and women from the people of the world to worship God in Spirit, of which Abraham was the type. The service of divine worship is not a mere form, but the manifestation of an endless life, being manifested as God's elect, and who is it that repliest against God? Or who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? (Rom. viii.33) Or question, why doest thou? The way of the righteous is evilly spoken of by those in carnality, and the carnally-minded are those, to my mind, that God said he would curse, and he would bless them that blessed Abraham, and all who are born of that incorruptible seed by the word of God are those who bless Abraham, and God blesses them, and they are the blessed of the Lord. This covenant of God was openly brought out among the sons of men, but God declared that he would make a new covenant with them in those days, saying, I will put my law in their hearts, and write it in their inward parts; I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. These are the blessed of all families of the earth. What a wonderful God is the God of Abraham! All his works shall glorify his Son. The poet Watts, according to hymn number one in Lester and Durand's hymn and tune book, and number one in the Beebe hymn book, expresses reverence, which we feel to record:

"Eternal Power, whose high abode
Becomes the grandeur of a God;
Infinite lengths, beyond the bounds
Where stars revolve their little rounds.

The lowest step around thy seat,
Rises too high for Gabriel's feet;
In vain the favored angel tries
To reach thine height with wondering eyes.

Lord, what shall earth and ashes do?
We would adore our Maker too;
From sin and dust to thee we cry,
The Great, the Holy and the High.

Earth from afar has heard thy fame,
And worms have learned to lisp thy name;
But oh the glories of thy mind
Leave all our roaring thoughts behind.

God is in heaven, but man below;
Be short our tunes; our words be few'
A sacred reverence checks our songs,
And praise sits silent on our tongues."

These glorious things are recorded to express some of the glorious things that are spoke of Zion, city of our God. Oh that all men would praise the Lord.

C. W. V.

THE HAND OF THE LORD

The record given us by Moses declares that "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." Coming over to the New Testament, we find John saying, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*** All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." Paul testifies, "For by him were all

things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." -Col. i. 16, 17. These declarations are all-inclusive and we believe every word of them. Among the creatures and things which God made was man, and we are told that God saw all that he had made, and, "Behold, it was very good." Job says, With his hand formed he the crooked serpent, so the serpent, along with everything else, must have been good for the purpose for which it was made. God was not, then, in any sense of the word disappointed in his crowning creature-work when Adam transgressed his law and became a self-condemned sinner.

"From hence it appears he made nothing in vain,
For Adam thus formed was a link in the chain;
In him 'twas decreed that his members should die,
And all for the lifting of Jesus on high."

Not many, if any, of our readers will deny the hand of God in all of creation. And history is conclusive in showing the rise and fall of nations, the making and unmaking of kings and rulers, whether great or small, and the destinies of all peoples that have ever dwelt upon the face of the earth have been in his omnipotent hand. Our object at this time, however, is to consider more particularly God's dealings with his chosen people and to show how he has and does continue to lead them. When God made promise to Abraham concerning Isaac, embraced in it was that his seed should dwell in a strange land for four hundred years and be in bondage and servitude, but it also carried with it the assurance that he would bring them up our of Egypt with great treasure. Isaac's offspring proved to be twins, or strugglers; Esau, the first, being red and hairy, of the earth, whom God hated, but Jacob, the younger, was the Lord's portion, whom God loved, and that before either of the children had been born, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth. Jacob tells us that the Lord found him in a waste-howling wilderness and led him about and instructed him. Tracing his offspring we soon run into some of the mysterious deeps of God's providences. Among his twelve sons was to be found a dreamer, and when Joseph had told his dreams he was hated by his brethren. They conspired against him and he was sold, first to the Ishmaelites, then to Potiphar in Egypt, where he was falsely accused and cast into prison. God did not forsake him, however, but with his own hand did keep and lead and prosper him until finally he was placed in charge by Pharoah "over all the land of Egypt." He who had begun the work was carrying it on and in due time a great and terrible famine was spread out over the face of the whole earth, and when necessity was laid upon Jacob he sent his ten sons to Egypt for corn. Little did Joseph's brethren know of God's way at first, but step by step they were shown the iniquity of their own hearts, until finally they stood dumb with silence before him whom they had so greatly wronged. It was then that Joseph spoke unto them, saying, "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you, to preserve life." How wonderful and sacred is the Savior's love when it is made known to and experienced in the sinner's heart. Joseph's brethren meant it for evil, but God ordained it for good. It is a blessed thing when our own evil purposes are overthrown by the hand of God. This, however, does not release us from guilt, but rather demonstrates the greatness of God's matchless love. And be it far from us to say, the hand of the Lord

leads one into sin. James said, let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. David rightly assumed the responsibility of having made his bed in hell. He acknowledged his transgression, declared that his sin was ever before him. On another occasion, he was heard to say, "I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the Lord, for his mercies are great, and let me not fall into the hand of man." Only those whose lives have hung in to the balance, and who have been deserving of death, can fully appreciate what it means to fall into the hands of the Lord; they know that his mercies are great, that God is merciful, or full of mercy, and their desire is to sing of that mercy as long as they have breath. They are made to realize that when sin did abound, grace did much more abound, and the hand of the Lord is seen in providing a way for their escape.

The hand of the Lord! What do we in reality know aobut it? Doubtless there are groups of the Lord's people, known as churches, who have prayed for and verily believed that they were given to see the hand of the Lord in raising up or sending to them gifts and pastors, or truly called and qualified servants of God to preach to them the unsearchable riches of Christ; his hand has been seen in adding to their number such as he would own and have to be saved. Sometimes it has been a gradual work, at others it has been a sudden cutting down of the rebellious, as with the apostle Paul, but always it has been the Lord who gave the true increase. The hand of the Lord has likewise been seen in the midst of great difficulties and trials, when his people have been compelled to wait upon him and he has delivered them out of their distresses. Pastors and ministers have very peculiar experiences, sometimes believing that the Lord has opened their field of labor to them, while at other times his hand has closed the door so that they could not enter therein. They know of a truth that the Lord opens and none can shut, and shuts and none can open. How good it is when their lot is cast in pleasant places and among brethren who dwell together in unity and peace. In all walks of life, those who have been led through deep waters have been made to earnestly desire to see the hand of the Lord directing their steps and guiding them in the way they should take. Many have had their prayers answered and experienced that every good gift, as well as every perfect gift, cometh down from above, from the Father of lights, with whom is neither variableness, nor a shadow of turning. Temporal blessings, such as the gift of a good companion, a child or children, loved ones and friends, as well as the necessities and comforts of this life, have all come from his bountiful hand. Too often we forget it. Many are made to desire wisdom from above that they may choose that which is right and acceptable unto God. When all goes well and we prosper in our undertakings, we may feel that the Lord is with us. His hand can withhold as well as give, but we are not so ready to recognize it in crossing our purposes and laying low all our fancied schemes. When trouble comes, when adversity and poverty stalk arm in arm through the door, and sorrow and sickness, and possibly the grim and cold hand of death enters our homes and takes from our very bosoms those whom we hold most dear on earth, it is not so easy to say, It is the hand of the Lord. Yet, do we not have to exclaim with Naomi, the Lord hath dealt bitterly with us? Today, distress is rampant throughout practically the entire civilized world, and great suffering and

possibly starvation has been experienced in many countries and thousands of homes. There are those who deny the controlling providence of an infinite God. We have no word for them, but to *the living* we would say, stay upon your God; though the storm in its fury rage and though the very foundation of your hope seems to shake, be still, for the Captain of your salvation is not only aboard the vessel, but his hand is at the helm, and only his wisdom and skill can be depended upon to bring you through safely. "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience [endurance] the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." We are aware, as we look about Zion, that there is much to disturb our minds; there is much to mystify and bewilder us, neither can we understand the whys and wherefores of a great deal that is going on about us, but let us not lose faith in the Almighty.

"Deep in unfathomable mines
of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will."

It seems easy to recognize his hand in times of deliverance, when he showers his blessings upon us, but let us not forget that trials are often in mercy sent. Job saw no hand but that of God in all of his afflictions. With him, it was God who gave, and it was that same God who took away, and he could still say, blessed be the name of the Lord. He verily believed that all things were working to one end and purpose, and that finally he would come forth as gold tried in the fire and purged of its dross. His faith was adequately rewarded in the end, for he answered the Lord, and said, "I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee." Listen to him once more: "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." The widow of Sarepta saw the hand of the Lord each time she went to the barrel and discovered that the meal had not wasted, neither had the oil in the cruse failed. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego saw the hand of the Lord in the fiery furnace, for instead of being destroyed, they were set at liberty and came forth without even the smell of fire upon their garments. Daniel was a witness to the same thing in the den of lions. Jonah saw the hand of the Lord as he lay at the very foot of the mountains in the depth of the sea, and was made to say, "Salvation is of the Lord." In the days of our Lord upon the earth it was often seen by his disciples: the wind and the sea were made to obey his voice, the grave gave up its dead, the blind saw, the deaf heard, the lame walked and the poor had the gospel preached to them. The woman at the well confessed it, the leper realized its cleansing power; Mary, out of whom seven devils were cast, experienced it; Peter and James and John were all witnesses, and what shall we say more? for time and space forebid to tell of the others.

However much may be in the record and regardless of the innumerable witnesses that might be placed upon the stand, we must have more than these if our own souls are to put in their claim. If we are to build upon the firm and solid foundation as individuals, we must be able to find some good reason for the hope that is within us. If we have been made to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, we have known what it was to mount up with wings as eagles, to run and not weary, to walk and not faint. Such experiences have convinced us that there is no god like our God, and we

have been persuaded that there is absolutely nothing too hard for him. Every day brings forth new struggles, however, and we have to prove again and again that his grace is sufficient for us. We hope to continue fighting the good fight of faith, ever looking unto Jesus to guide us through the wilderness of sin and unbelief. Sometimes the following petition becomes our very own:

"Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou are mighty,
Hold me by thy powerful hand:
Bread of heaven,
Feed me till I want no more.

Open thou the crystal fountain,
Whence the healing streams do flow,
Let the fiery, cloudy pillar,
Lead me all my journey through:
Strong Deliverer,
Be thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside;
Death of death, and hell's destruction,
Land me safe on Canaan's side:
Song of praises
I will ever give to thee."

In conclusion, we verily believe the hand of the Lord has been seen preserving the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as a medium of correspondence for the benefit of the saints, and the arm of him who has sustained it thus far is not shortened that it cannot save. Let us, therefore, not only look back upon mercies which are past, but look confidently to the future with hope, in the full assurnace of faith, believing that he who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, will do all things well, and when he takes us from this sin-cursed world, forever to be with him, he shall ever say, It was THE HAND OF THE LORD.

R. L. D.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

LUKE II. 14.

"Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men."

These words are a portion of that heavenly song of "a multitude of the heavenly host" sung at the birth of Jesus Christ.

"Glory to God." These are the first three words in the song. Is it not this very language of all the manifest elect of God? Others may glory in men, in their wisdom, might and riches. (Jer. ix.23.) They may glory in their own blasphemous doings, in their missionary societies to save souls, theological colleges, Sunday Schools, means and instrumentalities. They compass sea and land to obtain converts to their religion, and never fail to perpetuate the practice of those of whom the prophet Habakkuk writes, "They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag: therefore they rejoice and are glad. Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plentious." But the taught of the Lord are cut off and saved from such doings. In themselves how can they glory? The Holy Spirit is pleased to discover to them what they are in themselves: poor, loathsome sinners, and under divine tuition they see, and learn that vanity is stamped on all earthly things. They have the same spirit of the psalmist when he cried, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake."—Psalms cxv. 1. Having had revealed to him something of the majesty and excellent glory of the Holy One of Israel in the condemnation of transgression in the law, and justification most sweetly realized in the blood

and righteousness of Jesus, the believer is prepared and does in spirit cry, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified ulnto me, and I unto the world."—Gal. vi. 14. The heavens, and the earth, the deep places, all proclaim the glory of God. Oh what wonderful works are to be seen in the creation of God. "The ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious." Therein the holiness, the terrible majesty, and eternal justice of God is made known and felt in the hearts of the Israel of God. But the glory of the ministration of righteousness, the ministration of life doth exceed in glory.(2 Cor. iii. 7-10.) In the gospel of the grace of God is that glory that far outweighs and outshines all other manifestations of the glory of the King of glory, it is "the glory that excelleth."

"Glory to God in the highest." It overtops all others. Oh, the surpassing infinite riches of the glory of the blessed God, which shines forth in the face of our beloved Emmanuel. The sun, the moon, the stars, the sky, the earth, and all that is therein, shall fade, and crumble, and be no more; and all the pomp and glory thereof shall pass away. As it is said of the law, the ministration of condemnation, so of all things else, they have "no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth."—2 Cor. iii. 10. The glory of the Lord in the universe is but transient, but for time, but in the Word, the Son of God made flesh, in Jesus, Emmanuel, is the eternal, immutable, superlative glory of the everlasting God. In this unfathomable mystery is the fulfillment of the eternal, immutable counsel and oath of Jehovah. (Heb. vi. 17, 18) When the Word, the Son of God, came into the world, was made flesh, born of a virgin, made under the law, the covenant head of all the chosen and loved of God, the Mediator of the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, then was fulfilled the word of God by the prophet Micah: "Thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall be come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." This had been promised and foretold in the prophets, had been signified in the types and shadows under the law, and now "the due time" is come, and the Son of God in the joy of his heart, in his eternal love to his bride, the church, and in loving covenant obedience to God the Father cries out, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure: then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God."—Heb. x. 5-7.

"Glory to God in the highest." The will of Christ was to do the will of him that sent him, and to finish his work, and in fulfilling the "all things," (oh blessed be the name of the Lord, not in one jot or tittle did Jesus fail) ordered in the everlasting covenant (2 Sam. xxiii. 5), all the attributes of the eternal Godhead in glorious, sweetest harmony were declared, "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."—1 Tim. iii. 16. The Lord Jesus Christ went forth for the salvation of Zion, and in his obedience, suffering and blood he wrougth salvation, brought in everlasting righteousness, redeemed his prople from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them, saved them from their sins, justified them in his precious blood, and reconciled them unto God. He traveled in the greatness of his strength, mighty to save. Jesus Christ, our dear Redeemer, "being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant,

and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."—Phil. ii. 6-8. Thus Jesus went forth for the salvation of his people. "God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand: and there was the hiding of his power."—Hab. iii. 3, 4. It is in salvation that the eternal excellency of Jehovah is revealed. The justice and mercy, grace and love, yea, every perfection of God is declared to the eternal glory of the blessed God of Israel. (Rom. ix. 23; Rev. i. 6) This song which "a multitude of the heavenly host" sang at the birth of Jesus has never ceased to be sung. Even to-day it is the song of the believer in Jesus. While time shall last, and all eternity, all the loved, chosen and redeemed of the Lord will be praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest." (Rev. iv. 9-11; v. 12-14.)

"On earth peace." Oh what welcome, soul-cheering tidings is this to the distressed and oppressed child of God. What disorder and discord does the enlightened child of God behold among mankind. In that knowledge that flows from the operating of the Holy Spirit what a terrible and sad condition they realize themselves to be in by nature. It is their bitter experience to feel that "the carnal mind is enmity against God," though they labor most diligently to have it otherwise. The enmity still remains without abatement, this desperate and horrible plague rages within. It is their experience, and language, as recorded of the woman in Mark v. 26: "She was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse."

Those ministers of Satan, transformed as ministers of righteousness "in preaching" another gospel, which is not another (Gal. i. 6, 7), urge poor sinners to make their peace with God. Oh what a task! How utterly impossible for a vile transgressor ever to accomplish! Oh what conflicts with sin and Satan, what tossings to and fro, what unrest, what anxious thoughts possess the poor quickened sinner. His sins are as an army of bitter foes in cruel war against his soul, for the manifest child of God, called by God's grace, being made a partaker of the divine nature, being born of incorruptible seed, cannot be at peace with sin, but possessing spiritual life he hungers and thirsts after righteousness, and the longings of his soul are for entire freedom from sin, to see, to feel, to know that all these hateful foes are forever annihilated. No sooner does the poor sinner experience the quickening power of God than the warfare begins between the flesh and the Spirit. (Gal. v. 17.) The new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, and the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; there can be no agreement, no concord between them. Wherever these two are found there must be war. The sinner, therefore, in whom the Lord has begun his work of grace feels and fears there is no peace between his soul and the mighty and holy God. Oh how troubled is the poor soul amidst the aboundings of his iniquities. The adversary, the gates of hell, fight against the loved ones of God, and there can be no peace between the seed of Christ and the seed of the devil.

"On earth peace.." Such is the song of the multitude of the heavenly host. Jesus, of whom they sing, is "the Prince of Peace." (Isaiah ix. 6.) He is the Mediator of the covenant of peace. (Isaiah liv. 10.) "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." The dear Lord is our peace. Oh at what a cost he procured it. He made peace through the blood of his cross. (Col. i. 20.) "The chastisement

of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."—Isaiah liii. 5. God hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, in the body of his flesh through death, to present us holy, unblamable and unreprovable in his sight. Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed. Oh, our precious Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, in his obedience and blood vanquished and made an end of all our foes; and the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, reveals in the heart what Jesus is, and what he has wrought in our behalf, then we joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. All our enemies, all our transgressions are purged in Jesus' blood; death and hell are overcome in the blood of the Lamb. The law, which is holy, just and good, has received at our Surety's hand full payment of all its righteous demands, and the vessels of mercy in whom the Holy Spirit has revealed the wondrous doctrine of peace with God can indeed with the apostle Paul exclaim, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Oh what sweet tranquility flows into the soul when the poor troubled sinner is experimentally put in possession of the atonement of Christ. It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul. (Lev. xvii. 11.) It truly is a peace that passeth all understanding, keeping the heart and mind through Christ Jesus. It is "perfect peace." (Isaiah xxvi. 3.) It cannot be bettered. There no contingency therein. It is ordered in all things and sure. The covenant of peace shall not be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy upon thee. (Isaiah liv. 10.) How comforting, O believer in Jesus, is this enduring, eternal peace, that not all the powers of sin and hell can ever mar. Thy warfare is accomplished, thine iniquity is pardoned. (Isaiah xl. 1.) What! mine? Perhaps some poor soul is saying, So I at one time thought my sins were all gone, every voice of accusation was silenced, the devil and all his hosts fled when Jesus in his power and love and blood was revealed unto me, and in my heart his voice was most sweetly heard, saying, thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee. But oh what trouble, what wars and conflicts have I encountered since then. The evils in my heart; my sweet comfort and peace in Jesus has been most cruelly disturbed, and now there is warfare. I find I still have a carnal mind which is enmity against God. The old man is not gone, but is lively, and is so corrupt I fear that I shall be utterly overcome by indwelling sin, and prove a castaway. Oh what a mystery is the life of a child of God. The apostle Paul exclaims, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."—Gal. ii. 20. It is by faith that we now experience peace with God. And "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." The Lord Jesus has saved his people from their sins in his death. He died unto sins once. We rejoice to know that Jesus rose from the dead, and dieth no more. He rose for our justification, and is now within the vail for us, The Lamb as it had been slain (Rev. v. 6.) in resurrection glory. O, dear people of God, we have hope that we shall be like him, though now sharp conflicts with sin and Satan are our lot. In these things we have a taste of the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ, and if we suffer we shall also reign, when, in the resurrection, we appear with all the ransomed of the Lord. We shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. The Lord

Jesus Christ shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. (Phil. iii. 21.) Then no more will the carnal mind, the old man, the lusts of the flesh, plague and distress us. Our conflicts will all be over, for Jesus, in his precious blood, has destroyed all our foes, and this by faith, of the operation of God, we believe. And in the power and goodness of the Lord, even now, by faith, we can sing, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" We shall overcome at last. (Gen. xlix. 19.) "On earth peace." When God giveth us quietness, who then can make trouble? (Job xxxiv. 29.)

"Good will toward men." "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Yea, he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."—Eph. i. 11. "He will save."—Zeph. iii. 17. Who or what then shall hinder? "Good will toward men." This is "the good will of him that dwelt in the bush."—Deut. xxxiii. 16. Everything provided in the good will of God is precious. There is no lack, nothing faulty. Oh how good! It cannot be frustrated. It contains mercy (Rom. ix. 18), grace (Exod. xxxiii. 19), eternal life (John vi. 40), righteousness (Isaiah lxii. l.). Yea, all that the elect of God need for time and eternity is found in the good will, the covenant, testimentary will of God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "Glory to God in the highest."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

MEETINGS

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church in Conference on September 2, 1984:

The Church voted and it was unanimously agreed to appoint Elder Randall Saunders to serve as their pastor, due to the fact that Elder Simpson is aging and the distance is long for him.

He served this little Church well for twelve years and two months. At times, he filled his appointment when he was not physically able to be here.

His resignation leaves us sad, not only for the members, but for the friends and those associated with Richmond Church. Elder Simpson is highly esteemed with those of us who know him and our love and admiration goes with him and Sister Simpson.

Services will continue to be held each first Sunday at 10:30 a.m. Those of you who are given a mind and will, come and be with us on this Lord's day.

By Request of the Richmond Church

Submitted by the Clerk

SALISBURY AND FOREST GROVE

The Lord willing, the Salisbury and Forest Grove Old School Baptist Churches will hold a joint 5th Sunday meeting on March 31, 1985 and the Saturday evening before at the Salisbury meeting house.

We invite all ministers of our faith and all brothers and sisters and friends to join us.

Where: Route 50 and Baptist Streets
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

When: Saturday - March 30, 1985
Supper - 5:00 p.m.
Service - 7:00 p.m.
Sunday - March 31, 1985
Service - 10:30 a.m.
Lunch served after service

Anyone who would like accommodations, please write to Sister Phyllis Far-

low, P. O. Box 176, Pittsville, Md.21850 or call (301) 835-2130.

Elder Cleo Robertson and
Elder Julian Williams, Pastors
Phyllis Farlow and
Elbert Robbins, Clerks

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union Meeting appointed to be held at Danville Primitive Baptist Church the Fifth Sunday and Saturday before in March, 1985 if it be the Lords will.

All Elders, Brothers, Sisters and friends are invited to meet with us.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
R. T. Holley, Church Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 1984

Mr. & Mrs. Ballard Barker, VA..$	7.00
Mrs. Audrey V. Dyer, VA.	7.00
Mrs. Carole Leandra, CT.	32.00
Victor H. Laws, MD.....	7.00
Mrs. Mary Messick, AL.	5.00
Thomas C. Simpson, CA.	7.00
Mrs. Judy Wiliams, TX.	7.00
E. M. Reeves, TX.	2.00
Charles Alders, TX.	7.00
Mrs. Elizabeth T. Adkins, VA....	2.00
Mrs. Dianne Young, NC.....	13.00
Alvis G. Beacham, NC.	7.00
Mrs. Harry McNelia, MD.	2.00
Elder. W. D. Griffin, AL.....	10.00
Mrs. H. D. Underwood, VA....	2.00
Mrs. Nora . Largen, VA.....	2.00
F. L. Martin, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Ina Hendrix, TN.....	2.00
Mrs. Leonard Nichols, VA.....	1.00
Elder J. R. Williams, VA.....	100.00
Mrs. Helen Maxwell, WA.	5.00

OBITUARIES

LOUISE BUCK BITTNER

Louise Buck Bittner was born Jan. 1, 1923 to Asa B. Buck and Curlie B. Buck, both now deceased, and spent her entire lifetime in Morehead City, North Carolina.

She passed from this life March 2, 1984 to go to her heavenly home to be with the Lord. On December 14, 1945, she married Robert E. Bittner of Richmond, Indiana, who survives her. She is also survived by three daughters; Mrs. Nancy Pollack of Morehead City, Mrs. Susan Pond of Cary, North Carolina and Mrs. Becky Dodge of Savannah, Georgia; A son Robert E. Bittner, Jr. of Beaufort; A sister, Lina B. Willis of Morehead City; A brother Asa B. Buck, Jr. of Beaufort, and seven grandchildren: Davey, Robert, Sarah and Anna Pollack and Laura Pond, Gina Bittner and Nathaniel Dodge; An aunt, Mrs. Annie B. Higgins of Morehead City; Two uncles, Mr. E. Parker Buck of State Road, N.C. and Mr. Orin J. Buck of Wilmington, N. C. and so many near and dear relatives, in-laws, cousins and friends.

On May 29, 1982 she joined the Wilmington Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by Elder M. M. Gray. She later moved her membership to Hadnott's Creek Church in Carteret county.

Her funeral was conducted on March 5, 1984, at Bell Munden Funeral Home Chapel by Elder J. T. Prescott and Gary Haddock. Burial was in Bayview Cemetery. The ministers spoke very beautifully and with sweet comfort to the family, and the choir sang her favorite songs, "There Is A Home Not Made With Hands" and "When I Can Read My Title Clear," and at the cemetery they sang "Amazing Grace."

All will miss her, but we like to think of our loss as her eternal gain.

Sister Anna Higgins

IDA ANN COBB

Our gracious Lord saw fit in His Providence on March 1, 1984 to remove from our midst, Sister Ida Ann Cobb, beloved member of Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, Winnsboro, Texas. Sister Cobb was born October 15, 1898 in Franklin County, Texas. She lived most of her life in nearby Wood County in the Pleasant Grove Community. In 1914, she married Ocie Cobb who preceded her in death. To this union were born eight children. They, in turn, were blessed to provide her sixteen grandchildren. Late in life, Sister Cobb's memory began to fail her and she spent her last months at Whispering Pines Nursing Home in Winnsboro. Although her memory had begun to fail her, her gracious Lord, in complete harmony with His glorious nature and His immutable promises, never once failed her, and she fell peacefully asleep in Him. Few have been blessed with such a sweet disposition as Sister Cobb and she will be sorely missed.

Her funeral was officiated by Elder Joe Hamrick and her body was laid to rest in the cemetery by her beloved church to await the resurrection morning. "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Submitted by
Elder Jimmy Hamrick

SISTER VERA K. FUTRAL

Sister Vera K. Futral was born May 19th, 1911. It pleased our Heavenly Father to call her home on May 7th, 1984. She was the wife of Lauty J. Futral (Deceased).

To this union was born four daughters and two sons.

She united with Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church on June 9th, 1951. She was a faithful member and a firm believer in Salvation by Grace.

We at Sand Hill Church and a host of friends miss her so much, but feel our loss is her gain. She was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers at Sand Hill Cemetary.

Written by: Glennie Houston
Elvia Kennedy

LORENA HILL HOPSON

Sister Lorena Hill Hopson was born July 7, 1882, the daughter of Duncan Hill and Elizabeth Hill. She was called out of our midst on October 14, 1982—having lived 100 years and 3 months. Her husband, James Hopson, preceded her in death many years ago.

Surviving her are several nieces and nephews and one step-daughter -- all of whom were kind and considerate of her needs -- especially after she lost her eyesight.

In September 1923, she came before the Church in Durham, North Carolina and asked for a home. She lived among us a lovely and faithful member for 59 years.

Graveside services were held for her by Elders D. V. Spangler and C. B. Davis at Eno Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery where her body was interned.

Sister Lorena had been rooted and grounded in the Truth by her Lord and she set a lovely example in behaviour, stability and loyalty. She walked in the old paths—not conforming to the ways of the world—either by word or deed.

In her gentle way she comforted and encouraged the other members of the Church.

Though Sister Lorena never had children of her own -- she was truly one of the lovely mothers in Israel and we miss her.

Catherine Humbarger,
Church Clerk

JOHN ALBERT SOWDER

In memory of John Albert Sowder, Brother Sowder was born in Floyd County, June 16, 1904. The son of John and Alice Sowder.

He was married to Ethel Palmer, May 30, 1928.

From this union were three sons and one daugher, the daughter preceded him in death in 1972.

Brother Sowder leaves to mourn his wife Ethel P. Sowder; three sons, Johnnie T. Sowder, Albert Ray Sowder and Charlie E. Sowder; seven grandchildren, one great-grandson, one brother, E. V. Sowder.

He joined Belview Church, later named Laurel Ridge, the third Sunday in April 1953, and was baptized the third Sunday in May 1953.

A few years later he was chosen Clerk of the Church and served as long as he was able.

Brother Sowder showed love for his Church and the visiotrs that came from time to time, he would often ask permission to speak at the close of service and he would express his love for the people and his appreciation to the visitors and thank them for coming, he proved his love to the visiting Elders by helping them on their way and also his pastor, he did not want to slight any one it seemed.

I remember very well how happy he was just a few days before he past away, we met at his home to sing and his cup ran over.

His funeral was conducted at Laurel Ridge Church Saturday, September 22, 1984 at 11.00 a.m. The church building was filled with his family and friends, Services were conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder Lane Carter. After which his body was laid to rest in Blue Ridge Memorial Gardens, Roanoke, Va. to wait the second coming of the Saviour.

It was hard to believe that under those beautiful flowers was one we loved so dear and loved us.

But sleep on dear Brother, it will not be but just a moment, then our Lord will come.

Written by request of Laurel Ridge Church, November 17, 1984.

By: Elder Leonard J. Brammer

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Psalm 116:15

Signs of the Times

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Editors

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

Mat. 7:12

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EDITORIAL

John's Mission ended, the Mission of Christ is begun, John has fulfilled the mission that he was sent to conclude. There was not any stigma of defeat attached to his coming. Primarily he was sent to make ready a people prepared for the Lord (Luke 1:17).

Now let us step carefully. Who sent him? God sent John to prepare the people of God for the advent of their Saviour into the world. Let us get rid of falsehoods to begin with. He did not come to gather together everybody in the surrounding country. Let us be sure that we be careful here and adhere closely to the truth. John was not sent by God to make a people, nor to seduce all manner of people to gather unto the Preaching of the Baptist. There is not any question about him coming to gather together a people prepared for the Lord (Luke 1:17). Let us rest here, for we have found out that he was an Old Baptist in his preaching.

Unless my eyes and ears and mind has deceived me, this evangelist was sent by the Lord, even sent to a prepared people. Moreover, this preparation was not in any sense of the word a quickening of the dead alienated sinners into living children of God. Such an idea is contrary to the Bible in every conceivable manner. Now since we have been led into the nature of the work of John, let us now see what the work of Christ was to be. His work must be in harmony with the work of John, and His work, when He has come, must be in harmony with what the Messenger of the covenant did.

The prophecies of the Old Testament were all about what would be done in the gospel day. Although the Old Scriptures mentions near a hundred passages in which salvation is ascribed unto the Lord. It is my desire to take a brief look at one passage, to wit, *I, even I, am the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour* (Isa. 42:11). This is the testimony of God, who was the inspirer of the whole of the Bible. Now, in order to verify what I have said, and what has been said by the ministers in the church of Jesus Christ from the beginning is the language of the angel to Joseph when he was disturbed about marrying the virgin Mary. It isn't any of my affair, and I do not have any desire to dispute anyone about what was said to him. The evidence is that all salvation was vested in that unborn infant. If I am not mistaken in my calling, it is to preach the gospel, to preach far and wide, wherever and before whoever the Lord casts my lot, that Jesus saved everyone that God the Father gave Him in a well ordered covenant before the world had a beginning. The business of saving sinners was given into the hands of the Son of God before the world had a

beginning. My Father has had that in mind a long time. If there is one person on the face of the globe that does not believe in the certain salvation of the Lord's People, I do not feel that it is a duty laid on me to dispute with those that does not believe what the angel said to Joseph.

God is Light. In the morning of creation God made three lights. Before He spoke these three lights into existence God said, let there be light, and what was the result? Immediately, there was light even before the sky luminaries had been created. No man or woman is a light within themselves. They are in darkness until the light shines out of darkness. Let us remember that darkness cannot shine; there must of necessity be a Light that is spontaneous.

Let us not lose sight of the fact that John was not the light, but that he was a witness and a bearer of who was the Light. The Light in His spiritual power, had sent John, but when the light arrived, He was the Light before He came, and when He arrived, He was the Light that lighteth every man that comes into the world that God loved with an everlasting love. He was the Word, He was the Light, and without Him there was not, and there is not any light.

Before time's curtains were let down, He was the Light. He was before everything that was created. He was not the beginning, but He was manifest in the beginning or in the creation of all things. The only way that the creation would ever know Him was in and by revelation. In every act, yea in every thought pertaining to this creation. He had to think and act first toward them. Being created things, they had to be taught by their Creator. The greater has got to move towards the created being. You and I are created beings and even in our relationship with every phase of our natural life, we have got to be taught even the most important event in our time life, to wit, who our parents are. You know, and I know that you know that your knowledge of your earthly parentage has come, and had to come, from your own parents. Anything else, whoever teaches it, is teaching an absurdity; therefore , it is not the truth.

Now did this creation have knowledge to seek Him and to inquire about its relationship with Him? It did not. When Christ came among His own people in the flesh, what was their reactions? Did they warm up to Him? Did they follow Him about begging Him to stay close to them; did they do that? The answer is: they did not. He came to His own people. How did they receive Him? What was their reaction to Him? They did not receive Him as a people. They arose in voice and in manner, saying, we will not have this man to rule over us. That loud railing continued against Him: until, when Pilate would have released Him, His own flesh and blood railed out and said, Crucify him, Crucify him, and release unto us Barabbas (Luke 23:18). If He had turned His nose up against them, as a people, what would have become of them? The doctrine that is often hurled in our face, to wit, if you turn from Him, He will turn from you had of been enforced, there can you tell me what would have become of His people after the flesh?

He came to His own, and His own received him not. Is that all? No, no, mercy has not moved yet. Deaf ears have not been unstopped yet. However, he that unstops blind eyes and deaf ears is in charge. The momentous question with me is this: Will He, because of my unconcern tire of me? Will He turn away in disgust because I am unconcerned? Did the terrible conflict which He was facing cause Him to lose interest in the welfare of His people? No, dear reader, no, not at all. While His people, His flesh and His blood by the relationship that existed between He and His mother did not,

as a whole receive Him, yet let us remember that He did not come in the interest of any nation or nationality as such, that He did come for the salvation of those given Him out of every nation and kindred and tongue. That covenant relationship was not broken in this sad hour. The love of God was not weakened, the covenant of grace was not impaired in the least.

His own after the flesh did not, as a whole, receive Him. Let us remember that. He has not at this critical stage lost a single one of them given Him. The number, the names, the welfare of each and of all is as it was established and purposed whether of them that spends eternity in praise to His lovely name or of those left out of that blissful state.

As many as did receive Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God. If that had been all that was said about these that received Him, then not one of us, writer or reader, would be where we are religiously speaking. If only those that received Him had power to become sons of God, then the Old Baptist church would be futilely beating the bush in a hopeless cause. But it did not say that these had power to become born again men and women. Before these that did receive Him had received Him they would truly have had power given them to become born again children of God. Before He came to them they had already been born of God. He gave these that had previously been born again a gift to walk in obedience.

The dear and precious elder, to wit, G. W. Berry told me that he had a Bible of the Geneva translation that said, Jesus gave them right to become children of God or followers of God. Since, I do not look upon the translaters as being inspired of God, but that they were agents of King James, I am saying that I like the Geneva translation which says that He gave them the right to become the followers of Him, instead of they saying that He gave us the power to become children of God. Power belongs to God. I haven't got any.

Since they were already children of God when they received Him, they could not have been given additional power to become something that they already were by birth, which is the only way of becoming a child of God. That is exactly what we preach, to wit, first, the Children are first born of the Spirit, and each and everyone become ready for teaching, and all of that teaching (as far as salvation is concerned) is of the Lord (Isa. 54:13).

Now John testified to the truth. Christ is truth. He was preferred before John. I must, as God blesses me, hew to the line. John was a minister. He was an evangelist. He was a forerunner. He was the one sent before to announce the coming of another. He always put his preaching and his writing in the right perspective, in the place, with the right meaning. He never did get one step ahead of His Saviour. He never did say, I am of more importance than Jesus Christ. This ungodly world has always said that God's children were beset with an inferiority complex. O no, not that, those that have been put in their place know their place. John said, I am not first, He is first. I am not worthy to stoop down to tie or unloose His shoe latchet. Being with Christ taught him that likewise having been taught by Him that stooped down to the agonies of the rugged cross taught Peter to have his feet washed by the Saviour. I do hope that I have been taught by the dear Saviour, as John was taught, to know that He came into the world to save His peole, and that His teaching has been so effectual that I know, as John learned, that He is preferred before me. And I beg, as I hope, on bended knees, that day in and day out, even all of my days, that He come as the one full of grace and truth. That is lovely, that is helpful in the long journey before us. But the

journey is made better and more encouraging and more uplifting to know that all, yes, thank His dear name, all of the family of God have received of that fulness. May God manifest that fulness, and the filling of us in an experimental way while on this journey that is so long and so emptying to us.

Yours (not in assurance) but in a precious and abiding hope of seeing Him as He is, and of being like Him.

Elder W. D. Griffin

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

EDITORIAL OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE

ROMANS VIII. 38, 39.

"For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

This chapter begins with a declaration that there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, and concludes with the assurance of our text, that there can be no separation from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. This was not only the firm conviction of the mind of the apostle, but the inspired truth of the Holy Ghost. This blessed security from condemnation, and assurance of the immutable love of God, belongs to them who are in Christ Jesus, and to none other. As we are deeply interested in the subject, it becomes us to inquire earnestly, and to search diligently whether we are in Christ Jesus, and numbered with those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. If we are not in him, we certainly have no part or lot in these great and precious declarations. If we are in him, we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, according to Eph. i. 4, for Christ Jesus is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. (Heb. xiii. 8.) The exceeding greatness of the mighty power of God is exemplified in him; all things are put under his feet, and God has given him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. (Eph. i. 19-23.) Consequently if there ever was a period in time or eternity when any of the members of his church were not in him, then there has been a period when his body was not full. But to imagine the existence of a head without a body, or a body without a head, or a perfect and complete head, and an imperfect and deficient body, does not suit our understanding of the declaration that, it pleased the Father that in him all fullness should dwell. (Col. i. 19.) Again it is written, "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and ye [the saints and faithful brethren in Christ,] are complete in him which is the Head of all principality and power."—Col. ii. 9, 10. All the members of Christ are in him, even as the eternal Father is in him. He is the dwelling place (not of one-third part of the Godhead, as some seem to understand it,) but of all the fullness of the Godhead. "That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one," &c.—John xvii. 21-23. If the church is in Christ as the eternal Father is in him, must they not have been in him from everlasting? Would Christ be complete if the Father were not in him, or if all the fullness of the Godhead were not in him? Or could the fullness of the Godhead dwell in him bodily, if any part of the Godhead did not dwell in him? Certainly not. Equally certain is it then as

the church is in him as the Father is in him, and they are his body and the fullness of him, that all the members required to make his mystical body perfect and complete, must have been in him as well before the world began, as they will be when this world shall be no more.

We are not contending that our earthly, corrupt and depraved natures were in him, and were a part of his fullness before the world began; for they were not even in the earthly Adam until after the world began, nor did Christ himself come in the flesh until he was made of a woman; until his advent. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he [Christ] also himself likewise [or in like maner] took part of the same."—Heb. ii. 14. His children partaking of flesh and blood, shows that their relationship to God as *children* was perfect before they partook of flesh and blood; and that participation of flesh and blood no more constituted them children, than Christ's coming into the world and "also himself likewise partaking of the same," constituted him the Son of God, or the Head of Immortality to his body, the church: "That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." —Rom. ix. 8. If that earthly life which was given as in the earthly Adam could be distinctly identified so as to involve us in the guilt of Adam's transgression, almost six thousand years before we were born of the flesh, is it hard to understand the anti-type Adam, that our spiritual, immoral and eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested, (1 John i. 2,) and which was given to us in the unspeakable gift of God's dear Son, according to the record borne by the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, (1 John v. 7, 11,) should so fully identify us in Christ, that it could of truth be said of us that we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world? (Eph. i. 4.) Or as still more expressly stated, Eph. ii. 18: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." This term *created* has reference to the new or spiritual creation. It is not like the creation of the natural world, the creation of something out of nothing; but it is the giving of the members of Christ a place, a standing in, and identity with him who personifies their immortality, or their eternal life. This life instead of being called into existence after the manner of the old creation of the natural world, is the manifestation of a life which is eternal, which always was hid with Christ in God. For it was, as we have proven by 1 John i. 2; "For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that *eternal life which was with* the Father, and was manifested unto us." "And we know that the Son of God," (in whom the record of Father, Word and Holy Ghost declares that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son,) "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and *we are in him* that is true; even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life."—1 John v. 19, 20. Thus to be in Jusus Christ seminally, as the spiritual embodiment and progenitor of a seed that shall serve him, and be counted to the Lord for a generation, according to Psalms xxii. 30; Isaiah liii. 10-12; 1 Peter ii. 9, involves the Bible doctrine of eternal Union. A union of life, love and immortality. One with Christ even as Christ is one with the Father.

But to be in him manifestatively by a new and spiritual birth, implies that we are, or must be born again; not of a corruptible seed, but of that seed which was in Christ our spiritual progenitor, from everlasting. By the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever—not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of

the will of man, but of God. (1 Peter i. 23; John i. 13.) A birth is not the creation or origination of life, but the manifestation of life by what is called *pro*-creation. Our earthly nature which in christians is called the *old*, or *outward* man, was created in Adam, but pro-created by natural generation. But that immortality which is in the christian, and which is denominated the *new*, or the *inward* man, was given us in Jesus Christ, and is manifested by spiritual generation when born of God. As we are, and were strangers in our earthly character, to this spiritual life which is hid with Christ in God, until he who is our life appears, or is revealed in us, so when that revelation is made, we are no more strangers, we are brought forth bearing the image of the heavenly progenitor, as we have in our flesh borne the image of the earthly Adam. Hence, if any man be in Christ Jesus, manifestatively and experimentally, he is a new creature, a subject of the new or spiritual creation, and as an evidence of this, old things have passed away, and all things have become new. His old element, which was sin, darkness and death, is passed away, he is quickened by eternal life implanted, the light of life shines in his heart to give him the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, the love of God is shed abroad in him, he is delivered from wrath, he is taken up out of a horrible pit, his going is established, and a new song is in his mouth. All these things are entirely new to him, for they are not the productions of his flesh, but they are the fruits of the Spirit of which he is now born. He is delivered from the power of darkness in which he was before held, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

As the love of God, from which the members of Christ cannot be separated, is in Christ Jesus, we have dwelt the more particularly on the unity of Christ and his members; for if the love of God is in Christ Jesus, and we are not in him also, then there is no connection between us and the love of God which is in him; and it would be preposterous to talk of the impossibility of being separated from that with which we are not and never were connected.

We think it will be admitted even by those brethren who dispute the doctrine of eternal Union, that God loved his people *even when they were dead in sins.* (Eph. ii. 4, 5.) That he even loved them as he loved our Lord Jesus Christ, whom he loved before the foundation of the world. (see John xvii. 23, 24.) Admitting then the testimony of our text that this love is and eternally was in Christ Jesus, must not the objects of it also have been in him as anciently as they have been loved of God in him? So we confess it looks to us, and for this blessed assurance we are more than willing to bear all the reproach, slander, abuse and persecution to which we have been subjected for trying to set it forth.

From the foregoing considerations it strikes us that so long as God himself maintains his eternal immutability, there can be no separation of the saints from his love which is in Christ Jesus. Paul was persuaded that death could not effect a separation. Death's boasted power is impotent and weak compared with the love of God in Christ. Our death in trespasses and sins could not abate the love of God, since it is written that, "God, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins," &c. Death could enfold our earthy nature in its cold embrace, but all the dark floods of death could not quench its eternal flame. Again, death and the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, met in dreadful conflict on Mount Calvary, but death was vanquished, and immortality was brought to light in the sequel of the contest, and God commended his love, in that when we were yet sinners, in due time Christ died for us.

"He saw us ruined in the fall,
Yet loved us notwithstanding all."

Neither shall death in his last assult upon these mortal bodies, tend to separate us; but instead of alienating that love, it shall only remove the intervening curtain, that we may realize its eternal fullness in unclouded glory forever. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death, and then, "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit which is in us."—Romans viii. 11.

Nor life. Young christians in their early experience of this love, desire to die, to depart and be with Jesus, not only from the powerful attractions they feel drawing them to him, but from fear that their life in the flesh may bring some reproach upon the blessed cause, and that they may by some waywardness on their part lose the sweet and heavenly enjoyment of that love. But although the children of God do not always while here in the flesh enjoy the vivid evidences of the love of God, yet in Christ, where it is treasured up for them, it is immutable, and never can abate. It is among the "All spiritual blessings with which God has blessed them, according as he hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world."—Eph. i. 3, 4. He has established our goings; and he controls all things, and causes all things to work together for the good of them that love him, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Nor angels. Holy angels have neither the disposition nor the power, for unto the angels he [God] hath not put in subjection the world to come, of which we speak. (Heb. ii. 5.) Wicked angels have tried all their power, but never have, never can possibly produce an abatement of the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

Nor principalities. Should all the governments of eath combine their forces, as many of them have, they may indeed be permitted to annoy and harrass the saints, they may, if permitted, torture these frail, dying bodies, chain them to the stake, and consume the earthly tabernacle with fire, but the love of God is in Christ Jesus, and therefore out of their reach.

Nor powers. Of whatever sort or kind, for all power both in heaven and earth, is vested in him in whom this love of God is secured, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him. There is no power but that is of God, and perfectly subject to the orders of his throne. The power of sin, the power of darkness, the power of the law, cannot effect an alienation, for Christ has redeemed his people from all these; nor are there any powers in existence that are or shall be able to succeed.

Nor thing present. Although for the present, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations, though clouds may obscure our skies, tempests may beat, and thunders shake the world, there is nothing in the present tense that can lessen the love of God to his saints in Christ.

Nor things to come. The coast is clear. O, christians, look ahead. Look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith; there is nothing in the impenetrable future to fear.

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread,
Are big with mercy, and shall break
With blessings on your head."

Should the mountains be uprooted and hurled into the midst of the sea, should the waves thereof swell and roar, should death sweep over the earth, the sun forget to shine, the moon turn into blood, and the pillars of the universe totter to their fall, there is nothing in all that can come to pass that can separate you from the love of your God and Saviour.

Nor height. Look upward then, and trace the fearful omens of the heavens. See blazing comets approach with seven-

fold speed of lightning; if your God commands them so they may come in contact with this little dwelling-place of worms and dash this world to atoms. Pestilence, like winged warriors, may come on every wind, thunders may shake the earth, lightnings may bear the bolts of almighty vengence far and scatter death abroad, but no heights, with their infinity of space, can possibly deprive you of the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, treasured up for you.

Nor depth. No hidden fires in secret caverns burn beneath your feet, nor volcanic terrors which may tear the earth, can change the love of God towards you; and could your eyes unbar the doors of death, gaze into the gloomy chambers of the grave, and sepulchres of the mighty, or could you ever penetrate the deep confines of hell, and scan the horrors of the damned, still undismayed let faith lay hold upon the infallible assurance, it cannot separate you from the love of God.

Nor any other creature. Death and life, angels and principalities, powers, and thngs present and things to come, and heights and depths, are all the creatures of God. He has created them not in vain, they shall accomplish his purpose and do his pleasure. Neither these nor any other creature is to be regarded by the saints as having power to dispossess them of what God has given them in Christ Jesus our Lord.

If then there is nothing in death nor life, nor in principalities nor powers, nothing high nor low, nothing present nor to come, that can remove the saints from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, may the Lord pity the graceless wretch who dares aver that the children of God may fall from grace, lose their interest in the love of God, and sink to hell at last.

CORRESPONDENCE

MEPHIBOSHETH

I remember the oath that David made to my father (1 Sam. xx. 14-17). How that for my father Jonathan's sake he would show him the kindness of the Lord, and would show it to his house forever; and, also, when David was in hiding for his life, from my grandfather King Saul, how my father visited him in his stronghold in the wilderness of Ziph, and there they renewed their covenant. Since then my father was slain with my grandfather in the battle on Mount Gilboa. David escaped the sword of my grandfather, King Saul, and has succeeded him to the throne. Will now David the king remember his oath to my father, that he will show the kindness of the Lord to my father's house? But am I worth remembering? Here I am, lame, cannot walk, a lifetime cripple, an object of charity and a charge on the hands of my friend Machir in Lodebar. My life is but a trial of the patience of my friend; he would be the better were I dead. I know that I can be but a burden. But, notwithstanding all this, oh how I love King David for my dear father's sake, because he loved him as his own soul. Is it not that love that made the oath? Will David keep it? Why should he? I am not worth the keeping of it. Were I one of the valiants in David's kingdom it would make the oath a matter worth keeping. Does David love me for my father Jonathan's sake? I cannot see why he should. It would be a mystery, and yet I know that love is also a mystery, seeking and resting on the most unworthy objects. It is for this reason only that I can be remembered of David for the oath's sake. But now the king is too busy with the great affairs of his newly acquired kingdom to think on the oath, or I on

whom the covenant rests; and should he, it would be the least of his kingly interests and undertakings. Although the covenant guarantees David's favorable consideration of myself, yet I would not regard the king as unfaithful should he annul the oath he made to my father, because I am sole surviver of my father's posterity, and am but a dead dog in the sight of the king. Thus Mephibosheth thinks of himself, debased himself and esteems himself quite unworthy of any favorable consideration that the covenant secures to him from his father's inseparable friend. But, as Mephibosheth thinks so of himself, David, the king, esteems Mephibosheth in a wonderfully different way. The covenant that went out of his mouth straight to Jonathan's heart he resolved to perform. He will make it the weightiest matter in the conduct of the kingdom of Israel. The Kingdom would sooner fail that this his oath. So David sends for Mephibosheth. He falls on his face and does reverence. David breaks to him the unexpected and glad tidings that he is now to receive at his hands the kingdoms of the Lord for Jonathan his father's sake. Oh thou faithful friend of my father, does that unbroken friendship rest upon me? It surely does, yet I can be no better than a dead dog, yet thou hast bestowed this honor undeserved, that I shall eat bread continually at thy table the remainder of my unprofitable life. Accept my thanks, King David; it is all I have. My love and my devoted heart are thine; but what is that to thee? In and of myself alone. But as I cannot recompense thee, it affords me the greatest joy that thou art so doing unto me for my dear father's sake, in memory of the covenant between him and thee, and founded upon the love that passes the love of women. I know, therefore, with what cheerfulness and with what freedom I shall be served at thy royal table all my days. No slackening or diminishing of the love that sustains that covenant. Neither shall the dainties of thy kingly board be less bountiful and free, for could this come to pass, the fountains of the oceans and the springs of the seas could more surely cease to flow.

Now, dear readers, do you find yourselves about like Mephibosheth in his relationship to his fast, protecting and sustaining friend, King David? He is your faithful literal type. Your spiritual David took you up when you could not take another step. He brought you to his banqueting-house. His banner over you bore the insignia of love. Although unprofitable and lame, you are the blest offspring of God and the beneficiaries of his covenant of love, grace and mercy. It is good for you, dear readers, that you descended from a covenanted stock. It is serving you better than your feet could do, or you as a sinner deserve, for when you lost your self-supporting, walking ability then, and not until then, you became a real, lowly, mourning Mephibosheth. You can now receive the graces and benefits of your spiritual David's house in real true godly humility. Do you see your likeness in Mephibosheth as if he were a mirror, completely disrobed of all your unrighteousness? That is God's work, that his grace and glory through Christ, your spiritual David, may rest upon you as the meek of the earth. You must become impotent in the loss of all your fleshly abilities, so that you cannot carry yourselves another step, and then David's house is yours. Now that all the good of Israel's kingdom is secured to Mephibosheth he meditates thus: Not the least of all these royal favors have I merited, none of them do I deserve, yet how greatly I need them all. They are gracious gifts, undeserved and unsought. Incomparably more pleasant and soul-satisfying than was my temporary abode with my kind friend Machir in Lodebar. Here that covenant of love has made me a lifetime resident of the city of David.

There, it was at best, but a time of waiting to see what tomorrow might bring to me. Succession of days brought me no assurance of future bliss, the present day was all I could claim as my own. The next, and my stay in Machir, though kind and welcome, might be ended. But here assurnace forever. David, kind friend, nourisher and preserver of my soul. Let no grateful anthem ascend with sweeter chords of solemn praise than mine for thee. Readers, Mephibosheth portrays your travel from the wilderness to your exalted abode in the Zion of your God, the militant church of Christ which he set up on earth. Wisdom builded this house (Proverbs, ninth chapter) over nineteen hundred years ago, and her maidens (gospel ministers) have been preaching good tidings to the simple (Verse 4) ones, the little children, since that time. Jesus is bringing the Mephibosheths from the uttermost parts of the Gentile world and adding them to the churches, that they may be saved from this present evil world. You Mephibosheths are the people that God has formed for himself to show forth his praise. (Isaiah xliii. 21.) Mephibosheth was David's special care. The riches of David's kingdom contributed to his support. The riches of God's kingdom supply your every need as you eat the bread of the broken body of Christ and drink his blood, for his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed. He has washed you from all your filthiness and clothed you with his robe of righteousness. Having done all for you, you find yourself asking this question, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?"—Psalms cxvi. 12.

Dear Editors, I had to write on this subject to get it off my mind. It may not be worth its room in the SIGNS, if not, consign it to the waste-basket and I shall be satisfied.

Yours very unworthily,

J. I. FOSTER

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VISIONS

I want to write on visions that I have seen and heard:

Before I began to speak in public I saw a bush with lightning flashing near the ground where I had to walk. As I walked this thought came to me, that no man could go through this and live without the faith of God. I walked through and I was not harmed, I heard a voice say, surely Jim has seen the hand of God.

In the same night I had another vision, I saw two men come up in front facing me, they did not speak to me but just looked at me, turned and went back to where they came from. I heard the same voice over my head up in the elements, saying, thou shalt have two children by thy wife before you can see my face, I had already only seen one, her name was Peggy. In 1955 my wife died in Duke Hospital. This gave me much trouble because I knew that the Lord said two. I went about 35 years wondering what this meant, one day this dream came fresh in my mind and the interpretation with it. The two children was my two grandchildren, I rejoiced to know what he meant by saying two children. I knew that it was the word of God that said this to me. Then I thought that my time was near at hand. God gave this dream to keep me looking to him.

In another dream, I saw myself standing in a field, and I was looking at a hill covered with hardwood trees. I heard the wind coming over the trees, the wind had a sweet sound and was very strong, every tree bowed under the pressure and not even one leaf fell from the trees. I heard the Lord speak from the trees, He said a God born man cannot sin, you don't know who they are, but I do. All this was before I began to speak in public, although I had been preaching to myself for about three years. After this I went to the General Hospital, I was greatly concerned about my future, afraid that I would not continue to be faithful. Two nights before I was released from the hospital, these words were placed on my lips: Go now, go then, I will be with you until the end! That room was a heavenly place to me.

The year of 1962 was a trying year for me. I prayed continually most of three days and nights for the Lord to tell me what to do, the third night about 12:25 a.m. I heard the God of heaven saying to me, be still and know that I am God. I awoke, shouting, praising and thanking God. I felt that God was with me. I am now 81 years old, and my eyesight is very good.

May God bless the Editors and the readers.

Elder J. R. Hollandsworth

BRETHREN EDITORS:

I will pen a few lines for publication. For there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. As many as are led by the Spirit, they are the sons of God. If Christ be in you the hope of glory the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is alive because of righteousness. There is one body, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, one Father of all, who is above all, through all and in you all. He ascended up on high, led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men. He first descended unto the lower parts of the earth and was seen by five hundred of the brethren. We are not our own keepers. We are kept by the power of God through faith, therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God, unto whom we have access by faith into that grace wherein we stand and rejoice in the Lord. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven. Who knoweth the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor? The wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the heavenly Father, the Prince of Peace, he rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. John said in Revelation, "I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." He must reign until all things are put under his feet; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." He arose triumphant over death, hell and the grave, giving us the greatest victory that has ever been won, all for his people. The Lord's portion is his people, chosen our of every kindred, tongue and nation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I am God, and there is none beside me. Be still and know that I am God. Art thou not he that divided the Red Sea and made a way for the ransomed of the Lord to pass through dry-shod? Which the Egyptians assayed to do and were all drowned. Pharaoh and all his host. Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all these things will be added unto you. It seems to me that these things

are his goodness, his mercy, his power, his loving-kindness, his everlasting love. We love him because he first loved us and gave his only begotten Son that the world might be saved: those who love his precious name. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honor, glory, dominion, power and majesty. He is a God of truth. He is the rock, that rock is Christ. Jacob was the lot of his inheritance; he kept him as the apple of his eye, and led him about and instructed him. As the eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, taketh them, beareth them, so the Lord alone did lead Jacob and made him suck honey out of the rock and oil out of the flinty rock. That rock surely was Christ, he was a man acquainted with grief, and as a lamb before her shearers is dumb, so he said not a word. If it be possible, let this cup pass from me, yet not my will, but thine, be done. Those wicked men cried out, Crucify him, crucify him. They did not know what they were doing. He is too wise to err and too good to be unkind.

I can hardly realize as I pass into my ninety-fifth year that I have lived twenty-four years beyond the allotted time of man. I have been greatly blessed in being able to attend our meetings quite regularly for fifty-seven years, and it has been one of my greatest pleasures to meet with the brethren for so long a time. There have been many changes in that time and many have been removed from our midst. We miss them, but it is far better to be with Christ, where there will be no more pain, to be like him, to abide with him. If ye abide in me I abide in you. Think of those who are afflicted and not able to meet with us, pray for them that they may be restored to health again, if it be his will. Can I say with the psalmist David, The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul. He leadeth me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. His rod and his staff they comfort me. He preparest a table before me. He anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy will be with me all the days of my life?

As is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly, and as is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy. The outward man perisheth, the inward man is renewed day by day. As thy day so shall thy strength be. "Brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."

From your unworthy brother,

D. L. BLACKWELL

JOHN XVII. 22.

"That they may be one, even as we are one."

Could it be the pleasure of the Lord I would like to pen a few thoughts on the subject matter contained in the Scripture here quoted. Realizing my weakness and inability in this, or anything good, I would beg the Lord to guide me in the right way: the way of truth. There are several very important things to notice in these words of our Saviour. First, this is a part of his prayer to his Father. Second, the people he is praying for. Third, the oneness in the Godhead. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. For a long time I have read and reread this memorable prayer, and I hope with much interest. It seems this prayer was uttered but a short time before our Savior was crucified, just a short time before he received the vinegar and said, "It is finished." This prayer therefore seems to be his last one before he was crucified. He was praying for people, his disciples. "I pray for them," he says. There were also people he did not pray for. "I pray not for the world," those who were not his by the gift of the

Father, "but for them which thou hast given me; for they are mine." Well, some tell me this was only his disciples he was praying for. Very well, we will suppose it was. "They [the apostles] are thine." Then what about his next words in this memorable prayer; "And all mine are thine, and thine are mine"? Surely we all believe the apostles were his, then equally all for whom he shed his precious blood are his. All for whom this memorable prayer is made to his Father. "That they are one, even as we are one." Now as to this oneness. He prays for his disciples, his people whom he came to save from their sins. We feel sure they have it in the sense they are all taught of him, for left alone to answer for themselves they would answer with the man who was made whole and the one whom he blessed with his sight, so that he followed Jesus in the way. So I believe they would answer as did these were it not for those judiazing teachers teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. This doctrine of God our Savior is not now nor ever has been popular with the learned and rich of the earth, but to the poor and needy, the lame and the blind it is sweet. They know it is not for anything good in them they receive such great blessings, but attribute it alone to Him from whom they know the blessing came, and left without so much carnal teaching they follow Jesus in the way, and in this sense they are one. But in a nobler and higher sense they will be one with him in heaven, there their praise will be one to the triune God in all eternity. No big "I's" or little "u's," but all one in him. I in you and you in me and I in the Father. One indeed! Our heavenly Father calls Christ and his members one, we the dear children of his love and he the firstborn Son.

I feel now that I have missed almost the whole of what I thought to write. I hope the good Lord will put this subject in the mind and heart of some able writer so he may write more fully of what it seems to me it contains, and that I, a worm of the dust, may get to read it.

With the sweet hope that I am embraced among that people for whom the Savior prayed, I am, yours in hope.

JOHN R. WILSON

DEAR BRETHREN:

The "blueprint" is to the building about what the pattern is to the garment, and serves the architect as the pattern does the tailor. We read in the Scriptures of types, shadows and figures; in fact, the Lord's way of teaching is in a great measure by this method. In the first chapter of Genesis we have the following: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." We are persuaded that the word "image" not only means that Adam looked like the Creator, but it reaches beyond that, it simply means that in every leading act of his life he was the figure of his Creator. "Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come."—Rom. v. 14. "Him that was to come" is Christ, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, a quickening Spirit. I cannot agree with those who teach that Adam lost this "image" of his Creator when he fell under the curse of the law. If Adam was the figure of Christ he was not the real Adam, any more than a natural Jew is a Jew, or circumcision in the flesh is the real circumcision, and Paul tells us there is not anything real about either. "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a

Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Therefore the first Adam was not the real Adam, he was of the earth, and earthy, and the second Adam was the Lord from heaven, a quickening Spirit. The first shall be last and the last first. First in manifestation, but last in duration and honor, glory and majesty. So according to our modern way of expressing it, when God formed Adam of the dust of the ground he could have said truly, there is going to be an Adam that will come into this world in a future age, and I am going to give you a real figure, or blueprint of him. When the Lord breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul, he gave us a figure of that eternal life which was hid with Christ in himself before the world began. When God caused that deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and performed that operation, and formed a helpmeet for him, he prefigured that deep sleep that fell upon Jesus Christ, and the sword thrust by the wicked men, which is God's sword, and men of earth are his hand (Psalms xvii. 13, 14), by which came out blood and water, the only means by which the second Adam could have a helpmeet, or bride, and if Adam was the figure of him that was to come, surely Eve was the figure of her that was to come, the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife. If it was not good for the first Adam to dwell alone it evidently is not good for the second one, "the Lord from heaven," to dwell alone. When Eve was beguiled by the serpent and fell under the curse of the law, she prefigures the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife, in the same condition, and when Adam voluntarily went under the same curse for the love for which he had for his bride, and thereby justified her, by becoming as guilty as she, he beautifully portrays the second Adam, as made under the law, and made a curse and sin for his bride. I wish here to call attention to the fact that in studying the types and shadows in the Bible we should remember when the type is set for the paper it reads backward, but when it is imprintd upon the paper it reads from left to right, so when God created Adam (the figure) he was "upright" and a "very good man," but he represented his posterity in sin and ruin. The second and real Adam was made under the law, and under its curse; in fact, he was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. So in the creation and lifework of the first Adam the type was set, and it reads backward, or directly from God. The bringing in of the antitype, Jesus Chrit, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, a life-giving Spirit, the imprint reads right, for he, Jesus, assumed the responsibility of the sins of all the world and in all ages of the world. He lived for them, kept the law for them, suffered all its penalty for them, died for them and rose again from the dead for their justification. If Jesus was "made sin for us," and a curse for us, and died and rose for our justification, will we stand justified before God? Or will he punish two persons for the same crime when there is but one guilty? In other words, if Jesus stood in his people's place before the judgment bar of God and suffered the vengeance of his holy law in their stead, will his people have to stand there and suffer the same sentence? No, in no wise.

G. W. BERRY

Columbus, Georgia

DEAR BRETHREN:

If I could feel as sure that I am worthy to thus address you as I am that the doctrine set forth in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is the doctrine of the Bible I would have no fear and trembling in claiming this sacred kinship. Sometimes

when I look back over my past life I feel that I have deceived the dear people of God in asking a home with them, but where would my peace and happiness be if they had no fellowship for me? I can find no spiritual comfort outside the fellowship of this peculiar people. The God they worship is the God I love to talk about and meditate upon. With Ruth I would say, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. He has all power in heaven and in earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? All things are under his control, and whithersoever he will he turns them. The world lieth in wickedness, but God's power is over all; and we read, The wrath of man shall praise him and the remainder he shall restrain. The God we hope we worship is sovereign over all worlds, dominions and powers. Omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient is our God, and he is Israel's strength, the Rock of Zion's habitation. He has been our dwelling-place in all generations, and says, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Fear not what man can do unto thee, for I am with thee, no harm shall come to thee. My grace is sufficient for thee. Oh what precious promises for our comfort and uplifting. Like Jacob's staff, they strengthen us in the way, and, dear ones, if God be for us who can be against us? Persecutions and fiery trials may assail us, but Jesus the Master suffered these, much more than are sent upon us, and we must suffer if we would reign with him. Paul was a persecutor of the saints until Jesus took up his abode in him and killed him to the love of sin, and afterwards we hear him saying "that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my live dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." So we find Paul the persecutor becomes the persecuted, like the humble Nazarene he learned obedience through suffering, and obedience even unto death. See the power of God manifested in this miraculous change. Yea, we are told to rejoice in persecution for truth's sake, for great is our reward in heaven. We often think over the miracles our Lord Jesus performed while here on earth, raising the fallen, cheering the faint, healing the sick and leading the blind, but the grandest miracle the Master ever performed while his feet trod the streets of earthly Jerusalem was when he gave eternal life when he bade a wretched sinner live. All the way down through time we see the same miracles wrought before our eyes when we see the blessed Son of God working mightily in these temples of clay. We see the old man with his deeds cast down and the new man rejoicing gloriously, singing the new song put in his mouth, even praises to God. Like Abraham of old, have we not longed to see His day, and have we not seen it and are glad? Though we walk through a fiery furnace the Son of God will be with us, and like the three Hebrew children we shall be brought safely through and not even the smell of fire on our garments, "For I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless, and sanctify to thee thy deepest distress." We read how that the old apostles were sanctified in fires of persecution: they were reviled and learned not to revile again. This is why the martyr Stephen could pray, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. He had learned it of his royal Master. It was not of the flesh, but by the grace of God that he could pray this prayer. Grace all the work shall crown through everlasting days. What a long array of martyrs we read about, who said over and over again that in their flesh there dwelt no good thing. What a legacy of comfort

Jesus left behind for us, not only in his own life of holiness, suffering and in his atoning even unto death, but it pleased him that he should have many witnesses from the sons of men, making his power known in working miracles in earthen vessels. We thank our Lord for these spiritual gifts to the church by which God so wonderfully and graciously manifests himself as working and abiding in his chosen vessels, and by which they are made to so live that others seeing their good works may glorify their Father in heaven, and hereby are rich in comfort to the scattered flocks as they journey through the wilderness toward that city not made of hands, eternal in the heaven. May the Lord keep and bless you editors in your labor of love, and bless each and every one of his loved ones.

Yours unworthily, in love,
(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS

DEAR BRETHREN:

I feel like expressing some of my thoughts on the wonderful works of God recorded in the Scriptures of eternal truth. I understand the Scriptures to be a record of the truth of God to his chosen people, or church, and the truths there recorded are as unchangeable as God himself, and not one of her cords can be broken nor her stakes be removed. This being so, we can with delight and much comfort read its sacred pages. We read in the fifteenth chapter and twenty-first verse of Paul's first letter to the saints at Corinth, "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." Now we have the plain truth recorded that death came by man, also that the resurrection from death came by man. We understand that this is the word of truth that the apostles commanded to be rightly divided, and in order for this we must know that the apostle is setting forth the fact that there are two men under consideration, and in following him on to the forty-fifth verse we see the division: "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such ase they also that are heavenly." I have given the above testimony in order that we can divide the truth here recorded. Jesus says we are to know the tree by its fruit. A corrupt tree cannot bring good fruit, neither can a good tree bring forth corrupt fruit. We understand it is as impossible for this first man to bring forth life or divine fruit as it is for the corrupt tree to bear good fruit, because the very heart or life of this first man has been so corrupted by sin that there is no good thing in the flesh, says the same apostle, and we only have to go back to the beginning to learn how and where this first man Adam lost or forfeited all claim on anything but death. In the day that thou eatest of the fruit of which is forbidden, thou shalt die. This being a fact, we can see by the disobedience of this one man many were made sinners, for it was by the disobedience of this one man that sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death has passed upon all, for all have sinned. Such is our awful state by nature, but blessed be God, by man came the resurrection of the dead. By man, which is the Lord from heaven, and is called the man which is my fellow, the lion of the tribe of Juda, which is Shiloh that was to come, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. It is through the obedience of this one man many were made righteous. It is througt the death and suffering of this man that our sins were put away,

and it is by this heavenly man, by his having all power over death and the grave our redemption is sealed. The apostle continues this sublime subject by saying, As we have born the image of the earthy we shall also bare the image of the heavenly. So we who have tasted of the grace and mercy of the heavenly know and feel what the greatness of sin is which is condemned in the flesh, and we with Paul can and do groan within ourselves as we are bearing the image of this earthy man by which all these pains of heart come. We find this same law in our members warring against the law of our mind, so we cannot do the things we would. We are often made to say, Father, here is the wood and the fire, but where is the lamb for the offering? In this we are bearing the image of the earthy, but blessed answer of the father, God will proide the offering. Yes, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but when he, the heavenly, shall appear we shall be like him. for we shall see him as he is. Oh Glorious thought, bear the image of our dear Lord. When I awake with his likeness, then will I be satisfied. This is my hope and my all.

May the dear Lord bless and keep his dear and afflicted people in this blessed faith and hope until the true light cometh and the darkness flees away, is my prayer. Yours in gospel bonds,

J. T. BARNES

"LET US HOLD FAST OUR PROFESSION."

This language is found in Hebrews iv. 14, and in the same book (x. 23) we have, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering." The word "profession" is found only a few times in the Bible, and means a declaration or announcement, a confession. In this connection it seems to refer to our expressed faith in Christ as our Savior. It points out that we have embraced and declared in a public way that we hope and believe Jesus Christ is the only Savior of sinners. In Hebrews iii. 1, Paul says, "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." Here the people of this calling are said to be holy brethren, and that Christ Jesus is the High Priest, or Intercessor, for this profession. So we see again that Christ is our only hope for reconciliation with God and the remission of our sins, for he is the only one to make the atonement. Now, friends, if Jesus Christ is the High Priest of our profession, for there can be no other so good. Christ is not the High Priest of any other profession, and there is but one people who has a holy calling or a heavenly calling. They are a holy people in the sight of God, therefore were given a heavenly calling under their High Priest, even Jesus Christ. If the people of this calling and this profession should fail to hold fast to their profession they would have nowhere to go. "To whom shall we go?" There are other high priests who make a different offering, and to another god, and over a temporal priesthood. We cannot go there, for we have an eternal priesthood. Paul tells us that Christ witnessed a good confession before Pilate. Christ did bear witness that he was the Son of God. He also witnessed that Pilate was in God's hands. This is the same profession that Paul recommends to us, that we should hold fast to it and not deny it, nor forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is. We are also admonished to walk worthy the vocation wherewith we are called. It seems that there is a vocation, or state, whereunto God has called his believing children. They are called to be soldiers of the cross; even made "prisoners of hope." In this we must surely conclude that our profes-

sion will hold fast to us, and if Christ Jesus is the High Priest of our profession, it will hold forever.

In the fourth chapter, first verse, of Ephesians Paul says, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." Here Paul claims, or admits, that he is a prisoner of the Lord. He is held fast unto the profession, even made a prisoner of the High Priest of his profession. He is bound up in the belief in Christ. Are we so bound that we cannot accept the reproaches of Christ? Some people are. In one sense the word "profession" means the body of people engaged in a certain vocation or calling. In this sense I believe Christ to be the High Priest of our profession. He is the High Priest of the class who believe in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. That is the belief he tells us to hold fast unto. Now I must admit that if I am not bound up as with bands and chains, the ends and links of which will not open, this poor man will never hold fast to any good profession. You all know me, from the least unto the greatest, for the Lord has taught you the frailness of the flesh. I do desire and must desire the love and fellowship of this profession. It is a good and true confession, but who can attain unto it? Only the holy brethren who have the heavenly calling, unto whom Christ Jesus is made the High Priest of their profession. No other can ever receive the atonement or hear the calling. May God ever accept the offering as made in our behalf.

Your unworthy brother in hope,
E. G. WEBB

Jan. 23,1985

Dear Bro. & Sister Spangler:

Do hope you both are doing fair this cold weather. We are doing alright I hope. We missed going to church last Sunday, of course, I go so many Sundays and come back so lonely and empty. Looks like I am not blessed to get much out of the preaching unless the loud speakers are on. If I know anything about receiving a wonderful hope in the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ it was before my first little boy was born, the one that you went to see in Reidsville Hospital. I wonder sometimes if there was as many thunder storms that spring before he was born as there was in April. I would be cooking and washing dishes and it would thunder and lighten. I was so afraid it would strike me and kill me and I'd go to hell. One night I dreamed of a deep pit in my front yard and I fell in it and I could smell my flesh burn. I could go to the spot right now and put my foot on it, oh, I was so worried over it. I would lie down at night and felt like I would never see my husband and babies again. I dreamed one night that I went down to our hog lot and there set the prettiest woman I had ever seen. She had a huge book in her lap and she had already wrote my companions name down and was writing mine down. Green grass was all around her feet and the most pretty little children around her feet. I didn't worry too much after this about where I was going and when my little baby boy was born, we like to have lost him, he was in the hospital for nine weeks and three days. We had give up on him when he entered the hospital, the nurse carried him up on the elevator and I was with her, she told me if it was the Lords will that he would live and they could do something for him, if not they couldn't do anything for him. I was made to believe long before this and the Lord blessed me with faith to believe he had all power both in heaven and earth. When this same little boy was nine years old, I had two serious operations, supposed to have been serious, but the Doctor said I got along better

than any patient he had ever done surgery for or on, but I was so afraid the night before I was to have surgery that I started to get up and slip out and go home to my husband and children. I was in a private room and the Lord spoke to me and it sounded from one end of the hall to the other and said, Fear not, I am with you always even unto the end of the world. I feel like he has blessed my husband and me both, to raise 4 wonderful chidren and live together 53 years. But I get down and out so many times, I know he has all power and sometimes I hope I feel thankful to be able to go to church. Seems like I can't be the same every time I go to church, but hope in heart I am the same and I hope we love them all. Robert looks for you every Sunday to come through the church door. He dearly loves to hear you preach and I do too.

You will preach every sermon thats intended for you to preach, but how lonesome it will be without you. We will miss you so much, I want to come to see you and set and talk with you just a few minutes. I have tried so hard to pray that you would get better, not my will but thine be done. I have never felt like this world was my home. I hope the Lord will bless you both.

Love,
Sister Rena Smith

Elizabeth City, N.C. 27909
August 1, 1969

Dear Sister Griswald:

I returned home safely from the associations which I enjoyed so much. I felt that it was good to be there and hear the everlasting Gospel preached with power by able ministers of the New Testament, to mingle with the saints, and hear the songs of Zion sung with the Spirit and the understanding. As I sat and listened to the singing one morning, I felt quite happy and the tears of joy welled up in mine eyes as they did under the joyful sound, which is the Gospel of the Son of God. In Psalms 89:15, we read: "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance." I hope I know this sound from the effect it has on me.

We were talking about the moon turning to blood, and I want to quote from the Commentary of John Gill, of London, the soundest, the most learned, and the most able Baptist theologian since the death of the Apostle John, according to Hassell in his Church History, which you probably have. On Rev. 6:12, "And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood," he had this to say: "By the MOON (referring to the opinion of others) they understand the church, which receives all its light, grace, righteousness, and holiness, from Christ, and which, like the moon, is changeable as to its outward form and circunstances, and this (the church) became as blood, through the persecutions; massacres, and cruelties of the Romish antichrist, who has been made drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus. AND THE MOON BECAME AS BLOOD; as when obscured." So it does not appear that the moon literally or actually turned to blood, but that the church composed of the saints whose blood was shed by or at the instance of the Romish antichrist (the pope and his followers) figuratively became as blood. When we speak of the dear Redeemer being a Rock we do not mean that he is literally a rock, but that He is in a figurative or metaphorical sense a Rock. He is the solid, unmovable, precious Rock upon which He is building His church. In Matt. 16:18, He says, "... upon this rock (meaning Himself, and not Petter) I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against

it." The devil with all his cohorts can never destroy the church of the living God. In the dark ages many were burned to death because they would not bow to popery, but I believe that when Christ comes again without sin unto salvation to gather his elect home the church will be standing and looking with joy for His glorious appearing in the clouds, and the dead will be raised in His likeness, that is the ones that sleep in Jesus. He will not leave Himself without a witness on earth, for some will be found contending for the truth when He comes again, and they will be caught up to meet Him in the air, according to the Scriptures of truth. I dreamed one time of looking for Him to appear in the clouds, but I did not see Him. It seems that I had hold of one end of a cord that reached to Christ within the veil. I could not see Him, but I could distinctly feel Him at the other end of the cord, which I hope represented the cable of faith. And hope is the "anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus...." In 1 Tim. 1:1, we read that the Lord Jesus Christ is our hope. Dear Elder King in his sweet introductory sermon spoke of Christ being the anchor of the soul and faith being a cable, or something to that effect, and it touched me sweetly.

With best wishes and kindest regards to you and yours, I remain

Yours in that blessed hope,
C. W. Vass

MEETINGS

MALMAISON SONG SERVICES

Beginning in April song services at Malmaison Church will be held on 4th Sunday evenings at seven o'clock instead of 3rd Sunday evenings as previously held. Everyone is invited at attend these services.

Elder Julian Williams

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

If God be willing, the next Union meeting of the South Ouachita Association will be held with Rehobeth Church beginning the Saturday before the Second Sunday in April, 1985. (April 23-14). Rehobeth Church is located at El Dorado, Ark. five (5) miles north on Hwy. 7 and one-half mile west on Hwy. 335. All who love the truth as it is in Jesus Christ are welcome.

C. C. Wilbanks,
Clerk

Presbytery Meeting

At the request of Richmond Primitive Baptist Chruch, Chesterfield County, Virginia, a Presbytery composed of the Following:

Elders: W. R. Saunders
Clyde Daniels
Deacons: George Conner
Cleveland Coleman

met with the Church on December 2nd, 1984 for the purpose of inquiring into the qualifications of Brother Ray Ellis for the office of deacon. The church had agreed on the first Sunday in November to call for a presbytery to meet with them.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder W. R. Saunders, as Moderator. Cleveland Coleman was elected

Clerk. On motion, second, and carried, the Moderator was authorized to appoint the members of the Presbytery to the various tasks.

The Moderator appointed Elder W. R. Saunders to question the candidate. The Moderator appointed Clyde Daniels to pray the ordination prayer. The Moderator appointed W. R. Saunders to deliver the charge to Brother Ellis.

W. R. Saunders questioned the candidate and church according to the scriptures concerning the qualifications of a deacon and the Presbytery being satisfied then proceeded to the ordination prayer and laying on of hands by Clyde Daniels.

The charge was then delivered by W. R. Saunders. After which, Brother Ellis was returned to the church an ordained deacon. On motion and carried, the Presbytery disbanded.

Elder W. R. Saunders, Moderator
Cleveland Coleman, Clerk

Elders: W. R. Saunders
Clyde Daniels

Deacons: Cleveland Coleman
George Conner

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR JANUARY, 1985

Jerry P. Cockman, NC.	$15.00
D. H. Richardson, FL.	2.00
Mrs. H. W. Jones, AL.	2.00
Elder J. C. Townley, AR.	1.00
Lloyd C. Spikes, OR.	7.00
Larry G. Conner, VA.	5.00
Mrs. Phylis Snyder, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Ella Cline, OH.	15.00
Marion N. Meeks, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Lora Smith, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Cliff Weaver, WA.	15.00
Mrs. Margaret Quesenberry, VA.	2.00
Thomas H. Sladky, NC.	5.00
Mrs. Ilene Clifton, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Hallie Griswald, NC.	15.00
Conrad Key, NC.	7.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER NETTIE RAYNOR HORNE

We, the Church at Cypress Creek, bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, in taking from our midst, Sister Nettie Horne.

She was born December 25, 1900 and departed this life on June 28, 1983, making her stay on earth almost 83 years. She left to mourn her passing, one daughter, one son, a number of grand-children and also great grand-children.

She joined the Cypress Creek Primitive Baptist Church, September 28, 1972, and was a very active member as long as she was in good health.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder D. B. Stokes and she was laid to rest in the family cemetery beneath a beautiful

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4/85

it will expire with this issue. Please send renewal in the mail today.

mound of flowers.

Done by order of Conference that this obituary be written, for a copy to be given to the family, one sent to the Signs of The Times for publication, and one be placed in the Church records.

Written by: Rovean Horne, Member
Albert Manning, Deacon
Elder Harmon Brown, Moderator

SISTER LOTTIE ETHEL SIMMONS

It becomes my sad duty to attempt to write a memorial of a departed Sister in Christ. It is a burdensome duty, for I am so unworthy and fear that I cannot write worthy of the deceased.

She was born Dec. 8, 1897 and passed from this life Nov. 1, 1984 at the age of 86 years.

She leaves to mourn her passing two sons, E. Lynn Simmons and Allen E. Simmons; one sister, Mrs. Myrtle Burch; three brothers, Jesse L. Setliff, Earnest W. Setliff and John E. Setliff; 6 grandchildren, 14 great grand-children, and 4 great, great grand-children.

Sister Simmons was married to Mr. Earnest Simmons in the year of 1917.

She joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church January 27, 1929 and was a faithful member to attend her meetings as long as her health permitted.

I believe Sister Simmons was made reconciled to her illness and to death, because she bore her afflictions without murmuring.

She was well cared for by her family and I would comfort the bereaved ones if it were in my power, but this must come from God.

Her funeral was held at Swicegood Funeral Home on Saturday, November 3, 1984 at 2 o'clock, and due to illness of her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, Mr. J. C. Raper conducted her funeral by reading what she had prepared to be read at her funeral.

We express our deepest sympathy to all who were near and dear to her.

Done by order of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church at her conference, Dec. 22, 1984.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator

Coley S. Strader, Committee

PERRY LEE STONE

We, the members of Liberty Church, note with much sorrow the passing of our dearly esteemed brother and deacon, Perry Lee Stone.

Brother Stone was born on June 26, 1903 in Franklin County, Virginia, to the late Rufus Franklin and Mary Cahill Stone. On the 19th of February, 1928, he was united in marriage to Miss (later Sister) Majie Odell, by the late Elder Dan P. Helms. To this union were born five children, all of whom lived to mourn his departure. Four sons; Hampton, Clarence, Ralph and Robert Lewis Stone, all of Basset, Virginia; and one daughter, Mrs. Norman (Thelma) Dodson of Fieldale.

By profession, Brother Stone was involved in furniture manufacturing. For many years he was an employee and foreman of Bassett Furniture Industries. Many people, both inside and outside the church, have given testimony that he was good to work with, and under his direction.

A number of years ago Brother Stone united with an Old Baptist Church which disbanded in later years. While with that body he served as a deacon and church clerk. On the first weekend in July, 1967 he joined Liberty Church on

confession of faith. At his request, he was then baptized by the pastor, Elder Bennie Clifton. On the first Saturday in September following, he was ordained as deacon by the same presbytery which ordained Brother Clement Washburn and Brother Lester Adams to the same office. In this capacity, Brother Stone served faithfully and well for the balance of his earthly life.

Brother Stone suffered with declining health for about the last three years of his life, although he continued to come to church as often as he could. Around the middle of October, he suffered a severe heart attack, from which he never really recovered. He passed away at Martinsville Hospital on October 28, 1984.

Funeral services were conducted at Liberty Church by Elders Bennie Clifton and John Wingfield, after which, Brother Stone was laid to rest in the church cemetery. Among the many who were left to mourn his passing were two brothers, Daniel and Albert Stone; one sister, Mrs. Clara Akers and six grandchildren.

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that we submit three copies of this obituary: one to be placed on the church record, one to be presented to the family, and one to be mailed to the Signs Of The Times for publication.

Done by order of Liberty Church in conference the 5th day of January, 1985.

Prepared by: Elder John Wingfield
Brother Joseph Cahill
Sister Lucy Cahill

SISTER ETHEL WITT G. THORNTON

In memory of our dear Sister Ethel Witt Gilley Thornton. Born April 17, 1908 in Patrick County, Virginia. Ethel was the daughter of Charlie Peatress Witt and Mary Ellen Taylor Witt.

Ethel passed this life January 29, 1985, making her stay on earth 76 years and 9 months. She was married to Oscar B. Gilley. To this union was born three children: Two sons, Malcolm D. Gilley, address unknown, and Oscar Benton Gilley, deceased. One daughter, Mary Sue Gilley Ferguson, Eden, N.C. Three brothers, Richard W. Witt, Patrick Springs, Virginia, James R. Witt, Bassett, Virginia and Charlie P. Witt, Martinsville, Virginia. Two sisters, Lillian Witt, Martinsville and Maude Witt Godshell, Orlando, Florida.

After the death of Mr. Gilley, Ethel married W.J. "Bill" Thornton. After his death she remained a widow the rest of her days.

Ethel united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on November 25, 1962. She was faithful to her church and attended regularly as long as she was able. She was a strong believer in Salvation by grace and grace alone.

She was blessed to stay at her home as long as she lived. Her dearly beloved daughter and husband went there and cared for her until her death.

Her funeral was held at Fair Funeral Chapel by Elder Haywood Wray. Her body was laid to rest at Patrick Springs, Virginia beside her first husband, to wait the second coming of the Saviour. Our loss is her heavenly gain.

Written by request of Dan River Church.

By Charlie Hopkins
and wife Ethel

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Psalm 116:15

Signs of the Times

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"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 65 Keeling, Virginia 24566

POETRY

MY BEST DREAM AND THE BEST ROBE

Job 33:15-17; Isa. 61:10

* * * * * *

Face to face in a precious dream,
Indeed, so sweet to me,
Yea, in a vision of the night,
I did the Saviour see.

With a smile, He appeared to me,
In slumberings on the bed;
And on me laid His hands three times,
Though not a word He said.

Then with the King of Kings I stood,
And mine eyes did behold
An emblem of His righteousness,
Which now He did unfold.

One end of a robe Jesus held,
Whilst I held the other;
O how favored to be thus found
With our Elder Brother!

Next He took the garment from me,
As about Him I hovered,
And the scene that shortly followed
Showed my sins are covered.

He solemnly dipped the vesture,
And around me it placed;
O Happy thought that surely I
Was in His love embraced.

This symbolized my being clothed
With th' robe of righteousness,
And when it was revealed to me,
I did a hope profess.

C. W. Vass

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EDITORIAL

Hebrews 12: 27, 28, 29.

"And this word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For God is a consuming fire."

It seems to be very clear according to the scriptures as well as the experiences of the Lord's people, that stability is not to be found on this earth; yet it seems that carnal nature is forever attempting to build upon earth's quicksand as if it were a substantial rock. There is no abiding city here upon earth, and it is all in vain to attempt to build one for the "world passeth away and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." I John 2:17. It seems to be necessary at times for the God of Providence to give the world of His elect a warning shake in order to enforce this important truth upon them.

First, let us look at the Lord's voice in shaking the earth on Mount Sinai. "And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the people that was in camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly." Exodus 19:16-18. The quaking of the earth here was to impress with greater emphasis upon the minds of the people the terrible force and authority of the law, and that the Law Giver was as a "consuming fire."

"The removing of those things that may be shaken." May we be blessed to look upon some of the natural things that may be shaken to better illustrate the spiritual significance of being shaken. Take an old building whose foundation is cracked, whose walls are leaning, would we want to build upon this type of structure? No, surely not, because this type of foundation and building would not be secure enough to build upon. But is this not what many of us were attempting to do at one time in our lives? Is this not what the Apostle Paul was attempting to do while on his way to Damascus before the removing of it took place by the power of God? Is this not what all worldly religious minded people are attempting to do today? Were not some of us involved in the same thing if we professed to be religious when we were

going about, "In time past in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others." (Eph. 2:3.) Were we not building upon a foundation that could be shaken?

Beloved friends, this principal, which is true in a natural realm, is much more true in a spiritual realm. There is a set time in the mind and purpose of God toward his elect people to bring them out of whatever false refuge they may have been involved in. We must be given spiritual life and light in order to feel and see our undone and lost condition. Our sins must appear exceedingly sinful. When Mount Sinai quaked by the power of God, it was typical of the shaking of the hearts and consciences of God's elect people under a fiery law. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezk. 18:4.) And "cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." (Gal. 3:10.) When the above killing "sentence of death" comes into our hearts and consciences, it slays us as to salvation by the works of the law. See how this shakes to pieces all of man's own righteousness? God's purpose is to remove everything which can be shaken. Take our own self-righteousness, were we not at one time attempting to gain the favor of God by our deeds of righteousness, but was this righteousness shaken to become but as filthy rags? Our creature wisdom was such we thought to gain eternal salvation through our own efforts. We thought we knew much, which was nothing more than boastful ignorance. We found this to be only a fool's dream when we were given by the grace of God to learn the real source of salvation. Our creature strength is demolished when we find by the same grace of God that we are without strength to serve the living God.

Some of you (as I was) may have been involved in a worldly or false religion, believing in the good efforts and works of man together with the grace of God (a mixture of work and grace) and we felt comfortable towards our assurance of salvation. But the shaking of Mount Sinai is typical of the law shaking to pieces our false religion; self-righteousness, wisdom, and creature strength. Why? because these do not constitute a sufficient foundation to build eternal salation upon and they all must be removed for whatever things can be shaken are to be removed. Everything then that man feels he can do to gain heaven by his own exertion must be shaken and removed. Everyone building upon the above, "Shall be likened unto a foolish man which built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the wind blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell and great was the fall of it." (Matt. 7: 26, 27)

Why did God shake your heart and conscience with the earthquake of his holy law? To remove the false heaven you had built up for yourself through your own righteousness, wisdom, strength and good works. He did this by discovering to you the evil of your own deeds and to remove the false heaven which you would have been pleased with until you sank into hell.

The whole of man's miserable abodes must be completely removed, for there can be no union between nature and saving grace. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (I Cor. 2:14). Salvation must be of grace from first to last. "And if by grace, then it is no more works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." (Rom. 11:6). "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2:8, 9)

What has been the result of all the shaking and removing of things which we have experienced? Surely we have had much removed from us which we highly treasured at one time but which would have led us to fall into the ditch of eternal destruction. Can we now, by the grace of God, say with the Apostle Paul, "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffer the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ. And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." (Phil. 3:8, 9) We were not all brought along the same way. While in our natural state, some of us were involved in a natural religion, and some of you may not have been, but surely we can all say we were involved in things that we can "count as dung." Blessed are the ones whose God has revealed these things to us. Beloved friends, you have this precious truth that whatever you may encounter along your pathway of life, that all things shall work for your good.

"That those things which cannot be shaken may remain."

We shall attempt to mention only a few of the things which cannot be shaken.

1. The divine wisdom and foreknowledge of God. "Known unto God are all his works from eternity." Acts 15:18. The foreknowledge of God cannot be uncertain or else he would cease to be an all wise God. "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." (Heb. 4:13.)

2. His will cannot be moved because "all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and we doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" (Dan. 4:35.)

3. The counsel of the Lord shall stand and cannot be removed. "My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." (Isa. 46:10) "The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations." (Psalms 33:11)

4. The unchangeableness of God and his decrees must remain. "I am the Lord, and I change not." (Mal. 3:6.) "With him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17.)

5. His justice, his mercy, his absolute predestination of all things, his election of a certain people in Christ Jesus, the finished work of Christ in the complete salvation of his people cannot be removed. "It is finished." His was a perfect work, a finished salvation and complete redemption for his people.

We may now view from a more personal standpoint what cannot be removed: the inward, holy, divine, and effectual calling of his people at an exact appointed time from nature, darkness, and ignorance into his marvelous light. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (II Tim. 1-9) This call can never be affected by what we have been, what we are now or might be, but according to his own purpose and grace. Neither can this call be rejected, refused, or resisted as to become void and of no effect. "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called, whom he called, them he also justified." (Rom. 8:30). This call springs out of eternal predestination accompanied by justification and future glorification. "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved." This kingdom in the scriptures is called the "kingdom of God." "The kingdom of God is within you." (Luke 17:21). It is a heavenly kingdom, a kingdom of grace, a kingdom of divine teach-

ing and work of the Holy Spirit within. It is called the "kingdom of God" to distinguish it from all other dominions and kingdoms of the world. One aspect of this kingdom is the rule of Christ in and over the gospel state of the church which the apostle declares to be more excellent than that of the law. The very nature of this kingdom is indestructible. Man did not set it up nor did God establish it for any temporary purpose. He established it for an eternal purpose, and has guaranteed its perpetual existance by his solemn oath. This kingdom will remain unshaken and secure. Yes, "the Lord has sworn and will not repent."

The kingdom is also a personal matter: "We receiving a kingdom" having been put in possession of it, and what a blessed kingdom it is. What a glorious work it is indeed by the Holy Spirit in establishing the kingdom of grace in a poor unworthy sinner's heart. You may have wondered, as I so often have, (if we be the children of God) why, O, why, did it please God to shake and remove all my false refuges that I was involved in and set up his kingdom of grace in my unworthy heart? "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and it shall not be left to others, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." (Dan. 2:44)

When the work of grace is set up in the heart of a child of God, it brings about many changes "as unknown, and yet well known; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich, as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." (II Cor. 6:9, 10.) This pathway is unknown to the world, only the chosen of God experience the sorrows and joys of this path. "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness: the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there; nor any ravenous beast shall go up theron, it shall not be found there: but the redeemed shall walk there." (Isa. 35: 8, 9). Those who travel it together know each other, they speak the same language, they have the same Father, the same Christ and the same Spirit. A precious love is made manifest among the sojourners of this narrow pathway, love that binds the people of God together for they are of one family, of the same household of God. "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." (Eph. 2:19, 20). Is it not beautiful to see how God calls his chosen to be members of the same household? To sit at the Master's table feasting upon the bread of life; to nourish that inward life, that inward kingdom which God has set up with you. Jesus says, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever." (John 6:51.) It is a glorious thing indeed to see members of the household of God sitting in a meeting together feeding upon the words of God through a God called minister preaching "Jesus Christ and him crucified."

This new kingdom, which the Holy Spirit has used to shed abroad the fruits of his Spirit cannot be shaken or removed. Faith, hope, and love may be deeply tried. Faith by unbelief, but faith will abide, even though at times it may seem to be almost enveloped by unbelief; yet, this spark within cannot be quenched. It must abide because it is centered in Christ who is the giver of it. It abides in him and trusts in him; it cannot be moved. Hope by dependency or despair; but despair cannot remove hope that is wrought by the Holy Spirit, for it anchors into that within the veil.

"Hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness." It is therefore said to be sure and steadfast. Love must labor against emnity; but love will abound for "many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it." "We love him because he first loved us." True faith, hope, and love cannot be completely removed; if so, a person could be saved then lost which we know is not true. You may be shaken at times as to your possession of them; yet, these stand not in the power of man, but in the power of God. "He works and who can hinder." You may be ready to say, I am often shaken as to the reality of the work of grace in my soul. This may be true, but if the work is real, the shaking which you may feel does not shake the reality of the thing itself. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. 1: 6.)

Those receiving this kingdom into their hearts, will experience many wonderful changes and at the same time, many fearful changes. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things become new." (II Cor. 5:17). There is a new creation, and there is an old creation, and by our own experiences we can say there is a great distinction between the two states. The old creation is for the world; all its desires, happiness, etc. are derived from this world. The new and old are not to be joined together. "No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." (Luke 16: 13.)

When you are born again into this new state or existence, many wonderful experiences may take place in your heart and conscience. You may have found yourself dropped into a complete new existence. Old things began to pass away and new things began to appear before you. You began to realize how foolish you have been concerning your past and now begin to wonder, "What must I do to be saved?" Everything that you had been holding on to to gain heaven by merit you found to be only a false foundation, or a foundation that could be moved. The world began to pass away from you with all its connections, with all its glory so far as becoming the pursuits and delights of your new regenerate soul. The Holy Spirit reveals to you that you are indeed a sinner. He brings you to see and feel that you have no right to heaven at all; but as a sinner, you have a right to hell and you greatly fear. What a vast change takes place in your mind. As the Holy Spirit has led you on through many trying experiences, can you look back with some hope in your heart and say, What a mercy that the Lord has made all these things new to us putting us upon a foundation that cannot be removed?

This is a big subject. I feel it has been too big for me and must acknowledge I have only skimmed the surface.

May God bless you all is my prayer,

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

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CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

If you have injoyed knowing of the various Churches all over this Country, please help us by sending us a picture of your Church with a brief history, location, date and time of your meetings and the name of present pastor.

CORRESPONDENCE

Copper Hill, Va. 24079
February 19, 1985

Elder Kenneth R. Key
Greensboro, N.C.

Dear Elder Key,

You will find enclosed a copy of my experience, that I hope and believe, by the grace and mercy of God, treats on the dealings of the Lord with me in the pardoning of my many sins.

Should you consider it worthy of space in the Signs, you will please publish it in same.

Should you for any reason see cause to not publish it, it will be all right.

My regards to Sister Key.

Now may the loving spirit of the risen Lord abide with you and yours.

Unworthily yours,
Gaye A. Thompson

EXPERIENCE

By way of introduction, I was born April 3, 1895, to J. D (Jeff) Akers and Della Cannady Akers, Floyd County, Virginia. My mother received a hope before she was married in her eighteenth year. My Dad received a hope several years later.

I have attempted several times within the last several years to write something concerning what, by the grace and mercy of God, I believe to be the dealings of the Lord with me in the pardoning of my many sins. Each time I have attempted to write it has been thrown into the wastebasket.

It is not so much what I did, but what I am within—a hell deserving sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all.

When I was in my thirteenth (13) year I had set the table. We had the food ready to put on the table when my Dad and the

work hands come in from the field. A small still voice spoke within me saying, "Go read". I knew what I must read. I went into the living room. I thought I will open the Book and read where it opens. When I did my eyes fell on the scripture treating on the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was as if I had never heard of it before. Prior to that time it had been nothing more than history. I thought, O, what a cruel thing was done to the Lord? I began to weep; I went out the front door, to hide behind the grainery, in the back lot. I fled out there to hide, because I did not want anyone to know anything about this. I heard mama calling me to come to lunch, I did not answer. I wanted nothing to eat. However, I knew I must go to the house. I thought I will wash my face and bathe my eyes.

When I went in to sit down at the table my brother, Rice, said, "Gaye has been crying." I replied, I got water in my eyes when I washed my face. Ready to lie rather than be questioned why I was crying. I remember so well how I was so deeply hurt over telling a falsehood about it. My trouble was so great over the suffering of the Lord, I was like Peter, I could not realize, "It must needs be."

I desired to live a better life. Yes, fleeing to the law for justification, in which there is no justifying. I liked to dance. Woud skip across the floor as I went from room to room. I became condemned over dancing. Would go to friend's homes to dances, take part in the dancing. Would suffer over it and vow I would never dance again.

I would get a break from this condemnation, go a long time at ease. It would return, seemingly, heavier than before. I found I had no strength within myself. About this time I dreamed I would live only two weeks. I checked the calender for the day I would die. Words are inadequate to express how I suffered. I knew hell would be my doom. Sometime later, I dreamed I would die on a certain day. Checked the calendar again, I thought it will surely happen this time. O the agony I suffered. Thedreadof hell I was facing. Only those who have had a like experience know anything about it.

Sometime after this, I dreamed I was standing in the back yard at our home, when suddenly I began to soar upward. I went up, up and up with the most ease. No effort whatever on my part. I suddenly realized I was going up within an enclosure like unto a wooden grain box, about six by six feet square. I continued to go upward; a voice spoke to me saying, "If you can reach the top, you will be saved." I reached the top which was like the top of a box. I swung there with both hands clasping the top of the box. I beheld a large room full of people. It was so dark in the room I could not recognize any one. At the far side of said room there was a door that opened into another room. It was the most beautiful place I have ever beheld. It was so light in this room. Brighter than the noonday sun. Everyone in there was the same size. They looked so happy.

I was the second child born to my parents. The first little girl died, age about three years, when I was a baby. Another little Sister (third child) died about two and one-half years of age.

Another Sister died, 1940, age thirty-eight. In the dream I recognized my Sisters. I said, those three little Sisters are mine. A voice said, "No, they are mine."

There was only one entrance to this beautiful place. The door was closed to this beautiful place. The people in the large dark room were going around in circles, trying to reach the entrance to the beautiful place. They were like unto cattle in a stall pushing, going around each other, however, making no progress to reach the entrance.

O, that I could find words to describe

the peace and happiness of the one and the anguish and torment of the other. It just can not be done.

My Daddy died in 1937. Twenty years before he died, I dreamed I saw him tied to a stake. His body was wrapped from head to foot with a rope a few feet from the house under the window of the room where he died. It seemed almost unbearable for me to witness this; I was begging God to let me take his place. In retrospect, I was reminded of this from time to time down through the years; always wondering what it could mean. When he was dieing, I fell on my knees beside his bed and asked God to let me go instead of him. Suddenly I saw him tied to the stake as I had seen him in the dream. Then I realized what the dream meant, his death. My Daddy and I were very close; even closer than my Mother and I were.

In my nineteenth year, I married B. Odell Thompson. He had employment in Roanoke City, Virginia, where he took me to live.

He came home from work and found me crying. When he asked what I was crying about, I replied, O, it is nothing. He was greatly concerned; fearing I was unhappy with our marriage. He asked, "If he were not as good to me as my parents were." I assured him he was and that it was not that I was troubled over. I told him I was troubled over my sins and could get no relief. He said, "That is easy, I will take you to hear Mr._____." He preached at the Round House where he worked for the Norfolk and Western Railroad Company. At that time my husband knew nothing about preaching other than the law worship.

I did not want to hurt him. I told him, if I ever want to go I will mention it.

Some time after that a child died whose Daddy worked where my husband did. He asked me to go with him to the child's funeral.

I did not know the Minister that had the funeral. However, I knew he was a Primitive Baptist by the doctrine he preached. I told my husband I would like to go to his church some time. He said, he would inquire and take me to hear him. He was pastor of Roanoke Church.

On our way home from church I ask Odell how he liked the preaching? He replied, "It was all right, I guess." As a matter of fact, he knew nothing about it. I became heavily burdened to beg God to remember him in mercy, to show him he was a sinner in need of mercy.

I had another dream. I was in bed in our room. My husband was at work. (He worked at night.)

I was whipped with a whip like a buggy whip; one lash after another, each whip becoming a hoop like a barrel hoop, and rolled off of the foot of my bed into a closet. After the whipping I became so happy; words are inadequate to describe the peace and happiness I enjoyed. Love flooded my soul. The feeling of condemnation and fear of hell never returned.

My husband became dissatisfied with his work. He said, "My foremen are nice to me, my helpers are good men to work with, I just do not know why I have become so restless." After we moved back to the country , we lived almost a year with my parents. Odell helped on the farm. It pleased God to show him he was a sinner. His trouble was so great he said, "Sometimes he would walk behind the wagon and weep when they went to the field to work." He did not want my Daddy to know he was weeping and was in so much trouble. We purchased a grist mill near my home. Later he tore the old building down, erected another, a merchant mill, manufactured flour, meal and hops.

He said, "One day when he started to milk the cow, his sins stood before him, he felt he was going to die and hell would be his doom." After reaching the

milk barn he thought, "If only he could pray." Suddenly a bright light shone about him, just enough to cover him. He said, "The brightness of it was indescribable." He expected that burden of sin to return. In meditating over it, he remembered the bright light that had shone about him. He was by the grace of God, made to realize he had received a hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. He is our hope, our redeemer, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace. We loved the church and had a great desire to ask for a home with them, however, our feeling of unworthiness was so great we could not offer, in other words, ask for a home with them. When we were discussing it we always agreed we would like to offer on a Saturday, when there would not be many people present.

Many were the times when I would plan to go. I recall once when I felt so sure of myself, when I arrived at church the children of God, that I loved so much, did not look good to me. I thought if I always feel like this, I shall never want a home with them. The Lord knows how to handle us, to teach us how weak we are, how helpless, and where our strength comes from. I desire to thank him that He taught me how dependent I am on him for everything, even the air that I breathe.

I recall once when I was meditating on offering to the church, I thought how could they receive one feeling so unworthy as I do? I had another thought, Lord if I am turned away, I hope I will still love them. It seemed to live without that love would be unbearable. He has blessed me to have that same feeling all these many years. Praise His Holy Name!

If we have any worthiness it is in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord deals graciously with us. He knows how to keep us at his feet.

I believe there is a time and a place. Evidently the time came the first Sunday in September, 1925, when the Smith River Association was adjourning, that had convened with the church, West Fork, Floyd County, Virginia.

I was standing on a slab we had sat on during the service, when suddenly, I became impressed to offer to the church. I was saying within myself, I will not! I will not! The Ministers were shaking hands in the stand. I noticed one that was so homely, I thought you old, ugly man, how I love you. My breath became so short, and I became so weak I would have fallen, if Odell had not caught me. He asked what was the matter, I said, "Let us go up there." He said afterwards he had never felt farther from wanting to offer to the church than he did at that time. Therefore he said, "We could never get through the crowd of people." I said, "Let me go in front."

If I had to ask anyone to let us pass I have never remembered it. When we reached the stand there was a pew placed in front of it, that had been put there probably for the benefit of the elderly to use. Suddenly Odell became impressed to ask for a home, in other words, to tell some of his experiences. Someone noticed us and ask that the pew be removed. In the meantime, Odell being so anxious, he stepped over the pew into the stand. Soon as I was seated he began talking. That was alright with me. Such a peace and satisfaction enveloped me, I was at ease. I was among the people I loved; I hoped for Christ's sake.

The Lord works in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform,
He plants his footsteps on the sea
And rides upon the storm.

We were baptized a month later by our pastor, Elder J. H. Cummings. I was so happy. I thought I would never have any more trouble. Monday morning I was ask, is there anything to all of this? O how I was let down. Only the day before I had thought I would never see any more troubles. From time to time during the month prior to our baptism

when we would awake in the mornings, Odell would ask what was the first thing you thought of when you awoke this morning? We were so happy, however, that happiness had to come to an end.

Some time before this I was told my husband would have to preach. I thought of all things, that would be the most impossible. I, in my weak way, tried to show God it could not be. How weak I was to undertake to show God how to manage his business.

Isaiah 14:24 *The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying: Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed so shall it stand.*

I suffered over this, telling no one about it. Sometime later, I feel safe in saying, "The Lord visited me, made me reconciled to his will." Then I begged the Lord to go with him. To give him grace to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. I long have been a beggar at the feet of Sovereign mercy.

I dreamed of seeing the most beautiful white horse, running toward Paynes Creek Church. I was told it represented the power of the gospel. Odell would, by the mercy of God, be given to share.

We had company to spend the night with us. Odell was in so much trouble he said he could hardly wait until they left the next morning. When we had seen them off. We went back into the living room. He took me in his arms and said, "I want you to promise me you will never tell anyone what I am about to tell you." I said, "I know what it is." He did not think I did. When he told me how he was so burdened to preach and that it could never be. I told him I had been suffering over the same thing. We stood there and wept together, feeling so helpless. He told me later he decided he would rather die than make the attempt to preach. Therefore, he took the gun, hoping he could end it all, and went up into the woods near the house. I knew, or thought I did, why he had taken the gun and gone out. He told me he saw where a squirrel had been cutting and was going out to see if he could get the squirrel. I was not uneasy. The Lord had told me he would have to preach, and had made me reconciled to it. By the grace of God, I believed God. I pray He may keep me in a way that I may have the fellowship of his children, while I sojourn in this world of sorrow and disappointment.

Psalms 25:4, 5 *Show me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me; for thou art the God of my salvation; on Thee do I wait all the day.*

The Lord is so good to me. I can witness with the Psalmist 90:1 *Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.*

Psalm 91:1 *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide underthe shadow of the Almighty.* I have had other sweet experiences I must withhold, since this manuscript is becoming too lengthy.

Gaye A. Thompson
Copper Hill, Va. 24079

Route 3, Box 294
Eden, N. C.

Dear Brothr David,

I am so sorry you are ill, my heart goes out to you & Sister Spangler. I missed you both at the Reidsville Meeting Sunday.

Over the years you have been very faithful to the church, a good leader and kept the church in peace. May God be praised. How often Brother David while uner the sound of your voice, has this scripture come to me. "As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things! Romans 10-15.

I have always wanted to tell you a

dream I had years ago. I have been burdened for days to write, but fearful of worrying you. This dream has meant a lot to me. I hope it is of God.

I saw the most beautiful white line across the heavens, there were three large white balls on the line. They rolled off the line one at a time, and burst into a bright light and with a noise like thunder. To me the first one was God. The next one was the Moon (law) turning to blood. Jesus fullfilled the law when he shed his precious blood on Calvery. This is the Moon turning to blood. Then the last one rolled off which was the Sabbath. When we are blessed to see our sins are hid in the blood, we are at peace with God and can rest in his love. That is your sabbath.

Brother David, I hope this was a revelation from God. If so we don't learn it from man or reading the Bible. There has to be a great spiritual awakening from God. Sometimes I long to go home where Sabbath's never end. I hope this hasn't worried you. This dream has meant a lot to me. May God bless you to be back with us soon is my prayer.

Love for Christ Sake,
Ruby McGuire

March 3, 1985

Dearly Beloved Brethren,

When a child of grace is left to himself, when God turns his face away for a moment, then all is dark, dreary and wild. There is no light and we grope blindly. If this contiunes for a while, we are prone to start our own fires; our carnal nature tells us there is something we have not done or something that we must do to put us in favor with God again. But our instruction is, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." We have been through these dark, depressing periods before, but because of our short memory, the temptations of our sinful flesh and satan, we must be taught again and again as was John when he was shut up in prison. Are we not just as imprisoned and doubtful as John? And is not our Lord as gracious to teach us as he was unto John?

But I do not now desire to write about the dark and dreary experiences of our lives, but what we are blessed to see when our Maker causes his face to shine upon us, and gives us ears to hear and heats to understand what the Spirit says to the churches. I do not know that I am a child of Grace, but I believe that I have been given a hope that extends beyond this time world, and I am made to rejoice exceedingly when I am given a glimpse of the blessed Savior and the salvation he hath bestowed upon the ones chosen in him before the foundation of the world. There was a time when I believed that Christ died for all the Adamic race and that all would be saved if only they would believe and accept his offered salvation: but praise His Holy, glorious and blessed name, I have been given to see and understand that the only offering Christ ever made was to God the Father. As our High Priest, he offered Himself once unto God, the offering was accepted, and he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. But, say some, "Everyone who will accept him will be sanctified." This can in no manner be true. What God hath done is forever. Nothing can be put to it nor anything taken from it. The word "hath" is a verb of past-tense and can in no way apply to the present or the future. Jesus said, "No man can come to me , except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh to me." If a man is taught of God, that man must be born

again, for the natural man receiveth not the things of God: for they are foolishness to him: neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned. "He that cometh to God must believe and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." "He that believeth on me HATH everlasting life." If we believe in God we have this life, for a dead person can believe nothing: and all of us were at one time dead in trespasses and sin, and by nature children of wrath even as others: but he hath quickened us with that life that was given us in Christ in eternity, for God hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: and this life that is imparted to us is a spiritual life. If we have been blessed in Christ, then are we in him, and chosed in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. O, how beautiful! how rapturous! is our hope that we were chosen in him, that we shall be raised from the grave in his glorified image and dwell with him in immortal glory forever.

According to the riches of God's grace we have been redeemed by the precious blood of His holy and righteous Son. Because of his love, he hath laid down his life to redeem us from the curse of the law under which we fell in Adam. We have broken God's just and holy law and His perfect justice demands our death. In all of God's attributes He is equal: one is not stronger than the other for they are all perfect. Love nor mercy can be extended at the expense of justice. Would justice be satisfied if an innocent live was taken instead of a guilty one even though the innocent one would gladly die to save the guilty? No! In no way! Murder would be the result of taking the innocent life, and the guilty one would still be deserving of death for his transgression. Then how, in justice, did Christ, the innocent Son of God, die in the room and stead of guilty, death-deserving sinners? The answer is amazing, yet vital, to us mortals. God created man in His own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. In what way did God create man in his own image? God is a spirit, an infinite being; and man is flesh and blood, formed from the dust of the earth, and mortal. An image is a likeness of an object. It can never be the object, but only as a resemblance there of. When God breathed into the nostrils of Adam he became a living soul.. Let us remember, however, that God made them male and female. Eve was in Adam when he formed him and breathed into his nostrils, but she was not yet made manifest. Then the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept: and he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her to the man. (We will note here that he made the rib a woman and did not make a woman out of the rib. To me this indicated that the church was complete in Christ). And Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore, shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleve unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. The first man was of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. Adam is the figure of him that is to come. And being a figure implies a perfect likeness. We cannot see the figure without beholding the true body. Eve was in Adam, bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, as a type or shadow of the church which is in Christ. He is the head and we are members of his body, flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones. As Eve was the bride of Adam so is the church the bride of Christ. The

two in each case are one flesh. Adam, being a figure of Christ, was not deceived, but the woman was in the transgression when she partook of the forbidden fruit. As a figure of Christ Adam loved his bride and willingly followed her into death, though he had no power to redeem her. This death was sure, for God had said, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Adam is the Federal Head of the entire human family, for in him was the seed of all natural men; and we are but Adam multiplied. Christ is the spiritual Head of the church, which is his body, which is also his bride. Because of his great love for her he would die for her, and redeem her from the curse of the law. For the love of his bride Adam died, though he had no power to redeem her as did Christ who had power to lay down his life and power to take it up again.

Justice was satisfied when Christ died, for justice can demand no more than death: and when he died his bride died with him, for me and she are one flesh. Not a bone of him was broken, for his bride, his church, can never be broken. All of the kingdoms of the world shall be broken in pieces, but his kingdom shall stand forever.

If we died with him, we were also buried with him in baptism, and we are also risen with him thru the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. Christ knew no sin, but God laid our sins upon him, where unto he died that we might live. And his righteousness hath God imputed unto us. Now are we dead unto the rudiments of the world, but alive unto Christ. We are dead, yet we live, and our life is hid with God in Christ. O, what a glorious salvation hath our Savior wrought for us poor sinners! The wise and prudent of this world know nothing of this salvation, and go about seeking their own salvation thru works, but it is of grace and not of works lest any man should boast. God hath hid these things from them and hath revealed them unto babes, even so for it seemeth good in his sight.

This is written in love for your prayerful consideration. May God bless it to his praise, honor and glory and to the comfort and edification of a little one or ones. Charge all errors to me, and ascribe all truth unto him. When he comes again to gather his jewels and take them home to glory may we be blessed to hear these gracious words from his lips, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Your prayers for me are greatly needed and desired.

Clifford Wilbanks

JONATHAN AND DAVID

The history of Jonathan and David in their relation to each other has a very peculiar interest. Even to the natural mind it is a wonderful and touching story; but, as is the case with all the Scriptures, its far deeper, its real and true interest and value, lie in its spiritual meaning. All that was written aforetime was written for our learning in spiritual things in this gospel dispensation. (Romans xv. 4.) This history has a striking gospel significance, which I wish to speak of briefly.

It is undoubtedly true that David was an eminent type of Christ, and that in most if not all of the incidents of his life recorded in the Scriptures there is set forth in a figure some truth concerning Jesus in his work of salvation. Jonathan appears to represent the Lord's spiritual people as they appeared under the law, while Saul as the anointed king represents Israel after the flesh, with the authority of the worldly sanctuary and carnal ordinances, and all that pertained

to the first covenant. Saul and Jonathan were related in the flesh, and were both under that legal covenant, as the carnal Israelites and those who had divine life were all together under that law, and under its carnal service, and could not be distinguished from each other by anything peculiar to either in that legal work. But when David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Saul hated him from that time, while from that same time 'Jonathan's soul was knit to the soul of David, and he loved him as his own soul." So when Jesus appeared, even in the prophecies of the Old Testament, as the conqueror of death, the enmity of the carnal mind was ever excited against him, and those who testified of him were persecuted.

I will dwell somewhat upon this battle of David. He was in the house of Saul after he had been anointed king, of which Saul was ignorant. Although anointed to be king, the kingdom was not to be given to David until Saul's death, then it was to be established to him and his seed forever. It was probably to signify the permanence of the kingdom to him and his seed that he was anointed out of a horn, while Saul was anointed out of a vial for the opposite reason. David always acknowledged Saul as king while he lived. Jesus was in the legal house, and subject to both parental and legal authority, but was not known as the anointed King by the legal rulers and princes of this world. He was not under their displeasure as a man, but only when by act or word he declared his sovereign power, and the work of salvation which he came to do.

When David was sent by his father to see his brethren, who were in the army of Saul fighting the Philistines, a champion of great size had come out of the camp of the Philistines forty days in succession, and each day had challenged Israel to choose a man to fight him. Upon his appearance all Israel were dismayed at the sight of him, and fled from him. Nevertheless Israel each morning, seeming to forget their fear of the previous day, went forth to the fight again, in the same armor, and again shouted for the battle, as though confident of the victory. But again they were afraid at the sight of Goliath, and fled from him.

The Philistines were gathered at Shochoh, (a thicket) which belonged to Judah, and pitched between that and Azekah (a cultivated ground). To my mind they, who were the great and constant enemies of Israel, represent our sins, and all the vileness of our fleshly nature, and it is in the wilderness of the flesh, between the flesh and the cultivated soil where grace reigns, the battle is waged. The great and fearful champion that comes forth from that camp of our enemies is death. Of him the Lord's quickened people must be afraid, for in the armor of the law they cannot overcome him, but must fall before him. Sin reigns unto death.

It was on the fortieth day of the champion's appearance that David appeared and accepted the challenge. So on the fortieth day Jesus overcame the evil in the wilderness. David could not go to fight Goliath without the authority of Saul, so Jesus must be recognized by the law as having the right to go into the conflict with death. He was authorized by the law, and put forward by the legal authorities as the one man who "ought to die for the people, that the whole nation perish not," though the high priest who uttered that prophecy by the Spirit did not himself know the power of the words he uttered. (John xi. 50-52.)

Saul armed David with his own armor, but David put it off. The law armed Jesus with the flesh. By being made flesh he came under the law. He could not meet and overcome death until he had taken upon himself and put off again that flesh in which sin had been committed, and thus had condemned sin in the flesh. It

was only by first being overcome himself that he could overcome the great enemy. He must first die in order to abolish death. The law must first be satisfied by his death, which makes an end of sin, and then death has lost its power. "He that is dead is freed from sin." Then the Son of God, who took upon himself the likeness of sinful flesh, in order to die the death due for the transgressions of his people, can no longer be holden of death, but comes forth victorious over him. "Death hath no more dominion over him."

All this must be shown in a figure by the action of David, while David must remain alive. So having put off Saul's armor, he chose five smooth stones from the valley. These stones represent an accursed death inflicted upon an Israelite. When a man became accursed he must be stoned to death. David threw one of these stones and brought down the giant. Jesus by his own death under the curse of the law, represented in this figure by the smooth (perfect) stones with which David armed himself, brought death down at his feet, and "destroyed him that had the power of death." He must first die, and then meet death with his own death, and thus overcome him so thoroughly that he can never make any one from whom Jesus died his captive any more. Jesus fought the battle so effectually in the valley of Elah, the bitter valley of death, that when he came forth out of that valley he even "carreid captivity captive."

To make the figure more complete David took the champion's own sword to cut off his head. It was the sword of justice which death held over all who were under the curse of the law. But when Jesus through his own death "finished transgression, made an end of sin," and so laid death low, deprived of all his power, then that sword of justice was taken from death and turned against himself to bring his existence to an end. It was not simply absolute power, as abstractly considered, by which Jesus overcome death, but the power that justice and judgment give, for they are the habitation of God's throne, or the foundation of his power as against death. His people are not simply snatched from death, as a stronger man may take away a lawful captive from a weaker, but they are legally delivered. They are justified. No charge can ever be brought against them, for God has justified them. "It was Christ that died, yea, rather, is risen again, and is now at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for them." His intercession is felt to be effectual, for with the sword of justice justly taken from his conquered enemy he has destroyed him forever.

"The Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side, and there was a valley between them." "And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead they fled. And the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines until thou come to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron." And when the Lord's people see the victory of Jesus over death they arise, and shout, and persue their enemies, and rejoice in the victory that is given unto them through Jesus Christ our Lord.

When David went forth to fight the Philistine Saul inquired who he was. No one seemed to know. Upon his return Saul sent for him and asked him, "Whose son are thou, thou young man?" David with modesty and meekness answered, "I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Bethlehemite." When he had thus spoken to Saul, "the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David; and he loved him as his own soul." "Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his

bow, and to his girdle."

What can this act of Jonathan signify unless it be the fact that all of the Lord's people in all dispensations do ever ascribe their robe of righteousness, and all their garments of salvation, and all their weapons of war and their strength, to Jesus? They recognize and testify that all they have belongs to him, and is his gift to them. This is as clearly declared by the holy men in the legal dispensation as by those now in the gospel day.

To the sight of men, Jonathan and Saul were alike as warriors. They fought with carnal weapons, and must both fall upon that same battlefield, overcome by the Philistines. That is the end of all who are under that dispensation. It is the end of all flesh. It is only by faith that a future is seen for Jonathan which is not seen for Saul, in which he and his seed shall be remembered in covenant love and salvation by David. Upon this earthly battlefield he and his fathers fight side by side with equal courage and zeal. David classes them as equals, and speaks of them with equal praise. "From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty. Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions." "How are the mighty fallen." That legal covenant could not furnish any weapon to those under it wherby they could overcome their enemies. "How are the weapons of war perished!"

For Johathan, David had some words of love and tenderness which he had not for Saul. "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan. Very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." The love of the Lord's people to Jesus is wonderfully described in those few words. In all ages, in all dispensations, in all lands and among all people, it is the same. It is indeed wonderful, a "love that passeth knowledge."

"Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father," and defended him at the risk of his own life, and saved him out of his father's hand, who sought to kill even Jonathan his son because of his defense of David. In this Jonathan may well represent the prophets and holy men of old, who testified of Jesus, and declard his coming and kingdom, and who were hated by the carnal Israelites and their rulers, and were persecuted and killed, because they spake good concerning the spiritual David who was to be the Ruler over Israel.

And Jonathan said to David, "And thou shalt not only while yet I live shew me the kindness of the Lord, that I die not: but also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house forever: no, not when the Lord hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth. So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, Let the Lord even require it at the hand of David's enemies. And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him; for he loved him as his own soul."

This promise was not literally fulfilled to Jonathan, for he died with Saul in battle with the Philistines on Mount Gilboa. Nor were the promises which were given to the prophets to declare among the people literally fulfilled to them. They, with all the Lord's spiritual Israel under the old dispensation, "having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."—Heb. xi.39, 40. The "everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure," which was made with them, and which was all their salvation and all their desire, (2 Sam. xxiii. 5,) was not made to grow or be fulfilled in their flesh, nor in the sight of men. Its fulfillment was ex-

perienced then in the manifestation of Christ to them through the Spirit, who has now appeared in the flesh, and has openly fulfilled all that they spoke of him, revealing himself to his people among all nations by faith, and showing unto us that his people both under the old and the new dispensations are made perfect only in him.

As we see the heart of Jonathan turned toward his children far in the future, with a longing desire that David would show the kindness of the Lord to them, so we see the hearts of the fathers (the prophets) turned unto their children in the gospel dispensation, and rejoicing when it was made known unto them that the things they declared were to be fulfilled unto us. (Luke i. 17; 1 Peter i. 12)

Silas H. Durand

Dear Brother Lefferts:

What a blessed relation! To think that we are heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, is a thought that I can scarcely claim for myself at times, yet I have that hope that was given me when Christ revealed himself to me as the light of my life, the chiefest among ten thousand. Dear one, I know you are passing through that part of your soul's journey that is not traveled but once; the first love; the sweet faith that follows the obedience of God's command to enter into that rest that remaineth to the people of God, "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." How true it is, we cease to work when we receive a hope. The church is the resting place of the saints. What a glorious thought to think that Christ is the chief corner-stone of this glorious resting-place. Peter says, He is a precious stone and the poor saints find it so. "Behold I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." Peter also says of the church, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." We are of the same people, the same nation, so we may thank God together that he has shown us the way, the church, the home of the saints, and made us of that near relation that the world knows nothing of, and is above all earthly relation.

We were glad to receive a letter from you, and we should have answered it long ago, but we have not these things in our own hands. The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away, so we cannot have the things to tell, nor the impression to tell them, only as the Lord gives them, and we must wait on the Lord, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.

"Let us love, and sing, and wonder;
Let us praise the Savior's name;
He has hushed the law's loud thunder,
He has quenched Mount Sinai's flame;
He has washed us in his blood;
He has brought us home to God."

"Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Your sister in hope,

E. P. FETTER.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

Dear Brethren:

This rainy day I have a desire to write on a text that has been as badly misunderstood as any part of the Bible. I know I have to face a proposition that has been rooted and grounded in most people's minds for ages, and a great many may think any one who would deny the erroneous idea that has been instilled into the minds of the people on this language is a presumptuous, silly person. The text is "Train up a child in

the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it."—Proverbs xxii. 6. This has been written on by our people, and some have said, this is not to teach a child to be a christian, nor to become a child of God, but to teach it to be a moral, truthful person, honest and upright. I beg leave to differ on this point. It is all right to try and teach your children to be truthful, honest, honorable, virtuous, &c., but this text is not on that subject. If it means you must teach your children honesty, morality, &c., and they will not depart from it when they are old, Solomon was mistaken, for a boy I went to school with was the model for all the boys in the town. His parents took him to Sunday-school and preaching nearly every Sunday, and did their best to train him right, and after I began to try to proclaim salvation through a once crucified but now highly risen and exalted Savior, I met this boy, then a grown man, and he said with an oath, "I don't believe there is any such thing as religion." There are hundreds of thousands of cases where the parents did their best to train their children up in the way they should go who did depart. Then the text must refer to something you have not seen. At that time Solomon was not writing to the Gentiles, but to Jews, and telling them to train their children up according to the Mosaic teaching. Teach them to observe the law and keep it, to go once a year with their offering and give it to the high priest, and he offer it to God, and if it was accepted by the Lord their sins were forgiven for that year. But the Scripture says there was a remembrance of sin every year. Hebrews x. 3: "But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year." Teach them they must be circumcised, they must be purified according to the custom of the law; train them up in the doctrine of the Jews and they will not deaprt from it. You never knew a Jew to depart from the teaching of the priests and the fathers unless God taught him Jesus was his Savior and he learned the law was only a shadow of things to come. Heb. x. 1: "For the law having a shadow of things," &c. Again, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of any holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." —Col. ii. 16, 17. When a child was born to Jew parents if it was a boy it was circumcised the eighth day, and all of them, both boys and girls, were taught the doctrine of the Jews just as soon as they could understand what their parents meant whey they talked to them. Their parents never tried to teach them before they were born, like people do now, trying to teach their children the things of the Spirit before they are born of the Spirit. Paul says, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."— 1 Cor. ii. 14. Just as soon as a child of God is born of the Spirit it has an understanding and can hear and understand the gospel. 1 Peter iv. 6: "We are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us." What does he mean by this language? He means, if you are not born of God you cannot hear "us," the apostles. "He that knoweth God, heareth us." Now turn to John xvii. 3: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hath sent." Then if they can hear they have eternal life, and can both hear and see. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Then if he is born of an incorruptible seed he is ready to be taught, and trained up in the way he should go. God teaches all of his children they are sinners, lost, ruined and helpless, but evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving

and being deceived. When the children of God are born of the Spirit and taught by a sound ministry they do not depart. I heard an Old School Baptist preacher say, When God gives a church a sound preacher it is a sign he is going to establish that church in the doctrine. Paul says, Eph. iv. 11–14, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." Then the true ministry train them up in the way they should go, and when they are old they will not depart from it. Peter says, "As new born babes, desiring the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."—1 Peter ii. 2. Paul says, 1 Cor. iii. 2: "I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able." First verse, same chapter, Paul says, "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes." So if we have babes among us, do not set up bars, but feed with the sincere milk of the word. 1 Cor. xiii. 11: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things." Hebrews v. 11–14: "Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." When I became a man, if I was ever anything, I put away childish things. "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" I learned that God predestinated to build a world and built it, and that Jesus was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and you by wicked hands crucified and slew him. I learned God determined before the world this should be done, and that the wicked men who killed him were wicked before they crucified him, and it made them no worse to do this, the wickedest thing that ever has or ever will be done; that their hatred of him, with the devil to aid and influence them, caused them to do this awful thing. My Bible says they hated him without a cause. Isaiah says, "He is despised and rejected of men," and Jesus said, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." "Of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Herod and Pontius Pilate were enemies before this, but when the Savior was to be killed they were made friends. They will all be made friends, and the Gentiles were there to help, when it was unlawful for the Jews to have anything to do with the Gentiles. "They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them." Train up a child born of the Spirit in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. So many little ones are like our little baby girl was. She went into our sitting-room, looked into the closet, ran out in the center of the room and began to scream. Her mother ran in, and said, what is the matter, Mary? She

said, Oh there is something in the closet; there is something in the closet. Her mother looked, and it was a striped kershaw, or squash as some people call them. Her mother took her by the hand to lead her up to where it was, saying, Mary, that is a kershaw, we make pies out of that. Mary took a step or two and then pulled back, and said, "Yes, kershaw; yes, kershaw." She was a little baby girl then, but she grew up and her mother taught her how to make pies out of squash and kershaws. Then when she had learned there was no harm in squash, or kershaws, she could sit up to the table and eat the pies. So it is with the children of God, when they find out how glorious and how wondrous the doctrine of predestination is they can feast upon it, for it is found on God's table he prepares of his people and for his little babes. If my wife had not known what a kershaw, or squash, was no doubt she would have told Mary to run, and she would have come after me to get me to kill the thing, like a great many of our brethren do in regard to predestination. Train them up in the way they should go. When some go too far, and say, The lust was in Adam, and he was a sinner before he ate the forbidden fruit, and the bad seed was in the dirt when God made Adam, and lust caused them to eat, they certainly need a little training. One thing sure, I am not going with them in that path, for God only knows where it will lead to. The first command given Adam was, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." Marriage is honorable in all, but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. (Heb. xiii. 4.) Lust is sin, and if Adam and Eve lusted after the forbidden fruit before they ate God created sin in them, and I am sure our great preachers never taught any such thing. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners."—Rom. v. 19. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom. v. 12. Here we are told postively how sin came into the world. Elder Gilbert Beebe never said or wrote that God created a sinner when he created Adam, or rather that Adam was a sinner before he ate the forbidden fruit. I have his editorial published in Hassel's history before me. He says on page 948, "Men act voluntarily when they commit sin." Page 949: "If sin has entered this world in opposition to his will, or because he had not the wisdom and power to prevent its entrance, what assurance have we that it will not also enter the world to come?" But he never taught God created lust. Lust is sin, for James says, "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin." James says, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neithr tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin." Eating the forbidden fruit was not raising children, as many think, for God married Adam to Eve, for God said, "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife," &c. If Eve was Adam's wife and God did not join them together in the holy bonds of matrimony, please tell me who did. Love is as high above lust as heaven is above earth, as God is purer than the devil, as light is brighter than darkness, as righteousness is better than sin. When God made Adam he was upright, for Solomon says, "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." There is not an upright man on earth since the fall, except so far as the grace of God causes them to walk uprightly. "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set." Long years ago Baptist wrote, "Man by reason of the fall hath lost all ability of will." Again, "By the transgression of the law **** so that

man has not only become dead in sin, and incapable to keep the law, or to restore himself to the same state of moral uprightness, but wholly unable to accept of salvation by Jesus Christ." Do not say, God created us like we are, for if you do, you had better ask wisdom of him who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not. He can train you in the way you should go.

Your brother in hope of mercy,
Isaac R. Greathouse.

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IT IS TIME TO RENEW

If the date before your name and address is marked 5/85, or an older date, it is time to renew. We would appreciate you looking at the date and renew as soon as you can.

Editors

OBITUARIES

ANNIS BATCHELOR BROWN

I will attempt to write the obituary of my dear Mother-inlaw.

Annis Brown was born March 19th, 1889, and was called to rest, July 5, 1983. She joined Muddy Creek Primitive Baptist Church May 1918 and was baptized by Elder Isaac Jones. She was a True and Faithful member and a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God.

Sister Annis had a stroke 23 years before she died that left her partially paralized. For almost a year she was unable to attend her meetings. She improved enough that she could bo back with the help of her sons. She had three very faithful ones that saw to it that she got to her meetings. The last seven years of her life was spent in a nursing home due to another stroke that left her helpless and unable to talk. Her afflictions were great but she never complained.

Her mind was well enough that she recognized the Elders when they visited her and she would greet them with a smile that lighted her whole countenance like a candle.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder D. B. Stokes and Elder William Everett. She was laid to rest under a beautiful mound of flowers to await the glorious morning of the resurrection when our Lord and Saviour shall come to take his chosen ones home.

Written by request of her son, Stedman Brown.

By One Who Loved Her:
Nettie Brown

ELDER ORA DAVIS

Elder Ora Davis, age 83, of Maynardville, Tenn. passed away

Thursday, February 21, 1985, following a short illness. He is survived by wife, Mrs. Sarah Davis; daughter, Mrs. Beulah Nicely; four grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. Sisters, Goldie Gose and Lorene Dyer. Brothers, Fred, Murphy, Auston and Verlin. Several nieces and nephews.

Brother Davis joined Union Primitive Baptist Church June 8, 1932 and was ordained an Elder Sept. 15, 1935. He was pastor of Union and Dotsons Creek Church and assistant pastor of Mountain Creek and Friendship Churches. He served as moderator of the Powell Valley Association for ten years (1972-1982).

Brother Davis experienced many adversities in his life but he never faltered in his belief and defense of a Sovereign God and a Complete Savior. His words were, "One who has already completed the saving." He served his churches faithfully for over half a century. We believe he could say as Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." Brother Davis would say he had been KEPT in the faith.

It is with a sense of great loss we bow to the will of God. His calling of our dear brother, teacher and friend. We thank the Lord for his life and his long service to our churches.

Brother Davis' funeral was conducted by Elder D. R. Cabbage and Elder Rush Hendrix. The body was laid to rest in the Monroe Cemetery, Maynardville, Tenn. to await the coming of Jesus.

Written by request,
Bernard Monroe

MISS EFFIE SMITH GOAD

It pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst my Aunt and our beloved sister, Effie Goad, February 18, 1985. She was born January 23, 1903, in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, to Albert S. Goad and Ida Dalton Goad, making her stay on earth 82 years.

She asked for a home with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church the fourth Sunday in September 1964 and was baptized by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, the second Sunday in October 1964. Aunt Effie and I were baptized the same day. She attended her meetings regularly as long as her health permitted. She loved her church and some of her greatest pleasures in life was to cook and prepare meals and invite the brethren and friends into their home to visit and talk of the goodness and mercy of God our Saviour. She loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace, and Grace alone.

Back in her younger years, she and her sister would walk down to the church once a month before the fourth Sunday and clean the Church. They did this for many years. She said sometimes some of the members would bring them a piece of material to make them a dress to let them know they appreciated them cleaning the Church.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and Elder Raymong Goad, her nephew, at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, February 20. She was laid to rest in the Church Cemetery, waiting for the day when God will call His Children home, where trials and tribulations will be no more.

Those left to mourn her passing are two brothers, Russell and Lloyd Goad and one sister, Nolie Goad, and a number of nieces and nephews.

Written by one who loved her and misses her very much.

Her Neice,
Mabel Hedrick

BROTHER WALTER C. HAMLETT

It is with sweet memories that we think of Brother Walter C. Ham-

lett. Brother Hamlett was a member and deacon at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, Gretna, Va. He was received by experience and baptized, April 10, 1966. Brother Hamlett was faithful to his church and loved the Brethren. He traveled many miles to hear the gospel.

Brother Hamlett was the son of the late Jessie Hubbard and Carrie Taylor Hamlett. He passed from this life December 5, 1984. His funeral was held by his pastor Elder O. K. Tench and Mr. Randy Bridger at the Bethel Baptist Church, Phenix. His body was layed to rest in the family cemetery near Phenix.

Brother Hamlett is survived by his step mother, Mrs. Mozell Hamlett of Phenix. Five daughters; Mrs. Carrie Gutheries and Mrs. Joyce Harris of Evington, Mrs. Jannie Sapp of Chesterfield, Mrs. Jean Phelps and Mrs. Dorothy Foster of Phenix. Three sons; Walter C. Hamlett, Jr. of Phenix, Herbert Hamlett of Evergreen, and John Hamlett of Keysville. Two brothers; Otis L. Hamlett of Pasadana, Md. and Clifford Hamlett of Salem. Three half-brothers; Carter Hamlett and Watkins Hamlett of Richmond, Richard Hamlett of Evergreen. Four half-sisters; Mrs. Bernice Sprinkle of Charolette Court House, Mrs. Elsie Harris of Madison Heights, Mrs. Shirley McCluster of Phenix, and Mrs. Glenn Casell of Richmond. Twenty-two grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Brother Hamlett will be sadly missed by all. May we all be reconciled to God's will.

Written in love and hope,
Carol R. Pickral

ELDER DANIEL AARON JENKINS

Elder Daniel Aaron Jenkins was born October 26, 1906, at Chipley in Washington County, Florida. His parents were Elder Green Berry and Senny Ann Jenkins.

Elder Jenkins' family moved from northwest Florida to south Florida in 1917. He worked as a farmer, then during World War II, was employed by Tampa Shipbuilders. In 1946, he started with the Hillsborough County Road Department and retired in 1968, as a Motorgrader operator.

Elder Jenkins married the former Zola Parrish on May 20, 1926. They were the parents of four daughters, Lorrain Joiner, Naomi Miley, Dean Koch, and Reitha Smith, and two sons, Harvey and Daniel. His loving and faithful wife preceeded him in death on July 17,1974.

The eternal God called Elder Jenkins into the fellowship of Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church on November 24, 1934. The church set him at liberty to the full function of the Gospel Ministry on January 26, 1946. The Presbytery was conposed of Elders T. M. Hughes, T. P. Webb, and G. B. Jenkins. Elder D. A. Jenkins faithfully served the churches of the Mt. Enon Association for almost 37 years. He was a brother to many and a friend to all. At all times, Elder Jenkins gave praise, honor, and glory to the eternal God who has all power in all things and faithfully preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ, "contending for the faith once delivered to the saints."

It pleased the God of all Grace to call Elder Jenkins from his labors here on October 3, 1982. Memorial services were held at Bethlehem Church and he was laid to rest, at the side of his wife, in the church cemetery to await the glorious resurrection of those with a hope in God our Savior.

Elder and Mrs. Jenkins are survived by their sons and daughters, 22 grandchildren, 25 great-grandchildren and 2 great-great-grandchildren.

Submitted by:
Elder J. A. Albritton

ELDER DAVID V. SPANGLER

"Through the years of my ministry, if I am in it, I have had great wrestling with the flesh, and but for His great grace would have fallen by the way, yet I have that blessed hope that I will someday see the King in his beauty, and praise Him as I ought." **(A quote from Elder Spangler's book, "Amazing Grace".)**

We are saddened to announce the death of Elder D. V. Spangler, at the age of 83 years. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church in 1918 and was ordained as an Elder in 1921. He served faithfully until his death April 18, 1985. His funeral was conducted at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church where he was member and pastor. A host of friends attended this service and his body was laid to rest in the church cemetery under a mound of beautiful flowers, there to await the coming of the King of Glory, whom he loved so much and spent more than 64 years in His service.

He served as pastor for Dan River Church for over 50 years, along with other churches in North Carolina, Virginia and Maryland.

He was married to Nannie Turpin who was blessed to walk close by him as a lovely ministers wife and as a very precious mother in Israel. All who know Sister Spangler, love her dearly. To this union was born four children: Elinor Hodnett, Mildred Graham, Rebecca Smith and David M. Spangler.

From 1936 to 1950 Elder Spangler was associate editor of the Signs of The Times. He was president of the board for 33 years and was serving as contributing editor at the time of his death. The Signs of The Times was founded in 1832 and no one ever served more faithful than did Elder Spangler. He gave much of his time and money to this cause, believing it to be of the Lord and a means where many of the Lords people have received comfort and His name has been exalted.

On behalf of the entire staff, we wish to thank God for the life and service of Elder Spangler and pray His presence continue to be with us as we try to carry on.

Editors

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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REJOICE

Rejoice, The Lord is King;
Your God and King adore:
Morals, give thanks and sing,
And triumph ever more!
Lift up the heart, lift up the voice,
Rejoice aloud, ye saints, rejoice.

Rejoice, the Saviour reigns,
The God of truth and love;
When He had purged our stains,
He took his seat above:
Lift up the heart, lift up the voice,
Rejoice aloud, ye saints, rejoice.

His kingdom cannot fail;
He rules o'er earth and heaven;
The keys of death and hell
Are to our Jesus given:
Lift up the heart, lift up the voice,
Rejoice aloud, ye saints, rejoice.

He all his foes shall quell;
Shall all our sins destroy:
And every bosom swell
With pure seraphic joy:
Lift up the heart, lift up the voice,
Rejoice aloud, ye saints, rejoice.

Rejoice in glorious hope,
Jesus the Judge shall come,
And take his servants up
to their eternal home;
We soon shall hear the Archangel's voice;
The trump of God shall sound, Rejoice.

c. w.

One of Elder Spangler's favorite Hymns.

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EDITORIAL

ADAM AS A FIGURE OF HIM THAT WAS TO COME

Of all the types and shadows listed in the Bible there is not any one of them that gives as much enjoyment and satisfaction and peace of mind as this does. Before we venture too far into the subject, let us remember another outstanding fact. The salvation of the people of God was determined in eternity. This beast, this power, this enemy of the saints of God arose in time, out of the sea and then still another beast arose up out of the earth. These powers were limited in power, a line was drawn between them and their followers. They were to have a lot of worshippers. Oftimes this can be a terror to hear about. But let us remember that the Bible is a revealed book to the people of God. It tells us the whereabouts and final destination of every person on the earth. All of one class is to worship these beasts or false gods. Old Baptists are accused of preaching selfishly; that they do not preach to nor give the destination of everybody. That is a mistake. We do preach the final destiny of all people. God's people had a Saviour God who inscribed each and every name of His people in the book of life of the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. If anybody doubts this, if there is any question to be raised, let them tell us who has had access to that book to erase one name from it. I maintain that what God does that it is done forever (Eccl. 3:14), that should settle it, but carpers are always finding fault, therefore the Holy Spirit led Solomon to add a few choice words to the matter. That flow of words from Wisdom, to wit, nothing can be put to it, and nothing can be removed from it. He fixed it that way to keep men fearing Him, but since there is a wicked nation before whose eyes the fear of the Lord is not found, it follows that only those whose names are inscribed in that Book fear Him. The balance of the creation worship beast. This is preaching TO the saints of God, and it is preaching AT the others, for there is not any way for a creature to add to the bookkeeping of the Creator. What a rich display is this of the mystery of Godliness. There is not any way in which the language of the Bible can be tampered with to change the fixed purposes of God in regard to His creation of the human race. And yet, men at large (that is, men in general) continue to worship the beast, and those whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world, will sometimes in this present life, will worship the Lord Jesus Christ—will bow down to Him, will confess that He is the Lord and that He is the Master.

There are two personages that we desire to notice. Beginning at the created Adam, he was a figure of Him that was to come. This being a figure of Him that was to come, we must insist that he, the man Adam, his whole life, whole work,

whole number of days on earth, ALL were a part of his being a figure of Him that was to come. In short, Adam was a figure of Him that was to come. As such, let us examine the sense in which he was a figure of Him that was to come. A figure can never be the object of what it is a figure of. It never is anything except a figure of something else. The figure never becomes the thing itself. Let us also note very carefully that the figure did not make himself that. Some other power made him the figure of He that was to come. Men, do and would, if they could, become as God; such is impossible and equally so. It is impossible for a man to be a figure of God, or of Christ, because it is not customary for the lesser to become still lesser, but rather for him to become greater. It is enough to say that man will not, of his own will, become a figure of somebody else. Thus, the wisdom of God is displayed in Adam being the creature.

Now in that habitat in which he was created in, Adam was a figure of some one else.

Let us remember that while Adam and Eve were one, yet, let us remember that each of them had a place in society, a place in the marriage picture, a place in the family life, a place in the parental work of begetting and bringing forth a family, of instructing that family, and the care and responsibility of it, as well as each of them had certain things that were allotted to them to do and to bear toward each other.

The relationship between them was a close, as near and as dear as divine wisdom could make it, and let me urge that this is not to imply that she was limited in how good that it was, but it is to urge that it was perfection in conception and execution. In the first place, divine Wisdom put the man to sleep before the operation of taking the rib out of his side. God has put more than Adam to sleep, that they might all be non-plussed about claiming any part of the glory. God gave His beloved sleep before He revealed to him that the Holy Thing in the womb of Mary was by the Holy Ghost. God also takes away sleep, and in such a way that no man has control of it either way.

The gift of Eve to Adam was from God. Do not come to me with any iffy doctrine, for salvation in every phase of it is by the gift of God. Adam knew where the gift of Eve to him as helpmeet came from. He recognized her as coming from God, and he did not ever go back on her. I want to urge that. I call on the universe to note what I say. He did not go back on her. After the removal of the rib from Adam and the making of the woman from it, God brought her to Adam. He said, she is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man, therefore, shall a man leve his father and mother and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh (Gen. 2: 21, 24).

The figure of Christ has sentenced himself to a life of servitude to his wife. Ah, how the figure takes on importance. I am not worshipping Adam; I am not paying any homage nor adoration to him: I am not placing Adam in partnership with Christ in saving sinners. I am not extolling the name of any man nor any set of men, but I am in my small way desiring to extol the name of our God that sent before Himself a figure that would do for his wife what the blessed Potentate, the all powerful One of all Deity (I Tim. 6: 15, 16). If I am not mistaken in my calling, I am laying down before you my dear precious members of the body of Christ, the saving doctrine of God our Saviour.

Men may, yea, even my readers may hold in disdain what I am presenting, but that doesn't matter; that doesn't change anything. The figure of Him that was to come is being placed in a certain set of circumstances in which the glory of God is exalted in them all to the high and

exalted praise of Him with whom we have to do. How closely are these two bound together? How harmoniously are the affections of Adam being forged for Eve. They have been so closely united in love that the man is determined not to let any one nor anything come between him and his wife. They are one flesh.

In no sense of the word is an attempt being made to say that Adam is conscious of being the figure of Christ. He is doing what he is doing without any restraint on him save that which was created in him, and consequently passed on to her. So interwoven were their affections that a man was to leave his father and mother an cleave unto his wife. We must not lose sight of that. Somebody may be ready to say that you are mixed up for Adam did not have a father and mother. What! Where did he come from?

He certainly did have a mother and a father. Wisdom was his mother and God was his father. He had the best characteristic of a husband. None of us would advocate paying all homage and adoration that is due to our parents. We are deeply indebted to them. However, when a man marries a woman his first allegiance is to that wife. Admitted, that times will undoubtedly come when a wife might be wrong, but the marital ties would compel a husband to stand up for his wife, That is exactly what Adam said that a man should do; that is exactly what God has commanded. That is exactly what Adam did do. God was Father and Wisdom was his mother, and yet he did not forsake his wife. She was unfaithful, but she was still his wife. She was still his bone and his flesh.

Several years ago someone sent out literature among the people of God, advocating that God was the author of sin, and among the blasphemous things, that was attempted to be palmed off on the Signs readers was that God worked the lust in a man or woman for each other, therefore that it was lust that caused Adam to follow Eve in eating the forbidden fruit. My remarks at the time were not complimentary about that theory, and I have not changed my opinion. It was love for his wife that sent Adam into disobedience. That is all that it was. If it could be proven that it was lust that caused Adam to follow his wife, then, He of whom Adam was a figure of, was not filled with love, but with lust for the church.

As we look in upon the dismal scene back in the morning of time it is amazing what a lovely picture is shown to us. They were happy in the arms of wedded bliss. How closely bound together were they as they shared the pristine holiness of the paradise of the early morning of creation. There was not an enemy that they knew about; they had not felt any chilling wind of adversity, or had not heard a dividing voice that would disturb their marriage nuptials from the Lord.

Types and shadows and pointers can never assume the authority nor can they ever have the wisdom nor the power to stem insurmountable or unseen enemies. Regardless of the fact that Adam was a figure of He that was to come, yet he was not aware of what was coming, nor of what his actions portended. He was in love with his wife, and love is blind as to responsibilities that are going to come or as to dangers that might arise.

An enemy was also in the garden. This enemy had been evil from the beginning (I John 3: 8). It is his way to ever be walking up and down in the earth, seeking whom he may devour (I Pet. 5: 8). Into that paradisiacal garden came that slipping, sliding, sneaking evil one.

Also in that garden came He that owned the garden, the world, and the fulness of it all. There is not now, nor there was not then a voice that could deny that Creator to do as it seemed good unto Him to do. At least, in the time

of the Christ man, none questioned His prerogative to do what he would with His own. If divine Wisdom overlooked someone that has the right to call Him in question about what he owned, let them speak up now. If not, we will, as given grace, proceed with our investigation of these sublime matters. This divine Lawgiver gave to the newly created progenitors a law. Let us remember that God cannot do wrong. Therefore the law given them was holy, just and good. It carried a heavy penalty. But let us think, first, on how good that it was. It was holy, just and good. The penalty for disobedience was death in the day of transgression. It is not my desire nor my intention to deal with the technicalities of the transgression except that our mother Eve, the bosom companion, the Woman who was bone of his bones, flesh of his flesh was deceived by the cunning approach of Satan. She was deceived, and one that has been subjected to the cunning approaches of this sinister influence is bewitched and does not realize the consequences of what they are doing. Thus she forgot the commandment of her Maker; she forgot the direful consequences of that careless moment.

When the Lord approached our mother Eve, the deceived wife of our father, Adam, she had the lamest excuse. Not a justifiable reason for having listened at the misleading, deceptive voice of Satan. But she was deceived; she did not realize what she was doing, but her husband was not decieved. He knew what he was doing. He did not count the cost, he knew the cost. He did not go into disobedience because that he loved sin, but he went into disobedience because he loved Eve.

There is not any exception to the laws of love. Whatever you love, that thing or that person you will serve. It was not in a finding fault attitude that he said unto the Lord, "The woman that thou gave me, gave to me and I did eat." It was not to blame his Maker, but it was to acknowledge the good gift that He had given him in the person of his wife. He owned up to her belonging to him. He received her as a gift from His Maker. He also knew what she had done; he knew what the penalty was for having disobeyed. She was dead to all that was godly, she was separated from all that had been given her. There was not any way in which she could turn back. There was not any way for him to buy or redeem her from what she had brought upon herself. She could not undo what was done. Yet the love and devotion for her was overwhelming. He still knew the penalty for transgressing. How strong it was before him. She had listened and had died, had become separated from their Edenic abode, love listened to the cries of his wife, but most of all, strongest of all powers, he listened to his heart. He knew the penalty; he knew the sorrow that it would bring, but he knew that in that way he could be with his wife.

ELDER W. D. GRIFFIN

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editors:

My mind is on the Spiritual world that Jesus prayed for in John 17. Also the world by wisdom knew not God. There is a great difference in the two. The spiritual world is the one, that Jeus said, *"I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name; those that thou gavest me I have kept,*

and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shoudest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." **The whole chapter is so lovely, concerning the spiritual world, that Jesus prayed for. The Lord's little ones rejoice in him. Who is the way, the truth, and the life. He is a spirit, he that seeks to worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth. The truth shall set you free. I believe that the born again, called, and chosen ones of God, are of the spiritual world. It is by revelation of Jesus Christ, that they are taught of him to know the truth. In Him we live, and move, and have our being. The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. Jesus said,** *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one. The truth is hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes, even so, Father, for it seemeth good in thy sight."* **The Apostle Paul said in one of his epistles,** *"The world by wisdom knew not God, I received it not of man, neither was I taught it by man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."* **The preaching of the true Gospel of our Lord and Saviour by his dear ministers, to his little children is so precious to hear the truth preached as it is in Jesus to them. II Cor. 2: 14-17** *"Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the Saviour of his knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one we are a savour of death unto death: and to the other the savour of life unto life, and who is sufficient for these things? For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ."* **The Lord's people was chosen in him from before the world, and to them, that are blessed to hear the true gospel preached or published. It is the life of Jesus in them that are saved, the saviour of life unto life, and in them that perish, death unto death, is how the true gospel affects them. The ones the Lord has revealed his precious truth unto, when blessed of him to hear, what the spirit saith unto the church. At times, it is so precious to our souls, the living waters springing up within us. The still small rain that falls on the tender herbs, that distills as dew in our souls. It is a time of rejoicing in our Saviour, God, and Husband, prophet, priest and King.**

We desire to worship Him in spirit and in truth, praising, honoring, and giving glory, to the only true and living God, whom our souls love, looking unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith; who promised never to leave us or forsake us. *"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."* **These words are precious, when the Lord lifts up his poor sinful worm of the dust, from time to time to rejoice in the Lord of Lord's, and King of King's, whom my soul loves and adores. I hope, and believe, he is my righteousness and clothes me with His robe of righteousness each day, because I have no righteousness of my own to plead. My righteousness is as filthy rags in his sight, I am so vile and prone to sin, I fear that I am not born again. These words come to mind,** *"For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God, when Christ, who is our life, shall*

appear; then shall ye also appear with him in glory." **How I desire to be with Jesus when from this low ground of sin and sorrow I pass, to appear with him in glory, now my remnant of days would I spend to his praise, who hath died my poor soul to redeem; whether many or few, all my years are his due, may they all be denoted to him.**

This comes to mind:

Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, City of our God;
He whose word cannot be broken,
Formed thee for his own abode.
On the rock of ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
Thou mayst smile at all thy foes.

See, the streams of living waters,
Springing from eternal love,
Well supply thy sons and daughters
And all fear of want remove,
Who can faint while such a river
Ever flows their thirst assauge?
Grace, which like the Lord, the giver
Never fails from age to age.

Deut. 33: 27. *"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."* **Tears of joy fill my eyes as I wrote, when the scriptures came to me,** *"The eternal God is thy refuge."* **My love to all the dear saints of God, may the Lord continue to bless you dear Editors and Ministers of the gospel, to publish, and preach the truth as it is in Jesus.**

Yours in hope, Lula Fox

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

VALLEY VIEW PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Pictured here is Valley View Primitive Baptist Church located two miles from Riner, Virginia. Established at Meadow Creek in 1785, it was moved to its present site in June, 1904 on land furnished by William Altizer.

Some of the first Elders to serve at the present location were Elders Cummings, Moran, B. O. Thompson and Roy Agee.

The meeting time is on the third Sunday of each month. The present pastor is Elder Raymond Goad. We have been blessed to meet and hear the word of God throughout the years.

ARTICLES

THE CREATIONS OF MAN

Gen. I:26. And God said, Let us make man, in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

"These words are spoken by God the Father to the Son and Holy Ghost, who were each of them concerned in the creation of all things, particularly man; because we read of divine Creators and Makers in the plural number. Job xxxv. 10: But none saith where is God my maker who giveth songs in the night. Psa. cxl. 2: Let Israel rejoice in him that made him and let the children of Zion rejoice in their King—see Eccl. XII: 1. Philo the Jew acknowledges that these words declare a plurality and are expressive of others being co-workers with God in creation; and man being the principal part of the creation, for whom the world and all things in it were made, which being finished, he is introduced into it as into a house ready prepared and furnished for him; a consultation is held among the Divine Persons about the formation of him; not because of any difficulty attending it, but as expressive of his honor and dignity; it being proposed he should be made, not in the likeness of any of the creatures already made, but as near as could be, in the likeness and image of God. *And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."*

Gen. I: 27. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

"Which consisted both in the form of his body and erect stature of it; different from all other creatures and in agreement with the idea of that body, prepared in covenant for the Son of God, and which it was therein agreed he should assume in the fulness of time; and in the immortality of his soul, and in his intellectual powers, and in that purity, holiness, and righteousness in which he was created; as well as in his dominion, power and authority over the creatures, in which he was as God's vice-gerent and resembled him. *In the image of God created he him;* which is repeated for the certainty of it, that it might be taken notice of, as showing man's superior glory and dignity to the rest of the creatures. 1 Cor. IX, 7. *Male and female created he them;* God first made man, or the male, out of the dust of the earth, an breathed into him the breath of life, and then made a female or woman, out of one of his ribs, who was presented to him as his wife. One male and one female were created, to show that hereafter a man was to have, at a time, but one wife—see Mal. xx, 15; Math. xx: 4."

Gen. I: 28. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

"The man and the woman he had made, with all the blessings of nature and providence; with all the good things of life; with his presence and communion with him in a natural way, through the creatures and particularly with power of procreating their species, as follows: *and God said unto them, be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth;* if this is not an express command as the Jews understand it, for marriage and procreation of children, it seems to be more than a bare permission; at least

it is a direction and an advice to what is proper and convenient for the increase of mankind, and for the filling of the earth with inhabitants, which was the end of its being made, Isa. xiv. 18. This shows that marriage is an ordinance of God, instituted in paradise and is honorable; *and subdue it,* the earth; not that it was in the hands of others, who had no right to it, and to conquer it, and take it our of their hands; but it is to be understood of their taking possession and making use of it: *and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air, and over everything that movetrh upon the face of the earth;* which was giving them an universal and unlimited dominion over all the creatures, of which see an inumeration in Psal. viii. 6, 7, 8."

Gen. I: 29. And God said, Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.

"That is, to Adam and Eve, whom he had made in his image and likeness, and to whom he had given dominion of the earth and sea, and all things in them: *behold I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth;* every herb or plant, which had a seed in it, by which it sowed itself again or being taken off, might be sown by man, even every one that was wholesome, healthful and nourishing, without any exception whatever; in any part of the earth, be it where it would: *and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed;* all but the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, afterwards excepted: both these take in all kinds of vegetables, herbs, plants, roots, even corn, wheat, barley, peas, beans, &c., and various fruits of all sorts of trees, but that mentioned: *to you it shall be for meat;* which is generally thought to be the food of the Antediluvians, it not being proper, at least very soon, to kill any animal, until they were multiplied and increased, lest their species should be destroyed."

Gen. I: 30. And to every beast of the earth, and to every foul of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.

"Wild or tame beast, the cattle upon a thousand hills; all God's creatures are provided for."

Gen. II: 7. And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

Gen. II: 8. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; or *had planted;* for this was not done after he had made man, but before, and so the word translated *eastward* may be rendered, *before,* for the plain meaning is, God had planted a garden before he made man, even on the third day, when all herbs and plants and trees were produced out of the earth.

The whole world was a garden in comparison of what it now is; what then must this spot of ground, this garden; have been, which was separated and distinguished from the rest, and the more immediate plantation of God, therefore is called the garden of the Lord, Gen. xiii, 10; Ezek. xxiii, 13. This garden was planted in the country of Eden."

Gen. II: 9. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

"That is out of the ground of the garden of Eden this was done on the third day, when the whole earth brought forth grass, herbs and trees; but a peculiar spot of ground was fixed on for man, and

stocked with trees of all sorts for his use, not only to bear fruit, for his food, but others also which would yield him delight to look at, &c. These trees may be emblems of the saints, the trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord: and made to grow by him through the influence of his Spirit and grace, whom he plants in his garden, the churches, and transplants into the heavenly paradise, and are often compared to palm trees, cedars, olive trees, pomegranates, &c. *The tree of life, also, in the midst of the garden;* set there as the most excellent place, where it might be most conspicious, and to be come at, for before Adam sinned there was no prohibition to his eating of it, so there was no obstacle to it; and as he had a grant to eat of it, with the other trees, it was designed for his support, and maintainance of his natural life, which would have continued, had he persisted in his obediance and state of innocence, and probably by means of this chiefly; and it might be also a sign and token to him of his dependence on God; that he received his life from, and that he was preserved by his blessing and providence and not by his own power and skill, and that this would be continued, provided he transgressed not the divine law, and it seemed to have a future respect, even to eternal life by Christ, for though it might be a symbol of that life to Adam in his state of innocence, and it became so after his fall; hence Christ is sometimes signified by the tree of life. Prov. III, 18; Rev. II, 7, who is not only the author of natural and spiritual life, but the giver of eternal life, the promise of it is in him, and the blessing itself; he has made way for it by his obedience, sufferings and death, and is the way unto it; it is his, his gift, and he bestows it on his people, and it will lie greatly in the enjoyment of him. The situation of this tree in the midst of the garden well agrees with him who is in the midst of his church and people, Rev. I, 13, and II 7; stands open, is in sight, and accessible to all now, who may come to him, and partake of the fruits and blessings of his grace, which are many, constant and durable, Rev. xxii, 2, and who will be seen and enjoyed by all, to all eternity; *and the tree of knowledge of good and evil;* so called, either with respect to God, who by it tried man, when he had made him, whether he would be good or evil, but this he foreknew; rather therefore with respect to man, not that the eating of the fruit of it could really give him such knowledge, nor did it, for by the law of nature inscribed on his heart, he knew the difference between good and evil, and that what God commanded was good, and what he forbid was evil, but either it had its name from the virtue Satan ascribed to it, chap. III, 5, or from the sad event following on man's eating the fruit of it; whereby he became experimentally sensible of the difference between good and evil, between obedience and disobedience to the will of God; he found by sad experience what good he had lost, or might have enjoyed, and what evil he had brought upon himself and his posterity, and what evil he might have avoided."

Gen. II. 15. And Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it.

"This is observed before in ver. 8, and is here repeated to introduce what follows; and is to be understood, not of a corporeal assumption, by a divine power lifting him up from the place where he was, but that he ordered and directed him thither; perhaps no more is intended by this expression, than that God spoke to him or impressed it on his mind, and inclined him to go, or stay there: *to dress it and to keep it;* so that it seems man was not to live an idle life in a state of innocence; but this could not be attended with toil and labor, with fatigue and trouble, with sorrow and sweat, as after the fall, but rather for recreation and

pleasure; though what by nature was left to be improved by art and what there was for Adam to do, is not easy to say: at present there needed no plowing, nor sowing, nor planting, nor watering, since God had made every thing pleasant to the sight; and good for food, to grown in it.

Gen. II. 16. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat.

"Commanded the man over whom he had power and authority, and he had a right to command him what he pleased, being his Creator, Benefactor and Preserver, and this is to be understood not of man only, but of the woman also, whose creation, though related afterward, yet was before this grant to eat of all the trees of the garden but one, and the prohibition of the fruit of that, for that she was in being and present at this time, seems manifest from chap. III. 2, 3: *saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat;* a very generous, large and liberal allowance this; or *in eating thou mayest eat;* which was giving full power, and leaving them without any doubt and uncertainty about their food; which they might freely take and eat of, wherever they found it or were inclined to, even to any and every tree in the garden, excepting one, next forbidden."

Gen. II. 17. But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

"Of the name of this tree, and the reason of it, see the note on ver. 9: *thou shalt not eat of it,* not that this tree had any efficacy in it to increase knowledge, and improve in science and understanding as Satan suggested God know, and therefore, forbid the eating of it out of envy to man, which the divine Being is incapable of, or that there was anything hurtful in it to the bodies of men, if they had eaten of it, or that it was unlawful and evil of itself, if it had not been expressly prohibited, but was previous to this injunction, a quite indifferent thing whether man ate of it or no, and therefore was pitched upon as a trial of man's obedience to God, under whose government he was, and whom it was fit he should obey in all things, and since he had a grant of all the trees of the garden but this, it was the greater aggravation of his offence that he should not abstain from it: *for in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die; or in dying, die;* which denotes the certainty of it, as our version expresses it, and may have regard to more deaths than one; not only a porporeal one, which in some sense immediately took place; man became at once a mortal creature, who otherwise continuing in a state of innocence, and by eating of the tree of life, as he was allowed to do, would have lived an immortal life; by the eating of which tree, sinning, he was debarred, his natural life, not now to be continued long, at least not forever; he was immediately arraigned, tried and condemned to death, was found guilty of it, and became obnoxious to it, and death at once began to work in him, sin sowed the seeds of it in his body, and a train of miseries, affliction and diseases, began to appear; which at length issued in death. Moreover a moral death immediately ensued; he lost his original righteousness, in which he was created, the image of God in him was deformed; and the powers and faculties of his soul were corrupted, and he became dead in trespasses the consequence of which, had it not been for the interposition of a Surety and Saviour, who engaged to make satisfaction to law and justice, must have been eternal death, or an everlasting separation from God, to him and all his posterity; for the wages of sin is death eternal." See Rom. vi. 23.

Gen. II. 18. And the Lord God said, It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him an help-meet for him.

"Not at the same time he gave the

above direction and instruction to man, how to behave according to his will, but before that, even at the formation of Adam; which he said either to him or with himself; it was a purpose or determination of his own mind, and may be rendered, he *had said,* on the sixth day, on which man was created, *it is not good that man should be alone;* not pleasant and comfortable to himself, nor agreeable to his nature, being a social creature. *I will make him an help-meet for him,* one to help him in all the affairs of life, not only for the propagation of his species, but to provide things useful and comfortable for him, to dress his food and take care of the affairs of the family; one *like himself* in nature, in temper and disposition, pleasing in his sight, with whom he could converse and be entirely agreeable to him, and answerable to all his wants."

Gen. II. 19. And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam, to see what he would call them, and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name there of."

Gen. II. 20. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowls of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found a help meet.

Gen. II. 21. And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof.

Gen. II. 22. And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

"It is commonly observed, and pertinently enough, that woman was not made from the superior part of man, that she might be thought to be above him, as being below him, to be trampled on by him, but out of his side, and from one of his ribs, that she might appear equal to him; and from a part near his heart, and under his arm, to show that she should be affectionately loved by him, and be always under his care and protection; and she was not *created* as man, out of nothing, nor formed as Adam was, out of the dust of the earth, being in the same form of man; but made out of refined and quickened dust, or the flesh and bones of man, and so in her make and constitution, fine and lovely: *and brought her unto the man;* he brought her as the parent of her, at whose disposal she was, and presented her to Adam as his spouse, to be taken into conjugal relation with him, and to be loved and cherished by; which, as it affords a rule and example to be followed by parents and children, one to dispose of their children in marriage, and the other to have the consent of the parent in it, as well as it is a recommendation of marriage, as agreeable to the divine will, and to be esteemed honorable, being of God; so it was a type of the marriage of Christ, the second Adam, between him and his church, which sprung from him, from his side, and was given by his Father—See Eph. v. 29, 32."

From *"Footsteps of The Flock"*

IN THE CLEFTS OF THE ROCK

This is where the Lord's people are when the dear Saviour makes his love known to them. "O my dove that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." This also is their safe hiding place while they remain in this mortal state. But how may we know that we are in the clefts of the rock? What kind of an experience is this? If the gracious and loving words of Jesus to his dove are sweet to our souls, then it is sure that we are of those to whom they are spoken; but it may be far from sure to us at the

time, because of our feeling of great unworthiness, and because we cannot see that we are in that secret, safe and sacred place, where the dove is said to be. The clefts of the rock, being the sure dwelling place of the dove, the bride of Christ, must be, as we think, a place most sweet and pleasant, free from trouble, and especially free from trouble on account of sin; and when we feel ourselves full of unrest, hedged in, afflicted, cut off from our desires, unable to do what we would, finding evil present with us when we would do good, how can we think that we are in the clefts of the rock, and that the dear Savior can find any sweetness in our complaining, supplicating voice, or see any comeliness in our sorrowful countenance?

I have had some precious comfort in some experiences and thoughts upon this subject of late, and have for some time felt a strong pressure upon my mind to express, as I may be enabled, some of these things for the comfort of those who have been tried as I have been.

Moses said unto the Lord, "If I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight." And again, "I beseech thee, show me thy glory."—Exodus xxxiii. 13, 18. Such desires to see the Lord's way, and to behold his glory, are not from presumptuous curiosity, as we sometimes fear, but are the solemn actings of faith in the soul, preparing us for such revelations of himself as he designs to favor us with. He will hear all such questions, all such longings and pantings of the poor soul after him, and will answer them, but it will be "by terrible things in righteousness."—Psalms lxv. 5.

"And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me and live. And the Lord said, There is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: and I will take away my hand, and thou shall see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen."—Exodus xxxiii. 19-23.

When all this took place (Exodus xxxiv. 1-7), Moses was alone with the Lord in that desolate mountain. "And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." What goodness and blessedness are here in this name, as thus far proclaimed! What a garden of delights, filled with most lovely flowers and richest fruits. What more could be desired by a poor sinner who hates sin, and hungers and thirsts after righteousness? Well might we say, if permitted to enter into this wonderful name, and enjoy its rich blessings, "O how great is thy goodness which thou hast wrought for them that fear thee; which thou hast laid up for them that trust in thee before the sons of men."—Psalm xxxi. 19.

But there is another syllable in this mysterious and glorious name, which a sinful man cannot hear and live, unless hidden in the cleft of the Rock, and covered by the hand of the Lord. "And that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." This part of the Lord's name is full of terror, and is fraught with death to every guilty soul. It as surely bars every

sinner from the safety and beauty of that holy name, as the flaming sword prevented the return of Adam and Eve to the garden of Eden, and kept from them the way of the tree of life.

Whether Moses was literally put into a cleft of a rock or not, we have in this cleft a figure of the absolute safety that was given to him while the awful name of the Lord was proclaimed. The Lord's hand that covered him while his glory passed by, is not a literal hand, to be discerned by our natural senses, but expresses to us his sure and absolute protection from a danger which is not to the body merely, but to the soul.

As this great experience came upon him, "Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped." —Exodus xxxiv. 8. In the proclamation of this terrible name Moses' prayer was answered. This name is the revelation of the Lord's way, of his goodness and his glory.

This rock represents Jusus. "There is a place by me," the Lord said, "and thou shalt stand upon a rock." Here is the only foundation upon which a sinful man can stand before the Lord. That sacred Rock was smitten in order that the Lord's chosen people might be safely hidden while his name is proclaimed before them, and while his glory passes by. When Christ was crucified the guilt of his people was atoned for and removed, justice and judgment were executed for them, and the Lord's name was honored and glorified. That part of his name which declares that he will in no wise clear the guilty, still remains, but it does not exclude his people any longer, for they are free from guilt, being crucified with Christ. and thus hidden in the cleft of the Rock.

When "the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with his anger" against sin, and "his lips are full of indignation" against the workers of iniquity, "and his tongue as a devouring fire" (Isaiah xxx. 27-30), none of all the sinful race of man can stand before him. No man can see his face and live. "Who may abide the day of his coming?" None but those whom the Lord has put in a cleft of the Rock, and covered with his hand. These were safe in Jesus while the wrath of that holy and terrible name was visited upon him. He was able to endure the stroke of the sword of justice, to die and rise again, and thus to "finish transgression, make an end of sin," and by satisfying the law to take the sting from death, and destroy that terrible enemy.

And as the Lord's people were saved when the glory of his name was proclaimed in the crucifixion of his dear Son, by being in him in that death in a wonderful and mystical sense, so that they are dead with him to the law and to sin (Romans vi. 7-11), so ever after, while in this mortal state, his sufferings and death are their only safe hiding place. In their flesh they cannot stand before the Lord, nor endure the glory of his name, for in their flesh "there dwells no good thing." Those who have been quickened by divine life, realize that they cannot of themselves do one spiritual thing, any more than a dead man can do a natural thing; as the apostle says, "If Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."—Romans viii. 10. And, as he further says, it is only as the body is quickened, or moved, by the Spirit of him who raised up Christ from the dead, that any man can do anything that is acceptable to God.

The experience of being in a cleft of the Rock must therefore be always crossing to the flesh. It must be an experience full of sore trials and afflictions. We ask the Lord, as Moses did, to show us his way; we beseech him to show us his glory. We want to see and understand more of his goodness. It seems to us that if he should be pleased to grant our desire, we should be at the height of

bliss. How little we know of his wonderful ways. He does answer us, but it is "in such a way as almost drives us to despair." "By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation." We "are shut up and cannot come forth." We find ourselves more and more unable to do the good that we would, and we are left to doubt at times even whether we have a desire to do good. We are hedged in by our sinfulness and utter weakness, and by the judgments of God which seem to go out against us. We cannot do what we would in providence. Poverty holds us in its dire embrace. We cannot succeed in our work. We hate and dread to be in debt, but debt comes upon us, or danger of starvation for those dependent upon us. Or we do prosper in worldly affairs, and find wealth, but with it there comes leanness into our souls. There is a famine even in the midst of plenty. What we have will not feed our souls. We cannot enjoy the temporal prosperity that comes to us. If we would help others we fear our motives are base and selfish, and that we are only hypocrites. There seems to be a searching power within and about us, and we fear we are found wanting. A tempest is going by, and we tremble; yet cannot see what destruction it is working. We are like those whom the Lord had shut in the ark. They could feel the terrible power of the winds and waves, but could not see what it was. They felt the beatings and tossings and shakings of the ark, and afterward the quiet and peace, but could not know the meaning of it all until the cover was taken off the ark. Then it was all made plain, and the beauty and glory of the rainbow showed to those who had passed through the storm, and who now stood on Ararat, holy ground, a blessed purpose of God in the flood.

In the cleft of the rock, covered and held down by the Lord's hand, how terrible must have been the experience of "Moses, the man of God." Not another soul in all that desolate mountain. The Lord was there, but not visible to his mortal sight. How long he was in that cleft is not material to know. The power of fear and pain is not measured by time. In a moment the soul maybe overwhelmed with terror. In what way the power of that name came by, we do not know, whether there was a literal quaking of the mountain, with fire and smoke and thunder, as when the law was given, or whether the awful power of the Lord's name was felt only within his soul, we do not know. What we do know is that a cleft of a rock must be a most uncomfortable place to be in. We also know there must have been a terribly destructive power in the passing of the Lord before Moses, if he must not only be put into that cleft, but must also be covered by the Lord's hand in order to be saved from destruction.

But O, what a blessed time that is when the Lord's hand is taken away, and we are enabled to see his wonderful works which he has done, and to behold the glory of his name which has already been proclaimed. We could not see his way before he had passed by in it. We could not know what he would do before he had done it. We cannot see his face as he comes toward us in his work of salvation. To see him coming in those "terrible works in righteousness," by which he saves his people, would kill us with terror. But after he has passed by in the fulfillment of all that terrible work, by which his glorious name is honored, the law magnified, and his people saved, then it is joy unspeakable to see his back parts, to see the glory that follows him. We cannot see him working, but we see the work when it is done. Even then, while in that experience of fear, of inability to see, like those in the ark, what caused the great commotion; in that experience of sinfulness and condemnation, and utter inability to do any good

thing, even then the secret of the Lord was with us, though we did not know it. We were far from the thought that this was God's work in bringing us to himself. We could not then have believed that this affliction, this inability to move in any way of righteousness, was because we were in a cleft of the Rock, because we were being crucified with Christ in our experience. We could not have believed that this tribulation in our souls was because the Lord had put his fear in our hearts, which "is to hate evil." But all this fearful exercise in our souls was the secret of the Lord, and when he removed his hand from over us, and showed us his covenant, then we understood that this was his wonderful work of salvation which he had begun in us, working in us "to will and to do of his good pleasure." "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew unto them his covenant."—Psalm xxv. 14.

Job was in that cleft of the Rock when he said, 'O that I knew where I might find him." "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right that I cannot see him." The psalmist was there when he said, "I am shut up, and I cannot come forth;" and Jacob when he said, "All these things are against me." Jeremiah was there when he said, "He hath hedged me about that I cannot get out: he hath made my chain heavy. Also when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer."—Lam. iii. 7, 8. And Paul was there when he was blinded by the light from heaven, and could see no man; and also when, long afterward, he said, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Those who are in the clefts of a rock all of the time can do no work upon the earth. They cannot run to and fro in the sight of men; they cannot join in work or worship with those who are not with them in the clefts. They are helpless for themselves, and they cannot extend help to any who are abroad upon the earth. They will often feel their confined, shut-in, cramped position so keenly, that it seems to them that they cannot endure it. They want to get out into the midst of the world and do something, do some good to themselves or others, do something to show that they are not altogether nothing. But if they seem to be able to get such desires gratified for a little, they are so utterly ashamed of their works that they want to shrink away out of sight. They find of themselves what the psalmist said of everyman in his best state, they "are altogether vanity." Then, in the Lord's own time, they learn the blessed meaning of this sad experience. They have not really been allowed to go out of that safe dwelling place at all, though they seemed for a time as one in a dream, to be working with the proud and wise of this world. They have been all the time, and yet are, held firmly by the hand of the Lord, notwithstanding all the rebellious lustings of the flesh against the Spirit. Now and then the gracious hand which covers them, and holds them in that narrow, confined place, is taken away for a little time, and they see the Lord's way, and behold his glory, and gaze with rapture upon the rainbow beauty and brightness of the everlasting covenant. And how they thank the Lord, and praise his glorious name, for his preserving power and mercy. How glad they are that he has overturned their plans, and broken down their strength, and disappointed them in their earthly hopes, and shown them that their works are vain, and that their days are vanity and are as a hands breadth. Now they are rejoiced to see that the works of Jesus are perfect, and that they are all-sufficient, and cover all the ground of their needs for evermore. O, how beautiful and glorious the Lord's

works are! How thankful they are for the sure protection they have had in that secret place of the Lord, from the windy storm and tempest which has been abroad in the earth, while they were so eagerly struggling to get away from the controlling and restraining power of God. Now they rejoice in their afflictions, for they see that salvation was in those afflictions. Now they rejoice in the tribulations that made them murmur and complain at the time, for through them they have been brought to "stand before the great white throne," from whence the river of the water of life proceeds, and have entered more and more into the experimental knowledge of the kingdom of God. And now they are called by the sweet voice of Jesus. O, these blessed seasons, when faith prevails, when the hand that held and covered them is removed, and they see the back parts of the Lord, and realize the blessed effect of his passing by in this terrible works of righteousness, by which he has answered us. "The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever."—Isaiah xxxii. 17. And the soothing, comforting, joyful effect of that precious voice of Jesus, not heard by the natural ear, but felt in the heart; how sweet it is: "O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock!" His voice speaks not in vain. "My sheep hear my voice," he says. When he speaks, then we know that we are his, and that we are dwelling in him, and he in us, and this by no work or wisdom of ours, but by his own power and grace. Those are the times when that voice of the Lord, which is powerful and full of majesty, is in our souls, that we can say, while our hearts throb and overflow with love. "My beloved is mine and I am his." The power of that voice removes our fears, and causes us to see that our afflictions have been light, and but for a moment, compared with the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," which they have worked for us. We see now that these sufferings, which we sometimes felt sure were evidences of the Lord's wrath, were really the fellowship of Jesus' sufferings, and that to feel them was to be in the clefts of the Rock.

It has been truly wonderful to me, when I have felt adversities of every kind pressing so heavily upon me, and have been sure that they were evidences that God had turned against me, and that I must certainly lose the fellowship of the saints, if ever I had really had it, and must be cast out; when I have seen not only spiritual comforts gone, but all worldly prospects failing, and have felt not only physical strength failing, but have feared that the little mental ability I had was going, and that I was of no account, either in the world or in the church; when blankness was upon my life, and darkness was settling heavily down upon my spirit; at such a time how wonderful it has been to find some words of the dear Lord in my soul with power, and light, like the morning rising upon me, and to be shown in a moment that all this was but an experience of being in the clefts of the Rock, and a sure evidence that I was one of the Lord's hidden ones, crucified with Christ; that this was "knowing him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and being made conformable unto his death."—Phil. iii. 10. To be assured that this is the way the Lord separates his people from the world and self; that this was "bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh;" dying with him, that I might live with him, even here; suffering with him, that I may reign with him, even while yet in the flesh, through the power of faith.

Then a constraining power is felt, making us turn our faces toward Jesus in love and praise, and causing our voices to "break out in unknown strains,

and sing surprising grace." It is the voice of the Lord, which breaks the cedars of Lebanon, which divides the flames of fire, which maketh the hinds of calve, and discovereth the forests, and causes every one in his temple to speak of his glory. (Psalm xxix.) It is the voice of Jesus, speaking with the holy, compelling power of his own unspeakable love, which removes the curtains of night, and lets in the morning upon our souls; which turns our thoughts and faces toward him in praise and holy expectancy, and causes us to make melody in our hearts unto him; for he says, "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely."

Elder Silas H. Durand

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

Elder F. A. Chick
Dear Brother In The Lord:

By your request, and that of others, I will try to pen my experience in passing from nature's darkness to the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. I tremble at the attempt, fearing that it will crowd out much richer and better pasture than has grown in me, but if God has planted his word in my heart, and I am made to feed upon it, and be nourished by it, why should I be ashamed of his workmanship? I hope that I never shall, although at times it seems but a dream and almost gone, yet I cannot forget that wonderful change which I was made to feel most thankful for. It was plainly shown to me that I had no part in this work, and it could not be taught by human knowledge, but it is given from above, and is of the free mercy of God. Words spoken by the apostle long ago suited my case, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." It is the gift of God, free and complete, and I saw that I could do nothing but gladly accept his mercy, and walk in humble submission to his will.

It might be well for me to go back to the time of my birth of Adam's race. I was born at Yardville, N. J., April 5th, 1873, and spent my childhood days with my twin brother and three sisters there on my father's farm. I seldom went any on my father's farm. I seldom went anywhere to church, as my father was not a member of any church, and my mother was a member at Hopewell, twenty-one miles distant. She could go but a few times in a year, and the most of the time we children were left at home, to keep house when we were old enough. Sunday afternoons Sunday School was held at our district schoolhouse. and against our mother's wishes we children would sometimes go. I was not interested in the Sunday school lesson, but went to see my schoolmates. I well remember one of the teachers telling me about little children in heathen lands without the gospel, and that they without it would be lost, and she said that I with others should bring some money the next time with which they would send a preacher to save them. I did not know what being saved meant, and so did not take the money the next time.

Mother would quite often talk to me about Jesus, who died to save his people from their sins, and of how sinful we all were, and I would get much interested in her talk, and thought it would be dreadful to be destroyed, and in burnings forever, yet I would soon forget all about it.

At the age of ten years I had a strange dream: I thought the world was coming to an end; I was going to school it seemed, and I could plainly see the devil, as I thought it was, gathering up the wicked

and throwing them into a large furnace on wheels, red with the heat, and I was greatly alarmed, and feared that he would take me, and longed for my mother's presence. Instantly she was by my side, and I told her what I was afraid of, and asked her that I might hide under her shawl, and then it seemed that we both crep under the fence out of sight as the devil passed by. This childhood's dream left such an impression on my mind that I never forgot it entirely, and to-day I can go to the very spot where it seemed that we hid. But soon again my mind was upon fun, and a good time, as I then called it. I can well see myself as I look back, rolling sin as a sweet morsel under my tongue, loving the world and its vanities, laughing at other people's calamities, until the Lord spoke and said, "Thus far shalt thou go and no further." And truly I was ripe for a fall, for sin was my all. I had now reached the age of fifteen years, and was slender and very tall. I remember well thinking what a man I was becoming, far ahead of my twin brother and others of my age. Now my fall came; trouble knocked at my door and walked in upon me. That summer my father had a large hay crop, and some of it we sold right from the field. One day I drove a load of hay to market, and while I was waiting for my father to come and unload it, there came a very heavy shower, and fearing the hay would spoil I went at it in great earnest, unloading it alone. That was the last of my work for the summer, I had suffered a strain, and for two long years I was able to do but little work. I now realized that pleasure and health were taken from me, and this worried me greatly, and so at last I thought it would be best for me to starve myself to death. My oldest sister coaxed me hard to eat, but I told her that I would not, for I wished to die, and she left me out of patience, When my mother heard all this she told me that I must not think of such a thing, and that in time I would outgrow this weakness and be all right again. I obeyed my mother, but was discouraged in getting well, as the doctors said it would take a long time. Thinking over my condition, and of what would become of me if I did die, I spent many, many nights crying, desiring no sleep.

At that time I cannot tell just how my past life would come up before me; thoughts like this would come, what an evil, wrong, wicked, sinful, vile life I have led, and soon I would forget my bodily affliction, and began to grieve over my sins, which had now become my chief trouble; I knew not what to do nor where to go; I spent my time in sore distress, crying and weeping week after week, and month after month, until I was compelled to seek the Lord for forgiveness and pardon. My poor heart prayed earnestly and constantly that my sins might be blotted out in his sight, but instead of any relief I grew worse and worse. While in this miserable state, one day I picked up one of mother's papers, the Signs of The Times, and I became interested in the reading, as it told of things which I had passed through. I was amazed, and did not know how to believe it, for I thought my case was an outside one, and that none could be half so vile as I. From that time until this I have been greatly comforted by the rich things contained in that paper.

About this time sister Lawshe and other Old School Baptists arranged to have meetings at their homes in Trenton, and would send us word, and sometimes mother would ask me to take her, and the preaching did me much good. The Elders spoke of the Lord's people being poor and afflicted, vile and sinful, so that they hated their own nature. This was the very way that I felt, yet I did not want it known by any one. I felt a great desire to know the truth, and resolved to read the Bible, but the more I read, the more it seemed to condemn my wicked ways, and my feelings became such that I can

never describe them, for I saw again that I was lost, and that I could not help myself, and what to do I did not know, yet I was begging God for mercy all the time, but as yet no relief came; sorrow, grief and afflictions seemed my only friends, for they were with me day and night. Truly I longed for a ray of light.

One morning while caring for the horses, the words came to my mind clearly and forcibly, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in his excellent word," and there came a smile on my face, for they seemed to take me in. O, how sweet to my soul these words were; I never can forget them. For days I seemed to live upon their richness. But joy brings sorrow, and sorrow brings joy, and soon I sank more deeply than ever in gloom and distress, and doubted all that I had passed through. About this time we received a card saying that Elder Vail would preach in Trenton, and father, mother and I went. I do not remember the text, but every word went to my heart and condemned my whole life, and my wicked ways. So weeping was all that I could reap from it, and this was what I needed, though then I could not see it so. When we reached our gate on our way home I told my parents that I would open the gate and walk down the lane. As soon as they had passed through I lay down on the ground and cried bitterly, because I felt so badly and so condemned. When I arose my eyes were fixed upon the sky, and it seemed that walking among the stars down towards me I saw the form of a man with large white wings, and in his hand he carreid a sword. Speaking to me by name he said, "Willie, you are my child," and disappeared. It was most wonderful to me, but I said nothing about it.

The friends in Trenton were so kind as to let us know about the appointments there, and we got to them quite often. My excuse was to take mother. Several times that we went there was no preaching, but this did not discourage either of us. I dearly loved the doctrine which they proclaimed, but thought such mercies could not be for me. These thoughts would bring fresh tears down my cheeks, and then I would seek the Lord in prayer, but while praying such thoughts as this would come into my mind. You know that you do not deserve what you are asking for; be still, and bear what belongs to you; do not place your wrong upon the innocent. This I could not deny, and I would get up and leave the place. O, how I feared the Lord because of my sins. I felt that I was lost, and lost forever, yet I begged the Lord that he would save me from hell and destruction, which path I had all my life been walking in. But the way of God is in himself, and what he does is ever best.

Now the meetings and the Signs had become a great comfort to me, they never failed to bring a sense of peace to my troubled mind when bowed down in distress. As I look back over those then dark, sad days, I now count them the best and happiest days of my life, and can see that they were good for me, turning my thoughts toward Christ Jesus, setting my feet upon the Rock, establishing my goings, and putting a new song in my mouth, even praise to our God. At the age of twenty-one years, and through the kind of providence of an all-wise God, we move to my mother's old home at Ewing. How glad I was that we were near Hopewell, yet I thought, what can I do with my sin? For they have grown like mountains before my eyes. I seemed to sink deeper and deeper into the miry clay. Many, many times I wished that I was dead, and several times I dreamed of my own funeral, but would awaken disappointed.

I tried to get relief from my burden and sin, and I went into young company, but soon found it a task to enjoy myself; the things they cared for I did not, and so

instead of relief, it but added sorrow to my heart.

One Sunday night Elder Wm. L. Beebe preached at sister Lawshe's, in Trenton. It being a stormy night, I went down alone, and after the meeting, sister Lawshe spoke to the Elder about me as one interested in the word, and asked him to talk with me about it. He spoke many lovely and comforting words to my mind, but I felt afraid to open my mouth. At last I expressed my feeling as being in the hymn 1022; "I am so vile, so full of sin, I fear that I'm not born again." he took the book and read the hymn, and turning to me said, "If these words express your feeling you should make it known to the church, for in that hymn there is a rich experience of a child of God." This was in the winter of 1895, and this winter had brought more sorrow to my poor soul than any time before. Truly I had come to hate myself, and felt that I was not fit to sit at the table and eat with the rest of the family. I asked constantly that the Lord would take away my sins, and guide my wayward feet in the paths of righteousness. I do not think that I could get into a much worse hell than my ownself seemed to me to be. I slept but few nights that winter without my pillow being wet with tears. One night I slept but little, and had a wonderful dream, in which I saw the end of time, with the heavens on fire, and above the sky I saw a great white throne made of white marble. It was long and narrow. In the center Jesus stood, and his twelve disciples around him, and at one end was a door, which was also of white marble, and I could plainly see his people going in. I was so happy walking on the clouds in heaven, and I soon came to the door, then the thought came, You are not fit, you are that wicked one. I cannot describe the feeling. I started back as it seemed, to everlasting punishment. Going down I seemed to meet my father and mother, and they told me that was the only way to enter in, at the door, and I broke out weeping. At this moment these words were spoken to me in a loud voice, which awoke me from my sleep, "Thou shalt be made willing in the day of my power." I wondered and felt to praise God for such a token, for it made me so happy, and relieved my sorrow.

At different times that spring these words out of the Bible, that I never remembered reading, or of having heard read, would come upon my mind, as though I had known them by heart: "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "The world by wisdom knows not God." It was in the school of Christ that I was taught these things. I now began to feel and know that the Lord was shining round about me, and had become merciful to my unrighteousness. O, how happy I felt because of his love. One morning at the table my sister Lizzie about her work was singing a gospel hymn: the words touched my heart, and I left the table crying. My father followed me into the shop and inquired what was the matter. I asked for my mother, and begged him to forgive me all my wrongs. As soon as I could I told my mother all the trouble of heart that had been mine so long. My mother broke down cring with me, but said she was glad the Lord had led me thus, because it was a true christian experience, as she believed. She said if I felt like telling it to the church, it would be right for me to do so. I felt to ask all the family to forgive me all the wrong that I had ever done them. My love for the people of God grew stronger and stronger, until I asked my parents if they would not ask you down to see me the next time you came to Hopewell, for as you know they were without a pastor at

that time. I thought I would like to talk with you when you came. You spent the night at our home, and quite a number came in, and in a weak way I told them what I have here written. You deemed it a good experience through grace, and that it was not mixed with creature goodness or self-righteousness. Some of the hymns that were sweet to me were sung, and they seemed very sweet that evening. I will mention the numbers of a few in Beebe's collection: 751,461, 1022, 671, 881. The next morning I took you to the train feeling much better. When I bade you good bye I hoped that I would be able to come to the church before long, and I told you to arrange a time, for I longed to be with them, and the second Saturday in June, I came and related what I trusted had been the dealings of God with me, and that I had been made to trust in him alone for salvation, that Jesus was the only way given under heaven and among men, whereby we must be saved. I was received as you know. But while I was so glad to be numbered among them, I do not think that I ever felt so broken up, and unworthy, and out of place, as I did standing there asking favor from so good a people. This Saturday was a clear, beautiful, balmy day in nature, but the next was cold, and it rained in torrents, nevertheless three others as well as myself were baptized. I shall never forget the hymn that was sung before we went down into the water, 1129, "Jesus, and shall it ever be, a mortal man ashamed of thee?" Also the words that you spoke to me when you gave me the hand of fellowship; they sank deep into my heart. It all seemed too good for me, but I was happy, and I could not help it.

Happiness is like the wind, it comes and goes without our control. Before dawn the next day the devil seemed to take possession of me. and doubts and fears and blind unbelief filled my mind. When I got home it was a very dark, sad night spiritually to me, and I prayed earnestly that I might know if I had done wrong in uniting with the church, for I thought that perhaps I had deceived the people of the true and living God. Some time the next day the Scripture came sweetly to my soul, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Instantly my fear was gone.

Dear brother, I have been trying ever since to walk in the way in a becoming manner, but I am so blind to spiritual things that I go stumbling, falling, fearing, and am so faint and weak that at times I am almost persuaded that I am not a saint at all. Then the word comes as an anchor to the soul sure and steadfast, holding me up to praise his great name, through faith, hope and love, which are the foundation of any experience of grace.

Now in closing, I wish to say that I feel that the dear Lord has been very merciful to me all the days of my life; I have nothing with which to repay him, but desire to be thankful and submissive to his will. Since I have been in the fold I have seen many brought into the banqueting-house of God, to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. Two of them are very near to me by natural ties: one my twin brother, and the other the wife of my bosom, for which I feel very thankful indeed.

I give this to your hands imperfect; after readint it and correcting it, if anything is left that you think would comfort one of the dear children of God, you are at liberty to put it in print, not to the honor of my name, but alone to the glory of God.

Wm. T. Yard

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."
Mat. 7:12

CONTRIBUTIONS

MARCH 1985

T. R. Pullig, TX.....	$ 2.00
Mrs. W. W. Haynes, AR.....	2.00
Mrs. Dorothy N. Barnes, TX....	2.00
Ms. Annie Pearson, MI., In memory of Mother Mrs. Mary M. Pearson	50.00
Mrs. Ruth T. Smith, LA.....	5.00
Harold Sisemore, TN.....	2.00
Mrs. Myrtle Black, NE.....	10.00
James W. Brown, TN.....	2.00
Mrs. D. A. Law, VA.....	5.00
Mrs. J. D. Neely, AR.....	2.00
Sanford R. Fanning, TN.....	2.00
Mrs. Bernice Dailey, VA.....	2.00
O. P. Murphy, TX.....	100.00

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

Next session of the Staunton River Union is to be held, the Lord willing. with Mount Ararat or Old Mountain Church on the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in June, located on Route 750.

A cordial invitation is extended to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
Sarah Barker, Clerk

OLD PINE CREEK

An annual all day meeting will be held, the Lord willing, at Old Pine Creek Church on the fourth of July, 1985. The church is located off highway No. 221, five miles north of Floyd, Virginia. Those coming from Floyd, turn left on to raod No. 682. Those coming from Roanoke, turn right on to road No. 682.

All lovers of the Truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Hale Terry

HOPEWELL

The eleventh annual Fifth Sunday meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with Hopewell Church, Winnsboro, Texas, beginning on Friday, June 28, 29th and 30th. Hopewell Church is located about six miles west of Winnsboro. Go west on Coke Road about four and one-half miles and follow signs.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

There will be no business, just preaching and singing.

Elder Joe Hamrick, Pastor

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The Fifth Sunday meeting of the West Country Line Union will be held with the Greensboro Church the Fifth Sunday in June. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us. A special invitation to all ministers of our faith and order. The church is located on the corner of Tate and Carr Streets in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Brother Wayne Edwards, Clerk

VALLEY VIEW

In celebration of their 200th anniversary there will be a 5th Sunday Meeting at Valley View Church in Riner, Virginia June 30, 1985. Valley View is located from Christiansburg toward Riner off Route 8 through Riner turning left on to Route 616, then turn right on to Route 678 to the church. If you come through Floyd, come on Route 8 toward Riner and turn right on th Route 678 to the church.

We would like to invite our friends in like faith and order to come be with us in this meeting.

Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
Brother Donald L. Agee, Deacon

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 65 Keeling, Virginia 24566

POETRY

SALVATION

I am a sinner saved by grace,
If ever saved at all,
And if I am, I'm sure of this:
From grace I'll never fall.

'Tis sure that Jesus Christ has done
All he need ever do,
To save poor, fallen man from sin;
He's saved the chosen few.

Of those whom he has saved from sin,
Not one will e'er be lost;
That they might live the Lamb was slain
Upon Mount Calvary's cross.

What need that man should try to do
This work which Christ has done?
The Spirit must our souls renew,
Since we are dead in sin.

Sure man's a creature helpless, lost,
Of earthly soil his nature;
By sin and Satan driven, tossed,
He cannot change one feature.

Then fear thou not, O little flock,
Though thorny be the road,
Ye live, for your dear Savior lives,
Redeemed from sin to God.

G. B. Bird

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Vernon B. Carawan

EDITORIAL

Therefore, if any man be in Christ he is a new creature: Old things are past away, behold all things are become new. And all things are of God who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: We pray you in Christ stead, be ye reconciled to God.

I have read the above scriptures many times, as I am sure you have and never really realized the extent of the doctrine that was set forth by the Apostle Paul in these few verses of scripture. Actually all of the emphasis in prior readings had been placed on the 17th verse. "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: Old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." Certainly this is the doctrine of God and is experienced and rejoiced in by all who have been brought from natures darkness and blessed with the marvelous light and liberty of the Saints of God. The newness of this spiritual life that they embark upon and the beauty and glory of it is more than they ever dreamed that man could experience in this life. The old things that pass away are the pride of this natural life, the vanity of the flesh and for the first time they see them in the proper perspective and realize that they are worldly and temporal at best and that they have no lasting value. While this is all true and of very great significance to each one, the Apostle Paul goes on to greater depths of the doctrine as experienced by the saints of God. As they run the race that is set before them. These things work for the good of the whole body and will be worked out over the all-settled time each is assigned to in this vail of tears.

And all things are of God who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. In the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. God hath forever reconciled his children unto himself and any or all of the combined force of the universe cannot alter or change that fact in any degree. He chose his people from before the foundation of the world, determined the price of their redemption from Captivity and sent his son into the world to reconcile them unto himself and this forever settles their salvation and place of eternal abode. The Apostle Paul then goes on to say that God hath given unto his children the ministry of reconciliation.

This new Creature, even though born of the spirit of God and blessed to behold the beauty and glory of this heavenly kingdom as through a glass darkly

will never be completely reconciled to this fact as long as they dwell in this tabernacle of flesh. This ministry of reconciliation is a process that will occupy the remaining days of their life as they grow in grace day by day, year by hear experiencing a little here and a little there, line upon line and precept upon precept. In Paul's letter to the Ephesians he said, *"But unto everyone of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ."* This ministry of reconciliation is given to each as is pleasing of God to enable them to occupy their place in the body of Christ. All are members of the body but all have not the same function. Just as the natural body had eyes to see, ears to hear and feet to walk so that the body can function as it was designed to do, even so, each member of the body of Christ fulfills the place assigned to them. *"But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him."* As each is called out of nature, manifesting their true heritage they embark upon their ministry of reconciliation, unaware of it, but it will be a perfect work. It may be a long and difficult adjustment to become reconciled to the fact that they are a chosen vessel of God, an heir of promise and a child of the heavenly King. This is not to infer that it is difficult for God, but rather some individuals endure more refining for the rare beauty of the jewel to be evident. Others may seem to be reconciled with less difficulty but nevertheless, it is a lifetime experience.

This reconciliation is brought about as a result of their experiences in life as they are made to acknowledge the sovereignty of God in all things, again and again, as they journey through life. Then as they relate these experiences unto their brethren and hear of their trials and lessons, their faith is strengthened and they continue to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ. They become more reconciled to this new creature that has taken up aboce in this body with the old man.

Paul goes on to say, *"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ as though God did beseech you by us. We pray you in Christ stead, be ye reconciled to God."* This is not to infer that man is helping God to complete the work that he has started, remember, the ministry of reconciliation was given of God for the good of the whole body. God has given to all an inter dependency of each upon the other for comfort and strength in the face of adversity in this low ground of sorrow. They comfort one another with the same comfort that they themselves are comforted of God.

Elihu said, *"Behold I am according to thy wish in God's stead; I also am formed of Clay."* God used Elihu to speak to Job and his three friends as one their own equal, but by the inspiration of the Almighty. He had said before, *"For I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me. Behold my belly is as wine which hath no vent. It is ready to burst like new bottles. I will speak that I may be refreshed: I will open my lips and answer."* Elihu was given to exercise the ministry of reconciliation but, keep in mind, that it is always the gift of God. It is for the comfort and edification of one and for the relief and refreshing of the other. Both working together for the good of the whole.

Peter, said in closing his last epistle, *"But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever."* Surely this growing in grace and knowledge is the work of the ministry of reconciliation. As his children live their allotted time in this world in love and fellowship with their brethren they become more reconciled and at peace in their dual role. When you think of all of the brothers and sisters you have known in your life, the testimony that they left with you, their life and walk, their concern for the wel-

fare of zion and love for all of like precious faith, isn't this the mission of an Ambassador? Does it seem presumptous to say of them that they were Ambassadors for Christ? I think not, rather it seems befitting of their lives and testimony. Surely this is the ministry of reconciliation, spoken of by Paul in its purest state. It is God's gift to the Church in all ages of time and it surpasses all the joy that the world can give and all the treasure that this earth contains.

"O, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out?" Surely these things of which we write are some of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God. They are certainly beyond the reach of mortal man with all of his earthly wisdom, technilogical advances and riches of earthly treasure and yet they are the heritage of the meek and lowly. They are the inheritance provided for in a will that was made before time began and will come to full fruition when time is no more. All of the integrity of the godhead is behind it and it cannot fail, for the gifts and the calling of God are without repentence.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Editors Of The Signs Of The Times—
Dear Brethren:

I send you the following for publication in the Signs, on the subject contained in Acts xix. 1-7.

Some years ago it was made clear to me that there was no re-water baptism of the twelve men mentioned here, that were baptized by John, because John's baptism was a valid baptism, is and ever will be a valid baptism, for it was done by John, who was "a man (not men) sent from God to make ready a people prepared by the Lord." No one did or could do John's baptism but John, for he was "the voice of one (not more than one) crying in the wilderness."

John was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb. His father, the old priest Zacharias, and his mother Elizabeth, were righteous before God; both well stricken in years, and had no child. "According to the custom of the priest's office his lot was to burn incense." But "the angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the alter of incense," said, "Elizabeth shall bear thee a son," "and thou shalt call his name John," "For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord," "and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb," "and he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Zacharias natural enough wanted natural evidence, and he got it, and it stayed with him until the promise was fulfilled, and he wrote "his name is John," and immediately he (Zacharias) praised God. "John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." "Then went out to him all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." This is the only kind John baptized. "Prepared of the Lord," which was the fruits meet for repentance, confessing their sins, and being made ready by John baptizing them. "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear, he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire," (not some of you.) "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have

need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him." "The baptism of John whence was it from heaven or of men?" I have given the foregoing quotations to show who John was, what he was, and what he came to do. "Jesus said, Suffer it to be so now, for it becometh us (John and the Savior) to fulfill all righteousness." O glorious baptism (eternal value).

The baptism of the twelve apostles by John, was always valid, otherwise there would have been a record of a re-water baptism. All John baptized had a valid baptism for all time to come. Now to the twelve at Ephesus Paul said, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism." Paul did not say to them, John's baptism is out of date, and is no value now, neither did he say, You were baptized by impostors that had no authority to do so, such as New School isms, hence your baptism is no good, and you must be baptized by water again. No, Paul said nothing that would give a particle of a shadow to such kind of thoughts. But Paul described or defined John's baptism to them in that full and complete way that is nowhere else recorded. How did Paul know just what John's baptism was? It is not likeky that he ever saw John, and if he did he was looking for stones at the same time, or ready to hold the clothes of them that would throw them, as was the case when Stephen was stoned. "Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." (Now this is all that Paul did say to them.) Now leave the word *this* out of the next sentence, for it is a supplied word, and it reads, "When they heard they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied." Just as John said, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost."

Brethren, I leave this with you. Do with it as you think best.

Your brother in hope,

JNO. A CAMPBELL

DEAR ONES IN THE LORD:

I am but a creature, and I feel so unworthy, but may God give me strength to pen a few lines. How can I find words unless they are given? I feel willing to wait if only a crumb is given me from the Master's table, and I hope that Jesus has made me glad through suffering. Most of the time with me it is sorrow and darkness, and thorns are strewed along my path, but at times beautiful things make me glad. O, how good it is that the Lord has given me a hope, and has, as I trust, raised me up from the fall: he is our only hiding place; he is my all and in all. There is no comfort for me only in Jesus; he is the only hope for a poor sinner like me. It is through suffering that we are brought to know these things, and I do believe that every one that is born of God must know of his suffering, and must taste of his grief. We cannot teach ourselves these things, no, not one of us. God does not speak to us as man speaks. When his heavenly voice enters into the heart of a poor sinner, that sinner will be made glad and rejoice. At such times we love the dear Savior and can easily say so, but at other times we feel weak and cast down. Sometimes a sweet calm is with us, this is when we have been brought to

a standstill place, and O, how good this is for us, but am I worthy of saying this? I find that I say these things quite often, and "I can't help it." I hope that it is because I love the brethren and sisters. Then these words come to my mind, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

I have been for a long time cast down; this is the brightest day for me in a long time, the beautiful mountains, hills and valleys, all seem to be clothed with brightness.

I am thinking that it is Jesus alone that can save from death; Jesus the great High Priest has full atonement made; his promises are sure, and none can change. Yes, I am glad that Jesus alone, who was God manifest in the flesh, has done so much for me. The pleasure of this world have faded away; they bloomed for a season, but soon decayed, but there is lasting pleasure in Jesus; he has given salvation on earth, and a mansion in heaven.

O, how I would like to meet with a multitude of God's dear children this bright day. It seems as though I have been through a valley, and it has been a long journey, but it is sweet to know that the Lord was with me there, all the way. There were some thorns and some roses there; they are strewed all along the way here below; in all the journey there are some sparks of light, some heavenly manna. This is the way that the good Shepherd leads his sheep. O am I one of that number?

Dear ones, I am afraid that you will feel as I do in reading this; it does seem so much like me, but I cannot help nor change it. I lhope that I am thankful that Jesus has, through suffering, taught me the measure of his love, and if so, then he has given me strength to sing such truths as these: "The hill of Zion yields a thousand rich supplies;" "My wants are well supplied," and "Since he is mine, and I am his, what can I want beside?"

Well, I had better close; it may be that I will not after all let this go from my hand; I will leave it all with the dear Redeemer. I send love to all the near and dear ones in the precious truth. Now, dear brother, do with this as you deem best.

I remain your sister in hope,

MARY OSTRANDER

DEAR BRETHREN:

It seems to me that I am lost without the SIGNS, it is meat and drink to my soul; I love to hear from the dear kindred in Christ, although I have met but few of them. I read so many good letters that tell my own travels so much better that I can myself, that I have a love for the writers which Satan, with all his combined host, cannot drown. When it pleases the Almighty to give me an assurance that I am one of his, I can say, Thanks be to his holy name for implanting his love in my heart. This enables me to be in sweet fellowship with his dear people all over the world. Although strangers in the flesh, and separated by many miles, yet we are one in faith and doctrine. I have many dark and dreary hours. But when my poor heart goes out in sweet meditation, and I can believe that here I have no continuing city, but that by faith I am seeking one to come, and I can look beyond this world of trials and tribulations, then I can, and do at times, rejoice, but it seems like a tiresome journey, and I feel as though I am but seldom in the right road as I should be. It is but just now and then, if at all.

Sometimes I feel that I am a poor, deluded sinner, and am in much distress of mind, searching for some evidences to confirm me that I am a subject of grace, yet when I look back upon my past life with its afflictions and troubles, I find

that the grace of God has upheld me, and that it is my hope and salvation. "By the grace of God I am what I am." My prayer is that God will keep me at the foot of the cross, believing in and declaring Jesus as the way and the truth and the life. He alone can reach the case of this poor, undone sinner. This arm of flesh is too weak to be a staff to me; it may do for those who never felt themselves to be sinners, but as for me the Lord Jesus Christ alone is my strength and my Redeemer.

Blessed be the name of the Lord, it is my heart's desire to do the will of the Master, but I come so far short of it many times. I ask an interest in the prayers of all those who may read this, for myself and for our little church, that she may flourish as the rose, and always be kept in peace. What a pleasure it is to meet and be with the brethren; it brings rejoicing to me. I often wish for the time to come when parting will be no more. To be with those who love God is such a blessing to me. I am not fit to be numbered with them, and I often think that I will ask them to exclude me, for I believe that if I am not a fit subject for the church, I ought not to be there. I would not harm one of the little ones, and if I were out of the church I should travel alone as I do now; I do not desire to be in the way of the people of God, but I feel alone in the world.

A. B. HARPER

Dear Readers of the Signs of the Times:

Today finds me at home, my health not sufficiently good enough to be be out among the saints of God. While thus sheltered from the cold, my mind is wandering in far distant lands. It seems that I can feel a tender love within me for the Lord's children everywhere. I ask, is it the "unfeigned love," spoken of in the Scripture? If so, it is the love of God. It is said in the Scriptures that "Love is of God, and whosoever loveth God loveth his brother also." And again, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." How blessed is that people who love their holy Lord! They love him because he first loved them. They love God because God gave them his love. Precious children, there was once a time with you that you did not love God. You were dead in trespasses and sins; you could not love God because you did not have his love; you did not want to love him; you perhaps thought that you would love him some time in the future, that it was an act of yours, and you could begin it at your own convenience. But ah, children, your own time was always in the future; you loved the pleasures of this world, and you had no fear of God before your eyes. You could not feel the danger awaiting you, for you were dead in sin, and loved its joys. God loved you even when ye were dead in sin. How sinful, and yet how unconcerned you were! "God is love," and it was he that kept you alive until his own appointed time to make you alive. You were enemies to God by wicked works, but Jesus died. The Lord quickened you when dead. O what a sinner you were. You have a knowledge of what you had been all your life. Your heart was broken and you wept and mourned; you wanted to love God, but O how depraved you were; your sins like mountains arose before you, and you were lost and ruined forever; you often went to some secreted spot where no eye could see, or ear could hear but God's, and there bowed beneath a load of sin and guilt, to pour out your soul to God in prayer. Poor, sin-sick soul, condemned by God's holy law.

Precious saints, you were thus made to feel the need of God's everlasting love to save you from being forever lost. You lost your life by trying to save it. You were completely worked out of works, and gave up all for lost. How sad and awful you felt; this was the darkest hour

of all your life. Did you get to this point at your own "free-will"? No, no, but grace has shown you your true condition: a lost and ruined sinner, destitute of everything good within yourself. The Lord just here sheds abroad his love in your heart, the darkness gives way, and you love your Lord. Matchless, boundless love! Jesus died for me!

O, precious children, how blessedly sweet to feel an interest in God's everlasting love bestowed on poor, hell-deserving sinners. O, that we could praise the Lord enough for his wonderful works toward poor sinners like we feel ourselves to be.

I so often feel cast down and think I have no grace, but I hope that I have realized God's love toward me. One of the best evidences I have is, I do love the poor, trembling saints. How I do love to hear them speak of their sorrow and grief. This touches my experience, for I am so much cast down, and so often feel sad and lonely. If I ever have any real joy it is when the Lord freely gives it to me. If I ever do a good work, or think a good thought, it is when the Lord's grace and love constraineth me. "The love of God constraineth us," saith Paul.

J. R. HATCHER

II CORINTHIANS XI. 7-9.

Brother C. M. Bruce, of Pawnee Rock, Kan., desires our views on the following Scripture: *"Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely? I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service. And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me, the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself."*

First. We will say, Paul had preached the gospel at Corinth first of any, and the church there was established under his ministry, afterward, when he had departed from them, preaching the gospel in other regions, he heard of many things amiss among them. Among other things, he learned that some men who professed also to be teachers of the gospel, had come among them, and had perverted the minds of the church, or some of them, away from him. Paul was not jealous for himself, but for the truth, and for them, that they might not be led away from it, and so he wrote to them two epistles, in which he rebuked, exhorted, and warned them against that which was contrary to the gospel, and against those who had perverted their minds.

Second. In this chapter he contrasts himself with these false teachers, and calls to the minds of his brethren, his sufferings in the service of the Master. He also speaks of his self denials among them. So jealous had he been for the good of the cause, that he desired to take away all room for even the appearance of selfishness in his ministry, and so had not made himself chargeable to them for a temporal support, as he had a perfect right to do, according to the law of God, and according to that which even men judge to be equitable. Therefore he had labored among them freely, receiving the things which he lacked, from the brethren in Macedonia. Now, in verse seven, he asks, Have I committed an offence against you in so doing? It might well be thought so, by some of them. If any among them had the truth in their hearts, and love to God and to his servants reigned there, they would feel as though he had deprived them of a great privilege, in that he had received what he lacked from others. They might well be offended that he had not shown more confidence in them. But he explained that he had done what he had because of his desire that none among them should have room to say that he desired to

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

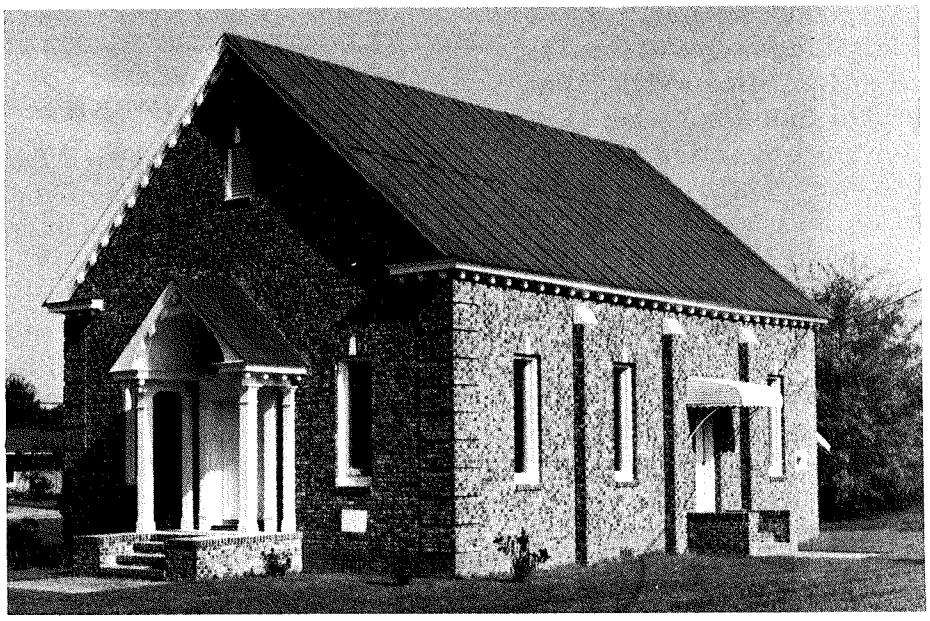

NORTH EAST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

North East Primitive Baptist Church is located in Onslow County in North Carolina on the Piney Green Road. The church was established in 1792.

To reach the church when coming from Jacksonville, N.C., follow Hwy. 17 about 4 miles to Moore Buick-Pontiac, Inc. on left at stop light. Turn right on Piney Green Road and follow to church. When coming from Maysville, N.C., follow Hwy. 17 to Moore Buick-Pontiac, Inc. on right. Turn left at stop light on Piney Green Road and follow to church.

Church services are held every third Sunday, with Quarterly Meetings in February, May, August and November on Saturday and Sunday at 11 o'clock.

Present pastor is Elder J. T. Prescott.

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make merchandise of them. Paul plainly teaches that he had a right to a support from them, but that in this case he had waived this right, and had become chargeable to the brethren in Macedonia.

According to the judgment of men, he had abased himself through preaching the gospel to them freely, but it was that they might be exalted. That is, that they might receive the word at his hands, and come to an understanding of it, which they might not do if they suspected that he was preaching for gain, and not simply for the glory of God. Was this an offence to them? In the thirteenth verse of the next chapter, Paul tells them that they were inferior to no other churches, except in this, that he had not made himself chargeable to them, and then he says, forgive me this wrong. Thus he counted it a wrong that he had not given to them the privilege of caring for him in temporal things, while he had ministered to them in spiritual things. Yet he excuses this apparent want of confidence in them, by showing that he desired to take away all occasion from enemies of the gospel, by so doing. It was his right to be support-

ed, and it was his right to expect that they would willingly do this, but Paul in verse eight says that he had robbed other churches, taking wages of them to do the church of Corinth service. That is, other churches had done what they were not under any obligation to do, in order to enable Paul to labor among the church at Corinth, and yet not be chargeable to them. They freely bestowed this help upon Paul, but yet after all, it was but relieving the church at Cornith, from their duty, and from what ought to have been a privilege to them. Then he says that no man should stop him from this boasting in all Achaia. He does not use the word boasting here in any offensive sense. He did what he did, not for his own exaltation, but for the glory of God, and the good of the churches, yet if any were spiritual among that church, they would feel very keenly the statement that he had been supported by others, while devoting himself to them. It seems to us that the brethren at Corinth, as they read these words, must have felt a great spirit of admiration for the unselfishness of Paul in preaching the gospel freely among them, and must have felt to praise that grace which thus appeared in him, while at the same time they must have had a feeling of deep sorrow that they had not themselves ministered to him as his needs required, While he was laboring among them.

Paul expressly teaches in all this connection, that in other places also, that those who labor in word and doctrine among the churches, have a right to support from those among whom they labor, but that they may waive that right also, for the good of the cause, and the glory of God. Yet he regarded it as being in some sense a wrong against that church, and felt to beseech them to forgive the wrong.

ELDER F. A. CHICK

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

ROMANS vi. 1, 16.

The first verse proposed for consideration reads thus, *"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?"*

The apostle had been dwelling on the reign of sin and death, and the redemption of the church of God from the dominion of both by the reign of grace through righteousness by Jesus Christ our Lord. The entrance of sin into the world by Adam as the embodiment and representative of all his posterity, long before the law or the Sinia covenant was given to Israel, even as early as the transgression of Adam, and the law is a detecter of sin; moreover, the law entered that the offense might abound. That is, as we understand it, that sin might appear as it really is, exceedingly sinful. The law did not make us sinful, but showed that we were so, making our sins to abound, or exposing them to view in their true magnitude, and so far as the church of God is concerned, the manifestation by the application of the law of the total depravity and just condemnation of those whom Christ came to redeem, shows the more vividly the superabounding of the grace of God. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. Sin, enthroned in our carnal nature, reigned unto death, but now, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, the principality of sin is spoiled; the strength of sin, which is the law, can no longer sustain the empire of sin, for being dead to the law by the body of Christ, they are no more under the law, but under grace, or under law to Christ. Grace now appears in regal majesty, erects her throne in the heart, and sways her sceptre with greater might, reigns, governs and controls unto the

opposite issue: life—eternal life. Sin's reign was unto death, but grace extends her reign unto eternal life, and never can possibly fall short of that result. As certainly as it is that sin is the sting of death, so certainly the gift, or grace of God, is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. None can fail of eternal life who are subjects of reigning grace, nor can any fail of the wages of sin who are subjects of its reigning power.

This being the prominent doctrine of the inspired apostles and of the primitive disciples of Christ, their workmongrel opposes slanderously reported that they held and avowed as their doctrine that they would sin, that grace might abound. But it was a false charge, and as slanderously said of the primitive saints as it is now reiterated against the old order of disciples, and upon the same ground. But the apostle pronounces it a slanderous report, and he says of those who propagate it that their damnation is just.

Again, the enemies of God and truth have always contended that the doctrine of sovereign, eternal, reigning and saving grace is exceedingly dangerous, leading to licentiousness, for they have no knowledge of that faith which works by love and purifies the heart. Their religion depends on fear, animal excitement, terror, fire and brimstone, &c. But the operative principles of love, as an incentive to holy aspirations, is only found under the reign of grace, hence all will-worshipers are ignorant of it.

Paul could and did confidently appeal to the subjects of grace in the language of our text, *"What shall we say then?"* We know what our calumniators, and all Arminians say on the subject, but, "What shall we say?" Can a subject of grace be found in heaven or in earth who will say, Let us sin that grace may abound? The very thought to them is abhorrent and repulsive; God forbid, is their language, for how shall we that are dead to sin, slain to its love, dead to its dominion, and emancipated from its reign, how shall we live any longer therein? Baptized into the death of Jesus Christ, being buried with him by baptism into death, crucified with him, dead to sin by his body, we are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God, and with him we are risen to newness of life; Christ now liveth in us, and the life which we now live in the flesh, we live by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved us and given himself for us. The body, or that which is born of the flesh, is dead because of sin, circumcised, or cut off, so that we are no longer known in the flesh, or after the flesh, but the Spirit; that which is born of the Spirit, is life, because of righteousness. It is the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him," that is, with Christ who was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification. "God who is rich in mercy, for his grat love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with him, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Now, therefore, our element is no longer sin, but holiness. "For he that is dead is freed from sin." Now, if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him." If we were crucified with him, baptized into his death, buried with him by baptism into death, and the body of sin destroyed; if with him God has raised us up together to a newness of life, then may we reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. And then the admonition of the subject applies to us. "Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." The old mortal

body is still of the earth earthy. Sin is still there striving to maintain a dominion over our members. But being legally released from his cruel dominion, we have a right to renounce his yoke, and refuse obedience to his wicked mandates. Sin will strive to reign over our members and to control them by stirring up our passions and lusts, and to press our members into its service. But here is the true ground of our confidence, that sin shall not have dominion over us, for we are not under the law, but under grace. "What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid."

We are frequently told by the votaries of free-will and human agency in salvation, that if they could be assured that they are not under the law, or exposed to its penal wrath, they would not only sin, but give a loose rein to all their lusts, and take their fill of sin, thus proving that they still love sin as well as ever. They are not yet full, they want more, and are only restrained by a selfish fear of hell. Our case is quite different, if we are under the reign of grace; we have had our fill of sin long ago, we loathe it now, we hate it, we detest it, and love holiness, for it is now our element.

We come now to the sixteenth verse of the chapter on which brother Springsteen desired us to comment, in connection with the first.

"Know ye not, that to whom ye yeild yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"

This the saints ought to know, and to thoroughly understand. Here are two opposite dominions, the one, sin; the other, righteousness; and if we are under the dominion of the first of these, we shall obey it in its lusts, yielding our members instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. But if freed from the dominion of sin, and brought under the reign of grace, we shall obey the governing principles of grace, the law of grace, which teaches us, "That denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we shall live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world." This law of grace is not written on tables of stone, but written on the tables of our hearts, according to the provisions of the new covenant, or covenant of grace. "I will put my law in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people," &c. While a discrimination is here made between the slaves of sin, and the subjects of reigning grace, we are taught to regard a love of holiness, a spirit of obedience to God, and a relish for the word of truth, the doctrine and ordinances of Christ, as a reliable evidene that we have passed from death unto life, from the dominion of sin, to the reigning power of grace, and in the fullness of our hearts, in the assurance of this evidence, we join the apostle in thanksgiving to God that our service under the dominion of reigning sin, is among the things which were, that being now made free from sin, we become servants of righteousness.

The question may arise, Why, if I am thus made free from the reigning power of sin, am I so prone to wander, so full of vain and wicked thoughts? Why do I the things which I ought not, and leave undone the things which I ought to do? The answer of this inquiry will be found in the words of our Redeemer, in connection with those of Paul: "That which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit, and that which is born of the flesh, is flesh. And the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for in our flesh there dwelleth no good thing." All our disobedience and rebellion against the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, arises from the flesh, which is and always has been at war with grace. It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. With my mind I serve the law of God, but with my flesh the law of

sin.

Here is the ground of the christian warfare; two opposing laws, two opposite principles dwell in us while we sojourn in the militant state. The flesh, or earthly, depraved nature will never harmonize with the aspirations of the new man after holiness. The flesh is still a servant of sin, but the new man is the servant of righteousness, and each zealous for its respective master. While the sin that dwelleth in us disputes and opposes every step of the reign of grace, so that we cannot do the things which we would, grace, on the other hand, or the immortal Spirit of life, which is denominated the new man, cannot sin, because he is born of God, and his seed remaineth, and making war, uncompromising and determined, shall crucify the old man with his affections and lusts, and shall assuredly triumph over all opposition with, "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The apostle continues to dwell on this subject throughout this and the succeeding chapter, and shows that the saints are debtors not unto the flesh, to live after the flesh; if governed by the flesh, or if we walk after the flesh, we shall die. Death hath passed on the flesh, and the flesh is dead because of sin; sin has defiled it, reigns in it, and his reign is unto death. The carnal or fleshly mind is enmity against God, and to be carnally minded in death. "But as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

EDITORIAL OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ARTICLES

LUKE XVI. 9.

Worldly riches are the mammon of this world. Whatever of them are possessed by christians, they hold only as stewards in trust, who are under a solemn charge to so use as not to abuse them, and they are amenable to their Lord for the manner of their stewardship. While possessing them in trust, if we impart them with a liberal hand to relieve the necessities of the poor and suffering, when we fail, or in our turn become poor and needy, we may, relying on our Lord's assurance expect to be in the same way ourselves relieved, for what measure we mete out to others, shall be meted to us again. "There is that which scattereth and yet increaseth; but to withhold more than is meet, tendeth to poverty."

Shortly after this parable was spoken, the disciples were driven from their homes, and their property was confiscated, but profiting by the instruction, those of them who had property, while they held an undisputed title, sold it, and laid the proceeds at the apostles' feet, and when they failed, they were received and supplied from the common provision thus secured. They had all things in common. (See Acts ii. 44-47.) We are not directed by our Lord to make a mammon, or god, of riches, or of what we possess of the world's goods, but make to ourselves friends of it. It can afford us friendly aid in our extremities, and so to use it as to secure the commendation of our Lord, whose stewards only we are, as acting wisely.

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."
Mat. 7:12

Elder J.K. Womack, My Dear Brother:

When your last brotherly letter came I was very busy, and now I am bad off with bronchitis, so that I am too weary and dull to write, but will tell you that I was glad to get yours. You write sadly, much as I feel, and would give an unpromising answer if asked, "Watchman, what of the night? what of the night?" But Peter said, "Though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." Is not this true in your experience? The Lord says, "I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." What a rich mercy that he hath chosen us at all! and how divine the blessing that he hath refined us, even though it be in the fiery furnace. Would those who would limit the Holy One in his counsel and purpose, admit that he foreordained the furnace of affliction in which he chose his people? If they admit this, then they must admit as well that his predetermined purpose embraced the ungodly conduct of the persecutors of his people, for they largely make up the furnace of affliction. So it is written, "The Lord hath commanded concerning Jacob, that his adversaries should be round about him." The Lord hath commanded it so. There is no escape from it, therefore. How gladly we would have it different, dear brother, for we find it very trying and humiliating to be thus surrounded, and to find ourselves in such a heated furnace. But should any deny that the God of the eternal purpose, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, has thus foreordained and commanded that our adversaries should be round about us as a furnace of affliction, for the trial of our faith, then they must also deny that the Lord hath chosen his people at all, because as certainly as he chose them it was in the furnace. Not a pleasant place, is it, to be in? Then how about always walking in the light and escaping affliction by good works of obedience? What saint has ever done so on earth? It will not do, my brother, because revelation and experience alike contradict it. This teaching is phariseeism, and it agrees with the micking words and teachings of poor, afflicted Job's miserable comforters. The good Physician says, "For the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." So here is hope for you, and for all the poor in spirit and contrite in heart, who have no righteousness to plead, nor merit wherewith to buy the Lord's mercies and blessing, which they so much need. These must come to the throne of grace, that they may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need, which is all the time, for they can never claim the least crumb of favor and blessing as a reward for their good works in serving the Lord. But they must humbly confess with Paul and say, "For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. - - - O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Here is promise and hope for you, dear brother, for you can say again with Paul, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

"In the world ye shall have tribulations," says the Prince of peace. But to offset this he also says, "But be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." He overcome it for us, and his victory is ours in him. Yea, dear brother, "So by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Therefore, the obedience which God accepts and blesses us for is

the perfect work of Christ, his beloved Son, for us. No other obedience under the shining sun is at all meritorious in God's account, but the "finished" work of the suffering and obedient Lamb of God possesses infinite merit; yea, more valuable and precious in God's esteem than all the glories and riches of the boundless universe.

O, then, why should the saints not be always swallowed up in the contemplation of our Lord's perfect work of finished redemption, and say, with a poet, "We only wish to speak of him who lived, and died, and reigns for us? We'll talk of all he did and said and suffered for us here below; the path he marked for us to tread, and what he's doing for us now." For if our souls were thus inspired with his love, and satisfied with his grace, there would be no desire or room in our minds and hearts to make a blowing horn of, or sound a trumpet before us to herald what we are doing for the Lord. Far more honoring is it to him, and in line with the primitive saints, to ever be testifying, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." Thus moved and filled with the mercy and grace of God toward us, we should be "to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Thus grace is all in this full salvation of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Hence, speak we of obedience to our Lord, it is the obedience of faith and love, and these are the fruit of the Spirit, and the gift of God's grace. So, after Paul labored more abundantly than all the apostles of Christ in preaching the gospel, he disclaimed the least ability or merit of himself, and said, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." If all the preachers in your country had thus taught and preached, and ever magnified the grace of God, as did Paul, think you, brother Womack, that there would have been such a contention and distress in all that country as has confused and scattered the sheep of the good Shepherd? I tell you, nay; for it would have comforted and united in fellowship all the poor sinners saved by grace. This simple truth cannot be disguised, or denied, for all know that the gospel of the grace of God, when believed and preached and walked in, has never yet made a contention and division among the Lord's people who are saved by grace, and it never will. What, then, has made all the confusion, mourning and sorrow among you all? Read Acts XV., and Paul's letter to the churches of Galatia, and you shall plainly see that then and there the doctrine and principle of conditions was first introduced among the believers in Christ, as an addition to the grace of Christ; and it was the propagation and insistence of this principle, which denied the sufficiency of the grace of God in Christ, that made all the trouble in those churches then. In proof of this the apostles in counsel said, "But we believe that through the grace of the LordJesus Christ we shall be saved." Not the least intimation then about two ways or principles of salvation, or two salvations; one by grace, the other of works; one everlasting, the other in time; but the only dispute was the doctrine and principle of salvation; and the decision of all the apostles and the church was, as above. The other party was the advocates of conditional salvation in part for believers in Christ. This is the contention and the source of the trouble now, as it was then, and has been all through the history of the church. It is simply a covert denial of our dear Lord's work to his servant Paul: "My grace is sufficient for thee." For as certainly as it was sufficient for Paul in his perils, persecutions, temptations and unparalleled labors, sacrifices and hardships, so it is ever sufficient for all who are

saved by his grace. Nothing else is sufficient for all who are saved by his grace. Nothing else is sufficient.

Believing that through the grace of Christ we shall be saved, yours in love,

D. BARTLEY.

ISAIAH XLIII. 1.

"But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine."

Is not this declaration of God, as made by the prophet Isaiah, enough to cheer and comfort the poor pilgrim of God while walking through the valley, and shadow of death? It would seem that this one sentence ought forever to silence the advocates of conditionalism, in their efforts to show that man has a work to perform to make God's blessings of any certainty to his people. Here in this forty-third chapter the prophet of God has repeated several times over, the glorious truth that God did this because he was their Savior, and that he loved them, and declares why they should rely in him, *"I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Savior."* The question comes to mind, If there is no other Savior, can there be but one salvation? He says, *"I have declared and have saved."* This is in the past tense, "have saved," so there can be no salvation left for poor, mortal man, or any other creature to perform. What did Christ say on this point? *"I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Rom. viii. 38,39.*

JAMES M. TRUE

JOHN XIII. 14

"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet."

In our every day life, with its trials and cares, we are called to walk the way of man's duty. Hindered by temptations we stumble over rough places and go astray in the dark. Some of us go in forbidden places and soil our feet, figuratively speaking, with the things of the world. When we are brought together it is needful that some loving brother apply the water of the word, admonish us, that our feet may be washed, and we be made to walk more carefully. Again, a brother may have had to walk a thorny path and over rough places, so that with bleeding feet he sits among us, then the water of the word cools and cleanses his feet, he is cheered by the wine of joy, and the balm of Gilead heals the wounds of his heart. That one goes away strengthened, to bless the place where he maketh his flock to rest.

One woman washed the Savior's feet with her tears, and a like service is rendered by the humble service of the sisters and mothers of Israel to-day. Many of us feel and see the sweet but strong influence of woman as she in her love tries to cleanse from us the filth of the world. So we ought to wash one another's feet: admonish in love, comfort and serve others, in their walk through the wilderness of trouble and temptation.

Some seem to go into such filthy places, and bring into the house such loathsome things that for a time they must be set outside; to pass through the fire, or be shaken in the devil's sifter, The weary pilgrim seeks a place of rest, and it is a friend indeed who ministers to his wants, and serves him lovingly in all things.

Jesus in word and in deed taught this loving service. The work he has done for us must be shown forth by our service to others, for as he works in us, so will it be manifested in our walk.

On this occasion he has appointed a place for the meeting, and sat with them as he also does with his chosen ones today. Then at the chosen time and place did they eat the passover with the bitter herbs of sorrow. Then he girded himself and taught them that they must be washed. At last Judas having received the sop went out, and it was night. Was it not the last night of the legal dispensation? Christ must go down into the death of the cross, and come up from the darkness of the tomb, leading his people out of darkness into the glorious liberty of the children of God, that they might be with him where he was, and behold his glory. Thus he taught that he would be with them to feed, cleanse and lead them. And as he served them, so must they serve and love each other; put away the filth of the flesh. When in love a brother is prevailed upon to cease from that which is an injury to him, and a reproach to the cause, a sinner is converted from the error of his way; a soul saved from death (or separation from the church) and a multitude of sins hidden. Thus are the members of the body cleansed, and the prodigals brought home again, and dressed in the best clean robes of humility. To do this for a brother requires love, courage, humbleness, in fact the fruit of the Spirit, "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law." Those we love we try to save and serve.

God grant us power and guide us in the right way, that we may "Wash one another's feet." Peace be with us all.

I trust I am your brother,

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON

I JOHN IV. I.

"Try the spirits whether they are of God."

In all ages of the world, from the dawn of creation until now, living witnesses to God's immortal truth have tenanted their houses of clay, travailing in pain and sorrow, it is true, but none the less unceasingly breathing forth praise and adoration to Jehovah, and testifying often in the midst of most awful ordeals, to the salvation found only in the arm of the mighty God, the fortress of his people in all ages in time and forever in eternity.

In all ages of the world, from the dawn of creation until now, have been those ever ready to curse the saints, to inflict all manner of persecutions upon them, striving to beguile them in the name of the Lord (?) and with a mask of seeming saintliness to fall down and worship Baal, and to leave the Shepherd of Israel. But he whose goings forth have been established upon the Rock Christ Jesus, is there to stay, and though often menaced by worldly adversaries and persecuted in most hideous fashion, has invariably come forth from the fiery furnace bearing not a single scent of smoke, with his gold not tarnished nor lustre dimmed.

Against these enemies of the doctrine of God our Savior, the apostle sounds the warning note, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Even at that time, so soon after the manifestation of God in the flesh, false prophets have arisen, so cunning as to almost deceive the very elect.

Many come to the saints filled with the holy Spirit of God, animated by a desire to speak to them concerning his goodness and glory, trusting that God will bless their labors to the edification of the saints and to the upbuilding of Zion. Others come to the saints filled

with the spirit of their father, the devil, animated by a desire to gain a good name for themselves, and to win a high place among men, stopping not from hanging salvation upon conditions, and clothing poor, puny man with a fancied glory of his own. Having their eye not single to the glory of God, they deem it an unimportant thing to leave him in the background.

But all who would teach in Zion, no matter by what spirit they are animated, are ushered before God's most awful tribunal, the highest court before which a man can possibly be brought, and from which there is no appeal; the church of the Most High. Here, in the hearts of all God's children, is a judgment-seat erected, and here, too, are unfurled the banner and standard of the truth. By this, the saints "try the spirits whether they are of God." Upon the spirits before them, they set their seal entitling them to serve the Lord in his most holy temple, or banishing them from their presence forever. Among all these spirits, the "man diligent in business, shall stand before kings." Every saint is a king and a priest to God, and before this most regal company only he whose business lies at wisdom's gate, whose whole desire is to praise the Lord for his salvation and mercy to usward, and whose testimony upon the walls of Zion declares him as the Rock and his work as perfect; only he, I say, can stand before this royal priesthood, the assemblage of the saints.

Such is the primary interpretation of the language of John quoted in the beginning. Now, briefly, let us glance at the secondary or experimental side of it.

None but those who have traveled it, can know how rough is the road from earth to heaven. Now it rises over the summit of a lofty mountain, then dropping a little, it pursues its course along a level plain, farther on, it suddenly drops and is lost to view among the dark recesses of some narrow valley only to rise again to climb the mountain where, lo, the golden sunlight gilds its highest point. How many different moods of mind possess the christian wayfarer all in a single day. Now doubting, now fearing, now mounting a pinnacle of hope, now plunging into the depths of despair, now calmly resting in sweet deliverance from the pit. Whether held in the bonds of the spirit of prayer, whether imprisoned in meshes of the spirit of hope, whether held by the spirit of grief, we constantly cry out, "Is this God or the devil?" "Is this the kind of affliction the Lord's people have, or are the whole human race partakers of it?" Thus daily does the child of God try the spirits which possess him, to discover whether they are of God or of Satan, whether they are the evidences of the indwelling of grace, or the croppings out of the propensities of the flesh. His constant inquiry is: "Am I, or am I not, one of the heaven-born sons of grace?" And only as the Spirit of God bears witness with our spirit, do we realize that we are the children of God. Today you may not know that the spirit which holds you is of God, but tomorrow, God will interpret your experiences, and by his Spirit, which is always your indwelling guide, bearing witness with and testifying to your spirit or experience, you will know what the past means. It is by the future that we understand the present, and by the present that we interpret the past. Next year you will realize how much God has been with you this year, but now, as he walks with you daily, you are not aware that it is he, so confident do you feel sometimes that he has left you. This is because you are in the cleft of the rock, and his hand is over you so that you see only his back parts, places where he has been, and not where he is now.

HORACE H. LEFFERTS

THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED.

(Matt. xiii.31; Mark iv. 31; Luke xiii. 19.)

In Matthew it reads as follows: *"Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The Kingdom of heven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest of herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof."*

First. This parable is recorded by three of the evangelists. They do not vary essentially in the terms in which it is stated. About the only difference in the three narratives is that Luke omits the expression, "which is the least of all seeds."

Second. It occurs in the midst of a cluster of parables which according to Matthew number seven. Mark and Luke omit several of these parables in their narratives. In our own mind this parable has always stood in connection with the one which follows it, the parable of the leaven hid in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened. The latter seems to present the hidden, silent, effectual, inward work of the kingdom, in those where it has been planted, while this former parable seems to us to present rather the outward manifestation of this kingdom.

Third. Let it be remembered that it is a parable describing the kingdom of heaven, and not the visible church organization. The church in the Scriptures is always one thing, and the kingdom of heaven is another. The two words must not be confounded wherever they may be used. We will call attention to some of the differences between the two words, and the two things, "the church of God," and "the kingdom of God." A man must be born again to enter the kingdom of God at all. He cannot see nor enter that kingdom without the new birth. But many a man has become a member of the visible church without knowing anything at all about the new birth, in the only way in which such knowledge can be attained to, viz: by experience. A man may be excluded from the visible church, but that does not exclude him from the kingdom of God. Many a man is in the kingdom who is not in the visible church, and many a man is a member of the visible church, who is not in the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of God is within men, but we cannot say this with any real meaning of the church visible. The word "churches" is frequently used, but never the word "Kingdoms" of God. We read of the church at Rome, Corinth, &c. but never of the kingdom of God in any particular place. There are other differences, but these seem to be sufficient to settle the fact that the visible church organization, and the kingdom of heaven, or of God, are not the same thing at all.

Forth. In this parable, and in many others, the kingdom of God is presented as a living power working within men, and producing results effectually. It is never presented as a form so much as a life. It is said to be within men. It is said to be righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. It is compared, as in the following parable, to hidden leaven, and as in fourth chapter of Mark, to seed which being cast into the ground springs up, first the blade, and finally the full corn in the ear. It comes not with observation. Jesus was himself set forth by John the Baptist as the embodiment of the kingdom. He said concerning the coming Jesus, "The kindgom of heaven is at hand." And so Jesus commissioned the disciples whom afterward he sent forth into every city where he himself would afterward come, to say, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." The organization of the churches followed in those places where the kingdom of God was preached, and where it began to appear

in the hearts and lives of men. Its beginnings are always presented as being in the hearts of men. As it worked in them the same things, so they would be drawn together in fellowship. And out of this oneness in feeling and in conduct, would come fellowship, and a desire to live together, and to mutually help and encourage each other. The church organization was therefore an outgrowth of the kingdom. The Savior spoke of the church as well as of the kingdom, and the apostles provided by inspiration for the order of the visible church, but always as the dwelling-place of those in whom the kingdom of God was manifest.

Many thing are said about the coming kingdom in the Old Testament, and many things are said of it after it had come in the New Testament. Of course we cannot refer to all that is said concerning it. We desire to call attention to this one parable, wherein some characteristics, among many others that belong to the kingdom, are set forth. And here, as well as in other parables, it will not do to seek too many meanings as belonging to it. As a rule, in all the parables there is one thought to be set forth, and if we can discover that, it is sufficient. The Savior's meaning is what we ought to desire to know, and not curious applications which our own fancy may present. As in the parable of the leaven, the one thought seems to be the secret, effectual working of the leaven in the meal, so in this parable the one thought seems to be the great outcome of what appeared to be a small beginning. What a miracle that so small a seed should produce such large results. How contrary to human judgment is the Lord's working. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings he ordains strength and out of weakness he makes men strong. He chooses even the things which are not, to bring to naught the things that are. God works with things which men despise. There is nothing at which men might wonder in a grain of mustard seed, but yet see now large an herb, like a tree even, has grown out of it. How poor and mean did the beginning of the gospel seem to all men. Even the disciples themselves did not see what the true glory of the work of the Redeemer was. They looked to the outward appearance and were disappointed. Yet see the mighty working of that small seed, and the wonderful outgrowth in all the ages since.

Now let us notice that a man took the seed and sowed it in the field. So our God by the Spirit plants his kingdom in the hearts of the chosen. As the man chose the field in which to sow the seed of mustard, so does our God choose all the sons of men in whom the seed of the kingdom shall be sown. It is sown in the field, and so is the kingdom sown in the heart. Man does not plant the seed of the kingdom in his own heart, neither does he sow the seed in the heart of any other man. One sower sows the kingdom in all places where it is sown. All this is true, but yet the one thought in the parable to which all others are subordinate is the smallness of the seed, and the great outcome from so small a beginning.

There has been some criticism concerning the statement that the mustard seed is the least of all seeds. It is not really so, it is urged. Some seeds are much smaller than the mustard seed. Cavilers have noted this, and have attacked the knowledge of the Savior on account of it. The word "least" is the same as that translated "smallest" or "small" in other places. It might just as well have been translated "smallest" in this parable. Our understanding is that it signifies not absolutely the smallest seed, but popularly and proverbially the smallest. And when it is said to be the greatest among herbs, it means not absolutely so, but relatively, and with relation to the smallness of the seed. When it is said that the birds lodge in the branches of it, we have understood the design to

be to point out the amplitude of the tree, and so enforce the contrast between the smallness of the beginning and the greatness of the ending. The smallness of the grain of mustard seed is also presented when the dear Redeemer said, "If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed," &c. That is, as we would say, "never so little faith." It is evident that all to whom the Savior spoke, would fully understand that he spoke of the smallness of the seed in the sense in which it was commonly referred to at that time, as the smallest or least of all seeds. He would say to them in substance, you yourselves know how small a seed of mustard is, and yet you also know that the power of the Creator causes it in multitudes of instances to become like a tree in size after a little time. So shall be the kindgom of heaven which I have come to plant in the earth.

Jesus himself appeared among men as a man of sorrows, and in lowliness of appearance and manner. His earthly parentage was obscure, he lived in obscurity, subject to his reputed father, until he was about thirty years of age; he walked during his public ministry in humbleness and meekness, and of the multitudes who from time to time followed him, but few became really his disciples. At the last he was crucified in the sight of men, and what claims he had put forth were thought by all to be brought to naught. He was crucified through weakness, as the apostle himself testifies. Afterward the great, the rich, the noble, did not believe on him, but the humble among men, such as servants and laborers who bore the burden and sorrows of life without its honors or riches. He had chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom. And it was then as it has ever been since, ture that his triumphs were not such as men could either see or understand. He reigned in the hearts of men; and the fruit of his reign there was not human wisdom, or knowledge, or power of reasoning, or the power to become great in any earthly line, but the fruit was love, joy, peace, humility, forbearance, longsuffering, patience, endurance, temperance, faith, hope and charity. These fruits were the fruits of the Spirit, but they were not such as would either then or now command the attention or applause of men. And these fruits appeared then, and do yet, not among many of the great, the wise, the noble of earth, but among the unwise, the weak and the lowly of earth, that no flesh should glory in his presence.

Another thought must be made prominent here, viz: The power to thus increase is in the seed itself; it is not in the surroundings at all; the seed has life in itself alone, and this life of the seed has transforming power. This is true of all seeds, as well as of the mustard seed. We refer to this to emphasize the one thought of the parable, the largeness of the plant grown from so small a seed. The plant becomes thus large not because of any outside aid, but because of the power that is in the seed itself. The kingdom of God does not grow in a man because of any good thing in him. The root grows out of a dry ground. The root gives fatness and moisture to the ground, but the ground does not give these things to the root. (Isiah 1iii. 2.) Jesus grows up as a root out of a dry ground. The ground then adds nothing to the root, but the root does add to the ground. The ground does not add to the power of the seed, but the seed does reach out and lay hold upon the dead earthly matter, and bid it live, and it lives in the plant. All is dead, and would remain dead without the seed. If then divine life exist in any man, and if any man does show forth in his body that life which is within him, the glory belongs to the life and not to him. The whole field in the parable is made up of dead earthy matter, but the seed lays hold where it will of that dead matter, and builds it up

into the body of the plant, until a tree is standing forth in its beauty and glory. Every branch and every leaf and every fibre of the tree, if it could speak, would say, "I was dead until the life of the seed reached out to me and bade me live."

Every spiritual thing, such as love, joy, peace, humility, faith and hope within us, speaks forth the praises of the kingdom, and not of self. All is to the praise of the glory of his grace. Out of the small beginning within us has come up these heavenly graces, and the name of the Lord is glorified within us by them all. And out of these heavenly graces comes to exist the delightful fellowship of saints. We for ourself look back over the past of our life, and can but wonder at what has followed from our past experences. Many of them at the time we could not think belonged to the life of the believer, but now, out of some of them have come our greatest joys and out strongest hope. Little thoughts, little experiences, that seemed so small that we could not claim them as being of the Lord at all, now bring to us large harvests of hope and love and joy.

If it be asked to what special thing do the fowls of the air refer, we would say that we do not think that it is straining the language of the parable to say that they may represent all those who in time of weariness, need rest, and in time of darkenss, desire shelter, and when the sun comes down with scorching heat, desire the coolness of the shade. The kingdom of heaven is all this to all such characters, and it is all this to these in spite of the small beginnings. God sees, and he gives those who are spiritual to see things which natural men never behold. That which is not desirable to natural men, is pleasing to God and wonderful in the eyes of his quickened children. How many who have felt themselves to be among the wandering fowls of the air, with no place of rest, and no one to care for them, have come to find shelter in the shade of this kingdom, and have rejoiced there with exceeding joy.

We have no doubt that the dear brother at whose request we have written this, can bear testimony to this experience. Once feeling to be an outcast from God and from man, there came a time when he found rest and shelter under the shadow of this kingdom of God, and after that it was his privilege to confess what this kingdom had become to him, among his brethren, and to find a home also in the visible church. How blessed it is to come to see and to enter the kingdom of God, and then how blessed afterwards to find a home visibly in the church on earth. In the time of heat and darkness and trouble what a place of rest is this kingdom to those who like the fowls of the air have no other home. Such ones the Lord sets up on high. Such ones he hides as in a pavilion from the strife of tongues. "Here the sparrow and the swallow have found their home." Whether they are ever known among the visible churches or not, still he gives them to abide in his kingdom, and to find all that they need provided there. The kingdom of God becomes to them more than meat and drink. As they have thirsted after righteousness, peace and joy in the Lord, now they have come into the possession of all these things, and their longing hearts are satisfied.

We will leave these thoughts with brother Terry, and with all who may read, having written with much of hesitancy and trembling, lest we darken counsel with words without knowledge.

ELDER F. A. CHICK

Look on your address label.
If the expiration date is
7/85
it will expire with this issue. Please send renewal in the mail today.

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION NOTICE

The next session of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will Convene, the Lord Willing, with Springfield Church.

The church is located in the town of Gretna, Virginia, in Pittsylvania County north of Danville, Virginia.

The meeting begins at 11:00 a.m., Friday, July 12 and will continue through Sunday which is the second weekend in July. All believers in the truth are invited to attend.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

APRIL 13, 1985 MEETING

We met at Knob Primitive Baptist Church and organized a Presbytery to look into the qualifications for Deacon of Brother Nelson Bryant.

Elder Amos Hash was chosen to be Moderator.

Deacon Claude Hopkins was chosen to be spokesman for the Church.

Deacon Carl Terry was chosen to be Clerk.

Elder O. K. Tench opened service with Prayer.

Elders: J. R. Hollandsworth, Larry Hollandsworth, and Lane Carter were chosen to lead in questions.

Elder Noel Conner was chosen to Pray the Ordination Prayer.

Elder Hale Terry was chosen to deliver the Charge.

A motion was made, second, and approved to proceed.

The Candidate was delivered into the hands of the Presbytery be Deacon Claude Hopkins.

Elder Lane Carter read from 1 Timothy 3rd. Chapter.

Elder J. R. Hollandsworth asked the Candidate questions concerning his calling and the duties of a Deacon.

Elder Larry Hollandsworth read from Acts. 6th. Chapter.

After these and other Elders had questioned the Candidate and Deacon Claude Hopkins, a motion was made, second, and approved to proceed with the Ordination.

The Ordination Prayer was given by Elder Noel Conner, with the laying on of hands by the Elders and Deacons.

The Charge was delivered by Elder Hale Terry.

A motion was made, second, and approved to receive the work of the Presbtery.

Deacon Claude Hopkins delivered Deacon Nelson Bryant back to the Church.

Then the Presbytery was dismissed with Prayer by Elder Larry Hollandsworth.

Elder Amos Hash, Moderator.
Deacon Carl Terry, Clerk.

Elders present:

O. K. Tench	Noel Conner
Tom Turner	Lane Carter
J. R. Hollandsworth	Amos Hash
Larry Hollandsworth	Hale Terry

Deacons present:

Harry Cannaday	D. S. Houston
Tommy Lovell	R. L. Wright
Fred Murphy	Bobby Bernard
Grover Semones	Eulas Turner
Amos Byrd	H. D. Ingram
Lonnzie Nichols	Gray Ingram
Guy Holly	Jimmy Holly
Charlie Childress	Wilford Parsons
Carl Terry	Claude Hopkins

"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceable with all men." Psalm 116:15

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST, APRIL 1985

J. O. Harrold, AR.	$ 2.00
Mrs. J. M. Jenkins, TN.	2.00
Mrs. Mabel Ellis, VA.	10.00
Mrs. Dorothy Cassell, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Fannie Wiles, VA.	7.00
Mrs. Odell Anderson, LA.	5.00
Eld. Rush Hendrix, TN.	2.00
Miss Cathrine Houchins, VA.	2.00
Dave & Sara Cody, AZ.	12.00
Eld. W. D. Griffin, AL.	10.00
E. E. Moran, VA.	25.00
Eld. Jimmy Hamrick, TX.	2.00
Raymond Haygood, TX.	10.00
Dale Haygood, TX.	10.00
Miss Clarisse Brooks, NC.	25.00
Mrs. William L. Lee, VA.	2.00
C. C. Barron, LA.	2.00
Mrs. Edgar Bolejack, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Olive Hastings, MD.	5.00
Mrs. Clemmice Bishop, AR.	5.00
L. W. Nichols, VA.	2.00
H. L. Knight, NC.	2.00

EDITORIAL NOTICE

In the published list of donations under the head of "Contributions," our readers have an index to the interest of the brethren and friends in the welfare of the "Signs". Aside from the financial value of these contributions, they are a source of great encouragement to us as tokens of appreciation of the conduct of the "Signs" and although our time is so occupied we are unable to reply personally to each one sending a contribution. We hope our not thus acknowledging our thanks for their liberality will not be interpreted as a lack of appreciation on our part, but that contributors will accept this notice as an individual letter of our sincere thanks for their kind assistance.

Editors

OBITUARIES

VERNON B. CARAWAN

On Sunday, June 17, 1984, after spending five of his last six weeks in Pitt County Hospital, Vernon B. Carawan passed away at his home, with his family in Greenville, North Carolina. Earlier that morning he said, "I want to go home." He knew he was home, at his house, my Mother told him. But he replied, "I'm not yet, but I'm almost there." And within a short period of time, we feel that he was home.

He joined Hancock's Primitive Baptist Church on May 18, 1969. Church for him on Sunday mornings was much more than an obligation. He enjoyed taking other members of the family and friends to Church, he loved seeing friends from other areas and "dinner on the ground," Associations seemed to be such special occasions to him. He'll miss them. I feel that we will miss him being there too.

His funeral was conducted at Wilkerson's Funeral Home in Greenville by Elder Joe Sawyer and Elder Reeves Smith and burial was in Greenwood Cemetary. He was survived by his wife, Lillian B. Carawan, two sons; Robert M. Carawan and Vernon E. Carawan, two sisters; Mrs. Sarah Vandiford and Mrs. Mary Wingate. He also, had four grandchildren and two step-grandchildren.

It seems ironic, June 17, Father's Day, to have to lose a Father on that day. But what better day could there be for one never to forget the help, kindness and understanding, always given by their Father.

Vernon E. Carawan

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Psalm 116:15

Signs of the Times

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PSALM 100

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.

Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

For the Lord is good; his Mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom."

Proverbs 9: 10

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Edward D. Morton

EDITORIAL

Isaiah 35: 8, 10

And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those; the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any revenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

At the beginning of our experience, we do not walk this highway. It is not our intention to walk the King's highway, but we, at first, are seeking cisterns in which we have had a hand in hewing. The apostles themselves were filled with unbelief in the beginning of their association with the Saviour. This unbelief accompanied them even during His many years of His personal ministry among them. In our early examination of their ministry we find them believing that they could stay awake when duty enjoined upon them to be vigilant and sober and above going to sleep at the post of duty, yet they all followed Peter, the spokesman for the bunch for them all, in going to sleep. Further, we find Peter desiring to erect an image in honor to both the prophets and to Moses along side of Jesus. He had to learn from the Master that there were not any exits nor detours on the highway of the Lord.

This highway is the Lord's work from its eternal design in the secret will of God, until the last traveller on it has reached their eternal resting place. The language is peculiar, and yet it is beautifull to think upon, and to meditate upon just the kind of travelers are to travel it. It is indeed delightful to think about when contrasted with the devious ways of poor sinners. It is a costly road, and the cost was all borne by the glorious Benefactor that sat down in counsel and in council before a move was actually made in its construction. He counted up the entire cost, not sparing anything for the security of those that travelled its course, even though that cost was all to be paid in suffering by the Man, Christ Jesus the Lord.

Come one and all of the poor sinners that are crippled in both feet, whose every faculty is failing, seemingly both in nature and in grace. View the landscape over dear reader. It is a peaceful looking road on which such way worn travellers would delight to pass through and out of this afflicted state in which all of the Lord's people are in. It seems important for us to notice the two fold sufficiency of the road. Travel on it is with-

out money and without price. First, all of the travellers were by nature like you and I. We were dead in sin; we were without God and without hope in the world. As by one man's sin, all of his posterity became the same, even so from the crown of our head to the sole of our feet, we were contaminated with it, even polluted and corrupted in every way. And yet, as we contemplate this highway being the way of holiness, and that no unclean thing shall go thereupon, our hand is laid over our mouth that we speak no more (Job 40: 4, 5).

As He communes with us and leads our mind into channels of His own devising, we are given here and there a glimpse of the wise Master Builder of the highway that His brethren are to travel from this dismal wilderness and desert land into the presense of all that heaven means, our view is eclipsed with the gospel declaration of the apostle Paul when he tells us that He was made of a woman, and made under the law. These two things to which He was made, sets forth the unequivocal truth that we could not have overcome either one of these two things which overcome our first parents and us in them. The apostle goes on to show exclusively that this having been made of a woman and under the law was in order to our redemption from under the law, and our adoption of sons. There is not any name given under heaven or among men whereby this could have come about any other way. This was, and it is, God's way of making poor sinners eligible to walk this highway of holiness.

The highway is there. The redeemed of the Lord are to travel on this highway. But there is a way or, if you will understand it better for me to say that there is a means of your travelling on and in this lovely way, let us, without any thought to what non travellers might say, say that there is a highway running every direction over this land, but if you expect to get to your destination, you will need a way to travel the road. I did not borrow the way from anybody. The Holy Ghost declared in the most emphatic and comforting manner that there was, and is, both a highway, and there is a way, or that God, that designed and built the highway is also the cause or the supply or the reason that you get along on the road.

In connection with the double promise in this highway and way, let us ever remember that the children of God have more than just Christ. He that gave His children Christ, His own darling Son, has, from the same divine source, and by the same bequest, has given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness, and furthermore, that all things are yours, the world, life, death, things present, things to come, all, all are yours.

Let us notice, and be glad, and be thankful, that it is the way of holiness. What a lovely work is this, my soul. How rich is the grace of God. We are sinners. There is not any way for us to remove our sin and thus qualify to travel this throughway. How can an unclean thing ever have the privilege of travelling here. There is not any way for sinners to qualify. And yet how precious is the gospel of the grace of God. That grace is the complete satisfaction for all of our sins and is the only cleansing power that can give poor sinners the right to walk here on this holy road. How wonderful is the cleansing power of the shed blood of the Redeemer. No unclean thing is to go there, and yet, the Redeemed of the Lord are the only ones granted to walk there. Have you ever heard anything as gracious and as wonderful as that salvation wrought out on the rugged tree of the cross when Jesus of Nazareth died? This is the only name given under heaven among men whereby poor sinners must be saved.

God did not open this way for the unclean to go over. God did send His Son to

the cross to die for the sins of His people. God did not receive the work of any man in satisfying the law. Why? Because they were all violators of that law. None of them qualified for the opening of that book and looking thereon. There was not any way that any one of them could have answered the mandates of that law. Therefore, (for that reason) God raised them up another Prophet. He could hear them, and they could hear Him. The law could do no hearing of the Israelite and the Israelite could never comply with that divine law of God. But God, who is before all things, and by whom are all things, could and did, raise up another Prophet. One who was God and could hear, and who also was born of a woman and could die and live again, and thus open, and keep open, the highway of holiness.

The unclean shall not pass over it. What has got to be applied to a guilty sinner in order for he or she to be eligible to travel this highway to heaven? Will the washing of water alone do it? The answer is an emphatic no. Will a mixture of works of various kinds cleanse us so that we will gain admission to that joyous band of travellers? The answer to all of the plans and efforts of ours for gaining admission are null and void, for not the first one will be there. The requirement is strict. Not one shall be there save he and she that are cleansed from sin. There is only one cleansing recognizable. That is by the precious blood of the saviour of sinners (I Peter 1:19).

While under conviction for sin there will be fearful things that will frighten a little child of God. But when the Lord speaks peace to he or she there is a feeling of safety, a feeling of perfect complacency and satisfaction that all is well. These travellers have lost their independence, but they have been blessed with a placid calmness that enables them to trust in and to wait upon the Lord as their divine Protector, as their daysman, as their salvation. There is plenty of reasons for this looking unto Him as their daysman. His care in ruling out and off from this Highway any unclean traveller that would contaminate or bring them into ill repute among fellow travellers is enough to cause trust and complacency. In fact, Mother Wisdom is the Designer of this Highway, and she looks well to the welfare of all travelling this road to glory. Everything for the welfare of those found theron is provided. O yes, they do not know as they hope to know, but a lack of knowledge in the travellers on this highway are well provided for. If any lacks wisdom; if any feel to be simple in understanding as a little child is likely to do, let them ask for understanding (Pro. 9). Come, poor sinner, and rest with the saints of God on the highway of holiness that not only leads home, but furnishes every needed thing while journeying hitherwards.

Much a do has been paid to God's humble poor as they have plodded through this world on foot, often that being the only way that they could make a living and fill their appointments. How good it is to be a wayfaring man on this highway. The world would reckon him rather low on the rung of the ladder of success, but what a blessing to be reckoned as a fool, but to have been guided into the highway of holiness, wherein there is not any accidentally or erring or stumbling on to it. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

How beautiful and how precious is the love of God for His people. He has perfected a highway for them, and only He and them are on it. O my God, what love is this. He came from God and He is God. Every one that walks this road to glory, is clean by the imputed righteousness of our blessed Lord. There is not anything unclean on this highway. Just Jesus and His bride. His atoning blood has cleansed each and every traveller, but the cleansing stopped there. Not any

overlapping of the mercy. It reaches each one of them and puts each one on the road to glory, but when that is said, it stops right there.

Now let us look and wonder and adore at something else about this glorious highway. There is not any fear on that highway. Yes, dear aged brother and sister that are now facing old age and the accompanying ills that go with it. For lo these many more than forty years I have come to you year by year with the vigor of the years, but I, too, am facing these aged years when so many problems arise. Wife and I are now old, and we can not plan as we once did. O yes, I am full aware that I have been as helpless in the past seventy nine years as I am now as I am entering my eightieth year. Yes, indeed, I know all that, but there is a difference now. I have to listen to my children, and I have to listen to my doctor (who is good to me), and I have to listen at myself as I argue with myself, that I just cannot do as I used to do. But that is not all, I desire to go as have always gone, asking leave of no one save the Lord, and yet I am confronted with this weakening body. Yes, there is a sense in which many fears come up. Am I strong enough to undertake a trip like that? Many times I am confronted with things that I do not know what to do about. Yet, with this fact that has been my daily companion for a long number of years, I say that I am not filled with any fear about anything for myself or my brethren if we have been remembered by our gracious God to that end. There is not anything on this highway to molest and make afraid of any soldier of the cross. "No lion shall be there." It was by design that the lion was specified, for it is the king of the beast. The king of beasts will not be there, I am sure that Wisdom was not dealing with such things as animals of the forest, but with any devilish character called man, as we have had them in this natural existence. There is not any kind of a being with the cunning and power of the lion that is going to make God's little ones wary of the way. There will not be a Herod nor a Herodias sneaking and lurking on that pleasant highway. What a serene journey. It is not any wonder that David said, "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go up to the house of the Lord." No lion there, no ravenous beast shall go there upon, they shall not be found there. But come dear child, look at the pleasant description of the journeyers there. Only the redeemed will journey in that celestial highway.

As I write and meditate on the grandeur and the height and depth of what I am seeing, I am sure that there is not the slightest bit of indifference with my God as to this highway and what is to travel here and who is to enjoy and reap the benefits of it all. God is the God of purose, He being the only Being in the universe that can purpose and bring it to pass. Before I go further, let me leave on the printed page an opportunity for you to present any being other than He, that is able to purpose and bring it to pass. Very well, I did not think that you could do it. Since you and I both must acknowledge that, is it feasible to think that He would purpose this highway for the redeemed to walk in and leave it indefinite as to whether a lion should walk there or not? Is it feasible to think this of Israel's God? No! No! Not at all. His determinate counsel undergirds and makes safe and sure every purpose that He has ever purposed. There will not be any lion on that highway because He purposed that they not be there. Equally true, and equally amazing, is every other promise made concerning this highway and those that travel there. If God could not purpose them out of the picture, then how could He purpose the safety of the travellers on the highway? If He did purpose that only the redeemed walk there, how did He purpose that the things harmful would

not be there, except that everything about the highway, those that walked there, those that did not walk there, and the assurance of them being there, unless all of the work be covered by His predestination? The Holy Ghost inspired the writer to say 'shall' in regard to the assurance of the travel and the destination of His people, and the same in regard to things other than children of God.

May God give us grace and spiritual courage to contend for all of the truth in all the ways.

Yours in much weakness, but in hope,

ELDER W. D. GRIFFIN

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

WEATHERFORD PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church was organized in the year of 1879 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia and is a member of the Staunton River Association. The Church is located at the Intersection of State Roads 760 and 763, about five miles Northwest of Gretna, Virginia.

Their meeting tims is each 4th Sunday morning at 11:00 O'clock. Elder O. K. Tench is the Pastor and has been a Faithful Servant here for 47 years. Elder Raymond Goad is Assistant Pastor.

CORRESPONDENCE

CONCERNING THE ONES THAT CRUCIFIED THE LORD OF GLORY JESUS CHRIST

To The Signs of The Times

Man is not excusable for neglecting God's will of command. Pharaoh was wicked and therefore justly punishable for not obeying God's revealed will though Abraham would have committed sin had he refused to sacrifice Isaac. And in looking to God's secret

will would have acted counter to his revealed one. So Herod, Pontius Pilate and the reprobate Jews were justly condemned for putting Christ to death. In as much as it was a most notorious breach of God's revealed will. They did no more than God's hand and his counsel - his secret, ordaining will determined before should be done. The wicked will be justly punished. Secret will belongs to God. The revealed will belongs to the Lord's children. Even the apostles of our Lord when he was being crucified did not understand the purpose of God in it. They did not know it was necessary that Christ must suffer and enter into his glory. They had earthly hopes of the restoration of an earthly kingdom. It would appear to human reasoning that with the prophacy concerning the suffering of Christ the prophets declaring before his birth the place of it, the foretelling of manner of his death that a bone of him should not be broken. That they should look on him whom they had pierced. That for his garments they should cast lots. That they would have understood the things. But the Holy Ghost must reveal these things. The carnal mind is always contrary to truth. The apostles were much stronger in predestination after the day of the pentecost. (Taken from D.V.S.) And Luke also says, "Then he took unto him the twelve and said unto them. Behold! We go up to Jerusalem and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles. And shall be mocked, and spitted on: And they shall scourage him. And put him to death: And the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things: And this saying was hid from them. Neither knew they the things which was spoken. Then said Jesus unto his disciples and apostles that thought that this should not be done, forgive them Father, for they know not what they do. They didn't think that Jesus should be curcified. Jesus never prayed for the wicked or for the world but for them the Father gave him out of the world."

In Daniel 12:8 "And I heard. But I understood not: Then said I, O my Lord. What shall be the end of these things? And he said. Go thy way Daniel: For the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified and made white. And tried: But the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand." You can trace the wicked all the way from Cane through Esau through the ones that killed the Lord and Savior, the Son of God.

I like when writing or preaching that they would let me know just where they stand on these things. I have heard several that go close to Judas, then go around an not let you know where they stood. I don't believe you will have to guess where I stand on this subject. Knowing that it is possible to be deceived.

I Thes. 2nd Chapter, verses 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 puts it this way. Beginning at the 11 to 16 verses. "As ye know how we exhorted and comfort and charged everyone of you as a father doth his children that ye would walk worthy of God. Who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. For this cause also, thank we God without ceasing because when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye recieved it not as the word of men but as it is in truth. The word of God. Which effectually worketh also in you that believe. For ye, brethren became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen even as they have of the Jews. Now pay attention to this fifteenth verse - Who both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets and have persecuted us and they pleased not God

and are contrary to all men. 16 verse forbidding us to speak to the gentiles that they might be saved. To fill up their sins always for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost. You notice we said above that the wrath had come upon them which was the wrath of God, not man.

Romans 1: 18 speaks of the wrath which says, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness was speaking of those pharisees Jews and gentiles and all that had to do with the murdering of the Lord Jesus.

In Acts 7: 52 says which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted. And they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the just one of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers. In Rev. 18: 24 And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all that were slain upon the earth. If it was all that was slain upon the earth, was not the Christ slain upon the earth.

Now let us look at the 8 chapter of John. It would do well to read the whole chapter but will only write a few verses. 8: 38, I speak that which I have seen with my Father and ye do that which ye have seen with your Father. In verse 40 - But now you seek to kill me. A man that has told you the truth which have heard of God: This did not Abraham. You do the deeds of your Father. Then say they to him we be not born of fornication; we have one Father. Even God Jesus said unto them if God were your Father ye would love me. Verse 43, Why do ye not understand my speech even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your Father the devil and the lust of your Father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie he speaketh of his own for he is a liar and the father of it. Verse 47 says, he that is of God heareth God's words. ye therefore hear them not because ye are not of God. I would like to know how much more any one that has received a hope in Jesus would need to hear. That those that killed the Lord Jesus Christ was not his people. They continued to kill the prophets. They beat Paul the Apostle, threw him out for dead long after they killed Jesus. Paul says you are the ones that killed the prince of peace and desired a murderer. You would do well to read the whole 20th chapter of Luke for that 20th chapter treats on this subject. The 20th chapter, 9th verse says, "Then began he to speak to the people this parable: A certain man planted a vineyard and let it forth to husbandmen and went into a far country for a long time and at season he sent a servant to the husbandmen that they should give him of the vineyard but the husbandmen beat him and sent him away empty." So they sent others, some they beat, some they killed until at last he sent his beloved son. It may be they will reverence him when they see him. Verses 15-17 says, "So they cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. What therefore shall the Lord of the vineyard do unto them? He shall come and destroy these husbandmen and shall give the vineyard to others and when they heard it they said, God forbid, and he beheld them and said, what is this then that is written, the stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? And the chief priest and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him. And they feared the people for they preceived that he had spoken this parable against them and they watched him and sent forth spies. They feared the people, not God. The scripture says the ones that crucified the Lord of Glory was the wicked. If you deny the separation you have denied the election and predestination, fore knowledge, and power of almighty God and

our Lord and savior Jesus Christ. I know that this is a very controversial subject with some of our people but not so much as it was some few years ago.

In 22 Psalms, 16 verse says in types and shadow don't you think? 16 verse says, "For dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me, they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones, they look and stare upon me, they part my garments among them and cast lots upon my vesture." Sure seems very plain to me that he was crucified for his people but not by them.

John 6: 64, "But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus from the beginning knew who they were that believed not, and who should betray him." So you see he said they, meaning more than one, not just Judas. In Acts 4: 25-29 says, "Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, why did the heathen rage and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus whom thou has annointed. Both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. And now, Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word." In this 4-26 Acts, they were called heathens. Now pray tell me what becomes of the heathen? You know, Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, crucified and slain these wicked men were raised up for this very purpose just as Pharoah was. All things were foreordained and predestinated. Whatsoever come to pass. In Acts 5: 27-29 says: "And when they had brought them, they set them before the consel, and the high priest asked them, saying, did not we strictly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and behold ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, we ought to obey God rather than men." Now I know that this is a very controversial subject and may wish I had never written it. There is so much more on this subject that could be said but this is what it is to me. If I send this to be published, please do what you will with it. Thank you.

We have here in Florida what is called Old Baptist, but I call them Universalists because they don't have any separation between the wicked and the sinner. They take into the covenant with the elect, all those that killed the Lord Jesus Christ, Judas also, and Esau, Cane, which are the wicked. To do that where would your separation be? You would have Universalists, which would be a no hell doctrine. Universal means that all would go to the same place. Some thought it an awful thing to say that God was the author of sin. Rightly so, so do I, but I had just as well say that he was the author of sin as to say that God loved the wicked. He didn't love Esau, did he? I believe that God made the devil to be the author of Sin, but to say he, God, loved the wicked would be to say God loved the devil, which is the most wicked thing in the world. So you see sometimes, you can be holding to one thing and be just as wrong on another. Those that killed the Lord, the Bible says was the wicked. Now we know that God's elect has done wicked acts, but they were not of that wicked one. Now to put things where they belong would be to put the wicked all on the left hand and the elect on the right hand. That would clean things up where they belong and not try to put the wicked and the righteous all together. I may be talking to hard for some, but not

as I see it. Now I know that we have some among us that try to say that Jesus prayed for them that crucified the Lord of Glory, but the apostles and those that stood afar off and wept thought that that shouldn't be done, didn't know what they were doing, and the Lord of Glory said forgive them Father for they know not what they do. Jesus prayed not for the world but for them that the Father gave him out of the world, not for the wicked.

I could write this much more, but I don't think it would be necessary. Will close for now. Come to see us when you can.

Yours in hope,
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ARTICLES

THE LORD'S PEOPLE

Some Of Their Characteristic Marks, Blessings, &c.

Dear Brethren, Sisters and Friends:

That there is a people peculiarly the Lord's people, in distinction from a people that are not, is abundantly proven by the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments. That the Lord has chosen this people for himself out of all kindreds, tongues and nations, and that they should by the Holy Spirit be called out from the world and separated unto himself, and live in this world of sin and sorrow in all periods of time, to the praise of his glorious grace, is also plainly taught. This people is also so plainly described, and the marks which characterize them, together with the forces with which they must ever be at war, are so plainly set forth in the pages of holy writ, that we need not mistake when we read. The holy Spirit has moved men to declare, "The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." "I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver, I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" "Chosen us in him (Christ) that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty and not many noble, are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty,

and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught the things that are." "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is Lord of lords and King of kings: and they that are with him are called and chosen and faithful." "And after this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. * * * And he said unto me, these are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." The foregoing quotations from several different inspired writers certainly is sufficient to sustain the remarks preceding them, though only a small portion of what might be quoted. This people God has most wonderfully blessed, and it is of these blessings, as provided by God the Father in his eternal purpose, and given them in his Son before the foundation of the world, and the possession and enjoyment of them in their personal experience of them, I wish more particularly to speak in this letter. Paul the apostle said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him." From this we learn that the source of all spiritual blessings in Christ, and that they are bestowed according to God's choice of the recipient in Christ before the foundation of the world. O, how manifold and wonderful are the blessings of God in Christ. They are all in Christ, not one ever came from any other source. Understanding this we may truly sing with the poet,

"Come, thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing thy grace;
Streams of mercy never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise."

To their spiritual David and his people identified with him, the covenant promise of the Father is, "My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments, if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me."

The visitation of the rod, and the stripes due for the transgressions of his people, was brought to bear upon their blessed covenant head, Jesus Christ, when he hung upon the bloody cross. So the prophet Isaiah could say, "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned everyone to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." His people are called members of his body, bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. Thus identified with him each member of his body must experience in some measure the pain and suffering of the Head, and "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." And to his people it is said, "For unto you it is given in behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Also, "If we suffer we shall also reign with him."

So then if we are his, every particle of suffering we endure for Jesus' sake, or on account of him, or because we are his, is a God provided and given blessing in behalf of Christ. Even the measure of chastisements that falls to our lot as a member of his body, is a covenant blessing of God, and "No chastisement for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous, but afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness in them that are exercised thereby." All his children must endure chastisement in some measure, for, "If ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons." Chastisements truly bring grief and sorrow, but who among all the saints would want to be without the evidence they afford, or without the peacable fruits they yield? How the children sometimes complain and writhe under the rod, and when some grievous trouble comes upon them, they feel to say like Jacob of old, "All these things are against me." When in the course of time this very thing has turned their mind again to the Lord, and they are brought down at his feet in humble and loving submission. To-day it became necessary for me to chastise a little grandchild for waywardness and disobedience. The desired effect was soon realized. An expression of willingness was given to do as required, and in a short time she came into the room where I was, and putting her arms around my neck said, "Pa, I won't be bad any more." Every affliction, grief and sorrow, that comes upon his children according to God's purpose and promise, are destined to work together with all things else for their good, and not one among all these things comes to them by chance. If his people are brought low down in grief and sorrow, the Lord in his own way and time lifts them up and comforts them. If they become idolatrous, or in any way too highly exalted, in his own way and time he brings them down, weans them from their idols, and this all according to his covenant promise in Christ. It is written, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." Jesus was ever, is now and ever will be the Savior, and the only Savior of his people. "His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." "In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them and carried them all the days of old." What a blessed people! What a wonderful Redeemer and Savior! He by whom and for whom the worlds were created, the possessor of all things, having all power in heaven and on earth, holding in his own hand even the keys of death and of hell. Well and truly was it said by one of old, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency; and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places." And again, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord: and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." This people have the promise of God that he will never leave them nor forsake them. In every sorrow, trial and temptation, though he seems to tarry long, yet will he manifest himself as their Comforter and Deliverer. "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God." "He is not slack concerning his promises to us as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any (of us) should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Then I would say to the poor, tempted, afflicted and sorrowing one, take courage from the foregoing considerations, no matter what the nature, or what you may consider the cause of your troubles. Your Savior is able to save you out of all your troubles, and from all your sins. All

his wisdom and power and riches is engaged in your behalf, and his promise is to you. Is not the very groanings of your spirit, prayer that he will save you from your troubles, from sin, from self? And is it not a fact that languishing on the bed of affliction, or a heavy sorrow resting on your heart, or smarting under the rod, you feel welling up in your heart an earnest desire for a resigned spirit that you may be able to say, "Thy will be done"? I say again, take courage, for no one but a heavenborn subject ever felt this longing desire towards God. You are admonished to "Look to Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith." He endured the cross, despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God. Think on him, "lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Think of the anguish of soul he endured in the garden of Gethsemane. As a consequence the sweat rolled off of him as it were great drops of blood. The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man had not where to lay his head. Although the earth and the fullness thereof was his, it was not his to use as the rich of this world, the kings and nobles did. But both the world, its wealth, and those who for the time had it in possession, were his. So of his people the apostle encouragingly says, "All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

I have witnessed a few times in life, languishing upon beds of disease and bodily suffering some of the most humble, devoted and spiritual minded of the Lord's people. They seemed to have been brought into close fellowship with their Lord. What a contrast I have been made to see between their condition of mind and my own; quite as much apparently as between our bodily health. I have been made to realize this especially in reading the writings of the late Mary Parker. So often in the furnace of affliction God's children are enjoying the richest of his blessings. In all our doubts, perplexities, afflictions, temptations and trials, we learn by experience that our salvation is not in our own hands; that our Lord alone can save. "By grace are (not were) ye saved." So our salvation even in time is not by works of righteousness which we can do, but by grace, "through faith, and that not of ourselves, but it is the gift of God." Afflictions, sorrows, trials and temptations, go largely to make up the experience of this life, as a necessary (and I believe a purposed) preparation to enable us to sing the final song of all the redeemed, "Not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake." Such is the condition then of the Lord's poor and afflicted in this life, by reason of foes within and without, that "If in this life only we have hope in Christ Jesus, we are of all men most miserable." But there is a time and place when and where sorrow and sighing shall be felt and known no more forever. The little foretastes of love and joy felt here, earnests of our inheritance beyond, shall burst in the full blaze of fruition beyond this vail of sorrows, perplexities, doubts and fears. Although "it doth not yet appear what we shall be," yet the strongest desire we have while sojourning here is to be realized, viz: to be like our blessed Lord. Our vile body is to be changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself. Yes, I do believe that there is a sphere of state of being beyond this life of turmoil, sin and sorrow, where the redeemed of the Lord shall be with and like Jesus, and shall be gathered in one great blood-washed throng, to praise their Redeemer Lord throughout the ceaseless ages of an unbounded eternity, unmolested by sin or any of its consequences.

These things, though feebly expressed. I believe to be true of the Lord and

his people, whether I am one of them or not.

In the hope that I am not mistaken in my hope, I am yours in fellowship,

H. B. JONES.

In the first place, at the beginning of this writing, I desire to impress it very clearly upon every readers mind, that in the writing which follows, there is the total absence of any intent in both my mind and heart, to even slightly indicate or infer of even the minutest particle of the excusing of any of mankind for his or her sinful weakedness; but rather instead, to the uppermost extreamity, may both our minds and hearts never lose sight of this one Holy true fact of truth, and that is that the three-in-one God does all the good and Holy things; and that mankind does all the sinful and wicked things. While at the same time (God willing), let us never lose sight of this very fact of truth also—and that is in all time for this world to stand, nothing has ever or shall ever take place, what did ever come as any surprise whatsoever to the "Almighty God," and this applys assuredly also to time, place, and the very manner in which it all came about, and furthermore all what has any direct or indirect connection with it, and all resultings what come from it.

It is that evil intent, within both the mind and heart of mankind, while performing an act, wherein lieth the whole of the wickedness concerning such performance; therefore, the transgression of "God's Holy Law" lieth entirely and only within that evil intent which were in mankinds mind and heart, while so performing that act. In other words, manking meant it to accomplish his evil or wicked purpose.

Just as it were in both the mind and heart of Joseph's brethren, when they sold him to the Egyptians, their only purpose was an evil and wicked one; while God's purpose in the whole matter was and is to accomplish His Holy purpose; one being surely to save much people alive; and that assuredly to be in and only in His way and manner and time and place. And my friends, I do feel and believe with all my heart and soul, that is the sum total of how every act and performance ever performed in this time world is, where man in his own wicked nature is involved, mans intent and purpose is evil and wicked; while God's intent and purpose in and for the whole matter is good and Holy. If God so will, then His greatness and goodness is the one and only thing I can rightly boast of.

Mankind has never and shall never, bring his evil and wicked intent and purpose into its ultimate and final accomplishment and conclusion. But the God in whom is my hope and trust, will surely use all things what take place in all time for this world to stand, for to bring untimate conclusion and final consumation and accomplishment of His every purpose in and for so having created this world in the first place.

You see, this great and Holy God of whom I speak, is the One and only true and Holy and Almighty, all in all Three-In-One eternal unchanging and everlasting God who holds and controls all power both in heaven and earth, for which can be and is used to furnish every ounce of strength for every thought of every mind and every movement of every body both great and small, in all time for this world to stand. And not only that, my friends, but all this time world and the fullness thereof ever has been and is entirely and wholly dependent upon this "God", even for its very existance, much less for its every movement while here. So you see my friends, there never has been and never shall be but just one and only just one thing, of which mankind could ever RIGHTLY boast of (if God

willing), and that is of His "God" greatness. And so my friends, in order to be consistant with my feelings and belief as above stated, is it so great a wonder that I do most assuredly believe in the absolute predestination of ALL things by this great merciful and almighty God.

And so therein, is left no room or opening for any one of mankind to render any praise of himself or another for anything. For without His furnishings, we can neither exist nor do any-thing. I have no doubt but that God's will be done. I just desire that I might be given a willingness that His will be done. But I feel to know for a certainty, that it is impossible for me, except that so be His pleasure.

It seems to me, that in order for one to feel that any or all of satan's and mankinds sinful meanness and wickedness, could ever in any way shape or form, either hender, hasten, stop or delay even for one trillionth of a second, God' plan and purpose in and for so having created this world and the fullness thereof; or that any or all has ever come as any degree of a surprise to God, or has to even the minutest degree brought about any change to God's mind or purpose; then that one who believes that such could ever be possible, must as an absolute necessity, also (in order to be consistant in his or her belief) believe that at some point in time and circumstances, satan or the devil must have had more power than God.

If a man should take all his worldly riches and give them to the poor widows and orphans; can that man of himself be (rightly) praised? I say no, ten-thousand times no. Now why do I say no? I feel first of all, that it is by reason of God's grace and mercy unto this poor and self helpless sinner, I could feel or say such. For I feel that within that process whereby I received these blessed gifts. I were given to feel and believe that after all, who beside this great and merciful "God" created and made my body and brain and furnish every ounce of strength necessary for its every function; and furthermore that His every creation was and is created perfect, in that it shall surely function to exactness in such manner, time and place, as to fulfill that very and exact purpose for which He made and created it for and to do in His having created it for in the first place. And my friends, there just can be no variation, slip-up, hastening or delay in that process of its every function, as was in both His mind and purpose while creating and making all things. And so now my friends; In as much as be in accord with His Holy will, may we ever be kept in rememberance of this very one thing—that each and every instance we were ever able to even think or feel or speak of His greatness and goodness, or able to pray unto Him for mercy; we were able to do so only by reason this great and merciful Three-In-One-God did ENABLE us so to do, and that only by reason it was His pleasure so to do. His willingness to, and pleasure in, so ENABLING us to do these things, is that very and only great cause of our every ability so to do. He just simply is our All in All. And that just simply is the Holy truth as it is in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I just feel to hope I am thankful unto God, that He is in no need of mine or others help, and so therefore, neither allows nor accepts any help from mankind in the operation of His government. Because, for me to feel and believe otherwise, my sweet and precious hope would be completely gone.

But, just so long as one still feels or believes, even to the slightest degree, that they or any other of mankind has ever or could ever do anything, even to the most minute degree, to in any way shape or form, either hasten, hinder, alter or help in the operation of God's government; then he nor she will ever fully concede to that principle under which unalterably declares of the abso-

lute predestination of ALL-things, by this merciful and almighty God. For this Predestination of "God" I have spoken of; allows of absolutely no confidence in the fleshly mankind; as having anything to do with or pertaining to the Holy Spiritual things of the true and living God and Lord and His Church.

In traveling around in this world we see oh so very many pictures, plaques, and monuments too, the expression of great accomplishments (so called) of different members of the human race; even in and around different church meeting houses, even some old or primitive Baptist meeting houses (which some call Churches).

But just so as The Lord God has said—vengeance is Mine, so does all praise rightfully belong to and only to Him.

And so, any and all plaques or otherwise expressions of praise toward any one or more of mankind for their accomplishments, can be and is no more of true worth than that of filthy rags. For otherwise the "Three-In-One God" could not be an All-in-All God.

Whenever it be and is God's pleasure to speak unto His children, thru the mouth of one of His Ordained Ministers, or a word of comfort thru the mouth of any one of His Children unto another; does this in any way shape or form justify the receiver of this comfort from those words, to render one iota of praise unto that one from whose lips those words of comfort came, as if they themselves helped in any manner, in originating or delivering of those words unto ones poor soul? I say no, ten thousand times no. For to my mind and heart that would be like subtracting (at the very least) a portion of that whole honor of which God is fully and wholly and Holy justified in receiving.

Now this is not to in any way or manner subtract from that deep and abiding love one brother is to have for another, by reason of what one has seen and felt of the manifestation of the Lord' working within one of his Brethren.

Written By: Troy Shepard
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Sent in by Elder Henry Jones

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

LUKE X. 25-27

"And who is my neighbor?"

This question was asked by a lawyer who desired to justify himself, and who previously, in answer to the interrogation from Jesus, "What is written in the law? how readest thou?" had said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." And Jesus answered him, "Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live." We believe that no man but Jesus ever kept that wonderful commandment, and though Jesus, after showing who was neighbor to the man fallen among thieves, said, "Go, and do thou likewise." yet neither the lawyer nor any other man of himself but Jesus could play the neighbor's part. Only Jesus loved the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his strength, and with all his mind, and his neighbor as himself. He laid down his life for his neighbor. In considering the parable of the man fallen among thieves we believe Jesus is setting forth a great truth for the comfort and edification of his people. The parable begins, "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho." This certain man does not represent Adam before he fell, nor

does it represent the natural man after the fall, for he is dead, not half dead, but it represents a child of God, one who is in a covenant, the covenant of grace which is ordered in all things and sure. By Jerusalem is meant that Jerusalem above which is the mother of us all. Thus this certain man is of that number that no man can number and we believe that he has tasted that the Lord is gracious, but for some reason not explained in the parable, he went from Jerusalem to Jericho. Before we dwell upon that, we would give our view of what Jericho means. In the early history of Israel, we come across a city named Jericho, it was on its walls that Rahab lived, and it was there that she hid the spies sent out by Joshua and that city fell before Israel at the sound of the trumpet and the shout of the people. It was from that city that the wedge of gold and the Babylonish garment were taken by Achan, which offence brought disaster upon Israel at the first attack upon the town of Ai. Poor Rahab and her household were saved, but the city and all therein were put to the sword and Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, "Cursed be the man before the Lord, that raiseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it." We find in the dark and cloudy days of Ahab, that wicked king of Israel, that Hiel, a Bethelite, built Jericho. He laid the foundation thereof in Abiram, his first-born and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son, Segub. Abiram means father of height, pride and lordliness, and Segub has a similar meaning. Thus we notice that the man who built Jericho was cursed before the Lord and the city was built upon what proceeded from him, his first-born, the father of height, pride and lordliness, and it sets forth a lordly fleshly religion which glories in self and self-aggrandizement. Thus it is from Jerusalem to Jericho that the certain man goes down. The prophet wrote, All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way. The Galatians began in the Spirit and wanted to be made perfect in the flesh; in other words, they went down to Jericho and fell among thieves. Many of the saints to-day began well, we cannot question that the work of the Spirit has been begun in them, yet we find them lured by the fragrance of Jericho. (Jericho means fragrance, but it is not the fragrance of the garden of God, but of creature excellency, worldliness and vain glory.) They lose their steadfastness and ere, long find themselves in the company of thieves. It is a child of God who can be robbed and spoiled. A worlding, whether professor or profane, has nothing, he is already dead, but a child of God who looks to the flesh is leaving, in his mind and thought, the security of the blessed city whose builder and maker is God. The walls of Jerusalem are secure, no power can overthrow them, outside are thieves and robbers. In the shalls and wills of Jehovah the child of God is secure, but men go down, and as surely as they do they fall among thieves. Sometimes the thieves are men who have been esteemed as Elders in the church. It is true they are called servants of God, but every time they speak in the name of the Lord they rob God, they belittle his word and would strip him of his power and glory. They take their knives, like the prophets of Baal, but instead of cutting themselves they cut and hack at the truth of God and would teach a righteousness of the flesh, at the same time stripping God's dear saints of raiment that God his Father has provided for them. Thus such thieves grieve and wound when they are through with their work, the child of God, mangled and mauled by them, is left half dead. Such preachers, though going by the scriptural name of Elders, belong to the den of thieves, and nothing puts

such to flight but a "Thus saith the Lord." Many years ago in our native village of Rowley Regis, England, there was an old saint, named Betty Rollinson, who had often been stripped and wounded by such thieves, and one day when a man of God stood up in that strange place and preached the truth she saw the people begin to get up and walk out, and at last, stamping her crutches on the floor, she said, "Fly, fly, this is the gospel." Many suffer at the hand of false preachers who are thieves, and the thief cometh not but to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. They hate predestination because it puts God above men, devils or sin, and as the word says, they only consult to cast Him down from His excellency, they delight in lies. There are many other ways that this certain man, in his journey, will fall among thieves. For there are those that will be rich, as Paul tells in 1 Timothy vi. 9, 10: But they that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some covet after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." Always, as we follow after the flesh, we find that our joy and peace are gone, for the flesh is under a curse, and when our soul is lifted up in us we are not walking by faith. This certain man was so stripped and so wounded that he was left half dead. How good it is that it does not read he was left quite dead. That would not be true, for though men and devils aim to kill they cannot exceed our Father's will. True all his joy was gone, he was stripped, yes, and wounded sore, yet there was still life there. The devil could not touch Job's life; if he could have done so he certainly would, but God's purpose is above, in and through all things that come to pass and it is for the lifting of Jesus on high. "And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side." Thus we see both the priest and the Levite passed by on the other side, giving no word of comfort, binding up none of his wounds. The priest, as a representative of the moral law, and the Levite, of the ceremonial law, neither could nor would minister to such an one. The law shows up an offense and can only be on the side of those who keep it. The law is not merciful, even though one is stripped and wounded. Neither the law nor those who administer it could clothe the naked guilty soul or ease the pain of those wounded that sin had made. "But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was." Jesus was a son of Abraham, but the Jews despised him, and in hating would call him a Samaritan, and we believe Jesus is that certain Samaritan, who as he journeyed, came that way. By man came disobedience, by man, the man Christ Jesus, came obedience. He came that way, he came in the likeness of sinful flesh. As he journeyed he came where he was. He could not get up and go to Jesus, but Jesus came where he was. Oh, what a blessed Lord Jesus we have, to come when we least deserve him, but just when we need him the most. "And when he saw him." Jesus had seen him all the time, even when the thieves were stripping him, and such power had he that not one of them could have touched the poor erring man if Jesus had said no, but this poor erring man must know the kindness, love and condescension of Jesus, therefore the thieves are there, all their malice and rage, all their cruelty and crime wreaked upon him, will, in the mercy of God, make the coming of this certain Samaritan the most wonderful event in the erring man's life. He did not pass him by. He never has, he

never will. He went to him. The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. He did not journey for those who have never been stripped, never been wounded, never sinned. He did not come for little sinners, but all God's people are big sinners, vile worms they feel themselves to be, and he came for such.

"And he went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine." This is the Lord's work, it has not been given to mortal man of himself to bind up the wounds of his brother, but Jesus does. You may wound your brother, and you should confess your sorrow for it, but it is Jesus only that binds up the wound, pouring in oil and wine, the oil of joy and the wine of the gospel, to stimulate and warm his poor heart and enable him to forget his poverty.

"And set him on his own beast." Such treatment would indeed revive his fainting soul and make him to admire amazing grace for saving a wretch like him, He "set him on his own beast." Although this poor man had been very active in sin, he was passive in the hands and mercy of the good Samaritan. This beast then represents just the means or way that Christ has of carrying his poor erring people. It is not man's way. Some may refer to this beast as representing the minister of the gospel; we do not feel that it matters. It was the Samaritan's way and the very beast he himself rode on, that this poor wounded man had to ride. In his majesty Jesus rode prosperously, and we believe that it is Jesus that raises us up, enables us to go forward in the strength of the Lord, and in the majesty of our God. He rides a white horse, the white horse of the gospel, and his people are raised, free from condemnation, pure and white, and he has placed them there.

"And brought him to an inn, and took care of him." Churches of Christ here in this world are like inns placed at convenient places along the way for the rest and refreshment of the weary travellers. A person who is at home in the world will not need such a place, but it is to such places Jesus brings his poor afflicted saints. Only Jesus can bring them, if he does not bring them they are in their wrong place and will soon show it. In this inn there is a bed of comfort for such an one, it is the love of God, and such can and do sing, "Father, we rest in thy love."

"And took care of him." Such was his mercy when he brought him there that he did not commit his care to any other while he was with him. With us, when he brought us to his people, it was one of the days of the Son of man, and perfect love cast out fear. He gave us sips of his love and we partook of the fatted calf. He brought forth the best robe, and took care of all our needs, and he left us in the hands of our brethren, having given the Elder of the church, who is the host of the inn, two pence, currency not of the world but of the Lord's people, each made in the same value for the comfort of the saints and the work of the ministry, that the man of God, the host, might be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. These two pence imply that Jesus has given his servant (and he only has the power to give) a faith in both the New and Old Testaments, that they are the very word of God, each having his likeness, the likeness of Jesus upon them, and both are for the comfort and edification of the saints. Thus the host, or Elder, has nothing from the Master in which to traffic but his word, or the two pence. So Paul told Timothy to study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. This was a gift, it was not a bargain, neither did the host set the price, and by this gift the host set the price, and by this gift the host was bound as a steward of the manifold mysteries of God to be faithful to his charge. Take "care of him." Feed the flock of God over which the Holy

Ghost has made you overseers. Take care of them as those who shall give an accounting. Feed them, encourage them-cheer them, wash their feet. Preach the word, and as you spend and are spent be sure of this, that whatever they are indebted to you, Jesus will make up when he comes again. This coming again to some may mean when he shall descend from heaven with a shout, but we here are disposed to suggest that he does in Spirit come into our midst from time to time and then the things that are wanting are easily numbered. If we are weary in his service, if we are tired, because of many cares, if we are grieved because of some slight, or because brethren have been unkind (and brethren when in the flesh can be very unkind), whatever it may be, even if we have been fretting under the yoke, or rebellious at the cross, when he comes he makes amends for all. Thus the priest and the Levite, who were teachers of the law, could not be called neighbors to this man, neither is he who teaches morality to-day a comfort to God's erring children, for morality can never take the place of the work of God's Spirit within, nor can the one who seeks to justify himself play the neighbor's part. It is Jesus who is the neighbor and only the Spirit of Jesus Christ in us will enable us to restore an erring brother, the Spirit of Christ will enable us to consider ourselves lest we be tempted. The wicked, tempting, self-justifying spirit that the lawyer possessed, which sometimes may be found in brethren, can no more love his neighbor than he can love the Lord his God with all his heart, soul, strength and mind. Those who profess the name of Jesus Christ also profess that they are led by the Spirit, but one can get very proud, haughty and hardened when in the flesh. How fearful it is when we consider the hardness of the heart of man, who, while forgiven the ten thousand talents he owed, will lay hands on the throat of a fellow-servant who owes him a hundred pence, saying, pay me that thou owest. Brethren, this ought not so to be, for even if it is the host of the inn, he could not take from the poor, wounded, robbed man, for he had not anything, but, "When I come again, I will repay thee." So whatever care or sorrow the brethren may cause us, when Jesus comes into our midst he will give full recompense. The apostle John says, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us (who are poor, miserable, erring wretches, needing mercy every hour); and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." Brethren can do very wrong. Who has not? Let us examine ourselves. It is only with a spirit that Christ gives that we can be nerciful. It is mercy that melts a heart of stone. Mercy was the one thing that the poor publican craved. He smote upon his breast, he did not justify himself, but Jesus lifted him up and took him under his care and keeping; in other words, he justified him. Yes, stripped and spoiled as we often are, wounded, sick and sore, what do we crave but mercy? The mercy of the brethren, the mercy of God, and he who is humbled under the mighty power of God to the lowest of the low, he then can cheer others, and does bind up their wounds, he is enabled by the Hold Spirit, the Comforter, with the word of the Lord to bind up the brokenhearted. After he has done all, so humble is he and lowly in heart that he savs. What have I done? It is the Lord, for it is in him and through him that his children do any good thing.

Elder George Ruston

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them"

Mat. 7:12

CONTRIBUTIONS

May 1985

Mr. & Mrs. R.H. Gauldin, NC.	$ 5.00
James W. Arrington, NC.	2.00
In memory Rufus C. Roberson, LA.	15.00
Mrs. Nannie Arrington, VA.	2.00
Eld. J.Y. McCormick, FL.	2.00
Mrs. Gaye A. Thompson, VA.	5.00
Mrs. Lora B. Tullos, AR.	5.00
Mr. & Mrs. Ira Bell, VA.	5.00
Bryan L. Shockley, MD.	10.00
John F. Simpson, FL.	7.00
Mrs. H.A. Harlow, TX.	5.00
Floyd Oakley, AR.	1.00
Mrs. Elva Spikes, OR.	2.00
Miss Reidy Pickral, VA.	50.00
Mrs. Julia Ada, MD.	2.00
Mr. & Mrs. Krewatch, MD. In memory Eld. D.V. Spangler.	35.00
Mrs. E.R. Graves, AL.	5.00
Henry B. Shockley, MD.	7.00
Mrs. Lillian Gilliam, NC.	5.00
William E. Mitchell, VA.	2.00

MEETINGS

PIG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Pig River Association will be held, the Lord willing, the first Sunday in August, Friday and Saturday before (August 2, 3 & 4, 1985).

Rocky Mount is the Host for this setting of the Association.

The meeting place will be Rocky Mount High School, Rocky Mount, Virginia.

Come into Rocky Mount on 220 Highway and exit onto Highway 40 going west. Take second Street to left to the High School.

We invite all our Brethren and Sisters that are in peace and good standing at home to seat with us.

Jammie E. Cooper
Association Clerk

SOUTH ARKANSAS ASSOCIATION

The next Session of the Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association will Convene with Pilgrim Rest Church, September 13-15, 1985.

Take highway 167, five miles north of Fordyce, Ark. and turn left on highway 273, the Church is located one-half mile on the left.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

Elder J.C. Townley, Moderator
Frances Townley, Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

If God be willing, the next session of the South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Union Church beginning on Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, (Sept. 20, 21, 22), and continue three days.

Union Church is located three miles north-east of Linville, La. and near Marion, La.

All who love the truth as it is in Jesus Christ are welcome.

If more information is needed, please call or write:

Clifford Wilbanks
217 Bastrop Drive
Monroe, La. 71203
Dial 318-343-5473

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Smith River Primitive Baptist Association is to convene, the Lord willing, with the Church at Long Branch, first Sunday in September, 1985, beginning on Friday & Saturday before.

The Church is located on Highway No. 40, approximately 9 miles west of Ferrum, Virginia.

We look forward to meeting the Saints there.

Yours in Hope,
Elder Amos I. Hash

BELL SPUR MEETING

Pursuant to the request of Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church, County of Carroll, a Presbytery met 2:00 P.M., April 20, 1985 at Bell Spur for the examination of Brother Alan Terry, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of the Deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Amos I. Hash. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the Presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders Amos I. Hash, Hale Terry, Larry Hollandsworth and Licente Carl Terry. Deacons listed below:

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Amos I. Hash as Moderator and Claude R. Hopkins as Clerk. Elder Larry Hollandsworth was chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Deacon Carl Terry having been duly appointed spokesman by Bell Spur Church, delivered Brother Alan Terry to the Presbytery. Examination was made by Elder Larry Hollandsworth using scripture from Acts 6th. Chapter. The Presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Hale Terry. Elder Larry Hollandsworth delivered the charge to the candidate. Scripture reference was Acts 6th. Chapter.

The Moderator asked Bell Spur Church if the church approved the work of the Presbytery, which was answeree in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to Brother Alan Terry and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained Alan Terry was delivered back to the church as an ordained Deacon of the Old School, Primitive Baptist Church at Bell Spur Church.

The minutes consisting of the work of the Presbytery were read and adopted. The Presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Larry Hollandsworth.

Deacons present

C. T. Conner	Grover Semones
J. Nelson Bryant	Vance Duncan
T. G. Lovell	H. D. Ingram
C. R. Childress	R. L. Wright
L. W. Nichols	Carl Terry
Claude R. Hopkins	

Elder Amos I. Hash, Moderator
Deacon Claude R. Hopkins, Clerk

FALLS OF THE TAR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH
Rocky Mount, North Carolina

Ordination of Brother Clyde DeBow to the full work of the Gospel Ministry, and Brothers James Arrington and Arnold Rasmussen as Deacons.

A Presbytery was called consisting of Elder D. B. Stokes, Elder Bill Everette, Elder Paul R. Lamb, Sr. and Deacons S. B. Brown, Pete Smith, Hassell Allen, Clyde Pridgen, M. D. Simmons, Jr., Marcus Armstrong, Milton Fountain, Thelbert Hocutt, Odis Daughtridge, Thomas Pennington, and M. D. Sim-

mons, Sr.

The Presbytery was called into conference. Conference was opened with praise and prayer by Elder Everette.

A motion was made and carried for Elder Stokes to sit as Moderator.

A motion was made and carried for Sister Frances Arrington to serve as Clerk.

The candidates were presented to the Presbytery by Deacons Clyde Pridgen and Marcus Armstrong of the Falls of Tar River Church.

Elder Stokes asked the Church if it was agreed to set Brother DeBow apart as a Minister and Brothers Arrington and Rusmussen as Deacons. It was unanimously agreed.

Elder Lamb and Elder Everette had no charge to make to the candidates.

Elder Stokes asked Brothers Arrington and Rasmussen what they understood their duty as a Deacon to be. They answered, "to be a servant to the Church and act in a Godly manner." Elder Stokes told them to make decisions by the Lord's guidance and serve the people always with a "Thus saith the Lord" attitude. Whoever your Pastor may be, always see that he is taken care of, and if the church does not, reprimand them if needful. A servant is worthy of his hire. He asked the members not to tie their hands.

To Brother DeBow Elder Stokes said; "Your life will not be your own. You cannot keep all arrangements. You may not always have a mind to go, but remember the ones who need you. You can sing praises to God wherever there are but a few as well as if there are many. Go as you are called by the Holy Spirit. Go ye unto all the world and preach the gospel wherever you have the opportunity. Look to the word of God when you are in trouble. The One who called our disciples called us. To Sister DeBow he said to do the best you can. You will find joy from time to time, but the way will be hard. Elder Stokes read from the book of St. Mark Chapter 16, verses 15 through 18. He asked the visiting Deacons if they had any words for the candidates. Brother Hassell Allen told them they were set apart to serve the Church, not to run it, to take the Church body and make decisions.

The Presbytery laid hands on the candidates in prayer. Elder Everette asked God to incline them always to look to him for guidance and strength; Elder Lamb said "we come with humble hearts: we ask thee to continue your blessings on them." Elder Stokes said, "We thank you for the gifts of the Church. May your spirit go forth with them and give them understanding. Bless their families. Walk with them in their lonely hours. They have the love of the people. May they serve them humbly, remembering they are servants."

Brother DeBow was presented back to the Church as an ordained Minister and Brothers Arrington and Rasmussen as Deacons.

Moved and agreed the minutes be read. Moved and agreed the minutes be received. Moved and agreed one copy to be reserved for Church records and one copy to "The Signs of the Times."

Conference was closed with prayer.

Moved and agreed conference adjourn.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Frances Arrington, Clerk

OBITUARIES

JOHN S. COLLIE, SENIOR

It is with much sadness that I attempt to write this memorial of our dearly beloved Brother in Christ, John S. Collie. Our Gracious Lord saw fit in His Providence to take him from us on March 2, 1985.

He was born on March 21, 1905 in

Caswell County, N. C., a son of the late Florence Siddle and George Thomas Collie. On December 8, 1928 he was married to the former Nellie G. Dix who survives. He is also survived by three sons, John S. Collie, Jr., Route 7, Reidsville, N. C., Bob R. Collie, Route 9, Reidsville, N. C., David F. Collie, Atlanta, Ga., one daughter, Peggy C. West, Ruffin, N. C., 10 grandchildren, and one great grandchild and one brother, Floyd I. Collie, Reidsville, N. C.

He united with Dan River Church in 1945 and was baptized by his pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler. He loved his church and was faithful to attend the services regularly.

He was associated with American Tobacco Company for 35 years and had been retired for the last 17 years.

Due to the illness of his pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, his funeral was conducted on March 4, 1985 by Elder Haywood Wray, Elder Kenneth Key, and Elder J. R. Williams. His body was laid to rest in the Dan River Church Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord. May the Lord grant the family faith to sustain them in their sorrow.

Written by request of the Dan River Church at her conference on April 27, 1985.

Respectfully,
Connie M. Page

EDWARD D. MORTON

BrotherEdward Morton was born near Jacksonville in(Onslow County), North Carolina of which he was a life long resident, 22 June 1906. He passed from this life in Chapel Hill Hospital, Chapel Hill, NC on 26 April 1985.

On 16 June 1923, he was married to Bessie Humphrey who survives him. To this union was born 3 children, Mrs. Isabelle Eubank (deceased), J. J. (Bud) Morton and Mrs. Marie Haga, all of Jacksonville, NC. Six grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

On 14 November 1936 he joined North East Primitive Baptist Church. Not long afterward the Church recognized the gift of Deacon in him and was ordained to that office which he was blessed to fill faithfully until death.

Brother Edward was a humble man, a very dedicated family man, but beyond that he was dedicated to the principles of Christ our Saviour, which the Church is founded upon. His desire was that "all things be done in decency and in order, that the Church be edified and the name of Christ be glorified."

As we visited him during his illness at home and in the hospital, his loving family was always there providing loving care, bearing the fruit of the Spirit that "you love one another even as I have loved you."

The family and the Church miss him greatly, but not to wish him back in his suffering, but would rather say, "Sleep on, take thy rest, thou good and faithful servant." We believe Brother Edward is asleep in Jesus and "all that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him when he comes again, without sin unto salvation.

May God reconcile his family and all who loved him, realizing what God does is right. "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

Written by one who loved him and consider it a most blessed privilege to have served with him.

His Pastor,
Elder J. T. Prescott

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8/85
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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Psalm 121

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help.

My help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth.

He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.

Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.

The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; he shall preserve thy soul.

The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

"A GOOD name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold."
Proverbs 22: 1

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EDITORIAL

FALLING DOCTRINE

Give ear O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass; because I will publish the name of the Lord; ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment; a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He. (Deut. 32: 1, 4)

This doctrine belongs exclusively to our heavenly Father. Our precious Saviour disclaimed it as being His and taught us so by His own statements far as Bible testimony goes, there is no source of saving doctrine save that which comes from God to poor sinful fallen men and women save this source. It is His, and He is the only source of it, and He initiated the only method of it being brought to us. I do not have any compromise to make about this doctrine getting to us. Furthermore, it not only is His doctrine, but he alone drops it down to poor sinners. It is dropped on purpose to us. He alone can drop that which is His, and if I had the only doctrine, that is, the only saving doctrine that there is, I certainly think that I would turn it loose to fall on only those that I purposed to drop it on. You would do that wouldn't you?

There is not a source of rain save that which belongs to God. If anyone knows of another source of it I hereby yield to the one that has rain cached up somewhere, and that has a method of getting it to where it is needed by the owner. Unless I hear of such a source, I will know that I am on the right text. However, I am not expecting this fact, that is, that God is the only source of this doctrine, and that He has the only absolute method of getting this doctrine to the desired point in the world to silence the objectors to His sovereignty.

Just a few years ago the powers that be (I beg your pardon, they just thought that they were that powerful) thought that they could end droughts. They carried the rain making tools and ingredients unto the vast universe above us and found some dry clouds and they sprayed those clouds and made it rain. But complications arose. They were threatened with lawsuits from neighboring communities because that they had been deprived of rain that they should have gotten. Other complications arose, for tampering with God's sole prerogative of looking after the weather.

If you are a God fearing reader, I kindly ask you to consider that God's doctrine drops as the rain. This is also inclusive of the snow and sleet and hail--all of it comes from the same source. It

only comes as God drops it, and sometimes it is in sweeping power that all men working together cannot form a successful barrier against it. There is not a sane person on the globe that does not know this. Another thing that they do not know, and that is that it comes so small and so smooth and so easy that we are not aware of it. This dropping of this moisture is so beyond the power and wisdom of men that it comes as a vapour and is distilled as dew while men of great power are sleeping and unaware of the falling from above.

How helpless is this great land of ours about rain? We are as helpless as new born babes for this falling rain. Every single man and woman in the United States, yea, for that matter in the world, are dependent for the dropping down of rain. Now the comparison brings us, each of us, face to face with the absolute and unconditional fact that all of us are dependent upon God for the doctrine of God to fall on us. If for just one year this necessary rain did not drop, what would be your picture of this world in which we live? It has done quite a bit of ropping down rain in the last twelve months, and yet look at the starvation that is rampant over the world. Just suppose that it not rain in the next twelve months? What would any of us do in that twelve months?

Likewise suppose that the doctrine of God does not drop down again in the next twelve months? He does His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. What would be the consequences if the doctrine of God our Saviour did not drop any more doctrine of God? This is not any laughing matter. God would be just if He withheld rain from every human being. You ask me, why? And I am telling you why! Simply because that we are all guilty before God. However, God loves His children and His doctrine of saving grace falls on those that belong to Him. He has made them an unconditional promise that He would come and that He would save them that belongs to Him. God never ceases to love His chosen people. In fact, God does not change His mind about coming and saving those that the Father gave Him. That promise was made by an unchanging God, therefore, that promise was made by the God that never changes. The doctrine of God is established upon the unchanging love of God. The doctrine of God's unchanging love is based on His continued faithfulness.

The salvation of God is as sure as the rain. Neither the rain nor the snow, in themselves considered, bring salvation, but God's way of handling them is figurative of salvation. As the rain comes down, even so does salvation come down from God. As there is not any salvation save in rain coming down, even so there is not any salvation ulnless it likewise comes from God. We certainly realize that there is salvation in what comes from God. Let us take a tour through the work shop of God. My thoughts are not your thoughts neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. Let us pause here. Thus we have found out one, if not the greatest things about we frail creatures and our Creator. He does not think as we frail mortals think, and He does not do as we frail mortals do. He has His ways, and He does his ways. What would it be if we had our way? Let us ask ourselves once again that astounding question, What would it be if we had our way. In the sense in which it was created for, it is a good, yea, perfect world. Had we, as the human race, had our way, who knows the destiny of it now? Now let us continue, to wit, For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Let us pause again. Not only are His ways and thoughts above ours, but they have been that way all of the time. His first and ultimate ways and thoughts

have been above ours. As our creator as the Architect of the universe, He is, and has been, the Potter and Creator, the builder and upholder and disposer of all things. This creature, man, has been a created destroyer (Isa. 54:16), but God's way has been higher and thus a Builder (Heb. 11:10).

This Builder is God. Man is a destroyer. Every blade of grass, every drop of rain that falls upon the earth, every smile of a little child together with its hand clasped in the hand of its mother, together with her love for it, every blooming flower, every sunbeam that has lighted up our pathway, every star that has shined out of the universe above us, together with every eye blinking, every breath you have had, combined with every beat of your heart has been a gift from God.

God's ways are not our ways. God's ways are higher than our ways. They have not recently got that way. All things were made that way and they have remained that way. The nations bluster and destroy and persecute the poor of the earth, but all of them reckoned together have a mighty poor standing with God (Isa. 40:15).

God is rated in His Book as being love. This love, like the source of it, did not have a beginning. Immediately a clamor arises among men and nations, both of them, like all things else, being creatures of God, He being above them, higher than all of them, did not have their origin in themselves; their being subject to His, the divine Creator of all, chose His subjects, His children in One like unto Himself, has fixed or arranged or appointed or predestinated their station here and hereafter, arranged all things and all subjects of this grace, together with those who are not subjects of that grace, should be ruled by Him.

Those subjects of His in nature have never gained the mind of Him. He appointed the laws of nature in such a sublime way that everything that His wisdom dictated as being necessary for the benefit, for the lifting of His people on high was provided in His declaring of the end from the beginning. Everything for the preservation of His people both in a natural as well as a spiritual way was set in motion. This setting in motion these many wonders of nature embraced the falling of the rain as He dropped it from His hand.

For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing where to I sent it (Isa. 55:8, 11).

Now I have dealt extensively with the fact that the weather comes from God. In every sense in which earthly creatures know to summarize the weather, it is all out of men's hands. Let me say to one and all what Napoleon said to a group of his generals. While on one of his noted campaigns, a group of his generals were in an argument about the question as to the extent of God's creation. He listened for a while in silence. In impatience he walked out of his office into the midst of his subordinate commanders, and sweeping his hand to the heavens he challenged them with, Gentlemen, who made all of this? He stalked back into the seclusion of his private quarters.

Dear brethren and sisters, who made this world and the fulness of it? Secondly, who did He make it for?

I have in my declining days dealt with the rain, and the wonderful way in which it fits into our lives. There isn't a human being on the face of the globe that acknowledges the Bible as the MAN of his counsel that can disannul the fact that God sends the rain when and where He pleases. Furthermore, that same sacred

volume teaches us that the doctrine of God's saving grace is sent from God out of heaven when and where He pleases and that the result is just as efficaciously distributed, spread out as the doctrine of God is dropped, God in His effective way of doing everything He pleases.

In the meantime, study Gods holy distribution of the rain that it always gives seed to the sower and bread to the eater, and beseech the Lord in my behalf that He will give me an exercise of mind to explore the beauties of that grand and glorious doctrine.

Elder W. D. Griffin
Route 6, Box 269
Fayette, Alabama 35555

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

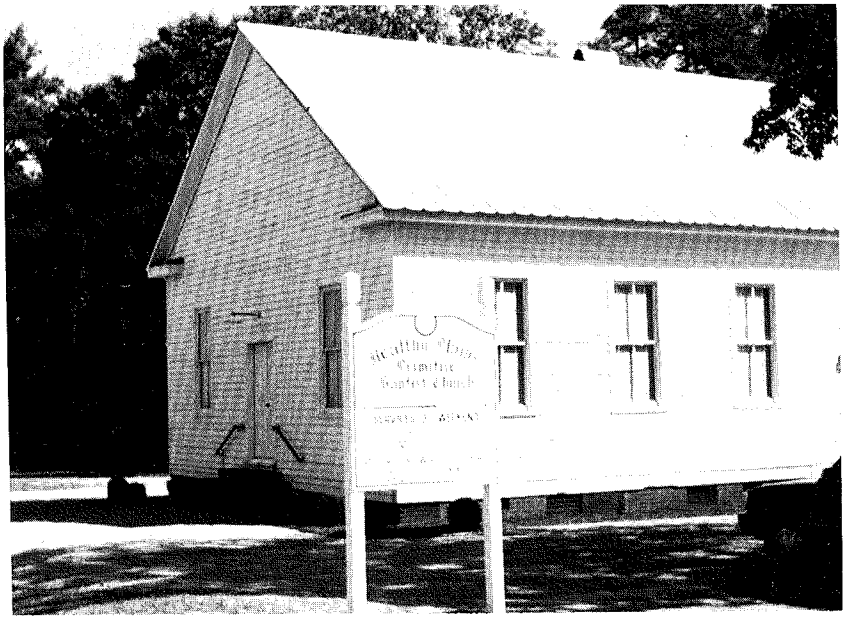

Healthy Plains Primitive Baptist Church was constituted in August 1872. The church is located about 4 miles south of Bailey, N. C., on N. C. Highway 581 at the intersection of County Road No. 1129.

The meeting time is at 11 a.m. every third Sunday and 2:30 p.m. on the Saturday before.

Elder W. Randall Saunders is the current pastor.

CORRESPONDENCE

Please find enclosed check for two years for The Signs of The Times. I enjoy The Signs very much as I am not able to go to The Churches and I get my preaching from The Signs.

I am eighty-five yrs. and crippled with arthritis pretty badly.

Keep up the good work and may God bless.

Mrs. Ella Mae Merrill

"*Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.*" **Psalms 116: 15.**

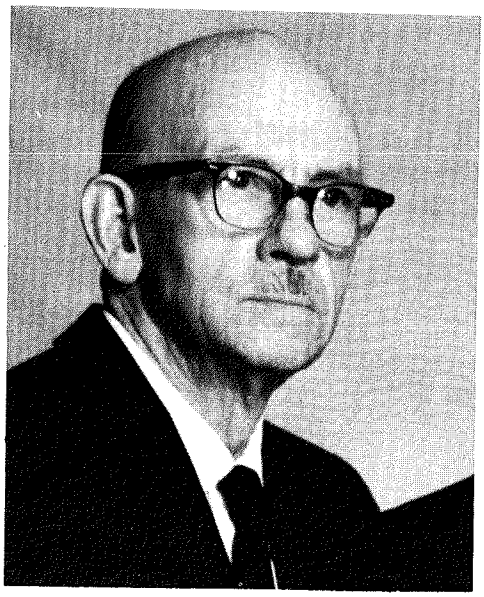

Few if any editor has spent more time and effort than Elder John D. Wood in presenting the Signs Of The Times, nearly flawless to its readers in years past. We also remember him saying the task would be impossible without the help of Sister Wood. There is a question mark in our mind to-day as to where the paper would be without their effort throuh years past.

The Signs has and will greatly miss, not only his devotion to the paper, but also his name on the editorial pages, having been listed since 1951 or 1952. We were saddened to hear of Elder Wood's passing, born June 3, 1898, died July 3, 1985, "but we sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." The faith he worte of , believed, and spoke about brings us to acknowledge, as in Romans Chapter 8, Verse 28, *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."*

May this paper continue to strive to uphold sound doctrine, to His own name's honor and glory as the editors of the past.

Editors

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8 Central Park
Brownsville, Texas
July 13, 1970
Mrs. Lela Culpepper,

Dear Sister in Christ:

I want to thank you for your kind letter of July 7. I was very glad to hear from you. I am aware of the church in both Stockdale and Welaco. I have heard Elder Ault several times and also your beloved minister, Elder Shipman.

Both my parents are Primitive Baptists as were some of my ancestors. My older brother married Jeanene Hamrick. I'm sure you have heard Elder Hamrick.

I grew up hearing such fine old preachers as Elder John Lee Smith, Elder R. W. Rhodes, Elder Haygood, and the older Elder Shipman. I feel very fortunate to have listened to these men who are most assuredly blest of the Lord.

I rejoiced to hear the fact that you got some joy out of my writings. I often feel that I do not know the truth, but when one of the little ones tells me that she feels it is the truth, then I praise God for what He has done. The credit belongs all to Him, for I am not able of my own self to write anything unless he gives me the ability to do so.

I am only 23 years old, but I feel at times that I am so weary of this life. I look constantly for the Master to come, and hope eternally that I will be counted in His flock. The majority of the Old Baptists are old and poor, but I have never found another group of people

anywhere that show such abiding love for one another. There is something in the hearts of them that draw them closer. We are poor, yet we have the greatest of blessings here in this earthly life, and that is to believe in the true and living God, and to hear His word preached as it was meant to be preached. That is something that cannot be taxed, destroyed, or conquered. We need the blessing of the Almighty God to give us of the crumbs from the Masters table, and we are filled.

Thank you for writing. I am going back to college this summer to work on my Master's degree in education. I teach school in Brownsville.

I am not a member of the church. I have never felt myself worthy to ask to become a member. I hope someday to become a member, however, I feel I have much to learn first. I am not worthy to try to talk to anyone about the wonderful blessings of God, but I would like to leave you with this one short verse:

> "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

Yours in hope,
David Harrell

EARMARKS OF GRACE ABOUNDING

Dear Friends and Loved Ones:

It seems I must try, the Lord willing to tell some of the blessings I have received at His Hands.

I am such a poor, feeble soul who, it seems, has always been a backward child. I never seem to be able to talk or act as I would like to. Ever since just a small child I have had the feeling that I didn't belong: I wasn't able to join my friends and companions in their activities, though I greatly desired to be popular. Even at a very early age I would read my father's Bible in secret, for I didn't want anyone to see me. I do not know why I felt that way. I would sit and listen to my elders talk on the Scriptures, but didn't want anyone to know that I was interested.

I have always felt that the Primitive Baptist were a chosen people, but I thought I was as good as anyone else, for I had never done anything that I thought was such a great wrong. But, bless your souls, there is one who can show us just how far from good we are. It was in my late twenties that I was made aware of just how sinful and lowly a creature I was. I was reading my father's Bible one day, which I had read many times before, when it seemed I saw myself a lost soul, doomed and without any way to turn. Oh, what a terrible feeling it is to become aware that you are standing naked before God; and to know that there is nothing in this world that you can do about it!

I thought perhaps that if I would go to church, I would find some comfort; but not so. I tried reading the *Signs of the Times,* and opened to where someone had written about the prodigal son, but, instead of comparing myself with the prodigal, I saw myself as the brother. I even thought that if I were just a dumb brute, Oh, what a blessing it would be. I suppose I was envious of the dumb beasts of the fields who have no soul to go down into Hell.

All I could do, was to think, Lord be merciful to me a sinner; I could not open my mouth. Oh, I thought, if only I could fall down on my knees and pour out my heart to Him who was all power, then surely I would find relief; but I could not open my mouth.

This feeling of dread and doom stayed with me for some time — it seemed longer to me I'm sure than it really was. Then, one day just as this terrible feeling had come upon me, it left, and a wonderful

peace came over me. I went around with a song in my heart, but, just as I hadn't been able to open my mouth in prayer, neither could I sing. But I thought, Oh, to be able to sing His praise from the highest mountain! For I was persuaded it was He and He alone who had helped me, for the arm of flesh had failed.

Since those days, I have had wonderful feelings of rejoicing; then there are times of great doubts and fear that perhaps I have imagined it all. This is the reason, I suppose, that I have been fearful of telling anyone: for fear that I am deceived and trying to deceive. I can only hope that God will keep me by his power, for, if left to myself I shall surely fall. I feel to know that poor, beggarly man has not the power to stand of himself.

I don't know why I have written this, but it seems that I shall tell others.

Unworthily,
Lena Mae Johnson

ARTICLES

WHERE ART THOU?

"And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, where art thou?"

One of the differences between the doctrinal belief of Old Baptists and all other faiths of the world is, they believe man to be totally depraved; that he is wholly corrupt and can do nothing at all to extricate himself from his fallen state in Adam. He cannot in anywise fulfill the law, neither can he by any act within and of himself, obtain eternal salvation. He is destitute, lost and undone, without hope in this world or the world to come, except for the intervening love and mercy of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Now when he had partaken of the forbidden fruit, seen his nakedness, become ashamed and hid himself; when the Lord Called, "Adam, where art thou?" it was not to get information or learn something he did not already know. It was a question to cause Adam to take a good look at himself. Oh! what a pitiful, groveling, hell deserving wretch he saw, when he was forced to face himself. Do you remember? Suddenly he had fallen from the sinless state in which he was created, to a creature who was nothing and less than nothing in the sight of God.

Not only did he fall from his happy state, but in his disobedience he incurred the wrath and anger of God and, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Heb. 10:31). God in his wrath expelled him from the garden and decreed, through Adam, death on all mankind. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. 5:12) and also, "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation."

Following the fall and explusion, God set a flaming sword to guard Eden, so that man could not enter again. This left him out in a world of sin, lost and without help, to face the wrath and judgment of a jealous God.

Then Adam learned so many things about himself. The forbidden fruit did exactly what the wily serpent had promised. It made him know good and evil, and the things he saw in himself were only evil. Satan was no help now, in saving him from the awful judgment into which he had led him.

Man learned that the Lord had formed him from the dust of the ground, which was a very humble beginning. He was shown also that he was made a little lower than the angels, who are servants of God. He learned that man at his best state is altogether vanity. He came to know that all nations are nothing, less

than nothing and vanity, before this God with whom he had to do; that these nations are as a drop in a bucket and are as the small dust in the balance. When *all* nations are as such, small, puny man looks really, totally depraved to himself, when asked by God, "Where art thou?".

As Adam stands before an angry God in judgment, words cannot describe the littleness of his feelings or his destitute condition. He tries to reach across the deep, awful chasm that separtes him from safety, and knows a desperate, indescribable futility. His own efforts to span the mighty gulf are in vain.

David asks, "What is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?" (Psalms 8:4) and James asks, "For what is your life?" and answers, "It is a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

Adam feels that vanity, less than nothing, small dust of the balance, the drop in the bucket, and vapour are as small as man can get, in nature, but the law condemns him even lower than any of those things. It puts him in a devil's hell. So when man is really shown what he is in the eyes of God, he does not question, but that he is totally depraved. He knows that, "Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering," and that, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good," so where can he flee?

God asked Adam, Where art thou? then left a record of many, many places where He found him. If you are a child of God, you have been in those places, and felt your own sinfulness and weakness at such times. You have looked here and there, and found no hiding place from his all seeing eye.

At one time man was found in a desert land and in the waste howling wilderness. Another time he was found in a horrible pit, in the miry clay. Jonah was in the belly of hell. One of the apostles was found on the way to Damascus to persecute God's children and another lied about knowing the Saviour. As an idolater Adam (man) threw the Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, and as a thief he was curcified on the cross.

These all faced God in judgment. Their sins were as scarlet, they were helpless, empty, famished, unable to help themselves, no matter what the sin or situation in which they were involved. They had sinned and were sinners, and the wages of sin is death. Their sin was ever before them and in their anguish they cried with David, "There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin."

Unknown to Adam, God from eternity had set up a means for his deliverance. His anger and justice were tempered with mercy. He sent his own Son, who was himself Manifested in the flesh, to be a mediator between God and man; to bridge the gap that was impossible for Adam to cross. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." (I Tim. 2:5) This mediator was sent to satisfy and fulfill the law that Adam had transgressed. The Father gave all things into his hands. He came to seek and to save that which was lost.

All things given into the hands of the Son included judgment and justification. This mediator set things right between Adam and God, by taking all of Adam's sins on his own shoulders, and satisfying the law by dying in Adam's place. Only death would satisfy the law for the wages of sin is death. This delivered man from the transgression of the law and its dreadful consequences. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (I Cor. 15:22) And again, "Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people; thou hast covered all their sin."

When at this point in his experience

God asked, "Adam where art thou?" there is One who answers in his place. Man still knows himself to be unworthy, and will not lift his eyes, but can cry only, "God be merciful to me a sinner." He knows he is naked before God and begs to be hidden. He finds hope through promises made him by the great Mediator. He has a witness within him that causes him to hunger, to thirst, to beg for mercy, and to look forward to the deliverance of the body from this death.

He also finds in the scriptures, where those of like or similar experiences, were lifted up and delivered. The wanderer in the desert land and wilderness was led about and instructed. He who was in the pit and miry clay was lifted up. His feet were set upon a rock and his goings established. Jonah was vomited from the belly of hell and preached, "Salvation is of the Lord."

Paul and Peter continued in his way, and were kept as fountains, through which his mercy and grace was preached to fallen man. Nebuchadnezzar, the idolater, praised and extolled him, after being shown his own weakness by the "Fourth man." The prodigal son returned, begging his father's forgiveness, and confessing his sins and weakness. The thief on the cross died with the precious promise, "Today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." Adam in all these found mercy and grace.

All creation in Adam fell under the law, but we have written only of those, who are that portion of his posterity, for whom the Lord died. The precious chosen ones He redeemed from under the law and clothed in his own righteousness, after finding them naked and undone.

According to David, the wicked will not seek after God and they shall be turned into hell. But we hope to be one of that number found through his love, and made to answer his call, by begging for grace and mercy, and praising and extolling his wonderful name. He said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Once in the first Adam we feared Satan and all he could do, not knowing the bounds of the wicked serpent were set, as is all created things. Now, we trust that the second Adam found us lost and undone, taught us Godly fear and clothed us in his own righteousness. This is our only hope for that bright tomorrow, when He calls Adam where art thou; that the One who died for us, to wipe away our sin, our sorrow and our shame, will answer for us, Lord, here am I.

"And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit." (I Cor. 15:45)

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Spearsville, La.

LETTERS FROM PRISON

Among us who read this, there may not be any who have had some loved one in prison. So, if we have never read a letter from one of our prisons today, we would not be able to fully comprehend the very hopelessness of such a letter. There would be the agony of the very thought of losing one's freedom. I imagine this thought that takes possession of one's heart eats like a cancer. The prison walls are a painful reminder that one has lost his freedom. Rebelling against this situation is not the answer, but where is the one who wouldn't rebel? Not only losing the very valuable prize of freedom, but having on the conscience the awful weight of guilt.

With all this in view, then what attitude would one take, for there must be some sort of avenue for the mind to follow. They do not just sit and look at the gray walls of the prison. It would be one of these two: they would become bitter, or they would repent of the wrong they had committed. Good and evil are set

before us. In this case one must watch his conduct. Now I've written of one in prison, but my main object is to write on another case — of other letters from prison: those of the Apostle Paul.

This one said that in all things he could adapt himself. Now we know the prisons in those days were horrible indeed. We can imagine them cold and bare; without one sign of the flickering light of the sun. We do not feel it was total darkness, but the light must have been faulty, the food poor, the hours long and lonely. In this last imprisonment there was not the slightest hope of ever being free again, only by death. Now what was the attitude of this prisoner? It was not hopeless, it was not one of despair, as one who had reached the road's end. It was one filled with bright anticipation; one that could look beyond prison walls to a brighter country. Even in this bleak and bare prison, there was sweet communion with God. David once said, "Whither shall I go from the presence of thy Spirit?" He goes on to say that wherever he went the presence of the Holy Spirit went with him.

So, then, some of the sweetest letters come from one in prison. We notice he spoke very little of himself, but told of the love of God to all the saints. To have drawn our attention to his sufferings, at the moment, would have relieved him somewhat, but his mind was not on things temporal, but on things eternal.

We find in Second Corinthians 4:17, some of the words of encouragement that must have filled his mind while in prison. Here it says, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." Ah, how it would lighten our burdens to see the things eternal! It took a man in prison to tell us of the glories of these things. Earthly prison bars held him fast, but this did not dim his keen anticipation of a final release. I believe this prison life had helped him; and at first consideration, the question would be, How? We can answer this question when we contemplate our own life here. There are times when we all feel imprisoned; and, like David, there seems no relief. We could beat our hands upon these prison walls, but to no effect. It's when we find that God comes to us even in the prison of trials, and a troubled heart, that we can see the joys set before the Apostle Paul. His were through the gates of death; but ours, oft-times through having the burden lifted. In contemplating his last prison term, we'd do well to visualize what he suffered there. There was probably no way of measuring time but by the flickering light that failed when the day was done. It must have been cold throughout the night and day. There would have been little companionship of anyone, maybe a guard now and then; but that too would be fleeting. One thing he had that we do not have: he'd been to the third heaven and saw such splendor that there are no words to describe it. He had viewed the eternal home of all the redeemed. In that cold dark prison those visions came back again to him.

We find him saying, "The time of my departure is at hand." Such confidence, such complete calmness of mind! We will fail to get any benefit from this, if we don't get off to ourselves sometimes, and just contemplate how we'd feel if we knew that our time here on earth was finished. Now we're not leaving a cold prison; no, not in the sense he did. Of course, I know this whole world is a prison that holds us here, and we all wait for freedom into the blessed eternal day over there; but actually, we do not have a natural prison wall around us.

From a natural standpoint, we'd think

those outside these walls would be the ones to encourage the prisoner; bit in this case, it's the prisoner that writes letters of encouragement. Oh, the unsearchable riches of Christ; and those riches come through the pen of one behind prison bars. These are some of the mysteries of God revealed to us. We often wonder why he let his servant go to prison; but there was a purpose in it, so we are not to question it. There have been thousands who have given their life for the sake of the gospel.

If ever we find ourselves so overwhelmed with troubles and disappointments, let us read those letters form prison to cheer our hearts. We will never have a heaven here, but we can read about one in those letters of a prisoner, who had already been there. In another place he says, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

The one main prison that holds us here is this body of clay; and how well we know this. We say, along with the Apostle Paul, "Who shall deliver us from the body of this death?" We see it dying day by day, but we have this hope within of one day having a body like unto His body. Our Lord says, "Let not your hearts be troubled: Ye believe in God, believe also in me." What comforting words to the troubled heart, the promise of eternal life given to all the redeemed. Along with these words from our Lord are also these comforting letters from prison.

Myrtle Cross
429 E. Chevy Chase Dr.
Glendale, California

"For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth."
Proverbs 3: 12

JESUS THE AMEN

I was asked to write a sermon upon the word amen. Well, I may not be able to do that, but I will very readily pen some few thoughts upon it that has been comforting to me, and in which I have had some experience by the power of the Holy Ghost.

The first and most blessed thing is that Jesus Christ our Lord, our redeemer and everlasting friend, is "The Amen" Rev. 3:4. Indeed, there is no abiding blessedness apart from our beloved Savior. As He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely, He is also the fountain of living waters. In Him we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places; but all would be a failure, all our hope in things pertaining to God and to eternity would be a failure, if Jesus Christ were not the Amen.

This sacred name, like all the names he bears, is what He is unto His church. This name signifies that He is the constant one, the gracious, immutable Almighty friend, faithful and true. Rev. 3:14. He is the one, who makes sure, and will bring to an all-glorious consummation all the eternal purpose which Jehovah the Father purposed in Him. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the head of the church, and He is the mediator and surety of the new covenant, and as our covenant head He is in delighted acquiescence with it. Even though in order to the removal of the sins of His people, to make atonement for their transgressions and reconcile them unto God. He should come and give Himself a ransom, a sacrifice for their iniquities. He said, Amen to it. So let it be, it shall be. Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea, Thy law is written in my heart." Psalm 40: 7-8; Heb. 10: 4-10. All the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him amen, unto the glory of God by us. 2 Cor. 1:20.

Oh what exceeding great and precious promises there are in Him for time and eternity. The new covenant was established upon better promises than those given unto Israel under the law, the old covenant. The gospel promises are in Christ's gospel; they are made unto the elect in Christ. Thus, by the communion of the Holy Ghost, who speak to us, and shows to us, and glorifies Jesus Christ in our hearts, We have sacred assurance, and are in earnest expectation in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began. Titus 1:2 All the promises of God in Jesus Christ are yea, and amen, sure to all the seed. As our covenant head He said, amen to them all.

In His faithfulness, love and mercy, and omnipotence He will see that none of these promises fail. What God hath promised, He is able also to perform. Their gracious and glorious fulfillment is not based upon the creatures performance. Ah no! God will show His people His covenant in the incarnate Son of God. Psalm 25:14. "For God willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us which hope we have, as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." Heb. 7:17-20. In all the characters that Christ sustains, and all the offices in the new covenant He fulfills, He is surely the amen.

The pleasure of the Lord prosper in His hand; the government shall be upon His shoulder. Isaiah 9:6; 53:10. Well, beloved ones in the Lord, as we meditate upon the glorious work wrought by our Redeemer, and see how He was faithful to Him that appointed Him, how He finished, and will finish all the work of eternal salvation, and will surely bring His people home to eternal glory, faultless, and holy, and without blame, and with exceeding joy before the majesty in the heaven, truly we are comforted and our hope is sure and steadfast, for Jesus Christ, the word made flesh is the amen. And we, like the four beasts, (living creatures) in Rev. 5:14 say, "amen" to all that Jesus Christ has done, and to all that He, as our great high priest, in heaven is doing for His people. There He appears in the presence of God for us, and forever, our beloved Redeemer, intercessor, our advocate with the Father. And when we offer up our feeble sacrifices of praise, when our hearts send forth our sighs and prayers unto the throne, they all come through Him unto our God Father. He says amen to them, for they are all cleansed by His precious blood, perfumed by incense of His finished work upon calvary's cross, His sacrifice of Himself in our behalf, an offering, and a sacrificies of a sweet smelling savor unto God. Through Him, our amen, we have acess into the grace, we are favored to worship God in the beauty of holiness, with reverence and Godly fear. Yes, our hearts say amen, so let it be, to all that Christ has done, and all that He is unto His people. When we are in sweet accord and our hearts are saying amen to Christs gospel, all sufficiency in self has been cast to the moles and to the bats, we are lowly in our own sight, we feel how naked and destitute we are in ourselves, we see we are poor sinners, and we have been taught under this bitter and humbling knowledge to look unto Jesus as the only ground of hope for perishing sinners. Yes, here must be Gods own gracious teaching to humble such sinners, sinners who are enemies of God, alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in

them because of the blindness of their hearts. It needs such operations of the Holy Spirit in the sinner's heart to bring him to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," to bring him to see that all creature righteousness is filthy rags, and to submit to the righteousness of the God-man Christ Jesus, which is unto and upon all that believe. But every one that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me saith Christ, John 6:45. And in our precious Jesus our all-sufficiency salvation, righteousness, all grace and glory, and to everything in Him we say amen. All is agreeable, all is needful, there is nothing lacking, all is finished, all is blessed, all is altoghter lovely, all is to the glory of God, and to our everlasting consolation and happiness, in faith and love we say, amen, so let it be. If the gracious operations of the Holy Ghost are so essential to bring our souls into accord with the gospel of Christ, and to say amen to all the revelation of Jehovah's counsel therein: so also the same teachings of the comforter God and Holy Ghost, are needed to bring us to say, amen, the will of the Lord be done in all His providences. We have surely learned, yes, we have had to learn it over, and over again; that without the continual ministrations of the grace of Christ how unreconciled we are to our lot, how cast down we are sometimes, how fretful, what inward murmurings, and how hardened we then become in rebellion. "The rebellious dwell in a dry land." Psalm 68:6. God's providences are high and deep—His thoughts, His purposes therein are not for us to fully understand.

"Deep in unfathonable mines,
Of never failing skill,
He treasures up His bright designs,
And works His sovereign will."

Job at one time could say amen to the adversities and bitter afflictions to which he was subjected, Job 1:20-21; 2:9-10; but in the continuation of his deep and sore troubles he is found fretting at a great rate, and speaking hard things against God. But we see the end of the Lord: that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy, James 5:11. "The Lord answered Job and said, Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct Him? He that reproveth God, let him answer it." Surely this severe reproof was nevertheless love's reproof! It entered Job's soul, subdued all opposition to the Most High, and brought him at the feet of the Lord. Then Job answered the Lord, and said, "behold, I am vile: what shall I answer Thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken: but I will proceed no further." Job 40:1-5.

We have trials, afflictions, adversities, we have vexations, and things that are so contrary to flesh and blood. Our little plans are upset; our gourds are blasted, the flowers that delighted us wither, they are snatched away, cisterns are broken, and creatures all fail. Sickness, pains in ourselves and others we have to endure, we suffer bereveaments and we encounter the enmity of the wicked, of hypocrites. How shall we say amen, unto the Lord under the pressure of any or all these woes? When the Lord giveth us tears in great measure to drink, Psalm 80:5; if the bread of adversity and water of affliction be our portion, Isa. 30:20, is it possible to acquiesce, and say amen to God? When the thorn in the flesh is rankling, and the enemy is buffetting us until we are at our wits end, shall we not cry out for the extraction of the thorn? We pray that the enemy may be forced to take departure from us, but if it is the will of God that the thorn shall still pierce us, and the enemy still assault us, can we then say unto the Lord, amen? We can, but only when our Heavenly Father says, "thou art my dear son;" thou art unto me a pleasant child. Jer. 31:20. Thou are beloved, lovely, all acceptable unto me

in the beloved. Eph. 1:6. Drink the cup, my child! O then we can say, amen, so sweetened is our cup with our heavenly Father's love in Jesus Christ our Lord. And, when He says, "my grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness," then we can say, amen, and join with the apostle Paul and say, "most gladly therefore, will rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." 2 Cor. 12:9. Pharisees, the selfsufficient, the hypocrite may talk very smoothly, and say, we ought to say, "Thy will be done" to God's providences. But the dear child of God, who while in this world is compassed with infirmities, poor and sinful and tempted, finds himself so in need of grace that it is only by the power of Christ resting upon him, only as his preciousness is communicated and the spirit of truth glorifies our dear Savior in the soul, and thus sustains us in afflictions, and sweetens the biter waters that we can say, amen to all our Heavenly Father's will.

There, I have penned some thoughts upon the word, and, oh may such grace from the Lord be ours that we be in accord with Him who is the Amen.

Frederick W. Keene
Raleigh, N. C.

PRIDE HUMBLED

The following is republished by request and is told, as part of the unwritten or traditional history of Elder John Leland.

During the latter part of his life, Mr. Leland traveled much over the country on preaching tours on foot. On one occasion he had been warmly solicited, in writing, by a widow lady, to visit the part of old Virginia in which she lived and preach, telling him to set his time and her house was at his service, both as a place of abode and also a place to hold his meetings. Mr. Leland replied by setting a day that he would preach at her residence, at 10 o'clock a.m. The lady was a wealthy planter, in Appamattox valley. She regarded herself one of the most pious and exemplary persons to be found anywhere.

She had been raised in the high circles of life, and knew nothing about poverty, nor had ever associated with laboring classes. She was at this time about thirty-five years of age, and had been a widow two years, but knew nothing of the privations commonly attending the life of a widowed mother. She took much pains to appear pious, and her chief object in inviting Mr. Leland to preach at her house was, that she might make a displaly of wealth, and thus have the applause of her associates; not only to show her wealth but her piety as well; so she went to a great trouble and expense in preparing for the meeting. The appointment had been spread far and near, pressing solicitations had been sent to numerous friends to attend the meeting; no expense or pains had been spared, not only to have the best and the finest of everything, but to have everything in the best style.

On the evening preceding the meeting several carriages had already arrived, to be in good time and enjoy the hospitality of the hostess. About sunset Mr. Leland came up to the mansion on foot. The day was quite warm and dusty when he made his appearance. The walk had caused a free prespiration, which ran down his cheeks, making roads in the dust which had settled on his face during his day's walk. He walked up to the door of the large stone mansion, and his rap was answered by a black servant, of whom he inquired for the landlady; the servant ran down the broad carpeted hall to a door, from which preceeded the talking and laughing. In a very short time a lady, very richly attired, made

her appearance, walking briskly and lightly toward the door, where Mr. Leland was standing. He had a fair view of her person, and at once saw in her physiognomy and deportment something of her leading traits of character.

His intention had been to introduce himself, but before he had time to speak, or before she was near enough for him to address her, she spoke in rather a harsh tone; "Old man what do you want here? I have nothing for beggars."

Mr. Leland, in a very soft and unassuming tone, said, "Please excuse me, madam; I do not wish to beg for money, but I am very tired from a long walk, and called to know if you would do me the kindness to allow me to stay under your roof during the night."

Veiwing him hastily from head to foot, she very positively answered: "No! I have company now, and tomorrow the Rev. Mr. Leland is to preach at my house; so I can't take in poor stragglers."

"Well," said Mr. Leland, "I am too much fatigued to travel further to-night, will you allow me to stay in one of those cabins?" pointing to a row of negro houses just outside the mansion yard.

After a moment or two of reflection she said, "Yes, you may stay there with the negroes if you want to."

He bowed a very polite thank you, and turned toward the row of huts. He proceeded to the fartherest one from the mansion before he found any one to whom he could speak, to ask permission to stay, but came at last to the smallest but neatest of all the huts, there he found seated at the door an old negress, who was fanning herself with the wing of a fowl.

He spoke to her very gently:

"Good evening, aunty."

His greeting was answered with "Good evin, mosta."

"Well, aunty," he said, "I have come to ask a very uncommon favor of you.

"Bless de Lord, mosta, what can that be, fo' please God I'se got nuffin to give you?"

"I am very tired from walking all day. I called at the house of your mistress, but she says she has no room for me in the great house. I am too much fatigued to go furher, and so have come to see if you can allow me to shelter in your house."

Bless de Lord, mosta, I got no 'commodation for any one; but 'fore a fello' mortal shall stay out doo's, I lets 'em stay in my cabin sho,' ef da can put up wid my plain hut. Uncle Ben be in drecly; den he can keep you company while I fixes you sumpen to eat, for you looks as tho you had not a morsal for a long time, and at the same time, pointing to a three legged stool by the door, saying, "Set down dar and rest yourself, for you looks so worn out."

Mr. Leland took the seat as directed. saying, at the same time, "I am sorry that I am compelled to put you to so much trouble, as I have no money to pay you."

"Please God, mosta, Aunt Dilsey never charges any one yit for sich commodations as I could give'em for God knos its poor enuff at best. You say, mosta, you call on missus at de ouse dar, and she can't take you in. Well, you must 'cuse her, for she's looking for a mighty heap o' company to-morrow; dar's a great man to be dar to-morrow, what's gwine to preach in her house, an' a good many folks done come a'ready an' heap mo' comin', to-morrow, so missus is mighty busy fixin' for 'em. But here's Uncle Ben," she continued, as an old grey-headed negro came around the corner of the cabin, muttering to himself about the carelessness of some of the other negroes.

This old couple, Uncle Ben and Aunt Dilsey, as they were familiarly called by all who knew them, both black and white, were an old couple who, from age, had for a long time lived in a small,

but snug cabin at the far end of the row of huts occupied by younger and more active slaves. Although Uncle Ben was not required to do any labor, yet he voluntarily took a kind of supervision over the farm, stock, etc. When he saw Mr. Leland he stopped and gave him a scrutinizing look when Aunt Dilsey spoke, saying: "Uncle Ben, don't stare your eyes out at a stranger; dis old gentleman was out travelin', and come to stay in our cabin, kase missus can't let him stay dar, as she's got a heap of company now."

"Well" said Uncle Ben, "We's commanded dat if a stranger comes along we's got to take him in an' give him sech as we have to set before him."

While Aunt Dilsey was preparing supper, Mr. Leland learned much about the lady of the mansion from Uncle Ben; he learned, with other things, they were a very religious family, but the hostess had been raised in the city of Richmond and had imbibed all the fashionable ideas of religion with but very little of its true principles, and none of its humility. Soon after Mr. Leland had finished a very good coarse supper, he told his host that he was very much fatigued from a long day's walk, and would wish to retire for the night and that he felt like he wished to return thanks to his Creator for the blessings of the day, and invoke his protection through the night; that if it would annoy them, he would retire to some place out of doors.

"Bless God!" said both old folks at the same time, "we allers like prayin' in our house, and nebber goes to bed 'thout one o us tries to pray."

Mr. Leland then took an old worn Bible out of his bundle, and read in a very solemn tone the one hundred and second Psalm. During the reading the two old blacks often said in a low voice, "Amen, bless de Lord." When the Psalm was ended Mr. Leland fell upon his knees, and poured out his feelings in such an outburst of revential eloquence as was seldom ever equaled, and never surpassed by mortal lips. His host and hostess were so affected by his reading and prayer that they could do nor say any more than to fix their eyes on their guest, as though they felt that he was something more than mortal man. He retired to a clean pallet in one corner of the cabin, where he soon fell asleep.

When morning came he was up early; Aunt Dilsey soon haf him a good, plain repast, after which he seated himself to read, telling his hostess that he felt too much fatigued to travel, and if she was willing, he would rest there until afternoon any way; and then, if he felt better, he would go on his way.

Aunt Dilsey said, mosta, stay jest as long as you want to; we be glad to have you stay with us a fortnight, if you can put up with our far."

Mr. Leland seated himself under a shady tree in the cabin yard, with Bible, waiting to see what the finality would be.

About nine o'clock everything was in a bustle at the stone mansion; all the servants were called in to dress in their very best. Carriages began to arrive by the dozen, until the hall and every part of the large and elegant building was crowded to overflowing, but to their dismay no preacher made his appearance, for the last carriage that came in sight had been scanned to get a glimpse of the minister. No one in the large congregation had ever seen him but all had heard of him. So every one was full of anxious expectation, supposing that when he cme he would be drawn by two or four horses, driven by a servant in livery.

Ten o'clock passed, half-past ten, eleven o'clock was announced by the clock on the wall, and no minister.

The company by this time had become restless, and were about to disperse, when Aunt Dilsey went to her mis-

tress and said: "Bless de Lord, missus, why don't you git dat ole man who stayed in our cabin last night to come here to de door and pray, 'fore de folks all go home; he prayed in our cabin last night and dis morning, 'a 'fore God, in all my born days I nebber heard sich prayin' afore. He's settin, dar now, under de tall pine tree; ain' as de preacher's not come, if you'll let him pray, I'll go right now and fetch him down."

The lady consulted with some of the company, the matter was talked of among the congregation, when it was agreed to have the straggler, as they called him, to come and pray before the congregation broke up. Aunt Dilsey went where Mr. Leland was sitting and said, "Mosta, de folks all dispinted bout de preacher coming': he am not cum and da wants you to go down and pray for 'em, 'fore da all breaks up. Mosta, I wants you to pray jis like you did las' night."

Mr. Leland walked down to the front door and, standing on the steps, repeated a hymn from memory, sang, and then he engaged in prayer, and by the time his prayer was ended, all eyes were fixed upon him with amazement. He then remarked that as there seemed to be a disappointment, that if it would not be assuming too much, he would talk to them a few minutes; and as a foundation, or starting point he would read a short passage from the word of truth, which they would find by reference to the thirteenth chapter and second verse of Hebrews: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have enertained angels unawares." When he had spoken for twenty or thirty minutes, the hostess, who had refused him the hospitalities of her house the evening before, became so deeply affected that she ran and prostrated herself at the feet of Mr. Leland and would, had he allowed her to have done so, have washed his feet with her tears.

It was said that she was so overcome and affected from that time forward, she was a changed woman, so much so that she threw off all her jewelry and ornamental dressing, and became an humble and plain Christian. Though she was a professor before, her whole deportment underwent a complete change. Her house became a place of divine worship, where she delighted in making all, no matter how plain or how poor, as happy as kind attention could make them, in fact it was said that, if preference had to be given to any, it was always in favor of the poor and needy.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

SERMON BY THE LATE ELDER A. B. AYERS
Pigg River Association 1960

I will read to you the third verse of the fifteenth chapter of Romans: *"For even Christ pleased not himself; but as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me."* The word "me" here implies Christ himself, as we understand. The Psalmist uses almost the same language in the 69th Psalm, 9th verse: *"The zeal of thine house has eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me."*

As we understand the word fallen and the word fell, both signify the past tense as to when the "reproaches fell on me." We read also in 1st Timothy where the Apostle said that Adam was not deceived, but Eve being deceived, was in the transgression, but she should be saved in childbearing.

Now the question is, When did the reproaches fall on "me?" My mind goes out to believe with all sacredness of heart and soul that in the garden of Eden, when there were but the two, there was the transgression. And in thinking

about it, a thought is formed in my mind that there never was but one transgression, and that was in the garden of Eden; and that transgression has been multiplied as the human family has been multiplied. My thought is that in the transgression there was every conceivable sin that has ever been practiced by mortal man. The Apostle tells us in the 4th chapter of Ephesians that there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism. There is one salvation; and that salvation was prepared in the Son of God, upon whom the reproaches fell in the transgression. This woman, was in the transgression, yet she shall be saved in childbearing. Now to me, in the transgression the church was figuratively in Eve; and the seed of the woman concerning whom God spoke to the serpent, was the salvation of his people: "It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

The Apostle Peter tells us that He stood a Lamb without blemish from the foundation of the world. Christ has been without blemish from the foundation of the world; yet there was the promise that he should bruise the serpent's head; and there was the promise that she shall be saved in childbearing.

Well, what child is under consideration here? It didn't say, In children bearing; but in childbearing. The very child, to me, brethren, the very child, the seed of the woman that was promised there in Genesis, is the very one in which Abraham received the promise that in his seed this child should come forth, "For in Isaac shalt thy seed be called." And in Isaac Jesus did come forth, that is, in the genealogy of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Jesse, David, Solomon, etc., — the genealogy right on down, did the seed of the woman come forth, on whom the reproaches of the transgression fell. That is, "All the reproaches have fallen on me."

Therefore, he stood as a Lamb without blemish and covered every transgression of the household of faith — of the church of the living God. The old prophet Zachariah tells that, "In that day", (a specific day, which to me is the very day in which the seed of the woman was crucified,) "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleaness," "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem: half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea." That was the blood that had the atoning power in the day of the crucifixion of the blessed Lamb of God, upon whom all the reproaches had fallen. He came at the appointed time of the Father, as we are told in Galatians: "When the fulness of time was come God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law."

What a blessed promise, brethren? The promises of God can't fail: never have, and never will. If the promises of God could fail, then none of us would have salvation, nor eternal life. What a blessed promise we have in him, that he should bruise the serpent's head. All the promises were based on him. In Hebrews the Apostle wrote, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visiteth him?" He did visit the Son of Man. The man that is under consideration is figurative of the church; and here we have the Son of Man whom God visited with the wrath that we deserved — that the church deserved in their transgression, because the whole church went down in that transgression and was never able to lift itself up. You can't lift yourself up by your own boot-straps; you can't lift yourself up with nothing to cling to, but He has the power to lift us up. The Psalmist declares that He brought him up from the horrible pit and the miry clay, and placed his feet upon a rock.

Brethren, friends, and neighbors, do

you have your feet upon a rock this morning? If so, what rock are you standing on? Not the common rocks that I see in the land and soil up here, but the Rock of Eternal Ages. That is the bed-rock. That's God's salvation and eternal truth, who arose from the dead, and became the first fruits of them that slept.

So the reproaches of them that reproached thee have fallen on me. Now can you fathom the greatness of God: his mercy, his love, and his truth and salvation that he has in store for all his people that love him. All of us were in the transgression, yet He chose the church in Christ, for he tells us in 2nd Timothy, *"Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace that was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."*

So, brethren it can't fail. There was your promise that all the reproaches of them that reproached thee have fallen on me. Yet he stood in that capacity from the foundation of the world; and before there was a people God made this covenant of redemption with the Son. Can you fathom the greatness of the mercy that God had on you, knowing what would take place? There is not a sin or shortcoming that you have ever come through in life's journey that was not known to God from all eternity.

He knows how vile and depraved we are today. But the question is, do we believe by faith? The Apostle John tells us, "He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." Do we believe this morning that God the Father from all eternity did embrace that grace in him, and send him forth at the appointed time? Can you conceive that all the salvation of the whole church of the living God, coming in the very small package, in the oneness of that infant babe that was born in Bethlehem of Judah, and wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in the manger. Can you conceive that there was a sufficiency for every child of promise, every heir of promise, every child of grace in every age, from the creation to the final consummation, he standing as a Lamb without blemish from the foundation of the world, and the reproaches of them that reproached us are fallen upon him? Brethren, if you can concieve that, then you have something that is far beyond the capacity of the mind. I have thought about it; and the more I think of it, the more it becomes a sea without bottom, without brim, without shore: The greatness and mercy of God, and what we call eternity; and to live through eternity in the bliss and splendor of the Son of God, clothed with the garments of righteousness that will never fade, never decay.

It is said by a prophet of old, "Let the foundation be strongly laid with three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber; and let the expense be given out of the king's house." Oh, brethren, here comes your expense again: that one that the reproaches fell upon. He is the expense of the king's house; and here is the foundation strongly laid: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And there is life in every one of those layers of stone. Let the foundation be strongly laid of three rows of great stones — and they are great stones brethren. It is the very foundation upon which the church of the living God is built. Every house must have a foundation, a good foundation, otherwise the building will soon fall and decay.

But I assure you, brethren, if we have faith to believe that Jesus is the Christ, then we are born of God; and he that is born of God doth not commit sin, because his seed remaineth in him, as the Apostle tells us. Who is it that is born of God? It is not this corrupt man here; it is not this earthly body of ours, but it is the Spirit of God born in you. That is the new birth to me: When he sheds abroad that quickening power that brings us to the knowl-

edge of how vile, how sinful, and how lost we are, and how depraved we are; and, with that, always gives the knowledge that there is power that is able to save the most vile sinner. If he was willing to reach my case, that was always my thought, for mine is an outstanding case; if he was just willing to reach down that mercy to me. I believe he has brethren, because I have a precious hope that is superior to me to all the hopes of this congregation. I wouldn't give you mine this morning for all of yours, because it wouldn't do me any good. But this blessed hope is that all the reproaches not only of the whole church of the living God, but this poor servant, was embraced in that same promise of covenant grace there, and redeemed by that blood. And I want to give you, in my way of seeing and understanding, the full assurance that none of you will ever enter heaven and immortal glory, only through the merits of that blood that streamed from the side of him that said, "The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen on me." Just the merits of that blood, and the sacrifice of that body.

When he came into the world, he didn't come as the other high priests did, offering the blood of bulls and goats as sacrifices. He, being the High Priest himself, did not have to offer for sin for himself, as the other priests did: for all the Levitical priesthood had to offer sacrifices for themselves and not for the people only; and that had to be every year. But once in the end of the world, the Apostle tells us, He made one sacrifice: and by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, because the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen on me, and the zeal of thine house has eaten me up.

Brethren, what a wonderful God this is, that made a promise that can't fail. Abraham his servant received faith to believe that the promise of God could not fail, when the Lord said, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest... and offer him for a burnt offering." He had faith to believe that though I go and slay him, he is coming back. He testified to that when he said to his servants, "Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again unto you." He is coming back, though I go and slay him. Brethren, here is your resurrection from the dead. He is coming back with me! That is a glorious thought with me — the resurrection from the dead.

This life here is such a short span, its just a few days. The servant of old said, "A few days, and full of trouble." If we live to be four score years, we soon pass on just the same. There is no time limit with God, but we must all go the way of the earth. But the blessed thought is that there was a day coming when this one that all the reproaches were laid upon should come forth, for the Lord said, "Thou shalt bruise his heel, but he shall bruise thy head." That is to me, brethren, when the reproaches, the one sin that has been multiplied that was committed in Eden, like a tree that comes forth from the seed — just one seed brings forth the tree, fell upon him. Here is a figure, that one sin back there has been multiplied, and all of us have been bitten by that same poison, and that same poison will cause all of us to wither. If you chop around a tree and break the sap and bark, you will soon see it wither; and it will soon die. So sin has been multiplied, and caused us to wither in body, to wither in mind and thought, and this old body will go back to the dust. But the thought is now, that He has borne the reproaches — they have fallen on him. He was bruised for our offences, buried for our iniquities, and arose for our justification.

What a blessed thought, that death couldn't hold him! Neither will it hold you. Because just so sure as Jesus came forth from the dead, just so sure there

will be a resurrection day. Abraham saw that when he was assured that, I will slay him, but he will come back with me. I have thought of that many times: "While we go yonder and worship". What was he going to worship? He was going to take the life of his son, but that unfaltering faith and the all abounding love of God was so strong in him that he saw the resurrection there. And when he went to perform the very thing that God commanded him, there God placed a ram — which is a figure of this one that bore the reproaches. There the ram was slain, and Isaac went free. Again here is a pertinent figure of the church: Isaac went free: the lamb was slain.

Here is that blessed Son who knew no sin, who bore the reproaches of sin of all his people, the whole church of the living God. He was bound upon the cross. God delivered him there, and withdrew himself from him, that he might die and pay the ransom price. Your purchase price is the blood of Christ. Your passport, if you enter heaven and immortal glory, has been written in the Lamb's book of life with that blood; because the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.

"For the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen on me."

(The above is from a recording, and is somewhat condensed for publication — Editors.)

CONTRIBUTIONS

JUNE 1985

Thomas T. Brammer, VA.	$ 2.00
Mrs. Jesse Ray, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Estelle Dowlen, TX.	2.00
Charles H. Allen, NC.	7.00
Elder Albritten, FL.	2.00
Elder R. O. Smith, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Minnie Barrett, AL.	5.00
Mrs. Letcher Smith, FL.	12.00
Elder C.M. Haygood, TX.	2.00
Nolan Lanier, NC.	7.00
Ms. Pamela A. Key, MD.	1.00
Mrs. Russell Jennings, MD.	2.00
Mrs. Edd Hodnett, VA.	2.00
D. E. Ferguson, Can.	7.00
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Simpkins, VA.	10.00
Mrs. Any D. Heppler, AZ.	12.00
Mrs. William Steele, FL.	7.00
Hartzel Nelson, WV.	2.00
Mrs. Ruth Jeffreys, NC.	12.00
Elder Paul Lambe, NC.	2.00
Homie C. Dalton, VA.	2.00

We wish to thank our many subscribers who renew their subscriptions so promptly and have sent in new subscribers and renewals. This is Very encouraging for our efforts of the past and the future.

Editors

MEETINGS

MOUNT OLIVE CHURCH MEETING

On the 15th day of June, 1985, Mount Olive Church was called into conference. The Church by motion and second declard themselves ready to proceed with the ordination of Brother David W. Harrell to the Full Work of the Ministry.

Pursuant to this call, the following Elders:

Joe L. Hamrick	W. M. Burkhalter
James D. Hamrick	G. D. Shipman
Graydon Smith	C. M. Haygood

and Deacon Walter Harrell were seated to form a presbytery.

The presbytery orgainzed itself by electing Elder Shipman as moderator and Elder Jimmy Hamrick as clerk. Then prayer was offered by Elder Smith to our gracious Lord for His divine blessings upon the presbytery.

The Church's spokesperson, Elder

Burkhalter, delivered Brother David W. Harrell to the presbytery. After Elder Haygood had questioned the Church's spokesperson and Brother Harrell concerning his qualifications as a God-called minister. it was moved by Elder Joe Hamrick and seconded by Elder Haygood to continue with the ordination.

The presbytery selected Elder Joe Hamrick to word the ordination prayer and Elder Smith to deliver the charge. The ordination was then conducted by the laying on of hands of the presbytery and with prayer by Elder Joe Hamrick. The charge was then delivered by Elder Smith.

The right hand of official fellowship was given to Elder Harrell by the members of the presbytery, which then by motion and second delivered him back to the Church.

Mount Olive Church, by motion and second, received Elder David W. Harrell back as a duly ordained minister. The right hand of fellowship was given him by members of Mount Olive Church, visiting brethren, sisters, and friends.

The minutes of the presbytery were read and approved, and the presbytery dissolved in order with prayer by Elder Burkhalter.

Gerald D. Shipman, Moderator
Jimmy Hamrick, Clerk

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom."
Proverbs 9: 10

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OBITUARIES

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT FOR ELDER DAVID V. SPANGLER

Elder D. V. Spangler, at the age of 83, was called home by his Lord on April 18, 1985. He was born January 9, 1902, the eighth child of the late Elder Jacob F. Spangler and Roberta Howery Spangler. He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Sister Nannie Turpin Spangler, four children, Sister Mildred Graham, Elinor Hodnett, David M. Spangler and Rebecca Smith; eight grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Brother Spangler joined the Spray Primitive Baptist Church in 1918 and later moved his membership to Dan River. He first spoke to the congregation at Dan River in June, 1920. He served the church from 1923-1927 when the meetings were held in homes and then officially from June 25, 1927 when the property was legally granted to the members whom he served. Elders Kenneth Key and Paul Lambe conducted his funeral on April 30, 1985 and his body was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

Brother Spangler would not have wished to be eulogized or grieved over. Therefore, it is our prayer that anything penned here might be to the praise and honor of Him whom our precious Brother spent his life exalting above all names. As was stated at his funeral, he preached his last sermon on the 53rd. chapter of Isaiah. This experience is related below in the words of his daughter. Sister Mildred Graham:

"Several months before Daddy passed away, he had a revelation on the text on 53rd. Chapter of Isaiah. That night my mother heard him weeping and she wanted to know what was wrong. He told her to go back to bed that he was so happy

and that he was rejoicing in this text and everything was fine. He told her he was shown that his Redeemer lived, and He had shown him wonderful things and that where his home was when the time come.

He had wanted to be able to preach one more sermon on this 53rd. Chapter of Isaiah—especially the 10th. verse, 'Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he had put him to grief: When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.' Ne never got to tape or preach this sermon at church.

The morning he passed away he told the nurses that he had one more sermon to preach, and they would have to listen. He quoted the entire Chapter of 53rd. Isaiah. He preached beautifully for about 30 minutes; clearly, forcefully, with great power. At the close of the sermon he said that there was a time to be born and a time to die, and his time had come. He again said his Redeemer lived and His will be done.

He had told us the first of the week that he was going home. The nurse said she felt blessed to have share this experience."

This eperience brings to mind Romans 10:15, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" Our Brother's walk and talk speaks for itself. He was blessed in the years of his ministry to do as Paul instructed Timothy, "Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." And we feel surely he was able to witness with Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the fiath; Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day."

Brother Spangler loved his brethren dearly and was blessed to serve them faithfully. We will miss him immensely and his memory will live on in our hearts, but we would not, could not, wish him back as we know he has reached that final destination for which he longed. Rather than sorrowful hearts, may the Lord grant us thankful hearts for all the years we were blessed with Brother Spangler, for the blessing of communing with him, of hearing the special gift with which he was blessed, and of seeing the Lord shine in his countenance. There is no question to whom he looked for strength as evidenced in his favorite hymn, "Rejoice the Lord is King," and in one of the last hymns he sang, "Oh Lord, I would delight in thee, and on thy care depend; To thee in all my troubles flee, My best, my only Friend." May we be given to look to that same source, and may his family be blessed with a reconciling peace of knowing that he is where he most wished to be as he stated in the final words of his book, AMAZING GRACE, "I have that blessed hope that I will someday see the King in his beauty, and praise Him as I ought."

Humbly Submitted,
Sister Mary L. Hawkins
Brother Bob R. Collie

"But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depts of the sea."

Matthew 18: 6

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Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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Psalm 1

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."
Mat. 7:12

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EDITORIAL

"God is the Lord, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar." **Psalm 118: 27.**

There seems to be no doubt that David was (at the time he wrote this verse of scripture) possessed with divine light. This light had shown from above into his heart and opened up to him things that had been hidden from all eternity. By this light shining into his heart many things were manifested to his heart and soul. The Psalmist does not say that this light came into his heart through his own creature exertion or his own wisdom or his own free will, but he ascribes the whole of it to the giving of the Lord.

My dear ones, if we have any spiritual knowledge of the workings of the Holy Spirit in our hearts and soul, it is because this same divine light has shined there by the power of God. *"For God, who commanded the light to shine our of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."* **2 Cor. 4: 6, 7. The Lord does this for his elect, by making the things they were once buried in as darkness, deadness, ignorance to pass away and his true divine light to shine into their hearts revealing to them things they never felt or experienced before.**

Christ meets the sinner with all the curses and pollution of his father, Adam, upon him, born in sin and shapen in iniquity, by nature a child of wrath even as others, without Christ, having no hope, and without God in this world. In this awful condition he had no power to help himself; he may have thought he had while he may boast of his goodness, of his good works, of the freedom of his will, yet he is still where he was, a sinner dead in trespasses and sins.

The effects of Christ in taking the sinner into union with himself soon make their appearance by light in the understanding and life in the affections; for Christ is both the Light and Life to the new creation. Christ in boundless love unites himself to the soul of a sinner, and from this blessed union the sinner becomes a branch in Christ the heavenly Vine, a member of his mystical body, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. The effects of this peculiar relation will show themselves in every circumstance of time and to all eternity. But light and life are felt struggling with darkness and unbelief, because the life and light implanted by the Holy Spirit in the soul are most violently opposed by Satan and he musters all his forces to combat against the new regenerated soul. Satan tries very hard to frustrate or destroy

the work of God in the heart and soul, and we deeply feel the effects of his efforts in attempting to do so. But thanks unto the Lord, for he furnishes a weapon from the heavenly armory called prayer. "God be merciful to me a sinner."

"God is the Lord, which hath shown us light." O, how this precious light of God when shinned into our hearts, reveals to us what poor polluted undone sinners we are. He has shown us light by giving us some knowledge of ourselves and of himself and of his will. If the Lord has shown you and me this blessed light as he did David and those of old, we will have certain evidences, certain convictions to give us a sweet hope that we are partakers of his divine light. There will no doubt be times when unbelief, doubts, fears, dark clouds hovering over our minds will darken the presence of this light; but the light is never completely diminished because we can look back to a time in our lives when we had no such light, when we were in total darkness. We may have considered ourselves at that time to be engulfed in his light; yet, everything spiritual and heavenly was dark to us, and we were dark to them.

"Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar." The horns of the altar of burnt offering were eminences of spires at the four corners of the altar which were not only for ornaments but also for use, so that the beasts to be offered might be bound with cords to them. To bind the victim with cords to the horns of the altar seems to imply that there was a certain fear, a certain dread, a shrinking from the horror of being bound. But in our text we are not to think of slain beasts as being the sacrifice. *"For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins."* **Heb. 10:4. Then what sacrifice is this that our test speaks of? This sacrifice signifies Jesus Christ who offered himself as a propitiation for the sins of his people.** *"And he is the propitiation for our sins."* **I John 2:2.**

May it please God to bless us to enter into some of the things concerning Christ which bound him to the horns of the altar. The one great thing that bound Christ is God's decree concerning his everlasting covenant. *"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and ecery man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."* **Heb. 8:10, 11, 12. The Lord's covenant is ordered in all things and sure. It is a covenant of electing love, of redemption and salvation by grace, entered into by the sacred Three in one Godhead, in behalf of elect sinners on whom grace and glory were settled forever in Christ, their covenant head. There were certain covenant engagements which our Lord had freely and voluntarily undertaken and when once entered into bound him with cords to the horns of the altar. He was bound to take upon himself the spiritual seed of Abraham, to suffer, bleed, and die for he was** *"The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."* **Rev. 13:8.**

My mind at this point seems to meditate upon Abraham and Isaac. Remember God had given Abraham an order to take his son, Isaac, to a certain mountain to be made a sacrifice for a burnt offering. All things were made ready for the sacrifice, and as Abraham stretched forth his hand to slay his son, an angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, "lay not thine hand upon the lad." *"And Abrahm lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns, and Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son."* **Gen.**

22:13. Isaac could not be made a sacrifice for he was not perfect. The sacrifice had to be without spot or blemish, only the Lamb of God could be a sacrifice, for he was perfect in every detail.

The ram was no doubt a type and figure of Christ. Was not Christ "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world?" The thicket that the Lamb was cought in seems to me to be as an emblem of God's covenant in his decree on behalf of his elect people. A covenant that Christ was caught and bound to when he undertook for his bride, the Church. He was bound to the covenant that would give his people eternal salvation. "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." The Lamb was caught by his horns, an emblem of salvation. *"The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I trust, my buckler and the horn of my salvation."* **Psalm 18:2. There are two horns which established the sure truth of the covenant in the salvation of his people.** *"In the mouth of two or three shall every word be established."* **2 Cor. 13:1. The cords that he was bound with seem to be an emblem of the sins of his people. It was the sins of his people that bound him to the horns of the altar. The cords of his people's sins were binding to him.** *"His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holder with the cords of his sins."* **Prov. 5:22. Christ who had no sin took the sins of his people upon himself.** *"For he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."* **2 Cor. 5:21.**

Remember that the beasts that were "bound with cords to the horns of the altar" were bound because they were to be sacrificed: all these were pointing to the great sacrifice made by our Lord Jesus Christ. The beasts were bound literally, pain was to be endured, blood was to be shed, their binding was not voluntarily; but Christ being bound by sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar, was acting from choice by his own free will. *"Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offering and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God."* **Heb. 10:5, 6, 7.**

Why was it necessary to "bind the sacrifice" with cords? Is there not a tendency in all flesh to shrink away from things that horrify us? In the case of our Lord Jesus Christ, was there not some shrinking from the human nature of Christ to escape the bitter cup of extreme pain, blood shedding, and his suffering death upon the cross? Did he not pray saying, *"O my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me?"* **Yet he was bound to the horn of the altar and says,** *"Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."* **Matt. 26:39. So he was caught by the horns in the thicket of covenant engagements which he by his own will had freely and voluntarily undertaken on the behalf of poor unworthy sinners, that he might forever put away, as far as east is from west, the sins of his people.** *"By the which we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."* **Heb. 10:10.**

May the Lord bless us to see and feel the binding of his people, spiritually and experimentally. As the victim had a feeling of breaking away from those confronting him, so the Lord's people have an inclination to break away from the pathway the Lord has predestinated for his elect children to walk. There is a shrinking back from suffering, trials, tribulations, burdens of sins, labouring under our sins, guilt, troubles, and many other difficulties which confront us in our walk of life. Was this not true of the children of Israel while traveling through the wilderness? *"And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, would God that we had died in the wilderness! Were it not better for us to*

return to Egypt?" **Num. 14:23.**

Christ being bound to the horns of the altar suffered untold sufferings for his people while here upon earth and is now sitting in glory at the right hand of the Father. If we have a hope of entering into that future glory then we must expect much suffering along our pathway of life here upon earth for there is no entering into glory except through suffering. Is it not even a gift from Christ to his people for them to suffer? *"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."* **Phil. 1:29. Our growth in grace is not without trials and tribulations. If we be in union with Christ, being bound to the horns of the altar, we must suffer to some degree with him, for how can the Head suffer without the body being effected? If we suffer each hour while on earth, for Christ's sake, what would it be compared to eternal glory, if we be his children and heirs?** *"And if children, then heirs: heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon the suffering of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us."* **Rom. 8:17, 18.**

We are all born into a sinful world, with a sinful nature. Our sinful nature is so prone to go after the things of the world, to go after its' idols and to hew out cisterns for ourselves, broken cisterns that hold no water, forsaking the Fountain of living waters. Dear ones, can we not see how this world could become our paradise with our every thought and mind centered upon it if God did not cause it to become a wilderness, a desert land to us through suffering, trials, and tribulations? Our afflictios may be great or small, but afflictions we must have, because we are bound to the horns of the altar and there is no escaping them if we be in union with Christ Jesus. *"We must through much tribulations enter into the kingdom of God!"* **Acts 14:23. We are traveling on a stormy sea tempted and harrassed by Satan, by the many idols of this world, sometimes by family troubles, temporal afflictions, bodily afflictions, and many more may fall on those traveling to Zion. Yea, sometimes trouble among churches and brethren. But in all these may we be given by the grace of God to proclaim that this world is not our home, we are only passing through to that far greater and better home which God hath prepared for them that love him.**

If there is anything worthwhile in this article, give God the praise; if errors, charge those to me for I'm ignorant and full of errors.

An unworthy sinner in hope of mercy,

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brother Williams:

I am sending in check for two years subscription to the Signs.

I really enjoyed the July issue—Hidden in the cleft of the rock was so beautiful.

Sometine God blesses me with His sweet spirit of love, then *everything* **is** *beautiful*—**Love is such a powerful thing, it makes everything worth while.**

I know everything God does is just and right for He *is wisdom,* **but I wish many times I could retain the Spirit, and would hold it if I could, but we are** *taught* **that without it we can** *do nothing,* **and we learn where it comes from. I have begged for wisdom and knowledge of the things that pertain to God and Godliness—and it is written "If any lack wisdom, let him ask God, who giveth liberally". Great is the** *mystery* **of Godliness.**

Brother Williams, God gives us what we need and I feel so grateful to have

been given faith to *believe in Him* and Hope in His Mercy and enjoy the love and fellowship of His Children and try in our weak way to praise His name and talk of His mighty love and power by which He upholds all things, rules and controls all things.

May He watch over us all and lead us in paths of righteousness and peace, for His own names sake.

Mrs. Lucille Young
807 Pope Street
Memphis, Tenn. 38112

Dear Brethren and Friends:

I feel like writing a few thoughts for publication in the good old paper, the *Signs*. I do not know what I may say, but hope it will be a thus saith the Lord. I am sure I can say one thing: that there dwells no good thing in me, that is, in my flesh, all polluted, a poor, trembling worm of dust. When I would do good, evil is present; the good that I would I do not, evil thoughts crowding out good thoughts, as prone to err as the sparks are to fly upward. There in only one good, that is God; he is precious to them that love his name. The name of Jesus, how sweet, how lovely, how pure. Man in his best estate is but vanity, a lump of clay in the hands of the Potter. The Lord's portion is his people, chosen out of every kindred, tongue and nation; not many mighty, not many noble, but the poor of this world. Forty-nine years ago to-day I tried to tell the brethren here at Hopewell what great things the Lord had done for me. I could say but little about this wonderful salvation through grace, faith and hope through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior. I thought I must tell the brethren how worthy I felt, but hope I was made to see that there was no salvation in that way. I was received, and have been greatly blessed to have the privilege and to be able to be in my seat at most of the meetings. Sometimes I ask, am I a child of God, or have I deceived the brethren? So many misgivings and failures to do the good I would. He said, There is none good, no, not one. That encourages me at times, The thief on the cross repented at the last moment and was saved. He is merciful, he will not chide, neither will he keep his anger forever. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. Whosoever confesseth me before men, him will I confess before my Father which art in heaven. Whosoever denieth me before men, him will I deny before my Father which art in heaven. We love to praise him and crown him Lord of all, giving him all the glory, honor, dominion, power and majesty. A poor babe found in a manger wrapped in swaddling clothes grew up the wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, and died that ignominious death on the cross. He was made a little lower than the angels, died and rose again for our justification. I feel that I can praise him for all his wonderful works and trust him for all that is to come. If I could only feel sure that I am numbered with his chosen ones. I fear at times that I have not been born again, forgetting spiritual things and clinging to worldly things. That good hope is an anchor of our souls, sure and steadfast not like the anchor of a ship, but a sure anchor, a sure foundation, that will stand. My sheep hear my voice, I know them; not one shall perish. Other sheep have I, which are not of this fold. He gathers his sheep in his arms and carries the lambs in is bosom; he will never forsake one of them, they are his. Blessed are they that do his commandments; they shall have right to the tree of life and enter in through the gates into the city. Fear not, little flock, for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. We hear much about worldly inheritance,

but we seek that inheritance which fadeth not away, but is from everlasting to everlasting. O the depth of the riches, both of the knowledge and wisdom of God! Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor? Is not God wiser than the wisdom of men? No flesh shall glory in his presence. The foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of men. Paul said, By the grace of God I am what I am. I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. He told his Philippian brethren to rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice. "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." The mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but my loving-kindness shall not depart from thee. The words of the prophet were: Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed, neither confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame, for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy maker is thy husband, the Lord of hosts is his name, and thy redeemer the holy one of Israel. The God of the whole earth shall he be called. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy redeemer.

I fear I have written more than I should, so will close, hoping that some one of the little ones may get a crumb of comfort from this poor letter. I wish I could write like others of my brethren.

From a poor worm of the dust,

D. L. Blackwell.

Dear Brethren:

I cannot find words to express to you what the SIGNS is to me in my lonely life, separated so far from those I love for the truth's sake. It seems to me that all the dear writers are taught by the same great Teacher—all taught the same great truth. Some dear one writes of the power and majesty of our God, who has all power in heaven and on earth, and of the nothingness of man. How I realize the truth and beauty of the words. What a sweet and comforting doctrine, that our God is the God of purpose and grace; that He works all things after the counsel of His own will, and that all things work together for good to them who are the called according to his purpose. Such letters are full of comfort and strengthen the little ones. Then a letter from one whose heart is drawn out in love and sympathy for those who are situated like myself, far away from those they love for the truth's sake; they I feel are my friends, and I hear no preaching except through the Signs. We have the Bible, the precious word of God; yes, and a precious treasure it is, but sometimes our hearts are so dark and dead we cannot see the beauty in its pages, and it seems like mockery to attempt to read its divine words. O how dark and dead is our heart when we can see no beauty in that word, so full, so precious to God's dear people. I read on; each and every writer has some word that touches a responsive chord in my heart, telling some of my daily experience; so it all seems like an unbroken chain linked together in love. I can but hope that I am taught by the same unerring Spirit, and my heart is drawn out in love for each

dear one. My only hope is in Jesus, that because he lives I shall live also. How much I love the Old Baptists; I feel that I know something about their sorrows, their longings and also their great joy when the burden is lifted. My heart rejoices with those who rejoice and sympathizes with those who sorrow. May the Lord keep and bless you and spare you long to publish the dear old Signs of The Times, and long spare the dear editors to continue to fill it with truth and light from above, to share with the little ones.

Yours in love for the truth,
(Mrs.) F. J. Norris.

Dear Editors:

I have been impressed several times to write you, but have procrastinated until to-day, and now it seems to me I cannot think of one thing that so actuated and prompted me then, so there is no doubt in my mind at this time that if you deem this as worthless as I feel at present you will throw it into the wastebasket. I have read some letters in which the writers have expressed such feelings, and I was made to feel strengthened and benefited by their letters, so I am still inclined to make an attempt. Strange indeed that we take consolation in our infirmities by the testimony of like experiences in others, but did not Paul say that he gloried in his infirmities, and another place in the cross? It strikes me that such infirmities are good symptoms of grace. My mind is directed to John vi. 44: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." It seems to me that the conclusive thought herein conveyed is that of the resurrection. Jesus declares that he is the bread of life, and that no man can come unto him except it were given unto him of his Father. From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no longer with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. This part of the subject seems to be of most concern to me at this time than any other. Some called it a hard saying, and it appears that Peter did not deem it otherwise, and the Lord did not say that it was not a hard saying. It was manifest there that there were some that did believe and there were some that did not believe, and now this matter of depravity is the most hated doctrine of any other in my country, I think. It occurs to my mind to give my experience, sentimentally, whether any one else is wrought upon in like manner or some other manner. The scripture says, dust thou are, and unto dust shalt thou return. This is consistent with my own experience, and I take it to embrace all of Adam's race. Though a man appear to be something, yet he has no more sovereign power than the dust under his feet. Let our attention go to Matthew xxv. 24, 25: "He which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed: and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine." Now let us consider just what the Lord taught in this parable. Men seem to have that which they have not, and we do not understand that the Lord surrenders his rights of sovereignty over the work of his own hand, because he was accused of being hard. Jesus is all to his people; they could not do anything whatever toward their soul's salvation without him. It seems to me that if we could do one thing that would be of any merit in our soul's salvation the Lord would not have told us that some would come up and claim that they had done many wonderful works in his name. If our understanding is right there

is a death to die, and we infer that no man can approach it of himself; and a birth to take place, then what could a man do in the begetting and birth of himself? So may we well conclude that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, and that the Lord works in his people. Philippians ii. 13, reads: "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Now I think it a plain proposition that the apostle put to the Philippian brethren, and they had no right to claim any of the honor for their well-doing, for all the honor and glory belongs to the God of all creation. There are many other references in the Scriptures, both in the Old and New Testaments, which space will not admit, since I would like to say a few words about the latter part of the passage: "And I will raise him up at the last day." There seems to have been people in the days of Christ and the apostles who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. The Sadducees were grieved that the apostles taught the people and preached through Jesus the resurrection of the dead. (Acts iv.) I reckon that the world is no better now than it was then, for they not only had the Savior face to face to correct or rebuke them, but they had more than five hundred witnesses, and when the apostle recorded the incident he said the greater part of them remained, and a study of the resurrection of Jesus himself seems to give us a hopeful anchor; the victory is all in Jesus.

I think I had better stop here. If the Lord will, I want to attend some of the associations this fall, and I hope I may find the brethren in preaching spirit, for I believe it is now nearly two years since I heard any of them. If it were not for the SIGNS I hardly know what would become of me. I am miserably lonesome, depraved and sinful.

With only a hope,
J. A. Preston

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

North Creek Church was established in 1742 and may be the oldest active Primitive Baptist Church in North Carolina. Minutes of the meeting from 1790 to 1890 are in Duke University Library. For those minutes prior to that time we have no record.

Our meeting days are Second Sunday and Saturday before in each month.

Our pastor is Elder J. T. Prescott who has served us for about fourteen years. The church is located on Highway 92 about 10 miles east of Bath.

North Creek is also Elder Reeves Smith's home church.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

Dear Brethren:

The Psalmist says: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." By the Spirit of God in him David was enabled to know that the Savior would come and suffer and die for his people, rise the third day, as shown by the sign of Jonah, raise his loved ones above the law, bring all of them to him and finally land them all in glory. "He that goeth forth and weepeth," whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Again, the prophet says, Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord; his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth. If we follow on to know the Lord. Most people have not followed on to know the Lord, and have dried up for the lack of rain and perished, and you will hear them singing, We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves, claiming to do what has already been done by the great Redeemer. People tell us the Primitive Baptists are an ignorant people. They honestly think this is true, because they do not know, and have been taught from their infancy that it is so.

"He that goeth forth and weepeth." Before the world it was arranged, and when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. When the appointed time came for him to suffer and to go into the garden and weep, they came to a place called Gethsemane. He began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy, this one who did no violence, neither was guile found in his mouth; who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. He said to his disciples, "Tarry ye here and watch," and he went a little farther and fell on the ground. Matthew says, "Fell on his face and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." He said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." He came back and found them asleep, and said, "Could you not watch with me one hour?" The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Then while he was in the garden there came an angel the third time and strengthened him. Brethren, have you not experienced the same: been so distressed, so awfully pressed down with the weight of your sins that you gave up to die, and something would strengthen you? The angel of the Lord encampeth around about them that fear him, and delivereth them. Paul says, That ye may know him, and the fellowshilp of his sufferings, and the power of his resurrection. He suffered for us, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. Then they came out against him in the night, and Jesus said, This is your hour, and the power of darkness. Then the appointed moment had come, so they took him and crucified him.

"Bearing precious seed," is the next clause. The Bible says, A seed shall serve him, and it shall be accounted unto the Lord for a generation. Again, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. Again, I will make Christ's seed to endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me. Paul says, If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Abraham was a type. Again, The children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are accounted for the seed. Because they

were the natural children of fleshly Abraham it did not make them the children of God; the relation must be in the Spirit. Paul says, Therefore, it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed. Peter says, Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. So he bore all this seed, and not one was left out. He is the head, ye are the body, and members in particular, from whom all the body, having nourishment ministered and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. They were all there. Were they always in him? Was that incorruptible seed they are born of always in him, or are they baptized into him, or does the preacher sow the seed and in this way they are born and get into him? If this seed the preacher sows is what causes the birth, none but those who hear the preacher are born of the Spirit, every one else is lost. We had a member who was convicted in Africa, brought to America after she had received a hope, and when she joined the church she said, "Master, what you preach I felt in my heart in my own country." Primitive Baptists never did believe the birth is caused by seed sown by the preacher. This is like their bringing in the sheaves, they leave too many out. Billions they never even see, much less bring in.

"Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing." Paul says, And the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, make you perfect to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight. Peter says, Begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The prophet said, After two days he will revive us, in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. He came again with rejoicing. Isaiah says, Sing, O barren, that didst not bear; break forth into singing, thou that didst not travail with child; for the desolate hath many more children than the married wife, saith the Lord. Yes, brethren, there are many more Gentiles that are manifested as the children of God than there are Jews. Isaiah says, For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake will I not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee; and as the bridegroom rejoice over thee. Here you have been trembling and full of fear, saying, My God hath forgotten me and the Lord hath forsaken me. A woman may forget her sucking child, yet will I remember thee, is what God says. O, says every poor little trembling one, I do not see how the great, wise and wondrous Savior could even look at such as I, much less rejoice over me. O, I want to hide my homely face, I want to go away in some dark hollow, in some dense forest, and lay me down and mourn always because I am so black and so polluted. It cannot be that the one Isaiah says is glorious in his apparel and travels in the greatness of his strength could love me. I can see so clearly how he can banish me from his presence and the glory of his power. There is every reason why this should be my lot, I deserve it so much, and I cannot see how he could love such a polluted sinner as I know myself to be. If I only knew he rejoiced over me as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride I would be the happiest mortal on earth, and willing to bear any loss, or any cross, or any trial or disappointment. That is what all of his loved ones say. If you had no spiritual life you could not see your blackness. You do not look black to him, for you are washed, you ane sanctified, but you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

"Bringing his sheaves with him." The

angel said he would, and we believe the angel told the truth. Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. Peter says, For Christ hath also once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. His power is sufficient, for he said, No man taketh my life from me; I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. Again, All power, both in heaven and in earth, is given into my hands. His arms are long enough to embrace every one that ever did or ever will live; not only long enough, but reached out backward and forward and lifted every one above the law. For Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. Again, it is written, The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. It only took Jesus three days to reach out and get every sheaf and bring it back with him. Isaiah said, Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. The world, from Abel down to the last one to be born, is the field where these sheaves are, embracing all nations and all people—a big field. Now, brethren, look at these people that sing, We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves. How few they bring; what great multitudes they have never even seen. According to their theory nearly all the sheaves are lost. If I were to raise a great crop of grain, and when it was ripe, if I were to do all I could to save it and fail as completely as they have, I would think myself a poor manager. In 1880, according to their own statement, nearly seven-tenths of the human race had never seen a preacher or a Bible. Then nearly all the sheaves are lost if their doctrine is true, but thank the Lord it is false. People say to us, You do not save any one but a few Old Baptists. You never heard an Old Baptist say that. Benedict, the Missionary Baptist historian, says all the old divines taught that all the Savior died for he saved. God said to Abraham, I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven. Paul takes this up and says, Therefore there sprang even from one, and him as good as dead, as the stars of the sky in multitude and as the sand of the sea innumerable. Can you count the grains of sand in a peck? John saw so many no man could number them, out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people. They said, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to loose the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood. That is how many the Old School Baptists believe are saved. Paul says, As is the offence, so also is the free gift; for if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many, not unto a few. When we treat on the subject of those God has chosen out of the world for his witnesses and to suffer for his sake, we say few, very few. So it is written, Many are called, but few are chosn. Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leads to life, and few there be that find it. Gideon had only three hundred out of all Israel to fight that famous battle, but all the balance of Israel shared in the spoils. God chose the three hundred so he could show what he could do. He said, The people are too many, lest Israel should vaunt themselves, and say we, yes, we have gained this battle by our might. So it is here and there we find a few like Gideon's three hundred, ready to suffer and fight for the truth as it is in Jesus. Those who went lapped the water as a dog lappeth. A dog is the most faithful animal to his master we know, and will follow him through rain and snow, heat and cold, and if his master is so poor he cannot give him a crust of bread the dog will go and hunt something to eat, and come back and follow his master. So it is with God's true and tried people, they follow Jesus through evil as well as good report

and follow him through sneers, jeers and all kinds of abuse. Preachers will, when the church is too poor to help them, earn their own living, and then come and preach to them. Bringing his sheaves with him. The satisfying of the law, the saving of his people, and the place and time, are one thing, and the manifestation of it is another. The place where he saved his people on the cross, and when he came out of the tomb; the manifestation of this is in all time and places. The Bible says, The redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads, &c. Again, I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him. They shall show forth my praise. Again, In that day shall the great trumpet be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mountain at Jerusalem. Now, brethren, come and stand right here on this tower and look. See away yonder in the east in China. See them coming from away over there where there are no ministers of the gospel and no Bible. Bring my sons from far. How, you ask, were they saved? The same as yourselves. As Paul says, Therefore being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. Now turn toward the frozen regions of the north. I will say to the north, Give up. O Look! See them coming. The ransomed of the Lord shall return. Hear them shout the victory through Jesus. Now, brethren, turn with me and look over there at that dark place, that is Africa, that is south, and to the south God says, Keep not back. No place to black, no one too poor. Do you know that Jesus was born in a stable, among the beasts of the stall? Does not the Bible say, Out of every nation? Surely it does. Then there they come, millions for whom Jesus died and saved, according to our doctrine. which is true Bible doctrine, yet, according to the teaching of the Arminian world, are lost for the want of the gospel. Ah, yes, coming. Glory to God, coming, in spite of error, regardless of all the carelessness, corruption and neglect of men. Coming, and praising Jesus for saving them. Not a few Old Baptists, but as the sand of the sea, innumerable. Jesus said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." This "all" embraces all the Father gave him before time began. O how grand and glorious, how wonderful. Saved and coming, regardless of their ignorance, imperfections, mistakes and wrong doings. Coming singing:

"All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And Crown him Lord of all."

Coming, money or no money. Coming if all preachers die. Coming if no one gives a cent to foreign missions. Wonder of wonders, glory of glories! This is the most wonderful doctrine ever preached. No wonder Paul wrote, therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed. Coming, even if they are deceived and do not believe, for Paul says, If we believe not he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself. For the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. O, brethren, am I one, poor, little, sinful thing that I am?

The editors can do as they like with this. I have written too much.

Your unworthy, brother, if one at all,

Isaac R. Greathouse

ARTICLES

GOD MAKES THE WRATH OF MAN TO PRAISE HIM.

What things in the Bible are the most talked of, written about and dwelt upon as being the greatest of all God's works? Are they not those things brought about by the acts of wicked men? Take, for instance, the act of the king issuing a decree that all the male children under two years of age should be killed. On the one side of the scales we see the death of little children, the anguish of the mothers, heartrending scenes throughout the world; on the other side we see the babe in the manger, the little ark (hidden in the bulrushes) containing Moses, whom death, the king and all the powers of wickedness could not find. Were the scales balanced when Jesus sat thereon holding far from the maddened crowd his babes? On another pair of scales we see Joseph sold into Egypt by his brethren only because of God's revelation to him. Could anything balance the scales?

Let us see. There is a live Joseph storing up corn for those who sold him. Which was greater, God through Joseph, or the devil through the brethren of Joseph? Take Daniel in the lions' den. On one side of the scales let us place the king, with those who obeyed him; on the other side, God commanding the lions. Did they hear him? Do we not find a great obstacle in our way when we place the fiery furnace into which the Hebrew children had been cast on one side the scales? We need here One who can quench the violence of fire, One who can walk right into the furnace with his children and speak to the fire. Did the fire hear? Again, I see mighty Pharaoh and his vast army pursuing the Israelites on one side the scales. What can weigh down the other side, when we see the Red Sea in front, the mountains on either side and the enemy behind? Could a simple word do it? Hear this: "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward." Where? Into the deep waters? Yes, because they shall not overflow them. They shall be driven back. Haman sits on one side of the scales, planning death for Mordecai, Jesus sits on the other, who wins? Delilah sits on one side, striving with all her might to take away Samson's strength. His hair is cut off and his eyes put out, surely now his side is too weak to have any weight; but see him in the temple, bowing himself as he holds to the pillars, asking God's help, and then answer. I can picture a prison, with the disciples of Christ bound with chains, on one side, what do I see on the other? A great quaking of the earth, and the prisoners set free. Now place Judas, Herod and the entire world on one side of the scales and the crucified Son of God on the other. Is there a balance here? He is risen a mighty conqueror over death, hell and the grave.

Pattie Woodard Anderson

ACTS XII. 5.

"Peter therefore was kept in prison; but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him."

Concerning the matter of prayer there seems to be much confusion in the minds of many people. Some seem to think that the Lord can be and is influenced by prayers, that the will of God is determined by prayers, that the Lord waits to hear the petitions of men before deciding in his own mind what he will or will not do. This confusion of thought regarding prayer arises from the human error of trying to conceive of the Almighty as being one like ourselves. This is an entirely wrong idea of God, but one which is characteristic of all human thoughts

of God. God being infinitely above the comprehension of the human mind, it must be that the human mind by no sort of effort of its own can possibly grasp one right thought as to who God is, or as to how he works. The Scriptures declare that God is of one mind and none can turn him, that he is the same yesterday and to-day and forever, that he changes not. Any idea of prayer which implies that God can be influenced by prayer, which seems to indicate that God is subject to change because of prayers, does violence to numerous declarations throughout the Bible concerning the true character of God. On the other hand, concerning prayer itself, it is not a matter within the control of mortals to know when to pray, or what to pray for. We cannot appoint times and seasons for prayer ourselves, for no one of us knows when or where it may please the Holy Spirit to indite its petitions in our hearts, and without the Holy Spirit leading and teaching us in this matter of prayer no prayer can be made. If the apostle Paul himself confessed it to be his infirmity that he knew not what to pray for as he ought, and if he ever went so far as to include the Roman brethren as being in this same weakness with himself, we are confident that not one of all the Lord's people since Paul's time has grown any stronger in this regard, and that it is still the weakness of every child of God that they cannot pray of themselves. The work of the Holy Spirit must be going on in the believer's heart if true prayer is ever offered up unto God. Since, then, prayer in no wise has any influence with the Almighty so as to in any sense change his plan or purpose, and since true prayer must always be, and is, the fruit of the Holy Spirit in the believer's souls, then prayer is not for the instruction of the Almighty to instruct him in his people's needs, but it is for the instruction and edification of those who believe in God. It is through the experience of prayer that believers are shown their spiritual need of, and their entire dependence upon, God. If God has not all power in heaven and in earth what would be the need of prayer? Would it be worth while to petition a God that could not grant our petitions? We mention this because our enemies have said, and do say, that Old School Baptists have not much use for prayer. They say this because they think that the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God does away with the necessity for prayer; that if God has purposed all things whatsoever come to pass, and that all things shall come to pass just as God wills, whether we pray or not, or whether we want it to be so or not, why pray at all? Well, if prayer, as said before, be for the purpose of telling God what to do, then there is no sense in it, for whoever prays with the thought in his or her mind that God is in anywise to be influenced by the prayer is not really praying at all. Prayer arising from any such wrong notion of God is the fruit of nothing but the flesh, and has not the Holy Spirit for its cause. But, to come at the matter rightly, predestination is the very backbone and sinew of prayer. It is because God has purposed from eternity to do certain things for his children that he does by the intercession of the Holy Spirit cause them to pray for and to desire the very things which it is his eternal purpose to give them. Every true prayer, the fruit of the Holy Spirit, is in entire harmony with the will of God, never in harmony with the will or lusts of the flesh. The experience of real prayer cannot be otherwise than a crucifixion to the flesh, a humbling of our carnal nature. That is why, in ancient times, the posture of kneeling or prostrating the body and generally considered the right position for one to be in when praying. It showed outwardly the humiliation and self-abasement that was felt, or ought to be felt, inwardly in the soul by the one praying. As it is impossible for us with

our finite minds to know what is the will of God, and since every prayer worthy of acceptance with God must be in accord with his divine will, how necessary then, if we are ever to pray, that we be taught in some way what the will of God is in order to pray. Inasmuch as the Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God, and since nothing in all the will and purpose of God is hidden from the mind of the Spirit, how well it is that God has ordained his Spirit to help us in this our infirmity regarding prayer, and to teach us how and what to pray for.

All this leads up to the subject of our text at the head of this article. The church suffered great persecution for Christ's sake during the days of the apostles and of the early church. The twelfth chapter of Acts records one of these persecutions. During one of the Jewish passovers, the authority of Herod, ruler over Judea as the representative of Rome, arrested Peter and put him in prison. This, of course, distressed the brethren greatly, and they prayed unceasingly for Peter's release. Did the prayers of the church cause or bring about Peter's release? No, positively not. Prayer never causes anything unless it may be the comfort and edification of the Lord's people, but as for prayer being the cause of any event in the history of men, or of the church, it is not so. Prayer is itself an effect or fruit of the Spirit, as we have said, but prayer itself is not a cause. It was all in the purpose and will of God that Peter was to be released from prison, and his release did not wait upon, nor was it caused by, the prayers of the church. How do we know this? Simply because Peter was one of those selected by Christ to preach his gospel, thus to feed the lambs and the sheep. Having thus a work to do in the vineyard of the Lord, he was perfectly safe from any vital injury until his work should be accomplished. It was just as impossible for Peter to die before his work was finished as for the sun to be blotted from the sky. The prayers of the church did not lengthen Peter's life, nor did they effect his release from prison. His marvelous escape when an angel came to him and bade him follow, when the chains fell from his hands, when the iron gate opened before him and he went out safely into the street, all this was a demonstration of the power, not of effectual prayer, but of the power of almighty God, who alone is wonder-working. The prayers of the church were spiritual, because the Holy Spirit indited this prayer for Peter's safety in the heart of the church. Had not the Lord before determined upon the release of Peter the Holy Spirit would not have put it in the minds and hearts of the brethren to pray for him. True prayer invariably asks for what is already God's will to give. When the late president William McKinley was shot it will be remembered how special prayer services were held all over this country, and by various religious denominations, asking the Lord to spare his life, but he died. The will of God was not that McKinley should be spared. This proves that in all the so-called prayers that were offered up for his recovery there was not one single spiritual prayer. Had there been one true prayer in all that multitude, his life would have been spared; not that the prayer would have caused God to spare him, but the true prayer would have been the fruit of the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit never gives rise to a prayer contrary to the will of God. Had it not then been the will of God to release Peter from prison the brethren would not have found themselves able to pray for his release. They would have been, no doubt, crushed with sorrow for Peter, but as to prayer, would have been dumb. We met a mother this summer who had suffered the loss of a dear child, and through all this child's illness she was convinced it was going to die, simply because she found herself unable to pray for its

recovery. The fact that she could not pray for nor desire its recovery was an evidence to the mother that it was God's will for the child to die. Had it been God's will for it to live doubtless she would have had in her heart a petition for it to live. This is an instance proving how prayer runs counter to one's natural inclinations. We are glad we have been made to believe in the immutability of Jehovah. What comfort to a poor soul could there be in a God who could be led about willynilly by the desires of now this one, now that? Prayer is an experimental exercise of the Spirit by which the believer is brought around into harmony with the will of God, not a process by which God is brought into our way of thinking.

Written by request.

Elder H. H. Lefferts

SOME THOUGHTS BY THE WAY

God is love. But do I love Him? What evidence have I? It is said again, Love is God. The origin of all that is good is from above. Man is corrupt in all his ways, he cannot attain unto anything good. A bitter fountain cannot send forth sweet water. John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Why and how do I love the brethren? It is because of the imputation of the divine life, the love of God shed abroad in the heart. Paul says, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and in sins." What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dreadful curse of my soul? Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. If sons, then heirs of God and joint-Heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ. We love him because he first loved us and gave himself for us—died for the ungodly. If God so loved us, we ought to love one another. Do we do this? Do we love the church? Do we love his blessed cause? Do we prefer Jerusalem above our chief joy? Are we willing to make sacrifices for the cause, forsake father and mother, wife and children, home and lands for His dear name's sake? If God so loved us that we should be made the rich recipients of all the fullness of the riches of His grace, is it not but a small sacrifice upon our part to attend to the things spoken in his word, and not give heed to seducing spirits, fleshly feelings and hatred one toward another? By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another. I know of no other way of manifesting the love of God and serving Him acceptably with reverential fear except as we love and serve one another.

"Do not I love thee, O my God?
Behold my heart and see."

ISAIAH XXI. 11

"The burden of Dumah. He calleth unto me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night?"

Well may we pause, and with reverence and solemn awe cry from the depths of our poor laboring hearts, Watchman, what of the night? With our beloved Zion, the silence of Dulmah thus crieth out of Seir. "The Watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night." Yes, the day of rejoicing has been in Zion, when we could indeed look upon Zion, the city of our God, and see Jerusalem and quiet habitation, where the glorious Lord was unto us a place of broad rivers and streams, a fruitful field indeed, when saints did long for the courts of the Lord and count it all joy to forsake all and follow the commands of their Lord and Master and meet in the assembly of the saints, when love reigned supreme; but a sad reverse has come, her glory has departed, few come to her

solemn feasts. One of old said, Is there not a cause? We answer, Yes, the love and glitter of the world, loving the wages of sin rather than the riches of the Kingdom, sowing to the flesh, and of the flesh reaping corruption. The apostle has well said, If ye live after the flesh ye shall die. This is inevitable. May each of us ask ourselves the momentous question, Am I living after the flesh? May we find the response in our own hearts. The dear Redeemer said, seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. God grant that we all do this, that it may be our meat and drink to do our heavenly Master's will, that our daily inquiry may be, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? May each feel the solemn pledge when received in the church, and the joy of soul, and to feel as David, A day in thy courts is better than a thousand in the pleasures of sin (the world). Then will Zion's courts be filled again, and the voice of singing songs of praise unto Him who loved us and gave himself for us. "If ye will inquire, inquire ye: return, come."

UNTO JOHN'S BAPTISM

I wish to present more fully than heretofore my reasons for believing that the twelve disciples whom Paul found on his second visit to Ephesus had not been baptized in gospel order, and that when the apostle explained the matter to them they were, by his direction, baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. (Acts. xix. 1-7.)

1. My first reason is the plain and only reading of the text. There must be a radical change in the construction of two sentences, verses five and six, in order to make them express any other meaning than that when these disciples heard what Paul told them about John's teaching those whom he baptized the necessity of a belief on the Lord Jesus, then they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

2. Paul did not ask the men who baptized them, but unto what they were baptized; that is, what pattern or authority they had in view in receiving that ordinance. If John personally had baptized them it could not be said that they were baptized unto his baptism.

3. About twenty-five years had passed away since the death of John. If it were at all likely that these men had been baptized by him, how could they have failed to hear the baptism of Jesus and of the Holy Ghost during all those years? John's baptism was his own personal work. No one ever had the right to baptize in his name, or unto his baptism. Of the one hundred and twenty who were together after the ascension of Jesus, some may have been baptized by John. On the day of Pentecost, and from that day I do not see anything to warrant the thought that any were added to the church without being baptized. We do not read of any coming and being received in any church upon any former baptism. How strange it would seem to find, twenty-three years after the notable day of Pentecost, twelve men who had been baptized two or three years before that day, and yet in all that time had not even heard that there was any Holy Ghost, nor known the baptism of Jesus.

4. Paul had been at Ephesus some time before, bringing Aquila and Priscilla from Antioch, and leaving them there. At that probably his first visit to Ephesus, he did some preaching and reasoning in the synagogue, and soon left them. Some time after (Acts xviii. 24), Apollos came there. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, but not perfectly, knowing only the baptism of John. He spoke for some time eloquently and diligently, teaching the things of theLord so far as he knew them. Whether he or his imperfect instructors baptized

these twelve men we cannot tell. He had not been teaching long before he was heard by those who were fully instructed in the gospel, and they faithfully expounded to him the way of God more perfectly.

These twelve disciples were found at Ephesus on Paul's second visit. They seem to have been recently baptized, and likely they had not heard Apollos after he had been more perfectly instructed and had begun to preach the gospel of Jesus clearly.

5. The apprehension that the validity of John's baptism is involved in this question, has undoubtedly led some to try to re-arrange the sentence so as to make it express the idea that these men had been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, but had never known it till Paul told them. Our object and effort should be to find out what the inspired Scriptures do really say, without reference to what we might think they ought to say. The validity of John's baptism, as his personal act, is not at all involved in this subject, but only his baptism as the example and authority to be had in view in administering the ordinance under the gospel. John's baptism ceased when he ceased to administer it personally.

However satisfied one may have felt when receiving baptism, if it was not administered in gospel order then it is not gospel baptism. The ordinance must be in the name of Jesus, and the faith of him who is baptized must be in that name. It must be in the fellowship of the gospel church, in accordance with the command given by Jesus to his apostles, and set in order by them in their acts and teaching.

How carefully and jealously should the order of the gospel church be observed and guarded. To the eye of faith that church is "the perfection of beauty," out of which "God hath shined." It is the order as established by the Lord, not the numbers, by which any organization is known as the church of God.

Many are around almost any gospel church who have not been baptized, yet who are loved and held in esteem by the brethren as dear children of grace. They love the church, and attend with deep interest upon the preaching of the word, and yet they do not come in. We often try to show them that it is their privilege and duty to be baptized, but without avail. We often feel that we ought to be able to say the loving and powerful word that shall remove the hindrances from their minds, but it is not given us to say it. We have to learn that it is in the day of God's power, not in the day of our power, that his people will be willing. When any do come, and O, how easily and sweetly they come when the Lord opens the way, both they and we know that it was God's power, not ours, that brought them. If they never come, as is the case with so many dear believers in the Lord, we know that it was not God's purpose that they should be thus united with the visible church of God, as his witnesses here in the world. We still are bound up with them in the bundle of life, holding them in christian love and fellowship, though not being able to extend to them the hand of church fellowship. When they leave this world we believe they have gone to dwell with their Savior in glory.

Baptism is an ordinance of our dear Savior for this time state, but has nothing to do with the preparation of his people for heaven and its eternal glory. To that eternal glory and blessedness "many are called," even a great company that no man can number, "but few are chosen" to be of "the little flock." to whom the kingdom is given here in time, who shall stand as witnesses of Jesus in the world, as the church of God," the pillar and ground of the truth." For this church, and those individually who are members of it, there are appointed reproaches, and burdens, and afflictions,

and a yoke, and labors, and crosses, and daily dyings, and honors unseen by the world, and joys unknown to men, and conflicts; all of which are in some measure seen by the dear children of God without, but not shared in by them except in small measure.

But these things end with time. Our eternal state is not affected by them, nor is there any difference there between those who were in the visible church here, and those of God's dear people who were not. We cannot say to one, "If you will join the church here you will be the happier hereafter." The Lord gives his servants here a higher, holier motive to labor in his service than that, even his own glory. Love is in the heart of every redeemed soul when called by grace here below, the love of God, whether in the church or out, and that love remains when we go from earth to glory. In that blessed world of light all the redeemed shall join in the endless song of praise unto God and the Lamb.

Elder Silas H. Durrand

CONTRIBUTIONS

LIST FOR JULY 1985

Mrs. Jane T. Fagan, NC	$ 7.00
E. W. Holland, VA.	2.00
W. G. Brown, SC	2.00
Mrs. Merkley Giles, VA.	10.00
Mrs. Novaline Stewart, NC	2.00
Carroll Ellwanger, NC.	2.00
C. E. DeBow, NC	2.00
W. C. Lake, FL	2.00
A. W. King, NC	5.00
Mrs. Ruth B. Pittman, NC	2.00
Mrs. Brenda Johnson, TX	2.00
Mrs. W. N. Tilley, NC.	5.00
Mrs. Nettie Rice, VA.	7.00
James B. Pugh, AL	2.00
Mrs. Joel S. Alexander, AL	10.00
Mrs. Alice Gibson, VA	7.00
Mrs. Ora Adams, VA.	3.00
Mrs. Celeste Welch, NC	2.00
Hardy Hill, TX	2.00
Mrs. Lucile McGee, WA	7.00
Mrs. Pattie B. Krewatch, DE., In memory Eld. John Wood	35.00
Mrs. William Griffith, NY.	2.00
Elder Raymond Goad, VA.	2.00

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the next session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Red Banks Church near Greenville, N.C. on October 11, 12, and 13, 1985.

All who believe and love the doctrine of Christ–Truth and Grace–are invited.

To get to the Chuch, go to the intersection of Highways 11 and 264 on the south side of Greenville. From this point go east on 264 to the second stop light past Pitt Plaza Shopping Center, turn right, go about ¾ mile to the dead end of this road, turn left and you can see the Church.

Milton Fountain, Clerk
Route 1, Box 607
Richlands, N.C. 28574
Phone (919) 324-3205

HOPEWELL ASSOCIATION

The Hopewell Association will convene, God willing, with Liberty Hill Church, Tuscaloosa County, Alabama, on Friday, October 18, 1985 and continue through Sunday.

The meeting house is between Highways U.S. 43 and Alabama 69. Signs will be placed on these highways and at intersections along the routes to the site. One may leave westward from Highway 69 near Windham Springs between mileage markers 170 and 171; or eastward from Highway 43 near Northside High

School between mileage markers 221 and 222 (along County Road 38 for part of the way); or one may leave eastward from Highway 43 in New Lexington along County Road 55 for part of the way, (leaving 43 between mileage markers 228 and 229).

If more information is desired, please call or write:

Levert Howell
82 Arcadia Drive
Tuscaloosa, AL. 35404
Dial (205) 556-5157

PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Pleasant Valley Association will convene, the Lord willing, first Sunday, Friday and Saturday before in November, 1985 at Shepherd Fold Church, Houston, Texas.

The meeting house is on Little York Road, between Interstate 45 and Highway 59. All beliveres in the truth are invited to attend.

Elder Gerald D. Shipman
Association Clerk

SULPHUR FORK ASSOCIATION

The one hundred fortieth annual session of the Sulphur Fork Association, the Lord willing, will meet with Prospect Church, Friday before the first Sunday in October 1985. Located east of Simms, Texas on Highway 67.

The meeting will begin at 10:30 a.m., on Friday, October fourth, and will continue to Sunday noon. All lovers of the truth are invited to be with us.

If further information is needed, call (214) 796-3011 or (214) 629-3561.

"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."
Proverbs 16: 18

OBITUARIES

BROTHER ARELIOUS DELPHUS BLEVINS

We of Mt. Peak Primitive Baptist Church of Ovilla, Texas are deeply saddened by the loss of Brother Arelious Delphus Blevins, our dear Brother in Christ, whom the Lord saw fit to call from this life on Thursday, March 21, 1985. We believe to rest in the Arms of his beloved Savior to be at peace forever more.

Brother Blevins was born May 25, 1901 at Keller, Texas to Brother G. T. and Sister Mary Carolin (Bird) Blevins. One of ten children which all preceeded him in death but one, Brother Gains A. Blevins of Keller, Texas.

Left to mourn his passing are his wife of 60 years, Sister Neta Pearl (Wallace) Blevins, united in marriage at Keller on December 6, 1924. Of this union there was seven children born, of this a son Elder Robert Lee Blevins, preceeded him in death in 1976, of the remaining sons are Alfred Arelious of Duncanville, Texas, Elgin K. of Jacksonville, Texas and Grundy Ward Blevins of San Antonio, Texas. Daughters Eula Wadsworth and Oleta Cooper of Midlothian, Texas, and Doretha Lipe of Ovilla, Texas. Twenty-five grandchildren and forty-one great grandchildren.

Brother Blevins united with the Primitive Baptist in the spring of 1929 at Ft. Worth, Texas. He was ordained a deacon the first Sunday in April 1960 at the Mt. Peak Primitive Baptist Church of Waxahachie, Texas.

Funeral services were held at the Methodist Church of Ovilla by Elder M. R. Alton and Elder R. A. Moore, with burial in the Ovilla Cemetery.

Be it resolved that a copy of this go to the family with a copy going into the

church records and to all of the many papers that he took and so loved, also often writing articles in them.

At conference time April 28, 1985.

Moderator: Elder M. R. Alton
Church Clerk: Alfred A. Blevins

LOUISE BAUCOM

Sister Louise Eaton Baucom joined the Durham Primitive Baptist Church September 19, 1959. She was received by letter from the Church at Nashville, N.C.

She was married to Daniel Baucom, the son of Sister Fannie Baucom, one of our members here at Durham.

She was very direct and forthright in expressing her belief in our Lord and loved the doctrine of salvation by grace and predestination of the elect to glory.

Her life among us was marked by faithfulness in attendance at her meetings and she showed a generous and helpful spirit toward those who were sick or needed help.

She walked softly among us for twenty-one years. After a brief illness she died August 12, 1980.

The members of Durham Church remember this woman with deep love and respect.

Catherine M. Humbarger
Church Clerk

JOEL MADISON HALL

It becomes my sad duty to write a memorial of a wonderful departed brother in Christ. It is a burdensome duty for I am so unworthy and fear that I cannot write worthy of the deceased.

He was born in Patrick County, Virginia near Lovers Leap, and was married to Miss Nellie Elizabeth Major, on January 25, 1922 in Amelia, Virginia.

He joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church June 9, 1974.

Brother Joel passed away April 12, 1985 in triumph of the faith in the Savior of whom he loved and served, and was faithful to the Church.

His first wife preceded him in death by several years. In December of 1973 he was married to Sister Berdie Cobb Saunders, also a member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church.

His survivors are this wife and three sons: Joel Madison, Jr. of Reidsville, N. C., John Dillard and Frank Irvin of Greensboro, N. C. Two stepdaughters; Dorothy S. Henderson of Raleigh, N. C. and Wilma Anne Jones of Reidsville, N. C. Five grandchildren, five great grandchildren and four step grandchildren.

His funeral was held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, his pastor Elder D. V. Spangler was critically ill at time of Brother Hall's death. Elder H. W. Wray and Elder Kenneth Key offici ated. Burial was in Dan River Church Cemetery.

I would comfort the bereaved ones if it were in my power but this must come from God.

Done by order of Church at Dan River in her Conference, May 26, 1985.

Elder H. W. Wray - Moderator
J. Boyd Minter - Clerk
Coley S. Strader - Committee

SISTER SAGASTA HUDGENS

Our hearts at Old Mt. Church were sadened to hear the Lord in his devine wisdom had removed from our midst a dear sister, on Sept. 5, 1984, Sister Sagasta Hudgens.

We will miss her, tho we feel our miss is her gain. She loved the church, and the doctrine, Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. She joined Old Mt. Primitive Baptist Church April 14, 1979, and was baptized May 19, 1979 with her sister Carrie. She was a faithful and devoted member, attended regular as long

as her health permitted, then would sometimes ask to have meetings in her home. Her health was bad for several years, yet she bore her afflictions with patience, never complaining, often saying the Lord was so good to her.

Her faithful, devoted family did every thing loving hearts and hands could for her comfort. Sister Hudgens was not afraid to die, she had a sweet hope of a home above. We feel sure she is resting in Paradise, waiting for the Lord to come in a cloud, reunite soul and body, and carry His children home. Then they will behold Him and be satisfied.

Sister Sagasta Hudgens was born Feb. 1, 1924 in Sycamore, Virginia. A daughter of the late Robert L. and Annie Marie Dalton Brumfield. In 1942 she married Schaub (Slim) Nathaniel Hudgens, and lived most of her life in Danville, Va.

She leaves to mourn her husband, one son, Buddy Nathaniel Hudgens, Danville, two daughters, Linda H. Phillips, Fort Bragg, N.C. and Bonnie Meadows of Danville, and three sisters, Mamie Brumfield, Doris Rowlin, and Carrie McDaniels, all of Danville, Va. and five grandchildren.

Her funeral was held Sept. 8, 1984 at Barker Funeral Chapel, by her pastor, Eler H. W. Wray. Her body was laid to rest in Danville Memorial Gardens, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers. May the Lord bless the family and reconcile them to his will.

Done by order of church conference June 15, 1985.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
Sarah Barker, Clerk

BETSY HUNT

Betsy Mangum Hunt was received into the Durham Church May 19, 1974 and passed from this life August 31, 1983. She is survived by her mother, Sister Sally Mangum, two sons and several sisters and a brother.

Like many of God's people, she had come through much tribulation and she encountered distress and sorrow in her pathway, but the Lord had given her a hope of heaven and this was her treasure. For many months she suffered a terminal illness with great patience and submission to God's will—until the Lord released her spirit form her afflicted body. She looked forward to Heaven as did the writer who wrote:

"There is a home for weary souls
By sin and sorrow driven
When tossed on life's tempestuous shoals
Where storms arise and oceans roll
And all is dark—but heaven.

There fragrant flowers immortal bloom
And joys supreme are given;
There joys divine disperse the gloom,
Beyond the confines of the tomb—
Appears the dawn of Heaven."

Catherine M. Humbarger
Church Clerk

BROTHER DOWNEY MURPHY

Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church is once again sadden by the death of one of its members, Brother Downey Murphy. Bro. Murphy was born October 20, 1901 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. He passed from this life June 4, 1985.

Survivors include his wife, Sister Viola Murphy; two daughters, Virginia M. Owen and Arline M. Giles; One sister, two brothers, two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

One thing that will always stand out in my mind about our dear Brother, is that he and Sister Murphy carried me to Chapel Church and introduced me to Elder O. K. Tench, who became our pastor some years later.

His funeral was held at Swicegood Funeral Chapel. Conducting the service was Elders O. K. Tench and Denver

Simpson. Interment was in Highland Burial Park.

We trust God will comfort and reconcile the family to His will.

Humbly submitted,
Peggy Wells

SISTER ELISE SLAUGHTER

The Lord in his devine wisdom has removed another dear sister from our midst, Sister Elise Slaughter on Nov. 14, 1984. She was the oldest active member at Old Mt. Church and was blessed to attend regular to the end.

She had visited her daughter in Richmond, Va., came home and visited each of the other chidren, and had gone to her son's home to make her home on Sunday, was carried to the hospital on Monday and died Tuesday. The all wise and merciful God did not leave her to lay and suffer. She often said that she was thankful to the Good Lord that she was blessed to fix her meals and wait on herself. She did not want to bother anyone. Her lovely family was always there to do any thing they could for her comfort and convenience.

Sister Slaughter was born December 13, 1895 in Pittsylvania County. A daughter of the late Thomas Davis, and Betty Marshal Davis, she lived all her life in the Mt. Cross Community.

She joined Old Mt. Church in Sept. 1917. Was a faithful and devoted member over 67 years. A mother in Isreal, loved by all that knew her. She loved her church, her family and friends, and above all the Primitive Baptist doctrine.

She was married to Deacon S. A. Slaughter who died March 9, 1973.

She leaves to mourn one son, Posie Slaughter. Three daughters; Naomi Clark and Nora Winn of Danville, Va. Marion McDaniels of Richmond, Va. One sister, Lillie Pennell of Danville, Va. 16 grandchildren, 23 great-grandchildren, and 8 great-great-grandchildren.

Her funeral was held Nov. 17, 1984 at Wrenn-Yeats Funeral Home by her pastor Elder H. W. Wray and Elder Wallace Smith. She was laid to rest by husband in Danville Memorial Gardens, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to wait the call from her Savior, children come home.

Done by order of church conference, June 15, 1985.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
Sarah Barker, Clerk

HETTIE THACKER

Sister Hettie Thacker was received into the Durham Church on November 18, 1939. She passed from this life July 13, 1984 and her funeral was conducted by Elder C. B. Davis. She is survived by her husband, Mr. Burnice Thacker, and a son, Vernon Thacker.

Sister Thacker was by nature a very industrious woman who worked at public work for many years and faithfully performed her duties toward her family and home, but her love for the Lord and His people was the focus of her life. Even when affliction overtook her and she was confined to her home for many months, her love and interest in the Church did not wane.

She looked forward to her hope of heaven and eternal rest as did the poet who wrote:

"From thee, my God, my joys shall rise
And run eternal rounds
Beyond the limits of the skies
And all created bounds.

The holy triumphs of my soul
Shall death itself outbrave
Leave dull mortality behind
And fly beyond the grave.

There, where my blessed Jesus reigns
In Heaven's unmeasured space
I'll spend a long eternity
In pleasure and in praise."

Catherine Humbarger
Church Clerk

Signs of the Times

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Psalm 124

If it had not been for the Lord who was on our side, now may Israel say;

If it had not been for the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us:

Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us:

Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul.

Then the proud waters had gone over our soul.

Blessed by the Lord, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth.

Our soul is escapted as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken and we are escaped.

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

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EDITORIAL

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love: Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."

The entire epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Church at Ephesus is, to my way of understanding, the richest in doctrine of all of his writings to the Churches in his day. It contains the fulfillment of his statement to the Elders of the Church in Acts 20, verse 27. "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." **It contains some of the strongest language in the scriptures of the way and manner in which the salvation of the Saints is accomplished, the reason for it and the absolute surety of their eternal abode in the heavenly kingdom. These scriptures and others where the doctrine of salvation by the sovreign grace of an Almighty God of heaven and earth is set forth so plainly, are the walls and bulwarks, the high towers that are round about Zion as referred to in Psalms 48:12, 13 and 14. They are the foundations upon which the City rests and from which the inhabitants strength is renewed as they walk about Zion and rejoice in the perfect work of their Savior and King. They acknowledge the weakness of the flesh, the changeableness of the creature from day to day as events and circumstances occur that cause them to change their plans, their priorities and yes, even the desires of their heart for the immediate present. These experiences cause them to rejoice in the scriptures which speak of the predestination of all of the elect family of God to an inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for them. They are made aware, as they travel in this wilderness of sin, after the truth has been revealed unto them that they would never have attained to this blessed state if left to their own devices. They would have continued on in their vain pursuit of the pleasures of the world and the gratification of the fleshly mind and body, seeking its physical needs and desires and eventually died in their sins completely unaware of a heavenly kingdom and the glory and beauty of it.**

The Apostle Paul learned all of this by revelation and experience and wrote much about the omnipotence, omnipresent and omniscience of the God of heaven and earth who created all things for himself and for the pleasure of his own sovreign will. These truths were made manifest in his life as he was turned from natures darkness, where he had spent all of his life, thinking he was serving God, to the marvelous light and liberty of the gospel of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. There can never be too much said, or written, by inspired

men in all ages of time regarding these basic points of doctrine for they are the pillars upon which the foundations are laid. "For other foundations can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." They are the works of God as he manifests his presence to, and bestows his love upon the vessels of mercy which he hath afore prepared unto glory. "According as he hath chose us in him, before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein, he hath made us accepted in the beloved." These are some of the most comforting and soul inspiring scriptures in the bible, especially to those who have been made to see what they were in nature and what they deserved, who have now given this gift by the grace of God and have heartfelt evidence in their bosom that they are indeed heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. Their cry is now, "O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements and his ways past find out!"

In writing to the Hebrews the Apostle Paul refers to the milk and the strong meat or different degrees of their understanding of the scriptures. "For everyone that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." It seems to me, as I read these scriptures that Paul is saying that some are exercised more, blessed to reach deeper into the scriptures than others. The milk and the strong meat are both doctrine, both are true and both are profitable to those that are blessed to profit by the teachings of them. Some are blessed, as Paul was, to understand more than others and shunned not to decalre all that he understood unto his brethren, and some are not so blessed. Some will endorse the scripture and appreciate the message, "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." And then question the wisdom of one who says, "I beseech you brethren by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Both scriptures are included in the whole counsel of God and are for the comfort and edification of the whole body. Both are truth, one is known and fully understood by God but believed and trusted in by the elect and the other is experienced and enjoyed by the heirs of grace as they manifest their love to God and one another as they journey through this vale of tears. The most beautiful experience is to see this love blossom and bring forth fruit to the glory of God and his Church.

The scripture at the heading of this article is Ephesians, chapter 4, verses 1, 2 and 3 and are the charge of the Apostle Paul to the Church at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus. This, I believe, is the sincere milk of the word. Paul is not talking to those who have not been born of the spirit and who have no evidence of a work of Grace in their heart, he is speaking to the same brethren he has addressed in the three previous chapters. In the previous chapters he had written of the certainty of their calling and their salvation, now he is beseeching those same brethren to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called. Is this a different doctrine, no, he is beseeching them to respond to this holy calling by its evidence in their walk and talk in the church. As children of the heavenly king, surely the indwell-

ing of the holy spirit within one should manifest its presence in their heart and witness to those of like precious faith of their mutual faith and love.

The Apostle Peter wrote on one occasion, "This second epistle beloved, I now write unto you, in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance." Peter was not writing to the dead alien sinner, but to his brethren, and he knew that God was able to make them stand fast in the doctrine but for the love that he had for them and for God he wanted to remind them again of things they already knew. Peter knew of the weakness and frailty of the flesh and thought it good to manifest his love and concern for them again and again. Can anyone say that this is not the heartfelt longing and prayer of the soul that has been touched by the love of the heavenly king. This is the outward manifestation of this indwelling love of God's children toward their brethren as they travel this low ground of sin. These manifestations of love is fulfillment of Jesus Command, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Jesus said in speaking of this light, "And it giveth light unto all that are in the house." Not a witness to the world but to those in the house (of a like precious faith), and fellowship is enjoyed by all that see and understand the source of the light.

There have been many times in the past, when men have quoted these scriptures, charging and admonishing the dead alien sinner to change his ways, walk in good works and receive honor and glory from God the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ. There is nothing that could be farther from the truth, and the message they convey, or, to the ones the message is addressed to. These are the men that Jude wrote about, "For there are certain men that crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ." These have caused great disturbance amongst the brethren as they quote the charges and admonitions as contained in the scriptures to all mankind, to encourage him to unite with them to further their own personal greed and goals. This has caused churches to divide and brethren to declare non fellowhip because of these scriptures being used as a support for false doctrine. It is sad indeed that this has happened, and is happening around the country, and it causes much grief and heartache to those who are blessed to know and love the truth. Furthermore, it causes more distress by a reaction to these troubles as brethren hesitate to acknowledge or use and love them because of fear they will be charged with unsound doctrine. Brethren, this should not be done, the truth is the truth and should be preached as the truth of the bible regardless of how some may have used it to supposedly support a lie. "All scripture is given by inspiration and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." Those who are born of the spirit of God will understand the truth and will realize, by their experience, that the scriptures are only to those who have been called and set apart by the grace of God.

The Apostles did not hesitate to preach all the Counsel of God and it should be the same today. The whole Counsel of God includes the absolute predestination and decrees of God which only He knows and understands fully, and it also includes the inspiration with which he infuses his children to cause them to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling as he leads them in ways that also are known only by him. Some love to quote the absolute decrees of God which are in

the whole Counsel of God and yet shun to quote the admonitions; which is also in the whole Counsel of God, as was done in former days for fear of being called weak or unsound. The exhortations and the admonitions are for the comfort and edification of the Church today just as it was back in the Apostles day. The words mean the same thing today that they did back then and if spoken in love and prompted by the spirit will promote love, peace and harmony in the church.

If I know my heart, I love my brethren and my prayers are for their spiritual comfort and well being. I love them for the truths sake and would do nothing intentionally to hurt or offend them. I cannot believe that if prompted by the spirit which is love, you admonish or charge a brother to attend church, support it in every way, walk worthy of their heavenly calling, or any of the other exhortations which promote peace and harmony in the church is wrong, in fact, it is wrong to do otherwise if the opportunity presents itself. We practice this all the time with our children and loved ones in nature because of the love and concern that we have for their well being, and do not think of ourselves as hypocrites. How much stronger should be our desire for the welfare of our brethren in the spirit, and our desire that they walk in the spirit and glorify God with their whole being. This is what I understand to be the good works that the Apostle Paul admonished the church to be careful to maintain, because they are good and profitable unto men. They are comforting and inspiring to the children of God in their earthly pilgrimage and strengthens and refreshes them and encourages them to press on to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ.

This is sound doctrine, it is beautiful doctrine and should never be neglected because some have used the same words, directed to the man in nature, to turn him from his evil ways and learn of God. This is the raging heathen addressing the vain imaginations of the people and it will accomplish nothing spiritual. Paul speaks of these in II Corinthians 11: 13-15. "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." These speak great swelling words of vanity and quote scriptures from the head not knowing where of they speak, and deceive the simple who have not the gift of discerning the truth.

I believe that the indwelling spirit directs the saints of God in all they say and do and directs them in ways that are for their good as well as the Church. It is called the comforter and Jesus said, *"He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."* What beautiful and inspiring words of the heritage which belongs unto the children of God for their sojourn here in time. Surely, to constantly remind and encourage your brothers of this marvelous heritage is good and to admonish them for the weakness of the flesh which man is so susceptible to, promotes peace and is the work of the Comforter in all ages of time.

To my understanding this is the message that the Apostle was saying to the church at Ephesus. "Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forebearing one another in love. Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." He is saying, I love you for Christs sake and because of my love for you and for Him

and for the peace of the Church, I admonish you to let your calling be manifest in all places in the Church, that it may be a beacon to all of like precious faith. This is the spirit in which all admonitions, charges, exhortations, rebukes and instructions in righteousness are to be given and received.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

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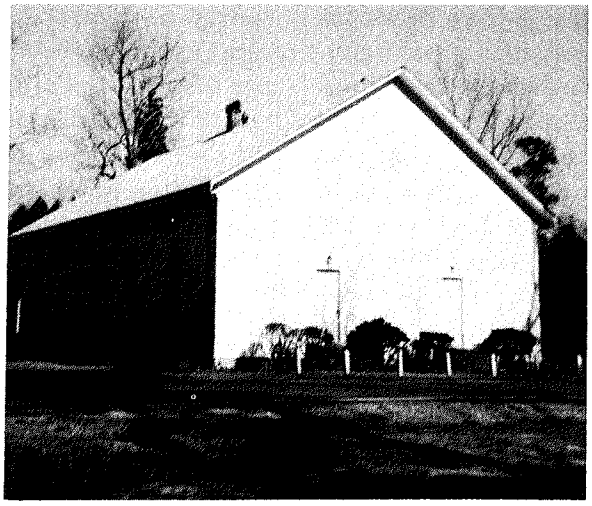

Smithwicks Creek Church

Our Church is located at Route 1, Williamston, N. C. (Martin County). It was established in 1803.

Our meeting time is 11:00 every fourth Saturday and Sunday.

Smithwicks Creek is the home of Treasurer and Deacon Asa J. Hardison. Elder J. T. Prescott is the present pastor.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brethren Editors;

Please permit me to express my thanks to the many readers of our family paper for their many expressions of encouragement during this period of tragedy that has come my way.

So many telephone messages of love and encouragement, and the overflow of letters and cards of encouragement and good will that with my broken arm I will never be able to write a message to all of them. I desire to use your pages to express, in my little way, my appreciation

and tanksgiving to God for your words of consolation and encouragement.

It has been tragic for me to be confined to my home so closely, but the Lord has been good to me in giving me your words of encouragement and consolation and in blessing me to ascribe thanksgiving unto Him. I am doing as well as can be expected and hope to soon be able to resume my normal duties.

Your little sister in the best of bonds,

Lois C. Griffin

Route 1, Box 8
Elgin, Ore.
March 5, 1985

Miss Reidy Pickral
Richmond, VA.

Dear Sister in Christ:

Your letter in the January Signs stated that you transcribed a sermon from a tape. It gave me courage to ask a favor from you.

In the year 1965, Elder Spangler was here at Riffe, Washington, and delivered a sermon, the *"Arks"*, I have been longing to see it printed in the Signs so all the readers might enjoy it as much as I. This is a cassette tape, would it be possible for you to have time to transcribe it for the Signs?

I realize this is very presumptive of me. From your letter in the Signs, I knew you have a great love tor the brethren which prompts my asking so great a favor.

I am just an old woman who, if not deceived, love the doctrine of free grace. My hearing and eye sight is very bad. But thanks be to our blessed Redeemer, I still by the aid of a magnifying glass, am able to read.

Yours in hope of meeting in a better and eternal home.

Elva C. Spikes

(The following is the sermon mentioned above. Thanks to Sister Spikes for sharing it with us and to Sister Reidy Pickral for transcription.)

I feel inclined, the Lord will, to talk to you about a subject that probably was mentioned at Lloyd Spikes' while visiting here and for the last two hours, some way, I have had some thoughts concerning this, and as a foundation for whatever I might speak to you I'd like to read the first verse of the 7th Chapter of the Book of Genesis: *"And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation."*

I'm sure that Bible readers are familiar with this scripture and I would like to speak briefly, the Lord will, on the subject of the three arks found in the Bible and I know that if I speak about all three that I can't talk long about each one. We know at this time that God had commanded Noah to build an ark and not only did He command him to build an ark, but the same God who commanded him to build an ark gave him faith to believe.

In Hebrew it is said, by faith Noah, warned of God, prepared an ark to the saving of his house. So we could not leave out that important thing, that whatever there was embraced in the ark, it was the mind of God, and that it was built because God gave Noah to believe He would send a flood upon the earth.

No doubt, while Noah was preparing this ark the people thought he was crazy, preparing an ark! And probably the sun was shining. I understand in the scripture that each of the three arks—there are only three arks found in the Bible—were typical of our Lord Jesus Christ. And, as our salvation, these three arks are typical of our Lord Jesus Christ. They bring to our view a perfect salvation because in each of these three arks

there was a type of Jesus Christ, the saving of His people in every sense in which they would need salvation. The first ark was to preserve life upon the earth and was to protect Noah and his family from the wrath of God, and if we know anything about salvation we need that protection from God's wrath.

The second ark was the one that Moses was placed in that I mentioned probably while I have been here and was to protect Moses from Pharaoh who was a type of Satan, the power of darkness.

The third ark was where the Ten Commandments was placed when Moses came down from the mount after God had given them to him and it shows that Jesus our Lord is the one who kept the Commandments for us in that ark. And that was call the ark of the covenant of the Lord our God.

When this ark had been completed, God said to Noah, "come." God must have been in the ark, He didn't say, go into the ark, He said, "Come." I like that word "come" in the Bible. It's been used so many times so wonderfully, "come." I am told there will be a time when every subject of God's grace will hear the word, "come." Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Jesus said, Come unto me, etc. The thought is: God was in the ark. And thee only have I seen righteous, though there were eight souls in the ark saved from the waters. God looks directly at Noah. Thee only, He said. And we know about the clean and the unclean beasts.

In the construction of the ark, it had three stories; lower, I believe that's the way it reads, second and upper stories; it didn't say first, second and third—lower, second and upper stories. One thing about the ark, it is a type of Christ, there was only one door, and another thing about the ark, the door was in the side. And as we think of salvation, it was the side of our Lord that was torn, that opened to us salvation and the door of heaven. And the door shall be in the side. I believe our dear brother mentioned it being pitched within and pitched without so that the water is kept out. It had one window, and in a cubic shalt thou finish the window above, and that speaks of the faith of the people of God. God had provided a way to them to see everything, that they always see them as they look up. That window was finished in a cubic above. I am sure that when the earth had gone down beneath the wrath of God, there was only one way for these people in the ark to look. Up, upward. Then after God had said to Noah and his family, Come thou and thy house into the ark, the Bible says *and the Lord shut him in.* Why, Noah couldn't even shut the door. After he'd been brought in the ark, the Lord shut him in, you notice how it reads: shut him in. For yet seven days and I will open the window of heaven and pour out a flood upon the earth. I used to wonder why the ark would be sitting seven days and no rain. Seven in the Bible, the number seven, is symbolic of a fullness and a completeness of anything. And the seven days represented that Noah and his family were safe before the flood began. It represented the safety of the people of God before they needed salvation. Seven days and I will open the window of heaven and pour out a flood. Oh, my friends, our soul has often asked, did I have a safety in that ark. The ark of grace, the poet calls it, the ark of grace:

In the ark the weary dove
Found a welcome resting-place;
Thus my spirit longs to prove
Rest in Christ, the ark of grace.

and the poet said,

Tempest-tossed I long have been,
And the flood increases fast;
Open, Lord, and take me in,
Til the storm be overpassed.

That poet could sing about this ark. And what happened when the windows of heaven opened and the floods came upon the earth. That which caused every hill to disappear raised the ark. Raised the ark! The wrath of God poured out on that ark, the safety of Noah in it is a type of the safety of the people of God. There was a time, my friends, when every hill disappeared and when only that lonely ark floated on the water as a type of Jesus Christ. There was a time when the eyes of God—that all He saw as He looked was the type of His Son. There was a time, my friends, on calvary's hill when the Son of God hanged there for you and I. That God looked at him He sees as the redeemer of His people, as the stroke of justice for us. One said, He looked and, of all, there was none to help and therefore mine own arm brought salvation. And the ark rises above the waters. The reason Noah was safe was because God had prepared him a place.

Another thought I want to briefly pass on about the ark. As the waters began to recede after the flood—you know why it was 40 days? I don't know why, but I'll tell you what I think. I have a reason for saying it. Our Lord was tried forty days in the wilderness wasn't He? Why, this journeying of Jesus after He came into the world, He was lead of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, and He ahungered, and for Satan to try Him. So we all must be tried forty days. So the Israelites must be in the wilderness forty years. All of this is symbolic. The floods fell and finally the waters began to recede. And where did the ark rest?

You know, I read the Bible and you know suddenly I saw something I hadn't seen in all these years. You never reach a time you don't find something new in the Word of God. And as the waters receded the ark was right over Mt. Ararat. It wasn't by chance it was there, on the highest mountain. And I was filled with rejoicing when I saw it said the ark *rested* there. It didn't by chance just be over that mountain. It rested. Our Lord Jesus Christ rested. Yes when the wrath of God had passed, you could rest. It rested on Mt. Ararat and then the raven and the dove were sent out. And it still found life upon the earth, still there was life when the olive leaf was brought in. The raven goes to and fro in the earth, but the dove found no place for the sole of his foot. It couldn't find a resting place and it returned the first time and we are told Noah reached for it and pulled it in. That's appropriate with that hymn isn't it? Ark, the weary dove. A type of God's church found a peaceful resting place.

My beloved hearers, have you found a resting place in Christ? Wonderful rest! Wonderful rest! There's no rest like rest in Christ. Your body may be weary, you may be tired but rest in Christ is different to anything else.

The second ark was when Moses' family had hid him three months. They couldn't hide him any longer. The decree of the King was that every male child of the Hebrews should be cast into the river. But in the face of that Moses' parents, the Bible says by faith they put him in an ark of bullrushes, another ark. An ark right down to the water where they were supposed to be drowned. In this ark of bullrushes, I mentioned it before, Pharaoh's daughter came down. And sometimes in my mind I see her as the one who was, in the purpose of God, to come and she looked at the child. He's weeping. She takes it and calls his sister and says, find a home for it and she takes it and Moses was reared in the house of Pharaoh as we might say. Pharaoh is a type of Satan. We only need protection or salvation in three ways. From the wrath of God for sin, from the devil and for someone to honor the Lord God for us. That's the only thing a man needs in salvation. And that was the protection of that and then we come to the ark of

the covenant. I want to talk a little while about that.

I love the expression in the Bible: the ark of the covenant of the Lord our God. And Moses was commanded to make this ark. It was a small piece of furniture as we think about it, I couldn't quote the dimensions at the present time but it was to be brought into the tabernacle. When Moses was called upon Mt. Sinai and God gave him the law the first time, Ten Commandments, when he came down he found, as our brother mentioned, the Israelites worshipping a golden calf. They couldn't keep themselves very well could they? Just as soon as Moses leaves them they go into idolatory. And you and I are just as prone today to forget the Lord as the Israelites were, when He leaves us. Moses threw down the tables of stone, to find his people in that condition, and God called him back again. And then He engraved them in stone and when he returned he put them in this ark. Moses couldn't keep them. The Israelites couldn't keep these Ten Commandments themselves. But there was a safe place for them. In the ark is a type of Jesus Christ. He's the One who has kept the law for us if it's ever been kept. Honored it in his life. And over the ark there was what we call a mercy seat.

You know I used to read that and I thought that's the most beautiful peaceful expression I ever heard. A mercy seat. A mercy seat. You know, God appropriately named many things. He had over this ark a mercy seat. He said to Moses, and there will I meet with thee. God has a meeting place for sinners. But it's above the ark and it's above the mercy seat and there will I commune with thee from above the mercy seat. How thankful we've all been that there is a mercy seat, a place one can sit down in mercy. And over the mercy seat there were two cherubims. The best I can understand, they were like two eagles. One of them is over here and one of them is over there. The scripture says, "The wings of this one touches the wall. The wing of this one touches the wing of that one on that side, and the wing of that one touches the wall on the other side. To me it represents the old and the new testament because each one of these cherubims was facing the mercy seat.

And all the prophecies before the coming of Christ were a promise of His coming. There's no vacant space between the cherubims because the wing of this one reaches all the way, reaches to this one and so in my judgment the word of God has covered the period of all time that we recognize. And they looked at the mercy seat. The most precious possession the Israelites had was the ark of the covenant.

Somebody asked me a question at Natchez in the night about the ministers. She said I didn't answer directly. Sometimes we answer indirectly—how much honor we should give the minister, etc. And I said, you know, as the Israelites journeyed in the wilderness they carried this ark with them. It was a precious possession. The type of Jesus their Lord. The Ten Commandments were in there. When they had reached Jordan, why, the land they had looked forward to so long to cross over, into the promised land, they carried the ark along. And God gave Joshua instruction as to how they should cross over Jordan, and He said to him, make the Priest take the ark on their shoulders. I believe the minister of the gospel today is bearing the ark in preaching Jesus Christ. He has nothing else to preach. He's satisfied with His name, the name of Christ. He said, when you see the ark removed, borne by the priest, go ye after it. He didn't say, when you see the priest start moving–but, watch the ark. Watch the ark! How lovely to hear a minister bring the sweetness of Jesus' name to people. How lovely, as we listen to people exhort the name of Jesus Christ. They desire no glory, no

honor in the flesh. And He said, when ye see the ark removed, borne by the priest, go ye after it. Don't you keep so far behind them and when they were about to cross over Jordan, the priest stood in the midst of it with the ark on his shoulders until all the people passed over. God opened it up like a wall and it stood up like a wall.

Concerning the wandering of the Israelites, the ark moved when they moved. I read on one occasion about the ark being carried into the camp of the Philistines, their enemies, there was a plague there.

They may take His name but only those that have truly needed Him embrace Him indeed. They had the ark and no doubt they felt rejoicing. We have the most precious possession, the ark of the covenant in our camp. And everything began to happen: plagues, and the same ones decided, why thou art a curse in our camp, and we'll see what happens. So they took a milk cow, highly spoken of and they shut up the calf at home, and they put the ark on a cart. They said now if that cow carries that ark to the camp of Israel, we'll know its a plague. And you know, that cow left the calf. She went mooing but she had to go. There was no choice. Because the power of God overcomes every obstacle when it's His will for things to move. It sure does, even down to brute animals. We speak of it, we say it couldn't be, but it was! Shut up the calf at home and the cow leaves, goes mooing pulling the cart. Why? Because the power of God arranged it that way. You can never exault the power of God too much. You can never abase a sinner too much.

No doubt it was a great day when the camp of the Israelites saw the ark coming. Coming! And the hand of man wasn't bringing him back either. Wasn't bringing him back, the hand of God was bringing him back.

And so I want to leave you people thinking of it, with the thoughts I've scatterly presented about the ark. This was a complete salvation that God typified there and the anti-type can never be less than the type. So our hope, our consolation, our joy, everything we have, is because God has ordained it so. Our Saviour said: "I thank thee Oh Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and the prudent and revealed them unto babes." You know how God's way is in revealing things —to hide things is to leave them unrevealed. That's the only thing necessary for God to hide things, is to leave them unrevealed.

So these three arks were typical of our Saviour. The scripture abounds from the first chapter to the last with Christ. I said last night, if you take Him out of the Bible you'd just have two lids left. That's all you'd have. Jesus Christ, who it is said is made unto us righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

A few personal remarks I'd like to make now: When I was a boy I was thrown with a people that believed that the work of regeneration was the work of grace and that sinners were passive in regeneration. But they held the doctrine that after regeneration we had the power and the ability to obtain the blessings of God if we'd obey Him. And you know that looked like a good doctrine to begin with. It looked so good, I said, I'll just obtain the blessings of God and I won't have any chastisement and I was foolish enough to believe that I could live without chastisement. Yet I found in the Bible that He said, "If you be without chastisement of whom all are partakers, you are a bastard and not a son." But time went on. Suddenly, in May 1919 I was sitting under a minister who was standing in the pulpit preaching and he was preaching from the first chapter of Hebrews, "When he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high," and

suddenly my friends, something hit my heart like a dart. That I must speak in His name. I've got to talk about it to His people. I went home that afternoon and put up the horse and walked the pastures, wondering about what I had felt: I said, Lord, take this burden off of me. Time went on and the burden wasn't removed. I wrestled day and night. If I am a minister of the gospel I am not a volunteer. But I love to preach it when God blesses me.

I remember one of our daughter's, expected to lose her on one occasion. And I said this is the wrath of God upon me. The judgments of God because I hadn't spoken. Have you ever felt those things? The judgments of God, and every time things would get worse as the burden became heavy, I'd say: Lord, take it off, I'll speak. And when it eased up I was just as hard again. I'm just as hardhearted.

Finally, we had a brother-in-law who lived in my home. I loved him very much. I would say he was closer to me than any brother I had, we lived in the same house. He was critically ill. He had said to me many times as a boy, David, I think you are going to have to preach. The brother would say that, though he wasn't a member of the Old School Baptist, he united while he was down sick. I just want to tell you a few things of my life before I leave you, because the most of you I'll never see you again, not here.

A few days before he passed away he called me to the bed, he said: "I'm goind to die, and I want to hear you talk before I die." And I tell you I was trapped. I knew if I refused to try to speak to him I would carry it to my grave. I remember, my friends, going to a barn on our farm and bowing down before the Lord and asking Him, Lord give me strength.

Some of our neighbors gathered at our home at 2:00 or near about that hour and my father opened the service and I tried to speak a few words. I didn't feel I was blessed but when it was through he said, I'm satisfied. Two days later I stood by his bed and heard him say, "I see the angels coming for me."

My friends, they had come for him, I learned obedience, if I know anything about it, through sufferings. I had to have fellowship with my Saviour. I learned that this matter was not optional with men. I learned that if I had a blessing God gave it to me before the world and my Saviour. I learned the doctrine of predestination I'm preaching, if I know it at all, before God opened my mouth. I tried not to believe it.

I remember one of the first times I ever stood up. I took the text: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. Are ye not much more valued than many sparrows? Yea, even the very hairs of your head are all numbered." Why? Because I believe that doctrine. I can't be fed with this doctrine of part works and part grace. Not a poor sinner like I am.

A man was in my congregation and what I said that day appealed to him in such a way that the next week he came to see me. I had small children, I was having a hard time in life, and he said I want you to go to work for me, I believe the doctrine you preached. I worked twelve years with that man from that sermon. Now, to me these are the providences of God. My hearers, God has been good to me. Good to me! Wonderful, so wonderful to me. I can't praise Him enough. I know I'm talking about personal things but I just want to tell you how it came. (A smaller voice on the tape said: "It's wonderful, wonderful, keep on!)

I believe that every minister who exalts the name of God goes into the depths to learn that doctrine. He cannot feed the flock of God until he's been there. And I can tell you the pathway he comes. I can tell you the mountain tops and the

valleys. I can tell you of the sunshine and the rain. I can tell you of the winters and the summers. I can tell you of seed time and havest. I'm talking about everything. And that God has provided in the wonders of His grace and His people are kept before him and He said even a sparrow doesn't fall without me. I use to think He said, "his notice" but He said "without me." I feel like I'm among a people that believe that doctrine.

If I didn't believe it, I wouldn't be here tonight. The sovereignty of God over all worlds, all things, all events, "life, death hell and worlds unknown hang on His firm decree, He sits on no precarious throne, nor borrows leave to be." You love that hymn? Sometimes you can sing it from way down here, yes.

Keep silence, all created things,
And wait your Maker's nod!
My soul stands trembling while she sings
The honors of her God.

Not Gabriel asks the reason why,
Nor God the reason gives;
Nor dares the favorite angel pry
Beneath the folded leaves.

But the precious last verse of that hymn is:

In thy fair book of life and grace,
O, may I find my name
Recorded in some humble place,
Beneath my Lord the Lamb!

God will never give His glory to another. And the glory of His Son shall never be detracted from whatever happens in the world by men, Christ sits on the throne. And my beloved hearers, He's conscious of your needs. He's a great High Priest who's gone to heaven who can be touched. Touched! Touched with a feeling of our infirmities. I like to think of Steven when he was dying. I like to think Steven saw heaven and he said, I see heaven open and I see Jesus standing on the right hand of God. And his face was like an angel's. Good way to die wasn't it? Have you ever felt if death comes, all is well? Have you passed that state of fear that you had no more fear? When? When the Lord was there.

TO THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

May shew forth in type of the cross that the elect of God's people do have to take up and follow Jesus. The children of God did not have a cross to carry until Christ came and put within them his spirit which is a righteous spirit. Neither did they have a warfare or a godly fear even, they walked even as others until they were born again of the holy spirit not to save them, but because they were already saved being born again, brought them into the light and knowledge of the truth. Then they had a cross and warfare and a godly fear and they do keep his commandments and follow Him, Jesus Christ the son of God. Matthew 27:32 tells the one that carried the cross, "And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name; him they compelled to bear his cross."

Concerning the cross that Jesus was nailed to at the place called Golgotha, I have heard many of the brethren say that Jesus carried his cross, but he did not for he was without sin. He, Jesus, had no cross to carry, not even a wooden cross, but his children do have a cross to carry for they are sinners.

Now let us take a look at Mark 15:21, "And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross." This seems to look so very plain to me. Now let us go on to Luke 23:26 and it says, "And as they led him away they laid hold upon one Simon a Cyrenian coming out of the country and on him they laid the cross that he might bear it after Jesus." I think where so many misunderstand this scripture is in John 19:17 which

reads, "And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha, where they crucified Him." This doesn't mean that Christ was carrying his cross but speaking of him that did carry the cross which was Simon. I hope I am making myself clear on this matter or scripture. To me this should be enough and if I am not right on this matter, would some brother or sister please let me know.

By the word cross is understood Gebret, made of wood. Two pieces of wood put across where they cross with right angles at the top as a "T". The cross was the punishment of the vilest slaves and was called a servile punishment; this punishment, our servile punishment, this punishment our saviour underwent. Matthew 27:35 This penalty was so common among the Romans. Pains, afflictions, troubles, and unprosperous affairs were called crosses, and the verb crucifixion was used for all sorts of chastisement and pains of body and mind. Our Saviour says often in his gospel that he who would be his disciple must take up his cross and follow him. Matthew 16:24 He must submit readily to whatsoever afflictions God lays upon him or any suffering that befalls him in the service of God even to death itself. Cross is taken for the whole of Christ sufferings from his birth to his death but especially those upon the tree. Eph. 2:16, Heb. 12:2 And for the doctrine of the gospel; that is of salvation through Christ crucified, Cor. 1:18. False teachers who pressed the observation of the law of Moses as necessary to salvation besides faith in Christ are called enemies of the cross of Christ. Phil. 3:18. Because by such doctrine they did really oppose and undermine the power and merit of Christ and sought to avoid prosecution which they would have been exposed to had they preached salvation only by Christ crucified as the apostle Paul was, Gal. 5:11. To crucify is not only for putting to death on a cross, Matthew 27:35. But also for subduing sin: for breaking the strength and mortifying, suppressing the motions and breakings out of corrupt nature. Gal. 5: 24, "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with affections and lusts." Christ's death on the cross has not only merited reconciliation with God but is to subdue and mortify lust of the flesh. Gal. 2:20, I am crucified with Christ, it is said of them who for some time have made profession of religion and afterwards turned opostates that they crucify to themselves the son of God afresh. Heb. 6:6 that is they shew themselves to be of the same opinion with those that did crucify Christ and would do it again were it in their power. The apostle tells the Galatians that Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth crucified among them. Gal. 3:1. They had been as fully and clearly informed of the nature and design of Christ sufferings as if all had been transacted in their sight. If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. In Hebrews 12:2 "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. In Matthew 10:38, And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me. The elect being the only ones that is given to do this, being the only ones that has a cross are a warfare or a godly fear in. Cor. 1:17-18 says for Christ sent me not to baptize but to preach the gospel; not with wisdom of words lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect, for the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

In Colossians 1:20, And having made peace through the blood of the cross by him, to reconcile all things unto himself; his children being saved on the cross by

the blood of Jesus Christ; and he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me.

In hope,

W. C. "Bill" Lake
1111 North Gilmore Ave.
Lakeland, Florida 33805
Phone 1-813-683-1726

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

LUKE XVI. 9.

"And I say unto you, make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations."

"*And I say unto you.*" Jesus did not speak like other men. The officers that were sent to him said truly, "Never man spake like this man." He taught not only in a different manner from other men, but upon a different principle. The words of his that are written by the pen of inspiration are not words by which his teaching is *to be* done, but the words which tell how his teaching has already been done. The written words tell to the enlightened understanding what the spirit and life of those words has already written in the new heart. "The words, that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."—John vi. 63. When he said, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven," he said in words what his Spirit always says wihin his people. These words do not express a proposition on his part which mayor may not be complied with by those to whom they are addressed, but they tell what has been, and is being wrought in them by his creative power. They express the same invincible power by which God commanded the light to shine out of darkness, as he now shines in their hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. iv. 6.) When Jesus says, "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you," he did not present a condition to those to whom he spake while they might or might not fulfill, but he declared what he speaks with living power in the hearts of those to whom he gives spiritual life, and which they can, in the Spirit, no more refuse to obey than Adam could refuse to breathe when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. This speaking of Jesus is not to the fleshly mind and heart, but to the new head, and the flesh responds to these living words of Jesus as it is moved upon by the power of spiritual life. These spiritual powers are always inclined to perfect obedience, and when they are in exercise, by the grace of God, then they become effectual weapons of warfare, pulling down the strongholds of fleshly opposition, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exaleth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. (2 Cor. ix. 4)

"And I say unto you." Not as one man says something to another which it will be profitable for him to hear and attend to, but as the Creator says to the creature in that creative work by which he is "created in Christ Jesus unto good works." When we come to the true meaning of the words of Jesus which are at the head of this article, we shall find in them not a recommendation of a course that will be for the benefit of his people to follow, but a command which has already been written in their hearts. Here is the difference between the legal character and the subject of gospel grace. Here is the difference in principle and action between the

unjust steward, who is a pharisee and is covetous, and who sees in legal things only a chance for self-exaltation and emolument, and the gospel character, who has been given an honest spirit, and who sees in legal things the just requirements of a holy God, whose name must be glorified. Here is the difference between the teaching of this world's wisdom to "the children of this world," and the teaching of the wisdom which is from above to "the children of light."

The unjust steward made friends with his lord's goods, or riches, by requiring of his debtors less than they owed; and his lord (not our Lord) commended him, not for honesty, but for a wise forethought and care to provide for himself against the day of adversity. His wisdom was earthly, sensual, devilish, but it was wisdom in a worldly sense, and looked to his worldly advantage. It pertained only to worldly things, and was eminently selfish, and it was only commended in a worldly sense. It is only as using the wisdom that he thinks will best advance his interests that he is commended by our Savior to the attention of the children of light. They are not directed to do as he did only in one thing, and that is, to diligently pay attention to the dictates of the wisdom which belongs to them, as he diligently attended to the directions of the wisdom of this world. The Savior said, "Be wise as serpents," but he did not say, "Be wise like serpents." The children of this world are compared with the children of light to the disadvantage of the latter in one thing only, and that is, that they are wise in their generation, looking after what will be best for themselves in this world, while the children of light are not wise in their generation, when left to themselves to look after their own interest, but are constantly liable to turn aside from the path of true wisdom, and cannot therefore trust in themselves to guide themselves for one moment, but must be led constantly by the dear Savior.

That point in which they are liable to fail of true wisdom is their tendency to make use of the wisdom of this world, which constantly holds our allurements to them to follow its lead. And how often they follow the lead of that worldly wisdom, looking for the advantages it promises, until they are led by it into trouble, desolation, famine and death. The true wisdom of the child of God is to always distrust the dictates of earthly wisdom. Therefore from the beginning of his experience he is turned away from the ways of this world, and taught a different way and a different wisdom. This is indicated here.

"And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness." To make friends with those riches was to use them unjustly, as the pharisees (the unjust steward) did; to make friends of them is to experience and acknowledge the justice of their claims against us; to honestly own our full indebtedness, and to ask no reduction, even though we have nothing to pay, but must give up our own selves to satisfy the claim. For the mammon of unrighteousness undoubtedly means the things of the law. The word mammon simply means riches, wealth personified. Unrighteousness here does not mean anything evil or wrong, but the lack of righteousness or value. There is no real value in a pattern or in a type, but only a representative of value; there are no riches in an account, but only the representation of riches. The things belonging to the legal dispensation had no real righteousness in themselves, but they were important as representing the "true riches" of the gospel dispensation. And these true "riches of righteousness" brought forth in the gospel, which belong to the children of light, are only committed unto them after they have been found faithful in regard to the riches of unrighteousness, or the things of the law in which there is no righteous-

ness, but only a typical representation of righteousness. One has made friends of those legal riches, the commands, ordinances, types, accounts of the legal dispensation, when he has acknowledged the justice of them. Under the law an Israelite had paid the debt when he had given up himself to be sold for it. Then the claim was settled, and in the year of jubilee he went free with no claim against him. No charge could be brought against him, for the law would stand his friend. So the law is the friend of the poor sinner who has acknowledged the justice of its claims against him. The moment he feels that he is justly sold under sin, that he is justly condemned, and feels that his condemnation is just, that moment for him the year of jubilee has come, and he is received by the very law which held such a claim against him, into the everlasting habitations of the gospel.

All of this chapter to the eighteenth verse confirms the view of the text which I have thus briefly suggested. The Pharisees were covetous, so is every one who justifies himself before men. These are those who depend upon the works of the law for salvation. Though they appear to men, and to themselves, to be true servants of the law, yet in their hearts they are covetous, and do not really care for the honor of God, nor seek to magnify his law, but are seeking their own honor and riches. They are not faithful in that unrighteous mammon, or riches, which belonged to another man, and under which they were known as servants, because they had not faith. As soon as one is born of God he has faith to see the true requirements of the law. He feels that its claims against him are just. He can say, "The law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good, but I am carnal, sold under sin." Now he wants the law honored. He could not accept deliverance at the expense of the law, it would be no deliverance for him. He is faithful in these riches of the law, though there is no righteousness in them, yet they represent righteousness. There is no real value in the page of the account book which shows the great debt he owes, but it represents the true value, which he knows ought to be paid. It represents true riches. He could not dishonor those riches, that holy law, by accepting any release upon the payment of half or four score. He feels in his soul the truth which he does not yet understand, that every jot and tittle of the law must be fulfilled, that the whole debt must be paid.

"That when ye fail." There is a time when every living soul must fail, and that is when he sees the amount of his indebtedness under the law of God, and the justice of it. When that is seen and acknowledged, then the time of failure comes. Ten thousand talents in debt, and not a farthing to pay. Then all at once the law ceases to hold us, the soul is delivered, and we are astonished and amazed to find ourselves at liberty, freed from guilt, and rejoicing in a sense of righteousness. In his own time and way Jesus appears as having satisfied the law, and it is the riches of that legal dispensation, the accounts of that law now satisfied, which receive us into the gospel, the city of habitation. The righteousness which that law represented is now fulfilled, so that nothing can be laid to our charge, and thus the gates of the holy city are opened unto us, never to be shut any more.

Silas H. Durand

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/01
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

ARTICLES

ECCLESIASTES IV. I

"So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and, behold, the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter."

In this book of the words of the wise man, Solomon preached the vanity of all things under the sun; or, of all earthly things, and having considered them, one by one, has by that wisdom with which he was especially inspired by the Spirit of the Lord, pronounced them all vanity and vexation of spirit. And the truth of his preaching is witnessed by all those whom God has made wise unto salvation. No amount of earthly possessions can secure happiness, as will appear from the parable of the rich man, who proposed to pull down his barns and build larger, when on the very eve of his anticipated ease and pleasure, his soul was required of him. Poverty also has its inconveniences and perplexities; and when all is accurately summed up, the full amount is vanity. Yet it is in the earthly nature of mankind to "Stretch their arms like seas, and grasp in all the shore." To the enlightened child of God all things below the sun are vanity; and all earthly things are a vexation to that spirit which is born of God; which is called the new or inner man; and whose conversation or citizenship is in heaven. Although the things below the sun may feed and nourish our fleshly nature, that very flesh which lives on earthly sustenance is a vanity and vexation to the heaven-born spirit. And that spiritual life which feeds on immortal bread, lives on Christ, by living faith, eats his flesh and drinks his blood, can find no comforter under the sun, no food, no consolation or spiritual enjoyment from earthly or sensual things.

"So I returned," that is from the pursuit and contemplation of other objects' "and considered the oppressions that are done under the sun." Literally the world is full of oppressions, and we see the oppressed bearing the yoke. In our favored land, where we have the most liberal and by far the best form of government under the sun, still we find oppression. The strong oppress the weak; the rich too often oppress the poor; the wise and cunning oppress the weak and simple, while the oppressors are themselves oppressed in turn, by that which inflicts on them care, toil and labor. Anti-Christ oppresses the children of God, and has drenched the earth with the blood of the saints, so that in the world, or under the sun, the saints must have tribulation. They are a poor, oppressed and afflicted people, who trust in nothing under the sun, they trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon their God.

"And behold the tears of such as were oppressed." The bitter tears wrung from the streaming eyes of the widows, the fatherless, the poor, the injured, the robbed and the spoiled, among men in nature, as well as the peculiar trials, and flowing tears of the oppressed, persecuted and afflicted saints, are a witness of the correctness of the wise man's conclusion, that all below the sun is vanity, and vexation of spirit.

"And they (the oppressed) had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter." Can this be said of the saints of God? It is true God's people have a holy and heavenly Comforter. "Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive." But that Comforter is the Holy Ghost; is God himself, and their comforts are spiritual and divine. The wise man does not speak of things above; but of things which are under the sun. The comforts of the oppressed saints are above the sun; they are blessed with all spiritual blessings in *heavenly,* not in

earthly places, in Christ Jesus. And as they are in him, they are not under the sun, in the sense in which the wise man speaks, for Jesus is higher than the heavens. They have no comforter in earthly things. Although in the kind and gracious providence of God they are provided with as much of the production of the teeming earth as their heavenly Father knoweth that they have need of, and which they are to receive with thanksgiving, and use as not abusing it, knowing that its fashion passeth away, yet they are not to set their hearts on earthly substance, for it is all vanity.

"What should we wait and wish for then,
From creatures, earth and dust?
They make our expectations vain,
And disappoint our trust."

With the oppressors there is power, but not unlimited nor unrestrained; for

"Death and hell shall do no more,
Than what our Father please."

Power was given to anti-Christ to afflict the saints forty and two months, and power to make war with the saints, and to overcome them, &c., only until the purpose of God is accomplished, and the remainder of their wrath God will restrain. But the oppressed have no power to avert the oppression of earth, and of earthly things. They have no comforter in the things below the sun. God is their portion. He giveth strength and comfort to the weak and fainting, and underneath them are his everlasting arms. We should rejoice in the assurance that from all this vanity and vexation of spirit, God's children shall, in due time, be delivered, and be made more than conquerors through him that has loved us.

"Wait then, my soul, submissive wait,
Prostrate before his awful seat,
And 'midst the terrors of his rod,
Trust in your wise and gracious God."

Elder Gilbert Beebe

ACTS V. 38, 39.

"Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God."

Such was the counsel of Gamaliel to those who were madly engaged in the suppression of the truth, and persecution of the apostles and primitive saints. All their efforts thus far had failed to prevent the faithful testimony of the servants of our Lord Jesus Christ, or to intimidate them. The Redeemer has said, "Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," and his words were no less omnipotent in the utterance of these words than when he called the world into existence, or when the tempests or the seas obeyed him. Indeed his very word is sufficient indemnity for the faith of all his children under all their trials and persecutions. He speaketh the word and it stands fast; he commands and it is done. The counsel of Gamaliel was rational and consistent, whatever were the motives which led him to offer it to the Jewish Sanhedrin, and they are equally as true and appropriate now as when the apostles of the Lamb stood accused before that council.

Refrain from these men. What men? The context shows the men alluded to were the apostles and witnesses of our Lord, who had been arrested and imprisoned for the testimony of their divine Lord and Master, and liberated by the angel of the Lord, and then re-arrested and again brought before the council. These men were the constituents of the gospel church in its primitive organization, and represent the church of Christ throughout all subsequent ages; for quickened sinners after having gladly received their word, were baptized and added to them, that is, to *these men.* And they continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread and in prayer, and the Lord added unto them

daily such as should be saved. The whole church is evidently included, and *these men* are still to be found on the earth, and still identified by the same discriminating characteristics: *steadfast in the apostle's doctrine.* Whatever new fashions, fancies or theories the religious world in its progression may adopt.

There was at that time, there has been ever since, and there still is a strange inclination manifested by the religious world, or the worldly religious, to oppose, annoy, perplex and persecute *these men* in a variety of ways; nor is the opposition which they encounter alone from the world. The Apostle Paul in admonishing the elders of Ephesus, predicted that, "Even of your own selves shall men rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Elsewhere he warned the church of God that "perilous times should come; that many should depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." All the violent persecution the church has endured from anti-Christ, the cruel and murderous edicts, restricted liberties as citizens of the world, the torturing racks and ingenious machines for inflicting dreadful physical sufferings, the executioner's block and axe, or the stake and fagot, have never proved so hurtful to the church of God, as internal disruptions, dissensions and disorders produced among her members; the sowing seeds of discord, scattering firebrand arrows and death, by false brethren; by men of corrupt minds, who have loved pre-eminence, and to acquire it have assailed the doctrine, character and reputation of the men of God. History informs us of no age in which the church has not been more or less infested with this description of opposition, except it has been when the fires of persecution from without have burned so violently as to render the religion of the Bible too unpopular and expensive to suit the carnal, selfish notions of nominal professors and graceless hypocrites. The only avowed enemies of the church with all their instruments of brutal cruelty, has proved a purgative, and the flames of persecution have had a purifying effect, while the treachery of ungodly men within her inclosure has had a corrupting tendency. But neither the one nor the other of these, however much they may harrass or perplex the saints, can ever overthrow the work of God. If the world or Satan had power to overthrow the work and counsel of God, the church would have fallen long ago. But God's counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure and it is his good pleasure that his little flock shall inherit the kingdom; it was prepared for them from the foundation of the world, and in his own appointed time the God of heaven has set it up, and decreed that it shall stand for ever; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be moved, neither shall any of her cords be broken.

"From age to age she has withstood
The utmost rage of earth and hell."

But still, unshaken as is the throne of God, and unshaken as is his oath and promise, she remains perfectly secure, for God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved, God will help her, and that right early. She has encountered the storms of persecution, the floods and rains have assailed her ancient battlements with violence, but she fell not, because she is founded upon the Rock of Ages.

How very different are the counsels and works of men, when applied to matters of religion. Every scheme and device, however cunningly or wisely devised, and every human effort and application unauthorized by the precept of the King, shall certainly come to naught.

How many thousands of religious inventions, societies and institutions for evangelizing the world, arise with great pomp and promise, reach their climax and dwindle back to their original noth-

ingness. Others again in turn are constantly springing up, but all embodying the certain seeds of their own inevitable decay.

All that kind of religion which is or can be produced by the will or works of men, must come to naught. The fruits of modern revivals, which have been effected by excitement and fanaticism, have been like crackling thorns in a momentary blaze, giving a glaring but transient light, only to make the gross darkness which succeeds, the more frightful and doleful. And every failure has proved the soundness of Gamaliel's counsel, as all time shall show the immutability of the decree of him who said, "Every plant that my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up."

From what is thus clearly demonstrated, let hell despair, but all who trust in God shall rejoice, for they shall be as Mount Zion which cannot be moved; which abideth forever. What have the children of God to fear? The enemy may come in like a flood, but the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against the enemy. The heathen may rage, and men of earth imagine vain things, they may reolve to disband the saints, and cast their cords from them, but he that sitteth in the heavens shall hold them in derision, for it is written, "The enemies of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them." Nor do these fearful threatenings hang impending alone over the devoted heads of those enemies which are outside the organized boundaries of the church of Christ, for "If any man defile the temple of the Lord, him will God destroy." Then let the sinners in Zion tremble, and let fearfulness surprise the hypocrites. God will protect his little ones from all the rage of their adversaries, and avenge his own elect who cry unto him day and night. They who touch them, touch the apple of his eye, and it were better for them that a mill-stone were hanged about their necks, and that they were cast into the depths of the sea, than that they should offend any of our Lord's little ones.

Elder Giblert Beebe

SHOW MERCY

To keep a sweet and gentle temper in the midst of bitter opposition is real strength. It is true wisdom. A truly great man has the wisdom that is from above. It is "pure and peaceable." Such a man is not a bigot nor self-conceited. Great men are easily approached. Little men hold malice a long time, while those that are truly wise will not let the sun go down on their wrath.

A great man is full of mercy and easy to be entreated. It is hard for small men to forgive an injury or confess a fault, but men truly wise can do both. Much might be said of the wisdom that cometh from above. Without it we will never understand our lost estate before God, nor the riches of grace and mercy in our salvation.

Men truly wise abhor themselves in dust and ashes. They know what mercy is and are ever full of mercy to others. Those who know the sweets of pardon are ready to pardon those who trespass against them. Men can never admire the riches of His grace who have not seen the deep depravity of themselves. To be peaceable and to seek peace and ensue it, is true wisdom. Our behavior should nourish peace in every lawful way. We can be firm and zealous and yet, be kind. We can be peaceable with others, and yet love and stand for the truth, and a zealous, firm and peaceable spirit is what James insists on. *"The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men."* We have been shown mercy by the Lord and should be glad to show mercy to others.

Elder J. H. Olyphant
"Messenger of Peace," 1913

CONTRIBUTIONS

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MEETINGS

CHAPEL BAPTIST CHURCH

In compliance with the request of Chapel Primitive Baptist Church, a presbytery was called for the purpose of an examination, and if found qualified, the ordination of Brother Thomas Solomon for the full work of the gospel ministry.

The presbytery was organized with the election of Elder O.K. Tench as moderator. Elder Tench inquired of the church it it was of the same mond as to proceeding with the ordination of Brother Solomon. The church spokesman, Brother Clay Brown, answered in the affirmative. The moderator asked Elder Land Carter tp present the candidate to the presbytery for ordination.

Questioning of the candidate was by Elder J. R. Hollandsworth. Brother Solomon related his experience as to what he believed was his call to the ministry.

The presbytery agreed to proceed with the ordination.

Laying on of hands was performed during the ordination prayer by Elder J. R. Hollandsworth.

The charge was given by Elder Kenneth Key. Elder O. K. Tench also remarked to Brother Solomon about some of the duties of a minister.

The work of the presbytery was accepted by the church spokesman and Elder Thomas Solomon was delivered back to the church as a fully ordained minister by Elder Lane Carter.

Ministers present for the ordination:

Elders:

J. R. Hollandsworth	C. B. Davis
O. K. Tench	Junior Conner
Denver Simpson	Lane Carter
Raymond Goad	Rufus Brown
Larry Hollandsworth	Kenneth Key

Deacons present for the ordination:

Deacons:

Arthur Potter	W. W. Abshire
Hancil Conner	R. A. Eanes
Nelson Bryant	Claude Hopkins
Chester Hagood	Richard Stegall

James E. Cooper
Clay Brown
Jessie Tyree
Fred Murphy
Lawrence Myers
Herbert Dodson
Hassell Hale
W. T. Conner
Albert Hudson
Robert Shelton
Clyde Johnson
Posy Poindexter
Homie Dalton
Stafford Houston
Marvin Brumfield
Claude Johnson
Harry Cannady
Jimmy Holley
Junior Dent
Burnell B. Williams
Wilson King
Vance Duncan
Coley Strader

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Burnell B. Williams, Clerk

OBITUARIES

CHESTER AVERY

At the request of Hancock Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing, we will try to write an obituary for our father, Chester Arthur Avery.

Our father was born in Pitt County, near Winterville, N.C. on April 30, 1906. He was the son of James Henry and Woodie Ann Brann Avery. He had eight brothers and four sisters.

Our father married Martha Margaret Tripp, who is better known as Betsy, on December 15, 1926. They were married while sitting in our father's car by preacher Walter Nobles of Winterville. Unto this union two daughters were born, Mrs. Doris Sawyer and Mrs. Bettie Sue Joyner.

Our father lived all his life in the community where he was born. He was a farmer. During his lifetime, he saw many changes in farming as well as in other areas.

During his younger life, he was not one to attend church regularly. Then on third Saturday night, August 16, 1958, he joined Hancock Primitive Baptist Church near Ayden, N.C. He was baptized the next day. It was a joyous time for our family. From that time on, he was always ready to attend church and he always like to arrive about an hour before services were to begin. He was always interested in keeping the church in good condition. He would often speak of the friendliness and love of his dear brethren of the church. He said that he loved Hancock and it was a sweet place to him.

In May of 1983, he was diagnosed as having lung cancer. Instead of having an operation, he chose to fight this disease on his own and with the help of the Lord. He and our mother fought this long, hard battle approximately two years. The Lord blessed our mother and kept her healthy so that she could care for him. The three of us did what we could to keep him as comfortable and happy as possible. During his illness, he was blessed with visits by many of his brethren, relatives and friends. At first, Daddy was able to talk with them and later as his voice faded, he could only look at them and smile. Even though he could not say so near the end, we knew he enjoyed seeing everyone of them. Then on April 9, 1985, at age seventy-eight, the Lord called him home.

Many years ago, our father had signed his name above hymn number 623, Hicks Farewell, in Lloyd's Hymnal. Although he never mentioned it to anyone, we knew he wanted it sung or read at his funeral. His funeral was conducted on April 11, 1985 at 3 p.m. at Farmer Funeral Home in Ayden, N.C. by Elder Reeves Smith and Elder D. B. STokes, Jr. Hymn number 623 was read by Elder Smith. The words of this hymn were very comforting to our mother and to us. Our father

was entombed in the cemetery at Hancock Primitive Baptist Church.

He is survived by his wife, Betsy; his daughters, Doris and her husband, Joe, of Winterville, N.C.; Bettie Sue and her husband, Edward, of Greenville, N.C.; two sisters, Mrs. Ellen Pilgreen of Winterville, N. C. and Mrs. Etta Pilgreen of Newport News, Va.; four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Although he is missed greatly by our mother and us, we would not have him back to suffer as he did during the last two years of his life. We can only hope that it is the Lord's will that we can join him one day where there is no suffering and pain, only joy and peace.

Written by his daughters who miss him very much.

Doris Sawyer
Bettie Sue Joyner

L. BRIAN HILL

Once again, death has created a vacancy in our midst. Our esteemed brother, L. Brian Hill, passed away on March 2, 1985 at the age of 93. He had been in failing health many months before his death. He died in the Craven County Hospital, New Bern, N. C., and his funeral was conducted at Farmer Funeral Chapel, Ayden, N. C. by Elder Joseph L. Sawyer. He was buried in the Winterville, N.C. cemetery, beside his first wife, Clara Sutton Hill, who preceded him in death on January 20, 1976. He is survived by his wife Mrs. Cloie Hill, Winterville, N.C., three sons, Alton Hill of Winterville, N.C.; Willard Hill of Carthage, N.C.; and Simmons Hill of Ayden, N.C.; a daughter, Mrs. Helen Hardison, of New Bern, N.C.; nineteen grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, and a great-great-grandchild.

Brother Hill was a man of compassion and integrity. He was an honor to his community, to his church and to his family. He was a neighbor in the truest sense of the word, always willing to share with others. Wherever there was sickness or death he would be there to comfort or to lend a helping hand where needed.

On a confession of faith, Brother Hill united with Hancock Primitive Baptist Church on July 15, 1956, and faithfully filled his seat as long as health permitted. He enjoyed going to church and mingled with the brethren. He also visited many of the other churches of the same faith. He visited in the homes of many of the brethren and he entertained many of the brethren in his home. When he visited these churches, he always carried others with him, especially those that had no other way.

He was ordained a deacon of Hancocks church on June 14, 1958, and he filled these duties faithfully. He loved the church very much and was concerned for its welfare.

We miss Brother Hill, but feel that our loss has been his eternal gain.

Done by order of the Church while in regular sesson of conference in May, 1985.

Elder Joseph L. Lawyer, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk
Mable McLawhorn, Assistant Clerk

"The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honor is wisdom."
Proverbs 15: 33

"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."
Proverbs 16: 18

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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Hope and Fears

How sweet the sound of Amazing Grace
When blessed to feel it reaches our case.
No words or tongues can ever express
How it brings our soul a feeling of happiness.

The bible says by grace we are saved
Not by words can our roads be paved.
It is a gift of God we are told
By faith we hope to reach his fold.

This doctine of salvation by grace
His chosen ones will see his face.
If we praised him all of our days
We could never give enough praise.

Our life is mixed with hope and fears
We look ahead to the coming years.
We need his mercy and his grace
And his guiding hand to win our race.

Sister Mamie Bisher

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."
Mat. 7:12

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EDITORIAL

The Trial of God's People

I would beg for grace to write this message of love and fellowship to you and that I might deal with the subject as becometh a follower of the good things of the kingdom of heaven. In the beginning let me say that it is not my hope to write as though I was writing to a people separate and apart from any other portion of the family of God. I would not make any attempt to divide the family of God into two groups, one group having this trial and the others not needing or not being worthy of the trail or being so exempt from being poor faltering sinners that they do not need trials along the way.

I do not say that there is one among us that feels to be exempted from this trial, but if there is, then I do not have any message either of warning or of approval, but leave them where they have ever been, in the hands of God. If I have a scriptural text I would call it to your mind. In my humble judgment there is not a Bible character that is any better qualified by the grace of God, any better qualified by his own tutilage under the jurisdiction of the Teacher in Israel than Peter. I desire to refer to him as he referred to his brethren. More than once he called them, all of them, his beloved brethren. Let us be certain that we understand that he was writing by the inspiration of God to the elect family of God. It behooves us at times to contend earnestly, even firmly, even bluntly, that when Peter, or anybody else writes to the elect of God, the family of God, that none are left out.

I do hope that my mind is exercised by the same divine Spirit that was moving the beloved Apostle to write to the elect family of God. I desire to address each of you, as he addressed each of them as far as I feel towards those to whom I write, there are none left out. If the doctrine of the gospel of God's electing race is not for you, it cannot be said that I discriminated against you. As I have been contemplating to the greatness and loveliness and the universal extension of that glorious theme, I hope that there is not one anywhere, that these lines come to, that I leave out of my salutation to you. The only reservation that is laid down is that laid down by inspiration of God, to wit, that the subject is one that is for the elect people of God. It would be sad to relate, but would be out of my hands or the hands of any of my readers, including those that object to being included in the number that Inspiration moved the Apostle to write to.

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing had happened unto you (I Peter 4:12). Everything in

these two short epistles were written by the Apostle to the elect family of God. In fact, every epistle inspired of God as written to the various churches were every word addressed to those of like precious faith.

To the Elect of God, those of like precious faith the world over, for every period of time, that particular communication is sent to every elect vessel of mercy. As the various gifts of God are brought in contact with these gospel truths, they are applicable to every beloved member of the body of Christ. Love is the ruling passion when a man of God is writing, or when it is applied to the church in unison all over the universe.

Now let us look at the background of Peter. I want it understood that I am not casting reflection on the apostle. As far as nature goes, none of us are superior nor inferior to any other of the subjects of grace. When it pleases God to give any of us grace, we are all on a common level. On the other hand, in our relationship with the works of the flesh, we are on a common level with our fellow man in the flesh. As we are all born in a fleshly state, we all follow the things of that state which we are born the first time. We are without exception, of the earth, earthy. Until there is a new birth, brought about by the divine work of the Spirit, we will only do the works of that fleshly birth. This kind of a tree will not, nor cannot, bring forth spiritual fruit. I realize that many people will rise up and attempt to tell us that a man does not have to do those things in nature. But we are told that a corrupt tree cannot bear good fruit. If that kind of a tree cannot bring forth good fruit, then it follows that a corrupt tree cannot help but bear fruit after the flesh. However, as soon as this corrupt man is born again, born from above, that he, being a new creature in Christ, that, then and there, that there is going to be some good fruit. The reason of this is found in the fact that there are now, in the same house in the same body, two men with two natures.

Now when the Lord Jesus Christ began to call His apostles to His side, Peter was right early one of those called. It is a sad note that right early that Peter manifested a spirit that, uncurbed, would lead to dissension in the body of Christ or in the church. However, in no sense of the word would I dare to insinuate that he was more unjust than his fellow servants. They were all, as all of us are sinners in the same way.

Now let me go back into eternity. God evidently determined to create a world. Regardless of how any one of my readers feel about predestination, there is not one of my readers that would attempt to build a world without a previously drawn blue print. All of my life among the Primitive Baptists, I have read the views of brethren that objected to the thought that God determined all things before the world was created, and yet not one of them all that would start out to build anything without previously having a blueprint. I know that not one man among them all would ever start to build a house or a pig pen or a world without first counting up the cost, and as far as he or she was able that they all would build the world or the pig pen or the house that they desired to build.

The text that Peter brings to our attention is a wonderful rallying point for those that is to be about bringing into existence. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you as though some strange thing had happened to you." That is something that the receiver of the fiery trial did not have anything to do with receiving it. He or she was not consulted about it. If you have not got anything to say about me for saying that than that you do not like the appointment of the fiery trial. The evidence is that this fiery trial was designed by He that gave us all things.

As far as power and wisdom was, and is concerned, the Saviour could have called any one of the apostles to first go through this fiery trial. But it was Peter that was first led through this fiery ordeal and trial. It always brings the hardest epithets to one of the Lord's servants for them to suggest that Satan is ever involved in the welfare or the trial or the good of the Lord's people. Time and again, over the years have bitter pens and tongues lambasted any idea or thought that God ever had anything to do with Satan, or that He ever used him in any way for the good of His people. But I know better. Not much that I claim to know, but in this case I know better. Not only do I know better, but the enemies of the truth know that I know better.

Once upon a time the sons of men came to present themselves before God. Satan was among those that came. God talked to Satan. Had God not talked to Satan he would not have ever known about Job. There is not any way for Satan to have ever known the name nor the circumstances of God's servant Job had not the Lord introduced the subject. Let us ever remember that the Lord tries His people. Let the subject drop right at that point. The Lord tries his people. How many of them does He try? How many people has He? When Peter spoke of the constancy of his devotion to the Saviour, what did the other apostles say and do? When poor despised Peter went to sleep while the dear Gallilean was praying, how many of the others also slept?

When word came that the Saviour was dead, how many of the apostles were ready to go fishing? As you are reminded of your many denials of the blessed Saviour, of the cause that you have professed so many times before God and before His dear people, you and I are brought face to face with the fiery trial which is to try us all, even this fiery trial which the beloved Peter first experienced and then lived through it many times in after life, realizing time and time again that it was given for the specific purpose of trying him. I feel again and again to say with Peter, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you, as though some strange things had happened to you. Me thinks I hear the groans, the anxitities, the yearnings as the inspired man writes. He is not only writing by inspiration but he is writing out of a heart brimming full of soul experience.

Every poor tried soul of Job's day looked upon the scenes depicted by Peter. I dare say, without Bible authority for a denial of what I say that every associate of Job felt the trial of their faith in the manner described by Peter. Isaiah felt it as the living coal was placed on his lips. I say without fear of successful contradiction that Samuel experienced the same feeling that every elect vessel has felt when our trial day came our way (I Sam. 7:12). I am not afraid to say that every elect vessel of mercy will be woefully tried by this fiery trial, which is to try them all. It is a joy and a satisfaction to closely scrutinize every text in the Bible and then to tell you in positive terms that every one of those poor sinners, yea, even all of them, shall be brought through the fire; that every one of them will be tried, and after the trial that they shall all be as gold. My precious readers, one and all, shall suffer this fiery trial. Every elect child of God will be subjected to this fiery trial. The Saviour was no exception, those given grace, they too, as was every prophet of old, every one that calls upon the name of the Lord. And do not forget, too, that he and she that belong to the elect body of Christ are to be tried with this universal trial. This trial is experienced by the Head of the church. Oh what a terrible price to pay for unworthy sinners. Oh, the depth of the riches

both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out (Rom. 11:33). How sublime is the trial of the whole church of God. Two parts shall be cut off and die. Prophecy is fulfilled in the appearing of the Shepherd, the law never did give righteousness to a single elect sinner. It too shall be cut off and die. That law never did save a sinner. No use for a trial here. Note it was cut off without a trial. But there is something, and somebody, even a numerous host that is to be tried. The beauty of this trial is that both the Saviour and those that are saved are both to be tried. All, in the land shall be cut off and die, except, EXCEPT the third part. Draw near dear saints of God. Behold the Lamb of God that is to take away the sins of the world. He is to pass through the fire in trial for you. Notice poor sinners how intricately the Sacrificial Lamb and the whole Covenant of the sheep cote is embraced and linked together in what is to follow. Notice dear child how you are embraced in what is coming to pass. God is bringing the third part through the fire. Notice that this is in the singular, which alludes to Jesus Christ, and then look at the second part. He says, I will refine THEM as silver is refined, and I will try them as gold is tried; they shall call on my name, and I will hear them. I will say, It is my people, and they shall say this is my God.

The Lord willing, I will meet you there.

Elder W. D. Griffin

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

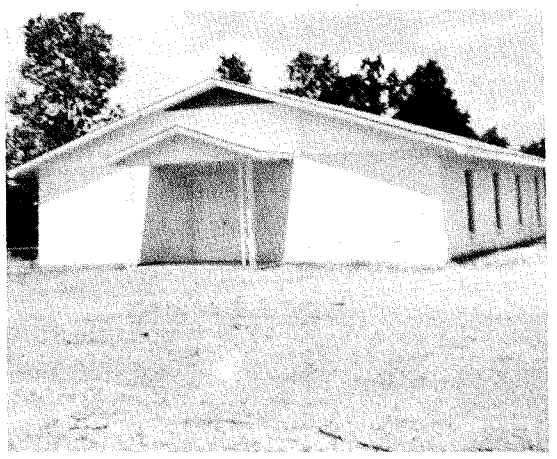

PLEASANT RIDGE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Pleasant Ridge Primitive Baptist Church was constituted in March 1882 and is a member of the Hopewell Association.

The Church is located eleven miles north of Gordo, Alabama and seventeen miles south of Fayette, Alabama in Tuscaloosa County.

The meeting time is each fourth Sunday morning at 11 o'clock. Elder W. T. Posey is the Pastor.

Sister Dannie Strickland, Church Clerk
Star Route, Elrod, Alabama 35458

CORRESPONDENCE

My dear ones:

This day the dear Lord has given me a moment of peace, a calm from strife, a mind to think on Him, a mind to think of you, with love I hope.

I really don't know how to think on Him except to thank Him for the moment of peace; I thank Him for strength of mind and body. I work very hard, under pressure, and long hours. I don't have many things that most people have, but the Lord has given to me freely those things which please Him that I have. I love the Lord so much when He makes me to know that He is God, that He has bleseed me with all that I have in this world. And I'm not talking only about those things which we touch and see; they are good in this life here but there is life beyond this veil. I thank Him so much that He has restrained my temper this day. He's even put a kind word in my mouth. What is better?

I know this state will not last long. Often within hours I am bounced from the lofty heights to the depths of depression with such force that I almost beg to be left in the depths. Oh foolish one that I am. I love this God who rules in heaven and in earth. Wisdom is His. And mercy. How wonderful that God knows our woes. Wouldn't you have problems trying to explain many things that need His mercy? He knows where we are and what we have need of. How wonderful! But more, He shall supply our needs.

Oh, my dear ones, you who hope to love the dear Lord and one another, I thank Him for you. You have been joy to me for many years. I have a beautiful picture of two dear ones who never knew I loved them. For eighteen years the heavy burden of being a sinner was mine alone. The dear Lord in His time I hope blessed me to go with you and the way has been good. To me, I love those two to whom I never confessed love just as I love you. Death does not hinder this love.

On this day in October, the 10th day of the month, these thoughts have been with me. May the God of peace, mercy and wisdom be with us, and may it be His pleasure to make His peace known to us from time to me, as it seems good in His sight.

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickral

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

REPENTANCE

2 Cor. 7:10—*For godly sorrow worketh REPENTANCE to salvation not to be REPENTED of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.*

It has been almost two years since I have written anything for publication. In answer to the many inquiries relative to the reason for my silence: I must be frank with you, I must confess that I cannot find one good reason even though my carnal mind suggests many frivolous excuses. I have experienced much sorrow because of this neglect but I greatly fear that it is the sorrow of the world which results in death instead of godly sorrow that worketh repentance to salvation. I can, at this moment, sympathize with Job who said: *"I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."* I would but cannot write, So help me, Lord, I pray: Deliver me from this plight. Bless my hands this day. May I be blessed to pen, Words that Thou wilt give—To sink into hearts of men, That they repent and live.

The first question we shall attempt to answer is: What is godly repentance? The term repentance suggests a true mourning for sin and a fervent desire to be delivered from it. True repentance is always the result and experience of those who have been convinced that they are sinners. Am I convinced that I have transgressed God's holy law? Do I possess sorrow in my heart because of my many wrong-doings? Is this sorrow great enough that I will confess to my God, my brethren, and my friends that I have sinned? Do I hate my sins to the extent of renouncing them? If I can from the heart answer these questions in the affirmative I do have some evidence of true repentance. I am convinced that true repentance is the daily exercise of a true Christian. David asks in Psalms 19:12: *Who can understand his errors?* Then he prays, *"Cleanse thou me from secret faults."* Enough of my faults have been revealed to me to make me shudder, but I realize that I have many that I am not aware of. I am guilty of disobeying God's revealed commandments in the Scriptures. I am guilty of being polluted in my own carnality. I am fully aware of the fact that I am so awfully polluted and so terribly depraved that I am helpless in attempting to deliver myself. If saving repentance does not include the mercy of God given to us in Christ Jesus, I have no hope. Repentance is a change of mind or purpose. There is a repentance that need to be repented of. This repentance is worked by the sorrow of the world. Worldly repentance includes change of mind or purpose, but would only be a change from one error to another error. Worldly repentance is the result of a sense of danger and fear of wrath brought about by the workings of a natural conscience. However, godly repentance is the result of a true mourning for sin and an earnest desire to be delivered from it which is brought about by the workings of the Spirit of God in changing the natural conscience to a spiritual conscience. The conscience that has been spiritualized by the mighty working of the Spirit will do to follow. There are different kinds of repentance. There is the natural, legal, internal, external, and hypocritical repentance, as well as the true spiritual godly repentance.

The next question we shall consider is: Who is the author of true repentance? We find through sad experience that the carnal mind is not subject to the law of God. There must be something done for us, and in us, from without before we can repent or have a change of mind or purpose against self toward God. Repentance is not within the grasp, or reach, of the natural mind. The natural mind does not have the ability to change itself. True godly repentance must be the work of God. God promised it through prophecy by the hand of Zechariah. We read in Zech. 12:10 —*"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his own son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his own son."* Repentance is a grace or gift of God as is clearly affirmed in Acts 5:31 — *"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and Saviour, FOR TO GIVE REPENTANCE TO ISRAEL, and forgiveness of sin."* Read the second chapter of Acts and you will note the effect of this God given repentance. Those who were "pricked in their heart" gave evidence of a change of mind and purpose. God had turned their hearts with his godly sorrow to make them fit subjects for external repentance. They brought forth fruit meet for repentance which caused them to be proper subjects of address to heed the command of Peter, "Repent..." Outward repentance would be nothing less than hypocritical if the heart and mind has not been changed. Inner repentance worked by God, is certain

to cause outward repentance. Jeremiah quotes Ephraim as recorded in Jeremiah 31:18-19 — *"Turn thou me and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord, my God. Surely after that I was turned, I REPENTED..."* The Lord performs a perfect work that will result in the desired effects. Turning and repenting are synonymous terms. I do not feel it would do any violence to the meaning of Ephraim's cry to paraphrase it, using these words, "Give me repentance of heart and mind, Lord, and I shall have repentance. Surely after my heart and mind was given repentance, I outwardly and manifestly repented." We will further prove that repentance is the gift of God by quoting Acts 11:18 — *"When they heard these things they held their peace and glorified God, saying, 'Then hath God also to the Gentiles GRANTED REPENTANCE unto life'."* Paul verified this in his instructions to Timothy relative to his duties as a minister as recorded in 2 Timothy 2:25 — *"In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves: if God peradventure WILL GIVE THEM REPENTANCE to the acknowledging of the truth."*

The text implies that there is a repentance worked by a worldly sorrow. Your temperament, education, and the customs within your environment may cause you to experience a sense of guilt coupled with a feeling of helplessness which would result in an apprehension of danger. This painful feeling would not necessarily mean that your repentance was brought about by the Holy Spirit. I once knew a man who committed an ungodly act. Two years later it became publicly known that he was guilty. Then, he went to one whom this act had offended and said, "I am very sorry. Can't you forgive me?" The offended one responded, "Are you sorry that you committed the act? Could this sorrow be only because you were caught up with?" The only sure test that repentance is worked by a godly sorrow is hatred for the sin and not for the consequences of it. Evidence of true repentance is your fervent desire to be delivered from the sins themselves — not just delivered from the result of them. It is further proof that you sincerely seek this deliverance when you put forth every endeavor possible to refrain from committing these sins.

If our own internal experience harmonize with the teaching of the Holy Scriptures relative to repentance, we have evidence of genuine repentance. Paul experienced sin being mixed with all he did. He realized the presence of evil in the midst of his desire to do good. He declared himself to be a wretched man and wondered who would deliver him. His conclusion of this state of being was that with his mind he served the law of God, but with the flesh, the law of sin. He must look to the mercy of God through the merits of Jesus Christ for deliverance from this wretchedness. When we can see our experience in the experience of God's children as recorded in the Bible, we have evidence of genuine repentance. If examination of ourselves prove that we hate our secret sins as much as we hate those outwardly performed, we have another evidence that we are in possession of genuine repentance. The hatred and forsaking of both secret and open sins prove a genuine repentance. Another evidence is that you desire sincerely to do the will of God; to walk and to talk becoming to saints of God. These things must be in us and abound.

Let us look to the verse following our text to note the specific things wrought by this godly sorrow that worketh repentance – *". . . What CAREFULNESS it wrought in you, yea, what CLEARING OF YOURSELVES, yea what INDIGNATION, yea what FEAR, yea what ZEAL, yea what REVENGE..."* (2Cor. 7:11) One wrought upon with godly sorrow cares so much for the doctrine that gives, or proclaims, God to be the author of all things pertaining to godliness that he will not condone

any other doctrine. His care is so great relative to discipline that he will do his best to walk circumspectly so as to not bring reproach upon the church. His care is great enough to inspire him to seek the fellowship of those of like precious faith. The world would want to clear themselves of guilt by denying that they are guilty. It is not so with those who undergo this godly sorrow. We confess our guilt, acknowledge our error, pray for forgiveness, and do our best to rid ourselves from this error. The indignation manifested by those who have genuinely repented is a righteous anger against base things. We hate the things that are unjust and vile with a godly hatred. How careful are the Lord's people not to give approval to anything as righteous that would be in any way polluted with man's self-righteousness. The fear worked is the reverential fear of God. This is a contrast to slavish fear, or fear of men and devils. We eagerly and passionately desire to be rid of these hateful characteristics to such extent as to promote the greatest endeavor to reform ourselves, looking to the power of God for this strength. We are persistently pressing on, being graced with a godly zeal to attempt to rise again after each fall. The kind of revenge worked in us is not the revenge against persons, because this kind of vengeance is rightly exercised only by God; so, this revenge is against sin and not the sinner.

Awakening to the mercy of God in Christ Jesus is essential to genuine repentance. The immortalizing of the conscience by the Spirit of God gives knowledge of the laws of God and causes those who come under its stimulation to demand the same perfection that Divine Justice would demand. This is the reason that awakened sinners are never satisfied with their actions, thoughts, or words. We are made to constantly pray for mercy and strength. Our souls surely would be tormented to remorse and desperation, were it not for the knowledge of Christ and the belief in Him worked in us. Our God is a consuming fire that can destroy the adversary, is our only hope of ever being completely rid of sin and all of its consequences. This hope is based upon the truth that Divine Justice is satisfied only by the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ. Grace cannot be so amazing as it is to those who have been wrought upon in such a manner as to convince them and convict them of their sins. What a wonderful revelation to poor hell-deserving sinners to taste of God's mercy, and to behold the richness of His grace; to believe in Jesus Christ who both lived for us and died for us.

We read in the Holy Scriptures of *"Repentance to the acknowledging of the truth"; "Repentance unto salvation"*; and *"Repentance unto life"*. What a perfect and complete work this repentance begets. There may be many who turn from one error to another error. There may be some who will turn to damnation as a result of the working of a worldly sorrow. Many, no doubt, will experience a repentance unto desperation and death. How sweet and how glorious it is to experience the repentance that is given us by God, which results in our embrace of the truth and our love for it! How sweet that life is that never ceases, to which we are turned when we lose confidence and a taste for worldly and carnal life! When our earthly life loses its beauty, our life which is from Heaven becomes our joy and glory. Our minds are turned from the overwhelming desire to lay up treasures which are from above. We are turned in our purpose in this life from the desire to please man to the desire to please God. We are turned from seeking the praise of man to seek the good will of our Heavenly Father. We are made to realize that it is God who holds the keys to Heaven, to death, and to hell. We seek for those to be our companions who are graced to walk in the paths of righteousness. This godly sorrow

causes us to realize that we have no continuing city here but we seek one that is to come whose builder is God. We turn from the "untoward generation" to a company of believers who have a goal set before them. We turn from the modernists in search for the "old paths" that lead to life eternal. We strive to walk in "the footsteps of the flock".

How thankful ought we to be for this godly sorrow that has weaned us from the things of this world in order that we be fit subjects to have our feet set upon a rock and to have our steps ordered and our goings established. This repentance needeth not to be repented of. We have no desire to love sin and self again. We have no wish for the allurements of this world to be renewed. We run with patience the race that is set before us. We do not put our hand to the plow and look back. We look to Jesus who is the author and finisher of so great FAITH. We have no desire to stay here longer than it pleases God. Sometimes, we yearn for our departure from this rugged and unpleasant life. Sometimes, we look upon death as not the end but the real beginning. We look upon it as the entrance into Heaven instead of the end of our journey. We think of it as the time we shall be clothed upon instead of being unclothed. We think of it as being the beginning of that ETERNAL DAY instead of being the night. How merciful God is to sinners to work in them such change of heart, mind, and life. May God give you the knowledge of this change being wrought in you, as you meditate upon these words. May your faith be strengthened and your hope greatly renewed as you call to remembrance the drastic changes that has been wrought in you during your sojourn here. May you be given to praise God for the wonderful leadings of His Holy Spirit is my sincere prayer as I close these remarks.

Elder E. J. Lambert

ARTICLES

FRAGMENTS

When the sun's rays reach the earth and rest upon us, then for the first time we know that there is a sun and know something of his character and power. It is only by himself that we can be taught of his existence and character. We can see him only by his own light. So we can know nothing of Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, except what he teaches us by revelation of himself in our experience. Till his light and truth reach us we do not know that there is such a being, however much we may have heard others speak of him. We can only know him by an experience of his presence, love and power in our souls. We can only see him in the light of his own face, as David says, "In thy light shall we see light."

When the heavens distil dew upon us at night, or manifest themselves in falling rain or snow, then we know them as we have not known them before. We learn of the clouds when their treasures of rain reach us. Then we realize vital interest in them. We cannot go up to the heavens for knowledge of them till they come down to us and furnish us a way by which to climb. When they touch us with their rain, or dew, or sunshine, or starlight, or with the vital elements of the air, then we can rise up to them.

The doctrine which drops like the rain is the only doctrine that can be of use to us, or that we can be vitally interested in. The speech that distils as the dew is that which brings true knowledge and heavenly comfort to our souls. All other doctrine and speech, however attractive to the natural mind, are too far away from the child of God to be of any real importance to him. He must have a doctrine that will touch the heart and

explain the mystery of the new life within him; not a doctrine, that he can study and speculate upon, but that he can feel, that he has already felt. He must hear a speech that will bring refreshment to his bewildered mind and to his perplexed and wearied soul, as the dew distils from all the surrounding atmosphere and refreshes the tender herb and drooping grass.

When the Lord send messages of love and instruction to his fainting people, those messages come thus, dropping like the rain into their souls, and distilling upon them as the dew in the nighttime of sorrow; "as the small rain upon the tender herb and as showers upon the grass." The parched earth calls to the heavens, and the heavens call to the Lord, who answers with a full supply for all the needs of his people, as he says, "I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth."—Hosea ii. 21.

Elder Silas H. Durrand

WHY?

"O Lord, why has thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear?"—Isa. lxiii. 17.

This question does not express a bold and arrogant inquisitiveness into the secret purposes of the Lord, but is an expression rather of deep and reverent humility. The prophet is not charging God with the transgressions and hardheartedness of Israel, nor is he finding fault with his dealings with them, though it may appear so to the natural understanding. The natural mind cannot search out the true spiritual meaning of the inspired Scriptures of truth, nor is it to the natural understanding that their rich and important mysteries are unfolded, but to the faith of the Lord's people. The things of the Spirit are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes. The Spirit reveals them. They are first known in the experience of the soul, and then recognized and understood as they appear in the word of truth.

The poor soul who has been brought to see himself a sinner against a holy God, as he looks back over his sinful life, is brought down into the dust before the Lord in shame and self-loathing. He never feels like charging any part of his sins and wickedness upon any other than himself, not even upon those who may have induced him to do evil things, much less upon the Lord, but feels that all the blame belongs to himself. The language of his soul would be, "I am condemned, but thou are clear." Yet he knows that God has sovereign power over all men, and that if he has not been as outbreaking a sinner as some have, it is because the Lord has in mercy restrained him. He knows also that if the Lord had so willed he could have kept him from the evil that he has done, and that he could have brought him to see his sins and to cry for mercy long before he did. But it does not occur to the quickened soul to thing that the Lord ought to have done so, nor to question his right and justice in leaving him to his own wicked ways. On the contrary, we know that it would have been just in him to have left us to act out all the evil that is in our depraved hearts, and to go down into destruction. Our wonder is that he ever made us to see and feel the sinfulness of our hearts, and to cry for mercy at all, and that he ever purposed salvation and joy and glory for such as we. And since we received this unexpected blessing of a good hope through grace, how often we have wandered in thought and word and deed from the Lord's ways. We know that at any time the Lord could have kept us from error and transgression, and could have kept our hearts soft and tender in his fear, if it had been his will. We know that, do we not? Does not any one know that? But what poor soul, when mourning over his sins, and experiencing

the chastisement of the Lord for them, ever thought of chiding the Lord for them, or of finding fault with him because he did not keep us from thus acting out the evil that was in our hearts? We know that we have no right to complain for the punishment of our sins. (Lam. iii.) We feel rather to say, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him."

But still we are sometimes in a muse, why the Lord has thus left us to err from his ways, or, using the prophet's inspired expression, "made us to err from his ways." The disposition to err was in our hearts, and it was his purpose that we should be left to manifest it. But why? We humbly and reverently inquire, is it that we may see that his justice requires us to be cut off from before him? We cannot complain of this, if it is so. David was left to the workings of his evil heart, and did evil in the Lord's sight, and against him, that the justice of the Lord might be manifest in his condemnation as a sinner, and that the glory of grace might be clearly displayed. (Psalm li. 4; Romans iii. 4.)

Instead of chiding the Lord, and complaining because he made his people to err from his ways, and hardened their hearts from his fear, the prophet is humbly pleading with him that he will withhold the wrath which they deserve, and that he will return unto them with mercy for his servant's sake, for the honor of his name. He would acknowledge with Jeremiah that it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. (Lam. iii. 22)

The natural man would at once question the justice of the Lord's condemnation of a man for doing what he had purposed the man should do. We can all see in our own minds the motion of an opposition to such a thing, and therefore, when left to our natural understanding, we either boldly deny that such is the case, and say that the Scriptures which declare such things do not mean what they say, or else we take the bold ground that the Lord is really the author of sin, tempting and causing a man to sin, and then condemning him for it. But the quickened soul, taught by the Spirit, is far from ascribing sin to the Lord, or saying, when he sins, "The Lord tempted me to sin," for the Lord tempts no man (James i. 13), but he takes all the blame to himself, and really feels it to be his own, and yet he knows and acknowledges God's omnipotence, and knows that nothing, not even his worst sin, could have taken place contrary to God's purpose, and he knows that every manifestation of the depravity of his heart, in a sinful word or act, but the more clearly shows that the Lord is justified in his sayings, and that he will overcome when he is judged. (Romans iii. 4.) That the Lord does purpose that certain evil and wicked things shall be done by men, acting out a portion of the wrath and wickedness of their hearts, and that they shall be punished for the evil, the Scriptures clearly show by many examples. Those who crucified Jesus did what it was the determinate counsel of God that they should do. The Lord turned the hearts of Israel's enemies to hate his people (Psalms), he brought their enemies against them in battle that he might thus punish his people, and then that he might destroy the enemies.

This is a deep and wonderful mystery, but the quickened soul feels the truth even while the carnal mind is reasoning blindly, and trying in vain to harmonize the works and ways of God, with human reason. His judgments can never be understood by the natural mind of man, for they "are unsearchable," nor can his ways be discovered by human reason, for they "are past finding out." But the child of God, when led by the Spirit, accepts implicitly what the word of God declares, no matter how far he may be from understanding it, nor how contra-

dictory to each other different portions of the Scripture may appear to the mind. He never ascribes sin to the Lord, for he feels that he is himself the sinner, that it is man that sins, and he feels all the blame. He knows that nothing can exist, transpire or be done that God did not purpose, for then he would not be omnipotent; and yet when the Lord says concerning the terrible wickedness of Israel in the service of Baal, "which I commanded not, neither spake it, neither came it into my mind," we understand the perfect separation of the Lord from all that is sinful. There is not, there cannot be, any sin in the Lord's purpose concerning the evil and sinful acts of men. The sin is all theirs, and always theirs. The Lord's purpose is pure and holy, and ever tends toward his own honor, holiness and glory, and the salvation of his people.

In all the transgressions of his people of old he had a wise and holy purpose. In them, and in the punishments that followed quick upon them, they were all examples for us. They "all happened unto them for examples," and they were written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come; the ends of the legal world, which are the aims or meaning and fulfillment of all the types and patterns of that legal dispensation. (1 Cor. x.)

Those who are exercised by the Spirit feel the importance of the sacred admonitions of the apostles. "Secret things belong to God." When they are revealed to us we handle them reverently. But the assurance of our souls that the Lord has settled his word forever in heaven, that all time is before hilm, that a thousand years are as one day with him, that he has declared the end from the beginning; all this does not hinder us from prayer and supplication, from pleading for mercy and forgiveness for our many sins; from calling upon his blessed name and entreating him to keep our feet in the right way, and to keep us from sinning against him. All this trust and confidence in the Lord, as a God of purpose and predestination, does not make us less, but rather the more, anxious to do his commands, to walk in obedience to his will, to meekly exhort our brethren unto love and good works to strive with them to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, to warn the unruly and to reprove and rebuke where it is needful to do so.

The good conscience does not excuse sin. We find no excuse for the indulgence of our selfishness and sinful lusts in the truth that our carnal natures are not changed in and by the new birth. If we have been born again, we have the life and Spirit of Christ, which shall henceforth rule us, and bring Adamic nature into subjection. Here constantly exists a warfare. It is a warfare, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. The contest goes on. We cannot rest in fleshly ease. It will not satisfy us to assert that the old man is evil, and that we cannot look for any good from him. No, but we look for his evil suggestions and selfish inclinations to be denied. And where this dying of the Lord Jesus is borne about in our body we shall feel and see suffering, and shall manifest the life of Jesus in our mortal flesh, and when we speak with our brethren, or write to them, or preach to them, our communications to them will be more than a mere repeating of the words and arguments of sound doctrine. There will be felt in what we say, a savor of what we feel and suffer and enjoy from day to day. The things by which we live will be seen; the mourning sore as a dove; the chattering like a crane or a swallow; the eyes failing with looking upward; the cry of the oppressed, "O Lord, undertake for me," the sweet answer of peace from the Lord, as in the case of Hezekiah. "What shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me and himself hath done it. I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of

my soul. O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my Spirit."—Isaiah xxxviii. 9-22.

If there is not the life of an exercised soul, the struggles, pleadings, answers, in what we preach or write, it will be dry hearing of reading for the exercised people of God. In one we know personally we must see a godly life, a showing forth in thelife "the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light," or what that one says, however right in the letter, will be of no value to us. The truth of God's salvation felt in the soul, and manifested in the life, will cause the utterances of that one to have a goodly savor, and a holy power. Where there is a felt dependence upon a God of unlimited and eternal purpose and power, there will be manifested a deep and reverent humility, and a childlike confidence and trust. But a belief in a God with whom there is any degree or kind of uncertainty, any of whose favors or blessings are offered upon conditions to be performed by us, and left dependent upon our will, tends to manifest self-confidence and pride, instead of humility and godly fear, and to cause levity in speech and carelessness in act, instead of a trembling solemnity of soul, and a constant desire and prayer for the dear Savior's manifested presence and power.

Elder Silas H. Durrand

GOD IS WORSHIPED IN SPIRIT

"God is a spirit: and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth." John 4:24.

He is a spirit and the true worshipper must worship him in spirit and in truth, that is, he cannot worship him except in Him, or his spirit. He is too holy and too pure to be approached by the carnal of fleshly mind. It must be from heaven, and none is able to ascend up to heaven and bring him down, or descend into the deep and bring him up. We must be still and know that he is God and a spirit; and that his spirit is in his word, and that his word is sent like the rain and snow upon the earth, and that the earth is not changed by the rain and the snow, but is made to bring forth fruit to the glory of his name, and that he holds the waters in his hands, and whatsoever his soul desireth that he doeth; and, without him, or his spirit, we can do nothing; and by him and through him we can do all things. His people believe on him through his word. He puts his laws in their hearts, and writes them in their minds. He will be to them a God and they shall be to him a people. He works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. I believe he works in them often "to will" before he works in them "to do".

I believe that every child of grace is made willing to serve him and obey him, and he has His laws in his heart; but his infirmities cause him to cry out and say, that he knows not how to perform. But as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

I believe he sent his only begotten Son into this low ground of sorrow to be made sin for his people, and to restore the law holy unto the Father; and that the Son learned obedience by the things which he suffered: or in other words, He went into obedience for his people; and, also, into repentance for them, and that his soul was exceedingly sorrowful; and that every one of his children must take his yoke upon him, and learn of him. They do not learn to obey, but they learn obedience by the things which they suffer. Jonah was called to preach to the Ninivites, but fled in another direction. But he was brought back by the omnipotent hand of God, and by it was qualified to preach that salvation is of the Lord, and learned obedience by the things which he suffered. Although he had obeyed the

Lord, and did obey him in coming back, I am sure he did not boast and claim any honor in coming back.

The carnal mind does not serve or obey God; it is not subject to his law. Peter tried to walk on the water, but soon found that he had not the faith to hold him up. He was also going to follow his Master, even unto death; but Jesus told him that he would deny him thrice before the cock should crow, and even a girl could scare him off from his resolution, this causes him to weep, and he is converted, and became as a little child, and is, no doubt, able to tell his brethren that they must receive the kingdom of heaven as such.

If I ever have obeyed and served the Lord, it has been through some mysterious way that has left me out of the whole matter. I know that those that are willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land, and I hope that I have experienced that; but, bless be God! I believe it was through him. After I hope that I had tasted that he is gracious, I was continually saying, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" I wanted to go to the church, if it was the Lord's will; but it seemed as though some strange thing had happened to me. I had the will, but not the "to do". But after listening to a sermon by old Elder Amos Dickerson, which I believe was the gospel in its purity, to my surprise, I went in a sort of a dazed way, not knowing hardly what I said, and was received. So calm did I feel afterward, that I stood in the yard with my head bowed down, almost unconscious of my surroundings, when there was a dart in my mind—It might have been a messenger from Satan, a thorn to buffet me, that said, "If you were right you would not be so indifferent." But God has said, that we are not to be tempted above that we are able to bear; but in all our temptations he maketh a way for our escape. Just then a brother stepped up and tapped me on the shoulder and said, "You have done right; you have calmed the tempest." I stared up and wondered how he knew that I had been in a tempest. It was like an apple of gold in pictures of silver. I now feel that He is a covert from the tempest, a shadow of a great rock in a weary land, and as rivers of water in a dry place. I thought of the expression, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I saw its precious meaning for the first time, that some how I had obeyed the command before I knew what it meant, and had learned obedience by the things which I had suffered. It left me out of the matter; and yet I felt it was in Him that I had moved and obeyed, and had my being. Studying over these things, I thought that whatsoever my hand should find to do, I would do with all my might; but some strange impression got hold of me, that I thought I knew was from Satan. It was an exercise of mind in regard to preaching. Right here I could write a volume. I was determined to resist the temptation, as I thought it to be; but, suffice it to say that I did finally make the attempt and, in process of time, gained some strength; andthought I would be instant in season and out of season, take the advice of the brethren and make the attempt when an opportunity offered, forgetting that I had no right to say, "I will"; but "If the Lord will." So the next attempt was such a shameful failure that I wept over it for hours, and vowed that I never again would make the attempt, again forgetting to say, "If the Lord Will". Yet it is the most pleasant thought that I have, when I think of my failures and can glory in my infirmities, knowing that I obeyed, if I obeyed at all, in spirit and in truth; and that I have been cut off at every point, so that I can venture to say, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." I am now thinking of one of the dearest sisters that I know of, to the church, whose very countenance beams

with the grace of God. When she received a pardon of her sins, she pondered it over in her mind, and said she would go to preaching, but would never join the church. But on the morning of the meeting day, it seemed that her eyes were holden and the understanding of her heart closed, so that she got into her carriage and went to the place, having no knowledge of anything that transpired that day, till she came to herself, and the brethren and sisters were weeping and giving to her the hand of fellowship. She had obeyed the Lord and was now willing and obedient, and was eating the good of the land; but she surely obeyed in Him and could say, Not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory.

I mention these things to try to show that I believe in the working of his mighty power, and that salvation is appointed unto his people for walls and for bullwarks, and that it is eternal and reaches from earth to heaven, and that we know nothing save Jesus and him crucified. Some may be ready to say that I have thrown away the gift of exortation, and would say, do not come to the church as long as you can stay away. But I believe no such foolishness; neither do I want to hear it: for the spirit and the bride say, come; and his servants sow the seed in the morning, and withhold not their hands in the evening, if they have any seed, but it is all of the Lord. But what I want need not influence other people.

I believe that Jesus is feet to the lame, and eyes to the blind, and that his people walk in him and him alone.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
H. V. Cole, Simpson, Va.

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PLACE FIRST THINGS, FIRST

For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established. **Rom. I:11**

The man that wrote this epistle and our text was careful to place first things first. Unto God was ascribed all honor and praise for the Roman brethren, and not once did he attribute their steadfastness in the faith to themselves. Through Jesus Christ there was always thanks giving for these brethren at Rome as well as other places. The apostle's trips among them were all according to the will of God, notwithstanding the fact that he often purposed to come among them.

There is everything lacking in a man that is called to preach if he does not have a true regard for the churches. In fact, it is to be seriously doubted that one is called, who does not love the churches. This love is of God, and it cannot be denied. It may seem to be denied, but if it is not real then it is to be taken away. The truth of the matter is, that any kind of "don't care" is conclusive proof that one is still in the world and of the world. I cannot say too many times that predestination is the poorest thing in the world to hide meanness behind. I wish you to read that again, and note that I did not say that one who believes in predestination will try to hide behind it for their sin. For those who have an understanding in predestination are never inclined to so misapply the scripture. Predestinarians are careful in their conduct, desiring to shun evil and to maintain good works. And further the ablest predestinarians, including the apostle Paul, were interested in the churches which the Holy Ghost made them overseer of.

Every point of doctrine, order, practice, in fact the whole catalogue of scripture, was written by men as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Not just a pet phrase

here, a disjointed sentence there, a portion of the old and a portion of the New Testaments put together, but the whole Bible is to be used by the man of God. It is all profitable alike for the things enumerated. Just why do we preach predestination? One of the reasons given is because Paul or Peter wrote on that. Why do we advocate election, effectual calling, final perseverance of the saints, resurrection? The Bible teaches it, this is the undeniable answer. That is true and none would deny us the right to rejoice with the apostles as they are blessed to bring out things new and old for us to glean from these subjects. But if it is good and desirable to get the 'thus saith the Lord' from the Bible in regard to doctrine, why isn't it as desirable from their viewpoint and instruction in regard to our walk before one another?

Do the ministers who are some of my readers, ever feel towards their churches as Paul did toward Rome? "I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end that ye may be established." Now let us not get too hasty, neither let us be a laggard. You do not have this yearning just from reading about Paul having it. Religion does not come that way; duty is not that way; true and filial devotion and service does not come that way. The experiences of the followers of Jesus cannot be acquired by others who desire the same gift, but have not been wrought upon in like manner; however, when you are given to know the inward workings of the Holy Spirit, it is worth something to hear of someone else that has had a like experience. The doctrine is taught us by the Holy Ghost, and it is not to be learned by research work, although the Spirit may lead us into that. But it is to be noted that the Spirit does not teach us anything that has not been inscribed by inspiration. So, also, we are not going to be led into experiences and duties that those gone before us has not already seen and felt.

The experience of Paul was for his day, and God inspired him and others to write theirs so that when we are led forth into these things we might have a true and tried criterion to go by. Let me ask again, do you feel toward your churhes as Paul felt? Honestly, isn't it true that sometimes you long to go to them? I wish that it were the will of the Lord for me to tell my experience as a pastor. I am at a loss to express through the medium of words that you would not think what I write is incredible. I am still trying to serve each church that has called me, and I do not have a favorite among them. Each week for sixteen years there has been a longing desire for the time to come for me to start. This desire has not been as a result of diligent inquiry; it has not come, I hope, for filthy lucre's sake; it has not come, I hope, because the apostle longed to go to Rome, but I have wanted evidence that this desire was scriptural and acceptable to God.

I have had this desire from week to week, from year to year, in hope. If I have been sent forth in the kingdom, I have gone in hope, oftimes not knowing whither I was bound and why. Yet this hope has had some knowledge blended in it. We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren (I John 3:14), and sometimes I am blessed to enjoy this in my own feeling and not for someone else. I believe that God's people love one another, yet I do not think for one moment that we can love at option. We must be taught where our strength is, for it will not be the pleasure of God for us to walk long in our way. As we travel in hope we must remember that with hope there is faith and charity. Upon these three the apostle could say, I have longed to come that I may impart to you some spiritual gift. Faith laid hold on the having of that gift, hope kept Paul expecting to come, and his love for them did not abate.

The fish and the loaves were first given to the disciples. They were as helpless as any other member of that vast throng. It is a pleasure to sit at his command, and it is equally as great a pleasure to serve when commanded. He gave the disciples all they had, and they gave it to the congregation. All that Paul had was given to him. All that any minister has is that portion that has been given him. Unless I am mistaken in my calling, I believe every minister has things given him, and when given it is as a cup running over, and it produces a longing desire to meet the household of faith, to im-
part to them the things that have brought you so much joy. A faithful servant does not desire to lead his people into his dominished pershing strength, but they desire to see the churches established in the truth that is in Jesus. And this desire is not to come in great swelling words of men's wisdom, but in the simplicity of the gospel of Christ. And the food that feeds the congregation is the food that the undershepherd lives on. I am not writing on the duty of the church to her pastor, so I want to use this scripture on this subject, namely, they that preach the gospel shall live of the gospel (I Cor. 9:14), for Paul desired to be comforted together with the Roman brethren by the mutual faith.

All the scriptures are yours; the gospel is yours; the commandments are yours; all things are yours, but keep in mind that it belongs to you as from faith to faith. If there is not faith, there is not action in his service, whether it is the minister coming to the churches or the brethren going to the assembly of God's people, but if there is faith all the other virtues you can add. But you cannot add unless you have something to add. If the things enumerated are in you and abounding, they make you that you will not be barren and unfruitful.

Finally, I desire to write more on the subject of spiritual gifts. Keep in mind that every good and perfect gift is from above. Drive a good solid stake there. The gifts and callings of God are without repentance. Put your second stake there. A man's gift will make room for him. Third stake please.

In precious hope of immortality
Elder W. D. Griffin

THE PATH

Path means an established way. St. John 14:6: *"Jesus said unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."*

St. Matthew 3:3: *"For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, Make his paths straight."*

Straight means upright and honest dealing. Strait means strict, distress, difficutly, narrow.

Job 28:7-8: *"There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen: The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it."*

I remember one night many years ago, when there seemed to be no rest for me. My heart was troubled. I walked out in my yard in the middle of the night and looked toward Heaven, as unworthy as I felt. I saw a strait path that divided the clouds as far as I could see. I felt within me a voice saying, therein you shall walk. I know that in my flesh dewlleth no good thing and in myself, I cannot walk that path. I am very fearful, depending on the Lord to lead me in the way he would have me go.

I Corinthians 10:21: *"Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils."*

I feel the words we find recorded in St. Matthew 10:16 are to those blessed to walk the straight path, *"Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be*

ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves."

I have witnessed many divisions among the Primitive Baptist people over the years that divided associations, churches, homes, and families. I have seen many precious old brethren whose heads were blooming for the tomb so deeply hurt, who have been blessed to walk the strait path for many years.

II Timothy 3:12: *"Yea, and all that will live Godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecutions."* **But, let us remember I Corinthians 14:33:** *"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."*

Isaiah 32:17-18: *"And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places."*

I feel and hope the Lord has led me in a path away from the things that seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof is death. *"For God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform."* **I feel that he has blessed me with a quiet resting place for I am tired and weary of church trouble. But, if we are blessed to walk the strait path, it will make no detours around the things we must suffer for his namesake.**

If not deceived, I feel I was blessed to find peace, love, and fellowship at Durham Primitive Baptist Church. I hope, for what few more days I have left in this path, before I go the way of no return, to see brotherly love continue.

As I look at the evening sun going down and watch the shadows upon the earth that all point to the east, I think of my own life. For my evening sun is sinking low and I am hoping for a few more crumbs from the Master's table. I pray for a peaceful moment to pass from this path of trials and tribulations, and I hope rest that peaceful rest that surpasses all understanding.

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14: *"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."*

"In all the paths thro' which I've passed,
What mercies I've enjoyed!
And this shall be my song at last--
Cast down, but not destroyed."

In thankfulness,
Clifton Robertson
Route 1
Reidsville, N. C.

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR OCTOBER 1985

Mrs. Della M. Swan, LA.	$ 2.00
Mrs. Irene M. Setliff, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Edd Glidewell, NC.	2.00
C. W. McKinney, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Ruth Wall, TX.	2.00
Mrs. Maggie Culp, KY.	15.00
Mrs. Ester Cole, NC.	2.00
Mrs. C.R. Hollandsworth, VA.	3.00
Mrs. Noma J. Smith, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Ida E. Palmer, FL.	2.00
Mrs. W. B. Herndon, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Luther Procter, NC.	2.00
Elder Noel Conner, VA.	5.00
Mrs. Mary Messick, AL.	5.00
Robert Saunders, NC.	12.00
Eugene F. Osborne, MD.	7.00
Jerry P. Cockman, NC.	15.00
Mrs. Nellie G. Bunn, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Ruby A. Hawley, VA.	7.00
Mrs. Lloyd Delp, VA.	2.00
Mrs. V. L. Johnson, TX.	5.00
Mrs. Ellie Wallace, LA.	5.00
Elder David N. Bailey, WV.	5.00

Mrs. Susie Williamson, NC..... 2.00
In Memory of Elder W. R. Dodd & Mrs. Nannie Nuckols by Mrs. Jesephine Dodd, Va.... 5.00

OBITUARIES

ADA MARSHALL BOND
(1899 - 1985)

Sister Ada (our mother) died in her home the late evening of March 8, 1985 in a surrounding of intensive and loving care provided by her family.

Mother was born December 6, 1899 to Mary-Ellen (Quesenberry) and Elbert A. Marshall in Carrol County, Virginia. She married the late Isaac Shafter Bond of Floyd County, Virginia on January 18, 1920; they had six children.

Mother joined the Indian Valley Primitive Baptist Church in her early 20's. She and her family moved to Danville, Virginia in 1932 and later to Richmond, Virginia in 1952 where she became a full-time cabinet-maker. She endowed the homes of her children, friends, and other families in Richmond with items of woodwork that are a mark of her ingenuity and skill; indeed she was an artist with wood.

Mother joined the Richmond Primitive Baptist Church March 5, 1956.

Left to cherish the memory of this great lady, and to enjoy the legacy of her spirit and strength are her children: Dessie Mae Barbour, Eva Marshall Bond, and Francis S. Bond of Richmond, Virginia; Vera B. Harvey of Waynesboro, Virginia; Toby C. Bond of Houston, Texas; nine grandchildren and two great grandchildren. Another daughter, Clara B. Barbour of Danville, Virginia died in 1968.

Funeral services were held at Woodys Funeral Home March 11, 1985. She was interred at Greenwood Memorial Gardens. By family tradition her pallbearers were those of close family members: Tanny Harvey, Tamera Harvey, Gerry Barbour, Cheryl and Mark Walker, Johnny Barbour, and Marshall Bond—all grandchildren, and Marvin E. Elderman, nephew.

Our adorable mother was a heroine and her life was one of success. She set her goals early in life and achieved them all. She was able to meet all hardships and struggles that obstructed her path through life with a faith and confidence that forced them aside and allowed her to pass unharmed.

Mother loved her church; it was the only one she ever attended. She gained so much joy and "spiritual food" from every service, and was humbled to be counted as a member. Two of mother's highest earthly values were her children and her church.

God has been generous to us; we owe him a debt of graditude for allowing this precious woman to mother us these many years; a debt so large that not even our combined efforts could hope to repay.

The Bond Family

SISTER ANGIE CUNDIFF BROWN

Sister Angie Cundiff Brown passed from this life, June 16, 1985. She was the daughter of the late William Cundiff and Susie Perdue Candiff. She was born January 25, 1907. Sister Angie was married to Joseph Daniel 'J.D.' Brown.

Sister Angie was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by experience and baptized April 14, 1963. She was dear and faithful member, and attended as long as her health permitted and always seemed to enjoy the gospel.

Those left to mourn her passing are, her husband J. D. Brown of the residence. Four sons; Calvin Brown, Hurt, Va., Orrie H. Brown (Pete), Martinsville, Va., Bradie G. Brown, Danville, Va., and Virgil Brown, Gretna, Va. A daughter; Bernice B. Richardson, Danville, Va. Two brothers; Redge Cundiff, Danville, Va., Harry Cundiff, Moneta, Va. Six sisters; Lizzy Amos, Moneta, Va., Ola Blankenship and Meem Brown, both of Roanoke, Va., Ella Maxey and Julia Arrington, both of Rocky Mount, Va. and Nellie Perdue, of Union Hall, Va. Four grandchildren.

Sister Angie's funeral was conducted by her beloved pastor Elder O.K. Tench. Her body was laid to rest in the Highland Burial Park in Danville, Va. to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Written in love and hope,
Carol R. Pickral

SISTER ELSIE MAE HARRELL

It is with sadness I attemp to write the obituary of our dear Sister Elsie Mae Harrell, who was born in Union County Ark. on Jan. 12, 1894 and passed from this life on July 30, 1985, after having been here on this earth 91 yrs., 6 months and 19 days. She was married to the late L.H. Harrell and a member of Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church which she attended faithfully as long as her health permitted.

Sister Harrell is survived by one son, Hoyt N. of El Dorado, Ark. also two sisters, Faye Hogg and Clemmie Bishop of El Dorado; Two brothers, Fred Murphy of El Dorado and Doyle Murphy of Smackover, three grandsons and a host of nieces and nephews.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder David E. Turner, at Rumph Funeral Home in El Dorado.

Sister Harrell loved the real truth according to the bible for many years. We do believe that is one of the best evidence in this timely world of being a child of God by the new birth. She certainly believed in the doctrine of salvation by Grace, Love, Faith, and Predestination. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son that he might be the first born among many brethren.

Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified them he also glorified.

What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justified.

Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril or sword?

As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angles, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Written by the request of her family.

Elder David E. Turner

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom."
Proverbs 9: 10

EMORY LESTER KNIGHT

The hearts of the brethren and sisters of Hillsdale Primitive Baptist Church are saddened by the loss of a beloved brother.

Emory Lester Knight was born December 28, 1917, to Samuel Pinkney and Maggie Warren Knight in Rockingham County, North Carolina.

He was married to Florence Bailey, January 7, 1938, and the young couple made a home and reared their family at Route One, Summerfield, North Carolina.

Brother Knight was a well known respected farmer and merchant. He was a kind husband, a good father, a friend to the community in which he lived, and to all who knew him.

He joined Hillsdale Primitive Baptist Church in March, 1972, and was baptized on the second Sunday in April, 1972. He was ordained as a deacon in February, 1975, filling the office with the best interests of the church foremost in mind. He remained treasurer of the church cemetery fund until a few months before his death, when he requested to be relieved of the post, as he could no longer carry on the duties required.

He was faithful in attendance to the church at Hillsdale, as well as the sister churches of Crossroads Union, as long as health permitted. He was a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace and that not of self, but a gift of God. During the many years of close acquaintance with the brother, he proclaimed the mercies of God, and was led to believe that a Divine Hope had been given to him. Though severely afflicted with arthritis, he faced the suffering with courage, giving thanks unto God in being blessed to do what he could. His health deteriorated rapidly after receiving injuries from an automobile accident.

Brother Emory Knight departed this earthly life July 1, 1985. Survived by his wife, Sister Florence Knight; daughter, Mrs. W.R. Grant, Jr., Jacksonville, Florida; sons, William Lester, Summerfield, NC, Rueben MacArthur, Reidsville, NC, Thomas Edward, Ridgeway, VA, Carey Lee, Ruffin, NC; sister, Mrs. Ora Lee Wright, Reidaville, NC; brothers, J. R. and Sam P. Knight, Jr., Reidsville, NC, John W., and Lawrence D. Knight, Summerfield, NC; ten grandchildren, three great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held July 4, 1985 at Hillsdale Primitive Baptist Church by the Pastor, Elder B. D. Hutchens, Jr. internment was in the chuch cemetery.

We have been led to believe our brother has gone home "where the morning stars sing together, and the saints of God shout with joy," those glorious words, "Worthy, Worthy, art Thou, Lord God Almighty." The song sung before the world was when, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and The Word was God."

Though our brother will be sorely missed, we desire to be made submissive to the Father's will.

Written by request of Hillsdale Church

A Friend in Christ, (I hope)
Mary C. Knight

SISTER SADIE SARAH MURHPY

The appointed days of Sister Murphy ended August 5, 1985. She was born December 10, 1894.

Left to mourn her death are one son, Doyle Murphy, Hot Springs, Ark., two daughters, Mrs. Maude Jounston, Norphlet, Ark., Mrs. Margret Beavers, Williams, Arizona, two brothers, Walter Williams, El Dorado, Ark. and Gorden Freeman, Arkadelphia, Ark.; three sisters, Mrs. Minnie Davis, El Dorado, Ark., Mrs. Lena Murphy, Norphlet, Ark. and Mrs. Jewel Ballard, Little Rock, Ark. 10 grandchildren, 15 great grand-

children and 18 great-great-grandchildren.

She was a member of Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church for many years and greatly enjoyed attending church meetings. She showed much love for her brothers and sisters in the church and attended as long as health permitted.

She will be missed by all that knew and loved her.

Elder Graydon Smith
Rehobeth Church

BROTHER JOHNIE S. PAYNE

Brother Johnie S. Payne 84, of 841 Arnett Blvd. Died May 21, 1985 in Memorial Hospital of Danville, Va. after five years decline in health. Born Nov. 17, 1900, in Pittsylvania County. A son of the late Leroy Thomas Payne, and nellie Allen Payne. His entire life was spent in Pittsylvania County.

He was married to Lucy Boaze Payne who died in March, 1979. Was baptized June 15, 1975. A faithful and devoted member, a firm believer, and loved the Primitive Baptist Doctrine, loved to talk on the scripture, and was blessed with a deep understanding. Was a joy to sit and listen to him, his pastor, and others talk in so much harmony. Was loved by all that knew him.

Prior to his retirement, he was co-owner of Chatam Farm Supply, and in the 1940s he was the founder and operator of the Payne Supply Co.

He leaves to mourn three sons: John T. Payne, Morris A. Payne, and Jerry W. Payne, all of Danville, Va. Three daughters, Katherine P. Rigney, Baltimore, Md., Dorothy P. Walton, Dayton, Ohio and Nancy P. Burnett, Dry Fork, Va. Three sisters, Daisy Payne, Dry Fork, Va., Francis Womack and Alice Payne, both of Danville, Va. 14 grandchildren, 13 great grandchildren, and one great, great grandchild.

The funeral was conducted May 23, 1985 at 2:00 P.M. at Wren-Yeatts Funeral Home Chapel by his pastor Elder H. W. Wray. He was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park by his wife, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, attested to the esteem in which he was held.

May the family be reconciled to His Holy will. Feeling sure their father and mother are waiting the coming of their Lord and Master to gather the jewels of his mercy, there to ever be with the Lord.

Done in order of conference at Old Mt. Church.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
Sarah H. Barker, Clerk

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"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Psalm 116:15

GEORGE D. PEARSON

Brother George D. Pearson passed away on June 14, 1985 at Nash General Hospital at the age of 64.

He is survived by his wife, Nina Ward Pearson, two brothers, Cecil Pearson of Apex and Tom Pearson of Oak City; one

sister Mrs. Ruth Gerkins of New Jersey.

Brother George was a member of Rocky Mount Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church where he joined in April 1962 and was ordained a deacon in January 1964. He faithfully fulfilled all his duties well, for he loved the church and the people, always putting them first.

Brother George was widely known and loved and left an impression of kindness wherever he went. One of his outstanding characteristics was that he was a peace maker. We thank God for the life of this man. We feel that our dear brother is resting in peace with our Lord, by the evidence he showed in his life and the hope that he had in his heart.

Be it resolved that this obituary be submitted for publication to The Signs of Times, one for the church record and a copy sent to the Family.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Pastor
Nina W. Pearson, Clerk
(by Martha S. Armstrong)

SISTER GLADYS POWELL

Asleep in Jesus, came to mind when we heard of the passing of our dear sister, Gladys Powell. She was one of the most humble, loving, patient and kind person we ever knew.

Her children and inlaws said they had never seen her mad or heard her raise her voice.

Sister Powell was sick at home and in the hospital most of the time for a number of years, yet never complained, and would often speak of how good the Lord had been to her.

She joined Old Mt. Primitive Baptist church Aug. 23, 1959. And was baptized Sept. 15, 1959. A firm believer, and devoted member as long as she lived. And loved by all that knew her.

Sister Gladys passed away April 12, 1985. She was born July 12, 1907 in Pittsylvania County. The daughter of the late Respess Payne, and Alice Booker Payne.

She was married to Deacon George Powell who survives, also two sons, Bobby Powell and Morris Powell, both of Rt. 1, Dry Fork. Two daughters, Marie P. Baurk, Rt. 1, Dry Fork, and Betty P. Booth, Rt. 3, Ringold, Va. Two brothers, Elder Raymond Payne, Rt. 1, Dry Fork, Va. and Luther Payne, Rt. 1, Dry Fork. One sister, Pattie P. Brumfield, Afton Rd. 12 Grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Her funeral was held at Wrenn-Yeatts Chapel, April 14, 1985, by her pastor, Elder H. W. Wray and Billie Robertson.

Her body was layed to rest in Danville Memorial Gardens, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to wait that blessed call, (come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world). May the Lord bless her faithful and devoted family, and friends that mourn, to be reconciled to his will. That our loss is her gain.

Submitted by the unworthy writer by request of the church.

Sarah H. Barker

"Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.
Proverbs 22: 6

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."
Proverbs 25: 11

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Psalm 127

Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.

It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows; for so he giveth his beloved sleep.

Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord; and the fruit of the womb is his reward.

As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are chidren of the youth.

Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them; they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.

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EDITORIAL

With a prayer for Gods help and guidance, we now enter into the one hundred and fifty-third year of publishing the Signs Of The Times. We want to thank each of you subscribers for your support, our editors for their good editorials and the God of all grace from whom all our blessings come.

Editors

The following is transcription of a sermon delivered by Elder Kenneth R. Key, third Sunday in March 1985 at Moons Creek Church. (Edited and condensed for publication).

Reading from the First Chapter of Philippians, the sixth verse, we find these words: *"Being confident of this very thing that He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."*

What more comforting a feeling could we have than to feel that God has begun a work in us, and that He will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. When we first were given to feel that hope in Him; when we first were given to feel that love for the Church and if not deceived was given a view through that gate called beautiful, that we could see the Church of the Living God, and had a desire that we might go therein and be a member of that church.

If you can look back, with me, to the feelings you had of that great joy that sprang up in your heart that gave you to rejoice so much, that you felt you were free of sin - that there would be no more trials - there would be no more sorrows - that you were lifted up in your feelings, seemingly as high above the earth as we could ever be here in this life. It was a great experience. If you could go back with me, in your experience and feel these times again and muse on the things of the past. Maybe not all have placed their name upon a church book, but waiting, as on the porch of Solomon's Temple - which we feel is a type of the Church of God, there on the porch, and have not yet entered therein - but, they hear the singing, they hear the peaching, they enjoy the fellowship of those of like precious faith, and it is a joyeous feeling in their heart.

Here, we find the Apostle Paul speaking unto the Philippian brethren, trying to comfort them in their feelings. No doubt, he knew how that sometimes they came down in doubts and fears, and then they would go back and inquire as did Gideon of Old. He would ask of God - "If, indeed, I have found Grace in thy sight, why have these things befallen me?" In this life, in our journey here, it's a journey through the wilderness. That's the way God chose to lead his people. He said, "I could have carried them through an easier way", but, when He delivered

the children of Israel out from under the Egyptian bondage, He lead them through the wilderness way, and He tells us why He did this. Trouble may come, and they would repent and turn back. Through this, they were toughened for the journey. I think, sometimes, if we had all of our sorrows and afflictions that we must have here in this life, if they fell upon us at one time, we would not be able to bear them. The burdens would be too great. It's through the wilderness that He leads us - through difficult and trying situations, and yet even in this desert and wilderness way there are oasis. There are places of rejoicing. There are refreshing places as we journey along. It is not always through difficult and trying times but a mixture of joy and sorrow.

I believe there are seasons in our lives - in our spiritual lives, as we journey through this land here. I believe there is spring - summer - fall - and winter. Sometimes, it seems that our winters become so long. We become so cold-hearted within ourselves and our winters seem to last for a long time. So many people recently have said to me that they don't have the feeling they once had. They don't have the feeling of that first love. They're filled with doubts and fears, which spring up within them. Some even go to the place, as Peter did and go back fishing. As we go back and think of these things and find parallels in the scriptures, we see we are not the only ones who had or will ever have these feelings. Peter loved Jesus and followed him, and said I will go with you even unto death, if necessary. I will stick close by your side. Yet, Jesus knew his frame. He knew Peter would even doubt Him, and told him even before the cock crows, you will deny me. That is the frame of the carnal man here in this life. Nevertheless, this Peter who loved Jesus so dearly and followed Him so conscientiously and had the desire to stick close by His side, and I think he was just as sincere in his feelings at that time, as he could ever be. Just like you, when you were first given that love and desire, nothing could cause you to turn back and go any other way. Yet, God suffered Peter to go back fishing, and go back to the things that he once enjoyed, but he caught no fish. It was for a purpose to teach him that in yourself you can do nothing, but in me, all things are possible. He suffers us to go back to the time and place in which we once enjoyed, but you find joy no longer out there in the world. Even the dove that went out from the Ark as the waters were receeding, and he came back. He found no place to rest the souls of his feet. There is no place for the children of God to rest the souls of their feet in this world, we have been killed to the things of the world and have been given to hunger and thirst after righteousness. Paul, being confident, tells them when these times come, may God bless you to think upon this. Be confident of this very thing, that He that hath begun a good work in you, He will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

Jesus told his desciples, I give unto you everlasting life and you shall not perish. This will not perish which God gives unto His children. This pure in heart which is Jesus born in you, the hope of glory. It never dies. There is no end to it. It will be with you and He will perform this work even unto the day of Jesus Christ.

Nevertheless, we must come through this time of doubts and fears.

We find David of Old - one who was a man after God's own heart. He was a man who walked close with Him. He showed his love and feelings when he was called into this work by saying the Lord is my shepherd. He was given to feel so confident at that time he could boldly say the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. There are times when we can say that with great confidence. We can say that with great feelings, because

of the blessings and experiences we have been through, or the times we have felt that God has begun a work in us. That the Lord is my shepherd, and it was so precious - and David says, surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. He didn't feel that anything but goodness and mercy would follow him all the days of his life. Isn't that your feeling when you were drawn into the knowledge of this truth, and given this precious hope in Him - and given to feel that God is your heavenly Father - and that in Him, all things dwell -that everything that you need is stored up there for you - and that He will grant it unto you as you need it here in this world - that He will give unto you and withhold no good thing from you. David had this blessed feeling that surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.

I can go back to the time when I was first given a home in the church, and how precious it was to me. Between the time I had joined the church and the time that I was baptized, everyone I come in contact with, I wanted to tell them of this experience - that I felt I had. It was so precious to me. I thought I could tell everyone about it. I could show them, and they would love it, too.

I soon found out that this is not the way it comes. We cannot teach our brother, our neighbor to know the Lord. This is the work of God. He says, I will do this work. I will teach them, and they shall know me. A stranger they will not follow, but this teaching is not of man, but of God, our Heavenly Father as he performs His work in the hearts of His children. You can be confident, this very moment, of this very thing that He who begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. We would if we could - we would teach everyone to see that which is so precious unto us, but we find that we can't do it, and it didn't come to us that way. It is not by flesh and blood that we are taught these things, but through revealation.

When Jesus asked of Peter - who do you say that I am and Peter said, "Thou are the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Blessed art Thou Simon-bar Jonah, flesh and blood has not revealed this unto you, but my Father who is in Heaven. He told him how he came into the knowledge of this truth. He told him where it came from. He told him who taught this to him.

Let us go back now to David, who had this feeling with him, that surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and then later on when trials and afflictions came unto him, we find him praying unto the Father - "O, Lord, restore unto me again the joys of thy salvation." It seems like his heart had been hardened. That he had been turned cold. That he had become poor in spirit, and he prayed unto the Father. Here's the man who said the Lord is my shepherd and I shall not want, and the same man saying, O, Lord, restore unto me again the joys of Thy salvation. You can be confident of this very thing that he that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. So, dear children, as you journey along and when these trying and difficult times come, and when you become poor in spirit, just remember this God has promised tribulations here - but has promised never to leave you. Never to forsake you - but be with you always even unto the ends of the earth. He knows all of your trials. He never sleeps or slumbers, but is ever watchful over His children. We find, as we journey here, we shall also be as they back in that day. God never changes. I believe the words spoken to the children of Israel are the same as if they were spoken to you today - because it's all unto the household of faith, those who have been taught by the Spirit of God. We find John the Baptist another one who had a

great experience in baptizing the Savior there in river Jordon. He saw the spirit of God come down and light upon his shoulder in the form of a dove, and he heard the voice saying from Heaven - "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

We would think if we ever had an experience like this, we would never doubt again. Would you think you would forget this experience, and ever doubt again? Yet, we find John a few days hence shut up in prison, and I believe that's the experience we have from time to time, in our feelings. We're shut up in prison. We can't unlock the prison doors. We can't alleviate this condition. We can't get out of this condition that we're in. It seems we're in so much darkness that we can't even see a ray of light, and we become in doubt and fear just as John did. He sent his disciples out to inquire, is this the Christ, or shall we look for another?

Just that soon, he was brought down to the place where he was doubting. Christ sent the diciples bact to John, and said go, and tell him again. Go - and not only tell him again, but show him again - how the deaf ears were opened, etc. Just go back in your experience. There was a time when your ears were deaf. There was a time when you couldn't hear the gospel as it was preached unto the children of God, and a time you couldn't understand spiritual things.

I can go back in my experience, and I know many of you were reared up in a church of this faith and you attended when only a child, having been brought in your mother's arms. There were times back then when you heard the preaching, but you did not understand it. Your ears hadn't been opened, but when it pleased God to open your ears and you began to hear these blessed truths, and this is what He is telling here. Go back and show John again. Go back and tell him again how the deaf ears have been opened and how their hearts have been given to understand. How the eyes have been opened. They are able to see these things. We have to be shown over and over again, and you can be confident of this very thing - that He that hath begun a good work in you, he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. When you need to be shown again, He will show you again. He will give you a little more evidence. He will give you a little sign as you need it. I believe you will find your daily bread to sustain and keep you along the journey. Haven't you experienced this in your life? Just be about your daily vocation of work, and feel that in some little experience that you could see the hand of the Lord in the matter, and you were given to feel deep within your breast to say THANK YOU, THANK YOU - GOD, feeling that you know for sure that He was with you - that this was a blessing of God, that he was remembering you once more with His tender love and mercy, and affording you with this blessed experience, yes, being confident of this very thing - that He that hath begun a good work in you, He will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

I'm glad that He is able, not only to start this work, but perform the work in the hearts of His people. Sometime we start things that we can't finish, but this God has loved you with an everlasting love, and with loving kindness drawn thee. He draws His children out of nature's darkness and brings them into the knowledge of this truth. Aren't you glad it is with loving kindness that He brings you? I don't care how you might have lived before He brought you unto the church. I don't care what you might have done. He doesn't rebuke you. He doesn't tell you when he brings you in that you have been a bad boy or bad girl and all the bad things you've done - but, you will be received with outstretched arms. The prodigal son as he was brought home to the Father's house, and likewise, He brings his children in drawing them.

He says, No one can come unto me except the Father that sent me draw them. That's the only way we can come unto the knowledge of this truth. This is the way this work begins in the hearts of His children. He draws them unto Him. Everyone He draws, they shall come and He says, in no way will they be cast out. He draws them unto him and everyone that is drawn unto Him, they are made willing in the day of his power. I don't care how strong in the world they might have been - where their status in life is, but they can be brought down, being made a beggar, and be brought home to their friends, crying - not of the things that they've done - not boasting of how they've given tithes - how they have done this and that, as we find this in the Pharisee. They went up to the house to pray. There was he who boasted of the things he'd done. He was a man of great works in the world, and he boasted of those things he'd done. I feel he was sincere in that which he was feeling, but there's one that stood afar off - not feeling worthy even to lift his eyes up toward Heaven, but he smote upon his breast and said, Lord, be merciful unto me a sinner. This man went down justified.

Do you feel you have done a lot for the Lord, that has caused him to turn his eyes unto you and be merciful unto you? Rather we come feeling we have done nothing, but it is with loving kindness and tender mercies that He's drawn us, and we come with that prayer within our breast - that the Lord be merciful unto us a sinner.

Being confident that God will just give us that Grace, that we could go being confident of this very thing - that He that hath begun a work in us, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. I feel confident of that thing this morning. Sometime I worry about myself, and look for evidence, has He ever touched me? Do I know anything about the matter? I have never doubted this doctrine or these words. I have never doubted these promises that God made to His children. Many times I have wondered about my own life, and we find the Apostle Paul - one who has written some 13 books in this Bible, and one that God said was a chosen vessel. A great man of God. As he labored and had a great experience being brought down, and seeing a great light shine round about him - that overpowered him and brought him down, and changed his way, and caused him to go forth preaching salvation by the grace of God. He went into cities feeling that bonds and afflictions await me in every city I go, but none of these things move me. He was willing to spend and be spent in the ministry, the work God put him in. He said, God put me, God put me into the ministry. Paul didn't go into it because he decided he wanted to, but was brought down and he said, He put me into the ministry.

Of all Paul went through - of all the suffering - of all the many stripes that he was beaten and bore - of all the trials and afflictions that he had, going forth and none of these things moved him, God gave him to press on, feeling that God would be with him all the way - even unto the end - and yet there was a time in his feelings that now, after all this time - am I to be a cast-a-way?

I am confident of this very thing, God will perform the work begun in us. He will perform it all the way. You might be cast down, but you will never be destroyed. Why, because he said - that which is within you is greater than that which is in the world. Jesus Christ, the hope of Glory. It is stronger than any power in the world, and there's no power that can take it away from you.

We travel through a baren land, with dangers thick on every hand. It is a troublesome, difficult journey, but, just think about it. Jesus, who went before us, he made the path for His children. He was acquainted with grief. He knew much

sorrow, and He was an innocent man. He never rolled sin under his tongue as a sweet morsel. He was not guilty as you and I, who have committed sins - and yet, He took our sins and He bore them - carried them to the cross, and He paid the redemption price - shed his blood - gave His life that we might receive the joys of his crucifixion - that we might receive the benefits of His crucifixion.

He went before us; He made the way - and you can be confident in this very thing that if He's begun a work in you, He will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

May God continue to bless you as you journey through this wilderness way - that you might feel confident along the journey, that He has begun a work in you and that He will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Jesus preached this doctrine to his diciples that No one can come unto me except the Father who sent Me draw him and many went away. Not all were diciples, Many were following just for fishes and loaves. There were 12 diciples that stayed with him. The others went away. He said to this twelve - Why would you not also go away? They said, "Where else can we go?"

I ask you, where else could you go? Except unto those of like faith to find this which is comforting to your soul. There is no place to go, and there were twelve who stayed by Him - out of the five-thousand who had gathered around.

The church of God is a small number. I am not ashamed of the little flocks. The scriptures teach us to Fear not, ye little flock, because it's the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. It's a small number. Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to eternal woe. Narrow is the gate, straight and narrow is the way of the Lord's children. They are few in number. He said, I have not loved you because you were the greatest in number - because you are the fewest of all people.

He's going to be with you here. He will give you all that you need, and keep you along the way. He will feed you and strengthen you, and comfort you with every needed blessing. You shall die with that precious hope that this is not the end, but death is only the entrance into our long home. "I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am, there you may be also." One day we'll hear that beckoning voice saying, "Come, ye blessed of my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

I love this doctrine. If I can't live with you people, I don't know where I could go. May God bless us and keep us that we might journey together in that oneness of faith with one-eye single toward Him, ever looking unto Him - the author and finisher of our faith.

Elder Kenneth R. Key

CORRESPONDENCE

MEDITATIONS OF A SINNER.

March 3, 1879

Dear Brother In Hope:

If indeed I know anything about hope as it is in Christ Jesus. It is a serious question with me whether I do or not. But the Apostle John says: We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. Sometimes I get to the place where this is the only proof that I have of the new birth. But since I have had a hope that God has shown me the way of truth, I don't believe my heart has ceased to love the brethren, and pray for the peace and prosperity of Zion. No wonder then that it is with fear and trembling that I should attempt to write or speak in this great name. One of old said: That if we speak we should speak as the oracles of God. Study to show thyself approved unto

God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings for they will increase unto more ungodliness, 2 Timothy 15-16. Now, Dear Bro. I have no patience with a man who says that God has called him to preach His gospel and to publish peace, and to say to Israel thy God reigneth, and to give to each his portion of meat in due season, and then gets his conceptions of the two dispensatios (Law and Grace) so mixed up that he does not know heads or tails. I say he must be mistaken. It must have been God of the Arminians that called him. Because Israel's God is not a God of confusion, but of peace.

Dear Brother, these lines come to me with so much force I must quote them:

"How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord
Is laid for your faith in His excellent word
What more can He say than to you He hath said
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled."

The foundation of God standeth sure; having this seal the Lord knoweth them that are His. Dear Brother, I am satisfied that all the combined powers of darkness can not shake this foundation for Christ said: "Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." How it thrills our hearts with joy when we are enabled to see that God has reserved unto Himself all power and wisdom and has given us the consoling hope that we are included in the everlasting arrangement. We are made to say surely salvation is of the Lord; and I don't believe that means two or three or half dozen salvations either. Christ said: "I am the way, the truth and the life. No man cometh unto the father but by me." Dear brother, does this not include all the salvation that there is? Is not the salvation spoken of sufficient for every child of Grace? Does not this same Jesus hold the keys of death and hell? Will any be able to pluck His own out of His almighty hand? He says, my Father who gave them me is greater than all and none shall pluck them out of my Father's hand. He also said, I will raise him up at the last day. The foundation of God standeth sure. Having this seal the Lord knoweth them that are His.

Then the question arises: Can we, or have we, ever done anything to merit God's favor? I for one feel to answer no, because I feel that sin is mixed with all I do. How to perform that which is good I find not. For the things I would, I do not and the thing I would not that I do. Notice, here are two minds (flesh and spirit) and they are contrary one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. And Paul said; "Then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me."

Plunged in a gulf of dark despair
We wretched sinners lay
Without one cheering beam of hope
Or spark of glimmering day.

I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly. Here then is the great High Priest after the order of Melchisedec without beginning of days or end of life. Who was able and altogether worthy to enter into the holy of holies. Once for the sins of His bride perfecting forever them that are sanctified. Not just a part, but all of them, for He says all that the Father giveth me shall come to me. Here's the church founded upon the rock against which the gates of hell cannot prevail, here's the glorious building without spot or wrinkle, kept by the power of God. Without the assistance of man. Let us notice just here the kind of character embraced in this everlasting indestructible building. Two men went up to the temple to pray. One a Pharisee, the other a Publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself: "God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men." He

must have been the half dozen salvation man, because he said he was not like other men or even this Publican. But notice the other character the Publican, who stood afar off, and would not so much as lift his eyes to Heaven, but smote upon his breast saying: "God be merciful to me a sinner." This man went down to his house justified rather than the other not by his own good works. Oh, no, but by Jesus Christ, who is rich in mercy to all that call upon Him. It makes no difference how great a sinner you are. If you have come to Jesus Christ for salvation (not two or three salvations) but for salvation. He says He will in no wise cast out though your sins be as scarlet I will make them white as wool. Here is based all the hope this poor worm of the dust has. I believe if He will He can make me clean. And He said upon one occasion: "I will, be thou clean." And then my mind goes back over a period of 27 or 28 years to one bright June morning when I became so miserable I could not work. I tried to pray but I could not utter a word and yet every breath was God be merciful to me a sinner. I hope and believe that this same great High Priest appeared as my righteousness, lifting me out of the awful pit, placing my feet upon the rock and putting a new song in my mouth. I say when I remember this time I am made to say surely salvation (not salvations) is of the Lord, and that the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal the Lord knoweth them that are His.

Dear Brother, I started out to write you on entirely a different line of thought, and I don't know why I have written as I have, but I shall not apologize. But will say just do with it as you see fit and it will be perfectly all right with me.

Yours in hope,
E. F. SAUNDERS,
Randleman, Route No. 2, N. C.

Dearly beloved brethren,

The subject of sin, what it is, its effects, its origin and what God has done to save his people from the condemnation it brought has been on my mind for some time and I feel a strong desire to write some of my thoughts for your consideration, feeble though my thoughts may be. If not deceived, my desire is to write to God's praise, honor and glory, and for the comfort and edification of his beloved children. May God guide my every thought.

We find in Rom. 5:12; "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin: and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." We see from this that man is the author of sin. Webster's dictionary defines an author as being one who makes or originates something. Sin was not something in the world, but Adam made or originated it when he transgressed the only law that God had given; for sin is the transgression of the law. (I John 3:4). God's law is as just and holy as God, and the transgression of it brought death. "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The only thing I have found recorded in the holy scriptures that God cannot do is lie. (Titus 1:2). Therefore we know that Adam died in that day. No, he did not die a corporal death, the death of the body, but a spiritual death. The meaning of death is, to be separated from something. Adam was not at that time separated from the world, but from his standing with God and his upright and innocent state in which he was made. And we, being the posterity of our federal head Adam, fell under condemnation with him, for we were in his loins when

he fell.

I believe I have given scriptural proof of what sin is, who its author is, its effect and the penalty. There are many other scriptures that give proof of this, but I trust these are sufficient. Now let us consider its purpose and what God has done to redeem his children.

We read in Psalms 5:4-5; "For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee. The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thy hatest all workers of iniquity." This scripture is enough, though there be many, to prove that God hates sin. None but a reprobate would deny this. Although God hates sin, he has a purpose for sin being in the world, for he has a purpose in all things. If he does not have a purpose in sin, then it would not be here, for he certainly has the power to keep it out: or if he does not have such power how can we be sure that it will not be in heaven? He said, "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; as I have purposed, so shall it stand." He has thought of and purposed all things, or he is not the God I hope to worship, for Paul tells us that we know all things work together for good to them that love God, and them who are the called according to his purpose. (Rom. 8:28). If all things work together for good then certainly God knew everything that would come to pass and had a purpose in them. "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." And Christ was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God and was crucified and slain by wicked hands. Who would dare say that God did not have a purpose in their gathering together to crucify the Savior with their wicked hands? It was with evil intent that Joseph was sold by his brothers, but did it not serve God's purpose to save many lives?

God made everything that is made, and everything he made is good. That is, everything is good for the purpose for which he made it. He made man from the dust of the ground, breathed the breath of life into his nostrils and placed him in the garden of Eden; and when he made him, he made him subject to vanity. "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." (Rom. 8:20). God also made the crooked serpent (devil), and though the devil is an evil being, he is good for the purpose for which he was made. The devil was a liar from the beginning and the father of it, and he tempted Eve and lied to her: and she, being subject to vanity, and being tempted, fell under it. We will note that God did not tempt Eve, but the serpent. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lusts, and enticed." God made us the way we are, and we are not to question his authority or reason. As Paul says, "Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that made it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump, to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" God hath made us upright; but we have sought out many inventions. (Eccl. 7:29).

Eve was deceived and drawn away by her own lust, but Adam, being a figure of him which was to come, was not deceived; nevertheless, because of his great love for his bride, he partook of the forbidden fruit and transgressed the law of God. There was no pressure or enticement or any such thing from God: they simply followed after their earthy or natural desires as God knew they would

even before he gave them the commandment, for he said, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." He did not say, "if thou eatest," but, "in the day thou eatest." There was a day already set when they would eat the forbidden fruit and die. This came to pass, for God had a purpose in it. He had given a commandment to them saying, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." This they could not obey because, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." (John 12:24). Had they not died, spiritually speaking, they would have remained in their upright and innocent state in the garden and remained childless. Nevertheless, Adam is the federal head of all mankind and all his posterity was in his loins when he fell under the law, therefore death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. As it is written, "There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are togather become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Rom. 10:12) This is only one of many scriptures that proves all men are sinners, but I am sure that a child of grace needs no scripture at all to know what he is by nature and what he hopes to be by the grace of God once he has been translated out of his dead alienated state into God's marvelous light. He cries and moans over past sins, begs for grace to live godly, and pleads for mercy as did the poor publican. Only those who have not been touched by the grace of God would pray as did the Pharisee.

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." In the fulness of time, the set time, it came to pass, for God had purposed in eternity that his beloved Son would come into this low ground of sin and sorrow and save his chosen people from their sins; for Christ stood as a Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. (Rev. 13:8). God well knew what man would do before he made him, and having a particular people among men that he loved with an everlasting love their redemption was made sure in Christ even before the foundation of the world, and their names were written in the Lamb's book of life. Those whose names were not written there will fall down and worship the beast (Satan), but the redeemed shall sing a new song: "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."

All of God's attributes are equal. Neither his love nor his mercy is greater than his justice: one cannot override the other. No one is made perfect nor justified by God's love, for God is perfect and his holy law demands perfect justice when it has been transgressed, and the penalty is death of the transgressor. Blood must be shed, for where there is no shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. (Heb. 9:22). The blood of Christ was the only blood that could be shed to satisfy justice and redeem sinners at the same time, for he was the only one without sin, spot or blemish. How justice could be satisfied in accepting his blood and death in the room and stead of sinners is a very sublime subject in its self, which I will not attempt to write now, but we know that he offered himself once a sacrifice well pleasing to God and hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. The Holy Ghost brings us this witness, for the Lord hath made a covenant with us, saying, "I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." "What God hath done is forever. Nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it."

Beloved brethren, we are sinners, and deserve death and everlasting destruction from the face of the Lord. At least this is what I feel I deserve, and if he casts me into the bottomless pit of hell he will be just and holy in doing so. But I believe he has given me faith to believe in the redeeming blood and power of the blessed Savior, and a hope that I am one for whom he shed his precious blood.

Brethren, it seems to me that my thoughts have been very scattered, but if they praise, honor and glorify the blessed Savior, may he bring them together unto you for your comfort and edification. Charge all errors to me, and praise him for all truth that has been set forth.

A sinner in hope of eternal life,
Clifford Wilbanks

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

POPLAR SPRINGS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Poplar Springs Church located about three miles off Highway 17 between Millport and Vernon, Lamar County, Alabama, was organized April 5, 1834. In the spring of 1900, the location was moved approximately 5 miles to its present location.

The old wooden building was replaced in 1973 by this brick building.

It is in the Buttahatchie Association. The meeting time is the third Sunday in each month at 11:00 o'clock.

Elder H.C. Moon has served as Pastor for 36 years. Elder J. B. Moon is Assistant Pastor.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

WHAT IS TRUTH?

New Vernon, N.Y., Sept. 1, 1844
(EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM A FRIEND AT THE EAST.)

"There are things in which I am more interested than in any pecuniary consideration, and they may be implied from the following interrogatories, viz: What is truth? and, what is duty? A general answer may be given to the first in which all professed christians will agree, viz: The bible or word of God; but of the doctrines and duties which that word teaches and enjoins there is a great variety of interpretations or opinions. This difference of understanding exists not only between the saint and sinner, the elect and reprobate, but also among the saints themselves, or good men. These, to a great extent result from early temperaments, &c. But to be definite, permit me to ask of you, what is truth in relation to the perpetuity of the Sabbath? Taking into consideration the course pursued by those friends of Christ who after attending to his burial returned to their homes, "and kept holy the seventh day according to the commandment;" and also the direction given by the Savior to his disciples in regard to the destruction of Jerusalem, when he said, "Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day." To what extent is the moral law, so called, binding? I saw in the SIGNS some time since, an article on this subject (the Sabbath,) by S. Trott, and recently another on the subject of the moral law. But I should think they did not perfectly harmonize. I wish for light.

"Again: What is Truth in relation to the decrees of God? Did He ordain all events that have taken place, and are to take place? And as many or most things occur or eventuate through a course of means, did he also ordain the means? Do means or conditions appointed by God, and by him associated with the result in man, leave events necessarily unfixed or uncertain with God? If Tyre and Sidon would have repented had they seen the mighty works which were done in Chorazin and Bethsaida, is it not possible that some who are now in the darkness of heathenism, might exercise the same kind of repentance, if the law of God, by which is the knowledge of sin, and the truths of the New Testament, through which God commandeth all men everywhere to repent, were declared unto them? And after determining what is truth in regard to these things, let me ask, what is duty in reference to the same?

"I ask not these questions to elicit a discussion, for I have neither disposition or competency to do so; I am no sage, but as a sincere inquirer after TRUTH."

It is at all times a pleasure to communicate what light we have to those who sincerely inquire after truth; but it is not unfrequently the case that those who inquire "What is Truth? like Pilate, when he made this important inquiry of our Lord, turn away without waiting for an answer.

Our young friend is right in his conclusion that the testimony of the scriptures is truth; but the bare testimony of the bible does not fully embrace all that the question implies. Christ is emphatically The Truth, and he is that truth of which the scriptures are a faithful record. The inquiry then, "What is Truth?" Amounts to the same, when thus proposed to our fellow-creatures, as that expressed in the words, what think ye of Christ? We cannot give a full, appropriate answer to the one question, that will not with equal propriety apply to both. In reply, therefore, we say to our friend, it is our firm conviction and settled faith, that

Christ is essentially the Truth of God, "the way, the truth, and the life." "The faithful and true witness; the eternal *Logos* or Word, which was with God and was God; the Word which was made flesh and dwelt among us; in whom was light, and that Light was the life of men." As the Word of God, he is the Truth of God, and that Word by which regeneration is effected, by the communication made to them by the Spirit of that light which was in him, and which was the life of men.

The second inquiry is, "What is Duty?" We answer, to "fear God and keep his commandments is the whole duty of man." In confirmation of this decision read Eccl. xii. 13. In point of duty, then, it will be discovered that all mankind are deliquents when measured by the commandments of God, which are exceeding broad; for in our depraved state it is written, "there is no fear of God before their eyes." And again, "all have sinned;" and "by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified." Consequently there can be no just grounds to hope for acceptance with God upon the performance of duties.

"No works, no duties of our own,
Can for the smallest sins atone;
The robes which nature may provide,
Cannot our deep pollution hide."

It is true, as our friend remarks, there is much difference even among professors of religion in regard to duty, as well as in relation to the doctrine of the scriptures; but every soul that is born of God, is led by the unerring Spirit of Truth to see himself a poor, lost, guilty, perishing, and helpless sinner, cut off from all prospect of salvation by any power or exertion which he can possibly make. His former system of duty religion can avail him nothing while under such circumstances. Duty faith, duty repentance, duty prayers, and duty works, all serve only to press him down to the gates of death. In short, he may labor and toil for a law righteousness until the commandment slays him at the feet of Soveriegn Mercy, where his legal hopes all yield up the ghost, and there he is made acquainted with Christ as the resurrection and the life, the way, and the truth. Christ's blood is applied for the remission of his sins, and his perfect righteousness is applied for the justification of his soul, and he finds with joy and ecstacy of soul that transforming grace which

"Changes a slave into a child,
And duty into choice."

At this important crisis of his experience, he loses his burden and guilt, for all his sins and all his duties, and his own righteousness roll with Bunyan's pilgrim's burden into the sepulchre, to return to him no more. Now old things with him are passed away, and all things have become new. He is now delivered from the law, and there is, therefore, now no condemnation to him, for he is now experimentally in Christ Jesus, and walks no more after the flesh, but after the Spirit; for the law of the spirit of life, in Christ Jesus his Lord, has made him free from the law of sin, and whom the Son maketh free is free indeed. The difference between the former and present condition is, formerly he was under a law that convicted him of sin and guilt, which required everything of him, but furnished him with nothing; but now he is brought under the gospel, which requires nothing as a condition, but furnished everything that his poor soul could want to make him perfectly happy and perfectly secure. His whole soul is now made to rejoice in Christ whose love is richly shed abroad in him. Nothing can to him now appear so lovely as his blessed Savior; nothing so desirable as to be found glorifying him in the soul and body which are his. He cannot now be deterred from following Jesus. He is not inclined now to study how to prevert his examples, or to evade his commands;

he desires not to shun the reproaches of the cross, for he esteems them better than all the treasures of Egypt.

"Through floods and flames, if Jesus leads,
He'll follow where he goes.
'Hinder me not' will be his cry,
Though earth and hell oppose."

"My sheep hear my voice," says Jesus, "and I know them, and they follow me." "A stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers." In allegiance with Jesus as his King, it is his highest privilege to observe all things whatsoever he has commanded, and to walk in all his ordinances blameless, as did Zacharias and Elizabeth.

But to come to those particular points upon which light is sought by our inquiring friend. "What is truth in relation to the perpetuity of the Sabbath," &c.? In all candor we reply, the Sabbath in the letter or legal observance of it, as it was obligatory upon Israel under the legal dispensation, is abrogated, and with all other hand-writing of ordinances was nailed with the great law fulfiller to the cross; blotted out and done away, so that the apostle Paul commands the church of God, "Let no man, therefore, judge you in meats, or in drinks, or in respect of a holy day; or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath day; which are a shadow of good things to come, but the body is of Christ." "Touch not, taste not, handle not."—Col. ii. 14, 16, 17, & 21. But in relation to the spirit, or body, or substance, of which the legal Sabbath was a shadow, it is perpetual. It consists not, however, in the seventh day, or a first day cessation from the ordinary pursuits of life, but in a complete cessation from all the servile works of the law, and entrance into rest. The law dispensation was the six days in which men were commanded to labor and do all their work; but the gospel dispensation is the Sabbath of the Lord our God, and in it the saints are to cease from all their own works as God ceased from all the works which he had made, when he rested on the seventh day and hallowed it, and as Christ also, when he had fulfilled the law, finished transgression and made an end of sin, rested from his own works as God did from the works of creation when he had finished them. As under the abrogated law men were not permitted to gather sticks, kindle fire, or perform any kind of labor, or think their own thoughts, or speak their own words, so under the gospel, those who believe and have entered into rest, according to Hebrews iv. 3, are not suffered to gather sticks and kindle fires; or, as your eastern people would say, make use of means to get up a revival of religion, or by a system of duty religion, to warm themselves into happy frames, or religious exercises. No manner of work shall be done, no burdens shall be borne upon the Sabbath day. Works are excluded, the saints are to live by faith upon the Son of God; rest on him, rest upon his promises, his grace, his blood and righteousness. This glorious rest remaineth, or is perpetuated for the people of God; but God has sworn that those workmongers who hold on to the observance of blotted out hand-writings, and ordinances, nailed to the cross, they shall not enter into rest. They are like the troubled sea, they cannot rest, they cannot cease from their own works. It is impossible to rest in Jesus, unless we believe in him; and faith is the gift of God. It works by love; instead of its being exercised by us, it exercises us, lays hold of the promises for us, overcomes the world for us, enters within the veil for us, and subdues kingdoms, works righteousness, obtains promises, stops the mouths of lions, quenches the violence of fire, delivers from the edge of the sword, out of weakness makes us strong, waxing valiant in fight, and turns to flight the armies of the aliens. What shall we say more? Time would fail to tell of Gideon, and of

Barak, and of Sampson, and of Jephthae, of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets. Such is the vitality and power of the faith of God's elect; having this faith in us we have confidence in God; we trust in him and are as Mount Zion which cannot be moved, but abideth forever. Without this faith none can know the blessed privilege of a gospel Sabbath, this Sabbath of the Lord our God; this day which the Lord has made, this Lord's day, this glorious and perpetual Sabbath of rest unto all that have the faith which was once delivered to the saints. But we are requested to notice the Sabbath in connection with the circumstances of the saints observing the seventh day Sabbath, after the burial of the crucified body of our Lord, and of Christ's direction to the saints to pray that their flight should not be on the Sabbath day, &c. In regard to the first circumstance, we would remark that the disciples were not delivered from the obligation to keep the law of Moses, until the resurrection of Christ; for although he had fulfilled every precept, and borne its penalty in his death, put away sin, and made an end of transgression, &c., yet he must rise again from the dead for their justification. As they were buried with him by baptism (immersion) into death, and after the similitude of baptism raised with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. Christ suffered for his people as their Head, and in that relation to them, they, in regard to the demands of law and justice, suffered and were dead and buried with or in him, so that when he was raised up by the glory of the Father, they were raised *with him* to newness of life. No longer to serve under the letter of the law, but to worship God in the newness of the spirit. It must be borne in mind that Christ came to redeem them that were under the law, and to this end came himself under the law, and remained under the law until the resurrection from the dead. This accounts satisfactorily, we would think, for the disciples' keeping the Sabbath day, which elapsed while Christ was in the tomb, according to the commandment of Moses, which was still binding upon them at that time.

The instruction to the disciples to pray that their flight from the fearful calamities of Jerusalem might not take place upon the Sabbath day, is urged by the advocates of a perpetual obligation to keep a seventh day Sabbath, as evidence that our Lord taught the perpetuity of that obligation after he had nailed the hand-writing of ordinances to his cross. But on examination other sufficient cause will be found to warrent that admonition. It was named incidentally with some other things, which might be serious hindrances to their precipitate flight, in which any hindrance might involve them in the most dreadful calamities. This admonition no more implies that their flight on the Sabbath day would be a violation of the law, than the other circumstances named in verses 19 and 20 of Matt. xxiv.; but because, like the other difficulties named, this, should it so occur, might prove a serious hindrance to their flight. Indeed, the reason is assigned by our Lord in the very next verse; "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world" up to that date, and hence the necessity that they should be prepared instantly, at the signal which he would give them to take their flight. If they were circumstanced so as to prevent immediate flight, though this would violate no precept of the law, yet at that moment it would involve them in woe. Or if the flight should be in the winter, which of course could not be overruled by them, it would make it difficult for them to speed their flight; or if on the Sabbath day, the seventh day of the week, which the Jews were at that time very tenacious for the sanctity of, should

they attempt a flight, they would subject themselves to an arrest by legal administrators of the Jewish law, according to the usage of the Jews at that time. Up to the very day in which Jerusalem was overthrown, the Pharisees sat in Moses' seat, and enjoined a strict observance of the seventh day Sabbath, and would arrest any offender, just as the authorities of Connecticut formerly did those whom they caught traveling on the first day, which they said had, by some means or other, taken the place of the seventh; and thus it would prove a serious hindrance to their flight.

Is it not astonishing that the aversion of the hearts of men who profess to be the followers of Christ, should be so great to the plain declarations of the scriptures, as to lead them to pervert such passages as these, so as to make them seem to conflict with the testimony of the inspired apostles of Jesus Christ, who by the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost declared that the ordinances of Sabbath days were blotted out and nailed to the cross, as shadows of which Christ was the body or substance. As to the day being changed from the seventh to the first, there is not the least shadow or trace of authority for such a change in the bible. If, as some have contended, the obligation was moral and not ceremonial, and therefore perpetual, the same argument, if it could be established, would also forbid the change, for moral statutes are as immutable as they are perpetual, and therefore they cannot change.

As to what appeared to our correspondent as a discrepancy in brother Trott's comminication on the Sabbath and then on the law, perhaps the further development of his views in this and the last number of the SIGNS, may obviate the difficulty; but if not, he will please hereafter state particularly wherein he apprehended a want of harmony.

"Again: What is truth in relation to the decrees of God?" We reply, in our opinion all that God has said upon this subject, as well as all that he has said upon all other subjects, is truth; and he has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure; (Isa.xlvi. 10) and that he"worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." —Eph. i. 11. These scriptures are sufficient to establish the point, that God governs and controls all things, and that his government of all events and things is in strict accordance with his fixed, immutable and eternal purpose, counsel or decree, from the flight of a sparrow, the falling of a hair from our head, up to the most important events which involve the destiny of kingdoms and worlds.

"Did he ordain all events that have taken place, and are to take place?" Yes, as certain as it is that he is God. If an event has ever transpired over which he had no government, then other such events may also yet take place independently of his government; and if one such event can or has taken place, millions may follow, and by such an admission we should be hurled into absolute atheism; for if he is God, he is just such a God as he has declared himself to be, and has all power in heaven and on earth, governs and controls all beings, all destinies and all events, and causes the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder of wrath he restrains. He forms the light and creates darkness, makes peace and creates evil; for he has said, "I the Lord do all these things." And all the things which he does, he works according to the counsel or decree of his own will, as we have already proved.

"And as many or most things occur or eventuate through a course of means, did he also ordain the means?" Things which are brought about in the providence of God, or by virtur of his universal government, bear an intimate rela-

tion to and are connected with each other, like the revolving wheels in a complicated machine; and to the imperfect vision of the poor finite mortals, these revolutions may seem to conflict, yet in the wisdom of God they work together in harmony. Those which to us seem most trivial, are with God as important as any other of the events connected in the system of government; and he who is the Maker and Builder of all things, who has declared the end or issue of all things, has secured, by immutable decree, a revenue of glory in the result of all things, which he will not give to another, nor his praise unto graven images. What we call *means are things,* and belong to and are embracaed in the *all things* which he governs and controls. Hence what we may call means are the result of the decrees of God, as well as those things that are effected by them. For instance, the death of Christ was an event which, for magnitude, challenges a comparison with all other events. It took place according to the decree of God, as all are compelled to admit, and yet that very death was a means connected with other events to be effected by it. "That by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal life."—Heb. ix. 15. The treachery of Joseph's brethren was a means to induce them to murder him; their avarice, and the providential appearnace of the Ishmaelites, were the means which induced them to change their purpose and sell him; this sale was the means of his going down to Egypt; the wickedness of Potiphar's wife was the means of Joseph's imprisonment; his imprisonment was the means of procuring an opportunity of interpreting the dreams of the butler and baker; and this was in turn the means of his appearing before Pharaoh, which was the means of his promotion, which was the means of laying up corn, and this was the means ultimately of bringing about the interpretation of Joseph's dreams, which had been the means of first moving the enmity of his brethren against him, and all this was the means of preserving Jacob's family alive through the famine; and that preservation was connected as a means of a Savior's visit to the world, for out of Judah came forth a Deliverer, to turn away ungodliness from Jacob. Can our correspondent, or can any other being, tell which of these events were unimportant, or which, if any of them, might have been dispensed with without breaking the chain of causes and results of means of ends to be accomplished? If the results were ordained, of course the means were also equally ordained as the result of other means or causes which produced them.

"Do means or conditions appointed by God, and by him associated with the result in man, leave events necessarily unfixed or uncertain with God?" Certainly not. But why associate means and conditions in the statement of the question? There is no great affinity between them. Every event that ever occurred, from the creation of the world to the present day, has been an ordained means of bringing about other events, which, in their turn, are also means bearing upon others; but conditions are very different things. When God sent Moses and Aaron with conditions of peace to Pharaoh, saying, "Let my people Israel go," and threatening with judgments if those terms were not promptly complied with, he told Moses that he would harden Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let Israel go until he should execute his judgments on Egypt. So the statement of conditions in his case did not hide from his eye the end or result.

And when God gave a conditional covenant to the nation of Israel, embracing temporal blessings and curses on condition of obedience or disobedience,

if we admit that God is Omniscient, we must admit that he knew precisely how these conditions would be treated by, and what effect they would have upon those unto whom they were given; consequently it was impossible they should render the result indefinite or uncertain with him. But let it be distinctly understood, that although the covenant which is now abrogated, which was typical, and which provided only for temporal blessings and curses, was conditional, that the covenant of salvation is ordered in *all things* and sure; not *yea* and *nay*, but *yea* and *amen*, to the glory of God by us. There is not a condition stated or intimated in all the scriptures, either directly or indirectly, expressed or implied, wherein God has offered, proffered, or proposed to save a sinner from the condemnation of the law, or from the just penalty thereof, upon any condition, of any kind whatever; for all that are saved, or ever were or ever shall be delivered from the wrath and condemnation, are "saved, and called with a holy calling; not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given to them in Christ Jesus before the world began." They are blessed with all spiritual blessings according as God has chosen them in Christ Jesus, before the foundation of the world; and he has predestinated them unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, wherein he has made us accepted in the Beloved.

"If Tyre and Sidon would have repented, had they seen the mighty works which were done in Chorazin and Bethsaida, is it not possible that some who are now in the darkness of heathenism, might exercise the same kind of repentance, if the law of God, by which is the knowledge of sin, and the truths of the New Testament, through which God commands all men everywhere to repent, were declared unto them?"

If things were otherwise than what they are, we confess our utter inability to say what they would be; but of this we are fully satisfied, if one link of the chain of cause and effects, which God in infinite wisdom has linked together, could possibly be broken, we should be in a deplorable condition; results unlooked for and unprovided for might then surprise God himself, and world on world might dash, until all would sink to utter ruin. The supreme theme of our devoutest joy is that the Lord reigns; but if we, or any combination of power in heaven, earth, or hell, could, by sending a bible or a missionary, or any thing else, into heathen lands, (if indeed there be any other land to which that designation more appropriately belongs than it does to this land of bibles and of boasted light,) could bring about the accomplishment of any event that was not provided for in the eternal, unchangeable, and invincible decrees of God, by the accomplishment of such a work, we would disprove all the record God has given of himself. Why did not the same cause which would have produced repentance in Tyre and Sidon, produce that effect on the cities where it existed? And why was it not employed in those cities which for the absence of it were destroyed? Or is it proper for us to inquire why God has made one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?

It is turly by the law that a knowledge of sin is sent home to the conviction of quickened souls; but if a knowledge of the mere letter or reading of the precepts of the Old Testament could effect that conviction, why was Saul of Tarsus without such conviction until he undertook his journey or mission to the city of Damascus? And why are not American sinners, who abound in bibles, convinced of sin? That every bible of which we speak declares the reason; because that it should be the peculiar work, not of the bible simpy, but of that spirit which Jesus should send, to convince of sin, of right-

eousness, and of judgment to come; and when the Spirit executes this work, he employs the law, and brings the commandment home to the sinner's heart in its spirituality, and sin revives, and the sinner is slain.

If it were the purpose or pleasure of God that those regions of the earth which are called heathen, should have that kind of repentance which Tyre and Sidon would have had, if God had been pleased to give it to them, or any other kind of repentance, they would assuredly have it; for he doeth his pleasure in heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; he taketh up an island as a very little thing, and nations before him are as the drop of the bucket. None can stay his hand; he speaketh the word and it stands fast; he commandeth and it is done.

"And after determining 'What is Truth' in regard to these things, let me ask, What is duty in reference to the same?" In consideration of all the grand, magnificent and sublime things contemplated in the foregoing questions and replies, it is certainly becoming that we should "be still and know that he is God." "What the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law," and we conclude, therefore, that it is the duty of those who are under the law, and the delightful and inexpressible privilege of those who are delivered from the curse and bondage of the law, and brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, to *believe* all that God has said to them respectively, and to obey all that he commands; and, as we have said before, this comprehends *the whole duty of man.*

CONTRIBUTIONS

AUGUST 1985

Elder Hale Terry, VA.	$ 7.00
Buford Holland, VA.	5.00
Mrs. W. L. Simmins, VA.	2.00
William L. Midkiff, VA.	7.00
Mrs. Minnie G. Roberts, NC.	2.00
Miss Era Barber, AL.	5.00
Mrs. Lucille Young, TN.	4.00
Elder Rufus Brown, VA.	1.00
J. A. Avera, FL.	5.00
Cecil Neal, IL.	7.00
Frank Hunt, VA.	10.00
Mrs. Alpha Ramesy, VA.	7.00
Mrs. Genera W. Meara, CA.	15.00
Willie M. Ratliff, VA.	5.00
Mrs. Ruth Sparkman, TX.	2.00
Mrs. Jessie P. Whaley, NC.	2.00
Elder Richard Campbell, TN.	14.00
Elder W. D. Griffin, AL.	5.00
G. G. Comer, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Herbert Gibson, VA.	2.00
G. W. Carter, NC.	2.00
Howard L. Peters, VA.	2.00
Mrs. R. C. Moore, NC.	2.00

NOVEMBER 1985

Mrs. Mamie Aldridge, NC.	$ 2.00
C. Martin Hollandsworth, VA.	3.00
C. C. Wilbanks, LA.	7.00
H. B. Rhoades, TX.	7.00
Mrs. Myrtle Daniel, FL.	2.00
Mrs. Inez Hollie, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Marjorie Harris, CA.	2.00
Mrs. Bessie Barber, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Lillian S. Davis, NC.	2.00
O. W. Parks, TX.	7.00
W, J. Lambert, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Charity Dowdy, NC.	2.00
Loyd Chance, TX.	7.00
Luther Gaskill, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Homer Pettis, LA.	2.00
Mrs. Dorothy Sieflaff, NC.	7.00
Lawrence Holloway, MD.	2.00
Mrs. Myrtle Black, NE.	5.00
James W. Huber, MD.	10.00
Levie Goard, VA.	2.00
A. R. Potter, VA.	2.00
Mrs. D. V. Spangler, VA.	45.00
In Memory Mrs. Mary H. Brooks (11/22/1900-6/30/1985) By her Children, AL.	50.00

MEETINGS

The next West Country Line Union meeting will be held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church the fifth Sunday in December, 1985. Moons Creek Church will be host for this meeting. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. We extend a special invitation to ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Pastor
Sister Emma Sartin, Clrek

OLD MOUNTAIN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God, Old Mountain Church (Mt. Ararat) looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift. They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed on Saturday, October 19, 1985 at 3:00 P.M. at Old Mountain Church, Danville, Virginia, for the purpose of examination of this gift, brother Edgar Horsley and if found qualified be ordained to the full work and service of deacon.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together. The meeting was opened by prayer by Elder Raymond Payne. Elder Haywood Wray was elected as moderator and deacon Bob Collie to serve as clerk. Brother George Powell acting as spokesman for the church delivered brother Edgar Horsley to the presbytery. The qualifications for deacon were read as set forth in scriptures First Timothy, third chapter, by Elder Jimmy Hollandsworth and Acts, sixth chapter by Elder Leonard Key. Examinations followed by Elder Leonard Key and Elder Raymond Payne and other Elders of the presbytery. The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of this candidate proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder Jimmy Hollandsworth. The charge was delivered to brother Horsley by Elder O. K. Tench. He was then delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. A copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to be sent to the Signs of The Times for publication and a copy to be given to brother Horsley along with a certificate of ordination.

Presbytery was dismissed by prayer by Elder Jimmy Hollandsworth.

Elder Haywood Wray, Moderator
Deacon Bob Collie, Clerk

OBITUARIES

SALLIE HALL GAULDIN

On July 5, 1985 God in His infinite wisdom called our beloved sister Sallie Hall Gauldin, home at the age of 87. Her funeral was conducted by Elder Kenneth Key and Elder Hayward Wray at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. Her body was laid to rest in Dan View Cemetery in Eden to await that glorious resurrection day when the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout and the dead in Christ shall rise to meet Him in the air and ever be with the Lord.

Sister Gauldin was blessed to ask for a home in Dan River Church on September 17, 1954. She loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace and despite many obstacles was faithful to her Church and attended her meetings regularly as long as she was able. She was a very sweet and humble woman and was loved by all. We deeply miss her but may we and

her family and friends find peace in knowing that for God's hulmble poor, knowing that for God's humble poor, being absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. To depart this life and be with Christ is far better than anything this world has to offer.

Sister Gauldin was born on May 4, 1898 to John and Birdie Hall. She was married to the late Robert Bruce Gauldin on May 3, 1916 and to this union were born six daughters, one of whom preceded her in death (Hazel Edwards). Those she left behind are Eva Johnson, Eden, North Carolina; Bea Winn, Roanoke, Virginia; Cleatus Shope, Eden, North Carolina; Christine Salmon, Winston-salem, North Carolina; and Janice Mason, Crystal Lake, Illinois.

May God bless and comfort her family as only He can do.

Written by request of Dan River Church in conference on August 24, 1985.

Jean B. Moran

ANNIE L. PRICE

Sister Annie L. (Proctor) Price, a devoted member of Pleasant Hill Church was called from this life June 24, 1985. She was born August 3, 1895 making her stay in this world 89 years, 10 months, and 21 days.

She was received into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist at the Nashville Primitive Baptist Church, Nashville, North Carolina the fourth Saturday in February, 1915 and was baptized the next day by Elder John T. Williams. After moving from that area back to the community near Pleasant Hill, she asked for a letter to move her membership and was gladly recieved by the brethren of Pleasant Hill Church on Saturday, September 26, 1931.

Sister Price, loving in nature, enjoyed her meetings at home and was always ready to travel any distance to meet with the brethren as long as her health permitted.

Being afflicted with declining health, her last years were spent in a rest home. Even then, when she felt she could possibly stay up long enough to attend her meetings, she was there with the aid of a very attentive family.

Her funeral was conducted June 26th at Johnson Funeral Home, Rocky Mount, N. C. by her pastor, Elder Henry C. Jones and her body was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery.

We, at Pleasant Hill, extend our heart felt sympathy to her family of four daughters; Mrs. Annie Ruth Skinner, Mrs. Nora Boone, Mrs. Frances Tolson, and Mrs. Ruby Keel; for sons: Harvey, Clarence, John, and Marvin; twenty-nine grandchildren, and forty great-grandchildren.

Though we miss her greatly, we do have that sweet hope for her eternal heavenly rest and realize it would only be a selfish wish to wish her back into this land of trials, troubles, and tribulations.

written at the request of the brethren of Pleasant Hill Church in conference August 24, 1985.

Elder Clyde Debow, Moderator
J. Carroll Williams, Clerk

ELDER CECIL E. TURNER

Our beloved pastor, Elder Cecil E. Turner has gone Home to ever be with his Lord.

He was born in Patrick County, Va. July 4, 1905 and passed away with the dreaded disease of Leukemia in Memorial Hospital of Marinsville, August 30, 1985.

He joined River View Primitive Baptist Church the 4th week-end in July, 1933 and was baptized by the late Elder Dan Helms. He began speaking in pub-

lic the 4th week-end in September, 1934 and was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, August 29, 1936.

He was married to Sister Gladys Conner Turner August 13, 1928 and they were blessed with 51 years together. Sister Turner passed away August 29, 1979; and since her death he was never content but looked forward anxiously to the time when he too could lay his armor by and go "Where congretations ne'er break up and Sabbaths never end."

He is survived by one son and daughter-in-law, Elbert and Avis Turner of Bassett, Va.; one grand-daughter, Aleta Turner; One grand-son, Mark Turner; Three sisters, Mrs. Gwendelyn Lawson, Stuart, Va.; Sister Agnes Thomas, Collinsville, Va.; Mrs. Wanda Sumner, Patrick Springs, Va.; Four brothers, Brother Conway Turner, and Mr. Norman Turner, Bassett, Va.; Elder Rupert Turner and Mr. Arnold Turner, Collinsville, Va.

A few months before Elder Turner passed away he arranged most of his funeral service. His pastor Elder James R. Hollandsworth of River View Church, together with Elder Leonard Brammer and Elder Buddy Crotts conducted a most beautiful service to an overflowing crowd of brethren, sisters and friends at Collins Funeral Chapel, Bassett, Va. on Sunday, September 1, 1985. He requested also that each Pigg River Minister to speak briefly at this service, if they so desired, after which he was laid to rest under a beautiful blanket of flowers by the side of Sister Turner in Roselawn Burial Park.

We thank our Lord that he was given to us as our lovely pastor at Roanoke Church in sweet Fellowship these 32 years. At the time of his death he was also pastor of Chestnut, Martinsville, and Rocky Mount Churches.

His love and faithfulness to his God in the srvice of the church will live with us in the years to come. Although his voice has been stilled among us, he will ever live in the esteem of his brethren. We cannot think of a more fitting memorial than to say, we believe truly that he was called by divine grace and ordained by God to preach salvation by the grace of God these many years.

A volumn could be written about our Father in Israel but this is not what he would have wanted. He desired all praise and glory to be given to our blessed Lord and not to poor creatures here on earth.

We, the members of Roanoke Church realize that our loss is his eternal gain and may God's richest blessings keep us all and bless us to comply to his last message to us, "Do the best that you can."

Written by Sister Rlee B. Houchins at the request of Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church while in conference, Saturday October 5, 1985.

Elder Lane Carter, Acting Moderator
Brother Hassell A. Hale, Church Clerk

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Psalm 116:15

ELDER JOHN D. WOOD, SR.

Elder John D. Wood, Sr. our beloved pastor, passed away on July 3, 1985 in a nursing home in Westminster, Md. at the age of 87 after an extended illness. He was faithful to his flock for many years having served churches in several different areas of Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania.

In 1916 he united with Roanoke Church and was baptized by the late Elder J. C. Hurst. In April 1918 he was licensed to preach and consequently ordained at Roanoke Church in 1931.

Following is a list of churches served by Elder Wood:

1937-48 Belleview Church (now Laurel Ridge)
1938-48 Little Hope Church
1938-85 Black Rock Church, Butler, Md.
1950-83 New Valley, Mount Zion and Frying Pan Churches in Virginia
1948-78 Rock Spring Church in Pennsylvania
1971-81 Ebenezer Church in Baltimore, Md.

In addition to these, he served on fifth Sundays two churches in the mountains of Pennsylvania: Needmore and Sidling Hill while able to drive such distances. From 1937 until 1978 he served as clerk of the Pigg River Association and was editor of the Signs of the Times from 1951 until late years when he became an associate editor.

While pastoring the churches in upper Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, he made his home in Manassas, Virginia where he and Sister Virginia Wood entertained many brethren. Their door was always open to those of like precious faith and any that stayed there were shown loving hospitality.

Following is a memorial written by Rock Springs Church for Elder Wood:

Resolution of Respect

WHEREAS, Elder John D. Wood, presently of Manassas, Virginia, served the Rock Springs Church as Pastor for thirty years and one month, August 15, 1948 to September 3, 1978, and

WHERAS, He gave the Church this long period of service in the nurture and admonition of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ; serving faithfully in the ability in which he was endowed by his Creator, our almighty heavenly Father; giving always unto the Son of God all due reverence as the Savior of his chosen people; teaching gospel truth, expounding and exhorting upon the same;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that this Resolution be entered in our record as a Memorial of him—as exemplary of an undershepherd of his Lord.

Charles B. Osborne,
Deacon & Clerk

Elder and Sister Wood traveled long distances to faithfully serve his many churches until his failing health caused him to resign from serving. He was no longer able to drive such distances and eventually was confined to a nursing home with his faithful companion.

All who knew him will miss his gentleness, sincerity and sweet humility. He was truly a servant of God. But we feel that he has gone to a better place (not made with hands) to be with his Lord and Savior. One of the editors of the Signs remarked that he "had never known a nobler man."

Elder Wood was laid to rest in Black Rock Cemetery, Butler, Maryland. His funeral was conducted by Elder Junior Connor of Salem, Virginia. He is survived by his wife Virginia Carter Wood and a daughter, Virginia Gladding both of Westminster, Md., and a son John D. Wood, Jr. of Manassas, Virginia; five grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, one brother, Paul Wood of Roanoke and three sisters, Kathryn Davis of Roanoke, Edith Foltz and Doris Wood, both of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

The above was compiled by Sister Beulah Stuart, Sister Ella Simpkins, Sister Peggy Osborne and Virginia Wood in loving memory.

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PSALM 95

O come let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.

The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land.

O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker.

For he is our God: and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand, to day if ye will hear his voice.

Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness.

When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work.

Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways.

Unto whom I sware in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.

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EDITORIAL

"Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits."
Song of Solomon 4:16.

We believe there are two speakers in the above text. The first speaker represents the Lord Jesus Christ, and the second, the church, His bride, His spouse. It is Christ who has created the winds and holds them in His fist, who opens His hand and lets them loose and can recall them at His pleasure. This He demonstrated while here upon earth. While on the Sea of Galilee, he rebuked the wind and sea commanding a calm of them and they became calm. This caused His disciples to say, "What manner of man is this that even the wind and the sea obey him?" Matthew 8:27. Christ has power to shut or open the winds according to His own purpose and pleasure.

The wind in this text I believe to be emblematic of the Holy Spirit of God. In Ezekiel 37: 9, 10, we read, "Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say unto the wind, thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, and exceeding great army."

On the day of Pentecost: "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting." Acts 2: 2. The Lord Jesus Christ by virtue of what He has fulfilled for His chosen bride, has now the authority to call upon the Holy Spirit to continue upon those whom the Father has chosen in Him before the foundation of the world and given to Him as His bride. And this not to show authority over the Holy Spirit, but to show the complete union that exists between them. So when Christ says to the Holy Spirit: "Come and blow upon my garden," He is speaking as Mediator calling upon the Spirit to do his assigned work concerning the Church. This is not supposed to show any inferiority in the Spirit to Christ, for all three persons have jointly agreed in the everlasting covenant to take their several distinct parts in the salvation of the Church. The Spirit acts freely in the first application of grace to poor unworthy sinners. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." John 3: 8. The workings of the Spirit of God in regeneration are visible to natural man; he can no more discern the Spirit's grace than he can see the wind blow; he cannot account for operations of the Spirit, for he neither knows his person or his grace.

It pleased the Father to get glory for his divine justice and holiness by demand-

ing full satisfaction for sin. He was the avenger of sin; therefore God is called in scripture a consuming and devouring fire and a jealous God. It pleased the Son to get glory for the divine attributes of God by satisfying justice and fulfilling His holy law. It pleased the Holy Spirit to give glory to all divine attributes, by breathing into their souls a newness of life, and carrying it on through this life into a life of glory. The necessity of his continually breathing into our souls the breath of life is beautifully represented in the text. The Spirit is described under his known emblem, "wind." Our souls can no more live to God, without grace, than our bodies live without air. Nothing can grow in the garden without air, neither can any grace grow in our souls unless the Holy Spirit blows upon us. After we have received His grace, are quickened and made alive by it, we must have its influence every moment to support and to carry on the life which he has given, just as we need air for our natural bodies to carry on their lives.

"My garden," here the Church is spoken of under the figure of a garden. A garden is a piece of ground distinguished and separated from all others for the owner's use. This garden only includes the elect of God, it is not left to other people. It is a garden walled in, walled in with everlasting life. "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Jeremiah 31:3. This is a garden that has been planted by infinite and eternal wisdom. His people are not only like a garden, but a garden enclosed. God's infinite mercy has made the Church an enclosure into which no invader may dare to come in. "For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst thereof." Zechariah 2:5. He sets a hedge about them in providence, so that nothing can destroy them. A garden enclosed by His precious love and mercy toward them. "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." Isaiah 26:1. You are as safe as Jesus, for on His heart He bears your name, on the arm of His strength He wears your name, as the high priest wore the names of the tribes upon his shoulder, as well as upon his breastplate: "I give unto my sheep eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Christ has enclosed this garden from the wilderness for his own use. He has set trees of righteousness which he has moved from the desert land of the world where they grow wild by nature and transplanted them into his garden. Here they are cultivated and watered with his grace. The Church is said to be a spring: "A spring shut up, a fountain sealed," from which water flows to water all the plants in Christ's garden. The graces of the Spirit which are in her as "a well of water, springing up into eternal life." John 4:14.

"Awake, O north wind" The time has come for one of Christ's chosen ones to be quickened from deadness in trespasses and sins. He calls upon the Spirit and notice, it is the north wind. We are not born in the garden of the Church, but in the wilderness of the world, in a dry barren land, where no water is, no dew or rain. In this barren soil we are like the wild olive tree. We bear no fruit until the heavenly husbandman moves us and grafts us contrary to nature on to the good olive tree; all that are in Christ Jesus will bring forth good fruit. The Spirit's first work upon a quickened soul is to come as the north wind. The north wind was to awake. We all know how cutting and penetrating the cold north wind can sometimes be cutting to the very marrow of our bones. When the Spirt comes to a sinner as the north wind, it begins to humble him, cutting the heart with piercing convictions and

bringing us to realize our sad state as sinners before a Holy God. The law demands more of us than we can render, therefore we feel to fall under its curse. "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Gal. 3:10. I believe it was the north wind that made the Apostle Paul cry out: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" The publican to cry: "God be merciful to me a sinner" and the jailor to cry: "Sir, what must I do to be saved?" The north wind was to awake. It was to be the first mover, for all men lay in the dead sleep of sin, until the Holy Spirit awakens them. And his general method of awakening sinners is to inspire them with conviction of their sins. He opens their eyes, shows them their guilt and lets them see their danger and this is very painful and distressing. The wind strips him of his self-righteousness, creature strength, and wisdom. Everything seems to be against me where must I flee? Everything we treasered at one time begins to fade away, our idols are torn down, and we must also cry out: "God be merciful to me, a sinner." When all hope seems to be banished, we cry out with the Apostle Paul: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

"And come thou south." The Spirit is spoken of now as the south wind. The Spirit at first kills, and then makes alive; wounds, and then heals; he brings them into the wilderness and then "speaks comfortable to them." The Spirit makes known the things of Christ in all their suitability to a poor condemned sinner. The promises of Christ to poor unworthy sinners now begin, begin to yield their sweetness. When by the eye of faith we are blessed to see the sweetness of Christ's atoning blood and love, the sweetness of His righteousness, and His faithfulness, we are ready to "sing a new song." "And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praises unto God." Psalm 40:3. The south wind is generally a soft wind, so it signifies the Lord bringing his promises to his people's conscience with power, and some of these sweet promises are "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions and as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." Isaiah 44:22. "He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities," "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." Psalm 103:10, 12. And "I came not to call the righteousness, but sinners to repentance." Luke 5:32. The whole work of bringing us from a barren to a fruitful state, from a bad tree to a good one, is of the Lord.

"Blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out." I believe these spices to be fruits of the Holy Spirit worked into the hearts of God's people by the Spirit. For his believing people are not capable of doing so themselves; for they can no more exercise grace than they can work it of themselves. Christ knew full well that it is the Spirit's work, therefore he calls upon him to blow upon them. I believe these spices consist of fear, faith, hope, love, prayer, humility, joy, peace and many more. For instance, is there anything out of heaven sweeter than faith, the faith which trusts and clings, which believes and hopes? Christ never delighted in the burning of bulls, goats, etc. but he always delighted in the faith which brought these things as types of the one great sacrifice for sin. When Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, and Abel's sacrifices were accepted of God, because Abel's offering manifested his repentance toward God, and his faith in the things of Christ. Can there be found any sweeter spice than love, the love which loves God because He first loved us, the love which flows out to all the brethren and for the precious truth as it is in

Christ Jesus. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I John 3:14. The God who gives us faith may well be pleased with faith. The God who created love in such unlovely hearts as ours may well be delighted at His own creation. These spices can only flow out of a poor sinner as they are worked in by the Spirit. "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven." John 3:27. "Let my beloved come into his garden and eat his pleasant fruits." Here the Church is speaking and expresses her desire to have Christ come into his garden. This, I believe, refers to a spiritual coming of Christ into the hearts of his people, when they feel his presence, when his love is made manifest to their hearts. The Church here is seeking his spiritual, gracious, and comfortable presence that she might have more intimate communion with him. Christ does not always manifest himself to his people. How often do we feel the hiding of his face? He is always in the garden, because he has promised to be always with his people to the end of the world, but he does not always manifest himself to them. But at this particular time in our text, the Church seems to be enjoying the manifestation of Christ's love, mercy, and the enjoyment of his presence because the Spirit has been blowing upon them that the spices might flow out. We can never feel too close to Christ, we always want more nearness to him, and no doubt will, until we are with him in glory. "O For a closer walk with God." It is Christ's presence that makes his garden, the Church, a heaven on earth. He never comes empty handed, when he makes a visit, he always brings something that makes the hearts of his people glad, for he revieves the plants, waters them and makes them fruitful. Sometimes it is necessary for Christ to do some pruning. When one of his little ones get to branching out too far towards certain idols and the things of this world, it becomes necessary for him to "come and tear it from its throne" so that "I'll worship only thee."

"And eat his pleasant fruits" All spiritual fruits are performed by virtue of our union with Christ. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me" for "without me ye can do nothing." John 15: 4, 5. "It is God that works in his people both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Christ obtained all grace for his Church in the everlasting covenant, "ordered in all things and sure." He is the author and finisher of faith and of all grace to be given to us, and by his spirit works it in us. So these fruits of faith, love, hope and more may be said to be his, for we have none of ourselves. These fruits are said to be well pleasing in his sight. By eating them is said to be Christ delighting in them, his enjoyment of them and his acceptance of them. It is Christ to whom all the fruits belong and this is acknowledged by the Church. Therefore the owner of the garden had the right to eat of the fruit thereof.

I close with a hymn by Isaac Watts. Song number 57 in Goble's.

We are a garden walled around,
Chosen and made peculiar ground:
A little spot enclosed by grace
Out of the world's wide wilderness.

Like trees of myrrh and spice we stand,
Planted by God the Father's hand;
And all his springs in Zion flow
To make the young plantation grow.

Awake, O heav'nly wind, and come,
Blow on this garden of perfume;
Spirit divine, descend and breathe
A gracious gale on plants beneath.

Make our best spices flow abroad
To entertain our Savior-God:

And faith, and love, and joy appear,
And ev'ry grace be active here.

In bonds of love,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."
Mat. 7:12

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

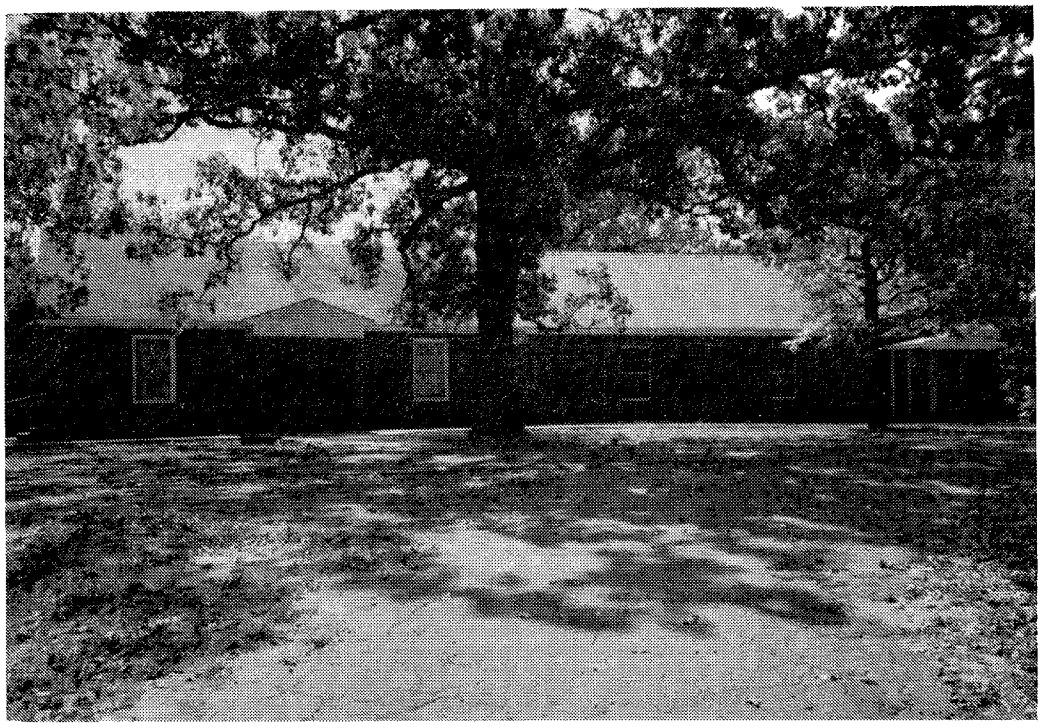

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church was organized in July 1855. The church is located about six miles west of Winnsboro, Texas. Meeting is at 10:30 on 2nd Saturday and Sunday of each month, and at 10:30 on 3rd Sunday.

The present pastor is Elder Joe L. Hamrick.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Following is transcribed from tape of a sermon preached by Elder Raymond Goad on Sunday, July 14, 1985 at the Staunton River Association.)

Found in the 2nd Chapter of the Book of Job, beginning with the first verse, it says: *"Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord."*

You know it seems in conversation

with people that they picture Satan as being a human being in the sense that he has supreme powers, but you know as I see Satan, there is a little bit of him in all of us. And you know here it didn't say anything about anyone else that came on this day other than the sons of God. You know God has so fixed everything that there is a certain time, the Bible refers to certain people, certain days and it is so fixed and he said the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them. He didn't say anything about him coming among anybody else. He says he came among them.

This scripture came to me very forcibly this morning while I was attempting to get ready to come to church and I thought of old Satan, about how, as I said, there is a little bit of Satan in us all, in the children of God most especially because if there isn't a littel bit of Satan in there, where does the warfare come from. If this earthly tabernacle were holy, then Satan wouldn't be there. If this earthly tabernacle were pure Satan wouldn't be there. And if it's holy we woudn't need to be changed would we? So we find that old Satan comes among the children of God. And the Lord said unto Satan, "From whence comest thou?" Wasn't in the sense that the Lord didn't know why he came. But He knew that he was there. I know that he's here, I know he's in this earthly body that stands before you because he troubles me. But you know I believe that Job is a type of the church. You may not agree with this but I see Job as a type of the church.

And Satan answered the Lord, and said, "From going to and fro in the earth and from walking up and down in it." Now he wasn't talking about the ground you walk on out here, that we know as the earth. He is talking about this earthly tabernacle that stands before you and those that sit out there that God has dealt with. Satan does not bother those that have not had a change of heart because they already belong to him, or else they have not been made alive to Christ. And Satan doesn't trouble those that haven't been made alive to Christ Jesus. But Satan is that sin that dwells within our bodies. Satan is that that troubles our minds. Satan is that that troubled Christ, as the brother said when Christ said, "Get behind me Satan." Did not Christ go before for all of the ransomed church of God? Then when He said, Get behind me Satan, did He not put him behind all of the children of God? In the sense that he (Satan) will never deceive one of them until they are lost. If this is not true then Satan has the greater power, does he not? Satan is that that Paul sought the Lord to remove. Paul had those troubles, you have those troubles, I have those troubles in this life. I ask myself daily if I am a God-called minister, why do the thoughts pass through my mind that pass through there. It's nothing more than Satan tempting.

And so it goes on to say: "And the Lord said unto Satan, hast thou considered my servant Job?" In other words, hast thou considered my church? I love to think of that as the church. Maybe I'm wrong in that, am I brethren? Hast thou considered my church? And what does Satan say to Him? He says, you have him hedged in. In other words, he knew, Satan himself knows he has no power, no temptation, no deceiving, unless God permits. God rules and reigns in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay His hand or say, why doest thou. So He is talking about (the Saviour), as He speaks of Job, I believe the old testament is full of types and shadows pointing to the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

"And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth." I want to ask you, my dear hearers, and I

trust my brethren this morning, is there anyone in the earth like you? You know, I believe the poet said, Is there anyone like me, so far from God I lie, it often makes me weep and cry. And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job? You know this came to me very forcefully that Job is a type of the church. Do you ever find where God ever put His love in the heart of a poor trembling sinner, in this Book, that he ever desired to go back to the ways of Satan?

Even though Paul suffered shipwreck, he suffered imprisonment, he was beaten with many stripes, he was put in prison and all of these things and it seems that before the light shined around about him that he was traveling on flowery beds of ease, it seems he had all kind of friends as the Prodigal son did when he left his father's house. He had plenty of money, he had all kinds of friends. But when the money was gone the friends were gone were they not? And the Lord said unto Satan, Hath thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth. There is none like the children of God upon the face of this earth.

I told some of the brethren that I enjoyed so much the visit of Elder Foreman the other night and the other brethren that were with him, Elder Reeves Smith and I told them, even if I'm not included in it, I've had a wonderful life just to live among these people, to hear them tell what the Lord has done for them.

"And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man." Job denies this. God's children deny this. They deny being perfect. But the thing of it is, my dear hearers, He says I have put their sins as far away as the east is from the west and know them against you no more and that your robes shall be washed white as snow in the blood of the Lamb.

Then how does He see his church? Does He see it in it's sins, then he hasn't put them away has he? But I believe when the Lord looks down and sees His church He sees it as a bride adorned for her husband. That's the way I believe He sees His church. Perfect, an upright man, one that fears God. You know the world at large doesn't fear God. There are people who don't believe there is a hereafter. There are people that don't believe there is a God. And there is a people that worship Him in vain. And there is a people that deny Him. There is a people that deny His powers. But there is a people called of God. Christ died for a certain number of people and the scripture says not even the angels of heaven know; but their names were recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life before the foundation of the world.

I asked a minister, he told me he was a minister, not long ago, if he believed the scripture in the Book of Revelation where it says that all shall be saved, that may not be verbatim, whose names are recorded in that Book. He said, Well I don't know why not. I said, well, if you believe that, then tell me how one of them can be lost or one added to it, because that Book is sealed with seven seals and no man in earth and no man in heaven or no man under the earth is worthy to loose the seals and look thereon. If we don't see God as the Supreme Architect of this Universe and see Him as knowing all things from the very beginning, then He ceases to be God. He wouldn't be any more than you or I if He's got to wait until tomorrow to see what I'm going to do because tomorrow old Satan will probably be very present with me. Will he with you? You and I don't have the power to tell Satan to get behind us as Christ did. But I believe that Christ, when he said, Get thee behind me Satan, meant for him to get be-

hind and he's there.

"And Satan answered the Lord, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life." All that a man has he will give for his life. "But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life."

You see my dear hearers, Satan has no power to pluck out the life of the saints of God. He goes as far as he can, he afflicts you, he gives you evil thoughts, he gives you trouble on every hand but he has no power whatsoever to take your life, just as he did Job. And we find that the Lord gave him permission to afflict Job. From the sole of his foot to the top of his head were sores and boils and even Job's wife said, Just curse God and die. What did Job say? And what does the church say? What would you say? What has it made you do? You know I have seen those whose companions don't believe this doctrine, won't have it, but it will make you leave your home, your families, and often your wife, your children, those that are sick to go somewhere and to be with those of like precious faith, will it not? So Satan went forth in the presence of the Lord and smote Job with sores and boils from the sole of his feet to his crown and here we see this affliction. Here we see what Satan has done to the church of God. And remember now, we must remember there are some things as we read these scriptures and pray for understanding that we must remember as we read them. Remember that he cannot touch his life, and remember that God has said that he was a perfect man and I believe that God sees this church as a perfect church because He's going to present it, as He has said, to the Father in that day only beknown unto him. He's going to present it, as He has said, to the Father in that day only beknown unto Him. He's going to present it perfect, without spot, without wrinkle, without blemish, think about it my dear hearers.

Is Satan not behind you, get behind me Satan, get behind me Satan. Yes, he's back there, and didn't Job's wife say, Just curse God and die. And what did he tell her? What would you tell somebody this morning should you come down to a bed of affliction and they would say, if God were just this wouldn't happen, just curse God and die. What would you tell them? You'd tell them just like Job did: You speak as one of the foolish women. You speak as one of the foolish women. You see, my dear hearers, these things are given of God freely, these things are first. I heard this morning something that did my heart good. I heard someone say they heard Brother Soloman's wife say yesterday that she used to think she was first in his life but now she was second.

You see, my dear hearers, God comes first. He said you seek me with (I don't know the exact quotation) all your heart and with all your soul, and all these things, He comes first. These things are the first and the foremost in life because Satan is behind and all the things of Satan you see. But what does the scripture say about Satan? He said he would deceive the very elect if it were possible. He (Satan) would deceive the very elect if it were possible. You see, my dear hearers, he would deceive Job, he would deceive the church, he would deceive them all if it were possible. But it's not possible. It's not possible for one that Christ died on the tree of the cross for and said, "It is finished," it's not possible that one can be plucked from His hand. But that they all, what did He say? In the 17th chapter of John when he prayed to the Father: He said they are in the world but they are not of it. You see, there's a difference. So we become a dual person, become the warfarer.

I don't have to tell you when you do

wrong or something out of the way, that you've done that. There's something in here will tell you that. When you lie down on your pillow at night there's something will say, I wish I hadn't done that, I wish I hadn't said that. What is it? It is that that is pure. It's that that's within. I take away the old and stony heart and give you a heart of flesh. That's the heart of understanding. I give you a pure heart. And if it's pure, then my dear hearers, how is anything going to pollute it? If God gives you something that's pure, then how is Satan going to pollute that? Get behind me Satan. You and I don't have that power do we?

But aren't you glad that Jesus Christ came here to this low ground of sin and sorrow and went before us, conquered death, hell and the grave and is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high, making intercession for the saints. Someone said that He is there preparing a place. The place is already prepared. There are two places prepared. And I'll tell you one thing my dear hearers, that fire that will burn was not prepared because there wasn't going to be anyone there. It's going to be just as many there to be cast into that lake of fire — He'll say, Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you. And it's going to be just as everlasting as heaven is.

When we've been there ten thousand years bright shining as the sun, you'll have no less days to sing God's praise than when you first begun. I believe they were false witnesses that came to Job and told him that his cattle were gone, Job was a wealthy man, you know, that to me is a type of the children of God when the've been born again. You know, the wealth of this world doesn't seem all that important any more does it. How many of you in your early years had set great goals in this life? You were going to be somebody in this world and when the Lord melted your heart it didn't seem to be important any more did it?

And so those false witnesses, those false messengers as they may have been, came to Job and told him that he (Satan) destroyed his family and his earthly possessions. To me that represents false witnesses that come to God's children but they don't deceive one of them. It never changed Job one iota. All of the afflictions that Satan brought about, and you can rest assured my dear hearers if God has placed His love in your heart, all the temptations that Satan will ever bring upon you in this life will never pluck you out of His hand. He'll never turn one of them back to the ways of this world. He'll never receive one of them. But they all shall come forth in that day, bright shining as the sun. They'll have no less days to sing God's praise than when they first begun.

Yes, I believe that this is a beautiful type of the church of God. When God's people come together Satan comes among them also. Satan is that that's within us. Going up and down, and to and fro in the earth, in this earthly tabernacle. Deceived and being deceived. Deceive the very elect if it were possible.

But aren't you glad that God so fixed it and that He has paid the price for all of our sins, not part of them. If there had been something left for you and I to do old Jonah would have had to swim a little ways when he went down in the belly of the whale. But there you see a complete deliverance. He was delivered out on dry land. He didn't have to wade. He didn't have to swim. You know, I believe all of God's ministers are taught in the school of Jonah. Let's suppose that Jonah had gone straight way to Nineveh when the Lord told him to go down there and preach to that wicked city, what would he have preached to them? He didn't have an experience, he didn't have anything to preach to them. But he went the way the Lord had prepared for him to go. He went the way of the sea and the whale swallowed him there and

he went to the depth of the sea and the sea weeds wrapped around his neck and then what did he say? I vow that salvation is of the Lord. And that old fish vomited him out on dry land. A very beautiful type of the deliverance of God's people.

You shall be delivered on that celestial shore and that celestial city whose builder and maker is God eternal in the heaven on the wings of His love. Someone has said here at this Association, that He will never set foot on land again. But He says He's coming again, to meet you in the air, to take you home on the wings of His love, present you to the Father without spot, wrinkle, blemish or any such thing.

My dear hearers, Satan will never get in front of one of you to hinder that straight and narrow path. If Satan could get in front that wouldn't be a straight and narrow path would it, you'd have to detour to get around would we not? But I find that that straight and narrow path, that all of the obstacles have been removed. You know, as a small boy, we used to walk a lot of places we went. We went through the woods, the shortcuts but we had to go around the steep places and the bluffs, the ruts and the rocks and the trees and the paths were crooked. But the pathway to heaven, that pathway that Christ laid down for you, all has been removed. And Satan has too because he's behind, he's not in front. You are traveling home to glory.

Someday this life will be over. Some day you are going to see Him for yourself and not another. And someday you will know in fullness what you have only known in part. Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man what God has prepared for them that love Him. And them that love Him, old Satan is behind. Never be in front, never deceive. Bless your heart you shall see Him for yourself and not another, be like Him and be satisfied and Satan won't be there. He won't be there then. It will all be pure, white and He, as someone said, I believe, yesterday, we won't need the sun by day as we have it today or the moon by night for He shall be the light of His people.

May God bless you and keep you and cause His light to shine upon you is my prayer for Christ's sake and come back to see us when you can. Thank you!

Elder Raymond Goad

November 4, 1985

Dear Elder Williams:

It is time to renew my subscription to the dear Signs of the Time. I sure love the Signs of the Times, sure hope I can always be able to keep it coming to me as long as I live.

Find enclosed a check for $18.00 for two years subscription.

Thanking you in advance,

Mrs. Bonnie Gover
Rt. 5, Box 411
Dothan, Ala. 36371

Brethren in Christ:

I am enclosing a check to renew my subscription to the "Signs of the Times" for another year; the balance, a small gift.

I feel very blessed to be able to partake of the spiritual food provided therein.

May the Lord continue to bless you in your endeavors in behalf of his "little ones."

In Christian Love,
Marjorie Harris
1425 2nd Ave. SP 13
Chula Vista, CA. 92011

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

LUKE XV

It is well for us to note that there are three parables in this fifteenth chapter of Luke, and all three are linked together in a remarkable manner. The first is the parable of the lost sheep, the second is the parable of the lost piece of money, the third is the parable of the lost son, improperly called the "prodigal" son. The word "prodigal" means wasteful. This son was worse than wasteful of the goods divided unto him, he was "lost" and in effect "dead." Verse twenty-four gives the real kernel of the parable: "This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." So let us call it the parable of the "lost" son," not of the "prodigal" son, as it is generally headed in most of our Bibles. What is a parable? It is a placing of natural things alongside of spiritual things to effectively point a truth. Jesus employed this figure of speech many times in addressing the unbelieving multitudes, as for instance see Matthew xiii. in verification of Psalm lxxviii. 2, and Isaiah vi. 9, 10. Verses one and two of Luke fifteen give the situation which gave direct occasion for Jesus to declare these parables. Going back into Luke fourteen, we see from verse three, Jesus had been addressing the lawyers and Pharisees, and also in verse twenty-five he had been addressing the multitudes. The effect of these discourses of Jesus on his hearers is shown in verses one and two of Luke fifteen. The publicans and sinners drew near for to hear him, but the Pharisees and scribes murmured at what he said and found fault because he received sinners and ate with them. Thus, Jesus' preaching was, as ever, discriminating, and separated between those who hungrily hung upon his words because it was just what their souls needed, and those who self-righteous and self-satisfied needed not a savior and knew not that they were sinners. Keeping this fact in mind: the two kinds of people in this congregation confronting Jesus, the one wanting to hear him and the others hating and not believing his sayings, we can easily see the primary application of these three parables. Let us glance at each a moment before taking up more especially the one of the lost son.

The parable of the lost sheep sets forth the work of God the Son in redemption. The ninety and nine are left in the wilderness, while the sheep that is lost is sought for and found by the Shepherd. The ninety and nine are not left safe in the fold, they are left in the wilderness. These ninety-nine do not represent at all those who are saved. The ninety-nine were in the wilderness and were left there. Hence they signify the Pharisees and scribes who objected to Jesus' teachings. These, satisfied with themselves as they were, were in the wilderness of unbelief and unregeneracy. The lost sheep, when found, was not brought back to the ninety-nine in the wilderness. The parable does not so state. The lost one, found, was carried on the shoulder of the shepherd and brought "home," where friends and neighbors were who could join in the glad rejoicing at the successful issue of the shepherd's search. This "lost" one is, in figure, the needy souls who drew near to Jesus to hear him, as declared in verse one. The Son of God was manifested in the flesh to seek and to save his lost sheep. He labored in this search, he was burdened, he was in agony, he hanged bleeding upon the cross. He laid down his life for the lost sheep. But he arose from the dead bringing up with him from the captivity of sin and from under the power of death, those whom the Father had in eternity committed to his care—the "lost" ones. When he arose trium-

phant leading captivity captive and ascended into heaven to give gifts unto men, there was indeed more joy, yea vastly more, rejoicing in heaven over the victorious outcome of the Son's journey to earth, than there was over the ninety-nine self-justified persons left in the wilderness not needing any repentance, for there was not at all any rejoicing whatsoever over these latter.

The parable of the lost piece of money. The woman, it seems to us, in her search for the lost piece of money does not go outside her house, but searches diligently everywhere within the house. In her search, she uses a candle. Does she not represent the work of the Holy Spirit? If the first parable sets forth the work of God the Son in redemption, the woman in her search for the lost money shows the work of the Holy Spirit. The lamp used by the woman is significant of the holy Scriptures, because the Spirit uses the word in his work of searching the hearts of those within the house. The house is not merely the visible kingdom, but the whole house of God: those manifested publicly as "found" by the Spirit and also those who may not be visibly connected with the kingdom but those whose souls are searched by the "lamp" of the word made applicable to them by the Holy Spirit. Psalm cxix. 105, would seem to indicate this. The lost piece of money is without value while it is lost. No matter what the monetary value stamped upon it, it cannot be used for any purpose for which money is used, while it is lost. It cannot be used to pay a debt, nor to purchase anything, nor for any other financial end, while it is lost. It needs to be found and restored to circulation before it is of any value. Yet, all the time it is lost it bears the stamp of the government to which it belongs, even though it is in a useless state. Saul of Tarsus was the property of God even before he was regenerated. All unknown to Saul, he was a chosen vessel of God, and had been so from eternity, but he did not know it until he was "found," nor was he any good to the church until he was "found." Jesus died to save his people from their sins. Having done so, the Holy Spirit sends the word with power experimentally into the hearts of the elect of God to bring them to the knowledge of the truth and to unite them vitally to their divine Head so they can bring forth fruit unto God. But there is no fruit-bearing until vitally united experimentally to Christ, just as the money while lost is without value no matter what may be stamped upon it. Apart from Christ, God's people have no value. Joined with Christ, they are good for something; without him, they are good for nothing. Right here, please note these zeros. 000,000,000. What is their value? Nothing. But, now, let us put 1 in front of them. Thus: 1,000,000,000. The 1 gives value to the zeros, but without the 1 the zeros have no value no matter how many they may be. The 1 is Christ. He, the Head, makes us nothings leap into significance.

And now we come to the parable of the lost son. "A certain man had two sons." Not just any man, but a "certain" man. This man, we think, was Abraham, because Jesus here is addressing none but Jews. The Jews were the descendants of Abraham. Isaac had two sons: Ishmael and Isaac. He had others afterward by Keturah, but we are not thinking of those now. Ishmael, the child of his flesh; Isaac, the child of promise. Two great lines of Jews sprang from Abraham: the natural Jew, the spiritual Jew. These scribes and Pharisees who murmured at Jesus because he received sinners and ate with them, were Jews naturally. As Ishmael mocked Isaac, so did these mock Jesus and those who truly believed him. Those who drew near to Jesus for to hear him because their hearts had been opened to receive him, might well have been Jews in heart,

spiritually so because their circumcision may doubtless have been in the heart by the Holy Spirit and not merely outward in the flesh. How else would they have been drawn near to him to hear him, while others drew away from him? These two classes are the two sons of the "certain man." The Pharisees, in their self-righteousness, were the stay-at-home good son, good in their own estimation. These professed to have deserved well of their father because they had not at any time transgressed the commandments. The younger son demanded of his father the portion of goods belonging to him. According to the Jewish custom, the oldest son always had priority over the younger. This was seen in Jacob and Esau. Esau the elder was displaced by the younger. Jacob found favor while Esau was rejected. The same is the case here in the parable. That which is natural is first in evidence, but afterward comes the spiritual and takes precedence over the natural: thus the elder serves the younger. The Father, being asked by the younger for his portion, also gives unto the elder his portion: as it is written. "He divided unto them his living." These blessings thus divided between the two, could have been only natural blessings. Because had they been spiritual blessings, the younger could hot have wasted them and lost them. The spiritual blessings with which God has blest his people in Christ before the foundation of the world, are such as cannot be wasted nor mortgaged nor sold. Nor equally so, could the portion divided to the elder son have been spiritual blessings because to the self-confident are not given spiritual blessings, but only to the poor in spirit, for it is the meek who shall inherit the earth, not the self-exalted. As to these blessings which did pertain to the Jews, we have not far to seek. In Romans ix. we have the list: "To whom (Israelites) pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." The younger son, receiving his portion, departed "not many days after." How rapidly did Israel decline. This was exhibited at Sinai while Moses was away from them in the mount. They made a golden calf and ascribed to it the deliverance from Egypt, the glory whereof was rightly the Lord's. "Not many days after" coming out of Egypt, we find them idolatrous. "Not many days after" coming into the land of Canaan under Joshua's leadership, we find them defeated at Ai because of the golden wedge hidden among them, obtained in disobedience from the accursed ruins of Jericho. How quickly did the fine gold become dim! Having wasted his substance in riotous living, having spent it all, and the famine coming where he was, the younger son finds himself reduced to beggary, hunger and want. All this was verified in Israel's history. Again and again did the nation go in the way of the Gentiles and heaped to themselves refuges of lies, which availed them not. Yet when they turned unto the Lord, he heard them and sent them deliverance. How very great is his mercy toward those with whom he is in covenant-relation! His compassion is very wonderful. This younger son finally "came to himself." He was awakened to see his true condition. How very well he represents those who, circumcised in heart, are made to rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh! "He came to himself." Who can do this, except they be convicted of sin by the Spirit of Truth? The sinner cannot see himself as he truly is, in the sight of the just and holy God, but by the entering into him of the commandment so that he finds the law to be unto death, killing him to the love of sin and to any expectation of escape therefrom save by the might of Jesus

Christ. "He came to himself" is explained by verse twenty, in which it states he "came to his father." There can be no coming unto salvation save as the sinner is awakened to the true knowledge of himself. Coming to the true knowledge of one's sinful condition by nature is the first step in coming "home." In verses eighteen and nineteen he makes to himself the confession which he expects to make when he shall meet his father. He resolves to ask his father to receive him back on the basis of a hired servant. But this can never be! Never on the basis of "law" can a son be restored to the "home." To be received back as a hireling would be restoration on a legal footing, and not on the ground of grace. Impossible! And the son comes to know later that there can be no such status for him at "home," no matter how unworthy he may feel. While the son was yet a great way off, the father saw him and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him. Before ever he could make his confession, the father gathered him to himself. Thus the covenant of God's mercy in Christ gathers the wanderer in unconditionally, not on the basis of any confession or otherwise. Whatever confession is to fall from the recreant lips must come as the after effect of love and compassion, and is not the cause thereof. Then, after the revelation to him of the love of his father, pours from the heart of the "found" one his confession of unworthiness and the acknowledgment that his sin has been primarily against heaven, that his sin is against God far more than man. But not a word does the son say to his father about being restored on the basis of a hireling. He had thought to do this previously, but such a rush of love as comes from his father quenches all such false fancies as are based on legal expectations. Not one word of blame or condemnation comes from the rejoicing parent's lips. All is love and forgiveness. In answer to the plea of the son that he is no more worthy to be called his son, the father commands the best robe to be brought and put upon the son. This best robe is the imputed righteousness of Christ. This is all the worthiness the sinner needs to fully restore him to his rightful heritage in the covenant of the father, and without this imputed righteousness of Christ nothing else will avail to obtain favor with the father. Christ's righteousness is the answer to our unworthiness. In addition, the ring is put on the son's finger, thus are the saved sinner's works linked up with the covenant of grace. Good works are the fruit of faith, and are not the cause thereof. Acceptable works follow justification, never do they precede the latter. New shoes are put on the feet. Just so, there can be no walking in obedience to the precepts of the covenant of grace except as the effect of justification through the imputed righteousness and obedience of Christ. As the hand represents works, and the feet represent the walk, so do the works and the walk of the child of God spring from justification by faith in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Rings and shoes were not put on slaves, but on free men. How wonderfully do these ornaments show the son to be, not a slave as he once felt he was willing to be, but a freeborn son! (Rom. viii. 2.) "Bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry." Here is a sacrificial feast. The Jews of old had a custom which they called the "feast of the threshold." Whenever a son would run away from home and come back after an interval of time, one of the first things done by the father on the return of the scapegrace son would be to kill a sacrifice at the door of the house before allowing the "found" to enter. This sacrifice was supposed to atone for any transgressions the boy may have committed away from home. These being "covered" by the blood, the boy was

free to enter again the home he had left. You will not find this sacrifice enumerated in the law of Moses among the others there set down. It was simply a custom which grew up out of Jewish tradition, but it is a very comely one. The killing of the fatted calf and then the eating thereof, presents the truth of sacrifice and then of feasting. Only on the ground of the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ can the lost sinner be found and restored wholly reconciled to the Father. And from this sacrifice of the Lamb of God comes not only our peace with God, but the living food which feeds the souls of the lost when found. Except we eat his flesh and drink his blood, there is no life in us. The sacrifice of himself becomes the feast of his church. So beautifully, therefore, does the ordinance of the Lord's supper set forth the food and drink of the Lord's people, at the same time that it memorializes his death until he comes again.

After all this gladsome reception of the younger son, we find in the parable the description of the anger of the elder son because of his jealousy at the rejoicing made over his erring brother's restoration. Verse two of this chapter fifteen shows very plainly who this elder son is. Comparing verse twenty-seven with verse thirty-two, we see a great light. The son had been received "safe and sound," says verse twenty-seven; and in the thirty-second verse, we have it that the dead is alive again and the lost is found. Putting these two verses together, and letting them explain each other, what have we? To be "safe" is to be "alive from the dead," and "soundness" is to be "found" of God's grace and restored to the "home" predestined for us. In the thirtieth verse, the angry elder son refuses to acknowledge the restored one as his brother. He says, "As soon as this thy son was come." "Thy son," not "my brother." How awfully do these words as they fall from the lips of anger and jealousy rightfully judge the one who utters them! In very truth, the lost one found is not the brother really of the self-righteous Pharisee. No, there is a great gulf between them, brothers in the flesh though they be. This elder son chides his father with never having given him a kid that he might make merry with his friends. Notice this! He wanted to make merry only with his own associates, no desire whatever to rejoice with his father. True it had been, that the errant younger son had wasted his living on harlots, but never did the father give him a feast to make merry with evil associates: yet the elder son wanted a feast only that he might make merry with his friends, not at all that he might rejoice with his father. What a picture is this of false religion, that religion of the natural man which knows no conviction of sin and repentance, but wants the favor of God only that it may continue in the paths of its own choice, to make merry with its own friends.

H. H. L.

ARTICLES

LAW AND GOSPEL

(Part of a letter by J. C. Philpott, 1861.)

My dear Sir – In one of your letters you expressed the wish that I should give my views upon this point – Why, in my judgment, the law is not a believer's rule of life... In doing so I shall take occasion to offer my thoughts on these three distinct points –

1. Why the law is not the believer's rule of life.
2. What is his rule?
3. Disprove the objection cast upon us that our views lead to doctrinal or practical antinomianism.

By a believer, I understand one who by faith in Christ is delivered from the curse and bondage of the law, and who knows something experimentally of the life, light, liberty, and love of the glorious gospel of the grace of God. By the law I understand chiefly, though not exclusively, the law of Moses. And by the rule of life I understand an outward or inward guide, by following which a believer directs his walk and conversation before God, the Church, and the world.

It is very necessary to bear strictly in mind that we are speaking here wholly and solely of a BELIEVER. What has the law to do with a believer in Christ Jesus? Is he required by the revealed will of God to take the law as the guiding rule of his life? I answer, No; and for several reasons.

1. God does not leave us at liberty to take at will one part of the law and to leave the other. It must be taken as a whole, or left as a whole, for God has so revealed it. I cannot find in any part of God's Word any mitigation of its terms, or any halving of it, so that, according to the views of many divines who have written on the subject, we may be dead to it as a covenant, and yet alive to it as a rule. The essential and distinguishing characteristic of the law is that it is a *covenant of works,* requiring full and perfect obedience, and attaching a tremendous curse to the least infringement of its commands. If then I, as a believer, take the law as my rule of life, I take it with its curse; I put myself under its yoke, for in receiving it as my guide, (and if I do not this, it is not my rule), I take it with all its conditions and become subject to all its penalties . . . The indispensable connection between a covenant and its rules is clearly shown in Gal. v. 1-6, where the apostle testifies to *"every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law."* It is idle to talk of taking the law for a rule of life, and not for a covenant; for the two things are essentially inseparable; and as he who keeps the whole law and yet offends in one point, is guilty of all (James ii. 10), so he who takes but one precept of the law for a rule, (as the Galatians took that of circumcision), by taking that one, virtually adopts the whole, and by adopting the whole puts himself under the curse which attaches to their infringement.

People speak very fluently about the law being a rule of life who little think of the resulting consequences; for amongst them is this, that its written precepts and not its mere spirit, must be the rule. Now, these precepts belong to it only as a covenant for they were never disjoined by the Authority that gave them, and what God hath joined together no man can put asunder. To show this connection between the precepts and the covenant is the chief drift of the Epistle to the Galatians, who were looking to the law and not the gospel, and having begun in the Spirit were attempting to be made perfect by the flesh. Read with enlightened eyes, this blessed Epistle would at once decide in favour of the gospel as our guiding rule of Christian conduct as distinct from the law which was never given to believers in Christ as the rule of their daily conduct and conversation. Observe how Paul chides those who would so act; he calls them "foolish Galatians", and asks who hath bewitched them that they should not obey the truth (that is, the gospel), "before whose eyes Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth, crucified among them." He appeals to their own experience and asks them: "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?" He draws a line of distinction here between those works which are done in obedience to the law as a guiding rule, and that power of God felt in the heart which attends a preached gospel when heard in faith, and asks them under which of the two they had received the teaching and testimony of the blessed Spirit. But observe, further, now

he bids them "walk in the Spirit" (Gal. v. 16). Now, to "walk" is to live and act, and the rule which he here gives for this living and acting is not the law but the Spirit, and he tells them the blessedness of this divine leading and guiding: "If ye be let of the Spirit, ye are not under the law"; that is, neither as a covenant or as a rule – that they were free from its curse as a condemning covenant, and from its commands as a galling yoke, which neither they nor their fathers could bear (Acts. xv. 10). But **to show them that this deliverance from the law did not set them free from a highter and more perfect rule of obedience, he bids them "fulfill the law of Christ",** which is love, a fruit of the Spirit and not produced by the law which worketh wrath and gendereth to bondage (Rom. iv. 15; Gal. iv. 24).

If we are willing to abide by the inspired Word of Truth, we need go to further than this very Epistle to decide the whole question, for in it we have laid down the rule according to which believers should walk, which is, "a new creature" (or a new creation): "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, Peace be on them, and on the Israel of God" (Gal. vi. 15-16). Is the law or the Spirit's work on the heart held out here as the rule of a believer's walk? The law is strictly a covenant of works; it knows nothing of mercy, reveals nothing of grace, and does not communicate the blessed Spirit. Why, then, if I am a believer in Christ and have received His grace and truth into my heart, am I to adopt for the rule of life that which does not testify of Jesus either in the Word or in my conscience? If I am to walk as a believer, in must be by a life of faith in the Son of God (Gal. ii. 20). Is the law my rule here? If it be, where are those rules to be found? "The law is not of faith." How, then, can it lay down rules for the life of faith? If I wish to walk as becometh a believer with the Church, what help will the law give me there? To walk as such must be by the law of love as revealed in Christ and made known in my heart by the power of God. If I am to walk in the ordinances of God's house, are these to be found revealed in the law?

We give the law its due honour. It had a glory, as the Apostle argues (II Cor. iii.) as the ministration of death and condemnation, but this glory is done away, and why are we to look to it now as our guiding rule? The ministration of the Spirit, of life, and of righteousness "doth much more exceed in glory", and why are we to be condemned if we prefer the Spirit to the letter, life to death, and righteousness to condemnation? A rule must influence as well as guide, or else it is a dead rule. If you choose to be ruled by the killing letter which can only minister condemnation and death, and we choose for our rule that which ministers the Spirit, righteousness, and life, which has the better rule? It is much to be feared that those who thus walk and talk have still the veil over their heart, and know nothing of what the Apostle means when he says: "Now the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. But we all with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (II Cor. iii. 17-18).

But not only have we these deductions to influence the mind in rejecting the law as a rule for a believer's walk, but we have the express testimony of God as a warrant for so doing. We read, for instance, that "I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God" (Gal. ii. 19); that "I am become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that I should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that I should bring forth fruit unto God"

(Romans vii. 4). As a believer in Christ, the law is dead to me, and I am dead to it. The Apostle has clearly and beautifully opened up this subject. He assumes that a believer in Christ is like a woman who is re-married after the death of her first husband; and he declares that "she is bound by the law to her husband as long as he liveth, but if the husband be dead she is loosed from the law of her husband" (v. 2). Of course the first husband is the law, and the second husband is Christ. Now, adopting this figure of Paul's, may we not justly ask: Which is to be the rule of the wife's conduct when re-married, the regulations of the first or of the second husband?

2. What, then, is the believer's rule of life? Is he without rule? A lawless wretch who because he abandons the law of Moses for his rule has no guide to direct his steps? God forbid! for I subscribe heart and soul to the words of the Apostle: "Being not without law to God, but under law to Christ" (I Cor. ix. 21). The believer then has a guiding rule which we may briefly call THE GOSPEL. This rule we may divide into two branches. The gospel as written by the divine finger upon the heart, and the gospel as written by the blessed Spirit in the Word of truth. These do not form two distinct rules, but the one is the counterpart of the other; and they are mutually helpful to and corroborative of each other. One of the four promises of the new covenant (Jer. xxxi. 31-34; Heb. viii. 8-12 compared), was: "I will put My law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts." This writing of the law of God in the heart, I need not tell you, is that which distinguishes it from the law of Moses which was written on tables of stone; and becomes an internal rule whereas the law of Moses was but an external rule. This internal rule seems to be pointed out in Romans viii. 2 where we find these words: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." By "the law of the Spirit of life", I understand that guiding rule (for a rule in Scripture is frequently called a law; the word law in Hebrew signifying literally "instruction") which the Spirit of God, as communicating life, is in a believer's heart. It is, therefore, the liberating, sanctifying, guiding influence of the Spirit of God in his soul which, as a law or rule, delivers him from "the law of sin and death"; by which I understand not so much the law of Moses, as the power and prevalency of his corrupt nature.

If this then be a correct exposition of the text, we have a guiding internal rule distinct from the law of Moses, and a living rule in the heart, which that never was nor could be; for it did not communicate the Spirit (Gal. iii. 2-5). But this internal rule, as being "the law of the Spirit of life", has power to lead all the children of God; for in the same chapter (v. 14) the Apostle declares that "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God". This leading which is peculiar to the children of God and is an evidence of their sonship, delivers them from the law; for "If we be led of the Spirit we are not under the law" (Gal. v. 18) either as a covenant or as a rule, for we have a better covenant and a better rule (Heb. viii. 6). What is the main use of a rule but to lead? But who can lead like a living Guide? How can a dead law lead a living soul? The very proof that we are the children of God is that we are led by the Spirit; and this inward leading becomes our guiding rule. And is it not a disparaging of the guidance of the blessed Spirit to set up in opposition to His guiding rule a dead law and to call those Antinomians who prefer a living Guide to a dead letter? This living Guide is that holy and blessed Spirit who "guides into all truth" (Jn. xvi. 13). Here is the main blessedness of the work and grace upon the heart, that the leading and guiding of the blesses Spirit

form a living rule every step of the way; for He not only quickens the soul into spiritual life, but maintains the life which He gave, and performs (or finishes, margin) it until the day of Jesus Christ (Phil. i. 6). This life is eternal, as the blessed Lord at the well of Samaria declared, that the water which He should give the believer should be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life (Jn. iv. 14). It is then this springing well in a believer's soul which is the guiding rule, for, as producing and maintaining the fear of God, it is "a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death" (Proverbs xiv. 27).

But lest this guiding internal rule be abused, which it might be by enthusiasm, and that they might not be left to substitute delusive fancies for the teaching of the Holy Spirit, the God of all grace has given to His people an external rule in the precepts of the gospel as declared by the mouth of the Lord and His apostles, but more particularly as gathered up in the epistles as a standing code of instruction for the living family of God. Nor do these at all clash with the rule of which I have just spoken, but on the contrary harmonize entirely and thoroughly with it; for, in fact, it is one and the same rule; the only difference between them being that the blessed Spirit had revealed the one in the written Word, and by the application of that Word to the soul makes the other to be a living rule in the heart.

Now there is not a single part or particle of our walk and conduct before God or man which is not revealed and inculcated in the precepts of the gospel; for, though we have not minute directions, we have what far excels all such unnecessary minutiae — most blessed principles enforced by every gracious and holy motive, and forming, when rightly seen and believed, a most perfect code of inward and outward conformity to the revealed will of God, and of all holy walk and conduct in our families, in the Church, and in the world.

I would say then that a believer has a rule to walk by which is sufficient to guide him in every step of the way; for if he has the internal quickenings, teachings, and leadings of the Spirit to make his conscience tender in the fear of God, and has the law of love written upon his heart by the finger of God; and if besides this he has the precepts of the gospel as a full and complete code of Christian obedience, what more can he want to make him perfect in every good word and work (Heb. xiii. 21)? Can the law do any of these things for him? Can it give him life, in the first instance, when it is a killing letter? Can it maintain life, if it be not in its power to bestow it?

But it may be asked: Do you then set aside the two great commandments of the law: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," etc., and "thy neighbour as thyself"? No, On the contrary, the gospel as an external and internal rule fulfills them both, for "love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. xiii. 10). So that this blessed rule of the gospel **not only does not set aside the law as regards its fulfillment, but so to speak, absorbs into itself and glorifies and harmonizes its two great commandments, by yielding to them in obedience of heart, which the law could not give; for the believer serves in newness of Spirit, not in the oldness of the letter** (Rom. vii. 6), **as Christ's free man** (Jn. viii. 32), **and not as Moses's bondslave.** This is a willing obedience and not a legal task. This will explain the meaning of the Apostle: "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man"; for the new man of grace, under the powerful influence of the Holy Spirit, delights in the law of God, not only for its holiness, but as inculcating that to do which fills the renewed heart with inward delight—love to God and His people.

CONTRIBUTIONS

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OBITUARIES

SISTER LETTIE BARBOUR

It pleased our Dear Lord, to remove from our midst, Sister Lettie Shelton Barbour. She was the daughter of the late Harvey Shelton and Martha Pickeral Shelton. She was the widow of Thomas Barbour. Sister Barbour passed from this life September 30, 1985.

Sister Barbour was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, Gretna, Virginia. She was received by experience and baptized April 10, 1947. She believed and loved the doctrine, Salvation by Grace. She attended meetings as long as she could.

Sister Barbour leaves to mourn her: one son, Lorenza A. Barbour of Hurt, Va. Five grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted by her beloved pastor Elder O.K. Tench and Rudy Hearn and Larry Brafford. The funeral was held in Springfield Primitive Baptist Church and her body was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park.

Written by a sister in hope,

Carol R. Pickral
Elder O. K. Tench, Pastor
Oscar D. Pickral, Clerk

ELDER BENNIE NEAL CLIFTON

Amongst our sadness, there are many sweet memories as it falls our lot to record the passing of a dear father in Israel.

We desire first and above all to give thanks to God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ for the life and devotion of this dear servant and count it our most

rich blessing that we were enabled to walk with him these many years.

Bennie Neal Clifton was born May 18, 1910, one of twelve children of the late Austin Minter and Martha Jane Plasters Clifton. He grew up in the Vesta community and was given some most wonderful experiences of grace before ever being able to go to the church.

Bennie was about twelve years old on one occasion as his mother left to walk to church, and being filled with conviction, he begged God for a little glimpse of Heaven before he should depart into everlasting punishment. To his most wonderful surprise, a vision of almost unspeakable joy appeared,

Heaven came down my soul to greet,
and Glory crowned the mercy seat.

When he did get to go to the church for the first time, he went to the outside of the pulpit and wept that he could just be where the people met to praise and honor God. That dear esteem of the children of God, and his unwavering devotion to Christ, never left him through all his years of service and even in his most trying hours.

The Angel of the Lord appeared to Bennie in a dream also when he was a young lad. In the dream, Bennie felt he was a fugitive and a most wretched sinner. Hiding in the woods and trees, a beautiful young woman brought food to him. As he tried to escape to safety at his father's house, thinking to hide in a barn, a man dressed in white appeared riding a white horse. The man inquired of Bennie's father telling him he had watched Bennie in the wilderness and had sustained him there.

The walls of the barn opened and the man put a golden cuff on the wrist of Bennie to which was attached a gold chain. After he put Bennie on his horse to take him away, Bennie asked "How long must I serve?" The man looked back at Bennie and said to him, "Your sentence is Thirty-Three Years."

On June 2, 1934, Bennie was married to Miss (later Sister, whom he baptized) Edrie Ruth Terry at her father's home by the late Elder David Spangler. (Elder and Mrs. Spangler were dear friends in Christ to them both and were blessed to stand by them on the occasion of their fiftieth wedding anniversary.) This union was blessed with four daughters, Rebecca, Betty, Judy, and Carole, and at the time of his passing ten grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Sister Clifton was a dear companion to Elder Clifton, sticking close by his side through raising their family and through all his ministry.

In September, 1939, Bennie was received by experience into New Dan River Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized the next day by the late Elder Noel B. Gilbert. In September of 1943, he was found qualified and ordained as deacon of his home church.

Brother Bennie became very burdened with the call of the ministry and, thinking to escape as Jonah, went into the service of his country on April 4, 1944. He served until October 16, 1945. The Lord ruled in the sea also and as their ship came under attack in the North Atlantic, Bennie came before the men and preached his first sermon. A young man was there to witness the event and he came forward and embraced Brother Bennie. They were parted during the war, but were brought back together 19 years later to walk together as brethren for many years. This man, Brother Ruben Pickral of Bannister Springs Church was one of those who bore Elder Clifton's body out to its resting place.

Deacon Bennie Clifton was appointed to serve as a trustee of New Dan River Church (Vesta, Va.) in March, 1950. Another member of the church, Brother Henry Cassell, was given a dream or vi-

sion in early 1952. He was shown and told in the dream that "Bennie Clifton must preach the gospel!" Brother Cassell brought this before the church the fourth Saturday in April, 1952 and confronted Brother Clifton with his thoughts. Brother Clifton confessed and yielded to the ministry. He entered the pulpit of wood to stand in the defense of his Lord and Saviour the next day, the fourth Sunday in April, 1952.

Bennie Clifton was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry in July of 1953 and during his ministry he saw and was blessed to be kept,

Through many dangers, toils, and snares
I have already come;
'Tis Grace has led me safe thus far,
And Grace will lead me home.

Elder Noel Gilbert was a dear father in Israel to Elder Clifton, having spent many hours and nights at his home. As Elder Gilbert's health began to decline, Elder Clifton was called equal pastor with Elder Gilbert in June of 1955.

Elder Clifton visited many churches throughout the southeastern United States and was called upon to conduct hundreds of funerals and weddings. He also baptized scores. He was called at different times to serve Thomas Grove, Round Peak, Old Hollow (Stewart's Creek) and Spoon Creek Churches. At the time of his passing, Elder Clifton was the pastor of New Dan River, Liberty, and Goblingtown Churches. He never refused to serve anywhere he was called upon to do so.

As he was blessed to devote much of his time and resources, Elder Clifton saw New Dan River go from an unsealed building to its present condition with bathrooms, electricity and heat, and spent so many of his last days building a room onto the church for meals and overflow crowds. He remarked while working the room would be good for funerals. Little did we realize as soon as it was completed, his would be the first funeral in which it was used for such a crowd. The church grounds are also reminders of much of his work with an outdoor stand, a pond for baptizing, and now a perpetual trust-funded cemetery for our loved ones.

Through all the work though, Elder Clifton never considered it out of servitude but rather a labor of love. He would never want any honor to himself and he was always the first to count it OUR privilege to sit underneath the drippings of His blessings.

Even as Elder Clifton came to the end of his earthly pilgrimage, he was blessed with such a deep reconciliation to God's Will, and talked freely and joyfully of passing to the other side.

I am glad that I am born to die,
from grief and woe my soul shall fly.

Elder Clifton was diagnosed as having cancer in January, 1985. The doctors examined him and said he was healthy as a fifty year old man. After surgery, he counted it a privilege to have his side pierced and remain so until his death, saying if his Lord did so he was no better. But our prayers were answered in that we were given a few more months with him and he was able to returen to his churches before his passing. His last sermon at his home church, while very ill and in pajamas and robe still outlined the great sovereignty of God our Saviour. He left admonishments to the churches to be faithful to Christ and love each other; That Salvation was by Grace and that by Revelation only.

As I sat by his bed and watched him grow weaker, I remembered the many times in the last six or eight years he had told me this was the way it would be, but I just never could accept it.

On the fourth Sunday in April of this year (1985) from a wheelchair in the

chapel of the local hospital, Elder Clifton laid hands on and prayed for the latest new member of his home church, after baptism that morning, then sat up and talked to a few of the other members and friends that were present. The first of the week following he became more ill and went into a coma eight days prior to his passing. Sister Clifton stayed right beside Brother Clifton throughout all his suffering and ministered so lovingly to all his needs. As was shown her in a dream, she followed with him right up to the river of death and stood by him as he breathed his last breath.

Sweet to rejoice in lively hope,
that when my change shall come;
Angels shall gather round my bed,
and waft my spirit home.

Elder Clifton passed away on May 13, 1985, only five days short of being 75 years old. The local funeral home (Howell's) said it was the largest crowd ever to attend the viewing of a body. Funeral services were held for Elder Clifton at his home church on May 15, 1985 by Elders Paul Hopkins, John Wingfield, and Ernest Branche, there was a great multitude in attendance, and he was borne out to his desired resting place near the church.

From the fourth Sunday in April, 1952 when he first went into the pulpit unto the fourth Sunday in April, 1985 and his last prayer Elder Clifton's servitude to the Lamb he loved was Thirty-Three years to the day!

In this day of turmoil and trials may we all consider this experience that has touched our lives and be assured that God is Sovereign!

We love Elder Clifton and we miss him, but again we hope we're thankful for the humble walk he was given, and the times we've sung together, cried together, and communed together.

May we all bow in humble submission and give God all the Praise, Honor, and Glory, for unto us was Christ's words felt, "Rejoice, *rather,* that your names are written in Heaven."

When the clouds shall part and the myraids of angels spring forth, and the King in all His Glory shall appear, may we be blessed to be changed in a moment and go forth to dwell together forever.

When Earth can no delights afford,
He spreads a Heav'nly feast;
Such dainties crown his royal board-
"To be with Christ is best!"

Submitted by:
Elder Paul Hopkins
Clerk James Shelor

SISTER LOLA CHAMBERS RUSSELL

Sister Lola Russell was received as a member of the Durham Primitive Baptist Church on December 1, 1984. She passed away in the late evening of that same day.

She had been very ill for several months and while in the hospital the last time she requested the pastor and deacons to tell the church that she desired membership with us. She was unanimously received as a member at a special call meeting on December 1, 1984.

Sister Russell was not able to be baptized with water. But the church had seen evidence in her life that she had been baptized with fire and the Holy Spirit. She had been attending Old Baptist meetings for most of her life and rejoiced in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace and we believe that her hope of heaven has now become a reality to her spirit.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the spirit that they may rest from their labors: and their works do follow them."

C. Humbarger, Clerk

Signs of the Times

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PSALM 3

Lord, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise up against me.

Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah.

But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.

I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah.

I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me.

I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about.

Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God: for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.

Salvation belongeth unto the Lord; thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah.

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EDITORIAL

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God my be perfect throughly furnished unto all good works. **(II Timothy 3: 16, 17)**

I am sure that somewhere, in some of our religious periodicals that I have already said perhaps too much on this text, but a time has come about to where I feel to notice it again. I am sure that it means what it says. If it does not mean what it says, then I would appreciate some one clarifying the writings of inspiration so that we would have a better system of understanding inspiration.

To me the inspired word of God means what it says. If it does not mean what it says, then poor students like I am are in a great need of instruction. In the first place, each reader of these sacred matters needs qualifying by a higher state of intelligence than Paul was in when he wrote by inspiration. We are told by Inspiration that all Scripture is given by the Inspiration of God. It bearing that approval, it is presented to us as being from God and of God; that whatever utilization of application is made of it that it is perfectly useful in teaching and in application of the said Scriptures to any Phase of God's teachings. It is the doctrine of God our Saviour although it is the writings of men, even inspired men. In no way is there any danger or likelihood of failure or any way in which the writers of the Bible saying the wrong thing or leading the recipients of those writings to leading the brethren astray.

All Scripture is given by the inspiration of God. Here is the only safe place to tarry. Safety is found only in the reception and the following word by word the writing of Jesus Christ and His inspired apostles. That does not permit any of the followers of the blessed Lord differing from Him. Whatever He or they said or left on record on the pages of the Holy Bible was for us to obey. This declaration of the apostle is applicable to one and all of us that have been called to minister to and among the saints of God. To be sure, this does not give any Elder the right to skip over any portion, of Holy writ, and to raise objections or to deny any portion of it or to leve it off or to quibble or stagger or halt or dodge one syllable of the inspired testimony of the Saviour or any one of the inspired apostles.

One of the most noted Elders among our people made the bold assertion that he did not believe in giving admonitions. Our people gave him wide approval of the wide assertion. There are numerous Elders scattered over the United States that boldly and publicly and some of them daringly and boastfully that they do not use admonitions nor exhortations in their preaching and writing. Their reason for this is because that they did not believe in doing so. Such preaching

is not true and it is not a healthy atmosphere among the ministers of God--in fact it is doubtful if a single passage of Scripture can be found to substantuate anything like that in the Bible.

I have felt like for years that some eternal Being had to have an inspired mind in order for the Bible to have absolute authority. What a useless book the Bible would be if each writer in it was moved to write the Scriptures of divine truth, and that he had supreme authority to interpret it in his own judgement.

Again may I refer to the text at the head of this article. My dear brethren, let us be careful about disputing what the Saviour and the apostles commanded us to do. If any of us differ with what they said, who does it put in a precarious position? Is it us or them? If we take the authority to take out of the sacred Book what He has commanded us to do, doesn't He have the right to take out His promises to us out of the book of life? If not, why not?

Our text is found in the charge to Timothy. How much of this charge is applicable to Paul? To Timothy? To you and I? What man among us that has come under the laying on of hands in ordination to the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ? It is essential that all of the charges in it be given. There are not any minor items in this charge. Our text assures us that each item in this charge be given to the man being ordained. If not, I am taking the position that a man has not been scripturally ordained. My dear yoke fellows in the ministry, yea, to every reader who has been baptized into the church of Jesus Christ, isn't it bidden that an applicant for baptism is obligated to be completely immersed in water to be properly baptized? Likewise, did the rules laid down by the apostle Paul include all of the charges that was given by him for the orderly ordination of a deacon? The Scriptures tell us in a sure and in no uncertain term that these rules for the ordination of deacons are to be carried out. Again, let me say that I have heard favorably known elders speak lightly of both charges to ministers and deacons. One noted and favorably known Elder said that there was not any use for charging deacons and ministers because they did not intend to obey them anyway.

Yet, with a tendency for lack of confidence in our brethren is one of our major weaknesses. I am told on many occasions that God will take care of His church and His people; that is a mark of meddling with God's business. Where my dear brethren in Holy writ is carelessness and neglect and closing our eyes to the ordinanes, instructions and commandments of God set aside by His servants. We are under commandment by God the Father, God the Son to follow His commandments, definitely not to set up a rule and conduct and procedure of our own. If we do not have any stronger incentive for adding to or taking from the direct and spoken commandments of the Head of the church than to base what we are removing or canceling are certainly on a weak foundation and are in a pitiful condition. After the direct spoken commandment of the Saviour, the Son of God, the inspired truth as given to us by the glorious Sufferer of the body of Christ, we have either lost something that He gave us for the benefit of the men of God, or we have added to His inspiration something in addition to His inspired word.

My dear brethren is there any difference in the error of taking from what He said than there is in adding to it? I do not know of any sin that could be introduced among us worse than that of adding to or taking from what He instructed his apostles and ministers to carry out. This thought brings before us the gospel charge from Paul the apostle and minister of the gospel to the young fellow minister of the gospel of Christ. If I am

called by names and charges of being weak in the faith, so be it. The Elder the Apostle Paul was charged with this and that and the other. His answer to these charges was that none of these things move me. I would pray on bended knees that my Father enable me to bear any and all charges pressed against me when these charges are because of standing steadfast in defense of the doctrine of God our Saviour.

It is hard for me to understand anyone that boldly declares that they do not believe in exhortation (Acts 14: 22, 23; II Cor. 8: 17). They do not believe in admonitions (Rom. 15: 14). They do not believe in rebuking those that are yielding to the enticing suggestions of those that walk disorderly (Titus 1: 13, 25; 12: 5). I cannot understand how any man that professes to have been called of God to the work of an evangelist, to pastor churches, to minister in the militant kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ can say boldly, sometimes in an arrogant manner that they do not admonish; that they do not rebuke; that they do not exhort. Yes, I am well aware of the reason given for not doing so. They are bold to tell me why that they do not do so. Their reasons for not doing so are two fold. First, they do not believe in doing so; second, there is not any use of it.

My first reason for writing the things that I am writing is because that it has been placed there by the Head of the church. I do not profess to know more than my brethren, but you have a right to know what my views are. I do know that when Elder G. W. Berry gave me the charge, soon will be fifty years ago, that he was careful to charge me as to what they were ordaining me for. I further am sure that Elder R. W. Rhodes in the most tender, and yet authoritative manner was called upon to add to the remarks of Elder Berry and I am sure that both of them were thorough and explicit in giving the charge as they could be. I confess today, as I have confessed many times, that I have not been as punctual in hewing to the line in that way as I should have been.

Another thing that has been a mystery to me has been the boasting of many of our Elders in their attitude about admonishing God's children about following the Lord in the pleasant rite of baptism. The sad thing, yea, the pitiful thing is that many, if not the most, of our ordained elders is that they boast about NOT doing it. What is their reason for not doing it? They generally have several reasons for not doing it. First, the Arminians do it, that is admitted, but if that is acceptable as a reason, then they also, many of them, baptize the candidate. Does that prohibit us from baptizing the candidates? If not, why? I have had it put to me by the Elders of my day that I am to preach the word, but that that is the end of my work, that the believers are on their own as to them coming before the church.

That is a wonderful gift, preaching the word. But is that all that Paul said? Please be kind to me a poor beggar. Is that all that Paul commanded Timothy to do? Now is it? Did Paul command Timothy to preach the word and stop his commandment to him and to all other ministers? I freely admit that he told him to preach. But I insist that he told him to do other things. There was a good reason for the Apostle telling Timothy to do other things. He told that young minister to preach the word. Yes, it is freely admitted that he commanded Timothy to do that. But he did not stop there. I deny that preaching was all that Paul commanded him to do. In the way that all ministers should give a charge, Paul charged Timothy to be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrin, and he told him why for him to do so.

I have not run over this United States

telling people that I have been assigned to a place in the ministry as Timothy was, but for some reason best known unto God, my brethren says that I have been. If so, do I not have the same authority that Timothy did? If so, I will, as Elder Spangler told me a short time before he passed away, continue to do as Paul told Timothy, and as he told you and you and you to do.

I have scores of articles in past issues of the Signs in which I spoke repeatedly in defense of absolute predestination and admonishing the brethren to go forward in walking in these admonitions.

That has always been my policy. I told Elder Dodson that before I was put on the Signs staff. He was a man that was a believer in doing that. The founder of the Signs was a strong believer in admonishing the children of God. His noted son, Elder William was a strong believer in doing that. Many of the editors, if not each one of them, together with writer after writer for the Signs for more than a hundred years often encouraged God's little children about walking in the numerous admonitions and exhortations laid down in the Bible.

Please bear with me, a poor unworthy sinner.

Elder W. D. Griffin

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

MOUNTAIN CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Mountain Creek Primitive Baptist Church was organized October 24, 1935 in Claiborn County, Tennessee and is a member of the original Powell Valley Primitive Baptist Association.

The church is located on Owl Hollow Road about one mile west of Lone Mountain, Tennessee.

The meeting time is 11:00 o'clock Sundays following the third Saturday each month. Elder D. R. Cabbage is the moderator.

CORRESPONDENCE

32 Cloverdale Estate
Northport, Al. 35476
Dec. 5, 1985

Dear Brethren, Editors, Associate Editors of Signs Of The Times:

I am sending check for two years, and you may use the other as you may see fit.

I have been reading the Signs seven years. And I hope and believe that the Great God, the only true and Living God, has at many times caused me to rejoice in the reading. How dependent that we all are upon this All Wise, All Powerful, Merciful, Loving, God. So much of the time I am made to wonder how He could love such a sinner, worm of the dust as I am. But we know that He come down, born of a woman, lived and died for sinners, of whom I feel as the Apostle Paul, to be the chiefest of sinners. And if a Saint, the least of all. But Dear Brethren, that Precious Hope that I have is so Precious that I would not exchange if possible for everything in this world. Praise God from whom all blessing flow, Praise His Holy Name.

It has pleased God for me to have met you all, as unworthy as I feel to be. I surely hope that it will be Gods will for the Signs to be continued many years. And I want to say that, as with all things was fixed before the foundation of the world, and no man can change any of God's work. Please forgive me of all errors in my writing a sinner, if saved; saved by Grace and Grace alone.

Come to see us when you are given a mind to do so. We are always glad to have the dear children of God, of whom we feel to be, of the elect family to be with us at any time.

In hope of eternal life,
Elder W. T. Posey

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

ETERNAL LIFE.

"This is the true God, and eternal life."—1 John v. 20.

That this testimony is given by the inspired apostle concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, we presume but few if any will dispute, since there is no other character or being found in heaven or earth to whom we can apply these titles without involving the sin of blasphemy. The whole theme of John in this epistle, as well as in all his writings, was to bear record of testimony of him, and to show by the most indisputable testimony that he is as here declared, the true God, and eternal life. It is hghly important that the children of God should be instructed in regard to his being, his attributes, his fullness, and of the relationship subsisting between him and them; and to meet this necessity the Holy Ghost inspired John to write unto the scattered family of God that they may have fellowship with each other, and that their joy may be full. (1 John i. 1-4.)

As the doctrine declared in our text involves the fellowship of the saints one with another, and their fellowship also with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, how very important it is that we in striving to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace, should search diligently these Scriptures which testify of him.

Two important points are established by the declarations of our text. First, that Jesus Christ is the true God, and secondly, that he is the eternal life. On these two points we will offer a few remarks for the prayerful consideration of our readers.

First. He is *the* true God. It is not said that he is *a* true God, as though there

were a plurality of true Gods: for the Scriptures proclaim but One living and true God; and he himself has said, "I am God, and beside me there is no other." Hence the definite article is used to signify that Jesus Christ is the same God of whom Moses testified unto Israel saying, The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath thee are the everlasting arms. He is the same God who said, by Isaiah, unto the seed of Israel, Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else. Yea, he is that very God who has said he will have no other god before him. He is therefore called, The only wise God, our Savior. And in our text he is also distinguished from all false gods, or imaginary deities, the *true* God. This descriptive characteristic, implies that there are those that are called gods, and worshiped as such, that are not true. Jesus himself testified, all that ever came before him, were thieves and robbers: and he admonished his disciples that many *false* christs would come, and commanded them to beware of them.

He is the true God; all others who claim that honor, or who are revered as such, are false, delusive idols, whether they be of gold or silver, or any material subsance, or existing only in the vain imagination of their worshipers. But when we claim that Jesus Christ is the only true and living God, we hold that all the fullness of the eternal Godhead dwells in him. The eternal Father is in him, and he is in the Father, and he and his Father are one. The Holy Spirit of the Lord God, in all his infinity is given to him without measure or limitation; it dwells in him, and is one with him. All that constitutes the Godhead, with all the attributes and perfections belong to him, and are essential to his nature, so that in the absence of any of them, if it were possible that any of them could be absent from him, he would be disqualified to be a *Savior,* or to be worshiped. God has declared that he is God and beside him there is no Savior, and he has forbidden his creatures to worship any but himself, therefore in worshiping Christ, we worship none other than the true God. The Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, Notwithstanding these personal distinctions by which they are severally set forth in the record of truth, are but the one only living and true God, for these three are one. In his eternal Godhead we hold therefore, in distinction from the views advanced by those who lately assailed our faith on this subject, that Christ, in his Godhead, is self-existent, independent and eternal. That his Godhead in unbegotten and underived, it is the Godhead of the Father, and of the Holy Ghost, and we would as soon think of applying derivation to the Father or Spirit, as to that fullness of the Godhead which is embodied in our Lord Christ.

Although he is the true God, equally and identically with the Father and the Holy Ghost, he also sustains and most gloriously fills a mediatorial identity, in which he is as fully identified as one with his church, as in his Godhead he is one with his Father. Hence our apostle not only declares him to be the true God, but also proclaims him as the eternal life. He himself declares, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life." "I am the Resurrection and the Life." The scriptural record of this Eternal Life, as given by the apostle John, and by all inspired writers, finds its origin in the eternal Father; and hence its eternity. "That which was from the beginning, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that Eternal Life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with

his Son Jesus Christ."—1 John i. 1-3. The manifestation of this eternal life which was with the Father, is represented as a begetting, a bringing forth, a setting up, and a Sonship, while its incarnation extended the manifestation to the saints on earth, so that they could see with their eyes, and handle the Word of life. Let us not forget that this Life is eternal, the manifestation is not the origination of it; for before it was manifested, it was with the Father. The begetting, or birth, is not the origination of that life which is made manifest by a birth. This eternal Life, is the Life which our Lord Jesus Christ is unto his *body* the church, which is the fullness of him that filleth all in all. "For me to live is Christ." "When he who is our life shall appear, we shall appear with him in glory." When this eternal life was manifested, of course it appeared, and in it all the saints were and are manifested in glory, even in that glory which the divine Mediator had with the Father before the world was. This is what we understand to be the eternal vitality, or immortality of the church of God. It was with the eternal Father, hid with Christ in God, and it was given unto the saints together with all that pertains to life and godliness, in the unspeakable gift of God's dear Son, whom God has given to be the Head, Life and Immortality of the church, which is his body; all the members of which the omniscient eye of the Father did see, yet being unperfect, and in his book all its' members were written, which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there were none of them.

These views, if correct, involve what is called the doctrine of Eternal Vital Union.

That is the life of all the saints of God is one life, it is Christ, and Christ is eternal, as the Immortality of His body. The manifestation of this eternal life involves a spiritual generation, preceeding from God the Father, in manifestation of the eternal Life which was with him, and all this eternal life with all spiritual blessings, was given us in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. Hence, in the Sonship of Christ is found all our vital relationship to God. This is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and the life is in his Son, so completely identified with the Sonship of Christ that he that hath the Son of God hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life. For he only hath immortality dwelling in the light. The children of God having spiritual, eternal life given them in Christ before the world began, are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; they are a seed that shall serve him, and be counted to the Lord for a generation.

This is the doctrine of the Bible on the subject of the true God, and Eternal Life, and a prominent and fundamental doctrine of the apostolic Baptists in all ages, and in all parts of the world. It sets forth Eternal, Unconditional Election, and life given to the chosen or elected people of God, before the world began. Yet there are those now, as probably there have been in past ages, who would confuse the minds of the saints, in order to rob them of the comfort which an understanding of this subject inspires. John says, "These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." Satan and his legions oppose the doctrine, traduce, misrepresent and persecute those who hold, and proclaim this doctrine. Not because Satan has any hope of being able with all his allies on earth, in or out of the christian profession, to overturn or destroy it, but the joy of the saints cannot be full without the consolation of this doctrine, the object of the powers of darkness is to prevent the fullness of joy which the subject inspires.

May the Lord lead our minds by his Spirit into this and all truth, and deliver us from all error and delusions, for

Jesus' sake, and then we can well afford to bear all the reproach which may be heaped on us for the truth's sake.

"Then let the loudest storm arise,
Let tempests mingle earth and skies,
No fatal shipwreck shall we fear,
For Christ, our life, is always near."

THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE
MIDDLETON, N.Y. January 15, 1859.

ARTICLES

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt save thyself, and them that hear thee." (Tim. 4:16)

In a recent editorial we voiced our concern for false doctrines which are presented in the name of Jesus by nominal Christians. We are far more concerned, however, about matters that pertain to the church. We need not be surprised at what goes on in the world, either politically or religiously; and this is because unregenerated people have not been taught in the school of Christ and have not been quickened to know anything of the laws of Christ. The very best that is in human nature falls far short of spiritual things; for no person is subject to the laws of the kingdom unless he is a citizen of that kingdom and living within it's bounds.

Every subject of the kingdom of God is born into the kingdom and are citizens by birth, there being no provisions made for naturalization as among natural kingdoms. Each of these subjects is taught of the Lord, for his laws are put into their minds, and written in their hearts. The prophet Isaiah wrote, "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." And a portion of the New Covenant reads, "I will put laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people; and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."

We believe this is true with respect to each and every subject of grace; and there are no ignorant ones in this family, for to whatever extent of the depth of the mystery of godliness any of them may be led, they are all built on one foundation, and fed on the sincere milk of the word.

There is another important side of the matter, however, which, if we are faithful, we will look into; and looking, we will find much which will take us unto the throne of God for grace to guide and lead us aright. There is much in us as individuals and as churches which is not according to godliness; and the eyes of our understanding are surely blinded and our conscience seared, if we fail to recognize it.

Conditions were such in the church at Corinth that Paul wrote them: "For ye are carnal; for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?"; "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness of God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." (I Cor. 3:3 and 18-19). Also to the Galatians, Paul wrote: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you." (Gal. 3:1) What ever the circumstances which demanded the above from the Apostle, (which are named), the same is demanded whenever there is any departure from the faith anywhere or at any time.

When Jesus spoke to the eleven after his resurrection, he said: "All power is

given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER I HAVE COMMANDED YOU; and lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." (Matthew 28:18-20)

In our early days among the brethren we felt,—as did many of the brethren, that a brother was sound in the faith if he believed Predestination, Election, Resurrection, etc. And we are certain that these are sound doctine if correctly understood and defined, and as such are absolutely necessary to be preached and believed every time the GOSPEL is preached; but these are not the only things which are sound doctrine.

To preach everything whatsoever Jesus commanded to be observed is sound doctrine and everything which the Apostles taught and commanded is sound doctrine. And we must insist that everything which was written by inspiration is sound doctrine; but that everything else not in accord is not sound doctrine. Sound doctrine is properly called the truth as it is in Jesus, and cannot be rightly separated into distinct parts, for it is one continuous whole. Therefore, if any part is neglected to be taught and believed, truth,—or sound doctrine, is neglected.

To illustrate what we have in mind, we may say that orderly walk and godly conversation is sound doctrine; but if exhortation to these things is neglected, or if reproof or rebuke is neglected where necessary, then the WHOLE TRUTH is not being presented. It is well to read the whole of the 2nd chapter of Titus; where Paul wrote: "Speak thou the things which become SOUND DOCTRINE: that the aged men be sober, brave, temperate, sound in the faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded.

In all things shewing THYSELF A PATTERN OF GOOD WORKS; in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you. Exhort servants to be obedient to their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again, not purloining but shewing all good fidelity; that they may ADORN THE DOCTRINE of God our Saviour in all things.

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, TEACHING US that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. THESE THINGS SPEAK, AND EXHORT, AND REBUKE WITH ALL AUTHORITY. Let no man despise thee."

It is our understanding that all gospel ministers are under this charge, as well as all other things they are instructed to teach and preach; such as, "Of these things put them in rememberance, CHARGING THEM BEFORE THE LORD that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain bab-

lings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness." (2Tim. 2:14-16). In the 4th Chapter of 1st Timothy, Paul wrote, "These things COMMAND AND TEACH. Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou AN EXAMPLE of the believers, in WORD, IN CONVERSATION, IN CHARITY, IN SPIRIT, IN FAITH, IN PURITY. Till I come, give attendance to READING, TO EXHORTATION, TO DOCTRINE. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophesy, with the laying on of hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that they profiting may appear to all. TAKE HEED UNTO THYSELF, AND UNTO THE DOCTRINE: CONTINUE IN THEM: for in doing this thou shalt both SAVE THYSELF, AND THEM THAT HEAR THEE." Are not these things included in the calling of a servant of God, and is he not charged with them when he is ordained? Surely so; for whether spoken or not, all things which belong to the office-work of an elder are included in the charge.

Not only are the servants of God to preach and teach these things, but the brethren are exhorted to hear them and continue in them, as children who have been taught of the Lord and have his laws written in their hearts and put in their minds: That they may lead a quiet and peaceful life, and adorn their profession, and walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called. Being children of God and taught of him, there is no walking outside of these things which may be tolerated in the church; for though it is said,—and it is true, that when we walk astray it is because we are walking in the flesh.

Yet if this reason is sufficient to give license for such walking, and allowable as a principle governing conduct where would there be place for gospel order and discipline? Though each of us feelingly realize our fleshly walk so often, are we not therein condemned by the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which has made us free from the law of sin and death: and being dead in sin cannot walk any longer therein? Is there not that within us which causes us to know that these things are not becoming to us as professed followers of Jesus, members of his body, and having a hope of eternal life? We understand the Scriptures to teach, and our experience to confirm that, though we have these treasures in an earthen vessel, we are not at all excusable, but are amenable to the discipline and order which belongs in the church, and which the brethren are enjoined to maintain.

If this were not true, the church would have no right to require godly walk and conversation of her members as necessary for the retaining of fellowship and privileges of the church. It is therefore, gospel order that when members are in disorder from any cause, the weakness of the flesh cannot be accepted as giving them a right thus to walk; but they are required to walk as becometh godliness. If they do not thus walk, after proper admonition and labor on the part of the brethren, the fellowship and privileges of the church must be withdrawn.

He is a faithful preacher who preaches the word to his people, not only in the fundamental principles and experiences, but in exhortation reminding them what is required of all those in fellowship, who are baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; and have right to the communion of the blood and body of Christ. But if any should withhold from the brethren which he is commanded to teach, he is not faithful to his calling. "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." (ICor. 4:2) No servant of God should inquire of men what he should preach, nor turn aside for any earthly reason from preaching the whole truth; but taking heed unto himself and unto the doctrine, and realizing that he falls far short of ability and

wisdom, he will betake himself unto God who called him, as James said; "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering." etc. (James 1:5-6)

Jeremiah mentions a terrible thing among the priests and prophets: "A wonderful and horrible thing has happened in the land; the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their own means; and MY PEOPLE LOVE TO HAVE IT SO; and what will ye do in the end thereof?" (Jer. 5:30-31). No doubt the same things may be said of some of the Lord's people in this and former days: some love their own ways, and their own desire of advantages, rather than the Lord's ways according to the pattern and examples given; and what makes it worse is that many are ready to follow. In this they are not only wrong themselves, but are upholding those who are wrong. If any are in disorder they would soon come to naught were they not strengthened by those who uphold them. Personalities should have no place among the brethren, for they should preach, not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and themselves the servants of the brethren for Jesus' sake (see 2 Cor. 4:5).

Our earnest prayer for Zion is that the Lord may be pleased to give us sober minds and understanding hearts; and a sitting still, (Ruth 3:18); and a laying down of our lives for the brethren, (I John 3:16). It is such a serious thing for any to cause unrest and disturbance of the peace of the churches. May we all be blessed to take heed unto ourselves, as well as the doctrine, and not have the following apply to us: "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a fearful looking for of judgement and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengence belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, the Lord shall judge his people. IT IS A FEARFUL THING TO FALL INTO THE HANDS OF THE LIVING GOD." (Hebrews 10:26:31).

No doubt all brethren will agree that the saying mentioned in the text pertains not to eternal life but rather saving the church from errors in doctrine and practice; for it is a very noticeable thing that where there is a sound and faithful ministry, there is usually a sound and faithful church.

J. D. W.

I desire to write a few thoughts upon the two olive trees spoken of in Zechariah iv., in connection with the two witnesses mentioned in Revelation xi. The great question is, who are the two olive trees, and who are the two witnesses referred to in the two Scriptures named? It seems to me that in Zechariah iv., the angel answered the question of Zechariah quite plainly: "And the angel that talked with me came again, and awaked me, as a man that wakened out of his sleep; and said ulnto me, what seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, (the church) with a bowl upon the top of it, (Christ) and his seven lamps thereon." These seven lamps give light to the church, and the Head of the church provides the lamps, and also the oil. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the

throne, which are the seven spirits of God. Now it was said that upon one stone should be seven eyes. The stone is Christ, and it "shall be," not "may be," for there are no maybes in the Bible. And "I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day." These "Are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth."—Zech. iii. 9; iv. 10. Now let me quote from Rev. ii. 7; iv. 5' vii. 6: "And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices, and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God." "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the Elders, stood a Lamb, (Christ) as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." For the type of all this see Exodus xxv. 31; Leviticus xxiv. 1-5; Hebrews ix. 1, 3.

There were seven pipes to the seven lamps, and two olive trees, one upon the right and the other upon the left side of it. And he said, "So I (Zechariah) answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these my Lord? Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Therefore it must be true, and it must also be that all human means and instrumentalities are cut off by this sweeping declaration, and the Spirit is the first witness. Does not this prove that the first witness is the Spirit? And who will dare to dispute the word of God? Now who is the second witness? "Who are thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone (Christ) thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, Grace unto it." The seven eyes of the Lord were on that stone (Christ).

I will now refer to Revelation xi. "And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days (or twelve hundred and sixty years) clothed in sackcloth. It is in the body, the church, which in this world is clothed in sackcloth, that Christ and the Spirit do prophesy, and nowhere else but in the church. These are the two olive trees standing (which shows that they have all power) before the God of the earth. We also read that if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth and devoureth their enemies, and if any man will hurt them, he must in like manner be killed. Now who has this power outside of these two witnesses, the Spirit and Christ? Read 2 Thess. ii., eighth verse especially, "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume (is there anything left of that which is consumed? With the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." Has any power like this ever been given to any others? These it is said have power in themselves (not given to them) to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy. The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven, to give rain unto the land. (Deut. xxvii. 12.) Elijah said unto Ahab, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word."—1 Kings xvii. 1. By whose power then was it sent? "And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go show thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth." It is also said that these witnesses have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will. Now where does this power come

from? "Thus saith the Lord, In this thou shalt know that I am the Lord: behold I will smite with the rod that is in mine hand upon the waters which are in the river, and they shall be turned to blood." —Exodus vii. 17. Jesus also said, "It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me." And he said, "And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." And this Spirit of truth he says shall abide with you forever. And "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." And again he said, "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." (John viii. 17; xiv. 16, 17, 26; xv.26.)

Was not the Holy Ghost also a witness upon the day of Pentecost? Paul said, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." Again he said, "Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you."—1 Cor. i. 6. And again, "God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." (Read 1 Cor. ii. 9-12.) Again, "This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ. Not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."—1 John v. 6, 7. And also from revelations we have seen that Christ is a faithful and true witness. John to the seven churches which are in Asia; Grace be unto you, and peace, from Jesus Christ the faithful and true witness, and from the seven spirits which are before the throne. Job had said before, "Behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high." This is in Zion, the city of our God. Her two witnesses who fight all her battles, and conquer all her enemies, and put them under her feet, are eternal, invisible to the world, but are revealed unto the saints.

Now under the law we read, "And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always." If Christ, the antitype, had not been beaten with many stripes, we never could have received the oil of divine grace through the other witness, and Holy Ghost. The typical lamps must burn continually throughout the legal dispensation. And so the church of God receives continually the olive oil from the two olive trees, which in revelation are said to be the two witnesses. These olive trees have all power in heaven and on earth, and ever have and ever will exist. They are eternal. Therefore the oil by which Zion is supplied is inexhaustible, and her lamp can never go out, but must burn eternally. Her lamp is brighter than the noonday sun, for God is her eternal light. Then "Let Zion arise and shine, for her light has come, and the glory of the Lord has arisen upon her. For behold darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people, but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." This is by the power of the two witnesses, Christ and the Holy Spirit. These two witnesses are the only ones that have power to justify them and cleanse them from all guilt. "Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons

shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see and flow together, and thine heart shalt fear and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee."—Isaiah lx. 4, 5. These two witnesses are the only two who could testify from the first, from Adam and Abel through all time, even til the end of time.

Now where are these two witnesses slain? In Babylon. Where do their dead bodies lie? In Babylon. No wonder the inhabitants of Babylon stumble over them, they are in their way. No wonder they want to bury them, there are too many sheep and lambs bleating after them to suit the old lady and her daughters. To preach Christ crucified always was, and always will be a stumbling-block and foolishness to the worshipers of Babylon. To them it is dead preaching, and there is no life in it. "Wherefore it is contained in Scripture, Behold I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious, but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed."—1 Peter ii. 4-8. Read also Psalm cxviii. 22; Isaiah viii. 14; xxviii. 16; Matt. xxi. 42; Luke ii. 34; Acts iv. 11; Romans ix. 22; 1 Cor. i. 23. Again it is said, "And he shall be for a sanctuary; (to his chosen) but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offense, to both the houses of Israel, (natural Israel) for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem (the old Jerusalem). And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken. Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples." This is the testimony of the two witnesses, and it is the spiritual law that is signified. (Isaiah viii. 14-16.)

Babylon has no use for these two witnesses in making her converts. It is all by might of men and money, and hellfire, instead of Christ and the Spirit of God, they scare their converts into their fold, so that they can shear them. "They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag: therefore they rejoice and are glad. Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag, because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous. Shall they therefore empty their net, and not spare continually to slay the nations?"—Hab. i. 15-17. Read also the thirty-fourth chapter of Ezekiel. These two witnesses are the life of the church, they are the only people who will not suffer Babylon to put the two witnesses away. These are their witnesses who can clear them in the court of heaven, from which there is no appeal. In this court these are standing witnesses; these are prophets who have prophesied the end from the beginning; eternal prophets. "And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth." These help one another at getting up fires or revivals, to make proselytes. But the prophet has said, "Behold all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow."—Isaiah l. 11. The inhabitants of the earth do not want to be baptized with the Holy Ghost, for they are all afraid of it. They are afraid that it would burn their building down to ashes. They have no use for the fire of God, or his Spirit, they would sooner have their own. This they can make of themselves

without the help of God. He is too slow to suit them, he is about two thousand years behind the times. His way of doing may suit the Hardshells, or Iron Jackets, for they know no better than to believe that God does all the work of eternal salvation. With this "behind the times" people, it is not God and company, but God alone, the Almighty. Say these slow ones, The last in man's judgment, shall be first, and the last or first in the world, who are so ahead of the times, shall be last. These have no oil in their vessels with their lamps. Hay, straw and stubble, and strange fire, this does finely in the world, but will not stand the test of the Judge of all the earth.

While there are many witnesses spoken of in the Scriptures, such as Enoch, Elijah, the apostles, all the saints in every age of the world, the starry heavens, the earth, and all God's works, which are witnesses of his power, and the Old and New Testaments, which contain all the records of these witnesses, yet these are not the two witnesses, or the two olive trees of which I have here spoken.

Your brother in hope,

R. S. BANKS.

Elder F. A. Chick: Dear Brother in Christ:

Feeling in the mood for writing, and my mind reverting continually to you, once more I address you as above, for what purpose I know not, only that I desire to hear from you, and take this means of getting a thought or two from your pen. Were you to meet me on the highway and greet me with the usual salutation, "How are you?" I scarcely know how I would answer you. No very deep trials, spiritually or otherwise, have stirred my mind since coming within the portals of the Zion of our God. My chief uneasiness is felt when I am brought in contact with the world around me. This hurts me. Imagine how sensitive the body would be were the outer or scarf skin removed, and you will have a very clear idea of my state of mind when in the course of my daily walk I am brought in contact with unbelievers, or what is worse, the adherents of popular religion. I think it would be more in conformity with the experience of the saints, were I to realize more intensely that my worst enemies are "those of my own household." The children of God seem to talk more of their peculiar trials of mind while I have none. Surely there is a lost chord somewhere. "If ye be without chastisements, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons." Do such Scriptures as these apply to me? Evidence seems to point that way, yet something within me thrusts them from me, and will not accept them.

Both of my parents were Old School Baptists before I was born. As soon as I knew anything at all, I was taken by them to Old Baptist meetings. Every Sunday found them in their place, and of course, I with them, for none of us children were permitted to stay away unless in the event of its being dire necessity. Now, under such training as this, how could I turn out to be anything but an Old School Baptist? I sometimes fear my knowledge of their doctrine is all in the head and not in the heart, where it ought to be. In a very weak and unsatisfactory manner I will endeavor to lay before you what I hope has been an experience of grace in me, but will leave you to decide whether such is the case, or if it be but a wild fancy of the imagination.

Born in the month of April, 1879, near the village of Southampton, Pa., and almost under the shadow of the Old Baptist meeting-house at that place, such were the circumstances that no excuse could be found permitting me to stay away every Sunday meeting, even in infancy. What tiresome, tedious, sonorous ser-

mons those were to my boyish mind. When during the sermon I should lose myself in slumber, how rejoiced I would be upon awaking, to find them singing the last hymn. The pleasantest part of the meeting for me then was when the minister closed the Bible. To the best of my recollection, I never heard any other than Old Baptist preaching until about fifteen years old. Naturally, having never heard any other, I thought the Old Baptists were all right, but I could not comprehend them. While I thought their religion was a mighty good thing for them, it was not for me. They seemed above me, exalted to heights that I could never reach, nor did I care to reach them at that time. I was satisfied with myself as I was. My parents being blest with the gift of hospitality, our home was always open to the brethren far and near, so that from hearing their conversation I became intellectually familiar with the various points of their belief.

Children around me attended Sunday School, yet I never asked permission to go, knowing full well I would be met with a point blank refusal if I did, and knowing this, I never had any desire to go.

Just when I began to think of eternity and the life hereafter, I cannot say. I sometimes feared that I would die in the night. At such times I would not go to sleep lying face upward, thinking this position more than any other favored death, and might tempt the "Black Angel" to visit me. Such superstitions would haunt me at times, but would all vanish with day-dawn, and not for some time later would I have such thoughts again.

Desiring from early years to become a teacher, in the fall of 1895 I began attending a normal school in my native State, to prepare myself for the work. Here the rules were such that every student must of necessity attend service in one of the many churches of that vicinity, every Sunday morning. No Old Baptist church existing in that place, I was forced to attend other denominations, and here for the first time I heard other preaching. I recognized a difference in the preaching almost as soon as I heard it, not that I thought it was contrary to Bible teaching, but that it was more interesting to listen to, and more calculated to keep one from sleeping, than what I had formerly been accustomed to.

The week just preceding Thanksgiving was always set aside at the school as a "week of Prayer." During this week the Y.M.C.A. held daily meetings for the purpose of winning converts to their cause if possible. Speakers of some reputation in the religious world were procured to address these meetings, and to play upon the emotional side of every student's temperament. The "week of prayer" in 1895 slipped by without my paying any heed to it whatever. In fact, while the Y.M.C.A. held weekly meetings throughout the year, yet I very rarely attended any of them. At least it was noticeable to me that the very students who were the ringleaders in all the mischief going on, usually made the longest prayers and the longest speeches, but failed to act it out in their daily walk and conversation. This disgusting me, I was very seldom found at their meetings.

Uneventfully my student days passed on until the "week of Prayer" in the fall of 1896. The card issued as invitations to the meetings and scattered promiscuously among the students, bore this inscription at the top: "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good."—Numbers x. 29. Suddenly a determination to attend these meetings seized me. The motive that prompted me was possibly one of curiosity, as I wanted to see what effect such meetings would have upon me. Not because I realized the need of salvation did I attend these meetings, but as I have said, simply to see how such meetings were conducted, and whether I would be in any way affected by such proceed-

ings. Thus I began attending the sessions held in the fall of 1896, of the so-called "week of prayer." At the close of the first meeting all who desired to be saved were asked to stand up. Immediately I asked myself, Shall I stand or not? Do I want to be saved or not? Why certainly, what sensible man would not want to be saved? Therefore I stood with the others. At the second meeting all who stood at the first meeting were requested to remain at the close and consult with the professor who had the matter in charge. Feeling that I now had gone too far to draw back, I remained in my place at the close of the meeting. When all who were not interested had left the room, the professor made a prayer and talked to us about what we should do to be saved. Belief, he said, was the only necessary qualification for salvation, and it was for us to say whether or not we would be saved. I was willing, I thought, to be saved, but now to make myself believe in something that I knew nothing about, I could not understand. However we were requested to sing a hymn. The one selected had for its theme the giving of one's self to Christ, inviting him to enter and make our heart his home, &C. "I believe," "I trust," "I own," "I want," and other expressions were scattered throughout the hymn. How can I ever express my feelings while singing this selection? Here my pen fails when it attempts to portray in black and white the revelation manifested in my soul at this time. Something said to me, "You are lying, yes, lying, and that in the face of a just and mighty God. You say you trust in his name. You do not. You say you believe that Christ died for you. You do not. You and standing up boldly in the sight of God and telling a bare faced lie." Such agony as filled my soul I can never express. Hitherto my dealings had been between man and man. Now, in the twinkling of an eye, the scene was shifted, and my dealings were between God and man. He was just and mighty, true and good, holy and undefiled. But I, what was I? Alas, a poor, wretched worm of the dust, crawling on the earth, striving in vain to seek a hole to creep into away from the fierce outbust of God's righteous indignation that had suddenly engulfed me, and was sweeping me to everlasting destruction. Yet I said it was righteous and just. I was the one that was altogether out of the way.

"And though my soul were sent to hell,
His righteous law approves it well."

Just how long I was in this state of anguish I have never been able to remember. How I managed to get out of that meeting and to my room, I do not know, but when I did get there I threw myself upon my bed and wept long and bitterly, much to the surprise of my roommate, who became much alarmed, thinking that the meetings had worked me up to such a pitch that I was going crazy over religion. He advised me not to attend any more of the meetings, and I did not; not because I feared insanity, but because I could get no comfort there. Gradually time wore on. Instead of getting better, I got worse, and my burden was fast becoming more than I could bear. The professor before mentioned, seeing I was under conviction, kept telling me that if I would but give myself up and believe on the name of Jesus, I would be saved. He asked me what I was waiting for? I said, "A revelation. When I see Christ and know that he died for me, then I can believe, not before." He then accused me of stubbornness, and so we parted, and never again came together in any other relation save that of teacher and pupil. At last I thought, what would I not do to be rid of this burden? O, if only Christ was my Savior. O, if he only had died for me. "Lord, thou canst if thou wilt make me clean." Now, to my mind, if relief were to come, it seemed to me it must come by a revelation, and that so vivid and so startling that I never could

doubt my being saved. I had come to the place where I ceased to work, or to try to rise from the depths to which I had fallen. All my efforts had availed me nothing, so I ceased to do anything and was wait-wait-
ing; waiting for what? For that revelation so startling and so sure that it would dispel all my gloom and save my soul from hell. While watching for this vision, I opened the Bible, and my eye fell upon these words, "Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision: and it shall be dark unto you that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets and the day shall be dark over them." Alas, I was waiting for something that was not to come. I wanted a vision; I would have none, because the word of God coming to me with power told me I would not. Thrown down from this hope, vain as it had proved to be, I now suffered more than ever.

One night, laying upon my bed, I could not sleep. My troubles were fast getting too severe, and I verily thought they would be the death of me. They were gripping me by the throat, and I could feel my breath fast leaving me; I was dying. My mental anguish had brought on bodily suffering, and I had a raging fever. Now, surely, unless relief came, and that quickly, I should perish, and with that it seemed to me I or something within me cried, "Peace!" In the twinkling of an eye I was at rest. All my burden had gone. Hardly realizing my state, I tried to bring back my troubles, but could not. They were gone, thank God, for ever. Happy and as free as a bird, I fell asleep and slept till morning. And now again I cannot express my joy upon awaking. The sun never shone so brightly: all nature was at her best and rejoicing with me; I felt the power of the resurrection within and around me, and that the gift of eternal life was mine through the blessed sacrifice of God's only begotten Son, who was offered up for me. Shout, ye heavens, and listen, O earth, Christ died for *me*. Such were my feelings at that time. Now I was not aware that there was another being on earth that had passed through what I had. Upon going home to spend a few days at Thanksgiving, I talked all the time to my parents of my feelings, and they rejoiced to see me rejoice. I soon saw that they had experienced the same things that I had. When I returned to school, I took with me a book written by our beloved pastor, Elder S. H. Durand, entitled, "Meditations on Portions of the Word." For weeks this was all the preaching I had. I soon saw from his writings that he knew all about my feelings from having experienced the same, and I loved him. It was in this way, through hearing them preach, and reading their writings, with the understanding that I now had given me, that I came to see the Old School Baptists as the only and true church of the living God, because it all corresponded with holy writ. Knowing this I loved them because I could not help it. No other people that I have ever met could understand my feelings. Loving them, I knew I had experienced the new birth, for "We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." I did not go before the church at this time. Had I been near them when in the first flush of love, I know not what might have been the consequence, but, as I have said, I was not near any of them, and when I did get back to where they were, doubts and fears had so assailed me that I verily thought I had been deceived, and as for being baptized, I had not thought of it. The very idea was absurd. Nevertheless I have always attended Old Baptist meetings whenever an opportunity presented itself, never having attended regular service in any other denomination since leaving school, but my unworthiness was the barrier that separated me from them. However, in the fall of 1900, while

attending a yearly meeting, with the Welsh Tract Church, in Delaware, I lost sight of my unworthiness, and longed all at once to be baptized. This desire kept increasing in spite of the temptations Satan put in my way until the second Saturday in December, 1900, when at the regular church meeting at Southampton, Pa., I related my state of mind to the church. To my surprise they received me, and on the third Sunday I was baptized. Thus far the Lord hath led me on, as to the next step, I know not what it will be. I look to him to be my Guide. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

This letter is far too lenthy, and I know will sadly try your patience, so will close without more ado.

Yours in the hope of eternal life,

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."—John iii. 3.

True religion begins with an entrance into the soul of supernatural life. How or why it comes the soul knows not; for "the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit." The wind itself is not seen, but its effects are felt. The sound of a going is heard in the tops of the mulberry trees, where God himself is not seen. The voice of the Lord, powerful and full of majesty, was heard by those who saw no similitude (Deut. iv. 12). Thus effects are felt, though causes are unknown. Streams flow into the heart from a hidden source; rays of light beam into the soul from an unrisen sun; and kindlings of life awake in us a new existence out of an unseen fountain. The new-born babe feels life in all its limbs, though it knows not yet the earthly father whence that natural life sprang. And thus new-born souls are conscious of feelings hitherto unpossessed, and are sensible of a tide of life, mysterious and incomprehensible, ebbing and flowing in their heart, though "Abba, Father," has not yet burst from their lips. A man's body is alive to every feeling, from a pin's scratch to a mortal wound, from a passing ache to an incurable disease. The heart cannot flutter or intermit for a single second its wonted stroke, without a peculiar sensation that accompanies it, notices it, and registers it. Shall feelings, then, be the mark and evidence of natural life, and not of spiritual? Shall our ignoble part, the creature of a day, our perishing body, our dust of dust, have sensations to register every pain and every pleasure, and be tremblingly alive to every change without and every change within; and shall not our immortal souls be equally endowed with a similar barometer to fluctuate up and down the scale of spiritual life? We must lay it down, then, at the very threshold of vital godliness, that if a man has not been conscious of a new feeling, and cannot point out, with more or less precision, some particular period, some never-to-be-forgotten season, when these feelings came unbidden into his heart, he has not yet passed from death unto life. He is not in Christ, if he is not a new creature (2 Cor. v. 17).

"O that I knew where I might find him! That I might come even to his seat! I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments."—Job xxiii. 3, 4.

Was not Job in the same spot where we often are? If this aged patriarch had not known what it was to be shut up in his mind, harassed and distressed, and well-nigh overwhelmed with the attacks of the wicked one, he would not have said, "O that I knew where I might find him! That I might come even

to his seat! I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments." Has that ever been, is it now, the genuine feelings, the real experience of your soul? Do look into your heart, you that fear God. Do look for a moment, if you have never looked before, at the work of grace (and where are you, if you have never looked at it?) and consider if you know any of these matters. Did you ever, in a feeling of darkness, gloom, bondage, and distress of soul, cry (I do not say the words, it is the feelings we want, let the words go), " 'O that I knew where I might find him!' Lord, I do want to find thee; my soul longs after thee; I want a taste of thy blessed presence; I want to embrace thee in the arms of my faith; I want the sweet testimonies of thy gracious lips; 'O that I knew where I might find thee!' I would not care what I went through." If so, then these very things shew that you have the fear of God in your souls, and the teaching of the Spirit in your hearts. You are where Job was, and if you know something of what Job speaks here, "O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!"—if that is the desire of your soul, you have Job's religion, you have Job's experience, you have Job's affliction in this matter, and you will have Job's deliverance, Job's joy, Job's peace, and Job's salvation. Job's God is your God, and you will be where Job now is, bathing your ransomed soul in all the glory of the Lamb.

"He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up. Selah. God shall send forth his mercy and his truth."—**Psalm lvii. 3.**

And where is God's mercy revealed? Outwardly in the word of God; inwardly in the heart. And it is by sending his mercy into the conscience, shedding abroad his love in the soul, manifesting his pardoning favour within, That God "saves from the reproach of him that would swallow us up." Man may say, "I do not doubt your religion; surely you have marks and testimonies of being a child of God!" Ministers may come and endeavour to soothe you, and often by their soothing make more mischief than they mend: "O, no doubt, if you are exercised with these things you are a child of God;" as though a man could be satisfied with exercises, and because he is hungering and thirsting after the Lord, could be contented with his famine and his drought. No; these things do not touch the secret malady, do not go far enough, nor deep enough, nor come with divine power as from the mouth of the Lord himself. All short of this leaves the poor patient afflicted, desolate, and dejected; and does not remove that under which his soul labours. But mercy, sweet mercy, sent from heaven, and dropped from above into his spirit, applied to his conscience, revealed to his heart, and brought warm into his very soul by the Spirit of God—*that* saves him from the reproach of every enemy that would swallow him up. For if he can lean, confidently lean upon the arms of mercy, what can man do, what can Satan do, what can sin do, what can death do, what can hell itself do to hurt him? If the mercy of God is upon his side, revealed to his heart, and sent from heaven into his soul, who or what shall swallow him up?

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."—**Hebrews xi. 1.**

Wherever there is faith, there is desire; and as faith embraces heavenly realities, desire embraces that of which faith testifies. Now as the soul

is wrought upon by a divine power, and faith is drawn forth into blessed exercise upon the promises of which it is persuaded and which it embraces, desire is kindled for their enjoyment. Religion is not a burdensome, painful, melancholy, wearisome, and toilsome task or employment as many think. It has indeed its trials, temptations, afflictions, cutting griefs, and depressing sorrows; but it has its sweetness, its peace, its delights, and its enjoyments. And it is the sweetness that we feel, the enjoyment that we have, and the delighting ourselves in the things of God, which hold our head up and encourage us still to persevere and travel on through the wilderness. It is not all bondage, nor distress of mind, nor sorrow of heart, nor perplexity of soul which the heirs of promise feel. There are sips and tastes, drops and crumbs, and momentary enjoyments, if not long nor lasting, yet sweet when they come, sweet while they last, and sweet in the recollection when they are gone. The Lord gives that which encourages, strengthens, comforts, and delights, and enables us to see that there is that beauty, blessedness, and glory in him which we have tasted, felt, and handled, and which we would not part with for a thousand worlds.

"Him that God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."—Acts v. 31.

Jesus is "exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and remission of sins." The two go together. Whenever he gives repentance, he gives remission; wherever he grants remission, he bestows repentance. It will not do to let repentance go. Every child of God is brought to repent of his sins, and by repentance to forsake them. "But," you say, "have I repented? Considering the nature and magnitude of my sins, were I a repenting sinner, surely I should be mourning and sorrowing over them all the day long." What, then, creates that doubt in your mind? Because you are often hard, dark, dead, cold. Here, then, again, we must distinguish between that godly sorrow for sin which is felt in the spiritual mind, and that hardness and darkness of our carnal mind which is still enmity against God, nor is there faith or love, repentance, or any one good thing in it. But there have been times and seasons when, under a peculiar influence, your heart was softened and melted before God; when sin was truly repented of; when you felt that it was indeed an evil and a bitter thing to sin against so good, so holy , and so great and glorious a God; when the rock melted, the hard heart gave way, the eyes flowed down with tears, and the swelling breast was almost ready to burst with penitential grief for your sins and over the sufferings and sorrows of the Son and Lamb of God, and you could only loathe yourself in dust and ashes before his holy, heart-searching eye.

"But we see Jesus."—Hebrews ii. 9.

Did your eyes ever see him? Do look into conscience—did your eyes ever see Jesus? I do not mean your natural, your bodily eyes; but the eye of faith, the eye of the soul. I will tell you what you have felt, if you ever saw Jesus. Your heart was softened and melted, your affections drawn heavenward, your soul penetrated with thankfulness and praise, your conscince sprinkled with atoning blood, your mind lifted up above all earthly things to dwell and centre in the bosom of the blessed Immanuel. Do you think, then, you have seen Jesus by the eye of faith? Then you have seen the perfection of beauty, the consummation of pure loveliness; you have seen the

image of the invisible God; you have seen all the perfections and glorious character of the Godhead shining forth in him that was nailed to Calvary's tree. I am sure such a sight as that must melt the most obdurate heart, and draw tears from the most flinty eyes; such a sight by faith of the beauty and glory of the only-begotten Son of God must kindle the warmest, holiest stream of tender affection. It might not have lasted long. These feelings are often very transitory. The world, sin, temptation, and unbelief soon work; infidelity soon assails all; the things of time and sense soon draw aside; but whilst it lasted, such, in a greater or less degree, were the sensations produced. Now, if you have ever seen Jesus by the eye of faith, and ever had a tender affection going out toward him, you will see him in glory. But you will never see him in glory, if you have not seen him in grace; you will never see him eye to eye in the open vision of eternal bliss, unless you have seen him now upon earth by the faith of God's elect in your heart.

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."—Romans viii. 1.

There is not a more blessed declaration than this in the whole world of truth. It is the sweetest note sounded by the gospel trumpet, for it is the very crown of the whole Jubilee. Is not condemnation the bitterest drop in the cup of trembling? the most thrilling, piercing note of that terrible trumpet which sounded so long and so loud from Sinai's blazing top that all the people that were in the camp trembled? (Exod. xix. 13, 16.) Condemnation is the final execution of God's righteous law, and therefore carries with it all that arms death with its sting and the grave with its terror. The apprehension of this; the dread and fear of being banished forever from the presence of God; of being lost, and that without remedy; of sinking under the blazing indignation of him who is a consuming fire, has filled thousands of hearts with horror. And it must be so as long as the law speaks in its thunders, as long as conscience re-echoes its verdict, and as long as the wrath of God burns to the lowest hell. O the blessedness, then, of that word of grace and truth, worthy to be sounded through heaven and earth by the voice of cherubim and seraphim, "There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus!"

"My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."—2 Corinthians xxi. 9.

How mysterious are God's dealings! That such a highly favoured man as Paul should come down from the "third heaven" to the very gates of hell (that is not too strong an expression, for "the messenger of Satan" came from hell), that he should sink in soul-feeling to the very gates of hell, there to be buffeted by "the messenger of Satan;" and all to teach him a lesson that heaven did no teach him, *the strength of God made perfect in weakness!* Do you not think, that if we are to learn our weakness, we must learn it in the same way? How did Paul get his religion? And must we not get ours, in our feebler measure, through the same channels, by the same means, and by the same inward teachings? If we are to learn the secret of Christ's strength, it is not by making daily advances in fleshly holiness, and getting stronger in self day by day. It is not by old nature being so mended and improved, as bye and bye to be shaded off into grace, just as the colours in the rainbow are so harmoniously blended that you can scarcely tell where the one ends and the other begins. For this is what is really meant by

"progressive sanctification," that the old nature is so gradually softened and blended into grace, that we can scarcely tell where the old man ceases and the new nature commences. Did the Apostle learn Christ's strength in that way? No; but by being buffeted by Satan's messenger, and thus being beaten out of his own strength, he found Christ's strength made perfect in his weakness.

MEETINGS

South Ouachita Association

The next Union Meeting of the South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association will be held, God willing, with Union Church which is located three miles northeast of Linville, La. near Marion, La.

Time of meeting begins Saturday before the third Sunday in April, 1986, and will continue two days.

All who love the truth as it is in Jesus Christ are invited to worship with us.

C. C. Wilbanks, Clerk
217 Bastrop Drive
Monroe, La. 71203
Phone 318-343-5473

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 03/86
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

OBITUARIES

1907 SIMEY BRICKHOUSE 1985

Brother Sim, as he was familiarly called by those close to him, was born in the Kilkenny area of Tyrrell County, North Carolina in 1907. In 1924, he married the former Mary Dunbar and they were blessed with two children, a son, Jack, of Alabama and a daughter, Evelyn, who lives near them at Route 1, Bayboro, North Carolina. In addition, there are seven grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. Brother Sim joined Smithwick's Creek Primitive Baptist Church in 1973 and was baptized by his pastor, Elder J. T. Prescott. He was blessed to see the natural things for the upkeep of church property and also the welfare of his pastor. He never hesitated in taking the initiative in anything that needed to be done, oft times at great expense to himself.

Brother Sim was a man of few words and when he spoke, people listened. He was a very humble and meek person who loved the doctrine of salvation by grace. In 1977, he was ordained a deacon and served that office well until his death. In 1983, because of distance, he and his wife moved their membership to North Creek Church which was much nearer their home. We felt that while his former church had lost a reliable member, we at North Creek were blessed to have them as members.

In October, 1984, he suffered a cerebral hemorrhage and was unable to speak after that. He was perfectly helpless as far as nature provided. It was unusual not to see his precious wife at his bedside night and day. She was a faithful wife who sincerely believed in the vows "til death do us part". He died May 10th, 1983 at his home and was laid to rest in Smithton Community Cemetery. His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder J. T. Prescott with Elder Jesse Foreman, Elder Reeves Smith and Mr. Willis taking part. We miss him. His wife and family miss him, but we feel he is sleeping the sleep of the eternally blest.

Elder J. T. Prescott, Pastor
Elder R. O. Smith, Committee

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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THANK GOD FOR LITTLE THINGS

Thank you, God, for little things
that often come our way,
The things we take for granted
but don't mention when we pray,
The unexpected courtesy,
the thoughtful, kindly deed,
A hand reached out to help us
in the time of sudden need -
Oh make us more aware, dear God,
of little daily graces
That come to us with "sweet surprise"
from never-dreamed-of places.

Helen Steiner Rice

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EDITORIAL

"As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. **(Romans 9: 13, 15)**

My mind has been led by some power to write my feelings in regard to these things, which I believe fully in my mind are in the New Testament for the benefit of God's humble poor. I have not pitched myself into a frame of mind that would make me think that I can bring harmony to every believer in the world. No such illusion is in my mind. Before I say by way of comment anything about this sacred chapter I want to appeal to you, the reader that we might not, either writer or reader have any hard feelings toward the other or anybody else.

This writing is that of the eminent Apostle Paul. He was writing as he was moved by the Holy Spirit. If a writer or speaker handles this language according to the same rules of language there is bound to be fellowship between both writer and reader. Neither of us will be allowed to differ with the other.

This writing of the Apostle is not garbled by the apostle. It means what it says, and it will still mean that after writer and reader are sleeping beneath the sod. We read, all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thychildren. If we do not believe what the writers in this sacred Book has given us, having been moved by the Holy Ghost, we should not be disputing with our brethren.

I have not got a reader that is going to dispute what Paul quoted about God hating one and loving the other, or loving one and hating the other.

What did God say? Did He say that He loved one and hated the other? Paul quoted from the Old Testament that He did. Did he say that? Do you dear readers believe that? Paul in this sacred writing asks this question, to wit, is there unrighteousness with God? Let us pause right here for a moment of reflection. Not only was Paul writing by the inspiration of God, but he was being taught as the inspiration came to him. Looking forward by faith, and being moved by inspiration and looking forward to the time when people would not believe what was being said, he exclaims, what shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? What do you think? Is it unrighteous in God to love one nation of people and hate another nation? At least two thousand years before Paul could see what was coming. It is still prevalent today. The Primitive Baptist people here in the united States are despised on every hand because of God's love for

Jacob and His hatred for Esau. I have said time and time again in American publications that the wrong people are bearing the brunt of this hatred. If people dislike election, they dislike God loving one and hating the other, then He is the one that is due to get their ire.

However, let us look at what Paul says. Is there unrighteousness with God for thus making this vast difference between these two boys. He gives an emphatic God forbid. Is it right, is it biblical, to lay the blame on any set of people? If so, how is it? What does God say about His having done this? He says to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth but of God that sheweth mercy.

What does God say? Who does He say it to? He says it to one and all that has it written in their church minutes and bulletins that we have got to get people fired up so that they will run here and there throughout earth's boundary lines, so that they will quit the ways of the world and come running with willingness of mind into the kingdom of heaven and be saved.

Can anything be found in any book that is any plainer and any more to the point than this? God says, It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth. It is not that way. God says that it is not that way. Now what am I supposed to do? It is not that way? What must I do? Is there a way for me to be loved by God? Since it is not gotten into by being willing or by being good at running, how could anyone, anyone at all, ever get to be loved?

For the scripture saith unto Pharoah, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up; that I might shew my power in thee, and that my power might be declared throughout all the earth.

Why should the children of God not believe this? These are the words of the Apostle Paul. He was writing by the inspiration of God. What right have I to attack them? Instead of my attacking them as being untrue, why should I not write on them as being a part of the gospel of grace? Tell me, why should I not do that?

Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Ah! at the hard sayings, the hard preaching at brethren that have quoted that passage of Scripture. It is the inspired writings of God Almighty, even the one through which any salvation for any one of the adamic creation, and yet He is malignantly ascribed as being a tyrant worse than Pharoah himself. Pharoah has not been reckoned by anyone as being a humble child of God, but rather he is reckoned as being evil, as being hard. Why should poor frail sinners berate the Lord God who shall, at the appointed time, say unto Pharoah and all of His kind, into the lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels? Reasoning from this standpoint unbelievers will ask, Thou wilt say unto me, Why dost He yet find fault? That is telling God off; that is calling His hand, even telling Him that He has not got any right to deal with one of His creatures in such a way.

God is not under any obligation to listen to any man's retaliatory remarks, for any and all of them are but a reply against God. To those that dares to reply against Him, He says, Nay but, O man, Who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another to dishonor (Romans 9: 21).

Now let us talk about the potter and the clay. We will never understand about this workman and his product unless we know something about each one. It was my privilege to watch a bona fide Potter

make a complete vessel one time long ago. I had become interested in the Bible, what is said, and who it said it to. To find a potter in a road show was a little strange and out of place, but I have always believed that the Lord brought us together. No man, however much book learning he may have will ever destroy the use, the work, and the result of potters vessel. Even as little as I know, it is the most useless thing in the world to argue that clay is joined together in deciding what a vessel is going to be. That is at least, one of the most unexpected things to occur in a transaction of building anything. On the occasion, when I watched the roadside potter, every product, as well as the number of vessels made was all decided by the potter.

In the case under consideration, the potter was the only one that touched the clay. He decided how many and what size each vessel would be. It is passing strange that people order millions of dollars worth of goods each year, and the manufacturer decides what the size, the quality, the texture, and any other ordered handle or spout that each article has, but, while God is the Potter as to how many children, their each characteristics, and their destiny. It is unreasonable, ungodly, preposterous for sensible people to think, and to argue, even getting mad over the matter, that the clay has a say so in what it is going to be.

Let us ask the question that Paul asked. Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another to dishonor? The usual manner of theologians is to make fun of the intelligence of anyone that would dare to suggest such a thing. A few will acknowledge that God has the power but that He does not have the right. Inspiration, foreseeing the objection, still asks it. Then the dear man of God, the Apostle Paul, being under the administration and guidance asks a question, to wit, What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory even us, whom he had called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles. (Read the entire chapter number 9 of Romans).

My prayer to God is that our Father will open to the chosen sheep an understanding of these sacred matters, but not make us such champions of what is revealed to us that we start out condemning everybody that doesn't agree with them.

Let brotherly love continue.

Yours in precious hope,
Elder W. D. Griffin

CORRESPONDENCE

2-3-86

Signs Of The Times
Dear ones of The Faith of Gods elect:

I received the February issue, enjoyed its contents, especially Law and Gospel written by J. C. Philpott in 1861.

I fully agree with him. God does not allow his Elders or Servants, to take at will, one part of the law, and leave the other.

James 2: 10, "For whosoever keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all."

To me this one point is this, thou shalt not bear false witness is to those that believe in self righteous, to enter the Kingdom of God.

We believe it is by the spirit of God, who worketh the will and the do, giving him all the glory. We read in St. Luke 12: 31, 32, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added

unto you. Fear not little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom."

Hebrews 8: 10-12, "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people, and they shall not teach every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Hebrews 9: 11 and 12, "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building, neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

"The ungodly do not believe in Elecion, Isaiah 45: 4. Matthew 24: 24, "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

Psalms 3: 9, "He sent redemption unto his people he hath commanded forever, Holy and Reverend in HIS Name."

We believe in the will and shalls of God, which is the words of God and the words of Christ. Ephesians 4: 4-6, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in hope of your caling: One Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Ephesians 5: 14, "That we henceforth, be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men, and cunning craftness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." 5th. Chapter, verse 5, "For this ye know that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor coveteous man, who is an idolater hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God."

Sincerely,
Mattie Underwood

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

IT MUST BE BY FAITH

"But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." **Heb. 11:6.**

In my effort to write on this subject, I fear I can only reach the surface and the depth of the subject will still be unexplored. Paul said, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways are past finding out." Rom. 11:33. If by searching we could find the mysteries of God, the wise and prudent would have a great advantage over the ignorant and unlearned in acquiring knowledge of God, but since it has pleased God to hide these things from the wise and prudent and to reveal unto babes the things of his kingdom, it eliminates the class who would otherwise learn of the kingdom of God by searching rather than by revelation. Jesus said, "I thank thee oh Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes." Math. 11:25.

If we believe in God, it must be by faith. This belief in God is not dependent upon any of our works of righteousness, for Jesus said, "It is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Again we find recorded in Holy

writ, "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise." Heb. 11:8-9. This faith which Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were in possession of, was revealed to them, and they, as well as all the redeemed family of God, lived by this faith, for Paul said, "But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed." Gal. 3:23. Paul says further, "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." Heb. 2:4. Rom. 1:17.

This faith which was revealed to Abraham was not given to his ancestors through the law, as was supposed by those who came to John's baptism, to be baptized by him. For John said, "Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come. Bring forth therefore, fruits worthy of repentance and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." Luke 3:7-8. We find almost the same words recorded in the 3rd. chapter of Matthew. This is clear evidence that the Pharisees and Sadducees were not children of God because Abraham was their father. Paul said, "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or his seed, *through the law,* but through the *righteousness of faith.* For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect. Rom. 4: 13-14.

But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must beieve that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. To all those that Jesus healed while he sojourned here in the world, were given faith to approach unto him. The woman that was a sinner who came from the city and entered into Simons house where Jesus had gone and when he had sat down to meat, washed his feet with the tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head, kissed his feet and anointed them with ointment.' "And he said, to this woman, thou faith hath saved thee, go in peace." Luke 7: 50. We find again recorded in Holy writ, that two blind men followed him crying and saying, "Thou son of David have mercy on us and when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, yea, Lord. Then touched he their eyes, saying, according to thy faith be it unto thee, and their eyes were opened. Math. 9: 27-30. This was living faith that dwelt in the hearts of all of those who came to Jesus and asked for help in time of need, and the evidence that he heard them was that they received that for which they petitioned. John said, "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." I John 5: 14-15.

It is little by little that the children of God are given faith to believe in God. Our carnal mind, which is not subject to the law of God, is continually in conflict with the word of God, believing that some other way is just as good, like Naaman, the Syrian, who was a leper, who thought that the waters of Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, were just as good as the river of Jordan, to dip in for a cure. The little maid that was taken captive, and waited on Naaman's wife, directed him to the Prophet in Is-

rael, but instead, he went to the King of Israel first (the law) bearing a letter from the King of Syria. But the King of Israel said, "See how he seeketh a quarrel against men, am I in God's stead to kill and make alive." He must go to the Prophet to find a cure. The same is true today. If you have a dreadful disease (sin) you will try all the remedies first that the flesh directs; and remedies they are, for there is quite a difference in the medicines that are labeled remedies and the one that is a cure. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin. But every avenue must be closed before we are made willing to follow the meek and lowly lamb of God; Who is the way, the truth and the life. When our efforts are exhausted and we give up, a little faith is given to approach him at a throne of grace and we are enabled to ask for help in time of need. Then how appliable are the words, "Ask and it shall be given you; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you. How marvelous are his words. "Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace. For he that cometh to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

When Lazarus, the brother of Martha and Mary, died, Jesus said to Martha "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the son of God, which should come into the world. Jno. 11: 26-27. May I repeat again that this belief in God is not dependent upon the work of the creature, for Jesus said, "It is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Then it is evident that faith is a gift of God and all that are born of God are of the spiritual family of Abraham, and not heirs because they were of his offspring by nature. For Paul said, "For the promise that he, Abraham, should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." And again we find recorded, "To Abraham and his seed were the promises made." I say not unto seeds as of many but unto one seed and that seed, which is Christ. And all that are born of the spirit of God are freely justified by faith. Paul said, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith, unto his grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of glory of God. Rom. 5:1-2. The suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ was to meet the demands of God's just and Holy law and bring in everlasting righteousness and justification for the chosen and redeemed family of God. Paul said he was delivered for our offences and raised for our justification. Therefore the Apostle said, "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." Seek how? By faith. For without faith it is impossible to please God for he that cometh to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

We find recorded in Holy writ that all men have not faith, and this class is pointed out in 2nd. Thess. 3rd. Chapter and 2nd. verse. "And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith. Those who have living faith, possess and manifest good works." If one professes to have faith and there is no evidence of good works manifested by him, it is evident that his faith is dead. For James said, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." As further proof that good works accompany faith, James says, "Yea a man may say, thou hast faith and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works and I will shew thee my faith by my works." James 2: 18. In other words, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Our works are our fruits. We recognize the mark in a child

of grace by their fruits or works. This fruit identifies a child of grace. It cannot be hid, even though the little one is not aware of the mark, it is there. In all ages there have been a few who believed in salvation by grace. This belief was given them by faith, and they have earnestly contended for this doctrine of salvation by grace. No man nor set of men can ever convince this redeemed family of God that it is by any works of righteousness which they have done that this faith is "once delivered" to the children of God. It matters not where they are found, whether they be at the church house, at home, in the field or on the road or in any state or country, they will be earnestly contending for the faith which was delivered to them. Jude said, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Jude 3. Paul said, "Therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." Faith is indeed precious and this is more fully realized when we come to the end of our wits. Troubles arise, and sore afflictions are to be endured. Such experiences bring dark times in our souls. But faith looks up to God even in the sorest affliction and our strength is made perfect in weakness. how true was this when the disciples of Jesus were out at sea in a storm. The waves were mounting up high and covering the ship. We find recorded, "And he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him. And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with waves; but he was asleep. And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. And FEARFUL, O ye are of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the sea; and there was a great calm." Math. 8: 23-26. "He maketh the storm a calm." His disciples had a little faith or they never could have awakened the Saviour. The Saviour said to Peter, "O, thou of little faith:" it is evident that he had some faith when he said to the Saviour, "Lord if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water." "And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterious, he was afraid; an beginning to sink, he cried saying, Lord, save me." Math. 14: 28-30. When Peter was some distance off with no storms and waves he could walk, but when he approached the Saviour his strength became weaker and weaker and when Jesus made bare his hand by stretching forth his hand. Peter's strength was made perfect in weakness, Paul said, "When I am weak, then I am strong." Strong how? Strong in faith, like Abraham who staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith giving glory to God.

How wonderful is it to have a little faith to approach unto God an be enabled to lay all of your sorrows and troubles before him. THE ONE WHO "Took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses." Math. 8: 17. All of those characters who received help from the Lord were in possession of faith, which enabled them, as well as you, to ask for help in time of need. "But without faith it is impossible to please God. For he that cometh to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

T. F. Adams

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom."

Proverbs 9: 10

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 4/86 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

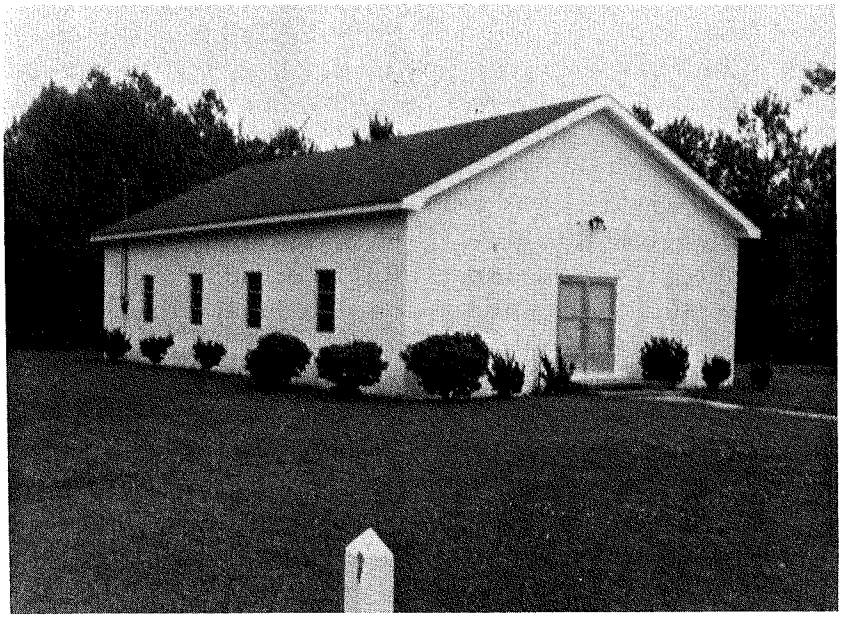

BAY SEA LEVEL CHURCH

Bay Sea Level Primitive Baptist Church was organized Sept. 5, 1829. The present Church building was built in 1969 in Sea Level, Cartert County North Caroline.

Church services are held every third Month, on first Sunday. Present Pastor is J. T. Prescott.

ARTICLES

DEAR BRETHREN:

In attempting to write on the general and important subject of "discipline," which is to rule and govern this chosen people of the Most High, and realizing as I think I do my ignorance and imperfection, and thinking of this people to whom it is addressed, it certainly makes me fear and tremble, knowing that many of this number are far more able to perform the task than I am, but if it is the Lord's will he can make it serve a good purpose; he can make his power and glory known as well through or by the pen of one of his little ones as by the pen of the ablest writer, for where there is but little, there is but little required. How often we are fed and comforted by the little preacher as much as by the big ones, for it is the Spirit which God puts in the matter that sweetens and makes it palatable, and nourishing to our hungry souls.

I used to think that the gift of discipline was given to the preacher, and now I believe that is giving us much trouble to-day. The members are, to my mind, too ready to give ear to the preacher, or pastor, whether he knows anything about discipline or not. It is a big mistake to have any man's person in admiration. Paul says, Is there not one among you

that is able to judge between his brethren? The true answer often is, No. They just wait for the preacher to give vent to his feelings, whether he is in the flesh or in the Spirit, and I believe it is quite generally admitted by our good ministers and brethren that a majority of our troubles are caused, or brought about, by the preachers. Then, brethren, that being the case, should we not give the more earnest heed along this line? Brethren, I would that I could deeply impress that very thing upon your minds, that we may reduce our troubles, which seem to be on the increase. If we know where the line is that needs the closer guarding, why not give heed to these things, instead of letting them creep in and then have to war against them and have our peace broken up? But I say some of our best disciplinarians are found among our ministers. I have not found in all the volume of the Book where there is a general code of rules that will clearly apply to all cases that we are encountered with, and yet the very spirit of the whole matter is written, here a little and there a little. In some cases we can find written in one short sentence that which will furnish the key to a big problem. I could recite a number of cases where brethren or church got mixed up in trouble, individuals, or the collective body, and continued in trouble for a considerable time, and when at last the mystery, or the hidden secret was revealed by some little one, or by some sister who was very timid about calling attention to the key to the whole matter. Another mistake that is, perhaps, too often made, is having too strong a desire for peace. Brethren, we cannot have permanent peace at the expense of justice and order. While I hope I do have profound respect, love and sympathy for the true order-loving ministers, yet I have a great desire that the members do not esteem any man more than they should. Some ministers need much encouragement from their members, while others need holding back. I think some are spoiled by the church being too hasty in their ordination. Paul rejects a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. I think they should learn thoroughly the difference between dignity and humility, but it seems that it is hard for all our brethren to learn the importance of this short lesson. Oh that there be no hateful, dignified spirit in an Old Batist stand. Paul is correct, they are hard to teach order, It seems they would rather slay an opposing brother than to have their dignity humiliated. They seem to think that it would forever ruin their standing among the brethren, forgetting that God resisteth the proud and gives grace to the hulmble. Now this is one of the things I would love to strongly impress upon your minds, for it seems so seriously hurtful, not only to the church, but to the individuals, so let us have no man's person in admiration. When trouble arises among us, let us look for its source, its cause, and fairly remove the cause, regardless of whether it is the right eye, or any other member. Even our own companion should not be spared.

Here is another thing I wish to speak of: If a church is constituted in disorder, it can never be recognized by orderly churches. I suppose that this view is most generally considered among the churches.

Another thing that is found nowhere but in the evil, fleshly nature, is talking among the brethren. Often it happens that one brother will say or write something about another that is rather offensive, then the other makes some unkind remarks in reply to him, even in a private way. Then he tells the brethren how he made his brother retreat. His purpose being to elevate himself in the estimation of his brethren by lowering the other. This trait is also found in preacher jealousy. These things come only of the flesh, and not of the Spirit of Christ. He

that exalteth himself shall be abased. So we had better take heed, for the higher one exalts himself the harder he will fall. Let us remember that which was written afore time was written for our learning, so let us turn to the book of Esther and learn the story of Haman and Mordecai, from which we may learn a wonderful lesson.

The next I wish to call attention to our ministers. While in the stand it is common with some when they have no food for the sheep to employ their time in slurring false religion, to the embarrassment of their own members. I think this only arises from the carnal mind, and should be reproved. That which is not of faith is sin. Faith works by love and purifies the heart. Sin is prompted by the flesh and Satan and corrupts the mind. Are we not willing to bear hardness and suffer persecution without reviling again and calling men liars? God judgeth them without. The command to Peter was, "Feed my sheep," and you cannot feed them on husks, brethren, so preach the word. Do all things decently and in order. Do good to all men, especially to the household of faith.

Brethren, this is a difficult subject for me to write upon and make myself plain. Perhaps it is because I know so little about it, so I feel to urge good wirters to take up the subject of the keeping of the Lord's house, that I may learn much more about it, for it certainly is a subject well worth our consideration.

I do not desire to have anything unsound or worthless come out over my name, so I urgently request that the dear editors examine this, and act according to its deserts.

R. P. BYNUM
Ranger, Texas

Jan. 22, 1935

Be not wise in thine own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil.
Proverbs 3: 7

JOHN X. 2, 3.

"But he that entereth in by the door is the Shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth, and he calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out."

In perfect harmony with predictions going before, Jesus "Opened his mouth in parables, and uttered dark sayings;" and while unto his disciples it was given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, unto them that are without, all these things were uttered in parables, for without a parable he spake not to them. This course was well adapted to the execution of the design of God, whose pleasure it is to hide these things from the wise and prudent and reveal them unto babes. The wisdom and prudence of men would rather dictate the opposite course, and instead of purposely concealing the things of the Spirit from the understanding of the great and learned, the wise and the noble, it would seek by moral suasion, lucid argument, conclusive demonstration, &c., to persuade men of influence and talent to embrace the gospel. Had our blessed Redeemer intended to court the favor or applaluse of those who move in the higher circles of human society, he might have used human policy, and adapted his discourse to their taste and capacity, as the worldly taught preachers of our age do; but then their faith would stand in the wisdom of this world, and not in the power of God. —1Cor. ii. 5.

God's peculiar people are in various parts of the scriptures called sheep; and this figurative appellation is given them as the children of God, in distinction from the rest of mankind, who are designated goats. "All we like sheep have gone astray," says the prophet, Isa. liii. 6, "and the Lord has laid on him (Christ) the iniquity of us all." Of these strayed sheep the same prophet has said, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he

shall gather the lambs with his arm and carry them in his bosom."—Isa. xl. 2. And the inspired psalmist says, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." —Psalm xxiii. 1. And in connection with the parable under consideration, Christ annouces himself the good Shepherd, that layeth down his life for the sheep. Hence we have the testimony of Christ himself that the redeemed, or those for whom he died, are his sheep; that they were not only sheep, but they were *his sheep,* before they went astray, and that they were the objects for whom alone he laid down his life. Much might be said on the appropriateness of the figure, but to trace its analogy would swell our article to too great an extent. In the course of this chapter Christ speaks of two distinct sheep-folds; the one is that into which he as the Shepherd of Israel has entered by the door for the purpose of bringing out his own sheep; and the other, that into which he will fold all his redeemed when there shall be but one fold and one shepherd. The carnal tribes of the family of Abraham, under their legal covenant, were a fold in which many of the sheep which he came to redeem were held in bondage. "For this Agar is Mt. Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."—Gal. iv. 25, 26. The son differeth nothing from the servant until the time appointed of the Father. And this was evidently the case with those "lost sheep of the house of Israel," which Christ the Shepherd came to seek and to save. He for this purpose entered into the fold where they were confined, *by the door,* for the purpose of effecting their emancipation; and as the anti-type of Cyrus, of whom it was written, "Thus saith the Lord thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself; that frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish; that confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited, and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof; that saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up all thy rivers; that saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure; even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundations shall be laid. Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut: I will go before thee and make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron," &c.—Isa. xliv. 24-28, and xlv. 1, 2.

As in the execution of the word of the Lord, Cyrus acted as the Lord's chosen shepherd in delivering his captive people from their bondage, and in leading them out of Babylon, and in the re-establishment of Jerusalem, and in the building of the second temple, which was more glorious than the first, he was evidently so far a type of Christ: even so God has proclaimed his Son as his Shepherd, and the man that is his fellow.—Zech. xiii. 7. As God went before Cyrus to break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron, and to open before him the two-leaved gates which were closed upon captive Israel, so the right hand of Christ in the deliverance of his people from the wrath and condemnation of the law, was upheld by the omnipotence of his eternal power and Godhead. Cyrus entered Babylon by the gates, and the palace of Belshazzar by the door; for God had said unto the deep, Be dry, and the proud waters had re-

treated from their accustomed channel, and the army of Cyrus entered the city under the walls, and the guard or porter opened the gates of the city to him; and according to the word of the Lord these gates could not be again closed against God's redeemed people. "But he that entereth in by the door is the Shepherd of the sheep." Christ in entering the fold, or place of his children's captivity, may be considered as having entered by the door, in reference to the prophecies going before. He came as it was written of him in the volume of the book, to do the will of God. "A body," said he,"hast thou prepared me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sins, thou hast had no pleasure." "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that he may establish the second." —Heb. x. 5, 6. Secondly, he came in by the door to the place where his sheep were folded, when he was made of a woman, made under the law; for it was a carnal or fleshly covenant that his sheep of that fold were under; "The children being partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren; that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."—Heb. ii. 14-17. The captivity an bondage of God's people was in the relation in which they stood to Adam. "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men unto condemnation," &c.—Rom. v. 18. And the Jewish covenant embraced a carnal or fleshly people, related to Abraham by being born in his house or brought with his money, and their covenant contained also carnal ordinances and worldly sanctuary.—Heb. ix. 1. To effect their deliverance from that bondage, to emancipate them from that fold and from that government, he must needs be made flesh and dwell among them, he must be mad like them in all points, and yet be without sin; and although like them in point of humanity, yet holy, harmless and separate from sinners.

"For he who could for sin atone,
Must have no blemish of his own."

Although he had no sin, he was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God through him.

3d. He entered by the door, agreeably to his explanation of the door of *his* sheep-fold. "I am the door," he says, and by himself he has fulfilled the law, cancelled its demands, borne its penalty, suffered the vials of almighty wrath, poured out his soul unto death, descended into the grave, encountered the king of terrors on his own dominions, despoiled him of his sting, and the grave of victory. "Not by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."—Heb. ix. 12. He had power to lay down his life, and power to take it up again, so that by himself he was able to enter. This was a *new* way, a living way of entrance, and the Shepherd who entered by the door is himself the way, and no man can come unto God but by him.

To him the porter openeth. If, by the law, his captive sheep were held in the prison-house of death, Divine Justice was the porter who kept the door. No bribe could tempt him, no pity move him; he was inexorable. But to Jesus even this inflexible porter opened, and wthout expense, for Jesus met his full demands, and Justice asked no more. The brazen gates of death were unsealed; the massy bars of death were cut in

sunder.

To him the porter has not only opened the door of death, and the grave, but he has opened to him the portals of immortal glory. Not only have the gates of death been opened to receive him as the ransom of his people, but they have been opened to deliver him up, for it was impossible that he should be holden of death. Having done and suffered all that law could demand, or justice could inflict, he has now entered into the inner court of the temple by his own blood. He had commanded, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in! Who is the King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty; the Lord mighty in battle."—Psalm xxiv. 8, 9.

But again: In the testimony of the Son of God, (1 John v. 6) we are informed that Christ came by water and blood; not by water only, but by water and blood; and it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.

We have shown in the foregoing remarks, that Jesus by his own blood has entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us, and by reference to Matt. iii. and last clause of the fifteenth verse, where the porter opened the door to Christ in regard to this witness. When Jesus came into the sheep-fold, or palace, the Spirit, in bodily shape like a dove, designated him as the Son of God. And lo, a voice from heaven was heard, saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." This Baptist porter opened the watery door to the Shepherd of the sheep, because "Thus it became them to fulfill all righteousness."

And the sheep hear his voice. As he had promised by the mouth of the prophet. "I will cause my glorious voice to be heard, and will shew the letting down of my arm," &c. He has verified the promise not only in causing his voice to be uttered, but he causeth it to be heard, by giving ears to the deaf, and life to the dead. "The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live."—John v. 22. Although dead in trespasses and sins, he gives unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand. But by the sheep hearing his voice we are to understand something more than to hear what he says; they give the same evidence that they hear his voice, that sheep do when they are called by their shepherd, they follow him. The voice of Jesus as the Shepherd and Bishop of souls is sounded in the gospel, and all the sheep recognize the gospel as the well-known voice of Jesus; but others believe not, because they are not his sheep, as he said unto them.

And he calleth his own sheep by name. He has their names all written in his book of life from the foundation of the world, and the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. He is therefore at no loss in calling them. He knew among the Jews who were the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and he knows equally well all his sheep among the Gentiles, which were not of the Jewish fold. He is not liable to the mistake which the arminians charge on him, of calling some that are not his own and endeavoring to make them his own; and of frequently failing in the enterprise. He says, "I know my sheep and am known of mine;" and he also knows who are not of his sheep. "For whom he did foreknow them he also did predestinate to be conformed to his image, that he might be the First-Born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called," (he calleth them by name, and he makes them hear and understand and obey him) "and whom he called them he also justified; and whom he justified them he also glorified." He calls them with an holy calling, not ac-

cording to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began.—2 Tim. i. 9. If he should call them ineffectually, that would not be a holy calling; for a calling that is holy cannot be defective—must secure the design of him who calls. His calls are not general, as arminians assert, but special and particular, addressed to his own sheep, and these he calls by name, that there may be nothing indefinite in the vocation.

And leadeth them out. Christ was not only anointed to preach good tidings unto the meek, to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison doors to them that were bound, but also to bring his prisoners out of their prison houses. The porter having opened the door to him as the Shepherd and Leader of his people, he leadeth them out. In order to lead them out it was necessary that he should go into the prison house where they were: this he did when he was made under the law, and when he descended into the chambers of death. But his was an errand of mercy, and by death he destroyed him that had the power of death, which is the devil; and wrought deliverance for them who were all their lifetime subject to bondage. He leads in the fulfillment of all righteousness, in a perfect obedience to all the requisitions of the law of God. None had ever preceded him in this work. But going before he leads his people after him, in bringing them up to the utmost demands of the law, for he is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. He leads them out from the guilt and consequence of sin: being made sin for them, and having put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, he has brought life and immortality to light, and leads them out of their state of sin and death, into life and immortality. This is fully demonstrated in his triumphant resurrection from the dead. He became the First Fruits of them that slept, and now holds in his hands the keys of hell and death. He giveth unto his sheep eternal life, and the assurance that they shall never perish. He leads them out from condemnation and into a state of justification—taking the lead in this also, for bearing the sins of his people he was numbered with the transgressors, and condemned by the law; but having satisfied that law, he that was manifested in the flesh, and put to death in the flesh, was quickened and justified in the Spirit, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on the world and received up into glory.

We have observed that Christ in coming into the Jewish fold, where he was sent unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel, was made flesh, made under the law, of the stock of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, and of the lineage of David; was circumcised, and became a debtor to do the whole law, and in this body which was made of a woman he was put to death. The law could pursue him no farther. When, therefore, he arose from the dead, instead of returning to that same relation to the legal covenant, to the carnal family of Abraham, tribe of Judah, &c., he was in his resurrection manifested as the Son of God with power. And although he had been known, in these respects, after the flesh, yet we shall know him no more after the flesh.

"No more the cruel spear,
The cross and nails no more;
For death itself shakes at his name
And all the heavens adore."

As the Forerunner of his people he has passed into the most holy place: "For Christ has not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."—Heb. ix. 24. In all this transition from death to life, from legal bondage to liberty, Christ is the Leader of his peo-

ple and must be followed by them. Having removed the old tabernacle which was made with hands, and set up the true tabernacle which God has pitched and not man, and having abolished death, and nailed the hand-writing of ordinances which were against us to his cross, abolished the enmity, even the law of commandments, he has taken his seat upon the throne of his glory, and led the way for all his redeemed to follow him, and they shall all return and come with singing unto Zion, and sorrowing and sighing shall fall away.

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say his flesh, and having an high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for he is faithful that promised; and let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works."—Heb. x. 19-24.

MATTHEW XIII. 15-17.

At an early period in the primitive church the question arose among the disciples, and as they could not exactly agree among themselves, they brought the question for a decision to the Master, viz.: "Who is the greatest in the kingdom?" Our Lord did not tell them that Peter, James, or John, or the Pope, or the Bishop, was the greatest; nor did he say directly, as he might with great propriety, that this honor belonged to him exclusively. He understood them to mean the greatest among the disciples. How many of them had anticipated the palm we are not informed; but it is natural to conclude that the disputants at least were actuated by ambitious, if not absolutely arrogant feelings—feelings very unbecoming them as the disciples of him that is meek and lowly. "And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them; and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." What a lesson for their instruction! What a reproof for their ambition! And what an example for their guide! "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Strictly speaking, Christ is the only one that has ever humbled himself in the manner described; others have been truly humbled under his mighty hand, and Christ is beyond all dispute greatest in the kingdom. The more childlike, therefore, his disciples are, the more they like Jesus.

With this preliminary instruction, our Lord proceeded to admonish the disciples of the unavoidable occurrence of offences, and how they should deport themselves when such offences should come. Although such offenders as cannot be reclaimed in a gospel manner are to be expelled, however conspicuous their standing or important their station, although they may be to the church as the right eye or the right hand is to the body, we are not to indulge in carnal reasoning, nor suffer anything to be done by partiality. With all the severity which the order of the house of God demands, gentleness, meekness, and a desire to reclaim an erring brother, is to mark the course of the disciples one towards the other. This lesson is set home by the most admirable argument contained in the scriptures: "For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost;" and this declaration is beautifully illustrated by the man that had an hundred sheep, of which one is lost; he goeth into the mountain to seek the

truant sheep, and when he has found it, he rejoiceth over its restoration more than over those which had not strayed. Now is this christian-like? Then it is the proper course for christians to pursue when any have strayed from the footsteps of the flock.

"Moreover," besides this general lessons of instruction, which are always to be observed by the saints, "if thy brother shall trespass against thee." We cannot understand this to mean any particular kind of trespass, as to smite thee, rob thee, slander thee, or even that the trespass shall be against *thee* personally; but if thy brother shall trespass, or transgress the laws of Christ, so as to effect thy fellowship towards him, then the duty becomes indispensable to apply the instruction which follows: "You that are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness." It is not said, if thy brother trespass against thee *privately*, then tell him his fault between thee and him alone; nor is it said, If he trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. Observe the figure laid down—one sheep has gone astray. It is sufficient that he has gone from the ninety-nine; no matter whether he went off secretly or openly, he has gone, and must be looked up. As the Son of man came to save that which was lost, we are to be Christ-like, and go in pursuit of the stray brother, with a becoming desire to render him a real service in restoring him to his place.

We are aware of some of the objections to the application of this rule to cases of open or public transgression; and there are also some arguments used against its application to offences of a strictly private character. A case is supposed: a brother has been seen and heard in open court, to curse and swear, and deny that he has any knowledge of Jesus Christ. This offence was open and before the world, in presence of the enemies of the cross of Christ; now what is to be done in this case? Certainly an individual brother, although he might convince the offender of his error, has not the power to exonerate the offender from his responsibility to satisfy every member of the church; but still he is a stray sheep, and should be sought for. Now, to follow the direction and rule under consideration, how shall he proceed? To us it appears that this should be the course: My brother, I am grieved with your conduct; you have inflicted a deep wound upon your brethren in denying our dear Lord and Master, and in the profane language which you used on the occasion; you you still persist in that course, or are you convinced of your error, and ready to make acknowledgments of your wrong? Now suppose the brother says, as David said to Nathan, "I have sinned," and manifests the same contrition that David did, what will the laboring brother require to heal the wound? Will he not say, I rejoice that God has given you repentance for the wrong, and filled your heart with godly sorrow for your transgression; and if the matter were only known to myself, here the difficulty should end; but you know, my brother, that this offence was committed openly, and has come or should come to the ears of all your brethren; they are or will be as sensibly grieved as I have been. Now do you not see the importance of leaving here thy gift before the altar, and going immediately to be reconciled to the brethren? Go confess to them as you have now to me and they will rejoice to receive you; yea, they will rejoice more over you than over ninety-nine just persons that need no repentence. If this offending brother's contrition be genuine, will he hesitate one moment? Will he not rather hasten to acknowledge his fault, and do all in his power to remove the stumbling block which he has been the unhappy occasion of? Would not such a course be in the spirit of the instruction of the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, and much better cal-

culated to restore the offender, (if he be a subject of grace) than to simply cite him to be and appear before the church, and make satisfaction to the church for offences of a public nature? Where a real disposition exists to restore a wandering brother in the spirit of meekness, there is seldom any difficulty in understanding the mode of proceedure directed. But when a difficulty occurs, (as, alas! too many have) where, instead of the spirit being grieved, the *old man* is mad, and seeks occasion to be avenged or to retaliate, it is astonishing how very exact he can be in requiring his offending or accused brother to pay the utmost farthing. How keen the eye to detect the difference between a public or a private offence. If public, he says, I will make it still more public—I will let the world see how much worse that brother is than I am. I will not go and labor to reclaim him; it is his duty to come before the church and confess, and if he should be excluded it will serve him right. Such a person will plead eloquently for scripture rule, but remain stupidly inconsiderate of the application of that rule to his own case. We would by no means be understood that it is unimportant that christians should be at all times and under all circumstances governed strictly by the scriptures of the New Testament; but we do object to that selfish construction of the word which would lead a brother to pursue a fellow-member out of the church, without laboring to reclaim him in the spirit of the directions laid down by our Lord in the chapter under consideration.

Again, instances have not been lacking where an individual has been conscious that he had given just cause for complaint, but, instead of being melted down with contrition for his wrong, he coolly sets about making his defence. In his turn he becomes amazingly tenacious for an exact conformity to certain instructions of the scriptures; or rather for his version of them. Now, says he, if I have offended let my brethren pursue the course laid down in the 18th of Matthew, or I will give them no satisfaction; I'll let them know that I know something about church discipline, and if I have offended my brother, he is required to come and tell me my fault, &c.; let him, therefore, come to me if he wants anything. Is there a particle of gospel exercise manifested in this sort of contending for bible rule, while such scripture as requires the accused to go and be reconciled to his brother is altogether unheeded?

We have heard this argument also used in some cases: If a brother should inflict an injury upon a brother in private, so that the sufferer has not the means to prove his charge, that he is bound to bear the grief without pursuing the course of labor enjoined in this chapter, because that he cannot establish every word by two or three witnesses. But we trust this mode of reasoning does not prevail very extensively. The rule makes all necessary provision, for instance: My brother offends me privately; the facts of the case are known to none but ourselves. I go and tell him his fault, as directed, between him and me; he will not hear me. I then take what is called the second step of labor; taking one or two brethren we visit him; now before these brethren he denies all the facts in the case. I affirm and he denies; and if I proceed to tell it to the church, his word is supposed to be as good as mine, and the church, it is thought, cannot decide upon the just merits of the case for want of clearer testimony.

But let it be remembered, I am to go in obedience to the command of Christ, in the spirit of Christ, and of course trusting the issue to him; (if I perish, I perish) and in the second step of the labor, also trusting in God, I cannot be without sufficient witness. I have the very best of witness. My one or two brethren and myself make up the number of two or three,

and being assembled to labor with an offending brother in obedience to Christ, we are together in his name, and we have the assurance that he is in our midst. This assurance is given in the same chapter and in the same connection with the rule, and Jesus says every word shall be established, and he will make good the pledge, if the directions of Christ have been truly observed there is no possibility of failure in regard to the issue.

Before we close our remarks we wish to say that, although we fully believe this rule is always binding on individuals, requiring them thus to proceed in all cases, whether public or private, yet we do not believe the church, in her church capacity, is always bound to see that priate labor has been taken, before she can consistently exercise that authority which is vested in her for dealing with transgressors. Cases may occur in open church meeting, requiring the immediate reproof of the church before all, that others may fear, &c. But in all cases where a charge is brought before the church against a member by an individual member, we do not believe that it is the duty of the church, before acting upon the charge, to see that the first and second steps of gospel labor have been duly taken according to the rule.

JONAH III. 9, 10.

"Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce wrath, that we perish not? And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not."—Jonah iii, 9, 10.

It appears from the record of this prophet that Nineveh was a heathen city of great magnitude and in a most deplorable state of ignorance and depravity, and that the Lord, instead of calling for the organization of a Foreign Missionary Board to collect funds, manufacture, commission and send missionaries to warn Nineveh of impending wrath, commanded Jonah, one of his own prophets, to go to that greatcity and deliver a certain message; and notwithstanding Jonah's indisposition he was compelled to go and preach the preaching which God had bidden him. Every thing necessary for the accomplishment of the sovereign will of God in relation to Nineveh was provided without human aid, even to the great fish to ferry the runaway prophet to the field of his labor, and the gourd under which he should rest after having obeyed the word of the Lord. And can it be doubted that God, who has declared the end from the beginning, and said, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," was deficient in his knowledge of the result of Jonah's mission to Nineveh? Certainly not. Every circumstance in this divine record, when duly understood, goes to confirm the doctrine of the sovereignty, immutability and omniscience of God, but yet in such a manner of demonstration as to confound the wisdom of this world.

Jonah was commanded to say to the people of Nineveh, "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown;" it was therefore his duty to go and to leave the execution of the prediction to the Lord. And it is as certain that God was as able to have prevented the disobedience of Jonah, as it was for him to overrule his disobedience to his own glory and the direct accomplishment of his designs. In the disobedience of the prophet occasion was afforded not only for Jonah to become a sign or type of a crucified and risen Savior, but also for the use which God designed for a certain fish which he had before prepared for a certain agency in regard to Jonah's mission to Nineveh.

The restraining power of God was

also as potent to prevent the wickedness of Nineveh is it had been his pleasure to have employed it for that purpose, as it was in preventing Jonah from making his contemplated visit to Tarshish; but God designed to make use of that wicked city in testimony against Corazen, Bethsada, Capurniam and Jerusalem, and therefore every circumstance was wisely ordered and overruled to answer the counsel of his own will, in accordance with which he worketh all things.

But we presume the difficulty in the mind of our correspondent is that God had authorized Jonah to say that Nineveh should be destroyed in forty days, and then that he repented of the evil that he had said he would do, and did it not. By reference to Jeremiah xviii. 7-10, our correspondent will find the following law or principle of administration in regard to national judgment, &c., recorded viz: "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation against whom I have pronounced turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build up and plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them." The judgment of Nineveh was then in precise harmony with the rule by which he administers his judgments in a national point of view, and consequently there was nothing in the case of Nineveh indicating on the part of God the least variableness or shadow of turning, the words *repent* and *turn* being used in such cases not to indicate mutability or change of purpose in the mind of God, but a different administration from that anticipated by the language of the law under which nations and cities, as such, stand amenable to God. Thus, in relation to the sentence of the law of God against transgressors, individually or collectively, the law denounces judgments without mercy. The sentence is in the most plain and emphatic language possible—"The sout that sins shall die." Thus, the law contemplates wrath and damnation, and that, too, by what God has said, speaking in the law; nevertheless, in the richness of his grace he has provided deliverance from the wrath for his redeemed people, and their deliverance, so far from reflecting upon his prescience and immutability, goes fully to establish both, inasmuch as their salvation and calling are "according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began." Repentance in scripture parlance usually if not universally signifies a change or turning from. Such a change is sometimes in reference to purpose, and sometimes in regard to action.

An offending brother may turn again, repenting. Judas repented of his perfidy, and Esau also, that he had sold his birthright; and there is also a repentance which is unto life, to give which unto Israel and the remission of sins Christ is exalted a Prince and a Savior. But in none of these senses or the word can the none of these senses of the word can the term be applicable unto God, for he is of one mind, and none can turn him. Because he is the Lord and changes not the sons of Jacob are not consumed. To interpret these terms in their application to God as we may in their application to men, would involve a contradiction in the scriptures. But allowing the words *repent* and *turn* in our text to mean the same as Jeremiah xviii. 17-10, and we find them relating to the outward or providential dealings with nations, in their national characters. As when he saith in his law that the nations that will not serve him shall be destroyed, still reserving the power and right to turn these very nations from their wicked-

ness, and preserve them in the enjoyment of their national prosperity. It must be conceded that God knew beforehand what the effect of Jonah's preaching should be upon Nineveh, and although Jonah preached to them the legitimate consequence of their course, God humbled that city, and caused it to repent at the preaching of Jonah. And when he had effected this design by Jonah's preaching he made known to them his further design to save them from the impending ruin which was threatened. Now compare all this with the first experience of the children of God, and we discover a striking analogy when one is quickened by the Holy Ghost. Moses, or the law, like Jonah, comes preaching wrath; and this preaching, like that of Jonah, presents no alternative. "Thou hast sinned," thou are the man! thou shalt surely die! At this startling ministry of the law, the soul, like the Ninevites, is humbled; the relish for sin is killed, and like the men and beasts of nineveh, the soul is shrouded in sackcloth, a real sense of guilt and deserved wrath is brought home with terrific force; but when God, by the ministry of his law has sufficiently humbled the soul, he reveals to it his great salvation. This does not lead the soul to conclude that God has changed his purpose or his nature—that he has sacrificed his veracity or his justice, but he is made to rejoice in the revelation of that system of grace which is ancient as eternity, and in full harmony with the perfections of God.

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you."—I Peter iv. 12.

The "fiery trial," then, is not a strange thing which happens only to a few of the Lord's family, but is more or less the appointed lot of all. Do we not hear the Lord saying to his Zion, "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction?" All then that are chosen must pass through the furnace of affliction, and all know experimentally the fiery trial, for by it they are made partakers of Christ's sufferings. But this is indispensable in order to be partakers of his glory. "If so be that we suffer with him, that we maybe also glorified together." Thus they suffer with him, "that when his glory shall be revealed, they may be glad also with exceeding joy." And this suffering with and for Christ in the furnace of affliction salts the soul, preserves it from corruption, communicates health, gives it savour and flavour, is a token of interest in the everlasting covenant, and is a seal of friendship and peace with God.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 1986

Elder Larry Hollandsworth, VA..	$ 2.00
Mrs. Elizabeth T. Adkins, VA....	5.00
Mrs. Ilene Clifton, VA.....	2.00
Mrs. Mamie Lou Haney, AL. ...	2.00
Davis Mordecai, AL.....	5.00
W. H. Blaylock, NC.	2.00
Claude Harwell, MO.	2.00
Mrs. Kenneth Mathis, TN.	2.00
Mrs. Jean B. Moran, NC.	2.00
Mrs. J. B. Blaylock, NC.....	7.00
Mrs. Helen Maxell, WA.	10.00
Mrs. Clarence Baublitz, MD....	2.00
J. Cline Chandler, NC.....	5.00
D. G. Hart, NC.....	2.00
Mrs. Joyce Farley, TX.	7.00
John Collie, Jr. NC.	2.00
Casey Johnson, NC.	7.00

Mrs. Ethel Carter, NC	7.00
Mrs. Oza Hill, TX	2.00
Mrs. James H. Terral, TX	2.00
R. H. Hale, AL	2.00
Mrs. William I. Teel, PA	2.00
Miss Lora Smith, NC	2.00
James Cunningham, MO	2.00
Mrs. Ruth C. Clark, VA	2.00
David M. Spangler, VA	2.00
Hester M. Dawson, OR	5.00
Mrs. Clara McDuff, TX	5.00

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The next West Country Line Union meeting will be held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, the Fifth Sunday in March, 1986, if it be the Lord's will. Pleasantville Church will be host for this meeting.

We welcome our Friends, Brethren, Sisters and Ministers of our Faith and Order.

Elder H. W. Wray, Pastor
Sister Rachel Wray, Clerk

OBITUARIES

KENNETH LESLIE BLACK

Kenneth Leslie Black, of North Delta, B.C., formerly of Detroit, Mich. passed away at the Kelowna General Hospital, Kelowna, B.C. on Monday, April 29, 1985. He was 95.

He was born in St. Thomas, Jan. 13, 1891, the son of the late Archibald John Black and Kate Leslie (Rawlinson) Black. He was employed at the New York Central Railroad office where he worked for 50 years before retiring Feb. 1, 1956. From 1958 to 1975, he worked for the Ion Optical Company, Detroit. He lived in Detroit from 1922 to 1980 and moved to British Columbia in Aug. 1980.

Our dearest Uncle Kenneth was an adherent of the Old School Baptist Church, of which his parents were members, all his life. He would speak of his love of scripture and of the dear Old School Baptist faith. He loved to hear the Old School Baptist hymns.

We praise God and thank Him that He allowed us the great spiritual benefit of having dear Uncle Ken live his final five and a half years with sister Flora and her family, and with us, in our home.

He was predeceased by brothers John Black of St. Thomas, William T. Black of St. Thomas, Archibald Black of Fort William, Duncan Black of Vancouver, B.C., James Black of St. Thomas, D. Crawford Black of Los Altos, Cal.; sister Kate Black of St. Thomas, and nephew Lt. Jemes Wallace Black, killed in action in Italy in 1944.

Surviving are nephews Duncan Black of London, Ont., Ted Blac, of Loveland, Colo., Duncan T. Black of White Rock, B.C., Kenneth C. Black of Nanaimo, B.C., T. Archibald Black of Ganges, B.C.; nieces Flora (Mrs. George Snowdon) of Okanagan Centre, B.C., Betty (Mrs. Lloyd Blackman) of North Delta, Mrs. Donna Black Sommer of Delta, B.C., Ruth Black of Thunder Bay, Ont., and Kathleen Hindley of Talahassie, Fla., and several great nieces and nephews including Anne Black Dunlop of St. Boniface, B.C.

Funeral services were held in the R.E. Allen Funeral Chapel with interment in the family plat at St. Thomas Cemetery.

Submitted prayerfully,
in Christ's love,
Elisabeth Black Blackman

MYRTLE (PASCHAL) CARTER

Plesantville Primitive Baptist Church sadly records the death of our Dear Sister in Christ, Myrtle Carter, 93. She died Sept. 25, 1985 at Will-O-Haven Rest Home, Greensboro, N.C. Her funeral was held at Ray Funeral Home, Madison, N.C. by her Pastor, Elder H. W. Wray. Burial was in Comers Chapel Church Cemetery. She was a native of Rockingham County, N.C., living near Madison, N.C. all her life.

Surviving are Son, Gary Carter of Greensboro, N.C. Brother Roy Paschal of High Point, N.C. and two granddaughters.

Sister Carter was Baptized into the fellowship of Plesantville Church Sept. 1st Sunday, 1965 and she was a kind, loving and devoted member, always attending her meetings, until in 1979, she had memory failure and had to go the the Nursing Home. She did so many good things for others. Caring for her sister, and sister's grandchildren, and others.

We know our loss is Her Eternal Gain.

Sister Rachel Wray

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Psalm 116:15

MRS. LILLIE MAE MCCOLLUM

Plesantville Primitive Baptist Church sadly records the death of our dear Sister in Christ, Sister Lillie Mae (Mitchell) McCollum, 93.

She died May 12, 1985 at Country Side Manor Home, Stokesdale, N.C. Her funeral was held at Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church by Elder H. W. Wray, her pastor. Burial was in Church Cemetery.

Surviving are, Daughter-in-law, Edith of Ky. and three grandchildren, Captain Jimmy McCollum in England, Carol Sue in Calif. and William McCollum III of Madison, N.C. Five great-grandchildren and all of them came to her funeral.

She was a native of Rockingham County, N. C. and a merchant.

She was baptized into the fellowship of Plesantville Church in June, 1964 and was a loving, kind and devoted member, until failing health kept her from attending her meetings and had to be in the nursing home several years. She loved to read her Bible and the Signs of The Times. She spoke of wanting to go to her heavenly home when we visited her, before the strokes took her away.

May the Lord comfort her family and all who love and miss her.

Sister Rachel Wray

SISTER ELLA DARNALL

Sister Ella Darnall was born in Trigg County, Kentucky on April 1, 1900. She was the daughter of Ira and Mary Calhoun Dixon. Sister Darnall was united in marriage on August 13, 1916 to Elder Joseph (Nuck) Darnall. He preceded her in death on April 13, 1979.

She became a member of Dry Creek Primitive Baptist Church on the Saturday before Second Sunday in June, 1921. She was a faithful servant to the Lord in her gentle, humble way, has cooked, fed, and given lodging to many "Ole Baptists" during her lifetime with Elder Nuck.

Sister Darnall passed from this life on June 16, 1985 at Shady Lawn Nursing Home in Trigg County, Kentucky. Her funeral was held June 19, 1985 at Goodwin Funeral Home by Elder R. H. Hale and her body was laid to rest in

Atkins Cemetery to wait the second coming of the Savior.

She was survived by seven sons: Fentress, of Fayette, N.C.; Clayton of Harding, Ky.; Eugene of Marissa, Ill.; JOe, Ervin, and Elias of Trigg County, Ky. One daughter, Addie Pearl Harris of Hopkinsville, Ky. Twenty-two grandchildren, three step-grandchildren, four great-grandchildren. Two sisters: Modie Thomas and Ollie Compton. Four brothers: Tom, Delbert, and Lindsey of Trigg County and Douglas Dixon of Hopkinsville, Kentucky.

She will be greatly missed by all at Dry Creek Church, but feel that our loss has been her eternal gain.

Written by Elizabeth Mathis
Route 1, Box 247
Dover, Tenn. 37058

BROTHER LARRY WEATHERFORD, Sr.

The writer of this memorial feels unworthy to undertake this also, I was saddened to hear of his death.

He was born September 28, 1917 in Rockingham County, North Carolina. Died December 4, 1985 at Durham, North Carolina. He was a son of the late Deacon Harry Thomas Weatherford and Sister Beulah Dix Weatherford. Both were members of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church.

On December 25, 1941, he was married to Delores Callahan. To this union was born two sons. He leaves to mourn his passing: wife, Sister Dolores Weatherford of Danville, Virginia; Sons Larry G. Weatherford, Jr. of Lynchburg, Virginia, and Ashley W. Weatherford of Pittsburg, California. One sister, Mrs. Mildred W. Hanks of Danville, Virginia. Two brothers, William T. Weatherford and Brother Harold D. Weatherford of Danville, Virginia, also six grandchildren.

On March 9, 1968 Brother Larry Weatherford joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church and was a faithful member until his death. Psalm 116: 15 "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." The last time I spoke to Brother Larry was our fourth sunday meeting in November, 1985. My wife and I were planning to be in Danville in a few days. I told him we would be by to see him. He said If I am still here. I believe he felt his days were short. Brother Larry was deep in the scriptures. He loved to hear his Lord lifted up high and the name of Jesus exalted above every name. He believed in prayer. Saint Luke 9:63 "No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Brother Larry's faith in God was strong to the end. He was looking for that city whose builder and maker is God. II Timothy 4: 7 & 8 "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the Righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." I truly believe that Brother Larry could witness with the Aposltle Paul the above text. We will miss him, however, we believe our loss will be his eternal gain.

His funeral was conducted December 6, 1985 at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church by Elder's Kenneth R. Key and Lonnie Mozingo, Jr. He waslaid to rest in the Chruch Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord. May the Lord bless the family and reconcile them to His will.

Written by request of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, December 21, 1985 at her conference.

Humbly submitted,
R. Allen Carroll

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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ROMANS 8:28 THROUGH 39

And we know that ALL THINGS work together FOR GOOD TO THEM THAT LOVE GOD, TO THEM WHO ARE THE CALLED ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE.

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long: we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us.

For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come.

Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

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EDITORIAL

"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory." **I Cor. 2:7.**

If the wisdom of God is spoken of in a mystery, then we might ask; what is a mystery? Spiritually speaking, a mystery is a divinely disclosed secret which apart from revelation cannot be discovered. It is a wisdom which has been hidden from the world as far as having it revealed to their hearts, but revealed unto babes. Since this mystery is a secret conceived only by God and only known by Him, makes it an eternal decree, a divine wisdom which has long been kept hidden until in time revealed by the Spirit of God. From this we might summarize and say: 1. a mystery is a divine truth beyond the ability of nature, sense, and reason to comprehend. 2. it is hidden from the wise and prudent, and 3. it is revealed unto babes, by the Holy Spirit.

The gospel contains many wonderful mysteries. One of the first grand mysteries in the word of truth is the mystery of the Trinity. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus." I Peter 1:2. And "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one." I John 5:7. There are many passages of scripture that prove a trinity of persons in the godhead. No, the doctrine of the Trinity does not rest upon one or two isolated verses of scripture such as the above two, but it is a ray of light that illuminates the whole of God's word from Genesis to Revelation. Take away this precious doctrine of the Trinity and we would have no part in election, no pardon of sins, no redemption, no justification, no sanctification or salvation. The sovereignty of God in the choice of his people is a mystery, but do we not believe by faith that he has so appointed it to be? His sovereign will has fixed the circumstances of his creatures and His purposes none can reverse.

The Christian hope is based upon the doctrine of the Trinity. How can anyone have a hope of being of the elect of God unless it be from a Father who has all

power in heaven and upon earth and who elects according to His own purpose and will, unless he be God? How can anyone have a hope to rest upon the atoning blood of Jesus Christ in the redeeming, justifying work for his people, if it not be of the righteousness of the Son of God? How can His people be taught by, led by, and have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts unless it be the Spirit of God? So can we not see that the spiritual knowledge of the Trinity lies as the foundation of all vital godliness, the sum and substance of all spiritual religion. The three persons in the godhead are not just three names but three persons distinctly named and described, and who are but one God. Now nature is reay to ask, how can one be three and three be one? Is it not because this mystery is a truth beyond the ability of nature, sense, and reason, being hid from the wise and prudent and revealed in time to babes by the Holy Spirit.

Another great mystery of Godliness brought forth in the scriptures is the son of God being made manifest in the flesh. "And without controversay great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." I Tim. 3:16. Jesus Christ was sent into the world (with his own consent) by the Father and the Spirit. "Now the Lord God and his Spirit hast sent me." Isa. 48:16. "God was manifest in the flesh." Where can we find a greater contrast than between God and flesh, and yet the two are blended in the incarnation of the Saviour? He "was manifest in the flesh," is this not essential to the salvation of the elect of God? He who made you became like you, yet without sin. "But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." Phil. 2:7. Take away from our faith the doctrine of our Lord's true divinity, and our hope of deliverance through Him is found baseless. What virtue would there be in his blood, if the Lord Jesus be not God? If the Lord Jesus be not God, his blood could no more save us, or purge away our guilty crimes, than the blood of any ordinary man; for if he be not the God-man, what merit could there be in his blood? There could be no atonement for our sins, no trusting to the Saviour's care, no hope of his mercy, and no prayer through Him.

Do we not find the incarnation of Christ to be a most extraordinary and amazing affair? It is a blessed event indeed, that the Son of God should become man, that he should be born of a pure virgin, without any concern of man, but by the power of the Holy Ghost in a way unseen and unknown signified by his overshadowing. Why was this necessary? In order to bring about the most wonderful work ever done in this world, the redemption and salvation of his elect people. We might ask, if Christ is God, can God shed blood, or suffer, or die? No, the God part could not but the man part, the human nature part, was the part that shed blood, suffered, and died. This is why. He took on a nature that could suffer, bleed, and die. "And without shedding of blood is no remission of sins." Heb. 9:22. The incarnation of Christ was to make peace with God for his elect to make reconciliation for sin which was appointed Him in covenant. He has recociled sinners to God by his obedience, blood, and death making peace by his blood upon the cross.

His incarnation was also that he might bring forth, on behalf of his people, all those spiritual blessings provided in covenant and laid up in Christ; and which came by him, our High-Priest, over the household of God. "Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Eph. 1:3. So, He who now is adored by angels once laid in a manger; He who has power over all

flesh and all things was as man, made to sleep, eat, suffer, and die. A religion without the incarnation of the Son of God is like a house without a foundation. Hope discovers in it a sure foundation and love delights in an incarnate God, proclaims his honors, cleaves to him, gives him all the praise and crowns him, "Lord of all." Is not the incarnation of the Son of God a mystery beyond nature, sense, and reason to comprehend, yet revealed unto babes by faith?

The mystery of sin or iniquity is another great mystery. "Who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Titus 2:14. That he might deliver His people from the guilt of sin in which they were slaves and captives to their lusts. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men for that all have sinned." Romans 5:12. Where does this leave all of Adam's posterity but dead in trespasses and sins into an estate of sin and misery. A loss of original righteousness followed upon Adam's sinning, he lost the righteousness in which he was created so that he and all his posterity became unrighteous. Guilt upon the conscience of our first parents appeared so they attempted to hide themselves from God among the trees of the garden. "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." Romans 5:18. The guilt of Adam's sin continues, and is imputed to all his posterity. This fact soon appeared in the corruption of Cain's nature by shedding his brother's blood. Doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit? No, no, make the tree good and the fruit will be good; and this is done only by the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ.

"There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God." Romans 3:11. Though they may understand natural things, and somewhat of moral things, they understand not spiritual things, the things of the Spirit of God which they neither receive or know because they are spiritually discerned. They know not God as to glorify Him. They know not Christ, his heart-felt truth, nor the way of salvation by Him. They know not the Spirit, his person, office and operations upon the hearts and consciences of his people. Those who assume a creature power on the part of man to lay hold of salvation, only proves the light that is in them is darkness. This creature power to play a big part in his salvation is dishonoring to the Triune Godhead. It denies the eternal foreknowledge of God in men's salvation. It denies the eternal union of the Church with Christ and the necessity of that union to give birth to the right of redemption. It takes away the work of the Holy Spirit as the Holy One whose work is to quicken the dead. It both adds to and takes away from the Holy work of God.

The unregenerate will not accept the fact that they are spiritually dead, alienated and separated from God to the extent that it is impossible for them to worship Him in spirit and in truth. They believe what the devil told our first parents when he said, "Ye shall not surely die. For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Gen. 3:4, 5. Is this not what the unregenerate are saying today? We are not spiritually dead, we can accept or reject Christ anytime we have a desire to do so. They will not accept the fact that they are enmity against God, cannot please God, neither can they know Him.

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." Col. 1:12, 13. God's elect are brought to know Him.

This was made possible by the incarnation of the Son of God. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to teach his people of the things of God, of truth itself. First by quickening them from being dead in trespasses and sins and by shining his divine light into their hearts to give them knowledge. "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined into our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." II Cor. 4:6. This knowledge teaches us of the utter helplessness and impotence of ourselves and is daily worked out in our experiences. We learn that we are not sufficient of ourselves even to think a good or spiritual thought, or originate a right desire. We cannot feel, act, or pray as we ought. We have no power to defend ourselves against the assaults of Satan, or to keep our minds from going astray and unless "kept by the power of God," and upheld every moment by Him, we are sure to fall. He alone is our strength and refuge. Do we ever truly feel what a tremendous stake heaven or hell is? May God work in us all to feel and view the things of time and sense as mere toys of vanity and to feel and know that the things of eternity are the only solid, enduring realities.

Another great mystery is that concerning Christ and the Church. "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. This is a great mystery but I speak concerning Christ and the Church." Eph. 5:30, 32. From the eternal election of Christ by the Father as Head of the Church, and eternal election of the Church in Christ by the Father, flows the eternal union which of God subsists between Christ and the Church. The Church was chosen by the Father in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. He knew each and every member for He wrote their names in the Lamb's Book of Life giving the Church an eternal union with her covenant Head. Nature, sense, and reason is ready to ask, How can she be a bride before she is born? But we believe that the Church was viewed and taken in all her beauty before the Adam fall. Their eternal union, in the mind and purpose of God, was not lost in the fall, but the personal and individual effects of it was loss, because they became alienated and separated from God. This union was made manifest again in a personal way at the new birth, bringing them into a close personal union once again. How strong is this spiritual union between Christ and the Church? This precious union rests upon a sure foundation which is nothing less than a Triune God. This close union betwen Christ and his Church is suitable to that of a vine and its branches. "I am the true vine, ye are the branches, he that abideth in me, and I in him; the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without me ye can do nothing." John 15:5. Without the continual influence of the Vine upon the branches, they bring forth no fruit. Christ is spoken of as the true Vine. His believing people are the branches. The Lord's people differ in the exercise of divine teaching; as all are not led in the same precise path of soul experiences and temptations, do not sink equally deep in trouble, nor rise equally high in sweet enjoyment of His felt presence. But there is one thing at least common to them all, a sense of creature helplessness. "Without me ye can do nothing." Nothing to fulfil the demands of the law, nothing to put away sin, nothing to atone for their sins, nothing to fit and qualify your souls for the inheritance of the saints in light. Who shall deliver us from this dreadful state of helplessness? God's people are as helpless to partake of divine things after they are called by grace as they were before. Some of us may be tried by a feeling that we bear so little fruit as fear, faith, love, hope, humility, etc. We may try to read, pray, strive to do what appears to be right, but

seem to fail so much of the time. But our failures are meant to bring us away from self-righteousness in all its shapes and forms to a cleaving to the Son of God, and to realize that without Him, we can do nothing. James says, "Faith without works is dead being alone." How are these works to be performed? Just as the vine works sap into the branches causing them to bring forth fruit, so the Spirit works grace into the heart to cause it to bring forth fruit or good works according to the gift of God. "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of God." Eph. 4:7. Only the saints of God bring forth spiritual good works. Some day Jesus will say to them on his right hand: "I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat. I was thirsty and ye gave me drink." and "Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?" The King shall answer and say unto them, inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Matt. 25: 35, 37, 40.

Another great mystery brought forth in scriptures is that of the gospel. "That utterance may be given unto me that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds." Eph. 6:19. The meaning of the word gospel is "good news of glad tidings." Good news because it is a message of pure mercy from heaven; a revelation of free, sovereign, distinguishing grace of God to poor, lost, and ruined sinners. The gospel in scriptures is called the "gospel of Christ" because Christ is the grand subject and object of it. Remove Christ from the gospel and there would be no revelation of his love, grace, mercy, his blood and righteousness, his risen power or his ascending glory. The gospel of Christ becomes the very good news to those who have been quickened and made alive to their ungodly, lost, helpless, ruined condition, and without strength or knowledge to save themselves.

The gospel is a mystery because it proclaims salvation for the guilty wretched sinners, this is what makes it a mystery. It would not be a mystery if it proclaimed salvation for the righteous, the whole who know nothing of sickness, sickness of sin and sickness of self. The mystery is Christ "come not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Luke 5:31. All the human race are sinners and unrighteous, but only those who have been made alive spiritually are made conscious of it. Because the unregenerate are alive physically, they feel able to perform all things necessary for their salvation. A gospel which nature has contrived, which consists of merits an works in order to obtain salvation, is not the gospel of Christ. There is no mystery in a conditional gospel, but the mystery is how can the Holy Triune Godhead look down in love and mercy on such sinful wretches that deserve nothing but damnation in hell and yet make them endless partakers of His own glory!

Another mystery is the mystery of the kingdom of God. "He answered and said unto them: Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." Matt. 13:11. The kingdom of heaven is also spoken of as the kingdom of God. "Behold the kingdom of God is within you." Luke 17:21. There are many scriptures in the four gospels that reveal the kingdom of God, or heaven, as being a principle of grace set up in the hearts of his people by the Holy Spirit. It is a "kingdom which can never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms and it shall stand forever." Dan. 2:44. Before the new birth, God's people are by nature

the children of wrath even as others. But there comes a time for each of God's elect to be quickened. "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." Eph. 2:1. The new birth brings God's people from darkness into his marvelous light, and a new principle of grace is set up in their hearts by the Holy Spirit.

Without an experimental knowledge of this mystery, there can be no living to God, and no dying in the Lord. Can we look back to any period during our lives when the effects of spiritual life began to show themselves in our souls and consciences? Maybe we can and maybe we can't. But can we say whereas I was dead, I now have a hope of being alive, so as to feel my lost, ruined condition. Whereas I was blind, I am now made to see my need of salvation by the blood and righteousness of Christ. I was once in carnal security, I was made to flee for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before me. May we consider these things in our journey here upon earth and search our experiences for a reason to hope that the Holy Spirit has implanted spiritual life in our hearts and souls.

Do we have any waymarks? Can we give a reason for the hope that is in us? Have we had the entrance of conviction into our hearts, the application of the law to our consciences, and the breaking in of light enough to show us that we are sinners, lost, ruined, and undone? These are waymarks in our pathway of life. Again have we ever had an answer to our prayers? Have we ever received any particular blessing in hearing the preached word? Have we ever felt a love for the truth and for our brethren who love the truth? These are waymarks. Are we cast down by troubles of all nature? May we be given by these precious waymarks, some sweet encouragement that God is our strength and refuge in time of trouble. Are not all these great mysteries of truth hidden from the ability of nature, sense, and reason to comprehend? Hidden from the wise and prudent, but revealed unto babes in Christ by the Holy Spirit through faith?

There are other mysteries mentioned in scripture of which I shall not attempt to write on as this article is too long already. May the Spirit of God lead us more deeply into the mysteries of the gospel, and to know them will separate us from the world and we will say with Ruth: "Thy people will be my people, and thy God, my God." May we praise God not only for some understanding of these mysteries, but that He has given us faith to rejoice in them. May God bless you all is my prayer.

In hope of mercy,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

CORRESPONDENCE

Saline, La.
Feb. 6, 1986

Dear Editors of The Signs:

It is time again to renew my subscription and I am sending you a check for one year.

I am so glad that I believe in the predestination of all things because to me it means that in God is our trust, and we believe that all is in His hands and He has all power and control over everything in earth and heaven and works all things after the council of His own will and for His purpose. And when we can believe this, we know that whatever troubles and tribulations we are faced with, God has already worked it all out for us. The hardest is the submission to His will for me. I know in my heart that what is will be and is right because whatever He does is right, but so much trouble I have submitting to His will if the will is hard

to face. But even so, we do and we will because what is to be will be as God wills it to be.

I'm glad that we have a Saviour to look to for help, and a way to escape the pollutions of this old world. I'm so glad that we have a hope that we have one to council and lead and guide us and make intercession for us, not because we are worthy, but because He is worthy and paid our debts for us. A lawyer pleads a case for his clients worthiness but Christ pleads our case because of His worthiness, because we know that we have no good thing in our flesh that merrits anything.

I believe that proof of Scripture comes from no man but that it is given you to understand as you experience the spiritual birth. I believe that you must be borned again before you can understand or hear What the Spirit says, borned of an incorruptible seed and that everything or event that comes to pass was predetermined to be just as it happens and that God has a purpose in all.

I believe that God had a purpose in bringing Judas into the world, the same as he had a purpose in bringing Christ into the world. Judas was chosen to betray Christ so the scriptures could be fulfilled, and some say that Judas was saved but I wonder about this because he was the Son of perdition, he was a devil— HJohn 13:18. I speak not of ye all I know whom I have chosen but that the Scripture be fulfilled, he that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his hand against me. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy name, those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them are lost but the Son of Perdition that the Scripture be fulfilled.

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Also Judas did not witness the first resurrection because he, after he saw that he was condemned, he repented himself and brought again the thirsty pieces of silver to the Chief Priests and elders saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood and they said, what is that to us. See thou to it—Matt. 27: 4, 5. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed and went and hanged himself, this he did before Christ died on the cross showing that he did not witness the first resurrection so they chose another to take his place, his name was Matthias. Peter spoke saying, Acts 2:16, men and brethren this scripture must needs be fulfilled which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus Acts 2:17. For he was numbered with us and had obtained part of this ministry. (Yes, part but not all) Judas was one of the twelve so the scripture could be fulfilled. He had to betray Christ so that Christ could finish the work God gave Him to do and come into His glory.

Also the man of sin must be revealed, for that day shall not come except there come a falling away and that man of sin be revealed. The Son of Perdition.

I do not believe that if sin was never revealed to us that we would ever repent of our sins or even know that we are sinners.

I believe it all works in God's perfect way, everything he made has a purpose to serve and it will serve that purpose that it was made for. I hope that I am His Child, but if not, then I will get and deserve whatever comes. There is a beautiful Scripture that I long to be a part of. Psalm 85:10-13, Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth and righteousness shall look down from heaven; yea the Lord shall give that which is good and our land shall yield her increase. Rightious-

ness shall go before him and shall set us in the way of His steps.

This is just some things that have been on my mind and thought I'd send them to you just to read and see what you think or believe about them.

Sincerely yours in hope,
Kate Mathews

Rt. 2, Box 78A
Strong, Ark. 71785
Feb. 18, 1986

Dear Editors of The Signs;

Work out your own salvation, with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you, both the will and the to do of his good pleasure. I hope my mind is set on things above, and not on earthly things. If the Lord will bless me to write, and guide my pen to write on spiritual things that comes to us from above, from the Father of lights, where there is no variableness or shadow of turning. Every good and perfect gift is from above. I am wholly dependent upon the Lord to write anything that would be of any comfort to the Lords beloved people. I feel to love you all in Christ, I can do nothing without him, I feel much of my time to be nothing and less than nothing. The vilest of sinners, this world, sin, and satan, they do beset me so, possessed with doubts and fears from time to time of being one of his, my mind goes back a long time back, to some thoughts that come to me. Said Jesus, I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. I did not feel to be righteous then, and I still feel I have no righteousness of my own to plead, unless the Lord is my righteousness, I have none. The whole hath no need of a physician, but it is the sick that hath need of a physician, to heal and forgive them of their sins. To clothe them in his righteousness.

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee!
Let the water and the blood,
From thy wounded side which flow'd,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.

Not the labors of my hands
Can fulfil thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears for ever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring!
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die!

For by grace are ye saved, through faith, that not of yourself. It is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast. The gifts and calling of God, are without repentance, the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance. "Ye are not your own, you are bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are his. I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore, with loving kindness, I have drawn thee. Your sins and iniquities, I will remember no more against you. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow." I love the precious words and thoughts of my Saviour, and my God, to me, whom I love and adore, where your treasure is, there will be your heart also. We have this treasure in earthen vessels. That the power be of God, and not of us. The holy spirit takes the things of Jesus, and shews them unto you. It is by revelation only, that the Lord blesses one of his, to know the truth. You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.

Saith Jesus, Mat. 11:27 "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father;

neither knoweth any man the Father, save the son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, it is so precious to believe in the three in one God, and that he reveals his precious truths unto his called and chosen ones, and hides it from the wise and prudent of the world by wisdom that knows not God. The Lord speaks unto his little ones in a still small voice, the precious truths as it is in him. For the promise is unto you and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. He makes known to us, after that ye belived, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, hymn 8.

The soul that's truly born of God,
Delights to run the heavenly road;
He mourns for sin, and hates the ways
Which lead to death—behold he prays!

Grace is the theme his soul explores;
A God in Christ his soul adores;
Before the cross his fears he lays;
And now to God, behold, he prays!

He flies from works to Jesus' blood,
Yet proves by works he's born of God;
He runs with joy in Zion's ways
And to his God, behold, he prays.

The Lord is my strength and my song, the rock of my salvation.

Yours in hope of eternal life.

Written with Love,

Lula Fox

7600 Willow Oak Lane
Arlington, Texas 76017
February 27, 1986

Editors, Signs of The Times:
Dear Brethren:

I see I have long since let our subscription expire. Please renew it for another year, back from when it should have been renewed. The remainder, use anyway you see fit. We (my wife and I) enjoy each issue very much and look forward to the next months.

When I read some of the articles, I hope I am blessed to see what a wonderful, loving, forgiving, merciful and powerful God we are given to worship. A God that knows where His people are at all tims, knows what they stand in need of and then fulfills all those needs. I did not say our wants or desires, but our needs. For most of us, our wants and needs are about as far apart as the east is from the west. I hope I am given to know He is just as much in control of His people today as He has ever been. He is a God that changes not, the same yesterday, today and forever. If this scripture is true, then he does not need man to do his work or help him. He said, He stretched forth His hand and made Heaven, earth and all things therein. He ask Job, where he was when He made heaven and earth; with whom did He take council when He did all these things.

Thanks be unto this God, that if we are His, He first saved us, then called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

May God continue to direct all the editors to continue to publish the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. There sure isn't much spiritual truth in the land today.

A Brother in Hope,

Frank Richards

February 23, 1986

Dearly Beloved Brethren,

If God will bless me to do so, I will write to you a few of my thoughts concerning Job, and I pray that God will guide my every thought. Over the years I have heard many brethren express

their views concerning Job, and at times I have expressed my own views to others. I do not remember ever hearing a view expressed that completly satisfied my mind, and neither did my own views satisfy me. But recently, while spiritual things were far from my mind, thoughts of Job came into my mind suddenly. It was as though someone had spoken into my ear and said, "Job represents the children of God." My heart was flooded with great joy and my mind filled with many thoughts. I reviewed my own experiences and was amazed to see how closely they resembled those of Job, and wondered why I had not seen the resemblance before. I do not claim to know that I am a child of God, but if not deceived in heart I believe I have been given a very sweet hope in Christ.

In the first verse of the first chapter we are given a vivid description of Job. He was perfect and upright, and one who feared God and eschewed evil. How so? for man that is born of a woman cannot fit this description. As David said, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." In Rom. 5:12 we read, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." In the flesh Job was a sinner and therefore could not be perfect and upright. Neither could he fear God, because he first must know him, and the carnal mind is emity against God. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." There is a natural fear in all men, as one would fear a poisonous snake or being hurt; and in many, but not all, there is the fear of hell and Satan. This fear is preached and is the basis of the religion of many churches. But the fear ascribed to Job is a reverential fear that is born of love through the operation of the Holy Spirit. We love God because he first loved us. And because of this love we have a reverential fear of him. It was because of this fear that Job eschewed, or shunned, evil. We attempt to follow this example, but when we fail it causes us pain, and we moan within.

I believe I have proven by the scriptures that Job as a natural man could not be the one described in the first verse of chapter one. Then who does this description fit but a born again child of God? For, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remainth in him: and he cannnot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest." "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of th flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." It is beyond doubt with me that Job had become a son of God by this holy birth and as such is the one described.

"Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them." In the past I have been greatly confused about where and how the sons of God and Satan presented themselves before God. I may still be confused, though in my own mind I am satisfied, but I believe that when the children of God gather together to worship, pray, sing praises, and hear his blessed gospel preached through the mouths of his chosen ministers that they are presenting themselves before God, and that Saan is always among them seeking to deceive and destroy, because this has been his endeaver since the beginning. But thanks be unto God that Satan can go no further than the decrees of God. "Doth Job fear God for naught? Hast thou not made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the works of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land." But as God did

unto Job does he unto all his sons. Satan was given power to afflict and tempt, but in this we should rejoice, not complain as we so often do, for, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." Also we, if need be, are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of our faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons, for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons.." Did not Satan tempt our Lord, and did not God lay all our iniquities upon him who knew no sin? God spared not his only begotten son, therefore shall he spare us?

It is obvious that in the beginning Job knew and feared God, but as yet he knew nothing of his own sinful condition nor the righteousness of Christ. At that time he was relying upon his own self-righteousness, a righteousness he thought he had by his own works under the law. He begged to be shown wherein he had erred or sinned. He was afraid that his own sons may have sinned and cursed God in their hearts, therefore he continually offered burnt offerings according to the number of them. I do not find that he made an offering for himself. When they were taken away from him, with all that he possessed naturally, he fell upon his knees and worshiped the God that he feared. He knew he brought nothing into the world and he could take nothing out of it. All that he possessed was a blessing from on high, and he would not charge God foolishly for taking it away, though Job's friends tried to convince him that he had lost all because of his sins. Is this not the way of many of our friens today? Do they not try to convince us that we should turn from our sinful ways, accept Christ as our Saviour, let him come into our hearts, and dedicate our lives to him? And should we not do this before it is everlasting too late? They tell us what we should do, but I have never found one who could tell me how to do it. Either they err in doctrine or we do not worship the same God, because the God that I hope to worship does his will in the army of heaven and amongst the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay his hand nor say unto him, What doest thou? What his soul desireth, even that he doeth. What are we that we should let him or hinder him in any matter? There is no power but of God. All the powers that be are ordained of him. He gave Satan power to afflict and to tempt his beloved sons, but never more than he gives them strength to endure. Though he gives Satan such power, he never gives him power to take the life of a son. This life is eternal; it was given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world and it shall never perish; but it is after the birth of this life at the appointed time of God that he makes us to know of this life. A natural baby has feelings and other senses, but it does not have the capacity to understand its life, so it is with a child of Grace, but as it grows it is given knowledge, grace and wisdom. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." It is not all given at once, for we could not bear it, as Jesus told his disciples. First I believe we are made to know our sinful condition and how lost we are, and then we begin to search for ways to make us righteous in the eyes of him who made us. We turn to the law, for in it is our hope;

but we find that it only condemns us. It demands everything of us and gives us nothing. Eventually, when we have reached the end of our hope of approving ourselves under the law and are made to see that we are doomed to the vengence of the fires of hell, and that justly so, we are given to see Jesus Christ and what he has accomplished for his beloved children, and then by grace we receive a very precious hope that we are among those for whom he has shed his holy and precious blood. Though this hope may seem very weak at times, it is always sufficient. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." Though Job's sufferings were great, they were not worthy to even be compared to the glory and joy he should receive in that life beyond the grave. And as I said before, I believe Job is a figure or type of the eternal sons of God.

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." Brethren, let us never forsake presenting ourselves before the Lord, collectively and individually, and worshiping at his feet.

Beloved brethren, I have presented only a few of my thoughts and views for your prayerful consideration, and not to attempt to change the views of anyone who see these things differently. May God bless the truth and pardon the errors.

Brethren, I beg an interest in your holy prayers of faith, and may we all hear these gracious words from our blessed Saviour's lips on that great resurrection morn, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Clifford Wilbanks

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

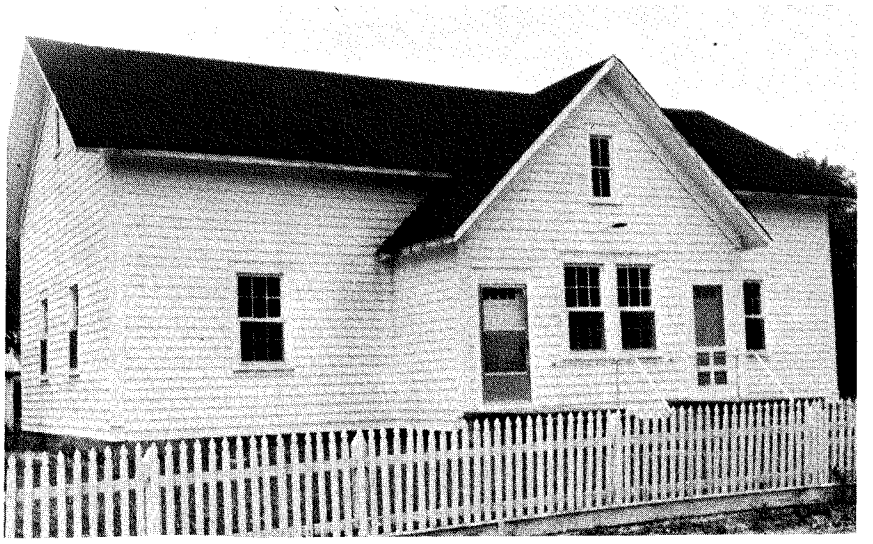

Hunting Quarters Church was Organized September 5, 1829. The present building was built in 1918 in Atlantic, Cartert County, North Carolina.

Church Services are held every third month on the first Sunday. Present Pastor is Elder J. T. Prescott.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

MATTHEW V. 16.

"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

This exhortation was addressed to the disciples by our Lord Jesus Christ in the course of his discourse upon the mount. Retiring from the multitude that had gathered round him, Jesus withdrew to a mountain with the little group of his disciples, and sat down and instructed them. First in regard to the blessings of God which rest upon all such as possess the characteristics of true discipleship, which are these: poor in spirit, mourners, meek, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, yet a proscribed, persecuted, suffering and reviled people for Jesus' sake. That the development of these characteristics is to distinguish the children of God as the blessed of the Lord throughout all time, there can be no doubt; so that in the absence of these there are no marks by which we are at liberty to recognize them from the unregenerated mass of mankind. The children of God are not blessed for possessing these discriminating qualities, for that would imply that they were chosen on account of some personal excellency in themselves, which God has said is not the case; but the possession of them is the evidence of their being blessed, the effect and consequence of their having been previously blessed. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has blessed his people with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, — Eph.i.3, 4. Thus we see that all spiritual blessings were prior to our personal holiness and exemption from blame, and our holiness and deliverance from guilt result from and are in accordance with his blessing upon the choice of us before the foundation of the world; and this choice and provision of grace and mercy had in view, as its ultimate object, and did secure to God's chosen people holiness and deliverance from blame. For the encouragement of this distinguished and blessed people, Christ has, in this chapter, given exceeding great and precious promises for their faith to live upon, viz.: 1st, the kingdom of heaven is theirs; 2nd, they shall be comforted; 3rd, they shall inherit the earth; 4th, they shall be filled with righteousness; 5th, they shall obtain mercy; 6th; they shall see God; 7th, they shall be called the children of God; 8th, theirs is the kingdom of heaven; 9th, great is their reward in heaven. What a glorious catalogue of *shalls* are strung together like a chain of gold to comfort, adorn and sustain the people of God.

"Each of them powerful as that sound
That bid the new made world go round,
And stronger than the solid pole
On which the wheels of nature roll.
The voice that rolls the stars along
Speak all the promises."

Such a people, thus distinguished in the eternal choice of God, thus chosen of God unto holiness and ordained to eternal life, Jesus separated from the multitude, and sat down upon the mountain to teach as never man taught; and unto this people the exhortation placed at the head of this article is addressed. To no other people under heaven can this admonition apply. No other people are in possession of this light, nor can any other people let it shine, or aid in the diffusion of it. To this distinguished people Jesus said, Ye are the light of the world: a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it

under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Then follows the word of command: Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven. That the disciples to whom these words were immediately addressed were designed in a special manner to diffuse the light of divine truth, as ministers of the gospel, we shall not dispute; but we must at the same time contend that the gospel church, embracing all the subjects of his kingdom, is included with them, as the city set upon a hill; and each member of the gospel church is addressed, and in these words commanded to let his light so shine. The testimony which the sons of God are called to bear, is something more than can be borne by a mere articulation of sounds, and in the spirit of the admonition before us, it is to be borne by a display of works, at the development of which God is to be glorified, and all that are in the house of God are to be illuminated.

It is of vital importance that we should understand by what description of works God is to be glorified; for we live in a day in which there is great confusion and error upon this subject. For this very reason we have called the attention of our Old School Baptist readers to the consideration of this important subject, and we wish to be very particular in defining the nature and description of the works by which our testimony of Jesus is to be uttered. In order that we may be the more distinctly understood, we will first state some kinds of work by which a correct, true and faithful testimony cannot be borne, and consequently, by which the declarative glory of God cannot be advanced by us. And first, the works of the flesh have nothing to do with the diffusion of the light of Zion. By the works of the flesh, we understand all such works as the children of men, in an unregenerate state are capable of performing. All our Power, whether physical or mental, are by nature depraved; so that all the emanations from our fleshly powers are earthly, sensual and devilish. The thoughts and devices of the unrenewed heart are evil, and that continually. The carnal, or fleshly mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Christ has informed us that it is as impossible for man in his unregenerate state to perform that which is acceptable to God, as it is for a corrupt fountain to send forth pure water. The fountain must first be made pure, and then, but not until then, will the stream be pure. The tree must be first made good, and then its fruit will be good. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest; which are these." [disguise, modify, or shape them as you may, still they are there,] "Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like."—Ga. v. 19-24. Consequently the works of the flesh are not the works by which the children of the kingdom of Christ are to glorify God. The declarative glory of God cannot result from our works, as the apostle clearly testifies to Titus, iii. 4, 5. "But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior towards men appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done," &c. All the works which we as creatures can do, whether good or bad, can never make the kindness or love of God appear, or in anywise develop the glory of our Father which is in heaven: therefore, such works as can be planned by our mental, and executed by our physical powers, are not the works intended in our text.

Second. The works of the law are not intended: "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse."—Gal. iii. 10. And the works required in the text are from such as are under the

blessing, and not under the curse. Works which are wrought by us, however unexceptionable, if wrought in obedience to the Sinia covenant can never show forth our redemption from the law, or our translation into the kingdom of Jesus Christ. So very far are we from glorifying our Father in heaven, when we attempt to liquidate the demands of the Sinai law, and by obedience to its precepts render ourselves acceptable unto God, we insult the divine Majesty, and count the blood of the covenant wherewith Christ was sanctified, (or set apart as the law fulfiller) an unholy thing. A thing of itself insufficient for the perfect accomplishment of the complete salvation of his people. None who have faith in the perfect work of Christ will ever think it necessary for them to do his work over again, or to offer any amendment upon what Christ has done; but rather rest their whole soul on that finished salvation which Christ has affected by his perfect obedience to the requisitions of the law, and his suffering of the penalty due for the transgressions of his people.

If then, as we have proved by the testimony of the scriptures, the works required of the children of God, whereby they shall show forth the praise of him that has called them out of darkness into his marvelous light, are not those which are of the flesh, nor even our works of obedience to the holy law of God, by what works, our readers may inquire, shall let our light so shine before men that they may glorify our Father which is in heaven?

The light which the saints are to let shine is that which God lighted up in our souls, when he communicated to us the light of spiritual life; of vital union to Jesus, as our Head by which we are enabled to see the kingdom of God.—John iii. 3. And the only works by which that light can be made manifest to all that are in the house, are those works which God has wrought in us.—Isa. xxvi. 12. "For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."—Phil. ii. 13. The works intended in our subject, are those wherein we have our fruit unto holiness, and the end thereof is everlasting life. They are those whereof we are born of God. They are defined by Paul as the fruits of the Spirit, viz: Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity; for if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."—2 Peter i. 5-9. Those, therefore, who obey the injunction of Jesus, in our test, are those in whom these things, mentioned by Peter, abound, and by the abounding of these things they let their light shine; for they, in whom these things do not abound are blind, cannot see afar off, and have forgotten that they were purged from their old sins; while they who do those things, viz: the things which are to be added to their faith; do walk in the light—do let their light shine, and are not barren nor unfruitful, are not blind, they can see afar off, and do remember that they have been purged from their old sins.

No man can add to his faith, virtue, until he is in possession of faith; and faith is the fruit of the Spirit, and the gift of God, and without it we cannot please God. No man can let his light shine, who has no light to shine. The breaking of the pitchers of Gideon's three hundred men could have produced no light, if the lamps had not been in the pitchers. We were sometimes darkness, but God has delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of

his dear Son; has given us an inheritance among the saints in light; constituted us children of the light; commanded us to walk in the light, and let our light shine. "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. iv. 6.

Christians, Old School Baptists, readers of the Signs of The Times, has the Sun of Righteousness arisen upon you with healing in his wings? Do you know him as the Fountain and Fullness of light, life and blessedness? How is it with you at this time? Are you reflecting that light, by walking in the light as the children of the day? Are you adding to your faith, virtue, and to virue all those excellencies made manifest by the refulgent radiance of that light? Or have you forgotten that you have been purged from your old sins? If this is your situation, may not the apostolic admonition be applicable in your case? "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise."—Eph. v. 14, 15. Would you, as the disciples of Jesus Christ, let your light shine, remember that this can only be done by walking worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called of God. We are not to sleep, as do others; there are foes for us to face, conflicts to be endured, enemies to be encountered, errors to be exposed, truth to be set forth, sheep and lambs to be fed, brethren to be exhorted, heresy to be resisted, persecution to be suffered, a cross to be borne, a warfare to be engaged in, a good fight to be fought, a course to be finished, and a crown to be received and worn in heaven. Each other's burdens are to be borne, and we are to watch over each other, detect sin and reprove it, both in ourselves and in others; a world to be renounced and its vanities to be laid aside. Besides all this, there are mourning christians to be looked up and comforted, strayed sheep and lambs to be restored; lions, wolves, dragons and devils to be subdued; and God has given us a banner to be displayed because of the truth. Sons of Zion, purchase of the Redeemer's blood, can you discover nothing in all these considerations which requires you to "Let your light shine?"

But do we hear one say, "My hope is in the Lord, I do not expect to be save by my works!" If your hope is good for any thing, it must be in the Lord; and if you look to works for salvation you will be awfully disappointed. But have you indeed a hope in God, and is it ture that you rely on him and him alone for salvation? How will you make this known without faith and obedience? If your faith is of God, it will manifest itself by obedience. The very confidence which the christian has in God as a whole Savior, swells his expanding heart with love and gratitude, and awakens every heaven born sensibility of his soul with ardent desires to glorify him in his body and spirit which are Christ's.

Few, feeble, weak and persecuted as we may seem to be in this day of rebuke and blasphemy, we ask for no accession to our ranks, but such as love our Lord Jesus Christ, and are willing to suffer the loss of all things for his sake. A very orthodox theory of faith and loud professions of attachment to the doctrine which sustains and comforts our souls are not enough. That faith only is genuine which works by love and purifies the heart. It is true, the old order of Baptist have been in some cases imposed on by persons professing our faith, who have proved (but too painfully to us) spots in our feasts of charity—men who cannot let their light shine because they have none; all they deem necessary is to sign with their hand our creed, and surname themselves Israel, and then make the livery of the Old School serve them as a cloak for their ungodly corruption of life

and deportment.

Should we attempt a delineation of the characters to whom we allude, we might be thought quite too personal; we will leave our brethren and our churches to look around them, letting their own light shine at the same time, and drag into the light those who have crept in among them unawares. Those who can find hours to spend in the merry circle of the graceless and profane, and can find some trivial excuse for absenting themselves from the house of prayer, those who can find the time and the means to fill a whole community of christians wit fill a whole community of christians with tumult, bickerings, jealousies, contentions and disorder, but have no disposition to weep with those who weep, and mourn with those who mourn; though they may boast of volumes of head-religion imported from neighboring countries, can give but poor evidence of a lighted lamp within their earthen pitchrer. There may be peachers who can boast of preaching in the name of Jesus, and of casting out devils, and working miracles, and in their own estimation, giants among dwarfs, yet in the diffusion of the light they shall be detected, and should be put away. Those who are careless concerning what figure they make in the world, can join with the jovial and eat and drink with the drunken, cannot be at the same time shunning the appearance of evil, or letting the light of life, derived from Jesus, shine before men, that they may see their good works and glorify God.

Many of the dear saints of God may feel convicted of having been too remiss in regard to a circumspect walk and conversation. Alas! how much we all have to lament of our shortcoming; but the apparent severity of our remarks in this article will not break their bones, they will not be offended, but they will acknowledge with the writer,

"Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love."

The stand which we as Old School Baptists have taken, the sacrifices we have been called to make for the sake of purity in faith and practice, and above all, our love of holiness, our allegiance to Jesus as our King, our sense of the immaculate purity of his precious cause, will not allow us to walk in fellowship with those, under any name whatever, who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. On the one hand, we should withhold our countenance from heretics, and on the other, from all who hold the truth in unrighteousness; and so from every brother that walketh disorderly withdraw ourselves.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

ARTICLES

Elder H. C. Ker—DEAR BROTHER:

Brother through a precious hope of life eternal, through the love, mercy and grace of Christ Jesus. If you will allow a vile sin-polluted being like me to address you in this manner. I have had a mind for some time to attempt to write some for your consideration, for the dear old Signs and household of faith, if the good Lord will direct my thoughts and give me a field of thought to draw on.

Some time ago, after visiting some Baptists who live in the irrigation district of the Peace Valley, and while humming over the old song, "Come, thou Fount of every blessing," my mind seemed to grasp some thoughts in an impressive way that led my mind out to meditate upon God as an eternal fountain, and the lay of this particular section of the country seemed to me somewhat as an example by which I might be able to express some thoughts as to the way God's chil-

dren receive blessing from this eternal Fountain (God).

I will first give a description of the surroundings of that section, and then attempt to give some of the thoughts which I have dwelt upon for some time. Looking west from the town of Roswell, New Mexico, one can view the Captain Mountains far in the back ground, something like sixty miles away. Those mountains are snow capped the greater portion, if not all the year round, and this melting snow becomes water and winds its way down the mountain slopes, through the canyons and into the Peacas River, and follows its natural water course on through a high land semiarid section of country, which is little more than a desert, and suited only in its state of nature for grazing land. In the heart of this section and along the water course of this river is found an irrigation district which is bountifully supplied with water from flowing artesian wells, and not drawn from the river channel, as one might suppose. While in conversation with a gentleman there and he was telling me about being one day at a certain place on this river and finding no water at all in the bottom of the river bed, only dry sand was there. The next day he came to the same place in the river and the water had risen above the sand and was flowing in a stream there. First, we understand that no stream can rise higher than its fountainhead, so when we draw a mental picture of the fountain which is formed there in those mountains by the melting of the snow on those mountaintops and canyons, which is probably hundreds of feet higher than the section of country where the artesian wells are found, it gives the thought of the pressure from this fountain which causes the water to flow upward from those artesian wells with such great force. It is, to my mind, an example of this God, this eternal Fountain, who inhabited eternity before this time world was ever spoken into existence. This God of power, this God of knowledge, or wisdom, who was wise enough and who possessed power enough to declare the end from the beginning, the things of ancient times, and the things on down through all ages of the future which are not yet done, this God from whom all good and perfect gifts come; this God whose thoughts are as much higher than man's thoughts as the heavens are above the earth, and whose ways are as much higher than man's ways as the heavens are above the earth, in my mind (as man views things in weakness) is as the fountain of water which comes from those mountains that supplies those artesian wells to irrigate this garden spot of the plains. This dry, sandy place in the river bed at times, and at other times where an abundance of water flows, does not, to my mind, indicate in those dry days and times a weakness or a running dry of this fountain, but to me it carries a thought of the cold, indifferent stages of life which come in the experience of God's dear ones. When God with his all-seeing eye has seen fit to withdraw his presence from us for a little season. These periods of time when God sees fit to withdraw his sweet communing Spirit from us, and all seems sunken beneath the sand of time, comes to us often after we feel we have felt the almighty hand of God dealing with us, after we feel that we have heard the call from God as it comes to us, as it did to Saul of Tarsus on his way to Damascus, which spake, Saul, Saul, why persecuteth thou me? and he answered, Lord, who art thou? Showing he felt it was the Lord dealing with him. Yet when he arose he saw no man, for he was without sight three days and nights, a time when the spiritual waters had sunken beneath the sand. Saul felt that the Lord had dealt with him, yet quickly had hidden his presence from him. And the Lord sent a servant (Ananias) that he might lay his hands

upon him (Saul) that he might recieve his sight. When Ananias had come in unto Saul and put his hands upon him, and said, Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who spake to thee on thy way, hath sent me that thou mayest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost, and immediately there fell from his eyes, as it had been scales, and he received his sight forthwith, arose and was baptized, and when he had received meat he was strengthened. This was the rising of the spiritual water above the sand. Dear brother, I hope by the eye of faith I have a period in my experience (if I have one) that I experienced this time of being without sight, after I had reached the full extent of all my power and been led to the place where I had lost all hope and confidence in my own flesh, and in that of every one else, and had come to the point where I had to say, All I can do is just to wait upon the good Lord, if he sees fit to pardon my sins, but if my soul be sent to hell his righteous law approves it well, and the time came when this burden which had been causing me so much grief and mourning, and causing the tears to roll from my eyes in streams that I could not hold back, was gone, and I knew not where nor why, yet immediately after realizing it was gone I felt I had been dealt with by the hand of the Lord. However, I could not feel that sweet rejoicing I had hoped to when I felt the Lord had dealt with me. I had heard people talk of some one who had striven with the Spirit of God until he had sinned away the day of grace. Had I done that? Why could not I feel happy with the Lord's dealings with me? When I felt sure he was dealing with me, for that burden was gone and I could not bring it back, not a tear could I shed. Had God turned his face forever from me and hardened my heart so I could not any longer mourn about my condition? Saul was blind until his eyes were opened, and when his eyes were opened he realized the deliverance, just as did poor old Jonah when the Lord rescued him from the belly of the whale, and he said, I have vowed salvation is of the Lord. This opening of the spiritual eye and our realizing our deliverance is the rising of the water above the sand, and is an example of the deliverance of Saul, and every child of God when he passes through those cold, indifferent stages of time, when we would so much love to take the Bible and read it with understanding, but all seems shut in to us then. But after it is opened unto us again and we are delivered from this cold state we are allowed to read and meditate, to feast upon spiritual things.

Then when we follow on down to the irrigation district, where I viewed the flowing well of artesian water as it gushed up from beneath the surface of the earth through its grat casing, which was possibly fifteen inches in diameter and stood there continually throwing out a great stream of water day and night, which was carried out over each of the respective farms and watered them with such an abundance of water that all vegetation thereon grew so rapidly that it was called the garden spot of the plains. This conveys the thought to my mind of how this continual stream of God's love, mercy and blessings goes out from this eternal Fountain (God) to the individual heart of each of his little ones, and feeds it, waters it and causes it to grow in grace and thrive just as it so pleases God to have it do, until we feel in our minds to express praise with the poet,

"Streams of mercy, never ending,
Call for songs of loudest praise."

Dear child of God, it is true that when we are allowed to drink of the water of life which Jesus spoke of when talking to the woman of Samaria we experience the truth of Jesus' words, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give

him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." We do not feel that with all our songs and words of praise to Christ Jesus we can ever express the praise due him for what he has done for his chosen people.

This highly favored golden spot of the plains is an example of God's highly favored few, as it lies there in the heart of this semiarid desert land receiving daily an abundance of water, until the fields stand thick with tall corn, and great, tall, large-trunked trees stand in their splender and beauty, the alfalfa fields are beautiful and green, and cotton produces over a bale to the acre. This irrigation district is surrounded by semiarid grazing land, which is very poor even for grazing, as one can tell from the condition of the herds of cattle and horses that feed thereon. This highly favored garden spot is an example of God's chosen people, those who are the called according to his purpose, and we are reminded of the parable of the clay in the potter's hand: "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" "Shall the thing formed say to him who formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Can the desert land say to God who created it, Why did you not make me a fertile valley with artesian wells and abundance of water, that I, too, might be beautiful and produce an abundance of beautiful vegetation?

On the other hand, Adam was the first man, created and formed of the dust of the earth. We people of this day and time are only Adam multiplied, and when God placed Adam in the Garden of Eden he gave him a law to keep, therefore the law entered that the offense might abound. The offense, the breaking of God's law to Adam, brought sin into the world. Where sin abounded grace did much more abound. Not for the entire Adam race, but for those highly favored few only does this grace abound. Christ says, I pray not for the world, but for those that thou hast given me out of the world, and as many as thou hast given me I will raise them up at the last day, except the son of perdition, who was chosen for a devil. Also we read that Christ has power to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him, and that no man is able to pluck them out of his hand, neither can any man pluck them out of the Father's hand. My sheep hear my voice and they know me, and they follow me, and a stranger they will not follow. For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that faith not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. Here is another stream from that eternal fountain of God. That gift of grace, combined with that faith which is sufficient to save the soul of each and every one of God's chosen ones, is treasured up there in this fountain that has stood ready to be measured out to each one of them at God's appointed time, from the very beginning of time on down through all ages that ever have or ever will come, and that measure which is used by the Lord Jesus Christ is not only sufficient to pay the debt for his people, but it pays it double.

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem (which is the true, invisible church of God), and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." We see by this that he, and he alone, has paid the debt for this highly favored few.

Take up the narrative of Jacob and Esau, we find that the Lord says, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." The children being not yet born, neither having done good nor evil, that the doctrine of election might stand. Therefore

we find that this God purposes all things and works all things, both good and evil, after the pleasure of his own will, and none can stay his hand, or question him as to why he does things in this manner. He is the most high Power, and does all things according to his own purpose. Neither does he counsel with or consult any one or any thing as to whether they are willing to do his bidding, but he speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast.

Just a sinner saved by the grace of God, if saved at all,

S. O. TATUM
Clovis, New Mexico
Feb. 12, 1934.

"Set thee up waymarks, make thee high heaps; set thine heart toward the highway, even the way which thou wentest."—**Jeremiah xxxi. 21.**

To look at the past is often a blessed encouragement for the future. If we are travellers in the way Zionward, we shall have our various waymarks. A conspicuous call, or a signal deliverance, or a gracious manifestation of Christ; a promise applied her, or a marked answer to prayer there; a special blessing under the preached word; a soft and unexpected assurance of an interest in the blood of the Lamb; a breaking in of divine light when walking in great darkness; a sweet sip of consolation in a season of sorrow and trouble; a calming down of the winds and waves without and within by, "It is I, be not afraid"—such and similar waymarks it is most blessed to be able to set up as evidences that we are in the road. And if many who really fear God cannot set up these conspicuous waymarks, yet they are not without their testimonies equally sure, if not equally satisfying. The fear of God in a tender conscience, the spirit of grace and of supplications in their breast, their cleaving to the people of God in warm affection, their love for the truth in its purity and power, their earnest desires, their budding hopes, their anxious fears, their honesty and simplicity making them jealous over themselves lest they be deceived or deluded, their separation from the world, their humility, meekness, quietness, and general consistency often putting to shame louder profession and higher pretensions—these and similar evidences mark many as children of God who cannot read their title clear to such a privilege and such a blessing. But whether the waymarks be high or low, shining in the sun or obscure in the dawn, the virgin of Israel is still bidden to "set them up," and to "set also her heart toward the highway, even the way by which she came."

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 1986

Mrs. Garlon Vick, NC.	$ 5.00
John D. Manning, NJ.	18.00
Burnell Williams, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Lessie Sladky, NC.	7.00
Martin Brock, AL.	10.00
Mrs. Mildred Hanks, VA.	30.00
Mrs. Virginia Apple, NC.	2.00
Elder J. A. Foreman, NC.	2.00
P. B. Clifton, VA.	4.00
Bruce Smith, VA.	7.00
George W. Hyslip, TN.	2.00
Mrs. Mattie Underwood, VA.	10.00
A. G. Beacham, NC.	22.00
Mrs. Harry Payne, VA.	10.00
Mrs. William Jewett, Jr., OH.	15.00
Mrs. Naomi Houser, VA.	12.00
Hilton Haney, NC.	7.00
Mrs. Carl L. Bryant, LA.	5.00
Mrs. Virginia Gladding, MD.	6.00
T. C. Simpson, CA.	14.00

Mrs. Peggy West, NC.	2.00
Elder Joe L. Hamrick, TX.....	7.00
Mrs. Bennie Clifton, VA.....	2.00
Dan Anders, AL.....	2.00
Jack K. Hays, TX.	7.00
Roy S. Oxley, WV.	2.00
Mrs. Eula M. Langford, AL.....	5.00

MEETINGS

The Lord willing, our fifth Sunday meeting, (Friday, and Saturday before) will be held in June, 1986, at Hopewell Church, located six miles west of Winnsboro, Texas.

We extend a hearty welcome and invitation to all lovers of the truth to come so that we can enjoy your presence and fellowship together during this meeting.

For additional information, call 214-629-3561.

OBITUARIES

ELDER POSIE EDWARD INGRAM

Our dear pastor for 37 years at Town Creek Church died on January 30, 1985 at 83 years of age. He was dedicated, caring and generous to all, even giving money to the visiting ministers if he thought we had not taken care of them adequately. We have seen him cry when we gave him a little money at Christmas time because the humbling spirit of Christ made him feel undeserving. He gave us more than we could ever give him in every way, He wanted peace, not only in his churches but all of those in our fellowship. He did not put peace above right, and at times was so humble in order to maintain that situation. He was quick to apologize if he thought he had spoken quickly. We loved him because he loved us, and because he was steadfast in the faith, and because he was a good preacher and teacher.

Elder Ingram and his wife, Sister Lillian were Chiropractic Physicians for 50 years, and very good and knowledgeable ones. He was poetic and wrote lovely poems. At the end of his biography for the Church History for our bi-centennial commemoration, he said some sweet and loving things about his wife and ended with this verse:

When we reach life's ebbing tide
We may in perfect love abide.
And when Life's sun shall set beyond the hill
We may go hand in hand together still.

Written by members of Town Creek Church.

Elder Posie Edward Ingram of 301 Rives Road in Martinsville, Virginia, passed away on January 30, 1985, at the age of 85.

He is survived by his wife, Lillian Bryant Ingram, two daughters, Mrs. Earl (Jacqueline) Wagner of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, Mrs. Frank (Patricia) Olenchak of Ann Arbor, Michigan. Also surviving are three sons: James R. Ingram of Martinsville, Dr. Phillip Ingram of Winston-Salem, North Carolina and Joseph Ingram of Augusta, Georgia. Also surviving are eleven grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Elder Ingram was born in Franklin County, Virginia, on September 16, 1899, a son of the late Flemon Ingram and Betty Turner Ingram.

Brother Ingram and his wife both graduated from the Palmer Chiropractic College in Davenport, Iowa, in the class of 1928. They came to Martinsville in 1938 where they had a joint practice for fifty years.

He served Knob Primitive Baptist Church for fifteen years, and for the past 37 years had served as the pastor of

Town Creek Primitive Baptist Church.

Brother Ingram loved peace, and longed to see the brethren set down together and come together in order, in peace, and in love. He was a man that loved to see the churches prosper in the Lord and he labored much to that end.

If he saw a brother hurt, he tried to help him and it seemed he did not want to hurt anyone.

I shall not forget the many times he would call me on the phone or talk with me when he saw me down and try to cheer me up when he knew that I was down. He was like a Dad to me.

In his declining days, he would call me to come to Town Creek to help him because part of the time he was not able to carry on the service.

I am thankful that I could go, hoping that it would be of some benefit to him. He and I and our wives would go to church together, Brother Ingram and I preached together, we would sing together, we would talk together on the phone, as brethren and as friends.

His funeral was conducted at Collins Funeral Home in Bassett by the writer and the chapel overflowed with many loved ones and friends.

His remains were placed in the cemetery at Town Creek Church to await the second coming of the Lord. Sleep on, dear brother, we hope to meet you where we will never part again.

Written by Request,
Elder Leonard J. Brammer

J. WRAY WILSON

On January 4, 1986, it pleased my blessed Lord to call unto Himself a dear deacon and true Old School Baptist, Brother John Wray Wilson. For more than 50 years, Brother Wray was a member and faithful deacon of Philadelphia Primitive Baptist Church in Ellenboro, N.C. He was one who ever delighted to walk humbly in the "old paths," and was never afraid to stand out boldly when the truth was attacked.

Brother Wray Wilson was born on August 27, 1907 and died this January 4th. making his sojourn upon this earth exactly 78 years, four months, and eight days. Son of the late Oliver and Hessie Edward Wilson, he was a native of Rutherford County, North Carolina and was a farmer about all his life. Our brother is survived by his wife, dear sister Vernie McKinney Wilson. Brother and Sister Wilson were married for over 53 precious years. Other survivors are one son James Wilson, a brother Russell Wilson and one sister Mildred McKinney, three grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Funeral services were conducted on January 6th by Elder W. C. Edwards, with burial in Bethel Cemetery at Ellenboro.

Brother Wilson was a long time reader of Signs of the Times and said he often felt like he knew Elder Spangler, Elder Wood, and many of the other brethren connected with it. Our loss is very keenly felt at this time, but our Lord "doeth all things well" and we feel that Brother Wilson has left us a great example that we should ever adhere to the OLD WAYS of Grace.

Submitted by one who loved him,

Wylie W. Fulton

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
Route 1, Box 65 Keeling, Virginia 24566

POEM

Many, many years ago
God looked down and saw
The world was full of sin and woe,
For man had broken the law.

Then He said, I do repent
That I have made this man:
So the awful flood He sent,
And covered all the land.

He put a rainbow in the east,
For a token of His law
When the dreadful flood had ceased
He makes a promise now.

No more the world shall wash away
With such torrential rain;
But time and season, night and day
Men shall sow their grain.

Seed time and harvest moon
Shall go on just the same;
The fragrant flowers that bloom
Shall glorify His name.

The earth shall yield her increase
For man, and beast, and bird,
So bringing home the sign of peace
The lonely dove is heard.

The rainbow with its color
So dazzling, pink, and green,
The clouds must then pass over,
Before the bow is seen.

Whenever I look upon the bow,
I will remember then
This promise I shall always know
Was made betwix God and men.

The rainbow, oh the rainbow!
As it bends into the blue,
Reminding us of long ago,
God made a covenant new.

By Sister Evelyn Walker

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EDITORIAL

FALLING DOCTRINE

"For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." (Isa. 55: 12, 13)

In this important prophetic announcement who is it that is the giver of the great blessings that we have before us? In this illustrious cluster of blessings who is responsible for them? Who is the beginning of this rich cluster, who is to be worshipped for what we have been gleaning among? Did any one of all that has come under our observation had anything to do in the saving influences that were brought to bear on these inhabitants of the kingdom of heaven?

Hundreds of times we are told that salvation is of the Lord. Was the dropping down of the doctrine as the rain the cause of all the obedience rendered or was it the volition of the will of those that received it? It begin in dead sinners or it begin by the influence and work of the Holy Spirit. In former treatments everything was hinged on the "As the rain and the snow came down from heaven," likewise the result was that the same divine power was manifested in the word of the Lord going out of His mouth.

In this gracious and almighty work of the word going forth out of His mouth I am sure that all of the source as well as all of the salvation stemmed from the Lord. Or did a small portion of the power come from that which had already failed. This indeed would be a poor mixture for poor sinners to depend on. This is not Bible doctrine; such a trashy poor doctrine has never been the system of salvation that fell from the hand of our gracious heavenly Father. He never had that kind of salvation in His hands. He knew more about the heavy indebtedness of His people than that. His coming was for a better purpose than that. That which He came to do was for a better purpose than such a trashy venure as that. He came to redeem His people from all of their sinful and polluted condition. But He laid down in the sacred Scriptures a pattern that would be followed in that redemptive work. The pat-

tern was true, and the righteous work of redemption was completed satisfactorily, for as the rain and snow came down and satisfied everything, even so, in the same way and by a satisfying way, the effectual word even at the cross, in the blinding overwhelming sorrow and anguish and dying, He said "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do" (Luke 23: 24).

What keen anticipations thrill the poor sinner that has been subjected so long with the apostle, and not only he but every poor sinner that has battled with the dreadful problem, to wit, When I would do good evil is present with me. How is such a problem to be handled? Have you worked at such a problem? What? You do not have problems like that? Then have you ever been cast down to say, to even have it wrung out of you with groanings, Woe is me, for I am undone?

There is not a man or woman in the ranks of the church of Jesus Christ that can handle a situation like unto either of these dreadful situations, to wit, Woe is me, for I am undone, or O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death. Not for the purpose of jesting, God forbid, but to leave no hidden barbs of the nefarious doctrine of poor sinful wretches having to cause or to let the doctrine of God fall on us, let us keep before us these solid God given truths showing the absurdity of a man made and man projected systems of salvation as is being harped on by men at large and surprisingly, that is being palmed off on God's little frail helpless children.

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptible year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness the planting of the Lord, that he might be justified (Isa. 61: 1-3). This is none other than the doctrine of God our Saviour falling on the children of God. Is this enough? Does this comfort you and make room as it permeates your being, in soul, in mind, in heart?

This falling doctrine is essential. It fills every need. This falling (and saving) doctrine burns up our sinful works, however, it doesn't leave you to carry the ashes of your condemned works. O no, not that, something falls in the doctrine that is better than that. It gives you beauty for ashes. Furthermore, it does not leave you with a sad countenance to wear around; it does not make you ashamed of having been crucified with your Saviour. No, no, not that, he gives you the garment of everlasting praise.

Salvation is the work of the Lord. It is not by works of righteousness which we have done. How contemptuously have men called vile names of brethren in Christ that no other charge was ever raised against them other than they contended that salvation, (without any suffixes or prefixes) was of the Lord. So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth. It shall not return unto me void. My dear brethren and sisters, is this true? If it is true, then the doctrine of salvation alone by the grace of God is likewise true. Either God sends forth His Spirit in a saving way, or it returns to Him void. It accomplishes what He pleases or it does not accomplish what He pleases. Which is it? If the going out of His mouth His word accomplishes salvation, then, as a matter of Bible fact, then salvation is of the Lord, but if it does not accomplish salvation then, the going out of His mouth is not worth anymore than my word going forth out of my

mouth.

But the going out of His mouth of His word is worth even more than that. Well how could that be? That is what Christ came to do, and at His appointed times He has been accomplishing His miraculous manner it has been prospering. Not failing, not returning unto Him in an empty void, doing His will and prosperity following it. And in my feebleness, I am still bold enough to say that there is prosperity among the children of God. Their King, their Chief, their Saviour is still head over all things and He has not lost a single supplicant. The Lord's people are in His Hand of grace and He and His Father are still in union and in unity. May God be praised.

You can call us behind the times if you want to. It hasn't stopped the gospel from being preached; it hasn't stopped it from bring heard; it hasn't stopped it from being received and enjoyed. If He isn't making it manifest to but few, that is His business, even the making manifest of it or the hiding of it; in both cases there is prosperity accompanying it. Be it in small measures or in such overcoming prosperity as to stop the whole world at a complete stand still.

The poor and afflicted flock of God is marching triumphantly. There are no falling out along the way. The Physician of sinners is with them. Joy is accompanying them as they go. They are in peace one with another and their Captain is in peace with them. This joy and this peace will accompany them from the time that it is first spoken to their aching heart until they reach heaven's open door.

Yes, dear reader, mountains and hills will ever lie before you. Dismiss them as being enemies. Your Father has placed each one in your path. They are blessings placed there for your good for your welfare and for the glory of Himself. Do not think for a moment that they are the work of any enemy. Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you. If they seem to be obstacles, if they seem that they are a hindrance instead of a help, there is a precious accompanying need for you. They are a part of your trial, and rejoice dear saints. They were not set in your pathway by an enemy, but by the Friend of sinners. Think it not strane concerning the fiery trial which is to try you. That is an allotment of your Father. That trial, being administered by your Father will yield you in season peaceable fruits of righteousness.

But there is more. The way gets better, it is leading nearer home. Eventually every child of God as he and she gets nearer home there will be a joyful theme of heavenly praise to our Father. The mountains will break forth in triumphant songs of deliverance. The hills and mountains that look so fearful to our weak faith will spring forth before us as kind and benevolent mercies bringing us nearer ever nearer our abode who has ever reigned to this glorious end.

This is a living multitude arriving home. They are all green trees, all bearing fruit in lofty praise to our Saviour. There are times of joy as we travel this highway of holiness. It is a highway lined with living trees nourished by the warmth of His love. When first looming up before us we think of them as trials and we do not see any way around or over them. As we are triumphantly steered around them, or we are given to see them as living evidence that our Father was looking after us, we are carried around them, the whole universe seems to be singing the song of Moses and the Lamb. These are evidences of His everlasting love, and our feeble voices, or the greenness of the life that is in Christ Jesus seems so vibrant with love that every tree (saint) is lifting their hand and their voice in praise to the great name of our Redeemer God. Then it is a way of peace in the Man of peace, and the trees that seemed to be hedging us in are replaced

by trees that signify a fragrant smell and greenness signifying live everlasting.

Remember me at a throne of grace.

Elder W. D. Griffin

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

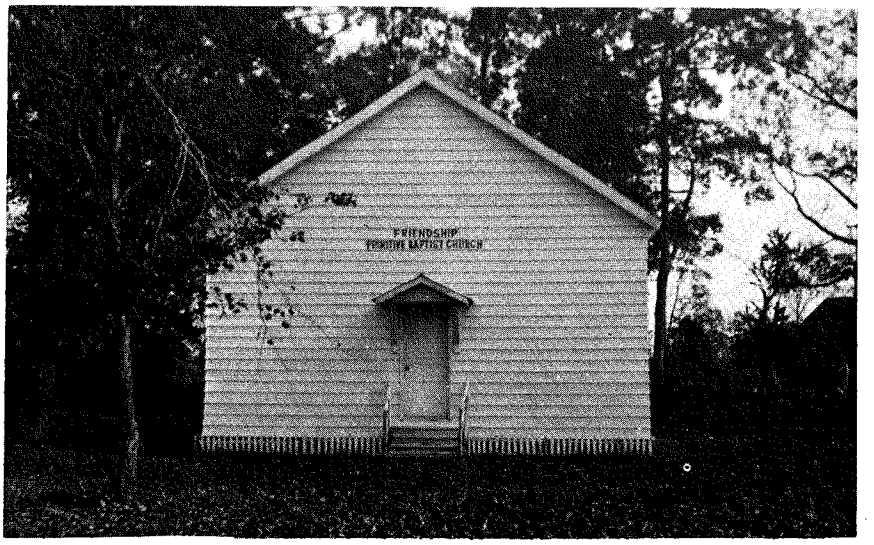

FRIENDSHIP PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Friendship Primitive Baptist Church on Route 1, Cottontown, (Sumner County) Tenn. is located on the Portland Road approximately two and one-half miles from White House, Tenn.

It was established in September 1836 on land donated by its first pastor, Elder William Jackson.

Elder Ramer Lee Biggs served as pastor from 1932 until his death in Sept., 1972. Elder C. Swayne Young of Memphis, Tenn. served from October, 1972 until August, 1978 when ill health prevented his coming.

Elder Rush Hendrix of Hermitage, Tenn. is the current pastor.

Our meeting days are the 3rd and 4th Sundays in each month and we welcome any and all who have a mind to visit with us.

Marjorie Cook, Church Clerk

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

Nov. 8, 1918

The prophet said *"O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted." "O thou afflicted."* The Bible says, Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. Again it is written, I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. These poor people are poor in spirit, they are all alike. The Lord says, I will give them one heart, and I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. God said to Eve, I will greatly multiply thy sorrows and thy conception. Then it is true we cannot

prevent being full of sadness. Multiply thy sorrows and thy conception. One definition of conception is, "to form an idea in the mind." How often do these afflicted people form in their minds dire trouble for themselves in the future? How many times do they fear and tremble on account of their sins? Like David, who said, I will fall some day by the hand of Saul, so they think they will be destroyed because of their sinful flesh, and they cry out, "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

"Dangers of every shape and name
Attend the follower of the Lamb,
Who leave the world's deceitful shore,
And leave it to return no more."

You ask worldly people, Do you suffer, are you afflicted on account of your sins? They always answer, No; but the children of God realize this world is not their home, they are pilgrims and strangers in the earth. How many times have you been in a crowd whey they were especially merry, laughing and enjoying themselves to the fullest extent, and your heart was breaking with affliction and sorrow. You could not take part in their joys, you are not like they are, you are like all Primitive Baptists, think like they do, talk like they do, feel like they do, sigh like they do, love the same kind of food spiritually, enjoy the same company, love the same people they do. My son wrote me to sell all I have and go see the wonders of this world and spend what I had made and enjoy it. I told him I would rather attend one Old Baptist meeting than go to Europe and visit all the curiosities of the world. Job said, Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. His flesh upon him shall have pain and his soul within him shall mourn. Tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope. The Savior said, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace.

"Afflictions, though they seem severe,
In mercy oft are sent;
They stopped the prodigal's career,
And forced him to repent."

Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. Our sorrows and sufferings are for our benefit, and it is written, if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him. Your sorrows come and you cannot prevent them; they come when you least expect them. David said, Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts; all thy waves and thy billows have gone over me. When you were born of the Spirit you came in possession of a mind that could comprehend how unworthy and polluted you were, and how you justly deserved eternal banishment from God and the glory of his power, and you called to him for mercy. An unusually intelligent man is called a deep man. God is unlimited in wisdom, so he is indescribably wise, wonderfully deep. You called and said, "God be merciful to me a sinner." You said, like David, Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me. And I said, O that I had wings like a dove, for lo, then would I fly away and be at rest. I would wander far off and remain in the wilderness. But go where you would, still your burden remained, your affliction was with you, and after you wre relieved and thought the sin all gone and you were so overjoyed you never expected to have an enemy nor a sorrow, still you found you were mistaken, for the waves of sorrow and billows of distress came from time to time rolling over your defenceless

head, and you found your hand was too feeble to stay them; so now you can say, All thy waves and thy billows have gone over me. Were these great sorrows painful and hard to endure? This text refers first to your blessed Savior. Deep calleth unto deep. Hear him in the garden: O my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me, yet not my will, but thine, be done. Listen as he cries on the cross: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? He said, I thirst, and they gave him vinegar to drink. You go to one of the world thirsty, and say something about your sorrows and thirstings, and they will give you vinegar to drink. They have told me when I was famishing for a cool draught of the water of life that I did not pray enough. The fact was every breath I drew was a prayer. Then you must go on and on in affliction greater or less until the time comes for God to call you home to rest. This is Zion, that is afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted, and the Bible says, Zion, the people of God. Jesus came to save them, and he did what he came to do. Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. All your distress is for your good.

"In all thy distresses thy head feels the pain,
Yet all are most needful, not one is in vain;
In love I correct thee, thy soul to refine,
To make thee at length in my likeness to shine."

"Tossed with tempest and not comforted." It takes wind to cause the waves of the sea to roll and toss about. When the bitter, briny waves of the flesh toss you, and when the winds of adversity beat upon you and you have no rest in your spirit, how awful is your distress; and when you try to find Him who is a covert from the tempest and he hides from you, then you say, O that I knew where I might find him; I would come even to his seat. All through the dark, tempestuous night you look and listen and wonder and wish for the morning, and cry out, Is his mercy clean gone forever? Many a poor shipwrecked person has been on the sea looking, wishing, longing for a ship, and passed through long, dark nights, and may have perished for food. It is just as true that the children of God as they cross the rough sea of this life are tossed and long for a place to rest, and for comfort and the water of life. So Jesus said, Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Often I have said, God does not love me, or I would not be so forsaken, and I could not see how he could love one so sinful. When tossed I have said, God hates me, and he ought to. Many, many times have I waked in the morning so distressed I would say, O why did I ever wake again? Why could I not have slept on forever and forever? Why do I have to go out again in this old sin-cursed world to struggle with the affairs of this life? You, little children of God, started out like all other people; joyous, with high hopes, building castles in the air, enjoying gay company, sailing along across the placid sea of this life with not a care, hardly a thought of trouble, but all at once the waves began to toss you and it grew dark and threatening, the lightening flashed and peal after peal of thunder burst above you and you thought, Surely I will be lost, and, like Jonah, for the first time in life you were made to say, I am the cause, my sins like mountains high appear to me. In Revelation it is written, Out of the throne proceeded lightning and thunderings and voices; and you heard, The soul that sinneth it shall die, the first time you had ever heard a voice say that. You may not have heard this in audible language, like we talk, but away down in your heart there crept a sadness you had never felt before, and you

realized you must have help or sink. David said, They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters in ships, that do business in great waters, these see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths, their soul is melted because of trouble; they reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven. Little children, this is your experience. God commanded and raised the stormy wind, which lifted up the waves; they mount up to the heaven. The waves of the eaa are salty and slimy; so when God convicted you for sin the nice ballroom became sickening to you. Salt water makes you sick. These waves lashed over every place of amusement you frequented, and you became sick of them all. They go down again to the depths. Ah, yes, you were let down, down, and thought, Surely I am gone and none can help me. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them into their desired haven. Yes, you were tossed until you rocked to and fro and staggered like a drunken man, and got no rest until you went home to your friends and told them what great things God had done for you. So far as my case is concerned, it took many a wave to cause me to be willing to go home to the church of God, which is a haven. And he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant. But I could not see this until God made darkness light before me and crooked things straight. He says, I will bring the blind by a way they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known. He does not say, I will leave it to you whether you come or not. Every thief, every murderer, every robber, every natural man, child and little negro, and big ones who have not been brought by a way they knew not, that believe in a hereafter, will tell you the way just exactly like the Arminian preacher does. They all think they can and are going to get salvation some time, and that it rests with them whether they do or not, but the Savior said, No man can come unto me except my Father which hath sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day. This tossing is experienced not only by the children of God individually, but is applicable to each church. Often the awful waves of contention arise in the church and it is terribly tossed, like the ship Paul was on when the storm struck it. That was a natural ship and a natural storm, but here is a lesson for us. Some of the sailors took the lifeboats and started to leave the ship, but Paul said, Except these abide in the ship ye cannot be saved. Possibly more churches are destroyed by division than any other cause. A house divided against itself cannot stand, so said the Savior. Forbear one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit. There is no unity of the flesh; all the discord, trouble and dissension come from the carnal mind. Jesus said, But if ye have bitter envying and strife among you, glory not and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. But the wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, &c. The prophet said, O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself.

"And not comforted," comes next. We all love comfort. Ministers whom God has called and sends sometimes comfort the weary pilgrim, but the greatest comfort we have is derived from the holy presence of the Savior. When he comes and rejoices over you it calms all your fears, gives you beauty for ashes, the oil

of joy for mourning and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. The word says, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." The purpose of the gospel is to relieve the fears of the people of God. The first proclamation of the gospel after the Savior was born was by the angel of the Lord. The Bible says, "There were shepherds keeping watch over their flock by night, and the angel of the Lord came upon them and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid." The angel did not tell them anything to increase their fears, nor try to impress upon them the necessity of gettting religion, but said, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people; for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Not comforted? You will be. It is written, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Do you mourn? Then you shall be comforted. Mourn because you are a sinner. If you had no spiritual life you would not mourn nor even know you were a justly condemned sinner. If you had no life you would have no light, and if you had no light how could you see yourself a lost and ruined sinner? The Bible says, "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." Nearly all my time is spent in sorrow; seldom do I see a moment free from deep sadness. Sometimes a little comfort comes into my spirit, but long and cold are the times of my journey; yet we sorrow not as others who have no hope, for if we believe in Jesus some day we shall leave all sorrow and sighing behind and go home to enjoy the glory that awaits the children of God.

"There everlasting spring abides,
And never withering flowers;
Death like a narrow sea divides
This heavenly land from ours."

Not comforted. The prophet goes on in this chapter and tells what God is going to do for Zion who is not comforted. I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires, and I will make thy windows of agates and thy gates of carbuncles, &c. All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. Great shall be your peace, greater shall be your joy. Zion, said the Lord, hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me; but God says, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." He will never leave, never forsake one of these afflicted ones. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

Isaac R. Greathouse

CORRESPONDENCE

March 31, 1986

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord:

For sometime I have been thinking about writing a few lines in the Signs Of The Times book and while meditating upon the precious word of God, I will attempt to write of which I hope will be in praise and adoration unto the True and Living God, Father of Heaven and Earth.

For me it is such a sweet privilege to write down on paper telling of the goodness and mercy of which only comes

down from the Ever to be adored Three in One God. God The Father, God The Son, God The Holy Ghost. I love so much to think upon him for he has been so good to me—for me he has answered many a prayer, soothed many a sorrow, calmed my fears and wiped the tears from my weeping eyes and if not a poor deceived mortal, has risen me from the dead state I was at one time in, unto a new and living way, one that will never, never die. "Oh, how precious he is to his children." I believe with all my heart if we are a Chosen Vessel of his great love, sometimes here in this time world from the oldest down to the youngest will be one that will trust and think upon his dear name, dear children of mercy, haven't you found in your life that he has delivered you time and time again.

We find in his Holy Word where he told his people, "I will be unto them a God and they shall be unto me a people." Isn't that the God we hope and believe in for if we are what we hope and trust to be, we know in whom we live, move and have our being. Dear little ones of the Kingdom, you need not fear what people may do, for he has promised to never leave nor forsake. I have often thought of the way and manner concerning bringing about the deliverance of John when he was in prison, as you know they intended to bring him out of prison at the time man had proposed, but the God we hope and trust in today, saw fit to bring him out before the intended time of man. And dear ones, that is the way I see and feel I too have been in my many, sweet and precious deliverances in this life was not brought about by any man, woman, boy or girl or any other creature, no, not anything on this Earth, but was brought about only by the True and Living God of which I feel deep in my soul to praise the rest of my remaining day's, whether they be few or many, and look to the day with great anticipation for the expected Joy I hope to receive when this life is over. I believe if a person has ever been made to see the true way, they will think time and time again while traveling upon this low ground of sin and sorrow of the one who died in their stead and rose from the dead in order that they might have life. I say again, "Oh, how precious he is to his Children." I truly hope and believe he has blessed me with his sweet Holy Spirit, for it is sometimes I feel so much Joy and Peace of which I feel could only come down from his bounties. It raises the drooping spirit to that sweet spirit of Joy and Peace—what a sweet foretaste of Heaven if then be so sweet, just think of how it will be to be in that Heavenly bliss, to be forever in His sweet presence. I believe with all my heart if one has ever been blessed to witness such sweetness, then it is you can say life is worth living and death is worth dying. No wonder the poet could say: *"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believers ear, it sooths his sorrows, heals his wounds and drives away his fears."*

Each child of his can say the same for he knows their every need and administers unto them as their need arises. I remember well on one occassion in my life of a problem that had come my way, I tried to forget about the matter, but somehow it just wouldn't go away. Upon retiring one night for sleep I had one of the sweetest dreams, I saw myself leaning on the strongest prop I had ever felt, somehow I knew (in my dream) he would never let me fall. I remember singing two Hymns, for the very life of me I just could not remember when I awoke from my sleep, the name of the first song I sang but did remember well of the second I was singing. About the time I started sining the second one, I remember looking around and seeing my sister, Mae, standing beside me. We were both singing together and I remember how happy we both were. These wery the very words I remember we were singing. *"There's a*

land that is fairer than day, And by faith we can see it afar. For the Father waits over the way to prepare us a dwelling place there." **Then I awoke from my dream and the first thought came to mind was, now I've been delivered from that worry, sure enough it never bothered me again.**

As you know we are told we would have trials in this life but he is the strong deliverer. As you Bible readers probably have read many a time in his Holy Word of his precious comforts and promises he has left on record for a true thild of his. If you will kindly turn to Chapter 3 of Malachi, it contains just one of the many when they would become discouraged by the way. Won't write all of chapter for it almost seems impossible to do so, but will pen down a few verses starting from Chapter 3, Verse 16. "Then they that feared the Lord spoke often one to another and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of Remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon His name and they shall be mine saith the Lord of Hosts in that day I make up my Jewels." I have had so many sweet and precious experiences and dreams in my life I would love to tell, but time and space is limited but would love to tell just one more of my sweet dreams for it has been so precious for me to meditate upon down through many years of my life. Thinking back, I believe it to have been when I was about 14 years of age. I dreamed I was out in our yard, just as I looked up I saw Jesus coming with angels all around him, it was from the east direction and was the most beautiful sight to behold, words cannot describe the beauty of it. I was so happy. I remember not having any worries at all, I felt to be in perfect peace. I have a precious hope this morning that I may be one in that God blessed number he was referring to when he told his people he would returen for them. His people will be looking for him to return. He explains so well in Holy Writ when he said those that look for him would see him, sometimes I long to go home where there won't be any sorrow, death, pain or any such thing but will be only joy, peace and love.

Here we have joys mixed with sorrows, here we know in part, see in part but then face to face. How I long to see him the one who loved me so and would if I could tell one and all of the great love I have for him. When it is we have come to the ending of our allotted day's, then we can be able to shout, "Sweet deliverances on the other side." "We're Home at last."

I know here in time we have a few joys here and a few joys there but the one who's behind this pen can say from the bottom of her heart if one has ever witnessed that great love of a precious Heavenly Father they can testify that his love surpasses any natural joy we may ever have. May praises ever be flowing unto him from all the Heavenly Host whom I know dearly and truly deserves all the praise both now and forever more. Now in concluding I would like to quote two verses from the precious old Hymn in the little blue book of Primitive Baptist Hymn book, page 20, No. 17 of which I dearly love and which means so much to us all.

Amid the glories of that world,
Dear Saviour, think on me.
And in the victories of thy death
Let me a sharer be.

His prayer the dying Jesus hears,
And instantly replies,
Today thy parting soul shall be
With me in paradise.

What a precious hope we have. It is to me worth more than all this world could ever offer.

From one in hope of Everlasting Life.

Belle Chaney
Rt. 2, Box 141
Stuart, Va. 24171

March, 24, 1986

One of the greatest miracles that I am able to think of at this time is the so arranging of the super power that can cause a sin sick soul to hope and rejoice.

I have some beautiful thoughts going through my mind about what has happened to me within the last thirty days.

I have been strickened down by a dreaded and deadly disease. I was sent to a hospital in Little Rock, Arkansas for tests to confirm what it is. There was a dread by me for this. The miracle that I hope to describe is this. As I was carried from room to room and from departments for X-rays, bone scan etc. there seemed to be a light shinning somewhere in the room or department or a guardian angel standing by. It seemed to me that nothing bad could happen to me under these circumstances. How beautiful it was! That something like this could happen to me, an unworthy sinner as I feel myself to be. This was a vision I hope. Thoughts like this were running through my mind. Even the linnens that I was laying on were so very soft and praising God. God can make a dying bed feel soft as downy pillows are. I have derived much pleasure from this.

I would like to mention some Primitive Baptist people we met on a trip through Tennessee and North Carolina last fall.

Elder Kenneth R. Key and wife
Elder Leonard Key and wife
Deacon John Coker, wife and daughter
Deacon Hassel Allen, wife and mother
Elder Reeves Smith, wife and son
Elder Joe Sawyer and wife
Elder D. B. Stokes and wife
Elder Henry Jones, wife and wife's sister
Elder J. T. Prescott and wife

Elder Prescott carried us in his car on a day's journey of seeing old Primitive Churches, one established in 1754.

Doyle Oren Murphy
Arkansas

Dec. 16, 1918

Dear Brethren Editors:

The time has rolled around for me to renew my subscription to the Signs, as another year, with its joys and sorrows, has passed away. I have never attempted to write anything for publication, believing that others were more competent than I. We have some good writers for the Signs, fulfilling the command Jesus gave to Peter when he said, "Feed my sheep," and, to my understanding, most of their writings agree with the teaching of the Scripture. While we cannot all agree upon what the Scripture teaches, we should endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Paul said, "Who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead." So no man can believe anything spiritually, only as that power is made manifest in regeneration, that raised Christ from the dead. My mind is called to a passage of Scripture recorded in the fourth chapter of Romans, fourth and fifth verses: "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Paul is telling the Roman brethren how they are justified, and how they are not. He tells the Corinthian brethren, "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures." Now the first thing he told them was how Christ died for our sins. He said again, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." So we see we were made just in the sight of God without works. One of the writers said, Was not our father Abraham justi-

fied by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? Paul answere the question, If our father Abraham was justified by works he has whereof to glory, but not before God. He might be justified by his brethren, but not before God. Why? Because he was justified by faith before he was called to sacrifice his son. Therefore he had the faith to believe that if he took his son's life God was able to raise him from the dead, because the Lord had told him he would make a great nation of him: In thee and thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed. What is faith? Paul said, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." What is the gift of God? Jesus Christ was the gift of God. It is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Paul said, Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. When we say a man works, we mean there is an end to be reached by his work. Can a man in the state of nature work to please God? No. Why? Because his mouth is an open sepulcher, with his tongue he uses deceit, the poison of asps is under his tongue, his feet are swift to shed blood, the way of peace he has not known and there is no fear of God before his eyes. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. Paul said, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by his mercy he saved us. Paul was a good example, before he was regenerated, when he had letters of authority to bind all he found calling on the name of Jesus. I am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. He thought he was doing a great work when he was casting the people of God in prison, and binding them. He also said he held the clothes of them that stoned Stephen, and was consenting unto his death. In all his work he proved he was dead in trespasses and sins. Therefore Christ said, I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Now to him that worketh was the reward not reckoned of grace. Who was Paul talking to? He was talking to the church of Rome. He said, "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." What is the gospel? He said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God." So if a man preaches the gospel he preaches the power of God, and not the power of man. A reward in natural things is something we strive to win. Is this reward Paul is talking about won by works? If so, there is no grace about it. There is no doubt in my mind that Peter was speaking of the same thing when he said we are begotten unto an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. None of our works change that inheritance. Why? Because Abraham received it by promise. There is where the gospel, or power of God, was preached to Abraham. When did Abraham receive the promise, in circumcision or uncircumcision? In uncircumcision. The Lord told him, I will make a great nation of thee; in multiplying I will multiply thee, and in blessing I will bless thee. Abraham did not do these things in order to receive a blessing, or to be justified, because he had already been blessed and justified before God. In the old law covenant there were no spiritual blessings promised, but all were natural blessings. But in the new covenant things have changed, the Lord no longer says, If you will I will, but says, "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unright-

eousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Now under the old law the people had to be taught what God's law was, but now he says, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. So in the gospel day we do not have to have somebody tell us what God's law is, because it is written in our hearts. Christ told his disciples before he left this earth, If I go not away the Comforter will not come, but if I go away I will send him, and he shall take of the things of mine and shew them unto you. The Comforter is the Spirit of truth. The Spirit never teaches you that you can work and obtain that reward, but it is the flesh that teaches you that you can be justified by the deeds of the flesh. Paul said to the Galatian church: "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" He wanted to know of them if they were so foolish as to say their spiritual blessings came through the flesh.

These are a few of my rambling thoughts as they came to me. I feel I have barely touched the subject. I leave it to you to do with as you see fit. I hope it is the Lord's will to give you both strength, and bless you according to his will, that you may still edit the Signs for the comfort and edification of his people here on earth. Earnestly contend for what you believe to be the truth, and the faith that was once delivered unto the saints.

Now may the grace of our once crucified but now risen Savior rest upon you and all the household of faith, is the prayer of your humble servant.

H. T. Hughett

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."—Hebrews xi. 1.

Jan. 13, 1919

Dear Editors:

As my subscription to the Signs is nearly due I am renewing for myself and my dear mother, and will try in my weakness to write a few lines by way of remembrance, but cannot tell whether it will be worth anything to God's dear saints or not. If my thoughts are not directed by the Spirit of truth they will not be worth anything to them that love the Lord, for every good and perfect gift is of the Lord, and is freely bestowed on them that are enabled by his grace to walk in the paths of obedience. His people are a poor and an afflicted people, and realize that they cannot do anything good of themselves; all goodness comes from him, and he will receive all the praise. Man is ever trying to receive the praise, but in God's own good time he will bring him down into the dust of humility, for every mountain and every hill shall be brought low and every valley shall be exalted. The mountains of human wisdom, their vanity and pride, shall fall before him who has all power both in heaven and in earth. The grass withereth and the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it. No one knows anything about the power of the almighty God except those to whom his power has been manifested. He works in them to will and to do according to his good pleasure. I hope that power has been manifested in me, a poor worm of the dust, who am not worthy of the notice of his dear saints, and if I have any worthiness it is in Christ Jesus the Lord, for he is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end; he is the life, the light and the strength of his people, and without him they can do nothing. It is certainly sweet when we are enabled to trust in him and to be reconciled to his holy will, but we cannot trust unless it is given us, for we are weak and prone to evil. I very

often feel of late to sin is all I do, and surely a child of God could not be as corrupt as I am, for sin is mixed with all I do. I cannot be what I would like to be. My nature is so corrupt that it makes me fear and tremble. I fall far short of what it seems to me a true follower of the Lamb of God should be. I sometimes decide that I had just as well give up and let my old nature take its course, as there is nothing but it in me, and I am only acting the hypocrite in professing to be a believer in God; but God, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, knows my weakness, and if I am a child it is according to his love and mercy, and I am safe in his love, for his love never changes, no matter how far we may go in the paths of disobedience. He is very watchful over us, and we can go no farther than it is his holy will for us to go. We are often turned loose to our own ways to work out our own destruction, as were the children of Israel when they thought they could fight their own battles; God turned them over into the hands of their enemies to consume them. So it is with spiritual Israel; they very often get to thinking that they are able to do for themselves, and it takes suffering and tribulation to keep them humble and make them know that God only is their keeper and their salvation. Great is the mystery of godliness! It is so great that the natural or carnal mind knows nothing about it. The only way that the children of God know anything about his mysteries is by revelation. He reveals to them such things as are needful for them to know, no more, no less. They will receive everything that is for their good and his glory. We very often think our lot is hard and grievous to be borne. I believe we all have an inheritance here on this earth, and when we have received all of that inheritance we shall leave this world of sin and sorrow. We will suffer every pain and every sorrow that is for us to suffer, and we shall receive every joy. God has a glorious purpose in it all. David said, He brought me up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock and established my goings. He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God. David was certainly a sweet singer in Israel, for his songs of praise are in accord with the experiences of the children of God, for they do know what it is to be in that miry clay where there is no place to stand. They also know that they cannot get out until God takes them out to place their feet upon that rock which cannot be shaken. O, is it not glorious to be enabled sometimes to hope that David's God is our God? For if he is we have nothing to fear, He hath put a new song in our mouth, even praise unto our God. That new song is the sweetest song that ever was sung; it is the theme of his people to praise his holy name, and they will never get through singing that sweet song, which song is sung in the Signs of The Times by its editors and many writers, and also our preachers, whom God has blessed us with, are enabled by his grace to declare the unsearchable riches of our risen and exalted Savior, who was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Their preaching is not according to man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit. They do not preach for filthy lucre. Paul said he had nothing to glory in, for necessity was laid upon him, and "woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel." Whenever God calls his preachers he qualifies them to do the work he has for them to do, and they will do that work when the time comes, not one minute too soon nor one too late. They will fill the ministry wherein he sends them; no one can fill another's place, but can fill his own, for every member of the body of Christ is needed in that body and will fill its place. So may we be bound together in one bundle of love, which no one knows anything

about but those born of God. Where that love is there is peace and harmony. It is certainly sweet for love to be manifest in the church, then there is union and communion and sweet fellowship for one another. It is a blessing that this world cannot give, and worth more than the gold of Ophir or the cattle on a thousand hills. What will it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? What would it profit the children of God to lose their spiritual enjoyments of if they could give them for the vain and perishable things of this earth? All that it contains will not compare with the sweet enjoyments his people partake of in the Lord's bountiful store. What is of God is perfect, and he is from everlasting the same true and living God. What his people receive here is only a foretaste of heavenly bliss; we only see in part and only know in part here, but when raised with the likeness of the dear Savior we shall be perfect as he is perfect, for we shall know as we are known; no more doubts and fears, no sighs and tears, for he will be our song; no more of the cares of this vain world to hinder us in that perfect praise to the holy triune God.

Your little brother, I hope, in Christ Jesus the Lord,

E. F. Readhimer

ARTICLES

CONCERNING ETERNAL LIFE

My very soul trembles in me as I ponder the question of could a child of Grace, a joint heir with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, an heir of Heaven and Eternal Life in the presence of a gracious and merciful God, die a spiritual death. I call your attention to Psalm 121, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper. The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; he shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth, and even for evermore."

I would call your attention to Lamentation 3: 22, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not."

Also for your consideration, Proverbs 2: 7-8, "He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous; he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly. He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints."

Proverbs 2:11, "Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee."

John 10: 27-29, "My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

John 17: 2-3, "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

John 3: 14-15, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosover believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

John 4: 36, "And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto

life eternal; that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together."

John 6: 45, "Whosoever eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him."

John 6: 58, "This is that bread which came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead; he that eateth this bread shall live for ever."

Titus 1:2, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that can not lie, promised before the world began."

Titus 3:7, "That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

I John 5: 10-11, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."

I John 5: 13, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God: that you may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God."

I John 5:20, "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life."

Now if you died a spiritual death there would be nothing in you to lead you but your fleshly lust, which do not the things of God, so the results would be that you would follow after the things of this world and your fleshly lust. Having no spirit to guide you or lead you to the things of God, would you not miss heaven and hell would be your home. But if you be one of his, you are born of that incorruptable seed which according to the prophets, liveth and abideth forever.

Is this not the Spirit under consideration as spoken of by Jesus Christ when he said, "I in you and you in me and I in the Father and the Father in me." If so, then this is the Holy Spirit of God; this is the Spirit given by God as of Isiah 42: 5. Was not this the spirit present at the creation, Genesis 1: 1. Was not this the spirit sent by God as spoken of in Psalm 104: 29-30. Is this not the wellspring of wisdom: Job 32:8. Is this not the Spirit that bring instruction: Nehemiah 9:20. Is this not the Spirit that was present at his Baptism: Mark 1:10. Is this not the Spirit that brings peace to your Soul spoken of in Isia 54: 13. Is this not the Spirit that dwells in each of us as spoken of in 1 Cor. 3:16. Is this not the seal of God. 2 Cor. 1:22. Is this not the comforter spoken of by John 14:26. Is this not the Spirit that teaches us the way. Psalm 143: 10. Is this not the Spirit that enables us to become the Sons of God, the Spirit of regeneration, the Spirit that increases our faith, the Spirit that raiseth us up and purefies our soul, aids our redemption, calms the troubled waters of our soul, convinces us of our sins, quickens our mortal bodies, endows us with grace. Is it not the basis of our life in Christ Jesus, giving us the wisdom of understanding, teaches us the way that we should go, reveal the truth of God.

To our souls show to us the purposes of God. Is this not the Spirit of Jesus Christ spoken of as being in you.?
The Spirit that guides us in the truth.
Is this not the Eternal Spirit,
The Spirit of adoption
The Spirit of counsel
The Spirit of knowledge
The Spirit of promise
The Spirit of supplication
The Spirit of understanding
The Spirit of wisdom.

Is this not the eternal Spirit? If so, how can a child of God die a Spiritual death? Think you not that God would give unto you a Spirit to keep you, Teach you and lead you and preserve you unto himself. How could you die a Spiritual death and still be preserved unto God. I say no. The Spirit given unto us by our God is

that Spirit that liveth and abideth forever and preserves us unto that inheritance, reserved for us in heaven where we shall dwell with the God of all grace and his Son, Jesus Christ our Savior forever and ever.

Boyd Minter

EXPERIENCE

When I was very small I became concerned about my soul; It seemed the judgment day was coming and I was doomed to eternal punishment. I would go to bed at night and cry myself to sleep and try to beg God to have mercy on me and save me.

One night I dreamed it was judgment day, and I thought I was frightened and Jesus came to where another little girl and I were playing, and He put His hand on my head and said, "You're one of my little school children." The next thing I knew, I was sitting at a table and everything on it was white. Sometimes I believe I have been made to sit at the King's table, and I hope I've been taught in the school of His grace.

I told mama about this dream, and she cried and said it was a good dream. I was not satisfied though, and went on in much trouble from time to time, but I would have short seasons of being contented and went about playing with other children.

Again I dreamed judgment day had come and as before I was greatly frightened and I thought I saw the entrance of a building. I stopped here and a man showed me an open book and I saw my name and with my name these words, "I was with you always." And I said, "If I had known this, I would not have been afraid of the lightning." I was always afraid of storms. This satisfied me, and for several days I was in praise to God. It seemed all things had become new, old things had passed away, but since that time I have had many doubts and fears. Often doubting if I'm in that number for whom Christ died.

That great love was given me, I hope, for Him and His people. I love Him because He first loved me.

I had another dream during this time. I dreamed about mama and me being together when the end of time came. I was afraid and started to speak to her and she was looking up and shouting and I looked up and saw Jesus, and I began to shout and I was no more afraid.

About six years ago I became so burdened I could not sleep or have any peace when away from my work; it seemed my mind was with the church at Dan River. I was concerned with asking a home with them. During the time I desired more evidence to tell them, when these words came to me, "What more can He say, than to you He hath said." When I was enabled to go over all the past experience and say, it is sufficient. I love the hymn, "How firm a Foundation, Ye Saints of the Lord."

I went to church at Dan River but couldn't tell them a thing about my dreams and travels. I did tell them o how I had been burdened to come, while I didn't feel worthy, and don't yet. I just wanted to be one of them, they all looked so good to me. If not deceived, I was drawn there by the sweet cords of His love. I saw in my dream the place where I would sit and saw myself going alone, which I did. I thought my husband would go with me, but he didn't. He did come late though. I was in so much trouble the week following, fearing I had deceived the church, and my pleadings were, if I have "deceived them don't allow me to do them any harm." This is the way I have been brought along, I don't know whether it is an experience of grace or not, I just hope so.

The morning I was baptized these words came to me. "I cast down, and I

raise up, I the Lord do these things." You preached so beautifully on this subject I thought when you visited Dan River. I have been cast down in my feelings, and hope I know what it is to be raised u. We don't like to be cast down, if we knew it was the Lord doing the casting down, it would be different. Well, come to Dan River to see us again and bring Sister Adams, we enjoyed your visit very much.

Your little sister in hope
(Mrs.) W. C. Vipperman
Draper, N. C.
(From Zion's Landmark 1952)

CAVE ADULLAM.

"David therefore departed thence, and escaped to the cave Adullam: and when his brethren and all his father's house heard it, they went down thither to him. And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men."—1 Samuel xxii. 1, 2.

Cave Adullam was the place of David's hiding from his enemies, the secret place where God's anointed dwelt safely, to which his pursuers did not penetrate. To him here in this secret place came the needy, and over them he became captain. What a singular army was that made up of the distressed, the debtors and the discontented! There are few incidents in David's life that more beautifully and wonderfully prefigure the Christ than this of David's refuge in Cave Adullam. But a few in each age of time have appreciated the true character of Jesus. The popular conception of Jesus and his work has never been the truth. Jesus' real character has been known in th past, and is known now, only by those to whom faith has been given to penetrate to his secret dwelling place. This is the result of revelation from the Father to his gracious subjects, for it is only by revelation that Jesus can ever be properly believed in. Jesus while in the world himself had two natures: the human and the divine. As a man among the men of his day he was known as being the son of a carpenter of Nazareth. His humanity was apparent to all men, and those who saw nothing but the outward man of him regarded him as a blasphemer, or as a fanatic, or as a heretic, or as an impostor, depending upon the individual viewpoint and judgment of those criticising him. In his essential character as the Son of God, the Word made flesh, the Savior and Redeemer, but few comparatively knew and loved him, and these because they had been taught of God to know and love him. Jesus, in his spiritual life, was a stranger to the world, and the world a stranger to him. The world could not penetrate beneath the outward mask of his humanity and discover the spiritual man hidden there. This was his Cave Adullam. That is, his Spirit self was his refuge from those pursuing and hating him, for this Spirit self was the God in him, and God kept him from being touched until his hour had come, and even when his hour had come to make the supreme sacrifice the persecution vented upon him bruised and wounded his body, but could not by any possibility damage his spiritual self. In order to come at the Cave Adullam, which is Jesus' real self, and there find the Captain of our salvation, one must be distressed, or he must be in debt, or must be discontented. Then, too, one must belong to Jesus' Father's house and be one of his brethren. This takes us back to before the foundation of the world, when God chose or elected his people unto salvation in Jesus Christ, the period known only to God, when he wrote their names in the Lamb's book of life. To have been thus chosen of God in

his Son before the world began means that some time or other, according as God has fixed, he will reveal himself to us. This revelation is the assurance of our pre-world election in Christ. One of the first-fruits of this revelation in the sinner's soul is distress. He is made to see himself wholly a sinner, without one good thing in him, full of wounds and bruises and putrefying sores from the sole of the foot even unto the head, the whole man is sick, without one spot of soundness in him. This causes sharp distress to the conscious sinner, making him to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The sincere, heartfelt cry of the soul penetrates unto Jesus' real self, it finds him in his Cave Adullam. The sinner, thus made sensible of his sins, realizes that he is ten thousand talents in debt without one farthing to pay. He sees that he has never kept one single commandment of the law of God, and never can, that he has never done anything but transgress God's law in thought, word and deed. So he sees himself a debtor to the law. These are the characters to whom God gives the spiritual discernment of living faith to cause them to seek him whom their soul loveth and to find him in that cave retreat hidden from the gaze and understanding of all men. Another mark of the election of grace is to be discontented. That is, to be discontented. That is, to be discontented with self, with sin, the flesh and the world. God's Spirit working in the subjects of his grace brings about this dissatisfaction with self. It is a mark of true discipleship that one hates his own life. Very few of those who openly and loudly declare their zeal for God really know what it means to hate one's own life. This Spirit-begotten discontent with self urges one on and on in quest of that which is infinitely higher than self: the selflessness of Christ. Thus do the discontented come unto him in his Cave Adullam, or the real inner self and character of the real Jesus Christ. When John the Baptist was in prison and sent messengers to Jesus to ask whether he was the Christ or should they look for another, Jesus sent back the messengers to tell John again those things in which Christ is seen. The first of these evidences of the Christ is that the blind receive their sight. Has one ever been blind to the things of God? Yes, all of mankind are thus blind by nature, not one of them able to see God or to make themselves see him. But the Christ of God comes unto the elect of God from among all mankind and gives them eyes to view him. Then these say, once I was blind, but now I see. To have been blind and then to be made to see the things of God as they truly are is to have been visited by Christ, and to have gotten acquainted with him in the very essence of his being. To have had that lameness which makes one unable to walk the way of God's commands, and so to have been disobedient, and then to have had that lameness cured by the imputation of Christ's obedience, is to have known Christ. To have known the fearful leprosy of one's sins, and then to have had those sins washed away in Jesus' blood, is to have known the true Christ. To have been deaf to the sound of the gospel, and then to be given ears to hear the joyful sound, is to have known Christ. To have been dead in trespasses and sins, and then to have been quickened by the Spirit and raised to the newness of spiritual life in Christ, is to have been brought into communion with our spiritual David in Cave Adullam. Have you ever been poor in spirit? That is, have you ever felt that you were lacking in all the things of God's Spirit? Have you ever in this poverty-stricken condition had the gospel preached to you with such power that you could not gainsay your interest in it? If so, you have seen and known the Christ. You have heard the call of your Captain from his Cave Adullam, that pavilion where he hides

you in the day of trouble, that secret of his tabernacle.

"From every stormy wind that blows,
From every swelling tide of woes,
There is a calm, a sure retreat,
'Tis found beneath the mercy-seat."

But for the mercy of God to usward in Christ we should be without any refuge in the day of trouble, any shelter in the time of storm. So, in the days of David, the poor and the sorrowful and the unhappy found a safe retreat with David in Cave Adullam. Infinitely better than that cave of old, but, nevertheless, foreshadowed by it, is that wonderful virtue and power of Jesus' real inner Spirithood to shelter his people in all their woes, to save them from all their sins, to protect them from all the poisonous, fiery darts of the world and the flesh, which constitute the adversary of our peace. We do not think one has ever found the secret of true living until he has been to Cave Adullam and has had fellowship and communion with Jesus in his true inner self. Men of the world and of the worldly churches have various and peculiar ideas as to what constitutes true living. From the scriptural standpoint, the true life is to know one's self as one really is. Thus, it is to know that one is a sinner, in debt, and extremely miserable therefor, then to be driven by the lash of one's very extremities to seek out Christ in the safe and sure retreat of the Cave Adullam of his inner and true oneness with God; this, we feel sure, is the essence of all true living. Those who, by the grace of God, have known something of this true life shall never really die. They may appear to die, but death can never really touch them, for they are God's anointed, and Saul cannot touch God's anointed. For them death is abolished and the resurrection assured. Every child of God lives two lives: the outer or fleshly life, which all men see, and by which men mostly know us; the other the inner or spiritual life, the Cave Adullam life, which is secret from the gaze and understanding of all around us. This inner life is often to the tired soul a restful retreat from the storm and stress of the outer life. It is in this inner life that one holds sweet fellowship with God. It is with this life that we lay hold on more life to fight the good fight of faith, if we fight it at all. It is in this inner life that the Captain of our salvation trains and disciplines his followers to endure that hardness which is the lot of all the soldiers of the cross.

Elder H. H. Lefferts

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 1986

Mrs. Wylie H. Spires, VA.	$ 2.00
Clarence M. Kearns, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Flora B. Berry, NC.	2.00
Frank Richards, TX.	25.00
Mrs. Bonnie R. Moyers, TN.	2.00
W. P. Potter, VA.	2.00
Mrs. D. A. Law, VA.	5.00
Mrs. Cliff Weaver, WA.	15.00
Elder Ben Preston, OR.	7.00
J. E. Potter, NC.	2.00
Mrs. D. V. Spangler, VA.	50.00
Martha & Levert Howell, Memorial to Sister W. D. Griffin, Al.	30.00
L. T. Sadler, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Pendleton, VA.	4.00

MEETINGS

ASSOCIATION NOTICE

The 145th session of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with

Malmaison Church on July 11, 12 and 13th of July 1986, which is the second weekend of the month.

Malmaison Church is located on state road 726 about 7 miles north of Danville, Va. This highway connects with the main north-south highway # U.S. 29. The church is about 3 miles from the exit from U.S.29 on the left.

All lovers of the doctrine of Salvation by Grace are invited to this meeting.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/86
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

OBITUARIES

ELDER W. J. BERRY

It becomes my sad duty to write an obituary for my dear husband, Winford Jennings Berry, Sr. He was born October 10, 1908 to John F., and Lucy (Holmesly) Berry at Coleman, Texas. He died in Alamance Hospital, February 10, 1986, age 77 years and 4 months.

My dear one had been a diabetic since 1941. His Dr. at that time, told me that he had a life-expectancy of 20 years. But he lived almost 45 years with this debilitating disease.

His entire adult life was dedicated to the cause of his beloved Lord, and His little ones here. He began to speak in public soon after uniting with Seclusia Church in Santa Monica, Calif. in 1932.

He was Editor and publisher of Sovereign Grace, which he began to publish in 1932. Later he took over the responsibility of printing and publishing The Lone Pilgrim, changing the name to Sovereign Grace and Pilgrim. Beginning in 1936, he also started to publish Old Faith Contender, a semi-monthly magazine. The two papers were eventually combined, and published until January, 1981, when he was forced by very poor vision and declining health to discontinue.

In 1950, he founded the Primitive Baptist Library, contributing the building site, as well as his rather extensive personal Library. He authored and published *TRACING THE TRUE WORSHIP OF GOD*, and *CULTS*.

We moved from southern California to North Carolina in 1944, where he had served County Line Church over forty years, and others for shorter periods.

His ministry was a searching one, contending, in love, for the faith once delivered to the saints, humbly refusing to compromise, in a most humble manner, any principle he felt to be God honoring. God's glory and honor and the welfare of His people, were his primary burden. He contended for a practical godliness which must accompany salvation. His love for the Old School Baptists everywhere surmounted the many sad divisional boundaries. This he very ably expressed in his Editorial, *"The Whole Estate."*

Though he asked that no eulogy be made, I must say that he was one of the most self-forgetful, generous persons I have ever known, and I am sure that many will witness to this fact. He was unsparing in his labors, despite our anxiety, and his Doctor's warnings, he gave all he had. It seemed to me that his ministry caused him to be either greatly loved, or as greatly disliked according as his searching ministry was appreci-

ated and accepted or rejected. The love of so many who did appreciate his ministry is such a comfort to me now as I receive their words of love from him.

He was a tender, devoted husband, very protective, a loving father. But he had become so weary and we are consoled by the asasurance that he is at rest. His precious body now awaits the resurrection and the coming of our Lord, in the Mausoleum in Memorial Park, Burlington, North Carolina.

In sorrow, but a sorrow sweetened with joy that his dear spirit is now resting in the arms of Infinite Love.

His unworthy companion,
Mabel Berry

ELDER RUFUS R. BROWN

The Church at Camp Branch deeply mourns the loss of their pastor, Elder Rufus R. Brown, who passed from this life unto the great beyond December 22, 1985. He was 82 years of age and had served Camp Branch Church as Assistant Pastor from 1960 to 1963. He was then made pastor, after the passing of our beloved Brother and Pastor, Elder Emory Burgess.

He was born December 23, 1903 and was married to Sallie Wilmont Dillon, Sept. 21, 1921. To this union was born ten sons and four daughters. His wife and two sons had preceded him in death in 1982.

He was the son of Will and Betty Brown. He was a member of Gills Creek Church and had been pastor there for years.

His funeral was held at Lynch Funeral Home in Rocky Mount, Virginia by Elders Denver Simpson, Elder Amos Hash and Elder Larry Hollandsworth. His body was laid to rest in Gills Creek Church Cemetery on December 24, 1985 by the side of his wife who preceded him in death on May 24, 1982.

He leaves to mourn his loss: eight sons, four daughters, two sisters, one brother and a host of friends and relatives.

Nancy Voorhees
Church Clerk

OBIE FAUCETT

It was our heavenly Father's will to call from our midst Brother Obie Faucett in October, 1985. Brother Obie was 84 years old. He joined Monticello Primitive Baptist Church Easter Sunday, 1963. Brother Obie was a faithful member and exhibited a true love for God's Church, attending as long as he was physically able to attend. He leaves to survive him his wife, Annie Pritchett Faucett; a son, Marcus; a daughter, Vivian Faucett; a brother Emmett Faucett; and a sister, Ila Faucett Herbin.

The funeral service was conducted by his minister, Elder Paul Lambe and was held at Lambeth/Troxler Funeral Home in Greensboro. He was laid to rest at Monticello Primitive Baptist Church cemetery.

SISTER BESSIE PARSONS

Sister Bessie Parsons was blessed to be called home after about ten years confined at home, the last seven years in bed, At the home of her daughter, Gertrude Davis. Who so lovingly cared for her, And graciously welcomed all her visitors. The last few years sister Parsons did not seem to know we was there until her pastor and others began singing Amazing Grace, She would sing every word with them. Her face would look like the face of an angel. She joined Old Mt. Primative Baptist church in 1918. She was A faithful and devoted member as long as she was able to go.

She was the daughter of the late James H. Scearce and Mollie Norton Scearce. She was married to the late Deacon Grant Parsons, She lived her entire life in the Mount Cross area. Survivors include five doughters, Gertrude Davis, Brosville, Stella Soyars, Westover Drive, Mary Smith and Ruth Motley, both of Danville, and Lucy Shields, Parkway Drive, Four sons Clyde Parsons, and Joseph Parsons, both of Danville, Andrea Parsons and Wilford Parsons, both of Mount Cross Road, one sister, Nannie S. Turner, Danville, Four half sisters, Emily Lue Walker, Annie Ruth Phelps, Margaret Hammock, and Ollie Merricks, of Danville, one half brother, Tommie scearce, Danville, 39 grand children. A number of Great grand children and four great great grandchildren.

Her funeral was held at Swicegood Funeral Chapel Dec. 2, 1985, by her pastor Elder H.W. Wray and Elder Amos Hash. Her body was layed to rest in Danville Memorial Gardens, Beneath A beautiful mound of flowers. May the Lord bless and comfort the family as only he can.

Done in order of church conference March, 15-1986.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator.
Sarah Barker Clerk.

BROTHER GEORGE POWELL

When the Lord called, Nov. 5, 1985, Brother George Powell fell asleep in his chair, just seven months after loosing his precious wife, Sister Gladys Powell.

He will be greatly missed as A member, as A song leader, and as A Deacon. It was A shock to us at Old Mt. Church. Our hearts go out to his close devoted family, who was so attentive to them both. Our sorrows and loss are great, We feel his piece ans joy by far exceds our sorrow.

Brother Powell joined Old Mt. primative Baptist Church and was baptised April 17-1971. Was later ordained deacon.

Born Sept. 10-1907, in Pittsylvania county, A son of the late John H. Powell and Laura Scearce Powell. He was married to Glarys Payne Powell. He leaves to mourn two sons, Bobby Powell, and Morris Powell, both of Dry Fork, two daughters, Marie P. Burke, Dry Fork, and Betty Booth, Ringgold, two sisters, Betty Watson, Danville, and Larua Ramsey, San Diego; three brothers, Claude Powell, Danville, Henry Powell, Roanoke, and J. Hampton Powell, Elmhurst, Ill; 12 grandchildren, two great-grandchildren.

The funeral was conducted at Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Chapel by Elder H. W. Wray, and Elder Wallace Smith. He was layed to rest in Danville, Memorial Gardens by his wife, Sister Gladys, To wait the call from their Lord, Saying come ye blessed of my father, Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

May the family be comforted and made reconciled to His holy will.

Done in order of conference at Old Mt. Primative Baptist church March, 15-1986.

Elder H.W. Wray Moderator.
Sarah Barker clerk.

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HYMN

There is a world of perfect bliss
Above the starry skies;
Oppressed with sorrows and with sins,
I thither lift my eyes.

'Tis there the weary are at rest,
And all is peace within;
The mind, with guilt no more oppressed,
Is tranquil and serene.

Discord and strifes are banished thence,
Distrust and slavish fear;
No more we hear the pensive sigh,
Or see the falling tear.

Farewell to earth and earthly things;
In vain they tempt my stay;
Come, angels, spread your joyful wings,
And bear my soul away.

I long to see my Father's face,
And sing his praises too;
Adieu, companions, dearest friends;
Vain world, once more, adieu.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/86
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

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EDITORIAL

To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven.

This is probably the most quoted scripture in the Old Testament and especially among the Saints of God. It is very basic in the doctrine to all who have been called out of nature's darkness and blessed to rejoice in the marvelous light and liberty of the gospel of God our Savior. The very foundation of their faith is the omnipotence, omnipresence and the omniscience of a just and Holy God who is in absolute control of everything and who is of one mind and changes not. The above scripture embodies all of these characteristics and is realized and remembered time after time in the experience of those who are led in ways that they know not and who see the majesty and wisdom as things unfold before them for good that they would never have known of themselves.

These are the experiences that are recorded throughout history as the Lords people are prepared for events that are to happen to them, and then how God leads them thru and the work is performed. Joseph did not know what was in store for him ahead as God's plan unfolded before him but in the end he saw the fulfillment of the dream that he had when he was but a young lad and he was blessed to see the wisdom and the purpose accomplished by the hand of God. There was a mighty work to be performed in the deliverance of Israel from the famine that was to envelop the land to manifest God's care for them as his chosen people. There was no power on earth that could prevent the work but the season of famine must occur and then the time and purpose of God respecting their experience is made known unto his chosen people and to them only. The world would see it only as luck.

The man who was born blind and whose sight was given by Jesus is a prime example of the season, time and purpose of God in the lives of his people. There was a long season of darkness in the life of this individual in which he could not see the light of day and the world around him, an example of the spiritual blindness of the natural man. When the appointed time of the Father came to make manifest his purpose in this. Jesus came along, gave him sight and said the purpose in all this was that the works of God should be made manifest in him. How like the spiritual awakening of each Child of grace who is born in a condition in which he cannot see the spiritual kingdom and experience the joys of salvation until Jesus comes by at the appointed time of the Father and makes himself known as he did to this

man, to the Apostle Paul, the Gaderine Cornelius and the list goes on and on to include the whole lot of the inheritance of the Children of Israel. There was a season of darkness in the life of this man but, thanks be unto God there was a season of light. There was a season of famine in the life of Jacob but there was also a season of plenty and the fat of the land. This is true in the lives of all of the heirs of promise as the various seasons are experienced and the time and purpose which they serve us made known to them. Joseph was blessed to experience many seasons and acknowledge as they were finished that they came about by man, his brethren, from an evil intent but God meant the same series of events for good as it is this day to save much people alive.

This same scripture applies to the experiences of Daniel, Job, Jeremiah and all of the writers of the old testament and they were blessed to record them and leave them, for the generations to follow, that they might know and understand a little more of their own travels. They learned by experience that regardless of what men or nations may do to accomplish something or to prevent something from happening it will be to no avail regarding that which is ordained of God. That which is to be, according to prophecy, will be and that which is not to be, in the wisdom of God, cannot be. Solomon was wiser, richer and experienced more than any of the kings of Israel before or after him and this was his conclusion: "That which is crooked cannot be made straight, and that which is wanting cannot be numbered." He also wrote, "So I was great and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: Also my wisdom remained with me. And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them. I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labor: And this was my portion of all my labor. Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labor that I had labored to do; and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun." This is the testimony of one who was blessed of God and who was spoken of before he was born as being chosen for this work. Soloman knew that the devices of man are many and that the efforts of man would be endless to accomplish his own desire, but that in the end, when the season, time and purpose of God are present, then and only then will the thing determined be accomplished for which they were ordained. He also acknowledged: "I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it that men should fear before him." And he also wrote, "The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom."

These things are realized and experienced many times in the lives of those who have been Saved and Called with a Holy Calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose in grace. There have been seasons in their lives which they would love to return and experience again. They would love to re-live those earlier seasons when they experienced the first love and awareness of the presence of the spirit within their heart and soul and to hold onto the sweetness and beauty as long as they can. Alas! they cannot because the season and time are gone and the purpose has been accomplished in their lives. They can but go on, in faith, to other seasons and purposes trusting that he which has called them and sent them forth on this journey will continue to lead and direct their way and that they will learn more about these solemn truths and understand more about this new life they are living. They are made to hunger and thirst for more evidence that they are indeed and in truth on the

way that leads to life everlasting.

They have beheld and admired the older brethren and sisters in the faith and appreciated the wisdom, experience, patience and steadfastness in doctrine, and in practice and desired to attain to that state of seeming perfection to them in their earlier days. They continue on for a seemingly short space of time and then they realize the old ones are gone and now they find themselves looking and seeing the younger one newly come into the faith, and they love and admire them for their eagerness and vitality, and yet, their meek and humble countenance as they experience the understanding of these precious truths for the first time. All of these seasons through which each must travel teaches them the truth of the sovreignty of God and makes them realize that it is all sent in mercy and love from God to them according to his own purpose and grace. "O the depths of the riches of both the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgements and his ways past finding out."

To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven. This applies to all the seasons, times and purposes and they are allotted to each vessel of mercy, which he hath afore prepared unto glory, for their growth and learning of the depths of the truth of the perfection of God in all of his way. "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever."

May God bless us all to run with patience the race that is set before us and to wait upon these seasons, times and purposes as they come our way, and when they do, may we be blessed to, be still, and know that He is God and behold his wonderful works. How rich a heritage belongs to those who are saved and called with a holy calling from among the sons of men.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."
Mat. 7:12

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

I CORINTHIANS 1. 21

"For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

We glean from the field of history, both of man and that which was inspired by God, that since the beginning of time there have been upheavals, convulsions, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and the like in the earth. Nature has been forced to find some way of casting off her surplus gases. In the animal and human world strife, warfare, extermination and death have been waged; species have come and gone; kingdoms, governments and nations have risen and fallen; every phase of life has had its perils. In the light of the past, it is no strange thing that there is to-day a great spirit of restlessness raging in what is commonly termed the religious world. Men are ambitious for leadership and notoriety, and are not satisfied to continue in the old order of things. Many self-styled "Sages of Divinity" are, therefore, making claims to scientific discoveries which, if true, tear down the very foundation upon which the church is built. Had not God declared by the mouth of his own Son, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." we would begin

to worry. Because the finite minds of men cannot comprehend or explain the mysteries of God they have the arrogance and impudence to tell us the Bible is out of date, contradictory, untrue and mythical. They deny the miracles of Jesus, and have no use for "old time religion," for they say, "The trouble is that oldfashioned religion really bores. That is the matter with it. It bores, and boredom is worse than murder. It kills as effectively." It is clearly seen they know not him who is the chiefest among ten thousand, the altogether lovely one, hence cannot say with David, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth I desire beside thee." But those who love the Lord can sing, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah." Those who have the witness within that the Lord has been their dwellingplace in all generations will desire that he might so teach them to number their days, that they may apply their hearts unto wisdom. "The natural man," however, "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Men have become drunk with the wisdom of this world, which is foolishness with God, and they would do well to remember, "If any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know." We are told, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Can it be possible that those who show such utter disregard and disrespect for our Lord have any fear or love in their hearts for him? It seems to us that were he not the God of matchless mercy that he is he would crush such defying creatures into dust and scatter it upon the sea of his wrath. Had the Lord not put his law in the inward parts, and written it in the hearts of his people, it might be possible to deceive them; shrewd men might be able to confuse and convince them that the Scriptures do not mean what they teach, but when Christ has been formed in one the hope of glory, and he has been quickened by the mighty power of God that wrought in him in raising him from the dead, such questions as, Whether the conception was of the Holy Ghost, or, Hath he power to quicken the dead? are not debatable; they know such miracles have been wrought in them, and they can say with Peter, "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty." They know that part of the Bible which they have experienced is true, and by faith they believe all that God has said. They are willing to remain babes in Christ, and do rejoice, in spirit, with him in saying, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty," &c. We feel safe in saying Paul was one of the "not many wise after the flesh" whom God called, and yet he declares, "My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." The grace of God worked effectually in his heart and changed him from a giant Pharisee to "less than the least of

all saints." This is what it does wherever it is manifested, and where we see the spirit of defiance, rule or ruin, haughtiness and pride we can be sure they are not the fruits of the Spirit. God said, Except a man become as a little child, he cannot enter the kingdom. So-called ecclesiastical experts say, Except a man become a master in science he cannot find out God. Whom are we to believe? Let God be true and every man a liar. A babe, naturally, does not imply to our mind one possessing more than ordinary wisdom or strength, but rather we think of its helplessness, being wholly and entirely dependent upon the parent, and we like to think of its simplicity and childlike faith to believe all, everything, that the father says. Recently we have had occasion to observe the absolute confidence of the child in the father, trusting him so implicitly that he would step off into space if the father held out his arms to him. Surely those who have been led about and instructed by our heavenly Father, and kept as the apple of his eye, are willing to trust him just as implicitly. Their faith staggers not at anything, for they know things which are impossible with man are possible with God, that he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that they ask or think; they know whom they have believed, and are persuaded that he is able to keep that which they have committed unto him against that day. If it were possible to search out God through the medium of science it would destroy faith, without which it is impossible to please God, and it would do away with revelation. John said he wept much because there was found no man in heaven, nor in the earth, neither under the earth, who was able to open the book which he beheld in the right hand of him that sat on the throne, but he was told to, "Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." It was perfectly sealed. In the beginning of the book of Revelation it is declared to be "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John." Let those who will, deny it. As for us, we believe it with all our heart; yea, more, we know some things have been revealed to us. "Secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children for ever." This latest outbreak is nothing new, so to speak; it is the same old serpent that appeared in the Garden of Eden, lying to and deceiving Eve. In the days of Job, when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan came also among them. He has ever been going to and fro in the earth, beguiling with his subtility, and, at times, as Paul says, is transformed into an angel of light. He has even invaded the camp of Israel and driven his beautiful (?) wedges of "modernism" and "conditionalism" between brethren, but the Lord has him in charge and his bounds are set, and his destruction sure: "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." We would that brethren might measure all things with the golden yarstick of truth and weigh them in the scales of Holy Writ, lest they be deceived.

We shall now come directly to our text, which says, "For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." This cuts the ground from under the feet of all workmongrels and science searchers, for we are plainly told here that it was verily according to the wisdom of God that the world by wisdom should not know God. This is diametrically opposed to, perhaps, ninety-nine per cent of all that is being preached and believed

to-day, but the system of creature works in obtaining salvation has no foundation in the word of truth. Some are cunningly endeavoring to mix works with grace, but they are, and ever must remain, as separate and distinct as water and oil. It is not true, never has been nor ever will be true, that God beseeches or pleads with his creatures to give their hearts, or to accept of his salvation. Preaching is not for the purpose of converting the world to Christ, as some affirm, but rather to save them that believe, to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood; not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ be made of none effect, but with such simplicity that the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein. This preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto them which are saved it is the power of God. Paul said, "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." The cross of Christ does not consist only in the fact that nearly two thousand years ago he hung upon Calvary's cross for a few hours; while the physical pain his humanity experienced there must have been excruciating, to say the least, we do not believe for a moment that it compared with the awful agony of his soul in the Garden of Gethsemane when he sweat as it were great drops of blood, realizing not only that of the people there was none with him, and that his beloved disciples could not watch with him one hour, but worse, yea, ten thousand times worse, he felt forsaken of his Father, and was made to cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" So far as we can determine from the record, with but one exception, his entire life in this world was a cross. He was declared to be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; he came not to do his will, but the will of the Father which sent him, to the end that of all the Father had given he should lose nothing. It was through the door of suffering he was to enter into his glory. The law demanded that the soul that sinneth, it shall die, and in order that he might redeem his bride from under the curse of the law, he, the just One, must lay down his life, pay the full penalty demanded by the law, to satisfy the justice of God in cancelling the debt against his bride, the unjust one. To preach that he did this and that "there is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," is to speak comfortably to Jerusalem, to cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. It is by the experience of these things that we are crucified with Christ; nevertheless we live, "Yet not I," said Paul, "but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." It is when we are given to see that he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed, and that he is made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption, that our hungry souls can feed upon the bread of life which came down from heaven. "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit." God's people are living creatures, and except they eat his flesh and drink his blood they can have no part with him, for in him we live, and move, and have our being. We, too, must suffer, must endure the contradiction of the flesh, but when we are weak, then are we strong; when we are utterly lost, then are we perfectly saved.

"How strange is the course that a chris-

tian must steer,
How perplexed is the way he must tread;
The hope of his happiness raises from fear,
And his life he receives from the dead."

This kind of preaching saves them that believe; it finds those who are in the way, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and they are filled, or satisfied, with what the Lord has done.

"I am, saith Christ, the way,
Now, if we credit him,
All other paths must lead astray,
How fair soe'er they seem.

I am, saith Christ, the truth,
Then all that lacks this test,
Proceed it from an angel's mouth,
Is but a lie at best.

I am, saith Christ, the life,
Let this be seen by faith;
It follows, without further strife'
That all besides is death.

If what those words aver,
The Holy Ghost apply,
The simplest christian shall not err,
Nor be deceived, nor die."

We felt to take up our pen in defense of the truth, and have written for the consideration of those who know the truth. Jesus said to those which believed on him, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The Lord deliver us from error.

Elder R. L. Dodson

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

GOOD HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Good Hope Primitive Baptist Church was organized in 1874. The church is located about eight miles northeast of Winnsboro, Texas. Meeting time is 10:30 on 4th Saturday and Sunday of each month. The present pastor is Elder Joe L. Hamrick, assistant pastor, Elder Jimmy Hamrick.

CORRESPONDENCE

March 14, 1986

Charles B. Osborne
Quarryville, Pa.

To a dear brother,
in the flesh and in the spirit:

At our last visit to your home you were concerned that the "truth" be rightly divided and you asked me to read the passage of scripture in the gospel of John 3:16. Dividing the truth was, I beleive, an instruction of Paul to Timothy, an undershepherd, a workman in the ministry. It is a good instruction for all true gospel preachers, but let us not expect truth from the false ones. It is written in 2 Timothy 3: 16-17, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect throughly furnished unto all good works."

Peter has written, regarding the epistle of Paul, that there "are some things hard to be understood." But it is said that God is his own interpreter and that there is complete harmony in the Scriptures. The infallible rule for interpretation of seemingly difficult passages is to be sought by reading other portions of the Scriptures. On occasion, the disciples asked Jesus about his speaking in parables. For example, concerning the parable of the sower, Luke 8: 10, Jesus answered "Unto you (meaning the disciples) it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand." Jesus continues in verses 17-18 "For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad."

Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have."

How can anyone rightly divide the truth, except it be in fear and trembling and with the sure guidance of the Holy Spirit that bestows light and life upon those on the Good ground? In the sight of God nothing is secret, but those among the thorns, on a rock, and by the way side only seemeth to have something, but even that God shall take away. We know that all men cannot see, hear, or understand the truth, much less, rightly divide it. In Matthew 11:25 (Luke 10:21) Jesus answered, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because (that, in Luke) thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

So, to read a single verse of Scripture is ofter a dangerous thing if we hunger and thirst after the truth and righteousness. John 3:16 reads, "For God so loved *the world*, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." If taken out of context from the "scripture" that "is profitable" "for instruction in righteousness". John 3:16 can be likened to Mark 16:15 "Go ye into all *the world*, and preach the gospel to every creature," and the passage in Philippians 2:12 "...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." These passages are favorites of the popular religions, of the antichrists who would serve mammon and enter the kingdom of heaven by the broad way and who would destroy the "hedge" about God's people. I believe these passages are typical scripture that serves to confound and mislead the wise and prudent and hide from them the secret of the saving grace that is given freely to God's people who were elected to eternal life and redeemed

through the atonement of Jesus so as to sing praises in eternity to his eternal glory. But for the lazy, the wicked, and the slothful (Matthew 25:24-30) there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The profitable workman will read more of John, chapter 3. He will notice verses 3, 5, 18-21. In reading Mark, chapter 16, the profitable workman will observe that the instruction "Go ye into all the world" was directed only to the eleven disciples (not to preachers in 1986), and verse 20 leaves on record that the eleven, with "the Lord working with them" preached "everywhere". The profitable workman seen in Ecclesiastes 3'14 that "whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever; nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it." Thus all the evangelism and missionary work of the wise and prudent will fail to save any of those that "will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" Matthew 7:22-23.

"Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up" Matthew 15:13.

The profitable workman will read more than "work out your own salvation" He will study the follow-on verse "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." In seeking, or dividing the truth, God's people must look for the harmony of the Scriptures. They must study scripture like Ephesians 5:6-21 which reads with emphasis in part as follows:

(6) *let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God* upon the children of disobedience.

(7) *be not ye therefore partakers with them.*

(8) For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: *walk as children of light.....*

(11) And *have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness,* but rather reprove them.

(12) For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.....

(15) *See then that ye* walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise.

(16) *Redeeming the time,* because the days are evil.

(17) Wherefore be ye not unwise, but *understanding what the will of the Lord is.*

Having cited John 3:16, what shall the workman do with scripture as in John 2: 15-19, especially, *"Love not the world,* neither the things that are in the world. *If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him....".* In rightly dividing the truth, shall not one ask, is the world of 1 John 2:15 *the same* as the world of John 3:16. The antichrists, the missionaries, and today's evangelists would have us believe that *the world in the Scriptures is the whole of the planet Earth.* It is a major task to examine every reference in the Scriptures that contains the words, earth and world. In my analytical concordance I find about 1000 references to *the* earth and some to a *new* earth. I find, on the other hand, references to *this* world and to *that* world. But a remarkable (for me) revelation is seen when one finds:

Hebrews 1:1-2 "*God,* who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets. (2) Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his Son,* whom he hath appointed heir of all things. *by whom also he made the worlds;"* and Hebrews 11:1-3 "Now faith is.... (3) *Through faith* we understand that *the worlds were framed by the word of God,* so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."

Therefore there are many worlds that require distinction. There is, on the

planet Earth, a world for the Lord's people that is hedged about and protected by God's sovereign grace so that none are finally lost. There is a different world for the carnal mind, for the damned, and for the reprobate. There is a world in the furnaces of affliction wherein every child of God is chastised, is tried, and perfected. *Jesus answered Pilate (John 18:36) "My kingdom is not of this world:...* but now is my kingdom not from hence."

There are some workmen and some sheep among the visible church who proclaim entitlement to unbridled liberty of conscience, unique personal experiences, and a mere profession of belief in Christ Jesus as the only qualification for church membership. However "devils also believe and tremble", James 2:19. Let us not ignore the scripture of Jude verse 3, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the *common salvation*, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Jude, verse 1, was writing specifically to "them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ." His epistle was not written to mankind in general as they are scattered throughout all of planet Earth.

In the sermon in the mount, our Lord and Savior, declared in the Beatitudes the elements of the *common experience* of every elect child of God. Jesus explicitly stated a rigid requirement, Matthew 5:20, for membership in his church, which is the kingdom of heaven here on earth. Jesus declared, *"That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."*

The Beatitudes, given in verses 3-13 of Matthew 5, reveal the *common experiences* of salvation by grace and not of man's work. In being born again, every member of the Lord's body must by grace be brought into poverty of spirit with a recognition of their sinful condition. They are then brought by grace into a spirit of repentance and are made mournful and are given the grace of faith to be comforted. The fear of God is wrought into their hearts, for how else are they to be made meek. As the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom they are made to hunger and thirst after righteousness, after which they are filled *not with self-righteousness and vanity in their own works, but through the free gift of grace they are filled of the righteousness of Jesus.*

I ask, is there any righteousness among sinners greater than the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, *except it be the imparted and imputed righteousness of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus?* Should not then all profitable workmen and the visible churches they serve (not rule) refrain from begging and recruiting numbers to increase the rolls of the visible churches from among mere professors of religion who declare a literal belief in Christ; where no evidence is seen of poverty of spirit; of mournful condition; of a fear of God and meekness; and a zeal-hunger and thirst for understanding the truth as it is in Jesus and the Scriptures? To accept less is planting error - both on the part of the pastor (workman) and the members of the church - which leads to the ditch, Matthew 15: 13-14.

Pilate asked, "What is truth?" *Jesus did not answer,* John 18:38. The promise that "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." was given to those who are "disciples indeed" of Jesus, John 8:31-32. *"Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls...",* Jeremiah 6:16.

I beg that God extend his tender mercies to me, a sinner, and to every needful member of the Lord's body.

Eugene F. Osborne, Sr.

ARTICLES

CONVERSATION

It is astonishing the force that certain words have as used in the Bible. Take this word "conversation," for instance. This word to-day, as used among men, means the interchange of thoughts and ideas between two or more persons by means of spoken language. This use of the word is very limited, as compared with the sense in which it was employed in ancient times. Biblically, the word referred not simply to personal social intercourse by means of language, but it meant the whole behavior, conduct or character of the individual. This is the primary meaning of the word wherever it is used in the Scriptures, with the exception of Paul's use of the word in his letter to the Philippians, in which letter the word "conversation" is used twice, and means "citizenship," or to behave as a citizen. "For our conversation is in heaven." We do violence to this expression, and sadly limit its meaning, if we say simply that our conversing or talking together is in heaven. But the word is given its full force when we understand it to mean that every true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is a citizen of the kingdom of heaven, and that therefore his citizenship (conversation) is in heaven. Enoch was translated that he should not see death, and it is true of every subject of God's grace that they are translated from the kingdom of nature's darkness, in which they had been born dead in trespasses and in sins, into the light and liberty of the kingdom of Christ by his Spirit's regenerative work. They had been the slaves and servants of sin, but now are they the Lord's freemen, having and enjoying that freedom the truth of God alone can give. Being thus translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, the childrn of God cannot eternally die, for death is abolished through Christ's victory over death and the grave, and life and immortality are brought to life, that is, into evidence and to our understanding, through the gospel. All subjects of the new birth, or of that birth which is from heaven, are citizens of the kingdom of heaven. They are governed in their hearts by the spiritual law of this heavenly kingdom, which law emanates not from the law of Moses as of old, but from Him who is forever King of kings and Lord of lords, and this law says simply, "Love one another." This is the love of God shed abroad in every citizen's soul, which love radiates toward all the household of faith. The citizens of this holy land are under the constant care and keeping of Him who never slumbers nor sleeps, and as the mountains are round about old Jerusalem, so the angel of the King's presence encompasses each and all the citizens of this better country. As far as the church of God is concerned, heaven is begun below; that is, if it is right to speak of anything eternal having a beginning. At least, there is a beginning to our knowledge of it. Every spiritually quickened and heaven-born soul breathes the atmosphere of heaven while yet dwelling here in this time state clothed in flesh. Also, the kingdom of heaven is within every one of them. Now, in the first chapter of Philippians we find "conversation" used thus: "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ." Again, this does not simpmean let our talking together be according to the gospel, but, if we give the word its full force, it signifies, Let your behavior, or life, as citizens of heaven be as becometh the gospel of Christ. A man may talk one way and do another, but God's people are not simply to talk of the gospel, but to live in it, and act according thereto. We have tried all our life since coming into the church to live and act according to the gospel, but with-

out success; that is, if we have ever done the thing we ought to have done it has never been the result of our trying to do so, but always the effect of some power other than self. We hope this other power has been the grace of God. Indeed, if it has not been the grace of God that has kept us upright, provided we have been upright, then we do not know to what to credit the power. There is but one principle that can instruct the people of God in the matter of right living. For that, see Paul's letter to Titus, second chapter: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." Thus it is very plain that the very same grace of God that revealed to God's people the way of salvation is the very same principle that does not leave them after effecting that revelation in them, but keeps on abiding within them, to cause them to deny the flesh and all its lusts, to the end that they are thus enabled by grace to live and to behave as citizens of heaven should, soberly and righteously and godly while yet in this present time world. If there is any man but Christ in the soul that can teach us how to behave ourselves as citizens of that better country, we quite certainly do not know who it is. It is a sure thing that if we try to rely on our own strength and wisdom in this matter we are doomed to be ashamed of ourselves later on.

So much for Philippians. Now let us look at "conversation" in other places where it is used. In the letters of Peter, both in the first and in the second, we find the word used several times. Space forbids quoting all, to take a few, let us notice: "Be ye holy in all manner of conversation." "Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, * * * from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers." Here in these two Scriptures, we have "holy" conversation and "vain" conversation. Again, it is not that talking together is meant, but one's whole behavior or conduct. The conduct of God's people before redemption, and while still under the law walking according to the traditions and doctrines of men, was a vain or empty conduct. The conduct of believers in the Lord, who are risen with Christ from under the law, and who are seeking those things which are above all law and condemnation, is a holy conduct. God's people have been redeemed from their former vain or unsatisfying behavior under the law by the precious blood of Jesus. Redemption by the blood of Jesus is the one essential thing unto holy behavior.

In Peter's second letter, second chapter, we find it written that God delivered just Lot, who was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked. This does not mean that Lot was vexed simply by the filthy language of the wicked, but by their filthy behavior. To prove this read the eighth verse: "For that righteous man (Lot) dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds." In one verse we are told Lot was vexed by the filthy conversation of the wicked, in the next verse, by their unlawful deeds. Therefore conversation means not simply talk, but deeds. Further, he was vexed not only by what he heard, but by what he saw, more proof that conversation scripturally used means the whole behavior of a person.

Turning back to the Psalms we find this: "The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation." It was in olden times quite the usual thing for highwaymen or robbers to lurk in secret along the beaten ways of travel to waylay travelers and to despoil them of their goods. Remember the man who went down the road from Jerusalem to

Jericho and who fell among thieves, who was robbed and beaten and afterward visited by the good Samaritan. Such cases often occurred along the roads of the ancients. God's people in this world who are effectually called by grace unto a godly life, walk in the strait and narrow way that leads unto life. But along this way are many pitfalls and dangers: the wicked with drawn sword and bent bow, who try to cast down the poor in spirit and those who feel their need of God, and who endeavor to slay those of upright life (conversation). The first man Adam fell in sin, the second Adam, who is the Lord from heaven, is the man of upright life. Jesus raised up his elect whom Adam had prostrated. Those justified before God in the resurrection of Jesus Christ are the ones of upright conversation or life, for the word conversation here means a course of life. Jesus lived a godly course of life while here in the flesh, so he was of upright conversation. But evil men beset his way on every side, tormenting him with all manner of temptations, and the wicked finally killed him, not knowing that in killing him they were defeating their own expectations. The life of a true christian, the course of the upright life, is beset with manifold temptations. At times it seems the evil triumph over one. One sees the prosperity of the wicked, and even at times envies it, but when the Lord brings the poor and needy into his sanctuary, out of the dangers of the trodden road, then is revealed the end of the wicked, which is inevitable defeat and perdition, then the upright's envying the wicked ceases.

Psalms 1. 23: "To him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God." Again in the word conversation is presented a course of living. To him who orders his course, or manner of living, correctly will God reveal his salvation. Who is the one that orders his course of life aright? It is not you. It is not ourself. Who is it then? It is not, cannot be, any mortal man. Who then? None other than our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He, being God tabernacling in the flesh, had the power to order the course of his life aright, and he did it, not making a single misstep, nor uttering one idle word from the manger to the cross. To him, Jesus, is shown the way of salvation. From him to his people and down into their hearts and souls distils this knowledge of the way of life. All God's people are taught of Jesus, so that their peace is an abiding peace. He reveals to them that his salvation is wholly of grace, and not at all according to creature works. None can teach this truth except Jesus, for he is the one and only man who ordered his life aright, so that to him alone is revealed the way of salvation in order that he should reveal that truth within every one of his children.

The word "conversation" occurs in various other places that we have not space to mention. Look them up and read them for yourselves.

Elder H. H. Lefferts

DESOLATION—THE WORK OF THE LORD.

"Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth."—Psalms xlvi. 8.

Peculiar notions float in the minds of most men as to what constitute the works of the Lord. The shining of the sun and of the moon, the blossoming of trees and flowers, the falling of the snow and the rain, the singing of birds, the blowing of the wind, the birth of a child, the bestowal of happiness and of prosperity, all these most people would say are the works of God; but when it comes to the reverse of all these pleasant and cheerful things, to the things that produce pain or sorrow, death or disease,

these things most people prefer to ascribe to some other power than that of God. The truth is, that all these things come from the Lord, both those things that bring peace in their train as well as those things that leave a streak of fire behind them. War, famine and pestilence are a trio that go together, and rarely ever are separated; where we find one we are very apt to be able to discover the other two. A terrific world war has just spent its force in taking its terrible toll of the blood and treasure of the nations. Accompanying this whirlwind of destruction and following upon the heels of it comes famine, taking its toll of precious lives throughout Europe and Asia, many persons starving to death for lack of the wherewithal to sustain life. Probably even in our own land, and perhaps not far from our very doors, scores, and maybe hundreds, are suffering for the lack of the necessities of life. Hard upon war and famine comes the third of the trio: disease, or pestilence. The present epidemic of influenza raging all over the United States is really a pandemic, because it is worldwide, prevailing in the countries of the old world as well as here. The total of those who succumb to the pestilence will exceed in number the victims of the war. Thus we find ourselves in this present generation living in the midst of these monsters of destruction, things we have all read about in the history of the past, but which we ourselves hardly expected to see for ourselves. These are not the agencies or instruments of Satan, they are the works of the Lord. As it has been in the past, so it is now, and so shall it ever be as long as this old world remains constituted and organized as it is. The Lord in the days of Noah saved eight persons in the ark from the flood; all others living at that time were swallowed up in the deluge. Many people expressed themselves during the last four years that this war was the worst thing that has ever come to pass, but we think they must have forgotten about the flood in the days of Noah, which desolation must have been terrible to those who perished in it, but which nevertheless was the work of God. Again, what desolation was that which God wrought when he overwhelmed Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, thus delivering his own elect people. Again, what desolation was the work of God when the earth opened and swallowed those who replied against Moses and Aaron, and two hundred and fifty men who offered incense were consumed by fire from the Lord. The word of the Lord by Ezekiel declares, "So will I send upon you famine and evil beasts, and they shall bereave thee; and pestilence and blood shall pass through thee; and I will bring the sword upon thee. I the Lord have spoken it." You will notice it is not Satan who says this, but the Lord himself. In the ninth chapter of Ezekiel we have the vision given the prophet of the slaying to occur in Jerusalem: to six men who came from the way of the higher gate with slaughter weapons in their hands, the Lord commanded, "Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women." This is by no means the only place in the Bible where the Lord commanded the killing of women and children. The Lord is not only a God of construction, but also of destruction; he both kills and makes alive as he sees fit.

But let us come to the forty-sixth Psalm and consider the desolation there spoken of. The first thing mentioned as being destroyed is war: "He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth." And, by the way, the Lord is the only being that can effectually make an end of war. Some doubt the success of the attempt that is being made to make war obsolete. The world to-day is trying to devise a league of nations to establish worldwide peace. We hope for success. This plan may not

succeed, and we do not have to be a prophet to make such a statement. One needs only to carefully read the Scriptures to learn there that God alone is the author of peace, and that only the peace of God can endure forever. As long as human nature is what it is, and as long as the governments of the nations are organized as they are, there can be no worldwide permanent peace. However, the Psalm says that to the ends of the earth the Lord makes wars to cease. This does not convey the idea that God makes wars to cease all over the earth, but to the ends of the earth. The ends of the earth are the Lord's people. Every subject of God's grace is brought to the end of all earthly things, to the end of his strength, to the end of his wisdom, to the end of all confidence in himself or in the flesh. Thus, by the revelation of God's Spirit, the sinner finds he is full of all that is earthly, sensual and vain, and that there is no hope of salvation coming through the help or power of man. He finds the end of a man, and that the end of a man is vanity. This, the end of a man, is the end of the earth. Here is where the war ceases. Whereas before the sinner was fighting against God, at war with heaven and in league with hell, now by the work of the Son of God, and the death which Jesus suffered, this war or opposition against God is ended, and he is reconciled to God through the mediatorial work of the Redeemer. This is the war that ceases, and it ceases only to those who have been brought to the end of the earth. He takes from us all our weapons of warfare so that we can no longer struggle against him. "He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder: he burneth the chariot in the fire." The reason many believe that their works save them is because they have never experienced the destruction of their weapons of war at the hands of the Lord. No one can believe in salvation by works who has witnessed the Lord making wars to cease to the end of the earth. The Lord strips the sinner of all his works, he humbles his pride in the dust, he destroys all self-confidence and all fine spun theories and philosophies which have for their aim the elevation of the creature in the place of the Creator. It is no wonder the Lord's people believe wholly in salvation by grace, for the Lord has wrought a work of desolation in them, a work in which he has destroyed their spears and bows and chariots, so that they no longer can trust in their own defences, but must be still and know that he is God. No one is ever still, that is, ceasing his own ineffectual efforts, until the Lord makes him to be still, and creates within him the knowledge of God, through the destruction of all creature fortresses and selfsufficiency. The Lord destroys as he builds up. There is no such thing as growing in grace without at the same time growing out of self. In order to be built up in the faith that is God's elect's one must have had faith in one's own self destroyed. Those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, but one never waits upon the Lord until he gets to that place where he can no longer wait upon himself. This, for that one, is the end of earth. Here every vain imagination is cast down, every idol shattered; the sinner is abject in the dust, wholly surrendered to the King of heaven, for God has destroyed all his weapons whereby he might longer fight, and has consumed all his strength, so that he could not fight had he still the weapons. Thus does God exalt himself among the heathen. One who is an unbeliever in God is a heathen, whether he dwell in Asia, Africa, Europe or America. None can convert the heathen but God himself. He does it through the operation of the Holy Spirit and the revealing power thereof in the soul and the life of the one who is a heathen. Self, and all the things of self: the mind and the will and the affections of self, are abased

that God shall be all in all. This is the way God exalts himself among the heathen. It is through these bitter things that God's people are taught to lie passive in his hand and know no will but his. Thus comes into the soul that final abolition of all war, the peace that passes all understanding, the peace that the world can neither give nor take away. Experimentally, God's people are taught that God's glory is advanced through their self-abasement. That which is exalted must be abased, and that which is abased must be exalted. God's plan of salvation leads downward instead of upward, downward into the abysmal depths of self-knowledge, that one may know what is the height of that wisdom and knowledge that is of God.

Elder H. H. Lefferts

WHERE IS THE CHURCH?

An inspired writer has said, "As the lily among the thorns, so is my love among the daughters." None who are born of God and taught by his Spirit can doubt that this figure is intended to describe the condition as well as the superior excellence of the church above the daughters. She is called the "Love, Dove, and Undefiled" of her Beloved. The figure of a *lily* not only describes the modest beauty of the church, but shows, according to the instructions of our Lord, that her exceeding glory, although surpassing that of the regal splendor of Solomon, is not the result of her own labor. She toils not to procure it, she spins nothing that would answer for warp or for woof; her life is derived from an invisible Root, and her head is bowed under the genial rays of the sun. But she is not only like the lily as that flower stands gracefully in the field, or among other beautiful flowers, but she is like the lily among thorns. How truly does the church of Christ answer to the figure in all its fullness of illustration! God has chosen her in a furnace of affliction, and she has ever, in her militant state, been among the rude briars and thorns. The earth, groaning under the curse of the righteous Creator, is destined to produce thorns and thistles, and while this world remains the temporary abode of the church she must encounter them. One of her most prominent sons prayed no less than three times that the thorn might be removed, but was referred to the sufficiency of the grace of God to sustain him and bear him through all the buffetings of Satan. To those who have discernment in spiritual things how admirably does the church contrast with that by which she is surrounded. All that the lily is of itself is merely grass of the field which today is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, but God has so clothed her as to challenge comparison with the most exalted glory of the earth. All flesh is as grass, and all goodliness thereof [that is produced by human power, or the flesh, for all that is born of the flesh, whether physical or mental, is flesh] is as the flower of the grass; the grass withereth, the flower thereof fadeth away, but the Word of the Lord abideth forever. While the flower thereof, that is, the goodliness of the flesh, or grass, may adorn the meadow, but, in common with the grass with which it is connected, it cannot survive the dissolution of the flesh, or grass; but God so clothes it (the church) in the garments of salvation as to secure the glory as an inheritance which is incorrubtible, undefiled, and cannot fade away.

> *"Defiled and loathsome as we are,*
> *He makes us white and calls us fair,*
> *Adorns us with that heavenly dress,*
> *His graces, and righteousness."*

Consequently the church is enabled through grace to sing, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful

in my God, for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness; as a bridegroom decked himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. (Isa. xli. 10.) She "is all glorious within, her clothing is of wrought gold, she shall be brought unto the King in garments of fine needle-work." (Psalms xlv. 13.) All human beauty and creature excellency, compared with the church of the living God, which is the ground and pillar of the truth, is but as thorns. Zion is pronounced in the language of inspiration *the perfection of beauty;* it cannot, therefore, be improved. Earth has no colors, nor has creation charms to lend which would not obscure her beauty. And although her peculiar excellency appears not to the eyes of an adulterous generation, for except a man be born again he cannot see her, because the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them because they are spirtually discerned; still all her attractions are clearly apprehended by those unto whom the Spirit of God reveals her. To them she appears as the New Jerusalem, descending from God out of heaven adorned as a bride for her husband. She looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. Understanding these to be some of the general characteristics of the church of God, may we not inquire, Where may she be found at this day? We cannot consistently believe that Christ has no church on earth at the present day; and if he has a church now upon earth she must bear the lineaments which are drawn in the New Testament. We shall not find her at the corners of the streets, in harlots' attire, seeking for lovers; from her lips will not be heard the silly boast, "I have peace offerings with me, this day have I paid my vows." (Prov. vii. 14.) She cannot be recognized in any other dress than the garments of salvation which her Lord has given her. The daughters spoken of, Isa. iii. 16-26, with their haughty carriage, stretched forth necks, wanton eyes, and mincing walk, making a tinkling with their feet, with their cauls, and their round-tires like the moon, their chains, and bracelets, and the mufflers, the bonnets, and the ornaments, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings, and the rings, and nose jewels, changeable suits of apparel, mantles, and wimples, and crisping pins, glasses, fine linen, hoods, and veils, are only the thorns by which the lily of the valley is surrounded. "There are threescore queens and fourscore concubines and virgins without number; my dove, my undefiled is but one, she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bear her."—(Cant. vi. 8 & 9.)

In order to demonstrate the existence of the church of Christ on earth at the present day, we must find a community of saints corresponding to the primitive pattern, of eighteen hundred years ago—a people whose only beauty consists in the comeliness which Christ has put upon them—a people saved by the Lord who is the shield of their help and the sword of their excellency, and whose enemies are found liars unto them—Deut. xxxiii. 29) A people dwelling alone and not reckoned among the nations, with no governmental patronage from the powers of the world—a kingdom that is not of this world, nor visible to the world, because they are the sons of God; the world knoweth them not because it knew him not—A poor and afflicted people trusting in the name of the Lord—a persecutee people; for if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus he shall suffer persecution. Their names shall be cast out of men, and they shall be hated of all men for Christ's name sake. They are regarded as the offscouring of all things, accused and slandered in like manner as their divine Lord and

Master was; for if these things were done in the green tree they shall be repeated in the dry; if they called the Master of the house Beelzebub they will also call them of his household so. also call them of his household so.

These are only some of the outlines of the church of Christ. She is also characterized by her *"one Lord, one faith, and one baptism."* Her faith is as radically different from that of every other professing people on earth as are her Lord and her baptism. Of her faith Jesus is the Author and Finisher; but that of all other religious bodies either originates with themselves or is derived from the doctrines, traditions, and instructions of men. But blessed is she, for flesh and blood hath not revealed these things to her, but her heavenly Father has taught her by his Holy Spirit. She is the opposite of all other sects in regard to her food, her appetite, and the source from which all her supplies are received. Others can and do eat their own bread and wear their own apparel; but she must eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus. Nothing short of the true Bread which came down from heaven, that kind which Moses never gave, can satisfy her; but her neighbors, or the thorns among which she is situated, do not see why the bread that Moses gave is not good enough.

Christ's church is a peculiar people, in all respects essentially different from the religionists of this world. She comprises a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation, and shows forth the praises of him who hath called her out of darkness and translated her into the kingdom of his dear Son. The doctrine which her faith takes hold of is that which cannot possibly suit any body else under heaven. And if there be any who have not passed from death unto life, who fancy that they can understand and love the doctrine by which the church of God is distinguished, they are deluded. As none knoweth the things of a man but the spirit of a man that is in him, (for the spirit of man being taken from any man but a dead and unconscious corpse remains,) neither knoweth any man the things of the Spirit but the Spirit. And unless we be born of the Spirit, and that Spirit abide in us, we are as dead to all spiritual things, as the human body is to natural life after the animal spirit has departed. It is, therefore, quite as practicable to teach the tenants of the tombs the English grammar, or any science, as to teach the things of the Spirit of God to unregenerate men. The church of God, if found at all, will be found in possession of doctrine which cannot be taught by every or any man to his neighbor, saying, Know the Lord; it cannot be taught nor learned in Sabbath schools, or what are called theological schools; nor can it be derived from reading the bible, or hearing it expounded, even if Paul himself were the expounder, for the natural man cannot receive it; it is spiritualy discerned. Every organized body of professors of religion who hold a doctrine which they can teach their unregenerate fellow-men is a branch of anti-christ; and the nature and attainableness of their faith proves that they have not the faith of God's elect, and that their faith stands in the wisdom of men, and not in the power of God. See 1 Cor. ii. 5. The primitive church acknowledged Christ as the only spiritual King, the true and only Potentate, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light which no man can attain unto. That church cannot now be identified where Christ is not so regarded; nor is he so regarded by any church, sect, or people who hold that there is spiritual life anywhere else, or that the light in which he dwelleth can be approached. To approach is to make some advance towards the object; but this no man can do, as the members of the church of Christ know right well. The true church now, as in her primitive days, depends on God to

raise us, qualify, send forth, and sustain the ministers of the gospel. Those who heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, are not the church of Christ. To him who ascended up on high, who led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, they look for all the gifts which the church can need,—to him who reigns, being exalted a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins, and to him alone they look to bring sinners to repentance and to cause the redeemed of the Lord to return with singing to Zion with everlasting joy upon their heads. To him who opened the doors of death, and rose triumphantly from the grave, who conquered sin and hell, they look for support, comfort, deliverance and victory.

Finally, the church of our Redeemer is *the circumcision who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.*

J. C. Philpot

"A GOOD name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold."
Proverbs 22: 1

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 1986

J. S. Granberry, TX	$ 2.00
Dale Haygood, TX	2.00
Dr. & Mrs. G.R. Harrell, TX	7.00
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Mrs. Edith Sewell, FL	2.00
Mrs. Olive Hastings, MD	5.00
Mrs. Gladys Wright, PA	7.00
Mrs. Gladys Philpott, VA. In memory of husband, Harley R. Philpott	20.00

MEETINGS

OLD PINE CREEK CHURCH

An Annual all day meeting will be held, the Lord willing, at Old Pine Creek Church on the 4th of July, 1986. The Church is located off highway -221, five miles north of Floyd, Virginia. Those coming from Floyd, turn left onto road # 682. Those coming from Roan-

oke, turn right onto road # 682.

All lovers of the Truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Hale Terry

PIG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Pig River Association will be held, Lord willing, the First Sunday in August, Friday and Saturday before, Aug. 1, 2, 3, 1986.

Bethel is the host church for this setting of the Association. The meeting place will be Rocky Mount High School, Rocky Mount, Virginia.

Come into Rocky Mount on 220 Highway and exit on to Highway 40 going west, take second street to left to the High School.

We invite all our Brethren and Sisters that are in peace and good standing at home to seat with us.

Jamie E. Cooper
Association Clerk

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom."
Proverbs 9: 10

OBITUARIES

BROTHER RUFUS R. BROWN

At the request of Gills Creek Church I will attempt to write the obituary of our beloved Elder, Brother Rufus R. Brown.

Brother Rufus was born December 23, 1903, the son of Brother William and Sister Betty Brown. On September 21, 1921 he was married to Sallie Dillion and from this union was born fourteen children, of which two preceded him in death, (Tyler and Wilton Brown).

Sister Sallie preceded him in death on May 24, 1982. Brother Brown seemed to lose his desire to stay here any longer after Sister Sallie was called to rest. Brother and Sister Brown are missed by those who loved them, but are remembered with many kind affections.

Brother Rufus and Sister Sallie joined Bethel Primitive Baptist Church June 6, 1942. They moved their membership by letter to Gills Creek Primitive Baptist Church December 9, 1956. Brother Brown was ordained as a gospel minister July 11, 1959. He served as Assistant Pastor of Camp Branch Church from April 30, 1960 to July 6, 1963, when he was put in as Pastor. He also served as Pastor at Gills Creek and Canton Creek.

Brother Brown was called to rest December 22, 1985. His funeral was conducted at Lynch Funeral Home Chapel, Rocky Mount, Va. by Elders Amos Hash, Denver Simpson and Larry Hollandsworth. He was laid to rest at Cross Roads Church Cemetery under a beautiful mound of flowers.

He is survived by four daughters, Sister Zelma Reed, Mrs. Hattie Minter, Mrs. Jaunita Hodges, and Mrs. Barbara Hughes. Eight sons, Brother Warren Brown, Brother Edward Brown, Jake Brown, Curtis Brown, Willard Brown, Wilbur Brown, Doc Brown, and Joe Brown. Two sisters, Mrs. Harry (Maggie) Condiff and Sister Posey L. (Ella) Plybon. One brother, Mr. J.D. Brown. Forty-four grandchildren and thirty-three great-grandchildren.

Brother Albert Hudson, Clerk
Larry Hollandsworth, Moderator

Be not wise in thine own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil.
Proverbs 3: 7

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It is with a sad heart I attempt to write the obituary of our Dear Brother Clarence D. Brumfield. He will be greatly missed by our little flock at Strawberry Church.

He loved his church and was a faithful member, always ready to help do anything for the welfare of the church. He loved the friendship and fellowship of his breathern and enjoyed entertaining them in his home.

God called Brother Clarence home to Glory, June 27, 1985. He was born February 18, 1901, to Brother Luther F. Brumfield and Sister Dora C. Brumfield. He leaves to mourn his loss, his dear wife, Sister Margaret L. Brumfield, three sons, Shirley M. Brumfield, Charlotte, N.C., Horace D. Brumfield, Newark, Delaware and Wayne Brumfield of the home. One daughter, Mrs. Vivian B. Fraser, Cookville, Tenn., two brothers, Matthew C. Brumfield, Chatham, Va. and Charles F. Brumfield, Danville, Va. Three sisters, Ruth Brumfield and Virginia B. McDowell of Danville and Lola B. Fuller, Mount Hermon, five grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

His funeral was held at Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Chapel, Danville, Va. by Elder Lane Carter and Elder O. K. Tench and was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park, Danville, Va. beneath a mound of beautiful flowers to await the coming of his blessed Savior to gather his jewels home.

Brother Clarence was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace. We miss him so much, but we feel our loss is his eternal gain. May we bow in humble submission to his Holy Will, who works all things after the council of His Will, he never makes a mistake. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, Blessed be His name.

May the Lord, Bless, Comfort and give reconciling Grace to his dear family.

Written by a Sister in Hope
Who loved him
Sister Gertie Holley

SISTER ELVA FOSTER

It has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst, our beloved sister of whom we all loved so dearly. Her daily walk and actions showed us she believed in a sovereign and all wise God.

She was born Sept. 4, 1915 and departed this life March 8, 1986, making her stay on this earth 70 years.

She was married to Leonard Foster, December 29, 1934, to this union was born one daughter.

Her mother was Sophornia Brown and father was Jack W. Brown.

Sister Elva Joined Dan River Primitive Church July, 23, 1972. She was a strong believer and attended her church faithfully until she became disable to go.

She leaves to mourn, her husband, Leonard Foster of Rt. 2, Ruffin, N.C. and one daughter, Mrs. Shirly Grant, Ringgold, VA., also two granddaughters and one great-granddaughter.

We at Dan River Church extend our heartfelt sympathy to her family and loved ones.

We will all miss her presence, but feel she is in the presence of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ where there will be no more pain, nor tears to shed, there she can give all the praise, honor and glory to Him.

Her funeral was conducted March 10, 1986 at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church by her beloved pastor, Elder

Kenneth Key and Elder Haywood Wray.

She was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the coming of our Lord Jesus.

Written by one who loved her,
Mildred Strader

SISTER PAULINE N. O'BRYANT

By the request of our brother deacon, I endeavor to write a few lines in memory of our beloved Sister Pauline Noah O'Bryant, whom the Lord saw fit to call from her earthly bonds February 23, 1986.

The funeral service for Sister O'Bryant was conducted at Hillsdale Primitive Batist Church, where she was a member for over fifty years, with Elder B. D. Hutchens officiating.

Sister O'Bryant was united in marriage to the late Elder David Archie O'Bryant on December 14, 1919.

She left behind to mourn her loss, three sons: Irvin, Russell, and James O'Bryant, and one daughter, Barbara Ann Lewis, and a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Sister O'Bryant was a kind and gentle lady, well known for her hospitality to those who passed her way. Always cheerfully welcoming brothers, sisters and friends who were blessed to visit her home.

She loved her church and was faithful to attend the meetings as long as she was able. The last few meetings she attended was with the aid of a wheel chair.

Although she loved her family dearly, she expressed to her pastor her desire to go on to her heavenly rest. Thus revealing the surety of her faith and hope.

Sister O'Bryant was laid to rest in the cemetery at Hillsdale, there to await the coming of our Lord on that great and wonderful day, when He shall return to carry His little ones home.

Although we miss her sorely, let us rejoice in the thought that our loss is her eternal gain; and bow to the will of our heavenly Father who doeth all things well.

Written by the request of Brother Hugh Knight, Jr., and approved by the church at the April conference meeting.

Florence Knight, Clerk

SISTER ELLA S. M. PICKRAL

Sister Ella Stephens McClanahan passed from this life, January 17, 1986. Sister Pickral was born March 17, 1889. She was the daughter of the late Sam Stephens and Lorador George Stephens.

Sister Pickral was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, Gretna, Va. She was received by experience November 11, 1911. She enjoyed coming to church when she was able. She loved the doctrine and was a faithful member.

Sister Pickral was twice married, once to the late Oscar McClanahan and the late Robert Pickral. She is survived by two sons; Connley McClanahan of Altavista and Robert L. Pickral, Jr. of Fort Richie, Florida. Several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Sister Pickral was laid to rest in the family cemetery at Pitsville, Va. Her funeral was held by Morris Cather.

Sister Ella will be sadly missed by all who loved her.

Written in love and hope-

Carol R. Pickral

Elder O.K. Tench, Moderator
Oscar Pickral, Clerk

DEACON HAROLD D. WEATHERFORD

It is with much sadness that I endeavor to write this memorial of our dearly beloved Brother in Christ. Brother Harold was a kind and gentle person and an inspiration to those who knew him.

He was born on July 14, 1924 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, and died February 8, 1986 at The Memorial Hospital, Danville, Virginia. He was the son of the late Deacon Harry Thomas Weatherford and Beulah Dix Weatherford. Both parents were members of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church and served their churh faithfully as did Brother Harold.

On November 6, 1948, Harold D. Weatherford was united in marriage to Frances Thompson. Four children were born to this couple.

He is survived by his wife, Frances Weatherford of Danville, Virginia; daughter, Deborah W. Slayton of Danville, Virginia and Ramona Weatherford of Media, Pennsylvania; sons, Bryan Weatherford of Rocky Mount, Virginia and Scott Weatherford of Danville, Virginia; sister, Mrs. Mildred W. Hanks and brother, William T. Weatherford, both of Danville, Virginia.

Brother Harold joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on March 23, 1958 and was baptized on the fourth Sunday in May, 1958 by his pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler. He loved his church dearly and was a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace.

On October 24, 1965 he was ordained a Deacon at Dan River Church and like his father before him held this office in high esteem and served the church with honor and dignity. In April 1967 he was appointed trustee of church property and also through the years served on the cemetery committee. Brother Harold will be sorely missed, but as we recall the years, we can appreciate the fact that we had the privilege of knowing and being in the fellowship of this dear Brother. He loved to sing the old hymns, and was a leader of the song services for a number of years. During his illness, long after his memory was gone, he could still hum the tunes of certain hymns, like "Am I A Soldier of the Cross," even though he could not say the words. According to one of his sons it seemed as if this was his way of praising God at that particular time.

His funeral was conducted or February 10, 1986 at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Kenneth R. Key and Elder Julian R. Williams. The body was laid to rest in the Dan River Church Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord. May God bless this lovely family and comfort and reconcile them as only He can do.

Written by request of Dan River Church in conference on March 22, 1986.

In Loving Memory,
John Collir, Jr.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Psalm 116:15

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I CORINTHIANS 13

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not chairty, it profiteth me nothing.

Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.

Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil.

Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.

Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

Charity never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

And now abideth faith, hope, chairty, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

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EDITORIAL

"A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband; but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones." **Proverbs 12:4.**

It is by the request of Elder W. D. Griffin that I fearfully attempt to write a little upon the above passage of scripture.

First, what are the attributes of a virtuous woman? A woman who is blessed with moral practices or actions, conformity to the standard of right. Moral excellence, integrity of character, uprightness of conduct. Blessed with virtues as faith, hope, charity, patience and humility, these being infused by God into human nature. In chapter 31 of Proverbs, Solomon credits a virtuous woman with the following qualities: "The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her." She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life." "She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hand to the needy." "Strength and honor are her clothing; and she will rejoice in time to come." "She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness." "She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness." "Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her." "Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates."

When God first formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, he became a living soul. God planted a garden in Eden and placed the man (Adam), whom he had formed, in the garden. The Lord God saw that it was not good for the man to be alone; therefore made him a help meet by taking one of Adam's ribs making a woman and bringing her to him. She became bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. The maker of all things took measure of man's need and constituted woman a suitable complement: "Who can find a virtuous woman?" This seems to intimate that few of the daughters of men measure up to this standard. Woman is the complement of man, a necessary part and there is no standard by which her value can be expressed: an help meet designed and bestowed by God in heaven. "She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life."

Woman's place is important; God has made it so and made her fit for filling it. Man is incomplete without her. There is a blank about him which she alone can fill; it is here that her great strength lies. Man, though made for the throne of the world, was found unfit until he got the woman as his help meet. She became the completion of his capacity and title, she

became his crown. May the woman ever be content with the place that God has given her; let her be what God made her, necessary to man, and not to make herself independent of him. When a woman assumes an independent or rival place, she mistakes her mission and her power. In her own place, her power has a great influence in human affairs; out of it, her efforts only reveal her incorrect position.

It is of immense importance that all who regard the word of God should not underestimate the genuine value of the female character. In the fallen state of human nature, it is no wonder that but few (compared to the multitude), either men or women, measure up to what they ought to be. But thanks unto God, there are some women who measure up and answer to the description of a virtuous woman. The adoptation of the feminine character to be the companion of man is one of the best defined examples of that great wisdom which pervades creation. When the relations of the sexes move in fitting of truth and love, the working of the machinery of life is a wonder to man, and glory to the creator God.

A virtuous woman fears the Lord, will reverence her husband, manages her house well with prudence and care, is charitable to the poor, and is kind to all. She will make her husband as happy as she can by showing him great respect and honor, therefore she deserves to be compared to a royal crown, enriched with those lovely virtures which are so important to the welfare of her husband. The effect of her amiable behaviour will no doubt act as a cause to cheer her husband in all the affairs he has to be engaged in.

To give cause of suspicions is bad in a woman; also, to suspect without any cause is extremely ungrateful in a man. It should be the duty of a virtuous wife to make sure there is no cause ever for suspicion and it will be a pleasure to her husband. The harmony of hearts arising from mutual esteem in husband and wife afford the most delightful pleasure which anything less than true religion can give, and when true piety in both is added, it is simular to a little heaven here on earth. The prospect of future happiness with the husband who has a virtuous wife makes his heart rejoice. The virtuous wife is as careful to please her husband by an even and sweet temper, as she is to manage her affairs with discretion. She will labor to be the same day after day, neither sickness, nor poverty, nor old age will dampen her love for her husband. If the husband should speak in a somewhat harsh manner to her, she will bear with him and forgive him.

When a virtuous woman opens her mouth to speak, it is a pleasure to hear her for she usually speaks with wisdom. She will find time to read the Bible and other good religious books, and will often pray to the Father to lead and guide her in her duties as wife and mother. Her children will have a high esteem for her as well as her husband.

The term virtuous is used by Boaz in referring to Ruth; he says; "And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doeth know that thou art a virtuous woman." Ruth 3:11. A virtuous woman's reputation is established and her life is spent in a useful manner. Her conversation is also prudent and pious, cheerful and friendly. Kindness and wisdom will influence what she says. She speaks according to divine law which requires love and gentleness.

"But she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones." This is a horrible contrast to that of a virtuous woman. We need not be too surprised at this as the best of things abused can become the worst. So we see that the woman who is lacking in virtue makes her "husband ashamed is as rottenness to his bones." She is not a help but more of a

torment to him. When a woman is not virtuous, she can in many ways become a shame to her husband by her company keeping, gossiping, tale bearing, contentiousness, or extravagance. She is like a disease which wastes away the bones. She can injure her husband's character and prevent the proper care of his family. Woman is the very element of home wherein all its relations and affections live and move. When that element is tainted, corruption will make its presence felt. Let the wives consider seriously whether they wish for happiness and honor to their husbands, or disgrace and misery; whether it is better for themselves to prove helpers to the joy and crowns to the head of their husbands or as living plagues to them. Also let the husband give honor to their wives and encourage them in virtue by their kindness and tender love towards them. As Christ so loved His bride, so ought husbands to love their wives.

Few men understand more of women than Solomon to whom God had given much wisdom. Solomon knew her fragility and her virtues. Why does not Solomon mention beauty in the character of a virtuous woman? Because when beauty is not sweetened by virtue, it alone cannot secure that love which it raises. True piety is the beauty of the soul, and can far excel that which is just an outward beauty. A fortune in a wife is better than a fortune with a wife. A virtuous woman is a true woman, chaste, prudent, modest, loving, faithful, patient in suffering, and brave in duty, keeping within the orbit of her sex and lighting it with the graces of womanhood. Such a woman is a crown to her husband. Her love for him is a deep resistless current running through her nature, it is a love that "will do him good and not evil." It is a sunbeam that continues through all their lives the same yesterday, today, and forever..

Husbands and wives are one; and they are so looked upon in the minds of others, as to be in a certain measure, identified, the respect or disrespect, felt for the one, in many ways extends itself to the other. It is usually a good relationship when husband and wife feel themselves as one. Superiority and inferiority is not a household item to them, for authority seldom ever need to be asserted and subjection is never felt, the one being exercised, the other rendered in love.

A prudent wife is the Lord's valuable gift to such as He favors. We may picture to ourselves a virtuous woman. After many years, her children have grown up and married having children themselves. What comes into their minds concerning their virtuous mother? Their mother is constantly before their eyes. Her tender guidance, her wise counsel, her loving disposition, her good example, her prayers are all kept in memory, and they will no doubt attempt to train their children as they were trained.

Just a few words on the virtuous woman whose husband has been called to preach the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ. Very few people perhaps realize the many sacrifices that a virtuous minister's wife makes during his many years in the ministry. Words cannot express her value to her husband while attempting to serve the children of God. She most always goes with her husband, watching over him and to live for him is her greatest happiness. When he is feeling low because of some untimely remark or criticism toward him, she is the first to console him. She is his constant companion in all his duties as a servant of Jesus Christ. Many future plans, such as family reunions etc., may have to be passed over in order to be with her husband and to be doing what she considers her more important duty to perform.

May God be praised for giving so many ministers virtuous wives as help meets to encourage, console, and comfort them

in all their endeavors in serving the Lord's people. A prudent wife is the Lord's most valuable gift to such as He favors. The many wonderful qualities of a virtuous woman will be a crown to her husband as long as she lives, and will bring many precious memories back to her husband as long as he lives.

In bonds of love,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

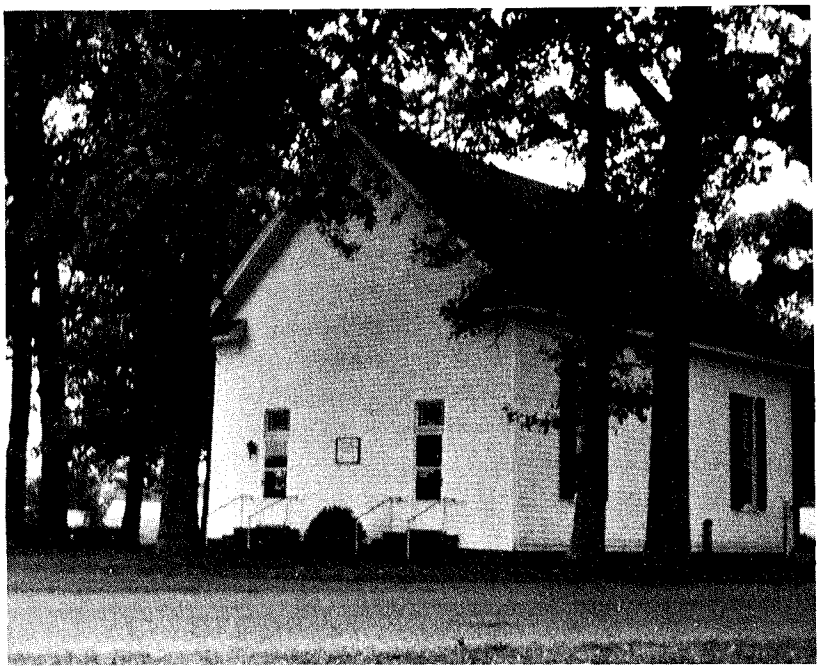

FOREST GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH

The Forest Grove Old School Baptist Church, Parsonsburg, Wicomico County, Maryland, was constituted January 26, 1886, by nineteen members from Little Creek, Nassaongo, and Indiantown Churches. The meeting called Elder John W. Timmons as first pastor; he died three months later, on April 24, 1886. The present meetinghouse, the second, was completed in 1898. We feel highly favored by our Heavenly Father to have Elder Julian Williams as our pastor. Meetings are third Sunday at 11:00 a.m.

The Lord willing, we will have our yearly meeting third Sunday morning and Saturday evening before in September. Supper will be served Saturday at the Community Building in Parsonsburg. We invite all lovers of the truth to this, our anniversary meeting.

"A GOOD name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold."
Proverbs 22: 1

"Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.
Proverbs 22: 6

CORRESPONDENCE

Route 1, Box 101
Willis, Va. 24380
June 13, 1986

Dear Editors,

Please renew my subscription to the "Signs of The Times" for two years. Use the remainder where needed.

I don't get to go to meetings as often as I would like to, so I look forward to reading my Signs each month. I am yet able to go to meetings at my home Church for which I hope I am thankful to God. I know, unless He gives us a thankful heart, we are not able to thank Him for anything, but I hope to be found praising Him in all things.

Remember me when at the throne of grace.

A sister in hope,
Margaret Quesenberry

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
Elder J. R. Williams, Editor
Route 1, Box 65
Keeling, VA 24566

May 7, 1986

Dear Elder Williams;

Inclosed is a check for a two year subscription to the Signs. I would like to state this publication has brought me many moments of pleasure in seeking truth and light in the Scriptures. I commend the Editors and also the faithful subscribers in the work and loyalty involved which has been necessary to keep such a devoted and loyal publication alive for over a century and a half.

I am also inclosing a letter I received in 1946 from one of the dear Elders of the East, it was my good pleasure and fortune to have known. The letter was to me, then a young man, very much interested in but not yet confirmed in the Primitive Baptist Faith. The letter is from Elder Arnold H. Bellows of the State of New York who later retired to the State of Maryland and if I am not wrong may have been connected with the Signs Of The Times in those past years. The letter has a great deal of personal feeling, I'm sure would be of no vallue to anyone else but there is a simple and beautifully revealing sermon contained in the body. At the time I received this letter I was not capable of understanding it's beauty so my devoted mother just tucked it away in the pages of her Bible where I came across it once again after her death.

I don't know if material like this has any place in the archives of The Signs publications but I thought I would offer it as my appreciation and love for those who have gone on before us.

In sincere Christian love and hope,

John T. Brooks
902 Maple Avenue
Torrance, CA 90503

West Hurley, New York
April 11, 1946

Dear friend John:

With many happy memories of meeting you in the past and hoping to meet you again many times. I am writing you a letter. I was much pleased to see you at the meeting at our home this winter and to note what you said about Communion. You were right in your attitude. One can commune with Jesus if he has never united with a visible church. All admitted you were right after you left the meeting. And we all believe that you know something of the Truth and have a love for it and an understanding of it. You will understand more and more of it from time to time as the Lord reveal it unto you, if such is His will, as I fondly trust.

You are one who thinks things out for yourself. You realize that God is all powerful or He would not be God. You also realize that He must be all-holy, as He requires holiness from man in his holy law. He has all knowledge and wisdom else He would not be God. He then knew the end from the beginning and so chose the entire church in the person of His son who was to come into the world in time to be born of woman that He might take upon himself our flesh as his mother was descended from Adam same as we are. God's holy law required or demanded that man live a holy life. Man cannot do this because of the weakness of the flesh and so man is condemned by the law of God and unless redeemed, must suffer under it. But Jesus came clothed in human flesh, being God in the flesh, and kept the law for all that believe on him of any nation or creed. The law condemned sinful man to death and damnation, and so Jesus died in the sinner's place and for him, and the sinner being chosen in Christ before the world was, died in Christ, so the sinner rose in Christ and lives in Him, and so death can have no permanent power over the believer, and the grave can not hold the body of the sinner a prisoner. The Bible teaches this, and I think you believe it. It is a wonderful comfort.

A man can not bring about his own birth into the world in any natural sense, and so a child of God can not bring about his own birth into the kingdom of God. He can not give life to himself when he is dead, nor can he give life to another who is dead in the grave. So you see when we are born into the kingdom of God, it is by the power of the Holy Spirit. Another power outside of ourselves, that is God, must bring about our birth. By just teaching certain things to a child will not make that child a Christian. One sinful man can not save another sinful man. It takes the power of Christ who was without sin to save a sinner. We cry because we have life, not to get it. When one really prays, it is a sign of spiritual life. The dead in the graves do not stir or show life naturally, and so the dead in sin must have some higher power act upon them before they can live. We believe in preaching to those that are alive from death in trespasses and in sin, and so we preach to feed the flock of God, not to make sheep, for that we can not do.

I see your mother occasionally. I do hope she recovers from her trouble or gets much better so that she will not be inconvenienced, if it be the Lord's will that she shall not entirely recover. I feel very anxious about her. She is a good woman and a true Christian, and we all esteem and love your father dearly.

I hope you will come to some more of our meetings, and you will always be welcome. I feel an interest in you, for I have known you from childhood.

My best wishes in which my wife joins go out to you in all things.

Trust in the Lord and know that He will not fail you in all the problems that face you in life.

Very sincerely,
Arnold H. Bellows

Dearly Beloved Brethren,

While I attempt to write to you a few of my thoughts of the past several days it is my hope and prayer that God will guide my every thought so that all that is written will be to his praise, honor and glory and will be edifying to his beloved children.

My thoughts have been concentrated upon the body of Christ, both natural or literal, and figurative or spiritual. We will consider the spiritual body first. In this sense the church is his body. (Eph. 1: 22, 23). He is the head and we are the body. "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." (Eph. 5:30). In Psalms 139:15 we read, "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made

in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there was none of them." The body of Christ has never been, nor will it ever be, imperfect, but it will remain unperfect until the last member in God's book is born. How anyone can believe that he can do something to get his name added to that book is more than I can understand, yet the Old School Baptists are the only ones who do not believe or preach that this can be done. "If this doctrine is true," say the others, "God is unjust. He should give everyone a chance." As for this poor sinner, I am glad that this is bible doctrine, because this is my only hope of ever reaching heaven and immortal glory: for the carnal mind of man is emity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. (Rom. 8:7). If my mind is enmity (hatred) against God, how can I possibly worship him as my Savior? But if my name is written there as a member of his body it shall never be broken off, for the scriptures were fulfilled that, "A bone of his shall not be broken." This is indication that no member shall ever be broken. If my name is not there I am still sure that God will give me my must reward - a place in hell - and his holy law approves it well.

The natural man receiveth not the things of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (I Cor. 2:14). The carnal mind is a part of the flesh, and we are not in the flesh but in the spirit, if so be that Christ dwells in us; then do we have the mind of Christ and are enabled to receive and discern the things of God.

Now let us consider the natural body of Christ. "Forasmuch then as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that thru death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." (Heb. 2:14). In the flesh all men have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Sin is the transgression of the law, and God's law being just and holy, it demands the death of the transgressor. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezek. 18:4). However, Christ stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world to make atonement and reconciliation for the sins of his children: but in his Godhead, being a part of the holy Trinity, he could not die; and without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. (Heb. 9:22). Under the old Livitical law priests were ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices for sin, but the sprinkling of blood of animals or the ashes thereof could in no wise make them nor the people perfect. Otherwise there would have been no need for the precious blood of Christ to be shed. But this service under the old law only pointed to the coming of Christ and eternal salvation. It was by his own blood, not by the blood of bulls or goats, that he entered the perfect tabernacle, having obtained eternal redemption for us. Because justice demands the shedding of blood, Christ must have a body from which the blood could flow. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offerings thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me. (Heb. 10:5). Notice that he was a body prepared, not that a body was prepared for him: and there is a vast difference. If he had only entered a prepared body and that body died, even on the cross, it would not have been Christ that died, but a body only in which he dwelt; and if Christ died not, then are we still in our sins. It was not an inanimate body that sweat as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground in the garden of Gethsemane; that asked the Father to remove the bitter cup from him, but said, "Not my will, but thine be done;" that cried, "My God,

my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" that commended his spirit back to the Father; but it was Christ himself in his office of mediator of the new covenant and high priest of his people, who had come, not to do his own will but the will of the Father. And what is that will? "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." (John 6:39). It is by the will of God that we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all, and by this offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. (Heb. 10:10, 14).

All of us were at one time under the curse of the law and condemned to die, "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Great indeed is the mystery of the birth of Christ in the flesh. The natural mind of man cannot in any wise comprehend it. "Now the birth of Christ was on this wise: when as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost." The Holy Ghost overshadowed Mary, a virgin, and she conceived and brought forth a son. Therefore he is rightly called the son of man and the son of God, or the Man-God. Joseph knew this child could not be his own, and therefore he sought to put Mary away privately. But an angel informed him from whence this child did come, and said, "And thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." To do this it was necessary for him to be born of a woman that he might become flesh and blood; that he be born under the law, for if he were not under the law, then how could he fulfill it? And it was necessary that it should be fulfilled to a jot and a tittle. Jesus said, "Think not that I am come to destroy but to fulfill." The prophets of old foretold the coming of Christ and all that he should do, but they understood it not, nor was it revealed to them: but unto us it is revealed by the Holy Spirit.

Christ has ever been with God: there is no beginning to his existance. He was with God when it was said, "Let us make man in our own image." Therefore the birth of Christ in the flesh is indeed a great mystery, but this is the way that God prepared him a body. I do not say there was no other way, but according to the scriptures this was the way it was accomplished, and by faith we believe it is so. By faith we also believe that he suffered and died for our sins, and rose again for our justification. The Just died for the unjust. How can justice be satisfied with this? All of God's attributes are perfect. One of them cannot outweigh or override the other. We know that God hath loved us with an everlasting love and that he is continually merciful unto us; but his perfect law demands perfect justice, therefore justice must be satisfied. When one is found guilty of a crime worthy of death and is sentenced to die, would justice be satisfied with the death of an innocent one in the room and stead of the guilty? Surely not. Taking the life of the innocent one would only be murder, and the guilty one would not be less guilty nor any less worthy of death. However, I think no one would deny that the Innocent Lamb of God died for the guilty when he shed his precious blood on Calvary. This being true, the question arises, was justice satisfied, and, if so, how? Yes, truly, justice was completely satisfied, and Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, "Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." (Gal. 3:13). God laid our sins upon his beloved Son, who paid the price demanded by justice and we were freed from the demands of the law. The answer to the second part of the question, How? is

found in the first portion of this letter: "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Christ being the head, and the church his body, when he died we also died with him; for the body cannot live without the head: and justice can demand no more than death. By the grace of God we have been freed from the curse of the law and from sin, for he that is dead is freed from sin. The death of Christ would mean nothing to us however if he had not risen victorious over death and the grave. God hath raised him up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. (Acts 2:26). "And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise us up by his own power." (I Cor. 6:14). "In all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in all things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." (Heb. 2 .17). Christ was made like unto sinful man, but without sin, and when the blessed Saviour shall return again he shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. (Phil. 3: 21).

Beloved brethren, this is my hope, if I truly have a hope, and how sweet it is at times. And I desire to say with David, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."

Brethren, I wish I could have written all of my thoughts unto you as they were given to me, for they have caused me great pleasure. However, the few thoughts that I have presented are for your prayerful consideration. Only if God is in the matter will you be edified or rejoice in them. I ask that you receive them only as far as they are sustained by the holy scriptures.

May all praise be unto God, and remember me when at the throne of his grace.

C. C. Wilbanks

MEETINGS

ORIGINAL SOUTH ARKANSAS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The next Session Convenes with Pilgrim Rest Church. Located off Highway 167 north of Fordyce, Arkansas. Take Highway 273 about one-half mile to Church.

Session beginning on Friday before the 3rd. Sunday in September, 1986. September 19, 20, 21 beginning at 10:00 A.M.

Elder John C. Tounby,
Moderator

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Smith River Association is to be held with Salem Church. Located in Floyd County, Virginia on Road # 221, between Copper Hill and Check, Virginia.

Beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1986.

We look forward to meeting our lovely Brethren and Friends there.

Yours in Hope,
Amos I. Hash

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association is scheduled to convene with Newhope Church the fourth Sunday in September (25, 26, 27, 1986) Friday and Saturday before. Newhope Church is located near Spearsville, La. in Union Parish.

All lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ are invited to visit and worship with us.

C. C. Wilbanks
217 Bastrop Dr.
Monroe, La. 71203
(318) 343-5473

FALLS OF THE TAR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Church met in conference for the Ordination of Brother James Bunyan Pridgen as Deacon.

Elder W. L. Everette opened conference with song and prayer.

A Presbytery was formed consisting of Elder D. B. Stokes, Elder W. L. Everette, Licentiate Lester Eason and Deacons Thomas Pennington, Clyde Pridgen, James Arrington and M. D. Simmons, Jr.

A motion was made and approved for Elder D. B. Stokes to serve as Moderator.

A motion was made and approved for Sister Frances Arrington to serve as Clerk.

The Candidate was presented to the Presbytery by Deacons Clyde Pridgen and M.D. Simmons, Jr.

The charge was made by Elder D. B. Stokes, Elder W. L. Everette and Licentiate Lester Eason.

The candidate was charged to work as a Deacon, having the love of God in his heart; to sacrifice self for the church. He was told he would not feel worthy, that he would make mistakes, but God, with his infinite power, would take care of all things.

Elder Stokes read from I Timothy, 3rd Chapter.

He then charged him to be a servant, to work in harmony with the brethren as much as possible, but to stand up for his convictions when necessary. He charged him to strive for peace in the church, also for his wife Dora to help him and for them to work for the Glory of God.

Elder Everette bid him Godspeed.

The Presbytery laid hands on the candidate and the Ordination prayer was given by Elder D. B. Stokes, Elder W. L. Everette and Licentiate Lester Eason.

Deacon James Bunyan Pridgen was returned to the church by Deacons Clyde Pridgen and M. D. Simmons, Jr.

It was moved and agreed for the minutes to be read.

It was moved and agreed the minutes be approved.

It was moved and agreed that conference adjourn.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Frances Arrington, Clerk
June 8, 1986

PRESBYTERY FORMED AT REHOBETH CHURCH

June 7, 1986 was a special day at our church, Rehobeth, in Union County, Arkansas.

Several churches of South Arkansas and North Louisiana met for the purpose of presenting Brother Charlie Fox as a candidate for deaconship of Rehobeth Church. After singing several beautiful hymns to the praise of our God and a wonderful prayer by Elder George Jones a Presbytery was formed of four ministers and seven deacons.

Elder Graydon Smith served as moderator and Deacon Clifford Wilbanks was chosen as clerk. Prayer for the ordination was voiced by Elder Clovis Townley. Brother Fox was presented to the presbytery for consideration by Deacon Doyle Murphy. Bro. Fox was deemed a worthy candidate for the office of deacon. The laying on of Hands was done by the following Elders: David E. Turner, George Jones, Clovis Townley, Graydon Smith, and the following Deacons: Fred B. Murphy, Clifford Wilbanks, Frank Pilgreen, C. C. Barron, Doyle O. Murphy, Alvin Fox and John Smith. Bro. Fox was given the charge by Elder Turner and returned to the church as a full deacon.

The right hand of fellowship was given to Deacon Fox and his wife, Estelle, by the entire congregation.

Doyle O. Murphy
Smackover, Arkansas

ARTICLES

I CORINTHIANS XV. 58

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

A sister in Ohio has requested that we write on the above Scripture. It is evident from her letter before us that she is distressed by the indifference to truth and godliness manifest among some professing to be Old School or Primitive Baptists. God forbid that we should sit in judgment upon our brethren, or lightly esteem those for whom Christ died, for our most precious moments have been when sitting at the feet of the brethren and the banner over us was love. We have listened to the heavenly theme of salvation by grace, and have seen Jesus exalted, and have loved the brethren so that we felt we could give our life for them. Then we felt our heart was fixed, and, like Ruth, we were steadfastly minded. We were sure these people were our people. Beloved brethren, "Charity suffereth long, and is kind;" there can only be true steadfastness where there is faith that works by love. Blessed souls they are who are possessors of this love: God's love. Such are easy to be entreated, and possess a willing mind. They want to be found in the Way, the good old way. This love constrains them, so that their walk and conversation are becoming; it "doth not behave itself unseemly." Where this precious love is shed abroad in the heart there is a right conception of truth and godliness, for it "rejoiceth in the truth," and the word of God is their criterion. It beareth all things, believeth, hopeth and endureth all things according to the word of God. One with such love may be deceived for awhile by those who profess love to them, but the true test is, What think ye of the Beloved, and what is his word, his work, to you? for do not I love them that love thee? We are not commanded to love everybody, nor to fellowship anything contrary to God's word. If there are brethren for whom we have professed love and fellowship there can but be a desire in our hearts for them and their welfare, and a questioning as to the spirit that we ourselves possess. Are we prompted by love? Has love through all our actions run? We hear of many up and down this land denying this doctrine or subscribing to that, but we never hear of a poor sinner who has suffered under the condemnation of God's holy law, and God's grace has reached him, lightly speaking of grace. We mean the grace of God that bringeth salvation and worldly lusts. In the living of this grace there is a sure defence of the truth. Paul says, "Be ye steadfast." Where love is, there is the best ground for brethren to be rooted steadfast in the apostolic doctrine. "Unmoveable." There are many things calculated by Satan and his angels to move the child of God. Bonds and afflictions abide them, but Paul says, "None of these things move me." Faith looks beyond the things that are seen, it has respect unto Him who has promised, knowing that he who has promised is able to perform. Some to-day are not asking for the old paths where is the good way, but rather are departing from them, and are inclined to try and remove the ancient landmarks, but the Lord still reigns, and in his purpose there has always been a sifting of his people. In that sifting the chaff will go, but not a grain of wheat will fall to the ground. Sometimes there is a shaking by various winds of doctrine, but that which is steadfast cannot be shaken, therefore remains. The church is being sifted to-day, there are those in it who do not belong there, for by their fruit ye shall know them. While some

are denying the doctrine, others hold the form of sound doctrine whose lives are unbecoming, and in some cases, we fear, they appear to hide behind predestination. Remember the accountability of men and devils is just as truly set forth in the word as the predestination of God, and he who would hide behind predestination in his wickedness is out of the secret. There is in this day in many places a conformity to the spirit of this world, and wherever this is so the understanding becomes dull in the things belonging to godliness. The conscience is less tender and the affections cold, sin is not the burden it once was to the soul, and there is little crucifying of the old man and his deeds. Again, in this day there is an absence of spiritual conversation as brethren assemble together, and often worldly topics, foolish talking or jesting take its place. Paul Says, Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." We are called to glory and virtue, and in learning of Christ there is of necessity a putting off concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.

But to return to our subject. Throughout the whole of the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians, Paul is dwelling upon the resurrection of the dead, There were some among the Corinthian Church who said there was no resurrection of the dead. Such denial, if true, would remove all "hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." Therefore Paul begins by declaring what he had delivered unto them, and states that his testimony was according to the Scripture. He makes mention particularly that he had testified of Christ's burial and resurrection, and then mentions many witnesses, including himself, and he informs them that the greater part of the said witnesses were still living, while some had fallen asleep. From the substance of the whole chapter it is easy to discern that the closing verse is an admonition to the brethren to be steadfast in the doctrine, especially in the resurrection of the dead. To us the resurrection is a glorious, soul-cheering theme, too high for mortals to comprehend and too profound for controversy. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust, and while it doth not yet appear what we shall be, yet we hope we are not deceived when we say that there is that within us that says, like Paul, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." There are two ways of denying the resurrection: one verbally, that is, with our mouths, and the other by our walk and testimony in divine things. From verses thirty-three and thirty-four we have reason to think there were those in the Corinthian Church who denied the resurrection in their corrupt and unrighteous walk. Whilst there are none to our knowledge among the Old School Baptists who deny the resurrection verbally, yet there are those who deny it in their walk and conversation. The scriptural record is simple, and is sufficient condemnation to any who might verbally deny the resurrection, but it is our intention in this article to warn the brethren against such who say that Christ lives, yet deny him in their lives. Paul says, "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received." Has there been anything delivered unto us? Have we received the truth that Jesus died, and that he died for our sins, and that he was buried and arose the third day for our justification? If we have received this we have received the word of truth, the gospel of salvation, and we have in us evidences of a new birth, also of a deliverance from the law and its penalties by the body of Christ. We have evidence of the resurrection powers, for we

have risen by the operation of the gospel in us from under the condemnation of the law to the liberty wherewith Christ makes us free. The Scripture fits us then where Paul says, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, and it can truly be said of us, "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new," so there is now a new man in Christ Jesus. There may be those who would say that the resurrection power manifest in this new man is all the resurrection he will know. Whosoever they are they certainly place themselves in the same error as Hymenaeus and Philetus, who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is passed already, thus overthrowing the faith of some. There is a resurrection still ardently desired by the new man, which we hope to show as we proceed. This new man is distinct from the old man, for it is a heavenly creation, created after God in righteousness and true holiness, yet it is the sinner that is born again, it is the sinner that is saved. Let us consider the new man "according to the scriptures," for while our hope is that we shall bear the image of the heavenly, we do not yet see ourselves in this heavenly image. This new man has a mouth, for he says, Thy word was found, and I did eat it, &c. What is this mouth? it is not the mouth of the natural man. He has a nose with which he smells the heavenly fragrance of the vine with its tender grapes; it delights to smell the unction of grace. He also has eyes with which he sees Jesus crowned with glory and honor; he also sees his calling. He has an ear also that hearkens to the truth and hears the voice of the good Shepherd, but it knows not the voice of a stranger. He has a heart that is a new heart, and it is with this heart that he believes unto righteousness. He has hands with which he gathers the handfuls of purpose that fall for him in the gospel field; he also clings to Christ, the blest angel of life, saying, I will not let thee go except thou bless me. He has feet that walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. With these feet he can run and not be weary, and walk and faint not. None of us can describe what this new man really is, but we know and can postively testify that as is the heavenly so are they that are heavenly (present tense), and we thank God it is written, as we have borne the image of the earthy (which image we have borne and are bearing), so shall we also bear the image of the heavenly. Lest any should say we have separated the new man from the sinner we will proceed further. This mortal body is the dwelling-place of the new man. Paul says we have this treasure in earthen vessels, also bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. By the quickening of our mortal bodies by the Spirit dwelling in us there is a painfulness, an anxiety, a questioning and a declaration, "O wretched man that I am," &c. Paul tells of an experience in which he saw things unlawful to be uttered, and he says, Whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell. Many of the saints have had experiences similar to Paul, but while here in this time state they are in the body. There are also joys experienced, so that our whole body is filled with praise, and our mouth utters what our heart feels, and our eyes shed tears of joy. All this is not an expression of the old man, but of the new, and the sinner is the new man. The old man is crucified, for they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lust. There is not one sinful inclination of the sinner but what the new man mourns over and would have it otherwise. This makes him long for cleansing blood, and he deplores his vileness, and will ever do so as long as he bears the image of the earthy. If the mind of man could be put in a beast it would not be satisfied, but would aspire to be equal with man, yet

having the mind of man he would feel more humiliation because he had a beast's likeness, which humiliation would not cease until he was in the likeness of man. So it is with us, for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality, and until this comes to pass the saying that is written is but a "saying." But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the "saying" that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory," and this victory is through our Lord Jesus Christ. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Elder George Rustin

Williamstown, Kansas
Jan. 9, 1924.

Dear Brethren Editors:

I feel quite unworthy to address you as brethren, but I trust you can bear with me. I have felt somewhat impressed to write a few lines for your consideration, and if you think it will be of comfort to any poor child of grace you are at liberty to publish it; or if for any reason you prefer not to publish it, it will be all right with me. The Scripture which I desire to notice can be found in Solomon's Song v. 4: "My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him." The writings of Solomon, as well as all other writers of divine testimony, are laid deep in divine wisdom, and can be understood only as it pleases our God to reveal them unto us. But when we read what any of the divine writers say concerning the hand of God it creates within a feeling of reverence to his most holy name, for we know that none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? The writing of this wise man is especially interesting, as well as comforting, to the dear people of God, because, first, he represents the bride, the church, as well as every member in particular; second, because he seems to be holding such sweet and close communion with his beloved, and the interchange of compliments as passed between them will not be regarded as flattery on either side, but as words spoken openly from a pure and honest heart. Many of the expressions of Solomon lead us back in memory to our own experience when first we saw ourselves lost and ruined sinners. "Look not upon me, because I am black," he says, How well do you, child of God, remember how awful was the scene when first your eyes were opened to see the corruption of your own heart. No one could frame words to suit your feelings better than these of Solomon: "I am black," not fit to be looked upon even by my fellow-men, much less by the pure eyes of God. And what a surprise we were to ourselves when we first say ourselves thus. We had spent our lives in fancied security, feeling nothing of the weight and stench of sin, neither did we know anything of the joys of salvation. We may have spent our lives in innocent pastime, or honest toil, or we may have plunged deep into pharisaical religion with earnest zeal, and thought we were verily doing God service, or we may have been outlaws, fearing neither God nor man, and seeking nothing but selfish interests; whatever our former walk of life, this one thing is certain: we never had seen ourselves so black, so sinful. Hence I say, what a surprise when the light shined within and revealed all the blackness of our polluted heart. Our whole being seemed but one polluted mass. We may have regarded our former conduct as exemplary and above reproach, but notwithstanding this with all this display of blackness and darkness we can only cry, unclean, unclean. We pause and look backward now upon our past life,

and we find it is one continuous scene of sin and transgression against a just and holy God. It is quite common with the Lord's people when they arrive at this stage of their experience to feel that something is due on their part; in fact, they feel that something must be done to appease the righteous indignation of God or they are lost world without end. We sought to win the favor of God by trying to keep the commandments, but found we could not do that. We sought to do good, but learned that in us, that is, in our flesh, there dwelleth no good thing. We sought to appear clean, but found we could not bring a clean thing out of an unclean. In all of our efforts, no matter with what zeal or energy they may have been put forth, this awful truth stood preeminently above every thing else: "I am black." Thus every dear child of God is made not only to see himself a sinner, but he is made to confess the same. It pervades his very nature, he feels it lurking in his every move, motive or ambition. In a word, he realizes he is lost, ruined and undone, as one having no hope, and without God in the world. Dear child of God, can you remember when you came to this stage of your travail? Or can you remember ever having begged for mercy until you were brought right here? The Scriptures abundantly testify that salvation is by and through the mercy of God. It is therefore necessary that we be brought down low, so low that we will even smite upon our breast and say, "God be merciful to me a sinner." It is necessary that we be made to feel a real conviction of sin before we can pronounce God "just" in our condemnation. Indeed it is the design of God to teach his people the all important lesson that we are vile and full of sin, and he is full of truth and grace; that we should put our trust in none but him. As long as we were trusting in our own works, as long as there was a straw, as it were, for us to cling to, that was our hope, but, "as an eagle stirreth up her nest," these straws are removed little by little, until we are finally brought to see that our nest, our old resting place, where we were nurtured and brought up, is no longer a place of repose for us. Our old nest of fancied security has become decidedly uncomfortable to us. The little eagle when he is thus deprived of everything, so to speak, finds himself alone upon the high precipice of the mountain, a yawning chasm before him, no food in sight, and apparently forsaken of the parent bird. He feels that he must do something. He plunges forth, but alas he finds he is too weak, his wings have not the strength to bear him to safety. Down, down, until death seems his certain doom, when oh, to his glad surprise, the parent bird comes beneath, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them and beareth them on her wings, and by her own strength, to safety. So the Lord alone did lead Jacob. So our "beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door." Thus it is our heavenly parent that stirs up our nest. He shows us we are sinners, and shows us we are helpless to recover ourselves from that state. Indeed we come to the very place where we can see no hope of salvation, and as we give up all for lost we are given the sweet realization of the fact that his everlasting arms are underneath, and, as Solomon expresses it, "My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." What joy and surprise to us who have seen ourselves so black, not to hear our Beloved address us as, "My love, my fair one." But such is the complete work of our Beloved, our Redeemer. He gave himself for his bride, his church, his beloved, that he might present it unto himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. "He is the Rock, his work is perfect." Through virtue of his perfect work he persists in his attitude towards his beloved, and says, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." Had not

our Beloved put in his hand, this gracious state never could have been attained to by us. "My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door." "Of the door," are words written in italics, signifying they were supplied by the translator, and I fail to see how they add anything to the weight or importance of the subject. I am at a loss to know how to construe those three words in harmony with the subject matter of the text. But, "My beloved put in his hand by the hole." I think this will apply to our experience better if we say this hole is a horrible pit, such as he found David in, or the great chasm from which he delivered the little eagles, for in such places is where he finds all his little ones. The horrible pit, the miry clay, how well we remember those places; that helpless condition we were in we can never forget. Here indeed our Beloved put in his hand. He inclined unto us; he heard our cry; he took us up also out of an horrible pit, and out of the miry clay, and set our feet upon a rock; he established our goings. He put a new song in our mouth, even praise unto our God. The hand of our Beloved did this. Our consolation is in the fact that as he did for Jacob, for Solomon and for David, so he does for all his little ones, for his mercy endureth forever. Men may boast of their progress and advancement in religion, but God's people know we are just as helpless as any of those whom he has set for an example to us. Dear trembling child, your condition was just as hopeless and just as deplorable as any of those, and many more who are mentioned in the Scripture, but your deliverance is just as complete as was theirs, for the hand of the same Beloved that was "put in" their case is "put in" in your case. You may have thought, perhaps you now feel, that you have strayed too far in the waste howling wilderness of sin; or you may feel that you are black, so black that you fear your Beloved will never look upon you, or you may have felt that you are in the pit so deep and are so begrimed with the miry clay that he never would take up such an one as you, but he was there with them, he is there with you, his hand is stretched out still. You may feel that you are small, indeed you may feel that you are very small, but we have not read in the Scripture of anything that is too small or too great for our God to perform his wonders upon it. "He taketh up the isles as a very little thing." This means you, dear child of grace. An isle naturally is a small body of land entirely surrounded by water. How well this represents the afflicted and poor people of God. The waters, an emblem of tribulation and distress and affliction, they surround God's people on every hand. The beloved apostle has said, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." These he taketh up, and, like David, their feet are set upon a rock, and, like him, they sing a new song, even praise unto our God. Sometimes we falter in our uneven journey here, when trouble and distress roll in upon us, when we are stricken with grief or burdened with sin, but let us not be discouraged, for the hand of our Beloved is there. He measured the waters in the hollow of his hand. Our afflictions and distresses are measured to us, dear child of God, and each of us will drink just as they are measured to us by the unerring hand of God, and he alone doth know the full measure of our cup. It is enough for us to know his hand is there. He has declared by the prophet Zechariah, "I will turn mine hand upon the little ones," signifying that his hand covers ever one of them. They are all in his keeping, and their steps are all ordered by him. Our race is set before us. It therefore becomes us who are running in this race to be ever looking unto him who is the author and finisher of our faith. Yes, his hand is turned upon his little ones. The imprint

of every one is there on the palms of his hands, there is no danger of these falling away and being eternally lost, as we are sometimes told they may, or hear him say, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." Truly it pleases him to sometimes lay his hand heavily upon us, but have we received good at the hand of the Lord and shall we not also receive evil? In all his dealings with us, his people are made to confess that he is just and righteous in all his ways. By this we know that all things work together for good to those who love him, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Truly indeed our Beloved put in his hand by the hole. Hence he says by the prophet Isaiah, "Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged."

Time and space forbid enlarging further upon this sublime subject. Time and language would fail me to speak of all the wondrous work of the hand of our Beloved, but it may be briefly comprehended in this: He worketh in all things after the counsel of his own will. May we all be humbled under his mighty hand, and upheld by his mighty hand, and may we join in the song,

"Resistless Sovereign of the skies,
Immensely great, immensely wise,
My times are all within thy hand,
And all events at thy command."

L. L. Schenck.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 08/86
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

REVELATION III. 20.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock."

At the command of Christ, the glorious One whom John saw in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, the apostle wrote a message to each of the angels of the seven churches which were in Asia. Every one of these seven churches was a Gentile church. Therefore, the messages are especially adapted to the needs and conditions of the gospel church in this age of the world, an age in which the elect from among the Gentiles are being brought into the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. It seems to us that these seven churches in Asia represent the seven ages of the gospel church, beginning at the end of the time of the apostles and extending down to the end of gospel dispensation, the last age being the Laodicean period of the church's history. It is at the close of the Laodicean period that the bridegroom is to stand at the door and knock. Beginning with the message to the church at Ephesus, we have given us here a history of the Church's travel throughout this day, or age, of grace. If we had wisdom enough to tell just when the Ephesian age ended and the Smyrna age began, just when the Smyrna age ended and the next began, and so on down to the end of the Laodicean age, we could then tell the exact day and hour at which the Bridegroom shall stand at the door and knock. This can never be done by mortal man. No man, however wise, is able to take the centuries of history and divide them up into periods so as to exactly fit the prophecies of Scripture. To do so would enable such a man to tell at what moment the Bridegroom shall come, would enable him to

date the appearing of Jesus to his people. That kind of proceeding would entirely displace faith and put the matter within sight. This can never be in the world, for the people of God must walk by faith, and not by sight. But while we cannot delimit the boundaries of the ages with such exactitude, we can, God helping us, glean some of the spiritual truth contained in these seven messages from Christ to his churches. To begin with, there have been but thirteen apostles, and there never will be any more than these: the twelve apostles to the gospel church among the Jews, and the one apostle to the Gentiles. Some think that Matthias, chosen to take the place of Judas after his death, was merely a filler-in until Paul appeared, and that upon the coming of Paul into the apostleship Matthias dropped out of sight, thus making Paul the twelfth apostle. We cannot see the matter in this light. There were twelve apostles to the twelve tribes of Israel. Aside from these, there is one to the Gentiles, and Paul is that one. Now, it was not strange that immediately after the apostles' day certain men should arise claiming to be apostles, and claiming their right to legislate for the church in matters of doctrine and practice. These men were impostors, and there were those of God's people who were not deceived by any such representations on the part of these men. In the first message, which was to the church of Ephesus, Christ commends that church for detecting the false claims of the would-be apostles. "Thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars." There were other things about the church in that Ephesian age which were not to be commended. It had left its first love. This was regrettable, and Christ condemned this falling away from first love; but, on the other hand, the church in that age was endued with patience, it labored in the cause of truth, it did not faint nor become weary in welldoing, and it could not endure them that were evil.

The message to the church of Smyrna plainly indicates that age of the church in which it suffered martyrdom for the cause of truth. "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." The expression "ten days" is not to be taken as meaning literally ten days of twenty-four hours each, as we count time, but it signifies a definite period fixed by the Head of the church (it may have been ten years or ten tens of years) during which the gospel church was to be persecuted and suffer martyrdom for the truth.

The message to Pergamos plainly indicates that age of the church succeeding the previous age of martyrdom, a time when the church ceased to be troubled so much by persecution from without, but a time when false doctrine reared its ugly head among the ranks of the professed followers of Jesus. "Thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam." "So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate." It is a peculiar mark of church history that purity in doctrine coincides generally with those ages in which the church endured severe afflictions, laxity in doctrine, and the inroads of heresy coincide with those times in which the church was at rest and more or less at ease.

The outstanding mark of the church in the Thyatira age seems to have been that the woman Jezebel was suffered to teach, that she called herself a prophetess, and that she seduced the ministry to commit fornication, and caused them to eat things sacrificed to idols. This was an age when the churches experienced great searchings of heart by the Spirit of God, it was a time when those who could

not be beguiled by this false woman and who could not receive her doctrine were commanded to hold fast that which they had already received by revelation from God, and to know nothing other than they had been taught by the Holy Spirit. This woman Jezebel does not simlply mean a person or individual who was teaching at that time, but Jezebel is a generic name, signifying a diabolical false teaching abroad in the land at that time.

The especial mark of the church during the Sardis age seems to have been that she had a name to live, but was dead. This means that the church was professing to be the church of Jesus Christ, but that for many of them it was nothing more than a dead profession: a religion without a soul, faith without works. As the ages succeeded one another, the opprobrium which at one time attached to being called a "christian" wore gradually away, and it came in time to be a badge of respectability. Therefore many attached themselves to th church and professed to be christians who had never been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and who were utterly strangers to the actual life and experience of true religion. This was the condition of things in the Sardis age. Many had the name, but were really dead. However, not so all of them. "Thou hast a few names even in Sardia which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy."

This brings us to the Philadelphia age of the church. Like all the other ages which we have briefly and hurriedly outlined, we cannot tell what year it began nor what year it closed, but it was that age which was the cleanest and purest of all the church ages since the days of the apostles. In this period an open door into the sacred mysteries of God was set before the saints and there was such liberty of understanding and of utterance given the ministry of the Word as has not been the case since that day. It was a good time in which to have been alive, but it has passed and the Laodicean period is upon us.

The Laodicean period is the last age of the gospel church; that is, of the gospel dispensation. It is a period when the church is neither cold or hot, but is lukewarm; a time when the love of many waxes cold, when enthusiasm and zeal flag and when spiritual winter holds the church in its icy clasp. We are not a prophet, nor the son of a prophet, but it has seemed to us that the church of Jesus is passing through the Laodicean period right at this time. How long it is to last we cannot tell, but at its close the Bridegroom will stand at the door and knock. Then, and not until then, will the winter be over and gone and songs of praise and adoration ascend upward to the most high God of our salvation. "I sleep, but my heart waketh," say the bride in the Song of Solomon. Being asleep, she is inactive, there is no spiritual exercise, life is dormant. She is not dead. Her heart is awake. Christ is her heart, and he never slumbers nor sleeps; but there are times when the saints of God sleep, times when they cannot talk nor think nor read of spiritual things, times when they have no manifestation of divine things, and no enjoyment in them. To be in such a case is to be right where the Laodicean church was. At such times only one thing can wake her up, that is the coming of the Bridegroom. At his appearing she awakens into activity. The singing of birds is come and the voice of the turtle, the speech of love, is heard in her head. She says, "Stir not up, nor awake my love, till he pleases." No power under heaven can ever stir up nor awaken spiritual animation in the church of the living God until the Bridegroom, Jesus, comes. Let him but knock at the door and instantly she is all aflame with love, wide awake, eager for his coming. Whatever business or cares she may have

been engaged in, these are hastily laid aside, forgotten, all earthly cares and considerations drop away when he knocks at the door. "My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him. I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock. I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone." But, at the end of the lukewarm Laodicean church age, when he shall knock at the door, he will not withdraw himself and be gone. No, but then unto all who hear his voice and open the door, that is, unto all his elect people (for none others can hear, and none others can open) he will come in and sup with them and they with him. In other words, right here fits in the Scripture in 1 Thess. iv. 15-18: "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Thus shall the Bridegroom come, and thus shall his saints when he knocketh open unto him, thus shall they sup with him, and he with them. At his appearing they shall appear with him in glory, shall see him as he is, and be like him. They shall be raised forever above the reach of all terrestrial things. There is but one really soul satisfying experience which the saints of God have while journeying through this world, and that is the appearing of Jesus. At such times, "or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Amminadib." Such seasons, rare and splendid, are but foretastes of what is to come, of that glorious and wonderful time when we shall awake with his likeness, to be satisfied, not for a moment only, but forever and forever.

Elder H. H. Lefferts

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 1986

Donald R. Arrington, NC	$ 2.00
Julian Nolan, SC	20.00
Mrs. J. L. Marze, LA	5.00
Kineth Hollandsworth, LA	2.00
E. R. Fraves, AL	3.00
Raymond Clayton, KY	7.00
A. R. Patterson, LA	10.00
Elder Noel Conner, VA	5.00
Bryan L. Shockley, MD	10.00
Mrs. Claude Mann, FL	7.00
Orville R. Beatty, PA	1.00
Mrs. H. C. Houchins, VA	2.00
Mrs. H. A. Harlow, TX	5.00
Horace E. Walker, VA	3.00
Mrs. Jessie G. Abshire, VA	5.00
Mrs. John O. Mitchesl, VA	7.00
William L. Neal, NC	7.00
Mrs. Lora B. Tullos, AR	2.00

OBITUARIES

VEL HENRY ALVERSON

It is with sadness I attempt to write the obituary of our dear Bro. Vel Henry Alverson. Bro. Alverson was born April 10, 1903 and was married to Dora Ardina London July 24, 1921, who survives him, along with five children, Nettie Woods, Dorothy Smith, Barbara Harrell, Jean Nelson and Hunter Alverson. Bro. Alverson was accepted into fellowship of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church 1st Sun. in Aug. 1938 and was Baptized 2nd Sunday in Aug. 1938.

He passed from this life on Jan. 8, 1986

at Annie Penn Hospital, Reidsville, N.C. His funeral was held by his pastor, Elder Kenneth Key, he was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Bro Alverson was an excellent father and husband, never spoke critical of anyone. He loved the church and always wanted to do his part, he filled his seat every meeting day when his health permitted, a faithful devoted member, a firm believer and loved the Primitive Baptist Doctrine. He will be greatly missed. May the Lord comfort his family and all those who loved him, our loss is his eternal gain.

Written by order of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in conference.

In Hope and Love,
Sis Bea French

SISTER VERA LUCILLE COATES

Sister Vera Lucille Coates was born in Floyd County May 30, 1925. She was the daughter of Vollie and the late Grace Sowers. Departed this life October 19, 1985 at her home in Bumpass, Va. She joined Richmond Primitive Baptist Church at a special meeting by her pastor, Elder Bunn, in Richmond Memorial Hospital on July 5, 1967, and was baptized in a chair in Manchester Lake in Richmond on September 3, 1967. She married Charles M. Coates, Jr. on Dec. 7, 1946. They had three children (Maralyn C. Douglas, Sandra C. Kenrick, and Dale M. Coates), also a foster daughter, Sylvia Spradlin. She had six grandchildren, three foster grandchildren and six foster great-grandchildren. She also leaves three brothers, Marvin, Arnold, and Norman Sawers.

Sister Coates was afflicted with arthritis when she was only eighteen years old. Gradually grew worse, was in a wheel chair many years. Her faithful husband and children were so good to wait on her and keep her at home. She was so patient with her affliction which she bore so wonderful. She would often say she was alright, never mumered over her condition. To know her, was to love her.

Her funeral was held at Salem Church by her pastor, Elder Denver Simpson. Was laid to rest in Rest Vale Cemetery in Floyd County.

This was written by her Aunts, Sisters Velvice Agee and Ora Conner.

I was her pastor for over twelve years and visited her many times, she bore her afflictions well, always greeting you with a smile.

Elder D. L. Simpson

SISTER PEGGY COLLINS

It is with a sad and lonely heart that that I attempt to write the obituary of Sister Peggy Collins, our Sister in Christ we hope, for I feel so unworthy to try to write this letter.

Sister Peggy was born April 21, 1943 and died January 16, 1986. She was taken with polio when she was 8 years old and confined to a wheelchair the remainder of her life. She was in the nursing home for 8 years until her death. Sister Peggy was a faithful member and attended church when she was able.

She is survived by her mother, Sister Blanch Collins, one daughter, Kimble Collins, and brother Billy Collins, two sisters, Vivian Morton and Marry Alice Kellum.

She was a member at North East Church for 10 years.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Oliver V. Allen at Jones Funeral Home, Jacksonville, NC. She was laid to rest in the Collins family cemetery near her home beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

This being written by the request of the Church in conference. Three copies to be made, one for the family, one for the church records and one for the Signs of The Times.

Elder J.T. Prescott, Moderator
J. J. Sammons, Clerk

SALLY WORRELL LYNCH

Sally Worrell Lynch was born January 1, 1894. She was married to Jim Lynch who passed away in 1956. To this union was born ten children, six of whom are still living. They are Edna Varnell, Lula Dickens, and Lois Weeks of Rocky Mount, N.C. Will Lynch and Wiley Lynch of Marrow, Georgia. They are a close family and did all they could to make their mother's life pleasant and comfortable as possible.

She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Pleasant Hill May 26, 1951. She attended church when she could. Her love for her church was manifested in the expression on her face when she came in the door. She was a quiet, unassuming, humble person but was strong in her convictions. I visited her one day in her later years and she said, "I have lived a long time. I have worked hard all my life. I have raised a big family. If the Lord hadn't been with me, I couldn't have done it and I thank Him for it."

She passed away February 23, 1986, making her stay on this earth 92 years. Her funeral was preached at Johnson Funeral Home in Rocky Mount by Mr. Horace Ward and Robert A. Phipps. Her pastor Elder Henry C. Jones was unable to attend.

She was laid to rest in Pinewiew Cemetery in Rocky Mount, N.C. beneath a beautiful array of Flowers that were given by her friends and family as an expression of their love for her. We will miss her but hope our loss is her gain.

Written by order of conference of Pleasant Hill Church, March 22, 1986.

Lessie L. Lancaster

"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."
Proverbs 16: 18

In Loving Memory of
Eli T. Smith Sr.
November 27, 1896 - July 30, 1985

"A life that touches the hearts of others goes on forever."

During his eighty-eight years, Eli Smith touched many hearts, some old and some young. He was rooted and grounded in the truth of his God, and set an example of behavior and loyalty to that truth. He never apologized for his belief in a sovereign God and his omnipotent power.

He united with the Aycock Primitive Baptist Church on March 28, 1935, and served the church faithfully as a deacon and clerk.

He not only served his home church, but was made clerk of the Black Creek Association, and served as deacon of the Wilson Church until that position was filled by a member of that church.

He had many beautiful experiences during his lifetime that related to his association with the many friends who were of the same faith as he. Not only did he serve his church and community, but when called to serve his country, he answered that command also.

He was the son of the late William Gabe and Molly Ballance Smith who were also members of Aycock Church, and his father served that church for many years as deacon.

He was married to Retha Blow Smith who preceded him in death. To this union were born three children, Eli T. Smith, Jr. (Pete), who is a deacon of Aycock Church, Mrs. Sedalia S. Green, and (Bill) William Henry Smith. He is also survived by four grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

His funeral was conducted at Shackelford Funeral Home, Fremont, N.C., by Elder Paul Lambe and Elder D.B. Stokes, his pastor. His body was laid to rest in Elwood Cemetery where again his many

friends were apparent because of the mound of beautiful flowers that surrounded him.

I shall never forget the help, kindness and understanding he gave so unselfishly, not only to his friends but also to his family.

Submitted by his daughter
Mrs. Sedalia S. Green

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT
Jesse Robert Somers

Brother Jesse Robert Somers was called home by his Lord on September 21, 1985. His funeral was conducted by Elder Kenneth Key and Elder H.W. Wray on September 24, 1985 after which he was laid to rest in the church cemetery. He was born on October 15, 1898 to the late William and Mary Smithey Somers. Surviving are his wife, Sister Emma Stanley Somers, his son, Edgar William Somers, two daughters, Mrs. Lillie Mae Hiatt and Mrs. Mary Ruth Lee, nine grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

On Saturday night June 24, 1933 he was received into the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church as the hymn, "How Firm A Foundation" was being sung. The following day he was baptized by Elder David Spangler. Papa loved his church and his brethren with all of his heart. There is no where in this world that he would rather have been than filling his seat at the meetings and the Lord graciously enabled him to do that even when he became unable to walk. The last thing I would wish to do is eulogize him because he wouldn't have wanted that and I hope you'll forgive my familarity in referring to him as Papa, but he meant so much to me and to all of my natural family. He was blessed to live the quiet, peaceful life that becomes a true follower of Christ. There were many trials in his life, but the Lord blessed him with patience and a truly forgiving spirit. Though we did not recognize them at the time, there were signs that he knew his time was drawing nigh. There were some severe thunderstorms prior to the week of his passing, and he told my brother, Steve, that an old lady once said that she liked to hear it thunder because she knew the Lord was still alive, and he said that sometimes when it stormed, he wished the Lord would come. He also told my grandmother that it wouldn't be much longer before he went home and he told my mother, that very week, that he was ready to go. There is one other experience that I would like to mention as I feel it showed the gracious hand of the Lord. My grandfather had not seen my sister, Robin, in seven years and the Lord blessed him to see her one last time before He took him home the following morning. For that we are all eternally grateful if we know our hearts.

We feel that surely, Papa could say with Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." May the Lord bless all of us who feel an empty void in our lives due to his passing with the reconciling peace of knowing that he is where he most wished to be - with his Lord, and may we be blessed not to dwell on our loss but rather be given thankful hearts for the precious memories which we have of him and for the kindness and gentleness with which he touched all of our lives. May the gentle Shepherd be with our grandmother and bless her to feel the everlasting arms supporting her. In all things may the Lord be praised.

Humbly submitted
by his granddaughter,
Mary L. Hawkins

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
Route 1, Box 65 Keeling, Virginia 24566

Elder Smith wrote the following in 1944. When we visited with him recently, he recited the entire poem word for word from memory. He is now eighty-five years old.

Elder J. R. Williams

EXIT THE OLD YEAR-- ENTER THE NEW

Farewell, old 1943;
Come in, thou '44.
I say to thee, old '43,
That I'll not see thee more.

And what, thou 1944,
Pray tell us, wilt thou bring?
Wilt thou bring troubles more and more?
No peace song shall we sing?

Wilt thou the war's death-toll increase?
Will casualties run high?
And the great prize--O lasting peace!
Will it be far or nigh?

I'm sure no living mortal knows--
Not Roosevelt or Pope;
And Churchill great, and Stalin too,
What hold they forth of hope?

Old '43 was bad, we know--
What anguish, pain and grief!
Could I it change, with '44,
I'd do so, and with lief.

And '45, through '48,
Will each grow worse unless,
It please the Lord to intercede,
With His great power to bless.

The nations seem not yet to know,
Jehovah rules supreme:
And that He issues weal or woe,
Just as it pleases Him.

The monarch great, the peasant, too
Both on the Lord depend;
Though it may be they neither do,
Nor can they see His hand.

Thy saints, dear Lord, keep by thy grace,
Through this great conflict sore,
Grant us the shinings of thy face--
O may we trust thee more!

May we due strength, from thee on high,
Be given to suit each need:
And may we, Lord, be made to cry;
With thee, O may we plead.

Nor may our pleadings be in vain,
Thy ear it is not dull,
Thy arm it has not shortened been,
That thou can't save in full.

Thy power display, thy love make known;
Come, save thy people sore:
Then in that sweet and lovely home,
We'll praise thee evermore.

Elder John Lee Smith

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"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Psalm 116:15

EDITORIAL

"And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God: I know thy works, that thou are neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or not. So then because thou art lukewram, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment that thou mayest rich; and white rainment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."

Revelation 3:14-18.

"Amen" is much more full of meaning than we may have supposed, and as a title of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is eminently suggestive. Amen signifies true, faithful, and certain. Our Redeemer took this as a personal title to himself. He called himself "the Amen" and so he is, "the faithful and true witness." He proved himself to be Amen; the God of truth, sincerity, and faithfulness in his fulfillment of covenant engagements. The Lord undertook to bring all His elect to glory. His Father gave him a people chosen in him to be his for-

ever; and he undertook suretyship engagements, that every one of these should be delivered perfect and complete without spot or blemish by his own hands. He undertook, in order to accomplish this, that he would suffer, bleed, and die for his Church; that all her debts should be discharged from his own veins; that a perfect righteousness should be wrought out for her, in which she will stand in perfect beauty in the sight of God. My dear brethren, do you not believe the Lord Jesus has faithfully kept his engagements? He has been "the Amen" to the full in this respect. "Lo, I come! (In the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God." Heb. 10:7. Seven years of toil for Rachel were achieved by Jacob, and seven years afterwards, and our Master has achieved the same. He has paid the price of his Beloved to the uttermost farthing, and it is said by him, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and he that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37. "Having loved his own which were in the world he loved them unto the end." John 10:1.

"The beginning of the creation of God." Christ is said to be the beginning because he was in the creation of all things. Without Him was nothing made which was made, and therefore he has Lordship and dominion over all. All power both in heaven and earth is committed by the Father into his hands. He has been given power over all flesh and all things.

The epistle to the church of Laodicea is not to be thrown into the waste basket and forgotten. Upon its pages still flow the words, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches." "I know thy works." As much as to say, "Nobody else really knows you. Some think better of you than you deserve. You do not really know yourself. You think everything is excellent, but I know different." Their works were not pleasing in the sight of Christ. Nothing can be hid from Jesus, He knows and sees all things. He knows our thoughts from afar off. He searches the heart and tries the reins of the children of men. Our opinion of ourselves as a church and Christ's opinion of us may be very different and it is a very sad thing when it is so. "I know thy works." Does He make you feel this? Does He follow you in your secret life, in your purposes, your designs, aims, motives, thoughts and ways? "That thou art neither cold nor hot." Is this our state? If a church is in a lukewarm condition, it may feel comfortable; but is in a dangerous state and is dishonouring to the Lord. The church spoken of, no doubt, maintained much of the truth; but how did she maintain it? In form, but not in power; in the letter, but lacking in Spirit. Yet with all her decay, she was no doubt, a church of God; for she is addressed as such. The Lord gives counsels such as he gave her to those only that are his.

"I know thy works that thou art neither cold nor hot." They were not cold but they were not hot either. They were believers; but not in real earnest. They were not in real earnest, they were not disreputable in moral charachter, but they were not distinguished for holiness. They were not irreligious, but they were not enthusiastic in piety nor eminent for zeal. She was alive, but not lively; neither was she without some spiritual love to God, and Christ, and to his people. She was not without some light. They had a deficiency of real prayer and liberality. They were lacking in real piety and were careless in their walk. But everything seemed to be going well with them; what more could they expect. They were no doubt holding on to some phase of the truth while other phases of the truth were left wanting. Many of their members were attempting to serve mammon and God while some were sincere in only serving God. Some were no

doubt making all kinds of excuses not to be with the assembling of the saints, while others were eager to attend. As a whole the church was in a "lukewarm" condition.

My dear ones, I believe what Jesus is warning us concerning the state of the Laodicean Church should be of vast importance to us all today. Do we say, I believe what he teaches, but I do not think it is sufficient importance for me to disturb myself much about it? Did Jesus Christ think salvation of such importance that he must needs come from heaven to earth to work it out? Did he think the gospel which he preached so worthy to be made known that he must needs spend his life in proclaiming it? Did he think the redemption which he wrought out to be so valuable that he must needs shed his own precious blood in order to complete it? Should not we all who profess a blessed hope, be concerned over our present condition? Should we, as ministers of the truth, attempt to pray that God would give us grace and wisdom to preach the whole counsel of God? Do we degrade the mercy seat by not making it a wrestling place in prayer as Jacob did? Oh, how far short I see myself in all these things. No wonder the Lord has said to his people, you are "lukewarm."

Oh, if we could be blessed to look upon Jesus and say, "Oh, Jesus, thy heart was full of love for us in whom there was nothing lovely! Thou didst leave the glories of thy father's house to come down and become bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, yet without sin. Thou didst fight our enemies and rescued us out of the hands that were stronger than we. Thy pangs were grievous, thy sufferings were bitter, and thy anguish was extreme. We look up to thy thorn-crowned brow, we gaze into thy marred face, and see those innocent eyes red with pain. Now may we be given grace to pray that thy love will burn in our hearts as coals of fire. Oh, Jesus, thou art worthy of the best place in our hearts."

Jesus shows his faithful love to the Church by this letter to them and prescribes the only remedy and cure for the disease this church was under the power of. "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire." this verse may be somewhat confusing as the Lord has said the church was "poor, blind, and naked." How can she buy? What does she have to offer in exchange for "gold tried in the fire?" We may ask what does this gold represent? I believe it is faith which is a gift of God. But how is she to buy it? Only when the soul is deeply convinced of sin, of its helplessness, ignorance, blindness, wretchedness, folly etc. and when the Lord draws the poor, needy, guilty sinner to his bosom and enables him to lay them all at the Lord's feet and cross as the Holy Ghost dictates: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, He will sustain thee; he will never suffer the righteous to be moved." Psalm 55:22. The church had these things to give in exchange for "gold tried in the fire." This faith comes from Christ as a free gift. Was it tried in the fire? Yes, the hottest fire, the fiercest furnace that ever burned. Everything about this glorious Jesus, our Prince of Peace, was sorely tested. His life, his love, his patience, his obedience, his strength, all, all was put to the test his Father imposed. Sinners tried him, the devil tried him, imputed sin tried him, his own law tried him,justice tried him, his Father's stripes tried him, divinely made darkness tried him, death and the grave tried him. Only, Immanuel, our immortal Jesus could have overcome such a "sevenfold" furnace. This trial was necessary for the assurance, as well as the salvation of the church. The foundation rock on which the church was to be built must be well proved. This is the foundation on which our most holy faith is built. So says

Christ, "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire." He gives no other than this precious faith tried in the fire. What was the Church to buy with nothing? Nothing but our sins, our helplessness, our ignorance, our blindness and wretchedness.

"And white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear." Why did the Church need white raiment? Because she was naked, defiled, polluted, and unclean. "For I say unto you; that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 5:20. The Lord's people who are to dwell forever in the glorious presence of God must be suitably clothed. "White raiment," raiment for covering; white for purity, loveliness, and with absolute perfection. It is the wedding garment, it is the way in which she is made ready. "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." "Naked and ye clothed me." Matt. 25:34, 36.

"And anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see." This eyesalve is surely heavenly teaching by the blessed Spirit of God. So this eyesalve seems to be made up of the Word of God which is our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching of the Holy Spirit. "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. 4:6. Can we say with the man who was born blind, "One thing I know, whereas I was blind, now I see?" Can we see our sins, our pollution and hate them? Can we cry out from our hearts, "God be merciful to me a sinner?" Why? Because the things we see by divine light concerning ourselves are not pleasing, but fearful to us. Perhaps some of you who have had a zeal for the truth, are faithful in attendance etc. maybe troubled at times with doubts and fears as to your standing in the Beloved; but when these doubts and fears come across your soul and mind, can you not say with regard to them, I know one thing, namely, that I'm not what I used to be. I feel I have been brought into a new sphere of things. I have experienced many changes to which I was a total stranger. One thing I do believe, that once I was blind but now I see, I see Jesus as being my only hope of salvation. Is all this the truth? How can it be a lie when wrought forth by the Holy Spirit? When the time arrives for Jesus to reveal himself to our hearts and consciences, can we then sing that beautiful hymn:

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

We see Jesus as the way, the truth, and the life. The Holy Ghost causes every soul he teaches to come with his sins to the Lord, willing and anxious to part with all. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." To buy, ordinarily is to exchange or give money for that which is of equal value. In this sense buying of Christ is impossible. What have we but corruption? Yet the Holy Spirit causes every elect soul to come with all in exchange for pure gold, his white raiment, and his eyesalve.

My dear brethren, what is the general state of the Church today? Are we all concerned on the growing decline of our churches for the past seventy-five years or so? Several associations in our country which were once prospering are no longer in existence. In the past ten years we have seen three of our churches in the state of Texas cease to exist. What sadness this brings to our hearts. Can we not keep from asking, is there not a cause? we know that we can relieve our

minds some by saying it is exactly as God wants it or He would change it. None of us would dare dispute the absolute sovereignty and authority of God in ruling all things because, "He doeth according to his will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Dan. 4:35. But can we say, God is well pleased with the present conditions of our churches? Was He well pleased with the Laodicean church when He said, "I would thou wert cold or not?" Are we satisfied in our hearts as the Laodiceans were not knowing the sad state which they were in?

Are we as ministers of the different churches we have been called to serve and believe to be among His visible churches here on earth, preaching the whole counsel of God? We may as ministers say and feel that we need exhorting and reproving more than our brethren (and so we may) we therefore refrain from bringing forth these things before our people. But are we to go by our feelings or by the command of the Holy Spirit by the pen of Paul when he says, "I charge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with longsuffering and doctrine." II Tim. 4:1,2, also "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." II Tim. 3:16, 17.

Do we who have been given a hope in Christ Jesus, and as Christians, have certain responsibilities to attempt to perform? Knowing without a shadow of a doubt that we cannot of ourselves perform one good act, but only by the grace and strength of God. Paul says, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Phil. 4:13. We are not what we hope to be only by the grace of God? Paul also says, "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God whih was with me." Cor. 15:10.
which was with me." I Cor. 15:10.

No doubt we all believe that the sovereignty, foreknowledge, and predestination of God is the backbone of our precious doctrine. Naturally speaking, our backbone is a very important part of our body structure, but our ribs which are attached to our backbone play an important part for protection as well as other parts. Can we not also say that the promises, the precepts, the commands, the applications and exhortations in the gospel, also play an important part in our precious doctrine? How often do we all pray, pray, and pray that God will give us grace and wisdom to read and study the scripture with the correct understanding of them. Jacob wrestled all night praying to the Lord. Paul says, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." II Tim. 2:15.

Our forefathers with much zeal for the truth in their hearts, endured bad weather, road conditions, and poor means of transportation to attend church. Where is the zeal they had? Some still have it, but do we all? Are we good at making excuses for not assembling ourselves together each Lord's day? "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." Heb. 10:24,25.

I realize that some of the things written in this article may be offensive to some; but please try to accept it in the love and concern, I trust, in which it is written. As an Elder once said to me, "If

we disagree, let it be in love, and not with malice." I hope what has come on my mind to write was prompted by the Spirit and not by me. I pray that no one is offended. If I'm in error, please forgive me. I ask each of you when you are given a mind to pray, remember our churches and remember me. I need your prayers.

A concerned sinner
in hope of mercy,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

TARBORO PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albermarle Avenue in downtown Tarboro, North Carolina. It was established on February 7, 1819, by Elder Joshua Lawrence, Martin Rose, Thomas Billings and Thomas Meredith. Elder Lawrence is buried in the church cemetery.

The present church building was built in 1826 after the first building was destroyed.

Elder D. B. Stokes has served us as pastor for the past 29 years. Previous pastors have been Elder Joseph D. Fly, who served for nearly 28 years, Elder S. P. Denny, Elder P. D. Gold and others.

Our meeting time is every first Sunday morning and Saturday night before of each month. We welcome you to visit us.

John H. Coker, Clerk

"A GOOD name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold."
Proverbs 22: 1

"Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.
Proverbs 22: 6

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editors,

We received our Signs this week and I have felt for sometime I wanted to tell you editors how very much we appreciate all the work and time you put forth that we may enjoy the Signs each month. We feel it is another of the many blessings we receive from the hand of our loving God and Saviour. He has been so good to us. If we could only praise Him as we should.

For awhile it seemed our Church went thru dark days but now with Elder Williams coming to us each month and Elder Robertson coming to the Salisbury Church and different dear Elders visiting, we feel we are receiving double blessings for all our troubles. It seems as we get older and the world means less and less to us we look forward to the weekend and our meetings more each month. Also each weekend seems more precious.

I wish God would move more of our Elders to write for the Signs and the Brothers and Sisters to write their experiences or how the Lord is leading them in this world. It is comforting to read the travels of those of like beliefs and faith.

Everyone has been so kind and thoughtful of us since Lawrence had the stroke. It melts our hearts in thankfulness.

When we were able we traveled some to the different churches and now that we cannot get around as we did, we remember with much pleasure the many Brothers and Sisters we met and friendship and fellowship shown us.

May the good Lord continue to give you health and strength for this work that means so much to all who believe in salvation by grace and in predestination.

Your grateful sister, I hope.
Ethel Holloway

Dear Brother Kenneth:

I hope all of you dear people are doing well, by the mercies of our covenant God.

I'm sending a sermon preached by Mr. C. A. Wood, while we were in attendance at one of his churches in England last year. I thought our people might be interested in reading a sermon preached by a Particular Baptist minister from England.

They call their ministers Mr. in place of Elder. We fully enjoyed meeting the people of the Gospel Standard churches affiliation. The Particular Baptist people in England have been blessed for many centuries to preach the truth, in fact, long before the United States was ever inhabited by our forefathers.

Elder Joe Hamrick

SERMON PREACHED BY MR. C.A. WOOD, THURSDAY, 20TH MAY, 1985---CROYDON, ENGLAND.

Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." Isaiah 44: 21, 22.

Distinguishing grace separates the believer from the idolator, the wheat from the tares, the wise virgins (having the vital possession of oil in their lamps) from the foolish. It distinguishes the true Israelite from Israel at large. Here the Lord is speaking: "Remember these," think of that state in which you were born, dead in trespasses and in sins, without God, without hope, without Christ. O wondrous grace that delivers us from

such a state! Nothing but God's mighty power in grace can deliver a sinner from that state in which we are born, with the carnal mind at enmity to God, turning away from the ways of God, not seeking God. But now, as one of our hymns says,

But now, subdued by sovereign grace,
My spirit longs for Thy embrace.

What cause have the redeemed to bless and praise God for salvation by Grace, redemption by blood and that mighty, effectual work of the Holy Spirit in the soul delivering it from that state of darkness and bringing it into the light of life. Those words have been fastened much on my mind lately – "the light of life." Where that spiritual light shines in the heart which was before in a state of darkness and of death, there is now spiritual life.

Quickened by the Spirit, made alive, brought out, God has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son "in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." Remember then O child of God, from whence thou hast been called, thy wondrous deliverance, the matchless grace put forth toward thee, a lost, ruined and perishing sinner. It is God which hath begun a good work in you and He will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Think of where you would be tonight, but for the wondrous grace of God. Certainly you would not be in this place, would you? Certainly you would be without love to the Lord, without a desire for the things of God! Certainly your heart would be destitute of a cry for mercy. Certainly this Jesus would be nothing to you. But now, called by His grace, you are a new creature in Christ.

O beloved, I say how precious is this Jesus to convinced sinners, taught by the Spirit their lost state and ruined condition. We often quote the line,

'Twas grace that taught my soul to pray

And it is all of grace if ever I pray to God, if ever I know the burden of sin, if ever I feel the solemnity of eternity, if ever such a vile wretch is directed to the cross to look to the Saviour of sinners, to the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness.

'Twas grace that taught my soul to pray

Yes, a spiritual groan is a prayer, the upward glancing of an eye when none but God is near, that "Lord, help me," that "Lord, save me" springing from the depths of your hearts, is blessed evidence of spiritual light and life in the soul.

'Twas grace that taught my soul to pray
And pardoning love to know

This is what some of you are praying for. Some of us have tasted just a little of it; we want much more, we want to know the full blessing of the second part of my test: "I have blotted out..." God has done it. No one else can do it. God has done it - "Blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions and as a cloud thy sins."

And pardoning love to know
'Twas grace that kept me to this day

So that you have not gone right back, turned back into the world, turned your back on Him whom your soul loveth, Alas! we have to mourn our backslidings, our wanderings. But God says, "return unto me." Look, poor sinner, "I have redeemed thee." So,

'Twas grace that kept me to this day
And will not let me go.

This is the wonder of it - "will not let me go." It holds me, it keeps me, and it will bring me to glory at last. "For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." We may look with pitying eyes, sometimes, alas, almost with self-righteousness, on the heathen man that

makes (as described in the Word of God) his idol of wood taken from the tree, shaped and fashioned. Part he burns, part he uses to warm himself, for cooking etc. Another part he uses to make an idol and bows down and worships it. Yet, my friend, as we look at the heathen, what can we say of any and all that are without Christ? What a mercy to have our eyes opened and to remember these, remember the futility of worshipping anything but the true Jehovah, or resting on anything but the finished work of Jesus Christ, of building on the sand instead of the rock. O beloved, may we pray to be preserved from a false religion, a vain hope, dead tradition, just a head knowledge of the truth. We want something wrought in our heart by the Holy Ghost and if we have this we shall look back with increased wonder and say, "Why such love to me, Lord?"

Why was I made to hear His voice
And enter while there's room
While thousands made a wretched choice
And rather starve than come.

"Remember these, O Jacob and Isreal." What need we have to be kept from going back. I know every child of God will be brought to glory at last but we have to be kept from backsliding or trusting in anything but Jesus Christ. How vain it is to lean on the arm of flesh, for if we turn our eyes from our God, if we trust in anything but our God, are we not guilty of forming an idol and bowing down to it, looking to man for our help? O may we worship God and "remember these," think of the lost, of that "so great salvation," of that mighty power of grace wrought in the heart. Then pray to be kept, for believers need to be oft in prayer to be brought to remember that word at the end of John's first Epistle, where it seems as though the Apostle of love closes with abruptness (we speak with reverence, for it is the Word of God) - "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." He saw the danger, and we need to be kept from it.

"Remember these, O Jacob and Israel." Jacob sets forth the wrestling one, but it also sets forth weakness, it sets forth "worm Jacob." Yet it was to Jacob that God spake "exceeding great and precious promises" at Bethel. It was this dear man who in his time of trouble and distress, called upon his God and pleaded a promise with a "Thou saidst." The Lord himself wrestled with Jacob and there Jacob's thigh was put out of joint. There the Lord said, "Let me go, for the day breaketh," and Jacob said, "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me." Do you know something of prevailing prayer like that in your heart at times? Do you know something of such a need of Jesus Christ that you feel you cannot go on without a blessing for your soul? You are weakness itself, poverty itself, sinfulness itself. O cling to Christ! "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me." As said Jabez "O that Thou wouldst bless me indeed." That is it; that is the language of this spiritual Jacob and this prevailing Israel. "And He blessed him there." So his name was changed from Jacob to Israel for "as a prince hast thou power with God and with men and hast prevailed." He prevailed by the grace of God, by the strength given him.

As Israel of old groaned under their burdens in Egypt, so God's people spiritually groan under the burden of their sin in this tabernacle of their body. "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened," groan because of some besetting sin, groan because we come so short of what we want to be, of what we hope and long to be. Yet we cry out, and this is our mercy, that God hears a cry and a groan and in His time will come down and deliver the burdened soul.

One more thought here - "O Jacob and O Israel" - speaking of Nathanael the Lord Jesus said, "Behold an Israelite in-

deed, in whom is no guile!" He did not mean that Nathanael was sinless but that the grace of God in exercise in the heart will make a sinner honest and sincere so that they seek to speak the truth and will not go beyond what God has shown them, blessed them with, and taught them. The fear of the Lord implanted in the soul will undoubtedly affect and direct our spirit and the words that we utter. "For I have formed thee, thou art my servant." This fear will make us turn from idols to serve the living and true God. "If any man serve me, let him follow me." No man can serve two masters, so as the Lord works this mighty work of grace in a sinner's heart he will be like the Hebrew bond servant on the day of liberty when he was entitled to go free; but said, "I love my master." O Lord Jesus, help me to serve Thee, help me to love Thee, preserve me from fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, help me to do the will of God, to be a true servant. "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Was the cry of the Apostle at his conversion, and it is the language of those who are spiritually minded, exercised in the things of God. They constantly seek to serve God, and not like a slave who only fears the whip, and has not love in his heart; but as a child in loving obedience to the parent, knowing that it is for his own good. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

As we look at this word, "I have formed thee" we think of dear Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, who was bidden to go down to the potter's house and there, said God, "I will speak to you." There was a vessel which was marred but it was made anew. "I have formed thee." O, when that work of grace is begun there is a new creature, a vessel made meet for the master's use. That vessel has to be cleansed; it has to be emptied. True grace has an emptying effect before filling. My friend, it is painful, but profitable, to be emptied, emptied of all vain hope, all that is of the creature, all that is of dead religion, to be emptied, cleansed and then filled, held in the hand of the Lord Himself and used for His honour and glory.

"Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel!" Do not read this word too quickly, do not pass over the little word, 'O'. Just think what that means to you sometimes, when you feel so burdened, so cast down, such a sinner, tempted by Satan, accused by the enemy, derided perhaps by the world, burdened and distressed in affliction's path, in darkness and under pressure. What is then squeezed out of your soul? Not a very long, wordy prayer, but sometimes just this - "O, Lord." O, what a word! It comes from the depth of the heart; it is the upward glance of faith to God. But is it not Got that is speaking this word, "O, Israel." This letter "O" has no beginning and no end. It speaks to me of the love of God, His everlasting love. It is as much as to say, "O Jacob, amidst all your distresses and all your troubles, O Israel under all your burdens, I love thee." Yes! though you may be passing through the fire, though you may have many fears, may be sorely tried, greatly tempted, though your sins are as great mountains before you, or as we have in the text "thick clouds" yet the love of God is everlasting, it has no break in it. From this love the dear people of God shall never, never be separated. If you are tired and tempted, turn to the Word of God and O that faith may rest in and lay hold upon such a word as this: "I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

In the words of our text tonight there is a love taken from heaven, it is a kiss

from His mouth to a poor trembling, burdened, sorrowing sinner, who feels to be so lonely, to be forgotten, forsaken, full of fears. You look at the future as you look at your present path, and perhaps you feel that nobody loves you. We do not despise the love of brethren, of husbands and wives, friends, brothers and sisters, but sometimes God's children may walk a very lonely path. But think of this: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." O think of it! I shall never forget hearing Mr. Pilgrem shortly after the death of my Pastor when this came as a word from heaven to my soul. "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." "Moses, my servant is dead, now therefore arise, go over this Jordan. As I was with Moses so I will be with thee; I will not fail thee or forsake thee."

Brethren, your poor Pastor has to confess that he looks so much at the things that burden, press, try and trouble him and forgets the God that says, "I will not forget thee." We lose sight of our great God, the God of all grace, the God of all mercy, the God of all love, the God of all power. My friend, whatever your burden or need may be, whatever your weakness or need may be, whatever your weakness or your trial, your path, your cross, your thorn in the flesh, your cup, your dark valley, whatever you may be passing through, seek grace to look up. It is not all gloom, though it is through much tribulation that we must enter the kingdom, for there are times of blessing, green pastures, still waters, the love visits of our God. We can bear testimony to the truth of the Word before us: "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." When I had something before me my dear Pastor would say, "I will remember you." Sometimes you come to me and I say, I will remember you, but that is as far as it goes. The prayers of the godly are a great strength, a great support and help, but the God who says, "O Isreal, thou shalt not be forgotten of me," is our God, and there is nothing too hard for Him. Our God can make you strong out of your weakness. In the path that seems to us so strange, he can turn the curse into a blessing, the bitter into sweet and if your burden lingers and gets greater, do you mean to say that your God will fail you? Do you mean to say that He will not give strength to bear the burden? Your God has told you this, beloved, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord and He shall sustain thee." He "upholdeth all things by the word of His power." He "hangeth the earth upon nothing." And he holds up, bears up and supports His dear children, even as we read a little later in this prophecy, "Even to your old age I am He, and even to Hoar hairs will I carry you; I have made and I will bear, even I will carry and will deliver you."

He will bring you through the fire. Yes! God here speaks of the path of His dear people. "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest" - you are walking step by step; you are not consumed in that fire, you are going to come through it; "When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned." The work of grace in your soul shall never be destroyed, that precious faith will never be overthrown, "neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." But I hear you say, "I am in the dark; I am in such a sad state, so cast down, so oppressed. I do not know where I am." But is there that cry from your poor heart for the Lord? Can you find light in your darkness, help in your trouble, strength in your weakness, joy in your sorrow outside Jesus Christ? Tell me, can you? You may be under the cloud, it may indeed be a dark path; but this word still stands. You may not have that faith in exercise to penetrate the dark cloud above, but God says, "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgot-

ten of me." Joseph was forgotten by the butle, but he was never forgotten by God, never!

It is not an easy path and we do not use this word tonight as an easy way out of trouble, but it is a strength to us in our trial, it is a support to us as we go forth. Sometimes you may fear as you enter the cloud, but God says He will bless all who fear Him, both small and great. "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." This is true in your providential concerns. Once they came to Peter for the tribute money and the Lord told Peter to go and cast a hook into the sea and in the mouth of the first fish he caught was money sufficient to pay for Peter and for Himself. Elijah proved it; the brook dried up, but He, God did not fail. There was a widow woman at Zarephath; she had only a handful of meal and a little oil but "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." Later when Elijah was under the juniper tree, His God had still not forgotten him but sent an angel. He knows what is in front of you and that the journey is too great for you. "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me."

So beloved, what a strength and comfort this is. You may be passing through a deep trial. May the Lord sustain and support you and comfort you with this word. "Behold the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in his mercy." He will show love, pity, and compassion. "Underneath are the everlasting arms." We do not want to sing a song with a heavy heart, but where else can we go with our trouble? Dear Medley wrote hymn No. 7 on the occasion of the sudden death of one of his children. O what a mercy to have a God to go to!

Too wise to be mistaken He,
Too good to be unkind.

O, we want another visit from Him, another love token, we do long for the kiss of His mouth, we do want the sun to pierce the cloud and to hear His lovely voice again speaking to us. Have you ever heard it? Has ever your poor heart been crumbled and melted and humbled as the Lord has spoken a word of His love to your poor soul? He will not forget you. He changeth not. He will not alter that word or go back on what He has said, "He is faithful that hath promised."

"I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins." This cloud comes between your soul and God, between you and the enjoyment of His love. You say, "Lord, my manifold transgressions are like a thick cloud from me. Indeed Lord, every moment I live, every breath I draw, I am adding to the intensity of that black cloud of my transgressions, the cloud of my sins that comes between my soul and Thee." This black cloud speaks also of something else; it speaks of the wrath of God that should justly fall upon us because of our sins. But God says, "I and none else can do it." Blessed be His name, He has done it. "It is finished" was the cry of the Saviour on Calvary's cross. We cannot meet the demands of His holy law, but He blots the debt that we owe. God says, "I have blotted out all that debt." It is paid.

Payment God cannot twice demand,
Once at my bleeding Surety's hand,
and then again at mine.

What moves a thick cloud literally? Is it not the wind and the sun? When the Holy Spirit comes and bears witness in your soul of your interest in the blood, when the Sun of Righteousness arises with healing in His wings, He pierces the cloud and shines with healing in His wings. He pierces the cloud and shines with love in your soul. "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." "The Son of God loved me and gave Himself for me." "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins.. I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own

sake and will not remember thy sins." "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

To whom then is this spoken? Why, friend, it is to a poor coming, venturing sinner, whom the Lord has drawn to himself, pleading mercy and looking alone to Christ, hanging on the cross.

Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling.

"Saying unto my soul I am thy salvation." "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just (you see, justice is on our side) to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The great cloud speaks of sins in our life. I look back on mine and you look back on yours, and we see things that grieves us. Our sins are as the cloud that covers the sky as we see sin mingled with everything that we do. But here is our God who blots out. And what is it that blots our our sins? Nothing but the blood. What is it that you pray for and plead for? Nothing but the blood.

Assure my conscience of her part
In the Redeemer's blood,
And bear Thy witness with my heart
That I am born of God.

"Return unto me." God will bring them back, and what a path it will be! It will be with weeping, with tears, with sorrow. It will be coming afresh, feeling that load of sin, to seek the Saviour, to acknowledge what a wretch one has been and to stand amazed at the grace of God manifested towards us that in His long-suffering He has not dealt with us as we so richly deserve.

"Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee." This redemption is by the blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord. "Thou shalt not be forgotten of me" right to the end of time. You may have a fear of death, but this word shall stand. You may not have the comfort of it, but I trust you will have faith to believe it. The full enjoyment of it will be when you come down to death itself and you will be given dying grace in a dying hour. So you will prove that your God has never forgotten you, failed you or forsaken you. The Lord bless His word. Amen.

MEETINGS

FIVE MILE CREEK ASSOCIATION

The Five Mile Creek Association will be held, Lord willing, the 3rd Sunday in September, Friday and Saturday before, September 19, 20, and 21.

Shady Grove Church is host for this Association. The church is located off highway 69 between Jasper and Cullman, Alabama at Bugtussle. Turn east and go to top of hill and then turn right on first road. Go about 4 miles to church.

Elder H. C. Moon, Moderator
Bremen, Alabama

SULPHUR FORK ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the one hundred and forty-first annual meeting of the Sulphur Fork Primitive Baptist Association convenes with Hopewell Church Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, October 3rd, 4th, & 5th, 1986. Church is located about 5 miles west of Winnsboro, Texas, just West of FM 515.

We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to come so that we can enjoy your fellowship and presence in our homes. We have been blessed to have some wonderful preaching during these Associations and do gracefully welcome all ministers of our faith and order.

For additional information, call (214) 269-3561.

Elder Joe Hamrick

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Salem Primitive Baptist Church, Floyd County, Va., a presbytery met May 10, 1986 at Salem Church for the examination of Brother Andrew Agee, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgement, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The solemity was begun with prayer by Elder Raymond Goad. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders Larry Hollandsworth, Noel Conner, William Holland, Lane Carter, Junior Conner, Raymond Goad, Amos Hash, Hale Terry and Carl Terry.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Hale Terry as moderator and Elder Carl Terry as clerk. Elder William Holland and Elder Junior Conner was chosen to lead the examination of the candidate. Deacon Tiris Conner, having been duly appointed by Salem Church in conference May 10, 1986, as spokesman for the church, delivered brother Andrew Agee to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder William Holland and Elder Junior Conner, using scripture reference Acts 6 and 1 Timothy, 3rd Chapter. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Amos Hash. Elder Lane Carter delivered the charge to the candidate. Scripture reference, 3rd chapter 1st Timothy, 6th chapter Acts, and 5th chapter 1st Timothy.

The moderator asked Salem Church if they were satisfied with the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmitive.

A certificate of ordination was presented to brother Agee and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained deacon was delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Salem.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Larry Hollandsworth. Deacons present were: Harry Cannaday, Lawrence Myers, W.T. Conner, John Plunkett, Woodrow Abshire, Grover Semons, G. T. Abshire, Ed Dyer, Hancil Conner, Lonnie Nichols, Donald Agee, Bobby Bernard, Jamie Cooper, Nelson Bryant, and Claude Hopkins

Elder Hale Terry, Moderator
Elder Carl E. Terry, Clerk

BEL SPUR PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Bel Spur Primitive Baptist Church, Carroll County, Va., a presbytery met April 19, 1986 at Bel Spur for the examination of brother Carl Terry, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgement, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of the Gospel Ministry.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Leonard Key. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders Leonard Key, Kenneth R. Key, Larry Hollandsworth, Noel Conner, Jr., Amos Hash and Hale Terry. Deacons Nelson Bryant, Alan Terry, Claude Hopkins, W. G. Parsons, Donald Agee, Jamie Cooper, H. D. Ingram, Edwin Dyer, Wilson King, Lonzie Nichols, Grover Semons, Tyres Conner and Jimmy Holley.

The presbytery was organnized by electing Elder Amos Hash as moderator

and Elder Hale Terry as clerk. Elder Kenneth Key and Larry Hollandsworth were chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate. Deacon Alan Terry having been duly appointed by Bel Spur Church in conference April 19, 1986, as spokesman for the church, delivered brother Carl Terry to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder Kenneth Key and Elder Larry Hollandsworth, using scripture reference 1st Timothy, 3rd chapter. The Presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The Ordination Prayer was delivered by Elder Junior Conner. Elder Larry Hollandsworth delivered the charge to the candidate.

The moderator asked Bel Spur Church if they approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to brother Carl Terry and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained Elder was delivered back to the church as an ordained minister of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Bel Spur.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Junior Conner.

Elder Amos Hash, Moderator
Elder Hale Terry, Clerk

ARTICLES

ISAIAH XLII. 16

"And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."

The above prophecy is full of wonder to the blind. It is evident that this prophecy is to Israel; that is, the prophet was speaking to the house of Israel. There is no doubt this is a figure, or type, and did and does embrace spiritual Israel (the church) in her travels in this gospel day, for the prophet begins this chapter with the mark of attention: "Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles." This can have reference to none other than Jesus, our blessed Redeemer, and this being so we see that the Gentile is embraced in those who are led in a way they have not before known. There are three things in this text I wish to notice. First, the leader, the one who says, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect," is God, and he says, I will bring the blind. No conditions nor ifs in it. Oh how precious is this positive declaration. No wonder Paul says the gospel of Christ is the power of God. No wonder it comes to the blind in demonstration of the Holy Ghost and in power. No wonder it comes with such assurance to the poor soul who feels ready to fall by the way, and says to him, You are not your own keeper, but are kept by the power of God. I am glad that Wisdom away back in eternity saw and prepared such a safe and sure way for these poor blind pilgrims who have no abiding place here, but seek a country where all the shade will be removed from their eyes and they will be blest to see their blessed Leader as he is and be like him. This anointed of the Father says, I am the good shepherd, and my sheep (the blind) hear my voice and they follow me; they know not the voice of the stranger. Bless the dear Lord for this understanding the blind have to hear and know the voice of their leader (Jesus), and we just as truly thank his holy name for making us (the blind) deaf to the voice of the stranger. Dear, blind brethren, lift up

the drooped head and receive strength for the feeble knees, for our God blessed this same old prophet to see this way so secure and sure that one, though a fool, should not err therein. Now we come down to the day and time when this blessed prophecy began to manifest itself, and let us (the blind) gaze upon the great mystery, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not," a way which they had never traveled before. Oh how beautiful is the way. Angels, with the heavenly host, awakened the shepherds who were watching over their flocks by night and led them in the way (Bethlehem), and their eyes (the blind) saw the way. I am, says the Anointed, the way. In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and was God made flesh. As we follow him in the way every step is taken in wonder and amazement. It is a new way, it is God's way, and his way is as high above man's way as the heavens are above the earth. We see him in Simeon's arms, and hear Simeon bless God for what he (the blind) saw: God's salvation, and hear the old prophet say that he (Jesus) was a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Israel. Simeon saw here what Israel saw many years before. Now as we start out in this way let us note the great mystery in the way, but in this let us not lose sight of the surety of the way. I will have to pass over many of the waymarks, on account of space, but before I leave the babe I want to notice some of the crooked things which are in this way, also the darkness that shuts it out from the wise and prudent of this world, but he who leads the blind reveals it unto babes. We see Joseph and Mary take the babe and flee into Egypt (darkness). Why did they go? Because he who said, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not," said, Go. What! the God of the whole earth running for his life? Yes, Herod will seek his life. Right here in the beginning of the way is a place so dark that nothing but the light of the Spirit which Jesus says shall guide you (the blind) in the way can penetrate, and so crooked that the world, with all its boasted wisdom, can never find or get one of these blind ones. Now let us go back to the Father of this blind nation, Abraham, who is the father of all the faithful. See him when called out. Though blind to the way he staggered not at the promise of God, but went out, not knowing whither he went, but it was a strange land to Him. Here is evidence that he was led in a way he had never before traveled, but while it was a new way to him he did not stagger, and the reason he walked uprightly was because the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob did lead him, and there was no strange god with him. It is said that the sheep know not the voice of the stranger. Oh how my poor soul does rejoice while traveling this mysterious way to find these immovable monuments of the faithfulness of our blessed Leader, who knows all the way, and who makes all the mountains of doubts as level as the valleys, and makes straight all the crooked ways that come up in the mind and heart. Dear ones, all this heavenly host of blind pilgrims was completely hid in the seed of Abraham, for in his seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. When this had come it was declared by the angels that this good news should be to all people, and as we journey on in the prophetic day we see them all stop and wonder with great admiration at these blessed waymarks. Take old Jacob, to whom this blessed promise was confirmed, after he had spent a life in this way, and had proved the faithfulnes of God, his great leader, he could look back and see how wonderfully God had straightened all the crooked places and smoothed all the rough places. While passing through many of them he felt they were against him, but the dear Leader could show him, as he did Paul, that all things were working for the good of all the blind who

loved this way and were called to walk in it. Then please note Elijah, the old prophet, in this way felt in his very soul all his companions had been killed and that he was left alone with his enemies. Oh how rough and crooked was then the way to him, but God, faithful to his promise, removed every obstacle by showing him that he had reserved seven thousand who had not surrendered to his enemies, and the young prophet Elisha (the gospel church which followed Elijah, the church under the law) saw him as he traveled in this highway, saw him go up in a chariot of fire drawn by horses of fire. This, to my mind, represents the fiery trials and afflictions through which all God's children must travel in this world. As we behold the dear church of God, which embraces every one mentioned in the text, in their fiery afflictions, singing as they go, we glory in tribulation, because it worketh patience, and in no way can the path of the weary souls be made smoother and straighter than to have patience to wait upon their dear Leader, knowing his faithfulness to all his blessed promises to his chosen and called. If we could see the end of the way (purpose of God) there would be no mystery, but our text truly teaches that this way was made for the blind (redeemed) to walk in, and they possess two natures: the Adamic, or carnal, which is enmity to their divine nature, which is spiritual. The gospel of God, which is Jesus, leads and guides us in the way of truth. The carnal mind was received from our earthly father, Adam, and is so corrupt it cannot understand the things of the spiritual way. Satan is ever present with his deceit, and tells us that God, who leads us, doth not know. Jesus, who is the way, was not exempt from this great deceiver, but God the Father prepared for him a body which was to atone for this blind nation, who should be led in this sure way. While he was tempted in all points as his brethren, yet without sin; that is, the Spirit was given to him without measure, and he was able to resist all temptation and live a holy life, and in this he fulfilled the law, and all this blessed blind nation was in him, and he bore their sins in his own body and nailed them to the cross. If the knowledge of him and this blessed atonement had stopped at the cross we would have been like the apostle who said, If in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable. But the promise in our text is that he will make crooked ways straight and rough places smooth, so let us wait upon the one who promises. We have now followed him as far as we can, and unless he rolls away the stone that has the king's seal (death) upon it we never will see the way. How true it is that we, like Israel, who came up to the great waters of the Red Sea, must stand trembling and wait for God's salvation, and, according to his promise, his angels on the appointed morn come and roll the stone away and the seal of death is broken and the eternal sun shines forth in all its glory and lights up the highway, and makes it so plain through the gospel which brings life and immortality to light. The prophet's vision is now made plain, for we see the blind as they are journeying and communing on the great mystery, the crooked and rough way. This eternal Light which is to remove everything that blocks the way appears, and shines with such glory it causes the heart within to burn with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Please look and listen to this wonder. Jesus says, What is it troubleth you so? With astonishment and wonder they say, Are you a stranger in Israel and know not the things which have taken place? O my soul, see how wonderful is the teaching of this Teacher. What things? Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God, and we had hoped he would redeem Israel, but to our great disappointment they have crucified him, and this is the third

day, and some bring strange news to us, saying he is risen. "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" He began at Moses and the prophets and straightened and smoothed the way so these blind and fools could not err in the way.

I must now leave this glorious subject with a short exhortation to the blind to watch for the footprints of the flock who walked this good old way, and be not carried away by the new ideas that are now being manifested among the flock. The gospel tells of these, and says, Go not after them, for they are designing men. They have men's person in mind, and not the welfare of our beloved Zion. In all your troubles rest with faith in your great Leader, for he has promised to bring us off more than conquerors.

J. T. Barnes.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," &c. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "On these two commandments hand all the law and the prophets."

Matthew xxii. 37, 39, 40.

The law, and all the prophets, and all of the glory of the Father's house were hung upon the nail that was fastened in a sure place. That nail is Jesus. Isaiah xxii. 23, 24: "And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house," &c. The law was a part of the glory of the Father's house, because Paul says, 2 Cor. iii. 7, 8: "But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stone, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?" "For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." Luke xvi. 16: "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached." It is plainly set forth that we are not obligated to keep the law; none but the Savior did or could keep it. Our salvation depended upon his being able to keep the law. He loved God with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself. All the glory of his Father's house was hung upon him, and he had the power to fulfill the law, and kept it perfectly. It demanded perfect and perpetual obedience. He said, No man taketh my life from me. I have power to take it up again. In the first place, this party who wrote me cannot do what he thinks he can, and no one else can. Then if our eternal salvation depends upon something we cannot do, we are lost, unless it is so arranged some one else can do for us what we cannot do, and his doing is credited to us. Unless what the one does who is able to satisfy the requirements of the law is imputed to us we are lost. This is exactly what was done for us when the Savior came. By his righteous living, death and suffering on the cross in the garden, and by his resurrection, we were eternally saved, and absolutely by nothing else. "So by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."—Rom. v. 19. Again, "Much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righeousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." Man cannot do what the law says, so it is written, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."—Rom. viii. 3. This man the world thinks can keep the law is dead, blind,

and cannot hear what Jesus says. Jesus asks, "Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word."—John viii. 43. Paul says, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14. There has got to be something done for these helpless, lost, ruined God-hating people, and God is the only one who can do what is needed to be done for them, and every time they are told they can love God, and are free to choose, and it is just left to them whether they will serve God or sin, and are free to choose between God and Satan, it is causing them to trust in man, whose breath is in his nostrils. The Bible says, "Vain is the help of man," and, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." No wonder crime is on the increase, when they are told all they have to do to be saved is to say three words, which are, I accept Jesus and that God will save them if they will let him. This causes the alien sinner to say, I will go on and have a good time, but as I can turn round and go to God, and as he is so anxious to save me he will do it, this doctrine is licentious. Let us see what God has promised to do for his people who cannot break away from Satan: They walk "according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." Isaiah xlii. 16: "And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." Did you ever hear anything more glorious than this promise? God has to draw them, because they are under the control of Satan and do not know it, and cannot deliver themselves from the power of darkness.

You say, "God does not want us to love him because he compels us to do so." I did not say God compels us to love him, but his love compels us to do things. His love moves us to action. All men naturally hate God. Paul says, "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."—Rom. viii. 7. Isaiah liii. 3. "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not." These men you say ought to love God, hate him, and no man has ever loved God until God has shed his love abroad in his heart. Therefore Paul says, Romans v. 5, "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which is given unto us." Again, 1 John iv. 7: "For love is of God; and every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God." 1 John ii. 29: "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him." Every one ought to know that love controls us, instead of thinking we exercise it, and they would were they not drunk on the blood of the saints, and controlled by the wine of the beast, and were not in the school of old Jezebel. So it is written in Revelation, Because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel to teach and to seduce my servants, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. It is the power of love that causes people to cast themselves over precipices, and into rivers, and destroy themselves rather than to be separated. Many strong minded men have lost their reason because disappointed in love. The nobleman's daughter fled with her lover. Her father caught up with them at the arm of the sea. The ferryman risked his life on account of her entreaties. The waves were rolling, white caps breaking, when her father saw the great danger, he cried out "Come back, come back, my daughter," but he was

too late, she and her lover and the ferryman went down beneath the awful waves, and to their long eternal home. It was love overpowered her father's anger. If natural love is so strong, what must the power of the love of God be? "God is love." Song of Solomon viii. 7: "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would be utterly condemned." If God is love, as the Bible says, it is clear that there is no power equal to the love of God. Paul says, 2 Cor. v. 14, "For the love of Christ constraineth us." "Constrain" means to compel. Let this be quoted, "The love of Christ constraineth us," until it reverberates and resounds over every vale, leaping to every mountain top, reaching back and forth, rolling along in thundertones, smashing the doctrine of free will, scattering its advocates as chaff before a cyclone, resounding as with heaven's trumpet, until every child of God on earth shall take up the text and repeat it, while heaven breaks forth in unison with all the redeemed of God on earth, while spiritual cords in every heaven-born soul's heart tremble with rapturous joy and gladness, while tears of glorious emotion flow down the weather-beaten, furrowed cheeks of the people of God in all lands, while the heralds of the cross repeat this glorious truth in all countries where the glorious gospel is preached; in harmony with Paul saying, "The love of Christ constraineth us," and tell the church of God that the word "constrain" means to compel, and therefore an alien sinner will not turn his back on the pleasures of this world until this love compels him to do so. As Ephriam said, Jeremiah xxxi. 18, "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God." Let the truth be shouted from every watchtower by every faithful watchman, that "the love of Christ constraineth us," and tell them "constrain" means compel, until all the denominations learn that the "free will" doctrine of Zoroaster is false, and that it is not left to the heaven-born children of God to do as they please, which is, they can join the church of God or not, come in or stay out as they choose, and that it is left to do as they want to, but that the love of God causes them to want to come, so as to find a place of rest. The love causes them to come, or they are scared into the church by fear of punishment, or some other impure motive. So the Savior says, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Drawn by his love. No one knows this better than your poor, little, sinful brother. Ah yes, down there on the old farm on the river, as wild as ever grew, sinful and profane, until, as I hope, God called me by his grace, turned me, and I was turned, brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, set my feet upon a rock, put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God, and established my goings. (Psalms xl. 2, 3.) Do you wonder I have gone through cold and heat, rain and snow, leaving my loved ones, and am now giving all my time to my blessed Savior? If a man has a child that cannot know his father because he does not know him, is under the control of a party that teaches him that his father is a terrible tyrant, the child believes what he is taught, the father will have to do something to change this state of affairs, so as to cause the child to love him. This is what God does. The first thing God does is to give life, ("I give unto them eternal life") and enables him to see his lost condition, and makes him say,

> *"If my soul were sent to hell,*
> *Thy righteous law approves it well."*

Sheds his love abroad in his heart, and he loves his Father with the very love his Father puts in his heart. Now he knows the devil had him, and if it had not been for the love his Father had for him, and

for his Father's superior strength and wondrous power, the devil would have dragged him down to everlasting darkness and eternal woe. No wonder he is willing to serve his Father. That is enough to cause any disobedient, hell-deserving child to be willing to obey.

"'Twas all of thy grace we were brought to obey,
While others were suffered to go
The road which we chose as our way,
Which leads to the regions of woe.

Then give all the glory to His holy name,
To Him all the glory belongs;
Be yours the high joy still to sound forth His fame,
And crown Him in each of your songs."

One of the leading preachers in the south was at my house some years ago, and he told me he was traveling and preaching. He said his shoes were about worn out from walking, and I think he said his feet were sore or blistered, but the impression to go on was so strong he could not stop. Now the question is, Was it the love of God that was compelling him to go, or was it some impure motive? Was the carnal mind the moving power, or was it the power of the love of God? If I knew it was the love of God that causes me to go, I think I would be exceedingly happy. But I am so cold, so dark, so weak, so ignorant and little, sometimes I am alive to my situation. I am past seventy years old and must soon be called to try the realities of a never ending eternity. Have I, poor, weak, unworthy thing that I am, ever tasted of the good word of God, and the power of the world to come, and have all the impressions and power that have moved me been brought about by the love of God, or have they all been from one Paul writes about where he says, 2 Cor. xi. 14, 15, "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works?" It was love that caused the Savior to bow the heavens and come down, and suffer, and die, and save his people from their sins. So Paul says, Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it. Then if he loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation, redeeming the time because the days are evil?

Your brother in hope of mercy,
Isaac R. Greathouse.

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"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."
Proverbs 16: 18

OBITUARIES

SISTER FLORENCE M. HARBOUR

Sister Harbour was born in rural Patrick County, Virginia on December 13, 1892, the daughter of Andrew Jackson (Jack) Martin and Sarah Tilley Martin. Early in life she began to accompany her parents and some neighbors as they walked out of the mountain on their way to Liberty Church. Somewhere during that time, the Lord softened her heart with love for that Church and for the cause in which it believed, and she never returned from following after them.

In December 1926 she was united in marriage to Carper Alex Harbour, a widower with three children: Elwood, Eva and Henry Harbour. In due time the Lord blessed her and Brother Harbour with three more children: Mary, Sadie and Robert. The balance of her temporal life was devoted to her family, and in her mind and in theirs, she was a true mother to everyone of the six children. She never labored anywhere outside of her home.

On the first Saturday in June, 1969 Sister Harbour related to the Church her long-standing desire for a home. She was baptized by her pastor, Elder Bennie N. Clifton. Thereafter, she attended services as long as she was able, except when she stayed at home when Brother Harbour was unable to come. Brother Harbour united with the Church in September 1970, and both of them were blessed to adorn the profession which they made.

After an illness of several weeks, Sister Harbour died at home on November 5, 1985. All that human hands could do was done for her by her devoted family, both during her illness and long before. Her funeral services were held at Liberty Church on November 7, conducted by Elder John Wingfield, and burial followed in the Church Cemetery, near the remains of several members of her earthly family.

Sister Harbour was survived by her husband, Brother Carper; all six children, Elwood, Henry and Robert, Mrs. Eva Wagoner, Mrs. Sadie Koger and Mrs. Mary Flippen; nine grandchildren, two great-grandchildren; and one brother, Forest B. Martin. She will be sorely missed by all her brethren and sisters as long as our memories remain, but we have the consolation of knowing that she is peacefully asleep in the everlasting arms of our dear Saviour.

Submitted by:
Elder John Wingfield

SISTER ALMA WRIGHT SHORTT

We, the County Line Primitive Baptist Church, feel "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble, 46th Psalm, and at the request of the two surviving sisters write this memorial of Sister Alma Wright Shortt, born January 17, 1903 and died December 19, 1985.

Services held at Wood Funeral Home were conducted by Elder Noel F. Conner and interment was in County Line Cemetery, Floyd County, Virginia, on December 21, 1985. She was married to David G. Shortt who died October 30, 1982. Surviving are one daughter, Gearldine, one son, Rural and one daughter-in-law, Berneace. Also one grandson, Gregory, and one step-grandson, Maurice Quesenberry, and one step-granddaughter, Mrs. Joyce Hunt. Three step-great-grandchildren also survive. She had two surviving sisters, Mrs. Mamie Barton and Mrs. Dovie Nolen, both of Bassett, and one brother, Moyer Wright of Floyd-Virginia.

She was not quite one year old when

her father, Mr. Thomas George Wright of Patrick County, Virginia, died. Her mother, Mrs. Emma Houchins Wright, moved back to Floyd and after a few years married Mr. Willian R. Turner. They both joined County Line Church in 1920, and in 1922 Brother Turner was ordained Deacon. Both saw their daughter's interest and felt she was drawn to County Line, and longed to see her come home. The work of grace in her heart, her step-father saw became heavy on her heart and when she became more afflicted with heart and unstable blood pressure conditions, she while preparing to come to County Line meeting in June 1985, fell and broke a bone near the hip joint. While in the hospital she was visited several times, and in talking with her and in prayer, said "she loved the people at County Line, and would tell them so if she ever got there again." In the presence of her son, Elder Conner endeavored to pray and left. She seemed strengthened but said she was not reconciled about her surgery. We again visited her July 4, 1985, and prayer was made at the bedside again, and asked if she was of the same mind to tell her love for County Line, "and she related how she saw the beauty of God's people at one Association held at County Line, how happy they looked, and desired to live with them," but said, "I do not see myself as I see them, but to live with them is my desire, yet felt too unworthy." We received her into the fellowship of the church and hoped to see her baptized, what her step-father had so desired to see before he died.

She was a lovely daughter, a good wife, a precious mother and grandmother, good friend and neighbor. She and her husband living near County Line Church had a special care for the Church and Cemetery, and they gave time, work, money and cared for many visitors in their home from the church meetings.

She taught five sessions in public schools. All will remember her, and we do miss her. She had surgery after much delay July 11, 1985. She came to County Line meeting once a few minutes, and once to stay the whole meeting, four days later, she suddenly passed away. She gave good evidence that our loss is her gain, and we await the glorious resurrection morn.

One in a dream, several years ago, saw her standing in the water at the usual place of baptism. She was dressed in a beautiful white wedding gown and seemed to be gazing into the heaven above her and us, so happy and rejoicing. In the dream we remember she did not seem to see those standing on the banks waiting to see her baptized. And her baptism was of the Spirit we do feel.

Elder Noel F. Conner, Moderator
Catherine A. Houchins, Clerk

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"Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee."

Psalms 55: 22

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PSALM 121

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hill's from whence cometh my help.

My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.

He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.

Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.

The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; he shall preserve thy soul.

The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

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EDITORIAL

GAL. CHAPTER I, VERSE 9-11

"As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man."

The Apostle Paul begins this epistle by stating, he being chosen an apostle is, "not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead."

We are most sure, without a doubt whatsoever, that if Paul was called of God, which we have every evidence to believe he was, to preach, he was also called to write as both are directed by the power of God. Therefore we have that certainty that whatever Paul is writing to the churches of Galatia is true in that day and is to-day.

Paul here is defending what he has preached and is preaching, as I believe each of God's called ministers delight in doing to-day.

We are taught in the above scripture as well as His law written in the heart of all true believers, that of all that preach; many men do preach another pospel, or one that isn't taught in the bible.

I think he is warning all that know the truth to beware of, to stay away from, notice the danger of etc. making sure they follow not or believe, any other gospel than that Paul is setting forth or that they have heard, the Word of God verifying all.

We have heard and believe that which is the nearest the truth is the most deceiving. Follow not doctrine which has an uncertain sound, but weigh all matter as to correctness.

Paul says "do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? There has never been an age or time in the world that the true and pure doctrine of God was pleasing to the entirety of mankind or would be received of the unbeliever or any one the truth had not been revealed to. His people shall know the truth and the truth shall make them free and that means in part, free from a doctrine of gospel that is untrue.

Do I seek to please men or God? should be a question in the mind of all that know the truth, especially those who are called to stand before a God fearing people, as all His people are. Notwithstanding we know not which are His, yet to please men or to seek to please men, would erase each from being a servant of God. This is a serious matter

brethren.

As God's minister stands, or is given to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ; is pleasing those he is before fore most in his thoughts or speaking that which is indited in his heart, in the fear of displeasing God, who call him by His grace. I fear many times, is it thus with me, but trust by the grace of God, there have been times, I cared not what men might think or say, but spoke from the heart, if ever I have. I don't believe if we were to try to please all that attend our assemblies we could preach the gospel of Christ.

We must declare He is of one mind, and changes not, the same to-day, tomorrow and forever. That all who ever know Him must be taught from above by His holy spirit. To know God is life eternal. Teaching we didn't choose Him but He chose us and called us into the knowledge of the truth at His appointed time. He looked down and there was none to help, His own arm, whom I believe is Christ, brought salvation.

Did not Paul declare as Jesus himself did while on earth, that all good and perfect gifts come down from above, from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. We see Him as knowing all things, then does He wait for us to ask for what we need before He knows? Are not all our blessings stored up in Him from eternity, not a possibility of us missing one blessing. We are being kept by His power as He brings us to desire many times the very thing He has determined to give. "And we know that all things work to-gether for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." Do we believe this, or are we apt not to declare He doeth all things well and none can stay His hand? This should be our theme if we believe in Him.

If we please men we are not the servant of God. Then do we declare all we believe or withhold part to please men.

We read of a day when every knee will bow and every tongue confess He is the Lord of glory. Have we been prone to water down the unchangeable gospel of Christ? If so, we have not or will not be His servant. A servant tries to please the one he serves, if he serves people, he is loyal to his employer, in fear of being discharged. If a servant of God, expecting nothing as a reward, just made willing to serve God, in fear and trembling.

May we ever be found striving to declare that truth once delivered to the saints, giving His name all the honor, praise and glory for all time, trusting He will guide our hand to write, as well as our speech.

Submitted by,
Elder J. R. Williams

CORRESPONDENCE

July 23, 1986

Elder Kenneth R. Key
721 Willard Street
Greensboro, N.C. 2405

Greetings:

I am so sorry to read the obituary of Elder W. J. Berry, Sr. in the June issue of the "Signs of the Times". He was a man that stood by his convictions and held the truth as "Gold tried in the Fire." I remember visiting him at his home and talking to him for several hours about the goodness of God to His people. Which were foreknown and chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.

God's people are called with a holy calling here in time without repentance, unto grace and not by works. They are born not of corruptible seed, but incor-

ruptible and they cannot be unborn (John 3: 6-8). They are never more reckoned in the First Adam, but pass from death to life in the second Adam-Christ!

They are set apart by one offering. Perfected in Christ forever. Kept by the Power of God, members of one body of Christ. They are scaled by the Spirit of truth unto the final pay of Redemption, for they are "Accepted in the beloved."

They are given eternal life and this life is in God's Son. They shall never perish, eternally, nor can they be separated from the Love of God, which is in Christ, for they are loved "Unto the end."

They live because He lives also, and their lives are hid in Christ. Therefore, they are God's people, a Gift to His Son, Jesus Christ. (John 17: 6-7) What a wonderful God is this!

It is sad to live to be old and see so many of God's dear people go on in death, but like Job said: "I know Thou wilt bring me to death and to the house appointed for all living." I like to think of that house, not as the grave, but that heavenly house appointed for all the elect family. May this be of comfort to all of the household of faith everywhere.

Sincerely,
Horace E. Walker
6430 Kelley Street
Salem, VA. 24153

Saltillo, Tx.
July 23, 1986

Elder Kenneth R. Key
721 Willard Street
Greensboro, N.C. 27405

Dear Elder Key,

It was surely a pleasure meeting you the night we stayed with Elder Lenard Key. We enjoyed our visit with you. I was very impressed with your preaching during the Smith River Association.

Brother Key, for several months now I have noticed a particular interest in the subject of Gods will. I have been impressed to write on the subject, because it has to do with the vital subject of faith and practice. Any preaching that does not give due observation to both, becomes either Legal or Antinomian and will lead away from vital truth.

It would seem in studying and observing Church history when controversy on either side there is a tendency of preaching continually on one side and lose sight of the "This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." No question about it; when left to the flesh we go one way or the other and become unconcerned with Zions condition and God's judgement on us, (Rev. 2:23 and etc.). Then charging it all on the sovereignty of God and hiding behind the effectual workings of the Spirit as a refuge for our own sin of neglect. On the other hand, go in the opposite direction by imbibing a legal spirit.

Which of us can say we are not guilty, therefore I have tried in this article to stay free from both errors. If you deem it worthy of publishing, I would like for you to do so. It is at your disposal.

In much love for you and yours,
C. M. Haygood

THOUGHTS ON THE WILL OF GOD

The all encompassing will of God is proven by the following Scriptures Ps. 115:3; Isa. 46:10; Dan. 4:17,32; Rom. 9:18, 19; 11:33-36. God's decree and purpose, called His will, has ever been carried out, without change of which it is utterly impossile for any people, devils, or angels to change or

frustrate. "_____ For who hath resisted his will?" Rom. 9:19 "_____ His ways past finding out!" Rom. 11:33 "For who hath known the mind of the Lord_____" Rom. 11:34.

Are we obligated to use this as a guide or rule in practice as taught in the scripture? No, it is not for us to know. "And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power," Acts 1:7 for it is secret and "secret things belong unto God" Duet. 29:29 and unknown as the above Scriptures prove. Therefore His secret will and purpose being unknown, there can be no duty or obligation to endeavor to use it as a guide for our actions. There has been no event of time that has escaped the secret will and purpose of God. This is complete and perfect, no such thing as change or chance or uncertainty, "_____ neither shadow of turning," James 1:17. Thus proving it utterly impossible to change or transgress His secret will. Again is this a rule for us to endeavor to be governed by? No, if so it would be like a ship on the sea trying to steer it's course by an unseen star or compass or something to charter it's course by, it will very likely come to shipwreck, however, if it's course is chartered by a compass or star clearly seen it would surely bring it on its way.

When we try to adjust our conduct to God's purpose and decree as the rule of our life, thus error follows; which places a special emphasis on one portion of Scriptures and neglecting of others. As time goes on we become crystallized in expressions and when we endeavor to use His secret will, purpose and decree as our guide we develope a seeming dislike and shuning of treating upon the many precepts, responsibilities and commandments laid down in the Scriptures as a doctrine to be avoided.

Now let us further consider as taught in the Scriptures the other BRANCH called the Lord or God's will, His commandments and our obligations. Out of fifteen passages of Scripture in the New Testament that I have noted, I have chosen four for reference called the Father or God's will, "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven," Matt. 2:12. "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother," Matt. 12:50. "That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lust of men, but to the will of God" 1 Pet. 4:2. "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." 1 John 2:17.

From the beginning of time God commanded Adam "Thou shalt not eat of it." Gen. 2:16, 17, 3:11. The various commandments making transgression a sin. Man was put under law and obligation, (See November 1984 issue of The Signs of The Times, pages 248-251) not to sin. In every sin we set up our own will, forsaking His commandments, "Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight_____" 2 Sam. 12:9. Are we not under law and obligation to observe his (Christ or God's) commandments? Surely, Paul charged Timothy how we OUGHT to behave and conduct ourselves. "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou OUGHTEST to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth," 1 Tim. 3:15. Also "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." Ecc. 12:13. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matt. 28:20. After Christ came and fulfilled the law to a jot and tittle the justice and

wrath of God was completely satisfied for his People. "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Heb. 10:14. Are we now under no law or obligation? Surely we are. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. 5:48. "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." 1 Pet. 1:15, 16. "_____ That ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." Col. 4:12. Though such obligation and standard is not reached in this life; "—— The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak." Mark 14:38. As Paul says "Not as though I had already attained either were already PERFECT! but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus," Phil. 3:12 "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," verse 14. The spirit doesn't enable us to live a perfect life in keeping all His Commandments but it is our desire.

The arminians teach that it is absurd to suppose that God required that which they are unable to do, but not so. This branch of God's will called the will of the Lord, which is revealed in the Scriptures for our guide is a perfect rule, Matt. 5:48, 1 Pet. 1:15, 16. But we are continually sinners (it is not given us to be perfect in keeping all his commandments) and transgressors if we ignore Gods will of precept; called his will, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven," Matt. 7:21. "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother," 12: 15. In denying this branch called God's will we run into contradiction of thought in the Scriptues. "Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye OUGHT to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus." 1 Thes. 4:1, 2.

Let us, the Lord willing, harmonize God's purpose and decree and the other branch of his will, our responsibility to Him. This is not engaging in a dangerous curiosity, but is in harmony and consonant with both. The revealed will of God is our duty and responsibility and is not speaking of his secret purpose and decree, but our guide and responsibility.

God's children are not a lawless people, "To them that are without law, as without law (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ) that I might gain them that are without law" 1 Cor. 9:21. And "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be," Rom. 8:7. "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man," Rom. 7:22. Here we quote from a writer of old. "But to suppose that whatever God requireth of us that we have power of ourselves to do, is to make the effectual working of the spirit of non-effect, our duty is our duty constituted unalterable by the law of God whether we have power to perform it or not." Let us carefully note here our ability and our duty and obligation are not synonymous and does not have the same meaning in all cases.

It was God's command by Moses to Pharoah to send the Children of Israel out of Egypt (Exod. 5:5, 7:2) but he did not have the ability and it was his sin and destruction. It was Christs command, "Jesus said unto him, if thou will be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me," Matt. 19:21, but this was not in his ability, (V. 22) "But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sor-

rowful; for he had great possessions," and this was his sin. A certain lawyer stood up "Tempting him (Christ) saying, what shall I do to inherit eternal life," Luke 10:25. Christs command to him "thou hast answered right; this do and thou shalt live." Luke 10:28. Also Christ commanded him again, "Go and do thou likewise." Luke 10:37. But this was not in his ability and was his sin. Also Christ commanded his disciples in Gatsemane, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation," Matt. 26:41. And this was not in their ability and was their sin.

All our ability to obey is from the Holy Spirit, He must work both to will and to do, (Phil. 2. 13). There is a great difference between do such a thing as a command and obligation and you shall do it by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit. One is our duty and responsibility and the other by His effectual spirit. "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin." John 15:22.

Look at some of the exhortation given us as our duty, for example, of the four chapters of Colossians, two of them are preceptive and exhortation; of the six chapters in Ephesians the last three are preceptive and exhortation; of the five chapters in First Thessalonians, the last two are preceptive and exhortation, and all through the New Testament we find these precepts and commandments. Has Paul's charge to Titus become obsolete? "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men." Titus 3:8. My brethren do we not all fall very short in these things? But if love is in our heart we will not use such exhortation as a rod in a legal way; as to use the precepts for others and not as a rule for ourselves also, provoking a spirit of bitterness and division, almost if not denying the power of God; as though we by ourselves could lift ourselves up by our own boot straps.

So as we are blessed to preach in love, "I can of mine own self do nothing," John 5:30. And that "Without me ye can do nothing," John 15:5. As it has been said, "We have no power from the Holy Spirit unless we live in a persuasion that we have none of our own."

On the other hand, let us also preach and be just as insistant. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," Phil. 4:13. Dear ones, anytime we loose this balance of truth and begin to maximize the work of the flesh, I can't (John 5:30, 15:15); and minimize the work of the spirit, I can (Phil. 4:13); we are in trouble; or vice-versa. To continually make judgement about our disability and placing it against our ability and responsibility and God's commands; this my brethren is not exalting the grace of God, but our disability and weakness. Did Peter's weakness and disability of denying Christ release him from the sin of doing it, "Thou shalt not bear false witness." God charges sinners for their sins, not their weakness, not their disability. It is not right to try to justify ourselves, pleading our weakness and disability as an excuse for not obeying His Commandments. Dear brethren, how easy it is to enlarge on the purpose and decree of God to the extent, without realizing it, of developing a seeming dislike and shun the many precepts and responsibilities; taking refuge behind the effectual working of the Holy Spirit as a release from such obligations. Oh, how dependant on the Spirit to keep us from extremes both ways, (Isa. 31:21).
Gods children know where all their obedience comes from and how helpless they are. This gives great occasion for prayer and supplication to Him, to make His strength perfect in our weakness.

It has ever been Satan's cunning craftiness to tempt us one way or the other. Do we not all feel we have experienced

these temptations? May it please the Lord to keep us from both extremes; departure in doctrine or in practice, the things that accompany salvation, "But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak," Heb. 6:9. But give each their proper place preaching all the counsel of God, "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God," Acts 20:27.

To SHUN is to disguise any important truth, at least to decline the open publication of it for fear of displeasing those to whom it ought to be declared. If we go either way; one side arminianism----legalism. On the other, losing sight of the many obligations and exhortions laid down in the Scriptures, which begeteth a spirit of indifference. Even going so far as denying responsibility or duty, much less exhorting the brethren daily. "But exhort one another daily, while it is called today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin," Heb. 3:13.

God's Children do not go through this world to heaven ANYHOW, but ONE HOW, by the GRACE OF GOD. This grace in their heart does produce a real change in their life bearing fruits of love, joy, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, crucifying the flesh and its affections. (Gal. 5:22) "Teaching us that we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world." Titus 2:12.

Teaching us that there is a necessity of striving to enter in at the strait (low, small and pressed) gate. (Matt. 7:13) It is not just professing "Lord, Lord," but in doing this revealed will and here in this sense we are justified by works. (Matt. 7:21. "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead being alone," James 2: 17. "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD?" (Verse 20). "Was not Abraham our father justified BY WORKS, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the alter?" (verse 21) "Ye see then how that BY WORKS A MAN IS JUSTIFIED, and not by faith only." (verse 24) "_____ so faith without works is dead also," (verse 26) surely it is not as easy as we might think to be a follower of our Lord. The Scriptures teach a vital experience of truth in the heart and fruit of the Spirit manifested by a godly walk and conduct.

When as enabled by the Spirit to exhort in love to such things, there is a tendency of some to hurl back the arrow of exhortation, rather than let it stick in their conscience by such false charges; "unsound, unsound," quickly change the subject by comparing NATURAL things with SPIRITUAL instead of matching or comparing Spiritual things with Spiritual. "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth; but which the Holy Ghost teaches; comparing spiritual things with spiritual," 1 Cor. 2:13. Now he is preaching you can do something without the grace of God; all we want to hear is comfort, there is no room for reproof, rebuke or exhortation "Preach the word; be instant in season, our of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." 2 Tim. 4:2 (See also Dec. 1984 Signs, Pg. 271, 172 Article on Secret and Revealed Will of God, which I feel is sound.)

As we are blessed of the Lord our obligation to His revealed will, when we are blessed to read it in the Scriptures and hear it preached we should simply endeavor to obey it, not tarrying to inquire into His hidden purpose and decree or whether we shall be able to perform it or not. But my dear brethren, let us be very careful not to break the commandments of God, for the sake of what has been handed down to us, by tradition, "Why do ye also transgress the commandments of God by your tradition," Matt. 15:3. And try and repeal and empty the commandments of our master of all

their meaning and force to us, as a guide and duty, just to suit our own tradition. "Thus have ye made the commandments of God of none effect by your tradition," verse 6. "Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. 1 Thes. 4:1, 2.

This makes me fear and tremble. Oh, how far short I have come and failed my brethren, so many times, but some how, by the mercy and Grace of God, I continue to this day and I want to live and die with you.

Now I feel a timely exhortation is in order "Finally my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his might." Eph. 6:10. And again "Be of good courage, and let us play the man for our People," and thus leaving it in his secret will and purpose, "_____ and the Lord do that which seemeth him good." 2 Sam. 10:12. "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord," Prov. 16:33. (See also Acts 2: 23-26.) If we be his children, it is all working for our good. "_____ we are already more than conquerors through Him that loved us," Rom. 8:37. "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord_____;" Phil. 3:1. "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say rejoice." Phil. 4:4.

Written in Love,
C. M. Haygood

August 4, 1986

Dear Elder Key:

I don't suppose you'll ever know how much it ment to meant to me your calling me this a.m. I've been awful cast down in spirit and health since I last saw you.

Sure wish I could have been with you all at Greensboro meeting Sunday, Aug. 3. You sounded on phone as if indeed you did have a good meeting with the two visiting ministers from Texas and Alabama. It would be worth the drive for me to be there from S.C. every meeting day but it is now I don't trust my car.

The following is some of my experiences before I joined the church: All of a sudden this spring morning this terrible pressure began to build up in my chest and I knew it was God dealing with me but I didn't know what to do to get relief. I suppose this was what they call the Spirit of Conviction dealing with me and as well as I can remember, this stayed with me for maybe 36 or 48 hours. I called the Pastor (Preacher) to ask what to do and couldn't find him. I went to a certain woman in the office building where my business was because she was a regular church attender. I sat down in her Beauty Shop and she knew something was wrong and asked if she could help. God stopped my mouth so I could not speak. Finally, I thought of my mother at my home. She was a very religious person of her belief so I figured for sure she could tell me what to do, so I closed my business and raced home and told her I had to ask her something. When she asked what my problem was, my mouth was stopped again. So I knew no one else to turn to and I felt I would explode in my chest, so I hit the floor upon my knee's and cried aloud in tears "God Have Mercy." Then came wonderful relief and I got up rejoicing with a smile.

Sometime later in Mt. Airy, N.C. I was at home alone when I first experienced the power of God in the warmth and power of His Spirit upon me. If it wasn't a reality, it appeared to me, the house was shaking and cracking, I was reading where Abraham was justified by Faith without works. I thought I was going to be translated as I had read about Enoch. I begged God not to take me then so I could tell others, because I

thought at the time I was the only one who knew this wonderful truth. So it happened. But still for a time after this I was a terrible Pharisee.

I was placed as mens adult Sunday School Teacher. I questioned the Pastor for preaching works instead of Pure Sovereign Grace. His answer was that he knew it but the congregation dind't want it.

So I got onto the assistant Pastor for the same (only he was worse). He kept telling me if I believed so strong about Grace, I should join that old bunch of Primitive Baptist until I decided maybe I should and did after I searched for you people on Tate Street until the 3rd Sunday. When I finally found you, I remember Elder King spoke that day, and I left perfectly blessed. I hope I'm never turned to another belief than pure Amazing Grace. But I was still suspicious and had the Bible in question. I wondered if this was for real or was it my human emotion being stirred up, until one day it was proven to me with no doubt there is a real God.

I was in Jones Studio on Elm Street retouching negatives with no thought of God or religion on my mind, when all of a sudden, the most powerful and warm spirit began to descend upon me like heavy downpours of rain. It was so powerful it reminded me of the Scripture accout (King James) of the day when John the Baptist did Baptize Jesus and said without any ifs, ands, or buts and without doubt "Behold the Son of God which taketh away the sins of the world." Isn't it amazing that later when John was in prison, he doubted when he sent the messenger to Jesus (and you know the message). Just think of so many religious people who claim they have no doubts. Also when Jesus was on the cross he doubted evidently when the spirit was taken from him and he said "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." Elder Key and to all my Brethren and Sisters in Christ, I say as long as I'm in my right mind, I'll never again doubt there is a true and living Spiritual God. I'll try to shorten this letter but feel I must refer back to when I cried unto God for mercy and got relief, I didn't even know who Jesus was or what he meant to me. And this reminds me of when Jesus said "I knew you before you knew me." I hope all my writtings and sayings are to the comfort and edification of the chosen saints of God and as it is written, "In all thy ways acknowledge The Lord Thy God." I believe we all do fail at times, I would rather it be so as it is written. I am so scared of this God Jehovah so much of the time, for it is written he is a terrible God as well as a merciful God. But I'm still relieved that my destiny is not in the hands of flesh and blood.

I'll sign off for now because there is no end. And believe me if I do any boasting, let it be in Christ Jesus and I do desire to be humble before God and his chosen Saints. Please forgive me if I seem otherwise.

Carl Richard Hoffman
4 Arbor Avenue
Hartsville, S.C. 29550

August 18, 1986

Dear Elder Kenneth Key,

You asked me when you visited my wife and I sometime back to write a letter for the Signs of The Times. I had never felt I was able to write for such a good paper and for the good people that read The Signs.

To start off with, my wife's health is not good enough to travel any distance much of the time and am afraid to leave her for fear she will need me.

I would like to express a few thoughts on the 6 verses of the 5th Chapter of Romans. I think Paul expressed justifi-

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

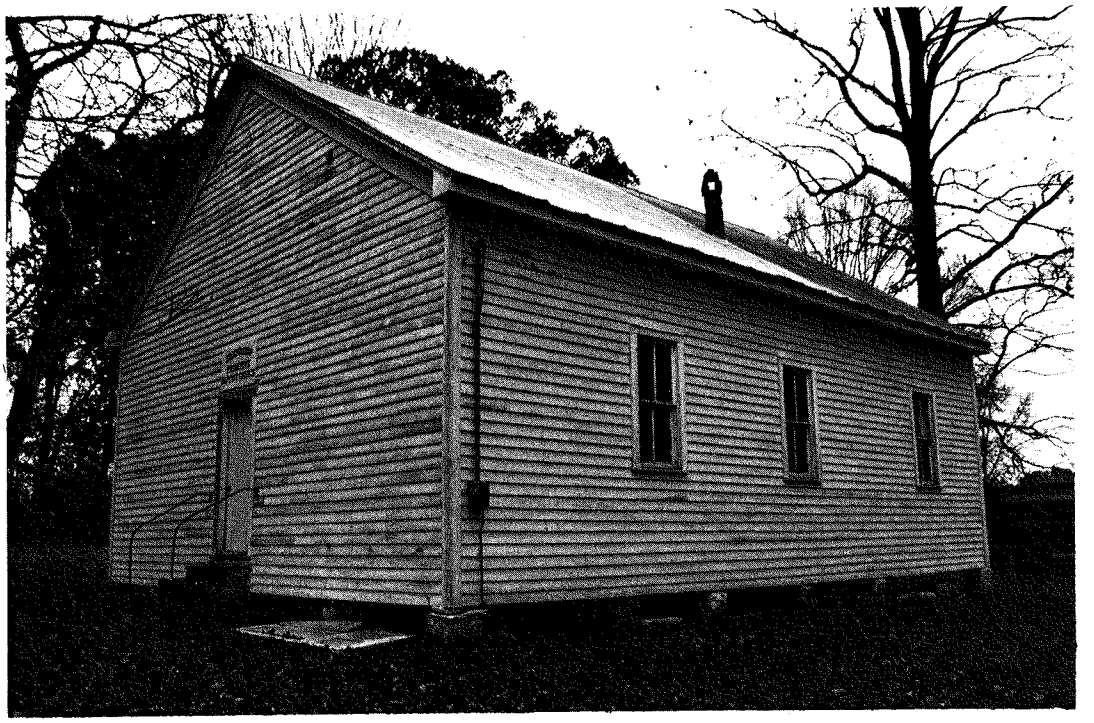

FRIENDSHIP PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Friendship Primitive Baptist Church is located at White Pine, Tennessee (Jefferson County).

The church was established in 1819. It is one of four churches composing the original Powell Valley Primitive Baptist Association.

Our meeting time is 11:00 A.M. Sunday following the 4th. Saturday (April through October). Elder D. R. Cabbage is the pastor.

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cation very beautifully. Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into the grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulations worketh patience: And patience, experience, and experience hope; And hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

I have been thinking along these lines a long time also the 8th and 9th verses of Ephesians, For by grace ye are saved through faith and that not of yourselves: It is a gift of God. Not of works of man, lest any man should boast.

I may not have written it exactly as it is written in the Bible. But I guess I have read and re-read it ever since I was a child. Remember my wife and I to your family and may God bless you both.

Saved by Grace of the Lord
Jesus Christ if saved at all.

Carroll Ellwanger
716 Lawsonville Ave.
Reidsville, N.C. 27320

P.S. I love all the people at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church and try to attend whenever possible or any other Primitive Baptist Church whenever possible.

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Contentnea Association will be held with the church at Goose Creek Island on October 10, 11, and 12, 1986.

The Church is located about 35 miles Northeast of New Bern, N.C. between Hobucken and Low Land.

All of our Brethren and Friends are invited to share the joy and fellowship of this meeting.

Milton Fountain, Clerk

HOPEWELL ASSOCIATION

The one hundred-second annual session of the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Association will meet, God willing, with Salem Church, Pickens County, Alabama, beginning on Friday, October 17, 1986, to continue through Sunday.

The meeting house is three miles south of State Highway 86 on a farm road which joins Highway 86 west of Bear Creek, near mileage marker 22.

All lovers of the truth are invited. For further information, call (205)556-5157.

Levert Howell, Clerk

DURHAM
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God, Durham Primitive Baptist Church looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift. They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed Sunday afternoon July 20, 1986 at three o'clock at Durham Church, Durham, N.C., for the purpose of examination of this gift, brother Clifton Roberson, and if found qualified, be ordained to the full work and service of deacon.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together. The meeting was opened by prayer by Elder Paul Lambe. Elder Cleo Roberson was elected as moderator and Elder Kenneth R. Key to serve as clerk. Brothers Brinkly and Whaley acting as spokesmen for the church delivered brother Roberson to the presbytery.

The qualifications of deacon was read as set forth in 1st Timothy, 3rd chapter. Examinations followed by Elder Prescott and the presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of Brother Roberson proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder W. D. Griffin. The charge was delivered to Brother Roberson by Elder H. W. Wray. He was then delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. A copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to be sent to the Signs of The Times for publication and a copy to be given to Brother Roberson.

The presbytery was dismissed by prayer by Elder Cleo Roberson.

Elder Cleo Roberson, Moderator
Elder Kenneth R. Key, Clerk

ARTICLES

"Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters."—Job xxxiii. 13.

When God made his covenant with Abraham he did not tell Abraham the ways of anything in that covenant. He made it, and it should be taken as his right, for he who made it cannot do wrong nor sin. He is not under law to any man or government. He is God. He told Abraham that in his seed should all the nations be blessed, and that in Isaac should his seed be called. This Abraham received, and believed. Yet that faith should be tested, or he should be tested in that faith. Isaac is born. Abraham saw that part of the fulfillment of God's promise to him. But here is the trial: "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." Abraham did not say, God, you have promised me that I shall be a great nation, a father of many peoples, and my seed shall be in this very child. Now if I go and kill, and burn him thy word will not be true. None of these things were with him. The faith which God had given him was great, and that constituted him the father of all the household of faith, of the children of God. He believed that even though he should kill him God was able to raise him from the dead. That God's word was sure, that it could not fail. With this faith he arose, saddled his ass, took his servants and Isaac, and went, as God had commanded him, into the country of Moriah. His faith was not seen by Isaac at that time. Abraham had fire, he had a knife, upon the shoulders of Isaac he had wood. All were Abraham's, and prepared by him for the fulfillment of the word of God to him. As they went there seems to have been no inquiry in the mind of Abraham. Whatever there may have been in his mind was known only to God, for he was silent. There he was still to know that he who had commanded him was God. There was an inquiry in the mind of Isaac: Father, here is the wood, the fire, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering? He knew nothing of why they were going, only to offer to God an offering. The faith which God had given to Abraham saw in the distance the Jehovah-jirah of God. Not a word of all the promises of God could fail. He had not reached the top of the mount of God, but faith told him that that holy altar was there. "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering," is the answer of faith. Could he see his dying son? We do not know, but if he could he could see the resurrection of God in him. He would raise him from the dead. His word was sure. He who is to be a blessing to all nations is to come forth from this child. That is the promise, and he who promised will surely fulfill all he has said. Isaac shall live. God will provide for himself an offering. All Abraham as a man could see was Isaac. But what did it differ? God had power over death as well as life. All were his to command, rule and overcome. Dead or alive may Isaac be, but the promise of God is sure. Isaac must live. He is the father of the promised seed. This faith moved Abraham to go with unfaltering step to the very spot. When he was there God showed him the place. There he built the altar to receive the sacrifice. The wood was put in order, the sacrifice was bound and laid upon the wood on the altar. Not one doubt is seen. The whole is a scene of faith in Him who had promised, and commanded. It is His ability which is being trusted. At last came the fatal step: the knife is taken ready for the last blow toward the offering. Sure there never

was such a trial in any other man, and yet there is not one lame step in it all. But behold the end of faith: "Abraham, Abraham," said an angel of God. "Here am I," said faithful Abraham. He had not failed in one point of all that God had commanded. "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me." Abraham had seen the provision of God only by faith, but now he looked, "and, behold, behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram, and offerd him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son." Did not God know before all the way? Was there anything in all this that was new to him? Doubtless he did this to prove to Abraham his wonderful power to keep him in the most trying times which could come to him, and to all his seed that he was able to save unto the uttermost them that come to God by him. This is what he shows to us in his wonderful dealings with us in our poor hearts as he saves us from the power of our sins. Thus he brings our blessed Jesus to our view and we are able to see in him all we need, and that he is ever the Jehovah-jirah of our God to all his people. He did not give an account of any of these matters to Abraham, only as he fulfilled them in him and to him.

I have been made to feel that Elihu was a true type of the gospel ministry, and yet he could not convince Job of sin. His three friends had failed. To me they are striking figures of Arminianism which we have to contend so much with in the warfare with our old carnal natures. These know not the truth, and therefore cannot teach it. I have not been able to quote from them as the servants of God. They knew nothing of his inspiration. Eliphaz knew nothing only as a natural man. None of his words were inspired of God. They are not Scripture given by inspiration of God. He was a son of the tribe of Esau. He was of the non-elect family. When he said, "Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upwards," he only knew what he said literally. He had no inspired knowledge of what he said. It is fully proven in his other expression, "He shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." God has never made any such promise to his people. He has not in any way, nor at any time, limited his goodness to his people. His word to them is, Lo, I am with thee alway, even unto the end. I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. The everlasting arm is ever underneath. Such are the words of God which are embraced in the faith of God. It was in these things that Abraham was moved forward in the service of his God without faltering step. Any who will read the fifth chapter of the book of Job will see that right in the beginning of his sermons to Job Eliphaz showed himself to be a strict Arminian. There is where you will find those quotations. He and his friends came to hold a protracted meeting to convert Job. This is the first protracted meeting I have any account of being held. Three preachers to convert one man. They began as if they were in earnest. They went at it with fastings. However not one of them had felt the conflicts which Job was feeling. There they could be no more than miserable comforters to him. They could not enter into his sorrows, for they did not know them. When Elihu began to preach the gospel to him he did not answer Elihu. But he could not bring the needed comfort to Job. Finally God spake, and the mouth of Job could not answer. He had said things which were too wonderful for him, therefore he put his hand upon his mouth and spake no more. His mouth was a stream of words before the three Arminian preachers, but how very quickly it was sealed when God spake. You know how it is. You

have traveled that way, and there is where it has to be learned. There is no other school where any one may learn of God. It was in the dealings of God with Abraham that he learned of him, and so must it be with all who learn to know Him and the power of his resurrection.

L. H. Hardy

Topeka, Kansas

Dear Sister:

I was so overwhelmed by distracting sorrow and distress I seemed to have forgotten the omnipresent God, and had no thought to call upon him as an ever-present help in time of trouble. But while so forgetful of him, he showed me, as I humbly hope, that he had not forgotten me, by speaking these words in my ear: As the days of a tree so shall the days of my people be. Then, in the midnight darkness and loneliness, in the midst of an ever-changing throng of a speeding train, I lay back in my seat, and with closed eyes, oblivious to all about me, a picture was spread before me such as I have never been able to portray with tongue or pen. The winter just passed has been another continuous siege of distracting grief and tribulation and my mind reverts to the view I then had, and I have wished I might express to those of "like precious faith," and also of like trials and conflicts, some of the thoughts those words have brought to my mind. Being spoken to me as they were, I thought they were Scripture, but the only text I can find is in Isaiah lxv. 22: "They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." No doubt the connecting sentences have a deep significance, and I would love to read after the pen of some one who is given understanding of them. As for me, if I attempt to search and find out God, I am apt to find that his judgments are unsearchable and his ways past finding out, and can only speak of the things which are given and revealed to me. As I humbly hope, by his Spirit, and leave them to his elect, precious, to judge whether they are of him, or only the emanations of fleshly imagination. If it was not a token of remembrance from a compassionate, unchanging God, then I fear I have never received a seal of his love, as he sometimes allows me to dare hope he has given me. I was often made to reflect on the words, "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness." It seemed that in this the Lord quickened again my slothful, forgetful heart, and for a little while my troubles were put in the background and I was given a little surcease from the tempest raging in my mind, and instead thereof a season of refreshing from his very presence, which he made me feel was going with me.

I have thought that the "tree" here spoken of represents Christ, who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and as his days so shall the days of his people be. As I lay back, with closed eyes, I seemed to see a little tree in all its verdant, springtime beauty, clothed with leaves and blossoms. In the warm sunshine and gentle breeze it waved and beckoned with its spreading branches, and how sweet to rest beneath its shade, enjoy its fragrant bloom, and reflect on the prospect of fruit to follow. So shall the days of my people be. Where is the similitude of the days of a tree and the days of the Lord's people? Let us go back to the early experience of a child of God,

"When converts first begin to sing,
Their happy souls are on the wing;
Their theme is all redeeming love,
Fain would they be with Christ above."

Oh what lovely blossoms, and what a sweet savor of Christ they send forth as

they call and beckon to us to "come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." "Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein." The trees of the field do clap their hands, the cedars of Lebanon (the older brethren) bow at his feet, and praise him in fullness of joy, resting in the blessed promise that the Lord will not leave himself without witnesses. Perhaps the little tree had stood unnoticed, apparently dead, until the little leaves began to grow and the signs of life involuntarily began to appear. What rejoicing now that we see it is not dead, as it appeared, and now we hope to see the sweet fruits of the Spirit evidenced later on, for they shall take root downward and bear fruit upward. But, as the days of a tree, by and by the sun does not shine so brightly, clouds appear, and oh how dark it becomes. A storm arises, and in the raging the poor little tree sways and bends, the lovely bloom is beaten off and swept away, or covered with earth. The storm passes, and the little tree is left standing, not so proudly, perhaps, but of a more sore dignity, as, the promising bloom gone, the fruit buds begin to appear, and as the fruit increases in the upward branches the root is taking deeper hold in the earth. So are the days of my people.

"It is not long before they feel
Their feeble souls begin to reel;
They think their former hopes are vain,
They're filled with sorrow, grief and pain."

Cannot every child of God go back in memory to the time they thought they would always go on their way rejoicing in the bloom of their earliest love, believing the enemies of their carnal nature were all slain, and would never vex or annoy them any more? But alas, the little clouds begin to arise, vexations come, and the lovely bloom is beaten off as the sorrows of the world worketh death to the sweet spiritual enjoyment, perhaps leading them as far as Peter, to even deny the Lord, saying in doubt and unbelief, that after all it is only a delusion, and they were deceived and had deceived others. Where now is the blessedness ye spake of? The beautiful promising bloom which looked so pleasant is gone from their view, swept away and buried in the storm of earthly cares and sorrows that has so unexpectedly fallen upon them. "But the root of the righteous shall not be moved." The storm passes, and they find themselves still standing in the faith of God's elect, cast down, but not destroyed. Oh then the fruit buds begin to appear, as in humbleness they are brought to see that it is not in their own strength they stand. "I am the root and the offspring of David." This is the Root that extends downward in the earthen vessel of mercy. Each can say, O Lord, "my goodness extendeth not to thee," but his goodness does reach down to every vessel of mercy. The strong downward Root holds firm, and will not let them be overwhelmed. They are made to realize that "the root of righteous yieldeth fruit," which is borne upward in praise and thanksgiving to God for deliverance from the storm. The many storms of affliction and sorrow, trials and tribulations, perils and persecutions break and beat upon the "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord," until they bow and bend, so shaken in mind they fear they cannot stand; no, not another day.

"I fear at last that I shall fall,
For if a saint, the least of all."

Yet when the storm passes, and the Sun of righteousness once more beams forth, then in this light, and not their own feeble sight, they see it is not in their own strength they still stand, but the Strength of Israel has held them. Not by works of righteousness which they have done, not by might, nor by power, but by my

Spirit, saith the Lord. Much more of the cherished fruit is gone. But when blooming youth is gone, and old age comes on, we are made to realize that it is the bitter, gnarly fruit of self-confidence and fleshly ambition that is being beaten off. It came from earth, and must fall back from whence it came, for "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up," but the "tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord," its fruit shall remain. One by one we see every earthly hope and joy beaten off and swept away, but the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace and fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, oh nothing shall ever be able to separate us from that. How gladly we should have the gnarly, poisonous fruits of the flesh pruned away, so that we might shine forth as the morning, with not a cloud to intervene between us and our Rock, who shelters us in this weary land of storms and trouble. As the tree grown older, as the growth in grace and in the knowledge of truth increases, the poor tempest-tossed child of God seems to gain strength in the storms, often stands more firm, and is not so easily tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine; does not so lightly bow and bend to the lo heres and lo theres, but the sweet fruits of the Spirit are borne upward to him, the Strength of Israel, the Root of David, in the earthen vessel, has kept him from falling, and enables him to say, I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me. If it is his will that I shall weather another storm he will give the old trunk, stripped of all the foliage of youthful hopes and ambitions, every branch of earthly aspirations and joys broken off, strength to endure. But oh the weakness of the flesh. How we do shrink and dread when we see the storm coming, though there is a "needs be" for it all, and we know that

"Not a single shaft can hit,
Until the God of love sees fit."

How we do feel the need of the prayers of all saints, for it does seem at times that this flesh and heart will surely fail. Oh may he, by the power of his might, when the adverse winds do blow, give me strength to still stand in the way, ready for whatever is in the counsel of his will to come next.

"As the days of a tree." How often have we seen the tall cedars, the sturdy oaks, beaten by the storms of many seasons almost to the ground, nothing left but their bare old trunks, and to all appearance have lived their time and served their purpose, yet they do not quite fall; not yet, their downward roots have not yet parted from the earth, they must wait the appointed time to fall. So shall the days of my people be. Old age is come, the bare old trunk is stripped of every allurng earthly joy, until there is nothing left to live for, and "I long to lay my armor by, and dwell with Christ at home," for

"Surely like a withered tree,
No fruit to me is found,
Why do I live, O Lord, I cry,
A cumberer of the ground?"
"When a few more days I've wasted,
When a few more scenes are o'er,
When a few more griefs I've tasted,
I shall fall, to bloom no more."

But not yet. The downward Root has not yet parted from the earthen vessel, and though I often feel, especially in the heart-rending trials I have endured of late, that there is no fruit borne upward from such a withered and weather-beaten old trunk, yet all the days of my appointed time I must wait until my change come.

One night as I lay thinking of the trials and conflicts of the Lord's peculiar people these words came to my mind with force, "I see men as trees walking," and I thought how like a tree is the walk of the Lord's people. None can see men, nor the people of God, walking as trees, until led out of the town, or world, as was

the blind man, by God's own hand, and how short the time until made to see that as the days of a tree, so are the days of the Lord's people. He sometimes lays his hand heavily upon us, showing us what great things we must suffer for his sake, until we cry, "Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me." Whom he loves he rebukes and chastens, and it is his chastening hand that makes us look up, until we see clearly every man, every child of God, walking the same path, every one enduring the same storms and afflictions, for if ye be without chastisement, then are ye bastards and not sons. There is no place of rest for us in the town, or world; we cannot go back there, or tell to any in the town of the things we see clearly. They know nothing of the reproach of the cross, and have no sympathy for the mourning people of God. But to our own house, there we may freely go, sure to find there the sympathy and fellowship we crave. There all speak the same language, weeping with those who weep and rejoicing with those who do rejoice. Here we see men as trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, walking the same road, buffeted on every hand by storms without and within. The same storms that beat and bend one old tree beat upon all, and though one may feel that the storm has brought him a little lower than the rest ever get, yet all the rest feel the same way: less than the least of all saints. But in this is our fellowship and our love made perfect, and we often find the lowest tree bears the sweetest fruit, as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood. What a comparison. The low apple-tree is the one that bears the fruit. The ones that stand the highest are not always the most fruitful. But "as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons." "Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly." His loved ones among the sons of earth are lowly. A proud look he hates and abominates. The proud he knoweth afar off. But the fruit of his love on the lowly trees is sweet to our taste; yes, sweet, because when we are made to look up we see that his banner over us is love, and know that, "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me." "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

As the days of a tree, so are my people. As the tree falls, there shall it lie. It falls to earth, and returns to the dust as it was, and so shall it be until the bright morning of the resurrection, when the Lord shall bring again in power that which fell in weakness, and will clothe it again in the beauty of holiness, then shall we be satisfied. Every idol that now intervenes between us and our love will be swept away, and we shall see his face, and never, never sin. No more storms of darkness and sorrow falling upon us, no more crying of pain and anguish, no more griefs and heartaches, no more trouble and mourning, no more losses and crosses, no more wars and fightings, the conflict will be over, our warfare ended, and God himself shall wipe the tears from off all faces, for, "as one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." Then shall we see him as he is, and be like him. "As the days of a tree [He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief] are the days of my people."

Submitted to the discretion of the editors, and through them to the people of God, walking as trees, toiling, sorrowing, rejoicing, the half of which can never be told.

One of the least,
Mary Ellison.

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."
Mat. 7:12

ROMANS VIII. 28

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God."

These words bring to our minds solemn thoughts and reflections, of the ground they cover, and the real true meaning of the words here spoken by the apostle, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God. How hard it is for poor insignificant creatures to understand or comprehend the working of his almighty power, as he (God) works all things after the counsel of his own will. As we contemplate the majesty and glory of our God in all his works let us ever remember that "as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." It seems to me that Paul was here contemplating the work of God from the beginning to the end, from creation to the final glorification of all the redeemed, and not a single link in the chain of God's providence could be left out and his most holy will and purpose accomplished for his dear saints and his glory. We poor finite creatures cannot sit as judges of what our God should do or not do, or divide between the good and the bad, from our viewpoint. It has often been said that God predestinated the good things, but not the bad. Who of us is able to sit as judge and draw the dividing line; place the good things on the right, the bad on the left? Let us examine a few things left on record for our learning. God created Adam upright, a good created being, gave him a law. He broke that law and fell under its curse: sin and death uoon all his posterity. Now we all know that our God could have made Adam strong enough to have withstood the temptation, but in the purpose of God, with an end in view in the far future, he made Adam just as he was. We would place this evil step on the left, not comprehending the thing to be accomplished: the glorification of our God and his only beloved Son Jesus, the Savior of sinners. But I want it distinctly understood that God is not the author of sin; man is wholly responsible for all his sins and misdeeds. We note again among the "all things" the selling of Joseph. Joseph had a dream. (Read the narrative.) Was it a mere chance dream, or id the God of heaven inspire it? He had a purpose in it, therefore it was a link in the chain. Joseph told it to his brethren and they put their interpretation upon it (and a correct one). The evil of their corrupt nature arose and they conspired against Joseph and sold him to merchantmen, who carried him to Eygpt. See the sorrow of poor old Jacob. Would we not all place this on the left, with the bad things, as old Jacob did when he said, All these things are against me? Dear reader, how often have we said in our hearts as Jacob did, not seeing the end? But, reader, follow Joseph in all his career, shut up in the prison cell by evil intention, is this for good? Yes, in the purpose of God, though yet hid from mortals. Pharaoh dreamed a dream, Joseph was there to interpret it. Suppose Joseph had not been there, then what? But he was there to interpret the dream. Seven years of plenty, seven years of famine. Joseph finds favor with the king, and is made head over all, to save much people alive. God sent him there; the end is good, and when made known his brethren bowed to him willingly, and Joseph told them, Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. Again, the betrayal of Christ by Judas. Where in all the history of the world was there a blacker or more heathenish crime? Yet it was all in the fixed, predestinated purpose of our God. Suppose there had not been a Judas; then what? The Scriptures would not have been fulfilled, nor the purpose of God. It is written, "As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three

days and three nights in the heart of the earth." When Jonah took ship it was evil upon his part, but God meant it for good. He was to learn obedience by the things he suffered. The storm came. Was it by chance? Certainly not. They cast lots, and it fell upon Jonah, the guilty one, and they cast him overboard. Then what? Our God was superintending it all, and had prepared a great fish to swallow him up and carry him to the place appointed, ordained or fixed. Had our God control of that fish? Most assuredly he had, and when the three days and nights were up he was delivered. So they "were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Now how any true believer can repudiate and hold up to ridicule this blessed doctrine I cannot understand. I am satisfied many are prejudiced by wrong interpretations of evil doers. I have heard of some, in trying to refute the doctrine of predestination, taking up some atrocious crime of murder, and holding it up in all of its most heinous nature, crying out with a loud voice, Tell me that God made that man do this awful deed? Now that is a false statement. I have traveled extensively in twenty-two states, and Canada, and have never heard any one ridicule such an idea, and I could not fellowship any one who did. God is not the author of sin, neither tempteth he any man, man of his own lust is tempted. I know of one man who thus tried to justify himself in an evil deed, but the church excluded him, and did right in so doing. I have never favored setting this up as a standard in church fellowship, but have opposed it. I have full fellowship for those who do not see this as I do, and can stand hand in hand and fellowship with them, but cannot fellowship those who hold it up to ridicule. In all my travels I have met but one man who favored it as a standard. I opposed it, and do yet. For the elect's sake the world stands, and many of the dark scenes that take place, that are beyond our comprehension, will be among the "all things" in the providence of God, and in some way, though remote, be for the good of his people, individually or collectively. The wrath of man shall praise God, the remainder of wrath will he restrain. The wicked are his sword for the chastisement of his people. What a sweet comfort when we can rest all in his blessed hand and power, and know that the darkest scene is as necessary as the brightest one. Darkness and light are alike with the Lord. He dwells in the thick clouds; he maketh the clouds his chariot. Truly it is a day of darkness. Darkness has covered the earth, and it truly seems gross darkness to the people, and I sometimes wonder why his wrath is not poured out; but for the elect's sake will the world stand until the last one for whom Jesus died be made manifest.

"Chained to his throne, a volume lies,
With all the fates of men,
With every angel's form and size,
Drawn by the eternal pen."

What a blessed comfort to feel that

"The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will."

Dear reader, I trust you may be favored to gather a few crumbs of comfort from these scattered thoughts, for there has been a little comfort to my soul as I have penned them, and a relief to an exercised and burdened mind. The dear Lord bless you all, and lead and guide us all in the pathway of peace and righteousness.

Yours in sweet gospel fellowship, though the least and poorest in my Father's house.

P. W. Sawin

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

JOHN XV. 14, 15.

"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends: for all things I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."

Having meditation regarding the love and friendship of the Lord's people we quote the above as a basis of remarks to write unto you, our friends. Jesus expressed the first sentence, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you," which calls us to note the mutual love existing between Christ and his people, who are members of his body. They, being members of his body, are active in the body in accord with the mind, as the living Head commanded. The doing of the things commanded is but the action of life in his people. The action of life is not produced by a dead body, hence we must be alive to have active life. Man in nature is dead in trespasses and sins, and hath no spiritual life until he is quickened by the Spirit, and in this spiritual life is given understanding, and the Spirit maketh manifest the spiritual man which is in obedience to the Son, even as the Son is to the Father, and all the commandments of the law of the Spirit of life are in the heart and mind of every child of grace, which identifies them as his friends. What great love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the friends of his Son, and having that love for his commandments which constraineth us to be obedient children. The cause of Christ embraces fellowship, order and faithfulness in his house, and all these are commanded by him in his Spirit, of which we trust we are partakers. Henceforth his Spirit taketh of the things of his and showeth them unto us. The child of grace has the mind of Christ, and the relation of obedience rendered by the Son to the Father is in the hearts of all the subjects of grace, and whatsoever he commands they do, and are a unit in action as they are led by him as their Shepherd, and they do what he doeth; as sheep of his pasture, they feed, and know he feedeth, and none other can give that food, for it cometh from the treasure of heaven, and none can give it but the Son. His friends know the things committed by the Father to his Son, and he hath made known unto us all things that he heard of his Father. The Father commanded his Son, and his Son was obedient to his Father in all things commanded. Jesus declared that he came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him. Jesus taught his disciples in word and act, and by the revelation from the Father they knew he was the Son of God, and the works manifested were beyond the power and comprehension of the natural man. The disciples of Jesus were spiritually minded, and all the commands of Jesus were felt and reverenced, by which they could say, "Thou hast the words of eternal life." Dear brethren, as we are united in the body, and every member of special use, we feel we want all to be present and feel the love one to another flowing from heart to heart. When the light of grace shines in the walk and conversation of an individual, all who see light rejoice in the light, and a special friendship is felt for the one who walketh in the light. This one perhaps has had a hope but a short time, yet is bearing fruit unto God through Christ, and we know it is a precious fruit, because of its sweet and delicious flavor. Having the sweet and precious fruit borne upon the tender branch, we are continually questioning, Why do they not come to the church? not realizing they must wait the Lord's time. When they feel the power of

his word, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done," they are made willing in the day of his power. We feel Jesus is a friend to the sinner, and one who never leaves nor forsakes, but keeps and saves with an everlasting salvation; where his Spirit ministers it is a sacred place. Jacob, when he lay all night with a stone for a pillow, and saw, as it were, a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, and the angels of God ascending and decending upon it, though restless and weary, yet, with the presence of God, he could say, This is none other than the house of God. The members of his body as his house are to each member as the poet expresses, "There my best friends, my kindred dwell, there God my Savior reigns," and if possible we would forever be in praise, and enjoying the sweet fellowship of the saints. We do not wish to be separated from them.

"Bless be the tie that binds
Our hearts in christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

Dear brethren, it becometh all as followers of him to be faithful in every good work, keeping in mind the admonition of Paul to Timothy: Study to shew thyself approved unto God. In all deliberations as children of light their light shineth forth from their hearts, and others see of their good works and glorify God. Their good works are the working out from their hearts, which God hath worked in them, both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and not the works of natural man. We can often sing, My dearest friends in bonds of love, whose hearts in sweetest union prove, &c.

We have some feelings along this line of thought we cannot express, but we hope the Lord hath commanded us, which enables us to realize a heart-felt power incomprehensible to the carnal mind, and we know we cannot find him out by searching, but continue hoping unto the end. We desire in our conversation, either oral or written, to be mindful of the friends Jesus had in mind when he spake. All people with whom we are surrounded that we are blessed to live peacefully with those we call our friends, and are in this natural life, but not of the spiritual, though one might be both. Dear friends, may we be kept in that dear uniting love that will not let us part, and may it be felt in our hearts that we can say, come thou with us. May those who have gone after other gods, whom we have felt were of us, be made to know the friends of Jesus, and to those who have not been given strength may it please God to give strength for their day in trials, and may we be favored to see them coming home to Zion with song and everlasting joy upon their heads, doing whatsoever he commanded them.

Elder Charles W. Vaughn

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 1986

Harold T. Clayton, NC.	$ 7.00
Mrs. Nannie W. Wiggins, NC.	2.00
Frank Simkins, VA.	10.00
Julian L. Ray, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Frances Jarvis, MD.	2.00
Mrs. Ala Mae Noviello, TX.	2.00
Mrs. Clemmie M. Bishop, AR.	5.00
W. W. Abshire, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Annie C. Lawrence, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Lessie W. Tilley, NC.	5.00
Mrs. Ruth Vick, TN.	5.00
Mrs. Jessie Lambert, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Shirley DeBow, NC.	2.00
Elijah Palmer, AL.	2.00
Mrs. B. T. Hollandsworth, VA.	3.00
Mrs. Ina Hendrix, TN.	7.00
Mrs. Catherine M. Vass, NC.	7.00

OBITUARIES

GEORGE W. EARP

Brother George was born December 21, 1912 and died May 12, 1986, Making his stay on earth just over 73 years. He was blessed to offer to our church and was received in full fellowship just one day before he passed away. Brother George was in the hospital at this time, therefore, was never baptized by water, but we feel he was baptized in the Spirit.

For some time, Brother George had attended our church. We all felt he was a believer of Salvation by Grace and it was nothing he could do toward his salvation.

To know him was to love him. We feel Brother George is no longer suffering from pain and is now resting in peace and love with our Saviour. We send our sympathy to his family and feel our loss is his eternal gain.

Done by order of conference at our June meeting.

Elder Joe Sawyer, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

BROTHER EMMETT FAUCETTE

Be it resolved that we the members of Monticello Primitive Baptist Church do humbly submit to our Father's will in the calling home of our beloved brother and deacon, Emmett Faucette on March 11, 1986.

Bro. Faucette joined at Monticello on Easter Sunday, 1963. He was a devoted member, a faithful member, and served the church as a deacon from shortly after he joined (June, 1963) until his death. He suffered much the last few years but was always present on meeting day unless he was physically unable to attend.

Left to survive him are hs wife, Iola Pritchett Faucette, a son, Phillip, a daughter, Virginia, and one granddaughter. Also surviving him is his sister, Ila Herbin.

The funeral service was conducted by his Minister, Elder Paul Lambe, and included a hymn sung by his granddaughter.

Bro. Faucette was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the resurrection day.

Written by request of the members with a copy sent to the family, the Signs of The Times, and one kept for the church records.

Shirley Donovan, Clerk

ELDER JAMES ROBERT HOLLANDSWORTH

It is with sadness we feel to make the attempt of writing an obituary of our dear Pastor who passed from this life March 30, 1986, and yet such joy and trust thankful to God for the blessing of having known one so trusting in his allwise God. Elder James Robert Hollandsworth, age 82, born August 12, 1903 to the late Thomas and Martha Turner Hollandsworth. Surviving are his beloved wife, Nannie Mae Hollandsworth, a daughter Mrs. Joe (Peggy) Pegram, Bassett, Va.; three sisters, Minnie Lou Foley, Patrick Springs, Mattie Lee Coleman, Kernersville, N.C. and Ida Ruth Foley, Ridgeway, Va. A brother, Green Hollandsworth, Collinsville, Va., and three grandchildren.

Brother Jim as he was known to us and many brethren far and near, walked humbly and softly among his brethren preaching most firmly Salvation by Grace, holding steadfast the Precious gift that (his God) had so richly blessed

him with. Brother Jim has so many beautiful and strengthening experiences of the Lord speaking to him and calling him by name, saying be still and know that I am God, and I will be with thee even unto the end. Of which we truly feel he (the Lord) was. His conversation was constantly on the scriptures and word of God, but he so humbly would correct one if he felt they were in error, showing a love for truth and peace, small in stature but when overshadowed with God's love he was bold and strong. He had an experience even to the end of being shown he would be called (home) on Easter of this year. He would so often tell us he would not be here long, we tried to close our mind to this, as our loss is so very great, but yet feeling our loss is his eternal gain and his reward is great.

He joined Riverview Primitive Baptist Church in 1935 and was ordained to the Ministry in early 1940. He was Pastor of Riverview, Bethel and Reed Creek Churches, and was blessed to serve each so devotedly.

His funeral was conducted at Riverview Church on April 1, by Elder Junior Conner and the following Elders: Paul Lamb, Leonard Key, Kenneth Key, Denver Simpson, Amos Hash, Hale Terry, Bro. Carl Terry, Tom Turner, Larry Hollandsworth, Noell Conner, Tom Soloman, Lane Carter, William Holland, Leonard Brammer, all spoke so comforting, with burial in Roselawn Burial Park in Martinsville, Va. Our loss is very keenly felt at this time, but our Lord "doeth" all things well and we feel Bro. Jim has left us a great example that we should adhere to.

Written by request of his beloved wife and a copy be sent to each of the churches he served, and one to his wife.

Unworthy
Posey & Elsie Poindexter
Clyde & Lucy Johnson

ROSA GRAHAM RATLIFF

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst Sister Rosa Graham Ratliff. Sister Ratliff was born and reared in Patrick County, Va., on January 17, 1893, a daughter of the late Jacob and Mary Graham. She departed from this life March 15, 1986 at the age of 93 years.

Sister Ratliff was the widow of the late Pierce Ratliff who died April 28, 1959. Also she was preceeded in death by two infant daughters and two sons, Diamond and Daniel Ratliff.

Survivors are: Mrs. Rufus (Sadie) Joyce, Mrs. Jack (Nannie Belle) Martin, Mrs. Moir (Margaret) Hatcher, all of Stuart, Va., and James Alvis Ratliff of Patrick Springs, Va. Also (Sister) Josie Foley of Eden, N.C., a brother Mr. Edd Graham of Stuart, VA., 33 grandchildren, 70 great-grandchildren, and 19 great-great-grandchildren.

Sister Ratliff joined Liberty Primitive Baptist Church on the first Sunday in June 1940, by experience and was baptized by the late Elder S. D. Koger, Moderator at Liberty Church.

She attended Church as long as her health permitted, she lived in Blue Ridge Nursing Center for about 14 years before her passing.

Her funeral was conducted by her Pastor, Elder John T. Wingfield, on March 17, 1986, at Liberty Church and burial was in the church cemetery.

We at Liberty Church extend to the family our deepest heartfelt sympathy and hope they may be strengthened by remembering the Faith and Hope their Mother had.

Done by order of Liberty Primitive Baptist Church in conference on First Saturday in April 1986.

Submitted by,
Paul Puckett, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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PSALM 8

O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained:

What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things under his feet:

All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field:

The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.

O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 11/86 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

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Durwood B. Stokes, Sr.
David Raymond Walker

EDITORIAL

FALLING DOCTRINE

Let us repeat that there is not any doctrine that falls except the doctrine of God. He does not drop a conditional doctrine. The angel's testimony was good news. The reason for it being good news was because that the child which the good news of heraldric declarations from heaven were of a saving nature, (Mat. I: 21).

This was (and still is) the best news that poor frail earthly creatures have ever heard. The most of us poor mortals think of angels as coming from above. This declaration of the angel to Joseph is the most precious news that has ever been heard. I am not afraid to say that this was indeed the doctrine, even the saving doctrine of God falling upon poor lost and ruined sinners. The angel was from above; the doctrine that it brought was the saving doctrine of God our Saviour. It falls from God and its manner of falling is as the rain.

May the Lord give us grace to follow this falling doctrine, this falling rain. Before we launch out upon the memorable blessing, let us remember that we are speaking about saving sinners. All of the related figures and parts of speech must fit. God being with us as our guide we must not trifle with what God has said. For just this once let us as blessed of God stay strictly with the Bible. First, let us remember the present text. Losing sight of the given text oftimes leads us into confusion. The text is, to wit: My doctrine shall drop as the rain. Let us remember that this dropping of the doctrine as the rain carries with it slack times of rain. Sometimes it comes down exactly as the rain does, somes a heavy downpour, at other times it comes slow and easy; sometimes it comes as a hard crushing hail, of times beating down tender olants; sometimes it seems to us fragile humans, that at times it comes too much and at other times insufficient.

We have a case before us in which poor sinners would charge the Lord unwisely. Let us look in on our brother Jacob. In the outset let us remember that God loved him. It would seem to any one of us that God dealt extremely with him. Some of the time he was on a burning desert; at other times he was in a waste howling wilderness. Let us talk right much about this experience. First in a dry barren dessert, momentarily he was subjected to a waste howling wilderness. None of us know, how forsaken and how miserable that our dear brother was cast down unless we have been there. Let us take a step further with

him in his misery, and as we take this step, the picture changes ans lo it is us as poor sinners that are coming under the raining down of the sovereign doctrine of God our Father. Sometimes we are seemingly cast so far from him that we are ready to cry out, save Lord or I will perish.

But the rain or grace, or the rain of the doctrine is not finished yet. We are about to forget a part of this being taught under the jurisdiction of this lovely reign of grace. This is the place where the teaching begins. let us not forget dear fellow traveller that God was with him all the while, and that the precios truths of the doctrine of god our Saviour were falling into his opened heart and mind. It was a long desert and wilderness road that was laid out for you to travel and to thus learn wisdoms ways.

One thing about this road of travel. Let us keep in mind that this lone wanderer is figurative of the lot of God's inheritance. Each of them were where Jacob was when the Lord found him; each of them have been over each sad event of the life that all of them live. The doctrine drops as the rain fell on the hot dry soil after a long drouth. I fled for shelter; I did not know what to do nor where to turn. If I could have devised a way, and had the strenght to go that way. I would not be where I am now. I did not know that not only had He, as I look back and now hope, found me, but that He was instructing me. Come dear readers, come and listen while I tell about this instruction, At first I rebelled, but rebellion cannot last when the Instructor is present. My hope is that the doctrine fell in a torrent upon me and swept my ways and my thoughts asunder and brought me to the banqueting house of the Lord.

But I must hasten away. There is much dropping of the doctrine of God as the rain and the snow cometh down from heaven thus watering the earth, sending saving showers of blessings to God's little children that I desire to mention. Perhaps we may become confused in following the dropping of the doctrine as the rain, but let us hope not so. At least God said that it shall drop as the rain, and He carried the picture far enough to include the hail and sleet and snow in the figure.

Let us seperate ourselves from all of those that liken themselvs unto God. God does not think as we think. He does not do as we do. We do what we can with what we have to do with. Therefore he does not have any limitations on what he does except that his will is done. He does not work at having the consel of his own will being done, but He works all after the consel of His own will. He does His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and during the reign there is none that can stay His hand (Dan. 4:35). Has there ever been a time when this doctrine was not true? Come tell me, has there ever been a time when He was not doing His will? Has any one inhabitant of the earth ever called His hand and stopped Him from what he was doing? If so, I would be through with the adorable doctrine of His Sovereignty. That very point of divine doctrine gives me something to preach; it gives me something to write about. O yes, bless his dear name. His ways are not like our ways. Bless the Lord O my soul what an adorable doctrine is ours to preach and to write about. He is not us, His ways are not our ways; He does as He pleases and none can say , What doest thou The heavens ARE higher than the earth, and His ways ARE higher than our ways. this history of His ways and our ways being different did not happen. Our ways declare far and wide that there is not any chance with God. Not any happen so with God.

For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not

hither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it to bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and the bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it (Isa. 55: 10).

Dear saints of God, what is the Holy Spirit moving Moses to say to Israel? Is this a fairy story of a man that is raking these things out of his rattled mind. Or is this the inspired writings of God as He continues His instruction to His nation of people? What is he saying to them? I kindly call your attention to the inspired words of God as He moves Moses to write them. Let us look at the little word as. now let us ask ourself, Does it mean what it says? Does God mean to be saying to Israel what he is saying? If God means that the future falling of the rain and the snow is going to be like it has in the past,and that the effect is going to be like that it had been heretofore, will it be that way? To me it is simple for the sake of the little children of God. If there is an alternate way to say it so that no mention be made of the external fixedness of the weather, and seeing that that doctrine is so obnoxious, why did He not avoid that doctrine in both the weather and the dealing of God with the subject in writing about the experience of His dear children?

There isn't now nor has there ever been a man or a set of men, however strongly organized they have been that could regulate the rain and the snow coming down from God out of heaven. I do not mean to ridicule nor to cast odium at anyone, but I have been ridiculed and belittled over America as has been my brethren, until I would like to clear up the misunderstanding about predestination. Let us quote it once again. As the rain and the snow cometh down from heaven and watereth the earth and giveth seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth, it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing where unto I have sent it. In that work, from the dropping of every drop of rain and snow upon the earth to every morsel of crop in the universe was settled in the mind of God from all eternity.

If this does not express absolute sovereignty, what words, what language would you use to do so? Now did God establish or predestinate or fix the weather and the harvest in that way and subject the balance of this universal government without any subjection to everything else? Would He do so haphazardly?

But as He did absolutely fix this part of his government, even so He did fix another part of his royal work. There isn't anybody that can successfully say and prove that He predicated His righteous work in His word going out The origin of the first is absolutely and unconditional the work of God. The second is in and of and from the same source. As one was altogether the work of God, so the second is the work of God. The desired work or intention of God was in both works the same. Imagine dear readers, God working in such a manner of Absolute Predestination in all of the features of this much of his world, and the balance of it left to happen or fall out at random?

God willing, the mercy of God as bestowed upon these objects of mercy on what the AS and So embraces and entails will follow.

In precious hope,
Elder W. D. Griffin

"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."
Proverbs 16: 18

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

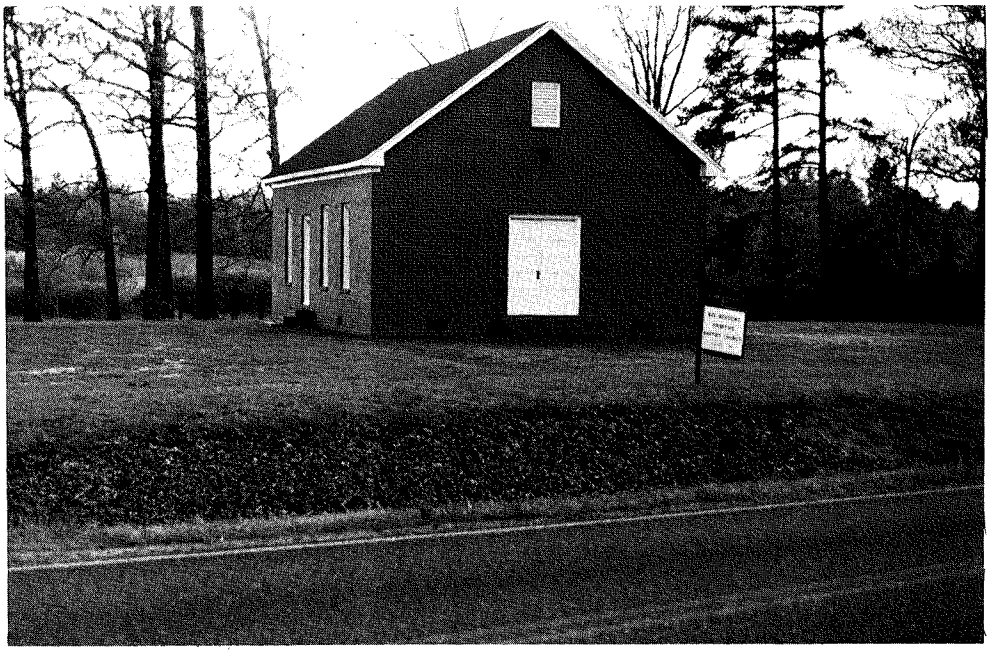

BIG MEADOWS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Big Meadows Primitive Baptist Church was organized 1843. It is located in Chatham County, N.C. approximately 20 miles south of Graham, N.C. Going south from Graham on highway 87, turn right a short distance after crossing Cane Creek (see marker at bridge) at the next road and go four miles to a cross road. Turn left at this cross road and go one mile to church. We meet for services each second Sunday morning at 11:00.

We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Elder Kenneth R. Key is present pastor and has been serving Big Meadows Church for twenty-two years.

CORRESPONDENCE

April 16, 1966
Route 1
Glade Hill, Virginia

Dear Brother Tench:

Recently your remarks in regard to Isaiah 54:11 and 12 moved me to forward to you the same and they are sent in hope it may be a benefit--. Nothing I'm about to write is original with a depraved sinner like me.

"O thou afflicted tossed with tempest."

As in a tempest the heavens are black with clouds and there are just cloudy and dark days and God seems hid by terrible clouds. "Thou has and covered thyself with a cloud that our prayers should not pass thru." Lamentations 3: 44.

"God answers the sinner in the secret place of thunder and proves him in the waters of strife." Psalm 81:7.

So at such times every minister of

Christ is a Boanerges, a son of thunder and according to Mark 3: 17 you see. "God answers the sinner in the secret place of thunder and proves him and it seems as if seven thunders had uttered their voice at once- - -hence it is that God compares the case of the Gentiles under their afflictions to the deluge in the days of Noah. "For this is as the waters of Noah unto me for as I have sworn that the waters of Naoh should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee.- -" Isaiah 54: 9

So the wroth of God is the storm the thunder and lightening which attended Zion. "For a small moment- - - -in a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee."

So Brother Tench, dear brother, to understand the text we must see the God compares the flood to the affliction of the Gentiles.

"The same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up and the windows of heaven were opened." Genesis 7: 14. So that torrents from both above and beneath conspired together. So the sinner has a torrent from above and beneath and between these two is at his wit's end- - -the world tossed alludes to the ark- - -it is unspeakably horrible to be a sailer at sea on a sea that has no shore- - -especially if the waters are violently tossed and there is no prospect of reaching port. Such would be "tossed with tempest and not comforted."

Tossed first upon a broken law which works death and wrath- -tossed in his own heart where he sees nothing but enmity and rebellion, tossed by his past life, tossed by his evil ways- -tossed by a thousand crimes- -tossed by looking to judgement day- -tossed by the fear of The Righteous Judge which shall consume the adversan and from beneath tossed by every performance there is sin in them all- - -and if he looks to encouraging promises the accounts of imposters and apostates toss him there- - - if he looks to the saints their safe and happy state provokes him- - -and if he looks to his sinful companions they sun and ridicule him so that the sight of his nature within and his follies without the accusations of his conscience and the darts of Satan keep him full of tossings to and fro- -both by day and night- - -.

To such a one Jesus says "Behold I will lay thy stones with fair colors."

Any such sea sick sailor might be appreciative of having his feet o a Rock.

"I have laid in Zion for a foundation a stone,""a tried stone," a precious corner stone,"a sure foundation," and upon that rock shalt thou be built, and neither sin nor death shall ever prevail against thee or that, and in doing this "judgement also will I lay to the line and righteousness to the plummet." Isaiah 38: 17

"Zion shall be redeemed with judgement" executed on her surety "and her converts with righteous" perfected by her Covenant Head.- - -

And you that lie unpoloshed in the quarry of fallen nature will I bring to this foundation that I have laid in Zion and as livly stones I will build up a spiritual house.- - -

"They shall be as the stones of a crown lifted up as as ensign upon His Head." Zechariah 9: 16

"They shall be mine saith the Lord of hosts in that day when I make up my jewels." Malachi 3: 16

Here are the stones of which the church is composed and God will lay them with fair colors that they may answer to the foundation which is of sapphires.

Now there are various colors in these precious stones and we see that the breastplate of the high Priest contains mostly the same kind as the foundation of the new Jerusalem.

The lustre and polish they require was

accomplished in their being so violently tossed.

There is not a black stone in the lot. Black was their natural complexion but their comliness is borrowed, and is bestowed--.None are pale in color which is a sign of sickness or death. (Rev. 6: 8) Take it altogether thus: My church is as brilliant as the diamond by sanctification in Christ; in the shining majesty of reigning Grace, as purple as the jacinth; in purifying faith, as rich and as yellow as the topaz; under the great atonement, as red as the sardius; in life and verude, as green as the jasper; as a chaste virgin as fair and blushing as the sardonyx; and even the least of all the family under the influence of My Spirit are full, as green as the chrysolite or the beryl, not dried up but verdant; and every soul upon which the trice light shines like the chalcedony, has got a tinge of the rainbow and is coming into peace with me.

"I will" says God, "lay the foundation with sapphires." This is equally true, "Other foundation can no man lay.- - -" I. Corinthians 3: 11

And what a foundation it is!

In Him every prefection of God shines and harmonized in the salvation of our souls.

Here is the goodness of God to pardon, while justice by the blood of the covenant sends prisoners out of the pit. Life quickens us, omnipotence supports us, and omnipresence protects us.- - -Here pity and compassion are displayed where loving kindness draws us to Him and mercy is built up forever. . . - - - Peace is proclaimed, law is honored, reconcilation is made and grace reigns thru righteousness over all the aboundings of sin, over death and all the craft and malice of devils.

Such is the foundation that God has laid in Zion and this foundation is laid with sapphires.

Here heaven is cleared of all of its storms and trangressors of all their cloud of sin; while every prefection of Diety supports the throne and conspires to uphold and adorn the Church.

With all the best wishes and christian love, I remain your sinful servant.

Julius Bocock

Dear Editors and Elders,

As you will see that this is a personal letter from Bro. Frank Richards to me. I thought it is so good I hope if you think it is appropriate, I would love to see it printed in the Signs of The Times. You can be your own judge and use your own discretion.

I enjoy the Signs very much. I am not a member, but I really love the primitive Baptist.

Very Truly,
Loyd Chance

7600 Willow Oak Ln.
Arlington, TX 76017
July 13, 1986

Dear Bro. Chance,

I hope you do not think it strange of me to write you when I could pick up the phone and call you. I want to tell you how much I do enjoy talking with you. You are one of the few people I can talk to with ease about Scriptures. I hope I do not bore you or think I have a lot of spiritual knowledge and understand ing. Oh how I wish I was given the spiritual understanding of the deep and hidden things within God's Holy Word. We can only have what it pleases God to give us.

Aren't you glad, we believe in a God that gives us the perfect measure of Grace we need. Not too much or too little, but the perfect measure. We didn't or don't

have to go look for it but it is given to us in the self same hour, it pleases God to give it to us.

There is a Scripture on my mind, that I have wanted us to talk about. It has been on my mind for two or three months. The Scripture I have on my mind is recorded in II Peter 3:9, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness: but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." The last half of this verse is what I want to comment on if God will give me the ability to do so. We have recorded in I Peter 4:11, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles (revelation) of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen." If I am able to address this scripture it will have to be by what God reveals to me.

Peter tells us who he was writing to in chapter 1:1. It is to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. This is to all God's people until the end of time. This righteousness is given to us by God himself for His own pleasure. Verse 3 tell us this. I hope you will read all this book. I find it, a very fruitful book.

I will try to get back to what I wanted to comment on. The churches or religions of the world would have us to believe that God is not willing for any to perish, all we have to do is just accept him or let him have his way. We are the ones with the power, all God can do is just make the opportunity available to us like is done in every world church every week. I hope we are given to believe that God is the one with "All Power". That all power was given to Jesus Christ by God and that there is no power in heaven or on earth except it be given by God himself. It is God who works all things – ALL THINGS after the council of His own will. This leaves nothing out. He is the Potter, we are the clay. HE makes one vessel (person) of honor and another of dishonor. Can the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Rom. 9:20-21. In Rom. 11:2 Paul tells us,"God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew." Rom. 11:5 "Even so then at THIS present time also there is a remnant according to the election of Grace." If God is not Willing for any to perish. Can any of God's chosen perish? I do not believe they can. i hope I am not implying that I am one of his chosen ones. I hope I am, but that is God's choice and not mine. We are told that it is not in Man that walks to direct his steps. We are also told our natural heart is despertally wicked. All our righteousness is as filthy rags.

God tells us that He gives his people a new heart when he calls them out of natures darkness into his marvelous light. Paul tells us we are saved first, then called with a Holy Calling. If this is true, then the decision for our salvation was made before He (God) called. He speaks and it is done; He commands and it stands fast. None can stay His hand or say what doest thou.

The New Birth, rebirth being born again is spoken in the pulpit somewhere every Sunday. I think the most beautiful illustration of this is found in Isa. 66. God says He has never caused a child to come forth and then shut the Womb. He has never called one of his little ones to be formed again, and then left the decision for them to come out of the Womb (World) up to them. An unborn baby cannot decide to come into this time World or stay in its Mother's Womb, neither can a child of Grace decide to stay in natures darkness, when called to come into God's marvelous light. The ones He has called and brought forth

are the ones He is not willing to perish. Not one will be lost or left because Jesus said He would not lose a single one, the Father gave him. He came to seek and save that which was lost. He did not fail in his work for he said, He had accomplished all the father gave him to do. If any was not saved that are to be saved, then he still has work to be done. All his suffering, the Crown of Thorns, and finally the piercing of the side was all in vain for some could still be lost that God was not willing to perish.

Brother Chance, there are still many many scriptures I can think of I would like to write about but I will stop for now.

Again, I sure enjoyed our phone conversation and am so glad to see you at Church.

With Brotherly Love,
Frank Richards

Dearly Beloved Brethren,

May the gracious God of heven and earth guide my every thought as I attempt to write again unto you a few of my thoughts of the past several days. I do not know where it will end, but my prayer is that all will be to His praise, honor and glory and for the confort and edification of His beloved children.

Many of my recent thoughts have never entered my mind before, that I can remember, yet they are thoughts on scriptures that I have read, studied and wondered about many times. This brings to mind the scripture that says, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scriptures of any private interpretation." No one can truly understand any scripture in truth until the Lord opens it unto him, as he did to the two men on the road to Emmaus. I do not know that I have been enlightened by the Lord, and being subject to error I ask that you recieve this only as far as it is sustained by Holy Writ.

My thoughts have mostly been concentrated upon the sword of God and circumcision. We read Heb. 4:12: "For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder the soul and the spirit, and the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The word of God is often refered to as the bible, and also one of the many titles properly applied to Jesus Christ as the Mediator of the new covenant and the life of his chosen people. "In the begining was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." "And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." We do not see this sword as a natural metal instrument, but as the words that he speaks, and they are quick and powerful. The word quick, as applied here, signifies life of life giving. Jesus said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall nenver perish." Jesus does not speak unto the words without discrimination. In one place he told the Jewa who he is, yet they doubted and said,"If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. And he answered them, I told you, and you believe not: the works which I do I my Father's name, they beat witneess of me. But you believe not, because ye are not my sheep." When he

speaks to his sheep however, his word enters the heart as a piercing sword, as it did on the day of Pentecost, and pricks the heart and is always effectual. This same sword cuts the flesh, which is soon healed, but does not toucg the hearts of others, therefore they stop up their ears and gnash with their teeth as they did when Stephen preached unto them, for to them the truth is very painful. They stoned Stephen because he preached the word of the truth, and they tried many times to kill Jesus for the same reason.

The word of the Lord is powerful, and it endureth forever. He said, Let there be light, and there was light. He spake and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast. He said, "So shall the word be that goeth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but is shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I send it." That the Word of God, Jesus Christ, is powerful is abundantly demonstrated by his works when on earth, for he opened the eyes of the blind, healed the sick and the lame and raised the dead. He spake to Lazarus who had been dead four days, and Lazarus came out of the grave; he took the hand of the daughter of a certain ruler who said she was dead, and the maid arose; he touched the bier of a dead man and said Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and begin to speak. Jesus said to Martha, the sister of Lazarus, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: In another place he said, "The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." All of the dead, both the just and the unjust, shall hear his voice on that resurrection morn and shall come forth from the grave, but this is not the death under considerations here. When Adam transgressed the law of God sin entered the world, and death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. The first man Adam was of the earth, earthy; and he is the progenitor of all mankind. We, in the flesh, are only Adm multiplied. The second man is the Lord from heaven. As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Adam was flesh and blood and that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. In the flesh there is no good thing, but in the Spirit there is good only. And because there is nothing good in our flesh, that is our propensity of natural inclinations being always evil, we cannot do anything that is good. Our works of the flesh are these; adultry, fornication, uncleanness, lascivious ness, idolatry, withcraft, emulations wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkeness, revellings and such like. "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." If Christ has spoken to you, and his word has entered your heart as a sharp sword, and awakened you to your sinful, depraved nature, shown you your lost and helpless condition, and then revealed unto you that he is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, given you a hope in him, then are you quickened or made alive. This is called the New Birth, the being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. This is Christ in you, the hope of glory. This is not a remodeling of the Old Man which is born of the flesh and is flesh, for this birth is of the Spirit and is spirit and is called the New Man. There are now two men, or principles, occupying one body, and they are completely opposite. One is corruptible, and the other incorruptible; one sinful and depraved, the other

holy and righteous; therefore a warfare is immediately begun, and it will continue as long as the body remains on this earth. Before this new birth our sinful naure did not bother us, for we were not even aware of it, but now that our eyes have been opened we seek to do good and shun evil; but we cannot, for we do not know how. As Paul stated it: "for the will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." In this statement Paul is refering to the flesh and the works thereof. However, we are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in us: and if he is in us, then we are in him also: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." In the flesh we cannot walk in good works, but in the Spirit we MUST walk in them; and these works are the fruit of the Spirit which is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Without faith it is impossible to please God, and faith is a gift of God. Even the works of Abraham did not justify him before God, which is the cutting off of the flesh, and was given faith to believe in God. This circumcision was by sword, or word of God, which is always effective, and not the circumcision made with hands, which is a seal of the righteousness of faith, which Abraham received after he believed. This rigtheousness shall also be imputed to all who are circumcised with the circumcision not made with hands; for this righteousness is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed. This thought is very comforting to me at times when I am given faith to believe that I am one of the seed.

That there is a spirit and soul in man is clearly stated in the scriptures, but I yet have difficulty understanding what they are or the difference. However, the sword does divide them assunder. The Word of God also discriminates between the soul and spirit which is natural to all men, and that that spirit which is produced of the new birth. That which is born of the flesh is divided asunder by the sword from that which is born of the Spirit. The flesh is of the earth, sensual and devilish, while the other is heavenly and Christ-like. The flesh lusts against the spirit and brings a child of God into captivity to the law of sin and death. But this new spirit is after God, created in righteousness and true holiness, and when the two are cut asunder we are made to see how black and vile we are in our natural state, how lost and helpless. At the same time the righteousness of God, the way salvation, his love and mercy are revealed in this new spirit. This new spirit teaches us that all divine understanding is from above, that every spiritual feeling or thought is a gift of God, that the love we have is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit and any good thing about us is because of the imputed righteousness of Christ. What a beautiful revelation this is to a poor lost sinner when he is given a hope in the righteous blood of the Son of God. Before this new birth we were dead in sins and the uncircumcision of our flesh, but he hath quickened us together with Christ and hath forgiven all our trespasses. By the quick and powerful sword of God we are circumcised, for the body of sin must be cut off. All of our fleshly powers, which we only believe that we possess, must be cut off before we can believe that he is the only power in whom we must trust. In Christ we are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ. By the cutting off of the body of sin, we are now made free from the law of sin and death and made alive unto the law of the Spirit of life in Jesus

Christ. Nevertheless there is a law in our members, warring against the law of our mind, bringing us into capivity of the law of sin which is in our members; for in us, that is, in our flesh, there is no good thing. The mind which is constantly warring against the flesh is not the carnal mind, for the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither can be; but we have the mind of Christ, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in us. The war that is waged is a constant pain and promotes great anguish in our soul, but the Spirit must always prevail in each battle, though the war will continue as long as we remain in the world. We dwell in a body of death and long to be delivered from it, andas Paul said, "O, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Yes, beloved brethren, on that great resurrection day we shall be delivered from this body of death, for we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. It does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him for we shall see hilm as he is. And as Davidsaid, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness." O, how sweet it is at times to feel a hope within that we shall be raised and changed in such fashion.

"And is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." There is nothing in our heart that Christ does not know, and this is a great consolation to his children, for he knows how to succor them when they are tempted, for he has already suffered the same temptations. There are times when he enters our heart to give us peace and joy; at other times the sword is sharp, revealing the evil thoughts and intents of our hearts, not to himself, but to us. This turns us around and leads us into right paths: and he that is led by the Spirit of God is a son of God. "Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." Many times we do not comprehend the thoughts and intents of our own heart until his sord enters and enlightens our understanding. This in turn often causes us to fall upon our knees before his throne and beg for mercy and guidance.

Brethren, I have presented only a few of my feable thoughts for your prayerful consideration, but this letter is perhaps already too lengthy. Remember this poor sinner when at the throne of Grace. Charge all error to me, and praise Him for any comfort of edification.

C. C. Wilbanks

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTY LINE MEETING

The next meeting of the West County Line will meet the fifth Sunday in November at Dan River Church. Dan River Church will be host to this meeting. We invite all who have a mind to come and meet with us. All ministers of our faith and order are invited.

Brother Boyd Minter, Clerk
Dan River Church

MEETING THANKSGIVING DAY

The Lord willing, Dan River Primitive Baptist Church will have a night service at 7:00 o'clock Thursday nigh November 27, 1986. We invite all lovers of the truth to come and meet

with us. Song service will begin at 6:30 o'clock.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Pastor
Brother Boyd Minter, Clerk

ORDINATION OF LESTER L. EASON

The Williams Primitive Baptist Church in their conference on Saturday, August 16, 1986, agreed to ordain Brother Lester Lee Eason.

A presbytery was called for the purpose of an examination, and if found qualified, the odination of Brother Eason for the full work of the gospel ministry.

Elder Henry Jones was chosen as moderator. Questioning of the Brother candidate was done by Elder Henry Jones and Elder Reeves Smith.

Laying on of the hands was preformed by Elder Jones and Elder Smith.

The charge was given to Brother Eason by Elder Reeves Smith. It concerned the duties of a minister. Elder Smith also spoke to Sister Eason concerning the duties of a minister's wife.

The work or the presbytery was accepted by the church and Elder Lester Lee Eason was delivered back to the church as a fully ordained minister by Elder Henry Jones and Elder Reeves Smith.

Elder Eason was given the full hand of fellowship by his family, church members and friends.

Ministers participating in the ordination:
Elder Herny C. Jones
Elder Reeves O. Smith

Deacons present at ordination:
Jesse Clyde Pridgen
Arnold Rasmussen
James Arrington
Troy G. Shepard
J. Carroll Williams
John H. Coker

Elder Henry Jones, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

NOTICE

The Primitive Baptist Library of Route 1, Elon College, N.C. is in need of a new roof and other repairs. Since there is no fund to take care of this work, we are asking for your help.

Elder W. J. Berry founded this library and spent many years collecting many books and periodicals of interest to the Primitive Baptist. There are many rare volumes by the Puritan authors of the 18th and 19th centuries; and many books and publications by the Strict Baptist of England: as well as various books and publications by the Primitive Baptist including associational minutes. The materials are available for research to all Primitive Baptist, regardless of factions. Vistors are welcome at all times. Since the death of Elder Berry, many have asked about the future of the library. The library operates under a board of trustees who will continue to keep the library open and available for all who may be interested.

Your reply should be made to Mrs. Mable Berry, Sec. & Treas., Route 1, Box 422, Elon College, N.C. 27244.

Committee of Library Trustees

NOTE: The vault in this library contains valuable old church records such as church minutes. These are not only of the local area but received from Primitive Baptist any where that wished to preserve them at this place. We consider this library a very worthy cause and urge all that can and are interested to contribute to the upkeep and further preservation of this library.

Editors

ARTICLES

PSALMS CXXXIII. 1.

"Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

To behold, in a spiritual sense, means to view with spiritual eyes; hence simply reading or speaking these words naturally does not make one see what the psalmist is talking about. To see what he saw is to be blest as greatly as he, in being able to write. Everyone who is enabled to glean even a little confort from the Scripture is blest in the same way and by the same unchanging God who moved the holy men of old to speak. We can only understand and believe in one way, and that is by revelation in our experience. What we understand by revelation, is the giving to God's children spiritual thoughts and interpretations of the written word in their hearts and in their minds. We learn over and over again that these thoughts cannot be brought about by our own power, and yet we try to hunt up a text and study out a sermon. It is not strange that those who have learned that it is by grace will try this, but it is that we, whose only hope is the Lord, must be taught it again and again. No wonder Paul said, "O foolish Galatians;" and we are foolish when we try to improve the works of the flesh. Surely as it is God who began the work he will preform it until the day of Jesus Christ. It is only when the light shines in us that we realize how much we have been in the dark, and it is only when we get a glimpse of the true meaning of a text that we realize how little of depth and fullness we have seen. When Christ in you the hope of glory says, Behold, you see the treasures of this dwelling-place. With the command comes the power to behold how good it is. Goodness includes strength, durability, perfection, and so we learn that our dwelling together in the unity of Christ is s strong place, built upon the rock of God's revelation, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it: it is durable, lasting as eternity, and perfect as he is perfect. Pleasant it is as the garden of Christ, with her sweet smelling spicies, fruits of the Spirit, flowers of grace; beautiful enough in every way to satisfy every need; pleasant with the singing of spiritual birds that leave the earth on wings of faith, and in open field of God's love they sing "sing surprising grace." All things are freely given us with him, and it is all for brethren, children of God. joint-heirs with Christ, who dwell together in him in unity. This dwelling together in oneness of Christ is so good and pleasant that nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus the Lord. It is like the precious ointment that runs down from the head to the hem of the garment which covers the whole body of Christ, dwelling together with him. Clothed in the righteousness of Christ we can shout in our innermost heart, that holy of holies, where none but he, our High Priest, enters, "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" God give you a rest in that eternal dwelling-place, is the prayer of one of whose only hope is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Your brother, I trust, in him,
DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.

EXODUS XX. 25

"And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone; for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it."

All the institutions for the religious service of Israel under the old dispensation presented a shadow of things to come, the substance or body of which is Christ, and the altar was among the provisions under the law for the sacrificial service of the children of Israel, and in which they were to be distinguished from all other nations and people. Nothing was valid in their religious exercises which God had not himself appointed; and every attempt on the part of Israel to improve upon what God had authorized, was regarded as a pollution. The altars of Israel, in general, seemed typically to allude to the great sacrifice which should be offered up for the sins of the spiritual Israel of our God; but there were other things also to be set forth by the patterns of the things in heaven. as is evident; for although there now remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, since Christ was offered up, yet we find there are sacrifices, figuratively so called, to be perpetuated in the gospel church by those whom our Lord has made kings and priests unto God, and destined to reign on the earth. The precise figurative import of the altar alluded to in the text under consideration, is not altogether clear in our mind; but the manner of building, and the materials of which this altar is to be composed, seems to agree with the gospel order of building up the church. The apostle says, (Heb. xiii. 10) "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle." Peter, in his first epistle, ii. 15, says to the saints, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ;" and in verse ninth, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood," &c. As priests unto God, we certainly are not to offer sacrifices in atonement for sin, as there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, since Christ by one offering has perfected for ever them that are sanctified or set apart unto salvation.—Heb. x. 14. But the scriptures speak of spiritual sacrifices, anti-typical of those carnal sacrifices which were offered under the old covenant, and upon Jewish altars. But the text under consideration forbids that the stones for the altar should be hewn. No improvement is to be made on what God has instituted. The materials for building up a church are not to be fitted for stations in a gospel church by human instruments or tools: like the temple, the church must come together without the sound of tools—without the polishing touch of human art or enterprise. No *front* bench tinkering, no protracted meeting efforts, no moral suasion exploits, no missionary, tract, Sunday School or other humanly devised instruments are to touch the work of building up the kingdom of God. The sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty must come in as the men, women and animals come into Noah's ark, just as God by his Holy Spirit shall teach, guide and direct them.

Again, the effect of lifting up human tools upon the lively stones of which the church is built up, has been sensibly felt in many places where we had hoped the Lord had graciously recorded his name; for instance, a young brother manifests a disposition to preach the gospel, he is thought by the sagacious to have rather a rough appearance, he is unlearned, his manners and language too rude for the polished age in which he must figure, yet he is a good brother, very zealous, and—and what? With a little hewing, and squaring, and polishing in one of our theological seminaries, he would be better qualified to do credit to the altar. With such and similar reasonings, modern religionists, like Israel of old, have provoked the Lord, and sacrificed in gardens, and burned incense on altars of brick, or hewn stone, or in some way in which their own handiwork is used to set off and improve upon the Lord's work

and the Lord's appointments.

Not only in convert or proselyte making do we see human instruments employed but also in regard to all institutions connected with the order of the church. Baptism administered in apostolical simplicity, has become too vulgar for the refined taste of many who claim to be Baptists at this day. They are shocked at the idea of men, and especially delicate females, going down into the river to be immersed in the presence of the gazing multitude, and they are tired of the scandal and reproaches which have been heaped on the Baptists by their anti-Baptist neighbors, and finally they have set their wits at work to hew down the institution, and throw off the offences of the cross; and in this work they have succeeded admirably, so that the Rantizers, of Roman Catholic emanation, have even laid aside their quart basins, and come over to immerse their converts in the splendid cisterns fixed in the basements of Baptist meeting houses, where an apparatus is ingeniously contrived to warm the water in the tub, so as not to chill the qeal of their candidates.

The Lord's Supper has also been hewn down; in many instances the wine is omitted, and water, or water in which dried raisins have been soaked, is substituted.

The laws for the government of the members of the church have not escaped the human appliances for modification. The New Testament is not sufficiently clear and explicit to answer as an only rule for the faith and practice of the saints, without some of the ingenuity of human invention.

In short, there is nothing connected with the faith or practice of the church of Christ, that is suffered to remain precisely as Christ has given authority; some improvement has been attempted, and all such improvements are regarded as a pollution of the altar of the Lord. Let us then be admonished to adhere strictly to the law and the testimony, and turn not aside to the right hand or the left.

J. C. Philpot

PHILIPPIANS I. 27.

"Only let your conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ."—**Phil. i. 27.**

This exhortation to the Philippian church, is equally applicalbe to the children of the kingdom of Jesus Christ to the end of time. With a singleness of heart and purpose, it becomes all the followers of our Lord Jesus Christ to walk worthy the vocation wherewith they are called of God. We know that it has frequently been slanderously reported of the saints of God that they say, "Let us sin, that grace may abound;" and is it becoming those who bear the name of Jesus to give the least currency to this calumny, by a careless indifference in regard to our daily deportment? God has called us unto holiness, and if we have passed from death unto life, we cannot live comfortably in the indulgence of sin. Perhaps no greater reproach can be inflicted on the house of truth, than for men of corrupt minds and licentious habits to embrace the profession of it. Their unrighteous course is frequently brought forward by the enemy, to the deep mortification of the children of God, and urged as the legitimate consequence of adhering to the doctrine which we profess. The church of God is bound to maintain a strict discipline over her members, and every individual member is bound to watch over his deportment, and not suffer sin to rest on any brother unreproved. Every soul that has been taught of God, knows that the true tendency of the doctrine which we profess is to swell the heart with love and gratitude to God

as the Author of our salvation. To contemplate the eternal, discriminating and invincible love of God towards us, without feeling our souls drawn out in fervent desire to glorify, love, bless, adore and praise that Savior who hath loved us and given himself for us, would be a strange thing indeed. It does not require that we should live under the false impression that our final acceptance with God depends on our works, in order to impel us to action.

"Not by the terrors of a slave
Do we perform his will;
But with the noblest powers we have,
His sweet commands fulfill."

Men who profess our faith have no claims on our fellowship while their faith is dead; and that faith which does not produce a conformity to the laws of Jesus, is dead, being alone.

While we as a people reject works as a ground of acceptance with God, we are bound also to reject that description of faith, in whatever form it may be presented, which does not dictate to us a correspondence between our profession and our conversation or practice.

J. C. Philpot

"The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honor is wisdom."
Proverbs 15: 33

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VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

ISAIAH XI. 6, 7.

"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a young child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox."

Pursuit to a request from a reader of the Signs, living in Chicago, Ill., we will try to give our views on the above subject. Like so many other prophecies in the book of Isaiah that looked forward through unborn time to the gospel age, this text quoted above also describes in figurative language that which the Lord's people in the gospel dispensation were to witness and experience, but which was never apprehended by those who lived under the law except by faith. Here we have set forth that which is contrary to nature, which the nature of men can never bring about, but a condition which, in the kingdom of Jesus Christ, is to be the fruit of the Holy Spirit and the effect of the grace of God. It is not natural for a wolf to dwell with a lamb, nor for a leopard to lie down with a young lion and a fatling. Further, it is not natural for the cow, which enjoys the vegatarian diet, to eat with the bear, which loves to devour flesh; nor for the lion to eat straw like the ox. All these incidents, though contrary to nature, are to be effected, because "a little child shall lead them." This means that nature is to be brought into subjection, and held there, by the meek and lowly and gentle Spirit, which shall subdue the vile passions of men and shall cause them to dwell together in gospel love and fellowship as they

shall be brought by the power of God's grace to sit down with Abraham, Issac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God. We have been hearing a great deal for the past few years about an era of worldwide peace to soon be ushered in, when the nations of the earth shall learn war no more, when the swords shall to be beaten into ploughshares and the spears into pruninghooks. This is an outcome, no doubt, devoutly to be desired, for we all agree that war and strife are dreadful things, but these things which have been resident in the nature of man from the first of creation can never be abolished through human inventions and man ingenity. If worldwide and everlasting peace is ever to prevail over a world weary of war, we must look to a higher power than our own. Such an age can only be drawn upon us through the victorius operation of God's holy Spirit subduing all that is opposed to godliness and giving rise to righteousness and wisdom that must prevail in and through all who inhabit the earth. There never can be any compromise with evil, nor any treaty with antichrist; these must be uttely destroyed if righteosness and peace are to prevail unmolested. So the prophet Isaiah through the divine telescope of faith was looking down the years seven hundred years beyond the period in which he was living and beholding the spiritual kingdom of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. In this church of God is that peace which the world can neither give nor take away, but which is eternal to all the elect of God, through the atonement made for their sins in the sacrificial work of Jesus. In this church are both Jews and Gentiles, Greeks and barbarians, bond and free. The Lord himself, not the Missionary societies invented by man, brings his sons from afar and his daughters from the ends of the earth and calls then by effectual grace unto godly repentance, working in them by his reserrection power to believe on Him who raised Christ from the dead. In this way all the nations flow up onto the house of the Lord, and the mountain of the Lord's house is established in the mountains. This is something that is going on to-day though men cannot see it with their natural powers. The kingdom of heaven is in the world and is within the subjects of divine grace. Jesus is living and reigning in his kingdom in the hearts of his elect, gathered from every nation which is under heaven. He has been gathering them into his gospel kingdom, he is now so gathering them, and he will continue so to gather them until the last vessel of mercy, beforehand chosen into glory, shall have been brought into this church of our God, and with this gathering man have had nothing to do. It has been all the result of that still small voice which, like the wind, blows where it lists. It has not been by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts. As for man, he is altogether vanity, and all his works are a vain show. All of them are utterly condemned before God. God made man upright, but he has sought out many inventions. He has invented ways to save the heathen from their sins and to bring them to God, he has schemed to win the whole world for Christ, and now he is scheming to abolish war and to usher in the millennium. All these inventions are a vain and idle show, and shall pass away into nothingness when the breath of God shall blow upon them. It will be noticed in the words of our text at the beginning of this article that, in the list of animals given, a wild animal is coupled with a tame animal. From the Jew standpoint, the Gentiles were to them aliens and foreigners, without any right participate in the services of the legal sanctuary, and strangers from the covenant made with them by the hand of Moses. Therefore, in Isaiah xi. 6, 7, the Gentiles are represented by the wild

animals and the Jews by the tame ones. The declaration, therefore, is that the time was to come when the barrier, or middle wall of partition, between Jew and Gentile was to be abolished through the work of Jesus Christ, his death and resurrection, and of the twain was to be made one new man. The Gentiles were no more to be strangers and foreigners from the commonwealth of Israel, but fellow citizens with the saints and with the household of God. (See Eph. ii.12-22.) These wild ones were to be brought into close spiritual relationship with the elect of God among the Jews, so all would be one body through one Lord, having one hope, one faith and one baptism. The gospel was first preached to the Jews. After this, the gospel was declared to the Gentiles. In the Acts we see many striking instances of God's work among the Gentiles, how that true believers were raised up among them, how that the prejudice between Jew and Gentile was overcome through grace, and all lived together in the church of God, forgetting their past differences and forgiving one another their transgressions. Peter, the Jew, was sent for to preach the word of the kingdom Cornelius, the Roman. We doubt if he would have gone on this errand had he not been prepared beforehand by the vision of the sheet let down from heaven, knit at the four corners, containing all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts and creeping things and fowls of the air. Herein was revealed to Peter the truth that in God's covenant of election were included all the peoples of the world, that election is not confined to the Jews, but that God has a people among all kindreds, tribes and tongues that dwell on the earth. Having had this matter shown to him, Peter's prejudice against the Gentiles was overcome, and he was ready to preach the gospel to Cornelius. Here we see the wolf and the lamb dwelling together. Cornelius belonged to a nation that then dominated the world and ruled over the Jews, who to the Romans were a subject people. However, here we see an individual of the world-ruling people made willing to sit at the feet of the meek and lowly and despised Jesus, anxious to hear the word of truth, and believing in it with all his heart. Again, Saul of Tarsus, like a lion, went about the country hunting down and persecuting the christians. But the time came when this roaring lion was subjugated by the mighty hand of God and brought under the swat of divine grace. He then was made to eat straw like the ox, to desire the same spiritual bread of life as the Jews whom he had been persecuting for believing in Christ. The little child Jesus led Saul and changed him into the humble Paul; the same little child Jesus brought Peter to preach to Cornelius, and caused Cornelius to embrace the formerly despised Jew in gospel love and fellowship. We believe, therefore, that the words of our text apply not to some far distant millenium framed in human dreams, but we think the spirtual meaning of Isaiah's words are realized in the gospel kingdom of the Lord, where dwell his honor and glory, and where is the habitation of his throne. What a great variety of natural dispositions and temperaments there is among the members of Christ's body. Some of us are like lions, others like wolves, and so on but all are chastened and subdued by reigning grace and made to dwell together in unity, when if left to ourselves, to act our individual likes and dislikes, we would be quarreling and contending all the time. All these strifes and contentions are annulled by the reign of the childlike Spirit of Jesus, causing his people to pray for one another, to bear one another's burdens, to esteem others better than themselves, all because he has taken out of them the stony heart and has given them a heart of flesh, wherein he has written his

royal law: Love one another. The kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation. Though we may long look for some outward sign of approaching worldwide peace, we may never see it so long as man's nature remains as it is and earthly governments continue to be organized as they are. However, in the realm of Spirit, in that world which lies beyond the reach of all mortal senses, in that church of our God which is in the world, but is come through the death of Jesus. This is a peace which passes understanding and abides world without end.

Elder H. H. Leferts

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 1986

B. T. Jetes, VA.	$ 2.00
Mrs. Virgie Withers, TX.	2.00
Friends, VA.	50.00
Harry G. Troutt, NC.	2.00
J. L. Proctor, NC.	5.00
Marvin J. Clay, OH.	7.00
Eld. Bernard Moon, AL.	22.00
C. Ned Barron, LA.	7.00
James L. Howell, AL.	17.00
Mrs. Lelah Hill, CA. In memory of Eld. Winchell, Orville Winchell & wife Eva Winchell.	15.00
Mrs. Lovie A. Thompson, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Bertie A. Brown, NC.	4.00
A Friend, NC.	20.00
Eld. J. T. Prescott, NC.	7.00
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Mrs. Ora Adams, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Frank Scarce, VA.	2.00
Oscar Pickral, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Rachel Hudson, VA.	2.00

"A GOOD name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold."
Proverbs 22: 1

OBITUARIES

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT TO BROTHER LEE BROWN

In June 8, 1986, it pleased our Heavenly Father to call home our dear Brother Lee Brown. Brother Brown was born on April 17, 1896, making his stay on earth 90 years.

Brother Lee was blessed to join Tarboro Church on July 7, 1968, and was a faithful member until the end. He was a humble and peaceful member, never wanting to see trouble in the church. To know Brother Lee was to love him and his presence will be greatly missed at the Tarboro Church.

His funeral was preached by his pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes. We trust Brother Brown is at rest with our Heavenly Father.

The members at Tarboro send their sympathy to his family and trust they will follow the footsteps Brother Lee set forth.

The church agreed that three copies of this resolution be made: one to be sent to the family; one for the church records; and one to be sent to the *Signs of Times* for publication.

This done by order of conference at our July meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator

John H. Coker, Clerk

LOUISE BARROW BRYANT

By agreement with Goblintown Church I will endeavor to record the life and passage from our midst of a very precious sister in Christ, Louise Barrow Bryant.

Sister Bryant was born in the Leatherwood section of Henry County, Virginia on August 27, 1907, the third of six children of the late Clarence and Kate Stultz Barrow. Her parents were Primitive Baptists and her maternal grandfather was an Old Baptist minister, Elder Bryce Stultz.

Shortly before her eighteenth birthday, Louise was united in marriage to Mr. Floyd H. Bryant of Fieldale. He was a native of the Union Church communnity of Patrick County, Virginia, and was also brought up among Old School Baptists. Their wedding ceremony was conducted by the late Dr. J. P. McCabe of Martinsville.

The Lord graciously blessed their union to endure for better than fifty-nine years, and they were truly a loving and devoted couple all the while. To them were born three daughters and one son, all of whom survived her passage. The are: Mrs. Roger (Catherine) Warrick, Mrs. Norman (Janice) Joyce, Mrs. Larry (Judy) Roach, and Floyd H. Bryant, Jr. All of them lived near their parents, at either Fieldale or Bassett.

After several years of marriage, Brother and Sister Bryant acquired some farm property west of Fieldale and built a home there. In the years that followed, their home was a haven for Old Baptists from far and near. After Riverside Church was organized nearby in the latter 1930's the various pastors (including Elder Emmett Bryant and Elder James Gardner) and brethren were frequent and welcome visitors in their home. It is doubtful if the members themselves were any more mindful of the needs of that chruch than they were.

Following many years of faithful attendance, Brother and Sister Bryant united with Riverside Church and were baptized together on the first Sunday in July, 1962 by their very dear friend, Elder Bennie N. Clifton. In the Following February Brother Bryant was set apart by a presbytery and ordained as a deacon.

As a member and deacon's wife, Sister Bryant gave the very best of everything she had to the cause of her church and its people. She was never forgetful to entertain strangers. She washed the feet of many of the saints and fed them at her table. She bore childred to her husband and taught them to honor their father and mother. She was a "virtuous woman" and the name of her husband was respected where they were known. The law of kindness was in her tongue, and the love of God ruled in her heart. She was a pillar of strength to her entire family. Her strength was derived from her Godgiven faith in the Son of God, who doubtless led her about and instructed her. Her nine grandchildren all loved to come to see her and to dine at grandmother's table. Indeed, none could fail to enjoy the excellent hospitality of her home, regardless of how frequently they visited.

Brother and Sister Bryant removed their memberships from Riverside in August of 1981. Sister Bryant joined Goblintown Church on confession of faith the third Saturday in April, 1983. While she was not permitted to live long afterwards, she made an impact that

will be felt by that church for a long time to come.

Sister Bryant suffered from declining health for about her last two years. While a patient in the hospital in Winston-Salem, N.C., she was given a vision which strongly indicated her pilgrimage was nearly over. She saw in her vision the hand of her doctor come down in front of her, and his hand was withered. She told him that he would be unable to reach her case, and she was right.

On the morning of February 20, 1985 Sister Bryant was seated at her kitchen table when she collapsed and died in the loving embrace of her husband. Her funeral service was held two days later at Collins Funeral Home Chapel in Bassett by the author of this obituary. Her body was laid down to rest in the Oakwood Cemetary at Martinsville, near the final resting places of her parents. Mourners in addition to her immediate family were two surviving sisters: Mrs. Norma Slaydon of Deland, Florida and Mrs. Ruby Joyce of Collingsville, Virginia.

Sister Bryant died the death of the righteous, and sleeps the peaceful rest of the redeemed. Her soul waits in paradise for the return of her spirit which went back to God, and one day both shall be reunited with her glorified body and meet the Lord in the air; to be carried to the land where she shall sing the praises of the Lamb of God forevermore.

Submitted by,

Elder John Wingfield

DOLLY JEFFERSON CRAIG

Sister Dolly Jefferson Craig, a long-time precious member of Goblintown Church was born in Patrick County, Virginia on April 1, 1892 and died April 21, 1985, making her pilgrim journey on earth just over 93 years. She was one of the six children of the late Nathaniel and Mary Jane Spencer Washburn, who were both members of Old Baptist churches: he of Goblintown, and she of Liberty. One of their five sons was an Old Baptist minister, Elder 'Pete' Washburn.

Sister Craig joined Liberty Church by experience on the first Saturday in December 1913, and was baptised by the late Elder Lemuel Gilbert. April 1919 she moved her membership to the church at Goblintown. She was united in marriage to Charlie E. Jefferson, also of Patrick County. Their relatively brief union was blessed with one son, Brother Clinton E. Jefferson of Patrick Springs, Virginia.

Following the passing of Brother Jefferson, Sister Dolly was married to the late Mr. Jasper Craig, who was a believer though not a member. Their union was blessed with three children: Connell Craig (who preceded her in death), Randolph Craig of Collinsville, and Mrs. Robert (Avie) Peak of Bassett, Virginia.

Sister Craig was faithful to her church as long as her health permitted her to attend. For about her last fifteen years she was confined by very poor health to the Blue Ridge Nursing Home at Stuart. Her last days were attended by many bodily afflictions, including blindness.

When Sister Craig departed this world for that better one to come, she left behind the three children previously named; fourteen grandchildren; twenty great-grandchildren; and three great-great-grandchildren. Her funeral service was conducted at Howell Funeral Home Chapel by Elder Leonard Brammer and Elder Leonard Corns. She was laid to rest in the Bowles Cemetery, near her original home.

We miss Sister Craig, but we are comforted by the sweet assurance that her soul is resting in Paradise while her

body peacefully awaits the second coming of the Blessed Redeemer.

Done by order of Goblintown Church in conference, the 17th day of May 1986.

Submitted by:

Elder John Wingfield

EDGAR JOHN HALL

We note with much regret the passage from our midst of Brother Edgar John Hall. A son of the late George William and Mary Ruth Pendleton Hall, Brother Edgar was born near the Charity section of Patrick County, Virginia on July 26, 1907. He resided in Patrick County until the last few years of his life, when he moved near Koger's Orchard in western Henry County.

As a young man, Brother Hall was united in marriage to Miss Eula Hall. To their union the Lord granted three sons and one daughter: Calie and Roger Hall of Bassett, Virginia, James Stewart Hall of California, and Mrs. Shirley Haven of Bristol, Va. Brother Hall made a living for his family first by farming, then by working in an area furniture factory.

In his experience, Brother Hall traveled a long and lonesome road, until he was brought to the very end of his own strength. He came before Goblintown Church begging for a home in June 1962, and his request was granted. He was baptized by the late Elder H.D. Prillaman, and lived quietly and peaceably in the church until his departure from this life on January 11, 1984, at the age of 76.

He was survived by his four children; his step-mother, Mrs. Beadie Hall Craddock; three brothers, Arthur, Charlie and Curtis Hall, and one half-brother, Bro. Frank Hall; two sisters, Sis. Ethel Greer and Mrs. Daisy McAlexander, and two half-sisters, Sister Mae Chaney and Sister Everine Chaney; and four grandchildren.

His funeral service was conducted at Collins Funeral Home Chapel at Bassett by Elder Leonard Corns and the writer of this memorial. His mortal body was laid to rest in the Hall Family Cemetery near his parents' old home place at Route 2, Stuart.

Although Brother Hall suffered much in this life, we believe he suffered for Christs' sake, and will one day hence reign with Him in glory.

Done by order of Goblintown Church in conference, the 17th day of May 1986.

Submitted by:

Elder John Wingfield

HARRY E. PICKRAL, SR.

It is with sad heart, but sweet memories that I attempt to write the obituary of one that I esteemed so much higher then myself.

Brother Harry Edgar Pickral, Sr. was born February 21, 1903, son of the late David Wade Pickral and Hester McClanahan Pickral. He passed from this life June 23, 1986. His last breaths were as soft and gentle as his walk in life.

Brother Harry was a faithful member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, Gretna, Va. He was received by experience and baptized October 13, 1928. He loved the church and his Breathren.

He leaves to mourn him, his wife; Margaret Mills Pickral; seven sons; H. Edgar Pickral, Jr., Gerald Pickral, Bobby Pickral, and Reuben Pickral, all of Chatham, Va. Oscar Pickral, Judson

Pickral, and Charlie Pickral, all of Gretna, Va., three daughters, Betty Rowles and Shirley Shelton of Gretna, Va., Rebecca Shelton of Concord, Va., two brothers; Arthur Pickral of Gretna and R. Turner Pickral of Danville, Va., four sisters; Mrs. Ida Hamlett, Mrs. Ola Crawley, Mrs. Laura McMinnis and Mrs. Minnie Hedrick, all of Gretna, VA. Thirty-one grandchildren and twenty-two great-grandchildren.

His funeral was conducted by his beloved pastor, Elder O.K. Tench. His body was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park.

We pray God will reconcile each of us to His will.

Written in love and hope
Carol R. Pickral

Elder O.K. Tench, moderator
Oscar Pickral, clerk

DURWOOD B. STOKES, SR.

By the request of Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church, I will attempt to write a resolution of respect in memory of our dear Brother Durwood B. Stokes, Sr.

Brother Stokes was born November 10, 1906 and died April 21, 1986, making his stay on earth 79 years.

Brother Durwood was blessed to join our church by letter from Red Bank Church in January, 1972, and was received in full fellowship. He was faithful in attending the church until his death. We feel he was a believer of Salvation by Grace and also the fact we can do nothing for ourselves. He was the father of our dear pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, Jr., whom we love very much.

The church at Tarboro resolve our loss is his eternal gain and we feel he is resting in peace with our dear Saviour.

We send our sympathy to Brother Stokes' family and trust God will send the Comforter and bless them to carry on.

This done by order of conference at our May meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

DAVID RAYMOND WALKER

By request of Hillsdale Primitive Baptist Church, I write the obituary of our beloved Brother, who recently passed from this life unto life eternal. He was the son of Frear and Sue O'Bryant Walker. Born and lived in the Midway community of Rockingham County, N.C. He united with Hillsdale Primitive Baptist Church in 1973. The Church is deeply saddened by the passing of our beloved Brother. His presence and great bass voice are deeply missed. The community has lost a great friend and statesman, but heaven gained a saint.

He helped form and organize the Midway-Monracton V.F.W. Post 8297. Serving as its quartermaster since it was instituted on October 1, 1978. He did so, he said, because he felt a need to bring all the veterans of this community as children of God, to work together for the good of our country in a land where we could worship our God as we chose to. He felt the God that ruled his country was the same God that ruled his church.

He is survived by his wife, Sister Jean Everitt Walker, son Ronald Everette Walker, and daughter Sandra Walker Smith.

Elder B.D. Hutchens, Moderator
Sister Florence Knight, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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PHILIPPIANS 2

If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God;

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Due to lack of communications the November issue of the "Signs" got to the printer without being proofed for typographical errors. This resulted in many errors and mispelled words. We apologize and will try not to let this happen again.

Editors

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EDITORIAL

JOHN 3: 14,16.

We find in the beginning of this 3rd chapter of John that the Lord Jesus Christ was instructing Nicodemus who seemed to be in darkness with regard to the new birth, and told him that unless he was born again he could not see the kingdom of God or enter into it. A wonderful truth this is, a truth that separates the lost and the saved, the dead in trespasses and sins and the living. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." The flesh is corrupt, sinful, defiled and "dead in trespasses and sins." You cannot make it any better, it cannot rise above itself. You must always be dead within self, it is a truth which shall draw an absolute distinction between flesh and spirit. You may have fleshly riches, fleshly knowledge, fleshly religion but it is still flesh. "You must be born again."

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness." I believe that Jesus sets before us a type of Himself. The type is the serpent of brass which Moses, by God's commandment, made for the healing of the Israelites who, for murmuring had sent upon them fiery serpents and they who were bitten were dying by the thousands. God commanded Moses to raise the serpent upon a pole that the bitten Israelites might look upon it, and in looking, by divine commandment receive healing. Bitten people, what does this mean? Are we not bitten by the serpent, the dragon, the old serpent, the devil, bitten by sin and the poison that is in us is rushing through our veins? The brazen serpent had the form of a serpent but not the poisonous nature of one. Christ was sent in the likeness of sinful flesh yet without sin. He, was made sin for us, who knew no sin for He was sinless in himself but was made a curse for his people that he might redeem them from the curse of the law. The serpents that bit the children of Israel were many but the serpent that Moses was commanded to make was but one, so there is one Mediator between God and man, one High Priest, one King, in whom alone is salvation from the bites of Satan, sin, and self. "But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood." Because Christ is eternal everything He did was eternally efficacious. Therefore

they needed but one sacrifice, "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Heb. 10:14. The gospel is the everlasting gospel because He is the everlasting Son of God. The redemption which He obtained when offering Himself upon the cross of Calvary was eternal redemption. He was a spotless, sinless, Sacrifice and died a sacrificial death to make atonement of the sins of His people. His people are the only truly rich people in this world. Had you not rather have Christ in your heart than to be a worldly king or prince? "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches that the treasures in Egypt." Heb. 24-26.

"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ, our Lord." Rom. 5:21. Sin reigned unto death, and death will reign in the grave over our bodies until the resurrection. But though sin has corrupted our whole body, yet grace shall reign. Sin shall not have dominion over those who are not under the law but under grace for "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Rom. 5:20. "Christ must be lifted up" for "without shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins." Christ was lifted up when He was crucified. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto me." John 12:32. Christ uses the words "lifted up" to express the manner of death. Christ looked to the cross as the goal of all His exertions. It was the place upon which he could say, "It is finished." He could never say, "It is finished" on his throne, but on his cross He could say it.

"Will draw all men." The all here means some of all classes, the "all" for whom He shed His precious blood. The Lord never does unnecessary work, we should never hear of Christ drawing if we could come to Him without being drawn, but the fact is we stay away from Christ, and love the distance; yea, we make the gulf still wider by adding to our original depravity. Men cannot come, so He casts out from himself bands of love and cords of gracious constraint of grace. He draws all His chosen among the young, the old, the rich, the poor, the learned, and the ignorant for He has "Redeemed us to God by thy Blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Rev. 5:9.

My dear brethren when we are blessed by God's grace to receive faith from Him to see Christ lifted up on the cross, can anything become more precious to us? For we see that "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the God-head bodily." Possessing in Himself human nature in its perfection. God will look upon nothing in His people for acceptance and salvation but what He has given to Christ for them. He has our nature in all the purity and perfection of it, and in our nature He met all the requirements that God claims from them. The lifting up of Christ upon the cross was according to the commandment of His Father. "I lay down my life, that I might take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." John 10:17,18. O, how precious it is when we are given faith and hope to see

Christ on the cross for us, to see Him there with our sins imputed to Him, there punished and deserted of His Father; cursed by the law which He as Surety had obeyed and fulfilled. Surely if we are taught of God, we will find on the cross grace, wisdom, love, mercy, and the power of God in the salvation of His people. Here on the cross "mercy and truth met together: righteousness and peace kissed each other." "He must be lifted up" for without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. May the Spirit of God so lift up the dear Son of God in our souls that we may be given to say, "Lord, I believe: help thou mine unbelief."

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." This verse of scripture is, no doubt, the most frequently used by the unregenerate and the most frequently abused as to its true meaning than any other scripture. Many worldly people are striving to prove from this scripture that Christ is trying or wants to save all people if they will but allow Him to do so. First, we must realize that the scriptures do not contradict, but they harmonize to form a beautiful picture of truth. This is true because the writers were all inspired by the same Holy Spirit. May God save us from such a falsehood as many have. Is man greater than his Maker? But regardless of the abuse of this scripture, it still remains intact as to its true meaning.

"God so loved the world." May we first examine the word "world" as used by the Holy Spirit. Can it mean all persons of the human race? Does God love all equally, all without exception? If so, would this not allow that God is impotent to save them? "World" surely means all of God's elect both among the Jews and Gentiles whom God determined to save with an everlasting salvation. Those Chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world known to Himself alone; the objects of His everlasting love. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Jere. 31:3. Sometimes we find the word "world" used in Scriptures referring to the world of God's elect, to the world of the Jews, of the Gentiles, and the world of the unregenerate. "I pray for them. I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them." John 17:9,10. So we see that Christ prayed for the world that He loved, is this not the world of the text?

But God, who is love, willed to express His love on objects outside himself. From all eternity He decreed to have a people in whom He would bestow and make known His love. It is beyond our ability to comprehend, that God being so great, so holy, so sovereign should choose a people in His Son to love and bless them irrespective of what He knew they would become as sinners; that He should love them from aliens into children by adoption, by delivering them from their sinful death in trepasses and sins into a state of holiness that should fit them to dwell with Himself in heaven eternally. Love must give, it cannot keep back. God did that, "He gave his only begotton Son." Although man became a huge monster of iniquity, God was not alienated from the objects of His love. "Many waters cannot quench love, neither

the floods drown it." Song of Solomon 8:7. Jesus said concerning the objects of His love: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life: and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all." John 10: 27,28,30.

Jesus did what He came to do, to save His people from their sins. "His name shall be called Jesus for He shall save His people from their sins." Matt. 1:21. All He came to do He finished. The moral law He obeyed perfectly: He was perfectly holy in all His life. No malice, no guile, no wave of enmity, no lie, no lust, no covetousness, no pride, ever in the heart or on the tongue, or in the acts of the Holy Lord Jesus Christ. My dear ones consider the completeness and perfection of Christ's work which ended in His death. Christ drank up to the dregs the cup of penal wrath His Father gave Him to drink. O, my dear ones, we shall need endless eternity to really explore the infinite riches of the grace and love and power of the Lord God in providing a Saviour and salvation for lost perishing men.

"That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." This is a portion of the text that is so widely abused. They say all you have to do is just believe and I believe therefore, I am saved. How deceitful can one become with just a head knowledge belief? No person ever savingly and vitally believed in the cross of Christ unless by divine teaching. The Lord brings His people along a certain pathway which they have not known, after being quickened by the Holy Spirit of God. "And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Eph. 2:1. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." John 6:63.

The Apostle Paul in writing to Timothy says: "It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him." II Tim. 2:11. When Christ was crucified, it is said, "We are crucified with Him." When Christ was interred in the sepulchre, we are said to be "buried with Him." What does this mean? Does it not mean as He died in His body, (if we be in union with Him) we must die inwardly speaking. Then there is such a thing as being dead with Christ and this being dead with Christ is an evidence of our being alive with Christ. Unless we die experimentally as Christ died actually under the law, we cannot be said to be dead with Christ. We are not to set up any rigorous standard of experience concerning this dying of His elect people. It is the same as natural death, we don't all meet death in like manner.

"The soul that sinneth it shall die." Eze. 18:8. When this sentence of death comes into our hearts and conscience, slays us as to salvation by the works of the law: it condemned us and killed us outright as to any hope that may have sprung from our self-righteousness, our creature strength, our own false religion, our own false head knowledge belief. We can now say with the Apostle Paul: "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. 7:24. When His people experience something of this death, they feel the door to heaven to be closed to them and the door to hell stands wide open. But the Lord does not leave His people here. In time the Holy Spirit will reveal Christ to His people as being

"the way, the truth, and the life." When we are blessed through faith to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ from our hearts, then this surely is the belief that is spoken of in the text. Do we not believe then that no person ever savingly, or experimentally believed in the cross of Christ unless by divine teaching. "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." No one ever believed in the Lord Jesus Christ except by divine teaching. No, this is not a head knowledge belief spoken of here, but a spiritual belief coming from the new spiritual life as having been resurrected from a death in trepasses and sins. Believing on Him is a mystery; faith is a mystery in the heart of His people. What is a mystery? It is a divine truth which is beyond the ability of flesh, sense, and reason to comprehend, it is hidden from the wise and the prudent. But it is revealed unto babes by the Holy Spirit of God through faith.

What does believing in Him consist of? Believing in Him by the grace of God, to put all our hope for eternal salvation in Him and Him alone. Looking to Him for all our needs, to go to Him in prayer, to trust in Him and Him alone as our only hope of ever entering heaven and immortal glory. Amen.

A sinner who hopes to spiritually believe in Him,

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

The beams of our house are cedar, and our rafters are fir.

Solomon 1:17

NOTE OF INTEREST

The following is an excerpt from the Signs of The Times dated 1835. You will notice among the list of contributors was one A. Lincoln. We assume this was Abraham Lincoln as we understand his parents were members of the Little Pigeon Primitive Baptist Church in Indiana and that Abe as a young man was interested and very active in their church.

RECEIPTS.

Burrel Lyman,	Pa.	$1 00
David Bowen,	do	1 00
Joseph Tapscott,	Ohio.	13 00
Eld. Stephen Gard,	do	3 00
Wm. D. Ferris,	N. Y.	1 00
Eld. Gabriel Conklin,	do	20 00
David Jackson,	do	3 00
Xavir Abbott,	do	1 00
Benj. Corwin,	do	1 00
Eld. E. Halcomb,	In.	5 00
J. B. Goode,	Va.	5 00
John Hardy,	do	1 00
M. A. Staley,	do	1 50
Mr. Windsor,	do	1 00
Eld. P. T. Outten,	do	5 00
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Eld. T. H. Owen,	do	10 00
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Mrs. Mary Ott,	do	1 00
E. Grice,	do	1 00
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Eld. J. Henderson,	do	10 00
do do	do	10 00
Jonath'n. Cossington,	Ms.	1 00
C. C. Palmer,	Ct.	2 00
Robert Tripple,	N. C.	1 00
Total.		$130 00

ST. JOHN, 3:16

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotton Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12/86
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

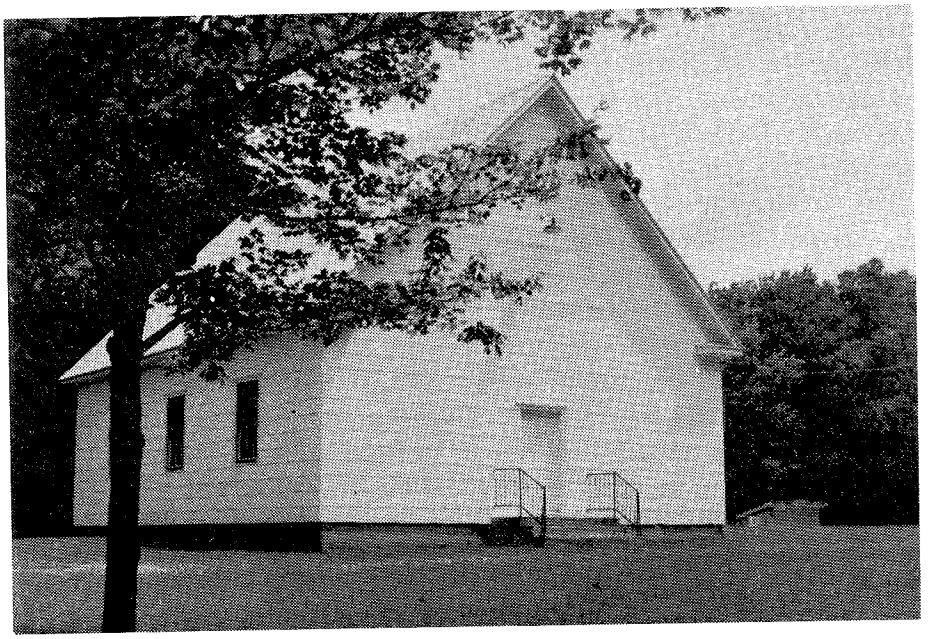

LAUREL CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Laurel Creek Primitive Baptist Church was organized in 1854. The church is located in Floyd County, Pilot, Va. Meeting time is 2:30 P.M. on 4th. Sunday of each month. The present pastor is Elder Larry Hollandsworth we welcome you to visit us.

CORRESPONDENCE

Reuben Davis
March, 1984

Dear Brethren:

Somehow I have been impressed to write a few things. My mind goes back to happenings in my life which to me is evidence of a supreme power that rules all things, both natural and spiritual. When I was about sixteen, I quit school and stayed at home with my Mother and Dad. We lived on a small farm and we had to strive to make a living. That was just after World War I.

I was born on October 1, 1905 in Henry County, Virginia. My Dad and Mother were not church members, but when Elder J.W. Wyatt or Isaac Jones would come through any-time in the week, he would make a special effort to go over to Axton to the Church to hear them. I would go with them and I would notice a lot of the time in their preaching that my Dad was enjoying the sermon so much that tears would be streaming down

his cheeks. I just couldn't understand his feelings, not only him, but a lot of others were so enveloped with the Spirit, it was very clear how happy they were. I went to Sunday school attended the Revival meetings of other denominations but, to me, their worship was not as heartfelt nor as impressive. I wondered and I read the Scripture especially to debate with my Dad on the subject of Pre-Destination and Fore-Knowledge of God, while we were working together in the fields. I was looking for definite proof that a natural man could acquire favor with God by his own conduct or if he was his own free agent to do a lot of meanness or not. But in my reading of the Old Testament, Moses chose rather to suffer afflictions with the children of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. This tells me that he was so enveloped with the spirit of Almighty God that the natural man, being so enticed by the sins of the flesh, was compelled by the Spirit not to follow the way of sinful flesh. Here we see the spirit working against the flesh, but all of those who have been born of the Spirit will come out more than the conquerors by Him who loved us and gave His life for us. We read blessed are those that walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. They are blessed not nor will be if they do certain things. Therefore, the natural man deserves no praise for the blessings he receives here in this world, be they spiritual or natural.

My mind goes back to my life at home with my parents. In the twenties or early thirties, I followed the dancing and music crowd throughout the whole community, enjoying all the natural pleasures for a season. I was about twenty-four or twenty-five years old and had saved a little money. I had an Uncle who moved to town in the late twenties and rented his farm to a family who lived in town at the time. They moved down on this farm, about one mile from where we lived. As it was a general custom to visit a new family in the community, our nearest neighbors had been down. I asked one of the boys about the family. He said there was one young girl about fifteen or sixteen who seemed to be very quiet and not too happy with the situation (moving from town). She had three younger brothers and two older brothers, there at home. It seemed that a feeling of compassion was aroused, why I didn't know. I had not seen the young lady at that time. But when I did, her appearance appealed to me very much. Our courtship began and continued on for probably one year and in the meantime, my Uncle, who owned this property, decided to sell it.

This was in the early thirties. He authorized another one of my Uncles to sell it for him. So he came by and told me about it. He was asking $3,000 for it. I told this Uncle I would give him $2,500 for it. Time rolled on about two or three months. After that, the same Uncle came by home and said he had decided to take my price. I had to borrow $500, as it must be cash. We made the deal that day, July 19, 1931, Depression Days. I was still very interested in the daughter that lived there. That fall, they moved to another farm about four miles west of Ridgeway, Virginia, about twenty miles from where I lived. We weren't engaged, and I was past broke (financially owed $500 and had no way of traveling unless I caught a bus), so I decided to just forget about her. A-

bout six months passed and I didn't see her. But my love for her could not be quenched. Especially when I walked down on the farm that I bought. It had two good houses on it. Somehow, a feeling went over me that "this is where you all will live." The feeling was so strong that I decided if I ever saw her again, I would ask her to marry me. So I was fortunate enough to see her about once a month for about another year. We planned to marry and did in the fall of 1933 on Nov. 18th. In the year before that, my Aunt passed away. They lived about two miles from us. The funeral was at the home. They had a young preacher who stood in the hall and I was standing very close to him. I had never seen him before, but his countenance shined and the words he said were precious to me. I inquired as to who he was and was told he was David Spangler and that he operated a store in Cascade, Virginia. It dawned on me that if I ever got married, I wanted him to perform the ceremony. So, as my plans matured, a friend of mine took me to see him at Cascade and made the appointment to be at his home on Saturday afternoon November 18, 1933. We were happy and loved each other but I well knew that, without the blessings of Almighty God, our lives would be miserable. But He smiled on us with blessings untold. I will never forget that, in 1941, I planted my crop early, and had an especially nice tobacco crop. Sometime along the last of June, the County Agent came down and wanted me to work for him a few weeks. I refused at the time. I felt that I had excelled all of my neighbors with a nice early crop. I was preparing to save tobacco on the seventh of July, this being the afternoon of the sixth of July. A small cloud just overhead began to make a noise and thundered in within a few minutes. It began to hail, the wind whirled, and in minutes, my tobacco crop was beat into the ground. I had a boy hired by the month and I also had a sharecropper who had three acres of tobacco here on the place. After the cloud passed, we went up into the fields: the tobacco was beat to the ground. My sharecropper was shedding tears, but it seems that I couldn't grasp just exactly how serious it might have been.

On the morning of the eighth, I decided that I and the boy I had hired would cut the stalks off and turn out a sucker (new leaf growths on tobacco stalks). We had cut off a few rows when several of my neighbors, older farmers than I, as well as my Dad told me I was foolish--it was too late in the year. As a result, we quit. The young man I had hired said he wanted to try to get another job. I told him to wait until tomorrow and we both would look for work.

Late that night (perhaps in the early morning)--I don't know if I was awake or asleep,--I "saw" the tobacco fields in a beautiful crop about a shoulder high. I woke my wife and told her to get up and cook breakfast: I was going to get another hand or two and cut the tobacco off. She said, "You quit yesterday." I answered "Yes, but I am not quitting today." Only I knew how I felt. We cut it all off that day. I told the hired boy just to continue on as before.

In a few days, we began to leave the best suckers. The weather was dry for about three weeks-- it looked very discouraging, and I didn't hear many encouraging words. My faith got very small, but it began raining the first of

August and it rained almost every day for nearly three weeks. By that time, those suckers were all in top. I got some extra help and we topped every plant anywhere from twenty-four to twenty-eight leaves. This was about the first of September on Sunday morning after we had topped it. It was a beautiful crop. I walked up on the Ridge to look at the crop, and the picture I saw that night (before I began to cut the stubble off the second time) came to me so perfect--even to the shapes of the edge of the fields. As I stood there, it seems that a chill went over me as much as to say that the Lord took it away and He has given it back. It took just that to teach me whose earth I was using, just where all my strength and knowledge came from, and just how helpless and dependent we all are. Sometimes, we can pray with thankfulness in our heart, but how often we are like the hog eating apples off the ground, and never looks up to see just where they came from.

As time moved on from this time onward, I was deeply interested in going to hear men preach--especially the Old School Baptist. Once in a while on Sunday morning, I would walk around and look at the growing crops, and a feeling would so envelop me, I would hurry to the house to get ready to go somewhere to hear someone speak on the Great and marvelous things of God. I went to hear several different factions of the Primitive Baptist Church. Some of them said things that I didn't believe. But as the poet said, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear--it soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds, and drives away his fears. It makes the wounded spirit whole and calms the troubled breast, Tis manna to the hungry soul, and to the weary, rest." Sometimes, my spirit was aroused about as much what the Preacher didn't say as what he did. This drive to go and hear something only happened three or four times a year. It seems that most of the time, I was too deeply involved in natural things. A few years passed like this and I decided to build a fish pond--and did. I stocked it with fish and charged each person one dollar per day to fish. Also, I built a concession stand and sold candy, ice cream, canned goods, and cold drinks.

This project worked very well for several years (moneywise), but I didn't have time to go to church. In the year 1958 (about the first of May), the fishing business was very good--especially on Sundays. Cold drinks were very important. One Sunday morning, my drink box had conked out, and the drinks were hot. I had it repaired, and the next Sunday, it was "out" again. That week, I got a repairman: He said all it needed was some more gas in it, so he put gas in it. It worked a few more days and quit again, so I didn't have cold drinks that weekend. The following week, I bought another box from one of the drink companies--it worked very well.

However, on Saturday evening of that week, my youngest son, who was about nine years old, didn't eat any supper. He was complaining with his side. I called our family doctor--he said to bring him to his office. I carried him and he examined him. He said he didn't think anything much was wrong, probably a slight upset stomach. We came on home. The next morning, I got up early, about 4:30 a.m., as a lot of the fishers would

come in early. At about eight o'clock, my other son, who was about fourteen years old at the time, came up to the pond and said, "Mama wants you to come to the house as Clark (the youngest son, who was complaining the evening before) is very sick and walking bent over." I went down and called the family doctor who had seen him the evening before. He said for me to bring him to the emergency room and that he would meet us there. When we arrived, the doctor called in another doctor, who was a surgeon. He said that he had got appendicitis and must be operated on at once. They began to prepare him for the operation. By ten o'clock, he was in the operating room. It was about two hours before the doctor got through--Ordinarily, an operation of this kind wouldn't last over twenty minutes. I was restlessly waiting to hear why it took so long. The doctor came to me and told me that his appendix had erupted but that he had "cleaned" him out the best that he could. Also, he said that, with Clark being young, he felt that he would make it through this illness. To me, it was a serious report. I went to his room and saw all of the tubes in his nose and they were putting something in his veins, so I left the hospital. About four o'clock (on the way home), if I ever tried to pray, it was then. In my discourse, it seemed that a voice spoke to me very eloquently and impressively: "You are operating a fish pond on Sundays and not going to church. Neither of you have been baptized." I bargained with that spiritual approach as much as to say, "Lord, if you will just spare my son, I will walk differently." I came home and told my wife the sad story. I told her that there would be no more fishing on Sundays. The following week (I guess about Wednesday), this being about the last of May, 1958, an old black man (whom I knew very well, and who lived about 6 or 7 miles from me with his son) came down to see if I had any tobacco plants. We were through planting, so I told him "yes" and I carried them to the beds and told them to help themselves. I went back to the house to hear from my son. When my wife came back from up at the hospital, she said that they thought he was a little better. Then, I walked back up to where the old black man and his son were drawing plants. I said, "Uncle Dillard, if you don't get enough here in this bed, on the other side over there are some more beds." This old man stood up and took off his hat and said, "Mr. Davis, I told my wife before I left home that if anyone had any plants to spare, it would be you. You have been blessed in all of your farming activities. What church are you a member of ?" Why did he ask such a question?--He didn't know that my son was seriously ill at that time. I told him that I wasn't a member of any church at this time. He said, "Mr. Davis, you ought to join the church of your belief and be baptized." That hit me so hard that I was speechless for a minute or two. I had to agree with him. But when and where to go, I didn't know. I was in deep trouble. I began to go to different factions of the Primitive Baptist Churches, but when the doors of the Church were open for the reception of members, I couldn't move. This fearful condition went on with me for a month or two. But since I had closed the fish-pond on Sundays, a friend of mine asked to baptize in the pond on a Sunday morning during this period.

That Sunday morning, while they were baptizing, I went up there. My wife didn't go, and when I came back, it seemed that I could see a difference in her.

That night, sometime in the late hours, I missed her. The house was dark, and I wandered and began to search. I found her sitting on the back steps, crying. I asked her what was wrong and she said, "I think I am sure for Hell, I have sinned against the Holy Ghost." All of this loosened chords around my heart. I could see that my prayers were being answered as I had so many times tried to pray in my feeble way that she could see the things that I had been blessed to see: The mighty and mysterious works of the Lord and how He rules and guides His people and causes them to see their sinful and helpless state, and that then and only then will they call for mercy, and that that all-seeing eye which never sleeps nor slumbers reaches out His loving arms of Grace and Mercy, giving them a desire to follow their Lord in baptism. What a great comfort to feel and hope that, some sweet day, you will rest with Him in glory when the trials and troubles of this world are over.

Back to the following Sunday after this had taken place with my wife. It being a fourth Sunday, I understood that David Spangler preached at Dan River on that day. I began to get ready to go and my wife fixed two of the children, but she wouldn't go--she said she didn't feel like it. So, I and two of our children went. I didn't know that they were having a baptizing out at the pool. The people were standing all around. We stood on the outer edge of the crowd. David Spangler stood up on top of a cement step at the pool edge and began to speak on the greatness and mercies of God. It seemed to me that his faced shined and that everything he said was directed to me. He said, "The doors of the church are now open, and if any of you feel a burden, to unite with the church and follow your Lord in baptism, now is as good a time as any." I gave my hat to my daughter and said, "I've got to go." I went through the crowd and up to Elder Spangler and told him I had put this thing off as long as I could and it was my desire for a home with the Church and to be baptized. Anything else I said, I don't remember. They accepted me. He asked me who I was, as it had been twenty-five years since he had united me and my wife in marriage (of course, he had forgotten, since he hadn't seen me since then). I told him, if it be the Lord's will, I would like to be baptized the next fourth Sunday. So the following week, Brother Deacon Gold Minter came up to see me and it was a great pleasure to talk to someone who understood the way my travels had been. My wife was so glad when I came back and told her that I had united myself with the church. She embraced me and we shed tears of joy together.

The following week, Elder Spangler came to see us and we were glad to see him and his wife. My wife was anxious to ask him some questions and tell him portions of her experiences. His talk to her was a lot of comfort. So the next fourth Saturday night, my wife offered herself to the church and was accepted.

On Sunday morning, Elder Spangler baptized us both. This was in 1958, the fourth Sunday of September.

We well realize we have enjoyed

many precious blessings in the last twenty-five years. Of course, we have had some natural disappointments - (and I realize these struggles in life are good for us to make us realize from whence all of our help comes-- both Spiritual and natural) and I hope we thank the God of all mercy for our many acquaintances who have had experiences such as ours as it is a lot of comfort to witness such evidence along the way.

Reuben Davis

MEETINGS

SAINTS REST CHURCH

Saints Rests Primitive Baptist Church, 2710 Engle St., Dallas, Texas invites all brethren and friends to meet with us in our annual fall three day meeting.

The Lord willing, the meeting will begin at 7:30 P.M., Friday November 28, 1986 and continue through the 5th Sunday, November 30, 1986.

Local telephone numbers for contact: Elder Carey C. Morris 214-298-3269 Deacon Dean G. Connell 214-298-8086

Elder Carey C. Morris
Moderator and Pastor

Requested by Saints Rest Church, written by Deacon Dean G. Connell, Church Clerk.

1 PETER 5:10

But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strenghthen, settle you.

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the Staunton River Union is to be held the Lord willing with Malmaison Church, the 5th Sunday - and the Saturday before - in November. A cordial invitation is extended to our ministers, brethren, and friends.

Elder O. K. Tench - Mod.
Peggy Wells - Clerk

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Signs of The Times, Inc.
Rt. 1, Box 65
Keeling, Virginia, 24566

ST. JOHN,3:3

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

ARTICLES

HEAVENLY REALITIES AND DIVINE CERTAINTIES

"And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This the true God, and eternal life." - 1 John v. 20

There is a reality in true religion, and indeed, rightly viewed, a reality in nothing else; for every other thing passes away a dream of the night, and comes to an end like a tale that is told. Now you cannot say of a thing that passes away and comes to an end that it is real. It may have the appearance of reality, of possessing a firm, enduring substance, when in fact it is but a shadow. Our very language, nay, the very laws of our land, embody this idea. We read or hear sometimes, for instance, that a man of wealth has died and left such or such an amount of real and personal property. What is meant by real property, and why is it called real, as thus distinguished from personal? By real property we understand land and houses. Money, jewels, pictures, books, furniture, securities, these are not called real but personal, and for this reason, that they belong to the individual and are therefore moveable and transitory. Money may be spent, jewels be lost, books be burnt, furniture decay, pictures vanish by time and age, securities be stolen. But not so with land; that cannot be burnt, nor stolen by night, nor dropped down a sink-hole, nor decay with old age. Amidst all the changes of time there it remains in all its original firmness, and is handed down as a solid possession from father to son. The law therefore, calls all such property "real."

Is there not some similarity between this and the things of eternity? Nothing is real but that which has an abiding substance. Health decays, strength diminishes, beauty flees the cheek, sight and hearing grow dim, the mind itself gets feeble, riches make to themselves wings and flee away, children die, friends depart, old age creeps on, and life itself comes to a close. These fugitive, transitory things are then mere shadows; there is no substance, enduring substance in them. They are for time, and are useful for a time state. Like our daily food and raiment, house and home, they support and solace us in our journey through life. But real religion - and by this I understand the work of God upon the soul, abides in death and after death, goes with us through the dark valley, and lands us safe in a blessed eternity. It is, therefore, the only thing in this world of which we can say that it is real.

Is not this John's testimony? "All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." (1 John ii. 16, 17.) What a testimony is here given that everything in the world is passing away, and that only one man abides for ever. And who is that man, that blessed man, who lives when all dies, who abides for ever when all others pass away into the outer darkness? It is he who doeth the

will of God. And how and when do we the will of God? When we believe in His dear Son by a living faith; for "this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." "And this is the will of him that sent me, that every on which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." (John vi. 40.) If, then, you have seen the Son and believed in Him, you have now everlasting life, and Jesus will raise you up in the last day.

Now wherever there is reality, there will be a measure, more or less, of certainty. If you are the possessor of a piece of land, it may be but a small field or half an acre of garden ground, you know for certain whether you are the possessor of that piece of property or not. When you walk up and down the length and breadth of it, even if a few yards be the full extent of your walk, you can stamp your foot upon the soil and say, "This is mine; this is my property." But we observe that there is a distinction between the certainty of right; that your title is good as well as your proprietorship. So in the things of God.

There is a certainty in the truths of revelation, and those who know something of the things of God in their soul are resting upon them as divine certainties, of which the blessed Spirit has borne in their conscience His sure testimony. And even where this is not clearly the case, where this inward testimony is weak, the possession of the fear of God, as the beginning of wisdom, gives to its owner a possession of the kingdom of heaven. Thus every child of God may not have attained to the certainty of title, though he has the certainty of possession. His title may be good in itself beyond all doubt and question, as regards its reality; but if you ask him to produce it, he can scarcely find his deeds, or make out a title to satisfy himself, or fully to satisfy you. And yet if the Lord the Spirit has but begun the work of grace in his heart, he has the certainty of title.

What leads me to make these remarks upon realities and certainties? The peculiar language of our text, the firm reality, the positive certainty which stamp its declarations. Do we find any uncertainties here? Any "perhaps" or "peradventure;" "I think it may be," or "I cannot tell whether it may be so or not?" Does the Holy Ghost ever speak the language of uncertainty in revealing to us the truth of God? Mark how clearly, decisively, certainly the man of God speaks here: "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us and understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." What a certain sound the gospel trumpet here gives; with what confidence the man of God speaks. And if he did not, how could we believe him? If a man profess to be my guide, say on some Swiss mountain, amidst rocks and snows and falling avalanches, he must know the way and every step that he takes on that perilous ground or I cannot follow him with any confidence. If I own a ship, and a pilot undertake to carry it down the channel, he must know every shoal, or my ship and cargo and many precious lives may be lost through his uncertain handling of the helm. Other instances will occur to your mind in which we want certainties, that we may clearly know where we are, what

we are, what we are about, and whither we are going, in order to preserve us from being altogether wrong and going altogether wrong.

Now if religion be of all matters most important, if a mistake in it, at least a very serious mistake, be fatal, how desirable, how absolutely necessary is it to have certainties in our own case. The word of God in the hands of the Spirit is our guide; how needful therefore it it is that it should be a certain guide; and may I not add that the interpretation of it by a professed servant of Christ should be as clear and certain as the word itself? God help me then this morning to be this faithful interpreter of His word. Our text is clear and certain. If in my interpretation of it then there be anything dark confused, or uncertain, to me must the fault belong. Still I hope that the Lord may enable me so rightly to divide the word of truth, so to dive into the treasures of our text, and lay them bare to your view, that you may with God's help and blessing, gather up from what I may bring before you something that may enrich, feed, comfort, and instruct your soul. I shall draw your attention to three points connected with our text.

I. - First, the positive declaration, "This is a true God, and eternal life."

II. - Secondly, the knowledge which the believer possesses that "the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true."

III. - Thirdly, the positive assertion, that "we are in him that is true." God give the needed blessing!

I. - "This is the true God, and eternal life."

1. Whilst we are in nature's darkness and death, we have no knowledge, and we want to have no knowledge of the true God. We are, as the Scripture emphatically declares "without God in the world;" and we love to have it so. If we have any thought about God - and where is the conscience that has not at times - some thought about Him? - we view Him for the most part as our enemy. We are told indeed that we ought to love Him, and in His holy Law He has bidden us to do so with all our heart and soul and mind and strength. But this we cannot do; for if we make the attempt we soon find and feel the springing up of that enmity of the carnal mind for it "worketh wrath," and by stirring up the wretched enmity of the carnal mind against Him of which Paul speaks. And indeed the law provokes it; for it "worketh wrath," and by stirring up the wretched enmity of our carnal mind, baffles every attempt at love.

Besides this wretched enmity of our heart, we have an instinctive feeling that God must be our enemy as long as we are living in wicked works; for even our natural conscience testifies to His holiness, and that holiness we see and feel firmly and unalterably directed against the sins and idols which we hug to our breast. Viewing Him, then, as our enemy, we shun His presence, and escape as far as we can out of sight. Under this feeling Jonah went down from the presence of the Lord to Joppa; and the prodigal son took his journey into a far country. So we get away as far as we can from anything which testifies of the presence and power of God. Any person, any place, any book, any conversation, and I may add, any thoughts which would remind us of the pres-

ence of God we get away from as fast and as far as we can, for we cannot bear the condemnation which His presence brings.

There is another reason why we wish to have nothing to do with God, and for God to have nothing to do with us. There is an inward conviction in our mind, that if we have to do with God and God has to do with us, we must give up that which our nature loves almost more dearly than our life - blood. We must part with our sins, pluck our idols from our breast, abandon love pursuits, relinquish dear friends, offend affectionate relatives, sacrifice cherished prospects, and, as the world says, ruin ourselves for life. Now no man can look this prospect steadily in the face, this utter crushing of our inmost heart, until he has the fear of God deeply planted in his soul. This was just the case with me. I had often wanted to be religious and sometimes tried to be so; but I never could bear the thought of what I must give up if I truly became so. The sacrifice was too great; and I could not make it. Thousands are held here who never proceed any further. Here they live, here they die, here they perish.

But God will not let His own dear children thus perish. He therefore arrests us in our ignorance or our indecision, in our unbelief and in our enmity, by His all-subduing work of grace upon our soul, which He himself begins, carries on, and finishes. Now, no sooner does a ray of light shine out of His fulness into our heart and divine life quicken our soul, than so far from seeking to escape the eye of this God whom we have thus far continually shunned, there is raised up in the bosom a deep-seated, abiding, and almost continual feeling, that wherever we go that eye follows us. Thence springs the fullest conviction that there is no escaping out of His hand, or withdrawing ourselves from His heart-searching eye. We are also made to feel that if we live and die His enemies, under His wrath we must perish forevermore. This deep conviction at once puts an end to all our false conceptions of God, and to all the vain imaginations that we have formed concerning Him. It detects our false worship of Him, and how satisfied we have been with addressing Him with our lips when our heart was far from Him. It shows us that our strict morality, all our, as we thought, decided piety, all our religious thoughts, connections, and associations were but a form of godliness, whilst we really denied the power thereof.

I speak thus, for it may have been the case with some of you not to have been abandoned to any course of immorality, but on the contrary, to have been preserved in the greatest strictness of life and conduct, and yet by being varnished over with a false religion, to have stretched your limbs upon a bed too short, and wrapped yourself up in a covering too narrow. Whether then we lived in open sin, or were strict moralists, or false religionists, however it might affect our character and reputation, it made little difference when spiritual convictions entered into and laid hold of our awakened conscience. When God searches Jerusalem with candles, He lays bare every secret imagination of the mind: when He lays judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet, He sweeps away every refuge of lies and His waters overflow every hiding-place. When the sword of

the Spirit, which is the word of God, pierces even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, it is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. The word of God thus finds us out, piercing and penetrating every veil and covering, and brings us out naked and bare in all our natural and hideous deformity before His heart-searching eye.

Under this work of grace, under these teachings of the blessed Spirit as a Spirit of conviction, we begin to have some acquaintance with the true God; learn to worship Him in spirit and in truth; and to have some right apprehension of His character, of His holiness, justice, majesty, and power. In all this we see the first budding fruit, and effects of that godly fear which He gives by His grace, and which He has promised to put into the hearts of those with whom He makes an everlasting covenant that He will not turn away from them to do them good. (Jer. xxxii. 40) It is in this way that we come to a knowledge of the only true God in His justice and holiness.

2. But after a time, as the Lord is pleased to work by His Spirit and grace, we come to a knowledge of the only true God as the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. This we do not see at first. We read that "it is the glory of God to conceal a thing." (Prov. xxv. 2) Thus it is for His own glory that for a time He conceals from His people that which afterwards He reveals unto them. For the most part, therefore, He exercises them well and long with guilty apprehensions and fears of His great and terrible Majesty, that He may strip them thoroughly of all the rags of creature righteousness and bring them down to that spot where He means to reveal in them and unto them His dear Son, and make Him precious to their souls.

Now no man can bring into his own heart a spiritual, saving knowledge of the Son of God, or give himself faith to embrace Him as the Christ of God, so as to have any assurance that He died for him. He may long to do so, and even attempt to raise up faith in his own bosom; but till the time comes when God is pleased to give some discovery and manifestation of His dear Son to his soul, he cannot see Him; for He hides Himself in the thick darkness; nor can he believe in Him so as to find rest and peace from an assurance of pardoned sin and acceptance in the Beloved. Men may question and cavil at these strong assertions, but I am very sure that I speak in the fullest harmony with the experience of every living soul in thus speaking; for all such well know that the faith that brings peace is not in their own power, but is the pure, sovereign gift of God.

When, then, any whom the Lord the Spirit is inwardly teaching has been exercised, some for a longer and others for a shorter period, with such apprehensions of the character of the only true God as to bring him down into the dust of death, this gracious Teacher in some most unexpected moment will bring some discovery to his soul of the Son of God as a Savior, suitable to his lost case and condition, and raise up faith in his heart to embrace Him as the Son of God. I cannot now stay to work this point clearly out in the experience of the Lord's disciples, as we see in the New Testament; but take it all in the words of Peter: "Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are

sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." (John vi. 68, 69.) It is in this way that we are brought to see who the true God is, not merely in His character as holy, just, and righteous, inflexible against sin and determined to punish the guilty, but obtain the gracious view of His mercy, goodness, and love in the face of Jesus Christ. This is what the apostle means when he says, "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. iv. 6.)

You will observe that our text says, "This is the true God." There is no other God but this. All others are false gods, the vain and vague conceptions of men's minds - not the true God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God of all grace, of all mercy, and of all truth, as manifesting Himself in the Person and work of His dear Son. This revelation and discovery of the glory of God in the face, or, as it might be rendered, in the Person of Jesus Christ, changes the whole scene, brings the soul out of darkness into light, gives it a sweet deliverance into the mercy of God, makes Christ precious, fills the heart, according to the measure of the revelation given, with all joy and peace in believing. Then we can say, "This is the true God" - God in Christ, God revealing Himself in the Person of His dear Son, as pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin.

3. Now connected with this true God is "eternal life," for our text combines them as one: "This is the true God and eternal life." O the blessedness, which eternity itself can never exhaust, of possessing eternal life. There is something to my mind so singularly blessed in the expression "eternal life," that I cannot help dwelling upon it. How the thought, the feeling of it expands the breast! Compared with it, how poor, mean, and low is our temporal life and all its concerns - the short span which God has allotted to us here below!

Observe how our eye is directed by holy John to the true God as being Himself eternal life. He is not only the Giver, the Spring, the Subject, the Object of it; He Himself is it all. O if He has but quickened our souls by His Spirit and grace, we carry now, even now, eternal life in our breast; for this eternal life is the precious fruit on earth of that eternal life in heaven which was with the Father and was manifested unto us. (1 John i. 2.) We have no life in our own bosom independent of the Source and Fountain of life; for Jesus is "the way, the truth, and the life." He is our life (Col. iii. 4.), and He has said, for our encouragement and consolation, "Because I live ye shall live also." (John xiv. 19.) If we have any light, any warmth, any fruitfulness, any motion, it comes from the Sun of righteousness; and so if we have any life, it comes from Him who is "the Fountain of life." (Psa. xxxvi. 9.)

4. How shall we know that we have eternal life, you may ask? How do we know that we have natural life? By an inward consciousness that we are alive; by the pulse which beats, the lungs which breathe, the eye which sees, the ear which hears, the tongue which speaks, the hands which feel; by the warm play of blood through our veins, by the thoughts which pass to and fro through our mind. Similarly we know the possession of spiritual life

by an inward consciousness of it and by its inward actings. And as where there is spiritual there is eternal life, as we feel the bubblings, springings, risings, and varied movements of this spiritual life in our bosom, we have a testimony that we have also eternal life; that this eternal life is in the Son of God, and from the Son of God has been breathed into and communicated unto our souls.

Preached at Providence Chapel, Oakham, on Lord's Day Morning, June 11, 1865. by J. C. Philpot

AMOS III. 3.

"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"

There was a time, child of God, when the world held in your heart the chief place. It was not so in God's heart. You and he were therefore at variance. But now, through grace, you are brought to make eternity your chief concern. You and God are agreed there; for in the mind of God eternity as much outweighs time as the stars in the midnight sky outweigh a grain of dust. There was a time when you loved the world and the things of time and sense; and earth and earthly things were your element and home. You and God disagreed upon that matter; because the Lord saw that the world was full of evil, whilst you saw it full of good. The Lord saw the world under his curse, and you loved its favour and its blessing-seeking madly and wickedly to enjoy that which God had denounced; therefore you could not agree. Thus you see that in order to be agreed with God, we must have God's thoughts in our heart, God's ways in our soul, and God's love in our affections. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." But they must become such; and when once God's thoughts become your thoughts and God's ways our ways; when once we have the mind of Christ and see with the eyes of God, then God and we become agreed, and being agreed, we can walk together. What is it to walk together? Why, it is to enjoy union, communion, fellowship, and friendship. Now as we are brought to agree with God, we walk with God. He has set up a mercy-seat on high, and when they thus agree, God and man may meet at the mercy-seat of the Redeemer. As the eyes are enlightened to see the truth of God; as the heart is touched to feel the power of God; and as the affections are drawn forth to love the things of God, we meet at the mercy-seat. It is sprinkled with blood; it contains and hides from view the broken tables of the law. There God meets man in gracious amity, and enables him to pour out his soul before him and to tell him his troubles, trials, and temptations. And every now and then he sweetly relieves by dropping in a gracious promise, applying some portion of his sacred truth, encouraging him to believe in his dear Son, and still to hope in his mercy.

J. C. Philpot

I THESSALONIANS v.6.

"Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober."

Here sobriety is opposed to sleepiness, and is connected with walking in the light and in the day, as sleepiness and its frequent cause, drunkenness, are connected with darkness and night. One of the greatest curses God can send on a people and its rulers, its prophets and seers, is a spirit of deep sleep, as the prophet speaks: "For the Lord hath closed your eyes; the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered." But to be sober is to be awaked out of this sleep, and, as a consequence, to walk not only wakefully but watchfully. It implies, therefore, that careful, circumspect walking, that daily living, moving, speaking, and acting in the fear of God, whereby alone we can be kept from the snares spread for our feet at every step of the way. How many have fallen into outward evil and open disgrace from want of walking watchfully and circumspectly, and taking heed to their steps. Instead of watching the first movements of sin and against, as the Lord speaks, "the entering into temptation," they rather dally with it until they are drawn away and enticed of their own lust which, as unchecked, goes on to conceive and bring forth sin, which, when it is finished or carried out and accomplished in positive action, bringeth forth death.

J. C. Philpot

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

"THUS SAITH THE LORD."

The expressions, "Thus saith the Lord," "Saith God," and including the sayings of Jesus, occur at least one thousand times throughout the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Yet, despite this fact, there are to be found those who say the Bible is not the word of God. Indeed, beyond all sucessful controversy, it is verily the word of God. Jesus Christ himself is the living Word, the Scriptures of inspiration are the written Word. These two, the living and the written Words, do never contradict each other. They are in perfect harmony. The literal meaning of the Scriptures and the spiritual significance thereof, do never conflict. If at any time, any man thinks he sees contradictions and lack of harmony in the Word of God, the opposition is in the man himself. Every one of us by nature are in opposition to God's word. The carnal mind is enmity against God and the natural man knows not the things of God. No wonder, then, that carnal minds and natural men charge the Scriptures with being contradictory. Every man's opinion, every man's views, all preaching, all philosophy, all meditation and all sentiment, should be brought to the test of the written Word of God. If not in accord with the Scriptures, they must be cast aside and rejected, howsoever fair and plausible they may seem. Frequently we hear it said that one says the Scriptures mean thus and so, another man says they mean quite something else: therefore, it is said the Scriptures can mean anything. This is absolutely false. When the Scriptures are taken and handled honestly with no attempt to deceive and with no personal bias which twists them to suit our personal notions, they can mean but one thing, and that one thing is the truth of God

as revealed in and through Jesus Christ. God's people should not follow preachers only in so far as the preacher follows the Scriptures. The Scriptures should be the man of our counsel. The brethren at Berea were more noble than the other christians because they searched the Scriptures daily to know whether the things said by Paul were so. (Acts xvii. II) The brethren at Thessalonica were said not to have done as the Berean brethren did. We fear that in this present day there is entirely too little searching of the of the Scriptures by the brethren themselves and too much reliance placed in what the preacher says. If any man lacks wisdom, we are not told to go to our pastor about it, or to inquire of the preacher, but we are commanded to ask of the Lord and that thus inquiring sincerely of him, we shall receive. To go directly to the fountainhead of all Wisdom is vastly better than to inquire of one of the streams. No Scripture should ever be interpreted at variance with the context in which it occurs. If we pick out a verse here, another verse there, a word here and a word there, the most fantastic and absurd conclusions may be arrived at; but this is not right and certainly not honest. We fail to see how a man truly called of God to preach can conscientiously thus handle his Master's goods. What kind of an account will such a man give his stewardship? We are commanded to study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen rightly dividing the word of truth and so needing not to be ashamed. The word of truth needs no addition and subtraction, but it is to be properly divided. This the servant of God does by that same Spirit which has called and qualified him as a servant of God. If the calling of God be absent, no amount of study will do any good. It is not necessary to study the Scriptures themselves, compare Scripture with Scripture, spiritual things with spiritual. No amount of Bible reading will ever make a man preach the gospel, but one who is truly called to the work of the ministry will feel to make the Scriptures the man of his counsel and will desire to read and search them, asking the Spirit to direct him in his perusal of them. In any walk or profession of life, it is needful to have the tools to work with. Are not the inspired Scriptures the tool of the man of God? Are they not for his furnishing to all good works and for his instruction in doctrine? If we cannot give a "thus saith the Lord" for what we believe and preach, we had better quit. Nothing is worth anything unless founded on divine authority. Divine authority for doctrine is to be found in the inspired Scriptures of truth. True Baptists all down the ages have always required spiritual proof for their doctrine and practice. Anything not sanctioned by "thus saith the Lord," they let alone. It is interesting to know the the word "bigot" arose centuries ago in France. "Bigot" comes from "by God." Today this word means a narrow-minded person and one who is very decided and uncompromising in his views, particularly on the subject of religion. In olden times, the Huguenots in France were called a "by God" people, because they demanded the word of God as their authority. Whenever approached by their enemies and examined by them to know why they believed as they did, they would refer their enemies to the Bible and declare that their faith was "by God,"

their doctrine and teachings was "by God," their practice was "by God," etc. Thus, it came to be that a "by God" person was one who demanded the Bible and the "thus saith the Lord" as his guide. This phrase "by God" has been by much use contracted into the word "bigot." Most people today hate to be called "bigots," but we who love the Scriptures should rejoice to have ourselves thus denominated, because when we know the origin of the word, it is complimentary rather than defamatory, since it stamps one as being an upholder of the Word of God. When we come, in our reading, to passages of Scripture which we cannot understand, let us await the Spirit's pleasure to unfold them to us: and as we thus wait, let us not deny them and us not permit our imaginations to range wildly over them unduly spiritualizing them. Imagination, someone says, is the biggest "nation" in the world. Surely it is and further the Word says the imaginations of our hearts are nothing but evil continually.

Elder H. H. Leferts

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 1986

Mrs. Lucile McGee, WA.....7.00
Loy P. Rodgers, AR.....7.00
Hassell A. Hale, VA.....7.00
Mrs. Rachel J. Green, WV 2.00
Roy & Minnie Cunningham, OR..10.00
Mrs. Minnie G. Roberts, NC.....2.00
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OBITUARIES

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

GEORGE TYLER RAKES

In my poor weak way, will try to write the Obituary of Brother Rakes.

Brother Rakes was born April 11, 1896 in Patrick County Va. passed away October 13, 1985 making his stay here on earth over 92 years.

He was the son of William Rakes and Lillie Helen Rakes. In 1923 was married to Zada Huff, to this union two sons were born, Marvin T. and Allen H. Rakes, 3 grandsons, 1 granddaughter.

Brother Rakes, joined Thompson Grove Church, July 3, 1960, was baptized the following day, by his pastor Elder J.P. Helms. On Saturday Oct. 3, 1964, was ordained a Deacon by presbytery Elder J.P. Helms Moderator. He had a drawn out illness of 11 years 6mths. and 2 days. During his afflictions he would often say I believe Salvation is by the Grace of God. Often during the many visits, he would speak of our Salvation on my visiting him, he would say I hope to come to church one more time. He was faithful to the church as long as he was able.

His funeral was conducted at Woods Funeral Home in Floyd Va. by Elder Hale Terry, and his pastor Elder Lane Carter. Written by request, by one who loved him for Christ sake I hope.

Elder Lane Carter

SISTER NELLIE J. TATE

Sister Nellie Tate was called home by her Lord on April 15, 1986. She was the daughter of the late Pink and Mattie Jarrell. In 1931 she was united in marriage to Harry Robert Tate who passed away August 29, 1964. To this union were born nine children, Robert, Dewey, John Dillard, Lorene, Cecil, Elaine, Bessie, George, and Debra, all of whom survive their mother. On August 7, 1967 Sister Tate married Brother John B. Tate who also survives.

Sister Tate joined Dan River Church on May 24, 1959. She was truly a gentle, loving mother in Israel. The Lord blessed her with a desire to do for others and enabled her to do so. When it came to doing for others, he blessed her to rise above self and put others first.

A very special memory for me is how she tenderly cared for her flowers. She loved flowers. I remember sadly thinking as I passed her home after her passing, how beautiful all the flowers looked, but at the same time I remembered the words of her favorite hymn:

"How tedious and tasteless the hours,

"How tedious and tasteless the hours,
When Jesus no longer I see;
Sweet prospects, sweet birds, and sweet flowers,
Have lost all their sweetness to me.
The mid-summer sun shines but dim;
The fields strive in vain to look gay;
But when I am happy in hime
December's as pleasant as May."

I feel He has taken her unto Him on high "where winter and clouds are no more" and that she is one of the flowers in His garden. For her companion and her family, many of whom I have known since childhood, my prayer is that you might be blessed with the reconciling peace of knowing that though your mother loved you, she sought a happiness which this world could not give her but could only come when the Gentle Shepherd carried her home. May He bless you not to dwell on your loss, but rather give you - thankful hearts for all the precious memories of the life she was blessed to live here.

In all things may the Lord be praised.

Humbly submitted,
Mary L. Hawkins

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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PRAYER

O that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still!
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will!

O send thy Spirit down to write
Thy law upon my heart!
Nor let my tongue indulge deceit,
Nor act the liar's part.

From vanity turn off my eyes;
Let no corrupt design,
Nor covetous desires arise
Within this soul of mine.

Order my footsteps by thy word,
And make my heart sincere;
Let sin have no dominion, Lord,
But keep my conscience clear.

My soul hath gone too far astray,
My feet too often slip;
Yet since I've not forgot thy way,
Restore thy wandering sheep.

Make me to walk in thy commands,
'Tis a delightful road;
Nor let my head, or heart, or hands,
Offend against my God.

Watts

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EDITORIAL

EPHESIANS 2: 8,9,10.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any should boast. For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

The Apostle Paul wrote much about the grace of God and well he should have for his experience from beginning to end was a glorious display of this sovereign grace of a just and holy God who works all things according to his own will and purpose. He was made to realize that but by the intervention of this amazing grace in his life in the way and manner which it came he would have lived his entire life believing that he was serving God when, in reality he did not know him at all. He was made aware of the fact that if things had depended upon him to change them of his own volition that he would have continued on his original course and never have been blessed to believe the truth or to worship God in spirit and in truth. He was well satisfied with the life that he was living, as he wrote to the Galatian Church, "I profited in the Jews religion above many my equal in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers." He was practicing religion as he had been taught from his youth, was highly esteemed by his peers and was given letters of authority from them to wage war on this new sect of people which was rising up in their midst and challenging the traditions and practices of the Sadducees and Pharisees of that day.

There is no indication in the scriptures that Saul of Tarsus would have voluntarily changed his pattern of life, his faith or religion since he was extremely successful in what he was doing and the flesh loves the recognition for success. Yet this is the particular time in the career of Saul of Tarsus that the grace of God came into his life and through no effort of Saul he was made a new creature in Christ. It came upon him suddenly, sovereignly and forcefully in so much that he began immediately to preach the faith that he had so earnestly persecuted til that time, and as he wrote in one of his epistles, when a man is made a new creature in Christ,

old things pass away and all things become new. This experience made him know that it is by grace that you are saved and grace only. In relating his experience to the Galatians he said, "But when it pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen: immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." He realized that the work of grace in his heart was so perfect and complete that he did not need to inquire of the wisdom of this world or of the flesh regarding it. This is what caused him to declare that salvation is a gift of God, not of works lest anyone should boast.

All of the works of the Apostle Paul prior to his conversion was certainly no basis or reason for this sudden and dramatic change in his life, his convictions and new found faith in God because they were but leading him further astray. They are rooted and grounded in the world and worldly wisdom and regardless of what the world contends they will never cause the man of the flesh to turn to God, and this the Apostle learned in his experience.

This grace that saved the Apostle Paul led him the remaining days of his life, through trials, scourgings, shipwreck and other afflictions too numerous to mention and yet through them all he was faithful to this heavenly calling and related his experience to all who would listen. God's children love to tell their experience, to anyone interested enough to listen, hoping to find others of like precious hope and rejoice in the fellowship they have for one another. Paul never again persecuted the church or anyone else from that day forward, in fact from then on he loved those that disagreed with him and prayed for them that did not know the truth. His hearts desire and prayer was, for all men, that they might be saved and come into the knowledge of the truth even as he had. See the difference that a work of grace in the heart does for those who are exercised by it. This is the heartfelt prayer of all who have known this change, that all men might have this experience and come to know and worship God even as they have. They know that they are no better or more deserving of this gift of grace than anyone else and must confess that it is a sovereign and holy gift from the giver of every good and perfect gift and for reasons known and understood only by the giver.

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Although Paul acknowledged that he was not worthy of the notice of God he believed that it was for a reason and that the purpose would be fulfilled and the glory would be unto God. He realized that his entire life was the workmanship of God and that it would produce a result that was ordained before the world was formed. To this agree all who have been called out of the darkness of the flesh and by grace made to see and experience the glorious light of liberty bestowed upon them by the amazing grace of an all wise sovereign Creator. Their praise and adoration flows out with the realization that this work that has been done in their heart is the way of salvation, as they read in the scriptures of the way in which the saints of God in all ages of time have been brought forth and

made to declare the power and majesty of their Heavenly Father.

Whereof I was made a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power," and again, "Unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given, that I should preach among the gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." All that the Apostle was, he ascribed to the grace of God that was given him. He was made aware of the fact that it was given to him for a purpose and he was given faith by the same work of grace to go where providence sent him and to be content in whatever situation he found himself. As the milch kine which were tied to the cart upon which the ark was placed, he went not knowing where he would go but trusting that the one that sent him would also provide a way and that the desired results would be accomplished.

Jesus' Commission to the Apostle Paul Acts 26 vs 16. "But rise and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of the things which thou hast seen, and of those things in which I will appear unto thee: Delivering thee from the Gentiles unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." In view of the life of the Apostle Paul prior to that day on the road to Damascus, his experience that day, including the charge given him, and the change in his life from that day forward it is easy to understand why the subject of the grace of God should occupy such a prominent place in the writings to the churches. It is the most common characteristic in the experience of all of those that have been born of the spirit of God and the most precious characteristic of God in the hearts of all of those who have known it. The Apostle realized that all of those who trust in God have been given this gift of faith by the grace of God and also how dependent that they are upon a continuance of this grace in their lives. He closed each of his epistles to the churches and to Titus and Timothy with the phrase. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you," or "Grace be with thee." If not the last verse then in the last three or four verses one of these phrases appear, showing that grace was constantly on his mind and the necessity of the grace of God to continue to be with them in every step of their experience. He knew that they would never reach a point, in this life, when they would not be totally dependent on grace to support them if they are to walk a godly walk and live a godly life. He knew that they would desire and strive to live godly and fail, so, for their comfort he wrote "For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that I do not: but what I hate, that I do: and again." For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." This experience is painful but it is for good since it makes them humble, and then realizing that all experience it, strengthens their hope and the realization that their sufficiency is of God and his wonderful gift of grace.

"But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." This is a beautiful expression of the gifts of grace and the reason that there are varying degrees of this gift. It does not mean that anyone does not receive a sufficient supply of grace to accomplish the purpose for which it is given. One may observe their brethren and the gift that they have received and then wonder if they indeed have a gift because it is not the same. This is normal since it is only acknowledging the beauty of the gift as it is being made manifest in the church, and they are observing the fruit that is born as a result of the gift. Each gift is just as productive as the other. Each accomplishes the purpose for which they are given and fulfills a definite need in the church since no gift is in vain or unneccessary. We can all remember, in our travels through life, gifts which we have observed bearing fruit which was so lovely and edifying to the church and yet the brother or sister felt to have no gift. The beauty is in the eye of the beholder. All do not have the gift of the Apostle Paul but all have one equally as important to the church, since the church is the body of Christ and is complete only as it is made up of all of the members with their own special gift filling their own place. They render honor and glory to God as they make their calling manifest in the church and confess the work of grace in their heart and the faith in God that it produces.

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lust, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our saviour Jesus Christ." Is this what you have been taught and made to seek after and desire with all of your heart? If it is, that is because the grace of God has brought salvation and placed it in your life, redeemed you from all iniquity, purified, sanctified you and made you zealous of good works. He not only made you zealous of good works but he ordained that you would walk in them to the glory of the grace of God and to the praise of his holy name. Grace has supplied your every need for life and for salvation. It is a complete package deal and none will receive only a part of it and not all. It makes you hunger and thirst after righteousness and it makes you righteous before God. It puts you in need, gives you a heart to pray for the answer of your need, then supplies it so that you glorify God from the very depths of your heart. It makes you realize what you are in nature (no excuses) and see what you must be by the law and fully realize that only the grace of God can reconcile the difference which he did in sending his only begotten Son into the world to give unto every heir of heaven the ministry of reconcilliation as a free unmerited gift.

All of the scriptures quoted above were written by the Apostle Paul on the subject of grace to which he owed his salvation and hope for eternal abode in heaven. He also wrote to Timothy, "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering for a pattern to them

which should thereafter believe on him to life everlasting." The longsuffering that he refers to here is the grace of God in action. Longsuffering is bearing with one when they are wrong because of a love that you have for them in spite of what they do. It is the characteristic of God that enables a just and holy God that demands perfection regarding obedience to his law, to save sinners who cannot keep the law for one day much less for life. Except for the longsuffering (grace) of God there would have been none to inhabit the earth for Adam & Eve would have been destroyed in the garden of Eden. Except for the longsuffering (grace) of God none would ever have been born of the spirit and enabled to worship Him in spirit and in truth. This is one lesson that all have learned in their own personal experience, "For by grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:"

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brother Key,

I don't feel worthy of taking your time, or space in the Signs of the Times. For sometime I have been thinking of writing a little of my experience, dreams and the reason for my hope.

When I was about ten years old, we were playing hide and seek. I went inside the door to hide. As I stooped down, I heard a voice say you are hiding from your playmates, but you are not hiding from God. For He knows everything you do--everywhere you go. These words are as strong in my mind today, as they were the day I heard them spoken. About two years later I went to spend the week with my cousin. One morning about eleven o'clock, it came the worst hail storm, I have ever seen. I have never seen a darker night--than it was that morning. It was hailing so hard it was coming down the chimney and rolling out in the floor. I was scared, I was afraid I would die. I wanted to go home to my earthly family. I said Lord if you will let me go home to my earthly family, I will be willing to die. Soon the cloud was over and the sun was shining again.

One afternoon I was weighted down with a heavy burden. I felt so heavy, like I had heavy weights around my neck. I went to bed that night in tears. I lay there begging the Lord for mercy. (So many times in my life I have had to beg for mercy.) I felt the burden was more than I could bear alone. I knew relief could only come from the Lord. I tried to go to sleep, hoping I would feel better when I woke up. Later in the night I went to sleep for a while, when I woke up the burden was still so heavy. I got up and hurriedly fixed breakfast, fighting to keep my feelings from showing. I wanted to get the children off to school, and the men out to work, so I could be alone.

When everyone was gone, I sat down at the table, sitting there crying and begging for mercy, I said Lord what is wrong with me? Then my mother came in, we sat there and talked for a while. When she left, not feeling any better, I went outside. I had walked only a few feet, when I felt that burden lifted from me. I stopped in my tracks, I was light as a feather. I stood there

looking toward heaven, and praising the Lord. It was a wonderful feeling, everything around me was so beautiful. For a while I was on the mountain top and I felt I would never be in the valley again. I soon found I was wrong, I was down in the valley again. I am glad we have to go down in the valley. Then we appreciate being on the mountain and know how sweet it is to be lifted up. I wish I could express my feelings like some I have heard, but I cannot. I have been to church, the preacher was telling some of my experience better than I could tell it myself. I felt like he was preaching directly to me.

One night I dreamed, I was out walking, I came to some branches. I wanted some water, there were some pans, some old, some new, on the branches. There was just a few drops of water in the new pans. I went to the end of the branches, some people were standing there. I do not know who they were. I don't know why, but for some reason they did not want me to have any water. I started walking away crying. I folded my arms across my eyes to hide my tears.

As I walked on I came to a well, I believe the well I saw in my dream was Jacob's well, where Jesus stopped to rest, being weary of his journey. I stood there looking at the well for a while. Then I walked on I looked to my right which was the east I saw the most beautiful long, round, hill covered in green grass. It was as smooth as if it had just been mowed. The hill was covered with snow white sheep, both young and old. They were grazing, all headed in the same direction. There was not one of them disturbed, they were so calm and peaceful. I looked over the hill, the sun was rising it was shining as pure gold.

I walked on I looked to my left, which was the west. I saw a grove of trees, among them were seats and the stand like they were having an association. I stopped at the back of the seats looking at the people. I don't know how I got down there, but the next thing I knew I was laying on the ground, between the seats and the stand, at the feet of you dear people. Then a sister came by stepped over me and went on. Then I woke up. If you will let me live at your feet it is more than I deserve.

I had a very short dream sometime ago. I dreamed I was dead, then I was living again. I was standing there moving my fingers, they were the only part of my body I was moving.

The reason for my hope, Elder William Stadler was pastor of Prospect Hill Church. At the end of the service he would always say lets look to the Lord and be dismissed. I was sitting not far from the end of the bench. I closed my eyes and Christ appeared at the end of the bench where I was. He was looking directly at me. He had a long snow white beard and a long snow white robe on. There was not a spot or wrinkle on it. He kept looking at me. A thought came to me, open your eyes and close them back to see if He is still there. I opened my eyes and closed them again, He was still standing there looking at me. Then in a few seconds He was gone. I believe He came before me to show me He is the way, the truth and life, and there is no other way.

It is by Grace of God through faith that we are saved. It is a gift of God and not of works, lest any man should boast.

I hope my name is written in the book

of life. I love all my brothers and sisters in Christ. If we do not love our brethren whom we have seen, how can we love Christ whom we have not seen?

I am thankful for our pastor, and Greensboro church for giving me a home with them. You don't need me, but I need everyone of you, I love you all. I feel so little.

I need your prayers, when at the throne of Grace remember me in your prayers.

A little unworthy sister,
Allie Clayton

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

REHOBETH PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Rehobeth Primitive Baptist church is located on State Highway #335, five miles North of El Dorado, Arkansas in Union County. It was established in 1891 and the present church was remodeled and finished in 1956.

Elder W.K. Smith was the first pastor called to serve this church. He served from 1891 until 1933. (42 years) Other pastors who have served are Elders; R.W. Rhodes, W.A. Speer, E.J. Lambert, and others. At the present time Elders David E. Turner and Graydon Smith are serving.

Our meeting time is the second Sunday and Saturday before of each month at 10:30 a.m. We invite you to visit us.

ARTICLES

HEAVENLY REALITIES AND DIVINE CERTAINTIES

"And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This the true God, and eternal life." - 1 John v. 20

I now pass on to show the knowledge which the believing soul has that the Son of God is come.

1. You will observe the positive certainty wherewith John speaks; and you may perhaps ask yourself the question, Whence arose this positive certainty in John's breast? John himself shall tell us. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you." (1 John i. 1-4) He was not speaking at a peradventure; there were no perhapses, or ifs, or buts in his knowledge, as there are none in his declaration of it. He had seen with his eyes the Person of Jesus; he had heard with his ears the voice of Jesus; he had handled with his hands Jesus as the Word of life; and therefore knew by the witness of his eye, the witness of his ear, the witness of his hands, and the witness of his heart what he speaks of to us, and what he has by divine inspiration recorded in the word of truth, that we may have fellowship with him and all the saints of God.

You may say, "We cannot have that same certainty which he had. John saw our blessed Lord in the flesh; John could look upon Him with his natural eyes, John could hear His voice with his natural ears; and as John lay in His bosom he could almost feel the warm pulsations of the Lord's natural heart. But we cannot do this. We do not stand in the same position with John and the other disciples. How then can we have the same evidence and the same certainty?" All this is true; but did no others see the Lord with their bodily eye? Did no others hear the Lord with their bodily ear? Were there no other witnesses to his crucifixion? Were there no ears which heard, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani" but those of John? Did no other eyes but his see the spear pierce the Redeemer's side when forthwith there came thereout blood and water? Yes, but what did they see? A malefactor. And what did they hear? The cry of a dying man. And what did the Roman soldier behold before he raised his spear? One who was "dead already." And did not thousands see and hear Him in the days of His flesh who perished in their sins?

It was not then sufficient to see the Lord Jesus with the bodily eye and hear Him with the natural ear, unless there was the believing eye and the believing ear, springing out of a believing heart. Because then the Lord

has left earth and is gone up to be where He was before and is now seated at the right hand of the Father, is there no eye to see Him now, no ear to hear Him now, no hands to handle Him now? Just as much as there were eyes to see, ears to hear, and hands to handle Him when upon earth; for those only then "beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father," "which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John i. 13.14); and regeneration gives the same eyes now. Thus if we have not the same full amount of certainty we have a similar kind.

It was necessary that the apostles should have the fullest amount of certainty, and especially those of them who were inspired to write the Scriptures, to be the food of faith to the Church through all ages. They believed what they saw with their eyes and heard with their ears with the fullest certainty; and having given a testimony of this certain knowledge to us in the word of truth, we believe their testimony. Having thus a measure of the same divine teaching, divine witness, and divine revelation, we are made able to say, not perhaps to the amount of their full confidence, but still with a measure of it, according to the strength of our faith, "We know that the Son of God is come."

2. Now let me unfold to you a little more fully and clearly how we are brought to know that the Son of God is come; and do you weigh in the balances of the sanctuary what I shall bring forward upon the point, and see whether, when you have weighed in them your own experience, you can say with your hand upon your heart and your eye to God that you know that the Son of God is come. In working out this point, I shall come down as low as I possibly can, that I may not make the heart of the righteous sad whom the Lord has not made sad. But I shall draw the line as straight as I can.

i. We know it, first, then, by the testimony of the Scripture, by the light which the Holy Ghost casts upon the Scripture, and the faith which He raises up in our bosom to believe the Scripture. This is very important; for it excludes everything visionary and fanatical, as well as all the traditions of men from every side and quarter. When, then, we read the Scripture with the light of God upon it, and that light shines from the Scripture into our heart, raising up a living faith to believe what we read, then from the testimony of the word in our conscience, and the light, life, and power of the Spirit resting upon it, we know that the Son of God is come.

Have you not sometimes as you read the Scripture felt the power of it drop into your soul? The truth of it, the certainty of it, the majesty of it, the authority of it, and the very voice of God clearly and distinctly speaking in it, so came into your heart as the word of the Lord, testifying of Christ, that you could say, "I know that the Son of God is come." "As I read the miracles which Jesus wrought when He went about doing good; as I read the words which dropped from His lips in His parables, and especially in His gracious discourse with His disciples, my eyes are as if opened to see that this was not less than the Son of God. In His miracles I behold his Deity: in His eating, drinking, sleeping, groaning, agonizing, sweating blood, and dying on the cross I see His humanity; and I

view Deity and humanity shining forth in His glorious Person. My enlightened understanding and my believing heart receive Him as the Son of God; and feeling myself a poor, lost, guilty sinner, I receive Him as able to save my soul to the uttermost; I cast the weight of my sins upon him; I look to Him to save me, and to Him alone; and I do this from the light that I have in my mind and the faith that I feel in my breast; and I thus embrace Him as a Redeemer and Saviour, altogether suitable to my case." Now if you can say all that, you can add, with some measure of confidence, "I know that the Son of God is come."

ii. We will rise a little higher. When the Lord Jesus is pleased in some solemn hour to reveal Himself to our soul, when He graciously condescends to take the veil from off our heart that we may behold His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, when He kindly favours us with some manifestation and discovery of Himself as the Son of God, the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His Person, then we know, in fuller, larger measure that the Son of God is come.

How do you know that the sun rose this morning? By the light which rose with it. How do you know that it is not darkness now? By the light which even now streams in through the windows, and fills this place in which we are assembled. So we may say, spiritually, "How do you know that the Son of God is come?" By the Sun of righteousness arising upon you with healing in His wings and the shining light which He diffuses in your heart. So the Lord speaks to Zion: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee." That is the way in which the darkness is dispersed; for He adds, "Behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee."(Isa. lx. 1,2.) Did not our blessed Lord say: "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness?" (John xii 46.) And has He not promised, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life?" (John viii. 12.) So also testifies John in this epistle: "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." (1 John i. 5.) Now as God is light, when He is pleased to shine into the soul, we walk in the light as He is in the light, and then we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin. This is the best, this the surest, this the safest way to know that the Son of God is come.

iii. Again, we know that the Son of God is come by the communion with which He favors the soul from off the mercy seat. You know what it is to come to the mercy seat, there to behold by the eye of faith Jesus sitting as the great High Priest over the house of God; there to pour out your heart before Him, to tell Him all your complaints, and to seek communion with Him. Now when He condescends to commune with you from off the mercy seat and speak a word to your heart, then you know that the Son of God is come - come from the bosom of the Father to save your soul; come out of heaven down to earth to bear

our sins in His own body on the tree; come to do the work which the Father gave Him to do and to do it fully and wholly, so as to be able to say with expiring lips, "It is finished," before He gave up the ghost, rose from the dead and went up on high. How faith sees Him now on His throne of grace as the Mediator, the only Mediator, between God and us; how hope, a good hope through grace, anchors in Him; and how love embraces Him as the Son of God. We thus know by faith and feeling, by an inward knowledge of Him, and by an experience of the power of his resurrection, that the Son of God is come, and come, we trust, into our hearts to draw up its sincere and warm affections unto Himself.

iv. We know also that the Son of God is come by His presence; by His power put forth on our behalf; by the answers which He gives to prayer; by the way in which He appears in dark and gloomy hours, making crooked things straight and rough things plain, discovering Himself to us as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, showing unto us that in Him there is rest and peace, solid abiding happiness, and in no other. He thus draws and fixes our eyes upon Himself, where He sits as the right hand of the Father in the fulness of His grace, glory, and majesty. Thus we know that the Son of God is come. Every prayer, every petition, every sigh and cry, every longing look that you cast up to Him, and every word of His grace, every sweet promise, every glimpse or glance of the King in His beauty, which you receive out of His fulness, are all so many testimonies that the Son of God is come, and that you know that He is come.

Let me put this one point to your soul, that you may gather up from it some encouragement, if you are doubting and fearing through the power of unbelief. Take away the Son of God out of the word, off the throne of grace, and out of your heart, where are you? Where is your religion? Where is your hope? What is there before you but black despair? Thus, you know that the Son of God is come not only by your deep necessity, by your wants and woes, by your guilty conscience, by every cry, sigh, and desire of your bosom; but you know that the Son of God is come by the testimony which you have in your own breast of His presence and of His power, which alone support you in seasons of darkness and distress.

3. Another blessed word is added: "And hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true."

There is a point involved in these words, in which many both private Christians and ministers appear, in my judgment, confused or defective. They do not see - at least I have rarely seen the subject clearly handled by any man of God, they do not seem to see the difference between a gracious, enlightened understanding of the truth of God which springs out of the teaching of the Spirit, and what is commonly called head knowledge. There is such a thing - and a most dangerous, delusive thing it is, as head knowledge, and faithful ministers do well to warn people against it; for it is in our day widely prevalent in the Calvinistic Churches. But then there is such a thing as an understanding heart in the things of God: "the eyes of your understanding being enlightened" (Eph. i. 18), a spiritual, saving knowledge of the only true God and of Jesus Christ whom He

has sent; or what is so beautifully expressed here, "hath given us an understanding (God's own special gift,) that we may know him that is true."

Do you not find and feel sometimes that God has given you an understanding heart? - that you are not, as you once were, in ignorance of God and His dear Son? Is not your mind enlightened to understand the meaning of the Scriptures as they are opened up from time to time to your heart by the power of God? Do you see no beauty or blessedness in the word of God? Is it not commended to your conscience as divine truth? Has it not a liberating, sanctifying power and influence upon your soul? Do you not see at times wonders in the word of God, depths of wisdom, heights of grace, blessings and favours revealed and made known in it which seem to surpass all conception and all expression? Have you not seen sometimes "in one line of Scripture," to use an expression of Bunyan's "more than you could well tell how to stand under?" Is all this understanding to be thrown away and trodden under foot as mere head knowledge? Is it not rather an understanding which God has given us, and by which we know Him that is true? Let us not then confound these two distinct things or despise one of God's best gifts, but ever desire to be "filled with all spiritual understanding;" yea, "unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God and of the Father and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Col. i. 9; 2,3.)

You may say, "How am I to distinguish between mere head knowledge and this spiritual understanding?" I will tell you. When a special light is cast into your mind; when the word is opened up in its spiritual, experimental meaning; when the Holy Ghost seals it with sweetness and power upon your heart, and you not only understand what you read but receive it in faith, feel its savour, and enjoy its blessedness. Is not this a very different thing from lifeless, barren head knowledge? But view also its fruits; look at what this enlightened understanding has done for us! Until we had it, the veil of unbelief and ignorance was over our mind; we stumbled at noon as at night, groped for the wall like the blind, and could not find our way to the city. We read the Scriptures, it is true, but knew nothing of their spiritual meaning; and though we talked perhaps about God and Jesus Christ, and it may be prattled a little about the truth of God, we were really shut up in the grossest darkness.

Do we not see this now in others, if we cannot distinctly see the change grace has made in ourselves? What ignorance we find in them when they talk about the Scriptures; and how we see through all their head knowledge even when they speak consistently with the truth. There is no power, life, or savour in anything they say. How highly favoured then are we if any of us can say, "We know that the Son of God hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true." Men think that we are fools, narrow-minded bigots, shut up in ignorance, or intoxicated with the fumes of fanaticism and enthusiasm, are walking in a false and delusive light. No; we are not fools; we are sober-minded men; we understand what we profess; we

know what we believe; peradventures will not suit us. We do not sit down with folded hands and sleepy eyes, dreaming our time away in airy visions and speculative notions in a fool's paradise. Our soul is at stake; heaven and hell are trembling in the balance.

I must not live and die at an uncertainty whether there be a Christ or not, whether the Son of God is come or not come, whether I have an understanding to know Him that is true, or whether I live and die in darkness and ignorance. Such a religion won't do for me, or for any one in earnest about his soul; I must have realities, to know for myself that the Son of God is come, and to have an understanding in my very bosom to know Him that is true, by His own blessed manifestations, discoveries, and sweet visitations to my heart. And if I know that the Son of God is come and hath given me an understanding to know Him that is true, I shall speak that which I do know and my trumpet will give a certain sound. If I profess to be your guide, I must go boldly on as knowing every step of the way. If I am to pilot your ship down the channel, I must know the chart, that you and I may arrive at the harbor of safety.

Though men may speak against certainties in religion, the most important concern of all, yet will not men have certainties in the things of this life? Who will buy an estate with an uncertain title? Who will even deal at a shop where he is uncertain whether the goods sold him are valuable or worthless, pure or adulterated? When you receive change, do you never look at your money whether it be right? Why you count the very pence, lest you be a halfpenny wrong. The children of this world are too wise in their generation to do with uncertainties. "Let the thing be as clear and as certain as it can be," says the man of business, the trader, the farmer, the dealer, the buyer, the seller, "or I will have nothing to do with it; I will not be deceived if I can help it to the fraction of a penny."

If then the men and women of this world can so speak, so act as regards those poor, perishing things which are passing away like shadows, shall you and I, who have immortal souls and feel that we have them and that they are hanging in the balance, - shall we rest upon uncertainties, not to know whether the Son of God is come or not; not to know whether or not He "hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true?" Why the uncertainty of these things is our very life. Not that all the children of God have the certainty in their own bosom. As I before said, a man may certainly be the possessor of a property, yet be dubious as to its title, and yet have a good title too. You with the fear of God in your breast are as certain of being in heaven as that Christ is there now; but you may not have the certainty in your own breast. You may have, as most people of God have, thousands of doubts and fears which may seem to rack you to the very centre, and yet there is a certainty in the things themselves, though your doubting soul may be at an uncertainty about them. Still, it is not good to be ever fluctuating upon a sea of uncertainty; it is good to find the ground solid under our feet, and to have a rock, the Rock of ages, on which to firmly stand.

by J.C. Philpot

"And a man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest."—Isaiah xxxii. 2.

Who is this man? Need I ask the question? Is there not a reponse in every God-fearing breast? It is the man Christ Jesus—the man who is God's fellow. How blessed it is to have a scriptural and spiritual view of the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ, to see him not merely as God, truly essential God, one in essence, glory, and power with the Father and the blessed Spirit, but also man, made in all things like unto us, sin only excepted. And what a suitability there is in the humanity of the Lord Jesus, when we view it in union with this glorious Deity! As man he suffered, as man he bled, as man he died, as man he stands a Mediator for his fellow men between God and man; as man, he has for human distress an affectionate, compassionate, sympathising heart; as man, he obeyed the law in every particular; as man, he bore all the sufferings of humanity, and thus became the Brother born for adversity, flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone; yet perfectly pure, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and now exalted higher than the heavens. But what beauty, grace, glory, and suitability do we see in the man Christ Jesus, till he is revealed to the soul by the blessed Spirit? None. It is he who takes the humanity of Christ Jesus and shews it to the eye of faith. And this humanity he shews not as mere humanity, but as in union with, though distinct from, his eternal Deity. O this blessed man!—this man of sorrows; this suffering, agonizing, crucified man. View him on the cross, bleeding for thy sins; and then lift up thine eyes and see him as the same man at the right hand of God. This was Stephen's dying sight just before he passed into his presence: "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God" (Acts vii. 56).

J.C. Philpot

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VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

ESTER 4, v.16

"So will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish."

Seeking the Lord's help and your very prayerful attention, I

would direct your attention of Esther 4, v.16.

We read in the Word of God that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable." Some may ask the question concerning this Book of Esther: Wherein is the profit? Certainly the name of God is not literally mentioned in it. There is no prayer actually, literally recorded, and yet the Book of Esther forms a very significant part in the revelation of God. We do well to remember that if you and I have eyes to see it, the finger of God is stamped on every chapter in this sacred part of God's Word. Furthermore, though we do not read any particular prayer within its chapters, yet if ever there was a time when secret prayer prevailed, it was in the time of Esther and Mordecai.

Let us for a moment consider the circumstances which led to this crisis in Esther's life when she was driven to this place: "So will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish." You will remember that in the Garden of Eden, when the Lord God banished Adam and Eve from it, He made a remarkably significant prophecy concerning a conflict. Speaking to the serpent He said: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel." That conflict is the conflict between Christ's church and that arch-enemy Satan. Throughout the history of time, Satan has drawn up his battalions, his armies, again and again with this on one objective, to destroy the church of Christ. Blessed be God (and what a mercy it is as true today as it ever has been!), the Lord has said concerning His church: "Upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." It does not mean there is never going to be any conflict, that there is not going to be a warfare, but it does mean that the final outcome is assured. "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Now in the Book of Esther we see Satan raising yet another attack against the Lord's people, and he had a ready agent in this man Haman, who figures much in the pages of this Book. But, whilst Satan was working his own devices, seeking to overthrow the Lord's people, to undermine God's own word, God's purposes were working fast.

"His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower."

There is every evidence in our day that Satan and the gates of hell have come against the church. Sadly and solemnly many inroads have been made, and yet midst it all remember this: "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth," and, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." When the Lord Jesus cried, "It is finished," one of the things that was assured was the final conquest for the church, the final victory of the church over sin, hell and Satan himself.

Now, in this sacred Book of Esther we see this conflict. We see how the Lord first of all moves in providence. Esther has much to say about providence. There is grace within this Book particularly seen, not so much in words but in the walk of those two gracious characters, Esther and

Mordecai. Let me pause there a moment. When all is said and done, your walk speaks far louder than your - words. It is a very solemn thing if our words are different from our walk. May God give you young ones grace, and older ones too, that there may be that sacred consistency between our words and our walk. Remember, it is our walk that people watch; it is that which speaks loudest.

Notice how the Lord in His sovereign purposes brings Esther to the throne. There was at first another Queen, Vashti, and she offended the King who in his displeasure deposed her, removed her. Now that might seem insignificant to many, but it was one of the links in God's golden chain of providence. It was one of the all things working together for good. In God's purposes Esther, a Jew, was brought to the throne. Think of that. She was a foreigner, an alien by nation, and yet God had ordained that she should sit with the King as his Queen. At the same time as God was working out this great thing, which had a far deeper significance than could be seen at the time, Satan was at work in the matter particularly of Haman. Here was a man who sought after a position. Here was a man whose god was his own reputation, who hated the truth, and above all hated those who walked consistently. While all the city was ready to bow down to Haman at his request, Mordecai, that honoured servant of God, would not bow the knee. That may seem to some of you churlish. You may have said, "Well surely Mordecai was rather discourteous. Should not he have given him the honour due to the position that he had?" Friends, you must remember that Mordecai was a man of discernment. He saw much more in the dealings of Haman that others had seen, and Mordecai knew that that man was soon to prove an enemy to the church. We need men of discernment in our day. They will not be popular; they will not be the ones to get the general applause. We need men of discernment who know the mind of the Lord in matters - Daniels, willing to stand alone." Mordecai was one of these. "Dare to be a Daniel; dare to stand alone." Mordecai was one of these. As the days grow darker we are going to need more Daniels and more Mordecais, whatever it may cost us.

Mordecai had one thing in view: the honour and the glory of his God. Mordecai would not move an inch; he would not move an atom from this one principle. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory, for Thy mercy, and for Thy truth's sake." He would not bow the knee to mammon, to the world - none but his God.

Of course, Haman being what he was, a man entirely unregenerate, entirely left to his own spirit, soon showed that jealous streak. Remember what the Word says: "Jealousy is cruel as the grave." Beware of it. Beware of that burning jealousy within. Friends, it has caused havoc in churches, it has caused havoc in the nation, and here in the Book of Esther it threatened the whole existence of the Lord's people - all because of the jealousy of one man set on fire by hell itself.

You younger ones will know how Haman moved. He got the King to sign that deed that on a certain day of the month all the Jews in every nation were to be slain, and there were 127 kingdoms over which the King

Ahasuerus reigned. His was a vast empire. Think what this would have meant. It would have meant the annihilation of God's chosen people. You can see how Satan was working; you can see what his aim was. Would god stand idly by? Will God stand by and not be mindful of His church when it is in such imminent danger? No.

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

Already the Lord was at work. Already Esther was on the throne. Already events were moving in God's way, not Haman's way. But look what a trial it was. Look what a pressing time it was for both Mordecai and Esther.

Some of you young ones will be interested to know that one of the laws that governed the Persian Empire was that whenever the King made a law, it was called "the law of the Medes and Persians that altereth not." It could not be changed. Mordecai knew this; Esther knew this. What was to be done? It seemed an insurmountable object. The law had been passed and signed by King Ahasuerus. Surely now nothing could be done. Surely there is nothing now for it but to wait for our desstruction. Friends, there is a stronger king that Ahasuerus; there is a stronger, more certain law than that of any earthly king. It is only God's laws and God's Word which in the end will never be broken. It is God's Word which cannot be broken. He has broken the "I wills" of men all down the ages. May He break some of the "I wills" of our present leaders in respect of breaking down that precious heritage, our Sabbath. They have said, "We will break it down," but, friends, the "I wills" of God are stronger, if that be His sacred will to preserve to us His day.

What was to be done now? Let me tell you what they did first. Although it does not say so, friends, I am sure they did something first - they went to prayer. Be sure of this, there was secret prayer. We are thankful for public prayer. It is a good thing for the Lord's people to gather together for public prayer, but there is a special value in secret prayer. Jacob was left alone - then what? "There wrestled a Man with him" (not against him, but with him) "until the breaking of the day." What was the result of it? "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me." What was the fruit of it? "As a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."

"Wrestling prayer can wonders do;
Bring relief in deepest straits!
Prayer can force a passage through
Iron bars and brazen gates."

You may use every means, and it may be right to use every means, but if those means are not sanctified by the Word of God and prayer they are useless. O may God give you grace that the means that you use be sanctified by the Word of God and prayer.

"Pray, if thou canst or canst not speak;
But pray with faith in Jesus' name."

It fell to Esther's lot to put her own safety and her own life in imminent danger. Now, Queen Vashti was deposed from the throne because she did something that was not lawful. When the King bade her come according to the law, she was supposed to

come, and in disobedience she did not, and she was cut off for it. Here was Esther about to do something else not lawful. She was not supposed to go into the King's presence unless he called her. She could remember what had happened to Vashti and yet, you see, such was her case, such was her extremity, such was the pressing nature of her need, she says, "So will I go in unto the king, which is not according to law."

Now just a word about the maidens and those companions of Esther. What were they doing? Friends, they were praying for her. Our Secretary, in reading the Report just now, quoted, "Brethren, pray for us." Here is the secret of prosperity in the ministry, in our churches, in our nation. "Brethren pray for us." Secret prayer. Those of us who are pastors have valued those who we know spend nights in prayer for us; dear saints of God, many confined to their homes who cannot even attend the means of grace, but their hearts are exercised, they are travailing for Zion. There is the secret of real prosperity: "Brethren, pray for us." Those women prayed, and Mordecai prayed while Esther went on this venture: "So will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish."

There was another insurmountable object to natural wisdom. Who else was in the presence of the King? Who else was sure to be there when Esther went? Why, Haman himself. He was going to be there; he was the King's most trusted adviser, and he would be there. It was an obstacle. Yet, knowing that her chief adversary would be there as well, still Esther presses on, still she says: "So will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish."

Do you know what happened? You young ones will know. When she ventured into the presence of the King, he put forth the golden sceptre. What an answer to prayer! O what a moment it must have been to Esther when at first she saw the King and he first saw her! Will he cut me off? Will it be a frown or will it be a smile? Will it be "come" or "depart"? He put forth the golden sceptre. "What wilt thou, Queen Esther?" What an answer to prayer! The hearts of all men are in the Lord's hands. "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord...He turneth it whithersoever He will." Some of you may have one in authority over you, one who in God's providence you are forced to deal with, and you may tremble at the outcome of it. Friends, God is higher than all second causes. He has the hearts of all men in His hand, and He can turn matters to His own will and to His own purpose, and for His own honour and glory. "Is there anything too hard for the Lord?"

So Esther ventured, and you know the outcome. The eventual outcome was that the Jews were saved. Haman, in the sorrow of the world that worketh death, hangs on the gallows. Satan, as he always will do in the end, overreaches himself, and those blessed words: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" are vindicated once more. The law of the Medes and Persians was overruled. Although not according to the law, Esther gained her request.

There are those of you here this afternoon, and O that it were all of you (may the Spirit so work in each heart), who will say, there is deeper truth beneath these sacred words which I have read this afternoon. There is a

greater King than Ahasuerus to go before. There is a greater King than any earthly monarch, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and you and I need grace to approach Him. It may be with you this afternoon as it was with Esther. So much may seem against you. First of all, the case itself may seem impossible. It may seem irrevocable. You need the faith of Martha is much criticized at times for being over careful, but if ever a child of God's faith flourished, it was Martha's when she said this: "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know, that even now, whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee." That is faith. "All things are possible to him that believeth." If He gives you a grain of faith, that grain of faith can remove mountains. That grain of faith can force a way through iron bars and brazen gates just as it did for Esther and Mordecai. The Lord Jesus stretched forth His almighty hand and cried, "Lazarus, come forth, " and he was restored to life again. "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" You may have a hard matter this afternoon; it may be something quite beyond human reason. Well, if it is done, you will know who did it. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory, for Thy mercy, and for Thy truth's sake."

Secondly, "not according to the law." It may be there is one here this afternoon who says, "That is just how it is with me. The very Word of God seems to condemn me; it seems to cut me off. I can find no hope there; I am a sinner indeed, and the sins that I am guilty of condemn me in God's Word. It says, 'The soul that sinneth it shall die.' I am a perishing sinner, but 'so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.' "

Just as it was with Esther, you have an adversary, have you not? John Newton wrote:

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see,"

but he also wrote:

"I know the Lord is nigh,
And would but cannot pray,
For Satan meets me when I try,
And frights my soul away."

It was just the same with Joshua when he stood before the Lord: Satan was there to resist him. Is that how it is with you?

"Does Satan tempt you to give up,
And call no more on Jesus' name?
Cast not away your little hope;
Come hither, and behold the Lamb."

You have all these adversaries, an impossible case - a soul case, and perhaps a providential case. It is not according to the law; it is something different; it seems so out of the question. There is a stumbling block whichever way you look. What are you to do?

This is it:

"I can but perish if I go,
I am resolved to try,
For if I stay away I know
I must for ever die."

This poor soul will have to press through everything, all the unbelief he may feel, all the guilt he may feel, all the opposition he may encounter,

everything that seems against him. "If I may but touch His garment, I shall be whole." That is how this poor, venturing soul comes. Will the Lord receive me? Will He extend that golden sceptre? Yes! Look at this, dear friends. What did the Lord say to Satan when Joshua stood before Him? "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan...is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" Is this not one of My dear children coming to the mercy seat, seeking pardon and forgiveness? "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan," and the Lord is able to do that. He can silence the adversary; He can silence your unbelief as well. He can put paid to all these objections.

What about it not being according to the law? That does seem a closed door to some of you this afternoon.

"The door of hope is open wide
In Jesus' bleeding hands and side."

The law has done its work. It wounded the side of the Lord Jesus and in doing that made a way of access for these impossible cases. The blood of Jesus has a blessed and sacred effect. It is the very thing that is the key to the holiest of all.

"But since my Saviour stands between,
In garments dyed in blood,
Tis He, instead of me, is seen,
When I approach to God."

O poor sinner, plead that grace, that precious blood.

"So will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish , I perish." What will the Lord say to this poor sinner? He will not say, "Depart"; He will not say, "No"; He will not say, "The case is too difficult"; He will not say that you are altogether too vile. What does He say to such poor sinners? He says this: "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me." He will bring you through all these difficulties. "And him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out."

"Approach, my soul, the mercy seat,
Where Jesus answers prayer;
There humbly fall before His feet,
For none can perish there."

One last thought. Dear friends, this word has heaven in it, if we look at it like this: "So will I go in unto the king." How do poor sinners at last enter glory? Not in their own merit, not in their own strength, not because of anything of the flesh. It is because of this glorious word: "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me," and, "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory." As each redeemed soul is taken from time into eternity the golden sceptre is put forth — Welcome, welcome. "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord: wherefore standest thou without?" It is like this: if you are one of these coming sinners this side of the grave, you will hear that blessed eternal "Come" that will land you safe in glory.

So will I go in unto the king, which not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish." Esther did not perish, and neither will you,poor trembling child of god because it is Jesus who has the matter in His hand; "and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand."

G.D. Buss
(Pastor, Chippenham London)

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 1986

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Eld. Jack Cox, VA 2.00
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OBITUARIES

WILLIAM EZRA CUMMINGS

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our beloved brother William Ezra Cummings. He was born August 2, 1904, passed away May 7, 1986.

He was the son of Elder Harlie and Amanda Cummings. He was married to Delma Whiteneck in 1936, who he leaves to mourn his passing. He also leaves two sons, Ralph and Paul Hale.

He and his dear wife joined Valley View Primitive Baptist Church, July 15, 1979 and were baptized by their beloved pastor, Elder Raymond Goad on August 15, 1979.

We will all miss his presence, but feel he is in the presence of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ where there will be no more pain, nor tears to shed, where he can give all praise, honor and glory to Our Heavenly Father. A graveside service was conducted by his pastor, Elder Raymond Goad, at Sunset Cemetery. The body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

Written by Sister Fannie Sue Lucas

WILLIE KELLUM

Be resolved that we the members of North East church do humbly submit to our Father's will in calling home our beloved brother and deacon Willie Kellum. He was born April 20, 1900.

He married Mollie Humphrey May 21, 1921. To this union was born five children of which 2 are deceased, leaving 3 to mourn his death. They are James Kellum, Dorothy Williams, Glenda Bright, all of Jacksonville, N.C. He had 10 grandchildren, 8 great-grandchildren and 2 sisters, Rosa Morton and Effie Hewitt of Jacksonville, N.C.

He joined the church the first Sunday of February 1937. He was a devoted and faithful member and served the church as deacon until his death.

He died May 21, 1986. His funeral was conducted in Jones Funeral Home by his Pastor, Elder J.T. Prescott. He was laid to rest in the Humphrey cemetery to await the resurrection day.

Written for the church, with a copy sent to the family, one for the church record and one sent to Signs of the Times, done by the order of conference at our August meeting.

Elder J.T. Prescott, Moderator
Lewis J. Sammons, Clerk

MURRY MOTLEY

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." I feel this could truly be said of our brother, Murry Motley. His toil and suffering in this life is over. He joined Malmaison Church August, of 1983, and most of that time since suffered from an incurable illness. He continued to attend his meetings until hospitalized. I can think of no better way to prove ones faithfulness and love for the truth.

Brother Motley departed this life Sept. 8, 1986. Survivors include his widow, sister Jewel Motley, two daughters, two sons, three brothers, ten grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren. The funeral was conducted at Malmaison Church by Elders O.K. Tench and Julian Williams. Interment was in the cemetery at the Sheva Church of Christ.

Humbly submitted
Peggy Wells

ELDER RAYMOND S. PAYNE

At the request of Old Mt. Church, and help from on high will try to write a few lines in memory of our brother Elder Raymond S. Payne, who passed away July 14, 1986, in Memorial Hospital, Danville, Va. Brother Payne was born Sept. 26, 1905. A son of the late J.R. Payne and Alice Booker Payne, in the Whitmell Community where he spent his entire life. He was married to Ruby Scearse Payne, who survives. Brother Payne joined Old Mt. Church July 21, 1934 was baptized by his pastor, Elder Robert Dodd. Began speaking and was liberated Dec. 24, 1936, was ordained June 25, 1939, and has served a number of churches. At the time of his death, he was pastor of Strawberry, Canes Creek, and North Fork churches.

Was Moderator of the Staunton River Association for 20 years. Was well established in the doctrine and widely known among the Primitive Baptist. Attended many associations in several states. He was a retired farmer, and had worked for the A.S.C. office in Chatham, Va. as a crop surveyor, until his health failed.

Having been in declining health a number of years, yet faithful to attend church as long as he was able. At times it seemed almost impossible, but moving his feet a few inches at a time, he would get there. We feel he could say as one of old, I have kept the faith, I have finished my course, I have fought a good fight, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord shall give me at that day. And not to me only but unto all them also that love his appearing. He leaves to mourn: his wife, one

sister, Pattie P. Brumfield of Danville, Va.; one brother, Luther H. Payne of Dry Fork, Va. May his dear wife and family be reconciled to his will, knowing the Lord doeth all things well.

His funeral was held at Wrenn Yeatts West Over Funeral Home Chapel by his pastor Elder H.W. Wray, Elder Wallace Smith and Elder Amos Hash. His body was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, a token of love and respect from his family and friends. Done in order of conference. Oct. 18, 1986.

Elder H.W. Wray, Moderator
Sarah Barker, Clerk

ARTHUR WELDON STRADER

Though we bow in humble submission to the will of our Lord, we, nevertheless, are saddened as another of our dear brothers is taken from our midst. Arthur Weldon Strader was born February 14, 1907, in the Ruffin township of Rockingham County where he lived all his life. He was the son of the late Arthur and Lizzie Barber Strader. On June 11, 1927, he was married to the former Muriel McKinney. To this union were born five children --- two boys and three girls, as follows: Harry Strader, Ridgeway, Virginia, Wallace Strader, Knightdale, N.C., Mary Travis, Danville, Va., Frances Stump, Greensboro, N.C. and Florine Lillard also of Greensboro. There are eleven grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren.

Brother Weldon joined the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on September 12, 1982, and was baptized the following October 10th. He dearly loved to attend his meetings and the love he had for the church and its members and friends was manifest in his countenance.

This writer has, on many occassions, had the opportunity to talk with Brother Weldon at length. Though his health was not good, he did not dwell for long periods on his physical condition. Rather, he was thankful that things were as well with him as they were. One night at Brother Reuben French's home, he talked with me at length concerning the former years of his life. Like most of us, he was not at all proud of various aspects of his past. He just thanked God for having been shown a better walk and he praised his dear companion for her love and faithfulness toward him throughout the years.

Brother Weldon attended his meetings faithfully until he was no longer physically able to go. His two favorite hymns were Amazing Grace and Rock of Ages. What better hymns could one choose to point out the way of salvation and the sinful nature of the creature man?

Brother Strader died at his home on September 2, 1986 at the age of 79. His funeral was conducted at his home church by Elders Kenneth Key and Haywood Wray and his body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the coming of the Lord. Though saddened by his passing, we are indeed made to feel that our loss is his eternal gain. May the Lord be praised!

This memorial resolution is written by order of the church seated in conference October 26, 1986. It is requested that a copy be made available for publication in the Signs of the Times and that a copy be given to the family.

Written in Love,
Bob R. Collie

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
He rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

Cowper

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EDITORIAL

EXPERIENCES IN THE TRIALS OF LIFE

It is not my intention nor is it my desire to write about our exploits of life in this natural realm of existence. There is much in the life of those born again and those still in captivity to ungodliness that is much related. This is because that those born again are still citizens of this world and are still contending with the body of flesh. From a natural standpoint, it is the same life that both are living. Each have their own problems in making ends meet in this earthly life. Until the spiritual life of a born again child of God is made manifest there would be little, if any, difference made manifest between the two.

It is not promised to the natural man that he shall have tribulations in this present life; it is not promised to the natural man that in this life he shall be tried by many sad afflictions, trials and dark scenes wherein they will be in despair. You (the reader) may closely observe those that have not yet been blessed to make a good profession, and you will never hear them speak of their dire trials and troubles in this life.

How different it is when one is born again or from above. Troublesome days and nights follow, often fast one upon another. These changes nearly always, if not always, brings a change in both they that are thus exercised but also in them not thus exercised. To the one exercised by these sad things this is often used as a witness against ourselves. We see our former days of peace, and we are not at ease anymore. Ofttimes this is a witness against us because our neighbor is not disturbed as we are. This is an added trial; this is the beginning of the training of the soldiers of the cross. This is, in a spiritual sense, the being taught of the Lord. This is where we begin to sit at the feet of Jesus and learn of Him. No sooner than one begins these divine lessons than trials, afflictions, tribulations, long deep valleys all begin coming as a deluge upon the fragile barque that often will still find themselves encompassed by a desire to go down to the sea there to do business in great waters (Psa. 107).

This travel of a new born child is ofttimes, if not always, accompanied by great blessings at first. What a lovely way indeed that it is to travel under the influences of a new hope.

Everything is to the liking of one thus newly brought into this living way. But the young believer is not yet aquainted with what is in the pathway of one belonging to the kingdom of God's dear Son.

I have dealt with the life of Joseph in much of my writing, but I do not think of my feeble efforts as having exhausted the beauty, the grandeur, the majestic setting of his travels down into Egypt, and his majestic handling of the great starvation time in that country. In the relationship of Israel and Egypt with that period, I do not have any idea that God planned it even in a secondary manner for the benefit of Egypt. This was not for the trial of Egypt at all, but it was conceived in the eternal mind of God, brought forward and perfected for the good of Israel and the glory of God.

First, let us call to remembrance that from the beginning men have been making amends for God's mistakes, shortcomings, and even carelessness. He needs none of their attention. Not a created thing, man or beast or thing before God spoke the world into existence. Now if anyone has proof that I am wrong in that statement, let he or she come forward with proof, but if they do not have that proof, let them be still, for anything that is produced is a reply aginst God. I think it becoming in each recipient of the goodness of God to be quiet and not rail against those that reply against God.

God made and created the world and the fulness therein. Before that there was a void, an emptiness, a nonentity; there was not anything there. By Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things created by him, and for him (Col. I: 16). I am not soliciting anyone giving me proof contrary to that. There is none. In the next verse is fitly placed in doctrinal arrangements by the Holy Ghost. To forego, and to forever settle the matter as there being a power of any kind or description, Paul continues in the 17th verse by saying, And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

There was not one existing thing or mouthpiece to raise an objection to what God inspired Paul to say. In thankfulness to God, I am glad and I trust thankful that there was not any disappointed office seekers to raise objection to what God was doing. Therefore, I say humbly, but I hope in thankfulness to my God that any created tongue that dares rise up against the way that God created the world and put people over the world had a perfect right to do as He did do. Any dissenters to what He was pleased to do were replying against God, and any at this late date that are carping and objecting to His creation are all of them replying against God. And I would beg for grace to stand as firmly devoted to the whole truth of the gospel of Christ in saying or defending any false theory in regard to His divine creation. I am writing about the travels of God's people. This travel started in the garden of Eden and it has extended until the present. Adam went out from the surroundings of the garden in sorrow, in grief, in labors, in misgivings, in sweat of the brow for his daily bread, in condemnation. Reading about it by those that have not yet come into a knowledge of what he was passing through brings from them a disdainful toss of the head "that he got what he deserved." That has ever been the

demeanor of those that have not yet had the finger of divine justice laid upon them. When that has first come about the accuser of Adam becomes as low and as guilty a culprit as Adam. Until the finger of divine justice is pointed into his own behaviour he will continue to gather his silken skirts closer around them lest they be spattered with their sins. And I say it without fear of successful contradiction that the trouble makers, the scoffers, them that are ever meddlers in other men's business, all those that dispute about matters that they know nothing of are today the same body, the same house of wreckers on the little groups of believers scattered over the world.

There is not near as much danger of trouble where a wretched heart broken sinner as Adam was when he was afraid as those that have not yet been brought into condemnation, that have not yet experienced that condemnation that our foreparent Adam felt. Poor sinners do not give much trouble in the organized church of Jesus Christ. Trouble comes from trouble makers; troubles come from the contentious, not from those that are contending for the faith.

To those that God has raised up in past days, and is still raising up today, I pay all respect to each of them. I look back over the history of the Church (the Bible) and I am lifted above my daily routine, above my ups and downs, trials and afflictions and am made to sit down in the assembly of God, those that have been made to walk humble before God not looking to men for what they preach and practice but to He that called them out of darkness into the marvelous light and glorious liberty of men called and qualified, strengthened to go forward, taught to be still, put on the firing line, staying at the post of duty, ever counting it a holy calling to be called to leave earthly treasures, to leave families, assets of an earthly nature and to follow the Prince of Peace through thick and thin.

First, I want to write my feelings and to examine the life and to meditate on the printed page the beauty and the exquisite sweetness of the life of one raised up for the glory of God.

I do not have any desire to pay homage to Moses as a man, as an individual of Adam's posterity, for not unto us belongeth the victory, but that His arm hath gotten the victory. The coming of this man into the congregation of the righteous was spectacular and certainly is a phenomenon that no set of educated men will dare to explain on the basis of human merit of ingenuity.

God created and made all things. Let us put a strong stake down deep right there. Any argument against that doctrine will fall upon deaf ears in the kingdom of heaven. It does not matter what others say or do, because He that created all things has ultimately set their destination. Another vital truth ever present in the Book is that at beginning of creation there was not a being present to suggest or to meddle in the way that any created thing would go or do or say. The order of all created things was ordered by He that created all things. This conclusion is biblical from the first of Genesis to the Amen in Revelation. It also is in keeping with good language and grammar. The Bible says clearly that God declared the end from the beginning. How much of the end did God declare from the beginning? How much dear brethren? How precious Bible readers? Now let us ask this question, to wit, Who determined the

end from the beginning? We have it on good authority that God declared it, but did He determine it? If God did not determine what He declared from the beginning, just who or what did?

The subject, dear readers, is the fiery trial of God's people, which, Peter tells us, is to try the elect family of God. Our heavenly Father and our blessed Saviour warns the people of God that many sad and trying things are in store for them. He does not say that they may come. He tells them that persecutions, tribulations, false witnesses, and a host of sad trials and afflictions are sure to come upon them, yet, He does not leave them comfortless. If I may call Him my Head, he is to pass through these trials also but in telling them, He does not issue a single conditional affliction or persecution or tribulation. He tells us in the most emphatic language that they shall come. If He is making them a conditional promise of a trial for the purpose of trying them I do not see nor understand why that He always told them in positive terms that they shall be tried.

I now conclude this little article by asserting once again that the trial is promised to all of the elect by Him that lived and died and gained the victory over every single one of them "shalls", and as I have lived a long time and have been closely associated with a lot of sad events that belong to sad trials.

The intention of the king of Egypt was for the purpose of reducing the number of the Israelite nation. Now that is right, isn't it? How simple, and yet, when it was utilized for the destruction of Israel, it is so puerile that it becomes incredulous. Just issue a decree that the attendant at the birth of an Israelite baby murder it to keep Israel from growing. Who designed that? What a trial for the mothers. Now tell me, did God have anything to do with that? Did Satan, independent of God's design or intention, stir the women attendants to lie about the liveliness of the Hebrew women? Did God have anything to do with the mother of Moses in her hiding her baby in the flags? Was her object the only one carried out? Was it the mother's wisdom that hid the tiny child near where Pharoah's daughter came to bathe? Was it the frantic mother that had her baby hid where it was hid, or was it God that had it put at that specific spot so that Pharoah's daughter would find the infant, fall in love with it, adopt it and carry it home to have the run of the kingdom as the adopted grandson of the King, learning all the secrets of the empire, and be ready and equipped in mind and body for the delivery of the children of Israel at the opportune time of God to carry out His promise to Israel?

The intention of the King was exactly like Joseph told his brethren. Furthermore, every case is just like that. God meant it for good, Pharoah meant it for evil. What a solemn trial has been by predestinarian ministers in the last hundred years. They have preached the true doctrine of God being a God of purpose; that He purposed things for good for the children of His kingdom; that He only meant it for good. That is what Joseph said about the whole train of evil trials that were brought upon him and his family. If there has been, or there is, one anywhere that advocates the predestination of all things and has anymore to say than what Joseph said, then I denounce it as being untrue. Joseph said all that is necessary. Nor do I need the explanation of any man,

anywhere, at anytime to explain God out of the dilemma that He has caught Himself in by such an expression. Anything that any man says, in argument about the trial of the children of God, that brings up anything in the trial in the travel of God's children, that forces anything into what Joseph said about evil, is adding to the inspiration of God. I do not have anything to say about what is assigned those that add to what God has said.

In trials and afflictions but in hope,
W.D. Griffin

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Williams,

Please renew my subscription for the Signs of the Times for the year 1987. I have truly gotten a blessing from the material that has been published in the past, and am sure with the dedicated work you and your associates are doing it will continue to be so in the future. Hope you and yours will have a blessed Christmas and God will bless you all with good health, safety, prosperity and happiness throughout the coming year.

With Christian Love,
W. T. Giles
868 Fieldstone Rd.
Mooresville, N.C. 28115

Olympia, Washington
Dec. 8, 1986

Signs of the Times, Inc.

Enclosed is my personal check in the amount of $25.00 to cover a 2-year renewal and please use the remaining $7.00 toward the Contribution Fund.

Would like to compliment your editorial staff on the improved format of the Signs as well as the heavy black print.

May God continue to be with you all.

In hope of His grace,
Alma F. Coate

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Stauton River Primitive Baptist Union meeting, if the Lord willing, will be held at Danville Church the Fifth Sunday and Saturday before in March 1987. We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us. All ministers of our faith and order are invited.

R.T. Holley - Church Clerk

Buttahatchie

The next union meeting of the Buttahatchie Association will be held with Mt. Carmel Church March 27,28 and 29, 1987. Mt. Carmel is located in Millport, Ala.

Ray M. Hayes, Sec.

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

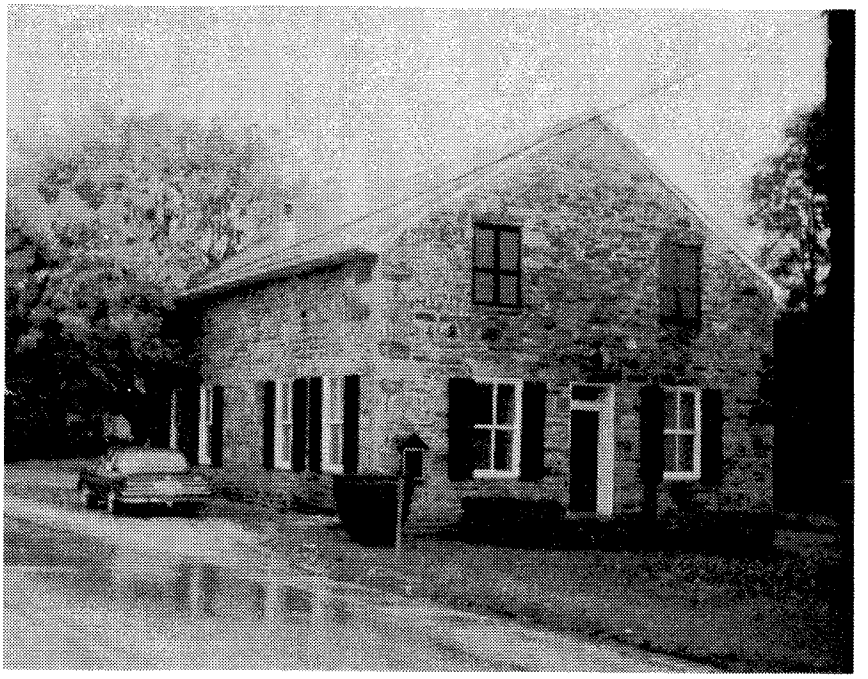

BLACK ROCK CHURCH

Black Rock Church was organized in 1828. It was a lovely place for the Lords people to meet for over 150 years. It was also the location of the "Black Rock Address." It is located in Baltimore County, Butler, Maryland.

The pastors who served Black Rock were Elders; Edward Choate, Eli Scott, Samuel Trott, William Grafton, W.J. Purington, H.C. Ker, Farris A. Chick, Joshua T. Rowe, Douglas L. Topping. The last Elder to serve was John D. Wood who served from 1938-1985. He had to discontinue to serve because of poor health and has since died.

Black Rock meeting house stands today as a plant that was planted, was kept watered with the dews from Heaven, budded and bloomed and now faded. All members have died and the building remains only as memories of the past.

ARTICLES

HEAVENLY REALITIES AND DIVINE CERTAINTIES

"And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This the true God, and eternal life." - 1 John v. 20

This brings me to my last point. "And we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life."

Here the man of God points to the union and communion which the saints of God have with His dear Son. "We are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ."

How are the saints of God "in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ?"

1. First, they are in Him by covenant ties, by solemn engagements, by eternal choice, as the Holy Ghost speaks by Paul. "According as he hath chose us in Him before the foundation of the world." Men may quarrel with election, but it is the grand foundation of the union which the Church has with her covenant Head; for she was chosen in Him; not chosen in herself, or chosen out of Him; and being chosen in Him, she can never, so to speak, be lost out of Him. This will be very plain by a moment's consideration. If every member of the mystical body of Christ was chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, it is impossible that any member of that mystical body should be lost. The whole body would suffer, and the Head would suffer with it, if the smallest member of the mystical body of Christ could perish. It would not be a complete body if it lost the smallest member. If, therefore, you are in Christ by vital union, you were in Him by covenant ties before the foundation of the world. This is the grand security of the saints; this is that which kept the Church from being swamped and swallowed in the Adam fall, and held her up in the midst of that transgression which was attended with such fearful consequences.

2. There is another way in which we "are in him that is true;" and that is by vital union.

This vital union is of two kinds: a union of Him with us by His participation of our flesh, and a union of us with Him by our participation of His Spirit. There is thus, so to speak, a double union.

In order to make the Church wholly His, by becoming one with Himself, the Lord took her nature into union with His own divine Person. The apostle, therefore, says: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." (Heb. ii. 14.) We therefore read: "For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church: for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." (Eph. v. 29, 30.) Thus there is a union which the Church has with Christ by virtue of His partaking of her flesh and blood. As the wife has a union with her husband from being one flesh with him, so the Church has a union with Christ as being one flesh with Him. How beautifully does Paul unfold this mystery: "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church." (Eph. v. 31, 32.)

This union of Christ and the Church as one flesh, by virtue of His incarnation, is the ground and basis of that other union with Him, which I have already mentioned — a union with him by a participation of His Spirit; as we read, "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." (1 Cor. vi. 17.) Thus our union with Christ is not only a union by covenant tie, which was the source, not only a union by His partaking of our flesh as the great mystery of godli-

ness, but a union with Him in living experience, by oneness of Spirit. Now if you know anything of the grace, the presence, the power and love of Christ; if you have been baptized with His Spirit and have ever felt anything experimentally of communion with Him, you are one spirit with Him. There is a oneness of spirit between you and the Son of God. You see with Him; you feel with Him; you sympathize with Him; you walk with Him; you talk with Him. And He feels with you; sympathizes with you; walks with you; talks with you; communicates of His grace to your soul, infuses His Spirit into your breast, and makes you a partaker of the divine nature, that you may escape the corruptions which are in the world through lust.

Now it is only by this oneness of spirit with Christ, and by being able to realize it, that we can ever say without fear, "we are in him that is true." When you feel a oneness of spirit with Christ, then there is a testimony in your own bosom of your union with Him, which can never be described, and yet can be and is blessedly felt. To melt into His Spirit and His Spirit to melt into yours; to have the mind of Christ; to see with the eyes of Christ, to feel with the heart of Christ; to love what Christ loves, to hate what Christ hates; to be jealous of His honor, tender of His glory mourn over Him and with Him, hate your sins because He suffered for them, abhor yourselves in dust and ashes on account of your unlikeness to Him: to be sighing continually that He would draw you nearer to His bosom, supply you out of His fulness, manifest His love to your soul and baptize you into His Spirit — this is oneness of spirit with Christ, and by this oneness of spirit you can clearly make out our union with Christ.

Let me illustrate this by something of a similar character. You talk with a child of God, say for the first time; but from some cause or other, you feel no union or communion with him. Why? Because there is no present oneness of spirit between you and him. But another day you meet him: he says something that drops into your spirit; you say something which drops into his spirit: heart flows to heart, spirit melts into spirit; you are one with each other, know the same truths, believe the same things, feel the same power, can unfold to each other your mutual sorrows and your mutual joys, and love flows into each other's breast. This is oneness of spirit. So it is with us and the dear Redeemer. There is a oneness of spirit with Christ the Head as there is oneness of spirit with the members of His mystical body; and thus as we are able to trace out this oneness of spirit with Him, we arrive at the sweet testimony that "we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ."

Then it is, so far as we are enabled to enter into the vital reality of these divine things, that we can say with holy John, "This is the true God," lifting up heart and mouth for ourselves, and pointing out to others God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, as manifested and revealed in the Person of Christ. "This is the true God, and eternal life;" for I have a testimony in my own bosom that "this is the true God," from the experience I have of His truth and blessedness; and as I look up and see by faith eternal life in Him, I can add also that this, and this only, "is eternal life."

Some of you may not be able to speak with this blessed certainty of your interest in this only true God and this eternal life; and yet you may be certain that these things are true. Faith, I believe, has in it always a

measure of assurance. For what is assurance? It is merely the larger growth and fuller development of faith. The nature of assurance is much misunderstood. It is often considered something distinct from faith. This is not the case. It is merely faith in a fuller, larger development. The word "assurance" in the original has a very simple yet beautiful meaning. It means literally "a full bearing;" and the word is applied sometimes to a large crop of corn or fruit, and sometimes to the tide coming in with a fuller wave. Now it is the same corn which grows in the fields, whether the crop be much or little; it is the same tide that comes up the river whether in a scanty or full flow. So it is with assurance and faith: it is the same faith, only increased, enlarged, bearing more abundant fruit, or flowing in a more abundant tide.

Assurance in Scripture is not confined to faith; there is "the full assurance of understanding" (Col. ii. 2), that is, a fuller measure and amount, a greater enlargement of understanding to know the truth of God. The understanding is the same; but there is a larger measure of it. So there is the full assurance of hope, that is, a hope strengthened and enlarged, bearing more fruit and flowing in a fuller tide. But it is the same hope — the same in kind, though larger in degree; a stronger anchor and yet an anchor still. (Heb. vi. 11.) Similarly there is the full assurance of faith (Heb. x. 22), that is, a larger, fuller measure of faith — a richer crop, a more abundant tide. Thus you have a measure of the assurance of faith if you have faith at all. In fact, if you have no assurance of the truth of these things, why do you follow after them? Why do you hang upon them, why do you hope in them? and why do you seek the power and experience of them in your soul?

Have you not arrived at this point yet? "we have not followed cunningly devised fables; these things that I am following after are realities; these objects set before me are certainties." I grant that you may be much exercised about your interest in them. Still, unless you know that they are certainties, why do you believe them? Why are you anxious to know your interest in them? Why do you sink in doubt and fear for want of clearer evidences of an interest in them? And why do you spring up in peace and joy the moment that a little light from them beams upon your soul and a little sweetness out of them drops into your heart? Because you know that these things are realities. So far then you have an assurance that they are certainties, and in due time, as God is pleased, you will have the assurance in your own breast, not only that they are certainties, but that you have them in your own sure and certain possession.

by J.C. Philpot

(Written By Elder E. Rittenhouse.)

To the churches known as the Delaware Baptist Association, this letter is addressed in accordance with what will be your expectations.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In recognizing you as worshipers assembling yourselves at stated times to worship him to whom worship and praise belongeth, it may be profitable to contemplate the character and perfections of him who was, and is, and is to come: the Almighty. It will be necessary in treating of the attributes of Deity, to avoid anything that has the

appearance of presumption, confining ourselves to what the Lord has been pleased to declare to us of himself. The inspiration of worship in the hearts of the children of men is undoubtedly the result of a revelation that God has made of himself so that all worshipers have received that knowledge of the object of their devotions that has qualified them to worship with reverence and godly fear. The Scriptures bear witness to all that revelation that God has made in the experience of his people. To them we may go as to a man of reliable counsel, and for a confirmation of all the ground of our hope. It is clear to our minds that all experimental knowledge that we have of God has come to us in and through the person of Christ. Christ was a man, and as we are men, God has seen fit to communicate with us always by men. So the apostle calls our attention to the matter thus: "God who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken uto us by his Son,...." God is a Spirit, and so no man hath seen God at anytime. This communicating with men in divers manners has seemed to confuse the minds of many theologians, and so we find them engaged in dividing up Deity into different persons, having different and entirely distinct offices. The revelation that was made to Moses upon the fiery mount has never been superseded, nor has any revelation conflicted with it. "Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord." All subsequent revelations then must be understood to be in accord with this, carrying out and confirming the concentration of all the divine attributes and perfections in one supreme and eternal Jehovah. While we may hold that these promises are fully sustained by the Scriptures, yet we are aware that a vast amount of labor and talent has been devoted to the establishing of a theory quite at variance with this. Terms have been coined and phrases arranged and adapted and strenuously contended for that are never used by any inspired writers. Unscriptural theories are generally contended for strenuously and in an intolerant and proscriptive spirit. Such expressions as "three equal persons," and "equal and distinct persons," and even the word "Trinity," are terms and phrases not found in the Bible at all. The plural form is sometimes used because God has made himself known through various channels and in a great diversity of ways. We read of the seven Spirits of God, and yet in the same connection are told that it is one and the selfsame Spirit. An expression that is relied upon somewhat to support the idea of a Trinity is this: "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." The closing expression at once annihilates all the trinitarian theories that have ever been invented. Though God has revealed himself through these three different channels, yet it is the one God, and no other but he. "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." Jesus is abundantly and continually set forth as a man, in both the Old and New Testaments, and his qualifications to be a Mediator, and to be a merciful and faithful High Priest, are hinged upon the fact that he was a man in all things like unto his brethren; touched with the feeling of all their infirmities, and tempted in all respects as they were. But God was with him. While all the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily in him, yet he was and remained a man in distinction from that Godhead that dwelt in him. Mighty works were done, but the

Father that dwelt in him, he did the works. Jesus said he could of his own self do nothing. As these things are set forth, all Scripture testimony harmonizing in plain and explicit declarations, the infinite wisdom and fitness of the divine arrangement, continually appears. Christ as the child born and the Son given. "The Spirit of the Lord God was upon him," and thereby he was anointed to execute all the glorious work provided in the covenant of grace. But unless he had been under the law it could not have received fulfillment at his hands. He is the Daysman betwixt God and men that can lay his hand upon both. If no man can see the face of God and live, how condescending and kind of God to communicate with men through a man like themselves, one whose presence does not forbid their approach. Nowhere in all the Scriptures is "The second person of the Trinity" spoken of, or any such phraseology ever used. "God was manifest in the flesh." The psalmist speaking of the King of saints says, "He is fairer than the children of men, grace is poured into his lips, therefore God hath blessed him forever." God, as God, hath appointed him heir of all things, while he as man receives the appointment, and is thus empowered to execute judgment. Not the second person in the Trinity, but God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. For as the Father hath spiritual and eternal life, and this life is in his Son. For as the Father hath spiritual and eternal life in himself, so hath he given the Son to have life in himself. It is God-given life, but it comes to us through the Mediator. If were three distinct beings or persons that were objects of worship, we should certainly have been so informed in the Scriptures. But instead of this we are continually informed that there is but one living and true God, and that he alone is to be adored, and had in reverence of all that are about him. "That ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Savior."—Isaiah xliii. 10, 11. Christ himself refused to receive worship at the hands of men, directing them always to worship God, and to pray to the Father in his name, and assuring them that God would give them whatever was thus sought in and through his name. When the time comes that every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that he is Lord, it will be to the glory of God the Father. Theologians have noticed that the name of Jehovah is sometimes made himself known. It was the same God, but he had not before made himself known by the name that he now announces unto them. A proper conception of the attributes and perfections of the divine Being, and a proper discovery of him where he has revealed himself, inspires in our hearts those sentiments of adoration that are required of us. Idolatrous worship is utterly abolished. The glory of God that was seen in the face of Jesus Christ had never been seen anywhere else, and we know of no other way in which God could be revealed to men only in the person of a man.

"God is a Spirit." By the term person, we understand something different from a Spirit. Among the ways in which God reveals himself, and makes his salvation known, is as a Spirit. This revelation comes in quickening, in teaching, in convincing of sin, and of comforting, and in witnessing to our heirship. This Spirit is called the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of Christ, and also the Spirit of truth. By

this Spirit the saints are guided into all truth. The apostle speaks of different gifts, and diversities of operations, and differences of administrations, but asserts emphatically that it is one and the selfsame Spirit. Then again, after repeating the several gifts he says, It is the same God that worketh all in all. It will not be expected of us in this place to notice the theories and the arguments that have been promulgated with a vast amount of labor to maintain the idea of a trinity of equal and distinct persons. If the Scriptures do not teach any such thing we can leave all errors of every kind to fail and come to naught of themselves. Some phrases that have been promulgated, and jealously advocated, are not only unscriptural, but utterly absurd and tending to confusion. If the infinite and incomprehensible One has seen fit to reveal himself in and through a Mediator, may we not recognize and trace the power of God, and the wisdom of God, to its source as they shine and reign in the life and immortality brought to light in the gospel? With the Spirit that God has given his people is a knowledge of those perfections that inspire spiritual devotion, so that he who is a Spirit is worshiped in Spirit and in truth.

These things are suggested with deference, and with a sense of their sacredness, to be considered and accepted only so far as in strict accord with that record in which the glory of God is revealed.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

SINGING IN PUBLIC WORSHIP

Inquires and answers in Gospel Standard, August 1, 1855

Sir: Is singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, a part of the worship of Almighty God? If so, is it right that eight or ten persons should be huddled together at a corner of the chapel and pitch scientific tunes, so that hardly any one can sing but themselves? There are many of the Lord's poor, who after a week of toil, would be glad to join in singing a gospel hymn in honor of their once suffering but exalted Lord, but are hindered by theatrical singing.

A few words from you on this subject would very much oblige, Sir.

A few poor broken down sinners.

When heart and voice can go together there is no sweeter part of the public worship of God than the singing. "I will sing with the spirit," says the apostle, "and I will sing with understanding also." (1 Cor. 12:15) It not only forms a most suitable commencement of the service, softening and opening the heart, and preparing it for drawing near to God; but after the attention has been strained in listening to the chapter read, and uniting in spirit with the prayer offered it forms a sweet relief of mind, it being, so to speak, a relaxing of the stretched string, and a consequent enabling of it again to be tightened to attend to the sermon. It is also the only mode in which the congregation, consistently with solemnity and order, (for the Wesleyan interjection of Amen, Lord hear, etc., are a thorough nuisance, and for the most part the mere expression of canting hypocrisy) can give vent to their feelings, and take an expressed part in the worship of God.

Singing is as much a part of the public worship of God as prayer or preaching, and ought therefore not to be choral, but congregational. A certain knowledge of music, indeed, is needed to preserve our ears from being distressed by horrid discords, and

this part of the service of God from being made a misery instead of a delight; and to a certain extent it is necessary for those who are gifted with musical ears and voices to sit together, that time and tune may be observed and a body of harmonious voices have sufficient strength and unity of sound to lead and sustain the scattered voices of the congregation. As this accuracy of time and tune, and this full harmony of sound, can only be attained by practicing together, what is called a choir is gradually formed; and by degrees the more scientific portion, often alas! the least gracious, begin to hanker after, and perhaps introduce tunes, which, however beautiful, in themselves, are out of place in the public worship of God, and actually destroy that part of devine service, from the inability of the people to follow them. This is an abuse of singing, which should be testified against, and if possible, put down.

Our own view is this, that, as a general rule, the good old stock tunes are the best. They have stood the test of time, possess in themselves those only real sources of musical excellence and delight, melody and expression, are generally well known to the congregation, are pitched in keys within the compass of ordinary voices, and therefore are capable of that full body of sound which constitutes the sweetness and force of congregational, as distinguished from choral singing. We do not want in our simple humble chapels the graces of a concert-room, the science and harmony of an orchestra, or the loud swell of the organ of a cathedral. We want simplicity in the service of God. Simple and childlike should be the prayer, simple and plain the sermon, and simple though not unmusical, the singing. . . .

Wm. L. Beebe

Memphis, Tenn., May 10, 1901.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—While I esteem all the salutations of the apostle Paul to all the saints in every place, as being very precious and replete with comfort, I have selected his salutation to the church at Corinth which reads, "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours,"—1 Cor.i.2, as a salutation to you and to the readers of the SIGNS. The fourth verse reads, "I thank my God always on your behalf, for [which word for means because of] the grace of God which is given you by Christ Jesus."

The reason why Paul thanks God for the grace given, is because of the result, the evidence or fruits of grace. He says, "In everything ye are enriched by him in all utterance, and in all knowledge." So when we utter words which become sound doctrine, it is not we that speak, but the grace of God which is given by Christ Jesus. Divine inspiration is essential in order that we may speak the words which become sound doctrine, and all utterance as declared by the apostle is the gift of God, the result or fruit of grace. "Ye are enriched in all knowledge, so that ye come behind in no gift." And Paul goes on to say in substance that this is in order that ye may be blame-

less in the day of Christ, and that ye wait for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall also confirm you unto the end. Thus he would say to them that they are not left, no, not for one moment, to themselves to save themselves, either in time or eternity, but are kept by the effectual working of grace. The gifts which are by grace are the righteous obedience of faith, and this obedience or work of faith, is our meat and drink, and as such does sustain us, that is the inner man. And thus in obedience, or in doing his commandments, there is great reward. This is because all obedience is the work of faith, an this work of faith, is given us by the grace of God: "By grace are ye saved," now in time, through faith. And being thus saved in time by the righteousness of God, which is by faith, and which is also the gift of God by faith, we are confirmed unto the end. Now that his will and purpose regarding these things, that is this good work might be fulfilled in all the saints, our God decreed in his own one mind (and who can turn him?) that all his saints shall work, not under the ceremonial law, as given to Israel, but by the law written in their hearts, and printed in their minds. Thus, in these gospel times, both when the apostle wrote and now also, every member of his church has his several work, a work which each man shall do, so that the hand cannot say to the foot, I have no need of thee. There is a needs be, not only for every member of his body, but also for the work of each member, by which work each other member is edified in love. All these works, collectively and severally, redound to the glory of God, because they are the gift of God unto each member. Now that his righteousness through Jesus Christ might be fulfilled in his people, Jesus himself in the beginning of the gospel, came quickly as testified to John in the Isle of Patmos, and his reward was with him, to give to every man according as his work should be. (Rev. xxii. 12.) This Scripture testifies that there is a certain amount of work which every man should do. Therefore, upon the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost was poured out according to the promise, some came to realize in their hearts (the law having been written there) that there was a work for them to do, and cried out, "Men and brethren what shall we do?"

Now having no righteousness of their own, it was essential that every man should be rewarded with grace, and the gifts of God, which are all by grace, in order that each one should do the exact thing appointed to him to do. This work was prophesied of, and when the time appointed of God had come, he, Jesus, come quickly and rewards them according to their work; he metes out to each one the measure of faith, and all the obedience which springs from faith, and this obedience is not their own righteousness, but the work of faith, as Paul has said, "For I say, through the grace given unto me." (Notice he did not say this of himself.) Thus the reward which the Lord gave Paul preceded his work or testimony, so that Paul spake with power, the power of the Holy Ghost. Thus it was the gift of God which was given unto Paul, which spoke in and through him, saying to every man, "Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."

All will do well to Rom. xii. 3-8. There we see that all good works are the works of faith, and not of ourselves,

and that they are done according to the proportion of faith which is given as a blessing. The work of faith is not limited to what we generally esteem as church work, such as uniting with the church, repentance, baptism, assembling ourselves together,..., but every good work, every act of obedience done, is the work of living faith, whether done by those who are visibly members of the church or not. Obedience to the law written in the heart has merit or virtue in it, because it is the work of God in the heart. Thus the poor woman who had an issue of blood for twelve years, had a work to do and a reward was given her; the Lord came quickly and relieved her, and her reward was that she touched the hem of his garment. Thus the Lord's reward did precede the work done, that is faith preceded her work, and although the multitudes did throng Jesus, yet nothing could hinder the God-given reward, or the perfect faith, and it did its perfect work, so that Jesus said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole. Her own works had all failed, she resorted to science, (the physicians) only to find that vain is the help of man.

Thus also the Lord rewarded Peter and the other apostles with the gift of healing at his own time, and we read that as Peter and John went up together to the temple, God by them did heal the impotent man, and Peter did not say we are able, and that we have healed the impotent man at our own option, but he said, It is not by our own power or holiness that this man has been made to walk.

Dear brethren, it does seem that all enlightened minds would accept it as truth, that both the poor woman, and the impotent man, were saved, and saved here in time from their affliction, so that if it be lawful to speak at all of a time salvation, it would include these cases. The Savior had dealt faith to them both in such proportions as resulted in the work which each did, so that the woman touched the hem of his garment, and the impotent man immediately obeyed, not Peter, but God, and walked, praising God, both doing this by faith, and Peter while standing there, declared it was Jesus, the only name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved, that had given to this man this perfect soundness, in the presence of them all. So, dear children, whose only Savior is Jesus, and whose God is the Lord, let us remember that the works embraced in the words, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation," or from the delusions which abound, are not works of righteousness of faith, and thus faith is made perfect by works, or the exercise of faith, but it is God, who by his own power has exercised this faith and made it perfect by works, for Jesus is not only the author of faith, but also its finisher, and a finished faith is a perfect faith, and it is perfected by works, it is not, as said before, our work, but the Lord's through faith. The body is dead because of sin, and therefore cannot do good works or works of obedience. But some critic may say, "Is it not your natural body of flesh and blood that is buried in baptism?" I answer yes, but the dead body does not bury itself, in baptism the body is as passive, as I might say, as a lifeless machine, held in the power of faith, and it is the power of faith which takes the body, and buries it in baptism, in the likeness of the death of the Lord, and raises it again up out of the water.

Now, dear brethren, I commit this entirely to you, I had much rather read from others, but I have felt impressed to write this, if I am in error with regard to all good works or obedience, that they have no merit in them, I desire to be informed of my error. Obedience is as a light which shines. Jesus said to his disciples, Let you light so shine,.... Now it is God who commands the light to shine out of darkness. He commands the obedience to shine, so therefore we do not obey at our own option, but according to his own purpose and will working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight. I cannot express just what I can see in this subject, but perhaps my feeble words may stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance of these things, and cause you to write one to another concerning these great and good things. Does not faith perfected, mean faith finished? If so it is evident that Jesus finishes this faith by works, and therefore the work, as well as the faith is his, and not ours. Thus he is the author of both faith and works, and he says that he will be with us always, even unto the end of the world.

David L. McNees

"IN CHRIST SHALL ALL BE MADE ALIVE."

(1 CORINTHIANS XV. 22.)

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

Inspiration reveals the truth and the work of God. Not one word of all that he has declared shall fail. The reason is, the Holy One is the I AM, the Almighty. Both is wisdom and power the Most High is unlimited. With him is absolute sovereignty. In all his attributes God is limitless, perfect and sovereign. To deny this is a denial of both his sovereignty and his Godhead.

It is an absolute truth, therefore, that the omnipotence of the Almighty is equal to and co-extensive with his omniscience. So not one thing of all that God hath spoken shall fail to come to pass. For his power is infinitely above and greater than all other powers. His kingdom ruleth over all, and his dominion subjects all beings and things to his "eternal purpose." This was fully proved in the person of his incarnate Son, whose voice at once subdued and controlled all creatures and things to whom he spoke, whether animate or inanimate, raving devils and men, warring seas and winds, hopeless maladies and remorseless death, all yielded at once to his simple word. Jesus spoke but once, the Lord makes no efforts — never tries. Of himself he says, "I will." To his people he says, "You shall." "He speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast." "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass: and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." This is our God, the God of Israel his people, the Lord God omnipotent. He is the Rock, his work is perfect. He is our refuge, our salvation, our defense. O how safe and good it is to be sheltered under his almighty wing!

How fearful and woeful to us is our relationship in Adam! Our whole lifetime in the flesh is but the realization and experience of the solemn fact that we are in Adam. Here we sow in tears. Thorns and thistles abound. All the mighty works of merciful power which Jesus wrought, blessedly healing all the afflicted and raising up the

dead, were overcoming and removing the ruin that is ours in Adam. So all these gracious miracles of the second man are typical of his mighty work of redemption. To his wondering disciples he said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." "And thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."

Salvation, therefore, is the work of Jesus—the salvation of his people. They are his people in every dear and sacred relation and meaning of the term "his people;" yet they are sinners. The text shows that their sins and death are because they are in Adam. Therefore they are born of the flesh, and are flesh. So Jesus taught. All in Adam die. Here none are exempt. "By man came death." "Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." All sinned in the one man Adam. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." "For the wages of sin is death." "That as sin hath reigned unto death." All this solemn fact is positive and absolute, unconditional and irresistible. This is the dominion of sin by man and in Adam. "There is no discharge in that war." "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

Whence, then, cometh obedience and righteousness, salvation and life. Not from Adam, nor from any who are in Adam, nor from the flesh; for in the flesh dwelleth no good thing, said Paul. Jesus, who spake as no other man, makes a clear distinction between "that which is born of the flesh," and the other "is spirit." Therefore, that we may have life and obedience righteousness and salvation, we must be in Christ. It is a divine mystery, not known to the wise of the flesh are in Christ Jesus and he lives in us. Paul thus states this truth: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." All this we need, and need it because "in Adam all die;" but this is all we need and shall receive. Our God has made his and our Christ all this to us, and it is of the Father that we are in Christ. Chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and blessed in him with all spiritual blessings according as we were chosen in him. This choice and these blessings are positive and sure, therefore, because they were vouch safed to all the chosen of God in Christ before the world was. This blessed fact places all spiritual blessings infinitely above every conditional principle and basis, and secures them to us, "not according to our works" or obedience, but according to God's choice. And since all spiritual blessings were given us in Christ according as God hath chosen us in him, these blessings are no more conditional or contigent on our part that the choice itself. And more than all spiritual blessings we do not need nor shall ever receive. Where, then, is there any place or need for conditional spiritual blessings? And since all spiritual blessings are ours in Christ according to the will and choice of God, why should it be thought that God bestows them upon us according to our will and choice? In this connection Paul goes on and says, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgive-

ness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." In all this way of life and salvation unto sinners, the sovereign choice and pleasure and power of God supremely prevail, and all "according to the riches of his grace." In the wisdom and love of God he ordained it thus, because "so it seemed good in his sight," and he saw that there was no other way that would glorify him and bring them into the blessing of life.

"In Christ shall all be made alive." But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." The clause "in Christ," qualifies and limits the "all" that shall be made alive. It is because they are in Christ that they shall be made alive. None who are not in Christ shall be made alive. All die in Adam because they are in him. They could not die in Adam unless they first lived or had their being in him. When a living tree dies, all in it die, because the life of the tree is the life of all its members. So it is with all in Adam. "Even so shall all in Christ be made alive." In Christ is perfect obedience, holiness and life. So all in him shall be made righteous by his obedience. All sin and death shall be separated from them, and they shall be perfected in the holiness and life of Christ. His unfailing word to them is, "Because I live, ye shall live also." "And whosoever liveth and believeth on me hath everlasting life." This one falls asleep in Christ, but is not dead. For in Christ is no sin nor unrighteousness nor death, but righteousness and life and peace. The sin and curse and death are in Adam—in our mortal flesh. So for the sins of his people Christ was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, to die no more. Thus our risen Lord made and end of sin, and abolished death, for his people.

In his resurrection Christ was the firstborn from the dead among many brethren. "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and because the first-fruits of them that slept." He was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Now, all that Christ is in holiness and life and power, he is all this to all in him, and they shall know the power of his resurrection, shall be perfectly conformed to his divine image, and shall know the glory of his ascension into heaven. All this is by the power of the Lord God Almighty and the riches of his grace.

The death of all in Adam is the time present—"all die;" but the text and its connection show clearly that the resurrection unto the life in Christ, of all who sleep in him, is in the future time—"shall all be made alive."

"We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." In our mortal flesh we cannot thus see the glorified man Christ Jesus. John was given a glimpse of him in his glory; but he said, "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead." Paul said, "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.

* * * For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." For this the holy Son of God prayed, saying, "Father, I

will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." "Afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." When they die in Adam, at the dissolution of their mortal man or body, they fall asleep in Christ, and in him they shall be made alive when he shall come the second time without sin unto salvation. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." This will be the perfect fulfillment of the Lord's prayer for us, and we shall be with him where he is and behold his glory. "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." "Have borne," is past, "shall also bear," is to come. We now bear the image of Adam after the outward man, and the image of Jesus after the inward man; so we now, in part, bear the image of the two heads, the earthy and the heavenly. But God has predestinated his foreknown and chosen people to be entirely conformed to the image of his Son, whom he raised up from the dead. This good work of grace in us shall be gloriously finished in us when we shall receive the adoption, for which we now wait in hope, "to wit, the redemption of our body." This will be our change, of which Paul says, "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortal ity, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory! The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Then, O then! "in Christ shall all be made alive." "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." The infinite and almighty wisdom and power of God in Christ Jesus our risen and glorified Redeemer shall gloriously triumph in the fulfillment of all this great and wonderful mystery of godliness, according to his own will, notwithstanding the opposition of all the wicked, who hate God and his sovereign power, and the unbelief of some of his own people. "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself." Paul again says, "For our conversation" (our citizenship and inheritance) "is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." In the divine assurance of this faith and hope,

afflicted Job said, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." And David said, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." So shall we all.

Hoping to "attain unto the resurrection of the dead," yours in Jesus,

D. Bartley

CONTRIBUTIONS

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/87
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

PSALM 91: v.16.
With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.

OBITUARIES

RUTH VIOLA DONALDSON

Mrs. Ruth Viola Donaldson 70 of Star City, Ark. died at her home on Saturday June 8th, 1985.

She was an active member of the Primitive Baptist Church of Star City.

She was born March 18th, 1915 to the late William Albert and Lutie Edna Womack both of Star City.

She was the widow of Harris Donaldson who died February 10th 1981.

She was survived by four sons, two daughters, 18 grandchildren, one great grandson, two sisters and two brothers and many nieces and nephews.

She has been very sorely missed by all who knew her.

Marjorie LaRue

DESSER MAE GREEN

It is with deep sadness that we report the death of our sister in Christ, Sister Desser Mae Green who was born February 8, 1891 in Wood County, Texas to Lizzie Cobb Hinson and Everett Hinson.

She passed away in Irving Community Hospital, Irving, Texas at 3:00 P.M. Friday, September 12, 1986 making her stay upon this earth 95 years and 8 months. She was married to Barney Taylor Green over sixty years. He was a deacon of Hopewell Church when he preceded her in death October 15, 1971. She was also preceded in death by her two sons: Felton of Dallas and Kenneth of Irving, Texas.

Sister Green joined Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church in 1914 and was a faithful member of this church for over 72 years attending regularly until hindered by bad health. She loved the pure doctrine of the sovereign grace of God. She loved to sing the beautiful songs of grace. The following poem was written by one of our present members, Sister Paula Thomas, expresses her childhood memories of Sister Green.

MEMORIES OF SISTER GREEN AT HOPEWELL CHURCH

Many seasons have come and gone
As the years go swiftly by,
And loved ones have passed
as quickly
As the twinkling of the eye.

But, through the grace of God,
We have precious memories
in our minds,
Always there, always remembered
Down through the passage of time.

In my mind I go back to
my childhood,
The springtime of my life,
And I recall a dear old sister
With soft and gentle eyes.

She had a peaceful face,
And at times her eyes filled with
tears,
I scarcely had begun my life,
And she in the winter of her years.

She sat in the front pew by
the window
Near the pulpit so she could hear
Each meeting day she was present
Year after year after year.

She loved the singing, the
fellowship,
And she stirred a warm feeling in me,
She had been there many years
longer
Than my childish imagination
could see.

I would sit and watch her listen,
I was a child and didn't hear
The precious words and promises
That fell on her hungry ears.

I'm no longer in the spring of my life,
And only hope to see the seasons
she's seen,
But there in the front pew
by the window
I'll always see dear Sister Green.

Paula Thomas

Sister Green's survivors include 2 daughter-in-laws: Geneva Green of Dallas and Jessie Green of Irving. Also 2 grandchildren, 4 greatgrandchildren, and 3 great-great-grandchildren all of Irving and a host of nieces and nephews and friends.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Joe Hamrick and his son, Elder Jimmy Hamrick. Her mortal body was laid to rest in the Hopewell Cemetery to await the second coming of her Lord Jesus Christ.

Done by order of Hopewell Church while in conference November 8, 1986.

Elder Joe Hamrick - Moderator

ELDER DENNIS RUSH HENDRIX

Words are very poor and inadequate vehicles to convey the true feelings of a heart that is saddened by the sudden and tragic death of a close friend and a beloved brother in Christ. It is even worse when that brother is a younger yokefellow in the ministry and you have been closely associated with him for many years. Such is my position as I inform you of the tremendous loss to the Primitive Baptist in Tennessee, Kentucky and surrounding states in the death of Elder Rush Dennis Hendrix, November 6, 1986 in an accident at the Nashville, Tennessee Airport where he was employed by T.W.A. Airlines.

I have known and had a special love for Rush, since I first met him, prior to his joining the Dotson Creek Primitive Baptist Church in the Powell Valley Association in eastern Tennessee. We have been close through the years as we pastored churches in the Nashville Tennessee area and alternated the annual meeting. One year at the Friendship Primitive Baptist Church which he served and the next year at the Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church that I serve, and in visiting other churches and associations in the area. It was beautiful to observe his being called out from the world and directed in ways pleasing unto God as he graciously placed Rush in his vineyard to minister unto his chosen people. It was an inspiration and a source of great joy to all who knew Rush and who were blessed by his presence and his preaching. One could not be with him long and not sense his intense interest, deep convictions and his experimental knowledge of the way in which God deals with his people and has led and directed his elect in all ages of time. He had a unique gift and it was greatly appreciated by all who knew and and loved him.

Elder Hendrix was moderator of the Powell Valley Association, Pastor and member of the Dotson Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Pastor of the Soldier Creek Church in Benton Kentucky and Pastor of the Friendship Primitive Baptist Church near Whitehouse, Tennessee. He traveled to churches and associations in Tennessee, Kentucky, Illinois, Alabama and Texas, to my knowledge and was loved and respected by brethren everywhere he travelled. He will be sorely missed by all who were blessed to know and hear him.

Rush was born June 25, 1932 to Alfred and Ina Hendrix in Maynardsville Tennessee. He was married to Delores (Del) Westland and to this union was born three children Sandra, Lisa and Dean. He is survived by his wife Del, his three children, his mother and three brothers Alfred "Bill, Okla City Okla Howard E. and Douglas L, both of Knoxville Tennessee.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer and Elder D.R. Cabbage Monday November 11, 1986 at the Cooke Mortuary Chapel in Maynardsville Tennessee with interment in the Beeler Cemetery near Maynardsville.

May God bless the family with his Love and Mercy. May he reconcile them to their great loss and graciously enable them to remember that Rush's life was one of God's greatest blessings given unto each of them to enrich their sojourn here on earth. May they

remember and praise God for this and all of his many blessings upon each of them as he leads them in ways known only to him.

Elder Richard Campbell

ISAAC ELDRIDGE MARTIN

Born June 21, 1903, to the late George and Ibra Lawrence Martin, and passed from this life December 1, 1986.

When a young man he was married to the late Alverta Williams. To this union was born two sons, Marvin Taylor and Charles Ray.

He is survived by one son Marvin Taylor, three grandchildren, two great grandchildren, one sister Mrs. Annie Reed, two brothers, Luther and Albert, of Pilot, Virginia.

He was married the second time to Eula Bell Williams. He is survived by his wife, six stepchildren, thirteen step grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by one son, Charles Ray, daughter-in-law Ella Mae. Also his parents.

Eldridge was a firm believer in salvation by grace of God. He had deep religious convictions. The writer has been comforted many times by hearing him speak of the wonderful works of God.

He could witness with the Psalmist——— (Psalm 18:1,2) I will love thee, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower. He received a hope in Christ, who is our hope, many years ago.

His funeral was conducted by Elders Hale Terry and Larry Hollandsworth, at Gardener Funeral Chapel, Floyd, Virginia, December 3, 1986. His body was laid to rest at Roselawn Memorial Gardens, Christiansburg, Virginia, to await the second coming of the Lord.

May it please God to comfort all who mourn.

In need of mercy,
Gaye A. Thompson

BETTY ADKINS STEVENSON

Sister Betty Adkins Stevenson was born near Parsonburg, M.D. Feb. 20, 1897 and died Dec. 9, 1986.

In Sept. 1915 Sister Betty married Edgar Adkins who died July 31, 1961. This union was blessed with six children, two preceded her in death. Ina Adkins and Brother Reginald Adkins.

Jan. 8, 1983 she married Marion Stevenson who survives, also surviving are three daughters Dorothy Wilgus, Louise Hadder and Bernice Blades, one son Brother Jimmy Adkins, two brothers, Louis and Brother Lawrence Holloway.

The second Sunday in Dec. 1945 she asked for a home with the Forest Grove Church and was baptized by her pastor Elder Harold Bennett. Sister Betty was a dear and faithful member all these years, loved by all who knew her.

Funeral services were held in the Holloway Funeral Home, Salisbury, Maryland by her Pastor Elder Julian Williams assisted by Mr. Wm. Sterling. Interment was in Forest Grove Cemetery.

Written by her sister-in-law
Ethel Holloway

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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POETRY

Could we with ink the ocean fill,

And were the skies of parchment made;

Were every stalk on earth a quill,

And every man a scribe by trade.

To write the love of God above,

Would drain the ocean dry.

Nor could the scroll contain the whole,

Though stretched from sky to sky.

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EDITORIAL

"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." John 14:23.

This is a blessed chain of gospel experience bringing to our minds the very painful shortcoming in our experiences in respect of them. This text is not meant for the men of the world who have their portion in this life; but for the chosen, and called, and faithful who are brought into and to understand the mysteries of his kingdom. "If a man love me, he will keep my words." We might be able to say, "we hope we love Him." Christ brings forth in this text that it would be manifest who were his own people by certain marks and signs. They would be those who love him and keep his commandments.

The first link in this golden chain is love to Christ. "If a man love me." This "if" separates those who are to enter and to prevent anybody from entering who ought not to enter. This "if" stands as a drawn sword, like the cherubim at the gate of the garden of Eden, to keep anyone from venturing or to intrude where you have no right to go if you do not love the Lord Jesus Christ. "If a man love me." Do we love Him? Let us not put this question aside but may we meditate upon it, for there are many who pretend to love him but really do not, for their conduct is not consistent therewith. Remember, that, if you do love him, he must have loved you first. Think of this ancient love, a love that was fixed upon you from all eternity, even though He knew you would be involved in the ruinous fall of Adam, and by your own personal transgression; yet loved you, notwithstanding all.

My dear ones, think of him, when the fulness of time was come, stripping himself of all his glory and descending from the throne of infinite majesty to the manger or humiliation and as a babe swaddled in his weakness. Look at His life, a life of poverty, for he had not where to lay his head; a life of rejection, a life of pain, for he bore our sickness, a life of dishonor, for he was dispised and rejected of men. Think of him on down through his life and especially in the garden of Gethsemane. Think of him on the judgment seat when he was falsely charged with blasphemy. Think of him hanging on the cross of Calvary wearing a crown of thorns. Stand and watch

when the soldiers pierced his heart and made the blood and water flow forth for your pardon and cleansing. Do you have a hope that he suffered all this for you and do you not love him in return? But let us not stop here: think of him as he rises from the grave for you, as he ascends to heaven for you and obtains great gifts for you, and now pleas before the Father making intercession for you as King of kings and Lord of lords. As you think of all this, can you refrain from loving him? Ye who are united to him in bonds that can never be severed, love him.

The next question is do we know him? If a man knows him not, how can he love him? There are many people in this world who profess to know him, but profession is not possession. "Whom say ye that I am?" Can we say with Peter: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"? His enemies were constantly disputing with him. They knew him not, except as one who was setting forth a strange doctrine and they judged he was not fit to live. But whom say we that He is? Is he the Christ, the Son of the living God? Is He the foundation of our hope? Is his cross the attraction of our soul? Is His righteousness the robe we desire most to wear? Is to be cleansed by His precious blood, our greatest desire? If a poor unworthy sinner is convinced of his sinfulness, of his deadness, of his helplessness gets a sight of Him as the new and living way to the Father as the foundation of his hope, does this knowledge of Him not cause His people to cleave to Him? You may be able to say, I feel that my heart is drawn toward him, but I know I don't and can't know him as I would like to feel from the depths of my heart. What is it to know Christ? Is it not life eternal? "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." John 17:3. How is this knowledge brought about? Only by that blessed Comforter whom Jesus said the Father would send in my name and "He shall teach you all things." And Jesus says concerning this Comforter, "Even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." John 14:17.

"Even the Spirit of Truth." We are surrounded with error, I mean religious errors. God's own testimony is that they "love darkness rather that light because their deeds are evil." John 3:19. Man, dead in trespasses and sins, loves religious error and while this darkness of error is hovering over them, how can they see any light? The Spirit alone can disperse the clouds and darkness of error and shine divine light into one's heart to give any true knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. He is called the "Spirit of Truth" because it is his prerogative to unfold truth into the hearts and souls of the quickened children of God make them experimentally acquainted with it. Truth in the bare letter brings no deliverance from the guilt, filth, love, power, and practice of sin. The work of the blessed "Spirit of Truth" is to take the truth of God and open it up, reveal, and make known, apply and seal it with power into the hearts and consciences of his people.

Have you ever felt at times a darkness pervading your soul, a gross darkness that you felt so that there

seemed to be no light and understanding at all? But remember it is spiritual light that makes you see and feel this darkness. You will groan and sigh beneath it, making you realize the need of the blessed "Spirit of Truth" to open up, apply, reveal and make known the truth to your soul. Thanks be unto God, there are times and seasons, when through his abundant mercy, He shines a spiritual light upon the word of Truth enabling you to read the Bible with enlightened eyes, and power and sweetness seems to run like a stream through every word softening your heart and filling your eyes with tears as the Truth of God shines into your understanding as bright as the noonday sun. You may wonder why anyone cannot read the Bible and see the covenant of grace revealed, the electing love of God, the deity of Christ, his eternal sonship, his atoning blood, the full salvation wrought out by the Lord Jesus Christ, and the regenerating work of the "Spirit of truth." But my dear ones, can you always feel this? Not unless it is opened up to you by the "Spirit of truth." He never teaches anything except the truth. He works truth and understanding into the hearts and consciences of his people without His power and teaching, we cannot of ourselves obtain spiritual truth. Truth would only come to us in word only, but He says: "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance." I Thess. 1:5.

"He will keep my words." I'm sure we all feel to fall far short of keeping His words. Do we search the scriptures and do we desire to live upon the truth the Lord hath spoken? Do we prize His precious words of truth higher than anything else? Do we strive to keep them in our hearts? If our hearts are right, we will have a sincere desire to put them into practice by the grace of God. May we be blessed to say, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart; for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts." Jer. 15:16. You may err, you may make mistakes, and may commit sin; but the intent of your heart is to keep the words by the grace and strength of God. The gospel is the Word, and Christ is the gospel, it is called the gospel of Christ. Here is the gospel, and here is our lost soul: if the gospel is done away with, you are undone forever. Therefore, by the help of God we will keep the gospel, we will reject every teaching that contradicts the gospel. We should hate everything in our soul that is against the gospel. We should have a desire to turn away from every temptation that would turn us away from the gospel.

"And my Father will love him." How do we know anything of the Father's love? Because "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." When it pleases God to visit our heart with a felt sense of His love toward us, does it give joy to our hearts? Can we say, I believe that I love His precious truth? I believe I love the brethren? The Father has loved the elect with an everlasting love.

"And we will come unto him." God's people are drawn to come unto him. "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me." But the text says, "We will come unto him" meaning the

Father and Son will come unto him, unto us. There is no longer a bar between God and our soul. We may feel so sinful and weak that there is no way we can come unto Him; but He says, "We will come unto him." This should be a comforting message to us all. O, we may be very poor and living in a hut, but Jesus says, "we will come." We may be uneducated in worldly knowledge but "we will come." Do we know anything about His coming to us? Do we know Him as coming with His precious blood and applying it to our consciences until joy springs up in our hearts giving us a blessed hope that all our sins are forgiven? Have you ever felt the presence of Christ so strong in your heart that you wanted to take Jesus up in your arms, spiritually, as old Simeon did literally, and say with him: "Then took he him up in his arms and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word. For mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Luke 2:28-30. Jesus reveals himself to His people by coming to them as he did the two disciples on the way to Emmaus.

"And make our abode with Him." This, no doubt, is one of the sweetest of all, yet it is difficult to attempt to communicate it to your minds and hearts. God does not come to dwell with his enemies but his friends. My dear ones, if we have ever experienced his presence to some degree, it is because we are his friends and Jesus has laid his life down for us. "I lay down my life for my friends." God knows all about the man with whom he comes to live. They are His elect, given to Christ, saved by the blood of Christ, and quickened by the Holy Spirit. Therefore God knows by the operation of the Holy Spirit and has purified and sanctified our hearts making them ready. To make his abode with us denotes habitation, for the saints are the dwelling places or temples of the living God, Father, Son and Spirit; not as a wayfaring man, but always, though this may not always be felt by believers, yet, it is a wonderful demonstration of His grace and mercy for God to condescend to dwell on earth with sinful man. A man without the indwelling of God is like a bush in Hareb when it was only a bush; but when the bush burned with fire yet was not consumed. The Lord brings a taste of heaven to you when He comes into your heart and you become rich beyond the intents of bliss. And, then it can be said: "That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." John 17:26. The love I feel in my heart for you dear brethren, I trust, is shed abroad in my heart by the Spirit of Truth.

Please remember this poor sinner in your prayers.

Love,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

John 6: 68.
Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

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CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

If you have enjoyed knowing of the various Churches all over this Country, please help us by sending us a picture of your Church with a brief history, location, date and time of your meetings and the name of present pastor.

ARTICLES

"We are saved by hope."
Romans viii. 24.

What is the meaning of being saved by hope? It does not mean saved actually, but instrumentally; not saved as regards our eternal security, but as regards our experience of salvation. By hope we are instrumentally saved from despair, saved from turning our backs upon Christ and the gospel, saved from looking to any other Saviour, or any other salvation; and especially saved from making this world and this life our happiness and home, as "waiting patiently for what we see not," even "the redemption of our body." Now it is by hope that we hang upon and cleave to Lord Jesus, and thus by this grace we abide in him. It is therefore spoken of as an "anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that which is within the veil." What holds the ship firm in the storm, and prevents it falling upon the rocks? The anchor. The ship abides firm as long as the anchor holds. So by hope the soul abides in Christ. He is within the veil; we are without, and it may be, tossed up and down on a sea of doubt and fear, distress and anxiety, and yet there is a bond of union between him and us firmer than the Atlantic Cable.

J.C. Philpot

LUKE XIII. 6-9.

We present some considerations concerning the words found in Luke xiii. 6-9. This Scripture narrates the parable of the fig tree, planted in a vineyard, which when the man who planted it came to it seeking fruit, and had found none, he commanded to be cut down as a thing which cumbered the ground, but the dresser of it entreated that it might be spared yet one year more, and if then it bore no fruit, it should be cut down. From many Scriptures we have no doubt that this relates to the Jewish nation and system. In the prophecy of Isaiah, fifth chapter, the Lord compares that nation to a vineyard, over which he had exercised great care, and upon which he had bestowed much labor, and in which he nevertheless found no fruit such as he had a right to expect to find. When he expected the ripe fruit he found only wild grapes. That is, he found perversity and rebellion, and all that was evil in his sight, rather than any good fruit. In Matthew xxi. 19, is recorded an incident in the life of our Savior, similar in its lessons to the parable of which we are especially speaking. The Lord found a fig tree on which was no fruit, when he and the disciples sought fruit, and the fig tree was cursed from that time. And so Jesus wept over Jerusalem, because of their rebellion and hardness of heart. And it is said that the gospel must first be preached unto the Jews, and then because they rejected it, the apostles were directed to turn unto the Gentiles. All these Scriptures do not at all imply that the Lord, who knows the end from the beginning, is disappointed as men are disappointed, because of their insufficient knowledge of the future, but it shows forth the mercy and long-suffering of God to the unthankful and the froward. In every way the rebellion of man is set forth in the word. By all his dealings with the Jews, our God brings to light the depravity, iniquity and opposition of the human heart, to him and his will. Men could not say that the truth had not been set forth among them, or that the God of heaven had not declared his will plainly among them, or that space had not been given them for repentance, if indeed there were any possibility of repentance in them. If they continued in their wickedness, it was plainly revealed by all these things that it was because, though light had come into the world, men loved darkness rather than light. God dealt with Israel as a nation, as men would deal with the fig tree, but still they were but the degenerate plant of a strange vine, and all the outward cultivation which they had received in all their history, only made this to appear the more plainly. Grace was not in their hearts, they were not partakers of the divine life, real sorrow for sin they had never known, and therefore all that was done to them in the providence of God only served to bring out the fact that they were wholly evil, and that continually. Our God had spared Israel unto that generation, and in all their generations they had been filling up their cup of iniquity, that upon that generation might come all the righteous blood that they had shed in all the generations of their national history.

If indeed the grace of God had really been bestowed upon them, if his

Spirit had been really in their hearts, then the warnings, reproofs, admonitions, chastisements, and, on the other hand, the longsuffering and patience of the Lord would have had some effect upon them to produce repentance and a turning with confession to God, but that they were wholly a carnal people was made apparent by all the dealings of the Lord with them as a nation. According to the parable, they had been spared not one year, but many years. Read the fifth chapter of Isaiah.

The parable speaks not of the heartfelt dealings of God with his spiritual people who know him in the pardon of their sins, but of his providential dealings in judgment, with that unregenerate and stiff-necked people, which in the end culminated in their swift destruction as a nation. When the spiritual gospel came to them they had no place for it. When Jesus came as he did, an humble man of sorrows, they could not recognize him, and preferred Barabbas to the blessed Lord. The true heart that was in them spoke when they cried, Crucify! crucify him! and release unto us Barabbas. It had done no good to dig around the fig tree, and water and manure it. Had it been the right kind of a fig tree, all this would have produced good fruit. God's word does have effect upon the natural man, no matter how much religion he may profess. The Jews, with all their carnality and rebellion of heart against God, yet made great profession of being his, but their profession was as the wild vine, it never could lead to spiritual fruit which should be pleasing to God, and, as said before, all the dealings of God with them only served to make this the more manifest.

Perhaps our sister has been troubled lest she should be that barren fig tree. No doubt many of the Lord's humblest ones have often feared the same thing concerning themselves. Israel naturally never had any such fears; no outward nominal professor ever knows any such fears. The very moment that one begins to fear lest he or she be but a barren fig tree, having the profession without the fruit, that moment the evidence is plain that they are not mere nominal professors. The dead have not life enough to fear that they are dead; the living fear. The dead know not anything; the living know how weak and imperfect they are, they know how precious is the fruit of the Spirit, and so they greatly desire it, and because of this great desire arises the fear that it does not appear in them. Our sister, if she has such fears, need not fear. If indeed she has no such fears, she might well fear. This seems like a paradox, but it is only one among many Bible and spiritual paradoxes, which the people of God alone know.

Elder F.A. Chick

PSALMS LXXII. 16.

"There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth."

Sister Phoebe Horton, of Warwick, N.Y., has asked that we devote the editorial space of our family paper to an exposition of the above Scripture. It will doubtless appear to all who will read this Psalm that it has to do with Christ and the subjects of his kingdom. He is King of kings, of whom it is said, "He shall

judge the people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment." What he would do for his people and to their enemies is further enlarged upon in the Psalm. We quote a portion of what is said, as follows: "He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. * * * He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust." His absolute rule over the whole earth, and the fact that he will be worshipped are further evidenced by the following: "The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him."

In considering the text, we will divide it into three parts: (1) "There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains." Whatever this signified, there is no question about it; it was most certain to be, for the mouth of the Lord had spoken it. Corn is known for its food properties: it is full of strength and substance. The concordance in the Bible which we have before us says there were eleven Hebrew words used for describing it in its different states. The world shall not stand long enough to exhaust the great variety that there is in the Lord Jesus Christ. Eleven of the original apostles testified of the wonderful things of Jesus, but neither they nor all who follow after shall ever be able to tell the half. That he was the bread of life which came down from heaven, we have his own words to show: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."—John vi. 51. The text says, "There shall be an handful of corn in the earth," etc. An "handful" is not a large quantity, but rather a small portion. At the most, therefore, comparatively speaking, we actually know but little of the Christ in this life, either as to his sufferings or the glory which followed. He reminded one of the beloved disciples who could not watch one hour with him that the spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak. We do but taste the cup which he drank to the dregs. Earthen vessels are not capacitated to contain the fullness of the joy that will some day, we hope, be ours, hence it is said, "Now we see through a glass darkly." This "handful of corn" was to be "in the earth," and not on the earth. The seed which is imbedded in the earth can neither be blown away by the winds of doctrines of men nor destroyed by the fowls of the air: it will in due season come forth and bear fruit. Jesus did not come on the earth to offer salvation to all who would accept. The angel of the Lord who appeared unto Joseph said concerning Mary, "She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." We are told concerning him that he "who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and

being found in the fashion of a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." He came in the likeness of sinful flesh; and for sin condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. His own words are, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Jesus, the blessed Son of God, was verily that corn of wheat which fell into the ground; it was he who was born of a woman, made under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. The fact that so-called learned men deny this truth only proves that He had hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes. Neither is this handful of corn said to be in the earth universally, as some would have us believe, but is declared to be in that part, or portion, of the earth referred to as "upon the top of the mountain." There is a definite number, known unto the Lord from before the foundation of the world, of the human race spoken of as a "chosen generation," and these are they whom God highly exalts and separates from the rest of the world by making of them a peculiar people, and they shall show forth his praise. Isaiah, by faith, saw the risen Christ coming from Edom, "with dyed garments from Bozrah," glorious in his apparel and traveling in the greatness of his strength. Bozrah means "sheepfold, which signifies that Jesus was made like unto his brethren in all things except that he was without sin. The Word verily was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth, is the testimony of the inspired apostle, John. Whatever knowledge we may have of Jesus today, regardless of its limitations, is that which has been made known unto us by the workings of God's mighty power. He writes his law in the inward part, even the heart of his people, and, therefore, they cannot be moved.

(2) "The fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon." Lebanon, with its high and lofty snow-capped peaks, and its wonderful cedars, was full of significance. Her cedars were evergreen, implying eternal life, and they received their refreshing from the pure waters on high. True, they were accustomed to the penetrating icy winds from the north country, nevertheless they endured, being sustained and kept by the power of him who held the winds in the hollow of his fists. These were typical of the trees "upon the top of the mountains" among whom the Lord of glory dwells. Ezekiel took up that line of thought, and the Lord spoke by him, saying, "I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent: in the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it; and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell." How remarkably this prefigured the coming of Christ through the house, or lineage, of David; his crucifixion, according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; his resurrection from the dead to

the pre-eminent position of being Lord of lords and King of kings. The fruits, or effects, of this have followed all down through the ages by the manifestation of his quickening power in raising sinners from their dead works to serve the true and living God. What a shaking there is when the wind of his Holy Spirit begins to blow upon the valley of dry bones. Truly, the dead are raised up, the blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk and the poor have the gospel preached to them. God's children are well acqainted with the hardships and trials that are the lot of those who follow Jesus. The record is that this world was not a friend to him while here in the flesh, and neither is it to-day friendly towards those who contend for his principles, but they have the assurance that they shall be brought forth more than conquerors through him that loved them and gave himself for them.

(3) "And they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth." Who is it that shall flourish? They of the city. What city? Mount Zion, the city of God. The positive manner of the language employed makes it certain, both as to the fact and the extent to which they shall flourish. We can well imagine that we hear a great chorus going up all over the country, saying, We are all dried up, and there seems little or no life in us. Notwithstanding this, we are persuaded that our text speaks the truth when it says, "They of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth." Many of us know how perfectly natural it is for the earth to bring forth grass. It seems to be a fixed trait of mother nature to cover her footstool with grass after the passing of winter; it comes forth abundantly almost universally, and not only without the assistance of mankind in great areas, but is spite of all that man can do to prevent it in many places. It is just as natural for the "new creature" to flourish by the rivers of the water of life, for when one is born of the Spirit, that life which is imparted unto him is as certain to hunger and thirst after righteousness as the sparks are to fly upward, or that water is to seek its own level. That which is counterfeit will not satisfy the cravings of such living souls, and they will be found fighting the good fight of faith. Such characters know how the grass flourishes in the earth and that it can bring forth nothing good. They become absolutely convinced that nature's barren soil cannot produce spiritual fruit, therefore, they cry unto the Lord. When the Lord is pleased to answer their prayers they are witnesses to the fact that the desert is made to blossom as the rose. What wonderful music there is when the barren are made to break forth into singing, when their hands are loosed and they are brought on Pisgah's top to view the wonders of God's redeeming love. One of the poets described some of the wonders of this city in the following lines:

"Zion's a city God hath blessed
With peace and everlasting rest;
A glorious city, strong and fair,
And Jesus dwells forever there.

Her ancient wall appear to be
The workmanship of Deity;
Founded in grace, they still appear
Without a flaw or chasm there.

Oft has this city's strength been tried,
By mighty foes on every side;
But all in vain it yet has been,
She baffles Satan, hell and sin.

Count ye her towers, how high they rise,
Her golden spires, they pierce the skies;
Her golden streets are fair to view,
Her palaces and bulwarks, too.

Then round her walk, her turrets tell,
Mark all her brazen bulwarks well;
Spread far and wide her deathless fame,
Her pearly gates and walls of flame.

Her founder's love has ever proved,
Like Salem's mount, which ne'er was moved,
'Tis fixed on this eternal base,
The grace of God, and gift by grace."

This city, then, shall flourish like the grass of the earth, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. If we have been given a good hope, through grace, in the mercy of God and can, by faith, behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world, we are, indeed, the most wonderfully blest of all peoples on the face of the earth. Let us, therefore, lift up our voices, as much as in us is, in songs of sublime adoration and praise and extol the great Ancient of days for his rich and distinguishing grace.

Elder R. Lester Dodson

Dear Editors:—I was born in Randolph County, North Carolina, on the nineteenth day of September, 1854. Before I was two years old my parents, W.F. and Massah Trogdon, moved to Surry County, North Carolina. I will state a little occurrence that came to me while living in Surry. Father and mother carried me to Grassy Knob schoolhouse, where there was preaching. I was not more that two years of age. Since my infant days, I have never remembered anything that occurred that day except what I here relate. I suppose mother was out of the house with me. The first that has ever been in my memory, we were walking up the aisle to our seats, I looked up in mother's face and saw the tears running down her cheeks; I thought she was crying and wondered what was the matter with her. My eyes were at once directed to Austin Cassell, who was preaching. He was standing with one hand raised and his eyes glancing upward. He had a lovely appearance to me. A pleasant solemnity of feeling came over me which I cannot express. I have thought it might be my inquiry of mind about mother was answered in this way, that my heart was pervaded with the pleasant feeling which my mother was enjoying. The above made such an impression on my heart that, as my parents said, soon after this meeting, while suffering from a bad burn, I cried for them to send for Austin Cassell. I have always remembered this little incident related, and leave it for what it is worth.

Before I was five years old father moved his family back to Randolph County, where I have spent the greater part of my life. When I was very young a heavy burden came upon me concerning death. It seemed to me if, up to this time, I had possessed any knowledge of the Supreme Ruler, or his protecting hand that saves us from the many dangers which we daily pass through, that such knowledge was entirely absent at this time. If it had been possible to have been placed in a world where everything was by chance, the reality and horrors of such a world could not have been more vivid to me than in the picture which was before me day and night when awake. All the dangerous

diseases, the bites of poisonous living creatures, the many so-called accidents, etc., seemed to be presented to me at once. Such questions as these came into my mind: Why did I, or anyone, escape one danger in the midst of so many? Why was there a world with a people liable to be taken by death any moment? Why were the people at ease while I was so miserable? Go where I might, or do what I would, the burden was with me. At morn I wished for the night, at night I wished for the morning, hoping that when I fell asleep all my burden might be lost and I awake without it. But sleepless hours must be passed in the most miserable condition, with the many dangers before me in which life might be suddenly taken, and no way of excape, except as chance might appear favorable. How little did the thread of this dependence appear, for if escape came one moment death might come the next. Instead of losing this burden in sleep, as I often hoped, as soon as I awoke all met me with the same force as before sleep came to my eyes. Deep as was this trouble, I cannot exactly tell just how or when it left me, but it seems to me the power of an unseen hand over all things could not have been more manifest that it was to me after the experience I had just passed through. When I became a sufficient reader to read my father's pocket Testament I read it more than anything else. Much of my learning to read was from reading the Testament, my mother pronouncing words for me when I failed to. I had no deep conviction of sin, yet there were struggles of mind to live a better life, which were met with disappointment in every effort. I remember one evening, while reading the Testament, I arrived at perfection in my imagination. I thought, Yes, I am reading the Bible. I will do nothing wrong; no, not so much as to give mother a cross word. While in this muse, I was suddenly surprised to find myself grumbling and resisting her wishes. What a shock! My vow was broken before my book was laid down. I cannot give dates, but what I am stating are incidents during childhood. Of a truth the time is not in my memory when I did not have serious thoughts. One of the things sacred in my memory of childhood days is of my parents often engaging in reading, singing and prayer before they retired. When it was apparent that father was about to omit the service, I would get his books, without a word, and go softly towards him. He would look up so humbly at me, reaching out his hand for the books. That look I shall never forget. Why it was I cannot tell, but I loved the services and loved to fall on my knees with my parents. During my youthful days I had such knowledge of an all-wise, powerful One that I often stole away to some secret place to ask for deliverance from some sorrow of our family, which all, as creatures of time, are heir to. Although I often felt that it was in his power to grant or deny, and if he did I had nowhere else to go. As I grew, with all my anxieties and serious thoughts, I felt that the God that ruled must perform all the work for the sinner; I felt to be helpless and seemed as one waiting. At one time I decided to try praying once a day, thinking that would make a change in my condition. I attempted three evenings in succession. I do not remember the words I uttered, but oh the dry formality seemed unbearable.

I hungered for that I did not receive. Thus I left off. I was then twelve or thirteen years old, and can say my soul was much exercised for years, having experiences too tedious to mention. I well remember hearing my mother telling how precious the Savior was to her and of her love for him. The inquiry arose in my heart, Can you say what your mother says? Do you love him? It seemed there was the greatest darkness in me. I sighed over my wretched condition. I mention this because of the difference between then and now. Although I did not have the deep convictions of sin I afterwards had, yet I was miserable much of the time, but could not tell why. But in my early years it seemed to me there was a lesson in what I passed through, and I was being led by the unseen Hand to realize what a seat of corruption my heart was, and that I was lost without the mercy of God. I remember reading the Bible through in my eighteenth year, thinking to do this every year thereafter. I read it through again the next year, but the day I finished it I closed the book with a heavy heart, and thought, If my feelings remain as dark as now I can never read it again. The book seemed perfectly sealed to me. The fourth Sunday in May, 1873, I went to Sandy Creek Church, this being the day for communion. Elder S. J. Lackey was present, but I found nothing in his preaching. As he broke the bread and poured the wine the deep solemnity of his countenance, how can I ever forget it? I was a poor, wretched sinner, without hope or God in the world. I broke down in tears. It seemed I could not leave without speaking to Elder Lackey, but was too miserable to approach him. As we started home father turned aside to bid him farewell. Much as I desired to go to him I could not, and stopped some distance away, when father said, Here is my daughter, she wants to speak to you. How father knew it I could not tell, for I had not uttered a word regarding my wish. When the minister took my hand the tears ran down my cheeks and I turned hastily away, at which he said to me, Choose that good part that Mary chose. Twelve months rolled on without any manifestation of Jesus as my Savior, but oh the searchings as to whether my exercises of soul were those of a poor sinner under the special dealings of God. It seems to me I would have been willing to have suffered the most horrible tortures of grief if I could have believed it to be God's work. With all, it seemed to me my condition was altogether outside of anything else that had ever been. I felt there was more hope for the worst criminal on earth than there was for me. How well do I remember the place I resorted to during the last months of bondage and tried to pour out my soul to God. One evening when I failed to eat supper my mother seemed so worried that I left the house crying, feeling that if mother knew my condition she would not wonder at my failure to eat. Truly I could have said with one of old, There is no sorrow like my sorrow.

On Monday morning, June 6th, 1874, I started to work at some distance from the house, and as I came to a short descent into a narrow valley my burden left me. I saw no wonderful vision, neither were there words sounded to me as many have expressed, but it seemed there was a vivid manifestation of a release from fetters, and I was given hope which has never at any time since been entirely gone, but has been, and is,

more precious than anything else besides. When my burden left me I cried out in these words: "Glory to God be given, glory to God in the highest." If I said other than these words it is not in my memory, but I repeated them over and over. Had I been in the presence of many, it seems to me I could not have refrained from speaking aloud, but I was alone. I thought when I went home to dinner to tell mother my joy, but I did not. It was not from any suggestion of fear, but mother's mind was so much on her work that I thought it best to wait until some other time. I returned to my work for the afternoon, and about two o'clock a suggestion of fear that I might be mistaken came to me. It came as a cloud passing over the sun, with the exception that the day was one of joy until about sunset. The sun shone with a mildness I had never seen before, and all things seemed calm and serene. But when the evening came my heart was filled with fear that I was deceived. I sought a place and asked the Lord that if I was deceived he would make it know to me. While on my knees my attention was called to the fact of the difference in my petition now and what it had been before. I knew there had been some kind of a change, but oh was it what I so much desired? I passed some months with this load of fear, but did not feel the binding of such fetters as I had for so long felt previous to the morning of that June day. Oh such a cloud of fear hung over me for months! One day I opened to the hymn beginning, "Now begin the heavenly theme; sing aloud in Jesus' name." When I read the hymn my heart was at once filled with the sweetness of the theme which was with me on that beautiful June day. Oh the words, "Redeeming love, redeeming love!" I read again and again the words. There was a sound in them most precious, and has been lastingly precious, and, if not deceived in the whole matter, it seems to me will ever be. He hath "delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us," for "his mercy endureth for ever." How precious are these words to the poor sinner who hopes that mercy has been once bestowed and his inward groanings are still for it.

Long before I had a hope I thought that when one was given hope in the mercy of God that one ceased to cry for mercy. How ignorant! For of a truth the saint never ceases to need his mercy, for which there will be the cry. It seems to me that no words are more expressive of inward groanings than Lord, have mercy on a vile sinner, for it is only with the realization of being a hateful sinner that one approaches the throne of holiness for mercy. "In his light," we know that God, in justice, might have banished all forever, but love embraced a remnant when as culprits all were bound in fetters. I love to linger here, but must try to return to my story.

I remained out of the church nearly four years after receiving a hope, but I much desired all the time to be there. The imperfections of the brethren never came before me as a hindrance to asking a home among them, for my own too far outweighed for that.

I must pass on to the nearing of the time of uniting with the church. I became much afflicted in the natural life. Father moved very near Old Mount Tabor Church. Only a few gathered at their meetings. The association of the

young and gay rabble had no charms for me; when I went to meeting my mind was with the little band that met. Often have I listened to the pastor, Atlas J. Gilbert, when he was engaged in the most impressive prayer, it seemed to me, and wished his prayers could embrace me among them. But I felt cut off, for I could not come forth. It seemed I must talk to mother and see what she thought of me. One night when we were alone I told her of my desire to go to the church. She said she could give me her hand without hearing me tell anything. That left me in a worse condition than ever, fearing she might be deceived. So my mouth was closed, and remained closed until I went to the church. Just one month before I went and asked a home there I was at their meeting, and as the benediction was pronounced the words "Closed forever," seemed to be spoken to me. Although I did not hear an audible voice, if I had been struck by some one the shock would not have been more clear. Weeping, I immediately left the house. That was not my habit, for I usually remained in the house after service until all went out. I loved to hear the members talk, and to get the hand of each, whether I spoke a word to them or they to me, and so I still remained. As I walked out of the house I thought to go home at once. A second thought came that it would be less noticeable if I took a seat by the side of the house until all came out, and so I did. I pondered these words all the way home, and the month following, having no thought I should ever be present again when the opportunity for membership would be given. The words were too distinctly spoken, it seemed to me. As next conference meeting was nearing my health was better than usual, the weather was fine, and every indication was that I might go. The morning came, and more of the brethren than usual came on and joined us. All seemed cheerful and happy, but I though that without doubt something unknown to the church would come in that day and hinder the church from giving the opportunity to join. As I have stated, I could not think I should ever witness this again, but when conference was assembled peace seemed to reign and the opportunity was given for members. I could not stay away. I wondered why it was I could be received on the little I expressed, but all seemed to welcome me. One brother as he gave me his hand said, The Lord has not hidden this thing from me. The pastor was not present at this meeting. The infirmities of age and distance of ten miles hindered him from being with us, but a deacon often went forward in holding conference, which he did at this meeting. I expressed a wish that Elder S. J. Lackey baptize me, and thus my baptism was deferred some months. Circumstances were such it was decided to wait no longer, and this was agreeable to my feelings, for I became so anxious for the day to come that choice was entirely taken away, just so it was one approved of the church. I have wondered if this choice, which is expressed by others, is not of the flesh. One thing, it seems to me, is true, that in the Spirit a perfect oneness exists in all things, and if the Spirit is not present the flesh is in exercise, which is always condemned. But He remembers that we are but dust; He remembers and pities us when we sin. When the morning came for me to be baptized I had a peculiar feeling. It seemed as if

there was to be an end in some sense, as I thought I was going to my own burial, yet feeling some kind of pleasantness in the thought I was eager for the hour to come. It was in the year 1878 that my lot was cast with the Lord's people, and though my trials, tremblings and fears have not been few, that home is still dear to me.

SARAH M. LAMBERT

This dear sister was one of the most graciously taught of the Lord that it was my sacred pleasure to be brought into spiritual intimacy with. All my remembrances of her afford me blessedness of heart, and praises to the Lord. She departed this life May 22nd, 1934, aged 79 years, 8 months and 3 days. She was married in June, 1882, to Thomas Lambert, who preceded her to the "better country, that is, an heavenly" (Heb. xi. 16) over a year ago. Six children were born to this union, two of whom died in early childhood. The youngest daughter lost her life more than twelve years ago in Washington, D. C. One daughter, Massa Esther Lambert, and two sons, M.T. and L.B. Lambert, survive their beloved mother.

FREDERICK W. KEENE

FIERY TRIALS

"BELOVED" think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified."

The above Scripture may be found in the fourth chapter of first Peter, verses twelve, thirteen and fourteen. Those whom Peter was here addressing he called the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia, calling them the elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. This peculiar and strange people are still scattered among all nations, tribes and tongues, and are the elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, and none are called in any other way, and are still being addressed through the same kind of message now as then, but in order for them to hear and to understand this message the deaf ear must be unstopped and the blind eye must be opened and they must be given spiritual ears and spiritual eyes, as these things are not taught of men, they are spiritually discerned.

Jesus, speaking through the psalmist David, has said, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." And when John saw a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands, and all the angels stood

round about the throne and about the elders, and one of the elders said unto John, What are these which are arrayed in white robes, and whence came they? John said unto him, Sir, thou knowest, and the elder answered, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. And again, in Isaiah xlviii. 9, 10, God in speaking to Israel, said, "For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off. Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." He spake to every child of grace which makes up the mystical body of Christ, the church of the living God. This was the multitude which John saw and which no man could number which stood before the throne arrayed in white robes. It is in the furnace of affliction that every member of this body is chosen and refined, consuming the dross of self-righteousness, and purifying their hearts and kindling that love for one another which Jesus mentioned when he said, "A new commandment I give unto thee, That ye love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love, one to another." It was through this love that he died upon the cross, and although he was the only begotten Son of the Father the bitterness of that suffering and death was so great that he felt forsaken of the Father, and cried out in the deepest anguish of soul, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" It is declared in Isaiah liii. 7, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so openeth he not his mouth," and if we would take up our cross and follow him we must pass through these sore trials, and it is through these that we are all refined and brought our of great tribulation. For he saith, "He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me." But if we are born of God we are made willing to endure all these things for his name's sake. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God" And though you are chosen in the furnace of affliction, he has spoken through the poet these comforting words,

"When through fiery trials
thy pathway shall lie,
My grace, all-sufficient,
shall be thy supply;
The flames will not hurt thee,
I only design
Thy dross to consume and thy
gold to refine."

After Christ passed through that agonizing death upon the cross and was laid in Joseph's new tomb, and a great stone was rolled to the door of the sepulchre and sealed and a watch was set there lest his disciples come and steal him away by night, there was a great earthquake and an angel of god descended from heaven and rolled away the stone, and the keepers did shake and became as dead men, and Jesus arose and came forth from the tomb and the tomb and the graveclothes alone were left, and the napkin which covered his face was folded and laid in a clean place. He thus triumphed over death, hell and the grave and sits at the right hand of the Majesty on high, where he ever liveth to make intercession for his people, and the glory which is his transcends all and is a recompense for all the reproach, all the anguish in the garden of Gethsemane, when his

sweat, like great drops of blood, was falling down to the ground. All the terrible decree at Pilate's bar, all the burden of the cross and of being denied by Peter and forsaken by his other disciples, all the pain and anguish of the crown of thorns, and the great nails in his hands and feet, and at last the cruel thrust of the spear in his side from which flowed the water and the blood, mentioned by the poet in that immortal hymn,

"Let the water and the blood,
From thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and power."

That crimson flood has been and is the double cure of sin, for it was shed as a ransom to take away forever the sting of death, which in sin, and to redeem his people from its curse. His life on earth was not spent in bearing his own cross alone, but also the cross of others who were drawn unto him in the great service which he rendered. Not unto the rich and the mighty, but unto the lame and the halt and the blind, or we may truthfully say unto the sick, the spiritually sick, for the well need not a physician. Thus we also follow after him when bearing the burden or the cross of others, for in Galatians vi. 1,2, he says, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." And again, "Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." And though we are called to pass through sore trials for his name's sake let us not fear, for "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." And, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." Therefore, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

Dear editors, I have made a feeble attempt to write the foregoing article at the request of a very dear afflicted friend of our family, and if it has your esteemed approval and you can find space for it in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES without crowding out other writings which might redound more to the glory of God, and more to the comfort of his dear saints, I shall be glad to have you publish it at your convenience.

Very sincerely,
Alfred E. Titus

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

IT IS WELL.
(2 KINGS IV. 26.)

From many points of view, we are living in a marvelous age. Mankind has encircled the globe. He has gone both to the top and the bottom of the world. He has ascended

high up into the stratospere and at last looked down upon the lofty peak of Mt. Everett, the highest of mountains; he has also descended into the depths of the sea. It would seem as though it could almost be truly said he has conquered the universe. Likewise, he has made a lot of wonderful discoveries and wrought out many ingenious inventions. His methods of travel over the world and communicating with its peoples, startle the imagination. He speaks and his voice is heard in the twinkling of and eye from east to west and north and south. With all of his accomplishments, it would seem that the world should become a better place in which to live. But, What are the facts and where do we find ourselves? Perhaps at no time since the human race began has the world at large been more seriously upset or more sorely tried than has been the case during the last half decade. The very foundations of governments have either been completely destroyed or mightily shaken. Kings have been both enthroned and dethroned. Rulers become bewildered and swept from their moorings. The wisdom of great statesmen has been utterly confounded. So-called peers in all walks of life have stood as wooden men, without the power to think or act. Earthly fortunes, both great and small, have either been swept away entirely or so greatly diminished that the shock and distress which have followed in their wake have made human wrecks by the millions. Suffering has been on such a wide scale throughout the earth that there is probably not a single nation in the whole world of which it can be truthfully said that "all is well." One may well ask, What is wrong and why cannot some golden rule method be worked out whereby all of the brotherhood of mankind can share and enjoy more equitably the blessings of this life? The Master would no doubt answer this by saying, That which is born of the flesh is flesh, meaning, as we would interpret it, that it is altogether corrupt and there is no soundness in it at all. Greed and selfishness are rampant everywhere. Dishonesty has seemingly worked as leven among those in authority, both in high and low places, in governments of all kinds, Federal, State, County, City, and throughout the rural districts, until there is little semblance of honor and uprightness left. That "the love of money is the root of all evil," is as true to-day as in any age of the world, and if one rises up with courage enough to attempt to blaze an "honest trail" he is laughed to scorn by many whose hearts are full of evil. If some measure of success is made by way of advancing decency to the fore and the powers of wickedness are compelled to recede for a short season, like the tide which goes out to sea, they will in due time return with even greater force and determination to gain their selfish ends. In our humble opinion, there is absolutely no hope of the world ever becoming better permanently. There will always be wars and rumors of wars. Nature is essentially corrupt, and though, like the slumbering volcano, it may appear to sleep for awhile, it will be found to be only accumulating its mass of putrefaction until the day of eruption, when it must be thrown off again.

Those who are taught of the Lord know that in the flesh there dwells no good thing. This world is not their home. They are only pilgrims here,

journeying to a better country. It is such characters as these whom we would like to have accompany us back to the scene in the narrative from which the words, "It is well," are taken. It may be that a view of the surroundings will enable us to find some nuggets of spiritual gold hidden beneath the surface, or letter of the word, among the things which were written aforetime for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

The fourth chapter of second Kings opens with the account of the creditor of a certain widow woman coming and taking her two sons as bondmen, and her appeal to Elisha, the man of God. He inquired of her what she had in the house, and she said, "Thine handmaid hath not anything in the house, save a pot of oil." He told her to "Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbors, even empty vessels; borrow not a few. And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which if full. So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured out. And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel: and he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed. Then she came and told the man of God: and he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest." There is something significant and beautiful typified in the pot of oil and the fact that the door was to be shut upon her and upon her sons while it was being poured into the empty vessels. God's work of grace in the heart of a poor sinner, empty and void of all that is good, is carried on in secret, and the Egyptians or unregenerate who are without the house, cannot look upon what is taking place. When the vessels were all filled, the oil stayed—nothing was wasted or lost, yet there was ample to satisfy the creditor, to pay the debt in full, and still sufficient to live on ever afterward.

We are told that the above incident fell on a day that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a "great woman," and that she constrained him to eat bread. "And so it was, that, as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread." Here is seen the communion and fellowship of saints. She perceived the prophet to be an holy man of God, and proposed to her husband that they make "a little chamber," and put it on the wall; and set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: "and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither. She was only showing her faith by her works. She was manifesting the great love which she had for the servant of God, and he in turn when he came was mindful of her. How could he have been otherwise? He commanded his servant, Gehazi, to "call this Shunammite." And when she stood before him, she was asked what was to be done for her. Should she be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host. She replied, "I dwell among mine own people." She was of that peculiar people referred to as a chosen generation. It was she who had been sent for to comfort king David in his old age, hence Gehazi answered his master, "Verily she hath no child, and her husband is old." According to nature, she could not even hope for a son by her husband, but the prophet

said unto her, At this season, when the time cometh round, thou shalt embrace a son. It was even as the man of God told her, but when the child was grown he was taken sick and died. How distressing! Again she desired to be comforted of God by his servant, and she besought her husband to send with her one of the servants that she might go to the man of God. Her husband said to her, "Wherefore wilt thou go to him to day? it is neither new moon nor sabbath." She said, "It is well." What wonderful faith. Of a truth, she was a spiritual worshipper; not a legal one. She had no confidence in new moons nor holy days, but believed that God was a present help in trouble. She could not wait for the time set by men; her's was an urgent case, and she made haste to go, saying to her servant, "Drive, and go forward; slack not thy riding for me, except I bid thee. So she went, and came unto the man of God to Carmel." The man of God beheld her afar off. There was no mistaking who she was. He said to Gehazi, his servant, "Behold, yonder is that Shunammite; run now, I pray thee, to meet her; and say unto her, Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with thy child? He knew she was a woman of sorrows and acquainted with grief; therefore, he commanded his servant to "run," or make haste, to help her, and that right early. Even to be inquired of by the man of God was comforting to her. "Behold, yonder is that Shunammite." What did he see in the Shunammite? He saw as it were the company of two armies; he saw the flesh and the Spirit waging their warfare; yea, he saw the struggle of faith in one who was torn apart and helpless. What a great mercy that the God of all grace should call, qualify and send his servants to feed the flock which he hath purchased with his own blood, and that they should be sent into the byways and hedges to hunt and fish them and then speak comfortably unto them. We hope we have some knowledge of what is meant by hunting and fishing the elect of God, and how wonderfully good it is to find even one. It is worth going to the very ends of the earth.

The Shunammite was spoken of in the outset as being a "great woman." She represents none other than the gospel bride, the Lamb's wife. Her first husband was old, typifying the law, and her only son, or all that she possessed under the law, was dead; therefore she could answer the question of faith, "Is It Well?"—notwithstanding her great grief—by the same faith and she could and did truthfully say, "It Is Well." As we consider this case our mind appears to enlarge itself and go out to the untold millions of God's people, each one having his or her own particular burden to bear, and yet in the realization of the fact that Christ Jesus came into the world to suffer, bleed and die in their stead, they can repeat, "It Is Well."

What an infinite variety of problems there are confronting the people of God. No doubt, many are deeply concerned to-day, and rightly so, over the condition to the churches throughout the country. In some instances things are creeping in which ought not to be allowed to disturb the peace of Zion. Differences of opinions over points of doctrine are doubtless being agitated and magnified to the detriment of the cause. On the other hand, there is a sad lack of forbearance among good brethren. There should be a provoking of one another unto love. There are also many difficult situations con-

stantly arising in all walks of life which bewilder and bring the people to their wit's end. Some may be without employment and with a scant provision for the necessities of life, possibly at poverty's door; and those who are employed or in business know of the dangers which lurk about them. The housewife and those in the home are by no means exempt from the anxieties and cares of what is going on, and sometimes they may even be bearing the very brunt of the burden. Not all of the Lord's people are blest with believing or sympathetic companions or friends, and some may even be unbearably hostile. There may be parents whose hearts are breaking on account of wayward children. Others may have bodily afflictions from which there is little hope of recovery. The cold and seemingly cruel hand of death has doubtless stalked into the home of some and taken their dearest earthly prop from beneath them. Old age may have brought you, dear reader, to the place where "father time" stands with his sharpened sythe, ready to reap you into the harvest, but regardless of all these, and more, if we can but have faith to believe that God is still in his holy temple and that the Judge of the whole earth can do no wrong, we shall still be able to say, It is well. This is only saying, in effect, what Jesus said in the garden of Gethsemane: Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done. David was enabled to say, Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies. It matters not, then, what the circumstances of our own individual case may be, if God be for us, who can be against us? and, therefore, It is well.

"It shall be well, let Zion know,
With those who love the Lord;
His saints have always found it so
When resting on his word.

Peace, then, ye chastened sons of God,
Why let your sorrows swell?
Wisdom directs our Father's rod—
His word says, it is well.

Though you may trials sharp endure,
From sin, or death, or hell;
Your heavenly Father's love is sure,
And, therefore, it is well.

Soon will your sorrows all be o'er,
And you shall sweetly tell,
On heaven's calm and pleasant shore,
That all at last is well."

Elder R. Lester Dodson

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FOR DECEMBER 1986

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Eld. John C. Townley, AR.....2.00
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OBITUARIES

ARTHUR OSCAR PICKRAL

Brother Arthur O. Pickral was born July 23rd, 1918. He was the son of the late David Wade Pickral and Hester McClannahan Pickral. He passed from this life October 19, 1986. His gentle manner and humble character made him dear to his Brethren and friends.

Brother Arthur was a very faithful member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, Gretna, Virginia. He was received by experience and baptism, September 14, 1952. Brother Arthur wasn't ashamed of his love for his God, nor his love for his Brethren.

He is survived by his wife, Belle Rowland; four daughters: Elaine Gibson, Gretna; Vivian Dawson, Hurt; Brenda Rowland of Long Island, Virginia and Donna Clemmons of Los Vegas, Nevada. One brother; R. Turner Pickral, Danville, Virginia; four sisters; Mrs. Ida Hamlette, Mrs. Ola Crawley, Mrs. Laura McMinnis and Mrs. Minnie Hedrick all of Gretna, Virginia. Eight grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church by his beloved pastor; Elder O.K. Tench and Elder Denver Simpson. His burial was in the Gretna Burial Park.

May we be given to feel our loss is his eternal gain.

Written in love and hope,
by Sister Carol R. Pickral

Elder O.K. Tench, Moderator
Oscar D. Pickral, Clerk

SISTER FRANCES MITCHELL

We again must bow in humble submission to God's will in removing from our midst Sister Frances Mitchell. I had a special admiration for this gracious lady since she taught me in the third grade, and long before either of us were members of Malmaison Church. Appropriately sung at her funeral were Amazing Grace and Father We Will Rest in Thy Love. When God has blessed one to know his amazing grace and knows His grace will be sufficient for them in life and death, it is truly a blessing. I believe Sister Mitchell had experienced this and is now indeed resting in God's love. She united with Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church June 7, 1964. She departed this life Oct. 13, 1986.

Left to mourn their loss are three children, Celia M. Branch, Charlottesville, Arthur L. Mitchell, Jr., Richmond and Clinners P. Mitchell, Pleasant Lake, Mich. One sister Ludie Hindley, Danville, eight grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted at Wrenn Yeatts Chapel by Elders O.K. Tench and Julian Williams. Interment was in the Boaze family cemetery.

May we be given thankful hearts that we could commune and fellowship together in this life and trust the grand promise "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" shall be ours forever.

Submitted by one who loved her
I hope for Christ sake,
Peggy Wells

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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HYMN

I LOVE to steal awhile away
From every cumbering care,
And spend the hours of setting day
In humble, grateful prayer.

I love in solitude to shed
The penitential tear,
And all his promises to plead
Where none but God can hear.

I love to think on mercies past,
And future good implore,
And all my cares and sorrows cast
On him whom I adore.

I love by faith to take a view
Of brighter scenes in heaven;
The prospect doth my strength renew,
While here by tempest driven.

Thus, when life's toilsome day is o'er,
May its departing ray
Be calm as this impressive hour,
And lead to endless day.

Mrs. Brown

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EDITORIAL

If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

Faith in God has been the basic characteristic that is manifested in the lives of the elect of God in all ages of time. It is evidenced in the writings and experiences of the prophets of old who lived in the law dispensation and is the primary factor as recorded in the lives and actions of those who left a trail of their travels, thoughts and deeds in the early days of the gospel dispensation. Faith is the outward manifestation of the inward presence of the spirit of God in the heart of the believer in their walk, talk and manner in all of their dealings with their fellow man and especially amongst their brethren. It is a force that is stronger than the man in whom it dwells and it leads and directs him in ways and deeds that he couldn't and wouldn't do of himself. It is evident in all phases of his life and gives him convictions and understanding of God and heavenly things that he cannot explain to anyone except those who have come by the same pathway and they are all unanimous in saying that it is only by the mercy and grace of their creator. The only reason that they can give for this change and these new experiences is that it is the will of God. The above scripture states as simply, directly and to the point as only wisdom can the results produced by these sincere convictions and motivation of the three Hebrew children when they are put to the test on this occasion. They did not hesitate to answer the king in this matter even though it was something affecting their very lives and well being. They were stating the simple truth of their convictions and the scripture does not indicate that they had to consult one another for them to reach their decision. They said, "we are not careful to answer thee in this matter" which seems to indicate that they realized from whence the wisdom and courage of their answer came, as Jesus told his disciples on one occasion, "when they shall deliver you up before kings for a testimony, take no thought what ye shall say for it is not

you that speaketh but it shall be given you in the same hour what ye shall say." As the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and love and of a sound mind." It is the same spirit, power and sound mind that leads his children in this life and causes them, at the time appointed of the Father, to rise up and perform feats beyond the limits of the strength of the man or to stand in the face of dangers that they would not do of themselves and could not and would not do at any other time. "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven" and when the season and the purpose are present the faith is given.

The scriptures are filled with such feats which those who were so inspired have done and the writers never leave any room for questions as to where the strength and purpose came from to accomplish them. In the first chapter of Daniel, 17vs. it is written, speaking of Daniel and the three Hebrew children, "As for these four children God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams." This manifests the truth of the fact that these were prepared, of God, for a work that was to be done and therefore there was no possibility that it should fail to be performed to the glory of God. In the preparation was the ability, or power, to stand and declare the resolution that they had made with the full realization that, as far as they knew, it could result in their death, but, even this prospect did not cause them to waiver in their solemn stand on this issue. They realized that even though they die it was better than that they worship any other god than Jehovah who created the world and everything that is therein. They could not serve any of the gods of this world because they knew full well the foolishness and the vanity that is involved there because they are nothing. They cannot walk, talk or act in anyway and actually are only the extension of the pride and vanity of man and exist only in his mind. They are subject to man and have no power other than that ascribed to them of their worshipers.

It seems that the makers of these gods would realize this lack of any wisdom or power of their own, yet, down through the ages, since the beginning of time millions of people have served them and are still doing so today. Man today will laugh at the foolishness of men in prior ages as they worshipped beasts, idols, sun, moon, etc. and yet they are just as foolish as their forefathers. The world is proclaiming long and loud, in every media available to them, that the creature ,must first originate the act of worship toward God, then, and only then, can God respond and bless them with his mercy and love. Of course, they maintain the idea that God loves all men alike and when one accepts him as their personal savior that he is then duty bound to respond and save them from their sins. They believe that he then assumes all their problems and blesses them continually as long as they obey him and walk according to his commandments. To my way of understanding this system does not include the grace of God toward the sinner but rather the grace of the sinner toward God in letting him come into their life. To me this is the same idol worship

that has been occupying the mind of man since time began. The Apostle Paul once wrote to Timothy, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." Surely the doctrines as preached in most churches today are fulfilling this prophecy of Paul, since it bears no resemblance to the truth that is taught in the scriptures. In many services the only time the truth is present is in the reading of the text and then only if from a version of the scriptures that presents the truth as contained in the original manuscripts and scrolls. Their doctrine is of the flesh and is intended to appeal to the natural mind and senses. It is designed to encompass land and sea to make proselytes and when they do, they glory in their own works and efforts and render no praise unto God.

The faith set forth in the above declaration of the three Hebrew children is the heartfelt convictions of their heart and renders all honor and praise unto God. Their faith is that God whom they serve is able to deliver them from this or any other peril or affliction if it is his will to do so, but, if not they will still praise him by their death for his mercy and grace toward them. Their death would have been a very dramatic demonstration of this work of grace in their heart and their faith in the sovereign majesty of God and the power and wisdom of the spirit that was dwelling within their heart. This faith would fellowship Job who when he had lost all his possessions and children yet praised God and said, "What, shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil." This was said by Job in the midst of his trouble and manifested the deep seated faith in Job in the same way that the three Hebrew children's stand when facing the probability of immediate death was evidence of the depth of the same faith in their God, and their trusting his will better than their own opinion of their need and personal desire. These examples are faith in its most beautiful and inspiring light to those who are running a race that has been set before them and they do not know what all it will include. They fear that they may be called upon to stand on a certain issue and are fearful that they will not be able. Their prayer is that if required they will stand and respond as these did and knowing that of themselves they cannot. They stand in awe of the courage and stamina displayed by these saints of God and wonder if they could bear it. Yes, if called upon, and blessed with the abilities that these were in their time of trial. These could not have stood and made these precious declarations of their faith if they had not been inspired by the Holy Ghost according to the divine will and purpose of God who works all things according to his own will. His children can do all things through Christ which strengthens them, and this is the strength that shall never fail then or now.

Now, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. This is the motivating force in all the saints of God who have been blessed to leave on record experiences in which they were able to do things beyond the realm of fleshly wisdom and power. The hope of things not seen with the natural eye,

the evidence of which is planted in the very depths of their soul is more sure and certain to them than things that they can see and feel and yet they cannot prove their existence to their fellow man. This is the experience of Abraham who left his home and kindred and dwelt in a strange land and I am sure his friends thought this very foolish and yet because of this all future generations are blessed. Noah was thought by his peers to be crazy when he built an Ark for no apparent reason and yet he saved all of his family and provided for the future posterity of the world. Jacob used methods which to worldly standards were very unethical to secure the blessing of Isaac and yet this fulfilled the purpose of God as revealed to his mother before he was born. In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews the Apostle Paul relates how the heirs of promise have responded to this faith that hath been given them and then says that time would fail him to tell of all who down through the ages of time have subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions and experienced all manner of deliverances from death and even suffered death and all types of afflictions through faith. If this has been the way of the redeemed since the beginning of time, and God changes not, then does that not mean that this is the way of salvation today. Faith is the gift of God, to a specific people, for a specific purpose and it shall not fail because of the weakness of the flesh. If it did, none of the above deed would have been done because all flesh is, was and shall ever be as grass and the goodliness of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withereth, and the flower falleth away. It is the faith that is planted in the heart of man by the spirit that enables him to stand to fulfill that specific purpose for which it is given.

This precious faith which lives in the heart and soul of man who has been quickened is stronger than the one in whom it dwells and the bonds between them and others of like calling is stronger than any of the other ties and obligations of nature and will last longer than the world itself. It is ever new in the hearts of the elect and produces praise and adoration to the giver everytime that it is made manifest in their journey through this low ground of sin. It is just as inspiring and uplifting to the heart everytime they are blessed to remember these seasons in their own lives or to see it beginning to be manifested in the lives of another as they are brought into the fold. They rejoice and praise God and say as David did, "O' Give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever." They are made to realize, and especially after long seasons of famine in their experience, that God is still on his throne and working all things after the counsel of his own will. They tend to forget this when left to themselves seemingly in a natural world, alien to the desires and hopes of their heart, and everything around them seems to ignore the things that are so precious to their soul, they wonder if they are possibly mistaken in their hope.

This has been the cry down through the ages, that they are alone, and the whole world is against them. Faith is not something that is proud and confident that it is right regardless of what others may say and do, but rather, a meek and lowly spirit that keeps

those that possess it in the way of righteousness in spite of their doubts and fears. Even as the kine that went lowing, looking neither to the right or the left, though their calves were tied in the barn they left all behind and proceeded to return the Ark to the land of Israel by the direction of the Lord. His saints are just as obedient to his will, whether they realize it or not, as the kine were. There is no glory or triumph for them in this life, they are but doing that which is their duty to do by inspiration, but the glory and triumph will be theirs when they reach that city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God. Then they will know even as they are known and they will be made to see and realize the triumph, and from whence it came, even as they can now read the experience of the three Hebrew children and see the glory and triumph in their experience.

For by grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. This says it all, the individual is completely passive in the experience of faith as far as originating or controlling it. They are not passive regarding the results of it. They are anything but passive, "As an eagle stirreth up her nest" they are stirred up and their whole life is changed. They want to help but they don't know how, and couldn't anyway, but they are very active as far as emotions, desires and seeking after more evidence that this is indeed a work of grace. They read, talk, go anywhere that the subject of salvation by grace is discussed, and spend most of their time and energy following after the footsteps of the flock just yearning for assurance that they are in the way that leads to life eternal. They will never receive the full assurance that they desire in this life but they are given an earnest expectation and this is the faith that will lead and direct them throughout their life and will keep them meek and humble among their brethren and this causes them to see their need of the fellowship and prayers of those who know, by experience lonely seasons when they feel forsaken by friends, family and especially when, at times, they wonder if they have been forsaken by their God. Through these experiences they change their lifestyles, their hopes and desires, and their brethren will see a change in their countenance and observe the new creature in Christ, and yet, their fear is that they do not have sufficient evidence to warrant a public confession of their faith or to speak to the church of their new found hope. Oh, that they could realize the extent of the great change that has occurred and know that this is the greatest evidence that they will have, in this life, that they are indeed children of the heavenly King.

This is the way of salvation, the highway where only the redeemed of the Lord are found, and it is a one-way throughfare. There are no exits, there are no accidents and the only destination is the City of New Jerusalem prepared of God for the habitation of the saints. The entire journey is by faith, the director of the journey is God, the certain assurance of a safe journey is the work of Christ, and the ones for whom all is done fearfully say, Lord is it I, and so say they all.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

Please help us by sending us a picture of your Church with a brief history, location, date and time of your meetings and the name of present pastor.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Members, Friends
and Brothers & Sisters:

Will try & write a few words on "Love" I don't feel like I am worthy to be loved or to be in the church for that matter. I'll be 77 years old this year and my husband will be 80 this year. We have been married 55 years and I know the Lord has wonderfully blessed us both with very good health and to raise four wonderful children. They are so good to us, help us every way they can and the four inlaws and grandchildren are the same way. I know the Lord has blessed them to love us and for us to love them. I certainly believe the Lord meant for all of his children to Love each other. Brother Spangler, Sister Spangler and Brother & Sister Barker visited us the summer before Brother Spangler passed away, he was sitting in our front yard and he looked at me and said Sister Smith I awoke the other night and I didn't have a ought against a sole in this world. I said Brother Spangler thats good and he started crying. I believe he meant it from the bottom of his heart. I believe it was his hearts desire for all of us church members to love each other. He said he wanted so much to see my husband Robert Smith join the church before he passed away. Robert said the last Sunday that Brother Spangler was at Dan River that he hoped to join the church next 4th Sunday, but Brother Spangler wasn't able to be there. I believe he felt in his heart that Robert would join later, which he did. I just don't see how the Brothers & Sisters could help but love each other, my mother and daddy were members at Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church. My mother used to say that she didn't hate no one, but she didn't like some peoples ways. Brother Standfield was her pastor and baptized my mother and daddy. When someone would say something about someone, Brother Standfield would say lets bear with the weak, when you have serious operations as I have had. The Lords voice speaks to you clear and loud and says fear not I am with you always even unto the end of the Earth. You will be made to love the Lord and all of his children everywhere. I don't love sin I hate it, but that doesn't mean I don't sin everyday I live. So I hope and pray that love and peace will be among us all the days of our life. I think he has well blessed us at Reidsville Church with a wonderful pastor Elder Paul Lamb and wife. We all love the other churches and hope to go and feel welcome. Sister Spangler is a lovely mother in Israel. May the Lord continue to bless us all in my prayers, for Christ sake. We love you all, thank the Lord for everything.

Love Sister Rena
and Robert Smith

Dear Elder Key,

I have a desire to write you about the good meeting we had at Long Branch over the past weekend. Long Branch was the only place that had a meeting because of the deep snow. Brother Amos Hash, my pastor, scraped the snow from the building, he also scraped it from Brother Parson's place. Lunch is prepared most every meeting and singing in the afternoon at Brother Parsons. Both places were heavenly places to be because I felt the Lord was there. Our visiting elders were Brothers Hale Terry, Larry Hollandsworth, Denver Simpson and Lane Carter. They, with Brother Amos, were wonderfully blessed to preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified being the way, the life and the truth. Before I offered to the church I was shown Long Branch being my home church and Uncle Goode being my pastor and he baptized me. My mother and grandmother were members there. I was shown Brother Amos would follow Uncle Goode in the stand to preach, but I didn't tell him until after he was ordained. A while back I heard these words spoken to me "Oh Sinner Free" when Christ makes us free. We are free indeed. I could write on and on but don't want to be too lengthy.

Your little sister in
Christ Jesus I hope,
Hattie Radford

Dear Elder and Sister Key,

I have tried to write an article pertaining to my experience. If it is found suitable, for publication in the Signs, you have my permission to do so. As you can very well see, I am not good at writing, but if there's anything, I may write, which will be comfort to any reader, I am willing to try. I have written several articles, but when I would read them, I would feel that the only place for this is the trash can. I was told by one of the associate editors to let you people decide where to put it.

We, the people of the Five Mile Creek Association, are looking forward to having you and Sister Key and others from your county to be with us during our three day union meeting. Please publish this meeting in the Signs. (See meeting notice in this issue.) Editors.

We will be looking for you lovely people on Thursday afternoon before the meeting.

A Brother and Sister
in Christ, we hope,
Bernard and Elsie

In the year of 1976, everything in my life began to change. I was in a state of deep depression and confusion. By a power beyond any control of man, I was drowning. The world seemed to have swallowed me, and I saw myself in the pit of hell. The things I once loved I now hated, there was no peace that I could find, and the things I once hated I now loved. I was in a condition where there was not anyone or anything to turn to. The world was spinning, and of all things there is, there was not anything secure. The things I saw in a dream during my sleep, is beyond words given to me to explain. If I could, I certainly would do so, for I feel, that

any person, given to see the things I saw, and to hear a voice say; "This is where you dwell, and there's no way out", that person would do as I did, and often do now. He would go down begging to the supreme power, the God of Heaven and of Earth. The experience I suffered can never be explained to another, by man, to where a person understands or believes. I certainly hope and pray to God, that there is an upper and better place prepared, for me. I know there is a Heaven and immortal glory for the children of God, chosen in Christ from the foundation of the world. The question is, am I one of those? Has God brought me to look toward thy Holy Temple and to look not to anything other for divine guidance? I cried by reason of my afflictions unto the Lord, and I pray His help and comfort remain with me. I hope, I was Baptized, by the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, with the Holy Ghost and with fire in March 1977.

I do not know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that the experience I suffered was the suffering of a new birth of the Spirit. I do not know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that I am a born again child of God. If I am, then it is for sure Heaven and Immortal Glory is my home.

I feel that it is good for me that the shadow remain with me. It is not good to me, but it is good for me. I feel that the shadow is a thorn in me to keep me buffeted. I hope that it is put there by the hand of God. It's a thorn which brings so much suffering within, and brings me to doubt. I sought the Lord then, and I seek Him now, to remove the thorn, but within there's a voice saying, "My Grace Is Sufficient For You". I sought God for help, I read the Bible concerning Christ and His Kingdom, and the great miracles He performed when on this earth. The burden seemed to become heavier and more severe, until finally it became so great, I could no longer refrain from the communion with those whom God had before brought to look toward thy Holy Temple. In October 1977, my wife and I were planning to attend church service, and she said to me; "I am going to join the church at Dorsey's Creek today". You can do anything you want. This must have been the straw that broke the camel's back. I knew then I was compelled to do the same, to look toward the Holy Temple of God. My wife and I asked for a home at Dorsey's Creek, Church of Christ, Primitive faith and order. My dad, Elder H.C. Moon performed the water baptism sacrament. I hope we were baptized with water unto repentance, that Sunday afternoon. If I have ever been brought to look toward the Holy Temple of God, it was when I was put under the water. I do not know if something was left in the water or if something came out of the water with me. I do know, the first time in a year, I felt content and reconciled even though the shadow of doubt remained with me.

This caused me to search the scriptures, not knowing that when a child is baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire, is when the teaching of God begins. As I would search the scriptures, the burden returned and seemed to be more severe than before. I felt that I was losing my mind, and feared that God had cast me out of his divine guidance. Yet, I believe I looked again toward the Holy Temple. There was no other place to turn or to look for help, for if God be for me, who

can be against me? Along with the burden, there was the voice inwardly saying; "I will show you what great things you must suffer for my name sake". This would bring to my mind all the years I lived in darkness, and all the terrible things I have done, dwelling in the pits of hell and enjoying it for several years. Now that the suffering had begun, and a lot of things considered, I feel that I can say from the heart, by experience, "just and right is He". Now, you must go forth proclaiming the hope and resurrection of the dead. I believe that the Spirit gave me to know, what a dreadful, and fearful place this is. I knew then, I was all alone, and there was no man that could help me. All help must be given by the Grace of God in His divine leadership.

The first thing that came to my mind was and is; I cannot perform in the ministry of God, I am in no way prepared to do so, and this is completely out of the question. I am in worse shape that the people whom I am to preach to. I don't know anything. I don't know what to say or what to do. I do not have any experience as a public speaker, but yet, I am compelled to go in the presence of the children of God, proclaiming the riches of God's free grace. So as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel, for I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation, to everyone that believeth. I know, if God does not show me what great things I must suffer for his name sake, that I cannot preach the gospel, for Christ said, in his own words, Matthew 7:14 "Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." There are many times, I feel, if I could quit, I would do so, but I don't know how to quit anymore than I know anything about going on. I do not have a choice about any of this, and it is for sure that I do not stand a chance. The Gospel and the salvation of God's people, is not by choice or chance, but by the grace of God. Yet, I believe, I looked again toward the Holy Temple of God.

By the sovereign grace of God, those whom God has brought to look toward the Holy Temple, He brings them, by afflictions, to look time and time again, toward the Holy Temple, for there is the source of the teaching of God and peace in Christ.

The Spirit keeps me in hope, that someday, Christ will remove the shadow, then I will know if I be on his right or left. If I am on his right, then I will know I am born of the Spirit, for that which born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, so that I may be carried into the Holy Temple of God, then shall the lord be my God and I will know beyond a shadow of a doubt that I am one of His, of which He shed his blood for.

Psalms 23:4 "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me." I hope the rod of correction and the staff of support, is with me in the valley of shadows, that in Christ, I am brought to look again toward the Holy Temple, for Christ is the rock and all of His ways are judgement. Christ, the savior of His people, is the only thing secure, while sin and death stands sure. The praises are to the Honor and Glory of God of Heaven and Earth. Sin and death are not secure, but was

abolished in the flesh of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the shedding of His blood, Burial and Resurrection, for His people.

Be it unto me, not according to my will, but according to thy will. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven.

A brother in Christ,
I hope.
Bernard Moon

MEETINGS

SOUTH OUACHITA UNION

The Union meeting of the South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association is scheduled to be held with Rehobeth Church near El Dorado, Ark. on the second Sunday and Saturday before in April, 1987. According to our minutes, the meeting is to be held in May. We sincerely regret the error, and hope that it has caused no one any inconvenience. All lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ are invited to come worship with us.

Anyone needing more information may call me or write.

C.C. Wilbanks
217 Bastrop Dr.
Monroe, La. 71203
Dial (318) 343-5473

FIVE MILE CREEK

The Five Mile Creek Union Meeting will convene, God willing, with Shady Grove Church in Cullman Co., Alabama. April 3, 4, and 5, 1987.

H.C. Moon - Moderator

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH

Shepherd Fold Primitive Baptist Church will have a meeting on the 5th Sunday in March. The church is located at 815 Little York Road, Houston Texas. We welcome all who have a desire to visit with us at that time.

Elder C.M. Haygood

ST. JOHN, 3:34

For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4/87
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

ARTICLES

2 JOHN 10.

"If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed."

What is this doctrine without which one cannot be received into the houses of the church and without one cannot be bade God-speed? Doctrine is here declared by the inspired apostle to be the essential thing, the real test of one's being a true follower of Jesus. Without this

doctrine, one lacks the necessary qualification for the fellowship of the saints. Since, then, this doctrine is so important, let us inquire what it is. In doing this, we shall not do better than to consider other expressions in this second epistle of John. For instance, in the seventh verse: "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist." Here it is plainly stated that not to confess the coming of Christ stamps one as being a deceiver; that is, not to confess Christ's coming in the flesh. The Scriptures plainly teach that Jesus Christ, the eternal son of God, was born of a woman, that he took not on him angelic nature, but the seed of Abraham. Now, the seed of Abraham comprises the elect family of God, chosen before the world began. This chosen seed was not elect angels, but elect human beings. So Christ was made a little lower than the angels, and came in the flesh for the suffering of death. To deny this coming in the flesh, to deny that Christ was as truly man as he was truly God, is antichrist and a deceiver and such is not to be countenanced by the house of God. However, it is not enough that we confess the coming of Christ as a historical fact. That, anyone could do, just as easily as he could say that George Washington or some other man lived years ago. There must be a confession that Jesus Christ has come in one's own flesh, that he has come in the individual experience of the believer himself. In other words, a living experience of Christ is the real test of genuineness. This doctrine or teaching of Jesus, more than any other one thing, was the test of discipleship when Jesus was here in the world as a man among men, and this teaching of his caused many who had been following him to withdraw from him. For proof of this, turn to the sixth chapter of John and read the wonderful discourse on the bread of life, from the thirty-second to the fifty-eighth verses. In these words Jesus taught that himself is the bread of life and that the eating of his flesh and the drinking of his blood are an essential test of whether one has eternal life, that "except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." In the sixty-sixth verse, we are told, "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." Jesus was not here referring to the gospel ordinance of the Lord's supper, but was plainly stating that unless one is brought into a living fellowship with Jesus in his sufferings on account of sin and into a living knowledge of the cleansing power of his blood, there can be no such thing as one's possessing eternal life. Life is knowledge, and there is always a certain amount of knowledge accompanying a certain amount of life. Eternal life is always accompanied with a certain quality of knowledge. Wherever eternal life dwells, there cannot help but also dwell the knowledge that one is a sinner and that his condemnation on account of sin is just. But spiritual knowledge does not stop there. It teaches that human nature is altogether unprofitable in the way of righteousness, that it is wholly incapable of any good thing in the sight of God. In a living way, and not our of books nor by tradition, the sinner continues to be instructed by the Spirit of the great Teacher until he fully realizes

his utterly lost condition and is made to throw himself entirely upon the mercy of God, without one jot of anything to merit that mercy. He becomes a beggar, but being really a beggar in heart and not merely by word of mouth, he is not turned empty away from Mercy's door. Christ Jesus appears for his relief and reveals himself to and within this beggar's soul as the Savior, the only name under heaven among men whereby that beggar must be saved. By the grace of God now appearing through Jesus to this beggar, the beggar is lifted from the dunghill of total depravity and is set among princes, is manifested as the son of the King; that is, as a child of God. From now on the believer finds his struggle but begun. The burden of condemnation lifted from him and his heart singing for joy because of the new hope springing within him, he finds himself in the company of all the people of God from Abel to the present time; but finds himself, like them, engaged in a warfare, one from which at times he would fain be free, but which cannot end until natural life ends: the warfare of flesh against Spirit and Spirit against flesh. He finds a dying daily going on within him, a continual being delivered unto death, a ceaseless rendering of his body a living sacrifice. In some such way as this there is a continual confession in heart and life that Christ Jesus has come in the flesh. It need not be that one is all the time confessing this by word of mouth, but the confession nevertheless will show itself in the outward life, in the actions of the individual; it will manifest itself in the conduct of the one having this living experience, shining out through the hands and the feet, bringing forth the fruits appropriate to repentance. Without this manifestation of Christ in the flesh one is a deceiver and an antichrist and cannot be in the fellowship of the house of God. When Christ came in the flesh it was not in order to reinstate or to reinforce the covenant of Moses. That covenant could never bring in salvation to the children of God, but Jesus came to make an end of the old effectual covenant and to establish a new and successful covenant. The new covenant became a vital reality to the children of God through the death and resurrection of Christ. This new covenant was promised to be put in the new heart of the child of God and to be imprinted in his mind. In other words, the new covenant or new law was not to be something abstract from the child of God, but was to be part and parcel of the new creature in Christ Jesus. It was not to be a covenant conditioned upon the volition of the believer, but was to be enforced in the life of the believer by the "wills" and "shalls" of God. Christ, after his resurrection, said "go" and they went, he said "come" and they came. All gospel obedience is this way, and no other. It is obedience springing from the manifestation of Christ in the life of the believer. He said to his disciples, A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another. This loving one another is not something we can bring about ourselves. Might just as well try to make the sun shine as to try to make one's self love the church of God. It cannot be done by one's own effort. But how easily one loves the brethren when this commandment is written in the heart by the finger of the Holy Spirit. This love is Christ manifest in the flesh. God is love, and love is God, and whosoever loveth is born

of God. If we love God we love those who are begotten of God. If we love not our brother whom we have seen, it is vain to say we love God whom we have not seen. Not having this love, we are deceivers and an antichrist. No wonder, then, Paul says in the thirteenth chapter of 1 st Corinthians that charity (love) is the one thing without which we are unprofitable to the house of God. Having not love, no matter what else we have or think we have, we are nothing. We might be able to speak ever so angelicly, might be able to dive down into the deep mysteries of God, might be able to expound all prophecies, make great sacrifices or expend ourselves and our substance bountifully, but if it be not prompted by love, have not love in it, what does it all amount to? Nothing. It seems to us that this is the doctrine without which John said a man was not to be received into the house or church. In order to gain admittance there, one must have a vital knowledge of the coming of Jesus in the flesh, and the essence of this living experience is love. Having not this love, one is classed a deceiver. In another place the inspired writer tells us to mark them that cause divisions, and have nothing to do with them. One who would divide asunder brethren in order to establish his own cause has not the love of God, therefore he does not confess that Christ is come in the flesh. From such, turn away. It is like those two women who brought a child to King Solomon, each woman claiming to be the mother of the child, and asking Solomon to decide the matter. Solomon called for a sword, and was about to divide the child when the woman, who was really the child's mother, called out to the king to let the other woman have it. Thus the woman who really and rightfully loved the child was willing to relinquish her right to it rather than see the child killed. True love in the church of God will always seek the good and welfare of the church itself before the personal good and advantage of one's own self. This is the living teaching or doctrine that Christ is come in the flesh, this doctrine gives one an open door into the houses of the saints; without this doctrine or teaching of love in one's own life one fails to possess that secret of God which gives access to the holy of holies. There is no sight on this earth more pleasant than a church of the saints where all love each other, where each esteems the others better than himself, where all are imbued with the desire to spend and be spent for one another, and any individual who would mar that peace to serve himself would most assuredly not have within him that doctrine of the Master, Love one another. Not having this love he could not confess that Christ is come in the flesh, therefore must be a deceiver and an antichrist. From all such may the Lord deliver his people.

Elder Leferts

A FEW THINGS THAT PERTAIN TO THE SHEEP

We ofttimes look back, not rejoicing in our sinful nature, but searching for a little oasis, which is a green spot in a desert land.

I remember when I was baptized in the waters of Haw River, one cold rainy fifth Sunday in November 1949. It was a solemn ordinance with me. If not deceived of myself, I felt a joy in

the Lord, and yet a fear. Fear that I had deceived the brethren, fear that I had not been baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire that cleanse the heart, which is the one baptism.

Ephesians 4-5: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." Baptism of water is a testimony of a clear conscience toward God for salvation is of the Lord.

I have witnessed many divisions among the churches. St. Matthew 18: 7, "Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must need be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offenses cometh!"

I have seen men choose to serve this preacher or that preacher saying he is the lesser evil. How foolish can we poor mortals be.

As weak as I am, I never felt I had a choice. I know the land is full of idol gods. Joshua said: "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

I have had many heartaches and sorrows along life's way, feeling to be accounted as a sheep for the slaughter, and God made a way when it seemed there was no way.

Romans 8:36, "As it is written, for thy sake, we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

Jesus told Peter, "Feed my sheep." I believe the food for the sheep is the manna from heaven that Israel did eat for 40 years in the wilderness.

St. John 10:4, "And when he putteth forth his won sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him for they know his voice."

II Corinthian 6:14, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"

We are told to beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits.

St. Matthew 10:16, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

I believe the sheep of his pasture, as the natural sheep, will bound together in the storms, endeavouring to comfort and protect one another, forebearing one another in love and endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace.

But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse deceiving and being deceived; and because inequity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

The Lord said, I will sift the house of Israel among all nations as corn is sifted in a sieve, and I believe that the powerful wind of God's spirit will blow away the chaff.

II Thessalonians 2:3, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition."

II Timothy 3:16, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

Evil doers cannot sow discord among the brethren and lay the charge to God's elect.

Galatians 6:7, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

"The Lord of hosts hath sworn,

saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."

Ecclesiastes 3:14, "I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him."

Jesus said the scripture cannot be broken. We cannot see God for he is a spirit and a spirit has no flesh and blood, but the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, faith.

The father of Jesus is a spirit and he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.

I hope to witness with John, who said, "I write to you not because you know not the truth, but because you know it." I Thessalonians 4:9, "But as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you, for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another."

It has been a precious blessing to visit the brethren from the mountains to the sea shore, and in other states and find them in peace at home, for which I hope I am thankful.

I have no desire to travel over the country seeking confusion and disorder and cause confusion at home, for love worketh no ill. The sheep will not swallow anything bitter to their taste.

I have experienced the suffering that trouble and confusion can cause. I have seen the precious old brethren offended whose conscience is void of offense toward their brethren and they walk as sheep before the shearers. We hear the bleating as the tears pour from their eyes. Thanks be unto God that they belong to the great Shepherd and not one shall be eternally lost.

If I know my heart, my desire is peace, love, and fellowship at home as well as wherever the sheepfold may be. There is but one fold and one shepherd. If these precious things abound, then all things will be done in decency and in order.

May the Lord keep us that we be not tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine.

Let us therefore follow after the things which made for peace and things wherewith one may edify another.

The sheep are ofttimes scattered into the hills and a hireling will search not for them. He is not the shepherd. A hireling looketh for the reward of his work.

Hebrews 13:20-21, "Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever."

God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform.

Clifton Robertson
Route 1
Reidsville, NC

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

ACTS II. 42.

"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship."

A dear brother, who wishes his name withheld, has asked that we write something for the SIGNS upon the subject embraced in these

words. The special question presented by him was the connection between the doctrine of the apostles and the fellowship of the apostles. While we feel incompetent, yet we feel willing to comply as best we may with this request. We are willing, both because of the regard in which we hold this brother, and because the subject itself seems most important, especially in these times when there is so much unrest and so much tendency in some places to disregard the doctrine of the apostles, and to count it of small concern. It has become a very common thing to hear it said that it does not matter so much what a man believes, so that he lives right. On the contrary, it does matter what a man believes more than anything else, because all a man's living, whether for good or ill, depends entirely upon what he believes. One of the evil signs of the present time is this tendency to believe nothing with any certainty; not only is it true that men do not know what they believe, but they believe nothing. Professions of religion are made, people unite with religious sects, attend upon the public services which are provided, and yet have not the faintest ideas as to what the faith of those with whom they are united may be. This is the general state of affairs everywhere, and more than this, professed ministers of the word encourage this very thing. Instead of insisting upon the doctrine which they claim to be taught in the word, it is ignored as a thing of small consequence; this is not the way of the Bible. The deep doctrines of the depravity of man, of his death in sin, of the redemption which is and can be only through Christ, of the incarnation of the Son of God, of his righteous life in the flesh, of his death in atonement for sin upon Calvary, of the resurrection of his crucified body on the third, the appointed day, the ascension into heaven, and the intercession of the blessed High Priest for his people at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, the new birth, including the quickening of the sinner dead in sins, to divine life, and the communion with God through Christ, and the fellowship of saints with one another, as partakers of all this grace, are the constant and prominent themes of the Bible. Admonitions are there also in abundance, but still the most prominent themes are these named above. Beside all these, that which lies underneath them all, the everlasting, unchangeable love and purpose of God, is always kept in view. It is because these themes are so constantly set forth in the word, and because through the perversity of fallen nature in us there is such indifference to them almost everywhere, that it is needful that all who love the word of God, and reverence the Author of it, should constantly affirm and set forth these things in their ministry. Also, because the admonitions and exhortations of the word can have no force at all unless first of all the doctrine of redemption with all that it involves be written in the heart of him who hears, these principles of the doctrine of the apostles ought to be always kept in view. It is all-important to believe that doctrine which exalts the grace of God, because there can be no right thinking, speaking or living without this. All the difference between doing for our own advantage and glory, and doing for the glory of God, is involved in a right understanding of the doctrine of the apostles. Doing for our

own glory, or doing for the glory of God, marks the difference between him who serves God and him who serves him not.

In the text suggested, two things are set forth, the doctrine and the fellowship of the apostles. First, it must not be forgotten that the fellowship of the apostles was in those days inseparably connected with the doctrine of the apostles. It was not without design that the Holy Ghost, who inspired Luke when he wrote these words, placed the doctrine first. These words come up in our mind in connection with these other words of John: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye may have fellowship with us." And these other words of James: "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable." Fellowship then must be based upon the pure word of truth if it be real Bible fellowship. Of this we desire to say more after a little further consideration of the word fellowship itself.

What is fellowship in the Bible sense of the word? Perhaps it will help us to see first what it is not. It is not such union as may exist between members of political parties, where after all selfishness reigns supreme, though there is perhaps an appearance of oneness of purpose and sentiment. It is not the union of men in some society, secret or otherwise, which yet at the bottom is purely selfish; it is not that kindly good feeling which may exist among neighbors who are mutually neighborly and helpful to each other; it is not the good will which kindly, pleasant-mannered people always will produce wherever they may be among men; it is not a mere love which may spring out of the fact that people are themselves loving and affectionate in feeling and manner; and it is not merely an agreement in sentiment upon even Bible teachings, for we all have known some men who believed in the very doctrine which we believe to be taught in the word, but whose life showed that all the knowledge and belief they had was in the head, and not in the heart; that they had never felt the power of the truth, or their own great need of it, and that it was not precious to them, except as any notion may be precious to any man who may believe in it.

All this is not fellowship. But on the other hand, perhaps it is enough to say that fellowship, Bible fellowship, must be in Christ, and that it is fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, and that it consists among the people of God in a belief and heart-felt experience of the truth. True fellowship means equality, oneness in all that makes up that fellowship. All they who by the inward teaching of the Spirit of truth have come to a personal knowledge of the truth, are in this fellowship. No child of God can have this fellowship for anyone in whom contriteness of heart, and a broken spirit, and humble trust in Christ, do not appear. These things are not taught in the schools of men, but in the experimental school of Christ. He who denies the truth as it is in Jesus, cannot be in fellowship with him who believes the truth; the child of God may pity such a one. As his child, father, brother, sister or mother, he may love him dearly, and desire his welfare; he may even long to see in that one some evidence of the work of the Lord, but he cannot hold that one in fellowship until he can see manifest in him the same work which he has felt in his own heart; and

he who has this work of the Spirit wrought in his heart will know and love the doctrine which is called the doctrine of the apostles. Thus in that early day they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship.

The word doctrine, as used in the Scriptures, sometimes means the teaching of the apostles, or of Christ, and sometimes that which is taught. Perhaps both shades of meaning are in the word wherever it is used. Here evidently the word signifies what the apostles taught, and it is the necessary conclusion that to continue in the apostles' fellowship it was needful that they should continue in their teaching, or rather, the things that they taught. Now in this very chapter we have the substance of that which they taught, and which the children of God gladly believed or received. Perhaps it will be well to give a synopsis of what Peter had been preaching to them. First, that Jesus of Nazareth, a man, had appeared among them, and had been approved of God by signs and wonders and miracles. Second, that by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God he had been taken and slain. Third, that they did it with wicked hands. Fourth, that God had raised him up according to prophecy, which Peter proceeds to quote. Fifth, that now Christ is not only raised up, but sits on the throne of David, and is exalted by the right hand of God, and has received the promise of the Father, and now has shed forth the Holy Ghost, as they did see and hear. This is the substance of the preaching of Peter as recorded in this sermon, but the doctrine of the apostles, or their teaching, is intended to include all that they afterwards proclaimed as to the doctrine or order of the house of God, and all those that believed upon that day continued in all that they taught. These same apostles are still the only judges in Israel, and in the Acts and in the epistles we have their infallible judgment in all that ever will call for judgment in the house of God.

Now let us call to mind how important it is that we to-day continue in the doctrine of the apostles; if indeed we wish to continue in their fellowship. Let us also remember that the beloved John said that their fellowship was with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. If then we find ourselves believing the doctrine of the apostles, we are in fellowship with all who also believe, and with the Father and the Son. On the other hand, if we are not in fellowship with the doctrine of the apostles, neither are we in fellowship with them, nor with the Father, nor with the Son. If the holy Spirit dwells within us it will surely teach us the truth, for it is called the Spirit of truth. It never takes of the things of men and shows them to us, but always of the things of Jesus; this is according to the words of the Master himself. If then any thought of our hearts is to the exaltation of anyone or anything save Christ in all our salvation, it is not the revelation of the Holy Ghost ;he always testifies of Jesus. The fellowship is in the doctrine, first of all; this should never be forgotten. May not some of us at times mistake a feeling of good will, of sympathy, of pity, or of admiration for some man, for this fellowship? Because of this danger we are told not to have men's persons in admiration. One may be lovable, kindly, full of feeling, and seem at times to be deeply moved with feeling, and our hearts may go out to them with similar warmth, but all this is not in itself true fellowship. One may possess all

these things in large measure, but if he denies the doctrine of Christ he cannot be in the apostles' fellowship. He that is weak in the faith indeed must be received, but not to doubtful disputation. If he denies the doctrine and fights against it he must not be received. Very many of the Lord's dear children have not been led deeply into the principles of the doctrine of Christ, but if any have had heart-felt knowledge of themselves they will not deny the grace of God, but will be found ascribing all their salvation to him.

What will arouse and excite this fellowship? We answer, the doctrine of the apostles. Why will this produce fellowship? Because the doctrine is the experience of the apostles, recorded by them, and it will meet all similar experience in all the children of God. This John taught when he said, We declare to you the things which we have seen and heard, that ye may have fellowship with us. Thus it was upon this day of Pentecost: "They that gladly received his word were baptized." Thus it was with the eunuch when Philip had preached Christ to him; thus it was with Lydia when the Lord had opened her heart so that she attended to the things spoken by Paul; thus it has been in all ages of the gospel day. It is the doctrine that binds together, and it binds together because it is the doctrine of Christ the Savior preached to poor sinners who have felt their need of him, and have found him in their need. How many have heard this preaching for the first time, and have said, You have been preaching just what I have felt and seen. One said in our hearing, "If that man is a christian then I am one, and if I am one, then he is." The preacher had been preaching just what that man had felt. His words were words of fellowship. There can be no fellowship outside of the doctrine of Christ. He that denies Christ cannot be in fellowship with him who confesses Christ. He that says, "I thank thee, that I am not as other men," cannot be in fellowship with him who says, "God be merciful to me a sinner." He that counts his blessedness as the result of his own worth, or worthy deeds, cannot be in fellowship with him who says, "By the grace of God I am what I am," and after having labored much says, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." There may be, and there are, often misunderstandings of portions of the word, and brethren may not all see clearly the truth, and there may be differences about some of the principles of the doctrine of Christ, or concerning some of the order of the church, which do not and ought not to lead to withdrawal from each other, but yet just so far as oneness of doctrine is found, just so far is there union and oneness of fellowship one with another, and just so far as it is wanting will there be a weakness of fellowship. To abide in this fellowship then it is needful that the doctrine of Christ be held forth in simplicity and experimentally. In no other way can fellowship abound, than by confession of the truth. He that preaches Christ as all and in all in a poor sinner's salvaton, will at once be in the fellowship of all who love the Lord and confess him as their Savior. If some poor sinner comes to the assemblies of the church asking a home with them, if his daily life be correct, all that is needed is that he bear witness that he is nothing and that Christ is all in all.

We say this is all that is needed, and this we repeat with emphasis, because in just this confession is the confession of election, predestination, the everlasting love and purpose of God, the atonement of Christ, and justification through that atonement, the effectual call of the Spirit, and the confession in short of the whole doctrine of salvation from first to last, and in this is the fellowship of those who receive this testimony. The doctrine of God our Savior will appeal to all true experience, because it is the narrative and explanation of all true experience. If one tells our travel of mind and heart, we must be drawn to that one, we must be one with that person, and this travel is the doctrine of God our Savior, given to us as our own. So Paul could call the gospel "our gospel," and even "my gospel." It is ours, our very own, when we have come to hear it and know it and live it.

If then we would strive for increase of fellowship and love among the people of God, continue to hold forth the truth, the doctrine of the apostles, there is no other way. It is in vain to urge fellowship, and union, and peace, unless the ground of all true union is presented. If Christ be lifted up, all will be drawn to him; there is no other way. All, we mean, who know him indeed and in truth. To preach Christ is to hold him up, and to preach Christ is to preach all that doctrine which is God-honoring and man-abasing.

Elder F.A. Chick

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 1987

Mrs. Elizabeth T. Adkins, VA....2.00
Mrs. Garlan Vick, NC.....5.00
Reed Harper, TX.....2.00
Mrs. Odell D. Dove, VA.....5.00
Mrs. Virginia Apple, NC.....2.00
Mrs. Del Hendrix, TN.....10.00
Miss Laro Smith, NC.....2.00
Mrs. Betty W. Kunkle, DE.....2.00
Mrs. Frank D. Thornton, VA.....2.00
Mrs. B.J. McLaughlin, TX.....7.00
Mrs. Bruce McKinney, VA.....7.00
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Mrs. Inez Gearner, TX.....2.00
Eld. J.L. Austin, PA.....5.00
Hester Dawson, CA.....4.00
C.G. Jacks, AL.....7.00
Horace E. Walker, VA.....3.00
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Mrs. Nelson N. Nester, VA.....2.00
Mrs. Frank S. Sizemore, WV....2.00
Mrs. Frances S. Smith, VA.....5.00
Mrs. Verta Haning, WV.....10.00
Mrs. Harry Payne, VA.....5.00

OBITUARIES

GEORGE EDGAR FOLEY

With sorrow for our loss but joy for his great gain, we note the passing from this life of a highly esteemed brother in Christ, George Edgar Foley. Brother Foley was born in rural Patrick County, Virginia on July 4, 1912, as son of the late Richard Lee and Sara Hundley Foley. Throughout his life he never lived more than five miles from his birthplace.

On August 20, 1934 he was united in marriage to Miss Annie Hestell Turner, also of Patrick County, by the late Elder Samuel Koger. To their

union were born five children, all of whom survive him. They are as follows: one son, George Herman Foley of the home; and four daughters, Ruby Jane and Martha Rachel Foley of the home, Mrs. John (Ruth Annie) Wingfield and Mrs. L. B. (Dorothy Ellen) Stone of Patrick Springs, Va.

For many years Brother Foley attended Liberty Church, to which he was carried by his mother from childhood. He united with the church by experience in July 1961, and was baptized the first Sunday in August 1961 by Elder W. J. Puckett. He faithfully attended the meetings and was very diligent in his care for the church until failing health confined him at home.

For about the last three years of his life Brother Foley was afflicted with a disease that gradually destroyed his mind. He was lovingly and patiently cared for by each member of his family, who exhibited toward him a ministration of that spirit which enables one to "Honor thy father and thy mother." After a stay in the hospital of some three weeks and three final days at home, Brother Foley died in the Reynolds-Patrick County Hospital at Stuart, Va., on July 9, 1986. His funeral service was conducted at the Moody Funeral Home Chapel by Elder Paul Hopkins, a close friend of the family. He was laid to rest in the Adams Family Cemetery near his home.

In addition to his wife and children Brother Foley was survived by two brothers, Clyde and Roy Foley, both of Stuart, Virginia, and four sisters: Mrs. Clarence (Rosa) Brewer of Graham, N.C., Mrs. Bill (Josie) McCuiston of Greensboro, N.C., Mrs. Herschel (Pearl) Edwards and Mrs Gerald (Ethel) Rakes of Bassett, Virginia.

Brother Foley was blessed by the grace of God to live a quiet and peaceable life but he was known and well respected by many, both in and out of the church. While we miss his presence among us we rest assured that his soul and spirit are peacefully at rest, awaiting that summons that shall one day come for the Throne in glory.

We of Liberty Church resolved to prepare three copies of this memorial: one to be retained for our church records, one to be given to his family and one to be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Liberty Church in conference, the first Saturday in November 1986.

Elder John Wingfield, Moderator
Deacon Paul Puckett, Clerk

CARPER ALEX HARBOUR

We note with deep regret the passage from among us of a dear friend and brother in Christ, Carper Alex Harbour. He was born in rural Patrick County, Virginia on May 14, 1893, one of several children born to James Thomas and Sarah Wood Harbour.

In the year 1913, Brother Harbour was united in marriage to Miss Hattie Mae Eanes. To this union were born two sons and one daughter: Carper Elwood and William Henry Harbour, and Mrs James (Eva) Wagoner. Following the death of his first wife Brother Carper was married to Miss Florence Martin in December 1926. The three children the Lord added to their household were Robert T.

Harbour and Mrs. Floyd (Mary) Flippen and Mrs. Jessie (Sadie) Koger. Sister Florence, who joined the church about a year before Brother Harbour, died in November 1985.

Along the journey of his long and fruitful life Brother Harbour was called out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light of the Lord. He related his hope and experience to Liberty Church in September 1970, was received and baptized by Elder Bennie Clifton. Thereafter, he was a humble, peaceable, and faithful member for the balance of his life.

After the death of Sister Harbour, Brother Carper had little desire to remain in this world. His earthly house of clay declined rapidly until the Lord called him home on June 19, 1986, at the ripe old age of 93. His survivors, in addition to the six children, were nine grandchildren, two great-grandchildren; one brother Druie T. Harbour of Ridgeway, Va., and two half-brothers, Calvin Harbour of Patrick Springs and Wilbur Harbour of Bassett, Va., and two sisters, Mrs. Tony (Bessie) Shively of Bassett, Va. and Mrs. Clyde (Nannie) Warren of Eden, N.C.

Funerel services were conducted at Liberty Church by his pastor, after which Brother Harbour was laid to rest in the church cemetery by the side of his beloved Sister Harbour. There, he peacefully sleeps, waiting that final summons to come from On High.

Be it resolved, therefore, that three copies of this memorial be prepared: one for our church records, one to be given to his family, and one submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Liberty Church in conference, the 1st Saturday in November, 1986.

Elder John Wingfield, Moderator
Deacon Paul Puckett, Clerk

DELLA ODELL MARTIN

At the divinely appointed hour, God removed from this troubled world our precious sister in Christ, Della Odell Martin. Sister Martin was born in Patrick County, Virginia on May 29, 1908 and died at Memorial Hospital of Martinsville on August 28, 1986, making her earthly pilgrimage three months past 78 years. She was a daughter of the late George William and Susan Spencer Odell.

Sister Martin was the wife of Brother Thomas Green Martin, a longtime member of Liberty Church, who died in 1982. Their union was blessed with two daughters: Mrs. Frank (Evelyn) Gard of Bassett, Va., and Mrs. Doris Little, who preceded her parents in death.

Sister Martin united with Liberty Church by experience the first weekend in September 1967, and was baptized by Elder Bennie Clifton. She was blessed by the grace of God to adorn the profession she had made of a hope of life in Christ. She faithfully attended her church meetings until bodily afflictions confined her at home.

When Sister Martin passed away she was survived by one daughter, Mrs. Gard; one brother, George W. Odell, Jr. of High Point, N.C.; three sisters, Mrs Perry (Majie) Stone and Mrs. Joseph (Lucy) CaHill of Bassett, and Mrs. Josephine Nobles of

Orlando, Florida; five grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

A graveside service was conducted by her pastor, Elder John Wingfield, after which her mortal remains were laid to rest in the Liberty Church Cemetery, by the side of Brother Martin. We feel assured that she is peacefully asleep, awaiting the appearing of her Savior in the Morning of the Resurrection.

Be it resolved, therefore, that three copies of this memorial be prepared: one for our church records, one for the family, and one to be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Liberty Church in conference, the first Saturday in November 1986.

Elder John Wingfield, Moderator
Deacon Paul Puckett, Clerk

NANNIE T. NEWMAN

The spirit of our dear sister in the Lord, Nannie T. Newman, has gone from the land of the dying to the land of the living. Sister Newman was born on October 3, 1889, a daughter of the late Peter Frank and Lucy Law Turner, and was reared in Patrick County, Virginia.

Sister Newman was married to the late Mr. Emmett Green (Brud) Newman, also of Patrick County, and to their union were born fifteen children, three of whom died in infancy. Mr. Newman passed away on July 4, 1969. Sister Newman was also preceded in death by four of her sons: Clyde, Frank, Eugene and Calvin Newman.

Sister Newman joined Liberty Church by experience in July, 1919, and was a member for 67 years. Although poor health and lack of conveyance prevented her presence much of the time in recent years, she was faithful to the church and was kind to both her brethren and her neighbors and friends.

Sister Newman departed this life August 19,1986. She is survived by five sons: Elwood, Ralph, Charlie, Curtis and Cecil Newman, all of Bassett, Virginia; and three daughters, Mrs. Essie Wright of Stuart, Mrs. Irene Simmons of Axton, and Mrs. Clara Smith of Collinsville, Virginia. She also leaves 26 grandchildren, 38 great-grandchildren, 11 great-great-grandchildren; two half-brothers, Mr. Tom Turner of Stuart and Mr. Crawford Turner of Collinsville; and two half-sisters, Mrs. Mary T. Hylton of Roanoke and Mrs. Alice T. Thomas of Rocky Mount, Virginia.

Her funeral service was conducted at Moody Funeral Home Chapel by her pastor, Elder John Wingfield, and a close family friend, Pastor T. E. Levinger. She was laid to rest in the Foley Cemetery at Route 2, Stuart, Virginia.

Be it resolved, that we at Liberty Church extend to her family our heartfelt sympathy. Be it further resolved, that three copies of this obituary be prepared: one for our church records, one to be given to her family and one submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Liberty Primitive Baptist Church in conference, the first Saturday in November 1986.

Elder John T. Wingfield, Moderator
Deacon Paul Puckett, Clerk

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
Route 1, Box 65 Keeling, Virginia 24566

"Walking with the Angels"

Today we were blessed to walk with Angels
These meetings are so precious to our hearts
The very thought of our blessed Jesus
Has caused all doubt and fears to depart—
As we walked with the Angels

We love to meet the Saints so dear
and rejoice together as praises we sing
Rejoicing in the hope of eternal life
There forever we may praise our Heavenly King-
While walking with the Angels

What a blessed thought—such a happy thought
When we will all meet in that glorious time
Our voices will blend together in perfect praise
Oh the rest and peace will be most sublime
There walking with the Angels

How precious to meet with them here below
and bow to join with them in prayer
There with God in communion so sweet
The blessed fellowship and love to share—
While walking with the Angels

Indeed it is a most cherished blessing
To be blessed the gospel sound to hear
The Saints proclaiming Christ the only way
How the message doth our drooping spirits cheer—
As we walk with the Angels

Our hearts are filled with love untold
Love and goodness so divine
The doubts are removed—the fears flee
Oh how bright His spirit doth shine—
While walking with the Angels

Oh precious Jesus, never leave or forsake us
Through every season keep us near thy throne
That after death in that eternal city
You may own us as thine own
Then forever we will walk with the Angels

(These Angels are none other than the dear Saints of God)

Rlee B. Houchins
Roanoke, Va. 24015

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EDITORIAL

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

John 10: 27,28.

Sheep are peculiar creatures, being very dependent and unable to provide for themselves. Except for the shepherd's care the sheep would soon perish. Is this not our case? Our spiritual needs are numerous and pressing, yet we cannot supply any of them. We are traveling through a wilderness that yields us neither spiritual food nor water. Unless our spiritual bread drops down from heaven and our water flows out of the rock, we would soon be consumed. If Christ were not our Shepherd, we would fall prey to Satan. We are sinful creatures and if we are his sheep, we shall feel it to be a great display of Christ's love and mercy toward us in coming down to this sin cursed world to bleed, suffer, and die for poor unworthy sinners.

"My sheep," says Christ. How come the sheep to be Christ's? They are his because the Father chose them in Christ our of the rest of mankind before the world was. They were given to Christ Jesus as his bride. He, according to the council of His own free will, and according to His own good pleasure, made choice individually of certain persons. For to Him belonged the sovereign prerogative that he might have mercy on whom he would have mercy. "My sheep." Their names were written in his book of life, so they became his portion and heritage. Christ often speaks of them in this way: "As many as thou hast given me" "Thou hast given them me." As a gift, the Father committed them into Christ's hands. Thus they became a token of the Father's love to his only begotten Son, separating them from among all mankind as a love gift to his Son.

"My sheep," says Christ. They are his for in addition to the gift, he has bought them with a price. They had sold themselves for nought; but he has redeemed them, not with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with his precious blood. There is not one sheep of all his flocks but what he can see the mark of his blood on him. In

the face of every saint the Saviour sees, as in a glass, the memorial of his bloody sweet in Gethsemane, and his agonies on the cross. So you see, "You are not your own, for ye are bought with a price." Will Christ suffer those whom he has shed his precious blood for, to perish? If Christ has suffered for us, bought us with his blood, will he suffer our souls to be cast into the pit? If so, where has justice gone that the substitute should bear our guilt, and we should bear it too? And where is mercy that God should execute twice the punishment for one offense? No, my dear beloved ones, He will not suffer any, no not one to perish for whom he died. He will keep them "and they shall never perish." Oh, it is a great feeling when a poor hell deserving wretched sinner finds in his heart a hope that he is numbered with those given by God the Father into the hands of the Redeemer, the Mediator and King of grace; and once placed there, it is an unalterable act. No power can change or undo the purpose of the great God of heaven.

"I am the good shepherd." How good? Sufficiently good to draw a former sinful rebel into the enjoyment of His love and mercy, to supply our ever needs, to stoop down and gather up a weak lamb to His bosom, and to protect his from the hands of Satan. "Our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep." Heb. 13:20. So great as to present to His heavenly Father every member of His flock in a spotless condition, having atoned for them, and having cleansed them from sins, in His own precious blood.

"And he said: Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." John 6:65. God's sheep are not only made conscious of their fallen state, but are made willing to return. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Ps 110:3. Are we so stubborn that we need grace to make us willing to return to the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls? Yes, dear ones, we are. We cannot of ourselves return. "For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls." I Peter 2:25.

What a mercy it is when the sheep are manifestly brought up out of the ruins of the Adam fall. What a great death that fall was: it was not as many seem to think, losing the sight of one eye, the hearing of one ear, the heart becoming a little hard, a little stumble or slip; but my friends, it was a complete fall, complete blindness, a complete hardness of the heart, it was a complete, total death in trespasses and sins, a complete separation from all spiritual life. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned." Rom. 5:12. But what a mercy it is to have and feel the life giving operation of the Holy Spirit, to have our eyes opened, to have our ears circumcised, to be given a heart of flesh, so as to hear the voice of the Son of God in His sweet gospel. Yea, though we are "wandering sheep" wandering is the outcome of our fallen state; but to know it, to feel it, to grieve over it, and looking up to Jesus and crying with a loud voice, "Lord, have mercy upon me a sinner" is a great favor in disguise.

The Lord makes manifest what

His power can do, when he brings forth His own sheep from an ungodly world, when they are called out of the spots and places in which they have been scattered in their unregeneracy. He will then display the power of His divine grace in separating them from an ungodly world. He separates his sheep for himself. The Lord leads His people in paths that they have not known. He leads them into His own fold; therefore they become a separate people. Separate in their desires, in their needs, in their pursuits. "Therefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean things; and I will receive you." II Cor. 6:27. It is indeed a great blessing when the sheep are drawn to follow Him. They will not be deceived in following a stranger very far, for they know not the voice of strangers.

"They hear my voice." The Lord makes a contrast between the elect and the unelect. The Lord's elect will hear the voice of the Son of God. His sheep know His voice because a sovereign God imparts to them the capacity to hear, because "The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made both of them." Prov. 20:11. Oh, what peace and joy there is in our hearts when the Lord speaks to us in His word. How sweet His voice sounds to a law convicted sinner as we know ourselves to be, when He speaks peace and forgiveness to our souls. How comforting when we are blessed with an inward feeling, a divine testimony in our hearts, when we hear Him say, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." Matt. 5:6. To hear and feel the voice of Christ proclaiming mercy and pardon to our souls is a taste of heaven here upon earth. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they be as wool." Isa. 1:18, Each of the sheep belonging to the great Shepherd will hear when the irresistable call comes to them just as Lazarus heard while in the grave when Christ called to him to come forth.

"And they follow me." When many that were walking with Jesus turned back, Jesus asked the twelve "will ye also go away?" They said, "Lord, to whom shall we go?" Feeling our own inabilities and barrenness, where is there to go? The world cannot help us, man cannot help us. The Lord alone is our refuge. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. 11:28. Let us go to Him in prayer. May He give us faith to lay hold of His precious promises, and feel them in our hearts and souls to be ours. May God bless us by His grace to follow Him, for He says, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." II Cor. 12:9. "Faith which worketh by love." Gal. 5:6. is the mark of Christ's sheep, and it is of true believers that He speaks when He says, "I give unto them eternal life."

"I give unto them eternal life." There is an implication, therefore that they had lost eternal life, not in the mind and purpose of God; but by their fall in Adam and also by actual sin. This eternal life comes to every elect as a matter of gift. He did not possess it when he first entered into the world. Being born of a corrupt tree, they were born to die. Eternal life is not a product of the soil of humanity: it is a gift. Nor

is it bestowed as a reward of service done. The term "gift" shuts out all idea of debt or of reward. We were spiritually dead; therefore, Jesus imparted to us a life which we had not before enjoyed. The Apostle Paul says, "You were dead, dead in trespasses and sins." "Eternal life" cannot be earned as a wage for good works, it cannot be merited in anyway, because it is a free gift. He does not sell but gives. "Ye must be born again." What He gives, He gives freely and it is forever. "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." Eph. 2: 1. When He bestowed eternal life upon His elect who has it, He knew quite well every imperfection and failing that would occur in that man. Therefore what He saw in man would be a cause for not giving, rather than for giving, so it would be inconsistent with the gift of God for the gift to be disannulled. "The gift and calling of God are without repentance." Rom. 12:29. May we always be reminded of what we were by nature. Do we see the hole of the pit from whence we were drawn? for "The wages of sin is death." Rom. 6:23. Man merits nothing but death, so life is the free gift of God. Now, to some this is a very humiliating doctrine, but to those who have been made alive to their terrible, fallen condition, it should be a precious doctrine. So may we remember the dunghill where we once grew.

Jesus says, "And they shall never perish." His sheep are said to be born again, so this new life within us is a divine life, so it can no more die than the life of God himself. We live because we are one with Christ. The elect sheep are referred to as the body of Christ. Shall Christ's body be dismembered? Shall He every now and then be losing one limb or another? No! It cannot be. The members of His body shall continue to live because He lives. The power that brought His sheep into this precious state is also the power that keeps them there: for "Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil. 1:6. The spiritual life in them shall never be starved out, beaten out, nor driven out. The elect himself shall never perish. You may feel at times you might; the devil may tell you that you shall. The Lord will seem to withdraw until we lose many joys and comforts; but "You shall never perish." My dear ones, "They shall never perish," takes in all the elect flesh of Christ. If we consider how this doctrine harmonizes with other doctrines of the precious words of God, we will find that these sheep were made "unto honor." "That He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory." Rom. 9:23. If the saints of God, just one, should perish will Christ have kept His promise? He is not a man that He should lie. Jesus Christ paid the debt charged to His sheep; therefore, they have no debt to pay. If He has borne their punishment, they have no penalty to suffer. If He has stood in their stead, even justice as well as grace will demand that they be saved. "It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?" Rom. 8:34.

"Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." All His sheep are in Jesus' hands. Can you think of a safer

place to be? An acquaintance once said to me, "they cannot be plucked out, but they can slip out and perish." Does not Jesus say, "they can never perish?" Therefore they cannot be plucked out, slip out, fall out, jump out or any other out, they are definitely secure. There are those who, with false doctrine, would deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. "Neither shall any." Not only any man, but the devil, fallen spirits, none will be able to pluck them out of His hands. Oh, what a blessed promise! "Because I live," says Christ, "Ye shall live also." John 14:19. May God bless you to live and rejoice in His precious doctrine and to feast upon His sweet promises is my prayer.

In hope of mercy,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

LET US HEAR FROM YOU

We need pictures and information of your Church if we are to continue "The Church of Our Faith".

If you know anyone you think would enjoy reading the Signs and are unable to pay, please let us know. Send their names & address and we well be glad to send it to them free of charge.

Our readers love to read the experience of others. Share with them the dealings of the Lord with you and give us the reason for your hope.

Have you any questions concerning certain scriptures? Maybe there is someone who has had some light on that subject.

We would love to hear from more of the Elders. Share with us your call to the misistry, and maybe some of the Bethel spots along your way. Write to us about any subject that might be on your mind.

How would you suggest to improve the Signs. We welcome your comments. So many shut-ins look forward to it each month. We want it to be edifying and as comforting as possible. May God bless us to do this.

Thanks for the donations we receive each month. This is what has kept the Signs of the Times financially strong. We thank God for giving you a mind to do this and may His grace continue.

The Editors

PSALM 5: 1-3

Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my meditation.

Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray.

My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.

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Rt. 1, Box 65
Keeling, Virginia, 24566

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editors of the Signs;

It has been requested that I write again to the Signs. I know I cannot write anything that would be comfort to the Lords beloved people unless he blesses me with a spiritual mind. I am poor in spirit, weak, helpless and wholly dependent upon the Lord to direct, lead and guide ,my pen to write and make a few remarks concerning spiritual things. For without Him I can do nothing. I have no confidence in my flesh to do any good thing. I am so vile, sinful, and wretched.

(II Corinthians 4 vs. 8-11) We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. I believe the Lords people are made willing like Moses to suffer afflictions with the righteous, than to enjoy sin for a season. As Paul said the body is dead because of sin. The spirit is life because of righteousness. The Lord is our righteousness, He is the way of the truth and the life. Jesus says unless you suffer with me, you have no part with me. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. What precious words! Lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world. I surely believe the Lord is with his people in all their troubles, sorrows, and afflictions, also their joys in him.

Poor and afflicted, Lord, are thine,
Among the great unfit to shine;
But though the world may think it strange,
They would not with the world exchange,
Poor and afflicted, yet they trust in God,
The gracious wise and just,
For them he deigns this lot to chose,
Nor would they dare his will refuse.

The scriptures were written for our learning, that we through patience, and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. Titus 3, 4-6 But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; Comfort ye Comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak Comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lords hand double for all her sin." When the Lord blesses his dear precious ones, with the comfort that her warfare is accomplished; that her iniquity is pardoned, she has rejoicing in her Dear Saviour and her God. I Peter 2:9. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of dark-

ness into his marvelous light: The Lord our Saviour and our God, who is worthy only to be praised. There is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved. Isa. 9, 6-7 For unto us a child is born, unto us a child is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counseller, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. I believe these scriptures have been fulfulled from the birth of Jesus unto his people. That he is at the right hand of God, sitting on the throne of David and upon his kingdom and that his government is now upon his shoulder. That the Prince of Peace is ruling his people, in his kingdom. Luke 1, 30-33 And the angel said unto her fear not Mary: for thou hast found favour with God, and behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name Jesus, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his Kingdom there shall be no end. Jesus said my Kingdom is not of this world; It was the Spiritual world that he prayed for while here in person. I believe it included all his called and chosen ones, in Christ. Jesus said; Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit; he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God, That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee; ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth; and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh; and whether it goeth: So is everyone that is born of the spirit. I believe when the Lord blesses his dear ones; to hear his voice in that still small voice, and to hear the joyful news of the Gospel; they are indeed blessed of the Lord with ears to hear what the spirit sayeth unto the Churches: In thy presence is fullness of joy. At thy right hand are pleasures forevermore. There are times when they cannot fell his presence with them. They mourn for his return. The spirit is liken unto the wind; you hear the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whether it goeth. So is everyone that is born of the spirit.

Ps. 145, 10-13 All thy works shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy Kingdom, and talk of thy power; To make known unto the Sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious Majesty of his Kingdom. Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations. John 5, 22 For the Father Judgeth no man, but hath committed all Judgment unto the Son. The Lord hath been our dwelling place in all generations. Out of Zion the perfection of beauty God hath shined. Ps. 132: 13-18 For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread. I will clothe her priests with

salvation: and her saints shall shout for joy. There will I make the horn of David to bud: I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed. His enemies will I clothe with shame; but upon himself shall his crown flourish. This is so precious to me, this psalm concerning the Lord, and his Church. Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift to the children of men. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: all things are yours that pertain unto life and Godliness. I believe the Kingdom that the Lord set up in the days of these King's prophesied by Daniel the prophet; which the spirit of God reveals unto his dear born again children, that the Kingdom of God is within you, Christ in you the hope of glory. We have a taste of this heavenly Kingdom, when the Lord blesses us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ. He must reign in his Kingdom, until the last enemy death is put down, read about it in the I Cor. 15, 20-26.

Written with Love,
Lula Fox
Rt. 2, Box 75
Strong, Ark. 71765

THE KINGS OF KINGS WE CANNOT SEE

The king of kings we cannot see, for he is God. We are comforted by his staff and also his rod. Our faith is ofttimes tried by questions that are hard. Without the spirit, man's interpretations we do not regard. His spirit is like the wind; we hear the sound thereof, when it blows. We cannot see from whence it cometh nor whither it goes. In the spirit of His great love, he chastens his own. In kindness, he makes the effectual working of his power known. We are taught by His grace we are not our own keeper. The Lord said, "the plowman shall overtake the reaper." In our heart, we have a desire our precious brethren to greet. In this world, foolishness, lust, and greed are not our meat. In this low ground of sin and sorrow, we wander and roam. We are made sick of sin, desiring that heavenly home. There is a precious home awaiting by Jesus we are told. St. John was blessed to see that city whose streets were pure gold. There, for the precious Saviour, praise will know no end. He proved the sincerity of His love and we hope, washed away our every sin. Lord keep us in thy perfect peace and in man let us not trust. Receive our spirit home when our vile bodies return to the dust. In that city we shall not see wife, friend, or brother. We shall see the King of kings for ourself and not for another. Man shall not destroy all flesh upon this low ground. When the son of man cometh there will be faith found. Let brotherly love continue and peace abound.

Clifton Robertson
Route 1
Reidsville, NC

Dear Elder Tench,

As you have been on my mind a lot lately, I feel a great need to

share a beautiful experience with you that I had three or four years ago.

After attending Church for awhile, I had this strong desire to join, but for reasons unknown to me, I couldn't. It bothered me alot.

On this certain spring morning, I was sitting alone in the kitchen at the table. I was listening to you speak over the radio. As I listened to that beautiful doctrine, I was completely removed from everything that was natural around me. Not with the natural eyes, but with my mind eyes. I could see this hand reach into my breast and hold my heart in the palm. There was no pain, no quickening of the heartbeat. There was such a perfect stillness and such a perfect peace. The touch was so gentle, it was like the gentlest breeze touch. My heart, I could just barely feel it, but I could feel such a great strength there.

When I returned to my natural state, I was about to rise up out of my chair with my arms lifted as a child does when he reaches to be picked up.

Words could never describe the beautiful things I felt that day. On two other occasions, I have felt this beautiful separation.

All my life, I have always been different. I never fit-in, I never felt a part of anything.

Since I have been blessed to come to Church, I feel I have come home, this is where I really belong.

I am not very good with words, so I hope you won't be offended when you read this in my poor way of trying to explain this beautiful experience.

There is nothing in this world that could begin to compare with that beautiful and perfect peace I felt.

Doris Giles
Altavista, Va.

Dear Brother Key;

Hope you both are well—seems a long time we have not had the privilege of being with you—but feel the Lord has richly blessed us to attend some sweet meetings this winter and be with the Brethren.

Brother Key we received this beautiful letter from Brother Harry Connoday in September 1967. Words cannot express how the Lord has richly blessed us with many times together and hearing Brother Harry speak of the blessings God has bestowed to him—how (He the Lord) has dealt with him in such tenderness. Feeling His presence through all his afflictions not once complaining: His desires are to be with his Brethren: So with his permission we would like to share with others. Would you please print this in the Signs. He is surely an inspiration to all. We feel God has blessed us far beyond our greatest expectations, to have known one so highly favored with God's love. Please remember us in your prayers.

Posey and Elsie Poindexter

Dear Brother & Sister Poindexter,

If one such as I feel to be should address you as such. I have a desire to write you dear ones, who we feel to be the children of God. Not having written, but very little in my life I know not how to begin. I truly hope your loved ones that are sick are getting along alright. And that the Lord will

bless them with a speedy recovery.

We enjoyed our visit with you all so very much Sunday, as we have been blessed to enjoy the many visits we have had together in the past.

Dear ones words from this unworthy sinners lips will never be able to express to you the comfort, joy and peaceful seasons we have been blessed to enjoy with your presence. I hope I am thankful to the Lord for such wonderful blessings. So much of my time this question is on my mind. Is this the way a child of God travels, feeling cast down, and so heavy and a stranger. Yet by Gods grace he is lifted up again, and again. I know if he dealt with me. According to my works, for I have never done anything, nor can't do anything that he would ever remember me. When I am so low I know God is able to deliver me, but can't see how he could remember such a being as I. So much of my time I am tempted on every side, evil thoughts, hatred, and sin is mixed in all I do. I cry out in my soul. O wretched man that I am who will deliver me from the body of this death. I know that in me "that is my flesh" dwelleth no good thing. For to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. In 1960 I had a dream I was sealed inside a large glass ball, and was rolling down a wide road. I could see the enemies on the outside were trying to destroy me, but they couldn't get to me.

I was then blessed to feel, I hope, the presence of Jesus that he was inside with me and the enemies couldn't harm me. Many times since have I felt surely I will be destroyed. I can't see any way of escape, but in some wonderful way I have been kept by the grace and mercy of God. By the grace of God I am what I am. How wonderful if he is ours, then we are his, purchased by his own precious blood and men, nor devils, can't change it. Nor take away this hope for eternal life, that he gives to his children. For we are saved by hope, hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for. But if we hope for that we see not, there do we with patience wait for it. Likewise the spirit helpeth our infirmities. For we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the spirit itself maketh intercessions for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Jesus told his disciples John 16 vs. 17. It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you. If not deceived I hope I have felt his peaceful presence many times, and heard that still small voice speak to me "Peace be Still" when I was so heavy it seemed as though I couldn't live. All my burden was gone. I was it seemed as light as a feather, rejoicing and singing the hymn I know that my Redeemer lives. Brother and Sister Poindexter this I hope was Jesus that spoke these words to me. I wouldn't exchange for the world if it were possible a thousand times. I know I was helpless, and there was none to help. I feel it was by the grace and mercy of God. I wonder sometimes if I am alone, if others get along the way I do cast down and burdened while others around seem to be full of laughter, without any trouble and

enjoying the things of the world. I hope I have suffered at least a small measure for Christ's sake. If we suffer, we shall also reign with him. Now I desire not to burden you I hope if I have written anything that would cause you all any grief that you will forgive me. Or if any comfort, give all the glory to him to whom all glory is due. I believe you all know and have experienced some things I have tried to write. I have felt a love I can't describe for you all. I believe this is that love that flows from heart to heart and from breast to breast.

We received you letter today. Marie came home at 12:00 to get it. We appreciate it so very much. It is most comforting, indeed.

Come to see us everytime you can and ask to be remembered in your groanings to him.

Your unworthy Brother and Sister in hope, Harry and Marie Cannoday

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Dear Editors of the Signs;

Please renew our subscription for another year. The remainder, please use in anyway to benefit the cause of the Old Baptist.

If there is anyone who knows anyone who is not taking the Signs and would like to have it, but is not able, if they will let me know. I will see that they get a subscription. Please, please, please understand I am not trying to be a hero or receive any glory. All I would like to do is to share with anyone who is a lover of the truth, enjoy the blessings, that are poured forth through the articles in the Signs.

Elder Key I sure did enjoy, your sermons in October, at Hopewell Church, Winnsboro, Texas. The world (Churches) cannot understand why our ministers and brethren would travel such great distances to Church. Especially without a guaranteed set fee. If they could only see, or better yet, feel the love of God that is felt in those meetings, then they would understand.

On three occasions, Jesus told Peter to feed his sheep, lands and flock; John 21: 15-17. I truely feel the sheep are well fed, when we are blessed to attend an association or one of the three day meetings. But, when we are blessed to attend one of these meetings and hear the ministers from the different parts of the country, it seems we are fed with special Heavenly Manna.

I would like to request some of the brethren, (if they are so blessed) to give their views on Ezekiel 16: 4-6. I see this scripture signifying how helpless each and every child of God is to help themselves, when they are brought to see themselves polluted in their own sins. Just as a newborn baby is helpless and cries for help; so must a child of God be made to cry unto God, "Heal me O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me and I shall be saved; for thou art my praise, Jer. 17: 14 and John 5: 2-9. We again have an illustration of how helpless we are to help ourselves. The man beside the pool at Bethesda said, there was no man to help him into the water when it was troubled. The water is signifying the cleansing or washing away of the sins or infirmities.

A brother in hope,
Frank Richards

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

DAN RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

The Dan River Primitive Baptist Church was constitued in 1884. The Anniversity Building, built with donations from members and friends, was completed and first used on August 26, 1984. Dan River Church is located on N.C. Highway No. 700 at Mayfield, N.C.
Scheduled services is as follows:
2nd Sunday evening, song service 7:00 P.M.
4th Saturday evening 7:00 P.M.
4th Sunday morning 10:30 A.M.
5th Sunday (with West County Line Union Churches)
Elder Kenneth R. Key is present pastor.

MEETINGS

THE WEST COUNTY LINE UNION

The West County Line Union meeting will be held, the Lord willing, the fifth Sunday in May at Moon Creek Church. We appreciate the presence of all who desire to meet with us. Elders of our faith and order

are especially invited.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Pastor
Sister Ema Sartin, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Union meeting will be held at Canaan Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in May 1987. We invite all who have a mind to come, and meet with us. All ministers of our faith and order are invited.

Elder J.R. Williams, Pastor
Mozelle Lacey, Clerk

ARTICLES

"Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise and praise thee? Shall thy loving kindness be declared in the grave, or thy faithfulness in destruction?" —Psalm lxxxvii. 10, 11.

This is not the language of a soul dead in trespasses and sins, but it is the breathing of a living soul struggling and grappling with death. What a difference there is, where there is life working in and under death, and where death reigns absolutely! Between the quickened soul and that in which there is nothing but death, death without one spark of spiritual life, death without one ray of heavenly teaching. There is no groan, no sigh, no lamentation, no piteous inquiry, no pouring out of the heart before God, where the soul is utterly dead, anymore than there is life and breath in a corpse in the tomb. But wherever life is implanted in the soul from the Fountain of life, that life groans under death. It sighs from out of the grave; it gasps for breath, under the corpse which overlies it; and seeks to heave itself up from that dead weight, from that superincumbent mass of carnality which clasps it in its rigid and chilling embrace; it endeavours to uplift and extricate itself from that body of sin and death which spreads its cold and torpid mass all round it so that it is unable to arise. Do you know the workings of life in this way? the heavings, the gaspings, and uprisings of the life of God in your soul, pressed, overlain, overwhelmed, and all but suffocated by that carnal, dead, barren, earthly, devilish nature, which lies as a weight upon you? Depend upon it if you have never known what it is to gasp and pant and groan and sigh under the weight of a body of sin and death, you know nothing of the vital operations of the Holy Ghost in your conscience.

J.C. Philpot

KEHUKEE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION
CIRCULAR LETTER

The Elders and Messengers of the several Baptist churches belonging to the Kehukee Association, met at the meetinghouse near the Falls of Tar River, Nash County, North Carolina, October, 1800--- To the churches in union with this Association send their

Christian salutation:
Beloved Brethren,

Called of God to the fellowship of his dear Son, and to an inheritance amongst those who are sanctified, and beloved by us, who hope we have obtained like precious grace with you. The great satisfaction which you have expressed in, and the willingness with which you have received our former epistles; together with a desire for your good, and the glory of the great Redeemer, are motives which induce us to address you once more in an epistolary way, which we send this year on the subject of GOOD WORKS, which is highly recommended by our Lord and Saviour, together with his prophets and apostles, and ought to be carefully observed by all who profess to be followers of the blessed Jesus. Witness the following Scriptures. Ecl. iii.17; chap. ix. 10., and xii. 14. Isa. xxiii. 17. James i. 25. Gal. vi. 4., 1 Thes. i. 3., Heb. vi. 10., Titus i. 10., James ii, 11, 21., Jonah iii. 10., Mat. xxiii. 10., 2 Cor. 11, 15., Rev. 14, 13 and xx. 12 and 32., Acts x. 35., Rom. ii. 10. These and many others abundantly testify that we were created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which the Lord before ordained that we should walk in them. And as the contracted limits of a circular letter will not admit of a full investigation of our subject, we shall in a few particulars show what we understand to be intended by the term good works. And, first, it might not be amiss to observe that before works can be called, or really deemed good works, it is necessary that they be the product of a true and genuine faith in Christ; for as "Faith without works in dead." so works without faith is dead also. Heb. ix. 14. The source or fountain, then, whence good works flow is not from any expectation of merit, but purely from a principle of love to God.

By good works, we understand works of various kinds, as, 1. Our duty to God. 2. Our duty to the Church and people of God. 3. Our duty to our neighbors. 4. Our duty to magistrates, or earthly rulers. 5. Our duty to our family; and lastly, to ourselves. 1. Our duty to God is, to consider him as the cause of our existence, our great benefactor, and sole author of all our happiness in time and eternity. To love him above any earthly enjoyment; yea, with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. We should use our utmost endeavor to keep his commandments, and have respect to all his precepts. But, as our duty to God is inseparably connected with our duty in other particulars, we pass on. 2. To our duty to the Church and people of God. As our Lord and Saviour has loved us and given himself for us, that he might deliver us from the curse of the law and the flames of devouring fire, and hath taken us from the wild stock of nature, made us all to drink of the same fountain of his everlasting love, and so tempered our spirits as to unite us together, not by tyrannical chains, but by the sweetest bands of love and fellowship, and declared us to be a select body of him chosen, and set apart from the world, it becomes our duty then to walk as people who are not of the world, but chosen of God, and bound for the heavenly Canaan, having given our hands and hearts to each other, to endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace,

to strengthen, comfort, uphold, encourage, watch over, and to pray with and for one another, to bear one another's burdens, and "so fulfill the royal law of Christ." Our Lord has compared his church to a company of horse in Pharaoh's chariot--hence it appears that all have something to do in the church of Christ, that none should be barren or unfruitful. The Lord has made it our duty often to assemble ourselves together, and we are exhorted by an apostle not to forsake it as the manner of some was. We hope you will, therefore, endeavor as oft as possible to attend your church meetings and places of public worship. We hear of coldness among some of you-- what else can be expected? When the church members so seldom see each other, they become in a manner strange and useless to one another, while some perhaps seldom, and others scarcely ever attend Conference at all. Dear brethren, pray consider the worthy name by which you are called, and the honor of that cause in which you are enlisted; you are called the light of the world; but how can you light be useful when many, even of the people of the world, are more careful to attend worship, yea even conferences too, than many who profess to be followers of the blessed Jesus. While thus backward or careless in attending your conferences and places of public worship, you would and grieve your brethren, and weaken the hands of your ministers, who, after coming perhaps many miles to endeavor to comfort you, find themselves oft-times under the disagreeable necessity of preaching almost to the naked walls, or not at all. The few hearers may have been chiefly those who make no profession of religion, whilst the members of the church are busily engaged at home, and cannot take time to attend on the worship of God, and many times kept back for a small excuse even on the Lord's day.

Thirdly, our duty to love our neighbor is to him as ourself, to be kind and charitable to all whose needs may require it, be they strangers or acquaintances, without respect of persons; to visit the sick, the fatherless, and the widow in their afflictions, endeavoring to nourish and comfort them as far as in us lies; also to receive strangers, use them kindly, clothe the naked, feed the hungry, and to be careful to consider the poor and needy, and grant them relief according to our ability. Beware of covetousness, remember the kingdom of God is not in meat and drink, but love, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; therefore glorify God, and comfort your fellow creatures with what you possess.

Fourthly, we should obey magistrates, and all those who are put in authority to rule over us in our temporal affairs. We should not speak evil, nor reproachfully of them, but acknowledge their authority, and honor them as ministers of God, by him appointed for the punishment of evil doers, and the protection of those who wish to do well; we should therefore show all good fidelity as patrons of good works and a light to the world, that we bring not reproach on the church of Christ, nor cause to be blamed that holy name by which we are called.

Fifthly, our duty to our family, which appears very extensive when we con-

sider ourselves, in respect to them, not only as stewards, who have to give an account of our stewardship to God, but as it were, as prophets, priests, and kings. As a prophet, we should teach and instruct them; as a priest we should pray with and for them, and should be careful in the order of their government. Each one to whom God has committed the care of souls, or a family, which is the same thing, should consider himself as their teacher, to whom all the family look, and from whom they all expect to receive their instruction, as it is well known that children in their tender years are naturally led to think the judgment, counsel, ways, and behavior of their parents to be superior to all others, especially when parents or rulers exercise a proper authority. Every family should have one, and only one proper head, who should take the government thereof, and in all cases endeavor to rule with justice, having a particular regard for all about him, setting forth good examples, walking in the ways of godliness and true piety, praying with and for them oft; yea, we are exhorted to "pray without ceasing", and in everything to give thanks. If we neglect public prayer, praise, and thanksgiving in our families, do we not leave them all to walk in the dark, as it were, while we suffer our light to be hidden under the bushel of worldly cares, or under the bed of sloth, while we ourselves walk unworthy the Christian name. A family should not be governed by passion; justice should be tempered with judgment and mercy. In vain does the passionate, fractious, turbulent, and inconsiderate person, after being the cause of a whole day's unhappiness and discontent in his family, at night, call on all, or any of them to join him in the worship of God, while every mind is filled with prejudice, every eye with evil, and every tongue ready to say, "Physician, heal thyself," or otherwise, "thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye." Therefore every ruler of a family should always remember that example has the most powerful influence, without which all our admonition will, in all probability, prove ineffectual. Parents should be careful to preserve and cultivate the morals of their children, they should use their authority and not gratify them in their own wicked desires, such as frolicking, vain company keeping, gaming, idle visits on the Lord's day, etc., but should on that day carry them to places of public worship, and after they return endeavor to impress upon their minds the things they heard; for, after giving too great a loose to the reins of our children's lusts, we shall find our reproofs to be in vain. Witness the sons of Eli. 1 Sam. ii, 23,24,25. And Solomon says, "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." Prov. xix. 18. If we cannot command the hearts of our children and family to make them pray, and love God, we may teach and admonish them; and should all our endeavors fail, we may lastly have recourse to the example of Job. Job i.5.

And, further, with respect to the observation of good works relative to family duty, it becomes every member of a family to practice the particular duties in the respective places our divine Lord and Master has placed us

in, as husbands to love their wives, and be not bitter against them. Wives to submit themselves to their own husbands. Servants to be obedient to their masters, and please them well in all things. Masters to give unto their servants that which is just and equal. Parents not to provoke their children to anger lest they be discouraged; as well as for children to obey their parents. Col. iii.

Lastly, we should look to our own souls, strive to walk humbly with God, and study to show ourselves approved of him in all things, patrons of good works, and endeavor to keep a conscience void of offence, to check and keep under as much as possible all our unruly passions; to watch and pray, and avoid as far as in us lied, giving any cause whereby the enemies of the Lord may speak evil of us, or blaspheme that worthy name by which we are called. Ready at all times to reprove vice, striving to confirm all our reproofs, counsels, or admonitions by a regular life, pious walk, and godly conversation. We should be careful to read and study the Scriptures, and often to withdraw from the hurries of life to secret prayer and meditation; for where these duties are neglected, our case becomes very alarming, we then grow cold, backslide, and in a particular manner may give the enemy of souls great advantage over us.

And now may the kind and good Lord strengthen, uphold, and enable you to watch and pray, fill you with every good word and work, comfort you abundantly, and preserve you blameless until his second appearance to visit his sleeping saints, and to be admired by all who love him, and long for his glorious appearance. Amen.

Signed by order,

Nathan Mayo, Moderator
Lemuel Burkitt, Clerk

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

CORRESPONDING CIRCULAR LETTER

The Delaware Association, in session with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, May 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1938, to the sister churches composing the same, and to the churches, associations and meetings with which we correspond, sends greetings in christian love and fellowship.

Dear Brethren:—Directly on the threshold of Holy Writ, immediately on the opening of Genesis i., we are greeted with the wondrous, profound doctrine of the Trinity. The whole of the Godhead was concerned in the stupendous work of creation. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." And then spake the Word: "God said, Let there be light." Thus, God the Father, God the Word (or Son), and God the Spirit conjoined in projecting forth the grand work of creation. Farther on in Genesis i., in verse twenty-six, the Trinity meets us again. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Thus, the fullness of the Godhead covenanted with the

three divine Persons thereof to bring about the formation of man out of the dust of the ground. Passing on to Genesis iii. 22, the doctrine of the Three-One God is seen here: "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." Such pronouns as used in above passages, "us" and "our" do not occur except where more than one person is concerned, thus going far to establish conclusively and scripturally the reality of the uncontrovertible truth that the Godhead subsists in more than one Person. Now, as to how many, the truth is decidedly more unveiled when we come to the New Testament. "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word [or Son], and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."—1 John v. 7. In Matthew iii. 16, 17, we have it attested by divine authority that both the Father and the Holy Spirit were present at the baptism of the Son. Again, the Three-One God is declared to be the divine Initiator of the gospel commission, Matthew xxviii. 19: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Again, this doctrine comes into prominence in the concluding benediction of the second epistle to the Corinthians. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." Consistently with this doctrine of the trinity of Persons in the Godhead, the testimony of inspiration is emphatic and conclusive that there are not three gods, but one and one only. "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me."—Isaiah xlv. 5. "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord."—vi.4. Space will not admit of our citing all the passages which bear upon this teaching of the Trinity, of the Three in Unity and of the One in Three. Over and over, the Scriptures reiterate that there are three distinct Persons in the Godhead in one God only. Nor is it wrong to speak of God as being a Person, for so does the inspired word itself in Hebrews i. 3, where it is declared that Jesus Christ is the express image of his person," that is, of the Person of God. Nor are we to understand from this that God is possessed of body, parts or passions such as characterize the finite creature man, yet is God immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, everyway infinite, most holy, most wise, most free, most absolute in his divine and glorious Person. We do not understand that the Trinity is merely designating the office-work of the Godhead, as some teach. For instance, it is sometimes said that the title "Father" applies to God in his office-work of creation, that the title "Son" applies to God in the office-work of redemption, that the "Holy Spirit" is God in the office-work of sanctification. We refuse to limit the Trinity of the Godhead to this realm of mere officialdom. Aside from all the various offices which the Godhead administers, there were three distinct Persons in the Godhead from eternity irrespective of any office-work which God has accomplished, is accomplishing, or will yet accomplish. These are not three different Persons, but distinct Persons. There is a distinction which Holy Writ reveals as subsisting be-

tween the Persons in the Godhead, but no difference between them. On this subject, we cannot forbear from quoting from that eminently spiritual servant of God, John Bunyan: "The Godhead is but One, yet in the Godhead there are Three. These Three are called the Father, the Son, (Word), and the Holy Spirit, each of which is really, naturally and eternally God; yet there is but one God. The Father is true God, the Son is true God, the Spirit is true God. Yet the Father is one, the Son is one, the Spirit is one. The Father is one of himself, the Son is one by the Father the Spirit is one from them both. Yet the Father is not above the Son, nor the Spirit inferior to either. The Father is God, the Son is God, the Spirit is God. Among the Three, there is not superiority. As to time, the Father is from everlasting, so is the Son, so is the Spirit. As to nature, the Son is of the substance of the Father, and the Spirit is of the substance of them both. The fullness of the Godhead is in the Father, is in the Son and is in the Holy Ghost. Each of these is God over all, yet no Trinity of Gods, but one God in the Trinity." This principle of doctrine is fundamental to our salvation. It cannot be grasped by human intelligence nor plumbed by finite reason, yet it is plainly taught throughout the Scriptures of divine revelation. In whatsoever measure we are led into it, it is by faith alone, not by natural faith, but by that God-given faith which is the evidence of things not seen, the substance of things hoped for. Lord, evermore give us this faith!

It is a blessed privilege to again be assembled together in associate capacity, to again greet brethren and friends whom we seldom see, and to have preaching by ministers we seldom hear. May peace and prosperity from the Lord abound throughout our beloved Zion. "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." The cooperation of interested friends in aiding to entertain this meeting is delightful to behold. Thank the Lord for such friendship which springs from heart interest in the truth. The hospitality of the homes which have been opened to us for entertainment over night is soul-cheering and heart-warming. We have come together in this meeting for the worship of God, that the sheep of his pasture may be fed with knowledge and understanding. It is not that we may put ourselves forward so as to be seen and heard of ourselves, but that Christ and him crucified may alone be adored and honored and glorified.

The next session of this associational meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, in Philadelphia, Pa., in May, 1939, with the Salem Church.

Douglass L. Topping, Mod.
John B. Miller, Clerk
Elder H.H. Leferts

OBITUARIES

BRUCE SIDNEY COLEMAN

Bruce Sidney Bunn Coleman was born in Nash County on November 13, 1903, to Allison Ruffin and Fannie Flowers Bunn. She died September 21, 1986, survived by four

children: Mrs. Fannie Mae Marlowe, A. Carroll Coleman, Mrs. Esther C. Bissette and Mrs. Vanice C. Mercer; six step-children: Cleveland Coleman, William Coleman, Garland Coleman, Mrs. Dixie C. Page, Durand Coleman and Mrs. Pearl C. Lamm; 21 grandchildren, 19 great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild.

She united with Sandy Grove Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized on July 2, 1927, by Elder George W. Boswell. In November, 1946, she moved her membership to Healthy Plains Church where her husband was a member.

One June 2, 1934, she married Grover Cleveland Coleman, widowed father of seven young children. She made many prayerful petitions to the Lord concerning this union and her prayers were answered as evidenced by a happy and close-knit family. The children received her thankfully and graciously and have shown their love and devotion to her until her death.

God was most important in her life and she strove continually to live righteously and pleasing to Him and worshipped Him unashamedly before her family and the world. She guided her children with the Word of God, talking to them and admonishing them daily to walk in the fear of the Lord.

Her church was precious to her and many brethren, sisters and friends were graciously welcomed and cared for in her home until failing health. She had many sweet and comforting experiences of grace and was always ready to give an answer to every man that asked a reason of hope that was in her with meekness and fear.

After her husband's death March 23, 1968, her daughter, Vanice Mercer, came to live with her. She was paralized with a stroke on June 18, 1984, and though she suffered much, was a perfect example of patience, humbleness and resignation to the will of God. She spoke often of His great goodness and loved to talk of Him with others. While in the hospital, she once told her children she wanted her epitah to read, "Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering from the fold of God, He to rescue me from danger, interposed His precious blood." She was an inspiration to many at the Wilson Convalescent Center and the hospital and was shown much love and kindness.

When she passed quickly away on her church meeting day, her children can hope that "when her change came, angels hovered round her bed and wafted her spirit home." (From her favorite hymn, "Sweet to Rejoice in Lively Hope").

Her life of unselfish love and kindness was rewarded by the presence of so many friends and gifts of flowers, food and church donations during the funeral.

Her pastor, Elder Randall Saunders of Eden, NC, conducted her funeral with the comforting words that she had preached her own funeral by the way she had walked and lived as a true witness to God.

She was laid lovingly to rest in the Healthy Plains Church cemetery next to her husband.

To her children, these words from Proverbs, Chapter 31, fit our Mother:

"Who can find a virtuous woman?
for the price is far above rubies.
Strength and honour are her cloth-

ing; and she shall rejoice in time to come.

She openeth her mouth with wisdom and in her tongue is the law of kindness.

She looketh well to the ways of her household and eateth not the bread of idleness.

Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.

Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.

Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates."

Esther C. Bissette, Daughter
Pearl C. Lamm, Step-daughter

WOODROW W. HUDSON, SR.

My precious brother in flesh, and I hope in Christ, departed his earthly home Feb. 11, 1987 after a brief illness. He was a life long resident of Union Parish having gone to the Primitive Baptist Church all his life. He enjoyed visiting in the Liberty Hill Union and Spearsville Primitive Baptist Churches whenever he could.

Survivors include his wife Mrs. Fabrice Hudson, three sons Elder Woodrow W. Hudson, Jr. of Bastrop, La., Jackie L. Hudson of Houston, Texas and W. Prescott Hudson of Baton Rouge, La. one daughter Beth Winstead of Live Oak, Florida also two sisters Mrs. Lelia Harper of Springhill, La. and Sister Ruth Miller of Farmerville, La. and seven grandchildren. His funeral service was conducted by Elders David E. Turner and George Jones at Farrars Funeral Home Chapel in Farmerville, La. Feb. 13, 1987, with burial in Liberty Hill cemetery near Farmerville.

Brother Hudson believed the doctrine that God inspired to be written by the writers of both old and new testament. He believed that God did so love the world that whosoever believed in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. That is the same love Jesus referred to in (John I-29), "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," also the world that Jeremiah spoke of when he said "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying. Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee. He that cometh to God must believe that he is God, the same that God said in (Psalms-127) "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." The same God that inspired Paul to write "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

This is written as a request of his beloved son Elder Woodrow W. Hudson, Jr.

Elder David E. Turner

WILLIAM JEFFREY THOMPSON
VIRGIE LAWRENCE THOMPSON

William J. (Jeff) Thompson, born October 17, 1896 passed from this life January 13, 1972. Son of E.K. and Mary Y. Thompson. He suffered much during a long drawn out illness. He was blessed to bear his suffering with patience. His brother, Elder B. Odell Thompson, together with several members of the church received him into the fellowship of Paynes Creek Primitive Baptist Church, at his home a short time before his death.
He was never able to be baptized.

Jeff was a firm believer in salvation by grace. He could witness with the Apostle Paul I Cor. 15:10 By the grace of God I am what I am. His God given faith could enable him to say, O that I may be given to pray for a faith that will not shrink when washed in the waters of affliction. He served in the U.S. Army. He was in the Officer's Training School when the armistice was signed. After returning home he was married to Virgie Lawrence. Marriage rites performed by Elder Willie Vest, February 23, 1919. To this union nine children were born. One daughter, Una Inez preceded him in death.

He operated a country store (general merchandise) near his home place.

After selling said store he purchased a farm, a cattle ranch, near Floyd, Va. where he lived until he purchased a home on the outskirts of town. He and Virgie were blessed with almost fifty-three years of married life.

Funeral services were held at Salem Church, Copper Hill, Va. January 15, 1972. Elders Roy Ages and Julius Bocock officiating. His body was laid to rest in Rest Vale cemetery, Copper Hill, Va., to await the second coming of the Lord.

Virgie Lawrence Thompson daughter of Solomon and Ada Board Lawrence, born September 22, 1896. Died June 19, 1986. She was a life long resident of Floyd County. Virgie had deep religious convictions. She was impressed to offer to the church. I think her feeling of unworthiness caused her to fight against said impressions, until she finally took her bed, practically lost her appetite. Jeff had the family doctor come to see her. He after examination, told Jeff, "He found nothing wrong with her, and he was at a loss to know why she was so depressed and refused to eat normally." In the meantime Odell and I visited her. She said, "She would get no better until she offered to the church. Odell told her, "He would like to ask Elder J.P. Helms and some of the church people to come to her home. They complied with his request. Jeff told the doctor our plans. He suggested only two or three be allowed to see her at a time. I would say, her room was about full of people. Jeff took Odell to one side and told him the doctor's orders. Odell's reply was, "They will do her no harm, however for your satisfaction I will ask some of them to leave the room. After she had been received into the church and the people had left, she asked us to prop her up in bed and bring her some

food.

Jeff told the doctor what happened, his answer was, "Sometimes the Preacher can do more than the doctor can do." Virgie was a dedicated member of Paynes Creek Primitive Baptist Church. Attending church as long as her health permitted. She had been a member of the church about forty-two years.

How comforting are our memories
They sustain us in our sorrow
And give us reassurance
As we face a new tomorrow,
And though the world seems barren
When our loved ones depart
Their memory blooms forever
In the gardens of the heart.

She suffered a stroke, practically six months before her death, causing her to loose the use of one side and causing a great impediment of speech.

They are survived by two daughters, Mrs. Thomas (Angie) Cox, Eden, N.C., Mrs. Thomas (Eleanor) Kilduff, Roanoke, Va., six sons, Sherman, Arlie, Merlin, and Bain of Floyd, Va., Breeman and Harold of Dublin; one sister Mrs. Effie Janney, Roanoke; 25 grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren and one step-great-grandchildren.

Poor and afflicted, yet ere long, they'll join the bright celestial throng.
And all their sufferings then shall close,
And heaven afford them sweet repose.

Funeral services were held June 21, Salem Church, Copper Hill, with her pastor Elder Hale Terry officiating, assisted by Elder Lane Carter; with burial in Rest Vale Cemetery.

May God's richest blessings rest upon the family, and all who mourn, and may He enable them to say, "Gracious Father, thy will be done." Submitted in love by the request of a daughter.

Gaye A. Thompson

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5/87
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

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Mrs. Mildred W. Hanks, VA 2.00
Homer Rogers, TX.....15.00
Mrs. Foye Cole, NC.....2.00
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Mr. & Mrs. Dale Richards, TX....15.00
Mrs. Hettie Wade, VA.....2.00

Signs of the Times

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POEM

A Sovereign Protector I have,
Unseen, yet for ever at hand:
Unchangeably faithful to save;
Almighty to rule and command!

He smiles, and my comforts abound;
His grace as the dew shall descend;
And walls of salvation surround
The souls he delights to defend!

Kind author and ground of my hope,
Thee, thee for my God I avow;
My glad Ebenezer set up,
And own thou hast helped me till now.

I muse on the years that are past,
Wherein my defense thou hast proved:
Nor wilt thou relinquish at last
A sinner so signally loved!

Toplady.

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

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EDITORIAL

A LAND OF MILK AND HONEY
Ex. 3:8

Since the kingdom of heaven is referred to as the smallest kingdom, and the children of that kingdom are referred to as being little children, it seems at this particular time (and especially since my correspondent requests that I write something beneficial to the little ones) a good time to speak and write quite often on that class of people. Speaking and writing to and about little ones calls for us to examine their needs and capacities, and while we are treating on such a delicate subject, it will be just as well, if not much better, to know something of the delicacy of their make up, as well as to inquire into what is embodied in their diet.

While giving special attention to the little children of the kingdom, it is as well, if, indeed, not better, that we also pay attention to the fact that the elder ones among us (and it seems, at times that more and more of us are falling into that category) oftimes seem to be delicate and weak and that they, too, need special diets.

As we scan the back issues of the Signs it seems that there has been a wide coverage of Israel going down into Egypt for bread. But little is said about delicacies for the feeding of the children of Israel. Primarily, it was bread, the staff of life, that they went after. There has been much arguing and oftimes unkind things said on at least two sides of the vital issues involved. I do not have any desire whatever to argue, nor to wound, nor to make anyone offended for a word, but at the same time, I feel compelled to maintain the untarnished truth that God sent them all down there, to save much people alive, and brought every one of them out for the untarnished glory of Himself (Gen. 45:7,8). Furthermore, God destroyed all of the mighty host of the Egyptian empire that had enslaved His people.

Let us notice this all absorbing thought. Israel did not have long excursions into what would be called good times. It is best for Israel to consider in the day of adversity (Eccl. 7:14). Let us think soberly about the

condition of Israel in all of this history. Think about the children of Israel and as you think about them let us think about ourselves. What would have come of them all had it not been for Joseph? Isn't it a sad day of bitter facts against the brethren (against you and I)? Come dear brethren, tell me who it was that saved Israel? Was it Joseph or was it by any of the righteousness of his brethren? In fact, what saving power was in action in all of the spectacular events of grace along the route of these historical travels? Which one of the brethren contributed to the welfare of Israel? The brethren that sold Joseph did not intend to save any of them, including themselves, in the way that they were saved. If any kind of salvation that God's children have received in any age of the world has come from the brethren, let me say with my dying breath that here is an outstanding salvation that embraced ALL of Israel and yet not one thing did an Israelite contribute to their preservation and salvation except the part that Joseph had to do with it.

When the fulness of the four hundred years and plus that God promised Israel that they would stay, was up, there was another chapter to the history of that nation that was in the offing of God's reign over them. It has always been like that. It will always be like that. In every phase of the history of Israel it has been ordered of God. Israel was intermingled in every period of the history, but God declared before hand what was coming each time. Notice carefully the long write up about Israel going to Egypt long before they did. It was not too long after the reason for Joseph going to Egypt had materialized before the next chapter or phase of Israel moving on was soon being talked about. This new land was talked about, as Egypt was talked about before it, as a goodly land. Starvation had caused them to go to Egypt and now persecution is getting them anxious and willing to go seeking a better place.

Adversity and prosperity are both from God. God has done the setting of one against the other. Thus, we are assured that there will not be any conflict between the events of each day. Time and again, Moses told the children of Israel that the land to which the Lord was sending them was a goodly land, even a land that flowed with milk and honey. This was, no doubt, good news to them, especially after having been persecuted and made to make hay and brick and labor in the fields.

Let us realize at the outset that there was not a thing coming out of this labor that was conducive to getting better production. It was exhausting labor that gave nothing to them in return except more demands on them for greater production. There was not anyway to satisfy the demands of the law. The more that you accomplished, the more there was to accomplish. While it has been truly said that the law came by Moses, I have always had a peculiar feeling that in some wonderful way that he in a double measure figured in some small measure as our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ also.

He began telling the children of Israel about a land to which the Lord was taking them to. He means more to me than just a messenger or a

type of the law, for here he is being guided by the Lord in getting the harassed people of God out from under the task masters of this new country to which they were going, would be flowing with milk and honey.

Have you ever heard of a man or a woman that could make honey? Do you know of a factory anywhere in the world in which they claim to be able to produce honey? Mark my question well. Do you know of such a thing? Now let us step back and read and meditate on Moses' declaration that the new land to which the Lord was directing them flowed with milk and honey. Was Moses telling Israel the truth? If so, name the time and place in which they found this to be true. Now before we venture further, let us ask this pertinent question, to wit, Has any man or woman, in and of themselves, ever produced any milk as food for their fellow creatures? No man, and no woman, in and of themselves, has ever produced a drop of milk. And notwithstanding all this. We are told that the new land flowed with milk and honey.

It is readily admitted that little ones need much milk in their diet. But they cannot produce a drop of this essential food. It likewise is readily admitted that honey is extensively used in feeding little ones. But here again, we run up against the fact, that no man nor set of men can produce a drop of it. Where is this flowing volume of milk and honey coming from? Remember the country is flowing with these two things.

Did Israel Live as well as Moses' statement would indicate that they would? They did not. However, the Lord did take care of them. Goodness and mercy did flow as a continuing and flowing stream. Then, dearly beloved child, let us think upon what Moses told the children of Israel, being altogether truth, altogether lovely, but let us think of this fabulous flowing land of milk and honey as spiritual blessings. David, in his advanced years was as full of God's bountiful promises as was Moses in this case, but David did not see the literal fulfillment of God's bountiful care of his people. He had been young and had gotten old, yet he had not seen the righteous forsaken or His seed begging bread. But to me he was speaking about spiritual Bread, certainly not natural.

Certainly the children of God have had days of adversity as well as days of prosperity, but whatever have been the days, the goodness and tender mercies of God have been a continuing flow of blessings. Certainly Israel gathered the manna from heaven; they stood astonished as Moses smote the Rock and the cooling waters flowed out; it is readily admitted that Moses father in law encouraged the Israelites to go on the journey because it was a good one, and that everything would be alright. But the question in my mind is: Was the goodness of the journey to be in the receipts of the good land and prosperous journey, or was the pleasant figure of a land flowing with milk and honey to be rich in spiritual blessings. Did the Lord turn from His people on this goodly journey in giving them Himself, in giving them to experience seasons of rejoicings in the Spirit to a rich and full life in the perishable things of this

goodly land. Were they to experience the trial that Job experienced? Were they tried with the trial that Peter tells us to look for and to expect? In short, did Moses seduce them into this lonely hazardous journey with promises of a full dinner pail and change in the pocket, or was he describing for their consolation; was he preparing them for a journey in which the days of adversity were rigidly set over against the days of prosperity?

It was a trying journey, although Jethro described it as a good journey I believe, if I believe, that the gospel of the grace of God was preached to them, but I am not able to conceive, either by the letter of what Moses and Jethro said to them, nor by my own experience that they were talking about material blessings, about the things of the earth, even though they flow freely from God's beneficient hand. It seems, at times, at least, that I have little evidence of acceptance with Him, but when I survey my status in my relationship with the earth, it is not too much help and encouragement to me to take hope. I have had a lot of sickness; I have been near death twice. According to those that know more than I do; I have had reverses in the business world, but notwithstanding all of that, I have lived in a land that has flowed with milk and honey. Strange as it may seem, it has been a source of anxiety because the Lord has been so good to me. On the other hand, it has seemed to me that I have such a little to base a hope in His mercy upon, that I am often cast down and filled with doubts of my hope and my call to the ministry. And yet, it is with shamefacedness that I write these things against myself. For, There has been times in the pulpit when I would have been as willing to leave everything precious to me on earth and to follow Him in death and in life. I have stood in the pulpit and wished that my hearers could stand there with me and see what I was seeing.

The things of the earth given me have been mine. God gave them to me for my benefit here. The weakness in my deportment before Him, and before His children have, likewise, been mine. Yet the things of the earth, having been as a land flowing with milk and honey, have seemed to be a stumbling block to me, but the things of the Spirit, if, indeed, I have been thus led, I have, as it were, stumbled or fell into the reception of them, as one that had no sense of direction. Yet, when water was given me, as by a Rock having been struck, when manna has dropped down when I was hungry and destitute, when a voice at my side spoke in soothing terms, This is the way, walk ye in it, at those times I do hope that my soul was built up, my faith increased, my hope brightened, I have felt some degree of desire to say, Have thine own way, Lord, thou art the Potter, I am the clay.

Elder W.D. Griffin

CORRESPONDENCE

" All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid

on Him the iniquity of us all." Isa. 5 vs. 3-6.

I awoke this morning with this scripture running through my mind and would like, if I can do so, to express a few of my thoughts on it. This shows forth the sad, depraved conditions of the human race, more especially of the Lord's people in their natural condition. Who is there among us who would not like to do as we please and have everything our own way. We very often strive very hard to have things our way until, finally, the Lord makes us to realize that our way is not the right way. It is such an easy and a natural thing for each of us to go our own way and it more often than not does lead us astray. Therefore God in His wisdom, before the earth was ever formed, knew that He had to have a plan to save man from himself. So by the everlasting covenant of the Triune Godhead, and by mutual agreement, so to speak, laid the burden of all the sins of man on the person of Jesus who was to be our Saviour at the appointed time and place.

Verse 3, "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not."

Man in his natural state has no love for Christ, indeed He is despised, hated and rejected by men, they feel no need for Him nor feel any sort of admiration. Therefore none wish to know Him, so they turn away and hide their faces from Him, and hold no esteem for Him whatsoever.

Verses 4 and 5, "Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted." "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed."

When we in the strife and disappointments of life find ourselves burdened down with sorrow and grief, so great that it seems to be absolutely unbearable. Then it is that our blessed Saviour comes to us with healings in His wings and bears upon wings of love and brings us comfort and peace, because He has borne our sorrows and griefs and in love and compassion comes to us when we need Him most. Yet natural man holds Him in no esteem, a man whom God afflicted. Still, it is for our transgressions that He was nailed to the cross, was wounded with thorns, spears and swords and in His agony was given a sip of vinegar and gall to drink, which I think is a symbol of the bitter, bitter cup filled full with all the sins of man. To be His drink in His final hours and so it is that with His stripes, that is, His punishment, all His sufferings and wounds which were inflicted on Him and causing His blood to flow out, when He gave His precious life to be a ransom for His people and His chastisement or punishment, was to bring about our peace, so with His stripes we are healed, made clean and pure of all our transgressions which He cleansed with His own precious blood and made us to be forever accepted in the beloved.

And so, now that it is all accomplished for his wayward sheep who have all gone astray, they will all be housed in one fold watched over by one Great Shepherd, who saved them from all their transgressions and has since then made intercessions between man and God, that man's prayers may be heard and that he might find favor in the sight of God and receive the manifold blessings of a gracious, loving Heavenly Father who holds all things in the hollow of His hand.

These are some of my thoughts concerning this beautiful scripture of Isaiah, foretelling the life and death of Christ. To me this is one of the most beautiful chapters in the Bible. I know my wording is very simple and inadequate to describe this magnificient work of a most powerful and Holy God.

If you think it suitable for publication you are free to use it, otherwise just discard it.

May God bless all connected with the publishing of the "Signs" to His glory.

From one who is the least of all,
Mrs. Laura Wolf

February 3, 1987
Route one
Scroggins, Texas

Dear Elder Key:

I believe the scriptures to teach that Zion is the complete church of God, the Bride of Christ, the Body of Christ, and that Zion is the one the Lamb of God did bleed and die for and did rise for on the third day, and He, Christ, did ascend back into the heavens to receive the Glory He had with the Father from the beginning. Is Zion in danger? Let us see.

Isaiah 46-13, "I bring near my righteousness: it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry; and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory." I understand His righteousness and salvation, here spoken of, to be the Christ, the Lamb of God. Where then is Christ? He is, or I understand Isaiah to proclaim, in Zion.

Psalm 132-13, "For the Lord hath chosen Zion, He hath desired it for His habitation." Zechariah 1-17,".... and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and yet choose Jerusalem." Will He comfort Zion? 2 Peter 3-9, "the Lord is not slack concerning his promise as some men count slackness but is long suffering to usward not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." As the scriptures set forth, God is not slack concerning his promise. Yes, surely he will comfort Zion. His habitation and salvation are in Zion, and He shall comfort her. What sweet news this is to a trembling child of grace; one who can find no resting place in this unkind sinful world. I can find no reason to be distressed over Zion, for "the Lord hath desired it for his habitation."

I will be honest, dear ones. What distresses me is me and my ungodly sins. I have to confess with Paul, "I am the chief of sinners." If I know my poor heart, I do desire to do all things that would be pleasing in the sight of

God. I beg him to "lead me in the Paths of Righteousness for His name sake," but I find I go farther astray. Oh, I would do good!

The Lord will surely take care of Zion. What could be desired for her more than the Lord has already done? He has placed salvation in Zion.

I know the scripture states in Amos 6-1, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria...." It does not say, woe unto Zion, but woe to them that are at ease in Zion. Who are those that are at ease? They are the ones that trust in the mountain of Samaria; worshipping strange gods, the flesh. Are they trusting in the Lord? If they are in Zion they will be brought to trust in Him. His salvation will appear to them at His appointed time and will surely bring them to a time of woe. Will it not lay the flesh low? Everyone that makes up the Body of Christ (Zion) will be killed to the flesh. All have or will be brought to a woeful time. Isa. 54-13, "Then they will be taught of the Lord and great shall be the peace of His children." This peace is given to each and every one of those that are in Zion. What is distressing about this? Psalms 9, 10, 11, "and they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee." 11, "Sing praises to the Lord, which dwelleth in Zion; declare among the people his doings." The Lord has promised to never leave or forsake his little one, and when one is brought to know the Lord, after he has been brought to a time of woe, surely he will "sing praises to the Lord, which dwelleth in Zion." Surely he will declare the Lord is risen and alive forever more. He will no longer trust in the flesh but trust in the Lord. What is distressing about being brought to trust in the Lord?

I have felt a desire, at times, to beg the Lord in His mercy to keep each of the little churches here in peace, but I have not been given a desire to ask for an increase in the churches. I find the scriptures to teach that the Lord will "add to the church daily such as should be saved." I don't think this means a new one will be added, but Christ shall be revealed, here in time, to them that are in Zion.

Dear ones, I believe Zion will be comforted. No harm shall come to her. God does dwell in the midst of her. She is safe, for salvation has been placed in her.

In the 46 chapter of Isaiah God proclaims "he has spoken it, and he shall bring it to pass." He shall "bring near his righteousness" and "placed salvation in Zion for Israel my glory." Who or what is Israel my glory? In the 2 chapter of Luke, when Simean, a devout man, was waiting at the temple "for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Ghost was upon him." he beheld the Christ Child. He asked the Lord to let him, Simean, depart in peace, for he had seen "the Lord's salvation, the light, to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Israel." This salvation, the "glory of Israel" (Christ) was placed in Zion by the Lord for his glory (Christ). It is by Him and through Him.

Job 23-13, "He is in one mind and who can turn him? And what his soul desireth even that he doeth." "He has spoken it, and he will bring it

to pass." He has placed a light in Israel for the Gentiles. He has promised never to forsake Israel. What is there to be distressed about for Zion? Zion is the habitation of the Lord.

Surely the Lord's desire is toward Zion. Surely He would not make Zion His habitation or place His salvation in Zion if His desire was not toward her. If God's desire is for Zion, can anything ever go wrong for her? Is she not safe?

Afflictions do come upon Zion. Are they for her good? In the scriptures we are taught when the Lord blessed Israel, she became a proud and stiff neck nation. How did the Lord humble Israel? He withdrew His blessings from her and brought her low. Then, she would "trust in the Lord" and "declare among the people his doings. "Was she ever in danger of being forsaken of God? No, for He has promised never to forsake Zion.

Would God forsake his salvation, the glory of Israel, the Lamb of God? Dear ones, to even ask this question seems almost blasphemous to me. He has given His promise to Zion. His promises are true.

There has come a great falling away among our churches, but has Zion been forsaken? Christ speaking of His second coming in Thes. 2-3, "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." The falling away seems to give evidence, to me, that the coming of the Lord is near. I trust, in small times, I can find a comfort in this. Trusting the Lord of glory will soon gather Zion unto himself in the final consumation of all things. How could this be a cause of distress for Zion? It appears good news: the promise of his coming.

I am mindful of Elijah in King (1), the 18 chapter, where he asked the worshippers of Baal to lay their wood and dress a bullock and put it on the wood, and he would do the same. Then they could call on Baal to set the wood on fire and he would call on God. He told them, "I will call on the name of the Lord: and the God that answerest by fire, let him be God." You know how it was, they called on Baal; they worked themselves up quite a bit even to the cutting of themselves until the blood ran. Elijah mocked them and told them, "cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or preadventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked." They called until they had no voices to call with. Then Elijah went near and called to the Lord and the fire fell and burnt all, even the stones and dust and licked up the water in the trench. Isaiah 59-1, "Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neather his ear heavy that it can not hear." The Lord whose habitation is Zion does not have a deaf ear. In Mathew chapter 6, Jesus teaches His disciples, telling them how to pray. He told them "not to be as the heathern," for they like to be heard for their much speaking, but "to pray to the father in secret and it would be rewarded openly." It is not with loud cries that inclines the Lord to hear Zion but with sighs and groans that cannot be uttered.

What more can we ask for Zion

than what God has already promised. Christ speaking in John 14-27, "My peace I leave my peace I give to you. Not as the world knows peace." This is the peace He has given Zion. Peace, salvation, light, promised never to forsake, and desireth Zion for his habitation--- what else does the trembling child of grace stand in need of? Does God need to be remindful of his promises to Zion? How foolish, how unprofitable we are.

Dear ones, I find much about myself to be distressed about, am I of Zion or not? This and my sins distress me greatly.

I find comfort and peace again, at small times, in that God's habitation is Zion, and that He has placed salvation and peace in her.

Pray for me and mine.

In hope of heaven.

Unworthy,
Evelyn Rhoades

Elder J.R. Williams
Dear Brother,

I am 92 years of age, have been a subscriber of the Signs for about 30 years. I have been blessed up till now that I still can read the book with my glasses and I have enjoyed reading it. But there is a time that I will have to quit.

I am sending you a check for another subscription, enclosed here with it a check for $12.00. $10.00 for my subscription and the two extra is for the benefit of the Signs.

I probably will not be able to go any longer this probably will be my last subscription. I called you brother not that I am worthy or at least for any good work that I have done but it is for the hope I have in our Saviour. Pray for me.

Yours in hope,
Harvey Vick

Christ. Our Saviour. He is coming again some sweet day to gather up all his jewels, Elect of God. Whose names were written in the Lambs Book of Life, before the foundation of the world. No man or the Angels in Heaven knows when he is coming. Neither the Son, but the Father. Many shall come in my name, saying I am Christ. There will be wars, nation against nation. Trouble and sorrow, earthquake Kingdoms against Kingdoms. The sun shall be darkened, the moon shall not give her light. The stars in Heaven shall be shaken. Then shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds. Angels shall gather together His Elect from the Four Winds, from the uttermost parts of the earth. Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. St. Mark 13:31. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch. St. Mark 13:37. I am alpha and omega the beginning and end. The first and last. I am that I am. God in Heaven. Blessed are they that do His Commandments that they may

have right to the Truth of Life and may enter in through the Gate into the City.

May the Grace and Love of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ be with you all.

My prayer is to know more of Christ our Saviour each day I live.

Pray for this sinner,
Fred Ballard Murphy
Route 8 - Box 50
El Dorado, Ark. 71730

March 12, 1987

The Editors of the
Signs of the Times,

I have a mind to relate a couple of dreams I had in the past.

When I was about 16 years old, I dreamed I was in a deep pit. Fire broke out all around me. I tried to get out of the pit, but everywhere there was fire all around me. Suddenly I was wafted upward and carried away to a place of safety—to a beautiful place where there were many seats. I started to sit down, but an angel, say's to me, "Sister Peters, that seat is not for you." "Here is the one's we have reserved for you." It was beautiful and when I sat down it was the softest seat I ever sat in.

Sometimes old satan gets in the way, but the God I love, gives me strength to tell him to get behind me. Somehow, as I journey here on this sin-cursed earth God has made the way smooth part of the time. I have been made to believe that Heaven will be my final resting place.

What a wonderful thought! I'll have no more rough roads to travel but I'll be able to walk the Golden Streets forever and forever.

May the God I love and trust bless his people the world over, is my prayer for Christ sake.

Love to all God's good people.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Roosevelt Peters

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/87
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will be held, if the Lord's willing, with Mt. Ararat (Old Mt.) Church second Sunday and Friday and Saturday before July 1987. We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us. All ministers of our faith and order, who are at peace at home, are invited.

Take Mt. Cross Road (750) from Riverside Drive go approximately 13 miles to the church on right.

Elder J.R. Williams, Moderator
Harvey Wood, Clerk

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

MARTINSVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Martinsville Primitive Baptist Church became a member of the Pigg River Association in the year 1900. The date the church was organized is unknown. Former pastors were Elder Randolph Perdue and Elder Cecil Turner. Elder Lane Carter is present pastor.

The church is located on Rives Road in the city of Martinsville, Va.

Their meeting times are 11:00 a.m. third Sunday of each month and at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday before. Communion service is held the third Sunday in June each year.

ARTICLES

GOD IS LOVE

The apostle John, inspired by the Holy Ghost, wrote much concerning love, and is often called the apostle of love, although, all of the apostles displayed great love for God and the saints of God after they had received the Holy Spirit. Before they received the Holy Spirit however, they showed forth their carnal, sinful natures. Each and every apostle that walked with Christ while he was on earth said he would die for Christ, yet all forsake him and fled, and Peter even cursed and swore that he knew him not. Of course Jesus knew exactly what they would do, and told them so. It could not be otherwise, for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. Peter, especially, received a great lesson from this - that he was not his own keeper-and this is written not for his sake alone, but for the learning of all the children of promise; for all scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works. We are not our own keepers for without Christ we can do nothing. Jesus said, Without me ye can do nothing. Can we do anything that Jesus said we cannot do? Certainly not. On the other hand, we can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth us. Is not love one of the "all things"? Everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love. We are not here talking of natural, earthly, sensual love. There is love of parents, brothers, sisters, other kinfolks, friends, etc. and there is the love of money which is the root of all evil. Certainly this is not the love spoken of in the bible by the inspired apostles. We are speaking of the love that none but the born again child of God can know anything about. This is a love that God teaches. I do not know that I have this special love, but I have a certain feeling for the people I believe to be the children of God, a feeling that I have for no other people on earth, and I believe I have the witness in my heart that I believe on the Son of God, and if this witness be true then I can be numbered with the children. Even when I was a child in nature, I believed there is a God and I sought to worship him, but my efforts were in vain, for I did not worship him in spirit or in truth. I only knew of him as I was taught of men, but I did not truly know him experimentally in my heart as my savior, nor did I know anything of his doctrine. I may not know anything now, but my understanding has been changed, changed at a time when I certainly was not seeking change. Before this change I believed I could do something toward my own salvation, for all I supposed I had to do was accept him as my personal savior. He had left this part up to me, for he loved all men and would gladly save them if only they would let him. For God loved the world so much that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever was willing to believe on

him would be saved. What a God dishonoring doctrine this is, and it is still being taught by men today. I do not wish to condemn those who believe this, for I have many friends among them, but my hearts desire is for God to show them the truth as I believe he did for me. Other men cannot do this with any effect. God does not love all men, for he loved Jacob but hated Easu. Jesus told some of his followers that they were not his sheep, and that they would not come to him for eternal life. Why would they not come? Because they were not given to Christ before the foundation of the world. "All that the Father hath given me shall come to me, and I will raise him up at the last day." God has a people in every nation, kindred and tongue who were chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, and he loves them with an everlasting love. He knew that they would transgress his holy law and fall under condemnation of the law; and the penalty is death. God's law is just and holy. It demands death of the transgressor, and it must be satisfied. Love and mercy are attributes of the Most High, but so is justice. One cannot overpower the other, for they are equal. There is no greater love nor mercy than that which God has bestowed upon poor, helpless sinners, but where there is no shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. Therefore a sacrifice must be found to satisfy justice and at the same time redeem sinners from the curse of the law. The blood of goats, bulls, doves nor any other creature could do that. Only the blood of the pure, sinless, holy Lamb of God could accomplish that. Therefore Christ stood as a Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. How this innocent Lamb could die in the room and stead of guilty sinners and still satisfy justice is indeed a marvel to behold, but I will not attempt to describe it in this short letter. He came to do the will of his Father. "And this is the will of Him that sent me, that I should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day." The work that his Father gave him was finished when he hung upon the cross and testified, It is finished. By one sacrifice he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, and is now entered into the sanctuary not made with hands to make intercession for them according to the will of God. The Holy Ghost bears witness of this to us, and the Lord has made a covenant with us saying, I will put my laws in their hearts, and write them in their minds. And their sins and iniquities I will remember no more. Greater love hath no man than he should lay down his life for his friends. Christ has laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our life for our brethren. This we cannot and will not do of ourselves, but only with the help of the Holy Spirit. Therefore let us go down on our knees daily and cry unto Him for grace to esteem our brethren better than self, and be humble before them in brotherly love. If we do not love our brothers whom we have seen, how can we love God who we have not seen? Let us not love in words only, but in deeds. In our churches today we hear professions of love often, but in many cases we see little action to prove it. A brother

or sister is turned aside for some offence, unintentional or not, or maybe he or she does not see a scripture in the same light as ourselves. False doctrine should never be tolerated, but let us not destroy one another over minor differences. If a brother offends, let us go to him in love and attempt to clarify the situation. Should this fail, let us always follow the doctrine and ordinances set forth for us by Jesus Christ and the apostles. Let us not follow after men. We have seen this following after men, and it has caused great division amongst the brethren and churches. There are even those who exercise great authority in the churches, without truly having this authority, and it is tolerated by the other members. This should not be, for Christ is the only one with authority. He is the head of the church, and we should always look to him for guidance. Should I or anyone else attempt to control the church, be he deacon, elder or lay member, immediate action, in accord with the scriptures, should be taken.

I can well remember when I knew nothing of the doctrine or ordinances of the Bible as believed or taught by the Old School or Primitive Baptist people, yet they manifested a love that could not be denied and I was drawn to them like a bee to honey. Bickering and petty jealousy among them was unknown to me. The meeting houses were often full to overflowing, but now our buildings are seldom full and often almost bare at meeting time because of the lack of love. Think about it, brethren, and pray, pray, pray.

And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave commandment. Faith, hope and charity are gifts of God unto us, and the greatest of these is charity, for charity is Godly love. When we no longer have need of hope or faith, charity will abide. Let it not grow cold while we dwell here in this world of sin and sorrow.

Beloved brethren, I had an urge to write to you today that I could not resist. I have not written what I thought I might, but I have written what has entered my mind. I trust that it has been given of God, and hope that it is for his praise, honor and glory.

I beg an interest in your prayers of faith. May the love of God ever be with you.

An unworthy brother, if one at all.
Clifford Wilbanks

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

PROVERBS IX. I

"Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars."

Some time ago Brother J.C. Kenerly, of Atlanta, Georgia, asked us to present our views in the SIGNS on the above text. We did not do so at the time the request came because we felt we could not, even now we fear to attempt it; however, to say that we have had no thoughts upon the matter at all would not be

true, therefore we shall try to present such thoughts as we have and leave them for the judgment of our brother and our readers. This wisdom spoken of by the inspired Solomon is the wisdom of God. The house of wisdom is the church of the living God. It is through the wisdom of God that the church is built and that her seven pillars are hewn out. Knowledge is one thing; wisdom another. The wisdom and the knowledge of God are both infinite, and comprehend all things. But if we confuse knowledge with wisdom in this matter we shall lose the beauty of the text. Wisdom is especially the use to which knowledge is put. Taking it naturally, a man might know many things yet have very little wisdom. On the other hand, a man might be very wise yet have a very limited knowledge. Education may strengthen the mind with knowledge, but it cannot compel that knowledge to be employed wisely. The natural-born mechanic can do marvelous things with a few tools, while a mechanic without natural ability might not do nearly so well with all the modern mechanical appliances; so a really wise man with a little store of knowledge might accomplish great things, wherein a highly educated man might fail because he lacked ability to be wise. We simply mention the above matters to show the distinction between knowledge and wisdom and that they are not at all the same thing. The true and living God is just as infinitely wise as he is infinitely knowing, but our text says particularly that it is through wisdom rather than through knowledge that the church is built. God, foreknowing from eternity all things that should ever come to pass, comprehended all and every condition that should ever befall his children throughout the ages of time. Knowing all things, God knew beforehand just what to do, and when and how to do it in order to establish and to secure forever his holy house, the church. This marvelous wisdom God abundantly displayed when he beforehand blessed his people with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Herein was provision made in the wisdom of God for all the needs of his people in any and all times. It will be noticed that the text says, "Wisdom hath builded her house," not his house. Wisdom is spoken of as being in the feminine, not the masculine, gender. The reason for this is because the unity of Christ Jesus and his people is so vitally and eternally close that the wisdom of the eternal God embodied in Christ Jesus is at the same time the wisdom of the church also. What belongs to Christ belongs to her, therefore it is her wisdom, further, because it is the wisdom of God manifested in the church and flowing out of the church in a living walk and conversation, bringing about a building of her members up into the spiritual temple. As Paul wrote to the church of Philippi, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." The outward fruit testifying of salvation in a believer's life is due to the Spirit of God working in the soul of the believer. Likewise the wisdom of God in the upbuilding of the church is not brought about by some outward influence brought to

bear upon believers, but it is brought about by the Spirit of infinite wisdom working in and through each of the living members of the body of Christ, and working so effectually as to bring them out from the quarry of nature where they have lain dead in trespasses and in sins and fashioning them and building them up into the spiritual house of God. The house of God is not in anyway the result of man's work or teaching; not even do man's efforts have a part in it. From the beginning to the end, from foundation-stone to cap-stone, it is entirely the work of God, and wholly the revelation of God's infinite wisdom working its will in and through the members of the body of the Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul told the Athenians when he preached that remarkable sermon on Mar's Hill that the most high God does not dwell in temples made with hands, nor is he worshiped with man's hands.

We now come to the second part of the text, which declares that wisdom has hewn out her seven pillars. In ancient times seven was often regarded as having a mystical significance, or as signifying perfection. For instance, the seven churches in Asia mentioned by John in Revelation do not mean simply seven literal churches, but signify the seven periods of the gospel church, or the entire travel of the gospel church from the days of the apostles to the end of this dispensation. Paul, in writing to Timothy, declared the house of God to be the church, the pillar and ground of truth. In the song of Solomon the bride, or church, is spoken of as coming out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke. We shall not, therefore, contradict the word of God when we say that the church is the pillar of the truth, nor would it be wrong to say that the churches of the saints are the pillars hewn out by wisdom. A pillar is used in a building to support the superstructure, and is itself builded on the foundation. One of the purposes of God in maintaining his church in the midst of an ungodly world is to uphold the truth as well as for it to be supported by the truth. God has nowhere said in the Scriptures that the church is to convert the heathen, or to save the world for Christ, but the Scriptures do abundantly testify that God's object in the church is that it shall be the living witness of his truth. Therefore, the church as a whole being the pillar of truth, the individual and separate churches builded upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets are the pillars. These churches of the saints, beginning with the one organized in the city of Jerusalem during the time of Pentecost spoken of in the second chapter of Acts and continuing on down through the centuries to the present time, have been hewn out by divine wisdom. Human efforts and creature wisdom have had nothing whatever to do with hewing out these pillars. The wisdom of God incarnate in the Lord Jesus Christ is the mighty force that, in the beginning of the gospel age, lighted the lamp of his truth in the hearts of men, and that same wisdom trims those lamps and keeps them burning at the present time. No one of us can keep alive our own soul, and it is equally true that all of us together cannot keep the

church alive. God has his own perfect way of carrying on and accomplishing this work. It is not the way that men would do it, nor is it after the advisings of men's thoughts, but it is the only perfect way, and as far above man's way of doing things as the heavens are higher than the earth. Unto the Jerusalem church, the first gospel church ever organized among men, God himself added daily such as should be saved. The members of the church had nothing whatever to do with increasing its membership, or with decreasing it. This was the Lord's work entirely, and it is still the work of God to-day. Through his infinite and unerring wisdom God selects whom he wants to be members of his church, and he, by the Spirit of divine wisdom in the hearts of those individuals, brings them into the church, maintains them in the church as long as it is his will that they should stay there, and when done with them here takes them home to the church triumphant. We see, hence, that truly it is wisdom that has builded the temple of the living God, and that it is indeed his wisdom that hews out the seven pillars of the house, that is, the whole perfect number of the churches of the saints that have been here in the world organized through the Spirit into visible bodies. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."

Elder Leferts

Dear Sir,—Is it scriptural for a Particular Baptist church to admit members of General Baptist churches to the Lord's table, upon a well-founded suppostion that they are the Lord's children?

An answer to this would greatly oblige, Sir,

Yours in the Lord
BETA, DELTA.

ANSWER.

All Particular Baptist churches consider such a practice subversive of their principles, and a sanctioning of error and disorder. As some really God-fearing persons in our churches may not clearly see this, we will devote a few words to the subject.

We fully admit that it may seem, at first sight, narrow and rigid, and to some almost unchristian, not to allow members of General Baptist churches, assuming they bear marks of grace, to sit down with the members of Particular Baptist churches. But what we are to consider is not so much individuals as a principle; and then what seems harsh as regards persons, may appear quite right as regards things. Now, as a principle for a church to act upon—and here we must consider the private feelings of individual members, but the church, as "the pillar and ground of truth"—is it right in a church, as Christ's representative, to sanction error and erroneous men? But this it certainly does whilst it admits members of erroneous churches to sit down at the table; for in sanctioning the members, it indirectly, if not directly, sanctions both the church and the minister.

Besides, what evidence have we that whilst they hold such errors, which we must assume they do as long as they continue members fo a general church, they are partakers of grace? The General Baptist churches are sunk in free will, and are for the most part deadly enemies to a free-grace gospel. How, then, can we welcome to the Lord's table those who deny his finished work, are not stripped and emptied of self, and fight against those precious truths whence we derive all our hope? If it be answered that these members do not, we may reply, their minister does, and the church with which they stand connected; and whilst in union with such a church, the voice and acts of the church are their voice and acts; for were they to testify against the doctrines held by the minister and the church, their membership would come to a speedy end. But would we admit their ministers to our pulpits? Why, then, admit their members to our table? "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" How then can the friends of a particular redemption walk with the friends of a universal one, or the lovers of free grace unite with the lovers of free will; or how can those who cleave wholly and solely to Christ's righteousness, walk with those who hold with part of their own? At the Lord's table, we want love and union, to be joined together in one heart and one judgment. But how can this be the case, when members of general churches unite with us at this solemn ordinance? If they be children of God, and have received the truth in the love of it, why do they still sit under error? Why still continue members of erroneous churches? Why not "come out and be separate," as the Lord bids?

But why do they want to sit down with the Particular Baptists? Have they not a table of their own? Why do they not keep to it? Why do they want us to sanction their errors? Most probably the reason of their continuing members of dead churches is some flesh-pleasing cause, or some worldly, self-indulgent motive. Why should this be sanctioned and covered over, and they thus really strengthened in their evil-doing? If they are one in heart with us, why not unite with us openly? If not one in heart, why do they want to sit down with us? By making a stand against their sitting down at the table— not from any prejudice against the individual, but on the ground of truth and conscience—we may lead them to consider their ways, which are not good; and thus our seeming harshness be really more profitable to them than flesh-pleasing softness. As long as churches of truth countenance error by word or deed, in principle or practice, it will be thought of little consequence. Thus truth and error get confounded, the church and the world insensibly mingled, the barriers set up against false doctrine pulled down, and separation from all evil eventually nullified. The only way is to make a stand at the outset, and not give way in this apparently little thing and the other seemingly mere trifle, as men estimate them—as if any part of God's truth or worship were a matter of indifference—but to resist the entrance of all error and all evil from the beginning, as one would at once

stop a small leak in a ship, or trample out a spark in a room, lest the former sink the vessel and the other burn down the house. A Particular Baptist church that does not stand firm to its faith and order will soon tolerate other innovations, till at last it loses all its distinctive features, and sinks down into a mere worldly church, a wreck and ruin of what it once was. As in individuals sin begins by littles, and one thing leads on to another, till crime is consummated; so in churches error and declension usually commence by "Is it not a little one?"

Upon these grounds, then, we resist the introduction of the members of General Baptist churches to the Lord's table, as sanctioning error, breaking down our faith and order, and opening a way to a union with the world and all its evil results.

J.C. Philpot

PSALM 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 1987

Mrs. Alice Johnson, TX	$2.00
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OBITUARIES

SISTER MARCELLA VEST CONNER

It has pleased our Heavenly Father by His love and mercy to call Home another one of our lovely members at Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church.

Sister Marcella Vest Conner was

born March 7, 1891 and passed away February 22, 1987, making her stay here on earth almost 96 years. She was married to Brother Robert Conner who passed away February 5, 1946.

She is survived by two sons, Mr. Estral Conner and Brother Hansel Conner, Salem, Va; one daughter, Mrs. Ada Lynn Bohon, Salem, Va. in whose home she lived for the past year. One daughter, Mrs. Sabra Short passed away in June 1984 and one son Mr. Basil Conner passed away in December 1986. A number of grand children and great-grandchildren also survive.

Sister Conner joined the Primitive Baptist Church with her husband in 1912. Her membership was at Laurel Creek Church until Mountain View Church Floyd Co. was organized, then they moved their membership there and Brother Conner was ordained a deacon. Later in 1957 she moved her membership to Roanoke Church where she indeed lived a faithful member until her death.

A few weeks before her passing she told me that she had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church longer than some people had lived, about 75 years.

The faith of God all these years has kept her and the most important thing to her was salvation by grace and she never looked for anything better or had any place better to go than to attend the churches of her faith. She was a beautiful Mother in Israel, made beautiful by the love of God which shined from her face and enriched her life. She also was so beautiful in death.

Her funeral was conducted February 24, 1987 at Lotz Salem Funeral Home by Elder Lane Carter, who spoke so comforting to the family and the many brethren, sisters and friends that filled the chapel, after which she was laid to rest in Sherwood Cemetery under a beautiful blanket of flowers to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now to her family we would say, weep not for her but rather rejoice that she is now resting from all her labors in the arms of her beloved Saviour.

This memorial was written at the request of her son, Brother Hansel Conner and humbly submitted by one who loved her dearly.

Mrs. H.C. (Rlee) Houchins

Johnnie Gray Everette

In loving memory of our dear Sister, Johnnie Gray Everette, who departed this life November 28, 1986. She was born in Martin County March 4, 1907, the daughter of Samuel H. and Sallie Blount Roebuck. She was married to Hubert Everette who passed away in 1945. To this union two children were born, Staton, who preceded his mother in death in April, 1971, and Hubert of Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania. He was blessed to visit his mother and have her visit him during the last years of her declining health. He proved to be a loving and devoted son.

We of Flat Swamp Church extend

our deepest sympathy to Hubert and his family and to all who were near and dear to her by the ties of nature. We miss her very much as she was always one of the first to arrive at church. She loved to greet each one with a hearty welcome and that sweet smile, which manifested her love. She was a strong believer of the Primitive Baptist doctrine and was always ready to defend it.

Sister Johnnie moved away from this area for several years, but upon her return to Robersonville, she soon asked for a home with Flat Swamp Church, where her father and mother had been members many years before. She was received by baptism on November 7, 1971.

Her funeral was held in Biggs Funeral Chapel by her pastor, Elder Reeves Smith. She was laid to rest in Robersonville Cemetery where many flowers and friends showed the love they had for her. We believe one day she will be blessed to hear her Savior say, "Come and inherit that home prepared for you from the foundation of the world, where there will be peace and love forevermore."

Done by the order of conference, Saturday before the first Sunday in December, 1986.

Elder Reeves Smith, Moderator
Hassel Allen, Committee

EMMA SMOTHERS MCCOLLUM

Sister Emma 93 died Feb. 15, 1986 in Twin Lake Nursing Home in Burlington, N.C. Her Funeral was at Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church where she was a member over 60 years with Elder H.W. Wray her pastor and Dr. Wendell Manuel her grandson officiating burial was in the church cemetery.

Surviving are daughters, Mrs. Edna Earl Manuel Madison, Mrs Hilda McNeily, Greensboro, Mrs. Ann Greene, Briar Cliff Manor, N.Y., foster daughters Mrs. Ruth Shreve and Mrs Essie May Patterson, Reidsville, nine grandchildren 13 great grandchildren. Brother Reubin Smothers, Monticello, sister Mrs. Louise Lambert, Monticello, Mrs. Ollie Neal, Stokesdale, Mrs. Ida Hill and Miss Addie Smothers, Reidsville, Mrs. Mary Everette, Summerfield.

Sister Emma loved her church and was a devoted member, and served as Clerk and Treasurer for 30 years. She had a lovely home and loved to fix meals for her brethren, sisters, and ministers. When her health failed she sold her home and lived with her daughters since 1978. They gave her devoted care. She broke her hip two months before passing and was in the nursing home. She was blessed with grace and patience to bear all things, trials and afflictions. We miss her very much and are thankful we had the priviledge of walking with her in the fellowship of our Lord over thirty five years. We believe she has entered into that blessed rest of our Lord Jesus Christ waiting that glorious ressurection day.

Sister Rachel Wray, Clerk

REUBEN TURNER PICKERAL

After a lengthy illness, God called our dear Brother (Deacon) Turner Pickeral from our midst, on February 14, 1987.

Brother Pickeral was born April 18, 1914, in Pittsylvania county. He was the son of the late David Wade Pickeral and Hester McClanahan Pickeral. He lived most of his life in Danville, Virginia, where he was employed by the Coca-Cola Bottling Co., before retiring in 1977. On January 15, 1937, he was married to Sister Effie Doss Pickeral. They had two daughters, Glenda P. Waller and Sandra P. Payne and two granddaughters, Lisa Brizoski and Gena Payne. They all live in Danville, Virginia. Other survivors include four sisters, Ida P. Hamlett, Ola P. Crawley, Laura P. McMinnis and Minnie P. Hedrick, all of Gretna, Virginia.

The Lord started dealing with Brother Pickeral at an early age. Many times he has told us that the Lord was with him so strongly on a ship, during World War II, at times, he didn't fear the enemy nor his bombs. This same Lord brought him safely home to his family and walked with him the remainder of his life. Brother Pickeral lived his religion. He was good to his family and a devoted member of this church.

Brother Pickeral joined Banister Springs Church on the third Sunday in April 1945, and was later ordained deacon. He served this office with great devotion. The welfare of the church was foremost in his mind. He believed that all church business should be done in decency and in order. He visited the sick and shut-ins and reported to the church how they were getting along. Whether it was seeing that the church building and grounds were taken care of , passing the communion plate or welcoming visitors, he was always there with a willing hand and a smile.

Brother Pickeral led our songs for us and said when the Lord tuned his heart that he could pitch them just right. We shall miss his beautiful voice singing the hymns of grace.

Brother Pickeral loved the doctrine of salvation by grace, believing that salvation was solely by grace of God. When the Lord opened his ears to hear, no one enjoyed a good sermon more than he. He fed from the Master's table many times. Brother Pickeral felt his religion and others could see it in him.

For the past two years, Brother Pickeral has been in declining health. He bore his sickness with great patience and humility, stating that he would live everyday that God intended for him to live. He attended church whenever possible and led the singing even though he was very ill and weak, but spiritually he was strong.

He and sister Effie welcomed visitors to their home to see them during his illness. You usually came away lifted up because he was spiritually minded and talked about the Bible or things pertaining to the church.

The funeral was conducted from Barker's Funeral Home chapel by Elder Melvin Shelton and Elder H.P. Somers. Brother Pickeral was laid to rest in Danville Memorial Gardens to await the morning of the resurrection, when Christ shall come to claim

his Jewels. I feel that Brother Pickeral is one of those Jewels of mercy.

He shall be missed by his family and all who knew and loved him, however our loss is his eternal gain. The church wishes to express its sympathy to Sister Effie, their children, grandchildren and all his family. May God be with you and grant you peace.

Written by order of the church:

Ruth Taylor - Clerk

WILLIAM THOMAS ROBERTSON

We at Old Mt. Church were saddened to hear that Brother Tom Robertson had been called home. He was highly esteemed among the Primitive Baptist, as well as his friends and neighbors, and all who knew him. He was born June 9, 1888 in Pittsylvania County. A son of the late John Robertson and Sallie Ann Motley Robertson. He was married to the late Cora Mae Lewis Robertson. He passed away Sept. 27, 1986.

He was a member of the Danville chapter of V.F.W. and the American Legion. He was a veteran of World War I, and a retired contractor. He was blessed with an unusual talent, a master builder, in wood, brick and stone, that he did not learn from mortal man.

Brother Tom lived a rich beautiful life for 98 years. Joined Spray Primitive Baptist Church early in life, later moved his membership to Mt. Ararat or Old Mt. Church. A faithful devoted member, attended regular as long as his health permitted. He always welcomed his brethren and friends who came to visit. Would ask about his church. He loved to talk on the scripture, and was always ready to give a reason for his hope.

He leaves to mourn a son William Thomas Robertson, Jr. of Charlotte, N.C. A daughter, Dr. Mary E. Bredemeier, Somerset, N.J. one sister, Ferrie Atkinson, Maple Shade, N.J. three grandchildren and two great grandchildren. A number of nieces and nephews, relatives and friends.

His funeral was held at the Fair Funeral Home Chapel, Eden, N.C. by his pastor, Elder H.W. Wray. His body was laid to rest by his dear wife in the Danville Memorial Gardens. beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, A token of love and respect from his family and many friends, to wait the second coming of his Lord Jesus Christ. May the Lord bless the family, and reconcile them to his will. Written by request of Old Mt. Church.

Elder H.W. Wray, Moderator.
Sarah Barker, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
Route 1, Box 65 Keeling, Virginia 24566

IN MEMORY OF JOHN RAYMOND BLACKWELL

October fifth and fifty-two
Marked the day one year
The death angel visited our home and took
Our husband and father dear.

We didn't know that he would die,
Most certainly not just then,
But just before he died I think
It was revealed to him.

While on his bed in agony,
He tried to breathe a prayer,
In a trembling voice then to me said,
I'm feeling better now.

Some scripture that he repeated,
As it now comes to mind,
Was, ask and it shall be given,
Seek and ye shall find.

He will not put upon me more
Than He will help me bear.
It was then that he, I'm sure, resigned
Himself unto His care.

He said, "God knows how I am suffering,
Just what I'm going through;
He died upon the cross for me
So He has suffered too".

I said to him, "What can I do"
When he was suffering so.
He said, "Lie down and get your rest
For you are tired I know".

"I know you'd help me if you could,
But there is nothing you can do.
I hope that He will give me faith
And bear me conqueror through".

With death's cold sweat upon his brow
Still trusting Him, he did relate,
"I know my Savior hears my cry,
His loving kindness, oh how great".

When his suffering became so severe,
He arose upon his feet,
But getting easy, he lay down and said
"I think I'll go to sleep.

He closed his eyes in a peaceful calm
And never more did wake.
That he's at rest in his Savior's love
Is our prayer for Jesus' sake.

We know it was right that he should go,
Tho our hearts with sorrow break,
For He is too good to be unkind,
Too wise to make mistakes.

He loved his church, his pastor too
And always filled his place;
He loved those good old songs of Zion
And believed Salvation was by Grace.

He was always a good husband and father;
His family was his delight.
Tho crippled from youth, undaunted,
He worked hard all his life.

He had his troubles, as we all do,
And I have often heard his say
That there was nothing in this old world
To make his want to stay.

I hope my Lord will help me
To raise my children dear,
That He may work things out His way
And cause them Him to fear.

I know that I too soon must go
The way that he has gone,
But Jesus will be with me;
I will not be alone.

Tho separated from us below,
He is reunited with our little son.
While our family circle on earth is broken,
In heaven it has just begun.

Written in loving memory of my
dear husband October, 1952.
Lelia D. Blackwell

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EDITORIAL

"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Romans 6:14.

The above passage of scripture is not a commandment, nor an admonition, but a promise from Almighty God. Sin has dominion over all the Adamic race while in the state of unregeneracy. Sin has polluted all our blood and left the leprosy still in our veins down to the latest generation. Sin has been the parent of all our earthly sorrows and will be the cause of our everlasting misery unless we are delivered from it. There is no monarch who rules over so many souls as that of sin.

Before entering fully upon the above text of scripture let us first consider the origin of sin as spoken of in our text. In the preceeding 5th chapter of Romans, the Holy Spirit very clearly set forth the state of all the human race as being in our federal head Adam. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin: so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom. 5:12. The guilt of Adam's sin has been imputed to all of us down through the ages of time as members of his fallen corrupt nature. "Therefore as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation." Rom. 5:18 For did not Adam "begat a son in his own likeness after his own image?" Gen. 5:3. We may wonder, how can it be said that all of the human race sinned in Adam? How did we do so? We must realize that in the first man Adam was the whole of human nature. He was the father of all mankind because the whole human race was in Adam. When he acted, the whole of human nature acted; they were all acting at the same time. So when Adam sinned, we sinned, and because we all sinned, death and a separation from God came upon us all. We all sinned in Adam because we were in him as parts of him. God made and appointed Adam as the representative of the entire human race. God decreed that the whole of humanity should be represented by Adam, and should suffer the consequences of his actions. Did God not have a right to do so? So we all sinned in and with Adam.

Thanks be unto God, the same 5th chapter brings forth the rich gift and free grace of God to His elect people in Christ as their Spiritual Head. "Even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification to life. "So by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Rom. 5:18,19. So can we not see that through the disobedience of one the whole human race became sinners; but by the obedience of One all are made righteous (all elect believers chosen in Christ.) That as sin reigns unto death in Adam; so grace will also reign unto life eteral by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us attempt at this point to make plain as to whom this rich gift and free grace are meant for. There are two very important pronouns in our "you" and "ye" which show that the text is spoken to a particular class of people. Chapter 1 verse 7 says, "To all that be at Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." "called to be saints" includes all of God's people, because they have been called, are being called and will be called by the Holy Spirit until the last one is regenerated. Who are the "called?" They are those whom the Father has chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. Divine or Holy calling is a special work of the Holy Spirit upon the soul. It is a shining of divine light into our hearts and souls giving us an unpleasant scene of what we are by nature. This holy calling brings forth a separating from the world, and as fears enters, our conscience is pierced with conviction. To be made a partaker of this heavenly calling is to be taught con-

cerning the law and gospel by the Holy Spirit.

Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called." Rom. 8:30. This divine calling springs out of eternal predestination, and is accompanied by justification, which issues into future glorification. God did not choose or call you in Christ Jesus because of any foreseen goodness in you such as spiritual belief, faith, love, hope etc. because all were completely void of all spiritual fruit, as well as any other consideration in us; but only from the sovereignty of His own free will and pleasure and "that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of him that calleth." Rom. 9:11.

"For sin shall not have dominion over you." The text does not say that sin shall not exist in you, for if so, it would lead us all astray. It does not say that sin will not cause you to grieve over the felt effect of it, as sin at times seems to be mixed with all we attempt to do. Sin becomes a great hinderance to that which has been made good within you. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit." Regardless of the anxiety and the shedding of tears that sin may cause us, it "shall not have dominion over us."

The scriptures declares sin to be the transgression of the law, and that all men are sinners. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Rom. 3:23. The whole Adamic race by nature is guilty, corrupted, condemned and depraved before God. Sin therefore reigns in our hearts, over the affections and lives of all men in their natural, unregenerated state: but to all of God's elect and redeemed people, grace will enter the heart and dethrone the reign and dominion of sin. "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." Luke 11:21,22.

Upon regeneration, Christ enters the heart as Lord of Lords and King of Kings and continues to be so. Grace does subdue the governing authority of sin. This is why we find two natures operating within us, grace and sin: the new man and the old which are completely opposed to each other. "So that we cannot do the things that ye would." Yet, "The elder shall serve the younger" The elder may at times seem to be the stronger, causing great fear, guilt and distress; but the younger shall prevail because "sin shall not have dominion over you." "for where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Rom. 5:20. Because Christ by his death crucified the entire body of sin, (the sins of the whole of His bride) and destroyed it. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Rom. 6:6. We may be ready to ask this question: if grace always reigns in a believer, why is it that we seem to fall a prey to sin for a season and at times feel the power of sin so strong within us? Let us look at some godly men of old. Noah was a righteous man and "found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Yet, he was overtaken with

wine, but he did not continue to live in the habit of it. Moses sinned in unbelief and free will in smiting the rock in the wilderness; but grace pardoned him through his faith and took him to glory, for he appeared in glory on the mount with Christ. With David and many others sin appears to reign, yet it does not, as grace worked true penitence and godly sorrow in each of them. Peter committed a great sin when he denied his Lord and Master with oaths; sin threatens to reign and appeared for awhile to have dominion over Peter. But Christ prayed that his faith fail not. Grace convinced Peter of his sin, pardoned it, and he was kept so by the power of God. Thus in the best of saints of all ages, sin has made strong attempts to have the dominion; but sin shall not have dominion for they are under grace.

"For ye are not under the law" God's quickened and born again children are not under the law as a covenant of works. To be under the law is to be subject to it, bound to its requirements and conditions, and as a covenant it demands all who are under it to perform its requirements, or come under its curse. For it is written, "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Gal. 3:10. And "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law. Rom. 3:19. Now by nature the whole human race is under the law, but true spiritual believers are not under it because they have been separated from it by an inward death. Paul says, "For I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." Rom. 7:9. Paul knew the letter of the law, but not the spirit of it until it came to him. When the above killing sentence came into our hearts and consciences, it slayed us as to any hope that may have sprung from our own self-righteousness, our creature wisdom, strength, works, etc. because these faded to nothing. We died to any hope of salvation from our own efforts. "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death." Rom. 7:24. At this point in our own experience we could say with the Apostle Paul, "For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not." Rom. 7:18. Were we not assured in our own mind that salvation by the works of the law was a sure impossibility?

Jesus died in His flesh under the law and if we are in union with Him, we must experience an inward death. "For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death." Rom. 7:5. In one respect, we were married to the law; but by our inward death, we are free from the law. "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Rom. 7:4. For "it is faithful saying: for if we be dead with him, we shall also reign with him." II Tim. 2:11.

The law was not given to deliver us from our corrupt and dead condition

in any respect. But the law was given to bring forth the exceeding sinfulness of sin, causing us to "exceedingly fear and quake." The law acts as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ by teaching us our helpless condition, our inability to combat sin.

"But under grace." The law was not destroyed, it was fulfilled by Christ. But we are not to be lawless, for we are under another law, the law of the gospel, the authority of grace. To be under grace is to be in Christ and to be in Christ frees us from all condemnation. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom. 8:1. The gospel is a perfect and sufficient rule for believers, it is the law of liberty for our rule. The gospel teaches us to "Abstain from all appearance of evil." I Thess. 5:22. To be under the covenant of grace is completely opposite to being under the covenant of works. The law of works is purely conditional; the covenant of grace is purely of free favor, absolute and immutable promises, and unconditional gifts and blessings wholly independent of any conditions whatever on the creature's part. This is what makes the gospel excel the law in glory. It sets free the lost, the guilty, the ruined, the utterly unworthy and the helpless It is unconditionally and forever "a kingdom which cannot be moved." What joy when He says, "Thou art my people" and our believing hearts can say, "Thou art my God."

If anything has been written according to the truth and your experience, give God the praise, and remember this poor sinner in your prayers.

With love,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Key,

I would like to use the Times to thank all the friends in Virginia and North Carolina for the many cards and letters I received following heart surgury. Would also like to thank our friends in whose homes we were so wonderfully treated these last two years. We hope to come that way again this year.

It is truly amazing, as I go out among these people, to see the love and fellowship that is shared, and how He works His people in such a way as to bring this about. He causes them to feel they should be at their brother's feet, which is contrary to human nature.

If the Lord will bless me, I would like to write a little about the word "Wilderness." You will remember the scriptures teach that the Lord's portion, and a very small portion it is, is his people. Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found Jacob in a desert land, a waste howling wilderness. He led him about and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of His eye. Never was Jacob, nor will we, be led out during this life.

He led him about and instructed him. Until this instructing began, we were aliens from God and without hope in the world. In the book of

Hosea 2:1, Hosea stated "Say ye unto your brethren, Ammi (my people) and to your sisters, Ruhamah (having obtained mercy)." The 14th verse reads, therefore I will allure her. In other words, He will make Himself the most desirable something she has ever seen before. All the beauty of this world will mean nothing. All those things she at one time longed for will fade away. Then He leads her into the wilderness and speaks friendly to her. He gives her the valley of trouble for a door of hope. His people have always been in trouble, but nothing like they find themselves in when He first touches their heart. They find themselves wanting something more than before and have no way of obtaining it. They, as we all, must realize they have withered hands and crippled feet and can't go on their own. Then, as in Psalms 107, they turn to the Lord, and the 35th Chapter of Isaiah tells what He does for them. This, to me, is some of the most beautiful reading in The Book. It tells us that the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. This is the beginning of being brought out of natures darkness, the work on the heart, mind and soul of one of His little ones. It shall blossom abundantly, and they will rejoice, even with joy and singing. Can you remember how sweet it was when you first believed, how beautiful the brothers and sisters had become? How beautiful the old songs sounded. And they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.

Then He begins to do something for the cripples. He tells them to be strong and fear not. He will come and save you. Then, at this time, the eyes of those that at one time could not see, are opened, to read and understand the scriptures. The ears of the deaf shall be unstopped, to hear the truth of the gospel preached. When this has been done to one of his little ones, then the lame shall leap as an hart, and tongues that at one time had nothing to say, will sing, and it will be a new song, because in the wilderness shall waters break out and streams in the desert. The parched ground shall become a pool. When He has opened to us our understanding, and we read all the wonderful things He does for His people, our cup runneth over. In the desert land where there was nothing, we begin to be taught.

Also, there is a highway and a way. It shall be called the way of holiness We can't get there by ourselves; we have to be "put" or led. The 40th Psalm tells us He puts our feet upon a rock, establishes our going, and puts a new song in our heart. The unclean shall not pass over it. This is why He went to the cross, to do away with our uncleanness. It shall be for those, the wayfaring men. Hebrews tells us they admit they are pilgrims, they have no certain home nor are they looking for one here, but they are looking for a city whose builder and maker is God. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go thereon, but the redeemed of the Lord shall walk there, because Jesus goes before His sheep. He leads them in paths of righteousness for His names sake.

The ransomed of the Lord shall

return. Our sins as a multitude have separated us and God. Love covers a multitude of sins. Because of these truths, they shall come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness; sighing and sorrow shall flee away. This is the inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for those that were chosen in Him before the world began.

In conclusion, may the words of our mouth and the meditation of our heart be acceptable in thy sight, oh Lord.

Elder Graydon Smith

MEETINGS

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Pigg River Association will be held, the Lord Willing, the first Sunday in August, Friday and Saturday before, July 31, and August 1 & 2, 1987. Reed Creek Church is the host for this setting of the Association. The meeting place will be on the grounds and the meeting house at Leatherwood Church.

Leatherwood Church is located in Henry County, Virginia, on State Road 657. Those coming from the south on Route 220, and those coming from the east on 58, go the north side of Martinsville, there take Route 108 N. for about 8 miles turn right on Route 657, and keep on this road for about 5 miles to the church.

Those coming from the North or East on Route 40, take Route 890 at Penhook. Route 890 goes to the Henry County line, then go 2 miles to Route 657, turn left on Route 657. Follow above instructions.

Those coming by Route 57, take Route 657, go about 2 miles to church. At each of these intersections, you will probably see a road sign "Leatherwood". Also watch for Association sign.

Jamie E. Cooper
Association Clerk

GOOD HOPE CHURCH

There will be a 5th Sunday meeting in August, 1987 at Good Hope Primitive Baptist Church.

7 miles south of Strong, Ark. on highway 275, if the Lord willing. All lovers of the truth and those of like precious faith, are welcome.

Lula Fox - Church Clerk

OLD PINE CREEK CHURCH

An annual all day meeting will be held, the Lord willing, at Old Pine Creek Church on the third of July, 1987. The Church is located off highway 221, five miles north of Floyd, Va. Those coming from Floyd, turn left onto road #682. Those coming from Roanoke, turn right onto road #682. All lovers of the truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Hale Terry

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

New Hope Primitive Baptist Church was established in 1847. The current structure is the third building, located in Spearsville, La. Former pastors were Elder John Lee Smith, his father and the present pastor is Elder Graydon Smith. This being three generations of the same family serving this church.

New Hope Church meets for service first Sunday of each month at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:00 p.m.

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

PSALM 9:1-2.

I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.

I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.

ARTICLES

LORD REVIVE US

Ofttimes when searching the scriptures and meditating upon them, which I hope is from the heart, I wish I could be blessed to put in words of love and understanding, the thoughts that are precious to me. Let me not be ashamed of my hope.

I have said many times, "My hope is so small; it seems almost gone." Our hope has never been small. It is Christ in you the hope of glory. Our sorrow is continually before us, and it makes us feel so small when we are not blessed to joy in the Lord.

Psalms 51:12, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit."

Restore means to revive. Isaiah 57:15, "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and Holy place, with Him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

Contrite means broken down with grief, humble, and sorrowful.

We read of many revivals over the land to excite the minds of the simple for the love of money. They have their reward.

I feel that the desire of our hearts is as we find recorded in Ezra 9:8, "And now for a little space, grace hath been shewed from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his Holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage."

Jesus is the nail in the Holy place. The Holy place is a sure place, as we find in Isaiah 22:23, "And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house."

Romans 8:29, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."

When we look in a mirror, we see the image of our flesh and we see nothing but corruption. We cannot see the image of our Lord in ourself, if indeed it is there.

God's humble poor are like the lily that has a beautiful flower and cannot see itself. Others see its beauty, as others see the image of Christ in the precious ones who are blessed to do all things decently and in order.

Conform means to make like. I believe the persecutions, heart aches, and sorrows his people--the chosen few that are a remnant--suffer in this low ground of sin and sorrow are conforming them to the image of Christ who suffered many things of the elders, chief priest, and scribes.

As unworthy as we feel, we are blessed with a precious hope that the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the law of sin and death. Therefore, we can say with John, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore, the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."

The world tells us what we ought to do and ought not to do. I believe we do what we do because of what we are. What we do doesn't make us what we are because we are not justified by works.

When we are revived by His free spirit, we are blessed to "joy in tribulations that worketh patience; and patience, experience; and exper ience, hope, and hope maketh not ashamed."

May the Lord bless us not to be ashamed to separate ourselves from disorder and unbelief, own our Lord and defend His cause, and pray for those that despitefully use us for we feel they know not what they do.

If we are not kept by the grace and mercy of almighty God, we will surely fall by the wayside. We cannot prosper by the wisdom of man, for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

Lord revive us,

Clifton Robertson
Route 1
Reidsville, N.C. 27320

"For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul? Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him? Will he delight himself in the almighty? Will he always call upon God?"—Job xxvii. 8-10.

Many of God's people are at times exercised as to their hypocrisy, and sometimes they may think themselves the most consummate hypocrites that ever stood in a profession. But if you are exercised with these painful surmises, these doubts and fears, just see (and the Lord enable you to bring it to the light of his countenance) these two features of a spiritual character. Do not talk about your hope; it may be "a spider's web." Do not boast of your gifts; they may be altogether in the flesh. Do not bring forward the good opinion of men; they may be deceived in you. But just see if, with the Lord's blessings, you can feel these two tests in you soul, as written there by his own hand. If so, you are not a hypocrite; God himself, by his servant Job, has acquitted you of the charge. Did you, then, ever "delight yourself in the Almighty?" It is a solemn question. Did your heart and soul ever go out after the living God? Did affection, love and gratitude ever flow out of your bosom into the bosom of the Lord? Did you ever feel as if you could clasp him in the arms of faith, and live and die in his embrace? Now if your soul has ever felt this, you are not hypocrite; and nothing can rise up out of your wretched heart, as an accusing devil, that can prove you to be one. Or if you cannot fully realise this, if you are one that always calls upon God, you are no hypocrite. I do not speak of your regular prayers, or any other of your regularities; for I believe that there is often more of God's Spirit, and more craving after God and delighting in him, in your irregularities, than in all the daily regularities which hypocrites delight in. But I mean, is there a sigh or cry by night, as well as by day; a pouring out of the heart into the bosom of God from time to time, as the Lord works it in you, in trouble, in perplexity, in

sorrow, and in distress? This is a test and a mark no hypocrite ever had or ever can have.

J.C. Philpot

PROVERBS 22:1-4.

A Good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold.

The rich and poor meet together: the Lord is the maker of them all.

A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.

By humility and the Fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life.

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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"WRATH"

The word wrath denotes several emotions including anger, grief, bitterness, indignation and fury. When used of God, wrath refers to His absolute opposition to sin. In no way is the anger of man compared with God's anger. Man's anger is destruction and cursed. Gen. 49:7 "Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel." Man has no mercy of himself and his wrath is cruel. Let us not fall into the hand of man. Let us fall now into the hand of the Lord: for His mercies are great. God is merciful God and His anger is a constant aspect of His Holy Righteousness, and man's wrath is an unholy emotion to which we should not give vent. Luke 4:28 "and all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath," and rose up, and thrust him out of the city.

"O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" Vipers, beasts, serpents, dragon. "The great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the devil and satan. John the Baptist referred to the Pharisees and Sadducees as vipers. Christ said to the scribes and Pharisees, John 8:44 "Ye are of your father and devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar and the father of it." John asked the question to a generation of vipers of which there was no answer from. Their own cursed anger which was

them to flee from their own destruction to come. Men are warned today and they seek to flee the wrath of man to come. Think and think again of the nuclear power build-up today; man's wrath to come. Cursed be their anger for it was fierce and their wrath, for it was cruel.

God being a merciful God and His anger a constant aspect of His Holy Righteousness, God's wrath warns not His people to flee from God, but by His tender love and mercy compells them to Him.

Hebrews 12:5 "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: 12:6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. 12:7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? 12:8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons.

To those, whom John the Baptist was addressing when he said, "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," were just and devout people waiting for the consolation of Israel and the Holy Ghost was upon them. It had already been revealed unto some by the Holy Ghost that they should not see death before they had seen the Lord's Christ. (Luke 2:25-32 Jesus presented in the Temple.) To those who were waiting by faith for the consolation of Israel and looking for redemption in Jerusalem heard the voice of one crying in the wilderness. Words which they had long waited to hear. "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Rom. 11:5 "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." To the remnant, the elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ that was enough to say. When John saw the generation of vipers come about him, he found it necessary to say much for they gloried in it that they were the seed of Abraham; but John knew they were of their father the devil. John was not bashful nor did he fear the face of men for he was full of the Holy Ghost and of power. The Pharisees and Sadducees were a viperous gang, they were all alike, though enemies to one another. A wicked generation is a generation of vipers and they ought to be told so. Note; many come to ordinances, who come not under the power of them.

Now to the word of exhortation and direction. Matthew 3:8 "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance."; we profess repentance and atten upon the doctrine and baptism of repentance. Repentance is sealed in the heart and it is there as a root, but in vain do we pretend to have it there, if there be no fruits of it. If repentance is sealed in the heart as a root, it is there by the baptism of Christ who has baptized us with the Holy Ghost and with fire, and the fruits are sure. John 15:5 "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bring forth much fruit: for without me

ye can do nothing. The fruit of the Spirit are what the branches are to bring forth. Eph. 5:9 "For the fruit of the spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth." If we are of His kingdom, we will continue to pray to God to keep us faithful.

Luke 16:10 He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

Col. 2:6 "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." Is this not our desire to walk in the same faith and or the order of the Orthodox churches, and to continue in the faith of the Apostles? Some will answer this question, "Yes, it is my desire." This Dear Brother in Christ will be praying to God to lead him and direct his path in the strait and narrow way and he will press forward holding fast to the faith with those comfortable words of Christ; "Lo, I am with you always even until the end of the world." Christ did not say, He would be with us in all our ways. He said, St. John 12:26 "If any man serve me let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be. If any man serve me, him will my father honor."

God of Heaven and of earth gave the oracles of faith to the elect according to the foreknowledge of God preserved in Christ. The first and primary ordinance of the Church is the baptism of the Holy Ghost and with fire, by our Lord and Saviour; Jesus Christ. Matthew 3:11 "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." The baptism He performs with the Holy Ghost and with fire is in union with Him sharing in His death, burial and resurrection. The baptism of the Holy Ghost, in no way, can be separated from the born again child. The new birth and the baptism of the Holy Ghost and with fire are united in one in Christ.

The baptism of water unto repentance is a symbol of Christ's baptism into the Militant church here on earth and is the first ordinance of the Militant church along with the Lord's Supper. The word was made flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth, leaving us an example. 1 Peter 2:21 "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps." an example pertaining to His kingdom in His words, things which shall be, things which must be and things which should be. Christ bore the sins of all His people expiated them by His death upon the cross and no man can depend safely upon Christ as having his sins and expiated his guilt, till he dies unto sin and lives unto righteousness. 1 Peter 2:25 "For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your Souls." Not only is He supreme in examples, but supreme in all Holiness and righteousness, having taught His disciples the eight characters of blessed people and plainly in His own words set forth the fact concerning adultery. Matthew 5:32 and 19:8-9 There would be great comfort to the militant churches and members to read these scriptures along with the third chapter of First Timothy and repent. The letter to the angel of the church in Thyatira said, Rev. 2:18 "And I gave her space to repent of her fornication." There are those whom

do say, I have read these scriptures many times, but my consicience will not permit me to comply with them. Brethren, please, I beg you; the conscience is not the final appeal. The final appeal is God and not man's conscience. Due to the persistance of sin, a man's conscience can become seared or hardened; for this reason the conscience can not be our guide. By the Grace of God, we are given blessings which are rich and divine inspired scriptures which are true. To hold fast to the scriptures is not an injustice to any person but love and kindness to the members. It is a divine biblical right, given by the Grace of God, to reprove, rebuke and exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. To do so, is not taking anything away from any person or depriving them of spiritual blessings. When we, church members, including deacons or ministers, step outside the inspired scriptures to our conscience, we can and must feel assured that five of the letters in Revelations chapters two and three are applied to us. Ephesus, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardus and the Loodiceans. He who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ said, Rev. 3:19 "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent. 3:20 "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him and he with me." Note: just to hear the voice is not good enough, but the door must also be opened. The five foolish virgins heard the voice but the door was not opened. All ten virgins had everything in common, including the grace, love or charity, of God, except oil, which represents faith.

There is a great difference between Heavenly spiritual blessings and blessings from Heaven. The children of Israel received blessings from Heaven while in the wilderness. The blessings they received were to sustain the natural body and to provide them with strength to continue on to the promise land which flows with milk and honey. Bread, milk, butter, honey and wine are the nourishments to the hungry soul, spiritual food from Heaven and Heavenly food to the eight characters of blessed people. The natural food we received each day is no doubt food from Heaven and for this food and all other natural and spiritual blessings, we are to offer thanks and pray to God to give us hearts to be thankful unto Him. If we receive the Heavenly blessings, we must follow Him, not enticing words of man's wisdom or man's conscience with cruel wrath. Matthew 8:12-13 "There are many come and sit down with Abram, Issac and Jacob in the kingdom of Heaven and the children of the Kingdom are cast out into outer darkness; there is weeping and gnashing of teeth." The kingdom of Heaven, (the church), is first above all things on earth and we must seek first the kingdom. To those who seek first the kingdom in faith, will of no doubt be scourged, not only by some outside the church, but even of some false professors in the church, who will seek after their own conscience and believe. The church is first above our everyday work, friends, our children our husband or wife. Christ

plainly set this forth in Luke 12:53 "The Father shall be divided against the Son and the Son against the Father, and the Mother against the daughter and the daughter against the mother; the Mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." Seek ye first the kingdom, and when people say, regardless of who they are, or how close they may be to you, "He loves the church of Christ, Primitive faith and order more than he loves me," that's a blessing to you.

To the true professor in faith, those who by the Grace of God, through faith, possess the eight characters of bless people, are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Heavenly places and will not fall down to worship any other. A steadfast faith in Christ will produce a steadfast faithfulness to Chirst. Our own close of kin will tell us we must give in a little here and there when even kings must own that when their commands are contrary to the commands of Christ, that it is Christ to be obeyed and not them. Daniel chapter 3, Matthew chapters 4 and 27, and Acts chapter 25.

We, the Church of Christ, Primitive faith and order, would not deny any person, any organization or group of people the right to worship as his or her conscience may dictate to them, nor would we deny them to worship any gods they may choose, nor would we deny them the right not to worship, or even to say, there is no God. It is a constitutional right of this United States of America. Let us pray, hope and try that this right will remain for it is the only way this nation can stand as a nation. However, there is a great difference between a constitutional right and a divine biblical right. The divine right and the right to worship as the conscience might dictate was made manifest in Cain and Abel. By the Grace of God, Abel was given the divine Grace of faith to worship God in Spirit and in Truth. By the power of God, the right of the conscience was given to both Cain and Abel. So by faith, Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. At the season and time to the purpose of God according to the election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth, began the most brutal war that has ever been or will be upon the earth, when Cain slew his brother Abel. Cain, who was of that wicked one, slew his brother because his own works were evil and Abel's Righteous. 1 John 3:12 "Cain who was of that wicked one and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil and his brother's righteous."Cursed be his anger for it was fierce, his wrath for it was cruel. For now the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. The voice, the blood and the cry was made manifest to man, of the first sons of Adam. The voice, the blood and the cry was in Egypt, in the wilderness and on the cross. Christ Himself, the only offering acceptable unto God for the sins of His people whom were chosen in Christ from before the foundation of the world. The Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon the flesh and the flesh withereth, but the word of our God shall stand forever. So above all, take the shield of faith

wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the darts of the wicked. Hebrews 11:4 "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts and by it, he being dead yet speaketh." At the time Abel made the offering, we have no record of the word faith. Genesis 4:2 plainly sets forth the fact that by the Grace of God, Abel was given faith before the offering. "Abel was a keeper of Sheep." God gave Abel repentance and faith in the promised seed and instructed him in the mystery of sacrificing. Faith was made manifest in Abel, a saint, along with the first example of religion. By the Grace of God through the sanctification of the Spirit Abel was made acceptable unto God first and then by faith, the offering was more excellent unto God. Abel lived by faith and died for it. This is one of the first instances that is upon record of fallen man going in to worship God. God is a merciful God and communication between man and God was not void due to the fall of man. The strait gate and narrow way was opened to God's elect according to the election of Grace when Christ stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Matthew 7:14 "Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Thanks be to God, by the Grace of God, there are a few who do. The Grace of faith here mentioned is vastly different from the false and feigned faith of the hypocrite of fruitless faith of the false professor. It is the faith of God's elect, wrought by the spirit of God in effectual calling. Faith is a precious grace and not only, as it is very uncommon, very scarce. Even in the visible church a very small number of true believers, among a great multitude of visible professors, have the true grace of faith. To those who do, it is most precious. The just live by faith, a truly divine spiritual life. Faith procures all the necessary supports and comforts of this excellent life. Hebrews 11:1 "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Here we are given a definition or description of the grace of faith in two parts. Faith and hope go together, and the same things that are the object of our hope are the objects of our faith. (1) It is firm that God will perform all that He has promised to us in Christ to the elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through sanctification of the Spirit. The divine promise is firmly embedded in the soul and the things which are included in the promise are fruits of the spirit which produce the substance of things hoped for, by the first fruits and the foretastes of them. The true believers in the exercise of faith are filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. Christ dwells in the soul by grace through faith. (2) The evidence of things not seen. Faith demonstrates to the eye of the mind the reality of those things that cannot be discerned by the eye of the body. Faith is the firm assent of the soul to the divine revelation and every part of it and set to its seal that God is true. It is an approbation of all that God has revealed as holy, just and good. It keeps the soul suitable for affection and endeavors and

serves the true believer instead of sight and to be to the soul all that the senses are to the body. Faith reflects honor upon all those who have lived by it.

Faith is not a new invention. The Grace of faith, by the Grace of God, has been planted in the soul of God's elect since the covenant of grace. The first best men that ever were in the world were believers in the true living God. They were an honour to the faith and the faith an honour to them. It put them upon doing the things that were of good report and God has taken care that a record shall be kept and report made of the great things they did in the strength of His grace.

Faith goes to Christ and buys the wine and milk, which are the proper nourishment of the new inward man. Isa. 55:1 "Ho, every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters and he that hath no money, and without price." Faith buys and brings home the tried gold, the heavenly treasure that enriches, faith takes and puts on the white raiment, the royal robe that clothe and adorn. Rev. 3:18 "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve that thou mayest see." Faith unites the weak believer to Christ as readly as it does the strong one and purifies the heart of one as truly as another. And every sincere believer is by faith justified in the sight of God. The righteousness and obedience of Christ gives faith all its values and preciousness and the righteousness of such a person cannot but be of infinite value to those who by faith receive faith. (Faith for faith)

Jesus Christ is God, yea our God. He is truly God and infinite being, who has wrought out this righteousness and therefore it must be of infinite value.

Rev. 1:11 "What thou seest, write in a book and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia." Let us hold in view that the letters were to the visible churches made up of visible people and set up by the apostles shortly after the day of pentecost. There were two of these Churches that Christ did not say He found fault or He had something against. These two churches are Smyrna and Phelodelphia. Christ said to the Smyrna church "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life." Christ said unto the Church of Phelodelphia, "Behold I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

I will therefore that men pray every where lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting. Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, in every thing give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Abstain from all appearance of evil. Faithful is He that calleth you who also will do it.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Elder Benard Moon

PSALM 13:6.

I will sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

MATTHEW XXV. 14-30.

Brother F. L. Cox, of Dardanelle, Arkansas, desires that we shall write concerning the parable of the talents, recorded in Matthew xxv. 14-30. He says some in his section have said that they knew that to them had been committed a talent, and that they meant to so improve it that they should gain the reward promised, but his feeling about the matter is those to whom the talents are really committed, will not see that it is so, because near the end of the chapter it is expressly said that those who had done the things named there, could not see that they ever had done them, while those who had not done them, thought that they had.

First we will say that we think that our brother is right in his view of the matter. Whatever the parable of the talents may signify, we are sure that it does not present a bargain between the master and his servants, or that the servant knows that if he uses his talent well, he shall be rewarded for it. So far as the statement of the parable itself is concerned, it is plain that when the man took his journey into a far country, and before doing so committed the various talents to his servants, he said nothing to them of any reward for good and profitable use of the talents. He promised nothing to them at all, but simply committed the talents to their charge. This is a picture of all the dealings of God with his servants. He does yet commit to all his servants some talents, but he never says to them, If you will be faithful and gain other talents, I will reward you. Indeed, according to the very terms of the parable, the master could not have offered any such reward. These were his servants, not hired, but his own bond men, belonging to him, and he had a right to all their service, and they had no claim for any reward at all from his hand, and no right to expect any. He could not be put in any debt to them, nor come under any obligation to them by all that they might do. This is fully set forth by the Master in another place where he expressly says that after the servant has done all, he is to say, I am an unprofitable servant, I have done only what was my duty to do. There also he teaches that instead of rewarding the servant who has been faithful, he still expects that servant to gird himself and wait upon him at his meal. It all sets forth the truth that we cannot put the Almighty under any obligation to us in any way. So in the parable, the servants of this man belonged to him, and all their powers were his, and he could owe them nothing, for all they might do. We may be faithful, and it may be said of us, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant," but never Well done, thou profitable servant. We can never do more than we are under obligations to do, and so can never deserve a reward.

All that was conferred upon the faithful servants in the parable was a reward of grace, and not of debt. Still further, it was not ease, or riches, or relief from care, but added burdens and responsibility. It was said, "Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I

will make thee ruler over many things." That is, I will commit to thee still more talents, that thou mayest ocupy upon them. In this very thing is the joy of the Lord into which the servant should enter. This enlarged field of care and responsibility conferred upon him, was a mark of the favor of the Lord, and in entering upon this greater field he entered into the evidence of favor, and here was the joy. What a solemn joy this would be to that servant. There would be gladness that the field was widening, and yet what a sense of solemn responsibility would be there, so that the joy would not be a careless, light hearted, thoughtless joy, but rather a sober, thoughtful joy, which is far more abiding and satisfying than any other joy can be.

The sense in which it was said, That servant should be made ruler over many things, did not differ from his former rule over the five or two talents. What a false idea men have of what ruling must mean. To rule does not mean that one is to be ministered unto by others, but rather it means that he who rules must spend his life and every power within him serving others. It is a life of service, and not of ease, if indeed one be a true ruler. In ruling over the five, or two talents, labor and care and service were involved. Now to rule over many things, meant still more labor and care and service. It was not to places of ease or careless pleasure that these two men were promoted, but to more constant labor, and more solemn responsibilities. It was such a promotion as would cause them to shrink and hesitate, rather than feel any great elation. It was not a promotion for which they had striven, and which they had coveted. There would be in them, growing out of what they had experienced in their former care, a sense of unfitness and fear and a shrinking from it, because of the greatness of the work, and because of the true desire in them to honor their master in all that they did.

The whole spirit of the parable is that they did not do what they did as a stepping-stone to wider and more honorable things. Such a motive as this would have spoiled the service. It would not have been with an eye single to the glory of God, but would rather have been seeking their own glory. The one motive set forth in the parable was to just occupy upon what the Lord had committed to them, that he might have his own with usury. Nothing for self but all for the Lord. O, for more of this spirit in us all. If any of the Lord's true servants have begun to think of the service as one for which a reward is offered, and which they engage in because they expect some future gladness, or some added favor, that servant has missed the true service, and misunderstood the true reward, and whatever he has, or fancies he has, comes to him not as a reward of grace, but rather of debt. That servant is getting away from grace, and sinking back into legal service and bondage.

By the talents we do not understand what men now call talents, as for instance, it is said of some person that he or she possesses great talents, meaning ability in themself. But we understand by the talents, and also in the other similar

parable of the pounds, the field assigned to one for his occupancy. For instance, one is called to the ministry of the word, that one manifests that faithfulness which is becoming in that which is committed to him, and soon, without any thought upon his part that it ought to be so, but rather while he yet feels that he has been very unfruitful and unfaithful, still larger demands are made upon him; he is called to wider fields, and soon he finds more and more responsibility thrust upn him, which he will feel very unfit for, and which will bring to him more of care and anxiety than of gladness, though there will be also a sense of gladness that he is counted worthy to serve, and to serve more and more. It is so with whatever his talent may be. They that use the office of a deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith. The same rule applies here, such a man is not seeking preferment; indeed he does not see how it can be for him at all. It is not conferred upon him as in any sense a payment for his service, but it comes by growth without his taking one thought for it. In every department of service in the house of God they that serve well shall have the honor of still more and more service. Upon the willing heart and the willing hands shall more and more demands be made, and in this wider and still wider service there will be also a growth in humility and fear, without which no service is of any value. In the parable the servants did not say, I ought to have a reward, or I ought to have a wider field, but the lord himself said that. It must always be so. Not he who commendeth himself, but whom the Lord commendeth, is approved. To commend one's self is sin, because it arises out of pride and not humility, and is of the flesh, all the thoughts of which are sinful. The service is a loving one, and therefore a willing service. The servants in the parable to whom five and two talents were committed, did not say of the master, Thou art a hard man, thou reapest where thou hast not sown, and gatherest where thou hast not strawed. No such thought had entered their mind, they did not feel so toward him, theirs was willing, loving service, they desired to honor him, and to show forth his praise. But here was one, of whom it was said that he did thus regard his Lord, there was no love in his heart, and there could be none. All who are legal in their service yet, thus regard the Lord of life and glory. They regard him as a God who exacts, and who only rewards those who are of service to him, and according to the measure of their service. No wonder that they fear, and fail to really occupy the talent committed to them. All that service that grows out of the flesh of the people of God, is of that sort, and for it there is only a curse. Gospel fields are not open to them, and there is no growth in their usefulness to the people of God, rather what has been conferred upon them in the way of a field of labor, will be removed from them, and they will cease to be known by any service which they may render. They still belong to the Master, but become of no use in his household. He calls them wicked and slothful servants, and to express the wideness of the separation

between the two kinds of service, and God's approval of the one, and disapproval of the other, it is said that the one talent is taken from the slothful servant, and given to him who now has ten talents.

This servant who regarded his Lord as a hard and exacting master, and so spoke of him, no doubt, to others, might have seemed very jealous for the rights of his lord, and anxious that he should have his own, but it was not so in the eye of the master himself. It is free gospel service, and not legal, that he first begets in the soul, and then recognizes and blesses, and so this blessing always comes as a sweet and glad surprise to the recipient of it.

Our brother was right in his reference to the closing parable of this chapter, the blessings conferred upon the true servants were not expected, and they could not see why it should be said to them that they had served at all, but how out of their humility must they have rejoiced and magnified grace, which had so dealt with them.

"Grace all the work shall crown,
To everlasting days;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

There will be a solemn fear in all those whose hearts are filled with love to God, and regard to his honor, lest they regard the Lord as a hard Master, and lest their service be of that slavish sort that knows not grace but only bondage. Between outbreaking sin and pharisaical or legal service, there is a most narrow path. Truly the vulture's eye hath not seen it, or the lion's whelp trodden it. Human wisdom and human power, symbolized by the vulture's eye and the lion's whelp, can never enter there. In that way of life to God is given all the glory, and the creature is abased. In that way we must decrease, and Jesus must increase, and if we be in that way we shall rejoice that it it so. When Jesus is exalted our joy is fulfilled. How wonderful the grace which saves from outbreaking sin on the one hand, and then on the other hand keeps us from boasting that we are therefore better than our fellows.

We leave these somewhat scattered thoughts to the consideration of brother Cox, and our readers in general. We have not attempted to give a full explanation of the parable, but only to suggest such considerations as were called out by the questions and remarks of the brother, in his note to us.

Elder F.A. Chick

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 1987

Mrs. Fannie Wiles, VA.....5.00
Mrs. Devine Bradford, OK.....2.00
T.R. Pullig, TX.....7.00
Dolphus Hall, FL.....2.00
Dean & Ettie Connell, TX.....2.00
Mr.&Mrs. K.A. McKinney, VA...10.00
Mrs. J.L. Marze, LA.....2.00
Mrs. H.W. Jones, AL.....2.00
Alpha Sears, OH.....2.00
Mrs. Audrey V. Dyer, VA.....2.00
Lloyd U. Chance, TX.....7.00
Mrs. Ada Campbell, VA.....2.00

James L. Howell, AL.....7.00
Mrs. Rlee B. Houchins, VA.....5.00
Mrs. Susan Chandler, FL.....2.00
Wayne Edwards, NC.....15.00
Eld. J.Y. McCormick, FL.....7.00
Mr.&Mrs. Edd. Hodnett, VA....2.00
Eld. Jimmy Hamrick, TX.....14.00
H.L. Knight, NC.....2.00
L.W. Nichols, VA.....2.00
T.E. Hall, NC.....2.00
J. Cline Chandler, NC.....5.00
William E. Mitchell, VA.....5.00

OBITUARIES

Theodore Calvin Austin

In memory of a beloved brother in Christ, Theodore C. Austin whose time ceased on Feb. 1, 1987 after more than 76 years.

The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh blessed be the name of the Lord.

He was predeceased by his wife Pauline Setliff Austin July 1981. He is survived by one son Curtis K. Austin of Ruffin, N.C. and one daughter Kay H. Burnett of Blairs, Va.

Brother Sport as he was called by the Brethren and others who knew him who loved him so dearly was a gentleman of excellent character and behavior, which made him greatly esteemed by those among whom he lived.

He united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church Sept. 25, 1982 and was baptized by the late Elder D.V. Spangler along with seven other members on this same occasion.

He loved his church and its members because he considered them to be a manifest portion of the children of God whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world.

He belived that the Lord called his people out of natures darkness into his marvelous light, according to the measure of his grace in the appointed time.

Funeral services were held in Dan River Primitive Baptist Church Feb. 4, 1987 by Elder H.W. Wray and was buried in the church cemetery by his wife.

Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to his dear family.

Prepared by one who loved and appreciated him.

Coley S. Strader

Elder Paul Poyner

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding. For by me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy life shall be multiplied."

Elder Paul Poyner ceased his service to the church at death on January 10, 1987, at the age of 97. He was pastor of the New Providence Church near Murray, Kentucky. This was the church where he was received by experience and baptism in September 1934. In July 1936 he was ordained to the full work of the ministry at New Providence.

In the exercise of his gift it seemed apparent that he was given

spiritual understanding above the measure of most. He traveled much along the Primitive Baptist Churches in his area and had the pastoral ministry of two other churches, including The Soldiers Creek Church near Benton, Kentucky. This is the home church of The Soldiers Creek Association. He was the moderator of the association for many years.

Although Elder Poyner had not been able to attend meetings for about 1 1/2 years, those visiting him at home found the same active mind that they had known, and a tongue eager to proclaim again the doctrine of sovereign grace and the merits of his Lord and Savior.

His loving and faithful wife preceeded him in death September, 1977. Other graces given him in this life are evidenced by his surviving offspring; three daughters, two sons, ten grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren.

With sorrow for our loss, but joy of his gain and our joy for having known him, this notice of his passing is written and submitted to the Signs of the Times, at the request of The New Providence Church.

Wayman G. Chapell

MAME WATSON

A very precious sister was called from our midst on September 17, 1986 to be with her God, that is the feeling of all that knew her.

Sister Mame Watson was born May 25th, 1883 and died September 17th, 1986 , her stay here on earth being more than 103 years. She joined the Church at Beulah in 1915 and was baptized by Elder E.E. Lundy. Her membership remained at Beulah Church until the church ceased to function, and then her membership was moved to North Creek Church.

Sister Mame was of small stature and that with her humble walk and childlike voice endeared her to all the brethren. She was well taught in the scriptures and anything unresolved, she would tell you.

Sister Mame in her last 3 or 4 years became confused in mind at times, but in the nursing home, she was as gentle as could be, and could often be heard singing the songs of Zion without missing any words.

She leaves behind two daughters, Sister Beatrice Lupton of Coinjock, North Carolina and Virginia Garcia of Chesapeake, Va. and one son, Hatten Watson of Buxton, North Carolina.

Her funeral was conducted by her Pastor, Elder J.T. Prescott and the writer. Her body was laid to rest in Beulah Church Cemetery under a mound of beautiful flowers to await the coming of our Savior, when body and spirit will be immortally united and there forever be with the Lord.

Elder J.T. Prescott, Mod.

ST. JOHN 8:31-32.

Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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POEM

While in thy school I lessons learn,
Unfolding as I go;
My heart uplifts in praise to thee;
My God has willed it so.

My heart would speak thy praise aloud,
Would sing it as I go,
At home, abroad, in jostling crowd;
My God has willed it so.

His love saw fit to raise me up,
To share in human woe,
By drinking from the bitter cup;
My God has willed it so.

My life is hid with Christ in God,
He is where'er I go;
Nor would I from my Saviour flee;
My God has willed it so.

And when my race on earth is run,
My body buried low,
I'll rise again, bright as the sun;
My God has willed it so.

Sing blessings, blessings to the Lamb,
We'll start the theme below,
In rapture to the great I AM;
My God has willed it so.

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EDITORIAL

ISAIAH 61: I, 3.

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for the spirit of mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.

Truly, truly, He is the bearer of good news to all classes of men. These classes of men are all described by the gospel that He preaches to them. Every class of them have been overcome by problems that no one of them, in their own category trouble, could extricate themselves out of that which had them in its control. In the proclamation of His gospel, by either Himself or the servants which He sends into the gospel field, always describe the people to which He or His followers, are sent to with the good new of their message.

This precious Saviour not only preaches the gospel, the truth, but He applies the truth and the power of the truth. God's people are taught the truth, and the truth frees them from all the false doctrines and shackles and encumbrances. The gospel in every phase of it, is good tidings. In all of these different aspects of the gospel, or good tidings, there is not any creature conditions about what He is exalted to preach. In fact, as soon as conditions are put to it, it ceases to be good tidings, regardless of who preaches it, or of how it is dressed so as to appeal to the carnal mind.

The Lord has anointed the Saviour to preach glad tidings to the meek. Let us be careful what we say. This scripture is too pleasant that Christ Jesus our Lord was anointed by the Father to comfort all those that mourn.

God the Father appointed unto them that mourn in Zion grand and

glorious experiences in the administration to them of all these magnificent blessings. In fact, let us never forget that our Father only has power and authority to appoint anything to us. None of them are what is sometimes called bad appointments. He is good and only good can come from Him, and He is the only Saviour and none can hurt or damn that which He has blessed. Let us, as moved by the love of God, ever be alerted to the fact that "out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined (Psa. 50:2)." Zion is the resting place of God; He will rest in His love there (See Zeph. 3). Here is beauty forevermore, and from here the source of it, it is given to every inhabitant of that holy Mount Zion, yea, even beauty for ashes. Stop poor sinner and ponder the significance of this rich promise. In the meantime do not let satan nor any of his cohorts becloud the clarity of His promise.

Let us listen at the beloved apostle for a moment. Do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, He conditions us all. That fiery trial tried Job in his far off day. It was one of the most trying times of his Christian journey. All kinds of falsehoods were concocted to torment him, and to induce him to deny the Lord that had been such a glorious benefactor to him for so long. Faith made the difference; faith gave him the victory; faith enabled the patriarch to say in all of the fiery ordeal, "when He hath tried me I shall come forth as gold." Peter was blessed to bring the same sweet assurance in his day.

The Spirit of the Lord is a consuming fire. The application of this fiery ordeal, which is applicable to us all, is not to destroy us, but to save us. That is what the saving is about from beginning to end. To separate us from the vain and perishing objects of the flesh; to wean us from the vain things that are forever rising up in our carnal mind to lead us astray. As these objects rise God has blessed His children by the gift of His consuming fiery Spirit which sits as a refinery in us, consuming the fleshly desires and ambitions, thus saving us as by fire. Fire does not reduce to nonentity; ashes are always left. If these ashes which was the result of the burning of your fleshly works, they would be a source of shame to you. But God the Father anointed Jesus Christ your Saviour to give you beauty, which shines out of Zion, for the ashes that otherwise would accumulate day by day.

The Lord God hath anointed His Son and your Saviour to give you the oil of the joy for your mourning. Does that also come as a free gift to poor sinners. Delightfully so, dear heart. He alone delights fully and freely in the law of God. Although suffering untold agony, yet, while in the throes of death, His delight was upon the happy delight that He, in those agonies of death, was bringing and giving to His lovely bride the oil of joy for every mournful tear she had ever shed because of her sin. That oil of joy was wrung from him as in anguish of soul He cried out, My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me? And the answer is that she might, being a poor weak and sinful and oftimes unfaithful bride that she might have the oil of joy to succor her in her hours of desolation and doubts and

fears.

But that is not all. The blessings of this faithful Husband will never end. He was anointed to give unto His bride, His people, each and everyone that came up out of the wilderness leaning on the arm of the Beloved. It was plenty to go after her. It was plenty to endure the dreadful agony of the cruel tree for her. It was much, much more than any of us could have borne to ransom her from death, but that was not enough. He knew her enemies, and He knew the suggestive cunning powers of satan. He had gone before her, and He knew the cost, the soul trying cost, of her travel in this low ground of sorrow and anguish and death. He knew what her path and her journey would consist of in solitariness, in sorrow, in loneliness.

People talk about God being the author of sin. Let us settle that once and for all. By man came sin, and death by sin. God commanded that they not eat of the tree, for, says He, in the day that they ate of it, that then and there they died. Adam and Eve sinned, and on the day that it was revealed to them that they were sinners, then and there set in the spirit of heaviness. That is as soon as any man or woman has ever grieved because of sin. What a grevious burden it is to mourn on account of being a sinner. What a pall of heaviness sets in when first it becomes apparent that the things that they would not do, that those are the things that they do. What lamentations have gone up before God because of indwelling sin.

How dreary is the travel of a poor sinner. What pleadings for a divine unction that the Lord has had mercy on one that when he or she would desire to walk obediently before the Lord in all sincerity and in humility, and yet to be swayed by evil thoughts.

In each case like unto this, it is a savor of good. Not a savor that your sin is good, God forbid. But it is a savor that God has been dealing with you; that He has begun a good work in you. Could ever a work be any better? The Master has begun to reveal to you that you are a sinner. He gives you a desire to leave it off, and instead of leaving it off it seems that you are getting worse. You say to me, what do you know about such a life? What do you know about being heavy pressed because of outbreaking sins? Come let us go backward fifty eight years. I hope that God had already shown me what a weak wretched sinner that I was. But He had not cured me of profanity.

No reader can ever know, save he and she that has gone under that spirit of heaviness. What a pall of blackness it was to bear. The time did come, when even that was removed, but the stigma of sin is still prevalent in me today, and I need the garment of praise to be brought down from above, and as my sins are rolled away and from off me, I need that garment of praise put on me, beginning at my head, and proceeding downward until I am enveloped in a garment of divine praise to His great and holy name.

Now let me ask you to go back with me and read the whole text slowly and quietly. Let us ask the question, Why were all these things done? Who is it that done each of

these saving acts? Let our blessed Saviour answer. He is to have the final work in the salvation of the family of God. He tells us, all that we need to know about not only our individual salvation, but the salvation of everyone that will ever enter the realms of glory. There was unity in heaven, long before the conception of Jesus in His mother's womb He was. Before Abraham's day He could say I am. Long before the morning stars sang together, He was the great I am. Listen, dear reader. The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to the end that I perform each of these miracles upon the people described. There is not a logician on the face of the globe, neither has there ever been one that could, nor will there ever be one that can enact any rule, or set of rules, that can ever open up any plan or new system that can ever add one more to the list that is going to be saved than these enumerated, nor will hell ever devise anything to take one of these away and cause them to be lost.

After enumerating all of the miracles that the Lord God had anointed Him to do for these poor sinners, He then proceeds to tell us why that all of this was done in the first place. I am not afraid of the security of God's children, one and all. I am not in doubt as to the safety and the truthfulness of the gospel as Old Baptist preach it. It is the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Everything that Jesus was anointed to do was for only one purpose. All of this work of Jesus Christ in their behalf was that, they (everyone of them) might be called trees of righteousness. All of these trees were to be planted by the Lord. Let false religionists rage and let the people imagine vain things, all of their spite belched forth at once will never endanger one of the least of these plantings. Every tree which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. (Mat. 15:3). Now our delightful text tells us that all of this work was done as a result of what the Lord God had anointed His Son to do, and they are referred to as trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord.

The final and clinching purpose in all of this being done was that the Lord be glorified in it all. Suppose that one tree is not planted by the Lord? That will not get by. God keeps His promises in both directions. He saves to the uttermost all of them that He has planted, but He does not save even one that somebody else plants. God's work is perfect (Deut. 32:4). There is not a loose link, nor a broken link; there is not a dropped stitch in all of this catalog of events, for everyone of them was done as a result of the Lord God anointing them to that end. Surely, surely men are not so foolish as to charge Wisdom personified as being so foolish or lacking in anything so as to come short in that which He planted. Surely men are not that brazen. How weak it sounds to charge God of planning such a gigantic forest, every tree therein being a righteous plant and everyone of them planted for the glory of God.

God has, and God will adorn every facet of His glorious work.

Elder W.D. Griffin

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

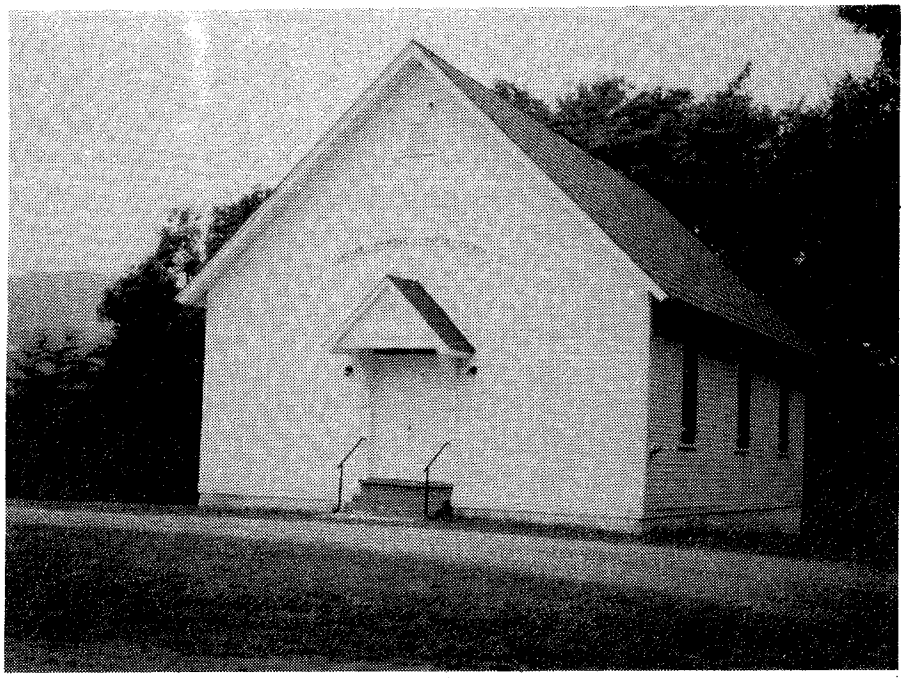

BASHAM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Basham Church was organized in 1908. It is located in Stewartsville, Va., 6 miles east of Vinton on route 24.

Their meeting time is 2nd Sunday each month at 11:00 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. Communion Service, 2nd Sunday in July each year.

Their present pastor is Elder William Holland.

MEETINGS

Springfield Church

As Per Precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God, Springfield Primitive Baptist Church looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift. They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed Saturday, May 9, 1987 at 6:30 at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, Gretna, Virginia; for the purpose of examination of this gift, Brother Oscar Donald Pickeral and if found qualified be ordained to the full work and service of deacon.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together. The meeting was opened by prayer by Elder

Raymond Goad. Elder O.K. Tench was elected as moderator and Elder Amos Hash to serve as clerk. Brother Homie Dalton acted as spokesman for the church. Elder Denver Simpson delivered Brother Oscar Pickeral to the Presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon read as set forth in scriptures I Timothy 3:1-13 by Elder Lane Carter. Examinations followed by Elders and others. The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of this candidate proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder William Holland. The charge was delivered to Brother Oscar by Elder Julian Williams. He was then delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon. The spokesman said, "The church was satisfied with the work of the presbytery."

The minutes of the Presbytery were read and adopted. A copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication and a copy to be given to Brother Oscar Donald Pickeral along with a certificate of ordination.

Presbytery was dismissed by prayer by Brother Marvin Brumfield.

Elder O.K. Tench, Moderator
Elder Amos Hash, Clerk

Elders:
J.R. Williams
William N. Holland
Denver L. Simpson
Lane Carter
Raymond Goad
O.K. Tench

Deacons:
Brother Clay Brown
Brother Silas Payne
Brother Harvey Wood
Brother Fred Murphy
Brother Marvin Brumfield
Brother Nelson Bryant
Brother Nelson Nester
Brother Bobby Bernard
Brother Claude Johnson
Brother Clyde Johnson
Brother Stafford Houston
Brother Richard Stegall
Brother H.D. Ingram
Brother E.S. Horsley
Brother Homie Dalton

Smith River Association

The Lord willing, the next session of the Smith River Association will convene with Union Church, Sept. 4, 5, & 6, 1987. It is located in Patrick County, Va. on state road #623, near Fairy Stone Park. All lovers of the truth are invited and especially all Elders of our faith and order.

Elder Amos T. Hash, Moderator

South Ouachita Association

The next session of the South Ouachita Association will convene with New Hope Church, located 1 1/2 miles north of Spearsville, La., 4 miles east of Hwy. 67, beginning on Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1987. All lovers of the truth are invited.

Elder Graydon Smith

The West County Line Union

The West County Line Union meeting will be held, the Lord willing, the fifth Sunday in August at Pleasantville Church. We appreciate the presence of all who desire to meet with us. Elders of our faith and order are especially invited. The church is located on 704, five miles east of Madison, N.C., 220 junction, 704 at Tuttle Chevrolet Madison. By Reidsville 87 W. junction, 65 take to 704.

Elder H.W. Wray, Pastor
Sister Rachel Wray, Clerk

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8/87
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

ARTICLES

PROVERBS XXV. II

" A Word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

While journeying through Samaria our Saviour comes to Jacob's well. The disciples have gone for meat. Seeing a woman at the well about to draw water, Jesus asks a drink at her hands. She stands aghast at such a request, for, seeing he is a Jew, she knows it to be an unusual thing for one of that race to ask anything of a Samaritan. Thus she reminds him, but he replies, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him and he would have given thee living water." Thus begins a remarkable conversation between our Lord and this adulterous woman. In it he reveals himself to her as the Christ, the Messiah which was to come. At the close the woman runs away joyfully to her companions exclaiming, "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" Yes, this poor, miserable woman has seen the Savior, and knows that he it is who speaks to her. His words to her are "fitly spoken."

Shifting the scene, we behold the gate of the temple, Beautiful, at Jerusalem. Hither come a number of men bearing one whom they lay at the entrance. This man has been lame from his birth, and never able to walk a step, and is placed here daily to receive alms of those who pass by. Peter and John, two disciples of the Lord, approach him. He begs an alms of them. They have none, but say, "Look upon us," and then follow these remarkable words, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." Immediately he is healed, leaps up and goes with them into the temple, leaping and praising, not the disciples, but God. Their words were "fitly" spoken.

Let us glance at one more scene. Before us is the road leading out of Jerusalem toward Damascus. Down it come a company of men headed by Saul of Tarsus. Look at him. He has

left Jerusalem with letters admitting him into Damascus. One of the most remarkable men of his day, he is skilled in the law of his fathers and in the wisdom of the east. Dominating him is a fierce hatred of the followers of Christ. The purpose of his journey to Damascus is to persecute these people, and to bring them captives to Jerusalem. He verily believes he is doing God's service, and breathing out slaughters and threatenings against the disciples of the Lord, goes forward. Suddenly a dazzling light from heaven shines round about him. He falls to the earth, and to him a voice speaks, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Astonished, he cries, "Who art thou, Lord?" "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Humbled, ashamed and groveling in the dust, this once haughty man implores, "What wilt thou have me to do?" "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." In Damascus we find him preaching the gospel he hated to the very ones he had intended to persecute. What has wrought this wondrous change? "A word fitly spoken."

In these instances which I have cited, Christ either directly or through his servants has given the fitly spoken word. "The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." It is the tidings of that salvation which God has wrought for his people in his Son Jesus Christ. These tidings may be spoken directly to us by God himself, in our sleeping or in our waking hours, while at work or at rest, while reading or while in meditatation. It may come through an earthen vessel such as all of God's servants are, but not necessarily so. Most emphatically the preaching of the word is not essential to give one a knowledge of Christ or his salvation. But no matter in what way it comes, the gospel of Christ is a "word fitly spoken." In it is embraced the doctrine of God, that doctrine which Moses declares shall drop as the rain and distill as the dew upon the tender herb and upon the grass. "Upon the tender herb," which is a conscience made tender by the application of the law. To such a one the tidings of salvation are certainly words fitly spoken. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,"... This word is Christ, the word "fitly spoken." It is "fitly spoken" because peculiarly adapted or fitted to the needs and conditions of those to whom it is declared. In your lost condition, who found you? In your blindness, who restored your sight? In your sin-sickness, who healed you? In your darkness, who brought the light? The answer is one word, Christ. That word revealed with power is our salvation from all the wretched conditions that befall us. Then is it not a word spoken with fitness? I do not hesitate to say that no other word under heaven is ever "fitly spoken" but the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

But how is the gospel like "apples of gold in pictures of silver?" A picture all one color would be a barren monotony. Picture a wide expanse of ocean in a dead calm, with not a sail or a ruffle to mar its peacefulness. What weary, monotonous waste it is! Just so would be a picture of silver. It may be valuable,

but it certainly is not beautiful. One color never yet made a beautiful picture. But what a change is wrought when "apples of gold" are painted in it! How it sparkles in its lustre, and how clearly the yellowness of the gold stands forth displayed on a background of silver. Black will appear blacker if placed next to white. So will gold appear brighter when placed in contrast with silver. This picture of apples of gold in silver is a picture which typifies the lives of the saints. Take out of your experience the seasons of rejoicing you have had when in the Savior's presence, and what have you left? Only sorrow, pain, affliction, darkness and tribulations of every description. This, dear child of God, is the background of silver. The 'apples of gold" are the high and bright places in your experience when you have been drawn away from the world for a time and have rested alone in the arms of the dear Redeemer. They are seasons of rejoicing and gladness you have had when the word spoken in your heart lifted you out of the horrible pit and set you upon a rock, and put a new song in your mouth, even praise to our God. "Apples" implies sweetness. Truly these are sweet times. They are also a fruit. So are these happy days the fruit or the result of many days in darkness and tribulation. Without these "apples of gold," these "words fitly spoken," our lives would be but as trees without fruit. With them the lives of the saints are pictures beautiful, rich and rare.

H.H. Lefferts

"TEN VIRGINS"

Matthew 24:1 "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom."

First, let us note the time in which Christ was speaking of. He was speaking of, then shall be the kingdom, when the kingdom of heaven or the church would be fully established and the spirit of truth returned on the day of Pentecost as He had promised. "I will not leave you comfortless."

After coming forth from the sepulchre and ascending unto his Father and your Father, the day of Pentecost was fully come. Devout men out of every nation under heaven, by the Spirit went in with Christ to the marriage, all of one accord, in one place, in Jerusalem, the church. By faith, just and devout men had long waited when the day of Pentecost was fully come and the spirit of comfort had returned to them as promised by Christ. "I will come to you."

John 14:15 "If you love me, keep my commandments. 14:16 "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another comforter, that He may abide with you forever." 14:17 "Even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: But ye know Him: For He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." 14:19 "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me because I live, ye shall live also." So, the kingdom of heaven is likened unto ten virgins. Likened unto one company

of ten virgins having everything in common, with the exception of Oil. All ten are virgins, modest, untouched, clean and undefilied. There is not one goat among the ten, but five wise virgins and five foolish virgins. Apart from other considerations, this description is decisive as regard to the main character of the actions of the visible church which are represented by two groups. The one is wise unto salvation, the other have their foolish hearts darkened in outer darkness.

Matthew 8:11 "And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." 8:12 "But the chilren of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." It is clear that which is outward in the visible church is the lamp. What is inward and spiritual is the oil laid up in the vessels. When we contemplate with the apostle Paul, the works having a valve from the living principles of faith, out of which good works spring, the works are the lamps and faith is the oil, which must feed the lamp. Ephesians 2:10 "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Our Light must shine before men in good works, but this cannot be, unless there be a fixed active Spirit of God in the heart of faith in Christ, love and kindness to God and our brethren, from which we must act in everything we do in the faith. The oil, which keeps the lamps burning, is derived to the candlestick from Jesus Christ, the great and good olive, by the golden pipes of the ordinances, which is explained in John 1:16 "And of His fullness have all we received, and Grace for Grace." Let us hold in view that it is of His fullness, therefore it it faith for faith as well as Grace for Grace. For where there is Grace there is the portion of faith given, to His servants according to his several ability, to them that are called His own.

The bridegroom come and they that were ready went in with Him to the marriage. It is to the marriage and not to the wedding. Marriage being the state of being married which Christ is joined to His bride, the Church.

We must behold the letters to the seven churches of Asia, that five of the churches had done as the apostle Paul said, II Timothy 4:4 "And they shall turn their ears from the truth, and shall be turned into fables." Let us not overlook the fact that the lamps of the foolish virgins were at one time burning or they could not have gone out. Matthew 25:8 "And the foolish said to the wise, give us of your oil: For our lamps are gone out." The five churches of Asia, of which Christ finds fault, were no doubt at first, when they were established, were of the original faith and order. If they were not, they would not be part of the seven.

All ten are virgins, all ten have lamps, all ten are at one visible meeting place seeking one common goal. Joy, comfort, peace, fellowship with our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ in His kingdom and eternal salvation. Let us observe that works are performed by both groups of which the lamps represents works.

The wise take oil in their vessels. They all slumber and sleep, they all arise, and they all trim their lamps. It is sure all these things are directed by the Spirit. So we ask the question, then what is the difference in the works? The Spirit of truth and faith made the difference and it is the difference. By the kind providence of God, the Spirit brings forth action and movement to both the wise and foolish. Does not the wind blow on both the wise and foolish? The Spirit directs both the wise and foolish to slumber and sleep. The spouse sleepth, but by faith his heart awaketh. The Spirit directs both the wise and the foolish to hear the words "Behold the bridegroom cometh," and commands both to go out to meet Him. By the Spirit of faith the wise go in the open door to the marriage. The door is open only to the wise in faith, wise unto salvation. Grace for Grace, Faith for Faith. Revelation 3:7 "He that openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." The Spirit directed the foolish to the appointed place and time where their eyes are open to the fact that the door is shut to them. The Spirit opened their mouth to say, Lord Lord open to us," and the Spirit opened the unstopped ears of the foolish to hear the words of the bridegroom say, "I know you not." The bridegroom did not say, I never knew you. The bridegroom knows the foolish as not having light for their works are without faith. The faith they went to buy did not sufice. The foolish must have obtained what they went after for they did return, and experienced displayed the fact that the Grace of faith of God cannot be obtained other than from God. The bridegroom knows the works of the seven churches of Asia as He knows the works of the wise and the foolish. Revelation 2:4 "Nevertheless I have somewhat against the, because thou has left thy first love." 2:5 "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. We repeat, Gods wrath is a constant aspect of His Holy Righteousness.

James 2:17 "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. 2:18 "Yea, a man may say, Thou has faith, and I have works: Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works. 2:19 "Thou believest that there is one God, thou doest well: The devils also believe, and tremble. The lamps and the oil go together, and light is shown. The works are Christ's workmanship, of which we are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, and faith go together. Where the oil is there is also the vessel which contains the oil that feeds the lamps. Where faith is, there is also work performed by faith. Where there are works that are not fed by faith, the works are confused, of which God is not the author. I Corinthians 14:33 "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

Christ delivered unto His own servants His goods, to every man according to his serveral ability. The servant that hid his Lord's money in the earth, was a servant as well as the other two. Matthew 25:29 "For

unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: But from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which be hath." So is faith, when it is hidden, we are known to be in a lukewarm condition, neither cold nor hot, and Christ said "I will spue thee out of my mouth." "I would thou wert cold or hot." Revelation 3:20 "Behold I stand at the door, and knock: If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. 3:21 "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcome, and am set down with my Father in His throne.

Let us keep in mind, Christ was speaking to the churches, to those who profess repentance and attend upon the doctrine and baptism of repentance. The kingdom of heaven was at hand when Christ was walking with us on this earth. It is not only at hand now, but much more. He has fully established the kingdom leaving us with the inspired scriptures of full instruction, pertaining to the visible churches and church members, to follow the plan precept of His kingdom. Though God's divine will renders that obedience is impossible of man, sets forth the fact, that we must look to Christ to lead us and direct our footsteps. We must pray without ceasing that Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven, lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.

Let us not be so obsessed with the words absolute predestination that we leave the impression with anyone that we believe we are justified in our own disobedience. We are not excusable for neglecting God's planned precept of His kingdom. The divine will of God, considered in itself, is simply one and the same: However in its lower and present state to the visible churches and their members, the divine will is very much set forth into secret and revealed. The brief of the matter is this, secret things belong to God, and things that are revealed are given to us. Therefore, we are given the ordinances of the church, the rules of actions or conduct and direction. We should simply endeavor to obey all set forth by the scriptures, without tarrying to inquire into God's hidden purpose.

God does not mock His people, for if we do not believe His word nor observe his precepts, the fault is not to Him but in ourselves. If God directs His people to the door of His kingdom and then shuts the door for an everlasting time, against those whom He has directed, then His directing would be a mockery, and unworthy of Himself. Those that are chosen in Christ from the foundation of the world, of whom He shed His blood for, even the foolish virgins, the slothful servant, and those who have not on a wedding garment, are directed by the Spirit in God's grace and kind providence to the appointed place and time where Christ's gracious influence compells them to know that God is God, and that it is God's plan precept of His kingdom that we must follow.

"I am the Lord and there is none else, there is no God beside Me: I girded thee, though thou has not known me. Ephesians 1:10 "That in

the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him." Christ did not use the words, to the five foolish virgins, the slothful servant or the one whom had not on a wedding garment, as He used to the goats on the left. Matthew 25:46 "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment but the righteous into life eternal.

There are so many times we feel as the foolish virgins and seem to hear those words from the bridegroom say "I know you not." So many times we feel as the slothful servant who took his portion of faith and hid it in the ground ans was cast into outer darkness. How many times have we felt being without the wedding garment? There is a great consolation in these feelings as we find them to give us the desire to press forward in the faith, in hope to be as the wise virgins, the servants which doubled their faith, and as the guests who have on their wedding garments, for these are the faithful in Christ in His kingdom for they (I Timothy 6:12) "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life whereunto thou art also called, and has professed a good profession before many witnessess." So follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, lone, patience, and meekness. For it is they which are of the churches Smyrna and Philadelphia.

Dear Lord lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, give us the strength in faith to fight the good fight of faith, that when we are near death we can say as the apostle Paul said; II Timothy 4:7 "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith 4:8 Hence forth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: And not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.

Those who have never experienced the feeling of being cast out into outer darkness is because one of two things. The portion of faith has never been given to them or either in their slothful sleep state of disobedience to the precepts of the kingdom, they have fallen into a luke warm condition in believing and saying, we have need of nothing, not knowing that thou art wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. When God rebukes and chastens in and by His constance aspects of His Holy Righteousness, then is when the pain, suffering and crying begins, saying; Lord Lord open to us, and the bridegroom says, "I know you not." Be zealous therefore, and repent. For we are given exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust, therefore add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge temperance, to temperance patience, to patience godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and brotherly kindness charity. These things make you not barren or idle nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ and His kingdom, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: For if you do these things, ye shall never

fall, An entrance is ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting marriage, the kingdom of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ.

Beloved, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness, but grow in grace, faith and in the knowledge of our Lord. To Him be Glory both now and forever.

Elder J.B. Moon

ECCLESIASTES XII. I.

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth."

By the approval of the editors I will offer a few thoughts to the readers of the Signs for their consideration upon the above words. These are the words of the wise man, addressed to the wise, and since this is true this commandment has always been obeyed. This Scripture, according to my understanding, does not apply to the boy of sixteen, when he feels youthful and strong, but to the youthful in the church. Remember, the Scripture is written for the church, and not to those who have not and do not want any understanding of the Scriptures. How foolish it would be for me to say to a youth, "Remember now thy Creator." In fact, it would be just as foolish to quote these words to an adult, if he had never tasted that the Lord is gracious. No natural being can be interested in the Lord unless the Lord makes him interested. When this is done, then such an individual remembers his Creator. This word "Creator" demands our careful attention. Something beautiful seems to appear as we meditate "Creator." Brethren, consider with me what it means. Does it not mean to form something from nothing? The Lord formed man from the dust of the ground, and he formed the dust to form the man. Then the Lord is a creator. (I will arrive at what is in my mind later on.) Let us go back to the very beginning, so that we can build upon a solid foundation. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Keep in mind the fact that the Lord is doing these things, and not man. This is very necessary for us to remember. We are to remember further that he is creating things from nothing. This brings us to understand that our God is a creator, bringing into existence creatures and things from nothing; so we will say of our God the following words:

O"Eternal Power! whose high abode
Becomes the grandeur of a God;
Infinite lengths beyond the bounds
Where stars revolve their little rounds."

The Lord also formed the sun, moon and stars and set them in their places. We cannot understand how the Lord did those things, but we have these created things around, above and under us to prove that things were created. While these things are wonderful for us to consider, there is something still more wonderful for us to consider. What is it? The Lord has made or formed a way by which miserable and hell-deserving sinners can be saved.

What is that way? The answer is Jesus. I am the way, the truth and the life, said Jesus. To prove that man is incapable of coming to Jesus I will quote from the Messiah again: "No man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Here again is proof that the Lord of hosts does all things after the counsel of his own will. The Father sent the Son. Brethren, consider this well, that we do not forget to give the almighty God credit and praise for all things. Remember thy Creator. Why remember him? Because he has remembered you. When you were in your mother's womb he knew you; he it was that caused the bones to form therein. But you say, Why did the Lord bring me forth to see trouble and sorrow? The answer is, Because it was his will. You say again, I am no profit in the earth, and I am sorry I ever came into existence; but you are praising the Lord unconsciously, you are worshiping him in spirit and in truth, because he seeketh such to worship him.

We must consider the word "youth," as mentioned in the subject. As stated before, it is the youth in the church. What is this first experience in the church like unto? It is like unto heaven below; everything is beautiful and lovely, the singing is grand and thrilling, everything is calm, the gentle breezes and the singing of the birds praise the Lord. "Tongue cannot express the sweet comfort and peace of a soul in its earliest love." But this is not to last. How strange that evil days must come, and the clouds not to return after the rain, and even the grinding is to be low. What does all this mean? It is my desire to try to interpret these last words, though as a rule I try to refrain from trying to interpret or expound the Scripture, because I feel to know but little if anything about it; but I will only give my views. As stated before, the clouds fail to return after the rain, and the sound of the grinding is low. To my mind this Scripture has a deep spiritual meaning. To illustrate the spiritual meaning I will do so in the following manner. The writer of this book, Ecclesiastes, knew something (knew much) of christian experience. He tells it by natural illustrations. The clouds return not after the rain, and the sound of the grinding is low,... How well does each subject of grace remember his youthful days in the church, when the clouds soon returned after the rain and when the sound of the grinding was strong. The preacher in this book is calling our attention to natural things to reveal the spiritual. You know that our Creator, of whom we have been writing, sends rain often sometimes, and at other times withholds the rain, and for many long days at times there is not the least sign of a cloud in the sky, and the streams which our Creator has placed in different parts of the earth become short of water, so that there is not sufficient force in the water to turn the upper upon the nether millstone. Those living in rural districts will better understand what I mean by the force of the water, but that I may be better understood, will say that when there is a full head of water in a stream, that is, when the water is high, all will understand that there is more power in the water when the gate is hoisted from below

than when the water is only twelve inches above the bottom of the gate. This is due not only to the amount, but the weight of the water, and when there is a head of water it is then the grinding is strong and the upper millstone moves with great rapidity. But the preacher talking about a drought, when the clouds return not after the rain, and when the streams are dry and the sound of the grinding is low. How many are there today who have gotten into this condition spiritually. They feel they are famishing because of the drought; the clouds are not returning, they have almost forgotten when there was a shower, their heart seems to have turned to stone, love has gone, there is a coldness indescribable, foolish and vain thoughts only are passing through the mind, and we try to go back and get into the condition of mind we were in when we first came into the church, or even later. As for myself, I wonder what has come over me. Only a few years past I was continually writing to someone concerning things which I then thought were spiritual, but now all is changed, I have gone down into the depths, shut up entirely, not a sign of a cloud. If I were called upon to read a hymn in the meetinghouse I do not feel that I could do it. Hence the clouds are not returning, and the sound of the grinding is low, the streams are almost dry, my heart is out of tune, I cannot sing with any satisfaction, there is no life back of it. How different from the days of my youth, when I could hardly wait from one meeting day to the next. I often find myself studying a way to make more money. How long is this terrible condition of mind to last, and what does it all mean? Who can tell me? One of our poets tells us his experience in the following words: "I sometimes go where others go, but find no comfort there." He is not finding fault with the preacher, it is himself that is in a dead state, and the dead know not anything. Just now I am reminded of another poet, he tells us: "Something yet can do the deed, and that dear something, Lord, I need." Again I am reminded that clouds and rain come very unexpectedly sometimes, and this brings to my mind and experience that had entirely gone from me, and I am wondering in amazement right now why I am thinking about it. I almost tremble to tell it, yet feel that I must. Some years ago when I lived in Cannon, Del., there was a long dry spell in the summertime, and it looked as though crops would be destroyed. On a certain day I walked out to a neighbor's field near by. I felt I wanted to get out of the post-office for a little while. Everything looked desperate; the melon vines were scorching, the corn blades twisting and the sun was shining very hot. A strange sadness came over me. What if the Lord should will to withhold the rain? I knew he had a right to do this. Then it seemed I could see how the people would suffer. I stood in silence a little while, and there came over me a strong desire to ask the Lord to send rain upon the scorching vines and crops. This I did in a very few words. I did at that time seem to be in possession of a little faith. I remember that a man came into the office and said something about the dry spell, and I replied that

while there were no visible signs of rain, yet I believed it would rain soon. He said he hoped I was right. Not long after that I heard it thunder. I wanted to look for the cloud, but for some reason, I know not why, I was not allowed to look. I cannot describe my feelings at that time. The following is the best that I can explain: a simple trust, the thunder continued, and in due time the sun was hid by the cloud and then I was allowed to go out and look. In a short time it was raining hard and it thundered loud. At that particular time the thunder sounded musical to me; it seemed to me the Lord was speaking to the earth, demonstrating his wonderful power. O how good to think of the Almighty doing his will! We fear him and we adore him in songs of sublime adoration and praise. O, if our minds could always be in this pleasant condition.

Brethren, after considering this experience which I have just related I feel like telling you that we have not a God that is afar off, but a God at hand; that he is ever near, and his ear is ever open to our cry. I cannot understand how this can be so, but it is. The natural mind says, It would have rained had you not asked for it. My reply is, It did not rain until after I asked. I must be careful here, lest I am misunderstood, and I may be anyway. There is no virtue in me to bring rain. If I had or have faith it is the gift of God. It is like the dew upon the grass, it comes down upon me and us, and in such a quiet way that we hear no noise, but we feel its power and influence. In this respect we are like the grass: the dew nourishes the grass, causing it to grow; so the heavenly dew comes down upon us, causing us to grow in grace and in knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. So the clouds return after the rain, though it seems to us to be long sometimes.

A.T. Benson

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Editors

PSALM 1:1-2.

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

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VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

ACTS XX. 37, 38.

"And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more."

This text and its connection embodies an interesting subject, as well as one of importance, from many standpoints. Some things embraced in the Scriptures are seldom mentioned, perhaps for various reasons, and we confess our own omission of some such things. Often they are reckoned unimportant, hence unnecessary, but is there really anything in the "holy book" unnecessary? All must have its place and its application in its season. The weaknesses of man, as well as the power of man, through grace, are often shown clearly and in a decided way through the inspiration of God, and in the text above quoted this is done. But before taking up that side of the subject it is our desire to make mention of the strength of Paul, as a man of God, and his faithfulness to Him who called him unto glory and virtue. We have no reason to believe that any other apostle suffered as many hardships, privations and persecutions as did he. Perhaps one reason for it was the promise of God that he would shew him what great things he must suffer for the name of Jesus Christ. Be this as it may, no other apostle suffered more bravely and patiently than did he, no one of his brethren in the ministry served more cheerfully, nor worked harder to do so than did he, and, if we be allowed the term, no one accomplished more in the apostleship than did Paul. In the service of God he was seeking a clear conscience before God, and seemed ever to have it. He called to the attention of the elders of the church of Ephesus his manner of life among them, at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, with many tears and temptations. It must have been good for him, and to him, that he could conscientiously call attention to those things as he was taking his last leave of the church of Ephesus. His entire life among them had been as becometh the gospel of Christ. Again, he had kept nothing back that was profitable to them, whether it suited their feelings, notions or ideas or not. This is one point of his strength. We would that all of us who are in the ministry could be strong in this direction. He taught them publicly, and from house to house, testifying to all classes repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. He said at one time, "For to me to live is Christ," and whether in life or death Christ should be glorified in his body. As we think of this holy man of God, and his manner of life, we feel ashamed of our unprofitable existence, lo these many years, in the house of God and in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. We wonder, with fear, if it will ever be any better than in the past. What little testifying we have done has been publicly, surely not from house to house.

The apostle then told the elders

that he was going, bound to Jerusalem, not knowing what things might befall him there, save the witness of the Holy Ghost that in every city bonds and afflictions awaited him. But brave and fearless he said, "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." Here again is his strength made manifest in his determination to finish his course in testifying the gospel. At last he could say before God and his brethren that he had finished his course, had fought a good fight and kept the faith. The good work that the Lord began in him He finished, or performed. Perhaps it would not be out of place to say that Paul was twice a soldier. First, in nature's army, fighting in the armor of Saul, with all the strength and zeal possible for a natural man to possess, believing he was doing God service, but when the commandment came the battle was against him; his strength failed and his armor proved worthless. After that he was pressed into the service of God and became "a soldier of the cross," clothed with the authority and power of the Captain of our salvation, having upon him "the whole armor of God." He obeyed every order and the armor never failed him, though he died, or finished his course, in it.

The Holy Ghost made known unto him that the elders and brethren of Ephesus would never see his face again, and during this wonderful talk to them he told them that they would see his face no more, and in the parting forever he declared unto them that he was pure from the blood of all men, having fully and faithfully discharged his duty, both to them and to God. It will be seen by reading the Old Testament that the watchmen placed upon the walls of Zion were to take the oversight of the inhabitants of the city. If when they saw the enemy approaching and gave the alarm and the people did not prepare to meet the enemy, the watchmen were pure, or free, of the blood of those killed. But if they saw the enemy coming and did not warn the people, and the enemy caught them unawares and slew them, then the blood, or responsibility, of the death of the people was upon the watchmen. Paul, therefore, not having shunned to declare unto them all the counsel of God, and to warn them night and day, was pure from the blood, or responsibility, of what might take place after his departing if they kept not in mind the things he had declared unto them during his stay with them. Hence he said unto them, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." Then came his farewell benediction: "And now,

brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." He then kneeled down and prayed with them all. "And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more." We can readily understand how the love, honor and respect the elders had for Paul caused such deep sorrow at parting with him forever, but surely their weakness was greatly manifest in sorrowing most of all for those words: Ye shall see my face no more. It is perfectly natural, and when we say "natural" we mean natural, for a church of God to feel sorrowful and weep when a faithful, loving and true pastor takes his leave of it to serve in some other part of the vineyard, even though that church has no thought of never seeing his face again, but sometimes there are greater reasons for weeping than the parting with the man, let his faithfulness be ever so great and their love ever so strong, and in this the natural weakness of that church is made manifest. It should be remembered that the leaving of a pastor is not always the greatest calamity that can befall a church, and surely the final farewell of Paul to the church at Ephesus was not the worst thing to come upon it, but in its love for the man everything else was overlooked, and they sorrowed most of all that they should see his face no more. In reality what did that amount to, when compared with other things he said to them? He told them that grievous wolves should enter in among them, not sparing the flock. When the nature of the wolf is considered, and the certainty of their entering in among the sheep of God, not sparing the flock, but rather to devour, wound and scatter the sheep and lambs, in other words, making havoc of the church of God, what a small thing the parting with Paul was, yet they sorrowed most of all for that. What a frail weakling man is, and in how many ways it is made apparent, more to others perhaps than to himself. There seems no reason to think that the elders of Ephesus realized their weakness when sorrowing more for the departing of Paul than for the sure entrance of wolves in among them who would not spare the flock. Again, Paul told them that of themselves men should arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Instead of each one asking the questions, Lord, shall I depart from thy truth and speak perverse things? Shall I be a wolf among thy sheep? those grave questions and the vitally important matter weighed very lightly upon their minds, if at all, but they sorrowed most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. Paul's parting with them did not strike him with much force or significance, but the dangers to which the church was to be subjected, the troubles and divisions, were uppermost in his mind and feelings. No doubt he felt sorry to leave forever the brethren, but he sorrowed most of all for the things which were sure to come upon that church. In this again his wonderful strength was made manifest. He doubtless loved them as well as they

loved him, perhaps more, but the parting did not hurt him anything like as much as those things he knew would follow his absence.

May we all ever be given to weigh the matters that may come upon us with carefulness and prayer, always considering the most important points first, and not make our weakness known through our natural feelings and emotions. Let us stand up for the right, and bravely meet every loss and cross as it comes to us, and above all things consider the peace of the church first of everything in this world. The parting with pastors, whether by death or otherwise, is severe, and hard to bear, but not to be compared with divisions and other church troubles. To have to give up our sons and daughters, fathers and mothers, crushes us to the earth, but the grace of God is sufficient for us. The chief desire of all the people of God should be to dwell in the house of the Lord, to behold his beauty and to inquire in his temple.

"My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life or breath remains;
There my best friends, my kindred, dwell,
There God my Savior reigns."

Elder H.C. Kerr

"I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day."—Isaiah xxvii. 3.

The Lord Jesus Christ, who lives at God's right hand, has to send down supplies to his grace continually to keep your soul alive unto himself. Without this life being kept up and maintained by these continual supplies of his grace, you cannot pray, or read, or hear the word, or meditate with any feeling or profit. You cannot love the Lord and his blessed ways; you cannot submit to his righteous dealings; or hear the rod and him who appointed it. You may approach his throne, but your heart is cold, clouded, and unfeeling; your spirit sinks under the weight and burden of the trials and difficulties that are spread in your path; nor are you able to do anything that satisfies yourself, or that you think can satisfy God. By these painful but profitable lessons, you are experimentally taught that you want the life of Christ as well as the death of Christ, the resurrection of Christ as much as the crucifixion of Christ; Christ as an ever-living, ever-gracious, ever-glorious Mediator, to send down supplies of his love and power into your soul, as much as you needed him to die upon the cross for your redemption.

J.C. Philpot

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OBITUARIES

ALICE LAWS ADKINS
Died April 18, 1987

JACOB MORRIS ADKINS
Died April 7, 1987

Alice Laws Adkins, a long time and staunch friend of the Old School Baptists, died at her home in Berlin, Maryland on April 18, 1987. She was the daughter of the late Sarah Catherine Jarmon Laws and James H. Laws who were members of the old Indiantown Church. Her husband, Jacob Merrill Adkins, Jr. died in 1970. His parents, Emma Morris Adkins and Jacob Merrill Adkins, Sr., were also members there.

Funeral services for Alice Adkins were conducted at the Burbage Funeral Home in Berlin by Elder W. Randall Saunders who spoke from the words of Solomon in Proverbs, chapter 31, verses 10-31, ending with the thought about the virtuous woman..."but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised." Her favorite hymn, "Does the Gospel Word Proclaim Rest For Those Who Weary Be?" was read as well as "How Firm a Foundation", and one found marked on page 204 of her Durand Lester hymnal, ending with these words:

'Tis sovereign mercy finds us food,
And we are clothed with love;
While grace sustains us in the road
That leads our souls above.

His goodness runs an endless round;
All glory to the Lord;
His mercy never knows a bound,
And be his name adored!

Watts

Surviving Alice Adkins are two daughters, Alice May Adkins Fisher and Emma Catherine Adkins Esmark, both of Berlin and five each of grandchildren and great-grandchildren. A sister, Irene Laws Toadvine of Salisbury, a brother, Homer Laws of Wango, and several nieces and nephews also survive.

It was especially poignant that the only son of Alice Adkins, Jacob Morris Adkins, age 56, died in the

Salisbury Hospital on April 7, 1987, preceding his mother's death by eleven days. He was faithful in his attendance at the Nassaongo Old School Baptist Church. At his funeral services Elder Saunders chose the text found in 1 st Corinthians, chapter 15, verses 51-58 that end with these words: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Both Morris and his mother were laid to rest in the Evergreen Cemetery in Berlin. By their walk in life, they and their forbears gave evidence that by God's mercy their trust was in the Lord and that by His grace they were "given to hospitality" to the brethren and friends. In death they have caused us to remember again that it is through faith, the gift of God, that we are "willing to be absent from the body, and be present with the Lord."

Written for The Signs of the Times at the request of a grandson of Alice and Jacob Adkins and submitted in love by the undersigned.

Frances P. Parish

BUELAH TRUITT LITTLETON

Buelah Truitt Littleton, born December 3, 1894, was called home to be with her Lord, April 25, 1987. She was the daughter of John H. and Mary Hasting Truitt. Her husband, Charles M. Littleton died 1957. Living was one step-daughter, Florence Hopkins of Chincoteague, Va.

She had been a member of the Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church since 1914. She was a devoted wife, mother and always faithful to her church as long as she could go. Although she had been unable to attend church during the past ten years, due to age and sickness, she never ceased to be interested in all the churches. Up until the time of her death, she always wanted to know where the services were, who preached and what the sermon was about. She loved to have Old School Baptist ministers and brethren visit.

After the death of her husband in 1957, she became a resident of the John B. Parsons Home and for the past four years had been in the Harrison House Nursing Home in Snow Hill, Md.

Funeral services were held at the Holloway Funeral Home in Salisbury, Maryland. Officiating was her pastor, Elder James Poole. She was buried beside her husband in the Snow Hill Old School Baptist Cemetery.

She was a loving, kind and caring person. She loved children and cared for many. She was strong in the faith and longed to go home to be with her Lord. A few weeks before she died, she asked to have a tape brought in to play for her, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds". When done, she said, "Now I am satisfied."

She was loved dearly and shall be missed, but to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. May His name be praised.

Frances T. Jarvis

Signs of the Times

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"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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Elder Smith wrote the following in 1944. When we visited with him recently, he recited the entire poem word for word from memory. He is now eighty-five years old.

Elder J. R. Williams

EXIT THE OLD YEAR-- ENTER THE NEW

Farewell, old 1943;
Come in, thou '44.
I say to thee, old '43,
That I'll not see thee more.

And what, thou 1944,
Pray tell us, wilt thou bring?
Wilt thou bring troubles more and more?
No peace song shall we sing?

Wilt thou the war's death-toll increase?
Will casualties run high?
And the great prize--O lasting peace!
Will it be far or nigh?

I'm sure no living mortal knows--
Not Roosevelt or Pope;
And Churchill great, and Stalin too,
What hold they forth of hope?

Old '43 was bad, we know--
What anguish, pain and grief!
Could I it change, with '44,
I'd do so, and with lief.

And '45, through '48,
Will each grow worse unless,
It please the Lord to intercede,
With His great power to bless.

The nations seem not yet to know,
Jehovah rules supreme:
And that He issues weal or woe,
Just as it pleases Him.

The monarch great, the peasant, too
Both on the Lord depend;
Though it may be they neither do,
Nor can they see His hand.

Thy saints, dear Lord, keep by thy grace,
Through this great conflict sore,
Grant us the shinings of thy face--
O may we trust thee more!

May we due strength, from thee on high,
Be given to suit each need:
And may we, Lord, be made to cry;
With thee, O may we plead.

Nor may our pleadings be in vain,
Thy ear it is not dull,
Thy arm it has not shortened been,
That thou can't save in full.

Thy power display, thy love make known;
Come, save thy people sore:
Then in that sweet and lovely home,
We'll praise thee evermore.

Elder John Lee Smith

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"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Psalm 116:15

EDITORIAL

"And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God: I know thy works, that thou are neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or not. So then because thou art lukewram, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment that thou mayest rich; and white rainment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."

Revelation 3:14-18.

"Amen" is much more full of meaning than we may have supposed, and as a title of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is eminently suggestive. Amen signifies true, faithful, and certain. Our Redeemer took this as a personal title to himself. He called himself "the Amen" and so he is, "the faithful and true witness." He proved himself to be Amen; the God of truth, sincerity, and faithfulness in his fulfillment of covenant engagements. The Lord undertook to bring all His elect to glory. His Father gave him a people chosen in him to be his for-

ever; and he undertook suretyship engagements, that every one of these should be delivered perfect and complete without spot or blemish by his own hands. He undertook, in order to accomplish this, that he would suffer, bleed, and die for his Church; that all her debts should be discharged from his own veins; that a perfect righteousness should be wrought out for her, in which she will stand in perfect beauty in the sight of God. My dear brethren, do you not believe the Lord Jesus has faithfully kept his engagements? He has been "the Amen" to the full in this respect. "Lo, I come! (In the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God." Heb. 10:7. Seven years of toil for Rachel were achieved by Jacob, and seven years afterwards, and our Master has achieved the same. He has paid the price of his Beloved to the uttermost farthing, and it is said by him, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and he that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37. "Having loved his own which were in the world he loved them unto the end." John 10:1.

"The beginning of the creation of God." Christ is said to be the beginning because he was in the creation of all things. Without Him was nothing made which was made, and therefore he has Lordship and dominion over all. All power both in heaven and earth is committed by the Father into his hands. He has been given power over all flesh and all things.

The epistle to the church of Laodicea is not to be thrown into the waste basket and forgotten. Upon its pages still flow the words, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches." "I know thy works." As much as to say, "Nobody else really knows you. Some think better of you than you deserve. You do not really know yourself. You think everything is excellent, but I know different." Their works were not pleasing in the sight of Christ. Nothing can be hid from Jesus, He knows and sees all things. He knows our thoughts from afar off. He searches the heart and tries the reins of the children of men. Our opinion of ourselves as a church and Christ's opinion of us may be very different and it is a very sad thing when it is so. "I know thy works." Does He make you feel this? Does He follow you in your secret life, in your purposes, your designs, aims, motives, thoughts and ways? "That thou art neither cold nor hot." Is this our state? If a church is in a lukewarm condition, it may feel comfortable; but is in a dangerous state and is dishonouring to the Lord. The church spoken of, no doubt, maintained much of the truth; but how did she maintain it? In form, but not in power; in the letter, but lacking in Spirit. Yet with all her decay, she was no doubt, a church of God; for she is addressed as such. The Lord gives counsels such as he gave her to those only that are his.

"I know thy works that thou art neither cold nor hot." They were not cold but they were not hot either. They were believers; but not in real earnest. They were not in real earnest, they were not disreputable in moral charachter, but they were not distinguished for holiness. They were not irreligious, but they were not enthusiastic in piety nor eminent for zeal. She was alive, but not lively; neither was she without some spiritual love to God, and Christ, and to his people. She was not without some light. They had a deficiency of real prayer and liberality. They were lacking in real piety and were careless in their walk. But everything seemed to be going well with them; what more could they expect. They were no doubt holding on to some phase of the truth while other phases of the truth were left wanting. Many of their members were attempting to serve mammon and God while some were sincere in only serving God. Some were no

doubt making all kinds of excuses not to be with the assembling of the saints, while others were eager to attend. As a whole the church was in a "lukewarm" condition.

My dear ones, I believe what Jesus is warning us concerning the state of the Laodicean Church should be of vast importance to us all today. Do we say, I believe what he teaches, but I do not think it is sufficient importance for me to disturb myself much about it? Did Jesus Christ think salvation of such importance that he must needs come from heaven to earth to work it out? Did he think the gospel which he preached so worthy to be made known that he must needs spend his life in proclaiming it? Did he think the redemption which he wrought out to be so valuable that he must needs shed his own precious blood in order to complete it? Should not we all who profess a blessed hope, be concerned over our present condition? Should we, as ministers of the truth, attempt to pray that God would give us grace and wisdom to preach the whole counsel of God? Do we degrade the mercy seat by not making it a wrestling place in prayer as Jacob did? Oh, how far short I see myself in all these things. No wonder the Lord has said to his people, you are "lukewarm."

Oh, if we could be blessed to look upon Jesus and say, "Oh, Jesus, thy heart was full of love for us in whom there was nothing lovely! Thou didst leave the glories of thy father's house to come down and become bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, yet without sin. Thou didst fight our enemies and rescued us out of the hands that were stronger than we. Thy pangs were grievous, thy sufferings were bitter, and thy anguish was extreme. We look up to thy thorn-crowned brow, we gaze into thy marred face, and see those innocent eyes red with pain. Now may we be given grace to pray that thy love will burn in our hearts as coals of fire. Oh, Jesus, thou art worthy of the best place in our hearts."

Jesus shows his faithful love to the Church by this letter to them and prescribes the only remedy and cure for the disease this church was under the power of. "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire." this verse may be somewhat confusing as the Lord has said the church was "poor, blind, and naked." How can she buy? What does she have to offer in exchange for "gold tried in the fire?" We may ask what does this gold represent? I believe it is faith which is a gift of God. But how is she to buy it? Only when the soul is deeply convinced of sin, of its helplessness, ignorance, blindness, wretchedness, folly etc. and when the Lord draws the poor, needy, guilty sinner to his bosom and enables him to lay them all at the Lord's feet and cross as the Holy Ghost dictates: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, He will sustain thee; he will never suffer the righteous to be moved." Psalm 55:22. The church had these things to give in exchange for "gold tried in the fire." This faith comes from Christ as a free gift. Was it tried in the fire? Yes, the hottest fire, the fiercest furnace that ever burned. Everything about this glorious Jesus, our Prince of Peace, was sorely tested. His life, his love, his patience, his obedience, his strength, all, all was put to the test his Father imposed. Sinners tried him, the devil tried him, imputed sin tried him, his own law tried him,justice tried him, his Father's stripes tried him, divinely made darkness tried him, death and the grave tried him. Only, Immanuel, our immortal Jesus could have overcome such a "sevenfold" furnace. This trial was necessary for the assurance, as well as the salvation of the church. The foundation rock on which the church was to be built must be well proved. This is the foundation on which our most holy faith is built. So says

Christ, "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire." He gives no other than this precious faith tried in the fire. What was the Church to buy with nothing? Nothing but our sins, our helplessness, our ignorance, our blindness and wretchedness.

"And white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear." Why did the Church need white raiment? Because she was naked, defiled, polluted, and unclean. "For I say unto you; that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 5:20. The Lord's people who are to dwell forever in the glorious presence of God must be suitably clothed. "White raiment," raiment for covering; white for purity, loveliness, and with absolute perfection. It is the wedding garment, it is the way in which she is made ready. "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." "Naked and ye clothed me." Matt. 25:34, 36.

"And anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see." This eyesalve is surely heavenly teaching by the blessed Spirit of God. So this eyesalve seems to be made up of the Word of God which is our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching of the Holy Spirit. "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. 4:6. Can we say with the man who was born blind, "One thing I know, whereas I was blind, now I see?" Can we see our sins, our pollution and hate them? Can we cry out from our hearts, "God be merciful to me a sinner?" Why? Because the things we see by divine light concerning ourselves are not pleasing, but fearful to us. Perhaps some of you who have had a zeal for the truth, are faithful in attendance etc. maybe troubled at times with doubts and fears as to your standing in the Beloved; but when these doubts and fears come across your soul and mind, can you not say with regard to them, I know one thing, namely, that I'm not what I used to be. I feel I have been brought into a new sphere of things. I have experienced many changes to which I was a total stranger. One thing I do believe, that once I was blind but now I see, I see Jesus as being my only hope of salvation. Is all this the truth? How can it be a lie when wrought forth by the Holy Spirit? When the time arrives for Jesus to reveal himself to our hearts and consciences, can we then sing that beautiful hymn:

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

We see Jesus as the way, the truth, and the life. The Holy Ghost causes every soul he teaches to come with his sins to the Lord, willing and anxious to part with all. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." To buy, ordinarily is to exchange or give money for that which is of equal value. In this sense buying of Christ is impossible. What have we but corruption? Yet the Holy Spirit causes every elect soul to come with all in exchange for pure gold, his white raiment, and his eyesalve.

My dear brethren, what is the general state of the Church today? Are we all concerned on the growing decline of our churches for the past seventy-five years or so? Several associations in our country which were once prospering are no longer in existence. In the past ten years we have seen three of our churches in the state of Texas cease to exist. What sadness this brings to our hearts. Can we not keep from asking, is there not a cause? we know that we can relieve our

minds some by saying it is exactly as God wants it or He would change it. None of us would dare dispute the absolute sovereignty and authority of God in ruling all things because, "He doeth according to his will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Dan. 4:35. But can we say, God is well pleased with the present conditions of our churches? Was He well pleased with the Laodicean church when He said, "I would thou wert cold or not?" Are we satisfied in our hearts as the Laodiceans were not knowing the sad state which they were in?

Are we as ministers of the different churches we have been called to serve and believe to be among His visible churches here on earth, preaching the whole counsel of God? We may as ministers say and feel that we need exhorting and reproving more than our brethren (and so we may) we therefore refrain from bringing forth these things before our people. But are we to go by our feelings or by the command of the Holy Spirit by the pen of Paul when he says, "I charge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with longsuffering and doctrine." II Tim. 4:1,2, also "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." II Tim. 3:16, 17.

Do we who have been given a hope in Christ Jesus, and as Christians, have certain responsibilities to attempt to perform? Knowing without a shadow of a doubt that we cannot of ourselves perform one good act, but only by the grace and strength of God. Paul says, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Phil. 4:13. We are not what we hope to be only by the grace of God? Paul also says, "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God whih was with me." Cor. 15:10.
which was with me." I Cor. 15:10.

No doubt we all believe that the sovereignty, foreknowledge, and predestination of God is the backbone of our precious doctrine. Naturally speaking, our backbone is a very important part of our body structure, but our ribs which are attached to our backbone play an important part for protection as well as other parts. Can we not also say that the promises, the precepts, the commands, the applications and exhortations in the gospel, also play an important part in our precious doctrine? How often do we all pray, pray, and pray that God will give us grace and wisdom to read and study the scripture with the correct understanding of them. Jacob wrestled all night praying to the Lord. Paul says, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." II Tim. 2:15.

Our forefathers with much zeal for the truth in their hearts, endured bad weather, road conditions, and poor means of transportation to attend church. Where is the zeal they had? Some still have it, but do we all? Are we good at making excuses for not assembling ourselves together each Lord's day? "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." Heb. 10:24,25.

I realize that some of the things written in this article may be offensive to some; but please try to accept it in the love and concern, I trust, in which it is written. As an Elder once said to me, "If

we disagree, let it be in love, and not with malice." I hope what has come on my mind to write was prompted by the Spirit and not by me. I pray that no one is offended. If I'm in error, please forgive me. I ask each of you when you are given a mind to pray, remember our churches and remember me. I need your prayers.

A concerned sinner
in hope of mercy,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

TARBORO PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albermarle Avenue in downtown Tarboro, North Carolina. It was established on February 7, 1819, by Elder Joshua Lawrence, Martin Rose, Thomas Billings and Thomas Meredith. Elder Lawrence is buried in the church cemetery.

The present church building was built in 1826 after the first building was destroyed.

Elder D. B. Stokes has served us as pastor for the past 29 years. Previous pastors have been Elder Joseph D. Fly, who served for nearly 28 years, Elder S. P. Denny, Elder P. D. Gold and others.

Our meeting time is every first Sunday morning and Saturday night before of each month. We welcome you to visit us.

John H. Coker, Clerk

"A GOOD name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold."
Proverbs 22: 1

"Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.
Proverbs 22: 6

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editors,

We received our Signs this week and I have felt for sometime I wanted to tell you editors how very much we appreciate all the work and time you put forth that we may enjoy the Signs each month. We feel it is another of the many blessings we receive from the hand of our loving God and Saviour. He has been so good to us. If we could only praise Him as we should.

For awhile it seemed our Church went thru dark days but now with Elder Williams coming to us each month and Elder Robertson coming to the Salisbury Church and different dear Elders visiting, we feel we are receiving double blessings for all our troubles. It seems as we get older and the world means less and less to us we look forward to the weekend and our meetings more each month. Also each weekend seems more precious.

I wish God would move more of our Elders to write for the Signs and the Brothers and Sisters to write their experiences or how the Lord is leading them in this world. It is comforting to read the travels of those of like beliefs and faith.

Everyone has been so kind and thoughtful of us since Lawrence had the stroke. It melts our hearts in thankfulness.

When we were able we traveled some to the different churches and now that we cannot get around as we did, we remember with much pleasure the many Brothers and Sisters we met and friendship and fellowship shown us.

May the good Lord continue to give you health and strength for this work that means so much to all who believe in salvation by grace and in predestination.

Your grateful sister, I hope.
Ethel Holloway

Dear Brother Kenneth:

I hope all of you dear people are doing well, by the mercies of our covenant God.

I'm sending a sermon preached by Mr. C. A. Wood, while we were in attendance at one of his churches in England last year. I thought our people might be interested in reading a sermon preached by a Particular Baptist minister from England.

They call their ministers Mr. in place of Elder. We fully enjoyed meeting the people of the Gospel Standard churches affiliation. The Particular Baptist people in England have been blessed for many centuries to preach the truth, in fact, long before the United States was ever inhabited by our forefathers.

Elder Joe Hamrick

SERMON PREACHED BY MR. C.A. WOOD, THURSDAY, 20TH MAY, 1985---CROYDON, ENGLAND.

Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." Isaiah 44: 21, 22.

Distinguishing grace separates the believer from the idolator, the wheat from the tares, the wise virgins (having the vital possession of oil in their lamps) from the foolish. It distinguishes the true Israelite from Israel at large. Here the Lord is speaking: "Remember these," think of that state in which you were born, dead in trespasses and in sins, without God, without hope, without Christ. O wondrous grace that delivers us from

such a state! Nothing but God's mighty power in grace can deliver a sinner from that state in which we are born, with the carnal mind at enmity to God, turning away from the ways of God, not seeking God. But now, as one of our hymns says,

But now, subdued by sovereign grace,
My spirit longs for Thy embrace.

What cause have the redeemed to bless and praise God for salvation by Grace, redemption by blood and that mighty, effectual work of the Holy Spirit in the soul delivering it from that state of darkness and bringing it into the light of life. Those words have been fastened much on my mind lately – "the light of life." Where that spiritual light shines in the heart which was before in a state of darkness and of death, there is now spiritual life.

Quickened by the Spirit, made alive, brought out, God has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son "in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." Remember then O child of God, from whence thou hast been called, thy wondrous deliverance, the matchless grace put forth toward thee, a lost, ruined and perishing sinner. It is God which hath begun a good work in you and He will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Think of where you would be tonight, but for the wondrous grace of God. Certainly you would not be in this place, would you? Certainly you would be without love to the Lord, without a desire for the things of God! Certainly your heart would be destitute of a cry for mercy. Certainly this Jesus would be nothing to you. But now, called by His grace, you are a new creature in Christ.

O beloved, I say how precious is this Jesus to convinced sinners, taught by the Spirit their lost state and ruined condition. We often quote the line,

'Twas grace that taught my soul to pray

And it is all of grace if ever I pray to God, if ever I know the burden of sin, if ever I feel the solemnity of eternity, if ever such a vile wretch is directed to the cross to look to the Saviour of sinners, to the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness.

'Twas grace that taught my soul to pray

Yes, a spiritual groan is a prayer, the upward glancing of an eye when none but God is near, that "Lord, help me," that "Lord, save me" springing from the depths of your hearts, is blessed evidence of spiritual light and life in the soul.

'Twas grace that taught my soul to pray
And pardoning love to know

This is what some of you are praying for. Some of us have tasted just a little of it; we want much more, we want to know the full blessing of the second part of my test: "I have blotted out..." God has done it. No one else can do it. God has done it - "Blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions and as a cloud thy sins."

And pardoning love to know
'Twas grace that kept me to this day

So that you have not gone right back, turned back into the world, turned your back on Him whom your soul loveth, Alas! we have to mourn our backslidings, our wanderings. But God says, "return unto me." Look, poor sinner, "I have redeemed thee." So,

'Twas grace that kept me to this day
And will not let me go.

This is the wonder of it - "will not let me go." It holds me, it keeps me, and it will bring me to glory at last. "For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." We may look with pitying eyes, sometimes, alas, almost with self-righteousness, on the heathen man that

makes (as described in the Word of God) his idol of wood taken from the tree, shaped and fashioned. Part he burns, part he uses to warm himself, for cooking etc. Another part he uses to make an idol and bows down and worships it. Yet, my friend, as we look at the heathen, what can we say of any and all that are without Christ? What a mercy to have our eyes opened and to remember these, remember the futility of worshipping anything but the true Jehovah, or resting on anything but the finished work of Jesus Christ, of building on the sand instead of the rock. O beloved, may we pray to be preserved from a false religion, a vain hope, dead tradition, just a head knowledge of the truth. We want something wrought in our heart by the Holy Ghost and if we have this we shall look back with increased wonder and say, "Why such love to me, Lord?"

Why was I made to hear His voice
And enter while there's room
While thousands made a wretched choice
And rather starve than come.

"Remember these, O Jacob and Isreal." What need we have to be kept from going back. I know every child of God will be brought to glory at last but we have to be kept from backsliding or trusting in anything but Jesus Christ. How vain it is to lean on the arm of flesh, for if we turn our eyes from our God, if we trust in anything but our God, are we not guilty of forming an idol and bowing down to it, looking to man for our help? O may we worship God and "remember these," think of the lost, of that "so great salvation," of that mighty power of grace wrought in the heart. Then pray to be kept, for believers need to be oft in prayer to be brought to remember that word at the end of John's first Epistle, where it seems as though the Apostle of love closes with abruptness (we speak with reverence, for it is the Word of God) - "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." He saw the danger, and we need to be kept from it.

"Remember these, O Jacob and Israel." Jacob sets forth the wrestling one, but it also sets forth weakness, it sets forth "worm Jacob." Yet it was to Jacob that God spake "exceeding great and precious promises" at Bethel. It was this dear man who in his time of trouble and distress, called upon his God and pleaded a promise with a "Thou saidst." The Lord himself wrestled with Jacob and there Jacob's thigh was put out of joint. There the Lord said, "Let me go, for the day breaketh," and Jacob said, "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me." Do you know something of prevailing prayer like that in your heart at times? Do you know something of such a need of Jesus Christ that you feel you cannot go on without a blessing for your soul? You are weakness itself, poverty itself, sinfulness itself. O cling to Christ! "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me." As said Jabez "O that Thou wouldst bless me indeed." That is it; that is the language of this spiritual Jacob and this prevailing Israel. "And He blessed him there." So his name was changed from Jacob to Israel for "as a prince hast thou power with God and with men and hast prevailed." He prevailed by the grace of God, by the strength given him.

As Israel of old groaned under their burdens in Egypt, so God's people spiritually groan under the burden of their sin in this tabernacle of their body. "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened," groan because of some besetting sin, groan because we come so short of what we want to be, of what we hope and long to be. Yet we cry out, and this is our mercy, that God hears a cry and a groan and in His time will come down and deliver the burdened soul.

One more thought here - "O Jacob and O Israel" - speaking of Nathanael the Lord Jesus said, "Behold an Israelite in-

deed, in whom is no guile!" He did not mean that Nathanael was sinless but that the grace of God in exercise in the heart will make a sinner honest and sincere so that they seek to speak the truth and will not go beyond what God has shown them, blessed them with, and taught them. The fear of the Lord implanted in the soul will undoubtedly affect and direct our spirit and the words that we utter. "For I have formed thee, thou art my servant." This fear will make us turn from idols to serve the living and true God. "If any man serve me, let him follow me." No man can serve two masters, so as the Lord works this mighty work of grace in a sinner's heart he will be like the Hebrew bond servant on the day of liberty when he was entitled to go free; but said, "I love my master." O Lord Jesus, help me to serve Thee, help me to love Thee, preserve me from fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, help me to do the will of God, to be a true servant. "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Was the cry of the Apostle at his conversion, and it is the language of those who are spiritually minded, exercised in the things of God. They constantly seek to serve God, and not like a slave who only fears the whip, and has not love in his heart; but as a child in loving obedience to the parent, knowing that it is for his own good. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

As we look at this word, "I have formed thee" we think of dear Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, who was bidden to go down to the potter's house and there, said God, "I will speak to you." There was a vessel which was marred but it was made anew. "I have formed thee." O, when that work of grace is begun there is a new creature, a vessel made meet for the master's use. That vessel has to be cleansed; it has to be emptied. True grace has an emptying effect before filling. My friend, it is painful, but profitable, to be emptied, emptied of all vain hope, all that is of the creature, all that is of dead religion, to be emptied, cleansed and then filled, held in the hand of the Lord Himself and used for His honour and glory.

"Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel!" Do not read this word too quickly, do not pass over the little word, 'O'. Just think what that means to you sometimes, when you feel so burdened, so cast down, such a sinner, tempted by Satan, accused by the enemy, derided perhaps by the world, burdened and distressed in affliction's path, in darkness and under pressure. What is then squeezed out of your soul? Not a very long, wordy prayer, but sometimes just this - "O, Lord." O, what a word! It comes from the depth of the heart; it is the upward glance of faith to God. But is it not Got that is speaking this word, "O, Israel." This letter "O" has no beginning and no end. It speaks to me of the love of God, His everlasting love. It is as much as to say, "O Jacob, amidst all your distresses and all your troubles, O Israel under all your burdens, I love thee." Yes! though you may be passing through the fire, though you may have many fears, may be sorely tried, greatly tempted, though your sins are as great mountains before you, or as we have in the text "thick clouds" yet the love of God is everlasting, it has no break in it. From this love the dear people of God shall never, never be separated. If you are tired and tempted, turn to the Word of God and O that faith may rest in and lay hold upon such a word as this: "I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

In the words of our text tonight there is a love taken from heaven, it is a kiss

from His mouth to a poor trembling, burdened, sorrowing sinner, who feels to be so lonely, to be forgotten, forsaken, full of fears. You look at the future as you look at your present path, and perhaps you feel that nobody loves you. We do not despise the love of brethren, of husbands and wives, friends, brothers and sisters, but sometimes God's children may walk a very lonely path. But think of this: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." O think of it! I shall never forget hearing Mr. Pilgrem shortly after the death of my Pastor when this came as a word from heaven to my soul. "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." "Moses, my servant is dead, now therefore arise, go over this Jordan. As I was with Moses so I will be with thee; I will not fail thee or forsake thee."

Brethren, your poor Pastor has to confess that he looks so much at the things that burden, press, try and trouble him and forgets the God that says, "I will not forget thee." We lose sight of our great God, the God of all grace, the God of all mercy, the God of all love, the God of all power. My friend, whatever your burden or need may be, whatever your weakness or need may be, whatever your weakness or your trial, your path, your cross, your thorn in the flesh, your cup, your dark valley, whatever you may be passing through, seek grace to look up. It is not all gloom, though it is through much tribulation that we must enter the kingdom, for there are times of blessing, green pastures, still waters, the love visits of our God. We can bear testimony to the truth of the Word before us: "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." When I had something before me my dear Pastor would say, "I will remember you." Sometimes you come to me and I say, I will remember you, but that is as far as it goes. The prayers of the godly are a great strength, a great support and help, but the God who says, "O Isreal, thou shalt not be forgotten of me," is our God, and there is nothing too hard for Him. Our God can make you strong out of your weakness. In the path that seems to us so strange, he can turn the curse into a blessing, the bitter into sweet and if your burden lingers and gets greater, do you mean to say that your God will fail you? Do you mean to say that He will not give strength to bear the burden? Your God has told you this, beloved, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord and He shall sustain thee." He "upholdeth all things by the word of His power." He "hangeth the earth upon nothing." And he holds up, bears up and supports His dear children, even as we read a little later in this prophecy, "Even to your old age I am He, and even to Hoar hairs will I carry you; I have made and I will bear, even I will carry and will deliver you."

He will bring you through the fire. Yes! God here speaks of the path of His dear people. "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest" - you are walking step by step; you are not consumed in that fire, you are going to come through it; "When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned." The work of grace in your soul shall never be destroyed, that precious faith will never be overthrown, "neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." But I hear you say, "I am in the dark; I am in such a sad state, so cast down, so oppressed. I do not know where I am." But is there that cry from your poor heart for the Lord? Can you find light in your darkness, help in your trouble, strength in your weakness, joy in your sorrow outside Jesus Christ? Tell me, can you? You may be under the cloud, it may indeed be a dark path; but this word still stands. You may not have that faith in exercise to penetrate the dark cloud above, but God says, "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgot-

ten of me." Joseph was forgotten by the butle, but he was never forgotten by God, never!

It is not an easy path and we do not use this word tonight as an easy way out of trouble, but it is a strength to us in our trial, it is a support to us as we go forth. Sometimes you may fear as you enter the cloud, but God says He will bless all who fear Him, both small and great. "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." This is true in your providential concerns. Once they came to Peter for the tribute money and the Lord told Peter to go and cast a hook into the sea and in the mouth of the first fish he caught was money sufficient to pay for Peter and for Himself. Elijah proved it; the brook dried up, but He, God did not fail. There was a widow woman at Zarephath; she had only a handful of meal and a little oil but "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." Later when Elijah was under the juniper tree, His God had still not forgotten him but sent an angel. He knows what is in front of you and that the journey is too great for you. "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me."

So beloved, what a strength and comfort this is. You may be passing through a deep trial. May the Lord sustain and support you and comfort you with this word. "Behold the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in his mercy." He will show love, pity, and compassion. "Underneath are the everlasting arms." We do not want to sing a song with a heavy heart, but where else can we go with our trouble? Dear Medley wrote hymn No. 7 on the occasion of the sudden death of one of his children. O what a mercy to have a God to go to!

Too wise to be mistaken He,
Too good to be unkind.

O, we want another visit from Him, another love token, we do long for the kiss of His mouth, we do want the sun to pierce the cloud and to hear His lovely voice again speaking to us. Have you ever heard it? Has ever your poor heart been crumbled and melted and humbled as the Lord has spoken a word of His love to your poor soul? He will not forget you. He changeth not. He will not alter that word or go back on what He has said, "He is faithful that hath promised."

"I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins." This cloud comes between your soul and God, between you and the enjoyment of His love. You say, "Lord, my manifold transgressions are like a thick cloud from me. Indeed Lord, every moment I live, every breath I draw, I am adding to the intensity of that black cloud of my transgressions, the cloud of my sins that comes between my soul and Thee." This black cloud speaks also of something else; it speaks of the wrath of God that should justly fall upon us because of our sins. But God says, "I and none else can do it." Blessed be His name, He has done it. "It is finished" was the cry of the Saviour on Calvary's cross. We cannot meet the demands of His holy law, but He blots the debt that we owe. God says, "I have blotted out all that debt." It is paid.

Payment God cannot twice demand,
Once at my bleeding Surety's hand,
and then again at mine.

What moves a thick cloud literally? Is it not the wind and the sun? When the Holy Spirit comes and bears witness in your soul of your interest in the blood, when the Sun of Righteousness arises with healing in His wings, He pierces the cloud and shines with healing in His wings. He pierces the cloud and shines with love in your soul. "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." "The Son of God loved me and gave Himself for me." "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins.. I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own

sake and will not remember thy sins." "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

To whom then is this spoken? Why, friend, it is to a poor coming, venturing sinner, whom the Lord has drawn to himself, pleading mercy and looking alone to Christ, hanging on the cross.

Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling.

"Saying unto my soul I am thy salvation." "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just (you see, justice is on our side) to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The great cloud speaks of sins in our life. I look back on mine and you look back on yours, and we see things that grieves us. Our sins are as the cloud that covers the sky as we see sin mingled with everything that we do. But here is our God who blots out. And what is it that blots our our sins? Nothing but the blood. What is it that you pray for and plead for? Nothing but the blood.

Assure my conscience of her part
In the Redeemer's blood,
And bear Thy witness with my heart
That I am born of God.

"Return unto me." God will bring them back, and what a path it will be! It will be with weeping, with tears, with sorrow. It will be coming afresh, feeling that load of sin, to seek the Saviour, to acknowledge what a wretch one has been and to stand amazed at the grace of God manifested towards us that in His long-suffering He has not dealt with us as we so richly deserve.

"Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee." This redemption is by the blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord. "Thou shalt not be forgotten of me" right to the end of time. You may have a fear of death, but this word shall stand. You may not have the comfort of it, but I trust you will have faith to believe it. The full enjoyment of it will be when you come down to death itself and you will be given dying grace in a dying hour. So you will prove that your God has never forgotten you, failed you or forsaken you. The Lord bless His word. Amen.

MEETINGS

FIVE MILE CREEK ASSOCIATION

The Five Mile Creek Association will be held, Lord willing, the 3rd Sunday in September, Friday and Saturday before, September 19, 20, and 21.

Shady Grove Church is host for this Association. The church is located off highway 69 between Jasper and Cullman, Alabama at Bugtussle. Turn east and go to top of hill and then turn right on first road. Go about 4 miles to church.

Elder H. C. Moon, Moderator
Bremen, Alabama

SULPHUR FORK ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the one hundred and forty-first annual meeting of the Sulphur Fork Primitive Baptist Association convenes with Hopewell Church Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, October 3rd, 4th, & 5th, 1986. Church is located about 5 miles west of Winnsboro, Texas, just West of FM 515.

We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to come so that we can enjoy your fellowship and presence in our homes. We have been blessed to have some wonderful preaching during these Associations and do gracefully welcome all ministers of our faith and order.

For additional information, call (214) 269-3561.

Elder Joe Hamrick

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Salem Primitive Baptist Church, Floyd County, Va., a presbytery met May 10, 1986 at Salem Church for the examination of Brother Andrew Agee, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgement, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The solemity was begun with prayer by Elder Raymond Goad. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders Larry Hollandsworth, Noel Conner, William Holland, Lane Carter, Junior Conner, Raymond Goad, Amos Hash, Hale Terry and Carl Terry.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Hale Terry as moderator and Elder Carl Terry as clerk. Elder William Holland and Elder Junior Conner was chosen to lead the examination of the candidate. Deacon Tiris Conner, having been duly appointed by Salem Church in conference May 10, 1986, as spokesman for the church, delivered brother Andrew Agee to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder William Holland and Elder Junior Conner, using scripture reference Acts 6 and 1 Timothy, 3rd Chapter. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Amos Hash. Elder Lane Carter delivered the charge to the candidate. Scripture reference, 3rd chapter 1st Timothy, 6th chapter Acts, and 5th chapter 1st Timothy.

The moderator asked Salem Church if they were satisfied with the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmitive.

A certificate of ordination was presented to brother Agee and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained deacon was delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Salem.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Larry Hollandsworth. Deacons present were: Harry Cannaday, Lawrence Myers, W.T. Conner, John Plunkett, Woodrow Abshire, Grover Semons, G. T. Abshire, Ed Dyer, Hancil Conner, Lonnie Nichols, Donald Agee, Bobby Bernard, Jamie Cooper, Nelson Bryant, and Claude Hopkins

Elder Hale Terry, Moderator
Elder Carl E. Terry, Clerk

BEL SPUR PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Bel Spur Primitive Baptist Church, Carroll County, Va., a presbytery met April 19, 1986 at Bel Spur for the examination of brother Carl Terry, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgement, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of the Gospel Ministry.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Leonard Key. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders Leonard Key, Kenneth R. Key, Larry Hollandsworth, Noel Conner, Jr., Amos Hash and Hale Terry. Deacons Nelson Bryant, Alan Terry, Claude Hopkins, W. G. Parsons, Donald Agee, Jamie Cooper, H. D. Ingram, Edwin Dyer, Wilson King, Lonzie Nichols, Grover Semons, Tyres Conner and Jimmy Holley.

The presbytery was organnized by electing Elder Amos Hash as moderator

and Elder Hale Terry as clerk. Elder Kenneth Key and Larry Hollandsworth were chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate. Deacon Alan Terry having been duly appointed by Bel Spur Church in conference April 19, 1986, as spokesman for the church, delivered brother Carl Terry to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder Kenneth Key and Elder Larry Hollandsworth, using scripture reference 1st Timothy, 3rd chapter. The Presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The Ordination Prayer was delivered by Elder Junior Conner. Elder Larry Hollandsworth delivered the charge to the candidate.

The moderator asked Bel Spur Church if they approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to brother Carl Terry and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained Elder was delivered back to the church as an ordained minister of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Bel Spur.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Junior Conner.

Elder Amos Hash, Moderator
Elder Hale Terry, Clerk

ARTICLES

ISAIAH XLII. 16

"And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."

The above prophecy is full of wonder to the blind. It is evident that this prophecy is to Israel; that is, the prophet was speaking to the house of Israel. There is no doubt this is a figure, or type, and did and does embrace spiritual Israel (the church) in her travels in this gospel day, for the prophet begins this chapter with the mark of attention: "Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles." This can have reference to none other than Jesus, our blessed Redeemer, and this being so we see that the Gentile is embraced in those who are led in a way they have not before known. There are three things in this text I wish to notice. First, the leader, the one who says, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect," is God, and he says, I will bring the blind. No conditions nor ifs in it. Oh how precious is this positive declaration. No wonder Paul says the gospel of Christ is the power of God. No wonder it comes to the blind in demonstration of the Holy Ghost and in power. No wonder it comes with such assurance to the poor soul who feels ready to fall by the way, and says to him, You are not your own keeper, but are kept by the power of God. I am glad that Wisdom away back in eternity saw and prepared such a safe and sure way for these poor blind pilgrims who have no abiding place here, but seek a country where all the shade will be removed from their eyes and they will be blest to see their blessed Leader as he is and be like him. This anointed of the Father says, I am the good shepherd, and my sheep (the blind) hear my voice and they follow me; they know not the voice of the stranger. Bless the dear Lord for this understanding the blind have to hear and know the voice of their leader (Jesus), and we just as truly thank his holy name for making us (the blind) deaf to the voice of the stranger. Dear, blind brethren, lift up

the drooped head and receive strength for the feeble knees, for our God blessed this same old prophet to see this way so secure and sure that one, though a fool, should not err therein. Now we come down to the day and time when this blessed prophecy began to manifest itself, and let us (the blind) gaze upon the great mystery, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not," a way which they had never traveled before. Oh how beautiful is the way. Angels, with the heavenly host, awakened the shepherds who were watching over their flocks by night and led them in the way (Bethlehem), and their eyes (the blind) saw the way. I am, says the Anointed, the way. In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and was God made flesh. As we follow him in the way every step is taken in wonder and amazement. It is a new way, it is God's way, and his way is as high above man's way as the heavens are above the earth. We see him in Simeon's arms, and hear Simeon bless God for what he (the blind) saw: God's salvation, and hear the old prophet say that he (Jesus) was a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Israel. Simeon saw here what Israel saw many years before. Now as we start out in this way let us note the great mystery in the way, but in this let us not lose sight of the surety of the way. I will have to pass over many of the waymarks, on account of space, but before I leave the babe I want to notice some of the crooked things which are in this way, also the darkness that shuts it out from the wise and prudent of this world, but he who leads the blind reveals it unto babes. We see Joseph and Mary take the babe and flee into Egypt (darkness). Why did they go? Because he who said, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not," said, Go. What! the God of the whole earth running for his life? Yes, Herod will seek his life. Right here in the beginning of the way is a place so dark that nothing but the light of the Spirit which Jesus says shall guide you (the blind) in the way can penetrate, and so crooked that the world, with all its boasted wisdom, can never find or get one of these blind ones. Now let us go back to the Father of this blind nation, Abraham, who is the father of all the faithful. See him when called out. Though blind to the way he staggered not at the promise of God, but went out, not knowing whither he went, but it was a strange land to Him. Here is evidence that he was led in a way he had never before traveled, but while it was a new way to him he did not stagger, and the reason he walked uprightly was because the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob did lead him, and there was no strange god with him. It is said that the sheep know not the voice of the stranger. Oh how my poor soul does rejoice while traveling this mysterious way to find these immovable monuments of the faithfulness of our blessed Leader, who knows all the way, and who makes all the mountains of doubts as level as the valleys, and makes straight all the crooked ways that come up in the mind and heart. Dear ones, all this heavenly host of blind pilgrims was completely hid in the seed of Abraham, for in his seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. When this had come it was declared by the angels that this good news should be to all people, and as we journey on in the prophetic day we see them all stop and wonder with great admiration at these blessed waymarks. Take old Jacob, to whom this blessed promise was confirmed, after he had spent a life in this way, and had proved the faithfulnes of God, his great leader, he could look back and see how wonderfully God had straightened all the crooked places and smoothed all the rough places. While passing through many of them he felt they were against him, but the dear Leader could show him, as he did Paul, that all things were working for the good of all the blind who

loved this way and were called to walk in it. Then please note Elijah, the old prophet, in this way felt in his very soul all his companions had been killed and that he was left alone with his enemies. Oh how rough and crooked was then the way to him, but God, faithful to his promise, removed every obstacle by showing him that he had reserved seven thousand who had not surrendered to his enemies, and the young prophet Elisha (the gospel church which followed Elijah, the church under the law) saw him as he traveled in this highway, saw him go up in a chariot of fire drawn by horses of fire. This, to my mind, represents the fiery trials and afflictions through which all God's children must travel in this world. As we behold the dear church of God, which embraces every one mentioned in the text, in their fiery afflictions, singing as they go, we glory in tribulation, because it worketh patience, and in no way can the path of the weary souls be made smoother and straighter than to have patience to wait upon their dear Leader, knowing his faithfulness to all his blessed promises to his chosen and called. If we could see the end of the way (purpose of God) there would be no mystery, but our text truly teaches that this way was made for the blind (redeemed) to walk in, and they possess two natures: the Adamic, or carnal, which is enmity to their divine nature, which is spiritual. The gospel of God, which is Jesus, leads and guides us in the way of truth. The carnal mind was received from our earthly father, Adam, and is so corrupt it cannot understand the things of the spiritual way. Satan is ever present with his deceit, and tells us that God, who leads us, doth not know. Jesus, who is the way, was not exempt from this great deceiver, but God the Father prepared for him a body which was to atone for this blind nation, who should be led in this sure way. While he was tempted in all points as his brethren, yet without sin; that is, the Spirit was given to him without measure, and he was able to resist all temptation and live a holy life, and in this he fulfilled the law, and all this blessed blind nation was in him, and he bore their sins in his own body and nailed them to the cross. If the knowledge of him and this blessed atonement had stopped at the cross we would have been like the apostle who said, If in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable. But the promise in our text is that he will make crooked ways straight and rough places smooth, so let us wait upon the one who promises. We have now followed him as far as we can, and unless he rolls away the stone that has the king's seal (death) upon it we never will see the way. How true it is that we, like Israel, who came up to the great waters of the Red Sea, must stand trembling and wait for God's salvation, and, according to his promise, his angels on the appointed morn come and roll the stone away and the seal of death is broken and the eternal sun shines forth in all its glory and lights up the highway, and makes it so plain through the gospel which brings life and immortality to light. The prophet's vision is now made plain, for we see the blind as they are journeying and communing on the great mystery, the crooked and rough way. This eternal Light which is to remove everything that blocks the way appears, and shines with such glory it causes the heart within to burn with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Please look and listen to this wonder. Jesus says, What is it troubleth you so? With astonishment and wonder they say, Are you a stranger in Israel and know not the things which have taken place? O my soul, see how wonderful is the teaching of this Teacher. What things? Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God, and we had hoped he would redeem Israel, but to our great disappointment they have crucified him, and this is the third

day, and some bring strange news to us, saying he is risen. "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" He began at Moses and the prophets and straightened and smoothed the way so these blind and fools could not err in the way.

I must now leave this glorious subject with a short exhortation to the blind to watch for the footprints of the flock who walked this good old way, and be not carried away by the new ideas that are now being manifested among the flock. The gospel tells of these, and says, Go not after them, for they are designing men. They have men's person in mind, and not the welfare of our beloved Zion. In all your troubles rest with faith in your great Leader, for he has promised to bring us off more than conquerors.

J. T. Barnes.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," &c. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "On these two commandments hand all the law and the prophets."

Matthew xxii. 37, 39, 40.

The law, and all the prophets, and all of the glory of the Father's house were hung upon the nail that was fastened in a sure place. That nail is Jesus. Isaiah xxii. 23, 24: "And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house," &c. The law was a part of the glory of the Father's house, because Paul says, 2 Cor. iii. 7, 8: "But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stone, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?" "For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." Luke xvi. 16: "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached." It is plainly set forth that we are not obligated to keep the law; none but the Savior did or could keep it. Our salvation depended upon his being able to keep the law. He loved God with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself. All the glory of his Father's house was hung upon him, and he had the power to fulfill the law, and kept it perfectly. It demanded perfect and perpetual obedience. He said, No man taketh my life from me. I have power to take it up again. In the first place, this party who wrote me cannot do what he thinks he can, and no one else can. Then if our eternal salvation depends upon something we cannot do, we are lost, unless it is so arranged some one else can do for us what we cannot do, and his doing is credited to us. Unless what the one does who is able to satisfy the requirements of the law is imputed to us we are lost. This is exactly what was done for us when the Savior came. By his righteous living, death and suffering on the cross in the garden, and by his resurrection, we were eternally saved, and absolutely by nothing else. "So by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."—Rom. v. 19. Again, "Much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righeousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." Man cannot do what the law says, so it is written, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."—Rom. viii. 3. This man the world thinks can keep the law is dead, blind,

and cannot hear what Jesus says. Jesus asks, "Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word."—John viii. 43. Paul says, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14. There has got to be something done for these helpless, lost, ruined God-hating people, and God is the only one who can do what is needed to be done for them, and every time they are told they can love God, and are free to choose, and it is just left to them whether they will serve God or sin, and are free to choose between God and Satan, it is causing them to trust in man, whose breath is in his nostrils. The Bible says, "Vain is the help of man," and, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." No wonder crime is on the increase, when they are told all they have to do to be saved is to say three words, which are, I accept Jesus and that God will save them if they will let him. This causes the alien sinner to say, I will go on and have a good time, but as I can turn round and go to God, and as he is so anxious to save me he will do it, this doctrine is licentious. Let us see what God has promised to do for his people who cannot break away from Satan: They walk "according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." Isaiah xlii. 16: "And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." Did you ever hear anything more glorious than this promise? God has to draw them, because they are under the control of Satan and do not know it, and cannot deliver themselves from the power of darkness.

You say, "God does not want us to love him because he compels us to do so." I did not say God compels us to love him, but his love compels us to do things. His love moves us to action. All men naturally hate God. Paul says, "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."—Rom. viii. 7. Isaiah liii. 3. "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not." These men you say ought to love God, hate him, and no man has ever loved God until God has shed his love abroad in his heart. Therefore Paul says, Romans v. 5, "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which is given unto us." Again, 1 John iv. 7: "For love is of God; and every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God." 1 John ii. 29: "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him." Every one ought to know that love controls us, instead of thinking we exercise it, and they would were they not drunk on the blood of the saints, and controlled by the wine of the beast, and were not in the school of old Jezebel. So it is written in Revelation, Because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel to teach and to seduce my servants, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. It is the power of love that causes people to cast themselves over precipices, and into rivers, and destroy themselves rather than to be separated. Many strong minded men have lost their reason because disappointed in love. The nobleman's daughter fled with her lover. Her father caught up with them at the arm of the sea. The ferryman risked his life on account of her entreaties. The waves were rolling, white caps breaking, when her father saw the great danger, he cried out "Come back, come back, my daughter," but he was

too late, she and her lover and the ferryman went down beneath the awful waves, and to their long eternal home. It was love overpowered her father's anger. If natural love is so strong, what must the power of the love of God be? "God is love." Song of Solomon viii. 7: "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would be utterly condemned." If God is love, as the Bible says, it is clear that there is no power equal to the love of God. Paul says, 2 Cor. v. 14, "For the love of Christ constraineth us." "Constrain" means to compel. Let this be quoted, "The love of Christ constraineth us," until it reverberates and resounds over every vale, leaping to every mountain top, reaching back and forth, rolling along in thundertones, smashing the doctrine of free will, scattering its advocates as chaff before a cyclone, resounding as with heaven's trumpet, until every child of God on earth shall take up the text and repeat it, while heaven breaks forth in unison with all the redeemed of God on earth, while spiritual cords in every heaven-born soul's heart tremble with rapturous joy and gladness, while tears of glorious emotion flow down the weather-beaten, furrowed cheeks of the people of God in all lands, while the heralds of the cross repeat this glorious truth in all countries where the glorious gospel is preached; in harmony with Paul saying, "The love of Christ constraineth us," and tell the church of God that the word "constrain" means to compel, and therefore an alien sinner will not turn his back on the pleasures of this world until this love compels him to do so. As Ephriam said, Jeremiah xxxi. 18, "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God." Let the truth be shouted from every watchtower by every faithful watchman, that "the love of Christ constraineth us," and tell them "constrain" means compel, until all the denominations learn that the "free will" doctrine of Zoroaster is false, and that it is not left to the heaven-born children of God to do as they please, which is, they can join the church of God or not, come in or stay out as they choose, and that it is left to do as they want to, but that the love of God causes them to want to come, so as to find a place of rest. The love causes them to come, or they are scared into the church by fear of punishment, or some other impure motive. So the Savior says, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Drawn by his love. No one knows this better than your poor, little, sinful brother. Ah yes, down there on the old farm on the river, as wild as ever grew, sinful and profane, until, as I hope, God called me by his grace, turned me, and I was turned, brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, set my feet upon a rock, put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God, and established my goings. (Psalms xl. 2, 3.) Do you wonder I have gone through cold and heat, rain and snow, leaving my loved ones, and am now giving all my time to my blessed Savior? If a man has a child that cannot know his father because he does not know him, is under the control of a party that teaches him that his father is a terrible tyrant, the child believes what he is taught, the father will have to do something to change this state of affairs, so as to cause the child to love him. This is what God does. The first thing God does is to give life, ("I give unto them eternal life") and enables him to see his lost condition, and makes him say,

> *"If my soul were sent to hell,*
> *Thy righteous law approves it well."*

Sheds his love abroad in his heart, and he loves his Father with the very love his Father puts in his heart. Now he knows the devil had him, and if it had not been for the love his Father had for him, and

for his Father's superior strength and wondrous power, the devil would have dragged him down to everlasting darkness and eternal woe. No wonder he is willing to serve his Father. That is enough to cause any disobedient, hell-deserving child to be willing to obey.

"'Twas all of thy grace we were brought to obey,
While others were suffered to go
The road which we chose as our way,
Which leads to the regions of woe.

Then give all the glory to His holy name,
To Him all the glory belongs;
Be yours the high joy still to sound forth His fame,
And crown Him in each of your songs."

One of the leading preachers in the south was at my house some years ago, and he told me he was traveling and preaching. He said his shoes were about worn out from walking, and I think he said his feet were sore or blistered, but the impression to go on was so strong he could not stop. Now the question is, Was it the love of God that was compelling him to go, or was it some impure motive? Was the carnal mind the moving power, or was it the power of the love of God? If I knew it was the love of God that causes me to go, I think I would be exceedingly happy. But I am so cold, so dark, so weak, so ignorant and little, sometimes I am alive to my situation. I am past seventy years old and must soon be called to try the realities of a never ending eternity. Have I, poor, weak, unworthy thing that I am, ever tasted of the good word of God, and the power of the world to come, and have all the impressions and power that have moved me been brought about by the love of God, or have they all been from one Paul writes about where he says, 2 Cor. xi. 14, 15, "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works?" It was love that caused the Savior to bow the heavens and come down, and suffer, and die, and save his people from their sins. So Paul says, Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it. Then if he loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation, redeeming the time because the days are evil?

Your brother in hope of mercy,
Isaac R. Greathouse.

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"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."
Proverbs 16: 18

OBITUARIES

SISTER FLORENCE M. HARBOUR

Sister Harbour was born in rural Patrick County, Virginia on December 13, 1892, the daughter of Andrew Jackson (Jack) Martin and Sarah Tilley Martin. Early in life she began to accompany her parents and some neighbors as they walked out of the mountain on their way to Liberty Church. Somewhere during that time, the Lord softened her heart with love for that Church and for the cause in which it believed, and she never returned from following after them.

In December 1926 she was united in marriage to Carper Alex Harbour, a widower with three children: Elwood, Eva and Henry Harbour. In due time the Lord blessed her and Brother Harbour with three more children: Mary, Sadie and Robert. The balance of her temporal life was devoted to her family, and in her mind and in theirs, she was a true mother to everyone of the six children. She never labored anywhere outside of her home.

On the first Saturday in June, 1969 Sister Harbour related to the Church her long-standing desire for a home. She was baptized by her pastor, Elder Bennie N. Clifton. Thereafter, she attended services as long as she was able, except when she stayed at home when Brother Harbour was unable to come. Brother Harbour united with the Church in September 1970, and both of them were blessed to adorn the profession which they made.

After an illness of several weeks, Sister Harbour died at home on November 5, 1985. All that human hands could do was done for her by her devoted family, both during her illness and long before. Her funeral services were held at Liberty Church on November 7, conducted by Elder John Wingfield, and burial followed in the Church Cemetery, near the remains of several members of her earthly family.

Sister Harbour was survived by her husband, Brother Carper; all six children, Elwood, Henry and Robert, Mrs. Eva Wagoner, Mrs. Sadie Koger and Mrs. Mary Flippen; nine grandchildren, two great-grandchildren; and one brother, Forest B. Martin. She will be sorely missed by all her brethren and sisters as long as our memories remain, but we have the consolation of knowing that she is peacefully asleep in the everlasting arms of our dear Saviour.

Submitted by:
Elder John Wingfield

SISTER ALMA WRIGHT SHORTT

We, the County Line Primitive Baptist Church, feel "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble, 46th Psalm, and at the request of the two surviving sisters write this memorial of Sister Alma Wright Shortt, born January 17, 1903 and died December 19, 1985.

Services held at Wood Funeral Home were conducted by Elder Noel F. Conner and interment was in County Line Cemetery, Floyd County, Virginia, on December 21, 1985. She was married to David G. Shortt who died October 30, 1982. Surviving are one daughter, Gearldine, one son, Rural and one daughter-in-law, Berneace. Also one grandson, Gregory, and one step-grandson, Maurice Quesenberry, and one step-granddaughter, Mrs. Joyce Hunt. Three step-great-grandchildren also survive. She had two surviving sisters, Mrs. Mamie Barton and Mrs. Dovie Nolen, both of Bassett, and one brother, Moyer Wright of Floyd-Virginia.

She was not quite one year old when

her father, Mr. Thomas George Wright of Patrick County, Virginia, died. Her mother, Mrs. Emma Houchins Wright, moved back to Floyd and after a few years married Mr. Willian R. Turner. They both joined County Line Church in 1920, and in 1922 Brother Turner was ordained Deacon. Both saw their daughter's interest and felt she was drawn to County Line, and longed to see her come home. The work of grace in her heart, her step-father saw became heavy on her heart and when she became more afflicted with heart and unstable blood pressure conditions, she while preparing to come to County Line meeting in June 1985, fell and broke a bone near the hip joint. While in the hospital she was visited several times, and in talking with her and in prayer, said "she loved the people at County Line, and would tell them so if she ever got there again." In the presence of her son, Elder Conner endeavored to pray and left. She seemed strengthened but said she was not reconciled about her surgery. We again visited her July 4, 1985, and prayer was made at the bedside again, and asked if she was of the same mind to tell her love for County Line, "and she related how she saw the beauty of God's people at one Association held at County Line, how happy they looked, and desired to live with them," but said, "I do not see myself as I see them, but to live with them is my desire, yet felt too unworthy." We received her into the fellowship of the church and hoped to see her baptized, what her step-father had so desired to see before he died.

She was a lovely daughter, a good wife, a precious mother and grandmother, good friend and neighbor. She and her husband living near County Line Church had a special care for the Church and Cemetery, and they gave time, work, money and cared for many visitors in their home from the church meetings.

She taught five sessions in public schools. All will remember her, and we do miss her. She had surgery after much delay July 11, 1985. She came to County Line meeting once a few minutes, and once to stay the whole meeting, four days later, she suddenly passed away. She gave good evidence that our loss is her gain, and we await the glorious resurrection morn.

One in a dream, several years ago, saw her standing in the water at the usual place of baptism. She was dressed in a beautiful white wedding gown and seemed to be gazing into the heaven above her and us, so happy and rejoicing. In the dream we remember she did not seem to see those standing on the banks waiting to see her baptized. And her baptism was of the Spirit we do feel.

Elder Noel F. Conner, Moderator
Catherine A. Houchins, Clerk

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Psalms 55: 22

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POEM

Written May 24, 1987
In Memory of my husband Elder C.N. Bunn who died May 24, 1972—15 years ago today.

Peacefully sleeping, resting at last,
The worlds weary troubles and trials are past.
In silence you suffered, In patience you bore,
Till God called you home to suffer no more.
A memory, a tear, thought sincere,
How often I wished you were still here.
Deep in my heart you will always stay,
Loved and remembered everyday.
I cannot bring the old days back, when we were together.
But the many days I spent with you,
Will live with me forever.
If ever a loved one existed, If ever a sweet flower grew.
If ever a soul filled its mission on earth,
Dear loved one it was you.

Written by Elder C.N. Bunn's Widow Nellie Bunn

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EDITORIAL

ISAIAH 61: 1,3.

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me: because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.

"To comfort all that mourn."

Poor sinner this is thy lot. Sin, when revealed, always brings mourning to the children of God. It is much better to be a mourner because of the indwelling of sin, than to be in a class that rejoices in sin. There is no anointing of Christ for your comfort if sin does not cause discomfort. He whose sin has found him out has been signally blessed of God, For he has anointed Jesus of Nazareth to comfort all that are afflicted with mourning because of indwelling sin, Sin is the primary cause of the mourning soul. I say without fear of denial among the family of God, that sin causes lamentation and wringing of the hands in anxiety. If I understand what the absolute sovereignty of God means, then I believe it wholeheartedly, but if there is a man made addition put to it that the predestination of all things makes me love sin; that it does not need cause any morning nor any anxiety in the lives of the Lord's people, then away with it. The sinners that the Bible describes are mourners because that they do the sad things that they would not. There is hope for a poor sinner that groans because of indwelling sin, and there is gracious promise to them in the person of Jesus Christ because I am not afraid to say before all the spiritually minded people of God for us to read into it something that is not there. There is not any condemnation to them that respect the inspired word of God, but the Bible has pronounced woe after woe on them that add to or take away what God has said. However, there is something that is even worse than adding to or taking away.

That is dealing in subtile manner, crafty, artificial in order to deceive.

The Lord did not anoint the Saviour to preach to the arrogant, the scornful, in order that they get to be meek. Any pupil in the earliest year of grammar school knows that the language will not stand up under that kind of strained composition. The hearer has experienced the dealing of the Lord with he or she before the anointing of the Lord to preach good tidings unto them. Before any minister gets to one of the Lord's little ones, the Holy Spirit has already visited them and prepared them for the coming of the Saviour, or, for that matter, the minister of the gospel.

"He hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted." As it was with the Hebrew women giving birth to male children in the camp of Israel, they were lively, and before they called for help from the mid wives, the child was already born. That is the nucleus of the Primitive Baptist doctrine. Let us rest right here. We have many lovely things to write to the children of God about our Saviour, and about the deep purposes of our God without spending time in turmoil and strife arguing about such weak and unfounded matters. Such mooted questions as what broke their heart, is well known to every poor sinner that has wrestled with their corruptible nature. The revelation to a poor sinner that they disobeyed their Creator in the morning of time is enough to be broken hearted about.

Any comfort to one broken hearted will only come from One who has been anointed to that end. Meekness is a lovely asset, but it is a blessing within itself and not in order to being blessed. A man or a woman is already blessed, if they are meek. That is what the Saviour said about it. He did not say, that if one would get to be meek that they would receive a blessing. It is one of the strangest things about the religion of the creature for invariably these beatitudes must be acquired before the blessing comes. Why is this? Why is it that all creature worshippers make the blessings in Psalms I, as conditional blessings? Ask yourself that question. Those three blessings in that verse are bestowed upon a poor sinner, and for that reason only they do not commit the three sins. People that are taught in grammar and in grace know this in both cases. Likewise, in our text, the Saviour was anointed to the meek, to those that have been blessed before hand to receive it.

Christ does not break hearts. He gives new hearts, and He binds up the broken hearted. Let us ponder the question, How did His people become broken hearted. As long as we can cope with any given problem we will never have a broken heart. If we can do it, we will take courage, take a new start, take heart and solve the problem before us. If another, if an unknown power places a burden upon us that we cannot put off, it will break our heart. That is the burden that the law of God placed on all of us. It is a heart breaking burden. No man of the family of fallen Adam has measured up to its unequal burden. Lay down what you are doing, and let us go down to the foot of the fiery mountain of Sanai, and hear the lamentations of the children of Israel to Moses. What was it. What had been said to them that was heart breaking? It was a

denunciation from God. It was simple, but it was universal. It said in simple language, The soul that sinneth shall die. They had been eager to hear God tell them what He required at their hand. Now that have heard it, and the last one of them fled from the presence of God. They quaked and trembled; they implored Moses to go to God in their behalf and to tell Him they could not hear it again and live. If the text does not arrest us, then we may know that our application of it is wrong. How did it effect you? Did you quake and tremble in the presence of God? Did you confess that you could not hear such a strict law as that and live? Now you did not want to die; you did not want to be banished from the presence of your Creator. The consequences were devastating to you. There was not any hiding place. There was not any shelter.

May the Spirit bring to you and to you the comfort of the message of the Lord and Saviour. He is come. The Comforter of broken hearts has come into your soul. It is a personal message from Him to you. Poor mourning soul, you and you that has had your heart broken by the message of God, is now comforted by the Spirit of the Lord. Thanks be unto His unspeakable mercy. He has sentenced us to death by our sins, and has comforted our contrite and broken hearts by the glorious appearance of Jesus Christ our Saviour (2 Cor. 4:6).

"He hath been sent to proclaim liberty to the captives." That is the gospel message. This message was preached in types and shadows and figures and pointers. The message was not in code, but it being in parables, it could only be heard by those to whom it was proclaimed. We must ever remember that the things of God both hid and revealed. There is not any trick in the message. The difference between the two is the difference that God makes between His children and those of the bound or law woman. God does not bother her children. They readily tell you that they do not want a salvation that they do not have a part in it. Listen at them talk. Sometimes it has been complained that I have overdrawn the picture. I have not intended to do so, but I have intended to stay by the rule. God's way of dealing with his creation is to hide the things of God from the wise and the prudent, and to reveal them unto babes. This rule seemed good unto Him, and I reckon as how that it will stay that way.

The Spirit of the Lord was upon the Saviour to proclaim liberty to the captives. Not one less, not one more. There was not the slightest mixup in this undertaking. Every captive was notified of his or her freedom. They were not notified that they had an opportunity to have liberty, but every one was notified that they were at liberty. That is the thorough way that God works. He works exactly according to previous promise. God has not broken any promises. He keeps all that He makes.

"He hath been anointed to proclaim the opening of the prison to them that are bound." We do not want to forget what the mission of the Son of God was into the world. Isn't it a lovely doctrine? God is before all things, and the wisdom of that primeval date gives us a glorious insight into the purpose of God respecting the work of His Son. God anointed Him

for each one of these glorious works. Each one of the works were of the kind that no poor sinner could ever do. These were works that none could do save Jesus Christ the great High Priest. Let us repeat this great truth. Let it be our theme song on earth, for, assuredly it is the theme song of that fair land called heaven. God anointed His Son to do all of these wonderful blessings, each of which must be done in order for each group mentioned to be saved.

Have you ever heard such a glorious doctrine among men that know not God? No, no, and such will never be heard only where the Saviour of sinners has wrought. Who would expect the opening of the prison of the bound by the religion of Moses? Who would expect the lawyers and the doctors to set and declare a day for the removal of the bounds that they had set? None can expect that. This is a remarkable opening of the Millennium. What a glorious time it will be, when everything that was against God's children have been nailed to the Saviour's cross and thus put out of the way forever. How glad that I am, and I hope that I am thankful for His having nailed all that was against us to His cross, and that He put it out of the way. Yes, indeed, He brought in the everlasting day for His brethren. He was anointed to proclaim these glorious days. When God anointed Him, you can rest assured that it was forever, for what He does is done forever.

There will not be anymore bound days, for since His anointment by His Father, the message from His charming lips is, All is well. All power is in my hands. Nothing can be against the people of mine He bore everything. His control is so perfected over everything; so perfected that everything is working together for the good of the children of the kingdom and for the glory of the King. No more bondage from those that would bind you by the barbs of the law.

Heretofore, the sheep were ofttimes in bounds, they were ofttimes, heckled and annoyed and made sport of because that the terrors of a broken law was ever present. Too, the children had no acceptable year of the Lord. But the dawn of a new and living and wholly acceptable time of the Lord is come. The law of sacrifices, that has served the purpose of a holy and righteous Creator is now folded up, as a garment no longer needed, and is carefully laid away. The acceptable time of the Lord has come to save Zion, and His day of vengeance is now at hand on all that would dare molest or make afraid the poor burdened souls bound by lawyers and doctors.

"To comfort all that mourn."

Poor sinners heard these things all fulfilled when Jesus met with His followers as recorded in Luke 4:16, 2. Each time that the everlasting gospel of the grace of God had been preached since Jesus has been exalted a Prince and a Saviour, it has proclaimed the same divine truth. Jesus was, and is, anointed to preach this salvation to all that are described in this wonderful passage. It is Jesus that speaks, and it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes. It is worthless in making mourners, but it is comforting to all that are mourning because that they cannot throw off the guilt, and the bounds that law worshippers bind the help-

less children of God with.

God willing, more later,
Elder W.D. Griffin

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

IVY CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Ivy Creek Primitive Baptist Church was established in 1829. It is located in Crenshaw County, Alabama off highway 77, West of Rutledge, Alabama, on a farm to market road 59.

Elder O. Allen Bailey of Westover, Alabama serves us as our pastor.

Our meeting day is first Sunday of each month at 10:30 a.m.

Communion is first Sunday in July.

We invite you to visit us.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

EXPERIENCE AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY OF ELDER P. D. GOLD

"But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which art written in the law and in the prophets;"

"And have hope toward God, which they themselves allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." Acts 24:14-16.

Many have requested me to write my experience and manner of life, but it has seemed to me that my life is so poor and sinful that it is unbecoming in me to make much personal reference. However, it is a fact that what each and every one writes reflects his own character and inner life. If a politician writes in bitter flings at the opposite party, it is because his heart is full of that strife. Should one's writing or talk be of lewdness, it is because his soul is full of that filth, and if you could mirror his heart you would see the imagery of this bestiality ruling in him. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," according to scripture.

The prophets and apostles spoke and wrote as they were moved of the things of Christ Jesus. For they spake and wrote not by the will of man, but that which they had seen and heard through the eye and ear of faith and their hands had handled of the word of life they have declared unto us. Notice how constantly Paul refers to his own experience in his writings. Indeed, what could we know of redemption were there no living epistles written by the Holy Ghost in our hearts, and known and read by all men. In that sense the apostles were themselves a savor of life unto life in them that are saved, that is those who are saved could and did behold in the apostles so sweet smelling a savor of Jesus that was delightful to them, and they glorified God for such gifts. So, the walk of every true called servant will be to so act and conduct himself in both word and deed that all that love the Lord Jesus will be captivated with his good conduct. No one should ever be ordained to preach that has a bad name among them without, (those that are in the world), that is that acts so badly that outsiders have a right to speak evil of him for his dishonest conduct. It is not persecution for one to be talked about because of his defaulting conduct. The enemies could find no fault in Daniel except concerning his religion. He could say like Paul, "I have defrauded no man, therefore receive us." See II Cor. 7:2.

It is the inner, real life of a child of

God that you desire to know. Hence, the writers so often tell of their own joys and sorrows. The scriptures are made up in great part of the recital of the troubles and deliverances of God's people. It is only in this way or by the fruits they bear that one can see the handwriting of Deity in the life of another. Nor is there any other way for you to have hope that you were saved by His grace only as the Lord works in you both to will and do of his good pleasure, also His working out and making manifest His salvation to others, as well as to your own comfort, so that we will be ready always to give to every man that asks us a reason of the hope that is in us with meekness and fear. For one that loves the truth desires to hear you tell what great things the Lord has done for you, and had mercy on you. Hence, Jesus said to the one out of whom he had cast so many devils, go home to thy friends, and tell them, not what you have done, but what the Lord has done for you, and that is all that we hear of his doing afterward.

Notwithstanding my embarrassment to refer to myself so much, when an aged and much beloved Sister Percy Ham recently said to me she desired to read my experience before she died and earnestly requested me to write it out and publish it, there was a willingness of heart to do so. The text of Scripture at the head of this article occurred to me this morning as embodying the substance of what is in my mind to write.

I was born in what is called Cleveland County, N.C., (then it was in Rutherford County, N.C.) on the water of Sandy Run Creek, almost on a line equidistant between King's Mountain and Gilberttown, (southwestern North Carolina), places made famous by important scenes and events of the Revolutionary War. When a youth, one of these old soldiers lived near, and this old man is about the only Revolutionary War soldier within my memory. The date of my birth was March 25, 1833, so that the great progress made in modern arts and sciences, such as application of steam to machinery has been done chiefly within my memory. Such a thing as telegraphy was not known then which has so revolutionized business. There was not a railroad in operation in all this country at that time. The name of my father was Milton Gold. My mother's maiden name was Martha Fortune. My father was a farmer and a poor man that never owned a servant (slave), though it was common in the South for men to own slaves. He and my mother with their children did the farm and house work. It was not common for him to hire work done. From early morn to dewy eve it was labor, labor. Seldom did we have a Saturday afternoon even for rest or sport.

Then it seemed hard to me not to be allowed to roam and play or frolic. For they did not allow their children to go to dances or parties. It was only a short while after crops were laid by that we went to school a few weeks. Our winters were spent chiefly in clearing up large new grounds for cultivation. That boys and girls of this day and generation may know how my time was spent in youth, this part is written.

Now the memory of my parents is dear to me for giving me this severe discipline while in my youth. I do

appreciate it now!

What were my habits of life? While my morals were fairly good, as I thought, yet my nature was abominably corrupt. It is not my way of thinking to gloss over crime, nor blacken that which is good. While men in writing memoirs of life or obituaries of those gone on hide the faults and magnify the virtues of their subjects, this is not according to the pattern shown in the mount. The scriptures tell of our first father's sin, and of our first mother's nakedness. It does not keep back the drunkenness of Noah, nor the adultery of David, not the backsliding of his son, Solomon, nor the faults of God's people. When the Bible records the ugly traits of one, it does not select an obscure person, but the king on his throne, as well as the humble and obscure, is selected. God causes the writers of His book to tell the truth. He is a God without partiality.

While I was never drunk with intoxicating liquor until I was grown, yet since then it has been shown to me that my thoughts were vile and every abomination dwelt in me. It was about the time of my birth and the division among Baptists began on the Mission question that Andrew Fuller and his aids devised in the preceding century, but the progress of Fuller's methods did not spread so rapidly in that country. For in my youthful days there was not a salaried preacher, nor a Sunday School, nor any of the modern machinery of the Missionary Baptists in all that country.

My father and mother were members of Sandy Run Church in my youthful days. Elder Drury Dobbins, "Uncle Drury" as many called him, was the pastor of that church. Not within my memory or observation either has ever a preacher been beloved or more deservedly so. His grave is dear to me now. Last summer it seemed to me his dust was precious to me as a friend and myself visited it. Elder Dobbins was a predestinarian Baptist by any standard, and preached the whole truth ably. He was wonderfully gifted and his conduct was exceptionally good. His manners were captivating, his wit without slur, his wisdom above guile, his eloquence burning, his speech sublime, his expositions of Scripture were indicted by the Holy Ghost. In the memory of the old people, he yet lives in that country.

It was as a youth that my days were passed under that wonderful preaching. Who can tell the power and influence of a Godly preacher on a community, county, state or nation?

Elder Dobbins opposed the new measures of Missions in full as long as he lived. He was not in favor of protracted meetings, and stood as a wall against Mission schools to teach people how to preach, money beggars, and all that hive of modern schemes to control the world so endorsed and practiced by modern missions. He kept those things out of the churches he served and out of the old Broad River Association as long as he lived. These things are remembered by me. Besides they are admitted in a history of the Broad River Association recently written by one of its leading Missionaries, J.R. Logan, Esq., a man that was personally known to me very well and an honorable man. Drury Scruggs preached the funeral of Elder Dobbins about the year 1845. This man lauded Elder Dobbins with all the

force of his speech, (the writer was present). On the next day he went down to Sandy Run, at the church where Elder Dobbins had been pastor perhaps 40 years, and had preached election and predestination or grace so long, and this man Scruggs said at a protracted meeting they had commenced, "As for the doctrine of election and predestination, I stamp my foot upon it," accompanying the remark with that action of his foot on the pulpit floor in a very boistrous, loud, angry manner.

Then Missionism began to sprout up and spread all over that country, and soon it had overrun the entire country and has deluged it ever since.

In my day after these things protracted meetings were common. After crops were cultivated in the leisure weeks of August and September, the preachers would hold their protracted meetings and frighten people with graveyard tales and old wives' fables, and get them up to the mourner's bench to get religion, as they called it.

Such scenes as these have often frightened me, and to escape the awful doom they pictured, the young people generally, and myself among them, would kneel for prayer. Many made a profession of religion at such meetings, and many too that professed afterwards made it manifest that they knew nothing of the truth. What is the good of so reproaching the blessed worship of God by these desecrations? By the lawful and true preaching of the gospel all that are ordained to eternal life will believe. Much scandal is brought on that blessed name of Jesus by such unhallowed measures. It is good to have gospel preachings, and God will not leave himself without a witness. This gospel of the kingdom has already been preached to the end of the world, and the Jewish world has come to an end.

When attending these meetings many would be seized with paroxysms of such excitement that they would become quite excited and then sink into a semiconscious state for a while. After the excitement would pass off the reaction would bring a calm, which the preachers would tell them was religion. But to me there was no such feelings. Often my desire was to be made to feel my sins as others seemed to feel theirs, but my heart was as unfeeling as a stone. Satan or my evil nature would suggest to me to commit some sinful deed in order to bring on conviction, but still hardness of heart was my lot. What a gloomy state this has since appeared to me. There was no true fear of God, no life toward him, no knowledge of sins, or dreadful estate of a lost sinner. It was a state of delusion and deceitfulness when no truth was preached. If ever the true doctrine of truth was once preached in all that dreary time, it is unknown to me. It was held out by all their preachers that it is left with the sinner to determine about his salvation. The Lord has done all that He can do to save sinners, only He is standing, waiting and waiting, willing and ready, but He has no power over the sinner unless the sinner will step forward, meeting Him halfway, allowing Him to come in and save him. Such a thing, "All that a Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast," (John 6:38), was never hinted. All exhortations were to the

ungodly or chiefly so, and the dead sinner was represented as having the power of himself to accept, and if sinners did not accept these preachers would be swift and willing witnesses against them in the judgment.

When about 21 years of age at one of these meetings, some excitement seemed to get hold of me and my hope was that it was conviction of sin. A few tears were shed and on my way home one night a kind of relief came which appeared to me then as religion. The next day they received me and baptized me soon. But there was no change in my views of faith or doctrine. The same notion that was held by me in all my youthful days, that salvation is attainable as the result of creature effort, were still held by me, though my mother had often repeated these words in my hearing, "Salvation is of the Lord. " Nor was there any change in my inner and outward life or my affections. It may have been that more care was taken that my conduct should give no offense to others, for pride would prompt a young man of my views and aspirations to maintain a decent regard for good behavior.

The question has often been agitated in my mind whether such a system of religion, wherein preachers and their theories, and not the love and fear of God, controls the minds of the membership of such churches is any profit to mankind or not. That the converts of this system deny the power of God, yet maintaining a show and form of religion, is apparent. For if you will talk with one of them on the subject of religion, his idea of faith will be that it is first all up to the natural man, and the limit and test of self denial is to pay the preacher and give a few dimes to save the heathen, and maintain a decent behavior, claiming at the same time that money can send the gospel anywhere. He will tell you that unless the money is sent, the heathen are lost, but that if it is sent, they will be saved, while he may himself be worth his thousands, yet not give ten dollars a year for that purpose. He will not tell you anything of personal experience, knows nothing of being a lost, ruined and condemned sinner, has never felt the power of Jesus in his soul, nor the comforts and guidance of the Holy Spirit, He thinks the doctrine held by the Old Baptists the most dangerous and horrible of any ever held. He cannot endure election and a life of faith. He thinks there is no kind of drunkenness but that of liquor. Education is absolutely indispensable to qualify one to preach the gospel he holds.

Such were my views before and after the time here spoken of. My glorying was in the Missionary Baptist denomination, nor once did ever the question arise in my mind, "Can they be wrong, or myself either?" Occasionally in an encounter with a Primitive Baptist during the Civil War, as we would argue on subjects and differ, did it occur to me what a dangerous doctrine they do preach and hold, what ignorant, selfish and conceited people they must be.

Every part of my natural ambition, when a young man, was to be a lawyer. When between twenty and twenty-one years of age and just before joining the Missionary Baptists, my academic course at school began. As soon as they received me as a member it was remarked that there will be a preacher. This was very distasteful

to me. For amid all my imaginings in my youthful days as to my occupation in after life, it never occurred to me at all that I would be made to carry the name of any kind of a preacher. There was nothing in it of any charm to me. My ambition was to be a lawyer. A few years found me with my legal diploma and damaged morals — damaged not because of the legal profession, but because it was in me before and began to rage. It is not good to charge one's bad conduct to his associates or occupation. The source of the trouble is in the man. If he were right, he would choose good associates and pursue a righteous course of life. Man is weak, morally corrupt, totally depraved, having no margin or reserve force against temptation, and should not presume that he could weather any storm, whether small or violent Let him choose the safest craft he may and steer in the calmest waters, and even then he may make shipwreck.

Soon my soul was plunged into much trouble in consequence of reckless living. Then it occurred to me that the best way to do was to preach. This was decided upon as the antidote for my troubled conscience. But to be a great preacher was the next step. The Civil War in a few years came on before my course was complete, and I left school. There a new trouble confronted me. Debts to the amount of about $3000 were on my hands, and nothing with which to pay. For the first time this mountain of trouble stood towering and threatening at me. Such had been my thirst for education that this difficulty had not much embarrassed me until now. For one may be so absorbed in the pursuit of a cherished object that he will quite forget or scarcely notice great dangers even imminent. After leaving school this debt matter greatly oppressed my feelings. My father had always advised me not to make debts, yet my lot so far had been to be in debt from the time of my majority.

During the war (1861-1865) in the town of Goldsboro (N.C.), my marriage occurred. The woman given me of the Lord possessed no worldly goods. In this respect we were equals. In purity of character she was and is yet far my superior. For the Lord has blessed me among many other things with a good wife. During the war and after my marriage a friend gave me $5000. The Confederate money was used as far as my creditors would receive it in payment of my debts contracted for my education and otherwise, and it liquidated nearly all of these debts which was a great relief to me.

After the war was over for about five years we lived in Halifax County, North Carolina. During the war my troubles began in another and severer form more than ever. While attending my usual course of service as a Missionary preacher and glorying in that denomination, in a manner wholly beyond my contraception or control, it appeared to me that my heart was completely full of sin, rendering me totally unfit to preach to anyone. The people were kind to me, the congregations large and prospects flattering outwardly, but there was no pleasure for me. It increased until it seemed that to be allowed to crawl under the house and not be seen, but merely suffered to hear someone preach, would far better benefit my desperate

case. The thoughts of my heart were foolishness. Sin was an unbearable burden to me. My heart troubled and anguish of soul weighed down hard on me. For months this darkened state of feeling oppressed me. The justice of God appeared so clearly in my condemnation that the words, amen to my condemnation, seemed fittest. God appeared so holy and my nature so vile that it looked to me that no place but hell could be suitable for such a sinner. Sin seemed as a tempest raging in me, and it looked to me that if a great stone were dropped in the atmosphere as it could have no power to resist its own fall, but its own weight would hurl it down, so my own sins were driving me justly to destruction, nor did it even enter my thoughts that this was conviction of sin that would end in salvation for me; for there was no hope for me. In the midst of these awful moments while riding on horseback, suddenly Jesus was revealed to me in a glorious appearance in the heavens, and these words were sounded out as plainly as if spoken to me, "If God give you Christ, how shall He not with Him also freely give you all things." This occurred on the 15th of February, 1865.

It did not then occur to me that this is salvation. My mind seemed to be wholly absorbed in the contemplation of the glorious character of Jesus. The load of guilt and sin was gone, and peace reigned in my happy soul, and self was lost sight of for a time. The glorious character and kingdom of Jesus appeared to me as it had never done before. It seemed to me as a new world, but with my preaching it was difficult. At once Christ appeared to me as the only way of truth . This in letter or words for years had been held by me, but now in a new spiritual and glorious form it appeared and possessed my spirit, and thus the character of my preaching was changed; for from that time it was that Jesus is the Christ.

New views of the church and way of salvation opened up to me, so that questions arose concerning Christ and His kingdom in a manner so distinct and unmistakable that they were answered in my conscience only by preaching Christ as my righteousness and the righteousness of saints. Jesus appeared to me from that time in power and glory as the Head of the church, having all power both in heaven and earth. There was then nothing else for me to preach but Jesus. All else was excluded from my heart and conscience. Money, Sunday schools, Boards of men, Theological schools, human learning, the force and strength of combinations of men all disappeared, nor was it in my heart to preach them anymore. Jesus appeared to me as the righteousness of saints, and ever since that time, more than twenty-five years ago, it seemed to me there is nothing else for me to speak of or attempt to preach. We preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to Greeks foolishness, but to them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

The matter of preaching has been a grave and serious question to me for many years. It was the most offensive thing to my feelings, and never, if this nature of mine had been suffered to dictate my course of life, would this have been my lot. How it came to pass that I was made willing was the most

soul-humbling. It was a crucifying of my nature and caused an immolation of my most cherished objects on earth. But to be made willing to swallow down all that I had endorsed and espoused, to renounce that which had been so dear, namely the institutions and doctrines of modern missionism, and discard all my former associates, and to worship after the way they call heresy was a sore trial, so much so that nothing but divine power could lead me to do this.

They at once began to reprove me for that sort of preaching, and to tell me it was not profitable, and would scatter the congregation of people, and wither the church; that while it would do to talk predestination around the chimney-corner to old women, or to serve old established Christians, it was not palatable to a general and mixed congregation composed in considerable part of unbelievers, and that the experience of their people was that in order to hold the congregations and win converts, the preaching must be adapted to the taste of the hearers. It may as well be remarked here that the more of such arguments as this were advanced the weaker their cause appeared to me. Out of ridicule, it was said that my facial appearance and the construction of my brain made me "a predestinarian," and that my views would land me in the lap of "Hardshellism."

Others said it is the disposition of some men to take this view of questions and see only the Lord's work in operation. But not until recently had it so appeared to me. A great and radical change had passed over me. Once I had believed as they did, and encountered lovers of predesination with the same arguments they now assailed me, and that which once appeared to me as glorious had been stripped of its beauty. Now the Lord appeared to me as the great operator of all the powers and forces of the universe, and men are but as dust and ashes in His hand.

My search for the true church began, or to find people that held and loved what had been revealed to me, and to find a people congenial to me, for what would the true church be to one that loved it not, nor had any of its truth hid in his inward parts. But if God is in one, then that spirit of truth will lead that soul to cry out for the true and living God, and to seek rest in His habitation, and as soon as that place of rest or the church of Jesus Christ is revealed, there will he see rest and there will he abide.

To suppose that such as God teaches will not love His people and doctrine is an absurdity. No sound of ax or iron tool is needed or heard to change a vessel of mercy brought into this temple to cause it to fit in the building.

Many and painful were my perplexities, and long and bitter were the trials that for about five years beset me in this search. I became thoroughly convinced that the people of my early choice and myself could not agree. They could not see things as they appeared to me, nor could I be in fellowship with them. My soul thirsted for a people of simple manners, that loved electing grace, that rejoiced in the power of Jesus, that lived in hope, that walked by faith, and contended earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, a people that worship God as the fathers did, relying alone

on the word and power of God, and that believe that all things that God hath spoken by the Psalms, the law and the prophets or in the Scriptures, shall assuredly come to pass, or teaching none other things than the law and the prophets did say should come to pass, that Christ should suffer and should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people (Jews) and to the Gentiles, having hope toward God that there shall be a resurrection both of the just and unjust, which they themselves also allow. For there are some things which all denominations of the world allow to be right.

But the great questions is, "What think ye of Christ?" Of old they rejected Him in totality, but in modern days they preach a Christ, but not the Christ the Lord. They preach a Christ that has no power until the sinner helps Him, or becomes willing for Him to save him. They preach a Christ that died for everybody and rose again for their justification, and still many will not be saved by reason of their own neglect for whom He died.

It appeared to me that Jesus is King in the holy hill of Zion, and that He has all power both in heaven and in earth, power over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as God has given him, and all the people of God are taught of God and, therefore, great shall be their peace.

When my affection was turning to the strangest people on earth that I had so opposed, I had an interview with Elder John Stamper, and in the conversation I said in substance, it appeared to me that the child of God is not under law but under grace, that if one is under the law of Moses as a rule of life, he must be under its penalty also, for a law without a penalty has no force, and, if one is no longer under its penalty which is death for any transgression, then there is an abounding love, abiding peace and salvation for a believer in Jesus; but He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, and a believer is now under law to Christ who is our Law-giver, our Judge and our King who will save us; for He hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. The old brother replied "that is our doctrine, that is what we believe." How good it seemed to me to find a people that believed as I did, and my soul loved them.

But with the idea of going to that people, my pride rebelled. But the more my researchers were pursued the more the Primitive Baptists appeared to me as worshipping as the fathers of old did, or as God's people had always worshipped and served God from time immemorial.

Entangled in the wilderness, what hard fare I had, no peace, no rest. The question between peace of conscience and self-interest, the fear of God or the snare of man, whether to forsake all for and follow Jesus, or remain with those I was with and enjoy prosperity and wealth of the people I was then with, whether to unite, if they would have me with a poor people, few in number and despised, hated and evilly spoken of by all nations, and be ostracised by my former friends for renouncing all I had ever confessed, and contending for the doctrine that

never will be popular with the world, or remain as I had been, was a most distressing question. For it is no easy matter for one to be made to change his church relations. One that has never traveled in this way can never know the sorrow and distress it will cause. You will have to experience it and those who have traveled this road well know what I am talking about.

It was said, "If you go to the Hardshells they will ram you down in a corner and not help you any, and you will starve for bread." It did look that way. This Scripture was much on my mind:

"And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my sake, and the gospel's shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren and sisters, and mothers, and children and lands with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life." (See Mark 10:29,30.),

which has proven true in my case, and the God who begins to delight is able to finish the matter.

Another Scripture was on my mind for months whenever I would attempt to fill an appointment, yet I dared not use it as a text, for its meaning was too plain to me.

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, said the Lord Almighty." II Cor. 6:17.

There was no agreement or fellowship between myself and those I was with. Many of them were dear to me and we were good friends, but on doctrine we would not see together. Was it right to them or me for me to stay with them? We could not walk together because we were not agreed; but how hard to leave them and give this offense. When I left them, they would have no more dealings with me, for they called it heresy. It often seems to me now that it would be a great pleasure for me to visit their congregations and preach to them, (if enabled) Jesus and the resurrection.

Then the question would arise, how do you know that you are right? The answer to this would rise up in my deliverance. How did you receive Christ? By works of the law, or the hearing of faith, or was Jesus revealed to you according to or for your works?

Then the question would arise, how will you live if you go? and the words in that Scripture, "I will be to you a Father, etc.," would ring and sound as if He commanded the universe, and, therefore, would supply all my need.

The question would arise, "What about Sunday Schools? Are they not doing great good?" Look at the numbers that advocate them and how they get people into their organization that way when they are young and thus they mold and shape their lives as they please and bring them up as they wish. Are they not thus doing a great work? Without Sunday schools how can we get along, they would say. They are the greatest institutions in the world. Well it appeared to me if they were really so important as all this, would there not be some words in their favor in the Bible? For that is the book to decide all such questions,

and the Bible thoroughly furnishes the man of God unto all good work. But on looking into and searching that book it is seen that Sunday schools are not once named in that standard authority, not even once named. So it was with other pet measures of this denomination. None of them are once named.

I asked Elder C.B. Hassell about feet-washing, for it was on my mind that it is right to wash feet. He said that Primitive Baptists washed feet—that some washed all together after the Lord's supper and others did not wash at that time, but they would wash at sometime whenever it was on the mind of any member to wash and he would ask others if they would join in with him, and thus they would engage both in the spirit and in the literal act of feet-washing. I well remember the first opportunity offered for Christ's given example after being received by the Primitive Baptists. It was at a brother's house. He brought his basin and water and girded himself with a napkin at night at his own house, and washed my feet and I washed his feet. Since then I have a number of times washed feet with the church after the Lord's supper, and to me there is no difference in the answer of peace in each and every case. Nor is there ever a sweeter feeling of peace received after my experience in the participation of Christ's example of humility. If brethren have this humility in their hearts and are given to perform it, they are happy in the deed.

The question of reform has been much on my mind. What is true zeal? Jehu boasted of his zeal for the Lord, and asked one to come with him and look at his zeal. He was raised up to kill a wicked king and others, but ah, himself was wicked also in some things.

To not condemn another in that which you allow in yourself is moderation. To require in another more than you render yourself in anything while you offend at all is making yourself a judge of evil thoughts.

Whenever a brother pushes his zeal so far as to destroy churches for a point of order, beware of him. There are many things crooked that we cannot make straight. The great place for a reformation to commence is in one's own life. Some would be great reformers, but alas, they do all their work on others, and see no fault in themselves. If you are with a people you cannot fellowship, withdraw from them and let them alone. If you say, I cannot leave them, there is no other place for me to go but to stay, then try to correct evils mercifully, not by tearing up churches, or wringing the nose to force blood. Take care if you use violence and smite and tear up churches that you yourself are not smitten in turn.

I am satisfied to have forbearance and the spirit of feet-washing. If Jesus or any one of His disciples had ever said that a church must wash feet every time they commune, thus making feet-washing a test of fellowship among the brethren, or if there is a single example where the church in the days of the apostles observed feet-washing in connection with the Lord's supper after the resurrection of Jesus, then we should require it thus done now; but as this does not appear in the scriptures, it is not wise to enforce this to the destruction of

churches. The reason I engage in feet-washing at the Lord's supper, or at other times, is because it is plainly taught that we should wash one another's feet and the time or place is not so important as the act being done in the right spirit.

Washing feet is taught in such a way as to show and make manifest the very spirit of feet-washing or humility, and so it was impressed on me in those days of affliction and famine wherein the things I am recording were taught me by the Hand of God in the furnace of affliction, and my views were cast and molded in the molten sea of trouble, and searching inquiry, when deep called unto deep at the noise of His waterspouts. Do not tear up churches because they do not wash feet literally; may our God bless us to wait and show the spirit of forbearance and brotherly kindness by washing feet literally and long suffering towards our brethren, remembering God's long suffering to you.

On the question of my rebaptism some trouble arose, but I felt that if the Primitive Baptists were the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, they were contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, and, therefore, they kept the ordinances and possessed the true baptism. For Christ is not divided. It is not, as believed by the world, that one denomination has one part of the ordinance of Christ, and another denomination has another part, or one denomination is the head and another the hands, and another the feet of the same body, and you have to get all those together to make on body. But the body of Christ (The Church of the true and living God) is one and fitly framed together. All the members hold one and the same thing, for there is one Lord, one faith and one baptism, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.

Finally, all objections to the Primitive Baptists were removed. Myself was in the way — my unfitness, but still I loved them so that it was my desire almost every moment to be with them.

It was on Saturday before the second Sunday in March, 1870, at Old Kehukee Church, and at the old meeting house that I went and told them but little, for I have never been able to express my travail in full. They received me into that church, and on the next day Elder C.B. Hassell, a most precious brother to me, baptized me. It was in the same stream of water and the same place that I had baptized many when a Missionary Baptist, and many of them were present to behold the stoop, as they viewed it. The time had been when this would have been an intolerable disgrace. But that day it appeared to me that I was a dead man, so quiet and peaceful and so restful. Glory was everywhere and peace and love. It was on that day that the words that had been burdening my mind so long "Wherefore come ye out from among them," etc., were used by me as a text. It did not seem to me as preaching, but it was the sweetest ease and relief, as the long pent up matter was emptied and I felt so refreshed. That text has never since burdened my mind.

After being received into the fellowship of the church, I visited my father's section, and there was a little church of the Primitive Baptist faith in the neighborhood (back in Cleveland

County, N.C.) in which Elder Drury Dobbins had lived and died. A seed had been sown and a remnant was preserved. My mother heard me speak, though she and my father had both gone off with the New School or Missionary Baptists. When she heard me she said, "Son, you preach as they did when I was baptized, and I desire to live with you." She was received there on a confession of faith and her former baptism. Some time after this, she and my father were in Wilson, N.C., and when he heard the preaching and saw the order of worship of the Primitive people here, he said it carried him back to the days when he was first baptized, for it was like that, and he desired fellowship with us and was also received on confession of faith. My grandfathers and grandmothers on each side of the family were also Primitive Baptists, and thus my fathers' God is, I hope, my God. "My father's God and I will exhalt Him." Ex. 15:2. Who is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the Lord of our fathers? It is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, and the God of all comfort. Him only do I desire to worship and serve. What a blessed mystery to have that blessed hope that one is a child of God, born of God and identified with and related to the whole house of Israel.

There was then another matter that was unfolded in my experience. It was the case of what is called the prodigal son. I was that prodigal that had come home, been brought home, and, the fatted calf was slain, the ring of love was put on my hand, the garment of praise had covered me, then was feasting, music, and dancing in my soul. This lasted for months. Why cannot one remain in that blessed estate of love, feasting and obedience for life? What a sweet life it looks like it would be. But, alas, as we leave our first love, coldness, doubts, barrenness and trouble set in.

One very prominent question that much exercised my mind for years was the nature and extent of the atonement made by Jesus Christ. The Arminians claim an unlimited general atonement and say they preach free grace and free salvation which they charge the Primitive Baptists in not doing. The Primitive Baptists truly believe and preach an unlimited atonement, and the Arminians can scarcely be said to preach any atonement. God's people here believe that no power on earth or in hell can prevent the salvation of the sheep for whom Christ shed His blood and laid down His precious life. For all power both in heaven and on earth is in His hands, and He has power over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as the Father had given Him. But those who preach that many for whom Christ died are eternally lost do certainly limit His atonement. While those that preach that Christ hath forever perfected them that are sanctified by the one offering of Himself once, do most certainly preach an unlimited atonement. That is, we hold that so effectual and perfect is the atonement of Jesus, the price that He paid down for the redemption of sinners, that nothing shall ever prevent the coming to Him of any or all these for whom Jesus died.

The Arminians preach what they call an universal atonement, that Christ died to save everybody, every human being or all mankind, but it is

really no atonement at all. It is dependent on conditions to be performed by man that so fetter and clog their so called atonement of Jesus that many man-made things, controlled by man, as they say, may defeat it, or render it ineffectual and powerless. It is left with the creature entirely and altogether whether he will repent or not. If he does not, although Christ died as much for him as He did for any other person that was actually saved in the eternal covenant, that person never will be saved. They hold that Christ died as much for all that are finally lost as He did for any that are in His election with His Father before the world began, He died for all, they say. The man must act !

Whether the heathen are saved depends on many contingencies such as whether covetous man will give enough money to send the gospel here and there, and then whether any go to preach to them afterwards, and then whether the heathen will repent and believe, and, further, whether they will live a Godly life and none of these things are at all made certain by the death and resurrection of Jesus; but all are dependent on the creature (so called) effort. Now according to this belief, where is any guarantee or certainly in the atonement of Christ in the shedding of His Blood or the salvation of anyone? Is this not a most limited and uncertain atonement? Indeed, is it any atonement at all?

The Primitive Baptists preach it is the power of God that quickens the dead, and that Jesus, having all power, quickens whom He will, and makes sinners willing in the day of His power, and that He saves and calls them with a holy calling, and not according to their works; and that all that call on the name of the Lord shall be saved, and that everyone that thirsts shall be filled, and whosoever drawn by God's Spirit will come to Jesus and shall be saved, and that all that are weary and heavy laden are among the redeemed; also, they believe that salvation is free and given without money or price or previous goodness of the creature; nor is it based on his good works foreseen, but contrawise it causes the sinner to perform good works and lead a Godly life.

Salvation is a "gift" in every and all senses of the meaning of the word "gift."

Preaching too is a gift, and those that the Lord calls to preach receive their qualifications and preparations of Him.

It is through much tribulation that we enter the Kingdom of Heaven. My trouble is not with the people my lot is cast among, nor with the doctrine they hold, as Ruth said, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee," and the feeling of my desire and heart is "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. (Ruth 1:16).

The Primitive Baptists have faults and know that they are sinners. Nor do we occupy the land or live as we should. The strength is decayed, and burden-bearers are weak. The strength and force of discipline is much wasted, and we have departed from the living God in many things. Still, they come nearer to the ancient landmarks than any people within my knowledge. They are blessed to know the truth and rest in Jesus alone in Him for salvation.

My trouble is concerning myself. My unbelief and disobedient conduct give me more trouble than anything, and yet it seems to me that it does not grieve me deeply enough or I would be given deeper repentance. Daily nothing but grace can reach my case. As I look back and can see my life, how abased I am made to feel. Persecuting the church, reckless in manners, and if called to preach, it is in such a way as to humble me for life, having been brought from the land of Moab. If a child of God at all, having only a fleshly experience, I was taught the depths of Satan by going through its cheats and practicing in its pretensions; if there is one that can truly say by the grace of God I am what I am, it is myself.

Still after so much that should humble me, I am yet a sinner, no better, but rather worse.

If others have whereof to glory in works, I have the Lord Jesus to glory in who had mercy on me and saved me. If others may seem to glory in salvation by works, it does seem that none could blame me for loving the doctrine of salvation by grace. For nothing else could save me.

I can never ascertain to a certainty that I am a child of God. We are saved by hope, and we walk by faith. In this faith is the giving of diligence to make our calling and election sure. The true calling of God is a life time matter, nor is it finished while we are in this mortal state.

As to the matter of preaching it has never been clear to my mind that I am called of God to preach, as we know things naturally. It appears to me if I could know that God had called me to serve thus in the gospel of His Son that it would, next to my own personal salvation, be the greatest thing to know; and if I could know my services thus rendered are of the Lord and to the profit of His people, then it would be the sweetest and best of all labor.

When I was received among the Primitive Baptists, I was made to lay my services at their feet, and said on the day that I was received that if my services were not of the Lord, my desire was to cease, and that if I could quit, I would like to do so.

But with me it is not a matter of choice, nor am I able to keep my mouth shut or hold my peace; yet, I am not able to decide fully without any fear that I am a gospel preacher, and still I am afraid to try to stop, nor dare I do so.

This is a soul-humbling life, a life of trial and straits. The question is never with me, "what money shall I receive, " but it is "What will God bless me to give, if anything?" It is more blessed to give than to receive. Have I anything of the Lord to give? Has He blessed me with the truth to His people? I am poor in this world's goods and expect to be as long as I live. Yet, the Lord supplies my need. He has cast my lot as an editor, and by my own labor I earn my bread for myself and those that are with me, and this is in harmony with my views of labor and natural obligation. For a preacher or an editor is in harmony with my views of labor than others, and labor is ennobling, and if by word of pen or writing I am blessed of the Lord to serve Him, it is enough for me. It does appear to me that money and the love of it is degrading and that the best employment of man is to seek

nobler things than worldly gain. While some suppose that gain is Godliness, it does not occur to me that a soul is ever redeemed with money, or any such corruptible things as silver and gold, and, therefore, money nor the giving of money can ever atone for sin, nor save a soul, either in this land or in any other country or world for that matter.

The maintaining of these principles, or those that the Primitive Baptists hold, render one necessarily unpopular with the world. If ye were of the world, it would love its own. We must be crucified to the world, hated of all men for the sake of Jesus, and our names cast out as evil.

It was in 1871, contrary to any and all my expectations or thought that I was requested to move to Wilson, North Carolina, where my room has been ever since. A contract had been made for me to live elsewhere and teach school. This contract was cancelled by mutual consent.

Soon after moving to Wilson, Elder L. I. Bodenheimer, who was then Editor of this paper, requested me to become Associate Editor, and pretty soon afterwards it came into my hand. All of this was unforeseen by me, unthought of and unsought, but as the way was opened, I found myself willing, if enabled of the Lord, to serve in this way. Though feeling incompetent, yet it seems impressed on me thus to serve, and if it is profitable to the household of faith, that is reward enough for me. This too seems to be the way Providence has prepared and opened for me to support my family and self with food and raiment together with the little help otherwise received. But it is mainly, indeed, nearly all, obtained in this way.

it has been the disposition of my mind or according to my feelings to serve churches. But seldom do I take any trip otherwise than as a pastor, visiting the same churches I've been endeavoring to serve for years, though it would be a pleasure to me to often visit other churches.

The brethren have borne surprisingly with me and my infirmities, while they are accused as sinners and selfish. I know there is one sinner among them and that one is myself. They are kind and loving people and have shown me much kindness.

For about twelve years my health was very poor and it was unusually much of an effort to keep going; but within the last year or two it is better. It was the Lord that healed me, for in Him we live and move and have our being. Having obtained mercy of the Lord, I continue to this present time, testifying repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

My hope is toward God, if not a deceived soul. Many are my heart sinkings and heart searching at times. Heavy burdens of a sense of vileness and friendlessness pass over me; yet, the Lord delivers and I trust and hope He will yet deliver. There is hope that when our brief stay on earth has passed, then we shall be partakers of the glorious fruit of the resurrection.

To this end I press on, sincerely desiring to be found in Christ. To have a conscience void of offense toward God and man is the best of all living. There is no such living amid all the wealth and honors of earth. To be so exercised in the truth so that God will keep our bodies under subjection and live to Him in peace and in good will

toward men is the best of all living.

If God be for us, who can be against us? If by the faith of Jesus I am enabled to live in truth, dwelling with Israel in peace, and having good will toward men, this is a good exercise.

May peace be upon Israel and the blessings of the Lord rest on and direct my labor and may it be to the Lord.

Brethren, pray for me that my faith fail not. To be dead to the world and all worldly institutions, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ, our Lord, and to live the life I now live in the flesh by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me, and be found unto praise and honor and glory at his appearing, is my desire.

P.D. Gold

***

Elder P.D. Gold wrote the above experience about the year 1895. Elder Gold died in the year 1920 at the age of 87 years. Editor.
(Reprint from Zions Landmark. June 1987).

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union meeting will be held at Strawberry Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in November 1987. We invite all who have a mind to come and meet with us. All ministers of our faith and order are especially invited.

Elder Thomas Solomon, Pastor
Sister Gertie Holley , Clerk

SAINTS REST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH at DALLAS , TEXAS

Saints Rests Primitive Baptist Church, 2710 Engle St., Dallas, Texas invites all Brethren and friends to meet with us in our annual fall three day meeting.

The Lord willing, the meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m., Friday November 27, 1987.

Elder Carey C. Morris
Moderator and Pastor

Telephone number for contact:
Elder Carey C. Morris, 214-298-3269
Deacon Frank. D. Richards, 817-467-0005
Deacon Dean G. Connell, 214-298-8068

HOPEWELL ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Hopewell Association will convene with Mount Zion Church on Friday, October 16, 1987 and continue through till Sunday noon. The meeting house is located on Alabama Highway 159 near Mileage Marker 18, North of Gordo and South of Fayette. All lovers of the truth are welcome. For further information call (205) 556-5157.

Levert Howell, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE

Mrs. Novaline Stewart, NC 2.00
Mrs. Marjorie Cook, TN 25.00

Hardy Hill, TX 2.00
E. R. Graves, AL 3.00
Orville R. Beatty, PA 2.00
Bryan L. Shockley, MD 8.00
G. R. Slate, VA 2.00
Wade & Mary Poff, VA 2.00
Mrs. Pattie Krewatch, DE 40.00
Noland Lanier, NC 7.00
Mrs. Jessie Ray, NC 2.00
A Friend, NC 2.00
Mrs. Ella M. Merrill, AL 2.00
G. W. Carter, NC 2.00
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Simpkins, VA ...7.00

OBITUARIES

VOLLIE T. SOWERS

Vollie T. Sowers, born June 11, 1899. Son of the late Elder Frazier T. and Flora Martin Sowers. He was married to Grace Moran February 29, 1920. To this union was born four children. Three sons, Marvin, Arnold and Norman; one daughter Lucille.

He was afflicted with cancer nine years. Was in and out of the Hospital many times during his illness. When at home he was lovingly cared for by his son Norman and his wife Christine and daughter Barbara. Also a part-time nurse and other family members. He desired to be at home as much as possible, therefore he appreciated the care the family gave him, to enable him to stay at home.

Surviving are the three sons, fourteen grandchildren, twenty-six great-grandchildren, two step great-grandchildren. Also three sisters, Mrs. Mary Conner, Mrs Ora Conner and Mrs. Velvie Agee. He was preceded in death by his wife and daughter, Lucille S. Coates.

Brother Sowers was a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God; yes, the grace of God that bringeth salvation to the poor, helpless sinner, both for time and eternity. Therefore he could witness with the Apostle Paul 1 Cor. 15:10 *"But by the grace of God I am what I am.* Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation. *Deut. 33:27 "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.*

May I speak of thee dear Lord,
Of thy mercy, grace and love,
That we know in part on earth
But shall know in full above.

We grieve not for him as for one who has no hope. He is our hope, our all in all. O what a blessed people are God's people! He departed this life February 15, 1987. Funeral services, Salem Church, Copper Hill, Va., conducted by his pastor Elder Hale Terry, assisted by Elder Lane Carter. Interment church cemetery beside his wife, to await the second coming of the Lord. Brother Sowers was a dedicated member at Salem Church for many years.

May God's richest blessings rest upon the family and all who mourn and may He enable them to say, "Gracious Father thy will be done."

Submitted in christian love, by request of his sister, Velvie.

Gaye A. Thompson

Signs of the Times

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STRING OF HOPE

In nature I'm a sinful wretch
Sometimes I fear that I'm a goat
But I thank God, that He has let
Me have a little string of hope.

I have no confidence in my flesh
With trials sometimes are hard to cope
When in confusion I'm a mess
But I thank God for the string of hope.

By the Grace of God, I'm what I am
In worldly things I'd win no vate
But I thank Christ the precious Lamb
That He gave me a little string of hope

I'm weak and needy in this life
So many times I've felt the jolt
But through my Lord and Saviors strips
I'm thankful for a string of hope.

Some troubled times have cast me down
I groan within me, prone to mope
But through the blood of the precious Lamb,
I'm thankful that I'm given a little string of hope.

Kate Mathews

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EDITORIAL

PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS

Matthew 25 : 1-13.

Elder J.L. Hamrick

"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you; but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

his parable should be of utmost importance to us all and should be taken very seriously. The meaning that I trust the Spirit has given me to see in this parable may be different from the views of some others; if so, may our difference be truly in love and not with any ill-will. Every person has a right to their own views; therefore I can only bring forth what, I trust, I have been shown to be the meaning of this parable. I believe that the main intention of this parable is to show forth the condition of the visible Church state here upon earth at the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. This parable continues with the same thought concerning Christ's second coming as found in the preceding twenty-fourth chapter, which says, "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of

heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of the trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Matt. 24: 30, 31, 42, 44. "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins."

A parable in the gospel sense of the term signifies a similitude taken from the ordinary action of men (as shown in this parable), and made use of to inform in one or more points, spiritual doctrine. It is said that our Saviour spoke many things to the multitudes in parables concerning truth under similitudes from ordinary actions as were done by men. When "his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be?" He said, "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand." Luke 8: 9,10. In studying parables, the first and principal thing to be conscious of is its scope and end.

This parable might be better understood by knowing a little of the usual rites and customs concerning Jewish weddings before and during the time of Christ here upon earth. When a young man and woman became espoused to each other as Joseph and Mary did (this is referred to now as being engaged), the young man with some help from others would go to build a home for him and his bride. The progress of the work would be known to the bride, and when it was almost complete, the bride would begin to make preparation for the wedding. Ten virgins were chosen by the bride to accompany her before and during the wedding. The bridegroom also had his ten men to accompany him. Their marriages were most always at night. The bride and her ten virgins would be waiting at her father's house. When the cry went out that the bridegroom was coming, the ten bridemaids who were attending the bride went forth to meet the bridegroom with their lamps lighted to conduct the bridegroom and his young friends into the house and unto the bride. When they were all in with their lighted lamps, those who had been invited, the door was shut to all others and the marriage proceeded. It seems now that the spiritual meaning of this parable is based upon the customs and rites of Jewish weddings. I will now, the Lord willing, bring forth what I believe to be the spiritual meaning of this most important parable.

Verse 1. "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins." The kingdom of heaven, as used in this parable, refers to the condition of the visible church state on earth at the second coming of Christ. It is called a kingdom of which Christ is king, and in which the saints are subjects to him. It is styled the kingdom of heaven in distinction from the kingdom of this world. We would think that subjects of it would strictly be heaven-born souls, however, the devil at times sows tares among the wheat. "But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way." "The enemy that sowed them is the devil,

the harvest is the end of the world: and the reapers are the angels." Matt. 13: 25, 39. The kingdom of heaven as used here cannot mean the kingdom of glory for there will be no foolish virgins in it, nor in the internal kingdom of grace. Do not feel that this parable will not include us if we die before his second coming. This parable is not considered just simply to that period of time of Christ's second coming; but respects and affects us all. As we depart this world in death, we shall be classified as either wise or foolish, and as such will be found at the night of his coming, it concerns all ages of time.

"Ten Virgins." The term ten virgins as presented in this parable must not be given a spiritual significance as denoting pure Christians, for five of them do not represent true Christians. Being a virgin is surely a commendable state to be in, and some were virgins as far as good morals in the flesh is concerned. The Apostle Peter speaks of some who have escaped the pollution of the world for awhile, though later they are again entangled therein and overcome . . . II Peter 2: 20-22. This parable shows the difference between nominal and real Christians and just how far persons may go in a profession of religion and yet at last be shut out of heaven. They had much in common as far as their outward appearance was concerned. They were all, no doubt, sincere in their worship, and in their purity, at least in appearance. They were not corrupt in their conversation and were looked upon by the religious world as being sincere Christians, yet five of them had only a form of godliness. The office of these virgins is to go forth and meet the bridegroom at His appearing; and one of their chief concerns was to have lights in their lamps.

"They took their lamps." I believe that "lamps" as used in this parable, is a symbol that signifies a profession of religion. They all had their lamps, they were all professors of religion, but not all of them were possessors of true religion. They all had a lamp of profession; but not had the Spirit of grace in their hearts. Some were like the stony and thorny ground professors and five were of the good ground professors who were also possessors.

"Bridegroom." The bridegroom here mentioned is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ. The true church is His bride.

Verse 2. "And five of them were wise, and five were foolish." They are not distinguished into good and bad, but unto "wise" and "foolish." We find in Matt. 7: 24-27 where the wise man built his house upon a rock, and the foolish upon the sand. Salvation by grace is the lamp of the wise, and the law is the lamp of the fool. The wise virgins mentioned here are heavenly and spiritual virgins. They are elected and chosen in Christ and given to him by the Father before the foundation of the world, and were espoused to Christ from all eternity in God the Father's purpose. Christ accepted them and calls himself their husband. "For thy maker is thine husband: the Lord of hosts is his name." Isa. 54:5. The wise virgins may not be so wise in the things of nature, or of this world, but having been taught by the Holy Spirit, they are wise unto salvation. They are taught that their own right-

eousness, wisdom, strength, and works are as "filthy rags in the eyes of God." They are blessed to look to Jesus Christ for justification, to his blood for pardon, to his amazing grace for saving a wretch like us and to his righteousness for a hope of eternal life with him in heaven. They are blessed to see Him and Him alone as "the way, the truth, and the life." The beginning of true wisdom consists in the fear of God. "The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom." Prov. 9:10. "The wise man's eyes are in his head, but the fool walketh in darkness." Ecc. 2:14.

"And five were foolish." The foolish virgins may not be foolish in natural knowledge or a head knowledge of the scriptures; but they were foolish concerning themselves and the impurity of their hearts. They did not realize the imperfection of their own self-righteousness and they are strangers to the spiritual teachings of the Holy Spirit. True religion consists in true wisdom; but the foolish were left in darkness. "Therefore I said, surely these are poor; they are foolish: for they know not the way of the Lord." Jer. 5:4.

Verse 3. "They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them." "Oil" as used in this parable, I see, as being the Holy Spirit. The foolish took their lamps but without the indwelling of the Spirit of God. Here their folly is fully exposed by depending upon their lamps of professing religion and without having the indwelling Spirit in their hearts. They felt no need of it until it was too late; this no doubt will be the fate of thousands at the end of time, or when they come to die.

Verse 4. "But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps." The "vessels" as used here, I believe, means the heart. We must have the Holy Spirit in our hearts which is also referred to as a kingdom. "Behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Luke 17:21. We must be born again of the Spirit of God before we can worship Him in spirit and in truth. To be wise, we must have light, and by this light, God reveals his Son in us, the hope of glory. "For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light." Psa. 31:9. If we only have a profession of religion, and draw near him with our mouth and with our lips do honor him while our hearts are far from him, we worship him in vain as the foolish do. The hearts of the wise are near him because he dwells in them. Where there is no heart of the Spirit in religion, there is no faith, for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness.

Verse 5. "While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept." The space of time referred to here as the bridegroom tarrying is not the time set by the Father for Christ to come; for that time will not be hastened, nor will it be delayed: but it is speaking of the time concerning the general expectation by the people who will be living on earth before his second coming. Though Christ will tarry past the time expected by many people, he will not tarry past the due time. He will not come until all his decrees are fully accomplished, and until the restitution of all things. "And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you; whom the heavens must receive until the time of the restitution of all things, which God

hath spoken by the mouth of his holy prophets since the world began." Acts 3:20,21. All his elect among both Jews and Gentiles must be gathered into the fold.

"They all slumbered and slept." What does this slumber and sleeping consist of as concerning the wise virgins? The truths of the word concerning God, Christ, heaven, and hell have not such a lively influence upon them. Faith is fallen asleep ready to give place to the flesh and they are concerned more about worldly things than heavenly things. The soul is taken up more with carnal projects than it should be (Are we guilty of this?) They live too much to themselves for it is a feeble, sleepy love which does not direct our actions to the great end which is the pleasing and glorifying of God. A cold and careless hope may exist when there is not that earnest and desirous expectation of blessedness to come, which may draw us away from the things of God. "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust and enticed." James 1:14. Peter experienced this after he said unto Christ, "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." Matt. 26:33. But alas! how soon were his wings clipped, and he taken in the snare of the devil? Peter did not realize his weakness, do we? The Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak; therefore the degree of grace which the best attain unto in this life if mixed with imperfection. The wise were blessed to sleep as possessors of true religion, and slept with the Spirit of grace in their hearts. Their faith being of a natural source, consists more in a form of knowledge than a lively assent to the truth of godliness. The word of God comes to them in word only, not in power, nor by the Holy Spirit. The foolish trust in a profession of religion. "He that lusteth in his own heart is a fool." Prov. 28:26. "Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" I Cor. 1:20.

Verse 6. "And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." When all the events ordained of God come to pass, the bridegroom will come. There will be a tremendous cry when Christ comes in his amazing glory. The wise and godly are reserved to future glory, and the foolish and wicked are reserved to future punishment. The body that houses the soul that has been quickened by the Holy Spirit, and the body that houses the unregenerate soul, will be coheirs with the souls, and will share with them either in glory or in torment. When the bridegroom cometh, he will deal with the whole man. The body will receive the same glory or punishment as its soul. The bodies of the quickened souls at death, as "sown a natural body: it is raised a spiritual body. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption." I Cor. 15:44,42. All living on earth will hear the cry and all professors, as well as possessors of religion, will go out to meet him. Just as sure as Christ came the first time, he will come again to receive His bride unto Himself.

Verse 7. "Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps." The arising and trimming of their lamps shows that both groups believe in the second coming of Christ. The foolish think they are as prepared and ready for Christ's coming as the wise. They

trimmed their lamps to make their light of profession by works shine as bright as possible. The wise by trimming their lamps show their actual preparation for the Lord's coming. They were looking to the Spirit of grace to make their light so shine.

Verse 8. "And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out." The light from a profession of religion will not shine when the Lord comes to claim his jewels. The reason why the lamps of the foolish did not burn was because the Spirit of God was not in them. They, no doubt, had a zeal for godliness, but denied the power there of because they did not go to Christ for their supply. When the foolish can no longer go with the lamp of profession, they desire to have it from any source rather than Christ. They betrayed their folly by asking the wise for it. Why did the foolish ask for oil from the wise? To show that they were foolish, for who would go to men, to saints, or to ministers for the Spirit of grace? Only a foolish person. You notice they said that their lamps had gone out. This was not a light that shines forth by the Spirit of God in their hearts but a light of profession as imitating real Christians. Their lights being out show the lack of the Holy Spirit being in their hearts. Their consciences might be enlightened to some degree and their affections moved with some seeming heat and zeal, but were never thoroughly converted. We find many instances like these in the Word of God.

Verse 9. "But the wise answered, saying, not so; lest there be not enough for us and you, but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves." The wise, as all of God's children, desire more grace from the Spirit; surely those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, desire more. We hope that what we have will be enough to stand before the Lord, but none feel they have any grace in excess; and those whose hearts God has touched, earnestly desire more. You cannot have too much faith, too much fear, or too much love unto the praise and glory of God. The authority of giving grace has been given to the Son by the Father. "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." John 17:2. Therefore none can be sanctified, justified, or saved, by another man's grace. Now the wise could not help the foolish, nor the foolish the wise; but every man shall be judged according to what is within him. "Go to them that sell." This denotes they must go out of themselves because their vessels, or hearts, are empty, leaving them in complete darkness. If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness? "Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness." Luke 11:35. The foolish did go to buy oil for their lamps to give them light; but this light could be a light coming forth out of a profession of religion consisting of works. We see, no doubt, thousands today who seem to be in company with the foolish virgins. Spiritual grace and spiritual light comes only from God. "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." II Cor. 4:6. If we are void of the Spirit of grace in our hearts when the

bridegroom cometh, or at the time of death, we will forever and ever remain in darkness. "They know not, neither will they understand; they walk in darkness." Psa. 82:5.

Verse 10. "And while they went to buy the bridegroom came: and they that were ready went in with him to the wedding and the door was shut." The Lord Jesus Christ is to come at his second coming as a bridegroom. Then will come the dreadful separation of those who have been waiting for his appearing. The foolish and the wise were parted, the one from the other. The wise had been prepared by the Holy Spirit being in their hearts causing a spiritual light to shine forth; while the foolish had not the Spirit, but had gone to buy. Notice that the entrance of the wise virgins into the marriage was not only immediate, it was also intimate. "The Lord knoweth them that are his." Our Lord Jesus Christ left it in his will that his bride is to be with him in glory. "Father I will, they also, whom thou has given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory." John 17:24. Our Lord shall escort his bride to her place in glory. My dear brethren, how else could we expect or hope to go into the marriage if we did not go in with him? We must be wearing his robe of righteousness as our wedding garment and must be washed in his precious blood from all uncleanness. No one will object to the entrance into the marriage to all who go in with him, for all the requirements of the holy law and all the demands of divine justice will have been met by him.

This parable is meant to teach certain lessons and it seems to explain them very clearly. It shows those who will be prepared and those who will not be prepared. Be it ever remembered that, though we are all sinners, and utterly unworthy of so distinguished an honor, yet God says to every spiritual believing soul: "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband." II Cor. 11:2. This will be forever and ever. "And I will betroth thee unto me forever, yea, I betroth thee unto me in righteouness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies." Hosea 2:19. Marriage should be between parties of the same kind, as in the first marriage, Adam called Eve, "bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." Gen. 2:23. So Christ came to fit himself for that relation of husband to his Church by taking our nature upon him. And the Apostle Paul in speaking of this marriage between Christ and his Church uses the same name which Adam uses: "For we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones." Eph. 5:30. When Christ was in the world, he made a way for the marriage. He went back to heaven, it is true, but there was an interchange of tokens; he took our flesh, and left us his Spirit.

We know what a marriage on earth is like, but a marriage in heaven, who can describe it? Earthly marriage is contracted between two sinners; but this heavenly wedding is the marriage of One, who is all pure and holy, to another whom he has purified from every stain of sin, or spot, or any other such thing, and are made ready for this everlasting union. They that went in with him were at one time in the Lord's vineyard, toiling against the burdens of this world. They had some-

times felt the Lord's presence for a short season, and mourned over his absence. They had wandered from him in their minds and feelings. They experienced many trials and tribulations, with only a touch of hope in their hearts, yet they went in with him to the marriage.

Then comes this sentence, which is so terrible to the foolish, but oh, so sweet to the wise! "And the door was shut." It shut in the godly and shut out the wicked. The following two declarations of our Lord stand side by side. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." Matt. 25:46. Notice that these who went in with the bridegroom were a prepared people, a people who had been made ready. We must be made meet by our Lord Jesus Christ, in order to be ready to go into the marriage. A great change has to be wrought in you, far beyond any power of ours to accomplish before going into the marriage. You must be washed in his precious blood, justified in his righteousness as our proper wedding garment or we will not be ready. No child of darkness can go into that place of marvellous light.

Christ speaks of those that live under the dispensation of pure Christianity, some will be found true believers, other common professors. Even among the members of the visible Church here on earth that make a profession of the gospel, all will not be found prepared to abide the day of Christ's appearing in judgment. Even in Abraham's family there was an Ishmael as well as an Isaac. In Isaac's family there was an Esau as well as a Jacob. Even among Christ's disciples there was a Judas (called the devil) as well as the other eleven true disciples. When the door is shut, the exclusion is final.

Verse 11. "Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open up to us." The foolish now realize all the consequences of their past folly. These were only virgins in the flesh, not spiritual virgins in the Spirit as is plainly brought out in this parable because they were foolish ones. Notice they acted in much the same way as the wise, up to a certain point. They seem much like real Christians having some outward marks of the election of grace, yet they were not for they had not the Spirit of grace in their hearts, no indwelling of the Holy Ghost, no supernatural operation of him who worketh in the saints to will and to do of his own good pleasure. They said, "Lord, Lord" and, no doubt, they could have said, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name done many wonderful works? "But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are: depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity." Luke 13:27. "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and on whom he will, he hardeneth." Rom. 9:18. Some who were strong professors of religion, without being possessors of it, shall cry out, "Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay, but, O, man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Rom. 9:19,20. The potter has power to make one vessel unto honor and one unto dishonor; one fitted to destruction and one fitted for mercy, and who questions him except the foolish? The door to the wedding

ceremony will not be open for the bridegroom never knew them as the objects of his love.

Verse 12. "But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not." Christ knew their persons, conduct, and sad state, knew they were foolish virgins, graceless professors who had depended upon their external profession of religion. He never knew them as being chosen in him before the world was. He never knew them as his bride. He knew their names were not written in the Lamb's Book of Life because he says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." Yes, they follow him right through the door to the marriage; and when they are all in, Christ will close the door against all others. It will be a dreadful misery to be disowned by Christ at his coming. May God bless us to be found when he comes Wise Virgins.

Verse 13. "Watch therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." He will come is certain, and when he comes, it will be quickly. The time is fixed, therefore it becomes us to be on the watch. Study what the Scriptures say will be before his coming. Why are we to watch? "Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such and hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Matt. 24:42, 44. We should watch to our present state and safety. This is twofold: a watching to avoid evil, (as much as in us is) and a watching for the careful performance of that which is good. Every man has a little garrison to keep, and he himself is the watchman of it. His conscience is to sit as watchman at the door, to examine whatever cometh out and entereth in, as the watchman used to sit at the gate of a city to watch what entered in and went out. All the thoughts, affections, words, actions, and so forth are to be examined as to what they consist of lest a temptation be let in or a corruption be let out. "He that has no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down and without walls." Prov. 25:28. Man needs no devil to tempt him; we have enough in our own bosoms to prompt and urge us to sin: "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." James 1:14. There were but two Adams, and they were both tempted. Adam in his innocency, and Christ in his human nature were tempted; so can we hope to escape? If we neglect our watch, we become a ready prey to the devil. "When the servants slept, the enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way." Matt. 13:25. Therefore we are commanded to watch. "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices." II Cor. 2:11. We may ask, how can we watch for and combat against these evils? By the oil which is the Spirit of God in our hearts. Our flesh cannot; but the Spirit of God within us can. "And he said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." II Cor. 12:9. Yes, the inbred corruption of our nature is ready to betray us to most temptations, and to open the gates to the enemy without, for the thoughts and imaginations of our hearts are evil continually.

Watch and pray. May we not live as if there was no God to come, no

punishment to render, no dreadful charge to give, no account to be given. Joseph was tempted but by the grace of God by being watchful, he did not fall. May God set a watch upon the door of our conscience. Therefore let us not sleep as others, but watch and pray. "But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." I Peter 4:7. May we watch, may we be prepared, by the Spirit of God, is my prayer.

In love,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

CORRESPONDENCE

ELDER TOM TURNER — 102 YEARS OLD

Elder Turner was born April 17, 1885. His parents were Robert "Robin " Turner and Sarah Ellen Martin Turner. He was married November 20, 1912 to Ida Susie Stone who is now deceased. To this union was born nine children, four boys and five girls. All living now but one, nineteen grandchildren and more than 50 great grandchildren.

Elder Turner and his wife joined the church on the same day in 1922. They were baptized the following Sunday in a river by Zanda Cahill. Several years later he felt a call to the ministry and was ordained in 1938. he has been preaching now about 50 years and is highly esteemed among his yoked brethren in the ministry and is loved by all who know him.

Elder Turner has lived a good life, and worked at a good many jobs in his lifetime. He has farmed, blacksmithed, owned and operated a merchantile store for 18 years and worked in a furniture factory several years. He operated a shoe repair shop for fifteen years before he retired at the age of sixty-nine. He believed in working for a living and for the support of his family and has remained active ever since his retirement. His many jobs and work never hindered his work in the ministry. His church was always first and he was ready to lay down all else and go when called and needed. He was a workman who needed not be ashamed.

Elder Turner at the age of 102 still goes to church and enjoys having his friends visit him. He loves to talk about the scripture and tell of the things the Lord has done for him. He loves his Lord and has a precious hope his Lord loves him. His natural vision is growing dim, but he has a clear vision of the work of the Lord and looks unto Him as the author and finisher of his faith.

When he was young and his brother had died he said he would like to live to be 85 years old. When he was 84, he thought, "Well I think I'll make it to 85." A small voice spoke to him over his shoulder, and said, "Eighteen to go." There was no one near so he knew it wasn't anyone talking to him, and he thought, "Why that will make me 102." Through the past several years he has related this experience to many of his friends. Now that he is 102 years old he says it must have been a voice from above talking to him.

Family information, pictures and dates above were furnished by his daughter Clara T. Bryant.

We love you Elder Turner and pray for Gods richest blessings to continue with you.

The Editors

Route 4 Box 21 A
Winnsboro, TX 75494
January 8, 1987

Dear Brother Cannaday;

You have been on my mind some since meeting you before and during the Pigg River Association. I hope the Lord is still blessing you with a submissive will toward His dealings with you, both naturally and spiritually. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28.

Even thou your sufferings may be great and painful, I trust the Lord is still visiting you from time to time with some sweet manifestations of His love and mercy toward you. You are among the number of those whom the Lord, as a loving Father, is pleased most graciously to exercise with pain and suffering. This cannot but produce grief, but it appears you are kept from murmuring and complaining. This is sweet grace: for this you cannot be sufficiently thankful. You have the sweet assurance that the Lord is your helper in time of need. In all your pains and sufferings He can support your mind and lift up your soul above and beyond all your sufferings. He does this by refreshing you with some blessed views of His everlasting love and mercy to you in Christ Jesus; and by sending His Holy Spirit to take the things of Christ and revealing them unto you. It is the very crown of patience to bear up under bodily pain and grief, looking to Jesus as our only comfort. The Apostle says, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." It is great indeed with us when we have no will of our own, but can say, "Thy will be done." May the person of Christ; the love of Christ; the righteousness of Christ; the sacrifice of Christ; the salvation of Christ; the whole of what he hath been and done, suffered and finished, as set forth in the everlasting gospel on behalf of His people be a relief to your mind, and all-sufficient to refresh your spirits and fill you with everlasting consolation.

We cannot run away from the cross, we cannot cast it off. But remember your cross, whatever it may be, is appointed to you in covenant love; it is the portion alloted to

you by the heavenly Father decreed in weight and measure, to an atom, and you will not have to bear it one moment longer than He has determined, and many precious fruits will it produce. Though the burden of your cross, He is only bringing your mind from earthly things that He may increase your communion with the Father, Son, and Spirit. You can carry your cross only in the strength of almighty grace. There is no feeling of mind, no sigh, no tears, no groans or pain that you are subject of, but what Christ sees and knows. His everlasting arms are underneath you. He says to you, "Fear not, I have redeemed thee, I have graven thee on the palms of my hands: I will remember thee with everlasting kindness." All may fail, nature may fail, life, strength, flesh and heart; but Jesus will not, Jesus cannot fail you.

My dear brother, in Christ you have everlasting life, and I believe by your experience, this is manifested in you. your being in Christ is the highest instance of God's love and mercy toward you, all other blessings are but the effect of it. Remember that nothing can take place either in life or death which can separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. The scripture says, "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer." He will be with you: He will comfort you with His precious peace. He will refresh you with the water of life; He will feed you with the hidden manna and will work deliverance for you in his own time and way.

We should all look forward to our leaving this old sin cursed world, for it opens the door for our souls to be carried up into His presence to bask in the sunshine of His love and mercy toward us, and to sing praises to His holy name and to await the resurrection of our bodies. Solomon said, "That the day of one's death is better than the day of one's birth." and Christ says, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." and "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Ps. 116:15. You and I do not know the beauty and blessings of heaven yet, nor can we till death siezes us; but I trust we, in the Lord's own time concerning us we will know.

May the Lord Jesus be present with you. May He give you to enjoy great nearness and much free access to him, may He sanctify every sorrow. May He so influence your mind, that while the outward man decayeth, the inward man may be renewed day by day, that your light affliction which is but for a moment may be working for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. May your heart and mind be exercised more and more on Jesus. May your understanding be filled with the true knowledge of him and may you increase in real personal communion with Him is my prayer. Amen.

Our prayers are with you and yours.

In Christian love,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/87
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE .

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

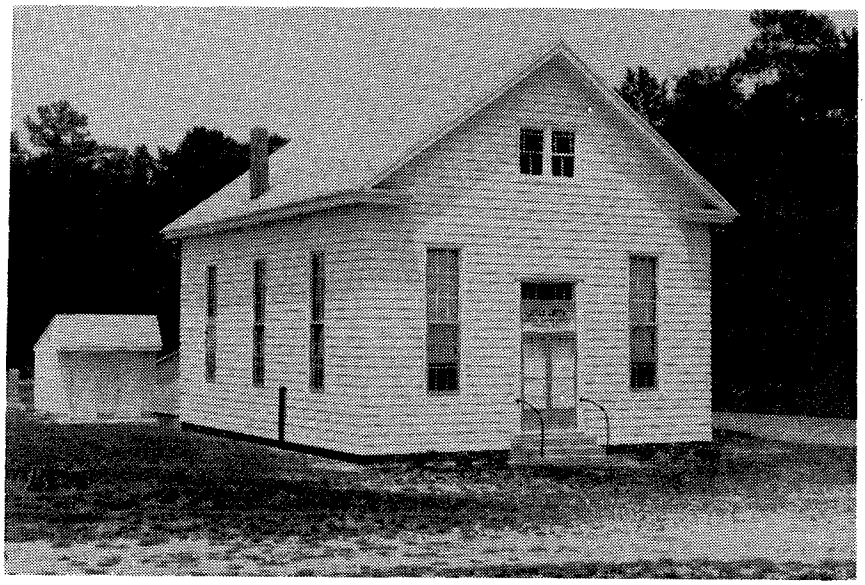

LITTLE CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Little Creek Primitive Baptist Church was organized in 1802. It is located on the Smith Mill Road, 3 miles east of Dual Highway 13 between the towns of Delmar and Laurel, Delaware.

The church is presently without a pastor but is blessed to have service each month with elders of our faith from various areas.

Meetings are held each 2nd Sunday at 11:00 a.m. and Saturday night before.

Some of the former pastors who were widely known and served faithfully were the late Elders: A.B. Francis, H.C. Kerr, Harold M. Bennett and Arthur R. Warren.

ST. LUKE 11 : 1-4

And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

And he said unto the, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed by thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

Give us day by day our daily bread.

And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

THE CREATURE MADE SUBJECT TO VANITY.

(Romans viii. 20.)

Who is this creature which "was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope?" It is the same creature spoken of in the preceding verse, whose "earnest expectation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God," and which in the following verse it is said "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." It belongs to the same spiritual creation referred to in verse 22, which in former dispensations groaned and travailed in pain together, and which now in the gospel day is manifest, as it ever was, by suffering, even in the apostles and early saints, who had the first fruits of the Spirit, "who groan within themselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their body."

This creature is the same spoken of in 2 Cor. v. 17: "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature," and also in Eph. ii.:10 "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." This workmanship of God whereby we are created in Christ Jesus, is experienced by a man, a sinner of Adam's fallen race. Before that work of God was experienced this man did not know himself as a sinner, and therefore did not have that kind of suffering which comes from such knowledge. In the first verse of this chapter the apostle speaks of those who are in Christ, and in the ninth verse we learn that to be in Christ, or in the Spirit, is to have the Spirit of God, or of Christ, in him. It is not until we have this experience of Christ in us that we can know that the body, which means the natural or earthy man, is dead because of sin. (Verse 10.) Let it be here noted and remembered that when the body or flesh is spoken of by the apostles in this sense, as dead because of sin, reference is not made merely to the physical body, for that cannot sin, but to the man, who is "of the earth earthy," the man who sinned and was condemned. The sin, the sinfulness, the depravity, are felt by the Christian to be in his mind, in his heart, and not in the literal flesh.

The life that is now ours is the Spirit of Christ, "The Spirit is life because of righteousness." "Christ is our life," and that life is all the light we have by which to see the deadness of our body, or the living beauty and glory of Christ, and of the kingdom of God. (Verse 10.) "In him [the Word] was life, and the life was the light of men."—John i. 4. The giving of this divine and ever holy life to the sinner is the creative work of God. It is not that the divine life or Spirit of Christ was created, nor is it that the Adamic man is new created, or made over again, but the bringing of the man forth in this new life, the causing him to be thus born of the Spirit, the manifesting of "the life of Jesus in our mortal flesh," (2 Cor. iv. 11) this is the workmanship of God; this is creating the man in Christ Jesus, and causing him to be a new creature.

This man who has been born again (from above), who has been brought forth in the life of Jesus, was first born of the flesh, brought forth in the life of Adam. In neither birth was any change of nature effected. In the first birth the life and nature of Adam were manifested. In the second birth the life and nature of Jesus were manifested. In being given the life of Jesus the life of the flesh was not changed in its nature, but remained a sinful life. Therefore David says, "My soul cleaveth to the dust;" and Job says "My soul is weary of life;" and Paul says, " The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." And throughout the Scriptures holy men have mourned on account of the felt sinfulness of their own life, and rejoiced in the evidences that the Lord was their life, and such is the experience of saints to-day. "Except a man hate his own life," Jesus says, "he cannot be my disciple." The two natures, the two lives, the mortal and the immortal, are both in the one person, but the spiritual or immortal is the stronger, and shall control and prevail.

The creature spoken of in the text is not the spiritual life in itself considered, nor the man who has experienced the new birth in himself considered, but it is the spirit or life of Jesus as manifest in the flesh, and it is the man considered as having this divine life, the man as being thus "in Christ." The man himself, regarded in his Adamic nature, is a sinful man, and his heart is deceitful above all things, and there is not enough goodness in his nature to cause one throb of sorrow on account of sin, or to excite the least hunger after righteousness, and the Spirit of Christ, considered separately from the flesh, can have no sorrow or pain. It was in the flesh that Christ suffered. It was for the purpose of suffering that he came in the flesh, and those who have the Spirit of Christ suffer with him. It is this suffering of the people of God with Jesus that the apostle is considering in this connection. He explains to them the cause of their suffering, and enters into the depths and heights of doctrine as he traces the exercises and describes the feelings of the little children, and thus points out and designates the humble followers of Christ.

The apostle in various places speaks of the one person in his relation both to the flesh and the Spirit. While there is an essential distinction between the flesh and the spirit, and this distinction is maintained in all the teachings of the apostles, yet they are both in one person, and there is an experimental sense in which they must be considered as together, though separate. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," and will remain so until the change shall come, "and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit," and will ever remain in unyielding opposition to the flesh. But the christian is possessed of both of these opposing natures, the human and the divine, and the apostle uses the personal pronoun when speaking of both. "For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." He speaks of the flesh as "me." "That which I do I allow not." "The good that I would I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do." "I am crucified

with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." "O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."

Thus it is the same I who realizes death in Adam, or in the flesh, and who realizes life in Christ. It is the same I who may at one time be experimentally in Christ, and, sowing to the Spirit, reap life everlasting, and at another time may be living after the flesh and die to spiritual things; may be sowing to the flesh, and of the flesh reap corruption.

But the apostle is considering here the unchanging, unvarying inclinations of the Spirit or life of Christ which is in all his people, and the consequent suffering of the child of God because of the vileness that is thus discovered in us by the light of the Spirit. And he is intent upon declaring and showing the certainty of the glory that shall succeed that suffering in every one who has been born of the Spirit, and who is therefore a partaker of the divine nature. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." How wonderfully connected the apostle's argument is. How one thing follows another, just in the order that keeps along with the exercises and travail of the Christian. Observe how many of these verses begin with the word "for," connecting it with what was said before.

"For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the Son of God." This earnest expectation is entirely of the Spirit. It is the view of faith, looking to things not seen by mortal powers. It is the expectation of things promised in Christ, and revealed to the faith of God's people. Faith makes no guesses, but sees eternal realities. Concerning these things it is said, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." Therefore, while there is deep suffering because of the corruptions of the flesh, there is at the same time, down in the depths of the soul, a calm and confident waiting for that which the quickened soul so earnestly desires, to see in ourselves the manifestation of that relationship as sons of God. We cannot see it in ourselves now, but we long for it, hunger for it, have been made to expect it, and quietly wait for it. We are saved by this sweet and sure hope. All this earnest expectation is in the Spirit; not in the Spirit of Christ considered in itself, but in that spirit as given unto us, and as living in our poor hearts, and as able to turn our thoughts toward heavenly things, and to set our affections on things above.

Now the apostle shows against what great and dire obstacle the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for such a wonderful and holy manifestation. That obstacle is the vanity of our fleshly nature, which he afterward calls the bondage of corruption." This is why we do not see in

ourselves evidences of sonship, such as we desire. Though to our faith may come assurances at times that "we are now the sons of God," yet "it doth not appear what we shall be;" and we are often left to doubt that we bear such a relationship because of the vanity of the flesh.

But now the apostle shows us that in the wisdom of God in creating his people in Christ, in giving them the life of his Son, he made them subject to the vanity of this nature. He could have caused them to be at once freed from sin and depravity, and to enter into a holy and sinless state. But it was his will that the new, divine life, the Spirit of Christ in them, should have this opposition to contend with, that this new creature should be subject to this vanity. "Every man in his best state is altogether vanity." "All the goodness and glory of man is as the flower of the field." As soon as the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it, it fades away. (Isa. xl. 7.) And because of this the workmanship of God is the more clearly manifest, and the power of the Spirit more clearly displayed, as the enduring quality and value of gold are shown more clearly when it comes in contact with fire.

For our comfort we are told of one things that we would not have thought of without being told, and yet which we see at once to be true: "Not willingly." The Spirit of Christ is essentially and forever opposed to sin. That life of Christ which is within the poor sinner's heart is just as pure and as much opposed to vanity there as it is in himself; as the sunshine is just as pure when it falls into a polluted atmosphere as when it leaves the sun. We can as times see that there is a principle within us that is opposed to all the vanity and corruption of our natures, and which makes us long to be perfectly free from it. Thus with our minds we serve the law of God, (we have the mind of Christ) while with our flesh we serve the law of sin. (Romans vii. 25) The apostle had no reference here to evil deeds, against which we would admonish his brethren, but he referred to that corruption of the flesh to which we must always be subject, feeling it as a bondage while we remain in this mortal state.

Not willingly. This is why we suffer in the flesh. This is why we can find no permanent rest in this mortal state. This is why, when we are spiritual, we hate not only evil deeds, but the vanity of even the most exalted and the purest of earthly things. This is why our days on the earth are a shadow, and there is none abiding. This is why we hate our own lives at times, and count this world a wilderness of woe. And it is because the new creature is not willingly subject to vanity, that exhortations and admonitions have a place and power. For this creature is ever seeking the honor of God, and desiring to follow Jesus, and to show forth his praises, but ever feels the hindrances of the vanity of the flesh, and so can never do the good it would do, but is always dissatisfied with even our best works. And no matter how far one may have gone astray, it is always right to exhort, when we can do it in meekness, for though we cannot make the word of exhortation effectual, the Lord peradventure may give repentance to the acknowledging of the truth:

Then how sweet and comforting

the assurance that this subjection of God's gracious work in us to vanity is in hope. We cannot see in ourselves now what we wish to see, (verses 24, 25,) but we are given good ground to hope for it. For the apostle by inspiration positively asserts that we, the new creature, shall be delivered from this vanity, from this "bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God." This we are given faith to believe shall be. We long for it, and in the Spirit we expect it, and thus we have that hope which saves us from being overcome and brought down to the gates of despair by this vanity. "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." No child of God can see himself as he wants to be, therefore he can never be pleased or satisfied with himself while in the flesh. He must see himself compassed with infirmities, held down by a bondage of corruption, therefore he cannot see himself as a son of God now, cannot see himself without sin, cannot see in himself, that is , in his flesh, any good thing. Therefore he is not only subject to vanity, but is subject to the temptation with which Satan tempted Jesus, "If thou be the Son of God."

But here comes into view the preciousness, and the saving power of that hope, which the Lord, who subjected the new creature to vanity, has given to light up the darkness, to cheer the heart, and to be "as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast," holding the vessel of mercy securely against all the adverse tides and terrible storms that must be met with on the ocean of time. This good hope is through grace, and does not depend for sustenance upon goodness in ourselves, or in our works, which every child of God longs for but can never see, but upon the revelation of Jesus Christ as "of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." At every new revelation of the blessed Savior to our souls, our hope seems to be renewed and strengthened. So we continue to hope for that we see not, for goodness, sinlessness, perfection; for the manifestation of the sons of God, for deliverance from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God, for "the redemption of our body," which shall be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus; and for all these blessed things so surely promised and assured unto us, we patiently wait, wait in the enduring and unfailing patience of a living faith in Christ.

"Not willingly." Still more and more blessedly does this wonderful expression shine out from the sacred page of inspiration, with assurance of hope, and with heavenly comfort, to the afflicted and poor people of God, who are still ever struggling on against barriers which present impossibilities to them, who are daily tried and are daily dying, and yet "who against hope believe in hope." What a comfort it is to see this "not willingly" in their own poor hearts. When they have to acknowledge that they do the things they would not, and do not do the things they would, how glad they are at times, in the midst of their infirmities and under the bondage of

corruption, to remember that they would not do an evil thing, and that they would do good things.

"But if indeed I would,
Though I can nothing do,
Yet the desire is something good,
For which my praise is due.

By nature prone to ill,
Till thine appointed hour,
I was as destitute of will,
As now I am of power."

How comforting to find that the apostles are with us in this experience of infirmities which the Spirit only can help. How glad we are that Paul, as well as we, had to confess, "The things that I do I allow not." Not referring to a course of wrong conduct, but to the fact that sin is mixed with all we do, so that we cannot do the things we would, but feel "sentence of death in ourselves," tainting all our works, only as we are given faith to do our works in Christ, to look to him for the goodness, and not to ourselves.

"Not willingly." This is the holy Spirit of God from which this "not willingly" comes. There is no half way will here, no uncertainty about this will that is ever and eternally against all sin. This is the will of the Father that was done in and by the Son. There is no weakness in this will. It is not even the will of Jesus, as a suffering man, which caused him to cry, "If it be possible let this cup pass from me," but it is the will of the Father which caused and enabled him to say, "Not my will but thine be done." His own will was the will of a pure and sinless man. This will he did not come to do. This will must be crossed, denied, crucified, for it would have turned from suffering. The Father's will was done in and by him, and by that will he was crucified; by that will he gave himself to the smiters, and became obedient unto death. By that will he was raised from the dead, and by that will we are saved. That is the will concerning which that Holy Spirit teaches us to pray, "Thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven." It will be done in the children of God, and through its power and exercise within them they will all eventually be brought into perfect conformity to the image of God's Son by the mighty power and working of his holy Spirit. He works in his people to will and to do of his good pleasure. In his own time, and in his own way, each of them will be made fully to know his own vanity, his own inability, "his own sore and his own plague," and will then be brought forever away from sin and weakness into the liberty of the sons of God, and will be prepared to give God all the praise of his salvation for time and for eternity.

Those who the apostle says are groaning and travailing in pain together until now, are not the natural creation, for it is not true of either man or beast. He is showing the sufferings of the Lord's people from the beginning. They were distinct from the legal worshipers, though they were among them. They all had faith in every dispensation, and by that faith they saw Christ as their Savior, and we trace them through all the Old Testament Scriptures by their groanings, complaints, self-loathings and bitter self-reproaches, as an afflicted, suffering people whose sufferings are on account of sin in the flesh. And the apostle joins himself and all the saints

under the gospel with the holy men of old, who were as much the creative workmanship of God as we, showing that although the gospel saints had received the first fruits of the Spirit, yet they groaned within themselves, looking for no comfort from the flesh, but looking for the promise of Jesus' coming, when the adoption would be fulfilled in the redemption of our body from corruption, and the inheritance into which we were adopted, (using adoption as a legal figure) would be received, which is to become sons of God. This name, Son of God, Jesus received by inheritance in his resurrection. (Heb. i. 4, 5; Rom. i. 4; Acts xiii. 33.) We are heirs with him of this sonship, and when the manifestation of the sons of God shall be complete in the redemption of our body from corruption, and in fashioning of it like unto the glorious body of Jesus, then we shall be manifest, not as adopted children, for the purpose of that legal figure is attained when we come into the inheritance, but as the real "children of God, being the children of the resurrection."—Luke xx. 36. This inheritance unto which we are begotten again by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, is not a corruptible, defiled and fading inheritance, as was the sonship we inherited from Adam, but it is incorruptible, and undefiled, and it fadeth not away, and it is reserved in heaven for all who have received the Spirit of adoption, for all who feel themselves to be poor, helpless sinners, who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and who long to be like Jesus; and all the heirs of this blessed inheritance are kept by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. (1 Peter i. 3-5.)

I have written upon this subject by the request of my dear brother, Elder G. E. Mayfield, of Elgin, Oregon. I wish I could do better with it, and write more clearly, but I feel more and more from day to day my ignorance and inability with regard to spiritual things. I often feel as though I ought never to try to write upon such things, or speak, either. It sometimes seems as though I know nothing as I ought to know, and it depresses me greatly. I am of late in the depths much of my time, but sometimes I hope I am enabled to cry unto God out of the depths. If it were not that those to whom I write know these things by a personal experience of them, and are therefore able to judge of what I say, I would not write. What I have written is what I have felt and tasted in my own soul, and so I feel free to submit it to the saints.

May the Lord direct our minds into all truth.

SILAS H. DURAND

SOUTHAMPTON, PA., July 15, 1901.

MEETINGS

DAN RIVER CHURCH

There will be a special worship service, the Lord willing, at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on Thursday evening, November 26, Thanksgiving day, at 7:00 p.m. Elder J.T. Prescott of Swansboro, N.C. will be the guest speaker. We invite all of those who love the truth to meet with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Pastor
Brother Boyd Minter, Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Rocky Mount Church. A Presbytery met at Rocky Mount Church 6/27/87, for the examination of Brother Ira Powell if, found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The solemity was begun with prayer by Elder Julian Williams. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the Presbytery. Those present were: Amos Hash, Leonard Key, Thomas Solomon, Noel Conner, Willard Cox, Haywood Wray, Denver Simpson, William Holland, and Julian Williams.

Deacons present were as follows: Jamie E. Cooper, Chester Hagood, W.R. Bernard, Clay Brown, Jessie Tyree, Jr. Dent, Nelson Bryant, Hassell Hale, Claude Johnson, Fred Murphy, Edwin Dyer, Joseph Cahill, Nelson Nester, Woody Young, L.C. Akers, Harden Walker, Jimmy Holley, Harry Cannady.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Amos Hash as moderator and Jamie E. Cooper as clerk. Elders Haywood Wray and William Holland was chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate Brother Jr. Dent having been duly appointed by Rocky Mount Church in conference as spokesman for the church, delivered Brother Ira Powell to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder William Holland, and all present Elders invited to participate. The presbytery being satisfied by examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying of hands, with the ordination prayer being delivered by Elder Willard Cox. The charge was delivered to the candidate by Elder Julian Williams.

The moderator asked presbytery if they were satisfied with the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Ira Powell and the right hand of fellowship and brother given. The ordained brother was delivered back to the Church as an ordained Deacon of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Rocky Mount Church. The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and approved. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Leonard Key.

Amos Hash, Moderator
Jamie Cooper, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Union meeting, the Lord willing, will be held at Strawberry Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in November 1987. We invite all lovers of the true church of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to meet with us, all ministers of our faith and order are invited.

Elder Thomas Solomon, Pastor

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will meet with Big Meadows Church on the fifth Sunday in November. Big Meadow Church is located

approximately 12 miles south of Graham, N.C. Take highway #87 south until you cross Cane Creek bridge. Turn right at the top of the hill and go four miles to a cross road. Turn left and go 1 mile to church. We invite all ministers of our faith and order and all who love the Truth to meet with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Pastor

OBITUARIES

MARY JANE (HILL) BRAKE

God has seen fit to remove from our midst one whom we loved as a sister in Christ, Sister Mary Jane Brake.

Sister Brake, born March 18, 1897 was married to Willie G. Brake February 4, 1914. To this union was born seven children, Mrs. Mary Lee Strickland, Mrs. Lillie Mae Collie, Mrs. Emma Jane Williams, Mrs. Elizabeth Landin, Percy, John, and Willie Brake, all of whom survive.

Sister Brake lived a humble life, devoting her life to her family and church. She was not a person to visit the churches at a great distance, but the brethren of her home church at Pleasant Hill, where she joined July 25, 1926 were sure to watch the door for her appearance.

As long as her health permitted, unless providentially hindered, she was at Pleasant Hill on each meeting day with the devoted help of her family who was faithful to provide her a way to her meetings as well as looking after her welfare through her latter years. Due to declining health during her last three or four years, two days attending meeting was too tiring for her, but if she wasn't present on Saturday we almost knew she would be there on Sunday.

Sister Brake was called home on Wednesday morning, June 10, 1987 making her stay in this world 90 years. Her funeral was conducted at Johnson Funeral Home, Rocky Mount, N.C. on June 12th by her pastor, Elder Henry C. Jones assisted by Elder Lester Eason. She was laid to rest in the Hill family cemetery, Edgecombe County, N.C. to await the second coming of her Saviour.

We, at Pleasant Hill Church, bow in humble submission to the Lord's work as we extend our sympathy to the family left to mourn her passing. We will miss her as a loving member of the flock.

Written at the request of Pleasant Hill Church, in conference Saturday, June 27, 1987 by

J. Carroll Williams
Elder Henry Jones, Moderator

SISTER LUCY JENKINS
(95 Years & 4 months.)

The Church at Bordeaux Nashville, Tennesee mourns the loss of a dear and loving Sister, Lucy Jenkins. Who departed this life July the 10th, 1987.

Survivors one daughter Kilra Allarie Evans and four sons Clayton, Wilson, Gilmor and Grady, and grandchildren, nieces and nephews. I was requested to write her obituary and send it to the Signs of the Times.

So here is the note I placed in our Church Minutes.

Since our last meeting day our dear and precious Sister Lucy Jenkins has departed this life on July the 10th, 1987. So she is now free of the trials and tribulations of this world. We feel she is asleep in Christ Jesus, to await his coming back to claim all that the Father gave him.

She was a strong believer in the Doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God through His mercy and the blood shed of his Son Jesus Christ, who died on the cross that through the shedding of his blood. All that the Father gave him. Would have Eternal life. We will miss Sister Jenkins sadly, yet we feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by her niece and church clerk.

Rebecca Moon.

MARY E. MCGEE

Sister Mary E. McGee was born Aug. 31, 1893 and died Oct. 22, 1986. She had lived the greater part of her life in the vicinity of Laurel, Delaware.

She was the oldest of 10 children of Jacob B. and Emma G. McGee who were believers and members of the Primitive Baptist doctrine for many years. Out of this family she is survived by 3 sisters, Martha F. Morris of Delmar, Del. Sara M. West, Bethel, Del. and Elsie R. Huston, Seaford, Del. A host of nieces and nephews also remain.

Sister Mary never married and had been blind for many years. At the age of 50 she went to work at the DuPont Nylon plant in Seaford, Del. as one of their blind employees. She retired at the age of 65.

She was very faithful to her belief and had been a member of Little Creek Old School Baptist Church for many years. Attending the meetings and visiting with various members was her greatest joy as long as she was able to do so.

She was an invalid for several years and had looked forward to her death as a great blessing. She asked for none to mourn at her passing but is missed by those who loved her.

Funeral services were conducted in Little Creek Church by Elder Reeves Smith, and interment was in the adjoining cemetery.

Written by a sister,
Elsie R. Huston

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PREDESTINATION

God made a journey for His child to trod,
Filled with weeping, sorrow and pain
But through all the rough spots, our gracious God
Has carried them, upheld them and sustained

Our souls need both joy and sorrow
As the earth needs the sunshine and rain
Tribulation works patience for tomorrow
As we're led through the valley of shame

Ofttimes we view our wretched sins
As we go along life's weary space
The furnace is often the place we have been
But we're taught by the school of His Grace.

Our afflictions so often come into view
But God had a purpose in mind
He has chosen life, the way and the truth
As His way His gold to refine

As we walk through this pilgrim journey
In our hearts God's love shall arise
And tells us the lessons we're learning
Are just sweet blessings, shown in disguise

So we follow our Lord, where He leadeth
And knowledge of truth shall be seen
God gives whatever is needed
For His child has nothing to bring

Soon shall the end be of this earthly life
Our troubles then shall cease
No more sorrow, pain or strife
Just God's Love, Joy and Peace.

Kate Mathews

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EDITORIAL

GALATIANS 2:20.

Elder J.L. Hamrick

"I am crucified with Christ : never-the less I live; yet not I , but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God , who loved me, and gave himself for me."

In this text we find the Apostle Paul professing a close and blessed union with Christ Jesus. He is enabled to do this by a most sacred experience that he has felt in his heart and conscience by the Holy Spirit. If we have not experienced to some degree a union with Christ, it must be a sign that we have not been born again, and if we are religious, our religion is bodily exercise and will die with our body. Scriptures similar to our text are important because they set forth a standard for us to measure our experiences by. May we be given grace to look at this text even if it condemns us.

"I am crucified with Christ." Crucifixion is usually a slow and painful death. Has the Holy Ghost made a personal application of this to us that we may experience what our religion is made of? Do we know anything about being crucified with Christ? If we do, how much have we lost for Christ's sake? The Apostle Paul was so crucified with Christ that he suffered the loss of all things and did count them but dung that he might win Christ. "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ." Phil. 3.8. If our religion has not cost us anything, can we feel that it is similar to that of the Apostle? If we have union with Christ and have been given an interest in His great salvation by the gift of His faith, will it not be made manifest to some degree in our experience?

We shall never be crucified with Christ until after we are born again of the Spirit of God. Has the law come to us as a killing letter? Paul says, "For I through the law am dead to the law that I might live unto God." Gal. 2:9. "Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not

covet." Rom. 7.7. Have we in our experience been reduced to nothing, yea less than nothing? Were we able at one time to say by our feelings, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. 7:24. Can we say in our past experience: 'For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died." But thanks unto the word of God which says, "It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him." II Tim.2:11. I trust we have felt in our hearts that in us, that is in our flesh, dwelleth no good things. Why is it necessary for the Lord's people to experience these things in our consciences? That Christ may (by the Holy Spirit) become precious to our souls. Do we not feel that by the law we were taught something of our undone, fallen sinful, and corrupt nature, and being helpless to do anything of ourselves to render our terrible condition? Therefore, we find that the law acted as a schoolmaster to teach us through the Holy Spirit to look out and away from ourselves for any hope of salvation. "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." Gal. 3:24.

'I am crucified with Christ." How does this come about? When does it begin? It begins after one is quickened by the Holy Spirit. The Lord sets His kingdom up within you and His Holy Spirit rules from this kingdom. "The kingdom of God is within you." Luke 17:21. We know that being crucified does not mean being literally crucified; for how could this give us a spiritual change of heart? But it is, as I see it, the worldly spirit in a believer's heart, the selfish, proud, self-righteous, carnal "I" is crucified with Christ. It kills the believers to many things which we were much alive to while in our natural state. Do we not find this true in our own experiences? When the world within us is crucified, does it not have some effect on the world without? "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Gal. 6:14.

It seems that Paul is saying when Jesus Christ hung upon the cross, he did not hang there as a private person, but as the representative of all His chosen people. The dying of Jesus Christ upon the cross was the virtual dying of all His people. It seems that Paul believed that by virtue of Jesus Christ's death, he had himself paid the law its due, satisfied divine justice, and found reconciliation with God. Do we have a hope that this is true for each of us? If the law has killed up inwardly, and spiritually speaking, cursed us, slain us, we are therefore free from its power because in the person of our Substitute the whole that the law could do, by way of condemnation has been executed upon us for we are crucified with Christ. Can we look back to a time in our lives when we can say many things reigned over me: I was self-righteous, full of lust for the things of the world, proud, conceited, and filled with pride? Do these things now have a place in our hearts they once occupied? If we are crucified with Christ, surely many things that we once delighted in, we have been

crucified to. Remember that crucifixion is sometimes a lingering death. God forbid that we should now glory in the things that we hope to be crucified to. May God give us grace and strength to say: Come world with all thy charms, pleasures, come wealth with all thy temptations, what can you do O vain things, with a crucified me? We preach personal election, personal calling, personal regeneration, personal perseverance, personal holiness, and do we know any word of grace which is not personal to the professor of it? Whenever the true Christian religion is truly in the soul, it soon leads to a personal consecration to God.

"Nevertheless I live." Those who die in Christ are the only people who do live. If we live, there should be living sensations in our experiences. We shall hunger and thirst for the living God. If we have spiritual life shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, this new life will have an appetite for the Bread of Life, a hungering and thirsting for the living God. If we have been made alive, "I live," there may be times in our lives when we feel a sweet, secret, living communion with God. This communion with God may come and make itself manifest in your solitary moments. You may be reading, writing, walking, or whatever, when some unaccountable living sensation will so possess your soul under the influence of eternal things as translate you from the things of time and bring you into sacred communion with our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." If this also applies to us, it is because life is produced in us by virtue of Christ's being in us, and our being in Christ. Jesus is the source of the Christian life. The sap in the vine lives in the smallest twig on the vine. So in every true Christian, though he may feel to be insignificant, and possessed of little faith, Jesus lives in him. The life which keeps our faith, our hope, our love in existence comes from Jesus Christ and from Him alone. We would cease to be living saints if we did not daily receive grace from our covenant Head. As the strength of our lives comes from the Son of God, so is He the ruling and moving power within us. If we call Christ "Master and Lord," we must be His servants; therefore we are not to serve another, for no man can serve two masters. The life of a Christian is a life which springs from Christ, and it is controlled by His will. Do you ever feel Christ opening your hands in liberal charity to help the brethren who are in need? To visit and correspond with those suffering bodily affliction? Truly we who are blessed to live unto God feel to some extent, the life of God within us. Christ lives in the believer's soul by His Spirit and grace; being formed in his heart the hope of glory; by blessing the soul with His presence and power; by communicating and shedding abroad in the heart, His love. Thus, it is not the believer, but the Spirit of Christ in him, by which he lives unto God. If we are blessed in our soul to pray with any feeling and power, it is the Spirit of God praying in us. If we are blessed to speak or write with faith, it is the Spirit of God speaking in us. Anything that we do, spiritually speaking, it must come from the Spirit of God which is in us.

"And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me, and gave himself for me." True faith arouses the soul to action. Faith is a gift from God through His Holy Spirit. "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." James 2:26. Faith does not allow us to sit upon the stool of do-nothing, but is a very useful and necessary gift in us, in the labor and travail of our mortal lives. Faith makes life to appear real and earnest, and so girds the loins for the race that is set before us. Our blessed Saviour set the example and was there ever one who worked as Jesus did? In His latter life here on earth, it was His meat and drink to do the will of Him that sent him. In his early life, he said, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Luke 2:49. And He says, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." John 5:17. Jesus worked and toiled until He could say, "I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou hast given me to do." John 17:4. Does it not seem that whenever faith is shed in our soul by the Holy Spirit, even in a small degree, that it suggests activity? When the life of grace and faith begins to gleam in our spirit and soul, is not the first effect, the confession of sin? The younger son cries, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." Luke 15:21. But he desires to do something, faith is producing, for he says, "Make me as one of thy hired servants." Luke 15:19. Faith leads us to look to God and God alone for our help in our ordinary walk of life. We are not to trust in our own judgements, but by the gift of faith, may we wait to hear the Voice behind us saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Isa. 30:21. Faith helps us through all our trials, tribulations, and sufferings. Faith teaches us all to wait and see the salvation of the Lord, to make us feel that in whatever state we may be brought into to endure, looking unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith. Faith teaches us this humility.

"Who loved me and gave himself for me." Jesus could not give anymore than Himself. He not only gave His sufferings, His death, His merits, He gave Himself. It is not possible for us to measure the unknown depths of Christ's sufferings. He gave Himself for us (if we be His) in the everlasting covenant when He stood as a Surety and Representative for His people. He gave Himself for us when He assumed our nature and became bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. He gave Himself for us through a life of toil and righteousness while here upon earth and He gave Himself for us as our Substitute when "Who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." I Peter 2:24. There is a limit to most things, but not to the love of God. If we are partakers of this love nothing can ever destroy it or separate us from it. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, not life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

Rom. 8:38, 39.

We may wonder sometime when we are suffering under certain trials, does He really love me? He does not send trials and pains for nothing, but it is for a purpose we may not at the time be able to see; but "He loves us and gave Himself for us." We may be very poor and under hard circumstances, but say to yourself, Lazarus was a poor man and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom; the rich man died and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment. Remember that He says, "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for his sake." Phil. 1:29. If we can find in our experiences things similar to what this text involved, then may our hope be strengthened by His words which say, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil. 1:6. When you come to die, and you have experienced the love of God shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Spirit, you will not dread the grave for Jesus loved you and gave Himself for you.

In bonds of Love,
Elder Joe Hamrick

Heavenly Visions of the Gospel Star, the Tree of Life and Gifts of Love

Bessie Mae and I wish to share with you during this holiday season the exceeding great joy, glorious peace, and unselfish love experienced as the streams from God's River of Rich Love flood our souls. We wish we had the glorious tongue of Heaven so that we could use the perfect language of the Spirit to convey to you these angelic messages we are now receiving.

Natural things are erased from our minds as we stroll with you into that special room where you have placed the evergreen TREE. We also view with you the STAR that crowns the tree and the GIFTS that adorn it.

As we look at the STAR we become as the shepherds on that memorable occasion when Jesus was born in Bethlehem. We hear the angels sing,

"GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST,
PEACE ON EARTH,
GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN."
(Luke 2:14)

There was a NEW STAR placed in the heavens unlike the multitude of stars already there:

This new star was next to the earth -- not high above.

This star went straight forward -- not in a circle.

This star gave light in daytime -- not just at night.

This star led the shepherds to Jesus Christ.

The gospel becomes our five pointed STAR that leads us to Jesus Christ. It becomes our TULIP:

"T" is for Total Depravity or total ruin of man through the fall.

"U" is for Unconditional Election, ONLY BECAUSE HE LOVED US.

"L" is for Limited Atonement: Christ atoned for the elect only.

"I" is for Irresistible Grace to be realized by all the elect.

"P" is for Preservation and Perseverance of all the elect unto glory.

The five pointed STAR becomes the five points of doctrine as expressed in Romans 8:29-30:

God FOREKNEW His people by choosing them in Christ Jesus.

God PREDESTINATED His people to be conformed unto His Son.

God CALLS EFFECTUALLY all whom He did predestinate to save.

God JUSTIFIES COMPLETELY all whom He calls.

God GLORIFIES each and every one who He justifies with immortality.

An ANGEL whispers, "The birth of Jesus did not depend upon the STAR. The STAR depended upon His birth. The Gospel does not bring the birth of Jesus in your heart; but because Jesus is born in you the gospel becomes your STAR." We are loathe to leave the STAR and its beauty.

We are amazed at the glorious circle, or halo, which is throwing rays of heavenlight upon the STAR as it is encircled. This luminous circle gradually lowers itself from the STAR that crowns your TREE until it brightly beams on the EVERGREEN. An Angel whispers, "This TREE is an emblem of the TREE OF LIFE spoken of in the Bible from the book of Genesis through the book of Revelations. Once you have Eternal Life you shall always have it."

We hear another voice from the Halo which encircles the TREE comfortingly say, "The sap of the TREE is life. This is why you cannot see Eternal Life in yourself because you cannot see the life-giving fluid in this tree. I ask the Angel, "Why cannot I see Jesus in the tree?" The Angel replies, "Jesus is the ROOT. The SAP of ETERNAL LIFE comes from Jesus, the life-giving ROOT. Jesus is hidden from the wise and prudent as the root of natural trees are hidden in the earth. Your enemies cannot destroy you for your life is hidden in Christ Jesus."

As this voice stirs my soul I exclaim, I want to see Jesus NOW! The Angel explains, "You are finite. You cannot NOW stand the unveiled LIGHT OF HIS GLORY. This is but a fleeting moment that you hear HIS melting tender voice, and feel His presence. You cannot stand the full view of Jesus NOW. You must wait for your change into immortality"! You celebrated His birth when He was born in you the HOPE of Glory. Your flesh has Him so veiled that you can only catch a glimpse of Him as through a darkened glass."

The halo disappears and we find ourselves viewing the tree as a whole. The words of Joyce Kilmer become sublime:

"I think that I shall never see,
A poem lovely as a TREE.
Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree."

We become conscious of being in your room with you viewing your tree, its many lights and decorations. The halo re-appears encircling you and the Gifts at the foot of the tree. We see the LOVE of God beaming from your faces. We are caught up with you in the Spirit and see you as you shop for these special gifts for the special ones who are the objects of your love.

What great concern you have in selecting a proper gift. You want to give something that will not only surprise your loved ones, but will bring joy and happiness to them. We see you select these gifts carefully and so wrap them that the one who

receives the gift will have no idea what the package contains. We see the name of the one to receive the gift written plainly even before the receiver has any knowledge of it. We think this is exactly the method God uses. Your name was written on the gift of Eternal Life and all of its blessings before you knew anything about it.

Gifts of God's LOVE surprise you when the gifts become yours. It is so wrapped in God's Providence that even after you receive it, you do not know what it is. The wrapping of time must unfold before you can know what it is. When it is in view it is something NEW. You have never gotten anything like this before. You want to select for your special loved ones something New: Something which they have never had before.

This very special hour has come in your home as we see you approach the TREE for the opening of the GIFTS. We see and hear these expressions of LOVE, JOY and HAPPINESS as the recipients of these gifts unwrap the packages. We see surprised looks and hear joyful acclamations as the real gifts are revealed. We see them embrace the givers proving that the LOVE OF THE GIVER is more precious than the GIFT OF THE LOVER.

Memories of this visit flood our souls. We give you our LOVE and wish for you the greatest spiritual gifts. If we could give one encouraging word to the despondent that would bring comfort, we feel, it would be a good Gift. Visit us. Write us. Pray for us. Remember us kindly.

Thanks for such a glorious visit in your home,

E.J. Lambert and Dessie Mae

CORRESPONDENCE

Route 1
Copper Hill, VA 24079

Dear Brother Kenneth:

Sometime ago I visited our precious Brother during his stay in the hospital and he told me of a dream that he had had of me. He said in his dream he wanted so much to comfort and help me. He said I asked him to write his experience so I told him there in the hospital that I couldn't think of anything that I would love more than to be able to read his experience and encouraged him to write if he could. So a few days ago he came to see me and brought his writings, saying that I could do as I saw fit with them. I have enjoyed reading it so much and want to share it with others, so I'm sending them to you for the consideration of the Signs of the Times.

I feel to be so unworthy of the sweet love that Brother Harry and other brethren have shown me and yet I know that our Heavenly Father gives that wonderful love through His precious Son. I spend so much of my time wondering, "Am I His? If I am, Why am I thus?" When I can feel that love that flows from breast to breast (with all of our faults put aside) it gives my heart hope that maybe I am one of His.

It is through this love and hope that I send this to you and beg that you will do as you see fit.

An Unworthy Sister
Mary Poff

Having been requested by some of the brethren to write some of the experiences I hope has been the dealings of the Lord with me and what I hope the Lord has done for me a helpless sinner.

After having a dream a few months ago that I saw a precious sister (Mary Poff) standing alone in this large field where she looked so forsaken and alone. It seemed I walked slowly up to where she was at desiring I might say something to her for comfort. I asked if there was anything that I might do to help. Her reply was you can write your experience and I am now trying to attempt to do that. Somehow I feel I must try to make this effort. I feel to be so insufficient for this task yet I feel I must try to make the effort to write with the feeling that if anyone would find any comfort in it that God would be praised. Here trusting that God will reveal to me some of the things, and the joys I have received by His mercy to a helpless hell deserving sinner as I feel to be.

When but young around 13 or 14 years of age, I can't remember dates as some are blessed to do, because I thought at first that the thoughts I was having and concerned about were imaginary. I remember my brother Roy and myself were spraying apple trees. Our stepfather Charlie Sutphin had passed away leaving three young boys 3, 4, and 5 years of age. Roy and I were trying to help Mother make a living for us. I also had a sister (Hazel) approximately 11 years of age. While I was pumping the sprayer which was a hand pump in a 50 gallon barrel fastened on a sled, there was a terrible condemned feeling that came over me. That I was a great sinner before a holy and mighty God. It seemed that I had mistreated everyone and I was in a miserable condition. I thought as soon as we quit for the day it being later in the afternoon that I would seek some secret place and try to beg God to forgive me of my many sins which came up before me they being so great, they seemed to be as mountains.

That evening I sought a secret place not to be seen of anyone to try to beg God to have mercy upon me a great sinner. It seemed God wouldn't hear one such as I. I made promises I would quit doing some of the things I was doing and do better. I found out that I couldn't keep the promises I would make that I only became worse. I think this was about the year 1938. We all had to work close together to stay together and we were all very close to our Mother and each other. I stayed in this condition until about the year of 1942. We had moved to Floyd County on a little farm and one night I awoke, and a great light came down through the house and it carried one away very close to me. As the light went upward it seemed it was taking this one so close to me away.

Odell one of my three half brothers had to have an appendix operation and the thought of this light was the first thing that entered my mind, but he got along alright. In 1943 my wife had to have a serious operation and I almost lost her but she recovered and I was so thankful still thinking of this vision I had seen.

One day my brother Roy and I were cutting corn and he said that he couldn't see. I had to lead him to the

house. We brought him to the Gill Memorial Hosiptal where they run a series of different tests, but it seemed they couldn't find the trouble and we would have to take him to the University of Virginia in Charlottesville.

I got my uncle Talmadge Young, who was always so willing to help any way he could.

When we got to the Doctor appointment in Charlottesville, Virginia the Doctor said there was no doubt in his mind that he had a tumor on the brain. We were heartbroken, and we had to leave him down there. In those days it seemed to be a long ways to us. He was operated on in a few days and he lived approximately 2 years from that time being completely blind. When he passed away it seemed I had lost part of myself. I felt a great comfort feeling he was the one God took in the vision. I couldn't wish him back for the Lord gave him a beautiful hope and I feel he is at rest. He desired a hope so much or some evidence that he could feel some assurance when he passed away of a better home when he was gone. One Sunday Elder John P. Helms came from Paynes Creek to see him and he told Elder Helms some of his feelings and how he desired a hope or some evidence that he was a child of God. Elder Helms told him when the desire of this was there that it would come in time. Not long before he died he was on his bed in the daytime and he said a voice spoke to him "Open your eyes and you shall see." He said he opened his eyes and saw the most beautiful place he had ever seen, everyone was dressed in the prettiest white that he had ever seen and so peaceful. He was so happy that he called me from my work and told me, and Mother that he wanted me to take him over to Elder B. O. Thompson who lived not far away. So we took him and he wanted to join the church. Elder Thompson told him some of the brethren and himself would come over which was in a night or so and he could tell the brethren his desire. He told me if I had not taken him to Elder Thompson's that night he believed he could have driven himself. The brethren received him into the fellowship of the church and when he was baptized; there was ice on the water but he said it wasn't cold to him. He was most of the time rejoicing what he hoped the Lord had done for him,, and desired to meet with the brethren until his death.

Before he died I had been in such a state of condemnation it seemed I couldn't live. I couldn't understand what was wrong with me. If I was losing my mind or if I had a dreadful disease. I now believe it was the worst disease you can have and that is a state of sin and condemnation. I being the only one to help support the family at this time it seemed that there was a continual prayer in my heart to God that he would direct my mind in a way that I could make a living for I realized that my life, mind, breath, and everything was in God's hands, that without him I could do nothing. I would work long hours and at night it seemed there was a burning bottomless pit, the most terrible place I had ever seen was around me. I don't care what anyone had done to me I couldn't wish anyone to go to this horrible place. It seemed that I was condemned to be cast into this place. I

was afraid to go to sleep, afraid God would cast me into this place for I knew He would be just in doing so. But how I did beg Him for His mercy and to spare me. My pillow would be wet with the tears each morning when I would try to thank him that I had been spared another night. Yet through the day I would feel so heavy and a groaning in me that God would spare me. I felt so cast down when in the fields plowing it seemed I couldn't make it from one end to the other. I would at the ends leave the team and hide behind the bushes to try to beg for strength to continue and that I might have strength to work to provide for the family. Sometimes I would become so heavy that I would stop in the middle of the field down in the furrow, and try to beg God for strength to continue.

I went in this condition for sometime. It seemed I had come to my end. I had spent most of the day more time among the bushes trying to beg God for his mercy and for strength than I had worked. It seemed I had come to my end and that night I must die and be forever lost; there was no hope for one such as I and I would go to this terrible place prepared for the wicked. That evening I went to the house and my Mother had supper ready, I sat down but I couldn't eat. My burden was so great. I couldn't hold back the tears not wanting anyone to know I was in so much trouble.

The thought came to me, I will try to go one more time and try to beg God to have mercy upon me, for this night I must die. There was a large oak tree just away from the house where no one could see me. I thought I would go there. It seemed I had just enough strength to get to this oak tree. I fell to the ground with my mouth in the dirt. It seemed I had not strength to open my mouth to say a word but there was a groaning in my being to God to save me, I perish. All at once something wonderful happened to me. I arose clapping my hands, I seemed so light and great joy filled my heart and I was praising my God for such a great deliverance from this great condemnation. This great condemnation has never returned. Somehow I believe we are delivered from something (sin and condemnation) to something (a hope of eternal life when this life is over) and we have a desire to be with ones (our brethren) which have been through their similar trials and have been brought along in the same matter.

The Lord having been so good to me and delivering me from such a horrible condition I so often doubt if I am mistaken. Yet I know such blessings as these can't be purchased with or be compared with such things as silver and gold or anything in this world. Not long after I felt I had been delivered from this death I started to bed one night and there was such a heaviness upon my heart that I can't describe the weight that I thought I couldn't live. A still small voice spoke into my very soul (please be still) and all this weight was gone. I was singing the hymn.

> I know that my redeemer lives,
> What comfort this sweet sentence gives,
> He lives, He lives who once was dead,
> He lives My everliving head.

At this time I believe if anyone had

asked me if I was saved, I would have said yes.

This feeling didn't last long and I was doubting if this could be for one such as I. I would take my Mother, Roy and at times the rest of the family to church most every weekend. We would often attend a little church at the top of Bent Mountain at that time call Union Church, where Elder John Wood preached every third Sunday afternoon. Often he would tell how I was getting along and I wondered how he knew so well my feelings. It seemed he was preaching to me and the tears would stream down my face. I didn't want anyone to know I was interested in the Old Primitive Baptist. I wondered what few friends I had would think. It seemed people would make fun and critize them. I wanted to be popular and have a large farm and be important. Sometimes I would enjoy the preaching so much I would wish I could just get under the floor and hear this preaching and no one would see me shedding tears. About this time I had become so heavy again. I was a stranger to myself and I thought to everyone else. How sweet the hymn seemed to me at this time. I am a stranger here below and what I am tis hard to know. This hymn seemed to fit my case.

At this time we had a little farm close to Paynes Creek church where Elder B. O. Thompson ran a mill. I had to go through the mill lot to get over to our place. One day as I drove by the mill I was in such a condition and so heavy I stopped my truck and went inside the mill, and seeing Elder Thompson I went and put my arms around his neck weeping and told him I would like to talk to him. I requested that we go down in the basement. I didn't want anyone to see me in this condition. After telling him my feelings he told me there would be a baptizing in the mill race a certain time and for me to bring my clothes that he felt I was burdened to join the church . He was so kind to me I felt relieved after talking to him. Then a little later I began to feel so bad I had bothered him with my troubles. I thought he wouldn't have anything to do with me anymore. When the time came for the baptizing I was afraid not to take my clothes as Elder Thompson had asked me but at that time there was no way I could offer to the church. My mind was so far away.

Not long after this I was at the Mt. Union Church and Elders J. P. Helms and B. V. Helms held services at this time as Elder John Wood had moved up to Manassas, Virginia. I enjoyed the preaching so much not thinking anything about joining the church.

When they closed the meeting and had published an open door for the reception of members, as they were singing and shaking hands, there was such a great love that filled my heart before I knew what I was doing I was up at the pulpit asking for a home with these dear people. (I hope this was the love of God that drew me to the church.) They received us into the fellowship of the church as candidates for baptism. Not having any thought of joining the church but when they asked me the question, it seemed the answer was present and I said Paynes Creek. Then they asked who we wanted to baptize us and the answer was present Elder J. P. Helms.

I seemed to be lifted up with

rejoicing but when I started to open the car door to come home the feeling came upon me what is this you have done, I thought I deceived these people. I went home feeling very low. Certainly not telling or boasting we had joined the church. At this time I was 20 years old, and it seemed I was certainly going through life the opposite way I had planned. This was in the year 1944. In the year 1945 the church chose me to serve as assistant clerk and a t a later date was chosen clerk. Being unlearned and not knowing anything about church business I didn't think there was anyway I could perform such a task. Yet I had a desire to be submissive to the brethrens wishes. I had such a hard task trying to write the minutes of a meeting and I couldn't read it for crying when the business meeting came. Elder Thompson was so patient with me and would just wait until I was given grace to continue.

In the year 1946 the church asked me to serve them as deacon. This I thought to be another impossibility. Yet desiring to be submissive to the church, I told Elder Thompson if this was the request of the church I would do as best I could as God would give me strength. I could not refuse feeling I had a great burden, and such a stranger to myself and I didn't know what it was for. A presbystery was called in 1946 and ordained me a deacon for Paynes Creek Church. Oh how I tried to beg the Lord if I wasn't called to such a sacred place that he would manifest to me and my brethren to not go through with this work. It seemed I was praying in my heart continually and would seek secret places to beg the Lord to guide me and to keep me.

I hope this has been a easier task for my brethren who have been ordained to this work.

I have now tried to serve the brethren at Paynes Creek for over 40 years. Sometimes it seems I am made to take inventory of myself and the requirements of a deacon and it seems I have not filled the first requirements or qualifications but yet I am blessed to press on by God's grace. The church has given me a wonderful home and have looked over my imperfections. The Lord has been so good to me.

David says when trouble came I remembered the Lord. When things seem to be going along smooth how we do forget Him and what we are but when afflictions arise and troubles come we know there is only one that can save us and we do beg Him for His mercy. Now justice, if we got justice God would have destroyed me long ago and banished me from His presence forever. Never to feel His presence or have any hope of eternal life when this life is over.

I have been brought to realize and I will say know that parents, kinsman friend or anyone on earth could or cannot help ,my helpless condition but the only true and living God can.

Twice in later years, one night in my home and once in a motel in Bradenton, Florida, I was blessed to feel I hope and believe that I felt the presence of Jesus was around my bed and this great love filled the room. It seemed I knew it was Jesus and I desired so much that He wouldn't leave, for the peace and love seemed to fill the room. My pillow was wet with tears of joy. Feeling that He would

leave but oh, that He would stay and I could feel this peace and love forever. My hope is this is a taste of heaven on earth also meeting with our brethren when we are blessed to feel His presence in our meeting and His love manifested. It is my hope that in the resurrection morning He will raise this body and change it into a body like unto His own glorious body to praise Him in perfect praise forever. Then we will come into possession of our hope that He has given us.

Oh to think that this will last forever no day or night there. No sorrow or pain. No afflictions, but all will be peace and joy in praising God forever in perfect praise. Then we will come into possession of hope that He hath given us. It seemed in my early life after I joined the church that not anything was important to me. I only wanted to know I was a child of God. One day I was reading in Romans 8:24 and it reads "For we are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for. But if we hope for that we see not there do we with patience wait for it." After reading this scripture I felt so highly favored to be blessed to hope in the Lord. Who is our only hope and I am so thankful I am blessed to hope in the Lord. So much of my time I wonder if I have been taught of God, or if all these things that I have experienced have been imaginary. Sometimes I don't think so this way being contrary to our carnal nature. I don't think any flesh would nor could follow or choose to come through these great afflications as His lot but God brings His children through great afflictions to show them how weak and sinful they are and without Him they can do nothing. There are other experiences I have had in life I would desire to write but it seems I can't at this time write them. Hoping that if there be any comfort to you Sister Mary that you will be blessed to give all the praise to Jesus who suffered, bled, and died upon the cross that sinners must be saved. Written by a sinner saved by the grace of God if I am saved and not by anything I can do or have done. God chose a special people in Christ before the foundation of the world and He came willingly. He was born of the Virgin Mary, conceived by the Holy Ghost to do the Father's will and when He said "It is finished" I believe He saved everyone that the Father gave Him in the beginning. For He said all that the Father hath given me I have lost none, but the son of perdition that the scriptures might be fulfilled. Not one will ever be added to this number, neither will there ever be one taken away or lost but it is all fixed eternally. I feel I must quit. I hope you will pardon all errors and come to see us when you can.

A brother in Christ, I hope,
Harry Cannaday

Dear Elder Key and Sister Key,

I am sending in my remittance for another year of the Signs—The one in October of this year is truly wonderful. When ones own experience of Grace so closely identifies with the writer it is comforting indeed.

I sometimes hear one tell of how they were led and I have not been brought that particular route to re-

ceive the Truth. I feel to wonder about my hope and often fear, "Has mine been real?" and sometimes it sends my mind going back a while, fifty or more years and try to live again the time (tho short) that I thought I knew I'd been born a new creature. The song 215 in the little Goble book tells of that earliest love, and when I'm blessed in the Spirit, I feel every line in the song is truly my experience of grace. And many times (if not mistaken in it all) I feel to have been brought to the banqueting table, and His Banner over me was love.

But there are dark threads woven in the pattern of our lives that must be endured while we live here in time. But God being the Weaver, the Author, and the Finisher knows it will be beautiful in His time — for He and His works are perfect.

Sincerely asking your prayers,
In love and I hope a sister,
Lucille Young

Dear Elder Key,

I have been wanting to write a few lines on the following subject for some time, finally got it done. I am sending them to you to do with as you wish. Hope this finds you in good health, both you and your family.

If you think these are worthy of space in the Times I would feel deeply honored. I sure enjoy reading the Times, I hope the Lord will bless you and the others who are doing all the work to continue to be able to get this magazine printed, along with all those who furnish the material. I feel the Times gives honor and praise to God and abases man, that is my belief and I enjoy reading it.

Thanking you very much, from a very unworthy brother, if one at all. I feel mighty low at times, but the little hope I have is mightly precious to me.

Frank C. Hunt
102 Lake Ave.
Salem, VA 24153

Acts 4:27 and 28

For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

The preceeding verse(verse 26) tells us that the Kings of the earth stood up and the rulers were gathered together, then verses 27 and 28 tell us why they were gathered together, "to do what thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Brethren I believe in a God who speaks and it is done, who knows the end from the beginning, with whom there is no variableness or shadow of turning I believe all prophecy will come to pass and all promises are just as sure as day follows night. I believe in predestination, or things being predetermined to carry out or fulfill the will and pleasure of an Almighty God. I believe this doctrine because I believe the scripture, and this doctrine is surely set forth in the scripture. I believe I have been shown the meaning of some of these scriptures, and not by or from man, which surely strengthens my belief of this doctrine.

Now this scripture Acts 4:27 and

28 says the people were brought together to do what his hand and counsel had determined before to be done. Now we may ask the question, is this the only place in scripture where this has happened? Many people say the things pertaining to the death and resurrection of Jesus was predetermined because they had to be. But I say that all other things are just as predetermined. I believe that God's foreknowledge is absolute, he sees and knows all things that will ever come to pass regardless of how far in the future they may be. Let's look at one example of his mighty works.

I have heard Elders remark at meetings that members are there because they couldn't be anywhere else. I have also heard others say they certainly didn't believe that. I most assuredly believe that the brethren were there because they couldn't be anywhere else. Take any given meeting. God in his foreknowledge has seen the people there before the meeting ever took place. So on the day of the meeting the people had to be there or his foreknowledge would be wrong, which is utterly impossible. He works all things together in order to have you at the place where he in his foreknowledge has already seen you. Have you never been ready to go to meeting and been undecided about where you were going. I believe in such cases you were trying to go where you couldn't and God was working your mind so you would go to the very place, He in his foreknowledge knew you would go.

Brethren, I believe this is the way it is in all things. I believe you are free to go your own way, according to your own will. But, remember the scripture, God works in you both the will and the do of his own good pleasure. The first meeting day after you read this, (if the Good Lord blesses you with health and a desire to go to meeting) you will be able to go to the church of your choice, but I truly believe that God will have worked with you and in you to the extent that your choice will be the very meeting house where He in his foreknowledge saw you ten thousand years before.

Some will say, "I know God does these things but what about the wicked things"? I say that God is almighty in his deeds and true and holy in His ways. There is no way man can rightly accuse God of being the Author of sin. When Joseph was sold into slavery, his brothers meant if for evil, and a evil act it was, but God meant it for good. Joseph was by every indication a good moral person, who suffered much in order to fulfill the things that God had proposed. When Patiphar's wife wanted him to go with her, he chose the right way instead of the sinful way. Man's way of thinking would dictate that he surely would have been blessed for that, but he had to serve years in prison. He was falsely accused, to be sure, but who knows how much suffering he went through. I dare say prison there and in that day was much worse than the ones we have here now. Don't you believe that God's will was being carried out. There was a purpose in it and it served its purpose. Joseph at that time probably couldn't see or understand why these things were happening as they were, although later he may have understood them

better. The same is true of us today. Often times we may have cause to wonder, but some things we are not supposed to see and understand. We see through a glass darkly. We live by faith at the present, but thanks be to God, for he says someday we will be with him, see him as he is and be satisfied.

As for Joseph's suffering for a while, rest assured that all is well with Joseph. Paul says eye has not seen nor mind ever thought of the pleasure laid up for God's children.

It is written throughout the scripture that these things have happened and I believe they all come to pass exactly as God had planned and proposed. He is the same today as he was when he had the scripture written. His word declares the scriptures will be fulfilled, and they will be fulfilled. I don't care how many "smart men" of the world and unbelievers scoff and laugh at creation and things being as they are. These people were around at the time of Noah also. After hearing news items about people being killed in various ways, you always hear someone say, How could God have allowed that to happen? God put every living soul on this Earth and he will be the one who takes them away. If one of us picks up a gun and kills someone, it would be murder. But at God's time, he calls someone to leave this old earth, it is surely his right to choose the time and method.

This is something to cause one to stand in awe at the wonderous work and ways of God. Surely it is hard for a poor mortal man to believe or understand how God can work his way and his will with man while at the same time allowing man to move, act and think in such a way that he is working as he thinks and as he desires. But you have to remember that God's ways are higher than our ways. Certainly we could never even consider holding God's ways down to such a low point that we could understand them, we are talking about the one and only God, not some would be king.

Acts 2:23 Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. According to the scripture the crucifiction of Christ was done by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. It was something that was predetermined and had to come to pass. The prophets foretold of the many things that would happen, and many things that would happen, and the prophecy was fulfilled. I believe these men who did these things were carrying out the work of God. They were doing exactly the things He wanted done and the way he wanted it done. I don't believe anyone of these men could have refrained from doing this no matter how hard they may have tried. While they were carrying out God's will they were acting willing, doing so of their own lustful desire and feeling in no way that they were being driven, led or forced to do it. So you see they were all guilty and could have no excuse, nor could anyone blame God or make God the Author of sin.

Psalms 76:10 "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, the remainder of wrath thou shall restrain." The wrath of man was doing exactly

and precisely what the determinate counsel of God wanted done. They fulfilled the scripture, concerning this deed, to a jot and tittle, but was allowed to go no further. Through the ages we can see from the scripture how the wrath of man has brought persecution on the church. In most all cases it has strengthened the brethren causing all to grow in the faith and praise God more. All these things are carrying out or fulfilling the very will of God, in His wonderous way. He has seen that all things work together for good to those who love Him, who are called according to His purpose.

But see also that the remainder of wrath He restrained, God will allow the wrath of man to fulfill his purpose but he will and does restrain it from going so far as to block or stand in the way of His will. In this old world, with all the wicked men and works of Satan, sometimes we see and hear many wicked things, that sometimes in a moment of weakness we are apt to wonder what will happen next. But the blessed Lord once more whispers to us, fear not. We are blessed to see, feel and believe that God is still at the reins of his government, working all things after the counsel of His will. So we know that in this old world Satan is a subject to the will and command of God. God says fear not him who is in this world for I am stronger than he. We have been blessed to feel, hear, see and believe, therefore we know that we are kept by the power of God. During our pilgrimage in this life we need to be at our brother's feet, but in the weakness of the flesh we are oftentimes led astray. But God in his tender love and mercy knows our need. He knows when and how to bring us down. At times we are given such love for the brethren that it is something to see and feel. Then we feel for a while like John did when he penned these words. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I believe when we are blessed with this love we know what we have, the world doesn't know, can't see or understand. But God's little children can say praises to a God who has blessed them all with a finished salvation, the promise to keep and protect them, and the power to keep his promise.

Frank C. Hunt

Thanks to Sister Peggy Osborn for sharing with us this most comforting letter from Sister Frances Jarvis.

Editors

Dear Sister and Friend,

My thoughts have been with you since talking with you last night. It brought back many memories of the fear, pain and thoughts of the future to come. But, we know that it is all in the hands of one greater than we. And how thankful we can be, that He knows all things, cares for all things with love and mercy. How often I have tried to guess the future, worry and fret, but only when I have felt my Lord's loving presence, saying, "Fear not-- my grace is sufficient" have I "let go" and given it all up to Him. Then I can rest and find peace in leaving it all to Him.

My prayer for you, is that you will feel the presence of our Lord. That He might enfold you with the everlasting arms, reconcile you to your state and

give you strength and grace to meet each day.

I know you are aware of all these things, and more. But since I have been through this, I can feel for you, and only wish I could say or do something to make the trial easier. But then, you don't need me, when you have a greater and loving friend, Jesus, the Comforter of all. Just know that I am here for you, if you need me.

I was glad to hear you sounded reconciled. And I really feel you will come through with flying colors. It sounds as if it was found in time, and your recovery will be fast. I think the word "cancer" frightens us more than the condition, especially when it is in a place that can be removed like ours. But there are much worse things than cancer. At least, I have always thought so. Try not to dwell upon it as I feel sure you will recover completely.

You have gone through much in the past few years, you and Gene. My heart goes out to you both. But you have been given the strength and faith to stand fast in what you believed. That is really what matters. I pray that my faith will not fail, and wish it was as strong as yours. In this world we will have tribulation, if we are His, which gives us hope that we will endure until the end. Have hope, my dear Sister, your trial of fire is burning the dross, that you may come forth a shining vessel. Our sufferings of today are only a tiny bit of our Lord's sufferings.

I do wish we lived closer so I could visit you. Maybe I'll try to get up soon, after you find out if you have to take therapy. Will be anxious to hear your report.

Don't think strange if you get depressed. It goes with it. I have plenty -- but it passed. Remember I love you.

Frances

MOVED OR MOVING ?

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Editors

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ECCLESIASTES 7:1-5

A Good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.

It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart.

Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.

The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.

It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools.

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

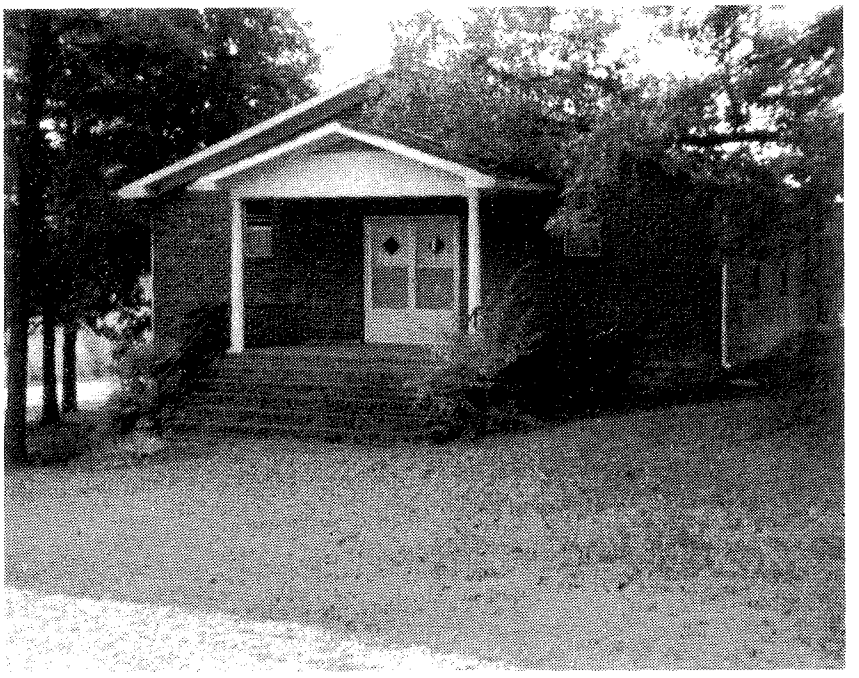

Dorsey Creek Primitive Baptist Church

Elder H.C. Moon

Dorsey Creek Primitive Baptist Church organized in 1875 in the Five Mile Creek Association.

Located in Cullman County, Alabama on Highway 69 about 17 miles southwest of Cullman.

Pastor is Elder H. C. Moon who has pastored this church for 39 years.

His father, Elder Lonnie A. Moon pastored this church approximately 40 years.

PSALM 89: 1-4.

I Will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations.

For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens.

I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant,

Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah.

ARTICLES

DOCTRINE

Acts 2:42. "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers." Acts 2:44. "And all that believed were together and had all things common."

Eph. 5:11,12. 'And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret." Can man improve on what is given by God's inspiration?

Rom.3:4 "God forbid: yea let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, that thou mightest be justified in thy sayings and mightest over come when thou art judged."

Psalm 116:11. 'I said in my haste all men are liars." Psalm 117. "For his merciful kindness is great toward us: And the truth of the Lord endureth forever. Praise ye the Lord."

Gal. 1:8,9. "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before so say I now again, any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."

II John 1 - 10. "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

Gen 1 - 31. "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day." Gen. 2:1,2. "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished and all the host of them." "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made." Was this a finished work with God?

Isa. 14:24. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and I have purposed so shall it stand." Do we believe the Lord on oath?

Eph. 1:4,5. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Do we believe what God thought, purposed, and predestinated caused anything to happen or come to pass?

John 7:16. "Jesus answered them, and said, my doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me." The question is do we believe his doctrine?

Troy Rhoades
Athens, Texas 75751

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

"The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."—Psalm cxix. 130.

The word "simple" means literally something which is not folded or twisted together. But owing to the treacherous and des-

perately deceitful heart of man, all, without exception, in a state of nature are the reverse of this. All their plots and contrivances for worldly profit or fleshly pleasure are tangled and complicated; and they are continually twisting together some thread or other of carnal policy. But when God the Holy Ghost begins the work of grace upon the souls of the elect, he proceeds (if I may use the expression) to untwist them. He takes hold of that rope which Satan and their own hearts have been twisting together for years, and he untwists it throughout its whole length, so as to leave the strands not intertwined as before, but riven, separated, and torn from each other. The light that shines into the soul out of the fulness of Jesus discovers to a man the tortuousness, the crookedness, the complicated deceit and hypocrisy of which he is guilty. A man then is made "simple," when the folds and rumples of his heart are shaken out, and he is brought to see and feel that God looks into him; that his eye penetrates into every recess of his bosom; and that there is not a thought in his heart, nor "a word in his tongue, but the Lord knoweth it altogether" (Psalm cxxxix. 4). This character is aptly represented by Nathaniel. He had gone through this untwisting work in his soul. He had been under the fig-tree, and whilst kneeling and praying there, the eye of God looked into him, and just as a flash of lightning runs, in a moment, through a coil of wire, so, when the eye of God looked into Nathaniel's soul, that instantaneous flash unravelled and untwisted the devices of his heart, and made him a simple man before him—"an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile" (John i. 47).

J.C. Philpot

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William Midkiff, VA 7.00
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OBITUARIES

HOWARD WAYNE ADAMS

The Church at Weatherford feels it has suffered a great-loss in the death of Brother Wayne Adams on January 20, 1987, at the age of 39. He died in Community Hospital in Roanoke, Virginia. May God reconcile us to his will. He was given hope and joined Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on March 28, 1982, and was baptized by Elder Raymond Goad on April 25, 1982. Wayne was sincere in his convictions and loved the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace and was blessed with many marks of Grace. To know him was to love him. When visiting in the Adam's home, much love was manifested.

Wayne bore his afflictions with patience and never charged God foolishly. He was blessed with a loving companion, who stood by him and did everything a human could do for him, loving parents who cared for him patiently during the day when his wife was at work, also a loving Brother and two Sisters who did everything they could for him. He enjoyed the visits of his Brethren and his friends, which were many and rejoiced in Godly conversations.

Wayne was retired under disability for the The Southern States Cooperative, Roanoke, Virginia.

He is survived by his wife, Deborah (Kitty) David, his parents, Brother Delmas and Sister Ora Adams, all of Roanoke, Virginia; one Brother, Percy Adams of Gretna, Virginia; two Sisters, Mrs. Melvin Dalton (Martha) and Mrs. James Worley (Hilda), both of Hurt, Virginia.

His funeral was conducted at 1:00 p.m. on January 23, 1987, at Oakey's North Chapel, Roanoke, Virginia, by Elder Raymond Goad and Mr. Wayne Grinnel. His body was laid to rest in Liberty Christian Church Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the Glorious Resurrection.

I feel Wayne fought a good fight and has finished his course and has kept the faith and henceforth there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give him at trhat day; not to him only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

The sweet memory of Brother Wayne will remain with us and may we be given Thankful Hearts that we were given fellowship and friendship with him.

Written by: Phyllis Goad

Elder O. K. Tench - Moderator
Elder Raymond Goad - Assistant Moderator
Phyllis Goad - Clerk

PSALM 128

Blessed is every one that fear-eth the Lord; that walketh in his ways.

For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.

JAMES RAN PERDUE

This is written in memory of my father, James Ran Perdue, who died April 27, 1987. He was born November 2, 1912 to John A. Perdue and Mary Susan Perdue. He is survived by his wife, Lucy D. Perdue; son, Billy; daughter, Betty; four brothers: two sisters; and four grandchildren.

There is only one word to describe my father and that work is Love. He said that there is good in everyone.

He was a faithful attender and supporter of the Primitive Baptist faith. He was the building contractor for Weatherford Primitive Baptist church and helped everytime he was asked with Springfield Primitive Baptist.

I feel within my heart that he is asleep and resting just waiting for Jesus to come for him.

His funeral was held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, April 29, 1987, by Elder O. K. Tench, Elder Raymond Goad, and Elder Denver Simpson. He was buried in Altavista Memorial Park.

Written by his daughter Betty

EDNA CATHERINE JONES RADFORD

Sister Edna Jones Radford was born June 7, 1908 in Floyd Virginia. Later, she moved to Danville in search of work which she found in the Spinning Dept. of Dan River Mills. A few years later, she met and married James Eddie Radford, who predeceased her December 24, 1931. Sister Radford Departed this life February 10, 1987.

Sister Radford joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in 1940 and was baptised by her beloved pastor, the late Elder David Spangler. Although Sister Radford was physically unable to attend services the later years of her life, she avidly looked forward to receiving her "Signs of the Times" until she was no longer able to read. She remained staunch in her faith until the end, although she never considered herself anything but a lowly sinner.

Sister Radford is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Mary Ann Radford Kingery; one son, James Melvin Radford; four sisters, Mrs. Lula Mae Beal, Mrs. Alma Jones Graham, Mrs. Dora Bradshow, Mrs. Sarah Wimmer; two brothers, Thurman Jones, Brown Jones; and one grandson, Victor Kingery.

May our Heavenly Father reconcile and sustain all who feel the loss of her passing.

Graveside services were held for Sister Radford February 12, 1987 at two o'clock in Schoolfield Cemetery, Danville, Virginia by her pastor Elder Kenneth R. Key. May we at Dan River Church be given to feel our loss is her eternal gain.

In Christian love,
Sister Phyllis Snyder

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Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS"

The existence, sovereignty, immutability omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah—the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the attonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistable, and in all cases. Effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers—that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

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EDITORIAL

ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS

"In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Eph. Chp.1, ver.11.

Trusting my mind will be directed along spiritual lines as I attempt to write a few thoughts in connection with the above reading, as some of our readers have desired.

The reader must first consider who is being addressed, and by whom are these precious promises being made, as the apostle writes. Ponder, if we are not the saints at Ephesus, which we are not, can we claim by hope to be the faithful in Christ Jesus. These two groups are all that the apostle is speaking to. I believe at times, anyway, the Lord's people can express this claim. This being the case of a promise to us, then, and made by God to each of His people, how can the promise fail! All that the Father giveth me shall come to me."

I can at times rejoice in this hope of being included in that inheritance left for all His people. Paul states, have obtained, not will be, meaning it is already accomplished, not might be, or any effort put forth to receive or earn by the work of the receiver. "By grace are ye saved."

My mind follows to express, if by grace, then no more by works. I think this saved by grace reaches farther than just eternal salvation. Our hope is sustained or revived daily by this grace, poured out to His dear ones, saved by grace through faith ready to be revealed at the last day. Unmerited favor of God daily, is all that keeps us here, also in a lively hope, if indeed we are in that number.

Then again we are strengthened as we read predestinated according to His purpose, no one else. How could the inheritance be worth anything if it wasn't predestinated, this meaning fixed or predeterminded before hand. The final outcome of any cause can never be determined unless some power can govern all events that could effect the disposition of such. We find this true if He then, predestinates all things to work after the counsel of His own will, who can change or disanull. What could possibly prevent any of His in-

heritance from falling to those to whom it is promised.

We could never rejoice, rest from laboring or cease from working, unless we can see Him as having all events under His control.

The heir of an inheritance could never feel secure, in nature that is, if the thought arose, that someone else may inherit his portion, but it reads have obtained, already as sure as it will be at the last day. Can any other than His people claim that inheritance?

If every man's destiny wasn't already prefixed, predetermined, or prearranged, which ever you like to call it, would not there be confusion in the last day, according to the manner of men, to decide who was the rightful heir. I truly believe, and the Bible teaches, He has already predetermined all men's destiny or no man's is fixed or will ever be. Already written in the Lamb's book of life, none added none erased.

What ever His will it comes to pass or has already and it will continue, whether we like it, deny it or believe it. On this precious truth, His people have, do now, and will continue to praise Him from whom all blessings flow,--- because all things are working after the counsel of His own will, therefore, they have no reason to work or worry. He works and none can hinder, hinders and none can work. Thank God it's so.

Submitted in love,
Elder J. R. Williams

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. PSALM 119:105.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brother Cannaday,

I know that you have never met me before, but just knowing that you have been given to believe in the precious doctrine of grace makes me feel as though I do know you. How truly blessed we are to realize that "Salvation is of the Lord," and that he does indeed do his will in the army of heaven and upon the inhabitants of the earth. My father and mother told me a little of your situation and I felt a desire to write to you. If I am given anything that is of comfort to you, please give the Lord the praise for he alone can apply the promises in His word to the heart. In His Holy Word there is something that will meet every need whether we be carried up to the mountain or down to the lowest valley.

I can not say that I know and feel what trial and tribulation that you are going through; yet, we are to: "Bear ye one another's burdens." and my heart does go out to you. I think a beautiful scripture concerning tribulations is found in II Cor.1: 3-11. "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." Yes, God alone comforts His little ones and then they can go and tell others, what good things that the Lord has done. When we go through trials, creature strength and dependence on others is

torn down, and we must cry unto the only one who can help us. v. 9 "But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead." Daddy mentioned that he was given to pray for you and verse 11 addresses the subject of prayer. I don't know what was said in the prayer, but I imagine it concerned a request that you would be given peace, comfort, strength, and a heart to look unto him. I'm sure that many others have prayed for you also. As the Lord sees fit to answer these prayers, thanks may be given by many on your behalf as verse 11 states.

In I Cor. 10:13 there is such a wonderful promise: "there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it." I don't think that this necessarily means that the trial will be taken away, but that He will give strength to bear it. "My grace is sufficient." "...and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Heb. 13:5 "... cast down, but not destroyed; II Cor. 4:9. Any affliction that we are called to endure is but light and "though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." Our walk must be a walk of faith-- "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." (II Cor. 4:16-18) There are two petitions made unto Jesus which should also be on our lips: "I believe, help thou mine unbelief" and "Lord, increase our faith."

I'm sure at times your soul does feel cast down. David felt this way, too. He talks to his soul and questions himself as I think we should do also. In Psalm 42:5 he says, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why are thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance. "In verse 6, David reflects back upon a time in his experience when the Lord helped him. Can we not draw comfort from the waymarks along our life's journey? David even though cast down knew that he would yet praise the Lord. Our hope is in God and "Yet the Lord will command His loving-kindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life." v,8. Our souls must wait only upon God for our expectation is from Him. He is our rock and refuge. "Trust in Him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before Him: God is a refuge for us."Ps. 62:5-8. Have you not felt such sweet peace and comfort when given to fall upon your knees and pour forth your heart? This is the peace that passeth understanding.

As we sojourn here we shall have storms in our lives. Many times in the very midst of the storm, Jesus speaks to us as He did to His disciples in the ship, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" He speaks and there is a great calm, and we like the disciples marvel saying, "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him!" It is as though He tells us, "Peace, be still."

What a blessing it is to believe in the Lord! "Whom have I in heaven but

thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever. "Ps. 73:25-26. "I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. My meditation of Him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord." Ps. 104:33-34.

The natural man does not care for the things of the Lord and has no spiritual appetite. It takes the power of the Lord to give spiritual life -- to make the blind to see. In II Cor. 13:5 we are told to examine ourselves. The love of the brethren is mentioned in the Bible as a sweet evidence. Have you not felt this love swell up in your heart? Have you been given new desires? Have old things passed away? Do you not love the Lord? Have you been given a broken and contrite heart? Have you been given faith? These are all gifts of God. One promise that has been of comfort to me is found in Phil. 1:6 "Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ: You have been brought to see that only in Christ Jesus is your hope of salvation. To me this is surely part of that good work that He has performed in your poor soul.

May we ever praise the Lord Jesus for "Worthy is the Lamb." "Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord." Ps. 31:23-24. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God; and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you.." II Cor. 13:14.

PSALM 25:1

Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

Count your blessings; so goes the sayings:

Dear Editors of the Signs of the Times:

In looking back in mind, upon my past seventy-five (75) years upon this earth, and considering to some small degree, of blessings I have received all the days of my earthly life; I would say to one and all, it would be just as possible for me to count the grains of sand upon the seashores, as it would be possible for me to count the blessings I have received from my Lord and God of all grace and mercy. It is like a steady flowing stream of water, with each drop being a separate blessing unto this poor undeserving feeling sinner.

Knowing what I am by nature, it sometimes seems a wonder of wonders to me, of still receiving His grace and mercy. Oh what a merciful God is He. He said, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy. Surely it must be simply by reason of His will alone; for without a doubt, I know that I have done nothing of myself to deserve them. I am a sinner here below, of that I surely do know, and so it follows that whatsoever of His grace I receive, it must be and is free grace. Thanks be unto "God" it is not for sale; for if good deeds on my part, determined my portion, then I never would have received any at all but condemnation from start to finish. Free grace and mercy is my only hope, that I might die in the presence of the Lord; if that be so, then all is well with me. Blessed be the name of the Lord. Praise His Holy name. He is my only hope, my only salvation, in both this world and that world to come. Salvation is of the Lord. I do hope and feel, I'm not

ashamed to own my Lord nor to defend His cause; not that He is in need of my defence oh no not that; for the Lord in whom I feel and hope is my trust, is in need of nothing, and most assuredly not from puny man. For anyone whom I or any other of mankind could help or assist in anyway, shape or form; could never be any God at all, except one of the god's many in whom I have no trust at all. For if I know my heart, I have absolutely no confidence in the flesh of poor puny fleshly sinful man, he who's heart is deceitful above all things, he who even comes forth into this world speaking lies. When we are in remembrance of what fleshy man really is, we no longer wonder at the flesh profiting nothing from the Holy Spirit. It (the flesh) will not seek it, for it does not want it; for it does not seek or want self condemnation, or condemnation of itself. But what it always and in every instance wants is, praise, praise and more praise. While in Holy truth, the One and only true and living three-one God of all grace and mercy is the only One to ever be worthy of any praise, honor and glory for anything whatsoever in both time and eternity. Some say that the absolute predestination of all things by the almighty God and Creator of all things, could not be gospel, by reason such would accuse God of being the author of wickedness or sin ; but without malice may I ask both you and I, have we ever commited an evil or wicked act that were not completely and totally voluntary on our part? and also, did not that sinful or wickedness drive as a result of our wicked intent and own purpose while performing that act? I believe so. God forbid, I should attempt to lessen the awfulness of mankind's sins against our Creator God. But only as an attempt at stirring up our mind ; God willing, let us think upon these things, —had not sin entered the world by man, what purpose would grace, mercy, forgiveness, Salvation, or Christ suffering, bleeding, dieing and arising serve? If we had never sinned, and been shown how exceedingly sinful we had sinned against our God, and then been given a feeling of deliverance out from that awful condition, through that feeling of God's forgiveness, how could we ever in truth feel to say—He is my all in all; or though my stay be in hell, His Righteous Law approved it well. Without our feeling to be nothing and less than nothing, how could we see and feel His greatness, or feel the need to pray and beg for His mercy and grace. And so, God did and does have His good purpose in and for suffering and letting sin by mankind enter into this world. Oh no there could surely be any good in the commitment of sin itself; and yet still, can we deny that it was good for us, for it to be made known to us that our sins were exceedingly sinful against our God? I think so. I somehow am persuaded that the entirety of all our sins commitment, derives from none other than our wicked and sinful intent and own fleshly purpose in and for so performing an act, either in thought or action. Dear child of God, all my doubts are concerning myself. I am not aware of ever having a doubt of God's absolute surety and certainty of all things whatever has been or will be in every instance of all times, places and mannerisms, throughout all time and eternity. As when He said—Let there

be light, and there was light; except He Let it be, it just simply is impossible for it to be. The very existance of this earth and all worlds and all they contain are simply and only by reason His furnishings of all what make that a possibility, keep it in a continuing existance; and ending any part or portion or all of it in and at His already afore appointed time, circumstance, place and manner in which it did, does and shall surely come to pass. For with "God" uncertainty is non-existant, even the falling or landing of a drop of rain or a leaf of a tree; the thought of a brain, or that action or reaction whatever follows after that thought. If I have any knowledge at all (and I feel and hope I do by the grace of God) of the way and greatness of the all wise three-one God of all power, grace and mercy, then with everything that in me is, I declare to one and all that it came to me as a free (and unmerited on my part) gift from God. If not deceived in my heart, that gift of knowledge has confirmed me into not accepting anything one iota less than the absolute predestination of all (all) things by the almighty God and Creator of all things whatever has or do or shall exist. Man of himself (I conceed) does do two things, 1. sins against his Creator and 2. then brags or boast about it; even in the name of Religion. Now let me give just one instance of what man of himself has done, and most probably will do again; men will get together and gather up material such as dead timber, dead stone, dead brick or dead rock, and put together a building with mortar and or nails; and when finished, they and others will point to that building and say—that is the Church. Oh the wind or fire may come along and destroy that building, or as they say the Church; then they go back again and construct another building of that same like dead timber etc. and once again call that the church also. Now let us prayerfully ask ourselves; Is that man constructed building worthy to be called the Church? or is that where the Lord said—upon this rock(Himself) I will build my Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, or is this worthy of being called the Church? Dear brethren, I believe you know the right answer, for I believe you in truth feel certain in your mind and heart, that no wind nor fire could ever destroy that Church the precious Lord builds. Now it surely is not my place, nor do I desire to condemn anyone, for calling a man constructed building the Church. I can (God willing,) only give my feelings concerning this, and that is—if man of himself taken any part in the building thereof, then I have no desire to be any part thereof. For my desire and hope is that I could be a small part of that Church the Lord builds.

Troy G. Shepard
Kitty Hawk, N.C.

Rt. 1, Box 145
Hampton, S.C. 29924

Dear Elder Key:

I tried to write and let you know a little about our church. We have been having some good meetings lately.

We are known as the Prince Williams Association. At one time we had nine churches, now only two. In 1948 we had a split that left us with five churches. Later on three have

disbanded leaving only two. We try by the blessings of the good Lord to carry on where our forefathers tried to. St. Paul Church now has only 47 members. My father, Elder Newton W. Terry served this church for 30 years. He passed away in 1959, my uncle, Philip Terry served until his death. Then we had to call Elders from other Associations to fill in. Then by the grace of God he gave us two young gifts. We are so thankful for them. They are well blessed to preach and we enjoy them very much.

Our church is located in Hampton, South Carolina in Hampton County. Ninety miles from Columbia, South Carolina; 80 miles from Charleston, South Carolina; 60 miles from Savannah, Georgia and 60 miles from Augusta, Georgia.

I enjoy the Signs of the Times and wait for it. It makes a poor sinner like myself feel good to read of the goodness and mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ.

May the good Lord bless you that you may keep up the good work you are doing.

A Brother in Hope,
Newton W. Terry, Jr.

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

ST. PAUL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

St. Paul Primitive Baptist Church was organized in 1874. It is located inside the City Limits on Highway 601, North Hampton, South Carolina.

Meetings are held on 2nd Sunday and the Saturday before - Saturday at 12:00 and Sunday at 11:00. Also, 3rd and 4th Sundays at 11:00. On 2nd Saturday and Sunday we are served by Pastor Elder Terrell Harvey and on 4th Sunday by Pastor Elder Robert Dobson - 3rd Sunday by both.

We commune and wash feet two times a year, April and September.

ARTICLES

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

In presenting our views on this subject, as in all other of our writings, we desire to adhere strictly to what is taught in the scriptures. The Apostle Paul realized that a great mystery enshrouded the Resurrection of the Dead; therefore, we hear him saying, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended," Phil.3:13. Evidently he meant by this that he did not fully understand all that there was to know about it, and we would do well in this day and time to follow his example, as well as to give earnest heed to his admonition concerning this matter. In the second verse of this same chapter, he says, "Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision." The great apostle is here warning against those who fight, who would stir up strife among the brethren on this issue, or cut off those whose views do not coincide with their own. Paul urged his brethren to "mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample (For many walk, of whom, I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)" Phil. 3:17-19. He says, "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Phil. 3:20-21. If our vile body has to be changed in order to be fashioned like unto his glorious body, it is quite evident that in the resurrection it will not be as it is now. There is abundant scriptural evidence to show that there will be a change. Consider for instance 1st Cor. 15:44,46 and 49: (1) "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." (2) "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." (3) "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

While we affirm most emphatically that Christ arose from the dead and that the identical body which went into the tomb was the same body which came out of the tomb, we do not understand that the body is anywhere in the Scriptures declared to be "his glorious body". On the contrary, the record is that the body was especially prepared for him here in this world: witnesseth, "wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God." From the record, again, we read: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him

that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of his people." Heb. 2:14-17. It was absolutely necessary for the Savior to come to where his people were—in the flesh—in their lost and ruined condition, in order that he might deliver them. It is written, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom. 8:3-4. John says, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." John 1:14. Paul said, "It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins," so Jesus came, as it was written of him, to do the will of God, "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Heb.10:10. It was, therefore, of the utmost importance that he should demonstrate beyond the shadow of a doubt that he not only had power to lay down his life, but most of all that he had power to take it up again. He had said to the Jews, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," and in order to verify his word, which could not possibly fail, whereby he was to put to open shame Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Roman soldiers, and all others who took part in crucifying him with wicked hands, it was absolutely necessary that the identical temple, or body, in which he had appeared before them here in this world should be the one to come forth from the tomb victorious on the third day, otherwise there might have been some semblance of truth in the false reports which they circulated by saying, "His disciples came by night, and stole him away while he slept." Mat.28:13. There were many infallible, or unmistakable proofs, which could not be gainsaid, of the fact that Jesus actually arose from the dead. He was seen by many of his disciples, by Cephas, then the twelve; after that he was seen of above five hundred at one time. These things we verily believe with all our heart and soul. The Scripture must needs have been fulfilled which had declared, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." This is the very essence of our faith, or the foundation upon which it rests, and without it all would be vain and we would yet be in our sins. And, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."

There are some, however, who claim that Jesus now sits at the right hand of the Majesty on high in a body of flesh, blood and bones, and that in the resurrection the bodies of the saints will be the same as we see them now; therefore, it is claimed, we will recognize each other in heaven. We have not yet found any scriptural

authority to support such an idea, and until we do we shall refuse to accept it. If not dreadfully mistaken, we have beheld him, by faith, the same as the prophet Isaiah did. He asked, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength?" The one answer is, "I that speak in rightousness, mighty to save." We understand that "Edom" means earthy, or fleshly, and so Paul comes along and says, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." He then goes on to say, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2nd Cor. 5:16-17. When Jesus had finished the work assigned to him by his Father here in this world, he himself prayed, saying, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." John 17:5. The glory which he had with the Father before the world was did not consist of a body of flesh, blood and bone, for that was not assumed until he came into the world. John declares that "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." John 4:24. In the very outset of John's record he says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, the same was the beginning with God." If God is a Spirit and the Word in the beginning was God, then the Word was Spirit, and if God heard his prayer, and he said, "The Father heareth me always," he must have glorifed him with the same glory which he had with the Father before the world was. We must conclude, therefore, that he is now with the Father and that they both are spiritual. Paul could very properly write to his Corinthian brethren then as follows: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." 1st Cor. 15:50. We have no less an authority than our Lord himself for saying, in substance, that earthly relationships cease in the resurrection. When the Sadducees came to him with the case of the woman who had had seven husbands, and asked whose wife she would be in the resurrection, he reproved them by saying, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." Mat.22:29-32. Shall we question the fact of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob being alive with God in heaven today, and can anyone even attempt to describe the kind of body possessed by the angels of God? John could not describe the bodies to be possessed by the saints in glory, and we feel it would be wise for ordinary men not to undertake that which John could not do. He said, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth no yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." 1st

John 3:2. By way of emphasizing these words, let us repeat them: It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he IS—not as he was when he was here in flesh. If Jesus is now as he was when he was here in the world, and we are to be like him, it would appear what we shall be, but this is contrary to what John says about the matter. It would seem to us that it should be sufficient for every saint to be assured of being like Jesus. The Psalmist said, "As for me, I will behold thy face in rightousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." Psalm 17:15. But Paul said, "Some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" He answers his own question by saying, "Thou fool, that which thou sowest, is not quickened, except it die: And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare (or natural) grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it has pleased him." 1st Cor. 15: 35-38. In this connection, the same apostle wrote, "Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ . Therefore , my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know your labor is not in vain in the Lord." 1st Cor. 15:51-58.

So far as we are concerned, no better illustration of this glorious mystery (and it is a mystery, regardless of what any man may say about it) can be found anywhere in the Bible than that given by Jesus, who said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." John 12:24. Do we not see typified here the very change which the apostle has been setting forth as that which is wrought in the grain of corn when it is put into the ground and comes forth anew? The grain of corn is composed of two parts, representing the two bodies— the natural and the spiritual; one sees corruption and returns to the earth from whence it came, but that which cannot be holden of death appears in a more glorified state. It does not by any means, however, lose its identity. It is corn when it is planted and it is still corn when it comes up even though it has a different body given to it. We verily believe that the creature who is known here in this life by his brethren and friends as LESTER DODSON, if indeed he be a subject of divine grace, will beyond all peradventure of a doubt be the one to sing praises eternally to God in that world which is

beyond this vale of tears, but he will then be bearing the image of the heavenly, and not the image of the earthy. Peter said, "Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me." Paul said, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labor: yet what I shall choose I wot not, For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better; Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." Phil. 1:21-24. After relating at some length to the church at Rome the corruptness of the flesh, he says, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" He evidently expected to be delivered from it, and by giving thanks to God through Jesus Christ our Lord he tells us how this deliverance is to be brought about. Then, in writing to the Corinthians, he said: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight;) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." 2nd Cor. 5:1-8

The Scriptures all harmonize with each other, and there is not a single solitary Scripture in all of the Bible, when it is properly understood, that is not in full accord with the foregoing quotations. To literalize and physicalize the resurrection, in our humble opinion not only does not harmonize with the Scriptures, but belittles and detracts from the resurrection itself. It was a great condescension for our Lord to forsake the glory which he had with the Father before the world was and assume a life of humiliation, which subjected him to ignomy and shame, but it will be the GLORIFICATION of his people for them to appear in his likeness and be with him in glory.

Let us earnestly urge those who prefer to take the word of God as the man of their counsel, rather than accept the traditions of uninspired men, to diligently read their Bibles. Surely a matter as important as this one is to the Church was not overlooked or neglected by the Great Head of the Church and his immediate disciples, who both laid the foundation and builded thereupon. Both Jesus and his disciples frequently used the expression "the resurrection of the dead," but neither he nor they made use, at any time or place, of such expressions as "the resurrection of the dead bodies of the saints," "the resurrection of flesh and bone," or even "the resurrection of the body," Nor do we find any such ex-

pressions by any of them as his raising up dust bodies on the General Resurrection Day and reuniting them with the Spirit. On the contrary, they said something entirely different, according to our way of thinking, Jesus said, in the resurrection they shall be "as angels of God in heaven." Paul says (Heb. 2:16) "Verily he (Jesus) took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." We see here that the nature of the angels of God in heaven is not the same as the seed of Abraham here on earth, and since Jesus says in the resurrection they shall be as the angels of God in heaven, it is definitely certain that they will not be as the seed of Abraham, which possesses an earthly nature consisting of flesh, blood and bone. This should settle the matter for all time to those who prefer to accept what Jesus and Paul says rather than what any mere man may say. He gave another illustration which is more common and more readily understood by earthly creatures by citing what takes place when a corn of wheat is put into the earth. Very little is said by some who like to quote from 1st Cor. 15th chapter, about that portion of Paul's testimony where he said, "thou sowest not that body that shall be." He follows that up by saying, "But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him." Later on he says, "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." It should be noted that the apostle says "there is a spiritual body," and not that there will be a spiritual body. Elsewhere we are quoting the words of Jesus to show that a spirit hath not flesh and bones. If the natural and the spiritual are the same of what need would there be for the apostle to distinguish between them? They are separate and distinct, suited for separate worlds entirely, and Paul makes a very definite statement in 2nd Cor. 5:16 where he says, "though we have known Christ after the flesh (here in the world), yet now henceforth know we him no more." John says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and doth not yet appear what shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." 1st John 3:2. This should suffice us, without quibbling over the matter. We are reminded here of what Joshua said to Israel: "If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the side of the flood (before regeneration) or the gods of the Amorites in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." If the unregenerate religious world is correct in their version of the resurrection, important as this matter is, may they not also be right about the rest? Years ago, we recall talking with the late Elder John McConnell, former pastor of the Ebenezer Church in New York City about having listened to some Minister speak what he felt was the truth, and we were somewhat puzzled to understand how he could preach what he did and remain where he was. Elder McConnell said while he may have spoken the truth to us he doubted that it was the truth to him. It was like God commanding the raven to feed the prophet. He did not feed the prophet with raven's food, but with

bread and fish which was what God had for his servant, and neither did the raven feed upon the prophet's food. Jesus said to the Jews which believed on him, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Anyone can quote the Scriptures of eternal truth, but they are TRUTH only to those who are given to receive and understand them. We should be very careful about accepting a doctrine believed by worldly men, rather than clutch it to our bosom as gospel truth. We like to believe that the vast majority of those who have been called to follow in the footsteps of our Lord, sincerely desire to conform to the pattern laid down by Jesus and the Apostles. The Good Book is a model and it should not be emasculated, and neither should expressions be attributed to it which it does not contain. The prophet Isaiah said, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

One was asked how he arrived at a certain interpretation of a particular Scripture. He replied, "according to the rule of Greek Grammar." Another says in substance, "There is no mystery about the resurrection; it can all be explained by the use of the Dictionary." Still another says in effect, he will make certain of explaining the mystery by going to the root of the various English words which are to be found in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, etc. If the Lord's people are going to be dependent upon any such methods as these for a proper interpretation of the Scriptures, they are in a most pitiable condition. We are persuaded that such is not the case, but instead God will reveal to them whatever is necessary for them to know.

Before concluding this part of our treatise, we wish to revert to Phil. 3:13. After Paul said,"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehendend," he went on to say, "but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." If we correctly understand him, he meant to tell us that he had turned his back upon the things which he formerly believed in and practiced. Having part with Christ who was the first fruits of them who were to arise from the death and condemnation of the law, he saw the legal dispensation at an end; he was in a new world and was contemplating to some extent, at least, the things which pertain to the kingdom of our God. If we have been delivered from the powers of darkness and brought into the marvelous light of the gospel of his blessed Son we, too, should forget the things which are behind which we clung to in our unregenerate state, and press toward the mark for the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Elder R. Lester Dodson

Experience of Elton C. Adams, Sr.

The year 1979 has come and gone but the memories still linger on. It was in that year that my heart stood still. I saw the sun shine in

seventy-nine. I saw it rain and saw it snow. I heard the wind blow. I went up high and was brought down low. I went real fast and was brought down slow. But thanks to God I'm still able to go.

I have many things on my mind. It seems like I have trouble talking about them, so maybe I can just write it down. I think when God has done so many things for a man he should tell his friends. But I just can't hold up and do it, so maybe I can just write it down. I have thought many times about Elder Tench coming to see me before I went for surgery. He asked me if I was not worried or afraid, I said no. He pointed up, I said that's what I mean. I just could not tell him all I would have like to that day.

Now going back a few years, I was riding on the car with another man going to work one night. We had to cross a railroad, when the car got on the track, it stopped. He could not get it cranked. Then the sound of the train whistle. I looked around and the train was so close to me I had to look up at the headlight. I could not move. Then the car cranked and off the track we went. Was that not the work of God.

It was not long after that, I was sitting out in the yard one night and was looking at so many stars. When the thought just went through my mind—God if you are up there, show me a sign. My eyes on one little spot, out came a star or meteorite and went streaking across the sky. Was that not the work of God. I heard a man say one time prayers are answered before asked. In this case that night looking up it sure looked like it to me.

Another incident. I had a few bad words with my wife. The next day when I came off from work, it was a bad storm. I came out into the street in town. The lightning hit the light pole I was passing and then hit the next one in front of me. Stopping in the middle of the street the day before was the first thing that came to mind. We do have a Father to rule over us.

I was going to a school at the plant one time with only a sixth grade education. I felt a little behind most of the men in there. Most had finished school, some college. On the day for our last test, I sat at the table and silently said if God be with me I can pass. When the tests were finished, the teacher told us to switch papers with each other, then we would check them. After the answers were called out, the teacher asked if anyone had a paper that did not miss any, one man raised his hand. "Whose name is on your paper", the teacher asked. When he said E. C. Adams, my blood ran as cold as ice. Then after we went out on the job, around one hour later, the teacher came to me and said, "You missed one question on the test." I looked at him and said that's good.

I heard a man say one time that he was listening to a preacher and that he knew what the preacher was going to say before he said it. I thought that just did not sound right. Then one Saturday night at work, I was talking to a man, he said there was a Lambs Book of Life and on judgement day you would be shown where your name would have been if you were not saved. He said that you had to be baptized to be born again. He said you had to know you were saved. Then I told him I did not see it that way. There is a Lambs Book of Life that no man has been worthy to open it. But if your name was in it at the beginning, it would be there at the end of time. I

asked him if he would not consider a man that had been brought to the truth that he knew there was a living God. Would you say that man may be born again, but yet that man won't say that he knows that he is saved. Because he will have to wait until judgement day to know.

Then he looked at me, and said, "In other words, you give God full power." I said, "I do." Then he said,"You know, that does make sense." The next day I went to church, Elder Goad was speaking, he preached on everything we had talked about the night before. So I found myself sitting there knowing what the preacher was going to say before he said it. It can happen.

A few years back I was smoking 2 to 3 packs a day. I wanted to quit and did try several times but after a few hours, I thought I would go crazy or smoke. So back I would go again. It was in 1976, I was having bad pains in my chest. The doctor said they would have to do an exploratory operation. But I would have to wait two weeks before I could get in the hospital. I sat around and worried about a week and a half. Then late one evening I walked around my house. I was down on the east side when I looked up and there was a perfect white cross in a cloud. I called my wife, she was in the house; she did not hear me. Then I started to get her, I looked back and the cross was going away fast, then I thought well maybe it was just put there for me to see. Then it came to me, I am not alone. God knows what's going on. It's not right to worry about this. It is in God's hands now. There is only two things I can do and that is die or make it. Either way, it will be what God wants and that's good enough for me. So I did not worry about it anymore. I did promise God or he told me, that if I made it I would never smoke any more. So the night before my surgery, I ran out of cigarettes. There was a man I knew in the next room. He came in to see me, I asked him for a cigarette, he gave me a pack and I smoked some of them. Then they came and got me the next morning for surgery. The next thing I knew, I could not set up, I could not fall over, I could not half breathe and could not see. I said my God help me! The nurse said Mr. Adams what is wrong. I never answered her. If anyone gave me a shot, I did not feel it but I did not suffer like that anymore. Then my wife came in one day, I told her I wanted a cigarette. She said you can't smoke in here. I told her no I would never smoke anymore. Till this day, I have not.

Then comes 1979, more pain in chest and down the arms. The doctors say I should go to Duke to get some test run. So when they rolled me up to the table they would do the test on, it was high on each side and down in the middle. I said silently God stay with me and guide these doctors hands. I had to be awake for them to do the test. Then I got on this table, they covered me with cloth and strapped me down. They went to work, I could see what they were doing on a TV. I could see the tube hanging down. I thought the love of God is there but you can't see a thing but walls and blood vessels. I had made it pretty good till now and then burning like I was on fire. I did not know till later they had gotten the tube hung in the muscles in my heart. They rolled the table up on one side and then the other. I don't think it could have burned any more if they had put red

hot coals in me. I screamed to the top of my voice and then could not get my breath back in. For a while like this then the pain was going away. I knew I was passing out or dieing I did not know which, but never was I afraid. God had to be with me that day. Then the doctors gave me oxygen and brought me back again. After two hours of this, the doctor said we are finished. They put me back on the stretcher and carried me back to my room. I was so weak I could not raise my head off the pillow. As going in my room, my wife walked beside me and said hi sugar. Well that hit the bottom of my heart. I could not speak, but cried I did to the top of my voice. Then the nurse said you are crying for joy aren't you. I bowed my head a little. I have dreamed many times of flying in the air over the mountains and houses. So after this, I can truly say I have been up high and been down low, but thanks to God I'm still able to go. I came home to stay two weeks before my surgery. It was in this time Elder Tench stood by my bed and asked me was I not worried or afraid. I did not miss one hour of sleep in the two weeks thinking about the operation.

On 4/30/79, around 6 a.m., they came to get me for surgery. I asked the nurse could I shave and brush my teeth. Then on the stretcher for surgery. After some eight hours in surgery, my heart had been stopped and started back. A machine to do my breathing, four arterys by-passed. Around 100 stitches put in my leg and chest. Then on the same day, I don't know the time maybe around 7 or 8 p.m., I had my brother say to me, I called mama and told her you were doing okay. It came to me then, they have finished the operation, I had no pain at all, but could not speak or see. I raised my right hand and shook hands with my brother. I heard him say as he walked away he not only shook my hand he squeezed it. Then a few days later Elder Goad and others came to see me. I must have been asleep, my wife said you have company then I looked. There was Elder Goad standing in the prettiest dark blue water up to his waist. I batted my eyes and the water was gone. Was this not the work of God. When I came home, my wife went to town one day, she brought me back a book. She walked in beside my bed and said, I brought you a book Miracles Do Happen. I turned over on my face and cried to the top of my voice. I never looked at the book, we never talked about it anymore, but the thought that came to mind that I don't have to read about miracles in a book. I know they happen, they have happened to me.

I don't know where I may go when I die. My sins are many, but my blessings are too— all I can say is God I hope to see you. To all of you that have troubles and sickness, it is no need to worry all that will do is make things worse. Put your trust in God, he can take care of you. I don't know to whom I write this to, all I know is that it is on my chest and some of it has got to go. Many times in my life, I have been faced with problems and knowing not what to do. By not doing anything, I set and watch things be worked out. I could write much more but I think this will do. To you in the family, you may think I have lost my rocks. I feel fine, I know my days are numbered. No one can add an hour to them or take one away. I look forward to each

day.

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Editors

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

THE SEVENTH DAY

I am in Baton Rouge, and for some reason I felt impressed to write on the following subject. I have no doubt in my own mind, but what it is scripturally and experimentally true, but I find myself so very imperfect, sinful and defiled, I want someone else to pass on it.

It needs many corrections in language and punctuation, but before I would have time to do all this, I might destroy it as I have other writings; which might be better in this case. I don't know why I've stayed up till after midnight to write it, as I needed rest very badly.

We seemed wonderfully blessed at Rehobeth Sunday, if I'm not deceived, and we tried to use this subject. I feel we were blessed to go into it more extensively than this writing.

I hope the Lord will see fit to bless us with true righteous Sunshine and Spiritual exercise in this dark, cloudy and evil day of deception and degradation; when the spirit of anti-Christ is ascending out of that dark, bottomless pit. We are entirely dependent on Him to give us light and to keep us in it. Oh, how I do hope we have been called out of darkness into his marvelous light and glorious liberties of the children of God. We know all things work together for good to them that love God (I hope I am one of them) through his goodness and mercy. If so, no weapon that is formed against me will prosper, and every tongue of accusation will be condemned; because that wonderful Counsellor, who bore my sins, represents me, having died in my stead.

I have had some desire in the last few hours, to write a few thoughts, that have been presented to my mind relative to the subject, as presented in Exodus 20:8,9,10, and 11. Please read these scriptures, before proceeding to read this writing.

The Sabbath Day, literally in this instance, no doubt, is the remaining day of rest, after all the work was finished. It would readily stand to reason, that if the Lord had finished all his work, there was nothing else for Him to do but to rest or to cease from his labor, as is stated here and elsewhere in the scriptures.

Human minds, unless divinely enlightened, cannot begin to conceive of the greatness, glory and wonderfulness of all God's work in creation; of Heaven and earth and all the hosts thereof, to say nothing of the righteous, holy, divine and wise purpose for which they were created,

and which they all fulfill to a jot and tittle, to his glory and praise, and to the good of his people.

God gave his people the seventh day, as a day of rest, but gave them six days, before the day of rest, and commanded them to do all their work in these six days and to do no work on the seventh, but to rest or keep it holy; even as He had finished all his work in six days and rested the seventh. They were commanded under strict penalty of death, if they were found doing any work on that day, even as much as gathering sticks to kindle a fire.

Now, dear reader, I am sure our finite minds are far too inferior, and our understanding is insufficient, to be able to express this wonderful, deep and solemn subject, but I desire to say, that I believe that every phase of each commandment and ordinance, was written aforetime, and was written for our learning, that we (even at the present) might have hope and consolation. Therefore, there is a sense in which all these scriptural laws and ordinances are applicable now, or at least, that is my humble opinion. For example, the Ten Commandments were spoken by the Lord, himself, in fact they are his word. The scriptures say the word of the Lord endureth forever, from generation to generation.

In another place it says, whatsoever he doeth it shall be forever. Then his words, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," is as much in effect today, in an anti-typical sense, as it was in a typical sense, when commanded by the Lord to Israel.

I want to be understood. I don't feel that we are under the literal commandment to abstain from all literal physical labor on the Sabbath day, as the Jews then were. We are not faced with that punishment of death in the literal sense as they were. There is a sense through Christ, after the inward man, that the children of God are still under command to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. It is always they have done fully six days' work, after which they are always weary, faint or tired. In other words, it is after they have worked themselves out of tools and timber, and have fallen flat on the mercies of God, who through Jesus, has finished the work of redemption and salvation.

Now, it seems clear to me, that this great subject is amply verified in the old and new covenants as expressed in the 8th chapter of Hebrew; (read it). In the old covenant it is implied that they were taken by the hand to be led out of literal Egypt. They transgressed and were subject to the most serious punishment as a consequence. The new covenant was not according to the old. The Lord gives them a new and soft heart, and He makes a new covenant with them. He writes his law in their hearts and puts it in their minds in such a way, that they are safe from violation. They are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

Also, in John's language it says. "He that is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." Then if it was sin for the children of Israel to work on the Sabbath day literally, so it also would be, for God's people to work in this Gospel Sabbath day. Wherein Jesus

came to seek and to save that which was lost (not lost now, but is saved), so Jesus finished the work which his Father gave him to do. It has been the Sabbath of rest, from that day till now and ever will be to his people, because the work is finished.

When the Light of God's blessed Spirit is revealed from Heaven, in our poor benighted souls, then we are brought to see our lost and ruined condition before him. After six days of hardwork, we are brought to our wits end, or to the ends of the earth. Then the blessed Saviour says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest," Mark the word rest in this text. The six days are over, when the blessed Lord gives us this sweet rest, in foretaste.

The opposite doctrine to this is that Jesus gives poor sinners a job; but not so. He gives them rest. At his command, they take his yoke upon them, not voluntarily, as all legalists believe, but through the constraining love of Christ which is shed abroad in their hearts. And Oh, dear reader, how easy is that blessed yoke that Jesus gives his poor, humble and bewildered ones, who are weary from a full week's work!

This yoke Jesus gives them off from their own works and constrains them to cease from them and their burdens. They learn of Him, that He finished all the work of their salvation and their entire six days' work is in vain, so far as saving them is concerned. How light is the burden of the precious Saviour to a poor, wayworn pilgrim. His thoughts and burden have been that he must do something. When he learns of Jesus that the work is finished, Oh, how light is this precious burden and how easy is this yoke. The customary way to fit an animal for work is to yoke him to it, but in this case they are yoked off from their works, and are given to rest. It is the Sabbath and they are yoked to keep it. That yoke is quite different from any yoke formed by earthly wisdom and skill, for they are yoked to rest. David described this when he said, "He leadeth me beside the still waters; he maketh me to lie down in green pastures." Many others also described this beautiful, easy yoke and light burden of Jesus, the blessed Saviour.

In the 4th Chapter of Hebrews it is said, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Just the opposite to what blind nature believes and advocates. They all believe and advocate works as essential to salvation. It is positively declared that it is rest that remaineth to the people of God. When you see people working in order to save themselves, or someone else, you may know they are not remembering the Sabbath day; and by this you may know, it is Monday, so to speak, with them. And to clearly show this same doctrine, it is almost universally believed that anyone can help in the salvation of sinners. It must be remembered in the anti-type, no man, nor his man-servant, his son nor his daughter, nor his ox nor his ass, is to do any work on this holy day. That is why we advocate that the sinner cannot do any work for himself, neither can all his closest relatives, nor his ox, which all have their anti-typical place and meaning.

Now there is quite a difference in the old and new covenants. Under the

old so far as Abraham and his seed were concerned, after the flesh, it was impossible for them to keep the law. The new covenant is exactly opposite. He that is born of God doth not commit sin. He remembers that Sabbath day to keep it holy, not through the carnal or Adamic efforts of nature, but after the inward man or the new man. "For if any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature." He has the new covenant of Grace. He has the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus and is made free from the law of sin and death.

He believes in his heart, although when delivered to the fleshly mind, he will at least to some extent, practice works just like anyone else. But as Paul said, "It is no longer I that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in me." So then, the being, soul or spirit that is in the child of God, or that he posesses, sins not, and he always remembers the Sabbath day and keeps it holy, through the light and influence and yoke of the blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, who works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. "They are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God before ordained that they should walk in them." So it is a good work that is worked in them to remember the Holy Sabbath of rest, of the finished work of redemption and salvation.

Christ said, "I have finished the work." Then the six days are over, and when the light of the Saviour reveals this to us, we cease from our works. We enter into that rest the Saviour gives. How sweet it is to the poor, humble child of God, when this beautiful Sabbath begins to dawn from the darkness and toil to a full week's work, which has been all in vain. When the Sun is above all the timber, and shining above the brightness of the noonday; when the blessed Saviour gives us that rest and trust in him as the Lamb that taketh away our sins, we are overcome with joy and gladness; and this is truly the Sabbath of the Lord.

The work is over, sweet rest is ours to enjoy. But as long as we are in the flesh, there will come other days of the week and we will still find ourselves entangled, through our fleshly mind. The light of this beautiful Sabbath will often be obscured and we will, to some extent, become burdened in our experience. The blessed Saviour visits us again and again and restores the joys of our salvation, and gives us rest and peace and blessed satisfaction in him.

The eternal Sabbath is in existence, so to speak, even as all the host of Heaven and earth are finished, but we are only given the earnest of our inheritance here below, which means the interest on the whole. So if the little seasons of rest that are manifested or given to us, are so sweet and glorious and precious here in time, what will the principal or the fullness of this inheritance be in that rest beyond the shades of death and the shores of time, when we shall have laid down this vile, corrupt and sinful body, wherein we groan and weep and mourn?

When we come forth formed and fashioned like our blessed Saviour, without sin and corruption, then we will always live, body and soul, in that eternal Sabbath. No more of the toil, groans and afflictions, as we are subject to in the flesh, but eternal,

glorious and peaceful rest, as is expressed in Revelation 14:13, "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, sayeth the Spirit, they shall rest from their labors; and their works do follow them, are the works that God works in them, both to will and to do his own good pleasure.

Also in Revelation 7th chapter we find that John saw these same people (who are given to remember the Sabbath to keep it holy) stand before God in white raiment. So they have kept the Sabbath in the Spirit of Christ, and all the other commandments, and they have cried salvation be unto our God and unto him that sitteth on the throne. Notice what they cried; and look around and see who they are. They also have washed their robes, not in literal water nor human cleansing, nor in their own works, because they have remembered the Sabbath day and kept it holy. Therefore, they have ceased from their own works as God did from his. (See Hebrews 4th chapter.)

The best of Revelation 7 is where He said, "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eves." Oh, dear child of the heavenly kingdom, how I humbly hope at times, if not deceived, that I am one of those that have been made to feel the sweet yoke and burden and rest of Christ the Saviour. And that some day all tears of sorrow shall be wiped away and I may be given to praise and glorify the blessed Saviour forever and ever, with all those who have come out of tribulations.

Elder R.W. Rhodes

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER

Tim C. Barron, TX	12.00
W.B. Aaron, NC	7.00
E.B. Dotson, TX	2.00
Eld. Graydon Smith, LA	5.00
Mrs. Joel Alexander, AL	7.00
Marvin Brumfield, VA	2.00
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Mrs. Lillie M. Hiatt, NC	10.00
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Mrs. Jessie Whaley, NC	2.00

OBITUARIES

ELTON C. ADAMS, SR.

With sad heart I will attempt to write the obituary of my Dear husband, Elton C. Adams. He was born August 24, 1934, the son of the late Charlie and Viola Adams. He passed away April 29, 1987. He was married to Eliza Brumfield Adams on July 3, 1954 and to this union two children were born, Elton Collin Adams, Jr. and Jennifer Wagman. Also surviving are four grandchildren, Ashleigh and Lindsey Adams; Brandon and Shannon Wagman; Three brothers, Lloyd Adams, Richmond, Virginia, Donald Adams, Gretna, Va., Larry Adams, Evington, Va. Also three sisters Elva Campbell Shipman, Va. Naomie Myers, Hurt, Va.,

Elton was a firm believer in salvation by grace, although he never offered to the Church, he was a precious borderline to Weatherford Church. On his death bed he said, "I don't feel I am good enough to belong to the Church." He talked to some of the brethern on Sunday before he died on Wednesday and told them he didn't know if he would go to Heaven, but he had a hope. Dear ones, I believe this is all we need in this life. On another occasion he talked with two brethren from Weatherford Church, Elder Raymond Goad and Brother Marvin Brumfield about one of his experiences. He told them the Lord spoke to him in a strong voice and called him by his name, "Elton this is the Lord speaking." Oh! how sweet this must have been to hear the Lord call his name.

Elton had a battle with cancer from 1981 and was in and out of the hospital since October 1986. He never complained about his illness, but he believed there was a reason for it. He fought a good fight and kept the faith. The Lord made his dying bed as soft as downy pillows are. Two days before he passed away, he told me he was going to leave me. He was talking so sweet to the children and I, and the sweetest smile came across his face and he said, "Jesus it feels so good." He told us how much he loved us and said to tell everyone I love them. He said I am so happy but tired. I was sitting by his bed and he said to me, "Do you see the rainbow?" I didn't see it but I hope some sweet day I will.

Elton was a loving and caring Husband and Father. I feel he was loved by our friends and neighbors in our community. This spoke for itself by the Church being full the day of his Funeral. His Funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on May 1, 1987 by Elders O. K. Tench, Raymond Goad and Brother Marvin Brumfield. His body was laid to rest in the Church Cemetary awaiting the second coming of our Dear Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

It would be hard to say how much I miss him for there is a vacancy that can never be filled. I can not wish him back, he has suffered enough. He believed his days were numbered. May the Grace of God give each one that feels the loss so great, strength to carry on.

Written by his Wife,
Eliza B. Adams

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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THE VALLEY

I have been through the valley of weeping,
The valley of sorrow and pain;
But the "God of all comfort" was with me,
At hand to uphold and sustain.

As the earth needs the clouds and the sunshine,
Our souls need both sorrow and joy;
So He places us oft in the furnace,
The dross from the gold to destroy.

When He leads through some valley of trouble,
His powerful hand we can trace;
For the trials and sorrows He sends us
Are part of His lessons of grace.

Oft we shrink from the purging and pruning,
Forgetting the Husbandman knows
The deeper the cutting and paring,
The richer the cluster that grows.

Well He knows that affliction is needed;
He has a wise purpose in view,
And in the dark valley He whispers,
"Hereafter thou'lt know what I do."

As we travel through life's shadowed valley,
Fresh springs of His love ever rise;
And we learn that our sorrows and losses
Are blessings just sent in disguise.

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We suffer a great loss by the death of Elder Joe L. Hamrick of Route 4, Box 21 A, Winnsboro, TX. Elder Hamrick was an associate editor of The Signs of the Times and he pastored several churches in his area. He died December 21, 1987—a memorial for him will follow in the March issue of the Signs.
Editors

EDITORIAL

Elder W.D. Griffin

Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

If you feel to do so, draw up a comfortable chair and let us behold the dealings of the Lord with His children. It is true that I have not mastered the way of God to that depth that some seem to have been able to do, but I am living in hope of a fuller understanding some day to where that I might lay hold on eternal life to such a depth and height that I can say, I know in whom I have believed and that I shall yet see Him as He is, and be like Him.

I would hope for each of us that we might be given grace to examine the text in the light of divine revelation. To the law and to the testimony; if their interpretation of the text does not match and correlate with the text, it is because there is not any light in them. The text interprets itself, but it will not bear any explanations nor interpretations. It is the truth just like it is recorded.

Again I say that I want to know more about my acceptance in the covenant of grace, yet, I would not exchange my hope in this promise of God, which is the allegory of the two covenants. Let us remember that each and every apostle wrote the truth; in fact, all that each of them wrote was the truth. One part, or any part, or all scripture was, and is, truth. Therefore, the text is the truth. Not only were the brethren at Galatia children or promise, as was Isaac, but all the children of God who were addressed by any sacred writer were as much children of promise, as was Isaac, wherever they sojourned when they were written to, but they were then as they still are, children of promise.

Every promise of God to His children is kept. His children are confident of this truth (Phil.I:6: Psa.138:8). Everything that God ever introduced

to any one of His children, He kept that promise. He did not get side tracked from His intention and leave it in the hand of a prophet, or an apostle, or some other subordinate official. We are assured that He that begins a good work will finish it, for there are not any unfinished projects left standing anywhere in the world that God started and did not finish. That is worth remembering as we contemplate the beauties in our text. Now who did begin this work with Abraham? Did Abraham? I would like to have an answer from you. If Abraham had an original thought like unto the narrative laid down in the Bible, then the Old Primitive Baptist people had as well close their meeting house doors and go home. Did Abraham initiate the movement? Did he hunt up God and make Him a proposition? You say that he did not. Good. We have a good text. It is about that which God originated. It has some good things in it. Let us, as blessed of God, look further into the matter.

Before we leave the begining of the relationship between Abraham and God, let us look back for a moment. Suppose God had listened at Abraham and had recognized the work of Abraham, Hagar and Sarah? This would have necessitated the closing of every Primitive Baptist Church in the land. Let us remember that not one thing of all three of the three conspirants had a thing in the world to do with Isaac's being born of Sarah. How did he get to be? It is not a case wherein the most of the credit goes to God. It just is not that way for anybody to be a brother to him except by the direct and immediate work of God. If there is more than one way for a sinner to be saved other than by the sure promise of God, let us hear how it comes about.

God did not recognize any of Abraham's work. Especially notable is the fact that his son by Hagar, his wife's handmaid did not heir. Only an heir would be counted that was Abraham's own child. Yet, according to nature, there was not any way for Abraham to beget one child much less the numerous mentioning of his seed being as numerous as the stars of heaven and the sands of the seashore. Let us remember the text says rather distinctly, and we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. God promised this many heirs to Abraham and Sarah. He promised them after they were too old to get children or to conceive them. As Brother Shockly, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland used to say, God clinched the doctrine of God making a promise to give Eternal Life to as many as were chosen to salvation. No man, nor no set of men, not no nation of men, no, and not even a world of religious zealots can promise one addition to the number of God's children and be able to deliver it. I am not afraid to make that assertion. Nor am I afraid to make the assertion that of all that God promised to save, that every one of them will be saved. The doctrine of God's sovereign election clinches the safety of each and every one of them.

The promise of God to Abraham was the greatest promise ever made to a married couple. God knows everything about everything. It is the height and the depth of all things at the time of promising such a numerous seed. AND HE KNEW THE NOR-

MAL INCAPACITY OF THEM HAVING ANY SEED AFTER THEM. Yet He make the promise. What were the premises that supported God's promise? What, if anything, was lacking in His promise that Abraham should beget, and that Sarah should conceive and start this lengthy number of heirs? Have we been led to believe that a single promise that God has made His people has ever failed?

Banish the thought. The same God inspired each writer in the New Testament. It was truth that Paul wrote to the church at Galatia, and it was truth that Peter wrote to the elect family of God. As Isaac was a promised elect heir, even so is the one promise that brought the birth of Isaac to full fruition brought every one of that numerous host of heirs.

Although, had the plan of the members of the first aid society worked it would have put the mocking Ishmaleite as the rightful heir, yet, as in all man made plans, it failed, it did not deter him from mocking the promised child. I write plain things but they are sacred matters, and will do you good. Sarah laughed when the news was told here that she would, at her great age, conceive and bear a son. There is not any doubt that many of my readers have been jeered at and sneered at because, as the mocking Ishmaelite has sneered at the wrinkled and aged and decrepit condition of the old order of Baptists. In my mind I have heard his remarks as Isaac nursed the wrinkled breast of Sarah. Spiritually speaking, people of the Ishmaelite stripe have sneered at the Lord's humble followers as they gathered together in our little church abodes and enjoyed the simple gospel truths brought to them by divine grace.

The works of the creature, originated in his or her mind, executed by them, regardless of how pious they may be, have never, and will never, bring salvation to a son or daughter of the Adamic race. Salvation is not attained by works of righteoiusness, but it is attained by the mercy of God (Titus 3:5). It seems like that such a statement should forever settle the matter. Moreover, salvation is not attained by the works of the creature regardless of the kind that they are (2 Tim. I:9). Therefore, it is a settled matter that the scheming endeavers of all that had a hand in the birth of Ishmael was of no avail of making him an heir of Abraham. If their deeds had of contributed to that end, the text would not be in the Bible. The well laid plot to put Ishmael in as the legal heir would have been heralded from one side of the Bible to the other. But instead he was put out of Abraham's household, and certainly did not heir as the seed of Abraham.

The failure of this scheme sounded forever the death knell of the creature salvation theory. It fell then and there. It having fallen in execution, from that day until now the gospel news has been sounded throughout Christendom to every poor sinner that they are members of the body of Christ by promise, as was Isaac.

How clearly Paul reasons the matter. What divine force is interjected in this memorable treatise on the two covenants. Yet, with all the force of God's hiding power, the veil is still secluding the beauty and the freedom from those that would follow Ishmael. Although he was driven out with gifts that perished with the using, yet the

mass of the religious world is paying homage and adoration to him and to the law (Hagar), and will continue to do so until such time as the Lord is pleased to remove the veil from before their eyes. One, if not the most important of all, of the blessings accorded the brethren of Isaac is that God has granted them seeing eyes to see the fallacy of the law for salvation as exemplified in the case of Ishmael and his mother, Hagar. People at large do not see, and even do not want to see, that all those trusting in the law are perishing by the law, as far as gospel blessings go.

Elder W. D. Griffin

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

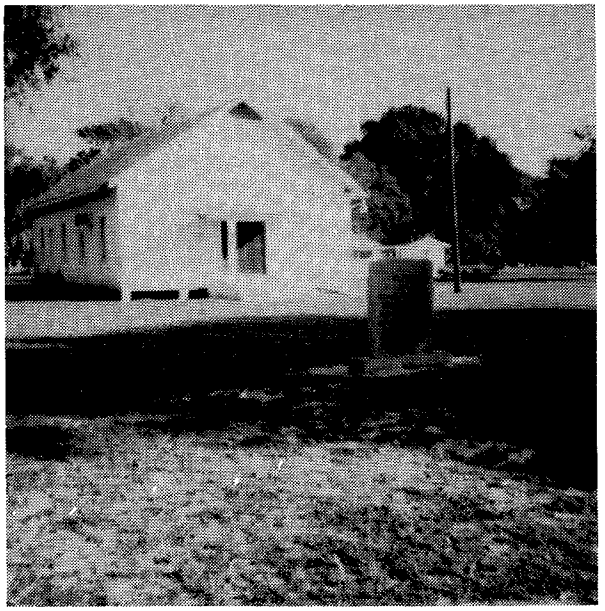

MT. ENON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

The church was constituted in May, 1867 and called Elder James Moseley for her pastor. Other known pastors were Elder John W. Futch, Elder E. J. DeVane, Elder W. O. Futch, Elder E. P. Stott and at the present you unworthy servant, Elder Fred B. Neikirk. The meeting house is located near Plant City, Florida off I-4 between exits 14 and 15. Our regular meeting time is the second Sunday in each month and Saturday before.

ARTICLES

The Resurrection of the Dead

ROMANS 8:11

"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."

We do not understand this Scripture as applying to the raising of our dust bodies on what is termed the "General Resurrection Day", but rather that its application is to the militant church here in this time state. We shall, therefore, undertake to present the evidence, as we see it, which supports this point of view. In the very first verse of this chapter the aposlte says: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." We will all doubtless agree that so far as that life which is beyond this vale of tears is concerned, there is now no condemnation to those who were chosen in Christ Jesus, but according to the language as we interpret it, there still is condemnation here in this life to God's people who walk after the flesh. Both our experience and the Scriptures bear testimony to this truth. Paul says, "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Heb. 10:26-27. Following on in the chapter containing our text, the apostle shows how the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit, which is attributed to the fact that the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the law of sin and death. He points to what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, and this necessitated God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to condemn sin in the flesh. He clearly shows that "they that are after the flesh do mind the thing of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit." Continuing with this line of reasoning he says, "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." Then he makes a positive statement to the effect that "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." His definite and final conclusion, therefore, is "they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Here, again, we believe, all will agree that the natural man, as such, cannot please God. There must be first the work of regeneration wrought in him and faith given before he can walk acceptably before God. Paul, therefore, tells his Roman brethren that "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." Then he goes on to say, "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." We might well inquire, how are we to be made aware of these glorious truths? Here is where our text come in and explains it by saying , "But if the Spirit of him

that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." It was God who raised up Jesus from the dead, and we are persuaded that his Spirit must quicken our mortal bodies before we can have any part in glorifying God in our bodies and in our spirits which are his. Saul of Tarsus realized full well the necessity of this quickening in his own case, and after experiencing it Paul (for he was even given a new name) was qualified to speak with authority to similar characters among the Ephesians, saying, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Eph. 2:1-3. This is all applicable to the experience of the children of grace here in this world.

The verse immediately following our text reads as follows: "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh." The conjunction, "therefore", shows conclusively to our mind that that which follows is inseparably linked to and becomes a part of that which went before, and this meant that those quickened characters whom Paul was addressing as brethren, "are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh," and he warns them of the result by saying, "For is ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." If these Scriptures do not substantiate our claim that the text deals with the life of God's people here in the flesh, we would not know what form of speech could be employed that would. The purpose of language, when properly used, is to convey what is meant, and in order to get the proper meaning we must not lose sight of that which surrounds the subject. Neither should we lift bodily a Scripture out of its setting and place it where it does not belong. It should be allowed to remain in its own native environment if it is to produce the results and serve the purpose for which it was originally intended.

There is such an abundance of evidence which follows on in this chapter to support our conclusion, and the importance of the subject is such that we feel compelled to present more of it here: (1) "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear: but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba Father; (2) The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together; (3) For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us; (4) For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope; (5) Because the creature itself also shall

be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body; (6) For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it; (7) Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought : but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." We repeat, if language means anything at all, it would certainly seem to us that these Scriptures deal with the children of God while they live here in this world.

Some years ago we recall reading an article written on the twenty-eighth verse of this chapter, which reads as follows: "As we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." In that article the writer maintained that what the apostle actually meant to set forth was that ALL GOOD THINGS work together for good, etc. We later wrote on the same subject through the Signs and said in substance that, since the apostle did not write these things of himself, but wrote as he was wrought upon and moved by the Holy Ghost, there could not possibly be any mistake as to what he said or what he meant, for his mind was even filled with the words supplied by the Holy Ghost to express the thought intended. The most learned of mankind often fail to choose the right words to correctly express their meaning, but the Holy Ghost, never. We feel the same way regarding our text. Had the text meant to refer to the quickening of dead bodies, at some far distant future time, unquestionably the Holy Ghost would have directed the apostle to so declare, but since it specifically says mortal bodies, which means bodies that are subject to death, we must accept it at its face value, unless we are will to have the Scriptures changed, and this we cannot consent to or permit.

We said in the outset of this article that we understood the text to refer to the quickening which God's people experience here in this time state, but we would not for the world leave our readers in doubt or even have them suspect that our hope, which we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, does not enter into that which is within the veil, whither the fore-runner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. This eighth chapter of Romans is one of the most wonderful in all of the Bible to us. Not only does the Apostle Paul set forth herein the things both of the flesh and the spirit, but he shows clearly to our mind how we are to be partakers of spiritual things, which is by the very same quickening power of God which wrought in Christ in raising him from the dead. He then assures those of us who are thus quickened that all things shall work together for our good, and finally and best of all he declares in no uncertain terms that nothing, not even DEATH itself, shall

be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. While we firmly believe that our text deals with God's children in this life, we equally and just as firmly believe that the latter portion of this chapter deals with the hereafter, or that which is beyond this vale of tears. In this connection, we would like to invite the attention of our readers particularly to the expression of the apostle in the thirty-fifth verse where he asks, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" We have purposely italicized the plural pronoun US. Please note the apostle does not ask who shall separate our spirit from the love of Christ, or the Spirit of Christ, and neither does he speak of either the soul or the body. There must be a reason why he did not differentiate between and mention them separately. If these bodies of flesh and bones in which we live here, which were formed of the dust of the ground, and concerning which the Lord said to Adam, "for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," (Gen. 3:19) were a part of the us referred to by Paul, death would at least separate this part of us from the love of God until we are raised, but the language of the apostle will not permit of any such conclusion. Incidentally, God is unchangeable and eternally the same, yesterday, today and forever, and we have never yet discovered between the lids of the Bible where he has revoked or altered in any degree whatsoever his decree or declaration to Adam that "dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." To better understand what the apostle had under consideration, since the Scriptures are their own best interpreters, let us bring forth some other Scriptures which bear upon this point. Job is a pretty good witness, so we will first call upon him. He says, "Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews." Job 10:11. The personal pronoun "me" here refers to the real Job who was clothed with skin and flesh, and was fenced with bones and sinews. Peter also is a good witness, so he shall be heard: His testimony is, "Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance: knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as the Lord Jesus hath shewed me." Peter was dwelling in a tabernacle which his Lord had shewed him had to be put off. Another outstanding witness is one that is familiar to all and is an unquestioned authority on these matters. We refer to Paul, who says: "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart (from the flesh or body), and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you," who were still in the flesh. Let us have some further testimony from Paul on this point. Continuing, he says,"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Here he speaks of two houses, or buildings, and they are not one and the same, for one is an house for us to live in while here in this world, which will be dissolved, but, the other is a building of God for our eternal abode in the heavens which are beyond. Dr. John Gill, famous biblical commentator of England, quotes one, Philo, as

having said: "I am very little concerned for this mortal body, which is about me and cleaves to me like the shell of a fish, though it is hurt by everyone." Sometimes we hear brethren say, "If it is not my flesh, my blood and my bones that will be resurrected, it will not be me, and if it is only something in me that is to be resurrected, I am not interested." If they did but know it, it is just the reverse of what they seem to think. Instead of something being in them, the truth of the matter is they are in something, as we have undeniably shown by the three witnesses whose testimony has just been presented. Our real self does not consist of so many pounds of flesh, blood and bones, which varies but little with most of us here in this life. The greatest men of history were very similar in fleshly appearance to the great masses, but something besides flesh made them stand as peers among their fellowmen. Ordinarily the features by which men are identified and distinguished from one another are found in the face or head, and the recognition of the Lord's people is to be found in their head, the Lord Jesus Christ. We do not need pictures of Christ hanging on the wall, which are so popular with the religious world, to give us an idea as to what our Lord looks like. Having never looked upon his earthly features, we would not recognize Jesus if he appeared in our midst, but even if we had seen him in the flesh it would be no guarantee that we would recognize him if he appeared in the flesh again. Even his own earthly mother, Mary, did not recognize him a few hours after his death and resurrection, for it is said she mistook him for the gardener until he spoke to her. His personality or identity as the blessed Son of God is what interests us most vitally. What he was, what he did and the principles for which he lived and died is what gives him the preeminence over all others who went before or shall follow after him. It was Jesus who said to Martha, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." He did not say, the spirit of whosoever believeth in me shall never die. He was speaking of the new creature who has part with him, and since Jesus destroyed him that had the power of death, not even death can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Is it any wonder that so many of God's called and qualified servants turn so often to this eighth chapter of Romans for solid comfort and assurance to the poor and needy. Not only are they told that tribulation, distress, persecution, famine and nakedness, peril and sword shall not be able to separate them here in this life from the love of Christ, but they are assured "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature," shall be able to separate them from the love of Christ throughout all eternity. The reason why nothing shall be able to separate them from his love is that he has conquered all foes and will destroy for them the last enemy, DEATH.

Elder R. Lester Dodson

"Mine heritage is unto me as a SPECKLED BIRD, the birds round about are against her; come ye, assemble all the beasts of the field, come to devour." Jeremiah 12:9.

I cannot see to read the Bible anymore, so I asked my wife, Ruby, to look it up for me. She did and read it to me. I felt already that the Lord had revealed to me sometime ago that the SPECKLED BIRD is a type of the church, Christ's, the Son of God's, inheritance. And lo and behold, it read, "Mine heritage is unto me as a SPECKLED BIRD, the birds round about are against her," with the beasts of the field ready to devour, etc.

Heritage is defined as that which is inherited; inheritance; God's chosen people, or Israel, or the church of the true and living God. This is evidence enough that the scripture is referring to Christ's own who are His inheritance whom His soul loveth so much that He was willing to leave all the glory He had with His Father in the high court of glory, to condescend to the low estate of His heritage, who being lost in sin, shame, misery, degradation, darkness, death and eternal gloom, whom His Father had given Him before the foundation of the world, to purchase it with the shedding of His own blood and for His eternal and everlasting love for them He was made willing to do it.

Christ referred to this heritage as a little child. They are humble even so much that when we see one, it makes us want to take them up into our arms and kiss them. So it is with one of these little ones of the Lord's people. Christ said, "Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom fo God is greater than he." Luke 7:28. Who is the least one? The Lord's people are made to feel little.

In the 18th Chapter of Matthew is recorded where Christ set a little child out in front of the people and said, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdon of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 18:3,4 When God has truly humbled one in His sight, that person, be he man, woman or child, is surely the least in God's kingdon. Little children are humble, and if they become angry, it does last only a few minutes. They do not nor will they hold a grudge.

This heritage of the Lord, which is the church, greatly feels her black spots, even also as the speckled bird. They are put on this bird in nature, but these little ones to whom Christ has referred to feel that their many sins have put them on them, and they cannot erase them anymore than can that speckled bird. The fact that all the other birds and beasts of the field are against her and are ready any minute to devour her gives one of these little ones, His little children, whom Christ has referred to as the least but also greatest, even more evidence. All that one has to do to get one of these big ones to walkaway with a devouring spirit is to tell just how little he feels and what he believes. In most instances they immediately take off and their humor is not good. Paul is a good example.

He said he was the chief of sinners and felt to be nothing, yea less than nothing. One often wonders just what is the size and measurement of this garment, "less than the least," in which His heritage is robed and attired.

A good example of some of these beasts, assembling and coming together, as mentioned in the text, was when they placed Paul and Silas in prison. They whipped them with many stripes because they had been preaching just what these little ones, of whom the SPECKLED BIRD is a type. Paul said that he even fought with these beasts at Ephesus. See 1st Cor. 15:32. Paul felt those black spots on him of which the spots on this bird are a type of. Let us remember that the Old Testament scriptures are written in types and shadows.

That speckled bird cannot help being speckled. Neither can we help being sinners. Paul wrote, "For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that I do." "'For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." "Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelt in him.

The spirit of the greatness of the little ones that comes through their meekness is recorded in Samuel where David sent for and fetched into the King's palace Jonathan's son who was lame in both feet to eat at the King's table. David did this because of the love he had for Jonathan whom he loved as his own soul. This is a type of the same love that Christ has for His heritage of which this speckled bird is a type. It is not just any bird. It is a SPECKLED BIRD, and those black spots represent the same ones on this heritage. Anything that is speckled contains specks and spots. Christ had to come and remove those black spots from off the ones His Father had given Him for an inheritance. Those spots and specks serve a good purpose for the knowledge of their existence upon them keeps them down at their brethren's feet because the feet are the lowest part of the body that one can get to. That is the reason Christ told Peter that He need only wash his (Peter's) feet.

Jonathan's son, who was lame in both feet, certainly showed how little the Lord's people are by type and example because he referred to himself as a "dead dog". He sat at the table in the King's palace in a way so that his lameness could not be seen. Here is the church, the SPECKLED BIRD. We may look out at a congregation of believers, collectively as an audience while in worship, and yet not literally behold this lameness, although it is there in large proportions. God sees this lameness in the hearts of His people. The world cannot see it. It is hid from them.

Even when it came down to it. His chosen disciples, yet being under the law of sin and death in their experience, fled and forsook Him. Peter denied Him three times, cursing and swearing that he had never known Him. This is the way all those other birds fly off and leave this SPECKLED BIRD. The very spirit that was in Christ is also in His people when He visits them and causes that Spiritual wind to blow. All the other birds will fly away when that Spiritual wind blows upon the Lord's people. May the Lord

comfort us when those other birds fly on and leave us. Surely, it strengthens one's hope when they fly away.

Those birds that fly off and leave this speckled bird are a type of those who had gathered once at a place called Calvary saying, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God." Luke 24:25. The one just to his left said, "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." Luke 23:29. These are the ones who are a type of the brids that fly off and leave the SPECKLED BIRD. The one just to His right had the same humble spirit as the poor publican who smote upon his breast saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Luke 18:13. The one just to His right, like the poor publican in God-given humbleness declared, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation. And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss." Those who fly away are a type of those who spit in his face, struck (slapped) Him, nailed His hands and His feet to the cross, pierced His side, mocked and scoffed at Him until He said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Then one named Joseph, whom the scripture says was "a good man, a just man,"(See Luke 23:50) took His Body down from the cross and laid it in a new tomb. (See Luke 23:53).

Now concerning the resurrection, recently being burdened, I begged the Lord to give me some evidence that my hope might be strengthened. One night in a dream I was shown a body lying in a coffin in a grave with the man's head cut off even with his body. That worried me very much for a while. Finally, it was shown me that the headless body, lying there in the grave, is a figure and type of the body collectively of all the Lord's people, the chosen, elect church and family of God, awaiting the first resurrection of the just at Christ's second coming. The Head that was missing was Christ, the great Head of the Church, who has risen from the dead and is now at the right Hand of the Father in Heaven.

The Lord has blessed me to see that truth of the resurrection many times since Paul wrote in II Thessalonians 4:14, "Them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." Christ said to the thief on His right, of whom the speckled bird is a type, "Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Luke 23:43. Christ referred to the soul and spirit of that thief that was about to leave the body of that thief. This body of the thief is also a part of that same headless body that was shown to me lying there in the earth, peacefully awaiting the time when that great Spiritual Head, the Lord Jesus, will, as He promised, come back again to raise the sleeping dust of that same body and reunite it with soul and spirit in the same Paradise. The bodies of His saints are only asleep now in the grave or tomb or in the sleeping dust, awaiting the fulfillment of their election and redemption at that eternal day of endless life when the soul and spirit, now resting in the Paradise of God our Saviour, will again be reunited with that same identical body in which they resided while in this natural life and world.

When Christ was here in the flesh and upon earth, He restored life to the

twelve year old girl. See Luke 8:42. The power of the same resurrection was made manifest in Elijah's day when the widow of Zarephath's son had died. It says, "His sickness was so great that there was no breath left in him." 1st Kings 17:17. Her prayer to God was answered for the return of his soul and life when Elijah, at the command of God, stretched himself upon the child three times and cried unto the Lord, "O Lord my God, I pray thee, let his child's soul come into him again. And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; AND THE SOUL OF THE CHILD CAME INTO HIM AGAIN, AND HE REVIVED." 1st Kings 17:21, 22,23. Here is proof that the soul, as well as the spirit (for the soul cannot live without the spirit) returns back to the body. Christ also raised Lazarus from the grave after he had been dead four days. All of these cases illustrate and illuminate the glorious truth in the resurrection of the body in the Trinity of God and of the trinity of man as taught by the Apostle Paul. He said, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole SPIRIT and SOUL and BODY be preserved BLAMELESS unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." 1st Thess. 5:23.

There is much discussion as to the kind of body with which they shall be raised. Paul made that clear. That same corporal body that was shown to me, lying in that grave, will be changed to a Spiritual Body when reunited with the great Head in the first resurrection. "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a Spiritual body." 1st Cor. 1:42, 43 & 44.

The little birds here in time sing with all their power each clear morning without clouds just after the breaking of day when the natural sun is rising out of the east. But on that happy Morn of all mornings, these glorified ones at the coming of their Spiritual Son, the Lord Jesus, shall rise when He comes from the east to carry that Heritage of God, that GREAT SPECKLED BIRD, home with Him for whom He gave His life as a ransom. She will give a shout of praise and hallelujah to Him, resounding into that glory land, to Him who give her home of eternal rest and final victory over all her enemies, sin, death, hell, the grave and the devil. John tells us what that song of praise and triumph will be in a hallelujah chorus that man never composed as He opens the gate and portal of immortal glory where He will present them to His Father "not having SPOT, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." WORTHY IS THE LAMB THAT WAS SLAIN TO RECEIVE POWER, AND RICHES, AND WISDOM, AND STRENGTH, AND HONOUR, AND GLORY, AND BLESSING," forever and ever. Amen. (revelation 5:12)

The following verses come to my mind as I close this article concerning that great SPECKLED BIRD. I heard them quoted many years ago:

THE GREAT SPECKLED BIRD

What a wonderful thought I am thinking,
Concerning a Great Speckled Bird!
You remember her name is recorded
In the pages of God's Holy Word.

All the other birds flock around her.
And she is despised by the squad,
For the Great Speckled Bird of the Bible,
Represents you, the great Church of God.

Always desiring to lower her standard,
They watch every move that she makes;
How they long to find fault with her teaching,
But really they find no mistakes.
She is now spreading her wings for a journey,
That she is going to take by and by,
When the great tribulation is over,
She will meet her dear Lord in the sky.

I am glad I have learned of her teaching,
Yes, I'm glad to hope my name's in her book;
For I want to be one never fearing
On the face of my dear Saviour to look.
When He comes descending and shouting from Heaven,
On a cloud as He writes in His word
We'll be joyfully carried to meet Him
ON THE WINGS OF THE GREAT SPECKLED BIRD.

Geo. A. Fulk
January 15, 1987

(Reprint from Zions Landmark)

"And when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples."—Mark iv. 34.

What is the exact meaning of the word disciple? It means properly a learner, one who is under a teacher, whose submissive and devoted pupil he has become, and from whom he receives continual instuction. And thus a disciple of Christ is one who is admitted by the Lord Jesus into his school, whom he himself condescends personally to instruct, and who therefore learns of him to be meek and lowly of heart. A disciple of Jesus is one who sits meekly at the Redeemer's feet, receiving into his heart the gracious words which fall from his lips. This was Mary's happy posture, whom the Lord commended for choosing the better part. Such is also the posture of all the saints of God, according to the ancient declaration, "Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand; and they sat down at thy feet, every one shall receive of thy words" (Deut. xxxiii. 3). But a true and sincere disciple not only listens to his Master's instructions, but acts as he bids. So a disciple of Jesus is one who copies his Master's example, and is conformed to his Master's image. A sincere disciple is also characterized by the love which he bears to his Master; so a disciple of Jesus is one who treasures up the words of Christ in his heart, ponders over his precious promises, and delights in his glorious Person, love, and blood. A disciple of Jesus is one who bears some reflection to the image of his heavenly Master; he carries it about with him wherever he goes, that men may take knowledge of him that he has been with Jesus; and as when Moses came down from the mount his face shone from the reflection of the heavenly glory which had streamed upon his countenance, so does the true disciple shine before men with some sparkles of the glory of the Son of God. To have some of these divine features stamped upon the heart, lip, and life, is to be a disciple of Jesus. To

be much with Jesus is to be made like unto Jesus; to sit at Jesus' feet is to drink in Jesus' words; to lean upon Jesus' breast is to feel the warm heart of Jesus pulsating with love; and to feel this pulsation, causes the heart of the disciple to beat in tender and affectionate unison; to look up to Jesus, is to see a face more marred than the sons of men, yet a face beaming with heavenly beauty, dignity, and glory. To be a disciple, then, of Jesus, is to copy his example; to do the things pleasing in his sight; and to avoid the things which he abhors. To be a disciple of Jesus, is to be meek as he was; humble as he was; lowly as he was; self-denying as he was; separate from the world as he was; living a life of communion with God, as he lived when he walked here below. To take a worm of the earth and make him a disciple of Jesus is the greatest privilege God can bestow upon man. To select an obstinate, ungodly, perverse rebel, and place him in the school of Christ and at the feet of Jesus, is the highest favour God can bestow upon any child of the dust. How unsurpassingly great must be that kindness whereby the Lord condescends to bestow his grace on an alien and an enemy, and to soften and meeken him by his Spirit, and thus cause him to grow up into the image and likeness of his own dear Son. What are earthly honours and titles when compared with the favour thus conferred upon those whose foundation is in the dust? Compared with this high privilege, all earthly honours, stars and garters, titles and robes, sink into utter insignificance.

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."—John xii. 32.

Wherever Jesus is graciously and experimentally manifested to the soul, and made known by any sweet revelation of his glorious Person, atoning blood, and finished work, a secret yet sacred power is put forth, whereby we are drawn unto him, and every grace of the Spirit flows toward him as towards its attractive centre. Thus Jeremiah speaks of the saints of God as coming and singing in the height of Zion, and flowing together to the goodness of the Lord (Jer. xxxi. 12). And thus Isaiah speaks to the church of God, "Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear (or as the word rather means, shall 'palpitate' with love and joy), and be enlarged" (Isaiah lx. 5). This view of Christ by faith is what the apostle speaks of to the Galatians, as Jesus evidently set forth before their eyes (Gal. iii. 1). As thus set before our eyes, he becomes the object of our faith to look at, ("look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth"); "the altogether lovely," to whom love flows; and the Intercessor within the veil in whom hope effectually anchors. As, then, the blessed Lord is revealed to the soul by the power of God, his glorious Person held up before the eyes of the spiritual understanding, his blood and righteousness discovered to the conscience, and his suitability to all our wants and woes experimentally manifested, the blessed Spirit raises up a living faith whereby he is looked unto and laid hold of, and thus he becomes precious to all that believe in his name.

J.C. Philpot

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

MEDITATIONS ON THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Two things at once strike us as we open upon the first verse. Being a letter, it commences according to the custom of the period with, 1. The name of the writer. 2. The name of the persons to whom it was written. Both of these points will claim our attention.

First, then, the writer: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God." The ancient way of putting at the top of the letter first the name of the writer, and then the name of the person to whom he wrote was a far more sensible plan than our mode of placing the name of the writer at the end, and that of our correspondent on the back, or, according to present custom, on an envelope. He, therefore, begins at once, "Paul." How clear, how simple, how distinct is this! How adapted to call attention at once to the writer! Let us for a moment endeavour to realize the meeting of the Ephesian church to hear read to them an epistle just arrived from Paul, their beloved father and revered Apostle, who for the space of three years had not shunned to declare unto them all the counsel of God, and ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. (Acts xx. 27-31.) One of the elders, perhaps one of the very men who had wept sore and fallen on Paul's neck and kissed him, when they parted at Miletus, would open and read the epistle. How still would they all be; and as the word "Paul" broke on their ears, with what reverence and attention would they listen!

But he immediately adds his commission and authority to address them in the name of the Lord: "An apostle of Jesus Christ." Apostle was the greatest gift and the highest office in the first visible setting up of the church of Christ in the power of the Holy Ghost. "And he gave some apostles and some prophets" (Eph. IV. 11.) "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets." (1 Cor. XII. 28) As this, then, was the highest office, so it demanded peculiar requisites, and possessed peculiar privileges.

The two chief requisites for an apostle were, 1. An immediate call and commission from the Lord himself ; 2. That he had seen the Lord after he had risen from the dead, and was thus a witness of His resurrection.

The call and commission of the other apostles we have in the gospels, Luke vi. 13 gives us their call, and Matt. xxviii. 18-20 their commission; and from Acts I. 21, 22, we see the fact as well as the necessity of their being witnesses of the resurrection of Christ. These two points, then, we need not further prove.

But here comes in a difficulty in

the way of the apostleship of Paul, for he seemed to lack these two grand requisites: 1. He had not been visibly and manifestly called or commissioned by the Lord himself; 2. He had never seen the Lord personally, either before or after his resurrection. This is why he calls himself, "one born out of due time."(1 Cor. xv. 8.)

How, then, were these two difficulties obviated? Thus. The first by a special call and commission; (Acts xxvi. 12-18;) and the second by a personal revelation of the Lord to his soul. He, therefore, says, "Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?* (1 Cor. ix. 1.) In one sense, therefore, he received a higher commission than any of the other apostles; for his was from Christ in his risen glory, whereas they had received theirs from Christ in his grace. Theirs was given them when Christ was on earth, but Paul his when Christ was in heaven. Theirs was in conjunction with one another; his peculiar and special to himself.

This special call and commission he much insists on, especially whenever it was called in question. He writes, therefore, to the Galations: "Paul, an apostle, (not of men,

Some of our best manuscripts, as the Alexandrine, the Vatican and the Sinaiticus, transpose the two clauses ,and read, "Am I not free? Am I not an apostle?" which certainly better connects apostleship with seeing the Lord.

neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead.)" (Gal.i.1.) So he writes to Timothy: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope." (1 Tim.i.1.) So also, "According to the glorious gospel and the blessed God, which was committed to my trust. And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry." (1 Tim.i.11,12.)

And as he was called and commissioned in a special manner, so was he taught and qualified in a special manner. As to make up, as it were, for his not seeing Christ in the flesh, he had a special revelation of him from heaven, so to make up the loss, which he had of not receiving the oral instruction of Christ before and after the resurrection, which his fellow apostles had been favoured with, the gospel was in a peculiar and special manner revealed to him by Christ himself, after his ascension. He therefore speaks: "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Gal. i. 11,12.) So in the Epistle before us: "If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward; how that by revelation he made known unto me the mysterys; as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ." (Eph iii. 2-4.) Similar expressions may be found, 1 Cor. xi. 23; xv. 1-3.

It is very desirable to have clear views on this point, as it gives such weight and power to the Apostle's words. If one whom we could fully trust should assure us that he had seen the Lord Jesus Christ, personally in his risen glory, and that he had

received certain words and a certain message from his mouth, which he was commanded to communicate to us; with what reverence and attention should we listen to and receive his communication. This, then, we have precisely in the Apostle Paul, and in the Epistle before us. He assures us (and his whole life and labours prove how worthy he is to be implicitly believed) that he had seen Christ for himself, and that the gospel which he had preached had been revealed to him specially and particularly by the Lord Jesus.

Now, just as far as we are persuaded of this, shall we listen to and receive his words, shall we desire to understand them, to believe them, to enter into their true and heavenly meaning, to experience their power and influence in our heart, and to find them made spirit and life to our souls. This is the true spirit in which we should approach and read his epistle, drinking its words into our inmost heart, and receiving them as a special and personal message from God to us, as much as if Jesus Christ spoke to us himself from heaven.

He, therefore, adds, "By the will of God;" that is, not God's mere approval or ratification of his commission to be an apostle, but that eternal, sovereign good will and pleasure of his, by which all things were ordained, disposed and regulated. As it is this apostleship of Jesus Christ by the will of God which gave Paul all his authority to write this epistle, it may not be out of place to point out two peculiar features of this commission:

1. Its first feature is, as we have already pointed out, that it was given him by a special revelation. All the Apostles were indeed taught and empowered by the Holy Ghost; (John xvi. 13-15; Acts. i. 8;) but they did not each receive an individual and separate revelation from the Lord himself in his glory, at least not in that direct and express way with which Paul was favoured. Peter was really as much commissioned, (Gal ii. 7,) as truly inspired, both to preach and write, (Acts x. 42; 2 Pet. i 12-16; iii. 1, 2,) and as much indued with gifts of miracles and tongues (Acts ii. 4; ix 32-41) as Paul; but he was not caught up to the third heaven, nor favoured with such revelations of the Lord as the great Apostle of the Gentiles.

2. But the gospel which Paul preached was also one of a special and particular character. He was emphatically sent to preach to the Gentiles, as Peter's mission and preaching was to the Jews; (Gal. ii 6, 7;) though, as a special act of favour, God made choice among the apostles that the Gentiles, by Peter's mouth, should first hear the word of the gospel and believe. (Acts xv. 7.) If you will carefully read Eph. iii. 1-11, for it is too long for us to quote, you will see how clearly and beautifully the Apostle there unfolds the peculiar dispensation of the grace of God given unto him, and that by revelation he made known to him a mystery, or heavenly secret which from the beginning of the world had been hidden in the bosom of God.

But what was this mystery? It was that the Gentiles should be "fellow-heirs with the Jews and of the same body, and partakers of the same promise in Christ by the gospel." Thus Jew and Gentile formed one complete and glorious body, the

church. Christ, as our peace, had made both one; and there was no longer any middle wall of partition between them, for the Lord Jesus had reconciled both unto God in one body by the cross; and having done this, he now came in the ministry of the gospel to preach peace to the far-off Gentile, and to the nearer, by external privilege, Jew. This was the gospel that Paul preached, and which shines as with a ray of heavenly light through all his Epistles.

3. But now for the persons to whom the Epistle is written.

What we have already said about the commission of the writer may the better prepare us to understand why he should write to the Ephesians, and why address them as "saints and faithful in Christ Jesus." They had been Gentiles and has "walked according to the course of this world, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath even as others." But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he had loved them even when dead in sins, had quickened them into divine life; and as they had been freely and fully justified by the blood and righteousness of Christ, so were they sanctified by the Spirit of God. He could, therefore, address them as "saints," not only as sanctified by the will of the Father, and the blood of his dear Son, (Heb. xx. 10, 29,) but inwardly sanctified by the special operations, sealing and indwelling of the Holy Ghost. (Eph. i 13; ii 18, 22.)

The Epistle is addressed also to the "faithful in Christ Jesus." This seems to give the Epistle a somewhat fuller and wider scope, as if, in addition to the saints in Ephesus, it would comprehend "all the faithful in Christ Jesus" to whom it might come. The word translated "faithful" means also 'believing," or "a believer," and is frequently so rendered, as Acts x. 45; xvi, 1; 2 Cor. xi.15; 1 TIM. iv. 3, 10, 12; v. 16; etc. We might, therefore, so translate the word here, and read, "to the believers in Christ Jesus," as, indeed, would seem to be its preferable meaning, for the epistle is addressed not so much to those who are faithful in their profession as to those who posses a living faith in the Son of God. To the saints at Ephesus, then, specially, and the believers in Jesus Christ generally, is this epistle addressed; and as the first title made it peculiarly suitable to us. The Ephesian saints have passed away, and Ephesus itself is a ruin; but believers in Christ Jesus still live, and will live till the church is complete.

But we cannot leave this salutation without pointing out how grace adorns and sanctifies all that it touches. The usual cold and formal beginning of a letter in ancient times we may see, Acts xxiii. 26, where we have an original and authentic Roman letter: Claudius Lysias unto the most excellent governor Felix sendeth greeting." Preserving the usual mode, how the Apostle infuses life, as it were, into a dead formula. How cold, though respectful, is "the most excellent governor," and how bare is the word "greeting." But how warm, how full of grace and life, as contrasted with this cold dead salutation if "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace be to you, and peace,

from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ."

But now a few words as to the blessings prayed for. These are "grace and peace" —grace the fountain, peace the stream; "grace," as containing in its bosom all that favour which God the Father has towards his people; and "peace," all that personal manifestation of it which could be realized and enjoyed from a sense of pardoning mercy. But we must not here enlarge, as much lies before us, and our progress at present has been but slow.

J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union Meeting will be, the Lord willing, at Dan River Church on the fifth Sunday in January. Dan River is host church for this meeting.

We extend a cordial invitation for all who love the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and especially to all ministers of our faith and order to meet with us. Song Service will begin at 10:00 a.m. and preaching to begin at 10:30.

Kenneth R. Key, Pastor
Bro. Boyd Minter, Clerk

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 1987

Ballard Barker, VA	20.00
Mrs. Clyde Belcher, VA	2.00
Mrs. Elva C. Martin, VA	2.00
Mrs. Kenneth H. Mathis, VA	2.00
Mrs. Eva Warner, FL	5.00
Ferrell Bird, OH	20.00
Mrs. Geneva Pettis, LA	5.00
Oscar Pickral, VA	25.00
O.W. Parks, TX	7.00
Troy G. Shepard, NC	2.00
Mr. & Mrs. J.B. Blaylock, NC	7.00
Mrs. Lawrence Holloway, MD	2.00
Tommy Middleton, NC	2.00
Luther Gaskill, NC	2.00
Levie D. Goard, VA	5.00
Noel Lavinder, VA	2.00
Mrs. Elsie Moon, AL	2.00
Miss Clarisse Brooks, NC	32.00
Miss Justine Alexander, AR	10.00
Mrs. Charity I. Dowdy, NC	2.00
Mrs. Lillian Davis, NC	2.00
Charles P. Hayes, AL	5.00
A.R. Potter, VA	10.00
R.C. May, VA	2.00
Mrs. Hattie H. Radford, VA	10.00
Levi R. McGough, AL	2.00

OBITUARIES

ROBERT JOHN ADA

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Brother Bob Ada was born January 11, 1916, in Cape Vincent, New York, and died August 14,

1986, in Salisbury, Maryland. He leaves to mourn his wife of 39 years, Sister Julia Ada; two daughter by previous marriage, Nancy King of Seaford, Delaware; and Betty Perry of Salisbury, Maryland; seven grandchildren, two great grandchildren, three brothers, Francis Ada of Sylvan Beach, New York, William Ada of Cape Vincent, New York, and Harry Ada of Providence, Rhode Island; four sisters, Lilla Bombard, Watertown, New York, Sadie Ihrig, and Cora May Ada of Rochester, New York, and Betty Cassentine of Fulton, New York. His funeral was conducted at Baker and Bounds Funeral Home, Salisbury, Maryland, by Elders Cleo Robertson and Julian Williams.

We, at Salisbury Old School Baptist Church, mourn the loss of a loved one, but we feel our loss is his eternal gain. We watched Brother Ada as he began to attend our meetings. We rejoiced as his interest and concern for the truth began to be manifested. We felt his pain as he endured his illness of cancer with patience and without complaining. Then, the first weekend of August, 1986, Brother Bob was unable to attend either Saturday or Sunday service. After service on Sunday, we visited him at home; and in tears, he asked for a home with the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church. The members gathered in his home and received him into the fellowship of the church. He was too ill to be baptized and died within two weeks. No more tears, no more pain, no more sorrows; he now awaits the glorious morning of the resurrection.

Read and approved in conference December 6, 1987.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Phyllis Farlow, Clerk

SISTER DIXIE DUPREE

We, the church at Tarboro, trust it has pleased our almighty God to call our dear Sister Dixie Dupree home. She was blessed to live on this earth 79 years. We feel thankful to have had her as a part of our church for so many years. Sister Dixie was a kind and loving member and we all loved her. She was a firm believer of Salvation by Grace. Sister Dixie believed that all things were in the hands of God and whatever happened was the purpose of our dear Saviour. She was faithful to her church and was always willing to do her part whenever she was able. Sister Dupree was blessed to join Tarboro Church in September, 1946. We feel it was the purpose of God that she came to our church.

We trust Sister Dupree is resting in peace with her God and our loss is her eternal gain. We send our sympathy to her husband and family and trust God will send them the Comforter. He has promised to never leave nor forsake us.

We resolve that three copies of this respect be made : one for the family, one for the church records and one sent to the "Signs of the Times" for publication.

This done by order of conference.

Elder Henry Jones, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

DEACON WARNARD C. LOCKE

Written in memory of our beloved father and husband, Deacon Warnard C. Locke, who was born August 6, 1910 and departed this life May 31, 1986. He was the son of Deacon Charles H. Locke and Sister Milena Perkins Locke, both deceased.

Brother Locke was united in marriage to Sister Grace Creason Locke on August 28, 1929. To this union was born two sons, Roy Lee and Charles Ronald, both of Benton, Kentucky. He is survived by his wife Grace, both sons, a sister, Imogene Creason of Benton, Kentucky; a brother John Vernon Locke of Lake Alford, Florida, five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

On the 2nd. Sunday of June, 1968, while attending the baptism service of their eldest son, Brother Warnard and Sister Grace asked for a home with the Soldier Creek Primitive Baptist Church and were received at the water's edge. Elder Paul Poyner was conducting the services. The Soldier Creek Church asked for the ordination of Brother Locke to the office of deacon on October 11, 1969.

Brother Locke was a firm believer in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace and a staunch defender of the truth as it is in Christ. He loved the church and was always in attendance until the last few months of his illness. During his illness, he never complained but would only speak of the blessing he had received from his Maker and Saviour. Although, he loved his church and family, Brother Warnard was made willing to depart this life to be with his saviour, whom he loved.

Brother Locke was interred in the Lyles Cemetery on June 3, 1986, to await the second coming of Christ. Elders Rush Hendrix and Wayman Chapell conducted the services.

As a husband, a father and a Brother in Christ, we mourn his departure, but we know he has gone to a better place.

Written by his son
Roy L. Locke

ELDER W. T. POSEY

William Thurmon Posey, the third child of Samuel William and Lela Stamps Posey, was born near Gordo, Alabama, August 16, 1916. Both of his parents died before he was three. He and his two sisters were reared by his uncle and aunt, Frank and Trannie Farley Stamps, on their farm near Gordo.

Brother Posey attended local schools until his late teens when he began working for grocers in Tuscaloosa. He operated city buses in Tuscaloosa and Northport, did military service in World War II, and returned to Tuscaloosa. His union in marriage to Annie Bell Lancaster was blessed with four children : a son, William Ralph Posey, Colorado Springs, Colo.; three daughters, Carolyn Lee, Lake Charles, La.; Jewel Gay, Tuscaloosa, Ala.; and Teresa Dambach, Birmingham, Ala. He and his family operated highly successful restaurants in Tuscaloosa for more than thirty years.

On the first Sunday in December, 1966, Thurmon and Annie Bell asked

for a home with Salem Church of which Elder W. L. Norris was pastor. They were received on confession of faith and were baptized by Elder E. E. McCool on Saturday, December 31, 1966. Brother Posey served as clerk of Salem Church for nine years, during which time he was ordained deacon on August 7, 1971, and began preaching in May, 1975. His ordination to the full work of the ministry was on February 2, 1980.

He served as pastor and as co-pastor of both Salem and Pleasant Ridge and quite often supplied at other churches in the Hopewell and Buttahatchies Associations. He and Sister Posey attended many of the associations and special meetings from Texas to Kentucky and Virginia.

Circulatory ailments necessitated a slower pace for him during the last three years, but he rarely missed an appointment until the fourth Sunday in September, 1986, when he had to enter the hospital in Northport. After two days, he was transferred to the DCH Medical Center in Tuscaloosa where he underwent surgery to replace four inches of an artery in his chest. He was apparently recovering well from this when one of his thighs was broken near the hip. That required more surgery for the insertion of a pin. He stood that operation well, was transferred to the Rehabilitation Pavilion, and seemed to be recovering satisfactorily after treatment to dissolve a blood clot which had developed in the affected leg. The second week-end in November he was eating and sleeping well (without special attention) and was expecting to be allowed to return to his home shortly. In the predawn hours of Tuesday, November 11, 1986, (apparently without much warning to the staff), he began to bleed internally and passed on very quickly.

Besides his wife and children named above, he is survived by his two sisters: Luna Squires, Mobile, Ala.; and Laurine Nixon, Northport, Ala.; by ten grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; and other relatives.

His funeral was conducted on Thursday, November 13, by Elders Albert Brock and Clovis Townley at Sunset Funeral Home with Burial in Tuscaloosa Memorial Park.

He is sorely missed among the Old Baptist Churches of west and north central Alabama and in other regions where he frequently visited. There was abundant evidence in his walk and talk that he trusted wholly in the grace on God and that he had good reasons for his hope in Him.

Written at the request of his family by one who feels that he knew him well.

Levert Howell

ST. JOHN 17: 1-4

These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

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POEM

He Maketh No Mistake

My Father's way may twist and turn.
My heart may throb and ache.
But in my soul I'm glad I know.
He maketh no mistake.

My cherished plans may go astray.
My hopes may fade away.
But still I'll trust my Lord to lead
For He doth know the way.

Tho' night be dark and it may seem
That day will never break:
I'll pin my faith, my all in Him.
He maketh no mistake.

There's so much now I cannot see.
My eyesight's far too dim:
But come what may, I'll simply trust
And leave it all to Him.

For by and by the mist will lift
And plain it all He'll make.
Through all the way, tho' dark to me.
He made not one mistake.

A.M. Overt

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EDITORIAL

SALVATION IS OF THE LORD.

There are many, so called, plans of salvation rampant in the world today and millions of people to subscribe to them all around the globe. All of them are different, place varied demands upon their followers to quality them to inhabit heaven and enjoy the benefits thereof for eternity. They are available to anyone that will accept their articles of faith and support their cause with their efforts and money, and I am fearful that the main requirement is their money. It is unbelievable how gullible people are to the doctrines of men that are declared, as the gospel, in the world today. It is fearful to listen to them loudly proclaim themselves as men of God witnessing to a lost and dying world, and tell how God wants them saved, and how much of their money is required for them to help God perform his plan of salvation. It seems like anyone could see the greed and hypocrisy of these false prophets and their self serving schemes. Even after the recent scandal of a major T.V. evangelist was exposed the others continue to spue forth the same damnable doctrine and join in condemning others who are doing the same thing. Surely these are the ones spoken of in Jude, "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. These ungodly men proclaim that the plan of salvation is effective only if man cooperates in the matter. Jude says, "These be those who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit."

This is certainly not the plan of salvation that is spoken of in the scriptures. The one that is told of by the writers from first to last ascribe all of the glory and honor unto God who created the heavens and the earth. Jonah, after a very trying experience stated the solemn truth as simply and as direct as it can be stated, "salvation is of the Lord." He learned, the hard way, that the salvation of man is sure and steadfast and will be accomplished as planned with or without the cooperation of the individual. He was made to acknowledge that man experiences the work of salvation in their life, but that God is the author and finisher of it. God

originated the plan of salvation of all of the saints and the success of the work is not predicated on any uncertain possibilities. He declared how it was to be accomplished in the lives of the chosen generation and provided all of the events and circumstances that are necessary.

Jonah, was commanded of God to go to Ninevah and cry against that great city for their wickedness is come up before me. Jonah had other ideas and planned to go down to Tarsish, but, through many trials and sufferings he arrived in Ninevah at the time appointed of the Father and preached the message that God bid him to preach and I believe that it was the revelation that he had received enroute which was his ultimate lesson that, "salvation is of the Lord." It was on his journey when he had been cast down to the bottom of the mountains his heart fainted within him and he was made to remember and pray unto God in his holy temple and his prayer was heard. Then he knew that it was the hand of the Lord that had led him in all of the way to make him acknowledge that his salvation from beginning to end was of God and all his experiences were part of it from the beginning.

This is a place where all of God's children are brought from time to time in their experience to reaffirm in their heart and soul that salvation is the work of God alone. This was typified as the children of Israel were brought to the Red Sea and made to cry because of their hopeless situation in nature. The Red Sea was ahead of them, mountains on either side and the Egyptians close behind and pursueing them. They were ready to give up and indeed cried unto Moses, "Let us alone that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness," but this was not the plan that God had for them. How similar to Jonah's position this is, and in neither instance could the outcome be resolved by the efforts or abilities of man. "Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." and in the case of Jonah "and the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land." The salvation displayed in each of these instances is by the same power and wisdom that is demonstrated in the deliverance of every child of grace from the law that condemns them to death and eternal ruin.

Joseph's experience was similar to Jonah's in the fact that neither of them could have delivered themselves from their predicament by their own personal wisdom or actions. From the time Jonah boarded the ship to Tarsish until he arrived in Ninevah he was never in a position that he had any choice regarding his next step. He was cast into the sea, swallowed by the great fish and was three days in the belly of the fish or as Jonah described it, "and he heard me out of the belly of hell cried I and thou heardest my voice." From the time Joseph was taken captive by his brethren, cast into the pit, sold into slavery, cast into prison and even while in servitude to the Pharoah he was never free to determine his own way or to select his own course of action. He was in bondage even as the children of Israel or Jonah but it was all to bring him to the place where he

would acknowledge the fact that his entire journey was for a purpose and that purpose was to save the children of Israel alive. He told his brethren that what they had done was meant, by them, for evil but that God who had ordained it meant the same action for good as it was on that day.

This same lesson is learned by all of the saints in their experience as they run with patience the race that is set before them. Peter went out and wept bitterly after he denied his Lord three times and then remembered that Jesus had told him he would even while Peter was standing and boasting that he would go with him even unto death. How many times they are all confronted by their weakness, their pride and vanity and are made to realize that if their salvation was not of the Lord then they would have no hope at all. Jesus asked Peter three times, "Lovest thou me," and the third time Peter answered him," thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."

The apostle Paul was brought by this same landmark in his travels. He was caught up to the third heaven and heard unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter, and was given an abundance of revelations in things of the glory of the heavenly kingdom. He then said that lest he should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelation there was given him a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of satan to buffet him. Paul then prayed thrice that it should depart from him but the Lords reply was, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Paul was then made glad of his infirmites because he saw that through the suffering Christ was manifest in his life. Paul was made to realize that salvation is of the Lord and that salvation includes this thorn in the flesh, therefore he gloried in tribulations knowing that tribulations worketh patience, patience experience, experience hope and hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given us. This is worth any amount of suffering and tribulations in the flesh, it sustained the three Hebrew children when cast into the fiery furnace, Daniel, Stephen and will support and enable all to face anything that they may be required to endure.

If I understand the scriptures and the truth that is set forth therein, and I have had an experience of Grace as I hope that I have, then the one thing that I can say that I am sure of is that salvation is of the Lord from the beginning to the end. God's children are born under the law and are in bondage to it as surely as the ones mentioned above were in their bonds til set free by the mighty power of God. They are all brought to the place that they see their ruined condition and there is no way out and then they are made to stand still, and experience the miracle of salvation as they are made aware of being a new creature in Christ. Then and only then can they sing the song of deliverance and truly worship God in spirit and in truth.

Jesus is the salvation of every heir of grace. On the isle of Patmos he told John, "I am Alpha and Omega the beginning and the end." and again, "Fear not, I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and

behold I am alive for evermore, Amen, and have the keys of hell and of death ," Since Jesus came into the world to insure salvation to everyone chosen in him before the foundation of the world and prior to his death in his prayer to God he said, "I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do," it stands sure and certain in the hearts and minds of all true believers that salvation is of the Lord. All of the recorded scriptures, as well as the experience of all the saints attest to the truth of this fact. You will probably find more agreement on this one point of doctrine than any other among those who are the recipients of this salvation. They know that in and of themselves they could never have attained to this blessed state.

For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation. This is a beautiful statement and shows that the salvation of the saints is because of the love of God for them even before they were aware of Him. This is stated many times in the writings of the Apostle Paul but more directly in Ephesians where he declares that all of the heirs of grace were chosen in Jesus before the foundation of the world that they should be holy and without blame before him in love: because they were so predestinated of God according to his good pleasure. With all of this assurance it seems that they could rest on these promises, but the thorn in the flesh, as with Paul, is not if they are true or not but do they apply to them. I believe the thorn in the flesh of the Apostle Paul was the doubts that he had of the thing that was most precious to him. In the flesh man will never have full knowledge of the fact that they are children of God, they have a strong hope but they also have doubts that they are included, seeing themselves as they are in the flesh.

And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness. To me this is the way of salvation, it is as much a path or trail that all of the elect shall travel. Certainly it is the way of holiness. It is designed and established according to the decrees of God for the wayfaring man, and surely this describes the pilgrim on a journey. There are no exits from this highway. All of the travelers will reach their desired destination regardless of the trials and tribulations that they may encounter in the way, and they will all acclaim that salvation is of the Lord, the Lord meant it for good as it is this day to save many alive, or it is by the grace of God that I am what I am. All of these are acknowledging the same basic truth that salvation is of the Lord.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campell

CORRESPONDENCE

Route 4, Box 21 A
Winnsboro, TX 75494
January 19, 1988

Dear Brother Kenneth;

As I was reading in one of Joe's books the other day, I ran across this sermon by J.C. Philpot that gave me much comfort. And as I

read it, I thought of others who are under heavy afflictions, too, who may receive a measure of comfort from it. I hope you may find space in some future issue of the SIGNS to print it.

I wish I could personally thank everyone who has reached out to my children and I from across the land, especially out your way, during our beloved husband and Daddy's illness and home going. We have felt your prayers. We have felt your love. If you could have been with us and the brethren here, you would have wept with us, too. But we do not weep, we sorrow not as those who have no hope. Although we are grieving and there is a great void in our lives, we are made to rejoice in Brother Joe's home going and we find happiness in what one precious little Sister exclaimed, "He's with the King, he's with the King!"

In bonds of that everlasting love,
Audrey Hamrick

(See Voices of the Past in this issue .)
Editors

Dear Elder Key,

At lunch on the day my daddy passed away, he charged me in no uncertain terms to write an article for the "Signs." Although he had on a few occassions earlier encouraged me to write, never before was he so fixed in his determination to see me get started. I promised him during that lunch period Monday, December 21, that Lord willing, I would indeed write an article. Little did I realize that late that same afternoon he would suffer yet another heart attack and would be called home that night. I have endeavored to do what my daddy wanted. He was not only a loving and patient daddy to me, he was also my beloved pastor and friend. His departure has been a hard and painful blow.

After prayerfully selecting a text and having written a large part of a rough draft, I discovered an article in the January issue of the "Signs" which largely covered the same subject matter. I merely skimmed this article on the resurrection of the dead by Elder Dotson and went back to work on my own article. Having finished my article, I went back over Elder Dotson's article, reading it in detail. As you can see, we don't see eye to eye on all points. Surely Elder Dotson was a good editor of the "Signs" and was blessed to be a faithful minister among God's people. Therefore, whatever differences may exist between the views of this man of God and myself; it is my sincere desire will be confined to loving differences.

Elder Key, after writing the article, there has been a burden removed from me. It is neither my intention nor desire for you to feel a burden to publish it. Do as you feel best, knowing you have my sincere wishes either way. We thank you and all the brethren up there for your prayers and your expressions of sympathy during this dark hour for us. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." May our gracious Lord see fit to continue His rich blessings upon you.

In Gospel bonds,
Jimmy Hamrick

(See article in this issue.)
Editors

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Elder L .J . Brammer

Union Primitive Baptist Church , Patrick County Virginia , of the Smith River Association , Constituted in early eighteen hundred's or about 1815. This is the third building , present building stands just off highway 626 , a short distance from where it was first built , two miles from Fairystone State Park .

Elder Leonard J . Brammer is our pastor and has served us for almost thirty years .

Services each fourth Sunday at 11:00 a.m . and Saturday before at 2:00 p .m . Communion is fourth Sunday in April .

ARTICLES

1 THESSALONIANS 4: 16-18

"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first : Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord . Wherefore comfort one another with these words ."

The Holy Spirit of God knew exactly what words to inspire the Apostle Paul to write which would be most appropriate to comfort God's people over the loss of loved ones . Although the actual context of this particular message of comfort goes back to the thirteenth verse ; Lord willing, we will only look at these last three verses which alone could never be fully expounded in all their meaning, beauty, and comfort .

"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven ." James 1:17 tells us, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Surely no greater and perfect gift has ever descended from above than the Lord Jesus Himself . And did not He descend in order for His people to ascend? Is not Jesus the ladder let down from heaven which Jacob saw in his dream ? Among the miracles which Jesus performed during His first advent was in behalf of a woman who had "a spirit of infirmity eighteen years and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself." Indeed, "With man it is impossible, but with God, all things are possible." What she could in no wise do, Christ personally undertook for her and therefore she was made straight and glorified God . This is typical of God's people who when quickened and made alive to feel the deformity of their sins, realize they are bowed way over and can in no wise lift themselves. Only the Lord Himself can remove such a burden by carrying it all the way to the cross for judgement . It is also typical of our physical bodies which when bowed down in death present an overwhelming problem ; for though part of us, we are powerless to lift these decaying bodies and fashion them like the Lord's precious body. Is all hopeless ? No ! "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout with a voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God : and the dead in Christ shall rise first :"

We have three things listed as taking place with our Lord's second coming . First, there will be a shout , and what a glorious shout of authority and command this must be ! "for the hour is coming , in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." Next, we have the voice of the archangel . Where there is an archangel, there must needs be many angels under him and all this angelic host joyfully responding to the summons of the Lord . We read of many angels associated with His second coming as recorded in Matthew 24:31 "And he shall send his angels

with a great sound of the trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to another." This brings us to the sound of the trumpet, the third item listed in Thessalonians as taking place at our Lord's return and also just referred to in Matthew above. This trumpet will sound doom for all outside of Christ and deliverance for those that are His. When the walls of Jericho came tumbling down, it was with the sound of trumpets, and when the builders laid again the foundation of the temple of the Lord, trumpets were sounded. A favorite passage referring to this last trump is 1 Corinthians 15:51 and 52 "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

God's people through the ages have had a yearning desire for this change. Job stated, "I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my veins be consumed within me." David prayed, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." Isaiah said, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."

The dead in Christ shall indeed rise first and Job, David and Isaiah will be among that blessed number. The more we are given to enter into the writings of the prophets and apostles, the more precious these men after God's own heart become to us and the phrase "dead in Christ" begins to take on more meaning. Moreover, the longer we sojourn here below, the more we are called upon to bear the loss of those saints who have shared in our sorrows and our joys. Sometimes the call strikes ever so close to home. A beloved brother, sister, husband, wife, son, daughter, pastor, father, mother, yoke-fellow, friend receives the summons of death and oh, how hard it is to let them go! One by one they join the ranks of the "dead in Christ."

We realize of course, that upon death, the soul and spirit are immediately ushered into the glorious presence of God, and what we are left with is the dead body of the saint. However, is not this dead body precious in the sight of the Lord and should it not be precious to us? When Stephen was stoned to death and his spirit and soul departed from the body to join the Lord above, we find the body of Stephen, though dead and lifeless, still such an integral part of him as to yet be referred to as Stephen. Acts 8 : 2 states, "And devout men carried Stephen to his burial and made great lamentation over him." If this is the behavior of devout men, should we not wish to behave likewise wise? It is wrong to mourn as those who have no hope, but it is certainly right and proper to mourn, while ever realizing that our dark cloud of sorrow has a silver lining for at His coming, "the dead in Christ shall rise first."

"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds ." What a glorious reunion this will be! The ones on earth who are alive when the Lord returns shall be transformed, glorified, and caught up together with the recently resurrected and glorified bodies now reunited to the souls and spirits of those who had gone on before . Shall we recognize one another ? With a loving difference towards those who say no, we are persuaded that as Moses and Elijah are recognizable in a state of glory (see Luke 9 :30-33), so will the rest of God's people . As for the fear that were we able to recognize one another in heaven, the failure to find some loved ones there would mar our joy in heaven is concerned; surely the presence of Christ in heaven will infinitely make up for the absence of anyone else. Besides, we will be able in that day to say amen to anything which contributes to the glory of God.

As wonderful as a reunion of the saints can ever be, it pales in significance to why they are caught up together in the clouds ; namely, "to meet the Lord in the air ." There indeed neither can be nor will be a heaven without the Lord Himself being there . The eyes of the saints will then be able to see how true it is that "of Him, and through Him and to Him, are all things : to Whom be glory for ever . Amen ." Whenever we experience great joy on earth, it seems the time flies by all the faster and we are soon reminded that heights of joy are indeed fleeting here below . Only the Lord knows how many times multiplied over will our greatest joy on earth be when we are ushered into the magnificent and glorious presence of our Triune God. But how long can such raptures of joy possibly last ? Only as long as we are with the Lord . But how long can we possibly be blessed to be with the Lord ? "And so shall we ever be with the Lord . Therefore, comfort one another with these words ."

In Gospel Bonds,
Elder Jimmy Hamrick

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

PSALM 71 : 1 - 5

In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion .

Deliver me in thy righteousness, and cause me to escape : incline thine ear unto me, and save me .

Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort : thou hast given commandment to save me; for thou art my rock and my for - tress .

Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man .

For thou art my hope, O Lord God : thou art my trust from my youth .

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

SUFFERING AND ITS BENEFIT

Preached on Lord's Day Evening
August 13th , 1853
Eden Street Chapel, Hampstead Road
England

But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." I Peter v. 10.

When Peter was in the garden of Gethsemane with his suffering Lord, he was not qualified to write an epistle to the Church of God. The hand that grasped the sword which cut off the right ear of Malchus was not the hand to hold the pen of an inspired apostle. Like other good men in the days of early profession, he had more zeal than knowledge, more fleshly ardour than deep teachings of the Spirit and rich experience of the love of God. Had he then written, he would most probably have used his pen as he used his sword; and in cutting down the foes of Zion he might unwittingly have smitten some of her choice friends. But when he had passed through affliction's fiery furnace, had the dross and tin taken from him, and had become melted and softened by the grace of God, then as the blessed Spirit breathed upon him, and touched his pen with His own sanctifying grace, he was qualified to write these epistles so full of power and blessedness, and so full of rich experience of divine truth. I know not whether you paid much attention this morning, when I read the first chapter of this First Epistle. Many seem to think the reading of God's Word a very unimportant portion of the service of God, and in some chapels it is omitted altogether, much, I think, to the loss of the people. But, in reading the chapter this morning, I could not but be struck with the richness and depth of divine truth with which that portion of God's Word seemed to me full even to overflowing.

We see, then, in the case of the Apostle Peter, how he was melted, moulded, and softened by the furnace of affliction and temptation; and when grace had wrought these blessed effects in his soul, then, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, he could sit down and pen this epistle for the edification of the Church of God in all times.

The grand point of the words which I have read --- and from which I hope with God's blessing to speak a little this evening --- is suffering and the benefit of it. But I shall, with a desire to bring the subject more plainly before your mind, and to enforce it more powerfully upon your conscience, divide my text into four leading branches.

I. I shall endeavour to speak a little on the fulness and freeness of grace.

II. The holy and heavenly calling wherewith the children of God are blessed.

III. The necessity and nature of suffering.

IV. The blessed benefits and divine fruits that spring out of it.

You will find this claim drawn out

in our text; and it will be my business, as the Lord may enable, to take up these truths and to lay them before you, looking up to the Lord to bless His own Word with power to your consciences.

I. The God of all grace. How sweet is the word "grace" to every God-taught soul! But there is something, to my mind, singularly beautiful in the expression which the apostle here makes use of --- "The God of all grace." It is as if he would lead our hearts at once to the fountain; as if he would bid us not look at the stream, but lift up our eyes and view, in the actings of faith, the ever-flowing source of all grace.

We may view this part of our subject negatively and positively. God is "the God of all grace;" and, therefore, there is no grace but that which is of God. Many seem disposed unduly to magnify what are called "means of grace." They are good when God through them is pleased to communicate grace; but without His blessing what are they? We see sometimes as we pass along the streets the pavements broken up and pipes and tubes lying about. What are all these pipes for? To convey water; but of what use are they if there be no water to flow through them? Will iron pipes of themselves bring water? So what is all our praying, preaching, and the ordinances of God's house? They are mere pipes, and need the water of grace to flow through them if they are to be of any benefit to us. If the water of grace flow through these into the soul, what do we feel grateful for? The water of the pipe? It is the stream of mercy and grace that flows into the soul for which we are thankful, and not the mere conduit through which that grace is communicated.

But positively He is "the God of all grace." But how, and in what sense? Why, of grace in all its various branches, ramifications, and developments.

1. For instance, there is convincing grace, for by the grace of God we are convinced of sin. The arrow of conviction shot into our conscience, making us to feel that we were sinners, and to cry for pardoning mercy, came from God. God was the Author of that feeling, if it were a spiritual conviction. It was He that wounded, He that pierced, He that killed, He that brought down, and He that opened the wound which nothing but the blood of Christ could heal.

2. But He is the God of pardoning grace. The same grace that led Him to wound leads Him to heal; the same grace that brought down raises up; the same grace that strips clothes; the same grace that preaches the thunder of the law, preaches the peace-speaking gospel; and the same grace that reveals the malady and uncovers the sore, brings the balm of Gilead and reveals the heavenly Physician. Therefore He is the God of pardoning grace in the sweet manifestations of the Saviour's love.

3. But the soul often wanders from its heavenly fountain. It backslides from God; and then grace is manifested in its restoration. David speaks of this restoring grace when he says, "He restoreth my soul." He brings us back to the spot whence we have wandered, and manifests the riches of His pardoning love, unsealing the fountain once opened for sin and for uncleanness. He it is who applies to the conscience the blood of sprinkling

which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel.

4. But we have walked, perhaps, in temptation's fiery path, and sometimes have been well nigh overwhelmed with a sea of trouble. As one said of old --- "All Thy waves and Thy billows have gone over me." Then we want supporting grace. "His left hand is under my head, and His right hand doth embrace me." "Underneath are the everlasting arms." As we pass through the mazes of affliction, are in the furnace of trial, or are tossed on the deep waters of sorrow, still His arm is underneath to sustain.

5. But as we have by nature a heart "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked;" as we live in an ungodly world, and carry in our bosom the seed of all sin, and are tempted continually to evil, we want keeping grace. "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." Of that too He is the Author, for none can stand a single moment except as upheld by the mighty power of God.

6. And when you come to lay your head on a dying pillow, and the cold sweats of death gather upon your forehead; when the eye-strings are breaking, and you must take leave of this world, and of all that is in it, you will want dying grace to support you in a dying hour.

Thus He is the "God of all grace." All the grace that ever the church had; of all the grace the church ever needed or will need, He is the God. Look at the sun, that beautiful emblem of the Holy Spirit's own choosing to represent the Sun of Righteousness. How that glorious orb of day has shone for thousands of years! Look at the thousands of harvests which have been reaped under his benignant influence; think of the millions of human beings that have been fed by the fruits that he has matured and ripened. But the sun still shines on in all his original warmth, light and beauty. He is not exhausted; he manifests no signs of exhaustion, nor has lost anything by shining; nor have all the rays and beams that have flowed from him drained him of one jot of his light and warmth. He is still the glorious orb of day, shining and shining, and losing neither light, nor heat, nor influence. So it is with the God of all grace! Thousands of hearts He has gladdened by the beams of His grace; thousands of contrite sinners He has comforted by the pourings out of His favour; but He is still the God of all grace, which is ever, therefore, flowing in rich streams of mercy, goodness, and love to the church of Jesus. Oh! why should we be so contracted as we often are, and lose sight of the God of all grace? Why dwell so much upon the creature instead of dwelling upon Him whom to know is life eternal? The God of all grace! This is a worthy theme, and I might enlarge upon it, but I have other work this evening before me to do.

II. I must, therefore, proceed with my text. "Who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus."

There may, perhaps, have been this thought in the heart of some present: All this no doubt is true; but what interest have I in it? I hear of the God of all grace; but have I grace? Has the God of all grace bestowed His grace upon me? You may well ask yourself that question, considering how few there are, speaking comparatively, upon whom God has bestow-

ed His grace; but just see what gives a manifested interest in it. What makes that grace my own? "Who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus." Calling, our second point of consideration, manifests an interest in the grace of God, and in the God of all grace. We are told by the same inspired apostle to "make our calling and election sure." How can we make our calling sure? By wrestling with God till He makes it sure in us, by sealing it with His own heavenly witness upon our breast, and making it as plain in our hearts as the sun in the sky. But it is not every child of God who can make his calling and election thus undoubtedly sure. There are some who, like Belshazzar, cannot read the writing on the wall, and want a Daniel to decipher it for them; but they have not an interpreter who can read one letter. Aye; there are many of God's children who cannot read their own experience; they cannot trace out their own grace, nor make manifest to themselves their own calling. They need then an interpreter, as Job speaks --- "One of a thousand, who can save them from going down into the pit," by showing them how to read the work of faith in their soul. This is the benefit of an experimental ministry, to discover to you what you could not otherwise learn for yourself --- opening up the work of God which is locked up from your own eyes .

There is then a being "called." This calling is "of God." It is "through Jesus Christ," and it is "unto God's eternal glory."

Divine calling is a special work of God upon the soul, separating from the world, profane and professing, bringing down high looks, piercing the conscience with convictions, and raising up longing desires after Christ, with a going to Him for mercy; leading the soul with weeping and supplication to the feet of the Mediator; and then in God's own time and way making Christ precious, revealing His person, blood and righteousness, and shedding abroad the love of God in the heart by the Holy Ghost. To know anything of this divine teaching is to be made a "a partaker of the heavenly calling," and to experience a saving work in the soul. And consider those striking and heavenly words, "to His eternal glory." Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." To be called then unto God's eternal glory, to view it hereafter in its full blaze on the heights of Zion, to enjoy it with a soul rendered capable of bearing its full and eternal weight, and the body made a fit treasure-house and immortal companion for the glorified spirit; to be enraptured with the manifestations of God's presence and love throughout a boundless, glorious eternity --- what prospects of heavenly bliss are opened up and revealed in those words! What the full enjoyment of this unutterable weight of glory will be is beyond all present human conception, beyond the apprehension of the wisest saint, or the experience of the deepest taught saint of God. At the best we can only have a faint glimpse of the glory which God has prepared for them that love Him. But it is not so of our calling. No matter how desponding some of the Lord's family may be, they are called unto His eternal glory, to the preparation for it

here, and to the right enjoyment of it hereafter.

III. But let us pass a little farther onward. We have not yet got into the marrow of our subject; we are still but at the vestibule --- we have not yet penetrated into the inner court. We must pass the entrance before we get into the apartments of the palace. There is no entering into glory except through suffering; nor is there any getting into the rich experience of grace without affliction and trial. Was it not so with Jesus? What did He say to His disciples? "Ought not the Son of man to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" And has not the Lord Jesus led the way in which we are to tread; and must we not be conformed to His suffering image here that we may be conformed to His glorified image hereafter? "If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him." If we have no union with Christ in suffering, we shall have no union with Christ in glory; and therefore there is a necessity of suffering with the Lord Jesus. Now it is this suffering which so deeply tries the minds of God's exercised family. If they were not so heavily weighted, they could get on, or at least they think they could; if the road were easy and the path smooth, if there were no trials and temptations, they, at least in their own apprehensions, could travel cheerily on. But when they come into temptation's fiery furnace, and are baptized into a flood of suffering and sorrow, then their faith seems to give way, and their hope to stagger they reel to and fro like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end to believe there is a grain of grace in their heart.

There is a necessity then for suffering; but though there be this necessity, yet one thing is very evident, that all God's people do not suffer in the same way, or to the same degree. God chooses our afflictions for us. He knows what peculiar trials are needful for every one of those who fear His name. We differ in bodily constitution, education, habits of life, powers of mind, and natural disposition. We differ as widely within, as we differ without; the features of our mind are as various as the features of our face; and therefore my suffering would not be your sufferings nor your suffering mine. We have each our own peculiar path of trial and suffering which God has appointed us to walk in. Some suffer in mind, others in body; some in their family, others in their circumstances; the trials of some are chiefly in things temporal, others suffer a fiery baptism in matters purely spiritual. But in addition to all other sources of trial, there is one common to all the redeemed family, a daily, hourly conflict with the body of sin and death, and the workings of evil in the carnal mind.

But time will not admit of a minuter detail of the various sufferings which are appointed for the family of God. Some may be deeper, others shallower; some shorter, others longer; but each is designed to work a like purpose --- the conforming of the soul to the suffering image of Jesus.

You will observe that in this chain there is a beautiful proportion and harmony. Suffering does not come at the beginning of the chain. First, we have "the God of all grace," the everflowing, overflowing fountain of

goodness and mercy , being the source of all . Then we have the "calling," whereby this grace is made manifest to the soul , and of which Christ is the blessed subject, object, sum , and centre . And then comes "suffering ," the third link of the heavenly chain . Grace first , calling next, and suffering third. If, then, you have not this link, the link of suffering there is a breach in the chain . If the God of all grace be your God, He has called or will call you; if He has called you , He has appointed unto you a certain measure of suffering by which you will be , as the apostle speaks --- "filling up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ," that is, not His vicarious sufferings , but His afflictions in His members .

IV. We are now then prepared to pass on , by the blessing of God , to examine our fourth and last point --- the benefits , blessings , and divine fruits that spring out of suffering , which adds the last link to the chain .

But observe the expression , "After that ye have suffered a while." Suffering is only for a while. Say at the most , that suffering should run parallel with the whole course of your life; say that you live to be ninety, and have day after day suffering and sorrow ; say that every hour brings you pain of body or grief of mind, trial of spirit, or temptation of soul. Say it shall be so, which however is not very probable, for you are not likely to live till you are ninety, nor are you likely to have every day a day of trial , temptation , and suffering; but say it were so appointed; then your soul is set at liberty from your enfeebled body , to soar upward into the regions of light and love , and drink in rivers of peace and joy at the fountain head, it would, after all, be only "a little while ." Measured by eternity, what is time? It is but a point , a thing only of a moment's duration . "Our light affliction which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceedingly and eternal weight of glory ."

But even in a world like this we are not always suffering . It comes and goes --- it is brought to-day and is taken away to-morrow . When the furnace has done its work , then the gold is taken out. But it is after, not before. You perhaps say you want to enjoy a clear assurance of interest; to be established in the liberty of the gospel ; to walk as an enfranchised child of God; to be favored with fresh and fresh manifestations of His mercy and love, and have your soul sweetly enjoying the presence of a beloved Lord. But have you ever been tossed on a sea of suffering? or do you think always to be in London Dock without ebb or flow? Does the extent of your spiritual voyage reach no farther than Gravesend , where the scarcely salt river is still far from the sea? You fresh water mariners , who sail on so jauntily in your river-built yachts , are not fit to do business in deep waters, nor can you see the wonders of the Lord as those do in the great deep . But if you have been long tossed on the stormy main, how welcome does the shore beam on your straining sight and how then you will drop anchor with an inward peal of joy . It is not before , then , but "after ye have suffered a while" that real soul profit, satisfaction , and joy are realized or experienced within .

But perhaps you are saying --- "May not persons be Christians , and

yet not be much tried or afflicted ?" Now , I believe it holds in grace as in nature --- whatever is easily got is rarely worth having. As a general rule, a man gets nothing easily that is really valuable ; neither knowledge , nor power, nor learning, nor even glittering gold dust ; nothing even that this world values is obtained without labour and pain. And sure I am that no spiritual man gets a rich experience of divine mercy and love without passing through more or less of soul exercise. He is not fitted for it ; his soul has not yet the capacity to enjoy the fulness of the love of God . In order to this he must , like a vessel , have ample tonnage . There must be capacity made in the soul, as in the hold of the ship , to receive the fulness of God's mercy. Self must be baled out before the Lord of grace and glory will come in ; the cargo of rubbish must be heaved overboard before the rich treasure of heavenly mercy can find room in the bosom .

It is, then, after we have suffered a while , and only after we have suffered a while ; been exercised in our soul, tried in our mind, tempted of Satan, and gone through more or less of this inward strife and affliction --- this sea of storms , that these other links of the heavenly chain are brought into the heart , of which the apostle speaks --- "But the God of all grace , who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus , after that ye have suffered a while , make you perfect , stablish , strengthen , settle you . "

Oh that these words might sound in your ears ! Oh that they might be graven as by the pen of God in your hearts .

1. But let us look at these blessings in their order . "Make you perfect !" What word have we here ? Does not this look like perfection in the flesh ? Perfection in the flesh! The Scriptures know nothing of this kind of perfection nor does any experienced child of God . In what sense , therefore , may we understand the word used by the Holy Spirit here? "Make you perfect." The terms have a meaning; we will not dislocate and distort God's sacred Word by putting on it a forced construction. Far be that from our wish or thought . I may observe , then , that there are two senses in which the word "perfect" is used in Scripture as regards the saints of God . The first meaning of the word is perfection in Christ --- "Ye are complete in Him . " The Church of God is represented as being "without spot or blemish or any such thing ," a view of which draws forth from her divine Lover those striking words --- "Thou art all fair, My love, there is no spot in thee ." In that sense the Church of God is perfect --- perfect in Christ , comely with the comeliness which He Himself has put upon her, and so stands perfect in His perfection , holy in His holiness , glorious in His glory .

But that is not the sense meant by the word "perfect" here . She is that already; but the making of her perfect "through suffering." Perfection, then as here spoken of is not that through Christ's righteousness ; that is an outward perfection; but an inward, an experimental perfection as wrought in the soul by the grace of God through suffering . What then is this inward experimental perfection ? There is an expression in Hebrews v . 14 , which , to my mind , much clears up

the whole subject --- "But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." The apostle is speaking here of the difference between those who are weak and ignorant and those who are strong and established. He says that some were babes, and did not even understand the elements of divine truth; but that others were "of full age." It is in the margin, which is the more literal rendering, "perfect." Those, then, are, in an experimental sense, "perfect" who have arrived at the meridian of full age, whose senses are exercised by long and deep experience to discern both good and evil. This, then is the scriptural definition of experimental perfection. It does not consist in the absence of sin; not in progressive sanctification; nor in being made any better as regards our carnal mind; but it consists in this --- in being ripened and matured in the divine life; in being no longer a child, and ever in want of a tutor of first principles; but "a man in Christ," grown up in Him and having a ripeness of Christian experience. This is Christian maturity and this divine ripeness of soul is only to be obtained through suffering. It is "after you have suffered a while" that God thus "makes you perfect" --- in other words, matures you, so that you bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, and become an adult man in the knowledge, enjoyment, and experience of spiritual things. The tried self comes forth from the furnace with the dross and tin of soul taken away, and thus becomes a vessel of honour fitted for the Master's use.

2. But the Apostle goes on to pray that the God of all grace would, after they had suffered awhile, "stablish" them. This extends somewhat widely ly. It implies an establishing of our understanding, conscience, judgment, and experience not only in our views of divine truth, but also of our own interest in "truth as it is in Jesus;" that we may not be carried about with every wind of doctrine, but be so established, rooted, and grounded in the truth of God, as never, by any consideration, be moved from it. How is this desirable thing to be attained? Suffering, suffering, is still the channel; and the furnace is still the means. It is only "after we have suffered awhile" --- suffered from Satan, from sin, from persecution of enemies, and the unbelief and abounding corruption of our own hearts ---it is only after such an experience of personal, inward suffering that we get to be thoroughly established in the truth. Growth in grace is like growth in nature. It is the mushroom that springs up in a night; but the oak is the growth of centuries. We are to grow like the oak, not like the poplar; be a cedar of Lebanon, not a willow by the brook. We have also to take root downward as well as to grow stout and strong upwards --- to spread deep and wide roots in the soil as well as to spread forth sturdy branches in the air air. And it is that we may thus take root and become established that we are subjected to affliction and sorrow sorrow.

No instance was ever known of an established Christian who had not become so through in medium of deep and sanctified affliction; and God will not alter His ways to please our vain fancies; "for He is in one

mind , and who can turn Him ?"

3. The next fruit of suffering for which the apostle prayed was that God might thereby strengthen them . But what a strange way of being strengthened ! You feel your weakness , do you not ? "Yes," I may speak for some here --- "I do indeed ; O if you did but know how weak I am !" I know it very well , for I know how weak I am myself . If I can read anything it is my own heart ; and in reading mine I can read yours . But you say , "How weak I am !" Well, will you ever be anything else ? Would you wish to be anything else ? "I would be strong ," you reply . So you are . "When I am weak ," says Paul "then am I strong ." There is the true secret of all strength . What makes us strong ? Weakness . "Weakness makes us strong ? --- that is a flat contradiction ." No, it is not . Because when you are weak then the Lord Jesus works strength in you , and thus you resemble the worthies spoken of in Heb . xi., who "out of weakness were made strong ." No other strength is worth a straw . Suppose I came here this evening and into the pulpit all strength in myself . Should I be worth hearing or listening to ? But I come all weakness ; if I have strength God gives it me . So if you come strong to hear , you will not want for Christ to bless the word and communicate strength to your soul ; but if you come weak as one seeking strength from Him , if you come as an empty vessel for God to pour His love and grace into ,then the Lord will answer you . Was it not so with David ? "In the day when I cried , Thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul ." But you will say , "I have had a great deal of trial lately ; I have had affliction in my body , or trials in my family , or my circumstances have been very distressing , and to make it worse , I have had such darkness of mind and many powerful temptations to grapple with . Under all this my wicked heart has rebelled against God ; and I have hard work, I can assure you, to stand my ground at all ." What has that taught you, and to what point has it brought you ? It has made you a hearer of the gospel, it has made you to long for the God of all grace to manifest unto you the the riches of His mercy ; it has weaned you from the world ; broken the arm of self ; destroyed your creature confidence ; and rendered you a fit subject for the Lord Jesus Christ to work upon, and in you to will and to do of His own good pleasure . All this good suffering has done, it has been sanctified to your soul . Look at Moses . How weak he was . He replied , when sent on his mission to Pharaoh, "I am slow of speech ;" but God qualified him to speak and act too . Look at Abraham , and the course of God's dealings with him . How the strength of God was made manifest in his and Sarah's natural weakness ! Look at David , the beardless boy, going out against the giant . So your weakness is but the needful preparation for God out of it to make you strong . I hope that some of you here this evening , if not many , are poor and needy , weak and helpless . So many as are such, are so many cases for God to strengthen .

4. The last blessing for which the apostle prayed as following suffering was --- that God would thereby settle them . I was speaking this morning

about a building . Now, you know a building must settle before it will stand . It is so with every structure . A bridge has to settle sometime some inches, and time for the most part must be given for every edifice to settle before you can be sure that it will stand firm. It settles by sinking, and becomes firm by losing somewhat of its original height; it drops that it may stand; it sinks that it may not fall. So must you be settled, if you are to stand; not settled on yourself, but upon the work of Jesus, the lining stone which God has laid in Zion . To be settled is not to be settled down in vain, presumptuous confidence, but to have a firm standing in Christ by the Spirit's teaching and testimony, and so to know Christ and the power of His resurrection . There must be a settling down into and upon the Lord Jesus ; a resting the entire weight of the soul's salvation wholly and solely upon Him who is mighty to save . And the more the soul is thus settled upon the foundation, the firmer, closer union it has with it .

Now, look at these things, for they will bear examination . I am not afraid of my doctrine being examined . Not that the things I have uttered are worth anything, so far as I am the speaker of them ; but the points I have advanced and dwelt upon are solid truths ; and I know them to be such . They are in strict accordance with the Word of God ; and I believe in accordance with the experience of God's saints . Weigh them up, then, and weigh yourselves too at the same time . Put yourselves into the scale, and see whether God has stamped good weight upon you . Who is it that has reason to tremble when the surveyors come round to examine their weights and measures ? It is the deceitful, dishonest tradesman who fears to see their face . The honest tradesman boldly brings forth his weights and measures, and does not slink into the back shop with fear and trembling . So the teaching of God in the soul will bear examination . You may be very weak --- the tradesman's weights and measures are not all of the same size and dimensions . There is the gill and the quart , as well as the pint and gallon ; and there is the quarter and half-ounce as well as the stone ; but they must be all lawful weight and bear the queen's stamp . So that if you say your grace is small, I reply, "It may be none the worse for that ." If we have gardens, and are fond of flowers, we admire the little shrub as well as the large one ; and there is as perfect a life in the tender flower as in the stronger plant . So if you are planted into the heavenly garden the divine Husbandman will water and make you grow . I would much sooner have a little living shrub put into my garden bed than a dead lofty tree . All the trees of righteousness planted by the hand of the Lord are living, growing trees, watered and nourished by the dews and rains of the Spirit . See, therefore, whether you cannot find something like the grace of God in your heart . O what a mercy to have one grain of grace ! What a mercy to be a living soul ! You may be tried , tempted , and exercised ; but if you are one of the Lord 's people all this will eventually be for your profit . But always remember that there is a furnace to go through to burn up self-confidence, and bring you forth a vessel fit for the Master's

use . The trials you are called to experience, and the sighs and groans you utter, are spiritual sacrifices, acceptable in God 's sight . These things are designed to mature you in the things of God, to establish you in the truth, to strengthen you in faith, hope, and love, and to settle you down into sweet confidence in the Lord Jesus. "O," you will say, "if this be the case, thank God for every trial ; bless His holy name for every temptation ; thanks for every furnace, every exercise, and every affliction ; they have brought my soul to a firm standing ; they have made Christ precious ; they have endeared His love ; they have led me more fully into the 'truth as it is in Jesus,' and given me richer and more blessed views of Immanuel, God with us."

Now this is the main thing the heart desires ; not that we desire the furnace , but we desire the great benefits produced by it . O may "the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus," in the words of our text --- "after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you ."

J.C. Philpot

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OBITUARIES

Elder J.L. Hamrick

On december 21st ., 1987 our beloved associate editor Elder Joe L . Hamrick finished his journey here on earth . saddened that we cannot see and visit him anymore . The Signs of the Times feels a great loss in the absence of his writings, to behold no more his name to an article, unless a reprint .

May God give us, along with the family, endless grace to believe he wrote every article he was supposed to write, and though no one else can fill his shoes, we trust others may be given to walk in other shoes to make tracks in the same pathway .

We know of no one in the last 10

years that worked as Brother Joe for the good of the paper, sending in many new subscriptions, paying for those unable to afford, himself.

While we hope God will make us reconciled to our loss, we would not heap praise on the man, but thank God for our love for him. We often stand in awe at the marvelous work He can perform in His people.

Although we grieve and miss him we sorrow not as those that have no hope, believing our brother has passed on to an eternal home, a beautiful city, that we with the lovely family, see yonder with an eye of faith, yet have many trials and sorrows to encounter, that he will know no more for ever. Can not we see he has laid his armour by, no more warfare, his battle is fought, at last at peace, at home with his Captain that has gone on before.

In sadness,
Elder J.R. Williams

SISTER ANNIE COBB

On July 17, 1987 God in His infinite wisdom saw fit to call Annie McKinney Cobb to her heavenly home. She had celebrated her 99th birthday on May 3rd, 1987. Then in June she suffered a stroke after which she improved enough to return to church one more time. Her favorite hymn was "Amazing Grace". God's amazing grace was very evident in her life. She was blessed with good health all her life until the stroke. When asked how she was doing, her bubbly reply was always, "I'm fine", even after her stroke. She never complained and enjoyed the long life God granted her. She loved her church and her pastors and attended very regularly.

Her funeral was preached at Dan River Church on Sunday July 19, 1987 by her pastor, Elder Kenneth Key, and Elder Paul Lamb. "Amazing Grace" and "I Would Not Live Always" were sung in Church and "Rock of Ages" was sung at the grave. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers to await the second coming of our Lord when we shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory What a great and glorious day that shall be when the graves burst open and these natural bodies are raised spiritual bodies and death shall be swallowed up in victory.

Annie McKinney was married to David Irwin Cobb in 1903. To this union were born 4 daughters and 11 sons. 6 sons and 2 daughters preceded her in death. She leaves 2 daughters, Lillie Cobb and Ethel Hopper of Reidsville and 5 sons, Brooks, Edward, and Raleigh of Reidsville, Herman and Curtis, with whom she made her home, of Eden.

She was a member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church for many years and was a faithful member until her death. Her presence has been greatly missed but we know that our loss is her eternal gain. Now she really is "fine". I extend my deepest sympathy to her family but I would say to them to rejoice in her homegoing knowing that she has found joy unspeakable with the Lord.

Written by request of Dan River Church while in conference on September 27, 1987.

In Christian Fellowship,
Jean Moran

Thelma H. Winborn

ASA JOSEPH HARDISON

Asa Joseph Hardison, born December 11, 1894 (Martin Co., N.C.) — died June 15, 1987. He was the son of the late George and Fannie Whitley Hardison. He was married to Otie Roberson April 16, 1922. To this union was born two daughters who survive — Thelma H. Winborn and Leona H. Corey. There are three grandchildren and two great grandchildren. Also one brother Ira Hardison and two sisters, Lizzie Griffin and Naomi Roberson. He was preceded in death by his wife who died June 22, 1986.

Brother Hardison was a hard working man, and many have said he always seemed to do what was right. Early in life, nine years of age to be exact, his father died leaving him head of the house. He joined the Primitive Baptist at Smithwick Creek in May, 1918. On July 6th of that same year he had to report for military service.

His faith was very important to him, he hardly ever missed a meeting. He used the Bible as his guide book. He served as clerk of the church since 1935 and as a Deacon since August 1947. He also was a trustee of the church.

His funeral was conducted at Smithwick Creek Church by his pastor Elder J.T. Prescott of Swansboro.

Written by his loving daughter, of Ahoskie, N.C.

IRA O. MYERS

As requested by his wife, with much grief in my heart, the Dear Lord willing I will endeavor to write a few words in memory of one whom I love. Our beloved Brother and friend was born in Pittsylvania County on December 17, 1919. He was a son of the late Charlie A. Myers and Arbelia Weeks Myers. Survivors include his widow, Sister Irene Dalton Myers of the residence; one daughter, Gracie Adams, Java; one foster daughter, Frances Johnson, Bedford; two brothers, Douglas Myers and Louis Myers, both of Gretna; four sisters, Kathryn Staton and Madgie Stevens, both of Lynchburg, Frances Vasser and Nannie George, both of Gretna; one grand-daughter, one great grandson and one foster grandson.

He attended his meetings regularly as long as his health permitted. He was received into the fellowship of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on December 23, 1979, and was baptized on April 13, 1980.

He was in V.A. Hospital, Roanoke, Virginia, 10 months and 2 days. He suffered long but bore his afflictions with patience and always enjoyed visits from his brethren and friends I believe he was made reconciled to his illness. I was blessed to visit him on many occasions and he would greet me with a smile. When he became unable to talk, he would point up above to let you know where all his

help came from . I believe he could witness with Paul— I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus .

He was taken from this world of sin and sorrow on March 7, 1987 . His funeral was held on March 9, 1987, at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by his Pastor, Elder O .K . Tench, and Elder Leonard Brammer . His body was laid to rest beneath an array of beautiful flowers in the church cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ .

Written by : Marvin Brumfield
Elder O .K . Tench, Moderator
Phyllis Goad, Clerk

MRS . FLORIECE WATSON

Mrs . Floriece Thomason Watson, age 76 years . Passed away Sunday, July 12, 1987 in the Hampton Nursing Home at Hampton, Ark . Sister Watson was a member of Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church. She was faithful to her church as long as she was able to come . She loved the doctrine of the Old Baptist. Sister Watson was the widow of Deacon Ross Watson, the daughter of Charles Thomason and Myrtle Oliver Thomason .

She is survived by two sons Charles Watson of Tinsman and Pete Watson of Memphis Tenn . Three daughters Mrs . Sarah Eubanks of St. Louis, Mo ., Mrs . Elsie Ashcraft of White Hall, Ark . and Mrs . Peggy Govan of Memphis, Tenn . Her mother Mrs . Myrtle Thomason of Haskell . One brother Gervas Thomason of Haskell, Ark . Two sisters Mrs . Melvie Thomason of Haskell, Ark . and Mrs . Alpha Reddin of Camden, Ark . Ten grandchildren, and six great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at 2:00 p .m . Tuesday, July 14 in the White Water Baptist Church at Tinsyan by Elder Clovis Townley . Burial was in Watson Cemetery at Tinsman by Benton Funeral Home .

She was loved by all Old Baptists that knew her. She was a lovely Sister and will be missed by all very much.

Brought up in conference, 1 copy to the Signs of the Times, 1 copy to family, and 1 copy to Pilgrim Rest Church .

Elder J .C . Townley, Moderator
Frances Townley, Church Clerk

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
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WE APOLOGIZE . . .

In the February issue of The Signs we regret that a few copies were mailed out with an incorrect page . If your received one of these please notify one of the editors and a corrected copy will be sent you .

Signs of the Times

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POEM

The Weaver

My life is but a weaving
Between my Lord and me,
I cannot choose the colors
He worketh steadily.

Ofttimes He weaveth sorrow,
And I in foolish pride
Forget He sees the upper
And I, the underside.

Not till the loom is silent
And the shuttles cease to fly
Shall God unroll the canvas
And explain the reason why.

The dark threads are as needful
In the Weaver's skillful hand
As the threads of gold and silver
In the pattern He has planned.

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EDITORIAL

REPENTANCE

Elder W.D. Griffin

This is a scriptural subject. If we, the writer and the reader, are men of God, then the subject is certainly for our benefit. On the other hand, if we are not men of God, the written word of the Bible, as well as all the preaching and writing of the gospel will not make the subject beneficial to either of us. Let us remember that as a stated truth from the inspiration of God. Let us emphasize that inspired truth make the work of God's Holy Spirit keep us from ever making a gesture of compromise about this stated truth.

Now let us not be afraid of any man of any set of men about this stated truth. May our adherence to the truth of this principle of the teachings of the written word be known unto all men. However, being a stickler for one phase or one side of the truth, and a slackness for another phase of the truth pertaining to the same subject, pictures us as being unstable, a compromiser, as being bewitched. If the doctrine of repentance applies to the men of God, it applies to all men of God wherever they may be as to the land of birth or their present dwelling place. Thus I do not have the right to speak in such a way, or write to the family of God, that what I am writing, or what I am saying behind the sacred desk, does not apply to them.

Let us be sure that we understand that repentance is not to any degree whatever the work of the fleshly minded man or woman. On the day of Pentecost the work preparatory to the success of the important Pentecostal day was done by the pouring out of the Holy Spirit upon all flesh. I realize the rising up of the carnal mind and making an application of that blessed event to every body that was there. As long as we dwell here in this world, we must expect this challenging storm of those that know not the covenant of grace, and that its message, cheer and comfort is limited to those given the Son in the choice of Almighty God. Not any of the words of divine Scripture, not any of the Holy Scriptures, not any of the preaching of the gospel is in any saving sense written or spoken or sent to any of the Adamic

family save those that are made alive in Jesus Christ our Lord.

What was the result of this pouring out of God's Spirit on the land of Israel? Was it effectual on them? How many other lands were savingly represented in the assembly on this blessed date? Does the minute description of these events show any Israelite undecided about coming? Does this vivid description of the arrival show one questioning the why of them coming? Now when the apostles got to their assigned places, did any try to crowd in other than those that got in? Was there any confusion as to who were to be seated and as to who would not be? When the service began, was there any hesitation, indecision, confusion or disturbance in anyway as to who was to do the preaching?

Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented: but sorrow of the world worketh death. (2 Cor. 7 : 10.) If language means anything, and, not withstanding the fact that it does, many contends contrariwise. However, for a sinner to have godly sorrow, he or she, must be godly. Again, if language means anything, then, of necessity godly sorrow is wrought in those that are godly by the indwelling Spirit of God in them. It is not the spirit of the creature that works repentance, but it is the Spirit of the God of all grace that is silently, effectually working it in them.

Now it is true that God works in gracious characters both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Now I did not say, nor Paul did not say that God worked in them both the will and the do. He did not say that. Let those say that He did that if they have that mind. But Inspiration did not say that. If He did not say that, what did He say? He said, For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. If inspiration had of said that God works in you to will, and the working out is left to a discretion of our will, then I'd place my hand over my mouth in silence. But since God works in us the will (the will always comes first) then, the will having already been wrought in us it is followed by the same effectual work of God to the end that immediately following the will being wrought in us, the outward performance of it is made manifest.

This day, as are all of the days of our salvation unforgettable. The people of God remember the day and the way in which He has brought them. All of them are unforgettable experiences. His goodness to them in leading and guiding them to obey His commandments; His patience and longsuffering with their shortcomings, both alike are remembrances of yesteryear that often brings us to live anew the mercies extended, or to hang our heads in sorrow because of our disobediences.

What mercies were shown both the people that had the spirit of the Lord poured out upon them, and Peter and the other apostles as they came for this momentous day. Has there ever been such unity as was wrought in the whole assembly? There had not ever been a day like unto this day. Where did it start? Did it start in the mind of God's people or did it start in the mind of God? Everything that is acceptable and honored and held holy before Him is that which starts with Him. God teaches His people; He

blesses His people ; He cares for them in every way. When God poured out His Spirit upon them , they responded ; there was an immediate effect upon and in them. While we are gazing in wonder at the scenes before us , let us have grace that we may always remember that every good and perfect gift comes down from the Father of lights in whom there is not any variation or even a shadow of turning . May God open our understanding to know, to fully believe that all goodness stems from Him, First, by an eternal design and secondly, by the effectual workings of His power and wisdom .

Great and marvelous are thy works Lord God Almighty . None of these had ever experienced anything like this before. But that did not show in the outcome of it all . All of Israel was there . Peter , and the other apostles were there. That weakling of other days, where was he? That man that had denied His Lord and Master where was he? Come dear readers, linger here in the midst of these glorious surroundings . Israel came not knowing what these things meant . When they heard the first gospel message in their lives they did not know what to do. Was it a happen so that Peter was there? Pity that poor sinner that believes there are any happen so with Israel 's God . Peter could not have strengthened these brethren earlier . He would have preached to them the same thing that he hurled in the face of his Saviour .

How wonderful it is that God changes things. In all of the history of Israel, both under the law and under the grace dispensation , God did not try to do anything. He never has, and, thank His dear name , He will never experiment to see if He can inveigle the race of Adam into doing something that He desires to be done . I know the rebellion that is in men 's hearts , including mine , but there is not anything too hard for the Lord to do. Just a word, just a look, melts the heart of a stubborn Peter, and brings a doubting Thomas to cry out for mercy , and to beg for help in their hour of unbelief .

There may be readers among the Signs patrons that believe in a god of limited power, but that does not make Him of limited power. He does His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. There is not an incident (nor an accident) in all of the teeming panorama of years since God pronounced all that He had made as being good that He has not come off victor in it all .

On this memorable day of Pentecost the laboring masses of Israel gathered at this divine altar. They did not decide to come . The evidence is that had the Spirit not been poured out upon them that they would have never come . So convinced am I of this victorious truth , that if that is furnished to me from the Bible, that I will close the lid on my typewriter and return my credentials to the church that issued them to me, and I will not ever enter an Old Baptist pulpit again. If God did declare the end from the beginning (and He did), then those that he determined to come will come. Not only did He declare the end from the beginning , but all of the incidental matters and events were in His declaration . To declare a thing shall be , is equal to an oath to that end . God did sware by Himself , by two immutable witnesses, in which it

was impossible for God to lie (to make a conditional promise .)

God sent His ministers to preach the gospel. The law system had failed every one that trusted in it . It was given to fail. I know that men recoil at such an expression as that , but it is only unbelieving men that disbelieve. That law was not given as an experiment . God had a purpose worthy of His name in giving the law . God did not give it to see if it would work. He did not do that . God does not want anything , not in my weakness I am going to say that He did not desire it to work. He gave it to teach poor sinners that writings and ordinances and conditional statues could not ever save . The laboring children under these things had the Spirit poured out upon them and were blessed to see that the keeping of them had not availed them anything. They came not knowing what to do. Down the ages of time God 's elect people have not been able to master the law of Moses. At the end of that lesson , God has folded them up , as He lays away every created thing as its purpose and usefulness is fulfilled (Heb .1 : 12) . How glad I am , and truly hope that I am thankful to the God of purpose that he made everything for a purpose ; that each purpose is fulfilled , then , THEN , that He folds it up , as is done with a garment that is not any longer of any use, and lays it away. I am glad and thankful for such a rich display of His sovereign will. The law will never molest or make afraid a single one of these chosen vessels .

The Spirit of God was, and still is, poured out upon every one of them , and it was effective in bringing every one of them , both then and now. The power of God will come to every one of them, and every one of them will be turning (repenting) from the law and will be found walking in the apostles doctrine ; further , they will be in fellowship with the apostle 's doctrine . and they will have all things in common .

Another matter comes up . There is not any Bible record of one of these beloved and chosen of being left to perish. God's will concerning His people is that they all come . I will say to the north , give up ; and to the south , Keep not back : bring my sons from far , and my daughters from the ends of the earth . Even every one that is called by my name. (Isa. 43 : 6 ,7) . It is my judgment that no father or mother among my readers , or , for that matter, in all the world, would call for any others when they divided up their goods with their children . I am sure of this. I am equally sure that God did not nor would not , nor could not have poured His Spirit out upon any but His own family , and I am equally sure that but very few , if any , of the Adamic mothers and fathers would leave any of their children out , yet , realizing that , in some cases , they would , and do , even that . But I am sure that God did not , and will not , and cannot leave one of His children out of any one benefit that rightly belongs to one of His children .

Peter , in his preaching , commanded these people that did not know what was taking place , that did not know what to do, to repent and be baptized. Now may God give us grace to examine the meeting on this occasion . If language means anything (and it does) then this is the folding up of the first covenant and the laying of it away. Let us not be fooled, for great and precious things are

being unfolded before us . God gave the first, and He had a purpose worthy of Himself in giving it . His purpose in giving it was not to see and find out as to whether it would work or not . God knew better . I urge that God knew better . I am going to say that God purposed that the first covenant of works (law) fail . It just had to fail . I am at times called by way of ridicule a necessitarian . I plead guilty . If this had to be, then, by all means, this had to be . There was not any ablution that could come about by the law . That could come only by the shedding of blood . Therefore , the first had to be removed, completely taken out of the way .

What a beautiful scene it is as God removes one and initiates the other . Here God is seen as working at both ends of the line . God alone in His almighty power and right and dominion begin that work . He poured out His Spirit on those that were to receive the benefits of this change , which , we must remember , was not a change in God 's purpose but a change in dispensations . Look and see poor sinner . Behold the goodness of God . As He pours out His Spirit upon these chosen people the inquiring begins ; the stirring among them begins . They begin to move forward to the Pentecostal Day .

Let me digress . Why is Peter the spokesman ? All of the apostles were along, but Peter alone did the preaching . Let us go back . It is needful that we remember the apostle 's weakness . Not only did he have the audacity to hurl conditionalism in the face of His Saviour , but boasted to Him of his ability to stand by Him through any conflict that might beset Him . Let us look at the naked truth . When thou are converted strengthen thy brethren . God doesn 't at all , and sensible men don 't leave the strengthening of weak creatures to themselves . God alone is to do that . He had a test coming up that would show up his weakness , that would overwhelm him with shamefacedness , and that would make him weep in much anxiety . This was provided by the Saviour . But more is to follow . At exactly the right time this apostle that could not preach the truth , but would attempt to preach his spurious doctrine to Jesus Christ , is sent to meet the new class of poor sinners , even a class that is to be preached the solid grace foundation to them . Not only sent to his brethren , who truly needed strengthening , but that he was prepared and taught and strengthened to say and to do just what would strengthen them in this trying hour . The pouring out of the Spirit of God upon them was strengthening to them , even getting them ready for the message , but that the poor sinner , the Apostle Peter , said exactly , no more , no less , than what was indeed good news to them , was Strengthening to them .

The gospel is the power of God . If ever there was an occasion when a great lesson was learned by both the speaker , truly it was here . With all of my heart I believe that this gospel , even the exact same gospel message is being preached today . It is the power of God being made manifest . To one and all to whom this gospel is preached it is the power of God today . We are living in the Pentecostal Day . This day will last long enough -- it will last until the Saviour comes the second time without sin unto the reception of the whole triune family of God .

This great Day is described in the Bible . This Bible contains the scriptures , which are inspired and written to the man of God to the end that he in every nation and kindred and tongue be perfected in every good work . I feel an urgency and a keen anticipation that I would have little support and evidence in my favor if I left off or added to single word of that Book .

From this good meeting by the people of God , they all continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship , and in the breaking of bread , and in prayers . They all continued in one accord . What was it that they were in accord about? It was in regard to the doctrine that Peter preached . Every apostle was in unison with it . They all heard Peter preach the gospel . All of those that had been favored with the pouring out of the Spirit upon them , all endorsed it as the apostles doctrine . Peter , with the approval of all other apostles , together with all of those on whom the Spirit had been poured , they all approved . All of them continued from that day forward in what they had heard .

I want to walk with this great band of believers . I beg for grace to live in their fellowship , to break bread with them , to go from house to house (from church to church) esteeming every occupant better than myself , knowing no doctrine save that , that was preached at the ushering in of the Pentecostal day , walking and , by the grace of God . Living in the apostles doctrine in precept and example .

If it is the pleasure of our heavenly Father , I hope to meet you in the spirit of this doctrine , in the fellowship that has ever abounded from the Day of Pentecost until the present , to be gathered together in these houses .

Your little brother ,
Elder W . D . Griffin

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Sister Jones ;

I am sorry that I have not answered your good letter before now . I was really thrilled to get it and particularly at the time that I received it . It was waiting for me when I returned home after our vacation . We came by the Powell Valley Association on our way back from Florida and I really enjoyed visiting with the brethren and sisters there .

The world would think it strange to feel that way toward someone that you had only met once and then for just a few hours , but , the same feeling of fellowship is there for those of like precious faith whether you have known them for a day or so much longer . At least , I hope that I can honestly say those of like precious faith . I fear much of the time that I have no faith , but nevertheless the feelings that I have for them is most precious to me .

Then when I got home and found your letter , and read it , it just seemed to be the perfect ending to a very enjoyable trip you and brother Jones always were some of the ones that I thought of most often when given a mind to remember the precious brethren and sisters that I have been associated with over the years . Your home was the first that I remember visiting

in after I began to visit among the Baptists and it has always been a most precious place to be .

I have enjoyed reading many of your sweet letters since Mother, Aunt Lucille and myself always share the letters which we receive from the brethren , I have always considered them to be among the things which we all have in common . I would never think of picking up one of their letters from a friend and read it but these letters of love are to anyone who has an interest in the spiritual kingdom of God .

You mentioned reading the hymn " If God is mine" and the travel of mind that you had thinking about the lines the poet was blessed to pen down . It seems , to me , that sometimes a poem , song or single verse of scripture can expand into the whole of the scripture if your mind is blessed to dwell on the truth they contain . There is a scripture that speaks of the simplicity that is in Christ . The scriptures a simple and beautiful story of the love and mercy of God which is sovereignly bestowed upon his elect vessels of mercy which have ever been afore prepared unto glory . This is not something that the natural man can attain to , but it is the substance of the heritage of every child of grace an and it has been theirs since the beginning of time and before the foundation of the world . In this life the fullness of this treasure is revealed unto them line upon line and precept upon precept , here a little and there a little to keep them following along in the way of truth . It is for a specific purpose and shall surely accomplish the desired end and produce the needful effect .

As Peter says " That the trial of your faith , being more precious than gold that perisheth though it be tried by fire might be found unto praise and honor at the appearing of Christ ." All of the experiences of a child of God are for their good that they should be a vessel unto honor , sanctified and meet for the masters use and prepared unto every good work . The natural man , as he is born into this world , is of the earth , earthly and could never be a vessel of mercy in and of himself , but as the spirit of God comes and indwells the man and leads him through his trials of faith he becomes something else . The trials are not that God might learn something about the man but rather that the man is made to acknowledge that his ways are not his own and to witness to the fact that , " By grace are ye saved through faith ; and that not of yourselves : it is the gift of God ." The natural man is proud and would never acknowledge his dependence on God for everything without his being made to do so . This he is made to do as his trial of faith produces its perfect work and he can do nothing else . The tribulations , doubts and fears which he endures makes him to realize his weakness but the grace and faith which are God's gift to him cause him to press on toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God .

These things sometimes seem so plain and simple that a child could understand them but when the spirit is withdrawn one can only say . " Oh wretched man that I am , who shall deliver me from the body of this death . " In this state you are given to see your wretched and undone condition and fear you have been mistaken

in it all and you have been but deceiving yourself .

The men of the world are never given to see themselves in this condition . They see only the pride and vanity of the flesh and never realize that it is all temporal and perishes with the using . They never acknowledge their weakness and inability to accomplish their desires . They believe they are masters of their own fate and can make themselves pleasing in God 's sight . They are ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth . They have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof .

The child of God is given to see their corrupt state and to mourn their undone condition but their hope is that this in itself is evidence that they are an heir of heaven even as irrational as it may seem in their present state of mind . As you said the rod is just as needful as the staff . They are each a blessing of God upon his people , purging them of the vanities of nature , the pride of the flesh so that they will acknowledge , " For all flesh is grass . " This they would never do living under the influence of the vanity that the fleshly creature was created subject to . Isaiah says , " Behold I have refined thee , but not with silver ; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction . " I believe that the furnace of affliction spoken of by Isaiah and the trial of faith that Peter wrote about are one and the same . They are not good to the heir of grace , but they are good for them and are necessary in the perfecting of the saints .

These are things of which the world is unaware and if you try to tell them about your experience they will say that you are foolish and imagining them . They cannot know them because they are spiritual and the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned . One of the disciples asked Christ , on one occasion , " Lord how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us and not unto the world ." The answer is that the comforter whom the Father will send in my name shall teach you all things .

Oh how I do hope and pray that I am in that number , and do know a little about these things from experience .

In bonds of love ,
Richard

We want to thank Sister Jones for sharing this letter from Elder Richard Campbell with the readers of the " Signs ".

Editors

LOOKING BACKWARD — THEN FORWARD

Dear Elder Key ,

Here is a letter I received from sister Rlee Houchins , that I think is good , and I asked her if I could send it to you for publication , she agreed to share it with the Signs readers , if you the Editors feel to print it I would be glad .

Leonard J . Brammer

As I stand on the threshold of another year , the old one almost gone , I look back at the long ,

rugged road that I have been brought, and I see many things. Sometimes on this journey, it seemed I was running with anticipation, then slowing down to a faltering walk, even stumbling and falling too, on this path of my uncertain journey.

Now as I stand and look, as it were, into the future, what do I see? Oh, I am so tired and so weary as I look out and wonder if and how I will ever get to the land that " flows with milk and honey." Will I ever reach it and forever be with Christ, or will it be of " fire and brimstone," with Satan and his angels?

As I look back along the long and wearisome journey, that I have come, I see the few " oases " in the desert that refreshed my parched soul from time to time. I can only beg that there will be a few more on the journey yet to come, that I may survive to reach the end.

I have only a precious hope that the " Star " that guided the wisemen of old on that glorious journey so many years ago, will lead and guide me to that land of eternal rest. That Star that is felt in the soul and heart and one that cannot be destroyed as the seasons come and go, I trust will lead me on and keep my feet in the narrow way.

Oh, sometime the hills seem so long and steep, I wonder can I go another step? Can I hold out to reach another little shadow, that I may again breathe the fresh perfume of His love? The hills of this life are so steep, the desert is so barren and dry. The hills are just decaying materials and there is hardly any foot-hold and if I fall, it will be into the horrible pit of destruction.

But listen! As I climb, what do I hear so faintly in the distance? Oh, I hear singing as I crawl onward and upward, slowly now, reaching for something solid to hold to. I can hear it more clearly now, though still it is far in the distance. Surely it is the singing of the angels, no other singing can have such a perfect sound. No other sound can soothe the tired, weary soul on such a long and fearful journey. There is no turning back now, the decaying materials of this life, the steep hill is crumbling behind me, I cannot go back. I must continue to press upward with each breath an unuttered prayer, that I might be blessed to hear each note of that melodious singing.

The end of my journey will soon be over now, my journey through the desert land and up the steep hill and then what? Just now I feel content that I will hear the angels singing as did the wise men of old. Oh, may my speed forward be a little more swift, not lagging, so unsure, but hasten forward that I may hear more clearly the angels in the Promised Land, that I may join the heavenly hosts, and " " Crown Him Lord of All."

Heavenly Father, as I look backward, then forward, hasten the day if it is Thy will, that I, a poor sinner, by Thy mercy and Thy grace, might join in Thy perfect praise.

Amen

Rlee B. Houchins
Roanoke, Va.

Jan. 30, 1988

Dear Editor:

For some time now my thoughts have dwelt upon the garments referred to in the Bible. Es-

pecially those garments that the children of God are to PUT OFF and those which they are to PUT ON. The Bible illustrates these garments as man-made , God-given and spirit-wrought.

Man-made garments as one has said; " are original, but not sufficient (Gen. 3 : 7). Natural, but not clean (Zech. 3 : 3-5), Smart, but useless (Isa. 64 : 6) and mended, but made worse." (Mark 2 : 21).

God-given garments are those provided by God and point to Christ — the sacrifice , which means TO COVER . " The Lord our righteousness ," who become OUR ROBE of righteousness. " Put ye on the Lord, Jesus Christ. "

Spirit-wrought garments is as much from God as the God-giving one — because the " ACTS " spoken of are done in the power of the Spirit. Having been born of the spirit TO SEE, TO ENTER and TO INHERIT the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world, our life here should be one which brings glory to God. Put ye on the Spirit-wrought garment of the Lord, Jesus Christ. Now if any have not the Spirit of Jesus Christ, he is none of His.

Satan in the garden of Eden stripped man of his Robe of Righteousness and Innocency and left him in a state of being naked and unfit for God 's presence. We have this illustrated in the parable of the man who went from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves , which stripped him of his Raiment, wounded him and departed, leaving him as dead. This is the picture of man 's helpless condition.

When Adam and Eve knew of their condition , they at once tried to remedy it. " . . . They sewed fig-leaves together and made themselves aprons " — man-made garments , denoting works of self-righteousness ness, by the flesh, works of the carnal natural man.

Those fig-leaves were but a picture of themselves plucked from the parent stem, death had set in and though for a time they might remain glossy and beautiful, they would soon be withered and dead. The fig-leaves were not sufficient to make them fit for God 's presence and when they heard God 's voice ("Ye are called with a holy calling ") " Where Art Thou ? " They hid themselves for they still felt naked and unclothed.

So , it is always with garments man makes for himself — Though sin would persuade us that we are well Clad ! " Ye clothe you " says Hagaai, " but there is none warm." And Isaiah expressed it : " Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves WITH THEIR WORKS " For " All our righteousness is as filthy rags ."

Unto Adam and Eve God made coats of skin and clothed them. With their first dress , the fig-leaf aprons , God had nothing to do, and with those " Coats of skin " man had nothing to do. They were God-given garments !

We do not read that Adam and Eve put the " Coats of Skin " over their Fig-leaf Aprons. They were stripped of all their self-righteousness . They were God-given and so The Word, that was made flesh , The Son of God is God-given !

When the Prodigal Son returned his father said : " Bring forth the best robe and PUT IT ON him . . ." The best

robe was not put over the rags in which he returned .

Man by nature is inclined to try to " patch-up " his old rags and put on " " some of self and some of Thee," but Christ tells us how useless this is : " " No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old , if otherwise then both the new maketh a rent and the piece that was taken out of the new AGREETH NOT with the old." The garment which God gives " Agreeth Not " with filthy rags !

In the demoniac story , when the Lord met him , he " wore no clothes , Neither abode in any house , but in Tombs ." A place of death . But when the demons had been cast out , he was found at the feet of Jesus . This a picture of man 's condition and when given a spirit-wrought garment will be found at Jesus ' feet , totally dependent upon Him ! In All Things !

Horace E . Walker

Horace E . Walker
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Salem , Va . 24153

Jan . 29 , 1988
Rt . 2 , Box 75
Strong , Ark . 71765

Dear Editor 's of the Signs ;

It was said to me , to keep writing , by some of the dear brethren , and sisters , from afar and near , I know unless the Lord blesses me with a spiritual mind , it would be of no comfort to you dear ones saith Paul , a carnal mind is emnity against God , not subject to the laws of God , neither indeed can be . For to be carnal minded is death , but to be spiritual minded is life and peace . I know there dwells nothing good in my flesh . I hate my sinful flesh , we know when the Lord blesses us with his spirit , to understand a portion of his precious truth . It is life and peace to us . Jesus is the way , the truth , and the life . Saith Jesus , my sheep hear my voice , and I know them , and they follow me : and I give unto them eternal life ; and they shall never perish , neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand . My Father , which gave them me , is greater than all ; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father 's hand . John said , whosoever transgresseth , and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ , hath not God . He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ , he hath both the Father and the Son . If there come any unto you , and bring not this doctrine , receive him not into your home , neither bid him God speed : For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds . I adore the three in one God , God the Father , God the Son , God the holy spirit . The secret things belongs unto God , the revealed things belongs unto us . Mat. 11 : 27 . All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son , but the Father ; neither knoweth any man the Father; save the Son ; and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him . I know the precious truths that the Lord has blessed me to believe , and also to write a little concerning spiritual things . I believe I was taught it of God , and not by man , but by the revelation of Jesus Christ ; That is the way the Lord; has taught all his children , from the least unto the greatest . Heb . 8 : 10-12 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days , saith

the Lord ; I will put my laws into their mind , and write them in their hearts : and I will be to them a God , and they shall be to me a people : and they shall not teach every man his neighbour , and every man his brother , saying know the Lord : for all shall know me , from the least unto the greatest . For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness , and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more , how precious these scriptures are to this vile and sinful wretch . Thy mercy , my God , is the theme of my song , The joy of my heart , and the boast of my tongue : Thy free grace alone , from the first to the last , Hath won my affections , and bound my soul fast , without thy sweet mercy I could not live here : Sin soon would reduce me to utter despair ; But through thy free goodness my spirits revive ; and he that first made me still keeps me alive alive .

1 John 4 : 15-21 Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God , God dwelleth in him , and he in God , and we have known and believed the love that God hath to us . God is love ; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God , and God in him , Herein is our love made perfect , that we may have boldness in the day of judgment : because as he is , So are we in this world . There is no fear in love ; but perfect love casteth out fear : because fear hath torment . He that feareth is not made perfect in love . We love him because he first loved us us . If a man says I love God , and hateth his brother , he is a liar : for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen , how can he love God whom he hath not seen ? and this commandment have we from him , That he who loveth God love his brother also .

1 John 5 : 1-2 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God : and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him . By this we know that we love the children of God , when we love God , and keep his commandments .

Acts 13 : 48 And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed , he came unto him own , and his own received him not , But as many as received him ; to them gave he power to become the sons of God , even to them that believe on his name .

Romans 9 : 23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy , which he had afore prepared unto glory , (verse 24) Even us whom he hath called , not of the Jews only , but also of the Gentiles

Ephesians 1 : 18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened ; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling , and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints .

Col . 1 : 12-15 Giving thanks unto the Father ; which hath made us meet to be partakers of the saints in light : who hath delivered us from the power of darkness : and hath translated us into the Kingdom of his dear Son : In whom we have redemption through his blood , even the forgiveness of sins : who is the image of the invisible God , the firstborn of every creature : saith Paul Rom . 6 : 17 But God be thanked , that ye were the servants of sin , but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you . There is one body , and one spirit , even as ye are called in one hope of your calling ; one Lord one faith one baptism one God and Father of all , who is above all , and through all

all ; and in you all . I love the way the Lord blessed his apostles to address the true churches of the living God , grace be to you and peace from God our Father , and from the Lord Jesus Christ . Also this from Isaiah , And all thy children shall be taught of God , and great shall be the peace of thy children . Hymn 280 came to me ; I poor , weak and worthless , tho I am , I have a rich ; almighty friend ; Jesus , the Saviour , is his name — He freely loves ; and without end . He ransomed me from hell with blood , and by his power my foes controlled ; He found me wandering far from God , and brought me to his chosen fold . He cheers my heart , my wants supplies , and says that I shall shortly be , enthroned with him above the skies — O what a friend is Christ to me !) Sometimes I can say I know my redeemer liveth . The Lord is my Shepherd , but when doubts and fears trouble my mind . I wonder am I his or not , do I love the Lord or not , I then have to be shown again , that the Lord is my Saviour and my God .

With love to all you ,
dear ones in Christ ,
Lula Fox

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

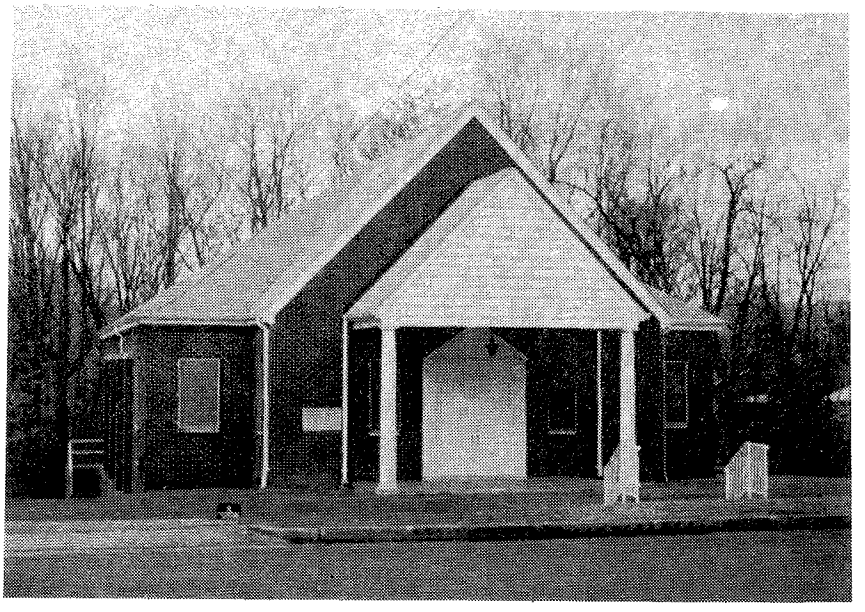

ROANOKE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Elder L .J . Brammer

The Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church was organized in 1900 and moved to its present location at Burke Street and Maiden Lane S .W . Roanoke , Va . in 1960 .

Meetings are held on 1 st Sunday at 11 a .m . and Saturday before at 2 p .m . Also every 5th Sunday at 11 a 11 a .m .

The Communion meeting is held on 1 st Sunday in April .

Elder Leonard J . Brammer is the pastor .

ARTICLES

AMAZING GRACE

Psalms 66 : 1 , " Make a joyful noise unto God , all ye lands : "

I don 't know of a more joyful noise than amazing grace when it is sung with grace in your hearts to the Lord .

" Amazing grace (how sweet the sound !) that saved a wretch like me ;
I once was lost but now am found , was blind , but now I see ."

His grace has most surely been amazing to a wretch like me . In my darkest hours , I heard my name called so plainly I answered . It was a fearful , but sweet sound . I was found in a waste howling wilderness and I believe by his amazing grace , he opened my eyes that I could see .

" Twas grace that taught my heart to fear ,
And grace my fears relieved :
How precious did that grace appear , The hour I first believed ."

When I saw myself a hell - deserving sinner , it taught my heart to fear . I felt so unworthy when I was blessed with a hope that the precious saviour died for my sins . By his amazing grace , my fear was relieved .

It was not my choice to believe or not to believe , rather by his amazing grace .

Hebrews 4 : 12 , " For the word of God is quick , and powerful , and sharper than any two - edged sword ."

" Through many dangers , toils , and snares , I have already come ;
" Tis grace has brought me safe thus far , And grace will lead me home home . "

I have toiled many nights because of my sins and snares that were set for me . I feel his amazing grace has brought me through many trials and tribulations .

I dreamed of seeing that city whose streets are pure gold . I hope his grace will lead me home where I shall see him for myself and not for another .

" The Lord has promised good to me , his word my hope secures ; He will my shield and portion be as long as life endures ."

I believe I can witness his promise through and by his amazing grace , for the Lord is good to me , and without his word , I fear my hope is not secure .

I feel his truth is my shield from the destruction of unbelief . Lord , I believe ; help thou mine unbelief .

If by his amazing grace I have a portion , I shall receive it in due season as long as life endures .

" Yes , when this flesh and heart shall fail ,
And mortal life shall cease ,
I shall possess , within the vale ,
A life of joy and peace ."

As we grow older , it causes us to realize that at any moment this flesh and heart can fail and we pray for a peaceful moment for this mortal life to cease .

The only joy and peace we find on earth is when we are blessed by his amazing grace to joy in the Lord and hope that we shall possess that joy and peace within the vale .

" The earth shall soon dissolve like snow : the sun forbear to shine ;
But God , who called me here below , Will be forever mine . "

I believe that , that day for which

all other days were made is nigh at hand and the things we see today will be seen forever no more .

There will be no need of the sun , neither of the moon , in that city which hath foundations , whose builder and maker is God , for the lamb is the light thereof .

At our communion service in October 1987 , I closed my eyes in prayer . I hope and believe that by an eye of faith , I saw the lamb of God standing beside the table . I hope by his amazing grace , I shall see him again and call him forever mine .

" Where we will have no less days to sing God 's praise than when we first begun ."

Clifton Robertson
Route 1
Reidsville , N .C .

"Beloved , think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you , as though some strange thing happened unto you : but rejoice, in asmuch as ye be partakers of Christs sufferings ; that when his glory shall be revealed , ye may be glad also with exceeding joy ." I Peter 4 : 12-13 .

Beloved brethren , we know that the trials of our faith are not for God to find out how much faith we have , but for our good ; for all things work together for good to them who love God , to them that are the called according to his own purpose . We have no faith within or of our own self , for faith is the gift of God , lest any man should boast . We face trials , tribulations and temptations almost every day of our life , but let us not charge God with our temptations . "Let no man say when he is tempted , I am tempted of God : for God cannot be tempted with evil , neither tempteth he any man : but every man is tempted , when he is drawn away of his own lusts , and enticed ." Every man and woman on earth is full of lust , for we were made subject to vanity from the beginning , and our federal head Adam fell under its power . And being Adam multiplied we can be nothing more than he . There are those who would charge God with being the author of sin because he made us the way we are , but they are only trying to hide their own sins , instead of confessing them and repenting . "Nay , but Oman , who art thou that repliest against God ? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it , Why hast thou made me thus ? Hath not the potter power over the clay , of the same lump , to make one vessel unto honor and another to dishonor ? " We were made according to his own will and purpose and we should be exceedingly glad that it is so .

Being made subject to vanity we fell under its power , and therefore became sinners . But God foresaw all of this , and the cure was with him before the foundation of the world : For Christ stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world . Though God made his people subject to vanity he also subjected the same in hope . Hope of what ? Hope of heaven and immortal glory : to reign with him forever . Can we have any real hope without faith ? I do not believe hope and faith can be separated . If we are given faith to believe that Christ died

for his people, must we not also hope that we are included? "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe, but also to suffer for his names sake." Yes, dear brethren, we must suffer for Christ's sake, for he also suffered for us. There are those who teach that you can live rejoicing every day, if only you will accept him as your Saviour and give him your heart. I don't know how anyone can give his heart to God, and if God does not take away our cold and stony heart and give us a heart of flesh we can never know him: "for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." If one does not know God, how can he give or even offer anything to him? "He that commeth to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." How can one seek anything that he does not believe exists? Brethren, my experiences have taught me that I cannot live rejoicing every day. There are moments when God reveals himself to me, (at least I believe this to be true,) but most of the time I go moaning in spirit and total darkness. Is this not also your experience? Not only am I in darkness, but trials, temptations, and persecutions meet me daily, and being very weak I often succumb to temptations; and almost always regret it. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it it." Although we often succumb to our fleshly lusts, a way is always made for us to escape so that we can never go so far that we utterly destroy ourselves. If it was not so, I feel sure I would have been destroyed long ago; and that justly so. Thanks be unto God that he sent his only begotten Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but to save the world from the condemnation it was already under. We read in the second chapter of Hebrews: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." And, "For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find help in time of need."

Yes, dear brethren, while in the flesh our Lord and Saviour was tempted of Satan in all points, but without sin; and is now sitting on the right hand of the Father making intercession for us. Therefore let us come

before his throne in prayer in our time of need.

The Apostle James tells us to, "count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." Also, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." Do we love him? If we love him, it is because he first loved us, and gave himself for us. To know him is to love him, for God is love; and it is God that teaches us to love. The natural man does not know or love God, for the natural man cannot receive the spiritual things of God. Only when one has been born again of the Holy Spirit can he know the love of God: and man has no more to do with bringing about this birth than he did in bringing about his natural birth. God is light, and the natural man loves darkness, for his deeds are evil. When one is born again and this new life is made manifest to him, a war is begun. There is then two lives living in one body and these are contrary the one to the other so that we cannot do the things that we would: for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. There is nothing good in our flesh, and the works of the flesh are adultry, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatory, hatred, etc. and these we will do if we are not led by the Holy Spirit. Then if led by the Holy Spirit we will have the fruit of the Spirit which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against which there is no law.

Brethren, it is this warfare that causes the believer to suffer. The non-believer knows nothing about this warfare, therefore he may live rejoicing every day; but because of our own belief we must suffer persecutions and afflictions. Yea, all that will live godly in Jesus Christ shall suffer persecution: but out of them all shall our God deliver us. Many non-believers say they believe; but know not the truth, for they know not from whence belief comes, nor do they suffer as do believers. Our belief is of God: "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Rejoice, dear brethren, if you suffer for his name's sake, for, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." Is this not your desire, your hope, that you will live and reign with him forever ever? Non-believers profess to know that they are saved and will surely get to heaven, but the true believer can only profess a hope: for we walk by faith and not by sight. Where does our hope come from? We must have faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ to redeem his chosen people before we can have hope that we are numbered with them. How do we attain to this faith? Is it something we can reach out and take hold on anytime we so desire? No, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; lest any man should boast." The grace and the faith are both gifts from God. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." I cannot separate faith and hope. Faith without hope would be worthless to me, and hope without substance (faith) would also be worthless.

Our God is a consuming fire; he

hath chosen us in the furnace of afflictions , and he will bring us forth as gold with all the dross burned away . I believe that the trials of our faith is a part of the burning away of our dross and the renewing of our faith . And as Paul said , " being justified by faith , we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom we also have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God . And not only so , but we glory in tribulations also : knowing that tribulations worketh patience ; and patience , experience ; and experience , hope . And hope maketh not ashamed ; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us . "

Brethren , I often rebel when faced with trials , and tribulations , and I believe this is common with all men : believers and non-believers alike . But when I am given to see that the hand of God has delivered me , it often brings me to my knees , begging forgiveness for my rebellion . At other times it makes me thankful and at peace with God , and seems to renew my little hope . Also there are times during my trials and tribulations that I turn to him , begging for mercy and to be relieved . I realize , however , that without trials and tribulations and persecutions that I would have no need or desire to pray : no need to ask for help or give thanks for help given . But thanks be unto our all wise God that all things work together for good ; for he works all things according to his own will and purpose . " O the depth of the riches of both the wisdom and knowledge of God ! how unsearchable are his judgments , and his ways past finding out ! " May we glorify his holy name forever .

Brethren , again I feel that my thoughts have been very scattered , but I present them for your prayerful consideration , and ask that you receive them only as you find them in harmony with the holy scriptures . May God bless the truth and pardon all errors .

Brethren , pray for this poor sinner .

Clifford Wilbanks

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

" The entrance of thy words giveth light ; it giveth understanding unto the simple." — Psalm cxix. 130 .

The word " simple " means literally something which is not folded or twisted together . But owing to the treacherous and desperately deceitful heart of man , all , without exception , in a state of nature are the reverse of this . All their plots and contrivances for worldly profit or fleshly pleasure are tangled and complicated ; and they are continually twisting together some thread or other of carnal policy . But when God the Holy Ghost begins the work of grace upon the souls of the elect , he proceeds (if I may use the expression sion) to untwist them . He takes hold of that rope which Satan and their own hearts have been twisting together for years , and he untwists it throughout its whole length , so as to leave the strands not interwined as before , but riven , separated , and torn from each

other . The light that shines into the soul out of the fulness of Jesus discovers to a man the tortuousness, the crookedness, the complicated deceit and hypocrisy of which he is guilty . A man then is made " simple," when the folds and rumples of his heart are shaken out, and he is brought to see and feel that God looks into him; that his eye penetrates into every recess of his bosom ; and that there is not a thought in his heart, nor " a word in his tongue , but the Lord knoweth it altogether " (Psalm cxxxix . 4) . This character is aptly represented by Nathaniel . He had gone through this untwisting work in his soul . He had been under the fig - tree , and whilst kneeling and praying there, the eye of God looked into him , and just as a flash of lightning runs , in a moment, through a coil of wire , so , when the eye of God looked into Nathaniel 's soul , that instantaneous flash unravelled and untwisted the devices of his heart, and made him a simple man before him — " an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile " (John i . 47) .

" If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool , that he may be wise . " — I Corinthians iii . 18 .

The fruit and effect of divine teaching is , to cut in pieces , and root up all our fleshly wisdom , strength , and righteousness . God never means to patch a new piece upon an old garment ; he never intends to let our wisdom , our strength, our righteousness have any union with his ; it must all be torn to pieces , it must all be plucked up by the roots , that a new wisdom , a new strength , and a new righteousness may arise upon its ruins . But till the Lord is pleased to teach us , we never can part with our own righteousness , never give up our own wisdom , never abandon our own strength . These things are a part and parcel of ourselves , so ingrained within us , so innate in us , so growing with our growth , that we cannot willingly part with an atom of them till the Lord himself breaks them up , and plucks them away . Then , as he brings into our souls some spiritual knowledge of our own dreadful corruptions and horrible wickedness , our righteousness crumbles away at the divine touch ; as he leads us to see and feel our ignorance and folly in a thousand instances , and how unable we are to understand anything aright but by divine teaching , our wisdom fades away; and as he shews us our inability to resist temptation and overcome sin , by any exertion of our own , our strength gradually departs , and we become like Samsom, when his locks were cut off . Upon the ruins , then , of our own wisdom, righteousness, and strength , does God build up Christ's wisdom, Christ's righteousness, and Christ's strength: as Jesus said to his servant Paul , " My strength is made perfect in weakness ; " and this brought him to that wonderful conclusion , " Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities , that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Cor . xii . 9) . But only so far as we are favoured with this special teaching are we brought to pass a solemn sentence of condemnation upon our own wisdom , strength , and righteousness , and feelingly seek after the Lord's .

J . C . Philpot

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

MEETINGS

MT . OLIVE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Dear Elder Williams as clerk for the Mt . Olive Primitive Baptist Church in Stockdale , Texas , I wish to notify you , for publication , of the change we made for our time of meeting . We have met for years the first and third Sunday of each month . Beginning in Feb . of 1988 we plan to have our meetings the second and fourth Sundays of each month .

We have three very able ministers Elder Gerald Shipman , Elder Malcom Burkhalter , and Elder David Harrell . We have very few members , but we live in hope .

Thank you
Iva Lee Souter , Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 1988

Rufus L . Jacks , AL 7.00
Eld . D .R . Cabbage , TN 2.00
Mrs . Hazel Garland , MD 18.00
Mrs . Mary E . Poff , VA 4.00
Alan Terry , VA 2.00
Mrs . Oza Hill , TX 7.00
James Cunningham , MO 2.00
Alvis G . Beacham , NC 12.00
Eld. Jessie A. Foreman, NC.....2.00
Mrs . Myrtle T . Daniel , FL 2.00
Mrs . Allyne Page , TX 7.00
Dr . & Mrs . G .R . Harrell , TX...7.00
Mrs . Joyce Farley , TX 32.00
Mrs . Nannie Arrington , VA.....2.00
Mrs . Susan W . Cutts , VA.....5.00
Alabama Friends In Memory Of
Eld . Joe L . Hamrick.....30.00
George W . Hyslip , TN 10.00
Ercy C . Redman , AL..... 7.00
Mrs . Annie Reed , VA 10.00
Mrs . Marjorie Cook , TN 3.00
Mrs . Jewel Scott , AL 2.00
Davis Mordecai , AL 2.00
Ones That Love Him , N .C .
In Memory Jesse Somers 20.00
Eld . T .J . Solomon , VA 2.00
Mrs . Virginia L . Apple , NC 2.00
Mrs . E .G . Wilson , NC 20.00

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4 / 88
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE .

OBITUARIES

OBITUARY OF ELDER WILLIAM ERNEST BRANCHE

Elder William Ernest Branche , a faithful soldier and gospel laborer in the army of the Living God , was discharged by death and called home on August 15 , 1987 at

the age of 74 .

Brother Branche was born in Patrick County, Virginia on December 22 , 1912 , one of the sixteen children born to the late Thomas Green and Lucindy French Branche . During his childhood the family moved to West Virginia so his father could work in the coal mines . In later years Brother Branche lived in Beckley , West Virginia and pursued the same profession for some time . Since the year of 1962 , he had made his home at Marion , Virginia .

On his 22nd birthday Brother Branche was united in marriage to Hazel Martin , a daughter of the late Elder John Martin . Although the Lord added no offspring to their household He blessed them to live closely bound together for better than 52 years .

As a young man Brother Branche thought to join himself to the world and be a partaker of its pleasures . The Sovereign Disposer of all events had made other arrangements : He called him out of nature's darkness to His marvelous light, revealed in him a hope of life and glory in Jesus Christ, and gave him a ear to hear the gospel of his salvation . He united with Guyandott Primitive Baptist Church at Budd, West Virginia in May 1938 and was baptized by the late Elder Albert Runyaon . In later years he removed his membership to Glenwood Park Church where he remained as a member for the balance of his earthly life .

The Lord laid His hand on Brother Branche in the early 1940 's and placed a special kind of burden upon his heart . In 1944 he moved clear across the country to California , thinking to leave behind what was to follow him everywhere . Inasmuch as when the Lord calls one must answer, he was compelled to return to West Virginia and offer his gift to the church . He was ordained to the full work of the ministry in July 1949 . He was called to serve Glenwood Park Church as pastor in September 1952 , following the death of Elder Samuel Priddy . At the time of his own death Brother Branche was also serving as pastor of Fisher's Gap Church at Low Gap , North Carolina .

Brother Branche was a true servant of his Heavenly King . In his disposition he was mild - mannered , kind and friendly , meek and humble ; but in his calling he was bold as a lion in defense of the revealed truth of God . He was especially blessed by the power of God to search out and bring to light the deep hidden things of the Spirit. His conversation was nearly always spiritual because his mind and heart were filled with the hidden treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of God .

When Brother Branche passed away he was survived by his wife , whom he baptized into the fellowship of the church: four brothers, Lemuel, Howard , Bruce and Bernice Branche and three sisters , Sister Sylvia Barbour , Mrs . Goldie Saunders , Mrs . Ollie Cook , together with several nieces and nephews . His funeral service was held at Glenwood Park Church and was conducted by Elders Curtis Branham , Paul Hopkins and John Wingfield . His mortal body was laid to rest in the Shumate Cemetery near Lester , West Virginia , at the feet of his well - beloved father and mother - in - law . There , he lies peacefully awaiting the redemption of his body in the morning of the Resurrection .

May his brethren and sisters in the

flesh, together with his dear companion and his brethren and sisters in the church, be made reconciled to the Will of God in the loss of Brother Branche.

Done by order of Glenwood Park Church in conference, the 13th day of September 1987.

Elder John Wingfield, Moderator
Sister Marilyn Shaw, Clerk

LEONA D. DALTON

It pleased our Lord to call home Sister Leona D. Dalton. She passed from this life, September 3, 1987. Sister Leona was the daughter of the late George Davis Dalton and Itasca Dalton. She was the widow of Brother Raymond C. Dalton.

Sister Dalton was a faithful member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She loved the church and came as often as her health permitted. She was received by experience and baptism July 11, 1937.

Survivors include three daughters, Doris Crews and Geraldine Torrence, both of Danville and Ruth Creasy of Gretna; four brothers, Lawrence Dalton, Claude Dalton, Lyle Dalton, and Orelle Dalton, all of Danville; two sisters, Gracie Sours and Ora Hodge, both of Danville; four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

The funeral was conducted from Springfield Primitive Baptist Church by her beloved pastor, Elder O.K. Tench her body was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park to await the coming of our Savior. May each of us be given to say, " thy will be done."

Written in love and hope,
Carol R. Pickral

Elder O.K. Tench - Moderator
Oscar D. Pickral - Clerk

SISTER KATE DYER

It is the desire of our church to write the followings in memory of Sister Kate Page Dyer, who was born May 20, 1903 and passed away August 1, 1987.

She had been in declining health for several years.

She leaves to mourn her passing, one son, Herman, three daughters, Barber Houser of Danville, Va. Ruby D D. Pace, Martinsville, Va. Youvne Holman, Dallas, Texas. Three brothers, and four sisters.

We esteemed sister Kate dearly for she was gracious, gentle, and kind with a warm personality that endeared her to those that knew her.

Sister Kate loved the doctrine of salvation by grace and she joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church June 25, 1938.

She was a faithful attendant as long as she was able to attend, she loved to meet with those of like precious faith and she always met them with a loving smile and a warm handshake. Her presence at her meetings always added pleasure for all of us.

Sister Kate was married to Brother Johnie Dyer, August 12, 1923.

Funeral services were held at Townes Funeral Home, Monday August 3, 1987, in Danville, Va. by Elder Kenneth Key and Elder Haywood Wray. Interment was in Highland Burial Park, Danville, Va.

Kenneth R . Key , Moderator
Coley S . Strader , Committee

MARY RUTH FLEMING

With a sad heart I will attempt to write the obituary of my Dear Sister , Mary Ruth Fleming . She was born August 23 , 1905 , the daughter of Marcellus and Mittie Hodges Fleming . She passed away November 6 , 1987 in Pitt County Memorial Hospital Greenville , N .C . making her stay on this earth 82 years , 2 months and 14 days .

Mary Ruth was a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God , although she never offered to the church , she manifested much love for the church and attended the meetings as long as her health permitted .

She loved her neighbors and people around her and was always ready to offer aid and sympathy in times of sickness or other needs that might arise in the neighborhood or community .

She worked as bookkeeper for a department store for 36 years before retiring and was loved and respected by her co-workers .

Her funeral was conducted in the Chapel of S .G . Wilkerson Funeral Home , Greenville , N .C . by Elder Reeves Smith and Elder Joe Sawyer . Her body was laid to rest in Greenwood Cemetery , Greenville , N .C . beside the resting place of her parents .

It would be hard to say how much I miss her for she lived with me the past twenty - five years and there is a vacancy that can never be filled . May the grace of God give each one that feels a loss so great the strength and faith to carry on .

Written by her Sister ,
Hazel Fleming Jackson

WILLIE THOMAS LOVELACE

Brother Lovelace was born October 23 , 1893 and passed from this life August 27 , 1987 . He was married to Ester Perkins in 1920 , who survives along with 7 children : Willie Lee Lovelace , Irene Rogers , Georgie Atkins , Vivian Wyatt , Nick Lovelace , Andrena Lovelace and Carol Brinson . Also surviving are 8 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren .

Brother Lovelace joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on May 26 , 1951 and lived most of his life in Rockingham County , North Carolina . He was a faithful member and supporter of his church as long as his health permitted ; he was declining in health for many years and unable to attend the meetings . He was a strong believer in the Doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God and believed all that the Father gave him would have eternal life . He was a kind and loving husband and father and will be greatly missed .

Funeral services were conducted by his pastor , Elder Kenneth Key . He was laid to rest in the church cemetery and to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour .

Written by request of Dan River
Church while in Conference

Submitted by Brother Reuben and
Sister Bea French

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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POEM

Let us sing the songs of Zion
While we sojourn here below.
Songs of Christ and His fair city
Where, by faith, we long to go.

On, how good to meet together,
Fellowship and love so sweet.
Let not pride destroy this union.
Keep us at each others feet.

Oh, the wisdom and the power,
Tis by this we walk and live.
And, when trials come upon us,
His sweet comfort He will give.

Let us bear our trials and sorrows,
Knowing they are for our good.
Causing us to beg for mercy,
And be cleansed in Jesus blood.

Filled with joy by His salvation,
With the Saints, Oh let us sing.
And while we are here together
Let Hosanas freely ring.

Hallelujah to our Savior.
Hallelujah to our King.
Swelling fountains born within us,
To our lips sweet anthems bring.

Written by Sister Lucille Young
and Elder Wayman Chapell
of Memphis, Tenn.

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EDITORIAL

Elder Kenneth R . Key

John 3-16 — This is a scripture that is probably read more and emphasized more throughout the worldly religions than any other verses in the bible . In my estimation the most incorrectly interpreted . This reads :

" For God so loved the world , that he gave his only begotten Son , that whosoever believeth in him should not perish , but have everlasting life . God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world ; but that the world through him might be saved . "

This scripture is pertaining to the church of the living God . There are those who believe that this is pertaining to every one that is born into the world . We do not find in the scripture where it teaches that every one would have everlasting life with Him . God has prepared a place for those of the elect family of God and he has prepared a place for the non-elect family . We do not believe it is his mind & purpose that all would be saved . We know this is a hard doctrine — the natural or carnal mind cannot understand this , why he would love some people and not love them all . It is written that " Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated , before either were born and neither having done any good or evil , that the purpose of God according to election might stand . He had an elect family who were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world . Now if he has an elect family , it is a family known unto Him . He has all of their names recorded in the Lambs book of life . They know him and they follow Him and a stranger they will not follow .

We may consider our natural families , there are eight children in my fathers family . There is no way we or anyone could add to that number or take away from it . It takes them all to make our family complete .

Now the family of God are those that have been born of Him , that incorruptible seed that liveth and abideth forever . This is made known unto them through the new birth . They are his children and He is their father . Those not born of the Heavenly father are bastards and not sons . He sent his Son down here to save his children from their sins , those that believe in him . Now who are those that believe

in Him ? They are those who he has taught to know him , who to know him is life eternal . They are those that have been born of that seed of Abraham , that seed that the Father promised that would grow into an enumerable host and be as numerous as the sand of the sea . He said they would live in a land of bondage for some four hundred and forty years . He said they would be delivered or led out . All of Israel is not Israel . Everyone that was born then were not of the elect family . Those that are born again— Jesus Christ born in them the hope of Glory , are given to look unto God as their father and it is those that believe in Him . There is a reason for that hope that is within you . There is a reason you believe this doctrine . You did not come to know him by the teaching of flesh and blood but by the revelation of Jesus Christ , and this is by the work of God . in Hebrews , eighth chapter he makes a new covenant with the house of Israel . He says ; " I will put my laws into their mind , and write them in their hearts : and I will be to them a God , and they shall be to me a people :

And they shall not teach every man his neighbour , and every man his brother , saying , Know the Lord ; for all shall know me , from the least to the greatest . "

Peter was able to acknowledge unto Jesus that thou art the Christ the Son of the living God . He told him there that this was by the revelation from God . This is the only way we can know the Lord , and be blessed to feel the Lord is my Shepherd , I shall not want .

In the natural state in which we are born into the world we cannot know him as Peter on this occasion . We are born into the word in a dead state as far as spiritual life is concerned . The carnal mind is enmity against God , and not subject to His laws . Before the Spirit is revealed unto us we could not believe in Him . We might believe in a natural sense . Our fathers and mothers would if they could have taught us to know him and they would have told us as much as they could about Him . We were brought up in a moral home , but before we could know Christ in a spiritual way we must have some experience of our own . It has to be by an application of the spirit of God right in our own lives . It has to be inside in our heart . Thats where he works . That is the way we come to know Him and believe in Him .

There is a reason you believe what you believe . You may look back through the journey you have come and somewhere along the way He was revealed unto you . He gave you to feel that He is your Heavenly father , that there is one in Heaven that could reach your case when earthly hands could not help you . I am sure there are times in each of your lives when you had come to the end of your strength , you felt you knew not which way to turn and you didn't know where to go . I believe there were also times you were given to feel that there is one that could help you , and you were made to pray unto the Father from whom all blessings flow . I don't know when this was manifest to you but you do . It may have been when you were a child . God is not only a God of the old but he is a god of the young . If he has ever loved you , if you are one of His children of the elect family you have ever been a child of God . He knew and loved you before you were even born .

The Apostle Paul was a chosen

vessel, the scripture teaches us, but God suffered him to plot his own course and he preached for fourteen years in the Jews religion and prospered above many of his equal. He said after his conversion he verily thought he was doing the work of God, but he admitted he did it in ignorance and unbelief. But when it pleased God to reveal His son in him, he saw a more excellent way. I believe Gods children have ever had the spirit of Christ in them even from the time they were chosen in him, but not mindful of this until it pleased God to reveal it unto them.

This is when they are born again, they are made spiritually alive — their blind eyes are open and deaf ears are made to hear. They begin to hunger for spiritual food. These are the ones he is talking about in our text. These are the ones that believe in Him. And they shall not perish but have everlasting life. When his spirit is manifested within you, when you felt his presence, you can then say you believe. Not because flesh and blood, your mother or father or any other man has taught you to know him. You now believe because you have felt something yourself, you have found a change within you, something has taken place that you didn't know anything about before this time. You couldn't hear the gospel being preached. You could hear but you didn't understand. The bible teaches of those who have ears but do not hear. He has to open those deaf ears.

This is such a blessed change and a love we can never tell. A little taste of Heaven on earth. At this time all doubts are removed and it seems nothing would ever mar our peace again. We feel as David that surely goodness and mercy would follow us all the days of our lives.

Then soon we are made to doubt just like John. He had the privilege of baptizing the Lord in the river Jordan. He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him: and to a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. You would think he would never doubt, but a few days hence he was shut up in prison and sent his disciples to inquire is this the Lord or shall we look for another. So soon he was made to doubt. Jesus told his disciples to go show John again. We have to be shown these things again, How we once were blind but now we see, we once were deaf but now we hear. You hear the things that are so sweet & precious unto you because it parallels with that of the laws he has placed in your heart. That is when the gospel becomes sweet and precious to you.

When we come to stand before Gods people, we realize we are not telling you anything that you don't know, but hopefully bring into remembrance the things that you have already received. The Apostle Paul admonished the church at Corinth to believe no other gospel other than that I have preached unto you and that which you have received. You have received something if you are one of the elect family of God that you have not received from any man but from the hand of God. This is his work, he put the laws in your heart.

When you hear the gospel preached you try the spirits, whether they be of man or of God. If what we preach does not parallel with that you have been taught in your heart or that you have been made to believe, then it

would mean nothing to you and you wouldn't believe it or understand it, but if it finds a lodging place there then its an evidence we have something in common. Then it is precious to us and we are then mutually comforted together.

Jesus told Peter that when thou art converted to strengthen thy brethren. We should talk of our experience of Grace to each other, tell others about your feelings, tell them about what you have received. You may find you have something in common, you have been taught the same as they have been taught and you believe the same as they believe. You feel the same as they feel in their heart. You are then being comforted together.

We do believe that those whosoever believe in him shall not perish but have everlasting life.

Lets now go back to this family — the elect family, this number of children that God has chosen, and none can add to it and none can take from it it.

God sent his only begotten son down here to save his people from their sins. He didn't send him to save the whole world. He said he came not to do his own will but the will of the Father. When Jesus prayed to the Father he said he had finished the work he had sent him to do. I have saved all of those that thou hast given me." He had saved every one of them — not a one of them were lost. His blood ran out half to the hinder seas and half to the former seas. This covered every one from the beginning and until the final consumation of time. And he said he would raise them up again in the last day and present them back to the Father without spot, wrinkle, blemish or any such thing. How safe and secure the church and the family of God is.

When Jesus ascended back to the Father he said he was going to prepare a place for them, that where he is they would be also. I believe that everyone he saved by his shed blood one day will see the place he has prepared for them. That city whose builder and maker is God. That long home to be with him forever and ever.

May God bless each of us to continue to run the race he has set before us, ever looking unto Him, the author and finisher of our Faith. And you may be confident of this very thing, that He who has begun this work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

Elder Kenneth R. Key

The above is excerps from a sermon preached at Moons Creek Church, the third Sunday in March 1988. Edited for publication.

CORRESPONDENCE

REMEMBRANCE

In searching through my correspondence that I have been blessed to have with many precious brethren over many years, I found a letter I received in 1969 from a dear old Elder whom I had never met and whom I feel is now resting from his labors — Elder Johnnie Joyner.

The reason for his letter was because of the love and fellowship I was blessed to have for my pastor, Elder Curry King, whose first concern

was peace at home .

Elder King was in the hospital and the day and hour he was to have a major operation, I was at my work. My thoughts were upon him and these words came to my mind. I wrote them down as they came and sent them to him hoping to express my love and concern .

I had no thought they would be published, until I saw them in the April 1969 issue of the Signs of the Times where he had requested they be published .

ONCE AGAIN OUR HEARTS ARE SAD

" We pray Thee , O Lord , as humble as we know how, for mercy, if it be Thy will, for one precious to us is very ill .

Our pastor , who so sweetly preaches Jesus, and the Crucifixion, is now on the bed of affliction .

In his suffering , gracious Lord , wilt Thou be near , for Thou hast caused us to love him so dear .

Grief has overshadowed us , as the darkness of the night. We can only look to Thee in whom there is light .

We know Thou has not forgotten to be gracious to those whom Thou has made precious .

Our Sister, and his companion so dear , whose heart is filled with love and fear , we know the way seems hard. Have mercy and strengthen her O God .

Upon the Lord with patience we wait , for His grace and mercy has never come too late .

Our Father we look to Thee , for a time like this , it is plain to see , how helpless we poor mortals be .

In His great and Holy name , we are not ashamed to cry for help , for we find our blessed Jesus wept .

O Lord , our arm is too short to reach Thee , but in love and humbleness we beseech Thee , that once again Thou will bless us to hear that tender voice, with praises ring, of our pastor Elder Curry King .

As we thank Thee Father for the gift , we can only say , in a kind and humble way , not my will but thine be done .

Lord Thou knowest that some service we desire to render, but keep us Lord that we might not hinder . "

Written in love and sympathy ,
Clifton C . Robertson

Elder Joyner's Letter :

Dear Brother ,

" We are strangers in the flesh but I hope we're not in the spirit . I was reading last Friday evening April the 18th in the Signs of the Times your prayer to God in the behalf of your dear Pastor Elder Curry King . After I had read your sweet prayer , I was made to rejoice in my poor heart so much . I had a feeling I just cannot express . That prayer was from God . He is the prayer giver. He is the prayer answering God .

I do believe you had your dear pastor at heart . I do believe you had the church at heart. The church loves their pastor and a true pastor like Elder King loves his little flock .

That evening while my wife and I was at the supper table, I was carried back in my feelings the time that I was blessed to hear Elder King preach . I don't remember just now where it was at but I haven't forgotten the text . It was in John's writing, Chapter 6 . ' All tht the father giveth me shall come to me .' If I have ever heard the gospel

preached, I heard it that day. My poor soul was so rejoicing, my cup was running over. I told my wife there was no doubt in my mind but what that was the gospel of God our Saviour. I was made to rejoice in it again.

After I read your prayer to God, dear brother, I have some feeling I would like to tell concerning my own experience if I have one, and I hope that I have some experience but I am in great fear. I am so scared that I will do something wrong. My experience, part of it, is just this: if it isn't something I have done, it is something that I haven't done.

I hope that in 1915 I was made willing to go before the church and ask them for a home with them. I was out in the cold. I was received in full fellowship. I never have felt that I was worth anything to the church, but it has meant something to me.

In 1918, for some cause, the church saw fit to liberate me to speak in public. I just felt like I just could not bear it. It has been a fearful thing with me. I fear sometime that I haven't been blessed to pray much, but I can say one thing. I have done a lot of begging the Lord to have mercy on me and to direct my footsteps in the way that he would have me to go. I believe I know the feeling of what it means to have the pastor care of a church. It is a fearful feeling with me. I have my home church and I have been trying to serve a church in Halifax County for about 12 years or some over. I love my brethren and sisters and they say that they love me. I can truthfully say that they have proved it to me by their deeds and that is a good proof. My home church is at Mill Branch Church.

We are in the Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association and the Black Creek Primitive Baptist Union.

Dear brother, I have felt so impressed to write to you ever since I read your prayer to God. I would like to meet with you sometime. When you see your pastor, give him my love and best regards.

In love, I hope to you and family and to your home church. I would like to visit with you all. I feel it would be a pleasure to meet with you all, but I don't know just when it will ever be. I do hope that my few remarks won't worry you too much.

Goodby."

From a brother, I hope,
Elder Johnnie Joyner

After receiving his letter, I had a desire to meet him. I went to his association with that in mind.

I met a man coming up the walk so afflicted he could hardly get along. I felt I could see the spirit of love and kindness manifested in his face. It was Elder Johnnie Joyner, for whom I was searching.

After meeting him and talking with him, his letter became even more precious. I never met a brother who I felt was more humble and sincere in his praise to God. I could see he was not one to try to study out some new gospel theme, but rather he spake in sincerity and truth.

It wasn't very long after we met, that I heard of his death, and I felt his suffering was over. There would be no more afflictions, and he has not been forgotten.

Psalm 116:15, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Clifton C. Robertson
Route 1
Reidsville, NC 27320

Dec . 11 , 1987

To Elder Kenneth Key and to whom it may profitably concern of spiritual things and hopefully for the comfort and edification of the Saints of the Most High Almighty God.

This message is a promise made by the One and Only Almighty to the Saints of God . This revelation was revealed to me only by this God with His spirit without any help of flesh and blood or human beings . Definition of these Saints are those who were chosen and elected in Christ Jesus from before the foundation of the world and known as Gods elect and with Jesus being the only Begotten Son of God . The saints are called by the divine spiritual power at an exact time and this true God does not lie and keeps all his promises . Also all his wills and shalls will and shall be done according to his will and without failure . These saints are born again spiritually by Gods Spiritual Supernatural Power for God is Spirit . You have no choice in this matter, whether one likes it or not and it's a fearfull thing to fall into the hands of a living God . You must be born again by His Spirit to receive any of his revelation (" Unstanding Truth ") One of the Great Promises to His chosen elect people is " I will bless those who bless thee and curse those who curse thee ." My understanding is that Gods revelation is not to all his creation either . Neither is His promises of good to all but only to those whom God has imputed righteousness according to his will for he is the only righteous one . This God is also a merciful God , " His mercy endureth forever " , This quote in King James Bible by King David but I believe one can only understand it by God's divine revelation . I hope God has caused me to by vision or dream to see a portion of this Eternal Heaven , or Paradise (whichever it should be called) I have never seen anything so beautiful . Don't think I could near describe it to anyone . God forbid I should lie about such fearful subject . I am glad of what Jesus did on the cross there on Golgatha Hill when he said " It is finished " and commended his spirit into the hands of his Heavenly Father . No more for the Saints of this God to do for this God is " The Author and Finisher of our Faith which is required to please this God . Free Faith , Grace , and Truth .

I may suffer but better for a little while than forever . I am living and or existing by this God Given Hope . We enter into eternal life " To Wit " I expect to see Jesus and be like him and be Satisfied . What more should one desire ? " Nothing more can be said than that which has been said . I am so happy about this , I thank God from my Heart , Soul , Mind and Spirit . " If God be for me who can be against me ?

Carl Hoffman
4 Arbor Ave .
Hartsville , S .C . 29550

Dear Elder Williams ,

Enclosed is a check to renew for another year . I'm at home today due to illness . I decided to write a few words , having been blessed to meditate on the riches of God 's mercy . A sweet song of ours says , " Now , thou art precious to my heart, My portion and my joy : Forever let thy boundless grace , My sweetest

thoughts employ." How, I thank God for the precious hope in my breast.

I was so sick early this morning. I could not raise my head up. The tears of joy stream down my face as I remembered the blessing of a Holy God on this unworthy worm of the dust. I knew this was the time I had to be sick, yet He still keeps me by His grace. God who has all power, blesses us in health, in sickness, in sorrows and the griefs that have been appointed unto us in this life. " To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called Trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified." Isaiah 61 : 3.

I remember the words of a dear Elder, as we parted five years ago this month. (I being in such grief at that time). " Take care of yourself, till we meet again." I said. He replied " I can't do that, for it is God who keeps us." Yes, dear beloved brethren, God keeps our feet, lest we fall. He will take care of us in all the trials of this life. When our bodies rest beneath the sod, He'll watch over the sleeping dust, till the dawn of that great day, when He shall come again. " For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Wherefore comfort one another with these words. Thessalonians 4 : 16, 17, 18.

May God bless the household of faith.

In bonds of Love & Hope,
Emmie L. Grayson

NOTICE:

Notice Is Hereby Given Of The Formation Of AMERICAN UNION OF BAPTISTS, INC. As a Non-Profit, Non-Stock Religious Corporation Organized Under The Corporation Law of The State Of Maryland - Approved 1987.

The major purpose of this corporation is to provide for divine worship as practiced by the Particular or Old School Baptists, in conformity with the King James Version of the Bible, as interpreted in the 1689 London Confession of Faith, the 1832 Black Rock Address, and the Volume I, Number I 1832 Signs of the Times Prospectus.

To that end, the corporation is authorized to sponsor and assist religious publications or magazines (such as Signs of the Times); to assist in preserving and maintaining the records and heritage of Old School Baptist Churches; to assist Old School Baptist Churches in secular affairs such as trusteeship, insurance, property management, and property acquisition or disposition; and for such aims and purposes to hold and manage properties, monies, gifts and assets of every kind.

The five founding and currently serving trustees of the corporation are: Milton Fountain, Richlands, N.C NC; Victor H. Laws, Salisbury, MD; Jennye A. Osborne, Westminster, MD; Eugene F. Osborne, Westmin-

ster, MD; Burnell B. Williams, Blairs, VA.

Said trustees elected the following officers: Victor H. Laws, President, and Jennye A. Osborne, Secretary / Treasurer.

The corporation acquired by merger in July 1987, the property and assets of Ebenezer Primitive or Old School Baptist Church of Baltimore City and is holding same for the above purpose.

The mailing address of the corporation is c/o Victor H. Laws, P.O. Box 75, Salisbury, MD 21801. All inquiries and correspondence should be sent to that address.

The corporation, and its trustees and officers, will welcome your help and your suggestions for accomplishing its aims and purposes.

Victor H. Laws, President

ARTICLES

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

JOHN 11 : 25-26

" I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall be live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? "

These words were spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ to Martha, and they undoubtedly have a great significance. It shall be our purpose, God being our helper, to present at least a portion of their meaning. We wish our readers would turn to and read the eleventh chapter of John. The account given here concerns Jesus, Lazarus, Martha and Mary. It is quite evident to us that they were much more than good friends, for when Jesus asked, " Where have ye laid him (Lazarus)? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept." John 11:34-35. Is it any wonder that the Jews should have said, " Behold how he loved him!" We have heard of brethren presenting the idea that the death of Lazarus and his being raised from the dead typified the resurrection of the Lord's people on the " General Resurrection Day." We would like to suggest here, in our humble opinion at least, that Lazarus was a type of the Gospel Ministry; Martha was a type of the Church under the law, and Mary was a type of the Gospel Church under the dispensation of Grace. When word first came to Jesus that Lazarus was sick, he said, " This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." He later said, " Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep." Apparently, they did not understand Jesus, and he finally said unto them plainly, " Lazarus is dead." When Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead, we are told that he " came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes, and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go." The true gospel minister must be as dead to the law and the things of the legal dispensation, as one who had been dead four days and laid in the grave, if he is to preach the gospel in its purity, and we believe that all ministers who are called and qualified by God can testify to this death. When they are brought

forth, however, by the mighty power of God, and the gift to preach is made known unto the Church, she is to acknowledge that gift by loosing him, or ordaining him to the full work of the gospel ministry, in order that he may be free to go wheresoever God in his providence may open a door and direct him. Otherwise he is not free to perform, properly, the ordinances of God's house.

Martha, as we have said, was a type of the church under the law. She could not understand fully the ordinances of God's house under Grace. We are told by Luke (10:40) that " Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, (Jesus) and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister (Mary) hath left me to serve alone ? bid her therefore that she help me. " But Jesus answered and said unto her, " Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her. " Martha, therefore, had to be instructed more perfectly in the things pertaining to the gospel church, and this was what Jesus was doing in the words of our text. She had just been saying, " Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. " Jesus then said unto her, " Thy brother shall rise again. " Martha replied, " I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." She, apparently, had a very similar idea to that held by many today and they need to be taught as she was taught and by the same Teacher, the way of God more perfectly. Jesus, therefore, said unto her, " I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." And then Jesus added, " " Believest thou this ? " We would to God that all of his people might believe this in deed and in truth, and, perhaps, then there would be no confusion, for they would then be seeing eye to eye and would no doubt speak the same things. But we are persuaded that it is not God's purpose that we should all be seeing alike on this point, any more than it is His purpose that we should agree on everything else. We honestly believe that as long as we live here in the flesh there will be things to bring forth the graces of his blessed Spirit, such as longsuffering one toward another, forgiveness, meekness, humility, charity, etc., that patience might have her perfect work. It is in this way we believe, that we are to see God manifested in the flesh, through the kindness and tender mercy of the brethren toward each other. There are those Marys, however, who have ceased from their labors and have entered into the house, or gospel church, and are sitting at the feet of their Lord and Master, enjoying and delighting in the work of redemption which he has finished in every sense of the word. They really believe with all their hearts and souls that Jesus is their resurrection and their life, and they are fully persuaded that whosoever liveth and believeth in him shall never die. Having part with Him, who is the first resurrection, they are convinced beyond the peradventure of a doubt that all of their adversaries and even the second death can have no power over them. We do not

understand that Jesus was the first to be raised from the dead in a literal sense , for there were others and he himself raised Lazarus from the dead but Jesus was the first to keep the law in every jot and title and to rise from its condemnation and death , for having satisfied the demands of the law he could not be holden of death , which was its penalty , and since he did all of this for his people they stand complete in him . With faith to believe this , they need fear no evil , for no lasting harm can befall them . Even the last monster , DEATH , which some so much dread , shall but prove the opening of the portals through which they shall pass out of this world of sin and sorrow into the fullness of that which no eye hath seen , nor ear heard and neither hath it entered into the heart of man , but is prepared for those that love him . They shall bid adieu to this vain world and find entrance into their eternal home , where undivided praise shall be rendered , world without end , to Father , Son and Holy Ghost . The Poet must have had a glimpse of this when he wrote the words which comprise Hymn No . 1256 , in the Beebe Collection :

" It is not death to die —
To leave this weary road ,
And , 'midst the brotherhood on high ,
To be at home with God .

It is not death to close
The eye long dimmed by tears ,
And wake in glorious repose ,
To spend eternal years .

It is not death to bear
The wrench that sets us free
From dungeon chain , to breathe the air
Of boundless liberty .

It is not death to fling
Aside the sinful dust ,
And rise , on strong , exulting wing ,
To live among the just .

Jesus , thou Prince of Life !
Thy chosen cannot die ;
Like thee , they conquer in the strife
To reign with thee on high . "

ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER

" And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God . . . " *Romans 8:28 .*

This verse in Holy Writ I see ,
Has very often puzzled me .
And many have been led to doubt
Just how this could be brought about .
How trouble as a blessing could
Work out for our eternal good
Was more than sight of man could know
And yet I felt it must be so .

" All things " include both dark and bright ,
It means the sunshine and the night
It means my sickness and my health ;
My poverty as well as wealth .
This world is full of toil and care ,
Both joys and sorrows have a share
But one there is a present friend
Who knows my life from start to end

Should He permit dark clouds someday ;
To cast a gloom upon my way ,
I know it is my Fathers ' will
I'm in His care . . . He loves me still ,
My feet may press a world of care
But I may breathe a purer air ,
An atmosphere from heaven above
Fragrant with the Fathers ' love .

Someday when I 've arrived at home
And view the road o 'er which I've come ;
I 'll see the battlements of light
And know he doeth " all things " right ;
For then will be revealed I know
A picture of my way below ;
Some things I had not understood
I 'll realize were for my good .

I 'll see from where I then shall stand ,
That " all things " were within His hand
He knew just where and when to send
A shadow with the light to blend
My Father has in view a plan
Far deeper than the mind of man
And since he n 'er forgets His child ;
I 'll trust Him and be reconciled .

The past is gone ; the present hour
Is mine with sunshine or with shower ;
The future days of weal or woe
Are veiled . . I 'm glad He wills it so .
" All things " . . this comprehensive phase
Will lead me on through lifes ' short days ;
And in a better world of rest ,
I 'll see more clearly , God knows best .

. . . Selected

Submitted by Sister Edith Thompson

" For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh ; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit ."—Romans viii . 5 .

None but those who are partakers of a heavenly birth feel heavenly realities to be their choice element , holy things their sweetest meditation , and the solemn worship of God their supreme delight . Look at this mark as a touchstone of divine life ; for to be spiritually-minded a man must be spiritual , and to be spiritual , he must have received the Spirit and been made a partaker of that " kingdom of God which is righteousness , and peace , and joy in the Holy Ghost " (Rom . xiv . 17) . Have you never found in reading the Scriptures a sweet peace distil over your soul , as the glorious promises came forth one after another as the stars in the evening sky , each one brighter and clearer and you felt a blessed persuasion of your interest in them ? When at the throne of grace , favoured with liberty of spirit and access to your heavenly Friend , have you never felt the peace of God to drop into your heart , and like oil upon the waves , to ally every rising of rebellion within ? Have you never found , in conversing with the saints of God , a sweet flowing of heart to heart and soul to soul , and felt that such conversation left behind a blessed fragrance upon your spirit ? Have you never in the house of prayer had your heart and affections drawn up to the things of God ; and as you sat and heard Christ , his Person and work , his grace and glory set forth , faith was drawn out to believe , hope to cast forth its anchor , and love and affection to flow , so that you experienced a spirituality of mind , a heavenly calm , and a holy peace that touched every spring of your soul , and watered it as the river that went out of Eden to water the garden ?

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

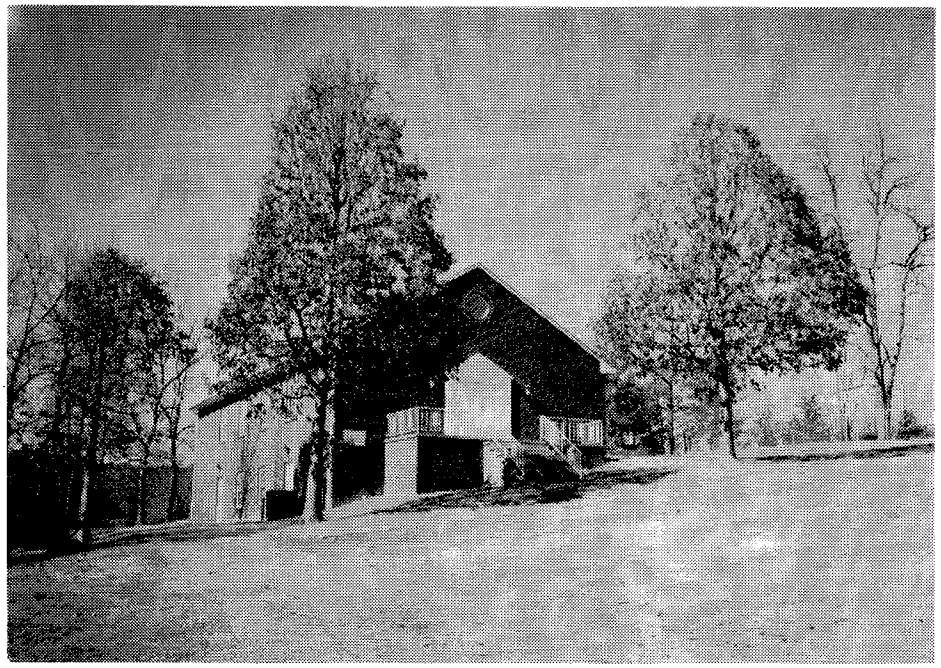

LAUREL RIDGE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Elder L.J. Brammer

Laurel Ridge Primitive Baptist Church near Cave Spring, Virginia, was organized around 1821. The church records date back to 1825, but the county records date the beginning of the church at about 1821.

The original building was a log structure and was used until 1890, when a new frame building was built on property nearby donated by George M. Bell, a deacon, with the request that the church be named Bellview. The name Bellview was used until 1975 when a new building was built near the site of the original log building and the name was changed back to Laurel Ridge.

Our pastor, Elder Leonard J. Brammer, has served our church continuously and faithfully since 1957. Our meeting time is eleven o'clock each third Sunday and 6:30 each third Saturday night. Our communion day is the third Sunday in May.

The Lord, in His infinite mercy, has blessed our little church to enjoy good meetings in His praise. The church is located on Roselawn Road, just off Route 221 near Cave Spring, Virginia.

The Lord willing, the one hundred and sixty third annual session of the Pigg River Association will convene at Laurel Ridge Church beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in August, 1988.

" Man's goings are of the Lord; how can a man then understand his own way? "—Proverbs xx. 24.

Does not your heart sometimes quake with fear lest you have nothing but a nominal profession, lest the god of this world be blinding you, and lest your conscience be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin? It is good to have such fears. He who feareth not, who has no solemn apprehensions, no anxious inquiries, who is never exercised with some internal trepidation of soul, it is much to be feared has never known what it is to have " the candle of the Lord searching the inward parts of the belly." But if God has quickened your soul into spiritual life, and you have ears to hear, I would just put two questions to you: Have you obtained righteousness by a manifestation of Christ's righteousness; pardon by the application of Christ's blood; love by a shedding abroad of love; deliverance by a discovery of God's outstretched hand? My other question is this—If you have not, and let conscience bear its honest testimony—if you have never experienced righteousness, pardon, love, and deliverance, is there a cry in your soul after them? Is there anything like fervent supplication that God would bestow them? Is there anything of a groan in the depth of your spirit that the Lord would reveal them? These are marks of life; and he that has these marks will have the blessing, because God has quickened him into spiritual life. It may be long delayed, but it will come at last; " it will surely come, it will not tarry." It may be withheld for wise purposes, and you may have to travel through many a dark season and many an anxious hour, but deliverance is sure; it is reserved for you in Christ, and you are reserved for it, kept by God himself unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

MOVED OR MOVING?

To assure you of getting your " Signs " and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5 / 88
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

" THE DEEP THINGS OF GOD."

(1 Cor. ii. 10.)

We recall that in our youth very often we heard " the deep things of God" spoken of by some as things to be avoided in our conversation and in our preaching. It would often be said by some, when certain principles of doctrine were named, O these are deep things, and we ought to avoid them and hold forth simpler, plainer things. This would be said especially of the doctrine of predestination, of election, of the atonement, the new birth, and of some other principles of truth as well. One thing we often noted, viz., that this was never said by any who believed these

principles of doctrine and whose hope of salvation was based upon them, but always by those who did not believe them, and who were seeking to oppose and overthrow them, and we further noticed that this would be said of the very things which lie at the foundation of a believer's hope. Still further, the principles of doctrine of which this was said were those which, if anything, were more clearly stated in the Bible that were some others to which not so much opposition was manifested. We have come to the conclusion in later years that all this language arose not so much out of reverence for the word of God and the things which are called deep, or such as would cause one to speak softly and carefully of them, but out of that opposition to God and his truth which dwells and rules in all natural hearts. We also noticed that those who believed in and who sought to defend these deep things were more reverential in their words and manner toward these things than those who questioned them, or who said let them alone. From our childhood it was our privilege to dwell among some who loved to speak of predestination, election, the new birth, the infinite attributes of God and of the work of the Holy Spirit in redemption. They solemnly felt that these were all deep things indeed, but they were the things revealed by the Spirit to them. We can recall such ministers as Elders John A. Badger, Wm. Quint, Wm. J. Purington, Hiram Campbell, P P. H. Hartwell and Joseph L. Purington, who sometimes visited our father's house in Maine, and who loved to converse of these solemn realities. They all confessed them to be deep things indeed, but yet believed them to be revealed things, revealed in the word of God, and these things they all rejoiced in as the foundation of all good hope. There was no lightness in the conversation of these men; they believed in solemn things, and they spoke of them solemnly, whether at the fireside or in the pulpit. It has been our observation all our life that they who know the Lord in these deep things have been more reverential in manner, and in their words when speaking of heavenly things, than have those who counted these things among those which ought to be avoided and as being beyond all our understanding.

In these later years we have sometimes heard the same things said in substance. Of some principles of doctrine we have heard it said, "I do not understand that." "We cannot understand this." "We have not experienced this, and cannot therefore know anything about it." Such things as these have been said of various principles of doctrine which are plainly stated in the Scriptures. Some have seemed to desire to avoid saying much about the attributes of Jehovah, such as his omnipotence, his omniscience, his omnipresence, his wisdom, his eternal purpose, personal election, the three that bear record in heaven, which three are one, the hope of future heaven and glory, the everlasting punishment of the lost, and the resurrection at the last day, and this upon the ground that we cannot know anything about these things, because they are too deep. With relation to these things we have also noticed much the same things that we did in our youth, viz., that they who say such things, do so because they do not fully believe the principles

of doctrine named . On the other hand, we have noticed that those who often speak of these things and believe them , do so because they love them , and because their hope is hinged upon them. It is sure that when any truth has been made precious to man , he will delight to hear and to speak of that truth. It is also sure that if one says of any principle of doctrine , We had better let that alone , it is because he does not love it or hope in it. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak . The truth is , that everything concerning God , sin , holiness and salvation is deep ; all belong among the deep things of God; one is no deeper than another. It is a truth that finite minds cannot comprehend infinity ; it would be an absurdity to say that the finite could comprehend that which is infinite . Things which our minds grasp are necessarily finite . It is also true that there is not a man of normal mind on earth who does not as a matter of fact believe and know hundreds of things which he cannot in the slightest degree comprehend or understand ; hundreds of examples could be given were there room to do so . We know that in the springtime the earth is covered with a carpet of green , but who can understand it ? We believe that the human heart sends out to all parts of the body the lifeblood for years , and scores of years , but who understands it ? We know that two people in an instant come to love each other, so that from that time there are none else in all the world for them save their two selves , but who can understand it ? If we do not believe or say anything about all that we cannot understand , there will be nothing left for us to believe or speak about. This is true both of the natural universe and of the spiritual world. It is true of both earthly and heavenly things . If it may be said of some one Bible truth, O that is deep , let us speak of other things that we do understand , what other things do we understand? If one says I mean , Let us talk of experience , of the love of God , of his mercy to sinners , of the ups and downs of our daily life , of practical duties , of the promises of daily grace and of future glory , then it may be well answered that all these things are bound up in one bundle with all the strong doctrine of the Bible. If it be said , Let us avoid the deep things , and testify of Christ alone , and of his sufferings , death , resurrection and ascension to glory , are not these among the deepest of the deep things of God? But one may say , We mean , let us speak of the revealed things and let unrevealed things alone . To this we would respond , " Amen ," with all our heart. But the revealed things are all of them deep things , all of them are too deep for reason 's line to sound . But faith finds them not too deep. The revealed things are all that God has testified of in the Scriptures . All that the Scriptures contain belongs to us and to our children forever. Secret things are the things that our God has not been pleased to make known in the word. All things were secret and would continue to be so were it not that he has been pleased to reveal them to the children of men . His very existence no human reason could ever be sure of. That he exercises a providential care over the earth and all that it contains no searching of man could find out. No man by searching can find out God , and so in the connection of the text it is written , " Eye hath not

seen , nor ear heard , neither have entered the heart of man , the things which God hath prepared for them that love him . But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit : for the Spirit searcheth all things , yea , the deep things of God ." According to this testimony , then , all that our God hath revealed to us belongs to the deep things, and if any of us are anxious to be sure that the things which we have personally seen and felt are the things of God (and what true believer does not often question this ?) we can only be sure by comparing what we have seen and felt with the testimony of the Scriptures . It is written , and rightly written , upon almost all church books among Baptists , that we believe the Scriptures are the only rule of faith and practice . They are the rule by which our faith , our feelings , our thoughts and our actions , either personally or in church capacity , must and ought to be tested . According to the connection of the text , then , it is the " deep things " of which we ought to speak . These things we should by no means let alone . We cannot let them alone if we be children of God at all ; they have been revealed in the word , and have been made precious to our hearts by a personal experience of our need of these very things , and then by having them at times sweetly applied to our consciences , purging them from dead works to serve the living God . How can the weak cease to think and speak of the power of God ? How can a sinner cease to think and speak of that which has put away his sin ? How can such finite , changeable beings as we are cease to think of and rejoice in an unchangeable God ? How can that soul who has realized his just condemnation cease to think of and testify to that atonement which released him forever from that condemnation ? How can a frail , dying man cease to think of the promise of the resurrection to life and immortal glory and to rejoice in it ? There are thousands of promises in the word suited to his need , most of them yet unfulfilled in him , but to him is given a foretaste of them , and , drinking of the stream , he must long for that period to come when he shall drink at the fountainhead . The future things , as well as present things and past things , are deep things , but in such measure as we have come to know past things and present things we can also know what future promises imply . Again let us say that we must and do believe things in the future of which we comprehend very little . Holy men of old wrote of the first coming of Christ , and believed in it , and looked for it even to the day that he came , yet how little they comprehended of it . They believed in his first coming , because the Father in heaven had revealed this to them , but many things connected with that coming they did not understand , and it is said that they searched diligently what and what manner of time the Spirit that was in them did signify when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow . Even so we are told in the New Testament of many future things , and it can but be true of us also that we shall search what and what manner of time the Spirit which has testified of these future things does signify . If we are not to speak of future things because we do not understand them , why did apostles and servants of God of old speak of them ? As believers

they did not understand or comprehend future things any more than we of to-day , and yet they testified of them; why should not we do the same same ? If failure to comprehend a matter forbids our thinking and speaking of it , there is absolutely nothing of which we can speak . The greatest mystery of all to every heavenborn soul is his own redemption and quickening into divine life . Does this stop our mouths from speaking of it? Ought it to stop them? And so also ought we to cease testifying of the hope of future glory, though we do not comprehend what that glory may be ? At least , we do know that there we shall be free from sorrow , toil, pain and sin. We do know that we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. We do know that we shall be satisfied when we awake with his likeness . We know all this , not because we have as yet attained to this perfect state , but because the word of God , who cannot lie , has declared these things. Who can, here and now , know what perfection means ? But yet perfection is promised us . Shall we not encourage each other with this promise? These are also among the deep things of God.

In conclusion we would say, if any who bear the name of Old School Baptists are ever tempted to lightly lay aside some principle of doctrine revealed in holy writ because it is deep , let them remember that the same reason would at last lead them to lay aside all the doctrine of God our Savior. Let us all be careful not to go beyond the testimony of the Bible , and let us desire and strive not to cast aside anything there revealed , as being of no present use to the church of God . There have always been many portions of the Bible with regard to which we have felt that we had no light; that is , we did not even understand the language or the figures of speech used. Concerning these portions of the word we have not been able to say anything at all. But, on the other hand , some portions of the word have seemed plain to us , while yet the truth couched in them was far too deep for us to sound; still we have found delight in that which has appeared , and sometimes after a time still greater understanding has been given us , as we hope and firmly believe . Many times we have been compelled to speak and to write without any feeling sense of the things of which we spoke or wrote , yet have believed at such times that we were giving the true meaning of the text , and have hoped that some of the preciousness of it might be afforded us , if not then , at some other time , and sometimes some little word , of which we had thought many times , has been filled with sweetness , and some doctrine that we have always believed has at times been made like honey and the honeycomb to us . We are glad when such experiences are given us .

Elder F . A . Chick

PSALM 107 : 1 , 2

O Give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good : for his mercy endureth for ever .

Let the redeemed of the Lord say so , whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy ;

MEETINGS

STANTON RIVER MEETING

The Stanton River Primitive Baptist Union meeting , the Lord willing , will be held with Union Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in May 1988 .

The Church is located on #605 between #799 and Rt . 40 . We invite all lovers of the truth , all ministers of our faith and order to meet with us .

Elder Raymond Goad , Pastor
Silas Payne , Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held , the Lord willing , with the Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church in Greensboro the fifth Sunday in May . Song service will begin at 10:00 A .M . & Preaching service will begin at 10:30 . All lovers of the truth are invited to come and meet with us . We extend a special invitation to ministers of our faith and order .

Elder Kenneth R . Key , Moderator
Brother Wayne Edwards , Clerk

HOPEWELL CHURCH

The fourteenth annual Fifth Sunday meeting will be held , the Lord willing , with Hopewell Church , Winnsboro , Texas , beginning on Friday , May 27th , 28th , and 29th . Hopewell Church is located about six miles west of Winnsboro . Go west on Coke Road about four and one - half miles and follow signs .

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us .

There will be no business , just preaching and singing .

Jimmy Hamrick , Moderator
John Hamrick , Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 1988

Mrs . John D . Stophel , VA 2.00
Horace E . Walker , VA 3.00
W .L . Knight , NC 2.00
Mrs . Cliff Weaver , WA 15.00
Mrs . Ilene Clifton , VA 2.00
Mrs. Sam Edd Craddock, VA 2.00
Miss Lora Smith , NC 2.00
Mrs . Iva Quesenberry , VA 5.00
Mrs . Clyde Black , Jr ., NC 5.00
Homer E . Rogers , TX 5.00
Mrs . Mary Messick , AL 5.00
Mrs . Naomi Houser , VA 20.00
Mrs . Audrey Glidewell , NC 2.00
Mrs . Phil Pittman , TX 5.00
R .L . Schofield , AL 2.00
Mrs . Nannie A . Carter , NC ...2.00
Mrs . Ruth C . Turner , VA 2.00
A .R . Elmore , NC 2.00
Mrs . James Treas , KY 5.00
B .B . Williams , VA 2.00
Mrs . Mary N . Phillips , TN 2.00

PSALM 27 : 1

The Lord is my light and my salvation ; whom shall I fear ? the Lord is the strength of my life ; of whom shall I be afraid ?

OBITUARIES

ROBERT COKER

The church at Tarboro feels it has been God's will to call our dear Brother Robert Coker home.

Brother Coker was born March 9, 1898 and died January 19, 1988, making his stay on earth nearly 90 years. Brother Robert attended our church many years before he was blessed to join on September 3, 1983.

He was better known in his community as "Uncle Robert". He was looked upon as a good friend and his advice was well respected. Uncle Robert was a great believer of Salvation by Grace, and he looked to his God for all of his blessings. He enjoyed having his brethren visit him to talk about the mercy of our dear Saviour. Uncle Robert will be missed by his church and friends, but we trust he is at rest with his Maker.

We, the church at Tarboro, send our sincere sympathy to his wife and daughters and trust God will bless them to carry on. We, therefore resolve, that three copies of this resolution be made: one for the church records; one for the family; and one for publication in the "Signs of the Times".

This done by order at our February conference.

Elder Henry Jones, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

CLARA CUMBO

Clara Mae Flint was born May 2, 1921 in Roanoke, Virginia. Her parents were the late Calvin and Maude Brindle Flint.

She married Homer Stanley Stroud in 1938. They were blessed with three children. Her husband and a son, Homer Whitney Stroud preceded her in death.

Sister Clara worked twenty years in the Spinning Room at Dan River Mills.

In 1957 Sister Clara married Otis Cumbo. She joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on June 27, 1965 and was baptized by her pastor, Elder David Spangler.

Sister Cumbo was in declining health for the last ten years. She died Jaunuary 13, 1987. She is survived by her husband, Otis, a son, Louis Rici Stroud, of Danville, Virginia; a daughter, Judy Allison Stroud of California; two sisters, Juanita Grubbs, and Sister Glenna Keaton of Danville, Virginia and four grandchildren.

Her funeral was held in Dan River Church by Elder Kenneth Key and Elder Haywood Wray. She was buried in Dan River Church Cemetery.

May God comfort and reconcile her family in their loss and may we at Dan River be given to feel our loss is her eternal gain.

In Christian love,
Sister Phyllis Snyder

ESTELLE GOOCH

We, the church at Tarboro, feel it was God's will to call our dear Sister Estelle Gooch home. She

was born September 16 , 1895 and died November 6 , 1987 , making her stay on earth 92 years .

After being a member of Aycocks Primitive Baptist Church for around 35 years , Sister Estelle moved her membership to Tarboro Church on May 6 , 1961 . She was a faithful member , and she filled her seat as long as she was able .

Sister Gooch enjoyed the visits by her brethren , as she and Brother Gooch in turn enjoyed visiting in the homes of many brethren in the states of North Carolina , Virginia and Maryland . She believed in Salvation by Grace and that all things are in the hands of her Lord .

To know Sister Gooch was to love her . She was the type of person who had only kind words for everyone she met . We feel she is now resting in peace with her Maker , awaiting for the day of Resurrection . We also feel our lost is her eternal gain .

The church at Tarboro resolve that three copies of this resolution be made : one for the church records ; one for the family ; and one for publication in the " Signs of the Times ".

This done by order of conference at our December meeting .

Elder Henry Jones , Moderator
John H . Coker , Clerk

ELDER JOE L . HAMRICK

The Lord or Glory saw fit on Dec . 21 , 1987 to remove from our grieving midst Elder Joe Hamrick , beloved pastor of Hopewell , Good Hope , and Paran Primitive Baptist Churches ; and associate editor of the Signs of the Times . His funeral was officiated two days later by Elder C .M . Haygood with , the help of Elders Gerald Shipman , Malcolm Burkhalter , and David Harrell . Afterwards , Hopewell Cemetery received his body to await the glorious resurrection .

Elder Hamrick was born May 9th , 1913 in Winnsboro , Texas to Frank and Dolly Hamrick . On June 9th , 1942 he married Audrey Ruth Duit and to this union were added five children : Joe Hamrick Jr . of Lindale , Mrs . Jeanene Harrell of Dallas , Mrs . Judy Williams of Rockwall , Jimmy Hamrick of Lindale , and John Hamrick of Mt . Pleasant ; all of whom along with his wife he had the great joy of eventually baptizing . These all survive him along with 13 grandchildren and a sister , Mrs . Allyne Page .

One Sunday afternoon early in 1957 , Elder Hamrick had the terrible and frightening experience of the weight of his sins crushing down upon him . He truly felt his life 's breath was being pressed out as he cried out , " " God help me ! God help me ! " This cry was heard and the Lord , mighty to save , quickly intervened to turn a terrible and frightening experience into one of joy . Surely he could identify with David in Psalm 38:4 — " For mine iniquities are gone over my head : as a heavy burden they are too heavy for me . " Also Psalm 34:6 — " This poor man cried , and the Lord heard him and saved him out of all his troubles . "

The Lord blessed him to join Mt . Zion Primitive Baptist Church in Weslaco , Texas on the second Sunday in May , 1957 . He later served as a deacon and in 1961 , he was ordained an elder . He tried faithfully to serve the churches he was called unto ,

realizing only God 's grace could make him a true and loving pastor. His reliance upon God's grace was not in vain and he was given a warmth about him which made it extremely easy for anyone to approach him with a problem or a question . His preaching was characteristically experimental. That is, he had much to say about the depths a little child of grace must enter due to convictions of sin produced by the Holy Spirit . Also , he spoke much of the sweet deliverance found in the person of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ .

The God of all love blessed Elder Hamrick to feel a great love for the saints and therefore it was a great burden and concern for him to see or hear of any trouble arising among them . When trouble did come , he was more than willing to be self - sacrificing in his efforts to restore peace .

Among other spiritual writers who Elder Hamrick dearly loved reading was J .C . Philpot , whose grave he was able to visit. It is truly felt that the inscription on J .C . Philpot 's tombstone also by God's grace applies to Elder Hamrick . It reads as follows : " He was widely known and greatly loved by the living family of God for whom he labored abundantly by tongue and pen . ' He being dead yet speaketh ' Heb . 11:4 ."

Solely by the grace of God , Elder Hamrick was blessed to be a loving pastor , husband , father , brother , grandfather, and dear friend. To God alone be all the glory and thanksgiving for the precious memories .

It was felt appropriate to end this obituary with Elder Hamrick 's own words as found in a paragraph taken from a letter to Brother Cannaday dated January 8th , 1987 — " We should all look forward to our leaving this old sin cursed world, for it opens the door for our souls to be carried up into His presence to bask in the sunshine of His love and mercy toward us , and to sing praises to His holy name and to await the resurrection of our bodies . Solomon said , ' That the day of one 's death is better than the day of one 's birth . ' and Christ says , ' Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord .' and ' precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints .' Ps . 116 : 15 . You and I do not know the beauty and blessing of heaven yet , nor can we till death seizes us; but I trust we, in the Lord's own time concerning us , we will know . "

Written at the request of
Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church
by his son , Jimmy Hamrick

MARY FAUCETTE POOLE

Sister Mary Faucette Poole , a member of the Durham Primitive Baptist Church passed from this life on September 11 , 1987 . She was the daughter of Brother Fred and Sister Vera Faucette .

She married James S . Poole . To this union were born two daughters , Linda and Susan . Sister Mary taught in the Durham Schools for a number of years and prior to her retirement was librarian at Holt School .

Besides her daughters , she is survived by three grandchildren , David Morris , Adam Ray and Lauren Ray , three brothers Horton , George and James, one sister, Ruth Allen and several nieces and nephews .

She joined Durham Church on August 19, 1951 and was baptized by Elder J.W. Gilliam. She was faithful to attend her meetings through the years and was very forthright in expressing her belief concerning the doctrine of salvation by grace and predestination to glory of the elect of God. Her friends both personal and professional knew of her belief. She was not ashamed of it.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Cleo Robertson at Hall-Wynne Funeral Chapel and her body was interred at Chapel Hill Memorial Gardens to await the resurrection. May the Lord console her love ones and fill the void in their lives with reconciliation to his will. I think that words of the poet who wrote this hymn also express Mary's hope and anticipation of heaven:

" There is a home of sweet repose
Where storms assail no more:
The stream of endless pleasure flows
on that celestial shore.

There purity with love appears,
and bliss without alloy:
There they that oft had sown in tears
Shall reap again in joy."

Catherine M. Humbarger
Clerk

EVA BROWN PICKEREL

We are again saddened by the passing of a sister, Eva Brown Pickerel. Sister Pickerel was born July 26, 1899, a daughter of the late Richard Crouch Brown and Nancy Taylor Brown. She was the widow of the late Posie C. Pickerel. Sister Eva passed from this life November 20, 1987.

Survivors include one son, Samuel V. Pickerel, Gretna, Va.; six grandchildren nine great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.

As we reflect on the sweet memories of Sister Eva Pickerel, we remember her sweet smile and soft hand shake as she met her brethren. Sister Eva was a faithful member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by experience and Baptism, August 12, 1962.

Sister Eva Pickerel's funeral was conducted by Elder Raymond Goad. Her body was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park to wait the coming of our Savior. May we be given always to say say, Thy will be done.

Written in love and hope,
Carol R. Pickral

Elder O.K. Tench - Moderator
Oscar D. Pickral - Clerk

PSALM 116 : 15

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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TRIBUTE TO OUR PASTOR'S WIFE

In the shadow of the Church
Stands a figure oft Obscure
Just behind the faithful pastor,
Is his wife, devout and pure.

She is with him every moment,
Helping make his work progress,
And you can't discount her portion
In his measure of success.

Oft behind the scene of action,
Often never seen or heard,
Yet she stands forever ready
Just to give a helping word.

With her home forever open,
And her work quite nicely done,
She is ever his faithful helper,
In the battles fought and won.

It is not in active service,
That her worth is really shown,
But in bearing heavy burdens
That to others are unknown.

With encouragement and vision
She must urge God's servant on,
When the shadows are the darkest
And his courage almost gone.

Don't forget the pastor's partner
When you measure up his life,
All too often he is honored
And forgotten stands his wife.

So while passing out the laurels
And when giving honor due,
Give a share to one who helps him
Through his trials to be true.

Selected

A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of Silver — Proverbs.

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EDITORIAL

Elder R.H. Campbell

At Midday, O king I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun shining round about me and them that journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard to kick against the pricks? and I said, Who art thou Lord? and he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest, But rise and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of the things which thou hast seen and of those things in which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the gentiles unto whom now I send thee. To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

The above scriptures give one account, of many, of the experience that the Apostle Paul had on the road to Damascus and of the things that he heard and was shown on that occasion. This was the occasion on which he was called up before king Agrippa and was told by the king to speak for himself and answer the charges that were brought against him by the Jews who desired to have him condemned and executed. This was the most beautiful and inspiring account of this experience and of his conversion from the traditions of his fathers to the Christian faith, as he was given to go deeper into the content of the revelation that he was given and the purpose of it. Surely it is the most dramatic experience that is recorded of one being brought from darkness to light.

There are scriptures recorded in the gospels which are referred to as the great commission, by many, which is the time when Christ, after his resurrection, sent forth the Apostles saying, " Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." He further told them of signs which would follow them as evidence of his presence with them and that he would be with them even unto the end of the world. Surely the above scrip-

tures are the commission that was conferred upon the Apostle Paul by Christ and is a pattern whereby all of his ministers have been sent forth into the gospel vineyard, since that time, to labor among their brethren and fulfill their calling. I have heard many relate their calling to the ministry and all have spoken of a burden that was placed upon them at some point in time and it so impressed them that they could not refrain but were compelled to go forth and declare the power and the mystery of their calling. They went forth as the kine that were tied to the ark and left all behind and went on their mission. Sometimes this is through dire trials and sufferings but yet they go, declaring that they are not going in their own strength but rather the power of their calling.

The Apostle Paul was, in his own opinion at the time of his conversion, serving God and prospering in that service above many of his equals in his own nation and was exceedingly zealous of the traditions of his fathers. He was satisfied with his religion and had attained a position of great respect among his peers, was at the height of his career in the Jewish religion and was authorized by them to aggressively persecute the Christian faith in the name of God. Seemingly it was in remembering these things that he wrote to the Galatian Church, "But when it pleased God who separated me from my mothers womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his son in me that I might preach him among the heathen: immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." This was his confession that this event was not at a time convenient with his plans but that it was at a time appointed by God that he was called and sent upon his mission. This calling was without repentance as are all of the callings of God and it is for life, not just till 65 or retirement age, but for the rest of their life. This was evidenced in the life of the Apostles and we see it happening all around us today in the God called ministers. I know and have known some active after the age of ninety. As Paul, they are told in no uncertain terms the purpose of their calling, to whom they are sent and the results that their going forth will have upon those who are given ears to hear and hearts to understand. They are made willing to go even though they go in fear that they are mistaken in their calling but go they must.

This is the experience of all that are called of God and sent forth on a mission that demonstrates the power and wisdom of their calling. Jesus told Peter on one occasion, "Verily, verily I say unto thee, when thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkest whither thou wouldst: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not." This was declaring unto Peter that he would be led in ways that would not be his choosing but the way was determined and he would fulfill his commission. Each one is led in their own path for a specific purpose and to fulfill a particular need in the kingdom of God, even though they may feel that there is no specific direction in their labor, there is, because this is the work of God and all his works are perfect. Jesus told his Apostles, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go

and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." If this was true of the Apostles , and it was , and of the Apostle Paul and he was a pattern to them that should follow , then surely this is the way with his servants today. They are each called and sent, not because of any qualities that they possess but just because it was the pleasure of the Lord to fulfill his will and purpose that was determined before the foundation of the world .

The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah saying , " before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee , and before thou camest forth from the womb I sanctified thee and ordained thee a prophet unto the nations ." His way had been determined according to the will of God before he even had an existence in the world . His reply was , "Ah , Lord God behold I cannot speak : for I am a child ." This did not alter the original plan and he did go forth on his commission and was a prophet unto the nations according to the Lord's words . Surely , this is the response of all when they are confronted with the power and the wisdom of this heavenly calling, realizing the weakness and unprofitableness of the flesh . The Apostle Paul was made to acknowledge, "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do, Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me . For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, " Oh the dilemma of the servant of God , the sin that dwells in the flesh causes suffering because of the spirit that is also present and he is made to ponder the question, which is the real me. Is the true essence of his being the evils of the fleshly being or the goodness of the spiritual entity . Many and varied are the travels of the mind and the fearful encounters experienced by the servants of God and only the sustaining grace of God causes them to endure and fill their allotted course and finish their race in peace .

The Apostle Paul was richly blessed to fulfill all of the prophecies set forth in his calling as set forth in the above scriptures . We have the epistles that he was blessed to write unto the churches and a record of the way in which he was blessed to minister unto the churches and the brethren in his day and the fruit that was made manifest everywhere he was led . Over the centuries , since that time , his writings have been a great inspiration to the saints in all ages who have been given an understanding of spiritual matters and a hope of things eternal. Surely, their eyes have been opened , they have been turned from darkness unto light and from the power of Satan unto God . This was not because of any wisdom or knowledge provided by Saul of Tarsus , but rather , because of the revelation given unto Paul for that specific purpose . In all of his writings to the churches he contended for this above all that it was by the grace of God that he was a preacher of righteousness that he should preach among the gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ . To the church at Corinth he wrote , "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me: Yea woe is me if I preach not the gospel. For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me." In

writing these lines he must have been remembering his commission and the power of the revelation that so impressed him that he was made willing to bear all things for the truths sake, he was made willing not only to be bound imprisoned, beaten and shipwrecked for the cause of Christ but even to die, (which he did eventually) for the glory of God and because of the necessity laid upon him by this heavenly calling.

If your hope of things eternal is based upon a personal demonstration of the longsuffering of a just and holy God toward one who feels to be the chiefest of sinners and unworthy of the least of his love and mercy then you are in complete fellowship with the Apostle Paul. If your hope of salvation is solely dependent on the finished work of God who loved you and revealed himself to you when you were ignorant of his presence in your life then you are in the same condition as all who have been called out of darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of God's heavenly kingdom here on earth. You too have been saved and called with a holy calling, not according to your works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given you in Christ Jesus before the world began. Your salvation is being experienced by you here in time, and being made manifest in your heart and soul now, but it is the end result of a work which was the determinate counsel and fore knowledge of God and it was his good pleasure for it to be so when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Yours is a glorious heritage and it cannot be corrupted by all the wicked devices and counsels of man or of nations of men. All of the combined efforts of man all over the world and in all ages of time have not been able to pollute the kingdom of God nor thwart any of his plans. They may cause grief or distress to the child of God, in their journey, by what they behold all around them but they will never cause one to be separated from the love of God, or from the way of their salvation tion.

May God give us a mind, from time to time, to reflect on all of our way, remember the day of our own spiritual awakening and the blessings we have enjoyed in our earthly pilgrimage. If so blessed we can, with patience, continually press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Pauline and Russell,

Have you ever had a desire to express your gratitude to precious friends but didn't feel blessed with words to express your feelings? If you have experienced such, then you can witness with me. I have desired to write to you and tell you how very much we enjoyed our visit with both of you. It was a bethel spot that we can go back to and feel the Lord was in our midst.

Since our visit, I have thought much about the subject of leaves and their comparison to man. As fall of the year approaches, the leaves began to

turn different colors. Leaves contain three different compounds, and the color of each leaf depends on which of the three compounds it has the most of after the chlorophyll breaks down. The glorious climax in the life of the leaf ends when a fresh breeze blows the dying leaf from the twig. It flutters to the ground. After the leaf falls, it lies on the ground for a while. The leaf is softened by rain, and then bacteria begin to break down the dead leaf materials. Rain water dissolves the decayed material and washes it back into the earth.

As I view the different leaves, I am made to notice the types and colors that come forth. Some are much more beautiful than others. Isn't it so true with man. Don't those that the Lord has wrought a work in have a different look and different walk than those in the world and of the world. "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" As some of the leaves are more beautiful than others, isn't there also a great difference in the race of man. There are many different types. Those that God has called out of darkness into His marvelous light have a different countenance. The glory of the Lord doth shine round about them. They walk in this life with a bowed head. When sin is finished, it brings forth death. All men must die, but not all men were chosen to be conformed to the image of His son. As the leaf decayed and washed back into the earth, so is the experience of man. He too must die (natural man) and to back to the dust of the earth from whence he came. But those that God hath chosen before the world began hath everlasting life. The Lord will come again and receive His own unto Himself.

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out. For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever."

Pauline and Russell, thank you for being so gracious to us. We enjoyed such precious fellowship with you. We enjoyed the delicious meals that we feel were prepared in love. We hope the Lord will bless us with thankful hearts for these many blessings. If we're not deceived, we desire to tell you that we hope we love you for Christ's sake.

If it is the Lord's will, we look forward to seeing you this coming weekend.

Love in Christ,
Jeannette and Cleo

ARTICLES

EXPERIENCE

Dear Brethren and Friends in the Lord:

I have had a mind for some time to write some for the Signs. My weakness and imperfections have given me much fear; however, I believe the Lord is able to give me strength to do so, if it be his will. I hope and pray He will direct my mind in the right way.

I was born in Patrick County,

Virginia, August 11, 1920, in a little log cabin about five miles from Fairystone Park. My mother had been married before, and had been left with some small children. When I was about eight months old my natural father died, leaving my mother again with more small children.

I do not remember much about my life until I was about eight years old. We did not own a home and found ourselves moving from one place to another. At about the age of eight I had scarlet fever, and the doctor told the neighbors that he did not think I would live. I was out for some time, I do not know how many days, and did not know anything. My grandfather lived with us about this time, and he was taken sick and died.

My mother did not have the money to buy clothes for me to go to school, so I had to wear my grandfather's clothes. I went to school but very little, and what time I did go I was nicknamed Grandpa, because my clothes were too large for me. Sometime in early life I had serious thoughts about death and what would become of me after death; but as I thought on these things, I also thought I had plenty of time; and before I got old I would think more about it. But time went on, and sometimes it did not bear on my mind so heavy; but other times it would get so heavy that it seemed I could not bear it.

I felt to be so young, and such a vile sinner, but I thought I was too young to even think about joining the Church because most of them were up in age. I thought I was too young even to think of such things, and would try to put them out of mind. I would go with my mother to church, and would see them and my mother crying, and I could not understand why. Why would they cry if they were happy? I did not know that their tears were of joy. I have always felt to be a misfit with my schoolmates, and with the Church people today. I well remember that one time my teacher came to me on the school ground and said to me, "Leonard, why don't you play with the other children?" I don't remember what I told her, but I felt so unwanted by my schoolmates.

There was an Elder who was to preach at a church close to the schoolhouse, and the teacher told us children that we would all go down to hear him. Most of the children as well as myself were glad to get away from school awhile; and this was the church I had been going to with my mother. We all went in and sat down, and the Elder began to preach. At the close of his sermon he turned to us children and began to admonish us how we should mind our parents, and how we should not worry them; for this was good in the sight of God. Before I knew what had taken place, I began to choke up in my throat. I have said, and still say, that I believe that was the first sermon I ever heard. Sometime after that my mother came back from church and told me that the church wanted me to be their housekeeper. I was twelve or more years old at this time, and I felt that to be a great honor: I would sweep the dust that came from the Saint's feet; and to be a doorkeeper in the House of the Lord was more than I felt worthy to be.

Time went on and I got worse instead of better, it seemed to me. I had heard people say that after you pass twelve years of age, that you would come to the age of accountabi-

lity ; and now I have passed that and have not felt the deliverance at the hand of the Lord . Time went on , and we moved to the little Town of Bassett , Va ., and I went to work in the plant there . My burden of sin became so heavy it seemed I could not live . I became very ill and could not hold down my job . This gave me much concern , and I began to lose weight ; and it seemed the doctors were doing me no good . What to do I could not find . I would try to pray but it seemed the Lord would not hear . I would go to bed at night and lay there trying to beg the Lord for mercy ; and when I arose in the morning , my very breathing was " O Lord have mercy on me . O Lord deliver me according to thy grace . Bless me , O Lord , that this mountain of sin might be removed from me . I confess before thee , O Lord of heaven and earth , that I am vile , I am undone ; but I believe thou art able to set me free , thou art able to give me life ."

I remember one night going to bed as usual ; and sometime in the night I dreamed I saw a large body of clear water . As I looked at this water a voice seemed to say , In it dwelleth righteousness . As I thought on this is seemed that in it dwelled righteousness for me , and I felt this was to show me I should be baptized . But I wanted more evidence . One of my half-brothers was boarding with us at this time . I thought him to be a good man and I asked him to pray for me — it seemed the Lord would not hear me and my prayers seemed to go no higher than my head . My half-brother went to his bedroom that night , and I could hear his voice but could not understand his words . That night I dreamed I saw a man standing in the pulpit of my home church ; and this man was my Lord , and he beckoned for me to come . I awoke the next morning and told my brother the dream . He was and still is a member of another order , but he said to me , " That is the church for you . "

I had been sick all of that winter , as I stated before . Sometime in March I had gone to bed as before , begging the Lord for mercy . The next morning I awoke , got up and walked to the window and looked out . My tongue will never be able to describe what I saw , and how I felt . I had never felt this way before : as I stood before that window I saw a new world . I believe I saw my Lord in the pardon of my sins ; that His blood had made me clean , and I was as free from sin as if I had never sinned . O the peace and joy that flooded my soul ! I wanted to talk about my Saviour to every one I met . I wanted to tell them what He had done for me — how he had come and taken my feet out of the pit , and put a new song in my mouth , even praise to His name . My thought and desire was to tell the church my feelings ; but I wanted more evidence . It came to me that if I didn't go with what I had , I would not receive any more . I felt that I would die if I did not go .

I was now only seventeen years of age . I went before the church at Riverview , Bassett , Va ., the fourth Sunday in March , 1938 , and was received . I was baptized the fourth Sunday morning in May , 1938 . I felt I left something there that has not been with me since : the heavy load I carried was gone , and I felt I had been enabled of the Lord to do His will for the first time in my life . I went on rejoicing I don't know how long ; but soon Satan came along and began to tempt me ,

and these thoughts would arise in my mind : You have gone to these good people and told them that you have a hope of heaven ; and they believed you . You should be ashamed of yourself . Over this I began to beg the Lord again , O Lord , what must I do ? I want to be submissive to thy will . It would be hard for me to go back and tell them I was mistaken in the whole thing ; but , Lord , if I have done wrong , I will go back and ask them to take my name off of the Church Book .

About this time I laid down on the bed in mother's room , not knowing what to do . I cannot tell whether I was asleep or not , but a man's hand appeared before me . I could see the robe as it swung from his wrist ; and as I beheld this strange sight , I saw his arm — and then I saw a body , but did not see his face . And , behold , it was the body of my Lord : I could see the blood and water flowing from His side . As I write this my eyes are dim with tears . As I beheld this glorious sight , the words seemed to say within me , This blood was shed for me .

I went on for some time , — a stranger to myself and to others , I thought . I became burdened again , and what was wrong I did not know . I did try again to beg the Lord to show me what he would have me do . I even asked the Lord if I was wrong about the whole thing , and if I should go back and repent again ; or if I had left my first love . My cry was , O Lord , help me . O Lord , lead me in the right way . Keep me by the right hand of thy righteousness .

I well remember at church one time , a brother Deacon called me aside and said , Brother Brammer , I have been watching you , and I see your interest in the Church , and seemingly you are carrying a burden for a deacon ; and I wanted to ask you about it . I did not deny it , and told him I felt to be burdened for something , but did not know what for . My home church called a presbytery to look into my qualifications as a deacon . This was in June , 1949 , the fourth Saturday . After I went for a short time thinking that this would ease my burden ; but in a few months the burden came back worse than ever . Again I did not know what to do . My dear reader if you have not traveled this road you may not know what I am talking about ; but if you have , then you know .

I began to feel that I would have to speak in public ; but my thoughts were , I cannot do this for I am slow of speech and of a stammering tongue ; and I would try to put it away from me . Time went on and I thought I could cast it aside ; but it was greater than I . I would make many excuses , but none of them did any good . My burden grew worse .

About this time I had a small peach orchard , and I spent much of my time there . A great deal of my work was in a bowed position ; and I worked and tried to pray and beg the Lord to show me what he would have me do . Sometimes the burden got so heavy I would leave my work and go to the woods and fall down on the ground , and cry to the Lord for mercy . Many scriptures would come to my mind . One time while in the field at work , I thought I had found a good excuse , because if I should be called to preach , I could not serve churches as Pastor . Just at that time my mind turned to a church that had a pastor ; and I was ashamed I had such thoughts . (I will try to explain this later .)

My burden was still heavy upon me, and I still did not know what to do, but would continue to beg the Lord over and over, O Lord, what would you have me to do. At one time it came to me, Why don't you put your case before the church and let them decide what to do. To this I could not answer, because I felt they would do what was right. About this time I felt I could not stay away any longer; and I still pleaded with the Lord. I heard a voice as if it spoke to me, " Wait, I say, upon the Lord, " and this would go over and over in my mind: " Wait, I say, upon the Lord. " And I was made willing to wait upon Him. Now I felt that if it were his will for me to preach, he would show me more; if not, I would become reconciled. I had tried to keep my feelings to myself as much as I could, but I would talk to my wife some about it. I well remember once when I was so burdened that it seemed I could not live, I was doing some work in the house, and I quit my work and told my wife that I could not live with the burden I had; that something would have to be done. Her reply was was, " I would not mind you preaching, if I knew you could preach; but I would not want you to worry the people."

This was one of the things that worried me; so I did not get much comfort from this. My pastor and I went to Bush Arbor Church together; and I had come to the place I must talk to someone. I told him some of the things I have written here, and asked him not to tell anyone; and he said he would not. Sometime after this I was going to my work one Monday morning, and a voice seemed to speak to me, " Now is the time, this is the day, this is the accepted year of the Lord." And I said, " Lord, if you will give me strength, I will go this coming meeting." The fourth Saturday soon came. I did not tell anyone my feelings until I got to the church that day. My prayer was, Lord you fix it the way you would have it to be. When I got on the church ground, my pastor, Elder J J .R. Hollandsworth was already there. I went to his car where he was reading his Bible, and said, " Brother Hollandsworth, I cannot live in the condition I am in." It seemed death if I went, and death if I did not go. This was the fourth Saturday in February, 1955. We went on in the house and the pastor asked me, after he told the people what I had told him, to open service with song and prayer, and to speak as I felt to.

I opened to the fourth chapter of Ecclesiastes, the 8th to the 12th verses, and talked for fifteen or twenty minutes. In a short time the church I spoke of above heard that I had begun to speak in public, and their pastor had told them to start looking for another pastor, (which I did not know at the time I first thought of this church,) and when the deacon heard that I had begun speaking, he said, " There is our Pastor! " I am now trying to serve those brethren, and three other churches.

I have had many ups and downs in life, but the Lord has been so good to me. I would like to tell another dream that I had: I dreamed that I saw a strange looking sight — it seemed that I saw bubbles floating on the earth. As I looked at this, I saw a bright spot in the sky, I saw the face of a man in the sky; and this was my Lord. It was not like you and me: it was solid gold as if it burned in a furnace. My wife was with me and we were sitting at a table, she on one

side and I on the other . We were talking about how glad we were that we had seen the Lord coming in the clouds of glory. As we talked it began to rain; and I thought it was the rain of fire and brimstone ; but I was not afraid because we had seen the Lord. I awoke my wife and told her in tears about my dream. I was crying so loud that it awoke my children upstairs ; and they began to cry : the whole family was happy. I have a hope that some day I will see my Lord for myself and not another.

Early in this article I stated that I had scarlet fever, the doctor gave me up to die . My mother told me after I started to speak in public, that while I was sick, she went to the kitchen and knelt down on the hearth rock , and asked the Lord to spare my life: if He would just spare my life she would be willing for the Lord to take me and use me anyway he saw fit. She said while she was praying, she saw a small light in the crevice of the hearth rock, and felt I would get better. That was about forty years ago.

I feel that the Lord has been so good to me , that he has been my strength, my shield, and the horn of my salvation. May His high and holy Name have the praise, the honor, and the glory , both now and forever . Amen.

Elder Leonard J. Brammer
Rt. 3 , Box 269
Martinsville , Va. 24112

Dear Brethren Editors : — By request, and also by my own wish, I am sending you this copy of a letter , which was begun by our late sister Nettie Porter, of Garber, Okla., and sent to me after her death by her parents , sister Elizabeth Garton and Roy Garton, of Lakemp, Okla. I read it with a solemn thrill , as a voice from the dead; then I thought, No, not from the dead , but the living , for Christ said , " Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." If it meets your approval please publish it in the Signs.

Unworthily ,

Mary Ellison

DEAR SISTER IN HOPE: — If you will allow me to so address you after this long silence. I have thought of you and I hope of all the dear kindred in Christ , often , but I am so slow to perform my duty that I have put off writing the letter which I know ought to be written. We are well and getting along very well, but I, as usual, am unthoughtful of God 's goodness to me until I feel his presence in this cold and stony heart . I am very unprofitable in the things of God; I am never able to observe his kindness and loving care until I feel that " something" which makes me thank him for the sunshine and beautiful day. I feel my heart overflowing this morning , hence this letter to you. Do not think I am always at the feet of Jesus , for I am not . Most of my path lies in shadows and doubts , and there are times when I fret and plan for tomorrow , forgetting there is One who has already provided for the morrow. This is my great grief, that I cannot always feel the assurance that he has provided a way . True , I believe it and think it , but when clouds gather and there is no light ahead I wonder how it is all going to come out— wonder how tomorrow is going to be provided for, when he has left so many assurances

that he has us in his loving care. When I look back and count my blessings and think how unthankfully I have received so many of them, it makes me wonder at the unreasonableness of my own nature, and in my heart this morning I cry, and long to cry with my lips, O for a closer walk with God. My mind has gone back on the path I traveled when I first began to think on the things of God, and I remember how impossible it looked for me to ever own my God and Savior and live a in peace at home. Then I remember how that still small voice urged me on, with a blessed assurance that all would be well. When things were the darkest, in my heart I was willing to give up all and go the way I felt drawn, and then the thought and the feeling would come that God was able to make all rough places smooth, and there would even be good in what then seemed hard to me. Now, when my husband and I sometimes grasp a thing of God together, I recall my doubts and fears, also the suffering I then had to bear, and I think that the burden I then had to bear is nothing, and not to be compared with the grace and comfort I get out of God's word, and the unity of feeling that exists between my husband and myself. That is one of the blessings I thank God for, and feel ashamed of the doubts and fears I felt; but I thank him for the strength that enabled me to bear my burden. I recall how I wandered in darkness, and how I would carry some little portion of my burden to my husband, and how like Job's comforters he was, and I know it was only the blessed work of God, to plant my feet on a firm foundation, and every shred of hard feeling has long ago left my heart, and I feel that spirit which prayeth, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. I can even say I am glad that it was so, for in it I can see that it was only a work to show forth the glory of God. There was always a desire to talk more with God's people about my travel before I came to the church, but there was always a something that kept me from it. I always loved the Baptist people; even when a child I loved the sound of their voices when giving thanks unto their God; but there was one thing that always grated on my nerves, even when a child, when I heard them tell of their experiences, and they would in any way connect a dream. It always made it look queer and superstitious to me. When I was fifteen years old I began to be worried about death and the hereafter. I wanted so much to do what was right, and tried that hopeless task of trying to merit salvation. When I was in the most hopeless state of mind I dreamed that I was riding on horseback over a desolate, hilly country. The hills were bare of vegetation, and even the sun was hid behind a cloud. I thought the path I traveled was so rough I might be killed at any moment, and just as I thought I was about out of the bad country I came to the end of my path, or road. I was on the top of a high hill that there was no visible way of getting down and going ahead. There was a valley that commenced right at the foot of the hill, with beautiful green grass, and a beautiful stream of water that ran very smoothly and wound prettily through the valley. There were a few clusters of trees, and over it all the sun shone so prettily that it made me shudder with dread as I thought of turning back over the desolate road I had traveled. I awoke with that awful

feeling of dread , and try as I might , and tell myself as often as I could that there was nothing in a dream , that dread and awful feeling stayed with me for seven years . Often I prayed to God to take it away , just to remove that dread and harrowing feeling . Once as I went alone out into the orchard I prayed for some kind of a token , to relieve my bruised and burdened heart. As I looked about me there came a feeling with these words : Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness , for they shall be filled. The thought was in my mind that surely I could take hold of that, because I was hungering and thirsting after righteousness . For a few months I found relief from the awful burden , and thought it was gone , when it came anew and seemed much worse than before . For a year I wandered and sought God in vain ; but one morning as I went about my household duties I felt the loving-kindness of God , and I worshiped as one who has no hope himself when I stood in my kitchen doorway and prayed God if it were his will to take away my burden and remove the dread produced by the dream , and it came as a voice , though I heard no sound , O , have you not yet suffered enough to know that it is not on a high hill of pride where mercy is to be found, but low, low down at the feet of Jesus ? and the peace , the sweet peace of God , so filled my heart that it shut out everything else , removing all doubt , all fear ; even the horror of the dream , that had hung over me , went , never to fill a moment of my time again , lifted as a mist before the sun . I am sometimes in doubt and in trouble , but not the kind that lays hold —

Here the pen was laid aside , and the hand of death intervened before it was lifted again. The beautiful song of praise was interrupted , to be resumed in the midst of the heavenly choir , before the throne of God and the Lamb , where throughout an endless eternity she will join with them in sweet anthems of praise , singing , Not unto us , not unto us , but unto thy name be all the glory , because thou hast redeemed us by thy blood . Not by works of righteousness which we have done , but by his mercy he saved us . The dear sister died about the last of February , leaving her husband , John Porter , and four little children , besides her parents and three brothers . I presume a suitable obituary notice will be sent to the Signs . Though rejoicing in such precious testimony of such a favored witness to the goodness , mercy and peace of God , which passes the knowledge and understanding of the worldly-wise natural mind , I am made to feel very humble and deeply sensible of my unworthiness to have been the recipient of this letter . Surely it is because He is of one mind , and none can turn him , that I am not consumed ; and though I deplore the expression of even an implied doubt of his mercy and favor to one who surely is less than the least of all saints , yet I am tempted to say , if one at all .

Submitted .

Mary Ellison

NOTICE

The address of the Circulation Office and Elder J .R . Williams has changed from Box 65 to Route 1 , Box 420 , Keeling , Va . 24566 .

Editors

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

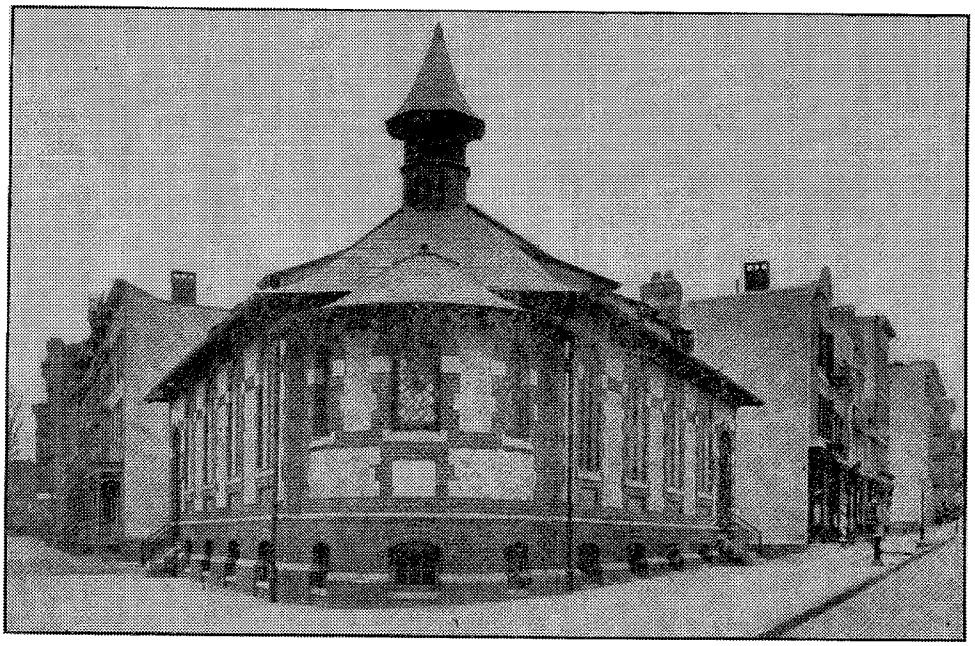

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH

Elder R .L . Dodson , former editor and manager of the Signs of the Times served this church from 1922 until 1950 .

" He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches ." — Revelation ii . 29 .

These words extend the message beyond the church to which they were spoken, and address themselves to every one to whom the word comes , and to whom an ear is given to hear and receive it . Thus each message sent to the churches becomes a message sent personally to us . If we have a spiritually circumcised ear , if we are willing to listen to the voice of the Lord , he speaks to us in every message as personally and as distinctly as he spoke to each individual church . It is indeed an unspeakable blessing to have this ear given to us that we may receive in humility , simplicity , and godly sincerity what the Lord speaks in the word of his grace . It is by his word that he knocks at the door of our hearts ; and what a blessing he has pronounced on the man who hears his voice and opens the door when he hears the knock , like a fond and affectionate wife when she hears the knock of her husband at the door of his house : " " Behold , I stand at the door , and knock : if any man hear my voice , and open the door , I will come in to him , and will sup with him , and he with me" (Rev . iii . 20) .

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

THE ARMOUR OF GOD

Paul instructs the saints at Ephesus and the faithful in Christ Jesus to , " Put on the whole armour of God , that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil ." (Ephesians 6:11) These wiles of the devil are principalities , powers , the rulers of the darkness of this world , and spiritual wickedness in high places . Seeing that all these things are confronting us today , we feel it to be high time to stir up your pure minds by calling to your attention the admonition of Paul to the brethren for this day of evil . The whole armour of God is necessary to overcome all these things and enable us to stand , pray , and watch as a good soldier . We must lay aside the armour of man and put on the armour of God . We must be properly clothed to fight the good fight of faith . Our strength must be in the Lord and the power of His might in order to withstand this evil day . We cannot overcome unless we are properly clothed and have the proper equipment for our protection and defense .

May God grace us to inspect this armour piece by piece in the order given in Ephesians 6:14-17 . Please read . As we examine each piece of the armour let us note the supreme workmanship and material with reverential awe . May we admire its supreme value to such extent that nothing else can satisfy us . May we be given to examine the girdle , the breastplate , the shoes , the shield , the helmet , and the sword in such a manner as to determine whether or not any piece of armour upon which we are depending is pure or counterfeit . Have we put on the whole armour of God ?

The girdle is the first piece of this armour to be considered . We are to have our loins girt about the Truth . The truth is to be close about us and we are to be tightly bound with it . The truth must not be slack about us , but taut . It is to tightly embrace the part of us that is so subject to pain . We find that Christ is the truth , and we must see Christ in each piece of the armour . The truth must be revealed to us and dwell in us in order to be girt about with it . We must be convinced of our ignorance and made to lay it aside before the truth can be close about us , as Job was when God spoke to him out of the whirlwind , as recorded in the 38th chapter of Job . God commanded Job , " Gird up thy loins like a man : for I will demand of thee , and answer thou me . " (Job 38:3) The purpose of our girding up our loins with truth is to be able to give a proper answer to those who inquire of us . When our enemies assail us we want to be adequately clothed with the truth , the whole truth , and nothing but the truth in order to stop the mouths of gainsayers . When Jesus was urging watchfulness to his disciples , He said , " Let your loins be girded about , and your lights burning ." (Luke 12:35) When Peter was exhorting against fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance and giving exhortations to godliness , he wrote : " Gird up the loins of your mind , be sober , and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation

of Jesus Christ . (1 Peter 1:13) Diligent searching for the truth and the discarding of erroneous and false impressions and theories tend toward girding up the loins of our minds . When a desire for the truth is slackened room is given for wild impulses and erroneous ideas to disrupt the soberness of our minds. When this is true we talk as a drunken man . Our conversation is rambling , inconsistent , and without purpose .

As we are now faced with the many wiles of the devil in this evil day, may we be given to gird up the loins of our minds with pure knowledge sufficient to discern between the true and the false . We may readily accept rumors as truths without an investigation in periods of relaxation, when truth is slackened . We may take dangling expressions as true without proof when the truth is not held as sacred and precious to us . We may tolerate hypocritical actions when we have little regard for sincerity . We may be careless concerning our vows and promises when the loins of our minds are not girded . We may be content with the customs and practices of our people without research, if we be at ease in Zion . We may be satisfied with what our preachers tell us without searching the scriptures to find whether or not they tell us the truth . We may be content with just knowing with whom we affiliate to such extent that we give no attention to WHY we are not in affiliation with certain people . These aforestated conditions make us unfit to stand as good soldiers .

Paul told Timothy to " Study to shew thyself approved unto God , a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (1 Tim. 2:15) The truth must be rightly divided in order that the different phases of the truth may fall into their proper places . We want to be certain that all things for which we earnestly contend are consistent and in harmony with each other and with the scriptures. We desire to be able to stand in the strength of our Lord and in the power of His might , when the Captain of our salvation so orders . We want to be acquainted with all the rules of honorable warfare when we engage in this spiritual fight . It is sometimes painful to have to part with pet theories , but this is necessary in our basic training . Our ignorance must be exposed in girding up the loins of our minds. This girding will so acquaint us with the fundamentals of the doctrine of Christ as our Saviour, that we will know better what we believe and why we believe it . It will better enable us to classify the experiences and beliefs common to all the Household of Faith , and those peculiar to only some . You have heard it said among our people about several customs and practices : " We do not make this a test of fellowship ." When you are asked , " Why ," what do you say ? Is it reasonable to answer , " We just do not ." I think that those who question us should , for their information, be answered more fully. What are the essentials of belief and practices upon which a test of fellowship should be based ? What are the essentials and non-essentials in our belief and practice ? Is it true when people say , " There is not much difference between us ? " Do we believe that the " Scriptures are the only rules of faith and practice ? " If we are not acquainted with the scriptures , are we acquainted with the

rules? If we do not know the rules, are we ready to take our stand as a good soldier ? May God impress upon us the necessity of " Girding up the loins of our mind ," that we may be able to give the right and proper answer to those who inquire of us ! May we be given to much reading , meditation and prayer !

The second piece of the armour is the Breast-plate of Righteousness . We may know the rules of honorable warfare to such extent that we may appear as a good soldier, but if we do not have on the proper breastplate we will fall when the test comes. We may be so well informed in true theology that we put on an excellent appearance , yet our hearts be far from it . The truth may be in our minds , yet be void of pure righteousness in our hearts . As Christ is our only pure Truth , He is our only pure righteousness. We desire to be right as well as truthful .

We read in Exodus 28th chapter that the high priest wore a breastplate of judgment with the names of the children of Israel inscribed thereon . Jesus is our High Priest. He wore the breastplate of judgment that we might wear the breastplate of righteousness . As our names are inscribed on His breastplate , so is His righteousness imputed unto us. This breastplate was to be fastened with two rings of pure gold . Two things must be before this breastplate can be properly attached to our armour . 1 st — Christ's righteousness must be imputed to us . 2nd , His righteousness must be implanted in our hearts. This breastplate was purchased by Jesus Christ , and the Holy Ghost applies it or bestows it on us . If we have on this breastplate, it shines so brightly that all our righteousness appears as filthy rags . As the whole armour is called the " Armour of light" in Romans 13:12 , the breastplate of righteousness shines radiantly . It proceeds from the Father of Light. It is purchased by the Light of the world for the children of Light . If your armour is graced with this breastplate you can detect the counterfeit . You will know that the theory of Christ's works mingled with creature works and merits , is not right . Right will prevail and finally triumph over the works of unrighteousness . This breastplate will stand the fiery trials and severe persecutions without its beauty being marred . May we be given to understand what is right as well as what is true !

The third piece of this armour protects our feet . Our feet are to be " Shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace ." We walk with our feet . Do we tread in the ways of destruction and misery? Are our feet swift to shed blood ? Do we walk in a way that seems right unto man , yet the end of that way is the way of death ? Do we waver in a broad way instead of the narrow way? The pathway of holiness is the pathway of peace. God says through Isaiah 55:7 , " How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings , that publisheth peace ; that bringeth good tidings of good , that publisheth salvation ; that saith unto Zion, " Thy God reigneth!" We read in Romans 10:15 , " How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace , and bring glad tidings of good things ." We walk slowly and steadily together when we are so shod. The tidings we bring are good . We publish things that bring

peace. We do not step hastily for fear of causing confusion. The way must be prepared, and we must be prepared, to walk in it before it is safe to venture. When God prepares the way and prepares us to walk in it, we are thoroughly convinced that this action will tend toward lasting peace.

We stand upon our feet. If our feet be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace we stand on a firm foundation. Jesus is the chief cornerstone of this foundation. If we be on this foundation it shall ever hold us up. It will never become weak. It is the foundation of the prophets and apostles. How firm is that foundation! No man has ever laid a foundation so stable and firm. Those who stand on that foundation cry, " Our God reigneth ." When we are fully convinced that our God supremely reigns, we are prepared with the gospel of peace that the world knows nothing about, and can never suppress.

Peace in Zion is the good soldier's objective. He does not wish to sacrifice peace in order that he may win personal placques for outstanding service. A good soldier will not surrender any of his comrades to the enemy in order that he may receive personal honors conferred by the enemy. A good soldier will not retreat from the foundation principles and forsake them in order to please the enemy. A good soldier stands firm when the Captain, Jesus Christ, so orders. When the Captain says, " March ," we press on toward the mark of victory.

The Shield of Faith is the fourth piece of this armour. It is impossible to please God without it. Faith shields us from the fiery darts of Satan. It protects us from the persecutions of the world. It causes us to bravely face the enemy without fear of being subdued. Faith that God controls the actions of all his creatures and miraculously and wonderfully work them together for our good, is so great a shield that we do not fear what man can do against us. It is that wonderful gift that encourages us to press on regardless of seeming difficulties. Faith in the power of His might shields us from the fear of the power of Satan and all his allies. The faith that our Captain has gone before us and subdued such great enemies as our sins and eternal death for us, shields us from their terrible consequences. The faith that this same Captain imputes unto us His strength to fight our warfare here, shields us from the fear of our own weakness. Faith in the power of the Holy Spirit calling, sanctifying, and preserving all His people unto Eternal Life, shields us from the fear that any of the elect of God will finally fall away. What a durable shield that so resists the fiery darts of Satan that all of the Lord's people shall finally triumph without the loss of any of the blessings of the Spirit stored in Christ for them from the foundation of the world!

The Helmet of Salvation is the fifth piece of this godly armour. Eternal salvation and the hope of it are the saint's helmet. Both of these render saints bold and courageous in their spiritual warfare. " But let us who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation ." ((1st Thess. 5:8) The helmet is a cap to protect the head of a warrior. It is the uppermost piece of the armour. Salvation is uppermost and the highest goal to which we hope to experi-

ence fully in Heaven. We are crowned with the helmet of salvation and do not fear the vengeance of God falling upon us as it fell upon Christ when He obtained our salvation for us. Salvation through the merits of Christ, and the hope of it being upon our head, shields us not only from the judgments and vengeance of God, but also points us out to Him as worthy of His blessings through the merits of His Son. This hope saves us from fainting and causes us to lift our heads high. This hope awakens us from sleep and makes us stand erect and face the enemy. This helmet of salvation makes us to realize that the enemy can never take our head. Christ is our Head. He is our helmet. He can never be destroyed. This helmet preserves unto Eternal Salvation. Natural bodies may be destroyed as natural helmets may be pierced so that the head of the body may die with the body. As certain as Jesus, the Head, lives, just that certain will His spiritual body, which is the church, survive unto eternal life. The helmet of salvation is our crown of glory.

The Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, is the sixth piece of this complete armour. Jesus is the Word of God, according to the first chapter of Saint John. This Word cuts to the heart of those who oppose Him, and pricks in the heart of His people. God's Word was not only clothed with flesh and dwelt among us in Jesus Christ, but also spoke this world into existence. This Word was spoken through the inspired writers of both the old and new testaments and becomes our only rule of faith and practice. This Word is indeed a sword wielded by the Spirit of God. It returns not unto Him void, but accomplishes that which He pleases and prospers where unto He sends it. (See Isaiah 55:11).

This Sword divides the spiritual from the carnal. It separates the works of man from the works of God. It separates the precious from the vile. " The Word of God is QUICK, and POWERFUL, and SHARPER than any TWO-EDGED sword, PIERCING even to the DIVIDING asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a DISCERNER of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Heb. 4:12) It is wielded promptly enough to keep the enemies from getting such strong hold as to infringe upon our rights. It is powerful enough to subdue all enemies and make a thorough work. It is sharp enough to pierce the stony heart. With this sword we can discern to the minutest extent any evil intents and so separate them from the good intents that no lasting damage will be done. This sword is two-edged. The psalmist prayed, " Let the high praises of God be in their mouth and a two-edged sword in their hand: to execute vengeance upon the heathen and punishments upon the people. (Psalms 149:6-7) One edge is for vengeance upon the heathen and the other edge is for the chastening of His people. One edge will cut off our pride and trust in self, and the other edge will bring to nought the evil intentions of the enemy. One edge will give us a trimming and the other will slay those who oppose us. When we are given to wisely wield this sword truth will prevail, and we will through the Spirit and Word of God overcome all of our enemies. One edge will eradicate the evil that is within and so subdue it until we will finally be victorious. The other

edge will bring to destruction those evils without so that they can never be victorious in overcoming us .

I trust the reader will be blessed to glean some inspiring and encouraging thoughts as you meditate upon this article . Many thoughts that were mine to enjoy while writing this , I was unable to express herein . May we be enabled to put on the whole armour of God in this evil day and be proven as good soldiers , so that in the end of our journey here we may say as Paul , " For I am now ready to be offered , and the time of my departure is at hand . I have fought a good fight , I have finished my course , I have kept the faith : henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness , which the Lord , the righteous Judge , shall give me at that day : and not to me only , but unto ALL them also that love His appearing ." (2 Timothy 4:6-8 4:6-8) .

Elder E . J . Lambert

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The one hundred forty-seventh session of the Staunton River Association will convene with the Church at Canaan on July 8, 9, 10th, which is the second weekend .

The Church is located in Pittsylvania County , west of Danville , Virginia , on State Road 844 . From Danville , follow Highway 41 about 12 miles and turn left at Frances Store . The Church is located about 3 miles on the right from this store . Watch for signs to direct you from Highway 41 .

Harvey Wood
Association Clerk
Elder J . R . Williams
Moderator

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 1988

John S . Collie , NC 2.00
Mrs . Bennie Clifton , VA 2.00
Mrs . Fannie D . Wiles , VA ... 10.00
Dan Anders ..... AL .
In loving memory
Mrs . W . D . Griffin 10.00
Mrs . Carl L . Bryant , LA 2.00
Mrs . J . D . Neely , AR 2.00
Mrs . W . H . Spires , VA 2.00
Eld . J . T . Austin , PA 2.00
L . W . Nichols , VA 2.00
Mrs . Verta Hanning , WV 10.00
Mrs . Mattie Underwood , VA ... 10.00
Alpha & Mary Sears , OH 2.00
Mrs . Wilma Sasser , AL 5.00
Mrs . Elizabeth Barnes , OR 5.00
O . P . Murphy , ... TX .
In mem . Eld. Joe Hamrick ... 100.00
Charles M . Coates , VA 7.00
Mrs . D . W . Jones , VA 2.00
W . P . Potter , VA 2.00
Richard Stegall , VA 2.00
Mrs . Grace Manly , FL 5.00
Mrs . Opal E . Hiatt , VA 2.00
Mrs . Pearl A . Law , VA 5.00
Mrs . Flora B . Berry , NC 2.00
Mrs . Betty H . Lovitte , NC 2.00
Harvey Blalock , NC 10.00
J . E . Potter , NC 2.00

PROVERBS 3 : 13 .

Happy is the man that findeth wisdom , and the man that getteth understanding .

OBITUARIES

TILLMAN KYLE DALTON

Tillman Kyle Dalton departed this life November 30 , 1987 , at the age of 84 years . He leaves to mourn him two sons , Kyle Dalton , Gary Dalton and four daughters , Mrs . Rebecca Hawks , and Mrs . Howard (Rachel) Stump , Mrs . J .R . (Elizabeth) Chisom , and Mrs . Martha Wright . Also there are eighteen grandchildren , and twenty-one great-grandchildren . Also , a dear friend , Mrs . Dorothy Worley .

He was married to Lelia Beck on March 10 , 1923 and she preceded him in death on July 2 , 1974 .

Brother Dalton joined the Roanoke Church sometime in the 1930's and was ordained to the office of deacon on January 31 , 1942 . Later he moved his membership to Weatherford Church near Gretna , Virginia

In his declining years , he moved his membership to Laurel Ridge Church near Cave Spring . Brother Dalton served as a deacon of the churches where his membership was and was faithful to the end . He was also a good song leader . He loved the little D .H . Goble song book , and there was but few songs in that book that he could not sing . He loved to sing and I would sing with him . It seems I can almost hear him now .

He had trouble with his eyes the last few years of his life , and some of the time he couldn't see to read the hymn book . I loved Brother Dalton and I believe he loved me . I could go to him and ask him something and could expect an honest answer .

The last few days of his life he was weak and short of breath and he desired and I believe prayed to the Lord to take him and the Lord granted that request .

His funeral was conducted December 3 , 1987 , at the Weatherford Church by his pastor , the writer , and assisted by Elder H .W . Wray at the request of Brother Dalton . He was laid to rest in the church cemetery beside his wife , also where he himself had worked so hard to keep the grass mowed and the regular upkeep of the cemetery of which he was instrumental in designing .

Written by one that loved him and by the request of the family ,

Leonard J . Brammer

REUBEN ROY DAVIS

Brother Reuben Roy Davis of route 2 Axton , Va . was born Oct . 1 , 1905 to the late Rollin Davis and Mary Jane Clark Davis . He died Dec . 9 , 1987 at Memorial Hospital in Martinsville , Va . He was a retired farmer had been treasurer of the Blue Ridge Soil Conservation District and was chairman of the board of Assessors of Henry County , Va .

Surviving is his wife Mary Hurd Davis of the home , daughters Mrs . James G . (Shirley) Burchell of Eden , N .C . , Mrs . Raleigh J . " Polly " Robertson of Axton , Va . and Mrs . Robert " Cynthia " Chivolonia of Washington , D .C . Sons are W . Filmore Davis of Axton , Va . and Allen Clark Davis of Richmond , Va . Nine

grandchildren , a brother William Tensley Davis of Axton , Va. , a sister Mrs. R.C. Thompson of Danville , Va. He joined Dan River Church August 24 , 1958 , was baptized Sept . 27 , 1958 . His funeral was conducted by Elder Wallace Smith. He was buried in the family cemetery. He was a faithful member , generous to the church — always willing to help in anything as long as he was able .

A man of strong convictions he believed in Salvation by Grace , and that God worketh all things and without him you can do nothing . He believed in the promises of God as John 14:23 Jesus said if a man love me , he will keep my words : and my Father will love him and we will come unto him and make our abode with him . Hebrew 13:2 He has said I will never leave nor forsake thee . To these promises our brother has said yea and amen . He also believed in Romans 8:2 That the law of life in Christ Jesus has made his soul free from the law of sin and death , and that he would sleep in the paradise of God and awake on the Resurrection morning to cry Abba father . It has been my privilege to visit his home. He loved to talk on the Scriptures and was always willing to give a reason for his Hope .

We at Dan River will miss his presence at our meeting. Unto Sister Mary and family May God Bless You and Keep You in the way .

Written by order of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church while in conference .

Elder Kenneth Key , Moderator
Boyd Minter , Clerk

HEBREWS 11 : 1

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

ELDER WILLIAM HOLLAND

Dear Lord , I pray you will bless me to write the obituary of our dear beloved Pastor of Republican Church .

Elder William Marvin Holland , born July 2 , 1914 , died December 4 , 1987 . His funeral was conducted by Elder W . Lane Carter . We all loved him so dearly . He was so kind and loving , our hearts ache at our loss , but we feel it is his gain .

He preached the doctrine so plain it seemed , indeed , he was a mouth piece for our Lord. Never afraid to say what the Scriptures teach because he trusted in God Our Savior .

He was married to Nellie Bussy Holland , who is a loving lady and was so good to Brother William . They had four children. Two girls and two boys , seven grandchildren , one granddaugter-in-law , one grandson-in-law , two daughters-in-law , two sons-in-law , four sisters and five brothers .

He joined Republican Church , January 16 , 1949 , and served there until his death .

He was ordained August 18 , 1956 .

He also served Pigg River Church, Basham Church , and Little Creek Church .

The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away , Blessed be His Holy Name . We hope to meet again on the other side with all Gods Children , where there will be no more sad farewells .

We thank our God for so great a gift as Brother William was , and we feel sure he is resting in perfect peace ' til Jesus calls. Then all His Saints will arise in a moment , be changed like His Glorious Body never to know no

more sorrow or pain, but be with our Lord forever and forever.

Written by one who loved him dearly,

A little sister,
Lessie V. Guilliams

THOMAS EVAN LANDERS

Brother Thomas Evan Landers was born in Bradley County, Arkansas, on December 27, 1907 and after spending the last two years of his life in the Pine Lodge Nursing Home at Warren, he passed from this life on December 10, 1987 making his stay here nearly 80 years. Brother Evan married Helen Nettie Ross on August 27, 1938 and they had a son Charles Thomas Landers of Jacksonville, Arkansas and a daughter Shirley Jane (Landers) Jackson of North Little Rock. Brother Evan had two brothers living: Leland of Little Rock and Doyle of Kingsland; also three grandsons and one granddaughter.

Brother Landers and his wife Helen joined Antioch Primitive Baptist Church at Warren on October 30, 1966 and were baptized by the late Elder John L. Sander. Brother Evan's father, Jefferson Davis Landers, was a member of Antioch Church at his death and his mother was Lovella McCone. He was the grandson of Elder Charles Bussey and Mary Catherine (Evans) Landers. This Elder was born in Georgia on December 26, 1817 and joined the Primitive Baptist Church in 1834 and was ordained shortly thereafter. He moved to near Warren in 1840 and was a school teacher. He studied and became a medical doctor. Also, several churches were organized in the 1840's in Arkansas as well as the Ouachita Association which was organized in November 1848 and Elder Landers was the first moderator (was moderator until 1855). Around 1890 the Ouachita Association was divided into the North and South Ouachita Association because of the size and area. The South Ouachita Association held its Ninety-seventh Annual Session in September 1987. Brother Landers was a firm believer in salvation by the Grace of God and God's determinate council will stand. God has shown unusual mercy to this Landers family. Brother Evan's only son is also a believer in a sovereign God and His free grace salvation. In memory of Brother Landers, let us remember the words of David in Psalms 116:15 "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."

Funeral service was conducted by the writer and Elder Paul Daniel at the Frazer's Funeral Home in Warren on December 12, 1987 and the body was laid to rest in the Oakland Cemetery in Warren.

Written at the family request,
Gerald D. Shipman

SISTER LILLIAN SMITH

Once again, seemingly all too often for our natural minds, God, in His infinite wisdom, has called home one of His little ones. Having known her over the years, I am honored and consider it a privilege to have been asked to pen a few lines in memory of this precious sister.

Lillian Dorothy Ore Morrison

Smith was born June 30 , 1907 in Patrick County (Stuart) , Virginia to the late Jim and Anna Bryant Ore . On December 19 , 1923 , she married Homer Moier Morrison , who preceded her in death by many years . To this union were born three sons — Ralph Moier and Millard Wallace of Eden , North Carolina , and James Revell of Greensboro , North Carolina . There are also seven grandchildren (four girls and three boys) who survive .

On July 4 , 1951 , Sister Lillian married James Samuel Smith . Brother Sam , a dear member at Dan River survives also to mourn her passing .

Sister Smith joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in 1938 and was baptized by her pastor , Elder D . V . Spangler .

She enjoyed her church meetings and the members and friends as much as anyone I have ever known . She had a beautiful countenance and clearly loved the doctrine of salvation by grace . Her favorite hymns were " Amazing Grace ," and " There Is A House Not Made With Hands ." I am convinced that she loved the God she knew and knew the God she loved .

Sister Lillian did not question her fatal illness nor did she complain about her condition . Rather , she seemed to sense that her time on Earth was growing short and longed to go home to her Lord . In visiting her at home shortly before her death , she could still smile and say that everything was all right .

Sister Lillian died at her home on November 2 , 1987 . Her funeral was conducted at Dan River by her pastor , Elder Kenneth Key and Elder Haywood Wray with burial following in the church cemetery .

We shall all miss this precious sister but feel that she has gone home to her Lord . Sympathy is extended to the dear family with a sincere hope that they may be made reconciled to the will of the Father .

It is requested that a copy of this obituary be made available to the Signs of the Times and that a copy be given to the family .

Written at the request of the church in conference Saturday night , February 27 , 1988 .

One who loved her ,
Bob R . Collie

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6 / 88
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE .

PSALM 118:14 .

The Lord is my strength and song , and is become my salvation .

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 156 KEELING, VA., JULY 1988 NO. 7

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EDITORIAL

THE DELIVERANCE OF ISAAC AND HIS BRETHREN
Genesis 22:14

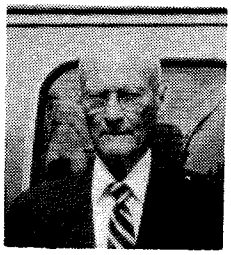
Elder W.D. Griffin

The choice of His people in Christ did not save them. By man came sin, and sin has passed upon all men for all have sinned. The world has been laying the charge at our feet that we believed that God saved His children before the foundation of the world. We have not advocated any such doctrine. We have said, and we do say, that God chose His people in Christ unto salvation. We do say that every chosen vessel was safe before the world was, but them being safe and them being saved are two things that are different. God having chosen them in Christ unto salvation was His guarantee that Christ would come as their sin bearer. They had an eternal standing in Him, the Lamb of God having stood as slain from the beginning.

This is one of the most beautiful features of the Covenant of grace. Jesus Christ was assigned to suffer and bleed and die for every heir of promise. But the pledge of God the Father to that end was clinched by an oath that God made that Christ was standing in a pledge owned by both Father and Son that the Son was not only pledged by His Father to that end, but that the end in view had been vouched for by the Son agreeing to stand in the council hall of His Father to guarantee payment, and the beauty and the surety of payment being made, the Father swore to that binding agreement. The promise and the word of God was forever settled in heaven to that end. (Psalm. 119:89)

There was a time for that to be made manifest. It was at the right time, the full time, but why be so set about the time? Because we are a people that believes that God does things in the fullness of time. The reason that we desire to hew to the line, is because of God's work in begetting His children. God did not send forth His Son until the fullness of time had come. When it had come, then He sent Him forth, made of a woman, made under the law. That all was in the salvation of His chosen people.

The time came in the life of Abraham and Isaac for God to tempt (prove) Abraham . In talking and writing of these lovely things so often a spy is watching for the careless use of a word so that they might have something with which to cast reflections on the bright banner of love. Let us step aside for a moment to say that our God does not tempt any man with evil neither is He tempted with it. But I am glad that the Lord tries every vessel in His kingdom as to the kind that it is , and this trial is extended to every elect vessel of mercy . Peter addressed his lovely letters to the elect children of God this letter so filled with comforting and instructive things and I am glad I know , and I hope that I am thankful to the Giver of every good gift to the children of men. Peter tells us , Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you as though some strange thing had happened to you. This safe and sound instruction was addressed to every one of them , and if we meet up with people that know so little about this trial that they show clearly that the trial does not mean anything to them, it may seem sad that the Lord has seen fit to leave the trial out of their lives , we will , as blessed with the guidance of His leadership, be thankful to Him. It is a happy privilege and a great honor for our God that Isaac and His father, Abraham, were both tried, along with the whole family of God, in the fiery furnace .

The further we move into the works of God in dealing with Father Abraham in the faith of God 's elect, the more precious it becomes . Isaac was a promised seed or heir . The doubts and fears, the tossings to and from , were sore indeed . Likewise Abraham faced insurmountable odds as far as humanity overcoming them, but He that first appeared to him never for a moment, in either case, left the issue up to them . Isn't that a marvelous doctrine ? Isn't it beyond the comprehension of dull mortality that from the morning of creation until the day in which Jesus Christ arose from the grave that there was not any anxiety , and doubt , not any casting about for a safer or a better way, but that God 's purpose was declared before hand and that there was not any deviation from that declared purpose . Truly , the grace taught apostle was right when he left it on record for the comfort of the brethren at Galatia , and of us , as we humbly hope , of our day that as Isaac was , are the children of God 's eternal purpose .

First , let us prove by ourselves whether we believe in God as per our profession. How many of the parents that read these lines that would have begin preparations to sacrifice their only son as Abraham did ? Have you known of anybody making a sacrifice like that ? Could you do it ? Frankly, I could not as matters stand today . However , if any of us were put in a place like unto this that Abraham was put in, I can tell you what we would do. We would begin to make ready our only son for the sacrifice. That is what we would have done , had we been delivered into the same surrounding conditions . That is what God given faith will produce in His people (Read Hebrews II).

Let all nature stand still on such a scene. Let every work mongering eye be prevented from a sight or a sound of what is going on. The Lord is here. Grace and mercy and justice is all

meeting in the sacred scene before us. The skeptic will say that Abraham was a hypocrite ; that he misled by innuendos his only son . That is a falsehood. Abraham did not mislead his son and heir. He was telling the truth. Faith was active in him ; faith was in command of his mind. Abraham believed God (who can believe without faith?), and there is not a time in the offering up of Isaac that Abraham did not believe that God would raise up his son Isaac. This is not new it is not false ; it is not misleading. Peter believed in the resurrection of David although it had been a long time since he had been buried. David himself believed that he would go to his son. Job believed in the future resurrection of the body. Abraham, is, at the present wonderful moment of which we are treating, a believer in the resurrection of his son, Isaac.

There has never been a procession with any more pathetic setting unless it was when they were moving towards the place of crucifixion of the Saviour. God had commanded Abraham to sacrifice his son. Here is a spectacular sight. Come near poor sinner and look in astonishment on the scene. The sacrifice is there. The wood for burning the sacrifice. The fire is there for the consumation of the sacrifice. The knife for slaying the offering is there. The one to perform the task is there. The skeptic says, You would tell us that Abraham believes God as he is moved by the circumstances to the sacrifice place. I certainly do tell you that. The writer of Hebrews tells us that Abraham offered Isaac by faith. You do not believe that? Well be gone with you. The Bible tells us that He believed God and evidently it was true belief because God counted it for righteousness.

The entire little assembly bears the marks of saints. All of them are resigned to the fact that God is the potter and that they are the clay. Oh, that the Lord would grant unto us grace to be submissive to our lot as was Isaac. At times we question the wisdom of our Father. What poor mortals that we are, that we are so ready to question His molding of us into vessels that His wisdom would dictate. At first Isaac questioned his father about the lack of an offering. Blind unbelief is sure to err, and at times like that, with us it is, Why are you going to the place of sacrifice with no offering? But Faith answers, My son, God will provide Himself an offering. Let us draw near and let us watch the proceedings and how that the participants are dealt with in the glorious episode of this our deliverance along with Isaac. When Abraham assures the lad that God will provide Himself an offering, it satisfies him. However, when they continue, and still no offering, still no lamb there is no further complaint. Faith is abounding. Grace is breaking asunder and driving the dark clouds away. When they get to the place of sacrifice each object of the sacrifice is put in order. The wood is placed on the promised child. The hope of Abraham and Sarah, the hope of Isaac himself, and untold millions is, seemingly about to be dashed. But not a word from Isaac ; not a groan from the old father whose hopes are all in the lad, and not a word from the lad himself.

O precious readers, what a boon is the faith of God's elect children. What a stronghold it is when the

power of God can clear the darkening and lengthening shadows and give poor troubled sinners rest and hope. The power that caused the Israelites to be still and wait at the Red Sea and the quietness and the submissive waiting for living water as Moses was ready to strike the Rock made itself known again in this momentous moment and everyone was quiet and submissive to the will of the Potter.

The hour is at hand. Destiny is about to strike. The father draws his hand to take blood, to take life. In an instant, but in plenty of time a Voice stills the drawn hand. It doesn't come from a single one of those that are going to lose everything by this sacrifice. It came from above. Come close dear brethren and sisters. It came from above. It came from the same place that the instructions to another tormented soul, to wit, Joseph. His hand was staid. It came from the same living source when a Voice from heaven staid the barbarous march of Saul of Tarsus. It came from the same country the two men in white came from that said, Why stand ye here gazing into heaven? This same Jesus that ye see go away will, in like manner come again. And the witnesses from heaven are abounding around us as the promised son and child is delivered. Be assured dear wayworn pilgrims that every good and perfect gift comes from above. This gift from above, which certainly was from God, saved the day for all of Abraham's hosts of heirs, and for all of the dear brethren who were children of promise from that day until now.

We, if we are included in the text, have received the same deliverance that Isaac received. The only thing that saved him was the fact that he was a promised child. That has saved God's children evermore, for God cannot lie. What a joy it is, yea, dear beleaguered soul surrounded by foes from without and within, that God cannot lie. Dry your weeping eyes, dear saint. Give no heed to tempting malicious voices that would spread gloom and desolation in the camp of Israel. God is on the side of Israel. He did not decide because of an emergency arising, but He swore His promise to Abraham, and He cannot lie. It is acknowledged by every son of Adam (that is not a promised heir) that some of every order in the world will be lost. That isn't the concern nor the business of Israel's God. He has promised to save His children and He does not, nor He cannot lie.

If you are beset by insurmountable difficulties, if you have family problems, anxities, doubts and fears assail you, lift up your tear stained eyes on high. God is in His heaven and this ungodly world is in obeisance to Him. By Him planets roll and by Him worlds spring into existence, and by Him are spoken out. And by Him His Son was made of a woman, made lower than the heavens, made in the form of a servant, made under the entanglements of the intricate law of Moses, caught in the nick of time, at the right time, in the right place to assure the salvation and complete deliverance of Isaac and every little brother and sister.

When it goes well with you remember me to the King.

Elder W. D. Griffin

CORRESPONDENCE

Roanoke , Virginia 24015
December 5 , 1985

Elder and Mrs . Leonard J . Brammer
Martinsville , Virginia 24112

Dear Brother and Sister Brammer ,

I need to talk to you both , but it has not been possible . I may not be blessed to put it in writing about the dream I had , but I must try , the Lord willing .

You remember , Brother Brammer mer , I told you I needed to tell you why I felt I knew that someday you would be our pastor at Roanoke Church .

Sometime ago before Elder Turner became ill with leukemia , I had a dream . I was sitting in Roanoke Church and it was just as we were waiting for the meeting to begin . I could see the brethren and sisters in their usual seats . Then I saw Elder Turner and you come down the church aisle , walking side by side , you on Elder Turner's right . You both walked up on the stand and as you both got to the level of the pulpit , a white cloud that cannot be described it was so beautiful , covered Elder Turner . It was white and it sparkled as dew on the morning grass when the sun was shining on it . It seemed but a minute or two , then the cloud disappeared and Elder Turner was no longer there . Then you walked to the pulpit and started speaking . Your text " I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills , from whence cometh my help ." As you spoke , I looked at the bottom of the pulpit around the table and there was a row of little lambs all standing in a half circle , their little heads all looking up at you as you spoke . They all was just the same size and all as quiet as could be . I woke up .

In my heart and soul I knew that one day you would stand in Roanoke Church pulpit as our pastor . I did not see a little goat in with those lambs , for if I had , then I would have known that the goat was me .

About twenty-eight years ago , I was burdened to move my membership from Head of the River Church to Roanoke Church , and I had tried to pray to be shown what to do . In the summer of 1957 I dreamed that I was at Roanoke Church and Elder Turner was in the pulpit preaching , " I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills , from whencecometh my help ." In the back of the pulpit was a wave of crystal clear water flowing down , and around the front of the pulpit was a row of little lambs , all listening quietly to the gospel . I brought my letter to Roanoke Church in September , 1957 .

As you were unanimously received the first Saturday in October (1985) as our pastor , I wanted so badly to tell the church about my dream . But I know I could not .

Dear ones , I love both of you and pray the Lord will give us many years in sweet fellowship and that He will ever keep me at brethren and sisters' feet .

Unworthy me ,
Rlee B . Houchins
Roanoke , Virginia

PSALM 119 : 105

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet , and a light unto my path .

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

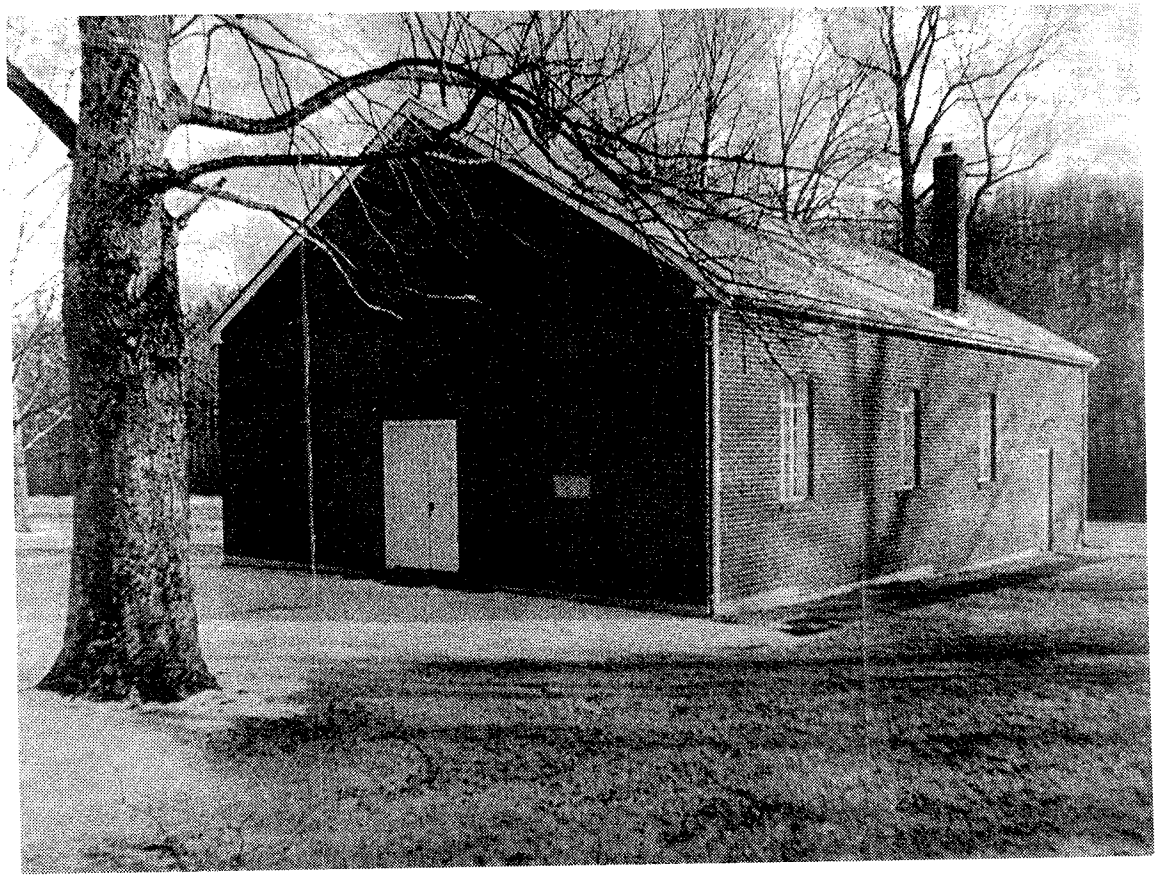

PIGG RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Pigg River Primitive Baptist Church was organized in 1773 present meeting house built in 1954 on Virginia 751 near Callaway, Va.

Meeting on 4th Sunday and Saturday before at 11:00 a.m. Communion meeting on 4th Sunday in July.

W. P. Lane Carter present pastor

HISTORY OF PIGG RIVER CHURCH

This church is situated in what is now Franklin County, Virginia, but at the time of its organization was Henry Co; and is on the south branch of the Pigg River, near the Blue Ridge mountains.

According to Semple's History it was established by Elder Randolph Hall in 1773, and tradition puts this meeting at a private home, but the record has been lost. The record is complete from 1796 to the present. The first record in the old book is as follows:

" Met according to appointment on the 4th Friday in August, 1796. The

following brethren were requested by the church to attend on the ordination of our beloved Brother Moses Reutfro, John Trout, John Larence, Henry Carter, Robert Simpkins, William Howard, Thomas Goodson, Robert Jones and Joseph Jones.

Elder Larence, Mod."

Then this note follows:

"The above brethren composed a presbytery for the purpose of the ordination of the said Brother Reutfro, which was done, and the brethren were then dismissed in order."

From evidence this man was ordained an Elder and from the record, he asked to be dismissed from the church the next year, 1797. The last named in the above presbytery Joseph Jones, was a deacon of the church.

The first delegates sent to the Strawberry Association was done at the September meeting, 1797. David Barton and Joseph Jones were sent.

At their meeting the 4th Saturday in April, 1797, they returned an arm that had been extended to Remnet fag, and was excepted by the church in the year 1805. The church granted liberty to James Sewel to improve his gift in the bounds of Elder William Howard's church, then in 1806 he was dismissed from the church.

In conference the 4th Saturday in July, 1807 the church asked Elder Joseph Pedigo to serve them as pastor, and he accepted. In this request it was stated that they had been without a regular pastor some time. This evidently was an able servant and served this church until his death which was Dec. 1, 1837. He was also the first Moderator of Pigg River Association, which was organized at Little Creek Church, the second Saturday in August, 1825.

The first deacons that were ordained was on Friday before the 4th Saturday in June, 1809, were Bros. Peter Young and David Lemon, and the names of the Presbytery were not recorded, but as stated before, Joseph Jones was a deacon. The next deacons ordained were James Welsh and Capselton Wade, at their August meeting, 1821; Elders Moses Greer, John S. Lee, Wilson Turner and Joseph Pedigo, made up the Presbytery. Then John Jones was ordained deacon the 4th Saturday in July, 1829; then the 4th Saturday in May 1833, Brother Peytan Ellison was ordained; the Presbytery was not named. Then at their meeting 4th Saturday in July 1853, the Presbytery consisting of Elder G.W. Kelly and Arnold Walker, was called and met at the October meeting and ordained John Trout as deacon; then A.B. Cannaday was ordained as deacon 4th Saturday in October 1867 by Elders John R. Martin, G.W. Kelly and John C. Hall; then Benjamin Cooper was received by letter, (church not stated) in the year 1858, who was a deacon, also Clerk till his death. J.P. Hollandsworth and John C. Roberson was ordained deacons at the July meeting, 1896, the names of the Presbytery was not recorded. Then at the May meeting, 1919 Brother Lee Willis and S.M. Prilliman was ordained as deacons, with Elder David Sumner and T.F. West as a Presbytery, and it can be said of Deacon Lee Willis, who could not read or write, that no church at any age has had a deacon who excelled him in manifesting a love for his church. There was nothing that he could do too much for him. Then at the October meeting,

1930 S .G . Akers was ordained as deacon by Elders J.E. Burgess, E.L. Blankenship and George F . Dyer as Presbytery . This completes the deacons so far as the record shows, and Deacon S .M . Prilliman and S .G . Akers are living, and are Godfearing, faithful deacons, and do not lord over God 's heritage .

As recorded before, Elder Joseph Pedigo was chosen Pastor July 1807; Brother George W . Kelley united by letter (church not stated) at the Sept. meeting 1819 , and was licensed to exercise by his church, and a presbytery consisting of Joseph Pedigo and Moses Greer ordained him the 4th Saturday in September, 1833 . Elder Joseph Pedigo died Dec . 1 , 1837 . Then Elder George W . Kelley was chosen Pastor at the July meeting , 1838 . This Elder continued to serve the church till the 4th Saturday in September , 1862 . He resigned as Pastor and the church requested Elder John C. Hall to serve them, and he agreed (Elder George W . Kelley died Nov . 17 , 1878). Elder John C. Hall served the church faithfully and well till age beset him ; then the Church selected Elder W .A . Via to assist him as pastor at the June meeting 1892 , and they both served till April 1901 when Elder J .C . Hall died. Then at the April meeting 1901 , Elder W .A . Via was chosen Pastor , and about this time there was a great revival in the church , and Elder Via baptized 20 at one time . This meek and useful servant died Feb . 1903 . Elder Peter Corn was chosen pastor and accepted at the March meeting 1903 . Elder Corn served this church in a very acceptable manner , and because of age and having to travel some distance, resigned the 4th Sat. in Nov. 1909 , and the same meeting Elder David Sumner was made pastor tor , and this servant served that church faithfully and in meekness , often walking to this church even in winter , and he lived over 25 miles from the church . He would leave his home on Friday and return Monday , was a poor man , but the Lord provided for him , and he continued as Pastor till his death , Aug . 21 , 1934 . At the August meeting, 1934 , Elder J J .P . Helms accepted the care of the church and has tried to serve them faithfully till the present time .

Above is set out in order the deacons and pastors of this church , but the Lord has blessed this church so wonderfully with faithful members, fathers and mothers in Israel . There has been and now are some of the outstanding mothers in Israel , who love and labor for the welfare of their church .

The first church building was of log construction, a small crude house with stone chimney and a fire place to furnish heat , later there was an addition built of logs and a gallery built for the benefit of the colored, as there were many colored members of this church from its earliest days to about 1890 when the colored members were granted letters in full fellowship to establish a church of their own and let the record show that many of these brethren and sisters manifested that they had been with Jesus and their lives was an adornment to their church. Slaves and masters worshiped the same Lord and partook of the emblems of Him together . About the year 1890 a frame house was built a few yards from the first church, which still is used by the church at present. The first deed to the property was lost

or destroyed with the court records of Henry County, but a deed was made by Robert Slone and wife, John Fralin and wife and Brother Richard Paine about 1890 to a plot of about 3 acres, including the cemetery. A few years ago Mrs. Julius Becket, whose ancestors were life-long members of the church, the Jones family gave one acre to the church grounds, and the same time the church purchased about one and one-half acres. So at this time the church has ample grounds, and well cared for.

This church as we trace them in the record, has been compelled to exclude members for various causes against good order, as they have maintained good order all these years but if there has ever been any disturbance because of the doctrine we have no record of it. When the mission movement caused a division in 1833, there is no mention of this disturbance in their record. Pigg River Church was asked to send a committee to Black Water Church and the church sent their Pastor and deacons to advise and labor with this church, which joined the Mission side and changed its name to Fairmont, which today is New School, but not one member left the Pigg River Church in this disturbance. In the uproar of conditional-time-salvation, again there was no notice of trouble. The church seems to always have been sound in faith and of one mind in reference to doctrine.

The articles of faith of Pigg River Church and Pigg River Association, are the same, and their articles of faith or their rules of decorum has not been changed so far as the record shows. This always has been a body of predestinarians who maintained gospel order and demanded an orderly walk of its members, and have always denied that predestination was the cause of sin, but that God causes good, and overules evil. This church has never practiced foot-washing, but has never made it a test of fellowship, and members who favored foot-washing or were against it, have lived in peace and love.

This church from the record has been as low as 14 in membership to 102, and at the present about 85. It has had the services of some able gifts as pastor. Elder Pedigo was and able gift, and Elder John C. Hall was a great man, and said to have been as able a gift as any man of his day, stood extremely high in his county of Franklin, was Treasurer of his county for several years, Clerk of New River Association for year, a great defender of the doctrine of God our Savior. Elder Wiley Via was a wonderful pastor, a free grace preacher who preached with his feet and hands and was followed by my grandfather in the flesh, Peter Corn, who was as good a pastor as any man of his day, served Pigg River Association as Moderator thirty-four years, a good able God-sent servant. He was followed by Elder David Sumner, a meek and faithful servant of the church. All these men were sound in faith and faithful in the ministry, and in this day as we examine the record, we can say with feelings of assurance, that surely the Lord has planted us, and as we leave this record for posterity, let it be always kept in mind that we thank the Lord our Shepherd and King for all of it and pray for grace to keep us and those that may be brought in, throughout the ages to come.

This the 4th day of November , 1947 .

Elder J .P . Helms

Vinton Va .

Elder J.P. Helms served faithfully from 1934 until his death Sept . 29 , 1965 . Elder William Holland served protem until May 1967 . Chosen as pastor He served until his death December 4 , 1987 .

Present Deacons W .R . Bernard , John Plunkett and W .W . Abshire .

W .P . Lane Carter

ARTICLES

EXPERIENCE

Dear Sister Beadie ,

In answer to your repeated requests ,I'm writing what I hope to be my experience of grace and joining the church , trusting God will guide me in the attempt . As you know I was raised in a Missionary home , always present at Sunday School unless illness prevented and I felt I was doing a good work . I was often begged to join the church by my friends , but deep down in my heart , I felt one must have a change and repent before joining any church . I had never been made to feel sorry for my sins , really I didn 't think I had many . I was living in my self right-eousness and I knew it not .

After I married I attended the Primitive Baptist Church . Not that I cared for the doctrine that was preached there , but a part of my husband 's people belonged there , his father being the later Elder Charles Meads .

The first time I realized just how helpless I was and how dependent I was for support from one higher than man , was on Sunday night , May 24, 1925 when I held my first born son in my arms and saw him die and all I could do was watch . Without God 's mercy I could never have stood the mournful days that followed . I felt I could never overcome this great loss of my only child . I often visited his grave , then I'd cry , pray , and beg God to have mercy upon me . Late one evening standing along at the foot of his grave looking at the sun which was about to set , I said aloud " Oh , God , why did you ever take him from me ? " The answer came sin . It seemed a mountain rose between me and the sun representing my sins . Yes , my sins stood before me as a mountain in all their original depth and coloring . I cried , " There is no sorrow like my sorrow ." I went mourning in the days that followed for the God of Creation had commanded the light to shine out of darkness in my heart to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ . This light pierced the most vital recess of my soul . I saw the blackness of my inward parts , what I was by nature , what I must be made by grace . My self-righteousness became as filthy rags and I cried , " Oh , Lord , Thou art too holy to behold the blackness of this sinful being whose soul is laid bare before Thy righteous eyes ."

I knew justice would demand that I perish in everlasting woe for these sins . I prayed daily that God would have mercy and save me from the pit

of eternal darkness that lay before me . Not wanting anyone to know of these things I told no one and the agony I suffered in the years that followed , those who have traveled through the wilderness of sin only know .

In March , 1937 I was taken very sick and went to Duke Hospital for an operation after which I was sent home to die , as I thought . As I stood in the hospital for the nurse to help dress me I was so weak the sweat ran down and stood on the floor . I realized there must be a renewed strength other than what I possessed for me to make a trip of about 200 miles alone . While the nurse talked I prayed a silent praye unto a living God and He answered . I did not use the rolling chair the nurse had for me . I walked to the elevator and out to the waiting taxicab , made two changes of buses without help and reached home safely .

A few days later I was taken very sick , was unconscious part of the time . I was so weak I couldn't even raise a finger . I saw death's door and it seemed I must enter . I'd go down and feel I could not get another breath then two arms would appear out of this gray mist , bear me up and I'd breathe again . This is where I feel I passed from death unto life because I was made to love the brethren . I was shown the redeemed of God enclosed in a gold band with crowns upon their heads and staffs in their hands . They comforted me by reading the scripture , singing and speaking words of comfort . The Son of righteousness appeared with healing in His wings . I soared away in the spirit to worlds before unknown . Without any effort on my part I felt that upon me there was bestowed a wonderful gift of light , life , love and happy immortality of the soul . Christ appeared to me the chieftest among ten thousand and altogether lovely . The Redeemer of sinners , He was my Saviour . He was the true and living God who in the beginning of time made the earth and all things therein . In the fullness of His wisdom He created a people on whom to bestow His bountiful light and love , made provision from before the foundation of the world to conform His righteous seed to the image of His Son , Jesus Christ .

When I was better Elder Ayers and some of the church members visited me . All I remember saying was " There is no other way but God 's way ." Elder Ayers talked beautifully and prayed that I might be healed of my affliction , that I bear witness to these great things I'd passed through.

In all my happiness my only thought was the church and when I was well I'd go tell them of the great things the Lord had done for me . Behold , I had forgotten the teachings of my childhood , my family and friends . No , I could never go to the church that would hurt my people . I must never let anyone know I desired above all things to join the Primitive Baptist . But a city set upon a hill cannot be hidden . People began to question me of my hope and desire to join the church of this faith . I lied , only to suffer for it later . Soon I began to doubt my experience as many had spoken of it as only delirium .

On Saturday before the fourth Sunday in July 1937 I was in church . They were singing hymn 142 and as they were singing , " Come ye to the waters , freely drink and quench your

thirst with Zion's sons and daughters ters," it seemed a light shone around me and the veil of doubt was lifted. I felt I must cry out, " Oh, little children of God, let me travel with you for the veil of doubt has been lifted. I've seen His marvelous light," but I kept silent for I could not join that church. From this time on I knew no rest for there was a continual warfare within, the Spirit against the flesh. The church was on my mind all the time, I could hear singing, praying and preaching. I'd toss to and fro at night trying to get rid of this burden. Often I'd be awakened it seemed by a bright light shining on my face. I prayed for relief and found it for awhile, for the spirit does not always strive with man. When the burden returned it was with greater force. In June 1938 I decided regardless of what my friends thought I'd join for I could but perish if I went. Just before meeting I had a dream concerning joining the church that distressed me. Not knowing the meaning of it I did not join that meeting but kept attending church trusting I might feast upon the crumbs that fell from the Master's table. My desire became so strong to join the church I'd not trust myself to sit among them in conference, fearing I might give way to my feelings. After each meeting I'd be nervous, upset, wanted to tell my troubles but didn't want anyone to know. I so often desired prayers but was ashamed to ask for them for I knew I wasn't fit for a door mat for God's children. In July, 1940 the sermon Elder Ayers preached so completely wrecked me I stayed away from church a few times only to suffer for it later.

In August 1941 the joy and comfort of the doctrine of salvation by grace melted me into tears and I asked for prayer that I might be strengthened. Elder Ayers said, " Why not go by the dictates of your own conscience, my friend ?" It seemed all fear was removed for a while I knew the dictates of my conscience were to " go home to thy friends and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you."

There wasn't any meeting in September and I could hardly wait until October to offer myself to the church. On the fourth Saturday morning in October 1941 I laid out the dress I wanted to be baptized in and went to church feeling so happy it seemed everything was praising God. Elder Jones was a visitor that day and he and Elder Ayers preached beautifully the things I'd experienced. I thought, " How glad I will be when the doors of the church are opened ", When the time came I found myself without strength to go. I sat as one in a trance, cold and nervous. When I reached home I wept much and said, " Oh, Lord, if indeed I am Thine, why am I thus tossed about ? " My faith was weak. I lost confidence in my prayers. Feeling you were indeed one of His, I felt if you prayed for me surely He would supply, so that's when I told you of my desires and asked you to pray if it be God's will I'd be strengthened to go next time. After this I had several beautiful dreams in which you were present. Surely you are one of His to speak words of comfort to the poor and needy in Christ Jesus. It would take too much space to tell all my dreams, I'll tell the last one. You and I were out in a boat and it seemed my feet were overboard and they became chilled. I said, " I can't stand this any longer." You said, " If the

water is clear we will go in . I said , " Clear as crystal." As we turned to go ashore we saw a beautiful , big white boat coming . I said " Do you see that boat ? Surely it can never come into this shallow water ." You said , " If it's in the channel , it can ." Just then a man came on deck and started down the ladder and there was no place for him to step but into the water . As he stepped a path appeared under his feet and as he walked the path continued before him over the mud and water . There were flowers blooming on this little narrow path . You asked me if I knew the man . I said , " Yes , it's Mr . Rob Perry and he's going to the Union Meeting ."

On November 22 , 1941 I was blessed to go before the church and tell a little of my feelings and ask them if they felt they could add another burden to their shoulders for that was all I felt to be . I was received in full fellowship the joy of this the children of Zion only know . I was baptized at 3 p .m . the same day , which was a cold , bleak day . As we came up out of the water you dear people looked beautiful to me . There was a deep stillness which spoke of His boundless love His very spirit beamed in your faces and attested to your love , the one for the other and for God . Old things had passed away ; all things became new . I had received a joy and consolation the world can never give or take away . This joy , comfort and peace within is beyond expression by mortal tongue . I thought , " Oh , is this just a dream ? Surely I'll soon be awake for one as sinful as I could never possess such calmness within ."

On the third night after my baptism I prayed " Oh , Lord , Thou knowest my ignorance . Make it plain ." After a chilly spell I fell only half asleep it seemed and from the place in my room where I use to see a light the same two arms that raised me up in my illness in 1937 appeared with an open book across them and I heard a voice as one reading . It began the 18th day of April , 1937 in Duke Hospital and read the interpretation to every dream I'd had pertaining to the church down to my baptism . I'll tell the interpretation to the last dream . It said , " The muddy water was your past life . When you became chilled and could stand it no longer there was one with you (and that was you) who knew when the harvest is fully ripe it will be gathered for she said , ' If the way is clear we will go in ,' meaning the church . You said , ' Clear as crystal .' The place had been reached where there was nothing to do but stand still and see the salvation of the Lord . The white boat was the sinner made white by the shedding of Jesus' blood . The channel was God and if you are chosen in Him He will prepare a path before you on which to travel through this muddy world ." I awoke and felt I could say " Praise the Lord , O my soul . All that is within me praise His holy name ." With the world , flesh and the devil set in array against me I have been tempted many times and my hope shaken as a reed by the wind but it's never completely left me .

Dear sister , pray that I may endure as a good soldier of the cross and at the end of this life hear Him say " Child , come home ."

Your Unworthy sister ,
Maud Meads
Route 4
Elizabeth City , N .C .

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

ADMONITIONS AND EXHORTATIONS

Should some one suggest that he wished to admonish me, I would expect a warning, notice of danger, rebuke, reprimand, severe criticism, or reproof. Should he state that he desired to exhort me, I would be listening for words of inspiration, encouragement, persuation, or earnest recommendation to pursue some specific course of action. Exhortation implies urgent advice, and admonition implies warning against some danger. These two words blend in their meaning but they are not strictly synonyms. We will find examples in the 27th chapter of The Acts where the two words are used, which prove their difference. The 9th verse says: " " Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous because the fast was now already past, Paul Admonished them." Now let us read the 22nd verse: " And now I Exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship" ... In the first quotation the prevailing dangers were that which necessitated the admonitions, while in the second, the need for encouragement and inspiration to cheer them brought about the exhortation. I recall a familiar quotation which I shall paraphrase in order to further define the difference between the two words. Swift asks, " How is it possible to expect mankind to take advice when they will not so much as take warning ?" My paraphrasing is, " How is it possible to expect mankind to take Exhortation when they will not so much as take Admonition ? ".

The Holy Bible contains too many admonitions and exhortations for us to ignore them and pass them by as not being applicable to us. There are too many for us to even mention in this article. However let us treat upon a few passages in which these terms are mentioned: notwithstanding, there are hundreds of them where the terms are not mentioned.

Let us examine Colossians 3:16, in view of the aforestated conclusions: " Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and Admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord ... Let us re-arrange this quotation in order to show what Paul said: " Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom: singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs teaching and Admonishing one another." (EJL Arrangement) A person cannot teach or admonish the Lord. If the word of Christ richly dwells in us, we are enabled to sing with grace in our hearts in hymns, psalms, and spiritual songs to the Lord. If we be so richly blessed, we can teach and admonish one another. We sing to the Lord. We teach and admonish one another. This includes warnings, notices of dangers, rebuke and reproof.

Let us notice 1st Corinthians 10:11, " Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our Admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." Paul is warning us by giving

historical experiences of Israelites who conducted themselves in such manner that it was not well pleasing to God . Even though they were among the number who were delivered and had part in the same spiritual meat , drink , and Rock , many were overthrown in the wilderness . Paul tells of the bitter happenings to many Israelites who were idolaters , fornicators , and tempters of Christ . Even those who murmured were " Destroyed of the destroyer ". These same conditions are prevalent today . We not only read these admonitions in the Scriptures , but if we look around us , we can see the same principle in force now . We have both the scriptural admonitions and presentday examples to doubly warn us of the dangers of falling into these snares . Therefore we strongly urge a positive course of action . While doing this we are exhorting you in accord with the statement of Paul in 1 st Thesalonians 4:1 — " Furthermore then we beseech you , brethren , and exhort you by the Lord Jesus , that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God , so ye would abound more and more .

Let us quote from The Acts Of The Apostles , chapter 14 , verse 22 : "... And exhorting them to continue in the faith , and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God ." Stedfastness in the faith is evidence of God-given faith . " Take heed , brethren , lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God . But exhort one another daily , while it is called Today ; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin . For we are made partakers of Christ , If We Hold The Beginning Of Our Confidence Steadfast Unto The End ." (Heb . 3:12-14) Many who seem to have a good beginning fall by the wayside . When troubles come some become offended and step aside . Some hear the gospel preached and follow it for awhile ; yea , as long as things are pleasant and going to suit them they appear to be true believers . They fall from their own steadfastness . The gospel has not profited them for it was not " Mixed with faith in them that heard it ." " Let us therefore fear , lest , a promise being left us of entering into his rest any of you should seem to come short of it." See Hebrews 4:1-2 . Peter exhorted them to continue in the remembrance of the exceeding and great promises of God to His children to give them all things pertaining unto life and godliness . He exhorted them to be diligent in adding to their faith the many virtues the Lord has given them in order to walk Godly in this present world . He tells us that if we do these things we shall never fall . He admonishes us against walking after the flesh by citing many examples of destruction and ungodly vices that were prevalent among those who followed the false prophets who led them astray . Peter plainly states that " There shall be false teachers among us who privily shall bring in damnable heresies , even denying the Lord that bought them , and bring upon themselves Swift Destruction ." Peter admonishes us against these seducers and gives a full vivid description of their many deceptive ways to allure disciples — to get and hold a host of followers . Yes , they promise them liberty and speak great swelling words of vanity ; yet they themselves are the servants of corruption .

Peter further reasons : " For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ , they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning ning . For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness , than , after they have known it , to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them ." (2 Peter 2:20-21) Evidently those who are of these characteristics afore described and do these ungodly things only possess a head-knowledge of Jesus Christ , and have resolved to begin to walk in covenant-relationship with the Lord's people to take away their reproach . They only profess to know Christ and surely do not possess the great gifts , nor the virtues of Faith , Hope , and Charity . As Peter says: " But these, as natural brute beasts , made to be taken and destroyed"; and, " But it happened to them according to the true proverb , The dog is turned to his own vomit again ; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire ."

It is interesting to note that there is a limit placed upon the times of admonition to those who will not heed them. There is no such limit placed on exhortations to the true believers . Jesus limits the number of times for one to tell his brother of his trespassing against him , to two times . See Matthew 18:15 , 16 , 17 . Paul places a limit on the times to admonish an heretick . " A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject ." Paul instructed Timothy to " ... Exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine ". We read in the concluding chapter of Paul's second epistle to the church of the Thessalonians : " But if any man obey not our word by this epistle , Note That Man , And Have No Company With Him , that he may be ashamed . Yet count him not as an enemy , but admonish him as a brother." If Paul had said, Exhort him as a brother, it would mean that we should not cease in our endeavor to keep company with him. Since he used the term , admonish , it is consistent with the advice to note him and have no company with him . Jesus' instructions and Paul's advice limited to two the times to admonish before treating him as an heretick , heathen , or as one from whom we shall withdraw our company. When we admonish one as a brother — not as an enemy — , we should use the softest terms and the utmost delicacy in delivering painful truths . Admonition free from harshness which is meekly administered often is like snow upon the earth: the softer it falls , the longer it stays , and the deeper it sinks into the heart . However , if a man will not heed to admonition how could we expect him to receive exhortations? Therefore, if one does not heed after the first and second admonition , it would be of no avail to keep harassing him . There are too many of the Lord's little ones who are in need of exhortation whose hearts are prepared of the Lord to hear them , for us to waste time and energy admonishing heathens and hereticks . We are in much better work when we are feeding and eating with sheep than for our time to be spent in skinning or petting goats .

You who have been possessed with enough interest upon the subject of Admonitions and Exhortations to read this treatise to this point , I consider you as fit subjects for admoni-

tions and exhortations . If you , dear reader , are among those who have departed from the old paths , I sincerely admonish you of the dangers and terrible consequences that are in store for those who are careless relative to their deportment . I admonish you of the pit-falls that are certain to engulf those who " Walk after the flesh ". I warn you that to be carnally minded means death . I sincerely rebuke those of you who are inclined to put your whole mind in laying up for yourselves treasures here upon earth . I frankly tell you , " Where your treasure is , there will your heart be also ." (Luke 12:34) You may be some of the Lord's people who have been deceived by false teachers , who , to cover their own sinful walk , have tried to make you believe that it makes no difference what you think , say , or do . It does make a difference because the Spirit of God works mightily in effecting a change in the thoughts, desires, conversation, and actions of His little ones .

The above admonitions are sufficient now . If you have not been affected by what I have said in these warnings , what I might hereafter say , would do you no good : I have come to the place in this treatise when further admonitions would be a waste of time and space . Let us leave admonitions and go into exhortations , and meditate upon the value of a Godly walk , and cheer and encourage those who are despondent and depressed , and advise all of you to forget those things that are behind , and reach forth unto those things which are before , and press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus .

I trust that you have been examining yourselves while reading this to ascertain whether or not you are in the faith . Paul exhorted , " Examine yourselves , whether you be in the faith ; prove you own selves ." (2 Cor . 13:5) If you find that you have left your first love and have become entangled with the unbelievers , and are yoked with them : I earnestly exhort you , " Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers : for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness ? and what communion hath light with darkness ? and what concord hath Christ with Belial ? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel ? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols ? for ye are the temple of the living God ; as God hath said , I will dwell in them , and walk in them ; and I will be their God , and they shall be my people . Wherefore come out from among them , and be ye separate , saith the Lord , and touch not the unclean thing AND I WILL RECEIVE YOU , AND WILL BE A FATHER UNTO YOU , AND YE SHALL BE MY SONS AND DAUGHTERS , SAITH THE LORD ALMIGHTY . Having therefore these promises , dearly beloved , let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit , perfecting holiness in the fear of God ." (2 Cor . 6:14-18 ; 7:1) If your heart has been turned by the Lord , I exhort you , turn yourselves from this generation who have no goal to press toward . " Why tarriest thou ? arise and be baptized , and wash away thy sins , calling on the name of the Lord ." Baptism is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh but is in answer to a good conscience toward God . It is a step toward following and walking in the footsteps of the flock . Baptism is a sign that you desire to bury your past and henceforth by God-given strength to walk in

newness of life . Baptism is an outward manifestation of your trust in being baptized in Jesus Christ and into His death . Baptism shows that your trust in self is being buried , and is an outward sign that Christ's life merited all the blessings ever to be bestowed upon and in the Lord's people, as well as paying the penalty of all their sins by His death .

I exhort you to put on the whole armour of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil ; yes , that you may be able to stand in the evil day . " Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth and having on the breastplate of righteousness ; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace . Above all taking the shield of faith , wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked , and take the helmet of salvation , and the sword of the Spirit , which is the word of God . Praying always with all prayer and supplications in the Spirit; and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints ." (Eph . 6:14-18) If you have the will that God worked in you — it is a strong will . God has also promised to work the do . If you have both , you will persevere even through great tribulations . If God has begun it He will perform it . Do you have the confidence that " He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ ." H .W . Beecher said , " The difference between perseverance and obstinacy is , that one often comes from a strong will , and the other from a strong won't ." The will that the Lord works in stronger than the won't which the devil works .

" Now we exhort you , brethren , warn them that are unruly , comfort the feeble minded , support the weak , be patient toward all men . See that none render evil for evil unto any man : but ever follow that which is good , both among yourselves and to all men . Rejoice evermore . Pray without ceasing . In everything give thanks : for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you . Quench not the Spirit . Despise not prophesyings . Prove all things ; hold fast that which is good . Abstain from all appearance of evil . And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly ; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ . FAITHFUL IS HE THAT CALLETH YOU WHO ALSO WILL DO IT . Brethren , pray for us ." (Thes . 5:14-25)

I exhort you , brethren , " To know them which labor among you , and are OVER YOU in the Lord , and admonish you ; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake , and be at peace among yourselves ." (1 Thes . 5:12-13) Those who have the rule over you and truly serve in the capacity as pastor , have been made your overseers by the Holy Spirit . Heed their admonitions and exhortations . Know that they have been called as God's servants to the church . They are the under shepherds who have been called by the Chief SHEPHERD OF YOUR SOULS . Their service is not to please you but rather to please God . They are not under your dominion in their ministrations . They are servants of Jesus Christ to you . " Let the elders that RULE WELL be counted worth of DOUBLE HONOR , especially they who labor in the word and doctrine . For the Scripture saith , Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that

treadeth out the corn. And the labourer is worthy of his reward. Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses." (1 Timothy 5:17-19) Provide for his natural sustenance by giving to him some of your earthly treasures as the Lord has prospered you, that he may be able to spend more time in studying the Scriptures and in administering spiritual things to the household of faith, without being hindered with lack of funds. Do you possess earthly treasures? If so, use them as your servants in the right way. Do not let them possess you and use you to serve them. A covetous person is a slave to his earthly possessions. He lives to take in everything he can and parts with as little as he can. Give as the Lord has prospered you to those who are in need.

I exhort you, deacons, be faithful to your charge of relieving your pastors of some of their responsibilities in order that they may devote more time to prayer and ministry of the word. Deacons, visit the sick, widows, orphans, the poor of the flock, and your pastors, to acquaint yourselves with their needs, and to see that not any of them are neglected. It is not your sole responsibility to supply the funds. It is your business to distribute the funds that have been supplied by the church. Let the church know the needs if funds are not sufficient.

I admonish the deacons who have been led to believe that you have any authority whatsoever over your pastor, that the result of this error is deacon rule. Anytime a deacon attempts to interfere with the spiritual welfare of the church to regulate its functions, you are out of your place. You must recognize the fact that God calls and sends forth His ministers and holds them accountable only to Him in their ministrations of preaching the gospel and baptizing believers. You, deacons, are selected by the church upon the recommendation of your pastor. I have never read in the Scriptures of the New Testament anywhere of an occasion or a stipulation which gave the authority for a church to select or choose a pastor. Let us read Acts 14:23 "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed." Let us quote Titus 1:4-5, "To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour. For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ORDAIN ELDERS IN EVERY CITY, AS I HAD APPOINTED THEE." There is no hint that these selections were left to the vote of the churches.

I exhort you, elders, bishops, pastors, and, or, evangelists: "Take heed unto yourselves therefore, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." (Acts 20:28) "Exhort with all long suffering and doctrine." "... Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thy self, and unto the doctrine; continue in them:

for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself , and them that hear thee ." (1 Tim . 4:13-16) This was Paul's instruction to his son in the ministry. Gospel ministers continuously study the Scriptures . This is necessary in order to rightly divide the word of truth . May God forbid that we , the ministers of gospel, ever be enslaved in the clutches of designing men who would dictate for us where , when , and how to preach. May we never be brought into captivity of those who would set themselves to the task of limiting us as to what we preach, and what not to preach . If the Lord has impressed you to comply with a request to preach in a place where His providence has directed you , do not let threats of men hinder you from going. Threats of non- fellowship and breaking off affiliation come only from those who would usurp authority over you and bring you under the jurisdiction of their selfish pride. Dear elders remember that " A man's gift will make room for him." Go wheresoever and whensoever God in his providence sends you . Preach the word in the fear of God— not of man. Baptize believers who bring forth evidence of repentance . May God grant us strength and grace us with His Spirit that we be enabled to break the bars asunder which man has put up that hinders the inter-communion of the Lord 's little ones . May we fight the good fight of faith. May God bless us to rule well the churches of our pastoral care. Do not permit other elders of other flocks to dictate to you whom you shall fellowship or accept in to your membership . You are not accountable to men for your ministrations in the capacity of pastor , because the Holy Spirit has made you overseers — not man . You are accountable to the church of your membership , dear pastor , as a member. Each and every member of your church has a right to say with whom they shall walk and affiliate . Dear pastors , preaching the gospel, baptizing believers , feeding the sheep , and taking the oversight of the flock, is your sole responsibility under the command only of the Chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ. I have baptized some , as Philip baptized the eunuch— a man of Ethiopia , before their cases came to the church for consideration. When these persons presented themselves to the church for membership , I informed them that my baptizing them did not make them members of that individual church , and that the members of that church had the right to reject them in their own local covenant relationship as members of that individual church. On the other hand, I have refused to baptize those who stated that they did not want to walk with any group in church relationship. Individual churches have the right to determine; or select, with whom they shall walk . Yet , churches and , or , pastors have the right only within their own dominion. Respect the judgment of other churches in dealing with their own affairs , and reserve the God-given right to tend your own business and let not outside intervention rob you of this liberty . Do not let your church be governed by decrees passed by other bodies. You cannot speak for your church relative to a matter until it has been taken up and orderly disposed of in your church conference .

This treatise has been written after much reading , meditation , and prayer. I am convinced that it is timely

for such scriptural admonitions and exhortations . I submit it with the prayer to God to use it to your good and His praise. This treatise contains my views . It is not necessarily the views of the other editors of this periodical.

Elder E.J. Lambert

MEETINGS

OLD PINE CREEK CHURCH

An annual all day meeting will be held, the Lord willing, at Old Pine Creek Church on the 4th of July, 1988. The church is located off Highway No. 221, 5 miles north of Floyd, Va. Those coming from Floyd turn left on to Road # 682. Those coming from Roanoke, turn right on to Road # 682.

All lovers of the truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Hale Terry

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The one hundred and sixty-third annual session of the Pigg River District Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, at Laurel Ridge Church, beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in August, 1988.

The church is located on Roselawn Road, just off Route 221 (Brambleton Avenue) at Cave Spring.

For those coming into Roanoke from the south on route 220, turn right at Exit 419 ramp, then left at traffic light onto Route 419 (also called Electric Road) go 2 3/10 miles, turn left onto Route 221 south (also called Brambleton Avenue) go 9/10 mile, turn right at the Orange Market onto Roselawn Road, go 9/10 mile and the church is on the right. Please bring your own folding chairs.

For those who plan to bring lunch, please do not bring plates, cups, napkins and forks as these will be furnished all three days of the meeting.

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God Danville Church looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift. They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed on the 7th of May at 2:45 at Danville Primitive Baptist Church, Danville, Va., for the purpose of examination of this gift, brother Irvin Holley and if found qualified be ordained to the full work and service of deacon.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together. The meeting was opened by prayer by Elder Denver Simpson son. Elder H.W. Wray was elected as moderator and deacon B.B. Williams to serve as clerk. Brother R.T. Holley acting as spokesman for the church delivered brother Irvin Holley to the presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon was read as set forth in scriptures Acts 6 Chapter read by Elder Kenneth Key and Tim. 3-8 by Elder J.R. Williams. Examinations followed by Elders Goad, Soloman, Williams, Simpson Tench and Key. The presbytery

being satisfied as to the qualifications of this candidate proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder Kenneth Key . The charge was delivered to brother Holley by Elder O.K. Tench. He was then delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. A copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication and a copy to be given to Brother Irvin Holley along with a certificate of ordination.

Presbytery was dismissed by prayer by Elder J.R. Williams.

Elder H.W. Wray, Moderator
Deacon Burnell Williams, Clerk

Ministers present were Elders H H.W. Wray, Kenneth Key, Kinsey Tench, Julian Williams, Tom Soloman, Raymond Goad, Denver Simpson, and licentiates Brother Marvin Brumfield and Clarence Stone.

Deacons present were Brethren Harvey Wood, Clifton Robertson, Willie Neal, Oscar Pickeral, Silas Payne, Wilson King, Richard Stegall, Russell Holley, Edgar Horseley, Fred Murphy, Stafford Houston, Coley Strader and Burnell Williams.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 1988

Mrs. R. Mitchell, TX...2.00
Bert H. Knox, WA.....7.00
Mrs. Harry Payne, VA.....5.00
Mrs. Armedia Taylor, LA.....2.00
Mrs. Florence Maxey, VA.....5.00
Mrs. Sara R. Cody, AZ.....15.00
Mrs. Odell Anderson, LA.....2.00
Mrs. M.E. Woble, NC.....2.00
Mrs. Etta J. Humphreys, VA...2.00
Elijah Palmer, AL.....2.00
H.B. Rhoades, TX.....7.00
Mrs. Nilie Brown, NC.....2.00
T.E. Hall, NC.....2.00
J.T. Carter, NC.....5.00
Mrs. Sedalia S. Green, NC.....10.00
Mrs. Berdie S. Hall, NC.....2.00
H.T. Cardwell, TX.....7.00
Dale Haygood, TX.....7.00
Mrs. Vercie H. Bolejack, VA.....2.00
William R. Pullig, LA.....2.00
Mrs. Virgie Withers, TX.....2.00
James T. Howard, AL.....2.00
Mrs. Flora C. Vest, VA.....2.00
Ms. Dorothy M. Craighead, VA...2.00
Ms. Juanita L. Semones, VA...2.00

OBITUARIES

GERTRUDE ADKINS AUSTIN

At has pleased our heavenly Father to take from our midst a dear and lovely sister, Gertrude Adkins Austin.

Sister Austin was born November 13, 1887 in Wicomico County, Maryland. After a long illness, she departed this life on January 12, 1988 at the age of 100. Surviving are one son, Rodney E. Austin of Winston-Salem, N.C., one daughter, Margaret Holmes Warren of Manteo, N.C., eight grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. One son, John Edward Austin, preceded her in death.

Sister Austin was received into the Fellowship of the Salisbury Church and was baptized by Elder David V. Spangler. On September 26, 1965, she moved her membership to

Dan River .

Our beloved sister was firm in the doctrine of the power and wisdom of Almighty God , and the total depravity of man .

Prior to her illness, she made her home with her son , Rodney E . Austin where she had the best of care as her family was truly devoted to her . Whenever friends visited her , she always asked about the brethren and " her church ."

A graveside service was held at Mardela Springs , Maryland by Elder James Poole . Her favorite hymn , " " Amazing Grace " was sung in the service .

We feel our loss is her eternal gain , and it is our hope that we may all be reconciled to the will of our heavenly Father .

Juanita M . Law

FRANK W . MILLER

Brother Frank W . Miller was born December 31 , 1917 and passed from this life May 21 , 1987 . He was married to Beatrice Carter , June 1 , 1946 , who survives him . To this union was born three children , Frank Wayne Miller , Dan Lee Miller and Mary Margaret Abbot . Also surviving are six grandchildren .

Brother Miller joined Dan River Church May 23 , 1982 and was baptized by his pastor , the late Elder David Spangler . He was a faithful and devoted member until his death . It was always a pleasure to talk with him and his main thoughts and meditations were concerning spiritual things This was much comfort to him especially in his latter days and during his illness . He believed in a God who ruled and controlled all things , and that everything works together to the good for the Lords chosen people . When told of his terminal illness he accepted it with no fear , but seemingly a great desire and looking forward to seeing his Lord . He was a dear friend , a loving husband and a good father and grandfather . Many precious memories , I am sure will remain and be cherished by his family and all those who knew him .

Our love goes out to Sister Bee who stood so close by Brother Frank to the end , ready always to administer to his needs .

Brother Franks Funeral was conducted at Dan River Church by his pastor , Elder Kenneth R . Key , assisted by Elder H . W . Wray . His body was laid to rest under a mound of beautiful flowers , his spirit resting , we feel with his Lord and waiting for that day to hear the voice of his savior saying , " Come ye blessed of my Father , inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world ."

Kenneth R . Key , Moderator
Brother Boyd Minter , Clerk

Copy placed on church records
Copy to Sister Bee
Copy to Signs of the Times

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7 / 88
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE .

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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POEM

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my Lord;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.

See from his head, his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet?
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

His dying crimson like a robe
Spreads o'er his body on the tree,
Then I am dead to all the globe,
And all the globe is dead to me.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

Watts

MOVED OR MOVING?

To assure you of getting your " Signs " and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

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EDITORIAL

" Therefore said I unto you , no man can come unto me , except it were given unto him of my Father .

Elder R .H . Campbell

The above are the words of Jesus and is a simple and direct statement of the only way that man can come to him and yet the world today is probably spending more money , time and effort to deny this one simple statement than on any other thing in the world . There are more people involved in this one project than have ever been aligned in a single endeavor in the entire history of mankind . Anytime that this basic truth is declared today , it will receive the same response that it did on that occasion , when Jesus made this statement to the crowd of people around him , the scripture continues , " From that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him . " This will always be the response of the man who has not received the grace of God which causes them to come unto Jesus and to follow him , and those who have been given this grace will never cease to follow him . This gift of the spirit which enables the children of God to know and to follow after the truth is not a trial and error method , it is never given for a season and then rescinded . Those who have been given this precious gift will respond as the twelve Apostles did when Jesus turned to them and said , " Will ye also go away ." they said , " Lord to whom shall we go ? thou hast the words of eternal life ." When quickened to spiritual life the blessed will always plead to whom could we turn , this is the word of truth , there is only one truth , and the truth is the only thing that will satisfy those who have been given to know it .

When man is born into the world he is of the earth , speaketh of the earth and knows nothing but the things of the earth . He is , as all men have been , since Adam was driven out of the garden of Eden , alienated from God and receiveth not the things of the spirit of God neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned . In this state man is incapable of accepting Jesus as his personal savior , as the world claims , because he does not know him and would not know him if he saw him , would not believe him if he heard him and could not if he wanted to , be-

cause he does not have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit within his heart. Just as he was born into the world of nature to enable him to know the things of nature and experience life here on earth, he must be born of the Spirit of God to know the things of the spiritual realm and experience the joys of the righteous as they are brought to Jesus and made aware of who he is and what he has done for them.

It is impossible to explain this phenomenon to anyone that has not experienced it since there is no common basis on which you can approach it with carnal reasoning. How can you explain, to the natural man, two separate and distinct entities dwelling in one body, each with a different set of values, separate likes and dislikes and yet this is exactly what happens when one is born again. The new creature judges and is critical of the old man as though it was another person and there is, there can be no peaceful coexistence when such a situation exists. The new creature delights in the law of God after the inward man, which is the spiritual nature that is born of God and rejoices in communion with Him and those of like precious faith who manifest their heavenly calling in their walk and conversation. The new creature and the old man in nature are as different as can be imagined and this causes a continual warfare in the life of the child of God and this makes them depend solely upon the one who has called them to follow him for all of their wisdom and strength. They know that they cannot overcome or control the other self but they can endure the conflict with him by the sustaining Grace of God in their life and the faith given them that He will never leave them nor forsake them in trials and tribulations which they endure.

The blessed assurance that they will not fail is based upon something else that Jesus said on this same occasion, which was, " All that my Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." This shows that there is no phase of the work of the salvation of the saints of God that is subject to chance. All that were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world will come to him here in time and none will ever be cast out, and these are the only ones that can come to him. This truth is the basis of the hope that dwells in the hearts of all who truly worship God. They realize, by their own experience, that if left to their own devices they would have never come to him and here Jesus is saying that all who were given him by God shall come and those who come shall dwell with him forever. This is not the beginning of something new, but rather, the continuation of a work that was determined and began before the world was formed and will continue after this old world is gone. This causes the strong consolation of those who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope that was set before them, the hope which is the anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast and entereth into that within the veil where Jesus is. This work is a perfect work and all who are given this hope in time are as sure to enter heaven as the fact that Jesus is there because the scripture continues " Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." If he entered for us,

doesn't that ensure the fact that we will enter into heaven where Jesus is.

O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out. We, in nature, will never be able to comprehend the fullness of the great truth regarding our salvation but praises unto his Holy name we are given the earnest of the inheritance and this is sufficient for now. It is a constant witness within of this work of grace in our lives and so occupies our time and thoughts that it enables us not to despair but rather inspires us to press on looking to the end of that which is promised to all of the heirs of grace. It renews our hope and makes us content in the way that we are going believing as the Apostles did that this is the only way, that Jesus only has the words of eternal life. As Jesus told the Apostle shortly before his death, "I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." This is the way of salvation and our faith is that we are in the way.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Readers of the "Signs":

The following is a circular letter taken from a Minute of the Smith River Primitive Baptist Association in 1915. This letter was written by Elder S.A. Thompson. We hereby share it with you.

Kenneth R. Key

The Smith River District Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with our sister church at Salem, Floyd County, Va., September 24, 25, 26, 1915. To the churches whose messengers we are and the Association with which we correspond sendeth greetings in the Lord.

Dear Brethren:—We, in this our annual Circular letter, will call your attention to the second chapter of the epistle of Paul to Titus, beginning with the first verse, and extending to the sixth verse inclusive, which reads as follows: "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things, that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded."

Here the Apostle was giving instruction to Titus as to what he should speak among the Churches in the course of his ministry. It was a direction to him, in a general way, as to what ought to be the trend of his teaching among the saints of God. And this admonition of Paul to Titus is equally applicable to all ministers of the gospel in this day and age of the world. These things were to bespoken in that day to the children of God; likewise these same things should be spoken and taught among the children of God in this day. And a sufficient reason why this should be done is

given later on in this same chapter, the eighth verse;— "That he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you." And again, a further reason is given in verses ten to fifteen in the same chapter, as follows:— "That they (the children of God) may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." This was the teaching that Titus was admonished to set forth among the brethren, and the reasons therefor.

It will be observed that nothing of the hidden mysteries of God which Paul in another place says," are past finding out," are directed here to be discussed among his people; but it is all along the line of righteous living and correct behaviour of the children; and Titus is also admonished in this same chapter, as follows; " In all things showing THYSELF a PATTERN of good works."

While it is clearly taught that in the days of the Apostles, the gifts of God's ministers varied, but still all of the same spirit, and it is evident in the present day and age of the world that the gifts of God's ministers vary,— some seeming to run in one channel and some in another to some extent,—there are deep unfathomable hidden mysteries that are unprofitable to discuss among God's children. These deep mysteries belong to God, and when his children, whether ministers or laymen, attempt to dive into these things that cannot be grasped or comprehended by the finite mind of men, they are almost sure to get into the broadfield of guess and speculation, and in so doing, get away from the experience of God's people, get away from their comprehension and understanding and confusion and the squandering and scattering of the flock is the result. There are a number of these deep mysteries that we have no way of accurately determining or demonstrating the correctness or incorrectness of what may be said concerning them,—such as the absolute predestination of all things, the soul sleeping doctrine, &c, &c. which only tend to strife and confusion when discussed among God's people, and in my opinion, the less said about them the better for the unity of the Church and the peace of God's children.

God's decrees concerning these things and many others are infinite, in fact He and all His ways are infinite, and the fullness thereof cannot be grasped or comprehended by the mind of men so long as it remains incased in the flesh, as so long as it remains in the flesh it remains finite. And so far as within us lies, we should steer clear of those unfathomable mysteries that lie within the gulf between the domain of the comprehension of the finite mind and the infinite wisdom of God. These mysteries are the ways of God, and are " past finding out." God's ways are as high above man's ways as are the heavens above the earth, which is simply another way of saying that

God's ways, and God's thoughts and reasons are not measured by, and are not to be compared with, the ways, thoughts and reasons of men. He and his ways, thoughts, &c., are infinite while man and his ways, thoughts, &c., are finite, and we cannot understand any more than it has pleased Him to give or reveal to us. And He has given us a sufficiency for our welfare here in the world.

The scriptures are full of plain simple admonishments and exhortations to the children of God, as to how they should live and act in this present world. They are exhorted to obedience, to sobriety, honesty, virtue, patience, temperence in all things, uprightness, long suffering meekness, charity and that they love one another.

Then let us all, so far as within us lies, live in humbleness, peace and thanksgiving before God for his great love and mercy toward us, and not wrangle and strive among ourselves over the deep mysteries and questions that we do not understand; knowing that our God is love and whatsoever he doeth He doeth right and that he has dealt with us not according to our deeds, but according to grace, which is unmerited favor and much mercy. Let brotherly love abound, realizing that we need each other's prayers and comforting and strengthening influence in these perilous times. Brethren, strive for the things that make for peace.

Respectfully submitted,
S. A. Thompson

ARTICLES

THE WORKING OF ALL THINGS TOGETHER FOR GOOD

Preached at Providence Chapel, Eden Street, London, on Lord's Day Morning, July 8, 1849.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God to them who are the called according to his purpose."—Romans viii. 28.

The child of God seems to me often to resemble a benighted traveller. He has left his home, and is struggling onward to a certain destination. He is surrounded on every side with mists and darkness; still he struggles onward. But looking up into the sky, he sees a star glimmer through the clouds; by-and-by another appears; and by-and-by another; till at last all the mist and fog are dispersed, and the stars shine forth in all their beauty and glory. Thus is it often with the child of God. He has left the world; he is struggling onward to his heavenly home; but he often walks in darkness and has no light; little else but mists and fogs surround the path he is treading. In this state, perhaps he opens the word of God; or as he is musing over his many trials, a text, a promise breaks in upon his mind, and that shews him the mist and fog are breaking up; by-and-by another portion of God's word another sweet promise comes into his soul; and this encourages him still more, till by-and-by the Bible seems full of promises, shining forth in the pages of the sacred volume more thickly and gloriously than the stars

that spangle the midnight sky.

Among these bright stars that glimmer in the firmament of Scripture, there is scarcely one more resplendent than our text. Let us travel through the promises upon record, and we can scarcely find one more sweet or suitable to an exercised child of God than this, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

In looking at these words this morning, I shall, for the sake of greater clearness, somewhat invert the order, and show,

First, who the characters are that are interested in this promise.

Secondly, the promise itself, and

Thirdly, the knowledge of the promise, and of our personal interest in it. The Lord grant his presence; and enable me to speak such things as he shall bless to our souls.

1.—First, then, let us consider the characters to whom the promise belongs. Now it is necessary to make the ground good here; for if we err here, we err everywhere. Let me illustrate this by an example or two taken from the things of common life. A man makes a will; when he dies, and the will is opened and read, the very first thing to be settled is the person in whose favour the will is made. Until that is settled, there is no going a step further. Or, there is a society founded for a certain object. This society has certain objects in view, certain characters on whom it bestows its liberality. There are prescribed limits; as age, poverty, being members of the household of faith; and if these qualifications are not in the individual, he cannot be a candidate. So it is spiritually. Unless we make the ground good at first by coming to some clear decision who are the characters interested in this promise, we are all in confusion; we do not make straight paths for our feet; our eyes do not look onward, nor our eyelids straight before us. It is absolutely necessary, therefore, in order to make the ground good, to clear up who the characters are in favour of whom the promise is made.

If we look at these characters, we shall find them described as bearing two distinct marks, (1) that they "love God;" (2) that they are "the called according to God's purpose." If a man, then, does not love God, and be not called according to God's purpose, he has no manifest interest in this promise. And if, on the other hand, he bear these two marks, that he loves God, and that he is called according to God's purpose, the promise is intended for him, and is ready to discharge its full contents into his heart.

I. First, then, let us look a little more closely at the character set forth as a lover of God. We are very certain this never can be true of any man in a state of nature, for "the carnal mind is enmity against God;" and if so, there cannot be any love to God in his heart. He is therefore excluded from the benefit of the promise; his name is not in the will.

But, in order to make this weighty matter more clear and plain, let us see what the Scriptures say of those who love God. I think we shall find in the first epistle of John three marks given us of those who love him; and by these three marks may we try our state. Let us, then, bring our hearts and consciences to the test of God's unerring word, and see whether we

can find these three marks of the lovers of God in our soul. We read, "Love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." (I John iv. 7.) Here, then, are two marks which the Holy Ghost has given of him that loves God, that he is born of God, and that he knoweth God. And if we look a little lower down, we shall find a third mark, "This is the love of God that we keep his commandments." (1 John v. 3.)

These, then, are the three marks of a man being a lover of God: 1. that he is born of God; 2. that he knoweth God; and 3. that he keepeth God's commandments.

1. But what is it to be born of God? We read of those who were followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, that they were "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John i. 13.) A heavenly birth is contrasted here with the birth of the flesh; the one is set aside, and the other set up. To be born of God is to be quickened into spiritual life by the Holy Ghost; to have passed from death unto life; to have faith, hope and love brought forth in our hearts by the operation of God the Spirit; to be made new creatures in Christ; to have the kingdom of heaven set up, and the power of God felt in our souls. If, then, a man can feel that he is born of God; that a mighty revolution has taken place in his soul; that he is a new creature in Christ; that old things are passed away and all things become new: if he has the witness of God in his conscience that this divine change has taken place in him, and that a measure of the love of God has been shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost—then he has an evidence that he is one who loves God, and therefore has an interest in the promise before us.

2. Our second mark of one that loves God is, that he knows God. This we cannot know by nature, for there is a veil of unbelief over our heart. We are born in darkness and the shadow of death; but when God is pleased to shine into our souls, and give us "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ;" to take the veil of unbelief away, and give us that knowledge of himself as the only true God, and of Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, which is eternal life—then we know God; we know who he is, and we fear his great Name

3. The third mark is, that we keep his commandments; that we come out of the world, and are separate from it; that we desire to do his will, to serve him, and to walk before him in simplicity, humility, and godly sincerity; that his fear is alive in us; that we obey him, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

But why do I mention these marks? For this reason; because the children of God are often tried and exercised whether they do love him. There are so many things in their hearts to oppose the love of God. There is the world; a going out in their carnal mind after the things of time and sense; sin working in them, bringing them continually into bondage; darkness of mind, so as to be unable to see their signs; deadness of soul, so that the love of God seems reduced to the last spark. All these things are so opposite to the love of God that they seem at times not to have one grain of it in their hearts. And when they would fain look back to certain spots, times, and seasons, when they did feel the love of God

shed abroad in their hearts , when they could delight themselves in the Almighty, when his word was sweeter than honey and the honeycomb , and they could walk before him in holy obedience and love, I say, when they would fain look back upon these favourite spots, times, and seasons, they often cannot . Such is the darknes of their minds they can scarcely see the hill Mizar , or remember him from the land of Jordan and of the Hermonites . Therefore , it is necessary to look to certain marks of God's word . The landmarks in our experience are sometimes swept away, or clouds of darkness cover them . We therefore must look to the unerring landmarks of God 's word , which , unlike the landmarks of experience , are never swept away , but stand there firmly fixed by the pen of the Holy Ghost . If therefore , with all our doubts and fears and misgivings, our hardness of heart , our unbelief , darkness of mind , and deadness of frame, we can find these three marks in our souls , that we have been born of God , that we know him , and that we are keeping his commandments and desiring to do his will , we have Scripture testimony that we are of those who love God , and therefore have an interest in this promise .

II .—Our second mark is , that such are the " called according to God 's purpose ." This seems to be added as a kind of supplement to clear up the first mark; and added for this twofold purpose . First , to exclude all men in a state of nature . A man , in a state of nature , might say , ' I love God; I love to walk abroad, and mark his glory in the beauties of creation . I look up by night , and as I see the stars in the sky I recognize in them a heavenly Architect . I am sure I love God .' A man in a state of nature may do this . Now this seems added to cut off such . It says , ' No ; all those that love God are the called according to his purpose .' A man must be called ; there must be a work of grace upon his soul before he can be a true spiritual lover of God .

But there is another purpose also. The child of God may say , ' Do I love God ? If so , what love do I now feel ? Are my affections now in heaven? Do I feel my soul now desiring the Lord more than thousands of gold and silver ? Is my heart now softened and melted by the sweet operations of his grace , mercy , and love ? No ;' the poor child of God says , ' I feel too much the contrary—hardness , darkness , carnality—perhaps enmity , rebellion—how can I , then hope I am the character for whom this promise is made ? Yet if I be not a lover of God, I have no interest in it .'

To clear up this dark path , it seems added by way of supplement, "called according to God's purpose ." His purpose is not affected by what we are , or what we have . His purpose is still going on. We may be in darkness and deadness ; but our darkness does not alter God 's purpose; our deadness does not change his decree . We may not have the sweet enjoyment of his love in our hearts; but still his ' purpose' remains unchanged and unchangeable , like its divine Author .

But how can we prove we are called according to God 's purpose ? Love may flag ; evidences may fade ; hope may droop ; enjoyment may cease ; but the calling still remains . Can we , then , look back to any time or spot when the Lord signally called

us ? Can we cast an eye on the path we have trodden in the ways of grace, and say that none but the Lord could have separated us from the sins in which we were entangled, the company with which we were mixed, the course we were pursuing ? Can we remember there were at the time certain feelings which none but God could inspire ? certain operations in our hearts which none but God could perform ? certain effects which nothing but a heavenly hand moving upon the soul could create ? If we cannot now trace distinctly that we are the lovers of God ; if we cannot now feel the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, yet we may compare ourselves with the three marks I have given, and take some comfort from them; or even if these three marks be buried in obscurity, we may still cast an eye along the vista which we have trodden, and see the hand of God stretched out in a manifestive way to call us out of nature 's darkness into his marvellous light.

I have been thus particular, and dwelt thus long upon this portion of the text, because I love to make sure ground. Let us make the ground good—then we can step safely on ; but if the ground be sandy, the foundation uncertain, we are faulty at the very outset. There is no advancing a single step till the ground be made good. I will suppose, then, the ground is thus far made good, and that there are in this congregation those who have some internal testimony that they are lovers of God, and that they are " called according to God 's purpose."

II.—But I proceed to the substance of the promise, " that all things work together for good " to such characters. Every word here is pregnant with blessed import : we could not part with a single syllable. And yet, what an exalted view does it give us of the wisdom, providence, and power of God ! Look at this complicated scene. Here are God's people, surrounded by a thousand mysterious circumstances, travelling in the various paths of life—station, age, sex, circumstances, all widely different. Here is the world lying in wickedness around them—a crafty adversary ever on the watch to beguile or harass them,— a heart full of sin to overflowing, except as kept down by the mighty power of God ! Look at all our varied circumstances; and then to believe that if we are the lovers of God, all things we experience are working together for our spiritual good, what a view does it give us of the wisdom, grace, and power of a wonder-working God! Let us bear with all our weight upon the text: it will bear all the strain that we can put upon it. " All things !" Look at that ! All that concerns our body and soul ; everything in providence, everything in grace ; everything you have passed through, everything you are passing through, everything you shall pass through.

Let each of you who love God, and fear his name in this congregation, take everything belonging to you, and lay it upon this text, as you might lay hymn-books and Bibles on the table before me. There is not a single thing in providence or grace that concerns any person in this congregation who loves God that the promise cannot bear. " All things! all things!" What! is there not a single thing, however minute, however comparatively unimportant, that is not for my good if

I love God? No, not one. If there were a single thing, this text would not be true; God would speak an untruth. If there were a single thing which befalls me, be it in providence, or be it in grace, that is not working together for my good, if I am a child of God, I say it with reverence, that this would be a lie in God's book. And yet, when we consider the variety of things that affect us—to believe that all of them are working together for our good, how must we admire the wonderful wisdom, and power, and government of God.

But let us, by the way of casting a clearer light upon the words, "all things," look at them more minutely. All things that take place are either according to God's decretive appointment, or according to his permissive appointment. Many things that try your mind, and exercise your souls, are according to God's decretive appointment. Everything with which sin or Satan are not intermingled, we may say, comes from God's decretive appointment; and if we are lovers of God, they are working together for our good. Are we tried in our circumstances? This is according to God's decretive appointment. Is it the Lord's will and pleasure to bring us down in the world, by sorrows and adversities in providence? This is still according to God's decretive appointment. Have we afflictions in the family? It is still according to God's decretive appointment. It comes from him. Nothing can happen in body, in property, in family, that does not spring from God's decretive appointment. Are children taken away? They are taken by the hand of God. "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away." Is wife or husband afflicted? The hand of God is in it. Is the body brought down with sickness? It cometh from God. Is the mind tried with a thousand perplexities, anxieties, and cares? It is still the hand of God. All these matters spring from his decretive appointment! But is Satan permitted to harass and distress our minds? This is only by God's permissive appointment. He could do nothing against Job until God gave him permission. Have we enemies in the church or in the world? Have we to endure persecution for Christ's sake? slander, calumny, and opposition? Shimei was permitted to curse David; and Jeroboam was raised up in consequence of the idolatry of Solomon. All is still according to God's permissive appointment. Are we tried by the evils of our fallen nature? It is still according to God's permissive appointment; for nothing can take place, either in providence or in grace, except as God in his infinite wisdom has decreed to perform, or decreed to allow.

But all these things, however trying to our minds, however hard to bear, however painful to our flesh, are decreed to work together. They do not work singly, but they work together with something else. It is like my watch. The wheel that turns the hand is not the same wheel that is moved by the spring; but one wheel works within another wheel, and one cog catches in another cog, until at length the time of day is shown upon the dial. So with respect to our afflictions, our exercises, the trials of our minds, the various disapointments and perplexities we have to endure; they do not work singly, but together with something else; and it is by this

working together with something else that they produce a divine and blessed result.

But what is that with which they work. The grace of God in the soul. The wheel of providence works with the wheel of grace; and the wheel of grace works with the wheel of providence; and together a blessing is the result. For instance. Some affliction befalls your body; you are laid upon a sick bed. That affliction will do you no good in itself; but it works together with the grace of God in your soul; and by its working together with the grace of God in your soul, a blessing is the result. Or, you are brought down in circumstances: you have a very difficult path to tread in providence. This will do you no good in itself; there are thousands of persons in bad circumstances who get no good from them. But it works together with the life and power of God in your soul; and so it produces a blessing. Or, you may lose a wife, or a child, or have sickness in your family; in themselves no good is produced by these things; but they work together with the life and power of God in your soul; and this brings about the blessing. In this word lies the mystery—they work together.

But what do they work together for? "For good." But what do we call good? We must not take our idea of good, but God's idea of the matter. We must not take what we fancy to be good, but what is really and truly so in his eyes. For instance. A man may say, it is very good to have health; it may be so in his eyes, but not so in God's. Another may say, it is a very good thing to get on in the world, to have a flourishing business, and prosperous trade; that may be good in his eyes, but not in God's. Another may say, it is good for me to have a family growing up in health and strength, and well provided for: it may be so in his eyes; but it does not follow that it is good in the Lord's. Another may say, it is good to have no troubles, no temptations, no wicked heart, no devil to beguile or harass; it may seem very good in his eyes, but it does not follow that it is so in God's eyes. He is judge in these matters.

What, then, are we to say is " " good?" Whatever produces spiritual profit and a blessing; that which is really good in the eyes of a heart-searching God.

Now just see whether all these things do not in this sense work together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to his purpose. You have had an afflicted body. Well, that in itself did you no good; for it incapacitated you for business, troubled your mind, made you a burden to yourself and a burden to all around you. There was no good in that. But suppose it weaned you from the world; suppose it set death before your eyes, made you die daily, stirred up a spirit of prayer and supplication in your heart; suppose it opened up those promises of God which are suitable to his afflicted family; suppose it was the means of blessing your soul with some sweet manifestation of your interest in the love and blood of the Lamb— are you then to say, that your sickness, your affliction has not been for good, when it worked together with the grace of God in your soul to bring forth a real blessing? Or, you have had reverses in the world, have lost money in trade, and are now in distressed circumstances. There is no good in these

things considered abstractly ; but do they stir up the life and power of God in your soul ? do they give you an errand to the throne of grace ? do they shew you what is in your heart ? do they call forth confession before God ? do they make Jesus near and dear to your souls ? do they wean you from the world ? then they have worked together for your good . You have lost a child , or have an afflicted wife , and unhealthy family ; there is no good in that ; for the sorrow of the world worketh death ." But suppose that this wife or child has become your idol ; that you have worshipped it instead of worshipping God,—why , then , this affliction works together for good , if through it your heart's affections are now fixed on the Lord Jesus alone .

Thus we are to measure this good , not by what the creature thinks, but by what God himself has declared to be good in his word , and what we have felt to be good in our soul 's experience . Have your trials humbled you , made you meek and lowly ? They have done you good . Have they stirred up a spirit of prayer in your bosom , made you sigh , cry , and groan for the Lord to appear , visit , or bless your soul ? They have done you good . Have they opened up those parts of God 's word which are full of mercy and comfort to his afflicted people ? They have done you good . Have they stripped off the covering that is too narrow ? They have done you good . Have they made you more sincere , more earnest , more spiritual , more heavenly-minded , more convinced that the Lord Jesus can alone bless and comfort your soul ? They have done you good . Have they been the means in God 's hand of giving you a lift in hearing the preached word , of opening your ears to hear none but the true servants of God , those who enter into a tried path , and describe a gracious experience ? They have done you good . Have they made the Bible more precious to you , the promises more sweet , the dealings of God with your soul more prized ? They have done you good .

Now this is the way , that " all things work together for good ." Not by puffing you up with pride , but by filling your heart with humility ; not by encouraging presumption , but by raising your affections to where Jesus sits at the right hand of God ; not by carrying us into the world , but by bringing us out of it ; not by covering us with a veil of ignorance and arrogance , but by stripping this veil off, and power into the soul . In this way , " all things work together for good to them that love God , and are the called according to his purpose . "

III.— And this leads me to our third point , which is our knowledge of these things . " We know that all things work together for good . " How do we know it ? We know it in two ways . We know it , first , from the testimony of God 's word ; and we know it secondly , from the testimony of God in our own conscience .

1 . Let us look at the record of God 's word . See the saints of old ; how afflicted they were ! But did not all things work together for good to them them ? Look at Jacob ! What sorrows , trials and afflictions the aged patriarch went through ! his whole life one continued scene of trouble and sorrow . But did not all work together for his good ? Was there one too many , or one too heavy ? Could he not in the end lay his head upon his dying

pillow , and bless and thank God for them all ? Look at Joseph ! Did not all things work together for his good ? His brethren 's enmity ; his being sold into Egypt ; the wicked conduct of his master 's wife ; his being cast into prison ; his interpreting the chief butler's and baker's dreams . How all these things worked together for his good , and brought him out to occupy the next place to Pharoah himself , and be the means in the hand of God of keeping alive the people of Israel . Look at David ! Hunted on the mountains like a partridge ; continually exposed to the spear of Saul ; on every hand nothing but persecution and distress : on all sides affliction and sorrow . Yet all things worked together for his good . What blessed Psalms we have in consequence ! What a sweet treasury of comfort for God 's people through David being thus hunted about on the mountains and in the wilderness ! How suitable they are to God 's poor tried and tempted family ! If David had not had all these persecutions and afflictions, he never could have written the Psalms , nor would there have been in them such treasures of consolation . Look at Job 's troubles and afflictions ! Children taken away ; property swept off in a moment ; his body plagued with boils ; his friends turned to enemies ; and God himself appearing to be against him . Yet , how all things worked together for good in his case !

2 . And have we not in our measure proved the same ? When trials came , we could not see that they were working together for good . No ; perhaps you have sometimes been , as I have felt , in such a state as to believe we never should see the day when they would prove for our good . They were so dark in themselves , so mysterious ious , so painful , so trying , so perplexing , that in the unbelief of our mind , we could scarcely believe that God himself could ever convince us they were working together for our spiritual good . But has there been any trial , any temptation , any exercise , any affliction , any sorrow , which has not in some way or other worked together for our spiritual good—in humbling us, shewing us more of what we are , opening up the Scriptures to us , stirring up a spirit of prayer , making Jesus precious , throwing light upon God's truth , or applying that truth with a measure of sweetness and comfort to our souls ? Thus , we know from our own experience as well as Scripture , that " all things work together for good to them that love God , and are the called according to his purpose."

But , you may say , ' I do not see it now .' No ; there is the trying point . ' I do not feel it at this present moment ment .' No . Did you see your past trials at the very moment that they were working together for your good ? When the Lord afflicted your body , brought you down in circumstances , sent disease into your family , suffered your mind to be tried with the fiery darts of the devil , and a thousand temptations and perplexities—I want to know whether at the time you could speak confidently , ' I know that what I am now passing through will work together for my spiritual good .' If you could say that , then I will add this—it was not half a trial . If you are passing through any trial , sorrow , or temptation ; and can look up unto God , and say , ' I know and am persuaded that this very thing is working together for my spiritual good—if you can say that ,

you have got through more than half the trial . It is this which aggravates the trials, temptations, and exercises of God 's people for the most part , that when they are in them they have not this blessed confidence .

But say , that they have faith to see that all the trials and afflictions that grieve and burden them are working together for their spiritual good , then they do not want much comfort from God 's word , and have no communion with God's tried saints. If I can fight my own battles , I do not want a precious Jesus to bring me off more than conqueror . And thus we should lose all the blessedness of having something to look back upon, and to say , ' I was in this trial , and it did me that good; I was upon that bed of affliction , and it brought me this blessing ; I had that reverse of circumstances , and it did me good ; I had that trouble in my family , and it did me good; I was harassed with this temptation, and it did me good; I was put into this furnace , and it did me good ; sifted in that sieve , and it did me good; had these oppositions, and they did me good.' When we can look back and say , ' there has not been a single trial that has not worked in some measure for my good '—that experience encourages us to look forward , and to believe that present trials will have the same result—and that all things are working together for good to us as far as we love God, and are the called according to his purpose .

Thus we may resolve it all. There is no man that can say, ' I can make my trials work together for good .' He cannot manage that . He must have them; and it is a mercy to have them. It is a mercy when we are enabled to bring our trials , our exercises , our temptations to the Lord 's feet , and say , ' Lord , here I am , with all my trials , troubles , exercises ; I cannot manage them ; they are too much for me ; do thou undertake for me ; do-thou bring me off more than conqueror ; do thou appear for me ; do thou bless me; do thou cause all my trials, exercises , and temptations to work together for my spiritual good; let the trial be sharp , let the affliction be heavy , let there be nothing in it but what is most painful and grievous , yet, Lord, if I can but believe that they are working together for my spiritual good, I can bear them all!' If we have found that this has been the result of all that has passed , it may enable us at times to believe it for all that is to come , and to look up in confidence that nothing can happen to us, be it in providence or in grace ,—but can and will " work together for good to them that love God , and are the called according to his purpose ."

J.C. Philpot

I will with this poor, little, weak hand try and write something of the wonderful book that John saw that was sealed with seven seals , if the blessed Lamb that had the power to open the book and to look thereon will open this poor weak mind of mine and enable me to see some of the wonderful things in that book , for no one can see anything in it except the Lord reveals it unto them . The book as I see it is the will , decrees , purposes , predestination and foreknowledge of God , which embraces all events that have ever taken place

from the foundation of the world and on through eternity . " No man in heaven , nor in earth , neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon . And I wept much , because no man was found worthy to open and read the book , neither to look thereon . And one of the elders saith unto me , Weep not: behold, the Loin of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David , hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof ." God alone can open the book and reveal his will and purposes and wonderful works to his children. He alone can open the book and turn the leaves of time, and as the leaves of time are turned it often reveals the wrath of God upon the people ; but it is right, for everything that has ever taken place in this world or will come to pass in the worlds to come , even every wicked or good event, is recorded in the book of the knowledge of God. There are no new or old things with him, and he is just in punishing the people in any way he sees fit for their sins and wickedness , and all the blessings that his poor people receive in this world and in the world to come are alone through the great mercy and love he had for them before the world began . All the wonderful works of God , and his precious written word , are a sealed book to every human being on the earth unless the blessed Lamb loose the seals and enables them to see by an eye of faith some of the things recorded in it . Under the law covenant the Lord loosed the seals and enabled the old prophets to look to the coming of Christ and to look for their redemption in him . Under the law covenant they had the law written on stones and their worship was obedience to the law . Now Jesus is the end of the law worship . He seeketh such to worship him as do worship him in spirit and in truth . He said, I will write my laws in their hearts and print them in their minds, and I will be unto them a God and they shall be unto me a people .

" And I beheld , and , lo , in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb , as it had been slain , having seven horns and seven eyes , which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth ." The Lamb had seven horns , which is all power in heaven and in earth, to open the seven seals of time , and had seven eyes to look thereon, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth , from the foundation of the earth until the end of time . God sees all things , yea , his Spirit searches all deep things ; nothing is hid from him .

" And they sung a new song , saying , Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred , and tongue , and people , and nation." Then John saw all God's people giving him all the glory, honor, power, riches, blessings and praise. God's people have always given him all the praise. David, the sweet singer of Israel , gave God all the praise for everything in heaven and on earth , and called on everything that hath breath to give God all the praise. The Primitive Baptist is the only church on earth today that is giving God all the praise. They are still singing that new song, and will be singing it when their blessed Lord comes to gather up his precious jewels from this earth. This

new song was new in the beginning of the world and will still be new at the end of the world. The praises of God never grows old, that is why our old primitive songs never grow old, because they give God all the praise, glory, power, honor and blessings. They suit our experiences because the blessed Lamb has loosened the seals and let us see that we are nothing but poor sinners in the sight of a just and holy God, and all the blessings we poor sinners receive at his precious hand are absolutely free gifts, that is why we want to praise him all the days of our unprofitable life in this world and through eternity, even then the song of his praise will still be new. I sometimes feel that if I could praise him every minute of my life in this world and through eternity I could not praise him enough for the many blessings he has seen fit to bless me with. I do not feel worthy of the very least blessing, and if I ever reach heaven and immortal glory it will be by free grace, and grace alone.

Your unworthy sister,

B.A. Crowley

"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."—I John iii. 8.

There will be no thorough destruction of sin within until the body drops into the grave, and the soul mounts aloft to be with the Lord; nor a full destruction of its effects in the body until the resurrection morn, when the body shall be raised from the sleeping dust and changed into the glorious image of the body of the Son of God, meet companion for the immortal soul. Then will the victory be complete; then will Christ appear, shining forth with the lustre of a million suns; then will be the glorious manifestation of the Son of God, and the works of the devil thoroughly destroyed. The burden of heaven's anthem, the grand theme of eternal adoration, will be the manifestation of the Son of God to destroy the works of the devil. The redeemed will look down from the battlements of heaven and see what works have been executed by the devil; they will see millions of fellow-beings consigned to eternal misery, weltering in hell, whilst they view themselves safe in the arms of eternal love. They will see the Son of God, without a veil between, manifested to their eyes in such heart-ravishing glory as the three disciples had but a feeble, dim view of on the Mount of Transfiguration. It will be their joy to see him as he is. He will always wear his human nature; he will never lay that aside. That will always shine resplendent with all the glory of Godhead; that will be the object of eternal admiration and love; and to that glory of the God-man all the saints in bliss will be for ever looking and for ever adoring, for sin will no longer have a being in them, but they will be conformed to the glorified image of the Son of God, and be celebrating for ever the grand triumph of the cross.

J.C. Philpot

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CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

LITTLE CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Little Creek Church is located in Franklin County, Route 4, Rocky Mount, Va. on road 641. The church was founded in 1823. Their meeting times are First Sunday afternoon at 2:00 & Saturday before, each month except first Sunday in September. This meeting has morning and afternoon service. Present Pastor Elder Lane Carter.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

" A MAN SHALL BE A HIDING PLACE "

" And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. " (Isaiah 32:2)

Prophecy, as we understand it, is the foretelling of events to come. In the foregoing scriptural quotation the Prophet has spoken of a " man " who is a refuge under certain prevailing circumstances. The person or people under consideration are those who find themselves in need of a refuge from conditions over which they have no control.

The man referred to by the Prophet is, as we understand, Jesus, for what he is in the quotation could not be fulfilled by any other than He. For He is the Eternal Son of God; the Creator, the Redeemer, the final Preservator; and resurrection of the dead.

The depraved nature of natural fallen man cannot know or foresee his

needs . Neither is he capable of reviving himself to the higher order, or spiritual life as it is in Jesus . Nor can he provide for himself a refuge from the menacing and deadly effect of sin and death .

The Prophet has spoken of elemental power and influences which man has always yielded to . Even though the ingenuity of men has devised many inventions , yet God " hath determined the times before appointed , and the bounds of their habitation ." (Acts 17:26)

In our text Jesus has made reference to the uncontrollable power of the elements by man . This has reference to the uncontrollable power of sin in the mortal nature of man . It is a debt that must be settled not by the resolution of fallen man in a self-righteous change — " For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God ." (Rom . 3:23) The law cannot be a refuge , " Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight : for by the law is the knowledge of sin ." (Rom . 3:20) Since God is holy the debt of sin must be settled by the holiness of God in His own Son . It is true the unregenerate find rest and comfort in their deeds of self works until the Holy work of Jesus plants the incorruptible seed of holiness in the heart which reveals the depraved and lost condition . Then there is an awakening to the lost condition and the deadness of self-righteous works . David 's horrible pit is then an experience . (Ps . 40:12) Pharisaical preaching loses its charm , for natural strength is dead . David in the horrible pit and Peter in the sea are sinking . They could not revive by the strength of nature . The same works that had before lifted them us were now taking them down . The bottomless pit of sin and the roaring waves of destruction can never be conquered by self works . The natural trend of fallen nature is to sin and disobedience to the law of God . This is a known truth to every child of God by sad experiences . " For the carnal mind is not subject to the law of God , neither indeed can be ." (Rom . 8:7) When the holy spirit is born in the soul and the old man nature is fully revealed in its ghastly form there is often a longing to hide from self . Sin and its evil effect is a strong , chilly wind to the Lord 's humble poor . Jesus is their covert .

The Prophet speaks for himself in deep , humiliating words of sorrow : " Then said I , woe is me ; for I am undone ; because I am a man of unclean lips , and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips : for mine eyes have seen the King , the Lord of hosts ." (Isaiah 6:5)

My dear poor in spirit , when you pause in deep meditation , loathe and deplore your state , whisper deeply within the heart : " Lord if my brethren knew me as I am , they 'd have no more fellowship for me ," you may take courage in a most precious hope , for your eyes have been opened to see the King (Jesus) . The Prophet did not find these defects of depraved nature until his spiritual eyes had been opened to see the King . This is when we feel to need the covert (Jesus) from the tempest of the powers of sin , its destruction and destitution .

It is not infrequently when the Lord 's humble poor recline at night with a desire to pray , before they are aware they have left off praying and the mind wandering on some earthly

object. How barren it makes one feel; how dry . It takes the " Rivers of waters" (Spirit of Christ) to revive the dry places , to water the barren soul poverty .

How often do we hear many of our aged brethren complain of their desolate condition , that their seasons of hearing and rejoicing seem to grow further apart as though a famine had begun . (Amos 8:11) The more the revelation of Jesus the greater the destitution . He must increase , but I must decrease . (John 3:30)

It is the gospel that gives a sure hiding place and a refuge. It creates a need and fills that need , creates hunger and feeds the hungry .

It is the gospel that gives the knowledge of light and darkness . " I form the light and create darkness : I make peace and create evil. I the Lord do all these things . " (Isaiah 45:7)

Formation and creation are here accredited both to the holy and divine work of God. The light of the gospel in all its virtue and power is formed by revelation in the heart of the redeemed . This formation creates a knowledge of the darkness and horror of sin in its deadly nature. The revealed peace of God in the soul is as a rest in the shadow of a great rock (Jesus) when the knowledge of evil is created within by Him who is our peace. (Eph. 2:14) Light and peace would have no meaning except from their opposite effect . How beautifully the scripture sets forth the complete destruction , eternally of darkness and evil by the atoning blood of Jesus for His redeemed . He is our hiding place , covert , as a river of water in a dry place and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land .

Submitted in love and for truth 's sake .

Elder W . E . Turner

MEETINGS

ORIGINAL SOUTH ARKANSAS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The next session convenes with Pilgrim Rest Church . Located off Highway 167 North of Fordyce , Ark . Take highway 273 about one half mile to church . Session beginning on Friday before the 3rd Sunday in September 1988 for three days . September 16 ,17 ,18 . Beginning at 10:00 a.m.

Elder John C . Townley , Moderator

UNION MEETING

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held, the Lord willing with Moons Creek Church the 5th Sunday in July. We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us and especially ministers of our faith and order .

Elder Kenneth R . Key

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 1988

Mrs . Erby Dalton , VA 2.00
Mrs. Eunice Thompson, NC ... 20.00
Mrs . Ruth W . Blair , VA 10.00
Mrs. Nannie W. Wiggins, NC ... 2.00
Hartzel B . Nelson , WV 2.00

Mrs . A .R . Patterson , LA 7.00
Glen Fisher , MD 2.00
Mrs . Ernestine Sharp , LA 7.00
Mrs . Roma H . Smith , AL 7.00
Mrs . Peggy West , NC 7.00
Mrs . T .H . Graham , TX 7.00
Mrs. Muriel M. Strader, NC 1.00
Horace E . Walker , VA 3.00
Mrs . Julia R . Garner , NC 5.00
R . Vernon Furr , NC 2.00
Mrs . H .A . Harlow , TX 5.00
William E . Mitchell , VA 2.00
H .R . Toney , MS 2.00
Mrs . Clemmie Bishop , AR 7.00
Miss Reidy Pickral , VA 50.00
Lawrence W . Myers , VA 2.00
Mrs . Cecil R . Massey , NC ... 5.00
Mrs . G .B . McAdams , MS 2.00
Mrs . Olive Hastings , MD 5.00
Eld . Willard Cox , VA 2.00
Frank & Ella Simpkins , VA 4.00
Mrs . Edith Thompson , VA 2.00
Mrs . Larrie H . Bowler , VA 2.00
In memory Eld . Joe Hamrick , TX .
Paran Prim. Baptist Church 50.00
Good Hope Primitive
Baptist Church 25.00
Hopewell Primitive
Baptist Church 90.00
Friends in Texas 35.00

OBITUARIES

FOYE BENTON

Sister Foye Benton , a member of Durham Primitive Baptist Church passed away on September 8 , 1987 .

She had moved to Durham with her daughter Elma Benton . On July 19 , 1970 , she was received into the fellowship of the Durham Church by letter from Mt . Zion Primitive Baptist Church in Birmingham , Alabama .

She was able to attend her meetings regularly for a while , but her health began to fall rapidly . Her daughter Elma looked after her faithfully as long as she was able . Sister Benton died peacefully in her sleep at Tyson Manor Nursing Home in Alabama and was buried in that state . She was a lovely, soft-spoken humble woman who truly loved the doctrine of election and salvation by grace .

We are grateful to have known her in sweet fellowship and friendship .

Catherine M . Humbarger , Clerk

DEACON H .B . CANNADAY, SR .

I have been requested to write a memoir of Deacon H .B . Cannaday , Sr . After obtaining the necessary information from his widow, like names, dates, etc. I was at a loss for a preliminary. I retired to bed meditating on it. I dreamed I saw Brother Harry sitting in a large room. I had to pass in front of him on my way to the pulpit, where I was appointed to speak in his memory . Someone suggested the lights to be turned on. I ask that they not be turned on . I felt my unworthiness to such a great extent I preferred to not be seen . Brother Harry ask . " Why not turn them on ? " They were turned on confronting me was an audience of God 's children . I reminded them of how we were blessed to have Brother Harry for Deacon . I realize this is a very peculiar dream , however it seems I must use it as a preliminary.

How encouraging it was to see Brother Harry and have him speak to me .

He also served as Assistant Clerk and Clerk from September 1964 until

September 1987 when he offered his resignation due to failing health.

He was born in Roanoke City, to Bernice A. and Clydie Brammer Cannaday Sutphin May 15, 1924. He was married to Marie Dobbins December 26, 1942. Dr. R. Gambill See officiating. To this union was born one daughter, Brenda G., two sons, H.B. Jr., and Roger D., all surviving, together with their mother Marie Dobbins Cannaday. Also surviving, grand-children: Amy M., Melissa, Steve, Todd M. and Laura C. Cannaday. Half Brothers George A. and Wilton L. Sutphin, Step-sister Ola S. Latta, Step-brothers: Elvin, Jessie and Isaac Sutphin. Others survivors: Step-grandmother: Mrs. Ethel Cannaday, Uncle: Stanford A. Cannaday. Preceded in death by his Father Bernice A. Cannaday, Mother: Clydie Brammer Cannaday Sutphin, Brother: Roy A. Cannaday, Sister: Hazel Cannaday Helms, Half Brother Norman Odell Sutphin.

Brother Harry and Sister Marie were received into the fellowship of the church June 1944. They were baptized July 2, 1944 by Elder J.P. Helms, membership with Paynes Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Floyd County, Virginia.

Following a lengthy illness from cancer, it pleased God to call our dear Brother, Deacon Harry Brammer Cannaday, Sr. from our midst January 8, 1988. Funeral services: Oakey 's Vinton Chapel, 1:00 p.m. January 11, 1988. His pastor Elder Hale Terry assisted by Elder Amos Hash officiating. He enjoyed singing. Was a good song leader. His favorite hymns were sung at the funeral:

I know that my Redeemer lives;
What comfort this sweet sentence gives!
He lives, He lives, who once was dead,
He live my everliving Head.
He lives to bless me with his love,
He lives to plead my cause above,
He lives my hungry soul to feed;
He lives to help in time of need.
He lives, my kind and gracious Friend;
He lives and loves me to the end;
He lives and while He lives I 'll sing.
He lives, my Prophet, Priest and King.
He lives, all glory to his name!
He lives, my Jesus, still the same
O sweet the joy this sentence gives,
I know that my Redeemer lives.

and:

Amazing grace how sweet the sound!
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
was blind but now I see.
' Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved.
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed.
Through many dangers, toils and snares, I have already come; ' Tis grace has brought me safe therefar, and grace will lead me home.
Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail and mortal life shall cease, I shall possess within the vale a life of joy and peace.

Brother Harry was a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God. Therefore he could witness with Paul 1 Cor. 15:10 By the grace of God I am what I am. Also Psalm 18:1,2 I will love thee, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer, My God my strength in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.

By the grace of God, he was able in prayer. His body was laid to rest at the Cannaday Family Cememtery,

Floyd County , Virginia , to await the second coming of the Lord .

May God bless the family with his Love and Mercy . May He reconcile them to their great loss and graciously enable them to remember that their husband and father's life was one of God 's greatest blessings given to each of them to enrich their sojourn here on earth .

May it please God to comfort all who mourn .

In need of mercy ,
Gaye A . Thompson

SISTER DONNIE MORTON

It has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst our dearly beloved Sister Donnie Morton, who was a member of Northeast Primitive Baptist Church . She was born to Banistor & Mary Morton April 2 , 1893 in Onslow County . She died October 8 , 1987 making her stay on earth 94 years and 7 months .

Sister Morton was married to Earnst Morton at an early age to this union was born 7 children , 4 sons , Earnest , James , John and Lester Morton , 3 girls , Mary Gibson , Margaret Collins , Nellie Lovett , all of Jacksonville , NC .

She is survived by 3 sisters , Mable Kellum of Jacksonville , Mary Lena Southerland of Willard , NC and Vera May Dean of Ohio and 15 grandchildren .

Sister Morton was firm believer in Salvation by the Grace of God . She attended church regularly as long as her health permitted .

Her funeral was conducted by Pastor Elder J .T . Prescott at Jones Funeral Home in Jacksonville , NC . She was laid to rest in Onslow Memorial Park to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ .

Written by request of North East Primitive Baptist Church in conference November meeting . Request 3 copies by made , one sent to the Signs of the Times , one copy sent to the church and one copy sent to the family family .

Written by Lewis Sammone , Clerk
Elder J .T . Prescott , Moderator

RUTH LANIER POLLARD

Sister Ruth Pollard , a member of the Durham Primitive Baptist Church passed away on December 14 , 1987 . Her funeral was conducted by Elder Cleo Robertson at Hall-Wynne Funeral Chapel and her body was returned to Jacksonville , North Carolina , for burial . She offered to Durham Church on May 19 , 1956 and was received by confession of faith . She loved the doctrine of election and salvation by grace and enjoyed sound doctrinal preaching .

For many years she looked after members of her family who needed her and she was blessed with a spirit of generosity toward the church where needed . She retired from Southern Bell Telephone Company , where she had worked for many years years . She is survived by a cousin , nieces and nephews . Sister Pollard bore her afflictions with patience and trust in the Lord and we feel that her spirit is now resting in that perfect peace that belongs to the children of God .

Catherine M . Humbarger
Clerk

RALPH B . TATE

God who doeth all things well has seen fit to remove from our midst our kinsman and Brother Ralph B . Tate on December 23 , 1987 at age 86 .

Brother Tate and his wife Florence Palmer Tate attended church many , many years and both contributed of their time and labor in the repair and upkeep of our church in many ways .

On June 25 , 1978 he asked for a home with Friendship Primitive Baptist Church near White House and Baptized on June 29 , 1978 by Elder Swayne Young .

He attended church faithfully until ill health prevented his coming .

He begged and was brought from the nursing home to our meeting November 1 , 1987 .

His wife preceeded him in death and was laid to rest on their 50th wedding anniversary July 4 , 1976 . Elder Richard Campbell conducted his funeral December 26 .

He is survived by daughter Wynell Whittaken , sons Joe J . and Douglas Tate , nine grandchildren and nine great grandchildren . He will be sadly missed but we hope our loss is his eternal gain .

Submitted by Marjorie Cook

ADOLPHUS M . WALKER

Our Heavenly Father , in his infinite wisdom , Love and Mercy has called from our pesence a dear Brother Adolphus Walker . This sovereign God is too wise to err , to good to be unkind .

Brother Walker tho we loved him and miss him , we would not wish him back to this world of trials , tribulations , and heartache.

We believe he is experiencing a peace and rest that we who are left behind know not .

Brother Walker was born Aug . 22, 1910 , the son of J . Willie Walker and Annie Cobb Walker .

He is survived by his wife Sister Hattie Griffith Walker , three daughters , Ruby Jones , Danville , Va . , Doris Salmons , Cascade , Va . , Patricia Dishmon , Eden , N .C . and one son Elwood Walker , Charlotte , N .C . Also one sister Lucy Burgess and one brother Howard Walker .

Brother Walker and wife Sister Hattie joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church Aug . 23 , 1975 , and was baptized Sunday following Brother Walker's funeral was held at Fair Funeral Home Chapel Tuesday Jan . 5 , 1988 by his pastor Elder Kenneth Key , burial was in Dan View Cemetery .

He was a meek and humble person and was loved by those who knew him . He was steadfast in the doctrine.

His toils and cares of this life are over , and his work on earth is finished ed . Indeed it was well done and his memory at Dan River Church and among his Friends shall not fade , but will linger on .

May we be made reconciled to the Lords will , especially his dear companion , and his lovely children .

This memorial was written by one who loved and appreciated him very much .

Coley S . Strader

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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POEM

IN THE VALLEY HE RESTORETH MY SOUL

When I 'm low in spirit I cry,
" Lord , lift me up, I want to go higher with Thee ."
But the Lord knows I can 't live on the mountain ,
So He picked out a valley for me .

It 's dark as a dungeon and the sun seldom shines ,
And I question , " Lord , why must this be ? "
But He tells me there 's strength in my sorrow ,
And there 's vict'ry in trials for me.

He leads me beside still waters ,
Somewhere in the valley below ;
He draws me aside to be tested and tried ,
But in the valley He restoreth my soul .

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your " Signs " and without missing any copies , be sure to inform us of any change of address .

Editors

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EDITORIAL

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me, and this is the will of him that sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up the last day.

Elder R.H. Campbell

Read the above scripture again very carefully. Consider what is being said and who is saying it. Then consider the doctrines that are being preached in the world today and determine which one can subscribe to the truth as set forth in these verses of scripture. Who among all of the religious orders in this day and age, who name God as their deity, declare the finished work of God as the only cause of the salvation of the saints. Who, in all of the Christian, so called, denominations in the modern age declare that it is all of God and that it was his own wisdom and power that designed this plan of salvation, is executing it and will assure the completion of his perfect work simply because it is his own good pleasure to do so. Who among them view the salvation of the sinner as the extension of the sovereign grace and mercy of God to a wretched undone mortal who is oblivious of his condition and at ease in his environment and spiritually dead. The scripture above is a simple statement of the truth that very few who profess to be Christians will accept as the doctrine of God our savior, and yet, it is the only way that the sinner will ever come to Christ.

These are the words of Jesus, on one occasion, as he taught his disciples and they set forth the absolute certainty of the salvation of the whole household of faith since it is the work of God and the scriptures teach that his work is perfect. It seems that from the statement and the direct reference to the reason that all come to and believe in Jesus that all who use the scriptures as their rule of faith would understand the sovereignty of God in their conversion. Jesus said that all of them were given to him by his Father and that they would come to him. This means that regardless of what they may encounter in the way, they will come to him and that they will be received by him into the church which is his body. This includes every

step in the experience of the Apostle Paul both before and after that day on the road to Damascus, it includes the total experience of one as destitute as the Gadarine, as blind to the things of God as Bartineous or as lame as the man who lay at the gate of the temple begging Alms of all who entered the temple. If the Father has given them to Jesus in that covenant before the foundation of the world, then at some point in this time world they will be converted as was Paul, clothed and civilized as the Gadarine, given sight as Bartimeous and walk as the lame man and they all shall, not may, come to Jesus and be received into his kingdom.

The doctrines of the world depict Jesus as wanting all men to come unto him to be saved and his will is that all would receive him into their life. Jesus declares in the above scripture that he did not come to do his own will, but rather the will of his Father, and the will of his Father is that he would save all that were chosen in Jesus before the foundation of the world. All of those who were predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of God's will, these and these only.

All of these truths are based upon what has already been done and are not, in any way, contingent upon what may or may not happen in the future. They are based upon the sovereign work of God in the birth, life, death and resurrection of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and his obedience to his Fathers will. This is why Jesus said, " All that the Father giveth me shall come to me," and again, " " no man can come unto me except it were given unto him of my Father." This is the only way of salvation and it is by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God the Father and this is, " to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all." Jesus is the way, the truth and the life to all that the Father giveth him and they shall come unto him, they shall be born again, and and they shall see and enter into the kingdom of God.

Jesus said, " I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am ye may be also." The world loudly proclaims that Jesus came to make a way whereby anyone who desired to do so could, at their own option or, as they state it, surrender their lives unto him and be readily accepted by him into his Fathers kingdom. The truth of the matter is that he has gone to prepare a place for a certain people, not the world at large, which he did with his death on the cross and resurrection from the grave and at the appointed time he will return and receive those certain people unto himself that they may ever dwell with him. He is not waiting for them to make a decision to come unto him as the world implies but rather by his going he finished the work that his Father gave him to do, and in so doing he has secured the purchase of the prized possession unto his Fathers kingdom as per the covenant made between the members of the trinity before time began. He is seated at the right hand of the Father til the last member is brought into the fold and the body stands manifestly complete as it has ever stood in the mind and

purpose of the creator who made it for his own majestic glory . Then Jesus will return according to his promise and receive them to himself and present them unto God without spot or blemish to the honor and glory of his matchless name . The scriptures declare that God will not give his glory to another and for man to presume that their salvation is accomplished by their decision, their works or efforts is to claim the glory that wisdom teaches is God's alone. God speaks and it is done , he commands and it stands fast and this fundamental truth applies to all of the scriptures in both the old testament and the new testament since they are Him speaking by the month of his servants . One scripture is just as sure and certain as any other whether spoken by the patriarchs and prophets of olden times or the Apostles in later years , they are all profitable for doctrine and are spiritual food for nourishment of the saints of God during their pilgrimage here on earth . The truth is just as profound if it appears one time or one hundred times in the scriptures , as one minister said on one occasion when a point which appears only once was mentioned how many times does God have to say a thing to make it so. All scripture is given by inspiration from the same source and inspiration teaches that even as He has thought so shall it come to pass . The lines of truth that are woven throughout the old and new testament are given by the same inspiration that stirs the hearts of God 's children today and quickens them to rise up and walk in newness of life . These truths do not dim with the passing of time nor do they become obselete because of the social and technical progress made in the world around us . In my lifetime I can remember when the standards of technology of the day were primitive when compared to todays and yet the heart of man has not changed or improved by these things . The heart of man today is evil and subject to the same vanity that the first man was created subject to . If there is a change in the heart of an individual it is not because his environment but rather because of a work that is done within and for him, and this is the work of a sovereign , loving and merciful heavenly Father . The scripture that says , " he spake and it was done ; he commanded and it stood fast ," seems to explain this change in the heart of an individual according to the experiences left on record of many who have been changed from the ways in which they once walked. This is according to my experience if I have indeed had one . I pray that it was of God , for if it was , it shall continue to stand fast and all of the turmoil and strife of the world around me cannot prevent it from standing firm and sure til the day of Jesus Christ .

The Apostle Paul evidently was of the same opinion as he wrote , " For I am persuaded , that neither death , nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers , nor things present , nor things to come , nor height, nor depth depth , nor any other creature , shall be able to separate us from the love of God , which is in Christ Jesus our Lord ." These scriptures are especially beautiful and comforting to anyone who has been made to see themselves as they are in the flesh . Their prayer is as David's was when he had sinned and God commanded Gad , Davids seer, to say unto David" I offer thee three things ; choose one of

them that I may do it unto thee ." The options were, seven years of famine, three months to flee before his enemies or three days pestilence in his land . David said unto Gad , " I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hands of the Lord; for his mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hands of man." David did not want his fate to be in the hand of man , either his own or others but let it stand in the hands of the Lord. When man is given to see his wretched undone condition he knows that the arm of man is too short and only the mercy of God is sufficient to reach his case . In this conditions the scriptures which stress the absolutes of God such as the one above which says , " All that the Father giveth me shall come to me me , and he that cometh I will in no wise cast out ," are the bulwarks in which we trust and the high towers which we look to are, the times of our conversion and the seasons of refreshing which we have experienced along our journey in life . Oh that we can just dwell in the hands of God 's mercy and never depend upon the hands of man , even our own , for anything pertaining to our salvation , is the fervent prayer of each one and they do not view it as a hard doctrine but rather the only plan of salvation that is sufficient for their case .

Jesus closed the above scripture with , " and this is the will of him that sent me , that of all which thou hast given me I should lose nothing , but should raise it up the last day." What a grand and glorious legacy , this is , that has been left to all of the heirs of promise assuring them that they shall be with him where he is . The foundation upon which it is built is that it is the will of the Father through the suffering and death fo the Son and is manifested in the heart of each by the Holy Spirit. There could never be anything that is more sure and certain to be fulfilled than this because it involves the integrity of each member of the trinity .

May God , in the riches of his grace bless this writing to the honor of his holy name and to the comfort of the hearts of those to whom these promises are made , if it be the truth and may he enable you to discern the error if it is not .

In bonds of love ,
Elder Richard H . Campbell

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9 / 88
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE .

PSALM 128

Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord ; that walketh in his ways .

For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee .

Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house : thy children like olive plants round about thy table .

Behold , that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord .

The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion : and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life .

Yea , thou shalt see thy children 's children , and peace upon Israel .

ARTICLES

DOING THE WILL OF GOD.

Preached at Zoar Chapel, Great Alie Street, London, on Lord's Day Evening, July 13th, 1845.

" For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise."— HEBREWS x. 36.

Man's ways and God's ways differ in well - nigh every respect. Man's ways are hastily planned, and for the most part imperfectly executed; God's ways are designed with infinite wisdom, and performed with infinite power. Man's aim is the aggrandisement of self in some shape or form; pleasure or profit, of some kind or other, is the main - spring of all his actions; the aim of God is His own eternal glory. Man, when bent upon any particular object, leaps hastily towards it, and cannot brook the slightest obstacle; God slowly brings about His own eternal purposes in the face of every obstacle cle, and in spite of all opposition or contradiction from earth or hell. Man's purpose is to bring things to a rapid conclusion, no sooner does he scatter the seed than he wants to reap the harvest; God's plans are carried out through a series of years, and as they are planned with infinite wisdom, so they are brought to pass by a succession of apparently opposing and contradictory events.

The reason, then, why the Apostle plainly intimated to his believing brethren that they had " need of patience, that after they had done the will of God, they might receive the promise," was to remind them that God's ways were not as their ways, nor God's thoughts as their thoughts; but that, in the execution of His own eternal purposes, there would be such obstacles and apparent contradictions, that it needed on their part " patience " to wait the result. It is, therefore, as if He bade them stand still and see the salvation of God; to put themselves into His hands, and lie with submission at His feet.

By way of bringing out, as the Lord may enable, the mind and meaning of of the Spirit in our text with greater distinctness and clearness, I shall adopt three leading divisions of my subject, and show:

First, what it is to do " the will of God."

Secondly, why we have " need of patience," after we have done His will. And,

Thirdly, in what way we " receive the promise," when patience has had its perfect work.

I. But at the very beginning it will be necessary to settle certain points. If the beginning of our sermons be wrong, as in religion, the whole will be wrong; and if we set out with false premises, the conclusion must needs be vitiated. I like, therefore, as the very outset of my discourses, to lay down my points clearly that, with God's blessing, we may start fair; that there be no obscurity, haziness, mist, or fog upon the mind, but that, by laying down my positions with clearness and distinctness at the beginning, there may be no mistake in my meaning, except a man will

mistake wilfully .

Let me then , first , settle from the Scriptures of truth what is meant here by " the will of God ." " The will of God" may be divided into two branches : there is the revealed will of God , and there is the secret will of God; and these two are often contradictory . I will explain my meaning by a few instances selected from God 's own inspired record .

1 . It was the revealed will of God that Adam should not touch the forbidden fruit . God specially commanded him not to eat it ; therefore that was the revealed will of God . But it was the secret will of God that Adam should eat of it , because by the bringing in of sin into the world through Adam 's transgression , the glorious plan of redemption , which was in the mind of God from all eternity , was brought to light .

2 . It was the revealed will of God that Abraham should slay his son; and Abraham , acting upon the revealed will of God , took the knife for that purpose , so that but one moment intervened betwixt the blade being drawn and being sheathed in Isaac 's heart . But the secret will of God was that Isaac should not be slain , but that the ram should be caught in the thicket , and be offered up in Isacc 's stead .

3 . It was the revealed will of God that Saul should slay Agag root and branch . But it was the secret will of God that he should not ; for it was by means of Saul 's transgression in this matter that he was put away , and David set upon the throne .

4 . It was God 's revealed will that David should not commit adultery , for God has said , " Thou shalt not commit adultery ;" and that revealed will of God David was bound to look to . But it was the secret will of God that David should fall ; for it was God 's secret purpose to give him Solomon from the wife of Uriah .

5 . It was the revealed will of God that the Jews should not put the Lord to death ; for God has said , " Thou shalt do no murder ." But it was the secret will of God that Jesus should be crucified; as we read , " Him being delivered by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God , ye have taken , and by wicked hands have crucified and slain " (Acts ii . 23) .

6 . It was the revealed will of God that Peter should not deny his Master; but it was the secret will of God that he should deny Him , to teach him experimentally his weakness .

Thus I have endeavoured to show show , in a variety of scriptural instances , how the revealed will of God often clashes with the secret will of God .

II . But what is " the will of God " that we are to do—God 's revealed will , or God 's secret will ? There cannot be a shadow of a doubt which will we are to do . To say we must do the secret will of God is bare-faced antinomianism . To steer our course by the secret will of God would be as much a delusion as if the mariner were to steer his course upon the trackless ocean by the newly discovered planet , invisible to the naked eye . Shipwreck would alike terminate his voyage and ours . No ; it is the revealed will of God we must obey . It is that which God has designed us to walk by ; and He will take care if we walk by any other rule than His revealed will that we shall smart for it in time or in eternity . " Secret things belong unto the Lord our God ; but

those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever" (Deut . xxix . 29) .

" The will of God in our text, then, is the revealed will of God—the mind of God , as declared in the inspired writings .

But what is it to do " the will of God" ? Here we must be equally clear , if the Lord enable. Our trumpet here, too, must give a certain sound. What is it to do " the will of God " ? Now , observe, to do " the will of God" is to do it in the way in which God would have it done ; and three things are absolutely needful in order that we should do " the will of God " as God would have that will to be done. " Thy will be done on earth , as it is in heaven ." We must do it from right motives, from right ends, and under right influences . But what are right motives , right ends , and right influences ? Are they to be found in fallen man? Are they the product of nature? They are not. Right motives are spiritual motives , right ends are spiritual ends , right influences are spiritual influences. And therefore, only so far as our motives are of grace, our ends are of grace, and our influences are of grace, do we " the will of God" as God would have it done .

There is a great deal of talk about doing " the will of God ," and the precept is much insisted upon by those who never felt the power of God 's truth in their souls . Men think that " the will of God" can be done by the creature; and so long as " the will of God" is done, it matters not how it is done. But a man may do " the will of God " from a mere selfish feeling, to gain heaven thereby. Yes, a man may do what he calls " the will of God," and yet self be his end , self his motive , and self his influence .

III . But having , as the Lord enabled , laid down , I hope , in accordance with divine truth , what " the will of God " is , and what it is to do " the will of God ," let us enter into some particulars wherein " the will of God" consists , and whereby " the will of God " is done . And observe , the Apostle is writing to gracious characters ; not to sinners dead in trespasses and sins, not to professors dead in a graceless profession , but to living souls, to those who have ears to hear hear, hearts to feel, and consciences to tremble at God 's word .

There is , then , a variety of particulars wherein we have to do " the will of God ," but it is only so far as God is pleased to work in us " to will and to do of His good pleasure" that we do " the will of God " at all . For instance ,

1 . It is one part of the revealed will of God that His people should repent of their sins . " Repent ye , therefore , and be converted , that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts iii . 19) . Now , when the Lord is pleased to pierce the heart , to lay conviction upon our conscience , to work sorrow and distress in our mind on account of sin , then we are doing that branch of God God 's revealed will by repenting of our sins and confessing them before God; and not only so, but forsaking as well as confessing. " He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Prov. xxviii. 13) . Every poor , sorrowing child of God that is grieved and troubled on account of sin is doing " the will of God" by groaning and sighing under sin as a burden upon his conscience .

2 . Again , to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ is the revealed will of

God. What said the Lord Jesus when they asked Him, " What shall we do that we might work the works of God God"? " This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent" (John vi. 28, 29). " And this is His commandment, That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ" (1 John iii. 23). Thus, when the jailor, fearing he should perish and his soul filled with horror, cried out in the agony of despair, " What must I do to be saved? " what was the answer? " Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts xvi. 31). Faith was given him to believe; and thus he did " the will of God." Not that the creature was able to put forth this mighty act of faith; but with the word power came into his soul, and the Holy Ghost raised up faith in his heart to see Jesus, and to believe in His precious name. To believe, then, in Jesus is to do " the will of God"—to do it from the heart; " for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. x. 10).

3. To come out of the world, to forsake it utterly, and never more to walk in its alluring paths, this is the revealed will of God; as He says, " " Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor. vi. 17, 18). To forsake the world, all its vanities, pleasures, and charms, and like Ruth of old, to cleave to the people of God, saying, " Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; " thus to feel, and thus to act, is to do the revealed will of God, under the Spirit's secret influence in the soul.

4. To come out and be separate from professing churches, which have a name to live while dead, is to do " the will of God;" for we read, " Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away" (2 Tim. iii. 5). Therefore, to come boldly out of all letter churches, be they ever so high or ever so low in doctrine, if the Holy Ghost is not in their midst, if the power of godliness is denied, or the things of God are not vitally felt by them; to come out and turn away from them is to do " the will of God."

5. To forsake the ministry of letter preachers, heady, notional Calvinists, with the doctrines in the head, and enmity against the power of vital godliness and the living experience of God's children in the heart—to flee from such a ministry is to do " the will of God"; for the Lord commends the church in Ephesus for " trying those who said they were apostles, and were not, and found them liars" (Rev. ii. 2). And if any of you who fear God are sitting under letter ministers, sound in the head, but devoid of experience in the heart, you are to do what God praises the Ephesian church for doing—to try them by the Word of God and your own experience, and if you find them liars, lying against the truth of God in any of its blessed branches, you are to come out from among them, and forsake the tents of these wicked men. This is to do " the will of God"—to turn your back on the false apostles, and cast your lot among His poor, despised and persecuted family.

6. To seek the Lord's face; to pour out your heart before Him; to

wrestle with Him for spiritual blessings, as Jacob wrestled with the Angel; to give Him no rest until He manifest Himself in your soul, and shed abroad His pardoning love in your heart—this is doing "the will of God"; for the Lord says, "Trust in Him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before Him: God is a refuge for us" (Psa. lxii. 8). "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found; call ye upon Him while He is near" (Isa. lv. 6). "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa. xlv. 22). The Lord has given these invitations as a part of His revealed will, and when we are enabled to seek His face, to cry, sigh, long, pant, and pour out our hearts before Him, it is doing a part of God's revealed will.

To wait at His feet; to take no denial; to persevere; to press through the throng of doubts and fears, like the woman with the issue of blood, and not to rest till we touch the hem of the Redeemer's garment, and find virtue flowing out of the blessed Immanuel into our souls—is to do "the will of God." What said God Himself from heaven? (and I remember once how sweet those words were to my soul) "This is My beloved Son! hear ye Him." As though God said, "Turn away your eyes from everyone else; listen not to the breath of the creature; 'This is My beloved Son; hear ye Him.' He has the words of eternal life." His words are the words of man that shall die, of a creature that shall come to nought; but the words that He speaks, "they are spirit, and they are life." To wait, then, upon the Lord till He be gracious cious; to beg of Him to manifest Himself to our souls, and keep pleading with Him, as Job said, "I would order my cause before Him, and fill my mouth with arguments" (Job xxiii. 4)—to do this continually and unceasingly, as He enables, is to do God's revealed will.

8. To endure afflictions, to wade up to the very neck at times through a sea of trouble, is to do God's will. He has left a "poor and afflicted people," and they are "to trust in the name of the Lord." It is "through much tribulation we are to enter the kingdom." Afflictions are our appointed portion, if our names are in the book of life. We have to be conformed to the image of a suffering Saviour below if we are to be conformed to His glorified image above. And, therefore, to endure a great fight of afflictions, to be buffeted by Satan, hated by the world, and troubled, daily troubled by a body of sin and death, is to do God's revealed will.

9. To bear whatever God may lay upon us; when one cheek is smitten, to turn the other also; not to render railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing; to submit to every stroke that God may lay upon us in providence or in grace; to see the rod, and Him who hath appointed it; and to know that every rod is the mouth of God—thus to endure "the will of God" (for "the will of God" is done by suffering as well as by acting) is to do "the will of God."

10. To resist even unto blood, striving against sin; not to give way to it, but to fight against it with every power of our soul; to cry and sigh, to grieve and groan, to wrestle and plead with the Lord that sin may not drag us down into open shame—thus to sigh and cry is to do "the will of God." And there is a special promise

to those who resist unto blood, resist Satan, take up the cross, deny self, put off the old man, and crucify the flesh with the lusts thereof. " There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man : but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able ; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it " (1 Cor. x. 13).

11. To endure to the end ; not to give up, not to yield the fight ; but though all weakness, and all helplessness, and exercised within and without, as Hart says :

" Still to maintain the battle,
With soldier-like behaviour ;
To keep the field,
And never yield,
But firmly eye the Saviour."

—this patient continuance in well-doing is doing is to do " the will of God."

II. But why have we " need of patience" after we have done " the will of God" ? which is the second part of my subject. Because we may do " the will of God " (though we only can do it under divine influence) and yet the promise be delayed. We may sow in tears, and yet be very long before we reap in joy. We may have years of painful exercise before the Lord comes into our soul in the rich manifestations of His glory and love. And therefore we need patience ; as James says, " Let patience have her perfect work " (James i. 4) ; and he quotes to us (v. 7) the instance of the husbandman who " has long patience," and does not expect a harvest to be reaped in the same week that the seed was committed to the furrow. Is it not so in nature ? Winds and storms, nipping frosts, blight, mildew—all these things pass over the corn; and yet when harvest comes it is ripened and reaped in spite of, and through, every contrary influence. And so with the grace of God in the soul. God has no mushroom Christians in His family ; no Jonah's gourds that spring up in a night and wither in a night, soon ripe and soon rotten. The oak is the growth of a century, the mushroom the growth of a single night ; and so, if we are to be oaks, " " trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified," we shall not grow very fast. Parents, you know, do not like to see their children run up too quickly. " Oh," they say, " I am afraid by my child's shooting up so tall, he is growing beyond his strength. " And parents never like to see the heads of their children grow very large, in disproportion to their bodies. " Ah," says the anxious parent, " I fear lest there be disease in the head, lest there be water upon the brain." And is it not so with professors ? I never like to see people's heads grow faster than their hearts ; it is sure to be at the expense of their bodies. Their spindle shanks show that the vital fluids of the body are being exhausted by this morbid growth. Many professors you may find in this day with large heads, but with small hearts ; active tongues, but their limbs trembling, and their hands and feet so weak, that they can scarcely move a step in God's way. God keep you and me from resembling them.

Thus we have " need of patience ience." But what does patience imply ?

1. It implies, first, endurance. " " He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved." " Ye are they that have continued with Me in My

temptations; and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me." Contrast the disciples that endured with those that fell away. When the Lord told them they must " " eat His flesh, and drink His blood," " Oh, " said they, " this is a hard saying: who can hear it?" (John vi. 60.) And when He told them, " Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," their pride rose to resent it, and they said, " We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man." And what was the end? " Then took they up stones to cast at Him." Oh, it is a mercy to endure! When we look around, and see those who started with us in the Christian race—where are they? It is almost with us like those who came to Job: " And I only am escaped alone to tell thee." Some have gone into the world, others fallen into sin, others drunk down deadly draughts of heresy and error; so that, like a shipwrecked sailor, we almost seem to have escaped with our lives in our hands. But if we endure for a single year, or a single day, it is only by the grace of God. It is now ten years since I first preached in this Metropolis, and what has kept me in the truth to this day? The grace of God, I hope. But it has been through exercises and trials, temptations and afflictions; and therefore I must preach them, because I feel them; and though my coward flesh shrinks from them, I can see what need there is for this heavy ballast, that the vessel may sail safely. It is to bring us low, and keep us low. By the pressure of sin, temptation, sorrows, and exercises, we are kept fast by the truth of God; for when we are brought into these painful places, we are made to feel that nothing short of the truth of God can save or bless our souls. We lean upon error, and it cannot hold us up; we lean upon self, and it is a lying refuge; we lean upon the truth, and find the truth to be that which supports our hearts. And thus, having bought the truth in the furnace of affliction, we love the truth, and we cleave to the truth, because the truth, through affliction and exercise, is the only thing which can comfort and support us in the trying hour.

But we have " need of patience" when the Lord does not appear, does not bless our souls, does not come into our hearts, does not visit us with His gracious presence, withholds His smiling countenance, and leaves us to grope for the wall like the blind, and to grope as if we had no eyes. But what makes us endure? A sense of the consequences of not enduring. Can I go into the world? I cannot; my heart will often go there, but I get stung with guilt if my heart goes after the world, and my body follows it. Can I go into sin? If I do it makes my conscience bleed. Can I go into error? I cannot; it is hateful to my soul. Can I drink down deadly draughts of heresy? I cannot; there is poison in it; no sweetness, no power, no savour, no life, no unction. Shall I go into dry doctrines and a graceless profession? That will leave my heart like the blasted hearth; no heavenly dew, no rain, no fertilizing showers, no divine down-comings or inshinings ings. No; I must cleave to the truth, let men say what they will; by it I must abide, for I know, well know, there is none other. Nay, I would sooner give up all my religion, go into the world, and be as I was some twenty-five years ago—a carnal, proud, self-

conceited man altogether—than have a name to live, entrench myself in crude notions, or lose myself in a labyrinth of dry doctrines. No; if I have not the grace of God in my soul, and the power of His truth in my heart, I would sooner make no profession at all. And if I preach, I must (God enable me ever to do it!) "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," and for the power of vital godliness; for I know nothing but the power of it can do for me, or save my soul from the bottomless pit. And yet we "need patience." When sin presses and Satan harasses, when clouds lower, when all is darkness within and gloom without, when God hides His face, when we have to wade through a sea of trials, we "need patience." But He who has begun the work in the souls of His people will carry it on for His great Name's sake, and will make them endure, that He may crown His grace with eternal glory.

2. But "patience" also implies submission. And what makes us submit? Seeing "it is the will of God;" that is our resting-place. For instance. Do I see it is "the will of God" that I should endure afflictions? I can submit. Do I see it is "the will of God" to lead me through sufferings to inherit His glorious kingdom? I can submit. Do I see that to call upon His name, seek His face, pour out my heart before Him, is to do "the will of God"? I can submit. When I can see what "the will of God" is, and when I can see that I am doing, or desiring to do, "the will of God," then I can submit; not otherwise. Rebellion, enmity, hardness, all work, when we cannot see that we are doing "the will of God." But when, with a measure of singleness of eye to God's glory, we can see that we are doing "the will of God," then submission is wrought with divine power in our soul.

Thus these two things, endurance and submission, make up divine "patience." It is not a man being very quiet, very meek, very contented, and very amiable; a man may be all these, and not have divine patience. We read of "the patience of Job." But if we examine the Book of Job, we shall not find much patience in the usual sense of the word; as though Job were all meekness, amiability, quietness, and resignation. No; but we find endurance: Job did not "curse God and die," as his wife would have persuaded him. And we find, too, submission; for we find that Job loathed and abhorred himself in dust and ashes. And so you and I may find much murmuring, much repining, much hardness of heart, much darkness of mind, and much working up of the sea of rebellion; yet we may have "patience"—patience in the new man of grace, and yet rebellion in the old man of sin and death; patience as the work of the Spirit, enabling us to endure and submit to "the will of God," and yet many secret murmurs from that old nature which is ever enmity against God and godliness.

III. But we pass on to consider what is intended by the expression, "receive the promise." Here is a deep vein of experimental truth: God enable you and me to feel that we know it. Now, it does not say, "Ye have need of patience, that before ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise;" but, "Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise."

1 . But let us see what is meant by " the promise ." The grand promise is Jesus Christ; " For all the promises of God in Him are Yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us" (2 Cor. i. 20) . He is the promised seed . He is the sum and substance of every Scripture promise . Now , there is " a receiving of the promise , " and what is that but receiving Christ into the heart , in all His fulness , preciousness , blood , obedience , and divine suitability; feeling Him precious to the soul , enjoying His presence , tasting His love , and having a sense of acceptance in Him ? But do you not see , we have , first , to do " the will of God "; and not only so , but to have " patience " before we receive this promise ? How men mistake this ! " Believe in Christ ; all you have to do is to believe in Christ!"—how this sounds from a thousand pulpits ! How , too , these worse than Egyptian taskmasters will lay on their scourge on God 's poor tried and tempted family , and try to whip them out of their doubts and fears ! " Why do you not believe in Christ ? Away with doubts and fears ! " This is worse than Egyptian oppression ! These are worse tyrants than the taskmasters ; for they could only scourge the body , while these scourge the soul ; they could only wound the back , but these wound the conscience; and inasmuch as the soul is more valuable than the body , and the conscience than the back , so are these worse taskmasters and tyrants than the Egyptians of old . Believing in Christ is no such easy matter . A letter faith is easy enough ; to say , " I believe in Christ ," is no hard matter , except for an honest conscience—hard work then . But for a seared conscience , and a dead professor , nothing is so easy as to say , " My Lord and my God !" or , " My dear Jesus ! " He can sing at the top of his voice , " My Jesus and my God ! " when God has never dropped one taste of His love into his heart . But it is no such easy matter to believe in Jesus ; no such easy matter to receive the promise ; no such easy matter to know our sins are pardoned through atoning blood ; no such easy matter to bring the kingdom of God , with divine power , savour and blessedness , into the soul . This the Lord 's people well know , and they alone . They are doing " the will of God " in their mourning , seeking , crying , praying and waiting . But they have " need of patience "; for the Lord long delays , the promise does not come , the smiles are withheld , the sweet manifestations do not drop into their hearts . But yet , in due time , they will " receive the promise. " They have done " the will of God " in seeking His face , calling upon His name , and groaning after the whispers of His love . They have endured many storms of inward temptation , and many gusts of outward persecution ; many a hard blow from letter ministers , and many a thrust with side and shoulder from the rams and he-goats of the flock . Yet they have endured , have not given it up , though Satan has often suggested , " Your religion is vain , your faith a delusion , your hope a lie ; I shall have you at last ; you will die in despair , and lie under the wrath of God to all eternity ." Still they are doing " the will of God ," and cannot give it up ; still they cry , sigh , groan , pray , and endure patiently and submissively till morning break in upon the soul , and dispel the long night of darkness .

2 . But there are many promises

connected with the grand promise. There is the pardon of sin revealed to the soul. Many of the Lord's dear family are doing "the will of God" in seeking His face, crying for the manifestations of His pardoning love, and enduring a great fight of afflictions in their conscience, because forgiveness is not sealed home upon their hearts. Well, you shall "receive the promise" in due time. "Christ is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts v. 31); and He will give you them both. If He has given you repentance, He will also give you remission. It is a twofold blessing in the hand of Immanuel; and if He has given you the one, He will not withhold the other.

3. The love of God shed abroad in the heart. Is there not a "promise" that the Lord will make known His love to the soul? "I have loved thee," He says, "with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee" (Jer. xxxi. 3). Has God drawn thee? Has your heart been softened by a sense of His mercy? Has you heart been melted and broken down in an approach to the footstool of grace, and a sweet hope sprung up in your soul that the Lord would soon appear for you? Have you come out of the world under the light of divine teaching, and come needy and naked to a Saviour's feet? What are these but the drawings of God in the soul? "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him" (John vi. 44). Every desire, every cry, and every longing petition that Christ would come into your soul in His blood and love, is a drawing of the Father; and if He has drawn you to His footstool, it is because He has loved you with an everlasting love, and means to shed abroad that love in your soul; and then you will "receive the promise."

4. That all things work together for the good of God's family—for you and me, if we are of the royal seed—is also a part of "the promise." What, all things? Yes, all things. It is a large word, the largest that could be used, and yet not too large. "Well," say you, "but how can this temptation, or this trial, or this affliction, or this exercise, work together for my good?" God has said, "All things shall work together for your good." Do not make God a liar; do not add to His Word, or diminish it either, "lest He reprove thee, and thou be found unto Him a liar" (Prov. xxx. 6). The temptation shall work for thy good; the affliction shall work for thy good; the trial shall work for thy good; whatever be laid upon thee, in providence or in grace, it shall work together for thy good. You cannot see the secret springs; but they are all working, one within another, like some curious machine, and your good is to be the divine result. But you must, first, do "the will of God" in endurance and submission, in putting your mouth in the dust, and in seeking His face; and then will you "receive the promise," that all things work together for good to them that love God."

5. Then, at the last, a crown of glory, immortal bliss, unfading joys—is not this part of "the promise" that God has given to them that love Him? "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you" (John xiv. 2). "Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they

may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me; for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world " (xvii . 24). But we must do " the will of God" first . Did not Jesus do " the will of God" perfectly, we imperfectly? Did not He endure a great " fight of affliction ," and " the contradiction of sinners against Himself " ? How He suffered ! how He was persecuted ! how He was tempted, hated, scorned ed, abhorred! Yet in all things He did " the will of God," and now He sits at the right hand of God in glory, " able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. " But whilst here we must do " the will of God," and to do " " the will of God" is to patiently suffer all things that may come upon us from without and from within ; to exercise ourselves unto godliness ; to endure the hidings of God's face , darkness of mind, temptations from Satan, the evils of our hearts, the scorn of man, and everything God may lay upon us—sickness , poverty , disease and death . We have to do " the will of God" in all these things, He, never be it forgotten , working in us those things which are well-pleasing in His sight, and making us what He would have us to be ; we the clay , He the Potter , and all we spiritually are and have the work of His hands .

None but God's people can do " " the will of God . " Others may do it legally, outwardly, in the letter, in the performance of the precept as it stands . But they are not doing " the will of God ," because they are not doing it from the heart . Their eye is not single to the glory of God, nor their whole body full of light . They do not act from spiritual motives , for spiritual ends , and under spiritual influences . They are " children in whom is faith , " and " without faith it is impossible to please God " (Heb . xi . 6); therefore, they cannot do " the will of God ." But His obedient family , His trembling children , His little ones , whom He is leading into the footsteps of the flock—these are doing " the will of God." " Oh, but," say you, " this is my great trial, that I am not doing ' the will of God,' so rebellious, so worldly, so proud, so inconsistent, so stumbling, halting, slipping, failing, falling, falling am I. I cannot see I do ' the will of God' in any one thing; I cannot see, when I take a review of my spiritual life, that I have done ' the will of God' in any one point." No, you cannot see it ; because your eye is single to the glory of God , and your body full of light; the light in your body shews the sins of your path . Therefore , while proud, painted hypocrites are congratulating themselves in doing " the will of God ," and are making a mighty noise and bluster about doing " the will of God," as though none but they did " the will of God " at all—though with all their loud profession it is all in the letter, from legal motives, and in a self-righteous spirit—the poor, needy tried, tempted, exercised, cast down and distressed children of the Most High are doing " the will of God " because they are lying where God would have them lie , at His feet , as passive as the moist clay in which the potter works, doing " the will of God" inwardly, from their hearts, because they are of the " true circumcision .

Now , these have " need of patience ." Others , who are not thus exercised, have no want of it. But the people of God , who have right views of God and of themselves, who know what " the will of God " is, and desire to do that will , are always coming

short . Yet their very mourning because they do come short is doing " " the will of God"; their very lamenting over their infirmities is doing " the will of God "; their very hating and abhorring themselves in dust and ashes is doing " the will of God "; their very putting their mouth in the dust, feeling themselves to be the vilest of the vile, is doing " the will of God "; for God would have them humble , and He makes them what He would have them to be . God would bring down proud looks ; and He does bring them down by these exercises . God would have them filled with shame and confusion of face ; and He does thus fill them with shame and confusion of face . Thus these are all the time doing " the will of God," by His secret power and influence upon their souls , when others , who think how much they are doing " the will of God," are not doing " the will of God " at all . Look at the two brothers—the prodigal and the elder brother . Which did " the will of God ," the mourning , broken -hearted , confessing penitent , or the stubborn -hearted , self-fighteous brother ? Why , every heart that knows God and truth will reply , " Surely , surely the returning prodigal ." He was doing " the will of God"; and God blessed him by putting shoes upon his feet , a robe upon his back , and the ring of eternal love upon his hand . But, my friends , if you and I are doing " the will of God ," we have great " need of patience ." Heaven is not so easily gained; the battlements of Zion are not to be taken by storm ; the harvest is not reaped in a day . Many trials , many exercises , many castings down , many afflictions we shall have to endure . But after we have endured them , after we have done " the will of God ," we shall " receive the promise ." And every affliction through which the promise comes , and every patient endurance of suffering and sorrow , makes the promise more sweet when it does come . Christ in the heart , the love of God in the soul , the manifestations of His favour , " all things working together for our good ," and heaven and glory at the last—who would not wade through a sea of trouble to reach that happy shore ! Who would not be all his days up to his neck in afflictions , if glory and honour and immortality is to fire his ravished soul with bliss at last ? Yes , if we are to " receive the promise "—Christ here and Christ hereafter ; the love of God in our soul now , and the love of God to all eternity—we must do " the will of God "; and in doing " the will of God ," we must endure to the end , submit to God 's will , fight the good fight of faith , and , with God 's help , resist even unto blood , striving against sin , till in due time we " receive the promise " to our comfort and God 's eternal glory !

J .C . Philpot

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

" These things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God ; that ye may know that ye have eternal life , and that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God ." 1 John 5:13 .

Now with regard to this first Epistle of John ,—in this verse and in the immediate context , he is

summing up that which he has previously been inspired to set forth, and he gives to us the great aim which he has in writing this letter: " that ye may know ;"—" that ye may know " There is in the writings of the Apostle John a directness, a simplicity, a wonderful freedom, and at the same time a profound depth. Why was this Epistle written ? " That ye may know ," and you will find that in the immediate context the word " know " is used six or seven times in the course of as many verses. " We know that we are of God ;" " We know that we have the petitions that we desire of Him ."

Is the writer of this Letter, the writer also of the Gospel that bears his name ? What do you think when I read this to you from the Gospel of John ? " Then came there out blood and water, and he that saw it"—O the simplicity and directness of it all !— " he that saw it bare record, and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe ," John 19:24 ,35. What do you think of this, too ? " But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His Name." " That ye may know," not with a speculative knowledge, not with knowledge that is merely intellectual, but that ye may know it in an experimental and practical way. " That ye may know "—This is not simply faith, but faith realizing, proving, and sucking sweetness from the Son of God, from the Name of Jesus Christ the Lord. In other word, the Apostle was inspired to write this Epistle with a view to the assurance of the people of God that the Lord had done great thing for them. Let us bless God for any degree of faith, for the least spark of faith constitutes that power which is described as the hand by which we embrace Christ; as the finger with which we touch Him ; as the desire of the soul that reaches forth towards Him. Faith is essential to salvation; assurance is essential to satisfaction. There are many of the Lord's people who possess faith, but who do not possess assurance ; but the essential to salvation is a living and saving faith. Assurance is the ring which the Lord is pleased to put upon the finger of faith. Peter lost his assurance, and well he might, but he never lost his faith. Peter's faith was never lost. The Lord Himself said, " I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not" (or " die not out"). But he lost his assurance. And how did he find it again ? In the way that God's people always find assurance : through the condescending mercy of his Saviour in coming and communing with him. The Lord Jesus had a private interview with Peter after His resurrection, and what took place at that private interview assured Peter's faith. Then there was a third confirmation of his faith by the Sea of Galilee, when the Lord said to him three times, " Feed My lambs ," " feed My sheep ," and again, " Feed My sheep ." So when we feel the power and sweetness of the Lord's presence, we cannot then doubt our interest in Him ; we know, and go on our way rejoicing. Therefore, whilst I speak to you about assurance, I would not make it for a moment a word of condemnation to any of God's weak ones, but I pray that it may be a word of consolation to those who as yet tremble to say, " I know ."

But how many there are, and some of whom we hope well, who just

settle down in a profession of religion; from whom—am I speaking for myself? am I speaking for you?—from whom we hear in conversation so little that has the power and sweetness and unction of the Name of Christ, —dry, dull. Those in such a condition do not, as a rule, like to be disturbed; they do not like to hear the searching word. What is my need? The powerful witness of the Holy Spirit to my soul, creating within me that assurance which shall enable me to say, "I know." Faith is the gift of God, and it has a wide scope. Women here, who know the Lord, want kitchen faith; men here want business faith, workshop faith. "Lord, increase my faith."

Now this is the great object which the Apostle, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, has in connection with our text, and in what goes before and comes after.

Let us speak for a little while first, about the subject set forth in our text, ASSURANCE. Secondly and lastly, the means of assurance—the written Word. "These things have I written"—the written Word witnessed by the Holy Ghost: —assurance and the means to assurance.

Is it not an important matter to seek continually to be assured of our salvation? The Apostle John desires that those to whom he wrote might know it in their own souls. "Believe on the Name of the Son of God" is repeated in our text. "I have written to you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that knowing that you have eternal life, you may believe on the Name of the Son of God." What does the repetition signify? That you may believe more abundantly, more deeply; that you may believe in the kitchen and in the workshop, as well as when you come to the place where God's people meet together. It is a parallel word to that: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Oh, brethren and sisters, there is the "more abundant" on before. My faith is indeed weak; it is a staggering faith often, but the Lord can make it strong and give assurance; and He sets forth the blessed lines upon which, in His sovereign love and mercy, He is pleased to work. John desires by the Holy Spirit that all who read this Epistle, who have been brought to believe on the Name of the Son of God, may have a more personal application to their own souls of the truths of the everlasting gospel. We are, all of us, on our way—on our way somewhere. Every one of us here is a traveller, on our way, each one, either to heaven or to hell. Now if I am a believer, I am going to heaven, and how important it is to know it, to be well assured of it. You say, "It is presumption." It would be, if God had not set forth the blessed truth concerning it in His Word. But sometimes to say it is presumption is rather the utterance of unbelief. The Apostle sets forth a well established truth. The Apostle was going to heaven, and he knew it; he loved the Lord, and he knew it; and he said, "My heart's desire for all of you is that you also, that believe on the Name of the Son of God, may know that you have eternal life."

Now some of you weak one, (and who is not a weak, a little one?) —it is evident from the tenor of this word that there were some even in John's day who believed on the Name of the Son of God, and yet did not

know that they had eternal life— " I have written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life." Then it is possible to believe, and yet not know that we have eternal life; and John was desirous that this blessed knowledge should be inwrought in their minds and hearts by the Spirit of the living God.

Dear friends, it is no light thing to be a Christian; it is easy to talk about it; it is easy to write about it. Is So—and—so a Christian? So—and—so has become a Christian. The phrase is heard on the right hand and on the left. What is it, as Hart sings, to be a Christian?

" Let us ask th' important question
(Brethren, be not too secure),
What it is to be a Christian,
How we may our hearts assure? "

It is to be an anointed sinner, an anointed man or woman. Christ means the Anointed; and a Christ-ian means an anointed sinner, a set apart sinner, a called sinner. It is to take up the cross; it is to bear it; it is to mortify the old man with his deeds; it is to put off the old man. It is to put on the new man; it is to know the power of Jesus Christ and Him crucified, crucifying the world to you, and crucifying you unto the world. What is it to be a Christian? It is to know under divine power and teaching the burden and the guilt of sin, and that under the condemning power of God's holy law you can find no salvation. A Christian —a called-out man! A Christian —a sensible sinner! A Christian —a man or woman who endures a conflict within and without all along the way! Everything outside us is against us; the world, and the things that are seen. Our old nature is against us; the great Adversary of souls is against us us. That being the case, to continue a Christian we need daily supplies of grace and strength and consolation. And the strong consolation which God has set forth in our text this morning, is to know that we have eternal life; if I know that, by the grace of God I shall win through. By the grace of God I shall battle on. By the grace of God, though faith, cast down by the inward conflict, and tormented by the outside things, I can say,

" Yes, I to the end shall endure.
As sure as the earnest is given;
More happy, but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven. "

Here, then, is the importance of the knowledge of eternal life. Is there any encouragement to the child of God like this: to know that we have eternal life? " I have written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God."

Look for a moment, then. Here is one who believes on the Name of the Son of God, and yet does not know that he has eternal life. What does the believing involve? There can be no believing without life, and where there is life it is eternal. God does not give one life to believe, and then confer eternal life subsequently. If I can say honestly, " I believe on the Name of the Son of God," I have life in my soul, and God put it there, and that is eternal life.

Mr. Hazelton pastored the Strict Particular Baptist Church in London from 1909 to 1924. The above sermon was submitted by Nancy and Roy Pullig, taken from a book of Sermons by Mr. Hazelton.

To be continued next month.

MEETINGS

EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Eastern Kehukee Association , the Lord willing , will be held with Flat Swamp Church located near Robersonville, N.C. First Sunday and Saturday before October 1st and 2nd , 1988 . Those traveling east on highway 64 to Bethel , N.C . should take Highway No. 11 South at the stop light intersection in Bethel and go about 1/2 mile to Flat Swamp road which turns off left in front of Hymans Convenient Market . This will be at the F & D Ford Truck lot . The church is located about five miles on the left hand side of this road across from Keel's Store which has been closed. Traveling north on highway eleven , after entering Bethel and passing the F & D Ford Motor Company, turn right on Flat Swamp road in front of Hyman's Convenient Market and go 5 miles and church will be on the left side of the road . Traveling South on highway eleven go through stop light in Bethel for about 1/2 mile and turn left on Flat Swamp road in front of Hyman Convenient Market and go five miles and church will be on the left .

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

Smith River Association to convene with County Line Church rch , Floyd County , Va . Located off Parkway where State Route 637 join State Route 635 . September 2 , 3 , 4 , 1988 .

From US 220 on Parkway South , pass mile post 156 , turn left on State Route 635 approximately 1.34 miles to church .

From Roanoke on US 221 at Pine Creek turn left on State Route 860 to Craft Shop , turn left on State Route 637 approximately 2 miles to church.

From Floyd and State Route 8 turn North on US 221 to State Route 860 turn right to craft shop and 637 turn left approximately 2 miles .

From Rocky Mt. , Va. West on US 40 approximately 23 miles to right on State Route 860 to Parkway, right on Parkway to State Route 637 and right on 637 to church .

From South on State Route 8 , turn North on Parkway, pass mile post 159 turn right on State Route 637 to meeting house .

N.F. Connor

CONTRIBUTIONS

We publish this list each month of those who have contributed to the signs. This money is used to help pay for the publishing of the " Signs " and enables us to send it free to those who are unable to pay . We want to take this opportunity to say to all of you , thank you very much .

Editors

FOR JUNE 1988

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Mrs. Anne M. Pearson, MI 50.00
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Mrs. Etta B. Newton, NC.....2.00
Elvin T. Sutphin, MD.....10.00

OBITUARIES

JOHNNY DAVID GRIFFIN

Brother Johnny Griffin, Born December 19, 1903 was called home on March 3, 1988. He was first married to Mary Weaver and to this union was born four children: J.D., Jr. and Marvin who survive; Estelle and Henry who preceeded him in death.

He later married Sister Mae Pittman Flood who also survives. Other survivors are: two brothers, Joseph and Elwood; two sisters, Sisters Ruth Edwards and Thelma Rose; 13 grandchildren and 16 great grandchildren.

Brother Griffin united with the church at Upper Town Creek on Saturday before the third Sunday in July, 1930 and was baptized the same day. He later moved his membership to the Elm City Church where he remained until the church disbanded in 1981. At that time, he and Sister Griffin asked for their membership to be placed at Pleasant Hill Church where she had held membership prior to their marriage. He served the Elm City Church as deacon and was received at Pleasant Hill in the same capacity.

He was a softspoken, meek mannered individual who was concerned about his brethren and their welfare.

His funeral was conducted on March 5th at Johnson Funeral Home, Rocky Mount, North Carolina by his pastor, Elder Henry C. Jones and Elder C.B. Davis after which his body was laid to rest in the Williams Family Cemetery in Edgecombe County, North Carolina.

The church at Pleasant Hill will miss him, though after his many years of poor health, we feel he is at rest with his maker and to wish him back would be against his own wishes.

Written at the request of Pleasant Hill Church in conference March 26, 1988 by:

J. Carroll Williams, Clerk
Elder Henry Jones, Moderator

NOTES / ERROR

The last line on page 189 in August issue of the Signs of the Times should read — and clerk of the Smith River Association from September 1964 until.

FLORENCE EVANS KEESEE

Sister Florence Keesee departed this world April 24, 1988 in Memorial Hospital of Danville, Virginia.

She was born on June 16, 1896, in Pittsylvania County, the daughter of the late Elder Charlie Terry Evans and Emma Talbott Evans.

She was married to Walter Clark Keesee, who died November 9, 1953. Survivors include three daughters, Madeline K. Mays, Danville, Virginia, Lillian K. Bell, Bedford, Virginia, Naomi K. Simmons, Baltimore, Maryland and one son, Gillie E. Keesee, Rustburg, Virginia, 24 grandchildren, 51 great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren.

Sister Keesee lived in Danville most of her life and was employed by The Memorial Hospital of Danville until her retirement.

On the third Sunday in May 1941, Sister Keesee joined Banister Springs Primitive Baptist Church was a faithful member, attending regularly as long as her health permitted. She was a quiet, gentle person with a sweet smile, who walked softly among her brethren and sisters.

Twenty years ago, she broke her hip. Although she had surgery three times, she was never able to walk without the aid of a walker and endured a lot of pain for the remainder of her life. She accepted her affliction with patience that could only come from God, never complaining about her health. She had a hope for a better life to come where there will be no pain and sorrow and God will wipe all tears from their eyes.

For years Sister Keesee's health hasn't permitted her to live alone, but she was blessed to have a daughter, who took her into her home and cared for her the remainder of her life. Even though she couldn't attend church, she enjoyed having her brothers, sisters and friends visit her and always made them feel welcome.

She was the last survivor of her generation and will be missed by all who knew and loved her, but their loss is her eternal gain.

The funeral was conducted from Barker Funeral Home by Elder M.C. Merricks. She was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park to await the morning of the resurrection when Christ shall come to claim his own.

Written by the order of the church.

Ruth M. Taylor - Clerk

SISTER JEWEL MOTLEY

Sister Jewel Motley was born in Pittsylvania, Va. Oct. 11, 1911, the daughter of the late James D. Towler and Hattie Motley Towler and departed this life April 5, 1988.

Sister Motley and her husband Brother Murry Motley joined Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church in August 1983. She was a devoted wife and patiently cared for Brother Motley in his lengthy illness. Her health began to decline shortly after his death and she was admitted to Riverside Health Care Center in Danville, Va.

Survivors include 2 step daughters, 2 step sons, 10 step grandchildren and 13 step great grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted at Scott Funeral Home in Chatham, Va. by Mr. Frank Fuller. Interment was in Sheva Church of Christ cemetery.

Submitted by Peggy Wells

CELIA PENSION

When we mark the passing of a sister in the church the scriptures can be comforting then like at other times we read that, " He hath made everything beautiful in his time: ...". Ecl. 3:11. And such it is as we report death of sister Celia Penson son. She died April 13, this year at the age of 75. She was a faithful supporter of the church for many years before being led to ask for a home with the body known as Salem Primitive Baptist Church in Benton, Illinois in May 1974.

Sister Penson was raised in a Primitive Baptist home in Alabama. She was the daughter of Bro. & Sister John and Ozzie Hyde. She was preceded in death by her husband, B.O. Penson in 1968. She has three surviving sons, two daughters, one brother, 18 grandchildren and 7 great grandchildren.

Although she was confined to the bed or a wheel chair for several months before death some of her children made it possible for her to attend services regularly. Her friendly personality, encouragement to the church and her ability to sign all reflected her faith in her Lord and saviour. We will all miss her.

Written at the request of church members.

Elder Wayman G. Chapell

SISTER ALTA DORIS (Tince) SHAVER

Our Heavenly Father by His divine wisdom called our beloved Sister Tince Shaver from our midst March 3, 1988; Age 61, at her home in Conroe, Texas; after several months battle with cancer.

How we here at Shepherd Fold Church do surely miss our precious Sister. She truely was highly esteemed and dearly loved by all of us, as well as among the Churches she was blessed to visit. She had a sweet smile for every one and was of such kind, warm, gentle and gracious spirit. Always willing and ready to serve those around her, surely she was a faithful servant.

She asked for a home in Shepherd Fold Primitive Baptist Church February 2, 1963 and was baptized by her pastor Elder C.M. Haygood March 3, 1963. In her experience she related how precious it was when God gave her a sweet hope in the doctrine of grace. One of her favorite scriptures was Isa. 43:1 " But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." The hymn " There is a House Not Made With Hands", was so dear to her and became even more so toward the end of her life.

She leaves to mourn her passing her faithful husband Elwood Shaver; one daughter, Sherri Calvit; two sons, Steve and Johnny Shaver; one sister, Thelma Shaver; eight grandchildren and a host of other relatives and friends.

Services were conducted by Elders: C.M. Haygood, G.D. Shipman and Malcomb Burkhalter. She was laid to rest in the Whitehead Cemetery near Grapeland, Texas to await the second coming of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We certainly feel our great loss cannot be compared to her Eternal gain.

Written in love by request of her husband,

Bernice Haygood

Signs of the Times

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"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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POEM

Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God!
He, whose word cannot be broken,
Form 'd thee for his own abode:
On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation 's walls surrounded,
Thou may 'st smile at all thy foes.

See! the streams of living waters,
Springing from eternal love,
Well supply thy sons and daughters,
And all fear of want remove.
Who can faint, while such a river
Ever flows their thirst t' assuage?
Grace, which, like the Lord, the giver,
Never fails from age to age.

Round each habitation hovering,
See the cloud and fire appear,
For a glory and a covering,
Showing that the Lord is near.
Thus deriving from their banner,
Light by night, and shade by day,
Safe they feed upon the manna
Which he gives them by the way.

Blessed inhabitants of Zion,
Washed in the Redeemer 's blood!
Jesus, whom their souls rely on,
Makes them kings and priests to God:
'Tis his love his people raises
Over self to reign as kings;
And as priests, his solemn praises
Each for a thank-offering beings.

Newton.

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EDITORIAL

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you (I Peter 4:12).

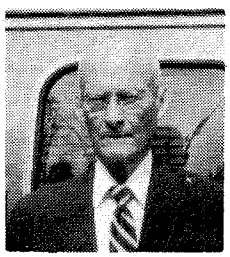
Elder W.D. Griffin

What a surprising, what an amazing thing that Peter should write in such a comforting manner to the elect family of God after the bitter experience that was taught him by the Saviour. Yet, in the outset I desire to praise the God of all grace for the precious dealing that He had with the apostle. That is my joy and my comfort to read all that he wrote afterwards and to find that there is not a trace of bitterness about the strict manner in which the Saviour dealt with him.

If there ever was a man that followed Jesus that knew that his salvation was of the Lord, Peter was that man. Yet there has not been a follower of the Lord listed in the Bible that was any more determined to save himself than was Peter. None, whose names are recorded there ever made any more of a failure at it than did he. I desire to comfort and to strengthen and to encourage my dear brethren by referring to his apostleship. As he warns us repeatedly, it is a good thing to examine ourselves as to whether we do not get swept off from our feet by the evil suggestions of men that made the mistake that Peter made, and which we all have made, and will make again and again if not, as he says, we are kept by the power of God God.

The only salvation taught in the Bible is of the Lord. The only salvation that I have known, or that anybody else with whom I have been associated with, has been of the Lord, and it has been in what is referred to as this time state. Peter had been an apostle some little time before the fiery trial that was to try him appeared in his life as an apostle. We are not, at this time, desirous of any of the details about how he became a child of God, a witness of God's calling him out of darkness into His marvelous light. If there are believers in the ranks of the Old order of Baptists that believe that Peter instigated the work of becoming a child of God, they are not Old Baptists. It is with one and all that God begins the good work of calling dead

sinners into His kingdom , and that is called a part of the so called eternal salvation . Thus , we find Peter sometime after the beginning of this good work , which God did begin . I do not know of any reason why that anybody would object to our examining Peter at this time . If he saved himself in this instance , to be sure , I will immediately confess to my contention about salvation being of the Lord from beginning to the end . Will you treat me as well if our examination shows that he was a miserable failure ?

And the Lord said , Simon , Simon , Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat ; but I have prayed for thee , that thy faith fail not ; and when thou art converted , strengthen thy brethren . And he said unto him , Lord , I am ready to go with thee , both into prison , and unto death . And He said , I tell thee , Peter , the cock shall not crow this day , before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me . Notwithstanding this assertion of the Saviour , Peter continued his vow that he would follow Him all of the way . Where is that conditionalist at now ? Did he watch , did he stay awake ? Did he seize the opportunity to show his ability ? In this trying hour would this be a good soldier to go with us unto death 's door ? What did he say in His defense as they led the Saviour away : Come tell me what went with his avowed devotion . Come and show me how that the conditional hobby horse is going to get blessings for his faithfulness here ? I am not calling anyone names . I am not making fun of you in your plight . I desire to know where the sinner 's ability goes in this hour of need .

Certainly this is a fiery trial . Certainly this is worth talking and writing about , if it is the fiery trial which the Lord sends on folks like Job and Peter and you and I , providing of course , we are His children , for it must be remembered that this fiery trial is restricted to the Lord 's people . They are all subject to this trial , and those without it are bastards and not sons . Remember that this trial of our faith is just that ; it is not a trial to see if you have faith , but it is the trial of one with faith .

Peter was bold to begin with . He could go at any time . He could follow all the way to death . He could watch faithfully when other men had failed , had gone to sleep . If , while in this good condition , he had gone to see his brethren he would not have been able to strengthen them . Why do you say that ? I say that because He could not watch one hour for his Lord and Master . He bore false testimony to Him as to what he would do for Him . He belittled all other men , but he spoke well of his own efforts to walk a straight line . He would have preached to them the same weak despisable doctrine that he preached to his Lord . He would have said , Brethren , be like me , get up and get on the move and be blessed for it . That is what he would have preached . When left to himself , he preached that doctrine more than once . He informed the Lord that only clean things had been eaten , but that vain survey of his prowessness perished as did his ability to follow the Saviour . However , let us remember that the Saviour said to him , When thou art converted , strengthen thy brethren . What a different soldier that he was then . How different that he talked to them . He had found out that he could not do as

he said that he could—Go at any time in duties way .

Now was Peter qualified and able to stand by his Saviour? To say that he could have, if he would have, is taking the testimony of men instead of the testimony of the Saviour . Even that kind of testimony is the same kind that Peter used, thus showing that if it suits the preconceived minds of men to receive the testimony of men instead of the inspired testimony of Jesus Christ that they will do just that and act , after doing so , just as haughty as Peter did until he was put in his place by the Master .

Let us remember, beginning right here, that God's children are all born of the Spirit of God. That Spirit of the most high God is in us and accompanies us in power from the beginning of its work in us to the day of Jesus Christ. It is a consuming fire in us. The consumation of our own works is not left to us . However , suppose that they were? What would be the result? We would, do exactly like Peter did, and like Paul did, we would be doing many things that were prompted by the flesh . However , that does not occur, for our works are consumed. The Method ? By the method which every child of God is fully aware of daily . Every work that is not directly the work of God's Spirit in us is tried by something that not a one of us can avoid or hinder or make void its work. I am speaking about the fire of the Spirit. That Spirit tries every man and woman that is born of it. Not the first one has ever successfully avoided this trial. That is the word of Peter to us . Beloved think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you. You need not think, says he, that some strange thing is happening to you . He is saying that this is what takes place with one and all .

This fiery trial was brought to bear upon Job , and equally upon Peter , though hundreds of years a part, and just like it has come to every one from righteous Abel until now , and will continue until the end of the Gentile church . It will do the same for each one of the children of God .

The sovereignty of God is most precious. God cannot be a sovereign over one thing unless He is a sovereign over all creation. Neither can He be a sovereign unless He created all things that are . There is not any reason in any other doctrine . One item , one thing , one man , one woman , one thing , be that thing whatever is suggested to your mind, God is a sovereign over one thing and all things or He is not the sovereign over anything . The wisdom of God dictates this on every page of Holy Writ . The powers vested in the Holy Spirit are each efficacious in salvation. The rain and the snow, the dew and the vapor, the fire and the water, the wind and the storm , are all qualities of the Spirit , and there isn't a human on the stage of action that can withstand one of these qualities or virtues. No man can raise nor calm the wind; no man can bring nor keep away the rain ; no one can over come or withstand the fire of the Spirit . It consumes , it tries , it reduces to ashes what we gloried in .

All of our works are to tried by fire. This includes mine and yours . I am a poor sinner writing to you a poor sinner . It was a sad day when the raging fire of the Spirit spring up within us, setting on fire our full barn. We tried to extinguish that fire, but its consuming powers would have en-

gulfed us had we not fled from it , I humbly trust to lay hold on the hope set before us . It was then and there that we first felt and tasted of the bitter trial of seeing all that we had stored up for a rainy day as it was consumed before us. That trying of us has not ceased since then. It has, as we humbly hoped , brought us low , and it has kept us there. It has caused us , as we hope , to go back over the route that we have come and there is not anything there that we have ever done that would gain a blessing, and thus it is true on the right and the left, and when we survey our feeble frame and find all within us as vile , we have not one thing to lay before the Lord . Yet, if not mistaken, enough light has broke through the mornings to give us hope to believe , as Job believed thousands of years ago , that the same God that dealt with him is dealing with us and that when the trial is finished that we shall stand before him without spot or blemish , and having passed through that stage of our ordeal by fire , we will lift our feeble voice in praise that we have been saved as by fire . There will never be a phase of our salvation any more precious than this, even though it is by fire. We will lose our works by fire , but the loss of our works will be sweet for we will have been preserved and saved by that which destroyed our works . May God be glorified .

David 's house was not so with God. His sin was ever before him. Did he have any right to conditional blessings when his house was in such a condition . Have we the right now , or have we ever had the right to eternal blessings , to say not a word about conditional blessings , when our house is in disaray before God ? Poor David, with his house in disaray; poor David with his glaring sin ever before him. He knew that the Lord was good, and it made him contented with that salvation that is in Jesus Christ . He did not have a charge or a complaint against His God . He acclaimed Him as being just, as having given all that was in keeping with the justice of a just and holy God, even to the extent that He was as the light of the morning , even one without clouds , and that His covenant was, not one based on either his failfulness and faithfulness , but that it was everlasting. He desired no other salvation than that which the everlasting covenant of God gave to him. David, as Job, and as the people of God have ever found is in one mind .

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He is our sin bearer. There is atonement for every sin that his brethern ever commit . It has been said , that our sins before we were born of the Spirit were atoned for by Jesus Christ , but that after the New Birth that we are punished for them . Men has said that . Unbelievers have said that. God has not said that . Jesus Christ has not said that . God says , by way of an angel , that Jesus Christ would save His people from their sins , and I am sure that the angel told the truth .

The Spirit of the Lord God was upon the Lord Jesus Christ, because that He was from God and because that He was God, and God the Father had anointed Him to preach good tidings to the meek ; to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives , and the opening of the prison to them that are bound ; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our

God ; to comfort all that mourn ; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes , the oil of joy for mourning , the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness Why did he do all of these things for them ? Did He do any of these marvelous things for them and then leave them to themselves ? Did God appoint and ordain and set up this Shepherd to thus secure a numerous seed, and then leave them to make it the best way that they could. What an unwholesome doctrine that is to the poor and needy child of grace. What a hard doctrine that is to needy worms of the dust. The answer is , No , no , not anything like that . Christ was appointed to make and keep the covenant of grace intact in time and in an eternal sense to this end , to wit , that they might be called trees of righteousness , the planting of the Lord , that He might be glorified .

Throughout all of this dealing in them and for them , the Spirit is a consuming fire . All the dross , all the works of the flesh shall be consumed by this consuming fire. Not only, dear readers , will our fleshly works be consumed , but we will not have the residue or ashes left to encumber us all of our days. No, not even that. He will remove the ashes and instead , give us beauty .

Thank God for His consuming fiery Spirit . It is the best trial gage mentioned in the lids of the Bible .

Elder W .D . Griffin

PROVERBS 25 : 11

" A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver ."

CORRESPONDENCE

" O wretched man that I am : who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? " " I thank God through Christ Jesus our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin ." (Rom . 7:24, 25).

I will try briefly to describe the wretched condition of total depravity of the whole human race which began with the first transgression in the Garden of Eden, " And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth , and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually ." (Gen . 6:5) " Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean ? not one ." (Job 14:4) " How then can man be justified with God ? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman ? " (Job 25:4) " . . There is none that doeth good , no , not one . " (Psa . 14:3) " Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me ." (Psa . 51:5) " The wicked are estranged from the womb : they go astray as soon as they be born , speaking lies." (Psa. 58:3) " There is a way that seemeth right unto man , but the end thereof are the ways of death ." (Pro . 14:12) " Can the Ethiopian change his skin , or the leopard his spots ? then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil ." (Jer . 13:23) The dead alien sinner does not know his condition but rather, " All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes ; but the Lord weigheth the spirits ." (Pro . 16:2) .

It seems to me the great object through the first eight chapters of

Romans is to show the whole work of justification and sanctification: that it is not by the law, but by the grace of God. In the first part of the seventh chapter of Romans (Verses 1-6) Paul shows that we are free from the law, as a covenant of works. " For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." (Rom. 6:14) " But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." (Rom 7:6) The law as a covenant of works we were once under but have died unto it through Christ. " Wherefore, my brethren, we also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." (Rom. 7:4). We must experience the law by the spirit which brings conviction and condemnation, " Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." (Gal. 3:24). There is no life in the law because all have sinned, and come short of what the law requires, perfect obedience, as Berridge said:

" Run, Run, and work," the law commands,
Yet finds me neither feet nor hands;
But sweeter news the gospel brings;
It bids me fly and lends me wings.

The law thy feet will not enlarge,
Nor give thy conscience rest,
Til thou find a full discharge
Locked up within thy breast.

The law with unrelenting breath
Declares the wages of sin is death.
Stern justice, satisfied by thee (Christ)
Bids mercy bring the news to me.

Cowper:
To see the law by Christ fulfilled,
And hear his pardoning voice,
Changes a slave into a child,
And duty into choice.

Hart:
The law was never meant to give
New strength to man's lost race;
We cannot act before we live,
And life proceeds from grace.

Now in Romans 7:1-13, Paul speaks of his past and present experience as a living experience of the wretched and helpless condition which the grace of God brings by using the requirements of the law to produce conviction of sin: " Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom 3:20) By the grace of the spirit the law shows what sin is and how wretched and undone we are. As in verse 13 when sin " becomes exceedingly sinful," this unutterable malignancy is an unspeakable sinfulness of sin. As Ezra confessed " And said, O my God I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head and our trespass is grown up into the heavens." (Ezr 9:6) Did you feel this deep conviction of sin (the law of works) when the spirit began to deal with you? It made you cry out with this tormenting incurable disease of sin, " " . . . Unclean, Unclean." (Lev 13:45) As Joseph Hart expressed, " To see sin smarts but slightly; To own, with lip confession, Is easier still; but O to feel [sin] Cuts deep beyond expression." Also with David, " . . . Thou art the man . . .," (2 Sam 12:7) again with David " My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness," (Psa 38:5) and " For my loins are filled

with a loathsome disease : and there is no soundness in my flesh ." (Psa 38:7) Have you felt this in your experience? In Job 42:5 & 6 he says " I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear : but now mine eye seeth thee . Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes ." Now we see the Publican , " . . . standing afar off , would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven , but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." Luke 18:13 Has the word of conviction of sin (as recorded in Dan 5: 27) "TE 'KEL thou [Personal] are weighted in the balances , and art found wanting ? " On the day of Pentacost , " Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus , whom ye have crucified , both Lord and Christ ." (Act 2:36) " Now when they heard this , they were pricked in their heart, " not to the heart as in Acts 5:33 , " and said unto Peter and to the apostles , Men and brethren , what shall we do? " (Act 2:37) " . . . Repent [or turn away from wickedness] and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ [Saviour anointed] for the remission of sins , and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost ." (Acts 2:38) . After Paul had received his experience of the grace of God , he was baptized , (Acts 9:1-18) . Baptism was so urgent and important in the apostle 's day to those that had been pricked in the heart that soon after midnight (Acts 16:25-34) Paul took the " Keeper of the prison" and the " Same hour of the night ," all that were in his house " were baptized , he and all his , straightway ."

In Romans 7:7-13 , Paul spoke of what happened in the past and now he comes to the present . Surely there are some most vital teachings in Romans 7:14-25 , not only of Paul's experience , but also for all of us . First , it teaches a most vital point of partial depravity in sanctification , a total dependance upon the spirit of God . " Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves ; but our sufficiency is of God ." (2 Cor. 3:5) . This total dependance is present ; we could just as well create a world as to have one pulse of spiritual life of ourselves .

I believe it is important to distinguish between the doctrine of justification and the doctrine of sanctification . As it has been expressed " Justification is ourside of us , sanctification within us , justification is perfect , sanctification is not perfect , (verses Rom . 7:14-25 plainly proves this) , justification counts us holy , sanctification makes us holy ; justification is our standing ; sanctification is our experience ; justification saves us from sin 's guilt ; sanctification saves us from sin 's power .

Paul plainly proves these points : that we have received sanctification in part and the spirit by measure . It is spoken of as the earnest of the spirit (II Cor. 1:22 and Eph. 1:13, 14) . Now an earnest means a part and not the whole . In Romans 8:23 , we find it is spoken of as " The first fruit of the spirit ," a pledge , a sample only of future abundance . Likewise in Romans 7:18 " For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing for to will is present with me ; but how to perform that which is good , I find not . " Are we better than Paul ? We are taught and must learn out our helplessness all the days of our lives that , from first to last , " Salvation is of

the Lord . " (Jonah 2:9)

Does this in any way exempt us from (the other side of the coin) the many exhortations laid down in the scriptures ? If there are no obligations , there can be no sin . We are blessed in obedience but not for it . Exhortations show what we ought to do but not how to do . This is very important . We are all prone to extremes . One error that is plainly denied here is what is commonly known as conditional time salvation , that his condition is in the hand of the child of grace to use as he sees fit . This surely is an error . As best I can gather from this reasoning , we agree on all the doctrines of free and sovereign grace except perseverance and predestination; we agree that not one at last shall be lost , however , we do not agree with the reasoning that if we do not obey , we will lose many blessings that are stored up for us . We feel this certainly is the wrong conclusion and brings in the do and live system , instead of live and do by the continued deliverance of the spirit " . . . Working in you both to will and to do . . . " (Phi 2:13) It seems this belief or reasoning is that we have life , now use it; that two options are set before us . Which ever we choose : obedience and blessings (as I said before , yes , blessed in obedience , as actuated by the spirit , but not for it) or disobedience and chastisements . We have life and the grace of God ; now we can use it or refuse it , which ever we choose to do; it is optional on our part . If this were true , we could use this spiritual life or the grace of God and thereby grow better and better . There would be no need for correction and at last to prove ourself bastards and not sons . (Heb 12:8)

Also there are such expressions as , " earn God 's approval ," and " God wants us to work out this salvation ," and if we DO NOT " We lose some of the benefits of salvation " putting great stress on " what we can do FOR God ," mixing the cans and can'ts together as optional to us. If we do , we earn God's approval; if we DO NOT we 'll lose many blessings that are in store for us . It seems this reasoning is very long on exhortations and obligations but very short on the absolute dependance on the spirit of " " Working in us that is well pleasing in His sight ." (Heb . 13:21). Here again let us be very careful to maintain the balance of truth , never giving up the things we ought to do , together with the to do or ability of the spirit . I feel this sets forth both sides of the coin and not the other side of the mouth and that they are not a contradiction of each other .

I feel God's children shall and will have this plague of sin as long as they are in the body . When this is brought home to us day by day , we must cry out : " O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? " (Rom . 7:24). Who can save me from the clutches of my own sinful self? What is it that gives you the most trouble and conflict ? This self loathing condemnation , miserable condition , this dead carcass of sin we carry around with us .

If Paul had left it and us here at this point , we would be most miserable all the time , without hope in this life . In I . Tim . 4:8 , he tells us , " . . . Godliness is profitable unto all things , having promise of the life that now is , and of that which is to come ." Deliverance and salvation , as Paul describes , " " Who delivered us from so great a

death (past), and doth deliver : (present) in whom we trust will yet deliver (future) us." (II. Cor. 1:10). Did Paul take refuge and comfort in his own helplessness and sinfulness ? Beware brethren of the principle of the flesh that would take comfort from sin. Paul did not do this but put great emphasis on, " O wretched man that I am." (present). All the experience of a Christian is not Christian experience.

After Paul describes the terribleness of sin, (the conflict ; the negative) he did not leave us there, but connects the conflict of sin with the positive and deliverance. Verse 25 : " I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." As Job 10:16 says, " Thou huntest me (conflict) as a fierce lion : and again thou shewest (deliverance) thyself marvellous upon me." Again in Psalms 34:19, " Many are the afflictions of the righteous ; (conflict) but the Lord delivereth (deliverance) him out of them all." And again in Ps. 116:6, " The Lord preserveth the simple : I was brought low (conflict) and he helped (deliverance) me." Paul expressed this again in II Cor. 4:16, " For which cause we faint not ; (deliverance) but though our outward man perish (conflict), yet the inward man is renewed." (deliverance). day by day." In Romans 5:20 " Moreover the law entered, [conflict], that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded [conflict], grace did much more abound [deliverance super abounds]."

" I thank God through . . . our Lord," by the grace of God, I surely want to hold fast to the words " OUR LORD ", not just Paul's experience, but all who have been brought along this way. " Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it [not that he wants to perform it if you will only cooperate with the grace of God, or let him] until the day of Jesus Christ Christ." (Phi 1:6)

As long as we live here, we shall have the plague of sin : " I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me." (Rom 7:21) " . . . but how to perform that which is good I find not." (Rom 7:18) Does this sound like it is optional on our part ?

This is a vast difference from living in sin : " What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound ? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein ? " (Rom 6:1-2) Beware of that person who says he loves sin as much as he ever did. Watch him and he will prove it by his life and will continue his old course of life with perhaps a little outward reform and profession. The Lord's children have a true experimental religion, as Satan's always have a counterfeit. This person loves to bring forth the sovereignty of God and the helplessness of man, NOT because he has had a great conviction of sin, but because he proves it by his attitude toward sin. However, he knows nothing of the true attitude toward sin, only the pretense. Paul here is Romans 7:24 brings forth true humility. Also in Psa 51:17, " The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit : a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise," having no true conviction of sin or " Fear and trembling," he will return to his wicked way as a dog to his vomit and the sow that is washed to it's wallowing in the mire." We are told by our Master, " . . . for the tree is known by his

fruit ." (Mat 12:33) Read carefully , Romans chapter six , which is aimed at such person . God 's quickened children hate sin and would never sin again if possible . Our feelings are " divorce my soul from every sin , let me thy servant be , O make and keep my consciences clean to show that I am free ."

Now Paul concludes this chapter by telling us as long as we live here we shall have the deliverance , the " Law of God ," or higher nature and also that the victory is not obtained in the old man in nature but by the grace of God .

We shall never be completely content or satisfied here but made to hope , reaching forward , onward and upward to the final deliverance , one and for all time in heaven .

In gospel bonds ,
Elder C .M . Haygood

Dear Brother Burnell :

Tonight as I sit here in my home , this 25th day of July , 1988 , I am thinking of you and your family , Sister Mary Frances and the girls . I have told you in times past , about my desire to write to you concerning some of my experiences . I don't know whether God will bless me to do this or not , but if it would be His will , I shall try .

I would desire to write to you concerning my experience in the Lord Jesus Christ . This experience I am talking about has been given by the Lord . I believe this from the depths of my heart and soul . Because of the many conversations we have had in days and nights past , I believe you can witness with me in what I am saying .

Do you remember the night I was so burdened and weighted down with a weight I felt I could not remove? This weight I could not take away , because I had not placed it there . We had been to services at Creeches Meeting House that night , and when the meeting was over , you and myself were standing in front of the building talking . I began to talk to you about my feelings and the way I felt concerning the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ . I knew I did not know how and could not do it of myself . I knew you , nor any other man , could help me do it . For it must come from Jesus Christ or it 's not preaching . I have not learned this out of any book or learned it from any man . If I know anything about this , it has been by the revelations of Jesus Christ .

Every since I was about eight years old , I have had many down settings , disappointments and heartaches . I remember being in the yard one day doing some work for my Mother . I felt something come over me , but I did not know where it came from . I have never forgotten it . I now feel it was the Lord Jesus Christ dealing with me , but at that time He did not show me where it was coming from or who was giving it . I was not brought up in the church nor told about the Lord by my parents . It was the Lord Jesus Christ who dealt with me in the past .

I have had many experiences since the night you and I talked in front of Creeches Meeting House . I dreamed one night I stood before the people and preached the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ as it was given to me .

Not me or any other man, but the Lord Jesus Christ was the one over all of it. He was the one that gave me the words to say to feed the flock. Yes, I believe from the depths of my heart and soul that time after time I would have these experiences even before I offered and was received into the church. Long before I was ordained to preach the gospel, I dreamed I was standing in the pulpit behind the book board. The meeting was over and I came down out of the pulpit. The people came and hugged me and embraced me and told me how much they enjoyed what the Lord had blessed me to say. Well, it cut me down very much, but it also lifted me up in one way, to feel the Lord had used me as His mouthpiece. Today, as well as times past He uses men (and I hope myself) as His mouthpiece to stand before the flock of God and preach to them. I don't believe one can preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to an unbeliever. One must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and the only way they can believe in Jesus Christ is to be born of the spirit of God. They must be born and brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Him. They must be given grace, and grace alone, because it takes grace to have the love and it takes the love to have the grace.

I believe both of us have experienced that love and that grace and not only us, but all of the children of God wherever they are met at. How much I love you and Sister Mary Frances, as well as, both of the girls, through and by the grace of God. We have seen the girls grow up from little girls to grown women, and I hope I love them for Christ sake. I love God's people wherever they are. It matters not where we meet, but if we can only be blessed to talk about the Lord Jesus Christ and what he has done for us. If we can tell the experiences of grace that He has blessed us with from on high. The many times our souls have been fed with the bread that flows from the throne of grace. Not anything have we ever done to inherit any of it, for it is a free unmerited favor that is given by Christ Jesus, the Saviour of sinners. He came to save the sinners, not the righteous. I know I am a sinner. I have been all of my life and will be the balance of my life that I live here in this world. But thanks to my God, He has given me a promise of a better place than on this earth. I don't know that I will be carried there, I only have a hope that I will wake up in that final home where the whole family will be there all together lovely and be singing the hymns of praise forever. A place that never ceases to be and where there is no darkness, only light. It will be lit up with the glory of Almighty God, so we can see and feel the joy of Thy salvation that we have a hope in now.

I believe both you and I, as well as our companions, all have a hope. I believe the Lord has taught us something that is beyond the teachings of man. People go off to seminaries to learn to preach the gospel, but the one I went to I trust I was carried by the Lord Jesus Christ and did not go on my own. If I know anything He is the one that has taught me. I did not learn it from any man nor did I learn it from any book. If I know anything about it, it is through and by the revelations of Jesus Christ. I have had many down settings in my life, but how wonderful it is to be down in the valley and then

lifted up on the mountain top that we can rejoice in a Saviour's love and in the Holy Spirit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. One that has looked down upon us and has called us with a holy calling. One who has brought us out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God. Oh, what a light this is. It is so bright, yet it will not blind you. The brightness of the natural sun will bring tears to your eyes. The light of Jesus Christ shining in you will make you cry, but it will be tears of joy and not for sorrow. Oh, how many times have I ever cried for the joy of the Lord Jesus Christ has given me. Dealt with me in that way, in that manner, that I could praise Him. The only true and living God that I have to look to tonight for living grace, that grace that will never die. That grace that will live now and for evermore and that great and holy love that is given us by Him, the only one that shall stand. This natural love that we have for one another here is going to cease to be someday, but that love that God has loved us with, and the love that we are bidded to love one another with, shall never die. It will live in this world with us and in that yonder world if we are only blessed to be carried there.

This is a true and lively hope that I believe God has given me. A hope that no one can take away. A hope that no man had anything to do with me receiving it. In due time, God showed me what I am by nature and what I must be by the grace of God. It didn't come none too early and none too late, because there is a time and season to all things. It comes times that He gives to me these things that I believe, these things I'm telling you tonight. I believe each one us has heard preaching from time to time on the mountain tops, on the sea shores, and in the valleys. Oh, how beautiful it is to be lifted up and to be carried to a place that looks and is beautiful. We want more of it, but we can't have anymore than what God would give us to have. What we will have in this life and in world to come is all stored up in His storehouse of mercy. How we would desire to praise our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ for the many blessings that He has bestowed upon us all the days of our lives, even when we knew it not.

My mind is carried back from time to time to my Mother. She had no girls, only boys. When I was about eight years old, I was doing some work for her. I did not know then, but I trust I know now, where the mind came from to help my Mother. The Lord Jesus Christ gave me that mind to do the things that I did for her. I would sweep the yard and do things like that and rejoice in it. The reason I rejoiced in it was because the Lord was in the matter. The Lord was showing me, but yet it did not please Him to show me where it was coming from. It did not please Him to show me where all of the goodness and mercy that was in my soul as a little lad was coming from. Years later it pleased Him to reveal to me where these things come from. He came into my heart and soul and condemned me of this world and the worldly things that I was dwelling in. He turned me from one place into another that was far better than the place I was going into. Oh, yes I'm still in this world, but I'm not of the world. I can truthfully say that I'm not of this world. This world has no charms for me anymore. The only charm I have, the only joy I get in

this world , is when I can feel the presence of my God into my heart and soul. He lifts me up from the vain and perishable things of this world where I can feel the joy of His salvation right into my heart and soul making me to praise Him from whom all my blessings have come from .

I need the blessings of my God to bless me to keep pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus . I don 't know of any other way that I desire to go but in the way that leads to life everlasting. Straight is the way and narrow the gate and but a few will enter therein. I hope with all my heart and soul that I I 'm one of those that has been called in that way, that has been called to go in that straight and narrow way that leads to life everlasting . In other words , that highway of holiness that leads to heaven and immortal glory where there is only one way you can get on that highway. That is straight in and through Jesus Christ . He is the only way one will ever walk on that highway of holiness. It is through and by the leading power of the Almighty God that we believe in . The Almighty God has kept us out of that broad way and that broad gate. He has narrowed the way down so narrow that we are not able to walk by ourselves , but He is able to lead us in it and enable us to walk in that way through and by the power of Him. It is not by the power of our doing not the power of any man .

It must come from the love and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ . Oh , what a wonderful grace that is . It is sufficient for every child of God that is on the face of this earth . That grace will sustain them through every trial and every trouble and every affliction they ever meet up with in this world. It will be right there with them and it will bring them through all of these things.

I know He has been with me through all my trials and troubles . Just like the experience I had in a dream . I dreamed I was driven up to the Red Sea , just as the Israelites were . The enemy was behind them . They couldn 't turn back , nor turn to the right or left and they didn 't see anyway straight ahead because the Red Sea was in front of them . I want you to know in my experiences I 've been carried to that same place. Brother Burnell , I want to tell you the waters were rolled back for me and I was carried across on dry ground just like the Israelites were . And that water , I can see it now , how the Lord Jesus Christ rolled it back for me to go across . I didn 't go on my own , He is the one that carried me. He is the one that rolled the waters back. He is the one that made the straight and narrow way for me to go . He can do the very same thing now as He did then . He does these things day by day and night by night and no one has ever told me anything to make me believe these things . It is through and by the Lord Jesus Christ that has made me to believe it. It is a true and living God that has watched over me every moment of my life , not just a part of it, but every day I live , every breath I breathe in this world here .

I want to tell you about your association of 1988 . How much I really enjoyed that meeting . I had been away for three years . I had been sick and in the hospital part of the time it was going on , but my mind was with you all. What a feast you were having there and what a feast I was having in the hospital also . The same God that was with me was with you at the

association . This year , 1988 , I was blessed to go after missing three associations in a row . Oh , how much those brethren who were called on were blessed to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ . One that was crucified , one that laid His life down , one who took His life and came from the tomb and ascended into the heavens to be with His Father making intercessions for His children while they live here in this world . I believe every one of them will feel the joy of His salvation while they live here in this world , while they are walking or riding up and down on the face of this earth . They will be ready to give a reason of their hope . We are told to be ready to give a reason of our hope , and Brother Burnell , I don't know whether you've ever been asked that question or not , but I have . One day I was asked to give a reason for why I was among the Old Baptists to start with . I told the man if he had a few minutes to listen I would tell him why I am among the Old Baptists . I talked to the man , who was my employer , for about fifteen minutes . He then told me anytime I wanted to go to my meetings to go ahead . He didn't want me to work when I actually wanted to be at my meetings . The Lord blessed me in that way to never be hindered from being able to go to Church when I was well , but I have been sick and couldn't go . I couldn't go this past meeting , the fourth weekend in July . I had to stay in bed , both Saturday and Sunday , because I was sick . My heart was beating too slow and I could not go , but thanks to my God , He has blessed me to have a mind to look to Him and write these things down on paper . To put them down and send them to you for you to read for yourself . May God bless you , your companion , and the girls . May the Lord be praised for this writing . May God be praised for everything . I would desire to be a little brother in hope , if one at all .

Elder Henry C . Jones

Dear Elder Key :

The Hopewell Primitive Baptist Association will convene , God willing , with Zion Church , Pickens County , Alabama , on Friday October 14 , 1988 and continue through Sunday noon . The meeting house is a short distance from Alabama highway 159 , approximately eight miles north of Gordo and twenty-one miles south of Fayette . Turn off 159 near mileage marker 8 at Hall of Zion Volunteer Fire Department and proceed about two-tenths of a mile westward along County Road to the meeting house .

All lovers of the truth are welcome . For further information , please write or call Levert Howell , 82 Arcadia Drive , Tuscaloosa , AL 35404 ; Phone (205) 556-5157 .

ARTICLES

ADMONITION TO DO GOOD

New Vernon , N .Y ., April 16 , 1834 .

" But to do good , and to communicate , forget not ."—Heb . xiii . 16 .

Thus wrote the inspired apostle Paul , from Italy , to the saints at Jerusalem ; and as the middle-wall of partition is effectually thrown down , which consisted in meats and

drinks, and divers washings, carnal ordinances, and a worldly sanctuary, &c, there is henceforth no distinction to be observed in the church of God; all are made one, in Christ Jesus our Lord. Hence we infer that the above admonition applies to the saints among the Gentiles with the same force as to those among the Jews.

But as in relation to all other scriptures, so with this, it has its appropriate meaning, and may not be wrested from that meaning with impunity.

We have been led to an examination of this text, by the frequent use to which it has been applied by the advocates of the New Divinity schemes of the day. In the absence of scriptural authority for the popular faith and practices of the great majority of professors, they have endeavored to cover their motives by a reference to this text; let the object to be effected, or the manner of accomplishing it, be what it may, this text is brought forward as a divine warrant. Thus, for instance: The Roman Catholic would say that saying mass, worshiping the Virgin, and advocating their doctrine, is in the meaning of this text to do good; and the paying tithes to the church, and money for the absolution of their sins to the Catholic priesthood, or for the deliverance of the departed spirits of their relatives from purgatory, is to communicate, in the sense of this scripture.

Another tells us that it should be understood differently; and so we find that men professing to be teachers in Israel do not agree. But, is there no rule given by which we are to know the mind of the Lord, as to what is in his estimation, and what is not, good? Are we indeed left to grope about in the dark, and for the want of a better, to employ human wisdom and providence as our rule, and to conclude that the answering of our own feelings and judgment in our decision will be satisfactory to the sovereign Judge of quick and dead? Let the apostles answer. Peter says, "We have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto we do well to take heed," (how long?) "until the day dawns, and the day-star arise in our hearts."—2 Peter i. 19. And Paul says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."—2 Tim. ii. 16, 17. Here then we find a rule for our proceeding, as the children of the kingdom, and as the men of God, we are thoroughly furnished to all good works. This rule will answer all necessary purposes unto the men of God; they are amply provided for. And while the nominal professor will attempt to justify his conduct in joining with and contending for the unscriptural institutions of the day, upon the general principle of doing good, without considering that "There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof are the way of death," the man of God, who feareth the Lord and trembleth at his word, will in all his religious pursuits regard the word of God as his only rule of faith and practice, and disclaim all religious works as evil, however fair they may seem, that are without example or precept in the good book.

Elder G. Beebe

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

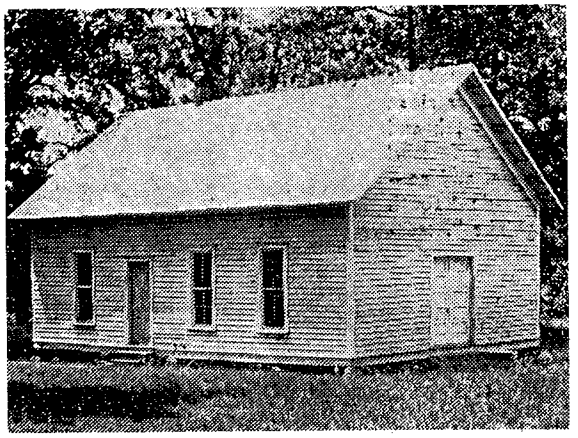

Before remodeling in 1960 .

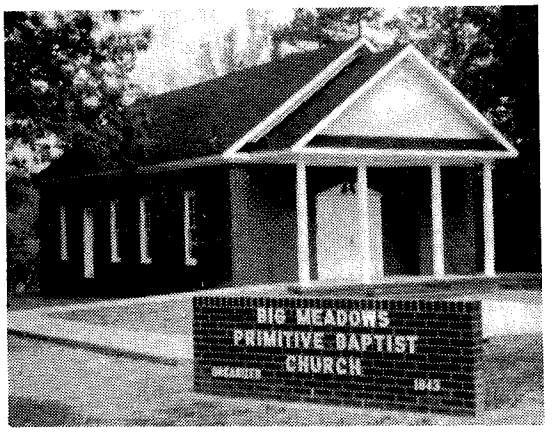

BIG MEADOWS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Big Meadows Primitive Baptist Church is one of the oldest churches in Chatham County . It is located on Siler City Route 1 about seven miles from Silk Hope . It was organized in 1843 . The church records reveal that the charter members included such names as Buckner , Lewis , Stephens , Johnson , Dowdy , Baliff , Norwood , Hargrove , Jones , Richardson , and Bailey , names that are still in the community and members who are descendents of the charter members .

The first services were held in a log structure which was near the present church . The log church was torn down in 1890 and the building that replaced it was remodeled in 1949 , again in 1960 and has just been remodeled as you see it above .

Services at Big Meadows are held second Sunday of each month starting at 10:30 a .m . Communion services second Sunday in June each year. Directions to the church is going south on highway # 87 from Graham , N.C. , go approximately 18 miles and turn right on first road after crossing Cane Creek bridge . Go four miles to a cross road and turn left and go one mile to the church .

We invite those who love the truth to visit with us in this quiet little valley with those we feel have been drawn close together by the chords of God's love .

The present pastor is Elder Kenneth R . Key who has served this church since 1964 .

Elder Kenneth R . Key , Pastor
Brother Casey Johnson , Clerk

NOTICE

Reidsville , NC
Rt 3 , Box 618

Western Country Line Union meeting is to be at Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church the 5th Sunday in October is its the Lord will .

We invite our Ministers , Brethren and Sisters of our faith and order .

Elder H .W . Wray , Pastor
Sister Rachel Wray , Clerk

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your " Signs " and without missing any copies , be sure to inform us of any change of address .

Editors

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

(Continued from last month .)

" These things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God ; that ye may know that ye have eternal life , and that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God ." 1 John 5:13 .

But what does the believing involve ? A title to heaven , because the righteousness of Christ is there . It is a righteousness which is " unto all and upon all them that believe ." If I am at this moment believing in the Name of the Son of God , I have Christ 's Name , work , and Person as my title to the inheritance that is " incorruptible undefiled , and that fadeth not away ." Hence , we started by saying that faith is essential to salvation ; I can have no belief in the Name of the Son of God without that faith which is connected with the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ .

" That ye may know that ye have eternal life . " Believing put us in touch with our title . Eternal life is the capacity for receiving from the Lord our God . A dead sinner — that is , a sinner " dead in trespasses and sins " — has no title , experimentally so , and no capacity for the things of God , none whatever . I think I have related to you what I read once in the " Life of William Wilberforce , " a grand man , the great instrument in the emancipation of the slaves in the West Indies . On one occasion he took his friend , William Pitt , then Prime Minister of England (one of the greatest), to hear one of the best of the evangelical ministers of his day . The minister laid the sinner low , and exalted a precious Christ high , to Wilberforce 's great delight . After the service he asked Pitt what he thought of the sermon , and he replied , " I could not make out what the man was driving at ." Apart from the conferment of a divine capacity — the new nature , eternal life , there can be no reception of things of God . " These things have I written unto you that believe , that ye may know that ye have eternal life ." What is it ? How does it commence ? A sinner is laid low before Jesus Christ and Him crucified . What does the Apostle Paul say concerning his own experience of the ups and downs of the way , and of

that which God had done for his soul? In the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, chapter 4, we have this as a transcript of the Apostle 's experience: " We faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet our inward man is renewed day by day; for a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.", Oh, the mercy to have that faith which looks at the unseen! that faith which looks towards an unseen Saviour, which looks towards unseen things, and which, working in the heart, brings to us the knowledge that we have eternal life, so that our afflictions are esteemed to be but light afflictions which endure but for a moment. This assurance, then, of salvation is an unspeakable comfort; it is a divine encouragement, and it fills the soul with a holy and gracious confidence.

Again, to revert to the experience of the Apostle Paul, he says, " I am willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." Why? He had the grace of assurance, and it is a sanctifying principle. When we are favoured with the assurance of faith, knowing that we have eternal life, all the terrors of the grave are gone; we are delivered from that bondage which comes through the fear of death; we have a blessed anticipation of glory; we gird up our loins and go forward in the way which the Lord is pleased to appoint.

But does not all this mean conflict flict? Joseph Hart sings concerning the temptations of our Lord,

" That impious ' if ' he thus
At God incarnate threw,
No wonder if he cast at us,
And make us feel it too."

" If Thou be the Son of God? —the " impious if" that the devil cast at God Incarnate; and Joseph Hart says, " If he cast that ' if ' at Incarnate God, do you suppose he will let you escape?" The devil seeks in every possible way to hinder and destroy the assurance which the Apostle John, by the Holy Ghost, has in view when he says, " I desire ye may know." But when we are thus brought low, we do know, again and again, something of the experience of Christian in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, when his sword was knocked out of his hand, and he laid low before the Destroyer. Then said Apollyon, " I am sure of thee now," and Christian replied, stretching forth his hand —faith brought into exercise—" Rejoice not against me, O my enemy; when I fall I shall arise; when I set in darkness the Lord shall be a light unto me" (Micah 7:8). And with that he gave a deadly thrust at Apollyon, who spread his black wings and flew away.

Let us speak of the means which the Lord is pleased to use to give this assurance or knowledge that we have eternal life. The Apostle John very simply, clearly, and directly expresses the means that are used, " These things have I written." O, let us bless and praise God for the written Word, not one leaf of which Luther would part with for all the world. things have I written." You, dear friends, who are trembling, doubting, fearing, read this letter again and again; pray over it, " Lord, open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law." This I

know , that no living soul here this morning , trembling , doubting and fearing , will ever be satisfied , and can ever be satisfied , until sweetly assured in the sense of the Apostle here . Safe you are as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ ; comfortable , happy , satisfied , strong , that you will be through the assurance which is spoken here .

I know of no other part of God 's Word which is so full of evidence as to the position and work of Christ in the soul as is this Epistle . One of the greatest proofs of eternal life is given when a sinner feels the plague of his own heart; when a sinner— (pursuing a figure used by Solomon in his dedicatory prayer at the opening of the Temple) —when a sinner stretches forth his hand toward this holy place . Solomon said , " O Lord , whether that man be a stranger or a Jew , as he feels the plague of his own heart , and stretches forth his hand toward this holy place , then , Lord , hear , answer and forgive ." And if you want God , if you know the plague of your own heart , and are stretching forth your hand toward the Lord Jesus Christ , you have an indubitable evidence that you are a possessor of eternal life .

" But I am so unworthy ; I have not sufficient depth of conviction ; my repentance is not what I would have it it ."

" If you tarry till you 're better ,
You will never come at all ."

You say you are so unworthy . Why ! that just makes you suitable for Jesus Christ the Lord . That sense of unworthiness is , as it were , the digging into your heart of God the Holy Ghost that into that hole He may let down His grace , love and mercy . In the Temple and the Tabernacle , mortice and tenon exactly fitted into one another , and God has made a mortice in your heart when you say you are unworthy and sinful , which exactly fits the tenon of Christ 's all-sufficiency .

" But ," you say , " I am so unworthy , will Jesus receive me ? " I answer that question , as I did I think , last Monday evening , Is His Name Jesus ? His very Name of Jesus is the sign-manual that He will receive you . " Thou shalt call His Name Jesus , for He shall save His people from their sins ." Concerning conviction of sin , —my experience is , I doubt not that many of you will confirm this , —my experience is that my conviction of sin has been deeper at the cross foot than before I reached that place . Repentance ! My repentance is so shallow ! Oh , but when we see the crucified Saviour , when He condescends to commune with us ; when our Joseph says , " Draw near to Me ," and falls upon our neck , and kisses us , then repentance deepens . Oh , brethren and sisters , it is all at Calvary ; deepening conviction , deepening repentance , blessed assurance ! O Thou risen Saviour , draw us to Thyself , and the praise and the glory shall be Thine ! Here is another evidence in the first verse of this chapter : " Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God ."

" What more can He say , than to you He hath said ,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled ? "

Whosoever ! That is wide enough , is it

not ? " Whosoever thirsts , let him come unto Me and drink ." Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ , that He who is called Jesus is the Christ , God's anointed Saviour? That is what " Christ" means; anointed by God the Father to be the Saviour of His people . Believing that , you believe that Jesus is the Son of God, because only He could be a Saviour for such an one as you . Then you are born of God and have received the anointing . So we have an anointed Saviour, and anointed sinners coming to Him as their Prophet , Priest , and King . " The same anointing teacheth you of all things ."

Here , then , stand the infallible Scriptures ; here stands the inherent Word of the living God. " These things have I written unto you ." Take them not simply as John 's words , but as the words of God the Holy Ghost . " I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me , Write " ; and the Spirit replied, " Yea" (Revelation 16:13) — the Spirit's " Yea" to the writing. Now to have this blessed Book with these truths expressed in black and white is better than a vision that fades and dies . It is better than angels . Here you have the truth of the living God , not in visionary form , not by angelic messengers , but written by men under the Spirit 's power . This same blessed Spirit attends this Word with divine power in your heart and conscience , and so through the things that are written , the Word of God attended with divine power , we have this blessed testimony .

Once more . " Every one that loveth Him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of Him" (1 John 5:1) . What is love ? What is desire ? it is an effect. If you love the brethren , that is an effect , and an effect cannot exist without a previous cause . And what is the previous cause of love to the brethren ? God 's love to you . Unless God loved you , and had shed abroad His love in your heart , according to the measure of His grace , you would not love . " This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments , and His commandments are not grievous ." Obedience is the test of love . Now I ask you in this respect , " Is your presence in this house of prayer — in other house of prayer where God 's people are wont to assemble— is it cheerful ? is it willing ? do you feel it to be a very hard matter to give up sinful worldly amusements ? " " His commandments are not grievous ," and " this is the love of God , that we keep His commandments ." Where your heart is , there will be your pleasure .

But I must stop . There are three witnesses — you can follow all this out as you read them , to the strengthening of your faith and the bringing of that assurance which you desire . " There are three that bear witness in earth , the Spirit , and the water , and the blood , and these three agree in one " (1 John 5:8) . Has the Spirit quickened , changed , illuminated you ? Do you know aught — I know not a few of you do — do you know aught of His secret power ? " The water and the blood " — water , Christ my sanctification , delivering me from the power of sin ; " the blood " — Christ my justification , cleansing me from the guilt of sin . All this is of God 's sovereign grace and mercy . The Lord give us then that sweet assurance of faith which is expressed by Susannah Harrison :

" My God ! for I can call Thee mine ,

My Father and my Friend !
Am I not Thine , for ever Thine ?
To Thee my groans ascend . "

I read the other day of a blind child who was in the arms of his father. The father put him into the arms of someone else , and said to the child , " You do not know who has hold of you ; Don 't you feel frightened ? " And the child replied , " I don 't know , but you do , and I am not a bit frightened . " Oh to have the sweet assurance that God is my Father , that Jesus Christ is my blessed Redeemer ; that the Spirit of the living God is my Comforter and my Guide . " He brings the blind by a way that they knew not ." Often we know not in the providence of God the next place on which we shall set our foot , but our Father knoweth all , and " these things I have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God , that ye may know that ye have eternal life , and that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God ' —that ye may believe more fully , more powerfully , more sweetly on the Name of the Son of God . The Lord bless His Word for His Name 's sake . Amen .

John E . Hazelton

Mr . Hazelton pastored the Strict Particular Baptist Church in London from 1909 to 1924 . The above sermon was submitted by Nancy and Roy Pullig , taken from a book of Sermons by Mr . Hazelton .

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10 / 88
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE .

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will hold it 's Annual Meeting with Hancocks Church near Ayden , N .C . on October 8 , 9 , 1988 , the Lord willing .

We plan to begin services at 10:30 a .m . both days . To locate the church , take highway # 11 between Kinston and Greenville to the intersection of highway # 102 near Ayden , N .C . Take highway # 102 east for 3 miles , turn left at the crossroads and go 1 mile to the church on the left . You will have passed through the town of Ayden while on highway # 102 .

All of our faith and fellowship are invited to come and be with us .

Milton Fountain , Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 1988

Mrs . Arlene Hole , NC 2.00
Mrs . M . Quesenberry , VA 2.00
Mrs . H .C . Houchins , VA 2.00
Mrs . Lelah R . Hill , CA 5.00
Mrs . Jeanne Vaughan , FL 2.00
Eld . David N . Bailey , WV 2.00
Mrs . Frances Jarvis , MD 2.00
Oscar Pickral , VA 7.00
Eld. Larry Hollandsworth, VA....2.00
L .C . Hornsby , GA.....2.00

Mrs . Shirley DeBow ,NC 2.00
Mrs . Joe Kee , TX.....2.00
Mr. & Mrs. C.N. Barron, LA.....2.00
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OBITUARIES

PAUL DUPREE

We , the Church at Tarboro , trust it was God 's will to call home our dear Brother , Paul Dupree . He was called in his sleep on May 14 , 1988 , making his stay on earth 83 years .

Brother Paul was blessed to come before our church and ask for a home with us on July 4 , 1964 . He was a firm believer of Salvation by Grace and was always giving God the praise for all of his blessings . Brother Paul would often speak about his salvation and how he felt it was all in God 's hands , no matter what happened . He loved his church and was always agreeable to the upkeep of the church . He was a man you could depend on for advice and was highly respected among the brethren .

Brother Dupree farmed all of his life . He enjoyed tilling the soil until a few months before his death . Brother Paul was blessed to have had a good wife , who together raised three children for whom looked after their Daddy following the death of Sister Dupree .

All of us at Tarboro Church , send our sympathy to Brother Paul 's family and trust they will follow the pathway their Daddy has set before them . We feel our loss is Brother Paul 's eternal gain , and trust he is resting in peace and love with our Saviour , waiting for the day of Resurrection .

We resove that three copies of this resolution be made : one for the church records , one for the family , and one for publication in the " Signs of the Times ."

This done by order in our June conference .

Elder Henry C . Jones ,
Moderator
John H . Coker ,
Clerk

MARY E . POFF

Home . Home at last . These words ring in my heart and soul as I try to prepare this memorial for a dear Mother in Israel .

Sister Mary Epperly Poff was born in Floyd County , Va . on May 8 , 1895 and passed away May 1 , 1988 in a Salem , Va . hospital , making her stay here on earth almost 93 years . She was the widow of Brother Eutaw V . Poff , who passed away in September 1967 . She and Brother Poff united with the Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church the first Saturday in June 1935 and was baptized the next day by the late Elder J .F . Stegall .

She is survived by one daughter ,

Mrs. Velma P. Gravett, Roanoke, Va. Five grandchildren , seven great grandchildren and one great-great grandchild. Also one sister survives. She was predeceased by one son , Vernon Poff in 1965 and a daughter Mr Mrs . Retha P . McKenney in 1982 .

Sister Poff was indeed a Mother in Israel to many of the Brethren and Sisters. She and Brother Poff loved to entertain and their home was always open to the comfort of their Brethren, Sisters and Friends . She was in the nursing home for about seven years and suffered much but always she wanted to hear about the meetings and what text the ministers spoke of at these meetings . I was blessed to visit her often and we rejoiced together many times. When I would read a portion of scripture to her , oftimes she would quote it ahead of my reading. Her mind was keen and she had a good memory up until a short time before her death .

In the last weeks of her life she suffered much, and she begged to go Home . The prayer , " O Lord , help me " was continually in her heart and on her lips . A short time before she passed away she said she was so happy because she was on her way Home. Her funeral was conducted at 3:00 p.m. at Lotz Funeral Chapel on Tuesday, May 3, 1988 by her Pastor, Elder Leonard J. Brammer who spoke so comforting to all that mourn. After which she was laid to rest in Evergreen Cemetery beside her beloved husband, to sleep until the resurrection morn when she will come forth in all Glory that her Lord has prepared for her .

I miss her so much and feel so unworthy of her love and kindness for these past fourty years but as I think of how she suffered and her desire to go Home, I can only say, " Thank You, Dear Lord , for holding her hand and taking her to forever be at peace with Thee ."

She requested that I write this memorial for her and send to The Signs of the Times . By the grace of God I did the best that I could, but the half has not been told .

Yes Home — Home at last .

An unworthy sister ,
Rlee B . Houchins
Roanoke , Va .

MOTHER ADA SEARS

Writing in memory of our dear beloved mother , who was born March 21 , 1901 , and departed this life July 28 , 1988 . Mother was a member of West Fork Primitive Baptist Church, in Clay Co., W.Va. She joined this Church in 1944 . Her husband Elder Lloyd Sears passed away in 1967 . They lay at rest at the Sears Cemetery in Clay Co., W.Va. We feel that this is our loss and their gain . Mother has left her children and grandchildren, and great grandchildren here in her memory. Her children, Dessie Tanner, Alpha Sears, Roscoe Sears, Evelyn Santy, Glendora Primo Primo, Lorain Keen. Mother has been in a nursing home for five years in Akron . Mother told me a dream that she had, it has left me in great hope and peace . We hope that mother is resting in peace with her God. There is no one left to write this but me .

Deacon Alpha Sears ,
Grace Hill Primitive Baptist Church
Randolph , Ohio 44265

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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POEM

I'M AN EARTHEN VESSEL

The master stood in his garden
Among the lillies fair,
Which His own right hand had planted
And trained with tender care.

He looked at their snowy blossoms,
And marked with observant eye,
That the flowers were sadly drooping
For their leaves were parched and dry.

" My lilies need to be watered."
The heavenly Master said:
" Wherein shall I draw it for them,
And raise each drooping head?

Close to his feet on the pathway,
Empty, and frail and small
An earthen vessel was lying
Which seemed of no use at all.

But the master saw, and raised it
From the dust in which it lay,
And smiled as he gently whispered,
" This shall do for my work today."

" It is but and Earthen Vessel
But it lay so close to me;
It is small and it is empty,
That is all it needs to be."

So to the fountain he took it,
And filled it full to the brim;
How glad was the Earthen Vessel
To be of some use to Him!

He poured forth the living water
Over his lilies fair
Until the Earthen Vessel was empty
And again he filled it there.

He watered his drooping lilies
Until they revived again;
And the Master saw with pleasure
That his labor had not been in vain.

His own hand had drawn the water
Which refreshed the thirsty flowers;
But he used the Earthen Vessel
To convey the living showers.

And to itself the Earthen Vessel
whispered,
As he laid it aside once more,
" Still will I lie in His pathway,
Just where I did before."

" Close would I keep to the Master,
Empty Vessel would I remain,
And perhaps some day he may use me,
To water his flowers again."

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EDITORIAL

For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel; neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

Elder R.H. Campbell

These few lines of scripture and the verses immediately following, which support this same basic truth are probably more hated and despised by the modern day religionist than any others to be found in the bible. They are hated because they state as simply and directly as can be said that it is not the natural man in the flesh that is the object of God's love. It says," the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God," and yet, the doctrine of the world contends that God loves all of the unregenerate creatures of the world alike, and is just waiting for them to exercise their free will, accept him into their heart and then he can bring them into his kingdom. They cry long and loud, that to be otherwise, God would be unjust and this is not in harmony with the loving and benevolent image which they have of his character.

The divines of this day and age use, natural philosophy and psycology, as though God was a man, as they are, subject to the same laws, naturally and spiritually. As they are, and try to rationalize, in human terms

a plan of salvation that is pleasing to the flesh and socially acceptable . In his epistle to the church at Corinth, the Apostle Paul states , " and I brethren when I came to you , came not with excellency of speech , or of wisdom , declaring unto you the testimony of God ." And again , " and my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of mans wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power : that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." The difference in these two ways of approaching the subject is that, one is the natural man preaching to the natural man , and giving an intellectual appraisal of God and spiritual matters and the other is spiritual revelation coming through the servant of God and showing to the heirs of promise the way of salvation, demonstrating the wisdom and power behind it.

To the heirs of promise , the chosen generation, this is good news for it is the only plan that will fill their need. They have been made to know and see their undone condition and the desperate plight they are in and their own inability , in nature , to remedy their situation. As the Apostle Paul wrote on one occasion , seemingly when in a condition such as this , " I was alive without the law once : but when the commandment came , sin revived and I died ." This was their condition at one time , they saw the utter helplessness of the flesh to do anything , the strength of sin is the law and the sting of death is sin , and this all pertains to the flesh and has dominion over it. They realize and acknowledge the corruption , pride and vain conceit of the flesh and rejoice to read the scripture , " They which are the children of the flesh , these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed ." They acknowledge the weakness of the flesh and what they have always been in nature and knew , in this condition , these scriptures give them hope that there is a way that might reach even unto them, and they begin looking and searching for additional evidence that they too are included in the promises of God. The scripture ,'For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh ,God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh , and for sin , condemned sin in the flesh ," now takes on new meaning to them , and together with the above quoted scriptures causes them to take courage . They explain this new dual entity that dwells within , one serving the law of god and desiring that which is good and the other serving the law of sin and bringing forth fruit unto death . Surely the Apostle Paul was here in his experience when he wrote , " O wretched man that I am ! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?

'For they are not all Isreal , which are of Israel : Neither because they are the seed of Abraham , are they all children: but in Isaac shall thy seed be called." This scripture once and for all time sets aside the popular theory of universal salvation and establishes beyond any doubt the doctrine of the election of a specific people, called of God unto salvation to all that profess to use the bible as the authority of their faith and doctrine . Ishmael was the eldest, as was Esau but although they were the legitimate heirs , accordiing to the law , they were not the children of promise , as revealed in the scriptures , and did not receive

the blessings of their fathers . Isaac was determined that Esau would receive the blessing , arranged the time and manner in which it would occur but God had announced to Rebecca before either of the children were born that the elder should serve the younger , and so it was . Furthermore , the Apostle Paul wrote that it was thus , that the purpose of God might stand , not of works but of him that calleth .

It is indeed a great comfort for the newborn child , in the spirit , to read where God works contrary to the laws of nature to preserve his kingdom and to bring his purposes to pass according to his own will . Each sees themselves as unworthy of these blessings in the traditional manner , according to thelaw , and yet they find this hope within that they are blessed of God . They now trust that theirs is another instance where God has chosen the foolish things of the world , the weak things and verily the things that are not to set aside tradition and purchase unto himself a peculiar people , that no flesh should glory in his presence . They have been made to see the flesh for what it actually is and know that their only hope of salvation is in the finished work of God because that is not bound by tradition , limited by time or dependent on the cooperaton of anything apart from the sovereign will and purpose of God himself . They are made to believe that he did deliver his children in generations past , raised up the most unlikely ones , according to nature , and made them kings prophets etc . And that he is doing the same things in this present day . The Apostle Paul , writing to the church at Rome about the prophet Elias , said that God had told the prophet that he had reserved unto himself seven thousand that had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal , and then he added , " Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace . And if by grace then it is no more works : otherwise grace is no more grace . But if it be of works , then it is no more grace : otherwise work is no more work ." Oh the joy and comfort that scriptures as these brings to the heart of those who have been made to see themselves as they are , made to try work righteousness and fail , desire goodness and be unable to attain unto it . They realize that this is the only thing that will satisfy their need and are given to see by revelation that this is exactly what has happened to them in their being made to love things they once hated and hate the things that in former years had been the center of their life .

All scripture is given by inspiration of God , and is profitable for doctrine , for reproof , for correction , for instruction in righteousness : That the man of God may be perfect , thoroughly furnished unto all good works . This verse was written by the Apostle Paul and it is , as all of his writings are , the results of his own conversions , on the road to Damascus , he believed that he was of Israel because he was born a Jew , professed the Jewish faith lived according to the law blameless and was exceedingly jealous of the traditions of his fathers . When the truth was revealed to him he saw that his truly being of Israel was by the grace of God and not his efforts of the flesh or his natural heritage . He now saw that his salvation was not in his keeping of the law but rather the election of God of a certain people

according to the promise of God from the beginning of time . This premise has been made manifest in the lives of this chosen generation down through the ages in ways that were contrary to the laws of nature but the end result was that the children of promise received the blessing . Surely he could see , now , that his own way of being made to see and understand the truth was miraculous and mysterious as was Abel , Isaac , Jacob , David and all of the others who were raised from obscurity and placed in the household of faith as it was pleasing to God and solely because it was his own sovereign will and purpose . It was the fulfilling of the promise made to Abraham many generations before and it will be to all nations who will ever populate the world .

On the day of Pentecost when the spirit fell upon the disciples and they declared the wonderful works of God , there were some who were pricked in the heart and wanted to know , " what shall we do ." Peter told them to repent , and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins , and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost . For the promise is unto you , and to your children , and to all that are afar off , even as many as the Lord our God shall call . You can talk to people about this scripture and get many different responses . Some will stress their question , " what shall we do ," others will stress the arising and being baptized and still others the receiving of the Holy Ghost for their obedience to the command of Peter . It seems , to me , that the fact that these who were pricked in the heart , told to repent and be baptized were the ones to whom the promise was made . Without this one aspect of the situation , all of the others would have been meaningless . This applies to all of the scriptures , they are all directed to the children of promise and to apply them to anyone else is false teaching . Abraham was justified by faith not by the deeds of the law and it was reckoned to him for righteousness before he received the ordinance of circumcision . Paul then wrote of these things and said , " Therefore it is of faith , that it might be by grace : to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed: not only to that which is of the law , but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham : who is the father of us all . " This one promise extended to all of God 's children whether they lived under law or in grace , and is sure and certain because it is from God . As it was given to a specific person , then , it is to a specific seed who will live in all ages of time , in all nations and it will make itself manifest in their life in many ways and circumstances . To some they were pricked in the heart and begin to question things ; others began to speak in tongues as the spirit gave them utterance , or to find themselves clothed and in their right mind for the first time . Regardless of the way and manner in which it occurs in the life of each individual , in all cases it is because of the promise made unto Abraham the father of us all .

The Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy , " For bodily exercise profiteth little : but godliness is profitable unto all things , having promise of the life that now is , and of that which is to come . Godliness is the effect of this promise in the heart of the children of God and it will insure them of the care and blessings of him during this life and of their eternal dwelling in his presence in the life to come . This is

the blessed hope that dwells in the heart of all the elect and when they are enabled to realize that it is because of God 's promise and not their own performance that they are saved they can for a season rest in the sweetness of his love and grace . They can rejoice in the scripture as declared by Moses . " The eternal God is thy refuge , and underneath are the everlasting arms : and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee : and shall say destroy them . Israel then shall dwell in safety above : the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine : also his heavens shall drop down dew . Happy art thou , O Israel : who is like unto thee , O people saved by the Lord , the shield of thy help , and who is the sword of thy excellency ! And thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee ; and thou shalt tread upon their high places ." Oh , the blessed heritage of the saints throughout the ages is the gift of God and sure to all the children of promise because it given to them in a covenant arrangement of which God is the guarantor .

In bonds of love ,
Elder R .H . Campbell

ARTICLES

" Behold , what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God ."

This scripture has been running through my mind for several days , and it seems that I must write something concerning it in order to get any relief . I pray that whatever I may write is from God and not of myself : if of myself I know that it will be of no value to the saints of God .

First , I would like to call your attention to the " we " and " us " in this passage . The " we " and " us " are the same , and are the sons of God . I do not know that I am included is this blessed people , but yet I have a little hope if not deceived in my sinful and depraved heart . The rest of the world will tell you that you can know that you are a son of God if only you will accept him as your personal Saviour ; but not one of them has ever told me how to accomplish this .

The children of God are called sheep in the scriptures and the others are called goats ; and there shall be a time when he shall divide the sheep from the goats . " And he shall set the sheep on his right hand , but the goats on the left . " Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand , Come , ye blessed of my Father , inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world ." And , " Then shall he say to them on his left , Depart from me , ye cursed , into everlasting fire , prepared for the devil and his angels ." Here we see that the sheep are blessed and the goats are cursed . Jesus said , " My sheep here my voice , and I know them , and they follow me : and I give unto them eternal life ; and they shall never perish ." But unto the goats , or the cursed , " But ye believe me not because ye are not my sheep ," and these shall be cast into the everlasting fire .

God chose his children - his - sheep in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world , that we should be holy and without blame before him in love . I do not say that these children existed in some form before the world was formed , but in

the mind and purpose of our Eternal God. " My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written when as yet there was none of them." All the members of Christ were written in his book before there were any of them in existance: and not all of them have existed or are in existance even now, but before the end of time they shall be manifest.

In the same sense that we were in Christ before the foundation of the world, we were in Adam the first man when he was made of God from the dust of the ground, but our natural life of flesh and blood was not made manifest until we were born of our parents. Neither is our eternal life in Jesus Christ made manifest before we are born again. Birth does not give life to anything, but it only brings forth the life that is already there. We had nothing to do concerning our natural birth and we can do nothing to bring about a second birth. Our Lord said to Nicodemus, " Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." And, " Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven; therefore if we are to ever see God in peace we must be born of his Holy Spirit.

Natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness to him. Neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned: and the carnal mind is enmity against God. Therefore if we are in the flesh only we cannot please God, and we would not even seek him, because we would not know him. To know his is eternal life. But we are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in us, and if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. Only those who have been born again, Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God have this Spirit within. It is unto these that received him that he gave the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. They did not reject nor accept an offer from him, but they received him when he was made manifest in them, the hope of glory. Paul tells us this is a great mystery which has been hid from ages and generations, but is now made manifest to his saints.

Brethren, I believe I have shown enough scriptural proof to show who the sons of God are and how they became such, and now I would like to pass on to the ' manner of love ' the Father has bestowed upon his sons. There can be no doubt that God loves his people, and this is an everlasting love with which he draws us unto himself. The Father so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son to die for them and redeem them from the curse of the law under which they fell when they transgressed his holy law. Christ suffered in the garden of Gethsemane and upon the cross of Calvary more than it is possible for man to even imagine, and he did it in our room and stead. His visage (body) was marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men. We beat him, plucked the hair from his face, spit upon him, put a crown of

thorns upon his head and nailed him to the cross. All of this was done to the holy, innocent, pure Son of God, who knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. " Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." Christ was made an offering for our sins and by his offering - unto God, not to us - he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. For the joy set before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Christ has suffered for us: shall we not also suffer with him? Surely we will, for God hath chosen us in the furnace of afflictions. And Paul tells us that all who will live godly in Jesus Christ shall suffer persecutions. Yet we should rejoice in these, for if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him. What a glorious hope this is! Can we not see that " All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose?" Can we not see this as a portion of the manner fo his love to us?

Our trials, tribulations and temptations are also a portion of his manner of love, for, " Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." And, " the trial of your faith, being more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." We should also glory in our tribulations for we know that tribulations worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is spread abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Brethren, our everloving God has ordained these things for us. He has set the race before us; let us run it with patience, ever looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith; for he has said, " In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; for I have overcome the world." It is by faith in Jesus Christ that we must overcome all that we must bear in this sin filled world; and our faith is the gift of God: " For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Again let us behold the manner of God's love.

There is much more that could be said upon this text, but I will mention only one more point before this becomes too long and you become weary.

If we be the sons of God we shall be chastened. Let us listen to the exhortation which speaketh unto us as unto children: " My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons." Our fleshly fathers chasteneth us according to their own pleasure, but God does it for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. No chastening for the pre-

sent seemeth joyous , but grievous : nevertheless afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them who are exercised thereby . Again , dear brethren , behold the manner of God 's love to us that we should be called the sons of God . What glorious and wonderous feelings I enjoy when blessed from time to time to hope that I also am a son of God . These times are short and far between , but without them I feel sure that I would perish .

Brethren , charge all errors to me and praise God for any comfort or edification you may receive . I beg an interest in your prayers of faith .

An unworthy brother saved by grace , if one at all .

Clifford Wilbanks

IT IS NOT ALL OF LIFE TO LIVE JUST AS IT IS NOT ALL OF DEATH TO DIE

by Doyle Oren Murphy (12-12-87)

My soul stands full and my cup runneth over . When this good feeling comes to me it causes me to have great desire to shout it from the house top , yea , and even from the mountain top of Zion itself . How comforting and pleasing it is for me to be blessed with a hope in the great beyond and a Savior who does all things well ; realizing that I am unfit and unworthy of any of His great mercies on my own merits , thats why I am so happy that Jesus'es righteousness is imputed to His dear children.

Death called home a young minister from our midst some years ago . We loved and cherished him very highly . His funeral was conducted by a very gifted and able minister who said of him that the young minister declared that he-was-not-afraid-to-die . We sing his favorite hymn at our church gatherings now as his choice of this hymn reiterates his belief that Christ's presence makes death easy:

> Why should we start and fear to die ? What timorous worms we mortals are ! Death is the gate of endless joy , and yet we dread to enter there .
>
> Jesus can make a dying bed feel soft as downy pillows are while on his breast I lean my head and breathe my life out sweetly there there .

All my life the thought of death has been so horrifying that I would discard it from my mind but of late . I believe I have changed from this feeling because it is not bad to die in the Lord . I have been taught that it is not all of life to live just as it is not all of death to die die .

Yesterday , December the twelveth , 1987 was church-day at our home church (Rehobeth) ; a grand and good day for us all . Two ministers , their lovely wives and other members of the church came to our little home after church . My belief is that Primitive Baptist Ministers have fine wives as deacons are also given good wives . I believe the wives are chosen , set apart and qualified just as their husbands are.

I love and respect the doctrine set fourth by our preachers and when one is enabled to look back over their past life and see just one occasion-in-time when the Lord laid his hand on you ; you are in good shape . He has promised that when he has started a good work with-in you He will perform it to THE DAY OF JESUS CHRIST.

(See Brother Murphy 's Obituary in this issue .)

EDITORIAL
ASSOCIATIONS OF CHURCHES

Two hundred years ago seven churches formed themselves into what is known as the KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION at a meeting house called " Kehukee" near Kehukee Creek, in Halifax County, North Carolina . This was in the year 1765 according to Hasasell 's Church History. Since this year, 1965 , is the bicentennial year of this ASSOCIATION TION ; we are impressed to write a short editorial upon the subject of ASSOCIATIONS OF CHURCHES . We shall endeavor to treat upon the aims of our forefathers in forming these churches into associations and to point out the necessity of conducting such associational meetings in such manner that the churches will retain their Scriptural position as the highest ecclesiastical organizations . We shall consider associations as creatures of the churches and shall warn against these creatures attempting to discipline and to set themselves above their creators . Seven Churches of Asia were written to by John . Seven churches originally adopted what is now known as the London Confession of Faith in abridged form in1643 . (Hassell Church History, see Page663) There were seven elders in the twelve churches constituting the Sulphur Fork Association of Texas in 1845 at Providence Church , Mount Vernon , Texas . Let us now leave the historical phase and immediately examine the purposes of these associations .

One of the aims in forming associations of churches is that personal acquaintance and contact might be enlarged to include a larger circle of brethren than would be probable with a single church in a neighborhood . It is as a good result of associations that thousands often meet together from different states to worship God in unison , and to become acquainted with many new brethren embracing sovereign grace principles . Our aim is to embrace more in our fellowship instead of trying to reduce the number . Our aim is to further unite rather than to divide ; add to instead of cutting off ; and , to be for one another rather than being against .

Paul said , " Be of the same mind one toward another . Mind not high things , but condescend to men of low estate . Be not wise in your own conceits ".(Romans 12:16) " Now I beseech you , brethren , by the name of our Lord , Jesus Christ , that ye all speak the same thing , and that there be no divisions among you ; but that ye be so perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Cor.1:10) " Fulfill ye my joy , that ye be likeminded , having the same LOVE , being of one accord , of one mind ." (Phil. 2:2) David said , " Behold , how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity ." (Psalms 133:1) The number TWO has been considered by some as being accursed as it is the first departure from unity . Only God who makes men's heart's can unite them . Whoever God joins together in this divine love can never be separated by the cunning craftiness of men without causing unhappiness and misery because of such separation . United we stand ; divided we fall . All who possess the spirit of God's love are as harmless as doves. Doves desire unity ; and it was the dove that would not leave Noah's ark . (Gen.8:9) We must warn against these wolves who

have come in among us, as well as the foxes who have crept into our numbers, who care not for the flock. They connive with their plots, schemes tricks, and " Legal justifyings " to handle churches as if they were the judges, lawgivers, and kings. They will band themselves together to annihilate churches and ministers. A whole psalm was written against this sin. Read the entire 83rd Psalm. The 12th verse is the expression of their central desire. " Who said, Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession. " Those who plot together to cut off churches from the union of churches " take crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. They have said, COME, AND LET US CUT THEM OFF FROM BEING A NATION."

It is comforting to know that the Lord is the one to take vengeance on them. The Psalmist asked the Lord to " Fill their faces with shame." The Lord created the wicked for the day of evil, and created the waster to destroy. He will fight our battles for us against our enemies in His way with that which He hath designed for the work of vengeance. True brethren do not need to waste time in warring with false brethren for if God be for us none can successfully come against us. He will deliver us from their clutches. We do not need to defend ourselves but use the time and talents in pressing on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Jesus Christ. We shall press for the unity of TRUE brethren. We realize that when these false brethren have done their dirty work they will separate themselves from us and go out from us, as the CHIEF Shepherd does His mighty work in protecting the sheep from the wolves and foxes.

Another aim is to encourage intercommunion of churches. Churches formed in such associations write letters to the other churches giving such information as each church may think prudent for the good and welfare of the union. This intercommunication so links the churches together that brethren composing one church feel free to commune with the churches so linked together. We know that all members of the church universal are all the saved, and that Christ is the only Head, and the Church is His Body. (See Eph.1:22-23 & Colossians 1:18-24) The church militant is composed of all the saints now on earth. The invisible church is all the Elect not yet called. A particular church is a society of believers called out of the world who have bonded themselves together, to be guided and governed by discipline agreeable to the laws of Christ as given in the New Testament.

Another purpose of associational meetings is to bring together the different gifts in the ministry in order that they may preach together and hear one another feeding the children of God with a variety of spiritual food. Many say they enjoy associational meetings because they are privileged to hear different ministers from the different sections of the country in different manners proclaiming the same gospel truth. It is indeed a blessing to be convinced that all these ministers have been brought up in the same School and have had as their teacher; — God, the Father; God, the Son, and, God, the Holy Ghost.

Associational meetings are heavenly when so many voices can be blended together in singing the songs of Zion in the spirit and God-given

understanding , having their voices mellowed by the love of God bringing them into the joys of Zion . It is wonderful to make new acquaintances and to visit so many who embrace the same sovereign grace principles which is our food and drink. It is wonderful to talk on the Scriptures together in smaller companies in the homes of the neighborhood in which the associational meeting is held. It is enjoyable to feel the warm welcome extended to us in these homes and to partake of the kind hospitalities so lovingly given us by the occupants of these homes .

When we see so many people together to worship God it inspires and encourages those who have been made to feel that there will be none of us left . I have heard people say at such meetings: " Old Baptists are not all dead as some would have us believe." It is encouraging when you are made to know that the Lord has reserved unto himself many more than you thought existed .

Interlinking of God 's people by the method of associational correspondence is a blessing when we are blessed to extend the chain rather than break any of these links. I will here quote the body of a corresponding letter which I wrote several years ago - which is yet my conscientious convictions and yearning desires relative to associational correspondence : - " Dearly Beloved Brethren : - We are bound to give thanks unto God for you , brethren , because our drooping spirits have been revived by the presence of so many of you who compose the membership of the several associations with whom we correspond . We have been greatly refreshed by the coming of your lovely and friendly correspondence. We appreciate your elders whom God hath endowed with His Holy Spirit to preach unto us salvation by grace through faith in the complete work of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in saving His elect Family. Our aching hearts have been renewed while we are blessed to drink together from the fountain that springs up into everlasting life."

" We are bound to thank God for this medium of fellowship granted us through associational correspondence. This chain of correspondence has united in one body many of our people from different states covering hundreds of miles . May God enable us to appreciate this grand blessing to the extent that we be given to watch and pray and so conduct ourselves that this chain will not be broken - but rather extended . May God keep us together and at one another 's feet . May this letter bear to you love and fellowship . We covet a continuation of your correspondence and visitations ."

All of these objectives heretofore mentioned , together with the practice of the apostles and apostolic churches writing to the churches and brethren , would certainly commend general meetings when we consider their visitations among the churches. Brethren and churches then desired to learn of the welfare of others as well as to inform others of their own welfare . Letters were written then and sent by messengers to each other . This would not be a departure from apostolic practice to have associational meeting regularly scheduled provided that messengers would not attempt any disciplinary action in dealing with any church or member . Associations have no Bible authority to deal in any manner disciplining

churches or members . Since the church is the only organized body sanctioned by the Bible , and any other society or combination of men would be without Scriptural authority; then associations constituted to be continuous existing bodies must be un-scriptural. Since we are all forgetful creatures , Old Baptists should be often reminded that there is no Bible authority for any formally organized association of God 's people other than the church itself; and because of this , no organized association of churches can be properly considered as a standing organization which is to be held sacred . Churches are continuous bodies ; associations are not. When we refer to " Our Moderator " between sessions of associations when speaking of the one who presided over the last associational meeting, we are sanctioning the idea that we do believe there is some other permanent Christian organization other than the church . When the associational meeting ends the duty of the moderator ends . When the churches meet again in an associated capacity , they are obligated to reorganize for that session. We enjoy visiting these associations , not for the sake of these humanly organized bodies, but for the wonderful heavenly privilege they provide , for the general assembling of the Saints of God , for the sole purpose of worshipping God , and associating with one another.

Have we departed from the steps of our forefathers in the use of associations? This is a vital question. We should ascertain the answer by examinination . The church cannot confer authority to any one or ones to act in its behalf . Christ is its only representive . Question 1 , Do you have a copy of the Articles of Faith Constitution , Rules of Decorum , Church Covenant , and copies of minutes of preceedings of the church of your membership? Question 2, Do you have copies of the Constitution, Articles of Faith, Rules of Decorum, and proceedings of the Association in which your church is catalogued as a member ? If your answer be NO to question 1 and yes to 2 it will show that a greater regard is shown toward the association than to the church of your membership . Question 3 , Has the church of your membership by an act of the church barred any church or minister from your affiliation in the past several years? Question 4, Has the association barred any church or minister within the past several years which has affected the affiliation of the church of your membership ? If your answer be NO to Question 3 and YES to question 4 it will show that your messengers have acted beyond their authority and that you respect your association more than the church of your membership . Question 5 , Has the church of your membership desired to invite certain ministers to preach to you but because of some action of the association unauthorized by the church of your membership , you are afraid to invite? If your answer to this question be YES ; then , you are allowing the association to infringe on your internal rights and to bring you into its bondage. Question 6, Have you ever had a church to seek affiliation with your church and a host of your membership would say to them, " We all have fellowship for you but you must present the matter to the association when it convenes "; and, you do not take any action upon the matter and make no recommendation

to the association in your letter in order that messengers from other churches may present this matter to their churches? If this be the way you handle the matters, you are supporting the idea that messengers making up the association are to be the executive board to govern, discipline, and regulate church affiliation and fellowship. I cannot believe that our forefathers who first organized such meetings meant that they should be used in this manner. They were aware of the fact that it could easily lead to this. Therefore, safeguards were well written in their first organizations of associations with the hopes of preventing such unscriptural use. We have before us the Constitution of the Sulphur Fork Primitive Baptist Association of churches. We shall quote these safeguards as written by our forefathers in forming this association: — " CONSTITUTION ...3. The members thus chosen and convened shall not have power to lord it over God's heritage, nor shall have any eclesiastical power over any of the churches, nor shall they infringe on any of the churches of the union...11. We believe that all societies or combinations of men, professing for their object the promotion of God's kingdom, for the spiritual good of men, except the Church of Christ are unauthorized by the Word of God, and are a fruitful source of contention and strife. Such as Foreign and Domestic Societies, Bible Tracts, Sabbath Schools, and State Conventions, all of which we believe are unscriptural and un-Christian in the origin operation, and tendency; and as such we will not fellowship ..."

It is worse to esteem associations higher than the church than to approve of auxiliaries within the church. Question 7, When you travel abroad and you are questioned by Old School or Primitive Baptists relative to your religious affiliation, What is your answer??? If your answer be that you are a member of a certain association, you either esteem your association higher than your church, or, there has been more effort and expense used to make the actions of your association prominent rather than your church. When you give such answer you are aiding the idea that there is some other Christian organization that is perpetual and continuous in its operations other than the church. Question 8, Do you think it necessary that your church belong to an association ?? If your answer be YES you aid the idea that the church of your membership is somewhat dependent upon someone other than Jesus Christ as its Head.

I am convinced that associiational meetings are a blessing to God as long as churches are blessed to use them as tools for the promotion of bringing more and more of the Lord's little ones into affiliation of one-another. I am convinced that associations become a curse when they begin investigating, dropping, disciplining, not receiving, and barring from fellowship, churches who have had membership with them. I am convinced that as wealth is a blessing as long as it serves you and becomes a curse when you become its servant: so is an association a blessing as long as churches use it, but becomes a curse when it uses the churches as its servants.

Associations are without scriptural authority to settle difficulties. If difficulties arise in a particular church let us look to the Scriptures which

contains the " ONLY RULE OF FAITH AND PRACTICE." If after much fasting ing, prayer, mediation, and study of the Scriptures; a satisfactory solution cannot be reached, let us, then, call upon a sister church or churches to come and sit with us to aid us in counsel and advice. If the solution is not reached after all this, WHERE ELSE CAN WE GO BUT TO THE LORD? We must patiently wait for His deliverence. Do not disturb the peace of an associational meeting with problems which you together with the combined efforts of sister churches cannot settle. Do not turn your back upon a sister church who is in trouble. True churches of Christ mourn when they are in trouble. Do not tell them that they are in " disorder ", and because of this, you cannot affiliate with them. This is the proper time for you to mourn with those who mourn. Do not leave them to themselves because of this disturbance. They need your helping hand. They need the caresses of your love and the manifestation of your fellowship more then than before. When the peace of a particular church is disturbed, it is sick. It is in need of your loving care. If a member of that body is afflicted do not tell the body that we will have nothing more to do with you until you cut this member off. This would be like telling a loved one who has an afflicted arm that you will not come to visit him until he has his arm removed. Associations sometimes quickly cut off affiliation and correspondence even without a due course of labor in order to save in fellowship, just over rumors and mis-understandings. These things ought not to be and are unauthorized in the testimony of the Word of God.

Dear Readers: I make this personal appeal to you: My soul has been on its knees for a long time. I go groaning, moaning, and sighing, as a lone pilgrim in a weary land. I am waiting, praying, and watching. I crave to get a letter from each and everyone of you whose hearts have been melted and softened in the furnace of afflictions. I deeply desire the sweet comradeship of true friends. I want to dwell with friends who do not render harsh judgment against each other. I want the comradeship of a people who will not hold my sins against me. I confess that my sins are many and that my mistakes are great. I admit that I am weak and do not know how to walk perfectly and have erred many times. I am seeking the friendship of citizens of Zion who really forgive. I want to walk with a people who - " Serve in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." (Romans 7:6) I want the correspondence of those whose theme is: The Sovereign Power of God 's Everlasting Love Through Jesus Christ Our Lord and Redeemer. I have prayed for deeper convictions, richer experience, stronger faith, brighter hope, and more fervent charity; but I was perplexed when I found I must go through greater tribulations and persecutions in answer to my prayer. May we rejoice together in many more associational meetings here and finally climax it in that Eternal Session of Heaven 's ASSOCIATION. Cast a mantle of charity to cover my many mistakes I may have made in this Article. Before you lay this aside, please, get an envelope and address it to:

E.J. Lambert
306 Richardson
Winnsboro, Texas

"And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones." — Isaiah liv. 12.

Upon Zion in her time-state "the Sun of righteousness" does not shine in all his brightness; the "windows of agate," whilst she is in the flesh, temper his rays. Her prospects, too, are not fully bright and clear; as the Apostle speaks, "We see through" (or in) "a glass darkly;" we have not those clear views which the saints have in glory, where they see Jesus face to face. We have prospects sometimes, I hope, in our souls, of God, and Christ, and heavenly glory; but still these views are but semi-transparent, streaked and clouded like a window of agate, not bright and clear as a pane of plate glass. But as Daniel opened his windows toward Jerusalem, that he might see by faith what he could not see by sight, so should we aim to look towards the heavenly Jerusalem, that by faith we may there "see him who is invisible."

But the Lord speaks of Zion's "gates." "And thy gates of carbuncles." The carbuncle is of a blood-red colour; and why should the Lord have chosen that Zion's gates should be of this peculiar hue? May we not, without wresting the figure too closely, believe that there is some mystic allusion here to the blood of the Lamb? As scarlet wool was taken by Moses, when he sprinkled the people, and as Rahab's house was marked by a scarlet thread, may there not be something here significant in the colour of the gates? But "gates," or doors, not only give exit, but admission. How does God hear prayer, and answer it too? Only through the "gate of carbuncle." Prayer ascends through Jesus, and answers descend through Jesus; groans through Jesus enter the ears of the God of Sabaoth, and through the same bleeding gate of mercy do answers drop into the soul. Our poor self-righteous hearts can hardly comprehend this; we think we must have a good frame, or bring a good deed, or something good in ourselves, to make our prayers acceptable to God. Perish the thought! It is nothing but the spawn of self-righteousness. The "gates of carbuncle," the open wounds of the Lamb, through these every prayer ascends, through these every answer comes down; and if we set up anything else, or make a gate of human merit, we do despite to the Spirit of God, and pour contempt upon the grace and blood of the Lamb.

"And all thy borders of pleasant stones." God's providential dealings, which often form the outer setting of his inward mercies, are of pleasant stones. North, south, east, west, and Zion's borders are of precious materials. The daily events of life, the circumstances of family, station, employment, success, or the contrary, the ties of domestic affection, with all those varied circumstances which seem rather the borders and outer courts than the inner sanctuary of gracious experience — yet all these are of divine material and workmanship. Viewed by faith, every event and circumstance of life, however apparently grievous, is a pleasant stone; for Zion is a king's daughter, and the meanest of all her courts is made of pleasant stones. For of wisdom, that is, vital godliness, we read, "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

J.C. Philpot

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

ROMANS XV. 1 .

" We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."

In coming before our brethren and friends , readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES , we are pressed down with a realization of our unfitness for such things as writing for your comfort and edification, so much so, that were it not expected of us and did we not have a deep and, we hope, sincere love to the people of God, we could not possibly attempt to write . We are confident in this experience that we are not alone , for we know that this is the exercise of our fellow-associates, each one of them . " Who is sufficient for these things ? " We believe that it is out of our felt need that the Lord at times favors us to speak a word in season to those who are weary , and it is out of weakness we are made strong , we are not therefore ashamed to confess ourselves as weak , especially when , by the good Spirit of God, we are favored with the company of God 's dear saints . We remember our brother Paul , according to the grace given unto him , declared , " Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities , that the power of Christ may rest upon me . Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities , in reproaches , in necessities , in persecutions , in distresses for Christ 's sake : for when I am weak , then am I strong ." Now let us get to our subject . Paul speaks of those that are strong , not strong in themselves , for such are not a help to the weak , but rather a distress , but strong in the Lord and the power of his might . Paul links himself up with those of like precious faith and says " " WE ." What a strength there is in the fellowship of God . You may be alone , separated by thousands of miles from the Lord's people who are contending earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints , yet such is the exercise of spiritual in your soul , teaching you your weakness and poverty , and the Spirit witnessing to your spirit of the strength and riches there is in Christ Jesus , that even you , alone as you seem to be , are not alone but one of this wonderful fellowship . This " " we " is the same people with whom his very coming among them would result in their being comforted together . It seemed to be Paul's happiness to link himself with this people by the personal pronoun " we." It is the same " we " that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain TOGETHER until now , who know that all things work together for good to them that love God , to them who are the called according to his purpose . Thus in our text this same " we " are addressed by Paul . We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please ourselves . Pleasing ourselves and ignoring the needs of our brethren is very unbecoming , such an attitude certainly is not prompted by love , the love of God . " " Bear ye one another's burdens , and so fulfill the law of Christ. " None liveth unto himself . " And the eye cannot say unto the hand , I have no need of thee: nor again , the head to the feet , I have no need of you . Nay much more , those members of the body , which

seem to be MORE FEEBLE , ARE NECESSARY: * * * and whether one member suffer , all the members suffer with it ; or one member be honored ed , all the members rejoice with it ." There were then as now those who were weak in the faith ," one believeth that he may eat all things ; another , who is weak , eateth herbs ."

Let us for a moment consider conditions as they prevailed at the time Paul wrote . The Jewish believers , many of them , had been brought up under the law that forbade them to eat certain meats . Some of them had a clear understanding and felt that they could eat all things , while there were some who were weak and were still bound by legal traditions . Among the Gentiles there were those who could buy meat that had been offered to idols and knew " that an idol is nothing in the world , and that there is none other God but one ." — 1 Cor. viii. 4. " Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge ," saith Paul , " for some , with conscience of the idol unto this hour , eat it as a thing offered unto an idol ; and their conscience being weak is defiled ." In ancient Rome there was so much of such meat sold in the public shambles that some fearful ones , lest they eat such meat , refused to eat meat at all and so ate herbs . There must have been quite a feeling over this . Some determining to eat such meat , and those others , weak , refusing , and eating herbs . Undoubtedly some were for cutting off the weak ones , making this and other things , such as holy days , a bar of fellowship . Paul discourages such an attitude , advising them to receive him that is weak in the faith , but not to doubtful disputations tions . The weak ones were brethren , partakers of the holy calling, like unto the strong , they had faith , but were weak in the faith , they were ignorant , yet perhaps thought they were wise ; poor , yet thought they were rich . Perhaps they were in their walk just like the Laodiceans , saying , I am rich and increased with goods , and have need of nothing ; and knew not that they were wretched , and miserable and poor , and blind , and naked . Such persons were perhaps hard to endure , and the easiest way would have been to avoid them and have little or nothing to do with them . But that would not do , for , saith the apostle , " " We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak ." Not treat them as wicked men , dropping them from our company , but as weak brethren , bearing with them , praying for them . Yes , prayer is one way to bear the infirmities of the weak , not only praying for them , but more often it will become us to pray for ourselves , that the Lord would guide our way to keep his statutes still . Those who may profess themselves strong in the faith , have not a right faith , if it be not a faith that worketh by love . Paul says we ought to bear the infirmities of the weak . Are they given to lightness , and jesting , which is not becoming , it is their infirmity ; are there truths which are our comfort yet they cannot receive them , through lack of knowledge . There are some things which those who are strong cannot renounce or deny , but they ought to bear the infirmities of the weak , although not approving their errors and mistakes . There is much in that word " bear ",, it takes us to the heart of the whole matter . Charity which " beareth all things , believeth all things , hopeth all things, and endureth all things ." Thus

charity, the love of God, the first love, which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us, this love which seeketh not her own, in the words of our text, pleaseth not herself. John wrote to the young men because they had overcome the wicked one, and to the little children because their sins were forgiven them for His name 's sake. For Christ 's sake then we ought to bear and forbear, for Christ 's sake we ought to love one another, for Christ 's sake ought to bear the infirmities of the weak. True faith does consider oneself, not with a self-satisfaction, but with self-loathing, which makes each to esteem other better than themselves. Faith sees each one complete in Jesus,

" Faith says to the mountains, Depart,
That stand betwixt God and the soul;
It binds up the broken in heart,
And makes their sore consciences whole.

Bids sins of a crimson-like dye
Be spotless as snow, and as white,
And proves such a sinner as I
As pure as an angel of light."

When we consider such faith, given to such vile sinners, we ought to bear with one another, encourage and not discourage. " Let each one please his neighbor." Who is my neighbor? The one who has fallen among thieves! In all this there is encouragement for brethren to walk together in the fear of God, helping one another. How few there are among men with whom we can walk or have anything in common in these days. One only has to listen a short time to know that he would be a misfit in this present world. People of worldly institutions are too good for God's poor and afflicted people, who are encompassed with infirmities, groaning and travailing together in pain until now, and how good to have brethren who can bear with our infirmities; yes, ever in our being unable to see with them in this or that, yet knowing we may differ from them and they can bear with us. Most of us can think of the patience and love of an earthly mother who bore with us, often not noticing things that others, who could not show us a mother 's love, would condemn. How we bless her for her love and forbearance. When we think of our lovely brotherhood, who have borne with us and put up with our ignorance, errors and hard speeches, shall we be like the man who was forgiven by his king ten thousand talents and who went out and found one of his fellow-servants who owed him an hundred pence, and he laid hands on him, " Pay me that thou owest " ? God forbid. Christ pleased not himself, though he was equal with God, yet he made himself of no reputation. He bore our sins in his own body, and it is written, " The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen on me." Wherefore receive ye one another as Christ also received us, to the glory of God. Much of the coldness and barrenness in Zion to-day is a result of not esteeming others better than self, and a strong inclination of many to please themselves. To-day, as of old, some say, " I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided ? Whenever differences come among brethren, and there have always been differences, there is enough flesh about us all to make the ways of Zion mourn. Brethren, at variance, always exaggerate the seriousness of their differences. The subject matter of our text is that breth-

ren shall drop doubtful disputations, and have a sympathy one towards another. When love runs through all our actions, then that which is lame is not turned out of the way, but rather is healed. God give us all to realize that he is strong who having no confidence in the flesh bears the infirmities of the weak. Realizing how apt he is to speak wrong and to do wrong, he can and does have a fellow-feeling for others. To keep pace with the weak, one must be touched by the angel in the same place as Jacob was. To condescend to men of low estate, can only truly be done when one is made to glory in his infirmities. Jonah could preach to Nineveh when he had felt the WEEDS were wrapped about his head and he had known something of what it meant for the earth with her bars to be about him forever. Peter also had a false strength, a strength that would have laughed at the infirmities of the weak. He would go to prison and to death and not deny Jesus, but Peter was brought down, he was converted, then he could feed the sheep and the lambs and bear the infirmities of the weak. To consider others for their good to edification will often result in the prayer of David being our prayer, when he cried " " Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am." Out of such frailty, compassion flows to the ignorant and those who are out of the way. Then thy light breaks forth as the morning and thy bread is dealt out to the hungry and the poor that are cast out thou bringest to thine house. It is in such strength that one visits those who are sick and in prison and is enabled to clothe those who are naked, and one is blessed to draw out his soul to the hungry and satisfy (by preaching Christ) the afflicted soul.

In conclusion, the strong have no strength in themselves, but in the Lord, and the infirmities of the weak are easily borne under the influence of the love of Christ which constraineth us.

Elder G.R. Ruston

MEETINGS

DAN RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

There will be a special meeting at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on Thanksgiving day night November 24th, 1988. The meeting will start with song service at 6:30 and preaching at 7:00. Elder J.T. Prescott of Swansboro, N.C. will be the guest speaker. Everyone is welcome who has a mind to meet with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Brother Boyd Minter, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 1988

Homie C. Dalton, VA	7.00
Mrs. J.T. Flippen, VA	2.00
S. L. Walker, VA	2.00
Charles E. Hatchett, OK	2.00
Harold T. Clayton, NC	5.00
Mr. & Mrs. B.W. Wade, WV	2.00
William Vick, TN	5.00
Mrs. Ernest W. Gibson, GA	7.00
Mrs. Emma Hardy, VA	2.00

James M. Burgin, TX 2.00
Mrs. James M. Hawley, VA ...2.00
Mrs. Minnie G. Roberts, NC 2.00
Grover Semones, VA 5.00
Charles Kirkpatrick, TX 2.00
Paul Chilton, KY 2.00
Irvin Holley, VA 2.00
Eld. G.D. Shipman, TX 2.00
Mrs. Ollie C. Gauldin, NC 7.00
Mrs. H.H. Blanton, MS 1.00
Mrs. Catherine Vass, NC 5.00
Mrs. Frank Scearce, VA 2.00
Ruben French, NC 5.00
Milton D. Houston, NC 2.00
Hassell A. Hale, VA 2.00
Mrs. Virgie L. Griffith, AL 5.00
Mrs. Bertie F. Brown, NC 2.00
C.W. Wood, VA 7.00
Eld. C.B. Davis, NC 2.00
Mrs. Charlotte Bullard, VA 2.00
W.W. Abshire, VA 7.00
Frank Hunt, VA 22.00
C.H. Oakley, NC 22.00
Mrs. Albert H. Davidson, LA.....7.00

OBITUARIES

DELMAS SMITH ADAMS

This is in memory of Delmas Smith Adams, who was born on March 3, 1907, in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, to Stephen Edward and Martha Jane Dalton Adams. He married Ora Short on January 2, 1926. They had five children, three of which preceded Delmas in death, and twelve grandchildren. He spent his early years in Pittsylvania County and Altavista, Virginia and later moved to Roanoke, Virginia, where he lived the rest of his life. He and his wife joined Weatherford Church in August, 1953. He loved the brethren and was a firm believer in salvation by grace. He was a kind and gentle man and will be greatly missed by those of us who loved and knew him best. He passed away on April 26, 1988 in Camelot Hall in Salem, Virgina. His funeral was held on April 28, 1988 in Weatherford Church and was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

Written in love by his daughter,
Martha A. Dalton

WILLIAM MOTEN COX

Brother Moten Cox, age 82 years, passed away June 1, 1988. He was hospitalized only two days after suffering a stroke until the Lord called him home.

He was born September 2, 1905 to Bert C. Cox and Nancy F. Cox. He was a retired farmer and a substitute mail carrier. He was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church since 1940. Brother Moten kept the faith until the end. He attended church on the 4th Saturday in May and was buried on the 1st Saturday in June. I would watch him listen attentive and nod his head when he was enjoying these precious truths being preached. Brother Moten greeted his Brothers and Sisters with a firm hand shake and hug.

Preceded in death one son Roger "Micky" Cox. Survivers are his wife Virgie Reed Cox, one son and daughter-in-law Paul A. and Bernice Cox from Nashville, Tennessee. Two daughters and sons-in-law, Evelyn S. and Danny Baker for Midliothian, VA; Pauline S. and Swanson Pendleton from Roanoke, VA. Two brothers, Hassell Cox and Ray Cox Illinois.

Three sisters, Ruby C. Mahr, Kate C. King from Illinois; and Zola A. Layman from Canada. One sister-in-law Beverly Cox, seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Funeral Services were held at Mayberry Chapel on June 4, 1988 at 11:00 a.m. by his Pastor Elder Hale Terry. Pretty singing by the Brothers, Sisters, and friends. Some of his favorites such as: How Tedious and Tastless the Hour, Amazing Grace, and others.

He was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in the family cemetery on the homeplace to await the Second Coming of Christ. We at Union Church miss him but, we feel our loss is his eternal gain.

Written by request of Union Church at last business meeting by: Dorcie Semones, Elder Hale Terry Moderator, Sister Lessie Cox Clerk.

DOYLE OREN MURPHY

The appointed time for our beloved Brother and Deacon, Doyle Oren Murphy, to pass from this life came June 22, 1988. He was born in Union County, near Eldorado, Arkansas, Feb. 20, 1909, making his stay here 79 years. Brother Doyle was the youngest of seven children.

He is survived by his wife, Helen Gathright Murphy; one son, David Lane Murphy and one daughter, Mrs. Robbie Holloway, both of Houston, Texas; three stepsons and one stepdaughter; one brother, Fred Murphy, and two sisters, Faye Hogg and Clemmic Bishop, of Eldorado, Arkansas.

Brother Doyle joined the Primitive Baptist Church in 1962, and was ordained a deacon of Rehobeth Church in March, 1980. He loved going to church and attended as long as he was physically able. Brother Doyle made several trips to churches in Virginia, North Carolina, Alabama and Texas, and made many friends along the way. He loved to sing the old songs and was very gifted in prayer.

He will be sadly missed by all who knew and loved him. May we who are left be reconciled to God's will in his death. His funeral was conducted by Elders Lloyd Wall and G.R. Smith at Young's Funeral Home, Eldorado, Arkansas.

The attached writing by Brother Doyle was found by his wife after his death.

Elder G.R. Smith

SISTER LILLIE PENNELLE

On Feb. 8, 1988 the Lord called Sister Lillie Pennelle home at the age of 99 years, 3 weeks, and 2 days. Had been in Riverside Health Care Center 4 1/2 years.

Born Jan. 17, 1889 in Pittsylvania County, she was the daughter of the late Thomas H. and Bettie Marshal Davis. She lived her entire life in the county. She was first married to the late Lindsy Hanks, who died leaving her with three small boys, Edgar, Curtis and Lester Hanks, all deceased. She later married the late Tom Pennelle.

Sister Lillie joined Mt. Ararat or (Old Mt. Church) May 27, 1916. A faithful devoted member as long as her health permited.

To visit her was a joy , her mind clear and centered on spiritual things. Telling of Gods great love and mercy to her all the days of her life . Of visions and dreams since a small girl. Will relate one she saw a few years ago, she looked out the window from her bed, saw some one dressed in the most beautiful white robe that she had ever seen , (did not see the face) as she looked in admiration at such beauty . She thought oh how I would love to have a robe like that , she looked down and low and behold she was wearing one just like it. She read her bible often and was blessed with deep understanding , loved to talk of Him who has all power , and changes not , Who predestinated all things .

She leaves to mourn , two daughters in law Mildred Hanks , and Lizzie Hanks . 9 grandchildren 24 great grandchildren , 6 great great grandchildren . Her funeral was held from Wrenn-Yeats Funeral home chapel , by her pastor, Elder H.W. Wray, Feb. 10 , 1988 . She was layed to rest in Danville Memorial Garden beneath a beautiful mound of flowers , where her body will rest until that Great day, when Christ , the righteous Judge , shall come to take his ransomed people home .

Written by one who loved her , at the request of the church .

Elder H .W . Wray , Moderator
Sarah Barker , Church Clerk

ELDER REEVES OWEN SMITH

I pray God will direct as I attempt to write this memorial of our dear brother in Christ I hope ?

Elder Smith was born Jan . 11 , 1919 , a son of John W . and Bessie Potter Smith . He departed from this life June 11 , 1988 . He leaves to mourn his passing , his dear wife Sister Rachel Allgood Smith whom he married Oct . 19 , 1941 . Two sons , Reeves O . Smith , Jr . of Belleville , MI., Chester W . Smith of Belhaven , N .C . Two daughters , Pat Taylor of Albany , Ga ., and Sylvia Kirk of Washington , N .C . Eight grandchildren, two brothers Clemon and Justice Smith of Belhaven , N .C . Three sisters, Sana Paul of Belhaven, N.C., Vera Waters of Pinetown , N .C . and Nelva Recceardelli of Jacksonville , Fla .

Elder Smith joined North Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Belhaven, N N.C. in 1969 and was soon ordained a deacon . Later the call to the ministry was recognized by the church. On the second Saturday night in March 1979 he was ordained to the full work of the ministry . Elder Smith was blessed to fill both offices as well as anyone I've ever known . I 'm sure that all who knew him would say the same . Elder Smith was sound in the doctrine of God our savior and was blessed with good advice at times which he shared with me and others . He was a good neighbor and friend to the community in which he lived . He was called to pastor Flat Swamp Church near Robersonville, N.C. and Bethelehem Church near Columbia , N .C . which he served well as long as he could go.

He was in declining health for about a year and suffered much but never was a complainer but was always ready to join with the great Apostle Paul and say , I recon the sufferings of this time world are not worthy to be compared with the glory

which shall be revealed in us . His loving family was always there, doing everything they could to make him more comfortable .

May we all , by God 's grace , say thank God for such a lovely brother and say to him, sleep on, take thy rest waiting for that blessed day when all God 's children will be taken home to glory where there will be no more sad farewells but will join together in everlasting praise to God the father .

His funeral was conducted at Paul funeral home in Belhaven , N.C . and his body laid to rest in the Smithton family cemetery , , Elders Joseph Sawyer, Jessie Forman and the writer officiating .

Resolved— one copy to the family one copy for the church record and one copy to the Signs of the Times .
By order of conference

Elder J .T . Prescott , Moderator
Tom Thompson , Clerk

VIRGINIA C . WOOD

Virginia C . Wood , wife of the late Elder John D . Wood , Sr . passed from this life on July 14 , 1988 at the age of 94 and was laid to rest in Black Rock Cemetery , Butler , Maryland . Elder Junior Conner of Salem , Virginia conducted the funeral .

Sister Wood lived a long, fulfilling life as she and her husband entertained many Old Baptists at their home in Manassas , Virginia . They traveled extensively to fulfill Elder Wood 's pastorate until his failing health caused him to give up his churches . Her last four years were spent in a nursing home in Westminster , Maryland .

She was the daughter of the late Jerman and Martha Franklin Carter and is survived by one daughter , Virginia Gladding of Westminister ; one son , John D. Wood , Jr . of South Carolina ; four sisters , Mary Sisler and Viola Carter , both of Roanoke , Virginia , Iva Burgess of Boonesmill , Va., Martha Deveraux of Afton , Missouri ; five grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren .

Although her memory of natural things declined considerably in her waning years , Sister Wood's spiritual mind remained clear and during our visits with her she was able to quote from the Bible and sing the songs of Zion with us from memory .

Peggy and Gene Osborne

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your " Signs " and without missing any copies , be sure to inform us of any change of address .

Editors

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POEM

I LOVE THY KINGDOM, LORD

I love thy kingdom, Lord
The house of thine abode;
The church our blest Redeemer saved
With his own precious blood
I love thy church, O God,
Her walls before thee stand,
Dear as the apple of thine eye,
And graven on thy hand.

For her my tears shall fall,
For her my prayers ascend,
To her my cares and toils be given
Till cares and toils shall end.
Beyond my highest joy
I prize her heavenly ways;
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
Her hymns of love and praise.

Jesus, thou friend divine,
Our Saviour and our King
Thy hand, from every snare and foe,
Shall great deliverance bring.
Sure as thy truth shall last,
To Zion shall be given
The brightest glories earth can yield,
And brighter bliss of heaven.

Dwight

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EDITORIAL

THE WIND

" The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, whither it goeth: so is every one born of the Spirit." (John 3:8)

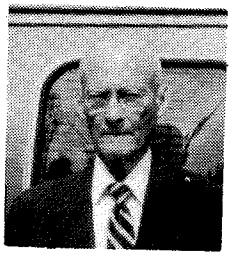
Elder W.D. Griffin

These two things are produced by the Lord. Not the first created thing had the least part of these two productions being carried or developed to full fruition. Furthermore each and everyone from the first one in the pristine morning of time, have, if they have, come into the kingdom of heaven under just such trying cirumstances as are described here by our Saviour. That is not the construction that I put on what He said, but it is the experience that I hoped to have passed through at the time.

That early experience was something terrible to endure, and it is still that way. I know that what the Bible says does not mean anything to anyone unless they have (and are) experiencing the things described. Therefore, I do not appeal (I do not preach nor write to those that have a vain philosophy) to those that have not, nor do not experience the power set forth by the Saviour's description of the New Birth.

Although the learned Saul had never bowed the knee to anyone, nor to anybody, yet, I have never, in all of my reading, come across a man as helpless and ignorant as he shown himself to be on the Damascus road. While we are at this particular place in the travel of one who has come under the experience and power of this wind, let me go a step further and say that anyone that leaves the spot where this wind has blown, that comes away knowing where it came from and what it is about, and what they are to do, one and all of them are mistaken about the Lord having demonstrated His power in their life.

Now I did not say that there wasn't a voice or a thunder or some other demonstration of great affairs. Many such occurrences happen which get a lot of attention, but when the dust has settled the Lord was not in any of them. Moreover, some of the time there is not a voice from outside the hearer. Only his or her imagination is using them. In what I desire to call your

attention to , each and everyone is brought into the presence of this devastating storm , and each one is brought into the scene when everything is yielding to this gigantic wind they feel the tremors that involuntarily pass through them; they bow down to great buildings that they have built to house their goods , and these are all laid waste about them ; they feel the surge of the mighty power within and around them , Yes , they are aware that their house has been wrecked for all time to come. But they fail to learn one thing that multiplied tens of thousands are learning everytime that a breeze rises, to wit, they know where it comes from , and , as they arise , and pick up the fragments, they soon have still greater blueprints for better barns and storehouses in which to store their goods .

Not so with the true Israelite , the true child of God . He or she leaves that stromy ground in a lot worse state than when the wind arose. They know something happened to them that had never occurred before , but they spend the balance of their days in amazement and in wonder. What did happen to me ? Where did it come from ? Where did it go ? Did it come from God or did it come from my depraved mind ?

This was indeed the greatest wind to ever blow . It does not leave you with a lot of goods intact. It spoils all of that which you laid up . It does not take this great spoil away . You have to live with the spoiling goods (they get worse as time goes on), and you need not think you are going to find out where the wind came from , neither are you going to find out where it goes . There is not a shred of conditionalism that you can perform and get some relief. You will never get any while you live . For you see a Stronger Man than you has come on the scene and has from the start routed you. He spoils your goods and then binds you. People talk about that they are free to perform this and that and get blessings , or to leave off this and that and miss them . That is not true. When this wind arises and blows itself out it leaves everyone a poor helpless sinner not knowing anything as he or she ought. They do not know where the storm come from much less do they know whether it is of God or not .

Once again I would urge that where this wind (Spirit) has blown there is not one that knows whether it is God that has dealt with them or not. Instead of all of those born of the Spirit being godly , they do not any of them know whether that they are godly or not. Thus, as I leave this phase of the subject, I would kindly ask, have you evercome this wind , or has it overcome you ?

Now let us follow the wind and the storm. Let us see if we ever do get to where we can master this Spirit . In order for us to have power to save ourselves , we must have power over the Spirit. Do we have this ? Have we the ability to retain the Spirit ? If so , we must also have the will to do so . Have we got that power ? The question is: Are we able to stay in the Spirit or to retain that Spirit ? If there is a passage of Scripture that declares that wonderful fact, certainly, I desire to find it. I find to the contrary. There cannot be any mistake about two things . Even though there is right much in writing and more still of loud talking that any child of God can walk in the Spirit at will , yet the wise man

declared that no man could retain the Spirit anymore than he could retain life in the day of death. It is passing strange that those professing to be saved by the grace of God, yet boldly and blindly declared that if we just would do it that we can walk in the Spirit at all times. Or have I misunderstood you — do you mean to suggest that you can save yourself whether in or out of the Spirit?

All of the great blessings in nature are also spiritual gifts. Ever so many times, in divers manners the written word is teaming with references about the wind in the travels and experiences of those who are of the members of the kingdom of heaven. As far as the references to the wind it always finds the poor sinner at its mercy. At this period in our dealing with the subject, let us remember that God is the direct and immediate cause of there being any natural wind. Of course, if you have some kind of a book that gives a source of wind in a nature other than our wise and gracious Creator, you get all out of it that you can, but for those who learned in the outset of their experience that it blows where it listeth, and that is in keeping with what our heavenly Father does, we that hope in Him will continue to believe that He holds it in His fists, and thus that every cooling breeze from the south, as well as every frigid blast out of icy lands, together with every tornadic wind that ever hit Kansas came as a result of Him opening His fists. If those that can master the winds will be so kind as to tell us where they find that fact in the Bible, we will appreciate it so much. But I think that they have an insurmountable problem to begin with for we are all reminded that the wind blows where it listeth, which is to say that it blows where it pleases and in relation to it blowing where it pleases, we are likewise reminded that God holds it in His fists, and that not only does that wind blow where God pleases for it to blow, both the wind of the Spirit and that in nature, but likewise that bound the waters in a garment that He has established all the ends of the earth, therefore, not only is every item of nature bounded, but that each time any of these natural gifts are spiritualized that in each case the Spirit is settled, fixed, arranged so definitely that happen so or maybe so or conditionality just cannot be found in the Bible concerning them by the children of God.

The people of God went down to sea to do business in great waters and on good ships. The wind arose, a storm was sent. The wind became quite rough. They could not master their vessels. They were tossed to and fro. About the time that they thought the storm was abating, lo and behold, the wind tossed them fro. Every last one of them lost their wits. A man and a woman that has lost their wits is not able to rescue themselves, to save themselves. It is useless for you to write me that you are able to maintain your wits at all times. If you have ever been to sea, you have, and you didn't know what to do, and like these that I am describing, you would have been lost had not He that sent the storm caused it to abate. Salvation is of the Lord.

Jonah determined not to go to Nineveh. God determined that he go. He used what he had to keep from going, but he did not have the power to keep from going when the storm broke in its fury on him. At that time he said, even declared, that salvation

was of the Lord. Both the wind of the Spirit, and the natural wind were effective in making Jonah renounce all subterfuges and all dodgeings of the flesh and to say without reservation, that salvation comes from the Lord.

In the 148th Psalm we have a long list of things that fulfil the word of the Lord. If the Lord spares my unprofitable life, I may at a future date touch upon all of these things, but right now I am delighted to call your attention to stormy winds fulfilling His word, and His word in every way that it is used in the Bible is used for the mutual benefit of His children these stormy winds are kept harnessed in the strong hands of the Lord and will never blow in a way to destroy their hope, their heritage, their home beyond this travail.

If I am not mistaken, I have seen and felt the tossing of the wind of the Spirit. I have felt, as I hope, the bending down of every plant that I have planted. I have known that a power greater than I was laying waste what I had thought to have done. I did not know then, as I would have liked to have known where the wind was from. I have sought time after time that He in whom I sometimes am given a faint hope that it was He at the helm, but that this been nearly sixty years ago, and my testimony today is the same that it was that day of yore. I do not know as I would like to know that it was the Spirit of the Lord. If I got brave and said that I did know I would then be subjected to the same rebuke that is due all these that have withstood the Spirit and the wind in salvation.

But I write in hope. I do hope that I have been to sea, and that the storm has been furious, and that I, together with all of those whose hope of salvation now and hereafter is in the hands of the Mariner that rests in His own love (Zeph. 3:17), but is ever kind and merciful to the cry of His sea and wind tossed trophies of His covenant, and that HE rebukes the wind and the waves and out of His fulness gives them to rest also in His redeeming love.

Elder W.D. Griffin

NOTICE

To all who write for the "Signs." It is our policy, not to publish anything in the "Signs of the Times" that reflects in any way on something someone else has written and has been published. All articles sent to us for publication will be edited accordingly.

Editors

CORRESPONDENCE

Dearly Beloved Brethen,

I have had many thoughts recently that I desire to share with you, if God be willing; and I pray that He will direct my every effort of His praise, honor and glory, and to the edification and comfort of His saints. I hope that my thoughts have been inspired by the Almighty, and that what I believe concerning the holy gospel has been taught of Him and not by man.

First I will tell you that I believe, if not deceived, that all things were predetermined by God: in other words the predestination of all things.

He has ever been and shall ever be in complete control of all things and events; or he is in control of nothing. He is the One who has " declared the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." And, "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." There are many such scriptures in the Bible that declare the wisdom and power of our Sovereign God; and if this is not the God you and I believe in, then is all our hope in vain and we are still dead in trespasses and sin. This is the God that created the heavens and the earth and all things therein by the word of His power and in His eternal wisdom. Everything he created, or formed, or made was and is perfect for the purpose for which He made it. " For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in the earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consists." " He spake and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast."

Now I would like to tell you some of my recent thoughts. I desire that you read this carefully and prayerfully for I know that I am very prone to error, and I ask you to accept it only as far as you find it in accord with the holy scriptures.

It should be obvious to all that the entrance of sin into the world did not bring to light the glorious plan of redemption: this plan was only revealed much later. If it had been God's will for Adam to keep His commandment then surely Adam would have kept it: for God works all things after the counsel of His own will: He works in us to will and to do of His own good pleasure. The " will of God" is that His purpose for all things shall be accomplished when, where and how He has decreed. If anyone should disagree with me on this, then we may find that we disagree on many things; but herein lies what I believe to be the difference between God's will and His commandments. It may be hard for us to understand why God gave commandments that He knew would not be kept, but as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are His thoughts higher than our thoughts and His ways higher than our ways.

God's commandment to Adam to not partake of the forbidden fruit is as holy, just and good as is God Himself. He has never given a commandment that was not thus. However, let us consider the purpose of this particular commandment, and the one to whom it was given. There should be no doubt in the mind of anyone who has been translated out of nature's darkness into the marvelous, holy light of God that God hates sin with a holy hatred. but that He has a purpose for it being in the world that is worthy of His holy name. Thanks be unto our most holy God, however, that the plan of redemption and salvation was already formed by the great Three - in - one, for Jesus stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. And sin entered the world by the transgression of one man Adam.

Now let us consider this man who accomplished the will or purpose of God, though he knew it not. When God made man from the dust of the ground, breathed the breath of life

into his nostrils and he became a living soul, did He not make him according to His own will and purpose? Was anyone there to direct or advise Him? Of course not! God in His perfect wisdom and knowledge made man exactly as it pleased Him. Are we to question this? Certainly not. Paul said, " Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that made it, Why hast thou made me thus?" God is a Sovereign Being and is never to be questioned. God made this man Adam perfect and upright. All things were made or created perfect for the purpose which they were made or created, even Satan and the wicked. Satan, the father of lies, deceived Eve, and she ate of the forbidden fruit. She gave the fruit to Adam and he did eat of it. Adam knew neither evil or good before he ate the forbidden fruit, but because of his love for the woman that God had given him he willingly followed her into the death that God had said he would die. "For in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." It was love, not lust, that made Adam willing to die for his bride; for how can one lust after something he knows nothing about: they were naked, but knew it not. It was only after eating of the fruit that Adam knew good and evil. And the Lord said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil," when Adam had eaten the fruit and his eyes had been opened. Adam fulfilled the purpose of God because of his love, but Joseph's brothers fulfilled it by selling Joseph with evil intent.

When Adam partook of the forbidden fruit, sin entered the world; for sin is the transgression of the law, and judgment came upon all men to condemnation, for all were in his loins from the creation, because he is our federal head: we are only Adam multiplied. The entire human race became totally depraved with that first transgression. " And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." There are many scriptures that declare the fallen, wicked state of man, but the one quoted above should be abundantly sufficient. " Therefore by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one (Jesus) the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous." Adam's transgression fulfilled the will of God though he knew it not: and so it is today. Each and every one of us will accomplish the purpose of God, whether it be when He works in us to do that which is well pleasing in His sight, or we do it with evil intent in our heart and break every commandment. Even our wrath shall praise him. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath thou shalt restrain."

It was the will of God that our Lord and Saviour should be crucified, for it had been foretold by God's prophets of old. " Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." And in the garden, the night when Jesus was taken, he said to his disciples, " Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He

shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels ? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled , that thus it must be? And Peter said, " But these things which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets that Christ would suffer , he hath so fulfilled." The Jews sought to slay Jesus many times , but could not , because his time had not yet come ; but at the appointed time they fulfilled the will of God, with evil intent, though they knew it not . And it was not only the Jews which took part in it: "The kings of the earth stood up , and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord , and against his Christ . For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus , whom thou has anointed both Herod and Pontius Pilate , with the Gentiles , were gathered together for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Brethren , it was no secret that Christ should be crucified and slain , and yet they did not know they were fulfilling the will of God when they hung the Saviour on the cross of Calvary . Had they known it , they would not have slain the Prince of Glory .

God commanded Abraham to take his only son , Isaac , upon a certain mountain and offer him there for a burnt offering , and by faith Abraham did as God commanded . When Isaac asked , " Where is the lamb for the burnt offering ," Abraham by faith said , " My son , God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering ." He took him where God said , placed him on the alter with the wood and would have slain his only beloved son had not God stayed his hand. Since it was God who stayed him, can we believe that it was God's will that Isaac should be slain for a offering ? I don't believe that we can . This is one of the fiery trials which is to try each and every child of God : not that we will be commanded to offer a son for sacrifice , but we have been chosen in the furnace of affliction and we must face every trial in the path that has been laid out for us ; but when we have been tried we shall come forth as gold with all the dross burned out . I believe that the trial of Abraham ' s faith was put on record for our learning and consolation . It teaches us that we should attempt to follow all the commandments of God and trust in Him to lead us in the right way by the faith given unto us . And it brings forth in a beautiful figure the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our redemption and salvation . By faith Abraham believed that God was able to keep all that He had promised , and it was imputed unto him for righteousness . It was not written for his sake alone , that it was imputed unto him ; but for us also , to whom it shall be imputed , if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead . There is no doubt in my mind that Abraham would have slain his son had not God stayed him , for he had faith to believe that God was able to raise him up , even from the dead ; from whence also he received him in a figure . God provided the ram caught in the thicket by his horns , and Abraham offered up the ram in the stead of his son . This ram was typical of the Holy Lamb that would be offered upon the cross of Calvary for the sins of his people . And by this one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified .

Abraham ' s faith was strong , enabling him to obey all that was commanded of him by God . Was his faith a work of the creature ? Did Abraham have something that he pro-

duced himself ? Did he have something that you do not have ? No , for faith is the gift of God : " For by grace are ye saved through faith ; and that not of ourselves ; it is the gift of God ." It may be that one saint has more faith than another , but we have exactly enough faith to overcome all our trials and tribulations ; for God shall provide all our needs . Much of the time our faith seems so small that we feel we have none , but we always have what we need . " There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man : but God is faithful , who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able ; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape , that ye may be able to bear it ."

God is in one mind , and who can turn Him ? There is but one will , and that cannot be divided . We must do the will of God , whether by faith in believing or out of an evil heart .

Without faith it is impossible to please God . " Now faith is the substance of things hoped for , the evidence of things not seen ." Without faith we would have no evidence to support our hope of ever living and reigning with Christ in glory and we would have no peace with God in this world . " Therefore being justified by faith , we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ : by whom we also have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand , and rejoice in hope of the glory of God ." How do we overcome the cares , trials and tribulations of the world ? By faith " For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world : and this is the victory that overcometh the world , even our faith . Who is he that overcometh the world , but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God ?" We must be given faith before we can believe in Jesus Christ . Brethren , there is much , much more that could be said concerning the faith that is so essential to us , but this should be sufficient . However , let me make one more point . " For the promise , that he should be the heir of the world , was not to Abraham , or to his seed , through the law , but through the righteousness of faith . For if they which are of the law be heirs , faith is made void , and the promise made of none effect : because the law worketh wrath : for where no law is , there is no transgression . Therefore it is of faith , that it might be by grace ; to the end the promise might be sure TO ALL THE SEED ." I thank God for such a wonderful doctrine , even if I be not included in the seed . However , I have a hope in this , if not completely deceived .

Beloved brethren , I have much more that I would like to say to you , but I forbear ; for I fear this has already become too lengthy . If God be willing , I would like at a later date to write some more to you . Remember this poor sinner when at the throne of grace .

Clifford Wilbanks

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716 Hill Avenue
Salem , VA . 24153

Dear Elder Key :

The other day I encountered a person that told me if I would accept Christ as my Saviour , that God would give me eternal life . The person was sincere in believing that he had eternal life because of what h

had performed by his decision to make Christ his Saviour and believed that Christ had already given him eternal life .

No where in the Bible can I find that eternal life , only a hope of , is given to us while in this mortal life . " The gift of Eternal Life is through Jesus Christ our Lord ", says the scripture . Any other way , is not acceptable , " For There is One God and One Mediator between God and men , the man Jesus Christ ."

Through Christ , the children of God can do anything , without Him , " we can do nothing ," says the Apostle . Through Christ we gain the Victory !" Thanks be to God which giveth us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ ." It is only through the " Captain of our Salvation " That we can boast of Victory over sin and death ."

Our knowledge of God comes through Christ. " Neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son , and He to whosoever the Son will reveal Him . But if I be one of that number whom He told the Father ; " Thine they were and Thou gavest them me ," Then my " life is hid with Christ in God . . ." " As Thou Father Art in Me and I in Thee . . . I in them and Thou in Me . . ."

There is so much for me to be thankful for . I am thankful for the love and esteem of my family , my friends and neighbors . I am thankful for the Liberty and Freedom to attend the churches and there be blessed with the sweet fellowship one toward each other . To listen to the message and praise be to the Giver of life and things to sustain us , is indeed a blessing .

We should be thankful for the Bible and read it more often and meditate over what is written there for our learning . Through Christ we see God , " Who at Sundry Times and in divers manners spake in Times past unto the fathers by the prophets , hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son . . ." " Who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person and up holding all things by the word of His power , when He had by Himself purged our sins sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High ."

" For Christ is not entered into the Holy place made with hands , which are the figures of the true , but into heaven itself now to appear in the presence of God for us ." What a comforting scripture this is to me !

Often times , I'm made to wonder , to doubt if the hope of faith will be turned to sight . If I look at myself so vile , I see nothing to and of myself to cling to , but when I' m enabled to look away from self to Him , my cup runneth over !

May the Lord bless His people and give unto them His peace .

Horace E . Walker

ARTICLES

The following is a sermon preached by Elder Raymond Goad at Little Creek Church near Delmar , Del .. April 10 . 1988 .

Perhaps if there is one chapter in the Bible that identifies Old Baptist belief , it would be the eighth chapter of Romans . I am sure there are those who had rather this scripture not even be printed , but thats beside the point . I believe that all scriptures are profitable for the doctrine , and in order to understand these scriptures , we must under-

stand in the spirit and in truth. As we read and all we ever see in these beautiful truths is the natural things of this life, it is evidence that we have not the spirit of God. Yet I believe that much of our time we are left to ourselves, that as we read we do not understand what we are reading, in the spirit. There are many times when I have opened the scriptures, my mind would wander away on earthly things. I trust that what few moments we stand before you that our minds may be removed from the vain and perishable things of this life, and be set on things that are eternal.

I will begin, the Lord willing with the sixteenth verse of the eighth chapter of Romans. " The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." Paul writes to the brethren here, to the church; He is speaking something that is present with children of God. He says the spirit itself bears witness with our spirit and as we read these beautiful truths we beg for understanding and enlightening in what they mean. Certainly we could not rejoice in the writing that Paul has written, unless that our spirits are along the same lines as Paul 's experience was. In order to rejoice in the truth as it is written we must know something about the spirit in which it was written. Paul says the spirit itself, that is the spirit of God, the new heart, the understanding that God gives his people, bears witness that we are the children of God.

I believe that God 's people from time to time rejoice in the spirit. Not only when they are at church, not only when their hearts are turned to the hymns of Zion, but when it pleases God. Maybe, when about our work, when it seems everything else is removed, only the things that be of God I have a few times took the wrong road as I drove along the highway when meditating upon the things that be of God. I trust that my spirit, if indeed I have one this morning witnesses with the spirit in which Paul records these beautiful truths. The truth bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.

I have told those who talk about things that they believe, if they could find some other teachings that I enjoy more in the things that you believe, then I would go that way. For more than twenty years, I trust by the Grace of God, that I haven 't found anything that I love better than the teachings that the Primitive Baptists stands for, that is salvation by Grace. Then he says the children are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. If so be if we have suffered with him that we may also be glorified together. Sometimes it melts me as I read these beautiful truths. We have read the experience of Paul, we have read many of your experiences from time to time as you have been blessed to write them. We have rejoiced in hearing those who have come to the church tell their experience.

We think sometimes, perhaps that we suffer more than anyone else. We do in one sense of the word and Christ in the seventeenth chapter of John tells us why that we suffer. I am not talking about physically, but I am talking about spiritually. He tells us we are in the world but we are not of the world. Thats why you are here today, thats why there is nothing out there in the world that is more important than to go to church. For me this is the most important thing in life, that we are blessed to meet together, to mingle our voices in hymns of praise, to talk about the

goodness and mercies of God. Certainly it was the most important thing in Paul's life after he was converted. It wasn't important before, neither was it in your life, neither was it in mine. There was a time in our lives when this was not important with us. I can remember going to church when it was boring to set even the short period of time while the minister preached. Yet I can remember even back then when I saw those dear saints set back there and shed tears of joy under the sound of the gospel. Paul said that I reckon the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. We know that we have aches and pains, sometimes we feel ours is greater than anyone else, but you know as we read these beautiful truths we find that God's people suffer at the hand of the enemy, many of them were beheaded, many of them were put to death. Paul was beaten and was in prison and even left for dead. He said he counted it all joy that he was blessed to suffer for the name of Christ, for Christ sake. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time is not to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. Isn't this beautiful, "the glory that shall be revealed in us." The word us as it is used has reference to the church of God, every heir of promise. For the ernest expectations of the creature waits for the manifestation of the Son of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. He said they shall be delivered. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. I know the Bible says we know nothing as we ought. It says the eye has not seen, the ear has not heard, neither has entered into the heart of man what God has prepared for them that love him. And we yearn for those little Bethel spots along life's journey. When our minds have been completely removed from earthly things, and yet they are not even to be compared with that which you shall receive. For we know that the whole creature groan and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourself, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why does he yet hope for it? There are those who criticize us for this. I will confess to you that this is all I have in this life is a hope. Sometimes it seems so small, but I don't believe it is ever completely removed. I have a hope that the Lord shall keep me from doing the things I see taking place in the world, from the things I have done and I have a hope that someday beyond this life, beyond these sufferings and trials that are mine and yours that we shall see him for ourselves and not another. We are saved by hope, but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. I believe God's children wait for it with patience. I believe that they are completely satisfied with the promises of God. God is not slack concerning his promises as some men count slackness. If we hope for that we see not then do we with patience wait for it.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth

our infirmities ; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought ; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered . And then he says these beautiful words . He that searches the heart . I think that so much of the time we are too anxious to judge . The Bible teaches us that we should not judge . It tells us in the book of Matthew to judge not that ye be not judged . He that searches the heart knows what is the mind of the Spirit , because he maketh intercessions for the saints according to the will of God . Satan would have you to believe its according to your will , but its according to the will of God . He taught his disciples to pray in this manner " That Thy Will Be Done , " not what we will . Its not always in our best interest for what we pray for , its not that he don't hear our prayers , its not that he doesn't answer them . Paul sought the Lord that he might remove the thorn in the flesh. He told him its there lest you get exaulted above measure , my Grace is sufficient for you . Then he says this , and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God , to them who are called according to his purpose . Not according to your purpose , not according to something that we have done , or something that we give , but according to the purpose of God . We spend much time in life wondering about those things and then we are reminded of this scripture . We find comfort in our hearts to know that these things are not out of control . If they were , then God ceases to be God . He is the supreme being of this universe and it tells us in this scripture there is no power except the power of the things of God . Then they are not out of control , they are working for your good . I know we can't always see that but we find comfort .

He says my peace I give unto you . I find peace when I think of this . I find peace knowing that He is in control . That these things are not going to over run anything unless it is according to the will of God . We are not always blessed to see that , but when we are we find peace . I am at peace with what God has promised . I have no doubt whatsoever that he is able to raise those stones up . I have no doubt whatsoever that he shall raise the dead . I am at complete peace at the promises of God . I am not at peace with myself , but I have complete peace and confidence in the promises and will of God . For whom he did foreknow , he also did predestinate to to be conformed to the image of His Son , that he might be the firstborn among many brethren .

Moreover whom he did predestinate , them he also called : He did not leave anything to chance . In the 110th Psalm it reads , " Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power ." In His prayer He says , all the Father has given me I have lost none and shall raise them up in the last day . We had a dear brother come among us who had been in many different churches . And not long ago he joined the church , my home church and he told me this , " " Brother Goad , what I like about your preaching is you all preach eternal security ." He said thats what I want , eternal security . If we preach Jesus , we must preach eternal security for all the heirs of God . Moreover whom he did predestinate , them he also called When we are blessed in the Spirit to see these things they are very clear , we see the calling of Paul , we see the calling of all the Patriarchs of old and we don't find where they made any

great to do's about their calling. They were about their business following after the things of Satan as you and I and would still be, had it not been for the love of God in our hearts, we would still be following after those things. Paul says it is no more I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me. Moreover them he did predestinate, them he also called, we see the calling of many of the others. We see the calling of many of you. We have seen those who had said they would not be old Baptists, they would not come among them, would criticise them and make fun of them and later on made to love them. They were called out of natures darkness and brought in to the marvelous light. There are those of you who have told me of a calling. You were predestinated, and called here in time. Them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified. Paul said what shall we then say to these things if God be for us, who can be against us There is no powers, nor principalities nor things present, nor things to come that shall separate us from the love of God, which is our Christ Jesus

He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. All, has reference to all whose name is in the Book of Life. That is who this scripture is written to. Thats who he is talking to. Thats why He came to this low ground of sin and sorrow and took upon himself a body of flesh, thats what he did it for. He said for this cause was I born. What shall we then say to these things, if God be for us, who can be against us. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things. Something that you work for is not free. Something you inherit is not something you work for. Thats what the scriptures teach us, that we inherit these things. They are free. By Grace are you saved. Grace is a free and unmerited favor. You might go out and talk till you are blue in the face and you couldn't make one believe this. But God with even the Gaderene who lived among the tombs, when he cast the devils out and into a herd of swine and they ran down into the sea. He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast.

Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? I have heard those who believe differently say, oh yes, that was of election. You cast one vote, Christ cast a vote and Satan cast one and you have to cast for the deciding vote. I wasn't around here before the foundation of the world. The Bible teaches this took place before the foundation of the world. How could I have had anything to say in it. This is hid from the wise and the prudent. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect. It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long! We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other

creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God; which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I am glad Paul was talking about us. I am glad he didn't just say me, he said us, shall not separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus.

My dear hearers if this is not eternal security, I don't know what it is. If that is not the love of the things that you believe, the basis of the things that you love, the things that you hope for. I can tell you this morning I have no doubt whatsoever but that none of God's children will be left out. I don't believe God is slack concerning his promises as some men count slackness, but is long suffering toward us. He came, he suffered as no other man has ever suffered, bled and died and hung between Heaven and Earth and shed his precious blood on the tree of the cross for you and I trust for me, that someday beyond the trials of this life that we shall see him, be made like him and be satisfied. I don't know what kind of body it will be, one of the writers said, it does not yet appear what we shall be, but I am satisified with this promise, we shall be like him and and be satisfied. I believe with all my heart that he is able to perform that which he has promised to the children of God.

I hope to live my days out among you people, I hope I never bring trouble among you and I apologise for my mistakes, but for the things I love I stand firm upon salvation by grace and grace alone.

Elder Raymond Goad

THE STORY OF RUTH

Not long since, I attended services of the Baptists in the city and heard the preacher tell "the story of Ruth," and also showed on the screen what were purported to be the leading events of her life, and as there have always been two ways of telling a story, it made me want to tell it in my own little way; hence the attempt.

Back in the depths of antiquity God called Abraham out from among the Chaldeans, and told him to get out of the country, and from among the people, and from his father's house, to a land that he would show him, and it is said that he went out, not knowing whither he went. Therefore we conclude that Abraham in all his journey toward the promised land walked by faith and not by sight. So Abraham came to the land of Canaan, and Lot, his nephew, came with him. Abraham was rich in cattle, gold and silver, and Lot also had great flocks and herds. Abraham, Lot and their servants were strangers in the land of Canaan, and in that "their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together," and their herdsmen got to fighting, and they had to separate. Evidently this was a sore trial for faithful Abraham, but he bore it patiently, giving Lot his choice: You go to the right and I will go to the left, or vice versa, so Lot "pitched his tent toward Sodom." Later we find him living in Sodom, we find also the men of Sodom were sinners exceedingly before the Lord, so much so that the Lord sent his angels to Sodom to inspect the city, and overthrow it if the report were true, but they stopped with Abraham and told him about their

errand, and faithful Abraham sued for the city, for the sake of Lot. He probably did not have faith to pray for Lot's family individually, but he put him in with a number, first fifty, then forty and on down to ten, and the angel granted his every request. But lo, and behold, there were not ten righteous people there, but the Lord is ever mindful of his own, and he led Lot and his two daughters out of the city, hastening them, for, said he, I cannot do anything until you get out. "But his wife looked back from behind him, and became a pillar of salt." This all looks sad, but remember they were the dark hours before day. Lot and his two daughters went and dwelt in a cave and saw the smoke ascend as of a furnace when the four cities were destroyed, and they naturally concluded they were the only ones of the human race that were left, so these daughters formed a plan to propagate the human race, and both of the daughters became with child by their father. The firstborn brought forth a son, and called his name Moab; the same is the father of the Moabites. The younger brought forth a son, and she called his name Benammi. He is the father of the Ammonites.

Now let us recapitulate a little, and see if it is not a fact that all the good things and all the bad things are absolutely necessary to the carrying out of God's great, grand and noble purposes. If the servants of Abraham and Lot had not "strove together" they probably could have lived together, and Lot would not have moved to Sodom. If the men of Sodom had not been "sinners exceedingly before the Lord" the Lord would not have destroyed Sodom. If Lot's wife had not looked behind she would not have become a pillar of salt. Could she have gone on with her husband and dwelt in the cave with him she would no doubt have protected him from his daughters' incestuous crime, and if his two daughters had not lain with him there would have been no Moabites or Ammonites, consequently no Ruth, for she was a Moabitish damsel. Had there been no Ruth there could have been no Obed, for no other woman in the world could have been his mother. Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David, and Christ came of the seed of David. Look over this line of events as we may, and there is not a single one that could have been taken out or changed without breaking the chain of events that led down to the coming of the Savior. God could, I doubt not, have brought him through some other line, but inasmuch as he did not do it, but chose that line and method, why not just believe that in his omniscience and omnipotence he has ruled and managed all these things according to the good pleasure of his will and the salvation of his chosen? Then why not say as one of old: "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Notice he does not say, How shall he give us all things? but how can he fail to do it,

having given such an enormous price as his only begotten Son ?

One more point , in Psalms lx . 8, and in Psalms cviii . 9, we find this Scripture : " Moab is my washpot ." Every family needs a washpot , and had any one of the foregoing events failed to take place God 's family would have been minus a washpot , and his dear little children could not have been purified , and made white , and tried . (Dan . xii . 10 .) When the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt , and through forty years in the wilderness , their last camping - place was in the border of Maob (near the washpot) , and Balak , king of Moab , was frightened nearly to death at an army of 603,550, and he sent for Balaam to come and curse Israel , and the Lord suffered him to come , with orders that he was to speak nothing but such words as God was to put in his mouth. So he came and sought enchantment, but God put a blessing in his mouth every time . One of the blessings God put in his mouth was this : " Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob , neither is there any diviniation against Israel : according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and Israel , What hath God wrought !" As much as to say , Look at Israel (the church) and see the work of the great God . But Balaam gave Balak this instruction : Send out the daughters of Moab to dance before Israel , and get them to sacrifice to your gods , and so transgress God's law , and you will be able to overcome them . He followed the instruction and all the unworthy and unfit of the land of Canaan yielded to the temptation and were destroyed as filth from the washpot . Israel now being washed in the pot (Moab), they were ready to cross over Jordan into the promised land (church).

Just a few more words . As I have shown before , Christ came through the genealogy of Ruth , the Moabitish damsel . In the spirit of the case . Jesus Christ is the great spiritual washpot , whose blood cleanses all his little children from all their filthiness and uncleanness and prepares them for that heavenly Canaan . that rest at God 's right hand .

So the story of Ruth , the little Moabitish damsel , is a much more interesting story than the one I saw at the picture show .

G . W . Berry

" But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you : but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things , and is truth , and is no lie , and even as it hath taught you , ye shall abide in him ." — I John 2:27

Have you ever had a solitary drop of this holy anointing oil fall upon your heart ? One drop , if it be but a drop , will sanctify you for ever to the service of God . There was not much of the holy anointing oil used for the service of the tabernacle , when we consider the size and quantity of what had to be consecrated , for Moses had to anoint therewith the whole of the tabernacle of the congregaton , as well as all the vessels , with all their various appurtenances . When he went through the sacred work , he touched one vessel after another with a drop of oil ; for one drop sanctified the vessel to the service of the tabernacle . There was no repetition of the consecration wanted ; it abode . So if you ever had a drop of God 's love shed abroad in your heart ,— a drop of the anointing to teach you the truth as it is Jesus ; a drop to penetrate , to soften , to heal , to feed and give light , life , and power to your soul ,— you have the unction from the Holy one ; you know oil you have been sanctified and made meet for an eternal inheritance .

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

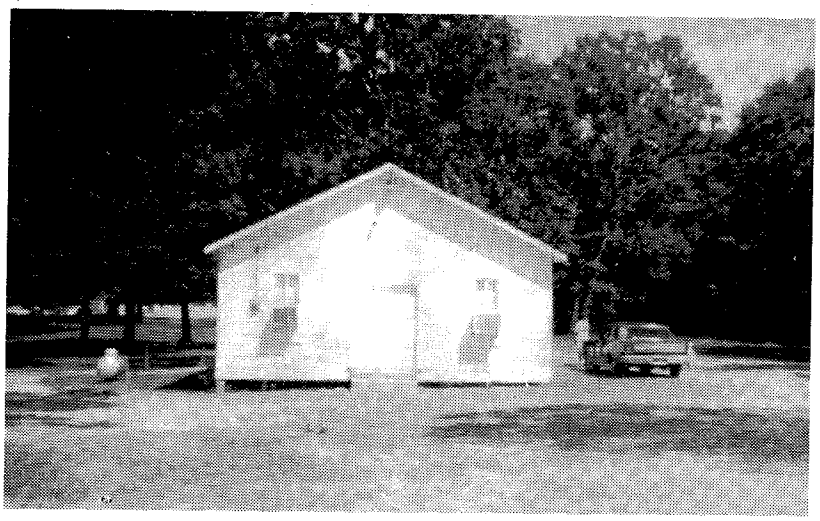

PARAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Last November 3rd marked the one hundredth anniversary of the constitution of Paran Primitive Baptist Church. The first meeting was held at Cox 's School House with Elders R .T .Webb and John Carter preaching the gospel of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Elder Webb was moderator of this meeting, and P.M. Faulk was clerk. Among the family names constituing the church at that first meeting were Faulk, Cox, Jones , Stapp , Snow , Wilson and McCarroll . The first members to be added to the church came forward at the very next meeting from the Burgin family .

Only an all gracious God could watch over , care for , and bless the various members of this church during 100 years of trials and afflictions and sweet deliverence. Truly only His grace is sufficient. Paran Church now meets every first Sunday and is located near FM Rd 2659 , 4 . 5 miles northeast of Hawkins , Texas . We would warmly welcome any visitors . Elder Jimmy Hamrick is present pastor , and Sister Flo Stutts is clerk .

The following notation by the church clerk , Sister Inez Gearner , is taken from the church minutes dated February 5th , 1978 ; and as it mentions the last two beloved pastors of this church, it was thought appropiate to include here .

" Sunday morning the church met at 10:30 for worship service . We had visitors from Hopewell and Good Hope Churches . It was such a joy to have them meet with us. After singing Elder Hamrick led in prayer. Elder E. J. Lambert went forward using as his text Ecclesiates ; 12th chapter , 13th and 14th verses . Elder Joe Hamrick followed using the last two verses of this same chapter . The feast was so great . Time seemed to fly . May God grant us many more of these pleasant times ."

In this corrupt and wicked age in which we now live , we feel a greater need than ever for our gracious Lord to bless His churches with pleasant times as they meet together in His blessed name. May He see fit to do so, to the praise of the glory of His Grace.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

The wise and foolish virgins all slumbered and slept while the bridegroom lingered . (Matt . 25) During all that time no difference could be seen between them . No mark appeared by which it could be told who were wise and who were foolish . No one could tell whose vessels had oil in them and whose had not. So it was with the nation of Israel during the legal dispensation . The Lord 's people could not be distinguished from the others ; The legal works could be done as well by who had no grace in his heart as by one who had ; all appeared alike , as do those who sleep . This was the sleeping time, the night dispensation, and no fault is found with them for sleeping. But when, at the end of that legal day , at midnight , the announcement was made , " Behold , the bridegroom cometh ," then the difference between the wise and the foolish was made to appear . Those who had oil in their vessels were ready to go in with the bridegroom ; those who were without oil could not go in. The difference between the two characters , those who had grace in the heart and those who had not, was as great before the bridegroom came as after, but that difference could not be manifest until he came . The wise were not made wise because they took oil , but they took oil because they were wise .

So also with the foolish ; they were not foolish because they took no oil, but they took no oil because they were foolish. The wisdom of the wise was and always is, a gift to them from the Lord, and so is the oil, or grace, by which they have the light of life, which shineth in the darkness of our nature, but is not perceived by the darkness. The wise went in with the Bridegroom and the door was shut. That door between the legal and the gospel dispensation was never opened but once, and then Jesus entered into his gospel kingdom with all his redeemed. " By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified ." When the legal character represented by the foolish virgins, comes, he must necessarily come knocking, for the door was shut as soon as Jesus entered in. One who knocks implies that there is some good reason why the door at which he knocks should be opened to him. Those to whom Jesus says, " Knock, and it shall be opened unto you," are gospel characters who desire gospel blessings, and they knock in the name of Jesus. But these are asking in their own names, because of good things they have done. The oil they have has been purchased by them, for which they have paid in their own good works, and it will not be received; it does not make gospel light. The true oil, the Spirit and grace of God, cannot be bought. So the Bridegroom says to them who come with that oil which they have bought I know you not

All of the Lord's people, from the beginning to the end of time, went in through that gospel door with Jesus, and none who ever have entered there experimentally, or ever shall, will ever make mention of any other name but Jesus as the way by which he entered in, and because of this there will be on the part of living souls, but no others,

a strong and deep exercise of the soul from time to time, by the power of this sweet command of Jesus : " Watch therefore for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh ." Every experience of the coming and power of Jesus , and every temptation to doubt and question concerning our knowledge of him will lead us more carefully to consider how all our experience of an entrance into divine favor , from the very first , has been an entrance with Jesus , and in his blessed name and will lead us to watch that we do not ask for or seek for any entrance into his favor be cause of any fancied merit of our own. How careful and watchful we are , and need to be , lest the light that is in us be darkness , lest the oil we have has been purchased with our own fancied goodness ." For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart ."

Silas H . Durand

MEETINGS

WEATHERFORD PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written Word of God , Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift . They ; therefore , called for a Presbytery to be formed on September 25 ,1988 at 3:00 P .M . at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church , Gretna , Virginia for the purpose of examination of this gift Brother Marvin Brumfield , and if found qualified , be ordained to the full work of the Gospel Ministry .

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the Presbytery and all Deacons were asked to sit together . The meeting was opened by prayer by Elder Denver Simpson . Elder O .K . Tench was elected as Moderator and Deacon Burnell Williams to serve as Clerk . Brother Stafford Houston , acting as Spokesman for the Church delivered Brother Marvin Brumfield to the Presbytery .

The qualifications for Bishop were read as set forth in scriptures ,1 st . Timothy , 3rd Chapter by Elder J .T . Prescott . Examination followed by Elders Amos Hash and J.T. Prescott. The Presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of the candidate , proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elders H.W Wray and Kenneth Key . The charge was delivered to Brother Marvin Brumfield by Elder O .K . Tench . He was then delivered back to the church as an ordained Elder .

The minutes of the work of the Presbytery were read and adopted. A copy to be placed in the church records , a copy to be sent the the Signs of the Times for publication and a copy to be given to Elder Brumfield along with a Certificate of Ordination.

Presbytery was dismissed by prayer by Elder Willard Cox .

Elder O .K . Tench , Moderator
Deacon Burnell Williams , Clerk

The following Elders were present and included in the Presbytery :

Elders C .B . Davis , Jr .
Raymond Goad
J .T . Prescott

Lane Carter
Amos Hash
Denver Simpson
Carl Terry
Leonard Brammer
Thomas Solomon
Junior Conner
Willard Cox
Noel Conner
Kenneth Key
Julian R. Williams
H.W. Wray
O.K. Tench

Licentiate
W.T. Conner
Clarence Stone

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 1988

Eld. J.T. Prescott, NC.....7.00
Mrs. Ruth Sparkman, TX.....5.00
Harry Troutt, NC.....2.00
David E. Kitchen, GA.....7.00
Alfred L. Ratliff, VA.....2.00
Claude Johnson, VA.....2.00
Eld. Carl Terry, VA.....2.00
Mrs. Eula McGlocklin, VA.....2.00
Mrs. Mae B. Hudson, Va.....7.00
Moon's Creek Ch., NC.....50.00
Mrs. Lucille Young, TN.....5.00
Mrs. Annabeth Arne, SD.....40.00
Mrs. J.W. Stratton, VA.....2.00
Mrs. Nannie Moran, VA.....2.00
Mrs. W.W. Stutts, TX.....2.00
T.L. Batts, NC.....5.00
Mrs. Mamie D. Ferguson, VA....4.00
Eld. Raymond Goad, VA.....2.00
Mrs. Ruth Dotson, TX.....2.00
Mrs. S.G. Harralson, KY.....5.00
Mrs. Alice Johnson, TX.....2.00
G.B. Loyd, OK.....1.00
Mrs. Rolla E. Mellott, PA.....7.00
Roy S. Oxley, WV.....2.00
A.S. Blalock, NC.....4.00
Mrs. Rachel Hudson, VA.....2.00
Mrs. Lessie S. Sladky, NC...32.00
A.R. Potter, VA.....2.00
James L. Howell, AL.....15.00
Alonza Davis, VA.....2.00
Robbie Holloway, TX.....10.00
Mr. & Mrs. J.M. Marshall, VA....5.00
Mrs. Marie D. Cannaday, VA....2.00
John Coker, NC.....2.00

OBITUARIES

EUNICE MATKINS BROOKS

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write the obituary of my dear sister, Eunice Matkins Brooks.

Eunice was born May 15, 1909, the daughter of Robert Lee and Eva Gilliam Matkins, of Alamance County, N.C. She passed from this life August 4, 1987, at Adams-Kenton Nursing Home, Lillington, N.C.

Surviving is her husband, Ernest Floyd of the Mayflower Motel, Raleigh, N.C., and a son, Dennis Darrell Brooks of Greenville, S.C., and two grand-children, Tamela and Scott Brooks.

She was received into the fellowship of Mebane Primitive Baptist Church, Mebane, N.C., June 12, 1938, and was baptized by her pastor, Elder T. Floyd Adams, of Willow Springs, N.C. Eunice was a firm believer in the faith and was dedicated to her church as long as her health permitted.

She was a professional seam-

stress in Burlington , N .C ., before moving to Raleigh, where she and her husband operated the Mayflower-Motel .

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Burch Wray, at Rich and Thompson Funeral Chapel. Her body was laid to rest in Pine Hill Cemetery, Burlington, N. C., awaiting the call of her blessed Saviour saying , " Come ye blessed of my Father , inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world ." (Matthew 25 : 34)

We have precious memories of having Eunice in our home and caring for her two weeks before she grew worse .

Written by her sister and brother-in -law .

Bessie and Leon Gilliam

SISTER RUTH COLLIER CHAPELL

Sister Ruth Collier Chapell , very precious and lovely sister in Christ for many years finished her earthly pilgrimage on June 3 , 1988 , after a short illness , and went to receive her crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give to all that love his appearing.

Sister Chapell was the daughter of Deacon J.B. " Bud" Collier of near Rives , Tennessee. Both parents and grandparents were members of Primitive Baptist Churches .

She was married to Flois Chapell, December 23 , 1923 and to this union was born two children. Elder Wayman Chapell of the Memphis Tennessee Church and Sister Ramona Moon of the Bowes Chapel Church near Fulton , Kentucky .Both Sister Chapell and her husband were baptized into the Cane Creek Church the third Sunday in April in 1972 .

Sister Chapell is survived by her husband , two children , 9 grandchildren and twenty-two great-grandchildren .

She was blessed with a good and full life and was active in her church until two weeks before her death. She was an humble and gentle person who deeply loved her brothers and sisters in Christ and was in turn loved by all who knew her for her quiet manner and loving smile . She will be sadly missed and long remembered for her devotion to her church, her family and her heavenly calling .

Her funeral was conducted by the writer at the Murphy Funeral Home in Martin Tennessee, June 5 , 1988 and was lovingly laid to rest in the Collier Cemetery . There she peacefully awaits that blessed call of her heavenly master , " Rise up , my love , my fair one and come away ". When she will enter into the eternal joy of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ .

Written at the request of the Cane Creek Church .

Richard H . Campbell

BROTHER WILSON FOUNTAIN

Brother Wilson Fountain , faithful member and Deacon of the Wilmington Primitive Baptist Church passed away April 21 ,1988 . He was born August 29 ,1906 . He was baptized in the summer of 1973 .

He leaves to mourn him his wife of many years and a sister , Sister Debbie Simpson of Chinquapin, N.C.

Brother Fountain will be greatly missed at his home church and the sister churches he was so faithful to visit . He was much loved and respected by all who had the privilege of knowing him. His manner manifested much love for the church. We feel that our loss is his gain .

He was laid to rest beneath a mound of beautiful flowers in Greenlawn Cemetery , Wilmington , N .C ., there to await the coming again of Jesus , and the Resurrection of His saints .

Evelyn R . Pratt , Clerk

SISTER BELVA HARDY GIBSON

With a heart pained with sorrow and filled with grief , I humbly attempt to write an Obituary for my beloved Sister Belva . She battled with cancer for almost eleven years , never complaining .

Belva was faithful to her church and attend until she got disabled. She told of her experience with the Lord and loved to be with and talk with the Brethren , even after she was bedridden. She enjoyed her company and would always ask the Ministers to have prayer . She told us she was ready to go , but knew she couldn 't until her time came . Belva was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace , believing God has fixed all things .

She was received by experience in Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on August 23 , 1964 and was baptized that afternoon by her beloved Pastor , Elder O .K . Tench .

Belva was born July 25 , 1918 at Sycamore , Virginia , the daughter of Tommy and Cora Dalton Hardy . The dear Lord saw fit to call her home on May 17 , 1988 . She leaves to mourn , two daughters , Inez Cook and Elizabeth Garrick; one son, Jerry Gibson; five grandchildren and four great grandchildren . Also one brother , Harold Hardy and three sisters , Sister Lera Vasser , Sister Alice Gibson , and the writer , Larrie Bowler .

Her funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by Elders O .K . Tench ,Denver Simpson , and Raymond Goad . Her body was laid to rest beside her husband , Herbert A . Gibson in the Church Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour. Belva will be greatly missed by her family , friends , and her Brethren. May we be thankful for the time God gave her here on earth and may we all be blest to say not my will but Thine be done .

Written by one who loved her .
Larrie H . Bowler

WALTER ELMO LUPTON

I feel, " the Lord rejoiced at the death of one of His Saints ," when Brother Walter Elmo Lupton passed away on April 30 , 1988 . He was sick for many years , but bore his afflictions in a very humble way . I believe everyone who knew him loved him , but God loved him more and called him to that home prepared for him and all His believing children .

Brother Elmo was born November 8 , 1906 in Scranton , N .C ., being blessed to enjoy life for eighty-one years . He was married to Beatrice Watson on June 30 , 1928 ; and this union was blessed with five children , Louetta Suter of Chesapeake , Va .; Milton Lupton of Suffolk , Va ; Windell Lupton of Portsmouth , Va .; Velma Twiddy of Coinjock , N.C.; and Peggy Whitlow of Chesapeake , Va . All the children , living near their mother to comfort her, is another great blessing.

He was blessed to unite with Beaulah Primitive Baptist Church on the third Sunday in April , 1954 being baptized by his pastor , Elder A .L . McKinney , and Elder J .L . Ross . He was later ordained Deacon and served his church in a very humble and helpful manner. Being a member here until the church became inactive , he moved his membership to North Creek Church . A very strong believer in Salvation by grace and grace alone, he was slow to speak but always ready to stand for what he felt was right. He always wanted to hear all the facts before voicing his opinion on any subject which may come up before the church . He will be missed very much in his church , union , and association . His companion , a very faithful and loving sister is very strong , but she needs our prayers and comforting words .

His funeral was conducted in Gay & Oman Funeral Home by his pastor , Elder J .T . Prescott , and Elder Reeves Smith . He was laid to rest in Greenlawn Memorial Cemetery here the beautiful flowers and many friends showed how much he was loved . He will rest here until that day when Jesus shall come again to gather His bride . Then I feel he will hear that welcome voice of Jesus saying , " Child come your father calls ."

We all extend to the family our deepest sympathy and trust God 's richest blessings may be upon you . May His presence fill the vacancy in your lives , giving you the strength to say , God doeth all things well .

Done by the order of conference Saturday before the second Sunday in June , 1988.

Elder J .T . Prescott , Moderator
Hassel Allen , Committee

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your " Signs " and without missing any copies , be sure to inform us of any change of address .

Editors

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12 / 88
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE .

PSALM 29 : 1-3

Give unto the Lord , O ye mighty , give unto the Lord glory and strength .

Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name ; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness .

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters : the God of glory thundereth : the Lord is upon many waters .

Signs of the Times

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"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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POEM

PROSPECTUS OF THE " SIGNS "

The existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah — the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. " These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistable, and in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers — that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

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EDITORIAL

Elder R .H . Campbell

We love him because he first loved us .

This verse of scripture as recorded in 1 st John 4:19 is one of the shorter verses to be found in these the Bible and yet the truth set forth in these eight words contain the essence of the doctrine contained in all of the rest of the scripture . This truth supports the doctrine declared by all the writers of both the old and new testament : And it sets aside , and refutes , the false doctrines preached in all ages of time which advances the theory that man is the originator of the communion with God . It supports the doctrine that Jesus is the author and finisher of the faith of all of the saints : and that they are the household of God which is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets , Jesus Christ himself being the Chief Corner stone . Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega , the beginning and the end of the salvation of all of the heirs of grace : loving them before the foundation of the world and coming down to manifest this love in them and to deliver them out from under the law . This is the central theme of all of the scriptures since they are but an account of the soverign love of a just and holy God for a chosen people and the way in which it is manifested in their lives as they are called out of natures darkness and led in the paths of righteousness for his own holy names sake . It is the substance of things hoped for ; the evidence of things not seen and it is the gift of God to each from the boundless storehouse of grace .

The apostle Paul in his epistle to the church at Corinth sets forth this truth as he writes : " Though I speak with the tongue of men and of angels, and have not charity , I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling symbol ." This charity is the love that is referred to in the above scripture and Paul says that without this , which is God 's love , in the heart , the most eloquent speech or profound wisdom of man is of no benefit . The truth can only come forth from a heart that is the recipient of God 's love to his children and will come forth in power and love for God and those of like precious faith : And is profitable to all believers of the truth . It is profitable unto the Church , which is the body of Christ . And it edifies and strengthens

the brethren in all generations: just as the writings of the apostles and prophets have been a source of comfort to God's children in all ages because of the love that prompted the writers to declare the truths as revealed to them. This charity is the key in which his children make melody in their hearts as they joyfully proclaim the good news of their salvation and rejoice in this love which so consumes them that they would, if they could, spend the rest of their lives praising him from whom all blessings flow. Alas, they cannot do this, but, they will always think of these days and remember from whence it came: and, it will ever be the center of their lives around which all things revolve and are judged as to their importance.

Charity beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things and never fails. If only that one could always be under the present and consuming influence of this love in their life: and have it as the motivating force in all that they do, and all their conversation and daily walk. It is only when the flesh is the moving force when discord, strife, envy, jeaously and pride begin to creep in and wreak havoc among the brethren and trouble arises in the church. The tragedy is that usually the cry is made that they are standing for the principles upon which the church is founded. Love, the kind this scripture refers to, never, brings grief to a church and never will; remember it endureth all things, hopeth all things, beareth all things and never fails. Where there is love there is peace and harmony, gentleness, goodness and a sweet fellowship in the spirit which is worth more to those that have it than life itself.

Charity suffers long, is kind, vaunteth not itself and is not puffed up or easily provoked. This is the effects that love has in the hearts of those who possess it: and should be the response of all brethren to one another in times of trouble. Sure this love and humbleness are the lessons taught in Jesus' washing the disciples feet after the last supper and the taking of the bread and wine; as, Jesus, our Lord and master who is the head of the church laid aside his garments and got down at his disciples feet and begin to wash them as a servant. Oh, that all; who seek occasion against a brother, could observe this service: and see and feel the love and humility that we all should when observing this service, before any action or words are spoken on the subject of dispute. Surely they would see the frailty of the subject in question as compared to the love and fellowship of those who would be affected by their actions: and would remember, the reason for the service. Surely, the reason that we love one another is that he first loved us, individually and collectively; gave himself for us and gave us of his spirit that we might walk in newness of life and not in the way of the flesh, as we did in former days.

This love dwelling in the hearts of the apostles and prophets caused them to suffer persecutions, imprisonments, beating and even to lay down their lives for the cause of the cross. They were hated, ridiculed and suffered all manner of hardship and then said they rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for the name

of Christ . They did not take offense at opposition to the truth or take it as a personal insult when everyone did not agree with them in their understanding of a truth . This is the test of love , that you realize that someone may differ from you and not be wrong necessarily . Paul said some observe days or eat meat and give thanks unto God and others do not observe days or don 't eat meat and give praise unto God . To the Colossians he wrote :" As ye therefore have received Christ Jesus , so walk ye in him ," or telling them to walk and believe according to the revelation that they had received and not to let man influence them through philosophy or vain deceit : following the traditions of men , after the rudiments of the world , and not after Christ .

Jesus told his disciples , on one occasion ; " A new commandment I give unto you , that ye love one another ; as I have loved you , that ye also love one another . By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples , if ye love one another ." This was one of the last few times that he was with them before he was crucified and seemingly he was stressing the things that were the strong meat of the doctrine ; and he begins it with the love that he had for them and that they should have for one another above all . He went on to speak of going to prepare a place for them : send the comforter to teach them constantly of the things pretaining to the kingdom of God . And finally the prayer unto the Father for them that they be kept and upheld to declare the doctrine unto their brethren. The fact that he began all of this by commanding them to love one another thoroughly emphasizes the importance of this love in the plan of salvation . First , his love for them is the whole reason for them being included in the plan of God the Father to reserve unto himself a chosen generation , a royal priesthood , an holy nation , a peculiar people ; and because he has done this for them , revealed it to them at the time appointed of the Father , they love him with a pure heart fervently and worship him in spirit and in truth . They realize their unworthiness of possessing this glorious gift ; but the scripture declares that there are none worthy of themselves , but God 's first loving them makes them righteous and holy , before him , because of the spirit that dwells in them . This love was theirs before the world was formed ; in fact , it was the reason the world was formed and all things that were created .

Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God .

In bonds of love
Elder Richard H . Campbell

PSALM 19 : 7-9

The law of the Lord is perfect , converting the soul : the testimony of the Lord is sure , making wise the simple .

The statutes of the Lord are right , rejoicing the heart : the commandment of the Lord is pure , enlightening the eyes .

The fear of the Lord is clean , enduring for ever : the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether .

ARTICLES

YE ARE NOT YOUR OWN

Preached at Shoreham , England on Thursday , June 16th , 1932

" What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own ? For ye are bought with a price : therefore glorify God in your body , and in your spirit , which are God 's ." (1 Cor . vi . 19 ,20)

These words have rested upon my mind for the last few days A poor woman whose husband had been laid aside for months , in telling me of his sufferings , quoted this text , as though it settled the matter : " Ye are not your own , for you are bought with a price ." This threw such a different light upon the words in connection with the tribulatory path that the people of God have to tread . They may wonder sometimes that they are called to pass such a thorny way , to encounter such difficulties , and to be beset with such snares ; yet it is all to one end — the lifting up of Jesus on high in their experience . Because they were bought with a price , namely the heart 's blood of their dear Redeemer , hence they are called to glorify God in their body and in their spirit , which are God 's .

" What ? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you ? " That is a wonderful truth , because the Holy Ghost is God — the third Person in the eternal Trinity ; co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Son . That God should dwell with men is one of the greatest mysteries ever revealed . " Great is the mystery of godliness , God was manifest in the flesh ." That relates to the Lord Jesus Christ : " The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us ." But it relates also to this great mystery , that ever the Holy Ghost , that pure Holy Spirit of God , should dwell in a sinner 's heart . You will never be able to unravel that mystery . You may believe it , and blessed be God , if you are His you will feel the effect of it from time to time ; but you will never be able to fathom that vast mystery , that the great God of heaven and earth should dwell in a poor creature 's heart, make His residence there . In repect to our Creator it is writen : " For in Him we live , and move , and have our being ." But here is something different . It is the Holy Ghost living in a sinner , taking up His residence , making the body a temple for Himself . This might alarm us , did we not know that it all proceeds from the grace of God , and therefore His grace , which is invincible , will super -abound over the aboundings of our sin . But here is the Scripture for it : the apostle is emphatic , he says : " Which is in you ." As much as to say : This is not a figurative expression , this is an actual fact , that when the Holy Spirit of God quickens a soul into divine life , from that moment that person 's body really becomes the temple of the Holy Ghost . When Nicodemus wanted to know how one should enter into the kingdom of heaven , the Lord Jesus showed him that it was necessary for the kingdom of heaven to enter into the heart ; namely , by propounding the doctrine of the new birth . When

the Pharisees of old inquired when the kingdom of God should come, Christ said: " The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation (outward show) ; neither shall they say, Lo here ! or, lo there ! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you ." Yes, my friends, the Lord Jesus Himself taught this same doctrine ; the necessity of the new birth, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This proceeds from God ; He is the foundation of all grace and goodness. So we see the Trinity in unity in our text, in saving a poor sinner from the wrath to come.

But how are we to know that we are the temple of the Holy Ghost ? Peter speaks of being born again of incorruptible seed, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. We can only know that the Holy Ghost dwells in us by His own operation. No man has a right to arrogate to himself this honour, that he is the temple of the Holy Ghost, unless he can produce proof that the Holy Ghost works in him. One of the first signs of the Holy Ghost being in a person is the consciousness of his own sinnership before God. When Christ came to the temple literally, He found there the money -changers, and the seats of them that sold doves, and He made no more ado than to take a whip of small cords and scourge these buyers and sellers, and overturn the seats of them that sold doves. And so when the Holy Ghost comes to a sinner 's heart, He comes, as it were, with a scourge of small cords ; in a word, He comes to the conscience and turns it into a lash with which the sinner is smitten again and again. In other words, He convinces of sin. He does not tell you that you are a good person, or that you are the temple of the Holy Ghost ; but He tells you this, and make you feel it, that you are a poor miserable sinner. I wonder how many of us here tonight have felt it ; have felt perhaps too miserable to live, and afraid to die, because of the lashes of a guilty conscience. In all probability that is the beginning of a work of grace in your soul; the Spirit's operation in convincing of sin against a holy God. But when the Holy Ghost comes in that way to discover your sinnership, He does not leave it there. He did not leave Saul upon the ground smitten down under a sense of the holy God in His law. But when Ananias was sent to Saul of Tarsus, it was said " Behold, he prayeth !" Now, that is another sign of the Holy Ghost dwelling in a poor sinner 's heart, when there is the Spirit of grace and supplications, and that is known repentance toward God. You are downright sorry you are such a sinner, and have committed such and such things. You wish you could be better, and you are brought to that spot to earnestly desire mercy. The publican 's prayer is often on your lips ; almost involuntary sometimes you may find it springing up in your heart: " God be merciful to me a sinner ."

" Sin 's guilt and filth
perceived and felt.
Make known God 's
great salvation ."

That prepares the way for the receiving of the doctrine of Christ. I knew a man who used often to quote that, but I never knew him to get any further. But if sin 's guilt and filth is

made known to you, that will leave a felt need in your heart that only the Holy Ghost can supply ; a void , an empty place , a deficiency in your experience , which only the Holy Ghost can fill .

Well , there is this repentance ; for so it is . " Oh but ," says the soul , " My heart is so hard , I cannot speak of repentance ." Well , what does that do for you ? You say : " I cry out against it ;" I say : " Lord , take away this heart of stone , this terrible impenitency ; give me a heart of flesh , and bring me to Thy foot -stool as a poor repentant sinner ." That is repentance ; you are repenting of what you actually perceive and feel within your own soul . That has been my own case many a time . I have not had to repent over what I have not done , though I will admit this : " He that offendeth in one point is guilty of all ." But the Spirit of God brings facts before your eyes and causes them to bear upon your conscience , and sets you crying for mercy for Jesus's sake. Perhaps you have often said : "Mercy through blood , I make my plea ; O God , be merciful to me !"

Another great work the Holy Ghost does in the soul is to reveal the Lord Jesus Christ . " No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost ." Now perhaps some will say : You have cut me off . Well , let us come to points . Do you feel a need of the Lord Jesus Christ and His salvation more now than you did in days past ? Perhaps one might say : There was a time when it might almost be said of me as it was of some , that they had never so much as heard that there was a Holy Ghost . More than one convinced sinner in a Strict Baptist Chapel had never heard with the hearing ear that there is such a person as the Lord Jesus Christ , who is able and willing to save . I remember the time when , as a lad and first convinced of sin , I knew no more of the way of salvation than as if I had been brought up in a heathen land . I knew the name of Christ , a historic Christ , but it was never brought home to my heart and conscience that that Lord Jesus died to atone for such sins as mine . So that , if by the Spirit of God you begin to feel the want and worth of the Lord Jesus Christ in ever so small a way — you can only judge sometimes by looking back to what you once were — that is an evidence that the Holy Ghost is in you , gradually forming in your heart the Lord Jesus Christ as the Hope of Glory ; though it may be many years before the top-stone is put on this temple , and you cry : " Grace , grace unto it ." Well , that is a good experience when the Holy Ghost is taking away first one prop , and then another prop ; one error , then another error ; and bringing a poor soul to say experimentally : " Give me Christ , or else I die ."

Then the Holy Spirit will take of the things of Jesus and reveal them to you. He will breathe the living word in your heart. You will feel and feed upon the precious truth of the gospel. Now I will tell you something else that used to be a stumbling -block to me. I knew nothing but my own heart's depravity, and the need of salvation in those days . I did not know what it was to feed upon the truth . Whether my ears were closed , or I had not the capacity. I do now know ; but I remember when the Lord began to open my ears , and

my heart was engaged, I began to see a beauty and suitability in the things of Jesus Christ . Well , it is the Holy Ghost dwelling within , and by these means He makes one His temple .

A temple is a place of worship , and it was the place of God 's residence upon earth . In the Holy of Holies , from off the mercyseat , was the place where this great God communed with poor sinful dust and ashes . So the poor sinner himself becomes the temple as he is brought down upon his knees as a suppliant at the footstool of mercy , and as he is brought to honour the Lord Jesus Christ in feeling after Him , seeking Him , and desiring to love Him .

But then this temple does not belong to you . " Ye are not your own." We may think very often we are, and therefore endeavor to do what we like ; but that is not according to the tenor of the Scripture , or according to the gospel of Jesus Christ . It is a great blessing to be taught in experience : " Ye are not your own ." Those who are bought with a price , namely the heart 's blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, are not their own. They never were their own ; but when the Spirit of God begins to seal them as heirs of that inheritance which is incorruptible, then they have to learn in experience that they are not their own . The Lord Jesus Christ taught this to His disciples. He told them that if they forsook not all, they could not be His disciples. That does not mean they should have nothing to do with their relations in life, but when it came to the great choice , then the Lord Jesus Christ must stand first. Whilst we are in this body, we shall have our relative as well as our personal duties and obligations; but when it comes to the grand point or choice , then we have to learn that we are not our own.

We are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God , which is our reasonable service (Rom .XXI . 1). We have nothing really of our own that can merit God 's favour ; nothing whereby we can bargain with God in the matter of salvation ; but all we need to save our souls from everlasting death and destruction , proceeds from the Lord Jesus Christ as the Husband of the Church, His bride and His spouse .

By the entrance of sin into this world, and death by sin, there was a forfeiture of everything that one could have claimed in Adam 's state of innocence ; but as death passed upon all men (for all sinned in Adam, Rom. V . 12 , margin), it was necessary that , if we are to be saved , Christ should accomplish eternal redemption for us. That means to buy us with a price. And what was the price? His own precious blood. He laid down His life as a sacrifice , and as a ransom - price for His people . That was the price paid . You may be concerned sometimes to know how it was possible for One to ransom the whole election of grace , millions of people — how one life could redeem so many hundreds , thousands , and thousands of thousands. One thing to remember is this — whose blood was spilt. It was the blood of a man , but not of a mere man . It was the blood of the glorious God - Man . Then consider this — the purchase that He made was covenant transaction. According to the Scriptures of truth , the revelation of the holy Word of God, a transaction was entered into before ever time was , that Christ for man should die — to use the words of the

poet: " When God, the mighty Maker, died for man , the creature 's sin ." That was the price set — the death of Christ , the laying down of His life , the shedding of His precious blood . That was the price put by infinite justice to the clearing of the guilt of poor, lost , ruined sinners . If Satan says it was not , if unbelief begins to doubt whether the blood of Christ is efficacious , you may say this : that if this is not true , the whole gospel falls to the ground ; it is of no avail at all . In that case all the sacrifices under the old dispensation were nothing but fables, because every lamb , or goat , or bird , or bullock , whose blood was shed , pointed to this one great sin -atoning sacrifice . The faith of all the Old Testament saints hung upon what was signified in type by the shedding of the blood of bulls and goats in sacrifice . Then what worth there must be in the blood of Christ ! And concerning the price , there was equity in this matter in this way : the sins and the guilt of all His people were charged upon Christ . He was made sin ; that is , by imputation , not by infection . Oh no ! my sins , the sins of God 's people never infected the Lord Jesus Christ. It was a law -charge, and imputation ; and He accepted the charge . Therefore it is said , and that rightly ; " Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree ." In Gethsemane 's Garden He felt the force of it , when He prayed to His Father thrice , if it were possible , for the cup to be removed from Him ; but added : Nevertheless , not My will , but Thine , be done ." He felt the guilt of imputed sin precious holy soul ; it pressed Him down to the very earth ." "... He prostrate lay , shocked at the sum , yet prompt to pay ." But that was only the beginning . He had to go through betrayal , ignominy , mocking , crucifixion , till on the cross He said : " My God , why hast Thou forsaken Me ?" That was the culminating point of the sufferings of Christ . And not long after , when the awful cloud passed , He cried with a loud voice : " Father into Thy hand I commend My Spirit ," and then having said: " It is finished", He gave up the ghost . Nothing could be added to it , and nothing taken from it . That is the price of the redemption of your poor soul , sinner . You are grieving perhaps , because your heart is so hard , and because of the load of your sin . Now , that is the price that was paid . Well might we say in the words of our incomparable poet :

" It is finished, said the Lord, in His dying minute ;
Holy Ghost , repeat the word , full salvation 's in it ."

That is the way to receive the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins ; for the Spirit of God to breathe the truth concerning this blessed Jesus in your heart , enabling you to say :

" O grace, thou bottomless abyss ;
My sins are swallowed up in thee !
Covered in my unrighteousness ;
From comdemnation I am free ;
For Jesus ' blood , through earth and skies ,
Mercy , eternal mercy . cries ."

Wonderful price !

Well then , you are not your own . You cannot do as you like . Oh , it is a very sad sign when the Lord 's people want to do as they like , and go just where they would ; when self -will

prevails . Peter thought so when he said : " I go a fishing ." He thought it was all over , and he might as well go fishing ; but he caught nothing . The Lord appeared , and told His disciples to let down the net , and they caught 153 fishes . But when Peter perceived that it was the Lord , he cast his fisher 's coat about him and came to the Lord Jesus . But what happened ? Why , there was fish upon those burning coals . It was as much as for the Lord to say : " Now , there was no need for you to go fishing . I could provide for you ." Then when the Lord began to reprove Peter and said : " Lovest thou Me more than these ?" that is , these things indispensable to your comfort . Then He said : " Feed My sheep . Feed My Lambs ." Peter was not his own , and he was told that when he became old , another should lead him and gird him , and carry him where he would not want to go .

You may carve out a way for yourself , and the Lord may just blast your plans and hedge up in your way , so that you cannot find your paths ; and perhaps misery , confusion , and hardness of heart come upon you , so that you begin to wonder whether there is any truth in religion at all . But presently you are enabled to prostrate yourself upon the mercy of God , for him to do so as seemeth Him good, and to confess your baseness and rebellion; then He may kindly whisper to your heart that you are loved with an everlasting love , or He may tell you that He will never leave you nor forsake you . Or it may be that thou shalt hear a voice behind thee saying : " This is the way , walk ye in it . I will guide thee with My counsel , and afterwards receive thee to glory ." Is not that better than going your own road ? Than carving for yourself ? It it not better to be under the gracious leading and teachings of God in providence and grace , than depend upon your own wisdom and creature - strength and holiness ? I am sure it is .

"Thy whole depence on Me fix ;
Nor entertain a thought ;
Thy worthless schemes with Mine to mix;
But venture to be nought ."

That is the safest place under heaven , not to be your own with regard to this life ; and I am sure it is the safest not to be your own in the matter or salvation , when you have not a rag of creature - righteousness to cover your naked back , and when you are absolutely dependent upon the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost to keep you in the ways of God .

" For ye are bought with a price , and ye are not your own ." Oh , if the Spirit of God would only speak this into our hearts , would it not make us little children , should we not let all fruitless searches go , and be determined nought to know but a bleeding Jesus , and be nothing before God that He may be everything , and for Him to use and dispose of us according to His sovereign will and pleasure? We do not know how much we seek our own glory until the Lord comes and mauls the head of our pride; then we see that we have been self - seeking all the time. Self - seeking was evident in Baruch. He was a godly man , but by and by Jeremiah got this word for him : " Seekest thou great things for thyself ? Seek them not : for , behold , I will bring evil upon

all flesh , saith the Lord : but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest." He had to learn that he was bought with a price. He may have wanted Jeremiah's post, and to retain his own personal property ; there had been a seeking of great things for himself . Perhaps he tried to think he was seeking them for the honour and glory of God, but pride, that hideous monster, that vile enemy of every child of God , had possibly blinded poor Baruch 's eyes that he needed the word by the prophets to tell him where he was and what he was .

" Ye are not your own , for ye are bought with a price ; therefore glorify God in your body ." That means in abstaining from sins , those things that are likely to bring guilt or bondage into the soul . There is a needs - be for abstinence from them . The Lord does not intend His people to abstain from necessary things given for their ordinary welfare in this life ; they are not to be monks ; but to abstain from all things likely to hinder communion between their souls and God . " Who is sufficient for these things ?" The Lord is sufficient. He has all sufficient grace . I was much taken with that verse last Thursday (Our hymn - writers must have walked in a deal of liberty to pen things so beautifully , which have taken some of us nearly a life - time to learn . But this was the word .)

" Grace reigns to pardon crimson sins,
And melt the hardest hearts ;
And from the work it once begins
It never more departs ."

O my friend, if you are bought with a price , grace will super - abound ! You may have much carnality, a great deal of the flesh , both which fight against God 's purpose , but grace is invincible , so that your body must be brought under . It may crave many things unnecessary for your real good but it must be brought into subjection.

" And in your spirit " ; which is a harder matter . If you can get your spirit subdued , you have gone a long way to getting the body subdued. It is easier , in a sense , to get the body subdued than to keep down the raging things in your heart . Ah my friends , if you are under the reigning power of God , your body and spirit will have to come into the crucible . The disciples wanted to call down fire upon the poor Samaritans , and the Lord Jesus said: " Ye know not what spirit ye are of ." That may be true of us . But the Lord puts our spirit into the crucible . He brought down some with hard labour; they fell down , and there was none to help ; then they cried unto the Lord in their distresses , and He delivered them . I have been thankfull many a time that the Lord had brought down my spirit . Sometimes with Jonah I have said: " I do well to be angry." Ah, and more than angry too, if it had been in my power . But if the Lord says : " Thou shalt not ", it is a grievous thing to still persist . But blesses be the Name of the Lord , He can bring down our spirit . He will not let either body or spirit keep His people out of heaven ; both shall be put into the crucible , so that the God 's . That is the thing : " For ye are bought with a price ; therefore glorify God in your body , and in yourspirit , which are God 's ." May He bless these few sentences , for His Name 's sake . Amen .

Caleb Sawyer

2 SAMUEL XII. 13, 14.

" And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit because of this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die."

Once upon a time we visited a section of country where there was a church which had been withdrawn from by other orderly churches because of the doing of certain of her members. There came a lady to our meeting who, while not a member of the visible church, had been a follower of the Old School Baptists for many years. She was more or less conversant with the circumstances surrounding the case and on perhaps a number of occasions had attended the meetings held by said church. We could not question her deep concern for the truth and for the welfare of Zion. We were, however, made to question whether the understanding which she appeared to have regarding the doctrine of predestination was the correct one. While engaged in conversation with her she inquired if she might ask us some very plain and pointed questions, to which we replied she might. Her first question was, " Do you believe in the predestination of all things ?" Our answer was, " Yes." Second question: " Was not the doings of the parties in question among the all things predestinated ?" and if so, " Why should the church of their membership be withdrawn from on account thereof ?" We replied that while their actions were unquestionably embraced in the infinite purpose of Almighty God, nevertheless we could not admit that the fact of this being so exempted them from the responsibility of their deeds, or their accountability to God. We related here the following incident which was told to us several years ago by Elder John G. Eubanks as having taken place in one of the churches of his early pastorate in the State of Georgia: At their Saturday afternoon business and conference meeting, it was the custom for any who had wronged a brother or sister to confess his fault and ask forgiveness. On one occasion a brother arose and said in substance, " Brethren, I reckon you all heard about my getting drunk the other week. I went down to the shucking - bee and they had a lot of corn whiskey and I got good and drunk," and then added, " But according to the doctrine which brother Eubanks preaches it was predestinated that I should do it, so I couldn't help it, nevertheless I thought I would tell you about it." Whereupon and old Deacon arose and said in so many words, " Brethren, I have listened to what the brother had to say, but I do not believe that predestination stops where he seems to think it does. I believe it was predestinated that we should exclude him, and I so move." This brought the brother to his senses, and he then apologized and begged forgiveness.

We believe all this apropos to our subject. In taking Bath - sheba while she was yet the wife of Uriah to be his wife and then murdering Uriah, which in effect was what he did, because he would not be used as a tool to cover up his own wickedness, David committed a great and terrible sin, and it dis-

pleased the Lord. David thought the secret was locked up in his own bosom, forgetting that there was a God who discerneth the thought and intent of the heart, who declared he would bring " this thing " out in the open before all Israel. This God sent his prophet Nathan unto David, and by use of the unsuspecting parable of the ewe lamb presented the enormity of the crime. " David 's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die: and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity." The prophets then replied, " Thou art the man." What a blow this must have been to David. After this he most certainly could not have found fault with a just and holy God had he condemned him to death. But right here is where grace stepped in, and oh! how amazing it was.

Nathan said unto David, " The Lord hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die." Later, we want to say more about this " putting away," but for the time being, let us note that David made no pretensions at all by way of excusing himself, neither did he attempt to hide under the cover of predestination. On the contrary, he confessed to being guilty, and said, " I have sinned against the Lord." He had despised the commandment of the Lord and had done evil in his sight, and for this the Lord said the sword should never depart from his house. It was a great mercy that he was given to confess his sin. We believe that herein is to be found the key which unlocks the Scripture that declares that David was a man after God's own heart. It is good to confess our faults to God and to one another. Where this is done there is hope. We think the words, " Thou shalt not die," as they are used in this connection, are one of the strongest texts to be found anywhere in the Bible for the doctrine of salvation by grace.

Even though the Lord had put away his sin and he should not die, " Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme." How true this was. Some seem totally indifferent to the effect their deeds have upon the cause of Christ. Either they do not realize or else do not care. The Lord's people should endeavor to shun even the appearance of evil. It is further stated that " the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die." We wish that this might sink deep down into the consciences of those who treat such things lightly. " The child also that is born unto thee shall surely die." The child that was to be born was the outcome of David 's relation with Bath - sheba while she was yet the wife of another. This brought shame and disgrace upon Israel and gave the enemies of the Lord great occasion to blaspheme. Such actions spring from the lustful desires of the flesh and the fruit thereof, or that which follows, must surely die. James tells us that sin when it is finished bringeth forth death. That God had an infinite purpose in this we cannot deny, for he had even decreed the number of days the child was to live. The record is that on the seventh day the child died. To our mind, this shadows forth the perfections of God 's purposes even in wickedness. David was made to mourn and fast over this child, but afterward God gave him another son,

even Solomon , by the same union , but Bath - sheba was then his true and lawful wife , Uriah having been put to death . Here it is seen that God 's judgments are unsearchable and his ways past finding out , for had there not been this union between David and Bath - sheba , Solomon would not have been born ; had there been no Solomon , there would have been no Jesus , since the absence of this link would have broken the chain of the lineage through which the Son of man came ; and had there been no Jesus , there would have been no Saviour , and had there been no Saviour , no sinners could have been saved . What an awful thing to even contemplate ! How glad we are that Nathan said unto David , " The Lord hath put away thy sin ." Wonder of wonders it is that God should overrule the wicked acts of men and cause them to work for the good of his people and his own glory . While it was " by wicked hands " that Jesus was taken and crucified and slain , nevertheless he was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God . Nothing was done to the holy child Jesus but what God 's hand and counsel had before determined . The bud often has a bitter taste , but when God's ways are opened up to us we can then see how it is that all things work together for good to them that love God , to those who are the called according to his purpose . Herein lies the strength and comfort of those who wait upon the Lord and trust him for his grace . They are compelled to stand still and see his salvation, and this they do by reason of being so hedged in with circumstances , over which they have no control , that they cannot do otherwise .

We would like to say more with regard to Solomon . The name implies wisdom . Wisdom is the child of experience . Sometimes experience is a very bitter teacher . In order to know anything , first - hand , about God's wondrous love , it is necessary that we have an experience , or knowledge of grace , which means the bestowal upon us by God of a favor that is unmerited on our part. The lady to whom we have already referred also spoke of the love of God, and then asked if we could cease loving God 's children even though they do wrong. We believe it is utterly impossible for one born of the Spirit not to love that which is begotten of God . This does not mean that we are to love the sin which even God 's people commit . If the mind of Christ be in us , we will hate sin wherever it is seen . Let us remember that Jesus stood for both order and doctrine in the church which he established . Hear ye him on this point :" If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out , and cast it from thee : for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish , and not that the whole body should be cast into hell ." Is there any one among us who would refuse to have an arm or a leg amputated if it be found that blood - poisoning or gangrene had set in , and we become convinced that the cutting off of such member is essential to the life and well - being of the body ? The unity of the body of Christ is such as to cause great distress and suffering to all the members when such action is necessary , but if a member be sick unto death , there is no choice . Every possible effort should be made to save the offending member , but when this is impossible it should be removed .

True love has a very definite way of manifesting itself. Let us see how Solomon discovered it. It is recorded when he was king that two women stood before him, " And the one woman said, O my Lord I and this woman dwell in one house; and I was delivered of a child with her in the house. And it came to pass, the third day after that I was delivered, that this woman was delivered also: and we were together; there was no stranger with us in the house, save we two in the house. And this woman 's child died in the night; because she overlaid it. And she arose at midnight, and took my son from beside me, while thine handmaid slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom. And when I arose in the morning to give my child suck, behold, it was dead: but when I had considered it in the morning, behold it was not my son which I did bear. And the other woman said, Nay but the living is my son, and the dead is thy son. And this said, No; but the dead is thy son and the living is my son. Thus they spake before the king. Then said the king, The one saith, This is my son that liveth, and thy son is the dead: and the other saith, Nay; but thy son is dead and my son is the living. And the King said, Bring me a sword. And they brought a sword before the king. And the king said, Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and one half to the other. Then spake the woman whose the living child was unto the king, for her bowels yearned upon her son, and she said, O my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it. Then the king answered and said, Give her the living child and in no wise slay it: she is the mother thereof. And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they feared the king: for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him." — 1 Kings iii. 17-28. Here we have unmistakable proof of true love. The woman who was willing to have the living child divided was not the real mother. One who is willing to divide the church to-day in order to gain his own ends is not manifesting the love of the Good Shepherd who gave his life for the sheep.

Jesus said, " Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." When the lot was cast and the blame for the distress to the vessel and crew was seen to lie at Jonah 's door, he promptly commanded that they should cast him overboard. Here is another example of genuine, true love. The apostle Paul said, " And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

In conclusion, we would restate our unshakable belief in the sovereignty of our God. If we did not feel positively certain that he doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, we would of all creatures be the most miserable. It is this doctrine that keeps us from despair and assures us of our final perseverance over all enemies, including death itself, regardless of how that may come about. We are aware of the fact that what is perhaps the largest so-called church organization in our country denies this by the refusal of their priests to officiate at the funeral of a suicide. We cannot

believe it possible that one for whom Christ died shall ever be eternally lost but this does not license or encourage us to take matters in our own hands. Neither does this doctrine justify erring brethren in pursuing a wrong course. Remember, the "child of the flesh shall surely die." The mouth of Him who cannot lie hath spoken it. We are, therefore, not the least bit sympathetic towards those who deliberately live after the flesh or who persist in following a course which is harmful and disturbing to the peace of Zion, and then run to predestination for cover. Nor have we yet been able to discover a better method of proving one's love either for an individual or a cause than by their actions, These invariably speak louder than words. We would most earnestly commend for the consideration of all who teach, Paul's admonition to Timothy: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."

Submitted in, love for the careful consideration of all who may read.

Elder R.L. Dodson

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

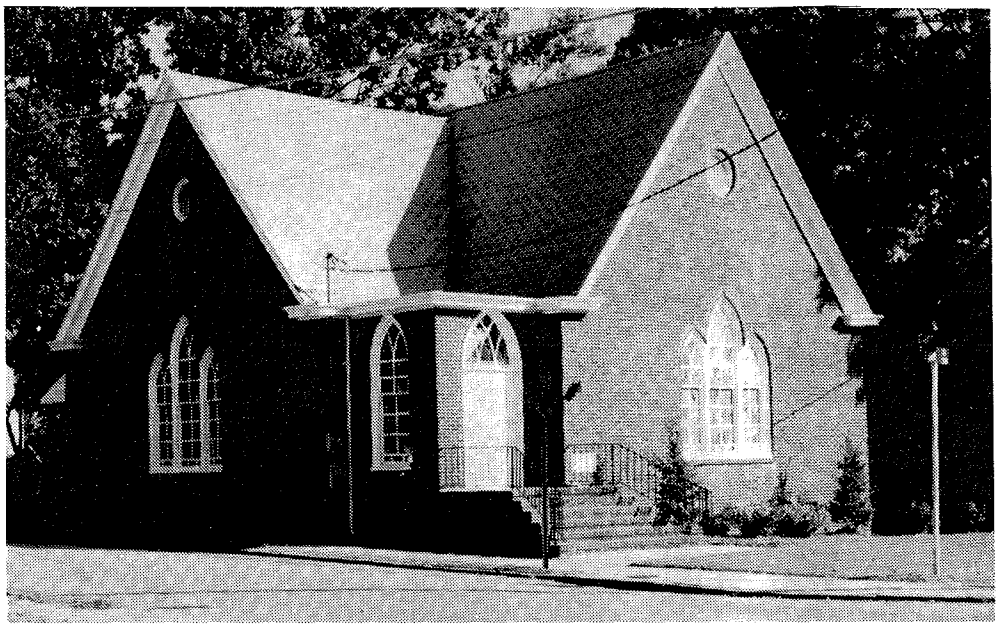

GREENSBORO PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

MINUTES OF CONSTITUTION OF GREENSBORO CHURCH

Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church was constituted November 2, 1907. The presbytery was composed as follows: Elders P P.G. Lester, P.W. Willard, G. Denny and Brother Henry Tucker, deacon. Elders P.W. Willard was chosen moderator and P.G. Lester, Clerk.

The following brethren were received by letter. Elder C.F. Denny, Elder O.J. Denny, Dr. Z.J. Brooks, J J.M. Denniss, J.H. Combs, Levi Harris, G.W. Snyder, T.A. Snyder, J.H. Taylor and S.B. Denny and sisters Mollie Denny, Ellen Denny,

Chessie H. Brooks, May Hampton, Nancy Denniss, Fannie Harris, Berlie A. Harris, Bessie J. Harris, Mollie Tillman, Lucy Osborne and Jennie Osborne.

On motion the Constitution, Covenant, Articles of Faith and Rules of Decorum were adopted and ordered spread on the church record.

On motion made by Elder Lester the Presbytery declared the members who presented letters legally constituted as a church to transact business for themselves as an independent body.

Elders C.F. and O.J. Denny were unanimously elected pastors to serve the church as they see fit. Brother Levi I. Harris was elected clerk. It was agreed to wait until some future time to choose deacons.

It was decided to have preaching every Sunday and the second Sunday in each month was the time appointed for conference meeting.

P.W. Willard, Moderator
P.G. Lester, Clerk

Elder O.J. Denny served as pastor from 1907 to 1931. Elder C.F. Denny served as assistant pastor from 1907 to 1919. Elder J.A. Fagg served as assistant pastor from 1919 to 1926. Elder W. Curry King served as assistant pastor from 1926 to 1931. Elder W. Curry King served as pastor from 1931 to 1970. Elder Kenneth R. Key was chosen as pastor at the death of Elder King on Oct. 17, 1970 and is their present pastor with Elder H. Leonard Key serving with him as associate pastor since April 18, 1971.

The Greensboro Church meets for service on first Sunday morning of each month at 10:30 a.m. Conference meeting is held on the third Sunday night in April of each year. Communion is held on the first Sunday in June.

Membership has remained stable throughout the years and the Lord has continued to bless this church.

All lovers of the truth are invited to attend our meetings.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Deacon Wayne Edwards, Clerk

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

THAT WHICH THE LORD HATH PURPOSED SHALL COME TO PASS

From some cause my mind has been much exercised for several days upon the purposes of God. I do not know why I should be so constantly meditating upon this, to me wonderful, deep and sublime subject, yet it is so. A kind of irresistible impression seems to impel me to write, notwithstanding my great weakness. I am fully aware of the fact that I am not able of myself to grapple with so deep and sublime a subject. Therefore it is with much fear and trembling that I approach it. I think it is with a heartfelt desire that the Lord may direct my mind so that I may write so as to glorify His name, and thereby edify His saints, believing that when God is honored through our Lord Jesus Christ, that the saints rejoice and are edified.

It was the purpose of God to speak the earth into existence. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Gen., 1:1. This proves a purpose to create. In fulfillment of His purpose He made the firmament, that handiwork might be shown. For "The heavens declare the

glory of God : and the firmament sheweth his handywork." That the dry land might appear , it is written , " And God said , Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together into one place , and let the dry land appear : and it was so ." Gen . 1:9 . " And God called the land earth ; and the gathering together of the waters called he seas : and God saw that it was good ." 10th verse . This his purpose carried out . Take into consideration the fowls , the beast , the fishes , the herbs , etc . Then come to man , in his creation we see the plural used . And God said ," Let us make man in our own image , after our likeness , and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea , and over the fowl of the air , and over the cattle , and over all the earth ; over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth ." 26th verse ." So God created man in his own image ; in the image of God created he him . Male and female created he them ." 27th verse . In their creation the male and the female . It is said that while they were in this state they were immortal . But God did not say so , and I shall not . It is also said that he was made able to stand , but liable to fall . But God did not say so and I shall not , for I don't know . That he did transgress and fell is certain . If he had never transgressed and fell , I own that I cannot trace the purpose of God in the perfect work of salvation . For if the man had fallen , I own that I cannot see for the life of me why God should , from before the world have given any of the fallen race grace in Christ . " Who hath saved us , and called us with an holy calling , not according to our works , but according to his own purpose and grace , which was given in Christ Jesus before the world began." 2nd Tim., 1:9. This is an affirmation of the apostle , as the preceding verse shows . This grace which was given in Christ Jesus before the world began , consequently was before the creation of man . If this was according to God's own purpose before the world began , it seems to me there must of necesssity have been a purpose in the fall or transgression of the man , without which he never could have been the recipient of this grace ; for none but fallen , depraved sinners stand in need of saving grace . I do not think that it is blasphemy to assert that as God purposed grace in Christ Jesus before the world began , that he also purposed that the sinner should stand in need of it .

I am not able to see how the Lord could declare the end from the beginning , and not see and know every event from the beginning . And he by the prophet declares , or commands thus : " Remember the former things of old : for I am God , and there is none else : I am God , and there is none like me . Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done . Saying , My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure ." Isa., 46 : 9-10. I am not able to see how he could declare things that are not yet done unless he purposed or predestinated that they should be done . To say that he permitted things to take place that he did not purpose , seems to me to contradict itself , and makes the creator no higher than the creature . Man purposes and plans , but his purposes fail, his plans are frustrated. Not so with God . He purposed and it

comes to pass .

" To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven ." Eccl ., 3:1 . Is this not according to God 's predestination ? The Lord's will cannot be frustrated in the least by any event that takes place under the sun, because every event is according to his purpose and predestination, hence it cometh to pass. " A time to be born and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted ." Eccl ., 1:2 . Who can put off his birth ? Not one . If there is a time for man to die, and he by some chance is cut off before his time , who is to die at his time ? Can he fill the time if he is cut off before the time ? If he passes over time , then what ? Who is to take him away after his time has passed ? Seeing that he has passed his time , " Yes ," says the objector ," but Hezekiah had fifteen years added to his days ." Yes, and if you admit that, then you can never kick against God's predestination, and are compelled to honor his purpose and will be compelled to acknowledge the chance system to be false . " For ," saith the preacher , " I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever; nothing shall be put to it , nor anything taken from it ; and God doeth it that men should fear before him ." Eccl., 3:14 .

We have seen that he declares that he will do all his pleasure . Then nothing can be put to it , and nothing taken from it . And it is clearly proven by this that all the idle cant about God being desirous to save all, and some will not let him save them, must be of the devil, and they that preach it must be the devil's tools . For the above is sufficient to show His sovereignty . " Every purpose of the Lord against Babylon shall be performed ." See Jer. 51:29. If against Babylon, why not in all things? It is certainly taught in the counsel of his own will, and then we clearly see that nothing in the heights or depths comes to pass without his purpose — no, not the falling of a sparrow or the rustling of a leaf.

The saints are saved according to His purpose and grace . The apostle says , " And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God , to them who are the called according to his purpose ." Rom ., 8:28 . For whom he did foreknow , He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son , that he might be the first born among many brethren ." 29th verse . " Moreover , whom he did predestinate , them he also called : and whom he called , them he also justified : and whom he justified , them he also glorified ." 30th verse . " But ," says the objector , " all good things work together , and not evil things ." I answer, " He that purposed the good, also purposed the bad , and He controls both alike ." " But ," says the objector , " this predestination , calling , justifying and glorifying , refers to the apostles only, and not to the saints generally ." I answer, If so, then the apostles are all that are saved , because without these callings , justifying and glorifying , it certainly must follow that none could be saved or are saved . Besides , there were only twelve of the apostles , and the number saved , and consequently were predestinated , called , justified and glorified , is a great number or multitude , that no man could number . So the idea that it was only the apostles must be of the

wicked one , and not of God . In the purpose of God , we are taught the principles of election very plainly in the following : (" For the children being not yet born , neither having done any good or evil , that the purpose of God according to election might stand , not of works , but of him that calleth ;) it was said unto her , the elder shall serve the younger . As it is written , Jacob have I loved , but Esau have I hated ." Rom ., 9:11-12-13 . Are we to believe these verses , and yet condemn God 's purpose , election and predestination ? Surely not . Then we certainly are bound to reverence God 's was of saving his people , or contradict his word . Are we to suppose that his purpose of election in the case of Jacob and Esau differs from his purpose with the rest of the children of men ? It cannot be without denying his right to govern and dispose of his as seemeth to him good .

Again , read Ephesians , 1:11 : " In whom also we have obtained , an inheritance , being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will ." I would ask who worketh things that are not after the counsel of his will ? Since God worketh all things , from whence cometh other things ? I must confess that if there be things either in providence or grace that are outside of God's purpose , then am I a deceived mortal . I do rejoice that the saints have hope , " According to the eternal purpose which He (God) purpose in Christ Jesus our Lord ." Eph ., 1:11 . For it does seem to me that if we ignore his eternal purpose , we are without hope .

I think there could be no quarreling and wrangling among the Baptists if all would be strictly attentive to the scriptures . For they certainly do teach the sovereignty of God clearly . His eternal purposes , election and predestination , are stamped upon every page . Our exalted Creator certainly purposed all events , or else he purposed a part and left some to chance ; and we know that if it is based upon chance , that it may or may not be . Far be this from God . There is no chance work in grace , not in providence . All thingshave fixed laws , and one law does not annul another , so far as it relates to the works of the eternal God .

" For this purpose the Son of God was manifest that he might destroy the works of the devil ." 1 st John 3:8. He did destroy the works of the devil , and thereby proved himself the Son of God . If not , then he has failed to prove his sonship . Then predicate the events of time upon chance , and to my mind we dishonor God , and make his Son out to be an impostor . I know carnal reason revolts at the idea of God's complete sovereignty . But we are to understand that carnality never believes in anything above itself . It is the spirit that reveals Christ as a complete Saviour . And that clearly proves the purpose of God .

Every purpose of God is for some wise end . When he says to Pharaoh , " Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up , that I might show my power in thee ." Romans , 9:17 . Evidently , the purpose of God according to what God in his foreknowledge intended or purposed was fulfilled in him . Certainly he would not purpose the cause of Pharaoh , and leave the rest of men to work by chance . No , no . He declared the end

from the beginning. Was not this the end of all things, acts or events? To deny it, it seems to me would be blasphemy. Then if man cannot fathom the deep things of God, none should ask why or what doest thou!

The Lord saith of the church, or at least to the Ephesians by Paul, " The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of this glory of his inheritance in the saints." Eph., 1:18. Then the saints have the eyes of their understanding enlightened; therefore they alone can see a beauty in the purposes of God, and look for the fulfillment of them all, and God will not disappoint them; if so, then some things will work together for their ill, and not for their good. It is a comforting truth that God purposes, and none can frustrate.

Let us keep silent and hear the Lord speak of his purpose by the prophets: " The Lord of Hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass: and as I have purposed, so shall it stand. That I will break the Assyrian in my land and upon my mountain tread him underfoot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off his shoulders. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all nations. For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? And his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back? In the year that King Ahaz died was this burden." Isa., 14:24-28. Looking at this wonderful prophecy, who can doubt the fulfillment of all the wonderful purposes of God, or question his sovereignty, or deny his predestination? To mind, if in the wisdom of God, anything visible to mortals, or invisible of them, were to work contrary to the purpose of God, then all that was purposed in Christ would be likely to turn out to be a failure in what Christ purposed to accomplish. And should his purposes fail in one instance, it follows of course that all might fail, and that Christ hath died in vain.

Oh, how discouraging, how horrible, to think of even a remote possiblity of a failure in the complete and perfect salvation wrought out by Christ at such an awful and wonderful cost! What a howl of triumph would rise from the dark dungeon of hell if one purpose of God were to fail! All the demons of that awful abode would rise, and with demoniac yells make universal space resound with their shouts of triumph over the conquered Son of God. And we think Christ and all the angels of glory would stand trembling for the safety of the throne of God. If one link in the chain of God's purposes — election, predestination, or of the reign of grace through Christ — could be broken, then farewell to the whole race of man. For all would be forever gone, eternally gone.

But to my mind all things were purposed by the eternal " I Am." And that his purpose is as sure to accomplish as it is sure that his throne stands. I cannot see, for the life of me, how his honor can be maintained if we teach a probability of the failure of the reign of his grace. And never, to my mind, has one single sinner been quickened to life only by the Spirit of God; and this, it seems to me, is because of the reign of grace. And this grace was given in Christ before the world began. And consequently was bound, in the very nature of things, to have been before there was

a man made; and that must of necessity prove that God purposed to make man, and that man would need a Saviour, because of his death in sin.

"Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgment, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his cousellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen." Rom., 33 to 36. Now, if in the wisdom of God all things are for him, it does seem that it is reasonable to conclude that all and every event that taketh place in the heights above or the depths beneath, or in the lengths, or breadths, either in earth, or hell, are under his control, and that he purposed and froesaw them, and overrules them to his own glory. Or else events are not things. Then, taking this view of the wisdom, power, mercy and love of God, I feel safe in believing and teaching that the God of salvation is a complete Sovereign, and therefore live in hope of His mercy, and that through the efficacy of the blood and righteousness of his adorable Son, that I shall yet praise him who is my "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." See 1 st Cor., 1:30. Then God forbid that we should glory save in the Lord.

Dear brethren, I have thrown these thoughts together under the most trying circunstances — with much fear and trembling — knowing that I am imperfect, ignorant and short sighted, often wondering can it be that such a creature as I am can be a child of God — saved by grace. I have written my own imperfect views, without consulting any man for his views. I alone am responsible for what is here presented. I desire that if this is published, that none will take offence because of it. I hope that I have had the honor of God in view, and trust that I have the mind of Christ. My race is nearly run. I shall soon go hence, and shall soon know the reality of these things. I am looking forward to the time of my departure. When I go I expect and believe that I shall meet a satisfied Saviour. My hope is to see the King in his beauty, and the whole of the purchases of Christ's blood, which will be a train that shall fill the temple — not one left out for whom He atoned; if so, it will be because of his eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ before the world began. Then I shall be as the glorified saints, and methinks that all the hosts of heaven will be shouting "Crown him Lord of all!" Then I shall be completely happy, as I stand with the sanctified family of God.

And to His name be all the praise now and in a world which shall never end.

J.C. Hall
Gogginsville, Va.

MEETINGS

Saturday night before the fourth Sunday in October 1988, Goose Creek Island Church met in conference to from a presbytery to examine brother Gene Lupton for the office of deacon. Conference

was opened with hymn and prayer by Elder J .T . Prescott . It was agreed Elder Oliver Allen be chosen moderator . It was agreed brother Hassel Allen be chosen clerk of this conference . It was agreed brother Earna Marslander and brother W .R . Mumford be chosen as the two deacons to present the candidate to the presbytery and then after ordination present the deacon to the church . It was agreed Elder J .T . Prescott lead in the questioning of the candidate . It was agreed Elder Oliver Allen deliver the charge to the candidate . It was agreed the two deacons appointed deliver the candidate to the presbytery .

After the candidate was delivered to the presbytery the questioning was lead by Elder J .T . Prescott followed by Elder Oliver Allen and Elder Jessie Foreman . The question addressed to the candidate was , if he attended service at his church and no minister was present , would he be willing to offer prayer and even read scripture and if given anything to say , would he do the best God blessed him to do . His answer was , " Yes , I will do the very best God would bless me to do ." The charge was then given to the candidate by Elder Oliver Allen , followed by a remark by Elder J . T . Prescott . The presbytery composing of Elder Oliver Allen , Elder Jessie Foreman and Elder J .T . Prescott laid hands on brother Gene Lupton and performed the balance of the ordinance service . After the ordination , the church was asked if it was satisfied with the service conducted by the presbytery . The church was unanimously satisfied with the service of the presbytery .

It was agreed deacon Gene Lupton be presented back to the church . It was agreed those present give deacon Gene Lupton and his wife the right hand of fellowship . It was agreed the minutes of this conference be read . It was agreed the minutes stand approved as read . It was agreed to adjourn the conference . Conference was dismissed by Elder Oliver Allen .

Elder Oliver Allen , Moderator
Hassel Allen , Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 1988

Mrs . Maude Spencer , VA	2.00
Horace E . Walker , VA	3.00
Mrs . Audrey V . Dyer , VA	10.00
Mrs . Ruth Blair , VA	10.00
Ora S . Conner , VA	2.00
Mrs . Ruby McGuire , NC	2.00
Mrs .Rachel J . Green , WV	2.00
Mrs. Lovie A. Tompson, NC	10.00
E . W . Holland , VA	2.00
Mrs. Hattie H. Radford, VA	2.00
Brian Leandra , CT	12.00
Dale F . Richards , TX	25.00
E .G . Wilson , NC	20.00
Mrs . Dollie Ward , VA	5.00
Mrs . Esther Cole , NC	2.00
Mrs . Geneva Pettis , LA	2.00
Mrs. Lillie M. Hiatt, NC	2.00
Fred B . Murphy , AR	7.00
Ora Adams , VA	2.00
G .F . Blalock , NC	2.00
Mrs . Gladys Wright , PA	2.00
Mrs. James W. Huber , MD	2.00
Mrs. James O. Mitchell, VA	7.00
Eld. G .W . Jones , LA	7.00

OBITUARIES

ELDER WILLIAM MARVIN HOLLAND

Elder William Marvin Holland was born July 2 , 1914 , passed away December 4 , 1987 in Franklin County , Virignia .

He was married to Nellie Bussy Holland , to this union was born two daughters , Mrs . Samuel E . Terry , Mrs . Roy B . Boone , two sons , Marvin R . and Michael W . Holland , these survive together with four sisters and five brothers .

Elder Holland united with Republican Church January 16 , 1949 . He was baptized by his pastor , Elder John P . Helms . The church and the brethren of Sister churches saw a gift in him ; my father saw this also . He began to speak on January 19 , 1952 , liberated May 17 , 1952 , licensed October 14 , 1953 , was ordained to the full work of the Ministry on August 18 , 1956 .

Brother Holland was meek and humble in his appearing before the church , yet bold to proclaim the truth , and not ashamed of the Gospel he loved and preached .

He served as pastor of the following churches : Republican , Pigg River , Little Creek , and Basham , all in the Pigg River Association . He is sadly missed by us all .

Brother William was plain spoken, blessed to preach the doctrine of salvation by Grace and Grace alone , always abasing man , and giving God the praise . He was given many visions dreams , and experience of Grace . He was always ready to listen and talk with love , to visit other churches , associations , and union meetings and was blessed to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ Jesus .

I could not fully express our sorrow , but we feel our loss is his eternal gain .

Funeral services were conducted at Arrington Bussy Chapel , Rocky Mount , Virginia, by Elder Lane Carter , and burial was in Holland Family Cemetery .

May the Lord comfort his family , brethren , and friends that he was blessed to serve .

Written by one who loves him for Christ 's sake , I hope .

W . P . Lane Carter

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To assure you of getting your " Signs " and without missing any copies , be sure to inform us of any change of address .

Editors

PSALM 2 : 11

Serve the Lord with fear , and rejoice with trembling .

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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POEM

THANK GOD FOR LITTLE THINGS

Thank you, God, for little things
That often come our way,
The things we take
for granted
but don't mention when
we pray,
The unexpected
courtesy,
the thoughtful,
kindly deed,
A hand reached out to help us
in the time of sudden need —
Oh make us more aware, dear God,
of little daily graces
That come to us with "sweet surprise"
from never - dreamed - of places.

Helen Steiner Rice

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Sister Hazel Tolson

EDITORIAL

WATER

Elder W.D. Griffin

Water is essential to natural life as well as spiritual. It is one of the greatest covenant or spiritual blessings mentioned in the Bible. It is likewise an essential in the natural realm of existence. It is necessary in both kingdoms. The inhabitants of either commonwealth must have it or they soon perish. It is not something that can be produced by either an inhabitant of the kingdom of heaven, or of the earth. To both earthly and heavenly citizens, it is a gift from a beneficient Benefactor.

It cannot be handled by the inhabitants of either country. Without it those that are spiritual and those that are natural will die of thirst. In connection with that thought, let me say no man can stay the terror of thirst in either kingdom, therefore, there is not such a thing as a conditionalist where there is not water to alleviate that thirst. Ever so often water, both spiritual and natural, is mentioned in the Bible. You can not do without it. Also you can easily drown in too much of it in a natural way. I am well aware that to an extent God gave man the ability to bring water under subjection to him. However, God also gave man dominion over tigers and lions, but do not try to carry that subjection too far.

In nature men have thought that they had control over water, being able, as they thought to make it do what they thought. They were not able to do so. A man does not have water under subjection in the ocean nor on the desert. Dry hole after dry hole has been dug. Many people have drowned in what was thought to be shallow water.

Jacob had a well used well of water. It was the only supply for a lot of people. However, the case that we wish to notice is a peculiar one. The Master met one of His sheep there. She thought to need that water, but her mind was distracted away from what she thought that she needed the water that she did not know existed.

The Saviour knew before hand why He had to go through the country where this well was. He knows the need of His people whether bond or free, Jew or Gentile. It is a joy to think that in His relation to His mother, to His people, that He be-

came tired at the time that He did . He needed the natural rest, but a poor sinner stood in need of living water . His becoming tired when He did was because of His relationship with this woman, and because that He was the son of Mary as well as the Son of God. His arrival at the well before she did was purposed from all eternity, accidental though it may appear to men .

She came , as she thought , for natural water. According to covenant arrangements , she came for living water. She did not understand at the beginning, neither did any of us, but, if not deceived , we , as did she , receive that teaching that stems from heaven . The meeting of the two had been seen and declared before times curtain was let down. Here is conclusive proof that all of God 's children are taught of the Lord to know Him whom to know is life eternal .

Happy is that people whose God is the Lord. Ah, how empty and barren we are as we go out , and how joyful we are as we are brought in. How full her time was in rites and legal ceremonies ; how absorbed she was in going to Jacob 's well when she left her home on that day, and how completely her day and her mind was changed when she met the Man at places of drawing waters that are so satisfying that she forgot home ties , legal customs, earthly drinking water, forgot her earthen pitcher , and yet was so carried away in the Spirit of Him that she had newly met that she was filled with an overflowing well of living water springing up into everlasting life .

Let us remember that we are writing about water in our life as a follower of the Lamb of God . There are , in our pathway , two kinds of water . There are bitter waters and sweet waters . These two are one over against the other . This is by purpose of He that calleth His children to take their cross and follow Him . These waters will be in the hands of the Shepherd , and they will become as His wisdom dictates .

This poor sinning woman had never been anywhere for water save to Jacob 's well . After meeting the Saviour she had no need for this water anymore as a follower of the Man she met, for the water which He gave her , and which He gives all those that meets Him at Jacob's well, is in her , a living stream flowing upward , even springing up out of dry ground a living stream , as living waters , causing the tender plants to revive , the tender herbs to come under the night much of the time , but having the distilling quietness and strength of the dew .

Christ Jesus the Lord was baptized in water . I will never forget the day when I was blessed to follow my Lord and Master in baptism. I have oftimes wished for brighter evidence of being an humble follower of Him in that lovely ordinance . To me , water is the only element in which a child of God can follow His Master in the ordinance . There is not any way in which a baptism can be finished except in enough water for the applicant to be carried down into the water, and raised up out of it. Any commandment of the Saviour must be full consummation to be complied with . Down into and up out of is in compliance ; anything short of that is not water baptism , be it performed by whosoever takes it upon himself to

perform it. The baptism of the Saviour was in keeping with gospel directions, all baptisms since then have been in compliance with the gospel rule, if thus complied with (We are dealing with only the mode. For a baptism to admit one into the church of Jesus Christ, there are other things necessary in order for it to be legal baptism. However, I am only dealing with water baptism, with the mode of legal baptism at this time. The Lord willing, perhaps later other phases of it will be considered). In passing, let it be noted that all of the water in the universe will never cleanse a soul from sin. Only the blood of Christ will do that.

The cleansing foundation of water was opened in eternity in the purpose of God. It was for sin and uncleanness figuratively speaking, and it is a spiritual work, and men do not have anything to do with its flowing. God opened this foundation, and He did not have a single contribution of help in time or money or creature effort. The manifestation of the opening of that fountain shall be at the time that the sword of justice shall be called upon to smite the shepherd. The time of the opening of this fountain ushers in one of the most important links in the history of salvation. First, it does away with prophets, and it does away with legalism. It comes with great wonders and things hard to be understood, and yet it comes as a new and living way, and it comes altogether as a gift of God. It is not the forethought of man; men have nothing at all to do with it coming. It was conceived in the eternal mind of a covenant keeping God, and its coming is to be attributed to Him that made heaven and earth.

Water is intermingled in many, if not all, of the acts of salvation. Sometime the waters are bitter, even mingled with gall; sometimes they are sweet to the soul, making the heart beat with joy and keen anticipation. There is not any question about waters flowing to every inhabitant of Zion. Let us begin with the 16th verse of the 34th chapter of Isaiah, Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read, no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate; for my mouth it hath commanded; and his spirit it hath gathered them, and he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line; they shall possess it forever; from generation to generation they shall dwell therein. (now chapter 35), The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing, the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellence of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees, Say unto them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as the hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert (Isa. 34 : 16, 17 and 35 : i, 6). There isn't any likelihood of any of these covenant blessings failing.

These promises are those of a covenant keeping God, and He will do them. As God blesses us with a retrospective review of His promises , let us remember His promise to Jacob . He finds every Jacobite in a waste howling wilderness , and in a desert land . Right in those two needy places the text takes on grandeur and beauty and everlasting hope for the poor and needy . If that is your status before God , do not hesitate , but let us , as blessed with faith to draw near in faith and to say , He is mine , and I am His .

Do not fear dear reader, this living water will be springing up as you travel heavenward . That is His promise . What does it matter what reformers say ; what does it matter what challengers of your faith and of your order say . The Lord is on your side (Psa. 124) . It is not a problem for earthly engineers to tanker with bringing in a well in a desert . God has engineered the whole order of business in saving sinners . He does not get angered at them and turn His back upon them , but He ever is at their side , and even though Peter denied Him , and Judas betrayed Him , and the woman at Jacob's well at first challenged Him to draw water when He had nothing to draw with , He still displayed mercy upon those that call upon His name .

The Lord loved Jacob . He loved him . Not with this kind of love that hangs to your coat tail one day , and persecutes you the next . Other people delight in a text (if it is man made), like unto that . But He is not a man as we are . God loved Jacob , not in six troubles , nor not even just in seven , but He loved Him with an everlasting love . But now thus saith the Lord that created thee , O Jacob , and that formed thee , O Israel , Fear not ; for I have redeemed thee , I have called thee by thy name ; thou art mine . When thou passest through the waters , I will be with thee ; and through the rivers , they shall not overflow thee : when thou walkest through the fire , thou shalt not be burned ; neither shall the flame be kindled upon thee .

I am not telling you that you will not have deep and threatening waters to wade through . No , no , my soul knows that right well our blessed Saviour measured the depth of those cruel waters of death , even measured the depths for an unbelieving bride , and unfaithful bride , for , as one has well said , No woman ever had as faithful a Husband as did the Church of God , and no Husband ever had as faithless a wife . Yet He measured His waters of sorrow , that had to be waded for you to arrive safe at home , and what a sad lonely walk it was that He had to go it alone , but how good it is to be up and about and physically able and a mind well enough to comfort you that He walked the depth of them for you alone that you might have Him to walk those waters of death with you .

I hope that I write in brotherly love,

Elder W . D . Griffin

PROVERBS 9 : 10

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom : and the knowledge of the holy is understanding .

CORRESPONDENCE

11-6-88

Dear E.J. & Brother in Christ.

At the end of the article in Nov. issue "Signs of the Times" by Elder E.J. Lambert it said, "Before you lay this aside," etc.; a request for answer was humbly requested.

First of all I want to say; I really enjoyed the honesty, sincerity, humbleness and simple truth he projected in describing the role of Church Associations. I have had no personal relationship with any association. Neither do I belong to a church group which participates in any. I do belong to a Primitive or Old School Baptist Group which split many years ago. This happened many years before I asked for a home with the brethren and too long ago for any of us now present to understand why.

My first exposure to the Primitive Baptist was through my dear departed parents, on the East Coast, in the Catskill Mountain Region of New York State, where I was born and raised as a child. My parents attended a church at Shokan, New York. The pastor was Elder George Ruston who while I was still a young child moved to Canada and became well known among the Old Baptists there. Elder Arnold H. Bellows accepted the call of my parents group and remained as pastor of the Shokan Church until I had grown into manhood, and left home for a vocation in aviation in the early fourties. I am retired now over five years. During most of the time I was employed in that industry, I had a lovely family of my own to come home to but I was married more to the company than to the family. My exposure to religeous activity was less than secondary. My father passed away in the middle fifties and my mother eventually became more dependant on us. In the middle sixties the company transferred me to the West Coast and of course my mother made the move with us. Now to show you how "All things work together for good, unto those who love the Lord"; my mother naturally had to find a Primitive Baptist Group soon after we made the move. And it was with this group on the west coast that I eventually; after my mothers death became a member. It was through my obligation in seeing that mother got to church that I became so interested in the Old Baptists, I was led very subtly to realize the love and fellowship there was something that I had never experienced among any other church group. I had always used vanity to excuse my projected lack of interest in mothers religion but secretly I had a spark of interest to learn what it was that made the Old Baptists such a happy and loving group. When mother died, I had to make a choice. To leave this happy group and find something else to occupy 1st and 3rd Sundays and the fellowship I'd become accustomed to or to continue accepting their warm hospitality. I chose to continue. Having a more lenient work schedule with the company, had more free time. I began to be more interested in 1st & 3rd Sunday sermons and began to ask questions. I had also found a new interest in the scriptures. All the seemingly dead

interests of my past exposure to the Old Baptist coupled to newly revealed truths in the scriptures showing me how helpless and lost I really was ; eventually showed me that I really had a hope in the Grace Given Faith and Doctrine of Jesus Christ . I began to sing with meaning " Once was lost but now am found." In this church group, I eventually accepted the office of Deacon ; Moderator for a time and have worn most of the other hats at sometime or other . I have suffered the problems most churches do from time to time , such as losing members , losing pastors and having to carry the load with little help, but I find myself still in there plugging along . And : Do you know what ? As crippled as we may seem from time to time , the Lord has always provided a solution . Always after our darkest hour , He has smiled on us .

When we lost our previous pastor more than a year and a half ago . I felt an obligation to mail a letter to the Signs of the Times and enclosed a letter of deceased, Elder Arnold H . Bellows . It was published and due to the Notoriety of the Signs ; The letter and my name was referred to an Elder visiting at an association type meeting in the Southern part of the East Coast . That Elder happens to live on the West Coast and became acquainted with us and now out of His good generosity and pleasure we hope , has been helping us on one of our meeting times each month . On the other Sunday it befalls the responsibility of myself and one other able Brother Deacon to bring a message of Truth in the scriptures to the Brethren and Sisters . This is not easy but as I said , in our darkest hours He always sheds a little light at the end .

I have always been fond of the hymn , " What A Friend We Have In Jesus ." I have found a quotation in Proverbs 18 : 24 which says it all in just a few simple words .

" A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother .

The first part of the Proverb tells us what most of us have learned ; That : If you want friends you have to Be A Friend .

The second part of the Proverb describes the sinners Only True Friend , Jesus — who sticketh closer than a brother . Lets prove the statement , : John 15:13 — : " Greater love hath no man than this , that a man lay down his life for his friends ." Is this not Jesus ?

Please accept me as a new friend , and brother in Christ Jesus , I hope.

John T . Brooks
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Paso Robles , CA 93446

Dear Sister & Brother Barker ,

I have been trying to write you ever since you were here and tell you how very much I enjoyed your's , Sister Minter and Sister Cox's visit to me . I feel so very unworthy to have people , like I esteem all of you to be , to even take notice of me .

Tonight I got ready to go to Bell Spur to meeting but had no way . Sometimes Bro . & Sis . Carl Terry

stop by for me . I was disappointed and didn 't know what to do with myself . I had a desire to hear preaching . I started playing the tape you brought me . I had already played it once , but tonight it seemed to be just what I needed . When I heard Elder C .B . Davis ' text " When , we would see Jesus ," it was enough . He told so sweetly the way we are made (or blessed) to see Jesus . I listened to it and then came this thought , " Have I ever been blessed to see Him ? " My mind went back to times when He has made Himself known to me as I humbly hope . I cannot tell a beautiful experience of Grace as I have heard others tell , which makes me very fearful , but the little " handfuls of purpose " that have been dropped for me are the most precious things in this world to me and cannot be bought with gold or silver .

I believe we are born to the right parents and His children (if I be one or not) are taught the things He would have them know , although perhaps not seeing or realizing it till years later . One of my greatest pleasures when a small child , was sitting quietly in a corner and hearing the Old Baptist preachers and members talk with my parents . Sometimes I am made to worry about that one thing that must surely be all I know about an experience of grace . But when I 'm given to consider the dreams I 've had I realize they were for me . Not to puff me up , but to keep me down .

One night years ago , I saw the most beautiful woman . She was dressed in a flowing robe of spotless white , lying on a crimson velvet couch . The white robe covered her completely . On the floor a few feet away was my husband on his knees . He was looking at her and the love he had for her showed all over his face . The same love was on her face as she looked at him with a beautiful smile .

I stood in the doorway and looked at them and a voice spoke to me and told me the woman was the Church of God , my husband was her servant and the love he had for her was greater than his love for me . She would have to always be first in his life , that his first duty was to her . I was satisfied and wanted to be just a small part of it .

I didn 't tell him the dream till long after he was ordained . I hope in a small way I was a part of it , in that I was made to not complain when the church was first as it always was . If I know anything about it , the minister 's wife has a part of the burden to bear along with her husband . When he rejoices , so does she , and when the trials and troubles come , she feels them , too . When he has to rise before the people , there is a begging within her for the Lord to give him words to speak to the comfort of the congregation . When he is favored she rejoices and if he is shut up , she feels it . Is that too much for such a one as I to claim ? I do not feel worthy of the many blessings He has bestowed upon me . I only hope I am thankful to be numbered with the dear children here on earth and it is my hope . I am numbered up there . If not , then I have surely caught the shadow and missed the substance , which is my fear most of the time .

With much love and sweet fellowship .

A weary stranger ,
Edrie Clifton

ARTICLES

Dear Elder Kenneth R . Key :

The Bible declares that there always has been God . That God has ever existed . Before the universe came into being , the living , self-existent being is God . This one infinite and perfect being is unique . He has no identical . He is in a class of His own . In His essence , nature and attributes , God is undivided and indivisible . To us (said Paul to the Corinthians) there is but one God , the Father of Whom are all things and we in Him and one Lord Jesus Christ by Whom are all things , and we by Him ."

The Bible reveals God as having the ability to think , feel and choose . He sees , hears , knows , speaks , loves , wills and works . God performs His mighty works through His Spirit . What is the Spirit ? Jesus told his disciples what the Spirit was when He told them : " To tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high ." (Luke 24 : 49 .)

So the Spirit of God is the power which performs His mighty works . And He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth ; and none can stay His hand , or say unto Him , What doest thou ? (Dan . 4 : 35.)

From the beginning of time " Known unto God are all His from the beginning of the world ." (Acts 15:18.) and Paul refers to the works of God in these words : " God calling . . . those things which be not as though they were ." (Rom . 4 : 17 .)

Isaiah spoke of God in these words : " Surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass , and as I have purposed so shall it stand ." (Isa . 14 : 24 .) When Jesus said in His prayer to God (John 17 : 5) " Glorify me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was ." He had reference to that time when God thought of Him in mind and purpose " . . . which is in the bosom of the Father , He hath declared Him ." (John 1 : 18) Those things which be not as though they were .

The only begotten Son of God is the focal point of all God 's works . Everything points to the fact that God performed " All His Works " with His Son in mind . All things were made by God and without God was not anything made that was made (John 1:3) . All things were created " For Him " (Col . 1 : 16) " For it pleased the Father that in His Son should all the fulness dwell ." " For thou (God) has created all things and for thy pleasure they are and were created ." (Rev . 4:11 .)

The Son of God was no ordinary person . No one ever existed like Him . He was no angel in disguise , nor a strange creature from outer space . He was a special man , conceived in and by the spirit of God . Was included in the plan of salvation in the mind , purpose and counsel of God before He had an actual existence .

His life and work were foreknown and purposed by God evidenced by the Old Testament prophetic scriptures of the reality of His coming advent . His birth and work , even His death was predicted .

God 's plan of redemption finds its center in the person and work of our

Lord Jesus Christ (Eph . 1 : 9-10) (Eph. 3 : 11) His Son was in the purpose and counsel of God before there was time and matter . Yea , He was with God from all eternity " Then I was by Him as one brought up with Him ." " The Lord (God) possessed me in the beginning of His way , before His works of old ." (Prov . 8 : 2)

No wonder then , Jesus could say say : " For thou lovest me before the foundation of the world ." And Paul could use the same language . . . Although the works were finished from the foundation of the world . (Heb . 4 : 3) Thus , we get a little more understanding of Paul 's words to the Ephesians : " According to the Eternal Purpose which He (God) purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord ." (Eph . 3 : 11)

Paul told the Ephesians that they had been chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world by God according to the good pleasure of His will , wherein having made known the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure which God hath purposed in Himself who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will . (Eph . 1 : 45 , 8, 9, & 11) embraces a people also in the mind , purpose of God before they had an existence . Yet, those things which be not then as though they were . It was said of God 's people that He loved them " with an everlasting love ." (Jer . 31 : 3) and yet we read in Isaiah 48 : 7 " They are created now and not from the beginning . " Which simply means that their actual being became a reality in time .

God 's purpose for His Son stands at the summit of all His works . " That in all things He might have the preeminence , " (Col . 1:18) He , the Son of God , is the beginning , the firstborn from the dead . It was God 's predestination that the redeemed be " Conformed " to the image of His Son , that He might be the firstborn among many brethren . (Rom . 8 : 29) And this saving grace was given in Christ before the world began . (2 Tim. 1 : 9) Most certainly embraces the purpose of God of those things spoken of which be not , as though they were . Yes , dear reader , even our hope of eternal life was promised before the world was . (Titus 1 : 2) entertains the same truth .

Peter told the men of Israel that Jesus " being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God ." (Acts 2 : 23) Surely bring our thoughts of God when He purposed " " in Himself " " All things after the counsel of His own will ." Again , Peter affirms : " Who (Christ) was foreordained before the foundation of the world . (I Peter 1 : 20) and by John : " Of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world ." (Rev . 13 : 8) And of a book of life from the foundation of the world ."

Isaiah wrote : God declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not saying my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure . . . Yea , I have spoken it , I will also do it ." (Isa . 46 : 10-11 , 42 : 1 Psa . 89 : 19,20,26,27) " I declare things that are right ." (Isa . 45 : 19 .)

In the words of David : " Things ...secret from the foundation of the world ." (Matt . 13 : 35 Psa . 78 : 2 Rom . 16 : 25 , 1 Cor . 2 : 7 , Eph . 3 : 9 , Col . 1 : 26) Finally , there is " blood shed from the foundation of the world ." Said Christ (Luke 11 : 50)

Yea . . . The foundation of God standeth sure , having this seal . The Lord knoweth them that are His . . ." (2 Tim . 2 : 19) .

Meditatively ,
Horace E . Walker
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ATONEMENT

" Did Christ atone for all our sins ?

If so , why do we pray to him to forgive our sins ?

And why is all our suffering here on account of our sins , if he has atoned for them all ?

Why is Christ interceding for us , if a full atonement has been made for us ?

Are we mistaken when at the first in our experience we feel that we are condemned sinners ?

Did Christ atone for all our sins , or only for those commited before we were regenerated , and after this we atone for them ourselves ?

What is meant by the forgiveness of sins ?

And what is meant by the intercession of Christ ? "

REPLY

The above questions were presented to us by letter some time ago , with the request that we would reply to them at our earliest convenience . They call attention to most solemn and weighty matters pertaining to the religion of Christ , and the hope of the believer . We do not feel at all able to write in reply as the subject demands , but yet this is the theme of all gospel ministry , and if one is called to preach at all , this theme must engage his attention , and still more , if one has been called to a good hope through grace , these questions and their answers have become most important to him , and must be the subject of his most earnest thought . Still further , upon the right conception of these matters must the hope and faith of all such ones rest . These considerations have induced us to present some thoughts upon this matter in this public way , rather than by private letter .

" Did Christ atone for all our sins ? "

There can be but one answer to this question ; the Bible is clear upon this one thing , if upon anything : " Who gave himself for us , that he might redeem us from all iniquity ." " Himself bare our sins in his own body ." This text suggests no limit to the number of them . " But he was wounded for our transgressions , he was bruised for our iniquities ." " The Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all ." " For the transgression of my people was he stricken ." " By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many , for he shall bear their iniquities ." " And he bare the sin of many ." " He was put to death for our sins , and raised again for our justification ." In the great type of atonement under the ceremonial law once a year , the sins , every sin of all the people of Israel , were confessed upon the scapegoat which was slain , and the one that was sent away into the wilderness , and not one sin remained upon all the people when this was done . So also when the red heifer was slain , every sin was

covered in all Israel . From all these Scriptures it is clear that Christ did atone for all the sins of all the true Israel of God . None of the above Scriptures suggest any partial atonement, either as regards the number of sins covered, or the completeness of the covering , and there is no Scriptures that speak of the atonement at all that could be twisted by any argument into the idea presented in the question above . An atonement that did not cover each and all our sins , would be as good as no atonement, seeing that one sin unatoned for would condemn any one of us to everlasting punishment . One transgression of our first parents plunged not only themselves but all their unborn race in condemnation , guilt and unending woe. If sin then was such an exceeding sinful thing, it is no less so now. So that one sin left unatoned for would plunge the guilty into irrevocable destruction from the presence of the Lord. We cannot be too careful or too earnest in insisting upon this ; the whole scheme of the gospel hangs upon it ; the good hope of the believer , which is through grace , hangs upon it ; the very doctrine of salvation by grace hangs upon it . If not saved by grace , through the atonement which is in Christ Jesus , from all sin, then there is no salvation at all except through works of the creature . If by grace , it must be by grace all along the line , and the atonement must cover every sin . If our work, our repentance or our faith must be considered as the ransom price for any sin at all , then these things must be the ransom for all sin. If by grace, it is no more of work, and if by work, then it is no more by grace. The testimony is clear upon this in the word. But the apostle leaves no room for cavil , for he says it is by grace . Therefore the atonement of Christ must cover all sin, if it covers any at all

The atonement lies at the foundation of all the gospel, yea, it is the very substance of the gospel . If we are right in the view we have of the atonement, we cannot be far wrong in any other principle of the doctrine of grace . If we are wrong in the view which we have of the atonement, we cannot be right in anything that pertains to the gospel. It is therefore all important that we have right views of the atonement ; the glory of God is involved in it ; the exaltation of the crucified and risen Redeemer is involved in it ; the comfort , peace , happiness and security of the believer is involved in it . Except Christ did indeed atone for all our sins, his death was utterly in vain, the wisdom of God was at fault , and there is no certain salvation for any one ; nay , it is then certain that no one can be saved . Surely every believing humble heart must shrink from the contemplation of such awful consequences as the above .

" If so , why do we pray to him to forgive our sins ? "

It seems to us only necessary to say that if we pray for the forgiveness of sins, it can be only upon the ground of the atonement . It was upon the ground of the atonement under the ceremonial law that the high priest made intercession within the veil for the sins of the people. When he came within the veil , provision was made that he should come there with the blood , as full evidence that the required atonement had been made . It

was the same with every prayer made by the priests for the transgressor: all was founded upon the blood of atonement . So when now we come before God as priests unto him , our intercession for not only forgiveness , but for every needed blessing , must be upon the ground of the full atonement of Christ , and all our prayers must be in his name , God will not hear them otherwise . And Jesus , our true High Priest in the heavenly places , pleads before the throne for all whose sins he bore , upon the one ground that he has himself died for them , and put away all their sin by the sacrifice of himself . There would be no use to ask for any forgiveness or any other gift had not Jesus died . The law knows no forgiveness . Forgiveness is one of the precious gifts received for the rebellious when Jesus ascended on high and received gifts for men . Were it a fact that we ourselves must make satisfaction for sin , and could we make such satisfaction , then indeed there would be no room for forgiveness , seeing that we had paid all our debt against the law of God , but as we do not and cannot pay this debt , but Jesus does pay it , to us forgiveness comes upon the ground that he has died and risen again , and only upon that ground .

" Why is all our suffering here on account of sin if he has atoned for them all ? "

Our sufferings here are not for atonement , seeing that a whole eternity of suffering could not atone for one sin . In no sense is suffering on account of sin here an atonement for it ; then indeed would the atonement of Christ be nullified , and all his work would be shown to be useless . But suffering is often for a trial of faith , and often as chastisement , to correct . David said , " Before I was afflicted I went astray , but now have I kept thy word ." And again he said , " It is good for me that I have been afflicted , that I might learn thy statues ." The sons of an earthly father are chastised , but not to atone for their transgressions . The stripes inflicted upon a child are not payment for wrong which he has done , but for discipline , that he may learn not to transgress , and this is for his salvation and good , not to satisfy any demand of obedience from his father . The father having chastised his child , does not therefore remit the duty of obedience , as though the stripes inflicted were in place of the obedience . So God chastises his children , not to atone for their sins , but to correct and to lead them in the way of peace and blessing .

" Why is Christ interceding for us , if a full atonement has been made for us ? "

This we have in substance answered in our reply to the second question , concerning prayer for forgiveness . It is only needful that we repeat that the very ground of the intercession of Christ is his own atonement . He pleads his own work in behalf of his chosen ones . He says in substance , Father , I have died for them . He does not , as the advocate , seek to extenuate their sins , or to make excuses for them . He at once confesses before God all their vileness and foul transgressions , and that they are without excuse . There is not one charge against them that he does not at once confess as being true . He does not plead for mercy upon the

ground of the smallness of their guilt, or circumstances. He pleads not for small sinners, but for great sinners. One said in former days, " O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great." He pleads for his own because their sins are many and great, and therefore he pleads his own wonderful work upon Calvary. His plea for them is all summed up in the words, I have died, and so his intercession avails always for them. Had he not died, he could not be our intercessor. The atonement is the sole ground of intercession. Instead of the atonement doing away with the need of intercession, it is the only ground upon which any intercession can be made, and such intercession is effectual always.

" Are we mistaken when at the first in our experience we feel that we are condemned sinners ? "

We answer positively, No. At the first in experience the law of God is doing its work, the commandment has come to us, as it did to Paul, and sin revives and we die. The law is to us then as a schoolmaster unto Christ. We are then hearing the voice of God in the law, and the law of God, holy, just and good, can but condemn us. When applied to the conscience by the Spirit, at once sin becomes exceeding sinful. The glorious gospel has not yet come in, and the sinner hearing only the law, feels its condemnation. He is not mistaken under the work and sentence of the law; he is condemned and he dies. It is needful that we travel as did Israel, first of all by Sinai, and hear its thunderings filling our souls with fear. This is a needful experience, otherwise we could not understand the gospel of salvation, or rejoice in it. God has thoughts of peace to us in all this experience, but we are not yet prepared to receive the knowledge of this, or to understand in its fullness just what the atonement of Christ means, nor just what infinite mercy, which provides the atonement, means. To gain some conception of these things there must be first a knowledge of our condemnation and need. To appreciate bread we must be hungry. To understand what redemption in Christ means, we must feel the burden of sin and condemnation, and in mercy God leads into the knowledge of the condemnation, that we may come to rejoice in the salvation afterwards, he leads us one step at a time, he shows us one thing at a time.

" Did Christ atone for all our sins, or only for those committed before we were regenerated, and after this we atone for our own sins ? "

We do not need to repeat what we have already said in reply to this question: Christ atoned for all sin; all our sins, past present and to come, were laid upon him; he bore them all away forever, and before God and his judgment bar not one of them shall ever arise to condemn the elect. We do not atone for sin after we believe, any more than for those committed before. If we sin, it is still true that we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus, who is the propitiation for our sins, these present sins which we commit now, as the text just referred to clearly shows. Beside, as said before, if one of the least of our transgressions be not embraced in the atonement of the Lord, we are forever without hope. But as all was

embraced in his atonement, when we sin we are privileged to come, asking to be forgiven, and pleading as the justification of our plea, that Jesus has died, and that he has cleansed us from all sin by his one sacrifice.

" What is meant by the forgiveness of sins ? "

As the atonement blots out all sin in the sight of God, so forgiveness blots out all sin from the conscience. The atonement regards sin as it is in the sight of God. Forgiveness regards sin as it rests upon our own heart and conscience. There can be no redemption without the atonement from the curse of the law, which says, " The soul that sinneth, it shall die ." So there can be no peace of conscience until there is an assurance of forgiveness applied to the sin - burdened heart and conscience, and this assurance, as said before, comes only through the one fact that Jesus has died, and that full atonement has been made. Forgiveness brings us home to God in our own experience, reconciled, penitent and humbled. First there is conviction of sin, then there is confession of sin, and then God gives to the burdened soul the assurance, " Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee." Literally the word " forgive " in the original Hebrew and Greek means, " to put away," " to let go," and sometimes " to cover ." The word " pardon " is from the same Hebrew and Greek words, and means the same things as forgiveness. The thought seems to be this, when assurance of forgiveness comes to a soul, it means that he is shown that his sin is taken away from him, as the scapegoat carried to a land of forgetfulness the sins of Israel, or that it is covered, as a robe covers all the body with all its deformity and uncleanness. Thus the very meaning of the word " forgive " involve the taking away of sin, or the covering it out of sight, and this is the work of the atonement alone.

" What is meant by the intercession of Christ ? "

This is also already answered in substance, but we will add that an intercessor, as the word is used in the Scriptures, signifies one who stands between two others, bringing them together. Jesus stands between God and the humble sinner, and in him they are one. Redeemed unto God is an expression in the word that presents the full consummation of all the work of Christ, and through him we look to God and come to him, and through Christ God bestows all answers of prayer, and all spiritual blessings, and final glory upon all the redeemed. Jesus by the Spirit presents to us the love of God, and his glorious salvation provided for us, and he presents before God his loved ones in his own righteousness, and with the single plea for them, " I have died ."

Elder Chick

NOTICE

The West Country Line Union will meet with " Big Meadows Church " the fifth Sunday in January, 1989 at 10:00. Preaching will begin, Lord willing at 10:30.

Directions to the Church is going south on highway #87 from Graham,

N.C., go approximately 18 miles and turn right on first road after crossing Cane Creek bridge. Go four miles to a cross road and turn left and go one mile to the church.

Elders of our faith and order are invited to meet with us along with all lovers of the truth.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Deacon Casey Johnson, Clerk

THE STRANGE WOMAN

" I have peace offerings with me; this day have I paid my vows." (The Strange Woman.)

How different the language of this strange woman from that of the Sister and Spouse of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose motto has ever been, " The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." — Psa. xxiii. 1. Zion has ever delighted in telling what her Lord has done for her. " He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, and miry clay, and established my goings, and he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise to his name." " He brought me to his banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." " He is her refuge in distress, and a very present help in trouble."

But not so with the strange woman. Her husband has gone a long journey, and has taken the bag of money with him, (as though he were a modern missionary,) and she is left to provide for herself; hence she is found, devoid of delicacy, in the streets at the twilight. She is loud and stubborn, and at every corner she seeks for lovers, and wishes with them to take her fill of love. She delights to tell of her own doings; for in truth she is a workmonger practically. She has decked her bed with tapestry, with carved works, and with fine linen of Egypt, (not of Zion.) She has paid her vows, and so of course she has peace offerings with her. Having by her industry, in the absence of the good man, rendered her house so inviting, by her peace offerings, her carved works, perfumed bed, and her fine linen of Egypt, she is now seen in the black and dark night; for her feet abide not in her house; she goeth forth a diligent seeker and a sure finder of her deluded proselyte. Among the young men she espieth one void of understanding; she flattereth him with her words, and with her fair speech she causeth him to yield, yea, she forces him. He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks, till a dart strike through his liver, as a bird hasteneth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life. She telleth him that stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. But he knoweth not that the dead are there, and that her guests are in the depths of hell. She hath cast down many wounded, yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

Ye children of wisdom, tell us, is she not a daughter of her who sat upon a scarlet - colored - beast, who made the nations of the earth drunk with the contents of her golden cup, whose name is called Mystery Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots, and the Abominations of the Earth?

If Mystery Babylon, is written in

legible characters on the forehead of Papal Rome , are not the features of the strange woman above described equally visible in her mystic daughter, the popular Protestant religionists of the present age ? Hark ye ! What do they say ? We have peace offerings with us , alias , the means of grace , the issues from death , and means whereby to make our peace with God, and of saving our souls from hell, and of saving the souls of as many as we can by our fair speech force to turn in with us . Do they not profess to have peace offerings with them, when they undertake to reconcile the world to God , and when they upon the house-top proclaim that their benevolent institutions are efficient means of saving lost sinners . Do not the engineers of a Protracted Meeting , when they call their deluded dupes to the anxious benches , to participate in the efficacy of their intercession with the Lord, and when to encourage them to come , (or with their fair speech to force them ,) they tell them that their compliance will advance them , one step at least , towards heaven . Do they not then declare that they have peace - offerings with them ? Or when they declare that all that is necessary to establish their peace with God is to give their hearts to him , and that they have power to do this , do they not then say , We have peace - offerings with us ? And when they have gone through the formalities of what is called getting religion , and have passed from the anxious bench to the submission chair , and into the church , do they not say , " This day I have paid my vows; I have given up my heart to God ; I have received the healing virtues of the consecrated bench ; I have joined all the benevolent societies , and what lack I yet ? "

True , the popular religionists of the present time do profess to own Christ as their Husband . But it is equally true that they do virtually say that he has gone a long journey , and will return at the time appointed .

And that he has left her to supply herself with pastors , and arrange her house so as to render her accommodations inviting to those among the youths who are void of understanding ; and having done all this , to go forth by her missionaries , agents , tract distributors , &c., to diligently seek for lovers , or converts .

Reader , can you discern the analogy ? Beware , then , for her house is the way to hell , going down to the chambers of death . The dead are there , and her guests are in the depths of hell .

Elder G . Beebe

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?
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Editors

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

THE LONDON CONFESSION OF FAITH

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE FAITH OF GOD :—As the plea has been made that the meaning of English words , though plain and clear when used , yet be - comes dark and obscure in later times , so it is with the declaration of the religious belief of the Baptists of the seventeenth century , in the year of our Lord , 1689 , and published in the London Confession . And as this doubtful meaning of this ancient de - claration of what the holy Scriptures teach was made the plea for holding what was called a " National Convention " of " leading Baptists " of the United States , last November , at Fulton , Ky ., for the purpose of adding a supplement to the London Confes - sion , to make plain and clear the meaning of some of its obscure parts , therefore it is well that we read for ourselves the words of our faithful brethren of more than two hundred years ago , upon some of the chief points said to be obscure and uncertain in meaning . So the following correct extracts from the Confession are given . In their address to the reader they say , " In those things wherein we differ from others , we have expressed ourselves with all candor and plainness . * * * We have also taken care to affix texts of Scripture for the confirmation of each article in our confession , in which work we have studiously endeavored to select such as are most clear and pertinent for the proof of what is asserted by us ." How does this agree with the recent pretext that those devout servants of God failed to make their meaning plain to the intelligence of Baptists of this time ? This is casting reproach upon those faithful men of God , as well as charging ignorance and stupidity to the Baptists of our time , for it is virtually saying that the common reader now cannot understand the real meaning of candid and plain words . It is a vaunting assumption on the part of a few self - styled " leading Baptists ," and it betrays a lack of " candor and plainness " before God and men .

In chapter two , speaking of God , the Confession says , " Who is immutable , eternal , incomprehensible, almighty , every way infinite , most holy , most wise , most free , most absolute , working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will for his own glory . * * * He is the alone fountain of all being , of whom , through whom and to whom are all things ; and he hath most sovereign dominion over all creatures , to do by them , for them or upon them whatsoever himself pleaseth . In his sight all things are open and manifest . His knowledge is infinite , infallible and independent upon the creature, so as nothing is to him contingent or uncertain . He is most holy in all his works and in all his commands ." All these statements are very candid and plain , and they need no master to explain them .

In chapter three those candid and plain men of God speak of God's decree , saying , " God hath decreed in

himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangedbly, all things whatsoever come to pass; yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin, not hath fellowship with any therein; nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor yet is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established, in which appears his wisdom in disposing all things, and power and faithfulness in accomplished his decee." The simple meaning of this sentence is so frank, candid and plain to the mind of every reader, that it will stand against the efforts of every modern convention of "leading Baptists" to doctor and obscure it to suit modern theology. Every child in the kingdom of God 's grace as well knows the clear sense of this declaration of faith in the sovereign power and wisdom and holiness of the omnipotent and unchangeble God as does any teacher in Israel, so that no recent footnotes added to it can explain it away or disguise the plain meaning to those solemn words of wisdom. They are based upon Scripture proofs, which are omitted here for brevity; and in this one sentence on the holy decree of God is most plainly declared just the candid belief of all who humbly and devoutly revere God as at once almighty and holy. These simple words of those godly men of old do most clearly repel the false accusation, that this solemn and scriptural belief in the complete sovereignty of the Holy One makes him the author of sin, and his holy decree the cause of the wicked acts of ungodly men. Arminian opposers of God's sovereignty have ever made this slanderous charge, which is nothing but replying against God and condemning the Almighty, but not till recently have professed Predestinarian Baptists joined in this slanderous report against the unlimited decree of God, that it makes him the author of and responsible for all the things he has embraced in his changeless counsel purpose and decree. Faithful Paul has met all such false inferences when he says, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" He refutes the slander and rebukes the false accuser when he adds, "Nay but, O man,, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" This is just what all such "things" do say when they speak thus against God. Who are men who thus rail against the Most High? Hear the answer of God: "All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity."

In chapter five of the London Confession, upon Divine Providence, it says, "God, the Creator of all things, in his infinite power and wisdom, doth hold, direct, dispose and govern all creatures and things, from the greatest even to the least, by his most wise and holy providence, to the end for which they were created, according unto his infallible foreknowledge and the free and immutable counsel of his own will; to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, infinite goodness and mercy.

"Although in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God, the

first cause , all things come to pass immutably and infallibly, so that there is not anything befalls any by chance or without his providence ; yet by the same providence he ordereth them to fall out according to the nature of second causes , either necessarily , freely or contingently .

" The almighty power , unsearchable wisdom and infinite goodness of God so far manifest themselves in his providence , that his determinate counsel extendeth itself even to the first fall , and all other sinful actions both of angels and men (and that not by a bare permission); which also he most wisely and powerfully boundeth otherwise ordereth and governeth , in a manifold dispensation to his most holy ends ; yet so as the sinfulness of their acts proceedeth only from the creatures , and not from God , who being most holy and righteous , neither is or can be the author or approver of sin ."

These candid and plain words are easy to be understood, and their simple meaning is so clear and open every fair and candid reader , that it would require several conventions to so doctor their evident teaching as to make them seem to mean something else . So far from any of the words quoted from this old Confession being obsolete or out of use or their meaning then being different from what the same words mean now , no writer of this time could use plainer or easier words to express what he believes in regard to God . But we suspect that the real objection to these simple and strong words is not that their meaning is dark or obscure to any fair and candid mind , but that the doctrine thus clearly declared by those ancient Baptists is too strong for the appetite of some modern Baptists , who yet are not ready to come out candidly and plainly and say they do not accept the doctrine of the London Confession , but they will therefore labor to place a meaning on it to suit themselves , like doctors will sugarcoat their bitter pills to deceive the weak stomach of the patient . But why would some Baptists , who profess to accept the London Confession upon the sovereignty of God , as quoted above , yet persist in charging upon other Baptists , who do sincerely accept and believe it , that therefore they represent the Holy One as at once the author and cause and doer of all wickedness , and that all sin is the result of his decree ? For in charging this result upon all who truly believe this doctrine set forth so carefully and plainly in the London Confession relative to the attributes of the omnipotent and immutable God , they likewise cast the same reproach upon all the Baptists who wrote and believed that Confession . Is this honest and just and of good report ? Is it brotherly and kind and the way of " Peace on earth and good will toward men ? " Our brethren all along the passing generations , ever since Paul said , "(As we be slanderously reported , and as some affirm that we say ,) Let us do evil , that good may come ," have been thus slanderously reported , because , with Paul , they have believed in the Lord God Omnipotent , " who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will ." It was to meet and refute this " slanderous report " of them , and to show that their adoring belief in the Holy One did not make him the author of sin , that

his humble and true servants of old put forth their true belief in the London Confession . Until lately such un - charitable and reproachful accusations have come from the multiform hosts of Arminian will -worshipers , who limit the Almighty in his attributes and power , and it was not so strange that they would thus slander the doctrine of God as proclaimed by his true servants ; but now , alas , Baptists themselves join in this " railing accusation " against servants of the Most High , and flaunt forth the unblushing outcry , that to believe he predestinated all things , makes him the author of all sin , and that all wickedness is the " result " of God's unlimited decree . Yet they say they stand on the London Confession ! That Confession honors God in his " eternal power and Godhead ," as having " Decreed in himself from all eternity , by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will , freely and unchangeably , ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER COME TO PASS ; yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin , nor hath fellowship with any therein ." But such most unfair criticisms and slanderous reports against the unlimited decree of God do dishonor him and falsely accuse his worthy servants of old . The Lord will rebuke those who " speak evil of dignities ," and despise the dominion of God , bringing railing accusation against his true and faithful servants of old , among whom was Elder Gilbert Beebe , a valiant man of God in Israel , who gave his long life in defense of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus , yet he is assailed and his doctrine aspersed , long after the Lord , whom he loved and served , took him to himself , and he is charged with having proclaimed a doctrine so abominable that it made our Holy God the author and doer of all the abhorrent crimes of all wicked men , because he believed just what is declared above by those holy men of old who adopted the London Confession . When it comes to this , dear brethren , it may well be asked , " Is there not a cause ? " O , how deplorable , when Baptists will profess to publicly adopt and stand on the London Confession of Faith , then publicly reproach and denounce the very doctrine that it most solemnly and plainly sets forth pertaining to God and his holy counsel and decree . That Confession is not binding on the consciences of any , as it is only a synopsis of what the Baptists then believed the Scriptures to teach , while they accepted the Bible alone as the standard of their faith ; but why should any claim to accept this Confession , when they are at war against its teaching on the Decree and Providence of God , and cruelly reproach the brethren who do honestly believe it , with making God the author and responsible cause of all wickedness and crime ? Is this " endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace ? "

For one , I do most truly believe every word here copied from that good Confession , and I accept it as a clear , just and full refutation of the untrue charge that the Baptists who thus believe make God the author of any sin , for we revere him as most holy , and believe he will judge all liars , who reproach his holy name and slander his sovereignty and truth , with righteous judgment .

In the filial fear of God and love of his truth , yours to serve ,

D . Bartley

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Union Primitive Baptist Church . A presbytery met Saturday , November 26 , 1988 at Union Church , for the examination of Bro . Clarence Stone , if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God , at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment , ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Ministry .

The solemity was begun with prayer by Elder Denver Simpson . All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery . Those present were as follows : L . J . Brammer , Willard Cox , Hale Terry , Noel Conner , Lane Carter , O . K . Tench , Denver Simpson , Lic : W . T . Conner , Lic : Clarence Stone .

Deacons present were as follows W . T . Abshire , Bobby Bernard , Hassell Hale , Woody Young , W . T . Conner , G . W . Conner , T . G . Lowell Lonzie Nickols , Nelson Bryant , Gray Ingram , Jessie Tyree , Joe Cahill , Harden Walker , Tiras Conner , Andrew Agee , H . D . Ingram , Jamie Cooper .

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Leonard Brammer as moderator and Jamie E . Cooper as clerk . Elders Hale Terry and O . K . Tench was chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate . Having been duly appointed by Union Church in conference , H . D . Ingram as spokesman for the church , delivered Brother Clarence Stone to the presbytery . Examination was made by Elders composing the presbytery using scriptural reference 1 st Timothy , Chapter 3 : 1-2 . The presbytery being satisfied examination and answers given by the candidate , administered the laying on of hands , with the ordination prayer being delivered by Elder Lane Carter . The charge was delivered to the candidate by Elder Willard Cox using scriptural reference

The moderator asked Union Church if they were satisfied with the work of the presbytery , which was answered in the affirmative .

A certificate of ordaination was presented to Elder Stone and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given . The ordained Elder was delivered back to the Church as an ordained Minister of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Union Church . The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and approved . The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Hale Terry .

Elder Leonard Brammer , Moderator
Jamie E . Cooper , Clerk

Elder Hale Terry
O . K . Tench
Elder Willard Cox
Lane Carter
Elder D . L . Simpson
Elder Noel Connor
Brother W . T . Connor
Leonard J . Brammer

PSALM 150 : 6

Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord . Praise ye the Lord .

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 1988

Horace E. Walker, VA 3.00
Mrs. Valsie P. Akers, VA 7.00
Mrs. Meta Mills, AR 7.00
Mrs. Rachel Hudson, VA 20.00
Vance Duncan, VA 7.00
John R. Coplin, TN 20.00
Ralph C. Lucas, VA 5.00
C.I. Randolph, AL 7.00
Mrs. Irene M. Setliff, NC 5.00
E.M. Reeves, TX 2.00
Mrs. H.G. McLeod, TX 10.00
R.L. Fleenor, TN 7.00
Mrs. Lula E. Sloan, NC 2.00
Warner Locke, KY 5.00
Mrs. Roberta Wilson, CA 2.00
Gene & Linda Lupton, VA ...100.00
In memory Eld. Reeves Smith &
Bro. JR. Smith
Mrs. H.C. Allen, AL 5.00
Mrs. Annie M. Adams, VA 2.00
Mrs. Ruth Hawley, VA 10.00
Miss Irene Griffin, NC 2.00
Mrs. Marjorie Harris, CA 15.00
Mrs. Virginia Gladdings, MD 9.00
Mrs. Reba I. Wise, TX 2.00
Mrs. Ruth Wall, TX 12.00
Mrs. J.R. Somers, NC 2.00
Mrs. Mamie Aldridge, NC 2.00
William T. Giles, NC 5.00
Mrs. Vera N. Potter, MS 2.00
Mrs. Della M. Swan, LA 2.00

OBITUARIES

MINNIE ANDERSON DALTON

As requested by Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, if God will bless me, I will write a few words in memory of our beloved Sister. It pleased our Heavenly Father to call her from our midst October 8, 1983 in Camelot Hall Nursing Home in Lynchburg, Virginia.

Sister Minnie was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, May 14, 1906 to David Earnest Dalton, Sr., and Sarah Goad Dalton. Survivors are, one brother, David Earnest Dalton, Jr., Hurt, Va.; two sisters, Mrs. Ada D. Keatts and Sister Odell D. Dove, both of Gretna, Va.

Sister Minnie was received into the fellowship of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by experience on April 24, 1966 and was baptized May 8, 1966. She was a faithful member. Sister Minnie was not permitted to attend her meetings several months prior to her death, due to her health. She bore her afflictions with much patience and enjoyed the visits of her Brethern and Friends and could always call you by name. I believe she was made reconciled to her illness and to death.

She will be greatly missed by her Church, Family, and Friends. May we all be reconciled to the Will of our Heavenly Father who does all things well and never makes a mistake. Her funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on October 10, 1983 by her Pastor, Elder O.K. Tench and Elder Raymond Goad and her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the call of her Heavenly Father.

Elder O.K. Tench - Moderator
Raymond Goad - Assistant Clerk
Written by: Marvin Brumfield

LILLIAN PAULINE (POLLY) SPENCER

Sister Lillian Pauline (Polly) Spencer was born April 21 , 1924 to Mr . and Mrs . Dover Dalton .

On April 26 , 1944 Sister Polly was married to Mr . Louis Spencer . To this union was born (4) children (2) of whom died in infancy .

Survivors include 1 daughter , Mrs . Karen Womack and 1 son Mr . Robert Spencer 3 grandsons , Andrew , Robert and Stuart Womack , 3 sisters , Mrs . Hazel Hall , Mrs . Geneva Varner and Mrs . Loel Draper 1 brother Mr . Winton Dalton .

Sister Polly joined New Bell Spur Church in June 1963 and was baptized by her pastor the late Elder S . E . Terry , which was a joy to behold .

Sister Polly often expressed the desire to be at rest . For several months she suffered with terminal cancer . During her last months she was confined to bed in her home where she was graciously cared for by her family and friends , whom she desired . She bore her suffering very patiently , rejoicing that rest would soon be gained . We believe this was granted .

On July 7 , 1988 the Lord graciously granted her long desired release from a troubled world . On Saturday July 9 , 1988 she was placed beside her late husband in Skyview Cemetery to await the great awakening when the Saints will be gathered home .

The Church and friends at Bell Spur greatly miss her yet we rejoice , believing our loss to be her eternal gain .

Graveside services by the unworthy writer and singing by the members of her home church and friends .

Amos I . Hash

SISTER HAZEL TOLSON

We , the church at Tarboro , feel that God's will has been done by calling home our dear Sister Hazel Tolson .

Sister Tolson was born January 27 , 1912 and died October 9 , 1988 , making her stay on earth 76 years . Sister Hazel was blessed to join our church May 4 , 1962 , and was a faithful member as long as her health permitted her to go . She was a great believer of Salvation by Grace and the doctrine the Primitive Baptist preached . She was a humble and kind person and appeared to love everyone . Sister Hazel never complained about her troubles for she felt it to be the will of God . To know Sister Tolson was to love her . She will be greatly missed in our church .

The members at Tarboro Church send our sincere sympathy to her family and trust God will be their Comfortor . We feel our loss is her eternal gain .

It's our wish that three copies of this resolution be made : one for the family , one for the church records and one sent to " The Signs of Times " for publication .

This done in order of our conference at our November meeting .

Elder Henry Jones ,
Moderator
John H . Coker ,
Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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POEM

AMID THE STORM

As I watched with wonder and awe,
These are the things I felt and saw,
The hail and rain were coming down
The winds were making an awful sound.

I felt a certain peace instead of fear,
Surely the Lord was watching with tender care
I may never again feel such peace
May blessings like that never cease

Windows were breaking from hail and wind.
And the trees did break and bend
I've thought of this storm as a test
This experience I will never forget

I saw this as a blessing unfold
A treasure more precious than gold.
May the good Lord always be near
And keep us in his protective care.

A sister's experience during a storm.

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EDITORIAL

THE COMFORTER

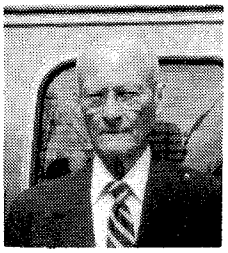
Elder W.D. Griffin

Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. And he that seeth him that sent me. I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not, for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that receiveth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but of the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak, therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak. (John 12:44 -50).

I have quoted this much from the lips of Jesus Christ in order that I might have authority for what follows.

If I do not know the solemnity of what I am writing about, I do hope that the Spirit of the Lord will take me to the secret power of prayer and there teach me that the matters that I fain would look into are the object of much soul searchings. I do hope that it is not a carnal desire to endeavor to fathom the secrets that belong alone to our Maker-God, but that we might gather together at times to settle on the pastures and leas to look up and petition that He teach us out of His fulness. I seek your petitions in my behalf at a throne of grace that I might walk softly in His presence, that I might look upon His great handiwork, both in nature and in grace, and be blessed with a fruitful mind concerning the kingdom of heaven and He that set it up, and that has called His royal guests into it. If it is wrong to desire to know more about Him, more about His kingdom, more about His doctrine, and more about His dear children, then I am certainly wrong.

First, I want to notice briefly the solemn fact that God is. That He is eternal, and that He is everlasting. He did not begin to be. If anyone is disposed to dispute and argue about that, I am not in an argumentative frame of mind, therefore, you have an

audience any where you find one, and I will not bother you. Secondly, I feel compelled to say what someone said in Proverbs, to wit, Before the earth or seas were made I was brought up before him, and was daily rejoicing before him, and my delights were with the sons of men. Yes, and no. I do believe in the eternal sonship of the Son of God, but an emphatic, no, I am not going to argue with anyone about it.

As God the everlasting and eternal Maker He has ever been God. All of the sons of ages have not dented His wisdom nor His power nor have those ages threatened His longevity. In the fulness of time this Supreme Being, which is denominated in the scriptures as God Almighty, sent His Son into the world. He (God) did not send Him lukewarmly; He did not send Him with concern about His accomplishing His will; He did not send Him reluctantly. Away with such silly talk by would be professors in Him. God Almighty, the Maker and Creator of all things was pleased to send him, and pleased with His work. I am not afraid of what I am saying. So much of the time I fear so many things; have so many doubts; have been spared from saying that I was going to quit preaching, but, sad to relate, many times I have concluded that I just as well quit, since I am not doing any good at it. If it was all of the time like that, I would not have any warfare. If Job had not been visited in mercy by the King of saints he never would have uttered that cry of joy and holy ecstasy," I know that my Redeemer liveth, ect.," and thus I am not afraid of God and I am not uneasy about Him abdicating His throne, or of discontinuing to rule the universe in righteousness.

Again, when the Holy Ghost overshadowed the virgin, God knew what He was about. The fact that it did not take place is conclusive proof that no man, nor set of men, that no power, and all powers combined, could have destroyed that Holy Thing in the womb of the virgin from the beginning of the conception through all of its embryonic state until delivered in the stable; furthermore, that all the combined powers of hell and earth, interwoven with all of the accidents and unthought of things by men, could not have put Him to death at any time or in any manner than what was done. How conforming to the greatness of God, and how confirming it is to the faith of God's elect, for He has taught us the whole truth concerning Himself, and has likewise taught us, as we hope, what to expect, and has promised grace to meet it with.

I desire to point out that Jesus Christ did not come into the world with but one purpose in mind. Prophets told what it was all about; angelic messages assured poor Joseph that nothing had gone away in his relationship with Mary's case; that his relationship and his love of the virgin was perfectly in keeping with the laws of Jehovah-God. Not only did Christ own His relationship with God, with Mary His mother, but He openly espoused the cause of His bride, His people. There is no account of anything as strong as He being made a curse for her. Twice that He became the curse to which she individually and collectively had incurred a curse was pronounced on one that hang on a tree, and there was a curse on every

one that continued not in all things written in the law.

How my longing heart longs to see Him for myself and not another, that really loved His chosen people to bear the ignomy of the double shame of a curse, that heaven, and all that holds for God 's humble poor, might be theirs without money and without price. Please look back to the first quotation from this Man of Gallilee. Listen to his declaration of His divine relationship with His Father. I would to my Maker God that each of my readers might be brought where Mary was brought at His feet, and learn of Him what she learned, and what we all must know before we are to have the necessary unction from above that we might understand Him finishing His work, and how astounding that the love of God unfolds to us in the sending of the Comforter. Let us remember the office work of God the Father, God the Son (Word) and God the Holy Spirit. With no intention whatever of dissecting the God head into three, and yet with no fear of any in setting forth the Bible assignments of the three distinct names under which each, in office work, functions.

I do not know how to say it better than the Bible says it. Mary was found with child by the Holy Ghost. If you want to speculate or if you feel an inclination for interpreting scripture, and in doing so, you find a better way, my advice to you is to keep it to your self for conjecture, guessing, interpreting, speculation, these are the reasons for the hundreds of ideas, translations, fantasies that we now have, and none of them are edifying, nor are the hair splitting views of any good when laid parallel with the straightforward things God has spoken to His Son, and the Son has spoken to us.

The work of the Son, as we learn from the angel to Joseph was to do the will of God the Father, to save His people. Properly speaking, that work is now finished and the time has come for the Saviour or Son to return to the Father. But first, let us find out if the Father finished His work of creation, of electing, of blessing His people in the Son. The question is, did He do that? As far as I am concerned, and as far I am able to understand the Bible, God the Father did finish His work. Now let us pursue the thought in regard to the Saviour. Did He do His office or official work? Did He fail in any sense of the word? If there is one of my readers that has a bonifide case of Him failing anywhere in His mission into the world, it behooves that reader speak up now.

Very good, indeed. Good news, indeed. He did not fail, but finished His assignment in full triumph. Now I feel free. I feel better. I feel like that maybe after all I have a perfect right to write and to preach, God giving me grace to that end, on the Comforter. God the Father having not failed in His work, and God the Son not having failed in His work, that the ordination of the elect family to eternal life and to a home in heaven becomes brighter, for, since the Comforter is none other than God the Holy Ghost, and He is equal with the Father and the Son in power and wisdom, it is such a pleasure to write in the strongest of terms that there is not any likelihood of one that God the Father chose, and that God the Son, saved, that surely, surely, no failure will ever come. His

name, the Comforter, is so lovely. It is so essential to poor sinners that will not find any lasting comfort in the earth to know that God has come, that He has always been our comfort, but especially, after having been with Jesus of Nazareth here on earth, to have had Him going before, His disrupting and upsetting the schemes and nefarious plans of Satanic powers, and then, in the great moment of the triumph of celestial powers that still another is given, even the Holy Comforter, the Spirit of peace and eternal happiness to lead and to guide in all things pertaining to this life and that which is to come.

Let us join hands and hearts in joyful praise unto our Saviour God. What loveliness is found in this God. What uniformity and equality is found in this matchless King of saints. Indeed, He is worthy of all adoration and praise of each and all of His elect family. He is our God and our Saviour; He is our fellow - sufferer, and our Elder Brother, and yet, as our Elder Brother, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. Ah, how it broadens out, what a great flowing fountain of love supreme that He becomes to us. He is God, even being God and none other beside Him and none like Him He is our understanding brother. He is sent of God, and yet He sends us another Comforter like unto Himself, and exactly like unto God the Father in wisdom, in power, in mercy, in everything that a poor sinner needs here or hereafter. Without fear of Satan or of any of his cohorting emissaries, He has the rule over everything that is a thing, and He will execute that authority here and in the world to come for the ultimate good of every heir of promise and the exaltation of His own glory.

The time is at hand for His departure from His sorrowing disciples. Step aside, dear reader, from the turmoil and strife, even from the seige that you feel at times that Satan has set for your unwary feet, and attend His departing words. Listen at the unity and the glorious pledge that he is making. I assure you that, although it has been upwards of two thousand years since these memorable talks to His disciples, that the same scene has been, and still is, being enacted between He and them. Time is not measured to Him that has no beginning and no end; that which was food and drink and comfort to Abel of ages ago, is just as precious and just as comforting to a newly born saint today. The things that you read in your Bible are living things today the needs and the desires of those sorrowing disciples as they listened to Him then are your life and your song and your hope today, there not being a whit of difference in their status before Him and your status before Him.

Yes, yes, indeed, they were sorrowing after Him. Granted that they did not know which way to turn. Come, dear reader, is it any different with you ? Doesn 't your unsolved problems seem as insurmountable as did theirs. There is no change in their sorrow and yours. They were sorrowing because that He was leaving (as they thought), and you are sorrowing because that He does not come. The situation is not any different between you and them, and my eyes fill with tears of joy and peace and abiding contentment as I contemplate the

beauty of the doctrine of God 's reigning grace .

It is today as it was that day . Nothing has changed. Your needs are as great, and His mercy is beyond our ability to fathom the length , and the breadth , and the depth , and the height of the love of God that is in Christ our Lord . But what a gracious promise he gave them , and gives us today, to wit, If you ask anything in my name I will do it . What do you need more than that ? What more could He have said to them than that ? What more can He say to you than that ? What better commandment could be left them , and which , also is left us , than that we love Him , and keep His commandments . And I am not writing frivolous things ; I feel that I am writing a fond farewell to each of you , and I tell indeed and in love and abiding fellowship that there are no grievousness in loving Him . Ah , that I could love Him more ; ah , that I could walk in His commandments and do them .

And now we come to what seems like His last token and last gesture of love for them . And I tell each of you that He that said that to them is still living , and that our need of comfort and consolation is as great as was theirs . I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever . Oh , what a glory is this , A Comforter that abides with them and with us , for - ever . He abided then , and He still abides . All of His power and strength is for the poor and afflicted children of God . The world cannot receive Him because it seeth Him not , and knoweth Him not. No scholastic learning will ever pierce or break through that cannot, and the world of ungodliness ever receive any benefit from Him , and the heirs of promise will never , no never , get negligent and lose Him as their comforter . The reason for the stedfastness of this is found in the fact that He dwells with you , and in you . And these in whom He is to dwell among and live in were those , and you and you , and me thinks that a ray of bright and shining hope springs up in my bosom and I , even I take hope .

When this Comforter came to them , yea , when He comes to the sorrowing children of God today , He comes with power and authority . He is equal in power and glory and Honor with the Father and with the Son. God, the Father , has not sent a Comforter that is inferior to Himself nor to His Son . The same Almighty power engaged in electing in Christ all that He (the Father) would have elected , the same Saviour that had vested in Him all power in heaven and in earth to the end that He give eternal life to those given Him , one like unto them , is even now the Comforter of poor sinners .

While the work of this Comforter is all designated as belonging to the sorrowing disciples in every age , we need not be alarmed that all of the Satanic powers during all of the manifest history of God dwelling among and abiding in His people , yet that arch enemy of God and of His chosen people , have ever been going about seeking whom he may devour , endeavoring to bore inside the realm of safety which has ever encircled the people of God , yet that he has not made a dent in the kingdom , nor has he ever enticed one from the safety and the final and lasting comfort of the precious Saviour .

My only hope and my only refuge is in this Comforter , which is none other than the Holy Ghost . As God the Creator , the Lawgiver , the Father , wrought in the earth to the end that not one promise of the suffering and final deliverance up of the Saviour to be crucified and slain as prophesied time and again from of old , and as the Saviour lost none of those given to Him , even so now , at this present time , the Holy Comforter has closed and forever sealed off the world from that which belongs to the saints , so that neither the world , nor they of the world, shall ever hinder the Comforter in His lasting consolation to them . My confidence to this end is established, 1 st. By the fact that God independent (of Satan and all of his cohorts) made the world for His glory , chose His people in Him , blessed each of them with every spiritual blessing ; that the Son suffered and bled and died to atone for their sins , keeps them ready for glory , and finally , but by no means last , is at the right hand of the Father as our intercessor there , and that before His royal ascension back to Him that He asked that the Father send the Holy Comforter to comfort them . Our God , our Comforter is guiding His people with the skill of His hands , yea , He will be our guide unto death . How glad I am , and I do hope that I am thankful that this Comforter even now is taking the things of Christ and he is showing them unto His brethren ; He is here now and is teaching all of His sorrowing disciples all things , and the beauty of it is , He will not let the least one of them all forget what they need to know . He will cause them to remember ; He will guide them into all truth .

His is the kingdom and He gave His people His kingdom , even one founded on better things that Moses could ever give us , even a kingdom that isn 't built and maintained by conditions , technicalities , but by the love of God .

This is my last to you . I will not see you anymore , but , God willing , I will meet you over home ,

Your little unworthy brother ,
W . D . Griffin

Elder Griffin passed away Jan. 29, 1989 . A memorial will follow later .

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your " Signs " and without missing any copies , be sure to inform us of any change of address .

Editors

CORRESPONDENCE

January 13 , 1989

To : Signs of the Times

I would like to write a little about what I believe the Lord has shown me , if he be with me to do so .

My family and I were raised in the Primitive Baptist Church . My mother was a member at Weatherford Church

for many years . I loved to go to church, but I thought I couldn't be one of those whom I believe are the children of God. I went to other churches, but it seemed I was in the wrong place.

Back in the early fifties , I was brought down so low I was willing to be God's anything. I went to doctors and to the hospital and it seemed they couldn't do anything for me . The doctor said it seemed I was worrying about something. I couldn't tell him or anyone else how I felt . I was so burdened I couldn't sleep at night. I would leave the house from where my husband and daughter were and go down to the tobacco barn and get down on my knees and try to pray , begging the Lord for mercy and for him to show me what to do. I felt I was at my wits end, but I felt I wasn't fit to offer to the church. This heavy burden stayed with me for several years . I tried so hard to just forget it all but it was no way it would leave me .

On the fourth Sunday in August , 1964, I asked for a home in the church at Weatherford, and they received me me . I was baptized in the evening after joining that morning . Our dear Elder O.K. Tench , pastor, baptized five that day . It was one of the happiest days of my life. I wish all my days could have been that happy, but we have troubles and trials to face here on this earth along with sickness and sorrows.

I have been fighting the battle of cancer for almost ten years, I've had three major operations , and my husband was sick for a long time before his death , but I am blessed to live alone and do my work in which I'm so thankful. I feel I know where my help comes from , and I give Him all the honor and praise .

Irene Myers, a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

Dear Brother Griffin ,

I am not worthy of my vile self to call you brother. I do hope our blessed sweet Jesus in His sweet love and mercy has blessed me a poor worm of the dust with a sweet hope in Him to love Him and his chosen little ones . My name has been with the dear brethren and sisters of the dear Old Primitive Baptist since 1922 . I was born in 1904 , Sept. 6 .

Elder Griffin I have wanted to let you know that I have enjoyed reading your good sermons in the Signs of the Times . In the April 1988 issue is a most wonderful sermon which you were blessed to write. I love so much to read them. You my dear brother in sweet Jesus were blessed to preach Jesus Christ the way , life and resurrection , O' how wonderful !

I want to try to write a vision I was given at Union meeting house several years ago . It was their communion day . I felt so low down , not even worthy to enter the door I sat down near the back of the house . I can't begin to tell anyone how vile and wretched I felt . I was begging the Lord with every breath if it could be the Blessed Lord's holy will that he would be merciful to me a vile sinner and if it were his will to let me know some way pleasing to Him if I a worm of the dust should take the communion with His Beloved Chosen Child-

ren that day . I felt willing for my blessed Lord to do whatever He would with me. While begging for His will to be done , I was given a vision to see the stand up above in the air and in the stand I saw Brother Cecil Turner and Brother Leonard Brammer (my half-brother). One of them , was praying and I could see the words of the prayer coming down from our Lord out of Heaven . I only saw the stand and the two elders . It was so bright , I cannot ever tell anyone the wonderful beauty of that sweet vision and the calmness in my breast . Bless His sweet holy name to comfort one so vile as I feel myself to be. I then felt it was His blessed will for me to commune with these beloved little ones of our Blessed Lord Jesus .

Another time several years ago I was real low with pneumonia . I was given up by one doctor and another doctor tending me told my family if I was living the next morning there would be hope for me. I did not know anything but I saw my body separated . I saw my dead body lying on the bed and I was going up without any effort of my own. I could see people in my room walking around. I wanted to tell them not to worry. I was taken into the most beautiful , happy , bright place as it seemed we were in rolling white clouds . I saw a large crowd of people all the same size dressed in white and they were singing praise to God our Savior. Up above them was a big white light. I felt it was the Lord. I was so happy , not a wave of trouble rolled across my breast while I was there. Why I did not speak while there I do not know. A sweet voice spoke to me and said you can not stay you must go back and stay with your little children , in a little while you will come again . O ' how sweet those words were to me! The next I know I was on my bed and my baby was standing close and I aimed to take her in my arms but I couldn 't even raise my hand off the bed I was so weak . During this same sickness I was very thirsty while I was so low with high fever . I was taken on a very steep mountain. A little clear stream of the clearest water I have ever seen was coming down this mountain. I took a piece of bark and put one end of it in the stream of water and I drank all I wanted. It was the best water I ever tasted. I told my mama the next day that I drank all that good , clear as crystal water I wanted and I will get well. I feel like it was coming from the throne of my Blessed Lord Jesus .

I often get down so low I fear I am a poor lost sinner. I long so much and try to beg our blessed Lord for his tender pure love and mercy and to keep me at his feet begging Him to lead me in the way well pleasing to him .

Some years ago I was so troubled I feared greatly that I did not love the precious Lord . I knew He knew if I truly did love him yet I feared that I was just pretending I loved him. It hurt me so badly I grieved almost day and night. I begged the Lord , if I truly did love Him in His pure love to let me meet his dear children at church . Sunday came and I didn 't get to go . Oh my soul , I was so troubled I could hardly live. I would go into the garden to work and mourn and cry until I felt like I would choke to death . My blessed Lord had given me a sweet home with his dear beloved saints and I hoped he had in His tender mercy

given me a love for them .

Two of my children were at my dear mother's house staying with her. She sent word for me to come and help her tend to them because they had the flu and a high temperature . Mama lived at Bassett, Va. and I lived at Stella, Va. We did not have a car nor a horse and wagon to go on. I was still worried about my troubles and my longing to know in the way my Blessed Lord would be pleased to let me know . I begged my blessed Lord " not my will, O Lord Jesus ," but thy will be done and at thine own time . Bless me a poor worm of the dust to meet thy dear children one more time if I truly do love thee O' Lord. That was on a Wednesday and we didn't get to go to mama 's house until the next Saturday . My husband got us a way down to mama's on a lumber truck. It was a fourth weekend . When we arrived at my dear mama's house my two children were alright so was mama. My brother was getting ready to go to meeting at Riverview . He said, " Callie, do you want to go with me to church ? " I said, " I would love to go ." I said, " I will ask my husband if I can go " I asked him not knowing what he would say fearing he would say no . He said I don't care , if you want to go . I was very pleased to get to go to church . When my brother Leonard Brammer and I walked into the meeting house , the dear saints were singing " Tis A Point I Long to Know. Oft it causes anxious thought. Do I love the Lord or No ? Am I His , or Am I not? If I love, why am I thus? Why this dull and lifeless frame ? Hardly , sure can they be worse . Who have never Heard His Name .

The dear beloved saints sang that sweet song through and I never heard such sweet singing in my life . It was up above the meeting house coming down from heaven, from the Blessed Lord , our Savior . It filled my whole soul with love for my Lord Jesus and all his chosen people in this whole universe . I cannot tell anyone how calm and peaceful my troubled soul and heart was at that time. The blessed Lord made me to know I loved Him and His chosen people. Oh how little I do feel to be comforted so freely and all in His Great Love and sweet mercies . Love was flowing from breast to breast and to the Lord in the church that day . I could feel it in my heart. O' Lord bless me a poor sinner to Thank Thee for thy goodness and sweet pure love and free grace .

Elder Griffin , I often get down so low I fear, I am a poor lost sinner. I do love to read your good sermons and all the others in the " Signs of the Times." " O dear brother I do hope the blessed Lord Jesus in His tender love and mercy may be pleased to continue to bless all the dear editors and their loved ones and may the loving kindness of sweet Jesus be with all his little ones all over the universe. He knows what they all stand in need of. I long so much He will keep me in the way well pleasing to Him .

Callie Clark
P.O. Box 665
Collinsville , VA 24078

ST. JOHN 14 : 1

Let not your heart be troubled : ye believe in God , believe also in me .

ARTICLES

The power and wisdom of God is on my mind as a text, and hopefully His power is working in me as I attempt to write a few words to His praise, honor and glory, and for the comfort and edification of His saints.

There are gods many and lords many (Cor. 8 : 5), but the God I believe in and have a hope in, (if not deceived), is the God of heaven and earth, the true and living God, the God who created all things and absolutely controls all things - times, events, people, etc. He has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. (Isa. 46 : 10). And in the ninth verse He said, " Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me." When God sent Moses to Egypt to deliver the Israelites from bondage, Moses wanted to know how to declare who He was to them; and God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. (Ex. 3 : 14). Brethren, this is the God that I desire to declare unto you today.

The world does not know this God: " For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." And Christ crucified is what is preached. Who believes the preaching of Christ crucified? Unto the Jews it is a stumbling block and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, it is the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Who are the called? " For whom he did foreknow, he did also predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified them he also glorified." From where were they called? From their dead alienated state and from nature's total darkness. " And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sin." Jesus calls them and they always hear and live. Jesus said, " The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." Jesus gave us several examples of his mighty power to raise the dead while he was on the earth. Not only will he raise them up when he comes again without sin unto salvation, but he also raises them up and gives them new life in this time world. God gave him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father gave him. " And this is eternal life, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." (St. John 17 : 2-3). If we know God and His Son we must first be given a new life or be born again, and then have a revelation from above. " All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." (Matt. 11 : 27). The world does

not believe this, for they teach that if any man will only open his heart to Christ that Christ will come in and save him; that they have power to accept or reject an offering of salvation. Even if it was possible for man to open his own heart to God it would be a work; and salvation is not of work but of grace. " They profess that they know God; but in works they deny Him." They cannot believe he has finished the work his Father sent him to do, and they believe they must do something to help him. To the worldly the Bible is only a recorded history of a man - child being born into this world, growing up here, performing a few miracles, and then being slain on the cross. This record is true, but if we do not understand, at least in part, the spiritual meaning of these things, then we have not been taught of the Father and we have nothing to base a hope upon.

When Jesus called Lazarus forth from the grave, and commanded he be released, Lazarus was bound in grave clothes and his face was bound with a napkin. The grave clothes represent, at least to me, the law that he was under till the coming of Christ; and the napkin represents the vail over his eyes that kept him from seeing the glory that was to come. As I see it, Lazarus is a figure of the children of grace. They are kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which is to be revealed at the coming of Christ to them as individuals. Therefore the law is our schoolmaster until that time; but after we receive the faith of Jesus Christ, we are no longer under the law or schoolmaster for we die unto sin. " For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me." Christ " died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." I believe the death and resurrection of Lazarus is a type or figure of this death and new life. I repeat, " The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live." What a glorious thing it is to be given a hope that we are among those who have heard the voice of Christ.

Christ also opened the eyes of the blind, Bartimaeus being among those; and though this was a natural blindness, at least in part, we must see the spiritual significance for it to mean anything to us. We are not told when he received faith to believe in Christ, but Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole: and he received his sight and followed Jesus in the way. Because of his faith, no one was able to keep Bartimaeus from crying unto the Lord, and so it is with every child of grace. Our cries are heard, and in the appointed time they are answered; for our eyes are opened to see Jesus Christ and what he has done for us; and we are given a hope that we are among those chosen in him before the foundation of the world: and as sure as we receive that hope we follow Jesus in the way. The followers of Christ are called sheep; and Jesus said, My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

Brethren, this is a promise with

holy power : this is power that the finite , natural mind of man cannot understand; but by God given faith we believe it .

There are those who contend that God has no power over Satan and that there is a constant struggle between them . In the book of Job , however , we find , " His hand hath formed the crooked serpent." Does not God have power over all that he created? Could He not destroy him as easily as he created him? Paul tells us in Romans 13 : 1 , " Let every soul be subject to the higher powers . For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." In Job 1 : 12 and 2 : 6 we find that God gave Satan power to afflict Job , but limited what Satan could do . Satan could not even touch Job until that time , for God had put a hedge about him . God also puts a hedge about his saints so that Satan cannot do more to them than it pleases God . There were many devils in the poor Gadarene , but Jesus displayed his mighty power by casting them out . Not only did they obey his command , but they had to ask for permission to enter the swine . We know that we have no power against the devils that besiege us from time to time , for they are much more powerful than us ; but Jesus drives them out and puts us in our right mind . Then he commands us to go and shew our friends how great things God has done for us . How sweet and peaceful the feeling when we are enabled to do this !

Leprosy is a disease of the body and always breaks out from within , and in the scriptures it is portrayed as sin . Ten lepers met Jesus when he entered a certain village , and they cried unto him for mercy . Jesus sent them away to the priests , and as they went they were cleansed of the leprosy . Only one of them turned back and fell upon his face and glorified God and gave Him thanks . We know that God shows mercy unto all of His creatures and heals them of their natural afflictions as it pleases Him , but we are not told what became of the nine that did not return to praise God : but the one that returned had been given faith to believe , and Jesus said unto him , " Thy faith hath made thee whole." This indicates to me that not only was he cleansed of leprosy , but also of sin . What a lovely picture this is of the children of grace !

Brethren , though we have been made to see the wonderful work of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ , there are many times that we are very doubtful and have great fear . We are not alone . John , who had seen the Lord in person and had seen the Spirit descending from heaven upon him like a dove after that God had told him that such a thing would come to pass , also had doubts while in prison , and he sent his disciples to ask , Art thou he that should come , or do we look for another ? Jesus answered and said unto them , Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see : the blind receive their sight , the lame walk , the lepers are cleansed , and the deaf hear , the dead are raised up , and the poor have the gospel preached to them . Brethren , this shows that we must be shown again and again these wonderful things , lest we forget . When Jesus said the poor have the gospel preached unto them he was not refering to the ones who have little or nothing of this

world's riches or goods, but to those who are poor in spirit, for; blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Jesus preached to the poor while here on earth, and now he calls, qualifies and sends forth his ministers to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to them through the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

What beauty, love and power is in this gracious promise!

Brethren, there is no end of this text. Remember this poor sinner when at the throne of grace, and may the grace and power of God rest upon you.

Clifford Wilbanks

REMARKS ON JUDE 11

"Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core."

Cain was a religious man; his religion was of a kind of which he could claim to be the author, and was consequently new schoolism, or a new kind in his day. In its external form it was something like that revealed to Abel from heaven; for he offered sacrifices to the Lord, and doubtless the best he had, as it was the fruit of the ground; and he also appeared to indulge a sincere belief that his offering would be as acceptable as that of his brother Abel. Abel offered of the firstlings of his flock, and the fat thereof; and the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering; but unto Cain, and unto his offering, he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth and in the issue killed his brother. This was the first religious quarrel in which blood was shed, that had ever occurred in the world. The difference between the religion of Cain and that of his brother Abel, will more fully appear by considering the way of Cain. The way of Cain was a way of his own, contrived by himself, and unauthorized by the God of heaven, and consequently unacceptable to the Lord; neither Cain nor his religion were respected; for the way of Cain did not recognize the doctrine of Divine Sovereignty; and he was evidently unwilling that the Lord should distinguish, single out, elect, or respect Abel and not himself, or of the same lump make one to honor and another to dishonor. The government of the Lord he was unreconciled to; yet he could be, and was, a religious man. His way, however, was not God's way, nor his thoughts God's thoughts; hence all his ardent piety and zeal availed him nothing. His offering, we have said, was unquestionably the best that he could command; and human reason would decide that it was as good as any part of Abel's flock; but those who have been taught by the Spirit of God will discover that while Cain's religion was a system, in modern language called Arminianism, Abel's was all of

grace , in its figurative import . The sacrifice of Cain was the fruit of his industry, he being an effort man, and the product of that ground then groaning under the curse of God for man's sake ; " And who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean ? Not one ." While Abel's lamb was not the fruit of his work , but , like Jacob's savory mean, was made ready to his hand, and pointed figuratively to the blessed Lamb which Abraham told his son Isaac , God would provide himself with for an offering ; and which was more fully manifested when the ancient Baptist, on the shore of Jordan, saw the Holy Ghost in visible form like a dove, descend and rest upon him as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. Hence while Cain's religion was a system of Arminianisms, Abel's was a system of grace; the former showing what Cain had done , the latter what God would do . The first, mere human invention, the second , a divine appointment ; the way of Cain to be defended by force of arms; the religion of Abel, by that God to whom Abel's blood cried from the ground. Now let an inquiry be made. Who are they in our time that have gone , or are going , in the way of Cain ?

But , secondly . " Run greedily after the error of Balaam ." Balaam was a prophet ; but not approved of God ; although he , as well as the beast upon which he rode, were constrained to declare some truth . Balaam was a missionary, and had a mind to go among the heathen and prophesy for Balak, king of Moab, to which work he had a call ; and , like many of his kind in our day who love his error, he asked permission of the Lord , and was suffered . Whatever might have been the outfit of this famous foreign missionary, the formation of a special board was superceded by the royal bounty of Balak; as it appears that Balaam had only to arise and saddle his ass, and away he went to prophesy in a foreign land , moved not by the love of God , nor regard to men ; but he loved the wages of unrighteousness , and he taught Balak to cause Israel to sin .

Let us again inquire seriously. Are there any in this our day, who love the error of Balaam ! If there are , wo to them ! thy shall perish in the gainsayings of Core, or Korah. The account of Korah . The account of Korah and his company , their gainsayings , rebellion , and awful end , are given in the sixteenth chapter of the book of Numbers . Korah , in an unhallowed union of effort with Dathan and Abiram , and their men , made an unauthorized attempt to assume the priesthood ; and like many of our young men of the Theological School, denied the reality of any special call to the work of the ministry ; and while in the very act of disputing the point with the Lord's ministers, the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up alive .

The awfully solemn considerations involved in the foregoing subject, cannot fail to produce emotions of the deepest interest in the hearts of all who fear the Lord and tremble at his word , to see the thousands who are at this day so very tenacious of the way of Cain ; or a way , like his , unauthorized by the Lord , and in which they may offer to the Lord unholy offerings; such, for instance, as their sinful hearts , their filthy lucre, their unconverted infants or their

dead works ; and the multitude of greedy dogs , who love the wages of unrighteousness as well as their ancient missionary brother Balaam did , and who are hurrying on after his error , believing gain to be Godliness , and at the same time knowing as we do , that as God is true , they shall assuredly perish in the gainsayings of Core .

Elder G . Beebe

THE NARROW WAY

Preached at Providence Chapel , Eden Street , Hampstead Road , London on Lord 's Day Morning , July 18 , 1847 .

" And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee , saying , This is the way , walk ye in it , when ye turn to the right hand , and when ye turn to the left ."— Isaiah xxx . 21 .

It is an infinite mercy for the church of God that the religion of Jesus Christ is not a religion of uncertainties . The way to heaven is not built upon peradventures . All has been designed by infinite wisdom , infinite mercy , and infinite love ; and what has been thus designed will be executed by infinite power . We indeed are ever fluctuating , as restless as the sea , as fickle as the wind , as changeable as the weather . But God changes not ; He is " the same yesterday , and to-day , and for ever " (Heb . xiii . 8) ; " the Father of lights , with whom there is no variableness , neither shadow of turning " (James i . 17) . O what an inestimable mercy , so far as we are the children of God , that though we change , He changeth not !

And His promises are as un - changeable as Himself . He is a God that cannot lie . " All the promises of God in Him " (Christ Jesus) " are yea and in Him Amen unto the glory of God by us " (2 Cor . i . 20) . One of these promises — as firm as the everlasting hills ,as stable as the throne of the Almighty itself — is in the words before us , a promise blessedly adapted to our changeable and fickle minds : " And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee , saying , This is the way walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left ."

Two things seem prominent in the words before us , which we may thus simply characterize : first , man 's weakness and waywardness ; and secondly , God's heavenly and infallible tuition . Man 's weakness and waywardness we find pointed out by the expression , " When ye turn to the right hand , and when ye turn to the left ; " implying that there is in the people of God a continual proneness to turn aside to the one hand or to the other . And God's heavenly and infallible tuition is pointed out in the words , " Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee , saying , This is the way , walk ye in it ."

I . God knows what is in the heart of man . It is said of the Lord Jesus Christ , He " needed not that any should testify of man ; for He knew what was in man " (John ii . 25) . We read too , " Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight ; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do " (Heb . iv . 12) . Thus , the Lord foresaw and foreknew all our

weakness and all our waywardness. He knew, and that perfectly, that left to ourselves, we could do nothing but sin; and short of His divine tuition, we could do nothing but err.

But let us, as the Lord may enable, enter a little more closely and deeply into man's weakness and waywardness as here set forth; for I am sure that a true knowledge and just appreciation of the malady is indispensable to a true knowledge and just appreciation of the remedy. If we are so ignorant of our own hearts as not to know that there is that in us which continually turns us aside "to the right hand" or "to the left," we may prize, or seem to prize, such a promise as this, but it will be only with our lips. There will be no inward value set upon such a promise in our hearts, unless we are acquainted, deeply acquainted with our own waywardness, backslidings, and continual departings in heart, in lip, and in life from the living God.

"When ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." What do these words imply? To my mind they imply this: that the way in which God would have us to walk is perfectly straight, without a single crook, or the slightest deviation from a right line. But when we, poor, fallen, feeble, ignorant, guilty, sinful wretches; when we would make some essays and feeble attempts, like a child learning to walk, in the straight and narrow path, we turn aside from the right line. And this turning aside is sometimes "to the right hand," and sometimes "to the left."

I cannot, I shall not attempt to define accurately what the blessed Spirit meant by "the right hand," in contradistinction "to the left." There may be a particular mystical meaning in it which my weak mind cannot enter into. I shall, therefore, merely lay before you what I know and feel on the matter as distinct from any mere fanciful or mystical interpretation.

"The right hand" is opposed "to the left." By the words, therefore, we have two extremes marked out as distinct from a narrow straight line. If you look at professors generally, and if you look at what far more deeply and nearly concerns you, the movements of your own heart, you will find there is a perpetual deviation to the one side or the other; and you will observe that these deviations are, generally speaking, contrary and opposed to each other. Let me instance this in a few examples.

1. Sometimes there is a turning aside to self-righteousness. Pharisaism is bound up in our hearts. It is born with us, grows with our growth, and strengthens with our strength. There is, therefore, in our minds an inward propensity to self-righteousness, in some men's minds certainly more so than in others; but the same propensity exists, in a greater or lesser degree, in every man to self-righteousness, pharisaism, a leaning upon something to be done by the creature in contradistinction to the finished work of Jehovah Jesus. But there is an extreme on "the left hand" into which we are just as prone to run—an antinomian licentiousness. Sometimes we think too highly of works, and lean upon them, as though actually there were some merit in them, on "the right hand"; and then, on "the left hand," we

indulge in our minds—I do not say in outward action—but slip away in our thoughts into antinomian licentiousness , as though it did not matter whether there were any works at all; as though the fruits of the Spirit in the outward life were of no consequence; as though so long as we had experience in our souls , it did not signify what works attended it. Now, here is a turning " to the left," just as much as pharisaism and self- righteousness is a turning " to the right ."

2 . Again . There is in many professors , and to go no farther, within ourselves (for before our eyes let the mirror be held up ; we have work enough to look at home) , there is a tendency to turn aside after dead assurance , carnal ease , a resting upon the doctrines of God 's Word without a vital experience of their life and power . In this snare how many hundreds are caught! O what a blast it is over the church of the living God! I have long marked , and do still mark and grieve over the effects of this dead , empty , notional carnal assurance , sweeping as it were over the land ; and I see in it the death of all good. It so hardens the conscience; it makes sin so little cared for and thought of ; it is such a bar against everything tender , humble , broken and contrite ; that I say again , wherever it comes it seems to be the death of all good . Yet we find it , I doubt not, in our hearts; a leaning to carnal security , a resting upon doctrines , a getting into an easy state , when the Lord is pleased to leave us unchastened , unafflicted . But then there is a " left hand " in the matter, which is to be in that state where there is a resting in doubts and fears; where there are no deliverances , no bright prospects , no cheering words , no heavenly glimpses , no divine testimonies, nor any desires after them. Now this is a turning " to the left hand," as much as dead assurance is a turning " to the right ."

3 . Again. There is a turning aside " to the right hand " in making too much of God 's precepts , as though nothing else were worth attending to. There are ministers who deal them out from the pulpit week after week, as though obeying the precepts and keeping the precepts were the all in all of religion ; while the work of the Spirit on the soul , His inward teachings and enlightenings , are thought little or nothing of. Precept! precept! precept ! Sunday after Sunday , as though keeping God's precepts were the sure way to glory. But again, there is a turning aside " to the left "; a neglect of the precepts , a despising of them, a saying, " What have we to do with the precepts ? It is all legality and self- righteousness. Let us have experience. Away with the precepts! we care nothing for them." Now this is just as much a turning aside " to the left hand" as making too much of the precepts is a turning aside " to the right ."

4 . But, further, there is a turning aside " to the right hand" by an undue setting up of ordinances , as though there were something in prayer, baptism , and the Lord 's Supper apart from what God makes them to be; and as if the sum and substance of all true religion were " to walk in the ordinances of the Lord 's house blameless." But there is also a turning aside " to the left " in despising the ordinances , in pouring contempt upon

baptism and the Lord 's Supper , neglecting prayer and the preaching of the Word , and counting these divine appointments legal .

5 . Again . An observing and reproving of the faults of the children of God and an overlooking of their good qualities , having the eye continually fixed on their defects and infirmities ; this is a turning aside on " the right hand ." But then , on the other hand , to make light of sin , justify transgression , and consider it immaterial how the child of God acts or walks , is a turning aside " to the left ."

Time would scarcely suffice to run through the various extremes into which we thus are from time to time continually driven . Our nature left to itself can never do anything but sin . We may say , perhaps , and think ourselves very sincere in saying it , " I will never turn aside ' to the right ' hand ; I will never turn aside ' to the left ' ; I will keep the straight and narrow path ." But how this shows our ignorance of self ! If left to ourselves , without God 's heavenly teaching in our soul , I am well convinced we can do nothing but sin and go astray . It is , therefore , an unspeakable mercy that God has recorded this special promise in the Word of life : " Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee , saying , This is the way , walk ye in it , when ye turn to the right hand , and when ye turn to the left ."

J . C . Philpot

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3 / 89
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE .

THE OBJECT OF OUR PAPER

Our brethren of the Old School of Christ will bear in mind that this humble sheet is devoted to the Baptist cause , as we believe the Baptist cause to be the cause of God , and that its columns are designed to be used as a medium for the circulation of bible doctrine and general information .

The dear people of God who remain steadfast and unshaken in the apostles ' doctrine are at this day greatly scattered through the country, and in many instances where one or more of them are found they are supposed to be the only ones remaining of the same faith and order . Indeed , they are often themselves driven to the conclusion of Elijah : " They have digged down thine altars and killed thy prophets , and I am left alone , and they seek my life ." In their scattered situation it affords them peculiar pleasure to hear from one another . " As cold waters to a thirsty soul , so is good news from a far country ."—Prov . xxv . 25 .

It is certainly good news to the scattered pilgrims to hear of the numbers in different parts of the land who still adhere to the doctrine and practice of the primitive church . In days of old , " they that feared the Lord spake often one to another ;" and the exhortation of the apostle is , that we " exhort one another , and so much the more as we see the day approaching ing ."

Elder G . Beebe

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

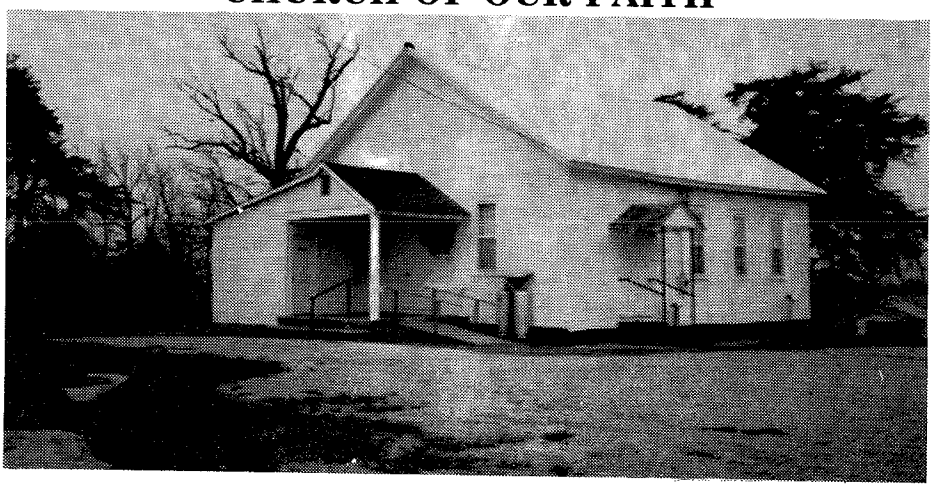

MOUNT ARARAT PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Mount Ararat (Old Mountain) Church was constituted July 6 , 1811 . Is located in Pittsylvania County , approximately 13 miles West of Danville , Va . on Mt . Cross Road (750) .

Former pastors were Elders Thomas Loveless , Hezekiah Smith , James Dameron , William S. McDowell , Thomas N . Walton , W . R . Dodd , Wallis Smith . Since 1971 Elder H. W. Wray has been our pastor .

Our meeting is the third Sunday at 11:00 , and Saturday before at 2:00 p . m .

Communion service is held the third Sunday in June . We invite you to visit us .

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

JOHN XIV . 18 .

" I will not leave you comfortless : I will come to you ."

This is one of the precious promises that Jesus made to his disciples before he was betrayed into the hands of enemies . Jesus is talking to his disciples of going away , of leaving them . They loved him . They loved him to that extent that they had left all and followed him; they left their families , their occupations and their homes , to follow him who was meek and lowly , and so poor that he had not where to lay his head . They followed him because they loved him . Jesus was everything to them . All their need was supplied by him . They knew if he should leave them they would be comfortless . They could not bear the thoughts of his leaving them . In chapters xiii . - xvi . he is conversing with them , and comforting them concerning his departure . He tells them that they should rejoice instead of grieve , because he was going unto his Father , to be with him . He pities them . In chapter seventeen he pours out his soul in prayer for them . He does not pray that they should be taken out of the world , but that they should be kept from the evil that is in the world . He said , " Father , I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am , that they may behold my glory ." This was his desire , that they should behold his glory , and it is the desire of every true

disciple of Jesus to behold his glory. But O, what does this mean? It means floods of affliction, temptation and fire. No glory can be seen in Jesus when there is any glory in ourselves. We have nothing to glory in save our infirmities, and we glory in them that the power and glory of Christ may rest upon us. But Jesus goeth away. He goeth forth sorrowing, yea, doubtless weeping, but to return with rejoicing, bringing all his sheaves with him; to come again with ten thousand of his saints. He goeth away and the disciples are comfortless; their hope is blasted, and they are in despair; they return to their former occupation; they go fishing. The disciples were not alone in this sad experience. Their experience portrays the experience of every child of God. Poor, old Jacob was comfortless when he exclaimed, "All these things are against me." But he was not left so. Job was comfortless when he said, "O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat," &c. But he was not left to die in this condition. The Lord came to him, and comforted him, but he came in the whirlwind. Jeremiah must have been comfortless when he was cast into the dark, damp, miry dungeon, but he was not left there. The eye of the Lord was upon him, when there was no other eye to pity, or arm to save. Poor, old Jeremiah may have distrusted the Lord, and concluded that he must die in that horrible dungeon, but the Lord was greater than all his doubts and fears. Jeremiah is brought to light and liberty again in the Lord's own appointed time. Have there not been times in your experience, dear child of God, when the Lord was with you, when the candle of the Lord shone round about you, and you meditated in his law day and night?

"What peaceful hours I then enjoyed,
How sweet their memory still."

But he goeth away, he turneth aside, he withdraws himself, and we are made to mourn saying, Whither is my Beloved gone? We are comfortless, and cry, "Return, O holy Dove, return, sweet messenger of rest." Yes, comfortless and destitute. We mourn our absent Friend. But Jesus, though out of our sight, sees us and hears our cries, and pities our groans. We cannot go to him, for we are lame, we cannot walk, our eyes fail with looking upward, and our tongue fails for thirst; we are utterly helpless, without Jesus we can do nothing, we are entirely dependent upon him, we can but wait and watch and wonder till he comes. Though he tarry, wait for him, for he will surely come. He is faithful concerning his promises. He said, "I will come to you." He comes in the clouds. The dark and threatening clouds which we so much dread are the chariots in which the Savior comes to us.

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head."

Jesus said, "If I go not away the Comforter will not come." How true this is in our experience. If we never knew what it was to be absent from the Lord, would there be any such thing as his coming to us? If we never mourned, how could we be comforted? and how can we mourn while the Bridegroom is with us? Yes, there are times when we are comfortless. Our wound is incurable, and we have no

healing medicine . There is but one Physician who can heal a sin sick soul, and though we cannot come to him , he comes to us . He does not leave us to die in our comfortless condition . No , no . " The eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him , and upon them that hope in his mercy to deliver their souls from death , and to keep them alive in famine ." Yes , he comes to us as our good Samaritan , pours oil and wine into our wounds , casts his own robe about us , and raises us up from our low estate , and communes with us by the way . He may leave us to try us , yet he never forgets us , though we may forget him .

" I will come to you ." How does he come ? He always takes us by surprise ; he comes as a thief in the night, when we are surrounded with darkness , and by terrors dismayed , when all the beasts of the forest creep forth , when we expect to be swallowed up by them , and the Lord seems so far away .

" When mine eyes are turned within ,
All is dark and vain and wild ;
Filled with unbelief and sin ,
Can I deem myself a child ? "

Here the Savior comes to us ; he finds us in a waste howling wilder - ness , he leads us about and instructs us ; he was leading us all the way along , and we knew it not . This is beautifully illustrated by the narrative of the two disciples who were on their way to Emmaus ; their hearts were sad as they communed with each other ; he whom they thought should have redeemed Israel was now crucified and slain , and they could not believe that he was alive again ; their fond hopes were blasted , and in this sore trial and disappointment Jesus comes to them , begins at Moses and all the prophets , and expounds unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself , but they knew not at the time that it was Jesus who was speaking with them ; as soon as he made himself known to them he vanished out of their sight . How often it is the case when brethren come together , and like the two disciples speak of the things that concern them most , that they find their pure minds stirred up , their love revived , and their faith strengthened . What is this but Jesus in their midst ?

" And they rose up the same hour , and returned to Jerusalem , and found the eleven gathered together , and them that were with them ," and as they testified of the things they had seen of Jesus , behold he stood in their midst . Jesus is always with his people when they come together to counsel one with another .

" Midst scenes of confusion and creature complaints ,
How sweet to my soul is communion with saints ."

When we are comforted while in conversation with brethren it is because Jesus comes to us and comforts us , and when a light surprises the christian while he sings , it is the Lord who rises with healing in his wings . When we are reading the testimony of Jesus , and all is shut up , and we have no light on those precious things , and are made to sigh and groan because of our blindness , and cry , " Lord , that I might have my sight ," portions of the word that were once full of beauty and comfort seem empty , and we can find nothing that will bring comfort , it is because we do not feel the presence of Jesus .

" I will not leave you comfortless , I will come to you . " Suddenly as we

are pondering over these things , or reading the Bible , there is some new and sweet revelation. Is it because of anything that we have done? No, no, a thousand times no, but it is because Jesus does not leave us comfortless, but comes to us . He is the true and faithful witness, the messenger of the new covenant whom we delight in , our elder Brother, Prophet, Priest and King ; he is our Shepherd , our Protector, Preserver and bountiful benefactor; he is our Friend; he comes to us , he manifests himself to us , and we are no longer comfortless , for

" His presence clears the darkest skies,
And gives us day for night;
Makes drops of sacred sorrow rise
To rivers of delight."

" He brings us to his banqueting-house, and his banner over us is love. We sit down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit is sweet to our taste." Yes, we sit down, for it is enough ; we rest in his love ; we are abundantly satisfied with the fatness of his banqueting-house; here we find a feast of fat things , of wine on the lees, well refined; here we behold the beauties of our Lord, and it is a feast to the soul; we eat his flesh and drink his blood .

" He hath loved us with an everlasting love , therefore with loving kindness hath he drawn us." He hath won our affection , allured us , and brought us into the wilderness , and here we are made to endure the fiery darts of the enemy , to hunger and thirst after righteousness. The things we once loved we now abhor. We are not mindful of the land from whence we came out ; no , we prefer the wilderness to that , forgetting those things which are behind , we press forward to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus . But often the way seems rough and stony ; sometimes we become discouraged and almost ready to fall by the wayside . Hard-hearted , full of unbelief , doubts and fears , we cry out , " Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious ? Is his mercy clean gone forever , and will he be favorable no more ? The Savior comes to us to cheer us on the way ; he speaks comfortably to us, and again we thank God and take courage, and go on our way rejoicing .

In all our losses and crosses and bereavements , the Savior comes to us , and proves a faithful Friend , a precious Comforter . He is precious because he can comfort and cheer us when all others fail , and in the deepest sorrows he is most precious, for he does not leave us comfortless, but comes to us, bringing comfort and consolation .

Edward F . Rounds

MEETINGS

The West Country Line Union will meet with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church , the Lord willing , on the fifth Sunday in April , 1989 at 10:00 A .M . Preaching will begin at 10:30 A .M .

Elder Campbell and Elder Chappell of Memphis , Tenn. are expected to be with us . All Elders of our faith and order along with all lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us .

Elder Kenneth R . Key , Pastor
Brother Boyd Minter , Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 1988

Charles P. Hayes, AL 5.00
Mrs. Mamie L. Haney, AL 2.00
Mrs. H.W. Jones, AL 2.00
Mrs. Clyde Belcher, VA 2.00
Mrs. Elizabeth T. Helms, VA 2.00
Mrs. Carrie Jo Williams, TN ...2.00
Mrs. C.D. Moses, AL 2.00
Mrs. Bessie D. Barber, NC ...2.00
Calvin L. Kimbro, NC 5.00
Mrs. Neva M. White, TX 5.00
Mrs. Anna W. Harper, NC 5.00
Charles Alders, TX 7.00
Roy & Minnie
Cunningham, OR 17.00
Raymond Clayton, FL 12.00
Mrs. Mozelle Lacy, VA 2.00
Mrs. Elizabeth Adkins, VA 2.00
Mrs. Maggie Nichols, VA 2.00
Mrs. Fred A. Baker, AL 2.00
Ralph Horne, NC 2.00
Mrs. Rosalie J. Biano, TX 2.00
Eld. J.T. Austin, PA 5.00
Luther E. Martin, NC 12.00
Mrs. Claude Mann, FL 7.00
Mrs. Estelle Stem, NC 2.00
Kineth Hollandsworth, VA 2.00
Loy P. Rogers, AR 7.00
George W. Hyslip, TN 10.00
Mrs. E.J. Marslender, NC 2.00
V.H. Laws, MD 20.00
Mrs. Garlon Vick, NC 5.00
Mrs. Bobby D. Gibson, VA 64.00
Mrs. Martha P. Thornton, VA 2.00
Mrs. Lela Lockhart, CAN 10.00
Marion N. Meeks, NC 2.00
Mrs. Larue LeBlanc, LA 10.00
Mrs. Hazel F. Jackson, NC ...2.00
Mrs. Ruby L. Gilbert, WA 32.00
J. Cline Chandler, NC 2.00
Levie D. Goard, VA 5.00

OBITUARIES

RUTH TERRY WALL

Sister Ruth 83, was the daughter of Hampton and Martha Terry, born in Surry County, NC and spent her life in Madison, NC. Retired from Gem Dandy Garment Plant there Her husband Percy Wall died in 1950.

She died Nov. 12, 1987, in Medical Park Nursing Center, Mt. Olive, NC. She had taken ill with loss of memory in 1983 and had a stroke later. She was in this home so she could be near her sister Roxie Comer and sons who looked after her, seeing that she had good care, since she had no children.

Her funeral was at Ray Funeral Home, Madison, with her pastor Eld. H.W. Wray officiating. Burial was in Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery. Surviving are sisters, Mrs. Roxie Comer, Goldsboro, NC, Mrs. Russell Webb, Mayodan, NC.

Sister Ruth was a faithful and loving member of Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church over 40 years. After doctors advised against driving, she didn't want to stop and miss her Sat. and Sun. meetings. She was blessed with grace to bear her afflictions and trials. She had her lovely home flooded two times, without complaining about these things. Her memory improved that she knew us, and she looked so happy to see us when we visited her. We loved her and miss her very much. We are thankful to have had her love and fellowship these many years, believing she has entered into that Eternal Rest and Peace of Her Saviour.

Sister Rachel Wray
Elder H.W. Wray, Pastor

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES . INC .
Route 1 . Box 420 Keeling. Virginia 24566

POEM

While winter 's gloom was still o 'er -
spread ,
And on my spirit lay ,
The voice of my Beloved said ,
Rise up and come away .

For lo , the winter 's past , the rain
Is over now and gone ;
The flowers appear , and songs again
Of praises are begun .

The power and sweetness of that voice
Wrought wondrous change in me ;
Made my poor , drooping heart rejoice ,
And fears and sorrows flee .

In sweet amazement I came forth ;
What wonders met my eyes !
Spring 's glorious beauty on the earth ,
Her radiance in the skies .

Grace fills the garden of the Lord
With blooming joys from heaven ;
The warm south wind is in that word
Which shows my sins forgiven .

'Tis this makes winter clouds depart ,
And gives me brighter days ;
The sweet spring time is in my heart ,
And I am filled with praise .

What heavenly rest from cold and pain
In these soft airs that come
With blessed thoughts of Jesus ' name ,
And breathing rich perfume .

Thanks that the weary days are o 'er ;
Thanks for spring 's gentle sway ;
Thanks for the love that says with power ,
Rise up and come away .

Silas H . Durand ,

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Sister Latisha Doss
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Sally Cash Mangum
Deacon Thomas N. Phillips
Brother Fred Smith, Jr.
Sister Lelia Frances Steele

EDITORIAL

MALACHI 3 : 6

" For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS

The first verse in this book Malachi, speaks of the burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi the prophet. Surely the word of the Lord has been, is today and will always be burdensome to the natural man. Rather than comfort, it condemns all of his ungodly deeds and thoughts.

All Israel we believe, are spoken to in this passage, but let us never forget, that all that are of Israel, are not Israel, although He has a people in every nation, people, kindred and tongue. God's promise of being with us, if His, all the way even to the end of the world, does not pertain to the non-elect, more so than He is everywhere present and no where absent. To His people He manifests His presence from time to time so that they feel His nearness that comforts and edifies.

This unchangeable grace of God is shown to all men in a natural way, or no one would survive, but saving grace is given only to His people, those chosen in Christ before the world began. Then we are made to hold to the above promise that states, " I AM The Lord". I think the " I AM", might well be noticed as this very declaration that was given Moses, to tell the people who had sent him. " Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you." This God that speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast, is the same to-day, yesterday and forever, for the I AM indicates an always present God, no past, no future, as with us in nature. Heb. 13 : 8, " Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever."

The people of God can rejoice in every dispensation of time, that they worship a God that changes not. What if He did change for any reason, could you be comforted that He once loved His people, could you be reconciled that He chose a people, would there be joy in His promises ? All of the worship of Him must, and let us stress must, rest in the belief that He changes not. Therefore the hope of His people is grounded, not in the fact whether He 'll change, or not, but have they from before time, been

chosen in Him .

Tim . 1 : 9 , " who hath saved us , and called us with an holy calling , not according to our works , but according to his own purpose and grace , which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began ." From before the world was until the Apostle Paul wrote these precious things was a long time , but not long enough for any change in God , neither is there any change yet , or will be till time is no more .

Already saved and called His people before the world was . Didn't wait to see their works , never waited for any effort on their part , could not ask their wishes or if they would accept Christ , as we hear so much of today . None but God was here .

Predetermined He would save His people , would call with a holy calling , not according to their works , but according to His own purpose and grace , causing them to walk in good works that He before ordained they would walk in them .

Can we not see then , if all of God's works are according to His own purpose we could never understand any of them or alter any for all were fixed before the world was or He is changeable .

Then does any work large or small , fit into the blessings God bestows on His people ? If so , no blessing is certain until the creature acts . Does God wait for a person to act ? If so He would have to change if the creature does . He determines the walk of all or the walk of none . He is no half way God nor can He be .

" For I am the Lord I change not ," the blessings along with all other things pertaining to God must be certain .

Therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed , " God will never change , but men will always change , daily , hourly , minutely , because they are men . There would be no comfort to me if there was a chance of Him failing to accomplishing just one of His promises .

My destiny would have long ago changed , if my actions changed the purpose of God . How do you feel ?

My heart tells me , because He changes not and cannot because He is God , that all is well with His Kingdom .

Therefore because He controls all things the destiny of His people is secure , as well as the destiny of the non elect is certain . As sure as there will be night and day , these precious promises are true and His children shall see God , for He changes not , therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed .

In hope of that City ,
Elder J . R . Williams

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Williams ,

The Lord willing I hope this finds you well and all is well with you .

I am writing this on behalf of my mother (Mrs . Huston Pitts) who is blind . It is her desire to donate $25.00 to the Signs in memory of Elder W . D . Griffin . He was a lifelong friend of our family and a much beloved Elder among all people of the Primitive Faith and Order and all those who hold the Truth dear .

Elder Griffin 's ordaination was called for by my earthly father (deceased) Brother Huston Pitts at Macedonia Church , Intelligence , Al . My mother , Sister Margie Pitts was the first to be baptized by Elder Griffin after he was ordained , so you see we have lost not only a faithful and well blessed Elder but also a very close and very dear friend .

May God bless you and us to continue in the Truth until He calls us from the walk of this life .

A brother in hope ,
James L . Pitts

My dear ones :

I do hope the dear Lord has given you blessings of health and love in these days . Yes , with each turning of the earth , with the rising of the sun , a portion of our lives passes , has passed forever . In days past I feared death to the point I never spoke of it , didn 't want to hear another speak of it . Did it worry me ? No . The dear Lord has blessed us in such a peculiar manner in this regard . We are well aware that our days could end any moment ; yet this knowledge is always kept in a special part of the brain , I call it the " on hold " part ; and it does not interfere with other parts of the brain and its activities . Isn 't that beyond our understanding and so wonderful ? The brain is just one marvelous part of the vessel we occupy while on this earth . Sometimes at night I think of a matter that should be taken care of first thing at the office next day ; I'll think of it a few minutes and then put it aside : the next day it comes to mind when I 'm at the office and it 's just wonderful to think the good Lord has so made the mind .

I think of a sermon I heard a few months ago . I enjoyed it so much . The Elder took the text : I Am That I Am . I love the I Am That I Am . I can see Him hold the seas in His hand . I can see Him touch you and give you a moment of peace while at the same time He does look upon me and withhold wrath even when my sins are many . He is with you and with me and with another , all of us being separated by many miles of land and water . I can see Him do the miracles I do not understand . I can see Him give His only begotten Son that sinners might live . I do not understand but I believe . Indeed , His thoughts are as high above mine as the heavens above the earth . I think of Elder Ingram . He told us of Jesus , I can hear him right now say : Jesus ; and he told of the earth and much that man had learned of it . I remember a Sister saying her children called him the science preacher .

Today I was blessed to attend my home church . I love to go to Springfield and I love to visit other brethren . I wish often I could visit more . Rather than more , my body prohibits my going as often as I formerly did . I thank the dear Lord for the wonderful blessing of desiring to be with you and desiring to hear His holy name . I often think this one of the most essential blessings a sinner receives toward peace on this earth .

Dear ones , I have been many days putting these few thoughts on paper , just a few at the time . I hope I have not taken the name of the dear Lord in vain . You know I believe except the dear Lord bless me to use

His name , it is in vain .

With love I hope ,
Reidy

Feb . 6 , 1989
Saline , La .

Editors of the Signs :

I am sending a check for ten dollars to renew my subscription for one more year .

I enjoyed Elder Griffin 's editorial (Water) . He explained so well the waters both natural and spiritual if I understand the spiritual meaning .

I also enjoyed the reply on the questions pertaining to the atonement, which I have wondered about— each believe that all things are possible with God and Christ has already died for the sins of His bride . I believe that we suffer on account of our sins here because we take up the cross and follow Him but if we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him . I believe that knowing what we are in nature we would be the most miserable of all if our trust and dependence were not in Christ and that all our travels have already been and that what is well be as planned . I believe that Christ has paid for all our sins (I hope I am one) scripture says something to the efect that : all sins passed through the forbearance of God — which I believe that a child of God 's sins all passed through the forbearance of God because their sins are ever before them — they wish with all their hearts to do good but know not how to perform that which is good . Their cry is Have Mercy Lord on a poor sinner who can do nothing to help himself — and they want so much to be a pleasure to the one who has done so much for them . Without the sweet mercy given them their lives here would be unbearable .

I believe that God 's children pray for forgiveness and beg for mercy because they have an unction with God . (1 John 2:27) says " But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you and ye need not that any man teach you — but as the same anointing teacheth ye all things and is truth , and is no lie and even as it hath taught you ye shall abide in Him ." When we feel the need to pray where else can we go but to the Lord .

Just a few of my thoughts as I do so much enjoy reading the views of others .

A sinner saved by grace if at all ,
Kate Mathews

Jan . 31 , 1989
Rt . 2 Box 75
Strong , Ark . 71765

Dear Beloved ones in Christ ,

My mind was on some , that was not able to tell their experience of grace , I for one was never able to tell much . If I had one it has been a little here ; and a little there , I was always looking for more evidence . It came to me in a still small voice my grace is sufficient for thee . I have written a little a few times , before I started writing this . I desired that the Lord would make known to

me, what I should write, I desired that the Lord would show me in a vision, or in a still small voice, while resting on my bed yesterday morning. These words came to me in a still small voice, come see the place where the Lord lay, I saw in a vision the tomb where he lay, He had risen, these words in a still small voice. I died for thy sins to atone. I arose again for thy justification. I am the resurrection, and the life, as I live, ye shall live also, as ye have born the image of the earthy, ye shall also bear the image of the heavenly, I rejoiced with tears of joy in my Saviour and my God, this morning, these words came to me in a still small voice, blessed are they that hath part in the first resurrection, the second death hath no power over them.

The precious things the Lord made known to me, in a vision, and a still small voice strengthen my faith and hope. I adore the three in one God, God the Father, God the Son, God the holy Spirit. After being quickened, I felt to be a condemned sinner while under the law, my sins revived and I died, I recall one time while hearing preaching about the law, I was crying Lord have mercy on me a sinner I did feel the law was my school master to bring me unto Christ. It would come to me for ye are not under the law, but under grace. Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness, to every one that believeth; Behold the lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, thy sins which are many are all forgiven; said Jesus my blood cleanseth from all sin. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. This spiritual world is to his called and chosen people. He loved them with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness, I have drawn thee. The one 's born in the natural world, unless the Lord quicken's them. They know nothing about the spiritual world of his people that he chose in him, from before the foundation of the world. Acts 13 : 48 and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. The Lord is the way, the truth, and the life.

1 Cor. 1 : 30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. (Heb. 2:11) For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all one. For which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. The Lord is the first born among many Brethren. The foundation of God, standeth sure having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. I am come that they may have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. The words I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

My father determined and wrote in his will the station I should fill, and the path I should trod. He is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. I hope he is blessing me to travel in that narrow path that leads unto life. And if Christ be in you. The body is dead because of sin. The spirit is life because of righteousness. The Lord knoweth my uprisings; and my down sittings. While traveling in this world of sin and sorrow. With many doubts, fears, trials, tribulations, temptations, and afflictions we have to suffer, and if we did not know anything about being

down in the valley, we would not know how to appreciate , when the Lord blesses us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ .

In bonds of love ,
Lula Fox

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

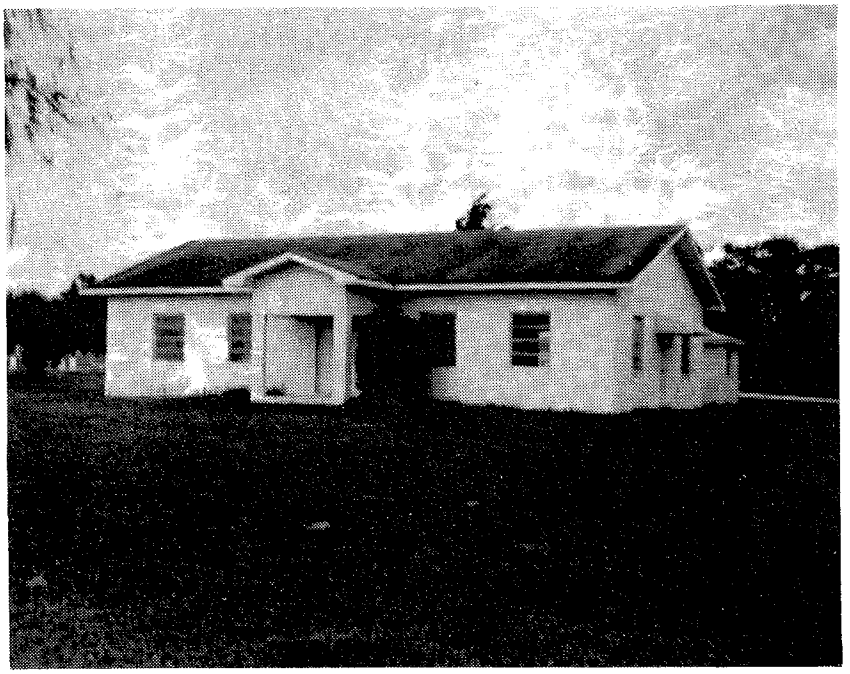

FELLOWSHIP PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Fellowship Church was constituted in 1875 on 40 acres of land donated by the Kicklighter family. Elder Andrew Kicklighter was the first Pastor and was one of the first to be buried in the church cemetery. After the church was established it was joined to the Mt . Erron Association .

Fellowship Church is located about six miles east of Wimauma , Fl. on State road #674 . Preaching services are held on the first Sunday of each month and Saturday before at 11:00 A .M .

In recent years the church has been served by Elder C .N . Davis , Elder A .A . Arnold , Elder W .S . Barefoot. The present pastor is Elder J .Y . McCormick serving his 18th year .

We cordially invite your presence.

PSALM 92 : 1 , 2

" It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord , and to sing praises unto thy name , O most High :

To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning , and thy faithfulness every night ,

ARTICLES

We shall read from the third chapter of Ecclesiastes and the fifth verse " A time to cast away stones and a time to gather stones together ; a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing ." Notice the order of the words. There are many occasions in the scriptures as you are familiar with, speaking of stones or a stone both in the singular and in the plural sense . They are numbered from time to time . There were twelve stones that typify the twelve tribes of Israel . There is a mention of the number ten stones which typify the ten commandments. David gathered unto himself five smoothe stones when he went out to meet Goliath . They typify the five books of the law. If our minds could be turned toward these things for a few minutes I would like to touch upon some of the essence that I feel like is embodied in the word stone and stones . First of all it said there is a time to cast away stones . We know that carnally we as all men of the world have within ourselves a hard and stoney heart . That hard and stoney heart must be transformed, it must be changed , it must be cast away. We of ourselves can not bring that about. We cannot cast away that stone that hardened heart , but the mercy and compassion of God as he touches us with his finger , brings about this transformation . That we have removed from ourselves the hard and stoney heart and out heart becomes a heart of tenderness , a heart of love , a heart of flesh as the scripture indicates . In that sense there becomes a time to embrace , and we embrace not only the fellowship of the church but we embrace the precepts and principals of Jesus Christ, who is the rock , the stone if you please of salvation .

Jacob in his experience , as he wrestled weary through the night with a vision. He saw angels descending and ascending as it were to and fro from Heaven and earth. He had used that night a stone for a pillow to his head. In the morning when he arose he took that same stone that was a comfort in the night. We would question how could stone under ones head be a comfort in the night. But it was such a comfort in the night that in the morning when he arose he took that stone and he set it up as a pillar and he called the place Bethel , because it would be to him a Bethel spot. He said the Lord was there .

There is not a single one of you that have been touched by the hand of God, but what can remember a place that you set up as it were a stone. It's a place of remembrance. It's a place that you look back to from time to time and feel like deliverance had finally come .

We find then under the old dispensation the beginning of the worship right, that the priest was to go into the temple and make an offering for the sins of the people. The Lord instructed Moses for a parcel garment be made that the priest would wear. The Lord gives him instructions, a pattern, that it was to be made from the finest linen that the world had to offer . There must be three colors involved. Those three colors were blue, purple and scarlet. The blue typify the purity

of Heaven the Royalty of Christ. The scarlet typify the sins of God 's people . The purple typifies the person of Christ because He is a combination of the two . He is the combination of the Godly man and the earthly man, though He knew no sin.

There was something else about this garment. It was called an Ephod. It was something similar to a modern day vest, but it was joined only at the shoulders, there were two pieces and it was joined at the shoulders . The two stones that were used to join these two pieces together were onyx, which is black . Typifying that when the priest went in to make an offering for the sins of God's people, that he carried upon his shoulders the blackness of sin and condemnation , the darkness of carnality. He carried that with him as he went in to make an offering upon the altar.

There is something else about this garment. There were four rows of stones across the breast work . In each row there were three stones , typifying God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit . or Holy Ghost . Those stones were the personal stones of the tribes of Israel , the sons of Jacob . Each one was a different stone . They were placed beginning on the right hand side as it would be upon the individual with the first son , second son and so on .

These stones show that in the Priest going , even before the fulfillment of the tribes of Israel , that the priest carried upon himself the burden as he entered and placed an offering upon the altar that he carried upon the altar that he carried upon himself the burdens that would come about as far as the carnality and the sin of man was concerned that it must be reckoned with , with a perfect sacrifice.

Also in the life of Elijah that there came a time when he found Israel worshiping a graven image . He has gathered together, here again twelve stones , and he built an altar with those twelve stones and he places an offering, a bullock upon this altar. He then demands those around him, that they may bring water , three barrels , and they poured this upon the offering upon the altar. He demands that they do so again and again. Then they dig a ditch around the altar and the water was poured upon the altar and the wood and the offering until it ran off and even the ditch was full . He had seen these men who were worshiping a graven image dancing and prancing and making merry toward their god and he questioned them as to the perfection of their god and the power of that god. In order to try to prove to him that their god was a living god , they began to cry even the louder and he said to them, perhaps your god is on a journey perhaps he is asleep. He then falls to the earth, he prays unto our most high God, that he might not only show those around him , some who were believers, but that he might show those who were worshiping the graven image , the power of an almighty God. The scriptures say that fire came down from Heaven . Now think about this , it consumed everything there except the twelve stones. Even the water within the ditch . Has there been proof in your life that His consuming fire has burned everything out of you except that heart, that spirit which is indestructible? Thats what is under consideration with the twelve

stones that is still existing .

Joshua , in his day , was commanded to lead Israel to the Promised land , and they must cross the river Jordan in order to arrive. According to the scripture, at that time of the year, was the time of harvest . The river Jordan was always at flood stage or over flowing upon the land . As they came to the water , they begin to question as to how they would get across . Joshua commands the priests who was carrying the Ark of the Covenant, that they should come and stand at the brink of the waters edge , in order that the people might see the majestic power of God. As the priests stepped in the brink of the water, that's where we are on every occasion, when we see ourselves as what we are and what we must be by grace , we stand at the brink of destruction, we stand at the brink of desolation , God rolled the waters back , and they crossed on dry ground.

The scripture relates that after the crossing that even the feet of the priests were dry . As they crossed Joshua tells those twelve priests that they should each take a stone and carry it upon their shoulder and place it in their tents. He says that in time to come that your grandchildren , your descendants shall say to you , why this stone in your tent ? And the answer would be, its a Stone by which I was delivered. Joshua commanded that they gather other stones , and they gathered stones and they made a heap of stones on three occasions I believe , where there was a heap of stones piled . Joshua said that this heap of stones will be a memorial, a testimony, for those who pass. That at this point we crossed the river, that was flooding, yet we crossed without the fear of water.

David goes out to see how his brethren fare upon the battlefield. We do that, we ministers, we visit to see how our brethren fare, David, tho he was just a lad, maybe around twelve years , and his brothers made a mockery of him. They asked him why he had come , who is tending the sheep at home . They didn't understand that the will of God and the purpose of salvation for Israel was taking place through this boy . He goes before the King and the King is glad that he feels that he wants to go out and fight this Giant of a man. He had paraded before Israel for forty days and nights and Israel was in much fear. Israel had no one who had the nerve to go out and approach this great enemy. The King wants to place his Armor upon David, and give David his sword, but it didn't fit, it had not been tried . David takes the most primitive weapon, a sling and he goes out and as he crosses the brook he chooses five smooth stones . They typify the five books of the law . He was carrying upon his shoulder everything that the law demanded, he was carrying upon his shoulder all of the hopes of Israel, because they had no hope— they were about to be over run by the Philistine army. He takes one of those stones and he slings it and it strikes Goliah in the forehead to such and extent that it buries itself , it strikes him dead . This again is a stone of deliverance . It has the conquering power over all power known to mankind, and this is Jesus Christ . He is the stone of our salvation, He is the stone of our joy,

the stone of our happiness . David in one of the Psalms , " Lord thou art the Rock of our Salvation ."

Isaiah speaks of this stone , this perfect stone , he calls it such , he calls it a tried stone and he said it shall be laid in Zion . It shall be a stumbling block for the Jews . We also find recorded that those who had access to this stone rejected it . The builders rejected it , feeling it had no merit . The builders of self righteousness and self works today still reject this stone . They don 't understand its merit . They can 't see that its a foundation stone of all of the hopes and the faith of God 's people . They can 't see that it is also the head stone , meaning that from the top to the bottom , its always Christ in the Church and with his people . That they never find a time or a place when this stone can be left aside or placed from view . We find then that Christ comes , a stone of salvation and the stone of deliverance comes . In his travels he come upon a scene where the people are attempting to stone to death an adulteress woman . He inquires of the charge and they tell him and he stoops and writes in the sand—marks in the sand with his finger . He arises from that position and he questions the woman and she feels they are just in their decision as to her guilt . There is something here that goes back to the casting away of stones . He says to those who would bring death upon her , let he who among you that is free of sin cast the first stone . He marks in the sand again and when he arises all the men have gone away . He ask the woman , where are thine accusers ? She said , I know not Lord . He said thy sins are forgiven thee , go and sin no more . Have we not in our times felt that as we had such guilt upon us for our thoughts and our ways and our actions , that we were condemned because we could not cast aside the weight of the stone that so heavily bore upon us . That is the stone of afliction , the stone of sin , the stone of condemnation that would weight us down to the very depths of hell . Thanks be unto God that when Christ has spoken and has relieved the guilty conscience of the fear of death and hell , then we can feel that our accusers are gone forever .

In the book of Revelation John sees a City , New Jerusalem . As he beholds the city he sees its construction and in the foundation of that city there are twelve stones . Twelve precious stones , he calls them . He also beholds in the walls of that city twelve gates , those gates are named for the tribes of Israel , the sons of Jacob . To me this means there will be no effort on the part of those who enter the gates of the city . They shall come from the east and the west and the north and the south and there shall be no effort to look for a place to enter because the place is already prepared . Those twelve stones that are the foundation of that city are the same color as the twelve stones in the Ephod that the priests wore . They are not all the same name but they are the same color . They are also the same colors as the colors of the rainbow , which is the expression of the perfection of the covenant between God and man , the first covenant , the rainbow . The same colors in the rainbow , in the stones upon the vest of the Priests and in the foundation of the City .

One other stone is mentioned ,

when John sees the combination of all things , he sees the Lamb 's book of life , he beholds He who sits upon the great white throne , and the book of life is opened , the names are read and when the sounding of the end of time is come , when the sounding of the angel has come , the angel of the East come and presents to Him a white stone . This is the church in the perfect sense . Under the old dispensation and even under the Roman law , if an individual was accused of some crime , some sin , and it was found that he was not guilty , there was given to him a smoothe white stone and he carried that stone with him all the journey of life . Then if some one should say to him or to her , aren 't you the one that did this or did that , he had the proof on his person . When the world says to you , my beloved did you not say this or did you not say that you have within yourself , upon your person , if you please , the white stone of perfection , because you have been judged not guilty . Christ took upon himself all of the wrath of God in order that you might be set free . John sees this as it is brought together . I believe that this morning that I am standing before a gathering of the stones of God 's salvation . You are a heap of Stones , as it were , placed here in time by the hand of God . You have been touched by the majestic wonder of that hand . You are a memorial , you are a testimony to what God has done for you by the blood of Jesus Christ . You are a memorial that the world can see and yet does not understand . They still have no place for the tried stone . It is rejected , you have been shaped as the scripture relates , the builder shapes the stone in the wilderness . In the construction of the temple where the stones were used not the sound of tools were heard . Peter , in his first book says , " ye are now as lively stones " and therefore I believe this morning I am standing before a heap of lively stones . You have been made alive in Jesus Christ . You know that your faith and your hope , though weak , it might seem sometimes is just as solid as the rock as when Christ said unto Peter , " upon this rock I shall build my Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it ." Your salvation , your welfare in heaven is just as secure as the word of God is secure . You are the stones of his suffering , you are the stones of his weeping , you are the stones of his body , because there is but one body that is the Church , and that is the body of Jesus Christ .

Let us render thanks , give all honor , glory and praise unto He who has brought us into the knowledge of the love of God , and made us lively stones in the hope of eternal life . That we might be present when the Lambs book of life is opened , that we might hear our name read , and that we might be a witness to the angel of the east that comes and presents Him with the white stone , saying that Lord , they have all been set free . There is no guilt upon a single one .

May God bless you and keep you is my prayer for Christ sake .

The above is a sermon preached by Elder C . B . Davis at Big Meadows Church , Chatham County , N . C . on the fifth Sunday in January , 1989 .

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

THE NARROW WAY

Continued from March issue.

This leads me to enter upon the second part of our subject, to shew the heavenly and infallible tuition which preserves the soul, or brings it back when it turns aside " to the right hand " or " to the left ."

I. God does all things by His word. It was by His word, in the first instance, that He created all things. He had but to say, " Let there be light," and there was light. It is by His word that God is pleased to beget souls into spiritual life : " Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth " (James i. 18). It is by His word He is pleased, from time to time, to speak conviction to the soul; and it is by His word He is pleased to bring peace and consolation to the heart.

Now, referring to this power of God 's word, the text declares : " Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it ." But God has various ways of speaking to the soul " when we turn to the right hand, and when we turn to the left ."

1. Sometimes God speaks by His providence. God's providences have a voice in them where there is an ear to hear; but if there be no ear to hear, they are unmarked. Those to whom the promise is made have ears to hear; for the text declares, " Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee ." God often, then, speaks in His providence. For instance, if we have turned aside " to the right hand," or " to the left," and our conscience begins to reproach us for getting out of the path, when God's providential hand in any measure goes out against us, it has a voice from the Lord reproving, rebuking, and sharply correcting us for having turned aside. When our conscience is made and kept alive and tender in God's fear, and begins to bleed under a sense of imputed guilt, God 's providence will speak very loudly; and if we see the hand of God going out against us in providence, it will cut very deep. The voice within will re-echo the voice without, and conscience will so fall beneath the stroke of God in providence, that we shall see His chastening hand in circumstances where otherwise we should not have seen it at all.

2. But especially does God speak by the word of His grace in the court of conscience. It is not what God speaks in the Scriptures; for unless He applies it, what He speaks there is for the most part unnoticed by us. Nor is it what God may speak from the pulpit, because unless our ears are opened by the blessed Spirit, and our conscience made alive and tender in His fear, the most heart-searching ministry may leave us untouched. But it is what God speaks from the Scripture in the court of conscience; for what He speaks there, that we must hear; that will ever be deeply attended to, because it comes into our conscience as from the mouth of God Himself.

3. Sometimes the Lord speaks in rebukes and reproofs. For instance, we may be fallen into a state of carnal ease; we may be imbued, as I have known children of God to be, with the spirit of dead assurance, and be resting upon doctrines more than

upon the manifestations of God 's mercy to the soul . When we are in a smooth path , and all things are prosperous and easy , this dead assurance does very well . But when sickness and death begin to stare us in the face , when convictions of our sins begin powerfully to work , and when the Lord is pleased in a more special manner to deal with the conscience , what becomes of all this dead assurance ? It fails us at the very moment when we want it most . We feel that it cannot take us safe into eternity , cannot give us peace with God , cannot remove the guilt of sin , cannot bring the smile of divine love into the soul ; it is useless , absolutely useless , at the very time we want it most . This is the rebuke of God in our conscience to bring us out of , and bring us off , this dead assurance into which our souls may have been secretly slipping . We begin to fall down as guilty sinners at the footstool of mercy , and beg of God to pardon our sins , and speak a word of peace to our poor guilty conscience . Here is the " word behind " us , when we have turned aside from the right way , to bring us once more into the straight and narrow path which leads to eternal life .

Or say , we may have got , as I have described , into a dark and gloomy state of despondency and dejection , eaten up with doubts and fears , and well-nigh swallowed up in the depths of despair . All our past experience seems swept out of sight; not a single token remains , and we are full of everything that sinks the mind in gloom and fear . Now when the Lord is pleased to speak a word of promise to the soul , and His voice begins to sound once more in the heart , " This is the way ;" " not your poor , guilty , miserable self , but Jesus is the way , His blood , His righteousness , and His love ;" when our hearts begin to receive these glad tidings , and the blessed Spirit seals them home with divine unction , savour and power , there is a turning out of this " left hand " path in which our poor souls have been groping , and coming once more into the King's highway , the way of holiness , the way of atoning blood and justifying righteousness .

4 . So again . We may have been drawn aside to see nothing but sin and imperfection in other men , and yet at the same time see nothing wrong in ourselves . But by and by the Lord begins to open up the depths of our wicked nature , or perhaps lets us slip and fall , not into outward sin to bring reproach upon the cause , but to walk upon the very brink of evil , and so withholds His preserving hand , that there is but one step between us and open disgrace . Now we see what we have been doing , finding fault with this man , and finding fault with that man ; seeing nothing but infirmities and sins in all the Christians we have known . We begin then to see such horrid evils in ourselves , and feel such living witnesses to our own sinfulness and wickedness , that the stones fall out of our hands , our mouth is put in the dust , and we have not a word to say against the sins and infirmities of our fellow Christians ; but fall down before God , with Job's language , " Behold , I am vile ! "

5 . Or again , as I said before , we may have been thinking too highly of the precepts , setting them up in such

a wonderful way , as if nothing else were worth attending to . But , after a time , we find how lean our souls become ! how little we are indulged with the manifestations of the Lord's mercy and love , and how barren , how cold , how legal , how dry our frame has become by setting up the precepts as the all in all of religion . Now we begin to long after heavenly visits and divine consolations , and to find there is something that we fall short of : that there is the life , love , and enjoyment of God ; and that these are as valuable as the precepts themselves . Or , we may have turned aside " to the left hand ," and thought very little of God's precepts ; and so long as we had a good experience it did not matter about anything else . But , perhaps , we have been entangled in some sin , and broken some of God's precepts ; then , when conscience begins to lash , and the divine rebukes are felt within , we see what blessed things the precepts are , and desire with all our heart and soul to obey them , and be found in the way of them .

6 . Or , we may have been among those who despise the Lord 's ordinances , treat baptism and the Lord's Supper with the greatest contempt , and call them poor legal observances But another time may have come when we have seen such a solemnity and glory in baptism , as opening up the sufferings of the Lord ; and seen such beauty in the Lord 's Supper ; that all our objections were removed in a moment , and the ordinances have risen in the estimation and affection of our souls . Or , on the other hand , we may have thought too highly of God 's ordinances , and esteemed them beyond their due position ; but we may have come again and again to the ordinances , and felt our heart as hard as adamant , as cold and lifeless as winter 's snow . Now we begin to see how we have been putting the ordinances above the Lord of the ordinances , and looking at the sign instead of the thing signified by it .

In all these various ways will the Lord 's people " hear a word behind them ." As they are walking along the road , their poor , wicked , carnal nature is continually turning them aside . Some darling idol , some besetting sin , some prevailing lust , some acting of pride draws them aside " to the right " hand or " to the left ." But they " hear a word behind them : " the word sinks into their souls ; the admonition falls into their heart ; they are obliged to take heed to it ; they cannot neglect it . It is thus by a word behind them they are brought back into the straight and narrow path that leads to glory .

II . And what does the " word " say ? " This is the way ." The word not merely reproves and rebukes when we turn aside from it , but it gives a direction , a clear , positive direction : " This is the way ! " What a " way "? Jesus , who said of Himself , " I am the Way " (John xiv . 6) . There is no other way . Now every turning aside " to the right ," and every turning aside " to the left ," is a turning aside from Jesus . For instance , if we get into legality and pharisaism , is not that a turning aside from Jesus ? If we get into a state of miserable dejection and gloom , and are unable to look to Him , is not that a turning away from Jesus ? If we get into a dead assurance , and rest upon the doctrines instead of the

sweet manifestations of Christ to our souls, is not that a turning aside from Jesus? If we get into carnal ease and security, is not that a turning aside from Jesus? If we get into the precepts as distinct from a vital experience of God's truth in the soul, is not that a turning aside from Jesus? And if we neglect the precepts He has given, is not that a turning away from Jesus? If we smite and wound the Lord's family, is not that a turning away from Jesus? And if we justify or make light of sin, is not that a turning aside from Jesus? Thus every turning aside "to the right hand," or "to the left," is a turning aside from Jesus, the only "Way" that leads to eternal life.

1. But how is Jesus the Way? In everything that He is to God's people He is the Way. His blood is the way to heaven, "for the whole path," as Hart speaks, "is lined with blood." By His precious blood shed upon Calvary's tree He has put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and opened up a way of access to God. His righteousness also is part of the way; for only so far as we stand clothed in His glorious righteousness have we any access unto, any acceptance with God the Father. And His love is the way; for if we walk in love, we walk in Him, for He is love. Every part of the way was devised and is executed by the love of His tender heart.

2. But the way also is the way of tribulation. Was not Jesus Himself the great Sufferer? And if He be the Way, the only Way, I must be conformed to His likeness in suffering. Not to know afflictions and tribulations is not to know Christ. He was "a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief." And if so, to have no sorrow, to have no acquaintance with grief, and to know nothing of tribulation, is to proclaim to all with a loud voice that we have no union and communion with the Lord Jesus Christ. But we are continually turning aside "to the right hand" or "to the left." There is that cowardice in the heart which cannot bear the cross; there is that slipping into carnal ease and fleshly security, so as to get away from under the painful cross of affliction and suffering. But when we thus turn aside "to the right hand," or "to the left," the voice the Lord sends after us is, "This is the way"—the way of affliction, no other; the way of tribulation, the way of trial, the way of exercise. This is the way in which the King walked of old; and this is the way in which all His people have walked before Him and after Him; for this is the only path in which the footsteps of the flock can be found.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4 / 89
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

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2 CORINTHIANS 13 : 5

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"

This important admonition is to the saints generally, as well as to the church at Corinth, unto which it was originally addressed. All the saints feel more or less inclined to

examine themselves in regard to their hope , their experience , and the reality of their interest in the cleansing blood and justifying righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ; and in this self-examination they are generally led to review their first religious exercises , what they experienced in their translation from darkness into the light , liberty and joy of the gospel; and this is right , and has often served to renew their strength and confidence in the assurance that what they have experienced was certainly the work of God . But it is also important that we should have the witness that we are in the faith , as well as in hope of the gospel . For now abideth faith , hope and charity , &c . So far as faith is considered as vital principle , or fruit of the Spirit , we cannot entertain a genuine gospel hope in its absence , for both faith and hope are the fruits of that same Spirit which is born of God. But we presume the apostle in this admonition has reference to the doctrine or principles of the faith which was once delivered to the saints, and for which they are commanded to contend earnestly. As these disciples possessed Christ in them, they could not possible be destitute of the grace of faith ; but from the many severe reproofs which he dealt out to them in both epistles , it appears evident that they were faulty in regard to the doctrine of faith and the practice corresponding thereto. It is equally certain that God 's dear children in the present day are liable to fall into the same faults , or faults equally incompatible with the high vocation wherewith they are called of the Lord. The term faith is often used by Paul to signify the gospel, in distinction from the law, or legal dispensation. For the law is not of faith ; but the gospel is a dispensation of promises and provisions of grace and salvation , which , in order for us to enjoy , we must have faith to lay hold of them. Thus, " By grace are ye saved , through faith , and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works , lest any man should boast ." It is altogether opposed to the doctrine of salvation by works, for the apostle says it is of faith that it might be by grace , to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law , but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham , who is the father of us all. (Rom . 4:16). Paul had told the Corinthians of some who concerning the faith had made shipwreck , and others whose heresy in denying the resurrection of the dead had overturned the faith of some. The grace of faith cannot be wrecked nor overturned , for it is the faith of Jesus Christ , and it overcomes the world ; but in regard to the doctrine of the gospel, as a system purely of grace , the saints are liable to depart, at least to some extent from it , and thereby suffer loss. How important then, that they should examine themselves in regard to what they hold or countenance as the doctrine of Christ. In this self-examination they require a more reliable standard to judge by than the decisions of learned doctors of divinity , creeds or commentaries written by uninspired men . Each of the members of Christ being personally interested for himself in the matter , instead of submitting to the judgment of another , must himself make the examination in the fear of God . We , as Old School Baptists ,

hold that the last will and testament of our Lord Jesus Christ is the divinely authorized standard of our faith . Whatever we believe religiously, or in regard to the gospel, must be tested by what is written in the New Testament. However popular or palatable a sentiment may be , if it is not sustained by that standard , it is to be rejected . Whatever that standard sustains , however unpopular and unpalatable to the flesh , must be regarded as the faith of God's elect— the faith which was once delivered to the saints, and the faith for which the saints are required to contend earnestly .

The Spirit also which God has implanted in his saints , searches all things, even the deep things of God, and is also a witness in point to establish the fact of our being in the faith ; but we must try the spirits , because many false prophets have gone out in the world. If the spirit we possess be of God , it will perfectly accord with the testimony of the Scriptures , and thus afford us two witnesses, by which every word shall be established ; and by these two witnesses , the word and the Spirit , we shall be able to prove our own selves , whether we be in the faith . Having this proof we have nothing to fear on the subject of our orthodoxy , or soundness in the faith .

Frames and feelings are a very unsafe guide , and carnal reason is still more treacherous and unreliable in the matter of self-examination. Our feelings are always varying , and carnal reason is blind, neither should be trusted to decide our faith or hope in God, but the word and Spirit of our God is immutable . The natural man may read the letter of the Scripture , but he cannot perceive its spirituality, because it is spiritually discerned . The spirit which Christ has given to his saints is the " Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive , because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye [the disciples of Christ] know him ; for he dwelleth with you , and shall be in you . (John 14:17) .

" Know ye not your own selves that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates ? " A reprobate is one that is rejected. And this faith in which the Christian church stands , rejects all in whom Jesus Christ is not; for " If any have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his ." Manifestly none are known to the faith or fellowship of the saints until they can give evidence that they are born of the Spirit, for all such, and none but such, have Christ in them the hope of glory , all others are rejected, or reprobates. But what an astonishing revelation is this that the saints know , that Jesus Christ is in them . He whom the boundless heavens adore , the Son of God , the Lord from heaven , the Resurrection and the Life , the only and blessed Potentate, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light, dwells in all his children , and gives them the evidence that he has taken his abode in them . This above all things is worth knowing. And hence the necessity of the self-examination enjoined by the apostle . Ascertaining by divinely approved testimony , that we are in the faith, and that our faith and hope are in God, we have the assurance , yea the knowledge, that Jesus Christ is in us, and that we are in him, who of God is made unto us wisdom , and righteousness , and sanctification ,

and redemption . To secure us from error , from heresy and from imposition , we should pursue the examination in the light of the unerring standard , and having the assurance that our faith is sustained by the standard of divine revelation , we not only enjoy the consolation of the assurance our own selves , but are thereby qualified to minister consolation to those who with us are of the household of faith , as well as by our walk and conversation as by speaking to them of the glory of our Redeemer 's kingdom , and talking of his power .

Elder Gilbert Beebe

MEETINGS

RIVERVIEW CHURCH

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God Riverview looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift . They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed Nov . 26 , 1988 at 2:00 at Riverview Primitive Baptist Church , Bassett , Virginia ; for the purpose of examination of this gift , brother Howard Peters and if found qualified be ordained to the full work and service of deacon .

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together . The meeting was opened by prayer by Elder Thomas Solomon . Elder Carl Terry was elected as moderator and Elder Thomas Solomon to serve as clerk . Brother R.L. Wright acting as spokesman for the church delivered brother Howard Peters to the presbytery .

The qualifications for deacon was read as set forth in scriptures Sixth Chapter Acts , 1st Timothy , 3rd Chapter by Elder Carl Terry . Examinations followed by Elders Thomas Solomon . The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of this candidate proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder Thomas Solomon . The charge was delivered to brother Howard Peters by Elder Carl Terry . He was then delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon .

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted . A copy to be placed in the church records , a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication and a copy to be given to Brother Howard Peters along with a certificate of ordination .

Presbytery was dismissed by prayer by Elder Carl Terry .

Elder Carl E . Terry , Moderator
Elder Thomas Solomon , Clerk

Deacons present were :

Clyde Johnson	Woodrow Abshire
Raymond Mays	Posey Poindexter
Fred Murphy	Eulas Turner
Robert Wright	

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Union meeting , the Lord willing will be held at Mt . Ararat Church (Old Mountain) the fifth Sunday in April , and Sat . before at 10:00 A .M .

The church is located on Mt . Cross road , 750 . About 13 miles west of Danville , Va .

All Elders of our faith and order, and all lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
Sarah Barker, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 1989

Mrs. Sara Barker, VA.....10.00
John S. Collie, NC.....2.00
M.T. Dalton, VA 7.00
Mrs. Frank Sizemore, WV.....2.00
Mrs. Rebecca S. Smith, FL...7.00
Jack K. Hays, TX.....7.00
Ralph Horne, NC.....7.00
Mrs. Mary Messick, AL.....5.00
Ms. Susan Cutts, VA 2.00
Mrs. Marjorie Cook, TN.....20.00
Mrs. Lottie Minter, NC.....2.00
Mrs. Martha L. Majors, TN....7.00
Mrs. Lavenia Biggs, TN.....7.00
Mrs. Lavenia Biggs, TN 25.00
In appreciation Eld. W.D. Griffin's work on Signs staff.
M.L. Richardson, FL.....2.00
Mrs. Hettie Wade, VA 7.00
Mrs. Frances S. Smith, VA....2.00
Mrs. Virginia L. Apple, NC 2.00
Elma G. Wilson, NC.....30.00
Mrs. Myrtle Thompson, VA 7.00
Mrs. Phyllis Snyer, VA.....2.00
Miss Lora Smith, NC.....2.00
F.H. Bryant, VA.....2.00
Eld. Amos Hash, VA.....2.00
Mrs. Alice Gibson, VA.....25.00
Mrs. Cara McDuff, TX 2.00

OBITUARIES

ROSE ELLA CONNER

It has pleased our heavenly Father to call from our midst our beloved sister, Rosa Ella Conner, wife of the late Alvah Conner; who preceded her in death Dec. 17, 1978.

She was the daughter of the late D.A. and Lydia Conner, born March 20, 1903; died July 19, 1988.

To this union were born five children; One son, Lynwood Conner of Roanoke, Va. who preceded her in death, May 8, 1986. Surviving are four daughters; Mrs. Julian (Eveleen) Rutrough of Copper Hill, Va. Mrs. C.V. (Kathleen) Ferris of Roanoke, Va. Mrs. Larry (Glenna) Link of Bristol, Va., Mrs. Rosetta Underwood of Roanoke, Va.

Also she leaves two sisters, Mrs. Hettie Manning and Mrs. Vergie Conner both of Copper Hill, Va. She leaves one brother Mr. Irvin Conner of Copper Hill, Va. Thirteen grandchildren, and twelve great-grandchildren.

Sister Rosa joined Salem Primitive Church also known as (Head of the River) May 8, 1960, and was baptized on the same day by her pastor, Elder B.O. Thompson. She attended her meetings regular as long as her health permitted, and will be missed by every one who knew her. Her health was very bad several years before she passed away. Sister Rosa was a lovely sister, and believed in salvation by grace and grace alone.

Her funeral was held at her church by Elder Leonard Brammer, and her

body was laid to rest in the Restvale cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, to await the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall bid her sleeping dust to arise, and she will ever be with Him.

Resolved, that a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication, a copy be sent to the family, and a copy be put on our church book.

Done by order of the church in conference January 7, 1989.

Your little sister in hope,
Elva S. Mitchell

SISTER LATISHA DOSS

With much sadness in my heart, I will attempt to write a few words in memory of my Dear Sister, Latisha Doss, who I loved dearly.

My beloved sister and your sister and friend was born in Pittsylvania County, Sycamore, Virginia, on November 22, 1914, the daughter of the late Luther Birk and Carrie Dalton Inge.

She was married to the late Brother Lloyd Doss on June 3, 1939. There were no children to this union. She leaves one sister, Beatrice Inge Colbert, Gretna, Virginia.

Sister Latisha was a strong believer in salvation by grace. She visited many churches with her husband. They visited churches in the association and sister associations often. She was faithful to her church and loved her brothers and sisters. She often provided transportation for other believers.

She asked for a home in Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on June 30, 1949, along with her husband, and they were baptized the first Sunday in July, 1949, by their beloved pastor, Elder O.K. Tench, at the same time.

She was a good sister, neighbor and wife who cared for those less fortunate that she, and visited often. She had a great love for her nephew and great nieces.

She bore her afflictions of many months with much patience and without murmuring. She enjoyed visits of sisters, brothers and friends. She said it was so lonesome. The prayers of the Brethren were most comforting

She fought a good fight, was reconciled to her illness. She made her funeral arrangements in detail, even the songs she would like sung at her funeral.

She died at her nephew's home, Gretna, Virginia, December 8, 1988. Her funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on December 10, 1988, at 2:00 p.m. by Elder O.K. Tench and Elder Raymond Goad. Her body was laid to rest beneath an array of beautiful flowers in the Gretna Burial Park to await the coming of the Lord.

I feel we have been greatly blessed of God to have had fellowship with such a wonderful sister. She is greatly missed by her sister, family and church friends.

May those of us that mourn our great loss be reconciled to God's will, who never makes a mistake.

Written by her sister who loves and misses her very much.

Beatrice M. Colbert

ELDER WILLIAM DORRIS GRIFFIN

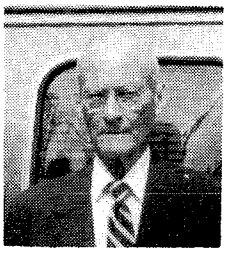
Elder W.D. Griffin

Elder Griffin passed away January 29, 1989 at the Warren Hill Nursing Home, Warrenton, N.C. He was born Oct. 3, 1903 to John Logan and Emma Magelene McDaniel Griffin. March 10, 1923 he married Lois Still who preceeded him in death Feb. 11, 1986. To this union was born a son who died in infancy and two sons, Thurman of Boydton, Va. and Howard of Louisville, Ky. who survive. Also surviving are seven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren and a brother Jackson Griffin.

Elder Griffin joined Harmony Church in the Hopewell Association in Alabama April 1927. February 28, 1937 he was ordained to the full work of the ministry. He served as pastor of Harmony and Hopewell Church in the Hopewell Association, Mt. Carmel, Bethel, and Macedonia in the Buttahatchie Association, Mt. Zion in the Five Mile Creek Association all in Alabama, The Welch Tract and other churches in Delaware and Maryland. In addition he humbly went to help where needed. At his death he was a member of Little Hope Church in the Hopewell Association. After Sister Lois' death he went to live with his son Thurman in Boydton, Va.

God gave Elder Griffin a deep understanding of the scriptures and blessed him to preach the doctrine of salvation of Grace and Grace alone. He was blessed with a wife in Sister Lois who supported him in his ministry and they were blessed with means to travel and enjoy the fellowship of their brethren. He was an avid reader and writer. For many years he was Associate Editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES writing numerous articles.

Funeral services were held in Norwood Funeral Home Chapel February 2, 1989 with Elders Richard Campbell, H.C. Moon, and Kenneth Key officiating. Burial was in Sand Springs Cemetery Fayette County, Alabama.

Tho he is missed by family and friends, we feel that our loss is his eternal gain and he is basking in the love of God for all eternity.

Written by one who had known and loved him all my life.

Charles P. Hayes
Northport, Alabama

SALLY CASH MANGUM

Sister Sally Mangum was born on November 26, 1895 and died on September 30, 1988. She was married to Buren Mangum. Her husband and two of their children, Annie Mae, age 2 and Sister Betsy Hunt preceded her in death. She is survived by seven children: Alex Mangum, Sallie Wilson, Doris Pickard Lula Mangum, Martha Duke, Jean Wiedman and Van Rhew. Also surviving are 22 grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild.

Sister Mangum joined Durham church on March 17, 1974. She was a lovely member who walked softly before the Lord and her brethren. She was confined to her home the last few

months of her life where she was lovingly cared for by her children . It was inspiring to see her whole family cooperate to care for her and show their love and respect toward her .

The Lord had given her an abiding faith in the doctrine of grace and the election and predestination to glory of His people . She bore her afflictions with great patience and often inquired about the other members of the church .

Her funeral was conducted at Clements Funeral Chapel by Elder Cleo Robertson and her body was laid to rest in Ellis Chapel Church Cemetery .

" Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord . . . ." .

Catherine Humbarger , Clerk

DEACON THOMAS N . PHILLIPS

Thomas Phillips was born August 25 , 1925 , the son of William T . and Lula Mae Phillips of Memphis , Tenn . and completed his earthly pilgrimage July 21 , 1988 after a short illness .

He was married April 17 , 1948 to Mary Nell Brock , daughter of the late Elder Matt Brock of Covin , Alabama and to this union was born two sons , Thomas B . and William T . and one daughter Barbara .

Thomas and Mary Nell were both baptized into the Memphis church on April 28 , 1963 , his having joined at the waters edge so they could be baptized together . They have served the church well . Mary Nell as church clerk for several years and Thomas was ordained to the office of deacon June 29 , 1986 in which capacity he served faithfully until the time of his death .

Thomas is survived by his wife , three children , one grandson , two grand-daughters , one brother , two half brothers and two half sisters .

He was a big man in stature but will be remembered and loved for his humble disposition , humor and the kindness reflected in all of his actions as a brother and deacon over the twenty five years he was a member of the Memphis Church .

Funeral services were conducted by Elders Wayman Chapell and Richard Campbell at the Memphis Funeral Home .

May the Lord bless and comfort the family and all who mourn the loss of one who touched their lives in a loving and gentle way .

Written at the request of the church while in conference as a loving memorial of one who will be greatly missed .

Richard H . Campbell

BROTHER FRED SMITH , JR .

In August 16 , 1988 , Brother Fred Smith , Jr ., who was known by his countless friends as Junior , was called by the Lord from this earth to await , we trust , the second coming of our Lord and Saviour , Jesus Christ , who will return and call those asleep in Him . He was a precious brother , strong in his faith , loyal to his friends , true to his country, and devoted to his family .

Brother Fred was born in Ransom-

ville , North Carolina , on October the 14th , 1918 to Fred Smith , Sr . and Mamer Cayton Smith . He grew up in Eastern North Carolina , and was working in a hospital in New York when World War II broke out . He enlisted in the Army and was assigned to the 20th Engineering Battalion , where he served with distinction from 1942 until 1946 . He was present at Normandy and was in Berlin when the war ended .

He was awarded the nations third highest decoration , the Silver Star , for conspicuous gallantry in saving the life of a fellow American despite considerable risk to himself from heavy artillery fire . Those who knew Brother Fred would have no trouble believing that such courage was as natural to him as breathing .

He was married in June of 1946 to Catherine Polovitch , who was to be his lifelong companion and who is herself a precious Sister at North Creek and a blessing to all who know her. Their four children Anita, Fred IV, Michael and Valla , further enriched the earthly life of Brother Fred and Sister Catherine with ten grandchildren , surely a gift from the Lord to two of his servants .

Brother Fred was best known for his hearty laugh and outgoing personality ; he never met a stranger , and his life was characterized by goodwill toward his fellow man and love of the Lord .

His funeral was conducted at Paul Funeral Home in Belhaven with Elder J J .T . Prescott and Elder Jesse Foreman officiating . Burial was at the Smithton Family Cemetery .

Those of us who have been left behind can only hope that our passing will reunite us once more in that Kingdom which has been prepared for the saints of God from the foundation of the world . May Brother Fred rest in peace ; may the name of God be praised .

Elder J .T . Prescott , Moderator
Tom Thompson , Clerk

SISTER LELIA FRANCES STEELE

It pleased the Lord to call home , Sister Lelia Frances Steele . Sister Steele was born April 18 , 1899 ; a daughter of John Wesley Steele and Nannie Custer Steele . She passed from this life November 17 , 1988 .

Sister Steele was a faithful member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church . She was received by experience and baptism ; August 29 , 1937 . Sister Steele put forth more effort than anyone I have ever known to attend meetings . She will surely be missed .

Survivors include three sisters , Mary Sapp - High Point , N .C . , Grace Hodges and Edna Hilburn , both of Yanceyville , N .C . and a number of nieces .

Sister Steele 's funeral was conducted by her beloved pastor , Elder O .K . Tench her body was laid to rest in the Hedrick Family Cemetery to await the coming of our Saviour .

Written in love and hope
Carol R . Pickral

Elder O .K . Tench , Moderator
Oscar D . Pickral , Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
Route 1, Box 420 Keeling, Virginia 24566

TO MY MOTHER
MRS. LELIA BLACKWELL

I've waited quite a long, long time
To write this poem to you.
I did not have the words to say,
As you always seemed to do.

I've read your poems all my life,
And never dreamed I, too
Could put my thoughts down in rhyme,
As I remember you used to.

But you have passed this gift to me...
(I'm told that this is true);
And what better way could I repay,
Than write this ode to you.

As I get older and recall
The things you said each day,
I find myself telling my boys,
"Well, Grandma used to say..."

And you know what I've found is true,
As your wisdom I relay?
The lines that I remember most,
Are those which showed your faith.

When times were hard and I despaired,
Not knowing where to go,
You simply said, "Remember this,
That God does love you so.

He would not put upon you,
More than you could bear,
Just trust and believe in the Lord,
He'll keep you in his care.

And, I have learned that this is true,
Each burden is custom-fit,

I share this memory with my sons,
Because I have proof of it.

Your God, Your church, and family,
Were very dear to you,
And I am sure they were your source,
Of strength to see you through.

And when your time on earth grew short,
Your one request of me,
Was to take you home so you could be,
Close to your church and family.

I'm sure that then God had revealed
His wondrous plan for you.
You went to Him, unafraid,
The way you wanted to.

We miss you here; I'm sure you know.
Your love and faith abide;
And by His Grace someday, I pray,
We'll be there by your side.

By Her Daughter...
Barbara Blackwell Schaeffer

(" and their works do follow them ")

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EDITORIAL

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and to the uttermost part of the earth.

Elder R.H. Campbell

These words were the last that Jesus spoke unto his disciples and Apostles before he was parted from them and descended into heaven to be seated at the right hand of God. Surely they contain the very essence of the truth of all scripture and were spoken on this very special occasion as a foundation of the gospel dispensation which was about to begin. These words declare as simply and candidly as language can covey, the basic doctrine of the God of heaven and earth, and the way and manner in which the natural man can be made able to comprehend the truth of the scriptures, and this he must be before he can witness to the glory of the kingdom of heaven. Those to whom these words were spoken had been with Jesus through his earthly ministry; they had beheld the miracles that he performed and had heard the doctrine that he preached: they had seen him die and return to life again and still they could not witness to these things concerning Jesus because they were still in the flesh and unable to discern spiritual matters. They would not be able to do this until they received power after the Holy Ghost came upon them on the day of Pentecost. When this occurred the Holy Ghost came upon them and they all began to speak, with other

tongues as the spirit gave them utterance and declare the wonderful works of God.

When Jesus spoke these words to them they were still under the law, as far as the flesh is concerned, and were in the same position regarding any knowledge of salvation as they had always been. They were in the same condition as all men are when they are born into this natural world. As Paul wrote on one occasion, " Now I say, that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant though he be lord of all; But is under governors and tutors until the time appointed of the Father." This is the precise point in their experience that these followers of Christ were; they were told to wait until the time appointed of the Father which was about to be made manifest unto them. They had the natural evidence of the things they had seen and heard but they were unable to comprehend spiritual aspects of them because, " The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him: neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned." As long as any person is in the flesh, they will never be able to discern the things of the spirit of God and Christ is emphasizing this basic doctrine by it being the last doctrinal teaching that He left with them before returning unto his heavenly glory.

The doctrines that are taught in the world today are directed to the natural man in the flesh and are for the purpose of instructing him in the ways of righteousness and to teach him to witness to other like creatures of the glory of the heavenly kingdom. The scriptures that were written to those who were born of the spirit and walking in the way of holiness are quoted to the general public and are represented as being the promise of God to them and their claiming these promises obligates God to bestow upon them all of the blessings that were treasured, in Christ, from the foundation of the world. This does not agree with or conform, in any manner to the teaching of Jesus to his disciples. Jesus was speaking to those to whom the promise was made and even they could not claim the promise until they were endued with power from on high: they could not witness to the truth of their salvation without the inspiration of the spirit and this was the sovereign work of God.

This basic truth is applicable to the children of God in all ages of time: in the flesh they are children of wrath even as others: But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love where with he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. This quickening comes upon them because they are vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory, and not to make them vessels of mercy. They were created vessels of mercy in the mind and purpose of God before the foundation of the world and the manifestation of this is that they are quickened by the spirit. " For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God."

The Apostles received power after that the Holy Ghost came upon them on the day of Pentecost, according to the words of Jesus, and thus entered the Gospel dispensation in which we live today. It would have been as impossible for the apostles not to have witnessed unto Jesus on

the day of Pentecost as it would have been for them to witness unto him prior to that time . They each went forth from that time and place , according to the scriptures and spent the rest of their lives witnessing to the wonders of the kingdom of God and the joys of their salvation . This was the purpose of this outpouring of the Holy Ghost in that day , and the same reason that it is still happening today . Just as then , when one is born of the spirit their lives are changed , they are a new creature and their walk and their conversation become an outward manifestation of this inner change . As they are fruits of the spirit that now dwells within their heart . Their witness becomes apparent to all who know the signs .

As the Apostle Paul wrote to the church at Corinth , " Now then we are ambassadors for Christ , as though God did beseech you by us : We pray you in Christ 's stead , be ye reconciled unto God ." I know that it is a difficult thing for one to make the statement that they are an ambassador for Christ but nevertheless the new creature in Christ is just that . An Ambassador is one that has been appointed by one country or kingdom to represent it in another and ; surely when the child of God receives power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon them and they witness unto Jesus , they are ambassadors of the kingdom of God to the quickened and called out family of God while they dwell in this world . This was first demonstrated on the day of Pentecost and will continue throughout this generation . As the Apostle Paul wrote in Romans VI, 4 " Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death : that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father , even so we also should walk in newness of life ." Now what is this walking in newness of life except manifesting the fact that they have been blessed with the power and knowledge that Jesus speaks of in the above scripture ; which fact is apparent to all of the household of faith and they rejoice in spirit . There would be no reason for rejoicing if those who express a hope in things eternal continued following after the world and those carnal pleasures and lusts of the flesh and displayed no change within . The household of faith rejoices because as they see the change they are strengthened and they are refreshed by this new evidence of the grace of God in bringing the elect out of natures darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of the gospel day . The display of this evidence is their light shining before men that they behold the good works and glorify their Father which is in heaven . When the child of God receives this power after that the Holy Ghost is come into their life , their whole thought and desire is that they might manifest the presence of this miracle of grace unto the whole world , but they soon find this is not the way it works ; they can only witness to those that are in the household of faith , those who understand the pure language and those who know the joyful sound . The world does not see nor understand the good works , neither are they interested in them because they are spiritual . Those that are in the house understand , see the light coming forth from within and will rejoice that the work is still going on .

When Jesus spoke the above words , the law had ended for right-

eousness in the death of Christ, the gospel day had not begun, and Jesus was telling his disciples that the fullness of his work was yet to be made manifest in their lives. They could not witness, or do anything but wait until they be endued with power from on high. This is just as true in our day and age as it was then, the natural man can do nothing until they are born of the spirit of God. Remember, Jesus, himself did not manifest the power of God until the Holy Ghost came upon him, at the baptism of John, and then immediately he began to be about his Fathers business, bearing witness that he was the Son of God and declaring the way of salvation.

On the day of Pentecost, the disciples were all in one place and in one accord and suddenly cloven tongues like as of fire sat upon each of them, and then was fulfilled the words of Jesus in his last conversation with them and thus began the gospel dispensation in which we live. As Jesus had said, they did indeed receive power and did witness unto his ministry and also the old testament and God's majesty and power in all things. " And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance." One can only imagine the ecstasy that flooded the hearts of these men, after the waiting and wondering they had experienced since Jesus told them these things; as they realized the full meaning of what was happening to them. This can be done only by those who have had a similar experience as the Holy Ghost came into their lives and they too learned what was happening to them. There is nothing, in the realm of nature, to compare with it, and as you begin to try to tell it to anyone who will listen you receive varied responses as they did then. Some will listen, look puzzled and change the subject, others will flatly reject it, but some will receive it and rejoice with you. It is only the power, that comes with it, that enables you to continue in spite of the difficulties you face in running the race that is set before you.

The Apostle Peter was the one who stood as spokesman on the day of Pentecost. He ws the one who when confronted by charges of being a follower of Jesus on one occasion swore that he was not, another time denied with an oath that he knew Jesus and again cursed and swore saying I know not the man. When walking on the water and seeing the boisterous wave began to sink and said Lord save or I perish. The difference in the Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost and on prior occasions was that the power of the Holy Ghost had come upon him and had made him a witness to the truth and unafraid of the faces of men. This power continued with the Apostles for the rest of their lives; they stood before great men and fearlessly witnessed to the truth of those things that they had seen and experienced with Jesus and those things revealed to them by the Holy Ghost. They received beatings, torture imprisonments and all but John were eventually crucified for their witnessing, but, these same ones who fled when the crowd took Jesus in Gesthemene, stood faithful to the end because of the power that they received when the Holy Spirit came upon them.

This is the greatest testimony that

we have of the truth of the scriptures as we understand it to be. The world declares that the natural man makes the difference in his salvation, or the lack of it, by his decision of chosing to believe and follow Christ or to reject his offer of salvation. The true believer learns by his experience that he knew nothing about God until the power of the Holy Ghost came into his life and with it came the desire to witness to the sovreignty of God and to speak of his power. He realizes that he was just as the Apostles were; they had been with Jesus, saw the miracles but only the spirit enabled them to witness to the truth; the true believer had heard of Jesus, read about him but did not know him until the spirit revealed him unto them. As Job, they could say. " I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee." There is a big difference in hearing of him and in hearing and seeing him. The world goes far and near to talk about and hear about God but this does not enable them to know him. This is accomplished only when they receive power after that the Holy Ghost comes upon them and this is the work of God, as Jesus said, " No man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up the last day."

I do not believe that it was by chance that Jesus told his disciples the above truth as he was departing from them into heaven. He had completed his earthly ministry; witnessed to and fulfilled all scriptures that were written of him in the old testament; finished the work that his Father gave him to do, and still he tells them, It is not for you (ye vessels afore prepared unto glory) to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his power. But ye shall receive power, after the Holy Ghost is come upon you: the lesson being taught is that it is the work of God that ye believe on me whom he hath sent. If man, in the flesh, had any part in working our their own salvation, these men would have had the ability to do so: if man, in nature, had the power to receive these things and witness to the world then Jesus would not have left them with these parting words. He would have commended them for their faithfulness and encouraged them to continue in the way. He did not do this but rather said, " wait for the promise of the Father which, saith he, ye have heard of me." The promise was that, " I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be lossed in heaven." Surely this is the promise that was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost for they did go forth witnessing unto Jesus when they received the keys of the kingdom which is the Holy Ghost according to Jesus' promise unto them.

This plan of salvation is sure and certain to reach every heir of promise and will seal them unto the heavenly kingdom, as, on one occasion the apostles asked Jesus, " who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them and said unto them, with men it is impossible; but with God all things are possible." This plan of salvation is beautiful and comforting to those who have been made to see what they are in nature; see the frailty of the flesh and then experience power coming upon them that makes them cry, Abba

Father ; as the Holy Spirit bears witness with their spirit that even they , with all their faults and weaknesses , are the children of God : and if children , then heirs ; heirs of God , and joint - heirs with Christ ; They can but stand in awe and wonder and proclaim as Paul did , " O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ! how unsearchable are his judgements , and his ways past finding out ! "

In bonds of love ,
Richard H . Campbell

Elder and Sister Griffin — celebrating 50th wedding anniversary .

Another great tree has fallen . Elder W . Dorris Griffin , at the age of 86 , passed from this life January 29 , 1989 .

He joined Harmony Primitive Baptist Church in the Hopewell Association in Alabama in April 1927, and was ordained for the full work of the ministry in April 1937 .

Elder Griffin was married to Lois Still in 1923 who preceded him in death February 11 , 1986 . To this union was born a son who died in infancy and two sons , Thurman of Boydton , Va ., and Howard of Louisville , Ky ., who survive him . Also seven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren .

(Cont . next page)

Elder Griffin served as pastor of Harmony and Hopewell Church in the Hopewell Association, Mt. Carmel, Bethel, and Macedona in the Buttahatchie Association, Mt. Zion in the Five Mile Creek Association all in Alabama. Welch Tract and other churches in Deleware and Maryland.

He was blessed to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ and much to the comfort of God's children. Not only was he blessed to speak comfortably unto Jerusalem but his writings, have been enjoyed and will long be remembered, to the household of Faith. He wrote his first article to the Signs of the Times and was published in 1928.

He joined the staff of the "Signs" a few years later and served as an associate editor until his death. In the more than fifty years he wrote numerous articles.

In speaking of Elder Griffin we think also of his lovely wife, Sister Lois. No two ever walked more closely together than they. Sister Lois was know for her gift in working with her hands — her needle work — weaving baskets — rugs and many unique pieces of crafts. She was a good mother who loved her family dearly, and certainly a good and true ministers wife.

On behalf of the entire staff of The Signs of the Times, we wish to thank God for permitting us to know them and to work with Elder Griffin. We have suffered a great loss but we bow in submission to God's will and by his grace we will think on what we have had — rather than what we have lost. We extend our love and sympathy to his family.

Editors

P.S. See reprint of Elder Griffin's first article, written at the age of twenty-five, on page 106 of this issue.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brother & Sister Stigall;

I had thought I'd get around to visiting you this week, but it doesn't seem so now, so will write instead.

There was much soul rejoicing when you dear people were brought to unite with the church. When this work is started in the heart of His people it will be completed and none can stay His Hand, We're told in His Word, My people will be a willing people in the day of my power. This power is always present in a will to keep, guide and direct us, but as a car motor is there, only when started does it create a driving force that carries the load to it's destination. It says my sheep hear my voice and do follow me. The power of God is a propelling force as well as compelling force. All that are given me shall come to me. I'm sure all our church is of the same mind in being thankful you two were directed to our church at Malmasion.

I've not witnessed anything like Sunday, as one after another humbly went forward asking for a home with the church. It reminded me of reading in the Bible of the day of Pentecost, especially in Acts 2:47 "And the Lord added daily to the church such as should be saved." To my mind this does not mean all that needed saving.

All needed it from a point of eternal salvation . Nor does it mean all that ought to be saved or would be better off to come . I believe this means " should " as the past tense of " shall which if applied thus it wasn 't any choice on their part or on the Apostle 's part . So they shall be saved all that should be saved .

Hope to see you very soon , until then may I say we have all confidence in you . May God protect , direct , correct , guide and keep you is my prayer . If I 've been blessed from above to call God , my God and embraced in the call of Him to His people .

A brother I hope ,
Julian

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

Members watching the church burn .

RIVERVIEW PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Riverview Primitive Baptist Church now lies in ashes but the spirit of the congregation is undaunted . The majority of the regularly attending members has been with the church for more than twenty years .

Riverview was the first church in the community , according to historical records kept by the Bassett Printing Corp . It is located on Bassett Heights in Bassett , Virginia .

Built in 1868 , the church , destroyed by fire Sunday morning , also had been used for a school around the turn of the century , said Nellie Terry , wife of its pastor , Elder Carl Terry . Several churches in the neighborhood have volunteered the use of their facilities for Riverview .

Services will be held at Reed Creek Church until other arrangements are made.

(Plans have been drawn and Riverview Church hopes to be in their new building sometime in the near future .)

Editors

ARTICLES

Elder Griffin 's first article published in the " Signs " 1928 .

" AMAZING GRACE "

" Amazing grace, (how sweet the sound,)
That saved a wretch like me ;
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see ."

I have many doubts and fears that I have ever had grace made known to this vile and sinful heart of mine , and often fear I have been deceived and am deceiving the precious saints , and that my trust in the saving grace of Jesus is only a vain imagination of a vile and sinful heart. It is true that at one time I was as profane and wicked as it seems I could be , and that something did burden me , but a great deal of the time I fear that it was only my own imagination. A very few times in my poor life it seemed when under the sweet preaching of God 's humble servants that I have been lifted up , as I hope , from the valley and my mind taken away from the perishable things and placed on Jesus . Just a glimpse of his lovely presence when darkness comes again and I am made to doubt more than ever. But, dear ones , as fleeting as my little star of hope is , it is my all in all. It is my prop and stay while struggling here below , and as much as I am made to doubt I would not give the little hope that dwells in my poor aching bosom for all this world and its riches. Precious readers , I know that if Jesus ever did manifest himself to me that it was amazing to my poor burdened soul , and oh how sweet it seemed. If the Lord ever has found me , it was wonderful indeed , because I was the most sinful wretch that ever lived (and am yet) and it could not have been justice to display to me " Christ and him crucified ," but only his mercy . Surely , surely I was lost , and oh so blind . I believe I felt as secure as any one ; not a single trouble ever rolled across my breast . I loved to boast that I was as good as any one , and I firmly believed that after I had had all the good times that go with youth I would turn to God and live a christian life . I held to that belief and I practiced it as fully as any one ever could. I cursed much and it did not bother me at all, until in the spring of 1924 . I am as unable to tell why it left me as I am to tell why , if not deceived , that God should manifest his everlasting love toward the chiefest of sinners . If, as I hope , the Lord did remember me on Calvary 's cross , I was blind for some time (and still doubt whether I see or not) about the Bible . I was in a conditional country and they taught me that if I would join " the church " the Lord would bless me bounteously . They taught me that God was not limited in power and that he was a complete Sovereign , but they told me he did not work all things after the counsel of his own will , or , in other words , that the predestination of all things was not taught in the Bible , and that it

was God dishonoring. I believed all this until I hope the Lord opened my eyes. I said the hardest things imaginable about the " old absoluters," and it made me angry to tell me I believed what was to be would be. Even after I came back home and found they believed in predestination here, I was, as I thought, sorry I did not join while away. As time went on my burden got heavier and I began to read after some of the precious brethren who advocated predestination. The more I read the more I wanted to read and the more it all seemed to fit the little hope I possessed.

" Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
' Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

How consoling, dear reader, to know that you do not have your own way to make. It it not only grace that lifts your feet out of the miry clay and places them upon firm ground, but it is grace that keeps them there. If poor weak mortals could keep themselves Christ's keeping would be useless, but if I were left to keep my own rambling feet I would not go wrong because I would already be wrong.

I started out to try and write upon predestination, but my thoughts are something I have never been able to control. For some time I have had the following words of Jesus on my mind mind, and try as I may I can't shake them off: " Father, the hour is now come." — John xvii. 1. If there was not another sentence within the lids of the Bible that sounded of predestination this one would be sufficient to prove there was a certain hour in which the crucifixion of the blessed Jesus was to take place. I am so ignorant and foolish (and as some people accuse us, unreasonable) as to believe he was put to death as an appointed and a fixed time. (Read Matthew ii. 45, and John xiii. 1.) If it was not a fixed time I am sure that it would have taken place much earlier. If it had been left to chance or " happen so " I verily believe that Herod's decree to slay infants would have left us without a Savior. It is useless to say that " good " men could have crucified the Lord. Since it was brutal and heinous to do this, what kind of characters did it take to do the work? Is it possible for men to say that the crucifixion of Christ was left to chance? If so, then the salvation of the elect is left to chance, and if the salvation of the elect is left to chance then the coming of them into the world is left to chance and it is perfectly possible for not an elect to be saved. Away with such a thought! Inasmuch as God foreknew that Adam would fall he prepared before the world a ransom for sin. Since God foreknew that Adam would fall, it was a fixed thing for him to fall. (If, as some claim, he could have kept the law we could have been righteous until now.) Since it was a fixed thing for him to fall, it was a fixed ransom to redeem him from under the fall, and Christ proved that the sacrifice was to take place at a certain hour. Now let us go back to our question above: What kind of characters did it take to crucify Christ? We are all agreed that it was a brutal crime. If so, then they were brutal characters who crucified him. If it was predestination for the Savior to be crucified was it not predestination for these wicked men to do it? If one single act

of it all was left to chance then that one act could make all of God 's plans go wrong . But I believe that predestination was behind the whole plan from beginning of creation until time shall be no more . Nor do I like the word " permission ." If you say that God permitted Adam to fall and Christ to be crucified , and all other events to take place because it is his will to do so , then that is all right , but if you just say that God permits , then add nothing , you leave us to think that he permits just to be permitting . I do believe God permits things to come to pass , but because it is his divine will for them to do so .

When you have prayed for all others will you remember this poor burdened boy ?

A poor beggar ,

W . Dorris Griffin

KENNEDY, Alabama

Sermon by Elder J.T. Prescott
Delivered at Northeast Church, N.C.
11/26/88

3rd Chapter of St . John

We from time to time refer to the occasion when our Lord conferred with Nicodemus and what a great setting that was . He stated immediately after this 8th verse " the wind bloweth where is listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof , but canst not tell whence it comest or whither it goeth : so is everyone that is born of the Spirit ." And I think that is as good a foundation for what we may say , if we are blessed to follow up , that our remarks may be predicated and founded upon " thus sayeth the word God ."

Now Nicodemus was puzzled about this , he did not understand . He asked a question : " How can these things be ? " How many times in our lives and in our experience have we been brought along those very lines and caused to wonder how can these things be ? I think that is one of the greatest questions that remain with a child of God , one whom God has opened the eyes of his understanding , one who has been brought and called by his grace , and taught his truth . It has been revealed unto him that he is a sinner , and then that God , a righteous God , a holy God , would condescend and cleanse one , making him whole . And then one could think back : How could a God of righteousness and holiness have such to do with such a wretched sinner as this , as I feel to be ? This is a continuation . Think ye not , that this is a one time situation with the child of grace , for he is called to ponder these things throughout his remaining days upon this earth . Yet that is answered by the Spirit revealing into his heart again , when Jesus said " I come not to call the righteous , but sinners to repentance ."

The great apostle Paul felt to be chief among all sinners . How do you feel ? Do you feel that you have ever gotten ahead of him ? I don't believe you do , if you are a child of grace . And yet this was the purpose of God in sending his Son into this world and dying , giving his all for poor , dying , wretches . We have " all sinned and come short of the glory of God ." Show me one individual that ever had had , does now , or that ever will , break this phase of action that within

himself will merit this great eternal salvation which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Not one, there is none good, no not one save the Father.

And yet it pleased the Father, as I said just a moment ago, to send his only begotten Son into this world to redeem just such as we have described — to call them from nature's darkness. Does he do it? " Has he done it? " Jesus said he did before he left this earth. Jesus said that he had finished the work that the Father sent him to do.

Now then, we see not all things complete. It has yet to be revealed. And that is the work of the Spirit of God, that is the work of the Holy Spirit to take the " things of him and show them unto you." When that Spirit reveals the truth unto you, it is going to reveal in your heart what the Son of God through the divine covenant with his Father in eternity has already done for you. Not what he is going to do, but what he has already done.

Now then, Nicodemus didn't understand this, much of it I don't understand if indeed I understand any of it. It seems a mighty small part, but I will tell you one thing — I would not trade if I had anything to do with it, what little that God has given me in my heart to rejoice and trust in, for ten thousand worlds like this. My brethren, why, because every bit of it is going to come to naught. The day is coming when we will close our eyes and yield up everything pertaining to this time world and what is it going to be worth then? Now then, my precious brethren, isn't what we are longing for and hoping for, and what our desire is, that we will have somthing abiding within each of us that will not die, that will not separate?

Now that is what the great apostle Paul declared when he said " I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall ever be able to separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." That is what we are talking about, something that supersedes and transcends all bounds, even death itself. My dear people, has that been manifested, has that been brought to life? Why, sure it has, not only when the Son of God rose from the tomb himself, but he manifested it in others when he quickened them and called them forth. We have it on record.

My dear people, Nicodemus was not some illiterate or unlearned person that we might criticise him for it. He simply did not understand how these things could be. Now then, Jesus answered and said unto him, " Art thou a master of Israel and knowest not these things? " Why certainly that didn't qualify him at all.

We might have all the book learning that there is, but I would as much as he will bless me, like to rightly divide, by God's grace the truth from error. We might memorize all the books that have ever been written upon this subject, if you please, and we might memorize this (Bible) from lid to lid and let me tell you there is not one ounce of salvation in that alone. I am not critical of this. I believe it behooves us as children of the heavenly King to proceed in the best manner that God will bless us to in all things. And yet salvation is in

none other than our dying God. That was what the salvation of his people was, that is where it is, and that is where it will ever remain until he comes back to this earth to receive the purchase of that which he died for.

Yes, I know that these things, as Jesus said, are hid from the wise and prudent. Jesus thanked his Father for that. He said " I thank thee, Father of heaven and earth, for thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, but even so thou hast revealed it unto babes because it seemed good in thy sight." Now then, Nicodemus with all his carnal knowledge did not know these things. How can these things be? Jesus went on to testify and tell him, " Verily I say unto thee, we speak that we do know and testify that we have seen and ye receive not our witness." You know that Jesus could speak nothing but the truth, he was the truth, he was the way, he was the light, and yet here he is telling that character that he receives not our testimony. Why did he not receive? He had not been blessed with anything within to receive it with.

Let me tell you, the world is full and this scripture testifies to these things — that there are those who have eyes and see not, there are those that have ears and hear not, and hearts and understand not. Why don't they have it? Because it just has not pleased God to give it to them. After reading that they don't have it and if you do have it, it is because it pleased God the Father to give it to you. It certainly isn't something that you have done to deserve it. That is what we are talking about, and that's what we want to get clarified to you this morning — that this salvation which was wrought in the Son of God is a free and unmerited gift to those whom God chose in his Son before the world began.

That is what the apostle Paul preached, that is what ministers have preached from that day until now and that's what we still desire to preach: that he has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the world began. That's what the apostle Paul had to say about it and I am not ashamed of it. But I thank God if indeed I have been counted worthy to stand upon these principles and the same blessed truth.

Let me tell you folks, we are living in a fast-changing world. But let me tell you something that does not change, and that is God and his wonderful work and his ways. They stand fast now, forever, the same yesterday and forever, and change not. Just suppose for a moment that God was as fickle and flimsy as we are in nature. I don't know of anything that would describe it any better than man and his ways are as an oak leaf in the wind. And you see for yourself, a puff of wind will come from this way and that leaf will just go tumbling that way. Then a breeze comes from the other way and it will turn and go that way and so will man with all his works and ways. Somebody else will come along and convince him of something just a little bit different and he will take off after that. God has said " My people hear my voice and they do follow me and a

stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of a stranger," Think about this which is predicated upon what I said— which was, that is and which will stand forever.

Jesus said, "If I told you earthly things and you believe not, how shall you believe if I tell you heavenly things." He is setting the record straight, my dear people. Here the scriptures testify that Jesus Christ came unto his own who received him not. They had nothing to receive him with. They didn't know who he was and I am telling you today that if he were to come back to this earth, the only way it would be possible for you or I or any other man to know who he is, would be for it to be revealed and given unto us. That is the only way and no man has ascended up to heaven. Oh no, Jesus comes down from heaven. We cannot reach up and grasp these things, we cannot bring him down. But aren't you thankful of that, that God is a Spirit and he humbled himself even to the cruel death of the cross. In his power he comes down even into the lowest parts of the earth. Where is it, if it is not right into the very heart of the poor sinner. That's about the lowest place that I know of upon the face of this earth — when one has gone down, when he finds himself sinking down and no one to cling to. Everything around him is going up and he cannot redeem himself and then one comes to him.

It is just like that man was, who was on the way from Jerusalem to Jericho. And he was beaten, he was robbed, and he was left half dead. He couldn't do anything. But the world is preaching today that everybody has a chance. Now let's see what kind of chance that man had. There was one, a priest came by on one side by chance and the Levite came by on the other side by chance. Neither one touched him, they didn't have anything to give him. Man doesn't have anything to give you today. But when that certain Samaritan came along he had the cure. And we rejoice today that he comes where we are because we can't reach up. Just remember that no man has ascended into the heavens, but that which is in heaven condescends even into our very hearts and causes us to cry many times— Abba Father — oh yes, and lifts us up.

All the healing that's ever been done, both physical and spiritual will be by that great physician. That is the first thing he did — to bind up his wounds. That man was wounded, he couldn't do anything but he bound up his wounds and poured in the oil of gladness. When God comes to one and binds up his wounds and lifts him up, don't you believe that there is rejoicing. The scripture says there is. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness even so must the son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life. Listen closely, dear people, this is a subject that is very important. It has been misconstrued and misapplied throughout the ages of mankind. Listen to the wording itself — how it reads. "That whosoever believeth . . ." What is belief? What is it based upon? What does it take to constitute a belief? It takes some evidence to establish a belief. Anything that is based on anything else is simply theory. It is just like the wind: somebody else could come along

and if you were depending on me and what I say, then somebody else can come along and tell you a little something more enticing and you would go after him. I believe I know human nature.

Now then, " whosoever believeth in him . . ." In him we move and live and have our continual being, so if we are in him, tell me how did we get there ? I want to ask you a question, if I may. Don't you believe every child of God will sing his praises in eternity and their names are recorded in the lamb's book of life and were written there before the world began in Christ Jesus? Let me ask you, who put them there? There are no names being written there today; there is nobody adding to or taking away this work that was constituted and completed and wrought in a blessed covenant between God the Father and God the Son in eternity. And all that's ever been since them was the manifestation and the revelation of that, and that is what we glory in today.

Now in the 16th verse: " For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." Do you believe that it is possible that one that has been regenerated and born again of that incorruptible seed that liveth and abideth forever shall ever perish?

But now let's go back now to this work of grace. In this work of regeneration, you think about it and consider an individual in his earthly state that he is born into this world. There are a lot of people that would like to think and probably do that every person born into this world is born with just a little bit of good in him and if you'll fan it just a little bit and work with it, that you'll make something out of it. But that's not what my Bible teaches me. My Bible teaches me that as that great patriarch David declared that it was in sin that my mother did conceive me and I sprang forth with tongue speaking lies. If there be anything acceptable unto God the Father in an individual, it would be that which has been wrought there and worked in you by the Spirit of almighty God in quickening you and calling you by his grace and revealing this unto you, teaching you that you are not your own keeper but the same one that created you and ordained you before the foundation of the world. But some people say. " You Old Baptist go back too far." Let me tell you God was, he is and he shall forever be and that which we hope to worship and praise and glory in is that which was in him from the beginning. It didn't just get there, but it was in him.

. . " That all of them that believe will sing his praises in glory." Who are they? I am glad that I can't tell you and I am glad that no man can tell you, but I can tell you one who knows and that is that one who holds that book, that one that John saw sitting upon the throne in the book of Revelations and in his hand he had a book and that book was sealed. I am glad that it is sealed today and it will stay sealed until the time of revelation comes when they will open that book and all whose names are found written therein shall come forth into eternal life. Just remember that the foundation of God stands sure having this seal: the Lord knows them

that are his .

We read terrible things and see it on TV about little children being abandoned and it is the most horrible thing that I know of , and I condemn it , by God's grace , with everything I have to do it with . The scriptures say " Yea , a mother may leave her suckling child but your heavenly Father will never leave or forsake you ." Isn't that wonderful . Though sorrows may come , though heartaches may come come , though afflictions may come , and yes you may wind up in prison . Some will say , " Oh no , I will never do that ." Don't say what you won't do . Peter didn't think he would curse and swear that he never knew his Lord , but he did , didn't he ? And the Lord knew more about him than he did , for he told him that was exactly what he would do . When it came to pass and that old rooster crowed , I've said this many times that it was one of the greatest sermons that ever was preached , for it brought to the attention of Peter what the Savior had told him and he wept bitterly . Brethren , that is repentance , that which God reveals , that repentance which he works in you , which is acceptable unto the Father .

Now then , for God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world , but that the world through him might be saved . It might be good for us right here to consider just a moment what world is under consideration . The only reason that the sun is still rising in the east and setting in the west — the only reason that this old natural world is still standing today is because of the grace of God . If man were left to himself , he would have already destroyed himself and everything that he has ever been connected with , but for the restraining hand of God . It just isn't God's time for it to be done away with yet .

You look out among us and you can see the grace of God in every aspect . You can see the grace of God when you see the plants come forth and when you see the trees grow ; you can see the grace of God when it rains and when the sun shines . Certainly all these things are by the grace and mercy of God .

We have under consideration that this world of believers is a different world from the natural world . Jesus told his little children that you are in this world , but you are not of this world . If you are among that royal seed , that heavenly host , and will sing his praises in eternity , you are not of this world either , for there has been a separation made .

And there is much admonishment , there is much instruction in the scriptures pertaining to this . I was reading some this morning , where the apostle Paul admonished his brethren : " Be ye not partakers with unbelievers , — to separate yourself from them , come ye out from among them and be ye a separate people ." I hope to emphasize that I feel Paul was qualified to do this . I believe it becomes us if we are instructed by God 's word , to rebuke and exhort with all long suffering and doctrine . " For the time will come when they will no longer endure sound doctrine , but will heap to themselves teachers having itching ears and will turn away from the truth and be turned unto fables ."

A man will preach the power that called him and I want to preach Jesus the way , the truth , the only

way given unto heaven that poor sinners must be saved. That is the only power that I believe in, " for there is no power," Paul says, " except the power of God and the powers that are ordained of God." You 'll notice that it is in the past tense: he that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already."

God 's people are a lively people. They have been begotten again unto a lively hope, they are made alive in the Lord Jesus Christ. Just show me one that has been wrought into and he will tell you the reason he does what he does is because God has already wrought a work within him. They don 't do what they do in order to obtain something, but they do what they do because they have obtained. That is the greatest difference between possessing and professing. In this condemnation that light has come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. " For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light lest his deeds should be reproved." There is your human nature, just fickle enough, just palpable enough that man within himself harbors some idea that if I won 't tell this no one will know. We have all been guilty of harboring thoughts in our minds that we are ashamed of and wouldn 't tell anybody what they were. It doesn 't make any difference whether you told anybody or not, just remember that God knows the heart and the purpose and intent of the mind even before you think them. There is nothing hid from God. Rather than us being concerned about what Brother so-and-so over here might think about what I said or did, I just better be concerned about my Lord and Savior for it is through him and by him that I live or die.

I would admonish you to examine yourselves " to try the spirits to see if they be of God or if they be of man." What is it that we cling to, what is it that we are possessing this morning: Is it something that by God's grace and his mercy we come into possession of? I hope so. I hope this is something that we have been given possession of, not because of what we have done, not of works of righteousness that we have done, but according to his own purpose and grace. Again it was given to us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

Elder J.T. Prescott

MOVED OR MOVING?

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Editors

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5 / 89
IT EXPIRES WITH THE ISSUE.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

THE NARROW WAY

Continued From April Issue .

3 . But again , it is the way of temptation . The Lord Jesus Christ was tempted in the wilderness by Satan . He said to His disciples , " Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations ." (Luke xxii . 28) . If we , then , are not acquainted with temptations , we know little of union to a tempted Lord . But we are very glad to get out of the way of temptation . It is a painful path to walk in . To be continually tempted by Satan , by our evil hearts , by " the world lying in wickedness , " and have a conscience suffering and groaning under the weight of temptation , is no small burden . But the voice still sounds behind us , " This is the way , walk ye in it ." It is indeed a way of temptation ; but still the way of temptation is the way of deliverance , and the way of deliverance is the way of glory .

4 . Again . It is the way of faith , for only by faith can we walk in the way . Nothing but faith can enable us to see the way before us , or to move to a single step in the way . By faith we stand , by faith we walk , by faith we fight , and by faith we triumph . So that would we walk in the way , we can only walk in that way by living faith . And here is the distinction . It requires no faith to turn aside " to the right hand," or " to the left." Unbelief can lead us astray , sin can draw us aside ; but to walk in the straight and narrow way — in Jesus , in the path of tribulation and affliction , in contradistinction to the general way of man — we can only walk in that way as God is pleased to raise up and keep alive living faith in our souls .

5 . And as we walk in it by the faith , so we walk in it by hope ; hoping to the end for the glory of God God , hoping that the Lord will appear in due time and cheer our souls , hoping for the day when all our cares shall be at an end and tears wiped away from our eyes ; hoping in God's faithful word of promise , in His expected deliverance, in His promised mercy ; hoping for nothing in self , but hoping for all in Him .

6 . We walk in this path also in love ; for only so far as we have some love to the Lord , love to His ways , love to His Word , and love to His people , can we be found walking in Him . He Himself is love ; and when we have felt a little of His love in our souls , then we can love Him ; and this is the language of our hearts , " " Draw me , we will run after Thee " (Sol . Song i . 4) . When we feel a little of the soft touches of love in the soul , then there is a running in the way of God 's commandments , in that straight and narrow path that leads to eternal glory .

7 . We walk in it , again , in the way of prayer . The Lord's family are continually sighing , crying , and pouring out their petitions to the Lord . " Lord , guide me , teach me , direct me ; hold me up ; keep me from error . Lord , visit and bless my soul ; look down upon me in Thy infinite mercy ." O how these cries , sighs , and petitions are continually going up from broken hearts to the footstool of mercy ! We cannot walk in the way except by these continual

sighs , groans and cries after the Lord . A prayerless , reckless , hard heart never finds the way , and could not walk in the way , if found . The life we have to live is a life of faith and prayer ; and the Lord will take care , I am well convinced , that we shall , as He declares of the elect , " cry unto Him day and night ." There shall be those conflicts , exercises , trials and temptations ; those desires and those wishes , those pantings and longings ; all combining and conspiring to keep up communion with the throne of mercy . Thus , as the Lord's people walk , they are led by supplications . He says , " With weeping and with supplications will I lead them " (Jer . xxxi . 9) . " I will pour upon the house of David , and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem , the Spirit of grace and of supplications ; and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced ."

8 . And this way also is a way of self- denial ; grappling with the flesh, putting off the old man , and putting on the new — plucking out right eyes, and cutting off right hands , as the Lord may enable ; " Whosoever will come after Me , let him deny himself, and take up his cross , and follow Me Me " (Luke ix . 23) .

9 . Again . It is the way of godly fear . We can only walk in the path aright as godly fear is from time to time springing up in our hearts ; a fear to be wrong , a desire to be right , a tenderness of conscience lest we break the bounds , slip into error , or turn aside into evil . So that the Lord 's people , in their passage home to glory , are continually fearing and trembling , knowing what fallen creatures they are , lest they make a mistake , be deceived or deluded , and turn aside on " the right hand " into some grievous error , or on " the left " into some awful deception of Satan . Therefore , they walk in self-suspicion , in godly fear , in holy desire , that the Lord would be their guide and keeper , and " lead them in the way everlasting ."

Contrast this with the way in which dead professors walk , be they ever so high or ever so low . They have none of these jealous feelings over self ; none of these suspicious thoughts over their own hearts ; no fears lest they be wrong ; no earnest desires to be right ; no cries , groans , and sighs after the Spirit's leadings ; no fear of error , no dread of evil ; no listening with anxious ear to the voice that speaks behind them : " This is the way , walk ye in it ." " Turn not aside ' to the right hand ,' nor ' to the left ' — here is error , there is heresy ; here is evil , there is sin ; avoid this quicksand , beware of that sandbank ; a precipice on one side , a quagmire on the other ." Thus the Lord 's people go along trembling , fearing , crying , sighing , watching , praying , because they know they carry in their bosom a heart so " deceitful and desparately wicked ," that turn aside they will , turn aside they must , except they hear the voice behind them , saying , " This is the way ! " " This is the way , look straight on before you ; it is a safe path , it leads to endless glory ; it will bring you right at last . You may have many doubts , many fears , many suspicions , many sighs and groans , and think you are altogether wrong because there is a turning aside to " the right hand ," and a turning aside " to the left ." But the promise still holds good ; you " shall hear a voice

behind you" sounding in your ears. "This is the way, walk ye in it.

But what a mercy it is to have this word sometimes sounding in our ears, and see that there is a "way" to heaven — a way independent of man, distinct from all the doings of the creature — God's own dear Son, "the Way, the Truth, and the Life!" that there is blood, precious blood, that cleanseth from all sin; a righteousness, a glorious righteousness, to justify a needy, naked soul; love, dying love, as a sweet cord twined round a drooping, desponding spirit; and that the blessed Comforter, from time to time shows us and gives us power to walk in the way of eternal life!

But has it not been, is it not sometimes with you, a matter of earnest consideration whether your feet are in the path? What makes it so? Because you find working in you so many things that seem utterly opposed to this path; so many trials, temptations and exercises, so many anxious questionings, and so much of the working of "a heart deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." All these things combined make you fear that you are not walking in the path. But what is all this but the blessed fruit of the "word behind you?" You expect, perhaps, to see something, but that is not God's way. The word is "behind," not before you; dropped into your conscience, not held up to your eyes. Yet because it does not go before us to warn us beforehand, instead of coming to reprove us afterward, we often think that it is not the word of God at all. But I would say, what is it that has kept you that are the people of God, and desire to fear His name? what has kept you out of that dead assurance in which so many walk? Doubts and fears, the tremblings and suspicions of your anxious mind, have not these instrumentally kept us from this great evil? What has kept you from being altogether swallowed up in despair? Have there not been now and then some glimpses, tokens, testimonies, some shinings in of God's countenance, some dropping of His word into your heart? What has been all this but the "word behind you?" When sin has been presented to you as a sweet honied drink, and you have almost grasped the bowl, there has been some lash of conscience, some cutting conviction, that dashed the cup away before you drank the deadly draught; has not that been a "word behind you, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it?" While you have been working and struggling, and thinking you would do something to please God, and got well-nigh stuck fast in the old pharisaical sandbank, a sweet light has broken in upon you, whereby you have seen Jesus, and turned aside from ruined self, and anchored within the veil; and has not this been "a voice behind you, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it?" When your path has been little else but trouble, sorrow, and affliction, and you are almost ready to give all up, and say, "This religion has brought nothing but trouble with it;" still there has been a soft whisper in your conscience, "'This is the way;' turn aside, and you must perish; you have a soul to be saved or lost." This has been a gentle admonition, and you have still kept on. Has not this been "a voice

behind you ? " When you have felt your heart prompted to break forth and pour out your petitions at the throne of mercy , and wrestle with God as for life and death, has not this been " a word behind you ," sounding in your ears, " Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek and ye shall find ; knock , and it shall be opened to you ? " When some precious promise has come into your heart, and cheered up your downcast mind , when you were fain to give up all for lost, what has this been but " a word behind you ? " But because the word does not always come before us , and we cannot see something with the bodily eye, we get confused and perplexed . But God has not promised we shall see anything with the bodily eye, or hear anything with the bodily ear . The word is to come " behind us ," as a reproving, rebuking , encouraging , or comforting word, as God see fit. But, however it comes , as a rebuking or comforting word , it still sounds , " This is the way ! " — Jesus , His blood , His righteousness, His Person, His perfect salvation — " This is the way , walk ye in it." Turn not aside to " the right hand," nor " to the left" ; walk in Him , and by walking in Him you will obtain eternal life .

What a mercy it is that God has left such a promise on record! and O, what a great mercy to have this promise fulfilled in our heart's experience ! That is the mercy . This we know , if we know anything, that we are ever turning aside " to the right hand " or " to the left ." If we do not know that , what do we know ? We are shut up in ignorance , presumption and carnal security, if we do not know that . But then , on the other hand, what a mercy if God does not leave us to turn aside to be engulfed as thousands are in destruction and ruin ; but deals with our conscience in mercy , and gives us a lash now and then ; or a refreshing admonition , promise , or encouragement ; or turn our eyes , as Jonah did , to look once more " toward His holy temple." Thus the Lord, sometimes in one way , sometimes in another , still encourages our poor , fainting souls to look to Him, and hope in His mercy ; and still mercifully says to us , " This is the way, walk ye in it ! "

J.C. Philpot

" He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." — Revelation ii. 29 .

These words extend the message beyond the church to which they were spoken , and address themselves to every one whom the word comes, and to whom an ear is given to hear and receive it. Thus each message sent to the churches becomes a message sent personally to us . If we have a spiritually circumcised ear, if we are willing to listen to the voice of the Lord, he speaks to us in every message as personally and as distinctly as he spoke to each individual church. It is indeed an unspeakable blessing to have this ear given to us that we may receive in humility , simplicity , and godly sincerity what the Lord speaks in the word of his grace . It is by his word that he knocks at the door of our hearts ; and what a blessing he has pronounced on the man who hears his voice and opens the door

when he hears the knock, like a fond and affectionate wife when she hears the knock of her husband at the door of his house : " Behold , I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice , and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." (Rev. iii . 20) .

J.C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 1989

Horace E. Walker, VA 3.00
Mrs. David Cody, AZ 10.00
Mrs. Gilbert Coate, WA 2.00
Reed Harper, TX 2.00
Mrs. Bruce McKinney, VA 7.00
Mrs. Noel B. Cassell, VA 2.00
Lloyd C. Spikes, OR 7.00
Mrs. Foye W. Cole, NC 2.00
Mrs. Mary L. Hawkins, NC
In memory Jesse R. Somers ...32.00
Mrs. Sadie Walker, NC 2.00
Edwin F. Dyer, VA 2.00
Mrs. Ruby Feldtman, WA 1.00
Eld. J. Y. McCormick, FL 7.00
Eld. Fred Neikirk, FL 7.00
In memory of Elder W.D. Griffin
Salisbury Old Sch. Bap. Ch. ...50.00
Hoyt D.F. Sparks, TN.....7.00
Don & Agnes Anders, AL 10.00
Mr.& Mrs. Charles Hays, AL...25.00
Mt. Carmel Pri. Bap. Ch., AL...25.00
G.B. & Edna McAdams, MS ...10.00
Mrs. Troy Younger, MS.....10.00
Mr.& Mrs. Russell
Rudowski, AL 15.00
Mr. & Mrs. H.H. Blanton, MS..25.00
Mrs. Margie E. Pitts, AL....25.00
Mr. & Mrs. Albert
Kewatch, DE 20.00
Little Creek Old School
Baptist Church, DE 20.00

OBITUARIES

SARAH " KITTY " MORAN AGEE

With sweet memories I will attempt to write Lord willing, a few words in memory of Sister " Kitty " Agee, whom I loved very much.

Our Heavenly Father by His divine wisdom called Sister " Kitty " from our midst October 15, 1988 at the age of 93. She was born March 13, 1895, the daughter of Jim and Molly Moran.

She was married to the late Floyd S. Agee on July 7, 1912. Born to this union were four sons; the late James Leroy " Roy ", Roscoe W., Andrew C., and Floyd S. Agee, Jr.; seven daughters; the late Elzora " Zora " Adams, Ora Guthrie, Ruie Poff, Ruby Hawley, Doris Hawley, Frances Lewis, and Madeline Banham. She was blessed with 24 grandchildren and 27 great grandchildren and one great - great grandchild.

Funeral services were conducted October 17th at the Salem Church in Floyd County with her pastor Elder Hale Terry and Elders Raymond Goad, Lane Carter, and Larry Hollingsworth officiating. She was laid to rest in the Salem Church cemetary.

Sister " Kitty " was received by baptism at Salem Church July 13, 1927 and was blessed to attend her meetings regularly with a lovely smile on her face. She was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace, believing that God held all things in His hands.

She was a humble and gentle person who loved her Brethren in Christ and in turn was loved by all who

knew her for her quiet manner and sweet smile .

She will be missed very much at Salem Church .

Written in love by request of her family .

Mary Poff

CYNTHIA GRACE JEFFERSON

Sister Grace Jefferson was called from the walks of this life , February 24th , 1989 . Sister Grace was a native of Newark , Ohio . She is survived by a brother , Charles Claggett of Newark , Ohio and a foster daughter , Betty Lengele of Madras , Oregon .

Sister Jefferson was born into this world of sin and sorrow March 24 , 1907 . She believed in the loving kindness of a precious Savior and God that pardoned all sins and iniquity of his chosen people with his precious blood .

We of the Little Flock and Seclusia Church express a feeling of a wounded heart , to think that in body we must one day part . Our hope gives us a view of our God and Savior , Jesus Christ , in Heaven of Heavens , where the precious Saints will live forever in that eternal love that abides forever , above this land of sorrow .

We feel the loss of our precious Sister Jefferson . " Though he slay me , yet will I trust in him ," Job 13-15 . The joyful seasons that we were blessed to enjoy in the past several years , shall not be forgotten . " There is no man that hath the power over the spirit to retain the spirit , neither hath he power in the day of his death ": Ecclesiastes 8:8 .

May we be blessed to humbly bow and be made submissive to the power that comes down from heaven . Though today we're filled with mourning , Mercy still is on the throne . With thy smiles of love returning , we can sing : " Thy will be Done ."

The Little Flock Church of Bakersfield , CA ., while in conference , approved the memorial of Sister Grace Jefferson , (request was made that a copy be mailed for publication) .

Elder Walter B . Wilson , Moderator
Sister Thelma Bridges , Clerk

PSALM 118:14

The Lord is my strength and song , and is become my salvation .

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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POEM

Now be my heart inspired to sing
The glories of my Saviour - King ,
Jesus the Lord ; how heavenly fair
His form! how bright his beauties are!

O 'er all the sons of human race
He shines with a superior grace ;
Love from his lips divinely flows ,
And blessings all his state compose .

Dress thee in arms , most mighty Lord ,
Gird on the terror of thy sword ;
In majesty and glory ride ,
With truth and meekness at thy side .

Thine anger , like a pointed dart ,
Shall pierce thy foes of stubborn heart ;
Or words of mercy , kind and sweet ,
Shall melt the rebels at thy feet .

Thy throne , O God , for ever stands ;
Grace is the sceptre in thy hands :
Thy laws and works are just and right;
Justice and grace are thy delight .

God , thine own God , has richly shed
His oil of gladness on thy head ,
And with his sacred Spirit blest
His first - born Son above the rest .

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EDITORIAL

" For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Elder R.H. Campbell

This single verse of scripture is, beyond any shadow of a doubt, the most often quoted verse to be found in the bible and just as often is quoted out of its context and as though it was the only scripture on the subject in the third chapter of John's epistle. This verse is just one sentence in an ongoing conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus and must, as all scripture, be quoted in its proper perspective in relation to all the other statements made on the subject under discussion. The person who spoke these words was Jesus and he was teaching Nicodemus the truth regarding the kingdom of heaven and explaining the way and manner in which the natural man is made a fit subject for it and how this is made manifest in his life; why it is this way and the purpose of God in doing it this way.

Nicodemus, who was a ruler of the Jews, in that time, came to Jesus by night lest his position in the Jewish nation be jeopardized, but he had questions regarding this new doctrine that was being preached throughout the country, and he wanted to know more about it. His first statement to Jesus reflected this concern, as he said, " Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." In this statement we are made to wonder if Nicodemus himself was aware of the full import of what he was saying; surely he must have wondered, even as David when he said, " What have I now done? Is there not a cause." There was wisdom in his declaration that he knew that God was with Jesus in his work and yet when Jesus answered him," Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven," he questioned the statement and said how can this be that a man is born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's

womb and be born again. He seemed to have lost the confidence that he had when he stated that he knew Jesus was a teacher come from God. Jesus continued his teaching of the same subject by further telling Nicodemus, " Except a man be born of water and of the spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of flesh is flesh: and that which is born of spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the spirit." Nicodemus' response to this was, " How can these things be." He still could not understand this great mystery but Jesus continues on the same point of doctrine throughout their conversation and at no time did he change the subject and begin talking about something else. He is still explaining the way and manner in which man is brought into knowledge of and is made to see the things of the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus asks him a question, " Art thou a master of Israel and knowest not these things," or in other words, knowing the law and the prophets who wrote of this truth, are ye yet without understanding regarding these things. Then Jesus said to him, " Verily, verily, I say unto thee, we speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen: and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe. If I tell you of heavenly things." Or, in other words, if I have told you in natural terms what must be done for the man of flesh to enable him to see and enter into the spiritual realm and you don't understand; how can you understand the purpose and the way that it is accomplished from a heavenly perspective? Jesus now begins, on the same subject, using scripture Nicodemus is familiar with, explaining again the same truth, " and no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." Nicodemus being a leader in Israel was familiar with the prophecies concerning the Messiah, the incident of Moses lifting up the brayen serpent in the wilderness and the fact that all of these scriptures were directed to and applied only to the nation of Israel. They were types and shadows of things to come upon the Lords chosen people in some future time and Christ's teaching to Nicodemus was that they were being fulfilled at this particular time in him.

Now, Jesus having said all of these things to Nicodemus on the subject of man having to be born again before he could see the kingdom of God; having to be born of water and of the spirit before he could enter the kingdom of heaven: telling him of the wind which blowed where it listeth, you hear the sound but don't know from whence it cometh or whither it goeth; reminding of Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness to save those that had been bitten of the fiery serpents

and that they die not ; and even saying that in this same manner must the Son of man be lifted up that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life, how can the world use these references and teach that these things are for anyone who will subscribe to them and accept them as promises to all the world . All of the above references qualify those to whom these things are directed and shows all of the qualifying is the work of Jesus in his coming into the world to do his Fathers will. Just as those who were bitten in the wilderness by the fiery serpents looked upon the brayen serpent, which was provided by God for this purpose , and lived , even in like manner those who are made to feel their infestation with sin look unto Jesus, the only begotten of the Father and live . They look because they have been born again , and for the first time in their life, realize their poor wretched and undone condition before God and feel their need of a Savior; they see this, recognize it for what it is and they know that the cure for their condition is beyond the natural ability of man .

When one has been taught these beautiful truths they automatically begin to wonder why it is so with them ; they cannot see any reason that they should be so blessed and yet they feel that they have been . Then with all of this teaching, bringing them to this point in their conversion the explanation is given , " For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son , that whosoever believeth in him should not perish , but have everlasting life ." This forever settles it in their minds ; they no longer look for the evidence in and of themselves but realize that just as the Jews were the chosen people of God in the law dispensation , he has a chosen people in the gospel dispensation and this third chapter of John is teaching this to all , who in future generations , will come this way , and find that it is because of God's love for them and not because of anything that they have done to merit it .

It seems that anyone who understands the English language , following this conversation and the line of truth that is presented throughout the conversation would realize that the sixteenth verse is not an isolated statement separate and apart from the subject discussed elsewhere . Surely the whosoever referred to here are the same ones who are born of the spirit, the same ones who are born of the water and the spirit , and upon whom the wind has blown . How can it be declared , so universally , that this scripture applies to all of mankind when so much care has been taken, by Jesus himself, to qualify those who will see and enter into the kingdom of God , and to describe the way in which it occurs to those who will enter in . Then his statement that it is because God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that those who believe in him, and surely this refers to those who have been born of the water and the spirit , might not perish. Everything that Jesus has said is regarding things that are beyond the power of man . Man cannot cause himself to be born of the water and the spirit any more than the Israelites who were bitten of the fiery serpents

could heal themselves. The healing must come from God then and it must come from the same source today. Moses was not told to instruct the Israelites what to do; he was just to place the brayen serpent on a pole and those that were bitten and looked thereon would live. They looked in the same way that Nicodemus came to Christ or that any believer comes to him; they cannot tell you why they just came. It was not something premeditated on the part of the individual, but, it was predestinated of God because Jesus said, " All that my Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

In 1 John Ch. 5, vs. 1, the Apostle John, who incidently recorded the original conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus, was blessed to condense the conversation into one sentence, and surely he was referring to it when he said, " Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. This qualifies the whosoever and limits it to those that believe that Jesus is the Christ and surely this same limitation is placed on the whosoever in John 3 16.

Jesus continues in John 3, 17 on the same line of truth when he said, " For God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved: He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Christ's coming into the world did not condemn the children of men or cause them to be lost because the law had already done that. All men are born in sin, Christ excepted, and come forth from the womb speaking lies and fulfilling the desires of the heart and mind, yielding to the vanity they are so subject to, yea were created subject to, so the law was given that the depravity of the natural man might be made manifest and that sin might abound. Christ came into the world that those who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world might be saved because they believed in him since they were born of the water and the spirit. He did nothing for those who were not chosen in him and they were condemned because they believed not in the name of the only begotten Son of God, and they were left in their state of condemnation where all men would be but for the grace of God toward the vessels which were afore prepared unto glory.

The religious world of this day quote the above scriptures and the great majority of them teach that they apply to all men alike, and that, how each one receives them is left up to their own individual choice. Actually these words are a conversation between the Son of God and one for whom he was sent into the world to seek and to save and they are applicable only to those of this elite group; those unto whom Peter wrote, " But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had

not obtained mercy , but now have obtained mercy ." These are the ones who are found of Jesus at some point in their lives and they will believe in him unto everlasting life , not may be , but they shall be - because they are born of God, not of the will of man nor of the will of flesh but of the spirit of God .

It all comes forth from the same source and comes as it has in all ages of time as stated in the song of Moses , " My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew , as the small rain upon the tender herb , and as the showers upon the grasses ." All of the works of God are as far above the ability of man as the sending forth of the rain and the dew upon the earth ; they occur regularly in the midst of the toil and strife in the world but they are effective only to those to whom they are directed. Such beauty and such perfection is the trademark of the God who created all things for himself and disposes of them as is pleasing unto him and his promise to those to whom all these scriptures are directed is, " Fear not little flock; for it is your fathers good pleasure to give you the kingdom ."

In bonds of love ,
Richard H . Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Signs of the Times :

Has the Lord pardoned my sins ? Can I claim a hope in Christ ? I don 't know what you will think , but here are some of the reasons why I hope I can .

Many years ago , (late 30 's) when my children were small , they all took Typhoid Fever . Sometime before they had this terrible disease, I had dreamed of being in a large crowd of people , and all my children were seated in swings — swinging out over the water — and I couldn 't get them out .

Then , when they got sick , I was fearful for their lives . I went out to the chicken house several times to pray, and to ask God to take care of them , and make them well .

They were very sick for a long time , but finally , all of them recovered . Still I felt a burden of sin , and many times made bread without salt or soda , because I could not keep my mind on my work . A few years later , this feeling got so bad that I could not rest day or night , without continually praying for God's mercy.

One night my husband came in and said that he was going hunting . Usually I didn 't want him to go , but this time I was glad . Just as soon as he was out of the house , I was down on my knees , begging God to show me , in a dream , whether I should go to the church or not — and when I got up off my knees this time , the terrible weight was gone . My husband came back into the house to say that he had decided not to go hunting after all . I remember feeling so happy that I was afraid he might notice , and ask the reason why , and I didn 't know what to say .

I dreamed that night that I was at a neighbor 's house , where people were going into another room , and being baptized . Someone asked me

if I wanted to go . I said , " you go ahead , yet will I be an Old Baptist ." This seemed sufficient evidence at the time to go to the church and tell them .

The next day being the third Saturday , (Oct . 1940) I went to the Republican Primitive Baptist Church. I don 't recall what Brother George Dyer preached about at that meeting , but when they began to sing " Amazing Grace ", I went up to join the church . I couldn't talk much , and I was afraid that they wouldn 't take me in . I felt unworthy to be in the church , but I did so much want to be . They did receive me . I loved them then , and I love them still .

I was afraid that my husband wouldn't want me to join the church . However , he put his arms around me in church and said , " I am so happy for you now . It broke my heart to see you as you were ." No man can say sweeter words than these . It seemed that my heart overflowed with happiness . Such joy and peace was mine !

Even now , writing about it , I feel the same joy and love of that day . I believe it will last forever , for I believe it is the love of God .

For several years , I had thought that if my husband was just a member of the church , we could go everywhere to preaching and I would enjoy that so much . I was selfish in this , I realize , as I was thinking mostly of myself .

About two years ago , I began to have such awful dreams about my husband that I told my children I was afraid that he might be taken from me .

Afterwards , when his health began to fail , I worried even more . He had a heart attack , (Dec . 1958) and was so very ill . The doctor asked me what I thought about his condition . I told him that I had very little hope , knowing he was so terribly sick . He said , " just pray and hope ." I thought : " I am praying every minute ," . . . but his condition was so critical that I knew only God could save him .

He remained in the hospital 29 days , and I stayed with him . I slept on the floor , or in a chair , because I could not go home without him .

When he started getting better , I was so homesick that I thought nothing could make me happier than just getting to go home . . . But , on that last night in the hospital , my dear husband told me of his hope in Christ and I thought , " the Lord was in this place , and I knew it not ." I felt so happy as I lay on the hospital floor, reaching up to the bed , to hold Fred 's hand for a long time that night . I had been so scared that Fred would die and leave me alone . I had prayed that if he did have to die , God would be with him and let him not fear death . I wanted him to say something that would let me know that the Lord had forgiven his sins . I felt sure that he had a hope in Christ , although he had never told me anything about it . You can imagine the joy I felt when he told me that he had no fear of dying , and that the Lord was with him .

I wanted him to go to church , but I was afraid , too , because of his weak heart . Oh , we of little faith !

Fred did join the church , (at Republican — May , 1959) and he was baptized a month later . It was

such a happy day for me, and I am sure it was for him, also . . . And therefore, these are some of my reasons of hope.

Now we both belong to the church, but Fred's health is not such that we can go everywhere as I had thought we could. Nevertheless, we are so very thankful for the love of God that we trust we have. We are content just to get to go when we can, and hope that God will be with us wherever we are.

There are many other reasons of my hope, but I have no desire to write more at this time.

NOTED IN 1974:

My husband, Fred, had a second heart attack — this one fatal — on Feb. 14, 1962. There have been so many lonesome days and nights since then. I know this is the way of the earth, and pray that God will be with me at the end, as I hope He has been through the years. He has blessed me with loving children and their husbands, and also, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Oh, if I could but be thankful enough for all His loving kindness. On that great day, when He calls all his children home, may I stand among them to praise His great and holy name.

If this is not worthy of space, please just cast it aside.

Signed,
Lessie Carter Via

MARCH 1989

After these words were written, the pages were tucked away at the bottom of a drawer, until recently, when my daughter learned that they existed. It is with her encouragement that I humbly pass this on to you.

Faithfully yours,
Lessie C.V. Guilliams
Rt. 1 Box 446
Callaway, VA 24067

ARTICLES

SOLOMON'S SONG II. 9.

"He standeth behind our wall."

Dear Household of Faith:— It is unto you that these glorious promises are left on record. It is for thee that He stands behind our wall. No other can ever realize the sweetness of having the glorious manifestation of his royal presence brought to us. The world, with all its ingenuity, can never pierce the ways of the King Jehovah and find out the dealings that he had with those who are bought with so great a price. From the teaching of God's word there must be more than one sense that God stands behind our wall, because we do not understand that he has left the wicked to their own devices. We believe that he is ever overruling all the schemes of wicked men and devils for the final triumphant deliverance of his chosen people into the glorious city beyond these things of time. Not only is that the belief of the Baptists in this part of Alabama, but we contend, and desire, if the Lord will be our stay and guide, to defend, that the Lord's people have always taught, that God overruled all things for the good of

his people. But just now our mind is not concerned so much with the sovereignty of God, but will say that we do not believe that God is in any way the author of sin. We are perfectly willing to take the Bible for our guide. We find that Joseph told his brethren that God sent him to preserve much people alive, and that though they meant it for evil, God meant it for good. (Gen. xlv. 5 ; I. 20.) God did, in some wonderful way, bring this about without coercion. Men and good brethren at that, are very much concerned over the way God works all things and still not be the author of sin. I used to spend much time in speculation on the same idea, but long since I have, as I hope, been shown the glorious beauties of his magnificent power, and it does not bother me so much any more. If God is so wonderful in power and wisdom that he can bring a blaspheming Saul to the earth crying, " Who art thou, Lord? that he is coming again to earth to gather from the graves all his little children, and raise them to immortality without the stains of sin ; that, if not deceived, he found the poor unworthy writer among the thorns of infidelity and self - righteousness and planted in his sinful heart a little ray of hope that all is well with my soul, then may he not work all things after the counsel of his own will? But let us not be content there. Paul tells us that God gave them (the wicked) up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts. (Rom. i. 26.) James tells us that God is not tempted, neither tempteth he any man, but man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lusts. (James i. 13, 14.) It is only as the sovereign Ruler of all things that he stands at the wall of the wicked. But, to the poor storm child of God, there is a more precious way that he stands behind our wall. According to my understanding, the wall is our flesh. Just as long as the poor little pilgrims sojourn in this time state we shall be looking through a glass darkly. Paul tells us that the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things ye would. (Gal. v. 17.) All of God's dear children who have been called out and given to know the truth know that this is true. When the Sun of Righteousness subdues the flesh and melts down the wall, it is then that we are exalted upon the mountains of his love, and are then obeying and keeping his commandments. We hear the Savior say, " Without me ye can do nothing. " Oh ! to be left down in the land of Lodebar, to our own sinful selves. Indeed, we must wait on the Lord for a visitation of his healing power.

If a man is in the flesh is he partly so, or is he completely under the influence of evil? It is not part Spirit and part flesh that prompts evil, nor is it both that prompts righteousness. It is sin that dwells in us that leads us in forbidden paths. It is the Spirit of Peace that leads us to do righteousness. Now Paul says that they that are in the flesh cannot please God. Peter thought that he never would deny the Lord, but at soon as the Lord withdrew from him he did deny him. He continued to do so until the Lord turned and looked on him. Just so it is with us. When

the Savior melts the barrier down, and steps from behind our wall, we are like Peter, we are made to weep bitterly.

I have heard dear old soldiers speak of their ups and downs in this life, and say their downs were many more than their ups. But nay, not so. Our downs are so much longer. We only get a glimpse now and then of his beaming countenance. With this poor writer the glass is very, very dark. If I have ever been under the smiling rays of his shining wings it has been very fleeting. He only shows himself at the lattice. It is here a little and there a little. Sometimes it seems that I can never again grope in darkness, and then I am made to again be as "a pelican of the wilderness," as "an owl of the desert." But blessed thought indeed that he knows our way! Even when the influence of his healing wings is not being felt he is watching over and caring for us. He will never leave nor forsake us, and is mindful of us when we are not mindful of ourselves. He will watch over and keep us in this world, and will watch our sleeping dust until he bids it arise. Then we shall be where he is and be like him, and this old wall, the flesh, shall be done away with and all will be heaven and eternal. This will be enough for a poor sinner like me.

I would like to have literature pertaining to the Old Baptists, especially Minutes from all associations, and old copies of the Signs, Lone Pilgrim and other papers.

May the Lord continue to enable the publishers and editors to print a paper that contends for the doctrine that has identified the church for ages.

Yours in hope of continued mercy,
W.D. Griffin

MOVED OR MOVING?

To assure you of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6 / 89
IT EXPIRES WITH THE ISSUE.

ST. JOHN 15 : 1 - 5

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

BETHEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Bethel Primitive Baptist Church was built in 1824 which is the present building . The church group actually came into existence August 1805 . It was founded by Joel Preston, Joseph Pedigo and Wilson Turner . Some of the first records were destroyed by fire . Available records of regular church meetings date from October 30 , 1899 . When Elder A .B . Philpott was moderator followed by Elders J .C . Martin , Randolph Perdue , J .A . Brooks and James R . Hollandsworth . The present Moderator is our beloved Elder Junior Conner .

Meeting time is first Sunday each month at 11:00 A .M . and Saturday before at 2:30 P .M . Communion service first Sunday in July each year year . The church is located two miles East of Glade Hill , Va . on State Rt . 834 and 674 .

PSALMS 25 : 8 - 14

Good and upright is the Lord : therefore will he teach sinners in the way .

The meek will he guide in judgment : and the meek will he teach the way .

All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies .

For thy name 's sake , O Lord , pardon mine iniquity ; for it is great .

What man is he that feareth the Lord ? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose .

His soul shall dwell at ease ; and his seed shall inherit the earth .

The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him ; and he will shew them his covenant .

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

CIRCULAR ADDRESS

By Elder J.A. Lee
Ebenezer Baptist Association
Wilcox County, Ala.
1858

The Ebenezer Association of Primitive Baptists now in session, to the several churches of which she is composed, sendeth greeting:

Dear Brethren. The revolving wheel of time has brought us together again in an associate capacity and according to a long established custom, you doubtless expect from us a circular address.

We therefore invite your attention to a portion of scripture recorded in First Corinthians, 13th Chapter, 13th and last verse. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity. Paul, the Gentile preacher, was the speaker of our subject. He was once a vile persecutor of the Church and thought that he was doing God's service, but the Lord, in his mercy, showed him better by calling him when on his way to Damascus to an account of what he was doing. When a radical change was wrought in his heart and the eye of his understanding being opened, he arose and was baptized, and after receiving meat and being strengthened, he preached Jesus, that he was the very Christ.

Paul's mission to preach was from Heaven and his field of labor was among the Gentiles and that which was mighty in Peter, to the circumcision, was mighty in Paul to the uncircumcision. For the Lord gave a large increase to his word. It was good seed sown in a well prepared soil. Paul was the planter and Apollo the waterer, but the increase alone came from God. Paul was a co-worker with God and the result was that the churches were built up, the ordinances were administered, sundry admonitions given, and a faithful exposition of doctrine made.

Our text is his concluding remarks upon the three ruling Christian graces, faith, hope and charity. Faith is the exercise of the mind in a correct knowledge and thorough persuasion of the truth as it is in Jesus. When the Centurion came to our Savior and asked him to go and heal his servant that was at home sick of the palsy, the Savior said he would go but the Centurion said that he was not worthy that Christ should come under his roof, but to speak the word and his servant would be healed, and remarked further and said, that he had servants under him and he said to one go, and he went, to another come, and he came, &C, which, when our Savior had heard, he remarked and said, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. The gist of the above is that the Centurion had an unbounded confidence in the sovereignty and power of Christ over all manner of diseases, everywhere and at the same time.

Again, when Christ and his disciples were crossing the lake to the country of the Gadarenes, there

arose a storm upon the lake that blew so furiously that their lives were in danger , and in their fright the disciples ran to Jesus who was lying in the hinder part of the ship asleep and awoke him, saying, Master, we perish ! The Savior arose , rebuked the wind and said to his disciples , Why are you so fearful? and for their fearfulness , reproves them for a want of faith, saying, How is it that ye have no faith? We think Christians may learn a very important lesson from the two cases above named - first , to repose all confidence in God ; secondly , though providence should appear to frown upon us, not betray a distrustfulness of the wisdom thereof but study a more faithful discharge of the duties involving on us as the professed followers of Christ . Paul , to the Hebrews , tells us that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, and that without faith it is impossible to please God, that Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness .

The fruits of faith are plainly set forth in the character and lives of Abel , of Enoch , of Noah , of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob and a host of ancient worthies , who all died in faith and should serve as an example for us for that which was written aforetime was written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope .

Faith comes by hearing , and hearing by the word of God and in order to a true and evangelical faith, implantation of the grace of God in the heart is necessary . Such an implantation produces a complete change in the soul, and so complete is the change that light takes the place of darkness and life takes the place of death , or in other words , that which was darkness becomes light and that which was dead becomes alive . The Scriptures represent this change as a new birth , being born again, a deliverance from the power of darkness and a translation into the kingdom of God's dear Son in whom there is now a saving belief which we shall denominate faith and which is now the act of the creature and by which the creature is actually justified .

But as faith is not always in lively exercise , the Christian grace of hope is given .

In all the works of God there is a great display of wisdom but in none of his works do we behold a greater display of wisdom than in the care and provision that he has made for his people while upon their pilgrimage in this world .

Hope is a confident expectation of something good (no man wants to be unhappy at any time and much less at or after death) . Happiness is the great disseration of all men ; if sick, we hope to get well; if poor, we hope to get rich ; in a word, if at any time we find our conditions are not such as we desire, we hope at some future day to attain our desire . The hope of the Christian is by means of the Gospel ; it is called the hope of the Gospel and is founded on gospel promises .

Hope is the helmet of Salvation . A helmet is a kind of cap for the protection of the warrior 's head in time of battle; the helmet of hope for

the Christian is for his protection in time of trouble , dire affliction or persecution, and although the saints have a strong assurance of a blest home beyond the grave, yet it is not so strong as to do away with the necessity of hope . The assurance the saints have may be increased or diminished just in proportion to their faithfulness or unfaithfulness in the discharge of any known duty . Behold . I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him and he with me. Again, if a man love me he will keep my words and my Father will love him and we will come unto him and make our abode with him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

But as a trial of the Christian 's faith is more precious than gold, God has seen fit at times to veil his lovely face and for disobedience the Christian is left to grope in the dark. The cares of this life have much to do in drawing the Christian off into forbidden paths. When all absorbed in the immoderate pursuit of worldly objects , the heart becomes hard , the zeal grows cold, and ere the soul is aware it has lost, to a considerable extent , its taste for religious ser - vices such as singing, prayer, reli - gious conversations - in fact , the whole train of religious duties are observed more through form than heartfelt desire . But the Christian eventually wakes up , his backslid - den state comes up vividly before him, the sight of which is painful and mortifying . Gloom shrouds the mind , the scriptures are searched for evidence of individual accept - ance with God, the characteristics of the Christian are therein marked out, and his path made plain, the spirit is now willing but the flesh is weak. A desire takes form but how we find not , anxiety increases , doubt of conversion or regeneration come in rapid succession ; all confidence is lost in the flesh , and if God is worshipped it is alone in the spirit. But the storm increases, the clouds thicken,

> A professor long I have been,
> But fear I 've never been
> cleansed from sin.

Many serious and solemn meditations I have had - many tears have I shed , but Esau shed tears . I have been baptized and so was Simon Magus; have partaken of the Lord's supper and so did Judas . I have believed , and so do the Devils . I hope, but it may be the hope of the hypocrite which shall perish . But amidst this dark and gloomy cloud, the Christian soul has an anchor, and that anchor is hope, and thank God, it is both sure and steadfast and although it be upon the rough sea of doubts and fears, or upon the broad ocean of fiery persecution , where the lightnings of cruelty flash , the thunder of anathemas roll and when the winds of oppression blow , the Christian's lot should be cast, yet is he not lost - neither sinks he into despair for the good hope that he has through grace will keep his head above the billows of time , and sustain him while crossing the river of death.

Having considered the two first propositions of our text , we come now to speak of the third and last

proposition , to wit : the abiding of Charity . John tells us that God is love, the truth of which all men must admit . We judge that men are compassionate and merciful, not for what they do for one , two or three men , but from what they do for all men, both friends and foes: hence, when men open their treasures and deal out to the needs of all, we call them charitable . Now, let us take a hasty view of what God has done for man. Man is the creature of God. He was made not as he is now, but in a state of moral rectitude . In the garden of Eden he was beautifully supplied with everything for his peace and happiness, but man kept not his first estate . He fell and became a transgressor under the righteous law of God and in the absence of love , would have been hurled into a state of eternal death. But God spared him , though he turned him out of the garden, to get his bread by the sweat of his face , and for his sake , the earth was cursed and brought forth briars and thorns .

Men , through all ages of the world , have been rebels against God . They have despised his law , rejected his counsel , stoned his prophets , killed his Son , and counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing . But God has not only borne with the manners of wicked men, but he has blessed them with a bountiful supply of everything to make them comfortable and happy in this life, and far above all this, he saves them with an everlasting salva vation beyond the grave . He saves them not in their sins, but from their sins, and that, too, according to the strictest principles of justice . God saves men according to a purpose and plan of his own, and such is the nature of his plan and purpose, that though all men are not saved, yet all men are left without excuse .

God has made communications to man from quite an early period of the world- first by angels; second by men; third and last, by his son whom he hath appointed heir of all things. God speaks to man now by the Gospel of his Son, he commissions men to preach its sublime truths and in the gospel message , men are commanded to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

But the heart of man is corrupt - his soul is contaminated with sin, but God, by his grace, regenerates and creates it anew in Christ. Old things pass away and behold all things become new . (No more strangers and foreigners , but fellow citizens with the Saints and household of God). Thus the heart is made new by grace and becomes the locality of the charity spoken of in our text which is no more nor less than a gracious principle imparted to men in regeneration. It is the greatest of the three ruling Christian graces, in that without it the others would be impossible.

When , therefore , the heart of man is renewed by grace, we natu - rally look for fruits corresponding thereto. A man, however, may give all his goods to feed the poor and he may give his body to be burned, and still be destitute of charity. Such was the gist of Paul 's reasoning on the subject.

But we hold it to be utterly impossible for a man who is renewed

by grace to be uncharitable, that is, to withhold his donations from the poor and the needy.

Charity suffereth long and is kind; the charitable man bears long the faults and foibles of his brother, and from the kindness of his heart, he is disposed to look over and pass by the faults of even his enemies. The Christian cannot be otherwise than kind. Acts of kindness will characterise him in all the relations of life, as husband, he will be faithful and affectionate; as father, kind and admonitory; as master, just and equal; and as neighbor, courteous and kind. From the above, we deduce the following: 1 st A christian will not be an abuser of his wife. 2. He will not be a discarder of his children. 3. He will not withhold a full supply of food and raiment from his servants. 4. He will not be a churlish and unaccommodating neighbor.

Charity envieth not. The Christian envies no one for what he is, what he has or what he may obtain. There is a principle in man to envy his neighbor, 1. perhaps for his large fortune, 2. For some particular piece of property, 3. for his intelligence, 4. for the high and honorable position he holds in society, but such is not the case with the Christian.

Charity vaunteth not itself - is not puffed up. The Christian boasts not of what he has done, what he can do or what he will or intends to do, neither of what he has had, what he has now or what he may obtain. 1. The Christian knows that tis God who gives him his being, 2. That God is the author of his hope, 3. That tis God that spares his life, 4. He knows all and everything that he has now, ever has had or ever will have was given, is given and will be given him from God; hence the impossibility of his being puffed up.

Charity doth not behave itself unseemly. The Christian behavior must be in keeping with that of our Savior. 1. He must be obedient. If it is his duty to preach, he must preach. It would be very unseemly for him to set himself up against the will of God and the judgment of the Church. If he is set apart to the office of deacon, he must not disdain to serve but ascertain how deacons did anciently and act accordingly. If it is your duty to pray, be certain to try, for a servant behaves very unseemly, not to ask his master for that upon which he subsisted and that too that he could not possibly obtain anywhere else. If it is your duty to exhort, be sure and do so and think not that because you can exhort, that you must preach. If it is your duty to sing (and doubtless it is the duty of church members to try) be sure and buy a hymn book for yourself, your wife and your children and provide a few copies for the use of your friends when they come to your church, and always be at the church time enough to sing one good song at least before preaching commences. If you find it to be your duty to help settle difficulties that may chance to be among your brethren, lay aside all your private preferences and as a good servant of the Church put your shoulder to the wheel and work for the peace of Zion. If it is your duty to administer to the poor and needy, and you fail to do it, how dwells the love of God in you?

If it is your duty to pay your preacher (and all must know that it is) let not the negroe that was bought, the land that was purchased the late cold spring , the bad stand of cotton, the storm, the drouth, the worm , and consequently a short crop, keep you from doing it, for it is very strange for a church to receive the ministrations from her pastor , from month to month and from year to year and not reciprocate . Such behavior is very unseemly .

It is very unbecoming and improper that through the coldness and tightness of the Church, the word of God should be bound . Seeketh not her own , is not easily provoked , thinketh no evil . 2 . The Christian must be self - denying , 3 . slow to anger , not allowing himself thrown into a fit of madness by every trifle that may cross his path . 4 . He must not surmise or think evil in advance . Rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoice in the truth . 5 . Neither by word nor action lend air nor give encouragement in the smallest degree to anything that is immoral or that would reflect discredit upon the truth of God or his institution upon earth but to approbate , encourage , support and help to maintain everything that will give encouragement and force to God 's truth . Beareth all things , believeth all things , hopeth all things , endureth all things . 6 . to bear all and everything that God , in his word or providence , sees fit to lay upon you . 7 . To believe the scriptures to be the word of God - a plain declaration of his will , and a sufficient rule of faith and practice . 8 . Never presume to steady the ark of God ; doubt not the wisdom of his providence . Never faulter (sic) in adversity and though your ranks be thin , if your warfare is righteous , hold up your heads - take encouragement and hope to the end . 9 . Should you be called to suffer, either from bodily afflictions , family affliction , adverse fortune , public calamity , or cruel edicts from kings , potentates , or heads , endure all things and bear hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ .

Dear Brethren , we are now done . We submit this , our circular address , to you as from a creature , to its sovereign not presuming to advise you prematurely upon any subject touching your internal affairs, only, as a child might dare to commense and advise with its parents upon things for the general good of the family. May the Lord give you grace to enable you to occupy till he shall come .

Farewell .

B . Lloyd , Moderator
L .B . Moseley , Clerk

Circular Address by Elder John A . Lee , Pastor , Bethsaida Church , Wilcox County, given at Sweetwater Church, Butler (Crenshaw) County.

PSALM 28 : 7 - 9

The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth ; and with my song will I praise him .

The Lord is their strength, and he is the saving strength of his anointed.

Save thy people , and bless thine inheritance : feed them also , and lift them up for ever .

" For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities , nor powers , nor things present , nor things to come , nor height , nor depth , nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God ."

How beautiful and how full of encouragement Brother Beebe, is the above quotation to the heart- broken sinner. It has occurred to my mind so frequently in times of darkness , of distress , and of difficulty, that I have been led to admire it as among the brightest passages of Holy Writ , and often to rejoice in the consolations hereof. It is one of those passages that has buoyed up my drooping spirits in the hour of temptation and fiery trial , when the powers of darkness have assailed my quivering faith, and attempted to undermine my steadfastness on the rock of ages. Often when the clouds of doubt have hung around my head — when the Lord has appeared to retire behind his pavillion of love , and dropped the curtain before my beclouded vision — when I have been left to wander and grope in the darkness, of coldness, of barreness and of little zeal, and have began to conclude that mine is a gone case — that I have been under a delusion , and have been following cunningly devised fables — that I have no interest in Christ the Saviour, even if there be a Christ to save; then, even then , my Brother , has it often been the case that the above words of consolation have burst in upon the dark and benighted faculties of my mind , like the penetrating beams of a noon - days Sun , lighted up all within me like a candle shining in a dark place , and again and again established my goings forth in the Lord .

And often have I learned to know thereby that all is well and will be well with us , if we are but rooted and grounded in the faith of God's elect; if we are chosen of the Lord, and are precious in his sight ; if we have in deed and in truth been built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets , Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone .

I have been led further to think on the excellency of the above quotation , when I look around me and see how that same amazing ' love of God ,' constraining many valiant soldiers of the Cross to stand up boldly in defence of the Gospel of the Son of God , counting all things loss and their lives not dear unto themselves , so that they may fight the good fight of faith and finish their course with joy . Few things have been more pleasing to me than (in attention to that of those with whom I am personally acquainted ,) to see the boldness the freedom , and zeal exhibited in the Letters of many of your correspondents from the east , from the west , from the north , and from the south , who rise up in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, and who in the true language of Israel , unmixed with that of Ashdod or any other nation , expose the superstition and hypocracy of the age — who cry aloud and spare not the deceitful works of iniquity, and who cease not to protest in the name of the most high against the innovations at this day made upon the solid and sublime principles of God 's plan of

Redemption.

These things I say, Brother Beebe, have a strong tendency with others, to sound the note of encouragement in my ear, to hear from such of God's people through the medium of the 'Signs,' and discover in many places where we thought the Lord had not a people, there His people spring up even if they are few and stand as ornaments to the Church of Christ. It appears then again, I am not entirely separated from the 'love of God in Christ Jesus the Lord' in this particular, because I am comforted and consoled, and conceive that he has visited me and increased my confidence in establishing a means whereby the children of His Kingdom, can hear from and talk to one another, and assist in building up each other in the most holy faith, notwithstanding the many hundred miles that may intervene, or the many geographical difficulties that may be in the way of their associating together, and seeing each other face to face on this side the bank of Jordon.

Your, in Love,
C.B. HASSELL

"For thou, O God, hast proved us; thou hast tried us, as silver is tried."— Psalm lxvi. 10.

The Lord's dealings with his people in the wilderness are very much to this purpose and to this end — to prove them, and to know what is in their hearts. Has the Lord implanted life in your soul? Has he touched your conscience with his finger? Has he begun a work of grace upon your heart? If so, in your travels through this wilderness there will be things from time to time to prove the reality of this work upon your soul. You will have temptations; now, when temptation comes, it will prove whether you have the fear of God in your soul to stand against the temptation, or whether you fall under the temptation; or, if you fall under the temptation, whether you are ever recovered out of it. And if you are a living soul, the Lord will keep bringing circumstance upon circumstance, event upon event, one thing after another; and all these things, as they come upon you, shall be made to prove whether the fear of God be in your soul or not. Now, if the fear of God be not in a man's heart, he must decline, he must fall away. Satan will be more than a match for every one except God's own family; sin will overcome and destroy every one but those whose sins are pardoned through atoning blood and dying love; and the world, sooner or later, will overcome every one who has not the faith of God's elect whereby alone the world is overcome. Thus the Lord, in his mysterious dealings (and how mysterious his dealings are!) proves the reality of the work of grace in every heart where that work is begun, and proves the hypocrisy of all who have but a name to live while their soul is dead before God.

J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Shepherd Fold Church
Houston , Texas
January 28 , 1989

Pursuant to a call by Shepherd Fold Baptist Church for a presbytery to meet on the above date for the purpose of the ordaination of Brothers O .P . Murphy and Marvin Curnutt as deacons of Shepherd Fold Baptist Church .

The following Elders and deacons met and organized themselves into a presbytery :

Elders David Harell, Jimmy Hamrick, C.M. Haygood, C.C. Morris, W W .M . Burkhalter , G .D . Shipman .

Deacons Raymond Haygood , Charles Hatchett , Frank Richards .

The presbytery elected Elder C C .M . Haygood , Moderator ; Elder Jimmy Hamrick , Clerk .

The Moderator called for candidates whereupon spokesman, Elder Haygood, presented the candidates to the presbytery .

After due examination of the candidates as to their qualifications as deacons of Shepherd Fold Baptist Church :

1 . A motion was made and seconded that we continue the ordination .

2 . The presbytery selected Elder Morris to word the prayer and Elder Haygood to deliver the charge . The ordination was then conducted by the laying on of hands and with prayer by Elder Morris . The charge was delivered by Elder Haygood from 1 Timothy 3:8 in which both deacons were most attentive and appeared to depend on God's grace to fulfill their duties .

3 . Deacons O .P . Murphy and Marvin Curnutt were then delivered back to the church by the Presbytery and received by the church by motion and second .

4 . The right hand of official fellowship was given Deacon O .P . Murphy and Deacon Marvin Curnutt by the members of the presbytery , also the right hand of fellowship was given by Shepherd Fold Church members , visiting brethren and friends .

5 . A motion was made that the moderator and clerks prepare minutes of presbytery presenting each candidate a copy , sending a copy to Signs of the Times and preserving one copy for records of Shepherd Fold Baptist Church records .

6 . Minutes of presbytery read and approved and the presbytery dissolved in order with prayer by Elder David Harrell .

Moderator , C .M . Haygood
Clerk , Jimmy Hamrick

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Laurel Ridge Church

Pursuant to the request of Laurel Ridge Church , a presbytery met Saturday , Jan . 14 , 1989 at Laurel Ridge Church , for the examination of Brother William Tuggle Conner (W .T .) if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God , at the satis -

faction and discretion of their judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Minister.

The solemity was begun with prayer by Elder C.B. Davis. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders: Leonard J. Brammer; Willard Cox; Jr. Conner; Raymond Goad; C.B. Davis; Thomas Solomon; Marvin Brumfield; Kenneth Key; Lane Carter; Noel Conner; Larry Hollandsworth; Carl Terry.

Deacons present were as follows: Woody Young; G.W. Conner; Jessie Tyree; Clyde Johnson; W.T. Conner; Grover Simones; Andrew Agee; Jr. Agee (Donald); C.T. Abshire; H.D. Ingram; Grey Ingram; Hassell Hale; Bobby Bernard; Ed Dyer; Jamie Cooper; Hansil Conner Lonzie Nichols; Coley Strader; Carlton Aker.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Leonard J. Brammer as moderator, and Brother Jamie E. Cooper as clerk. Elders Kenneth Key; Raymond Goad was chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate. Having been duely appointed by Laurel Ridge Church in conference Dec. 17, 1988. Brother G.W. Conner as spokesman for the church, delivered Brother William Tuggle (W.T.) Conner to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elders Kenneth Key, Cash Terry, Raymond Goad, Jr. Conner; Lane Carter, Thomas Solomon, Larry Hollandsworth, C.B. Davis; Noel Conner; Willard Cox; L.J. Brammer, and Marvin Brumfield. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination, and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands, with the Ordination prayer being delivered to the candidate by Elder Larry Hollandsworth. The charge was delivered to the candidate by Elder Willard Cox using Scriptural reference 2nd Timothy, Chapter 2.

The Moderator asked Laurel Ridge Church if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Elder W.T. Conner, and the right hand of fellowship and Brotherhood given. The ordained Elder was delivered back to the Church as an Ordained Elder, (MINISTER) of The Old School Primitive Church at Laurel Ridge Church. The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and approved. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Junior Conner.

Leonard J. Brammer, Moderator
Jamie E. Cooper, Clerk

Signatures of Ministers present:
Elder Willard Cox
Elder C.B. Harris, Jr.
Elder Larry Hollandsworth
Elder Carl E. Terry
Elder Thomas Solomon
Elder Raymond Goad
Elder Lane Carter
Elder Kenneth R. Key, Sr.
Elder Marvin Brumfield
Elder Junior L. Conner
Elder Leonard J. Brammer
Elder Noel F. Conner

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 1989

Mr.& Mrs. J.H. O'Bryant, NC...2.00
Mrs. Nannie P. Arrington, VA...5.00
Tommy Wall, VA 2.00
Mrs. Harry McNelia, MD 2.00
Hester M. Dawson, CA 5.00
Mrs. Leola Meador, NC 2.00
Sanford R. Fanning, TN 2.00
Whitney Mobley, NC 10.00
Mrs. Verta Haning, WV 10.00
Mrs. Isobel A. Dickinson, MI ...7.00
Mrs. Cliff Weaver, WA 15.00
T.E. Hall, NC 2.00
Mrs. Cloma McLaughlin, TX....7.00
O.P. Murphy, TX 100.00
Andrew C. Agee, VA 2.00
R.C. May, VA 2.00
L.D. Conner, VA 7.00
Mrs. E.J. Sutherland, VA ... 2.00
Mrs. Edith Sewell, FL 2.00
Mrs. Pearl A. Law, VA 5.00
Mrs. Fannie D. Wiles, VA ... 5.00
T.I. Griffin, VA
In Memory of Dad 50.00
In Memory of Elder W.D. Griffin
Mrs. Myra Renfroe, AL 5.00
Little Hope Church, AL 25.00
Tim Bobo, AL 20.00
Eld. D.R. Cabbage, TN 7.00

PROVERBS 7 : 1 - 3

My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee.

Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye.

Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart.

OBITUARIES

LUCILLE HARRISSON BRADLEY

With much sadness in my heart, I will attempt to write a few words in memory of my dear beloved Sister Lucille Harrisson Bradley, who passed from this life February 24, 1989. She was born August 12, 1923 in Edgecombe County, Whitakers, North Carolina.

She was the daughter of the late Robert Ernest and Lovie King Adcock. Surviving are her husband Richard C. Bradley, Route 1, Whitakers, North Carolina, one Son Richard H. Bradley and one grand-daughter Rebecca Lee Bradley of Pittsboro, North Carolina. Four sisters, Mrs. Minnie Hux, Mrs. Amber Bryan both of Rocky Mount, North Carolina, Mrs. Edith Brantley of Durham, North Carolina and Mrs. Lovie A. Thompson, Warrenton, North Carolina Rt. 1.

She joined Williams Primitive Baptist Church the third Sunday in August 1947, and was baptized by her Pastor Elder Julius Moore of Whitakers, North Carolina. She was a faithful member and attended her meetings regular. She loved her Church, Sisters, Brethren and Friends; each meeting day she would always fix her meals, to ask them home with her. She enjoyed their visits, setting around hearing them talk about great things the Lord does for His people, singing those

old Hymns of Zion. She was a good wife and a loving mother. Her health began to fail, and the last two years she lived, she was bed ridden. But she never gave up hope of returning back to her church. She would get out of bed and get dressed, then she could not go. She bore her afflictions of many months with much patience and without murmuring the prayers of her brethren were most comforting. She fought a good fight, was reconciled to her illness. I feel we have been greatly blessed of God to have had fellowship with such a wonderful Sister. She is greatly missed by her sisters, family and church friends. May those of us that mourn our great loss be reconciled to God 's will, who never makes a mistake.

Written by her sister who loved her and misses her very much.

Lovie A. Thompson

SISTER BEATRICE FRENCH

Sister French was called home by her Lord on December 6, 1988. She was the daughter of the late George R. and Sally Carroll Cobb. Left to mourn her are her husband, Brother Reuben French, her daughter, Barbara Bolden, three sons, Donnie, Rick, and David, two brothers, George Cobb, Jr. and Thomas M. Cobb, and nine grandchildren. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Kenneth Key.

Sister Bea, as she was affectionately known, joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on July 26, 1952 and was baptized by her former pastor, Elder David Spangler. The scripture, which comes to mind when thinking of her is found in I John 3 : 14, " We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." She was truly a mother in Israel. Her home was always a warm, welcome haven for the Lord 's people from both far and near. The Lord blessed her to give a drink of water in His name to many of His little ones. And yet we know that if she could speak now, she would not take any of the credit unto herself, but rather would witness with Paul in Romans 7 : 18, " For I know that in me (that is in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Her theme would be that it was God working in her " both to will and to do of his good pleasure." As her son mentioned after her passing, she was blessed with many friends outside of the Church and yet she never backed down or offered any apologies to those who would make uncomplimentary remarks about her beliefs but was rather blessed to stand firm.

Her warmth, her willing hands, and the love for her brethren which was always so evident in her countenance will be sorely missed by us all. And yet we feel that she could say with Paul, in II Timothy 4 : 7,8, " I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith: Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only,

but unto all them also that love his appearing."

May the family and loved ones be blessed not to dwell on the sorrow of their loss but rather on the memories of the warm, gentle life she lived in Christ. My heart goes out to them all especially Brother Reuben and her son, David, who was one of my closest childhood friends. May the kind, gentle Shepherd fill the aching void in their hearts and lives and bless them to know that He is their strength in time of need and that His everlasting arms are ever underneath bearing them up. Our prayer is that our precious brother might feel, on those quiet, lonely evenings, the presence of the blessed Saviour, who can be touched by the feeling of our infirmities.

Humbly submitted,
Mary Hawkins

SISTER ELLEN McKINNEY

The gracious heavenly father, who doeth all things well, saw fit to remove from this life our beloved sister Ellen McKinney on January 7, 1989.

She was born June 9, 1912, to the late Susan Davis and Emery Stanley, Sr.

On March 28, 1936, Ellen Samantha Stanley was married to Claude Wharton McKinney who survives. Also, one sister Ruby Haynes of Southerland, Va., one brother Will Stanley of Ruffin, N.C.

She was united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in June 1976 and was baptized by her pastor Elder D.V. Spangler.

She loved her church and attended service as long as she was able.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Kenneth Key and Elder Haywood Wray. She was laid to rest in Dan River Church cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

May the Lord reconcile the bereaved to His will, and enable them to say, "the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

Written by one who loved her.

Ruby McGuire

ELDER W.D. GRIFFIN
Former Associate Editor of the Signs

In rememberance of Elder W.D. Griffin who the Lord saw fit to call home from the cares and sorrows and tribulations of this world. He was a wonderful person who preached the Doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God through the shed blood of Jesus Christ his only begotten son, and held on to this sound doctrine until his recent death. I will miss him very much. But would not call him back for we feel that he is now at rest in Christ. The Primitive Baptist Church at Bordeaux in Nashville, Tennessee, in loving rememberance of Dear Elder Griffin are sending to the Signs of the Times, a donation by check of $100.00.

Written and submitted by the church clerk.

Rebecca Moon

Signs of the Times

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POEM

Thy way, O God! is in the sea;
Thy paths I cannot trace;
Nor comprehend the mystery
Of thy unbounded grace.

Here the dark veils of flesh and sense
My captive soul surround;
Mysterious deeps of Providence
My wondering thoughts confound.

When I behold thy awful hand
My earthly hopes destroy,
In deep astonishment I stand,
And ask the reason, why?

As through a glass, I dimly see
The wonders of thy love;
How little do I know of thee,
Or of the joys above!

'Tis but in part I know thy will;
I bless thee for the sight;
When will thy love the rest reveal,
In glory's clearer light?

With rapture shall I then survey
Thy providence and grace;
And spend an everlasting day
In wonder, love and praise.

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EDITORIAL

PROVERBS 16:9

" A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps."

This is a subject that has been on my mind for quite some time, and now I feel a desire to write something concerning it. My hope is that this is of the Lord, and I pray that he will guide my every thought. There is always some doubt in my mind, even though I know that the bible says, " The preparations of the heart and the answer of the tongue is of the Lord." This doubt is there as a thorn in my flesh — that I be not exalted. I cannot say that I know the Lord is leading me in anything spiritual, but I believe that I have been given a sweet hope that it is so. As I look back over my life I see many things that cause me to believe as I do. I have no desire to bore you with details, but I know there have been many forks in the road that I have walked. More often than not I have desired to follow the path of least resistance, the paths of lusts of the flesh, but was prevented from doing so many times; and I have been given reason to rejoice in that. On the occasions when I did follow after the flesh I was given often to regret it it. My desire, if I know my heart, is to thank God for every road that I have walked — both good and bad. This may sound unusual to some, but please let me explain. When I walk after the desires of the flesh and then have my heart condemn me, have I not been given a new heart? for the old one never condemned me. Has the Holy Spirit not entered into me? Before I was given this sweet hope in Christ, (as I hope), I followed after the flesh and it bothered me not at all; but now my sins are very grievous. Those who have not been awakened and made to see that they are condemned sinners before a just and holy God are not bothered by their sins. They may say, " Yes, I know that I am a sinner, but—", and that is about all they know. They feel no remorse, nor do they repent: they are still dead in trespasses and sin.

I believe, as did Paul, that I am the chief of sinners; but Christ came into the world to save sinners, not the righteous: and because I have

been made to know that I am a sinner — I am not proud , but ashamed — and because I have felt the rod of God's chastisement — for whom he loveth he chasteneth — it gives me a little hope that I am one for whom Christ shed his precious blood .

I had not intended to write of my own experiences , but I have written what came to my mind , and will continue to do so if the Lord will so bless me . I would like now to set forth some of the experiences of God 's chosen people that should show beyond reasonable doubt that God directs the steps of man and is in complete control of all things and events .

I am sure that most , if not all of you , know the story of Joseph , therefore I will try to be brief as possible and set forth only the main points . To me Joseph was a figure of Jesus Christ , and Christ is set forth in beautiful types and shadows . Both were loved of their fathers and hated by their brothers who sought to kill them .

God gave Joseph a dream , and when he revealed this dream to his brothers they hated him even more , for it showed that they would some day have to bow down to Joseph . They sought to slay him when he visited them while they tended sheep in the fields ; but Ruben delivered him from this and he was placed in a pit . At that time a company of Ishmaelites came by on their way to Egypt , and Joseph was sold to them as a slave . Those Ishmaelites were not there by chance , for God had directed them there for the purpose of delivering Joseph into Egypt . (Was not Paul delivered to Rome according to God 's purpose in an unusual manner ?). Joseph 's brothers tried to hide their sins (don 't we all ?) from their father by putting blood on his coat of many colors and telling his father that he had been slain by a wild beast .

Joseph was delivered to Egypt where he spent much time as a servant and in prison . Then at the appointed time of God he was given to interpret the dream of Pharaoh . The dream showed there would be seven good years of harvest followed by seven bad years . Pharaoh was greatly pleased , and he made Joseph ruler over all that he had . The seven good years came to pass and Joseph built great storehouses and stored the aboundant harvests . Then came the seven years of drouth and famine , and the people became famished . Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt and he sent his ten sons to buy corn . It was then that Joseph 's dream came to pass ; his brothers bowed down to him . He knew them , but they knew him not . He charged them with being spies and put them in ward together for three days . His brothers talked together in his presence , not knowing that he understood what they said . They admitted their guilt concerning him and believed this great distress was brought upon them because of their sin . Joseph understood and he turned himself about and wept . Did not Jesus do the same ? Yet Joseph filled their sacks with corn , and restored their money in the sacks , (showing that the corn of God cannot be bought), and gave

them provision for the way. Does not Christ feed his brethren corn from on high? Does he not give them provision for the way? Is there ever any charge for it? If there was, we would have nothing to pay with. No, though we may try to buy corn we cannot; for it is always freely given unto the needy: " yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."

Joseph kept one of the brothers in bonds, however, until the others should return again and bring their younger brother, Benjamin. They told their father all that had befell them, and when they opened their sacks of corn they found their money and were greatly afraid. " And Jacob said unto them, Me ye have bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me." Do we not complain the same way when we face trials, tribulations, afflictions, or persecutions? Yes, we do; even though we are told in the scriptures that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are the called according to his purpose. In time, however, Jacob would see that all these things that he supposed were working against him were actually working for his good. His son Joseph was alive and he would see him again before he would die.

Joseph gave his brothers beasts and wagons and provisions, after that he had revealed himself to them, and told them to bring their little ones and their wives and their father into Egypt; and this they did. God spake to Israel in a vision of the night, saying, " I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: and I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes."

When his brothers sold Joseph they did it with evil intent, but they were none-the-less accomplishing the purpose of God, as Joseph told them later: " But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive."

Christ came into the world to save his people, but he was also hated, despised, rejected, and slain upon the cross. He was delivered by the determinate counsel of God, but it was by wicked hands that he was crucified and slain. " For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Heriod, and Pontius Pilate, and the people of Israel, were gathered, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Their acts were evil, but God meant it for good.

Many years before Israel and all his family went into Egypt God had told Abraham that it would be so. " And God spake on this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years. And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God; and after that shall they come forth, and serve me in this place."

In the first years of their sojourn in Egypt God blessed them and they multiplied and grew strong. Then

King Pharaoh died, and another king arose, which did not know Joseph, and he treated them evil and made them slaves just as God had said. The king was afraid of the Israelites: he feared that they would grow so strong as to take his kingdom away. Therefore he told the Hebrew mid-wives to kill all the new born sons, but they feared God more than the king and did not kill the children. Then Pharaoh charged all the people to cast every new born son into the river. It was during this period of time that Moses was born. He was hidden for a while, but, as you know, he was found in the river by Pharaoh's daughter and she raised him up as her own son, and he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. All of this, of course, was in the plan and purpose of God to deliver his children from bondage as he had told Abraham that he would. The people rejected Moses, saying, Who made thee a ruler and judge? But this same man did God send to be a ruler and deliverer.

God sent Moses and his brother Aaron to Pharaoh, saying, "Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go that they may serve me." Yet the Lord said that Pharaoh would not let them go because he would harden his heart so that he would not let the people go. This is indeed strange to the natural mind, but yet it was in the purpose of God. I am sure that God could have softened Pharaoh's heart to the extent that he would have let the people go from their bondage even had not he sent Moses; but this would not have demonstrated God's power and made his name to be declared throughout all the earth. "For now I will stretch out my hand that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth. And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth."

God sent his plagues upon all Egypt, and when each plague fell on them Pharaoh promised to let the people go if the plague was removed: but after each was removed God hardened his heart and he would not let the people go. God said to Moses, concerning Pharaoh, "I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might shew these my signs before him: and that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them; that ye may know that I am the Lord."

Not only did God show great signs unto all in that time, but these signs of God's mighty power were to be proclaimed throughout all time. This is comforting to God's chosen people, but it means little or nothing to those who are not.

Pharaoh eventually sent the Israelites out in haste, but only after God had sent his death angel to slay all the first-born of the land — man and beast alike. Four hundred and thirty years had passed, but God had delivered them as he had promised.

Even then did God harden Pharaoh's heart and he pursued after them to bring them back into bondage. When the Israelites saw the Egyptians pursuing them they

were greatly afraid, and complained to Moses . They would have gladly stayed in Egypt or returned there. It is my belief that Egypt represents the world with all of its pleasures , lusts , evil , enticements , etc ., and when God turns his face away from us for a moment, we are immediately drawn by our own fleshly lusts back to Egypt . At least this is my experience .

Moses said unto the people , " Stand still and see the salvation of the lord . Which he will shew you today : for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today , ye shall see no more forever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace ." Yes , Brethren , let us stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. He will deliver : we are weak but he is strong, and he has promised, " I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." What a wonderful promise this is ! Though we forsake him , he will never forsake us .

Moses spake unto the people about the great signs that God had showed them and what he had done to deliver them; and I believe he was speaking to all of God 's chosen people throughout all time : " for all scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof , for correction , for instruction in righteousness ; that the man of God may be perfect , throughly furnished unto all good works ." In Deut . chapter four we read , " Unto thee it was shewed , that thou mightest know that the Lord he is God ; there is none else beside him . Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice , that he might instruct thee : and upon earth he shewed thee his great fire; and thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire ."

Brethren, you have not heard His voice with the natural ear, but unless you are still dead in sin , you have heard his voice , saying , " Come forth ." " For the time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God : and they that hear shall live ." He speaks to you, saying, " This is the way; walk ye in it ." And , " Come out from among them, (idol worshipers) and be ye separate , saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you , and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." " In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men , in slumberings upon the bed ; then he openeth the ears of men , and sealeth their instruction ."

Yes, dear brethren, God speaks to his children; quickening them into life , instructing them , comforting them , directing them . Though we rebel against him at every turn , he never forsakes nor leaves us : His mercy endureth forever. We devise our own way, but God surely directs our steps ; and we will walk in the paths laid out for us , we will run the race that is set before us, as long as we remain in this natural world .

Praise his holy name !

Clifford Wilbanks

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7 / 89
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE .

ARTICLES

The following article is being republished as it appeared in the " Zions Landmark " in December 1980 . It was written by Elder J .M . Mewborn .

Editors

THE RAVEN AND THE DOVE

6 And it came to pass at the end of forty days , that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made:

7 And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth.

8 Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from the face of the ground;

9 But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth; then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark.

10 And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark;

11 And the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf pluckt off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth.

12 And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him anymore. Gen. 8:6-12.

Several members of the church , both brothers and sisters , have recently asked , if I could be so blessed, to pen some of my thoughts on paper concerning the above scripture since I had made the attempt on different occasions to speak concerning this text. In attempting to comply with their request , I would say in the outset that the above scripture relates directly both in type and shadow to the following things contained in the truth and doctrine that, we believe, God has given us , viz :

(1) End of Forty Days , prefiguring or pointing to a specific time of tribulation for the church

(2) Noah , being a figure or type of Christ

(3) Window of the ark , pointing to the " Eye of Faith ,"

(4) The Ark , a type of the church

(5) The Raven, a figure or type of the non-elect or the wicked

(6) The Dove , a figure or type of the elect or the Children of God

(7) Waters that were on the face of the whole earth , representing sin that flowed into and covered all the sea of humanity or Adam and Eve 's posterity after their transgression in the Garden of Eden

(8) First departure and subsequent reentry of the Dove into the ark , prefiguring or pointing to the Church of God under the law , embracing both old world (from Adam to the flood) and the legal world (from the flood to the first coming of Christ), including all the Old Testament division of scripture

(9) Second departure and subsequent reentry of Dove into the ark in the evening , with an olive leaf pluckt off in her mouth , prefiguring or pointing to the Church of God (and the first coming of Christ) in the Gospel Dispensation in the New Testament scripture

(10) Third departure of the Dove,

pointing directly to the second coming of Christ and the final gathering of the saints (those who are alive and remain, as well as those who are asleep) in the first resurrection of the just into heaven itself and immortal glory

In commenting on the forty days period that the ark was upon the waters , I see this period of time as bringing out the relationship between the church and her tribulation here in the world. We must remember His promise , " In the world Ye (His Church) shall have tribulation : but be of good cheer ; I have overcome the world ." John 17:33 . This little ark or ship was raised above the troublesome waters that were on the face of the whole earth , but it was not free from the turbulent, troublesome, waters that surrounded it. All eight souls were safe on board , while her captain, Noah, a figure or type of Christ , looked toward the Heavenly realm for chart and compass. So Christ is our Heavenly Noah who is guiding the Ship of Zion today through this troublesome world of sin and sorrow and finally at last to heaven , her immortal home .

Likewise , the church of God is raised up by the power and Hand of God from beneath the powers of raging , sinful darkness , as it were by faith, to a perfect, tranquil peace that the world knows nothing of . In this sense only is she as " a city that it set on an hill whose light cannot be hid ." Matt . 5:14 .

One blessed thought about the forty unit period , spiritually speaking , is that there is always an end and a subsequent deliverance. There was an end and deliverance to the time (forty days) of the flood , there was an end and deliverance to the forty year period when the children of Israel were in the wilderness , and, likewise, there was an end and deliverance to the forty day period when Jesus was led up the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil .

The Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ gave this language to the church. " The light of the body is the eye : if , therefore , thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light . But if thine eye be evil , thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If, therefore, the light that is in thee be darkness , how great is that darkness ! " Matt. 6:22-23 . As Noah opened the only window of the ark , as mentioned in the first verse of the text above , likewise only the Lord Jesus Christ opens the only spiritual window of the church that His chosen vessels of mercy may behold heavenly and divine things with the single eye of faith. When the window of His church is opened (the new heart of flesh), likewise the window of heaven has already been opened, and " He has poured you out a blessing , that there shall not be room enough to receive it ." Mal . 3:10 . There is no disagreement in this vision , as all see eye to eye . The greatest blessing that we have ever received in this life is the blessing of understanding in the truth. The Lord must open the window of heaven , the window of His church, the eye of faith , before one can behold the beauty that shines forth in the truth, as noted in the above scripture . Carnal vision while attempting to unwrap or interpret inspirational

scripture only avails darkness , and " How great is that darkness ! " Matt. 6:23 .

First, it is very clear from reading the text that we are dealing with two species of birds in the aviary king - dom . The Apostle Paul in Galatians 4:24 makes use of the meaning of the word " Allegory ." An Allegory , according to our understanding, is a veiled presentation in a figurative context , of a meaning metaphori - cally implied but not expressly stated . An Allegory is a prolonged metaphor, in which typically a series of actions (as the sending forth of the Raven and the Dove) are symbol- ic of other actions. Also, an Allegory makes use of certain objects or emblems in the presentation of basic truth . These objects are em - blematic of the truth .

Therefore, the above scripture is most definitely (or undoubtedly) figurative language. Being a believer in the doctrine of absolute predesti - nation , I have to believe that the fall of man in the Garden of Eden in the very beginning of time , like all other events in time , including the en - trance of sin into the world , was in the decree and purpose of God. The Lord said concerning Himself , " I have sworn saying , Surely as I have thought , so shall it come to pass ; and as I have purposed , so shall it stand ." Isa . 14:24 . I would pause here to ask the question : When did God think this thought and when did He decree this purpose, as quoted in this scripture ? The definition of the word " thought " is the power to conceive or realize ; that which is in one's mind; a product of thinking; a judgment , etc . To our understand - ing , God has never had but one thought or one purpose and this is the eternal one that was given by His will in Christ before the creation or foundation of this natural world or universe . He well knew the pre- ordained path of Adam in the Garden of Eden for He had already given His church to His only begotten Son , as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world . Likewise , the Son of God , the Lord and Saviour , Jesus Christ , from the annal meeting that He had with His Father in the Chamber Hall of eternity , knew His preordained path from the place He occupied in the manger in Bethle - hem , Judea , to the place He occu - pied on Golgotha's hill , at Calvary , just outside the gate of Jerusalem , even to the time when " He went up " and two men stood by in white apparel . In Adam were only two component parts, both the elect and the non - elect, but only in the Lamb of God , The Word of God in the beginning that was made flesh , is the only truly , particularly chosen church of God . Both elect and non- elect are related only in the sense that they have sinful flesh and sinful nature . Both Raven and Dove are birds and their relationship to one another is in this natural sense only, but what a contrast is involved when their individual natures and charac - teristics are particularly refined and then compared . We shall look into these individual natures and charac- teristics a little later on in this article.

I see both the Raven and the Dove in type and shadow as pointing to God's purpose in the creation of our forefather and federal head of the human family, Adam. As we have

said, both elect and non- elect alike were in him. God had a purpose in the creation of the elect and non-elect, so He created Adam. All the human family is God's natural creation by generations, but only the Church, the chosen generation (of Jesus Christ) is His by regeneration, or spiritual creation. In Adam are thousands of generations of mankind, but only in the Lord Jesus Christ is there one generation, and one only. This is a chosen generation. That portion of Adam that was not chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world is none other that the non- elect. When Noah sent forth the Raven from the ark, it is the same as representing the creation by God of the non - elect before the world was. The Dove is also the creation of God in His eternal thought and mind, but there is a vastly distinct difference by nature and characteristic between the Raven and the Dove. Paul identified this Spiritual creation when he said, " For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10. Please note that " workmanship " is in the singular, not in the plural.

By strict observation and scrutiny of verse 7 above, the reader will notice that the Raven, once Noah had released it from the ark, " went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth." The door of the ark was kept shut to keep him out by our spiritual Noah, a type of Christ. The non -elect were in Adam and when he fell, they likewise fell in him, never again to return in any semblance or form in hope whatsoever back to the Lord. The Raven never got back into the ark. The door of the ark remained shut as he went forth to and fro. He, like the Anti - Christ, when transformed into an Angel of Light, even as Satan, might try to attempt to enter heaven, but this scripture is too specific in meaning. When the waters dried up from off the earth, the Raven had his home in the muck and mire of the world to live off the corruption and filth, all the corruptible debris and decaying flesh that had been scattered by the flood throughout the earth. The diet of the Raven consists of dead matter, dead fish and frogs, worms, eggs of other birds, and even young birds, all indicating its carnal nature of a bemeaning character. The Raven is a larger black bird and the concentration or quality of degree of its deep-seated color of blackness points to the permanence of the sin of the non-elect. It builds its nest on cliffs, in some instances, indicating the high elevation of the pride of the flesh when it comes to the religion of man and of the world. The Raven 's nest is well built or constructed like the synagogues and temples of the world, with their far- reaching towers and spires, and the female Raven usually lays from three to eight eggs. The family of the Raven, like that of the children of the bondwoman, is much larger than the family of the freewoman. " For the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband." Gal. 4:27. Isaiah substantiates Paul's teaching, " For more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord." Isa. 54:1. Again, let me

emphasize that the Raven never got back into the ark , neither will the non-elect ever come or be brought to Christ in a true, spiritual sense in this world or the world to come . They may make the attempt in their " to and fros ," even as Jesus told the unbelieving Jews, " Ye will not come to me that ye might have life ." John 5:40 . They could not come because the unbeliever, like the Raven in type and shadow, has his home and all of his natural sensual pleasure fulfilled while here in the world . The non-elect were not in that everlasting covenant, made between the Father and the Son before the world was made .

But Jesus did say, " All that the Father giveth me shall come to me ; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out ." John 6:37 . Those that have been with Him in this covenant arrangement for the re - generation of the soul and resurrec - tion of the body will come forth in that final day, in the final consumation of all things at the first resurrection (of the just), and they will hear Him say, " Come , ye blessed of my Father , inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." At this point He will make the separa - tion as promised in Matthew 25:32: " And before Him shall be gathered all nations ; and He shall Separate them one from another, as a shep - herd divideth his sheep from the goats: And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left." Matt. 25:32,33 . In our text the Raven bears the same relationship to the goats (in the end of time) that the Dove comparably bears to the sheep . David said , " The wicked shall be turned into hell." Psa. 9:17 . " The wicked , through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God." Psa. 10:4 . It has been right - fully said , " The wicked know no change ." These scriptures point to the wicked of which the Raven is a type .

Again, by strict observation and indirect contrast of verse 8 in the text above , when Noah sent forth the Dove, it found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned back unto him into the ark. Here is found a most vivid portrayal in exact meaning of John 6:37 , " All that Father giveth me shall come to me ; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out ." " No man can come to me , except the Father which hath sent me draw him." John 6:44 . When did God give His Son the church ? John answers this question , " I pray not for the world." John 17:9 . " I pray for them , then ones thou hast given me." John 17:9 . " I have chosen you Out of the world , therefore , the world hateth you . Because ye are not of the world, it hateth you." The only place that the Father could possibly have given the church, His own Elect, to His Son was in eternity from interpretation of the above scripture . Noah reached out his hand here , as a figure of Christ , " Then he put forth his hand , and took her, and pulled her In unto Him into the ark." Here again is the most vivid , clear picture , pointing to Christ and portraying His Gospel , both figuratively and in reality . His blood (Christ 's blood) made the discriminating difference between the predominating black color of the Raven and the beautiful conservative

color of the lowly Dove.

Let us look now at some of the more outstanding qualities of the nature and characteristics of the Dove. Its body is olive-brown with bluish-gray wings. The bluish characteristic points to the bruising of our Lord and Master, as it was prophisied concerning Him, "He was wounded for our transgression, He was bruised for our iniquities." Isa. 53:5. Any time we have the occurence of a bruise, we likewise have the association of blood. Thus, the perfection of God in power is complete and made manifest when the Dove is setforth as an emblem or symbol of peace, the church. Likewise, the Raven is an emblem of perpetual confusion, completely opposite from the perfect peace that God gives His children.

The dove is a devoted mate, and when it mates, it keeps that same mate for life. The true church will claim only one mate. She claims but one. This oneness is a great characteristic of Christ and His bride, the Church. The church is the bride and Jesus is the bridegroom or husband. Remember the freewoman had the husband, the bondwoman did not, signifying that the Raven may have several different mates at different times in the course of its life here in earth, while the Dove maintains a definite permanent hold to just the one mate. Here is reflected again the oneness of Christ and His bride, the church.

I shall endeavor to make a few more observations in comparing the Dove to the church. It builds a flimsy nest which is usually made of a few sticks and straws placed loosely together. Unlike the Raven which builds its nest on high cliffs in an exalted state, the dove has her home in a low tree, shrub, or hedge. A definite line of comparison may be unequivocally drawn between the construction of our meeting houses today and the construction of the natural home of the Dove. By comparison to the stately home of the Raven, the Dove's nest is said to be the least attractive of all other birds' nests. The church of God, though the most beautiful place on earth to the true believer, is totally unattractive to the world. As we have said previously, the entire family of the dove is never more than two little ones that occupy the home. What did Jesus say in identifying the true Apostolic Church? Answer: "Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Matt. 18:19, 20. Also, "In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established." Matt. 18:16. Remember the scripture where Jesus said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Luke 12:32.

An unusual characteristic of the Dove is its food and manner of eating. Unlike the Raven that feeds upon dead matter, dead fish and frogs, worms, eggs of other birds, and even young birds, the food of the Dove consists of pure small grains, the grain of wheat, living grass and seeds of plants and weeds. When

the parent or mother dove arrives at her nest with the palatable food of the above origin, the baby dove will open its mouth and will receive it. If it is not of the source just described, and even if it is of the right source but has been contaminated, the baby dove will not open its mouth to receive it. The baby dove is given the power of discernment by the blessing of God to know pure food from impure food. So it is with the Child of Grace " whose senses have been exercised to discern both good and evil." Hebs. 5:14. I well remember when I was a small boy on the farm growing up over forty years ago, how I delighted in finding a nest of baby birds and watching them all open their mouths at the slightest sound, expecting to be fed. An ill-mannered playmate of mine, taking advantage of them, the baby birds, would drop most anything in their mouths and they would swallow it. A baby dove will not do this. So it is typical with Christ's church. They will not accept just anything any man wearing the name of a preacher wants to give them and call it spiritual food. The life of the dove is also marked by complete circumspection.

Under the law of Moses, the dove, like the little lamb and sheep, was considered clean and she was used in the sacrificial worship at the direction of God's own Word. See Lev. 12:6, Luke 2:24 and Mark 11:15. Men of the world may make the attempt to sell this truth, as the money changers sat in the temple, selling oxen, sheep and doves, but eventually the Lord will always drive them all out when He has poured out the changers' money and overthrown the tables, as he said, " take these things hence; make not my Father's house of merchandise." John 12:15, 16. The world today, if possible, would make merchandise of you, His church, if they could, but thanks be to His name, they cannot.

The call or song of the dove is one of the most mournful sounds that I have ever heard. The old hymns (especially the old minor tunes that I now hear no more as I did when I was a boy growing up) are completely different from any of those that are sung by the religious orders and denominations of the world. Perhaps we should say that some of the hymns are the same, but the church's manner of singing them is quite different. In the bird or aviary kingdom the bobolink, bob-white, whipporwill and cuckoo, are named for their respective songs or calls. One of the catbird's calls resembles the " meow" of a cat. Crows utter an easily recognized " caw" and some owls " hoot." Out of all these calls of all the birds, it is said that the mockingbird can imitate the call of any one or all of them except the dove. The dove stands out completely alone in its characteristics, just as the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ stands out completely alone in the world in the doctrine her ministers preach and the practice of her members are given to follow. Many religious orders and organizations, secretly and publicly, have tried from shortly after the beginning of time to imitate the sound of this church, whether of scornful intent or coveteous desire, but none have ever succeeded. This true sound is a holy sound, and on one occasion the

Babylonians when holding Israel in captivity asked David saying, " Sing us one of the songs of Zion." David replied, " How shall we sing the Lord's songs in a strange land ? " Psa. 137:3, 4. His (the Lord's) song has never been sung in the world, but one might ask, " Where is it sung ? " I can tell you with the words of Soloman. It is heard in that little ark when we have come away from the element of time for just a little while, secluded from the world. " For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone ; the flowers appears on the earth ; the time of the singing of birds is come, and The Voice Of The Turtle Is Heard In Our Land." S. of S. 2:10, 11, 12. Yes is it not heard in a strange land from a strange god, but it is heard " In Our Land." Oh, there is nothing as heartwarming and soulcheering when that blessed sound is heard deep within the breast, soul and heart, of a little child of God. God has a set time and place for it to be sung as well as to be heard. It may be sung in the night, " Ye shall have a song in the night when a holy solemnity is kept," (Isa. 30:29), or it may be at midnight in the deepest dungeon or innermost prison, like unto Paul and Silas, where they prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them." Acts 16:25. Or it may be when God has delivered us from our enemy, as he anciently delivered Samuel from the Philistine army and " he took a stone and set it, calling the name of Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." 1st Sam. 7:12. God's people are still raising, even today, these Ebenezers. Or it may be sung at Bethel when we are awakened out of sleep, as Jacob, saying surely, " the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. How dreadful is this place ! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." Gen. 28:16, 17. God has set time when His Song will be sung and the world cannot in either case prevent it or hear it. His church hears it instantaneously or simultaneously.

Another characteristic of the Dove is its eye. Soloman said, " His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of Waters." S. of S. 5:12. Also, " Thou hast doves' eyes." S. of S. 1:15. I read these scriptures years ago and pondered over their meaning since that time. Now I can see the beauty of the meaning of it for the eye of the dove reflects absolute innocence. Jesus said, " Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." Matt. 10:16. Anything that is innocent is harmless, or vice versa, being harmless it is also innocent. If you have ever seen the eye of a Dove and looked straight at it, I believe you will agree with me that there is nothing to be seen but innocence. The Dove can look you straight into your eye. I have had the misfortune, while in conversation with some individuals, when I attempted to look them straight in the eye, they could not return the look. They would quickly glance either to the right or to the left and finally look off or away from me. The reason for such failure is because there is a lack of presence of truth and innocence and contrawise there is reason to believe that we have the presence of guilt. When we

are blessed in being on the side of Truth , we have one of the greatest blessings (if not the greatest) we could have in this world. The Apostle Paul said , " For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." II Cor . 13:8 . If there is any one thing that I crave in my poor heart, it is that God keep me in such a way that I am not in trouble with natural truth, and even more so, spiritual truth. To be in trouble with either one spells serious trouble . The truth not only sets one free, but it also keeps and guides the children of God through their pilgrimage in this sin - cursed world . Our lives , both natural and Spiritual, are preserved blamelessly in the truth , not against it. To be in conflict with or against truth means ultimate destruction. May it be God's will that He ever keep us in His way that we can always look one another straight in the eye. This is a wonderful characteristic of the Dove , a figure of the Church of the true and living God . It points to His beloved people and the imputed righteousness of their Lord and Saviour.

Another marked and noteworthy characteristic of the Dove is her ability to fly remarkably well while under diverse or very troubled and trying circumstances. David who suffered great persecution at the hands of King Saul , who tried to kill David , (See 1 st Sam . 23:15), recorded in Psalms 55:6 , while he (David) during this time was in a period of great doubt and fear, saying, " Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me , and sorrow hath overwhelmed me . And I said , Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away , and be at rest . I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest ."

Seeing how that Saul sought David's life with a spear brings to my mind circumstances that took place in my own family and natural home years ago . I was born in a family of nine children , myself being the youngest of the nine . I have two natural brothers , one of them being nine years my senior , the other being seven years my senior. They have always had a great interest in the sports of hunting and fishing , while I have never had but little interest in sports, whatsoever. One thing was for sure in the household or home of my natural father and this was in all of their hunting and sporting activities or exercises , he never permitted them to hunt and kill the little Dove. When I was younger and growing up , I did not understand this , although I knew that my father was a very devoted student of the scriptures and had his reason for prohibiting my brothers from killing them. Now I know that he considered the Dove to be sacred because of the many times (she) the Dove is mentioned in the scriptures and is a figure and type of the Lord's afflicted and poor people .

Some of my friends who hunt the Dove tell me that she is the most difficult of all birds to hit because of her strong wings , even with a shotgun because of the great speed with which she flies . As in David's case above with King Saul , this brings to mind all the ages down through the history of time that the enemies of the truth and church have tried to destroy them , but the truth and the church have always endured and

prevailed, and will endure and prevail until Christ comes again. Jesus said, " Upon this Rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Matt. 16:18. Jesus did not say they would not try to prevail against it. The forces of the devil and the powers of raging darkness have been trying to destroy this truth and the church since the beginning of time, since the days of Cain and Abel, even down to the present time, and will continue to make the attempt to the end of time, but they have not succeeded to this hour, and they never will.

David in the above quoted Psalms 55:6, refers to the wings of the dove. " Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then I would fly away, and be at rest. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest." We read in revelation 12:13 of a great red dragon (the devil or satan), having seven heads and ten horns that persecuted the woman, the Church of God, which brought forth the Man child, the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is recorded concerning her, " And to the woman were given Two Wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place." To my understanding the great Eagle, like the Dove, is a figure of God's church and the Two Wings under consideration are none other than Faith and Hope. Only one class of people in this world live in Hope and walk by Faith. We believe we know who they are! With these two wings surely they fly away momentarily from the vain and perishable things of this world into the ark, the Church of God, finding rest unto their weary souls, even " into her place," as John mentioned, " that her faith and hope (strength) might be in God." 1st Peter 1:21.

I have been asked through the years by various members of the church if I could interpret the significance in gospel meaning in type and shadow of the Dove's three departures by flight and only two reentries into the ark, as recorded in Genesis Chapter 8, verses 8, 10, & 12. The Dove made three departures at the hand of Noah (our Spiritual anti-type of Christ), as we will recall, returning from the first and second flights back into the ark, but it did not return back at all from the third flight. We would say that the third flight is still incomplete. Now what is the interpretation and significance here?

I have already pointed out in the Definition of Terms (please go back and reread) in the outset or beginning of this article concerning these flights. The first time, when she reentered the ark, she came back exactly as she departed. The olive leaf was not in her mouth. This flight points to the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ back under the law period. This flight embraces all of those subjects that were Christ's from Adam, Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Abraham. Sarah, the wife of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, the harlot-Rahab, Gedeon, Sampson, David, Soloman and Samuel and all the true prophets and believers in both the old world (from Adam to the flood) and the law or levitical world (the period of time after the flood or Abraham's day to the first coming of Christ). This first flight points to the entire Church of

God that was chosen in the covenant of Grace by the Father with the Son before the foundation of the world as contained exclusively in the Old Testament scripture . The Apostle Paul makes it very plain that those in the third (or Gospel world) dispensation would have no preeminence over these when he declared that " They without us Should Not Be Made Perfect." Hebs. 11:40. God's eternal love in Christ is equal to all His children with regard to their eternal inheritance regardless of the age or time in which they might have lived . In an inheritance where we have " joint - heirs " the division is equal and without partiality .

At the second departure and succeeding second reentry (and remember, she was the same Dove, not a different one, with reference to the same church), she " came in to him (Noah, our Spiritual Anti- type of Christ in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf pluckt off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth." "Waters" in the scripture is a representation of sin, and the word " abate " means to demolish , to put an end to , to destroy, etc. This " olive leaf pluckt off " that was in her (the Dove 's mouth) is none other than the true Gospel of peace of God our Savior. In this Gospel is the only hope of the believer's Salvation. It was not only pointing to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost , the Triune God , but to the (1) birth and life , (2) death and burial, (3) resurrection and ascension to glory, of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ . In all of this we have Christ's work in the New Covenant in which it is recorded, " their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more ." In this New Covenant we most certainly have " the abatement of the waters," or the destruction of sin . Since when " sin is finished, it bringeth forth death," (James 1:15 it was in the second or law dispensation of time in the old covenant (of works under the law) that the failing effort was made to blot out sin , which when it (sin) was finished culminated into death . The Old Covenant , which the Apostle Paul said was found to have fault (See Hebs . 8:7) , was given to God by Moses on the mount for the levitical worship by offerings to Him in the tabernacle. Yet, " For the law having a shadow of good things to come , and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually made the comers thereunto perfect ." Hebs . 10:1 . These offerings and the entire work of the levitical (priesthood) worship under the law could never take away sin . This the New Covenant did (and the olive leaf pluckt off pointed to it) by bringing in an everlasting righteousness and the only perfect peace that has ever been known on the shores of time .

Concerning the " olive leaf that was pluckt off" that was in the mouth of the Dove when she returned into the ark on arrival from her second flight, may we be reminded that the olive tree lives longer than any other fruit- bearing tree in the earth. Some of these trees were brought by the Spaniards to California as early as 1769 (over 200 years ago) and they are still living today . Even at this present time there are Olive trees in

Palestine (in the old country) which are said to date back to the time of Christ , when He was here on earth . Men grew olives even before our earliest history was written . All of this points to the everlasting Gospel of the Son of God . It is older than time , coming from eternity and will last into eternity . This (the three leafet twig , representing Father , the Creator , Son , the Redeemer , and Holy Ghost , the Revealer), was in the mouth of the Dove when she came home . When she comes today this truth or Gospel is always in the mouth of the some way - worn , weary God- called servant or traveler and it it always good news from a far country to those who have been given an eye to see it and an ear to hear it . To receive this precious Gospel , we must always be at home with our Heavenly Father and His little Dove . We cannot be present in the body or in the world . Sanctification of His Holy Spirit must separate us from ourselves and this vain world for us to be enabled to hear it .

It is true , as the Apostle Paul declared , that all those embraced in the Old Testament scripture in the first two dispensations of time , of which the first flight of the Dove represents , have equal recognition with God , based upon the divine merits of His Son alone , yet we hear Jesus , concerning those in the third dispensation of time in which we now live of which the second flight of the Dove represents , saying , " But blessed are your eyes , for they see : and your ears , for they hear . For verily I say unto you , That many prophets are righteous men (referring to those in the first two dispensations) have desired to see those things which ye see , and have not seen them ; and to hear those things which ye hear , and have not heard them ." Matt . 13:16, 17 . How wonderful it is for us who have been blessed to live in the gospel day or world or third dispensation of time , of which the second flight of the Dove with the olive leaf pluckt off in her mouth represents , in actually hearing the Gospel of the Son of God declared in demonstration of the Spirit and in power . It was here that the day of Pentecost took place . John saw the " angel fly in the midst of heaven , having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth and to every nation , and kindred , and tongue , and people ." Rev . 14:6 .

The question is now asked , " What became of the Dove after Noah released her from the ark on her third flight and where is she today ? " " And he stayed yet other seven days ; and sent forth the dove ; which returned not again unto him any more ." Gen . 8:12 . To my mind the " seven day period " that the Dove spent each time when in the ark represents God 's perfect work in creation and Christ's perfect work in salvation , both in a natural as well as spiritual sense . But to repeat the question , " Where is she today ?

We will find a portion of this answer to the above question recorded in Matt . 3:16 . " And Jesus , when He was baptized , went up straightway out of the water : and , lo , the heavens were opened unto Him , and He saw the Spirit of God Descending Like A Dove , and lightning upon Him : and lo a voice from

heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." This place, just described, is one of the highest ones to have ever been know in the history of the world. Here we have God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost in the presence of the Holy Dove all present on the same occasion. No other event has ever occurred or will ever occur until the end of time like this one. This same Dove that descended from Heaven, that lit upon Jesus, symbolizes or portrays most definitely the Church because Christ established her just after this event when he was here in the world. Her presence was made manifest all along, even from the beginning of time. Now, she will be here until He comes back again to take His entire redeemed family (His Heavenly Dove, His Beloved Companion) to live with Him forever in all eternity. He has said that He will not leave Himself without a witness and we know that His promises are true and sure. When He comes back to claim all those for whom He died in all three dispensations of time, there will still be that small remnant preaching Salvation by the sovereign grace of God. Yes, His redeemed family will be numbered as the sands of the sea, but the small remnant of them, the Church, are His faithful, true witnesses and will still be testifying of Him.

The final answer of her where-abouts today is that she will descend from heaven again. John said that he "saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Rev. 21:2. At that time there will be no more persecution, no more for her to be shot at by the hands of sinful men, "no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there by any more pain: for former things are passed away." Rev. 21:4. When that glorious day arrives "the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." Isa. 60:20. She will never mourn again because the powers of sin, death, hell and the grave and the power of satan will have been destroyed. Loneliness shall be no more. Then she will be gathered back into the Rock from whence she was hewn, that everlasting Ark, the Lord Jesus Christ, to go no more in or out forever. She was in the cleft of this Rock from the foundation of the world and she was washed white as snow from all her sin when they pierced His side by the shedding of His own precious blood.

So, today, she is free from all debt and all sin. Her title is clear. When He comes the second time without sin unto Salvation and gathers her into His bosom, and then carries her home on the wings of His never dying love into Heaven itself, we will have the completion of her (the Dove's) final flight and journey to Heaven, her immortal home. Then she will see her Beloved, see Him as He is, be made like Him and be made satisfied for ever and ever. How beautifully descriptive are the follow lowing words of her:

" Descend from heaven, immortal Dove!
Stoop down and take us on thy wings,
And mount and bear us far above
The reach of these inferior things.

Beyond, beyond this lower sky,
Up where eternal ages roll;
Where solid pleasures never die,
And fruits immortal feast the soul.

When shall the day dear Lord appear,
That I shall mount to dwell above,
And stand and bow among them there,
And view thy face, and sing, and love!"

J.M. Mewborn

MEETINGS

The West Country Line Union will meet, the Lord willing, with the Greensboro Church on the fifth Sunday in July at 10:00 A.M.

Coming from the north on Hwy. # 29 you will exit on Hwy. # 6 West and follow this approximately two miles and turn right on Tate St. The Church is located on the corner of Tate and Carr St.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Deacon Wayne Edwards, Clerk

HOPEWELL

The fourteenth annual Fifth Sunday meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with Hopewell Church, Winnsboro, Texas, beginning on Friday, July 28th, 29th, and 30th. Hopewell Church is located about six miles west of Winnsboro. Go west on Coke Road (515) about four and one-half miles and follow signs. We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us. There will be no business, just preaching and singing.

Elder Jimmy Hamrick, Pastor
John Hamrick, Clerk

OLD PINE CREEK CHURCH

An annual all day meeting will be held, theLord willing, at Old Pine Creek Church on the 4th of July, 1989. The church is located off highway #221, five miles north of Floyd, Virginia. Those coming from Floyd turn left onto road #682. Those coming from Roanoke, turn right onto road #682. All lovers of the Truth are invited and especially al all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Hale Terry, Moderator

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Pigg River Association will be held, the Lord willing, the first Sunday in August, Friday and Saturday before. (August 4, 5, & 6, 1989.)

Little Creek Church is the host for this setting of the Association. The meeting place will be Rocky Mount High School, Rocky Mount, Virginia.

Come into Rocky Mount on highway 220 and exit onto highway 40 going west. Take second street to left to the High School.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

Jamie E. Cooper,
Association Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, the second weekend in July beginning on Friday at 11:00 A.M. The dates are July 7, 8, and 9th.

The Church is located in Pittsylvania County about 15 miles from Danville, Virginia. From Danville take highway #41 to the intersection with 750 at Woods Stone. Turn right and proceed about one mile to the Strawberry Church which is hosting the association this year. We invite our friends and brethren for this meeting.

Burnell B. Williams, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The Staunton River Union Meeting will be held the Lord willing at Strawberry Church, the fifth weekend in July the 29th & 30th.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especially ministers of our faith and order, please come, we need you.

Elder Thomas Soloman, Moderator
Sister Gertie Holley, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 1989

Mrs. Carl L. Bryant, LA 5.00
Mrs. R.O. Smith, NC 2.00
Mrs. Mary E. Poff, VA 2.00
Mrs. Vercie H. Bolejack, VA ...2.00
Mrs. Muriel M. Strader, NC 2.00
Orville R. Beatty, PA 2.00
W.E. Mitchell, VA 5.00
Mrs. R.L. Milligan, AR 7.00
Hartzel B. Nelson, WV 2.00
Eld. Ben F. Preston, OR ...12.00
Mrs. Mila L. Vantrease, IL ...2.00
Eld. John F. Simpson, FL ...7.00
Mrs. Lois B. Cloud, NE
In memory of Myrtle Black ...66.00
A.M. Walker, NC 2.00
Tillman Pullig, TX 2.00
Eld. James C. Young, NC ...7.00
W.D. Godwin, LA 2.00
Mrs. H.A. Harlow, TX 5.00
Horace E. Walker, VA 3.50
Mrs. Gracie E. McClure, WV...15.00
American Union Of Baptist, Inc.
Mem. to Eld. W.D. Griffin...2,000.00
Mrs. E.B. Hodnett, VA 2.00
E.R. Graves, AL 5.00
J.C. Carroll, NC 2.00
Song books sold
from extinct Church 15.00
Mrs. Olive Hastings, MD 10.00
Mr. & Mrs. Tim Barron, TX.....7.00
Mrs. Jesse Ray, NC 2.00
Mrs. Margaret Smothers, NC ...2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER MYRTLE L. BLACK

Services for Sister Myrtle L. Black, 97, Meadow Grove, NE. were conducted Friday, April 7, 1989 at the Marshall-Harlan Funeral Home in Tilden, NE. Elder Don Halbgewachs, Cozad, NE. officiated, assisted by Elder John T. Anderson, Pleasant Hill, MO. Burial was in the Prospect Hill Cememtery

in Norfolk , NE . with Elder John T . Anderson and Elder Cecil Judd , Pickering , MO . officiating .

Sister Myrtle died Tuesday, April 4 , at the Boone County Hospital , Albion , NE . after two weeks in the hospital following the amputation of her second leg , due to poor circulation .

She was born September 7 , 1891 in Marion County , Iowa , the daughter of Z .I . & Anna (Bridges) Jones . She received her education in rural Knoxville, Iowa. On September 16 , 1908 , she was married to Walter W . Black at the home of her parents in Olathe , Colorado . The couple moved to a farm south of Meadow Grove , NE . in 1916 and then into Meadow Grove in 1942 .

Her parents and theirs before them were Primitive Baptists from Iowa and she grew up in a loving , christian home .

She joined the Deer Creek Primitive Baptist church in Battle Creek , NE . in 1932 and was a faithful member , going even when she had difficulty getting around , until she was 95 years old. The church building at Battle Creek was sold some twenty years ago , so the nearest meeting place was at Loveland , Iowa. She and her daughter attended , when possible , two times a month. On April 16 , 1987 Myrtle had a stroke and had to live in a nursing home until her death .

She was a strong believer in God 's Sovereign Will and loved to quote the scripture taken from Isiah, Chapter 46 , verses 9 & 10 , which was part of the text used by Elder Don in her funeral service. She also loved to have the brethren in her home and visit her in the nursing home. She lived with her daughter , Lois , for many years .

Survivors include three daughters ; Mrs . W .A . (Sister Irene) Jewett , Waverly , Ohio ; Sister Lois E . Cloud , Meadow Grove ,; Mrs . David M . (Sister Sara) Cody , Phoenix , AZ .; nine grandchildren , 11 great-grandchildren and 2 great-great-grandchildren .

She was preceeded in death by her parents , her husband , Brother Walter Black in 1971 , two sons and one sister .

Sister Myrtle loved to read her " church " papers and the Bible. She enjoyed discussing the scriptures and would sit at her piano playing hymns and singing the songs of Zion until after she was 93 years old .

Another quotation she loved to recite was " God moves in a mysterious way , His wonders to perform . . . . . ." and she could repeat it nearly to the end just a few weeks before her death .

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints !

Written in love by her daughter ,
Sister Lois E . Cloud

BROTHER JOEL ASPBERRY ELLEDGE AND SISTER HATTIE BELL ELLEDGE

Our sovereign God saw fit to remove from our midst Brother Joel on May 25th 1982 and Sister Hattie on Feb . 7th , 1989 . They were beloved members and faithful attenders of Good Hope Primitive Baptist Church. " Uncle Joel "

(as he was affectionately known by many who loved him), was born June 12th , 1888 and joined Good Hope Church Nov . 26th , 1967 , being baptized by Eld . Lambert . " Aunt Hattie" (as his dear wife was widely known) was born Nov . 28th , 1889 and joined Good Hope with her parents on Nov. 19th, 1921 . Ice had to be broken in preparation for their baptism . During this sacred ordinance , the congregation sang the following hymn which begins —

Christians, if your hearts are warm,
Ice and snow can do no harm ;
If by Jesus you are prized ,
Rise , believe , and be baptized .

Uncle Joel and Aunt Hattie were married on Oct. 18th, 1906 , and the Lord blessed them with a long and fruitful marriage of 75 years. After all that time together , their love for each other was stronger than ever and they could often be seen holding each other's hands. More importantly , their love for their blessed Saviour continued to manifest itself by the way they spoke of Him . They were always ready to declare how unworthy they were of the least of His many blessings and how wonderful He was for always providing for their needs . The doctrines of God's grace were a delight to their hearts and they never tired of hearing of God 's rich sovereign grace in the person of an all- sufficient and adorable Saviour, Jesus Christ, reaching down to poor wretched needy sinners .

Uncle Joel was blessed with a good voice and enjoyed leading the songs of Zion during worship services . He and his dear wife loved receiving God 's people at any time into their home where a most warm welcome was extended .

They were blessed with 3 sons and 2 daughters . Surviving to thank God for godly parents are Clive Elledge of Mt . Vernon , Myrtle Rhoades of Good Hope Community, and Bonnie Faye Gilbert of Scroggins, Texas. Survivors also include 6 grandchildren , 8 great-grandchildren , and 2 great-great grandchildren . " Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints ." Psalm 116 : 15 .

Written by request ,
Jimmy Hamrick

MEMORIAL - W .D . Griffin

A Memorial to the ministry of the late Elder W .D . Griffin of $2,000 is granted by the Ebenezer Fund of the American Union of Baptists , Inc . to the Signs of the Times , a publication of the good news of the Gospel in support of the Old School Baptist cause and for the glory of God .

Elder Griffin faithfully served Ebenezer Church in Baltimore City from 1958 to 1971 and also three churches in the Salisbury and Delaware Associations .

CLAUDE ALBERT JOHNSON

May we bow in humble submission in the passing of our beloved brother , Deacon Claude Albert Johnson .

Brother Johnson was born October 30 , 1911 and passed away November 3 , 1988 , after a short illness. He was preceded in death by one son Melvin Claude, his parents, Irving and Cora Johnson and one brother.

He is survived by his wife, Sister Gracie Thurman Johnson , one daughter, Shelby Johnson Brooks, two sons, Kenneth and Albert Johnson, five grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, five brothers and two sisters.

He joined Bethel Primitive Baptist Church October 2 , 1943 and served as Clerk for 31 years and was an Ordained Deacon for 22 years. We feel that his desire was to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he was called. He loved peace and served in the fear of God. He was blessed to fill these offices well. He loved the songs of Zion and led most of the singing at Bethel Church. He will be greatly missed not only by Bethel Church but all those that knew and loved him both far and near.

I feel that Brother Claude lived out his allotted days and died in the triumph of a living faith.

May God comfort his dear widow and family with the reconciliation of His Holy Will.

The funeral was conducted at Lynch Funeral Home in Rocky Mount, Va. The writer tried in his weak way to comfort the family and friends along with Elder Lane Carter and Elder Denver Simpson. His remains were laid to rest in the Franklin Memorial Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

Elder Junior Conner

ROBERT LEE LOVELACE

Brother Robert Lee Lovelace was born Aug. 12, 1902, the son of Joseph Thomas Lovelace and Mary Sue Jones Lovelace, and died Sept. 16, 1988.

He was married to Ossie Loftis April 12, 1924, who preceded him in death several years.

He is survived by five daughters, Margaret Wallace, Marion Thomas, Mary Burchett , Lillie Walton and Brenda Williams.

Brother Lovelace joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, Feb. 24, 1979 and was baptized April 29, 1979 and remained one of the most humble members the church has ever known.

Brother Lovelace never knew the riches of this world and such that he had , especially in his last years , were given to him by those who loved him.

The faith that God gave him was a beautiful thing to behold as the writer would observe him in the worship services that he loved so much, we could know his hope was strong and that someday he would bask in the sunlight of God's eternal love forever.

Brother Lovelace funeral was held at Pelham Methodist Church , conducted by Elder Wallace Smith and Elder Lonnie Mizingo.

May the abiding Love, grace and mercy of God be with his family and those of us who remain to the extent that we can believe he is resting in a Saviors love eternally.

Humbly submitted,
Coley S. Strader

Signs of the Times

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POEM

I asked God for strength, that I might achieve,
I was made weak, that I might learn humbly to obey.
I asked for health, that I might do greater things,
I was given infirmity, that I might do better things.
I asked for riches, that I might be happy,
I was given poverty, that I might be wise.
I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men,
I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God.
I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life,
I was given life, that I might enjoy all things.
I got nothing that I asked for—
but everything I had hoped for.
Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered.
I am, among all men, most richly blessed.

—Anonymous Confederate soldier.

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EDITORIAL

Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks. Consider her palaces: that ye may tell it to the generation following.

Zion is the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness and is the joy of the whole earth to those to whom it is promised as their heritage. It is the City prepared of God for his elect children and where he will dwell with them in all the glory and beauty of his presence when they have ended their earthly pilgrimage here in time. "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty God hath shined" was declared by David in the psalms, and this is certainly true as the saints are blessed, from time to time, to behold, by the eye of faith, the glory and beauty of this paradise, after they are born of the spirit and given eyes to behold the kingdom. They are made to long for more evidence of their being a citizen of this City. From that time forward they walk fearfully, by faith and surely the joy and anticipation of realizing the fullness of the reality of dwelling there is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen by the natural eye: they are envisioned by the spirit as it leads and directs them in the pathway of life. Surely this is the City that Abraham looked for in his day, and toward which his journey was directed from the time that God called him, told him to leave his kindred and go to a land that he would show him that he would inherit. This is typical of the heirs of promise, in all ages of time, when they are called with a holy calling, turned from their former ways and led in the paths of righteousness where all of the redeemed walk. They are placed on a highway which is called the way of holiness and it leads to the City of Zion; this city of towers, bulwarks and palaces which are all for the security, comfort and happiness of the inhabitants thereof. In this life they behold these wonders and glory in the blessed assurance that they are indeed citizens of this holy City of Zion.

In ancient times cities were walled areas designed for the protection of the inhabitants from the enemies without that they might live in peace, secure and without fear of animals or marauding bands of evil

men that could attack them unaware. Around the walls of the City there were towers and bulwarks, or places where the defenses were concentrated at points most vulnerable to attack, and they gave them the best security and the enemies advances could be most effectively repelled. Surely in this city of Zion these bulwarks are the decrees, the determinate counsel and purposes of God respecting the security, welfare and peace of his children dwelling within and these are made known unto them as they travel along here in time: they are raised up blessed to see and understand from whence their help comes, and realize the fullness of the meaning of the scripture of their being saved and called with a holy calling, not according to their works but according to the purpose and grace of God which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began.

The bulwarks, towers and strength of this City are surely the doctrinal truths upon which the hope of salvation is based in the heart and soul of those who are blessed to dwell within. They are the scriptures which have been left on record, down through the ages, as inspired men have been blessed to relate their experiences and revelations of the lines of truth which are eternal and yet new every time they are revealed. They are the power, wisdom and mercy of God displayed in the lives of all as they are enabled to walk about Zion and behold the way and manner in which they are hedged in and are safe from the evils that would destroy them without these defenses which surround them. David expressed it this way, "Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me: it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me and thy right hand shall hold me." What joy, and peace of mind belongs to those that are in this position and are given a mind to walk about Zion; behold the foundations and remember again those things which make you believe in the sovereignty of God; trust and praise him for all things, the seasons of doubt, trials and fears, as well as the green pastures and the still calm and serene waters that they are blessed to experience in this life. These are the reasons that keep them pressing on to the prize of the high calling of God: the things that are absolute and unchangeable by time or circumstance and are ever new and inspiring each and every time they are experienced.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void: and darkness covered the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said let there be light: and there was light." This is the first record that we have of any action or decree of God, and they are still as effective, sure and certain as they were at the time that they were declared; even so are the bulwarks and towers around the City. This is just as true of all of the decrees of God in subsequent ages

of time and there is no power on earth or in heaven that can thwart, reverse or in any way change or alter them. They have not increased or diminished from that which was announced in the beginning and the faith of the Saints of God is that all of the decrees proclamations and determinate counsels are as effective and sure as these are. The evidences that they receive along the way, revelations of the spirit and records left by those of generations past become, to the believer, a great cloud of witnesses to them each confirming and supporting that, that was before and all bearing the same divine authority and oneness of origin.

"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying my counsel shall stand and I will do all of my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: Yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it I will also do it." This one bulwark is sufficient to withstand the strongest onslaught that can be hurled against it and, alone, refutes all of the doctrines of men and of devils. This declaration is made by Isaiah, but, with all the authority of the Godhead who is the creator of all things: the sustainer of all things; the one who formed all things for himself and disposes of them according to his own good pleasure. The lot is cast into the lap and the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord: the one who said, "I form the light, I create darkness: I make peace and create evil; I the Lord do all these things." "I have made the earth and created man upon it. I even my hands have stretched out the heavens and all their host have I commanded." Man in nature can never understand the fulness of these truths but the one who has been made a new creature in Christ can, because unto them it is given to understand the mystery. Those who are so blessed love indeed to walk about Zion and view, from time to time these wonderful mysteries, rejoice in the strength of the defenses, and trust in the security that has been provided for the inhabitants of Zion.

"For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please and prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Just as the inhabitants of this city must depend upon the defenses which have been provided for their safety, they must depend upon the same supplier for their food. As a spiritual being they must have spiritual food and certainly the world cannot provide that, neither can the individual themselves. The food is provided, as stated above and it does produce results, in the form of praise and honor to him that sent it. They are made to know, by striving, that they cannot partake of this food at will but must wait upon God to supply it sovereignly as the rain and snow in nature. Moses

taught the children of Israel this lesson in the song , " My doctrine shall drop as the rain , my speech shall distill as the dew , as the small rain upon the tender herb ; as the showers upon the grasses ."
rain and dew provides the necessary moisture to make the herbs and grasses grow and produce , even so, the spiritual food causes his children to grow in grace and in knowledge of the truths of God , but only as it is supplied from above . They can have plenty of time to sit down and read or meditate upon the spiritual things , but , unless the unction is given that they can rightly divide the word of truth , they cannot discern the things of the spirit . When not given the ability to understand they are made to wonder if their faith is sound but when their understanding returns they glorify God for this precious gift which he has bestowed upon them . They are then glad that these things are not in the hands of man to handle as they desire because they know human nature ; how that it corrupts everything it touches , and how fleeting and transient are its most solemn and determined resolutions . They rejoice in the realization that it is in the hands of God in all cases and that it will be a perfect work , accomplishing his purpose in all things and sure , since he is of one mind , the same yesterday , today and forever . The surety of these cause them to delight in the evi - dences which they receive , along the way , of the prospering of this work of grace in their life .

" They which are the children of the flesh , these are not the children of God : but the children of the promised are counted for the seed ." Oh the gladness and joy that fills the heart of those who are born again as they read the scriptures that speak of the spiritual and the natural man . They realize and understand the man of the flesh from past experience , and now , they are experiencing something new and as they study the scriptures they learn what is hap - pening to them : They realize , not because they read the scriptures they have done that before , but they learn because of the inspiration that they have received from the indwell - ing of the Holy Spirit in their heart . For the first time the doctrine as set forth in the scriptures is food and drink unto their hungry soul . They read of the experience of , Isaac and Ishmael , Jacob and Esau and others of the lineage of Abraham and see that Isaac and Jacob were not cho - sen of God because of any integrity or attainment by the individual but solely because of God 's determin - ing , before they were born , who would receive the blessing . Then they can see that their experience is the same : there is nothing about them that would merit the blessing of God , and yet , in spite of their unworthiness they feel to be a chosen vessel and in receipt of a hope in God and Godly blessings . They realize that the distinction between the elect and the non - elect was made when God set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel ; for the Lord 's portion is his people : Jacob is the lot of his inheritance . As one is born of a particular race of people in nature , there is a spiritual race , that is not

visible to the natural eye, that is just as separate and distinct as the natural eye, that is just as separate and distinct as the the natural races and the individual has no more to do in their spiritual citizenship than they do in their natural citizenship. One is just as much the work of God as the other and both stood in the mind of the Most High when he divided unto the nations their inheritance, and the bounds were set according to the number of the children of Israel : even as the walls of the City of Zion were built to secure the elect and separate them from the enemies from without. The bulwarks are the evidences of the strength and power of the security of the city : the high towers are seasons when they are raised up and made to sit together in heavenly places and blessed to view the beauty and perfection of Zion : the palaces must be the places of rest with which the heirs are blessed , along the way , and which enables them , for a season , to be content in their faith and trust implicitly in the , King of the City of Zion , the builder and defender of it .

The foundation upon which the city stands is the finished work of Christ, as he said in his prayer unto the Father, " I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do ." The hour had come that all that the Father and the Son had agreed, in the covenant before the foundation of the world, must be done to secure the salvation of the elect had been accomplished and the time of the sacrifice had arrived . Either this one grand and glorious event sanctified all of the inhabitants of Zion, or, it did not. If it did, then they were safe and secure, treasured in Christ before the foundation of the world, for that was when the covenant was made, and time is but a manifestation of the fulfillment of those covenant arrangements ; if not then there are no sanctified heirs of grace, all men die in their sins and eternally separated from God. And why does the whole of prophesy, up to that time point to this event and for what purpose was the ignomious death of the only begotten of the Father ? Nothing in scripture suggests any uncertainty or question of what was required to sanctify the chosen generation, how it would be accomplished or what the final results would be. The work has been finished and the results are still being made manifest in this day and age . As Paul wrote , speaking of God 's telling Isaiah that he had reserved seven thousand that had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal and Paul updated that and said, " even so then at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace." As was true then, is true now, the effects of the work that was finished back then is still being made manifest today. This will continue as long as this world stands and until the last one for whom Christ died is brought in .

The full fruition of this work will be realized when this city comes down from God out of heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband and God and Christ shall dwell with his people ; they shall spend an eternity in a state of joy and ecstacy that they have never known in this life . Til then , they can but walk , by faith , about Zion and

rejoice in the sure foundation , the bulwarks and high towers that they are blessed to see in their journey through this world of sin and sorrow, as the spirit opens up their under - standing that they may view the solid foundations upon which their sal - vation rests .

In bonds of love ,
Richard H . Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Elder Harlan :

Dear Brother ,

I was brought up in a Primitive Baptist Home but that didn 't make an Old Baptist out of me, I was just like most other boys, I thought I would get all right , before I died . I could not tell the time that I didn 't fear God . I went along as a young man with worldly things . Something happened in my life , I lost all the pleasure of the world . I tried to get rid of it . The longer the worse , I couldn 't enjoy my family , my little children . I couldn't sit still, the chair felt so hard , I couldn 't sit still . I longed for the deep hollow, none but God could hear . I still tried to ward it off not knowing what the trouble was . I would walk along the path , and feel the shadow of death about me , I have turned to look to see it . I thought the way I felt that I could see it . I got in such a condition that I didn 't care what happened to me . I was in bed one night in a deep study, I heard a knock, I thought some body was working on their car . My mind was taken off my troubles , I won - dered what that knock was . All at once it knocked again and I jumped up in bed . Behold I stand at the door, and knock . The first thing that come to me was to call my wife, I did not, It went this way for some time . One Saturday my wife and children and myself went to the store , when we come home it was late , and the wife and children had gone to bed , and I was sitting in the dining room in one of the chairs and it was so hard , it was at the midnight hour , I thought I would go somewhere and try to pray. So I went out , I thought the darkest night that I ever saw . I went in a old garage , and pulled the door shut , and I went up to the front of the car , and fell down on my knees , and I couldn 't say a word . I raised up and the travel of Jacob come to me , and his vow . I fell down on my knees and made a vow to my Heavenly Father , and when I made that vow I felt a load move out of my poor heart . My troubles was gone , and gone was all my doubts and fears . When I came out of that garage that was the most beautiful night I ever saw , the moon and stars was so bright , I can only thank God for this . Nothing that I have done to merit it . Sometimes I get very low and that little spot is Bethel , to me . Take that from me and you got all I have .

Elder Allen C . Smith

(See Obituary this issue .)

This beloved Sister: Sister Dora A. Smith
Born : June 16 , 1905
Died : May 12 , 1972

Sister Dora was a member of Fair - View Primitive Baptist Church and was faithful to the church until her death . This dear Sister In Hope wrote this memo for her family to have when she was gone , but sorryfully it was not found until her husbands death ; Elder Allen C . Smith, who was the Moderator of the Fair -View Primitive Baptist Church , where both were members . This memo was found by a daughter while straightening up after her father 's death .

Would you please print this memo next to Elder Allen C. Smith's experience that he had written to Elder Harlan and for some reason had not sent out . The children have requested this to be sent in and printed beside their fathers writing . This would be appreciated very much. Thank you for sending me The Signs Of The Times . I enjoy reading it very much . I 'm sending a small donation of $15.00 . You have been very kind to me and I pray God 's Blessings upon the Editors : Elder J.R. Williams and Elder Kenneth R. Key . I Hope and Trust the God of all Power will guide your hands in printing this book . I hope and trust this writing will be a blessing to all that read it . Thank you , a Sister in hope and a member of the Fair - View Primitive Baptist Church .

Sent in by Gracie E . McClure

In the name of the Holy Father I pray he will guide me and take the leading charge of my heart and mind to write something that will be edifying of his word . And humbly hope that it will be of some comfort to Gods people . I have thought for sometime that when God caused me to rejoice in his name and with my heart so full of his love that I would try in my weak way to write something that might be of some comfort to his little flock . For he says fear not little flock , for it is your Fathers good pleasure to give unto you the Kingdom .

So you see dear ones in Christ , behold the Kingdom lies within you . So God has set up his Kingdom in the hearts of his people . And we have done nothing on our part to merit his good Graces . It is all of him and he says you have not Chosen me but I have Chosen you . So you see he has done the choosing and he also says know ye not that it is the goodness of God that draweth thee to repentness and no man cometh unto me except the Father that sent me draw him . And all that the Father giveth me shall come unto me . So you see this has nothing to do with chance , it is God 's word and it is Sure . And he says my word SHALL NOT RETURN UNTO ME VOID .

Work out your own SALVATION with fear and trembling for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of HIS OWN GOOD PLEASURE . And we are commanded to love one another even as God loved the church , and gave His Life For It . And when we are mingled together we can feel that love flow from heart to heart and breast to breast . So let us strive to love one another for love begets love and GOD IS LOVE ,

without His Love in my heart and life I don't feel at times I could carry on, as there is so much trouble and strife in this world. But He has promised never to leave us nor to foresake us. I have found it to be True. So many times in my life that when I had to face trouble that seemed too grievous to bear. He is always there to help me and see me through. I walk through the valley of the shadow of death and I will fear no evil. For thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me; Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

A SOUL IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE.

Sister Dora A. Smith

Elgin, Ore. 97827
May 21, 1989

Dear Sister Hastings;

Remembering that when you visited us in Yakima, Wn. last year you ask that I write you. I shall now make an attempt knowing that the Lord must be in the matter or it will profit nothing.

In reading the scriptures oft-times one word will leap forward from the verse and take possession of our mind and by the grace of an almighty God, we are, with great joy, allowed to see more deeply into the mystery and the beauty of his word. Such, I hope, has been my experience in reading the following verses.

Gen. chap. 2 verse 8. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden: and there he put the man whom he had formed. In the planting of this garden, to this writer's understanding, lies the basis of all things predestinated by our creator God. Cause produces effect and God is the cause of all causes, whether they be primary or secondary. Even the direction that man must face was predetermined before he was placed in the garden, for the garden was planted eastward.

In mans being placed in the garden, that was planted eastward, he was so placed in a natural sense looking forward to a new day when with the rising of the sun comes hope of rain or warmth to bring forth abundance from the earth in order that these natural bodies might be nourished; but moreover in a spiritual sense man's face was set to the east looking to the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who was to come in the flesh and lay down his life for the redemption of all who were created in Christ Jesus from before the foundation of the world.

This was the explanation of all God's people who were born under the law dispensation for they were given the promise that the redeemer would come and save man from his sin by laying down his life for the redemption of all whom God had chosen out of the world. Some seven hundred years before his coming into the world, Isaiah states, Chap. 53 verse 7, he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. The word is instead of shall be surely assures us that in the mind and purpose of our triune God, Jesus has ever stood as the perfect sacrifice for the redemption of those who are

given a hope, for it is written that he who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

By the word of history, we who came into this natural life during this grace dispensation, possess the knowledge that God fulfilled his promise of a saviour, in the form of Jesus Christ, yet we too have our faces set to the east looking to the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. John chap. 5 verse 28-29 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; etc. So our hope is anchored as we look to this day knowing that he is the fulfillment of our salvation.

Gen. chap. 3 verse 24 reads; So he drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life. (Jesus Christ). It would seem from the language of this verse that from the time it pleased God to drive the man from the garden until this present day that the Cherubims and the flaming sword have ever been eastward keeping the way of the tree of life. It is the desire of all who are born of the spirit to, from time to time, feel the presence of our Lord and Saviour within our breasts enhancing our faith and hope for we have all come to know that without him we can do nothing.

It is needful for those who come to this knowledge that they pass under the flaming sword in order that all dross be comsumed, that they be killed to the love of sin and that not one glimmer of self righteousness remain. It would seem that the Prophets and the four Gospels are typified by the Cherubims for we read that the law is our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith and that the scriptures are they that testify of me.

(Jesus).

Dear Sister, if we are led by the Spirit in this writing give all praise unto the Lord, but if by the mind of man, lay all fault at my door for I have no desire to place a burden upon your mind and heart.

Forgive us for being so slow to write. Give our love to all the brethren.

In Gospel Bonds,
Lloyd C. Spikes

Monday, May 12, 1986

Dear Brother Haygood,

I am sure that in my weak way I can say nothing to lift you either physically or spiritually, but I feel compelled to let you know how very much you were missed among us this weekend. I believe with all my heart that every one of us can truthfully say there is indeed a void when you're not with us for we surely love you and thank the Lord for what you mean to us. How I do hope God in His mercy has blessed you to feel better by now and He will continue to give you strength and health.

The entire weekend was so precious to me, I wish I knew how to thank our gracious Lord for making it possible for me to be there. It is the first conference I've been blessed to

be in , and the first time I 've been away from my home for 24 hours since Dec . 7 , 1985 . Oh , how sweet it was ! I have been , and still am , so guilty of taking His blessings for granted , failing even to thank Him as I ought for the wonderful privilege of hearing His blessed word proclaimed on almost every Lord 's Day , and to be among those dear precious saints that if not deceived , I love so dearly . When I am providentially hindered , how I do feel led to see my negligence in thanking and praising Him for His great goodness and mercy . Oh , I have surely been pressed down of late , sorely tempted and tried , full of self - pity , so weak , so vile , so prone to sin , indeed I do wonder if I have been born again . But , as Bro . Joe and Bro Jimmy gave me such sweet words of encouragement saying " Be thankful and rejoice that you are made aware of these very feelings , for there is a purpose , and surely it is to strengthen and increase your faith in our all-wise , all-powerful merciful Heavenly Father ", Yes , I surely believe , if I know my heart , that to feel His great love and tender mercy shed upon one so sinful as I , far surpasses anything this world has to offer .

Bro . Jimmy was blessed to speak so sweetly from Eph . 4:32 and Eph . 5 — most of the chapter . How Paul 's heart was filled with love for those dear saints and he admonished them to " walk in love ," for as love is surely the greatest element in discussing or interpreting the word of God , surely His people must be filled , by the spirit and grace of God to be kind one to another , forgiving even as God for Christ 's sake hath forgiven them . We know that God can and does supply the grace needed for that closer walk with Him . Thanks be to God who giveth the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord . Oh , how far short I do measure up , how I do fail in so many ways to obey , to keep my eyes and my heart stayed on Him and to thank and praise His great and holy name ! Oh wretched man that I am , who shall deliver me from this body of death ? Surely it is my hearts ' desire to feel and to know He is our all in all , " for of Him , and through Him , and to Him , are all things , to whom be glory forever ."

Then , on Sunday Bro . Shannon was surely blessed of God to speak to my heart on patience , oh how I do try to beg for it , I hope the Lord places in my heart that longing to be still and wait upon Him . I know in and of myself I can do nothing but plead for His mercy and grace to guide me as I know I must have patience with my dear little mother who is like a little child and requires assistance with almost everything .

Then Bro . Joe was given from the Lord above to proclaim God 's great love and concern for His disciples , as to all His people , in the 14th chapter of John . He knew what He was facing , the great sacrifice He was to make , or to be , for His people , yet He was not concerned for Himself , but for them — No self - pity! Oh , to be humbled and made submissive to whatever task is set before us for His grace is sufficient , and to know that in this world we shall have tribulations , but Paul says " if we suffer , we shall also reign with Him ". Is anything more precious to us than that blessed sweet hope that when this life is over we shall be at rest and peace with Him for ever

more !

Bro . Haygood , please remember me , tho I 'm so unworthy of even your thoughts , may you be given to pray for me . And if I know how to beseech our great Redeemer I pray, if it be His will to restore to you health and strength . May His blessings continue to be upon dear Sister Haygood and all of your sweet family

With love in Christ I hope ,
Cloma McLaughlin

Dear Elder Haygood ,

I got a letter from Sister Cloma and she said that you were not doing too well . You 've been on my mind and the Lord provided me with some time so I thought I 'd attempt to write you .

I heard a sermon entitled " The Groanings of Encouragement " taken from Romans 8 : 18-27 . I felt very uplifted after hearing the text expounded . (I have one of Daddy's old Bibles and the pages in Romans are almost worn thin . This book was one of his favorites .) It started out by stating that a child of God is on a pilgrimage or journey — strangers and pilgrims . Abraham only built altars and owned a grave . 1 Peter 2:11 " Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims , abstain from fleshly lusts , which war against the soul . " Sometimes this journey through life can be extremely difficult . Naturally speaking , we would think that the child of a king would have an easy life of luxury . " And if children , then heirs ; heirs of God , and joint - heirs with Christ ; if so be that we suffer with Him , that we may be also glorified together ." Rom . 8:17 . This is completely opposite in the spiritual realm . A child of the King is so united with Christ that he must to some degree travel the same path . Christ's path was one of great suffering so our suffering should not surprise us . " That I may know Him , and the power of His resurrection , and the fellowship of His sufferings , being made conformable unto His death ." Phil 3:10 .

There are two grounds in the text for great encouragement . . . the glory to come and the ministry of the Holy Spirit . Romans 8:18 . " For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us ." There is a great disproportion between any sufferings when compared to the glory to come . The sufferings are not even worthy to be compared on an imaginary scale or balance . Groanings cry forth from creation for there is a curse on it . Even it is looking forward to the glory to come . The child of God groans within waiting for the redemption of the body . (verbalized in Rom . 7:24) There will be a conflict (Gal 5 :17) throughout the life of a child of God . We now have the first fruits - fortaste pledge of what is to come — a present work within us ; yet , the redemption of our body is yet to come . " Who shall change our vile body , that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body . . . " Phil . 3:21 This should occupy our thoughts . Our sufferings are but transient and momentary . We should think upon the day of liberation — the expecta -

tion of glory to come. Glory is coming so we should be patient and not discouraged as we suffer here. Hope looks to the future. The fullness is yet to come. We look forward with certainty to that which is to come with eager patience. It is of great encouragement to know that the Holy Spirit intercedes. He knows our needs and comes to our aid with groanings. God has provided us with two intercessors— Jesus at the right hand and the Holy Spirit who dwells within each child of God. His prayer is perfect — according to the will of God. " Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, " Eph. 3:20. What great security we have in Him!

The oppositions and trials should not be of discouragement to us because of the work of the Holy Spirit and because of the future hope which is a certainty to come.

I can't relate all that was said, but it caused me to meditate some on this blessed glory. I do hope to see you this weekend.

With Love,
Judy

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8 / 89
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

ARTICLES

CHURCHES I HAVE SERVED
BY
O.K. TENCH

FORWARD

It won't be too long that my voice will be silent and my service shall end. Not for any glory that's due me, for by the grace of God, I am what I am. If in my life or ministry, someone has felt to have been benefited... Give God the praise. Perhaps, after I am gone, someone might like to know what I believed and where I served.

I was born January 23, 1911. My parents were Isham F. Tench and Sallie L. " Campbell " Tench. I was the third of seven children. My life was like most poor boys. I went to school until I was thirteen years old, barely finished the seventh grade. In 1926, my parents sent me to Ferrum Training School which was very religious at that time. The first night I was there, we were told to go to our rooms and pray and if our roommates refused to report to the authorities and they would take care of them. At that time, I thought everybody there but me was a Christian. I felt to be such a sinner that I was afraid to try to pray. On Sunday, the only Sunday I was there, we had to go to church. It has been fifty eight years ago, yet I can close my eyes and see that scene. The president sitting inside of the round railing during the service and a

group of students kneeling around the outside. This service I witnessed there caused me to want to leave the place more than any other thing. I felt that I would be forced to engage in this worship. So after six days, I came back home. My mother was very disappointed. As time past, I still have serious feelings about my soul. At a revival meeting, the old minister said, if we would give him our hand or join the church, the things that caused us to sin or our unworthy feelings would be taken away. So I went up with others that were joining. I remember one lady saying to me... Kinsey, I am glad you have joined the church, you have always been a good boy. Down in my heart, I knew it wasn't true. The next day I was miserable, now I had become a hypocrite.

I thought maybe when I was baptized, maybe I would feel better, but this also failed to give me relief. Then I thought when I take communion, I'll feel better. After the one time, I was so condemned... I never took it again. One of the members said to me, you must have done something wrong, yet he would get drunk and still take it. I still went there, but took no part in the service. I started to dance, but never really learned how. But then I began to be miserable on the dance floor.

One Sunday, on the outside of the church a boy said that the Bible said, " Jacob have I loved " and " Esau have I hated" and I disputed it but he told me where to find it. I found the scripture and began to read and had never read before. I found that the bible taught election, but I wasn't in it. There became a great conflict in my life. It seemed that there were two of me — one was against the other. I began to talk of the bible to anyone who would listen. I really didn't know who believed this doctrine. But when I went among the Old Baptist, I could detect a difference in their preaching and others. In my mind, I could see each of them building as if it were a house of logs. The difference was the Old Baptist finished it and topped it off, while the others always left it unfinished, as if I had to finish it. I could find no comfort in this doctrine. Also, when I began to talk on the scripture, someone would say, if they didn't believe it, " That's Old Baptist Doctrine ". Others who believe it would say, " You are going to preach ". I began going down to Old Chapel Church to hear Elder Stegall and I found comfort in the gospel of grace. But I became afraid if I kept going, I was going to join. One Saturday afternoon when they had services down there I had a great conflict of mind, I decided to take the mule and plow that afternoon. I got about half way to the field when something caused me to rush the old mule back to the farm and get ready as quickly as I could and go to church.

In the year of 1930, something very drastic happened to me. I think for a few days, I was very disturbed in mind. I left home on a T-Model Ford car and went to Roanoke. As I think of those days, I have a very hazed memory. I found myself staying just a few doors from the Old Baptist Church. On a Sunday, I went into their service. It seemed I had

just found a home . However , I did not join that day. But since that day, I have never doubted that the Old Baptist is the true church . These were the depression days, but I got a very poor paying job and worked there a few months . I was satisfied just to go to church for awhile . But one day , Elder J .P . Helms was preaching about the shepherds hearing the angels , saying glory to God in the highest , peace on earth and good will to men. I couldn't keep my seat, I went up and was received in the church . I didn't know anyone there and they didn't know me. They asked me about being baptized and I told them I had been baptized. They said, they didn't accept that, so I left then and came home . After a few weeks I became anxious about it and asked Elder Stegall to baptize me . One cool morning in May , he baptized me , and something was left there that hasn't bothered me since.

I had my membership at Old Chapel . Then I became impressed to preach, and Elder Stegall encouraged me . I went with him to meetings . We went to Town Creek Church and stayed all night at Dock Davis' home . They had a service at someone's home that night and we went . Several preachers preached and I couldn't hold back any longer, so I got up and tried to talk a few minutes . I really don't remember what I said . Elder Stegall was very kind to me under this burden . At times at Old Chapel and Bethel where I was known, I tried to preach without much liberty , until one Saturday afternoon at Old Chapel. It seemed to me as I began to talk, the words flowed to me and the most pleasant sensation I had ever had . The members rejoiced with me. And me a fool , thought . . .Now I have learned how and it is so pleasant and easy. In my folly, I thought now that I had learned how — I 'll dress up tomorrow and come here and really preach .

I believe now the Lord had a lesson for me. The next day it rained so hard nobody went, and it was six months before I had liberty any - more . Now after 50 years , I know that I can't preach, unless it's given to me at the time. In the year of 1937, I was ordained . That year I was called to Union Church . I went the first time on the first Sunday in October 1937 . I had married on Friday before .

In the year of 1938 , I was called to Weatherford , which I am still serving . After six years , I gave up Union Church because of the lack of interest of the members . I had concluded that the Lord had not called me there. In the year of 1946 , I was called to Chapel Church , where I am still serving . In 1947 , I was called to Springfield, where I am also still serving . In 1952 , I was called to Malmaison Church and am still serving there. I think sometimes I am greatly blessed to have these churches .

I was quite a bit younger in the year of 1937 , and I would like to recall some of the pleasant memories of the past when I started to Weatherford . There was a little boy named Raymond Goad , just three years old who came with his parents and often sat with his grandfather . I saw him grow up to manhood . In the meantime , I baptized his grandfather and his mother. After he had sown his wild oats, I baptized

he and his wife , Phyllis , and his sisters Mabel and Dianne . I shall never forget going with Raymond and Phyllis home one day for lunch. We sat down to eat and I felt impressed to encourage them to join the church, they both began to shed tears . The next month , they were received . After a few years , Raymond was burdened to preach. We think he has a great gift. Most of the old members who were there at Weatherford in 1938 have passed on on . We now have about 50 or 60 . One Sunday, I baptized 12. Some of them went to Springfield, some went to Malmaison and some to Weatherford. We have good attendance . A lot of young people , boys and girls bring their friends, which we appreciate .

In the year of 1946 , after I had served Chapel Church several years as the Pastor , Elder Stegall had been absent serving Roanoke Church . After he resigned , they called me to serve. We now have 18 members, as the older ones pass on on, others come in. I baptized 5 on one Sunday . We have good attendance .

In 1947 , I was called to serve Springfield . Elder Stegall 's health had failed. Several years ago, Elder Denver Simpson felt impressed to preach , and is now serving as co-pastor . Under his leadership , the building has had many improvements such as new pews , and an addition with tables and bathrooms. I couldn 't name all the members I have pleasant memories of . I think often of brother Louis Willis , a deacon who I baptized — the most spiritual man I ever knew . Sometimes , it seems I can hear him say " Amen " when a preacher says something that he loved . Another member , Raymond Dalton , a deacon who carried mail until retirement . Before we had telephone service up here , when I needed to conduct a funeral at Gretna, many a night have I heard a car drive up to my yard, and maybe I had already gone to bed, but I 'd come to the upstairs window and he 'd call brother Tench. . . They want you to hold a funeral service many of them I didn 't know.

I wonder how many funerals I have had , and tried to remember them a few years ago, but after 4 or 5 hundred , I knew I couldn 't remember them all. I baptized a young man named Melvin Shelton at Springfield, who was impressed to preach. After a period of time, he went to another church and now he is their pastor .

In the year of 1952 , I was discharged from Roanoke Church where I 'd been supplying .

Upon receiving a letter from Malmaison Church, I went and have been going since . I have many pleasant memories of things that have happened there. Years ago, a lady came to me and said , I am a member of the Methodist Church — they are good friends of mine , but I am not happy there , and I want to join Malmaison . I advised her to go there and tell them just how she felt and then to come back . I thought if she was sincere , she 'd be back . She took my advice and came back with the blessings of her former

friends . I baptized her and she became a faithful member until she died .

Time and space will not permit me to mention all the members and memories . But sister Kate Dodd , who passed away two years ago , was a person to someone who knew her , you just couldn 't forget . She was clerk at Malmaison for many years . She had her place to sit and she said what she thought . She attended long after her body told her she wasn 't able to . If one tried to help her, she would say, " Get out of my way ". I can still close my eyes and look to the left of the pulpit and see her sitting there looking like she was asleep , but she wasn 't .

Sister Mattie Williams who passed away several years ago, had her place that she always sat. When we built the new church , she found the same geographical location in the new church that she had in the old one and sat there . She was facing from the pulpit about the center of the left row of pews about the third pew from the front. She was very kind to me and faithful to the church . It has been a pleasure to baptize two of her sons , Julian and Burnell and the daughter , Naomi . After brother Julian joined the church , he 'd write me rich letters . I asked him if he was impressed to preach , he denied it . But it was like fire shut up in his bones , he couldn't resist it . He is now co-pastor at Malmaison and is serving other churches . Brother Burnell Williams is a deacon at Malmaison and song leader— one of the best that I know .

I regret that there isn 't space enough to mention all the members of these churches we 've tried to serve . But I 'd like to mention the deacons who have taken much of the load and responsibility off of me and are such a blessing to the churches .

As an overseer which an elder is called to have faithful deacons to council with is a great blessing . The deacons at Malmaison are Burnell Williams and Richard Stegall . At Springfield , Homie Dalton and Walter Hamlett . At Weatherford , Stafford Houston and Marvin Brumfield . At Chapel , Clay Brown and Fred Murphy .

I don 't know how long I 'll live or how much longer I 'll be needed at these churches , but I have no ambition other than to finish my course in the service that I feel to be called to .

The following is a circular letter I wrote to the Association .

TO THE MESSENGERS AND ELDERS THAT COMPOSE THE PIGG RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION AND TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS—

Greetings :

According to the law of averages , this will be the last circular letter, I shall ever write . So we might call it a farewell address .

I implore you that we might make this a time to associate , rather than to legislate and all that is within us seek to keep peace . May this association never attempt to Lord over the churches that it is composed of . May it not interfere with the internal affairs of our Sisters ' Associations . Above all , let us remember that we too are frail .

Let the beautiful words of the Bible — grace, patience, longsuffering, forbearance, forgiveness and charity, which is the love of God rule in our hearts. When we add all the good sermons, all the sweet fellowship, all the good meetings, and the precious memories of days gone by, and subtract peace from it, we have nothing left.

The time is soon coming when our voices will be silent. The earth will claim our bodies. The mourners go about the streets, because man goeth to his long home. (Ecclesiastes 12:5).

Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to thee which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. (Colossians 3:15).

O.K. Tench
December 1984

THE WOLF AND THE LAMB

" The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them."

There is a view prevalent among many that this prophesy is a natural phenomenon that will come to pass before the end of time. According to this view, the natural wolf will actually feed beside the natural lamb and cause it no harm. We know that the wolf is a natural-born enemy of sheep. It kills sheep and devours them whenever possible. We also know that God is sovereign and does whatsoever He will. Certainly, therefore, He could bring this to pass in nature if He so purposed. However, Isaiah is prophesying concerning God's people and His spiritual work within them.

" The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb." The wolf is spoken of in the scriptures as being ravin. This is one who preys on another and devours him; who seeks to kill and destroy. Jacob " Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil." Christ said " Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits." The wolf scatters the sheep and seeks food by its own labors. It is the natural enemy of the lamb.

Carnal man is a ravin wolf. " The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Therefore, it is the enemy of the spiritual man. The fleshly or carnal nature of man cannot keep the law of God, has no interest in spiritual things, and indeed is vile and wretched. Dear brethren, is your fleshly nature as the wolf? If not, you are far beyond me. For I am as the hymn writer wrote, " I am so vile, so prone to sin, I fear that I'm not born again."

In contrast to the wolf is the lowly and meek lamb. Sheep must be cared for by a shepherd. They do not obtain food and water by their own labors. Rather, they must rely on their shepherd. Psalm 78:52, " But made his own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock." St. John 10:4, " And when he putteth forth his

own sheep , he goeth before them , and the sheep follow him : for they know his voice ." David said of his shepherd , " He maketh me to lie down in green pastures : he leadeth me beside the still waters ."

Christ is the lamb that dwells within his people . When John saw Christ, he said " Behold the Lamb of God , which taketh away the sin of the world ." He stood a lamb slain from before the foundation of the world. There are many types of him as the Lamb of God ; but when we behold him on the cross, we see him " brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb , so he opened not his mouth ."

Now, the wolf and the lamb dwell together . Being opposites and enemies , they are in conflict and warfare . The wolf did not and could not of its own volition decide to dwell with the lamb . Two natures so opposite , how could they possibly dwell together ? You know that your carnal nature or wolf is vile and sinful and will do anything . You were , by nature , children of wrath even as others . How , then , did this wolf dwell with the lamb ?

Matthew says the birth of Christ was on this wise . Mary , being a virgin , was overshadowed by the power of God and the Holy Ghost came upon her . This was a virgin birth in that it involved no works of the flesh. It was by grace only. That birth is experienced by everyone of God's elect. The wolf and lamb now dwell together . The power of God that overshadowed you enabled this wonderful event to take place as He had given Isaiah to prophesy centuries before .

" And the leopard shall lie down with the kid , and the calf , and the young lion and the fatling together." A leopard is covered with spots. We, too , are covered with the spots of sin . We can no more change our sinful condition than a leopard can change its spots . A leopard is swift and watches for the weak to feed upon . In the revelation that Christ showed to John in the Isle called Patmos , John saw a beast rise up out of the sea and it was like unto a leopard. This beast was the works of the flesh rising up out of the sea of humanity . You will notice that it came up out of the sea . It did not come down from heaven. Kid means young or child as does calf , young lion, and fatling. The child of grace is set forth here . The leopard shall lie down with these together . In other words , when grace is manifested in you , it causes you to become as a little child and your self - works cease . You have entered into a rest that is for the children of God. When you enter into that rest in Christ, you have ceased from your own works . David said " the Lord maketh me to lie down in green pastures." In order to feed upon the green pastures of the gospel, you are made to lie down or cease from your works .

Christ said "Suffer little children and forbid them not , to come unto me : for of such is the kingdom of heaven ." " And Jesus called a little child unto him , and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily, I say unto you , Except ye be converted , and become as little children , ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven ." You , as a child of the heavenly King , are dependent upon

the Lord to feed and water you with the gospel , to clothe you with his righteousness , to lead you in the way of truth , and to give you understanding . You no longer rely on works of the flesh , for you found that way leads to death and destruction . You have a rest that surpasses all understanding . The leopard now lies down with the kid , the calf , the young lion , and the fatling together .

" And a little child shall lead them ." Isaiah also prophesied that " unto you a child is born , unto you a son is given ." He was speaking of a certain people — unto you — a child is born . This is the same child he was prophesying about that shall lead you . When the wise men were brought out of their country , they were following a star . The scripture doesn 't say how many wise men there were , though the world says there were three . These were a type of God 's elect that were being led out of their own countries into a land they had not known . They were led from their own works to grace or rest as was Israel when Joshua led them into Canaan . These wise men were being led by a star . A star so high and so bright and yet only they could see it and follow it . Only they were given this wisdom . A king and his learned men of the day wanted to find this child to destroy it . Yet they could not see nor discern this star to follow it . It was a type of this little child that was , in fact , leading them to a certain place . They could not follow this star until the child was born unto them . This child was the lamp unto their feet , and the light unto their path . This child led them to a manger wherein was laid a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes . This child born unto you was wrapped in the decrees and purposes of almighty God . He was born under the law and made obedient to it that he could fulfill it for you who are called by his grace . You unto whom this child was born . Swaddling clothes set forth that this child was made flesh that he might suffer , shed his precious blood , and die . These wise men were led to this place to see this wonderful truth . This child was laid in a manger where the animals feed . This was an appropriate place because his people are brought to this place to feed upon him . You are led by this little child that is born unto you . These wise men were given a wisdom that was not of the flesh , but of the spirit . Once these wise men experienced the birth of this child , they could not go back the same way they had come . Instead , they went a different way . Once you experience the birth of this child , you cannot go back the same way you came . This child leads you a different way from that time forward .

Elder Cleo D . Robertson

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your " Signs " and without missing any copies , be sure to inform us of any change of address .

Editors

MEETINGS

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Smith River Association will be held, the Lord willing, the first weekend in September at Laurel Creek Church in Floyd County , Virginia , beginning on Friday at 11:00 a .m . The dates are September 1, 2, and 3rd .

The church is located on St. Rt. 608 . From Floyd take Rt. 221 east to Rt. 612 turn left . Follow Rt. 612 approximately 5 miles turn left on Rt. 673 follow Rt . 673 to Rt . 608 turn right on Rt. 608 follow to church . From Roanoke take Rt. 221 West to Rt. 610 turn right . Follow Rt. 610 approximately 5.8 miles turn left on Rt. 673 . Stay on Rt. 673 to Rt. 608 . Turn right on Rt. 608 to church . From Christiansburg turn off of Rt. 11 and Rt. 460 onto N . Franklin Street at the court house . N . Franklin changes to Rt. 615 and at Pilot , Va . Rt. 615 changes to Rt. 612 . After you pass Gearhearts Garage Rt. 612 turns right . Follow Rt. 612 to Rt. 673 turn right on Rt. 673 to Rt. 608 . Turn right on Rt. 608 to church . Watch for association Signs .

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us .

Hale Terry , Clerk

PSALM 118 : 1

O Give thanks unto the Lord ; for he is good : because his mercy endureth for ever .

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 1989

Mrs . Charles Stewart , NC	7.00
L .W . Nichols , VA	2.00
Mrs . Letcher Smith , FL	12.00
Mrs . Grace Manly , FL	5.00
Miss Reidy Pickral , VA	50.00
Mrs . Martha Newnam , NC	2.00
Horace E . Walker , VA	3.00
Glen Slate , VA	5.00
One that Loves book , TN	10.00
Don E . Ferguson , CAN	2.00
W .W . Odom , FL	2.00
Mrs . Betty M . Nutter , MD	5.00
Mrs . Julia R . Garner , NC	2.00
Mrs . Ruth Clark , ME	2.00
F .J . Plaster , VA	2.00
Mrs . Mary Stanfield , VA	2.00
Robert Miles , FL	5.00

PSALM 118 : 17

I shall not die , but live , and declare the works of the Lord .

OBITUARIES

MAMIE BROWN HUDSON

We at Gill's Creek Church have lost a lovely Sister in Christ , Sister Mamie Brown Hudson . It seemed so suddenly she was taken from us . She was at meeting on the second Sunday in February , and called to rest on Wednesday of the same week .

Sister Mamie was born April 2 , 1913 , the daughter of Lee Taylor Brown and Cordaia Bell Brown . She passed from this life on February 15 , 1989 . Her survivors are four sons , John Hudson , Arney Hudson , William Hudson , and Mike Hudson . One daughter , Ruby H . Spicer , nine grandchildren , and six great grand - children . Three sisters , Marie Davis, Reva Hutcheson , and Lamona Clark .

Sister Mamie united with Gill 's Creek Primitive Baptist Church on February , 1949 . She loved the Church and meeting with the many brothers and sisters at church and in her home . She also loved the Doc - trine of God our saviour . Her gentle and kind way made her be one to know her was to love her .

Her funeral was conducted at Lotz Roanoke Chapel by her Pastor Elder Larry Hollandsworth . She was laid to rest in Blue Ridge Memorial Gardens in Roanoke , Virginia to await the second coming of our Lord. We feel our loss is her eternal gain .

Elder Larry Hollandsworth , Mod .
Sister Annie Dent , Clerk

WILLIAM ALBERT LESTER HUDSON

On February 18 , 1989 our dear Brother , Deacon William Albert Lester Hudson was called to rest .

On June 7 , 1899 he was born the son of Brother Bernard O . Hudson and Sister Emma Cora Lee Perdue Hudson .

He was married to Audrey M . Brooks . The Lord blessed them with sixty - seven years of marriage . To this union was born three children , two sons Calvin C . Hudson and Carlton Lee Hudson and one daugh - ter Hazel H . Lowell , seven grand - children .

He is survived by four sisters , Mrs . Mae Divers , Sister Hattie Dalton , Sister Maggie Simpson , and Sister Ernie Flora .

Brother Albert loved the Church and his brothers and sisters in Christ Christ . He united with Gill 's Creek Primitive Baptist Church on August 14 , 1949 and was baptized by Elder Posey L . Plybon the same day . He was appointed assistant clerk on September 9 , 1950 , ordained a Deacon on December 12 , 1953 , and appointed Clerk on February 11 , 1956 .

Brother Albert was loved by his Brothers and Sisters in the Church , by his dear family and by his many friends and neighbors .

We miss him at Gill 's Creek Church , but we feel our loss is his eternal gain .

His funeral was conducted at Arrington - Bussey Chapel by his Pastor , Elder Larry Hollandsworth . He was laid to rest in High Street Cemetery , Rocky Mount Virginia , to await the second coming of our Lord .

Elder Larry Hollandsworth , Mod .
Sister Annie Dent , Clerk

ELDER ALLEN C. SMITH

We bow in humble submission to the will of our merciful and kind Heavenly Father who called from our midst our beloved Brother and Moderator Elder Allen C. Smith.

Brother Allen was born Jan. 2, 1903 and died Feb. 28, 1989, making his stay on this earth 86 yrs., 1 mon. and 26 days. We feel our loss is his Eternal gain, our deepest sympathy goes out to his family and may they be comforted by God's Love and words of comfort is our prayers. Although there is a deep void in this writers heart.

I'm made to rejoice in this because he had a hope in an all wise, all Powerful, and Merciful God.

He was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace and not by man's works, he had a hope that when he awoke that he would be liken unto Christ's Glorious body, and be taken on the wings of Gods Love to that Celestial City, Eternal Heavens, whos builder and maker is God.

He became a member of Noami Primitive Baptist Church in 1949 and was ordained an Elder in 1952. He moved his membership to Fair-View Primitive Baptist Church in 1963, when it was built. He was faithful to his God and to the Church, standing on the Writings that are recorded in Holy writ, and speaking with him concerning the Scriptures, he made you search yourself. Although we mourn at his passing, let us also rejoice in the Lord, who doeth all things well.

He was married in 1923 to Dora Young, who preceded him in death. To this marriage was born seven daughters and one son. One daughter precedes him in death and at his passing he leaves to mourn, six daughters and a son, 23 grandchildren, 33 great grandchildren.

Services was conducted at his Church by this writer and was layed to rest beside his wife at Tyler Mountain Memorial Gardens, W.V.

Written by Request of Church.

Resolved; One copy for Church records, one copy for his family and one to be sent to, the Signs of the Times.

Elder Ronald K. Crouch, Moderator
Brother Okey K. McClure, Clerk

HARRY GARVINE TROUTT

On February 24, 1989 it pleased our heavenly Father to call from our midst Brother Harry Garvine Troutt.

He was born August 6, 1909 in Sumner County, Tennessee to the late Coley Troutt and Ruth Atkerson Troutt. On September 1, 1944 he was married to the former Rosa May Hershman who survives. In addition to his wife, he is survived by one son, Garvine Troutt, Norfolk, Virginia, two sisters, Rena Neel, Durango, Colorado, Kathleen Williams, West-

moreland, Tennessee, one brother, Bishop Troutt , Westmoreland , Tennessee and one grandchild . He was a retired loom fixer from Dan River , Inc ., Danville , Virginia with thirty years service .

Brother Harry was received into the fellowship of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on March 27 , 1977 and was baptized on April 10 , 1977 by his former pastor , Elder D .V . Spangler . He was a firm believer in salvation by grace . He loved his church and was faithful to attend the meetings regularly until his progressive illness prevented it .

My family had known him for many years . We especially appreciated him for all the nice things he did for our parents before us. He was a good neighbor and was well respected in his community .

Funeral services were held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on February 27 , 1989 by his pastor, Elder Kenneth R. Key and Elder Paul Lamb. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery under a mound of beautiful flowers there to await the second coming of our Lord . May his family be blessed to see that although they miss him greatly , their loss is his eternal gain .

Humbly submitted ,
Connie M . Page

JOHNNIE HARDING WALKER

As we have had taken from our midst, brother, Deacon and dear friend , Johnnie Harding Walker .

He was born January 28 , 1922 , the son of Brother Johnnie Milton Walker and Geneva Adkins Walker . He was married to Myrtle Pagans Walker , to this union was born two daughters , Sister Judy Walker Wimmer and Gloria Walker Stone . After her decease he married Sister Ruthie Dudley Walker , to this union was born one son , Mark Allen Walker . He was blessed with five grandchildren and one great grandchild . He is also survived by six sisters , Sister Lona Doss , Sister Esther Dillon, Matilda Amos, Rachel Jefferson , Nancy Lee , and Jane Carter , two brothers Brother Jack Walker and L .M . (Billy) Walker .

He joined Gill 's Creek Primitive Baptist Church the second weekend in November , 1962 and was baptized by Elder P .L . Plybon .

He was ordained a Deacon on May 11 , 1968 to an office to which he served well . The good Lord blessed Brother Walker to walk softly before his brothers , but to uphold to the order of the Church , and to the Doctrine of the Salvation by God . He was blessed in prayer and to serve his office as a Deacon in accordance with the scripture . We miss him at Gill 's Creek Church and the many other places where the Children of the Heavenly King assemble .

He passed from this life on January 12 , 1989 . His funeral was conducted by Elders Denver Simpson , Clarence Stone and Larry Hollandsworth. He was laid to rest to await the second coming of our Lord in Franklin Memorial Park . We feel our loss is his eternal gain .

Elder Larry Hollandsworth , Mod .
Sister Annie Dent , Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
Route 1 . Box 420 Keeling, Virginia 24566

If I Knew

If I knew how to thank Him
For my very breath of life
And for His care keeping me
From a world full of strife

If I knew how to thank Him
For my first and second birth
That taught me very early
His merits and this worth

If I knew how to thank Him
For fellowship with His sheep
The joy of Churches visited
And His Blessing our faith to keep

If I knew how to thank Him
For His son and precious blood
The full expression of His love
That binds us safe to God

If I knew how to thank Him
For a hope so pure and strong
For tender mercies and handfuls of purpose
I have reached as I humbly press along

If I knew how to thank Him
For His suffering on the cross
For His tears, persecution and death
That I would suffer no loss

If I knew how to thank Him
For His life after He died
Fulfilling a will when all things end
We shall with Him in Glory abide

If I knew how to thank Him
For but just a few of these
Or more of His Blessings my heart knows
I would be forever on my knees

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

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EDITORIAL

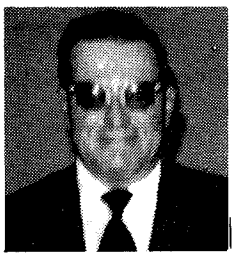
Elder C .B . Davis , Jr .

It is with a great feeling of unworthiness that I agreed to be on the staff of this much loved paper. I trust that God blesses me to adhere to the old way and uphold the principles set forth in the Prospectus of The Signs of the Times . I feel a weakness in the attempt to write for the wisest people on earth and my prayer is that God will direct my mind and pen . May He bless us who write and you who read with patience and understanding .

In Bonds of Love ,
C .B . Davis , Jr .

Dear Ones In Christ ,

I have been asked by several to write what I see in a few verses of The Word. I will attempt to do so with fear. I shall not be able to convey the fullness of beauty and therefore come short of my endeavors and be open for much criticism .

In the 24th Chapter of Genesis the third and fourth verses read — " And I will make thee swear by the Lord , the God of heaven , and the God of the earth , that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites , among whom I dwell ." " But thou shalt go unto my country and to my kindred and take a wife unto my son Isaac ." This was the command of Abraham to his oldest servant. We might note here that Isaac was born to Sarah when she felt she was beyond age for such . Sarah laughed when the Lord told her she would bring forth a son , thus the name Isaac in the Hebrew tongue means " laughter ". Let us here remember that the Lord told another that she would bear a son and she (Mary) also thought it impossible for she said " she knew no man ."

I feel this servant is typical of God 's ministers who are not told to go to the world (Canaanites) to seek The Bride but to go to His people . I 'm sure this servant began in great fear the journey set before him as we (if I might include myself) go with much fear and as he , with a prayer in our hearts . We must consider he was going to a place that he had not gone before and to visit a people he didn 't know .

The prayer in the heart of this

servant was that when he reached a certain well he would rest and seek water for himself and his camels. We note there were ten camels thus seeing the ten laws that in essence were conveying him (and us today) through Christ . For we each know the command of the master is per - fect and just. He desired of God that a damsel would meet him at the well and give him water and also his camels (this water typical of communion embodies the law as well as the servant and bride) . He saw his prayers answered in the person of Rebekah meaning flatter - ing or to please and gratify .

Rebekah went down and drew water and gave the servant drink and also his camels . How often do we receive of the church something that refreshes us along the way ? He asked her who she was and she replied she was the daughter of Nahor , brother of Abraham . She surely typifies the church who is truly related to Christ through His blood for it is His blood that makes us all relatives in spirit .

The servant relates to Rebekah his business (as we do also) to the church , and she told him there was room in the house of her family and also room and provender for his camels . We find always when the will of God is manifest that our prayers are answered and there is room and sustenance .

The servant and Rebekah leave the well and go to meet her people . This servant states his business to her family and tells them of his prayer and how he surely feels it is answered. There is no doubt or fear now (as it was in the beginning) for he sees the journey has prospered . God 's true ministers can feel the journey has been worth it all when they can feel for a few moments that truly there is communication be - tween them and the House of Faith .

Let us now behold what it is all about . This servant states that his master (God) is rich (verses 35 & 36) and hath given his all to his son Isaac (Christ) and he must have Rebekah return with him to be wife to Isaac . We as servants cannot carry you to Christ but we can indeed tell you where He dwells and that He is rich , in mercy , love , compassion , any and all things needed by the church (bride) .

We note that Rebekah is a virgin and as Mary , said she had known no man . The church cannot be adulter - ated because it is preserved in the blood of Christ . It knows no man (worldly) as its designer and are we not glad this is truth ? We know that she (the church) is virgin because she has the love of and love for He who rules all . She has not ; and cannot be polluted by the cunning - ness of the mind of man . Thanks be to God she shall remain virgin until the wedding is performed before the Throne of God .

Rebekah 's family is concerned about her going and asks that she remain ten days at least . We see again the ten laws which must be gone beyond in order for the Master and Bride to come together ; thus Christ fulfilled such that we may meet him some day . Her family is told so and that they must leave as soon as possible . We say to you of God's love that Christ waits today for the coming of the Bride and the same

feeling of longing to go , fills the heart of the Bride .

The servant and Rebekah make their journey together God 's mini - sters and the Bride are truly traveling together) going to a home the Bride hath not seen . I feel that sometimes ministers see through a glass darkly that home and encourage the Bride along the way . The journey is often hot (Satan is along) and dry (thus we thirst) and there are storms that except for God's grace would cause us to flee and seek shelter . We have been taught , however , that we already are sheltered underneath His wings .

They now approach home and Rebekah sees walking in a field a man and asks of the servant who he is . We know who He is for as we have seen Him (spiritually) walking the fields of Grace with handfulls of purpose we feel sure we shall see Him walking the fields of Salvation and Deliverance . The servant tells her it is the husband to be and with joy she alights from the camel (the law) and leaves worldly goods and the servant to meet this man face to face . My dear ones we shall leave everything here before we approach the One whom our souls lovest even the body of flesh that has carried the spirit all the way until death .

We as mortal beings cannot comprehend the joy and ectasy Rebekah surely felt as she ran to meet her husband to be . It is my prayer that we who are on a journey like unto this one (with which we can relate) will surely see our Savior in the realms of Glory and there know Him as the true Son to whom the Master (God) gave the wealth of salvation . He now in being the Husband , hath given wealth as inheritance and a home of glory where we shall dwell forever .

Now my dear readers if you find there is merit in my thoughts give the Master all the praise for I am but a lowly servant . If you find fault and do not agree then blame me for it is because of my weakness and not the Master 's .

Elder C . B . Davis , Jr .

CORRESPONDENCE

September 23 , 1976

Dear Brother and Sister Barron ,

As I sat here in my hospital room this morning , my mind was called to remember you dear sweet people who believe in salva - tion by Grace and Grace alone . How few we are that believe that God does all the saving and we do all of the sinning . But we know that God said only a few would be saved according to the election of Grace . Dear one , how I long to be with you this weekend but it is not in the arrangement of the Great God who rules all thing . I do hope and pray that you will have a sweet associa - tion in peace and love . Hoping the elders will be used to the maximum of their gift , knowing that if they are , then Jesus Christ will be preached and the believers will be comforted . What a blessing it is to hear Jesus Christ preached as the saviour of those given Him by the Father , also ,

what a joy it is to poor wayfaring strangers . If I had the strength , my desire would be to shout His blessed name from the housetop for what He has done for poor undone sinners which I am chief . How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believers ear .

Dear one , pray not for my natural sickness but pray that God will have mercy on this poor sinner and will lift his mind up above this low ground of sin and sorrow . My natural condition is not good but God moves in a mysterious ways His will to perform . What ever happens it is for the good of God 's people and He will not put more on us than we are able to bear . What is death but the door way to heaven for them that love God . How sweet it is when we are made satisfied to God 's will even if in the time of death . Only the children given to Sweet Jesus are ever satisfied with anything in this life . How glad we are that God has done everything for our salvation !

Be not concerned as those without hope but be comforted in what God does because He does everything well . Fear not for this one , for as the Apostle Paul had yet to preach the Gospel at Rome , so does this one if not deceived because of sin that dwells in me . That 's the surety that God has given me concerning my natural condition . Yes , this morning (5 a.m.) as I write to you my thoughts are how much sweeter it would be to with Jesus than to stay on this earth . Yet , how sweet and what peace I feel this morning just as if sweet Jesus had visited me and lifted me up from my trouble and sorrow . I feel just like Paul did , I hope , when he was lifted up into the third Heaven . I cannot tell the comfort and peace that I feel this morning . How I long for that feeling to last the rest of my life but knowing it will soon fade away as we cannot live on the mountain all our life but must go again to the valley . Then , we must suffer again because of our sinful nature .

The best the doctors know now is that I am not getting enough blood to my heart which means that some of the arteries are closing up . This can be fixed by taking medicine if the arteries are not too bad , if too bad then an operation will be required . The doctors are going to run several more tests before they will know what to do .

I hope this finds you feeling as well as usual . I know that you all are happy to have Sister Mary with you at this association time . She is so sweet and so much help . Forgive the writing and spelling and remember this sinner when at the throne of Grace .

In love ,
Elder G .D . Shipman

IT IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9 / 89
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE .

PSALM 2 : 11

Serve the Lord with fear , and rejoice with trembling .

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

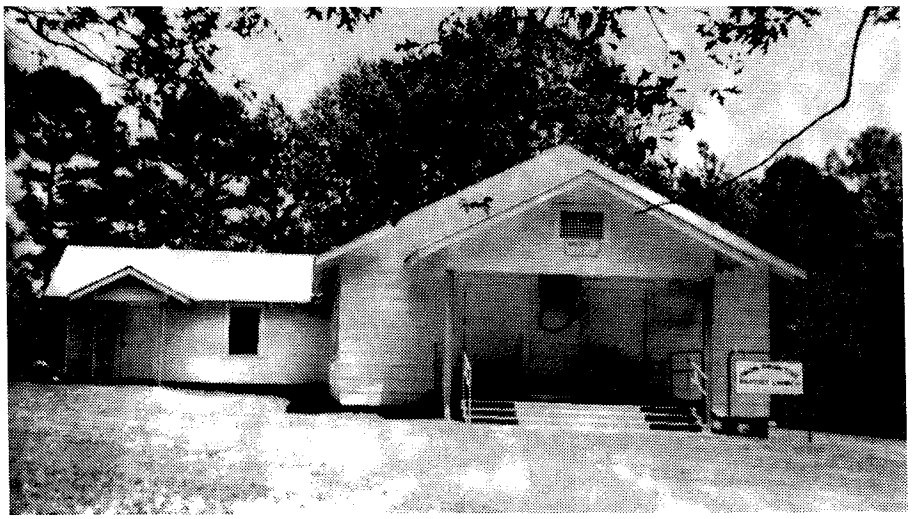

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

None of the present members of Union Primitive Baptist Church remember when the church was established , and her records were destroyed by fire on March 20 , 1943 . The church was organized about 1885 , or soon thereafter , in a school building called Oak Grove , and she was called by this name for many years . None of the members remember when her name was changed to Union . The old building was torn down and the present building erected in 1949 .

The names of her pastors , as remembered , were Elders Tom Nash , Tom Evers and Woody Smith . Records on hand show that Elder R .W . Rhodes was called in 1914 . Elder E .J . Lambert was called in 1942 to serve jointly with Elder Rhodes . In 1945 Elder Rhodes was called for as long as he should live . In 1946 Elder W.A. Spear was called to serve with Elders Lambert and Rhodes , and in 1947 Elder John Lee Smith was called . Of these Elders only Elder John L . Smith is still alive at this date .

Elder David E . Turner and Elder George W . Jones , both members of Union Church , are her present pastors . Brothers John E . Smith , Frank Pilgreen and C .C . Wilbanks are her present deacons .

Union Church is located in Union Parish , Louisiana , just South of Marion near the community of Linville .

Meetings are held each third Sunday at 10:30 and on Saturday before at 2:00 P .M . All lovers and seekers of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ are invited to come worship with us . Communion services are held in May and September .

ARTICLES

ISRAEL

According to my understanding of the Old Testament scriptures, the ethnic origin of all races, living in the world today, is traced directly to one of the three sons of Noah: Shem, Ham and Japheth, the order of their respective ages. Gen. 6:10. Abraham's national lineage is traced directly to Shem, the son of Noah. See Gen. 11 verses 10 and 26. The ethnic origin of the Gentiles is traced directly to Japheth, one of the three sons of Noah. Read Gen 8: verses 2 and 5. Thus, we have proven here by the scriptures that the Jews have their natural origin in Shem and the Gentiles have their natural origin in Japheth. I could enter further into the natural posterity of Ham, another son of Noah but do not feel that it is expedient to do so at this point.

The Jews were God's chosen people under the worship of the law in the prophetical or second dispensation of time. God made a covenant with Abraham saying, " God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Gen. 28:4,14. Paul confirms the above in Hebrews 6:13, " For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He sware by Himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee."

The scriptures tell also of the origin and early history of the Jews. Abraham, the father of the Jewish people, not only believed in God but he also worshipped Him. " And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God." James 2:23. " Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." Gal. 3:6. Abraham, his son, Isaac, and his grandson, Jacob, are known as the Hebrew patriarchs, or fathers. They lived, as best that I can tell from the scripture, about the year 1900 B.C. Jacob, who was also called Israel, had twelve sons. They were Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Zebulon, Issachar, Dan, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Joseph and Benjamin. All living Jews today are the descendants of one of these twelve sons. The twelve Tribes that later made up the Jewish people all descended from one of the above named Israel's (or Jacob's) sons who are the literal forerunners of the Jewish people. That is why the Jews are sometimes called the Children of Israel, or Israelites.

God's believing, elect or chosen people were made manifest in the first dispensation of time, as verified by His blessing of faith to these following names patriarchs: " By faith Abel offered unto God a more

excellent sacrifice than Cain , by which he obtained witness that he was righteous , God testifying of his gifts ." Hebs . 11:4 . " And Enoch walked with God : and he was not ; for God took him ." Gen . 5:23 . " By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death ; and was not found , because God has translated him : for before his translation he had this testimony , that he pleased God ." Heb . 11:5 .

As far as I am able to tell from the scriptures , there was only one race or nationality of people who lived in the first dispensation of time . This race of people was wiped out or destroyed in the flood or deluge of water when Noah , his wife , their three sons and three wives were spared from the waters of destruction . Noah and his family (eight souls) were of this race and all mankind today , regardless of race or nationality , must be descended from them and ultimately from Adam and Eve , our first parents .

God has had His chosen , elect people in the world since the beginning of time . This fact exists because they are His Seed , the Lord Jesus Christ who was with His Father when He made His everlasting covenant with His Son in the Counsel hall that was held in the annal of eternity . The Apostle Paul pinpoints this seed as follows , " " Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made . He saith not , And to seeds , as of many ; but as of one , And to thy seed , which is Christ ." Gal . 3:16 . As we have just pointed out above , they were here in the first dispensation . Concerning them it is recorded , " For until the law sin was in the world : but sin is not imputed when there is no law . Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses , even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam 's transgression , who is the figure of Him that was to come ." Roms . 5:13, 14 . While the Oracle of God (His order of Divine Worship) was not made manifest until after the flood , we must remember that His Seed was here prior to that time since He has declared , " Nevertheless He (God) left not Himself without a witness ." Acts 14:17 . The people of God , His Seed in Christ , have ever been identified by one glorious hall mark . This is the one , true , original faith . Job had the same faith that identified Noah , as well as Abel , Seth , the Apostle Paul , even down to the last heir of promise . True faith is the gift of God 's Spirit .

In order that the oracle of God (God 's Order of Divine Worship , given under the law , that culminated in the establishing of the Church by Jesus Christ) , could be delivered and set up , God appointed that the identification of His Seed must be designated , set apart , marked clearly and made manifest here in the time world . This identification and designation of this Spiritual Seed is first mentioned in Roms . 9:7. " For they are not all Israel , which are of Israel : Neither , because they are the seed of Abraham , are they all children : but , in Isaac shall Thy Seed be called . That is , They which are the children of the flesh , these are not the children of God : but the Children of the Promise are counted for The Seed ." As we have already pointed out , Abraham was first .

Then Isaac was the child of promise, not Ishmael, Isaac's half brother. It was recorded in Sarah's language after she saw Ishmael mocking Isaac, when she said unto Abraham, " Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac ." Gen . 21:10 . The transposition of The Seed , there fore , was passed from Isaac to Jacob on that memorial night just before the break of day , as Jacob wrestled with the Angel of God at ford Jabbok . This Man or Angel (in the scriptures the counterpart is called " Man ") told Jacob , " Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men , and has prevailed ." Gen . 32 : 28 . " And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel : for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved ." Gen 32 : 30 . From this point henceforth, Israel has ever halted upon his thigh. In all ages of time , wherever that name has been bestowed , that nation or people has been preserved and their life , although persecuted severely at times, has continued. No amount of persecution and trial could destroy them .

It is to be pointed out in a specific manner that the Seed of Promise (Christ) , the Son of God , who was with His Father as the Word in the counsel hall of eternity , was not to Ishmael , Isaac 's half brother , nor was it to Esau, Jacob's twin brother. All of the posterity or natural descent of Ishmael and Esau today persecute Israel and her friends . This involves a perfect hatred involving an irre - concilable enmity to the extent of killing and murder with violence. The best of my determination places the posterity of Ishmael and Esau in the Arab or Islamic World . The Arab or Islamic world (like the Jewish world is known as Semitic because Arabic is a Semitic language . Arabic is closely related to the languages of the ancient Assyrian , Babylonians , Hebrews , and Phoenicians . Of these peoples , the Arabs and the Jews, descendants of the Hebrews, are the only important Semitic groups who have kept their ancient language and some of their old customs . In today 's knowledge a Semite (both Jew and Arab) is defined as one who is a descendant of Shem , son of Noah . He is a member of a Caucasian race now chiefly represented by the Jews and Arabs, but in ancient times included the Babylonians , Assyrians , Phoenicians and others .

According to scripture, Abraham left his home in what is known now as northern Mesopotamia and traveled to Canaan , the area today that is known as Palestine . This area includes present day Lebanon , Israel and a portion of Syria and Turkey . He and his descendants lived there for many years . These descendants included Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, and their respective generations . Following this , as we are all aware , many Israelites journeyed to Egypt , a nation today that falls into the Arab world . The Bible tells us that Jacob 's sons sold their brother , Joseph , into slavery in Egypt for twenty pieces of silver. The Egyptian Pharaoh , or king , favored Joseph and made him ruler over his

(Pharaoh 's) house and gave him second command in the Egyptian kingdom . Later , when a famine struck Canaan , Joseph forgave his brothers (who had sold him down into Egypt) and brought them and his father to Egypt .

For many years the Israelites prospered and lived well in Egypt . But later a king " who knew not Joseph" (See Ex. 1:8) made slaves of the Israelites and forced them to build large cities and palaces in Egypt . God spoke to Moses in the burning bush, saying, " I am the God of thy father , the God of Abraham , the God of Isaac , and the God of Jacob.. (Note : Sic - He did not say the God of Abraham , Ishmael and Esau .) And Moses hid his face ; for he was afraid to look upon God. And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people (Israel) which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters ; for I know their sorrows ; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians , and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land a large , unto a land flowing with milk and honey ." Ex . 3:6 , 7, 8 .

According to the predestinated purpose of God, Moses, the devout leader and teacher of the Israelites, led them out of Egypt in the 1200 's B.C. This movement is called in the scripture , The Exodus . The Israelites wandered in the wilderness between Egypt and Canaan for forty years. It was here that they received the Ten Commandments (or the law) at Mount Sinai (through Moses, a type of Christ) during this period. The reception of the Ten Commandments of law verifies and identifies the Israelites as God's chosen people in the second dispensation of time. The Ten Commandments and the order of worship that God gave the Children of Israel to be used in the tabernacle contained the Oracle of God ; this pattern and order of divine worship of His chosen people sufficed to Him with the sundry types of offerings in the tabernacle until the Gospel order was established at the beginning of the third dispensation of time by Christ Himself . (By Oracle, I mean to say the medium by which God reveals hidden knowledge or makes known His divine purpose ; also , the place where the revelation is given .) All of these things (worship under the law) pointed to the first coming of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ . As God has given us faith now to believe that Christ has already come , they were given the identical same faith then to believe that He would come. God has never granted but one faith and that to one people. Moses died alone on Mount Pisgah, and his tomb remains unknown until this day (God buried him, according to scriptures) so that no man could worship him or his tomb or final resting place in this time world .

From this point The Seed , the mark of the true church of God, was interposed upon Joshua . Before Moses died , he chose Joshua to succeed him , saying , " Be strong and of good courage ; for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land , which I swore unto their fathers to give them ." Joshua 1:6 . Joshua led the Twelve Tribes back into the same land of their fathers . This " land of their

fathers" was the same land that God had spoken to Abraham many years before and from where Joseph and his father, Jacob, had departed into the land of Egypt . The Israelites probably had become established back in Canaan by about 1200 B.C. Here the Canaanites , Philistines , and others fought them for many years. Other attacks came from the neighboring kings of Edom, (the descendants of Esau , Moab and Ammon). The Israelites fought repeated wars with these people, who worshipped idols . God interposed upon Israel during all of this time The Seed (Christ, by faith) as David told the Philistine Giant," Thou comest to me with a sword and with a spear , and with a shield: but I come to thee in the Name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel , whom thou has defied . This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand ; and I will smite thee , and take thine head from thee ." 1 st Sam . 17:45 , 46 . Such faith, as expressed here, can only be the kind that is the Gift from The Seed, the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ . We will say that they (the Patriarchs of old , even King David) believed in and also worshipped the Absolute God of Heaven, who only holds all power in His blessed Hand .

Following Joshua 's day , God called such devout servants as Gidion , Samson , Deborah (known as Judges) through whom He led the Israelites . But to meet the many dangers that threatened them , the Twelve Tribes united to form a kingdom . They wanted a natural king to rule over them . The devout Prophet Samuel warned the people against forming a monarchy (a government which retains a natural king as its titular head), but finally gave in to their wishes and they chose Saul as king . The people honored Saul for his bravery, but found that he lacked wisdom and steadiness . In time , they turned from Saul to young David , a shepherd boy , who had killed the giant Philistine warrior Goliath . As we are all well aware , when Saul died in battle , David became king , whose throne was later inherited by David 's son , Soloman .

After the Israelites returned from Egypt through the wilderness , into Canaan , the land that God said flowed with milk and honey , a city was begun there that later was to be named or called Jerusalem . King David well chose this city about the year 1000 B.C. as the capital and chief city because it did not lie on any major trade routes . It was also high and difficult to attack. This little city in that day lay on top of a region of broken hills in the Highlands of Judea. The city is actually 2,618 feet above sea level . Here in this little city , David chose the site for the Temple which Soloman , his son , later built. We will refer back to the subject of the Temple at intervals in this article .

When Soloman died , political and economic troubles arose among the Israelites and the kingdom became divided . According to scriptures, Soloman's son, Rehoboam, increased the heavy taxes upon them and ten of the tribes broke away and set up an independent nation in the north . They chose Jeroboam as king, and called them-

selves the kingdom of Israel . The two remaining tribes , Benjamin and Judah , formed the kingdom of Judah in the south . The citizens of this kingdom were called Judeans . Joseph , the espoused husband of the Virgin Mary , and the Virgin Mary were of this group . Bethlehem where Jesus was born , was in the kingdom of Judea . The word " Jew " comes from this name , " Judea ."

Continuing on down the line , following the unbreakable chain , link for link , following the path of The Seed , the lineage of faith among the Israelites , God raised up such venerable prophets as Isaiah , Jeremiah , Amos , Hosea and others to stand upon the watchwall of Zion for the heirs of promise among them . With fearless honesty , they faithfully declared the Word of God , crying out and aloud , sparing not , reproaching the people and rulers for their wickedness . These prophets declared that the true and living God is the God of all creation , the God of all mankind , Ruler and Creator of all things , not just the God of the Jews only . It must be pointed out that true church of God in all generations has possessed this same faith and believed this identical doctrine or truth .

The Babylonians conquered Judah in 586 B.C. and destroyed the first Temple in Jerusalem that was built by Soloman . They took and carried away some Jews as captives , but left many in Judah . It wa during this time of the Babylonian captivity that Daniel was cast into the Den of Lions and Shadrach , Meshack and Abednego were cast by the Babylonian King , Nebuchadnezzar , into the burning fiery furnace . Because Daniel would not bow to the edict of Darius , another King of Babylon , " he (Daniel) went into his house ; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem , he kneeled upon his knees three times a day , and prayed , and gave thanks before his God , as he did aforetime ." Dan . 6:10 . Here is another mark of The Seed . God 's people (as in the case of Daniel) have never compromised this doctrine or truth and they have always been made to look to Jerusalem , the church and her glorious Head , the eternal God , when under the threat of their lives and heavy persecution . Immediately after this time , Daniel was cast into the Den of Lions , because of his belief in the law or oracle of God . See Daniel 6:5 .

The Jews spent many years as captives in Babylon . In reading the Book of Ezekiel , he prophesied that someday they would return to their homeland . From the best I can determine it was in the year 538 B.C. that Cyrus , the Persian Emperor , did allow the Jews to return to Jerusalem and to rebuild the Temple . This (second) Temple (with the remnant of the " Wailing Wall " in Jerusalem today) was completed about the year 516 B.C . Following this time , God raised up the prophets , Ezra and Nehemiah , and others , as His true prophets among Israel .

This brings us down now to the time just before the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ . It was at this time that two very rivalistic religious groups became active in Jewish life . The Pharisees (like all Armenians today)

felt that religion must grow and be interpreted. Spiritual revelation was disavowed . They claimed to be - lieve in the resurrection of the body, but believed it had already passed or transpired. They began to make new laws and rules for daily living, as they thought, based upon the Old Testament scripture . These laws (man - made) were to be just as binding as the written law in the scripture. Another group, the Sad - ducees, bitterly disagreed with the Pharisees, and accepted only the written law. The Sadducees openly denied the resurrection . They re - fused to recognize the so - called new laws of the Pharisees as binding upon them . Both groups were very self - righteous in their attitude, and were very hostile toward one another.

Now it was during this time that Jesus was born. Their own internal quarrels weakened the Jews. All of these things were in the predes - tinated purpose of God, and only fulfilled His divine and holy will be - fore the world began. The Jews had now become into a very high - minded, natural proud, high, lifted up state of mind and vanity. Jesus said concerning them, " Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of Heaven." Matt. 5:20. He also said, " Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." Matt. 16:11. Pompey, a Roman army general, had cap - tured Jerusalem at this time, and the Jews had to accept Roman rule. Jesus told Pilate, the Roman gover - nor, when asked if he was a king, replied by saying, " Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth hearest my voice." John 18:37.

They (the Jewish Pharisees and Sadducees) accused Jesus of sedition and other unlawful acts under their new system of laws and had Him brought before Pilate who ordered His crucifixion because he (Pilate) found no fault in Him. The Pharisees and Sadducees said, " We have a law, and by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." John 19:7. They used one of their newly made, man - made laws to indict Jesus. They were completely unaware of the meaning of two scriptures that Jesus had quoted them. One is found recorded in Matt. 24:2. " See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." He spoke of the forthcoming destruction of Jerusalem and the second Temple by the Roman army. In another place He spoke these words, " Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But He spake of the temple of His body." John 2:19 ,20 20, 21. He referred to His own re - surrection from the dead. They had no idea or thought as to what He was talking about.

Another scripture that He told them (these unbelieving Jews) is found recorded in II Peter 2:22. " For

it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, the dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." Peter had reference here to the Oracle of God, the worship that God had given them under the law that came by Moses. It was not the truth they departed from but from the "holy commandment" (the law) that Peter was referring to. They had never known the truth to have departed from it. After the resurrection and ascension of Christ to glory, the conflict between the Jews and the Romans increased to the point where the Jews finally revolted in the year A.D. 66, but the Romans defeated them. The Romans captured Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and destroyed the (2nd) Temple, as Jesus had told the Jews would take place in the above quoted scripture because they had come to the point (by the Oracle of God being removed) that they worshipped the building rather than the meaning and significance for which it had been established. In this awful destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the Romans, the Jews were scattered to the four corners of the earth into every nation of the globe. From that date A.D. 70 until May 15, 1948, almost 1900 years, they were called "the Scattered Nation." After World War II, many of them immediately returned back (according to God's predestinated purpose) to the same land where Abraham had first dwelt approximately 3,846 years earlier and had been one of the first there to believe God, the same land that the Lord told Moses that He would bring them, "unto a good land a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey." Exodus 3:8. God called this land "Canaan for an everlasting possession. See Gen. 17:8.

It was on May 14, 1948, that Israel declared her independence when the state of Israel was established. The United States was the first country to recognize Israel. On that date, Arab armies from the Islamic countries of Syria, Egypt, Lebanon and Transjordan (now Jordan that then controlled that part of Jerusalem that has the "Wailing Wall" of the old Temple) invaded Israel, intent on crushing the new nation. Saudi Arabia and Iraq (both Arab countries) also took part in the fighting. Little Israel (as little David's case compared identically when he faced Goliath) was desperately short of arms. But the Israelis drove the Arabs out of Galilee, the Negev, and a strip of land connecting Israel to Jerusalem, as well as other areas of Palestine. There are many now living today in this generation that witnessed this milstone in the history of the world, perhaps, unaware as to the great impact upon the history of time and the future posterity of mankind. Every battle in which they have since been engaged with the Arab nations they have won, as God blessed them anciently. They had now come back home to Canaan's land, the identical same one that God gave Abraham and the children of Israel nearly

5,000 years ago . Thus , we have fulfilled , the prophecy of Simeon when he held the Christ child in his arms , " This child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel . " Luke 2:34 .

Tel Aviv was made capital , where the seat of government is now located instead of Jerusalem , the old capital. The old, original capital, Jerusalem , could not be made the capital at that time since the Arabs still controlled a portion of the city , including the main landmark , the vestige of the (2nd) Temple , the " Wailing Wall ." Thousands of years of neglect had turned much of Israel 's soil into wasteland . The returning Jews drained the swamps, sank wells , and planted forests . Land once worthless became fertile again . Cities and towns were built through out the reclaimed province . The industries, built these cities and towns , are today some of the most advanced in western Asia. It is to be noted and pointed out that seldom , if ever before, in history has a people worked with such energy to build a modern industrial nation on the ruins of the past .

Before I proceed further with this article , I would like to point out a few facts about the current (today's) status of Jerusalem. In their taking back of their homeland it was in the Yom Kippur War in 1973 that the Israelis did not stop at the order of cease fire (as in 1967) , but continued until they the whole of Jerusalem , and even Hebron . The last portion of the area taken by Israel called the Golan Heights was another step in the fulfillment of prophecy .

With regard to Israel retaking the whole of Jerusalem in 1973 , they retook land that had not been in their possession for nearly 2,000 years . After that defeat by the Romans in A.D . 70 , the Roman Emperor who had succeeded Pontius Pilate ordered, as we have said, the destruction of the temple . Only a portion of one wall of the old Temple (the second Temple) remains standing today. It is called the " Wailing Wall ," because many Jews have never ceased to mourn the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple that took place in A.D. 70 . They (the Jews) had not been allowed to pray there since A.D. 70 until 1973 , a period of almost 2,000 years . This temple reaches back to the days and time of King Soloman , son of David .

When the Jews were scattered to the four corners of the earth in A.D . 70 , after the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, and before the crucifixion of Christ , the blindness of the Jews that the Apostle Paul spoke about in Romans 11:25 had already begun . "Blindness in part is happened to Israel , until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in ." All of this was predestinated to take place in order for the scripture, as found recorded in Song of Solomon 8:8 to be fulfilled . " We have a little sister , and she hath no breasts : what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for ? " To my understanding Solomon here had definite reference to the Gentile church. The Gentiles , who had previously been looked upon as dogs (a people altogether of a filthy , unclean nature) for hundreds of years , were now the fa -

vored people of God and continued to occupy this status for the nearly nineteen hundred years that fol - lowed when the Jews were scatterd from nation to nation. The Oracles of God were given to them (the Gentiles , Japheth 's descendants) (God's ordained worship) , after the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple . " He came unto His own , and His own received Him not. But as many as received him to them gave He power to become the Sons of God ." John 1:11 , 12 . The appli - cation of the following scripture fol - lows : " Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold , and said , It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken you : but seeing ye put it from you and judge yourselves unworthy of ever - lasting life , lo , WE TURN TO THE GENTILES ." The Gentile dispen - sation by way of divine recognition , began at this point and lasted until the beginning of World War II. It was at this point of time that the Gentile's fulness came in and ended, as I shall describe below .

In all of their sundry (many , many) persecutions and their wan - derings from country to country , their many trials , throughout the ages of time and many generations the worst was yet to come . In this I have to believe that (according to God's predestinated purpose) , they paid their final debt for their partici - pation in the crucifixion of their own King, the Lord of Glory, the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ . I am given to believe that the fulfillment of the prophecy as recorded in Malachi 4:1 , was fulfilled from 1940 to 1945 during World War II. This war marked one of the most vital turning points in the history of time . " For, behold the day cometh , that shall burn as an oven , etc ." During the 1930 's , Adolf Hitler and the Nazi party in Germany made anti - Semitism , or hatred of the Jews , an important part of their program . Hilter blamed the Jews for Germany 's many pro - blems in the years after World War I. He repeated his falsehoods so often that the German people believed them . Before World War II ended in 1945 , the Germans had slaughtered more than 6 ,000,000 men , women and children of the 10 ,000,000 Jews in Europe . He had huge furnaces built in Auschwitz , Poland, and other nearby places , where many of this number were gassed to death , in shower stalls where they (the Jews) thought they could take a clean shower after riding for days on cattle trains when being sent to various German concentrations camps dur - ing the war . When they cut on the shower valve instead of getting water , they got poison gas . Then their bodies were burned to annihila - tion . He killed them so fast that he did not have time to bury them . Destroying them in this manner was his only alternative . 500 ,000 of them (or more) starved to death in concentration camps of eastern Europe . Thus ended their exilement of 1,900 years . Don 't tell me that enough persecution will not reunite any nation . The Jews commemo - rated this holocaust in Jerusalem during the summer of 1981 . I watch - ed it on World News T .V . in June , 1981 , when they lit thousands of candles to commemorate the me - mory of those that had died at the

hands of Hitler's slaughter.

I would like to point out that during this period of 1,900 years from A.D. 70 to A.D. 1940, during their exilement the nation was not without an occasional true believer or witness in the Lord Jesus Christ and the true church. A case at point was the incidence of Elder Benard Greenwood. He was a German-Jew, a native of Germany, born in Weener, East Friesland, Kingdom of Hanover, on September 23, 1827. (Some of you may have his book entitled, The Dealings of God With a Labourer, or The Experience of Elder Bernard Greenwood.) He came to this country (The United States) in the 1850's. HE was shown the truth and united with the Old School or Primitive Baptist in the State of Ohio. He moved to North Carolina in the 1880's and for a short while, lived at LaGrange, N.C., where he preached for the church there and also nearby at our church, Mewborn's. My grandmother Turnage heard him preach on several occasions. His photograph today hangs in the pulpit of Sandy Grove Primitive Baptist Church (Black Creek Association of North Carolina lina) Nash County. His body rests in the Maplewood Cemetery, Wilson, N.C., where he lived or resided until his death. My grandmother Turnage told me that on one occasion he had an appointment to preach in the courthouse in Snow Hill, Greene County, N.C. at night. Some of the local Jews, who were merchants in that town (and who knew of his natural origin or identity) went out to hear him also. After the service was over, when the crowd had come downstairs from the courtroom where he had just preached, these Jews accosted him in a corner in the hall to one side where they loudly and angrily conversed together in the Hebrew Language. She said it got so hostile in sound that it appeared the matter would come to blows. However, it did not, the conversation soon died down, and the Jewish merchants moved on out. Elder Greenwood came over to where his brethren had been standing to one side in awe and with much concern as to his safety. Elder Greenwood exclaimed emphatically to them "they did not like my Jesus, they did not like my Jesus," seeing the wonderment on his faces. We can see, therefore, that even during the period of time when the Gentiles were God's favored, while the Gospel Church was nucleated among them, there were true, occasional believers among the Jews. Likewise, there will be a scattering (only a small remnant) of true believers now and in the future time left to this time world among the Gentiles. This small remnants of Gentiles believers will be however, true followers of the Lamb. I do believe that we will never again see throngs or multitudes standing on the foundation of the true doctrine, as many of us saw 50, 75, 100 or 150 years ago, and as was seen in the early days of the Federal period of the History of the United States of America, 1776 - 1840. His return to the Jews accounts for the falling away or decline in membership, the the breaking down of fellowship, and decline of interest today in our churches. May we be reminded that

for those years prior to the Revo - lutionary War, the signing of our Declaration of Independence and those years that followed , at least 70 percent or more of the people in America , that professed religion , were pure pre - destinarian in their faith and belief . Now , ask yourself what is that percentage today? (Yet, today the Armenian doctrine has never been more prolific.) Bitter persecution in England by King Henry VII and Queen Mary , Mary , Queen of Scots , or better known as " Bloody Mary " had brought pure hearts to America .

Back in the days that followed the Revolutionary War and for all of those years that comprised the 19th century , and even up through the years that immediately preceded World War II, our country, the United States of America , had a govern - ment that was relatively free of corruption . Since 1950 , the cor - ruption in our government here , as well as England , and other Gentile nations , has reached proportions that would have been unbelievable to our grandparents and forebears . A crime record with no previous comparison , debts of nations , unrest and turmoil convince fully this unworthy writer that the fulness of the Gentiles has come in. Violence in or among society in general in our own nation here has reached the point that we (ourselves) can scarcely believe what we see and hear with our own eyes and ears. The corruption in government (even this year, 1986 - 87) has been beyond all reasonable proportions in the latter. The Lord told Daniel , " O Daniel , shut up the words, and seal the book even to the time of the end ; many shall run to and fro , and knowledge shall be increased." Dan. 12:14 . We are definitely living now in the time of which Daniel prophesied . Scientific knowledge has tripled in the past two decades with many nations of the world now possessing the Nuclear bomb or the potential and capability necessary of obtaining and making it . Yet , since the ending of World War II , the United States has won no clear cut military victory any - where. A truce was signed to end the Korean conflict and a withdrawal settled the Vietnam War. (The invasion of Grenada by the U .S .A . in 1984 was a skirmish only and was not a battle as such .) On the other hand , ISRAEL has won every battle that it has fought or in which she has been engaged , since 1948 .

Many of us are aware of the deadly conflict that exists today in the Middle East. There is not a nightly international news program on television but what this grave conflict between Israel and her neighboring Arab (Islamic) countries is not mentioned. There are , no doubt , many , many people , that have wondered what this conflict is all about and the reason or reasons that have caused this conflict to erupt into violence , war and bloodshed from time to time in the past several years . This conflict is going on now at this very time.

In the year A .D . 70 when the Jews were scattered to the neigh - boring countries of the world , being displaced from their God - given homeland of Canaan (today known as Palestine and / or Lebanon), their land was vacated . The neighboring Arab Countries , descendants of

Ishmael and Esau , moved into the area . For nearly 1900 years these Arabic nations occupied this area . They established their homesteads, villages , towns and cities . From a natural standpoint the Arabs had lived on these premises long enough (1900 years) to feel that the land belonged to them . They may have had a natural (silent) right of possession or ownership , but they had no eternal right because , according to scripture , God had promised this land to Abraham , as we have already said , about 5,000 years earlier . When the appointed or predestinated time came for them to reoccupy it, they did, as they had always done, two times previously . Both nationalities are of the seed of Abraham , but one is designated in Romans 9:7 as CHILDREN OF THE PROMISE while the other is designated as " the children of the flesh ." Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son , even with Issac ." Gen. 21:10 . There is no way possible for these two nations (Israel on the one hand and the Islamic or Arab world on the other) to ever live or reside peacefully together since the scripture says , " Jacob have I loved , but Esau have I hated ." Romans 9:13 . This conflict is further widened today with the United States supporting Israel while . Russia is supporting Syria , an Arab country , with Russian made rockets on Israel 's border , aimed at Israel . A compromise could soon take place but hostilities will not cease .

The Arab or Moslem world today day often called the Arab bloc , stretches from the Atlantic Ocean (of West Africa) to the Persian Gulf . It includes all Arabic - speaking people of Ifni, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya , Sudan , Egypt , Jordan , Lebanon , Syria , Iraq , Kuwait , Saudi Arabia , Bahrain , Oatar , Trucial Coast , Oman , Aden , Yeman , with cultures extending into Iran , India , Afghanistan , Pakistan and Indonesia . Islam is the religion taught by the Prophet Mohammed in the A . D . 600 's . Mohammed was an Arab who was born in Mecca in A . D . 570 . He believed that he had been sent to destroy the idols of the heathen Arabs and to teach them to worship his god . He preached that there was only one god . Allah , and that he , Mohammed , was Allah 's messenger . Those who today believe in this god , and accept Mohammed as his messenger are called Moslems , from the Arabic , meaning those who submit to him . Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran , a name familiar to many , falls into this category . Islam, today , is one of the world 's largest religions , having more than 400,000,000 followers , located in the above named countries . To worship any God other than the true and living One would be Paganistic in principal , according to my humble judgment . Their places of assembling are not referred to as "church ," but " mosque " or " minaret ."

It was in 1978 or 1979 , that President Carter held what was known as the " Camp David Summit" conference at the presidential retreat , Camp David , Maryland , in which he attempted to bring together Israel and the Arab world together through the means of Egypt 's President Sadat , and Begin , Prime Minister of Israel . (Sadat was later assassinated in 1980 , as I recall , in

Cairo , Egypt .) This was an effort to halt the work of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (commonly called the PLO) whose objective today is to regain the land that was lost to Israel , as we have already pointed out . With all due respect to President Carter , had he known and understood the scripture , he would not have wasted the millions of dollars from this country that were promised to Egypt . Man cannot reconcile that enmity which God has said will never be reconciled . It has been said , "What God has done is done forever ." I do not believe that any man can change the intent of those (just quoted) words. The compromises of men , when against the command of God , will end in failure . The " love of God " and the " hate of God " are permanent and Unchangeable . See Romans 9:13 .

Today , at this very hour , the two Arab (Islamic) countries known as Iran and Iraq are and have been interlocked in a fierce war since 1980 over the area known as the persian Gulf through which flows more than 50 % of the world 's oil and petroleum supply . In this conflict the United States through the Reagan administration has backed Iran through the secret supplying of arms and munitions to that nation while Russia has done the same for Iraq . Out of this country 's (the United States of America 's) participation in that conflict has recently arisen a government scandal of our nation 's government 's secretly selling arms to Iran and giving the proceeds of such sales to the contras , freedom fighting soldiers in Nicaragua , against the Russian backed Nicaraguan government called the " Sandanistas " with profits from such sales being yet unaccounted for . Here again , our country , the United States of America , is helplessly hooked into and involved with " Gog " and Magog " against its determined aim and goal of swallowing up and destroying Israel .

Even in today 's world news , we hear and read where President Ronald Reagan on October 8 , 1986 , sent a Bible , during the time of this scandal of Hashemi Rafsanjani , second in command of Iran under Ayatollah Khomeni , with the following inscription : " And the scripture , foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith , preached before the gospel unto Abraham , saying , In thee shall all nations be blessed . " Galatians 3:8 . This verse refers to Abraham who is the common ancestor of both Moslems and Jews . Moslems know Abraham as Ibrahim . Jews trace their ancestry through his son . Ishmael , as we have already pointed out . I mention this incident only to point out the fact that even our president , Ronald Reagan , is partially aware of what is now taking place in the world , as it relates to scriptural or Bible prophecy .

In closing this article , I quote this scripture from Jesus' own language in Matthew 19:30 . " But many that are first shall be last ; and the last shall be first ." The first and the last and the last and the first are synonymous in meaning . They are the same in every sense of the word . The first here has reference to Abraham , the lineal forbear of Christ , from whom He descended through Judah , the son of Jacob . The last are those , the

descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the twelve tribes, who have now reoccupied Jerusalem after a period of exilement for nearly two thousand years. All of this according to scriptural prophecy and the foreknowledge of God.

In all of their wanderings for the past 4,000 years from that promised land that God said unto Abraham, " And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God," they have now returned for the last time. Three times during this period of time (the past 4,000 years), based upon information in this article, have they been displaced from this ar - land, but they will go no more out until the second coming of their King. They could not receive Him the first time because of the predestinated decree of the establishment of the Gentile church. " He came unto His own, and His own received Him not, but as many as received Him, to them gave He the power to become the Sons of God."John 1:11, 12. Paul said concerning them. " Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; HOW MUCH MORE THEIR FULNESS NESS." Romans 11:11, 12. Let us not forget this scripture, " And so all Israel shall be saved." Romans 11:26.

In their (the Jews's) fulness was the coming back home to their ancient home, Jerusalem, of which they now control in its entirety. This brings us down to the final fulfillment of the prophecy that John saw in Revelation 21:1, 2, as follows: " And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I, John saw the holy city NEW JERUSALEM, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." In the first resurrection of the just, her corruption will put on incorruption, her mortality will put on immortality. These are the number that was the seal of the living God, " an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel." Rev. 7:2, 4. John then pointed out another number in addition to the " one hundred and forty and four thousand," whom he said " sang a new song," and their number is " ten thousand, and thousand, and thousands of thousands." This is that number that he said " no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, who stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." Rev. 7:9. In this manner was included the Gentile church.

When NEW JERUSALEM, the happy, eternal home for which His weary pilgrims now long for finally comes, there will be a new Temple within it. John tells us what is will be " And I saw no temple therein: for the LORD GOD ALMIGHTY and THE LAMB are THE TEMPLE of it." Rev. 21:22.

So with the fulfillment and final

consummation of all things now at hand when Gog and Magog , Islam and Athestic Communism (or Russia), come up against little Israel , as has been prophesied in Ezekiel 38:18 - 22 , with all of their vast technology, superior nuclear bombs, missiles, ultra modern naval combats , combat troops (because of Israel's God- given impediment or block to those Arab nations which control the Persian Gulf out of which flows 50 percent plus of the world's oil supply), they will be no more than Napoleon , Hilter , William the Conqueror and Alexander the Great and other who eventually met their respective dooms . Since the beginning of time men have set out to conquer the world , but God has disallowed the fact since He has said of Himself , I am " King of kings and Lord of lords." No man or set of men, nation or group of nations , will He ever allow to take complete control of the earth and world. Time will end before such takes place .

Before the end of time , Gog (Islam) will give its power over to Magog (Communism) in a final endeavor as the means to accomplish this end when Communism (of Russia) would destroy Israel and take control of the world's greatest source of oil supply in the Persian Gulf area of the Middle East. This is verified by the scripture , " And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard , and his feet were as the feet of a bear , and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power , and his seat , and great authority ..." Revelation 13:2 .

The intervention of God (yet to be made known) will destroy Gog and Magog or Islamism and Communism God will impute His terrible fire , brimstone and hailstone in the final destruction of the world. I suggest again that you please read Ezekiel 38:18, 22." If God be for them (Israel), who can be against them ?" Romans 8:31. HIS SEED among both Jews , Gentiles , and all nations out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation will be raised in the first resurrection . Those who are alive and remain at His coming shall not prevent those who are asleep . The dead in Christ shall rise first and those who remain shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at His second coming ! Read 1 st Thess . 4:13 - 18. Thise whose names are not found written in the Lamb 's Book of Life will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone that burneth forever and ever . Rev . 20:10 . " Behold , He cometh with clouds ; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him ; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him . Even so , Amen ." Rev . 1:7, " Lift up your heads ; for your redemption draweth nigh ." Luke 21:28 . " Surely I come quickly, Amen Even so, come Lord Jesus ." Rev.22:10 . To that last heir of promise who will witness this indescribable sight, what a glorious thing it will be ! Faith then will become sight and hope a blessed reality , for ISRAEL , God's children who will go no more out for ever .

J .M . Mewborn
January 29 , 1987

We would like to thank Elder J .M . Mewborn for his permission to reprint this Editorial from his publication " Zion 's Landmark ."

MEETINGS

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 22, 23 & 24, 1989.

Union Church, located about five miles Southeast of Marion, Louisiana, will host the association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron,
Association Clerk
318-778-4217

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your " Signs " and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

PSALM 19 : 7-9

The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul : the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.

The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 1989

Joe L. Hamrick, Jr., TX ... 12.00
Y.W. Wade, WV 2.00
Mrs. Lois E. Cloud, NE 10.00
In memory Mrs. Lucille Bradley ...
Mrs. Lucille Bradley 20.00
John J. Monroe, IL 2.00
Raymond Oxley, WV 7.00
J.O. Harrod, AR 2.00
Harold T. Clayton, NC 5.00
Tommy & Hazel Ford, TX ... 12.00
Mrs. Janie Fanning, AL
In memory Eld. W.D. Griffin ... 50.00
Mrs. Harry Payne, VA 5.00
In memory Eld. W.D. Griffin
A Friend 100.00
Song books given Signs 56.00
Lloyd Chance, TX 10.00
Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church
Memory Eld. W.D. Griffin ... 100.00
Howard Griffin, KY
In memory of Dad 50.00
Eld. John T. Wingfield, VA 2.00
Mrs. J.D. Neely, AR 2.00
Dolphus Hall, FL 2.00
Mrs. W.C. Sutherland, VA
In memory Marvin J. Clay 20.00
Mrs. E. C. Thompson, NC 15.00
Eld. Oliver Allen, NC 5.00
Mrs. Lelah R. Hill, CA 2.00
Ms. Katherine Houchins, VA ... 2.00
Mrs. Mary Phillips, TN 12.00
Buford E. Thompson, VA 2.00
A Friend, MD 2.00
Ballard & Sarah Barker, VA
Memory Eld. W.D. Griffin 50.00
F.L. Shortt, VA 2.00
Mrs. Mildred W. Hanks, VA ... 10.00
Hugh Knight, Jr., NC 7.00

OBITUARIES

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It has been our Heavenly Father's will to remove from our midst , another of our Dear Sisters in Christ, Josephine N. Dodd on May 21 , 1989 . She was born April 14 , 1907 , daughter of James Lee Nuckols and Nannie Myers Nuckols.

Sister Josephine joined Strawberry Primitive Baptist Church the first Sunday in September, 1937 and was a faithful member , always attended her meetings as long as she was able . She had been a patient in the Roman Eagle Memorial Home for many years and was always interested in the welfare of her church . She was a firm believer in salvation by Grace and was Church Clerk for 32 years .

She was married to Elder W . R . Dodd in 1948 . He died August 26 , 1962 . She leaves to mourn her loss one sister , Edith N . Williams of Rocky Mount and a number of Nieces and a nephew .

Her funeral was held at Townes Funeral Home Chapel by Elder Julian Williams and interment was in Highland Burial Park to wait the Resurrection Morn when her Lord calls His children home . May the Lord bless the family and reconcile them to His will .

The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away , Bless his holy name .

Written by
Sister Gertie C . Holley ,
Church Clerk

IN MEMORY OF BRO . HUBERT HURST SIMMONS

Dear brethren , we the members of Sandy Level church of the Pigg River Association are deeply sadden to report the death of our dearly beloved Brother Hubert Hurst Simmons .

Brother Simmons was born April 27th, 1911 — entired into rest July 2, 1989 . Preceded in death by his wife, Survived by one daughter , two grand daughters and one grandson .

United with Sandy Level Church, March 15th , 1987 . He was a very faithful and loved member of the church . He believed and trusted in his God , while leading a very quiet & peaceful life . He will be sadly missed at Sandy Level Church by all of the members & friends .

Written in love and fellowship ,
Elder Clarence Stone , Asso . Mod .
Odessa D . Brown , Clerk
Rt . 1 , Box 286
Union Hall , Va . 24176

CORRECTION

This is to correct an error on page 177 of the August 1989 issue of the Signs . In the fifth paragraph of the letter written to Sister Hastings , it reads : This was the explanation — It should read : This was the expectation of all God's people who were born under the law dispensation for they were given the promise that the redeemer would come and save man from his sin by laying down his life for the redemption of all whom God had chosen out of the world .

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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GOD'S ONE

When the way seems sad and dreary
My friends do not despair
For though we feel worn and weary
Beyond the trials of darkness One is there

When tempted, forsaken and despised
Be strong — yield not to fear
For though Satan has his plan devised
In spite of that theres One to care

When pathways seem O'er clouded
And obstacles stand ever near
Fear not of being re-routed
There is One who the way will clear

When years have taken their timely toll
And we wonder if the end is near
Thanks that tho endless ages roll
There is yet One who is dear

When sundown comes and life does cease
Shed not a mournful tear
There is that everlasting peace
The joy that One is near

Then someday when life comes again
And in Glory we can appear
There without struggle, age or pain
We'll be with Christ — the One — forever

C.B. Davis, Jr.

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Brother Hobert Willard

EDITORIAL

But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Elder R.H. Campbell

The Apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Churches of Galatia is setting forth as clearly and precisely as he can the fact that the was an apostle of Jesus Christ and God the Father and that the natural man had no part of his becoming as apostle. He wanted them to understand that the gospel which he preached was of God who created the Heavens and the Earth, and all things that are therein and that man's intelligence could not discern the truth of it but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. The authority of his calling was not the results of any action by man, or any body of men, as was the authority for his mission when he was on the road to Damascus, but rather directly from Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God; and that there was absolutely no doubt in Paul's mind of the purpose of his calling and the certainty of the results. He wrote many times of the experience of his calling because this was the foundation upon which his ministry was based and he wanted no misunderstanding in their minds that he was assuming any credit for his calling or for the results of his labors for it was all the work of God. He realized that only those who had been called by the same power would believe and understand his words and the seal of his testimony was, that all that he knew of the gospel had come by the revelation of Jesus Christ to him on the road to Damascus and the things he had learned there.

In all of his writings to the various churches and to his brethren he continually referred to his holy calling as being the authority for the doctrine he preached and the reason for his boldness in declaring the gospel to them. He relates the account of his conversion from the Jewish faith to the Christian faith many times and every description of his experience stresses the fact that the power was beyond that of mortal man. Each step in the process from

his falling to the ground hearing Jesus and being blind when he opened his eyes was a very private and personal experience with him and , he alone , was aware of the change and the extent of the change that was wrought in his heart . Only he experienced the power of the spirit and then instant dramatic separation from the things that he had formerly believed to the new creature that he had become as a result of this change . This was what he was referring to above and for the remaining days of his life he went forth in the power of the spirit telling all who would listen of this wonderful transformation from the man of the flesh to the new creature in Christ and the joy and love that he experienced in the service of God and in fellowship with his brethren .

In writing of this calling to the church at Ephesus he explains it this way . " Whereof I was made a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power ." Always ascribing the reason for the change to the glory of God . This same sovreign and holy calling is experienced by all of the heirs of promise , here in time , and qualifies them to receive and understand the gospel preached by Paul , as he refers to them in his epistle to the Church at Corinth ," them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus , called to be saints ." This calling is not given to cause them to be heirs of promise , or , to see if they are , but rather to make manifest in them that they are and to enable them to fellowship those of like precious faith : to manifest their sanctfication from the world and worldly things unto the spiritual realm and the blessings of the redeemed ; revealing unto them and the church that they are one of those who were chosen before the beginning of time among the Lords portion .

None of those of record in the scriptures came to Christ and offered their services or believed in him until there was a manifest calling from God to them : Then they were all made willing and did serve him but always expressing their own unworthiness and insufficiency . This is true in the experience of the heirs of promise in this day and age : they are saved and called with the same holy calling and yet feel their inadequacy and many tend to hold back and fear to respond to the calling because of what they see in themselves . This is true of all , but , if only those who did not realize their unworthiness came forward there would be none to witness to a work of grace in their heart . They will say , in private conversation that they have been made to believe that they have a hope in eternal life and yet can 't come forward and express it to the church for fear that they are wrong .

If what I have experienced is a work of grace in my life , and all of my hope is based on the fact that it is , I was made to realize from the first that there is nothing good in the flesh and that the flesh is not qualified to make the decision for the new creature that is born of God : therefore if the work is of the spirit , it is making manifest the new Creature , which is qualified to come forth and ask for a home among the saints of God . The Church does not accept

members on the basis of any per - sonal goodness on the part of the applicant , but rather on the basis of the observed perfection of the work of grace which manifests itself in their Countenance , their walk and their careful , fearful conversation when talking of spiritual matters . Therefore those who feel to have a hope in things spiritual should dis - cuss the reasons for their hope with their pastor , deacon or some broth - er who they feel will give them the benefit of their experience and knowledge , and ask for advice and respond to that advice . It will be based on their love for you as a brother and from a prayerful concern for the welfare of Zion . Such advice will never , be based on a desire for members , friendship or kinship or for any reason other than their knowledge of the individual and evidence manifested by them of a work of grace in their life . This will be true because the one called on for advice of this nature realizes the solemn responsibility that is being placed upon them by the inquirer and the knowledge that God is witness to their reply and their motivation .

Some will say that man should not presume to give such advice but Paul did , Peter , Ananias and Phillip did . Aqrilla and Priscilla took Apollos aside and expounded to him the way of God more perfectly . Are there any scriptures that indicate that God 's ministers , deacons or members are any less qualified today that they were then ; is not the same God still calling and qualifying them today as then ; are not the same duties laid upon them in the same manner and for the same purpose ? There are still those who inquire today , as they did on the day of Penecost . " Men and brethren , what shall we do ?" And just as those in that day , they de - serve an answer and sound advice . The only ones who are qualified to give this sound advice are those who have been saved and called with a holy calling and experienced a work of grace in their heart . They then are qualified to advise others , who are coming along the way , of the things they have learned so that others may profit from their experience . Is not this the reason the scriptures are left on record , for others coming along the way . This in a sense is what Paul is saying to the Galatians . I certify you brethren that the gospel which I preach is not of man but is given of God to me by revelation that I might pass it on to others coming along the way , that they might know the path that they will tread and the things that will comfort them in life and enable them to follow along in the footsteps of the flock . This is what one is doing today as they advise others coming along behind them , facing the things that they have experienced .

These things are not done lightly but fearfully , prayerfully and in total dependence upon the one who has called us and trusting that the oc - casion was presented to make us live the faith that we profess to be - lieve . We should always walk and act by faith trusting that He who has called us will qualify us to do those things that we encounter in our journey , and do them in the way that will reflect our calling and manifest that it is of God . Just as the scriptures teach that God will not

suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, he also will not place a trial or burden upon us that we cannot bear. We can do all things thru Christ who strengthens us, as Paul said when he got to Rome, " So as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also." This was his response to the revelation of Christ to him and this should be the response in all as they face trials and afflictions in this life; do all things trusting that it is of God, never doing nothing about it from fear that he is not. This is walking by faith. A labor of love is never in vain, even when it doesn't accomplish what we expected because it manifests the spirit that dwells within and all who see this will understand and appreciate the effort and respond in love and fellowship for the attempt.

Paul said the gospel is the power of God unto salvation and the things to which we are referring is this power working in the lives of the children of God and leading them in the paths of righteousness. This was the power that worked in the life of Paul in his writing to the churches and in the lives of the apostles as they went forth from the day of Pentecost, suffering persecutions, imprisonments and all manner of trials and sufferings for the cause of Christ. We are not called upon in this age of time to endure these things but this power should be made manifest in our lives in the things that we do and the things that we stand ready to do if need should arise. The cause of Christ should be the most important thing in our life and all else revolve around it, and it will be this way to those who are taught not by man but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

In bonds of love
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Brethren,

I don't know if the Lord will bless me to tell you some of my experience of Grace that I hope was given to me by God. There is one verse of scripture that has been on my mind for several days. It reads, " Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." This scripture is very beautiful. There is a lot of meaning in it, if one can only be blessed to tell it. A shadow occurs when an object is intercepted by light. I believe the shadow of death is upon us when every child of Grace has been brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. We have done nothing to cause any of this to be. I believe this shadow of death is fixed and arranged by the Lord Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world. No one is able to make a shadow without a light. You can be out in the yard in the sunshine and you can make a shadow, but that is not the shadow under consideration. It is the shadow of the Holy Ghost. I feel it must be hovering over one when God sees fit to call them from this world. I believe from the depths of my heart, that shadow will take them to a resting place until the time

that God has appointed to come back to the face of this earth. He will then gather His bride, that shadow, which is none other than the light of the Glory of God. The Spirit of Almighty God shining down upon a poor weak sinner 's soul brings them to the knowledge of the truth as the gospel has been shown to them.

The gospel of Jesus Christ has been preached throughout all ages and through every generation of people that has been born into this world, as well as into future generations. That same shadow of Jesus Christ will shine upon them that are His. He has called, chosen and elected a people before the foundation of the world. If I know anything, it is a gift of God that has been stored up in His storehouse of mercy. Everything is of God and everyone He shed His blood for on Calvary 's cross belongs to Him.

We all know when He was nailed to the cross and hung between Heaven and earth, He was hung between two thieves, one on His left and one on His right. I can't help but believe it was the one on the right whom He spoke to and said, " Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." Luke 23:43. I believe every child of God whom He calls out of this world, He will gather them up in the sweetness of His love. And, will take them to that eternal home to forever be with him.

Jesus Christ knows all things. We cannot acquaint Him with anything, for what is today has already been in the mind and purpose of God and it will continue to be His will.

Sometimes I try to pray, not for my will to be done, but the Will of God. I also pray He will reconcile me to His Will, however it may be. Whatever suffering and punishment is mine, I hope to do it while in this world. Although, sometimes I feel I'm not of this world we live in but that spiritual world that God has prepared for us to be in.

The Bible speaks about a world in a world and a wheel in a wheel. I believe we are living in this world that we see with our natural eyes but, sometimes I feel that we are not of this world. One must be shown just what they are by nature and what they must be by the Grace of God before the spiritual things are revealed to them.

These scriptures are beautiful. They are used from time to time, but will never wear out. I've seen bibles when they were worn pretty bad, but the gospel of Jesus Christ was still being preached and will be as long as this world stands. The gospel feeds the hungry souls. The bread that flows from the throne of grace feeds our souls and makes us rejoice and even brings tears to one's eyes. It is so much joy and happiness just to get a little crumb. Sometimes I go to meeting and that little crumb is all I get. Other times I go and my cup is like David's, it runs over with the goodness and mercy of Almighty God. He is the only one we have to look to. To keep us out of that dark pit and miry clay, and keep us from burning forever. We have a hope in our faith to keep us pressing on up toward the mark of the prize of the high calling, as it is in Jesus Christ.

I wish I knew how to tell my feelings, but I can't tell you anymore

than God blesses me to . I feel sometimes I must tell you how the Lord has blessed and been with me all the days of my life . To show you the works of man , the doctor told my mother I would not live very long as a child. Man only knows what God has given him to know . He didn't give our life to any man . God gave us life in this world and we hope He will give us life in the world to come . We can't get beyond our hope. It matters not the experiences of grace He has given us, but oh what joy it is when we are blessed to feel the grace and joy of His mercy. He is one that is full of love and mercy all the time. We just feel that love a little bit here and a little bit there. As Elder Gold Travathan used to say , " just enough to keep us a beggar, but not a stealer ." These things are more precious to the human being that has been called , I hope by the Grace of God , than all of the money in the whole world. What good would it be to us if we had all of the money in the world and our souls were cast into that lake of fire to burn forever and ever. We can't change God's Will, because He is not a changeable God . He is the same yesterday , today and forever more and changes not .

I would love to talk about my Jesus and what He has done for me through the years I have been here. Part of the time I did not know anything about a Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I was not brought up in a home to know about the Church or to know about God . But thanks to Him , I was born into this spiritual world at His time I hope, as well as all the other saints of God, if I'm one at all . He died for His people and descended into the heavens to be with His Father that the Comforter would come back to be with us and to comfort us in time of need . He promised us our needs , not our wants . Certainly God is not one to back out on His promises. God does not change His promises and they will stand forever . He has never made a mistake and has never done anything wrong. It is no way we can change Him . I would like to change a lot of my ways and I'm sure those who believe in the Old School Baptist doctrine and believers in Christ feel the same way . It is not impossible with God , but there is nothing man can do to inherit the Kingdom that was prepared before the foundation of the world . It is all going to take place just the way He has ordained it to be . There is an appointed time for one to be born naturally in this world and an ap - pointed time for one to be born spiritually .

Nicodemus did not understand how he could be born again . He wasn't born again naturally, but born of the Spirit of God and brought into the light of the Glory of God . I have already expressed what I believe concerning the light . It is the most beautiful light I have ever seen , especially when it shines into my soul and protects me from dangers seen and unseen . I believe every child of God must experience this sometime or another . Before they can experience this or know any - thing about Him, they must be of the Spirit of God . If they are not in the spirit , it won't be anything but the flesh talking and God knows I don't

want to praise man for any of it . I would desire to praise my God and to thank Him for the many blessings He has bestowed upon me all the days of my life . I don 't know of a man of any race that is old enough , large enough or has enough knowledge for me to look to or worship and to beg to have mercy upon a poor sinner such as I am . I will never live long enough to praise Him for the many blessings He has given me in the years I have upon the earth .

God has been wonderful and good to us all , as He allows that light to shine . It says , " let your light so shine that others will see it ." When that light shines in one , they don 't have to be told to look for the light . They can see the manifestations of the Glory of God shining in one 's heart and soul . Yes , everyone who felt they were being called to stand before God 's humble poor , es - pecially myself , felt they could not do it . They ran from it . I want to tell you I ran from it as long as I could . I ran until I had nothing else to run from or to . I had nothing to hold on to because all of my tools and timber had been taken away . I had to beg God for mercy on this poor sinner . To be looked down upon and to have that seed of grace planted into our heart and soul , is all any child of God ever wants . This makes us believe and know there is a true and living God who has watched over us all the days of our lives . He has led us about in this world .

How wonderful and beautiful it is to have One we can look to , One we can praise , both night and day , for as long as we live . It is a blessing that the God of heaven has prepared a place for His children and when that appointed time comes . He will return declaring time shall be no more . This world is going to be destroyed , but thanks to the blessed God of Heaven that I have in my heart from time to time , I can feel the presence of Him along life's journey.

The greatest love that has ever been mentioned , or will ever be , is the love Jesus Christ has for His bride , for which I hope I am a portion of . I believe everyone He has chosen , feels that same way . I don't think I am getting off track of what the children of God believe . We don't have anyone else to look to nor do we have anyone else to beg to for mercy . He is a merciful God and has been to me . He has poured out His love and grace into my heart and shed His blood to cleanse me of all my sins , I hope . He took all of my sins upon Him as He hung between heaven and earth and the blood ran down and covered the whole bride . Without Him we can do nothing , but with Him we can do all things . It is through and by Him that I can ever think of you dear ones .

I think of you even when there is a great distance between us . We commune in the Holy Spirit when our minds are joined together even though we are miles apart . We think of the great fellowship we have been blessed to share . We have only one to praise for it and that is Jesus Christ . How good and wonderful it is that our minds are centered upon God from time to time . It's not all the time that we can feel the presence of Him . Then it is nothing but , the flesh and nothing but a carnal mind . Thanks to the good Lord , we have

Him to look to and to worship.

The good Lord is the One who has taught me these things and no one else. He has taught me to know He is all powerful. I beg unto Him for my brethren the world over, as well as myself, to bless us to walk in the spirit. To walk in that straight and narrow way that leads to life everlasting. It is only two ways, narrow is the way which leadeth into life, and few there be that find it. And broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in there at.

The non - elect will follow the broad way, which leads to destruction, but my God I hope, knows I don't want to be there, but if I were not chosen by Him before the foundation of the world, I will never see Heaven and immortal glory. If I'm not carried to Heaven, I won't see that final resting place where the hymns of joy will be sung forever and ever by the saints of God. But, if He did choose me and called me in this way, certainly I will be gathered with the whole bride.

The Lord of Heaven has done all things for me. He has done these things in His way, not mine. Our ways seemeth right unto man, but leads to destruction. There is no peace found, except through the Lord Jesus Christ. Through Him peace fills our souls with rejoicing felt into the very depths of our heart. Our heart leaps for joy, just as much as John did in his mother's womb before he was ever born into this world. John was made to leap for joy before he ever saw light or darkness on this earth.

When darkness covers the face of the earth, the light will shine through and darkness comprehends it not. It shines in the way and purpose God has fixed it to shine. No man can do these things. It is out of the reach of man's hands. They cannot do them, I have tried. I remember one time I was at an association in the mountains. It was a cold Sunday morning and the stand was in the yard. I had just been liberated to speak to God's people with truth, love and peace, I hope. All of the ministers, except the one speaking and the moderator, had left the stand to get warm. I went to my car, which was warm from the sun. I saw the brother coming and I had to do like Jonah. I ran, or at least slid down in the seat. The brother passed by the car, but something within me made me open the car door and let the brother know where I was. That was the work of God, not the work of man. Neither was it the work of old Satan, but the work of the Holy Spirit that is put into us. The brother took me by the arm and led me back to the steps that led into the stand and left me. I walked up to the bookboard and all I had to preach on (if it was preaching) was Jonah. I told of how similar my life was to Jonah's. Even when I was given a hope in Christ Jesus, these things were still like Jonah, I still ran from it all.

I did not know about the sweetness of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ until He came into my heart and led me about in this world. Not in the way I would go, for the way of man only leads to destruction, but Jesus Christ leads us in another way. He laid out our lot that we would trod

before we were even born in this world. I believe we will walk every step of the way that has been set forth for us to walk. How wonderful it is that He is coming back for His saints, and I truly hope I am one of them. His blood that was shed covered the whole bride, no more and no less. It will not be one to slip in, because He knows His sheep and another they won't follow. They will go in the way God has fixed for them to go. They will be singing the hymns of praise in that world that has no end. It will be the family that will never break up.

We know of family reunions, naturally speaking, when some couldn't be there. Some were sick, some had passed away, and other things. But, in the spiritual family reunion, everyone will be right there on scheduled time. One will not be late or one too early. The Lord Jesus Christ is coming back for one purpose and that is to gather His bride that was given to Him by His Father.

I know I don't feel worthy of writing these things and maybe I shouldn't try. Maybe I should leave it to the brethren who can write and explain the scriptures to the people better than myself. I feel I can't explain them like I feel them, but I would desire to do so. It is my heart's desire that when I am called upon to speak, I will preach Jesus Christ. The One that comes to His servants and uses them as His mouthpiece to speak words to feed some hungry soul that is gathered in the Holy Spirit of Almighty God. I must close at this time, but I desire to say if I am a brother or servant of God's, it is because He has done the choosing and the calling. Truly from the depths of my heart and soul, I don't feel worthy to even be among you. I try to thank my God from time to time, that He has blessed me to live a few years with what I believe to be a portion of God's children. He has taught them something that man cannot. Man cannot teach another man about the Lord Jesus. They can tell someone about Jesus all they want to and as long as God will bless them to do so, but they can't declare His name to the non - believer; it must be to the ones who believe in God. As I have already said, I feel to be just a little brother, but hopefully a part of that bride.

Just a little brother in Christ, I hope. May His name be praised for it all.

Elder Henry C. Jones
Rocky Mount, N.C.

PSALM 71 : 1 - 5

In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion.

Deliver me in thy righteousness, and cause me to escape: incline thine ear unto me, and save me.

Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: thou hast given commandment to save me; for thou art my rock and my fortress.

Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man.

For thou art my hope, O Lord God: thou art my trust from my youth.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

October 15 , 1903
By B .L . Beebe

PSALMS XL . 1-3 .

How wonderfully the psalmist was moved upon by the Holy Ghost to enable him to write the experience of every child of God through all ages. The Scripture cited above reads: " I waited patiently for the Lord ; and he inclined unto my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock , and established my goings. And he put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God ."

The expression , " I waited patiently for the Lord ," we do not think means to imply that the psalmist waited perfectly contented and in a passive state, for the Lord, for if he had he would not have cried to the Lord, and the Lord inclined his ear to his cry. The sense in which the word patiently is here used seems to mean endurance, as it is said of Job being a patient man, yet he was very restless and complaining, and so it is with every subject of grace ; they wait with patience for the Lord when they endure temptation, and look to the Lord for deliverance while they wrestle with doubts and fears , and groan under a sense of the sin that dwells within them, and cry unto the Lord, or as the Scriptures express it, " The Spirit maketh intercession for them with groanings that cannot be uttered ." When trials come upon the saints , and they are overwhelmed with afflictions , how the tempter torments them with the suggestion that they are not truly a child of God or they would be more submissive , and say at all times , " Thy will be done," and thus wait patiently for the Lord. But, dear child of God, if you were able to do this you would be perfect, and you would have no trial of your faith . God gives you this precious faith, and trials and temptations are given that you may have demonstrated to you the valve or power of this faith to sustain you through it all. If you had not the trials you could never know the sustaining power of this faith. When the Scriptures speak of the trial of your faith, it does not mean that God wants to learn how much or what kind of faith you have , for he knows without any tests , but to show to you the strength of that faith to sustain you through all the fiery trials that may try you . Then , " Beloved , think it not strange concerning the fiery trials which is to try you , as though some strange thing happened unto you ."

" He brought me up also out of an horrible pit , out of the miry clay ." This Scripture is nearly always misquoted the horrible pit of miry clay , but it reads , " The horrible pit , the miry clay ." Then the miry clay is the horrible pit, and this miry clay, to our mind, is the flesh. Isaiah says, " We are the clay , and thou our potter ," and Paul says , " Hath not the potter power over the clay , of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another vessel unto dishonor ? " This is the clay that David calls " an horrible pit ." And every heaven -

born child can say with David, This flesh, or carnal nature, is indeed an horrible pit, for through painful experience they have learned when they have been left to themselves they immediately begin to sink in this miry clay, and the more they struggle to get out, the deeper they sink. Sometimes in our efforts to free ourselves from self we make strong resolves to do better and be more faithful, and work ourselves up to great confidence in self to put down self. But alas, we find at last we are deeper in this miry clay of confidence in the flesh, and all our good resolutions were but trusting in the arm of flesh. Then after the Lord has suffered us to wallow in this miry clay long enough to show us our utter helplessness to extricate ourselves, and we have lost all confidence in the flesh, and are made to cry unto the Lord, then, and not till then, are we brought up by the Lord out of this horrible pit. If our deliverance depended on anything that we must do when we are sinking in this miry clay, how hopeless would be our condition. We must be brought with David to cry, "Save me, O God, for I sink in deep mire." A man sinking in deep mire is bound to struggle, and although he can see that the more he struggles the deeper he sinks, yet he cannot cease until he becomes utterly without strength. Thus the quickened child of God, when his eyes are opened to a view of his own condition, sunken in sin and fleshly lusts, immediately goes to work to get out of this horrible condition, and does not doubt at the commencement but what he can of himself climb out of the horrible pit, but poor creature, he soon finds that he is in an utterly helpless condition, as far as human efforts go. And when all hope and confidence in self is gone, then he is prepared to receive the salvation of the Lord, and when delivered he will ever after say with David, "The Lord brought me up out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay clay." But he does not simply take his chosen ones up out of the miry clay, and then leave them to take care of themselves, but he sets their feet upon a rock, and establishes their goings. Some brethren seem to think that after the Lord once takes his elect out of the miry clay, he then leaves them to establish their own goings, but it was not so in David's case, for the Lord set his feet upon a rock, which rock, to our mind, is his fixed determinate counsel, or his predestination. It does not say he placed David's feet upon the Rock, or we would know it meant Christ, but it says a rock, which implies other rocks, which we know could not be the case if this rock meant Christ. Besides the balance of the sentence, "established my goings," seems to imply that the rock was the "established goings," for the word and is supplied; in the original it reads, "set my feet upon a rock, established my goings." Then, after this wonderful deliverance, and firm establishment of his goings, well might David sing a new song. But take notice, David was not permitted to compose this new song, for it distinctly says the Lord put it in his mouth. What was this new song? Was it Lord, thou took me up out of an horrible pit, and placed spiritual blessings before me

to be obtained through my good works? No, for that would be plunging him right back into the horrible, the miry clay from which he had so graciously brought him up out of, but directly to the contrary, this new song was praise to God, not only for the deliverance, but also for placing his feet upon a rock, and establishing his goings. And many shall see this glorious manifestation of the power and mercy of our God, not in David's case only, but also in their own experience. And may we not hope, dear reader, that we have been made to see this truth, and experienced in our own souls the deliverance of which David writes? And may it be the pleasure of the Lord to place our feet firmly upon the rock of his fixed purposes, and enable us to trust that he has established our goings, and put the new song in our mouths, "even praise to our God."

B.L. Beebe

THE GROANING CAPTIVE'S DELIVERANCE

"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."— Romans vii. 24, 25.

That a mercy it is for the Church of God that the Apostle Paul was inspired by the Holy Ghost to leave upon record his own experience! And not merely to leave of it a scanty fragment, but to draw it out in that complete manner which we find in the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. What a relief it has been to thousands of God's suffering and sorrowing family! What a light it has cast upon the perplexities and intricacies of their path! What a breast of consolation has it been in all ages to God's tried and tempted people, and doubtless will be to the end of time!

The verses that I have read are, as it were, a summing up of the experience traced out in the chapter, and we may notice three points as connected with them:

I. The cry that sin and guilt pressed out of the Apostle's bosom: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

II. The deliverance that he obtained: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

III. The resolution that he came to in his own conscience: "So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."

The experience of the Apostle here is so pointed and so decisive that those who are ignorant of it in their own souls, have made every attempt possible to subvert it. Some, for instance, have said that Paul did not mean "himself," though he uses the pronoun "I" again and again. Others have said "that it was the conflict in the Apostle's bosom between nature and conscience, before the Lord called him by His grace;" and yet he speaks all the way through in the present tense, thus shewing that it was a present

conflict he was describing. Others have said " that it was a conflict under the law, before he had received a gospel deliverance." And yet, in the very teeth of this, he says: " O wretched man that I am!" not that " I was." " I find then a law," not " I found"; evidently shewing a conflict going on within at the very time he penned this epistle. The real source of all these perversions of the Apostle's meaning is ignorance of a work of grace in the soul. Being conscious that they have themselves no such experience, and that if these things be true they are wrong altogether, they use every means to subvert it utterly.

I. But what made the Apostle cry out so feelingly, so piteously: " O wretched man that I am!"? There were three things that forced this cry out of his bosom.

1. A knowledge of the breadth and spirituality of God's law. This, we find, he declares in vers. 9, 10: " " I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died: and the commandment which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death." The entrance of God's law in its breadth and spirituality cursed and condemned him. Seeing and feeling his condemnation thereby, guilt forced this piteous cry out of his bosom. Before he was spiritually and experimentally acquainted with the condemnation of the law in his conscience, he was " alive"; that is, he was pleased with his own righteousness, his own duties, his own performances. He did not see that God required truth in the inward parts; he did not know the purity and holiness of the divine character; he did not feel that the law curses for every transgression in thought, as well as in word and deed. The chambers of imagery, with all the hideous monsters lurking there, were not uncovered; the veil was not taken off his heart; light had not shone into his soul; life had not come into his conscience; and the Spirit of God had not begun His convincing operations within. For want, therefore, of this inward work in his soul, he was alive, because he had never been killed. Now the spirituality and breadth of the law must be felt in every quickened sinner's conscience, more or less. How long he shall be under it, or how deep he shall wade in trouble on account of it it, God had not defined, and we cannot. But the effect of the law must be known in every saved sinner's conscience, and that is guilt; " for by the law is the knowledge of sin." If I have never felt the guilt of sin in my conscience; if I have never felt trouble of soul on account of sin; if convictions have never pierced my heart; what can I know, what can I desire to know of a bleeding Immanuel? What is His pardoning love, what His atoning blood, what His rich mercy, what His superabounding grace to unwounded sinners? Thus, just in proportion as guilt works in the conscience, do we at first long after, and then know, prize and enjoy the mystery of atoning blood and dying love.

2. But there was another cause that produced this piteous cry out of the Apostle's soul, and that was the revival of sin. There was not merely the feeling of guilt on account of sin

past, but there was also the revival and the rankling of sin present. Sin, before the law entered with power into his conscience, lay dormant in him; it was like a viper in the winter—it was there with all its venom, but it was torpid. A man dead in sin, or dead in a profession, is carried down the stream of sin smoothly and insensibly, and like a heavily laden vessel borne along by the tide, he floats so quietly with the stream that he scarcely knows where he is going. Thus, while we were dead in sin, the inward tide of nature's corruption floated us so along into everything evil, that the secret workings of sin were not discerned. Then we were altogether under its power and dominion. But when the law revives sin by putting life into it, quickens it out of its torpid state, awakens the rattle-snake, and it begins to hiss in a man's mind, then he grieves and groans on account of the workings of present sin more if possible than he did from the guilt of past sin. What is our heaviest trial? We all have our peculiar trials: trials in body, trials in circumstances, trials in the family, trials in the mind; various trials we have each to pass through. But are any of our trials equal to what we feel from indwelling sins? Is it not your daily experience (it is more or less mine) to go groaning and sighing before the Lord on account of the working of sin in our carnal mind? Is it not our heaviest burden to have sin so striving for the mastery; that such base lusts are seeking perpetually to captivate our affections; that such evil desires are ever struggling for the victory in our bosom; that such pride and infidelity, and other abounding corruptions, are perpetually struggling, like a volcano in our breast, to get full vent, and desolate our souls? I am well convinced from soul experience that when sin is felt in its rankling workings in a tender conscience it will bow a man's head; it will make him at times burdened in his soul and distressed in his mind. His daily experience will be, more or less, hanging his head before the Lord, sighing and groaning, and bowed down by the corruptions that work in him, and so powerfully strive for the mastery. And what makes us feel this? The fear of God in a tender conscience. Some men can live, they say, above the world, the flesh, and the devil. Sin is no burden to them; their corruptions cause them no pain; their pride, their presumption, their covetousness, their lewdness, all the workings of depraved nature never draw a tear from their eye, nor force a sob from their heart. Why? Because they lack the fear of God in a tender conscience. Just in proportion to the depth of godly fear, and to the tenderness of conscience before God, will sin be inwardly perceived, inwardly felt, and inwardly mourned and groaned under.

3. But there was another cause that made the Apostle cry out so piteously, "O wretched man that I am!" and that was the inward conflict. He describes that conflict in the words, "For that which I do, I allow not; for that I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I." What a picture of that which passes in a godly man's bosom! that he has in him two distinct principles, two different

natures: one holy, heavenly, spiritual, panting after the Lord, finding the things of God its element; and yet in the same bosom a principle totally corrupt, thoroughly and entirely depraved, perpetually striving against the holy principle within, continually lusting after evil, opposed to every leading of the Spirit of God in the soul, and seeking nothing so much as at any cost and any price, to gratify its filthy desires! Now must there not be a feeling of misery in a man's bosom to have these two armies perpetually fighting; that when he desires to do good, evil is present with him; when he would be holy, heavenly-minded tender-hearted, loving, and seeking God's glory, enjoying sweet communion with a Three-One Jehovah, there is a base, sensual, earthly heart perpetually at work, infusing its baneful poison into every thought, counteracting every desire, and dragging him from the heaven to which he would mount down to the very hell of carnality and filth? Why, surely if there be a holy, heavenly principle in a man's bosom (and such there is in every quickened sinner's heart) that knows, fears, loves, and delights in God; and yet to find that in him which is altogether opposed to the mind of Christ, and lusts after that which he hates with a perfect hatred — must there not be sorrow and grief in that man's bosom to feel such a perpetual and unceasing conflict?

Now, these feelings which the Apostle groaned under are experienced by all the quickened family. Blessed then be the name of God Most High, that He inspired him to trace out and leave upon record his experience, that we might derive comfort and relief from it. What should we otherwise have thought? We should have reasoned thus: "Here is an Apostle perfectly holy, perpetually heavenly-minded, having nothing but the image of Christ in him, continually living to the Lord's glory, and unceasingly enjoying communion with Him!" We should have viewed him as a perfect saint, if he had not told us what he was; and then, having viewed him as a perfect saint, we should have turned our desponding eyes into our own bosom, and seen such an awful contrast, that we should despair of ever being saved at all! But seeing the soul conflict which the Apostle passed through, and feeling a measure of the same in our own bosom, it encourages, supports, and leads the soul on to believe that this is the way in which the saints are called to travel, however rough rugged and perplexing it may be to them.

Be assured, then, if you have never cried out from the depths of your soul, "O wretched man that I am!" you are dead in sin, or dead in a profession. If internal guilt, misery, and condemnation never forced that cry from your bosom, depend upon it, the life and power of God is not in your soul. But if there has been, and still continues, from time to time, this cry in your breast, forced out of it by the pressure of sin and guilt, there is in it a testimony that the same Lord who taught Paul is teaching you.

What is your experience before the Lord in private? Never mind your

Sunday religion ; that can be put on and put off like a Sunday coat. But what is your private experience ? What says your solitary chamber ? what, your fire - side ? what, your heart, in the quiet depths of it, in solemn moments ? Is there ever a piteous cry forced by guilt, shame and sorrow out of your bosom, " O wretched man that I am ! " ? It is something to be brought to feel this, that we are wretched. There is hope for such, there is help for such; there is a testimony that the Spirit of God is at work in such a conscience, that the Lord Himself is dealing with such souls.

But the Apostle, mark you, was not contented (who can be con - tented ?) with a cry and a groan. Look at the sufferer in a hospital. Is he contented with groaning on his painful bed ? Look at the martyr to raging fever. Is he satisfied with the fever that burns up his limbs, and the anxious tossings of his body from side to side ? No. Does he not want health and cure ? Does he not want something to be done for and in him? So spiritually. To be satisfied with merely saying, " O wretched man that I am ? " looks more like the experience of a hypocrite than the holy experience of a quickened soul. We shall want to be brought out of it; we shall want the Lord to appear; we shall want some manifestation of His grace ; we shall want some test - imony of His favour in our hearts; we shall want some deliverance out of it by the Lord 's own outstretched hand, and His bare right arm.

If, then, the Lord the Spirit has implanted that piteous cry in your soul, " O wretched man that I am ! " this will follow as a necessary con - sequence : " Who shall deliver me from the body of this depth ? " What, then, was it that so pained this holy Apostle ? It was the body of death that he carried in him ; that moving mass of corruption ; that Behemoth raising up his ponderous flanks in his soul, and trampling down all that was good and gracious in his heart. I have read that the idea is taken from a practice of the Romans of tying a dead body to a living one. And O ! what must have been the sickening sensation of ever feeling the cold corpse close to the warm flesh ; to wake, say, in the night, and feel the dead body tied around the living one one, and clasping it in its cold arms ! What a sensation of horror and dis - gust must the living feel from such a punishment !

Now look at it spiritually. Your new man is warm toward God. There are holy affections springing up ; there are panting desires flowing forth ; there are tender sighs, and longings and languishings after the Son of God in His beauty. And then, linked to it, there is a carnal, torpid, sensual, dead, earthly heart, per - petually surrounding it with its cold, clammy embrace, communicating its deathly torpidity to the soul. Would we pray, would we pour the heart forth in warm desires ? The cold paw of this body of sin and death quenches that rising desire ! Would we believe, and go forth in the sweet actings of living faith toward a cruci - fied Jesus ? Would we in the secret chambers of our heart earnestly seek His face ? The cold, clammy embrace of the body of sin and death chills it all, continually impeding

every upward movement of the spirit, and clogging and fettering every desire of the heavenly nature.

Now, the inward conflict produced by these exercises and perplexities forces out this cry: " Who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? " Where shall I look to for deliverance? From what quarter can it come? Shall I look to the law? Oh, no; that curses and condemns me, because I am continually breaking it. Can I look to friends? They may pity and sympathise, but they cannot remove the body of sin and death; it is too fast linked on for them to remove. Shall I go to ministers of truth? I may hear what they say with approbation, but there is something more wanted to remove this chilling embrace of the body of sin and death ? Shall I look to the Scriptures? They contain the remedy, but I want that remedy to be sweetly applied: Who then shall deliver me? What refuge can I look to? Whither can I go, or whither shall I turn? From what quarter can help or deliverance come ? " See the embarrassment! view the perplexity of an exercised soul ! looking here, and looking there; turning to the right hand, and turning to the left. Yet from one quarter only can deliverance come. And thus, when the Apostle was brought here, when he was sunk down to a low spot and anxiously turning his eyes to every quarter to see whence deliverance could come, God blessed his soul with a view of His precious Son. God the Spirit wrought in his heart that living faith whereby he saw Jesus, and whereby there was a communication of the blood and love of the Lamb to his conscience.

J.C. Philpot

September, 1936

Dearly Beloved Brethren: — On Wednesday night, September 16th, Elder T.W. Brock and I started for the South Arkansas Association that was held near Fordyce on Friday, Saturday and third Sunday in September, with Mt. Pisgah Church. This Association was divided a few years ago over conditionalism and limited predestination, and as usual in divisions, the numerical strength went to those in error. It looked at the time that they were forsaken, but the God of Israel never slumbers nor sleeps, so from a few they have grown to quite a number of Old Baptists. It was a great pleasure to meet these dear brethren and sisters and hear them talk of the wonders of grace. From this little Association we went on to the South Ouachita Association, held near Delhi, Louisiana, on Friday day, Saturday and fourth Sunday in September. Elder V.R. Harris was the esteemed Moderator of the South Arkansas Association until last year, but God saw fit to call him home last February. In his place Elder John R. Everett was elected, and we esteem him highly for the truth's sake. In this Association we met Elders G.R. Hathcock, J.R. Everett, E.R. Lambert and A.D. Wall. We had never met any of them except Elder Hathcock, as he had been at our Association (Hopewell)

twice . He has been preaching over fifty years and is a wonderful gift. In the South Ouachita Association they have three ministers, but Elder Nash is feeble in health and no longer active . Elder E .K . Evers is the Moderator succeeding him and he is a lovely brother. Elder R.W. Rhodes is an able minister, and has the care of five churches . They , too , have had their trouble with the condition-alists . At this Association we also met Elders R .P . Hendrix and W .J . Singleton , from the Mt. Zion Asso-ciation , in southern Alabama .

Brethren, let me give you a word of encouragement. Our conditional brethren tell that we are few in num-bers and that we are killing our churches with doctrinal preaching. It is true that we are few in numbers , but God will never leave himself without witnesses . In these two associations we found all the able preachers that they need , and , though their churches are small , they are active , and plenty of be-lievers on the outside . In the Hopewell Association we are not fearful of the church dying . If we bring in a large number of people by persuasion we will have trouble, but when they come by the power that added them in the apostles time they are genuine , and will not give the church trouble. Brethren, salvation belongs to the Lord's people, and is bestowed upon them because of the efficacious work of the Lamb , both for time and eternity . So he keeps the church adorned for the Husband.

With much love to the editors , contributors and readers , I ask an interest in your prayers .

Your little brother ,
W. D . Griffin

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your " Signs " and without missing any copies , be sure to inform us of any change of address .

Editors

PSALM 19 : 7-9

The law of the Lord is perfect , converting the soul : the testimony of the Lord is sure , making wise the simple .

The statutes of the Lord are right , rejoicing the heart : the commandment of the Lord is pure , enlightening the eyes .

The fear of the Lord is clean, endur-ing for ever : the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether .

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY
North Creek Church
Belhaven , North Carolina
June 10 , 1989

A presbytery was convened at North Creek Church at 1:00 P.M. on June 10 for the purpose of ordaining as Deacon Brother Milton Lupton , such ordination being in accordance with the wish of the church as expressed in the quarterly

meeting of the same date.

The service was opened with prayer by Elder Jesse Foreman. The presbytery was composed of Elders Foreman and J.T. Prescott and Deacons Hassell Allen and Earna Marslender.

Elder J.T. Prescott was chosen Moderator and Brother Tom Thompson was chosen clerk. Deacon Marslender presented the candidate to the Presbytery. Elders Prescott and Foreman examined the candidate and were duly satisfied that he would conduct himself as a deacon in a manner pleasing to the Lord and would put the affairs of the Church above all others.

Elder J.T. Prescott delivered the charge, reading from I Timothy, third chapter, verses eight through thirteen. He spoke also on the special relationship between minister and deacon and the responsibilities of the deacon to the flock. He encouraged Brother Lupton to speak out on church issues even when he would prefer to remain silent, and emphasized the importance of not shrinking back in matters of faith.

Elder Prescott concluded by inviting God's blessing on Brother Lupton and his family. The service was concluded by the laying on of hands with prayer and the singing of Hymn 322. Deacon Lupton was then presented to and accepted by the church and the Presbytery dissolved solved.

Elder J.T. Prescott, Moderator
Brother Tom Thompson, Clerk

PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The Pleasant Valley Association will be held Nov. 3, 4, 5, 1989, at Shepherd Fold Church, 815 Little York Road, Houston, Texas. Please call O.P. Murphy, (713) 649-5779, or Marvin Curnutt, (713) 987-1809 if directions or more information is needed.

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the next session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Hadnot Creek Church, Carteret County, N.C. on October 7-8, 1989. All who believe and love the doctrine of Christ, truth and grace are invited.

To reach the church from the north and west, travel to Maysville, N.C. and follow NC 58 East to the community of Pelletier which is approximately 3 miles north of Emerald Isle. Turn right at Pelletier Variety Store and locate the church about 1/4 mile on the right. From the south and Jacksonville take NC 24 East through Swansboro to intersection with NC 58 at Cape Carteret, turn left and follow NC 58 West to Pelletier Variety Store, turn left locate the church about 1/4 mile on the right.

Gene Lupton, Clerk
909 Covert Ct.
Virginia Beach, Va. 23464
Phone: (804) 467-5330

THOMPSON GROVE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God Thompson Grove looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift . They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed Saturday, September 2 , 1989 at 10:00 at Thompson Grove Primitive Baptist Church , Roanoke County; for the purpose of examination of this gift , brother Harry Lee Perdue and if found qualified be ordained to the full work and service of deacon.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together. The meeting was opened by prayer by Elder Willard Cox. Elder Lane Carter was elected as moderator and Elder Thomas Solomon to serve as clerk. Sister Fannie Conner acting as spokesman for the church delivered brother Harry Lee Perdue to the presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon was read as set forth in scriptures first 3 verses , 3rd chapter of 1st Timothy by Elder W.T. Conner and sixth chapter of Acts first verse by Elder Willard Cox . Examinations followed by all Elders present. The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of this candidate proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered Elder Noel Comer. The charge was delivered to brother Harry Lee Perdue by Elder Junior Conner. He was then delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. A copy to be placed in the church records , a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication and a copy to be given to Harry Lee Perdue along with a certificate of ordination.

Presbytery was dismissed by prayer by Elder Thomas Solomon.

Elder Lane Carter, Moderator
Elder Thomas Solomon, Clerk

Elders Present:
Willard Cox
W.T. Conner
Junior L. Conner
Noel Conner
Thomas Solomon
Lane Carter

Deacons present:
Hassell Hale
George Conner
Grey Ingram
W.R. Bernard
L. " Callie " Aker
Hansil Conner
Woodrow W. Abshire
C.T. Abshire
Jessie O. Tyree
Chester Hagood

EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

Take route 264 east out of Washington, N.C. About 10 miles out the road forks . Take the right fork which will be route 92 through Bath. Route 99 will join with 92 . Follow 99 north , at the first 90 degree turn to the left, North Creek

Church will be on the left.

The Eastern Kehukee Association convenes second weekend, Oct Oct. 7th and 8th, 1989.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 1989

W.C. Lake, FL	2.00
Eld. C.M. Haygood, TX	2.00
H.M. Pullig, LA	2.00
George Carter, NC	2.00
H.C. Brown, VA	2.00
A Friend, NC	10.00
Howard Peters, VA	7.00
Mrs. Ruth Pittman, NC	2.00
Mrs. Elva Spikes, OR	7.00
Mrs. A.V. Krewatch, DE	18.00
James O. Whaling, OH	2.00
Eld. Bernard Moon, AL	17.00
Nolan Lanier, NC	7.00
Mrs. Lessie W. Tilley, NC	5.00
Mrs. Velma Estelle, AR	2.00
Mrs. Lucile McGee, WA	7.00
Norman Jenkins, NC	2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER NANNIE LOU MARTIN

With deep regret for our loss we desire to record the passage from our midst of a precious sister in the Lord, Nannie Lou Martin.

Sister Martin was born in rural Patrick County, Virginia on June 9, 1901, and was a daughter of the late Joshua Adams and Betty Hancock Adams. She was one of a large family of children, many of whom were either members of, or believers in, the Old School Baptists in later years.

On December 31, 1924, she was united in marriage to the late Forest Biggs Martin. To their union were born eight children, of whom five survived her. They are: two sons sons, Druie and Johnnie Martin of Patrick Springs; and three daughters, Mrs. Alvis (Geneva) Pendleton of Stuart, Mrs. Henry (Dorethea) Ballard of Fieldale, and Mrs. Benton (Elsie) Spencer of Collinsville, Va. She was preceded in death by her husband and two sons: Alvis and Mervyn Martin and one daughter, Faye Martin.

Sister Nannie Lou united with Liberty Church by experience the first weekend in June, 1938, and was baptized by the late Elder Samuel D. Koger, her pastor at that time. She was blessed by the Lord to be a faithful and devoted member for many years, until bodily afflictions struck her down and prevented her from attending any more. Though absent in body, she made it clear that her heart and mind were ever with her brethren and sisters in the church.

After a lengthy illness and frequent hospitalization, Sister Martin died at her home on December 28, 1988. Her funeral service was conducted at Liberty Church by Elders John Wingfield and Paul Hopkins. Her many mourners and survivors included one sister, Sister Martha Texas Turner, eight grandchildren, ten great-grandchildren, and one great-great grandchild. She was laid to rest in the Liberty Church

cemetery by the side of her hus - band, to await a summons one day from the clouds of Heaven.

Although we deeply feel the loss of Sister Martin, we desire to humbly submit to the will of our Heavenly Father in removing her from this troubled world. We wish to make three copies of this memorial: one to be included in our church records, one to be given to the members of her family, and one to be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publi - cation.

Done by order of Liberty Church in conference, the 1 st Sat. in April, 1989.

Elder John T. Wingfield, Moderator
Paul Puckett, Clerk

NANNIE WASHBURN RICKMAN

In His infinite wisdom God saw fit to remove from among us our precious sister, Nannie Washburn Rickman. Sister Nannie was born to the late Jesse Ben Thomasson and Ellen Eggleston Thomasson of Henry County, Vir - ginia on December 20, 1903 and died January 19, 1989. Her earthly pilgrimage thus spanned 85 years and 1 month, lacking 1 day.

In the year 1920, Sister Nannie was united in marriage to Climmon Washburn of Bassett, Virginia. To their union were six children, all of whom survived her. They are as follows: four sons, Henry, Gilmer, and Versil Washburn of Bassett and Clarence Washburn of Martinsville; and two daughters, Mrs. Leonard (Jewell) Earles of Martinsville and Mrs. George (Jean) Kirby of Bassett.

One the first weekend in June, 1966, she joined Liberty Church by experience, along with her hus - band. Both she and Climmon were baptized by the late Elder Bennie N. Clifton. Brother Washburn was later ordained a deacon, and then he died in 1969. Some time after his death, Sister Nannie was married to the late Brother Sam Rickman of Eden, North Carolina. Sister Nannie was a good companion to Brother Rickman until his death in 1980.

In her last years, Sister Nannie was much afflicted in body and was confined to her home by the effects of a severe stroke. She was lovingly and faithfully cared for by her daugh - ters until she passed from the scenes of this life in January at Martinsville Hospital.

Funeral services were conduct - ed at Collins Funeral Home Chapel in Bassett by Elders Paul Hopkins and John Wingfield. She was laid to rest beside Brother Washburn in Mount Herman Church cemetery, located near her earthly home. Survivors in addition to her children included three step - children, Mrs. Russell (Charlene) McIntosh of Bluefield, West Virginia, Mrs. Elvin (Burnell) Haynes of Danville, and Mrs. Clyde (Mabel) Haynes of Reidsville, North Carolina; one sister, Mrs. Doris Gregory of Martinsville; 15 grand - children and 23 great - grandchild - ren.

We feel that the body of Sister Rickman is peaceful resting in the earth awaiting the reunion with her

soul and spirit that shall return at the Second Coming of our Dear Re - deemer . We desire to make three copies of this memorial : one for inclusion in our church records , one to be given to the members of her family , and one to be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publi - cation .

Done by order of Liberty Church in conference , the 1 st Sat . of April , 1989 .

John Wingfield , Moderator
Paul Puckett , Clerk

BROTHER HOBERT WILLARD

In loving memory of Brother Hobert Willard . He was the Husband of Sister Della Willard who passed away January 9 , 1981 .

He is survived by five daughters : Mrs . Pauline Hamrick , Mrs . Mary (Trudy) Cloud , Mrs . Ollie W . Sharp , Mrs . Belva W . Davis , Mrs . Elsie Banks ; One Son : Mr . Lenford Willard ; One Sister : Mrs . Mary B . Webb ; thirteen grandchildren , twenty - eight great grandchildren and five great - great grandchildren .

Brother Hobert was born May 21 , 1897 and was marrried March 22 , 1923 . He was a veteran of World War I . On September 17 , 1977 he asked for a home with New Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church and was received with joy . Especially by the writer . He was my first Brother in Christ at Bell Spur Church . He was baptized September 18 , 1977 by Elder Amos I . Hash . On this day Brother Hobert was the happiest person I have ever witnessed . He was afflicted and had to go on crutches but when he came out of the water the crutches were laid aside as he went through the crowd rejoicing . He was faithful to attend the meetings until his afflictions made it necessary to be confined in a nursing home . He rejoiced in the visits of the Brethren and especially the singing of Hymns and always asked us to sing the unclouded day . I feel that our loss is his Eternal Gain and that his hope is alive and will never leave nor forsake him .

He fell asleep April 6 , 1989 . Death came sudden and his trials , afflictions , and sufferings were over to the praise of our merciful God . May we , friends , family and Breth - ren , be made to rejoice rather than mourn in saying the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away . Blessed be the name of the Lord .

His funeral was at Vaughn — Guynn — McGrady Funeral Home , Hillsville , Va ., by Elder Corbin Vass . He is now resting in the Willard Family Cemetery , where he awaits the calling of his Blessed Savior .

Written by one who loved him ,
Hale Terry

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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POEM

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

The Lord controls the flea and gnat
And every barking dog.
He rules the flying bird and bat,
The little pig and hog.

Jehovah's power has no end,
His wisdom is so great;
His holy will we shall defend,
There's nothing left to fate.

As He has thought, so shall it be,
His purposes shall stand.
He is not moved by you nor me
To change His holy plan.

He ever loved the bride of Christ;
Those chosen in his Son,
His only Son was sacrificed
To save them every one.

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EDITORIAL

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

What a beautiful picture we perceive when given of Jesus Christ as the Light of the world. This view is not given to any natural man; " for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him : neither can he know them because they are spiritually dis - cerned." For one to ever receive a view of this Light he must have the Holy Spirit within : he must be born again. This being the work of the Holy Spirit, man can have no part in it. Man is dead in trespasses and sin until quickened into life, and we know that a dead man can do nothing. Jesus said, " The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God : and they that hear shall live." And Paul said, " And you hath he quickened, who were dead in tres - passes and sins." Who are these that are quickened ? They are the ones to whom Paul was writing; the saints at Ephesus, and ' the faithful in Jesus Christ', who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. (Eph. chapter 1). Until one has been born of the Spirit he has nothing but a carnal mind, and the carnal mind is enmity against God. It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. The eye of the carnal mind is evil. " The light of the body is the eye : if therefore thine eye be single, the whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness." Matt. 6 : 22 - 23. And men love darknes rather than light, because their deeds are evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made mani - fest, that they are wrought in God ! St. John 3 : 20 - 21. What a beautiful thought : that they are wrought in God ! What a blessing ! If we do truth it is because it is wrought in God. We are blessed to do it and in doing it - not for doing it. Jesus said, " With -

out me ye can do nothing ." Paul said , " I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me ." If we do anything that is well- pleasing in the sight of God , it is because Christ has been born in us, the hope of glory ; and because God worketh in us to will and to do of His good pleasure .

All of us in times past walked in the lusts of the flesh , fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy , for his great love wherewith he loves us , even when we were dead in sins , hath quick - ened us together with Christ , (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together , and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ.

Yes , brethren , we have all walked in the sins of the flesh , and enjoyed it ; for we walked in dark - ness , knowing nothing of the light , life , of righteousness of Christ. But our Saviour came into this low ground of sin and sorrow that we might have life , and that more a - bundantly. (St. John 10 : 10) . And in the first chapter of St. John we read: " In him was life; and the life was the light of men . And the light shineth in darkness , and the darkness com - prehended it not ." John was sent to bear witness of that Light , that was the true Light , which lighteth every man that cometh into the world .

Brethren, I believe that you know that the light under consideration is not a natural light as from a lamp or the sun in the sky , but the light of understanding. We read Eph. 5 : 13 - 14 : " But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light : for whatsoever doth make manifest is light . Wherefore he saith , Awake thou that sleepest , and arise from the dead , and Christ shall give thee light . " When Christ called you forth from the dead , alienated state you were in and translated you into his kingdom of light , what was the first thing made manifest to you ? Was it not that you are a sinner; filthy, black and as vile as anything you have ever seen ? How did you react to this terrible revelation ? Did you turn to law and try to justify yourself by your works ? If you did turn to the law , what did you find ? I am sure that the law condemned you and you were made to know that you are guilty and justly condemned . You felt that if God cast you into hell he would be just in doing so . What a horrible condition to be in, and you could see no way out. All you could do now was to fall upon your knees and beg for mercy . Christ had not yet revealed himself to you as your Saviour : God's righteousness without the law had not been manifested to you. You went about moaning and groaning day and night , and cried contin - uously for mercy .

Then , in the appointed time of God , the Son of Righteousness ap - peared as your Saviour : your sins rolled away as a black cloud and the day was more bright and beautiful than any you had ever seen . The Son of Righteousness arose with healings in his wings : you were healed , you were cleansed . What a beautiful figure Malachi used to por - tray the Son of God and his right - ousness !

Your cries for mercy now turn to songs of praise and love. You feel to

be the happiest person in the world. You feel that your troubles are now over. But before long you are taken by doubts and fears. Satan begins to work mightily in you to show you that you are only deceived in what you have seen and felt. How can a just and holy God even look upon one as sinful as you know yourself to be? How can he be just and holy and still justify such a sinner? Not by the law, but by faith. We read: " But not the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forebearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Your sins have been taken away; they no longer cover you as a dark cloud or rise up as a mountain. But why are they gone? You ask. You know you have been unable to do anything to merit his favor. Why should he favor such a sinner as you feel to be? Satan tells you that you are only deceived, and you are tempted to believe him, and would if it were possible: but it is not possible. (See Matt. 24 : 24) There may be few or many days of doubting — all being in the purpose of God but He " who commanded the light shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Yes, Christ is revealed to you as your Saviour. You are given an eye of faith to see Christ crucified for his chosen people and are given a hope that you are in that blessed people. What a blessing it is to receive this faith and hope! No man can just reach out and take hold of either, as is taught in other religion, but they must come down from above, from the Father of lights with whom there is no variableness or shadow of turning. " For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is a gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." " Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." No man can truly hope for something unless he has some evidence to base that hope upon. Your faith in God is that evidence: it is the substance that hope takes hold upon. Paul tells us: " For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for." If we could actually know that we are saved (as some teach) and that heaven and immortal glory will be ours when this life is over, what need would we have for hope? Of faith? None. And our works will avail us nothing, for no man is justified by the law in the sight of God: but the just shall live by faith. " And the law is not of faith; but the man that doeth them

shall live in them ."

You have been born again of the Spirit : Christ now dwelleth in your heart , and Christ is your light . The light that is in you is no longer darkness . Jesus said , " I am the light of the world : he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life ." Little by little , line upon line , precept upon precept the truth as it is in Christ is now revealed to you as you have need for it , and you will believe it . " And unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ , not only to believe , but also to suffer for his name's sake ." Worldly religion says that if you will only accept Christ and follow him you can live rejoicing every day . However , you find that this is not the truth . You find that your troubles have really just begun . The sins that never beset you before now become agony that causes moaning and weeping and much anxiety . You suffer trials , tribulations , and persecutions . You had never faced trials of your faith before because you had no faith to try , but the trials of your faith is more precious than gold that perisheth , though it be tried with fire . And Jesus said , Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake : for theirs is the kingdom of heaven . He also said , Remember the word that I said unto you , The servant is not greater than his lord . If they have persecuted me , they will also persecute you ." Jesus was a man of sorrow , and acquainted with grief . If we walk in his footsteps we must also suffer ; but if we suffer , we shall also reign with him ; if we deny him , he will also deny us . The apostles rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name .

Yes , brethren , we shall suffer ; but we can be confident that he will never suffer us to be over come by the world , for he hath overcome the world . And , " For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world : and this is the victory that overcometh the world , even our faith . Who is he that overcometh the world , but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God ? " These things that we suffer seem grievious most times , but remember , " All things work together for good to them that love God , to them who are the called according to his purpose . " This Scripture does not say that all things will be good to us , but that they work together for good .

In this new light we see things different . We find that the things we once loved we now hate , and the things that we once hated we now love . Old things are passed away , all things are become new . As Paul said , " Therefore if any man be in Christ , he is a new creature : old things are passed away ; behold , all things are become new ."

Now may Christ , the Son of Righteousness , dwell in your hearts by faith , and give you grace to know his love , which passeth knowledge , that you may be filled with all the fulness of God .

I realize that I have only touched upon this great and beautiful text , but if God be in the matter it will be enough . May God bless the truth and pardon the errors . May all praise be ascribed to our most holy God .

C . C . Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

Memphis , Tenn .
August 29 , 1989

Dear Elder Key :

I discovered I am very late with my dues for the Signs . My mind is a blank, as to writing, so will have to put a check in the mail . I love to read letters to you , even just short ones . I love folks telling what caused them to follow the Primitive Baptist . It is usually what we already know - but each one is told differently - and the cause is always the same . God 's love drew them . I get so hungry to see God 's will working in His children's heart. It strengthens my hope and gives courage to press on. I love to write or talk of the way (if not mistaken) it came to me. Go back in memory and re - live it , or try . Sometimes if the spirit is not in it , I wonder if I imagined it all? But I can't believe that. I believe Satan would like to cause that .

Your Sister in hope ,
Lucille Young

September 28 , 1973

Dear Elder Simpson :

I do hope you both are well this beautiful morning guess all here are well as usual. Sister Lolie about the same . I am sending you this picture as a token from my heart and my blessed Saviour Jesus Christ . I will never forget that sermon on that quiet beautiful A.M. up in Smith River Association, when you arose to speak, my heart leaped for joy .

I thought that morning , I don 't feel good , why go . Something said go and you may hear something and feel better . I thought of scripture that says wait on the Lord . So I thought when you were speaking so beautiful . Now I see why I came . I looked around to see if anyone looked like I felt. To me , I felt like I was among a flock of sheep. Washed in the blood and made as white as snow. I am so often made to wonder if I am one of his sheep. You know I am poor in education. I am not good on writing , but do hope I am one among the flock , and so often wonder when my righteous judge shall come to fetch thy ransomed people home , shall I among them stand ?

Shall such a worthless worm as I who sometimes am afraid to die, be found at thy right hand . Now do hope to see and hear you speak again some day if it be thy blessed Saviour's will. Hope you all can visit me sometime .

A Sister in hope ,
Viola Warley

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11 / 89
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE .

June 2 , 1988

Dear Brethren :

God only , knows why or for what purpose I am beginning this writing , or for what purpose it will or will not serve . As for my own self , I can only say — I just felt a desire to write , as a result from my feelings these past several days concerning the greatness and goodness of the three - one God; (verses) the wholly and complete frailty of mortal man . Which frailty of man (to me) is fully evidenced by the fall of the first man Adam , from that good and very good of which God spake concerning His every creation as He looked upon them every one . Now it in my feelings that good and very good of which God saw and spake , (as concerning mankind) did in no wise indicate or even hint , at man of his own carnal fleshly self being good , as Adam did surely illustrate and prove in his fall from his former sinless condition . But that good and very good was and is in that God had created and made all things to exactness in accordance with His will , purpose and pleasure in and for so having created them all for and to be and do in the first place and throughout all time for this world to stand; and that very good He Himself would work out from it all , to His own praise , honor and glory forever and ever after this time world is passed away and be no more .

Therefore , it is my feelings and belief , (in being consistent with the above statements), that the only good that be in or concerning man of himself , lieth wholly and Holy in and from whatsoever God Himself worketh in and out and all around and about any and all whatsoever do be and do in all time for this world to stand and eternally thereafter . And so , for any one of mankind to ever accomplish even one good , what be good in His sight , it is God Himself who worketh the entire accomplishment in and through and out of that one ; so leaving mankind absolutely without any right whatsoever to boast of or be praised for any portion of the entire matter whatsoever . Therefore it is my feelings from the very depth of my heart and soul (if my heart not be deceived) that the only good (good in His sight) whatever has or shall be accomplished during this time world , was and is and ever shall be only by the three - one God and Creator of all time and things whatsoever do be and do or came - to pass or accomplish . So don't speak to me of any of mankind being good or great as if he or she did independently perform any self good or great thing ; for I feel so deeply that such is an entire impossibility for any one of themself to accomplish , such praise of man is no less than an attempt at the lowering of God down to the low state of sinful man , or the raising of a man up to be equal to God . May we be kept in remembrance of His greatness , and our self helplessness .

Troy G . Shepard
103 E . Tateway Rd .
Kitty Hawk , N . C .

ARTICLES

GROWING

After warning of the errors of false teachers and exhorting the saints to diligence , in their spiritual concern, as they look to the day of the Lords return, the apostle Peter closes his 2nd epistle with words of instruction on how the saints are to guard against the ways of the wicked. He desires that they not fall from their own steadfast - ness, " But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever ."

Before examining the final words of Peter 's epistle it would seem helpful to consider to whom it is written . In the 1st verse of chap - ter 1 . We find that it is written to those of like precious faith in Christ Jesus. In other words it is addressed to those in whom the Holy Spirit dwells - -saints of God . There is no evidence that it is addressed to anyone else .

Also in the first portion of chapter 1 , it is seen that the grace , that is under consideration , and peace be multiplied, grows by the knowledge that is under consideration . But more directly to the point we see in verse 3 that it is by his power that he has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness . So from the be - ginning we see that the grace and knowledge that is under consider - ation in the last part of the epistle are among those things that are said to be given to his saints Even so , we are never - the - less told to grow in grace , and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour . In a manner of speaking , we are to accomplish or fulfill something that has already been accomplished for us .

If the Lord 's people are to fulfill something , or are to grow in grace , what specifically are they to grow in ? What is grace ? In short grace is the favor, kindness or mercy of God given to undeserving sinners . But if his people are told to grow in it, grow in grace, then grace must go another important step further than stated in the previous sentence. When mercy is received , his people have re - ceived unmerited favor . But when God gives grace it goes a step further than mercy. With grace there is an enabling quality -- a quality that fosters spiritual mindedness , and enables a godly walk .

To clarify, a distinction needs to be made here lest it be thought or proposed that natural man receives enabling grace and can do or ac - complish something spiritual -- he cannot and he does not. But with the rebirth all things become new . The Holy Spirit indwells and that new creation, that spiritual you that does not sin, that spiritual part of you that has it 's identity in God himself , is enabled to prosper in godly things . All the instructions and exhortations of the scriptures are, I believe, given to this new enabled being -- the en - abled being that is called you . " The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal ." This certainly implies an ability, 1 st Cor. 12 : 7 . Again it should be said , it is not of the old man , but of the new

man -- the new creation which is Christ in you .

Some ability to walk the godly walk is certainly implied in such scriptures as Eph . 5 : 31 , 32 " let all bitterness , and wrath , and anger , and clamour , and evil speaking , be put away from you , with all malice : And be kind one to another , tender hearted , forgiving one another , even as God for Christ 's sake hath forgiven you ." Some form of ability is certainly implied by those to whom this was written or the language seems senseless .

The apostle Paul puts this ability in it 's proper perspective in I Cor . 15 : 10 . "....and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain ; but I laboured more abundantly than they all : yet not I , but the grace of God which was within me ." The point to be made here is that Paul said ," I laboured , yet not I but " God ." In many scriptures , it seems , the latter part , " yet not I but God ," is not said — yet it must surely always be implied .

To grow in grace is then , addressed to you the saint , and yet not to you but to the enabling Spirit of God that is within you — the new you .

With this understanding let us proceed to explore this growth that Peter stressed so beautifully .

Any growth , even in the natural body is made possible only by some sort of feeding . Something is taken within (eating) and then by natural processes this brings about growth . A young boy may want to grow . But this cannot be done just by taking thought . It involves taking in food and exercising — things that come natural to a young boy . So it is , I believe , with spiritual growth . Some spiritual food must be used .

In 1 st Peter 2 : 2 , saints are told to desire the sincere milk of the word , " that ye may grow thereby :" This is taking in the spiritual word as a child desires and takes in food . The inspired written word of scripture , the spoken word of brothers and sisters when speaking of spiritual truths , the word of faith which is nigh thee , even in thy mouth and in thy heart (Rom . 10 : 8) and every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God , must be considered when looking at the sincere milk of the word . And this word shall not return unto him void , but shall accomplish that which God pleases , and prosper in those things unto which it was sent — See Isaiah 55 : 10 - 11 .

In making comparisons with a growing boy we should not overlook the fact that a young boy looks up to and tries to immitate his older brother . He desires to grow to be like him . He studies his ways and follows his example . In similar manner we should desire to grow in the likeness of our elder brother Jesus Christ and follow his example . In our growth we should desire to study what he has done , and in so doing rightly divide the word of truth .

If one is said to be a child of God , but does not have a desire to know more of the things of his elder brother , to follow after Christ 's example , and to feed on spiritual things , make him well . The desire , to know more of spiritual truths and the desire to feed on spiritual things , is more sure to be given to a born again sinner than is natural hunger and curosity to a growing teenager .

For the partakers of the divine nature, it follows then that they have a spiritual desire, which is given of God, to grow in every grace. Accordingly, in 2 Pet. 1 : 5 - 7 we read "...And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. If these things abound, they prevent you from becoming barren and unfruitful. These are the spiritual things that the spiritual minded will seek after, that make them grow strong, according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

With equal measure to growing in grace, as above discussed, Peter follows with the instruction to grow in knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Having knowledge is to know, and his people do have a knowledge, for they know Christ. " .... this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. " Then if we be his, and have eternal life, then we do know him in the sense of having a personal acquaintance. But Peter, I believe is speaking of something more or something fuller. To those that already know him as the author of their salvation, Peter tells them to grow in knowledge. This is to recognize Christ for what he is, and to become more acquainted with his works and ways.

Again, this is not for man in his natural state, but for the spiritual man. To encourage the natural man to such knowledge is foolishness. Why? Because " .... the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Rom. 2 : 14, 15. So it is the Spirit that is within that teaches all things — gives his knowledge. Never-the-less, it is the spiritually minded individual, the one that is spiritually enabled and given a spiritual desire, that is told to grow in knowledge.

And there is a need. By the examples given, Peter has shown that it is important that those of like precious faith be able to discern truth from error; to understand that there are false teachers, those that will speak evil of dignities and with feigned words make merchandise of you. Growth in the knowledge of Christ is needful, " .... lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness." 2 Pet. 3 : 17.

The apostle Paul also points out the need for growth in those persons that should be skilled in the word of righteousness, but are yet unskilled and need milk rather than strong meat. " But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." Heb. 5:13, 14. We are thus instructed to go on to greater understanding and to seek after the things of Christ.

You will notice that Paul says, " .... by reason of use have their senses exercised .... ". If I understand, Paul is saying to purposefully study the scriptures to gain a greater

knowledge of spiritual things . In 2 Peter 3 : 1 , he writes " .... I now write unto you ; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of rememberance ance . Can you discern when you are " in the spirit," as compared to being more sensitive to natural things ? There are times , I am sure , you feel you can . Then there are time when you are in doubt , or feel sure that you are sensitive only to natural things — spiritual desires seeming to have taken flight . But this is no excuse for not giving thought to spiritual things , nor doing things that seem good . We understand from Ecclesiastes that all thing are vanity in the flesh or in our carnal nature . Both the gaining of wisdom and folly are vanity , yet " .... wisdom excelleth folly , as far as light excelleth darkness ." Ecl. 2:13 . So at times it may seem vain or empty to study the scriptures . Yet is it not better to study than to not study ? How often has a poor and empty saint gone to the scriptures , with what seemed to be only mechanical action , or at best following " duty ", and be rewarded by the unfolding of untold spiritual beauty that can be taught only by the Holy Spirit . Of course , it is not always so , but this should not deter the children of God from their diligence in a godly walk and a desire to exercise the gifts that are within them , for this too is a part of spiritual growth .

God in his infinite wisdom has given us a need to grow in grace and the knowledge of Christ ; God has given us a spiritual hunger and has given us a desire to feed that hunger; God has given us the scriptures as one channel through which the Spirit teaches ; God has given brothers and sisters and ministers through which the Spirit teaches ; God has given exhortations and instructions to his people in many ways and then given them a desire to seek answers and solutions ; God gives answers to his people after he has given them the desire to seek and the instructions to seek . It is all of him who is the author and finisher of our faith .

So we are instructed to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ , and even though the growth is all given by God , it it never the less spoken to his saints " to do " — for them to grow . It is done by that enabling Spirit that is within ; the Spirit that gives the desire , that gives the will , that gives the do . None of it , no single point , is any more or any less in the fore - ordained purpose of God than any other — it is all there . He has fore - ordained all things and brings them to pass . Much of it is done by the will , desire and ability he has placed within his children by the Holy Spirit .

Elder Wayman G . Chapell

EPHESIANS 2 : 4-8

But God , who is rich in mercy , for his great love wherewith he loved us ,

Even when we were dead in sins , hath quickened us together with Christ , (by grace ye are saved ;)

And hath raised us up together , and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus :

That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus .

For by grace are ye saved through faith ; and that not of yourselves : it is the gift of God :

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

THE GROANING CAPTIVE 'S DELIVERANCE

(Continued from October issue .)

And that leads me to the second part of the subject. II . " I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord . " Now what did he thank God for? Shall I be missing the Apostle 's mind , think you , if I say that he had reason to thank God for his conflict? I do not mean to say that was altogether his mind here . He thanked God for his victory, I readily and cheerfully admit; but had he not reason also to thank God for the previous conflict ? Is not previous conflict a subject for praise? Had he not learned lessons in that conflict which could not have been taught him in any other way? You have felt guilt . Was not that guilt a mercy ? You have felt condemnation . Was not that sense of condemnation a mercy? You have been purged out of an empty profession. Was not that a mercy ? You have had the chaff of self - righteousness and false faith fanned away by the strong north wind of the Spirit . Was not that a mercy? You have sunk so low in your soul that none but God Himself could deliver you . Was not that a mercy? Surely it is . Whatever prepares the soul for mercy , must be mercy ; whatever fits the soul for the reception of Jesus must be a mercy ; whatever winnows away the dust and chaf of self must be mercy;, for it prepares the soul for a blessed Immanuel . Then we have reason to thank God for every feeling of guilt we have passed through , for every temptation we have been perplexed with , for every tear of contrition that has trickled down our cheek , for every sob of sorrow that has heaved from our bosom. For every feeling of misery, guilt and wretchedness, we have reason to bless His name ; for our choicest mercies spring out of them , and our richest blessings are only blessings just so far as these painful exercises have prepared the soul for the enjoyment of them .

But no doubt the mind of the Apostle was chiefly directed to thank God for the gift of His dear Son : " I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Now, if you have followed me in my attempt to unfold the cause of the Apostle 's cry , you will see there were three things that produced it . There was : 1 . the condemnation of the law ; 2 . the revival of sin ; and 3 . the internal conflict between nature and grace . Now , when he thanks God through Jesus Christ , he thanks Him having provided a remedy for each and all in the Person , work and mediation of His only - begotten Son.

1 . Look at the guilt of sin . How can we be delivered from the guilt of sin , the curse of the law , its holy condemnation , and its thundering vengeance? By no other way than by the blood of the Lamb, that precious blood which " cleanseth from sin , " that only propitiation, that wondrous sacrifice which the Son of God offered on Calvary 's tree . There is no other way to obtain pardon ; there is no other way to find peace ; there is no other mode of enjoying reconcil -

iation with God ; there is no other way by which the law 's thunderings are to be silenced , the curse removed , and the condemnation blotted out . The peace - speaking blood of Immanuel in the conscience is the only remedy for the soul that knows painfully the curse of the law, and the condemnation produced by it .

2 . And so with respect to the revival of sin . What does the revival of sin teach us ? Does it not teach us this (as the Apostle says , Rom . V . 21) : " Where sin abounded , grace did much more abound ." How am I to know the superaboundings of grace — the lengths , breaths , depths and heights of dying love ? Must I not know them by finding painfully and personally the aboundings of sin ? Then , just in proportion as I am daily led into a knowledge of the depth of the Fall ; as I feel the workings of sin in my carnal mind , and find how it abounds in me ; just in that proportion only can I know , and value when I know , the superaboundings of grace . It is a mercy , therefore , to know the workings of sin in our hearts . Men may cast their contemptuous reflection on what they call " corruption ." But I am sure of this , that in order to prize grace and value Jesus to love Him as " the chiefest among ten thousand , and the altogether lovely , " we must know personally and painfully the aboundings of sin and corruption in our carnal mind . The greater the sinner , the greater the saint ; the deeper the fall , the higher the recovery ; the more painful the sensations of guilt that the conscience experiences , the more is the balmy blood of Immanuel prized . So that not to know corruption in its painful workings , is not to know pardon , peace , or the superaboundings of sovereign grace .

3 . So with respect to the internal conflict . The Apostle saw " there was no condemnation to them that were in Christ Jesus "; that though they were tried and tempted, though they were harassed and exercised , though an unceasing conflict took place in their bosom , yet they were not to be condemned for it , for they were interested in the love and blood of the Lamb .

III . But this leads me to the solemn resolution that Paul came to . Just observe , he had experienced two things in his soul . He had experienced the curse of the law and the blessing of the gospel ; the aboundings of sin and the superaboundings of grace ; the knowledge of himself and the knowledge of Christ . Now the knowledge of these two things brought him , in his conscience , to this solemn resolution : " So then , with my mind I myself serve the law of God ; but with the flesh the law of sin ." Does the Apostle mean by these words to justify sin ? Does he intend to say that he was now settled at his ease ? That he had a corrupt nature which loved sin , therefore might sometimes gratify that; and had a divine and holy nature which loved holiness , and therefore might sometimes indulge that ? That he was sitting at ease in his armchair , comfortable " established" (as it is called) , and did not trouble himself about the workings of sin in his old man but quietly attend to the workings of the Spirit in

the new? I cannot think so; I do not believe that the words contain an expression of contentment. They are rather this: a feeling in his soul that there was no alteration to be obtained in this life with respect to the conflict he had to endure; that he never was to expect to rise beyond a warfare; that as long as he lived below there would be in him a body of sin and death — the law of sin working in his members and warring continually against the law of his mind. But it was not a settling down upon his lees; it was not a mere resting upon the doctrine of the old man and the new; it was not a throwing away of the arms of spiritual warfare. Not so; but it was a coming to this solemn conclusion in his mind: "I have two warring principles within me." He did not know it clearly before. It was then opened up to him; light shone into his soul, and brought him to see that his old man never would be any better; and therefore that he with his flesh would serve the law of sin, though with his mind he would serve the law of God.

Now let us look at these things. The "mind" here means the new nature, that holy principle which God the Spirit implants in a man's heart. With this we serve the law of God. This new man is holy, heavenly, pure, and spiritual, delighting in God, panting and seeking after communion with Jesus. It bears injuries, submits to unkind treatment, puts its mouth in the dust, and possesses a measure of conformity to Christ's image. Thus the Apostle says, "I, Paul — I, viewed as a Christian, as a believer in Jesus — I, with my mind, with my new nature, with that holy, heavenly principle which God has implanted in my breast, serve the law of God. I acknowledge the Word of God to be my rule and guide. I desire to know His will, and to do it. I seek to obey Him in all things; I strive to please, to honour, and to glorify Him. His will is my will, His commands are my commands, and what He leads me into, that I gladly perform." Now, this is just the spirit and bent of a gracious man's "mind" of his new nature. Praise, prayer, spiritual-mindedness, love to God's saints, desire to walk in Godly fear; this is the being, the element of the new man. With this mind, or new man, a believer serves the law of God. All feelings of holy reverence and godly fear; all the actings of faith, hope and love; all contrition and humility; all self-loathing and abhorrence; all desire to know God, to please Him, and to enjoy Him; everything spiritual, everything gracious, dwells in the new man. And thus we at times feel (do we not?) heavenly things our element, spiritual things our chief joy, the blood of the Lamb our greatest delight, and the Work of God the rule of our obedience. Thus "with the mind we serve the law of God."

But as long as we live in the body we have another principle, quite distinct from it, which the Apostle here calls the "flesh" — our fallen corrupt nature, our depraved heart, which ever was and ever will be a sink of iniquity, a sewer, a charnel-house of corruption and incurable depravity. Now, "with our flesh" — with this corrupt nature — "we serve the law of sin;" not gladly, that is

another matter . The Apostle does not say that he serves " sin ," but that he serves " the law of sin ." These are different things. To serve " sin," and to serve " the law of sin , " are very different matters. The internal principle is one thing, external acts are another. The lustings of your heart unto evil, putting into practice those lusts, are two very different things. Sin working in your heart, and sin acted in your body, are quite distinct. The Apostle does not say he serves sin. If we are the servants of sin, we are the children of wrath. " Sin shall not have dominion over you ; for ye are not under the law , but under grace ." But still we " serve the law of sin ," though we do not serve sin itself . The " law of sin " is that internal principle of sin in the bosom (if I may use the expression) , " the spirit of sin ," that subtle principle that is perpetually at work, seeking to regain its ancient mastery. Every infidel thought, every blasphemous imagination, every vile idea, every lewd desire, every covetous wish, every rising of pride, every movement of inward hypocrisy, every going out of love to the world, every secret exaltation of self (and who does not painfully know these inward workings ?) , are a part of the " law of sin ." This law works in the carnal mind, subtilly insinuating itself into every crevice, and is a law to our flesh, constraining it as a law constrains obedience to its authority, working in our carnal mind in the same intricate way as the blessed Spirit works in the new man of grace.

And this we shall serve to our dying day . But is servitude a pleasure ? Does the slave hug his chain? The poor African torn from his native land, and transported across the Atlantic, is he pleased with the hold of the slave - ship ? Is he not pining after light and liberty? So spiritually, does the Apostle mean that it was his happiness, his pleasure, his delight, to serve the law of sin? Does he so mean to distinguish the two principles as to say, " I can be happy with God in a chapel today, and happy with the Devil in a pothouse to - morrow "? Does he mean to say. " I can live in an atmosphere of spirituality one moment, and plunge into a brothel the next?" No; there is no such spirit in it. When he says, " I serve the law of sin ," he speaks of himself as one entangled contrary to his own wishes; torn, like a poor African, from hearth and home, taken captive by sin and Satan, and chained in the hold of the slave - ship, an unwilling captive, a groaning prisoner, who would fain get free, and yet finds the subtle spirit of internal sin and corruption perpetually seeking to regain the mastery over him . Be assured of this, if you can serve sin without sorrow, you have not the Spirit of Christ in you; you are still " in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity ." If the gratification of your secret lusts cost you no pain; if the workings of your base nature never force a tear from your eye, or a groan from your bosom, depend upon it you are not where Paul was. Servitude is a galling fetter. The iron chain of slavery often enters into the soul, and we never can be happy until we are delivered from the galling yoke.

So that the Apostle, in making this solemn resolution, " With the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin, " does not mean for a single moment to encourage licentiousness. He does not hold out that we may live in sin, and gratify our lusts, and yet be manifestly the children of God. Look at the sixth chapter of Romans, where the whole bent of this argument is against being under the power of sin. But what he means is this: that as long as he is upon earth he will have a body of sin and death; as long as he is in the flesh he will know the painful workings of corruption; and he submits to it, looking forward to that happy day when the corrupt body shall drop into the dust, and the soul shall enter into unspeakable bliss, reserved for the family of God.

I would ask in all sincerity (and may God in mercy apply it to your consciences), what you and I know of this experience? Why is it in the Bible? Why has God left it upon record? Is it not that we may try ourselves by it, and thus be brought to the test? Let us look at the experience of the Apostle, and see if we know it. Look at the three points; God enable you to see whether you know them experimentally.

1. What do you know of being a poor, wretched, guilty, miserable sinner? This is the first thing to be learnt in Christ's school. You cannot overstep that. You may as well try to read without knowing the alphabet, as think you can know Christ without knowing guilt and condemnation. Then what do you know of this step? " O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? " You say you do know it. Blessed are you if God the Spirit has wrought this experience only in your soul! It will lead on to better things. It will end in brighter things. We must, in Christ's school, begin with the lowest form, and then be led on, step by step, and line by line, to learn the lessons which the Spirit of God teaches all the ransomed family.

2. But can you get a step further: " I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord? " No sweet testimony? no precious deliverance? no gracious intimations? no marks of heavenly favour? no love to Jesus? Has His name never been precious to you? the savour of it never " like the ointment poured forth? " What! is the Son of God without form and comeliness to you? When you see Him, is there no beauty in Him that you should desire Him? What! no pantings after His sweet presence? no longings after His manifested favour? no cries to feel the power of His atoning blood? no secret pantings in your soul after the discovery of His mercy and grace? Now, if you know something of this experience, you can say with the Apostle, in a measure: " I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." There is a door of escape open. There is a way of refuge from misery, guilt and condemnation. There is a way — the Lord of life and glory, the Mediator between God and man, the Great High Priest over the house of God, He who is able to save unto the uttermost, the ever-living Intercessor, the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother. What! no faith

in Him ? no desires after Him ? Surely, surely if God the Spirit is your teacher, there is this going on in the quiet depths of your conscience.

3. Then you will have to come to this resolution : " With the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." " I desire to know His will, and to do it, to submit to His righteous dealings with me, to walk in the light of His countenance, and live under the shinings of His favour. And yet, in all, with all, and in the midst of all, I find and feel a contrary nature, a vile heart of unbelief ; proud, hypocritical, presumptuous, covetous ; a lustful eye, perpetually captivating my affections, ensnaring my soul, and inflicting cruel wounds in my heart and conscience." And yet you must bear the burden, endure the load, and look forward to the day of your deliverance. Nay, God in mercy overrules these painful exercises for the good of His people. Where would be your humility, where would be your self - loathing, where would be your contrition, brokeness, and godly fear ? where would be your shame of face and abasement of soul before a holy God, if you did not carry within you these painful testimonies that you are the very chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints ? Why, you would be throwing stones at everyone from you own little hill of holiness. Therefore, let men say what they will, and let presumptuous professors shoot out arrows of bitter scorn against it, we have reason to thank God for the knowledge of our corruption ; we have reason to bless His name that He has humbled us by showing it ; and that we have reason to thank Him that He has shed that light into our souls, and given that life in our conscience, whereby sin is, in a measure, ever brought to light, mourned over, hated, and repented of. Thus we shall walk softly before God all our days " in the bitterness of our soul," and thus be neither swallowed up by despair on the one hand, nor inflated with presumption on the other. To walk so is to walk safely. We then come to this solemn resolution: " I with my mind serve the law of God — that is my element — yet with the flesh I have painfully to serve the law of sin — and that is my misery. To serve the law of God is my joy ; to serve the law of sin is my sorrow. To serve the law of God in my soul is heaven; to serve the law of sin in my members is a bitter relic of hell." Yet all is necessary to make the soul watchful and humble, and teach it the superaboundings of grace over the aboundings of sin; to keep us little and low in our own esteem, and lay us prostrate at the foot of the cross, " being determined to know nothing, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

J.C. Philpot

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your " Signs " and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

SANCTIFICATION
THE EFFECT OF THE CROSS

To be partakers of Christ 's crown , we must be partakers of Christ's cross. Union with Him in suffering must precede union with Him in glory. This the express testimony of the Holy Ghost : " If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together " (Rom. 8:17) . " If we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him" (2 Tim. 2:11, 12) . The flesh and the world are to be crucified to us , and we to them ; and this can only be by virtue of a living union with a crucified Lord. This made the apostle say , " I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh , I live by the faith of the Son of God , who loved me and gave Himself for me . " And again , " But God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ , by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world ."

An experimental knowledge of crucifixion with his crucified Lord made Paul preach the cross , not only in its power to save , but in its power to sanctify . But as then so now, this preaching of the cross, not only as the meritorious sanctification, is " to them that perish foolishness ." As men have found out some other way of salvation than by the blood of the cross , so have they discovered some other way of holiness than by the power of the cross; or rather have altogether set aside obedience, fruitfulness, selfdenial, mortification of the deeds of the body , crucifixion of the flesh and of the world . Extremes are said to meet ; and certainly men of most opposite sentiments may unite in despising the cross and counting it foolishness. The Arminian despises it for justification , and the Antinomian for sanctification. " Believe and be holy," is as strange a sound to the latter as " Believe and be saved," to the former. But, " Without holiness no man shall see the Lord ," is as much written on the portal of life as , " By grace are ye saved through faith ."

Through the cross , that is , through union and communion with Him who suffered upon it, not only is there a fountain opened for all sin , but for all uncleanness . Blood and water gushed from the side of Jesus when pierced by the Roman spear .

" This fountain so dear , He 'll freely impart ;
Unlocked by the spear, it gushed from His heart ,
With blood and with water; the first to atone ,
To cleanse us the latter; the fountain's but one ."

" All my springs are in Thee ," said the man after God's own heart; and well may we re- echo his words. All our springs , not only of pardon and peace , acceptance and justification , but of happiness and holiness , of wisdom and strength , of victory over the world , of mortification of a body of sin and death ; of every fresh revival and renewal of hope and confidence ; of all prayer and praise ; of every new budding forth of the soul , as of Aaron's rod , in desire, warm supplication, honest confession , melting contrition , and godly sorrow for sin — all these

springs of that life which is his with Christ in God are in a crucified Lord. Thus Christ crucified is " to them who are saved, the power of God." And as He " of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption," at the cross alone can we be made wise unto salvation, become righteous by a free justification, receive of His Spirit to make us holy, and be redeemed and delivered by blood and power from sin, Satan, death and hell.

SANCTIFICATION
THE HOLY SPIRIT'S WORK

I shall consider, " the sanctification of the Spirit."

Observe, first, the peculiar force of the word " through"; it is " through sanctification of the Spirit " (2 Thess. 2:13). All the elect of God must therefore pass through sanctification. It is a path not merely into which but through which — through the whole length of which — they must pass; so that as there is no salvation from the curse of the law except through the blood and obedience of the Son of God, so there is no salvation from the inward defilement and inordinate power of sin except through the sanctification of the Spirit. The Bride must stand not only washed in Christ's blood and arrayed in Christ's righteousness that she may lift up her head without sin or shame in the presence of Jehovah; but she must be a partaker also of that " holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." Christ's righteousness is her wedding dress, arrayed in which He says to her, " Thou art all fair, My love, there is no spot in thee." This is her title and her warrant to heavenly bliss; but she needs an inward meetness, for she must have a queenly heart as well as a queenly robe.

The two are beautifully brought together in those words of the psalmist: " The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold." She is " all glorious within," as well as " clothed with wrought gold." The Spirit clothes her outwardly when He brings near and puts upon her the wedding dress; and the same Spirit gives her her inward glory when He sanctifies her by His special grace. Thus Christ not only " loved the church and gave Himself for it." but also " sanctifies and cleanses it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church " — glorious without and glorious within, " not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing" to mar her outward beauty, and to be also " holy and without blemish " so as not to mar her inward glory.

Sanctification, therefore, is as indispensable to salvation as justification. " But ye are washed, but ye are sancified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:11). Heaven is a holy place. Its enjoyments and employments are all holy. " Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts," is the eternal cry of created angels and ransomed spirits. There must be, therefore, a sacred meetness for this holy employment and spiritual enjoyment communicated to the soul before it can be fitted for those habitations

into which nothing that defiles can ever enter . How glorious must be that place of which we read , " The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him . And they shall see His face ; and His name shall be in their fore - heads . And there shall be no night there ; and they need no candle , neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever "!

That they may thus see His face and ever serve Him in the beauty of holiness was eternally provided for in the covenant of grace. In the same wondrous scheme of eternal love which contrived their salvation, provision was made for the Holy Ghost to sanctify by His indwelling power, and fit them for those heavenly mansions which were prepared for them. He being a divine Person in the Godhead, and as such taking a part in the covenant of grace, engaged, with a foreview of the depths of the fall, to regenerate them, to give them a new heart and a new spirit , to take possession of their soul , and fill them with every holy grace and every heavenly fruit. He thus pledged Himself to breathe into them in their time - state an element of holiness in which they might hereafter eternally swim as in an ocean of purity and love, and without which heaven itself would be to them but a hell. He did not undertake to sanctify their carnal mind , their Adam nature , but to breathe into them a new spirit , a spirit of perfect holiness, capable of expanding into heights and depths of purity and love beyond all conception or description .

J.C. Philpot

Dearly Beloved Kindred : — The time for an extension of my subscription to your valuable paper is at hand. While a poor and afflicted people in general . Many and strange to us are the things that are taking place in the world to - day, but , dear , little , wayfaring strangers, the most hurtful to God's little children , who know the joyful sound , to see the wicked ways of man, but nothing can so disturb the sheep as to have one of the fold who has long been following (seemingly) in the footsteps of Jesus to join hand in hand with those who would scatter the sheep. However, many of those who have professed a love for the truth , and even proclaimed it , are now becoming so progressive and active that the old ways are by far too strait for them and they are blazing new trails that the Scriptures do not authorize and our forefathers did not follow. I am reminded just now of the words of Christ: " Without me ye can do nothing." O Lord, do teach those poor and afflicted people the vital importance of thy gentle Spirit . Brethren , everywhere dwelleth no good thing. Water cannot of its own power, rise higher than its source, neither can the nature of many be raised into something beyond that nature . Righteousness either comes from God or it comes from the nature of man. Our own works have been tried sufficiently and they only serve to sink us deeper in the mire. They are only filthy rags. Oh the filth and sin that is in the hearts of God's most humble children. I know of no record that those best actions , thoughts and words of the natural man should be so covered up in the

blood of Christ that, that same old man should later (after regeneration) show forth the love of God. Dear sin-tossed pilgrim, do you find improvement in your conduct? Ah! never; oh no! But to the contrary. Daily, hourly, I find myself so prone to wander away to the alluring fancies of the world.

" I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I 'm not born again."

I am very much like one of our precious old brethren in this country: I do hate my sinful ways and mourn and grieve that my hope is not brighter, but I do love those who are just like me. I humbly hope that in some wonderful way, for some reason beyond my comprehension, God has made me to love these dear old begging saints who confess they are yet passive in God 's hands. If obedience is a fruit of the Spirit it is not a fruit of the flesh. If brethren believe the whole man doctrine it would be more consistent for them to say so than to hide behind a smoke screen of two salvations, because to say we merit our blessings in time is to say the old man is improved by regeneration, and of course then the warfare between the Spirit and the flesh is a myth. If obedience comes as a fruit of the Spirit, working in us the things that are well-pleasing in His sight, on what grounds are we to expect blessings for it? Paul tells us that the love of Christ constrains us (2 Cor. V. 14), and Webster tells us that " constrain" means " compel." The love of God does not lead his children against their will, but they are made willing to forsake all and to follow where he leads. I do not feel that God should reward his children for living sober, upright lives, but that he has rewarded them and their walking after him is an evidence of it.

Brethren, this is too deep water for just a boy to wade in. I trust that the Lord, if according to his will, will guide his called out children to continue fighting (and resting) in and for the dear old principles that have identified Zion for lo these many hundreds of years.

Remember this poor sinner when at the throne of grace.

W. D. Griffin

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will meet, the Lord willing, fifth Sunday in October at 10:00 a.m. Moons Creek Church will host this meeting but it will be held at Dan River Church, located on highway #700 in the Mayfield community. From Danville, Va. take highway #29 South approximately 3 miles. Exit on #700 and go west approximately 5 miles to church.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Sister Ema Sartin, Clerk

ORDINATION SERVICE

The Hadnot Creek Primitive Baptist Church, after seeing the gift of Deacon in our beloved brother, Clarence Prescott proceeded in our Conference on September 2, 1989 agreed to call for a Presbytery to examine and if found qualified to ordain Brother Clarence on Sunday, September 3, 1989 at 1:30 a.m. all present gathered back in the meeting house.

All ministers and Deacons present were invited to take part.

Conference was opened with the singing of Amazing Grace and Prayer by Elder Oliver Allen.

Elder J.T. Prescott was selected moderator Brother Melton Houston Clerk.

Brother Clayton Brown was appointed spokesman for the church.

Elder Jesse Foreman was appointed to lead with questioning the candidate Elder J.T. Prescott led with the charge to the candidate after reading from 3rd Chapter; 1st Timothy.

The ordination Prayer with laying on of hands was led by Elder Jesse Foreman followed by Elder Allen and Elder Prescott.

The moderator asked if the church was satisfied with the work of the Presbytery- the answer was yes. Then given the right hand of fellowship by all - Brother Brown then delivered Brother Prescott back to the church as being ordained to serve as Deacon.

Resolved that three copies of this action be made.

CC: Brother Prescott
Hadnot Creek Primitive Baptist Church
Publication in the Signs of the Times

Minutes approved as read.

Moderator Elder J.T. Prescott
Clerk Brother Milton Houston

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 1989

William Midkiff, VA 2.00
Mrs. Celeste Welch, NC 2.00
Eld. Hale Terry, VA 2.00
Mrs. N. Hunt, VA 2.00
Mrs. W.L. Simmons, VA 2.00
Mrs. Joel S. Alexander, AL 7.00
Garner Horne, NC 5.00
Bruce McIntosh, II, VA 50.00
Mrs. Marjorie Cook, TN
In memory, Sis. Rebecca Moon & Homa Rainey 25.00
Mrs. Minnie G. Roberts, NC ... 2.00
Mrs. Rachel J. Green, WV 2.00
William Vick, TN 5.00
Mrs. H.H. Blanton, MS 2.00
Jesse Ramsey, VA 2.00
Mrs. Ruth Blair, VA 15.00
Mrs. W.L. Adams, VA 2.00
Mrs. Lelah R. Hill, CA 8.00
Mrs. Clinron V. Ferries, VA 2.00
M.W. Lupton, VA 10.00
W.G. Parsons, VA 5.00
Mrs. Irene B. Jewett, OH ... 2.00
Mrs. Ada Campbell, VA 10.00
Mrs. Lela Lockhart, MS 20.00
Mrs. Lovie A. Thompson, NC ....
Mrs. R.C. Moore, NC 2.00

PSALM 67

God be merciful unto us , and bless us ; and cause his face to shine upon us ; Selah .

That thy way may be known upon earth , thy saving health among all nations .

Let the people praise thee , O God ; let all the people praise thee .

O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously , and govern the nations upon earth . Selah .

Let the people praise thee , O God ; let all the people praise thee .

Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God , shall bless us .

God shall bless us ; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him .

OBITUARIES

ELDRIDGE LEON GILLIAM

Our Heavenly Father has called from our midst our dear brother and Deacon , Eldridge Leon Gilliam , April 7 , 1989 . Born June4 , 1911 , the son of John A. and Rosa Turner Gilliam . Surviving is his wife Bessie Matkins Gilliam , two sons , David Dolian , of Spartanburg , S.C. and Arnold Edward , of Burlington , N.C. and one brother , James Odell Gilliam of Burlington , N.C. , six grandchildren and four great grandchildren .

Brother Gilliam was received into the fellowship of Mebane Primitive Baptist Church , at the waters edge , July 10 , 1937 . He and Sister Gilliam were baptised by their pastor , Elder Floyd Adams and Elder Curry King .

Brother Leon Gilliam was indeed a precious brother , a very quiet man to live with in the church . It was very evident what his belief and convictions were . He was so wonderfully blessed , as Solomon describes , Prov . 15:1 & 16:24 , A soft answer turneth away wrath and pleasant words are as an honey comb , sweet to the soul and health to the bones . Also as I remember him in life , I am reminded of what Jesus said , In your patience possess ye your souls , Luke 21:19 .

Brother Gilliam was also a successful business man who had many friends and our people found him to be , as Paul has said , Gal . 6:10 , let us do good unto all men , especially unto them who are of the household of faith . Many tokens of kindness we received of him . He was a faithful supporter of our church and our association .

We grieve with Sister Gilliam and their two sons , Arnold and David and their families . But how wonderful is the language of Paul in Thes . 4:13 . But I would not have you to be ignorant , brethren , concerning them which are asleep , that ye sorrow not , even as others which have no hope . Do we not witness together with Paul when he said , Titus 2:13 & 2:14 . Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ , who gave himself for us , that he might redeem us from all iniquity , and purify unto

himself a peculiar people , zealous of good works . We believe that Brother Gilliam is sleeping the sleep of those who will never awake to weep .

Funeral services were conducted by his pastor , Elder Burch Wray and Elder Wallis Smith at Rich & Thompson Chapel Sunday afternoon . Interment followed in Pine Hill Cemetery .

Unworthy
Elder Burch Wray

SISTER VERDA MACHESNEY

Verda Eva was the fifth daughter and youngest of twelve children born to Elder James B . and Wilabour (Wood) Hardy . She was born on a farm near Kiowa , Kansas , on January 28 , 1886 .

She was married to Donn L . Machesney on June 2 , 1909 , and together they reared their family of two sons and two daughters . He died in 1945 and her two sons also preceded her in death .

Sister Verda joined the Pleasant Valley Primitive Baptist Church in Kingman , Kansas , in October , 1939 and was baptized by her brother , Elder J . R . Hardy . This church was established by her father , Elder J . B . Hardy , in the early 1890 's .

Sister Verda was held in high esteem as a solid pillar of the church, and held the office of clerk until her health prevented her from performing the duties of clerk . She loved to meet early before services and discuss the Scriptures with the writer , and since she was so well versed in the Bible , I was careful to speak only on those on which I had been given some light , and very seldom did we disagree . The last Scripture we talked on before her illness was St . John 4:7 .

Sister Verda passed from this vale of tears on August 21 , 1989 in Kingman , Kansas at the age of 103 years , 6 months and 23 days . She is survived by her two daughters , Norma Nichols and Audrey Daggs , both of Kingman , Kansas ; three grandchildren , nine great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren .

Graveside services were conducted at Haviland , Kansas , by her pastor , Elder W . A . Winfrey .

Sister Verda wrote many beautiful poems , and the one enclosed was read at the graveside by her granddaughter .

Written by request of her daughters .

Elder W . A . Winfrey , Pastor

NOT DEATH , BUT SWEET RELEASE

This is not death , but a sweet release ;
So free from all trouble and strife .
A perfect rest in a Saviour 's peace :
Jesus , the way , the resurrection and life .

For mother is now on the other shore ;
The place where there is no night ;
In the loving arms of the God she adored :
Jesus , the way , the resurrection and life .

Our loved one has gone from earth's maze.
E 'er long we 'll meet her above all strife ,
And sing together our songs of praise :
To Jesus , the way , the resurrection and life .

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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POEM

Note of Joy

Oh teach me a song of Heavenly praise
A verse of joy divine
A stanza or two of God 's just ways
And of a hope that might be mine

Let me sing within my heart
Of blissful love on High
A tune of rapture please impart
That tells we shall not die

Sound the voices of one accord
Of Grace, mercy and glee
The endless song of Christ our Lord
That is music sweet from Thee

When we lose our earthly breath
Then no longer can we sing
But the music of Thy voice from death
Will tune our souls again

Someday an endless song we 'll sing
All the seed of Abraham
Then all the walls of Heaven shall sing
Of Moses and of the Lamb.

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

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EDITORIAL

For by grace are ye saved through faith : And that not of yourselves : it is the gift of God : not of works lest any man should boast . For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works , which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them .

Elder R .H . Campbell

Please read the above scripture again , carefully : now what do you believe about the plan of salvation of the saints of God , and the way and manner that it is accomplished in their lives , that is not addressed in this one simple statement . In fact , it is the simplicity of the scriptures and the candid manner in which the truth is declared that confuses the wise and prudent of the world . They search for the deep mystical and profound meaning of the written word that they believe requires the supreme intellect of the sages of the world to understand ; when in fact the scriptures declare ," " And a little child shall lead them ." The above scripture is plain and to the point and does not require a degree in the English language to understand what the apostle Paul is saying here. It is often quoted by people of all , so called , Christian faiths and yet I fear that the quoting of this very basic and solemn fact is as close as many ever get to the truth and the beauty and comfort that is contained in the pages of this book of all books .

The scripture states simply , " For by grace are ye saved ," and this places salvation beyond the reach of the natural man, regardless of how intelligent , honest and sincere , or dedicated he may be to his church and the doctrine that they stand for . Grace is the unmerited favor of one entity in this case , God to another, the hell deserving sinner, and it is at the sole discretion of the one who is granting the blessing. If it was due to any merit , or condition met by the one upon whom it is bestowed then it would not be grace, it would be payment , reward or some other manner of incentive arrangment. All upon whom this grace has been granted were , at the time of its manifestation, in natures darkness and wrestling with the problems of life and striving for the necessities of life in this world or fame and fortune amidst their peers. Then for no reason known by them

they were made aware of the spiritual kingdom and the fact that they were a member of it: made aware of the sin in themselves, the realization that they had been set free from those sins, and where the responsibity for this great change originated. They are made to stand in awe and wonder as they, behold the perfection of beauty that shines forth in Zion from the throne of God into the heart of the recipient of this marvelous and wonderful grace sent down from heaven. It is no wonder, among such, that the song, Amazing Grace, has always been one of the most loved and cherished songs that they sing in their pilgrimage here on earth. They all know it and seemingly sing it with more enthusiasm and vigor than other songs because grace is something that they all know so well and love so dearly.

This grace arrives with faith in the heart of the believer which is the gift that is God's first manifestation in their lives that they are something special, as they later learn, they are of a chosen generation that they should show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. This gift, which was God's and inaccessable to them previously is now theirs, and as the song says, "Cannot be wasted, nor mortgaged nor sold," it does not diminish with the using and all of the power of the devil and his angels cannot take if from you, but, neither can you give it or share it with someone else. Each must have their own gift before they can understand what the other is talking about and then they can share the love and fellowship of these precious things. Just as all of the works of God are sure and certain, so is this gift: it is everlasting through this life and the next. This faith is only replaced by the certain knowledge that each will receive when they enter into the everlasting joy of their God. In this life it will sustain you in all of your trials and afflictions, your doubts and fears and cause you to sing and rejoice with gladness of heart when you are raised up and blessed to sit together with your brethren in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

To further clarify and support these precious truths to the comfort and edification of the saints of God the writer states that these things are, not of works lest any man should boast: they are not of works, they are of grace. This is especially comforting to the heirs of promise in seasons of doubts and when they fear that it is of the flesh. When they read the experiences of others which so closely parallel theirs, the promise that this is a gift by the grace of God and is not of works, they are comforted in the understanding that the salvation of God's children is his workmanship in the person of Christ Jesus and that it is a perfect work, fulfilling prophecy since the beginning of time. This was what Jesus was referring to when he said, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." If Jesus finished the work of salvation, and he did, then they can all rest assured that as they were created in him unto good works, they will fulfil them to a jot and a title because this is as much a part of the plan as the gift of faith by

the grace of God.

Good works is a very basic and necessary part of the life of every child of God because it is through them that the work of grace is made manifest in their lives. If not for the preaching of the Apostle Paul after his receiving of his gift of faith we would have no knowledge of the fruits of the workmanship of God in his life. Except for the writing of Peter, James and John we would not know of the fruits of their labor of love that God had ordained that they should walk in. Good works are the things in the lives of brethren and sisters that we have known in our lives that cause us to remember and love them many years after they have finished their race here on earth with such warmth and joy. It was not necessarily great works that they did that touched us so, but, just little things that spoke volumes regarding that work of grace that was wrought in them: their quiet unassuming desire to do all that they could for the cause of Zion and for the welfare and comfort of the inhabitants thereof.

The Apostle Paul, in writing to Titus spoke much of the things that Titus must be mindful of as he went in and out among the brethren; the things that he should exhort the brethren to do as they traveled down life's journey to make manifest that heavenly calling which was God's gift to them. This included good works which he had ordained for the peace and harmony of the church. He wrote, "This is a faithful saying and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These are good and profitable unto men." These good works are the ones that the children of God are created in Christ Jesus unto and are ordained of God that they should walk in them. Paul and Titus' calling and good work was to admonish the church to remember their calling and to manifest it in their walk, and do all things as unto God.

It is very significant that the writer of the letter to the church at Ephesus included the above scripture in the way that he did. It seems that these three verses condense the teachings of the whole letter to these few words. The first two verses cover the plan of salvation and declares that it is all the sovereign work of God without any help from the one saved and not of works, to stop the boastful claims of man. Then the last verse brings in the results of this work in the life of the heaven born soul. It still does not praise man or grant him any credit in the things that follow, but makes manifest the work that was done in the heart, and it does declare that the good works that follow are just as much a part of the whole work as the gift of faith by the grace of God. By including them in the same context it shows that they are inseparable as part of the experiencing of the salvation of God by the heirs of promise as they run with patience the race that is set before them. The works are but the fruits of the spirit which God has given them for this purpose. When viewed in this way, certainly the calling of the ministers of God is to reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine to bring these things to their minds

again that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

In bonds of love
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Elder Kenneth R. Key:
Dear Brother Key:

My reason of a request of me, by an Old School Primitive Baptist Elder who I have spent many precious hours with speaking of the unsearchable riches of the true and living " God" and His free grace and mercy to usward, and the unlimited and unchangeable certainty of al - mighty power and absolute controll over His every creation at all times and under any and all circum - stances. Has persuaded me to submit a little of my writing to you for your consideration, as whether or not to insert it into the Signs.

The writing — In the morning of time for this world to begin its ex - istance, God in His infinite wisdom and almighty power and pleasure, did determine foreordain and abso - lutely predestinate and confirm of what all things and beings shall be and exactly their every movement, thought, word, action or reaction what would ever be in all time for this world to stand. And so therefore it is an entire impossibility for Almighty God to ever be surprised, disap - pointed, or in anywise become aware of any new or different thing from that what he fully knew from before He created this world and the fullness thereof. This God I speak of will receive unto Himself ' only ' that what He himself prepared in its entirety; therefore whenever one utters or groans a prayer unto Him for His blessing, that one has already received a blessing from " God " what did enable him to pray in the first place; and just so sure as that true prayer were performed, just that sure is it that prayer will surely be answered, (in God 's way of course); for the answer was already prepared even before that prayer were uttered or groaned. You see it was God 's work all - the - way from start to finish; He conditioned or prepared that one so he would pray, and in that conditioning or prepara - tion of him to pray, also prepared that one for the receiving of an answer to it. You see this God does not work half or part the way and leave the rest up to another, be - cause He just simply is an all - in - all God. With Him there just simply are no ifs, ands or buts; for with this " God " it just simply is — I will and you shall; " I will be unto you a God" and you shall be unto me a people. No condition there of ifs so and so, just simply a statement of facts. Which are oh so sweet and precious to me from time to time. Oh I am so very glad and I hope thankful unto my God, that He himself is at the helm at all times, and holds and controls all power what be both in heaven and earth, and that no man or men or governments can either hinder, hasten or interfere in any way shape or form with His perfect operation of His government. You see this " all - in - all God" already knows the heart

of every one of mankind; and so it is; we can make God aware of nothing, for yes He knew the end from the beginning , and all things in be - tween. You see mankind can neither think, move about or even have their begin or even exist , without God having first furnished him with all what make that even a possibility . You see by the power of " Almighty God " this world and all its contents were brought into existance , and every moment of its containuation is wholly sustained by that same power . To even think a thought takes strength, strength must derive from a source of power, and in that all power what be is ordained of " " God"; so therein settles the whole matter , as to what self ability man may or may not have independent from God furnishings of their every strength for to do anything . So you see there is only " one " in heaven or upon the earth whom we could ever rightly praise or honor for anything whatsoever, that being " The Three - one - God ."

For me to believe any less than the above concerning my " God " would be to live in this world without hope ; which hope is so very sweet and precious to me .

Your brother in Christ I hope
Troy G .Shepard
103 E .Tateway Road
Kitty Hawk , N .C . 27949

CAMBRIA , ILL., MAY 31 , 1933 .

DEAR EDITORS: — I am en - closing a letter written by dear sister Fannie H. Chester for you to publish if you see fit. It is too good to be put away without others enjoy - ing it with me . I have her consent to have it published. I am also sending two dollars to pay for our dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES , for we get much comfort from the good letters it contains .

Yours truly ,
Mrs . W .M . Odom

MURRAY , KY ., MAY 1 , 1933 .

MRS . ESTELL ODOM — VERY DEAR SISTER : — Home duties have prevented me from complying with your request , and my promise , in regard to writing what I hope I have been made to see and feel by divine power . I remember when a girl of writing dear Elder J .M . Perkins a letter and telling him some of my sorrows , or a part of my experience and he published it in the paper he edited at that time , the Gospel News , Mayfield , Kentucky . Dear sister , I was only a girl of seventeen years when first touched by the divine love (power) . At that time I could not understand what that power was . I could not then realize it was divine love , the road was so rough , I was out in the wilderness , deep in the mire . It was so dark I could find no way out . I felt to be without love in every respect. I even felt that my father , mother , sisters and brothers had ceased to love me. I had rather be alone than with any one . Well do I remember one cold December morning in the year 1900 . It was the last or closing day of our school, and very early in the morning a sad interrupted feeling came over me, I knew not what, and on my way to school I tried to evade this feeling by thinking of our school program , and repeating my numerous parts ,

but to no avail . My mind was so confused I hardly would have been responsible for what I might have said. This thought came: One more school term ended; no doubt before another some of our loved ones may be absent by death , and it may be me. Then I said, No, not me, I am not fit to die . I could hardly take care of my part during the program , for thinking I was not fit to die . After awhile the program was ended, and when the teacher gave her few farewell remarks in a tender and touching way I could then give vent to tears without any special notice of any one . The flowing tears gave a little relief, yet as I walked to my home I was sad, so sad, and had very little to say . I retired very early in the evening and wept until I fell asleep. I arose early in the morning and the gloomy feeling still continued. I said to myself , What is the matter with me? What can be the trouble? Why is the thought of death hovering over me so? I continued in this sorrowful condition for a few days, feeling so badly that I gave up and went to bed. Father and mother came to me and asked if I were sick . I answered by saying, I do not know; I feel badly. I think it was the next day that they found me very restless, and called a physician , but no relief came . At night I thought death surely was near , and thought , If I should die where would I go ? Lost . Oh lost forever in the ever - dooming hell . Just then I could see my past life and could view every evil, every sin in my life . Oh the vile sinner I was ! I remained so restless that the doctor was called again . Oh sister , I did wish he would not come again, for at that time I truly did realize he could do me no good . Then came the beautiful words of Benjamin Lloyd:

" Pity a helpless sinner, Lord,
Who would believe thy gracious word,
But own my heart, with shame and grief,
A sink of sin and unbelief.

Lord, in thy house I read there's room,
And, venturing hard, behold I come;
But can there, tell me, can there be,
Amongst thy children room for me?

For sinners, Lord, thou camest to bleed,
And I'm a sinner vile indeed;
Lord, I believe thy grace is free;
O magnify that grace in me."

My dear father and mother taught us children to walk uprightly at all times , but in my youthful days it was not altogether their teaching that stopped me: I had a fear of the all - seeing eye that was upon me. One night I was at a Missionary Baptist protracted meeting, when the preacher ended his sermon by trying to get sinners to the altar, or to the mourners' bench , as they called it. He quoted this to them: " Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." I said to myself , Is that Bible ? After going home I searched and found it. I was bothered about it, so the first time I saw Elder Perkins I asked him , What about such Scripture? He smiled, and said, That is James writing to the church brethren . I proved it to me . So I struggled on in my youthful days, up and down , until the fourth Monday in February, 1901 , when a Primitive Baptist minister came and spent the night with us . The evening he came we were sitting

around the fire and talking on the Bible (or rather they were , I was only listening), and during the conver - sation the minister asked my elder sister if she had ever confessed her sins . No sooner had he asked her and I felt as though my heart was in my mouth , for I was afraid he would question me on the same subject , and I did not want any one to know what was troubling me . I only wanted to hear others talk of how sinners were saved . I was much interested , but hesitated to ask questions . Sure enough , he turned to me and asked if that ever gave me any trouble . I ignored the question and he asked me again . I sat there with my head down and wishing I could sink beneath the floor . The third time he said , Fannie , do your sins ever give you any trouble ? I filled with tears and left the room . As I passed out he said , O child , do not leave us . Just then I preferred to be alone , yet at the same time I was hungry for a crumb from the Master 's table . At night I would creep to my bedroom and fall on my knees and beg God to forgive my many sins . I have lain on my bed at night when I suppose all the family were asleep but poor me . Oh ! the horrid , horrid thought of going down into eternal woe would almost make me scream aloud and tears would flow until I could find no dry place on either side of my pillow to lay my head . By this time all I could say was , Lord , Lord , have mercy on me . But it seemed to me my cries and begging were unheard . I longed to ask some one to pray for me , but was ashamed to do so . I went on in this condition until October , and the association convened with our home church (New Salem). During the meeting we had a great many breth - ren and sisters in our home , and Saturday night there were eight or nine ministers there and we had quite a meeting . Those who did not preach talked along the line of experience . Oh it was so interest - ing , the very crumb I was longing for. I shall never forget that precious night . Dear Elder Perkins , who now is sleeping the blessed sleep , preached last , and it seemed to me he must know my feelings better than I did myself . He preached to me . I tried to keep back the tears , but could not . I tried to hide behind others , but he saw the flowing tears and looked me in the face . By this time several were talking , praising God and shaking hands with love . Oh those precious shouts of joy , prais - ing God above everything . Oh listen ! to me just now I can hear those sweet voices singing the sweet praises over in my father 's and mother 's old home . My father was on a sick bed , but he rose up and shook hands with all and was very happy , while my dear mother sat by him . At this time I was sitting on the floor at the foot of the bed , but nevertheless Elder Perkins sought me out and took my hand . I left the room for fear they would hear my cries . The following day (Sunday) when the meeting closed and the people were leaving the church grounds , I was standing aside feeling very sad , crushed down with my sins , when Elder Perkins came to say goodbye , with tears streaming down my cheeks I asked him to pray for poor me , and with tears he said goodbye . Sister , he knew my suffer- ing was great . Then sister Lillian and

I hurried to our home , where the good old black woman had dinner ready . Soon many were leaving to catch the train , but I had an opportunity of asking one of the ministers to pray for me. I must say that at that time I could not understand the blessing , but was much shocked at what he said . He said , I feel too unworthy to pray for any one . Now that made me feel breathless , to think that such a sinner as I had even dared to call the Lord's name. I felt so little, so ashamed, because I had even ventured to speak to him on the subject.

I went on in this condition until the spring of 1902 , when one Sunday morning I awoke with my sins crushing me nearly to death . I felt I could not live longer . I tried to appear busy with something , but slow work it was . I was in the dining-room trying to sweep, but the time came when I could not help crying aloud. Mother and father ran to me, shook me several times, and father said, What is the matter with you ? What is the trouble ? I finally said, O father, the devil has hold on me and I cannot get away from him. They both wept and tried to console me , but I experienced no relief , though I was begging for it constantly. The same day, in the afternoon, as I was sitting on the back porch alone my sins came like mountains before me and I wept bitter tears . I went into the house and got the Bible to see if I could find some passage of Scripture that would give me a little comfort . But oh poor me , everywhere I read it would condemn me , and I said to myself , I cannot bear the suffering any longer. I was afraid someone would see me crying, so I went into another room and closed the door. I had fully decided to end my life . Then I saw myself doomed for hell and could see no escape . I had thought of three ways to end my life , and as I was sitting there all stooped over with my face buried in my hands, thinking which way would be the easiest and quickest, a calmness came over me . I do not know how long I sat there unconscious of the things of this world , but when I came to myself I was sitting perfectly straight with my hands clasped. The sweet peace I had so longed for had come to me , the grief and weeping had been turned into peace , sweet peace, and I was made to smile for a short while . I felt as though I had been in a deep sleep all these days and had awakened to something new. Everything seemed different. I walked out in the yard and the very sight of the grass and trees was beautiful, the sky was clear and the sun appeared to me to shine brighter than ever. It is impossible for me to express the beautiful and lovely scene. That burden of sin was gone and it never has returned. But other sorrows came. This Adam (natural) life came again , doubts and fears came, and I soon began to wonder if I was deceived. Oh the terrible battle I was in . Sister Odom , then I began my work. I thought I would be shown something I had done wrong . I was made to mourn because I was still continuing in my sins , and I made vow after vow to cease sinning . I truly thought I could be good and sin no more, but before I knew it I would find myself doing the same things over again , or rather , something

worse, and I would be much humiliated and would repeat my promise to God that if he would forgive me again I would be good and sin no more. But alas, dear sister, I had to surrender, for there was no good in me. Then I began searching the Scriptures, and I read Luke xviii. 19, where Jesus said, "Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is God." Then while searching I came to the epistle of Paul to the Romans, and in the seventh chapter was much encouraged by dear old Paul, an apostle, saying, "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law, that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me me. For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not." While reading the fifth chapter of Matthew my heart rejoiced when I read in the sixth verse, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Sister, down deep in my heart I was so hungry I was a beggar, and I am a poor beggar still. I remember one cold February evening, I was alone in my warm room reading in the eighth chapter of Luke about the woman who had an issue of blood for twelve years and the physicians could not help her, but rather she grew worse. But when she heard of Jesus she said, If I may but touch his clothes I shall be whole. I, too, felt that if I could stretch out my arms and hands high enough I would be healed. Oh the great faith has made us whole.

"Lord, in thy house I read there's room,
And venturing hard, behold I come;
But can there, tell me, can there be,
Amongst thy children room for me?"

Those words were my sentiments. Now a battle came. A desire came to follow Jesus into the liquid grave. But I felt so unfit that should I offer myself to the church I would be rejected. So I battled on until August, 1904, when I dreamed I was at a meeting of the church, Elder J.M. Perkins was praying, and such a prayer I had never heard. I arose and was talking and shouting while he continued to pray. Then I awoke, but with a stronger desire than ever to be baptized as Jesus was. The following month, September, 1904, Elder Perkins had an appointment with our church the 7th and 8th, and I attended both days. The first day I was cold and indifferent. Elder Perkins and brother Jim McNeely spent the night in our home, and the next morning these words were flying through my mind: Come ye that love the Lord. I asked brother McNeely if there was a song with such words. He said, Yes. Why? I said, Oh, I do not know, those words are continually in my mind this morning. A little later I heard him tell Elder Perkins about my asking him. It was soon time to be going to meeting again, but for some reason I felt I would rather not go, but as father had died the 20th of the previous February I felt I must go with mother. We all met and the songs

were sweet music to me . Elder Perkins preached, and told how the sinner was saved . He told me all I had been, told me what I was then, told my longing desire ; he told his own experience and it linked with mine exactly . After a song was selected it was announced that the door was open for the reception of members. Now, sister Odom, some power, whether it was divine or not I cannot say , made this clay form of mine quiver and shake and I was raised up and went forward and gave my hand . By the time I sat down another lady came forward, the song was ended . Then Elder Perkins spoke to me in regard to the church. He asked me to relate to the church in my own simple way the dealings of the Lord with me. I began at the very first, as I have with you, and when I was telling of the calmness that came over me and that I felt as though I had been asleep all those days , brother Perkins stamped his foot on the floor and clapped his hands , and with tears streaming down his face said, Stop, stop, we are satisfied. But, sister, I could not stop , and continued talking until I was satisfied to stop . While I was talking a young man came forward, his face wet with tears, and offered himself. I was received in full fellowship, and so were the other two, and in the afternoon we three were baptized . Oh the sweet relief experience in following Jesus and being buried as he was in the liquid grave, but I cannot tell you how utterly unworthy I feel to be among God 's people , but I am unable to express my feelings . Oh that God will keep me where I belong : at their feet .

I have not told you all , and feel that I could write on and on yet the half would not be told, but I am afraid you will be weary with me , so will close by asking you to pray for your poor unworthy sister , that I may always live to serve the brethren and sisters in meekness and humility .

Yours with love ,
Fannie H . Chester

November 3 , 1989

To the Editors of the Signs of the Times :

Dear Brethren (I hope I am one among you) : I just now read a writing of Elder Beebe's dated June 15 , 1845 . Headed — WHERE IS THE CHURCH , of which I could not (it seemed to me) be anymore in agreement with and I feel the same no less applies today than in 1845 . I am copying a portion of it to send to you for your consideration as to whether or not to insert it in the Signs .

Elder Beebe's writing — (remember this was written in 1845 . So let us look around and see if we agree that the same applies today) .

In order to demonstrate the existence of the church of Christ on earth at the present day , we must find a community of saints corresponding to the primitive pattern , of eighteen hundred years ago — a people whose only beauty consists

in the comeliness which Christ has put upon them — a people saved by the Lord who is the shield of their help and the sword of their excel - lency, and whose enemies are found liars unto them — (Deut. xxxiii. 29)— a people dwelling alone and not reckoned among the nations , with no governmental patronage from the powers of the world — a kingdom that is not of this world, nor visible to the world, because they are the sons of God ; the world knoweth them not because it knew him not - a- poor and afflicted people trusting in the name of the Lord — a persecuted people ; for if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus he shall suffer persecution . Their names shall be cast out of men , and they shall be hated of all men for Christ 's name sake . They are regarded as the offscouring of all things , accused and slandered in like manner as their divine Lord and Master was ; for if these things were done in the green tree they shall be repeated in the dry ; if they called the Master of the house Beelzebub they will also call them of his household so .

These are only some the outlinen of the church of Christ . She is also characterized by her " one Lord, one faith , and one baptism ? Her faith is as radically different from that of every other professing people on earth as are her Lord and her baptism . Of her faith Jesus is the Author and Finisher ; but that of all other religious bodies either ori - ginates with themselves or is de - rived from the doctrines , traditions , and instructions of men. But blessed is she , for flesh and blood hath not revealed these things to her, but her heavenly Father has taught her by his Holy Spirit . She is the opposite of all other sects in regard to her food, her appetite , and the source from which all her supplies are received . Others can and do eat their own bread and wear their own apparel ; but she must eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus . Nothing short of the true Bread which came down from heaven , that kind which Moses never gave , can satisfy her ; but her neighbors , or the thorns among which she is situated , do not see why the bread that Moses gave is not good enough .

Christ 's Church is a peculiar people , in all respects essentially different from the religionists of this world . She comprises a chosen generation , a royal priesthood , and a holy nation , and shows forth the praises of him who hath called her out of darkness and translated her into the kingdom of his dear Son . The doctrine which her faith takes hold of is that which cannot possibly suit any body else under heaven . And if there be any who have not passed from death unto life , who fancy that they can understand and love the doctrine by which the church of God is distinguished , they are deluded . As none knoweth the things of a man but the spirit of a man that is in him , (for the spirit of man being taken from any man but a dead and unconscious corpse remains ,) neither knoweth any man the things of the Spirit but the Spirit. And unless we be born of the Spirit , and that Spirit abide in us , we are as dead to all spiritual things , as the human body is to natural life after the animal spirit has departed . It is therefore ,

quite as practicable to teach the tenants of the tombs the English grammar , or any science , as to teach the things of the Spirit of God to unregenerate men . The Church of God , if found at all , will be found in possession of doctrine which cannot be taught by every or any man to his neighbor , saying , know the Lord ; it cannot be taught nor learned in Sabbath schools , or what are called theological schools ; nor can it be derived from reading the bible , or hearing it expounded , even if Paul himself were the expounder , for the natural man cannot receive it ; it is Spiritually discerned . Every organized body of professors of religion who hold a doctrine which they can teach their unregenerate fellow men is a branch of anti - christ ; and the nature and attainableness of their faith proves that they have not the faith of God 's elect , and that their faith stands in the wisdom of men , and not in the power of God . See 1 Cor . ii . 5 . The primitive church acknowledged Christ as the only spiritual King , the true and only Potentate , who only hath immortal - ity dwelling in the light which no man can attain unto . That church cannot now be identified where Christ is not so regarded ; nor is he so regarded by any church , sect , or people who hold that there is spiritual life any - where else , or that the light in which he dwelleth can be approached . To approach is to make some advance towards the object ; but this no man can do , as the members of the Church of Christ know right well . The true church now , as in her primitive days , depends on God to raise up , qualify , send forth , and sustain the ministers of the gospel . Those who heap to themselves teachers , hav - ing itching ears , are not the church of Christ . To him who ascended up on high , who led captivity captive , and received gifts for men , they look for all the gifts which the Church can need , — to him who reigns , being exalted a Prince and a Savior , to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins , and to him alone they look to bring sinners to repentance and to cause the redeemed of the Lord to return with singing to Zion with ever - lasting joy upon their heads . To him who opened the doors of death , and rose triumphantly from the grave , who conquered sin and hell , they look for support , comfort , deliver - ance and victory .

Finally , the Church of our Redeemer is the circumcision who worship God in the Spirit , rejoice in Christ Jesus , and have no confi - dence in the flesh . *(End of copy)*

After having read much of Elder Beebe 's writings , it is my deep feelings that surely his Teacher was the very same One who taught John the Baptist , and every other one of His chosen children who have ever truely learned of God 's greatness in all His atributes and absolute con - sistancy .

Troy G . Shepard
103 E . Tateway Rd .
Kitty Hawk , N .C . 27949

PSALM 91: v .16 .

With long life will I satisfy him , and shew him my salvation .

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH

The commandment is, " To study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Timothy 2:15.

The geographer divides the world into continents, islands, seas, lakes, rivers, mountains and valleys; the botanist classifies all vegetables, and reduces them to orders, genera, species and varieties; and so does the zoologist, that these series may be more easily studied. Let the theologian, then, rightly divide the word of truth.

The word of God is such a perfect whole, that we dare not divide it is such a manner as to disconnect one part from another. But we may, without an violence to it, say they are distinct, experimental and practical truths, and treat of each in their proper relation to each other. I prefer this division to that of law and gospel as is often made. Although the law and the gospel are distinct from each other, and should be so regarded, yet in Christ they meet in a perfect oneness. The division which I have made was through both the law and the gospel, and distinguishes one from the other when necessary, and brings them together in like manner in perfect agreement in Christ. We do not make void the law by the gospel, nor does the law make void the promises of the gospel. Romans 3 : 31.

1. DOCTRINAL TRUTHS. - Doctrine in a general sense, means whatever is taught. In it's application to the Bible it signifies the truths therein recorded, and we will see that these may be advantageously divided into doctrinal, experimental and practical truths. We must believe all the truths of the Bible, and by faith acknowledge them; some of them we must experience and have an experimental knowledge of them; others we must practice; thus we may again see the propriety of this arrangement. The word " rightly" in the text, must, if possible, be maintained. Let the word of God be " rightly " divided, or not at all. Improper divisions of it have done much harm.

Having in another part of this work, treated of the Eternal Godhead, to which I refer the reader, I will now take in hand doctrinally, the great subject of God's foreknowledge, predestination and election; not, however, in a methodical, elaborate manner, but according to the best arrangements I may be able to make of scriptural lights for their observances.

How sublime is the thought, that whatever the Lord does, is in strict conformity to His foreknowledge of it; ; that it is in perfect agreement with His eternal purpose concerning it; that it is after the counsel of His unchangeable will; that it is a manifestation of His infinite wisdom; that it is the product of His infinite power. All of which combine to make it right infinitely right as it appertains to Himself, and all other things.

Further, that when God, and

God only existed, He was as fully in the midst of all things, in one sense, as He has been since, or ever will be hereafter. He foreknew all things, could bring up all things before himself as clearly as though they then existed! Hence, so to speak, has God forever dwelt in the midst of all things. Reader, pursue the idea, and God will be glorified in it.

These truths enter largely and unqualifiedly into the great doctrine of man's salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ. The Three divine persons harmonize in it. The Father gives His people grace in the Lord Jesus Christ, before the world began, and elects them in Him; the Son agrees, in covenant, to perform the conditions of this gift; and the Holy Spirit testifies to the things of Christ, while they are One in their impassable Divinity.

The division of the word of God into law and Gospel, is by no means a bad one, but I prefer the one which I have made, inasmuch as it takes in the division as a distinct item. Besides my division is entirely consonant with the believer's relation to the word of God.

1. There are some truths which he has simply to acknowledge by faith, which may be called doctrinal truths.

2. There are some which he must experience, which may be called experimental truths.

3. There are others which we must practice, and may be termed practical truths.

This seems to me to "rightly" divide the word of God.

The first subject that I will take up under the head of doctrine, is the foreknowledge of God.

The word foreknew is used only twice in the Holy scriptures, but other words are employed to express the same thing. The word foreknowledge is also used twice; foreordained once, and foresaw once.

The word "foreknow," in Romans 8 : 29, is of great doctrinal import; it teaches us that the foreknowledge of God is not passive, but active, and for predestination, calling, justification and glorification, are all divine acts to be predicated of it. "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the First Born among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, He also justified, and whom He justified He also glorified.

Election may also be predicated of the divine foreknowledge, for Peter says, that the "strangers scattered through-out Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, where elected, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father;" and the gift of all spiritual blessings was made according to divine election, as is plainly taught in Ephesians 1 : 3 - 4. Also in this instance of election, expressed by the word "chosen," we see that it is God's foreknowledge, as it was made "before the foundation of the world." We are taught again, in Romans 11 : 2, that God foreknew the Jews, which is given as a reason why God did not cast them away. Peter says Christ verily pardoned before the foundation of the world. And David says; "My substance was

not hid from THEE, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest part of earth. Thy eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect, and in Thy book all my members were written, which, in continuance, were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." Psalms 139 : 15 & 16. Again, "Even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were." This is God's great and exclusive prerogative, to call up things that are not from the great and hidden depths of His divinity, and speak and act in regard to them as though they were. But the running reply is, God's foreknowing a thing, does not make it so. I ask, shall the Lord foreknow a thing, speak of it, and act in regard to it, and then shall it not come to pass? Many have prayed to gainsay the foreknowledge of God in a variety of ways, which I need not stop to notice, as it is now rather my duty to elucidate it according to the word of God, wherein it is not darkly and obscurely revealed, but plainly and undeniably. I will quote another text strongly in point: "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times, the things that are not yet done, saying my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isaiah 46 : 9 & 10.

Some suppose that these scriptural truths, when received in their plain significations, destroy the free will and free agency of persons. Now, had the apostle written that it is of him that willeth, and of him that runneth, I would try to protect free will and free agency by all possible means; but as long as the text reads plainly, that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy, I shall feel more inclined to trace out that mercy, and not give myself so much concern about free will and free agency, as to deny the foreknowledge of God, and His election, in order to protect things which Paul affirms are of no avail in our salvation. So that I have no confidence in the will nor agency of the creature. Man has a natural will, which is controlled by natural things; a spiritual will is born of God in the day of His power, and is controlled by spiritual influences. In the new birth there is a change of will as well as of heart. The old will with a new heart would be like sewing a new piece of cloth to an old garment.

I will now dismiss the subject of divine foreknowledge, as it is treated of more fully in another part of this work, and offer some remarks on divine predestination and election.

There is but little difference between predestination and election; so little that they may be almost used as convertable terms. In my remarks upon the subject of election, I shall contend chiefly for two propositions, which, if proven, will correct two of the most common and hurtful errors on the subject.

1. PROPOSITION. That there is a personal election.

2. PROPOSITION. That this personal election is not on account of foreseen good works.

Both of these propositions admit of plain scriptural proof too plain to be caviled at as it is. What saith the

scripture? Whom He did predestinate, them, the same ones, He also called. Christ says, I know, my sheep. Could He know them in any other manner than that in which they were contradistinguished from all others? In divine agreement with this, are the words of the prophets: "When thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed," His elect. Had He not seen them all at that trying time, He would not have been "satisfied," and they could not have constituted that joy which was then set before Him. Isaiah 53 : 10 & 11; Hebrews 12 : 2.

"In all their afflictions He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them; In His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bare and carried them all the days of old." Isaiah 63 : 9. Besides they were chosen in Christ and endowed prospectively with all spiritual blessings in Him, before the foundation of the world; and may we not, by all this, see plainly, that He must have known them personally? Any other conclusion would be in palpable violation of the scripture just quoted.

Besides, Christ said, all that the Father hath given to Him, should come to Him. Does He mean the same ones personally, or does He mean others? How can they be those given to Him by the Father, if He refers to others, for He says all of the former shall come to Him. Names relate to persons, and it is said their names were written in the Lamb's book of life. Whose names were written there? Those given to Christ, whom He saw on the cross with joy, when He made His soul an offering for their sins.

Directly in connection with the subject of personal, particular or unconditional election, as it is sometimes called, comes up the subject of the election of believers according to their foreseen good works, which brings me to the second proposition which I promised to prove: That persons were not elected on account of foreseen good works.

God's elect were blessed with all spiritual blessings, according as they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. To what end were they elected, and blessed in this manner? That they should be holy and without blame before Him in love. Where does this holiness come from? Certainly from the spiritual blessings given in Christ; and if so, not from any principle of holiness in fallen sinners, nor could their election have been determined by any good works performed by them, and foreseen of God.

But the objector is probably ready to say, that Peter says we must make our calling and election sure. This is admitted, but Peter was writing to believers and directed them that they should do this, that they might enjoy the comfort of it, by showing forth the fruits of those very spiritual blessings which were given to them in their election. These are evidences of the believer's election, and Peter wanted believers to enjoy these evidences. The unregenerate cannot know any thing about their election until these fruits begin to abound the fruit of election. I Thessalonians 1 : 4 & 5. God foresees no good works on the part of His elect until the tree is made good; not until they experience the gift of those

blessings given to them in Christ, by means of which they then perform good and acceptable works, which are the fruits of these blessings, and not the procuring cause of them.

I will now adduce further proof both from precept and example: "Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord; yet I loved Jacob and I hated Esau." Malachi 1 : 2 & 3. Was the choice of Jacob predicated on his foreseen good works? Let Paul answer. What saith the pen of inspiration? "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him that calleth. It was said unto her: The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Romans 9 : 12 & 13.

To contend that the election of believers is determined by foreseen good works amounts to about the same as to contend that our salvation is also. The Apostle says: The election hath obtained it, and in doctrine there can be no difference. Romans 11 : 7. But we have just seen that the election obtains it through Christ, and not works of righteousness on the part of the believer. It is plain that if grace, which saves, be without the merit of works that election which saves is also without such works; and if it be by works, it is no more grace, then if by works it is no more election. Romans 11 : 6.

I will now treat of another subject, which is not always rightly divided: THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL

The doctrine of the law is, do and live; that of the Gospel, live and do. And yet in the great affair of salvation they perfectly harmonize in Christ; in whom the Gospel establishes the law, and the law the Gospel. The law has been satisfied by Christ, and in the Gospel we receive its righteousness by faith, I mean the righteousness of the law. In this there is a practical illustration of their full agreement, so that the blessings of faith and righteousness have not been given contrary to the pure and holy law of God; but they are given through Christ, who has fulfilled the law. It has no demands where there is no sin; and Christ has taken away all sin from the believer. Hence we do not make void the law by faith, but on the contrary establish it. But we must establish it in Christ by faith and not by works of righteousness which we have done. Matthew 5 : 17 & 18 Romans 3 : 3.

God gave man a law which was enjoined as the rule of his conduct and he violated it, and thereby incurred the penalty of death- death of both soul and body. Sin is the transgression of the law, Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law. Thus by the law is the knowledge of sin. Had all the laws given by the Lord to all beings been kept, sin would have been excluded in all worlds. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Romans 5 : 12.

How shall man revive from under this curse? How shall his sins be forgiven? Not according to a covenant of works, for man is not in a condition to comply with such a covenant. "By the deeds of the law

then shall be no flesh justified in His sight ." Romans 3 : 20 . The law is good , pure and holy , but the deeds of men are wicked and unholy . In the covenant of works the law was given on the tables of stone , in that of the Gospel , it was to be in- written on the heart , which implies an inward work of grace . The doctrine of a covenant of works , and the doctrine of grace harmonize in Christ . " The law was given by Moses , but grace and truth come by the Lord Jesus Christ ." John 1 : 19 . But we must notice that grace and truth did come by the Lord Jesus Christ in violation of the holy law of God , which requires full satisfaction for all it violated precepts ; but faith says , according to the Gospel , this satisfaction was made by Christ , and is now mine , just as though I had made the satisfaction myself ! Thus may we in meekness speak through faith . What a mercy , what a blessed privilege ! In all this , we see , that mercy and truth have met together , righteousness and peace kissed each other . Psalm 85 : 10 . The law then has its works , and the gospel its grace ; and when I ask the question which saves ? The answer is ready : " By grace are ye saved ."

This grace involves good works , those very works which God has foreordained for believers to perform ; not , however , for their justification before Him , but as the fruit of the tree made good by Himself . A tree of righteousness the planting of the Lord that He might be glorified in its fruits . Isaiah 61 : 3 . Herein we have a plain distinction between the works of the law , and the works of the Gospel .

The ceremonial law with all its sacrifices , and gifts pointed to the manner in which the moral law would be fulfilled , magnified and made honorable by Christ . Then were the shadows of good things to come . But the great doctrine is that a carnal observance of these ceremonies did not procure spiritual life , nor pardon of sins . " For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly , neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh ; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly , and circumcision is that to the heart , in the spirit , and not in the letters ; whose praise is not of men but of God ." Romans 2 : 28 & 29 . There is a mystic circumcision which appertains to the Gospel ; it is a Gospel blessing , a circumcision of the heart without hands ; and as no one could be a Jew outwardly without circumcision in the flesh , so no one can be a christian inwardly without a circumcision of the spirit . An inward circumcision which the Jew must have as well as the gentile in order to be saved by Christ .

Christ hath by one offering forever perfected them that are sanctified . Hebrew 10 : 4 & 14 . We must make a distinction between the moral law of God , and ceremonial law . Christ by His one offering delivered the Jews from the latter , but not from the former , only as an end of it is seen through Christ by faith , according to the latter mystic circumcision which is of the spirit .

These ceremonies were types of aids to the believing Jew , in directing his faith to this one great and final offering . How sublime was the rending of the veil of the earthly temple when this one offering was

made , showing that these things had come to an end , Christ having consecrated another way , by His own blood , called a living way , unto the holy of holies , whither He is for us entered , even Jesus made an High Priest forever after the order of Melchesideck . It is here that He ever lives to make intercession for all believers .

So that by rightly dividing the word of truth we may have a plain and useful distinction between the law and the gospel ; how very different they are from each other , and yet how completely they harmonize in Christ . How very different the ceremonial is from the moral law , and yet how wonderfully they agree also in Christ . And how very different were all the offerings made by all Levites from the one offering , made by Christ in His superior priesthood . This one offering forever superseded all others , and now comes up in faith as the great prototype of all of them . The ceremonial law when observed by faith may well be called the gospel of the law , as it has been by some .

The law made a distinction between Jew and gentile , but the Gospel makes none . Galatians 3 : 28.
gentiles partake of the blessings of the Gospel , as do the " remnant according to election " among the Jews . Christ is all and in all to both . They are wide apart in the law , but are brought nigh and close together in the Gospel .

Elder John M . Watson
Sent to us by
Nancy and Roy Pullig

TIME SALVATION

December 1937

Who does time belong to ? Does it belong to God or man ? If it belongs to God , in the sense that he is only of time and ends when time ends , then all the salvation that we as creatures have is a time salvation , and ends when time ends . If it belongs to us as creatures of time , who are here as human beings for a time , then any kind of a salvation for us is a time salvation . Salvation is never spoken of in the Scriptures as being two or more . It is always spoken of in the singular . Salvation is nothing more nor less than deliverance . I want to investigate the matter from a scriptural standpoint and see if we can arrive at any conclusion as to where this salvation , or deliverance , comes from . If it is of God alone we could do no better than to contend for it as being of him , according as he blesses us to do so . If it is alone of man , then the Old Absolute Predestinarian Baptists need to be warned , so that they might cease giving all the praise , honor and glory to God and entreat the Lord to forgive us for our blindness , and promise to spend the balance of our few days in telling to dead alien sinners that the Lord may be found at any time . If it is of God and man , that is , if God does all of the regeneration or bringing through the powers known as the new birth and then turns the affair over to us to run or leave undone , then we need to beg the forgiveness of our conditional brethren , and go to work to get destroyed every copy of the London Confession of Faith ,

Philadelphia Confession of Faith , Black Rock Preceedings , SIGNS OF THE TIMES . Lone Pilgrim and every other paper or Minute that says God alone saves the sinner. He is the God of salvation . (Psalms lxviii . 19 ,20 .) His salvation is nigh them that fear him . (Psalms lxxxv . 9 .) The Lord hath made known his salvation . (Psalms xlviii . 2, 3 .) We will be glad , and rejoice in his salvation . (Isaiah xxv . 9 .) I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory . (Isaiah xlvi . 13 .) Salvation is of the Lord . (Jonah ii . 9.) Neither is there salvation in any other . (Acts iv . 12 .) The grace of God brings salvation . (Titus ii . 11 .) Here I give a few of the many quotations of salvation being alone in the singular , and alone of the Lord . Now as we undertake to go out in this great subject let it be understood that we are fallible brings . As far as I am concerned , I know that conditional time salvation is not the truth . If my blessings came as a result of my deportment since I have had a hope in the blood of the everlasting covenant , I am sure that I never would have received any . How is it with you , my dear reader ? Have you any merit to plead before the Lord that would bring him under any obligation to bless you with spiritual or temporal blessings since he first spoke release to your poor soul ? Do you hunger and thirst after righteousness ? Oh yes ! What poor wayfaring stranger does not ? From where did you get the thirst ? Did you manufacture it ? Is your hungering and thirsting of your own creation ? Ah , my precious one , you cannot answer in the affirmative . You must ascribe it all to Him . If you do ascribe it all to Him , then you cannot claim any credit for it . Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness , for they shall be filled . (Matt . vi . 6 .) How wonderful is this language . How full and complete it is to poor sinners . So different from the way it is taught by people who have not been completely weaned from the law . It would bring amusement to us to see a normal , intelligent man put the cart before the horse , but how different if we see a poor , blind , lame man doing it . If we have been taught by that love of God being shed abroad in our hearts , then it arouses pity and compassion . We do not wonder at a man who has not been touched in the hollow of his thigh (Gen . xxxii . 25) putting the hungering and thirsting before the blessing , but oh how sad to think of God 's dear children , who tell a beautiful experience of grace , telling us that if we will hunger and thirst we will be blessed .

Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death , that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father , even so we also should walk in newness of life . (Romans vi . 4 .) Now how was Christ raised from the dead ? None of his people helped to do it . Christ , as man , did not raise himself . He was raised from that tomb by the glory of the Father . We are buried by baptism into his death and likeness in the same manner , in the same process . As Christ was raised from the dead so we are raised to walk in newness of life . Is this conditional ?

" Wherefore , my beloved , as ye have always obeyed , not as in my presence only , but now much more

in my absence , work out your own salvation with fear and trembling : for it is God which worketh in your both to will and to do of his good plea - sure ." — Phil .ii. 12 , 13 . Do you fear and tremble , dear reader ? Can you help it ? If you are afraid of something can you keep from being afraid of it ? If you are not afraid , do you think you could will to be afraid ? If so , you would have to will to do that which you did not will to do . A dear , young brother recently said to me that the more he had to go to preach to God 's dear people the more afraid he was . Why ? Answer it yourself , dear reader . If not deceived , his expres - sion brought instant approval from my own poor heart . God 's dear children are a fearing people . See yonder dear man that arises before a congregation fearing and trembling . Why ? Because God is applying Paul 's admonition to him . He is before those people because God is at work . He cannot help it . He must preach , because God is working in him to will and to do . See that dear child of God coming before the church . How he quakes and trem - bles . How fearful he is . God is at work . He is adding to his church daily such as he would have saved . To these characters , it is a time salva - tion . To be saved from earthquakes, famines , storms , or from errors of the world , is all done in time , but not by timely creatures . Let me say that if we get any more blessings in time than what God knew we would get , then he has certainly changed . His foreknowledge was an imperfect foreknowledge , to say the least of it , and of course makes him an imper - fect god . If we are saved in an earthquake or a flood contrary to what his wisdom saw , then we get something that he did not see us get . Now that is only foreknowledge . Our conditional brethren say (or some do although a few years ago all would say) that God foreknows all things . But I cannot see the difference between God 's foreknowledge and his predestination . A thing that is foreknown is certain to come to pass . But I have been ridiculed for declaring to God 's dear children that all of them are blessed in time by the same source and manner as they are for their hope of heaven . Let us examine it for a little while and see . I believe that all of the elect are as destitute of anything good as the nonelect . That , in themselves con - sidered , they are nothing but a mass of sin and corruption . So Christ comes into the world to save his people , and takes all of their sins upon himself . But that would not benefit them as to their eternal destiny unless he gave them his righteousness . That is exactly what he did . For Christ to redeem us from all our sins he must bear them all , and I do not see how he would do that unless their sins were sure . And if he gave us (I hope I can include myself) his righteousness will we have any more righteous thoughts or deeds than he gives us ? Are there two sources of righteousness ? one in the creature and one from him ? And if he gives us his righteousness and makes us willing (or works the will) and causes us to do (or work the do) will he be under any obligation to bless us for it ? Furthermore , if he works in us the things that are well - pleasing to him , upon what score are

we entitled to pay ? Must we be meek in order to be in a blessed state ? If so the Savior used the wrong language . Must we mourn in order to be blessed ? Must we hunger and thirst after righteousness in order to be blessed ?

Dear editors and brethren , I have tried to show that our time salvation is of Christ . I know it is like I am , imperfect , but it is my response to the dear ones who have asked me to write again . I have written under a great strain , as I am very busy and have but little time left for writing after my daily work is done and my little goings among the Lord 's people are over , but I hope it will not harm any one , and , as usual with my little efforts , you are to use your judgment as to publishing the same .

Recently I was fortunate enough to come into possession of some old Signs , and I see in them that the doctrine of conditional time salvation was almost unknown seventy - five years ago . In fact , it is wonderful to see that the strongholds of conditionalism to-day were one time dear lovers of the SIGNS . I would like to hear from those in Pennsylvania , Ohio , Illinois , Kentucky , Iowa , Kansas , Nebraska and Florida who read (and believe) the SIGNS .

Hoping that God will bless editors , publishers and readers with every needed blessing , and asking an interest in your prayers , I am your poor little brother ,

W .D . Griffin

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will meet , the Lord willing , fifth Sunday in December at 10:00 a a .m . Pleasantville Church will host this meeting but it will be held at Dan River Church , located on highway #700 in the Mayfield community . From Danville , Va . take highway #29 south approximately 3 miles . Exit on #700 and go west approximately 5 miles to church .

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us .

Elder H .W . Wray , Moderator

THE STAUNTON RIVER UNION

If it be the Lord's will, it will be held at Danville Primitive Baptist Church , Sunday and Saturday before the fifth Sunday in December 1989 . State road 1515 .

All lover's of the truth are invited to come and worship with us .

Elder H .W . Wray , Moderator
R .T . Holley , Clerk

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12 / 89
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE .

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OBITUARIES

Brother Luther Hixon Mitchell was removed from this life on August 30th, 1989. He was born November 18th, 1910 to Posey and Lucy Mitchell.

He was preceded in death by two wives, Sister Pearl Conner Mitchell and Sister Loleen Carter Mitchell.

He is survived by his wife, Sister Elva Crotts Mitchell. One son William E. Mitchell, one step son John H. Crotts, Jr., one step daughter Jackie Crotts Cates, three grand-children, one great-grandchild, four step grandchildren, five step great-grandchildren, two brothers Cecil and Thomas Mitchell.

He united with the church at the water's edge and was baptised by Elder Amos Hash, later placing his membership at Salem Church.

He was a lover of the truth and believed in salvation by the grace of God. He attended his meetings far and near long after his health had failed and he was no longer able.

His funeral was preached by his pastor Elder Hale Terry and Elder Amos Hash. He was laid to rest in Restvale Cemetery to await the second coming of Christ.

Done by request of Salem Church while in conference.

By one who loved him,
Willie Mae Ratliff

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Editors

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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" The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." Ps. 23:1.

" But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Phil. 4:19.

A PRAYER FOR MY NEED

O FATHER IN HEAVEN,

Have mercy, by thy abiding love, to me a sinner;

Give me, daily, a measure of genuine living faith to believe in the resurrection and in the power of the redeeming blood of Jesus;

Grant me wisdom to understand the mysteries of thy Word and knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus;

Give me strength to endure every tribulation and each trial of faith;

Guide and direct my steps to that narrow path that leads to the straight gate and eternal life;

Set an angelic watchman before my tongue that it abstain from all deceit, falsehoods and blasphemy;

Give me a contrite spirit reconciled to thy will and a pure heart that I may judge righteous judgments and forgive them that despitefully use and persecute me;

Deliver me from temptation, from all appearances of evil, from pride, and from despair;

Comfort my soul, O Lord, in freedom from the condemnation of the law and with joyful experiences of the earnest of the Spirit and with foretastes of thy Glory;

Grant me power to obtain that spiritual and material wealth that will enable me to assemble with thy witnesses to worship and praise thy holy name that thy covenant of love and grace be established;

Comfort thy scattered children, O Lord, unify their spirits to the mind of Christ, make them to dwell in one accord in thy kingdom on earth and to be watchful of each other for good; and make me, O Lord, to be mindful and generous in view of their welfare and need;

Shelter me beneath the cloak of righteousness of thy beloved son, Jesus, that I may have effectual access to thee in prayer;

IN THY NAME AND FOR JESUS SAKE, AMEN.

Eugene F. Osborne, Sr.
11/18/89

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EDITORIAL

Elder Kenneth R. Key

With this issue we begin the one hundredth and fifty eighth year of continuous publication of the Signs of the Times. Surely God has been in the matter to bless it to prosper for these many years. God has given it many wonderful gifts that have been blessed to write to the comfort & edification of his people.

Many of the old heads have now been called home and we see the stirring up of the pure minds of others that have been added to the staff of the Signs.

Licentiate C.C. Wilbanks who has written many articles in the past has agreed to serve as an associate editor. Brother Wilbanks lives in Monroe, Louisiana. We had the pleasure of having Brother Wilbanks visit in our home fourth week end in November along with sister Wilbanks. He spoke at our service at Dan River Church on Sat. night & Sunday following. We pray God to continue to bless him both in the ministry and as a writer for the Signs of the Times.

We have also the consent of Elder C.B. Davis of Roxboro, N.C. to serve as an associate Editor and we look forward to his writings. He is no stranger to us here in North Carolina, and also Virginia, Maryland and Delaware. He is esteemed highly among those who know him

and is certainly a workman that need not be ashamed .

In mentioning our new associate editors let us not forget Elder Richard Campbell who has served so faithfully for many years now . We were blessed, my wife and I, Brother Coley Strader and wife, to visit in the home of Elder and Mrs . Campbell two or three years ago . They were both so gracious and went all out to show us a good time. We toured the city of Memphis , viewed the Mississippi , etc . The light of our visit tho was attending Elder Campbell 's home church in Memphis , Tenn . We were met there by the most lovely people . Tho we had never seen them before , they were certainly no strangers . We saw the cords of God 's love manifested in these precious ones . It was there we met Elder Chappel for the first time and his dear mother and they found a place in our hearts . I think about our visit there often and it is sure a bethel spot in my book of remembrance . We found there a little flock that loved each other and really manifested a genuine and sincere love for Elder Campbell , their pastor .

We want to make a few requests now of our subscribers ; when sending in notices of meetings to be published— do so at least 60 days in advance . Any regular meetings for the entire year can be sent in anytime and we will file them in the appropriate month for publication . Write to us and tell us about your experience of Grace and the reason for your hope. Many have expressed how they enjoy reading the experience of others . Christ told Peter that after he was converted to strengthen the brethren . In sharing your experiences it is strength for each other . As we enter into this another year we pray God might continue to bless us and that the Love of our Elder Brother might continue. Let us strive to walk in the old paths and do nothing in our Churches unless we find a " Thus sayeth the Lord ." Hold fast to the precepts and examples that have been set before us , Love one another and look over each other for good and not evil. Strive for peace in our churches — Hold fast to our articles of faith — Bring in no new ideas — When ordaining Elders and Deacons , adhere to the qualifications given in the scriptures by the inspired word of God . Refrain from those things and places that be offensive to our brethren. Follow no man unless he is following Christ . And most of all may we be kept humble , at the feet of our brethren , esteeming our brethren better than ourselves and " never seek a crown at the expense of someone else being dethroned ."

Your little brother in hope ,
Elder Kenneth R . Key

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Editors

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brother & Sister in Christ :

So glad to get your very precious letter and the beautiful things that you have been reconciled with . I believe that I can witness with you of God's unlimited Grace, in making us to live for each day and causing us to be thankful for each morning , when we arise .

I could not wish my affliction on anyone , yet in all this I have been made aware of God's love and that peace that only comes from him. Our brethren have been so good and helpful as far as they could go— but I as well as you , Sister , know that they can go but so far .

When I was told of my condition, I was terrified for a short while, then I was reminded of our Lord and Saviour in the Garden of Gethsemane , when he prayed that the cup might pass, meanwhile knowing that his mission in this world was to atone for the sins of his people . And he being without sin had to die , and I justly condemned in this flesh . I believe with the thief on the cross that I was made to cry out " Lord remember me when thou enter in thy kingdom ." When the Doctor in the hospital gave me no hope at all, then that peace that only God gives came to my innermost parts — all fear was removed and I was at ease . I knew that my life was in the Lord's hands and he was made that ever present help in the time of need; that fear of this natural death has not bothered me since then .

My precious friends , in my feeble physical being , I would not trade what I believe God has shown me for all the world , because flesh cannot teach some of the things that I feel I have been shown .

Our prayer is that God will continue to sustain you with his Grace , and your faith enable you to accept each day as it comes , always looking to Jesus , the author and finisher of our faith . We love both of you very much and hope all your medications are effective .

In bonds of that Sweet Hope ,
Reeves and Rachel Smith

Nov . 15 , 1987

Dear Brother Key ,

After reading the sermon you preached at the Staunton River Association of July 7, 1984 , I had to stop reading and wipe the tears away , it was so much like my experience . When I heard about my twin sister Mattie Underwood uniting with the Church at Republican was when I felt the most of my lost condition , that I just couldn't stand to see her baptized . I suppose I shed as many tears as if she had died a corporal death . Soon these words were spoken to me " I'll strengthen thee , and help thee and cause thee to stand ," I soon began to feel better . When she was baptized I felt so good , I felt that I was already in the Church . I ask the Lord if it was His will and my duty or privilege to join to make it plain to me . Just a short while before meeting I dream-

ed of being at Long Branch . When the meeting time arrived it was just like I dreamed . I related some of what I have written and was receiv - ed . I received an answer of a good conscience towards God and was so happy . I have heard these words spoken to me in a still small voice , " I had been Redeemed , Sanctified and I was His little Saint ." I could write a book of His goodness and mercy toward me , but will close .

Your little Sister I hope ,
Hattie H . Radford

I am pleased to write that Brother Amos I. Hash is my pastor and also my first cousin .

Nov . 30 , 1989

Dear Editors of the Signs :

I thank you all for sending the dear Signs of the Times to me free all this many months . I am sending a check to you to pay for the Signs of the Times for 2 more years and what is over to help with and way you need it . I enjoy reading the sweet SERMONS and wonderfully good writings in the Signs . I have read and re - read the good EXPER - IENCE in the December Signs 1989 . It is so much like I hope the blessed Lord has brought me . He has been so tenderly good to me and my dear children . We had 7 to live to be grown . Two daughters passed away not long ago . Esther Clark Byrd passed away in 1985 she was 53 years old . She had been a member of the dear Primitive Baptist since she was eleven or twelve years old . She dearly loved them and attended the church at River View and Union every meeting she was able to get there . My other daughter passed away in 1988 , the first day of April . My heart was so broken to give them up . I mourned and grieved so hard that my blessed Lord told or made it know to me that it was wrong to grieve for them . He had taken them out of their suffering . He makes no mistakes all his works and ways is most glorious . I have begged him for months and years if it can be thy holy purpose in the ways pleasing to you a Lord to show or tell me if I am one of the Least of Thy Chosen in the blessed covenant of thy grace just for a second . And in a second as it seemed these words was spoken to my heart and soul . " I have carried you in my arms all the days of your life ." My tears flowed and my Heart was melted in love . I am 85 years old old . I was born September 6 , 1904 , I have but a little learning in school . My daddy passed away one month before I was born .

May the Lord Jesus continue to bless you Editors and all that write the sweet writing in the Signs .

Callie Clark

PROVERBS 3 : 13 .

Happy is the man that findeth wisdom , and the man that getteth understanding .

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH

(Continued from December issue .)

The commandment is, " To study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth ." 2 Timothy 2:15 .

This brings me to the discussion of another subject, the second one in my arrangement, THE DOCTRINE OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE .

This begins with the inward calling of God . The doctrine is both retrospective and prospective . In the retrospect we see that the calling of God comes from His foreknowledge and predestination . " Whom He predestinated , them He also called." In the prospect, we see that 'whom He called He also justified , and extends prospectively to the glorification of him that is justified .' " Whom He justified , them He also glorified ."

We must distinguish the calling of God from the calling of His ministers. Their's is in the letter, in word only , in the commission given to " " preach the word." God's calling is of Himself , often , however , in connection with the preaching of His word . The plainest example which we have of this is in 1 Thessalonians 1:5 . The call in the commission is general, that according to election is special , but we are not as ministers to limit the general call because the other is special . This would be to assume to ourselves the light of election, which cannot be discovered only as we may see the word of God prevailing effectually on the hearts of hearers . Paul knew the election of the Thessalonians in this manner . For his gospel went forth unto them not in word only , but in power and much assurance of the Holy Spirit . He ever operates according to divine election , and whenever we recognize His gracious power , we may recognize also the election of the Father .

Let us now examine the fruits of these different callings . One says , Paul thou art mad ; another that he taught that men ought to do evil that good might come, another that such was his doctrine, no one resisted the will of God . In the extenuation of others he was a " fellow ," a " babler ," a disturber of the peace , and was not worthy to live . Besides his preaching was to the Greek " " foolishness ," to the Jew a " stumbling block ;" it was hid by Satan from others , and was to others a savor of death unto death , a sign of a gospel in word only to carnal hearts . This could not have occurred on account of bad preaching, for it was apostolic preaching . These are bad fruits , and many others of a similar kind might be enumerated both on the part of Paul and the other Apostles .

Enough , however , has been stated to show that the excellency of power was not committed to the hands of the Apostles for its dispensation . Let us now turn to the fruits of the " holy calling of God ." A quickening of the soul that is dead in

trespasses and sin , repentance towards God, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is expressed by other terms : as opening of the heart , a cutting in the heart , opening the eyes of the blind , unstopping the deaf ears , a circumcision of the heart , bringing the blind by ways they had not known , a spiritual demonstration of divine truth in the heart , power and assurance of the Holy Spirit, a begetting of the word of truth , a revealing of the things of Christ , a witness in the soul of the believer, a leading, the work of God. How great and striking is the appearance in these fruits .

We may safely deduce the doctrine of these callings from the text which I will now quote, and as it runs through all apostolic preaching, we feel assured it has run through all ministerial preaching since." But we preach Christ crucified , unto the Jew a stumbling block, and unto the Greek foolishness ; but unto them which are called , both Jews and Greeks , Christ the power of God , and the wisdom of God ." 1 Corinthians 1:23 & 24 .

Some I fear suppose that the great doctrine of sovereign grace , predestination , election and the like , abate in the commission to preach the Gospel to every creature, and assign more power to ministers preaching under it than the text just quoted will admit of . This doctrine about preaching fully justifies God in calling such as He does to preach . According to it may He not call the " weak " the " foolish ," the " unlearned ," and the " base ," in carnal estimation with but few " wise ," " mighty ," " noble ." Otherwise all preachers would require the endorsements which " itching ears " demand . As I have written on this subject for another part of this book I will pass on to the further consideration of the doctrine of Christian experience .

In our experience we have the calling of the minister and that of God . We know that the former did not prevail until we experienced the latter — that was effectual and turned our hearts in the way of repentance and faith; and but for this we would not have heeded the calling of the preacher . Thus is this divine doctrine established in the heart . Let us now distinguish between what the sinner does , and what the Lord does . Under the power of God 's calling the sinner lives , why ? because God gives him life ; he repents because God gives him repentance in that life ; believes, because God gives him faith; he perseveres because God keeps him by His power through faith unto salvation. Now I ask if the doctrine of sovereign grace is at all affected by any of these acts performed by the sinner ? He receives those gifts , is willing in the day of God 's power to receive them , and these gifts are said by the apostle to be by grace, to be entirely predicated on grace . Romans 5:15 .

The sinner lives through Christ , according to the gift of life , he repents through Christ , as his Saviour exalted to give him repentance, he believes in the demonstration of the Holy Spirit . Christ becomes the object of his faith , through whom the sinner experiences a sense of the Father 's

forgiveness of all sins, and a sense of His reconciliation to him. Thus may Father, Son and Holy Spirit be recognized in the great affair of Christian experience, in a perfect ONENESS in salvation, for salvation is of God. The sinners' living does not save him, it only shows that Christ has given him life, his repenting does not save him, it only shows that he is alive to God under a sense of his sins and sinful state; his believing does not save him, it only shows that Christ the hope of glory is found in his soul as the ground of his salvation. Thus is all boasting excluded, and Christ becomes all and in all to the helpless sinner. These are the unadultered fruits of grace. We behold the man living, repenting, believing, and persevering, which are great works. But in the light of the doctrine just set forth, we may readily discern the source of all these works, and ascribe them all, as did the prophet to the Lord, saying most truthfully that "the Lord has wrought all our works." Isaiah 26:12.

But says one, why insist so much on doctrine, for a knowledge of doctrine in the abstract cannot save us; but observe, we must have a knowledge of doctrine before we can feel and acknowledge its power on our hearts. And it is our duty to search the Scriptures, and learn all their doctrinal truths, and strive to obtain a correct understanding of them, hence the importance of giving a full and faithful exegesis of them, that the honest inquirer after divine truth may in that manner be aided in his pious remarks. All do not rightly divide the word of truth, all do not have a spiritual perception of it - all do not love and cherish - all men have not faith.

I will now relate some of the great truths which the believer must experience; he must have an experimental knowledge of them.

1. That he was a lost sinner.
2. That he was condemned by the Lord.
3. That his condemnation was just.
4. That he could not help himself.
5. That he could not of himself believe when he greatly desired to do so.
6. That faith is the gift of God.
7. That he perseveres through the power of God.
8. That grace and not justice reigned in his case.
9. That the effectual calling or turning was of God.
10. That it was not by works of righteousness which he had performed, but that it was of God according to His mercy.

This connects Christian experience with as strong doctrine as any in the Bible; for says Paul, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." Titus 3:5.

This gracious work of the Spirit, the washing of regeneration and renewing was not on account of works of righteousness which we had wrought. Whence was it then? from His mercy. Again, "Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." 2 Timothy 1:9.

If not according to our works,

how was it done? According to His grace. When was this grace given? Before the foundation of the world. How, or in what manner was it given? It was given to us in Christ before the foundation of the world according to the election and foreknowledge of God. Ephesians 1:34. Thus may Christian experience be strengthened in the great doctrine of grace. Whom He did predestinate them He also called. Thus the believer's Holy calling of God comes from His predestination, and this predestination partakes of the foreknowledge of God, and the election according to it, secures all the spiritual blessing of the Gospel to him.

When the Lord draws the believer to Himself, he may, in the light of that act get a view of the everlasting love of God. Jeremiah 31:3.

How safely does this doctrine connect the soul, when experienced with the love of God. I would not have my experience wrested from the strong hold of doctrine for all the world.

What is the doctrine of Christian experience in regard to the will and running of the believer? It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. The soul is said to be born not of the will of man, not of the will of the flesh, not of blood, but of God. John 1:13. In the light of this spiritual birth we may clearly discern the true doctrine of free will and free agency. They come in for no share of the glory of the new birth. A will, which is the product of God's power is the only one which accords with it. Psalms 110:3. This is certainly the day or time of God's power over the soul, when a new will is begotten. In like manner, I might show how Christian experience is connected with other doctrinal texts, but I have, I think, fully established the proposition that the great doctrine of grace does not abate in the holy calling of God.

I will now pass on to the consideration of THE DOCTRINE OF PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY, wherein we may perceive that the same doctrine still maintains itself.

What is the doctrine of good works? "Make the tree good and the fruit will be good." How plain, and yet many stumble at it.

Inward Christianity must have its outward demonstrations. These are made in those outward works, which were ordained for the people of God to walk in, and for them only.

I repeat for them only, because it would be sinful for the unbeliever to be baptised. Matthew 3:8. Sinful for him to partake of the Lord's supper; sinful for him to join a church; sinful to lead in religious exercises; and it would be even sinful to pray without faith. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Romans 14:23. "Unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure." Titus 1:15. Hebrew 11:6. Gospel duties were ordained for them who are created in Christ Jesus unto them, and without this creation in Christ Jesus, it is impossible to perform them in a manner acceptable to God. Ephesians 2:10.

Another very necessary division of the word of truth is to distinguish between the many sayings and commandments of the Lord which have been addressed to believers from those, to unbelievers. We

should not try to make those of the former apply to the latter, for this has been a great source of error . Matthew 7:6 ; 15:26 . Philippians 3:2 . Peter says, " Make your calling and election sure ;" but unto whom, not as some erroneously suppose to all persons , but to believers only , that they might enjoy the comfort of it , seeing that all things are therein given to them . He calls them brethren in the address . II Peter 1:10 . " Hereby we know that we are of the truth , and shall assure our hearts before Him." 1 John3:19. Believers are elected unto obedience , and if they do not maintain good works , the sign of election is wanting. Just as if the Thessalonians had not received the Gospel, the sign of their election would have been wanting in the judgement of Paul . But he saw evidences of it , and knew their election . Another text is often misapplied : " Work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling ," says the preacher, without indicating the persons to whom it was addressed . Paul calls them " Beloved ," the beloved saints of the Lord , and further said for their support and comfort, " For it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure ." Philippians 2:12 & 13 . These with other kindred texts are often misapplied , and in that manner there is no little perversion of the word of truth .

The invitations and promises of the Gospel must also be contradistinguished , or we shall confound them as many do. For instance when the Saviour says " Come unto me , and I will give you rest," unto whom does He speak ? unto those that labor and are heavy laden , and not unto those who are not seeking rest of soul. The invitations of the Gospel are general, and should be preached in that manner, but the promises are special and are with the Lord . They apply to particular characters all the while. All are invited to take heed to the promises , but they pertain to those only who mourn , who hunger and thirst, are poor in spirit, and of a contrite heart. All are invited to buy wine and milk without money and without price; the invitation is to all, but the promises is only to the thirsty The general invitation is to look to Christ and be saved, but the promise is to those who have eyes to see, for many seeing do not perceive. These characters differ widely from each other on account of a work of grace having been begun on the hearts of those who mourn, hunger and thirst; so that this difference is not of themselves , but of God . 1 Corinthians 4:7 . Hence, grace must have all the praises from the beginning to the end of our salvation. Hebrews 12:2 . The believer is the recipient only of these blessing ; things which he receives , but did not procure . He had nothing but what he received of the Lord. As a vessel of mercy he is filled , if I may so speak , with the good things of the Gospel. He is just as much the recipient of quickening, repentance and faith as he is of any other blessings .

But says the man of Arminian tendencies , does not the Lord command men to turn from their sinful course, repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? Assuredly He does . But who turns them ? Who grants them repentance? Who gives

them faith ? Are we not bound to answer each question alike ? the Lord. He has secured to all his elect the means , by which they perform these duties . This was done in the gift of the Holy Spirit. He gives life, leads in the way of repentance, and gives faith, and bears witness to the truths of the Gospel . All these blessings were pronounced through Christ ; but unto whom were they made sure ? Let Paul answer : " " therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed," which signifies God's own elect. Now, had the promise been made conditionally to all, to every one, to the whole world, how could the text have been written? Nor could there have been in that sense, any divine certainty in the promises of the gospel, but they would have been entirely dependent on Arminian contingencies? Had the promises been made sure alike to all , then all , every one would be saved . The Gospel addresses , in the commission , all men , and the whole world. But the doctrine of the difference between the general outward call , and the holy inward calling of God must be taken into consideration as has been already stated .

The word world in the holy scriptures must always be regarded according to the context; for it some sometimes signifies all, and at other times only a part. The words world and gentiles are employed by Paul as convertibly terms , for he says : " If the fall of them — the Jews — be the riches of the world , and the diminishing of them the riches of the gentiles , how much more their fullness?" Romans 11:12. Says a good writer , " There are several places relating to our redemption by Christ when the word 'world' is to be understood of the elect, or believers only : as God sent His Son into the world , that through Him believers might be saved , but only believers are saved through Christ; believers are therefore that world which Christ was sent to save : " Christ gives life to the world , " but Christ gives life only to believers and therefore believers only are that world, to which Christ gives life. " God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself , not imputing their trespasses to them ; " but the world to whom God does not impute their trespasses are only believers , therefore only believers are meant by that world which God was in Christ reconciling to Himself." Again, " We are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness ." " The whole world signifies here , the worse and wicked part of the world; " and when it is said: " He is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, why may not the words denote the better part of the world the elect ? " "The word world signifies some of all men , and sometimes all men. Christ says: " I pray not for the world, but for those whom Thou hast given me out of the world; they are not of world, as I am not of the world ." If there is a world which Christ does not pray for, and yet a member is given Him out of that world , cannot mean all men , both those that He did pray for, and those whom He did not pray for . Christ declared that He would give His flesh for the life of the world, and that He gives life to the world, seeing that He

does not give life to all men , the world to which He giveth life , does not mean all men . The words " whosoever believeth on Him should not perish , but have everlasting life ," explain and limit God 's love and intention in the text ."

The word all must also be often taken in a restricted sense : it is to be used five hundred times in a limited sense , hence we should be careful to determine its signification by the context : " The elect may be said in one sense to mean all men . Where it is said , Christ tasted death for all men , the word men is not in the Greek text ; then it signifies the many sons to be brought to glory , of whose salvation Christ was the Captain . Hebrews 2 : 9 & 10 .

I will in the conclusion of the present subject quote a passage from Prosper , which is strongly in point , if we study his exposition as it deserves : " The elect and fore - known , and from all generality severed , a certain special univer - sality is supposed ; so as the whole world is freed out of the whole world , and all men seem to be redeemed from among all men ."

It is well said by one , " That we may preach practical duties so con - stantly as to beget a legal spirit in our heads ." This I believe , especially if along with such preaching the doc - trine of good works be omitted . If the truth , that God works in the heart both to will and to do , be taught with many other similar ones , there will be no danger of engendering a legal spirit . But these truths should not hinder us on the other hand from teaching and insisting on a full observance of the commandments of the Lord . By such neglect we may beget a spirit of indifference to the duties enjoined in the word of God . How very careful ought we to be , to rightly divide the word of truth in this instance .

The man of a legal spirit says , why insist on the duties if they are not connected with our salvation ? I affirm that they are connected with our salvation , but not in any manner as the procuring cause of it , but as fruits of it — the things which accom - pany salvation .

Even if they be not all the procur - ing cause of salvation , there are many high considerations and worthy motives for performing them . Love to God manifests itself in the keeping of the commandments of the Lord , and what a blessed unction to the soul to feel that we have the evidence both inwardly and outwardly of loving Him .

To have the answer of a good conscience is a great consideration , and how shall we obtain and main - tain it ? only by obedience , the obedience of faith , for no Christian can be happy and enjoy this blessing who neglects Christian duties .

The Christian who is careful to maintain good works , acts from a commendable motive , to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour , for if he loves the doctrine it must be the delight of his heart to adorn it ; does he feel that the Lord has called him to be a saint ? then what satisfaction it must be for him to feel that the call - ing of God , and his life are in agree - ment ; does he believe that election makes salvation sure ? then what a pleasing satisfaction it must be to have some assurance that he is

bearing the fruits of that election. What a high motive to strive to send up memorials to heaven. Acts 10:4. Who does not want his light to shine? Could there be a higher consideration or a purer motive that to wish to glorify God before others. Matthew 5:16.

This is to be done by maintaining good works. The doing of good works denotes the presence of the Holy Spirit, and we cannot have communion with Him if we neglect good works.

All Christians must greatly desire the indwelling of the Son and the Father with them, and ought to be careful to maintain the signs of it. What are they? love God and keep His commandments. John 14:23.

Other motives and considerations might be adduced, but if these will not move the believer's heart to the way of duty, what will? We have just cause to fear that grace is absent, when these considerations have no influence. They who receive an abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life through the Lord Jesus Christ; this is the doctrine of salvation, but when these are enjoyed as a gift, ought they not to infuse the soul with a sense of its many obligations to the Lord?

Let us endeavor to discharge our duty faithfully unto the Lord in this short life. Let us constantly entertain the commandments, exhortations and warnings of the Lord. But says one, I have "another self" about me, which is opposed to all these duties. So had Paul, and yet he was an active working Christian. In this you have fellowship with him, a fellowship in the Gospel, as well as in yourself. Hear him: "For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not - when I would do good, evil is present with me."

Omissions of duties, and commission of sins come in through the flesh, to such an alarming extent sometimes that the believer feels wretched under a painful sense of them, and asks, as did Paul, "Who shall deliver me from this body of this death?" And it is well that faith can say: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 7:25. The holy scriptures give a blessed assurance of this declaration. They say that Christ ever lives to make intercession for all such; that when we were enemies He died for us, and if we were reconciled to God by His death, how much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life; that if any man sins he has an Advocate with the Father; that He will not suffer us to be tempted above that which we are able to bear; that they are in His Father's hand, and no one can pluck them out; that He gives eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; that they are born of an incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth forever; that God is for them; that whom He justified, He also glorified; that where He begins a good work, He finishes it; that He keeps them by His power through faith unto salvation. Surely, after all this, if we meet with any texts which allude to the falling away of professors, they

must be applied to different characters from these; such certainly mean that some fall away , or went out because they did not belong inwardly to the household of God. Hence, how needful it is that we should rightly divide the word of God on this subject for the edification , relief , and comfort of many minds . If we apply what is written about the falling away of hypocrites and carnal professors to real Christians we may make them exceedingly unhappy , and thereby rob them of the support and comfort which God designed for them in the blessed assurance which I have just stated.

Let the believer then have the full benefit of the doctrine of never failing perseverance; without it, who of us could feel safe in the flesh? We must at last have the victory which is through Christ ; if He be in our perseverance we are safe . We cannot tell who really are Christians, and who are not . But if carnal professors fall away we know that the foundation notwithstanding standeth sure , the Lord knoweth them that are His . Knows them how ? As those who will not fall away.

" I will heal their backsliding ," what gracious words , though it be done under the rod , yet it will yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness, to all who may be exercised in that manner . The doctrine of the final perseverance of saints is not as some suppose , calculated to make us presumptuous , for without holy living we cannot enjoy the comfort of it , nor its blessed assurance . The true Christian is not as fond of sinning as the hypocrite or unregenerate may suppose . The latter know how they would act , and suppose that the former would act in like manner . The believer knows that he commits sin enought to ruin him did God not continue to regard him according to His promises through the Lord Jesus Christ; and that his communion with Christ and his truth is always impaired by sinning ; he wants to enjoy the benefit of the sustaining communion and consequently dreads sin as his worst enemy. He does not want to live in it, but wants to rise above it; and he knows from experience that he can only get the victory over it through Christ. Besides, he knows full well in heart, if God mark iniquity against him , he cannot stand , and rejoices to know that there is forgiveness with Him that He may be feared. The fear of the Lord has a restraining influence ; His love also constrains ; and His chastisements fall on those who sin , sometimes heavily and grievously. The believer who sins must smart under the rod; it is then a token of his sonship ; and yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness ; so that sinning is not an agreeable thing to the Christian . The hypocrite may sin, and feel that he prospers in it , but the real Christian always suffers loss .

Elder John M. Watson

Sent to us by
Nancy and Roy Pullig

PSALM 25 : 1

Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

May 15, 1914

A FEW THOUGHTS.

" And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him: and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men." 1 Sam. 22:2.

As I cannot go in the discharge of what I felt was enjoined upon me, I will, by your permission, write a few thoughts on the above subject of the household of faith, hoping some one may be comforted and built up thereby. The captain that is mentioned above is David. He had been employed by Saul (the king) to make music before him, when he was possessed of an evil spirit from the Lord, that it might cheer him up. But Saul perceived that David was to be king instead of his son, therefore he sought to pin him to the wall with his javelin. This being the case, David had to flee for his life, though he had married the king's daughter, and had a right to a seat at the king's table.

And he fled to the cave Adullam, and there his brethren, father and mother, and those that were distressed, in debt and discontented, came to him. Now, it seems to me that David is a type of Jesus, in this case, and Saul a type of the government that Jesus was under when He lived here as a man. We notice that David had no certain abiding place, but went from one place to another, keeping out of the way of Saul. Saul could not take him. So Jesus, while here on earth, went from one city to another, and the Jews could not lay hands on him till " their hour." Here are two kingdoms set forth — the kingdom of Saul, which answers to Jerusalem, and the kingdom of David, which answers to Jesus.

There are three classes that came to David that I want to consider, and they might be considered as one. The " distressed," those in " debt," and those that were " discontented." These are types of those that are under conviction, and they are made to go to Jesus who becomes the " Captain of their salvation." We notice in the days of Jesus, the blind, lame and halt, the sick, those that felt that they were possessed of devils (great distress) — those that felt they were ten thousand talents in debt, and not a farthing to pay (discontent) and those like the wild Gaderene, all came to Jesus for the cleansing power and He becomes their Captain. These men that came to David did not forsake him but went wherever he went and helped to fight the Philistines. They never did forsake, though Saul would seek him with three thousand chosen men. Look how many against a few. Just so in the days of Jesus. His followers were few, while a great number came out to arrest Him in the garden of Gethsemena. Another point I want to notice is that Saul was called king by his subjects, when he was anointed Captain over Israel by the command of the Lord. 1 Sam. 9:16 & 10:1.

David was anointed king over Israel, yet his subjects made him Captain.

Saul was anointed out of a vial (invention of men) while David was

anointed out of a horn (something beyond human agency.) The first is easy broken and we can see through it, while it is just the reverse of the latter. Now and then David would show Saul that he had the power to slay him if he chose, by cutting off his skirt, or by taking his spear, but he would not touch the Lord 's anointed. Jesus would show his power to the world now and then, by driving the money changers out of the Temple and by healing the high priest 's servant 's ear, etc. but He never dethroned the king.

One more thought on the vial and horn. They answer to the two covenants. The vial, to the law of Moses, which must be or was broken, and the horn, which is grace; and it never will be broken. It will stand till time is no more. Then to come home to our experience, the heart of stone must be taken away, and a heart of flesh given. One that has life has feeling. There is no mercy in the first — in Saul — but in David, there is. There is a few more points I want to consider. Saul and David were kings, so to speak, at the same time. I want to bring this to our own experience, for that does not reach my experience, does me no good. Saul represents the flesh, which is first, and David the spirit, which is last. David does not come to the throne and rule as a king till Saul dies. Then the people flow to him from different sections. The spiritual man — the new man — sets up his kingdom in us after the old flesh becomes dead to the love of sin — comes to the end of the law. Then there is sweet peace. David had just a few subjects, while Saul lived, just so in the days of Jesus when on earth, but in His death, He broke down the middle wall of partition, and the Gentiles are brought in and there are people from every nation, kindred and tongue under heaven, that flow to this King, who is their great Captain.

While my mind has been carried away on these types and shadows, I have failed to say much about those that were in debt, distress and discontented that a sin - sick soul? Who is in more distress than one who feels he has sinned away his days of grace, and hell must be his portion? Who can feel any worse than one who owes ten thousand talents and not a farthing to pay? These are such characters that fought under David's banner. And these are the characters that are fighting under the banner of our spiritual David today. That distressed condition has been removed, the debt forgiven, and discontentment taken away by Jesus stepping into our shoes — dying the just for the unjust. When I was in this distressed condition, I wrote to one of my brothers, telling him that I felt like I did not have a friend on earth nor in heaven. He said it was the " bluest" letter he had ever received. That was the way I felt about it. I felt justly condemned before God. I was so " discontented," I could not study my lessons. I would leave the school room and go to some secluded place, and there ask God to be " merciful to me a sinner." I wanted Jesus to be my Captain — to rule over me — to fight my battles for me — let Him take my case. And sometimes I feel like He has heard my cry, and that my sins are pardoned. I don't feel that dis -

tress of mind — that discontentment — that indebtedness that I used to feel, yet today, " I fear I will fall by the hand of Saul ."

May the God of heaven guide and keep me in the right way, and that I may never offend one of God's little ones, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Brother Gold, I have not written as I thought when I commenced. It seems scattering to me, and I do not know whether to send it or not. Do with it as you please. I would love to see you and talk to you on the scriptures.

May the Lord bless you many years to come.

Your Brother in hope,
T.A. Stanfield
Melver, N.C.

Sent in by Mrs. H. Curtis Hanks
4180 Westover Dr.
Danville, Va. 24541

WHERE ARE WE GOING ?

This heading was written some months ago, and laid aside, but the thought has continued to linger with me. Yes, where are we going? — as a nation, as the church (the pillar of truth), as individuals. I believe that I am established in this one thing, that all things, large and small, all matter — animate and inanimate, are surely and unchangeably pursuing their course and will arrive on time to is respective destiny. I believe this wholeheartedly; but still I am disturbed as I see things coming that are of the spirit of Antichrist, to take our religious freedom from us, to join closer and closer, church (so-called) and state. The hand of this monster is in high places, and is covered in deceit, weaving a cloak of respectability, and is loud in all its words that it is for your good. But look at our schools, our seats of government — can you refrain from thinking, Where are we going ?

It is needless for us to hide our heads in the sand as the ostrich, and think this will pass by. It appears to me that the wrath of God is still being poured out on us; and as for me I would lift up one feeble voice against these things. There is no use of trying to single out one of them; take your choice between Catholicism or Protestantism, greed and power in high places, and your choice is just another stripe of the same kind. Yes what will be the heritage of our children and their children ? Seeing and feeling these things, should it not draw us closer and closer together as a people; — Where are we going?

Do you see and hear of anything among us that should not be ? I do. Yes, and this what causes unrest in my very being. What can we expect to reap from jealousy? I am talking to preachers now; I am not thinking of you personally; — I love all of you for the truth's sake, but am I mistaken? is there no jealousy among us ? Oh for this : " take heed to thyself ." Where are we going ? Brethren, I would to God that all of this backbiting cease, are we leaving the old way ? is it not better to talk to one another of your differences, than to talk about them to others? Brethren, I am not trying to reform you; — I am

disturbed, and want to know, Where are we going ?

Perhaps some may say, " I cannot stop all of this." One has said the best way to stop a quarrel is to stop your mouth. Understand, my brethren, I love you, and esteem you; you are the called of God ; but I would have you look at what rests in your hands . You can not bite and bicker with one another and not affect the church. Yes, Where are we going ? Today the flock of God are following preachers , even calling the church So-in-so's church, and the deacons coming under the hand of elders , and many have entered into this office who are unmindful of their duty , seeking worldly gain , not attending their conference meetings and then others have become dictators to the church, — do these things exist among us ?

What can we expect of the lay-members ? They have eyes and ears; they suffer in all this. Some of them are not without blame ; I say this with shame ; some have not attended their church in years, some can tell you all about current events, all of the prices on farm products, all about the strife between labor and capital, all about politics; but don't know what is going on in their own church , but are sure to be there if there is a quarrel, to settle it. What is the matter; where are we going ?

But after all has been said and done , do not think for one moment that you are not my people; I am not ashamed to be with you . My stay with you has been long ; you have been so kind to me ; I want to stay with you ; so don 't become my enemy because I tell you the truth. For the thought in my mind and the intent of my heart is for each of us to examine self; — are we in the faith? If we find any guilt in self after this examination (which is of grace), then I am sure that the very breathings of our very soul will be , Lord , help me; and then will surely come a satisfaction ; yes , peace of mind , and everyone that receives it knows that it is all of grace .

Brethren, this is written poorly, I know , but with your good in my mind, for we are surely drifting away from the good old way , not in doctrine so much , nor in order altogether; but we have lost something, in preaching, singing, praying, there is so much formality , or it could be called style , that the services have lost something. But I still believe that our faith is living and vital, and does move the creature yet. But you have gathered from this scribble what my thought and question is , Where are we going? I know, or all of you know, that heaven is the destination of every one of His children , but does the church look to you the same today as yesterday ?

In conclusion , do not undertake to put your brother or sister in the way , examine yourself . I fail from fault; have charity to cover me , and pray for Zion in this day of hardness and turmoil .

J.P. Helms
June 7 , 1946

PSALM 119 : 105 .

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path .

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

New Vernon, N.Y., Nov. 1, 1846

BROTHER BEEBE: There are three or four designing men in Middle Tennessee, who have created considerable excitement on the subject of a non-resurrection. They have charged the Richland Association with denying the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead.

I have been a member of this association for the last eighteen years, and I know that it believes the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and of a general judgment. It denies the resurrection of flesh and blood, and contends for the resurrection of Jesus Christ and all his saints, spiritual, in his likeness, as John says. John iii. 2. I send you a copy of faith in all the leading principles of the gospel, as they present an abstract of our principles."

George R. Hoge

It has been and still is our desire, so far as possible, to avoid unprofitable agitation of subjects which in our judgment have a stronger tendency to excite discussion than to edify, comfort and instruct the people of God. And although we consider the resurrection of the dead inferior in importance to no part of the gospel of God our Savior, we have feared that the manner in which some brethren have seemed disposed to discuss it, is calculated to gender strife and discord, rather than to result in the peace of Zion and the glory of God.

The letter of Elder Hoge which will be found above, states that the Richland Association of Tennessee has been misrepresented on the subject, and asks the privilege of explaining the real sentiments of that association. He has also sent us a copy of the minutes of the association, containing an "abstract" of their doctrinal sentiments, in which they say, item 10: "We believe in the resurrection of the dead, and general judgment." This expression undefined, we presume would be satisfactory; but as brother Hoge adds, "She denies the resurrection of flesh and blood," we conclude that the most of our readers will consider such denial as equivalent to a denial of the resurrection altogether, and a justification of those who have so charged that association. We will not attempt to define what is intended by their profession of faith in the resurrection, nor their repudiation of its application to flesh and blood; or what our brethren of Richland believe will be raised up at the last day; whether soul, body or spirit. If they only intend to say that all the relationship between the saints and Adam, or human nature, ceases with the death of these mortal bodies, and that the resurrection shall bring them forth as a production of the quickening Spirit of God, in the same manner that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, we see no cause for controversy; for such we presume to be the general view held by Old School Baptists on the subject. But if such be their intention, we think they have not been sufficiently clear in defining their position.

By the reference made to 1 John iii. 2. we are inclined to believe our brethren hold with us that the resur-

rection of the crucified body of our Lord Jesus Christ is an examplification of the manner and nature of the final resurrection of the bodies of the saints . In his resurrection he became the first fruits of them that slept , consequently the certain pledge that all his people shall in like manner be raised up in that hour in which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and come forth ; they that have done good to the resurrection of life eternal , and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation .

Many idle and vain speculations have been resorted to by multitudes at sundry times , in attempting a philosophical solution of the resurrection of the dead , but all philosophy must forever fail when applied to the things of the Spirit of God ; as we Old School Baptists hold the things of the Spirit to be known only by revelation , not by science ; rules therefore which will apply to natural things cannot apply to spiritual things . To us it seems quite inexpedient to say that flesh and blood will not arise , as many would be led from that expression to suppose that the identity or the bodies of the saints in the resurrection was denied ; which must be equivalent to a denial of the resurrection altogether . For if the bodies of the saints are raised from the dead at all , there must necessarily be a preservation of identity ; and if the bodies of the saints are not to be raised up , what is to be raised? Not the soul , or spiritual man , for that cannot die , cannot be committed to the grave ; and in the resurrection , all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth to the resurrection of life eternal , or of damnation . There can be no two ways of understanding Romans vii . 11 . But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you , he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you . The term mortal cannot apply to our spiritual life , as that is in no sense mortal , nor can it apply to any other part of us than that which came under the sentence , " Dust thou art , and unto dust shalt thou return ."

Some have said that flesh and blood shall not arise , but flesh and bones shall arise ; and this view they have attempted to sustain , first , because it is written that " flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God ; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption ." 1 Corinthians xv. 50 ; and second , because that Jesus had shed all his blood when he was crucified , and it is supposed that his risen body contained no blood . These two , we presume , are the strongest arguments used by the advocates of the theory . But let us examine them . Does Paul say that flesh and blood shall not be raised up ? or that they shall not after the resurrection inherit the kingdom of God ? By no means . Let it be remembered Paul speaks in the present tense , cannot ; and for the same reason that corruption cannot inherit corruption . The kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom , and our flesh and blood in their present state and relation to Adam , and to the law , are corrupt , depraved , diseased , mortal and natural . But in the text our brother has referred to (1 John iii,2.)

we are assured that when Christ shall appear, we shall be like him.&.; and Paul in the text quoted, (Rom. vii. 11 ,) has told us how : " He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies ." If then we can know how Christ's body in which he suffered death , was raised up , we shall also know our mortal bodies shall arise. And of his resurrection we can trace a few very important particulars . And first, we observe, though he was put to death in the flesh, he was quickened in the spirit . When put to death in the , flesh , we understand that his relation to the law, which he assumed by being made of a woman, was finished. He died as the Son of man ; as the Son of David ; as the issue of Judah ; being put to death in the flesh ; but he was quickened by the Spirit, or begotten from the dead, so that in his resurrection his body arose from the dead as the immediate production of the Spirit , and was thus declared to be the Son of God with power. " Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee ." is applied to the resurrection of his body from the dead , and not to his birth of the Virgin Mary. So to be like him, the same quickening Spirit that now dwells in the saints , by which they were regenerated , and which raised from the dead the crucified body of Jesus, shall also, that is, in like manner , quicken our mortal bodies . In which quickening the saints shall arise, so far as relates to the bodies, in a new relationship. As in the resurrection of Christ his risen body stood no longer related to the fleshly stock of Abraham , Judah or David , so in the resurrection , the saints shall be released from all relationship to those who are now their kindred after the flesh ; not to be known in the resurrection as Gentiles or Jews, as male or female, as married or as given in marriage , as parents or as children, but simply as the sons of God . The notion of some that parents are waiting now in heaven to embrace their children , husbands , wives , &c., is altogether unwarranted by the faith and testimony of the gospel. The immediate relationship which we stand in to each other here belongs only to our time state ; but all that relationship must be dissolved . We shall be begotten from the dead immediately by the Spirit, as independently of our present carnal relationship as though we had never sustained such relation to Adam. In the resurrection of Christ the identity of the body was preserved. " I am he that was dead, and am alive", &c. That Jesus whom John saw in his risen and glorified body was the same that had been dead . The identity must have been preserved to fulfill the scriptures . His flesh should not see corruption; and what he had given as a sign of his Messiahship . Destroy this temple , and in three days I will raise it up; the sign also of the prophet Jonah must have failed if the same body which suffered on the cross had not arisen from the dead. His Godhead did not die , nor could his soul cease to exist . His Mediatorial Headship of his church could not expire . But it was that wherein he was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, &c., and that which died arose from the dead . So when the saints are called hence their spiritual

life which they received in regeneration does not die ; their quickened souls do not die ; but their bodies , even their mortal bodies , die ; and those same bodies shall arise in like manner as the identical body of our Lord Jesus Christ which had been crucified did arise, bearing the prints of the nails and the place of the spear . A further definition of the identity to us seems superfluous. To talk of the particles of the flesh, the composition of the bones , to philosophize upon the subject , is as extravagant as to attempt to harmonize natural philosophy with any other part of divine revelation . We admit that all the blood was drained from the veins of the body of Jesus ; but that is no evidence that his risen body contained no blood; for the fact is quite as apparent that all the life of Jesus was taken from his body, and who will argue that his risen body contained no life. Such vain speculations serve only to gender strife and contention , and to divert the mind from a spiritual to a carnal train of thinking .

While thus we contend that the identity of the bodies of the saints shall be preserved, even as we have proved that the identity of Christ 's body was preserved, we also hold, and firmly believe , that the change which the apostle speaks of in (1 Cor. xv.) shall also be gloriously realized by all the saints. The body in its present state is mortal ; or subject to disease and death, but it shall be perfectly freed in the resurrection from mortality ; this will be a glorious change , but this is not all ; the body in its time state is weak, it is sown in weakness , but it shall be raised in power . Now it is corrupt , but it shall be raised in an incorruptible state , and death shall be swallowed up in victory . It is now in a state of dishonor , but it shall be robed in immortal honor ; it is now a natural, earthy, Adamic body ; but in the resurrection it shall be a spiritual, heavenly body, standing in the same relation to Christ as it now stands to the old Adam . That law which remands our bodies to the dust has dominion over our mortal bodies so long as they remain this side of the resurrection of the dead , but when they shall be raised up from their graves they shall be free from the power and dominion of that law. For the sting of death is sin , and the strength of sin is the law ; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ .

Elder Beebe

PSALM 128

Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord ; that walketh in his ways .

For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee .

Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house : thy children like olive plants round about thy table .

Behold , that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord .

The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion : and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life .

Yea , thou shalt see thy children 's children , and peace upon Israel .

July, 1943

SALUTATORY

Dear Signs Readers:

Our Editor, Elder Dodson, has asked me to come in as an Associate Editor. With hesitancy I am complying with his request, knowing at the same time that my writing like all other work as a servant of God must have the seal of approval of the Holy Spirit. I fully realize by experience that I am not able to take that approval by schedule but that it is a gift, as all other things of the Spirit, to be applied by and at the proper time alone through the Spirit. I feel a desire to ask each of you to watch my writings, and you that have contact with me my conduct. I hope that you do not set too high an estimation on me for I know I am not qualified to write and preach and conduct myself as a minister but by God's grace. If you love the cause of the Old School Baptists you will watch over me as a very small child and see that I am not a reproach to them. Do not expect me to be a "yes" writer and write only things that some one else has already affirmed. We cannot be agreed about everything. All the "ifs", and "ands" and "buts" that are hurled at the church, or individual, or editor, or preacher, or paper does not change nor alter the fact that no two of us are agreed upon all that the Bible teaches. If at any time in my misguided zeal I undertake to conform you to myself in practice or doctrine I think it is your duty to reprimand me or any other servant of the church. I do not want to reform the church. Above all things brethren, sisters and dear children of God do not ever allow me to become a standard while I am officially connected with the paper. I want to reprove, rebuke and exhort, and I want to (not be the standard), but to set up the standard. I want us to study the Scriptures and let them (but not some man's interpretation of them) be our last resort for anything we practice or believe. I do not think in this, my salutatory, that it is necessary for me to rehearse my doctrinal beliefs. As far as I am able to understand I am in accord with the prospectus of the Signs of the Times. On some of those points I have written volumes and do not care to retract anything that has gone forth except to say that some of it has been for strife instead of edification, and I regret that. In regard to that prospectus allow me to say, especially in regard to predestination, salvation in Christ and the future resurrection of the dead, that I believe them and until I am convinced otherwise I expect to continue advocating them in writing and from the pulpit as I may be blessed with power to do so. At the same time I want to say that in no sense of the word do I mean to say that all who are nominally in line with that prospectus are faithful servants of God. On the other hand many have lived and died among us who were faithful that did not conform to it. I am led to believe that it is the purpose of the Signs to edify and comfort God's dear scattered children. As long as it continues in that way I think it is worthy of our support. May God give

each of us , editor , associates , contributors , supporters and critics grace that we may make an examination of ourselves . An inquiry into our own bosom will often reveal that we have eye trouble .

In love and fellowship ,
W.D. Griffin

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1 / 90
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE .

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 1989

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C.C. Johnson , NC 7.00
Mrs . Warnard Locke , KY
In memory Warnard Locke 5.00
Mrs. Norma W. Smith, VA 2.00
Mrs . Elizabeth Adkins , VA ... 3.00
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OBITUARIES

SISTER THELMA HAMLETT WILLOUGHBY HARRIS

Sister Thelma Hamlett Willoughby Harris , widow of William Willoughby and Ray Harris , died at her home in Richmond , Va . on Sunday , September , 10 , 1989 .

She was preceded in death by her parents , Harry H . Hamlett and Mabel Taylor Hamlett , both of Charlotte County .

She is survived by two brothers , Allen Hamlett and Edward Hamlett , of Appomattox County , and one sister , Belle H . Roberts , of Richmond .

She was born on August 30 , 1926 , and joined Springfield Primitive Baptist Church in Gretna in 1943.

Sister Harris was laid to rest beside her first husband , William Willoughby at the Hamlett Family Cemetery near Phenix , Va . on September 12 , 1989 with the assistant pastor from Springfield Primitive Baptist Church , Elder Denver Simpson , and the pastor of Pamplin Presbyterian Church , Richard Hawkes , officiating at the service .

Written by request by Sister Ruby Adkins .

Elder O.K. Tench , Mod .
Oscar D. Pickral , Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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POEM

There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign,
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.

There everlasting spring abides,
And never - withering flowers:
Death, like a narrow sea, divides
This heavenly land from ours.

Sweet fields, beyond the swelling flood,
Stand dressed in living green;
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
While Jordan rolled between.

But timorous mortals start and shrink
To cross this narrow sea,
And linger, shivering, on the brink,
And fear to launch away.

O! could we make our doubts remove,
Those gloomy doubts that rise,
And see the Canaan that we love,
With unbeclouded eyes:

Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er;
Not Jordan's stream nor death's cold flood
Should fright us from the shore.

Watts.

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EDITORIAL

" I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together." Isaiah 41:19.

" The Glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box tree together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious." Isaiah 60:13.

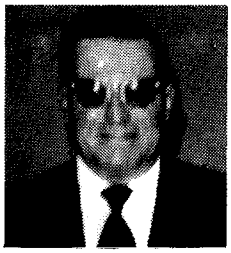
Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

I have been asked by some of His children to write something about the trees of the Bible. I now attempt to comply though with fear and a feeling of weakness. I trust that all who read will excuse the mistakes and the evidence of my weakness.

The trees of the Bible are named for a reason and names have a special meaning or rather the types of trees do. The trees begin in the garden of Eden — Gen. 1:29 and especially are the Tree of Life and also the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The fig tree also is there for Adam and Eve made for themselves coverings of fig leaves, Gen. 2:17. The tree of Life of course is symbolic, indeed is Christ and the fig tree is symbolic of the law for man tries to hide behind the law when confronted with his evil deeds. The scribes and Pharisees always boasted to Jesus that they knew and kept the law (were protected by).

We remember that Phillip when called by Nathanael and went to see Jesus asked Jesus when He knew him, John 1:49 and Jesus answered and said He saw him under the fig tree as thus He sees us under the law and the consequences thereof. Christ also condemned the fig tree that bore no fruit, Mark 11:13, 14 and 20 and 21 and it withered and died even unto the roots. He thus brought an end to the law in fulfilling it to a jot and tittle for it bore no fruit of comfort for His people.

We see in the building of Solomon's temple many trees coming together to beautify His sanctuary. We know there is order in all things and thus it is in the construction of the temple. The foundation was of stone, denoting Christ for He is the corner stone of all our hopes, yea even our salvation. The foundation must support and withstand all that comes its way, so Christ has and does today withstand all the cunning devices of man and stands secure no

matter how great the trials.

We find the floors of the temple were of the fir tree. The wood of the fir is white thus those who entered were reminded of the whiteness (purity) of the Word. The walls were of Cedar and the color of cedar (red) reminded Israel that it took the shedding of blood for the cleansing of sins. Pine was used in the ceilings and the resin that ran out reminded Israel of the pitch (Grace) used in the Ark of Noah and also the Ark of Moses.

The oil tree denotes the olive tree and it was noted for its durability. The doors of the entrance were of olive wood thus we see Christ as the eternal door for none can enter the Kingdom except by Him. The box tree was used in the making of furniture used in the tabernacles and temples under the old dispensation. The tree did not grow tall and majestic as did the cedars and others but made beautiful furniture and utensils.

The myrtle tree grew in most of the area around the location of the temple of Soloman. The blooms were of very sweet odor and the sap thereof was used in the same way as incense. We see in it the sweet savor that rose toward Heaven during the worship service and the sacrifices on the altars.

The book of 1 Kings 6 chapter gives the measurements of the temple and these numbers are typical of the travels of the Lords people. There is the measure of five cubits denoting the five books of law for we must go beyond the law to worship in Spirit and truth. The number twenty reminds us of the price paid for Joseph, the number thirty for the prices of silver paid Judas and the number forty for the wanderings of Israel and also the tempting of Christ by Satan. The number ten of course denoted the ten laws and the number six the years that Israel was judged. The seven years that the construction of the temple required reminds us of the seven angels and the seven churches.

We have touched upon the trees and types in the temple and see the fullness of all of God's promises. Yet there is still something that has not come forth — the shittah tree. This tree is of the acacia family and grew thorns so strong and durable that they were used as nails in some construction. The wood when cut and polished made the most beautiful furniture known at the time. I wondered about it being absent in the temple for all the others that were mentioned have found their place.

Now when the temple was finished Solomon called the elders together and directed them to being the Ark of the Covenant and place it in the temple. This ark was made of the shittah tree thus we hold the truth all now has come together. We must agree that all things pertaining to salvation, to worship and to eternal life hath come together in Christ. He is the true Ark, His is the temple of sacrifices and His is the sanctuary of Salvation. May His name be praised forever and may we be blessed to enter into His glory when time is no more.

Humbly submitted for your consideration.

Elder C.B. Davis

CORRESPONDENCE

716 Hill Ave.
Salem, Va. 24153
Dec. 27, 1989

Dear Editor
& The Precious Household of Faith,

The January issue of The Signs of the Times is superb reading. " Where Are We Going" by J.P. Helms is just as true today as it was when he wrote it. World events are unfolding by the will of God.

Yes, a few of us see the unfolding of events of political and economic trends in our times, such as revolutions all over the world. Yet, in spite of all this we hold truth as the basis of our faith and trust in God and His Word.

Elder Beebe on " The Resurrection of the Dead" Nov. 1846 was one of the most instructive on all aspects of the Resurrection of the Dead.

This letter was dictated because I've been confined to bed for over 30 days.

The Signs of the Times is a periodical containing both doctrine and practical food for digestion to hungry souls thirsting for knowledge. May the Lord bless His people and keep them in the bonds of His love everywhere in the world.

Horace E. Walker

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

JOHN X. 2, 3.

(New Vernon, N.Y., July 1, 1843.)

Agreeably to the request of brother Robbins, on another page, we will offer some remarks upon that part of our Lord's parable embraced in the passage proposed for consideration, viz: " But he that entereth in by the door is the Shepherd of the sheep; to him the porter openeth, and he calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out." In perfect harmony with predictions going before, Jesus " Opened his mouth in parables, and uttered dark sayings :" and while unto his disciples it was given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, unto them that are without, all these things were uttered in parables, for without a parable he spake not — to them. This course was well adapted to the execution of the design of God whose pleasure it is to hide these things from the wise and prudent and reveal them unto babes. The wisdom and prudence of men would rather dictate the opposite course, and instead of purposely concealing the things of the Spirit from the understanding of the great and learned, the wise and the noble, it would seek by moral suasion, lucid argument, conclusive demonstration, &c., to persuade men of influence and talent to embrace the gospel. Had our blessed Redeemer intended to court the favor or

applause of those who move in the higher circles of human society, he might have used human policy, and adapted his discourse to their taste and capacity, as the worldly taught preachers of our age do; but then their faith would stand in the wisdom of this world, and not in the power of God. 1 Cor. ii. 5.

God's peculiar people are in various parts of the scriptures called sheep, and this figurative appellation is given them as the children of God, in distinction from the rest of mankind, who are designated goats. "All we like sheep have gone astray," says the prophet, Isa. liii.6, "and the Lord has laid on him (Christ) the iniquity of us all." Of these strayed sheep the same prophet has said, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm and carry them in his bosom." Isa. xi. 2. And the inspired psalmist says, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." — Psalm xxiii. 1. And in connection with the parable under consideration, Christ announces himself the good Shepherd, that layeth down his life for the sheep. Hence we have the testimony of Christ himself that the redeemed, or those for whom he died, are his sheep; that they were not only sheep, but they were his sheep, before they went astray, and that they were the objects for whom alone he laid down his life. Much might be said on the appropriateness of the figure, but to trace its analogy would swell our article to too great an extent. In the course of this chapter Christ speaks of two distinct sheep-folds: the one is that into which he as the Shepherd of Israel has entered by the door for the purpose of bringing out his own sheep: and the other, that into which he will fold all his redeemed when there shall be but one fold and one shepherd. The carnal tribes of the family of Abraham, under their legal covenant, where a fold in which many of the sheep which he came to redeem were held in bondage. "For this Agar is Mt. Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." Gal. iv. 25, 26. The son differeth nothing from the servant until the time appointed of the Father And this was evidently the case with those "lost sheep of the house of Israel," which Christ the Shepherd came to seek and to save. He for this purpose entered into the fold where they were confined, by the door, for the purpose of effecting their emancipation; and as the anti-type of Cyrus, of whom it was written, "Thus saith the Lord thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself; that frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish; that confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited, and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof; that saith to the

deep, Be dry, and I will dry up all thy rivers; that saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure; even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundations shall be laid. Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut: I will go before thee and make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron," &c. Isa. xliv. 24, 28, and xlv xlv. 1, 2.

As in the execution of the word of the Lord, Cyrus acted as the Lord's chosen shepherd in delivering his captive people from their bondage, and in leading them out of Babylon, and in the re-establishment of Jerusalem, and in the building of the second temple, which was more glorious than the first, he was evidently so far a type of Christ: even so God has proclaimed his Son as his Shepherd, and the man that is his fellow. Zech. xiii. 7. As God went before Cyrus to break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron, and to open before him the two-leaved gates which were closed upon captive Israel, so the right hand of Christ in the deliverance of his people from the wrath and condemnation of the law, was upheld by the omnipotence of his eternal power and Godhead. Cyrus entered Babylon by the gates, and the palace of Belshazzar by the door; for God had said unto the deep, Be dry, and the proud waters had retreated from their accustomed channel, and the army of Cyrus entered the city under the walls, and the guard or porter opened the gates of the city to him; and according to the word of the Lord these gates could not be again closed against God's redeemed people. "But he that entereth in by the door is the Shepherd of the sheep." Christ in entering the fold, or place of his children's captivity, may be considered as having entered by the door, in reference to the prophecies going before. He came as it was written of him in the volume of the book, to do the will of God. "A body," said he, "hast thou prepared me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sins thou hast had no pleasure." "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that he may establish the second." Heb. x. 5, 6. Secondly, he came in by the door to the place where his sheep were folded, when he was made of a woman, made under the law; for it was a carnal or fleshly covenant that his sheep of that fold were under; "The children being partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren; that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make

reconciliation for the sins of the people ." Heb . ii . 14 - 17 . The captivity and bondage of God 's people was in the relation in which they stood to Adam . " Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men unto condemnation ," &c . Rom . v . 18 . And the Jewish covenant embraced a carnal or fleshly people related to Abraham by being born in his house or bought with his money , and their covenant contained also carnal ordinance and a worldly sanctuary . Heb . ix . 1 . To effect their deliverance from that bondage , to emancipate them from that fold and from that government , he must need be made flesh and dwell among them , he must be made like them in all points and yet be without sin ; and although like them in point of humanity , yet holy , harmless and separate from sinners

" For he who could for sin atone
Must have no blemish of his own ."

Although he had no sin , he was made sin for us , that we might be made the righteousness of God through him .

He entered by the door , agreeable to his explanation of the door of his sheep - fold . " I am the door ." he says , and by himself he has fulfilled the law , cancelled its demands , borne its penalty , suffered the vials of almighty wrath , poured out his soul unto death , descended into the grave , encountered the king of terrors on his own dominions , despoiled him of his sting , and the grave of victory . " Not by the blood of goats and calves , but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place , having obtained eternal redemption for us ." Heb . ix . 12 . He had power to lay down his life , and power to take it up again , so that by himself he was able to enter . This was a new way , a living way of entrance , and the Shepherd who entered by the door is himself the way , and no man can come unto God but by him .

To him the porter openeth . If , by the law , his captive sheep were held in the prison - house of death , Divine Justice was the porter who kept the door . No bribe could tempt him , no pity move him ; he was inexorable . But to Jesus even this inflexible porter opened , and without expense , for Jesus met his full demands , and Justice asked no more . The brazen gates of death were unsealed ; the massy bars of death were cut in sunder .

To him the porter has not only opened the door of death , and the grave , but he has opened to him the portals of immortal glory . Not only have the gates of death been opened to receive him as the ransom of his people , but they have been opened to deliver him up , for it was impossible that he should be holden of death . Having done and suffered all that law could demand , or justice could inflict , he has now entered into the inner court of the temple by his own blood . He has commanded , " Lift up your heads , O ye gates , and be ye lifted up , ye everlasting doors , and the King of glory shall come in ! Who is the King of glory ? The Lord , strong and mighty ; the Lord mighty in battle ." Psalm xxiv . 8 , 9 .

But again : In the testimony of the Son of God , (1 John v . 6) we are informed that Christ came by water

and blood; not by water only, but by water and blood; and it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.

We have shown in the foregoing remarks, that Jesus by his own blood has entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us, and by reference to Matt. iii. and last clause of the fifteenth verse, where the porter opened the door to Christ in regard to this witness. When Jesus came into the sheep-fold, or palace, the Spirit in bodily shape like a dove, designated him as the Son of God. And lo, a voice from heaven was heard, saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." This Baptist porter opened the watery door to the Shepherd of the sheep, because "Thus it became them to fulfill all righteousness."

And the sheep hear his voice. As he had promised by the mouth of the prophet, "I will cause my glorious voice to be heard, and will shew the letting down of my arm," &c. He has verified the promise not only in causing his voice to be uttered, but he causeth it to be heard, by giving ears to the deaf, and life to the dead. "The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." John v. 22. Although dead in trespasses and sins, he gives unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand. But by the sheep hearing his voice we are to understand something more than to hear what he says; they give the same evidence that they hear his voice, that sheep do when they are called by their shepherd, they follow him. The voice of Jesus as the Shepherd and Bishop of souls is sounded in the gospel, and all the sheep recognize the gospel as the well-known voice of Jesus; but others believe not, because they are not his sheep, as he said unto them.

And he calleth his own sheep by name. He has their names all written in his book of life from the foundation of the world, and the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. He is therefore at no loss in calling them. He knew among the Jews who were the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and he knows equally well all his sheep among the Gentiles, which were not of the Jewish fold. He is not liable to the mistakes which the arminians charge on him, of calling some that are not his own and endeavoring to make them his own; and of frequently failing in the enterprise. He says, "I know my sheep and am known of mine;" and he also knows who are not of his sheep: "For Whom he did foreknow them he also did predestinate to be conformed to his image, that he might be the First-Born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate them he also called," (he calleth them by name, and he makes them hear and understand and obey him)" and whom he called them he also justified; and whom he justified them he also glorified." He calls them with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began.

2 Tim . i . 9 . If he should call them ineffectually , that would not be a holy calling ; for a calling that is holy cannot be defective — must secure the design of him who calls . His calls are not general , as arminians assert , but special and particular , addressed to his own sheep , and these he calls by name , that there may be nothing indefinite in the vocation .

And leadeth them out . Christ was not only anointed to preach good tidings unto the meek , to bind up the broken hearted , to proclaim liberty to the captives , and the opening of the prison doors to them that were bound, but also to bring his prisoners out of their prison houses . The porter having opened the door to him as the Shepherd and Leader of his people , he leadeth them out . In order to lead them out is was necessary that he should go into the prison house where they were : this he did when he was made under the law , and when he descended into the chambers of death . But his was an errand of mercy , and by death he destroyed him that had the power of death , which is the devil ; and wrought deliverance for them who were all their lifetime subject to bondage . He leads in the fulfillment of all righteousness , in a perfect obedience to all the requisitions of the law of God . None had ever preceded him in this work . But going before he leads his people after him , in bringing them up to the utmost demands of the law , for he is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth . He leads them out from the guilt and consequence of sin : being made sin for them , and having put away sin by the sacrifice of himself , he has brought life and immortality to light , and leads them out of their state of sin and death , into life and immortality . This is fully demonstrated in his triumphant resurrection from the dead . He became the First Fruits of them that slept , and now holds in his hands the keys of hell and death . He giveth unto his sheep eternal life , and the assurance that they shall never perish . He leads them out from condemnation and into a state of justification taking the lead in this also , for bearing the sins of his people he was numbered with the transgressors , and condemned by the law ; but having satisfied that law , he that was manifested in the flesh , and put to death in the flesh , was quickened and justified in the Spirit , preached unto the Gentiles , believed on in the world , and received up into glory .

We have observed that Christ in coming into the Jewish fold , where he was sent unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel , was made flesh , made under the law , of the stock of Abraham , of the tribe of Judah , and of the lineage of David ; was circumcised , and became a debtor to do the whole law , and in this body which was made of a woman he was put to death . The law could pursue him no farther . When , therefore , he arose from the dead , instead of returning to that same relation to the legal covenant , to the carnal family of Abraham , tribe of Judah , &c ., he was in his resurrection manifested as the Son of God with power . And although he had been known , in these respects , after the flesh , yet

we shall know him no more after the flesh.

" No more the cruel spear,
The cross and nails no more;
For death itself shakes at his name,
And all the heavens adore."

As the Forerunner of his people he has passed into the most holy place: " For Christ has not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Heb. ix. 24. In all this transition from death to life, from legal bondage to liberty, Christ is the Leader of his people and must be followed by them. Having removed the old tabernacle which was made with hands, and set up the true tabernacle which God has pitched and not man, and having abolished death, and nailed the handwriting of ordinances which were against us to his cross, abolished the enmity, even the law of commandments, he has taken his seat upon the the throne of his glory, and led the way for all his redeemed to follow him, and they shall all return and come with singing unto Zion, and sorrowing and sighing shall flee away.

" Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say his flesh, and having an high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for he is faithful that promised; and let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works." Heb. x. 19-24.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

A PRAYER OF DAVID

Preached on Tuesday Evening, Oct. 13, 1840
At Gower Street Chapel

" Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joys of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit." (Psalm 51:10 thru 12).

By the aid of God we shall attempt to make a few remarks from the words of the text I have just laid before you.

We have no ground whatever to doubt but that David was a man of God; a man born of God, highly favoured of God, and possessing a rich experience of the goodness and the greatness, the mercy and power, the faithfulness and majesty of God. Sometimes he takes up a whole Psalm in extolling and exalting the glory and mercy, the goodness and power of his God. At other times we find him sunk down into the greatest depths of despondency, insomuch as to lead him to exclaim, " Is the mercy of God clean gone for ever, and will he be favourable no more? " At some times he tells us that his " mountain stands strong and shall never be moved." And again, " Thou hidest thy face, and behold I am very sad." In the Psalm

before us , he nearly takes up the whole of it in prayer and supplication unto God ; and , my dear friends , what encouragement it is to our poor souls , when the Lord brings us into great and extreme trial , to remember that our case is not the only solitary example , but that we can take comfort and guidance from the trials and troubles of God 's saints who have suffered in a similar manner .

" Create in me a clean heart , O God , and renew a right Spirit within me ."

Now it is very evident and very clear , that David , a man after God's own heart , knew to his sorrow , his grief , and his great distress , that he had an unclean heart ; and that this unclean heart was a source of excessive grief to his soul ; and therefore he cries out to God , from a keen sense and feeling of the plague and misery of sin , Create in me a clean heart , O God , and renew a right spirit within me . And it is evident , my brethren , from this supplication , that the psalmist David loved " a clean heart ; " that it was his great and supreme delight , on which all his affections were reposed . He knew that this alone could enable him to approach worthily unto God ; and that enjoying this blessed access unto him , he would be able to rejoice in his presence , and his " meditation upon him would be sweet unto his soul ." This he knew might be his honor and his privilege ; and therefore he begs of God to create in him " a clean heart ." So that you see it was no encouragement to David to have an unclean heart ; it was no source of pleasure to him to feel this , but rather a source of misery and pain .

It is clear in this petition , that the psalmist was convinced , feelingly convinced , that nothing but God could give him this clean heart ; that it was not in the power of his reading , of his studying , of his hearing , of his walking in God's path , but that it was only the gift of God , his own gift and none other's . Therefore he cries , " Create in me a clean heart , O God ." His soul was turned from every other source but God to grant him this blessed gift ; and as a poor beggar , a poor pensioner upon his mercy , he begs that God will hear his cry , and grant him his request , so that he might be delivered from this devilish and unclean heart , so that he might be freed from it and put his foot upon it , that he might commune with his God and feel the blessing of his goodness and his power .

Now , my friends , is this the case with you and with me ? It is a very easy thing for people to come to chapel , and take their seats , and become regular members and attendants , to suppose the truth preached , and even strive with all their might to prop up and support the cause of the Lord ; but the point is , are your souls led to understand and seek after the things that God has taught his children of old , that are left in the blessed records of his truth , and penned out in sacred characters in his word ? If you have not the bright side , if you have not the black side , if you have not the two sides brought up to meet together , upon what ground can you look calmly into eternity ? God Almighty search your hearts , my friends . I

have no pleasing of men in view ; yea, rather nothing but the affronting of men in view , but may God bless you , and search our hearts , and discover unto us upon what ground we stand. " All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction , and instruction in righteousness , that the man of God may be perfect , thoroughly furnished to every good work ." Have you ever felt the plague of an unclean heart? Have you ever proved the truth of what Christ says, " Out of the heart proceed murders, adulteries, fornications ,and all uncleanness ? " Is that your plague , is that your evil ? Have you known what it is to cry with Paul, " O wretched man that I am? " Do you know what it is to feel the plague and vexation of your soul? If you have not felt this, you have never had the foundations of the great deep opened in your souls . There may be some of you , who may be thinking that your hearts are better than others , and that you do your duty when you meet here in the presence of God . Perhaps there may be some one come here this evening out of curiosity — some one who has heard what a country fool there is preaching at Gower Street Chapel, and is induced thus to come and hear what sort of a fool he is . I tell you, if you have never seen your own depravity, if you have never felt its burden , and groaned in spirit to get rid of it, if thou hast never sighed for deliverance from its curse , thou knowest nothing of a " clean heart."

But then , say you , you are not going (to be sure) to put the uncleanness of a man 's heart to be evidence that he is a Christian? God forbid that we should. What! put the devil's work as an evidence of God's handiwork ! No ; but I am talking about the plague of an unclean heart ; I am talking about the soul that wants to be right ; I am talking about the feelings of the poor child of God, that is now suffering under it, and wants to be delivered from it , and to go up into the presence of his God and commune with him. Now if you know nothing about all this, what is all your religion , what is all your profession , what is all your knowledge , what is all your usefulness , and what are all your prayers? Why, when you come to the winding up — when death comes to break the pitcher at the fountain head — when eternity opens up its door and you must enter into an unknown world — if you have not had Christ, if you have not felt God in your soul , and the kingdom of God in your heart , you plunge into hell where there are devils and damned souls for ever and ever .

" Renew " (he says)
" within me a right spirit ."

Why , then , David was plagued with a wrong spirit, a bad spirit. Poor soul! though he was King of Israel, and had been brought through so many troubles , and had seen the heights , and depths , and lengths , and breadths , as far as ever mortal eye beheld of the power and goodness of God, yet, poor soul, he knew to his sorrow what it was to have a bad spirit , to be plagued with a bad spirit, to be tormented with a devilish spirit . And where is there a poor child of God in the world, but what is

tormented at times , and plagued with it — and I believe some more so than others ? We cannot however measure the heights and the depths of these things . This can be done only by God ; and we must wait willingly and patiently until he shall reveal it unto us . I believe there is not a poor soul , but what is plagued with a bad spirit .

What do you mean by a bad spirit ? An ill - tempered spirit ? Yes , an ill - tempered spirit , a discontented spirit , a murmuring spirit , an unbelieving spirit , a proud spirit , a devilish spirit , that comes from beneath , and from a place that is opposed to God , and to the consolation of the soul . Where is the man in the Bible , but was plagued at times with this bad spirit ? Moses felt it . I am sure Abraham had a bad spirit , a stubborn unbelief , a slavish fear , which is not God 's Spirit , for it seems to dispute God's word . It is a spirit that comes from beneath . God says to Abraham , " Fear not , Abraham , for I am thy shield , and thy exceeding great reward ." But poor Abraham was fearing , eternally fear fearing , whether after all he should not be left of God and plunged after all into despair , and perhaps afraid that God would never appear to him again . The very promise carries it with it , or else there is no sense in the words — " Fear not , Abraham , for I am thy shield , and thy exceeding great reward ;" and I believe God blessed it to his soul , and favoured him with a good spirit . He " renewed a good spirit" in his heart . I am sure, Job had not a very good spirit , when he cried out unto God , and cursed the day that he was born . I am sure he had not a very good spirit , or a very right spirit , when he says , " Let me alone , that I may take comfort a little , before I go whence I shall not return ." And again , " Let loose thy hand , and cut me off ." And again he says , " My soul chooseth strangling , and death rather than life ." I am sure , poor Jonah had not a very good or a very right spirit , when God says to him , " Dost thou well to be angry ? — asking him only a quiet question , simply whether it was right or whether it was wrong that he was angry — " Yea (says he) even unto death ."

Ah ! my friends what sort of spirits have you ? How often do we find a poor child of God , as peevish , as rebellious , as discontented , and as stubborn as a very yew ! Yea , and sometimes trying to harden his heart , and determined to plunge into further damnation . Ah ! my friends , what does this bring to our hearts ? guilt , dismay , sinking , sorrowing . I believe in my own heart , that God will bring this people to see this bad spirit , to feel this bad spirit , to guard over this bad spirit , to cry to God to renew a right spirit , and to lead them up to him in faith , in love , in hope , in gratitude , in contentedness , and in resignation . My friends the poor dear child of God has no peace of heart , no real , right , godly peace in the heart , but as God reconciles it , renews a right spirit within it , and causes it to tell us of our wants . Oh ! what a blessed spirit is that , when the soul feels content with its condition , content with all its

troubles , content with all its trials ; when it finds itself renewed in spirit, and can say, " The will of the Lord be done ! " My friends , this is religion ; this is the religion that does good to the soul ; this is the religion that brings glory to God ; this is the religion that brings peace to the mind. Come, come, then, poor soul that feels a bad spirit , that feels an unclean heart , God help thee to come to Him . It is of no use to go to thy fellow - mortals with it ; it is of no use to go to the parsons with it ; it of no use to go to any human arm with it ; but go to thy God ; where David went — to God , with his burden , his simple cry , " O ; God, create in me a clean heart , and renew a right spirit within me ." God heard him in his own time , and the Lord blessed him in his own time ; and God said , I will not despise the sighing of the needy , I will grant their prayer . God help thee to come with thy burden , and plead it for Christ's sake before his blessed majesty . May he give thee a clean heart , faith , love , patience , zeal , light , life , liberty . It is all his gift , all at his disposal , and he has promised to give it to them that ask .

But again ; the next thing in David's petition , or rather in our text is — " Cast me not away from thy presence , and take not thy Holy Spirit from me ."

How ! is there such a thing possible as going away from God's presence ? It is utterly impossible to get away from God's omnipresence . But David did not mean this . God's presence he well knew was every where . So that David does not mean that he could ever be cast out of God's omnipresence . For he tells us again in another place , " Whither shall I flee from thy presence ? If I ascend up into heaven thou art there. If I make my bed in hell , behold thou art there . If I take the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost parts of the earth even there shalt thy hand find me and thy right hand uphold me ." So that he could not mean , Cast me not away from thy omnipresence ; for let him be in heaven , or earth , or hell , there would God be and his presence would be with him . But in is evident from the whole tenor of the Psalm that when he says " Cast me not away from thy presence ," he means that he might not be cast out of his Fatherly presence as his Father and as his God , as his friend and as his brother , as his Daysman , as his blessed portion , and his all in all . For David well knew that it was the presence of his blessed God and Father , that was his light and his life his portion and his victory and his glory . The thought of being cast out of his heavenly Father's presence — what is there could be more grievous to a poor child of God . This , it appears to me , is what David means when he prays that he may not be cast out of God's presence , but shall continue to enjoy his loving kind - ness . This is the very thing that Moses so earnestly begged of God when he came into the wilderness , in going through the desert , in his way to Canan . " O Lord , the people know thou art with us , and thy presence goeth with them ."

Now here , then , we must understand him as asking for his Fatherly presence , his blessed presence , as

his God and his deliverer; his presence to uphold, instruct, defend, and guide him, stand by him in every storm, that he might not be left without the presence of his covenant God, that he might not be left alone to cursed unbelief, and carnal reason. This is why David cries out, "Cast me not away from thy presence." Now have you ever prayed for this? There are thousands and tens of thousands of professors of religion who never think of it. All the presence of God they ever think of, is to be privileged with the means, to attend upon the means; to read the word of God, and take his promise to themselves. This is the utmost extent of their knowledge; and with this they rest satisfied and at ease. But they know nothing about it, until they cry with David for their very soul, "Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me." They know nothing about it. Do you know anything? My brethren, I speak it with simplicity and humility — I do know something about it — I know a little about it as far as God has blessed me; for without the presence of God my Father, I am nothing at all. If I come to chapel without his presence, the devil tells me he will never come again. If I go sometimes to the Bible without his presence, it is a book that I cannot know. If I come sometimes to enter into Christian conversation without his presence, and to act as a little child in his presence, I am as carnal and as worldly and as unprofitable as though I have never known it. So, my brethren, it is my cry that God's presence would be with me in all that I do — in my preaching and reading, in all my toils in temporal things, in my prayers and in my pulpit, and when I come to cross over Jordan's stream. My soul has begged with prayers, that God will never leave me to die without his blessed presence; for when you come to grapple with death and to meet an angry Father's frown — when you come to have the devil rise and point at death and to eternity, — what a sinking it is to a poor soul! How the tabernacle trembles, how the spirit faints! "Ah," says Satan, "you are coming to die and to grapple with death, and how will it be with you? Where is your wedding garment? where is the oil for your lamp? It is gone out, it is gone out, poor dear soul; and thou can'st not go to any body." Thou must go to the Lord, and to none else. And it is poor trying, searching work enough for the soul, when it wants the presence of the Lord.

Come, then, poor soul, and take this heartfelt expression of David. If thou hast within thee the feeling of David, if thou art treading in the steps of David, and if David's God is thine, he will bring thee to the heights of Zion, and thou shalt dwell in the city of song for ever and ever. "Cast me not away from thy presence." Oh! my friends, what is all without the presence of God.

But could not David look back to the hill Mizar, and see how the Lord took him first from following after this father's sheep in the wilderness? Would he not remember Goliath of Gath; how he brought him to slay him with a sling and a stone, and to cut off his head, and caused him to sing for his deliverance, and shielded him ever since? Would he

pray about taking the Holy Spirit from him ? Had God ever hinted such a thing ? Is it possible that God could ever falsify himself ? Has he not said he takes possession of the hearts of his people ; that it is his dwelling place , and his house ? and has he not said , " Here will I abide for ever ? " God has promised every blessing to his own dear children, as free gifts , and sovereign gifts , and they are all deposited in his beloved Son, and secured in him for us. They are free and sovereign gifts, and the devil can never hinder us from having them . Satan can never hinder us from having them. God has told us that all his blessings are in Christ Jesus ; that every blessing is treasured up in him — all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. But he at the same time tells us he will " be inquired of." " I will be inquired of by the house of Israel " to do these things. God has promised that they shall be done; but God has determined that his people shall pray. If a man never prayed for them with his heart , where is the token that he is a righteous man ? The righteous crieth unto the Lord , and the Lord heareth him , and answereth his request . " They shall come ," he says , " with weeping , and with supplication will I lead them ; and I will bring them through the fire , and purify them as silver is purified and as gold is tried; and they shall call upon my name ."

So that , you see , God will have his people pray to him . How can a man expect these blessings if he has never prayed , or been brought to see the necessity of praying unto God ? David prays that God would not take the Holy Spirit from him; for if that were taken away , he could never pray . He knew that all the blessings of revelation, the opening up of truth, and the blessed application of those truths to his heart was the work of the Holy Ghost. Ah! my dear friends , may you all be taught as I have been taught. I know that he alone is the comforter ; I never had any comfort but what was brought to me by Him. I know that he is the sole and blessed truth ; that he is witnesser of my sonship of God. It is he who reveals Christ Jesus to our hearts. It is he who opens up to our understanding all the truths of God's holy word , with his blessed and enlightening beams. When his light and his revelation are withdrawn , then nothing is left us but carnal mindedness and darkness ; what a lump of ignorance , what a lump of death , what a lump of worldliness and carnality we are ! The soul had neither light, nor life, nor power, nor peace, not a single spiritual desire, when the Spirit of God has withdrawn his blessed influence . Have you ever prayed that you may not be left without this Spirit — this Spirit to teach you and guide you ? In my study for the pulpit, I do believe that nine hours in the year out of ten are in prayer. My cry to God, and the Holy Trinity, is to guide me, and stand by me . I have sometimes been so confused and so stuck fast , that really I have been brought to doubt whether God did hear me , or whether I prayed consistently with the words of his truth. I have prayed that God would lead my understanding into the truths of Scripture ; that he would open to me the prophecies ; that he would come to types and to

shadows and to different offices and characters, and explain them to me, so that perhaps once in a month I might be able to give a good experimental sermon. But I did not experience it, and this has made me fear that the Holy Spirit was taken from me. But when I have felt his blessed and enlightening Spirit, and God has made the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the things that are strong — then I have felt quite another man. My soul has then felt the blessing of God; it has felt in a state of liberty and peace; it has triumphed in God and felt the power of his salvation. My soul has then been content to be as nothing, and to come up in the way that the Lord should lead me. Therefore it is, that we should love to pray that the Spirit of God may not be taken from us.

Again, he says, " Restore unto me the joys of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit."

Now it is plain and evident here, that David rejoices that salvation was to be found in God. He cries that the blessings of salvation may be manifested in his heart; that they may be with him in his bonds, and afflictions, and carnal reasonings, that so his soul might be brought up to God and" rejoice in his salvation." When David desires the salvation of God he is prompted to exclaim, " He is my rock and my defence, the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." God has promised to those who seek after him, that they shall" draw waters out of the wells of salvation." It is the blessings of the salvation of Christ made known to the heart by the Spirit of God, that comforts us in all our afflictions, and griefs, and sorrows. And like David, your souls will cry again and again, until the blessed request is granted, Restore unto me the joys of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit. The souls of God 's people shall travel with David; their hearts shall go unto him, and the God that was David 's shall give encouragement to them. Uphold me with thy free Spirit, and then I shall indeed be free. I shall walk in liberty I shall walk in light. I shall be free in body, free in mind. Uphold me with thy free Spirit, and I shall then be free — free from falling into bonds — from falling into unbelief — from falling into pride — from falling into rebellion — from falling into any thing dishonouring to God. Uphold me with thy free Spirit. I shall then walk in freedom, live in freedom, fight in freedom, and go to death in freedom. I shall walk before thee my God and Father in the liberty with which thou hast made me free. I shall enjoy freedom in thy presence and thou shalt put a crown upon my head — a crown of light and of glory. May God grant his blessing through Christ Jesus. Amen.

J. Warburton

J.C. Philpot was baptized by John Warburton.

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your " Signs " and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

DOCTRINES
OF
GOD'S EVERLASTING LOVE
TO HIS ELECT, AND THEIR
ETERNAL UNION WITH CHRIST
TOGETHER WITH SOME OTHER TRUTHS,
STATED AND DEFENDED,
In a LETTER to Dr. ABRAHAM TAYLOR.

To consider another evangelic truth, which, indeed, is the sum and substance of the gospel, and with the proof of which the scripture abounds, though you are pleased to condemn it is a fancy, and that is, that "God sees no sin" in his people." I know this doctrine has been most odiously traduced, and most vilely misrepresented; but, I hope, when some few things are observed, it will plainly appear not to be a fancy, or a freak of some distempered minds, but a most glorious and comfortable doctrine of the gospel, and without which the gospel must cease to be good news and glad tidings to the sons of men.

1st, When it is asserted that God sees no sin in his people, the meaning is not, that there is no sin in believers, nor any committed by them, or that their sins are no sins, or that their sanctification is perfect in this life.

1. Sin is in the best of saints; to say otherwise is contrary to scripture, and to all the experience of God's people; If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." The ingenuous confession of the saints, their groans and complaints, and that continual war between flesh and spirit they feel in themselves, are so many proofs of sin's being in them; nay, it is not only in them, but it lives in them. It is true, indeed, they do not live in sin, for then there would be no difference between them and unregenerate persons; to live in sin, is not only unbecoming, but contrary to the grace of God: but still sin lives in believers; though there is an inward principle of grace, and a mortification of the outward actions of sin, and a putting off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts; yet this old man is not changed, nor removed, much less destroyed. Moreover, sin is not merely in believers now and then, by fits and starts, as we say, but it dwells in them. Hence the apostle calls it, Sin that dwelleth in me; where it is not idle, but active and busy; it hinders all the good, and does all the mischief it can; it makes war against the soul, and sometimes brings it into captivity.

2. Sin is not only in the best of saints, but is also committed by them: There is not a just man upon earth, that doth good and sinneth not; nor is there any sin, but what has been, or may be committed by believers, excepting the sin against the Holy Ghost: their daily slips and falls, their frequent prayers for the discoveries of pardoning grace, and the application of Christ's blood, which cleanseth from all sin, confirm the truth of this. It is true, the apostle John says, that whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God, that is, as born of God, he neither does, nor can commit sin. What is that which is born of God? The new creature; the other I, distinguished from sin that dwelleth in him: this never did, nor can commit

sin; there are an old man and a new man in regenerate persons; the new man never sins, the old man does nothing else but sin; there are flesh and spirit in the saints; all sinful works are the works of the flesh, as all good works are the fruits of the Spirit. The work of grace, though imperfect, is not impure; nothing impure springs from it, nor is any thing impure to be attributed to it.

3. The sins of believers are sins, as well as the sins of others; they are of the same kind, and are equally transgressions of the law, as others are: murder and adultery, committed by David, were sins in him, as well as they are as committed by others; yea, oftentimes the sins of believers are attended with more aggravating circumstances than the sins of other men, being acted against light and knowledge, love and grace and mercy. Though believers are justified from all sin by Christ's righteousness, and have all their sins pardoned through Christ's blood, yet their sins do not hereby cease to be sins. Justification from sin by Christ's righteousness, and pardon of sin through Christ's blood, free them from obligation to punishment due to sin, but do not destroy the nature of sin.

4. The work of sanctification is imperfect in this life: it is a good work begun, but not finished; there is something lacking in the faith of the greatest believer; love is not come to its full growth: and as for knowledge, it is but in part. There is a twofold sanctification; the one in Christ, this is compleat and perfect; the other is derived from Christ, and wrought in the soul by the Spirit of Christ; this at present is imperfect. There is indeed a perfection of parts, but not of degrees; that is to say, the new creature has all its parts, but these are not grown up to the perfection they will arrive unto. The best of saints need fresh supplies of grace, which they would not, were they perfect: they disclaim perfection in themselves, though they wish for it both in themselves and others; when therefore it is said that "God sees no sin in his people," neither of these things are designed by it.

2ndly, God's seeing no sin in his people, does not impeach his omniscience: nor is it to be considered as referring to the article of providence, but to the article of justification, as I shall shew presently. God is omniscient, he knows and sees all persons and things; nothing is or can be hid from his all-seeing eye: His eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings; there is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves. All the actions of men, whether good or bad, are known to him, with their secret springs and principles from whence they flow; he sees the sins of his own people, as well as the sins of others, both in their first motions, and in their open productions; The Lord's throne is in heaven, his eyes behold, his eye-lids try the children of men! the Lord trieth the righteous. About this there is no debate; they must be stupid indeed, if there be any; for my part, I never heard of any who deny that the omniscience of God extends to the sins of his people; it never was thought of, or designed, by this assertion, to limit or deny the omniscience of God; nor is it limited or

denied by it. Though the phrases of seeing and knowing, are used as synonymous in the article of providence, yet never in the article of justification; there they are always distinguished: knowledge and sight are two things; the one belongs to the attribute of God's omniscience, the other to the attribute of his justice: when therefore it is said, that God sees no sin in his people, the meaning is not, that he does not with his omniscient eye, see and know sin to be in them; but he does not see any iniquity in them with his eye of justice, or so as to punish them for their sins, or require satisfaction at their hands for them.

3rdly, Nor is the meaning of this proposition, that God "sees no sin in his people," that he takes no notice of them, nor resents them, nor chastises them, in a fatherly way, on the account of them. God does not, indeed, punish his people for their sins in a way of vindictive wrath and justice; for this is contrary to his justice, and must overthrow the satisfaction of Christ; for either Christ has perfectly satisfied for the sins of his people, or he has not; if he has not, they must satisfy for them themselves; if he has, it is contrary to the justice of God to punish for sin twice, or to require satisfaction, both of the surety and the sinner: but though God does not punish his people for their sins, yet he chastises them in a fatherly way; he takes notice of their sins, lays his hand upon them, in order to bring them to a sense and acknowledgment of them; If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from them, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.

4thly, Though God sees sin in his people, as being but in part sanctified, yet he sees no sin in them, as they are perfectly justified; though he sees sin in them, with his eye of omniscience, yet not with his eye of revenging justice; though he sees them, in respect of his providence, which reaches all things, yet not in respect of justification; though he takes notice of his people's sins so as to chastise them in a fatherly way, for their good; yet he does not see them, take notice of them, and observe them in a judicial way, so as to impute them, or require satisfaction for them: God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; No, he has imputed them to Christ, he has beheld them in him, he has charged them to him, and Christ has made full satisfaction for them; and therefore who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died. God will not require satisfaction at the hands of his people for their sins; he will not punish them on the account of them; they shall never enter into condemnation; for there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. Was God to see sin in his people in this sense, and proceed against them in a forensic way, he must act contrary to his justice and set aside the satisfaction

of his Son. A few things will make it plainly appear that God sees no sin in his justified ones, as such:

First, This will be evident, if we consider what Christ has done with respect to the sins of his people. These have been removed from them to him; they have been placed to his account, imputed to him, and laid upon him. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all; which he has bore in his own body, on the tree; yea, he is the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world; he has removed the iniquity of his people in one day: As he was wounded for their transgressions, and bruised for their sins, so he has washed them from their sins in that blood of his which cleanseth from all sin; by his righteousness he justifies them from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses; and by the sacrifice of himself, he has put away sin for ever; yea, he has finished transgression, made an end of sin, has made reconciliation for iniquity, and has brought in everlasting right eousness. This is the language both of the Old and New Testament, and if this be the case, as it certainly is, God does not, and cannot see iniquity in his people, since all their iniquity has been transferred on Christ, and it is all done away by him.

Secondly, This will be yet more evident, if we consider what God the Father has done on the account of the blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and satisfaction of his Son. He has freely forgiven all the sins of his people for Christ's sake; he has covered them with a covering of mercy, so as they are not visible; he has blotted them out of his sight, so as they are not legible to the eye of justice; yea, he has cast them all behind his back, and into the depths of the sea; insomuch that the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: such strong expressions as these from the mouth of the Lord of hosts, will sufficiently bear us out in asserting, that "God sees no sin in his "people."

Thirdly, Add to this, the view in which the people of God are to be considered, and are considered by Father, Son, and Spirit, being clothed with the righteousness of Christ, and washed in his blood; they are compleat in Christ; they are without fault before the throne, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing: Christ says to them, Thou art all fair, my love; and there is no spot in thee. The church is a perfection of beauty in his esteem; all the saints are perfectly comely through the comeliness he has put on them; yea, they are, in the sight of God, in the eye of justice, unblameable and unreproveable; and if so, then surely God sees no iniquity in them. One must transcribe a considerable part of the Old and New Testament to give the full proof of this doctrine.

If this is a fancy, it is the glory of the Bible, and the marrow of the Gospel; what most displays the riches of God's grace, the efficacy of Christ's blood, the compleatness of his righteousness, and the fulness of his satisfaction; it is the foundation of all solid hopes of future happiness, what supports the life of

faith, and is the ground of a believer's triumph. One would have thought, Sir, you might have forbore so severe a reflection on this truth, of God's seeing no sin in his people, since it is the το ρητον, the express words of the sacred oracles: He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel.

John Gill

MARCH 5.

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." — Revelation ii. 29.

These words extend the message beyond the church to which they were spoken, and address themselves to every one to whom the word comes, and to whom an ear is given to hear and receive it. Thus each message sent to the churches becomes a message sent personally to us. If we have a spiritually circumcised ear, if we are willing to listen to the voice of the Lord, he speaks to us in every message as personally and as distinctly as he spoke to each individual church. It is indeed an unspeakable blessing to have this ear given to us that we may receive in humility, simplicity, and godly sincerity what the Lord speaks in the word of his grace. It is by his word that he knocks at the door of our hearts; and what a blessing he has pronounced on the man who hears his voice and opens the door when he hears the knock, like a fond and affectionate wife when she hears the knock of her husband at the door of his house: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev. iii. 20).

J.C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 1989

Reubin French, NC	5.00
Mrs. Nellie Bunn, VA	2.00
Frank & Ella Simpkins, VA	7.00
Mrs. Kelly Watson, NC	2.00
Mrs. John Sanders, AL	7.00
Mrs. Kenneth Mathis, TN	7.00
Mrs. Donald Arns, SD	40.00
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IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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OBITUARIES

SISTER FRANCIS HUDSON

We the members of Sandy Level Church of the Pigg River Association are deeply sadden to report the death of a precious saint who has gone from our midst, Sister Francis Hudson.

Sister Hudson was born Dec. 12 12, 1907, entered into rest Sept 11, 1989. Preceded in death by her husband. Survived by 2 sons, 1 sister, 4 grandchildren, 3 great grandchildren.

United with Sandy Level Church, Sept. 18, 1988. Being in bad health, Sister Hudson attended church as often and as long as she was able. She loved and trusted in her God and her Church. Sister Hudson prayed for the day to come to be with her Lord and Savior.

Dearest Sister, thou hast left us,
Here, thy loss we deeply feel,
But tis God that hath benefit us,
He can all our sorrows heal.

Gone, but not forgotten by the ones who knew and loved her.
Written in love and fellowship,

Elder Denver Simpson, Mod.
Elder Clarence Stone, Ass. Mod.
Odessa D. Brown, Clerk

CLAUDE WHARTON McKINNEY

Claude Wharton McKinney was born March 2, 1911 the son of the late George T. and Mary Durham. Brother McKinney passed from this life, on July 13, 1989 at Duke Hospital in Durham, N.C. Brother McKinney was married to the late Ellen Stanley McKinney, on March 13, 1936, who preceded him in death, about 6 months, on January 7, 1989. There were no children born to this union. Brother McKinney is survived by three brothers, Jessie McKinney of Eden, North Carolina, Lewis and Fred McKinney of Pelham, North Carolina. Brother McKinney was a retired farmer and factory worker. He lived around the Pelham Community most of his life.

Brother Claude joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on June 6, 1976 along with sister Ellen. They were baptized by their Pastor Elder David Spangler. He was a faithful member of Dan River Church and loved to have members and friend in their home, where there was always a good meal and long talks about the scriptures with everyone present. Brother Claude loved to sing, in church, at work, or wherever he was. Those of us who were fortunate enough to have worked with him would always know when he came to work. He was usually singing when he came in the door, the old hymns he loved so well. In later years he did not hear too well and sometimes sang loud, but it was always from the heart.

His funeral was held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on July 15, 1989, by Elder Kenneth Key, and

Elder Haywood Wray. He was laid to rest in the church cemetery by his beloved wife, to await the resurrection morn, when the dead in Christ shall rise first to meet the Lord in the air to ever be with him.

Written by Sister Betty Southard
and Sister Lillian Wood

GATTIE MAE T. PROCTOR

Sister Gattie Mae Tolson Proctor, born Dec. 11, 1912 in Edgecombe County, North Carolina was called home on Sept. 18, 1989 at the age of 76.

Sister Proctor united with the church at Lower Town Creek and was baptized by the late Elder Leslie Coker. She moved her membership from Lower Town Creek to Pleasant Hill on February 27, 1982, where she remained a devoted member until her death. She was in poor health long before departing this life, but was faithful to attend her church meetings until the last several months she lived, which time she experienced almost constant pain that hindered her from going to meetings. She never lost her concern for the brethren and wanted to know about everyone. It always seemed to be her pleasure to have the brethren visit her even though there were times she was in so much pain she did not seem herself.

Salvation by the Grace of God was her theme — she talked that doctrine — she loved that doctrine and never failed to voice her hope of an eternal home with God, even though she confessed to be a sinner and if saved she knew it must be by the Grace of God. She loved and often called the hymn

" I am a stranger here below,
And what I am tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I 'm not born again."
etc.

and would often remark that this complete hymn expressed her feelings about herself.

Sister Proctor 's funeral was conducted at Johnson Funeral Home, Rocky Mount, N.C. by her pastor Elder Henry Jones and Elder Lester Eason after which her body was laid to rest in Upper Town Creek Church Cemetery in Wilson County.

She leaves a devoted family, a daughter Edna P. Braswell with whom she made her home and who made many sacrifices to take care of her mother; one son, John Luther Proctor of Knightdale; two sisters, Mrs. Daisy Williams of Sharpsburg and Mrs. Lucy Grey Sessoms of Pinetops; two brothers, Amos Tolson of Nashville and William " Bill " Tolson of Pinetops; four grandchildren; five great-grandchildren.

The brethren of Pleasant Hill extend sympathy to her family. We shall miss her among our congregation, but feel she has come in possession of a rest she had long awaited and do not wish her back.

Written by order of Pleasant Hill Church, in conference Sept. 23, 1989.

J. Carroll Williams

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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POEM

Be Near Me Dear Lord

Oh my Lord ever be
Ever near and close to me
Keep me humble at thou feet
Keep me safe till Thee I meet.

Trouble and trials can't divide
Or keep me from my Saviour's side
But draws me closer to his breast
Gives me hope of eternal rest.

God the Father, God the Son
Died on the cross for his little ones
His love, His mercy and His grace
Gives me that abiding faith.

By: Irene Setliff

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EDITORIAL

Clifford Wilbanks

Dearly beloved brethren, I have been writing unto you through the ' Signs ' for several years. I have never thought myself adequate to write any thing that would be praising, honouring or glorifying unto God, neither comforting or edifying to his beloved children. However, this is the purpose of my efforts as he gives me grace. From the beginning I was encouraged by the brethren to write, and it has been my desire from the first — when I first asked for a home with the church — to serve God and his church in any capacity that I can: therefore I have written when I felt that I was given an unction to do so from above. Whatever the results I know not, but I do know that they are in the hands of the Lord, and he will dispose of them as it pleases him. Praise his holy name!

Writing unto you has never been a burden unto me, but a blessing of great joy. I pray that it will continue to be so. Should it ever become a burden and not joyous I think I would cease to write, for I would feel that God is no longer in the matter. I do not say that I know he is in it now, but I am given hope through the encouragement of the brethren; for it is they who must judge.

Recently I was asked to join the ' ' Signs ' as one of the associate editors. Although I felt unworthy, unfit, and unqualified, as I told them, I consented to their request. The ' Signs ' has meant so much to me over the years — because it advocates the doctrine that I believe — and if the Lord should bless me to contribute any thing worthwhile to it I hope I shall be very thankful to him.

It is my understanding of the Scriptures that Jesus gives each of his children one or more talents according to their ability, which is also a gift of God: for without him we can do nothing, but we can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth us. It is my feverent desire to use such talent as I may have to the glory of my Lord and Saviour, and not to bury it in the earth.

Brethren, I ascribe to the prospectus of the ' Signs ' because it sets forth the doctrine which I believe, love, and contend for. Which is: The existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and

eternal perfections of the great Jehovah — the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. " These three are one. John 1:8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistable, and in all cases, the effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

That the church is composed exclusively of baptized believers — that to her are given able ministers of the new testament; that the Scriptures are the only authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

May God give us grace to ever contend for these truths is my prayer.

Brethren, I have met each of the editors of the ' Signs ' and have known some of them for a long time. My wife and I recently visited with Elder Key and Elder Williams and some of the other brethren in that area and we had a wonderful time. We were treated very graciously, and that is the way it is wherever we visit among the brethren who believe the doctrine of sovereign grace.

Beloved brethren, I am sure that in my weakness I will make many errors. If they are such as cannot be prudently overlooked, I would ask you to correct me in brotherly love. If our views differ on any Scripture, let us remember who maketh us to differ and then it will be a lovely difference. Brotherly love covers a multitude of sins. I love you for Christ's sake if not deceived. When at the throne of grace I ask that you remember this poor sinner. Come visit with us when you can.

Clifford Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Saints scattered abroad

Dear Brethren:

If the Lord permits I desire to write to you that you might share and witness with me the knowledge and understanding that you may have received concerning the proverb — " Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars " (Prov. 9:1).

One may observe that the action is complete, the house having been built in the past, that there was a work — a hewing and a building that stands finished. One may also observe that the hands of men did not contribute to the building as " we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," (2 Cor. 5:1). I do not

believe that his house was built by the wisdom of men as one might infer from the parable of the wise man who built upon a rock while the foolish man built upon the sand, for all mortal men are carnal and foolish. " Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it ." (Ps. 127:1), and " All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made " (John 1:3) referring to the WORD which was God the Son.

Is this not the Father's house in which there are many mansions ? From another proverb " Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established. And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches " (Prov. 24:3-4). Christ the Builder is the power and the wisdom of God (I Cor. 1:24-30, Col. 2:2-3).

O, Beloved reader, I am given to believe that this house represents the Church of the living God, and that there are crowns of righteousness, of eternal life, and of immortal glory laid up in the heavenly chambers. These precious and pleasant riches are reserved for every saint having a name in the Lamb's book of life. This wondrous house is the bride of Christ for whom Jesus shed his precious blood on Calvary's hill as the purchase price for our redemption. May we rejoice and praise the Lord from whom all blessings flow !

" Wisdom hath builded her house," an eternal house. She has selected durable building materials that are everlasting and suitable for eternity. The Lord God has laid in " Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation " (Isa. 28:16) which is none other than Christ, a living stone, chosen of God, and precious, as his only begotten Son, that her house shall endure in eternity. Upon this sure foundation, true believers derive their spiritual life and strength from the living stone as they also " as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house " (I Pet. 2:5).

Again, Wisdom " hath hewn out her seven pillars ." O, beloved brethren, do you understand the mysteries of this work ? Wisdom's work is a work of perfection, " nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it " (Eccl. 3:14). Because all men have the corruptible nature of the world embedded in their hearts no man can discover the mysteries in the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end. Yet there must be a work of hewing — a trimming back, a cutting away, a shaping, a cleansing of the elect saints who are to be lively stones built up in the spiritual house. God, which dwelleth in the heavens with this eternal spiritual house shall not see corruption. Thus every elect saint, by ways known only to God, must be hewn and tried while passing through this time world, this low ground of sin and sorrow, that they grow in faith and in grace to become lively stones, suitable, that they may be " fitly framed together unto a holy temple in the Lord " (Eph. 2:21), every joint of Wisdom's house knit and compacted together with His love.

Though the ways of God's work are beyond finding out, I believe that Wisdom's house stood builded and complete in the counsel and purpose

of God before the beginning of time as " that which is to be hath already been ." The writers of the Scrip - tures , inspired by the Holy Spirit , have revealed certain works of God between the former and hinder seas of time that manifest the spiritual house fitted with lively stones of the saints for eternity . Simply stated , for perfection, there are seven major works of God in the journey of every saint ; namely , creation , redemp - tion , conviction , regeneration , sanctification , justification , and glorification through the resurrec - tion .

But the works which Jesus did " if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written " (John 21:25) . Thus I should not speculate on the way of God 's works .

But if it is God 's purpose that I should write anything profitable for edification or for stirring the pure minds of the saints , I am brought now to consider the seven pillars . Among other uses and meanings in the Scriptures , the number seven signifies perfection . I believe this meaning applies in this instance for this house of the Lord is a perfect house , built without hands and cleansed by the precious blood of Jesus .

By nature I understand a pillar to be a structural element set upon a foundation and extending upward to support a major structural entity such as a building or house . What, beloved saints , do we see in the case of Wisdom 's house and the seven pillars? Do you see Wisdom's house placed upon a sure foundation that will endure throughout eternity? That sure foundation is Christ , the living Son of God , who is the light of the world . He is " the way , the truth and the life " (John 14:6) . The Apostle leaves on record " But if I tarry long , that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God , which is the church of the living God , the pillar and ground of the truth " (1 Tim . 3:15) .

Can Wisdom 's house rest and endure upon a deceitful foundation? Can this heavenly house find support upon pillars of false doctrine, works, professed religion , error and pre - tended truths ? O , the wonderful , glorious Wisdom 's house of right - eousness is set upon TRUTH , Lord Jesus, supported by branches of the word of truth rightly divided , rooted in Him . Let us pray , dear children , that his Spirit and Comforter reveal to each of us his truth rightly divided, that as lively stones we may receive eternal life in Wisdom's house. With much concern and fear I am given to believe there are seven pillars of truth which I offer for your considera- tion and further clarification :

1 . REVELATION , SALVATION IS BY GRACE : By revelation of God , the Father , the saints shall know that Jesus is the Christ , the Son of God , by whom all salvation is by grace . It is eternal and solely of the Lord , grace being the unmerited favor and gift of God and all of man 's accumu- lated equity in good works fail to satisfy the law 's demand for justice as all men have sinned .

2 . ELECTION: In charity , it pleased God , in eternity before time began , to first love a particular people who

were chosen to be hedged about and protected in his providence . At his appointed times God writes his laws in their hearts and puts them in their minds and they are individually turned about and are made to love the Lord , their God , with all their heart, soul, strength, and mind and to love their neighbors (brethren) as themselves and they are to God , a people. All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose .

3. FAITH IN THE REDEEMING BLOOD OF JESUS: Saving faith, which is a gift of God that fades not away in the face of tribulations and persecutions for the word, is a growing belief in the power of the redeeming blood of Jesus , which was shed upon Calvary's cross for the purchase of his bride, the church. Jesus, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world is the perfect sacrifice for the sins of every elect heir of promise , that none be lost . The sins of the saints are imputed to Jesus , as surety , for the saints ' justification under the law and for its complete satisfaction . This gift is a faith by which we live in hope and are blessed to walk in obedience and good works. However, being depraved in nature , our walk in this life remains imperfect , our old man 's fleshly nature engages the new spirit in continuing warfare :

4. IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS TO A CHASTISED , PERSEVERING PEOPLE : By the perfect righteousness of Jesus , imputed to his bride , the church is sheltered from the wrath of God and the sins of its individual members are remembered, by God, against them no more . Yet as little children the saints shall take up their crosses and follow Jesus in tribulations and in persecutions during their earthly sojourn . Their faith shall be tried in furnaces of affliction, and they shall pass under rods of chastisement for their good at times and occasions suitable to God 's purpose , and though the legions of Satan be against them , they shall persevere and overcome as the victory is won by Jesus , the Christ, which dwelleth within them.

5 . SPIRITUAL BIRTH IN ETERNAL UNION WITH GOD: The saints, who are the adopted children and sons of God, are joint heirs with Christ in an eternal union with God, having their names written in the Lamb's sealed book of life , who shall , in the fullness of time , be called out of the world by a conviction under the law as helpless sinners , and they shall experience a spiritual birth with baptism of the Holy Ghost and with fire, to thereafter seek after the righteousness of Jesus to follow after his example in baptism in good conscience and to walk as guided by the Spirit in the way of the Lord .

6. The Resurrection: The resurrection of Jesus to ascend and sit at the right hand of God, the Father, to rule as King , Prophet , and Priest as an advocate for his bride, is the reason for the hope by which we are saved.

7 . COMMUNION OF SAINTS IN THE VISIBLE CHURCH: Under the everlasting covenant of grace, during the gospel dispensation, the saints are given a unity of the spirit and a like mind , a mind like unto the mind of Christ , with a desire to follow his example. They are made to assem-

ble at appointed times, to sit together in love and unity in heavenly places here below in the kingdom of God, in a love made manifest not in word, neither in tongue but in deed and in truth, to rejoice in Christ and in tribulations, to grow in grace and in faith, to witness and watch over each other for good, and to eat and drink of the Lord's Supper in remembrance of Jesus, our Saviour and Head of the Church. They watch and await the great day when they shall be gathered to dwell in immortal glory in his house, ever singing praises to his Holy Name in eternity.

Let us glorify God and praise him in all events and things. Mark the errors in this writing to me, the chief of sinners in need of his mercy and your prayers.

Eugene F. Osborne, Sr.
January 1990

P.O. Box 48
Duarrenburg, N.Y. 12056
December 18, 1989

Dear Editors:

Enclosed a money order for $20.00 to cover the subscription for two years and rest for contribution. I have a letter, written by Elder Amosa J. Slauson who then lived at 46 Cedar Street, Kingston, N.Y. He became our pastor after the death of Elder Arnold H. Bellows. He was well toward 90 years old when he wrote this letter.

With hope and trust in God,
Woodrow W. Bellinger

Feb. 7, 1967

Very Dear Brother
& Deacon Bellinger:

Your very kind, good & welcomed letter recd. this a.m. and as always was glad to hear from you by the way of a letter from your hand and heart. Yes the words of Peter saying to whom shall we go thou hast the words of eternal life sure represents the God given faith that had been given Peter from God the Father. Peter was one who knew that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God, and had said so. We are told to know Jesus is life eternal and Peter knew that Jesus was The Way, The Truth and The Life, and had learned many times that he was law to Gospel and that His words was as Jesus said, that His was Spirit and life. So what a God given blessing to a poor sinner to know where to go to find words that have life in them and spirit in them. Jesus said in another place, take my yoke upon you and learn of me so Jesus was the one that Peter had learned of so many times and knew that there was none other to go to. Jesus has said come unto me you that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest. How wonderful to know of one that has the words of Eternal Life that commands those to come to him. For true rest, for time and eternity. How much we need rest being so weary and heavy laden with sin and weakness so lame & halt with this corrupt body. So weary trying to do good and find evil is present. What a God given blessing to poor sinners that there is one who has the words of Eternal Life, controls the power of

darkness delivers such weary and heavy laden sinners from the power of darkness — translates them into the Glorious Kingdom of the Son of God where they find rest for their weary and heavy laden condition . Where they can rest from their own works as God did from His . Where Christ imputed righteousness . En - ables them to say that Christ is my refuge and strength a very present help in trouble . Christ who has the words of Eternal Life and is a light to our path . We are enabled to see what we need and why we need it , and who can give it. Knowing this we cry and pray to the one who has the words of eternal life . For we have learned that it is not of him that willeth or of him that runneth but of God that sheweth mercy . We are ever and always at the door of mercy (Jesus) who opens and none can shut and shuts and none can open constantly coming to him begging for more of His love that we , in return might love him more and serve him better . Being in the world but we pray not of the world . For us to live would be Christ , then to die sure would be gain .

Had a 5 page letter from Sister Becker yesterday yes I just checked its 6 pages she is asking me some quite deep questions about Adam and Eve in request to God 's plan in the matter I feel that God knew what was going to happen or what Adam and Eve would do and what Satan would do and God permitted it all to take place just as it did . I do not understand that God foredained it or predestinated Adam and Eve to transgress in the Garden of Eden the way that they did . For there was another creature involved in the matter which was Satan and Eve being deceived by him , believes him instead of what God had told them . Eve was deceived but Adam was not for he said the woman gave him and he then become a transgressor , same as she . Satan is yet tempting and working and luring in the minds of men to lead not toward God but always in the downward road away from God but blind unbelief can not see this as their eyes are blinded as in Bible times there are Satans cunn- ing way and work and does not trouble them , only those that Christ lives in or eyes has been made to see or Holy Ghost has taught them and taken up His abode in their hearts so that their love is for God and things which are Heavenly as they are made to sit down or dwell in Heavenly flares with Christ Jesus and have a burning zeal in their hearts to please God and keep His commandments and walk Humbly and Godly before Him because of the love that they have for him . As a son before their natural Father , that loves and re - spects their natural Father as they should. Maybe you might have some good thoughts about what I have mentioned about Adam and Eve in the Garden if so write me glad to hear them .

I had a long interesting letter from Brother Albert Vail I have sent it to Sister Sickles to read , maybe I might send it to you to read also . His letter certainly gives one a lot to think about and check on he sure has some lease of mind . Hope you can forgive my poor writing and poor spelling . Just consider the imper - fection of the writer and cast the

mantle of Charity over it all. Faith and hope are wonderful but we are told that Charity is the greatest of all. As ever your loving Brother and Pastor by the grace of God if one.

Elder Amosa J. Slauson

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

GROWING UP INTO CHRIST IN ALL THINGS

Preached at Gower Street Chapel, London, on Lord's Day Morning, August 3rd, 1856.

" That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ." Ephesians 4: 14 & 15.

In the Church of God there is unity, but not uniformity. In nature, especially in the works of creation, we see something similar. In creating the world, the great Creator seems to have prescribed for Himself certain patterns — types as they are called by naturalists — in conformity to which He has moulded the works of His hands. This type or pattern we may compare to the circumference of a circle which bounds (so to speak) God's idea; but within that circle He works in an infinite variety. The human countenance, the trees of the field, the flowers of the garden, the birds that fly in the air, the animals that walk on the ground, the very fish that swim in the sea, are all constructed each according to a certain leading type; but within that bounding circle there is an infinite variety of colour, shape, size and form.

So it is in the dominion of grace. The Spirit of God works according to a certain outline; for there are certain grand distinguishing features of His divine operation upon the soul; but within that circle He works in various ways. He does not cut all lines the same depth, nor even trace the patterns in exactly the same form. Look at a turner at work; there is his lathe, and there his cutting tool. Every design is cut by the same tool, and the machine worked by the same treadle; yet what infinite variety in the execution of the patterns, and how visible in each the directing mind of the artificer!

So with the work of God upon the soul. It is the same Spirit who teaches all the election of grace, and He works by the same Word of truth, which is the cutting tool, if I may use the expression, to trace the image of Christ on the heart; and yet what a variety of experience is there in the Church of God! Can we find two Christians whose experience in all points agrees? And yet what a unity of feeling, what a oneness of heart, what a mingling of spirit, stamps all who are taught of God as really one! In this astonishing blending of the greatest variety with the greatest unity it is that we discover the hand of God, and thus trace consummate beauty and infinite wisdom.

This unity and yet variety are beautifully traced out in the chapter before us (Eph. 4). "The unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" is the great thing we are called upon to endeavour to keep. And this "unity of the Spirit" results from this, that "there is one body, and one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of

our calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all." But though there is this blessed oneness of body, spirit, hope, Lord, faith, baptism, and the Father, not an equal measure of grace, and therefore not an equal measure of experience, knowledge, or gifts, is bestowed on all. "But unto every one of us." adds the Apostle, "is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." This leads him to show whence Christ derived these gifts, what is their nature, and for what purpose they are bestowed.

I mention these things, because our text is so closely connected with them that we cannot well understand it unless this connection is seen. Carrying out, then, this connection, we may remark that there are three things that bear upon our text, and viewed spiritually may serve to cast a divine light upon it.

1. We are to view by the eye of faith the Lord Jesus Christ raised up from the dead by the power of the Father, and seated at God's right hand.

2. In seeing Him as seated at God's right hand, we are to view Him as having received from the Father a divine plenitude, and overflowing fulness of gifts; as we read, "When He ascended up on high He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." It is in the Psalm from which the apostle quotes (Psalm 68:18): "received gifts from men." Before He gave He received them, and received that He might give them. A store, an inexhaustible store, of gifts and graces was entrusted to, and deposited in Him, as the risen Head of the Church. They were laid up by the hand of the Father in Him, as we read (Col. 1:19): "For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell." The Church is therefore said to be "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places (or things) in Christ;" and John tells us that "of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." We are then to view Him as sending these gifts down, as was shown in an especial manner on the day of Pentecost. And though we have now no Pentecostal effusion, or the same measure and depth of spiritual gifts and graces as was then manifested, the Holy Ghost has not ceased to work in the Church of God. The Lord Jesus, at the right hand of the Father, still continues to shed His gifts and graces upon the souls of men, still is what He was then, and will be, till He has gathered into His bosom the last vessel of mercy; for "He is the same yesterday, and today, and for ever."

3. But there is a third feature connected with the text which it is very desirable to notice, that the gifts spoken of are especially ministerial gifts, as we find the Apostle laying down very plainly in the 11th verse: "He gave some apostles;" these were the most eminent servants of Christ, of whom there were but few in number; and these endowed with gifts to plant churches and govern them generally with especial authority from the Lord Himself. "And some prophets;" or preachers, men not invested with the high and peculiar office of an apostle, but endowed with preach-

ing gifts whereby they were not suited for a settled , permanent ministry ; not adapted to preside over a church or people , from an absence of the proper qualifications of wisdom and firmness , or from a want of spiritual flow of matter to season their preaching with a necessary variety ; but still blessed with ministerial gifts , adapting them to go from place to place preaching the simple elements of gospel truth and their ministry blessed to the conviction of sinners and the calling in of the scattered sheep . " And some pastors ;" men endowed with sufficient wisdom and ability to hold a permanent , settled situation , fitted to govern as well as feed the church committed to their care ; not only able to preach the gospel with power and unction , but qualified to rule and guide the brethren with all Christian wisdom as well as affection and love . And others " teachers "; not able perhaps to preside over churches as " pastors ," nor endowed with sufficient ability to go forth as " prophets ," or even as " evangelists ," but still able to drop a word of instruction from time to time in a small way and in a limited sphere , and thus be teachers of those who are willing to learn . Thus each man of these several ranks and orders was simply what the Lord made him ; none able to boast , but each filling up that post to which the Church 's risen Head had assigned him ; and as long as each kept his place , blessed in his deed .

But the Apostle tells us also why these gifts were given . He says it is " for the perfecting of the saints , for the work of the ministry , for the edifying of the body of Christ ." He thus plainly teaches us that the Lord Jesus at the right hand of the Father sends these gifts down , raises up these men , furnishes them each with his several ability , and plants them at their different posts to bring about three ends ; 1 . " for the perfecting of the saints ; " that is , that the saints of God may be matured and established in the truth and in the divine life ; 2 . " for the work of the ministry ; " that is , that the ministry of the Word in all its various branches — whether doctrine , or reproof , or correction , or instruction in righteousness , whether to convince or console , throw down or build up — might be fully carried out ; and 3 . " for the edifying of the body of Christ ," that the saints of God , forming the mystical body of Jesus , might be built up on their most holy faith , " till we all come " — that is , either collectively as a body or individually as members — " in the unity of the faith " — there being but " one faith " — " and of the knowledge of the Son of God " — through an experimental acquaintance with him — " unto a perfect man " — that is , grown up and matured — " unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ " — such a measure of stature as the fulness of Christ gives to make a man complete in every good word and work .

These preliminary observations may introduce us to the subject before us . " That we henceforth ." says this blessed man of God , " be no more children , tossed to and fro , and carried about with every wind of doctrine , by the sleight of men , and

cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth" (or as it is in the margin, "being sincere") "in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ."

In attempting, with God's blessing, to open up these words, I shall direct your attention:

I. To that state of religious childhood, out of which we are by divine grace to be brought: "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

II. Secondly, to the means which God employs to bring us out of the childish state, namely, "speaking the truth," or adopting, as I intend to do, the marginal reading, "being sincere in love."

III. And thirdly, to the result of these means: "That we may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ."

I. The blessed Spirit has selected the figure of a little child and used it in various ways, but chiefly in two:

i. He has selected certain features in a child which we may call favourable qualities as emblems of a certain state of soul spiritually corresponding with them. Again, He has taken certain (what shall we call them ?) unfavourable qualities in the child, and used them as figures of instability, weakness and imperfection in the divine life. And yet the foundation of the figure in both aspects is the same; the natural tenderness, immaturity, and want of growth, which is visible in the child. Let me explain myself a little more clearly and distinctly. 1. First observe the favourable qualities which the Holy Ghost has used as emblems of certain distinctive features of divine teaching. A child is naturally simple. The tenderness of its ideas preserves it from duplicity of speech or conduct. The Holy Spirit takes this quality, and uses it as an emblem of that spiritual simplicity and godly sincerity of which He is the author. We must become simple as little children. Again, the child is inexperienced, ignorant of many things which it has afterwards to learn, and the innate consciousness of this renders it teachable. So the child of God is teachable, willing to learn, to gather spiritual instruction where he can. The child again is humble. It knows little or nothing of worldly distinctions; the child of a peer will play with the child of a peasant as readily as with one of its own class. This external, visible humility is made a figure of that spiritual humility which clothes, or should clothe a child of God. The Lord Himself has used the figure of a little child in this point of view as simple, teachable, and humble, when He declared, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mat. 18 : 3).

2. But, on the other hand, there are things in a child of nature which are representatives of what is to be avoided in a child of grace. A Child is inexperienced, unacquainted with the world, with business, with any serious or useful occupation, with the art and craft of men, with the way in which the battle of life is fought

and won. So in grace. There is a state and stage in the divine life through which everyone passes, in which he has little experience of himself, of the evils of his heart, of the dreadful nature of sin, of the strength of temptation, of the power and subtlety of his unwearied foe; and, on the other hand, little experience of the abounding grace of Christ, of the efficacy of His atoning blood, and the manifestations of His dying love.

Again, a child is weak. Mind and body alike are naturally and necessarily feeble from its being a transition state, and neither having yet grown into their intended maturity. We can bear with this in childhood. Their very weaknesses, especially in our own children, are engaging; their very want of maturity, like a rose-bud, or a lamb at play, has something beautiful about it. But we should not wish our children to be lambs and rose-buds all their lives. We should not like them to be dwarfs lest haply they degenerate into idiots. We expect them, as years pass on, to grow out of this state. Were they always children, we should infer the presence of some disease. We should say there was something fundamentally wrong in their constitution, which stunted and starved their growth.

So in heavenly things. It is pleasing to see the work of grace in its first commencement on the soul. The doubts, the fears, the earnestness, the zeal, the simplicity of those in whom the Spirit of God is first at work is a sight beautiful to witness, and when seen in any near and dear to us unspeakable heart-gladdening; but we expect them to grow out of this weakness and feebleness, so as in due time to attain to a ripeness and maturity in the life of God, and not be children all their days.

Another feature of childhood is to be changeable, vacillating, pleased with a toy one day and throwing it aside the next; not knowing its own mind, but flitting like a butterfly from flower to flower. This fickle, unstable, changeable mood of a child the blessed Spirit uses as an emblem of a similar state of mind too often visible in the professing Church of Christ.

Reproving and condemning this childish instability, he bids us "henceforth be no more children." It was well enough to be children once, for in grace as in nature none are born men, and during spiritual as during natural childhood childish ways are borne with; but we are not to be children all our days, ever vacillating, unstable, undecided, carried away by every impulse, and moved by every breath, ignorant and inexperienced, knowing little of ourselves, and less of the Lord's mercy and love. There is a growth in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are, therefore, by divine teaching, to grow out of childhood into manhood, to forget those things which are behind and reach forth into those things which are before, and thus attain to some ripeness in the life of God.

ii. But the Apostle shews not merely the weakness of a state of childhood, but the dangers to which this state is exposed: "tossed to and fro, and carried about with every

wind of doctrine ." He rather changes the figure here ; for his heart was so full of the things of God, that like a workman with a number of tools before him, who drops the one in his hand and catches up another more suitable for a particular part of his work, he drops one figure to take up another more adapted to convey his meaning. He does not carry out the figure of childhood, but at once adopts another — that of a ship in a storm . How unstable is a ship at sea , how tossed up and down by every wave, had driven to and fro by every wind, especially if there be not much ballast in the hold! Whilst then we are in a childish, immature state in the divine life, we are like a ship at sea with little ballast, tossed to and fro by every wind that blows . Now that is a very dangerous position , because if the ship have not a good amount of ballast in the hold , it is liable to be capsized, founder, and go down in the deep waters. Not that the child of God can or will go down in the deep waters ; his soul , his immortal soul cannot be lost . The ship itself may not founder, yet much of the cargo may be lost , the passengers get wetted , and their clothes and goods spoiled. So we, from instability and inexperience , like a lightly ballasted ship in a stormy sea, may, without losing our souls, lose much of our comfort and peace ; and if we escape drowning, may not escape a thorough good wetting .

But there is something striking in the expression, " tossed to and fro." Here, on the side, is an iron-bound coast , full of rocks ; and on the other, the raging sea. Now the ship may be sometimes tossed " to " — approach the iron-bound coast, and be in imminent danger of being dashed to pieces — and then a contrary wind may suddenly carry it away " from " the rocks, and drive it out half a wreck into the wild, stormy ocean . So in divine matters . Here on one side are rocks — deadly heresies , dangerous speculations , fundamental errors upon grand cardinal point: the Trinity, the Sonship of Christ , the personality and work of the Holy Ghost. Errors of this sort are as sunken rocks lying abreast of the homeward track . Suddenly a wind comes from some preacher or author that catches the sails of an unstable ship, and drives it headlong to these sunken rocks , for errors and heresies thickly line the spiritual coast . But just as the vessel is coming upon the rocks , a land breeze springs up , a gust of despair or some sudden fear and terror, and away it goes right into the boundless sea . Many even of the saints of God, when not established in the truth, are thus " tossed to and fro"; driven sometimes almost upon the rocks of destructive error , and thence hurled back into a stormy sea , where terror stands on the deck , and despair rides upon the wave . How many , who one would hope fear God , are thus tossed to and fro! They wander from chapel to chapel , from minister to minister , from book to book, and can scarcely tell who are right and who are wrong, who are the servants of God and who the servants of pride and self ; sometimes taken with this man and then with that man ; lifted up and carried about with every new scheme and every fresh doctrine

that wears an air of plausibility ; hurled sometimes well nigh on the shoals of error, and then driven away to sea without compass or pilot . How many are thus " carried about" all round the compass , " with every wind of doctrine " ! No minister can long please them ; no people long satisfy them ; no doctrine long hold them . They change their place of worship as worldly people their watering place , and love new faces and new voices as much as seaside visitors love new sight and new seas .

iii . But the Apostle adds a remarkable expression : " By the sleight of men , and cunning craftiness , whereby they lie in wait to deceive ." He opens a wonderful depth here . It strikes me sometime with astonishment when I read the Epistles , to see that in those early days , when the power of Christ was so manifest , and men had to carry their lives in their hands , there were such errors and heresies in the Church . Yet I see the wisdom of God in permitting it . There were then men of God , such as the apostles , who could point them out and write down the truth , the living truth of God, under the special inspiration of the Holy Ghost , and thus set up a certain standard , and fix unerring landmarks for the Church of Christ for all time .

This tossing to and fro results , the Apostle says , from " the sleight of men ." The original here is exceedingly expressive , or I would not mention it . The word translated " sleight " means literally , cheating at dice ; the allusion being to the practice of gamblers loading the dice to obtain a favourable throw . I never saw it done myself, but I speak from what I have read . The dice are rightly marked and rightly thrown , but being loaded on on side , they always come up in favour of the cheat who throws them . So errors and heresies resemble loaded dice . They look all right , properly marked with texts and passages , and the minister or writer seems to throw them fully and fairly down before the people . And yet , like loaded dice , there is jugglery and deception at the bottom . As in sleight of hand, things are made to appear what they are not , so jugglers and cheats in religion deceive people by a show of piety and holiness , under the cover of which they hide the most destructive errors . Books , apparently very religious , but filled with infidelity , lie on every railway stall ; Jesuits , male and female , creep into families and schools as tutors and governesses , masters and mistresses , to entangle the young with Popish wiles ; Puseyites , with the Church of England in their mouth , and the Church of Rome in their heart , steal from house to house undermining all Protestant principles . The friends of truth are asleep , and the enemies awake ; simple souls are caught , but still the game goes on . Yet of all gamblers , religious gamblers are the worst , for the throw is for eternity , and the soul is at stake .

iv . But the Apostle uses another expression of great pith and power : " cunning craftiness ." The word means literally , " the unprincipled conduct of a designing wretch , who will do anything to gain his ends ." Such is the nature of error, that when

once a man's mind becomes thoroughly imbued with it, he cannot rest but as he propagates it. The man who holds error is sure to be ten times firmer in that error than many a child of God is in truth. Amazing, too, is the "cunning craftiness" of these erroneous men, "whereby they lie in wait to deceive." Though so deeply fixed in their errors, yet there is in them an instinctive consciousness that their views will not bear the light, and that the verdict of God's people is against them. "The righteous is as bold as a lion," but they are as crafty as a serpent. They therefore lie in wait, "as a serpent by the way as an adder in the path." David describes them well. "He sitteth in the lurking places of the villages; in the secret places doth he murder the innocent; his eyes are privily set against the poor. He lieth in wait secretly, as a lion in his den. He lieth in wait to catch the poor; he doth catch the poor when he draweth him into his net" (Psalm 10:8 & 9). Their delight is to catch some simple-hearted child of God, and under a show of deep experience, or wonderful manifestation, instil their poisonous errors into his ear and heart. Thus: "they lie in wait to deceive," or, as the words may be rendered, they pursue a systematic plan of deception, laying schemes to entrap the unwary, and are never so much pleased as when they can beguile an unstable soul into their net.

II. Now, how are we to be preserved from these dangers? If we remain always children, we shall not only be tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, but run imminent hazard of being juggled into error by these dicers in religion, entrapped into some heresy by these crafty deceivers. A child playing with a gambler has small chance of winning; an unstable soul arguing with a crafty heretic is more likely to be beaten than to beat. What, then, is our safeguard? To be "sincere in love." I adopt, you will perceive, the marginal reading. It is more literal, and throws more light upon the passage. We have not a word in our language to convey the exact meaning. If I might coin a word for a moment, I would render it "truthing it"; that is, being truthful throughout — not merely truthful in speech, but in heart and life. "To speak the truth" is but the fruit; to be truthful or sincere is to possess the root. Nor is it the truthful lip, but the truthful heart that preserves from the sleight of men and the cunning craftiness of unprincipled deceivers. Sincerity lies at the root of all gracious profession. If a man be not sincere he is nothing. God makes a man sincere by planting His truth in his heart; and whenever God does make a man sincere, the truth which He has implanted will grow. Truth does not lie in a man's soul dead and motionless like a stone in Gower Street; it is a living, active, expansive principle. If the truth be in the soul it will be ever pushing out error, because the two principles cannot exist together; and as Isaac thrust out Ishmael, and Jacob proved stronger than Esau, so will simplicity and godly sincerity be ever mightier than craft and deception. The truth of God in the heart will not wither and die, but will be shined upon by the

sun of righteousness , and sunned into fruitfulness by the smiles of God ; and as truth becomes day by day more and more precious , so will error and evil become day by day more and more hateful . A sincere soul stand " girt about with truth ," and truth forms its shield and buckler .

But how does this Christian sincerity prove the soul 's safeguard from error? By putting it ever on the watch tower , looking out and looking up for the teaching of God and the light of His countenance . A soul made spiritually sincere takes nothing upon trust, requires the seal of God on all it receives , and the witness of the Spirit to all that it feels . As a modest female is preserved by her modesty from the very approach of the seducer , her retiring sensitiveness forming her truest , her most impenetrable protection , so the very sincerity of an honest soul is its best safeguard from error . He who is sincere sees the rocks ahead , on which other concerning faith make shipwreck ; and being well ballasted with temptations , afflictions and trials , he is not easily tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine . His desire to be right keeps him right; his fear to be wrong preserves him from wrong. Knowing the worth of his soul , he will not sit down with religious dicers and gamblers to take it upon the throw of their loaded dice ; and as he walks warily and cautiously , he is not easily bitten by the adder in the hedge , or caught by the cunning craftiness of those who lie in wait to deceive. The light of God in his soul makes him see; the life of God in his heart makes him feel ; the fear of God in his conscience makes him honest; the love of God in his affections makes him love ; and all this gives truth that firm place in him that there is no room for error . The Apostle adds , therefore , " in love ." It is not enough to be " sincere "; we must be " sincere in love ." Mark that . It is not receiving God 's truth as a certain orderly system ; it is not furnishing our heads with a sound doctrinal creed and compact Calvinistic scheme which will avail us in the trying hour ; but it is to have the truth of God brought into our soul by a divine power , and realizing such unutterable sweetness in it as communicates a firm abiding love , both to the truth itself , and to Him of whom it testifies and from whom it comes . It is thus we are made " sincere in love ." The fear of God creates the sincerity, the application of the truth with power creates the love to it . And when we are thus made " sincere in love ," we are brought out of the childish state in which we are carried about with every wind of doctrine, and in danger of being entrapped by the cunning craft of every deceiver. We know the truth , love the truth , and become established in the truth .

The soul 's best , truest safeguard is love . The Apostle tells us why men " perish in all deceivableness of unrighteousness ." It is because " they receive not the love of the truth " (2 Thess . 2:10). They fall into error because they never really loved the truth which they professed . The truth , when known by Divine teaching , makes free not only from guilt and bondage , but also from evil and error . Once love

the truth, and error never more can have a place in your heart.

III. But I was to show you what would be the end and blessed result: "That we may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ." We have to grow up into Christ. Where self-righteousness or self-indulgence, self-conceit or self-dependence, or in whatever other form self may come, it is a deadly enemy to growth in grace.

There are two things we must ever be afraid of, error and evil. As the truth of God gets possession of your soul it displaces error and subdues evil. We learn to abhor them, and cannot willingly take such wretches into our bosom. Truth is like a person naturally clean and nice in his person, dress, and habits; he cannot endure anything that is not clean also. Error and evil are like the filthy tramp, never so happy as in his dirt; scissors and soap his intense abhorrence. As then truth is loved, error is hated; as Christ is made precious, sin is abhorred. Thus, by the love of truth, the soul grows out of self in all its manifold forms, and becomes conformed, in its measure sure, to the image of its blessed Master. He is now no more a child, tossed to and fro, but a man in Christ. He stands firm in the gospel of Christ, because he has received the love of the truth, and the truth has made him free. It has been applied to his heart with divine power. He has tasted, felt and handled its sweetness and blessedness. Self sinks, error is spurned, evil is abhorred, the world— at least as to its alluring charms— forsaken, and experimental knowledge is obtained of the Son of God, and thus he grows up into Christ in all things— in faith, in hope, in love, in union and communion, in obedience and in conformity.

Here we see the blessedness of a Gospel ministry; for if you read the connection of the text you will clearly see that it is closely associated with the perfecting of the saints, the work of the ministry, the edifying of the body of Christ. Those, therefore, who despise a Gospel ministry, only write themselves down ignorant. No child of God who has ever been blessed under a Gospel ministry can despise it. It is, in the hands of God, a means of building up the Church, and by its instrumentality the Holy Spirit brings the saints out of their childish state into the maturity of the Christian life.

The great want of to-day is a Gospel ministry of this nature. We want men who can preach the Gospel as it was preached in days of old, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; and owing to this, in a measure, it is that many of God's dear saints are tossed to and fro all their days.

This growth we may view as threefold: 1. The growth of the mystical body of Christ considered as a whole. The body of Christ may be considered incomplete until all the members are brought out into their decreed position. "In Thy book all My members were written when as yet there was none of them." The members were written in the book of life before one of them came into actual being; but until those that are lying in the womb of time come forth into actual and spiritual manifesta-

tion, the body lacks a part of its full completion. The accession, therefore, of every regenerated soul to the Church of Christ is an accession to its growth. As a building grows by the additon of stone after stone, so the continual addition of living stones makes the spiritual building grow " unto a holy temple in the Lord."

2. Another growth is the growth of a Gospel church; and this growth is twofold — the growth from without, by the goodly addition of godly members; and the growth from within, by the goodly increase of godly fruit. And these usually go together. A decaying church dies gradually in the branches, from the necessary bereavements it sustains and the non-addition of godly members; and dies gradually at the same time at the root by the decay of the life of God within. The two things go together. A church dying at the root pushes forth no fresh branches, and gradually becomes a withered trunk; whilst a church with life in the root ius ever pushing forth living branches.

3. The third growth is of the believer individually, when he goes forth and grows up as a calf of the stall.

Blessed is it when the body of Christ as a whole — a Gospel church as an integral part of that whole — and individual believers as members of Christ, are thus growing up into Him in all things — in knowledge, in faith, in love, in obedience, and in conformity to His image and example. Blessed is it when they grow in humility, godly fear, deadness to the world, submission to His Word and will, separation from evil, spirituality of mind, brokeness of heart, contrition of spirit, love and liberality to the saints, simplicity and godly sincerity, prayerfulness and watchfulness; in a word, in every Christian fruit and heavenly grace. To grow up into Christ in all things is the sum and substance of vital godliness.

I have spoken feebly and imperfectly, for there is a depth of truth in this passage which I feel to exhaust all my powers to speak of adequately. I have, therefore, merely given you a few fragmentary thoughts, though I have been purposely brief on the last head, as hoping to pursue the subject this evening. But may the Lord bless them to your souls, supply all my deficiency, and lead you into the truth for yourselves. Meditate upon these things. Pray that the Lord would establish them in your heart and conscience, that you may see the blessedness and beauty of them, and be led by the Spirit of God, who alone can lead you into all truth. The Lord give His blessing, and crown with His own heavenly dew and sacred unction what has been spoken in His Name.

J.C. Philpot

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3 / 90
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

STABILITY

New Vernon, N.Y., Nov. 15, 1842.

The apostle has warned the members of the christian church against being carried about by divers and strange doctrines, and urges the importance of their hearts being established with grace. It is essential, not only to our usefulness in our connection with the citizens of Zion, but also to our own individual peace and comfort. " A double minded man is unstable in all his ways," and is not therefore to be relied on in anything. However sincere or well meaning, he is at the mercy of every wind that blows. At one moment he professes firm and unshaken faith in the doctrine and order of the gospel, his faith appears to be sufficient to remove mountains, his zeal is ardent and love flaming; but alas! the wind veers about, and his ear is caught by some strange and novel sound, his eye is allured by some new wildfire light, and he is afloat upon the bosom of some treacherous and uncertain sea without chart or compass. To-day he mingles with the flock of Jesus, weeps in sympathy for their tears, burns with ardent devotion when they pray, sounds the highest notes when they sing, and participates with them in all the variety of their exercises — anon he is seen in the ranks of the alien, laboring to impeach the doctrine of Christ, joins in the clamor of those who ridicule the experience of the children of God, and is loud and long in repudiating the order of the house of God. Again as though conscious of his propensity to err, he seeks a middle way, places himself between the firing of the two conflicting interests of Christ and Belial, and offers a treaty of peace to both. Such professors of religion are never to be relied on; they cause continual agitation and turmoil in the church, and, so far as their influence is felt among the young and weak of the saints, cause wavering and fear.

Now while the dread hurricane of delusion and heresy is sweeping our country with all kinds of false doctrines, how important it is that the saints should be established in the truth, should have on the whole armor of righteousness, and having done all, stand fast; firmness and decision are very important. No one should take the Old School Baptist stand who can conveniently be anything else, and certainly one might suppose there is very little inducement among us to allure those who wish to be in favor with the world, the flesh or Satan. Those who from thorough conviction of the correctness of the ground we occupy find a necessity laid on them to join our ranks, will be likely to endure hardness as good soldiers, and count all things but dross for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. Such persons will be stable, and such will prove a blessing to Zion in comforting, encouraging and confirming the feeble and the wavering, and to such we bid a hearty welcome to bear with us the cross and share with us the crown.

We are informed the apostles went about confirming the souls of those who believed. If those who are strong among the flock of Christ

would copy the apostolic example, and endeavor to strengthen the hands that hang down and confirm the feeble knees, the result would be more happy than to denounce all who, for want of deeper experience and more extensive instruction, have failed to come up to their standard of orthodoxy. If the strong are required to bear the infirmities of the weak, let the energies of those who by reason of age are able to digest the strong meat, remember that the lambs require to be fed on the sincere milk of the word that they may grow thereby. We certainly need to have in exercise all the gifts of the Spirit with all wisdom and patience, that we may put to flight the armies of the aliens, and dash all their little ones against the wall, and at the same time " Hurt not the corn nor the oil."

Elder Beebe

PROVERBS 17 : 27 & 28.

He that hath knowledge spareth his words: and a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.

Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding.

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your " Signs " and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 1989

Noel Lavinder, VA 7.00
William T. Giles, NC 2.00
Mrs. Callie Clark, VA 22.00
Levie Goard, VA 5.00
Charles P. Hayes, AL 5.00
Clifton C. Robertson, NC 7.00
Alton Goodwin, NC 2.00
Mr. & Mrs. Ed Glidewell, NC.... 2.00
Mrs. Lizzie L. Lax, NC 2.00
Dr. G.R. Harrell, TX 2.00
Ballard& Sara Barker, VA 10.00
Mrs. Charity Dowdy, NC 2.00
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Mrs. Elva C. Martin, VA 2.00
Mrs. Irene Griffin, NC 2.00
A Friend In VA 10.00
George W. Hyslip, TN..... 10.00
Banks Conner, VA 4.00
Horace E. Walker, VA 3.00
Eld. W.T. Conner, VA 2.00
Mrs. Sedalia G. Green, NC 5.00
In memory of Eli & Retha Smith
Mrs Ilene Clifton, VA 2.00
James Lee Terry, VA 2.00

OBITUARIES

BROTHER CISCO BARRON

We at New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Spearsville, La. feel a great loss in the passing of Brother Cisco Barron, a precious and faithful brother and deacon, but

let us not weep as those who have no hope. Surely, surely, our loss is his eternal gain.

Brother Barron united with New Hope Primitive Baptist Church Sept., 2, 1933 and was baptized by Elder R.W. Rhodes. He was ordained deacon in November, 1956 and also served as clerk for many, many years.

He loved the precious doctrine of Salvation by Grace and loved to talk of the gracious, all wise, all powerful God. He loved those of like precious faith, and he and his companion have entertained Old Baptists from far and near many years.

He was born Oct. 26, 1904, the second son of Henry and Ela Rockett Barron and departed this life Oct. 4, 1989. He is survived by his dear wife of almost 61 years, Ruby S. Barron; two sons: Ned and Bruce; four grandchildren: Tim, Pam, Clint, and Kelli; two brothers: Gurvis and Harold; three sisters: Ruth Wade, Florine Kelley and Nell McWaters and Stepmother, Mrs. Ethel Gray. He is also survived by a host of friends and loved ones which was manifested by all the kindness, floral offerings and memorial donations to our church and other organizations.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Graydon Smith Oct. 5, 1989 at New Hope Primitive Baptist Church. Burial followed in the Spearsville Cemetery with Elder Jimmy Hamrick assisting Elder Smith with graveside prayer.

Although he will be deeply missed as a dear brother, deacon, husband, father and friend, may we be given to bow in humble submission to our God, giving thanks for the many years of love and fellowship we've been blessed to share with this dear one.

Written by order of New Hope Primitive Baptist Church while in conference Nov. 4, 1989.

By one who loved him dearly,
Mary Barron

MILTON BEDFORD FOUNTAIN

By request of Hadnot Creek Church, will try to write a few words in memory of our beloved brother. Brother Milton was born Jan. 1st, 1924 — died July 9th, 1989. Leaving to mourn, his dear wife Marie (Williams) Fountain, whom he married Oct. 8th, 1950, one son Rex Fountain, and one daughter Mrs. Diana F. Dail. Three grandchildren and one brother Philip Fountain. Brother Milton joined New Bay Church in 1974 and while a member there was ordained to the office of Deacon. In 1987 he was received into Hadnot Creek Church as a Deacon. He also served as clerk of the Contentnea Union and Association, also was chosen to serve on the board of trustees of the American Union of Baptist. Headquarters in Salisbury, MD.

Brother Milton was one of strong conviction. He was blessed to stand firm in the Doctrine of God our Savior sometimes even in the midst of heartbreaking circumstances.

Brother Milton served faithfully in all that he was faced with, a God-fearing Brother, a loving husband

and father to his family.

May God bless us all with reconciling Grace and say sleep on dear brother, take thy rest, looking forward to that blessed day when there will be no more sad partings, but all join in everlasting praise to one that doeth all things well.

Humbly submitted,
Pastor, J.T. Prescott
Clerk, Vilma Rhue

REBECCA MARTIN WARF MOON

Rebecca Martin Warf Moon, daughter of Andrew and Agnes Jenkins Martin was born February 5, 1902 and died June 5, 1989.

Sister Moon joined The Willow Springs Church in Hickman County July 12, 1919 and was baptized by Elder C.M. Wood. She served as church clerk at Willow Springs from August 1921 until 1924 when she moved out of the vicinity. She joined the Church at Bordeaux, Tenn. by letter from the Willow Springs Church on January 6, 1960 and remained a faithful member until her death. She was able to attend church until a few months before she died.

She was elected clerk of the Bordeaux Church shortly before the writer was called as their pastor and I have known and loved her since that time. Her church was the center of her life and she was devoted to it and to the members and friends. It can be said that she was strong in the faith and loved the doctrine of salvation by the sovreign grace of an all wise, all powerful God who created all things for himself.

Sister Moon was survived by sons: Harrel Warf of Nashville, Tenn., J.B. Warf of Santa Fe, Tenn. eight grandchildren, nine great grandchildren, one great great grandchild; sisters Myrtle Cockran, Lyles, Tenn., Viola Curle, Fairview, Tenn.; brothers James Martin, Zulfo Springs, Fla. and Freeman Martin, Hermitage, Tenn.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Richard H. Campbell at the Woodlawn Funeral Home in Nashville.

Written by request of the Church,
Richard H. Campbell
Marjorie Cook

SISTER ELSIE BRUMFIELD SWANN

We humbly bow to the will of God, A God that does all things well. Sister Elsie Swann was born February 21, 1902 to the late William C. Brumfield and Leaia Giles Brumfield. She died May 26, 1989 in Memorial Hospital, Danville, Va., leaving two Brothers, Vernard C. Brumfield and J. Howard Brumfield, one Sister, Ocie B. Blair, a number of nieces and nephews. Sister Elsie married Rufus F. Swann Oct. 11, 1944. He died October 3, 1954. She had been a member of Danville Primitive Baptist Church for nearly 40 years. Her funeral was held at Barker Funeral Home by her Pastor, Elder H.W. Wray. She was laid to rest in Hyland Burial Park to wait for

the Second Coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ . Wrote by Russell Holley by the request of Danville Church .

Elder H . W . Wray , Mod .
R .T . Holley , Clerk

ELDER JOSHUA " TOM " TURNER

Henry County 's oldest citizen died Thursday , January 25 , 1990 at the Eldercare in Rocky Mount .

Elder Joshua Thomas Turner was 104 .

Although he was born April 17 , 1885 , on the Franklin County side , his mailing address was Dodson , Va ., in Patrick County . His parents were the late Robert " Robin " Turner and the late Sarah Ellen Turner . He grew up on a farm in the Union Bridge Community , helping his father in his blacksmith shop . Turner would later operate his own smithy .

Following a stint in West Virginia where he built mining cars for a coal company , he returned to Bassett to work in a furniture factory , and shortly thereafter opened a small grocery store which he would operate for 18 years . He also purchased a store in the Fort Trial Community and still later the Trading Post at Oak Level . Later he bought the old Bassett Shoe Shop and operated that another 15 years .

While Turner had a variety of careers , none was more influential on him than his service as a minister in the Primitive Baptist Church for more than 60 years . He was a former pastor and member of Knob Primitive Baptist Church .

He is survived by five daughters , Mrs . William G . (Eva) Hill of Stanleytown , Mrs . Nelson (Clara) Bryant of Bassett , Miss Esther Turner of Oak Level , Mrs . Kenneth (Lula) Fulcher of West End , N .C . , and Mrs . Wilbur (Lillie) Doyle of Martinsville ; three sons , Lancaster Turner of Irisburg , Elmeade Turner of Oak Level , and Thomas G . Turner of Bassett ; 19 grandchildren ; 34 great - grandchildren , and five great - great - grandchildren .

The funeral was conducted at 2 p .m . Sunday , January 28 , from the Chapel of Collins Funeral Services in Bassett . Burial followed in Rose - lawn Burial Park .

PROVERBS 24 : 1 - 7 .

Be not thou envious against evil men , neither desire to be with them .

For their heart studieth destruction , and their lips talk of mischief .

Through wisdom is an house builded ; and by understanding it is established :

And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches .

A wise man is strong ; yea , a man of knowledge increaseth strength .

For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war : and in multitude of counsellers there is safety .

Wisdom is too high for a fool : he openeth not his mouth in the gate .

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TRIBULATION

Tribulation is A troublesome route,
Brings you down in the region of doubts,
But when we know that the people of God
Were chosen out of the furnace, brought
down with the rod.

Israel wept, when Moses led,
Them into the wilderness, to be fed,
They didn't like the knowledge of the
truth,
For their fleshy lives this did not suit.

Many fell in the wilderness way,
As so do all who come to that day,
But when we fall we know that we,
Are depending on God to make us see.

The beauty lies in God's own hands,
To bring us through the wilderness land,
Though troubled times will make us sad,
It paves the way that makes us glad.

From Egypt we traveled, to the wilder-
ness of sin,
Where we break the laws of God and we
feel it within,
But Christ paid, for the sins we've done,
He opened the way to peace, with A voice
that says come.

A sister in hope of a better world,
Kate Mathews, Shreveport, La.

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EDITORIAL

Some thoughts on a scripture I have wondered about a long time. These came to mind last Sunday as Elder Chapell was preaching re: Abraham, Ishmael and Isaac.

Verily, verily I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall ye do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to my Father. John XIV, vs. 12.

Elder R.H. Campbell

I have read this verse of scripture many times over the years and each time I was made to wonder at these words of Jesus. It was at a very solemn time in his ministry; he had eaten his last passover with his apostles, washed their feet and was spending some of his last few hours with them before he was to be crucified. He was teaching them the things that would be accomplished by his work here on earth and how it would be reflected in their lives down through the generations to come, and what their role would be in the gospel dispensation. They did not know the meaning of what Jesus was saying either because they did not have the spiritual discernment to know the things of the spirit. They had been with Jesus throughout his ministry and many times they questioned what he was saying and did not understand what he was teaching. On one occasion just prior to his crucifixion; when he appeared in their midst and frightened them, he showed them evidence that he was really Jesus and as he taught them the scripture (Luke XXIV vs. 45 says,) " Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,"

When the subject text was spoken by Jesus, they were still under the law; he was teaching the gospel truths that were contained in the law, fulfilling what was prophesied by the prophets of old but at the time they were still under the law. The law was to the natural man, God's chosen nation of Israel its true, but was to the natural man in the flesh. The law was given to direct him in the way that he should live and by so living he was blessed in the natural things of the world and would be blessed and cared for by the giver of the law. The law led the children of Israel to the gospel day but did not reveal the fullness of the truths contained

therein; it brought them to Christ but it did not enable them to know him unless he revealed himself to them during his ministry here on earth. He revealed himself to his elect, those chosen in him before time began and to no one else. The world by their natural wisdom knows not God nor his son, then now, or anytime in the future. The nation of Israel had to be told by the prophets of old that a deliverer would come and deliver them, but, they thought in natural terms and believed that he would restore the natural kingdom of Israel to its former glory and therefore did not understand what was happening

Christ, while here on earth performed many miracles and mighty works in the midst of the children of Israel, and while it was the work of the spirit that did them, the things that were done were to the man in the flesh. When he gave sight to the blind, the man received his natural sight for the remaining days of his life and enjoyed the things of nature and a normal natural life. When one was raised from the dead and restored to life, he lived for a few more years and then died again. When the lepers were cleansed, the lame healed and the hungry multitudes fed, they were all blessings in nature to the man in the flesh for their enjoyment in this life and then they went the way of all flesh. These miracles indeed gave to all of them a better quality of life in the flesh; and although great and wonderful displays of the powers of God over his Creation, they were, as the law, to the flesh and all ended at death. This is not to imply that they are not beautiful and marvelous demonstrations of God 's mighty power and show his love and mercy toward them but they are still blessings to the man in the flesh for his enjoyment, comfort and pleasure in this life.

All of this is to show that just as the law still prevailed during Jesus' life and that the law and grace do not mix. Just as the law included types which carry over to the gospel day and Jesus' miracles were types of what would be in the gospel day they were all still under the law which is to the man in natural things. Jesus was teaching spiritual truths to those who had not the spirit and would not have it til the day of Pentecost. As the scriptures says in several places, when miracles were performed, that after spiritual life they would remember those things which he had taught them, and understand the teachings.

When Jesus said, " He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to my Father " was speaking of a time to come when he would have gone to be with his Father and they would do the works that he had done and indeed would do even greater works than these. We would say; how could they do greater works than Jesus did? John XIV 16, 17 states, " And I will pray unto my Father, and he will give you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever; Even the spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." These are all part of the same text and explains how these works

shall be performed ; they are the same beautiful line of truth and inspiring prophecy of things to come in the gospel dispensation in which we live today. The last words that Jesus spoke to his disciples while here on earth were ," But ye shall receive power , after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you ; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem , and in Judea , and in Samaria , and unto the uttermost part of the earth ." The same glorious line of truth and brings about the way in which the subject text was brought to pass .

As we have stated the works that Jesus did were miracles of nature and applied to the man in the flesh and benefited him naturally . On the day of Pentecost , these Apostles were all with one accord in one place and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind , and it filled the house in which they were sitting . And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire , and sat upon each of them . And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost , and began to speak with other tongues , as the spirit gave them utterance . Now they have been qualified to do those works that Jesus did and yea greater works than those that Jesus did . They are no longer under the law and bound to the flesh , they have been baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire and are freed from the shackles of flesh and are able to do spiritual works in the hearts and minds of the elect because of the Spirit of truth dwelleth with them and is in them . They spake with other tongues by this spirit and devout men out of every nation under heaven heard them in their own tongue , turned to God and three thousand souls were added to them on that day . Is not the turning of mens hearts and minds from the things of nature unto God greater works that healing the lame of body and feeding the hungry . These greater works that the Apostles did are because they are spiritual and eternal , the benefits do not end at death , rather they increase as the children grow in grace and knowledge of their salvation and will reach the full fruition when they enter into the joy of their Lord and King on heavens bright shore .

I believe that surely this is the truth of the above text as Jesus speaks of the greater works that they shall do , but remember , he says that ye shall do them because I go unto my Father . It is a precious privilege to be where , on certain occasions , we feel to behold some of those greater works being made manifest as an Elder is blessed to stand and proclaim the glorious truths in all its beauty and purity and observe the effects as the children of God are fed with the manna from on high . Surely this is a greater work than feeding of the multitudes with bread and fishes , although , I believe that this miracle of the loaves and fishes is a type pointing to this spiritual feasting which we experience .

In bonds of love ,
Richard H . Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

716 Hill Ave.
Salem, Va. 24153

Dear Editor,

Horace E. Walker departed this life Jan. 1, 1990 for a better one with his Lord Jesus Christ.

He dictated his last letter to the Signs of the Times Dec. 27, 1989 and passed away the following Monday at 7:15 p.m.

(See obituary this issue.)

WALKING THROUGH THE YEARS

February 5, 1990

Dear Brethren & Sisters in Christ:

I have been shut - in a few days with bronchial asthma and I have missed church a lot. I am doing better now. The past Saturday evening I lay down on my bed to rest. I looked over at the clock. It was time for singing to start at my church. A flood of tears filled my eyes and rolled down my cheeks. Something I had been hoping and begging for. It seems for a long time I have been shut away. I could not cry, neither could I enjoy the preaching as I once did. I said over and over, " Return unto me the joys of thy salvation." It is so good when we can rejoice in the Love of God, which is past all natural understanding. Since then my mind has been carried way back in my life.

I am the youngest of 13 children. I had wonderful parents — Davis and Milia Dudley. I was a mischievous child and needed correction. My mother was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church. She joined Chestnut Primitive Baptist Church in 1900. She took her baby in her lap (my brother Vernon), rode a horse on a side saddle to church.

My Daddy worked hard on the farm to make a living for his children. Mother told him she offered to the church and they received her in so much love. He said if you had told me I would have gone. He was a believer in Christ but did not join until he was 61. My first thoughts of God was when I was a very small girl. A Bible salesman came by our house and my mother bought a New Testament with large print. He gave me the Book of Matthew with red backs on it. I carried it and read it until I wore the backs out and Mother sewed them on with black thread. I always got my verses for school out of it. I knew way back there was a " hereafter " and I feared hell. I wanted to know more.

My mother was a praying lady. I could hear her sometimes real low begging God to lead and guide her and to keep her in the straight and narrow way and help her raise her family. " Oh, If I Could Hear My Mother Pray Again " She loved her Bible and had a beautiful voice. She sang hymns a lot as she worked. She had her little Goble hymn book well worn. In winter, sometimes as we sat around the fireplace, she would lead the songs. Most of us

children knew them by heart. I could tell her the number of most of the pages of them . I enjoyed singing with her . They were Special Moments. I still love her prayer and it became my prayer.

In 1922 my Dad went to church all the time with Mother and sat on the front bench . One day he laid down to rest after lunch . While on his bed he asked God was it right for him to set on the front bench . The answer came back to him , " You have a perfect right." He came out of the bedroom singing " Amazing Grace " to the top of his voice and he looked at me and said , " Florence , go get Walter." I went through a path in the woods like a bullet . They talked all evening . On a Sunday in August when Dad was 60 years old he offered to the church at Sandy Level . Elder Randolph Perdue was pastor there. As Dad turned to come off the stand , he threw his arms wide open and said , " O , here comes Walter ." What a rejoicing time they had. Everyone was crying. I cried , too . I guess I knew something about it , in part — a wee part. Mother moved her membership to Sandy Level also .

My parents had the ministers in their home for lunch or spend the night and would talk late at night . I loved to listen and sometime would fall asleep somewhere back in the corner on the floor . Elder Randolph Perdue was a favorite of mine .

I lived not too far from my parents after I was married . My daughter , Elnora , and I would walk through Jackson Park to get to their home as it was not far from them . She would run in the house to get Grandma . In the summer many times my Daddy would be sitting under a tree with the Bible . He would ask me to sit down as he wanted to tell me what he was reading . I tried to keep him from knowing I was interested in every word . He told me that some day I would be a Primitive Baptist . I tried so hard to come up the wrong way . " Ye cannot serve God and mammon ."

Time went on a long time before I could have told you what real prayer was . I don 't know whether I had really truly prayed , but I know this one time my prayer was answered in a moment. My daughter had to have her appendix removed at the age of 5 . After she came home from the hospital she became real ill with a kidney infection . On Sunday night she did not notice us . Roy said , " I am going to get your mother ." When he closed the door , the thought came to me forcibly — you need the healing power of Jesus . I knelt down on my knees by her bed and tried to beg God if it be His will to heal my baby. I don't know how long I was there . The tears flowed . A neighbor knocked at the door to ask how Elnora was . He said , " Mrs . Maxey you are crying . Is she all right ? " When I went back to her , she had picked up her doll . No one could not tell me that was not a prayer answered in a moment . O , what a kind and loving Jesus , OH ! how thankful I was . Roy and Mother came a few minutes later. Roy could not believe she had changed so much for the better and I could not tell them about my prayer until later. This has always been so precious to me .

In 1938 when Elnora was 7 years old , I gave birth to Siamese twin boys. They were grown together on the side near the abdomen area . I was at home . The doctor called in another doctor. My husband and his sister were there. The doctor said it was my life or theirs. Together they weighed almost 12 pounds . This weighed on my mind . One of my neighbors brought my lunch one day while I was still in bed and she talked to me so sweet . I remember her words that helped so much . " Wouldn 't you rather your babies would be in Jesus ' arms than yours ."

After this for many years it seemed I just rolled along. Sometime seeing myself a hell deserving sinner. I did not feel I was fit to be noticed . Then this would leave me and I would be going along doing the things that young people like to do.

In 1941 on March 25th my Dad was taken from us . He had been paralyzed 10 years previously but had overcome a lot of his disability. My mother had come over to my home. I had cut out a dress to make for her . Dad went up in his little garden with his hoe and had a heart attack and fell against the fence . Their neighbor saw him and called her doctor and got him in the back porch . Jack McGuire came to get us . Dad was in such pain. I called the doctor and ask if there was anything that I could do . He told me a blood vessel had broken and was flooding his heart. He passed away at 7:00 P.M.

I had been under the doctor 's care . Some of my family spent the night with us . The next morning I was not able to get up and fix breakfast . My fingers and toes drew under. The doctor told me I could not go to the funeral . He gave me an injection to relax me . I had to go ! Oh , how I tried to thank my Jesus .

In 1944 my dear husband was called into service . Oh , how we missed each other . My daughter was 13 years old. She was at the age she needed to be with her school friends . Our hearts were broken . Roy and I wrote regularly . Sometimes we would jot down a chapter and verse of a scripture . We both were searching. He was in service January , 1944 until June , 1946 .

In August , 1945 he was transferred from England by boat to the Pacific , near Manila . We did not hear from him for 45 days . Elnora and I were frantic — then, just a little card — " Safe will write later ." His boat was picked up by the enemy . Of course, the men were upset. Roy was praying. He told me he felt the arms of God wrapped around the boat and was shown that they would be saved .

Oh , what a kind and loving Savior that loves us and cares when are not aware . I feel sometime that I could praise his Name forever. Then, I am down in the valley again.

In January , 1947 I went to Roanoke Church by bus . Roy was called to work that day. The sermon seemed to be to me. I shed so many tears. I tried to get out of the church without notice . A friend , Lena Holland , caught me and she said , " Here is a girl that needs to talk to the Church ." I said , " No , I felt so unfit." I ran to catch my bus. I could not tell my mother about this . She

did not know us for one month before she died . She passed away on January 28 , 1947 . I could not tell anyone about anything . I felt so sinful !

In November , 1947 I had been waiting two weeks for a room in the hospital for an operation . Roy went hunting that day . When they called to tell me they had a room and for me to be there by 3:00 P .M . , I left a note , took my bag , and caught the bus . Roy and Elnora came to the hospital that night . I was operated on the next morning . I'll never forget the band of angels over my carriage singing loud , " God will take care of you." My special nurse went with me in the operating room . She told me later that in all her nursing she had never seen such a smile on anyone's face .

I was so sick part of my stay in the hospital from the ether . An old lady across the hall thought I was going to die . I told my nurse to tell her , " No , I would be all right ." I could still hear those angels singing .

Soon I became so burdened again and my prayer , if it was prayer , was Lord , have mercy . I felt so sinful for justice . I was like the poor Publican that did not feel he could lift his eyes to heaven .

We attended church most every Sunday at this time . Elder Cecil Turner was coming to the church on the 1 st Saturday and Sunday and 5th Sunday . Elder Landon Harris on the 3rd Sunday .

I was burdened so heavy one night begging God to show me the way . My Dad appeared before me with open arms . He said , " Come on , Florence , you are all right ."

On the 3rd Sunday , March , 1948 , we went to church . Elder Harris took his text from James 2 (17-26). I was sitting two - thirds of the way back beside my brother's wife , Mattie Dudley . Elder Harris explained this so beautifully to me . Faith without works is dead . He preached so wonderful to me . He said that works through faith was singing songs of praise to God , visiting the sick , lending a helping hand , giving a cup of cold water . I did not mean to join that day , but , I found myself down there talking . I don't know what I said , only I loved the church and felt unfit . They received me in so much love . I was happy that day and night but the next morning I felt I should not have gone to the Church . How could I deceive those dear people ! I was unfit !

I had to go downtown the next day to pay our service bills . When I got on the bus , a dear neighbor and friend , Sister Sally English , was on there . I did not feel fit to touch that dear one . She hugged me and said , " Florence , you were so pretty yesterday . You told us such pretty things and your face shone as the sun ." (I took her to church in her later years as long as she was able to go .)

Oh , what a miserable person I was . I had deceived the most precious people . I did not know many of them — only by faces . I could not stay in the bed at night . I would try to slip out and go back to my breakfast room chair . There to try to beg some more . Sometimes I would go to the attic or basement . I was scheduled for baptism by Elder Turner with Sister Clara Hale the 1 st

Saturday in April (Easter Saturday). I just did not see how I could. I knew I could not the way I felt. I had rather changed places with the dog or the bait worms. I was glad for my Roy to go to work Elnora to go to school. I wanted to read my Bible but I did not want them to know. I read the new Testament through those two weeks. I felt so sinful I did not know how they could touch me. Oh, dear ones, I was on my knees so much, begging and asking God to show me the way. One evening Roy came in from work and found me on my knees with the Bible open in front of me to John, Chapter 15, verse 16 - 19. He was so kind and dear to me. I said, " Daddy, read this. Can you explain it to me ? " He told me what he thought about it. We both sat in the chair together and he said, " Florence, I believe in religion but I am afraid you are going to lose your mind." So tender! I kept reading my Bible.

My brother, Harry belonged to my church. I knew he was coming to see me and I thought he had been a member so long that he could tell me what to do. When he came, I froze. I could not talk about that. I was shown this was between God and me. No human hand could help. On Friday before I was to be baptized on Saturday, I had the vacuum out to clean. I went down on my knees to beg my God some more. All at once the room lit up like the rays of the noon day. I looked up and a scroll seemed to open across the heaven with my name on it. My burden rolled away. Oh, what a precious Savior. When I came out of the water the tears rolled. Everyone was so loving.

Father's Day, June, 1950, my dear husband joined. Elder Harris' text was The Prodigal Son. He was baptized the 3rd Sunday in July by Elder Harris. The day Roy joined was also a day of rejoicing. He was put in as deacon at Roanoke Church, Jan. 5, 1957.

We moved in our new home on Monday, the day after he was baptized. We were so happy together. Our daughter married in November. She gave us a son - in - law, Marion Paitsel who has always been kind and good to us. We enjoyed going to Associations in different places — Upper County Line, Virginia Correspondence. Also, Hopewell in Alabama where we spent the night with Elder Griffin. It seemed we both loved everyone. From 1948 — 1965 were great years with our church people. We kept meeting more and more dear ones. Our home was open to them. Elder Lambert stayed with us two weeks one time and we loved every minute of it.

In September, 1958 the American Viscose closed its plant in Roanoke. This was a hard blow for us as this had been Roy's employment since he was 16 years of age.

In 1964 along came Alzheimer's disease. No one knows how hard that was to stand by and watch body and mind deteriorate. Finally, the last 18 months he did not know me or his daughter whom he loved so much.

Following the closing of the American Viscose, Brother E. V. Poff asked Roy to come and work for them in his stock room. They were very dear

friends . The Association was at Roanoke Church in 1964 . About 2 days before that Association Brother Poff came to my home. (Elnora was there , too .) He told us that Roy 's health had gone down so he could not keep him on. We knew all about his health . I wanted him to tell me when it became a problem. Roy was so restless . I walked and walked with him. My children wanted me to take driving lessons. That helped so much — when he was so tense , I would take him out in the car for awhile . The doctor asked did he have a trade. He had been a barber while in service . The doctor suggested he go to Barber School for six months. If he did not pass the test he said it would be good for him anyway . When it was time to go to Richmond for the test our dear son - in - law , who was so good to him , took him there and was his model for the testing . He passed the test and worked for a while for a Mr . Cadd whom he had known . He would wake up at night — " Mommy , I did not cut the lights out , or I did not empty the till in the cash register ." I would always get up and go with him. Everything was always all right.

I quit my work to stay with him . My personnel manager told me I was going to lose a lot in profit sharing , but , Roy came first with me .

In February, 1970 he had to go to the Veterans Hospital . I could not manage him. He tried all the time to go outside in the cold in his pajamas. Also he had a cross disposition. It was snowing and Valentine 's Day . We had been up all night and I was at my wit's end. The doctor said , " Mrs. Maxey , you will have to take him to Veterans Hospital." I cried my heart out . I want to praise the Veterans Hospital and their staff . I felt they cared for him well . Either my daughter or I visited him most every-day by 1:00 P .M . We did not want him to forget us . He was there 25 1/2 months and passed away on March 25 , 1972 .

I have a lovely granddaughter , Melissa . She has always been a pride and joy . Her husband is Tom Vaughan and I now have two great grandsons whom I love dearly .

Family ties are sweet , but my church and church family are a world of joy . Elder Cecil Turner was my pastor for 32 years. He and his dear wife were in our home a lot. He was a good pastor. He always liked good order. They both were so kind to me during Roy 's illness . They visited Roy a lot . I could always go to him with questions on Bible verses and he gave me careful consideration . Elder Leonard Brammer is my pastor now. He and his wife are very dear. It was hard for me to give up Elder Turner. The Lord knows best. I love to have a few of my church people in my home for lunch, but my joy in that is hearing the scripture discussed . Elder Brammer handed the Bible to Elder Clarence Stone the last time I had them here . He told him , this is what she wants to hear .

The 139th Psalm is so precious to me . I felt as David — The Lord know our down sittings and uprising, and our thoughts from afar . What thoughts sometime ?

If I know my heart I love my church — the Household of Faith everywhere. I pray that the Lord will keep me in the right way .

On 2nd Sunday, February 11, I went with three of my church friends to Chestnut Church. Elder Lane Carter is pastor there. My pastor, Elder Leonard Bramer, was there also. I thought it was a wonderful meeting. Crumbs from the Master's table! I requested the song, "I Need Thee Precious Jesus" and in closing "What Wondrous Love Is This." My cup ran over.

Blessed be His Holy Name.

A little one, if one at all,
Florence D. Maxey

ARTICLES

The following article is a reprint from the Danville Register and Bee, Danville, Virginia dated February 1990. Sent to the "Signs" by Mrs. Mildred Weatherford Hanks.

COUNTY PREACHER JAILED FOR SERMONS

En route to Java and Riceville along Route 640, one comes upon a modest country church moments after crossing Route 832, "the South Boston Bypass." At the entrance to this church — Shockoe Baptist by name — stands a historical marker honoring an early pioneer of religious liberty — Elder John Weatherford.

To religious scholars, the name is familiar, but to most of those who have driven within preaching distance of his grave, John Weatherford is simply a figure from the dark recesses of history, a man the state of Virginia has deemed worthy of recognition — by motorists whizzing by at 55 mph. But how many of these folks have taken the time to stop for a quick look - see at the signpost?

As is the case with all such markers, the details are sketchy. One learns that Weatherford died at the ripe old age of 93 and is buried a half-mile from the church. One also discovers that this dissenting minister preached the Word for 70 years and was defended by no less a personage than Patrick Henry after being arrested for unlicensed preaching and thrown into the Chesterfield County jail.

LICENSE TO PREACH

However, the marker provokes more queries than it answers. For example, just why would the colonial authories imprison a kindly man of the cloth — which, by all accounts, John Weatherford was?

To answer such a question, it behooves one to understand the religious tenor of the times, both in England and in her prized colony named for the Virgin Queen. Anglicanism was the established religion and the Church of England was the Established Church. Any waywardness from the Book of Common Prayer was frowned upon; religious toleration, though mandated by the decree of William and Mary in 1689, was scarcely recognized and even more infrequently enforced.

As early as 1623, less than two decades after the first settlers scrambled ashore at Jamestown, every plantation or settlement was required to have a church or

meetingroom where worship could take place according to the tenets of the Church of England. Laws were passed in intervening stages thereafter to make Virginia safe for Anglicanism, and decidedly unsafe for any religious non-conformists.

However, during the Interregnum, when Cromwell ruled England, the colonial parishes were left to their own consciences as to what form their worship would take. For this brief period, an understated religious pluralism flourished. But upon the Restoration of Charles II to the throne of England, the supremacy of the Established Church was restored as well.

Then came though the Glorious Revolution of 1689 and the ascension to the throne of William and Mary. Their landmark Toleration Act secured the right, theoretically if not in practice, "to worship freely beyond the pale of the state church." In Virginia, a Presbyterian congregation quickly sprung up along the banks of the Elizabeth River in Norfolk County.

However, obtaining the license to preach dissenting doctrine was easier said than done. Because county courts would not grant such permission, all such preachers were obliged to travel to Williamsburg, the colonial capital, to receive their licenses. What's more, their requests had to be accompanied by a petition signed by two county magistrates and 20 people of similar religious persuasion and then verified by a clergyman of the Established Church.

So stringent were these regulations that, by the turn of the 18 century, only a "feeble" few Baptists openly practiced their religion in Virginia. After 1700, however, this situation began to change. By 1761, when John Weatherford started preaching the gospel, the first Baptist church in Pittsylvania County — Dan River, whose congregation was ministered to by preacher Dutton Lane — had been in existence for more than a year.

'A PLAIN MAN'

"A plain man without any pretensions to learning," John Weatherford was born in Charlotte County in 1740. Blessed with a fiery eloquence, this "zealous... herald of the cross" preached the Baptist faith — without benefit of license — throughout his native Southside. Extremely popular, he drew large crowds wherever he ventured to make converts. These talents, needless to say, vexed the Anglican hierarchy.

In 1773, one of these ministerial excursions took Weatherford to Chesterfield County, where he was promptly thrown in jail, one of seven itinerant Dissenters to be so treated. Never one to be discouraged easily, he began preaching at the jailhouse door. When this privilege was revoked, he commenced addressing a growing flock through the barred window of his cell.

One day while Weatherford was preaching from within the jail, the county powers-that-be stationed "base fellows" armed with knives outside Weatherford's window. Their intentions were obvious, in that when Weatherford spoke he

often gestured wildly with his hands. That day, he extended his hands through the prison bars in an effort to make his points. Whenever he did, these men slashed at the preacher, cutting his hands repeatedly.

But still Weatherford refused to be cowed. The crowds grew so large that the county magistrates ordered a 12 - foot wall built in front of Weatherford's cell. However, his congregation was not easily cowed either. Whenever a large enough crowd had gathered, one in the throng would raise a white handkerchief on a long pole, thus signaling Weatherford, who would then begin his sermon.

FREE AT LAST

Late in the fifth month of Weatherford's stay, it was learned that a lawyer from north of the James River in Hanover County was a staunch defender of liberty — and Baptist Dissidents. So five colonial pounds were raised to secure the services of this young firebrand for Weatherford's defense.

True to his reputation, Patrick Henry of Scotchtown summarily gained for his client "the privilege of the prison bounds" and then, just as quickly, Weatherford's outright release. However, the jailer refused to set Weatherford free until his jail fees were paid. After nearly five months' incarceration, these fees amounted to a considerable sum, and so Weatherford remained in jail. Not long thereafter, the preacher was informed that an anonymous benefactor had paid the money, thus unlocking the door to his cramped cell.

Twenty years later when Henry resided at Red Hill along the Staunton and Weatherford was overseeing a church in his native Charlotte County, the latter learned that it was Henry who had paid his bill. Thereafter, the mere mention of Henry's name by Weatherford, was accompanied by a certain "glow of affection."

15 CHILDREN

Never destined to be a rich man, Weatherford, after the American Revolution, settled eight miles from Chatham. There he farmed to supplement his meager earnings as a preacher and raised a brood of 15 children, 12 of them daughters. A gentle, generous man, this fiery minister of the gospel was the sort willing, as the story goes, to sell his horse and crop so that an indigent (and ne'er-do-well) neighbor might be spared the agony of the poorhouse.

His ministerial duties had Weatherford and his family forever on the move. After serving congregations in Charlotte and Campbell counties, he moved to Halifax County in 1813 at the age of 73. A decade later, he returned to Pittsylvania, too sick by then to travel the circuit but still determined to preach the word to his home congregation.

Soothed and bolstered by the strains of "Amazing Grace," John Weatherford died on Jan. 23, 1833 at the home of a Mr. Nowlen, who lived near Shockoe Church. Some 40 years later, Dr. William White, a prominent Chatham physician, remembered accompanying his father to the crowded funeral. He

remembered as well the sight of Weatherford's crossed hands, with their jagged white scars crisscrossing the knuckles and extending down to the wrists.

Weatherford was buried not far from Shockoe Church near the foot of White Oak Mountain in what was known as the " Owen burying ground."

In 1906 the local Baptist association dedicated a monument to his memory in the Shockoe churchyard. As simple and straightforward as the man it honors, the monument says, " John Weatherford — A sufferer for conscience sake ; an earnest and faithful minister of the Gospel."

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

EXPERIENCE AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY OF THE LATE ELDER S.L. MORAN, FLOYD COUNTRY, VA.

I have had a desire to leave something with my people in regard to the Doctrine that I have contended for from a child.

I had serious thoughts about things of God, and I was made to know without a doubt there was a God in Heaven, and that he loved me and that I loved him. And I felt that love filled my soul, and if I had to throw that away it would leave me with nothing.

I was very young but that stayed with me. I grew up as other boys and as wild as any of them, but when I did wrong it would hurt me and I would say I would not do that anymore. I would find myself going on in the same way, and continued to make the same promises but never able to keep them. I went on in this way until I was a grown man. I thought I could live a different life, but the more I promised the worse I got. I thought I could do better but found I was a failure.

After my first wife died, I felt she was saved, and I had a feeling I wanted to be prepared to meet her. I got down on my knees and tried to pray, and of all the wretches that ever made the attempt, I was the worst, and said in my mind that I would never attempt such a thing again.

I went on in my wild way until I married again, and I felt the Lord had given me a help - mate. Everything seemed to be getting along well with me until suddenly a change took place in my life. One night after going to bed, sometime during the night I was brought up before the Great God of all the earth. He was taking the Righteous on the right and the Sinners on the left. I was wondering what would be my doom. When I was brought up, I thought I would make some plea, but before I could speak I was taken on the left, and then I knew I was a lost sinner, justly condemned before a just God; and if all the world had told me there was a chance for me, it would not have done any good. My life had been so wrong and sinful, I knew there was no hope for such a sinner as I. And from that time on for months and years I went begging for mercy. I would go in the mountains to try to find peace of soul. I had to give up all for lost and thought I would not try any more, but I was still begging in my mind. I felt I must try

one time more. I went to the lowest place I could find and fell on my face and put my mouth in the dirt and all I could say was, " God be merciful to me a condemned Sinner ." And when I got up everything was new and that burden of sin and condemnation was gone. I felt to be in a new world, and made to praise God from whom all blessings flow. I thought I would go to the house and tell my wife, but I did not. I was afraid I was mistaken.

I went on sometime wondering what all of this meant. I had never heard any preaching for I had not attended any church, for I was not interested in church matters, and I had no thought of where the church was. I thought anywhere they claimed to worship was the Church.

There came a time I felt I wanted a home among God's people. I went to the Methodist to find a home. I went with full intention of joining them. But, lo, when the preacher began his sermon everything he said was against my hope. When he got through he left me without any hope. I went home and felt then I would not go to church anymore, but I soon got restless, and it came in my mind to go to Laurel Creek Church and see what Elder Cole would say. I went and when he began preaching, in the place of condemning me, he told my troubles better than I could. And when he got through I knew he had told the truth; and I did not have to look for the church anymore. Since that time I have not searched for the church. I have no doubt where the church is and no desire to find any other.

I went on for a year or two going to hear the Baptist preach. The more I heard the more I loved them. I did not feel I would ever join the church. But there came a time something took place with me very unexpected to me. The 4th Sunday in November, 1910, I told my wife that morning, I was going to Laurel Creek Church to hear Elder's Cole and J. J. Spangler preach. She said, " If you are going to join the church I want to go with you." I said, " If that is all you are going for, don't worry I have no thought of that, and I don't guess I ever will; and I know, not today." I went to church and both preachers preached. Elder Cole gave invitation for members and when they began singing to dismiss, something took hold of me with such power it caused me to tremble. I said, " I am not going," but getting up and starting to the pulpit still saying, " I am not going." But went on and began telling what I felt the Lord had done for me. They received me, and I rejoiced.

Then came a question in my soul " What kind of a man have you been?" I answered that question, " Very bad." Then, " What have you done? Can you do any better?" And I said, " No." " You know you will have to be turned out of the church, they will not keep you in the church." I went home with a greater burden than I have ever been able to tell in words.

Elder Cole asked when I wanted to be baptized. I replied, " I don't know." He said, " that is unfinished business." I went on until the next meeting which was the 4th Sunday in December, 1910 and yet I had no desire to be baptized. But on the night of the same month, if I have been called to preach it was the 25th

of that month. I went under a great burden since joining the church and had no thought of preaching until during the night. I saw a cloud come over me. I felt it was the power of God and a weight was so powerful it was pressing my life out; and a voice spoke out of that cloud and said, "Take up thy cross and follow me." I said, "Is it to Pray?" And the power got harder. I said, "Is it to preach?" The weight was lifted off me and I sat up in bed, and I felt a power over me that I never will be able to tell. I commenced speaking. I felt to know that it was the power of God. I had no doubt at that time, and I commenced speaking with as much assurance as I ever have since; and I said, "I will go wherever I am sent for the God of Heaven has called me." I did not have any doubt at that time, but when I came to my self I knew that was impossible. I told my wife not to tell of what I have said for I can't do that. I felt I would not go to church the January meeting. I still had no feeling to be baptized. I thought they would think strange of me for not saying anything about being baptized.

I had some work to do that day and started out to get some help. I was stopped on the way and this Scripture came into my heart, "He that forsaketh not father, mother, house and land, wife and children for my name's sake is not worthy of me. Take up thy cross and follow me." That turned me around and I went back to the house. My wife said, "I thought you were going to haul hay." And I said, "No, I am going to church." I went and after the meeting was over, invitation for members was given. Henry Board came forth and gave a good reason of his hope and was received. He said, "I want to tell a dream I had. I was baptized in a pretty pond of water and there were two fishes one on each side of me, and I loved them." Elder Cole said, "When do you want to be baptized?" And he said, "This evening." I felt I was bound to be baptized with him. I said "Brother Cole, I want to be baptized tomorrow." And Brother Board was willing to wait until the next day.

The next day it was raining. I thought there was not any reason in going out on such a day, but fixing all the time to go. When we got to the place they were coming out of the house to go to the pond. Elder Cole had told me to tell my wife to bring her clothes and be baptized with us. I told her and she said she couldn't do that. I said, "He told me to tell you and that is all I will say." My wife went and was received. Elder Cole took me in and baptized me first, then took brother Henry Board, and then my wife. Brother Board said, "I see my two fishes and I love them."

That was the happiest day I have ever seen fulfilled and there was not a thing that stood against me. I felt I was in a new world.

I thought all my troubles were over, but in this I was sadly mistaken. I had to go down, so much so that I felt I had deceived the Church. I felt I had to go to the church and tell them I was mistaken, but before the next meeting, I was more satisfied when Paul's writing came in my mind so sweetly, "There is a thorn given me in the flesh to buffet me lest I

become exalted above measure. I besought the Lord thrice that it might be removed from me. The Lord said, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

That was my case. When that came in my heart I had read the Bible but very little, but I knew that was Scripture. I went to the house and opened the Bible and it opened at that place without turning a leaf. That gave me great consolation.

After that my burden became the same as it did that night when the Lord said, "Take up thy cross and follow me." The same voice said, "You have lied to God." I awoke my wife crying aloud. She asked me what was the matter. I told her I had lied to God, and it was more than I could stand. I went on wondering what to do.

Sometime after that I had a trip to make. I had to go in the mountains, and as I was walking along thinking of my troubles, it came in my mind that all I had seen was in the night. Maybe it was only a dream. That same voice came in my heart and soul, "You have lied to God." I fell on my face and made a promise to God if he would let me live if I was ever called on, I would go. I thought that would let me off for I was not going to tell anyone; but it was not long until I told a brother and asked him not to tell anyone. It was not long after that, Elder Sumner came to our house. We were talking over many things, and the first thing I knew, I was telling him; but told him it was impossible for me to ever preach.

I went to Pine Forest Church. Brother Sumner asked me to go home with him. I went that night. He asked me if my impression was with me as much as it had been, and I told him not as much as it had been. We went back to the church the next day and he told me he was going to call on me. It shocked me so I could hardly speak. Then I remembered the vow I had taken and said, If it doesn't make any difference with you, don't call on me, it will embarrass me for I just can't go." I will never be able to tell the feeling that went in my heart and soul. I could not stay in the house. I walked below the church and stood for a few minutes, and if I know my heart, I asked the Lord to take my life for it was more than I could bear. It was not because I did not want to preach, I would have given anything if I could but I knew I could not. I thought I would go to the woods and try to ask the Lord to let this cup pass, but I was unable to even bow. A voice seemed to say, "You fool, why stand you here!"

I went back to the house. Elder Sumner was in prayer. I slipped in the house and got in behind someone. Elder Sumner saw me and said, "You just as well come on up here, you will have to anyway." I went and stood on the steps of the stand. I spoke a few words, but in the place of getting relief, I felt I had brought disgrace on my people; but the worst was, I had disgraced the Church. When I got home, I told my wife she could be getting things in shape for I was not going to stay in this country, and I certainly meant every word at that time. The next Sunday was the 4th Sunday, which

was Laurel Creek meeting . Elder Cole hearing I had gotten up at Pine Forest , asked me in the stand . It seemed I had no resistance and went on and that was still worse than the first .

My wife and I started to Brother Board's to spend Saturday night. As we went I told her that was the last time I would ever go ; and I verily thought I was telling the truth . That night at Brother Board's, something took place with me , I will never forget . After retiring , I will never know if I was asleep or awake , but let that be as it may. All at once I was in a strange country and I wanted to go home. I came out to go home, but I found myself in a wilderness . I could see a narrow path . I would follow that path until it would come to a solid wall . I would have to turn back and try another path it seemed. I continued trying and felt I would have to give up , then I saw a narrow path leading up a hill. I knew I would have to go that way. And when I got to the top of that hill, I looked across a Beautiful Valley and saw a passenger train , and I was glad for I knew I would be able to get home . When I got to the train the first thing I knew I was in a buggy with a young man , and I will never be able to tell the sweetness I felt in that ride . But it soon came to an end. All at once we came to a wide river and there was a covered bridge. When we got to the bridge, a shutter came down and cut us off. The young man was gone and I was left alone. I wondered what to do . I walked around the end of the bridge and looked at the river . It looked deep but I knew I had to go that way. I dreaded it but it was not as deep as I expected it to be. Then I got in the same road , it was a plain old road . When I got in this road , I looked ahead of me and I saw an oldlike woman walking ahead of me. She had on an old - time slat bonnet like my mother used to wear . I thought if I could catch up with her she could tell me of my troubles. But when I caught up with her , I began telling her my troubles . She began kissing her hand and laid it on my cheek , showing the love she had for me .

When I came to myself , I never doubted she was the Church , for the church had shown me all the kindness I could ask of them. That vision caused me to go, and I went to some church every weekend , but felt to have no liberty to preach ; until I got to the place I lost all hope of ever being able to preach . I feel the Lord gave me endurance and I feel that it was his time .

I went to Old Pine Creek Church. As I went around the cemetery , a Scripture came in my mind . It was sweet to me. I was not in the habit of reading a text. Elder Cole passed by me and dropped the Bible in my lap. I turned to the text that was on my mind . I read it and then began talking I felt with another tongue , for it was altogether different to me . I looked over that crowd of folks and they all looked good to me . I spoke for around 30 or 35 minutes and felt satisfied the Lord turned me loose and I would go and preach the rest of my time just like I did then . Only I would preach longer .

That was the first Sunday . The next Sunday there was meeting at Old Salem Church . That was the

longest week I thought I had ever seen , but when Saturday came I went . But not to preach . I knew there would be more people there on Sunday , so I refused on Saturday . There was an old Brother said to me , " Go with me to my nephew's." And I said , " Alright ." That night after retiring , whether asleep or awake I cannot tell , but I was in a room and the man that kept that room had to keep everything just right in that room. I used to dance and I thought I had not tried to dance for a long time. I began dancing over the floor, and the man that kept the room began whipping me with fire . It came around my waist and began taking my breath. I looked back over my shoulder to see who it was whipping me. I saw no one but I was picked up like a feather , and there was liquid fire in front of me and I was thrown in that fire and consumed . And a voice came into me , " God is a consuming Fire ." I wondered what that meant .

When I got to the Church that morning, I found out what that meant for instead of preaching , if I ever opened my mouth I never knew it. I sat down crying, longing to get out of that church and never to be there any more . When I was leaving I was bidding every thing goodby . But before I got out of sight of the church something took place with me. This sentence of Scripture came into my mind with sweetness , " We rejoice therefore in tribulations , knowing tribulations works patience , patience experience hope , and hope maketh not ashamed , for the love of God is shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost which is given us ." So I was made to rejoice and shed tears of joy . I was made glad the Lord had shut my mouth and taught me some sense .

The next Sunday was the third Sunday and I went to Pine Forest . And I went in the fear of the Lord, and he gave me liberty to speak ; and I have been going ever since. I know I am about through for if I live until February 22 , 1959 , I'll be 82 years old. And I can't expect many more years . The Lord has been wonderfully good to me and my Brethren and Friends have showed me all the kindness I could wish for. They are bound to see something in me that I can't see in myself, for I see nothing in my vile flesh that is good .

I hope I have not set forth anything in this writing to give myself any honor , for if I have been shown anything , it is the rotteness of my nature. It makes no difference how much the Lord has shown me I still see nothing good in my flesh .

There was a period of time in my ministry that the sweetness of the Gospel seemed to be completely taken from me. I felt I would have to give it up , but in that time I had a dream . I was traveling a road that was muddy and I was so worried on my journey. I felt I had gone as far as I could go and had given up. Then I viewed a road in front of me that was so beautiful , I can't describe it . When I had put my feet in that road, I felt as light as a feather . I began leaping and jumping and quoting one Psalm after another in praises to God and I wondered how long that would last . When I awoke I told my wife I had been seeing something wonderful to me. And from that time on for a

few years I had sweet liberty continually for a while, baptizing six or eight. Then I could see what that beautiful road meant.

The longer I live the more of my vileness I see in the flesh. And I can say of a truth, " In my flesh dwelleth no good thing."

S.L. Moran

Elder Moran is well remembered among the Baptists of Virginia. He united with Laurel Creek Church, Floyd County, Va., and later united by letter with the Salem Church (Head of the River) in the same county. He served as Moderator of the Smith River Association from 1932 until his death in 1960. He was ordained in 1916 and served five churches during his ministry.

The above was written by Elder Moran December 30, 1958, and we are glad to publish it in his memory.

Reprinted from March issue of the Signs 1974, at the request of Sister Mary Poff, Copperhill, Va.

EXPERIENCE

If it could be profitable to the Cause, I would like to give " a reason of the hope that is in me with meekness and fear." The fear is — what if I am mistaken about what I have believed are the Lord's dealings with me, and, in relating them, I deceive you who read this into thinking I have a Christian experience? Then the thought comes, the Lord's people are discerning people and not only can they separate law and gospel, but that truth or doctrine that separates sheep from goats.

I was given an abiding love for the church at the age of 13. Through a dream, I saw myself a sinner. I became a member of what is now known as a limited church. Although I read a great deal, I did not understand the fundamentals of our doctrine. I read about the life of Joseph and firmly believed, or so I thought, " " Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good." But as I grew older I became very zealous of good works and took a great deal of pride in my religion and in my zeal and I decided to devote my life to the church. I had zeal without knowledge.

Shortly after our marriage, my husband expressed dissatisfaction with the church of our membership, but I felt the trouble could only be in him as I saw the church as perfect and that his devotion was a little lacking. I felt he should be studying his Bible more. I was so full of good works (my own) that I couldn't see my faults.

In a few years trouble came in the church of our membership and it resulted in a division. Those believing as my husband, predestination of all things, both good and bad, went with him, and the others went their way. Not understanding the difference, I had not realized he had been preaching it for some time. Most of those he had baptized believed as he did and went with him. I had been given a church letter at the time of the division, but I vowed to myself that I never would join another church and certainly not the " Absoluters," so I burned the letter.

From this time on our home was frequented with " Absoluters," and

contrary to what I had been told about them many years before, they were kind , careful not to hurt my feelings , and tolerant of my occa - sional outbursts and foolish ques - tions . Three old preachers , now passed on, were especially kind and helpful. One of them often visited us for several days at a time. After such a visit and much discussion on con - troversial subjects , I awoke early one morning with this Scripture on my mind, " Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest ." I thought , " Now there's a Scripture I'd like to see him get around, since he said our obed - ience is passive. I'll just keep that in mind and ask him when I see him again." I believed this Scripture was an admonition and an invitation. In a few months we attended a meeting about 200 miles away and this old brother was there . I had not told anyone about my intention , not even my husband, and I was going to " spring " the text on the old brother when he went home with us . On Sunday morning, he was called on to preach and his text was , " Come unto me, all ye that labour," etc. As he unfolded its meaning and com - pared it to Rev. 22:17 , " The Spirit and the bride say , Come . And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst , Come . And whosoever will , let him take the water of life freely ." I began to see for the first time that the " comes " in my text and in Revelation were commands , not invitations. To get around the Arminian doctrine , I had heard it preached and had believed for many years that the text in Reve - lation was only to the elect, the only ones who were given the will , so I understood that they had to come . So if both were commands and came from the same source , then why wouldn't they be equally forceful? If one could be thwarted , then why couldn't the other? Did I believe in a God whose command could be re - fused on one hand and obeyed on the other? I was made to tremble .

One of the sorest trials at this time was to break off from the fel - lowship of my old friends whom I loved very much and still do. I knew they wouldn't understand, therefore an explanation was useless. Again, this old brother was a help to me and made me see that when the Saviour said , " Take my yoke upon you " meant that you had no choice what - ever about taking that yoke . When He says, " Take my yoke," you take it. He does not say, " if you will take it." And once you take it, there is no turning back . Like the children of Israel, I murmured and complained and looked back to Egypt. I wanted back where I didn't have so many doubts and fears . But Jesus pro - mises " My yoke is easy , and my burden light." Yes, it is so easy, the trials of this life forgotten, when we are blessed to worship Him in spirit and in truth , when we are made to rejoice in this beautiful doctrine . There is a rest for His children. Our striving to help ourselves is over. He has done it all .

Of course , there were many , many questions in my mind . I searched and asked questions and little by little I would be given a little insight . But I still had some false pride. At one communion meeting at my husband's home church , I felt

rather bitter because I couldn't take part. I felt physically and spiritually sick, and when I got home I went to bed. I felt so low that I thought I would die. The truth is, I did die; I died to that false pride. My good works were at an end. I now knew what it meant to be totally depraved. It is a terrifying picture.

Soon after this I had a dream that I was married to a very wonderful person but wasn't living with him, and my father (deceased) was trying to help make arrangements for us to live together. After I awoke, I felt condemned for not living in the church, and I had a compelling desire to ask for membership which I did at the first opportunity. I asked them to watch over me and look over my many imperfections which they have always done. Only that love, that charity that suffereth long, could put up with all the imperfections I have and that is the only reason I am still a member to this day.

The older I grow the more firmly convinced I am of the total depravity of man and the complete sovereignty of God over all things . . . When man is left to Satan to devour, there is nothing too low for him to do, any man. When it pleases God to keep him and to give man the will to be upright and follow after Him, it only proves to me that that man is blessed with God's grace, and all the praise for that man's good deeds belongs to God, the author and finisher of our faith. No, God is not the author of confusion because there can be no confusion where God is concerned. What seems confusion to us is not confusion to the Creator of all things who has predestinated the end from the beginning and all things in between as well, or else there would be all kinds of confusion.

As I have been writing this, I have prayed that what I might write would praise Him as much as words could from one so ignorant of His truth, for I would that I might spend the rest of my days praising Him, but He has not so willed it. I will no doubt be guilty of denying Him in a very short time.

I feel like thanking Him for a little glimpse of His wonderful Kingdom.

With love for all His little ones,
Grace Jefferson (Deceased)
Bakersfield, California
(Written about the year 1960)

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 1990

Mrs. Mamie D. Ferguson, VA.... 2.00
Rufus L. Jacks, AL 7.00
Mrs. Aline C. Jacks, AL
In memory of husband
Colman G. Jacks 57.00
Mrs. Allyne Page, TX 7.00
Mrs. C. Baublitz, TX 2.00
Mrs. Virginia L. Apple, NC 2.00
Mrs. Myrtle Daniel, FL 2.00
Mrs. Oza Hill, TX 2.00
Davis Mordecai, AL 2.00
Wyatt Willis, VA 12.00
L.C. Hornsby, GA 2.00
Woodrow W. Bellinger, NY 2.00
Mrs. Susan Chandler, FL 2.00
Guy Hundley, VA 2.00
Mrs. Carmen Abernethy, NC... 2.00
Mrs. Thelma Dickerson, NC ... 2.00
Mrs. Mary H. Stratton, VA 2.00
Ms. Joyce Farley, TX 40.00

Maurice Webb, IL 7.00
Ercy C. Redman, AL 7.00
Mrs. Dorothy Cassell, VA ... 2.00
Walter Hill, NC 5.00
Mrs. Cliff Weaver, WA 15.00
Mrs. Martha Dalton, VA 2.00
Mrs. James D. Marze, LA..... 2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER EMMA HALL

It has been our heavenly father's will to call from Dan River Primitive Bapt. Church another one of our dear members, Emma Denny Hall Oct. 7, 1989 at Morehead Memorial Hospital, Eden, N.C. She was native of Pittsylvania Co., Va. but had lived most her life at 760 Summit Rd., Eden, N.C. and was a Fieldcrest retiree.

She was daughter of late Elder Sam Denny and Nannie Lou Matherly ly, was married to William Leslie Hall Aug. 2, 1927 by Elder J.W. Flinchum To this union, one daughter Mrs. Sam Rodgers (Ruth) Waynesboro, Va., one son Edward L. Hall, Greensboro, N.C., three grand-daughters, two grandsons and five great grandchildren.

She and her husband joined Dan River Church April 26, 1964 and was baptized by their pastor Elder D.V. Spangler. She was a faithful member until her health failed. When visiting her, she would mention looking forward to getting able to come to church again.

I had the privilege of working with her many years and admired how they both attended church of their faith and were not wavered about with every trial. It made me rejoice to see them ask a home with us at Dan River Church.

Her funeral was held at Fair's Funeral Home Chapel Oct. 9, 1989 by Elder Haywood Wray assisted by Elder Kenneth Key. Her body was laid to rest in Dan View Cemetery, Eden, N.C.

Besides her family she leaves to mourn three sisters, Lillie Williams, Alyne Law, Eden, N.C., Ruby Shropshire, Eden, N.C. and three brothers John Denny, Irvin Denny, Eden, N.C. and Drewery Denny, Hopewell, Ala.

We the members will miss her. May the grace of our heavenly father reconcile each of you to his will.

Written by request in conference,
Lottie Minter
Eld. Kenneth Key, Mod.
Bro. Bob Collie, Clerk

HORACE E. WALKER

Horace died as he lived and believed in the full sovereignty of God.

Funeral services were conducted by Pastor David Neal at Oakey's Funeral Chapel in Salem, Va., Jan. 4 at 3 p.m. He was laid to rest in Sherwood Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He leaves behind his wife Agnes H. Walker and two daughters and sons-in-law Sharon & John Stump, Bedford, Va., Rebecca & Sam Pauley, Salem, Va. One brother Woodrow Walker, Danville, Va. Two sisters, Mary Cousins, Danville, Va. Thelma Hundley, Danville, Va. Four grandchildren and one great grand-daughter.

Agnes H. Walker

HOMA NEVADA RAINEY

Homa Nevada Rainey was born June 28 , 1909 the daughter of , Forrest and Iyora Rainey. She died July 12 , 1989 after a lengthy illness .

Homa never united with the Church although she believed and loved the doctrine that it contended for . She was a regular and faithful attendant and supported the Church financially and with her time and energy. Many times she was the first one there to open the Church and welcome all as they arrived. She was able to attend until a few months before her death , many times when physically she was not able . This demonstrates the deep love and devotion she had for the Church .

She is survived by a son , Dr . Fred Rainey of Elizabethtown , Ky ., four grandchildren , one great grandchild : sisters Burbin McFarland of Centerville , Tenn ., Lillie Russell of Lyles , Tenn ., Fannie Mayberry of Primm Springs , Tenn ., and Annie Lou Lee , Panama City , Florida .

Her funeral was conducted at the McDonald 's Funeral Home in Centerville by Elder Richard H. Campbell followed by interment in the Harpeth Cemetery .

She will be greatly missed by her family and by her Church . She was an inspiration to all who witnessed her battle with the disease which took her from us . She never complained or gave evidence of the pain she suffered . She was a beautiful person and will be in our minds and hearts as long as we live .

In loving Memory
Richard H . Campbell

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union will be held , the Lord willing , with Union Primitive Baptist Church , Sunday and Saturday before the fifth Sunday , April 1990 . State Road 605 .

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and worship with us .

Elder Raymond Goad , Mod .
Silas Payne , Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will meet , the Lord willing , fifth Sunday in April at Big Meadows Church , Chatham County . Take I-85 North and take the Pittsboro - Graham exit on highway #87 . Go approximately 17 miles and turn right after crossing Cane Creek Bridge . Go 4 miles to cross roads and turn left — Go 1 mile to church . We invite all lovers of the truth to come and meet with us . Ministers of our faith and order are especially invited . Song service will begin at 10:00 and preaching at 10:30 a .m .

Elder Kenneth R . Key , Mod .
Deacon Casey Johnson , Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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EGYPTS CORN

Corn they sought in Egypt land ,
It had to come by Joseph 's hand ;
Corn to end the famine at home ,
Christ gives freely to all His own .

This corn of Grace couldn 't be bought ,
Yet the world its strength has sought ;
The price long ago was fully paid ,
When God 's covenant with Israel was made .

Corn stored up before the need ,
Given freely His family to feed ;
No labor of works to endure ,
A gift of God by Grace made sure .

Corn to help them in their need ,
Their fainting , drooping souls to feed ;
Corn that holds the strength of life ,
Christ sends His family to end the strife .

Corn to lift our weary soul ,
Grains of mercy pure as gold ;
Corn of rejoicing and of praise ,
Love of Christ made known in His ways .

Corn of Heaven and Glorious light ,
That shows His love and too , His Might ;
Corn that surely will call us home ,
The bag of Grace says we are His own .

Corn that 's stored beyond the Gate ,
When reached will end our mournful state ;
Corn we 'll have there forever more ,
Corn of Christ an endless store .

C .B . Davis , Jr .

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EDITORIAL

The following is a sermon preached by Elder C.B. Davis at Moons Creek Church on Sunday , February 18 , 1990 .

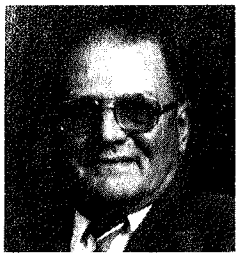
Elder C .B . Davis , Jr .

The word virgin seems to be strongly upon my mind may the Lord bless us that we might for a few moments touch upon the virtues of the word virgin as it pertains to God 's people and to the church because that 's what is under consideration .

In the eleventh chapter of 2nd Corinthians I would read to you the first three verses , after which I shall turn to the book of Revelation and read also . " These are the words of the writings of Paul , " Would to God ye bear with me a little in my folly : and indeed bear with me . For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy : for I have espoused you to one husband , that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ ." He 's talking to none other than God 's people . " " But I fear , lest by any means , as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilely , so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ ."

I well remember in the use of this word simplicity when Elder Campbell spoke at the Staunton River Union last year of the Simplicity of the Gospel .

So Paul in essence is saying the same thing , the simplicity that is in Jesus Christ . It is indeed a simplicity , a simplicity to the Gospel , to all of those who believe and are called according to his purpose , but to the world it is a stumbling block . Even to the Jews the scripture relates that the Gospel is a stumbling block - and foolishness to the Greeks . And so it was not simple , as we use the term , to those people , but let us still think about what Paul says here in that I have espoused you to one husband , that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ .

And then we find in the book of Revelation something that takes place in the last time that also speaks of the perfection that Paul here is setting forth . The fourteenth chapter of Revelation , the third and fourth verses , " And they sung as it were a new song before the throne , and before the four beasts , and the elders : and no man could learn that

song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first - fruits unto God and to the Lamb."

We think as we think of the word virgin that it has many meanings, but we find that in Webster's dictionary he defines it as being pure, he defines the word virgin as meaning clean, he defines the word virgin as meaning; and here we go back to the writing of Paul; simplicity of expression, simplicity of dress, simplicity of love, meaning that its pure in every sense of the word. And that it cannot and I declare to you has not been defiled.

Paul says that the serpent who beguiled Eve would or should corrupt the minds of those that see the simplicity that is in Christ. But I declare to you that your hope, your faith, is a virgin hope and a virgin faith, because in so being it has not known any man. Let us remember that these are the words of Mary, when she was told that she should conceive and bring forth a son. And she said how can this be, I have known no man, the Gospel of Jesus Christ has not been adulterated. That's another expression that Webster used and its that which has not been adulterated. The Gospel of Jesus Christ has not been adulterated by the hands of man. Now I know there are those in the world who would be satisfied were it possible to do so, to adulterate it to the extent that it would mislead God's people (those who have experienced a virgin birth). Because if we are what we hope to be, our spiritual birth, that is the birth that Christ expressed to Nicodemus is not the birth of natural man. It is a spiritual birth, it is that birth that springs from Christ himself. As Paul speaks of it here, and it is indeed a virgin birth because no man upon the face of the earth had anything whatsoever to do with it.

We go back to the creation and we find the very beginning of the word virgin, because each act of creation that God brought about did not have the hand of man involved in any sense of the word. And everything that He created He beheld it and said it was good. Had it been adulterated in any sense, had it not been virgin in its very creativity he could not have said it was good, but He beheld it and He said it was good. We find that Adam had not an earthly father, he had not an earthly mother so he was a virgin being in the beginning naturally.

But the time would come when he would be subjected to the powers of the serpent, not through himself but through the weakness of the flesh. That weakness of the flesh was his own bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh from which Eve was made. And so the serpent did not attempt to deceive him. The scripture relates he was not deceived. What he did he entered into willingly because of the great love for this wife if we might use that term that God had given him. Because she was flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone.

We think again as we think of the

term virgin and all things that God created were indeed virgin . All things that we view through his creations were virgin , but now I can declare unto you that our earth , our air , our water has been adulterated because it has been touched by the contaminating hands of man . We have poisoned everything that we have access to , except one thing and that 's the Gospel of Jesus Christ and it cannot be poisoned my beloved , because it is virgin , because it sprang from God himself . We know that as I mention our waters , our streams are now so polluted that the water is not fit to consume , but I can declare to you that I see another stream as John relates in the book of Revelation , and this stream has not been contaminated , its not adulterated , its that stream of grace that flows out , grace and mercy that flows out from the throne of God . And John says , its a pure and shining river , crystal clear . It shall never be contaminated by the ways of man . It flows out from the very throne of God so therefore it began as a virgin stream .

It shall be because all of this is virgin that he beholds in this , his experience in this His vision . I say to you this morning that your faith , your hope , is just as virgin as anything that the word might be applied to . I don 't care what sense of the word some individual or those of the world might use to desecrate this , might even try to change our thoughts upon the matter . It cannot be done because God has a people from the foundation of the world and these are the people , that have become the virgins of his purpose and will , my beloved . Paul is touching upon that very thing and he says I am jealous over you with godly jealousy for I have espoused you to one husband that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ . He 's talking about being married to the true husband of the bride and that bride is virgin .

Our true mother as we use it in the spiritual sense is the church because it is the bride of Jesus Christ and it 's the mother of us all . We are proclaimed in the scriptures that being the sons and the daughters of God if that be so then the church the bride , the true bride , the virgin bride of Jesus Christ is our mother . And we are virgin in the sense as I said a few minutes ago that no man that ever walked upon the face of the earth had one iota of power in the matter of our salvation , or our hope , or our faith . We have been delivered from the condemnation , from the contamination if you please of the sin that erupted in the Garden of Eden . And the only thing that can set us free from that is the virginity of the person of the blood of Jesus Christ because that was virgin blood , because it was holy blood , that flowed through His veins and He shed that blood willingly upon the cross , that we might become virgins of his desire and love . This is what its all about .

If I didn 't believe that , I wouldn 't dare be in this place . And I feel an unworthiness to be here , every time I come . But thanks be unto God that I know I feel like I know where my hope and my faith lies and its not in the contamination of the ways of man , I have enough of that right

here . This sinful creature that you see before you , this flesh I have enough of that and I have to carry them to such time as I breathe out my last breath and then that virgin spirit is going to climb as it were the promises of God and go back to heaven from whence it came , but this old body is going into the earth . It was made from the earth and is going back to the earth , nothing can prevent it . By the same token there is nothing whatsoever that can prevent the virginity of the spirit within because it belongs to God , because its perfect in every sense of the word , and its the only thing about man that is perfect . Its going back to rejoice in the presence of God and Jesus Christ . Its going back to be there when time shall be no more .

And as its spoken of , as John speaks of it in the book of Revelation and he can say to God , that is , Christ can say to God ; These are those that were redeemed from among the men of the earth and they are all virgins . It doesn 't matter whether your gender is male or female , it doesn 't make a bit of difference in the sight of God because the scripture relates that in heaven there will be no marriage , no giving in marriage , no male and no female .

Then these virgins are virgins of the lamb they are virgins of the love and mercy of God . They are virgins that have been made so by the sufferings of Jesus Christ . They have not been made virgins by devisive cunningness of the mind of man and I declare to you that it is absolutely impossible , for the devisive cunningness of the mind of man to make a virgin out of any human being that walks upon the face of this earth . I believe that just as strongly as I believe that I am standing before you this morning . But the power of God does , it has from the beginning , it has from the foundation of the earth .

In keeping with the wills and purposes of God designed by his own hand the virginity of his word , the virginity of his beloved , the virginity that would draw unto himself the spirits of those who he chose to be called His sons and daughters . John speaks of them as a number of a hundred and forty and four thousand , these signify the twelve tribes of Israel , twelve thousand from each tribe .

But John also sees an enumerable host as we read further in the book of revelation and he says that number is greater than the sand of the sea and no man can enumerate it it . It 's virgin , the number is virgin , why do I say the number is virgin ? because the number was complete in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world . It 's a virgin number . Did you and I choose the way we should go ? Did you and I choose our own salvation ? Did you and I declare to some individual that I 'm going before the church , I 'm going up to be saved , no , the work was performed within us .

In keeping with that virgin will of God that would draw us unto himself, that we might come forth and acknowledge that something had been done for us , that the world knows not and neither can understand . Aren 't you thankful this morning that we can rejoice in the thought , that he has done something for us to relieve us , of the con -

demnation of sin , to relieve us even from the throes of death . I 'm not talking about the first death . Every human being thats ever walked upon the face of the earth and shall ever walk upon the face of the earth has to die , one time . Death is promised to every individual , promised once unto all men to die so the scripture said but John again sees all these things come together to complete the will and the purpose of God . He sees here an enumerable host and they stand before the white throne of God and he who sits upon the throne. Then he starts talking about the second death , my beloved this second death is so much worse than the first death .

The first death shall separate the spirit from the body , and it shall be a time of rejoicing for that spirit but this second death that he sees , these are the ones he said whose name , whose record , whose works are written in the books . He says he sees the books open , he uses the term plural and then he says he sees another book open and that book is the book of the Lamb . And he says all whose names are not recorded in the book of the Lamb , in the book of life , are cast into the burning lake of fire . And satan is cast into the burning lake of fire , and the books are cast into the burning lake of fire .

I say to you this morning that the fires of that lake are just as eternal as is the bliss that awaits you in the climes of glory . And then John says and this is the second death . That second death shall have no power whatsoever , over God 's people . It shall have no power whatsoever to those who have been touched by the virginity of his power . And this burning lake of fire is going to consume all of the adulterated bodies , all of the adulterated thoughts that ever existed upon the face of the earth because they are going to burn forever and ever , and they are going to be destroyed .

That 's when satan will be destroyed . Sometimes I hear somebody say , and they don 't know what they are talking about , that the power of satan has been subdued that they've been taken. No, not in this day and time . I look at the world today and I can 't see how it could have been any worse in the days of Noah than it is today . I can 't see how it could be possible for it to be but yet I don 't know . But I can declare unto you that I know who controls it .

And I know who works within this earth , works within this earthen vessel , your earthly vessel because that 's what it is . And Paul speaks of the treasures in earthen vessels and in the book of Isaiah , I shall show ye the treasures of darkness , these treasures are virgin treasures , they come not by the power of man , they come because of the mercy of God . And he expresses those things to each one of His children , in order that they might call Him Father , in order that they might express their love for Him as we express our tokens of fellowship and love one for another , whenever we are together . And the agent that binds us together is the virgin blood of Jesus Christ .

It binds us together and it causes us to express our love and fellowship one for another . That is that part of us , that is the spirit speaking . Oh , this old flesh , this old flesh would

turn its back upon it every time were it possible to do so . But the spirit is more powerful than the body . The spirit drives the body , even those times that we don 't feel like going maybe or physically we 'd rather do this or we 'd rather do that . But the spirit the virginity of the power of God cannot be subdued .

We remember in the scripture after Moses had slain an Egyptian he departed the country , to live a life of exile but God wasn 't finished with him . Let us remember that his parents saw as he was just a babe that there was something proper about him . God wasn 't finished with him , so God sends him back , he says to go back and bring my people out of bondage .

We find the flesh saying , Lord I can 't go I 'm of a stammering tongue and slow of speech . But God says go , and here we see the first thing that Moses said , as evidence of the flesh . But then God says I will send Aaron with thee and he shall be a spokesman , here 's the spirit . The flesh couldn 't go alone but the spirit must go with it , cause the spirit must speak for it . And so then Moses said who shall I say has sent me , here we see the virginity of the very word of God , the power of God , he said tell them that the great I Am , that I Am has sent thee .

So Moses didn 't have to answer to any man , he didn 't have to go and say the king sent me or the president sent me , but he who holds the power of all things in his hand , he who is the I Am has sent me . And he sent me to fulfill a purpose .

We know of another that was sent to fulfill a purpose it was Joseph . And they are both types of Christ . Joseph went forty years before his brethren and they didn 't know him . As they went to purchase corn , they heard there was grains of corn in Egypt and they were famished and they were starving . That 's what you heard , my beloved when you were famished and you were starving you desired something that you couldn 't feast upon of nature . You desired the taste of something that was sweeter than the bitterness of the thought of sin and condemnation . And you began to go , you went to Egypt as it were . You went seeking your brother , your brother Christ . You went seeking Him , and they went but they didn 't know who they were seeking but that they were seeking sustenance . And that 's what God 's people seek when they find themselves desolate and an hungred and in due time Joseph made himself known to his brethren .

We see and hear again the work of the virgin power of God fully expressed to this extent , they paid for the grain that they took with them . But as they stopped to feast on their travel home they found their money in the mouths of the sacks . What did that tell them ? It told them the same thing that we know today that grace cannot be bought because its not sold in the markets of the world . It 's virgin because it comes from the very purity of God . And it 's the only thing that we have given that is absolutely free .

We pay a price for everything that we have use of in one way or another . We pay the price of sin with death . We pay the price of not taking care of ourselves physically , with

pain and illness . There are many ways that we pay a price for each thing that takes place in our lives but we don 't pay a price for salvation , because that price was paid in the virginity of the person of Christ when he hung upon the cross , and when he had shed his blood completely and he bowed his head and said it 's finished .

He meant my brethren that it was finished , He didn 't mean it left something else to be desired , he didn 't mean that it would take another savior to come somewhere along the eons of time . But he meant that he had completed salvation for every heir of promise , reaching all the way back to the Garden of Eden . The virginity of creation , reaching all the way into the book of Revelation when John sees the virgin soul standing in the presence of God , and John heareth the angel say these are those who are redeemed from among men and the world .

And he uses another term and he says they are those who are not defiled with women but he 's not talking about natural women he 's talking about the doctrines and theories of this time world . Let us go back to historical Israel , and many many times Love will find that Israel , as she fell away from godliness , was admonished .

The Lord will say thou hast be - come an adultress nation , thou art following after strange and adultress women , what was he talking about ? They were worshipping graven images . They were worshipping those things that are not virgin be - cause they have been made by the carnal hands of man . That 's what he is talking about , that 's the women he is talking about that these virgins are not defiled with .

I say to you that our heart is set with the purity of Christ with the burning desire on the inside that we might see him someday . We have not been defiled by the theories and the things of this world that the multitudes follow after . We have not been defiled by some individual who declares that he or she has the answers to everything , and there are some who claim they do . But they are going to find themselves come short of the word of God and here at the end we find it virgin in every sense of the word when he says come ye blessed of my father inherit the kingdom that is prepared for you from the foundation of the world . And to those on the left , he shall say depart from me you workers of ini - quity I never knew you .

Those words that say depart have just as much strength as those words that say come . Come ye blessed of my father , oh what a time to face the second death . Oh , what a time to find that the faith of the world , faith that they boasted of and a hope that they have boasted and they know they have , shall find them coming short , they shall find that their faith and their hope is not virgin , they shall find that it's contaminated. They shall find that it has no merit , they shall find its been defiled by the ways of man . They shall find that the end thereof is the depths of hell nor can they extricate themselves from those circumstances or conditions , not in any sense whatsoever be - cause it 's not the will of God , that it might be .

God has brought about through Christ the deliverance of every heir of promise and his promise is to you that I will not leave or forsake you, I'll go all the way even unto death that's the virgin promise. It stands today and it shall stand when the worlds on fire and it shall be enough. You know Jacob when Joseph's brothers went back to Jacob they said we've found our brother. Jacob there typifies the church when one goes longing and seeking for the grain of the corn they find they are filled they use the term my cup runneth over and they're finally fed and they go to the church, they go to the father as it were and their conversation is we've found our brother, he's alive, I say to you this morning that your brother Christ is alive, he's alive forever more. And Jacob couldn't believe it, when they said He wants us to come He has a land of promise, a land of plenty. And He wants you and all of us to come and Jacob said I couldn't believe it but the scripture relates that when he saw the wagons coming he said its enough, its enough I know that my son liveth, he knew that Joseph was alive, because he could see the promise itself being fulfilled.

Through that virgin spirit that you have within you are a witness to the power of Christ. You are a witness that will say when you have that feeling within that all has been satisfied and these feelings come once in a while. We don't have access to them day to day and they don't last the full day when they come but for a fleeting moment everything is satisfied then you can say its enough.

Its enough just to know that this has taken place, and it is that, that renews us day to day. It's that, that causes us to cling tenaciously to this virgin word, this virgin truth that we hold dear in our heart and we would not trade it if we could for all that the world holds.

One of the writers said, to learn of God is more precious than all the gold of Ophir or the rubies thereof, its more precious than anything we could have access to in the this time world because it holds within itself the promise of eternal life.

May God bless you and keep you is my prayer.

Elder C.B. Davis

PSALM 150

Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power.

Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness.

Praise him with the sound of trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp.

Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs.

Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.

Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST

Preached on Lord 's Day Evening , 15th November, 1925 at Brixton Tabernacle

" And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man , it shall be forgiven him ; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him , neither in this world , neither in the world to come ." (Matthew 12 : 32)

Such words spoken by Him who cannot lie , and spoken in such a plain way, must, if we have any grace in our hearts , make us tremble . To speak upon these words , apart from divine help , is impossible . The Lord help us ! This morning we spoke to the former verse , " All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men ," showing , I trust , the sufficiency of the atonement and the boundless grace of God in forgiving sin . Here we have a sin which shall never be forgiven . It is a solemn , searching , terrible scripture ; I am not aware of another scripture which utterly excludes hope as this ; for , if one is left to commit this sin , he is locked up unto eternal despair . Seeing the Saviour Himself spake these words , and the Spirit caused three evangelists to write them , we may safely say they teach a most important lesson . It is not desired to make one heart sad whom the Lord would not have made sad , but that , if God is pleased to help and bless us in our meditation tonight , we may ascertain something of the meaning of the Spirit in this portion , and have a solemn knowledge of the terrible nature of sin in general and of this sin in particular . Moreover , it may be someone is here now who has been troubled greatly respecting this sin , and the Lord may have a gracious purpose to make known to such an one .

One is reminded of Mr . Algar Locke , who preached for the immortal coalheaver (W . Huntington , S.S. S .S .) . He had been an itinerant preacher , but from sore temptation , especially that he had committed this sin , he gave the preaching up . One day he was struggling along Cheapside with this temptation strong in his soul , that he had blasphemed against the Holy Ghost . So great was his distress that , to save himself from falling to the ground , he caught hold of a post at the corner of Bow Church . Just there was an old lady (grace only makes ladies as grace only can make gentlemen) selling tapes , and she invited him to sit down on her stool , which he did . She could discern his trouble was more mental than physical , and asked Locke if it were not so . He admitted it was . " Oh then ", says she , " you must hear the coalheaver , sir ; he will suit you ; he preaches near by every Tuesday night ." He went . That night God sent Huntington into the pulpit with this very text , " The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men ." As soon as Mr . Locke heard the words read he feared he should hear his condemnation sealed , and

cried out, " Let me out! Let me out!" In those days the spirit of hearing was so abundant that the chapel was crowded, and, when once in, it was a difficult matter to get out until the service was ended. So poor Locke had to stay, and never regretted it, for the Lord made it clear to his soul in that sermon that he had not been guilty of this terrible sin. The temptation with some souls is the same now, for Satan may make much use of such a scripture to torment a sinner; and though Huntington is dead (yet lives and speaks) the Lord is alive to carry on His work, and if He is pleased to apply anything one may say to the ease and comfort of a tempted soul, it will not be in vain that we have met together.

It will be wise to consider, in passing, the exact terms by which the Holy Spirit has described this sin. This is judged highly important, for it is often called unpardonable. To quarrel about mere words is an indication of a small mind and very little grace, yet, in a case like the present, we shall do well to use " words which the Holy Ghost teacheth" and drop the words taught by man's wisdom. I cannot decide whether it is correct to call it 'unpardonable', but, this we can say, the Holy Spirit does not so speak of it. If by 'unpardonable should be meant there is something in this sin which God could not pardon, or as if there were something lacking in the atonement of Christ whereby this sin could not be blotted out, but on the contrary binds the sinner down by an eternal sin, then, personally, I should be disposed to say the term is not a good one. There is nothing lacking in the atonement of Christ, as we tried to show this morning. " All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men" is the strongest statement one knows of to set forth the all-sufficiency of the atonement of Christ. Unpardonable might seem to imply that when Christ died, Son of God as He was, Son of Man as He was, yet there was a something in one sin which His precious blood could not put away. It does not appear to be a question of inability of God to pardon (hence, not insufficiency of the atonement) as it is a matter of God's will. This will, perhaps, appear if we pass in review what the evangelists say, and it is observable that neither of them speak of it as unpardonable. Matthew says, " Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him." Terrible words indeed — " it shall not (not cannot) be forgiven him." Luke says, " But unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven." Mark says, " But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation." Mark, you see, speaking by the Spirit, declares the same as Matthew and Luke, but use a great word "never" — " hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation," or " is bound by an eternal sin." None of them call it unpardonable, as if there were something in it God cannot forgive, but all do say it shall never be forgiven, that it binds one down under the awful weight and power of eternal sin. God's sovereignty by the atonement

of His dear Son sweeps away all sin, but this one — blasphemy against the Holy Ghost — this He will not forgive, and sovereignty shines in the one He will never forgive to the glory of His justice and truth, even as sovereignty shines in the forgiveness of all other kinds of sins to the glory of justice, truth and grace.

What is it that shall never be forgiven? Read the three evangelists once more. Matthew, as taught by the Spirit, declares it to be "blasphemy" — the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost." Mark, "Blaspheme," — he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost." Luke, "Blasphemeth" — "But unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven." The united testimony is "blasphemy," "blaspheme," "blasphemeth"; the difference is of tense only, in each case the act is the same. In Matthew there is one word that should not be passed by; it is the word "speaketh" as in the text, "whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost." This indicates that "the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost," concerning which God declares it shall never be forgiven, is spoken blasphemy. Blasphemy expressed in words — that is the terrible sin which will sink one down to the pit without a vestige of hope — expressed blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. Had we more grace we should be careful with the unruly member. Little do we think of the terrible power of words, albeit they may be, and often are, very treacherous. To speak after the manner of men, hell hangs on words. Of everything on land and in the sea - beasts, birds, serpents — we each have a something far worse than they all. All kinds of beast have been tamed of mankind, but the tongue no man can tame; it is an unruly evil full of deadly poison: in short, it is set on fire of hell. "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." Little do most people think of the consequences of the sins of the tongue. By this member at any rate, is the sin committed which hath never forgiveness. God mercifully salt our tongues with grace!

Let us now look at the circumstances out of which our text grew. The Lord had healed the man "possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb"; the majority of the common people admitted on the strength of that miracle that He was the Messiah. "Is not this the Son of David?" say they. This went against the pharisees; it stained their glory, cut against their selfish interest, and then the native enmity of their hearts came out thus: "This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils." The Saviour delivered several arguments to show the impossibility of their charge against Him, and then solemnly asserted the following, "Wherefore (indicating the connection with the foregoing)... the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." "I say unto you", says Christ, "I, who will be your Judge in the great day, I say unto you, that by knowingly, deliberately, and out of pure malice asserting that My works are done by union with the devil, when they are done (as you well

know) by the Spirit of God , this blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men ." Judged by circumstances whence the text arose , it would indicate the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost to be the expression of the blasphemy which was in their hearts , namely , vile abuse of the Son of God , and that in full knowledge and out of absolute malice against Him . The abuse was against the Holy Ghost , since it was by Him that Christ , as Mediator , performed His wondrous works . Mark sets this forth without any ambiguity , " But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness , but is in danger of eternal damnation : Because they said , He hath an unclean spirit ."

Is there no sense in which this sin can still be committed ? I fear the answer must be , " Yes , undoubtedly ," for the Scriptures are for all time , and not merely for the period and people long since past. It would appear that this sin arises generally, if not always , from people who , like ourselves , have made some profession of religion . It was so , at any rate , in the first case , for who were greater enemies to Christ and His true people than they ? Who indeed ? Profession may be of the public kind , as by baptism and joining some local church ; or in a tacit way , that is , by meeting with God 's people at prayer meetings , preaching services , and generally being known as one among the people of God . Among this general profession as a whole is a people who also possess what they either publicly or tacitly profess and , without being harsh , one is justified in saying there are biblical reason for fearing that a very small portion of the bulk of professors of any kind of religious faith have the " root of the matter " in them . If tares and wheat grow together (and Christ said so) , it is to be suspected that tares are in every field . Happy man who has a godly jealousy over himself lest he should prove a tare ! From the ranks of profession arise the people who commit this sin , this blasphemy against the Holy Ghost . This sin does not , perhaps , come about all at once ; there may be stages thereto , and , without pretending to anything approaching the prerogative of the Almighty , namely , power to read the heart , yet there are a few things which may lawfully be taken as indicating persons to be in a very solemn state and on the highway to committing this terrible sin if they have not already done so .

Irreverent language of God , or to God , when knowingly and maliciously spoken , is a very solemn mark against one . This vituperation is fairly prevalent in some quarters . What does not fit in with certain religious preachers and hearers stirs up their enmity to an awful degree , and the most malicious things are spoken by such which , by their very profession and attendance at so-called means of grace , they must know is wrong . Yet they do it , and will do it , deliberately and persistently , against the rebukes of their conscience and the Word of God . What do many say of the work of the Spirit in a sinner 's soul ? What does it all mean when preachers and hearers , who profess to be born of

the Spirit , simply hate and abominate the workings and teachings of the Spirit of God in a sinner 's heart ? A soul truly convicted of sin , made to mourn heartily , goes in darkness for months , lying under the law 's condemnation , trying to seek for mercy and finding none , grieving over his felt depravity before God , unable to rest in the mere and bare notion of the truths of the Scriptures , in due time so blessed of the Spirit as to enjoy felt forgiveness of sins , and thereby is made to separate from all form for the love of the power ; now what do the majority of both speakers and hearers say of that person ? Who has not heard their vituperation ? " Such an one is mad ," say they . " He lives by feelings " says another , while a third cries , " He is always miserable ." Yet others of the same fraternity will say , " I do not want a religion like so and so ," naming him or her as the case may be . Such know very well that their religion never cost them one night 's wakefulness , one hour 's godly sorrow for sin , and that not yet have they ever had any felt and enjoyed revelation of Christ or His truth in their heart . Their peace is quiet enough , being dead , their conscience firm enough , never having been stabbed by the Holy Ghost , their whole religion from beginning to end lying in the wisdom of men and not in the power of God ; and yet from these will come the vilest abuse , the most savage but oblique knocks , and all for one reason , which they know quite will : " And wherefore slew he him ? Because his own works were evil , and his brother 's righteous ." This persecution of the true family of God out of enmity , and malice , by Pharises , Cains , and dead , dry Calvinists , is bidding fair , unless grace prevent , to terminate in this eternal sin ; for slander , abuse of God 's people because of their loyalty and uprightness to truth , is slander against the good Spirit of God . Such may well tremble unless , indeed , they are already given up to blindness and hardness of heart and have lost the very capacity to feel the solemn truth of God . People will not (unless raving mad and lost to all sense of common decency) openly blaspheme the Father , or the Son , or the Spirit , yet thousands are doing it constantly in abusing the saints of God . What is done to the member is done to the Head of the body .

Knowledge — yes , such as commit this sin have knowledge — but it is of that kind which " puffeth up ", and they swell out with great swelling words of vanity as to what they have for the Lord , and for this person and the other ; how that such and such a matter would have come to nothing but for their wisdom , skill and charity . Give these a text , it matters not what sort , and such is their knowledge that they can preach upon it within five minutes . The hearers — well , they come because form binds them , not because they hunger to hear for their souls ' profit ; indeed , they know far more than any ordinary or extraordinary mortal could tell them . They know all about God 's election of a people to be saved , and they know right well that they are of that number . The covenant made between the Trinity in Unity , that they know all about with everything it contains , and will sing

most confidently :

Come , saints, and sing in sweet accord,
With solemn pleasure tell :
The covenant made with David 's Lord ,
In all things ordered well ."

But have they ever had that personal election sealed home to their hearts ? If so , malice and abuse of God 's truth , ways and people would be turned out . Have such ever had the covenant made one of life in their hearts ? If so , humility , tender fear of God , holy sobriety , and love to His glory as the first thing would be in evidence . So one might name every truth of the gospel , as the incarnation of the Son of God , His holy life , vicarious death , His precious blood , but the one great and all - important point is this : Has the Holy Ghost taught one these things , or is the knowledge of them notional , educational by teachers , preachers , parents , or natural religion , of which we all are full ? This empty yet pride - filling knowledge will fill chapels with hearers and churches with members ; there they may remain for years too , die and are buried as godly people , but , " The Lord knoweth them that are His ." But in some cases the time comes when they " forsake the assembling of themselves together " , and those who once sang the loudest of the doctrines of grace will unite with arminians , who hate the doctrines of truth , and if spoken to upon the matter , the serpent hisses from their breasts , The forsaking of godly assemblings is the first outward mark of something being radically wrong in the heart , and then , generally , it may be , and will be (if God prevents not) such go from one stage to another until they get firmly seated in the seat of the scorner , and tread under foot the Son of God , and count the blood of the covenant , wherewith he was sanctified , an unholy thing , and do despite unto the Spirit of grace . They first ignore the ways of God (because of inward hate to Him) then go on by terrible stages until they do despite to the Spirit of grace , and how far short , if at all , of committing this eternal sin , that is , the day will declare !

None who fall into this sin of blasphemy against the Spirit ever get out of it , and none who fear God with a broken and contrite heart , and tremble at His solemn Word , ever get into it . God has given some solemn tokens in this life against mockers who do so out of a knowing , deliberately hateful heart . It will be a fearful thing to fall (out of the pulpit and pew) into the hands of the living God , of whom it is said , " Vengeance belongeth unto Me . I will recompense , saith the Lord ." May we never know that ! Some of this class of people have been sent raving mad , some have died in terrible convulsions , others have rushed to eternity by their own hand , and not a few have died with filthy diseases too revolting almost for nurses to attend to , and thus have ended their mortal career under the manifested curse of a holy God . And where is it not marked in this life , eternity will prove that not one mocker of truth and truth - loving people , who has died as a mocker , has escaped the fiery indignation of God .

Ernest Roe

FAITH AND A GOOD CONSCIENCE

A SERMON

PREACHED ON LORD 'S DAY EVENING, July 4, 1841

BY J.C. PHILPOT

At Zoar Chapel, Great Alie St., Whitechapel.

" That thou by them mightest war a good warfare; holding faith, and a good conscience, which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck." 1 Timothy 1:18 & 19.

I have been frequently led to admire, and I trust, not only to admire, but to feel also, the Epistles of Paul to Timothy. There are in them, to my mind, two very striking features. The one is the mellowed tone which is diffused through them. " Paul, the aged," writes as one meekened and softened by his long and wearisome pilgrimage; therefore, though he writes with authority as an apostle, yet that authority is tempered by a spirit of meekness and gentleness, produced by a long series of afflictions and consolations, as well as by the recollection of what he had been before grace came into his heart. He never forgot that he had " persecuted the church of God," had been " a blasphemer and injurious;" and the continual recollection of what he had been before the Lord called him by his grace, kept him humble at his feet. Therefore, he says, " This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." Still the chief of sinners, though " not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles;" " less than the least of all saints," though he had been caught up to the third heaven, and there had heard unspeakable words, which were not lawful (or possible) for a man to utter. The other feature in these two Epistles is, the fatherly tone in which he writes to Timothy, as being " his own son in the faith;" not using the language of haughty dictation, as though Timothy were to bow down to him sitting in the professor 's chair; but writing with authority as his father in Christ, and yet that authority softened down by the affection which he had towards him, as his " dearly beloved son." Thus the warnings and instructions which he gives to his son Timothy, however solemn and faithful they are, are yet mingled with the utmost tenderness of affection and feeling. And it is the union of faithfulness and affection which gives point to all instruction, as well as edge and force to all reproof. The minister who stands up in the name of God to take forth the precious from the vile, should combine (and he will combine them, if the Lord the Spirit is his teacher,) the extremest faithfulness with the tenderest affection; so that he may come up to that standard laid down by Paul, " speaking the truth in love." Truth must needs offend; it is a sword with a keen and cutting edge, and must needs inflict deep and painful wounds in the conscience. But we are not called upon to jag the edge by harshness in our manner and spirit, but so to use the word of truth, " the sword of the Spirit," that it may do just God 's work and no more, that it may just cut between flesh and spirit, natural religion and spiritual religion, and yet not so cut

as to cut away anything of God 's implantation , or to wound the tenderest heart that God himself has touched with his finger . But as in other cases , here we continually err . I know not what you feel , but I know that I have never done anything right in my life ; I have never said a word , nor ever done an action that could bear a strict and spiritual scrutiny . Something of my own has marred it before , in , or after it passed from me . If it came from right motives , some base and selfish feeling mingled with it and defiled it . Nor have I ever been able to wield the sword of truth aright . My heart has staggered , and my hand wavered between the two extremes of harshness and softness ; and all I seem to have said and done has been clumsily and ineffectually , like one fighting with an enemy in a dream , aiming right , but the sinews weak , and the arm unsteady , and every blow powerless and vain .

The apostle then lays before his son Timothy most solemn warnings and most profitable instruction ; and yet the blessed Spirit so filled his heart with tenderness , and so anointed his pen with authority and power , that one alive in God 's fear cannot recoil from the one or the other . And as our text seems to contain in it this admixture of instruction , warning , and tenderness , I shall , without farther preface , simply take up the subject as it lies before me , believing that " rightly to divide the word of truth ," and to divide the living from the dead , is a division more suitable with the Scriptures , and more profitable to the people of God , than a formal division into heads of my own making , which were I to adopt , I should probably not be able to adhere to . " That thou by them mightest war a good warfare ; holding faith and a good conscience , which some having put away , concerning faith have made shipwreck ."

" That thou by them ." What does the apostle mean by this expression ? It refers to the words that immediately precede . " This charge I commit unto thee , son Timothy , according to the prophecies that went before on thee , that thou by them " (that is , by the prophecies , according to them , in obedience to them , acting with reference to them .) " mightest war a good warfare ." In the primitive church there were persons who were called prophets , (1 Corinthians 12:28 , Ephesians 4:11 .) Their office was not , generally speaking , to predict future events , — they were not prophets in the Old Testament sense of the word , but they were what we should call , in modern language , " preachers ." This seems evident from the effect ascribed to their prophesying , (1 Corinthians 14:24 & 25 .) " But if all prophesy , and there come in one that believeth not , or one unlearned , he is convinced of all , he is judged of all : and thus are the secrets of his heart and manifest ; and so , falling down on his face , he will worship God , and report that God is in you of a truth ." Here we see what the effect of their prophesying was . The prediction of future events could not " judge ," that is , condemn a casual hearer , nor make manifest the secrets of his

heart ; but the preaching of truth in the power of God the Holy Ghost , is every way calculated to convince of sin , and lay bare the hidden re - cesses of conscience . Again , we read , " Let the prophets speak two or three and let the other " (that is those who sit by ,) " judge ," that is , decide , if he preaches truth . They could not judge whether he pre - dicted future events aright , for that could be proved only by their ful - fillment . " For ye may all prophesy one by one , that all may learn , and all may be comforted ." The prediction of events to come , communicates neither instruction nor comfort at the time , but preaching does both . And , therefore , we gather that these prophets were not prophets in the strict sense of the term , as pre - dicting events to come , but preach - ers of God's truth . Now it seems that when Timothy was set apart for the work of the ministry , there were certain prophecies uttered by those preachers in the church to which Timothy belonged . No doubt , lessons of instruction how Timothy was to conduct himself ; no doubt , lessons of deep and solemn warn - ings , that he should be faithful to the Lord that had put him into the ministry ; no doubt , encourage - ments also and promises that the Lord would stand by him , and enable him to do that work to which he had called him .

The apostle then , writing to Timothy , reminds him of what was spoken to him , when he was set apart for the ministry . " This charge I commit unto thee , son Timothy , according to the prophecies which went before on thee , that thou by them ," — that is , " that thou , " in strict compliance with them , " that thou " by their weight and their power resting upon thy mind , " that thou " by the application of them to thy conscience , and by walking in the path which those prophecies point - ed , " that thou ," in strict accordance with those solemn words of instruc - tion which were dropped from the mouth of God through his prophets , " mightest war that good warfare " to which thou art called . This seems to me to be the most consistent and the most scriptural interpretation of the words .

But we gather from this apostolic charge , that Timothy was a soldier of Jesus Christ . He says to him , in his second Epistle , (2:3 & 4) teaching him under figures , " Thou , there - fore , endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ . No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life , that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier ." Timothy then had been enlisted under the banner of the Lord . He was no voluntary recruit , but the Lord " had chosen him to be a soldier ," had selected him out of others for the express purpose that he might fight his battles , had called him by his grace , and quickened him by his Spirit , had put upon him the whole armour of God , equipped him with " the breastplate of righteous - ness , the sword of the Spirit and the shield of faith , having shod his feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace , and girt his loins about with truth ," and thus sent him into the field to war a good warfare , and to fight under the banner of Immanuel .

The apostle then , addressing

him as a " faithful soldier of Jesus Christ," tells him that he must " war a good warfare ," and gives him some instructions how he is to war this " good warfare ," by holding " faith and a good conscience ," solemnly warning him that some who had put away " a good conscience , con - cerning faith had made shipwreck ." The first part of his injunction is " to war a good warfare ." This implies that there is such a thing as warring a bad warfare ; for if there were no warring a bad warfare , there could be no meaning in the charge , that he was to war " a good warfare ." There are many who are guilty of this capital charge . Those , for instance , war a bad warfare who fight on the side of error against truth : this comprehends all Arminians , Arians , Socinians , and other opposers of the doctrines of grace . Those too war a bad warfare , who fight against the convictions of their own con - sciences , and against all the solemn warnings that are in the word of God against the impenitent , the ungodly , and the unbelieving . But the charge given to Timothy that he was to take especial heed to war " a good war - fare ," implies that is possible even for the soldier of the Lord to war a bad warfare . The good soldier then wars a bad warfare , when he goes out into the field of battle in his own strength , wisdom , and righteous - ness , " at his own charges ," as the apostle elsewhere speaks , (1 Cor . 9:7 ,) equipped in armour of his own making , and his own putting on . Of this folly those are guilty who at - tempt to convince people of the truths of religion by argument , to make proselytes to a certain scheme of doctrine , and to enlist under the banner of party those who the Spirit of God does not call by his quick - ening grace .

He , too , wars a bad warfare who contends for truth in a bitter spirit , who dips his words in vinegar , and cannot spread forth a table with the milk and honey of the gospel , with - out setting on it the wormwood and gall of his own morose temper .

He also wars a bad warfare , who distresses " the poor and needy " of God 's family . He plays the part of Amalek , who fell upon the rear of Israel 's army , and " smote the hindmost of them , even all that were feeble , faint , and weary ," (Deut . 25:18 ,) and therefore , unable to keep up with the march of Israel .

Timothy was a minister of righteousness , and yet Paul warns him to war a good warfare . Mini - sters , then , of truth may be led aside into warring a bad warfare . Good men have preached the gospel in their own spirit ; have built up hypo - crites and distressed the living family ; have sought to make pro - selytes to their own opinions , rather than to bring converts to the feet of Jesus ; have gone forth in their own strength , as though they would beat down error by weapons of their own manufacture , instead of going as " poor and needy ," weak and feeble, and hanging wholly and solely upon the strength of the Lord .

And so private Christians war a bad warfare , by fighting with wea - pons which are not put into their hands by the Spirit of God . The living soul sometimes finds a powerful working of sin in him , a rising up of base lusts , carving and hankering

after forbidden things. Convinced of the guilt of these things, and of the hatred of God against them, he seeks to overcome them in the strength of the flesh. This is not warring "a good warfare," because he wars not against his passions with spiritual weapons, but encounters flesh by flesh, and employs the strength and wisdom of the creature to keep down the evil and corruption of the creature.

Others of God's children war not "a good warfare," by not keeping to the post which the Lord has assigned them in the battle. The Lord places each of his children in a certain post; some he chooses should be weak and feeble; others he chooses should be powerful and strong. Some he sends into the front ranks to fight manfully "the good fight of faith;" others he places in the rear, because he knows that they are not strong enough to fight against his enemies. He then, whom God places in the front rank to fight his battles, that deserts his post through cowardice or love of lucre, wars not "a good warfare; he is a deserter from the post where the Lord has placed him. And he that rushes, uncalled, into the front ranks, when the Lord has assigned him an inferior place; he that instigated, by his own pride and presumption, pushes himself into the pulpit, without the Lord's calling him up there, wars not a good warfare, by assuming a situation to which the Captain of armies has never appointed him. He too wars a bad warfare, that leagues with God's enemies, and deserts God's friends, that wears the regimentals of the corps in which he is enlisted, and yet is carrying on treacherous designs with the enemy. Are there not professors of religion, yea, some who we hope are God's people, that can be, as they say, "all things to all men," and change their creed according to their company, that desert the principles which they profess to hold in one place, when those principles are attacked in another? And thus wearing the dress, and receiving the pay of the great King, they through cowardice, or fickleness, espouse the part of the enemy.

Again; those war a bad warfare who hang on the outskirts of the army, watching every unguarded place, observing every wavering regiment, scanning with curious eyes the weakest points, and perhaps affording intelligence to the enemy. These are the spies and renegades that hang upon the flanks of the army of the Lord of Hosts. Are not some such here? you keen-eyed observers that are watching for the slips and falls of God's children, that are ready to catch up every incautious expression dropped from their lips, that are ever seeking to make a minister an offender for a word, and carp and cavil unless every syllable be squared or rounded according to your fancy, are not you warring a bad warfare?

But the apostle tells Timothy what weapons he must make use of in order to war "a good warfare." "Holding faith and a good conscience, which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck." These are the two weapons which the Lord of Host

equips his champions with , and which he bids them hold fast . We will consider them separately , and see how appropriate and suitable these weapons are to the soldiers that fight under the Lord 's banner .

The first weapon which he is to hold is " faith ." It is not an implement for show , but for use ; not to be suspended in the armoury , like the pistols and bayonets in the Tower , nor like a rusty broad - sword over a man 's chimney piece ; but to be grasped and held . But before he can hold it he must have it . The weapon must be put into his hands . It is the King 's gift , for faith is " the gift of God ." It is that which is committed to him . " O , Timothy , " he says , " keep that which is committed unto thy trust ." The weapon of faith therefore is put into the hand of the soldiers of the cross ; not suspended in God 's word , that armoury of truth ; not admired as worn by the side of others ; not a mere weapon in readiness for some nightly thief , which may never be needed for a whole life ; but a weapon for daily use , first received and then held , and wielded in such a way as the Lord himself shall direct .

But what has faith to do in this " good warfare ? " why should it be so important , so indispensable a weapon ? Because every step of ground that we advance upon , we can only advance upon through faith every enemy that we have to contend against , we can only contend against in faith ; every promise that shall be for our support , every instruction which shall direct us how to act , every reproof and solemn rebuke that shall be for our spiritual chastisement , we can only receive by faith . And therefore the soldier , without the weapon of faith , stands naked and defenceless before his enemy . Think not yourselves , then , soldiers in the army of the Lord of Hosts , unless you know something of what it is to hold a weapon of faith in your hands .

This " good warfare " is carried on against three principal ene - mies — the flesh , the world , and the devil ; and each of these enemies so closely allied to ourselves , and each so powerful and so hostile , that they must surely overcome us , unless we are " strengthened with strength in the inner man ." There is the flesh , with all its baits , charms , and subtle attractions , continually laying its gins and traps for our feet ; per - petually ensnaring us in some evil word or some evil work , and we in ourselves utterly defenceless against it . — Said I defenceless ? — yea , eager to run into it , like the silly bird that sees the grains of corn spread in the trap , but thinks not , when it flutters around it , that the brick will fall and confine it a pri - soner . So we , allured by a few grains of corn spread before our eyes , often see not the snare , until we are fast entangled therein . Faith then is that eye of the soul which sees the concealed hook ; by faith we call upon the Lord to deliver us from snatching at the bait ; and by faith , as a spiritual weapon , we cut at times the snare asunder . Oh , how defenceless are we , when the temp - tations and allurements of the flesh plead for indulgence , unless faith is in exercise , unless faith realizes the hatred of God against sin , and brings

into our consciences a sense of God's heart - searching eye, and his wrath against all transgression! But where the Lord has put this weapon of faith into the hand of his soldier, he will often strengthen his arm to wield it in these seasons of extremity, even though that weapon should cut and wound self.

" How Joseph was enabled to resist the snares spread for his feet, by calling to mind the presence of the Lord! How he was strengthened to break asunder that bond which was fast twining round his heart, when faith sprung up in his soul, and he said, " How, can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God!" How the three children who were about to be cast into the burning fiery furnace, unless they would worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up, overcame that dreadful temptation to renounce their God and prove apostates, by living faith! How the worthies recorded in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, who wandered about in sheep - skins and goat - skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented: " out of weakness were made strong and waxed valiant in fight," simply through that faith whereby they were enabled to see the invisible God and the glories of the unseen world! And how in this country and in this very metropolis, martyrs have gone to the stake, and died horrible deaths, rather than renounce the Lord Jesus, simply and solely, through the exercise of that living faith which the God of all grace had implanted in their souls! Oh, what a weapon faith is, when the Lord does but give us power to wield it! How, as Hart says,

" It cuts its way through hosts of devils
While they fall before the word."

But when sin, temptation, and unbelief beat this weapon out of our hands, when it lies seemingly shivered at our feet, and we cannot get another such sword from God's armoury, how we stand naked and defenceless before our enemies! Therefore what need we have not merely of this heavenly grace in our souls, but to hold it fast and not let it go, lest the enchantress should catch our feet in her wiles and snares.

J.C. Philpot

(Sent in by Roy and Nancy Pullig.)

GALATIANS 1 : 8-12.

But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 1990

C .C . Wilbanks , LA 12.00
Irvin W . Clifton , VA 2.00
J . Cline Chandler , NC 2.00
Mrs . Sara Cody , AZ 20.00
Mrs . James H . Terral , TX ... 2.00
W .L . Knight , NC 2.00
Mrs . Ethel S . Carter , NC 2.00
Kenneth Conner , VA 2.00
Mrs . Naomi Houser , VA 12.00
Ted McDaniel , VA 7.00
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Mrs . Cara McDuff , TX 2.00
Mrs . Patsy R . Mitchell , TX 2.00
Eld . Jesse Foreman , NC 7.00
Mrs . Lora Smith , NC 2.00

OBITUARIES

VIRGIE McMILLIN MARZE

Sister Virgie Marze passed away in DeRidder , La . Memorial Hospital , Septemer 20, 1989 , as the age of 87 years . She was married to her late husband , Deacon Johnny L . Marze . To this union were born 2 sons , 3 daughters , and many grandchildren and great grandchildren , one son , and one daughter preceeded her in death .

At the time of their passing Sister Virgie and Deacon Johnny Marze were members of Mount Pisgah Primitive Baptist Church at Fields , La . She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for over 45 years . She dearly loved the church and visited other churches on a regular basis . During 3 day meetings , she gladly entertained members in her home at the Junction near Merryville , La . Those who knew sister Virgie loved her and miss her .

A sister that loved her ,
Odessa Marze

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5 / 90
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE .

CLARA MYRTLE TIPTON

Our precious sister , Myrtle Tipton was called from the walks of life , Jan . 7 , 1990 . " And Joseph went up to bury his father ." Genesis 50:7 . We understand that Jacob had made preparations for his grave in the land of Cannan . Sister Tipton had made all the necessary arrangements for her funeral . We feel that the God of truth , love and mercy blessed her with a believing heart that his blessed will is done in

the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth . Her husband , Elder Austin Tipton , one daughter and two sons feel the sorrow of the loss of a precious member of their family . She was also survived by one sister , six brothers , ten grand - children and twelve great grand - children .

Many seasons we enjoyed with our precious sister at the Little Flock Church , Bakersfield , Ca . and also went to Texas and Mobile , Ala . to meet with our Kindred in hope . In ful - filling Sister Tipton 's request , this unworthy one spoke a few words , hoping that our God would be honor - ed at this solemn meeting . " The Lord of hosts , he is king of glory ," Psalms 24:10 .

Walter B . Wilson

ANNIE IRENE WATSON

Annie Irene Watson , daughter of the late Spencer and Wal - cie Cook Palmer born February 5 , 1902 and died on January 5 , 1990 making her earthly pilgrimage one month short of 88 years . She lived a long and good life and was loved and respected by many in her community as evidenced by the attendance at her funeral .

Sister Watson joined the Friend - ship Predestinarian Baptist Church in , Whitehouse , Tennessee , many years ago , being baptized by the late Elder Ramer Lee Biggs her pastor and a widely known and loved mini - ster in the Nashville Area and sur - rounding states . She was a faithful and devoted member of her church and her home was open to baptist at any time and was a favorite gather - ing place at their annual meetings .

She was in poor health for several years but attended meetings as often as she could and many times when she was really too sick . Her last time to attend was at their annual meeting at her home church in November and she had to have oxygen , but she attended and en - joyed both days . She had expressed a desire that the funeral be held in her home church , but , the doors were too narrow for the Casket . There was a eulogy service con - ducted in Cole and Garrett Funeral Home in Whitehouse , Tenn . by her grandson Freddy Cope , then the procession to the cemetery stopped at the church , her casket was rolled onto the driveway in front of the church and her funeral service was conducted there in the yard by Elder Richard H . Campbell .

Sister Watson is survived by sons ; Robert Cope of Goodlettsville, Tenn . Claude Cope of Portland , Tenn . and Jerry Cope of Frankfort , Ky ., a daughter Frances Frenary preceeded her in death , 14 grand - children , 19 great grandchildren and 1 great , great grandchild , a sister Atlas Covington , Goodlettsville , Tenn . and a brother Clyde Palmer of Whitehouse , Tenn .

May the sadness of her death always be eclipsed by the precious memories of her life and all that she meant to her family , her church and others who loved her dearly .

Written by request of the Church ,
Richard H . Campbell
Marjorie Cook

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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POEM

Rejoice, believer, in the Lord,
Who makes your cause his own;
The hope that 's built upon his word
Can ne 'er be overthrown.

Though many foes beset your road,
And feeble is your arm,
Your life is hid with Christ in God,
Beyond the reach of harm.

Weak as you are, you shall not faint,
Or fainting, shall not die!
Jesus, the strength of every saint,
Will aid you from on high.

Though not unseen by outward sense,
Faith sees him always near;
A guide, a glory, a defense —
Then what have you to fear?

As surely as he overcame
And triumphed once for you,
So surely you that love his name,
Shall triumph in him, too.

Newton.

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EDITORIAL

" In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John: 1:1.

ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS

From my ability to reason this verse alone, will stop all men from trying to understand or teach others to understand the Bible from natural ability, if they are honest with themselves.

First let us and all men living in a time frame which the earth contains try to explain the beginning. Our beginning starting with life itself, (this being debated throughout the world today when earth began) and even this life's beginning we can't remember for the first several years.

We read God is the beginning and the end, but when was the beginning? As old as men that study such, say it is. If this earth is thousands of millions of years old, even they can't explain when was the beginning.

How can we understand, when, how or what of something that was in the beginning, and was with God and was God. Then can we obtain unto or explain to others or know of anything that has been, " In the beginning? "

The more I've thought of this the more a mystery it becomes, but some way we can't deny the Word has ever been with God and is God. We think it's an acceptable idea that this Word spoken of here is Christ, that was to come. The Savior of His people. My mind is searching, but rests each time on the thought that if, in the mind and purpose of God, and His ways and His thoughts are as high above man's ways and thoughts as the heavens are above the earth, His people were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the earth, then they were also in the beginning.

We can as carnal beings remember when in the beginning of our spiritual experience. God came to us, to speak peace to our troubled souls, if not deceived in the matter. This was God's beginning with us, this we remember and treasure; it was a beginning of something new with us, the first glimpse of God who has forever been, yet begins a good work in us that will be performed until the day of Jesus Christ. Names of His children written in the Book and sealed. Wasn't this in the beginning

God 's recording of things sure to come? Each thing accomplished by human effort is done at a certain time , we live in a time world . The bible verifies this in Eccles . 3 ch . verse 2 " a time to be born , and a time to die," etc. Yet with God there is nothing new , a day as a thousand years , and a thousand years as a day. For generation after generation promised to never leave or forsake , but be with each of His people all the way , even to the end . Psalm 136 each were reading " for his mercy endureth forever ."

In time we trust, in time we faint, in time we pray if blessed, we live in time , short or long as it may be , all we do or say every act is in time with constant change , yet He who was in the beginning says Malachi; chap. 3 verse 6 " For I am the Lord, I change not , therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed ." What a precious thought , though we can 't under - stand God, only small parts that may be revealed , we believe He has forever loved His people , does today , and will fulfill His promise to them some day although not ac - cording to a time world at His time He will come again to claim all His people . We and all time will pass , but He who was in the beginning with God and was God will present a saved people to God the Father without spot or blemish , a cleansed people washed white in the blood of the Lamb . No end with God , only with us .

J .R . Williams

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Household of faith :

What do I believe ? and why ? Those above questions are daily upon my mind . Along with others such as ; am I truthfully even aware of what I do believe ? And if so , is it only a head type religion? Or could it be , in my heart and soul also? Is what I feel and hope , of the " Lord ," and therefore in and of the Holy truth as it is in the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ? Oh how I do hope , it is of Him whom is the one and only Giver of every good and perfect gift . For if that so be , then I do believe the Holy truth , and my hope is not in vain; For it is a gift from God . If this hope I feel , so be His gift unto me , then my sweet hope shall surely continue throughout this earthly life , as that by which I live . For God said , His children live by hope . (I hope I could be one of them .) Now if what I feel , indeed is my belief ; then I do feel and believe that " God is " — eternal ; and there - fore without beginning of days or ending of years . and that " He is " almighty and unchanging . " That " as were His thoughts concerning all heaven and earth and the fullness thereof and all its comings and go - ings and continuations and / or end - ings , and any and all events to ever transpire or take place throughout all time and eternity . So shall it be . I believe " God " cannot lie . I believe those words recorded in the bible are and were pinned down ; as the

original writers were inspired by the Holy Spirit of God to write them; and therefore are the word of God. I have read all those writings ; and I must confess ; that most of what I read, I had no understanding of their true meaning ; and yet I feel they all are the Holy truth in their true meaning. One of the few things of which I do (from time to time) feel to have a clear understanding of is ; that I (of myself) am as near nothing and less than nothing, as it is possible for one to be. Another thing I feel to know for a certainty , is that without " God " (that is to say, His furnishing of any and all necessary strength , for my very existence and being and doing.) Then no part nor portion of any of my being or living, could ever function at all, and most assuredly, except His Holy Spirit worketh an understanding within me, then no part nor portion of His Holy truth could I ever understand. I feel to believe, that all creations were and are created by God and for His use in the fulfilling of His purpose as was and is His own good pleasure. That His power and greatness might be made known unto men; and all to His own glory. I feel to believe that the natural mind of man has never even remotely comprehended any portion of the reality of God as He is . I feel to further believe, that none except His afore chosen children shall ever comprehend of His reality as He is ; until that final closing or ending of all time for their world to stand has come ; When every knee shall bow and confess that " He is God." Then and only then, will all those " of" the world know for a certainty that " He is God " and besides Him there was and is no God ; and that all others they have worshipped were gods many ; and of satan or the devil.

The world is preaching to all whom will listen , that mankind can by his own choosing gain merits toward the deliverance of his soul unto heaven and immortal glory. But inasmuch strength of firmness as God may (if His will) furnish me with; I desire to declare that no man (and let me say , this does include woman) save " Jesus Christ " who ever lived has ever (of himself) thought one thought ; spake one word; taken one step, had one intent or purpose in either mind or heart , whereby could ever merit him or her even one favor from God . But instead, our every self matured function has been and is (as having to do with good as is good in the sight of God) deserving of no more highth than the bottomless pit of an ever burning hell. Now that is all (man of himself) has ever done ; in so far as meriting , or earning , or making himself one iota worthy, of a place in heaven and immortal glory. Even if such method of earning were possible which I believe is not possible.

Troy G. Shepard

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VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

FAITH AND A GOOD CONSCIENCE

A SERMON
PREACHED ON LORD 'S DAY EVENING, July 4, 1841
BY J.C. PHILPOT
At Zoar Chapel, Great Alie St., Whitechapel.

" That thou by them mightest war a good warfare ; holding faith, and a good conscience, which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck." 1 Timothy 1:18 & 19.

So again with respect to the world. What a snare the world is to God 's people ! Oh, the excitement of this past week !* How many of God 's children has it en - snared ! How they have been carried headlong into the whirlpool of poli - tics ! How anxious they have been that the side which they favoured should be triumphant, and how deeply interested in all that has taken place ! How their hearts have been drawn away from him who sit - teth enthroned on the water - floods, holding the reins of government, and directing all things according to the counsel of his own will ! But faith in a man 's bosom in lively exercise will make him proof against such politi - cal agitation, such carnal excite - ment. He that can look upon a suffering Jesus, that can view with eyes of faith an agonizing God, who received into his soul dewdrops of atoning blood, and manifestations of redeeming mercy, who longs after some secluded spot, where he can hold sweet communion with the risen Lord of life and glory, what interest can he feel who holds the helm of politics, or who stands at the head of the poll ? But only so far as faith realizes these eternal realities, and the soldier of the cross holds his weapon fast, can he overcome that intoxicating spirit of political excite - ment which ; now makes well nigh every heart to beat and every eye to glisten. Only by faith leading him into some spiritual sympathy and communion with heavenly things can he view these exciting scenes as an empty pageant and gaudy show that is passing away with all its actors into an eternity of woe.

So again when Satan comes in with his fierce temptations and fiery darts, what but faith can enable the soul to stand up against them, as the apostle says, " above all having the shield of faith wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, Ephesians 6:16. No - thing but faith in God, in his power and presence ; nothing but faith in Jesus, in his blood and his right - eousness ; nothing but faith in the Holy Ghost, as lifting up a standard in the heart by means of his divine operations ; nothing but faith in a triune God can enable the soul to battle against Satan 's assaults. Therefore see how indispensable faith is to fight a good fight, yea, so indispensable that a good fight is called emphatically " the fight of faith." " fight the good fight of faith," (1 Timothy 6:12), implying that true faith will enable a man to come off more than conqueror through every battle and to survive every conflict.

* The week of the general election of members of Parliament for the City of London and Metropolitan boroughs.)

But the apostle adds another word, and a very solemn word it is, " holding faith," he says, " and a good conscience, which" (that is, " " good conscience," the word in the original being in the singular number,) " some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck.

There is another weapon, then which the soldier of the cross has, and holds — " good conscience." We find that, in the apostle's time, there were characters who held faith, or rather what they called faith, and put away " good conscience." He mentions by name, " Hymeneus and Alexander, who he had delivered unto Satan," that is, excommunicated them out of the church, as heretics and blasphemers. But if to have put good conscience away, stamps a man as unfit for the visible church of God, it behooves us to search whether we have this weapon at our side, and in our hand. What does the apostle, then, mean by " a good conscience?" I believe he means a conscience alive in God's fear, a spiritual conscience, a tender conscience, what he calls, in another part, " a pure conscience:" " holding faith in a pure conscience," that is, purified from ignorance, from guilt, from the power of sin, " a conscience void of offense toward God and men." Wherever, then, there is living faith in the soul, there will be united with it " a good conscience." The Lord never sends forth a soldier to fight his battles with the weapon of faith only; he puts faith in one hand and " a good conscience" in the other. And he that goes forth with what he thinks to be faith, and casts aside " a good conscience," will manifest himself to be one of those characters, who " concerning faith, make shipwreck."

This is a solemn word of warning for you, that despise the workings of conscience, that think it legal, that are all for faith, and scorn all admonitions of an inward monitor. May the Lord apply it to your souls, lest you should prove to be one of those characters, who, having put away " a good conscience," " concerning faith, will make shipwreck."

But why is it called " a good conscience?" Because it comes down from God, who is the author of all good, the giver of " every good gift, and every perfect gift." There is none good but he (Matthew 19:17), and there is nothing good but what he himself implants and communicates. This weapon of a good conscience, that the Lord arms his soldiers with, works with faith, as well as proves its sincerity of faith, and tests its genuineness and reality. Faith, without a good conscience, is dead. It bears upon it the mark of nature, and however high it may rise in confidence, or however it may seem to abound in good works, it is not the faith of God's elect, of which the end is the salvation of the soul.

But it may be asked, how does a good conscience work with faith? What is the connection between these two weapons, and how do they mutually support and strengthen each other? In this way. What faith believes, good conscience feels; what faith receives, good

conscience holds ; what faith em - braces , good conscience rivets fast ; when faith is weak , good conscience is feeble; and when faith is strong, good conscience is active. They grow and they wan together , and like two stems from one root together do they flourish and fade . For instance , sometime through cowardice we shrink back from the post to which God has assigned us . How glad should I often be never to mount a pulpit again . How willing should I be , at times , to retire to some sequestered spot , to live a quiet and secluded life , and be set free from all the trying exercises of the ministry , and all the arrows that presumptuous professors and un - godly men shoot at every one who desires to be faithful . But I feel that this cannot be; I have put my hand to the plough and dare not look back . " A good conscience " begins to work . What ! to leave the Lord 's work , and slink away , because the arrows fly thick and fast ! To desert one's allotted post! Why, a sentinel that leaves his beat because the night is cold , or the enemy near , runs a risk of being shot . He has deserted his post through effemin - acy or cowardice . He does not " endure hardness ," or he turns back in the day of battle .

Sometimes , on the other hand , as I hinted before , there is that in us , which would push us out of the place which God has assigned us , would thrust us forward , when the Lord 's inward work would keep us back . Here too , " good conscience begins to work . It manifests the secret presumption of those steps ; its acute ear detects the hollow ground upon which we are walking ; its piercing eye discovers the vol - cano, near the crater of which we are treading; it checks the onward step, and realizing some measure of the displeasure of God against those who slight his word , brings back the soul to its right place , the spot where the Holy Ghost has himself set it down . Thus , if a man goes forward , " good conscience " pulls him back to his place . If a man slink back - ward , " good conscience " pushes him forward into the spot which God has assigned him . Thus , " good conscience" keeps the soldier at the post where the God of armies has placed him .

So , when the flesh presents its tempting baits , and comes forward with all its allurements , " good con - science " is the sentinel on the watch . " Good conscience " de - scribes the wiggling serpent gliding through the grass ; sees the crest , and hears the hissing of the adder . Before the rattle - snake springs for - ward , it hears the rattle , and begins to alarm and warn the soul of the dangers unperceived by all but it - self . Thus , " good conscience ," as a watchful sentinel sounding the alarm in the soul , pulls the soldier back from the dangers that beset his path . It warns him of the mines that the enemy is working under his feet; points out the hidden stakes on which he might run and destroy him - self ; gives him notice of the strata - gems and ambushes which the enemy is preparing . And thus , " good conscience " sounding its alarm in his ear , keeps him from the snare that is spread for his feet .

So , when the world , that power -

ful antagonist of the living soul, hangs out its charms, or brings forward its fears, when it comes in this shape, "If you join yourselves to the people of God, you will sink in everybody's estimation, you will lose your character, will injure your property, will offend your friends, will disgrace, as they consider it, your relations;" "good conscience" answers, "I am firmly convinced that those whom you despise are the people of the living God; that the experience which you ridicule is the truth of God; that the things I have received are things to live and die by; and therefore I will cleave to them at any cost, knowing that salvation is in them." Thus, "good conscience" keeps a man from being carried away by the fear of the world. So, when lukewarm professors, seek to draw us aside into their smooth and easy path, "good conscience" is upon the watch; "good conscience" calls to remembrance the sufferings of Jesus; and reminds us of the Lord's dealings with all his saints, and with our own souls in times past. The Lord the Spirit drops his admonitions into the ear of conscience, and it testifies against all flowery paths in religion, and sounds aloud, "Through much tribulation must you enter the kingdom of God." So, also, when Satan, the third antagonist of the living soul — the third enemy of the soldiers of the Lord, infuses base imaginations, and hurls his fiery darts, good conscience, being alive in God's fear, recoils with horror from his injections and call loudly upon the Lord to bruise him under our feet, and give us help and strength to resists his fearful insinuations. Or, when this subtle enemy changes his garb, and transforms himself into an angel of light, good conscience, living under the Spirit's teachings, sees the swarthy skin under the robe of light, and resists his delusions as firmly as his blasphemies.

He then alone wars the good warfare, who goes forth with faith in the one hand, and "good conscience" in the other; faith strengthening conscience, and conscience strengthening faith; each doing their separate office, but still tending to one end; each accomplishing the work which the Lord has appointed, and yet each fighting the Lord's battles, and bringing the soldier safe and victorious over his enemy.

But there were those in the apostle's time, as there are those in our time, who "put away good conscience." "All they wanted," said they, "was faith;" what had they to do with conscience? What need they mind about sin? Sin could not damn them, or do them any harm; sin could not blot their names out of the covenant; a child of God could not backslide, "for his new nature," argued they with logical dexterity, "could not go backward, and his old nature never went forward, and so between the two, backsliding was impossible." A true believer always stood firm in the liberty of the gospel, and was not to be entangled in the yoke of bondage. What then had they to do with this legal conscience? These characters are described by Jude (verse 12,) as "feeding themselves without fear;" and by Peter, "While they promise

them liberty , they themselves are the servants of corruption ." Their very language testifies an absence of living faith. They had, what they called , " faith ," but which would more properly be called, " vain confidence , presumption , and delusion." Bolstered up by this, they put away " good conscience ." They would not have the ballast in the hold, that they might sail the faster. They did not want exercises, temptations, doubts, fears, distresses, and soul conflicts ; they wanted to hoist the main - sail to the wind. But this lightening of their ship by casting their lading into the sea, when they loose the rudder - bands, and hoist up the main - sail to the wind, will bring them into the same spot into which it brought the ship in which Paul was prisoner. " And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the fore-part stuck fast, and remained immovable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of waves." (Acts 27:41.) That was the fruit of casting the wheat into the sea, and hoisting the main - sail to the wind. And those will meet with the same fate who cast out the ballast, and throw overboard " good conscience" as so much lumber and legality, who heave into the sea this burdensome companion, this moping creature that is always croaking between decks. Many professors in our day put away " good conscience ." They want to travel faster than " good conscience " will allow. They love a few sins which " good conscience" remonstrates against. They like their strong glass, and a little wordly conversation, and a little merry - making and amusement. A Christian, say they, is to be a cheerful character, he is not to be ever crying and groaning and sighing, and to confine himself to a few poor, moping creatures like himself, but to be lively and agreeable, to go into the world, and let his " light so shine before men, that they may see his good works," (Matthew 5:16.) 'And' (say others, of the same cast) ' in business, we must do as other people do. There is no carrying on trade now a- days, unless you do business as it is generally done. You must not be so particular and so nice about drawing bills upon fictitious credit. If there is an advantage to be taken over an unwary customer, why it is quite reasonable to take it, and make the most of your superior knowledge. People, ' he says ' of a scrupulous conscience may indeed call it cheating and swindling, but we call it a matter of trade, all in the way of business. ' I don 't see ,' he argues, ' why the professor of religion should be debarred from acting as others, or why he should suffer in the world, as he can never rise to be a respectable tradesman, unless he takes such advantages as other people take in the same line of business .' Now what is all this ? It is putting away " a good conscience ." It is casting aside that which God stamps in his word as a weapon for his soldiers to hold fast. It is manifesting the black mark of reprobation — a seared conscience. It is shewing the cloven foot beneath the robe of profession. And what is the consequence ? " Concerning faith they make shipwreck ." That will be the fearful end, the awful termina -

tion of the voyage. And how do they make shipwreck? They strike upon some sandbank, or some hidden shoal, and when they are stuck fast there, the waves of God's vengeance, and the winds which he has held in his fists, rise in everlasting fury, beat against the ship, and dash it into a thousand pieces. As long as there were no shoals or rocks, they could ride gallantly over the waves, and outsail many a deeply laden vessel, but when they stuck upon the reef, and the breakers beat over their heads, they soon went down into the boiling waves. Thus some of these gallant ships run upon the sandbank of open sin, and when they are firmly fixed there, God manifest his wrath in their consciences, the waves of his indignation beat upon them, and down they go to eternal perdition with all their sins upon their heads. Others seem to be making with crowded sails for the harbour. But just as they near the port, a sudden and violent gust dashes them against the pier-head, and they make shipwreck, at the very moment when they think that they are about to enter, with flowing sheet, into the haven of eternal rest. Their false peace gives way on a deathbed, and they die in all the agonies of despair. And why do they make shipwreck? Because they sailed forth in a ship of their own providing; because the Lord never sat at the helm; because "good conscience" was never upon the look out; because faith was never examining the chart; and because there was no anxiety nor earnest cry, that the heavenly Pilot would steer their bark through the shoals and sandbanks which lay in their course. But, on they went recklessly and carelessly; "sure," they said, "to be saved; they never could be lost; they stood so strong in Christ, they had such a scriptural creed, and were so well satisfied with the security of the ancient settlements, and eternal covenant transactions, that they were certain of going to heaven." And thus driven on by presumption, and neglecting all reproofs, warnings, precepts, and rebukes, trusting to the mere letter of truth, and ignorant of heavenly power, they made shipwreck of that very thing in which they put all their reliance — their faith. Now, these characters never had living faith, the faith of God's elect. Had they been possessed of divine faith, they would have had "a good conscience" with it. And therefore, when the apostle says, "who having put away a good conscience, concerning faith have made shipwreck," he does not mean to say, they had made shipwreck of real faith, but in the matter of faith, concerning that which they esteemed to be faith, but which, in reality, was daring presumption, of such faith as they had they made shipwreck. That bark to which they trusted their lives, and in which they expected to sail into the harbour of endless bliss, foundered and went down, because it was not built, charted, steered, and preserved by the hands of God himself.

Now, you whom the Lord, as you profess, has called out of the world, and out of the general religion of the day to stand by the side of the gospel truth, what know you of these weapons? Has God equipped you with

his own hands ? Has he girt the sword of faith by your side ? Has he put this divine weapon into your hands ? Examine the blade ; look at its temper; mark its edge. Is it of the true Damascus sort ? Has it been steeped in the waters of Jordan ? Has it been framed in the heavenly armour ? What is the other weapon that accompanies it ? Is it " a good conscience" a tender conscience, a living conscience, a conscience that trembles at God's word? We cannot often see our faith , but we can sometimes see our conscience. We cannot always rejoice in the Lord , but we can see whether we fear his great name . We cannot always triumph over our enemies , but we can sometimes observe whether there is a sentinel upon the look out . Thus , if you want to know whether you have faith , look at faith's companion, see what faith is attended by ; and if you find not " a good conscience," write death upon your religion . Throw away your sword ; it is useless ; it is of human manufacture ; it will break in pieces when you have to encounter your enemy , the king of terrors ; God's lightnings will shiver it then . But if the Lord has given you " a good conscience ," a tender conscience , a pure conscience he will strengthen your arm to fight " the good fight of faith ." You will often think your sword is so short , and your arm so weak that you cannot fight the Lord's battles . But if he has given you " a good conscience ," a conscience tender in his fear , he has put into your hands the sword of faith, and he will one day manifest it clearly , that he has himself equipped you with it , by giving you victory over all your foes . Oh , may the Lord raise up in our hearts , some sweet testimony , that we have a " good conscience ," and then we shall have this blessed consolation , that concerning faith we shall not make shipwreck .

J.C. Philpot

(Sent in by Roy and Nancy Pullig .)

MOVED OR MOVING ?

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Editors

BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST

Preached on Lord's Day Evening, 15th November, 1925 at Brixton Tabernacle

" And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man , it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him , neither in this world , neither in the world to come ."
(Matthew 12 : 32)

As some of God 's people have died under the most ravishing views by faith of Son of God and eternal glory , so some

of Satan's poor religious dupes have died under the most fear - ful tokens of the wrath of God most holy . Right knowledge of the truth humbles , empties of self , leads to believing , confession , and to love , thence to obedience to the gospel ; whereas , with but head knowledge only , there is pride , self - importance , nothing of living power in the soul ; no power constraining , humbling , making one to repent , to loathe self , and repent in dust and ashes before God ; no power to receive Jesus Christ nor truly to seek Him . The sow washed can and will turn to its wallowing in the mire , but not so the sheep .

One more thing may be men - tioned here as a very dark sign . I refer to the deliberate , hateful persistent attempts to hinder the gospel and its good effects upon others . Where this is done out of spite , in knowledge of what one is doing , it places that person peril - ously near this solemn doom , if , indeed , it is not the actual committal of that sin . It is worthy of careful notice that in Luke , where this sin is mentioned , the immediate connec - tion is : " And when they bring you unto the synagogues , and unto magistrates , and powers , take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer , or what ye shall say : For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say ." Compare this with Acts 3 , 4 , " And Peter , fastening his eyes upon him (the lame man) with John said , Look on us . And he gave heed unto them , expecting to receive something of them . Then Peter said , Silver and gold have I none ; but such as I have give I thee : In the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk ." It was so , for , " immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength , And he leaping stood , and walked , and entered with them into the tem - ple , walking , and leaping , and praising God ." Peter makes it abundantly clear to the multitude that it was not the holiness or power of him or John that made the man walk , but very powerfully preaches unto them Christ . Then the same old story has to be told : up came the religious leaders and teachers of that age , " being grieved that they taught the people , and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead ." And in order to show their love , their Christian spirit (who does not hear this talk today from the haters of Christ 's truth ?) " they laid hands on them , and put them in hold unto the next day ." The next day the Apostles are duly set before the rulers , elders , and scribes , and , in fulfilment exactly of the Saviour 's word in Luke 12 : 11 & 12 (" The Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye shall say ") , we read , " Then Peter , filled with the Holy Ghost , " made his glorious defense and preaches Jesus Christ of Naza - reth to them , and pointedly , faith - fully says , " This is the Stone which was set at nought of you builders , which is become the Head of the corner . Neither is there salvation in any other : for there is none other name under heaven given among men , whereby we must be saved ." What follows ? Mark the following points : " They took knowledge of

them ," and knew " they had been with Jesus ." And beholding the healed man standing before them , " They could say nothing against it ." Next they have a conference (to slander another not there to defend himself) among themselves , with this as the subject of debate , " What shall we do to these men ? for that a notable miracle hath been done by them in manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem ; and we cannot deny it . But what we cannot deny , we can hate , and do , and so let us threaten them that they speak no more in this Name ." And so they did , but God 's servants say , " Whether it be right in the sight of God to harken unto you more than unto God , judge ye ." Gladly would these dear , nice , kind , religious leaders have laid the stripes on their backs and the stones on their hearts , but they could find " nothing how they might punish them because of the people : for all men glorified God for that which was done ."

Now here was opposition to the Holy Ghost in the preaching of the gospel , and that not ignorantly , but knowingly and deliberately out of pure malice to truth . The could not deny good was done , but fought their best (or worst) against it with their eyes wide open . The days of the Apostles are over , but God has His own servants yet , and those He has sent He gives them of His Spirit , in measure , to preach the gospel of Christ , and He owns them and blesses them in the work , which is the sure signal for opposition from the religious leaders and their formal followers , who oppose with craft , cunning , conferences among themselves to stop the good work . In fact , such is their enmity to God 's order and applied truth that they will stop at nothing to render void a servant of God in his testimony and work . Whoever we fight against , if we must fight at all , let it never be against a servant or child of God ; to touch those whom God calls the apple of His eye is to do what God will be certain to punish . This sin , which still flourishes among professors , to the great grief of the godly in Zion , where done in full knowledge and in spite against the truth , is very close to the sin which shall never be forgiven , if it is not the sin itself in one of its varied forms . All such professors rolled into one , with all their malignity , their cunning , their crafty counsels with one another , can never do a servant or child of God one grain of real harm , nor hinder truly the gospel , but as overruled by God will be made a great blessing . Yet the guilt of running deliberately against the Holy Ghost , in the ministry , is theirs . Such will hurt themselves , not the object of their hate . The same hate is seen where the virgin birth of Christ is denied ; also where the full work of the Spirit in Christ 's human nature is denied ; and the plenary inspiration of the Word . In short , whatever is revealed in the Scriptures and is known in the conscience as right and true , yet , because it condemns one in his practice , or hurts his pride , or hits his envy and jealousy , is opposed simply out of hate and anger against the truth by professors of that truth ; such an one is truly in as solemn a state as he can possibly be .

There is something mysterious

as to why it should be against the Holy Ghost and not Christ. "Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him;" but he that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven. "All manner of sin and blasphemy" against the Son of Man shall, when one is brought to repentance and faith in Christ, be forgiven him experimentally. I do not feel able to unravel this mystery, but it may be remarked: firstly, it is not because the Holy Ghost is greater than the Lord Jesus Christ, for the God of the Scriptures is revealed as subsisting in three Persons, each of who is equal in nature and perfections — God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost. Not three Gods, but three Persons who are equally God. What the Father is so is the Son, and so is the Holy Spirit, unto whom may we ever be helped to ascribe equal honour and glory for the hope of our salvation. Secondly, there may be something in the phrase "Son of Man" which is recorded both by Matthew and Luke. "Son of Man", as applied to Christ Jesus, is a phrase denoting His humiliation, as thus: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." During His humiliation His Deity was largely veiled: "A root out of a dry ground." To speak against the Son of Man in the form of a Servant, while His Godhead was very largely veiled, is one thing; but to speak with contempt and malice of the Holy Spirit in His clear revelations of Him as Son of God is another. In the resurrection of Christ (in which the Holy Ghost wrought) He is "declared to be the Son of God with power," and the Holy Ghost has given the fullest attestation to His Deity and proper Sonship and divine mission and work. To speak against the Son of God out of malice and contempt, with scorn and hate, now the Holy Spirit has given such infallible proofs of what He was, and is and did, is not to speak merely against the Son of God, but it is to blaspheme the testimony of the Spirit. To speak contemptuously, maliciously, in face of knowledge to the contrary, against the Deity and Sonship of Christ, will be found eventually to differ very little, if any, from "speaking against the Holy Ghost." To speak blasphemously against His testimony of the Son of God is not less than to speak against His work by Christ when Jesus by the "finger of God" cast out the devil. To pour scorn and carnal objections upon the testimony of the Spirit when He speaks plainly of the eternal, unique, relationship of the Son with His Father, when He thus reveals the fullest glory it is possible for the Son to have, "The glory as of the only begotten of the Father"; when He shows unmistakably that the charge for which Christ died, because He said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God was blessedly true of Him, for at His resurrection the good Spirit, jointly with His Father, raised Him from the dead, and most blessedly testified of Him that He was the Son of God, equal with God because He was God; to ridicule this testimony and say it is a matter of no importance, in what does this differ from the people who in His day said He was in league

with Satan ? To speak against the Son of Man in His humiliation is one thing ; to speak against Him under the full blaze of glory as revealed by the Spirit will be found to be a most serious and solemn matter . God help us well to weigh this thought in the light of the Spirit 's teaching !

Thirdly , we would stress the word by Mark , who , speaking by the Spirit , declares the sin against the Holy Spirit to be " Because they said , He hath an unclean spirit ." This is attributing to Christ , in the face of clear evidence to the contrary , out of absolute spite against Him , unity with the most unclean spirit as implied in the filthy and disgusting name Beelzebub , or Dung - God ! As one has said , " This view of the matter is important , as implying a terrific aggravation of the sin committed by these pharisees in representing the wonderful acts of God as operations not of the devil only , but of Beelzebub , a name , though applied to Satan , is specially insulting , as it identifies Christ with the old Fly - god of the ancient enemies of Israel (the Philistines) and the Dung - god , into which this idol has been changed by the bitterness of Jewish controversial satire ."

Godly souls may ask , have we committed this terrible sin ? In general it may be said that none of God 's people can commit this sin unto death , not because their nature is not equal to it — for what others have done , they , possessing the same nature , can do — but because the Lord , in His care of His people , will not leave them to commit this sin . In particular it may be said that they who have not committed this sin , being regenerated of God , are marked by hatred of all sin , specially to such a sin as the text brings before us . They hate it , they pray to hate it more ; they are sorry they cannot hate it always , fully , deeply , and universally , that is , in all its branches . A hatred of sin , as sin , not because of its punishment , is a good mark of grace in the soul . Confession of sin before God in general , that is , acknowledgement of sin done by one and in one , and also particular confession , that is , special sins will be dealt with by such and mourned over before God from time to time as grace melts the heart . Supplications before God for repentance to be granted , godly sorrow for sin to be felt and pardon bestowed , surely tells that such a suppliant has not committed this sin unto death . Reception of the words of Christ , in a warm heart , because they are given you to have as your own possession ; a falling under the authority of His truth with meekness , willingness , and counting it your greatest honour to be subject to His truth and not to argue how near one can drive to the precipice of disobedience without going over it , as thousands are doing today , is a proof of the reality of indwelling grace . Spiritual desires for separation in spirit first , then , because of that inward separation , an outward separation from the profane and the religious camps , is another proof . And until separation in some good measure is manifested there must be doubt as to the reality of the work being of God . Leaving form - people for living - people , the external for the internal , the shell for the kernel ,

the husk for the wheat, the respectable religious for the sinners, harlots and publicans, and finding such your spiritual companions — this is a grand mark of being free from this "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit."

Once more, to have feeling enough to be worried about this point, to be exercised about it, to pray over it and against it, to seek God for evidence from Him that one has not committed it: this alone proves such are yet out of this hole of despair. "Past feeling" characterises the sinner who has fallen into this sin. It does not worry him because he has not enough sensibility to worry; nothing godly is a worry to him; he is either hardened through the deceitfulness of open sin or blinded and hardened under and by a dead formal religion: in either case he is "past feeling." Solemn state truly. A saint of God may have a hard heart, but he at his worst state is not "past feeling", because he feels his hardness, and grieves in spirit because of it. Further, he would not have it hard, and he cannot make it soft, but he does cry to One who can and does. "For God maketh my heart soft," and holy Job, and so say all the family of grace.

I have trespassed upon your time and, perhaps, patience too, but even now one feels he has scarcely touched this solemn theme, and having regard to the fact that this is the only sin which hath never forgiveness neither in this world nor in the world to come, one would try to say a few things about it in the interest of truth. Others with more grace than I have, could do much better, I am sure, on this terrible subject, but I have done what I could, as helped.

Now in closing, honour the Holy Spirit! Reverence Him as God in His teachings, all through His Word, in the work of His grace in your hearts and others. In these things I would identify myself with the weakest of you, for if left to ourselves what are we? The secret of all real religion is "Christ in you the hope of glory;" the heart affected mightily in addition to the head; vital communications with and from Christ under the unction of the Holy Ghost, and all to the glory of the Triune Jehovah, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Ernest Roe

September 1934

COLOSSIAN III. 2-4.

"Set your affection (or mind) on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

The security of God's people furnishes consolation for the tiding over many rough and stormy scenes this side the blissful state of eternity. If we had to look to anything belonging to the natural man for hope in the beyond I am persuaded that grace-taught children would be carried down so low in despair that they would cease to hope of ever seeing their Elder Brother, Jesus, and of ever being

with him and like him. In this time, when even the camps of Israel are being turned from peace and joy, trusting and resting in the wrought out righteousness of Jesus, to a tossed to and fro crowd, hearing the lo here and lo there, do we find many interpretations placed on the word. Some are telling us that we have the destiny of Zion and our own individual welfare in our own hands. We are commanded to place our minds on eternal things, instead of earthly things, because by so doing we may attain to large membership, active churches and all temporal things. But the eminent apostle does not tell us that. He gives a reason for doing this, but it is not for reward.

Let us digress a little, to get before your mind what is necessary for us to understand before we can heed the many scriptural admonitions. No man can of himself obey what is commanded. The word, as it is written by divine inspiration, does not put life or spiritual desires in the reader. Some of my best friends are people who seemingly are as destitute of the Spirit of God as any dead sinner can be, yet they can quote much Scripture. We must conclude that the Spirit alone teaches us to obey, because we would only be as foolish Galatians doing anything without the Lord. " This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are you so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain. He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? " — Gal. iii. 2-5. Here is ample evidence that the Spirit is ministered unto us by the same One that begat us to a lively hope. (1 Peter i. 3.) He that began a good work in us will not desert us to our carnal desires, which are all evil, but we may rest assured that the same God, who cannot lie (Titus i. 2), promised eternal life before the world began, and will, for the perfecting of his glory and the bringing together of many heirs, perform it all to the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil. i. 6.) " Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." — Phil. ii. 12, 13. How any man can construe this language to mean time salvation is beyond me. These were little children being addressed and admonished by their undershepherd along duty's ways. They were obeying characters, having always done so. The apostle is being led by the Spirit to admonish them to continue doing so, but, like all God-called ministers, he knows where the life is, so he is leaving the performing of that duty to God, and comfortingly tells them that all their salvation is of the Lord.

But let us desist just now on that because it would seem that the things Jesus has in store for his elect are the result of his feeling all righteousness, and that their walking in him and his commands are the direct result of his having given them the

will and working the do.

When the apostle wrote the Colossian brethren it was revelation from Jesus Christ. Set your mind on things above, and not on things of the earth. There must have been a reason other than a reward. Paul plainly tells that reason: " For ye are dead." How is the quickened child of God dead? Before the life-giving Spirit comes into their heart teaching them what sinners they are then they are dead in sin. Let us emphasize the fact that death has no degrees. Anything that is dead is destitute of any of the life under consideration. Any one who agrees with Paul that the natural man is dead in sin must agree that the child born again is also dead and both deaths being complete. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." — Rom. vi. 1-4. Here is good news indeed to the poor sin-burdened souls. They no longer love sin, but they hate it, and the hateful things in their flesh cause them much sorrow. " I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inner man." — Rom. vii. 21, 22. Oh, so many times have worldlings flung in our face, If I believed as you do I would do just anything I wanted to. Yes, and I am persuaded that only the fear of the law keeps them from it any way, because they still have the love of sin in their hearts. But with God's humble poor it is so different. They have their fill of sin and could they do the things that they would sin would be no more in their lives.

" Your life is hid with Christ in God." Lift up your drooping eyes, little wayworn pilgrims, for all is safe and secure. God, in Christ, paid it all, and nothing can take the home away from his chosen people.

" Not all the pains that e'er I bore,
Shall spoil my future peace;
For death and hell can do no more
Than what my Father please."

Our lives (if indeed he ransomed me) are hid in Christ, and for one of the elect to be left must first dethrone God himself. " My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; [How can some believe that Christ would fail to keep those he gave eternal life, when the gift meant the sacrifice of his own blood?] and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." — John x. 27-30. " And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone. — John viii. 29. " Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?" " At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." John xiv. 10, 20.

" When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also ap-

pear with him in glory." What glad tidings of great joy! What wonderful love is this manifested to poor sinners! Nothing about them to merit the notice of the sinless child Jesus, but the fact that they are covenant children, and for that reason he takes them from out the wilderness, wherein there is no water, and makes them to drink of water everlasting. That was all wrought out by him alone, when we were as yet enemies to him, but having loved his bride with an everlasting love, he goes about to pay their debt, and while paying it he is establishing a righteousness that is all complete, leaving them holy and without blame before him in love.

But our Savior is doing more for us than to die for us. By day and by night he keeps us, even when we are not mindful of ourselves. By the still waters he leads us and makes us to lie down in green pastures. The dear old walls and bulwarks of Zion are maintained by him and daily he adds to his church such as should be saved and that he would own at his second coming.

Let us not stop our meditation here, for his watchcare is not going to end at the grave. For countless ages our dust may moulder away, but his all-seeing eye never sleeps. When the Lord descends from heaven to gather his children home none will be left. They that are in the graves shall come forth; the sea shall give up its dead and those still living shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and all shall rise to meet him in the air. What more can we desire?

"God, my Redeemer, lives,
And ever from the skies,
Looks down and watches all my dust,
Till he shall bid it rise."

The years of my youth I thought much of the cold and silent tomb, and shuddered with much fear and anxiety at the thought that some time I must leave all the things of nature and lie down in death. But although still young in years, I trust that I have been shown the vain and frivolous ways of this time journey I am on, until I no longer fear to quit the walks of men as I once did. True, the natural man still dreads the sting of death, but the fiery darts that are hurled at poor wayfaring pilgrims, together with the unceasing trials and afflictions, mingled with a stubborn nature and hateful disposition, at times leave me in such a state that it would be peace to depart and be with Jesus.

Just a little more and I am through. As much as is in you, dear reader, take courage and press on a few days longer. Just a little longer on the battle field and the war will be over. Then we that have a good hope in Christ shall die a natural death, trusting sweetly and assuredly in our Assurer that some glad to-morrow he "will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name." Then shall the sheep enter into the Father's house, where there are many mansions, there to be with Jesus, and like him, to know no more the aches and pains and the things of time, but to walk in his light that illumines the city of our God,

and to sing redeeming love for ever and ever.

In a little hope,

W.D. Griffin

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The one hundred forty - ninth session of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Danville Church July 6, 7, and 8th. Services begin on Friday a.m. at 11:00 and will continue through Sunday. All of our correspondents and believers in salvation by grace are invited. The location of the church is off highway 41 in Danville and signs will be posted to highway 1515.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

OLD PINE CREEK CHURCH

An annual all day meeting will be held, the Lord willing, at Old Pine Creek Church on the 4th of July, 1990. The church is located off highway #221, five miles north of Floyd, Virginia. Those coming from Floyd turn left onto road #682. Those coming from Roanoke, turn right onto road #682. All lovers of the truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Hale Terry

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will meet with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing, on the fifth Sunday in July, 1990 at 10:00 a.m. Preaching will begin at 10:30 a.m.

All Elders of our faith and order along with all lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Pastor
Brother Boyd Minter, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 1990

Mrs. Helen Murphy, AR	2.00
Mrs. Lillian S. Davis, NC	22.00
Mrs. W.H. Spires, VA	2.00
L.U. Chance, TX	5.00
Miss Clarrise Brooks, NC	7.00
Mrs. Erby Dalton, VA	2.00
Mrs. Gertrude Payne, VA	2.00
Richard Stegall, VA	2.00
Burnell Williams, VA	2.00
Mrs. Audrey Hamrick, TX	2.00
D.W. Jones, VA	2.00
J.E. Potter, VA	2.00
James Cunningham, MO	2.00
James E. Fortner, TX	2.00
Mrs. Verta Haning, WV	10.00
Mrs. Mildred Hanks, VA	10.00
Don Jackson, TX	7.00
Mrs. Vercie Bolejack, VA	2.00
Donald R. Arrington, NC	2.00
Mrs. Emma Mitchell, VA	7.00
Floyd Bryant, VA	2.00
Willard Potter, VA	2.00
L.L. Bolich, GA	2.00
Mrs. Flora Berry, NC	2.00
Mrs. Bennie Clifton, VA	2.00

OBITUARIES

ELDER ZENNIE L. RHUE

Elder Zennie Larone Rhue, a faithful servant of the cause and kingdom of Jesus Christ, departed from this life at the Forsyth Hospital in Winston-Salem, N.C. on December 24, 1989, at the age of 87. He was a native of Stella community in Carteret County, North Carolina and was born on December 15, 1902, a son of the late Elder Thomas David Rhue and Noma Prescott Rhue.

On December 23, 1926 he was united in marriage to Miss Lilian Hinsdale. Their union, which was blessed to endure for 63 years, was favored with four children: two sons, David and Aaron Rhue, both of whom preceded Elder Rhue in death; and two daughters, Sis. Blaine (Rebecca) Teague of Raleigh and Mrs. Mary Ellen Pyrtle of High Point, N.C.

As a young man Brother Rhue left home and went to Winston-Salem for what he thought would be a relatively short stay to attend theological school. However, the purpose of God placed him in the school of divine grace and settled for good both the bounds of his habitation and the true purpose of his life. When his teacher called on him to attempt to preach what men had tried to teach him, he preached instead the unsearchable riches of the grace and glory of Christ. On that basis he was told that he must be a hardshell Baptist, and from that time his steps were directed unerringly to the militant church kingdom.

In due course he was received by experience into Bunker Hill Primitive Baptist Church at Kernersville, N.C and was baptized by the late Elder George W. Hill. After many sore trials and much suffering he was liberated to exercise the gift God had placed in him. He was ordained to the full work of the ministry in 1936, and in the following years was called to serve as pastor a number of churches in various parts of North Carolina. At the time of his death Elder Rhue was co-pastor of Bunker Hill Church, Rock Hill Church at Asheboro, and Suggs Creek Church at Seagrove, N.C.

For the balance of his earthly life (from 1936 on) Elder Rhue labored under the yoke laid on him by his Blessed Redeemer. While he was a meek and mild-mannered man in disposition, he was as bold as a lion in contending for the doctrine and practice in which he believed.

In the latter part of his life Brother Rhue was much afflicted in body, as well as in spirit. He bore his afflictions with great patience without murmuring or complaining. During that time the Lord recompensed him for much of what he had suffered and answered many of his long-sought desires. After a severe illness and decline of several weeks he died the death of the righteous on the last Sunday in 1989. Surely must we say of him what the Lord said to the church at Smyrna, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

In addition to his wife and daugh-

ters , Brother Rhue was survived by three brothers , Jesse , Redford and Roy Rhue ; and three sisters , Mrs . Eunice Norris , Mrs . Mildred Weeks and Mrs . Naomi Vinson ; and also , four grandchildren and three great - grandchildren .

His funeral service was con - ducted at Bunker Hill Church by Elders Thornton Manley , Paul Lambe , Paul Hopkins and John Wingfield . His body was laid to rest at Woodland Cemetery in Winston - Salem to await the consummation of his precious hope on the morning of the Resurrection . While those of us who knew and loved him sorrow for our loss , we rejoice for his great gain and hope to meet with him one day before the throne in Heaven .

Now , therefore , be it resolved that four copies of this memorial record be prepared : one for inclu - sion in our church minutes , one to be given to his family , and one to be submitted to the Signs of the Times and one to the Zion 's Landmark for publication .

Done by order of Bunker Hill Church in conference the 27 th day of January , 1990 .

Elder John T . Wingfield , Mod .
Sis . June Baldwin , Clerk

IN MEMORY OF BROTHER JUSTUS G . SMITH

Brother Justus Smith of Rt. 2 , Belhaven , N .C . was called from this earth on Wednesday , February 28th , 1990 after a brief hospitalization . He was a member of the North Creek Primitive Baptist Church and attended faithfully while his health permitted . He usually sat in the front pew and loved to hear the truth preached .

He was born on July 28 , 1908 , to John William and Bessie Potter Smith in Lowland , N .C . and had retired after a life of farming . He was preceded in death by his wife , Irene Jackson Smith . He is survived by three sons , Robert O . " Bobby " Smith of Roper , N .C . , J .G . Smith , Jr . of Pinetown , N .C ., and Joseph Smith of Belhaven ; two daughters , Mrs . Darrell (Sarah) Windley of Pantego , N .C ., and Mrs . David (Jean) Verdin of Austell , Ga .; two sisters , Nelva Gray Ricadellia of Jacksonville , Fl . and Sanna Paul of Belhaven ; and one brother , Clem - mon Smith of Belhaven . He had seventeen grandchildren and nine great - grandchildren .

Elder J .T . Prescott of North Creek Church conducted the funeral service at Paul Funeral Home in Belhaven on Friday , March 2 , 1990 . Burial was in the Sidney Freewill Baptist Church Cemetery with his grandsons serving as pallbearers .

Brother Justus was sustained in this life by a strong hope in the Lord . He will be missed by his family and church .

Tom Thompson , Clerk

ALTA BURNESS TEAL

Sister Alta Burness Teal was born August 24 , 1902 at St . Augustine , Texas to George Wash - ington and Nancy Jane Loyd .

At the age of 87 , our heavenly Father by his divine wisdom called her from her suffering January 13 , 1990 after a lengthy stay in the Grady Memorial Hospital in Chickasha , Oklahoma .

She married Charles Simms Teal in St . Augustine , Texas in 1919 . To this union seven children were born , three sons and four daughters . They lost an infant son , L .C . Mr . Teal passed away in 1975 .

She united with Little Flock Church , Altus , Oklahoma on May 23 23 , 1987 and was baptized June 25 , 1987 . Even though she lived a good distance from Church , her son Jimmy was faithful to bring her when her health permitted . She loved the Church people and enjoyed hearing the singing and preaching .

We wish to extend our love and sympathy to her family , two sons , Jack and Jimmy of Chickasha , Oklahoma , four daughters , Margaret Hatfield of Tuttle , Oklahoma , Mildred White of Verden , Oklahoma , and Juanita Argo and Janie Bennet , both of Oklahoma City , Oklahoma , one brother , Bro . George Loyd of Cogar , Oklahoma , twenty - two grandchildren , forty great - grandchildren , and a host of other relatives and friends .

Her funeral service was conducted by her pastor Elder C .M . Haygood at the First Baptist Church in Minco , Oklahoma . She was laid to rest in the Evergreen Cemetery near Minco to await the second coming of her dear Lord and Saviour . The large assembly of family , friends and beautiful display of flowers were a tribute to her love of God and her Church . Even though we miss her we believe our loss to be her gain .

Written in love and by request
of Little Flock Church .
Bernice Haygood

BROTHER HERMAN THOMPSON

God by His infinite mercy saw fit to call from our midst Brother Herman Thompson July 19 , 1989 . He passed away during surgery at the age of 73 years and 11 months .

He married Ida Mae Burkhalter October 3 , 1943 at Lovington , New Mexico . They lived most of their married life around Tipton , Oklahoma .

They both asked for a home at Little Flock Church , Altus , Oklahoma in June 22 , 1968 . They were received by experience and baptism and were baptized by their pastor , Elder C .M . Haygood .

Brother Thompson was an ordained deacon of Little Flock Church and a faithful member until his death. He loved to travel and visit among the churches and associations .

He is survived by four brothers , Leroy of Arizona , and Paul , Charlie and Benton of California . His wife preceeded him in death on August 15 15 , 1983 .

We greatly miss his presence but trust our loss to be his eternal gain .

Service were conducted by Elder C.C. Morris and he was laid to rest in the Hess Cemetery to await the second coming of our Dear Lord .

Written by request of Little Flock Church.

Bernice Haygood

SISTER NETTIE TURNER

The Church at Tarboro feels that God 's will has been done by the calling home of Sister Nettie Turner.

Sister Turner was born on April 13, 1901 and died February 13, 1990, making her stay on earth 89 years. She was blessed to join our church first Sunday in February, 1990, just a few days before her death. Even though she joined our church in her last days, she was a great believer of Salvation by Grace most all of her life. She believed in God as her Saviour and without Him we could do nothing. Sister Nettie never complained and was a sweet person to know. She had no children of her own, but she loved her many nieces and nephews.

We feel she is resting with our Saviour in peace. We send our sincere sympathy to her family as we feel our loss is her eternal gain.

It is our wish for three copies of this resolution to made: one for the family, one for the church records, and one to be published in the " Signs of the Times."

This done by order of conference at our March meeting.

Elder Henry C. Jones, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

BROTHER HARRY TURNER

We, the church at Tarboro, bow in submission to the passing of our dear Brother Harry Turner. Brother Turner was born on February 2, 1905 and died February 21, 1990, making his stay on earth 85 years.

Brother Harry joined our church in August of 1989. He was a dear member. Both he and his wife attended our church for many years before they united with Tarboro Church. Brother Harry was a great believer of Salvation by Grace and he loved to have his brethren visit him to talk about the Lord. He was always praising his God and giving thanks for all blessings.

Even though Brother Harry had no children, he was blessed to have a family of nieces and nephews who loved him dearly. One of his nephews made arrangements to see that he got to church after Brother Harry was unable to drive.

The Church at Tarboro resolve that three copies of this respect be made: one for the church records, one for the family, and one to be published in the " Signs of the Times ".

We feel our loss is Brother Turner's eternal gain. We trust he is now resting in peace and love with our dear Saviour.

This done by order at our March meeting.

Elder Henry C. Jones, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS

The only way that we can see,
What our gracious God hath done,
That we're conformed in Him to be,
His workings through His Son.
With trials and troubles everywhere,
We know not where to turn,
There is no earthly place to share,
The lessons we have learned.

This strange to natural man to see,
A child of God on bended knees,
Begging for mercy from His God,
Because he's seen the road he's trod,
His tear dimmed eyes A story tells,
God's grace has taught him very well,
Of all sweet blessings in disguise,
This seems to be where beauty lies.

They're taught of things, this world can't know,
Because it's not an earthly show,
In truth and honesty, they confess,
Deny themselves ask God to bless,
And lead them on their journey through,
We know theres nothing we can do,
We're given to know that His staff and rod,
Makes us stand still and know that He is God.

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EDITORIAL

Clifford Wilbanks

I was taught from an early age that man has a will concerning his destiny after this life on earth: he can accept Christ as his personal Saviour and be saved, or he can reject him and be cast into hell. The most quoted Scriptures to prove their point is John 3:16: " For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." Also, " Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." It is contended that man has a 'free will'; but the will of man has never been free, for it has always been controlled by the mind and the desires of the flesh which are evil continually. Gen. 6:5. " And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Man cannot even control his own destiny here on earth, Jeremiah says in chapter 10, verse 23, " O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps." The natural man does not know God: " For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Enmity means hate, and if we hate God we cannot know him, " for God is love; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." I John 4:7-8. Who is he that is born of God? Is it he that wills it so? We are told that all we must do is accept him as our Saviour and we will be born again and become the sons of God. I will ask, Who do you know that has ever chosen his own parents? But what do the Scriptures say concerning this? Read St. John 1:11-13. " He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Many will tell you that they have received Christ and

believe on his name, therefore they know that they are saved. If they truly have received him and believe on him, it is not because of their own will, but by the operation of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, " Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh: and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. John 3:5-8.

Why must we be born again? because we are dead in trespasses and sin. Man fell in the garden of Eden when Adam partook of the forbidden fruit. He transgressed the law of God: and sin is the transgression of the law. Adam being our federal head, we were in him and therefore fell in him. That Adam would fall was no surprise to God, for it was in his eternal purpose. It was his will that it should be so. God hates sin, but he had a purpose in it being in the world worthy of his Holy Name. Some will say that if it was God's will for Adam to sin then he is the author of sin, for he made Adam do it. Not so! God forbid! When God made man he made him subject to vanity: " For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." Rom. 8:19-20. God also made the crooked serpent; and this serpent, Satan himself, tempted Eve with the forbidden fruit and lies. Eve ate of the fruit and gave unto to Adam and he did eat because of his love for her. And in that day they died, for God had said, " In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Many will say that they did not die, because they lived to populate the earth. Surely they did not die a corporeal death, but they died unto whatever standing they had before God: they were cut off from God, for death means 'to be cut off'. When man dies a corporeal death he is only cut off from this life on earth, No; God did not force nor tempt in any way Adam to eat the forbidden fruit. Neither was Adam deceived when he partook of the fruit, but because of his love for Eve he followed her into death willingly. This only pointed to Jesus Christ, for Adam was a figure of him that was to come. Because of his love for his bride, the church, Christ willingly laid down his life that he might redeem her from the curse of the law. Gal. 3:13. Who is this bride? Is she not the ones chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world according to the good pleasure of his will? His will, not our. See Eph. 1:4-5. Better yet, read the entire chapter. And is not her name written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world? Can one name be added thereto or one name be removed? Never! Our God is unchangeable: " For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. Mal. 3:6.

Did Jesus redeem his bride? Dare any one say, no? Jesus said, " For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the will

of him that sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing but raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of his that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." John 6:38-40. Did Christ come to save the entire human race? No; only the ones God had given him: if otherwise the entire race is saved and there would be no fear of condemnation and hell. In Rev. 20:15 we read, " And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. " Wherefore we must conclude that Christ died not to save every one, because hell will receive those he died not for. And we must say that he finished the work that the Father sent him to do. In his prayer to the Father he said, " As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." John 17:2-4. In chapter 10 of Hebrews we read, " " Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God," and " — by the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." And, " For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Before Christ was crucified he prayed, saying, " Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine be done." Luke 22 : 42.

Brethren, it is always the will of God that MUST be done; not ours, nor even the will of Jesus. We read, " — and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Dan. 4:35. And, " But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." Job 23:13.

Man has a fleshly will of course, but as I showed before, it is evil continually. All of us have in time past fulfilled the lusts of the flesh and the desires of the flesh and mind; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. (Eph. chapter 2.) It has been said that God works on our will, to make us willing, but that we must exercise that will in accepting or rejecting him; because he will not save us against our will. I have never found any thing in the Scriptures to confirm such a belief, but I do find, " Ye have not chose me, but I have chosen you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit." John 15:16. And I find the only accepting done was of God: " To the praise of the glory of

his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." Eph. 1:16. When one has been quickened out of his dead alienated state and made to see his horrible, sinful condition and be made to realize that he has nothing with which to redeem himself, then he is not only willing to receive the grace of God's mercy, but he will beg for it: and what a great joy it is when one is made to feel that his sins have been forgiven, that his cold and stony heart has been taken away from his flesh and he has been given a new heart of flesh, (Ezek. 11:19,) and Christ is revealed in him, the hope of glory. This hope is the sweetest thing in the world to a poor, lost sinner, and he would not trade it for the world and many more like it.

It has been said that God has two wills, one revealed and the other secret: but it has not been revealed to me thus in the Scriptures. I know that all things are secret until God reveals them to us. Jesus said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Matt. 11:25. Only from the wise and prudent has God hidden things. He always reveals to his children all they need to know, when they need to know it. It is written in the prophets, "And they shall all be taught of God." John 6:45. When one is taught of God he will surely learn every thing that is taught.

Those who contend that God has two wills say that his revealed will is his commandments. Let us ask, which of the two wills shall be done? I believe I have already quoted enough Scripture to prove that God's will shall be done. Now the question is, which? If there be two wills, then they must differ, because if they are alike there can be only one one. But if they differ, do they not of necessity cancel or oppose each other? Let us examine a couple of examples.

When God placed Adam in the garden of Eden he gave him a commandment that he should not eat of the forbidden fruit. Yet God knew that Adam would break that commandment. Had it been God's will for Adam to keep the commandment, then surely he would have kept it. But God had a purpose for sin being in the world; and had prepared already the cure; for Jesus stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Rev. 13:8. Although he knew it not, Adam was doing the will of God. If we say God's commandment to Adam was God's revealed will, then this will opposes God's will that sin should come into the world, and make one or both void.

Now let us examine the will of God concerning the crucifixion of Christ. He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, (Acts 1:23,) therefore we know that it was his will for it to be done. Was it a secret will? Certainly not: for it had been foretold by God's prophets hundreds of years before, and Jesus himself told his disciples that it would come to pass. But one of God's commandments is, "Thou shalt do no murder." If this commandment is considered to be God's will, does it not completely oppose his will that Christ should be crucified? There was no fault

found in Jesus , yet the Jews de - manded his death, prefering to keep a murderer in their midst . The Roman soldiers nailed him to the cross , but the Jews were just as guilty of murder as anyone ever . Therefore I must conclude that God 's commandment here should not be called his revealed will .

God works in his people to will and to do of his good pleasure. Since we cannot stay his hand or say unto him , What doest thou ? then we MUST do his will. Has any one ever kept his commandments that were given as laws to be observed ? No . Not one, save Jesus Christ. He kept the law to a jot and a tittle . And James tells us that " Whosoever shall keep the whole law , and yet offend in one point , he is guilty of all." James 2:10. On the other hand we must do that which is well - pleasing in his sight: " For we are his workmanship , created in Christ Jesus unto good works , which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them ." This we should do willingly and not by constraint. Read I Cor. 9:16-17 and I Pet. 5:2 . Not only this , but God had said to his Christ , " Thy people shall be a willing people in the day of thy power." Since God has said that we will be willing, can we not be willing? And is this not the day of his power? If not , when will it be ?

Brethren , I must conclude that God has only one will . I have no desire to change your view on this or any other subject concerning the Scriptures , for I know that is in the hands of the Lord ; but if we differ , remember who it is that maketh us to differ , and all will be lovely .

Brethren , the Scriptures are filled with God 's promises and his gracious will concerning his chosen people . I have touched upon a very few , but if God be in the matter it is enough . May he bless the truth and pardon all error . May his love and peace abide in us , and may it be his will that you remember this poor sinner and worm of the dust when at the throne of grace and mercy .

Clifford Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Williams :

Enclosed is check for $10.00 to cover subscription to " Signs of the Times " for one year .

In reading Elder R .H . Camp - bell 's editorial in the April issue of Signs , I was impressed that the revealed truth as set forth was ba - sicly the same as given in an editorial by Elder Silas H . Durand in " Frag - ments ," page 207 , March 1906 , proving that revealed truth is the same from generation to generation.

February of this year I was 74 years old . Often I am made to feel how little I know .

The experiences as given in the last issue were truly wonderful , but made me realize how far short I come .

I do so miss the good preaching since Elder John D . Wood 's sick - ness and death took him from us . But I believe the Lord , if it is his will , can raise others up .

Sincerely ,
Martha C . Lunsford
(Mrs . E . Gordon Lunsford)

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

" THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON ."

We deem it appropriate to begin the editorial section of the first issue of the 136th volume of SIGNS OF THE TIMES with the scriptural quotation : " The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon ." This quotation has been the motto of the SIGNS these many decades . It appears on the front cover in bold letters . It has repeatedly appeared on the front cover of every issue since 1835 . Why was this quotation chosen in preference to others as the motto of this periodical , is the question that now concerns us .

We must go to the book of Judges in the Bible and read especially the 6th and 7th chapters in order to glean some of the reasons why this expression is so important to lovers of the truth . The book of Judges is a history of Israel during the period spoken of by Paul , " And after that he gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years , until Samuel the prophet ." (Acts 13:20) Israel suffered many calamities as a result of their forsaking the Lord , and idol - worship . The anger of the Lord was hot against Israel so that God delivered them into the hands of spoilers many times , " Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges , which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them ." (See Judges 2 : 13-17) The weakness and idolatry of Israel within and of themselves were so manifest many times during the time of the Judges ' rule that each and every deliverance by the Lord made manifest His great mercy to a weak and rebellious people . Their whoring after other gods deserved the severe punishment of being cut off without remedy ; however , God would only deliver them into the hands of the enemy for the purpose of humbling them until they cried to Him for deliverance . Sometimes the sword of the Lord would be against Israel , sometimes against the enemy . The enemy always thought it was by their own hand that they subdued Israel , yet Israel was made to know that it was the gracious act of God that saved them from oblivion .

Continued circles of sins , judgments , repentances , and deliverances compose the book of Judges . These same circles make up the history of spiritual Israel , the Church . Church people mix with idolaters and become contaminated with Idolatry . The gross sin of idolatry of Israelites begets judgment upon them from God . This chastisement becomes so heavy that it begets repentance . This repentance is followed by speedy deliverance . Peace is only for a moment because the church forgets her deliverer in time of peace , and begins anew to mix and mingle with the world . She has sinned again and must go around the circle again . How prone we are to forget The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon ! Immediately after the death of each of the judges , Israel corrupted themselves again . (See Judges

2 : 19) When Israel did not have a special watchman , prophet , or judge , supplied and ordained by the Lord , she always went astray . We feel that it is a good sign of the Lord's watchful care over the church when He provides good pastors to watch over the flock .

It seems that Israel was in her worst plight during the time of the seven years plunder of the Midia - nites , Amalekites , and other nomad tribes . It had become so terrible that the Israelites were forced to dwell in caves , dens , and strongholds . The enemy came as grasshoppers for multitude ; they trampled down the fields ; they plundered vineyards and gardens ; and they seized the cattle , and plundered man and house . No sustenance for Israel was left . The riots were terrible . God had de - livered Israel into the hands of the wicked in order to humble them . These afflictions were so severe that finally , " . . . the children of Israel cried unto the Lord ." (Judges 6:6) No doubt they pitied themselves a long time and complained to one another of their plight before they really cried to God for deliverance . Maybe , as the church , they tried many times to negotiate with the enemy . It is peculiar that the same nations that led them into idolatry were the same nations that would persecute them . Even though Israel 's sins were great , God 's mercy was greater . He heard their cry . How did God answer the cry ?

God sent first a prophet to re - prove with a message before He sent an angel with a message of deliverance . This message of re - proof contained a list of great de - liverances Israel had experienced by God 's hand , as well as reminding them of His promises . God re - minded Israel of the fact that He had said , " . . . I am the Lord your God ; fear not the gods of the Amorites in whose land ye dwell : but ye have not obeyed my voice ." (Judges 6:10) The Israelites had been afflicted enough by the hand of God through the enemy ; now , He gives them a sharp rebuke through His prophet . It is a good sign when God scolds us through His ministers because His rebukes often are forerunners of His mercy . These rebukes make us so ashamed and disgusted with our - selves . We could not be satisfied without a few stripes when we feel to rightly deserve so many . The pro - phet must come before the angel ; the angel must come before the deliverance . We find a parallel case in the New Testament . The prophet , John , was sent before the angel to prepare the way of the Lord . The angel was sent to both Mary and her espoused husband before the De - liverer , Jesus ,came . We find another parallel in our own exper - ience . We sin . We are turned over to Satan and his host for a siege of persecutions . After severe afflic - tions God sends a prophet , or mini - ster , to us . We are chided into deep humiliation as a result of this mini - ster 's message . All this properly prepares us to realize that deliver - ance must come " By grace through faith , and that not of ourselves , it is the gift of God ."

We read in Psalms 17:13 , " . . . De - liver my soul from the wicked which is thy sword ." We read in the writ - ings of Isaiah , " O Assyrian , the rod

of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is my indignation." (Isaiah 10: 5) We read from the pen of David, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." (Psalms 76:10) We read in our own experience that even the wrath of enemies upon us is a blessing in disguise. We read in our own experience that pleas to enemies to be easy on us, is all in vain; yet prayer to God will get results. Negotiations with our enemies are in vain because they are in the hands of God. God raised them up. He only can put them down. We read in our experience that cries to God only will be any help to us. Should we be successful in negotiating with our enemies it would be our willingness to reject the truth and accept error. This always bring us into deeper trouble because we are caught in their net. We read in our experience that God has so ruled the actions of the wicked that we have never suffered in vain a stroke from their hand. We read in our experience that All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. How good it is to know that whether it be the persecution of the enemy, or the persecution by the hand of brethren, our problems are to be solved by God. No use pleading to others, God holds the reins! The sword of the Lord is effective when he uses the wicked as His sword in both humbling the Lord's people and making proud the enemy. The Lord's sword is used for both delivering His people in a unit, and confusing and scattering the enemy.

An angel appeared with a message of deliverance after the forerunner, the prophet, had accomplished his bidding. This angel did not appear to all Israel but only to Gideon, the son of Joash of the tribe of Manasseh. When the angel appeared, Gideon was threshing "Wheat by the winepress to hide it from the Midianites." Yes, in spite of the malice of the enemies, the Lord makes secret provisions for His own people. Even though they had gone though the terrible siege of the enemy, Israel yet had a little wheat and a little wine. This was being hidden from the enemy. Even in the midst of the greatest turmoil in the church there is someone threshing wheat by the winepress. Some bread and some drink is provided for the Lord's people even when they are greatly distressed. It is provided in secret places, hidden from the enemy. This angel must have been the Lord of angels. The first words spoken to Gideon by the angel was, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour." (See Judges 6:12) The Lord's presence brings joy finally to the afflicted. Who else but Jesus, the mighty Saviour, could be mighty, bold, and courageous? The presence of the Lord makes all the difference! God chose the weak to confound the mighty. Gideon said, "
"If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us?... but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites." The Lord appeared to Gideon only. The Lord did not appear to the people but to the leader of the people whom God had chosen. The Lord had before appeared to Moses, not

Israel . Gideon could not suppose himself to be above his brethren , or exempt . Gideon speaks for the whole of Israel , as Jesus speaks in behalf of His brethren . Gideon could not feel to enjoy the praise of his own state as long as his brethren suf - fered .

God 's ways are not man 's ways . His choice is of the little and poor , whereas man 's choice would be of the great and rich . Gideon said , " Behold , my family is poor in Manasseh , and I am the least in my father 's house . " None have ever been raised by the Lord but those who have been cast down in their estimation of themselves . If one does not feel little before the Lord appears , he certainly will feel little after the appearance . The Lord manifests His greatness in mercy through men who are weak in themselves . Gideon asked for a sign . He must be sure that this unreasonable message came from God . His faith must be strengthened by greater evidences than mere words . How strange these words seemed to him ! How could these things be true ? He seeks to have surer ground for an abiding faith . Gideon is minded that such a messenger certainly de - serves a present . Such wonderful and marvelous words deserved tri - bute to the speaker . Gideon asks the angel to tarry until he could bring a present and set it before the angel . The angel promised . Yes , Gideon must be by himself for awhile to meditate alone as he prepares a kid and unleavened bread for this won - derful guest . The record is silent upon the thoughts of Gideon while preparing the feast . The strange words the angel had said must have kept Gideon 's mind employed . Such questions as : How could I , who am so little and poor , be called a man of valour ? How can it be that I am to deliver Israel by smiting the Midianites " As one man , " must have flooded his mind . Gideon was poor but he could give meat and bread to one who brought such won - derful message !

It was Gideon 's intention to pre - pare a dinner , yet God had ordained that it should be a sacrifice . Gideon brought cakes , flesh , and broth to eat ; yet God had ordained that the broth be poured out and the re - mainder to be used as a sacrifice . The angel gave specific and peculiar orders , yet Gideon followed these specific instructions without hesita - tion or questioning . The cakes and flesh were laid upon the rock as ordered . The angel touched the flesh , not the rock , with his staff . Fire immediately came out of the rock and consumed both flesh and cakes . What a sign ! Moses had before touched a rock that brought forth water ; now an angel brings fire out of a rock with a touch of his staff . The angel 's words were strangely wonderful , but not so wonderful as this ! The faith of Gideon must have been increased greatly as this rock became an altar before his eyes . The same power that brought fire out of a stone could raise courage and power out of the doubting heart of Gideon . He that consumed flesh and cake with fire could consume Midian with Gideon 's little faith . It is so wonderful what God can do to stren - gthen the faith of those who pray , " Help thou mine unbelief ." The

angel 's commission had been completed and he disappeared . When Gideon 's doubts had subsided , his fear increased . He who was said to be mighty in valour , now quaked and trembled at the sight and miraculous workings of an angel . God comforted him by saying , " Peace be unto thee ; fear not : thou shalt not die . " (Judges 6:23)

The Lord further instructed Gideon to destroy the altar of Baal and erect an altar to God on the same rock that emitted fire . Gideon must first destroy the god of idolatry before destroying the idolaters . Baal 's altar must be ruined before the erection of an altar to God . They cannot stand together . The true God is not satisfied with just a change of consecrating Baal 's altar to use in worshiping God . The altar must be destroyed . A new altar must be erected . It is not enough for a false church to be consecrated to the worship of God , but the false must be destroyed and a new church erected . All of the traditions and superstitions of man which are not according to " Thus saith the Lord ," must be put down and abandoned before the Lord will deliver from the enemy . All alliances with the enemy must come down . There is no agreement between the temple of idols and the temple of God .

God proved to Gideon that He was the God of fire , earth , water , and all . He would have Israel to know that it was not their might that saved them . Gideon only had 32,000 men yet God said that was too many . Those who were fearful and afraid were to be excused . This surely does not mean to convey fearful and afraid of God , but fearful and afraid of their enemies . 22,000 men were in that group . Many would be in the army as long as they are not confronted with the prospects of war ; but let a war come and the majority would be afraid and would leave . There were only 10,000 courageous men left . God said that is " Too many ." Many are called but few are chosen . God tested them . What a peculiar test ! " Every one that lapped water with his tongue as a dog lappeth " should be chosen . Every one that bowed down to drink were dismissed . Those who stood lapping water from their hands must have displayed their devotion to their leader . Those who bowed to drink showed their concern for their own gratification . They were more interested in their drink than performing their duty as a good soldier . No doubt they were accustomed to bowing down . They may have been some of those Israelites who had bowed to the image of Baal that were sent home . Only 300 of the 10,000 were left in the army . Read the 7th chapter of Judges , beginning with verse 9 , to see how that God works even in the hearts , minds , and tongues of the enemies to cause a name to be feared . God prepared a dream in the mind of one Midianite , and the interpretation of that dream in the mouth of another , so that the name , Gideon , would be feared . You will find how that Gideon had been stripped of all his army with exception of 300 men , but was encouraged when it was made known to him that his name was so greatly feared by the enemy . Even though this encouragement came

from the enemy Gideon worshiped God. To hear of himself as a barley cake did not disturb him when he learned that it would break the tents of Midian. It matters not how small we be just so victory is gained. Gideon knew the victory was already won when he was convinced that God dealt with both the Midianites and Israelites. The victory was certain even though it had not been manifest to Israel, but to its leader.

Gideon was no longer in doubt but boldly kept on in accord with God's directions. Even though he had been told that Midian was al - ready delivered, he must persevere in order that the manifestation of this deliverance be complete.

We might have expected Gideon to charge these 300 men to whet their swords, sharpen their spears, and fit their armour. Did he so charge them? NO! He gives orders for pitchers, lights, and trumpets. There is no need for anything other than noise and light to confound this host. Of course the name Gideon would scare them. Gideon divided them into three companies and gave them charge, " Look on me and do likewise." What a good charge! The leader would set the pattern and others would do as he did. He did not give them the charge before he supplied them properly. First, Gideon, " Put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers." (Judges 7:16) Undoubtedly this trumpet had a certain sound. Trumpets were used to call soldiers together and was an alarm of war. Paul said, " For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" (1 Cor. 14: 8) Since priests were accustomed to use trumpets in their day for the battles of the Lord, I am convinced, that these trumpets represent the gift of the ministry placed in the hands of the ministers by their leader, Jesus Christ. See Joshua 6th chapter for proof of this use of trumpets. The Gospel has a certain sound. It sounds of love, grace, and mercy to sensible sinners. When the trumpet is rightly blown it breaks the pitcher which is of clay. It blasts the goodliness of man as it magnifies the grace of God. It will put the enemy to flight. Man is made of clay just as the pitcher. The man must be broken before the light of truth will shine. The lamp is not the light, neither will it give light until lighted by the Spirit. The lamp is a figure of profession. There is no real light in the profession until our leader comes from within the camp. Jesus must make a fresh appearance to us before our sermons will do any good. When Jesus appears we can blow the trumpet, break the pitcher, let the light shine, and shout, " The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." We are not to look to man for life, righteousness, or salvation. This must be experienced as a gracious favor of God bestowed upon hell deserving sinners.

David said to the Philistines, " Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defiled." (1 Sam. 17:45) David had the better sword. He could have properly said, The sword of the Lord and of David.

Spiritual swords will be victorious over all else . The name of the Lord and Saviour , Jesus Christ , is the weapon of weapons . That is all we need . In Exodus 16:3 , we read : " The Lord shall fight for you , and ye shall hold your peace ." No use for us to engage in a hot war with our enemies , for our God is the God of battles . We do not have to conduct ourselves in order that the enemy may fear or dread us , because God does this in his own way . We quote Deuteronomy 11:25 , " There shall no man be able to stand before you : for the Lord your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon . . ." We call your attention to Exodus 23:27 , " I will send my fear before thee , and will destroy all the people to whom thou shalt come ; and I will make all thine enemies turn their backs unto thee ." It was just as true this day as it was before , that our God shall fight for us : " In what place therefore ye hear the sound of the trumpet , resort ye thither unto us : for our God shall fight for us ." (Nehemiah 4 : 20) The trumpet is placed into hands as Gideon placed trumpets into hands that had been dipped in water . Yes , undoubtedly these were clean hands into which Gideon placed the trumpets . These hands of the 300 were clean enough to hold water for drinking . Water is a symbol of cleansing . This cleansing must be the work of God . What God hath cleansed we are not to call common or unclean .

When we cry , " The sword of the Lord and of Gideon ," it gives a certain sound . It sounds only for the work of God . It is a certain sound . If there be any declaration which tends to give credit to the works of the creature to merit salvation either in time or beyond time , it gives an uncertain sound , and cannot be the cry , certain sound , and cannot be the cry , " The sword of the Lord and of Gideon ." May God bless us to blow the trumpet that has been placed in our hands , break the pitchers of clay , and shine forth that radiant light ; all of which will gather true Israelites and put the enemy to flight .

E .J . Lambert

SOUL AND SPIRIT

In esteemed friend and constant reader of the Signs , in Indiana , has understood us to hold that the spirit of the man is the part of the man that is , or must be , born again , and requests us to define or explain the difference between soul and the spirit of man .

From a sense of utter inability to analyze , the nature of man , we are compelled to decline the task of making clear to the understanding of others what we do not ourself understand . But we wish to correct his wrong impression , that we hold that any part of what constitutes us men or women is born of the spirit of God . We do not understand our Lord to say that some part or parts of man must be born again . But he said to Nicodemus , " Except a man , " (not a part of a man , a soul , or spirit , or flesh , or bone , or blood , or head , or foot of a man , but except a man , one

who has already been born of the flesh, and is flesh,) "be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." All the elementary parts essential to our earthy nature are born of the flesh, and are flesh, so called by our Lord, and all alike in all mankind.

It requires but one birth to produce them all; hence Jesus says, and his words ought to settle the matter, and forever silence all speculation on the subject, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." It is not possible that any birth can bring forth a nature different from that of the parents of which it is born; so nothing that is godly, incorruptible, or in that sense spiritual, can possibly be born of the flesh. Those to whom power is given to become the sons of God, "are born, not of blood, nor or the will of the flesh, but of God." — John i. 13. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." — 1 Peter i. 23. Neither is there anything carnal, earthly or corruptible born of the spirit of God. An incorruptible seed cannot produce or generate a corruptible production; and in the new birth, by which the children of God, as such, are brought into manifestation, we are expressly told they are not born of flesh or blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, nor of corruptible seed, but that they are born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. Is it not presumptuous then to say, in direct contradiction of what our God has said, that any part or element of our flesh, which Christ says is born of the flesh, and is flesh, is, notwithstanding what he has so expressly said, born of the Spirit, and is spirit?

As natural men, we have all the elements of an earthly nature, including soul, body and spirit; and these are all born of the flesh, and are flesh, in the sense in which Christ and his apostles have so declared them to be. Our earthly spirit is the spirit of the flesh and of the world: but the spirit which is begotten in us of God is pure and holy, and is called spirit in distinction from all that is born of the flesh, or that is flesh. Adam is the Father of our earthly spirit, but God is the Father of our heaven-born spirit. This distinction is clearly made in Hebrews xii. 9: "We have had fathers of our flesh, which have corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits?" Our life which is born of the flesh is Adam, with all his corruption and mortality; but that life in us which is born of God is Christ in us the hope of glory, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light. Every manifest child of God is the subject of two distinct births: first his fleshly birth, which is after or according to the flesh, or the earthy Adam; but the production of the second birth is after God, created in righteousness and true holiness. The one is called the spirit of the world, of the flesh, of bondage, of error, &c; but the other is called the spirit of God, of Christ, of truth, of adoption, of life and immortality. As many as are led by this spirit of God, they are the sons of God; but if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. If

we are born of the Spirit, we have in the spiritual birth received the spirit of God, which spirit raised up Jesus from the dead; and as the production of this new birth liveth and abideth forever, so it abides in us; and we are assured, this being the case, that He that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in us. — Rom. viii. 11. We are not told that it has quickened our mortal body, either in its whole or in its parts; but just as surely as we have this spirit in us, shall the creature which is now held in bondage and mortality be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

By this spirit, which we receive in the new birth, our persons, redeemed from the earth, are sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his (God's) glory. — Eph. i. 13, 14. Our body, soul and spirit, which are born of the flesh, were involved in sin and death, and required to be redeemed and washed in the precious blood of Christ; but that spiritual, eternal life, which was with the Father, and hid in God, being pure and holy, did not need to be redeemed, washed nor cleansed; ; and this life is that which is manifested in us by the new birth, being born, not of flesh, but of the Spirit — not of man, but of God — not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. By this spiritual life, which is born of God, the sons of Adam, redeemed by the blood of Christ, are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption (or final deliverance) of the purchased (or redeemed) possession, to the praise of the glory of God. This earnest, therefore, to all who have in their new birth received that Holy Spirit of promise, is a sure and certain pledge of the final resurrection and change of our vile body from natural to spiritual, from mortal to immortal, and from corruptible to incorruptible; because the creature itself, which was made subject to vanity, and whose earnest expectation (subsequently to the new birth) waiteth for the manifestation of the children of God. They who are counted worthy of that world of which Christ spake to the Sadducees, (Luke xx. 33,) and of this resurrection from the dead, are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. Begotten unto this resurrection by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; for as he was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, and quickened by the Spirit, so "If the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you." If this spirit now dwells in us, it so dwells in us by implantation, that is, by the new birth; for his spirit can only be born of God, it cannot be born of the flesh; and this spirit is the earnest given, that as it quickened and brought from the dead the crucified body of our Lord, it shall also quicken and raise up from the dead all those in whom it now dwells.

In conclusion , permit the in - quiry , Is it not better for the saints to examine whether this quicken - ing Spirit indeed dwells in us , than to indulge in vain speculations and uncalled for disputations , which gended strife and bitterness ? If it dwells in us , will not its blessed indwelling be manifest by its fruits , which are these : love , joy , peace , long - suffering , gentleness , goodness , faith , meekness , temperance , and things against which there is no law ?

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe October 1 , 1979 .)

PRAYER UNDER OPPRESSION

Preached at " Galeed ", Brighton
on Sunday morning
October 17th , 1926

" O Lord , I am oppressed ; undertake for me " (Isaiah 38:14).

Most of you will remember that these words were penned by Hezekiah after he had recovered from that sickness which appeared to be unto death , and yet was not unto death , but for the glory of God . It was to the glory of God in showing forth the mighty power and kindness of God toward him in particular , and to the church of God in leaving upon record this song of thanksgiving , confession , and praise ; so that the utterances of his heart have been to the comfort and help of others in all ages of time . To think that the King of Judah , a man remarkable for the deliverance from his enemies af - forded him , one who was raised up of God to bring about a restoration of true worship ; that such a one , when the hand of death was laid upon him apparently , should utter such an expression as this : " O Lord , I am oppressed ; undertake for me ". The Lord is no respector of persons , neither is death ; and when the hand of death comes upon a person , whether prepared or unprepared , it is a solemn matter . Well might the hymn - writer say ,

" Prepare me , gracious God ,
To stand before Thy face ;
Thy Spirit must the work perform ,
For it all of grace ."

Wherever the Lord has a purpose of mercy toward any person , we be - lieve that He will be with him in the hour and article of death ; and though there may be this oppression of spirit that was upon Hezekiah , yet there will be a breath of prayer , and a humble dependence upon the God of all grace . And so we believe it was with our departed friend , Paul . Though he was one who did not say much relative to his exercises , yet we have every reason to believe there was a humble dependence upon the God of all grace , and that he was looking for the mercy of God in Jesus Christ . And that kept him cleaving to the ministry of the gospel and enabled him to walk consistently with the measure of his profession , before an ungodly world and those with whom he came in contact . Undoubtedly there was the fear of God in his heart , which was

" An unctuous light to all that 's right ,
A bar to all that 's wrong ."

He may have known more of this text than he expressed. It is our mercy if we know anything of the grace of God in Jesus Christ, in reconciling us to God: that it is only in the dying and doing of the Lord Jesus. No man ever entered heaven upon his own righteousness; it is purely upon the justifying righteousness of the Lord Jesus, that is, His spotless obedience and the shedding of His precious blood, that any poor soul is justified, and has an abundant entrance into His kingdom. Yet it is a mercy when the grace of God so operates upon us that we show forth in our conversation a life, a practice, that is worthy the profession of the Name of Jehovah Jesus.

But to the words before us. We would speak of a few of the oppressions that come upon those who are exercised unto godliness; because this oppression of which Hezekiah speaks, is not just an ordinary oppression of spirit that a worldly man may have. It was something that pressed thus oppressed, by a sense of their lack of knowledge of Jesus Christ. What I find more generally amongst us is, that there is not this oppression because of the lack of the knowledge of the things of Christ. It is healthy sign if you are oppressed at times because you cannot get near Him, to touch the hem of His garment, or because you cannot behold the Lamb of God with the eye of living faith. I may say this is my greatest oppression; I have not a greater oppression than this — my spiritual ignorance of the precious things of Christ. You may know them in your judgement, you may hold them as truths; but to know the reality of them in your heart, to feel the powerful beams of God 's love shining into yur heart through the things of Christ, is an experience that I often lack, and one that I often desire. But, blessed by God, I trust it is an experience that I am not altogether a stranger to; and yet I am often oppressed because of the lack of this communion with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. Now, are your oppressed because of the lack of this communion? For if you fear the Lord you cannot patch up an inglorious peace, you cannot make up a sort of experience, and then call it communion; you want the real manifestation of God's love to you to inspire in your heart to be bound to Him, for there to be a flowing together; for your heart to be bound to Him, and for your to have some blessed hope that you are bound up in the bundle of everlasting life with Him. Well, if you are oppressed by reason of your lack of communion and fellowship with the Lord Jesus, you will pray for it, and you will not put anything in the place of it. The world may sometimes occupy your mind, your heart, and your attention; but often you will be burdened in spirit, there will be an aching void which the world cannot fill, and there will be, too, an earnest anxiety to be right in the sight of God. Do you know something of these oppressions?

Then again, there will be this oppression, which some of us groan under with the apostle Paul. That living principle of sin within the soul, which even grace itself does not eradicate, made the great apostle of the Gentiles groan under a sense of it desiring deliverance from it: " O wretched man that I am! who shall

deliver me from the body of this death?" I mean the old man of sin, the carnal mind, which is enmity against God; is it not oppression? Do you not feel sometime overwhelmed with a sense of it? This carnal mind meets you at every turn. When you would look into the Scriptures or go aside to pray, or when you would hold communion with the people of God, how often this old man of sin will oppose it vigorously! And this becomes an oppression, so that we cry out under it, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But the Lord sometimes puts forth His power within us, and subdues it, by the superabundance of His grace.

Then there are many oppressions. The various trials that we come into form oppressions. David was the subject of crushing trials throughout his life; and what an oppression this was to him! You will remember the time when he was driven from this throne by the unnatural rebellion of Absalom, who sought his life; and how he crossed over the stream, and went up Mount Olivet bare-headed and bare-footed, under this great oppression. There was this with David's trouble at that time — he could see his sin in it. And if you can see your sin in the trouble, it does not make it any less an oppression; sometimes it adds to it, when we see our own folly as being the procuring cause of our troubles. And cannot we, my hearers, in many of our troubles, find that our sin lies at the very root of them, that we have sown to the flesh, and of the flesh we have reaped corruption? So in David's case, when Shimei cursed him. When one wanted to take his head, David said, "Let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him", and how anxious he was that the ark of God should not be dragged into the mire, into what he himself feared he was going into! Now there were cares that lay underneath all that, and the language of David's heart would be bitterly expressed by this word, "O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me". And so with the people of God. You come into some trouble, and at first you think you will be able to bear it; in fact you know that you must bear it; but by-and-by it becomes so grievous that you begin to inquire of the Lord respecting it, and then the Lord shows you the worm at the root. He shows you that some besetting sin or some unwary action of yours has been the procuring cause of this trouble that has been laid at your door. Now this will bring an oppression; and in your oppression you will cry to the Lord to undertake for you. But as you see your sin to be the cause of your misery, one of the first things will be to seek release from the guilt of sin, and the pardoning love and mercy of God to be made known. As soon as you are brought there, it will not be long before the Lord commands deliverance for you; or He may give you such support and strength under the trouble that you acknowledge that even such a trouble as that is made into a blessing by the goodness and grace of God.

Take Job's case. There was a man who feared God and eschewed evil, there was not a man like him in the East, and yet Satan was suffered to take away all that he had, even his

health ; but he must not touch his life. Now how graciously Job carried himself, by the grace of God, under his oppression! He was able to say, " The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the Name of the Lord." But he did not continue all the time of his trial in that blessed state, in submission to the will of God. There were times in which he cursed the very day of his birth in the bitterness of his spirit; but he could not curse God. Sometimes he was able to say this, " Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him". There is something about Job's troubles that is really beautiful, as you behold the grace of God in him, strengthening and supporting him, and enabling him to bow with submission to the holy will of God. I do not believe there is a sweeter place under heaven, than in grievous trials to prostrate ourselves before the mercy - seat of Christ, confessing that He has a right to do with us and with ours as seemeth good in His sight. Those of us who have passed this way know it is one the sweetest place under heaven.

" Then wait, my soul, submissive wait,
Prostrate before His awful seat;
And midst the terrors of His rod,
Trust in a wise and gracious God."

The Psalmist knew this when he was dumb and opened not his mouth, saying, " Because Thou didst it." O to have a due sense of the hand of God as being in our oppressions or our afflictions! so that our hands are upon our mouths, and there is some humble trust in our hearts that after all the Lord will be better to us than our fears, and infinitely better than our deserts.

There is an oppression that may not be attended with any particular sin. Sin is mixed with all we do; but the Lord sometimes lays a trouble upon a person when it is for his spiritual good, and for the magnifying of His great Name, and that He might endear Himself to him a greater measure than He had heretofore. As we grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, some of us prove this; that when the Lord would make Himself known to us, as He did the three disciples on the mount of transfiguration, He brought a cloud over them, and " they feared as they entered into the cloud "; and then they heard a voice out of the cloud, saying " This is My beloved Son, hear ye Him ". And if only the Lord Jesus Christ makes Himself known in an oppression or an affliction, a bereavement, or a temptation, and endears Himself to the heart, then what spiritual profit there is, and what peaceable fruits of righteousness to those who are exercised thereby!

" O Lord, I am oppressed." It seems as though Hezekiah here was shut up to himself and to his own particular troubles. And I believe that sometimes the Lord's people are brought into that solitary condition that they can only look upon themselves and their own troubles, and look alone to the Lord for deliverance from them. I mean this; if troubles do not weigh upon us particularly, we can often enter into other people's troubles, but sometimes we have such troubles that swallow up those of others. And then we need the Lord to undertake for us in some special manner.

Then the people of God are sometimes oppressed relative to the Church of God. If your heart is right in the things of God, you will be concerned in the prosperity of Zion. When Zion is under a cloud, or under the hidings of God's face, or the withholding of His power, it will be an oppression upon your heart. And that oppression will make you cry to the Lord in secret, not merely complaining publicly that the Lord withholds power from the ministry, and so on. That will not be the sum and substance of your complaint, but oftentimes you will complain in secret before the Lord, and tell Him how oppressed you are by reason of what you feel yourself to be, and by reason of the absence of what you desire to see, that is, the goings forth of the Lord in His sanctuary. This may not be applicable to you here as a people, for the Lord has dealt very kindly and mercifully with you in bringing some into the fellowship of the gospel in an open and manifest way, putting on the Lord Jesus Christ, and giving a testimony of their hope in Jesus Christ. Therefore you have reason to bless and praise God for the opening of His hand, for the prosperity given. But then there are churches where those who are truly spiritual often grieve over the afflictions of Joseph, because the Lord's hand seems to be shortened. He withholds power from ministry. The ministry may be quite correct as regards the truth, but there may be a withholding of power and this is often an oppression to those who have the cause and interest of truth at heart. O what an oppression it is, when a soul is ready to exclaim with the Psalmist, " Will He be favourable no more? Will He never look down upon me as an individual with the smilings of His grace? Will He never look down upon Zion to the ingathering of precious souls, and to the building up of His church and people? " These are oppressions that some have to carry upon their hearts, and their desire is that the Lord would undertake for them.

Now it is only the Lord Jesus who can really undertake for a person who is under these oppressions. With regard to sin it is only in His having undertaken the whole of the liabilities of His Church and people, that they can ever be purged or pardoned. There would be no salvation of any one individual, had it not been for the wondrous love of God in giving His only-begotten Son, and for the grace of Christ in coming into this world to suffer, the Just for the unjust, to bring sinner to God. So He undertook everything in the matter of justifying those poor sinners who were given to Him in eternity past by the Father; and He redeemed them from the Fall by becoming sin for them, took away their sin and guilt, and by His spotless righteousness, imputed to them righteousness wherewith they can stand before the judgment-seat. And the Holy Ghost, He undertakes to make salvation known, and to witness with the blood of Christ; and as He has undertaken to gather every sinner from the four quarters of the earth who is redeemed with the blood of Christ, and to call such into fellowship of the gospel: so He will have His witnesses, and He will cause the word to go forth with sovereign power and energy to this end.

May the Lord add His blessings for His Name's sake.

Caleb Sawyer

This article sent to us by Bro. W.R. Pullig
Editors

MEETINGS

HOPEWELL

The sixteenth annual Fifth Sunday meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with Hopewell Church, Winnsboro, Texas, beginning on Friday, July 27th, 28th and 29th.

Hopewell Church is located about six miles west of Winnsboro. Go west on Coke Road (515) about four and one - half miles and follow signs.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us. There will be no business, just preaching and singing.

Elder Jimmy Hamrick, Pastor
John Hamrick, Clerk

PIG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Pig River Association is scheduled to convene, the Lord willing, the first Sunday in August and Friday and Saturday before, August 3, 4 & 5. Town Creek Church is to host the meetings on their church grounds.

Those coming from the south, go highway 220 North about five miles above Bassett Fork, Va., and turn left on route 605 and go approximately 2 1/2 or 3 miles to church. Those coming from the north turn right on 605. Route 605 is road toward Henry - look for Henry sign.

Jamie E. Cooper, Assoc. Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 1990

Dale Haygood, TX 2.00
Whitney Mobley, NC 5.00
In memorial to Mr. Melvin Smith, SD
From his children 20.00
Bert H. Knox, WA 10.00
Mrs. Armedia Taylor, LA 2.00
Alvis Beacham, NC 7.00
Mrs. Julia T. Sowers, VA ... 2.00
Mrs. J.D. Neely, AR 1.00
Raymond Clayton, KY 7.00
Mrs. Florence D. Maxey, VA ... 5.00
W.R. Pullig, LA 2.00
Clarence M. Kearns, NC 2.00
William R. Adcox, AR 2.00
Mrs. Pearl A. Law, VA 5.00
Lawrence W. Myers, VA 2.00
Mrs. Elma M. Burnett, TN ... 2.00
Mrs. E. J. Barnes, OR 5.00
Mrs. Lois E. Cloud, AZ 10.00
Miss Reidy Pickral, VA 50.00
Mrs. Betty Nutter, MD 2.00
Mrs. Berdie Hall, NC 2.00
Mrs. Ruth Turner, VA 7.00
Jackie B. Ferguson, VA 2.00
Kenith Hollandsworth, VA 2.00
O.P. Murphy, TX 100.00
Ollie C. Gauldin, NC 2.00
Eld. Tomas Solomon, VA 2.00
Mrs. Connie M. Page, NC..... 5.00
Mrs. E. Thompson, NC 20.00

OBITUARIES

LILA COTHRAN CRABTREE

It pleased God to call Sister Lila Crabtree from our midst November 23, 1989. She united with the Durham Church July 19 , 1925 and was a faithful member until the Lord , in His appointed time , saw fit to call her from us . Sister Lila had no children . She was a woman of humility and peace , with a deep abiding faith in God . She attended her place of worship as long as she was able , but for many years was in poor health and unable to meet with her brethren . A graveside service was conducted for her at Eno Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery by Elder Burch Wray. Elder Cleo Robertson offered prayer . " It is not death to close the eye long dimmed with tears , and awake in glorious repose to spend eternal years ."
Written by request of the Durham Church in conference .

Novaline Stewart
Assistant Clerk

SISTER PEARLINE MARDIS

Sister Pearline Mardis the daughter of the late Brother Ezell and sister Cassil Musgraw . She was born Oct . 12th , 1909 , departed this life Jan . 17th , 1989 . Making her stay here 80 years , 3 months and 5 days . She was married to George Mardis March 16th , 1929 who preceded her in death a few years .

To this union was born 4 sons and two daughters Gerald Mardis , Orlando , Florida ; James Mardis , Vencinnes , Indiana ; Eugene Mardis, Greenville , Miss .; Keith Mardis , Vencinnes , Indiana . Two daughters Irmogene Cain , Bastrop , La .; Brenda Braxton , Bastrop , La . One sister Geneva Pettis , Bastrop , La .; three brothers Mark Musgraw , Bastrop , La .; Jake Musgraw , Bastrop , La .; George Musgraw , Bastrop , La . Sister Mardis joined Concord Primitive Baptist Church Sept . 12th , 1954 and was baptized by Elder John Lee Smith . She was a faithful and devoted member , always filling her seat when she was able to go and many times when she was not able to go . She was at the meeting a few days before the Lord called her home . We at Concord Church miss her but we believe our loss is her eternal gain .

Funeral service was at Galden Funeral Home Chapel in Bastrop , La. by her pastor and writer Jan . 19th , 1989 assisted by Mr . Jim Taylor . Her body was laid to rest beside her husband in Christ Church Cemetery in Bastrop , La . beneath a mound of beautiful flowers , there to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour , When our vile bodies shall arise in the glorified image of our Lord and Saviour , Where we will be like Him and praise Him forever more , Where there will be no more pain nor sorrow no more death but all will be Peace , Love , and Joy while the eternal ages roll on and on . May the Lord bless and comfort all of her children ,

brothers and sister and all that loved her as only He can do .

Written by her pastor ,
Elder George W . Jones

LORA HUTCHINS REEVES

Sister Lora Reeves died February 9 , 1989 , after many years of illness. On August 16 , 1941 she was united with the Durham Church where she and her late husband , Willie , faithfully attended until her health failed and she could no longer go to meetings .

Though Sister Lora did not talk very much , in her walk through the years she proved to be an humble , peace - loving person who loved the Lord and her brethren .

She had no children to mourn .

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Cleo Robertson and she was laid to rest to await the glorious resurrection .

Written by request of the Durham Church in conference .

Novaline Stewart
Assistant Clerk

SISTER IRENE McKINNEY SETLIFF

With sadness in my heart , I will attempt to write a few words in memory of my dear beloved friend, Sister Irene McKinney Setliff , who died Thursday , February 1st , 1990 at her home in the Mayfield community where she had spent most of her life .

Born July 25th , 1911 , she was the daughter of the late Elder Sam M. McKinney and Sister Lena Dix McKinney . She was married September 14th , 1929 to C . Gordon Setliff who preceded her in death August , 1980 . The Lord blessed them with fifty one years together . She was formerly employed by Dan River , Inc .; a former partner of Setliff and Company of Reidsville , Eden and Madison ; a music teacher who gave private piano lessons and one who loved music and wrote some of her own . Her poem was printed in the March Signs . She was a member of Happy Home Extension Homemakers . She joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church September 12th , 1982 and was baptised October 12th by her beloved pastor Elder David Spangler . She was a faithful member and a firm believer in salvation by grace and grace alone . She loved the church , sisters , brethren and friends and attended her church on Sunday before she died on Thursday . She enjoyed the fellowship of having friends and church members in her home .

Survivors include one daughter , Gloria S . Pegram of Reidsville , one son , Charlie G . Setliff , Jr . of Pelham , five sisters , Muriel Strader , Connie Page and Kathleen Powell all of Ruffin , Mossie Walsh and Viola Hill both of Danville , Va ., five grandchildren and four great - grandchildren .

Her funeral was conducted from Dan River Primitive Baptist Church by Elders Kenneth Key and Haywood Wray . She was laid to rest , by the side of her husband , in the church

cemetery under a mound of beautiful flowers , there to await the glorious resurrection .

She is greatly missed by her family and friends . May we who mourn be reconciled to God 's will , knowing He never makes a mistake . Written by one who loved her and misses her so very much .

It is requested that a copy of this memorial be made available to the family members and that one be submitted for publication in the Signs of the Times .

Sister Lucy H . Davis

ELDER JOHN CLOVIS TOWNLEY

It is with sadness we feel to make the attempt of writing an obituary of our dear pastor . Who passed from this life December 31 , 1989 in St . Vincent Infirmary in Little Rock , Arkansas . After a long illness at the age of 71 . Born May 22 , 1918 . He joined Pilgrim Rest Church October 15 , 1955 , and was baptized by Elder J . T . Everett . Elder Townley was ordained as Deacon and served Pilgrim Rest Church from Oct ., 1960 until the First Sunday in May , 1970 . He preached his first sermon , and was ordained as Elder 5th Sunday in August 28 , 1971 . He loved the doctrine of the Old Baptist . He served several churches and was Moderator of South Arkansas Association , and did a lot of visiting other meetings and Associations . He stood for the hard doctrine , and preached it and lived it . And gave God all the praise . He was the son of Wiley Townley and Isabell O'Mary Townley , both were members of Chapel Hill Primitive Baptist Church .

He is survived by his wife , Frances Rhodes Townley of the home . Two daughters , Mrs . Mary Neal , Benton , Ark .; Mrs . Barbara Fish , Dewitt , Ark . One sister , Pauline Norris of Fordcyce , Ark . Two brothers , Troy Townley of Oxford , Alabama ; Doyle Townley of Maysville , Oklahoma . Three grandchildren , three great - grandchildren , two step grandchildren , five step great - grandchildren .

Funeral service was held at Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church on Wednesday January 3 , 1990 at 2 p .m . by Elder Loyd Wall and Elder Paul Danial . Burial was in Chapel Hill Cemetery near Sparkman , Arkansas by Benton Funeral Home . He will be missed by all that knew him and loved him . This was written by request of the church March 31 , 1990 . Written by one who loved and cared for him . He 's gone home , but not forgotten .

His Wife ,
Frances Townley

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your " Signs " and without missing any copies , be sure to inform us of any change of address .

Editors

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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POEM

This poem was written on May 28, 1990 in Louisville, Ky. We had been traveling for twenty - two days and would leave the next morning for home. We had a most enjoyable trip and feel we visited the many places in Spirit as well as in body. I humbly dedicate this writing to all who went with us and to any others who have witnessed the wonders of God 's Creation and given Him all praise and honor.

We have seen the Kansas plain
Spread out by Thine own hand
and know Thou gavest it for gain
Because of Thy love for man.

We saw the gaping Canyons
With walls treacherous and steep
and beheld Thy beauties in its depths
Painted by Thy hand, Grace the colors keep.

We saw the mighty rivers
Rushing down to the sea
and know Thou art the giver
Waters from mountain 's side set free.

We saw many cattle spread
Among the rocks and rills
and know that Thou hast said
" Mine are the cattle of a thousand hills."

We have seen Thy lovely mountains
Reaching up to Heavenly heights
and know Thou hast built them
To enrich our earthly sights.

We 've seen the early sunrise
The dawning of God 's new day
and prayed for Thine own blessings
As we journeyed on our way.

We beheld wild animals grazing
In valleys lush and green
and know its of Thy hand amazing
Their numbers and beauty there is seen.

Oh, we have seen the lofty trees
That through ages large have grown
and know Thou hast sown the seed
Thus the Glory is truly Thine alone.

We saw the rocks placed in a line
and in Thy works were amazed
We know the hands that laid them
Was not any mans - but truly Thine.

We saw the foaming ocean
As it crashed upon the shore
and know Thou didst set it in motion
To move and surge forever more.

We looked at dazzling mountain tops
All covered white with snow
and know they fulfill Thy plan
For from such Thy purest waters flow.

We walked upon the ice field
So barren cold and deep
We know its age of time is real
And that secret Thou dost keep.

We saw a beautiful sunset
And knew days end had come
We dwell in lifes fading light as yet
But long beyond it to reach our home.

We saw lakes in utter stillness
Some locked in frozen ice
We know these settings were for us
And thank Thee for blessings without price.

We beheld the steaming cauldrons
That express the earthly heat
and know Thou has control now
O'er every Satanic challenge we meet.

We thank Thee for Thy presence
As we traveled along the way
and feel we've seen Thy hand of essence
Manifest to us from day to day.

As we beheld these many beauties
And feasted on Spiritual food
No wonder Lord Thou hast said
" I made it and Behold it is good ".

With all praise to Him
Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8 / 90
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

EDITORIAL

" Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Elder R.H. Campbell

I don't believe that have ever heard this scripture used as a text for a sermon in the Primitive Baptist Church and I have wondered about this many times. It is one of the most beautiful and inspiring texts that I know of and it is in the fulfillment of this command that God's children receive the greatest joy and comfort in their pilgrimage here on earth. I know that it is a favored text of the religious orders of our day to promote a works system, to earn salvation and the blessings thereof, but that does not mean that this is the true interpretation of the scripture. Many avoid this text because they do not want to be confused with the modern theories of the teachings of the scriptures. These are the words of Jesus and they are to the church in all ages of time and they are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works. They are found in Jesus sermon on the mount as he taught his disciples the gospel that he was sent into the world to proclaim and indeed is the basis upon which our love and fellowship for our brethren is based. When this commandment is being fulfilled among the saints of God all is peace and harmony and they experience joy beyond compare as they travel in this low ground of sin and sorrow. If it was not for this light shining unto all that are in the house and their glorfying God for this light their journey here in time would be a dark and lonely experience. The light dispels the darkness and brings gladness to all that are in the household of faith.

Jesus began his sermon by telling his disciples that, the poor in spirit, the mourners, the meek, the pure in heart, the peacemakers and those who are persecuted for his sake are blessed characters. These are conditions that do not cause the individual to feel to be in a desirable position, or one that they would strive for and certainly not a blessed condition. By worldly standards, characters in these conditions are lightly esteemed among men and yet Jesus admonished them to rejoice and be exceedingly glad for great was their reward in heaven. These are the people who Jesus told they were the light of the world and the salt of the earth and all because of their being blessed characters, not in order to receive this blessed status. This is completely contrary to the worldly appraisal of the situation and the fleshly interpretation of the scripture quoted above by the majority of the theologians in the world today.

Mankind has always advocated a doctrine which supports a worldly religion based on natural causes and effects, and the natural mans ability to voluntarily believe the truth, and by responding to the law of commandments earn a place in the heavenly kingdom, and therefore

enjoy the benefits based on their merits . They quote scriptures to support their beliefs but it is by applying all scriptures to all people that they err , for all scripture are given by inspiration and are to the man of God . Because they quote , mis - quote and wrongly apply the scriptures in their effort to support a works system does not mean that they do, and certainly does not mean that the prophecies of the scripture are of private interpretation to be subject to the will of men regardless of popular acceptance .

Jesus was teaching his disciples who were blessed characters al - ready , and that blessing included their ability to discern the truth and to rightly divide the word of truth . That blessing also included the light and the ability to let it so shine that it would indeed give light to all that are of the household of faith that they may glorify their Father in heaven . In their journey through life many times the road gets dark and dreary and the heirs of grace tend to become discouraged as they see so much confusion and pursuit of the worldly pleasures and necessities of life all around them . Their heart seeks and desires better things and yet they feel so alone and it seems the dark - ness will consume them . Then they meet a brother who seeks the same things that they do, and no one could convince them that the world does not light up for they can now see clearly and the darkness and lone - liness is gone . In this life the joy of their salvation is in experiencing the love and the fellowship that they share with their brethren as they come together in peace and bask in the light that shines forth in the faces and the countenances of those whom the spirit blesses to commune together in the beauties of their salvation . When one begins to relate their experience and tell of God 's dealing with them , as he led them into an understanding of the truth , nothing can better describe their bearing than a light shining forth from a heart that has been instructed in the beauties of Zion . David wrote , " out of Zion , the perfection of beauty , God hath shined ." This is surely a Godly radiance that shines forth , not a carnal flickering of the natural man .

Surely this light is the fruit of the spirit that dwell within the heart of all the saints of God . This is declared so many times and in so many ways by the writers of both the old and new testament . The apostle Paul wrote much to the churches and especially in his letters to Timothy and Titus , who he called his own sons in the faith , regarding this light and how it would make itself manifest in the household of faith and the reason for it . He admonished all to let their walk and their conversation be such as becometh saints and not to be conformed to the world and the vanity and lusts of it . He wrote to the church at Rome , " I beseech ye therefore , brethren , by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice , holy , acceptable unto God , which is your reasonable service ." This was addressed to the children of God who had the spirit dwelling in them and that is what enabled them to perform this as their reasonable service which is declar - ing this as the reason for the gift of

the spirit in letting their light so shine. It was given to them individually, but it was given for the benefit of the church, as Jesus said, " Ye are the light of the world, a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick: and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." This is the reason it is given and they glorify God because they realize it is a gift from Him.

These gifts are not given to the world at large but to a blessed people and they are for a specific purpose which is to light their path and to dispel the darkness of the world. All can remember in their experience in the church, precious saints of whom, just the memory brings to mind this light shining forth from a pure heart. They were such a joy to be with as you beheld the work of grace in their lives; surely they were like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth their fruit in their season: their leaf also shall not wither: and whatsoever they do shall prosper. David said this of the blessedness of those whose delight is in the law of the Lord and whose meditation is of heavenly things day and night. Their prospering did not appear unto them but it did to all the household of faith just as the light shines out not in, and as long as their is one alive who was blessed to bask in that light they will never be forgotten. Their whole life was devoted to their church and their whole desire was to serve her in any way that they could; they never considered it work, it was a labor of love which they enjoyed doing as much as their brethren enjoyed sharing in this light that shined forth from the heart.

I have been blessed to know many of these precious saints in the thirty-seven years that I have been going among the Primitive Baptist and rejoiced greatly in the lovely fellowship that I have experienced in their company. I have seen many shining that have since been called to their heavenly home and they are sadly missed. There will be others but there will never be one to take their place, each is a special gift to the Church a beautiful gift that causes all who behold it to glorify their Father which is in heaven.

Surely this is the lesson that is being taught in this text and it is beautiful and comforting to see it unfolding before our eyes. In the eyes of those blessed saints they are, poor in spirit, mourning, meek and hungering and thirstings after righteousness; before God they are blessed characters who are the light of the world and the salt of the earth; unto their brethren they are lights shining forth in a world of darkness and they strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees and bring joy and peace to all the household of faith in a world of turmoil and confusion.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

PSALM 2 : 11

Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mrs. G.B. McAdams
102 Eastwood Dr.
Columbus, Miss, 39702

Dear Sir:

I am not a member, but I enjoy the good writing in the Signs of the Times. My grandfather was an Elder, William Dorris. Ordained to the ministry in 1901. He was a kind, loving, humble and faithful father, husband and friend. He was highly esteemed by those who knew him. He died in his fifties due to injuries received in a run away horse and wagon. I was only a year old. I wish I could have known him and heard him preach.

Elder W.D. Griffin was named (Dorris) taken from my grand-father's name a dear beloved brother himself, a pastor of my mother and father Gidie & Ruth Blalock's church, "Bathel" near Steens, Miss. and Milport, Ala. for 25 years, before going north to pastor Welch Tract Church. He and Mrs. Griffin was like part of our family we loved them dearly.

Sincerely yours,
Mrs. Edna McAdams

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

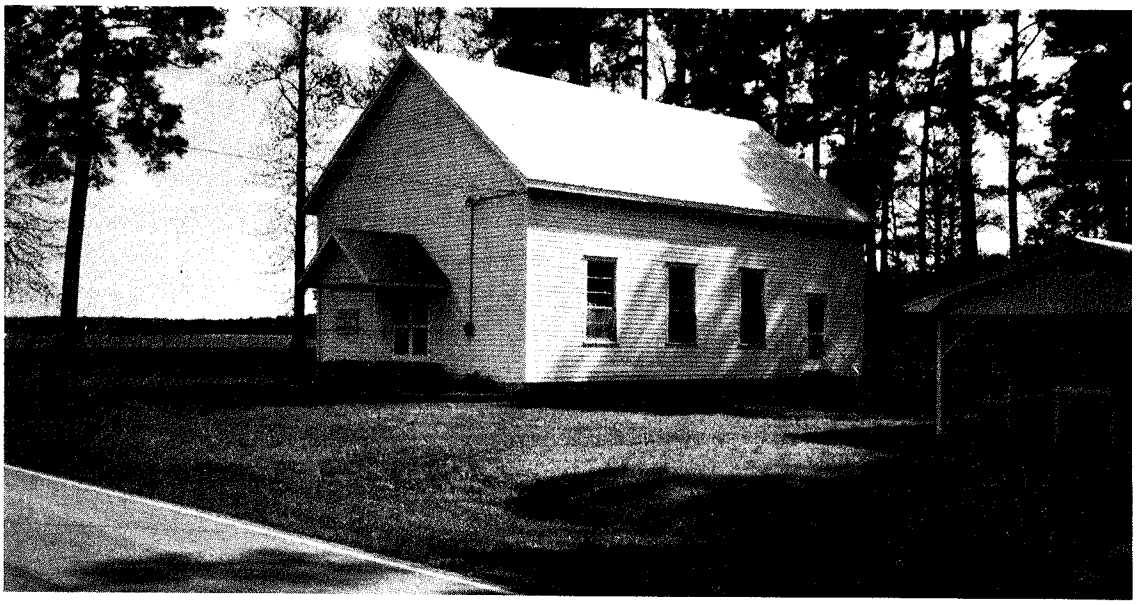

GOOSE CREEK ISLAND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

I am enclosing photo of our church Goose Creek Island located in Pamlico, County at Low-land, N.C.

The church records as I have, show it was founded in 1823, but Hassells history give it 1803. The present building was built in 1898.

Our meetings are fourth Sundays 11:00 a.m. and Sat. night before at 7:00 p.m. every quarter, Feb., May, Aug.- Nov. communion and feet washing every quarter.

Our present pastor Elder Oliver Allen.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

THE HEAVEN SENT BREAKFAST

Mr. H.L. Hastings, of Boston, says in his " Ebenezers ," that on the afternoon of Christmas Day, 1866, he went into an humble chapel on Lowell Street and found a physician delivering a brief address in reference to the gracious providences of God, and his guiding hand as seen in the affairs of life. He spoke in substance as follows:

" Once in my visits about the city, I stepped into a store and commenced to talk upon the truths of revelation ; and the conversation presently turned upon the faithfulness of God in providing for his people. And the merchant said, ' In the city of Portland there resided some years ago a rope maker named H—. He was regarded as being in prosperous circumstances, and doing a comfortable business. In the year 1812, the ' embargo' which was laid upon exhorts ruined his business: he could not sell his ropes, and finally fell into straitened circumstances.

' He had a wife, a frail and feeble woman, who had been afflicted with pulmonary disease for 25 years; and he also had several children. One cold, snowy, winter's night their last morsel of food was consumed; he had no means to obtain more, and the children went supperless to bed. The man was not a Christian, and was in great distress. The woman was a child of God and knew there was a hiding place for tossed and troubled souls before the throne of grace. The husband retired to rest with the children, and the feeble wife remained to pray, and plead the promises of God who feeds the hungry from his bounteous hand.

' The night wore away while she continued in earnest supplication; and about two o 'clock something seemed to bid her to go to the door; and she opened it. The snow was drifting and the storm howling without, but in the entry there stood a large basket. Unable to lift it, she dragged it within the door as best she could; and uncovering it, beheld bread, beef, potatoes, butter, ham, and a variety of other articles of food — an abundant supply for the pressing and present wants.

' For all these things she thanked and praised God; and having done so proceeded to prepare a breakfast for the family: boiling some potatoes, cooking meat, and placing them with the butter and bread, upon the table.

' When all was done, she called for husband and bade him come and see the breakfast the Lord had provided for them. But he, ignorant of God 's wondrous workings, supposed that hunger and trouble had made her insane, and begged her to be quiet; and said he certainly would get some food in the morning. But she insisted that he should come and see the food the Lord had provided for them. At length the odor of the cooking breakfast reached his nostrils, and he came out, and saw with grateful wonder the food which the Lord had given to feed his suffering family. The children were awaken-

ed, and the heaven sent breakfast was eaten with keen appetites, and reverent and thankful hearts. But the source of the supply, or the hand by which God had sent it, was yet a mystery. Nothing about the basket gave indication of the place from whence it came; and they could only give thanks to the giver or every good and perfect gift for such timely aid.

'Sometime afterward, someone was looking at the bottom of the basket and discovered on it the trace of two initials, nearly obliterated. At once the man recognized them as the initials of the grocer who lived at the next corner, and concluded the basket came from him. The grocer was a believer in the final salvation of all men, and was not regarded as especially devout; but it seemed evident that the Lord had used him to convey food to this suffering family.

'The rope-maker's wife lost no time, but speedily called on the wife of the grocer, saying, 'I have come to tell you how the Lord heard my prayers.' 'Stop', said the grocer's wife, 'hear my story first. That cold, stormy night, when I lay in the bed with my infant only a few weeks old on my arm, and the winds howling around, someone came and took hold of me, and said, Mr. H—'s folks are starving, and you have bread enough; send them some bread. My husband said that it was false, that Mr. H— is better off than we are. He does not need bread. Soon the hand was laid on me again, and the message was repeated. I again urged my husband to go but he refused.

'This was done the third time; and I entreated my husband to go, but he had no faith in it. I said unto him, You take care of the child, I am going to carry Mr. H—'s folks some bread. I cannot stay. God will take everything we have if we do not do it.

'Seeing that I was determined to go, he offered to go for me; and took the basket. I told him to put in bread, potatoes and butter, etc., and he went out in the storm, wading through the deep drifts of snow; and left the basket in your entry.

'The rope-maker's wife then told her story about the sore distress, the weary night watch, the agonizing prayer, and the timely answer, which brought comfort to both soul and body in that wild and stormy night.'"

"And", said the merchant who told the story, "I was one of the children who ate that breakfast which the Lord thus provided." "And", said the physician, "that merchant is Mr. H—, of this city."

This was the physician's story as nearly as we can repeat it; and we have placed it among these records of prevailing prayer in hope that from it some of God's poor children may derive comfort in the midst of trial and distress, and be enabled to plant their Ebenezers, or memorials of divine faithfulness, thick amid the shadowy pathways of this weary world, until they shall reach the land where, "They shall hunger no more, for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and lead them unto living fountains of waters."

Still God humbles his people, and suffers them to hunger, and feeds them in unknown ways, that

he may make them know that, " man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord, doth man live." (Deut. 8:3) Happy are they who apply these lessons of His providence, and learn more and more perfectly to trust His faithful word.

Sylvester Hassell

(Reprint from " Signs " 1960 .)

PETER'S RESTORATION

Preached on Lord's Day Evening, April 9th, 1922, at Brixton Tabernacle

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" And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said unto Him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly." Luke 22, 61, & 62.

If the Scriptures did not describe the Lord's people as having faults, evidencing their truly natural side, some of us would be unable to find much help in them. The falls of God's family are not written for our imitation, or to foster a spirit of lightness in us, or in any wise to make us think we may do evil that good may abound, but they are written for the consolation of people like Peter today.

This evening I desire grace to speak upon the restoration of Peter. Before his denial the Lord had intimated to His weak disciple that he should be recovered out of the snare of the fowler, " When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Here is the divine promise that forgiveness and love should reach his heart and then he would be fitted to help his poor stumbling brethren. Peter had been regenerated before this; he should be converted, that is, turned from and delivered out of the sad state of backsliding into which he so quickly fell.

What led to Peter's restoration? The Saviour's intercession. " I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." " Holy Father, keep all My people; keep them." Peter, with all his swearing and lying and other sins, gave ample proof as to where he would have gone had it not been for the Saviour's all - prevailing prayer for him. Even while he was in the sieve he was kept; had it not been so, the devil would have sifted him into perdition. Oh! the mercy that shines here in the Saviour's heart towards His sinning people. Peters here tonight, this is the Saviour of the Father's sending. What are your thoughts of Him? All that Peter said and did while in the sieve only illustrates the power of divine keeping, for to what greater depths of evil would Peter have sunk had there been no prayer of Christ for him and no power of God around him? Mark, Peter's cursing and swearing are not fruits of intercession and gracious keeping - decidedly not - such things can only come from a corrupt source, a depraved nature but, to be kept from total and final apostasy with a heart like he then revealed, only proves the more illustriously the effectual interces -

sion of Christ and the power of God around him.

Judas and Peter grievously sinned, the former from love of money, but the latter sinned against light, love and mercy felt. What saved Peter from an awful end like Judas? Nothing in Peter, we are will persuaded. What was it? Divine sovereignty put an interceding Christ between Peter and the halter and perdition, and so he was kept from using the one and going to the other. To every fallen and repenting child of God present I would say, "Your recovery to spiritual peace and fellowship with the Lord will start from the same source as Peter's; the Saviour loves you still!"

An act of providence must be considered and an apparently trivial one too. "The cock crowed," and, though this may have been an every morning occurrence, yet this particular morning it occurred in relation to such things that did not happen every morning. All four evangelists tell us of this cock-crowing and it had its part in restoring Peter. The cock-crowing had an effect on Peter Peter's mind, and haven't you been taught to feel a connection between things apparently trivial and certain things you have done? "The cock crew... And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice." This event was used by God to stir up Peter's mind by way of remembrance.

Has some affliction been sent upon you to stir up your mind, and is it being sanctified to your soul so as to convict you of your sin and so connect your sin and your affliction; you own the mercy and love of the rod and say, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray, even as far as Peter went, but I saw it was in love to my soul that this trial came to me and I pray that it will enable me to learn His statutes in a spiritual way." Such a Peter-like character will see something beneath the surface of this cock-crowing. Or it may be the Lord is bringing you through the fiery trial of bereavement. Something of the spirit of idolatry, which is so subtle and so ensnaring, may have carried you away from the Lord and caused you to look more to the creature than to the Creator. He has brought down the idol according to His promise, "From all your idols will I cleanse you," and blessed the solemn stoke to you and now the bereavement speaks to you as the cock-crowing did to Peter. God's voice in such circumstances reaches the deepest recesses of the soul and makes room for Himself in your heart and life as not before. You that have passed this way know the bitterness and the bliss of such trials.

It may be that numerous circumstances are, as it were, crowing and pointing out your folly. You had some smooth sailing, friend; the south wind blew softly and you had some prosperous times, but now the tempestuous wind called Eurocly-don has blown your temperal prosperity to pieces. Neither sun nor stars in many days appeared and all hope of being saved from these circumstances is being taken away. In your home, employment or business, things have suddenly taken an opposite turn; you have toiled hard

with brain and hand to go forward, but the circumstances are so pressing against you that you cannot help going backward and you fear a total wreck of everything dear to flesh and blood. Now, my friend, do not these topsyturvy circumstances, under the blessing of God, speak to you something like this? "Do you wonder at your circumstances being as they are? Can you complain of the hand of God going against you? Have you not asked for these things by your evil ways? Have you not neglected the Scriptures, the secret admonitions of conscience, the Lord's house, the watchfulness over your own spirit? Has not the mercy seat been infrequently and coldly visited, and far more time spent upon temporal and perishing things than in seeking eternal and spiritual things?" Ah! friend, here is the same thing happening to you as to Peter; the Lord knows how to make providences speak to you and call your sin to remembrance. Yes, and the day will come when you will bless Him with weeping eyes for those crooks in your lot, those thorns in your way, those wall of hewn stones, for they will be seen by you as the chosen means of love, in preventing you from plunging yourself into more grievous trouble. Trials blessed produce more soul profit than prosperous time unblessed. We must say, "He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." We have to learn what that means, "He gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul."

"And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him . . . And when he thought thereon, he wept." The power of spiritual thought is not with us. We are not sufficient to think spiritually of ourselves. Peter was now favoured to think and remember by the unction of the Remembrancer, and now he thought of the word of warning, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat." Apparently that warning word had previously fallen upon his ear without any effect but, as none of the Lord's words can fall to the ground, it comes home to Peter now with great power and he feels the importance of it.

We cannot disregard any word of the Lord without evil resulting, and sorrow is sure to follow such conduct. All revealed truth we need; all is profitable for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, in addition to doctrine, and, when we walk in our own ways and are not humbled enough to bow to the authority of the Word, we are on the highway to trouble in some form or another, as some of us have found. Then we find the exceeding kindness of the Lord in causing us to remember our evil ways, and our "doings that were not good", and, when He makes memory do its work, we think of our actions with shame and grief and have no small regrets that ever we could act so base a part.

Memory is connected with repentance elsewhere in this Book. "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent." Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and repent." The sins of the church are to be remembered as well as the

sins of the individual, and repented of in order to restoration. What a great mercy it is to have our sins set before us in the light of God's countenance and for Him to charge them home to us and show us the guilt of them! This is done by His goodness in order to lead us to repentance.

There was also a word of comfort for Peter to think of: "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." The Spirit showed him his own thoughtlessness and then the remembrance the Saviour had of him. "I have prayed for thee" is a great word to have spoken home to a man who has sinned like Peter. To have the mind led to muse on my great sin, on the one hand, in neglecting the word of the Lord and, on the other, to be led to the Saviour's continued intercession for me that my poor weak faith should not fail, is enough to break any man's stony heart; no one can stand out against that. Peter would have been harder than his name signifies if he had not gone out and wept bitterly. May you and I be favoured like that and see if we do not have to find a secret place to weep both tears of shame and tears of joy!

"The Lord turned, and looked upon Peter." If the Lord had turned His back upon Peter, could Peter have justly complained? To a tender conscience, departing from God's ways is sure to bring on fear— fear of the Lord leaving us to reap the full consequences of our sowing to the wind; the heart smites us with condemnation and we fear He will never show us His face again, never look with mercy again. If ever we have acted like Peter, sat where he sat, spoke like he spake, and then had a look of love and forgiveness given us, we all know something of the soul melting under the sense of the Lord's kindness to us. It is thus the Saviour becomes to us something more than a name. His Name, then, is as ointment poured forth and love to Him is then in lively exercise.

All Peters and Davids in heart (and some of the Lord's people may be like them in outward falls) want this look, and they shall have it, for the Spirit did not write this scripture for amusement and certainly not for the elder sons who have never transgressed at any time; no, He wrote for the comfort and hope of all those who, having sinned like Peter and David, are brought to repentance.

This look separated Peter and that at once. "Peter went out." Ah! poor man, erred in going in! Had we stood at the gate and told him he was acting foolishly in seeking to go in the courtyard, he would have bitterly resented it. Very few indeed can accept wise counsel. When he had got in, it was another matter to get out. The flesh and ignorant zeal can take us into great troubles and disgrace, but neither of them can help us out; nothing but a look from the God - Man Mediator will ever separate us from the enemies of Christ, but that will. Their fire may be very strong and alluring on a cold night, but a look from Christ sends a stronger fire in the heart and powerfully draws the recipient from the place of denial.

Many of us present tonight have professed to have received the

Saviour 's love into our hearts , but the reality of that will be seen by the fruit of separation . We shall be going out from many things and people too; all our life , going out, if this look of divine love has vitally reached us , and the going out is no hardship at all under the sense of love. Peter did not want telling to go out when this love reached him; no, he could not get out fast enough , depend upon that . Neither did he stand and argue about the Saviour being too hard , too strict , too severe — no . All such talk today only shows with certainty where we are. He would have been among the enemies until now had he not felt the power of love ; that enjoyed kills all such talk . " He went out ." He muffled his head in his cloak and went out and, as he went, he felt the spirit of these words : —

" Lord , pardon a backslider base
Returning from the dead ,
Ashamed to show his shameful face ,
Or lift his guilty head .

Ah ! what a fool have I been made ,
Or rather made myself !
That mariner 's mad part I played ,
That sees , yet strikes the shelf ."

Tears for sin are beyond our power to make, even when we know we ought to be , of all people , the most repentant. How glad we often would be if we could shed one tear over our sin ! But Peter found the secret of true repentance. " He wept bitterly." Terribly had he sinned (we equal him in that if we know our - selves ;) bitterly he weeps . Ah ! do we equal him in that also? Oh that we could manifest the same grief for our falls as he ! Plainly we can sin , plainly we cannot repent ; sin hardens , repentance shows a gracious softness. Judas went out, but he went out to get the halter and hang his body , and , as to his soul , he went out to perdition. The solemn fact for us is this, that, without godly repentance and spiritual softness of heart over our sins , we may escape the halter , but we shall not escape perdition , and we shall meet Judas in his and our own place. Some of us here tonight are tried exceedingly on this very point of repentance . We feel that after men have told us that believing is sufficient , they are not telling us the truth , for there is no word more true than this , " repen - tance toward God " — that first and then — " faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ ." No repentance — no faith .

" What mean the men that say , believe ,
And let repentance go ?
What comfort can the soul receive
That never felt its woe ? "

Brethren , Christ and Christ alone can rightly do the thing, and this look of Chrsit made Peter 's eyes over - flow with tears . Judas went into endless misery ; Peter went into the region of heaven in his feelings , for weeping from such a cause as the manifested love of Christ to him was far from the sorrow that worketh death — sorrow over his acts to be sure — sorrow over his heart .

" How weak must be this wicked heart ,
Which , boasting much to know ,
Made light of all Thy bitter smart ,
And wantoned with Thy woe ! "

But how surprisingly good his Lord appeared to him now ! What a revelation this was to him of the

Saviour 's heart !

Thus we have faintly, but I hope truthfully , shown the way the Lord restored Peter. Have I this evening a case present like his ? Then let me say to all such , you will find the intercession of Christ to be a most blessed thing . Your heart will one day be led to see that He had His eye and heart upon you perpetually and never ceased to bear up your name and case before His Father, and His intercession , as you will see fuller and deeper yet, is based on the fact that He died for your falls , the original one and all your actual ones personally since you knew Him. You will trace your recovery to His fountain of blood and to His priestly work performed in glory. But you will also find that He resents your conduct greatly and hence He will charge your sin home to you and make you judge your sin and own your sin as David did in the 51 st Psalm. Providences may be very trying to you as to others who have fallen and you will see the necessity of them and the kindness of God in them and understand why you have so many broken bones . Bitter cries you will put up that He would hide His face from your sins and blot out all your iniquities .

" Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation " will be the burden of your oppressed heart and it shall be granted you. That will be by the Lord granting you a look. He will give you a deep sense of His grace in pardoning your great offences , His righteousness in justifying you , His Spirit in renewing a right spirit in you and the exceeding kindness of His grace in Christ Jesus to you . This will separate you from your evil company and break your heart in true repentance , as the memory of your evil ways and the knowledge of your more evil heart is seen in the light of His love. Thus was Peter restored to a living fellowship and sweet communion with his Lord . He was still kept in the apostolic company and not thrown out as a castaway . The Lord sanctified his fall and made it useful to His disciple and through him to the church of God to the end of time .

" When thou art converted , strengthen thy brethren ," says Christ , for the Saviour knew he would have brethren who should fall like Peter and they would need some strengthening . Who better able to comfort fallen brethren than one who has fallen and been restored himself ? By the epistles that Peter wrote after his recovery many have been strengthened . " Kept " is a great word with Peter now, not by his own headiness, zeal or strength, but by " the power of God ." Now he felt the glory of the Saviour 's prayer , " Holy Father , keep them ; keep all My sheep, but keep Peter." If we will hear him , he speaks out of his chastened and forgiven heart to us , " Learn from my sad case in no-wise to trust to yourself or to any arm of flesh , but look only and solely to the power of God safely and honourably to bring you through ."

" Faith is precious " he tell us , and he had faith . " We believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God ." That faith was given him from the Father in heaven , and therefore was tried . It was tried in the sieve and failed not. Now he can speak to us tonight and

say, " The trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire." He is no novice now, for he can speak experimentally of his own trial of faith. It strengthens us to know we are not treading a path contrary to the apostles and saints of God as recorded in the Scriptures. " Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." The issue will be to make the pure gold shine the brighter unto the praise and honour and glory of Jesus Christ.

The preciousness of Christ to Peter now is more than notion. " " Unto you therefore which believe He is precious," and truly he felt that. " Precious in calling me at the first; precious in praying for me while I was in the sieve and precious in atoning for all my sins before my call by grace and all my crimes since I professed to know Him (though I denied all knowledge of Him, which I can never forget). Precious, indeed, in looking upon me on that bitterly cold night (in the courtyard and in my heart) which look warmed my heart and melted my soul and sent me out to weep bitterly. Precious in keeping me to feed His poor sheep and using me and my sad fall for the help and solace of all the brethren who sin and stumble as I did."

Peter knew something of this theme verily, " Watch." " Be ye therfore sober, and watch unto prayer." " Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, has as much enmity to you as to me; he has his sieve yet, and, should you get in that, you will display the same evils as I."

" Remember." " I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance." He had found out, to his great cost, the sorrow of forgetting the word of warning that the Lord had given him before his fall, hence he seems to want the whole of his first chapter in his second letter to impress upon us the importance of remembering.

He cannot leave us without another word, " Beware, beware!" " Beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stadfastness." That is Peter's last word of caution to the family of God — " Beware!"

May it be granted unto us to profit by these things! We would unite with Peter's ascription of praise, " To Him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

Earnest Roe

Sent to Signs by
Bro. W.R. Pullig
10220 Ridgely Drive
Baton Rouge, La. 70809

PSALM 19 : 7-9

The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.

The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

MARCH, 1939

PSALMS XLI. 1, 2.

" Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies."

Recently it was my privilege to hear one of those fellows who are saying lo here and lo there, use this particular Scripture as a basis for his money begging. Of course, as was to be expected, he took quite a bit of cash out of town. But I wondered if he did not leave town as destitute of the knowledge as to who it was under consideration, as when he arrived. Furthermore, I wonder if he was even one of the poor under notice. At least, he did not have the fruit, because one of those who have the fruit will not beg money in the name of doing work for the Lord. But we should never question anything that is said unless we can give something better. I wondered if I knew anything better, and, if so, did I know just what application to make of this Scripture? As I contemplated the wonderful display of sovereign grace, in the salvation of the dear children of God, I was made to rejoice that I even had, as I hope, a hope in this matchless consideration of the poor. The longer I live and the more I am made to see the corruption of this natural man, the more I am made to see what a high and complete consideration this was. The blessed character under consideration is none other than Jesus Christ our Savior. We would not speak of him being blessed as the Lord God from heaven, because, as him there would be none to bless him, as he is as old as God the Father, having been from everlasting to everlasting. But as the man Christ Jesus we love to feel that he was blessed of the Father to come in the fulfilling of his will. " And I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion. Thou art my people." — Isaiah li. 16. In speaking of his work on earth, he says that he came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him (John vi. 38), and thus we see that in that sense he had to be blessed to perform the work he was sent to do. In further confirming this he says, Of myself I can do nothing (John v. 30), and, My Father doeth the work (John xiv. 10), and, I live by him (John vi. 57). What about considering the poor? And who are the poor? And in what way did Jesus remember them? And how and to what extent were they poor? Yes, dear children of God, he has most graciously remembered thee. He beheld you in your sins even before there was any of you. Here is one of the sure things about the covenant of grace: that it was ordered in all things and sure before the world began. Determination is not worth anything unless the determinant has a full knowledge and control of all things that are to transpire in the time that his covenant is to be brought into perfection. Thus, we run into the grand doctrine of predestination

here , as elsewhere when we go to talk or write of the mercy of God. It is not so much a hobby as some of our enemies would have others believe, but it is the backbone of the whole scheme of salvation. To say that this consideration of the poor could come about and there be some power other than God Almighty determining things , certainly is a poor comfort to God's children. This poor that our text has inclosed in it want a sure doctrine . They are so poor that they would not dare leave any part of the salvation of their destitute souls to chance or works. Brethren , I believe here is a good place to say that these poor are not so afraid of making their God the author of sin that they are continually apologizing for his actions . He has done certain things , and will continue to do so, (and all by determination) and has set the bounds of all people in the same way . Not only has he considered us while we were dead in sins , but he is at it now . Some people have the idea that he does not remember us when we get in a poor state after regeneration. If such a dose of legalism was true , then our text would have to read that he is blessed when he remembers the rich , or those who are able to work in favor with him. Poor old Job would have been in an awful plight if the Lord had only considered him when he was in good condition. But listen , my dear readers , Job was a very poor man . " Oh that I knew where I might find him , that I might come even to his seat." " Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he doth work , but I cannot behold him : he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him." — Job xxiii. 3 ,8 ,9 Do you ever get in this condition , precious brethren ? Ah , yes , more that way than any other way , I hear you lament. If this was the heritage of the children of God what a dismal scene it would be . What would be the outcome of such a condition that you could not find him ? Do you suppose you could ever find him while in this terrible conflict of soul? O , dear little ones , how poor we mortals are. We do not know where he is. We are continually looking for him whom our soul loveth , but as long as we are looking in our ability to find him he is hid from us. Does God do a good work of hiding from his creatures ? He hid Jesus from Herod , which is a figure of the natural man, and the natural abilities of man have never found him out yet, and never will. But has God forgot to be gracious to poor old Job in the extremity of his case ? Oh no , he considers him , and teaches him of his loving remembrance. Let us look in on the poor destitute fellow and see if we find our own travel, our own hopes and our own deliverances . " " But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me , I shall come forth as gold ." — Job xxiii . 10 . Ofttimes , dear tried soul , he is hid from you , but he considers you as his sheep and he knows where you are . We cannot consider him , only as he gives us grace to do so, but his love and care of his people are based upon the righteousness of himself . As to who are the poor, we find them spoken of all through the Bible. They are the children of God. They are that

number that cannot be numbered by the enumeration of man. They constitute the bride of Jesus. Will he ever fail to take cognizance of his bride, that was given him in the covenenat of redemption? If so, then his agreement is indeed a legal covenant, and will certainly fail, because we are not able, and never can be able, to perform any satisfactory work. They are not chosen for numerical strength or righteousness, but in him before the world began. The number is so definite that men nor devils cannot add to nor subtract from it. (See 2 Samuel xxiii. 5.) To be sure the degree of being poor may vary with God's children. Some of them are dealt with in one way and some in another way, yet all by the Spirit, and for the good of them and his glory. Seemingly, the children he calls to the church are the poorest beings in this world. Everything must be taken away before one is fit for this kingdom. But all the different degrees of being poor are not a variation in God, but a confirmation of his work among his people. Paul, in writing to the church at Ephesus, says, But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. (Eph. iv. 7.) All of these little ones constitute the bride of Jesus, our Husband. There is not the least question about this poor woman being considered by her Husband. He has already paid all she owned, and I went to say that her debt was so enormous that she could never have made the first payment, or start, towards getting out from the condemnation she was under by reason of transgression. Her sins were such that she could never have met her Husband in that wretched condition, because he is without sin. But he considered her in the extremity of her case. Oh what love is this! What manner of attention, that he did take notice of this poor and sinful woman. Poor soul, when you are given to meditate upon the goodness and mercy of God, do you not often wonder how it is that you could be remembered and considered? No water to drink that would be thirst-quenching to a poor soul. The pantry empty of that bread of life, but in his consideration of you it was to open a fountain that never shall run dry, but flow in winter and in summer. He gives his chosen ones to eat of that bread that comes down from heaven, and, poor hungry soul, it is from an inexhaustible source. In taking notice of this poor and afflicted people, he laid aside the glory that he had with the Father. Not that he needed it, but that she was lost to him in her sin and degradation and the covenant must be carried out. Look at the world in her giving of alms and see if she administers as does Jesus. No, I dare say not, but it is with an expectation of applause of men, and usually looking for it back. But he lays aside his glory, and even passes by the nature of angels and takes upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. (Phil. ii.7.) Brethren, this is riches beyond compare, to think that he loved his people in such a wonderful way, veiling himself in flesh, being made like unto his own poor flock. Let us praise his adorable name for considering us enough

to give unto his bride one coat .

No art of man can weave this robe ,
Tis of such texture fine ;
Nor could the wealth of all this globe
By purchase make it mine .

Tis of one piece , and wove throughout ;
So curious wove that none
Can dress up in this seamless coat ,
Till Jesus puts it on .

" I give unto them eternal life ." Yes , he did this for you when you were so poor that you could not think upon his blessed name. He took our sins upon his shoulders and bore them to the cross , putting them away forever . While he had that terrible load on him he was working our that righteousness that we had failed to do. (See Romans v. 10 .) I am persuaded that you have been comforted time after time because of his consideration of you. May he give you to continue to rest in such a Man , who has been poor that ye through his poverty might be rich . (2 Cor. viii . 9 .) He will continue to consider your case , poor sinner because

Grace led my roving feet
To tread the heavenly road ,
And new supplies each hour I meet ,
While pressing on to God .

And he is even now considering you at the throne of grace and mercy , and will continue to do so until the last one of his poor and afflicted people is safely delivered home . How can he fail in any of his promises to his little ones ? How can he fail to consider them ? Listen , poor soul , you who are so cast down , what a safe and secure fortress you have to abide in : " The Lord will deliver him in time of trouble . The Lord will preserve him , and keep him alive ." We have ample proof that he de - livered him from , every enemy that assailed him thus verifying the above promise to deliver . Moreover , he preserved him , and kept him alive . Blessed thought that he is now alive , and is our Advocate for evermore , because

He took our mortal flesh to show
The wonders of his love ,
For us he paid his life below ,
And prays for us above .

Father , he cries , forgive their sins ,
For I myself have died ;
And then he shows his opened veins ,
And pleads his wounded side .

Let us see further as to his mission here on the earth . " He shall be blessed upon the earth ." Yes , he shall make many rich , and give unto them the keys of the kingdom , and they shall go in and out and find pasture . (John x . 9 .) He shall complete the work his Father gave him to do , and even now while you , perhaps , dear reader , are low in spirit , it is a finished work .

It is finished , oh what pleasure
Do these charming words afford ,
Heavenly blessings , without measure ,
Flow to us from Christ the Lord ;
It is finished , it is finished ,
Saints , the dying words record .

" And thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies ." Oh what matchless grace is this ! Oh what boundless love , that Jesus , that immaculate One , was sent to con - sider such poor rebels as we are , and that power was given him to

conquer death , hell and the grave over his enemies . Their will was to do him to death (they meant it for evil), but I am so glad to write this wonderful thought , that he came to do his Father 's will , and I hope I believe in a sovereign God to the extent that while he us here doing that, that not for one moment was he turned over to the will of his enemies, because my Book tells me that all of them were gathered together to do whatsoever his hand and counsel determined before to be done (Acts iv . 28) , and any other doctrine than this makes my poor and destitute condition dependent upon chance , or works . " Blessed are the poor in spirit : for their 's is the kingdom of heaven ." Poor sinner , can you get rich ? No , but here is One that has made you so , and inasmuch as your great High Priest was not delivered to the will of his enemies , just so you will not be .

As poor as Paul , yet in hope ,

W . D . Griffin

" Every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him ." — I John V . I .

There there is love to Jesus , there will be love to those who are his by redemption , his by regeneration , and his by personal possession. The more, too, that we see and the more that we know of the beauty and blessedness of the Lord of life and glory , the more we shall love his image as we behold it visibly marked in his dear people , and the more we shall cleave to them as being Christ's with tender affection. It is our dim , scanty , and imperfect knowledge of God the Father in his eternal love , and of the Lord Jesus Christ in his grace and glory , which leaves us so often cold, lifeless, and dead in our affections towards him ; and with the declension of love towards the Head comes on decay of love towards his members . If there were more blessed revelations to our soul of the Person and work , grace and glory , beauty and blessedness of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is impossible but that we should more and more warmly and tenderly fall in love with him ; for he is the most glorious object that the eyes of faith can see . He fills heaven with the resplendent beams of his glorious majesty ; and has ravished the hearts of thousands of his dear family upon earth by the manifestations of his bleeding , dying love . So that if we love him not , it is because we know him not . If , then , to those who know him he makes himself precious , it is evident that just in proportion to our personal, spiritual, experimental knowledge of him will be our love to him .

J . C . Philpot

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your " Signs " and without missing any copies , be sure to inform us of any change of address .

Editors

MEETINGS

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Smith River Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Paynes Creek Church the first Sunday in September and Friday and Saturday before. Those coming from the North on Blue Ridge Parkway, go a mile past 151 and turn left on State road #639. Those coming from the south, go a mile past 150 and turn right on State road #639.

All lovers of the truth and ministers of our faith and order are invited.

Elder Amos T. Hash, Moderator

ORIGINAL SOUTH ARKANSAS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION MEETING

The next Session convenes with Pilgrim Rest Church. Located off Highway 167 north of Fordcyce, Arkansas. Take Highway 273 about one half mile to Church.

Session beginning on Saturday before 3rd Sunday in September 15 & 16, 1990, beginning at 10:00 a.m.

Frances Townley, Church Clerk

SAINTS REST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

The lord willing Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas, will have our annual three day fall meeting beginning at 7:30 p.m. Friday, September 28, 1990 continuing through Sunday, September 30, 1990.

Brethren and friends of the OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST are invited to be with us in our annual meeting.

Elder C.C. Morris, Moderator
Deacon D.G. Connell, Church Clerk
214-298-8068

SOUTH OUACHITA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The one hundredth annual session of the South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association is scheduled to convene with New Hope Church beginning on Friday before the fourth Sunday in September 1990 and continuing until noon on that Sunday. New Hope Church is located one mile east of Spearsville, La. which is on La. Hwy. 15 in Union Parish. All who love the truth as it is in Jesus Christ are invited to come worship with us.

Call or write me if you need further information or a place to stay.

C.C. Wilbanks

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 1990

Charlie Fox, AR 2.00
Jerry P. Cockran, NC 7.00
Mrs. Roma Smith, AL 7.00
Charles Oates, VA 7.00
Mrs. Clemie Bishop, AR 7.00
Dan Anders, AL 2.00
Mrs. Muriel M. Strader, NC 2.00
Eld. J.T. Austin, PA 2.00
Mrs. Ernestine Sharp, LA 12.00
Eld. David Turner, LA 7.00
Eld. Malcoln Burhhalter, TX.... 2.00
R. Vernon Furr, NC 4.00
Barney & Melba Sullivan, AR ... 7.00
Eld. Lon D. Moon, AL 5.00
In memory mother Mamie Sullivan
Ms. Sue Quarles, AL 25.00
Mrs. Flora Vest, VA 2.00
Mrs. H.A. Harlow, TX 5.00
S.L. Walker, VA 7.00
Mrs. Harold May, AL 2.00
Mrs. Faye Cole, NC 2.00
Boyd Minter, NC 2.00
Margaret Quesenberry, VA 2.00
H.R. Toney, MS 2.00
Mrs. M.E. Womble, NC 2.00
Mrs. Betty Lovitte, NC 2.00
J.C. Carroll, NC 10.00
William L. Neal, NC 12.00

OBITUARIES

VESTER CLAYTON DICKERSON

It is with a feeling of much unworthiness and sadness that I attempt to write a few words in memory of our dear brother Vester Dickerson.

He was born January 19, 1912 to Alex and Mattie Cox Dickerson. He was twice married, first to Verdie Gwyn, they had one daughter, Nancy Dickerson Mosley of Reidsville, N.C. Verdie died in 1947. His second marriage was to Inez Strader Dickerson Feb. 14, 1948. To this union was born four children, Wayne Jackson, Charles Clayton and Jerry Penn all of Ruffin, N.C. also Sarah Dickerson Perdue of Reidsville, N.C.

He also had three sisters, two of whom survives him, one brother. Brother Vester asked for a home with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church at her meeting July 24, 1976 and was baptized along with his wife, Sister Inez on July 31, 1976, by their pastor, Elder D.V. Spangler.

Bro. Vester had a stroke June 9, 1984 and died June 8, 1989, and for five years was completely helpness, but his dear wife along with the help of their four wonderful children was able to keep him at home and was well taken care of.

He was a devoted husband and father from beginning to the end. His funeral was conducted at Dan River Primitive Church by his pastor, Elder Kenneth R. Key, assisted by Elder H.W. Wray. He was buried in the church cemetary.

Written by one who loved him and appreciated him many years.

Coley S. Strader

ELLEN DALTON DOSS

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst another one of our dear members, Sister Ellen Dalton Doss.

She was born May 1, 1899, in Pittsylvania County, the daughter of Booker Dalton and Zolza Love Dalton. She was married to Willie Russell Doss.

Aunt (Percy), as we called her, departed this life February 17, 1990, after a very lengthy illness. She was cared for so wonderfully by her family who did all human hands could do for her.

She united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church May 24, 1970, and was baptized by her Pastor, Elder O.K. Tench, June 28, 1970. Due to her health, she was unable to attend her meetings as she desired, but always enjoyed the visits of her Brethren and Friends.

Survivors include one son, Earl Doss, Gretna, Va.; three daughters, Bertha Walker and Arlene Jones of Danville, Va., and Jeanette Fowlkes of Ringold, Va.; two sisters, Rillma Dalton of Lynchburg, Va. and Lois Dodd of Richmond, Va.; also six grandchildren, ten great-grandchildren and eight great-great grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by Elders Denver Simpson, Marvin Brumfield, and Raymond Goad. Her body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the glorious resurrection.

She will be greatly missed by her family and by her Church. She will always be in our hearts and minds. May all that mourn our loss be reconciled to God's will.

Written by request of
her Family in loving memory,
Phyllis Goad

ANNIE SHORT HEDRICK

Annie Short Hedrick was born January 30, 1891 and passed away January 17, 1990. She was the daughter of the late James Short and Martha Cox Short. She was married to Ernest A. Hedrick who predeceased her on July 21, 1975. They had 11 children, two of which died as babies, Virginia Dare and James Malcom and Henry Bishop who was killed at the age of 25. The other eight surviving children are Helen Walker, Hazel Brown, Annie Bell Vasser, Vernell Barbour, Mary Newman, Shirley, John and Giles Hedrick. At her death she had 29 grandchildren 47 great grandchildren and 17 great-great grandchildren. She had five sisters and five brothers. Surviving sisters are Ora Adams, Jeanie Murphy and Lizzie Adams. She had a large family and was loved by each one.

On August 10, 1958 she united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized on August 27, 1958 by her Pastor, Elder O.K. Tench.

I have fond memories of Granny. Each time we visited her and Grandpa, the house was always full of friends and family. We were always there for the Holidays and there was

always someone there for all of us cousins to play with.

Granny was in Roman Eagle Nursing Home for the past 7 or 8 years. She never complained about being there. One Mothers 's Day, my mother had her family over for lunch and she went to the Nursing Home to get Granny so she could be with her children. After she had been there for a while, she was ready to go " home ". After having so many strokes which affected her speech, the only communication she had with anyone was holding their hand and smiling at them.

I've missed going to Granny's for a long time. She will be greatly missed by all who have been touched by her kind words and the love she gave us all.

Her funeral was held Friday, January 19, 1990 at Colbert-Moran Funeral Home by Elder O.K. Tench and Mr. Kenneth Durham. She was laid to rest at Green Bay Baptist Church Cemetery beside her dear Husband, Ernest Hedrick.

I feel she is at peace now is not suffering. She will be greatly missed by each of us.

Written by her granddaughter,
Francine F. Walker

BROTHER FRED MURPHY AND SISTER FAYE HOGG

Rehobeth Church, ElDorado, AR., mourns the loss of Brother Fred Murphy and Sister Faye Hogg. They had the same natural father and we that sorrow believe, the same heavenly Father.

Sister Faye was born May 4, 1898 and passed away January 19, 1990, making her appointed time here 91 years, 8 months and 15 days.

She was faithful in attending church at home as well as churches near by. Sister Faye believed in a God who does all things well and was totally dependent on Him and His grace as far as salvation is concerned.

She was clerk of Rehobeth Church for many years and performed her duties well. Sister Faye will be missed by those that knew and loved her, as I did.

Brother Fred Murphy was born August 17, 1903 and left us March 7, 1990, making his time here 86 years, 6 months and 20 days.

Brother Fred joined Rehobeth Church in 1951 and was ordained a deacon in March, 1957. He served faithfully as long as health permitted.

He was a firm believer in salvation by grace and went to many different parts of our country to hear it preached. Brother Fred loved his church at Rehobeth and always helped any way he could to keep things going well.

We went on several trips together, and he showed much love for those of like faith wherever they were. He received much pleasure in talking about the Election, Predestination and Foreknowledge of God.

May those who loved this Brother and Sister be turned to Him who does comfort those who mourn.

Elder Graydon Smith

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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POEM

The cross of Christ inspires my heart,
To sing redeeming grace;
Awake, my soul, and bear a part
In my Redeemer's praise!

Oh! who can be compared to him,
Who died upon the tree?
This is my dear delightful theme,
That Jesus died for me.

When at the table of the Lord
We humbly take our place,
The death of Jesus we record,
With love and thankfulness.

These emblems bring my Lord to view
Upon the bloody tree;
My soul believes and feels it true,
That Jesus died for me.

His body broken, nailed and torn,
And stained with streams of blood;
His spotless soul was left forlorn,
Forsaken of his God.

'Twas then his Father gave the stroke
That justice did decree;
All nature felt the dreadful shock,
When Jesus died for me.

My guilt was on my surety laid,
And therefore he must die;
His soul a sacrifice was made
For such a worm as I.

Was ever love so great as this?
Was ever grace so free?
This is my glory, joy and bliss,
That Jesus died for me.

Primitive

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EDITORIAL

" And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads."

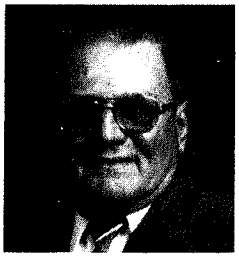
Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

The word Eden means in the old tongue — place of pleasure — thus this river springs from the presence of God, truly a place of pleasure. The river is pure in every sense for its purity is the river John sees in Revelation. This river also flows out of a place of pleasure, the throne of God. There is no pollution in these streams for in the beginning of creation there was no man to pollute and surely no one to pollute the one flowing in the New City — Heaven.

We note that the river of Eden divides (is parted) into four heads and this seems unusual for we in nature consider the head of a river the source of its beginning. The source though of this river is God's hand and is just as reverse to nature as are His works with man and his nature.

I would now write for your consideration what I feel to see here in essence. I feel these four rivers speak of the four Gospels for the source of the Gospel's springs from Christ and the oneness of God. The Gospels began flowing out (and still do) from the days of the beginning of Christ (the Church) as these rivers flowed out from the beginning of the history of creation and God's plan and works.

The names of these rivers (as all names in Israel) have a special meaning in the old tongue (Hebrew). The first one named is Pison which means an effusion pouring forth and changing. This is typical of the Gospel of Matthew as the first book. He is concerned with the explanation of the birth of Christ and thus is a pouring out of change that would be of eternal effect. He is bringing about an effusion of fulfillment of that in Psalm 46 and the fourth verse " There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High."

Matthew deals with the generations of men up to the birth of Christ and of course there is but one generation of Christ and we trust we are of this generation. He also

touches upon the conflicts between Christ and the scribes and Pharises. He brings our attention to the sermon on the mount and the miracles performed by Christ in the beginning of His work on earth.

The mode of prayer is set forth and baptism now comes into the frame of the Church. Christ begins the setting up of the Church and proclaims it is eternal. He encourages John with His proclamation that the poor have the Gospel preached to them and the blind made to see and the deaf made to hear etc.

Matthew admonishes believers to be aware that the servant is not greater than his master and that in all things Christ is first and foremost. This is indeed a pouring forth of change for under the old dispensation the priest was considered as the one to turn to in order that he make an offering for the sins of the people. There are many other thoughts of those things that are new to men but let us move on.

The second river is Gihon, Mark if you please meaning a bursting forth as water in a valley of grace. Mark begins Chap. 1 by writing, " The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the son of God." We see there a bursting forth of truth that would seem as pure and sweet as waters in a valley of grace.

Mark tells of the choosing of the twelve disciples setting them apart from other men to preach Christ the savior of man. This preaching is to assure God's people that the valley of death and despair hath become a valley of grace and eternal life.

The language of Mark seems in a sense directed to the gentiles as their comfort because prior to the coming of Christ they had no promise of hope of eternal life. This is now a bursting forth of tender mercy and loving kindness expressed in the works and words of Christ.

Christ taught many times in the parables which could not be understood by the scribe and Pharisees. When they stated they knew not the meanings His reply was " Let he that hath ear to hear, hear." They still did not understand that He was but telling them that the ear of understanding burst forth from Him.

The third river Hiddekel means a loud sound or voice. We can now relate to something in the book of Daniel chap. ten verse four, also chap. twelve verses 5, 6, and 7. We hear of the loud sound or voice telling Daniel that the things he desires to see and know are secrets of God himself. His voice proclaims they will be revealed when it pleases Him to open the book.

Luke (the third gospel) begins his book with the very first verse sounding loud and clear, " Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of these things which are most surely believed among us " etc. He gives us the fullest account of the birth of Christ and the clearest picture of words in His coming. He also concerns his writings with the experiences of the preaching of the disciples.

We hear as it were through Luke's writing the voice of Christ and His truths coming as a loud wind. We can hear the sound thereof and can see the effects and feel them also

but we cannot see the wind (spirit) itself. There is that small still voice that speaks within His people but however small it is loud enough to be effectual.

The road to the cross of sacrifice and death is set forth by Luke. Read now Chap. 9 verse 51, also Chap. 18 verses 29 through 33. We see then as Christ knows He must face death the flesh (the voice thereof) cries out " Father remove this cup from me " (the cup of the dregs of suffering and death). There is yet a greater voice heard and it is the sound of the spirit saying " Nevertheless not my will, but Thine be done."

Christ stands in the hall of law (in our stead) before Herod and Pilate and though they find no fault in Him the voices of the world loud and clear say crucify Him, read Chap. 23 verses 23 and 24. They knew not that the loud sentence of death was but a fulfillment of God's will, thus He goes to the cross as a perfect sacrifice for our sins.

The fourth river is Euphrates which means unknown but fruitful. John begins this fourth book with this writing, " In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Read on further through verses 12 and 13 for John reveals those things that were unknown yet are fruitful when they are manifest to the chosen of God. John would say he was not the light (as yet unknown) but bare witness of that light (the fruits thereof.

John also sets forth the doctrine of Christ in a way that would refute the teachings prior to this time by the Gnostics and Arians who but thought of Christ as a mere man who had no more than experienced a spiritual revelation of souls. We now know that what was unknown by those people would be and is fruitful for us.

The feast of five thousand and five leaves and two fishes would be an unknown (in nature) but in the realm of spirit all things are possible and fruitful. We see that after they feasted there were twelve baskets of fragments left. This typifies the twelve disciples teaching and preaching for after we have feasted at the feet of Christ (set down on the grass of grace) there is so much more to talk about and rejoice in.

John goes on to state why he has written his book and though there are still unknown with us the reasons are fruitful for they contain the promise of eternal life and a home in the region of bliss.

I would now like to touch upon some points I feel are as streams of purpose in a personal sense. We as mortal beings of a time world find in the first point (river) of experience a pouring forth of change. There is a change in conversation, walk, thought and attitude. We don't at first understand what is taking place and we begin to look for the source of this stream of grace. We feel even the tears of our weeping would pollute the stream but it is beyond our reach and sight, thus bringing us into the realm of faith and hope.

The second point of experience brings a bursting forth of love and peace that surely exists no where else except in the valley of grace. Now we begin to find comfort in the feeling that He is working within us

unto the promises of His gospel. We find a bursting forth of the sound of salvation each time we have a manifestation of His presence and hear the preaching of the word.

The third point of experience tells us (that small still voice) yet loud enough to discern the comforting words " Thy sins are forgiven ." We now feel in some marvelous way we are standing near the river of life and can hear the murmurs and ripples (assurance) that are eternal sounds of His power. We also consider the time we went down into the liquid grave and how we felt we left something there that would bother us no more. We can now rejoice in the sound of the singing of soul when the hymns are sung in meetings. The sound of praise and thanksgiving now prevails loud and clear unto He whose eyes are opened to all things and with whom we have to do.

The fourth point of experience we find is fruitful now and those things previously unknown are being revealed in His own good time. We know we are fruitful only in spirit and that it has come about by He who was unknown to His own — " (He came unto His own and they received Him not .) " These things revealed to us are the only avenues of escape for sins and condemnation under the law. They are in essence the very paths to the climes of glory.

We hope and trust we shall someday understand the unknown and shall see He who was made a ransom for us. That day will bring reality (the fruitful) of hope to see all the host of Heaven gathered in praise to He upon the throne. We appear there without spot, wrinkle, blemish or any such thing to join our voices in the song never sung by men before. John hears this song in the book of Revelation and it is the song of Moses (the law) and the lamb (the savior, the son of God).

If you find my dear readers any merit in these thoughts then give Him all praise and honor. If there are mistakes in thought or truth then lay blame to me.

May His name be praised now and forever and may the sound of the river of life be music to our ears even in death.

Elder C. B. Davis, Jr.

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your " Signs " and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

PSALM 28 : 7 - 9

The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth ; and with my song will I praise him.

The Lord is their strength, and he is the saving strength of his anointed.

Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

TURN US AGAIN, O GOD

Preached at Shaw's Corner, Redhill on December 30th, 1952

" Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine ; and we shall be saved. " (Psalm 80:3).

In this Psalm we have these words three times repeated. It is no vain repetition. Those are not vain repetitions which express the deep needs of the soul, its crying want. It matters not how often a poor needy sinner uses the same words in his prayers before God when they express the very feelings and desires of his heart. As we just noticed in reading, the Psalmist lays before God the sad condition into which the people had fallen by reason of their sin, their departure from God, and he pleads thus with the Lord, " Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock." He still addresses the Lord as the Shepherd of Israel, although the sheep have proved themselves to be so wayward, and have brought themselves into such a sad state, being banished atsuch distance from the Lord. The Psalmist still pleads with the Lord as the Shepherd of Israel. But you remember in the parable of the lost sheep that the fact that the sheep was lost did not cause the shepherd's care for it to cease, but rather the shepherd went after the lost sheep and sought it until he found it. He did not cease to be its shepherd although it had wandered, and so it is with the people of God. He does not cease to be their Shepherd although, alas, they so wickedly and so often have wandered from him.

"Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel." In this word there is a looking back to what the Lord had done; the Lord had done great things for these people in the past. He had, we read in verse 8, " brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it. Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land. The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars. She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river." Here he reminds the Lord of the great things that He did for this people in the past, and in one passage in the prophets we read, " look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.

There is a going back still further to the great thing that God did in calling and blessing Abraham, the promise He made to him, and the fulfillment of the promise. God is faithful to every promise that He speaks. Here the Psalmist reminds the Lord in these words of what He had done for His people, what He had been to them, and the Lord takes it well when He is thus re-

minded of what He has been. " Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his dis - tress ." And sometimes a child of God is helped to go before the Lord and remind Him of promises given in the past, of help afforded, deli - verances wrought, and there is wonderful comfort in the thought that He is the same. Wonderful comfort there is in that word, " For I am God, and not man, " and again, " I am the LORD, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed ."

Then the Psalmist goes on, " " thou that leadest Joseph like a flock ; thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth ." The Temple lay in ruins at this time. Where was the ark of the covenant? Where was the mercy seat? Where were the cherubims? Yet the Psalmist says, " thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth ." Although the symbols had been destroyed, yet the thing that was signified could not be destroy - ed, and God still dwelt on the mercy seat; it was still true of Him, " O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come ."

" Thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth ." It may be with the soul of the child of God a season of great darkness, he may be assailed by terrific and satanic temptations, may feel nothing but desolation within, guilt and bondage and fear, and atmosphere of gloom, yet the Lord still dwells between the cherubims, it is still true of Him that " He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer ." And the Psalmist goes on, " Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh stir up thy strength, and come and save us ." Here he appeals to the Lord for a putting forth of His power, " Stir up thy strength." " It is time for thee, LORD, to work: for they have made void thy law ."

" Stir up thy strength." Here is a feeling of utter weakness, an inabi - lity to do anything towards the rectification of the case, an appeal - ing unto the God of almighty power that He will stir up His strength. One says,

" The work is only fit for God,
A work of heavenly grace ."

Do you know what it is to feel that all your strength is utter weakness, that you cannot do a thing for yourself, can do nothing towards your own salvation, to feel that you have got into a net and cannot deliver your - self, you are sinking into a pit, a horrible pit and miry clay, and cannot extricate yourself from it, you have no power at all in this matter? " Stir up thy strength, . . . turn us again, O God", turn us again. This petition is well fitted to the lips of a helpless soul, a soul that is so beset by various evils, who is tempted, assailed by Satan, and do what he may only finds his case getting worse and worse. Here is the word well fitted to such a case, " Turn us again, O God . " Ephraim said, " Turn thou me, and I shall be turned," he could not turn himself. I remember Bunyan in the Pilgrim 's Progress, (I think after the pilgrims had wandered into the grounds of Giant Despair and got into sore trouble there, as you all know, and were then brought back into the right

way) speaks of it being easier to get out of the way when you are in it, than it is to get into the way when you are out of it. Ah, it is an easy thing to wander from the Lord, a very easy thing to backslide, and you may do it by imperceptible degrees, you may be gone before you know it, but to bring about restoration is beyond your power. Then it must be, " Turn thou me, and I shall be turned." You may find yourself in such a condition that you feel unable to repent, believe or pray, you cannot give yourself for one moment a right feeling, or create one good desire. You cannot create in your soul an appetite for the Word of God, or a desire for any spiritual duty, you cannot do it, you are just destitute of everything spiritual and everything spiritual and everything gracious. You have wandered from the Lord, you wander upon the dark mountains and there you are stumbling about, knowing not what to do, knowing not how to return.

" Turn us again, O God." That the Lord caused His servant the Psalmist to pen such words as these, " Turn us again, O God," throughout this Psalm, is a revelation of His own willingness to be thus gracious to a poor soul. The Lord would not have inspired the Psalmist to write these words, and to write them three times if there was no readiness in His heart to do the thing, if He were willing to answer such a request. The very fact that the words are three times repeated in this Psalm is proof of the Lord's willingness. When a poor soul finds itself so entangled, is weary with its wanderings and its fruitless searchings here and there, the Lord is willing to undertake for it, as we see in the parable that I referred to just now, of the lost sheep. We see in the parable the willingness of the good Shepherd to search out His sheep in the cloudy and dark day; " Turn us again, O God ", turn us again. Oh turn us again with repentance, O Lord, grant a fresh spring of repentance in my soul, do cause this heart of mine to be melted in godly sorrow, in true compunction, turn us again O God unto repentance, turn us again to the mercy seat. Lord, I feel so unable to pray; when I try to pray my poor mind is filled with confusion, I seem not to know the way to the mercy seat, turn me again O Lord, in the way of prayer, Quicken me and I will call upon Thy name; draw me, I will run after Thee, let Thy spirit indite true prayer in my heart that I may pour it out to Thee. Lord, I have sunk into a wretched prayerless state and know not how to deliver myself out of it, but thou canst do it, turn us again O God. How we need the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit to turn our souls yet again towards Christ, to bring us where Jonah was brought when he said, " I am cast out of thy sight; yet will I look again unto thy holy temple." Oh to be turned with our faces toward Christ, with our desires towards His holy name, to be enabled to look off from all other things, from everything of self and creatures, to look off unto the Christ of God and seek our all in Him!

" Turn us again, O God." Oh bless me again with a discovery of the Lord Jesus Christ, His person and His grace. " Turn us again, O God." Do you ever feel sometimes

that you have lost everything, everything that you thought you had, everything that you once hoped you had? Do you feel you have lost it all, that you are left completely destitute?

"Turn us again, O God." Oh, He is able to do it; it is He who taught the Psalmist thus to pray, and He is able to do the thing for which He taught that Psalmist to pray, "Turn us again, O God." Our hearts are very deceitful, hard and desperately wicked, our hearts are too much for us, but God is greater than our hearts, and I have many a time felt it to be a mercy that God is greater than my heart. The hymn-writer says,

"I ever into ruin run,
But Thou art greater than my heart."

Oh, He has power, the hearts of men are in His hands, my heart even is in His own hands, and if it be His blessed will He can turn my heart from all its ways, from all its pollution, from all its besetments, He can turn my heart to Himself and grant a fresh spring of repentance, faith and love and godly fear - He can do it.

"Turn us again, O God and cause thy face to shine." Oh how we need the Lord to turn us again to His Word. We are so sinful by nature, we have such unbelieving, such rebellious and wayward hearts that we weary of the Word of God.

"My heart by nature is a stone,
And unconcerned can look upon
Eternal misery;
Feels no affection for the Lord,
Takes no impression from his word,
But lumpish is and dry."

Have you ever been alarmed to find yourself so cold to the Word of God, without even a desire to pick it up and read it? The newspaper has become far more attractive than the Bible, or some other book far more attractive than the Word of God, and you have to force yourself to pick up the Bible and read a chapter as a wearisome task in which you have no delight, and you put down the book without another thought as to what you have been reading. Now, when a soul realizes that this is his condition, and feels something of the awful solemnity of being in such a state, and the peril of it, he cries, Wherever will this lead, where am I drifting to, what will be the issue of these things? Oh what if it means that I am out-living my religion, that all my religion has become withered and is proved to be utterly worthless, what if it means that? These thoughts are terrible solemn, are they not? And when a soul is awakened to perceive that his condition is such as I have been describing, what solemn alarm is felt, and yet do what he may, he cannot rectify the case, cannot impart to his soul a spark of love to the Word of God, cannot raise up in his heart any real and warm desire toward the Word of God.

"Turn us again, O God," and He only can do it, He can revive in the soul hunger and thirst for the Word of God, and cause the soul as a new-born babe to desire the sincere milk of the Word. It is His work when a soul answers to the description we have in the first Psalm of a godly man, that, "his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." Oh do you

say, I would that were the case with me? Well, it is His work to do it. It is the fruit of His Spirit's work in the soul if you delight in His Word and rejoice at it more than they who find great spoil, and esteem it more highly than gold and silver, finding it sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. It is His gracious work, He can do it, and He can turn a soul right round from the love of sin and hateful strife, in desire, in affection, in hunger and thirst and longing for His precious word. "Turn us again, O God," to Thy Word.

And do you find that you need the power of God to put in a right attitude to His people? I often think how easy it is for our intercourse with God's people to degenerate into nothing but worldly intercourse, nothing but trivialities, religious trivialities, perhaps but mere trivialities. Oh it can soon degenerate. "Our vines have tender grapes" which can easily be spoiled by the little foxes, and so intercourse with the people of God may become marred, it may for the time being be destroyed, may be as a common thing, nothing better than the intercourse of wordlings. And when this is so, you find sometimes a downright distaste in your heart for the company and discourse of those who are lively in the fear of God, and in whose hearts is kindled the flame of divine love. You shrink from contact with them; it may be that contact with them only throws into relief the wretchedness and destitution of your own condition. "Turn us again, O God." Oh to be united in true living fellowship with the people of God, to be walking with them, finding that as, "in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man," and to find sometimes in intercourse with the people of God a little of that experience that answers to the description given at the opening of the Temple, when the players on instruments and the singers were all as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord. Sweet intercourse it is to the people of God when they have such fellowship in worship. "Turn us again, O God," Do revive us in respect of our love to Thy people and our fellowship with them, that our intercourse may be gracious and profitable, that we may be profitable to them and they to us; deliver us from everything which tends to mar that intercourse, from those dreadful inroads of sin and the world and Satan which do so spoil and mar all our intercourse with the true people of God, and with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ.

"Turn us again, O God" Then with respect to the public worship of God and the private worship too, how our hearts get sadly out of tune, do they not? What a lack there is of that of which the Lord Jesus Christ spoke, when He said, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." and that word 'agree' signifies hearts being tuned together in gracious harmony to the same spiritual desires and heavenly affections. It does not mean two people meeting together and saying, 'We will pray about this, that or the other.' That may be said and there may be nothing in it, that may be said and there may be no tuning of their

hearts by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit of God who put the hearts of His people in tune, and causes them to have fellowship in their desires for the things that God has promised. Well, how we need the Lord to turn our hearts in this, turn our hearts toward the worshipping assemblies of His people, that we shall not become like those who forsake the assembling of themselves together, or who attend intermittently the place of worship, or who attend in a customary manner, but that we may be among those who come together with their hearts big with desire, who come together because they desire to realize the presence of God, whose hearts will be saying, " Be not silent to me: lest, if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit." Lord, do not leave me to myself in this service, do not leave me to the gaddings of my own wretched heart, do not leave me for my mind to be wandering to the ends of the earth, do draw my heart to Thyself and make me a true worshipper, that I may behold the beauty of the Lord and enquire in His temple.

" Turn us again, O God." How we need Him to turn us in respect to the public worship and the private worship too! I do not know of any consideration that causes so much searching of heart as the consideration of private worship, and the formal part taken in it. Oh what a test of the soul's state is private worship, our private reading and our private prayers! Oh how often there is deadness there when perhaps in our outward activities in our public services there is some appearance of liveliness. We may make a decent show before others, but what a shameful business it is often in secret! It is like flogging a dead horse to get yourself to pray in secret or to read the Word with any desire or any feeling, with any concern, with any faith.

" Turn us again, O God." Oh, He can do it, He can do it, He can take away the stony heart out of our flesh and give a heart of flesh. He can put in His hand by the hole of the door so that our hearts are moved for Him, and then there is an arising to open to our Beloved, and there will be a going forth in the way of seeking Him in the streets and broad ways of the city.

" Turn us again, O God:" Lord, Thou alone canst do it.

" Since tis thy work alone,
And that divinely free,
Come, Holy Spirit, and make known
The power of faith in me."

" And cause thy face to shine." " Lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us." Oh how we need that! Do you know what it is for a cloud to be spread over the face of God when He covers Himself with a thick cloud? Oh who can then behold Him? When you pray there is a cloud on the face of God, when you read the Word, a cloud upon His face, you have no sweet sense of His favour, no gracious influence of His love, no intimation of His good will towards you, all seems dark, His face is hidden. " Cause thy face to shine." Oh it is wonderful when reading the Word if the Lord does cause His face to shine, even if it is but for a moment or two. Some word

or other springs into life, as it were, as we read it, and what a fullness is seen in it! How big the word is made and how the soul is enabled to hang upon it! " I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil."

" Cause thy face to shine." And then in prayer, you may feel straitened in your spirit, prayer may seem utterly impossible, and suddenly you are given a view of the throne of grace and the sprinkled blood, of the new and living way to God, of Christ the Mediator and the great High Priest. How that causes you to open your mouth wide in petition. Oh how you are able then to bring large requests, and lay your needy case before the Lord, and implore Him to be gracious unto you. It is the shining of His face, it is the holding out of His golden scepter, an invitation to your soul to make known your requests unto Him.

" Cause thy face to shine." Sometime in His providential dealings with His people His face is hid, dark providences obscure their sky, and they cannot see what the Lord is doing, cannot understand it, cannot tell how good can come out of anything that has happened to them. " Cause thy face to shine," and sometimes the Lord disperses the cloud, manifests His favour in granting some deliverance, some help, some consolation, some word upon which He causes the soul to hope and enables it to rest.

" Cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved." Oh that will do it it; if the Lord will but lift up upon us the light of His countenance, if He will but speak the word of reconciliation into our poor hearts, that will do it, " we shall be saved."

" Turn us again, O God, cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved." Oh, do clouds veil His face? Or does He seem to frown upon you? Are you filled with fears as to whether He will ever be gracious to you again? The Lord help you to come to Him with this plea, " Turn us again, O God, cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved." I say, that will do it.

" Thy shining grace can cheer
This dungeon where I dwell;
Tis paradise when thou art here;
If thou depart, tis hell."

" We shall be saved," and this salvation is wonderful; to obtain deliverance from the load of guilt and from the awful shame that covers the soul, to have deliverance, to have a clearance of things, to be able to say,

" I lay me down and sweetly sleep,
For I have peace with God"

to say with the apostle, " The Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me." Well, may the Lord encourage poor people who may feel their cases to be set forth in these two Psalms that we have had before us this evening, may the Lord enable them to plead with Him in the language of the Psalm, " Turn us again, O God, cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved."

May the Lord add His blessing.

John Raven

Sent in by Roy and Nancy Pullig.

THE PERFORMER OF ALL THINGS

Preached at Providence Chapel,
Eden Street, Hampstead Road
on Lord's Day Morning, July 11th, 1847

" I will cry unto God Most High; unto God that performeth all things for me. He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up. Selah. God shall send forth His mercy and His truth." (Psalm 57:2 & 3).

Few days, I think I may say, pass over my head without bringing trials and exercises in their train. Weak health, dejected spirits; opposition from without and from within, and, above all, darkness of mind, strong temptations, snares spread for my feet, a daily sense of backsliding and departing from the living God, a continual conflict with the horrid evils of my desperately wicked and depraved nature; all combine, more or less, to bring a daily exercise into my mind. And yet I would fain hope that these painful things are for my spiritual profit. I would fain hope that by them the Lord is shewing me more and more what I am in myself, and that the things of time and sense are but a shadow which is passing away. I feel, too, the spirit of prayer stirred up by them in my bosom, and my heart's affections more drawn up to centre in the Lord Himself. And would fain hope, too, that these trials and exercises are not only for my own spiritual profit, but that they are mercifully overruled for the good of the people of God among whom I may labour. I am well convinced both in my judgment and in my conscience that, however my coward flesh may shrink from exercises and trials, an unexercised and untried minister is rather a plague than a profit, a burden more than a benefit to God's tried and tempted family. But what a mercy it is for us, that when we come to the Word of God, we find that the blessed Spirit there sets forth trial, temptation and exercise as the footsteps of the flock, as the path of the redeemed, as the way in which the Lord leads His beloved Church and people.

Above all, what a mercy it is for the Church of God that there is one book especially in the inspired record, I mean, the Book of Psalms, that sets forth so minutely, describes so accurately, and traces out so vividly, the exercises, trials and temptations which the Lord's people have to pass through; so that therein, as the Lord the Spirit enables, they can read their spiritual features, and have from time to time some testimony from God Himself, that they are walking in a right way, though it be a rugged way, " to a city of habitation."

The title of our Psalm is worth noticing, as it throws light upon the Psalm itself, and more especially upon the words of our text: " To the chief Musician, Al - taschith, Michtam of David (which in the margin is, " Destroy not; a golden psalm "), when he fled from Saul in the cave." Thus, the Psalm was written under peculiar circumstances. It was when David fled from the face of Saul, and hid himself in a cave from his apprehended wrath. And, under the trials

and exercises brought into his mind through the fear of Saul, knowing (or rather fearing) there was but one step between him and death if Saul 's angry spear should overtake him , he vented the feelings of his soul in the Psalm before us .

With God 's blessing this morning , I shall make no regular divisions ; but, to borrow a remark once made by a good man , I shall first " take the text to pieces , and then put it together again ." May the Lord enable me to bring forth the mind and meaning of the Spirit in it, that it may be some spiritual food for those who " hunger and thirst after righteousness ."

I. " I will cry unto God Most High." Observe (it is worth observing) what a man of prayer David was ! There is an expression of the Psalmist which has often struck my mind ; he says , For love they were my enemies , but I give myself unto prayer ; " it is , I believe , literally , " I prayer ," as though he spoke thus , " I am a man of prayer ; I am prayer ; prayer is so incorporated into my very being ; it is so a part and parcel of my spiritual self , that I and prayer are one ." And what a mercy it would be for you and me , if we had the same spirit of prayer in us which we find from the Psalms was in David , I mean , as to its intensity , its earnestness , and its frequency . If we have not the same spirit of prayer in our breasts that he had in his , we are dead in a profession altogether . But oh that we had — Oh that I had ! let me speak for myself — that fervent , that earnest , that unwearied , that persevering , that importunate , and , I must add , that prevailing spirit of prayer , which burnt as a holy flame upon the alter of the broken heart of the sweet singer of Israel ! Oh what blessed answers should we then from time to time be favoured with !

But observe this , too , — it is worthy of observation — that if David was highly favoured with the spirit of prayer , and blessedly indulged with answers to his prayers , he was led in a very trying path . He had to pass through deep waters , painful and powerful exercises . And it is in the deep waters , in these powerful exercises , that true prayer flourishes . If you would have a tree to spread its branches abroad , and carry up its boughs high to heaven , you must have a soil proportionably deep . And thus would we have prayer in our souls spreading far and wide , and lifting itself up high , there must be the deep soil of trial and exercise for it to spread its strong roots in . But what forced this prayer out of David 's bosom ? It was being in the cave , where he fled from the face of Saul . It was whilst lodged in that gloomy , desolate and dark abode that he said , " I will cry unto God Most High ." What is indispensable before we can use the same words ? 1 . Before we are cast into the same mould of divine experience we must first have this conviction deeply wrought in and established in our hearts , that there is a God above . For our heart — at least , my heart — is so full of infidelity , atheism , and scepticism , that I need divine demonstration to convince me there is a God at all . I think I am not very far from the word of truth when I say that we need divine faith to credit the very being of God ; for the

inspired writer tells us that " without faith it is impossible to please God; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is " (Heb . 11:6).

2 . But again . We need also to believe that God has power to deliver us out of the evils felt and feared . For , if we doubt about His power , our prayers will fall short ; there will be an inherent weakness in them ; they will be like an arrow shot from a broken bow , or when the string snaps as the arrow flies forth . So if, when prayer is aimed upward , there is some doubt in our minds , the string of our bow is broken in twain , and the arrow of prayer fall short upon the ground . 3 . But again . There must a persuasion (and this is the hardest part to get) that God has not only the power , but the will also . Not merely ability to deliver , but inclination .

Now when we get these three things wrought with divine power in our conscience ; 1 . that there is a God that hears prayer ; 2 . that there is a God who is able to save to the uttermost all who call upon His name ; and 3 . that He has a heart touched by sympathy , compassion , loving - kindness and tender mercy , and is therefore willing to give everything that our heart is moved to request at His hand ; then the arrow of prayer falls not short ; it is aimed at a certain mark , and enters into the mark at which it is aimed .

But there is something to notice in the word " Most High ," which I must also enter into , as I promised to take the text to pieces . " I will cry unto God Most High ." It is as though he was surrounded with difficulties , and , like a swimmer attempting to swim through a mighty flood , but fearful lest every wave might drown him the overwhelming gulph , he casts his eyes upwards " unto God Most High "; as though of Him , and Him alone , he would fix his look . Thus we read : " The Lord sitteth upon the waterflood" (Psa. 29 : 10); He " dwelleth between the cheru - bims" (Psa. 99:1) . And the prophet Isaiah in vision saw " the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up ," exalted above all the poor things (I can call them no other) that engross our minds ; and " lifted up ," that the eyes of waiting sinners might look unto Him from " the end of the earth" (Isa . 6:1) .

But in the word , " Most High ," there is also something , to my mind , very expressive . It is to " God Most High " that prayers go up from broken hearts in all parts of the world where the Lord has a quickened people . " Unto God Most High " every eye is pointed , every heart is fixed , and every breath of living prayer flows . Jesus sits in glory as " God Most High ," hearing the sighs and cries of His broken - hearted family , where they dwell in the utmost corners of the earth ; and He is not only sitting on high to hear their cries , but also to bestow upon them the blessings which He sees suitable to their case and state . Now , when shall we thus come " unto God Most High " ? When we are pleased and satisfied in self ? when the world smiles ? when all things are easy without and within ? when we are in circumstances for which our own wisdom , strength and righteous - ness are amply sufficient ? We may , under such circumstances , appease

our conscience by prayer, or rather its form ; but there is no cry " unto God Most High ." Before there is a real, spiritual cry raised up, we must be brought to that spot : " Refuge failed me ; no man cared for my soul " (Psa . 142:4) . Here all the saints of old were brought; Job upon his dunghill, Hezekiah upon his bed, Hannah by the temple gate. All were hopeless , helpless , houseless , refugeless , before they cried unto " God Most High ." And we must be equally refugeless and houseless before we can utter the same cry, or our prayers find entrance into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth . II . " " Unto God that performeth all things for me." Did not David, then, expect to receive something from God ? What a mockery to pray unto Him , and not want to receive anything from His hand! It is an insult to man to go as though we had some favour to obtain from him ; and when our business is asked , not to know the errand for which we came . And in a much higher sense spiritually , it is an insult and mockery to the Majesty of heaven , to go upon the bended knees , with lowly face or uplifted hands , to ask for what we neither know nor care about, or for which we have no earnest desire , and do not need, deeply need, the blessing for which we pretend — for it is a pretence — to beseech God to bestow.

" Unto God that performeth all things for me ." If God did not perform something for us ; nay , more , if God did not perform all things for us, it would be a mockery, a delusion to pray to Him at all. " The Hope of Israel" would then be to us a dumb idol , like Ashtaroth or Baal , who could not hear the cries of his lancet — cutting worshippers , because he was hunting or asleep, and needed to be awakened . But the God of Israel is not like these dumb idols, these dunghill gods, the work of men 's hands , the figments of superstition and ignorance ; but the eternal Jehovah , who ever lives to hear and answer the prayers that His people offer up .

" That performeth all things for me." What! all things? May I, then, go to God and ask Him for all things? No; there must be some limitation — God's revealed will. I might ask, for instance , to be perfect in the flesh! Has God promised it? I might ask for the conversion of the whole world! Has God promised that? I might ask for health , for strength , for riches , for prosperity, for freedom from trial and exercise , for a smooth and pleasant path ! Has God promised that? No. Though God " performeth all things" for His praying family, it is only those things which He has promised in His inspired record. There is the limit. It is indeed a limit; but how wide, how great, how extensive I might almost say , how boundless the limit (if not a contradiction in terms) that God has put to what He has promised to give to them that ask Him! But this is not all; there is another limit still , and that is , our present wants . There are a great many things you may, in words, ask the Lord to give, and yet you may not feel your need of them ! Is that honesty? is that sincerity? is that uprightness? is that godly fear? is that the work of the Spirit upon the heart? I say , no .

Then there are two limitations :

first , what the Lord is pleased especially to lay upon our consci - ences ; and secondly , what the Lord has promised in His revealed Word to give to those that ask Him . Carry this into your experience . The child- ren of God are all exercised , but differently exercised ; and , there - fore though they are brought from time to time to cry unto God to " " perform all things " for them , they do not all , and at all times , go to a throne of grace with the same or similar petitions ; yet all , as the Lord works in their conscience , " cry unto God Most High , unto God that per - formeth all things : for them . For instance ,

1 . There may be some here whose chief desire is that the Lord would manifest the pardon of sin to their conscience . Have not these a full warrant to go " unto God Most High , unto God that performeth all things " for them , with this petition ? Is sin their burden ? Does guilt lie with weight and power upon their heart ? Are the terrors of the Almighty within , and fear , lest death and hell should swallow them up ? Has God promised " to pardon the sins of those whom He reserves ? Is forgiveness of sins revealed in the everlasting gospel of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ? Then are they warranted — nay , more , they are enabled ; nay , more they are en - couraged — without and within — without by God 's testimony , within by the Spirit 's intercession — to go with these desires that the Lord would manifest His pardoning love to their souls .

2 . Others , again , may have backslidden from God . " Oh , sure - ly ," replies someone , " these must be very awful characters ! " " Thou art the man ! " Hast thou never backslidden from God ? The Lord in mercy may have kept thee from backsliding openly , or bringing a reproach upon His cause ; but back - slidings are not limited to open sins . Are there no heart idolatries ? no eye adulteries ? no departing from the living God ? no hewing out cisterns , broken cisterns , that hold no water ? no cleaving to the world ? no de - lighting in the things of time and sense ? no hugging in thy bosom that huge , that deformed , that ugly idol , more ugly than the hand of Hindoo ever framed — thyself , that monster self , which thou so lovest , admirest , and almost adorest ? Feel this , and thou wilt feel soon in thy conscience that thou art a backslider ; for self , that ugly monster , will be perpet - ually drawing away thine eyes and affections from the living God to centre in that worthless and abomin- able idol . Now , when we feel , deeply and daily feel , our inward idolatries , backslidings , adulteries , and departings from the living God , has not the Lord given a gracious promise that these backslidings shall be healed ? He says , " I will heal their backsliding ; I will love them freely " (Hosea 14:4) . Does not the Lord give a gracious invita - tion to His poor backsliding child - ren ? He says , " Turn , O backsliding children , saith the Lord , for I am married unto you " (Jer . 3:14) . How the Lord sets forth the espousals of their souls unto Himself , though they have departed from Him and gone after idols ! Now God can " perform all things " ; He can heal their back -

slidings , and love the backslider freely ; drop a sense of forgiveness into his conscience , and manifest restoring mercy and love to his soul.

3 . There may be others of the Lord 's family who are suffering under powerful temptations . There is some temptation which has taken you , continually haunting and entangling your thoughts , creeping in upon your affections ; and as the crafty spider twines its slimy thread round the fly, so there is some snare twining its slimy thread round your heart . You are as helpless in the temptation as the poor fly is helpless in the web of the cruel spider . But has not the Lord declared : " There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man : but God is faithful , who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able ; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape , that ye may be able to bear it" ? (1 Cor. 10:13). If , then , we feel we are in a temptation , and that none but the Lord can deliver us out of the temptation, have we not a warrant to cry unto Him ? Does not the Lord sometimes— I know from personal experience He does— bring us with sighs, cries , and earnest desires that He would break the temptation to pieces , and deliver our souls out of the snare of the fowler ?

4 . But you may feel, deeply feel, the power of sin. Who knows it? who knows it ? No man can know it but the man exercised with temptations. He knows it; but even he cannot fully know the power of sin . Sin is like a powder magazine ; it lies still and harmless till temptation comes ; but one electric spark of temptation , if God does not quench the train , will set the whole magazine on fire . A look, a word, a thought, an injection of Satan— these electric sparks can in a moment kindle all these combustibles into a flame. Thus we find, deeply find, the mighty power of sin, and yet , though it makes us groan and sigh and lament before the Lord, we feel we have no power over this monster . But the Lord has said , " Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace" (Rom. 6:14). And He has said also, " The elder shall serve the younger " (Rom . 9:12) . These are two certain things that God will perform, and which He does perform for those that come to Him for deliverance in good earnest .

5 . Or , you may be longing after some sweet manifestation of your interest in Christ . This conviction lies very deeply lodged in your soul, that your profession of Christ , however numerous the years may be that are passed away , all avails nothing without an interest in Christ, and a manifestation of that interest to your soul. And this perhaps lies as a canker at the very root of all your fears , gnaws as a worm at the very heart of the bud, as if it would eat up all your hope, because you have not the sweet testimonies of God 's mercy to your soul , and that clear sense of your interest in Christ that your heart is longing to enjoy . Doubts therefore , and fears , and despondency all make such solemn head because you have not that in your bosom which you can hold forth as an answer to the accusations of Satan . Now , has not the Lord promised to shed abroad His love in

the seeking heart , and reveal His mercy and truth to the waiting soul ?

Time will not suffice, and it might not be profitable to run through the various things that a living soul may be exercised with . But this I say , whatever be your peculiar trials , exercises , or sorrows , here is the warrant in God 's Word , that you should " cry unto God Most High , unto God that performeth all things " for those that are His. Nay, I will add another word; it will not be a matter of choice whether you will go unto God or not; you will go under compulsion, and yet not under compulsion, for you will go under the sweet drawings of the Spirit ; you will go under the peculiar power that we feel, but cannot describe, a power that carries and bears us along to a throne of mercy, and brings us there to pour out our complaints and desires into the ear of God that performeth all things for us .

III. " He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up ." David, I intimated, was at this time lying under a peculiar trial; the Psalm was penned when he fled from Saul and hid himself in the cave, perhaps hourly expecting that Saul would overtake him and thrust his spear into his heart . Now , under these feelings he cried " unto God Most High , unto God that performeth all things " for him , to " send from heaven , and save him from the reproach of him that would swallow him up ."

We may not be under precisely similar circumstances , though I believe if we fear God , and are honest and faithful in our day and generation , we shall have those (professors and profane) who will thirst for our life's blood, as Saul for David's . But I say , we may not be under his peculiar trial. I shall waive that therefore , and point out three things , of which we may justly say that they are such as threaten to swallow up God's children .

1 . Look at the power of sin . Is not that a mighty whirlpool , an all-devouring gulph, that has swallowed up thousands , and sometimes seems as though it would swallow us up too ? And is there not " a reproach " in sin ? And is it not this reproach brought upon the cause of God by sin that the Lord's people dread as well as sin itself ?

2 . But again . Is not Satan continually on the watch to swallow up God's people ? What but body and soul can satiate his infernal maw ? But that one , after a profession of many years , should be swallowed up by Satan , would not this bring a reproach upon the name and cause of God with which he has been connected ?

3 . And is not despair another vortex , an insatiable whirlpool , which has swallowed up thousands? And are there not moments , many moments perhaps with us, when we may fear lest that whirlpool should swallow us up too? Are you sure that when you come to die you will have a peaceful end? Do not doubt and fear sometimes work in your mind lest at that solemn moment despair might swallow you up? Are you altogether delivered from the fear of death ?

Has not death swallowed up his thousands ? and must not death swallow up you and me ? And if we

do not die with a sweet testimony in our conscience, and blessed manifestation to the Lord 's people around us, will there not be some " reproach " in it? And is not hell, too, an awful whirlpool that has swallowed up millions? And are there no fears in our minds ever working, when Satan is tempting and harassing us, lest hell should swallow up our guilty souls?

Well, if you are free from these fears it is your mercy. But then you cannot enter into the experience of David in this Psalm, nor can you say with a feeling heart, " He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up." But, on the other hand, if there are these fears working from time to time in your minds, and you tremble lest these things should swallow you up, and by swallowing you up cast a reproach on your profession, and perhaps add bitterness to the draught, then you will be able to join earnestly in the words " He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up."

You may observe here that David spoke with some degree of confidence. Perhaps you and I cannot always feel the same confidence. No; we are not blessed with as strong faith as he was, and we are not exercised with as strong trials as he was exercised with. Our blessings and our faith fall short of his blessings and of his faith, because our exercises and trials fall short of his; for these two things will always be proportionate. We may not be able always to believe (though there are times, blessed times, sweet seasons, when faith springs up and actually believes) that the Lord will do this or that, nor speak with the language of confidence. All the Lord 's people cannot use these words of David, nor can any of them at all times; but they all can turn it into the language of prayer, and say, " Send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up." Look into your conscience; take a review (it will take but a few moments) of the things which your mind is more or less daily exercised with - I mean, spiritual things. Have you feared lest you should be swallowed up by them? " Yes, yes," is the reply from some troubled heart; " I do fear lest the things you have mentioned, or some of them, should swallow me up." Whence, then, do you expect your relief? where are you looking " to be saved from the reproach to him that would swallow you up"? To self or to God? To man or to your Maker? To the creature or to the Creator? If you are looking to self, you are wrong, altogether wrong; you are deceiving yourself; there is no help there. But if you are looking to God — and to Him you must look, and you will look, and you will look, too, if He is working with power in your heart — this I well know, is the feeling of your soul: " God must send from heaven a word into my soul, to save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up;" for everything short of what God sends down from heaven leaves me where it finds me — unsatisfied, dejected, unbelieving. It does not bring out of that which I am labouring under, but leaves me (vile creature that I am!) a

prey to sin, Satan and self; but one word from the living God dropped into my soul, one smile from His most lovely countenance, sent from heaven with divine power into my heart, will save me, amply save me, eternally save me, " from the reproach of him that would swallow me up!" Are these your feelings? I am sure they are from my own, if, indeed, I know anything of those exercises that living souls are experimentally acquainted with.

IV. But what did he expect " from heaven?" A vision in the sky? a dream by night? an audible voice? some wonderful appearance? a light beyond the rays of the sun? No; these would not reach his case. Here was his malady, at the heart. He wanted something, not addressed to the outward eye, nor audible to the outward ear; but something that would drop into the very depth of his bosom and touch the whole inward malady under which he was suffering. Therefore, he adds: " God shall send forth His mercy and truth;" not dreams, not visions, not ecstacies, not trances, but " God shall send forth His mercy into the conscience, shedding abroad His love in the soul, manifesting His pardoning favour within, that God " saves from the reproach of him that would swallow us up." Ministers may come and endeavour to soothe you, and often by their soothing make more mischief that they mend: " Oh, no doubt, if you are exercised with these things, you are a child of God;" as though a man could be satisfied with exercises, and because he is hungering and thirsting after the Lord, could be contented with his famine and his drought. No; these things do not touch the secret malady, do not go far enough, nor deep enough, nor come with divine power as from the mouth of the Lord Himself. All short of this leaves the poor patient afflicted, desolate, and dejected, and does not remove that under which his soul labours. But mercy, sweet mercy, sent from heaven, and dropped from above into his spirit, applied to his conscience, revealed to his heart, and brought warm into his very soul by the Spirit of God, that saves him from the reproach of every enemy that would swallow him up. For if he can lean, confidently lean upon the arms of mercy, what can man do, what can Satan do, what can sin do, what can death do, what can hell itself do to hurt him? If the mercy of God is upon his side, revealed to his heart, and sent from heaven into his soul, who or what shall swallow him up?

But he adds, " And His truth." Not lies, not errors, not falsehoods; these cannot save the soul from the " reproach of him that would swallow it up." Hypocrisies, vanities, delusions, putting pillows under armholes, plastering walls with untempered mortar, canting and whining people into religion; these cannot heal a wounded conscience, nor pour the balm of Gilead into bleeding hearts, Nothing can do this but truth, the truth of God, the " truth as it is in Jesus." And mercy and truth are never separated; for we read that " mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Psa. 85:10). Wherever God sends

for His mercy, He sends forth His truth; and wherever He sends forth His truth, He sends forth His mercy. And it is God's truth alone, that can make us free; for "ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). I have taken my text to pieces, as I promised, so far as the Lord has enabled me. Now let me put it together again, and present it before your minds as one complete whole, It may, with God's blessing, then, leave a more distinct and clear impression.

Under what circumstances were these words poured forth? When David was in the cave. You and I may be spiritually where David was literally, in a cave — the cave of your own bosom. Aye, we may be in the midst of busy London, in the streets of the city, in bustling Cheapside, and yet be in a cave; a very hermit, surrounded by trade and bustle, or even walking in the very haunts of men. Yes, a man may still have a cave in his bosom, and into that cave he may retreat as the hermit into his hollow cell, the cave of his own thoughts; his own distressed and dejected mind, his own deep and solemn reflections and exercises upon eternal things. We may flee into this cave, the cave of a man's own bosom, as David fled into the cave from Saul. Every outward opposition and internal temptation will be sure to drive a living saint into the cave of his own bosom; and there he will seek to hide himself from the face of man, and commune with his own heart and God upon his bed.

Now when David was in the cave, where you and I may be sometimes, nothing could satisfy him. He might read the Scriptures, but those unapplied could not comfort him. He was compelled, therefore, to pour out his heart "unto God Most High," who he knew was able to deliver him. He was convinced that the Lord, to whom he cried in the lonely cave, could perform all things for him; that there was not a spiritual desire in his bosom, not an exercise under which he laboured, not a sorrow that wrung forth the scalding tear, for which God had not an ear to hear, and which He was not able to perform for him.

And does not the history of David prove this to be true? Can a single promise be found that God made to him which He did not perform in His own time and way?

But though the anointing oil had touched the brow of David, here he was in the cave, with only a step between him and death, full of anxious care, listening to the footsteps of Saul. Yet still, at the very last point, God performs His word, and shews Himself faithful to the promise which He had given him, and sets him upon the royal throne. But while in the cave, at the gloomiest hour, when all things seemed about to fail, and after being hunted up and down, as he says, "like a partridge upon the mountains," yet in his greatest extremity he cried unto God, the strength of his heart, even "unto God that performeth all things for him;" and he felt sweetly persuaded in his own soul that He would save him. He could not tell when, how, or where; but he felt assured that God would "send from heaven, and save him

from the reproach of him that would swallow him up;" and that the way in which He would accomplish it was by sending forth His " mercy and truth."

Can you find any of these exercises, any of these trials, or any of this confidence going on within? If you can, you have some testimony in the conscience that the Lord is at work with your soul. You may be very low, very dejected, and very cast down; and you will be, more or less, if the Lord is leading you about and dealing with your conscience; but the same " God of all grace," who heard the cry of David, brought him out of the lowly cave, and set him upon the throne of Israel, is able and willing to bring your soul and mine out the gloomy cave in which we may often dwell, and set us upon a throne of glory. " He lifteth the beggar from the dunghill, that He may set him among princes, and make him to inherit the throne of glory."

May God who " performeth all things," in mercy perform this for us us?

J.C. Philpot

Sent in by Roy and Nancy Pullig.

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the next session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will be held with North East Church, Onslow County, Jacksonville, NC on October 13-14, 1990. All who believe and love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited.

The Church is located off US Highway 17 North of Jacksonville on Piney Green Road. Those coming from the North on US 17 turn left and those coming from the South turn right on Pumpkin Center Road which is opposite the Moore Buick Dealership. Travel one mile to Piney Green Road, go straight through the intersection and the Church is approximately another two miles on the left.

Gene Lupton
Association Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Union meeting of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist will be held with Canaan Church the fifth Saturday and Sunday of September 29 & 30, 1990.

We invite all who have a mind to come, and meet with us.

Elder J.R. Williams, Pastor
Mozelle B. Lacey, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will meet with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church (Greensboro Church will be the host), the Lord willing, on the fifth Sunday in September 1990 at 10:00 a.m. Preaching will begin at 10:30 a.m.

All Elders of our faith and order along with all lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Pastor
Brother Boyd Minter, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 1990

Smith Walton, VA 10.00
Buford E. Thompson, VA 2.00
Mrs. Ira L. Bell, VA 5.00
Mrs. Etta J. Humpheys, VA 2.00
E.R. Graves, AL 5.00
Mrs. Olive Hastings, MD ... 10.00
Mrs. A.R. Patterson, LA 7.00
Walter F. Griffith, NC 2.00
Mrs. Odell Anderson, LA 2.00
Mrs. Fannie D. Wiles, VA ... 5.00
W.E. Mitchell, VA 2.00
Wiley S. Taylor, AL 2.00
Mrs. T.J. Pittman, TX 7.00
Mrs. G.B. McAdams, MS ... 2.00

OBITUARIES

OCIE BELL DALTON

Ocie Bell Dalton was born Nov. 15, 1899, the daughter of the late Albert Lee and Rose Dalton. She passed away August 11, 1989.

While Aunt Ocie was still a young woman her mother passed away and left several small children. She elected to stay at home and help her Papa with her brothers and sisters upbringing. There she lived until they were all grown and gone from home. Although she was never married, her brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews loved her very much. She is survived by three brothers, Ira, Lester and Swaney Dalton and three sisters, Ethel and Jennie Brumfield and Alice Dalton.

She united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church in Sept. 9, 1962. She attended church faithfully as long as she was able and was a firm believer.

Her funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on Aug. 13, 1989 by Elder O.K. Tench. She was laid to rest in the Church Cemetery.

Written by her niece,
Atha Dalton Bailey

THEODORE SILAS McGUIRE

We the members of Sandy Level Church of the Pig River Association are deeply saddened to report the death of our precious Brother Theodore Silas McGuire.

Brother McGuire was born April 27, 1912. Passed away May 1st, 1990. Preceded in death by his wife. Survived by 4 daughters, 2 sons, 12 grandchildren 1 sister, 2 brothers.

United with Sandy Level Church Oct. 16th, 1988 and was baptised the same day. Brother McGuire was in poor health, but supported and attended the meetings regular. He loved and trusted in God and prayed for the day to come when God would call him home to be with his wife. Brother McGuire will be sadly missed.

We shall sleep but not forever,
We shall rest beneath the trees
We shall wake to live forever
In the land where Jesus is.

Gone but not forgotten by the ones who knew and loved him.

Written in love and fellowship,
Elder Denver Simpson, Mod.
Elder Clarence Stone, Ass. Mod.
Odessa Brown, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
Route 1, Box 420 Keeling, Virginia 24566

HYMN 1078
Baptist Hymn Book
Beebe's Collection
Joseph made known to his brethren.
Gen. XLV 3, 4.

When Joseph his brethren beheld
Afflicted, and trembling with fear,
His heart with compassion was fill'd,
From weeping he could not forbear.
A while his behavior was rough,
To bring their past sins to their mind:
But when they were humbled enough,
He hastened to show himself kind.

How little they thought it was he,
Whom they had ill-treated and sold!
How great their confusion must be,
As soon as his name he had told!
"I'm Joseph, your brother," he said,
"And still to my heart you are dear;
You sold me, and thought I was dead,
But God, for your sakes, sent me here."

Though greatly distressed before,
When charged with purloining the cup,
They now were confounded much more,
Not one of them durst to look up.
"Can Joseph, whom we would have slain,
Forgive us the evil we did?
And will he our household maintain?
O, this is a brother indeed!"

Thus dragg'd by my conscience, I came
And laden with guilt, to the Lord,
Surrounded with terror and shame,
Unable to utter a word.
At first he look'd stern and severe,
What anguish then pierced my heart!
Expecting each moment to hear
The sentence "Thou cursed, depart!"

But, oh! what surprise when he spoke,
What tenderness beam 'd in his face;
My heart then to pieces was broke,
O'erwhelmed and confounded by grace
" Poor sinner, I know thee full well,
By thee I was sold and was slain;
I died to redeem thee from hell,
And raise thee in glory to reign.

By Newton.

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EDITORIAL

MATTHEW 16 : 15-17.

" He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS

We find in the above scripture a declaration by Christ himself why Peter knew whom he was and why he didn't answer as some others mentioned in ver. 14. This knowledge or wisdom if given from above, was the only way for Peter to know Christ in his day or for anyone else to know him in any age. Today we hear so often the creature has in himself this power to know God. In every age or place there isn't a possibility of this wisdom coming any other way than revelation, and this wisdom of God in revealing His Son is just to his people. We read to know God is life eternal, then to the elect family, just to those ordained to eternal life, just to those that will behold Him in His glory will know him in this world or the beautiful city to come.

In John chap. 10 Ver. 14, " I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine." Tell me how a shepherd, naturally speaking, could care for a flock of sheep if he didn't know how many he had, where they were or what they looked like. For God to know them he would have to know all about them, their desires, habits, faults etc. If the above scripture is true and we know it is, if we are his, which we have a hope of, we also know Him as he knows us. It says known of mine, which will give his people to know, his wisdom was present from the foundation of the world until the world is no more. To know His power to save all that call on His name, and

all His shall call on him in their hour of need when all other sources fail . They shall know He is faithful to the end, never to leave or forsake, as so often so called friends would do . Knowing also HE has finished the work His Father gave Him to do . They know without a doubt, for it is revealed unto thee from heaven also, that He who has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ . We know that He who has promised to come some day for His bride, is coming to carry His people home . For we know all shall awake in His likeness . Lastly might we add our just conviction , Rom . chap . 8 ver . 28 , " And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose ." Yet we read we know nothing as we ought, but we long to know , if not already , GOD IN HIS GLORY . Amen .

Tearfully submitted ,
Elder J . R . Williams

CORRESPONDENCE

Monticello , Ga .
July 9 , 1990

Dear Elder and Sister Key :

So much has happened since we were in touch . It seems the world spins ever faster , the years pass with their shares of joy and sorrow . Some of both is given us in this life but as we grow older , ripening for harvest , afflictions increase , weaning us from this world, dimming its glory and making us a little more able to say , whatever comes , Thy will be done , David said " Let him do with me as he will ." Whatever is , is right , this is of comfort to me for I know we see only the nearest link of the chain while God seeth the end thereof . His will is done ; may He grant us reconciliation and strength to walk the path set before us . Reuben 's death was a shock to me, although I knew he was ill . So many happy times we have been made welcome in their good home . We loved him and Ben dearly and know what a loss they are to the church , the family , their brethren and friends . We are all poorer for their deaths and I shall miss them while I live . The Lord be with us all who felt our loss . My husband is now in The Retreat Nursing Home in Monticello . I spend the days with him and surely miss him when I came home . He sleeps most of the time . Tomorrow , July 10 , will be the 66th anniversary of our wedding in 1924 that is a long road of years to walk down together . A great blessing — yet yesterday 's bread does not feed us today . May we tread the way to tomorrow with a reconciled heart .

Elder Key , the Lord grant you strength ; we do believe that when God gives work to do , He gives also strength to accomplish it .

In an humble hope ,
Florence Gibson

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10 / 90
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE .

ARTICLES

MAMIE WALTON'S EXPERIENCE
April 15, 1963

I am writing of an experience of my life; In growing up I was like other girls, I enjoyed going to parties and dances and was far from living right. I became so concerned about myself that I carried the testament with me to read every chance I had, I felt to be such a sinner and wondered if there was any forgiveness for one like me. This house I now live had a double porch at the front. I dreamed of being on the top porch or portico as it was called and was choking to death on the blackest violent substance in my mouth I kept trying to spit and keep it off my clothes and get it out of my throat and the railing on the porch giving away until I knew I was bound to fall. I began begging for mercy for a poor sinner, and something took hold of me. I went for sometime and wouldn't tell it to anyone. At the age of 20, I dreamed of a speckled bird. The prettiest bird I ever seen in a clear stream of water filled with the prettiest little rocks or pebbles this bird would peck these pebbles and look around I can't express my feelings as I should about the speckle bird. I was away teaching school when I had this dream. I could hardly wait to get home to my Dad and Mother and talk with them. When I told them my Daddy said that is a good dream and the speckled bird represents the church. He got the Bible to read it to me. I didn't feel fit to be in the church, but had a desire to talk with my Daddy and Mother more and more about spiritual things. My Daddy could remember what he read and was deep in scripture. I went to church as often as I could not only the Primitive Baptist, I went to other churches but there wasn't anything for me I would feel condemned. I became so burdened and felt to be the chief of sinners. I asked to be shown in some way that I could be reconciled. Elder Cole appeared in a dream with a white robe on and the words were spoken to me, listen to him preaching salvation is of the Lord, and I began singing when the combat is ended He'll carry you above. These words are in the 4th verse " When Shall I See Jesus." I want to tell another dream there was something like a cloud came down on me and I was smothering and felt like I would have to die, if I didn't ask for mercy. And I asked the Lord to have mercy on me and the cloud was lifted. I felt like I knew my redeemer lives and could praise His holy name for a while. So much of my time I am in darkness and have my doubts and fears. I went to the Salem Church in September 1925, and asked for a home, was received and baptized that meeting by Elder S.L. Moran. I have tried to write some of the things I have experienced and believed because they are not of anything I have done. I hope and trust that this has been the leading of a holy spirit and a gift from God, the way his little ones travel. My prayer has been to God that he will lead me in the path of righteousness for his name sake and

will give me strength and wisdom for the steps that are ahead of me, since my dear Husband was taken home June 24 , 1961 . I hope my children when they read this will not think I have written this as a boastful attempt, it is the belief of your Dad and Mother. My life is a struggle I go mourning and groaning from day to day trying to do the best I can, and the steps I take will be directed in the straight and narrow path that leads to eternal life and each of us can say not our will but thine be done. God is too good to be unkind. May his richest blessings go with each of my children the rest of their days .

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

November 1943

PROVERBS 26:21 .

As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contenious man to kindle strife .

These pithy proverbs are rich in nutriment and are applicable to our every day life as citizens of the world, but it is to God's people that they are written. The fact of the business is that the primary object of writing the Scriptures was that the church be instructed and comforted. Nothing else matters. Nothing else is needed. These proverbs are not sayings that Solomon learned as a man of the world and passed on to us , although many of them are applicable and true when considered in their natural or literal place, and no doubt , he could and did agree that they were true in some sense , even to a man of the world. Personally , I am persuaded that these proverbs are given to the church individually and collectively and that they are true in the church and that, when given spiritual sight, we may see those pictured that the proverbs measure for us . It is not for us to judge but only to measure. We are not given to judge but the ministry, especially, is given to measure what God has judged. To notice our text briefly we find a rich field to look into. God takes the simple things and instructs the simple, but confounds the wise . This wisdom that is confounded is not that from above. It is the wisdom that belongs to carnality with which all of us are filled when not purged by the Spirit. The "coals" spoken of in our text means charcoal and was used extensively in the country of the Jews . The " burning coals " are the glowing hot charcoal after it has flamed and burned out. Sometimes a great fire is started and much damage is done , but our experience teaches us that after a fire has flamed up and burned the fuel that it comes in contact with , that undisturbed, it will soon die out. In the verse preceeding our text it is said, " Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out ." So where no talebearer the strife ceaseth. If we were guided in our actions towards one another by love and that wisdom from above, we could see the timely rebuke that Solomon is handing us. In our carelessness, forgetfulness, slothfulness , weakness and jealousness many fires have been started . Many flames that are started among the Lord's people are vehement (S .S . 8:6) and leave

many little children of God seared by its devastating power. We so many times say things that start a fire, things that perhaps at any other time we would not think of saying. Oft-times it would soon go out, but the Lord's people have always had fuel-gatherers and talebearers among them. A little fire in itself soon goes out. It may do a little damage and I would beg the people of God to be careful that they do not start any fires. May we be given grace, love and wisdom in our dealings with one another that we carefully guard against bringing up things that will start a fire. It may be true that our brother does not eat meat, if he does not it is because he thinks it wrong. I wonder if we are guided by love when we undertake to make him eat it. It is better to let a fire burn out when once it is started than it is to keep adding fuel to it. To keep a fire burning we must have somebody to keep bringin fuel in contact with it. If not what happens? It goes out. Moreover, it goes out by itself. The fire burns, we dread it, it is devastating, but it goes out if let alone. It is the fuel-gatherer that keeps the fire going. Some people delight in a fire. Some even start them to see the destruction. It is the same way in regard to strife. Strife and fire are close kin. Some start them, some add to them after they are started. Each party is guilty and, in natural life subject to prosecution. It is so in the church and many times there should be an execution of the laws of Zion that her lawgiver has given her. Contending for the doctrine, order and practice of the church is necessary, but to be contentious about it is something that never is regarded very highly. We are commanded to contend earnestly but never fanatically. Those in the history of the church that have contended earnestly for the faith have been leaders in the constructive phase of the work. The contentious or fanatical leaders have been destructive. They have had several combats and won many victories, but to a poor, thirsty, hungry soul they have given many thorns, thistles and stones. They have gloried in the flames that they have caused by adding fuel, they have fed the fire, but not the children of God; they have exerted much strength and used much time to keep the strife going; they have put their construction on their brother's actions and words even though they know nothing of him or his motives; instead of trying to ease strife they feel that the future of the church has been given into their hands, and that they must keep it going in order for the church to survive. Not many fuel-gatherers live long in the memories of God's humble poor; not many reformers ever have a favorable place in the history of the church; not many that fight everything and everybody are ever known long as true soldiers of the cross. It is the quiet, peaceable, earnest soldier that proves the most capable when the going gets the roughest. He, perhaps, is not a perfect soldier; he may have some ideas that his commander-in-chief would not approve; he could be wrong about some things but his general conduct, as a soldier, is to build up, to console, to preach Jesus as the way, the truth and the life. May God, who gives us all courage, faith and zeal, send us forth (not to start fires,

not to gather fuel, but) to build up, to encourage, to console.

W.D. Griffin

THE VALUE OF COMMENTARIES

Temptation, prayer, and meditation," says Luther, " " make a minister." These, too, we may add, make the only true Commentary upon the Word of God. By temptation and conflict, the experience of the Bible saints is entered into and realized; by prayer, and in answer to it, its spiritual meaning is opened up; and by meditation it is turned into sweet and solid nutriment. The heavenly wisdom, the unspeakable majesty and beauty, the divine savour, the richness and fulness, the certainty and faithfulness, the suitability and blessedness that are stamped upon the Scripture — these prints of the hand of God can only be felt and recognized as the Holy Spirit shines upon the sacred page. He is the only true Commentator, for He alone can reach and melt the heart; and He is the only true Preacher, because He alone can seal the truth upon the soul.

But giving these scriptural positions the fullest weight, and we do so from our very heart and conscience, may not something still be said on the other side of the question? Because the Spirit of God is the only Teacher, are we to set our face decidedly against all human learning, all commentaries of every kind and everything written by the pen of man? Does the Lord never sanctify to His own use, to His own honour and glory and to His people's good, natural or acquired abilities? We did not learn the English language by grace, and yet we preach in English. So it is impossible to say how far God may not use natural abilities in the ministry of the gospel. Gold, silver, and brass, blue, and purple, and scarlet, fine linen, and goats' hair, rams' skins dyed red, badgers' skins and shittim wood (Exod. 35 : 57) were all freely given to the tabernacle in the wilderness, were all accepted and sanctified by the blood sprinkled upon them (Heb. 9 : 21), by the anointing oil sprinkled upon them (Heb. 9 : 21), by the anointing oil (Exod. 30 : 25-), and the divine Shechinah that filed the sanctuary.

Apply this view of the case to commentaries - such as of Dr. Gill, written by a man possessed not only of great learning and abilities, but of grace and divine teaching, and well instructed into the truth of God. May there not be something edifying and instructive, something establishing and profitable in the remarks made by him upon the Scriptures? Because ministers without a conscience may pillage from this fund, and pass off the Doctor's explanations as their own, it does not make the remarks themselves less valuable. A stolen sovereign is good gold still, though the pickpocket has filched it, and spent it as if earned by honest labour. In this, as in most other circumstances, it is not fair to argue against the use of a thing from its abuse.

J.C. Philpot

PSALM 119 : 27.

Make me to understand the way of thy precepts : so shall I talk of thy wondrous works.

LAWFUL STRIFE

Preached on Lord's Day Morning,
December 27th, 1840
at Trinity Chapel, Alfred St., Leicester

And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully." (2 Tim. 2 : 5).

The Holy Ghost appears to have made much use of figures and illustrations in the Word of God ; and I believe we may find more or less of this mode of instruction from Genesis to Revelation. For instance, immediately after the fall, the Lord made use of a visible figure, when He made coats of skins, and clothed in them our first parents. What was this but a visible sign of the garment of imputed righteousness, in which alone they could stand accepted before Him, connected with Christ's sacrifice, as the skin of the sacrificed animal was with its poured-out blood ? So after the flood, the Lord set His bow in the cloud, that, spanning earth and heaven, it might be a visible sign of His covenanted mercy from generation to generation. When we come a little lower down to the period when the Lord brought the children of Israel out of Egypt that they might be to Him a peculiar people, He still chose the same visible mode of instruction by type and figure. The paschal lamb, the blood sprinkled on the lintel and the two sideposts, the ark of the covenant, the whole train of sacrifices, rites, and ceremonies, with all the furniture of the tabernacle, were all so many speaking figures, whereby spiritual instruction was communicated to those who had eyes to look through the type of the thing typified.

So when we come down to the times of the prophets, types and figures were still employed. Jeremiah is sent down to the potter's house to learn God's absolute sovereignty (Jer. 18) ; was commanded to wear a linen girdle, and then hide it in a hole of the rock by the river Euphrates, to show how the Lord would mar the pride of Judah (Jer. 13 : 1 & 2), and was shown the two baskets of figs, to teach him the difference between the precious and the vile (Jer. 24). So Isaiah walked barefoot three years for a sign and a wonder upon Egypt and Ethiopia (Isaiah 20 : 3) ; and Ezekiel was commanded to take a tile and portray upon it the city, even Jerusalem, and lay siege against it (Ezek. 4 : 1 & 2). When we come to the New Testament, we find the Lord making great use of this mode of instruction. All His parables were so many speaking figures, under which spiritual wisdom was couched. The sower going forth to sow, the woman hiding the leaven in three measures of meal, the man finding a pearl of great price, the net cast into the sea, the door, the shepherd, the vine to which He compares Himself — what are all these but natural figures, which the Lord employs to convey spiritual instructions ? Indeed, so

apt and so beautiful are some of these figures , that it has been a question with some whether God had not in the original creation of all things , a special view to spiritual truths . For instance , when He created the sheep , whether He had not a special eye to the elect ; when He created the vine , whether He had not a spiritual reference to Christ and His members . They thus look upon all outward creation as a type and figure of the new creation. But I think there is one consideration which shows this view is not founded on truth . We find the apostle Paul employing figures not only altogether of man 's invention , but even such as contain in themselves much evil . For instance , in four different places he has borrowed an illustration from the public games of the Greeks , which , like all large and promiscuous assemblies , were doubtless accompanied with much evil . Thus we find him speaking (1 Cor. 9 : 24 , 25 & 26) — " Know ye not that they which run in a race run all , but one receiveth the prize ? So run that ye may obtain . And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things . Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown , but we an incorruptible . I therefore so run , not as uncertainly ; so fight I , not as one that beateth the air ." The figure here is clearly drawn from the foot race and the boxing match in use among the Greeks at their public games . So again (Heb . 12 : 1) he says , " Wherefore , seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses (alluding to the multitude of spectators that surrounds the runners for the prize , as a cloud) , let us lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us (as the racers threw aside all useless incumbrances) , and let us run with patience the race that is set before us ." So speaking of his own experience (Phil . 3 : 13 & 14) he says , " Brethren , I count myself not to have apprehended , but this one thing I do , forgetting those things which are behind , and reaching fourth unto those things which are before , I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus ." Here he clearly alludes to the runner in the foot race , who never thinks of the ground over which he has passed , in his eagerness to press forward and carry off the prize .

The fourth place where the same apostle borrows the figure of these public games , is the verse from which I intend , with God 's help and blessings , to deliver a few thoughts this morning . " And if a man also strive for masteries , yet he is not crowned , except he strive lawfully ."

In order to enter into the spiritual meaning of this text , I must detain you for a few minutes with the natural explanation of it. The Holy Ghost has chosen by the mouth of Paul to convey spiritual instruction under this natural figure ; we must therefore break through this shell to get at the kernel , for unless we have a clear view of the figure itself , we shall have a confused idea of its spiritual signification .

The apostle then , as I have already shown , borrows a figure here from the public games in his time , where there were prizes given to those who obtained the victory in

one of these five contests , the chariot, and the foot race, wrestling, boxing, and a combat made up of the two last. The " man that strives for masteries," means he who wrestles or otherwise contends for victory , the prize being a crown of leaves , which was given publicly to the victor. Now there were certain rules and conditions laid down before - hand , which were to be rigidly observed by all the candidates for the prize , and if any one of these what we may call " rules of the game" were broken by a candidate, then though he came in foremost , yet he lost the prize , because " he had not striven lawfully," that is, had not complied with the rules . To borrow a comparison from the horseraces of this country (a prac - tice I condemn though I use the figure to throw a light upon the text) if a horse runs the wrong side of the post, or carries less weight than the rule of the race requires , he loses the prize , though he comes in the first.

Having thus far opened up the natural meaning of the figure, we will now proceed to the spiritual instruc - tion conveyed by it. We gather from it, then, that in spiritual things, there is a striving lawfully , and a striving unlawfully ; and that the prize is not necessarily given to him who wins the race, if he has not complied with certain rules laid down.

I think then we may say there are three distinct ways of striving.

1 . There is an unlawful striving after unlawful objects.

2 . An unlawful striving after lawful objects.

3 . A lawful striving after lawful objects.

Of these three kinds of striving two are wrong and one is right. To strive unlawfully after unlawful ob - jects is clearly wrong . To strive unlawfully after lawful objects de - prives a man of the prize , and is therefore wrong too. To strive law - fully after lawful objects is the only strife that the Lord crowns , and therefore the only strife that is right.

I . But as what is right is often more clearly shown by holding up what is wrong , I shall attempt to describe first what it is to strive unlawfully after unlawful objects.

1 . To strive then after the pre - eminence , to be a Diotrephes in a church (3 John 9) , is an unlawful striving after an unlawful object . There is to be no superiority or pre - eminence amongst the followers of Christ. " All ye are brethren ," said Jesus to His disciples (Matt. 23 : 8) ; " the greatest in the kingdom of heaven is he who is most like a child" (Matt. 18 : 4). " The princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them , and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you ; but whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant" (Matt. 20 : 25 , 26 & 27). Pre-eminence among brethren is an unlawful object, and must therefore be always unlawfully striven after.

2 . All strife about vain and idle questions is unlawful strife . " Of these things," says Paul, " put them in remembrance , charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers" (2 Tim. 2: 14). So he speaks about those who

" dote about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds" (1 Tim. 6 : 4 & 5). When men of this cavilling, contentious spirit arise in churches, woe to their peace.

3. To seek after a form of godliness, whilst secretly denying the power thereof, or to have a name to live when dead in sin, is an unlawful striving after an unlawful object. To strive to be a whited sepulchre, a painted hypocrite, a deceiver of the churches, is awful striving indeed.

4. To strive after fleshly holiness and creature perfection is an unlawful strife. God never designed that the flesh should be holy. In His discourse with Nicodemus, Jesus laid it down at the very entrance in the Divine life, that " that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," thus establishing an eternal and unalterable distinction between them. " I know that in me," says Paul, " that is, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing." " The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other" (Gal. 5 : 17). All attempts, therefore, to improve or sanctify the flesh are bidding " the leopard change his spots, and washing the Ethiopian white."

5. Again, all attempts to please God by anything that we ourselves can do, is an unlawful striving after an unlawful object. He cannot be so pleased. The corrupt fountain of our heart is continually pouring forth its polluted streams, and therefore all that comes out of it is polluted. Nothing short of perfect purity can please a perfectly pure God; and as no thought, word or deed has passed from us by nature which is not defiled, it cannot please God. But how many think that their prayers or their tears or their good actions are acceptable to Him!

6. All attempt to keep the law in its strict requirements is an unlawful striving. That is, it is not done as God would have it done. Jesus, and He alone of all the sons of men, kept the law; and he who would go about to establish his own righteousness, to the neglect or contempt of Christ's righteousness, strives unlawfully.

7. To strive to convert the world, and to turn goats into sheep, to seek to overthrow the eternal lines of distinction between the elect and the reprobate, and frustrate Jehovah's sovereign decrees of judgement and mercy, is an unlawful strife after an unlawful object. To break down the barriers of the Church and the world, and reduce to mere nullities the distinguishing doctrines of grace, is indeed to strive contrary to every rule in the Word of God.

8. To seek to find an easier and smoother path than the strait gate and the narrow way; to come into the fold, but not through the door of regeneration, as the Porter opens it; to be aiming at any other salvation than an experimental acquaintance with Christ and the power of His resurrection; to set up human talents, and creature religion, as sufficient with or without the Holy Ghost's heavenly teachings; to strive after natural faith, hope, repentance and love — all are so

many branches of unlawful striving after unlawful objects. By unlawful is meant, as I said before, not that which is not in strict accordance with the moral law, or the ten commandments, or any branch of the Mosaic law. The words "lawful" and "unlawful" in the text have no reference whatever to the law properly so-called. The words "lawfully" and "unlawfully" mean a complying, or a not complying, with certain rules and conditions laid down in God's Word. These laws and rules are not legal, old covenant rules, but gospel, new covenant conditions. Mistake me not. I do not here mean conditions to be performed by the creature, but certain rules, according to which the Holy Ghost works. "We are the clay, and He the Potter;" but the heavenly Potter works according to certain rules; and could it be possible for a vessel to be made contrary to these rules, it would not be a vessel of honour meet for the Master's use. I wish to explain myself clearly, for directly a man begins to talk about rules and conditions, there are plenty of persons so ignorant or so prejudiced, that they will be sure to make him an offender for a word. Remember this then, that by the word rules, laws, or conditions, I mean certain modes laid down in God's Word, according to which the Holy Spirit acts, when He works in us to will and to do of His good pleasure

All the striving then of carnal, unregenerate professors is an unlawful striving after one or more unlawful objects.

Being destitute of heavenly teaching, lawful objects, that is, such objects as are set before the eyes of the elect, are never striven after by them. God has never enlightened them into the depths of the fall, nor brought His holy law into their conscience in its depth and spirituality. The fountains of the great deep in their heart were never broken up, nor their secret corruptions laid bare. Sin is a burden under which they never groaned, unbelief never grieved and plagued them, the utter alienation of their heart from God was never so discovered to them as to convince them of their helplessness and hopelessness. Isaiah's experience was never theirs, when he cried out, "Woe is me, for I am undone; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." Their comeliness was never turned into corruption like Daniel's, nor did they ever abhor themselves in dust and ashes, like Job. Had this work been wrought with Divine power on their consciences, had the law been inwardly applied, it would effectually have cut them off from all unlawful striving.

Nor on the other hand did the Holy Spirit ever set before the eyes of their mind the gospel of the grace of God. No carnal professor, whether Calvinist or Arminian, ever had a spiritual knowledge of law or gospel. Had he experimentally known the law, it would have cut him off from unlawful striving. Had he known experimentally the gospel, it would have cut him off from unlawful objects. Thus they never had any inward taste of the sweetness of the gospel. The outward scheme and theory they might perfectly understand, and discuss it most exactly and learnedly; but inward power, the heavenly

sweetness, the Divine application of it they had never the least acquaintance with. Their heads may be at Mount Zion, but their hearts are at Mount Sinai.

These unlawful strivers after unlawful objects are never crowned. They may indeed seem to arrive first at the goal, and we well know how an unburdened professor outstrips in zeal, activity, and outward religion, the poor heavily - laden, panting child of God. But he is not crowned. He had carried no weight. He has run the wrong side of the post. He has won the race and lost the prize. We hear the great Judge at the last day, in reply to all his declarations of his having prophesied in His name, cast out devils, and done many mighty works, refuse the crown of eternal life with this awful sentence, " Depart from Me, I never knew you.

I shall have occasion to show, as I proceed with my subject, that the Judge of quick and dead gives the lawful victor two crowns, a crown here and a crown hereafter: the crown of His love and approbation in the conscience on earth, and the crown of eternal glory in heaven. The unlawful striver after unlawful objects has neither of these crowns bestowed upon him, for the one is but the foretaste and the sure forerunner of the other. He has therefore no secret crown of Divine approbation set on his heart. God never smiled into his soul, nor sanctioned with a Divine manifestation in his conscience his words and works. Professors of every degree may have bepraised him, but the sealing of the Spirit, the heavenly diadem of God's own putting on, was never felt nor known.

God's children themselves are often entangled in this freewill strife, especially in younger days, before the Lord has purged away their filth by the Spirit of judgement and the Spirit of burning. We find this much in the case of the disciples, whilst their Lord was with them, before they were baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Though quickened into spiritual life, they were continually striving after pre-eminence, each wishing to be greatest. Thus the sons of Zebedee, fearful of their own persuasive powers, must needs employ the voluble tongue of a woman, that powerful weapon which so few men can withstand, to induce their Master to seat them on His left hand and His right hand in His kingdom. So, on another occasion, the same two disciples would have had fire come down from heaven to consume the Samaritans, when they would not receive Christ (Luke 9 : 54). Thus we in our youthful religious days were striving after many unlawful objects. Holiness in the flesh, to please God by our own exertions, to make ourselves religious, and understand the doctrines of grace by reading all sorts of religious books, to please professors, conciliate the world, avoid the cross, shun the imputation of uncharitableness, soften down carnal relations, and keep up old acquaintances, — who of us has never thus striven after these unlawful objects ? But we could never get the Searcher of hearts to put on our consciences the crown of His approbation. We strove for the mastery, but were never crowned because we strove unlaw-

fully.

II. But now I come to another kind of striving, which is unlawful strife after lawful objects. The strife we have just been describing was unlawful strife after unlawful objects, in that the things aimed at and sought after were as contrary to the rules of the Word of God as the mode of striving to obtain them. In the strife that we are about to consider now, the objects aimed at are lawful and good, but they are sought after in an unlawful, wrong way.

I repeat again, that lawful and unlawful here do not mean, and have nothing to do with the law properly so called, but signify a compliance or a noncompliance on the part of the striver with certain rules, which God has laid down in His Word. What those rules are we shall see before long.

There are then certain lawful objects, set forth in the Word of God, as the things to be aimed at by every one who runs the race set before him by the Holy Spirit. These lawful objects are the blessings which God has blessed His Church with in Jesus Christ. Who sits at the end of the race to award the prize? What says Paul? "Let us run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12: 1 & 2). Now to whom can the runners in a race look but to him who sits at the goal? They leave the spectators behind, and with outstretched necks look forward to the Judge of the prize. He is "the Author of their faith," giving them power to run, and "the Finisher," by crowning it with His approbation.

To "win Christ," then, is the object set before the soul that runs the heavenly race. "That I may win Christ," says Paul (Phil. 3: 8). But what is it to win Christ? Why to have Him in our hearts as the hope of glory, to embrace Him in our arms of faith and affection, and to be able to say feelingly, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His." Again, pardon of sin, manifestations of mercy, visitations of God the Father's presence and love, the Spirit of adoption enabling the soul to cry, "Abba, Father," applications of Christ's atoning blood, and gracious discoveries of His glorious righteousness, these are lawful objects for the living family to strive after. Lawful, not because the law, strictly so called, speaks of them, for the law never did testify of them either outwardly or inwardly, but because the believer's rule, the glorious gospel of the grace of God, sets forth these blessings as the portion of the people of God in the New Testament. Now none but a living soul ever panted and longed after these spiritual blessings. Hypocrites and reprobates may desire heaven to escape hell, as Balaam desired to die the death of the righteous. But I never can believe that any but a living soul desired an eternal heaven. Pardon of sin a reprobate may desire, to escape the gnawing of the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched; but I feel fully persuaded that not one dead in sin longed and panted with intense breathings and burning desires after the manifestations of the pure love of an all-pure God.

No natural man, no, not the

highest doctrinal professor , ever poured out his soul after the blessed overshadowings of the Holy Ghost. It was never his daily longing , nor midnight cry. Such a blessing he has neither a heart to ask, nor a heart to receive .

But in His gracious dealings with His own children , the Lord usually sets before them certain blessings, of which He makes them feel their deep need , and after which He kindles in their soul intense desires. I well remember how ardently not quite fourteen years ago my soul longed after the knowledge of God. It came upon me in the depths of affliction, unsought, and abode with me for weeks at times night and day. O what a spirit of grace and supplication I then had after the internal knowledge of God in Christ !

But there is an unlawful striving in quickened souls after these lawful objects .

Now God has laid down in His Word of Truth three solemn rules , laws you may call them if you like , which constitute lawful striving .

1 . The Holy Ghost must begin , carry on , and finish the inward work of grace .

2 . The soul must be brought under His Divine teachings to be thoroughly stripped and emptied of all creature - wisdom , strength , help , hope and righteousness .

3 . The glory of the Triune God must be the end and motive of all .

And departure from these three rules of striving make a man strive unlawfully .

Now in early days with us we are often striving after lawful objects , but our manner of striving after them is not in compliance with these three rules , and therefore we strive unlawfully. We are not stripped nor laid low in a day . It is often the work of time . I can speak well from experience here . I was not stripped, nor brought down for several years after as I trust , the Lord quickened my soul, though from the first I was led to strive more or less after lawful objects, and could not do without an internal religion . But thorough soul poverty had not laid hold of me , shame and confusion of face had not covered me. I had not then felt what a vile monster of iniquity I was , nor loathed and abhorred myself in dust and ashes . Man 's utter helplessness was to me more a doctrine than a truth; I was not acquainted with the mighty, overwhelming power of sin, nor had the ploughshare of temptation turned up the deep corruptions of my heart. I therefore strove unlawfully . When I fell , as I fell continually , I had some secret reserve in self , some prayers , or repentance , or hopes , or resolutions to help me out of the ditch . Have we not all been more or less here ? We had a legal spirit secretly influencing us, and there was a kind of dead hope that if we lived holy lives , believed the promises , looked, as we thought looking then was, to Christ, and kept perseveringly on, we should get the object of our desires . And though we never got a step forward in the matter , there was a dim struggling after progressive sanctification , and seeking the blessings of the gospel by the works of the law . Now what was the result of all this unlawful striving ? Did God ever crown it with

His gracious smiles and heavenly approbation ? We know that He never did . When is the crown put on ? " In the day of the espousals , and in the day of the gladness of heart" (Cant. 3:11) . And there can be no espousals , no manifested betrothing of the soul unto Christ in lovingkindness , in mercies , and in faithfulness, until we are dead to the law , our first husband . Then the crown is put upon the heart. God is a jealous God , and will not give His glory to another . Our own striving shall never procure us the looks of His love . Now this denial of the crown to all their ardent desires and earnest striving sadly puzzles and bewilders the seeking soul. Nay, he is almost ready to quarrel with God, and accuse Him of unfaithfulness , because He will not smile , and speak peace and pardon. Jeremiah was here , when with intemperate complaint he cried aloud , " Why is my pain perpetual , and my wound incurable , which refuseth to be healed ? Wilt Thou be altogether unto me as a liar, and as waters that fail ? " (Jer. 15:18) . But we cannot learn religion as we learn arithmetic; we cannot take the slate and copy out the rule and work the sum. God's teachings are of a very different nature , intended to baffle and confound all the pride and wisdom of the creature . Nor can we hasten God's work . His teachings are not hasty teachings for the most part, but line upon line, line upon line, here a little and there a little . I cannot stand in your experience ; you cannot stand in mine . Neither of us know one jot more nor one jot less than the Holy Ghost has written upon our heart . We do not learn religion in a day. The way from Egypt to Canaan was but a few days ' journey , but the Lord chose to lead His people about in the wilderness , amid fiery flying serpents, drought and famine, for forty years . And why , but " to humble them , and prove them , and know what was in their heart ? " This was one part of the lesson; and the other was that" He might make them know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord" (Deut. 8:2 & 3) . And thus we have to learn by painful experience the inutility of all creature striving , and to be brought down into the state where all exertions fail .

III. But we come now to the only striving which the Lord crowns — a lawful striving after lawful objects .

Of the other two kinds of striving, the first was chiefly the striving of reprobates; therefore not crowned. The second was the striving of quickened souls , but not crowned because they strove not according to the gospel rules .

But now we are dealing with characters brought down to penury and utter insolvency , in the state described in the parable of the two servants, " when they had nothing to pay ." What Hart calls " Perfect poverty " —

" Tis perfect poverty alone
That sets the soul at large ;
Whilst we can call one mite our own ,
We have no full discharge ."

To bring this about is the work of the law. The gospel does not reduce the soul to beggary. It only steps in as a friend to pay the debt when all one's

own money is gone. The law draws all the money out of the pocket by crying, " Do, do! Work, work!" But when all is gone, the law can do no more. The law then has done its office. The law puts a burden on, which burden is carried until the heart is brought down with labour, and the soul falls down, and there is none to help (Ps. 107:12). As Paul says, " I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." By this death the soul becomes dead to the law, as Paul says again, " Know ye not, brethren (for I speak to them that know the law), how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?" (Rom. 7:1). When then he dies under the law, he dies to the law, and the law ceases to have dominion over him. All striving therefore of the elect under the law end sooner or later in death to the law. Now I appeal to your consciences, whether God ever crowned your legal striving. What has the law done for you? What can the law do for you, but to bring its curse in your heart, lay guilt on your conscience, and stir up slavish fear in your mind? To strive lawfully, then, is not to strive after the law, but after certain rules laid down in the gospel. Well, then, they are called laws, as the Holy Ghost uses the word when He says, " I will put My laws into their hearts, and write them in their minds." Now we will begin with the first rule, which is this, that the Holy Spirit must work in us all the power, wiscom grace, faith, strength, and life, that we strive with. This work the apostle call a law in Rom. 8:2: " The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." " When He the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth." Now whilst striving in our own strength, the power and reality of the Spirit's teachings were little known. We could not lie passive, as helpless as the potter's clay. All creature strength was not gone; some little store was left.

The second rule of lawful striving is, that the runners in the race should have no strength. " He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increased strength." When we were without strength, Christ died for the ungodly." " Without Me," said Jesus, " ye can do nothing." The Lord opened His ministry by setting forth His covenant character to the poor and needy. " The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, to set at liberty them that are bruised." So He said, " Blessed are ye that mourn, for ye shall be comforted." All the blessings of the gospel are promised to the poor in spirit, the outcasts of Israel. But who makes them poor? The Lord, surely, according to the word, " The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich." A man may indeed, after a form, make himself poor by wearings rags, and assuming the garb of poverty. I have read of a man who, from some whim or kind of madness went about the country dressed and living as a common beggar. He had abundance of property, but he chose to dress in rags, and live on alms. Such a man was not really poor, as

his apparent poverty was but a mask and a cheat. So spiritually, he that makes himself poor is not one of God's poor; and he infringes just as much upon the work of the Spirit, and is as much guilty of presumption and hypocrisy as if he made himself rich. And a child of God who strives to make himself poor strives unlawfully, for he acts againt the rule, that all we are and have, all we know and feel aright, must be the whole and sole work of the blessed Spirit. A man that makes himself poor by throwing away outward pride, and putting on outward humility, never passes in his soul through the feelings that God exercises His children with. The living family are stripped unwillingly; they cannot believe the Lord is leading them in the right way. Despondency, unbelief, rebellion, infidelity work up in their heart against His teachings. Their former enjoyments, and what they thought communion, are taken away, and they feel, as Isaiah speaks, left as " a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on a hill " (30:17). The word beacon is in the margin, " a tree bereft of branches." And thus they stand bereft of all their spreading boughs of religion, a leafless trunk stripped of flowers and fruit, naked and bare. Perhaps some of you here never were in this spot— never lost all your religion and stood before God without a grain, like the tall, leafless, branchless mast on the top of the hill. " O no, " say you, " I have been very far, but was never driven into the spot yet." We read (Ezek. 17:24) that " the Lord dries up the green tree, and makes the dry tree to flourish." Then you must be dried up, for you are a green tree still, before you can flourish in the courts of the Lord. And perhaps when you get to have no religion it will be the very time for the Lord to give you some of His. We are " to buy of Him gold tried in the fire." Now if we were to look into the fire, where the gold was being tried, what should we see? why, a crucible, that is a kind of earthen pot, with scum, and dross, and foam, bubbling and boiling. O where is the gold? Out of sight, at the bottom of the vessel, covered with scum and foam. So it is with the soul that is in the furnace. Faith, hope, and love are all hid at the bottom of the heart, and the scum and dross of unbelief, despondency, and rebellion are alone seen. But when the refiner removes the scum with his rod, then the pure gold shines forth. Now whilst passing through this experience, you are striving lawfully, for you are fulfilling the second rule of the Christian strife. You are a poor needy outcast, who can do nothing. You now are where Paul was, " Though I be nothing " (2 Cor. 12:11).

And this enables you to comply with the third rule of lawful strife— to give God all the glory. Surely you can take no glory to self, when self has been proved, and found wanting. Then if the Lord has made you poor, in order to make you rich, naked that He may clothe you, and beggar that He may relieve you, a bankrupt that He may pay all your debts, an insolvent that He may take you out of jail with flying colours in the face of your creditors, and has brought you down to the gates of hell to lift you up

to the door of heaven then surely you must give Him all the glory. He has solemnly declared that " no flesh shall glory in His presence," and" he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." But what is so staggering to nature and reason is the way that He brings about this taking to Himself the glory. No man in his senses would walk in his way. But God does not act according to our senses, but " according to the counsel of His own will."

Thus we never strive lawfully we cease to strive naturally. Then the Holy Spirit begins to strive within with groanings which cannot be uttered. No pretty prayers to tickle rotten professors; no cut and dried sentences with texts nicely assorted and fitted in like the squares of a chess-board, no flowers of elo - quence to please those who are all for word and hate power. But the real striving is all inward work, sighing, crying, and groaning to the Lord. " Oh!" say you, " I will tell you what I call striving. It is to go to chapel three times on the Lord 's day, attend prayer meetings, pray pri - vately seven times regularly every day." Ah, my friend, this is striving after the flesh. The only striving that God acknowledges is the striving of the Spirit; and the Spirit never strives effectually till the flesh has ceased to strive.

Now the inward striving of the Spirit are a fulfilling of the exper - ience Paul describes, 2 Cor. 12:9 & 10. " When I am weak," he says, " then am I strong." Why so? Because " the strength of Christ is made perfect in weakness." Then if I am saved, I am saved as a vile wretch, a monster of iniquity, by rich, by free, sovereign, distin - guishing grace. Not a drop of heavenly favour can reach my heart by my own exertions. I might as well think of taking up the Atlantic Ocean in the hollow of my hand, as bring down into my soul a drop of God 's love, or a single smile of His countenance. I may sigh, cry, groan, long, and pant after the shedding abroad of His love, but I cannot bring down one grain or atom of it within. Then if felt, must not we give to God all the glory?

Now these lawful strivers after lawful objects are crowned, and they only. This crown is two - fold - a crown here and a crown hereafter, a crown of grace set on the heart below, and a crown of glory set on the head above. Thus Paul says, " Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteousness Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing" (2 Tim. 4:8). This crown below is the crown spo - ken of in Ezek. 16 : 12, " I put a beautiful crown on thine head," and which the Church laments to have lost, " The crown is put on the heart when the Lord smiles approbation and acceptance in the Son of His love love. As David speaks (Psalm 103:4

" Who crowneth thee with lov - ingkindness and tender mercies." Now this inward crown is never set on the heart of any but a beggar that has been on the dunghill. " He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill to set them among princes, and make them inherit the throne of

glory ." This beggar is one who is begging for a manifested interest in God 's great salvation , clothed in rags and sitting in dust and ashes on the dunghill of his own corruptions . He and he only is raised up in his soul to sit among princes; the priests and kings, the royal generation, who are invariably crowned with Divine fa - vour below, and inherit the throne of glory above .

Now of this internal crowning I believe there are different degrees . There are no degrees in glory , but there certainly are degrees of grace. There are no pious eminent saints above close to the throne, whilst the thief on the cross and Mary Magda - lene stand at the door as having been such great sinners . But below there are degrees of manifested favour ; there are babes , young men , and fathers . Whenever then you have been enabled by faith to rest on Christ 's blood and righteousness , whenever a drop of God's favour has flowed into your soul , whenever peace has been felt and known, and a solemn sense of God's goodness and mercy through the blood of the Lamb has been tasted; whenever in the depths of soul poverty and help - lessness , help and strength have been found to cast your burden on the Lord , then and there you have been crowned as a lawful striver . " O," say some, " we must have full assurance , and there is no faith without it." I believe that all true faith has a measure of assurance in it, but who can say how full it shall be? The leper who merely cried , " If Thou wilt , Thou canst make me clean ," had faith, and so had the woman who pressed through the throng to touch Jesus ' garment , and so had the Cannanitish woman who sought but for a crumb from the children 's ta - ble . This was a venturing faith , a faith of necessity, a faith working up and out of trials and burdens . This faith the Lord crowns as His own work , for He never crowns anything else . He crowns not our striving but His own, not our work but the work of Jesus Christ . Have you then never felt a little of this soul-melting work? " Aye ," say you , " but it did not last long , and has been but rarely felt ." But where is it said how long it is to last, or how often to be felt? To have had the crown on but once , and that but for a few moments , is to have been crowned . You complain that you have lost these sweet feelings . But how could you have lost what you never had ? You are saying , " The crown has fallen from my head ." Then it must have been there . And I will tell you another thing , that if the crown was ever set on your heart , the rim of it has left its mark behind , and upon that spot where it has left its impression you are longing to have it again set on . See then to it that you are striving lawfully . Have you run yourself out of breath yet ? are your arms withered , your legs and back broken? Then will the Lord Himself bear you , as on eagles ' wings, to the end of the race, and lay you at the feet of the Judge , where you will learn that " the race is not to the swift , nor the battle to the strong," but that " God has mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth ."

J . C . Philpot

(Sent in by Roy and Nancy Pullig .)

MEETINGS

EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

God willing the Eastern Kehukee Association will convene at Tarboro Church in Tarboro, North Carolina on the first Sunday and Saturday before in October. The church is located on the corner of St. James St. and Albermarle Avenue, two blocks west of Main St. There is a railroad track that runs directly beside the church and is parallel with Albermarle Ave.

We invite all brethren, ministers and friends, who are given a mind, to come and worship with us.

M. W. Lupton
Association Clerk

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The One Hundredth Sixth Annual Session of The Hopewell Primitive Baptist Association will convene with Pleasant Ridge Church in Tuscaloosa County, Alabama, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in October, 1990, and continue for three days. From Tuscaloosa take U.S. 43 North to Alabama 171. Follow Alabama 171 for approximately 18 miles and watch for signs to church which is about 2 1/2 miles off Alabama 171. For further information call or write me.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

James L. Howell
Clerk (205) 556-5157

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

August 5, 1990

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God Union Church looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift. They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed the 5th day of August 1990 at 2:00 p.m. at Union Church for the purpose of examination of this gift brother William Midkiff, and if found qualified be ordained to the full work and service of deacon.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to set in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together.

The meeting was opened with prayer by Elder Amos Hash. Elder Raymond Goad was elected moderator and Burnell Williams to serve as clerk. Brother Silas Payne acting as spokesman for the church delivered brother William Midkiff to the presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon was read as set forth in the 3rd chap. of Timothy and 6th chap. of Acts by Elder Carl Terry. Examinations followed by Elders Amos Hash and Clarence Stone. The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of the candidate they proceeded with the laying on of hands

and prayer was offered by Elder Denver Simpson . The charge was delivered to Brother Midkiff by Elder J .R . Williams . He was then de - livered back to the church as an ordained deacon .

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted . A copy to be placed in the church records a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication and a copy to be given to Deacon William Midkiff . Presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Clarence Stone .

Elder Raymond Goad , Mod .
Deacon Burnell Williams , Clerk

Elders present :
Denver Simpson
J .R . Williams
Amos I . Hash
Clarence D . Stone
Carl E . Terry
Thomas Solomon
Marvin Brumfield
Raymond Goad

Deacons Present :
Burnell B . Williams
Silas Payne
D .S . Houston
H . Clay Brown
Nelson Bryant
Edgar S . Horsley
H .D . Ingram
Harvey Wood
Oscar Pickral
Homie C . Dalton

PSALM 133 : 1 .

BEHOLD, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 1990

Mrs . Mary Stanfield , VA	2.00
Alvin Agee , VA	7.00
Ova C . Lester , VA	2.00
Mrs . Carl C . Bryant , LA	2.00
H .M . Pullig , LA	2.00
Woodrow Abshire , VA	7.00
Jesse H . Towler , VA	2.00
Mrs . Ina Hendrix , TN	2.00
A .S . Blalock , NC	2.00
Richard S . Blalock , NC	2.00
Julian L . Ray , NC	2.00
Warren Neal , IL	10.00
Mrs . Tom Strickland , AL	2.00
Eld . Gerald Shipman , TX	2.00
Mrs . Frances Jarvis , MD	2.00
Mrs . Julia Ada , MD	2.00
Mrs . Ida Taylor , MD	10.00
Mrs. B.T. Hollandsworth, VA	3.00
Mrs. Jessie S. Lambert, NC	2.00
Mrs . French Hogan , VA	2.00
Mrs. Annie A. Lawrence, VA	2.00
Alan McDaniel , VA	2.00
Mrs . H .C . Houchins , VA	2.00
Hassell Hale , VA	7.00
Mrs . Rosa H . Troutt , NC	2.00
Oscar Pickral , VA	27.00
Homie C . Dalton , VA	7.00
Mr. & Mrs. C.N. Barron, LA	2.00
Harold T . Clayton , NC	2.00
Mrs . Lessie Tilley , NC	5.00

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your " Signs " and without missing any copies , be sure to inform us of any change of address .

Editors

OBITUARIES

MINNIE E. GAMBRILL

A dear sister in Christ, Minnie E. Gambrill, aged93, died of heart failure on April6, 1990 after an eight year confinement at the Salisbury, Maryland Nursing Home.

Sister Minnie and her two sisters were baptized on the same day by the late Elder Harold Bennett about 45 years ago. For many years, until it closed, she was a member and clerk of the Rewastico Old School Baptist Church. She attended her church faithfully as long as she was physically able to do so, sometimes in a wheel chair.

By nature, Sister Minnie was a reserved, modest person of few words. These lines from that beautiful hymn by Watts seem to reflect her quiet spirit:

" God is in heaven, but man below;
Be short our tunes; our words be few;
A sacred reverence checks our songs,
And praise sits silent on our tongues."

Those who knew her well, knew that her whole trust was in the Lord.

A few years ago a friend, while visiting her in the Nursing Home, asked Sister Minnie what her favorite hymn was. She immediately replied, " When Joseph his brethren beheld ." Being unfamiliar with those beginning lines, the friend made a search and located this hymn in an early collection of hymns by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. It has since been a source of enjoyment to her friends.

Funeral services for Sister Minnie were conducted on April10 in the Holloway Funeral Home by a dear friend, Howard Gordy. In his remarks Mr. Gordy related that in his many visits over the years with Sister Minnie at the nursing home, he had never once heard her murmur or complain about anything. What was manifested was the faithful love for her God and her family.

Sister Minnie's husband, Robert Allen Gambrill, died in 1967. She is survived by a loving family — a son, Robert A. Gambrill II and his wife, Betty of Wichita, Kansas; a grandson and a granddaughter, a great-granddaughter, three nieces and two nephews.

Interment was in the Mardela Cemetery not far from the family homestead.

Submitted with love and
at the request of her son
Frances P. Parish

See Sister Gambrills favorite hymn on the first page.

MAMIE CONNER WALTON

On March 9, 1990, it pleased our heavenly Father to call from our midst a dear Mother, Sister and friend Mamie Conner Walton. Making her stay on earth ninty years, six months and seven days.

She was born September 2, 1899 in Floyd County to Brother George Ben and Sister Wilmeuth Jane Conner. On December 21, 1921, she was married to Alonza C. Walton. To this union was born seven children, Elwin O. Walton,

Portsmouth, Va., Percy A. Walton, Vandalia, Ohio, Anna Lee Conner, Check, Va., Mary Janney, Pilot, Va., John L. Walton, Goodview, Va., Ezra L. Walton, Lynchburg, Va., Jean Rorrer, Afton, Va.

She is survived by her seven children, sixteen grandchildren, eleven great grandchildren and two sisters Bessie Craighead, Salem, Va., and Virgie Jamison, Boones Mill, Va.

She was preceded in death by her husband of forty years and two son-in-laws.

She was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace. We are made to rejoice in this because she had a hope in our all wise, powerful, loving and merciful God.

Our Mother and Sister was received into the fellowship of Salem Primitive Baptist Church (Head The River) in September 1925 was baptized that meeting by Elder S.L. Moran. She loved her church and was faithful to attend the meetings there and other places as long as she was able.

A beautiful funeral service was held at Salem Primitive Baptist Church on March 12, 1990 by her pastor Elder Hale Terry and Elder Lane Carter and Elder W.T. Conner.

Her body was laid to rest by her husband under a mound of beautiful flowers in the Wilson Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord. She is greatly missed by her family brethren and friends but we feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Humbly Submitted by daughter
and Sister in Christ I hope,
Anna Lee Conner

See Sister Walton's experience on pg. 220.

UNA ROWLAND WILLIS

It is with sweet memories that I attempt to write the obituary of Sister Una Rowland Willis. For as long as I can remember her; she took care of the sick and elderly. And she was so kind and gentle with them.

Sister Una was a member of Springfield Primtive Baptist Church. She was received by experience and baptism, October 12, 1952. She loved her church and brethren. Sister Una loved her pastor and always when she spoke of him, she had a twinkle in her eye and a sweet smile on her face.

Sister Una was born November 3, 1910, a daughter of the late Robert and Nannie Simpson Rowland. She was the widow of Guy Thomas Willis. Her survivors are a son Virgil G. Willis of Gretna, three brothers, Douglas Rowland of Danville, Laughton Rowland and Lawrence Rowland of Gretna; two sisters, Nannie Midkiff and Belle Pickral of Gretna; one grandchild and one great-grandchild.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor Elder O.K. Tench at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park to await the coming of our Lord and Savior. She will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

Written in love and hope,
Carol R. Pickral

Elder O.K. Tench - Moderator
Oscar D. Pickral - Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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PROSPECTUS OF THE " SIGNS "

The existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah — the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. " These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistable, and in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers — that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

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Blanche Saunders
David Thomas Short
Tom B. Strickland

EDITORIAL

" But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand. (Isaiah 64-8).

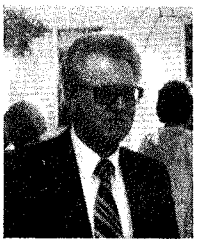
Elder Kenneth R. Key

Isaiah is speaking of those who through the new birth come to know their heavenly father. Jesus told Nicodemus " except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." The two scriptures above are to be considered as we think of the work of the Lord with his people.

Let us consider the potter. A potter takes a lump of clay and places it on the potters wheel. As the wheel turns his hand is always upon the clay and he has complete control of it. He molds the clay as he wishes it to be. The Lord being our potter is molding his people as he would have them to be and they would not ask why hast thou made me thus. It is God who is at the helm and reigning over his people. " O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Jer. 10:24. " For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. 2:13. Then Paul could say, it is by the grace of God that I am what I am. He was suffered of the Lord to go his own way. He went to a school and was highly educated and preached for some 14 years the works of man and verily thought he was doing the work of God. Then one day it pleased the Lord to show him a more excellent way. Paul fell immediately to the ground and looked up and said, Lord what will you have me to do. From that time forward and for the rest of his life he preached, we are saved by grace and not by works, lest any man should boast. Before thou people he confessed I come not with excellency of speech of mans wisdom, but in demonstration of the power of God.

The Lord is ever with his people even before the new birth, He has loved them even before the foundation of the world. When yet dead in trespasses and sin he loved them.

It is manifest to his people through the new birth that God is their father and they are his children. This is the work of the Father and if then his children, heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Nothing can destroy them or separate them from his love. What they do or what

they do not do has no effect on their eternal salvation. The greatest desire of God's children is that they can follow in the footsteps of their Lord. The apostle Paul who was a chosen vessel confessed that what he would not do, those things he did, those things he would do, those things he did. Then he explains that if I do those things I would not, then it is not I that does it, but sin that dwelleth in me. We can all relate to the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of satan that buffets us. I am glad satan's bounds are set, he can go so far and no further. Christ said that, that is within you, is greater than that, that is in the world.

We find comfort that our heavenly father is the potter and our way is not our own because the carnal mind is not subject to the laws of God, neither indeed can be, one being emnity against the other. We can be confident of this very thing that he who has begun a work in our heart will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. As the potter, he has hold of us and will not let us go. As long as we live the wheel will continue to turn until he has made us a fit subject of his grace and will one day carry us to a better world.

This will not be attained by any works that we have done but solely and completely by the work of our savior. Christ come to this world not to do his own will but the will of the father who sent him. That was to save his children from their sins. He came not to save the whole world, the whole adamic race, but to save those the father had given him in a covenant of grace before the world was. When he had finished his work, we hear him praying to the Father, saying, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou has given me; for they are thine. Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world. I pray that thou shouldest not take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

I believe this prayer is for all those who shall believe on the Lord. All whose names were recorded in the Lambs book of life. When the Lord shall open this book and the roll is called, there will be no absentee's all will be there to hear him say, come you blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

I hope I have set forth above some of the things that are most surely believed among God's people.

May we never forget it is in the Lord that we live, move and have our being. We are helpless and have no power except it be given from above. Not even a sparrow can fall without HIM. The scripture doesn't say as we often hear it quoted, without his notice, but without HIM.

He is our all in all, our Prophet, Priest and King and only hope of eternal life.

Humbly submitted,
Elder Kenneth R. Key

ARTICLES

My dear ones ,

The dear Lord willing , I would tell you of the dream of one man , Elder C.B. Davis , Jr., to see some of the many wonders or handiwork on this earth of the God of heaven and earth. We see so many things every day that are the wonders of God — I fear many I take so for granted that I seldom thank God for them . In our part of the country we see many varieties of trees , hills , rivers, streams, caverns, the ocean to the east and the mountains to the west.

We 've heard of the Grand Canyon, wide plains, deserts, Rockies, the mighty Mississippi , a salt lake , fields of ice . Elder Davis wanted to go see these wonders , wanted to take his family, friends and brethren. The dear Lord blessed 27 people to begin a trip on May 7th across these States and into Canada and He blessed them all to return safely home. May He give me words to tell you something of the joy we felt in seeing many beautiful creations .

The bus we traveled on was our home for 23 days , it was very comfortable , it had large , wide windows which enabled us to see much terrain as we went. The driver was very courteous and competent and the hostess , his wife , was most pleasant . We sang the songs of Zion every day , Elder Davis offered prayer , read scripture and spoke often as he was moved to do so .

You 've heard of St. Louis being the Gateway to the west. We visited Gateway Arch , tallest monument in the country , overlooking the Mississippi River. This Arch has an elevator which carries people up to the top center where there is an outlook (630 feet high) to see the city , the river and surrounding area for 30 miles .

We travel on toward our second night of rest in Topeka , Kansas. We look at the landscape, talk and sing. Elder Davis spoke telling us of the messages in some of the songs we sing. He spoke of Newton. Newton was captain on a slave ship. He was a man having no concern for his salvation or interest whatsoever in God . On a certain day Newton had 109 black men and women chained in the hold of the ship. There came a storm , he chained himself to the mast to prevent being thrown overboard. Water spilled onto the ship. Newton found himself on him knees begging God not to allow those blacks to be lost. The ship began to break up , a piece of board floated across his leg, and he prayed again. The sea began to calm , the blacks were saved . Newton wrote the words " Amazing Grace." There are six more verses in the original that most of us have never heard .

Another writer , Fawcett , was a minister of Particular Baptists as they were called in that day . Only two churches were recognized : Catholic and Episcopal . The Baptists were not allowed to gain attention. Fawcett was pastor of a small church in the country and he was such a blessed speaker many appreciated him and he was asked

by a church in London to come be their pastor, telling him he would be paid a sizeable salary. Thinking of his wife and children having a better life, he decided to move. On the day he was to move people came with carts, etc. to help him. They loaded everything except his trunk containing his hymn books and things necessary for the performing of his duties. When he went back into the house he was touched in such a way that he told the people not to move the trunk. He goes out and tells the people to unload the wagon. He set down the words " Blest Be The Tie That Binds Our Hearts In Christian Love."

Another noted Baptist in England, never married, a recluse in a sense, evidently lived to himself, and he moved into a basement apartment of one room. He had no money and got behind in rent for two months. The landlord told him unless he paid the rent one month in advance, he would be evicted that day. He had his clothes already bundled. As he saw the landlord coming up the street a knock came at the door and the caller said: " Mr. Watts, I heard you preach last Sunday and so I stopped by to give you (money)." A month in advance and he had two guinea left! He sat down and wrote the words " There Is A House Not Made With Hands."

Kansas is a fascinating State for one who loves to watch the sky— the sky ever changes, yet it is ever the same. As I look across the green flat land I see the sky come down to meet the field in any direction I turn. The grass looks to be three to four inches high and the wind is so strong it blows that grass into waves. Only a few trees are seen and occasionally few small houses which appear to be about a quarter mile from the road. The rocks in our area look solid; not these here in Kansas, they look to be in layers and upon close examination we even found shell.

We sing more on the long driving days. " A Sovereign Protector I Have," " There Is A Fountain Filled With Blood," etc. Sovereign Protector. Little ones, wouldn't you be afraid to go anyplace if your God were not the God of the universe, if He had not made all that is in the world, if He were not yet ruling among the armies of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth? I would. The more I see the bigger, in my eyes, is the one God of heaven and earth. I love to see His handiwork and hear His name. His handiwork is everywhere. If you are on your sickbed, the love and kindness of one to you is His handiwork.

Driving into Colorado the terrain begins to change. One can still see far distances but more long hills, and see mountains in front of us. Exclamations by a Brother who sees a snow-covered mountain far ahead. And a red road! The sand mixture used to form the hardtop gives the road a definite red color.

At Colorado Springs we visited the Air Force Academy which occupies 18,000 acres. The scenery is beautiful; Pike 's Peake, seen earlier by the Brother, is magnificent and a background. Just before the sun sets we visited Garden of the Gods. I saw huge rock formations only surpassed by larger ones. The colors were outstanding, some

appeared as light sand , some a reddish color ; the green of the growth and trees and the backdrop of Pike 's Peake with snow truly made breathtaking views. One little Sister , well known for her ready manner of expressing her thoughts, was so moved by the scenes here that she was unable to speak for some time and tears filled her eyes. I learned later that this Garden contained 1350 acres and the reddish rocks were indeed red sandstone rock formations believed to be over 300 million years old and sculptured through time by erosion.

The next day devotion began with the singing of " Rock Of Ages " and reading Isaiah 32. I really think our awe of the land, mountains and rock began in this State. After a long day of exclaiming and pointing Elder Davis read 23rd Psalm and spoke so beautifully . The day is ending , darkness almost upon us but our driver wants us to see Four Corners; we hear weathermen speak often of Four Corners. We turn off the road for a short distance and see not iron pins but iron plaques denoting the corners of four States : Colorado , Utah, Arizona and New Mexico. We " walk " the four States in five minutes , back on the bus and into Arizona for the night.

Arizona . The Grand Canyon state. We travel through mountains and desert . The mountains have little growth — a cedar type tree approximately two feet tall. Traveling through Navajo Indian Reservation we see the mud mounds where Indians cook bread . The sun is shining and warm and we see a mountain ahead with much snow . The Little Colorado River was almost dry when we crossed it.

Grand Canyon . Entering the area we see large trees that look like pine to me, with red looking trunks; I learn they are pinyon and ponderosa pine . We stop at several lookout points to get out and see the Canyon. The Colorado River which runs through the Canyon to the Gulf of California looks small , it is so far below us. The Canyon is 277 miles long, over a mile deep and the width runs from 600 feet to 17 miles! Many formations such as limestone, shale and sandstone steppes , cliffs , mesas and buttes are seen . The many shades of pink / orange, sand and earth tones are beautiful. Upon viewing this Grand Canyon from one point the little ones broke out singing " How Great Thou Art ."

Out of the Canyon and driving toward Nevada we see mountains again, almost no growth, but scattered about are groups of rock, three or four together, ranging in size of a bucket to that of an automobile.

Elder Davis told of seeing an eagle flying toward the east. He read Deu . 32 : 11 . Eagles are unique in many ways. Eagles hath parents to see after them . An eagle will tear meat from her breast to feed her young.

We stop to see Hoover Dam , formerly called Boulder Dam, in the Colorado River and on the Arizona - Nevada boundary . This Colorado River is a mighty river in this desert country . We rest at Boulder City , Nevada for the night.

I believe I haven't told you of the microphone at the front of the bus . Each day when Elder Davis read

scriptures he went to the micro - phone; also, when singing, he and others with the beautiful gifts of voice went to the front of the bus. I remember one day I was quite tired, I just closed my eyes and listened to the singing. It was so pretty and peaceful.

Elder Davis: "We Travel Through A Barren Land" Isa. 35:8. We are blessed to travel this high - way of nature to behold the many wonders of God's creation. We have places along this highway where we may enter and exit.

Isaiah speaks of the highway and a way. The highway he describes is the highway of Holiness. The way thereon is Christ for He indeed is the way. He says the redeemed shall walk there and no beast shall be there (sin, corruption, wickedness, etc.). We have no exits on this highway for we shall not desire to leave it.

We render thanks to God that He hath blessed us not only to travel with pleasure the roads of creation but also the highway of Holiness whereof we rejoice.

Crossing into California we see dry lakes, cactus, first grape fields, orange groves, and windmills on mountaintops generating electri - city. These "windmills" looked like tall poles with half moons twirling on them. Fasinating to me.

Second Sunday: My thoughts were at Springfield, communion Sunday. I had asked if Elder Davis had any appointments while on this trip and been told no. But I was beginning to feel this complete trip was one appointment, appointed of God I hope. I loved the manner of Elder Davis each day going to the microphone, asking for a song, offering prayer, reading scripture, and speaking as the Lord gave him utterance.

Elder Davis: "Sovereign Ruler Of The Sky." Mat. 1:18, 23, 25. They presented to Him gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh. Gold was owned only by royalty so gold typi - fied His heavenly heritage; the frankincense was burned in the tem- ple on the most holy day and it typi - fied the sacrificial offering of Him - self. Myrrh was a type of embalming agent for the dead so it speaks of His death. The scripture says they opened up their treasures, but to me they opened up their hearts to praise Him as the Son of the true and living God. Only the wise men of the world are still looking for Christ. When Mary went to visit Elizabeth, at the salutation. "I am with child," John the Baptist within Elizabeth's womb leaped for joy. Mary in her beginning of time had her doubts, "I have known no man." So it is with us spiritually: we have known no man and we are indeed with child in the spiritual realm because Christ is born within us the hope of glory. The church is always in the feminine gender. Therefore, the church is the mother of us all through the person of Jesus Christ. Mary was indeed the earthly mother, but Christ never called her mother but He did say in his dying moments, "Woman, behold thy Son."

We are riding through beautiful mountains toward Yosemite Natio - nal Park. The Park idea began in 1860's and President Lincoln signed the first Yosemite legislation. I was

almost shocked in seeing the huge rock mountains of Yosemite. I read that the cliffs of Yosemite Valley are sheer, near-vertical walls that rise for more than half a mile. There were giant sequoias and waterfalls. I saw water falling over the very top of the mountain down into the valley where we were. The water seems to fall to a plateau and then fall with much spray onto the next level and finally into the creek. In this Park is El Capitan rock formation which ranks among the tallest unbroken cliffs in the world. At some points the close proximity to these domes and cliffs was almost breathtaking.

We continue across California to San Francisco. There we go on a boat to the Bay area, see Alcatraz and the Golden Gate Bridge. On shore we see the sea lions which had been in the news just prior to the beginning of this trip. So many sea lions were coming in shore the question is what to do about them. The next morning a local tour guide directed us around the City, to Queen Willamilla Garden, Golden Gate Park. We saw many beautiful flowers, trees, Twin Peakes overlooking San Francisco. The houses looked to be simply planted on the side of the many hills.

Leaving San Francisco we drive up Redwood Highway. At Leggett, California, we see the Chandelier Tree in the Drive - Thru Tree Park which is 315 feet tall and 21 feet in diameter. There is a road through the base of this tree and cars go through; the bus couldn't go through and I was glad because I thought "they" had cut this tree quite enough.

Elder Davis asked that we sing "Do Not I Love Thee O My Lord," read Psa. 139 and spoke of Christ going with us every step of the way; we have found Him in the desert and on the mountain tops. Oh, what a wonderful, comforting thought.

Back on the main road we continue traveling north and see Pacific Ocean on the left and mountains on the right. Elder Davis tells us that Pacific means "perfect peace." Do you begin to feel that we were on a journey, that we had a leader, that our leader cared for us? I believe every one who went on this trip wanted to go, and I believe we traveled much on the enthusiaum of this dear Brother, Elder Davis.

Again we turned off Redwood Highway and visited Lady Bird Johnson Grove, Redwood National Park. Here we walked a mile on the nature trail through these beautiful redwood trees. I was very proud of that. No, I never led the group but I was very happy to be blessed to keep up. I read that these trees are thousands of years old, reach heights up to 375 feet, are among the oldest living things on earth and are native to the fog belt along the Northern California and Southern Oregon coasts.

Driving up the Oregon coast one sees the beautiful dark blue Pacific Ocean, waves breaking off shore or on the hugh rocks in the Ocean; on the right the pretty green mountains come right down to the edge of the water. At one point we stopped to take pictures and wade into the water. We see Oregon Dunes National Recreational Area; the dunes are higher than I've seen on

Carolina coast . The mountains in this Oregon country have been cut for lumber and one can see where trees have been replanted . At one point we saw logs on river tied and ready to be floated downriver for further processing — to meet our many needs I 'm sure .

We visited Mt. St. Helens Visitor Center but there was much fog and we couldn 't see the mountain . Going through the State of Washington was part of a long travel day . On the long travel days we sing more . The hostess sings with us and one day the driver sang a song for us . I remember one night the hostess was upset because of difficulties about reservations at the hotel and she told us the next day she thought she would feel better if she could hear Elder Davis and others sing .

Elder Davis : " I Love The Windows Of Thy Grace ." Prov . 8:22-36 . We were with Him before He built the mountains which we have witnessed and before He set the borders of the plains . May we again , as we tour our way across the country , feel in some measure that He is ours and we are His . This speaks of the spiritual realm for Solomon says we were as one brought up with Him . We indeed were brought up in Christ because we were chosen in Him before the foundation of time .

The first stop in Canada was Vancouver . There we caught a ferry to the island of Victoria where we were met by a local guide who took us to Burtchart Gardens . The 50 acre Gardens are open all year and in May many flowers and shrubs were in bloom , including azalea , rhododendron , alyssu , forget- me - not . Within the Gardens were Italian Garden , Sunken Garden , Rose Garden (not in bloom when we were there) and many varieties of trees . The ferry ride over was 1 hour and 45 minutes so I remembered when returning and walked around and explored the ferry . It had three or four levels and carried many cars and trucks , and had gift shop and restaurants .

The next day we are taken on a tour of Vancouver . It 's a beautiful city with pretty parks : Stanley Park , Elizabeth Park and one of these parks has three beaches . In the city we see a steam clock called " The Landy ," a revolving restaurant , a " hanging building " which is an office building . We see many orientals in Canada and in Vancouver there 's a large Chinese section and Japanese section .

Elder Davis : " Happy The Heart Where Grace Reigns ." I Cor. 13:1-13 . Christ opened the eyes of the boy who was born blind and once He performed this miracle people be - gan to question . Is he (the boy) not the one who was from birth blind ? His parents say to those who questioned them about the boy that he is ours indeed and to go to him and ask him , he is of age .

Paul states that charity embodies the attributes of Christ . If we have true charity it is a gift of God and comes through the channel of Grace

Further north into Canada we travel to Kamloops . The Rocky Mountains are beautiful , snow on many , and waterfalls . We see one long waterfall in a mountain which is the backdrop for another one , the

waterfall contains so much water and spray that it looks like much smoke, white smoke. Kamloops is a beautiful little city in a wide valley between georgous mountains. It is here that Brother and Sister Fer - guson come to see Elder and Sister Davis. They had dinner with us and visited into the evening. They were back the next morning for breakfast and to see us board the bus and take up our journey. I understand there are few Old Baptists in the West and my heart goes out to them. I often feel so far from my brethren but I am blessed to go meet with them most every month.

Elder Davis: " Far From The World, O Lord, I Flee." Psa. 121:1-8. We behold the beauty of these hills (mountains) and feel that David truly knew the beauty thereof be - cause his life came forth from such. We must look to Mt. Zion to view Christ as our help in times of need.

The Rocky Mountains are so beautiful, they begin in Canada and run through the States into New Mexico and Arizona. In Canada they are so numerous and in May many are snow covered or snow- capped. Mt. Robson is the highest in Canada, it is spectacular. We gasp in awe at one mountain and then see another one just as majestic in its beauty. In this country we look for bear, did see moose, deer, cariboo, big horn sheep, ducks on lakes. High in the mountains of Maligne Canyon Natio- nal Park we went for a walk. I saw the beginning of a waterfall; I looked down upon it, the water racing across rock and falling down onto other rock and into Maligne Canyon far below. Mt. Edith Cavell was named for a nurse captured by Germans during war. And wouldn't you know, we see mountains named Endless Chain Mountains (a17 - mile mountain chain); and finally, the guide asked that we pick a mountain and name it for ourselves.

Jasper National Park comprises 4,000 square miles and the town of Jasper lies within the park. We had spent the night in Jasper and I thought it one of the prettiest towns we visited. The town lay in a wide valley and the mountains around were so pretty. It was also the northern - most town we stayed in and I remember having to begin the night's rest and seeing much light outside. I'm happy we were not traveling in the short day season!

On Sunday we were driving to Columbia Icefield, the largest body of ice in the Rockies. I'd heard of ice fields and wondered what it would be like. We drove to certain area, boarded a special bus to a station where we boarded a snowmobile that took us onto Althabasca Gla - cier, one of the glaciers fed by the Icefield. The snowmobile had same tires as munster trucks and drove very slowly on this ice / snow. Here we stood on the Glacier and looked upon the Icefield. We walked a few feet from the Snowmobile and used the cups we had been given to drink from the purest water in the world. This Icefield covers 130 square miles and we look up to the gigantic mountains of Mount Athabasca and Mount Kitchener.

Banff National Park adjoins Jasper National Park and we travel south toward the town of Banff. In this area we see tree line about half

way up the mountains— we learn the vegetation growing season is only 60 days. At Weeping Wall Viewpoint we see Cirrus Mountain where water flows over sheer limestone cliffs and the waterfall is breathtaking . We have a very nice surprise on this Sunday afternoon: Abbott Bus Lines hosts a " High Tea " for us at the Chateau Lake Louise , a very large and beautiful hotel built in 1890 by Canadian Pacific Railway, overlooking Lake Louise is well- known for its emerald green color and one can see Mount Victoria and Victoria Glacier from the shore in front of the Chateau . The Tea began with fruit and cream and ended with sandwiches . I think it is very nice to see the customs of other people , and I appreciate the kindness of Abbott to us in so many ways .

Driving to Banff from here we see many aspen trees and the trunks of the trees are bare approximately three to four feet from the ground . The deer eat this bark in winter when no food is available . We 've had a local guide with us all day and we've seen many beautiful mountains , waterfalls , glaciers , but something was missing . Banff is our home for the night and after walking and sightseeing a bit we gathered in one of our rooms to hear Elder Davis read from Psalm 89 and in essence said:

At the top of the mountain there is no growth , no nutrient . We have no nutrient at the top and must be born again to the low ground in order to be raised up again by God Himself. We find in the valley the food of Grace and Mercy . When we experience this we are lifted to mountain 's height but to find the Lily of eternal life we must go back to the valley . Dear little ones , love was in that room that night .

The local guide was back with us the next morning and directed us to Sulphur Mountain where we could look down on Bow Valley and the Town of Banff. At the end of Sulphur Mountain Road were Upper Hot Springs and Sulphur Mountain Gondola Lift . Some of us walked to the Spring and put our hands in it . I learned this Spring is the warmest on this Mountain with a maximum temperature near 117 degrees . Others rode the gondola to the summit ridge of the mountain (7500 feet above sea level) to view the town of Banff , Bow River Valley and to see Tunnel Mountain and Mount Rundle . Leaving here we visit Cave and Basin Spring , a portion of Cave and Basin Centennial Centre which was dedicated in 1985 by Prince Philip . One could enter this Cave and know after a very few minutes that sulphur springs were present . Returning to Banff the guide leaves us and we are on our way to Calgary .

We saw and enjoyed much of Canada while the local guide was with us , and now it 's good to see Elder Davis come to the microphone, ask we sing" From All That's Mortal, All That's Vain, " read Gen. 9:12 , 13 13 , 14 and speak :

Symbols of the covenant God made with Noah . We behold symbols of that covenant . There are twelve colors in the rainbow, primary and secondary colors . Vestment that he is wearing as a priest , onyx stones held the vestment together . He holds all things together , even His people . On the front there were

to be placed twelve stones. These twelve stones were the individual and personal stones of the sons of Jacob. Reuben's stone was a ruby. There were four rows of stones, three in each row. If you look up the color of the stones, they are the same as the colors of the rainbow. Joseph had a coat of many colors. This typifies that he had a covenant with Israel (Jacob). Joseph, born a son of Jacob, would be there to feed Israel when his family was in famine, when destruction came upon the land. I feel the coat is symbolic of the covenant and had the same colors as in the rainbow. Joseph's coat was torn asunder and soaked in the blood of the kid, then he was sold into bondage. That blood was the blood of deception. The body of Christ was freely offered for the consequences of sin under the law. His blood was the blood of life. Those colors in Joseph's coat also typify the colors of stones in the walls and gates of Heaven. Go to Revelations and John sees in the building of new Jerusalem twelve stones, precious stones. Precious stones — those stones that belonged to Christ. The holy city had twelve gates, each named for the tribes of Israel. At each gate also is the stone of that individual. My bow shall be a covenant between any and all generations. There are seventy-two generations of man from Adam to Jesus Christ. When you come to Jesus Christ the generation ceases. If we are what we hope to be we see with the eye single. At the end of the covenant of God, end of the rainbow, is something more precious than all the gold of Ophir. The beholding of any covenant is good and to see it naturally and to feel it in your own heart means that in time it shall be surely fulfilled.

Upon arriving in Calgary about 4:00 p.m. we learned the Gardens we were to visit were closed because of the Holiday: Victoria Day. The next day was to be another long travel day for we were to head back to the States and to see Yellowstone National Park. May 22 was another beautiful day and we travel south on Route 2.

Elder Davis: "Tis the Gospel's Joyful Tidings." Psa. 71. He was beseeching God that He never leave him to those who are unrighteous or to those who would attempt to destroy him. God had ordained that he should be saved. Through the house of David shall come the Saviour. We know that David was a wicked man in his latter days and God would cause him to suffer. It would be in his house that the Lord would come. The Lord said to David, this sword shall dwell in thy house forever. This was the sword of suffering, to see incest, rape, murder, etc. in his own household. He begs God to save him from the wicked. We each have an experience of grace along the way. He has been our Keeper. We can feel as David, that when we are old and grayheaded and our strength leaves, He will not leave us. He will go all the way even unto death and then we shall meet Him face to face. The psalmist was begging for strength; restore unto us the joys of our salvation. May we have comfort from time to time as David experienced. He will not leave us. May God bless

each of you.

Oh, it's so good to be riding toward home again, to think of the many beautiful places we've seen, to think of the blessings of the dear Lord to us in these days. On a day like this we talk and visit and the singing is so pretty. Looking across the low rolling hills to the horizon, the sky is light blue, the mountains are snowcovered in the far distance, we see some farm land, cattle, horses, and large mounds of earth in the fields left by the Ice Age. The Canadians were glad to take our money but our change was in Canadian, so now it is time to stop, go into a bank and exchange any Canadian for American money. At noon this day we arrive at USA border, go through customs and we are in Montana, USA! Singing broke out: " God Bless America."

Montana is a beautiful state with wide plains, beautiful mountains and I still have a mind - picture of coming around a mountain and seeing the capitol, Helena, in a wide valley with mountains all around, one mountain in the distance being snowcapped. We stop at West Yellowstone, Montana for the night.

Elder Davis: " If God Is Mine Then Present Things." Job16:16-22. Job knew he was near death but he had the consolation of feeling he had a witness in heaven and a record on high. If we are what we hope to be we also have the same witness and record in the person of Christ. John said he was not the light but he bore witness in his time of Christ being our light and witness and our record on high.

Yellowstone National Park is located in Wyoming, running into Montana and Idaho. This Park consists of 2.2 million acres and contains a variety of spectacular views, the most popular of which may be the geyser, Old Faithful. We arrived here early in the morning and walked over to see it erupt. I read that Old Faithful erupts " faithfully " every 65.5 minutes to heights from 115 to 180 feet and 10,000 to 12,000 gallons of water are discharged at each eruption. This continues day and night, summer and winter! The Visitor Center estimated the time wait we would have before the eruption and sure enough there it was performing on time. A hail storm came just as we were boarding the bus but we were soon out of that. We drive to the area of the " thumb paint pots " which are very hard for me to describe. They appear to be groups of pools approximately 10 to 30 feet across, colorful and bubbly.

Riding through Yellowstone I see evidence of the 1988 fire. Many burned trees lay on the ground; I also see growth coming back to the Park. Yellowstone has a Grand Canyon with the Yellowstone River running in its bed. The waterfalls are just georgous. The formations in this Canyon look to be shades of yellow, beige, apricot. And then we come to Yellowstone Lake which is ice covered and mountains in distance are snow covered. At one point I see this cold Lake on the right and on the left side of the road I see steam rising from a pool of water! After seeing so many different scenes of nature we travel toward Cody, Wyoming for the night.

I look at the titles to the songs we

sang and they just remind me of the beauty we saw and how we marveled at the beauty of one creation after another. Some nights I didn't rest well and my body was so tired the next day, but I looked and saw yet another evidence of the one God of heaven and earth and my poor body seemed to shed some of that " tired " and forward I looked. You know that God created the heavens and the earth and all in them and He rested. Yes, He rested, but don't we know that it is He alone who rules the water that comes over those great waterfalls, the beginning and the end of each river, He knows the depths of the canyons and how much deeper they shall become, He knows of those Ice Fields, from whence they come and He knows exactly their increase or decrease before this earth shall burn. He knew this land before the Ice Age as man speaks of the many mounds and formations left by that Age, and He knows the mountains so regal and majestic.

Elder Davis: " O Lord, I Would Delight In Thee." Job 38:4. Job became exhaulted and lifted up and questioned God as to the abundance of His power. God began to question him as to where he was and who he was when God laid out all creation. He informed Job that he could not cause the hinds to calve nor bring any other thing to pass. Job then could acknowledge that God held all things in His hands.

Job lost all he had at one point (nature) but in the end was restored with more than he possessed in the beginning (spiritual).

One Sister asked Elder Davis about his experience and asked that he relate something to us. He graciously complied.

Elder Davis: When I was about fourteen years old I dreamed I was somewhere and a man was preaching and he was standing on a wagon. Eventually he turned. He had my face. I pondered that for some time and put it aside. When I was fifteen I dreamed that some one; he was standing on a rock and when he turned he had my face. I married and when 28 years of age I began to be so impressed to join the church and I didn't feel I was worthy and yet I had no alternative and eventually did join after several years of struggling of spirit and soul and I thought everything would be fine and the burden would be taken away. Shortly after joining the church the burden returned, I kept it a secret for quite a while. I felt I would have to attempt to preach and feel many of you have experienced what I felt of unworthiness. When Moses went to lead out his people he didn't have evidence but he still felt he had to. I lost weight, couldn't sleep, didn't weigh 150 pounds. I became so burdened I begged the Lord to give me a sign that would cause me to believe I could (preach) and on this particular night I saw what appeared as half an arm, the hand held out flat and it was holding a mound of sand, glittering like gold. The hand turned and it seemed the gold poured upon my feet and in the hand from which it fell was a hole I could see through. I asked the question, with the hole in the hand, why didn't that substance pour through. A small still voice said, that's the gospel, it cannot be

wasted and I became satisfied.

Yet, today, I feel the greatest unworthiness and weakness to try to touch upon the greatness of God. If I have anything I could base my hope upon it's this experience. I felt at one time I was much like Job. During the time of such burden I took the pistol at night and walked out in the yard thinking I wouldn't come back. Why shouldn't I give Him all the praise and honor for allowing me to dwell upon such love, people, and enjoy the fellowship of the church and behold the majestic wonders of His creation and the bounties of His salvation.

There was a hush in the bus after hearing this dear Brother tell these precious things. Another little Brother came to the microphone and told of an experience, of praying to God and the prayer not being answered. Yet, I believe God did answer that prayer because the little Brother was made satisfied with the disposition of his query. I was very moved by the relation of these two brethren and for some time had a desire to attempt to speak of what I hoped the dear Lord had done for me.

We are still in Wyoming, another beautiful scenic state. We see Bighorn National Forest, snowcapped mountains, hugh plateau, wide blue sky in any direction, blue violets. In the afternoon a cloud gave us rain and some sleet; the panoramic view was so wide, I could see the dark cloud to my right and on my left the pretty blue / white sky was so very bright.

Early evening finds us crossing into South Dakota and we rest for the night in Rapid City. There is a Mt. Rushmore Road in Rapid City and we take this out of the City.

Elder Davis: "O For A Thousand Tongues To Sing." Psa. 27:1-6. We have witnessed miracles of creation and spiritually of His grace and tasted of His righteousness. When we are touched by His hand we can see, spiritually, He has given us these days of pleasure and we know when we see Him, in a sense, that we also rejoice and feel great pleasure because it is those things that are spiritual that have worth. This natural world shall in time decay. All things shall pass away except heaven. That which God has stored up for us shall not pass away. As we view these things let us be mindful that we are passing through the highways of His creation, the fields of His righteousness. We could not feel as we do unless He had given us that unction of spirit to accept from where it came and to give Him all honor, glory and praise. Many of the things He did were in order that His name might be glorified. The scribes and pharisees questioned Him as to who sinned that caused the blind boy to be so from birth. That wasn't the case, it was in order that His blindness being healed might glorify God. Things that happen to us today are for the glory of His name. He has built them, as it were, for our enjoyment that His name might be victorious forever.

Mount Rushmore National Memorial. In 1924 a group of men desired to have a monument carved in the mountains of South Dakota and the sculptor, Gutzon Borglum, chose Mount Rushmore for the site.

The site is a hugh mass of granite rock which rises 500 feet higher than the hills and forests around it. The faces of Washington, Jefferson, T. Roosevelt and Lincoln have been carved out of this mountain. A very nice visitor center has been built here and we have breakfast in a large dining room, floor to ceiling windows and we look out and see Mount Rushmore and the faces of four of our presidents carved thereon. This is a very pretty place. Coming from Mount Rushmore we see three bears playing in a park, one on a swing. At one point I can see the complete city of Rapid City and its surrounding green fields and rolling hills.

In the afternoon we stopped at Wall Drug, Wall, South Dakota. I understand there was a pharmacist some years ago who was trying to make a living in this comparatively forsaken country. He decided to place a sign out on the road " free water," after other ideas failed. This worked and now Wall Drug consists of many shops, restaurant, etc. and free water.

Leaving Wall Drug we were soon in Badlands National Park (very near that free water). This land is very hard to describe but I read the Badlands were formed by various deposits of rock, sand, clay and silt when the sea that covered the area drained away millions of years ago. That may be true, I don't know, but I do believe God Himself is the Creator. I'll just look and marvel. There is some grass, little valleys, and miles and miles of mounds, shapes, the colors of these mounds and shapes look yellow, pink, grey, tan. Most are not tall, many look approximately 20 - 40 feet high. They were roped off and I thought, I I'd like to touch and sift this.

We drive on to Mitchell, South Dakota, to rest for the night. I think I shall miss most the panoramic views of the earth and sky. It mattered not whether we were riding through the plains, the mountains or the rolling hills, the horizon extended as far to the right and to the left as I could turn my head. Through South Dakota there were many different views and as the sun approached the horizon the hues of the blue sky changed a bit darker to my high left and on my lower left pink showed up in the sky and seemed to spotlight the clouds nearer to mid left. A beautiful sunset.

Mitchell is the center of the corn belt in South Dakota and the city has built a Convention Center called the Corn Palace. This Palace is decorated each year with corn, using a new theme each year. We toured the Palace and it was very interesting. Elder Davis was so moved by the picture that came into his heart when he viewed the artist's theme on the inside of the building that he spoke of what he " saw " when next he read scripture, Ecl. 12:1-2 and we had sung " Saviour, Visit Thy Plantation." And singing continued as it often did as we traveled, " How Great Thou Art," " Amazing Grace," and " How Firm a Foundation."

We travel into Iowa and next day cross Missouri River into Nebraska. It is Sunday when we visit Boys Town. I'm sure such places are good for many little ones but I just feel sorry for children who don't have

parents who love each other and them. In this world is sadness; in the world to come is perfect peace.

Elder Davis: " Does The Gospel Word Proclaim." Several verses of scripture seem to have entered my thoughts this morning and I would surely desire that He will bless us that our thoughts may bring these things together. I Cor. 15:35, 49. Paul is touching upon the very essence of our faith and we are continually questioned as to what we believe and what our thoughts are on the resurrection. We find that here Paul is explaining the difference in the natural body that goes into the grave and the spiritual body that shall come forth from the grave. If we have any glory it is arising from the person of Christ. And it does not belong to us as long as we are in this time world.

We believe that our churches have adopted, all the way back to the days of Christ and John the Baptist, the precepts of Christ Himself. The Articles of Confession were adopted about 200 years ago. We embody the ordinances of baptism and communion and the predestination of the church (His people). John saw a great miracle. He saw the books open. The Book of the Lamb — those whose names are in the Book stand before God alive. Those whose names are in the books stand before God dead because they have not been made alive spiritually. Some shall be resurrected to eternal glory and some to damnation. We know that God shall say to those on the right, come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world and to those on the left He shall say, depart from me ye workers of iniquity I never knew you. We go back to the basis of the Primitive Baptist: He hath saved us and He hath called us. The saving comes first; the calling comes last. We are often questioned why we believe that God chose a people before the foundation of the world. To substantiate our belief we must go to the 8th chapter of Romans. We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. He justified us in His life and He glorified us in His death.

We left Columbia, Missouri, early in the morning. Elder Davis asked we sing " Do Not I Love Thee," read Prov. 3:13-26 and spoke so comforting of the beginning of wisdom. Having attempted to convey to you some of the beauty and joy of these days I have come to realize that Elder Davis most often concludes each delivery with a prayer for the hearers. For example, on this occasion his words were: " May God bless each of us in the days ahead. May He give us a peaceful rest when death has taken our bodies until such time as the voice shall say ' Come.' "

Little ones, you can see that all beauty we beheld was not on the outside of the bus window. When I learned of the proposed trip being in May I thought of two things: one, May is communion month and two,

I'd miss complete strawberry season. And this day I still thank Him for His many blessings and for the many moments of communion given us in these days.

We are crossing these rivers again coming back toward home, the Mississippi, Little Warbash, Ohio. In Illinois and Indiana we see miles and miles of flooded fields, see gas pumper overcome by water. Our last night out is spent in Louisville, Kentucky. Here, again Abbott Bus Lines gives us a very nice treat. We were their guests to dinner. We are a bit sad, yet we want to get home and see our people. This wonderful trip is already beginning to be a dream. Not completely, I think I shall remember much I've seen, the dear Lord keep my mind.

We leave Louisville very early. It will be a long day to come home. Elder Davis asked we sing " A Sovereign Protector I Have," read Gen. 1 : 1-5 and spoke:

Each of us can say we've had a Sovereign Protector with us all the way. I've thought of how we left our homes on the first day, and we began the journey with expectations. We can now finish the journey as a witness to what we saw and how it has been. God created all things. He divided the light from the darkness, and evening and morning were the first day. He has revealed when His spirit moved upon the waters of life and within our spirit and in essence said, let there be light and the darkness of carnality flees. The power of light dispells darkness. The light of the glory of Christ coming into the world of sin brightens our experience. John said, I am not that light but a witness of that light. There have been the workings of spirit that cause us to bear witness of that light We shall be brought forth from that darkness — God has said, let there be light. I note that the evening and the morning were the first day; now we have come to the evening and morning of the last day so far as our journey is concerned. We must trust in God that our days shall be as blessed at the end of the journey of life when the evening and morning shall become the last day of time and the evening typifies our lives. It typifies our unworthiness. It typifies the end of the law. On the seventh day He rested from His work because it was a holy day and may we be blessed to feel that when death comes to close our eyes we see that as the last evening. We shall see Him in His glory, we shall be like Him and we shall be satisfied. We shall know as we are known. May God bless each of you in the future days that lie before you. We know not the future but we know who holds the future. I trust we shall be traveling in the straight and narrow way when the earth burns with fervent heat. When we reach the realm of Glory to sing a new song never before sung, of Moses and of the Lamb, our voices shall be in true harmony forever.

We are nearing home, have our last meal of the trip in Bristol, Virginia and in Christianburg the first of our group leave the bus. The trip officially began in Roanoke and we are told that from Roanoke and return we traveled 8,659 miles.

Dear ones, you have been so kind to ask me about the trip with

Elder Davis and I know you have been unable to attend meetings for a long time. If I can say we, to include myself, I hope and do believe we are on a journey, the end of which is brighter than the noonday sun and that, little ones, I cannot describe.

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickral

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

THE USE OF LEARNING

Because worldly wisdom is out of place in the preaching of the gospel, we need not canonise ignorance. If it be "the foolishness of preaching," God does not send fools to preach. Bunyan, Huntington and Gadsby were not men of learning and education, but they were no fools. On the contrary, they were men of original minds and natural powers which would have made them conspicuous in any sphere. Augustine, on the other hand, Luther and Calvin were men of deep and varied learning; and in modern times, Romaine, Berridge and Toplady were hard students. Nay, to come to Scripture instances, Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, Daniel was skilled in all wisdom, knowledge and science (Dan. 1 : 4, 5, 11), and Paul sat at the feet of Gamaliel.

Learning, therefore, abilities and study are only so far hindrances, and great hindrances too, as they are made substitutes for the teaching and wisdom of the Spirit. This is their great danger, and most of all in the self-instructed and half-learned, who have not got so far on the road as to know their own ignorance. With such tall masts and spreading sails, a deal of heavy ballest is needful. But with that there may be less risk of toppling over.

There is one test that they are kept in their place — when they never appear. Hart earned his daily bread by teaching languages. Where is there a trace of his knowledge of languages in his hymns beyond the admirable propriety and clearness of well nigh every line? Romaine was a thorough master of Hebrew. But where do we find him, beyond a passing hint in his writings, digging up Hebrew roots, and slicing them up hot or cold? Berridge was a tutor of his college, and a hard student. But where in his beautiful hymns are his Clare Hall researches visible? Luther was one of the most learned men of his age, but his German writings are so addressed to the popular understanding, so homely, pointed, racy and expressive that they are models of simplicity and strength, without the slightest tincture of pedantry or display, but gushing out of his heart clear, sparkling and forcible as a mountain stream.

If a man possess natural or acquired ability, it should make him all the more plain and simple, and only enable him, like a skillful mechanic, to turn out his work more sharply and finely. It is only bunglers that can't handle their tools, who make a parade with the chisel. A man's knowledge should be wrought into his hand as the mechanic's skill is wrought into his eye and mind. Let

the work show the workman, not the tools flourished before the eyes.

It thus kept in its place, if sanctified to the service of God, if used only with a single eye to His glory and His people's good, human learning is not to be despised. It is the application that decides the value. Gold was given to make the golden calf, and gold was given to make the golden candlestick; the one was an idol, the other gave light to the sanctuary. We may ask this simple question, " Where would have been our English Bible but for human learning ? " The Scriptures are written in what are called the learned languages. To translate these into English required an accurate and extensive knowledge of those languages, only to be acquired by long and patient study and labour. So far, then, learning has been used as an instrument in the hand of God for the benefit of thousands. The poorest man, with the Bible in his hand, may say, " Were it not for human learning I should never have read a line in this blessed book." To despise, therefore, human learning in itself, and apart from all abuse of it, is to despise what had been made a signal blessing to the church of God. And we suspect that its greatest despisers are those who do not posess it. Pride is of so subtle, accommodating a nature, that whilst one man is proud of his knowledge, another is proud of his ignorance.

J.C. Philpot

(Sent in by Roy and Nancy Pullig).

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 1990

Ray Cunningham, OR ..... $ 7.00
Mrs. Opelene Cunningham, AL.2.00
Frank Hunt, VA 12.00
H.P. Conner, VA 2.00
Donald Agee, VA 2.00
Mrs. Ernest W. Gibson, GA 7.00
Mrs. Rachel J. Green, WV 2.00
Mrs. E.J. Marslender, NC 2.00
Mrs. Ruth Blair, VA 25.00
Dr. & Mrs. J.L. Howell, AL
In memory Eld. Albert Brock.. 50.00
George Guilliams, VA 2.00
William Vick, TN 5.00
Mrs. Rachel Hudson, VA 5.00
Eld. Willard Cox, VA..... 2.00
Eld. & Mrs. J.B. Moon, AL.... 30.00
In memory Eld. Leonard Key
Charles E. Hatchett, OK 2.00
C.W. Wood, VA 7.00
Mrs. Frank Pilgreen, LA 2.00
Irvin Holley, VA 3.00
Mrs. Claude Mann, FL 7.00

ROMANS 15 : 5-7.

Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.

OBITUARIES

ELLA PEARL LEE

Sister Ella Pearl Lee, born in Rising Star, Texas, on July 26, 1898, was called home on May 6, 1989, at the age of ninety years, nine months, and ten days.

Sister Lee united with Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas, on May 7, 1939. At the time of her passing, she had been a member of her church far longer than any other living member. She went home to be with her Lord on the day before the fiftieth anniversary of her uniting with Saints Rest Church. She was the daughter of Elder C.B. Teague, former pastor of Saints Rest Church.

Sister Lee was faithful in her attendance as long as her health permitted. Several years ago her age and health required her to be relocated to Niceville, Florida, to be nearer her daughter who lovingly cared for her during her final years. Even then, she remained faithful in her support of the church and in her corresponding with the church brethren and friends for as long as she was able.

Sister Lee knew well what she believed, and rejoiced in the free and sovereign grace of God in the salvation provided in Christ Jesus, His blood and righteousness alone, without any admixture of human works or supposed creature merit. Her favorite scripture was Romans 11. 33: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

Sister Lee was survived by her daughter, Evelyn Peck; two sisters, Pruda Brown and Flora Boyd; two nephews, Bill Lee and Durward Rhodes; two nieces, Naomi Wilkerson and Jeannine Walters; one granddaughter Linda Broom; and one great-grandson, Steven Broom. Her mortal remains were laid to rest in Laurel Land Memorial Park, Dallas, Texas, to await the return of her Lord and Savior in that last great day. She is missed and will be missed by those who knew her.

Written by direction of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church while in regular quarterly conference on June 4, 1989, with the direction that a copy be sent to sister Lee's family, a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times, and a copy be retained in the church records.

Elder C.C. Morris, Moderator
Deacon Dean G. Connell, Clerk

SISTER HAZEL MOSS

Our dear Sister Hazel Moss departed this life March 15, 1990, after a two week stay in the hospital. She had been in declining health for several years.

Born April 6, 1915 in Pittsylvania county, she was the daughter of the late William Shreve and Elizabeth Widdifield Shreve.

She was first married to Russell Ireson, who died April 6, 1972. She later married Lawrence P. Moss who survives.

Most of her life was spent in Danville and she was the retired co-owner and manager of H & S Furniture.

In addition to her husband, survivors include a son, Donald R. Ireson, Sutherlin, two daughters, Patricia I. Haymore of Eden, N.C., and Linda E. Edwards of Blairs; and a stepson L.P. Moss III, of Spring Garden. She is also survived by two brothers Cosby Shreve of Danville and Victor Shreve of Toledo, Ohio, 14 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren. Sister Hazel also had a son, Russell Ireson, who succumbed to injuries resulting from an automobile accident, September 28, 1972.

When Sister Hazel's mother was on her death bed, the Lord blessed Sister Hazel with a wonderful experience that was precious to her and she shared it with many of us. This gave her a hope that she clung to the remainder of her life.

She joined Banister Springs Church on the 3rd. Sunday in September 1966. She believed that salvation was totally by the grace of God. The love she had for the church could be seen and felt as she greeted everyone with a smile and handshake or embrace. She enjoyed the fellowship of the brethren, sisters and friends. In the last few years her health had been failing, but she never complained and attended church if she were physically able. We'll always remember her sweet smiling face.

Sister Hazel was happy to have brethren, sisters and friends visit them and always made them feel welcome. Her warm happy spirit and the patience with which she bore her illness was an inspiration to all who knew her because it could have only come from God.

She enjoyed doing anything she could for the welfare of the church. If the church building needed repairs or anything to make it more comfortable, she and Lawrence were there doing their part joyfully. She was also faithful about checking on sick members, cooking delicious food for church meals or anything that needed to be done.

Graveside rites were held at Highland Burial Park on March 17, by Elder Melvin Shelton and Elder Polo Somers.

The church wishes to express its sympathy to Lawrence and family. Sister Hazel will be missed by all who knew and loved her, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. She is at peace now where there's no suffering, awaiting the resurrection when Christ shall come to claim his jewels. I feel she is one of these jewels of mercy.

Written by order of the church:
Ruth Taylor, Clerk

In Memory of One Precious

BLANCHE SAUNDERS

Blanche Saunders, though her name was not recorded on any church book, we feel and have evidence to believe her name was recorded in the Lamb's book of life.

She welcomed the Primitive Baptists in her home and manifested a heart filled with grace and truth.

The precious memories she left with us would fill a book.

She was an invalid the last eighteen of her ninety years in this low ground of sin and sorrow, manifesting the spirit that the will of the Lord be done.

When she was young, she was engaged to be married, but her husband - to - be died before the wedding. She never dated another saying he was the only man she could ever love. Though he was dead, her love never ceased.

Her mother died when she was twenty years old. Her daddy, Deacon T.W. Saunders, Sr., had to provide for a large family of small children. The writer's wife was but one month old and Blanch was the only mother she ever knew. No mother could have shown more love and care for her children as she spent her life for her family.

For many years she could not speak; yet, when we went in, her countenance said I love you.

I have found this recorded, "But if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." All the many years she was like a mother to the writer, I never heard her complain.

It was a sweet sorrow when we saw her meek and quiet spirit was with us no longer. Yet, we mourn not as those who have no hope; for precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

Her funeral was conducted by one who loved her as his grand - mother, Elder Cleo Robertson, assisted by Elder H.W. Wray. Both had been blessed to have sweet and precious words of prayer by her bedside at various times during her long illness.

She was laid to rest that peaceful rest beside her mother and her daddy whom she so tenderly cared for in his last days.

This was on my mind and I could not rest until it was written and there are yet many precious memories untold.

One who loved her,
Clifton C. Robertson

DAVID THOMAS SHORT

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst another Brother from Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church. Brother Short was born in 1896 and departed this life May 23, 1988.

Brother Short served in World War I on the front line and was blessed to return home safely and lived for many years with good health. Later in life, he became disabled and passed away in the V.A. Hospital in Salem, Virginia.

Brother Short was the son of the late James Short and Martha Cox Short and was married to Ruth Worley Short. Survivors include three daughters, Leona Arrington, Florence Robertson, and Helen Joe Lawson. Three sons, Carl, Gene, and Dell Short. Eighteen grandchildren, fifteen great - grandchildren. Five sisters, Lizzie Adams, and Sisters Ora Adams, Jeanie Murphy and Annie Hedrick.

I was blessed to visit with Brother Short many times while he

was in the V.A. Hospital. One time when we went to see him, he expressed his feelings and experience, he said he wanted to unite with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church. Brother Short was received into fellowship and baptized by Elder Raymond Goad on September 27, 1981.

His funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by Elders O.K. Tench and Marvin Brumfield. He was laid to rest in the Worley Family Cemetary to await the glorious resurrection.

Written by Elder Marvin Brumfield

TOM V. STRICKLAND

It is with a sad heart that I will attempt to write of the death of our dear brother in Christ and my companion of fifty-two and one-half years. He is survived by the wife and one daughter Mrs. Benay White, four sons Jerome H. Strickland, James Kindred Strickland, Harry Truman Strickland and Alton F. Strickland. He has 10 grandchildren,, three step-grandchildren and four step-great grandchildren.

Brother Strickland was born on January 3rd, 1907 at Moores Bridge, AL. After many years of poor health he went to sleep in Christ at Druid City Regional Medical Center at Tuscaloosa, AL. on May 6, 1989 making his stay on earth eighty-two years and five months. His funeral was held at Pleasant Ridge Primitive Baptist Church on May 9, 1989. Due to circumstances beyond our control our pastor Elder Lon Dee Moon was not able to conduct Brother Strickland's funeral. Two young men who visited with him many times at the hospital, Rev. Jerry Montgomery and Rev. Chester Free spoke comforting words to the family and friends. He was laid to rest in the church cemetary.

Brother Strickland joined Pleasant Ridge Primitive Baptist Church of the Hopewell Association in Alabama on September 25, 1983 and was baptised by Elder A.H. Brock, assisted by Elder W.T. Posey.

He was a firm believer of the doctrine of absolute sovereignty of God, the predestination of all things and salvation by Grace. He is sorely missed by his family, his Church, his many friends and community.

His sufferings and sorrows are over and God's purpose for him in this world is finished. Our earthy loss is his eternal gain.

Written by his wife,
Sister Dannie Moore Strickland

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Signs of the Times

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ALPHA AND OMEGA,

If God had purposed we should know
The date of birth of Christ His Son,
His word would plainly, clearly show
The hour and advent of this one.

The day, the week, the month or year
Is not important to our ear
For let us not exhalt a day
Apart from Christ, who is the way.

We would not celebrate one day
As separate from the heavenly way
For all the work of Christ, the king,
To Him we would our praises bring.

To exhalt one day above another
In honoring Him, our elder brother,
I'm sure that we forgetful be
That He truly's deity.

His birth, His life, His blood, His cross
Makes all things else appear as dross.
He is alpha and omega, too;
The beginning and ending, Oh how true.

I remember the day, the month, the year
He was born in me. My Saviour dear,
The cross and trials along the way
Has made Him more precious, day by day.

If round a tree your family meet
In spirit bow at His dear feet
Behold in Him abounding grace
And find in Him a hiding place.

This tree of life is ever green
Twas in the garden, first was seen
In Revelation Twenty - Two
We there behold, what it can do.

The late Elder David Spangler

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Odell Dalton Dove
Sister Alice Graham
Mamie A. Sullivan
Mertie Tyler

EDITORIAL

HEBREWS 11:1.

" Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Elder R.H. Campbell

In these few simple words, the Apostle Paul declares a truth that defies the intelligence of the natural man to discern and the ability of man to attain. It is as foreign to the natural mind as the mystery of life itself. It is the understanding of this basic truth that separates the elect from the non-elect, Cain from Abel, Jacob from Esau and the sheep from the goats. It cannot be seen with the natural eye or experienced with the natural senses. It cannot be obtained by the efforts of man, but, neither can it be lost, by his failures or shortcomings, once he is in possession of it.

The Apostle Paul wrote in his epistle to the church at Ephesus that faith is the gift of God unto salvation by his marvelous grace and it is only to those whom he has quickened together with Christ; that it was not of works, lest any man should boast. He said that those quickened souls were the workmanship of God created in Christ Jesus unto good works which he hath before ordained that they should walk in them. The works are just as much a part of that gift as the faith that accompanies it, and both are just as much beyond the ability of man to accomplish, so that there is no occasion for boasting on the part of the receiver of this most precious gift. They are sovereignly bestowed upon each child of God and it is because of God's promise to Abraham in his day, not because of any goodness seen in the subject, in his day.

Faith is not exercised by the one who has it but rather activates the one who receives it and they walk in ways they have not known and which were foreign to them before. Most of the scriptures left on record, by those who have gone on before, are the experiences which they have lived when motivated by this faith in their journey here in time. Many were things beyond the ability of the natural man and required wisdom that the man in nature does not possess. Isaac was born to Abraham by Sarah when she was well

past the age of child bearing; Abraham offered up Isaac (the pride of his natural life) when commanded to do so by God ; the three Hebrew children faced the fiery furnace rather than worship the golden image ; Daniel faced the lions ; and others fought battles against superior forces, wrought righteousness and suffered cruel deaths rather than deny this faith which was the driving force of their lives. This faith was the gift of God to each to enable them to perform these good works which he had before ordained that they should walk in them to the honor and glory of his holy name.

All are not called to bear the same trials and burdens but the same gift of faith is manifested in their life as each one runs the race that is set before them. Their fear is that they would not stand if called upon to face these trials in their day but the record indicates all do if they have the gift of faith. The presence of this faith is made manifest when a need arises and then, and then only, in this day just as in days gone by, the called will stand forth and respond to that calling from nature's darkness to the glorious light and liberty of the gospel of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Faith is not just a part of the salvation of the saints of God but rather is the sum total of it. It is the whole life of the born again individual and affects them in their every thought and deed ; whether they realize it or not, every decision that they make is influenced by this faith whether it be right or wrong. Their whole set of values are changed when they are born of the Spirit and when they do things contrary to that set of values it causes them grief and suffering whether anyone knows about it or not. That set of values is the law that is written on the fleshly tables of the heart and it judges their every thought and deed and that is what causes them pain. As Paul said," I find then a law, that when I would do good evil is present with me, for I delight in the law of God after the inward man : but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." They cannot escape this judgement and acknowledge that it is just. This is their daily struggle, but their faith conquers even this because it is based on the promises of God which were made to a chosen seed and their experience of the change in themselves causes them to believe that they are of this chosen generation. This is the evidence that is not seen, but, it is felt in the heart and witnesses to the testimony left on record by the saints of old and they dare not deny that kindred spirit.

The substance of things hoped for is their interest and claim of the promises of God to Abraham and his seed after him in succeeding generations ; a city which hath foundation whose builder and maker is God for an everlasting possession; a country that is an heavenly country where they will dwell in the presence of God, where he shall not be ashamed to be called their God and they shall know the peace that Jesus said he left with his elect. The substance is the holy city, new Jerusalem which shall come down

from God out of heaven where he will dwell with them ; where they shall know even as they are known , and there shall be no more sorrow nor any more pain , only the joy of the fullness of the beauty and glory of their salvation . That city shall have no temple for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it ; it shall need no sun nor moon for the glory of God shall lighten it and the Lamb is the light thereof . The nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it , and the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day : for there shall be no night .

This is the heritage of those whom the Lord loveth , and causeth to approach unto him . It is the earnest expectation in the bosom of every heaven born soul that claims these precious promises as theirs , by the right of inheritance . In this life they enjoy the earnest of their inheritance , a foretaste of that to come , by their spiritual birth making manifest that they are sons of God and joint heirs with Christ . A joint heir is not an heir of one part of the inheritance but has no claim to another part ; a joint heir is equal heir to the fullness of the inheritance , all of the joys and blessings of the whole . The whole being the fullness of the promises of the Almighty to those that he loved before the foundation of the world and who manifested that love by calling them , quickening them by his spirit and bestowing upon them this marvelous gift of faith .

The scriptures are the records of the trials of faith , of the saints of God in all ages of time , under the law and in the gospel day , as he leads them in ways known only to him , to teach them of their total dependence on him for all things . The law was the schoolmaster to bring them to Christ that they might be justified in him by his sacrifice , acceptable to God , for their sins . The law only manifested their inability to obtain righteousness of themselves but the scriptures told them of a prophet to come who would be bruised for their iniquities and by whose stripes they would be healed . When they were given the gift of faith they saw Christ as that prophet , and saw that their only hope of salvation was in his finished work in laying down his life for their sins as prohesied by the scriptures . They could then say with Daivid . " Although my house be not so with God ; yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant , ordered in all things , and sure ; for this is all my salvation , and all my desire , Although he make it not to grow ." As David they had no right to claim any standing before a just and holy God yet he had made a covenant with them fulfilling all requirements for them . They saw a completed work finished in the death , burial and resurrection of Christ , nothing to be added by man , ordered and sure to all , as many as were treasured in him from before the foundation of the world .

Surely , this is the substance of the things hoped for by the elect family of God since the beginning of time , and surely , this is what is termed faith , for it can only be received from the giver of every good and perfect gift . The knowledge of these things would never enter into the natural mind because they are

foolishness to it. In every experience of record it was the sovereign and majestic work of God in turning a vessel of mercy from the ways of the world to himself and then filling it with knowledge of spiritual things which produces the faith that directs him all his days in all of his ways. This is surely the substance of things hoped for in the hearts and souls of the saints of God in this time world.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

NOTICE

The Primitive Baptist Library at 4023 North Highway 87, Elon College, NC 27244, (919) 584-8531, has not been able to publish a quarterly for the Library for eleven years. Therefore we will give the brief background of the Library for those who receive this little paper.

In 1932, Elder W.J. Berry began collecting the historical records of the Old School, or Primitive Baptists. He had a love for them, feeling that they declared the truth " as it is in Christ Jesus." He valued their heritage, and saw our records being destroyed by those who have little interest in spiritual things, nor understanding the value of the truth and the preservation of our heritage.

His collection of these records, and old and rare books grew to the extent that a suitable place must be provided for them. Therefore, in 1946 he contributed a building site. Funds were needed and received to erect an attractive, brick, fire-proof building.

A self-perpetuating trusteeship of interested, godly men was selected to establish a foundation called THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES.

This was the first such library established for the service of our people.

Unfortunately due to the death of Brother Berry in 1986, many thought the library had ceased to function. It was to prevent such an eventuality that he placed the library in the hands of a faithful and able trusteeship.

The library has continued to serve our people, and we welcome any records or books for safekeeping here and for availability to those doing research. The records and books are catalogued and easily accessible for ready reference.

We receive and welcome visitors from any group of Primitive Baptists anywhere.

All the labor here is given freely out of love for the cause of our dear Lord, and the Primitive, or Old School Baptists.

The library is in need of funds to maintain and expand its service. It is funded only by voluntary contributions, which are gratefully received.

By Mabel (Mrs. W.J.) Berry,
widow of the founder.

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST LIBRARY IS INTERESTED in obtaining — church and association minutes, periodicals, church records and church histories, photographs of meeting houses, ministers, etc., historical materials, biographical writings, newspaper clippings, microfilms,

diaries and other informative material of interest.

AN URGENT REQUEST

There are many good books, old periodicals, church records, etc., which you may know should be preserved in this library. We urge you to see to the matter of having them sent at an early date. Quite often when such matters are delayed they are left to others who may not see their value or know where they could be preserved.

On file, in boxes are all of the Primitive Baptist periodicals, labelled for easy accessibility, as are minutes of most, if not all the associations in the U.S. There is also a good store of extra copies of minutes and periodicals. If these are desired, write for details.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

OBSERVATIONS ON THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES BY AUGUSTUS M. TOPLADY 1740 - 1778

Toplady flashed upon and past the world like a meteor. A brilliant streak of light, and he was gone. But he will ever live in the affections of all who love pure religion, and scorn every touchstone save the Holy Scriptures. To have produced the greatest hymn in the English language—"ROCK OF AGES" has, by general consent, been assigned the place of honour—would alone have earned him the gratitude of the churches. So remarkable, indeed, has been its vogue that the public are apt to overlook the fact that he was the author of many other hymns, some of which—for example, "Deathless Principle," and "What Though My Frail Eyelids Refuse"—surpass in euphony and ethereal beauty, though not in depth and intensity of feeling, his acknowledged masterpiece. In these hymns, written in rapturous moments that come only to the privileged few, and to them but rarely, the ardent soul dissevers itself from earth, mounts on eager and confident pinions, and flutters ecstasied before its God. But it is not as a hymn - writer only that Toplady excels. The best of his essays are studded with vitalizing thoughts expressed in noble and virile English. His sermons, which contain many magnificient passages are storehouses of sound and lucid divinity."

Necessary to be premised, in order to our better understanding the Doctrine of Predestination.

Although the great and ever Blessed God is a Being absolutely simply, and infinitely remote from all shadow of composition; he is, nevertheless, in condescension to our weak and contracted faculties, represented in Scripture as possessed of divers properties, or attributes, which, though seemingly different from his essence, are in reality, essential to him, and constitutive of his very nature.

Of these attributes, those on which we shall now particularly

descant (as being more immediately concerned in the ensuing subject), are the following ones ; 1 . His eternal wisdom and foreknowledge. 2 . The absolute freedom and liberty of his will . 3 . The perpetuity and unchangeableness both of himself and his decrees . 4 . His omnipotence. 5 . His justice. 6 . His mercy.

Without an explication of these, the doctrine of predestination cannot be so well understood: we shall, therefore, briefly consider them, by way of preliminary to the main subject.

1 . With respect to the divine wisdom and foreknowledge , I shall lay down the following positions :

Pos. 1 . God is, and always was, so perfectly wise that nothing ever did , or does , or can , elude his knowledge . He knew , from all eternity , not only what he himself intended to do , but also what he would incline and permit others to do , " Known unto God are all his work , from eternity ."

Pos . 2 . Consequently , God knows nothing now , nor will know any thing hereafter, which he did not know and foresee from everlasting: his foreknowledge being co- eternal with himself, and extending to every thing that is or shall be done . All things , which comprise past , present , and future , are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do .

Pos . 3 . This foreknowledge of God is not conjectural and uncertain (for then it would not be foreknowledge) but most sure and infallible ; so that whatever he foreknows to be future shall necessarily and undoubtedly come to pass . For his knowledge can be no more frustrated , or his wisdom be deceived , than he can cease to be God . Nay , could either of these be the case, he actually would cease to be God ; all mistakes and disappointment being absolutely incompatible with the divine nature .

Pos. 4 . The influence which the divine foreknowledge has on the certain futurition of the things foreknown does not render the intervention of second causes needless, nor destroy the nature of the things themselves .

My meaning is that the prescience of God does not lay any coercive necessity on the wills of beings naturally free. For instance, man , even in his fallen state , is endued with a natural freedom of will; yet he acts, from the first to the last moment of his life , in absolute subserviency (though perhaps , he does not know it nor design it) to the purposes and decrees of God concerning him ; notwithstanding which he is sensible of no compulsion, but acts as freely and voluntarily as if he was , subject to no control , and absolutely lord of himself . This made Luther , after he had shewn how all things necessary and inevitably come to pass , in consequence of the sovereign will and infallible foreknowledge of God , say that " We shall carefully distinguish between a necessity of infallibility and a necessity of co- action; since both good and evil men , though by their actions they fulfil the decree and appointment of God, yet are not forcibly constrained to do any thing but act willingly . "

Pos. 5 . God's foreknowledge,

taken abstractedly, is not the sole cause of beings and events; but his will and foreknowledge together. Hence we find, Acts ii. 23, that his determinate counsel and fore-knowledge act in concert; the latter resulting from, and being founded on, the former.

We pass on.

II. To consider the will of God; with regard to which we assert as follows:

Pos. 1. Deity is possessed not only of infinite knowledge, but likewise of absolute liberty of will; so that whatever he does, or permits to be done, he does and permits freely and of his own good pleasure.

Consequently, it is his free pleasure to permit sin; since, without his permission, neither men nor devils can do any thing. Now to permit is, at least, the same as not to hinder, though it be in our power to hinder if we please; and this permission or non hindrance, is certainly and act of the divine will. Hence, Austin says, "Those things which seemingly thwart the divine will are, nevertheless, agreeable to it; for if God did not permit them, they could not be done, and whatever God permits, he permits freely and willingly. He does nothing, neither suffers any thing to be done, against his own will." And Luther observes that "God permitted Adam to fall into sin, because he willed that he should so fall."

Pos. 2. Although the will of God, considered in itself, is simply one and the same; yet in condescension to the present capacities of men, the divine will is very properly distinguished into secret and revealed. Thus it was his revealed will that Pharaoh should let the Israelites go; that Abraham should sacrifice his son; and that Peter should not deny Christ: but as proved by the event, it was his secret will that Pharaoh should not let Israel go, Ex. iv. 21, that Abraham should not sacrifice Isaac, Gen. xxii. 12, and that Peter should deny his Lord, Matt. xxvi. 34.

Pos. 3. The will of God, respecting the salvation and condemnation of men, is never contrary to itself; he immutably wills the salvation of the elect, and vice versa: nor can he ever vary or deviate from his own will in any instance whatever, so as that should be done which he willeth not; or that not be brought to pass which he willeth. Isaiah xlvi. 10. My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure — Psalm xxxiii. 11. The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations. Job xxiii. 13, 14. He is in one mind, who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth; for he performeth the thing that is appointed for me; and many such things are with him. Eph. i. 11. Being predestinated, according to the purpose of him, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

Thus, for instance, Hophni and Phineas hearkened not to the voice of their father, who reproved them for their wickedness, because the Lord would slay them, 1 Sam. ii. 25. And Sihon, king of Heshbon, would not receive the peaceable message sent him by Moses, because the Lord God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he

might deliver him into the hand of Israel, Deut. ii 26, 30. Thus also, to add no more, we find that there have been, and ever will be some, whose eyes God blindeth, and whose hearts he hardeneth, i.e. whom God permits to continue blind and hardened, on purpose to prevent their seeing with their eyes, and understanding with their hearts, and to hinder their conversion to God, and spiritual healing by him, Isa. vi. 9. John xii. 39 - 40.

Pos. 4. Because God's will of precept may, in some instances, appear to thwart his will of determination, it does not follow either, 1. That he mocks his creatures, or 2. That they are excusable for neglecting to observe his will of command.

1. He does not hereby mock his creatures; for if men do not believe his word, nor observe his precepts, the fault is not in him, but in themselves; their unbelief and disobedience are not owing to any ill infused into them by God, but to the vitiosity of their depraved nature, and the perverseness of their own wills. Now, if God invited all men to come to him, and then shut the door of mercy against any who were desirous of entering; his invitation would be a mockery, and unworthy of himself; but we insist on it, that he does not invite all men to come to him a saving way; and that every individual person, who is, through his gracious influence on his heart, made willing to come to him shall, sooner or later, be surely saved by him, and that with an everlasting salvation. 2. Man is not excusable for neglecting God's will of command. Pharaoh was faulty, and therefore justly punishable, for not obeying God's revealed will, though God's secret will rendered that obedience impossible. Abraham would have committed sin, had he refused to sacrifice Isaac; and, in looking to God's secret will, would have acted counter to his revealed one. So Herod, Pontius Pilot, and the reprobate Jews, were justly condemned for putting Christ to death, inasmuch as it was a most notorious breach of God's revealed will. "Thou shalt do no murder;" yet, in slaying the Messiah, they did no more than God's hand and his counsel, i. e. his secret ordaining will, determined before should be done, Acts iv. 27, 28; and Judas is justly punished for perfidiously and wickedly betraying Christ, though his perfidy and wickedness were (but not with his design) subservient to the accomplishment of the decree and word of God.

The brief of the matter is this; secret things belong to God, and those that are revealed belong to us; therefore, when we meet with a plain precept, we should simply endeavour to obey it, without tarrying to inquire into God's hidden purpose. Venerable Bucer, after taking notice how God hardened Pharaoh's heart, and making some observations on the apostle's simile of a potter and his clay, adds that, "though God has at least the same right over his creatures, and is at liberty to make them what he will, and direct them to the end that pleaseth himself, according to his sovereign and secret determination, yet it by no means follows that they do not act freely and spontaneously, or that the

evil they commit is to be charged on God."

Pos. 5. God's hidden will is peremptory and absolute; and, therefore, cannot be hindered from taking effect.

God's will is nothing else than God himself willing: consequently it is omnipotent and unfrustratable. Hence we find it termed by Austin and the schoolmen, *voluntas omnipotentissima* because, whatever God wills cannot fail of being effected. This made Austin say, "Evil men do many things contrary to God's revealed will; but so great is his wisdom, and so inviolable his truth, that he directs all things into those channels which he foreknew." And again "No free-will of the creature can resist the will of God; for man cannot so will, or nill, as to obstruct the divine determination, or overcome the divine power." Once more "It cannot be questioned, but God does all things, and ever did, according to his own purpose: the human will cannot resist him, so as to make him do more or less than it is his pleasure to do; *quandoquidem etiam de ipsis hominum voluntatibus quod vult facit* since he does what he pleases even with the wills of men."

Ps. 6. Whatever comes to pass comes to pass by virtue of this absolute, omnipotent will of God, which is the primary and supreme cause of all things. Rev. ix. 11. Thou has created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created. Psalm exv. 3. Our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he pleased. Dan. iv. 35. He doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou? Psalm cxxxv. 6. Whatsoever the Lord pleased that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places. Mat. x. 29. Are not two sparrows sold for a farhing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father. To all which, Austin subscribes, when he says, "Nothing is done but what the Almighty wills should be done, either efficiently or permissively." As does Luther, whose words are these, "This, therefore, must stand; to wit, the unsearchable will of God, without which nothing exists or acts." And again, "God would not be much, if he was not almighty, and if any thing could be done without him." And elsewhere, he quotes these words of Erasmus: "Supposing there was an earthly prince who could do whatever he would and none were able to resist him, we might safely say of such a one, that he would certainly fulfill his own desire, in like manner, the will of God, which is the first cause of all things, should seem to lay a kind of necessity upon our wills." This Luther approves of, and subjoins, "Thanks be to God, for this orthodox passage in Erasmus's discourse! but, if this be true, what becomes of his doctrine of freewill, which he at other times so strenuously contends for?"

Pos. 7. The will of God is so the cause; for nothing can be the cause of that which is the cause of every thing.

So that the divine will is the *ne plus ultra* of all our inquiries; when

we ascend to that, we can go no farther. Hence we find every matter resolved untimately into the mere sovereign pleasure of God, as the spring and occasion of whatsoever is done in heaven and earth. Matt. xi xi. 25. Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. Luke xii. 32. It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Matt. viii. 3. I will: be thou clean. Mark iii. 13. He went up into a mountain, and called unto him whom he would. Jam. i. 18. Of his own will begat he us, with the word of truth. John i. 13. Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Rom. ix. 15, 18. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. Therefore, he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. And no wonder that the will of God should be the main spring that sets all inferior wheels in motion, and should likewise be the rule by which he goes in all his dealings with his creatures; since nothing out of God, i. e. exterior to himself can possibly induce him to will or nill one thing rather than another. Deny this, and you, at one stroke, destroy his immutability and independency; since he can never be independent who acts *pro re nata,* as emergency requires, and whose will is suspended on that of others; nor unchangeable, whose purposes vary and take all shapes, according as the persons or things vary who are the objects of those purposes. The only reason, then, that can be assigned why the Deity does this, or omits that, is because it is his own free pleasure. Luther, in answer to that question, "Whence it was that Adam was permitted to fall, and corrupt his whole posterity; when God could have prevented his falling &c., says, "God is a being whose will acknowledges no cause: neither is it for us to prescribe rules to his sovereign pleasure, or call him to account for what he does. He has neither superior nor equal: and his will is the rule of all things. He did not, therefore, will such and such things because they were in themselves right, and he was bound to will them; but they are therefore equitable and right because he wills them. The will of man, indeed, may be influenced and moved; but God's will never can. To assert the contrary is to undeify him." Bucer likewise observes, "God has no other motive for what he does than *ipsa voluntas* his own mere will; which will is so far from being unrighteous, that it is justice itself."

Pos. 8. Since, as was lately observed, the determining will of God, being omnipotent, cannot be obstructed or made void; it follows that he never did, nor does he now, will that every individual of mankind should be saved.

If this was his will, not one single soul could ever be lost; (for who hath resisted his will?) and he would surely afford all men those effectual means of salvation without which it cannot be had. Now, God could afford these means as easily to all mankind, as to some only; but experience proves that he does not;

and the reason is equally plain, namely, that he will not; for whatsoever the Lord pleaseth, that does he in heaven and on earth. It is said, indeed, by the apostle, that God would have all men saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth; i.e. as Austin, consistently with other Scriptures, explains the passage, " " God will save some out of the whole race of mankind," that is, persons of all nations, kindreds and tongues. Nay, he will save all men, i.e. as the same father observes, " every kind of men, or men of every kind," namely, the whole election of grace, be they bond or free, noble or ignoble, rich or poor, male or female. Add to this, that it evidently militates against the majesty, omnipotence, and supremacy of God, to suppose that he can either will any thing in vain, or that any thing can take effect against his will; therefore, Bucer observes very rightly, ad Rom. ix. " God doth not will the salvation of reprobates, seeing he hath not chosen them neither created them to that end." Consonant to which are those words of Luther, " This mightily offends our rational nature, that God should, of his own mere unbiasedwill, leave some men to themselves, harden them, and then condemn them; but he has given abundant demonstration, and does continually, that this is really the case; namely, that the sole cause why some are saved, and others perish, proceeds from his willing the salvation of the former, and the perdition of the latter, according to that of Paul, He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."

Pos. 9. As God doth not will that each individual of mankind should be saved, so neither did he will that Christ should properly and immediately die for each individual of mankind; whence it follows that, though the blood of Christ, from its own intrinsic dignity, was sufficient for the redemption of all men; yet, in consequence of his Father's appointment, he shed it intentionally, and, therefore, effectually and immediately, for the elect only.

This is self evident. God, as we have before proved, wills not the salvation of every man; but he gave his Son to die for them whose salvation he willed; therefore, his Son did not die for every man. All those for whom Christ died are saved; and the divine justice indispensably requires that to them the benefits of his death should be imparted; but only the elect are saved; they only partake of those benefits; consequently for them only he died and intercedes. The apostle, Rom. viii. asks, Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies, i.e. his elect, exclusively of others; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died for them, exclusively of others. The plain meaning of the passage is that those whom God justifies, and for whom Christ died (justification and redemption being of exactly the same extent), cannot be condemned. These privileges are expressly restrained to the elect; therefore, God justifies and Christ died for them alone.

In the same chapter Paul asks; " He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, (i.e. for all us elect persons) how shall he

not, with him, also freely give us all things? i.e. salvation, and all things necessary to it. Now, it is certain that these are not given to every individual; and yet, if Paul says true, they are given to all those for whom Christ was delivered to death; consequently, he was not delivered to death for every individual. To the same purpose St. Austin argues, in Johan. 45. col. 335. Hence that sayin of Ambrose, *si non credis non tibi passus est, ie* " if you are an unbeliever, Christ did not die for you." Meaning, that whoever is left under the power of final unbelief, is thereby evidenced to be one of those for whom Christ did not die; but that all for whom he suffered shall be, in this life, sooner or later, endued with faith. The Church of Smyrna, in their letter to the dioceses of Pontus, insist every where on the doctrine of special redemption. Bucer, in all parts of his works, observes, that " Christ died restrictively for the elect only; but for them universally."

Pos. 10. From what has been laid down it follows that Austin, Luther, Bucer, the scholastic divines, and other learned writers, are not to be blamed for asserting that " God may, in some sense, be said to will the being and commission of sin." For was this contrary to his determining will of permission, either he would not be omnipotent, and sin has place in the world; which it could not have, if God willed otherwise; for who hath resisted his will? Rom. ix. No one can deny that God permits sin; but he neither permits it ignorantly, nor unwillingly; therefore, knowingly and willingly. Vid. Aust. Enchir. c. 96. Luther steadfastly maintains this in his book *De Serv Arbitr* and Bucer in Rom. i. However, it should be carefully noticed, 1. That God's permission of sin does not arise from his taking delight in it; on the contrary, sin, as sin, is the abominable thing that his soul hateth; and his efficacious permission of it is for wise and good purposes. Whence that observation of Austin, " God, who is no less omnipotent than he is supremely and perfectly holy, would never have permitted evil to enter among his works, but in order that he might do good even with that evil," i.e. over-rule it for good in the end. 2. That God's free and voluntary permission of sin lays no man under any forcible or compulsive necessity of committing it; consequently, the Deity can by no means be termed the author of moral evil; to which he is not, in the proper sense of the word, accessary, but only remotely or negatively so, inasmuch as he could, if he pleased, absolutely prevent it.

We should, therefore, be careful not to give up the omnipotence of God, under a pretence of exalting his holiness; his is infinite in both, and therefore, neither should be set aside nor obscured. To say that God absolutely nills the being and commission of sin, while experience convinces us that sin is acted every-day, is to represent the Deity as a weak, impotent being, who would fain have things go otherwise that they do, but cannot accomplish his desire. On the other hand, to say that he willeth sin doth not in the least detract from the holiness and rectitude of his nature; because,

whatever God wills, as well as whatever he does, cannot be eventually evil: materially evil it may be; but, as was just said, it must ultimately be directed to some wise and just end, otherwise he could not will it; for his will is righteous and good, and the sole rule of right and wrong, as is often observed by Austin, Luther, and others.

Pos. 11. In consequence of God's immutable will and infallible foreknowledge, whatever things come to pass, come to pass necessarily; though, with respect to second causes, and us men, many things are contingent; i.e. unexpected and seemingly accidental.

That this was the doctrine of Luther, none can deny, who are in any measure acquainted with his works: particularly with his treatise *De Serva Arbitrio*, or free-will a slave; the main drift of which book is to prove that the will of man is by nature enslaved to evil only, and, because it is fond of that slavery, is therefore said to be free. Among other matters, he proves there that "whatever man does he does necessarily, though not with any sensible compulsion; and that we can only do what God from eternity willed and foreknew we should; which will of God must be effectual, and his foresight must be certain." Hence we find him saying, "It is most necessary and salutary for a Christian to be assured that God foreknows nothing uncertainly; but that he determines, and forsees, and acts, in all things, according to his own eternal, immutable, and infallible will; adding, Hereby, as with a thunderbolt, is man's freewill thrown down and destroyed." A little after, he shews in what sense he took the word necessity; "by it," says he, "I do not mean that the will suffers any forcible constraint, or coaction; but the infallible accomplishment of those things which the immutable God decreed and foreknew concerning us." He goes on: "Neither the divine nor human will does any thing by constraint; but, whatever man does, be it good or bad, he does with as much appetite and willingness as if his will was really free. But, after all, the will of God is certain and unalterable, and is the governess of ours." Exactly consonant to all which are those words of Luther's friend and fellow-labourer, Melancthon: "All things turn out according to divine predestination; not only the works we do outwardly, but even the thoughts we think inwardly:" adding in the same place, "There is no such a thing as chance, or fortune; nor is there a readier way to gain the fear of God, and to put our whole trust in Him, than to be thoroughly versed in the doctrine of predestination." I could cite, to the same purpose, Austin, Aquinas, and many other learned men; but for brevity's sake, forbear. That this is the doctrine of Scripture very adapt in those sacred books cannot but acknowledge. — See, particularly, Psalm cxxxv. 6. Matt. x. 29. Prov. xvi. 1. Matt. xxve. 54. Luke xxii. 22. Acts iv. 28. Eph. i 11. Isa. xlvi. 10.

Pos. 12. As God knows nothing now which he did not know from all eternity; so he wills nothing now which he did not will from everlasting.

This position needs no explanation nor enforcement; it being self-evident that, if any thing can accede to God, *de novo i. e.* if he can at any time be wiser than he always was, or will that at one time which he did not will from all eternity, these dreadful consequences must ensue: 1. That the knowledge of God is not perfect, since what is absolutely perfect, *non recipit magis et minus,* cannot admit either of addition or detraction. If I add to any thing, it is from a supposal that, that thing was not complete before; if I detract from it, it is supposed that, that detraction renders it less perfect than it was. But the knowledge of God, being infinitely perfect, cannot consistently with that perfection, be either increased or lessened. 2. That the will of God is fluctuating, mutable, and unsteady; consequently that God himself is so, his will coinciding with his essence, contrary to the avowed assurances of Scripture and the strongest dictates of reason, as we shall presently shew, when we come to treat of the divine immutability.

Pos. 13. The absolute will of God is the original spring and efficient cause of his people's salvation.

I say the original and efficient; for, *sensu complexo,* there are other intermediate causes of their salvation, which, however, all result from, and are subservient to, this primary one, the will of God. Such are his everlasting choice of them to eternal life: the eternal covenant of grace entered into by the Trinity on behalf of the elect; the incarnation, obedience, death, and intercession of Christ for them; all which are so many links in the great chain of causes; and not one of these can be taken away without marring and subverting the whole gospel plan of salvation by Jesus Christ. We see, then, that the free, unbiased, sovereign will of God is the root of this tree of life, which bears so many glorious branches, and yields such salutary fruits: he therefore loved the elect, and ordained them to life, because he would; according to that of the apostle, having predestinated us according to the good pleasure of his will; Eph. i. 5. Then, next after God's covenant for his people and promises to them, comes in the infinite merit of Christ's righteousness and atonement; for we were chosen to salvation in him as members of his mystic body, and through him, as our surety, and substitute, by whose vicarious obedience to the moral law, and submission to its curse and penalty, all we, whose names are in the book of life, should never incur the divine hatred or be punished for our sins, but continue to eternity as we were from eternity, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. But still the divine grace and favour (and God extends these to whom he will) must be considered as what gave birth to the glorious scheme of redemption, according to what our Lord himself teaches us, John iii. 16. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, &c.; and that of the apostle, 1 John iv. 9. In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that the sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him.

Pos. 14. Since this absolute will

of God is both immutable and omnipotent, we infer that the salvation of every one of the elect is most infallibly certain, and can by no means be prevented. This necessarily follows from what we have already asserted and proved concerning the divine will, which, as it cannot be disappointed or made void, must undoubtedly secure the salvation of all whom God wills should be saved.

From the whole of what has been delivered under this second head, I would observe that the genuine tendency of these truths is, not to make men indolent and careless, or lull them to sleep on the lap of presumption and carnal security, but, 1. To fortify the people of Christ against the attacks of unbelief and the insults of their spiritual enemies. And what is so fit to guard them against these as the comfortable persuasion of God 's unalterable will to save them, and of their unalienable interest in the sure mercies of David? 2. To withdraw them entirely from all dependence, whether on themselves or any creature whatever; to make them renounce their own righteousness no less than their sins, in point of reliance, and to acquiesce sweetly and safely in the certain perpetuity of his rich favour. 3. To excite them, from a trust of his goodwill towards them, to love that God who hath given such great and numberless proofs of his love to men; and in all their thoughts, words, to aim, as much as possible, at his honour and glory. We were to consider.

III. The unchangeableness which is essential to himself and his decrees.

Pos. 1. God is essentially unchangeable in himself. Were he otherwise, he would be confessedly imperfect; since whoever changes must change either for the better or for the worse: whatever alteration any being undergoes, that being must, *ipso facto*, either become more excellent than it was, or lose some of the excellency, which it had. But neither of these can be the case with the Deity: he cannot change for the better, for that would necessarily imply that he was not perfectly good before; he cannot change for the worst, for then he could not be perfectly good after that change. *Ergo*, God is unchangeable. And this is the uniform voice of Scripture. Mal. iii. 6. I am the Lord: I change not. James i. 17. With him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Psalm cii. 27. Thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.

Pos. 2. God is likewise absolutely unchangeable with regard to his purposes and promises. Numb. xxiii. 19. God is not a man that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it; or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? 1 Sam. xv. 29. The strength of Israel will not lie nor repent; for he is not a man that he should repent. Job xxiii. 13. He is in one mind, and who can turn him? Exek. xxiv. 14. I, the Lord, have spoken it; it shall come to pass, and I will do it: I will not go back, neither will I spare, neither will I repent. Rom. xi. 29. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance. 2 Tim. ii. 13. He abideth faithful, and cannot deny

himself.

By the purpose of decree of God we mean his determinate counsel, whereby he did from all eternity pre-ordain whatever he should do, or what permit to be done, in time. In particular, it signifies his everlasting appointment of some men to life and of others to death; which appointment flows entirely from his own free and sovereign will. Rom. ix. The children not yet being born, neither having done any good or evil (that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth), it was said, the elder shall serve the younger; as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

The apostle then, in the very next words, anticipates an objection which he foresaw men of corrupt minds would make to this: What shall we say, then? is there unrighteousness with God? which he answer with, God forbid! and resolves the whole of God's precedure with his creatures into his own sovereign and independent will: for he said to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

We assert that the decrees of God are not only immutable as to himself, it being inconsistent with his nature to alter in his purposes or change his mind, but that they are immutable likewise with respect to the objects of those decrees: so that whatsoever God hath determined concerning every individual person or thing shall surely and infallibly be accomplished in and upon them. Hence we find that he actually sheweth mercy on whom he decreed to shew mercy, and hardeneth whom he resolved to harden: Rom. ix. 18. For his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure: Isa. xlvi. 10. Consequently his eternal predestination of men and things must be immutable as himself, and, so far from being reversible, can never admit of the least variation.

Pos. 3. "Although," to use the words of Gregory, "God never swerves from his decree, yet he often varies in his declarations:" That is always sure and immoveable able; these are sometimes seeming ingly discordant. So when he gave sentence against the Ninevites by Jonah, saying, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown," the meaning of the words is, not that God absolutely intended, at the end of that space, to destroy the city, but that, should God deal with those people according to their deserts, they would be totally extirpated from the earth; and should be so extirpated unless they repented speedily

Likewise when he told king Hezekiah, by the prophet Isaiah, "Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live;" the meaning was that, with respect to second causes, and considering the king's bad state of health and emiciated constitution, he could not, humanly speaking, live much longer. But still the event shewed that God had immutably determined that he should live fifteen years more; and, in order to that, had put it into his heart to pray for the blessing decreed; just as in the case of Nineveh lately mentioned, God had resolved not to overthrow that city then; and,

in order to the accomplishment of his own purpose in a way worthy of himself, made the ministry of Jonah the means of leading that people to repentance. All which, as it shews that God's absolute predestination does not set aside the use of means, so does it likewise prove that, however various the declaration of God may appear (to wit, when they proceed on a regard had to natural causes), his counsels and designs stand firm and immoveable, and can neither admit of alteration in themselves, nor hindrance in their execution. See this farther explained by Bucer, in Rom. ix., where you will find the certainty of the divine appointments solidly asserted and unanswerably vindicated.

LIGHT.

New Vernon, N.Y., May 1, 1842.

" If the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness! "

THE MASTER.

We are informed by a prophet of the Lord, that men have put darkness for light, and light for darkness, and do we not see this fact abundantly exemplified in the present age? The terms, *light* and *darkness*, are metaphorically used sometimes in the scriptures, and decidedly so in the passages above referred to. Intellectual acquirements in the sciences of this world are esteemed, by the general consent of mankind, as light, and justly so, when confined to their appropriate spheres; but when attempted to be applied to the things of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, they cease to be light, and are denounced by divine authority as darkness of the most sable shade. However profitable and desirable human erudition may be in qualifying men for eminence and usefulness in temporal things, it never can enable the mind to understand the things of the Spirit of God. God has made foolish the wisdom of this world, and it has pleased God in his wisdom, that man by wisdom shall not know him: he has hidden the things of his Spirit from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes, because it has seemed good in his sight so to do. And ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men, &c., are called; that God has chosen the weak and foolish things of this world to confound the wise. The admonition of our Lord, Take heed that the light that is in you be not darkness, implies that there are characters of that description among men, and that we are liable to be mistaken in regard to what we denominate light. While this is the deluded condition of every natural man that flatters himself that he knows anything about spiritual things, and peculiarly so in the case of all who confide in theories of scholastic divinity, religious education and religious training, is it not also measurably the case, in some instances, with the children of God? Peter speaks of a neglect, on the part of christians, which will produce blindness, so that they cannot see afar off, causing them to forget they were purged from their old sins.

It is true, God has translated his

children from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son, and he has informed us that light is sown for the righteous; yet he has also said, " Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light; let him trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon his God." We frequently hear the saints complain of what they call darkness, when we are led to conclude that light is what they mean. As when the prophet cried, " Wo is me, for I am undone, " &c., it was the effect of extraordinary light, and not of darkness, for he had beheld a vision of the Lord. And we may rest assured that christians never see and feel and mourn over the corruptions of their hearts, unless they are in the light. It requires the true light which emanates only from the Sun of Righteousness to convince us of sin, and to cause us to feel the infinity of distance intervening between us and that perfect standard of holiness that we desire, and that we shall be brought ultimately into the full, perfect and eternal enjoyment of when we awake with his likeness.

However distressing it may be to feel and realize the depravity of our natures, it is a certain evidence that we are in the light, and that that light that is in us is not darkness.

But when men, who know not God experimentally, are left to rely upon the light of human reason, human wisdom, knowledge or science, and from the possession of these, connected with works corresponding with their conceptions of God and of the things of the Spirit of God, however pious they may appear unto men, they are but whited sepulchres, and the light that is in them, being only that of human acquirements, is darkness, and that darkness is great indeed.

Is it not, therefore, of vital importance, that we who hope for heaven and happiness beyond the grave, should examine carefully, prayerfully, and in the fear of the Lord, into the nature of that light on which we rely to make plain the pathway wherein we should walk, and to illuminate us through the dreary chambers of the valley of death?

At that critical hour when all the glittering lights of human science and intellectual vivacity shall be put out by the cold damps of death and the chill vapors of the grave, then the scholar and the idiot, the monarch and the slave shall be disrobed of every shade of distinction, and lay down their mortal tenements in one common bed, to slumber together until the trump of God shall sound, and the Archangel's voice shall call them forth in the resurrection of the last day.

Elder B.L. Beebe

MOVED OR MOVING?

To assure you of getting your " Signs " and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union will meet with Weatherford Pri - mitive Baptist Church , The Lord willing, the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in December, 1990. Preach- ing will begin at 10:30 a.m.

All Elders of our faith and order, along with all lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Weatherford Church is located approximately 6 miles from the town of Gretna at the Intersection of state road 760 and 763.

Elder O.K. Tench, Pastor
Phyllis Goad, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held, the Lord willing, on the fifth Sunday in December. The meeting will be held at Dan River Church with Moon 's Creek being the host church.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Sister Sartin, Clerk

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
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IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 1990

Mr. & Mrs. J.M. Marshall, VA ... 5.00
Mrs. Mae B. Hudson, VA 2.00
Mrs. Minnie L. Barrett, AL ... 5.00
Mrs. Eva Hollar, NC 2.00
Mrs. Janie Fanning, AL 2.00
Eld. J.T. Prescott, NC 7.00
Mrs. S.G. Harralson, KY 5.00
Mrs. Frank Scarce, VA 2.00
Mrs. Donald Arne, SD 50.00
Eld. G.W. Jone, LA 2.00
Mrs. Velma Estelle, AR 2.00
Allen Carroll, NC 2.00
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Mrs. Zanie S. Shively, VA ... 2.00
A.R. Potter, VA 2.00
Mrs. L.A. Thompson, NC 10.00
Mrs. Nanie Moran, VA 2.00
Raymond Haygood, TX 2.00
L.W. Nichols, VA 5.00
Alonza Davis, VA 2.00

OBITUARIES

FLORA BOYD

Sister Flora Boyd was born on January 28, 1903, in Rising Star, Texas, the daughter of Elder C.B. Teague, former pastor of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas.

Sister Boyd united with Saints Rest Church along with her husband, J. Taylor Boyd, on November 29, 1964. Brother Boyd was later or -

dained as a deacon . Sister Boyd was a loving and faithful companion to him all their days together, and an active and faithful member of our little church until her failing health limited her attendance and activi - ties . Even then she was able to occasionally attend church through the help of her loving and devoted daughter , Jeannine Walters , who watched over her and cared for her during her final years .

Sister Boyd was a strong be - liever in the historic principles of the doctrine of Jesus Christ, rejoicing in His free grace, His blood atonement as the only ground for salvation of needy sinners , the absolute pre - destination of all things , and a firm hope in the resurrection, and life in Christ hereafter .

She went home to be with her Lord on December 18 , 1989 , at the age of eighty- six years, ten months, and twenty days . She was survived by her sister , Pruda Brown ; her daughter , Jeannine Walters ; and three grandchildren .

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder C .C . Morris . Her body was laid to rest in Laurel Land Memorial Park , Dallas , Texas , to await the resurrection morning .

Sister Boyd is yet loved and missed by those of us who knew her.

Written by direction of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church while in regular quarterly conference on March 4 , 1990 , with the direction that a copy be sent to sister Boyd's family, a copy be sent to The Signs of the Times, and a copy be retained in the church records .

Elder C .C . Morris , Mod .
Deacon Dean G . Connell , Clerk

BROTHER WILBUR G . BROWN

Brother Wilbur G . Brown, be - loved member and deacon of Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church , and husband of Lillie Mae Merritt Brown of Florence , S .C ., departed this life February 11 , 1990 He was born October 26 , 1912 .

Brother Brown was a firm be - liever in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace . He manifested a great love for the Church and believers of this doctrine. Brother Brown and his wife traveled hundreds of miles every weekend they were physically able to meet with the brethren throughout the Contentnea Association and its correspondents . He manifested great joy in being among the breth - ren and in singing the precious old hymns . One of the hymns he fre - quently requested was #284 in Lloyd's Hymnal — " Jerusalem , my happy home, O how I long for thee; . . . etc . "

We miss our dear departed bro - ther, but we rejoice in the hope that he is now resting in peace with Jesus " Where congregations ne'er break up and Sabbaths never end ."

In addition to his wife , Brother Brown is survived by two daughters: Mrs . Jerri B . Anthony , and Mrs . Judy E . Curtis , both of Florence , S .C . , two brothers , Edward and Donald Brown both of Wilmington , N .C ., a sister Mrs . Rosalee B . Etheridge of Durham , N .C . and several grand children .

Many years ago Brother Brown united with Mount Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church in Bishopville, S.C. He was baptized by Elder Jerry Carter . Later his membership was with the Wilmington Primitive Baptist

Church , then at Stump Sound Church in Onslow County , N.C.

Written at the request of Stump Sound Church by an unworthy Sister in hope , the least , if one at all .

Evelyn Pratt

ODELL DALTON DOVE

In loving memory of Sister Odell Dalton Dove , who was born on July 17, 1913 , to the late David and Sarah Dalton in Pittsylvania County. She was one of five children .

Sister Odell was married to the late Reace Marshall Dove in October 1934 . To this union one daughter was born , Mrs. Louise Hutcherson.

For the last year , Sister Odell was confined to her home and bed. She was lovingly cared for by her daughter , son - in - law , and her sitter .

She , along with her husband , joined Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on December 16 , 1965 , and was baptized on May 8 , 1966 . " Do unto others as you would have them do unto you ", was a verse most precious to her .

Funeral services were conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on Monday , July 31 , 1989 , at 2 p.m. by Elders O.K. Tench , Raymond Goad , and Marvin Brumfield . She was laid to rest in the church cemetary .

Sister Odell will be greatly missed by Weatherford Church and by her family and friends . May all that mourn her loss be reconciled to God's Holy Will .

Written by her daughter ,
Louise Hutcherson ,
who misses her so much .

SISTER ALICE GRAHAM

Sister Alice Graham was born on October 11 , 1902 . She was baptized at Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church of Dallas , Texas , on September 2 , 1950 . On that same date her husband , Thomas H. Graham , who preceded her in death on July 14 , 1973 , united with Saints Rest Church and was also baptized.

Sister Graham was a loving and faithful member and attended meetings as long as she was able . She loved the doctrine of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ , loved to hear the gospel preached, and rejoiced in hope of salvation in Christ alone .

For years sister Graham was the one who ordered flowers in the name of our little church when one of its members or friends passed away. It was indeed doubly sad , then , when the time came that someone else had to order flowers for sister Graham's memorial service .

Sister Graham was called home to rest in Christ on February 7 , 1990. She was survived by her daughter , Doris Rivard , two sons , Aubrey Graham and William Graham , her sister Bertha Carter , and a great number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren .

Sister Graham's funeral was conducted by Elder Loyd Wall , of Bivins , Texas , who was assisted by Elder W.W. Taylor of Tinsman , Arkansas . Her body was laid to rest

beside that of her husband, Brother T.H. Graham, awaiting the glorious resurrection morning in the cemetery at Mount Zion Primitive Baptist Church, Cash, Texas.

Written by direction of Saints Rest Primitive Church while in regular quarterly conference on March 4, 1990, with the direction that a copy be sent to sister Graham's family, a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times, and a copy be retained in the church records.

Elder C.C. Morris, Mod.
Deacon Dean G. Connell, Clerk

MAMIE A. SULLIVAN

It has pleased our dear God to call from our midst, Sister Mamie A. Sullivan. She passed away November 15, 1989 at Druid City Hospital, Tuscaloosa, Alabama at the age of 95 years, 7 months and 9 days.

Sister Sullivan was the daughter of the late Elder D.T. and Gerushia ((Brazeal) Moore. She was married to Arlie T. Sullivan on June 13, 1915, who preceded her in death in 1973. To this union was born four sons, M.L., Fred, Bruce and Lesley Sullivan, Bruce preceded her in death. Three daughters, Jimmy Nell Oswalt, Sue Quarles and Agnes Sullivan. Eleven grandchildren and sixteen great-grandchildren.

Sister Sullivan united with Pleasant Ridge Primitive Baptist Church of the Hopewell Association in Alabama, on September 24, 1950. She was their oldest member. She loved church and attended regularly until ill health prevented her from going, about a year before she passed away. Her children were so good to carry her to church. She firmly believed in an all wise God that made no mistakes and salvation by Grace and Grace alone.

Her funeral was held by Elder H H.C. Moon, whom she esteemed very highly. He spoke so beautifully about the virtuous woman, which to us she truly was. She was laid to rest at Pleasant Ridge Primitive Baptist Church cemetery to await the coming of our dear Lord.

We miss her so deeply, but feel to know our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by one who loved her so dearly... Her daughter and little sister in hope.

Agnes Sullivan

MERTIE TYLER

We at Oak Grove Church are deeply saddened by the passing of our dearly beloved sister Mertie Tyler, who was loved by all who knew her, and whom God took from us, to live with Him in His house forever.

Sister Mertie was born March 7, 1908, at Chestnut La., the daughter of D.M. and Delma Finley Godwin and was taken from our midst February 16, 1990, making her stay here on earth 81 years, 11 months and 9 days.

Sister Mertie was married to Sylvester, Tyler in October 1926, and to this union God gave two sons,

Tracy Cole Tyler , and Eldon Ray Tyler (now deceased) and one daughter Nelda Faye Tyler , but besides her own children , she reared three younger sisters , and three grandchildren. I believe that I speak for us all when I say, She was a mother indeed to us all.

Sister Mertie united with Oak Grove Church , February 9 , 1957 . She loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. She loved to sing the Old Baptist hymns. She loved to hear the comforting sermons brought forth through the mouths of our ministers who are well educated in the school of grace. She was faithful to the end, always standing firm in the doctrine in which she believed.

Sister Mertie was survived by one son , Tracy Cole Tyler , Chestnut, La. One daugther, Nelda Faye Tyler Tolar , Natchitoches , La . 11 grandchildren , 16 great grandchildren , One brother — Elder David Godwin , Goldona , La . , three sisters — Edith Norman and Kate Mathews, both from Shreveport, La. and Hildridge Burch of Springhill, La.

Funeral service was conducted by our Elders , David Godwin and Hilton Mercer , at the Pilgrim Home Baptist Church , under the direction of Edmonds Funeral Home. She was laid to rest beside her husband in Oak Grove Cemetery, under a mound of lovely flowers.

Although we will miss her, we at Oak Grove Church ask God that we might bow our heads in humble submission to His will , feeling that our loss is her gain and God's glory, thanking Him that we were given this time to share with her , the joy of fellowship in the church and in the home , comforting one another.

We love her so much ,
Written by her
sister in flesh
and spirit I hope .

Kate Mathews

GOD'S UNITY

Unity is an attribute of God as clearly taught in the Scriptures in the sentence, " Let us make man in our image after our likeness." This clearly shows that there are three persons in the Trinity , for there are three that bear record in Heaven , the Father , the Word , and the Holy Ghost . These three are one . The same attributes are equally ascribed to each . They are possessed of one eternal and unchangeable will , which is the primary cause of all things . They are represented as being distinct in office work , but one in covenant relation. It seems that the object in creating the world , was to multiply the Heavenly Family . The Father gave the Son a bride . The Son accepted her , died to redeem her , put away her sins , made her pure and holy. The Father elects, the Son redeems. The Holy Spirit calls each person performing the stipulations of the covenant as agreed upon in the determinate counsel . " By the blood of thy covenant , I have sent forth the prisoners out of the pit wherein there was no water ." The three are united in all things, and are One .

Signs of the Times

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Jesus, before thy face I fall,
My Lord, my life, my hope, my all;
For I have no where else to flee;
No sanctuary, Lord, but thee.

In thee I every glory view,
Of safety, strength, and beauty, too:
Beloved Saviour, ever be
A sanctuary unto me.

Whatever woes and fears betide,
In thy dear bosom let me hide;
And, while I pour my soul to thee,
Do thou my sanctuary be.

Through life and all its changing scenes,
And all the grief that intervenes,
' Tis this supports my fainting heart,
That thou my sanctuary art.

Apace the solemn hour draws nigh,
When I must bow my head and die;
But O, what joy this witness gives,—
Jesus, my sanctuary, lives.

He from the grave my dust will raise;
I in the heavens will sing his praise;
And when in glory I appear,
He 'll be my sanctuary there.

Medley.

Above was one of Elder Leonard Key's favorite hymns.

(See obituary this issue.)

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EDITORIAL

" In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

Clifford Wilbanks

What greater power, knowledge and wisdom can any being have? Certainly there was no man to advise or question Him. God spake and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast. The finite mind of carnal man can in no wise comprehend such a thing, and only by faith can one believe it. There are people in this world today who have read or heard the first verse of the Scriptures many times and yet are searching diligently as to how the earth and the heavens originated and also the origin of man. Some believe (but I am sure they have no proof) that the heavens and the earth were formed when some tremendous planet exploded, and that man evolved from some creature in the sea. I have often wondered if any of these people ever ask, Who or what created that huge planet and the creature that supposedly evolved into man? I am sure they have never considered the bible a true source of information concerning this, but it is not my intention to discuss this any further, God being my necessary guide, but to talk of God's power, wisdom and knowledge to His elect children. The non-elect can never understand in truth what the Scriptures say: neither can anyone else until they are opened to him of God. Jesus taught his apostles and disciples many things while he was on earth in the flesh, yet they understood not until he opened their understanding (See Luke 24 : 45). To the others Jesus always spake in parables. One of the apostles asked, Why?, and Jesus said, " Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but unto them it is not given." In another place Jesus said, " I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven, and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and the prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." All spiritual things are hid from the wise and prudent because it pleased the Father. " For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the

scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (I Cor. i:19-21). And the 18th verse says, " For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness ; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. " Brethren, isn't it wonderful to feel the power that gives you hope that you are one of the ' us ' that are saved? I do not know that I am included in that blessed number, but at times I seem to have a hope that is ever so sweet. Who are the ones saved? Are they not the ones chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love?

God said, " Let there be light, and there was light." He divided the light from the darkness and called the light day, and the darkness night. God spake to the earth that it should bring forth grass, and herbs, and fruit trees, etc. and the earth did as commanded. God spake to the waters that they should bring forth abundantly every moving creature that hath life, and fowl that fly above the earth. God commanded the earth to bring forth all the living creatures, and it was so. In other words all living things upon the face of the earth and in the seas were brought into existence by the word of God 's power. Such power and wisdom the finite mind of natural man can in no wise comprehend. Neither can he understand how God made man from the dust of the earth, breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul. But God is an infinite being and he has declared the end from the beginnning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done. He is the Alpha and Omega.

When God made man he made him exactly as it pleased him and it pleased him to create man in his own image; male and female created he them, and he called their name Adam. Although the man God formed from the dust was only one outwardly, yet Eve was in him and so was all his posterity. Therefore he is the federal head of all mankind. In other words he is the father of all people born of the flesh, save Jesus Christ, whose Father is God.

The first man Adam was a figure of him that was to come, Jesus Christ. In type Eve represents the bride of Christ, which is the church. She was in Adam just as the church was in Jesus Christ, who was chosen in him before the foundation of the world. When God took a rib from Adam and made it a woman and gave her to Adam, he said, " This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man." Paul tells us that we are the members of the body of Christ. " For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Therefore we see that we were in him as Eve was in Adam.

God placed them in the garden of Eden and gave them a commandment that they should eat of every fruit of the garden except the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil. God knew that his law would be broken,

for he said, " In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." He did not say, " If thou eatest," but, " In the day thou eatest thereof." Sin would enter the world by this man, but the cure was already prepared, for Jesus stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. The serpent was in the garden of Eden. This serpent is the Devil or Satan, and he was there by the will of God. Nothing is done outside the will of God. When he entered the garden of we are not told, but he was there for a very specific purpose - to deceive. He was a liar from the beginning and the father of it. " He was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made." Job said, " His hand hath formed the crooked serpent. " These two verses should silence any who contend that God did not make the Devil, but I don't believe they will. They will be twisted or ignored as are many of the other Scriptures. God saw that every thing he made was good: it is good for the purpose which he made it. We know that Satan was there and that he deceived Eve: and he is still going to and fro in the earth and walking up and down in it, seeking to devour who he may. And I will say that he is seeking to devour only the children of God, for all the rest are his. But God has put a hedge about his children as he did about Job, and Satan can go only as far as God permits, for Satan has only the power God gives him: there is no power but of God. All the powers that be are ordained of him.

Being deceived, Eve ate of the forbidden fruit and then gave to her husband Adam, and he did eat. Being a figure of him that was to come, Adam was not deceived; but because of his love for his bride he ate the fruit. He had no power to bring her back, therefore he went to her. To be with her he must pay the debt that was incurred. Death is the only penalty or debt for sin. The debt of the wife is always charged to the husband, therefore sin has never been charged to the church, the bride of Christ, for all her sins were charged to him and his righteousness was imputed unto her, and because of his great love wherewith he loved her he came into the world and laid down his life to pay the debt that God's holy justice demanded. He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Had not Christ been raised from the dead we would still be dead in trespasses and sin and have no hope of heaven and eternal life. Christ is our life, and in him we live and move and have our being. And as surely as he lives we shall also live.

When Adam disobeyed the commandment of God he fell from his upright, pure, innocent state, to a state of sin, condemnation and death, and all of his posterity fell in him, for they were embodied in him. " Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." In the flesh we are only Adam multiplied, and as Paul said, " For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." Though death has passed upon all men Jesus Christ has already paid the penalty for his chosen people: the just died for the

unjust. How can justice be satisfied with this? We know that God is holy and perfect in all his attributes. His love, mercy, laws and justice are all equal: one cannot outweigh or override the other. We also know that he hath loved us with an everlasting love and that he has shown great mercy upon all. His love and mercy are the cause or reason for saving his elect people, yet it is not love and mercy that saved them, for his righteous justice must be satisfied, and without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. Therefore Jesus shed his holy blood on the cross of Calvary. As our High Priest he offered himself a sacrifice unto God and by this one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. The blood of sacrificed animals could never accomplish this, but the sinless blood of Jesus Christ did, and we are freely justified by the grace of God through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, for God set him forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood. " For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." To whom is this free grace given? Not to the entire world, for if it were thus so then the entire world would be saved. It is to the elect of God, those he chose in Christ before the foundation of the world, those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life, and as mentioned before they are flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones. We read in Ps. 139, " I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." What a marvelous declaration this is, for he is talking about the body of Christ. If we be the body of Christ then did God see us before we were ever born into this world. The body of Christ was not imperfect, but unperfect - being not yet fully manifested or developed. It will only be completed when the last member is brought into the world.

Christ is the head of the body and therefore he must control all of it. Without the head the body is nothing; it has no life. Therefore when Christ died on the cross we died in him. (I say ' we ' only in hope for myself). Now justice can demand no more. Jesus suffered the pain and agony for us, but yet in a mystical sense we also died. We were buried with him and we arose with him; now therefore we are free from sin and condemnation. The debt has been paid, we have been ransomed. Had not Christ arisen we would still be dead in trespasses and sins, but he was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. This was the first resurrection, and if we had a part in it we are greatly blessed, for, " Blessed and holy is he that hath a part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years." Those who had no part in the first

resurrection and whose names were not found written in the Lamb's book of life will be cast into the lake of fire with death and hell . This is the second death .

How wonderful , how marvel - ous , how beautiful ! how greatly we are blessed when we are given eyes to see , ears to hear and a heart to understand and feel at least a por - tion of God 's power , wisdom and knowledge . I feel that I have been greatly blessed to rejoice in hope as I have written these things unto you , and it is my prayer that God will also bless you likewise or more so . And if it be the will of God I will write more on this subject later . Right now my mind seems to be full of Scriptures concerning this , and I know that the subject can never be exhausted if he gives us grace to write the rest of our lives .

May God bless the truth and pardon all my errors .

Submitted in love and hope ,
Clifford Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

My beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ ,

I have lived my life among Old Baptists , my father , mother , grandparents . I can say I have respected them all the years . Loved them for over forty five years . Since 1934 have no doubt about where the Church was but could not join them until 1987 . I am sure that God rules everything everywhere with justice and a sure hand even to the tremb - ling of a leaf of the trees . I believe as sure as the sunshine and day and night that God rules with love and justice and needs no help to rule with a sure hand in everything . Let us have love and fellowship for one and all that believe our beloved Savior died for us . I believe in a sure Salvation by the Grace of God shed on his Son before the world was . I also believe He knew everything from the beginning .

I believe I will live to take every step alloted me before time and was born to Elder J . P . and Clara Helms on Jan . 22 , 1912 on time not one minute early or late . So my time to leave the earth is set as sure as my coming .

With love for Christ 's sake ,

James R . Helms
Rt .1 , Box 462
Catawba , Va . 24070

1 THESSALONIANS 1 : 1 - 4 .

Paul , and Silvanus , and Timo - theus , unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ : Grace be unto you , and peace , from God our Father , and the Lord Jesus Christ .

We give thanks to God always for you all , making mention of you in our prayers ;

Remembering without ceasing your work of faith , and labour of love , and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ , in the sight of God and our Father ;

Knowing , brethren beloved , your election of God .

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

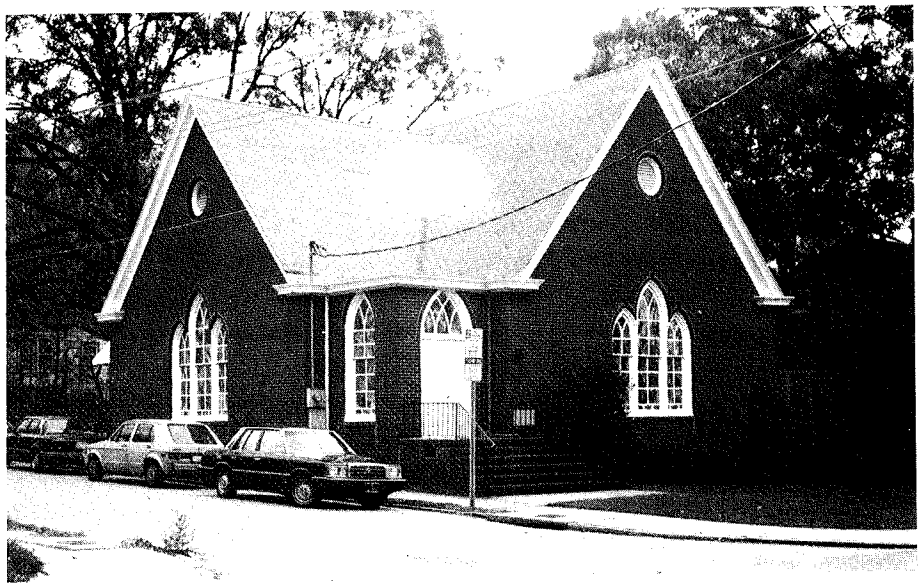

GREENSBORO PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

MINUTES OF CONSTITUTION OF GREENSBORO CHURCH

Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church was constituted November 2, 1907. The presbytery was composed as follows: Elders P.G. Lester, P.W. Willard, G. Denny and Brother Henry Tucker, deacon. Elders P.W. Willard was chosen moderator and P.G. Lester, Clerk.

The following brethren were received by letter. Elder C.F. Denny, Elder O.J. Denny, Dr. Z.J. Brooks, J.M. Denniss, J.H. Combs, Levi Harris, G.W. Snyder, T.A. Snyder, J.H. Taylor and S.B. Denny and sisters Mollie Denny, Ellen Denny, Chessie H. Brooks, May Hampton, Nancy Denniss, Fannie Harris, Berlie A. Harris, Bessie J. Harris, Mollie Tillman, Lucy Osborne and Jennie Osborne.

On motion the Constitution, Covenant, Articles of Faith and Rules of Decorum were adopted and ordered spread on the church record.

On motion made by Elder Lester the Presbytery declared the members who presented letters legally constituted as a church to transact business for themselves as an independent body.

Elders C.F. and O.J. Denny were unanimously elected pastors to serve the church as they see fit. Brother Levi Harris was elected clerk. It was agreed to wait until some future time to choose deacons.

It was decided to have preaching every Sunday and the second Sunday in each month was the time appointed for conference meeting.

P.W. Willard, Moderator
P.G. Lester, Clerk

Elder O.J. Denny served as

pastor from 1907 to 1931. Elder C. F. Denny served as assistant pastor from 1907 to 1919. Elder J. A. Fagg served as assistant pastor from 1919 to 1926. Elder W. Curry King served as assistant pastor from 1926 to 1931. Elder W. Curry King served as pastor from 1931 to 1970. Elder Kenneth R. Key served as associate pastor from May, 1963 and was chosen as pastor at the death of Elder King on Oct. 17, 1970. And his brother Elder Leonard Key served with him as associate pastor until his death on May 5, 1990.

The Greensboro Church meets for service on first Sunday morning of each month at 10:30 a.m. Conference meeting is held on the third Sunday night in April of each year. Communion is held on the first Sunday in June.

Membership has remained stable throughout the years and the Lord has continued to bless this church.

All lovers of the truth are invited to attend our meetings.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Deacon Wayne Edwards, Clerk

COLOSSIANS 1 : 16.

For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

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1 THESSALONIANS 5 : 18

In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

" The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." — Romans xi. 7.

Those that are blinded by the god of this world, have no knowledge of what power and feeling and savour and dew are; they see not these things, they are blind to their reality, they are dead to their importance; but the living family of God, who are brought by his blessed Spirit into some apprehension of eternal realities, have eyes to see what power is, and hearts too, to desire to feel its manifestation. Nay, it is the very seeing what reality and power are which makes them desire to experience the savour of eternal things in their conscience; and because they do not feel them as they wish, it makes them often fear that they are blind altogether (Isaiah lix. 10). But the very inquiry, the very anxious cry, the very groaning desire, the very fervent supplication to the Lord that he would not let them live and die without a testimony from himself, that he would lift up the light of his countenance and grant them the life of his favour — these very cries are a proof of life. Were you blind, you would not see these things; were you deaf, you would not spiritually hear these things; were you dead, you would not feel these things. And, therefore, that which you seem to take as an evidence against you, is, in reality, an evidence for you; and the very sensations of trepidation, anxious inquiry, godly fear, and the crying out before

the Lord that he would search and try you and really make your heart right in his sight — these very things are the symptoms of life, the evidences of a work of grace upon the heart, and are the spiritual breathings of the quickened soul, the Lord himself having communicated these feelings unto it.

J.C. Philpot

OBSERVATIONS ON THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES
BY AUGUSTUS M. TOPLADY
1740 - 1778

We now come, to consider the omnipotence of God.

Pos. 1. God is, in the most unlimited and absolute sense of the word, Almighty. Jer. xxxii. 17. Behold, thou has made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee. Mat. xix. 26. With God all things are possible. The schoolmen very properly distinguish the omnipotence of God into absolute and actual: by the former, God might do many things which he does not; by the latter, he actually does whatever he will. For instance, God might, by virtue of his absolute power, have made more worlds than he has. He might have eternally saved every individual of mankind, without reprobating any: on the other hand he might, and that with the strictest justice, have condemned all men, and saved none. He could, had it been his pleasure, have prevented the fall of angels and men, and thereby have hindered sin from having footing in and among his creatures. By virtue of this actual power he made the universe; executes the whole counsel of his will both in heaven and earth; governs and influences both men and things, according to his own pleasure; fixes the bounds which they shall not pass; and, in a word, worketh all in all: Isa. xlv. 7. Amos iii. 6. John v. 17. Acts xvii. 26. 1 Cor. xii. 6.

Pos 2. Hence it follows that, since all things are subject to the divine control, God not only works efficaciously on his elect, in order that they may will and do that which is pleasing in his sight; but does likewise frequently and powerfully suffer the wicked to fill up the measure of their iniquities by committing fresh sins. Nay, he sometimes, but for wise and gracious ends, permits his own people to transgress; for he has the hearts and wills of all men in his hand, and inclines them to good, or delivers them up to evil, as he sees fit: yet without being the author of sin; as Luther, Bucer, Austin, and others have piously and scripturally taught.

This position consist of two parts: (1.) That God efficaciously operates on the hearts of his elect, and is thereby the sole author of all the good they do. See Eph. iii. 20. Phil. ii. 13. 1 Thes. ii. 13. Heb. xiii. 21. St. Austin takes up no fewer than nineteen chapters in proving that whatever good is in men, and whatever good they are enabled to do is solely and entirely of God; who, says he, " works in holy persons, all

their good desires , their pious thoughts , and their righteous ac - tions ; and yet these holy persons , though thus wrought upon by God , will and do all these things freely: for it is he who rectifies their wills which, being originally evil, are made good by him; and which wills, after he hath set them right and made them good, he directs to good actions and to eternal life ; wherein he does not force their wills but makes them willing." (2.) That God often lets the wicked go on to more ungodliness: which he does , 1 . Negatively, by withholding that grace which alone can restrain them from evil . 2 . Remotely, by the providential con - course and meditation of second causes ; which second causes , meeting and acting in concert with the corruption of the probate's un - regenerate nature , produce sinful effects. 3 . Judically, or in a way of Judgment. Prov. xxi. 1 . The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of waters ; he turneth it whither - soever he will ; and if the king's heart, why not the hearts of all men? Lam. iii. 38. Out of the mouth of the Most High proceeded not evil and good? Hence we find that the Lord bid Shimei curse David, 2 Sam. xvi . 10 . That he moved David himself to number the people , compare 1 Chron. xxi. 1 with 2 Sam. xxiv . 1 . Stirred up Joseph 's brethren to sell him into Egypt, Gen. 34 , 20 . Positively and immediately hardened the heart of Pharaoh, Ex. iv. 21 . Delivered up David's wives to be defiled to Absalom , 2 Sam. xii. 11 . and xvi. 22 . Sent a lying spirit to deceive Ahab, 1 Kings xxii. 20 - 23 . And mingled a perverse spirit in the midst of Egypt, i.e. made that nation perverse, obdurate and stiff - neck - ed , Isa . xix . 14 . To cite other instances would be almost endless, and , after these , quite unneces - sary ; all being summed up in that express passage , Isaiah xlv . 7 . I make peace and create evil ; I the Lord do all these things. See farther 1 Sam. xvi. 14. Psalm cv. 25. Jer. xiii. 12 , 13 . Acts ii. 23 and iv. 28. Rom. xi. 8 . 2 Thess. ii. 11 . Every one of which implies more than a bare permission of sin . Bucer as - serts this , not only in the place referred to below , but continually throughout his works: particularly on Matt. vi. 2, where this is the sense of his comments on that petition, Lead us not into temptation ; " It is abundantly evident, from most ex - press testimonies of Scripture, that God occasionally in the course of his providence , puts both elect and reprobate persons into circum - stances of temptation : by which temptation are meant , not only those trials that are of an outward, afflictive nature; but those also that are inward and spiritual; even such as shall cause the persons so tempted actually to turn aside from the path of duty, to commit sin, and involve both themselves and others in evil . Hence we find the elect complaining, Isa. lxiii. 17 . O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways , an hardened our hearts from thy fear? But there is also a kind of temptation which is peculiar to the non- elect; whereby God, in a way of just judgment , makes them totally blind and obdurate inasmuch as they are vessels of wrath fitted to de - struction ." See also his exposition

of Rom. ix.

Luther reasons to the very same effect; some of his words are these; " It may seem absurd to human wisdom that God should harden, blind, and deliver up some men to a reprobate sense; that he should first deliver them over to evil, and then condemn them for that evil: but the believing spiritual man sees no absurdity at all in this; knowing that God would be never a whit less good even though he should destroy all men." and again; " God worketh all things in all men; even wickedness in the wicked: for this is one branch of his own omnipotence." He very properly explains how God may be said to harden men, &c. and yet not be the author of their sin: " It is not to be understood," says he, " as if God found men good, wise and tractable, and then made them wicked, foolish and obdurate, but God, finding them depraved, judically and powerfully excites them just as they are (unless it is his will to regenerate any of them) and, by thus exciting them, they become more blind and obstinate than they were before." See this whole subject debated at large in the places last referred to.

Pos. 3. God, as the primary and efficient cause of all things, is not only the author of those actions done by his elect as actions, but also as they are good actions; whereas, on the other hand, though he may be said to be the author of all the actions done by the wicked, yet he is not the author of them in a moral and compound sense, as they are sinful; but physically, simply, and, *sensu diviso*, as they are mere actions, abstractedly from all consideration of the goodness or badness of them.

Although there is no action whatever which is not in some sense either good or bad, yet we can easily conceive of an action purely as such without adverting to the quality of it; so that the distinction between and action itself, and its denomination of good or evil, is very obvious and natural.

In and by the elect, therefore, God not only produces works and actions through his almighty power, but likewise through the salutary influences of his Spirit, first makes their persons good, and then their actions so too; but in and by the reprobate he produces actions by his power alone; which actions, as neither issuing from faith, nor being wrought with a view to the divine glory, nor done in the manner prescribed by the divine word, are, on these accounts, properly denominated evil. Hence we see that God does not immediately and *per se*, infuse iniquity into the wicked; but, as Luther expresses it, powerfully excites them to action, and withholds those gracious influences of his Spirit, without which every action is necessarily evil. That God, either directly or remotely, excites bad men as well as good ones to action, cannot be denied by any but atheists, or by those who carry their notions of freewill and human independency so high as to exclude the Deity from all actual operation in and among his creatures, which is little short of atheism. Every work performed, whether good or evil, is done in strength and by the power derived immediately from God him-

self, in whom all men live, move, and have their being, Acts xvii. 28. As at first without him was not any thing made which was made; so now without him is not any thing done which is done. We have no power or faculty, whether corporeal or intellectual, but what we received from God, subsists by him, and is exercised in subserviency to his will and appointment. It is he who created, preserves, actuates and directs all things. But it by no means follows from these premises that God is therefore the cause of sin; for sin is nothing but illegality, want of conformity to the divine law, 1 John iii. 4, a mere privation of rectitude: consequently, being itself a thing purely negative, it can have no positive or efficient cause, but only a negative and deficient one, as several learned men have observed.

Every action, as such, is undoubtedly good; it being an actual exertion of those operative powers given us by God for that very end; God therefore may be the author of all actions (as he undoubtedly is), and yet not be the author of evil. An action is constituted evil three ways; by proceeding from a wrong principle, by being directed to a wrong end, and by being done in a wrong manner. Now, though God, as we have said, is the efficient cause of our actions, as actions, yet if these actions commence sinful, that sinfulness arises from ourselves. Suppose a boy who knows not how to write has his hand guided by his master, and nevertheless makes false letters, quite unlike the copy set him; though his preceptor who guides his hand is the cause of his writing at all, yet his own ignorance and unskillfulness are the cause of his writing so badly. Just so, God is the supreme author of our action, abstractedly taken; but our own vitiosity is the cause of our acting amiss.

I shall conclude this article with two or three observations. And, (1) I would infer that if we would maintain the doctrine of God's omnipotence we must insist upon that of his universal agency: the latter cannot be denied without giving up the former. Disprove that he is almighty, and then we will grant that his influence and operations are limited and circumscribed. Luther says "God would not be a respectable being, if he were not almighty, and the doer of all things that are done; or if any thing could come to pass in which he had no hand." God has at least a physical influence on whatsoever is done by his creatures, whether trivial or important, good or evil. Judas as truly lived, moved, and had his being from God as Peter; and satan himself as much as Gabriel; for to say that sin exempts the sinner from the divine government and jurisdiction is abridging the power of God with a witness; nay, is raising it from its very foundation.

(2) This doctrine of God's omnipotence has a native tendency to awaken in our hearts that reverence for, and fear of, the divine majesty which none can either receive or retain but those who believe him to be infinitely powerful, and to work all things after the counsel of his own will. This godly fear is a sovereign antidote against sin; for if I really believe that God by his unin-

termitted operation upon my soul produces actions in me , which , being simply good , receive their malignancy from the corruption of my nature (and even those works that stand opposed to sins are more or less infected with this moral leprosy); and if I consider that , should I yield myself a slave to actual iniquity , God can , and justly might , as he has frequently done by others , give me up to a reprobate mind and punish one sin by leaving me to the commission of another ; surely such reflections as these must fill me with awful apprehensions of the divine purity , power and greatness , and make me watch continually , as well against the inward risings as the outward appearance of evil .

(3) This doctrine is also useful as it tends to inspire us with true humility of soul ; and to lay us as impotent dust and ashes at the feet of sovereign omnipotence . It teaches us , what too many are ignorant of , the blessed lesson of selfdespair ; i .e . that in a state of unregeneracy our wisdom is folly , our strength weakness , and our righteousness worth nothing : that therefore we can do nothing either to the glory of God or the spiritual benefit of ourselves and others but through the ability which he giveth ; that in him our strength lieth , and from him all our help must come . Supposing we believe that whatso - ever is done below or above God doeth it himself ; that all things depend , both as to their being and operation , upon his omnipotent arm and mighty support ; that we cannot even sin , much less do any good thing , if he withdraw his aid ; and that all men are in his hand , as clay in the hand of the potter ; I say , did we really believe all these points , and see them in the light of the Divine Spirit , how can it be reasonably supposed that we can wax insolent against this great God , behave con - temptuously and superciliously in the world , or boast of anything we have or do ? Luther informs us , that he , " used to be frequently much offended at this doctrine because it drove him to self - despair ; but that he afterwards found that this sort of despair was salutary and profitable , and near akin to divine grace ."

(4) We are hereby taught not only humility before God , but like - wise dependence on him , and re - signation to him . For if we are thoroughly persuaded that of our - selves , and in our own strength , we cannot do either good or evil ; but that being originally created by God we are incessantly supported , moved , influenced and directed by him , this way or that , as he pleases ; the natural inference hence will be that with simple faith we cast our - selves entirely , as on the bosom of his providence , commit all our care and solicitude to his hand ; praying without hesitation or reserve that his will may be done in us , on us , and by us , and that in all his dealings with us he may consult his own glory alone . This holy passiveness is the very apex of Christianity . All the desires of our great Redeemer himself were reducible to these two ; that the will of God might be done , and that the glory of God might be displayed . These were the highest and su - preme marks at which he aimed throughout the whole course of his

spotless life and inconceivably tremendous sufferings. Happy, thrice happy that man, who hath thus far attained the mind that was in Christ.

(5) The comfortable belief of this doctrine has a tendency to excite and keep alive within us that fortitude which is so ornamental to, and necessary for, us while we abide in this wilderness. For if I believe with the apostle that all things are of God. 2 Cor. v. 18, I shall be less liable to perturbation when afflicted, and learn more easily to possess my soul in patience. This was Job's support: he was not overcome with rage and despair when he received news that the Sabeans had carried off his cattle and slain his servants, and that the remainder of both were consumed with fire; that the Chaldeans had robbed him of his camels; and that his seven sons were crushed to death by the falling of the house where they were sitting: he resolved all these misfortunes into the agency of God, his power and sovereignty, and even thanked him for doing what he would with his own Job. i. 21. If another should slander me in word, or injure me in deed, I shall not be prone to anger when, with David, I consider that the Lord hath bidden him, 2 Sam. xvi. 10.

(6) This should stir us up to fervent and incessant prayer. For does God work powerfully and benignly in the hearts of his elect? and is he the sole cause of every action they do, which is truly and spiritually good? Then it should be our prayer that he would work in us likewise both to will and to do of his good pleasure: and if, on self-examination, we find reason to trust that some good thing is wrought in us, it should put us upon thankfulness unfeigned, and cause us to glory, not in ourselves, but in him. On the other hand, does God manifest his displeasure against the wicked by blinding, hardening, and giving them up to perpetrate iniquity with greediness? Which judicial acts of God are both a punishment for their sin and also eventual additions to it? We should be the more incited to deprecate these tremendous evils, and to beseech the king of heaven that he would not thus lead us into temptation. So much concerning the omnipotence of God. I shall now,

V. Take notice of his justice.

Pos. 1. God is infinitely, absolutely and unchangeably just.

The justice of God may be considered either immanently, as it is in himself, which is, properly speaking, the same with his holiness; or transiently and relatively, as it respects his right conduct towards his creatures, which is properly justice. By the former he is all that is holy, just and good; by the latter he is manifested to be so in all his dealings with angels and men. For the first see Deut. xxxii. 4. Psa. xcii. 15; for the second, Job viii. 3. Psal. cxlv. 17. Hence it follows that whatever God either wills or does, however it may at first sight seem to clash with our ideas or right and wrong, cannot really be unjust. It is certain that for a season he sorely afflicted his righteous servant Job; and on the other hand enriched the Sabeans, an infidel and lawless nation, with a profusion of wealth and a series of success; before

Jacob and Esau were born, or had done either good or evil, he loved and chose the former and reprobated the latter; He gave repentance to Peter and left Judas to perish in his sin: and as in all ages, so to this day he hath mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth. In all which he acts most justly and righteously, and there is no iniquity with him.

Pos. 2. The Deity may be considered in a threefold view: as God of all, as Lord of all, and as Judge of all.

(1) As God of all, he created, sustains, and exhilarates the whole universe; causes his sun to shine, and his rain to fall upon the evil and the good, Matt. v. and is the preserver of all men, 1 Tim. iv. 19. For as he is infinitely and supremely good, so also is he communicative of his goodness; as appears not only from his creation of all things, but especially from his providential benignity. Every thing has its being from him, as Creator; and its well-being from him as a bountiful preserver. (2) As Lord or sovereign of all, he does as he will (and has a most unquestionable right to do so) with his own; and in particular fixes and determines the everlasting state of every individual person as he sees fit. It is essential to absolute sovereignty that the sovereign have it in his power to dispose of those over whom his jurisdiction extends just as he pleases, without being accountable to any; and God, whose authority is unbounded, none being exempt from it, may, with the strictest holiness and justice, love or hate, elect or reprobate, save or destroy any of his creatures whether human or angelic, according to his own free pleasure and sovereign purpose. (3) As Judge of all he ratifies what he does as Lord, by rendering to all according to their works; by punishing the wicked, and rewarding those whom it was his will to esteem righteous and to make holy.

Pos. 3. Whatever things God wills or does, are not willed and done by him because they were, in their own nature, and previously to his willing them, just and right; or because, from their intrinsic fitness, he ought to will and do them; but they are therefore just, right and proper, because He who is holiness itself wills and does them.

Hence Abraham looked upon it as a righteous action to slay his innocent son. Why did he so esteem it? Because the law of God authorized murder? No; for on the contrary both the law of God, and the law of nature peremptorily forbad it: but the holy patriarch well knew that the will of God is the only rule of justice, and that what he pleases to command is on that very account just and righteous. It follows:

Pos. 4. That although our works are to be examined by the revealed will of God and be denominate materially good or evil, as they agree or disagree with it; yet the works of God himself cannot be brought to any test whatever; for his will being the grand universal law, he himself cannot be, properly speaking, subject to, or obliged by, any law superior to that. Many things are done by him (such as choosing and reprobating men) without any re-

spect had to their works ; suffering people to fall into sin , when if it so pleased him , he might prevent it ; leaving many backsliding professors to go on to perish in their apostacy , when it is in the divine power to sanctify and set them right; drawing some of his grace , and permitting many others to future misery whom , if he pleased , he could undoubtedly save , with innumerable instances of the like nature (which might be mentioned) , and which , if done by us , would be apparently unjust , inasmuch as they would not square with the revealed will of God , which is the great and only safe rule of our practice . But , when he does these and such like things , they cannot but be holy , equitable , and worthy of himself ; for since his will is essentially and unchangeably just , whatever he does in consequence of that will must be just and good likewise . From what has been delivered under this fifth head I would infer , that they who deny the power God has of doing as he will with his creatures , and exclaim against unconditional decrees , as cruel , tyrannical , and unjust ; either know not what they say nor whereof they affirm ; or are willful blasphemers of his name , and perverse rebels against his sovereignty : to which at last , however unwillingly , they will be forced to submit .

I shall conclude this introduction with briefly considering in the ,

Sixth and last place , the mercy of God .

Pos . 1 . The Deity is throughout the Scriptures represented as infinitely gracious and merciful . Exod . xxxiv . y . Mehem . ix . 17 . Psalm ciii . 8 . 1 Pet . i . 3 .

When we call the divine mercy infinite , we do not mean that it is in a way of grace extended to all men without exception (and supposing it was , even then it would be very improperly denominated infinite on that account , since the objects of it , though all men taken together , would not amount to a multitude strictly and properly infinite) , but that his mercy towards his own elect, as it knew no beginning , so is it infinite in duration , and shall know neither period nor intermission .

Pos . 2 . Mercy is not in the Deity as it is in us , a passion , or affection ; every thing of that kind being incompatible with the purity , perfection , independency and unchangeableness of his nature ; but , when this attribute is predicated of him , it only notes his free and eternal will or purpose of making some of the fallen race happy , by delivering them from the guilt and dominion of sin , and communicating himself to them in a way consistent with his own inviolable justice , truth and holiness . This seems to be the proper definition of mercy , as it relates to the spiritual and eternal good of those who are its objects . But it should be observed .

Pos 3 . That the mercy of God , taken in its more large and indefinite sense , may be considered , (1) as general , (2) as special .

His general mercy is no other than what we commonly call his bounty , by which he is more or less providentially good to all mankind , both elect and non-elect : Matt . v . 45 Luke vi . 35 . Acts xiv . 17 ; and xvii . 25 , 28 . By his special mercy , he , as Lord of all , hath in a spiritual sense

compassion on as many of the fallen race as are the objects of his free and eternal favour : the effects of which special mercy are the redemption and justification of their persons, through the satisfaction of Christ ; the effectual vocation , regeneration and sanctification of them by his Spirit; the infallible and final preservation of them in a state of grace on earth ; and their everlasting glorification in heaven .

Pos . 4 . There is no contradiction , whether real or seeming , between these two assertions , (1) That the blessings of grace and glory are peculiar to those whom God hath in his decree of predestination set apart for himself; and (2) That the gospel declaration runs that whosoever willeth may take of the water of life freely, Rev. xxii. 17 . Since, in the first place , none can will or unfeignedly and spiritually desire a part in these privileges but those whom God previously makes willing and desirous; and secondly, that he gives this will to , and excites this desire in , none but his own elect .

Pos. 5 . Since ungodly men, who are totally and finally destitute of divine grace, cannot know what this mercy is , nor form any proper apprehensions of it, much less by faith embrace and rely upon it, for themselves; and since daily experience, as well as the Scriptures of truth , teaches us , that God doth not open the eyes of the reprobate as he doth the eyes of his elect , nor savingly enlighten their understandings ; it evidently follows that his mercy was never, from the very first, designed for them, neither will it be applied to them : but, both in designation and application, is proper and peculiar to those only who are predestinated to life; as it is written, the election hath obtained, and the rest were blinded, Rom . xi . 7 .

Pos. 6 . The whole work of salvation, together with every thing that is in ode to it, or stands in connection with it , is sometimes in scripture comprised under the single term mercy ; to shew that mere love and absolute grace were the grand cause why the elect are saved, and that all merit, worthiness and good qualifications of theirs were entirely excluded from having any influence on the divine will, why they should be chosen , redeemed , and glorified , above all others . When it is said , Rom. ix. He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, it is as much as if the apostle had said , " God elected , ransomed , justified , regenerates sanctifies and glorifies whom he pleases : " every one of these great privileges being briefly summed up, and virtually included in that comprehensive phrase ,

" He hath mercy ."

Pos . 7 . It follows that whatever favour is bestowed on us ; whatever good thing is in us, or wrought by us; whether in will, word, or deed: and whatever blessings else we receive from God, from election quite home to glorification, all proceed, merely and entirely, from the good pleasure of his will, and his mercy towards us in Christ Jesus , To him , therefore , the praise is due , who putteth the difference between man and man , by having compassion on some and not on others .

February, 1944

Put shoes on his feet. Luke 15:22.

Shoes are an important part of the travelers equipment. Not many would undertake a long journey without them. Whatever our destination may be, it inevitably follows that our feet will be used extensively to get us there. Not many would be willing to undertake a hazardous journey barefooted. Yet it is true that at certain periods and under certain circumstances we would be willing to undertake things knowing that it would be hard to accomplish, but the thing to be attained is of so much more joy, peace and pleasure that it covers up and hides from view the trials that have to be endured. It is not to tell just what the prodigal son represents that this text is before us. I am sure that the vast majority of people who have an experience of grace know the many and varied things that come their way are peculiarly fitting to their own travel. To pass lightly over the journey that the prodigal took, we find him getting back home. I am a firm believer in the fact that every biblical type, illustration, symbol, parable and miracle if rightly examined under the natural reasoning of man would tend to show that salvation is unconditional. I do not mean that the natural man could understand it, because the natural man cannot understand natural things when they pertain, or are used, to teach spiritual things. This can easily be ascertained by noticing the difference in the construction of the language used in the Bible and the newspaper. So it is in this case. All men (the spiritually unlearned) put a condition in it. They often lament over the matter that the youngest did not stay at home, not knowing that he could not. They, as often, lament because more of their hearers do not come home as he did, not knowing that each prodigal does come home when starvation drives him. Starvation will not let a man do as he pleases. It was not optional at all with him, it was necessary. That necessity became so great that it made him willing to have changes wrought. Subsistence reached the stage that the conditions under which it came did not matter. Is not this your experience, brethren? Is there not such a hungering for the food of your Father that you are willing for him to have complete charge of your life? Do you not feel that anything he orders will be too good for you? This prodigal no doubt had known splendor, he had known what fancy dress had been, he knew the state of the servant, he had looked with disdain on them, but this matter of something to eat occupies his whole thought. Such a change has been wrought upon him that he sees himself a vile, condemned sinner. He knows that he is not fit to fill a son's place. He went away in riotous living, and that carries with it plenty of clothes, but as he comes back they have lost their significance. He is so anxious to get home that he is willing to be as one of the servants. Let us notice that he did not ask to lose his sonship. He acknowledges his unworthiness to be called a son, but so willing has he become that he is willing to be " as a

servant." How changed he is now being called a son to being as a servant! He knew the custom of this country in which he lived, he knew a servant went barefooted. Although he knew the privations and hard - ships that such a procedure would bring, he was willing to go without shoes. My precious brethren and sisters, have you felt this? Does not the grace of God seem wonderful to you? If you have really felt this condemnation and have heard your Father say "put shoes on him" you have indeed been blessed. It was the custom in that land to put off the shoes on entering the house. It is true now, little children. No shoes are needed in the house of the Lord. They are given for the journey. How precious the sight to see the beloved of the Lord in his house without shoes. No need of them in his house, they are for the journey. Did you notice that they are shoes "put on?" Shoes are given to each of the Lord's humble poor. They are "put on" them. Solomon sang about the beauty of the shod feet of the be - loved (S.S. 7:1), and may I ask what condition there is in being shod? They did not send any searching party after the prodigal, yet he was brought to the place of shoes. Could he help coming? Did he get shoes by good works? Were they placed nearby and he told to place them on his feet? Brethren I love the doctrine of God's putting on shoes. Do you?

W.D. Griffin

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1 THESSALONIANS 5 : 21.

Prove all things : hold fast that which is good.

GOD'S OMNIPOTENCE OR INFINITE POWER

God's omnipotence is that perfection of his nature by which he can do whatever he pleases in heaven and earth, in the seas and all deep places (Psalm 135 : 6). His infinite power extends to all things possible. Though limited by his will to those things only which he has decreed to be done, God manifests his power in Crea - tion, Providence, and Redemption. His omnipotence is represented as an infinite capacity, while his omni - science is represented as an infinite act. It is he who created, preserves, actuates and directs all things; causing everything to fulfil the counsel of his will. If the Bible teaches God's omnipotence, it also teaches his universal agency. All of God's creations, visible and invisi - ble, are subject to his divine control. God is the author of all the good we do. He works in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, he worketh all in all. Lord, thou hast wrought all our works in us. He works in us both to will and to do his good pleasure. His power and wisdom is such that he causes all occurrences to praise him, the wrath of man included and the remainder he restrains.

MOVED OR MOVING?

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Editors

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 1990

E.W. Holland, VA 2.00
Mrs. Lela Lockhart, NS 40.00
B.F. Poindexter, VA 2.00
Garner Horne, NC 5.00
Hassell Allen, NC 5.00
Mrs. Bertie F. Brown, NC 4.00
Mrs. Marcy Burgin, TX 2.00
Mrs. Lessie Sladky, NC 12.00
Mrs. W. Blankership, VA 2.00
Herbert Dodson, VA 2.00
Mrs. Fred Baker, AL 2.00
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F.K. Morgan, AR 2.00
Mrs. Audrey Dyer, VA 7.00
C.P. Prescott, NC 5.00
Ms. Carolyn A. Purdue, VA.....5.00
Mrs. Sallie Hodges, VA 7.00
Eld. W.P. O'Neal, WV 5.00
Mrs. Jessie Somers, NC 2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER BURNICE PHILLIPS DAILEY

I will attempt to write in memory of our Dear Sister who departed this life on May 29, 1990.

She was born March 31, 1883 making her stay on earth 97 years. She had been afflicted for several years and had not been able to attend church.

She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church since 1949. In our visits with her as long as she was able she showed a great interest in the Brothers and Sisters and the welfare of the Church. She was given Grace to bear her afflictions well.

She left two daughters; Miss Burnita P. Dailey, Mrs. Mary D. Phillips; Granddaughter Phyllis Rich; Grandsons Allen Phillips, Marion Phillips; Great Granddaughter Amanda Rich; Niece Margaret Phillips.

Funeral Services were held at Richard & Horne Chapel June 1, by Elder Raymond Goad and Mr. C.E. Mannon. Burial was in Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery. We feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by request of Union Primitive Baptist Church at last business meeting by Dorcie Semones.

Elder Hale Terry, Moderator
Sister Lessie Cox, Clerk

ELDER HARVEY LEONARD KEY

By request I will attempt to write a memorial to Elder Harvey Leonard Key, our beloved associate pastor of the Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church, Tate St., Greensboro, N.C.

Elder Key was born Jan. 2, 1919 in Surry County, N.C. to Ida Elizabeth Lowe Key and Ransom Key and died May 5, 1990 after an extended illness. He leaves to mourn his passing his wife of forty-nine years Beulah Johnson Key, one daughter Barbara Key Eller, and one son

Harvey Leonard Key , Jr. also four grandchildren and one great grandchild , two sisters Mrs . Verona Hamby , State Road , N .C . and Mrs . Minnie Jackson , Gibsonville , N .C . and five brothers Herman R . Key and Elder Kenneth R . Key , Greensboro , N .C . , John H . Key , McLeansville , N .C . , Reuben W . Key , McLeansville , N .C ., and Conrad R . Key of Pleasant Garden , N .C . along with a host of friends .

Elder Key was affectionally known by many as Elder Leonard to distinguish him from his minister brother Elder Kenneth Key . He joined the Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church in April 1951 . On September 1962 he was ordained a deacon , but later the church recognized another gift in him and on September 7 , 1969 ordained him to the full work of the ministry .

Elder Leonard was a humble man and manifested much love for the brethren . He seemed to have a special love for children . In conversation his favorite subject was the Scriptures upon which he could talk for hours , always giving praise to his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ . He enjoyed visiting with the brethren and often visited sister churches far and near . He had a beautiful tenor voice and enjoyed singing the songs of Zion . He was a firm believer in the doctrine of election and salvation by grace . He believed in a sovereign , all powerful God having infinite knowledge . From the pulpit he often expounded from the Old Testament , Isaiah and Jeremiah being his favorite prophets . He often spoke of the Lord 's people as " the garden the Lord planted ." Also " the evergreen trees " was a beautiful subject to him .

It was a pleasure to him to see things growing , especially that of the fruit of his own labor . He planted and cared for different kinds of fruits , nuts , and even flowers and delighted in sharing with all who came his way . He provided well for his family . He owned and operated the Key 's Block Company and for many years did much heavy labor himself . With skilled hands he was an artist at many kinds of work . One of his last projects was making beautiful porcelin dolls . As usual he gave many of them away .

For almost two years Elder Leonard was unable to attend church , his greatest joy . This was a sore trial for him . During his confinement at home and especially after his sight became impaired to the extent that he was unable to read his Bible he would often times quote from the Psalms or Proverbs and with tears flowing beg for mercy .

With loving hands his family administered to his every need . His daughter once said " he spoiled us now we spoil him ." But none can stay the hand of the Lord when he speaks " well done , good and faithful servant " and bids him come home . The day before he died his daughter heard a dove cooing just outside her father 's window and she asked him if he heard that bird and he said " yes , that is a dove . It is a symbol of peace ." Before the noon of another day we feel his spirit fled to the arms of Jesus as this earthly body met with death .

Elder Leonard 's funeral was

held at the Chapel of Lambeth Troxler funeral home in Greensboro. It was conducted by Elders Hale Terry, Amos Hash and Lane Carter with prayer at the graveside by Elder O.K. Tench. Love for the man was evident and manifested through the exaltation of his Lord and Saviour. This was a fitting tribute to one who had been brought to humbly bow before his Lord and blessed to declare the whole counsel of God. Two of his favorite hymns were sung, " Jesus Before Thy Face I Fall" and " Amazing Grace."

It was Elder Leonard's wish that Elder C.B. Davis, Jr. also take part in his funeral. As circumstance would have it Elder Davis was instigator and partly responsible for a bus load of people scheduled to leave early the day of the funeral to view the Western States and Canada with the blessings of the family he left as scheduled. There were several people on the bus that knew and loved Elder Leonard. At the self same hour of the funeral while riding through Kentucky Elder Davis felt to conduct a short memorial service on the bus and the group sang " Rock of Ages." A loving remembrance for a departed friend.

The earthly tabernacle was laid to rest in Lakeview Cemetery just north of Greensboro to await the resurrection morn. We feel this one could witness with the Apostle Paul when he said " For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain."

" The memory of the just is blessed."

Humbly submitted,
Mary G. Blaylock

SISTER BESSIE MORTON

By the request of the church at Northeast Primitive Baptist Church

In my weak way I will try and write a few lines about our beloved Sister, knowing that God does all things well.

She was the daughter of Lewis and Susan Humphrey. She is survived by two children, one son, Jessie James Morton, one daughter, Marie Morton Haga, six grandchildren and seven great grandchildren and two sisters, Effie Morton and Emma Kellum.

Sister Bessie was born February 14, 1905 and was laid to rest February 20, 1990, making her stay on earth 85 years and six days. Her husband, Bro. Edward Morton, was laid to rest April 26, 1985.

She was always a good and faithful member when she was able to attend. We believe she is a mother in Jesus gone to be with God, where there is no sickness, sorrow, pain or death; but all love, joy and peace forevermore. We miss her, but we believe that her absence from her family and loved ones is her eternal gain.

Now to the Family: Son and daughter and grandchildren and great grandchildren..... Press on keep the good faith and press on to the high calling of God. I know that you have a vacant place in your home as well as in your hearts. I hope that the good Lord will reconcile all of you to your great loss and be a mother to all of you.

The services for Sister Bessie were preached by Elder J.T. Prescott, pastor of the Northeast

Primitive Baptist Church. She was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mount of flowers in the Humphrey Cemetery.

Written by one living in hopes of eternal rest in our Lord and Saviour.

Effie Morton
233 Wolf Swamp Road
Jacksonville, NC 28546

ELDER HERBERT R. PRINCE

Herbert Prince was born June 26, 1893, in Gardner Station tion, Tennessee the son of Frank and Matilda Prince and died March 14, 1990 at the age of 96 years and 9 months.

He was married August 26, 1917 to Bessie Cross and to this union was born 5 children of which 2 preceded him in death. Jere Y Prince a son and Louise Joiner a daughter. He is survived by 3 daughters Edna Harding, Catherine Newman and Charline Freeman of Martin, Tennessee.

Brother Prince joined the Primitive Baptist Church as a very young man and attended the church all of his life as his parents were members. He was ordained an Elder the 5th Sunday in March 1955 and pastored churches in Alabama, Kentucky and Tennessee until a couple of years before he died and was loved and respected by the brethren everywhere he went. His membership was in the First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis which he pastored for several years.

His funeral was in the Murphy Funeral Home in Martin, Tennessee and was conducted by Elders Wayman G. Chapell and Richard H. Campbell. Interment was in the Martin Cemetery.

BERTIE E. REID

Sister Bertie Reid was born on May 19, 1892, in Lovelady, Texas. She was baptized in the mid-1920's, but the exact date is now unknown. She united with Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, on June 17, 1984.

Sister Reid and her late husband band, A. K. Reid, had attended Saints Rest Church for many years, having relocated to the Dallas area in the early 1940's. Sister Reid loved to hear the doctrine of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ preached. She knew well what she believed, rejoicing in hope of the salvation provided by Jesus Christ by His blood atonement and imputed righteousness alone; and the absolute predestination of all things. Sister Reid was meek and loving, an asset to our little church who will be sorely missed by those who knew her.

She was called home on May 15, 1990 at the age of ninety - seven years, eleven months, and twenty-seven days. She was survived by her son, Howard Speer; her daughters Olive Fields, Edna Miles, and Louise Powell; her sister, Lottie Krenek; seven grandchildren, and many great - grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder C.C. Morris. Her

mortal body was laid to rest in Laurel Land Memorial Gardens , Dallas , Texas , there to await the coming of her Lord and Savior .

Written by direction of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church while in regular quarterly conference on June 3 , 1990 , with the direction that a copy be sent to sister Reid's family , a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times , and a copy be retained in the church records .

Elder C .C . Morris , Moderator
Deacon Dean G . Connell , Clerk

SISTER LINDA WISE

God , who is just in all His ways , called Sister Linda Wise from this low ground of sin and sorrow on October 12 , 1989 . Sister Linda was 48 years of age , having been born on June 1 , 1941 .

She was a quiet , humble person who loved her Church and supported it as long as physically able . She was baptised by Elder W .D . Griffin into the fellowship of the Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church on April 6 , 1969 and has been a member of Salisbury Old School Baptist Church since June 17 , 1984 .

Sister Linda suffered severe physical afflictions the last 2 years of her life , but was blessed with patience to endure them . " Tri - bulation worketh patience ; and patience , experience ; and exper - ience , hope ; and hope maketh not ashamed ; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us ."

Before she passed , she seemed to be reconciled and possessed a peace that surpasses all under - standing .

Sister Linda is survived by her husband , Robert Wise of Salisbury ; children - Ralph Kimes , Jr , Eugene Kimes , Denise Kimes , and Bradley Kimes all of Salisbury ; Mother , Sister Betty Nutter , also a member of the Salisbury Church ; and a sister, Vickie Hoeben of Salisbury , MD .

Her funeral was preached by her pastor , Elder Cleo Robertson , at Marvel Short Funeral Home , Delmar , Delaware and her body was laid to rest in Mardela Cemetery .

She was given a precious hope of one day being raised in the like - ness of her Lord and to dwell with him eternally .

Read and approved by Salisbury Old School Baptist Church .

Elder Cleo Robertson , Moderator
Sister Phyllis Farlow , Clerk

HEBREWS 2 : 8 - 11 .

Thou hast put all things in subjec - tion under his feet . For in that he put all in subjection under him , he left nothing that is not put under him . But now we see not yet all things put under him .

But we see Jesus , who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death , crowned with glory and honour ; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man .

For it became him , for whom are all things , and by whom are all things , in bringing many sons unto glory , to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings .

For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one : for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren ,

Signs of the Times

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GLORY

Await impatient soul of man
Until His purposed time
When joy shall then exalt the plan
With blissful peace divine

Search not in vain upon the land
But seek and ye shall find
Tis Grace that comes within His hand
That gives you peace of mind

Give thanks Oh Soul and look around
Observe the fullness of His work
Feel the gracious love abound
The fulfillment He did not shirk

Look up my soul beyond the veil
To where thy hope relies
Reach out with need that will not fail
To catch His seeing eyes

Rejoice thou soul that looks to He
Who spreads His love upon the flock
As wide as is the endless sea
And stands forever as a Rock

Consider oh soul the joy to know
When thou seest His glory shine
To rise and quickly with Him go
Where glory will be Thine

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EDITORIAL

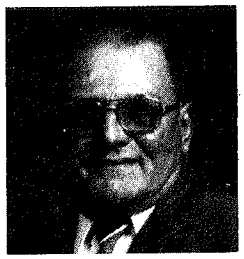
Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

I spoke some months ago on some of the marks mentioned in the scriptures as they relate to the Lord's people and have been asked to write my thoughts on the subject.

(1) In Genesis chapter 4 a portion of the 15th verse reads, *"And the Lord set a mark upon Cain" etc.* This mark is a type we all have in nature. It is the mark of disobedience and death we have inherited from Adam and Eve. We have in reality committed murder because our sins brought about the death of Christ. We did by our misdeeds make it necessary for Him to be crucified and His blood cries on our behalf to God as the blood of righteous Abel cried. We so often hear the statement "They crucified Christ" but my beloved it was the sins of the Church that crucified Him. Now we see the mark of sin and condemnation of ourselves sent Him to the sufferings of the cross and not the world. Those who remain the descendants of Cain have no part in our hope of salvation through His redeeming blood.

Man cannot with self works erase the mark of sin anymore than he can change his height, or to refer to the word, "anymore than a leopard can change his spots." We carry this mark of nature until death brings an end to sin. The corruption then (mark) will be destroyed as the body returns to dust. We have hope beyond this death that through Christ we shall live again without the mark of sin and death because His words is to present us without spot, wrinkle, blemish in perfection. We then shall have received the mark of glory and faith and hope will have become reality. We will then have been made perfect in love in order that we may dwell in His presence forever. The mark has been exchanged through Christ for a portion of heir to His throne. Praise God!

(2) Job writes in Chapter 22:15 *"Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden?"* This way is surely marked in the minds of each of us as we remember the way we have come. We as the wise men of old have no desire to return again to the old way. It was a way we were satisfied with until such time as Christ was re-

vealed and then we saw it as the way to the depths of hell. It is the same way David expressed as a horrible pit and miry clay and he would praise God that He had lifted him from such. We must under all praise to Him whose arm of grace is long enough to reach to any depths that one of His has fallen to. The old way is marked by our own remembrance that Christ has removed the joys of the circumstances of our sins in order that we not forget what we have been drawn out of. Those of the world are never concerned about this way because they don 't know the difference (have not been taught) and are known by their fruits (actions and pleasures).

(3) We find in Psalm 37 : 37 *" Mark the perfect man and behold the upright for the end of that man is peace."* There has never been but one perfect man and He is marked in our minds with His indelible blood. The marks of His laws in our hearts and minds holds us steadfast to His truths. We did not, nor can any man under the heavens bring these marks to be in or on another person, even our kinsmen by nature. These marks are of grace and thus not of works lest any should boast. We can behold the marks of grace on our brothers and sisters in Christ but not upon ourselves. This has been fixed thus in order we not become puffed up and exalted above measure.

The death of Christ not only brought peace to himself but also for us. He was taken out of this world that had been pain and humiliation for Him. He was indeed ready to die (willing) and return to the father in glory from whence He came. We rejoice now that in Him and through Him we died too that we be separated from the condemnation of our sins. We also are comforted with the promise that as He burst forth from the grave we shall also when His voice calls with a shout of victory.

We see, in His coming to His death the perfect submission to the will of God. His humility caused him to accept in silence the marks of His body to obtain humility and submission for us. In the 53rd chapter of Isaiah some of the marks are noted. *" He was bruised for our iniquities," " By His stripes we are healed," and " The chastisement of our peace was upon Him."* We will not suffer these wraths of God because He hath suffered them already for us. The world wonders after all these things why we trust and praise Him as our all in all. Isaiah also writes *" He saw of the travail of His soul and was satisfied."* Then He had fully obtained peace for Himself, for us and for a dying thief when He said *" its finished."*

(4) In the gospel of Luke 14 : 1 we find this, *" And He put forth a parable to those that were bidden, when He marked how they chose out the chief rooms etc."* We see this mark on many today along our journey. These are the ones who dote upon selfworks and choose for themselve an elevated place in so called Christianity. We hear oft-times some say they know God has a high palace for them because of what they have done. We are reminded that there will be no big I and little you in the climes of Glory. This same thought is under consideration

in the completion of the verse for Christ reminded them that there could come one greater than they who had chosen the highest room. He also tells them that he who thinks himself greatest will be abased and he who considers himself least shall be exalted. Thus beloved we who consider ourselves least in His kingdom shall be exalted and stand before Him justified.

In keeping with this parable we should mark (not judge) how a member conducts himself or herself with their brothers and sisters in Christ. We should mark what their conversation is and their humility. We should note (mark) how they conduct themselves in the house of the Lord. These expressions reveal the marks of the strength of their hope and faith and from whence it comes.

(5) In Psalm 48 : 11 - 14 and especially note verse 13. It reads *" Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following."* David is speaking of Zion and reminds us to mark her bulwarks which are the defensive strengths of the Gospel. These strengths tell us that Christ was marked for death before He was born in the will of God the father. We find John writing in the 18th chapter verse 37, *" To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth."* (The gospel, the bulwarks of Zion.) He came to fulfill the will of His father and obtain for us a place of safety within the bulwarks of Zion. He thus fulfilled to a jot and tittle the law for all who had been marked by election and predestination before the foundation of the world.

We now declare that all who were predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ desire to hear the bulwarks of Zion are secure and its the duty of all God called ministers to assure them their hope, faith and salvation are eternal security within the realm of Zion. We who walk about Zion (among the churches) discern the marks of order and discipline she has. The marks of the true bulwarks of Zion embody the virtues of Christ for He is the complete body of Zion (the Church).

We consider the palaces of Zion as the places where Christ is manifest to His own. The poet writing *" Prisons would palaces prove if Christ would dwell with me there."* Historically palaces were considered places of comfort and safety and a home where peace prevailed. Is this not a true description of the Church? Thus anywhere we find Him revealed is for a moment a palace and its as close as we come to the palace of eternity in this time world.

Christ marked the way to Mt. Zion by His sufferings and the trials the scribes and Pharisees placed upon Him. They scorned and derided Him because they felt they had the answers and not He. He has marked us in such a way that we are turned away from the world (even our relatives in the flesh) to follow the marks of the strait and narrow way. These marks embody salvation expressed in this world and eternal life in that world (palace) to come. He has blessed us with the marks of love, fellowship and communion in order that His name

be praised on the bulwarks of Zion and the palaces within.

We should treasure all the marks of afflictions and trials as well as the marks of His love. These are a part of the travel toward Zion. When we plan a trip (naturally) we choose a way that seems best and nearest to arrive at our destination. Thank God we do not (cannot) choose the way to glory for the carnal mind is enmity toward God and our best thoughts (choosings) as filthy rags. Christ Himself said *" I am the way the truth and the life."* In first Corinthians 12 : 31 Paul writes *" But covet earnestly the best gifts : and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way. "* The many marks He has given us are indeed gifts for we have not (cannot) obtained them by works. These marks are the fulfillment of the promise, *" My yoke is easy and my burden light." They are just mileage marks along the road to glory.*

In Psalm 27 : 11 David writes, *" Lead me in a plain path, etc."* The path of the preserver of Zion is plain to His people yet hid from the world because it pleased Him to hide these things from the wise and prudent and reveal them to babes. We then are commanded to tell these things to the generation following. We note the word generation is singular and not plural in any sense. This expresses the fact that there is but one generation of Christ. We became kinsmen of that generation because of the marks of the whip, spear and nails upon the body of the son of God.

The natural body has the mark of dust and death upon it for from dust was it made and in death to dust shall return. We can be assured that the spirit within has the mark of eternal life and returns unto God who gave it. It is that spirit of life that shall call (Christ) to the sleeping dust and shall deliver that new body to Zion's palace in order that we see Him for ourselves and not another.

May we praise His holy name along the way (on the bulwarks) and feel in some marvelous way as did Paul when he wrote in Philippians chapter3 verse14, *" I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."* Oh what a mark to receive and what joy to possess. Praise God!

My dear readers if you find next in these thoughts they are His marks for Zion but if no merit they are but marks of the carnality of myself.

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

ROMANS 5 : 1 - 5.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

By whom also we have access by faith into the grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also : knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

ARTICLES

Sermon by Elder Cleo Robertson

" Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father 's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you . And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again , and receive you unto myself ; that where I am , there you may be also .

I realize there are many interpretations of this scripture and certainly the world sets forth that God has a house and within it are different rooms for his people . But first of all , let me say to you that God cannot be housed or limited to any building or any limits . He is boundless . There are no limits with God . He is not confined to one place but God is everywhere present and nowhere absent . He fills the universe . We cannot even begin to comprehend the fullness of this God . He has no beginning ; he has no end ; and in our finite minds , everything that we think of naturally , and everything that the carnal mind comes up with must have limits to it . It must have a beginning and it must have an ending . That's the only way we can think ; for , in our natural selves , we have a beginning and will have an end as far as these natural bodies are concerned .

But the carnal mind is enmity against God , is not subject to his laws , neither indeed can be . So the carnal mind cannot reason out the things of God . It cannot search them out ; it cannot through any man 's intellect come up with the things of God or understand them . That comes strictly and solely by revelation and is a spiritual thing , the carnal man cannot understand it . The spiritual man does understand it because that is the spirit of God in you and that is the only way you understand it .

These are the words of Christ as he was talking to a particular people — his disciples that he had called as apostles and separated to this work — that would be his ministers . He knew that his time was approaching when he must go to the cross , that his hour of death was nigh . He had told them this and certainly there were some troubled by that . They did not yet understand what was going to take place . They did not yet understand the death and burial and resurrection of Christ . And so he was telling them , *" Let not your heart be troubled ,"* and he gave them some comfort in the words that he spoke to them .

He said , " In my father's house are many mansions ." Now what house was he talking about ? God does not live or dwell in a house as you and I . Some refer to this as being in heaven and that there are many houses or mansions or rooms there where he will house his people.

But another thing , my dear people , is that when that time comes and Christ comes a second time and he takes his redeemed home to dwell eternally in that eternal heaven , there will not be a separation there between his people . They will be as one there with God . They will

not be separated by walls or rooms or buildings or anything of that sort. This is a perfect place there. There will be one God and I believe that you will worship him in spirit and in truth there because that is what you will be also, a spiritual being. This flesh and this natural body will not be there. But he says " in my father's house." As you will read in the old scriptures as we refer to the old Bible that God had given to his prophets to write down; you will find that just about every time that it refers to one's father's house and many times it is referred to as house of fathers, it is referring not to a building; it is referring not to a structure that man has made; but it is referring to a people. It is referring to those who are called by someone's name name— a generation, if your please, heirs of somebody as Abraham's house, or Joseph's house, or Jacob's house. It is talking about his family, those who are of him. So, it is not talking about Abraham's house as a building, but it is talking about his heirs. So, it is here " in my father's house," it is not talking about a building, but it is talking about the heirs of God. It is setting forth the family of God, those who are called by his name, those that he died for, those who are the elect of God; and that is the house of God. When he told David to build a temple there, it was not to house God in; but, God would come down in that and meet with his people there and worship there. This was a type of something that was going to take place, the temple was, that they built there and it had things that were made after heavenly things.

The scriptures say that " ye are the temple of God." His people are the temple of God and that is where he dwells. And he said that " if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." That is where God dwells with his people— the church of the living God is the house that he is talking about. He is talking about the church, and the church is made up of many mansions that are furnished with things that are perfect, that are bought with an extremely high price.

In the scriptures it says, " who can find a virtuous woman, for her price is beyond rubies ? " He is talking about the church; he is not talking about an individual in the flesh. " Who can find a virtuous woman ? " There is none virtuous in this world. This woman who had an infirmity for 12 years had gone to physician after physician trying to find something to help her. She tried all the doctrines that men have to offer, and I believe that before you came into the knowledge of the truth, you had gone to all the worldly physicians in this world. You had tried them and they could not help your case, could not reach your case, but instead you only grew worse. The more you tried, the worse it got until there came a time when you had spent all that you had as this woman had. And then when you had spent all, and had come to the end, then you heard of Jesus, not just about him.

There is a head knowledge where many people that read about Jesus know so far as the written word is concerned what it says, but

do not have a heart understanding of him — that which is revealed to them by Jesus himself , for he doesn 't dwell in them, but only in his people, those whom he has called and separated from the world . They have a spiritual understanding . So this woman came to him desiring something and was given to believe that only he could reach her case . That was faith, my dear people, that she had been given . She hadn 't obtained it somewhere. Some man had not given it to her. She had not gotten it by reading it in some book, but this was something that God had given to her . He had brought her down to the place that she didn 't have anywhere else to go . She didn't have anywhere else to turn. It is then that he opens your eyes and your ears and causes you to hear of Jesus . And she was given a desire just to touch the hem of his garment and she felt that she would be made whole .

So she came in the press , and there were many people — a crowd of people evidently, according to the scripture, round about and he turned and said, " Who has touched me for I perceive that virtue has gone out ." Oh these disciples did not under - stand, with all the people, why was he asking that question. Who could tell him ? There were too many people around there. They could not tell who had touched Him. But Christ wasn 't asking for information . He knew who had done it. But he was asking for the benefit of this one . She had to come confessing what she was and he said , " Who has touched me , for I perceive that vir - tue has gone out ." Oh , she had to confess , but the virtue went out of Him . The virtue was in Him , it was not in her. She didn't have any, but the virtue went out of Him to her as it does to his people , to His house .

And then he told her to " go in peace , daughter ." Oh how sweet that was — daughter! He acknow - ledged her as His own, one of His — His daughter — a child of God . He knew who she was , he had drawn her to him by the cords of his love. He loved her before she ever knew who he was. He had always loved her — this is an eternal love that he loves his people with — an everlasting love. At the appointed time of God, he caused her to come, but she had to go down to his feet and touch the hem of his garment. She had to be brought down and he told her to go in peace. He gave her peace. I believe it was sufficient for her .

That was a mansion , my dear people. It is furnished with the best and the price far exceeds anything else for the price is far above rubies. All the gold and all the silver and all the rubies of this world couldn 't purchase her. It wasn't sufficient to pay the price . All the works of our hands aren 't sufficient to pay the price for this mansion . It took the precious blood of Jesus Christ to pay that price for that mansion . It was sufficient and it is furnished with the righteousness of Christ .

There is nothing unholy about that mansion in Christ, His Father's house , but you know that when the prodigal son went out and spent all that he had he also came to the very end . He began to think of his fat - her's house, not the building that his father lived in , but his father 's

house. Those that were of his father. He began to long to go back. He had a desire just to be a servant in his father's house. His father gave him the best robe — a robe of righteousness — it was the best robe. There was a mansion and it was furnished with the best — it had mercy and love.

And in this father's house there is a window — a window of faith. When He told Noah to build the ark, there was a window put in above and through that window came the light. Through this window they were given to see. So it is in the father's house. There is a window of faith for everyone of his people — the light comes in. You are given to see through that window. You can't see Christ and the things of Christ in any other way but through the window of faith. And the scripture says that all men have not faith. Well, if all men have not faith, then there is somebody who is not of God. There is somebody that is not of his people, for He has given faith to His people. I believe just as surely as He has given it to you, that He is going to manifest it to you through the trials and tribulations that you have, to show you that He has given it to you and to show you that it is sufficient to meet every need that you have, not matter how severe the trial or sorrow. No, you don't feel that you have faith. Not now. I don't believe that Stephen realized that he had the faith that he had until it was manifested to him, until it was proved there. And he saw that God had given him what he needed for that moment. Yes, it has the window of faith in it.

This house of God also has a door. It is none other than Christ. And no one can enter through that door except His people. He says, " No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." You can't go to Him except the Father who sent Him draw you. He is the door to this house. It is by Him that you enter in. I believe that that door shut out somebody just as certainly as it shut in somebody.

When God closed the door to the ark, He didn't leave it to Noah to close the door. He didn't leave it to any man to close that door, nor one of Noah's family, but God closed the door to the ark Himself. He shut them in and that way they were secure and they were certain there. There could be no leak in that ark. They were not in jeopardy in the ark. And just as surely as He shut them in, He shut out everything of the world, for it has a door and I believe it also has a banqueting table.

One in the scripture wrote that he brought me into the banqueting house and his banner over me was love. Oh, what a feast it is when He brings you in there. You feast on the things of God, the things that are satisfying and edifying and strengthening to you, and comfort and peace. Oh, you don't feel worthy of it. None of us are. You know when David asked if there were any of Saul's house left to whom I may show kindness, for Jonathan's sake, not for Saul's, but for Jonathan's sake, there was one they said: Mephibosheth, lame on both of his feet. He couldn't come of himself.

Oh, the world will tell you that you have got to come, you have to go, you've got to do this and do that,

you've got to accept him, that he is calling you. But if you are lame on both feet, how can you go? If you are in the condition that this one was in, how can you go? But He said to bring him. I believe they brought him and set him at the king's table. As he sat there eating the king's food, his afflictions didn't show. Oh no, for he was one just as the others were. For what a feast it was. He said, "I'm as a dead dog, I am not worthy to sit at the king's table. Oh, a dead dog has no usefulness at all. It is dead. That's how he felt. He was not of any use to anybody. There was nothing about him that was of any good or any benefit. Why would they bring me to the king's table? Such a place! But he did it for Jonathan's sake who was a type of Christ. It's for Jonathan's sake that you are brought to the king's table to feast there on the king's food. He showed kindness to you, mercy to you, love to you, and all the food they were given to feast on at the king's table. It may not be too often that we are brought there and we are given to feast like that; but, oh how precious and how good it is when we are enabled to sit at the king's table eating of his food. There is no comparison with our food, the things of carnal man, oh no.

The prodigal son, the husks that were fed to the swine couldn't satify him. There was just nothing to it. He desired to go to his father's house. They prepared a table there for him. All the food that was strengthening to him, that was sustenance to him was in his father's house. The mansions are his people there.

Each one of you is a mansion in the father's house. You've been clothed with the best robe, you have been given mercy and the love of God. You've been bought with a price that far exceeds anything this world could afford. You are a mansion in the father's house and he said "I go to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am there you may be also."

Where was the place that he was going to prepare for these ones? Evidently something had not yet been prepared. I don't believe it was heaven. I don't believe it was that place where you are going to dwell eternally with God. If it had not yet been prepared, if there was something yet not done, then it was imperfect. But it was complete, and perfect and had ever been so. Oh, yes, he came to redeem you from under the curse of the law, but you had already been elected. He already knew his own. Everything had already been prepared for you in heaven. There was nothing lacking there, and yet he had to go and prepare a place for these. He was talking to his apostles. He was going to send them somewhere. You know that when he rose from the dead he said, "go into all the world and preach the gospel." And they did go into all the world of believers. That was the world he was talking about and Paul said that that was done. They fulfilled that commandment, and yet the world wants to try to do it this day. But it has already been done. It was fulfilled as far as his commandment to his apostles there. They were instructed to do

that. They went into all the world of believers wherever they were. They preached Jesus , the gospel , to them and wherever his people are today, the gospel is there with them. It is inside them. They may not have a minister in the flesh there, but yet God does not forsake his people. He knows where they are and whatever country they are in.

You , in your own experience , when there was no one there but you, didn't you hear the word of God come to you. I believe some of the most precious times I have experienced have been when I have been alone, by myself, and not an audible word was heard. But yet there was something inside — there was preaching going on there. The word of God had gone out, the gospel was preached , and yet not a man was there. You can't limit this God. He is going to be with his people wherever they are , and they are going to know him . But he has to prepare a place. He told them that " if I go not away, then the Holy Spirit will not come ," but he said , " I go away that the Holy Spirit will come." There is another Comforter coming and he is going to reside in you , abide in you and he is going to take the things of Jesus and show them unto you. He is going to lead you , guide you and instruct you. " I'll not leave you comfortless , but I will come again ."

Now he sent his apostles unto his people, but before they could go to his people , something had to be done. How did they know to whom to go and if they went of themselves , what would they take ? And if they went and something had not been prepared, how could it be received? So he had to prepare a place for them among his people. He prepared his people . He came and established his kingdom within the hearts of you. He prepared you to receive his gospel and if he had not prepared you , then what would it mean if his apostles came and preached unto you? It wouldn't mean a thing to you. There had to be a place prepared for these apostles to go before they could go. When a pastor comes to you, when God sends one to you to preach his word , he has prepared you to receive him. And I believe that where Jesus is , there you are. You are in him and he is in you, so that" where I am, there ye shall be also." If we are where he is not manifested , then there is nothing to it . It doesn't mean anything to you and neither can the preacher preach . But He must be there and the preparation must have been made by him both for you and the minister. So he had to go to prepare a place for his apostles and his ministers to go. He prepared his people , he prepared their hearts. He said" I will write my laws in their hearts and put them in their minds and I will be unto them a God and they shall be to me a people ."

But when he hung there on the tree of the cross , the veil was rent and when he rose from the dead , they were commanded to go and preach to the world of believers , which included the Gentiles — us . But there had to be a preparation made before they could go . The word of God when it goes out is effective. It doesn't return unto him void. He knows where unto he sends

it. So the place was prepared and I believe just as surely as he has done a work in you and caused you to come to the church, that he has prepared a place for you there. It's already prepared. He prepared it. He prepared the people there to receive you as much as he prepared you to go. This God works at both ends. He doesn't just give you a desire to go and then leave you floundering. This thing is sure and certain. He said that "where I am, there you may be also."

Oh, how wonderful and precious it is when we can feel his presence with us. If he is not in our midst, then there is nothing there. You can make all the preparation you want to for a meeting like this, but unless Christ is there, unless he has prepared it, prepared you and the minister, then it doesn't mean a thing. The kingdom is within you. There he rules and reigns and he is your priest, prophet and king.

Elder Cleo Robertson

Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying. My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Isaiah 46 : 10.

Think about that statement for a while, from ancient times, to things way back from the beginning to things way out in the future. His counsel will stand, and he will do all his pleasure. As we read the scripture, and read history we know of some of the things that have happened in the past, both good and bad. As we hear and learn of these things we also see that God has ruled and is still ruling. Let us consider a few things the scripture speaks of, to avoid being too lengthy I won't quote scripture verbatim, but rather write in my own words. When Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, with all the dreadful consequences, don't you believe God was still in power. The children of Israel who was his chosen people while held in bondage, by the Egyptians being mistreated in many ways. Even so, don't you believe God was still in control, to prove that he was the scripture says that he brought them out an the selfsame day. Meaning the very day God had purposed that they would remain there. The three Hebrew children was thrown into a fiery furnace. Was God still in control? The heat didn't even sear a hair. When Daniel was cast into a lions den. Was God still in control? There wasn't a lion in that den that even scratched him. Look at the treatment the blessed Saviour suffered while here on earth, while in the body of flesh. Paul was stoned many times, John was beheaded, Stephen was stoned and many more such things which are too numerous to mention. But I say unto you that God was still in power, all things were working according to the pleasure of his will. Many of these things were spoken of before hand in a manner like this. And it came to pass, see God had sent his prophets telling of these things that were to happen, and just as sure as one of his prophets spoke, with God speaking

through him, the things he said was sure to happen, it would be recorded in Holy Writ in this manner. And it came to pass. My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.

Think of the terrible suffering and death of so many people during the civil war, and all the other awful wars we have read about in the past. Times when awful diseases would run through countries with no one able to control them, we read and hear of these things and are sometimes made to wonder. But thanks to the good Lord we still have to say, God is still in control. Think of all the people on this earth, God put them all here, gave all of them life. He chose the very minute they would receive life and the very minute they would die and the exact way. So we can see that it was his will that many would leave here during these wars, maybe this sounds cruel to you, but I say unto you that God has the power over death. The scripture says it is appointed unto man once to die, and I believe God is in control of every bit of it. Some of these things may be hard to understand. But remember God's ways are not our ways and his thoughts are higher than our thoughts as the sky is above the earth. My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure.

As we have looked at the past and have seen the things that have happened, and also seen how the Lord has controlled things, let us pause and consider some things that are before us today. There are problems today that without faith in the power of God, that he can and will control all things, would surely make us pause and wonder. Look at the terrible condition things are in around the Persian Gulf with the awful weapons that mankind has today, and many of them in the hands of a mad man, before that is settled it could be terrible to think about. The awful disease called aids, is spreading throughout most of the world causing much death and suffering. All these drugs that so many have started using is causing more trouble than most of us even know about. The many babies who are born to women who use these drugs are bound to cause trouble and burdens for years to come. In this country where I have enjoyed untold blessings from God we have all kinds of problems. People live in such a way that it seems as if it would be worse than Sodom or Gomorrah. The national debt doesn't make any of us happy. I am not writing all these things to make anyone sad, or fearful or in a complaining way. But rather to point out the fact that God has control over all things now as we have seen he did in the past. Men who are blessed with a God given faith, has faith to believe in the power and goodness of God, knowing that is able to work all things after the counsel of his own will. If I didn't have faith in the power of God to handle all things, I would look at the things I have mentioned here and would really wonder. But see, God put all that great source and supply of oil when it is, and he put it there for a purpose. I believe he could have just as easily put it here in the U.S.A. He put it there for a purpose and that purpose is being fulfilled even today.

Let us look now at part of one

verse of scripture Rev . 19 : 6 — ***Alleluia for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.*** (The word omnipotent, means almighty, all powerful). As we have been thinking about sad or terrible things, let us now look at this . We read where the scripture stated in Isaiah, his counsel would stand, and he would do all his pleasure, well that was way back in the distant past, many years ago . So now to show you that His power still holds, to remove any doubt as to the power of God. Here is this positive statement , written through the Apostle John as God revealed to him the things that must surely come to pass . ***Alleluia, God omnipotent reigneth.*** Now we can look at all these terrible things in a different way, believing in our heart that as bad as they may seem, they are all under the control of God. This declaration was made near the end of time as we know it, at the consumation of all things . So we are given assurance that none of these things or things to come will be too much for God to handle, or overthrow his power at all.

As we have looked and spoke of the things which are happening in this world as bad and great as they are, now let us look at something that is of much more importance to each of us, our individual soul . Those of us who profess a belief in Christ as our Saviour, who have sit in heavenly places, tasted the sweetness of his love, felt the peace that passeth understanding. I believe (at least I am) that at times because of our sins we are plagued with doubt and made to cry out, Oh what a wretch I am, it seems the harder I try, the worse I do. I believe I have been shown that I have not the power to better myself, or to live in such a way as to be pleasing to God by my works . So I have been given this precious verse of scripture, ***Alleluia the Lord God omnipotent reigneth*** therefore I know he has the power to bring to pass and to keep all those precious promises he has made to his children through the scripture . Didn't he also say, ***Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*** So with our God given faith, resting in him and his atonement for me. I believe he has the power to say, ***Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the earth.***

A brother in Christ, I hope .
Frank Hunt

EFFECTUAL CALLING

Webster defines effectual as follows: " Producing or having adequate power or force to produce an intended effect ." To deny the effectual calling of God's elect, is a branch of outright infidelity. Since the Bible says they are the called according to his purpose (Rom. 8 : 28), ***" they are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called*** (Jude 1:1). ***" They are called to be saints, I am confident, " says Paul. " That he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ." " And I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and ye shall keep my judgments and do them "*** (Ezek . 36 : 27) .

The outward call of the gospel is not effectual unless the inward call

of the Spirit has preceded it. The outward call to those not having the inward is a stumbling block and foolishness. The inward call is always effectual, because the elect are predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son and whom he predestinated, He called, justified, and glorified, and no charge can be laid against them. How shall he not with him freely give us all things? How shall he fail to give us all things since he has promised them in Christ, all things that pertain to life and Godliness?

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

What a doctrine! What a merciful God that would bestow such wonderful things upon sinners! Sometimes, when we are given to ponder over salvation by grace, it seems too much that such worms as we sons of Adam know ourselves to be, are freely given Christ as our Surety, whereby we are called sons of God. Believing in the harmony of divine testimony, we find John calling the attention of the children of God to this same doctrine: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."—1 John iii. 1. This "manner of love" caused the old apostle to write to Ephesus the language of our text. It caused him to be bold as a lion, wise as a serpent and yet harmless as a dove, to write that christian's theme, We know that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them that are called according to his purpose; to fight the good fight of faith; to instruct them that needed it, and to rebuke the unruly.

We hear much about preparing ourselves to preach, but God prepared Paul for his preaching and writing. One, if not the chief, reason we have so many isms in the church today is because of man's preparation to preach. Paul, prior to his miraculous calling from nature to grace, believed in keeping the law for life and salvation. God brought him out of this step by step, making him testify all along to God's children that it was due to grace. Some people, many of whom are wearing the name Old School Baptist, do not like to speak of God making his children do things. But in no other way could Paul leave this admonition with the church at Ephesus. Love, this kind that is peculiar, insomuch that when it is bestowed upon the heirs of promise the world no longer knows them, as it did not know Him, must efficaciously be shed abroad in the hearts of his dear children, and it produces fruit. It is strong as death, and none of these modern work-mongers are able to withstand death. It seizes upon rich and poor, high and low, bond and free, and they answer the call. To illustrate: We have recently been in the limelight in Alabama, because a poor miner's wife gave birth to quadruplets. They were lifted from obscurity to prominence, from rags

to riches . The town in which they were located was enjoying thou - sands of dollars of tourist trade. But in the midst of this wild celebration disease seized upon one of the babies and laid it low in death. Every Everything was done for it that money and medical skill could offer, but it had to die. So love, being as strong as death, when it is shed abroad in the hearts of the children of God, it produces obedience ; it honors and glorifies the Creator instead of the creatures ; it cause them to lose confidence in the flesh, and last, but not least, it causes them to fall out with the frivolous things of this world.

Believing that we have a foundation for whatever the text contains, let us look into its beauties. Let us remember that we must have grace to go into these things, and I do hope, if it is His will, that I may have an unction from the Holy One as I make the attempt. " And now, brethren, I commend you to God." Why do that, Paul? Why not tell them that they have matters in their own hands, and that they are able to have a prosperous church and live above trouble while in this world ? We might imagine the amazement of the apostle to call in question his statement. Every genuine Old Baptist knows that God is all we have to look to. Paul had lost everything that was precious to the natural man, including friends, position and money. Something had to be given him of more magnitude, power and wonderfulness to make him write as he did: " Yea, doubt - less, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God through faith: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death." Phil. iii. 8-10. Watch that man as the Lord brings him on the way. Oh how we cling to our own power, the things of this world and our own righteousness ! But Paul was made to renounce all things as but dung. Oh what are riches without Him? What are families and friends when we are in the gloom? Yes, the text is a good one, and I feel that the apostle was well qualified to commend the brethren to God " and to the word of his grace." Many people who have never been brought into the saving power of this Word of grace are ready to say that this is the written Bible, but, dear brethren, Paul commends and points us to something more wonderful than that. To the word of his grace. Ah, methinks I see him as he lays aside his glory and comes to his brethren, manifest in the flesh. This is the One that admonishes this grace of God. We hear him as he forever puts a seal on salvation by redeeming grace: I came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. This living Word of this grace is not bound and waiting for men to act first (to do so would not be grace, but works), but as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, so the Son

quickeneth whom he will. (John v. 21 .) Furthermore, the Word of this grace is all we have right now. He is a living Savior. He is a present Savior No wonder the apostle wanted to commend to the brethren the Word of His grace. He had found him such a refuge in time of trouble (Heb. vi. 18; Psalms xlvi. 1) that he could well commend the brethren to him.

" Which is able to build you up." Let us praise such a wonderful Being. The world cannot understand why we are such sticklers for grace. None but those who are grace-taught can read this language right. Learning cannot know this statement is one coming from One who is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent, but rather they all hinge salvation on conditions. Ah, poor, wayworn Old School Baptist! Here is something that was spoken to the church. The Builder of the kingdom is an able builder, even a master-builder. He cannot fail to keep this only set upon a hill. Our persuasion is that no power will ever pull it down. But brethren, the apostle is not treating upon the bringing in of new material altogether, but rather let us cherish the idea that He is able to build us up. Us, we who are, as we hope, already in the kingdom, need building up.

As I pen these lines to the poor and afflicted Old School Baptists who are scattered over land and country, I meet them in my mind, in union and sweet fellowship, each sighing and groaning as they look back in retrospection upon the rough journey they have so far come. Ah, with what shame must we confess that so many times we have builded on sand. So much of the time have we tried to walk in our own strength; so many times have we hewed out cisterns of our own, only to find that they are broken; so many times does the poor old minister fear that he has run when he did not have the unction from the Holy One. But, dear brethren and sisters, be of good cheer, He is able to build us up; yea, he will perform all the purposes connected with us.

Let us look for something besides those places of shifting quicksands. It is bitter contrast and warfare to the christian, and just as sure as we see so many scenes where we have builded by our own efforts, on a sandy foundation, we are sure to see spots that are like unto a Bethel to our poor souls. As said, He is a wise Masterbuilder. He knows we are ofttimes ready to despair and he builds us up at the proper time. I shall never forget when I had builded high ambitions in an educational field, and believed that I was all right. Oh what a scene when Paul was turned from what he chose to be to that the Lord chose and called him to to! Ah, the very elements were shaken and all nature seemed to be sad in sympathetic pose because I was dying. Dying, did you say? Ah, yes I was dying to the stability of my own building and workmanship. But I cannot forget that time, so precious and full of consolation, when the Lord showed me another building, and even gave me a boon, that troubles and unfitness have not removed, that I was part of the building.

I have doubted much as to my call to the ministry, as by birth, name

and life have been peculiarly connected with circumstances of other people. I have lamented that I felt that if I had not been caught in a whirl of circumstances I would not have been connected with the church as I am, and that I feel that I was deceived and deceiving others. Several times in the midst of these soul-searching times have I received that building up by this same Word of his power. This same Builder is the chief corner-stone of the building. Every member of this building is fitted in as it pleases the Builder. To all the Old School Baptists who feel they are nothing, and not worthy to be among such people, let me say that every member is a particular member. Then every blessing is yours. He will build you up.

"And to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Oh, poor soul, why art thou cast down? You have an inheritance that the Lord will give you among the sanctified. It is sweet here sometimes to enjoy the "earnest" of this inheritance, among his dear children here, in a church capacity, but in that day we shall see him that was slain for our sins, and shall look fondly on him.

I do not expect to meet many of the SIGNS' readers, but I want to commend you to God, and the Word of his grace, who is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among the sanctified. At that time I hope to meet you.

Submitted in love,
Elder W.D. Griffin

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." — Hebrews iv. 15, 16.

What heart can conceive or tongue recount the daily, hourly triumphs of the Lord Jesus Christ's all-conquering grace? We see scarcely a millionth part of what he, as a King on his throne, is daily doing; and yet we see enough to know that he ever lives at God's right hand, and lives to save and bless. What a crowd of needy petitioners every moment surrounds his throne! What urgent wants and woes to redress; what cutting griefs and sorrows to assuage; what broken hearts to bind up; what wounded consciences to heal; what countless prayers to hear; what earnest petitions to grant; what stubborn foes to subdue; what guilty fears to quell! What clemency, what kindness, what longsuffering what compassion, what mercy, what love, and yet what power and authority does this Almighty Sovereign display! No circumstance is too trifling; no petitioner too insignificant; no case too hard; no difficulty too great; no suer too importunate; no beggar too ragged; no bankrupt too penniless; no debtor too insolvent, for him not to notice and not to relieve. Sitting on his throne of grace, his allseeing eye views all, his almighty hand grasps all, and his loving heart

embraces all whom the Father gave him by covenant, whom he himself redeemed by his blood, and whom the blessed Spirit has quickened into life by his invincible power. The hopeless, the helpless; the out-casts whom no man careth for; the tossed with tempest and not comforted; the ready to perish; the mourners in Zion; the bereaved widow; the wailing orphan; the sick in body, the still more sick in heart; the racked with hourly pain; the fevered consumptive; the wrestler with death's last struggle — O what crowds of pitiable objects surround his throne; and all needing a look from his eye, a word from his lips, a smile from his face, a touch from his hand! O could we but see what his grace is, what his grace has, what his grace does; and could we but feel more what it is doing in and for ourselves, we should have more exalted views of the reign of grace now exercised on high by Zion's enthroned King!

J.C. Philpot

ROMANS 6 : 3 - 5.

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

CONTRIBUTIONS

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Ralph C. Lucas, VA	5.00
Mrs. J.T. Flippen, VA	2.00
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Editors

OBITUARIES

MARTHA MARGARET " BETSY " TRIPP AVERY

At the request of Hancock Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing, we will try to write an obituary for our mother Martha Margaret Tripp Avery, better known as Betsy.

Our mother was born in Pitt County near the Renston Community, which is located near Ayclen, N.C. on December 5, 1908. She was the daughter of W.L. and Mary Smith Tripp. She had one brother and two sisters.

Our mother married Chester Arthur Avery on December 15, 1926. They were married while sitting in our father's car by preacher Walter Nobles of Winterville, N.C. Unto this union two daughters were born, Mrs. Doris Sawyer and Mrs. Bettie Sue Joyner.

After marriage, our mother moved to the Winterville Community, where she lived the rest of her life. She was a housewife, gardener, and helped our father with the farm until his retirement. During her lifetime, she saw many changes in housekeeping, gardening, and farming as well as in many other areas.

During her childhood, she attended Hancock Primitive Baptist with her parents. After an absence of many years, she began to attend church again on occasion. Then on third Saturday night, June 14, 1958, she joined Hancock Primitive Baptist Church near Ayclen, N.C. She was baptized the next day. It was a joyous time. From that time on, she was always ready to attend church. She enjoyed preparing meals for the all day meetings, having people come home with us after Sunday services to eat lunch and visiting other churches. She loved Hancock Church and it was a sweet place for her.

In August, 1988, she was diagnosed as having a pre - leukemic (blood disorder) condition, that would require periodic visits to the hospital to receive blood. At first she refused to do this. Because of her refusal for treatment, she had a heart attack on October 14, 1988. After an eight day stay in the hospital, she returned home. After two weeks at home, she was able to return to most of her normal activities. With the Lord's help, she did very well until February, 1989 when she had another heart attack. After a three week stay in the hospital, she returned home. Although she was able to take care of her personal needs, she needed help with the household chores. With the assistance of an elderly black lady, my sister and I was able to care for her at home. She enjoyed the visits from her brethren, relatives, and friends. She fought a courageous battle against her blood disease and heart disease, which both required many visits to the doctors and hospital. In August 22, 1989, she entered the hospital once again suffering from a third heart attack in ten months. On August 23, 1989, at age 80, the Lord called her home.

Her funeral was conducted August 25, 1989 at 3 p.m. at Farmer Funeral Home in Aylen, N.C. by Elder Harold H. Pittman and Elder J.T. Prescott. Their words were very comforting to our family. Our mother was entombed in the cemetery at Hancock Primitive Baptist Church.

She is survived by her daughters, Doris and her husband, Joe, of Winterville, N.C.; Bettie Sue and her husband, Edward of Greenville, N.C.; four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Although she is missed greatly by us, we would not have her back to suffer as she did during the last 10 months of her life. We can only hope that it is the Lord's will that we can join her one day where there is no suffering and pain, only joy and peace.

Written by her daughters who miss her very much.

Doris Sawyer
Bettie Sue Joyner

NELLIE DIX COLLIE

Nellie Dix Collie was born June 9, 1907 in Mayfield, North Carolina to Mollie and Larkin Dix. She married John Siddle Collie on December 8, 1928. To this union were born three sons and one daughter, John S. Collie, Jr. of Route 7, Reidsville, North Carolina, David F. Collie of Atlanta, Georgia, Bob R. Collie of Route 12, Reidsville, North Carolina and Peggy C. West of Ruffin, North Carolina. Besides her children she leaves two sisters, Mary P. Brinegar of Spencer, Virginia and Essie D. Moose of Reidsville, North Carolina.

Sister Collie (Aunt Nellie) united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on August 27, 1938 and was baptized on the following fourth Sunday morning in the Dan River. She loved her Church, her pastors and all her brothers and sisters in Christ. She attended her Church regularly as long as her health permitted and enjoyed the preaching and singing so much.

After her husband was called away, she seemed to long for the day when she too could depart this old world. As her health worsened she found little pleasure here below and often spoke of wanting to leave. It seemed that the hymn, " Why should we start and fear to die ? ", became more and more precious to her as the day approached. Though we miss her so very much, we know that our loss has been her eternal gain.

She departed this life on August 3, 1990. Funeral services were held at Wilkerson Funeral Home (as our Church was undergoing remodeling) by her Pastor, Elder Kenneth R. Key, and Elder H.W. Wray. Interment was in the Church cemetery where she was laid to rest to await the " " coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints." " The Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

She was a firm believer in the

Primitive Baptist doctrine and felt that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. I would say to the family as Paul said to the Thessalonians, " that ye sorrow not even as others which have no hope."

Written by request of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church while in conference on September 22, 1990.

Jean Moran

DEACON REUBEN R. FRENCH

Brother Reuben was born August 29, 1920 in Rockingham County, North Carolina. He was the son of the late William R. French and Annie Robertson French. He departed this life June 3, 1990.

On November 15, 1940, he married Sister Beatrice Cobb who predeceased him on December 6, 1988. They were blessed with four loving children. He is survived by his daughter; Mrs. Barbara Bolden, three sons; Rick, Donnie, and David French, nine grandchildren; four brothers; Jett, Roy, Clarence and W.R. French, and three sisters; Mrs Mrs. Alma Johnson, Mrs. Lizzie Julian and Ms. Linda Roberts.

Brother Reuben joined Dan River Church March 8, 1970 and was baptised by his pastor, the late Elder D.V. Spangler. He was a highly esteemed member and attended his meetings regularly. Brother Reuben was blessed to travel far and near among the baptists. His home was a haven for the Lord's people. Being a firm believer in Salvation by Grace and the Resurrection of the Dead, he was blessed to walk softly and humbly before his brethren trusting in an all wise and merciful God. It was his delight to discuss the scriptures and relate how he had been blessed with spiritual blessings as well as natural possessions by his Heavenly Father Often times he quoted Romans 8:28 " And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose."

In January 1980, Dan River Church recognized a gift in Brother Reuben and ordained him a deacon, an office he filled well, being blessed to uphold the order of the church. Uppermost in his mind was the welfare of the church and her members.

Brother French could witness with Paul in II Timothy 4:7-8 " I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing."

His funeral was conducted at Dan River Church by his pastor Elder Kenneth Key and Elder H.W. Wray. He was buried in the church cemetery beside his loving wife to await the glorious resurrection morn when Christ the righteous Judge shall come to take his ransomed people home.

May God comfort and sustain all who mourn the loss of our dear brother, but we feel our loss is his eternal gain.

The writer mourns the loss of a dear Brother in Christ and the loss of

her fiance'. We were engaged to be married June 30, 1990, but it wasn't in God's Master Plan.

Written in love,
Sister Phyllis Snyder

SISTER BERTIE HALL

I've been asked to write a few words in memory of Bertie Cobb Saunders Hall. She was a good mother and friend, always cooking for, and visiting the sick, or preparing, and having people in her home. She was an humble and gentle person who always looked for the best in everyone. The joyful times that we were blessed to enjoy, in past seasons, shall not be forgotten.

On August 11, 1990, at his appointed hour, our Heavenly Father called sister Bertie home. She was born June 14, 1905, to the late John and Mary Cobb. Sister Bertie married Roy Saunders in her early years. He preceded her in death by several years. To this union were born two daughters, Mrs. Dorothy Henderson of Raleigh, N.C., and Mrs. Wilma Jones of Reidsville, N.C. who survive her, along with four grandchildren, 3 great- grandchildren, and one sister, Mrs. Beula Smith of McLeansville, N.C. On December 31, 1973, Sister Bertie married brother Joel Hall, a dear member of Dan River Church, who also preceded her in death, on April 12, 1985

Sister Bertie asked for and was received into Dan River Church on November 26, 1955 and she was baptized on March 25, 1956 by her pastor Elder David Spangler. She loved her church and the doctrine of salvation by grace. She faithfully attended her meetings regularly.

Sister Bertie Hall made her funeral arrangements, including the songs she wanted sung. The funeral was held by her pastor, Elder Kenneth Key and Elder Cleo Robertson. They spoke so comforting to the family and many brethren, sisters, and friends that filled the chapel. She was laid to rest beneath a mound of beautiful flowers by her first husband to await the coming of Jesus Christ.

May the Lord grant the family faith to sustain them in their sorrow.

Written by one who loved her.

Betty Southard

MARGIE HOLLOWAY

It is with a sad heart we write of the death of Sister Margie Holloway. Sister Margie was born April 14, 1904 and died July 13, 1990. She was the daughter of the late Joshua and Sister Annie Adkins.

June 18, 1928 she married Louis N. Holloway. They had one son Louis Norman Holloway. She asked for a home with the Forest Grove Church, Parsonsburg, M.D. and was baptized November 11, 1945 by her Pastor Elder H.M. Bennett and remained a faithful member until her death. She loved attending the meetings here and visiting sister churches from Maine to North Carolina and entertaining the Brethren in

her home as long as she was able. She was ill several years but love for her Lord and Church was a comfort to the end.

Her funeral was conducted at the Holloway Funeral Home by her Pastor Elder J.R. Williams and Mr. Gary Hawkins.

Ethel M. Holloway

SISTER NANNIE SIMPSON

After a two week stay in the hospital, God called our dear Sister Simpson from this world on July 31, 1990.

She was born on April 5, 1904 in Pittsylvania County. She was the daughter of Samuel D. Short and Ella Scruggs Short.

She was married to Floyd Simpson, who is deceased. She was also preceded in death by a son, Wilber Simpson of Philadelphia, Pa.; eight grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Sister Simpson worked with Memorial Hospital of Danville and also did private duty sitting with the sick or elderly until her retirement.

In 1941 Sister Simpson joined the church during a service at Dan River Church, but requested that her membership be put at Malmaison Church.

On the fifth Sunday in March 1963, she came forward asking for a home with this church and was accepted unanimously. She was a faithful and supportive member of this church the remainder of her life. A quiet, gentle person and strong in her belief, she loved the church and doctrine it proclaimed. She derived great pleasure from listening to the gospel being preached and I feel was fed many times from the Master's table.

Sister Simpson also enjoyed the fellowship of the brethren, sisters and friends and welcomed their visits in her home.

Her health had been failing for years causing her to be unable to walk without the aid of a walker. She stated that she wasn't in pain, just unable to walk. Whenever possible, she attended church regularly, bringing her walker with her. She didn't complain about her declining health and bore it with patience.

After she became disabled and could not care for herself, she was blessed that her two daughters took turns caring for her the remainder of her life. They invited brethren, sisters and friends to visit her whenever possible and made them feel welcome when they came.

The funeral was conducted from Colbert - Moran Chapel in Gretna, Virgina by Elder Melvin Shelton and burial was in the Simpson family cemetery in Hurt, Va.

We shall miss Sister Simpson, but feel that she was ready to meet her God. The church wishes to express its heartfelt sympathy to her family. I feel this verse of scripture aptly describes her life. " I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." II Timothy 4 : 7.

Written by order of the church: requesting that a copy be sent to family members, one sent for publication and one kept for church records.

Ruth M. Taylor - Clerk
Banister Springs Church

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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WAITING

How long dear Lord will troubles last
How long before the storms are past
How long before the trials cease
How long before I feel Thy peace

It seems so long since I have known
The hand that Thou alone hath shown
Times of sorrow that have no end
Joy and peace I long Thee to send

We know that we should not complain
For its in Thy hands to come again
Yet longing hearts desire to know
That Mercy and Love continue to flow

Thou measureth time not in days
As do men of worldly ways
Yet it seems so long between
The times when Thou alone art seen

Give us patience Lord to wait
Until Thou openest Grace's gate
To let us look within the Fold
And view the Flock of young and old

Relieve us Lord of toil and strife
Renew our hope of eternal life
Manifest Thy presence so dear
Among Thy children Thou holdest near

Give us to feel that short at hand
We'll see and walk the Promised land
Where trials and tears come no more
On God's celestial and peaceful shore

C.B. Davis, Jr.

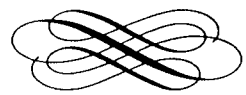

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MEDITATION OF A THIRTEEN YEAR OLD

As I sit on the rim of the warped sandbox which now holds my modest garden, I watch the clouds roll gently across the evening sky. As dusk draws nearer, the clouds seem to shift their positions as if to give the sun center stage to make it it's grand finale. Even as I watch, the sky grows dark, deepening into the brilliant purple, I know so well. As I watch the sun go down in it's array of fallish hues matching the leaves that clutter the backyard of my home. I realize as the sun makes it's final stand this day, I too will one day pass on and when I do, I want to do it as brilliantly and as breathtakingly as the sun.

Karen Glidewell
(Granddaughter of Ed and Audrey Glidewell)

EDITORIAL

Before introducing the following article we would like to offer our thanks to God for his many blessings unto each of us and for making the publishing of the " Signs of the Times " possible for this the 159th year. We are grateful for our editorial staff and for their editorials that are both edifying and comforting.

Thanks to you who have sent in articles for publication and to you for the gifts that make it possible to send the " Signs " to those who are unable to pay. If any of you know anyone who would enjoy the "Signs" and unable to afford it we will be glad to send it to them free.

We would also like to expand our distribution and we ask your help in doing this. Please order a subscription for your children or grandchildren if you think they would enjoy it. If you know a friend you think would enjoy the " Signs " tell them about it and how to subscribe.

Now the following editorial was written in 1960 by the late Elder D.V. Spangler who was editor of the Signs of the Times for more than 40 years. This is being presented by request.

The Editors

THE LOST SHEEP

Sometime ago I received a request from a dear brother to write an article on the subject of the Lost Sheep.

In presenting to our readers such thoughts as we have on the subject, it is with fear and trembling; there is a difference of opinion among brethren on the subject, and we hope a mantle of charity will be cast over the article; and if there are those who view the matter differently, we would be glad to have them write on the subject. As long as one manifests a brotherly spirit in his writings, we are glad to publish his articles; provided they conform to the principles of salvation by grace.

We find the subject of sheep throughout the Bible. The wealth of a person was often determined by the number of sheep owned. The animal was useful for food, and used under the law as a sacrifice — as a type of Jesus Christ.

Often in the presentation of them in the Scriptures they seem to represent the church of God as a whole. The line is often drawn between sheep and goats, as representing the elect and the non-elect; or the saved and the eternally lost. The parables of the Kingdom of Heaven seem to present two classes of people. The difference between the virgins was that five were wise, and five were foolish: five took oil in their vessels with their lamps; and five took no oil with them. Five went in with the Bridegroom to the marriage and the door was shut; and five returned after going to buy oil, and found the door shut. Under the legal or law dispensation, the Hebrew nation was often a type of the church which would be set up under the gospel dispensation; and often referred to as the House of Israel. But all are not Israel that are of Israel, but in Isaac (Jesus) the seed is called; which is the church of Jesus Christ. Though the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant is saved. This remnant, in our humble judgement, represents the lost sheep of the House of Israel.

Under the sacrificial law the priest and High priest made offerings for the people daily and yearly, with a promise of better things to come, as a lamb was bound to the altar, and his life taken by the priest. As this lamb was kept continually before the house of Israel as a promise of the coming of the Lamb of God who should take away the sins of the world, no doubt there were among the worshippers Israelites who saw no more than a literal offering; and others who saw Him who was brought as a Lamb to the slaughter for our sins. Faith in the offerer was that which distinguished between the true Israelite, and they who were after the flesh.

Many saw these daily offerings, and longed for a better sacrifice. Many longed for a better righteousness than could be obtained by daily offerings; and only where there was a God given faith could one see the day of Jesus, and rejoice. Abraham saw his day, and by faith could say to Isaac, as they journeyed to the mount where God had commanded him to make an offering of his son, "God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering."

As the coming of the Lord Jesus drew nigh , the Jewish priesthood had sunk to such a low level that the torn and the lame were often substituted for the Lamb without blemish: the people brought that which was torn and presented it to the priest for an offering ; and this was referred to in the book of Malachi as robbing God . Tradition had taken the place of the commandments of God , and Israel had sunk to a low state. And yet, with this dark picture before us , we are reminded that there remained some who thought upon His name ; and a book of remembrance was written for them. These are referred to in the 24th chapter of Ezekiel :

" As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered ; so will I seek out my sheep , and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day . And I will bring them out from the people , and gather them from the countries , and will bring them to their own land , and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers , and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture , and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there they shall lie in a good fold , and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock, and will cause them to lie down , saith the Lord God. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away , and will bind up that which was broken , and will strengthen that which was sick : but I will destroy the fat and the strong (persons who need no repentance) ; I will feed them with judgement . "

When Jesus sent out the twelve apostles, he commanded them to go not into the way of the Gentiles , nor into any city of the Samaritans : " But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel . And as ye go preach , saying the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick , clean the lepers , raise the dead , cast out devils : freely ye have received , freely give ."

One of our departed ministers was asked many years ago to whom he would preach the gospel , if God called him . His reply was , " If I preach the gospel , it will be to the lost sheep of the house of Israel .

When a woman of Canaan cried to Jesus to have mercy on her , her daughter being grievously vexed with a devil , he answered her not a word ; and his disciples besought him to send her away , but he answered and said, " I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel ." Then she worshipped him , saying , " Lord help me ." But he answered and said, " It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs ." And she said , " Truth , Lord : yet the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the master's table ." Then Jesus answered and said unto her, " O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt ." And her daughter was made whole from that hour .

In Luke 15:4 we find a parable presented to the Pharisees after the publicans and sinners had drawn near to him . The Publicans and the sinners seem to portray the lost sheep , as we find the poor publican

in the temple feeling too cast down to lift his eyes to heaven, but crying to God to be merciful to him a sinner; but we find the Pharisee thanking God that he was better than other men— resting his case on his fasting and giving. The line is drawn between the poor lost sheep, as represented by the publican, and the self-righteous Pharisee: one begs for mercy, with no righteousness of his own to plead; the other manifests that in his own heart he is a just person who needs no repentance. This was a good time for Jesus to draw the line: one class draws nigh to hear him — the publicans and sinners; the others, Pharisees, murmering because the Saviour eats with sinners and publicans. Here he searched their hearts; and closed their mouths.

" What man of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine (notice where he leaves the ninety and nine) in the wilderness, and goeth after that which is lost, until he finds it. And when he had found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he called together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."

There are those who do not hear Jesus' word; and they do no hear his word because they are not his sheep. He says, " My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. He calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth His own sheep, follow him, for they know his voice."

There were other sheep which Jesus owned, that did not belong to the Jewish fold, or the lost sheep of the house of Israel. This refers to the believers, or sheep, among the Gentiles, that he must also bring; and there would be one fold and one shepherd.

There are none of God's people who need no repentance; or whole who need no physician. He did not come to call the righteous to repentance, but sinners. All are sinners, but only to those who have received the commandment, sin has revived, and they have died to hope of salvation by the works of the law; and know the exceeding sinfulness of sin.

Dear reader, have you felt to be the lost sheep? Have you found yourself in wilderness, with no place to go? Have you been brought to the end of the law, and He took you on his shoulder and brought you to the fold? Could you believe that the Lord's people are those who are just persons who need no repentance? or are they the Pharisees whom Jesus was setting forth in the parable, who murmered because he ate with sinners? Are the ninety and nine, regardless of their profession of religion, the ninety and nine left in the wilderness. Has the dear Saviour found you as one alone, and delivered you from self-righteousness? If so, then you can sing with Newton:

" I once was lost, but now am found."

In my understanding, we find the lost sheep that Jesus takes on his shoulder and brings home, a picture of the church ; and the ninety and nine a picture of the self - righteous who have never felt the need of repentance. One claims to have no right to the blessings of God, as poor lost and ruined sinners ; and acknowledging that the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the master's table, and knowing that all they are, and all that they have, is because of the goodness and mercy of a gracious God. The other despises all others, needs no repentance, is clean in his own eyes, and trusts in himself.

As the line of distinction was drawn then, so shall it be until the Lord comes for his own. Times change, conditions vary, but human nature changes not.

Each may feel that he is a lost sheep. There are not two classes of God's people: they are all one in Christ Jesus. They are all by nature a disobedient people; all go astray, and need Him who must find us, deliver us, and bring us to the fold.

Written by the late
Elder D.V. Spangler

REVELATION 22 : 3 - 5.

And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

ARTICLES

TO THE SAINTS SCATTERED ABROAD

Dear Brethren: If the Lord permits I desire to write to you that you might share and witness with me the knowledge and understanding that you may have received concerning the proverb — "*Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars*" (*Prov. 9:1*).

One may observe that the action is complete, the house having been built in the past, that there was a work — a hewing and a building that stands finished. One may also observe that the hands of men did not contribute to the building as "*we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,*" (*2 Cor. 5:1*). I do not believe that his house was built by the wisdom of men as one might infer from the parable of the wise man who built upon a rock while the foolish man built upon the sand, for all mortal men are carnal and foolish. "*Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.*" (*Ps. 127:1*), and "*All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made*" (*John 1:3*) referring to the WORD which was God the Son.

Is this not the Father's house in which there are many mansions? From another proverb "*Through wisdom is an house builded; and*

by understanding it is established. And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches" (Prov. 24:3-4). Christ the Builder is the power and the wisdom of God(I Cor. 1:24-30, Col. 2:2-3).

O, Beloved reader, I am given to believe that this house represents the Church of the living God, and that there are crowns of righteousness, of eternal life, and of immortal glory laid up in the heavenly chambers. These precious and pleasant riches are reserved for every saint having a name in the Lamb's book of life. This wondrous house is the bride of Christ for whom Jesus shed his precious blood on Calvary's hill as the purchase price for our redemption. May we rejoice and praise the Lord from whom all blessings flow!

" Wisdom hath builded her house," an eternal house. She has selected durable building materials that are everlasting and suitable for eternity. The Lord God has laid in ***" Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation " (Isa. 28:16)*** which is none other than Christ, a living stone, chosen of God, and precious, as his only begotten Son, that her house shall endure in eternity. Upon this sure foundation, true believers derive their spiritual life and strength from the living stone as they also ***" as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house " (I Pet. 2:5).***

Again, Wisdom ***" hath hewn out her seven pillars."*** O, beloved brethren, do you understand the mysteries of this work? Wisdom's work is a work of perfection, ***" nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it " (Eccl. 3:14).*** Because all men have the corruptible nature of the world embedded in their hearts no man can discover the mysteries in the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end. Yet there must be a work of hewing — a trimming back, a cutting away, a shaping, a cleansing of the elect saints who are to be lively stones built up in the spiritual house. God, which dwelleth in the heavens with this eternal spiritual house shall not see corruption. Thus every elect saint, by ways known only to God, must be hewn and tried while passing through this time world, this low ground of sin and sorrow, that they grow in faith and in grace to become lively stones, suitable, that they may be ***" fitly framed together unto a holy temple in the Lord " (Eph. 2:21)***, every joint of Wisdom's house knit and compacted together with His love.

Though the ways of God's work are beyond finding out, I believe that Wisdom's house stood builded and complete in the counsel and purpose of God before the beginning of time as ***" that which is to be hath already been."*** The writers of the Scriptures, inspired by the Holy Spirit, have revealed certain works of God between the former and hinder seas of time that manifest the spiritual house fitted with lively stones of the saints for eternity. Simply stated, for perfection, there are seven major works of God in the journey of ever saint; namely, creation, redemption, conviction, regeneration, sanctification, justification, and glorification through the resurrection.

But the works which Jesus did *" if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written " (John 21:25)*. Thus I should not speculate on the way of God 's works.

But if it is God 's purpose that I should write anything profitable for edification or for stirring the pure minds of the saints , I am brought now to consider the seven pillars . Among other uses and meanings in the Scriptures , the number seven signifies perfection . I believe this meaning applies in this instance for this house of the Lord is a perfect house , built without hands and cleansed by the precious blood of Jesus .

By nature I understand a pillar to be a structural element set upon a foundation and extending upward to support a major structural entity such as a building or house . What, beloved saints , do we see in the case of Wisdom 's house and the seven pillars? Do you see Wisdom's house placed upon a sure foundation that will endure throughout eternity? That sure foundation is Christ , the living Son of God, who is the light of the world. He is *" the way, the truth and the life " (John 14:6)* . The Apostle leaves on record *" But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth " (I Timothy 3 : 15)* .

Can Wisdom 's house rest and endure upon a deceitful foundation? Can this heavenly house find support upon pillars of false doctrine, works, professed religion , error and pretended truths ? O , the wonderful , glorious Wisdom 's house of righteousness is set upon TRUTH , Lord Jesus, supported by branches of the word of truth rightly divided, rooted in Him . Let us pray , dear children , that his Spirit and Comforter reveal to each of us his truth rightly divided, that as lively stones we may receive eternal life in Wisdom's house. With much concern and fear I am given to believe there are seven pillars of truth which I offer for your consideration and further clarification :

1 . Revelation , Salvation is by Grace : By revelation of God , the Father , the saints shall know that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, by whom all salvation is by grace. It is eternal and solely of the Lord , grace being the unmerited favor and gift of God and all of man's accumulated equity in good works fail to satisfy the law 's demand for justice as all men have sinned .

2. Election: In charity, it pleased God, in eternity before time began , to first love a particular people who were chosen to be hedged about and protected in his providence . At his appointed times God writes his laws in their hearts and puts them in their minds and they are individually turned about and are made to love the Lord , their God , with all their heart, soul, strength, and mind and to love their neighbors (brethren) as themselves and they are to God , a people. All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose .

3 . Faith in the Redeeming Blood of Jesus: Saving faith, which is a gift

of God that fades not away in the face of tribulations and persecutions for the word, is a growing belief in the power of the redeeming blood of Jesus, which was shed upon Calvary's cross for the purchase of his bride, the church. Jesus, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world is the perfect sacrifice for the sins of every elect heir of promise, that none be lost. The sins of the saints are imputed to Jesus, as surety, for the saints' justification under the law and for its complete satisfaction. This gift is a faith by which we live in hope and are blessed to walk in obedience and good works. However, being depraved in nature, our walk in this life remains imperfect, our old man's fleshly nature engages the new spirit in continuing warfare.

4. Imputed Righteousness to a Chastised, Persevering People: By the perfect righteousness of Jesus, imputed to his bride, the church is sheltered from the wrath of God and the sins of its individual members are remembered, by God, against them no more. Yet as little children the saints shall take up their crosses and follow Jesus in tribulations and in persecutions during their earthly sojourn. Their faith shall be tried in furnaces of affliction, and they shall pass under rods of chastisement for their good at times and occasions suitable to God's purpose, and though the legions of Satan be against them, they shall persevere and overcome as the victory is won by Jesus, the Christ, which dwelleth within them.

5. Spiritual Birth in Eternal Union with God: The saints, who are the adopted children and sons of God, are joint heirs with Christ in an eternal union with God, having their names written in the Lamb's sealed book of life, who shall, in the fullness of time, be called out of the world by a conviction under the law as helpless sinners, and they shall experience a spiritual birth with baptism of the Holy Ghost and with fire, to thereafter seek after the righteousness of Jesus to follow after his example in baptism in good conscience and to walk as guided by the Spirit in the way of the Lord.

6. The Resurrection: The resurrection of Jesus to ascend and sit at the right hand of God, the Father, to rule as King, Prophet, and Priest as an advocate for his bride, is the reason for the hope by which we are saved.

7. Communion of Saints in the Visible Church: Under the everlasting covenant of grace, during the gospel dispensation, the saints are given a unity of the spirit and a like mind, a mind like unto the mind of Christ, with a desire to follow his example. They are made to assemble at appointed times, to sit together in love and unity in heavenly places here below in the kingdom of God, in a love made manifest not in word, neither in tongue but in deed and in truth, to rejoice in Christ and in tribulations, to grow in grace and in faith, to witness and watch over each other for good, and to eat and drink of the Lord's Supper in remembrance of Jesus, our Saviour and Head of the Church. They watch and await the great day when they shall be gathered to dwell in immortal glory in his house, ever singing

praises to his Holy Name in eternity.

Let us glorify God and praise him in all events and things. Mark the errors in this writing to me, the chief of sinners in need of his mercy and your prayers.

Eugene F. Osborne, Sr.
January 1990

" TRAVAIL "

I would like to write on the word " Travail ". The dictionary defines as follows:

1. Toil; Labor.
2. Trouble; Hardship.
3. The pains of child birth.

I would like to go to the Bible, Isaiah Ch. 53; 10, 11, 12. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief when they shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

When a woman gives birth to a child she suffers for that child. The child itself is being born; but the mother is suffering to bring it into the world.

The question now is did Christ suffer for the whole world or did he suffer for his people? When Christ went to the Cross, he went to give eternal life to his people.

We now go back to the scripture; for he shall bear their iniquities. The world SHALL means it is going to be. The dictionary meaning is as follows: In general SHALL in the first person expresses futurity, in the second and third determination or obligation. Now let us go on with this scripture; He bore the sins of many. This means what it said, he did not bear the sins of the whole world as many would have you think. He bore the sins of his family. We now go on a little further; and made intercession for the transgressors. The word intercession means to intercede which means to plead or beg on anothers behalf. When Christ was on the Cross, he made intercession for his family, not for the whole world. But he made intercession for the sins he knew his people had and would commit.

The question is, did he do all this for someone that might believe in Him or for those that were Chosen in Him. The word Travail means to me— He suffered for His people that they have life everlasting.

A brother in Hope,
Elder David P. Minter

PSALM 1 : 3.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season: his leaf also shall not wither: and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

TRANSCRIBED AND EDITED
SERMON OF ELDER JOE HAMRICK
PREACHED AT SMYRNA CHURCH (LA)

II CORINTHIANS CHAPTER 3

As the brother was speaking of the well being too deep for sinners to draw that water of eternal life it brought my attention to the third chapter of II Corinthians . I believe where God sends a minister forth to preach the gospel , and He sends them forth , because we certainly find in the tenth chapter of Romans where it says , " And how shall they preach except they be sent ? As it is written How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace , and bring glad tidings of good things ! "

Now if a person that has not had the experiences of a child of God I would like to ask you how he can go to a university or seminary and learn from man how to preach to people who have experienced the dealings of the Holy Spirit in their hearts and souls ? It is impossible to do that unless that man has been through the fire . You don 't go through the fire unless you go to the university that God creates for His ministers .

My dear ones , the apostle Paul experienced both of these . He experienced high learning from men and he was preaching that which he learned of men . But how dissatisfying to God 's people and how he hated God 's people for loving this wonderful doctrine . He hated them to the extent that he cast both men and women into prison . Ah , but later on when he was schooled by that heavenly Father he took an about face . Did he not ? That which he thought was right he found to be nothing but trash , nothing that God's people could feast upon . So then later on he made it very plain as to where the doctrine he preached came from . He said , " I certify unto you , brethren that the gospel which was preached of me was not after man . For I neither received it of man neither was I taught it , but by the revelation of Jesus Christ ." So now he had been schooled by that heavenly Father and now he was sent forth .

So then I ask you again , how can they preach except they be sent by almighty God ? But remember this one thing , that where God qualifies and sends forth one minister the devil follows behind with about a hundred . Yes , I believe God 's ministers are outnumbered by about a hundred to one and maybe more . It may even go up unto the thousands . Yesterday the brother was so wonderfully gifted to bring out these false prophets concerning the devil also . He has three loaves too , just the same as the three loaves that represent the true God and the true Saviour and the true Holy Spirit . The devil is going to have three loaves and he is going to make them look just as much like the loaves of the living God as he possibly can . Ah , but there is a difference in those loaves , look at the first loaf concerning God the Father . False prophets make him a weak creature , they make him

to have power in this regard to look in the future to see if man will do good or not. Then if he does he includes him and he writes his name in the Lamb's Book of Life. But that name can fall out of the Lamb's Book of Life. You have to do certain duties in order for it to stay there, so you see then that this god that the devil is bringing forth is a weak creature. He doesn't know the way of salvation actually.

This lord and saviour Jesus Christ that he brings forth in this second loaf, oh how weak he is. He is not a saviour that came down here and said he shall save his people from their sins; but he is a saviour that comes down here and gives everybody an opportunity. He wants you to come forth in this second loaf, he wants you to give your heart to him but unless you are willing he can't do anything about it. That is the loaf that the devil puts forth, but God's people don't eat of that loaf because it is not satisfying to them.

And that third loaf, my dear ones, which is of the Holy Spirit, the people themselves take this loaf as themselves because they tell you they don't need the Holy Spirit that they are not dead and they believe exactly what the devil said back in the garden of Eden when the devil told Eve that God knoweth that in the day thou eatest thereof thou shall not surely die, but thou shall become as God knowing good and evil. So the people then that put themselves here in this third loaf, they think they are not dead, that they can accept Christ and come to Christ anytime they so desire, and that they are not dead in trespasses and in sin as the scripture teaches and our own experiences tells us at one time.

Now I want you to notice the third chapter of II Corinthians. In this chapter you notice at the beginning there were certain false prophets that needed a recommendation, a written letter, to take with them to the different churches to recommend them to the people. The apostle Paul is bringing this out, " Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men " and he says in the third verse, " Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, ...". If God sends forth His ministers and qualifies them to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ with power, not in word only, but in power and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance they don't need a letter of recommendation because their gift is going to make way for them among God's people and that is what the apostle Paul here is speaking of. " Written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart. And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward; Not that we are sufficient of ourselves ... ". Oh no, he knew that and I believe that if we be God called ministers we realize it too. " Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; " and I believe we are taught that. If a person thinks otherwise it does not take God very long to dress him down and let him know where the power comes from.

" Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not

of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, ... ". And I want you to pay attention here now. " If the ministration of death," This is referring to the mortal law. " But if the ministration of death written and engraven in stones," You know when Moses was with the Lord upon mount Sinai that the Lord wrote these laws with His finger upon stone known as the ten commandments. " But if the ministration of death written and engraven in stones was glorious." Now look at that word glorious and keep that in mind. " ... so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away. How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, ..." . Now if the law and if the condemnation of that law be glorious, " much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory."

Now we come down to the eleventh verse and here is what I want us to begin to think about. " For if that which is done away was glorious", which was the law, " much more that which remaineth is glorious... And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished." Now if you read back in the 34th ch. of Exodus you will find where Moses went upon the mountain of Sinai and there met God and you know of all that took place there, the thundering and lightning and the mountain quaked. Moses said that he exceedingly feared and quaked. That was showing the wrath of the law. Notice that when Moses came down off the mount his face shown with such brightness they could see his face shine from afar off. Moses came near unto them and what did they do, what did Moses do? He put a veil over his face because of the shining feature that was upon his face. Now this veil which was put upon his face seems to me was a type and figure of the law.

Now the Israelites could not look and see the glory of Jesus Christ because of the law. They trusted in the law and they went about to try to fulfill the law. In other words there was blindness that came over their hearts. In the temple there you know the curtain that separated the Holy from the Most Holy place was hung. It was four pieces of cloth because it speaks of it as being blue and purple and scarlet and fine linen. So we have four here pulling together and making something that it would be impossible for the natural eye to penetrate. But when the Lord and Saviour came forth from the grave this curtain did what? It rent from top to bottom and it made a way then unto Almighty God.

There are many coverings over the faces and hearts of the people when they are in the unregenerate state before being born again of the Spirit of God. We have these coverings one on top of the other so that we cannot see the beauty, we cannot see the glory of Jesus Christ. We cannot see it because of the veil upon our hearts. We can't penetrate those veils when we are dead in

trespasses and sins. Let's look at the veils that are over our hearts. The first veil then that I might say is over our heart is that of ignorance, yes, ignorance. What does ignorance mean? It means darkness. We are ignorant to the things of Almighty God my dear ones. We are in complete darkness. With this cover we can't see our ignorance, we can't see the way of salvation. No, no, we can't see that. We are ignorant to the truths of Almighty God. We are ignorant to the inward dealings of the Holy Spirit in turning us around and then pouring us from vessel to vessel. We know nothing of those experiences because we are ignorant of them. Because of our ignorance there are coverings over our eyes and hearts and our hearts cannot be a partaker of the things of the Spirit of God. So don't you see then that it is impossible.

And you know the Scripture says that darkness covered the whole earth and gross darkness the people. This gross darkness then is because of these veils being over our hearts and our minds that we cannot see the glory of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We can't see that my dear ones. So we have a covering over our hearts and over our souls and this is not the only covering that we have. We also have the covering of unbelief. Yes, that is there too, we can't believe in the things of God. You know the people saw Jesus when He brought forth so many wonderful miracles. He called Lazarus to come forth from the tomb. There were people there that saw this and He gave sight to the blind and many people saw and they knew he was blind from his youth and yet they saw that Jesus brought sight to this man and how He cured the lame that he could walk again and how He gave hearing to the deaf and yet my dear ones because of unbelief they couldn't accept Him as the Messiah. You might say, well if I had been there I would have accepted Him as the great Messiah. But you wouldn't have my dear ones because it takes something more than flesh and blood to accept these things. Peter brought out what it takes to accept this when Jesus asked him whom do ye say that I am. He said thou art the Christ the Son of the living God. He said it from his heart, he said it because he believed it. There was given him faith to believe that Jesus was the Son of the living God and he brought it out in boldness. What did Jesus say to him? He said blessed art thou Simon Barjona for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee but my Father which is in heaven. So when divine revelation comes my dear ones and when that old belief is carried away, it is carried away by the power of God for as long as it is there we can't believe upon Jesus Christ. We might think we do but we believe on that kind of Christ that is in that second loaf that the devil puts there. Christ that wants to do things, that's an antichrist not the real Christ. We might be given to believe in an antichrist if we are given any belief at all. If we are not given to believe in the real Christ then it has to be an antichrist that we are given to believe in.

There are coverings then of ignorance and of unbelief and of

self- righteousness. Oh, that covering of self - righteousness is something is it not? Oh how we cling to our own self - righteousness , how we cling to it as long as we possibly can. That is a part of this old flesh and we don't want to give it up because the flesh produces self - righteousness and we are going to cling on to it as long as we possibly can. People will fight for it because that is all they have . This self - righteousness enables them to do things that would assure them of their eternal salvation. So they are not going to get rid of it . This old self - righteousness has to be torn away. When it is there it acts as a covering , it acts as covering that we cannot see the glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

There also is pride . Pride is a covering that covers us up . You might not be able to point to pride as a covering. I believe we have pride toward many things that we do not want to cut loose from. So it takes the power of Almighty God . And there is enmity against God and there is the enmity against the truth of God . It is such strong enmity in our hearts and this is a covering over our eyes and over our hearts that we cannot penetrate the glorious doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We can't do it and we can't believe on it. I don't care how hard we might try, we can't believe from the heart the true doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ not when the scripture says, " the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law , of God , neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."

So don't you see how these people are; yet everybody is in this state including God's people my dear ones. They are in this state and they have all these coverings over them and how in this world can you penetrate those coverings . You can't do it, it is absolutely impossible. Don't you see you can no more do it than you can go down and get water out of this deep well without anything to get it with . You just simply can not do it because my dear ones it is hidden from you . Gross darkness has covered His people so they are in this ignorance and they are in this darkness . But you know when it comes time and for each of God's children there is going to be a time the Holy Spirit begins to blow upon a little of this. He blows a little corner off here . He blows a little corner of this covering off.

You know the Holy Spirit is likened unto the wind . For it says , " The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell from whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is everyone that is born of the Spirit." So that when that wind begins to blow on all these old coverings over our hearts and over our minds and it blows off a little bit of corner here do you know what's going to happen then? Oh, you begin to see a little bit through this hole. You don't see the fullness of it. No, you don't see that at all but you see just enough to bring a little fear into your heart , a little fear into your soul . This covering had everything hid and you believed in this self - righteousness and you had confidence in the flesh but now you have just enough light here to

shine in that you began to doubt; you began to wonder am I mistaken. You had plenty confidence at one time in yourself but now you began to wonder my dear ones. Your confidence began to fade because the fear starts coming into your heart and into your soul, a fear that you might not be right, a fear that you might be on the wrong track, my dear ones. You hate to give it up and you are going to stay with it just as long as you can. But I'll tell you the bigger that hole becomes and the more you are given to see the more you are going to have this fear.

You know this fear is a wonderful thing. Yes, it's a wonderful thing to have fear because scripture speaks of it as the beginning of knowledge. So this fear then gives you doubts about all these other things you had so much confidence in at one time. So this fear is the beginning of knowledge that these things aren't perfect. Now you begin to see them come down just a little bit. Has this been your experience along this line that this fear began to creep into your heart and soul and cause you some concern? Oh you had a great desire to read more and find out more because you weren't safe any longer with your refuge that you felt you were riding to highest of heavens on. It was beginning to crumble underneath you just a little bit. You didn't feel safe upon it any more so my dear ones you began to look and began to read and you began to search and you began to want to hear more and more concerning the things of Almighty God.

Now I want to bring in the glory of these two ministrations here. Concerning the first one it says, " Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away :... For even that which was made glorious ..." So we see one glory here being done away with to pave the way for another which is far more glorious. So we see the law here, we see the law coming in and why was the law pronounced to be glorious? Because my dear ones it did something that was absolutely necessary to take place in your heart and soul. That's the reason it is glorious and it is glorious because it came from Almighty God and it is holy. It was a divine law but my dear ones when it began to come into your heart and soul it did something to you. Oh it wasn't glorious to you but it was a glorious thing for you because it did something for you that was absolutely necessary in the experiences of a child of God. And what is that my dear ones? It brought you down. The apostle Paul said I was alive once without the law. Oh yes, he went about, he did not have any worries but he said when the commandment came sin revived and I died and I tell you my dear ones right here when the Holy Spirit begins to blow here upon your heart then the fear comes in. You see God's just and holy law. You see God's holy law, " thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength... and Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." You realize that you can't do this. No, you can't do it because you can't love God with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind because if your heart is like mine it is

ninety - five percent of the time upon the things of this world away from the things of God. How in this world can you fulfill that law? You can't do it; it's impossible. What did James say concerning this? He says, " For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." What does the law say to you? It curses you, does it not? It is the ministration of death and condemnation.

It is a fiery law and the glory part of it is that it brings you down to see yourself as you actually are. It brings you down to nothing; it strips you of everything you had confidence in toward your own salvation and it leaves you naked and empty handed at the foot of Jesus Christ. You say if it is not by grace then I am lost and I am justly lost because I know my sins. When Jesus puts the sheep on His right hand and the goats on His left hand and says go ye cursed into everlasting punishment prepared for the devil and his angels, I can see myself there on His left hand be - cause I am guilty of everything that anybody could be guilty of. I am as the apostle Paul said, the chief of sinners. So that's the way you feel and you feel like if God's justice would rain down upon your head it would send you to the very depths of hell. But there is something else that is pointed out here. Now that the veil is going to be taken off your face and you are going to see the glory that's in Jesus Christ. Yes, that's where the glory is for God's people. It is in Jesus Christ. We must be brought down to nothing in ourselves first before we can see the glory in Jesus Christ. When the veil is taken off our face, it will not be all taken off, it will be taken enough off that we will see as through a glass darkened. We can see the glory of Jesus Christ to the extent that we realize if we have any salvation that it is going to be in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Then isn't that a wonderful thing that the Holy Spirit has come along and He has paved the way for it says you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sin. Yes, from whom He has blown these coverings away who were completely covered in unbelief, ignorance, darkness, in pride, in self - righteousness and all these coverings that were over your hearts.

Bless be unto God that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ came down here upon earth to pay the price for His people. We find in Matthew where it says when the angel was speaking to Joseph " ... in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." And you know He did not come to call the righteous but He came to call sinners and those are the ones that feel to be sinners and the others feel to be righteous. If we did not have these coverings blown away from us by the power of the Holy Spirit we would feel to be righteous. We would have confidence in our own self - right - eousness. We would have confi - dence in everything; but when the Holy Spirit blows them away we are those sinners and felt to be sinners and those are the ones that Jesus

Christ came down here to save. He came not to call the righteous but came to call sinners unto His glorious kingdom. He does everything for poor unworthy sinners who are made to feel themselves as sinners and not just to speak as being sinners but to feel themselves as being sinners. That's what counts my dear ones and I trust that each and everyone of us here have been made to feel ourselves as poor unworthy sinners, Sick of ourselves, sick of our sins, sick of ourselves from the crown of our heads to the soles of our feet as Job was sick with sores.

All those sores represented sins and we feel our sins from the crown of our heads to the very soles or our feet but we have a great physician. Yes, He came not to minister unto the whole but to the sick. Those that are sick of themselves, those that are sick of their sins, those that are sick of themselves because they cannot do the things they would but seem to get around to doing those things that they hate. They are sick of these things but remember, Jesus came down to minister unto the sick and not to the whole. He didn't come to minister to the self-righteous. He didn't come to those still buried in unbelief He didn't come to minister unto those. He came to minister unto the sick and those that are heavy laden, those that feel the burden of their own sins because did not He say, come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Yes, you have rest in Christ Jesus. There is no rest in this world for you. No, there is no rest for one of His little ones passing through this world because this world is nothing but a wilderness for God's people. It is a desert land. For that which is born of the Spirit of God there is nothing pleasing to it. As far as the old flesh is concerned yes, it is still pleasing to the old flesh. But, thanks be unto God we are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be the Spirit of God dwelleth in us.

I would like to turn for just a moment to the seventh chapter of Romans and read just a verse or two. It is wonderful not to be under this law. Ye are no longer under the law. Why, because Jesus Christ fulfilled the law for His people. Now I want you to notice the first verse of chapter seven of Romans. The apostle Paul is speaking here, "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,)". Who is it that knows the law? The ones that the law comes to them and acts as a schoolmaster to teach them of their evil condition; to act as a schoolmaster to bring them unto Christ. Yes, that's the glory of the law, but if the law has any glory in it, it is to bring us down to nothing and the greatest glory of all is having a way unto salvation where Jesus says"... I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." He is that way, don't you see, that's why this glory here outshines the glory of the other. The letter killeth but the spirit giveth life. The law puts you in prison but the gospel opens the doors of the prison and frees you. Yes, it frees you from being in bondage to that law. That is why there is so much more glory pronounced in the gospel by the

apostle Paul than in the glory of the law. " Know ye not brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) ". Those that have had some experience of being brought down dead inwardly speaking ." ... I speak to them that know the law, how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth ? " As long as we have these curtains of unbelief, self-righteousness, and ignorance, and all those things before us we know nothing about the law. But when the Holy Spirit begins to blow there and fear comes into our hearts and knowledge of the law begins to come into our hearts and souls that we can 't fulfill it, then we know something about the law in that respect. " For the woman which hath an husband is bound ," now this is spiritually speaking and not naturally speaking, " For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth ," now what do we mean here by husband, in a figurative sense we are married to the law. The law is our first husband. We come under the law. We are married to that law and as long as we remain married to that law it is going to curse us and we are going to everlasting hell. How is the way to become separated from that law? It is this death I have just been speaking of. We must die under this law, just as Jesus died under the law. We find scripture saying when the fullness of time had come God sent forth His son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. Jesus was made under the law then, He experienced the killing letter and we must experience it if we be in Christ Jesus, we must experience that death to some degree too. It is not a natural death I am speaking of but it is a death to those things that we once believed in and once cherished. We must die to those things. We must be brought down inwardly to nothing, unable to do anything. We must be brought down as the apostle Paul said, Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death. This is the death I am speaking of. But let me tell you, we cannot go below God 's everlasting hands. We can 't go below His everlasting arms. We think that we go low, low but His arms are always there to lift us up, if we be cast down we are lifted up again by Almighty God.

" So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress:" You know these people that claim they belong to Jesus Christ and have never been killed by the law. What is that? That is adultery. You have two husbands; you have adultery. Let me tell you that is spiritual adultery. Such a one will never enter into heaven. " But if her husband be dead then she is free from that law so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another." We have become dead to the law by the body of Christ that we should be married to another even to Him who is raised from the dead, Jesus

Christ , that we should bring forth fruits unto God .

Let's look now at the glory as it is in Christ Jesus . Oh what a wonderful glory that is . We have been under this law and been under sin and have seen glory in it , yes there was glory in it to bring us to our senses you might say . But the glory now that shined on Moses ' face and the veil has been taken away by the Holy Spirit to the extent now that we can see the glory of Christ and then we say Jesus Christ , it is all Jesus Christ . All my hope is in Jesus Christ , a risen Saviour . That's what shines to us , that risen Saviour . He's the one that shines . He's the one we look to and not to any thing else . Our hope is in a risen Saviour . If Jesus had remained dead in the tomb , how cut off our hope would be , as the apostle Paul said , " If in this life only we have hope in Christ we would be of all men most miser - able ." But our hope is in a risen Saviour and our hope goes on with Him into glory . This second glory here as the apostle Paul is speaking about in this third chapter oh how it does outshine the first glory . They are both important , they are both necessary , but oh how it excels that of the first glory . May God bless the truth and pardon any error .

Elder Joe Hamrick

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2 CORINTHIANS 6 : 16 .

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols ? for ye are the temple of the living God ; as God hath said , I will dwell in them , and walk in them ; and I will be their God , and they shall be my people .

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 1990

Mrs . Elizabeth Adkins , MD	2.00
Mrs . Esther Cole , NC	2.00
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Eld . G .R . Smith , LA	2.00
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PSALM 100 .

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands .

Serve the Lord with gladness : come before his presence with singing .

Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us , and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture .

Enter into his gates with thanks - giving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him , and bless his name .

For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations .

OBITUARIES

Written in memory of LILLIE BORDEAUX

In my weak way and if God will direct my hand, I will write a few lines about our beloved sister.

She was the daughter of Elder Henry F. Morton and Sister Phoebe Littleton Morton. Sister Lillie was born October 16, 1897 and died July 13, 1990 thus making her stay on earth 92 years.

The good Lord saw fit to bring her to the church in 1936.

She was married in her young life to Roman Riggs and to their union they were blessed with two sons, four grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

Ernest Bordeaux, husband of her latter years, is still living.

Sister Lillie was laid to rest in Maysville Cemetery beneath a beautiful mount of flowers. Funeral service was conducted by her pastor Elder J.T. Prescott.

To all of the family that Sister Lillie left behind, press on. I know that you loved her but God loved her more. We feel that she has gone to rest with the Lord, forevermore. I know that you all have a vacant place in your hearts as well as in your homes.

Written by request of the North East Church the third Saturday in August 1990. Three copies were made, one for the church, one for the family and one for the Signs of the Times.

Written by Sister Effie Morton

Moderator and Pastor, J.T. Prescott
Clerk, L.J. Sammons

HUEL LAVERN BURGIN

Brother Huel Lavern Burgin, beloved member of Paran Primitive Baptist Church, was born July 11, 1919 in Big Sandy, Texas to Grover C. and Opal Burgin. He died June 1, 1987 after a long illness. Brother Huel was a firm believer in the sovereign grace and mercy of Almighty God. Like his brother Wilborn, nothing less than sovereign mercy would do for him, for he realized his awful sins and failings and had that painful view of himself that only God can expose His people unto. But thanks be unto God that "where sin abounded, grace did so much more abound." Brother Huel could with feeling sing "Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me."

He was survived by his mother, Opal Burgin of Hawkins; two brothers, Wilborn Burgin of Tyler, who has since also been called home, and W.M. (Bill) Burgin of Houston; and three sisters, Helen Pittman and Patsy Mitchell both of Hawkins, and Flora Stutts of Jacksonville. Funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Joe Hamrick, who also knows by personal experience what it's like to receive the summons, "Child, come home." Brother Huel's earthly remains are near his beloved church in Smith Cemetery awaiting the sound of the last trumpet. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."

In Loving Memory
SISTER BLANCHE SCOTT COX

Sister Blanche Scott Cox was born May 21, 1985 to the late Thomas and Sally Scott. She married James L. Cox and to this union were born one daughter and three sons of which one son predeceased her. She leaves a daughter, Louise Suttle of Newport News, Virginia and two sons, Charles H. (Pete) Cox of Ruffin and William Frank Cox of Kansas City, Missouri, twelve grandchildren and two sisters, Virginia Page of Ruffin and Georgia Snead of Danville, Virginia.

Sister Cox united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on June 22, 1929 and was baptized on July 7, 1929. She attended her Church faithfully as long as her health permitted. She suffered a stroke on May 10, 1988 and was never able to walk again. In August of 1989 she told me that if she never walked again, God's gracious will proved it well. She said on another occassion that it wouldn't be right for her to complain about her condition for God made her that way, and she was thankful because she could be a lot worse. She said she was thankful she could see and hear as well as she could. She bore her affliction well and was always a joy to visit. Sister Cox loved to tell of how good God had been to her. She had a wonderful outlook on life and never lost her sense of humor. She loved her Church and all the brothers and sisters and sorely missed her meetings and the sweet fellowship she enjoyed there. She was filled with joy as she sat in her wheelchair on her last visit to Dan River Church. It seemed to do her so much good.

Sister Cox departed this life on July 13, 1990. Her funeral was held in Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on July 15, 1990 by her pastor, Elder Kenneth R. Key and Rev. Charles Halipilias of Hickory Grove Methodist Church. She was laid to rest in the Church cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ who shall appear without sin unto salvation unto them that look for him. Jesus said, " I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

We long for that glorious resurrection day when the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. There shall we inherit the kingdom prepared for us from before the foundation of the world and death shall be swallowed up in victory.

Though we are saddened by the loss of such a dear one, we know she has found joy unspeakable with the Lord. May her family find comfort in knowing that our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by request of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church while in conference November 24, 1990.

Jean Moran

CHAPTER 53 : 1.

Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

HARVEY J. BLALOCK

It is with a degree of sadness I feel in my loss as I write the obituary of Harvey J. Blalock of Gibsonville, N.C. He was born in Caswell County, N.C. on August 11, 1910 to Mac and Anna Blalock. He died on July 1, 1990 nearly reaching his eightieth birthday.

Harvey was loved by all who knew him and we all felt a sweet fellowship for him. He was a strong believer in the principles of the Primitive Baptist Church and attended somewhere at every opportunity. He readily helped and supported the many Churches any way he could. Although the Lord never saw fit to bring him into the membership.

I was blessed to have him with his wife Maxine and my wife for so many miles and hours of conversation of those things he deemed worthwhile. Harvey was strong in his faith and we all felt a sweet fellowship for him and saw evidences of his love for the Church.

Harvey leaves his wife, Maxine King Blalock, one son, Donald K. Blalock with his wife Glenda, a grandson Trent Blalock and a granddaughter Emily Blalock as survivors, all of Elon College, N.C. The funeral was conducted by Elder C.B. Davis, Jr. and Elder Kenneth Key at Bartlett Funeral Home in Gibsonville with burial in Gibsonville City Cemetery.

He will be missed in days to come by all who loved him and knew him as a true friend. We feel his suffering is now over and we who remain still have this to face before we find relief in death. The remembrances of him by those who loved him will have him live on and on for times to come in their minds and hearts.

May God bless all the family and others who feel a loss and each of us who knew him to thank God we traveled a while together.

In Respectful Memory,
C.B. Davis, Jr.

In Memory of ROBERT LEE SAUNDERS

Born December 23, 1915 — Franklinville, N.C. Died June 5, 1990.

He was a farmer and retired Carpenter. Surviving are his wife, Eva Coley Saunders, and three daughters, Mrs. David R. Pugh of Lexington, Mrs. Willie G. Smith and Mrs. Henry Fred Lemons of Randleman, N.C. Four sisters, ten grandchildren, 6 great great grandchildren. He was a member of Big Meadows Primitive Baptist Church of which he attended for 20 years. His funeral was conducted by Elder Kenneth R. Key and was buried in Giles Chapel Church cemetery. He is gone but not forgotten.

Written by Wife and daughters,

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Editors

SISTER MYRTLE M. THOMAS

Myrtle Thomas, daughter of the late Mr. & Mrs. Walter Thomas of Floyd, Co. Virginia died December 31 st 1990. Born October 27, 1899. Age 91 years and 2 months and 4 days.

Sister Myrtle joined County Line Primitive Baptist Church August 17, 1946, and was baptized September 15, 1946 by Elder J.G.L. Hash. Her funeral was conducted by her Pastor Elder Noel F. Conner, with Elder W.T. Conner bearing a part, at Wood Funeral Home in Floyd Co. January 2, 1991. She is survived by one sister Mrs. Laura T. Bartel, and one brother Mr. Claude Thomas and nieces & nephews and many friends.

She did start reading the Bible and began attending Payne's Creek and County Line Churches, and felt the Old Baptist was the true Church, and wanted to be among them. " She spoke of being at County Line Communion time of seeing Elder J.G.L. Hash at the table and as he took up the bread and broke it I had much joy, and was filled with Hope that it was broke for me, and I was satisfied at that moment.

She traveled by walking several miles to come to County Line, and after being baptized was relieved of the burden for a while.

In later years was confined to a wheel chair, but got better and when she had a way to travel, came to the meetings both Saturday and Sunday. But again became disabled, and was in the Nursing Home for several years. She loved to have Elder and Mrs. Noel F. Conner and the members to visit her, and sing and pray with her.

She became very ill and entered a Roanoke Hospital on December 27, 1990, and not able to speak, yet her face lit up with joy when she saw we were at her side. In death the look of peace, and Rest on her face gives us to feel glad her sorrow and suffering is over.

Read and approved by the church January 19, 1991.

Elder Noel F. Conner, Moderator
Catherine A. Houchins, Clerk

ECCLESIASTES 3 : 1 - 8.

To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;

A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;

A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;

A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

A time to love and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

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Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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POEM

BE NEAR ME DEAR LORD

Oh my Lord ever be
Ever near and close to me
Keep me humble at thou feet
Keep me safe till Thee I meet.

Trouble and trials can't divide
Or keep me from my Saviour's side
But draw me closer to his breast
Gives me hope of eternal rest.

God the Father, God the Son
Died on the cross for his little ones
His love, His mercy and His grace
Gives me that abiding faith.

By: Irene Setliff

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Editors

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EDITORIAL

I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me .

Elder R .H . Campbell

These are the words of Jesus to his disciples in the final hours that he was with them here on earth , shortly before he was to be betrayed unto the Jews by Judas Iscariot. It was a very crucial time in his ministry and his words have a special urgency as he began to tell them of the things that would come and the effects that these things would have on their lives and the lives of all of his chosen people in the generations to come . They are the most assuring and inspiring of all his teachings as he began to reveal the spiritual aspects of his ministry, how it would be manifested in their ministry and how and why it must be this way . In the scripture above Jesus sets forth , in one sentence , the complete sovereignty of God in the salvation of every heir of heaven , also , the complete inability of man even to approach unto the Father of their own initiative or strength .

Just prior to this time Jesus had told his disciples , " I go to prepare a place for you , and if I go and prepare a place for you , I will return again and receive you unto myself : that where I am , there ye may be also ." Jesus was referring to the fact that he was on the way to the cross where he would make the sacrifice necessary to take away their sin; then come forth from the tomb victorious over death , hell and the grave so that as he had triumphed over them , all that were chosen in him before the foundation of the world would likewise come forth and reign with him in the kingdom of heaven throughtout eternity . The law required this sacrifice for sin and Jesus was the only one that could make the sacrifice since it must be perfect no spot nor blemish . No one else could make it and man could not be instrumental in it in any way .

Jesus said , " I am the way ." Under the law sacrifices were made continually of bulls and goats but they could not put away sin ; rather it was just a yearly reminder of sin pointing to the time of the perfect sacrifice that would put away sin for all time . " For what the law could not do , in that it was weak in flesh , God sending his own son in the like -

ness of sinful flesh , and for sin condemned sin in the flesh ; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us ." This is the way , the only way that a sacrifice would be acceptable before God and that was that it be the body that was prepared for this one special event . Just as no man helped Jesus to do anything during his ministry here on earth previously they could not help , in any sense of the word , on this occasion ; therefore Jesus said , I am the way , not a way but the way and the only way . The way of all is the same , it is the Christ . This is the only way that man can be turned from darkness to light , from the power of Satan unto God , receive the forgiveness for sin , become heirs of salvation and be blessed to be able to look forward to receiving an inheritance among them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus . Man speaks of many ways of salvation based on many necessary ingredients but Christ simply says , I am the way . " He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold , but climeth up some other way , the same is a thief and a robber ." And again , " I am the door : by me if any man enter in , he shall be saved , and shall go in and out and find pasture ." All of these words , and many others , spoken throughout his ministry leaves no room for doubt but that all that his Father gave him before the foundation of the world shall come to him and all that cometh to him he will in no wise cast out . No man , of their own ability knows Jesus , for the scripture states , " All things are delivered unto me of my Father : and no man knoweth the Son , but the Father , neither knoweth any man the Father , save the Son , and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him ." Oh , the blessedness of those , in the fold , who hear his voice call unto them , by name , and who follow him in the way that leads to life eternal . They will not follow the voice of a stranger because they have not the words of life . This is the way that all must come to God and all of it is in Christ who is the way of salvation to all that belive on him unto life eternal .

Jesus said , " I am the truth ." All scripture is given by inspiration of God unto his servants for the edification of the church during its pilgrimage here in time : They are absolutely true and are profitable for doctrine for all who have been given the ability to discern the things of the spirit . The scriptures are a record of God 's dealings with his elect people down the corridors of time as he made manifest his truths to them here in time and they are taught to fear him . " The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom ." All of the elect learn this lesson well as they are made to see what they are by nature and what they must be by grace , and see the great gulf between the two extremes and realize that they can never bridge this great gulf by their own efforts . This is where they are made to see their need of a savior and at the same time are given a hope that Jesus , the Son

of God is their savior . This truth and knowledge which come as a package are the gift of God that enables them to know and to understand the word of truth : the word of truth that was made flesh and dwelt among them full of grace and truth . Only the recipients of this faith fellowship the mystery which has been treasured in Christ from before the foundation of the world but is made manifest in the Appearing of Christ to them at the time appointed by the Father . This truth and their love for it separates them from the world and their love for it , as in former days , and make them see and realize the vanity and foolishness of the things in nature when compared to the glory of the spiritual realm . This causes them to desire more and more to explore the depths of the wisdom and knowledge of God : to search out his ways and his judgements and find the ways that lead to life eternal . They realize that the truth is the only thing that is sufficient for their need and since Jesus , whom they know says , I am the truth , they will hear and follow him alone and trust him for salvation in time and in eternity .

" I am the life , Jesus said this many times during his ministry here in the world and each time that he said it he was speaking of that spiritual life which all must possess before they can have a hope of eternal life ; before they can come to him and be healed ; before they see the kingdom of heaven . They must have this life before they can believe as Paul wrote , " for he that cometh to God must believe that he is , and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him ." When they receive this life , which was treasured in Christ , they are a new Creature , old things are passed away , behold all things become new . Their walk and their talk take on a new direction , their food and drink is the flesh and blood of Jesus , the flesh being the word of God and the blood the life thereof. Jesus said , " whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life ; and I will raise him up at the last day . This change in the lives of the followers of Jesus is the outward evidence , to the saints , of the inward work of grace that had been done in the heart of the new believer . This is the life that radiates the light that shines before men , which cannot be hid , and gives light to all that are in the house , (household of faith) . This miracle of grace causes rejoicing in the hearts of all who behold it , and they render praise to the giver of this perfect gift of life as a manifestation of his presence in their midst and evidence that he is still adding to the church daily such as should be saved . This life produces action , just as it does in nature , and the individual goes forth in the strength of the Lord manifesting his calling to all that have eyes to see . This was demonstrated in the lives of all of the Apostles and disciples in Jesus ' day and if the calling is from God it will be in this day for the calling is for a purpose with a

designated end to be accom - plished . There are many callings and all are of equal importance , there are no insignificant callings, for they are for the good of the body , the church , of which they are a member and they are to the Glory of God the Father . As Paul wrote , " I therefore , the prisoner of the Lord , beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called . " You have been given this gift of spi - ritual life that you might fight a good fight of faith and finish your course having kept the faith in a pure heart as much as in you is . This is all that is your duty to do , and do it as the spirit enables you to and being diligent in all things as unto God .

" No man cometh unto the Father but by me ." Jesus had told Peter and the disciples , shortly before this , that where he was going they could not go now , but that they would go afterwards : Peter said why cannot I go now ? I will lay down my life for your sake . Jesus answered , wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake ? Verily , verily I say unto thee , the cock shall not crow til thou has denied me thrice . At this point in time Peter was willing and wanted to go with Jesus even unto death , but , when the time came to do it he denied vehemently that he even knew Jesus . This is the flesh ; always subject to circumstances and very much interested in self preservation . " To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven . " There was a certain time and way in which Peter was to leave this world and God had much to be done by Peter prior to that time ; Peter did indeed lay down his life by crucifiction , as Christ did , but at the time and place appointed by God . Peter could not go unto the Father but by Christ and at God 's time not Peter 's . All who go to the Father must go in Christ . God only prepared one place for those that he formed for himself ; only accepted one sacrifice as an atonement for their sin ; only had one plan of salvation whereby all of his elect would be secured to himself and all of this was in the obedience of Jesus Christ to his Father 's will . In Jesus ' prayer to his Father he said , " Father the hour is come : glorify thy Son that thy Son may also glorify thee ." The glory of the Father and the Son rested in the accomplish - ment of the designed goal , the salvation of the saints by the death burial and resurrection from the grave of Christ . Then Jesus said , " I have glorified thee on earth : I have finished the work thou gavest me to do ." The plan is executed , completed and suc - cessful and therefore the eternal abode of all the saints in Glory is absolutely assured . All who are in that number came to God by Jesus and those who climb up some other way will be judged out of the books at the final day .

In completing the work Jesus had taken away the first and had established the second ; he had fulfilled the law , taking it out of the way and nailing it to the cross , and he had established the

covenant of grace which was established on better promises than that of Moses . He had established a new and living way through the veil , that is to say the flesh , whereby each subject of grace might come boldly to the throne of grace and Commune with the Father in spirit and in truth : come having their loins girt about with truth , having on the breastplate of righteousness , feet shod with the preparation of the gospel the shield of faith , the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit which is the word of God . As Paul said , " wherefore take unto you the whole Armor of God , that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand . All of this Armor is defensive by design and is to thwart the attacks of the principalities and powers , resist the ruler of darkness and discern spiritual wickedness in high places . No offensive armor to help the Lord to resist these forces : He has already overcome them and thereby provided his children with these defenses .

O ' the depths of the riches , both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ! how unsearchable are his judgments , and his ways past finding out . The depths can never be completely searched out out , in this life , but the joys of searching and the treasures that the saints do find as they walk about Zion and study the word makes all the efforts worthwhile . It is sufficient to occupy the rest of their lives ; it is the pearl of great price , the treasure that was hidden in the field ; the handfuls of purpose that they find as they glean among riches of their inheritance here in this time word , the fulness of which will be realized when they enter into the joy of their heavenly home . The value of these things , to the wayfaring pilgrim is worth more than all of the wealth of the world . Their desire is to understand more and more of this mystery and obtain more and more evidence of their participation in this plan of salvation . They would only be satisfied with certain knowledge but this they will never have in time : this is what keeps them pressing to the mark , for the mark of the prize of the high calling of God which is treasured in Christ who is the way , the truth , and the life , and by whom all of the heirs of grace approach unto God .

In bonds of love ,
Richard H . Campbell

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PSALM 116 : 1 , 2 .

I LOVE the Lord , because he hath heard my voice and my supplications .

Because he hath inclined his ear unto me , therefore will I call upon him as long as I live .

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Old School, Grace taught, Primitive Baptist:

I write these words to you for your consideration, in hope that any of you who have been given more light upon this subject, you might do this poor worm of the dust of the earth, a great (wanted) favor, and give me your views.

I do so deeply feel and believe, that mankind in his nature is so completely depraved and sinful of himself, I just must not put my trust in them, where it has to do with Holy Spiritual matters; so therefore I must never, under any circumstance, even attempt to place any one or more of them upon a pedestal above any other of the human race of themselves. In other words, my deep desire is, that I might be kept in such a way, as all my trust, my faith and my hope be ever in my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for all my Salvation, both in this world and that world to come; and have no confidence in the flesh. With these things having arisen much in my mind and feelings, after having just recently read a writing by Elder Beebe: dated March 1, 1844. And in that my mind and feelings do wholly concur with what this Elder was enabled to set forth, and further that I am ever searching for a witness to my feelings, that my hope might somewhat be brightened, as did this writing of Elder Beebe seem to do for me. And further still, in the hope that this Elder's writing might somewhat serve to the lifting up of one or more in their feelings, I felt encouraged to copy his writing, and send it to the Signs of the Times, for its Editors, for their consideration, as to whether or not to insert it in the Signs.

Elder Beebe's writing follows:
1 Corinthians 1 : 30.

A correspondent inquires whether the text 1 Cor. 1 : 30, teaches that the preacher is of God, wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption, or that Christ is made these things unto us?

From the statement of the question, we infer that some self important preacher has laid claim to the application of these words to those who preach; that as preachers, they are the wisdom of the church. This idea would seem to agree with what Job said ironically to his miserable comforters, " No doubt ye are the men, and wisdom will die with you." Nothing can, however, be more clear than that these words are spoken in testimony of what Christ is of God made to his church. " But of him are ye in Christ Jesus." of whom? God who hath chosen the weak and despised things, &c., is antecedent to the pronoun Him; therefore the plain rendering is, " But of God are ye, (that is his people, his new creation; for, if any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature, old things are passed away, and all things have become new) in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom," &c. It is not of ourselves, nor of our works, nor of men, nor of angels, that we are in

Christ, for if we are in him, " we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. ii. 10. Of God were we set up in Christ from everlasting, chosen of God in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world. Eph. i. 4. " Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." These same scriptures which prove that our existence and security in Christ is absolutely of God, equally demonstrate that our life in Christ is not our minister, nor of any other being or power than that of God alone. That Christ, and not the preachers, is made unto the members of his mystical body, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, is so abundantly proved by the united testimony of the scriptures, and so very apparent in the experience of all who are born of God, arguments would be quite superfluous.

First, of God, of the provisions of his counsel, of his grace, and experimentally of the quickening operation of His Holy Spirit, Christ is made unto us wisdom. " We preach Christ and him crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." — Cor. i. 22, 23. But why is Christ to the one class so essentially different from what he is unto the other? Why is he a stumbling block and foolishness to carnal Jews and Greeks, and the wisdom of God to all that are called? Because God has chosen him so. God has caused us to differ. God has chosen us unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.

Secondly, of God, Christ is made the righteousness of his people; and this is the name whereby he shall be called, " The Lord our Righteousness." " Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness." Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, &c.

Thirdly, Of God, is Christ our sanctification; by, through, and of him, the saints are set apart unto salvation, consecrated to God, to holiness and eternal life.

Fourthly, Of God, Christ is our redemption. Certainly our minister did not redeem us from sin, guilt, condemnation, wrath and perdition; they paid no ransom price for us, neither was the right of redemption in them. Christ the near kinsman, by virtue of pre-existing relationship, held the legal right to redeem his people from the curse and dominion of the law, to redeem unto God by his own blood, and having redeemed us with a price, " In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins," &c. Christ our Priest having by his own blood ascended into heaven, where he ever liveth to make intercession for us. We give not one longing look after that redemption which is supposed to be by such corruptible things as silver and gold, or works, or efforts of men or of angels.

In as much as be in accord with the will of God, may he lead, guide

and direct us in such a way as to render praise, honor and glory unto His great and Holy name, and give us a thankful heart that we might be enabled to thank Him for His blessings what have flowed unto us all the days of our lives. Amen.

In hope this love I feel for you all, is for Christ's sake.

Troy G. Shepard
103 East Tateway Rd.
Kitty Hawk, N.C. 27949

ARTICLES

I would like to write a few thoughts about King Nebuchandnezzar who was quite a king, he was mighty among men, the king of the country of Babylon. He had such power and authority among men that by his own order he could have men put to death. He had such power that none dared to oppose him. When this king laid seige to Jerusalem, he requested that a certain number of the children of Israel be brought into his court. There to be fed good food and taught in the customs of the kings people, to learn his language etc. Now among those chosen from Israel was four of the children of Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, whose names were changed to Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshack and Abednego. God blessed Daniel with great wisdom and brought him into great favor with the prince and rulers of the kings court. Daniel told the king that he was a king of kings (Dan. 2:37) for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, strength and glory. So we can see from these few lines he was a mighty king with great power.

One night this great king had a dream which bothered him quite a lot, so he sent for all his magicians, the astrologers, sorcers and the wise men of the Chaldeans to show the king his dream. They stood before the king and said, Tell us O king your dream and we will give to thee, the interpretation thereof. But the king answered and said, it is gone from me. If you will not make known unto me the dream and the interpretation thereof, you shall be cut to pieces, and your houses be made a dunghill. I am writing this much about this king in order to show the reader what type man we are thinking about.

These wise and mighty men could not tell the king his dream, so he became furious and demanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. When the guards went forth to gather all the wise, they came to take Daniel and his companions. Daniel inquired as to why, and why the hurry to kill all these wise men, and he was told the reason.

Then Daniel went in unto the king and asked for time saying, give me a little time and I will tell you the dream and interpretation. Then Daniel and his companions Shadrack, Meshack and Abednego all prayed to God for the answer on the knowledge of this dream. And God revealed to Daniel the dream and the meaning of it. Then Daniel went to the king and asked him not to kill all the wise men, for of a truth they could not have revealed unto him the dream.

Then he told the king of his God who reigns in heaven and reveals secrets that he had shown unto Daniel these things , then he told the king his dream which was this ; (so as not to be too lengthy, I will not write it word for word , but if anyone wishes to read it, it is found in Daniel 2 : 31-45).

Daniel told him he saw this image , which was a image of the king himself , he also saw vision of five kingdoms made of iron , clay , brass , and gold . One kingdom cut out without hands and smote the other kingdoms and broke them to pieces , then this kingdom grew and grew until it covered the earth and lasted forever . The king was so pleased he made Daniel a great man with much power .

Then the king made a great statue of himself , out of gold , then passed a decree that all men at the sound of music should bow down before this statue and worship . It was reported to the king that Shadrack , Meshack and Abednego did not bow down to the idol, so the king ordered them to be brought forth. He then asked them , " do not you serve my god or worship the golden image which I have set up ". Now if you be ready when you hear the sound of music you will fall down and worship , you will be well , if not , you will the same hour be cast into a hot burning furnace , and who is the God that will deliver you out of my hand ." The children answered and said : " the God whom we serve is able to deliver us out of thine hand , but if not, be it known unto thee O king, we will not worship your god ."

Then the king full of fury , commanded the furnace to be heated seven times hotter than usual and the three children bound and thrown in, which was done . The heat was so great that some of the strong men who cast the three into the furnace was killed from the heat . Then the king stood up , looked into the furnace and said , (Dan . 3 : 47-48) " Did not we cast three men bound into the furnace and lo I see four men loose , walking in the midst of the fire , and they have no hurt , and the form of the fourth is like unto the Son of God ."

Let us stop and consider for a minute what this king has just said , " the fourth is like unto the Son of God." Now this was some 500 years before Jesus came to the earth with a body of flesh . The scripture has revealed in numerous places and times through prophecy by the prophets , guided by the Holy Spirit that there was a Son . We now know by reading the scripture and hearing the gospel preached that there is a Triune God , the Father , Son and Holy Spirit . But back at that date in time , some 500 years before the coming of the Son to earth , how many men had as much as heard the Son mentioned . How many knew of His existence , how did the king know ? And how did he know this fourth man looked like the Son . I believe there was only one way the king could have known these things and that was because God had revealed this unto him . Hadn't Daniel just said , (Daniel 2 : 28) " There is a God in heaven that reveals secrets ." I feel that this king was blessed with a wonderful experience to have seen the Son of God walking in those flames with the three Hebrew child-

ren. Can you imagine in such a heat and their clothes wasn't even scorched, for there was not even the smell of smoke upon them. The Lord was working with this king but he wasn't finished with him yet.

Lets go back to this dream the king had, Dan. 2 : 34. He saw a stone that was cut out without hands, it smote the image upon the feet, the other kingdoms were broken into pieces. Then this kingdom grew and covered the earth. This kingdom that Nebuchadnezzar saw in this vision, a stone cut out without hands, smashing the other kingdoms, growing until it covered the earth, was a vision of the kingdom of God. Notice the stone was cut out without hands, don't you see how clearly here that God is showing us that He will make his own Kingdom, without the help of man, or without any hand or hands helping him.

Doesn't the scripture say, the Spirit must the work perform, doesn't it also say it is by Grace, not by works lest any man should boast. The scripture teaches us in many places that he will accomplish the building of his Kingdom and the salvation of his people by his own work and method. The scripture tells us that all our works are nothing and even as filthy rags. Doesn't the Apostle Paul tell us that when a man is shown that he can do nothing in the way of bettering himself, or working for his own salvation, this is when he will be sometimes blessed to enter into that blessed rest that only the children of God will ever know. Yes the stone was cut out without hands.

It was also said this Kingdom grew and covered the whole earth, Yes this Kingdom would grow because it is God's Kingdom. Isn't it written, " I have a people in every nation, kindred and tongue." We now know how the gospel has been preached everywhere, we know how this Kingdom has spread. Dan2:45. Daniel said, " the dream is certain and the interpretation thereof sure." We know the work of God is sure and steadfast, for there is no power in heaven or on earth. Nothing in the times past, or out in the future that can change, delay or speedup, or hinder in any way the work of the God in heaven in whom we believe. I believe this kingdom is growing, just as fast as the Lord determined it would before time began. And it will grow to the exact size that was determined also.

I hope I am not getting too lengthy, but I would like to mention one more thing. Dan 2 : 21-22. Daniel told the king concerning his God. That wisdom and might are his, he changes the times and the seasons, he removeth kings and sets up kings, giveth wisdom to the wise etc. The Lord gave this king another dream and Daniel once again gave the king the interpretation thereof. Telling the king his kingdom would be taken away from him, that he would be driven from men, he would eat grass as the oxen. His body would be wet with the dew until his hairs were grown like unto eagles feathers, and his nails like bird claws, and seven times would pass over him. Daniel said this would happen until the king knew that God ruleth in the kingdom

of men, and giveth it to whom so ever he will . I can 't tell you the exact number of seven times, in the scripture it seems to represent a complete or a full number, such as seven days make a full week. Like I say I don't know the number, but I believe it was enough times to accomplish that which God set out to do , because this once great and powerful king was brought to the place where he said , " I praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth , and his ways judgement , and those that walk in pride he is able to abase." What an experience , what a revelation this once mighty king was given. Think of the difference in the things he is saying and the way he is thinking , compared to his thoughts and words back earlier. Isn't it written, Turn me O Lord and I will be turned. This king now knew for sure who was king , and who ruled both in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. This king now knew in whom he believed and why he believed in Him. You could not tell this king that God had no power or that he was a weak God, the way most of the world now believe . Do you believe you could tell this king that a man has to act first, or make the right decision then God would do the rest. I didn't find in what I read about this king that he was out doing good, or that he was changing his ways . He was still proud and all mighty and had his own way regardless of how or what that meant to anyone . But through this experience the king learned, just as everyone does, that when the God in heaven has any dealings with a person he is taught exactly what the Lord wants him to know . I believe that once God starts to do anything he finishes it, and I believe that every thing he has ever done was done right. The king's works or his good ways did not bring him to the place where he could praise and extol the God of heaven , for what does the scripture say, that election obtained it. I thank God for the belief I have in the doctrine of election , for that is one of the sure mercies of God. That sweet doctrine , I firmly believe would be lost world without end . There is a wonderful blessing contained in the book of Daniel for children of the heavenly king who has access to the scripture and has been blessed to read it . Does not the scripture in the New Testament say that the things in the Old Testament was written for our learning . I believe the scripture says, there are gods many and lords many, but one true and living God. This king I guess, for years believed in some of the little gods and even set himself up as a god here on earth. But when the time came and he met the one true God oh what a change was made. I verily believe that many people in the world today are found believing in these little gods . I believe that people today who are putting all their trust and dependance in money or the power of the almighty dollar are worshiping the silver idol just as much so as they did back in olden times . The scripture says, " it is the work of God that you believe in me." Therefore, I believe that men will believe in most anything , even in their own strength , until the God of heaven decides he should believe in Him, at such time,

and only then will man see or believe in the true God. This is the reason I like the magazine, Signs of the Times so much. It speaks of and praises the true and living God, the one who is all powerful, who thinks and it is done, who speaks and it stands fast; not the god of the world who is weak and begging. May the Good Lord bless us with Love to one another, peace and understanding, strengthen us in our weakness, that we may love Him as we should. I desire your prayers.

Frank C. Hunt
102 Lake Ave.
Salem, Va. 24153

ELDER W.P. O'NEAL, EXPERIENCE

When I was a small child I had many fears. I was afraid of the sun, I was afraid of the darkness and I was afraid that the world would come to an end. When I stayed all night with my grandparents, I would cry because I was afraid. They would ask me what was wrong and I would tell them my belly was hurting.

When my troubles first began, I decided to go to church. I was hunting for the church. I went to many churches and everything I knew of that called itself a church. All were killing to me. They would come to the house and say that if I didn't accept the Lord that He would not give me another chance.

I was told to pray for the Lord to appear to me and that he would talk face to face to me. I would cry all night until my pillow would be wet with tears. I finally begged for the Lord to appear unto me and one night while begging for him to appear, a white lacy form appeared to come down from the ceiling and began hovering around me. I was so afraid that I jumped out of bed and ran from the room. I never had a desire to ask the Lord to appear to me again.

I would go to work at night and I was in trouble all night and all day. I got in such a fix I thought my wife and baby had turned against me. I would lay in the bed at night and try to talk to my wife but a deep sleep had been placed upon her. I did not know at the time that she could not help me. This burden was for me to bear alone. I cried day and night.

I got to having dreams. I had not read the Bible, but would wake up quoting scriptures, begging the Lord to show me the true church. I dreamed I was in a trench and there was no way out. I saw a red horse and a man riding on it. The red horse had smoke and fire coming out of its mouth. I thought that if I would get out of this trench that the man on the red horse would get me. The earth was boiling with a red heat that I cannot describe. I could not go back to my wife and child but had to go on through this trench to my grandfather who was an Old Baptist preacher. (When I was a child, my grandfather had told certain ones that some day I would be with the Old Baptists.)

Another time, I dreamed I was in a wilderness, in thorns, thistles and barbwire. I was going up a mountain. I was talking to someone and told them that I must go to the top of

the mountain and when I got there everything would be as white as snow. When there, I saw a garden with all kinds of fruits and vegetables and the Old Baptists lined up at the table.

In another dream, I saw two trees. On one side I saw several denominations. The bark of their tree was slippery and swift growing. The apple was red delicious. These people were enjoying themselves and eating this fruit like it was so good. Someone gave me an apple, but it was the bitterest thing I ever ate. The other tree was on the right. It was old, the bark was twisted and the fruit was shriveled. I climbed up in the tree and tasted the fruit. It was the sweetest fruit I ever tasted. I thought this was the true doctrine.

In another dream, I was going up a hollow through brush, thorns and thistles. I saw an old man coming down the hollow with a long beard. We shook hands and the man said, " Brother O'Neal, you ain't one of them. I said " No, I'm Old Baptist", and went on.

In another dream, a light appeared in the east in the shape of a rainbow and it lightened all the earth. I saw free wills, holiness and pentecostals, and they were under a graveyard. They were trying to pray and were working with their hands to try to find out what that light was. I saw an old brother (Elder Otto Tilley) at a table (which stretched as far as I could see) and I went to them and Elder Tilley shook hands with me and called me Brother O'Neal and I sat and ate with them. One said to me, " I will tell you what that light is. It is Jacob's well appearing in the east."

Sometimes, in the night, I would get up and crawl behind a cook stove and read the Bible by the light of the street lamps. I would be crying and wetting the pages with my tears. I got to where I did not want to see anyone. I thought people would think, if I went into the church, it would be just to hide my meanness.

I had a desire to go to the Old Baptist meeting at Bud. I tried to get my uncle to go with me, but he would not go, so I went on alone. I caught the bus to Bud, not knowing where the meeting house was. When I got off the bus I saw two little boys. I asked them where the meeting house was. They pointed across the hollow to the next mountain. I got close enough to hear the singing but could go no farther. I looked up and down the road. I thought, if anyone would come by, I would go down into the woods and hide. I thought I would try to pray. I went into the woods and stopped, but I was afraid someone would hear, so I went farther into the woods. I kept going and finally I knelt down to pray. When I came to myself I was kneeling by an old burnt log. I was praying " Lord, have mercy on me, a poor sinner." When I went back home, I didn't go into the house. I went up under the porch. My wife came to the door and asked where I had been. I said I had been after a load of wood. She asked me what was the matter and I said " nothing." I lied. I was trying to keep my troubles hid.

I finally went to church. I remember going in and sitting down. I don't remember what happened after that, but when I came to myself, the church had accepted me. I

still do not know what I said. After this I had a strong desire to be baptized. I thought I could not wait until the next meeting on the fourth Sunday. I came to meeting and sat down on the floor. When they got done with meeting I sat there and cried. After meeting they took me and baptized me. Next, I wanted to go to the communion meeting.

I would wake myself up at night preaching. At meeting, when preachers were off talking, I was there too, talking scriptures. One day, after meeting, the Elders were standing outside talking. They said, " What are we going to do with Brother O'Neal?" I heard this and went out into the outhouse and listened to hear what they would say. I was afraid I had done something and that they were going to take me up in the church. One said, " We are going to have to put him in the stand." I feared then that they would put me in the stand right away, but they did not. In three or four months I was asked to open service. I said, " I can't," but they insisted. Elder Otto Tilley said to " pick a song and if you can't continue, I will." I chose Amazing Grace. I stood and cried. I could not sing. When the song was finished, I knelt down to pray. I don't know if I made a sound, but what was on my mind was " Lord, have mercy on me, a poor sinner." After this, Elder Tilley got up and went on in the stand and preached. Every now and then I was called into the stand.

Another time I was called to stand and I thought that I made such a mess that I vowed I would never go back in the stand. Some time after this, I was working in the coal mine and a huge rock fell from the roof and pinned me under it. It broke my back and paralyzed me for a time. I prayed that if the Lord would spare me I would go back into the stand. After the rock fall and the hospital stay, I was made willing to go back into the stand. I am satisfied that the Old Baptist is the true church. But to tell you that I am one, I cannot do. They are the most honest and the humblest people that I have ever known in my life.

In another dream, I was in a multitude of people. There was a woman in front. I thought she was the most beautiful woman I had ever seen. This multitude of people was dressed in white and followed the woman. She went around by a big rock and then went into the rock. Everything inside was as white as snow. All were clothed in white. I looked back and saw my wife May following along. When I looked back the second time, I didn't see her again. This worried me. I was told by Brother Mosely not to worry, that when in heaven, all would be alike. There will be no marriages in heaven. This seemed to satisfy me. I haven't worried about it since.

I joined the church May 25, 1947, was baptized on the fourth Sunday in June by Elder Otto Tilley and was ordained April 22, 1952.

Elder William Patten O'Neal

Note: Elder W.P. O'Neal is Moderator of the Newfound Church in Wyoming County, West Virginia, where meetings are held on the third Sunday of each month. The New found Church is in the Little Vine Olde Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

THE GREAT EXCHANGE

A beautiful discourse on the doctrine of imputation, given by Dr. John Owen (1616-1683) at the administration of the Lord's supper.

When we have the opportunity of speaking to you on these occasions, it is for the direction of the exercise of your faith in this ordinance in a due manner. Here is a representation of the death of Christ; and there is in the Word a representation of that which we should principally consider and believe in the representation that is made in this ordinance, and that is of a blessed change and commutation that is made between Christ and believers, in the imputation of their sins unto Him and in the imputation of His righteousness unto them: and the principal part of the life and exercise of faith consists in a due consideration and improvement thereof.

God taught this to the church of the Old Testament in the type of the offering of the scapegoat.

" And Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgression in all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness." (Lev. 16:21)

Aaron was not only to confess all the sins and iniquities of the people over the head of the goat, but he was to put their sins and iniquities of the people over the head of the goat, but he was to put their sins upon him. Here is a double act, the confession of sin, which is, as it were, the gathering of all their sins together; and the putting of them on the goat, to give a lively representation of it unto faith. So God did instruct Aaron to the putting of the guilt of our iniquities typically upon the sacrifice, really upon Jesus Christ.

He doth not say, He shall bear the punishment, but he shall take the sin itself, that is, as to the guilt of it, and carry it quite away: and therefore in the sacrifice appointed in Deut. 21 for expiation of an uncertain murder, when a man was killed and none knew who killed him, so none was liable to punishment but there was guilt upon the land; then the elders of the city that was nearest the place where the murder was committed, to take away the guilt, were to cut off the neck of a heifer by God's appointment, and that took away the guilt.

Thus did God instruct the church under the Old Testament in this great sovereign act of His wisdom and righteousness in transferring the guilt of sin from the church unto Christ. Therefore the prophet says, " The Lord has laid on Him the iniquities of us all." What then? By His stripes we are healed." The stripes were all due to us; but they were due to us for our iniquities, and for no other cause. Now our iniquities being transferred to Christ, all the stripes came to be His, and the healing came to be ours.

To the same purpose the apostle says, " He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him . " As we are made the righteousness of God in Him, so He is made sin for us. We are made the righteousness of God in Him by the imputation of His righteousness unto us ; for our apostle is to be believed , that righteousness is by imputation; God imputes righteousness , says he . We have no righteousness before God but by imputation; and when we are made righteous, the righteousness of God , which God ordains , approves and accepts , it is the righteousness of Christ imputed in us. And how is He made sin for us? Because our sin is imputed to Him. Some will say, He was made sin for us, that is, a sacrifice for sin. Be it so ; but nothing could be made an expiatory sacrifice but it had first the sin imputed to it. Aaron shall put his hands on the goat , confessing all their sins over his head; be their sins on the head of the goat , or the expiatory sacrifice was nothing.

The same exchange you have again in Gal. 3 : 13 , 14 : *" He was made a curse for us."* The curse was due to us , and this Christ was made for us : and to confirm our faith , God did institute a visible pledge long beforehand , to let us know, He was made a curse for us. He had made it a sign of the curse for one to be hanged on a tree, as it is written *" Cursed is every one that hangs on a tree."* What then comes to us? Why, " the blessing of faithful Abraham." What is that? " Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness ." Justification and acceptance with God is the blessing of faithful Abraham.

Here is the great exchange represented to us in Scripture in these things , that all our sins are transferred upon Christ by imputation , and the righteousness of Christ transferred to us by imputation . Both of these are acts of God, and not our acts. It is God who imputes our sin to Christ; " He hath made Him to be sin for us " : and it is God who imputes the righteousness of Christ to us ; " it is God that justifies ." He who made Christ to be sin, He also makes us to be Righteousness . These acts of God we ought to go over with in our minds by faith, which is that I now call you to.

The way to know the application of the benefits and advantage of this great commutation to our souls is by faith . Christ in the gospel , and especially in this ordinance , is " evidently crucified before our eyes" (Gal. 3 : 1). God hath set Him forth to be a propitiation ; so He is declared in this ordinance ; and Christ at the same time calls us to Him , " Come unto Me : Look unto Me , all the ends of the earth ." Come with your burdens ; come you that are heavy laden with the guilt of sin. What God has done in a way of righteous imputation, that we are to do in this ordinance in a way of believing . We are , by the divine help, to lay our sins by faith on Jesus Christ. Has God imputed all our sins to Jesus Christ ? Let you and I say Amen, by faith, so be it, O Lord. Let the guilt of all our sins be on the head of Jesus Christ ; and therein admire the goodness , the grace , the love , the holiness , the infinite wisdom of

God in this matter. If we were able to say Amen to this great truth, we should have the comfort of it in our souls, to acquiesce in it, to find power and reality in it.

Then the other acts of God is the imputation of the righteousness of Christ to us. It is not enough to us that our sins are all carried away into a land not inhabited; we stand in need of a righteousness whereby we may be accepted before God. He makes us to be the righteousness of God; we do not make ourselves so, but are made so by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ.

Our second act of faith, that God may stir us up unto in this ordinance, is to "receive the atonement." So the apostle expresses it (Rom. 5: 11). We receive together with it all the fruits of the atonement.

Now if the Lord will be pleased to stir up our hearts from under their deadness, to gather them in from their wanderings, to make us sensible of our concern, to give us the acting of faith in this matter, that in reality the holy God has laid all our iniquities upon Christ, and gives to us life, righteousness, justification and mercy by Him, we shall then have the fruit of this administration of the Lord's supper. (Copy from October 1981 Gospel Standard) (nfc)

N.F. Conner

"JUDGE NOT THAT YE BE NOT JUDGED"

HOWARD EASON
500-C N. Polk St., Amarillo Texas

"Judge not, that ye be not judged; for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." Matthew 7: 1,2.

It is by request that I undertake to write upon the above portion of scripture; and because it has been badly misapplied and abused, especially where difficulties arise requiring diligence and faithfulness.

It is only human nature to take the course of least resistance; and as a friend said to me in a letter a few days ago, "It is easier to get people to do nothing than it is to get them to do something." Therefore we can understand the workings of the carnal mind, those who have not been born of the Spirit of God, but those claiming to be followers of the teachings of the Bible, claiming to be taught by the grace of God, seemingly drifting along with little concern while disorder surrounds them on every side, is not so easily understood. The worst part yet, is when anyone undertakes to provoke them to action, they are heard to loudly exclaim, "Judge not, that you be not judged," etc. This is to justify a carnal ease.

As we understand it, the above scripture is part of Jesus' sermon on the Mount to His disciples. Jesus here did not mean to teach His disciples or His ministers or churches today to not judge of matters pertaining to the order and honor of God's house, but that they should not be cruel and unjust in their judgment, interpreting men's words to the worst. In order to prove that He

did not mean to teach they were not to be judges in anything , we would only have to go to the 15th and 16th verses : " Beware of false prophets , which come to you in sheeps ' clothing , but inwardly they are ravening wolves . Ye shall know them by their fruits . Do men gather grapes of thorns , or figs of thistles ? " Jesus is here warning them of wolves in sheeps ' clothing , and giving them instructions as to how to judge them .

The New Testament abounds with instructions to God 's under-shepherds as to how to watch over the flock and take care of the church of God . There are also instructions for the flock as to how they ought to behave in the house of God . Not only did Jesus warn His disciples of wolves in sheeps ' clothing , but we find the apostles warning the churches of the same . Paul said to the Roman brethren : " Now I beseech you , brethren , mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which you have learned ; and avoid them . For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ , but their own belly ; and by good words and fair speeches , deceive the hearts of the simple ." (Romans 16:17, 18.)

Again , we hear him using this expression : " Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world ? and if the world shall be judged by you , are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters ? Know ye not that we shall judge angels ? How much more things that pertain to this life ? " (1 Cor. 6:2, 3) . We hear Peter warning those of like precious faith in these words : " But there were false prophets also among the people , even as there shall be false teachers among you , who privily shall bring in damnable heresies , even denying the Lord that bought them , and bring upon themselves swift destruction . And many shall follow their pernicious ways ; by reason of which the way of truth shall be evil spoken of ." (2 Peter 2:1, 8). Someone might say , does not the Bible tell us these things are going to take place ? It is not God 's purpose that it take place ? Is it not embraced in the all things that work together for good to them who love God ? And what are you going to do about it ? etc . All these , and many more questions can be answered in the two following statements : Since the work of grace in the heart of a child of God produces fruit in their lives , what can those claim for evidence who live after the flesh and things of the world ? " For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men , teaching us , that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts , we should live soberly , righteously in this present world ." (Titus 2: 11, 12) . Effectual calling is a fundamental principle and has been held so in all ages . The burden is the same as Ezekiel 's : " And thou shalt speak my words unto them , whether they will hear , or whether they will forbear ." (Ezekiel 2:7).

" The election hath obtained it , and the rest were blinded ." — Romans xi . 7 .

Those that are blinded by the god of this world , have no knowledge of what power and feeling and savour and dew are ; they see not these things , they are blind to their reality , they are dead to their importance ; but the living family of God , who are brought by his blessed Spirit into some apprehension of eternal realities , have eyes to see what power is , and hearts too , to desire to feel its manifestation . Nay , it is the very seeing what reality and power are which makes them desire to experience the savour of eternal things in their conscience ; and because they do not feel them as they wish , it makes them often fear that they are blind altogether (Isaiah lix . 10). But the very inquiry , the very anxious cry , the very groaning desire , the very fervent supplication to the Lord that he would not let them live and die without a testimony from him - self , that he would lift up the light of his countenance and grant them the life of his favour — these very cries are a proof of life . Were you blind , you would not see these things ; were you deaf , you would not spiritually hear these things ; were you dead , you would not feel these things . And , therefore , that which you seem to take as an evidence against you , is in reality , an evidence for you ; and the very sensations of trepi - dation , anxious inquiry , godly fear , and the crying out before the Lord that he would search and try you and really make your heart right in his sight — these very things are the symptoms of life , the evidences of a work of grace upon the heart , and are the spi - ritual breathings of the quickened soul , the Lord himself having communicated these feelings unto it .

J .C . Philpot

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held , the Lord willing , on the fifth Sunday in March . The meeting will be held at Dan River Church with Pleasantville Church being the host church .

Elder Haywood Wray , Mod .

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 1991

In memory of Deacon A .C . Gibson
Mrs . Alice Gibson , VA 15.00
Mrs . Beatrice Miller , NC 2.00
Mrs . H .W . Jones , AL 2.00
Jerry P . Cockman , NC 7.00
Mrs . Bruce McKinney , VA 7.00
Mrs. Isobel A. Dickinson, MI ...7.00
Ms . Joyce Farley , TX 40.00
Mrs . B .F . McLaughlin , TX ...2.00
Ballard Barker , VA 10.00
D .H . Richardson , FL 2.00
Mrs . Larue LeBlanc , LA 2.00
Mrs . Ala Mae Noviello , TX ...2.00
Mrs . Frank Sizemore , WV ...5.00
J . Clive Chandler , NC 5.00
Mrs . Clara McDuff , TX 2.00
Mrs. Rebecca S. Smith, FL.....7.00
Mrs . Hettie Wade , VA 4.00
Mrs . Valsie P . Akers , VA 7.00
Charles P . Hayes , AL 5.00
Mrs. Cliff E. Weaver, WA 15.00
In memory of Jesse R . Somers
Mrs. Mary L. Hawkins, NC....32.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER DORA L. ALVERSON

Sister Dora L. Alverson passed away from this life on Oct. 8, 1990. She was laid to rest in the Dan River Church Cemetery on Oct. 10, 1990. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Kenneth Key.

She was born on Feb. 18, 1901 to the late John W. and Ida French London. Surviving are her son, Hunter Alverson, and four daughters, Dorothy Smith, Nettie Woods, Barbara Harrell, and Jean Nelson.

Sister Dora was one of our dear "Mothers in Israel." She was a loving mother and a dear wife. She was a proud mother of her five children. On her dying bed, I heard her pray aloud for her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

We were told that she asked for her deceased husband twice before her death. We talked about going to meet daddy so I know she was ready to go.

When I joined the church after daddy died, mother said to me, "You are not only my daughter, you are my sister too." Sister in Christ.

We were all saddened to see her suffer so long, but if our being there helped bear her pain we were all glad.

Sister Dora is at rest and her race is finished. God granted her two wishes before she died. One to walk again and to go back to church. Her paralysis did not keep her from trying to sing and pat her foot. I rejoiced when I watched her.

May the Lord bless our family who fought with mother to live on.

Submitted by her daughter,
Sister Dorothy Smith

NARCISSUS BARBOUR

We, the Primitive Baptist Church at Newport, Carteret County, North Carolina bow in humble submission to the will of our heavenly Father who took from our midst sister Narcissus Barbour on August 29, 1990. Sister Barbour was born December 7, 1900 in Harnett County. She was eighty-nine years of age.

Sister Barbour united with the Durham Primitive Baptist Church in 1948 and was baptized by Elder J. W. Gilliam. She came to Newport Primitive Baptist Church as a member in 1981 and was received with open arms.

Sister Barbour is survived by a daughter, Shirley B. Cheek of Morehead City, three sons, Billy W. Hamilton of Swansboro, L.B. Barbour, Jr. and William E. Barbour of Durham. Two sisters, Sister Meta Rohrbaugh, Williamsburg, Va., Sister Ada Chambers, Durham and a Brother, Dallas Jones of Coats. In addition there are six grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

Sister Barbour's afflictions caused her to be confined to her bed for several years. She will be greatly missed by her family and all that

knew her , and to know her was to love her .

She was a faithful member. She was blessed with a sweet and loving daughter and son - in - law , Shirley and Randel Cheek , who cared for her every need that human hands could reach .

Sister Barbour was a firm be - liever in the doctrine of unconditional election , turning neither to the right nor to the left , but pressed on with the precious hope that the Lord gave her .

Her walk was orderly and her conversation was Godly. From time to time when we would visit her she seemed to rejoice and we could see and feel the expression of love and sweet fellowship .

We feel satisfied that Sister Barbour is now sweetly sleeping in the arms of her dear Lord and Saviour . We trust that the Lord will reconcile her dear family, and cause them to realize that their loss is her eternal gain .

Her funeral service was held at Clement Funeral Home Chapel in Durham on September 1 , 1990 at 2:00 p .m . by her pastor Elder John Carroll . She was laid to rest in Woodlawn Memorial Park near Durham .

Therefore , be it resolved that a copy of this obituary be given to the family , one recorded in the church record and copies sent to Zion 's Landmark and the Signs of the Times for publication .

Done by order of Newport Primi- tive Baptist Church while in con - ference , September 16 , 1990 .

John Carroll , Moderator
Shirley Carroll , Clerk

JAMES WILBORN BURGIN

Brother James Wilborn Burgin beloved member of Paran Primitive Baptist Church, was born in Upshur County , Texas on April 26 , 1921 to Grover C . and Opal Burgin . He passed away July 20 , 1990 after a lengthy illness . Brother Wilborn was wonderfully blessed to have the fear of death graciously removed by his loving Saviour . A sweet calm - ness of spirit characterized his final hours . Also , he was blessed with a yearning desire for his blessed Lord, continually seeking Him whom his soul loved . Such a yearning and seeking can only find full satisfaction by entering a death void of its sting and a grave stripped of its victory by a wonderful Lord and Saviour who so graciously and lovingly receives His people as He calls them home . Brother Wilborn was made willing and ready to go .

He is survived by his loving wife of 49 years , Marcy Burgin of Tyler ; one son , Jimmy Wayne Burgin of Waco; two daughters, Jane Norris of Carroll and Linda Stricklin of Plano ; eight grandchildren and one step - great - grandchild . He is also sur - vived by one brother , W .M . (Bill) Burgin of Houston ; three sisters , Helen Pittman and Patsy Mitchell , both of Hawkins , and Flora Stutts of Jacksonville . He is also survived by his mother , Opal Burgin , of Hawkins . Funeral services were conducted by his pastor , Jimmy Hamrick . Interment of his body was in Smith Cemetery , near his beloved church where it awaits a glorious resurrection . " Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints . "

OKEY K. McCLURE

We bow in humble submission to the will of Almighty God, who in his wisdom and mercy called from our midst, our beloved brother and Deacon Okey K. McClure. He was born June 22, 1912, and died Aug. 20, 1990. We feel that our loss is his eternal gain. Our deepest Sympathy and Prayer goes out to his family. That God in his mercy reconcile their minds and hearts to accept his will, and give them strength, and comfort them in their grief. His singing voice and smiling face will be greatly missed by all, also we feel he is at rest in Christ waiting for that holy calling from on high that will call him from that sleeping dust to the arms of his Savior to ever be with him. He was faithful to his God and a faithful servant to his Church. He leaves his wife, Sister Gracie, five children (2 sons and 3 daughters), 18 grand-children, 3 great grandchildren to mourn his passing. He was a church member for 53 yrs. and a Deacon for about 37 yrs. Services was con-ducted at his church by Elders Ronald K. Crouch, Harold R. Johnson and Arlie Reynolds. He was laid to rest at Midkiff Cemetery, Lincoln Co., W.V.

Elder Ronald K. Crouch - Moderator
Brother William A. Johnson - Clerk

ELDER JOHN LEE SMITH

By the request of his wife, will try to write a few words in memory of our beloved Elder.

Uncle John Lee was born on March 27, 1901, in Spearsville, Louisiana, the son of Elder Woody K. Smith and Mary Rebecca Barron Smith. He was a life long resident of Spearsville. He died September 1, 1990, at the hospital in Farmerville, La.

Uncle John Lee was a member of New Hope Primitive Baptist Church where he served as Pastor for 40 years. He traveled much during these years and had a good report wherever he went. I have been in many of the churches where he had gone before and the brethren always asked about his welfare.

Survivors are his wife, Delma W. Smith, Spearsville, La., sons Winford Smith, Honolulu, Hawaii, Vernon Smith, Sheridan, Ark., Lyle Smith, Pine Bluff, Ark., and Carl Smith, St. Louis, Mo., one sister, Irene Risinger, Spearsville, La., nine grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

May we be reconciled to God's will in this matter and may he rest in this blessed hope which is the anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, which enters into that beyond the vail.

Written in love by
Elder G.R. Smith
Nephew by nature,
A brother in hope

In Memory of ELDER OTTO TILLEY

The Lord has seen fit to take home our beloved brother. Elder Tilley was born March 28, 1891. It is with a sorrowful heart that I try to write the life and death of our beloved brother.

Elder Tilley joined the Primitive Baptist Church May 21, 1921. He

was Baptised by Elder S.F. Collins, and later was ordained to go where so ever the Lord called him, that his lot be cast among old Baptist.

Brother Tilley was faithful in all the 42 years he served the Old Baptist. He went through the heat and cold, snow or rain. Yes, he suffered the affliction and burdens that was laid on him, and never complained.

He was with the Elkhorn Associa ciation until the trouble came and divided them. Within a few years Elder Tilley went to the old Pocatalico Association, and ask for a home in the Providence Church, and was received May 23, 1964, in full fellowship as an ordained Elder, there he remained until his death.

The Death Angel came on the 11th day of December 1970 and called him home. We morn the loss of our beloved brother, but we believe it is his eternal gain.

Written by,
Elder William P. O' Neal

SISTER BUELAH WRIGHT

Sister Malinda Buelah Lackey Wright was called away from this life on December 11, 1990 at the age of 96. She was a native of Patrick County, Virginia, and was born on December 9, 1894, a daughter of the late Elder George W. Lackey and Betty Ruth Turner Lackey.

She was united in marriage to the late Samuel Charlie Wright. To their union were born eight children, two of whom (Eulus and Noel Wright) preceded her in death. Her surviving children are: Lem Wright, Chester Wright, Grady Wright, Arthur Wright and Clayton Wright, and Mrs. Lee (Stella Mae) Adams.

She united with Goblintown Church by experience on the 3rd Saturday in August 1917, and was baptized the following day by her father, Elder George Lackey. She remained a member of this church until her death, although she lived a good distance away for some years and was unable to attend for that reason. Following the death of her husband in 1971 she made her home with her daughter at Bassett, and was able to attend as long as her failing health permitted.

Funeral services were conducted at Roselawn Chapel by her pastor tor, Elder John Wingfield, and a family friend, Reverend Oscar Adams. In addition to her children, she was survived by one sister, Mrs. Emma L. Brammer; two half-sisters, Mrs. Tommy (Nervie) Lovell and Mrs. Myrtle Ramsey; 14 grandchildren, and 18 great grandchildren. Her mortal body was laid to rest in Roselawn Burial Park at Martinsville, to await the second coming of her Redeemer.

Be it now resolved, that three copies of this obituary be prepared: one to be included in Goblintown Church records, one to be given to her family, and one to be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Goblintown Church in conference, the 15th day of December 1990.

Elder John T. Wingfield, Moderator
Sister Lena Clark, Clerk

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES , INC .
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POEM
Heb. 7:22

Christ, exalted, is our song,
Hymned by all the blood-bought throng;
To his throne our shouts shall rise;
God with us by sacred ties.
Shout, believer, to thy God;
He hath once the wine-press trod;
Peace procured by blood divine;
Cancelled all thy sins and mine.

Here thy bleeding wounds are healed;
Sin condemned and pardon sealed:
Grace her empire still maintains;
Christ without a rival reigns.
In thy Surety thou art free;
His dear hands were pierced for thee;
With his spotless vesture on;
Holy as the Holy One.

Oh! the heights, the depths of grace,
Shining with meridian blaze;
Here the sacred records show,
Sinners black, but comely, too.
Saints, dejected, cease to mourn;
Faith shall soon to vision turn;
Ye the kingdom shall obtain,
And with Christ exalted reign.

Kent.

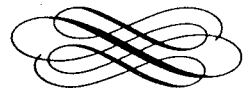

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EDITORIAL

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

If it be the will of God I will now continue to write a few words concerning His power, knowledge and wisdom.

Natural man cannot comprehend the living God of heaven and earth, *"for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."* God hath said, *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."* To understand anything in truth concerning the attributes of God we must be taught by Him. Jesus said, *"It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." And again, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me I will in no wise cast out."* I believe that I am writing to a people who have been taught of God and it is for your comfort and edification and for the praise and glory of God that I trust I write. Only if God be in the matter and directing me will it be of any value.

I do not wish to bring out anything new, but only to remind you of things you already know . As Peter said, *"Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of those things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth."*

The birth of Christ through the virgin Mary was, in the minds of men, a miracle. Yet it was no miracle for God, for He declared, *"As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."* Certainly he thought it, and certainly he had a purpose in it. Isaiah said, *"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and shall bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."* And an angel spake unto Joseph, saying, *"Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."* Now all this

was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. God has ever been with his children and they with him, even before the foundation of the world, for they were chosen by the Father in Christ before the foundation of the world. There are many people in the world who deny this, because they do not believe that Christ existed before his birth to the virgin Mary; but the Scriptures prove them to be in error. *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."* This could have been none other than the Son of God, for John said, *"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."* And in Chapter 19 of Rev.: *"And he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God."* And again John said, *"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."* But let us go to the words of Jesus himself in his prayer to the Father. *"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."*

God's prophets told of the coming of Christ and what he must suffer hundreds of years before it was fulfilled. They inquired and searched diligently what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified before hand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. This was never revealed to them, but it has revealed unto us in the Scriptures. Jesus said, *"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up again at the last day."* God's holy justice demands death for sin, and without the shedding of blood there is no remission. In his Godhead Christ could not die and he was the only one who could be accepted of God as a holy sacrifice. Therefore he must become incarnate that he might shed his blood and lay down his life for his children. We read in Chapter 2 of the Hebrew letter: *"Behold I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on himself the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."* And in Heb. 10 we read, *"Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me."* The body prepared, (which was Christ in the flesh and not a body prepared for him,) was sacrificed upon the tree of Calvary, and by that one sacrifice he hath perfected forever

them that are sanctified. Christ was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and by wicked hands was crucified and slain. From the time of his birth people sought to kill him, but could not; because his time was not yet come. Christ said, *"I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."* What great power was given to Christ, and what beautiful words he spake! (In another place it was said of him, Never man spake like this man.) My understanding is, that the sheep he must bring are the sheep of the Gentile fold, and they were to be combined with the sheep of the Jewish fold, making one fold; and Christ is the one True Shepherd: and they shall hear his voice. The Good Shepherd laid down his life for his sheep and on the third day he took it again. Jesus said, "The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live." Christ died to pay the penalty for the sins of the his children, but if he had not risen they would still be dead in trespasses and sins. But he arose for their justification, and because he liveth they also live. While he was here in the flesh, he demonstrated his power on several occasions to raise the dead, and he said unto Martha, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." *Can just anyone live and believe in him? Some of the Jews said unto him, If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believe not: - but ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish."*

All men are born dead in trespasses and sin and must be born again if they are to ever enter the kingdom of God. Jesus said, *"Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."* The Son of God speaks to his dead, alienated children and they hear and live. They are translated out of their state of death and darkness into his marvelous light and given eternal life; a life that was theirs before the world was, but is only now made manifest unto them by the appearing of Jesus Christ, for he is their life. he is the way, and the truth, and the life. He is also their prophet, priest and king. He is their all and in all. As their great high priest he ever liveth to make intercession for them, and he is the mediator of the new covenant which God hath made with the house of Israel. This covenant is; *"I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts: and I will be unto them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."* What a wonderful covenant it is truly wonderful, and we greatly rejoice

when we are given a heart to believe that his covenant is with us poor, undone, helpless sinnners. But there is much of our time spent in doubt, and we fear that hell will be our final destination. As for me, I feel this would be God's righteous judgment: but I trust in his mercy and grace; for Jesus Christ came into this low ground of sin and sorrow to save sinners, and I feel to be the chief. At times we feel we could walk upon the waters as did Peter if our Lord bid, and yet we quickly begin to sink in despair when we see our sins rolling over us in great waves. Then we cry unto him, and he hears. He speaks and the waves become as still waters and his arms of love and mercy lifts us up, and he renews our faith. When we are in the valley of fear and the slough of despondency he comes to us and drives away our fears and despondency. As David said, " I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, and out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he had put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." Yes Our God brings us out of our old, sinful, clay body, sets our feet upon Jesus and establishes our goings, yet we immediately turn out of the way when he does not lead us. He gives us eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to understand. He gives us faith to believe, hope in his promises and a love that the rest of the world knows nothing about. If we have patience it is his gift to us. *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of lights, in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."* All of our blessings were and are in Christ Jesus and we shall receive each and every one of them without fail; yet we do not know the things that he has in store for us therefore it has been ordained of God that we should pray for them. We do not know how to pray as we ought, nor what to pray for, but the Holy Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And as Paul wrote to the Corintians, *"I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the understanding."* God knows our needs and he said, *"Before they call upon me I will answer and while they are yet speaking I will hear."* He knows our every thought from afar.

What a marvelous God we have! How can any refuse to praise and worship him? or yet how can we praise and worship as we ought? But, *"if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."* Brethren, do you believe in the resurrection of the body? If not deceived, I do; and surely you do also. If you do not, then of what good is you faith and hope ? What do you have faith in, and what is your hope? And if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain and your faith is vain also. Jesus said, *"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not*

so I would have told you. I go to pre-pare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Did Christ fail to keep his promise? It would be absurd to even think of him failing to do anything that he has promised; for all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. The 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians describes in great detail the resurrection of the body. Read if for yourself, for there is too much to be quoted here, but in part it says, *"And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."* And, *"Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall all be changed."* To the Philippians Paul wrote, For our conversation is in heaven;from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." And David said in the Psalms, *"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness."* And Jesus said, *"for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."* Is there any thing put into the grave except our natural body? And Paul wrote, *"For we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."*

After the resurrection, Brethren, then cometh the judgment when our King shall divide the sheep from the goats; the sheep on his right hand and the goats on the left. Then shall he say to the sheep on his right hand, *"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."* Those sheep on his right hand are the ones whose names are found written in the Lamb's book of life, and whosoever is not found written in the book of life shall be cast into the lake of fire.

Brethren, my hope is that my name is already written there. If it is not, then it will never be there, for what God hath done is forever; nothing can be put to it, neither anything taken from it.

Brethren, I have only touched a few of the many Scriptures that have come to mind, but may God bless them to your comfort and edification, and to his praise, honor, and glory.

Elder Clifford Wilbanks

MOVED OR MOVING?

To assure you of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

CORRESPONDENCE

Copper Hill, Virginia 24079
March 20, 1991

Dear Elder Key,

You will find enclosed a letter relating on the experience of Sister Ora T. Nichols, 5320 Green Meadow Rd., S.W. Roanoke, Virginia 24018.

I would be very grateful if you would publish same in the Signs, at your earliest convenience, please?

In running through my files I found Sister Nichols letter written to my late husband B.O. Thompson and I in the year 1969.

She is a precious member. She and her husband, Deacon L.W. Nichol, have membership with Paynes Creek Church; Floyd County, Virginia.

Respectfully yours,
Gaye A. Thompson

Dear Bro. and Sister,

I have wanted to talk to you for several years, long before I joined the church, but seems like I've been held back.

I tried to do a lot of getting ready to join the church, I think I know I couldn't do anything. Yet I tried to choose the time and place, be dressed just right, and all that.

I wanted so much to tell the church how unworthy I was (and am), that I'm sorry for all the wrongs I've done, how much I love them, how good the Lord has been to me, and that I believe in "Salvation by Grace."

Well, I couldn't do any of that, I was choked with love and tears and could say only a few words and answer a few questions — but happy.

I have had to be showed over and over again that I can do nothing of myself. I lay awake at night thinking of all the times the Lord has lifted me up and in his light, given me hope.

One time I was sick and in the hospital for 7 weeks. The doctors kept calling my family to come, saying I could last only a short time or a few hours. I knew I was hurt bad, but family, friends, loved ones, no one mean't anything to me. My physical condition, and whether I lived or not, didn't bother me at all. The Lord was there, I felt his presence, his love, as it filled the room. I was surrounded by a quiet, joyful peace I had never known before and I have never been happier. I was shown a line between life and death and I was on that line. I had to fall to one side or the other, but either way I went, the Lord was going to be with me, so I had no worry. I believe I lived a part of the 23rd Psalm. I believe I walked through the valley of the shadow of death and feared no evil because He was wth me. I believe my cup was filled with goodness that comes only from above. A few words that kept ringing through my whole being during that time was 121st Psalm. "*I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth.*" I have done nothing and never will to deserve the blessings I feel He has bestowed upon me.

Once I saw a light in a garden that was so pretty, so bright it shone everywhere. It was a light full of love and joy

and had a glow, a ray of sparkling light that was brighter than all earthly lights. I didn't see Jesus in this, but it all came from a halo around the head of Jesus.

Once I was placed face down in sand at the base of a lifeless tree — just the trunk of a tree with no branches. I couldn't move or speak. A soft voice spoke to me saying the tree was my life and that my husband and I would rebuild my life with His help.

Another time it seemed I was forsaken forever. I felt that I had lived just as long as I could I was sure to die and if I died I would surely go to hell. I saw everything beneath me "scooped out," and filled with burning flames everywhere. I was certain to go into this burning hell. I saw this for several weeks and rushed from my room each morning to hide the tears — tears of fear. Then suddenly, I was lifted out of this torture by a hand so gentle, it couldn't have been anyone but the hand of God.

You two visited in our home when I was going through this and oh, how I wanted you to know! I wanted to talk to the church, but I was so different. I have heard of so many people fighting a desire to go to the church, while I wanted to join the church and couldn't. I see that as a blessing in itself, since I wasn't ready and I couldn't get ready, but I had to be showed this.

I must quit and am sorry I've been so lengthy.

Love to you both,
Ora Nichols
A sister, I hope.

ARTICLES

Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered. — Hebrews 5:8.

I don't understand why I am trying to write on such a deep subject. I know I am not worthy, or qualified, but this verse of scripture stays on my mind and has been for some time. So, I thought I would at least try to write a few lines and maybe get some relief.

When you think of obedience, it is hard to think of it in connection with the Son of God. Usually when you think of obedience it has to do with some younger person, some child to its parents, or someone on their job in relation to their superior. But we are speaking of the God who is so powerful that he spoke this word into existence, keeps all things in motion by the power of his word, controls the destiny of all men, knows their every thought and deed, even the hairs of their head are numbered. Who before time, chose a people for his bride, these people (his chosen), he has done everything that was needed to bring them to Glory as his bride, there is no way, any foe, enemy, or any condition or circumstance will ever be able to hinder one of his loved ones from spending eternity with their God. How do you place obedience when speaking of such a God?

In speaking of obedience, the scripture says, *Jo. 3:38 — "For I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me."* So here we see something of obedience, for he

says, I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him who sent me. So to do the will of the Father, he would have to be obedient to that will. We know from reading the scripture he was obedient to that will. We also know in many cases he suffered from doing that will.

He was given a body of flesh, like unto all of us for the purpose of fulfilling the law in the flesh. The body was also prepared and given to him for the purpose of using it for a sacrifice. Let us think of some of the times written in the Bible where Jesus suffered from being obedient to the Father's Will. Think of Jesus, the God who we have been speaking of, standing there before men, evil, puny, wretched men and allowing them to spit on him, revile him, mock him, make all manner of sport with him, knowing all the time he could call twelve (12) legions of angels to come to his defense. He humbly allowed men to drive nails through his hands and feet, hung on that cross suffering in more ways than we can ever describe. Certainly, he was obedient to his Father's will, and most assuredly, he did suffer from it. Think of the time when praying his sweat was as great drops of blood as this cup was set before him. The cup represented the sins of all his people. The Holy and Pure God that he was looked on sin as something dreadful and awful. We see that it was his Father's will that he drink the contents of this cup, thereby taking upon himself the sins of his chosen people. He was under such a strain as we said his sweat came as drops of blood. Hating the sin, not wanting those sins on himself, but wanting to be obedient to his Father's will he says. *Matthew 26:39 — Father if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.* He took the cup and drank every bit of it, surely he was obedient to his Father's will and surely he suffered from it.

We have seen where or how the scripture speaks of his suffering, but we won't stop there, for it also speaks of our suffering. *II Timothy 2:12 — If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us.*

This scripture is not saying you will have to suffer if you want to be saved. It is not saying if you want to go to Glory you will have to suffer etc. That would be obtaining salvation by our works. That we cannot do, and I certainly am not saying you can. The Lord has secured our salvation by his own works and power, and it is surely by grace through faith and not by any man's poor futile works. If we suffer, we will also reign with him, something else this verse of scripture doesn't mean. If we go out and break the law, steal something, or do something we shouldn't, get caught and we are found guilty and have to pay for it, by going to jail or paying a fine, and we are made to suffer by doing it. This is definitely not what this scripture means.

All of the Lord's chosen people have their own race to run, run with patience the race that is set before you. Each one has their own race, their own path, trials, tribulations, troubles, sufferings, joy, peace, etc. Look at the affliction and sorrow endured by the Jewish people because they were known as the chosen race. The suffering I am speaking of here is this, we all live in this body of flesh, with it's informities, weakness and sinful ways. Now when one has had some dealing with the Holy Spirit working within, making us, showing us the difference between the things of the Spirit and the

things of the flesh. Teaching us right from wrong, the sin that is in so many of our actions and thoughts. When we have been blessed to walk in the spirit and taste the fullness thereof. After we feel that we have witnessed within us that blessed hope of eternal life and salvation by Grace through our Lord Jesus Christ. After experiencing and enjoying this, we through the weakness of the flesh continue to commit sin and do the things we know are wrong, things we don't want to do. This is when I believe we are shown the meaning of this verse of scripture, "if we suffer with him." We know the Bible says that at the present time no chastisement is pleasant. This is when we are made to feel lower than the lowest, less than nothing, a trailer to that blessed hope that is within us. We are made to wonder if we have sinned away the day of Grace. We may not have a busted lip or a scarred face, but we will have an aching heart and a soul crying out for mercy. We cry for mercy because we feel justice would condemn us, and we would be lost worlds without end.

But praise the Lord, he knows how to care for his own, and thanks to his Holy Name he has the power to care for them. So in his own good time, when it pleases him, he can cause the sun to break through, put a smile on our face, place love and a sense of forgiveness in our hearts, and we are able to say Abba Father. We know the Lord doesn't whip one of his own for doing something wrong, no not because he did it, but so he won't do it again. Remember the scripture says, all those that are not chastened, are bastards and not sons.

So may we be thankful for everything, and praise God from whom all blessings flow.

I desire your prayers,
with Love — a brother I hope,
Frank Hunt

REDEMPTION

Christ in the atonement obtained eternal salvation or redemption for his elect people: Redeeming them from the curse of the law, from vain conversation, and from all iniquity. Words found in the Bible must certainly mean what our authors define them as meaning. Webster defines redemption as follows: To purchase back, or to regain possession of by judgment of a stipulated price, to repurchase, to ransom, to liberate rescue from captivity or bondage or from obligations or liability, to suffer, to ransom, to rescue, to recover as to redeem a captive. God's elect people are called lawful captives and the Father brings them to eternal life by a redeemer. The Father being the creditor, the Son lays down a sufficient ransom to offended justice for their deliverance, and rescues them by mere force and power out of the hands of Satan (Isa. 49:25). Satan being the jailor has no lawful right to detain the prisoner after the creditor is satisfied. If the atonement is universal, the redemption is also universal. But the scriptures teach that the atonement only embraces those sanctified by God, the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ and called. He shall save his people from their sins.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

TRANSLATED AND EDITED SERMON OF ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

Preached on December 20, 1969 at Bethel Church (Arkansas)

During the hymn service my mind was taken to expressions found in the 9th chapter of Isaiah. I would like to read starting at verse six and read through the seventh verse: *"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."*

We would like to begin in our treating upon this subject with the last expression in the seventh verse. The last part of that seventh verse, he said, *"The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."* The reason why we met this statement first and talk on this verse is to let you know those things which this text includes are not left to the chance and volition of men as to whether they be done or not done. To let you know that these things which we read in your hearing was to be performed by the zeal of God. To have a zeal is to be mighty in exercise, mighty in working, mighty in enduring. God does not sit on the stool of do nothing and wait and see what man will do. But this which we have under consideration, the prophet made the emphatic statement that the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this. It didn't say that the zeal of the Lord of Host will perform part of it and leave some of it for us to perform. But this which is under consideration, the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this. Now let's take under consideration what it is that the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform. This that we shall take under consideration will be certain; it will be sure; it will be perfect; it will not be lacking in any sense of the word. Why? Because it is based on the exercise not of the beneficiaries but upon the exercise of the giver — of the Lord of Hosts.

Beginning with the first part of the sixth verse of the ninth chapter of Isaiah, *"For unto us a child is born."* Notice the last statement that I read, *"The zeal of the Lord of Host will perform this."* That speaks as to the future, but in the first it says *"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given."* That's speaking in present tense. Even though this scripture of Isaiah was written hundreds of years before Jesus Christ made His appearance in the earth I firmly believe Isaiah experienced the real truth of the matter when he wrote: *"Unto us a child is born."*

Somebody might say those that came before the birth of Christ would be dealt with differently than those who came after the birth of Christ. I do not think so because God is the same God yesterday, today and forevermore. When we speak of God we can not speak of Him as in the past tense or the future tense when we speak of God rightly. But we speak of Him presently because the Scriptures

say that the Lord is not slack concerning His promise as some men count slackness, but is long suffering to usward not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. And just before this expression is made He said this, *"Be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day."* You know it seems to me that the apostle as he wrote this epistle he emphatically states you may be ignorant of many things and remain in that ignorance, but there is one necessary thing, one thing that you shall not be ignorant of, one thing that should be impressed upon your mind is that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day. What does that mean? That means this, that as it was two thousand years ago as far as man is concerned, that God is. That was present and is present in His mind now as though it was happening at this time, coming to pass at this time, the things that came to pass two thousand years ago. The things that are occurring now is just as present in His mind and the things that shall occur one thousand years hence, should time go on that long, is just as present in His mind as though it's occurring right now. You know that the mind of the Lord is so great that it can comprehend all things at the same time and all time at once and therefore there is no time reckoned with God, but He is one eternal NOW. So when we speak of God properly, we speak of God as being is.

Jesus made a statement that the English perfectionist would say, reasonably and logically, was stated wrong. When Jesus said, *"Before Abraham was I am"* the English critics would say that it was a wrong statement. If it had said, *"Before Abraham was I was,"* then that would be in accordance with good English. But the idea *"Before Abraham was I am,"* that would be contrary with the right usage of the English language say some teachers. But to those who are not ignorant of this one thing — that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day — it doesn't sound out of place to them. Why? Because *"Before Abraham was I am."* In other words even in the time of Isaiah, hundreds of years before Jesus was born in the city of Bethlehem in the country of Judaea, Isaiah could experimentally say, *"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given,"* the present tense.

This question was asked at Antioch church last Sunday afternoon. Do we have any scriptural proof that Jesus Christ was born on December 25th? I said no, as far as I know there is no scriptural proof of that. Commentators have agreed, judging all things that surely it was along about the month of October as far as the season is concerned that Jesus was born. It was in the city of Bethlehem in the country of Judaea almost two thousand years ago. But I said I would like to answer that question and tell you that it doesn't make any difference when He was born here upon this earth. It doesn't make any difference what day or what month He was born on this earth. But I will tell you what does make a difference. It is when Jesus is born in you the hope of glory. That's the difference and that's exactly when you celebrated the birth of Christ. It was when Jesus was born in you the hope of glory.

There is a great deal to this statement, *"Unto us a child is born."* I had

some thoughts upon it a few days ago that couldn't be bought. There is a difference in *"Unto us a child is born" and "Unto us a son is given."* If you read a scripture and you don't find Jesus in the scripture you haven't found the core of the text. If you read a scripture and you don't find you own experience there then you haven't tasted the text. Here's what was sought for at the time when Jesus was born. What would be the sign? What was the sign that was given to them. Would they find a giant? Was that the sign? No, this was the sign: *"Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger."* This was the sign. *"Unto us a child is born."*

Those who have been born of the Spirit of Almighty God have been made sensible to their many sins and brought to serve the law. What a terrible thing this law demanded and the law gave nothing but it demanded everything. You did your very best to serve this law. But the law entered that the offense might abound and when this law came into your hearts and minds it showed you the very best of your righteousness was as filthy rags in God's sight. You found yourself feeling to be nothing, less than nothing, vanity, that sin was mixed with all you did and when you would do good evil was present with you. You felt so low down that should a king have come to you or should one in great authority or one mighty have come to you it would have so sunk you that you wouldn't have had any use for it. It would have been too shocking to you. But this is the sign, you shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger. When you were in this condition you said, *"Lord save or I perish."* You were certain that you were doomed to hell in your own feelings. Did you want to come before a king then? No, you would say I'm unworthy. You said, I am unfit. Oh no, not that!

Let us take the words of Jesus. Jesus said, *"Come unto me, all you that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me."* What do we first learn about Jesus? What think ye of Christ in your first experience? What did Jesus say? Did He say to those who were heavy laden and to those who were labouring, come unto Me? Did He say to them that I am the mighty God? No, He didn't say that. Why? You weren't ready for that. What did He say to you? He said just like He said to those that were heavy laden and labouring. You are heavy laden with your sins and you are labouring very diligently to try to get yourself out from under that terrible weight of sin that has you pressed down so much. Oh how terrible it is. But Jesus said learn of Me. What did He say? He said, *"For I am meek, and lowly in heart."* He didn't say He was high in heart. He didn't say, I am King and nobody had better cross Me. He didn't say that, did He? No, He said I am meek and lowly.

I have thought about families who are given children; when a child is born the mother says this is mine. She can lift it up. It is little, she can lift it up and caress it. She says this is mine. When Jesus appears to you He doesn't appear as the mighty giant at first but the sign is that you shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger. Learn of me, I am meek and lowly in heart and you shall find rest in your souls. Here you are down; here you are without hope for the future; here you are facing the fiery

judgment and indignation of a righteous God. You know if He should do you justice you would be cut off and that without remedy. Then all at once you come into possession of something meek and lowly; something you can caress and handle. Yes, one wrote about what he had tasted, what he had handled, the Bread of Life, to handle Jesus as a babe is handled. What did you want to do with that child? Did you want to destroy Him? Oh, no, how precious is that One that is born in you the hope of glory. He came as a babe. You know if it had been God's will for Him to come as grown He would have. But it wasn't His will that He come as grown, but He came as a little babe. The Scriptures say that He grew in stature and that He grew in wisdom and He grew in favour with God and man. That's what the Scriptures say. Haven't you felt in your heart and in you experience the growing of the Lord Jesus? Yes, when He first came to you He said I am meek and lowly. You know Jesus said of my own self I can do nothing. He said the Father works and hitherto I work. So He comes to you as meek and lowly and says I can do nothing of myself. What did He say when one said I will follow thee? He said the foxes hove holes, the birds of the air have nests but the Son of Man has not where to lay His head. You know there was no room in the inn for Joseph and Mary, no room in the inn for Jesus to be born. But He was born and laid in a manger. He was wrapped in swaddling clothes. Not a very enticing garment was it? No, but it was the clothes that they habitually rubbed the animals down with that the Lord Jesus was wrapped in. It wasn't a beautiful garment. But that should be the Son when He came to you in your experience. When you first tasted of Him you found Him as a babe and oh how you caressed Him. You said He's mine. He's mine. You celebrated His birth. He was born in you as a child. He came to you as meek and lowly. You think you are low. You think you have been forsaken, but He came to you as the Psalmist David expressed, *"My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"* And as Jesus Christ expressed on the cross, *"My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"* He came meek and lowly. Jesus said that He became poor that we might become rich. Yes, He was born in you as poor.

"Unto us a Son is given." That's a different statement. The Son is given and we thank God for the gift of His Son. We didn't say that we merited His birth, no. But we thank God for the gift of the Son. *"Unto us a Son is given."* Aren't you glad it didn't say offered. Because in the offering you rejected Him many times in your experience. Yes, in your experience you rejected Him. But I want to tell you when the proper time comes the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this. He will make you ready. He will make your heart ready to receive Him. To receive Him first as a babe, to receive Him first as a child that you can caress and that you can love.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder." Jehovah created the heavens and the earth. He created and formed all mankind. He created everything and put man as head of that creation to have dominion over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and beast of the forest and to have dominion over the things that God created. God gave man dominion over them. He even gave man the power to name the things. He is

the creator of Adam and the earth and all things that is. You know that our God, Jehovah, the Father, knows how and does delegate power. In the Scriptures it says to be ye subject to the higher powers for all powers that be are ordained of God. That's a delegation of power, isn't it? He said be ye subject to the higher powers for there is no power but of God for the powers that be are ordained of God. So God delegates power and what did He delegate to his Son? He delegated the government of Israel to the Son. In delegating the government, I want to tell you the government shall be upon His shoulder. Sometimes elders in the church gets to fussing about who shall be the greatest and who will be the boss. Sometimes deacons and elders have it as to who will have control over this, that and the other. But it is all of the flesh. Why? Because God has decreed and God has ordained that the government of His church shall be upon the shoulder of Jesus Christ the blessed Son of God. So He is the governor. There is no pastor that can take that honor unto himself that he is the governor of the church. There are no deacons that can take that honor unto themselves that they are the governor of the church. There are no clubs of pastors and deacons together that can take that honor to themselves, that they are governors of the church an that the church must look upon them and respect them as such because any time that happens it just proves that it is not the church that is spoken of here. Because the government shall be upon His shoulder and in the New Testament it says that Jesus Christ is the head of the church and it speaks of the church as being His body. So the government shall be upon His shoulder.

I was talking to the pastor of the First Baptist Church in the community several years ago. He came to my home; he had recently moved to this community. He had heard that I was serving as pastor of some Primitive Baptist Churches in the community. He wanted to have a long talk with me. I invited him in and we sat down and began to talk. I have never been blessed in all my life with scriptures coming into my mind just as though I could see them in the Bible and I would quote them to him to every question that he asked. I'd quote the scriptural answer. He became astonished. He became so astonished that he began to talk to me as though he were a little boy and I was his father. He said, " Brother Lambert, I have such a terrible burden. The church here has twelve hundred members and oh what a great responsibility that's upon me, twelve hundred members resting upon my shoulder." I said, "I can sympathize with you. I used to feel the same way. I know what a burden it is, but that was too much of a burden for me and the Lord lifted it from me." I said that He gave me to understand that He assumed that burden. His face lit up and he said, "I never thought of it in that way, maybe you are right." I said, "I think I can tell you that I know that I am right."

"The government shall be upon His shoulder." He has the burden; He has the responsibility. Some of us quarrel and some of us complain about how He runs things but I want to tell you that it is the flesh and pride complaining every time. Sometimes its little folks that gets big recognition and people with a lot of pride say now that's just out of this world. How foolish it is that we come complaining

about it. I have seen people illiterate, as far as natural education is concerned, that the Lord has raised up and gave them the call to the ministry and qualified them. They were illiterate as far as worldly education was concerned, but when they went behind the sacred desk and the Lord blessed them to preach, they would make the wise and the noble hand their heads down in shame because they could preach so much better than they and so much more effectively. The pride of the flesh will come up and come against such things.

God's tool chest, do you know what God's tool chest contains? God's tool chest contains His instruments. His instruments are those He's chosen and Paul tells us that not many wise were chosen, not many nobel were chosen, not many mighty were chosen, but God chose the foolish things of this world to confound the wise. He chose the weak things to bring to naught the things that are mighty. He chose base things. What are base things? Base things are lowly things. He chose base things, yea even things that are not to bring to naught things that are. Sometimes we have to take off our high pinnacle and have to be squashed down. I want to tell you we can't pat ourselves on the shoulder and say we humbled ourselves either because a man that is taken down by circumstances over which he has no control must say that the zeal of the Lord has performed this, I didn't get down humbly. The government shall be upon His shoulder. I want to impress upon you that the governor of the church is the Lord Jesus Christ and He gives in this book the proper procedure for the church to follow.

He said and His name shall be called, first, Wonderful. Was there any thing more wonderful to you than the first child born to you? Here you are without hope in the world and here is one you can caress and love, who says I am meek and lowly. He became poor that we might become rich. How much would you take for a child born to you, a son that is given? Would a million dollars buy it? Would you sell a baby of yours for a million dollars? Would you? Money won't buy it.

Wonderful! We are at the last scheduled meeting at this place of this year, of this decade. What is the wonderful and the great spectacular of the decade? Most would agree that it was man's ascension to the moon and walking upon it. That is the wonder of wonders as far as the earthly wisdom, earthly technology, earthly science, earthly astrology is concerned. But you know what I consider to be the wonder of wonders. I read about the moon in Revelation. I read about the woman in Revelation. I read this woman was clothed with the sun and this woman had the moon under her feet. You know it takes a terrible power to draw you from the gravitation of the earth. It takes a terrible power because the earth draws. So it is with the lust of your flesh. It has such a drawing power that it takes a mightier power than you can ever manufacture to get yourself out from the bondage of the lust of the flesh. The gravity of that lust is so great. I tell you what kind of thrust engine it will take — the Holy Spirit — to ever lift you up from the gravitation of the lust of the flesh.

You know that man's first soar into space is the moon. The first spiritual soar after you have been taken from the gravitation of the flesh, the first spiritual lighting place is the law. While you are

under the magnetic drawing power and gravity of the flesh you are the servant of the lust of the flesh. After the Holy Spirit comes into your heart and mind and you are regenerated and born again it is a thrust engine that is fueled by the love of Almighty God that draws you up to the first stage in your space. That stage is the moon which is representative of the law and then you become as a servant of the law.

If you recall on the first trip as the astronauts went around the moon they let down a man to walk on the moon. The last time before the lift off from the moon to the earth they read the true story of creation. As they read in Genesis the purpose of the moon they read it in such a way that I knew that they knew that the moon itself was a dead mass of substance that wasn't worth anything other than what God has ordained it to be worth, to rule the seasons and to be a light by night. So it is in the night time when we cannot see the Son of righteousness that the moon is the only light, the law, that we have. That is when duty religion comes in. That is all we have when the Son is eclipsed from us and it has become the night time where the moon is the only thing that gives any light and that's the duty. That still is a stimulus and that's fine. But I want to ask you as far as the gravitation of the law is concerned what is the next flight? It is to be brought over the law and to be brought out from under its domination. You know the moon is over us. But I tell you we are servants of the flesh until we are drawn by the Holy Spirit into the gravity of the moon or the gravity of the law; then we are servants of the law. The scripture says the law is the schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ and Christ is the end of the law to everyone that believeth.

The next step is when Jesus brings us up out from under the dominion of the law. Then we are as that woman as the church, that's clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet. The law has no more dominion over us but we have been freed from the bondage of the law. We have become free indeed when we are no more servant of the law but servant of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. His name shall be called Wonderful. It's wonderful that He would take the responsibility of the law and fulfill it to a jot and and tittle in our behalf.

He is Counsellor. How is He a counsellor? He's a counsellor in the counselling: do unto others as you would have them do unto you, in saying love your enemies, pray for your enemies, do good to them that despitefully use you. If you have been favored with Him being born in you the hope of glory, as a child grown up, He has become you Counsellor and your advisor. You say Lord Jesus I want you to direct my way. Not only that but He is you Counsellor in pleading your case before God. He comes before the great throne of God and says to the Father, *"Father I have taken this person's sins upon my own self. Father, I have taken the responsibility of the law and paid all that is required. I have done that for him."* Therefore justice is satisfied because the law of God will not require anything less than the fulfillment of the law in every sense of the word and that all sins must be punished to its extremity. But Jesus Christ took that punishment. He's our Counsellor that pleads our case. He is at the right hand of the throne of God making intercessions for the saints of God according to the will of God. He's our Counsellor. Not only that but He is

Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God.

He doesn't come to you first as The Mighty God. He comes to you as a child. He doesn't come to you first as The Mighty God but He comes to you as a babe. He doesn't come to you as from a palace and arrayed in fine linen but He comes to you as wrapped in swaddling clothes first, then as Counsellor. He grows in your heart and mind and you grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and then you can count Him as The Mighty God.

The Mighty God what does it mean? Whatsoever His desire is, that He doeth. He worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. He runs your life. He controls your actions. He watches over you. He providentially cares for you. You may forget Him but He does not forget you. He's The Mighty God. He speaks and it is done. He commands and it stands fast. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.

Not only is He The Mighty God but The everlasting Father. Oh, as children we pray to Him as Father. We say, *"Father, give us this day our daily bread."* In that relationship we look to Jesus as the Father of our faith. We look to Jesus as the Father of our salvation. We look to Jesus as the Father to whom we can go to and depend upon for giving us the things best for us. What a great relationship it is that He is Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

You know scripture says God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. Any church anywhere that you find real peace Jesus is the author of it. Any church anywhere you find confusion Jesus is not the author of it. Somebody said that the devil is. You know we have a habit of wanting to put off on some strange unseen something that which really belongs to us. When I want to see the devil I look in the mirror. I don't charge God with my sins neither do I charge the devil with them. *"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) there dwelleth no good thing."* How they make me to cry and how they make me to weep. How afterward when I meditate upon these things I beg God to forgive me. I beg God for His mercy.

"Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end." You talk about the church of the Lord Jesus Christ decreasing. Do you believe it will decrease? If this scripture is true it will not. We get fearful just like the old prophet did. He said, *"Lord they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life."* What did the Lord tell him? He said, *"I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal."* Sometimes we get to thinking that the church of Christ is decreasing; that it is not increasing. According to this I have to say the church of Christ is on the increase. Why? Because it says here, *"Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end."* So it shall increase. As the world is becoming more populated every day the number of children of God is becoming more numerous every day. Don't you believe that ? I certainly do in the face of this scripture, *"Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it."* God orders it and He establishes it.

"The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Are you worrying about it? In our pride we worry about it. It is prideful humility. It's hypocritical religion, that's what it is, but we are guilty of it. If we could only realize that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, that all things, in some mysterious way in which we are not now able to understand, work together for good to them who love God, to them that are called according to His purpose. May God bless the truth and pardon error is our prayer for Christ sake.

Elder E.J. Lambert

PECULIARITY

January 1938

A woke this morning thinking of the peculiarity of the children of God. They are a peculiarity to the world, to themselves and to the Lord. We might take for a text, in consideration of this subject. Paul's language to Titus: *"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." — Titus ii. 14.* In nature they are not peculiar from other people, but are subject to the same things that other men are. They have contageous diseases and get hurt in accidents, are careless, and are subject to other things that befall the human race, the same as other men are. Too, they are like other men in their nature. They get mad, are subject to flattery run after vain and glittering things the same as those who have not heard of better things. Paul tells the Ephesian brethren that they were by nature the children of wrath even as others. (Eph. ii. 3.) So we can safely conclude that their peculiarity is not in nature. It is not the saving of his people on the cross that makes them peculiar, because up to a certain period in the life of Paul he was not different or peculiar from any other man in nature, even though there is not any doubt but that when Jesus cried out on the cross that it was finished, he had completely done all for Paul that was done for any child of God. Paul was under the law, and believed that all that he had, or ever would have, was to be had by keeping that law. In this he was not any different from any one else who has not been brought to a peculiar stage in life. All the sects in the time of Christ, as they are now, were alike and had much in common as to coming into eternal life. Ask any man now who has not had a work done for him and it made manifest, and he will tell you he must do something in order to inherit eternal life. There is not any peculiarity in this at all. But let us notice those who have been quickened. It is far different with them. Up until this imparting of life into them they did not bear a single characteristic of a child of God, they did not appear peculiar to themselves nor to the world, but now things are very different. One time, my dear reader, we all thought we were doing fairly well. We thought we could measure arms (works) with the best church member, and that the most of them were our inferior. This is a common feeling among the world. But how is it with you now? Do you feel that you are as good as any of them? No, no, you feel different now. You look upon each dear child of God as being far your superior. Can the world understand this? No. Can you even understand it

yourself? No, you do not see why it is. But the answer is simple to those who are simple and are made wise by the testimony of the Lord. (Psalms xix. 7.) The natural man can never understand the salvation of the Lord. An intelligent man who is a grammarian can do wonders with language until it comes to the Bible. He can read anything forward until he comes to the Scriptures. Then language fails him there and he shows that he has the same thing in common with the most illiterate man who has not been taught in the school of grace. On the other hand, you watch the man that the Lord deals with. See how much deeper grace can go than grammar. Grace can and does take a drunkard out of the gutter and make a peculiar man out of him. It can and does go into the college president's office and make him acknowledge that salvation is of the Lord, and makes a marked, or peculiar, man out of him. It was a special people that the Lord chose unto himself. They were not chosen because they were special, but were chosen to be a special people. (Deut. vi. 7.) They were very common in the nations around about them, because they were not the most popular nor the best, but to the contrary. But his choosing and causing them to come unto him made quite a bit of difference in the children of Israel. They were his special or peculiar people, and the world recognized that they were special, and they hated them for it. This brings this peculiar people under the hatred of the world. The Lord chose the type to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations of the world (Deut. xiv. 2) and they were hated at every turn and everything done to molest them. So it is at this day. The hatred of the world for this peculiar people has not diminished. It cannot comprehend them. It cannot understand how men can go to the stake, praising God above the roar of the flames. It cannot understand a motive (love is the motive; the world has not that love) so strong as to cause men to leave all that this life offers and spend and be spent in feeding the sheep (a service in the Lord) and the only compensation to be that *"I am with you alway,"* and to have afflictions, trials and disappointments.

Another peculiar trial of this people is their faith. Poor and cast down they may often be, but the Lord holds them up. Daniel could not be turned from worshipping God, even though it meant being cast into a den of lions. The Hebrew children went into the fiery furnace. The children of God several centuries ago went to the stake, were pierced through with hot weapons, pushed from cliffs, and yet their last cries were to God. This is a peculiarity that cannot be fathomed by the world, because this faith is of God. It is not in any way the work of the creature, because the creature cannot manufacture a faith that would stand. If it could, then it would cease to be peculiar.

What a peculiar people! *"Who hath made thee to differ?"* cries the apostle. It is the Lord that has done the work. The Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure (Psalms cxxxv. 4), and as long as this work is made manifest you will find this peculiar people, this holy nation, this royal priesthood, this chosen generation. May the Lord keep his peculiar people.

A poor sinner,
W.D. Griffin

MEETINGS

CERTIFICATION OF ORDINATION

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to certify that we the undersigned elders and deacons met March 16th, 1991 Union Primitive Baptist Church (Old School or Primitive Baptist Church of Christ) in Union Parish, Louisiana, for the purpose of ordaining Brothers J. Theron Jones and Clifford C. Wilbanks to the full work of ministry. After hearing the said brethren declare their belief in an absolute Sovereign God, total depravity of man, unconditional election, limited atonement, perseverance of the saints in grace by the perfect effectual work of the Father-Son-Holy Spirit, and the resurrection of the bodies — all merited for God's people by the work of Christ the perfect Saviour. This was done to our satisfaction by their preaching and response to questions by members of the duly-organized Presbytery. We did ordain Brothers J. Theron Jones and Clifford C. Wilbanks to the full work of the ministry by prayer, laying on of hands, and charge in accordance to the Holy Scriptures.

This authorizes Elders J. Theron Jones and Clifford C. Wilbanks to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ wheresoever and whensoever God sees fit to bless them, and to perform in any official capacity becoming an ordained Minister of Christ.

We commend Elders J. Theron Jones and Clifford C. Wilbanks to all orthodox and orderly Baptists as being sound in doctrine, careful in deportment, and as humble and conscientious in the display of God's Gift of the ministry in them.

Witness our hands this 16th day of March, 1991.

ELDERS
Richard Campbell
Jimmy Hamrick
C.M. Haygood
George Jones
Gerald D. Shipman
Graydon Smith
Lloyd Wall
C.C. Morris

DEACONS OF RESPECTIVE CHURCHES
Miles Bird
E.H. Chandler
Alvin Fox
Charles Fox
Marvin Curnutt
Frank Pilgreen
John E. Smith
Harold R. Toney

All of the above signed the minutes of the Presbytery.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FEBRUARY 1990

Lloyd Spikes, OR 22.00
Mrs. Philliss Snyder, VA 2.00
Mrs. Mildred Hanks, VA 12.00
Mrs. Lavenia Biggs, TN
In memory of Eld. Albert Brock 32.00
John R. Copelin, TN 2.00
Mrs. Annie Pearson, MI 22.00
Mrs. Vera N. Potter, MS 12.00
Mrs. Susan Chandler, FL 2.00
Mrs. Marie D. Cannaday, VA 2.00
J.W. Arrington, NC 2.00
Reed Harper, TX 7.00

Mrs. Willsie M. Wood, VA 2.00
Mrs. Virginia Apple, NC 2.00
E.F. Dyer, VA 2.00
C.J. Williams, TN 2.00
G.M. Lockey, NC 2.00
Milton Houston, NC 2.00
Eld. Fred Neikirk, AL 2.00
R.A. Hocutt, AL 2.00
Mrs. Marie Futch, LA 2.00
Eld. J.D. Hamrick, TX 4.00
Mrs. Ollie Rhoades, TX
Memory husband Earl Rhoades 18.00
Raymond May, VA 2.00
Eld. Noel Conner, VA 7.00
John D. Manning, NJ 10.00

OBITUARIES

BROTHER CLARENCE BARTON

In submission to the request of Sister Barton, and trusting it is the will of God, I attempt to write the obituary of Brother Clarence Barton. Brother Barton was a very loving person and often expressed his love to those around him. It was certainly a joy to know him. He was born July 11, 1901 in Floyd County, Virginia to the late Dennis and Jennie Ingram Barton. He and Sister Mamie were married December 25, 1931. To this union was born one daughter, Mrs. Peggy B. Bullins. In addition to his wife and daughter survivors include two grandchildren and one great-grandchilden.

He and Sister Barton were received into Riverview Primitive Baptist Church on Saturday, September 24, 1966. They were baptized the next day by their pastor the late Elder J.R. Hollandsworth. He loved to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ proclaimed and the singing of the songs of Zion. He loved to read his Bible and wore the covers off several during his life time. Brother Barton lost his sight several months before his passing and enjoyed listening to the Bible tapes.

He is greatly missed by his many friends and the members of the Church but we feel our loss is his eternal gain.

He departed this life on Thursday September 20, 1990, making his stay upon earth 89 years, 2 months and 9 days. His funeral was conducted on Saturday, September 22, 1990 at Collins Funeral Chapel, Bassett, Va. by Elders Noel Conner, Larry Hollandsworth, and Carl Terry. His body was laid to rest in the County Line Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery to await the glorious day when all the saints will awake with the likeness of Christ and be carried home to ever be around the throne of God to sing endless praises for ever and ever.

Written by
Carl E. Terry

OPAL VALETA BURGIN

It is with a sweet sorrow that I write the obituary of my dear grandmother and sister in Christ, Opal Valeta Burgin. Granny, as she was affectionately called by many, was born on December 23, 1899 and received into the hands of her loving Heavenly Father on November 11, 1990 at the age of 90. She was a member of Paron Primitive Baptist Church in Hawkins, Texas for 42 years and served as church clerk for a number of years. Granny was preceded in death by her husband, Grover Burgin, who was deacon at Paron. The Good

Lord blessed their union with eight children, four of whom survive, Sister Helen Pittman, Sister Flora Stutts, Sister Patsy Mitchell and Bill Burgin, and a host of grandchildren, great grandchildren and dear in-laws. Four sons preceded her in death: Huel, Wilborn, Grover Jr., and Wayne Burgin. My Granny's funeral was conducted by Elders Jimmy Hamrick and C.M. Haygood whose words were very comforting to the family and friends. Her body was laid to rest in Smith Cemetery next to her beloved church's meeting house.

Granny believed in an all wise and all powerful God and had no confidence in the flesh. She would readily admit that there was nothing good in her if someone would tell her how precious she was. Granny was a wonderful witness to the goodness and graciousness of a covenant keeping God and would often be seen with a sweet smile even while going through heartrending afflictions.

It seemed that Granny was blessed to love everyone, especially the household of faith. She was constantly doing good deeds for other people without any desire for recompense. Granny was truly blessed to live a life that showed a great work of grace in her heart. I never heard Granny say or do anything unkind to anyone. Only God could have blessed her to have done this.

My dear Granny died on a day that had the following scripture verse printed on my calendar; *"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."*

May our blessed Lord be given all the praise, honor, and glory for having given us this dear precious one who touched our lives so deeply.

Her unworthy grandson,
Phil Pittman

RUBY WALDON COLE

Sister Ruby Waldon Cole was born April 23, 1908 to Franklin and Laura Jane Beasley Waldon. She was called from the walks of this life Jan. 2, 1991. She was married to Morris Cole and to this union three children were born. Funeral services were held at 11:00 AM in Poplar Springs Church with Elder H.C. Moon and Bro. M.H. Hollis officiating. Interment was in Poplar Springs Cemetery. Sister Cole is survived by her husband Morris Cole, one son James Cole, one daughter Faye Cole Phillips. She was preceded in death by a daughter Sarah Cole Sisson. She also leaves six grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren, three brothers and one sister.

She believed and loved the doctrine of salvation by Grace. She was faithful in attendance and a supporter of Poplar Springs Primitive Baptist Church. She loved flowers and brought beautiful arrangements for church services. Though her name was not on our earthly church book we feel it was on God's Book of Life written there before the Earth was spoken into existance.

The many floral arrangements expressed the love of community and friends for her. She will be missed by her family, her church family, and the community. Though we will miss her we feel our loss is her gain.

Charles P. Hayes, Church Clerk
Poplar Springs Church, Lamar Co., Ala.

SISTER VIOLA MURPHY

God in His infinite mercy has seen fit to call from our midst at Malmaison Church, Sister Viola Murphy. Sister Murphy was an humble, very soft spoken lady. She had been in declining health for a number of years and unable to attend church, but always contributed generous to its welfare. She had lived with her daughter, Virginia since her husband, Brother Downey Murphy passed away. No one could have cared more tenderly for their mother than Virginia did. Sister Murphy was born March 2, 19023 in Pittsylvania County andd departed this life Sept. 14, 1990. She was the daughter of G.W. Shelton and Virginia Shelton.

She is survived by 2 daughters, Virginia M. Owen and Arline M. Giles, both of Chatham, 2 brother, 1 sister, 2 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

Her funeral was held at Scott Funeral Home by Elders O.K. Tench and Denver Simpson. Interment was in Highland Burial Park. May the family be given to feel that God was gracious to take her out of her suffering here. *"Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord."*

Humbly submitted,
Peggy Wells

JOSHUA E. POTTER, SR.

Lowland, North Carolina, Joshua Edward Potter, Sr. 89, or Lowland died Wednesday, January 30, 1991.

Funeral service was 11 a.m. Saturday in Goose Creek Primitive Baptist Church at Lowland with Elder Oliver Allen and Elder Jesse Foreman officiating. Burial was in Lowland Community Cemetery.

Potter was a retired farmer.

He is survived by his wife, Elma Ballance Potter; two sons, Preston Hubert Potter of Everglades City, Fla. and Joshua Edward Potter, Jr. of Greenville; three daughters, Joyce P. Carawan of Washington, Audrey P. Lewis of Lowland and Judy P. Murphy of St. Mary's, Ga.; a sister, Gentry P. Williams of Lowland, 12 grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren and a great-great-grandchild.

GOD'S ATTRIBUTES: GOD'S ETERNITY

Time has a continual succession, the former time passing away and another succeeding; but eternity is an infinite, immutable duration. Eternity, as an attribute of God, is that perfection of his nature by which he continually exists, without any beginning, end, or succession of time. His eternity fills all duration, as David says, *"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." (Psalm 90:2.) "Thou, O Lord, shall endure forever and thy years shall have no end" (Psalm 102:12-27).* The scriptures speak of God's eternal power and God-Head, all his acts, like himself, are eternal. What he does is forever his eternal nature being infinite. There can be nothing added to it, or taken from it. What a firm foundation for helpless sinners to base their hopes upon! That this eternal God, who has promised them eternal life and cannot lie, is not slack concerning his promise and has confirmed it by an oath.

Signs of the Times

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POEM

Lord, at thy table I behold
The wonders of thy grace;
But most of all admire that I
Should find a welcome place.

I that am all defiled with sin;
A rebel to my God;
I that have crucified his Son,
And trampled on his blood.

What strange surprising grace is this,
That such a soul has room!
My Saviour takes me by the hand,
My Jesus bids me come.

"Eat, O my friends," the Saviour cries,
"The feast was made for you:
For you I groaned, and bled, and died,
And rose and triumphed, too."

With trembling faith, and bleeding hearts,
Lord, we accept thy love:
'Tis a rich banquet we have had,
What will it be above!

Ye saints below, and hosts of heaven,
Join all your praising powers;
No theme is like redeeming love,
No Saviour is like ours.

Stennett.

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EDITORIAL

Elder R.H. Campbell

Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath annointed us, is God. Who hath sealed us and given the earnest of the Spirit in our heart.

In the beginning, God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them. And God blessed them and God said unto them, be ye fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth in the earth. In this we see that God loved the man that he had made and that he blessed him abundantly, so that he stood in need of nothing for life and happiness in the garden of Eden where God placed him to dress and keep it. He gave man an help meet to comfort and support him and they had all things at their disposal; the only thing that was forbidden to them was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; of this, they were not to partake, for in the day that they ate of it they would surely die. The man was created subject to vanity, and this brought about his downfall from the original state in which he was created; vanity causes man to desire all things and especially those things that are forbidden to him. Because of his fall, judgement was placed upon him and all of his descendants, because they were in his loins when the judgement was pronounced on him. This weakness is inherent in all his seed as well as all of the other characteristics that they receive from him, and this is the basic cause of all sin in man, their pride of life, selfishness, greed for wealth and power and prestige among their peers.

Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made and more deceitful than any other creature, and knowing of this weakness in man used the one restriction that was placed upon him to tempt him and bring about his ruin as far as his life in the garden of Eden was concerned. When man

yielded to this temptation, judgement was rendered to the serpent, the woman and the man because they were all involved. The serpent was cursed above all cattle and told that he was sentenced to go upon his belly and that dust (the earth and the carnality of the world) would be his food and his dominion would be in the natural things of the world all of his days. Enmity would be placed between his seed, (the children of wrath) and the seed of the woman (the children of promise treasured in Christ); that his seed would bruise the heel of the seed of the woman (crucifixion of Christ) and the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent (Christ's resurrection from the grave to destroy the power of the serpent).

Unto the woman the judgement that was pronounced was that God would greatly multiply her sorrow and her conception, in sorrow she would bear children and she would be subject unto her husband. In the day of creation God told man to go forth and multiply and replenish the earth, (these are the seed of promise) and now because of the transgression God is going to greatly multiply that conception, bringing in an innumerable host of people (the children of wrath) to continually war against the seed of the woman; they are of their father the devil and his works shall they do all the days of their lives. The ones referred to as the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman are all men in nature, offspring by nature of the woman; one, of their father the devil because of the transgression and the others of Adam according to the promise of God in the day of creation. This lineage is apparent in all generations and is known by the fruit they bear; they cannot change their heritage because they were created according to the pleasure of God for a specific purpose. The seed of the woman are all those treasured in Christ and the devil's seed those who crucified him because of the hatred that they had for him. This would all occur in the process of time as the plan of God unfolded to make manifest the purpose in it all to the Glory of his holy name. In this then we see the plan of salvation set in such a manner that man cannot affect or influence it in any way, as the scripture states in one place, *"The lot is cast into the lap and the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord."*

Man was originally created upright, without sin, and walked and talked with God in the garden of Eden, but because of the fall from the state of innocence to the corrupt and depraved state of man as he is in nature he was banished from the presence of God, as he had been, and sentenced to life apart from him; without any ability to recover himself from the wretched and undone condition that he was in. God made man coats of skin, which, I believe, represents the fleshly nature of man which conditions man to dwell apart from him, unaware of the kingdom of

heaven and completely satisfied and at home in the world of nature in which he lives. As long as man is clothed in these coats of skin he cannot communicate with God, has no desire for anything other than the things of the world around him; as Solomon wrote , *"He hath made everything beautiful in his time; also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end."* God drove man from the garden of Eden and placed at the east of the garden cherubs and a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life. The tree of life is eternal life (Christ) and the flaming sword surely represents the Holy Spirit which keeps the way of the tree of life pure and undefiled by the depravity and corruption of the man of flesh adorned with those coats of skin; they represent the vail that is over the eyes of man so that they (Israel) could not look unto the end of those things, typified by the law, and understand the truth thereof, nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that spirit, and where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. The only way that man in nature can partake of the tree of life is for the Holy Spirit (the flaming sword) to reveal it to him by removing the vail of flesh that is over his eyes and showing him the way of the tree of life, then and only then is man able again to walk and talk with God. This change, in man, is not influenced, in any sense of the word by the efforts, ability or desire of the old man of flesh but rather in spite of them; man would live out his life without any knowledge of the kingdom of God for he is at home in the world; as it is written the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. The man in nature knows not the way of the spirit and is not aware of God and his works all around him daily in the things he observes; the rising and setting of the sun, also the bow in the clouds, the seasons of nature and the fulfilling of prophecy in his day that were declared many generations ago. He is completely unaware of the wisdom and power of God that is behind every event and the sovereign purpose and plan woven throughout time and eternity.

God gave a law unto Israel, his chosen people according to the flesh, to govern his life here in this time world and to give a semblance of order to it. The law was not given as a way of salvation but was to show unto man his weakness and complete failure in his attempt to do that which was his duty to do, and his inability to direct his own way to accomplish his desired end. The sacrifices under the law made nothing perfect and was but an admission by man that he had failed in keeping the law and the same sacrifices year after year for the same failures made manifest the depth of depravity to which man, in nature, had fallen. The offering of the sacrifice did show evidence of a desire in

the heart of man to be justified before God, whether from a standpoint of vanity and pride, or a sincere heartfelt repentance to God for sin and a desire to be cleansed from their polluted condition before him. The differences in man's reason for their offerings appears many times in the scriptures; Cain and Abel offered sacrifice unto God but for different reasons. Cain's offering was from a standpoint of vanity in offering unto God the fruit of his labors the fruit of the ground which God had cursed; Abel's gift was an offering of faith unto God, presenting unto him a portion of that which God had given unto him and told him to have dominion over, the firstling of his flock and the fat thereof. Jesus spoke of the differences in the reason for mans honoring him on one occasion when he told some who followed him, "Ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled." Some sought him, and followed him because of the truth of his word and the power demonstrated in his work, while others followed him because they did eat of the loaves and were filled, or, in other words for the natural benefits that they received from the miracles. On another occasion Jesus asked them, *"What think ye of Christ ? Whose son is he?"* Their answer to this question manifested this same basic difference in the heart of the individual; some saw Jesus as the son of Joseph and Mary and perceived nothing special about him, while others beheld him as the Christ of God who taketh away the sin of the world and marveled at the wondrous word and work that he did among them. The offering under the law did not make the giver clean, but, it did make manifest the heart and the love, or lack of it, for God; some offered the lame and sick of the flock, while others cast into the treasury their very living, some gave grudgingly of their possessions while others laid down their very lives.

God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. Now, I know that the world quotes this as a text to support the theory that God loves all of mankind alike and that man, as he is in nature, must make a decision to believe and be saved, or to not believe and be damned as a result of that choice. I believe that the statement, that God so loved the world, applies to the time before the world was formed when God looked down through time and saw all things that would be, because it was his will for it to be so, was pleased with his work and said it was very good; he knew of the fall of man, the condition man would be in and in counsel with the Son and the Holy Spirit had established the plan of salvation that would assure that all of the seed of the woman in all generations would inherit everlasting life. He gave his only begotten Son that they should not perish and he loved the world for their sake; this

was the reason for the world being formed, in the first place. This thought was ever in his mind as he endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory. All of it was in the plan, and all of the plan was because of the love that God had for the children of promise that he formed for himself, created for his glory, called by his own name and redeemed from the power of satan unto himself.

In the above scripture, as in all of his writings to the churches and to individuals the Apostle Paul is declaring his experience and the basic truth of God's plan of salvation for every heir of promise. He knew that the only way that he could have come into a knowledge of the truth was for it to have been shown to him in such a way that he could not deny it and with such power that he could not resist it. All of this was done unto him when the great light which shined around him, he fell to the ground and heard Jesus speak to him and tell him of all the things he must do. Saul of Tarsus was a very strong and confident leader of the Jews and yet he had no will to resist this voice that spoke to him, but he, trembling and astonished said, *"Lord what wilt thou have me to do?"* It is on the basis of this experience that he wrote the above scripture to the Church at Corinth, "now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ and hath annointed us is God." Paul had thought that he knew God when serving in he Jewish religion but now he saw the truth; surely he could witness with Job, *"I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee."* He had studied the law all of his life but it did not teach him to know God, it took the annointing of the Holy Spirit and that was the work of God; who also seals and gives them the earnest of the Spirit in the heart. Just as Paul could witness with Job, all of those who have been given this earnest of the Spirit can also witness with the Apostle Paul that it is all the sovereign work of grace and a miracle to be turned from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God, to feel to have been forgiven of all sin and given an inheritance among them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus.

This was the calling that Paul wrote about so much, it was given him, he could not deny it, as it is in, and alway has been in the servants of God. It is for a specific purpose and that is always to the benefit of the saints of God and for the welfare of the Church in Christ. It led Paul the remaining days of his life and he shunned not to declare unto the churches all of the counsel of God, for that was the reason it was given him. As he admonished Timothy, "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his

kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." He was saying to Timothy your calling is of God, your strength will be of God and your mission is to all who have been given an ear to hear and a heart to understand; you cannot judge who these are, but the word will make manifest who they are and will bring forth fruit unto the glory of God. The annointing, the sealing and the gift of the spirit are of God, you are but an ambassador for Christ, as though God did beseech them by you, to be reconciled unto himself. The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God per adventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth ; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will. The ambassador is but to deliver the information, that he has been given to the one to whom it is sent, meekly and gently, knowing the results are in the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God who has stablished it from before time, and is working all things together for good to those who love him, to them who are called according to his purpose. The end results will be the salvation of every heir of grace according to the plan which wisdom devised and the Holy Spirit accomplishes in the sovereign display of faith in the heart of every saint; as mercy and truth are met together and righteousness and peace have kissed each other in the blessed experience of this conversion from darkness to light.

If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new. And all things are of God. Surely this is the experience of all who have had this change; right at this point in time they feel that they can say in all assurance, that they know that they have passed from death unto life because of the pure love that they have for Christ, his word, and for all who give evidence of this light shining in their countenance, their walk and in their conversation. Surely this is the light which Jesus referred to when he said, *"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."* There is no greater joy experienced in this life than when brethren come together in love and the vail of flesh is removed and they commune in spirit and in truth. As Paul wrote to the Hebrews; *Having therefore brethren boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure*

water." Oh that they could always be thus, but they cannot. It is these experiences and the memories of them past and the hope of others in the future that strengthens them and enables them to press on to finish their course in faith of Him who hath stablished them and annointed them in Christ Jesus their Lord.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard Campbell

ARTICLES

I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. Matt.: 11-25.

In writing what I am about to write, it is not with the intention to criticize anyone or their belief. But I do want to compare the wrong with the right, the truth against the error. I believe people believe the way they have to. If the Lord wanted them to know the truth, he would reveal it unto them. I am writing about a sovereign God who said, I will send the comforter, and he will take the things of mine, and show them unto you.

Most of us when we think of someone who the world considers as lost, one who we don't believe has been dealt with by the Holy Spirit. We usually think of those who drink to excess, cuss, gamble, fight etc. But I believe there are many in the same condition who you may see in their church regularly, who will tell you they are saved. I don't mean that I am judging them, may the Lord forbid. But by their fruits you shall know them. These people believe in their own righteousness, their own good works, they attend church, donate money to the church, visit the sick. They don't do things such as robbing, killing, etc. In fact some of them are morally good people. They are satisfied with their standing, feeling good within themselves, in short they believe in their own self righteousness. But what does the scripture say? ***Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven.*** The Scribes and Pharisees were very strict in their daily lives, they were very careful to maintain a outward show of godliness, but they trusted in their own works and their self made righteousness. We know they came far short of fulfilling the law. Why did they trust in their own righteousness, when the scripture plainly says, a man's righteousness is as filthy rags. Why can't the people of today read this in the Bible, and see they can't trust in their own works.

These same people I am writing about also believe and teach that all you have to do is believe. Why can't they read and understand, ***John 6:29 This is the work of God that you believe on Him, whom he hath sent.***

They say you have to have faith. I agree with that, you do have to have faith. But I don't believe a man can make it up within himself, doesn't the scripture say that faith *Eph. 2:8 is a gift of God.* Now that is plain language, why can't they read and understand that verse?

These same people believe God is calling everyone, he is begging and pleading, they believe the choice is up to every individual. A true believer, believes that God has a people who he has chosen in Christ from before the foundation of the world, and here in time he will call his chosen at the appointed time, not everyone, just his chosen. The scripture says in *Romans 8:29 for whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate,* those he also called. Why can't these people believe this, it plainly teaches their belief is wrong. They also believe you have a free will, it is up to each person whether they will believe, or they won't . But doesn't the scripture say, God works in you both the will and the do of his good pleasure. They believe and teach that God loves everybody, when the scripture plainly says, *Jacob have I loved and Essau have I hated.*

Like I said, I am not writing to criticize their belief, because I surely think they believe what they have to. I am trying to point out the many times the scripture in plain language teaches the opposite from what they believe. Now they either can't read these parts of scripture, or they read and can't see their true meaning. The one thing that makes it seem so strange to me is this. At one time I believed the very things I have just wrote about as being a true doctrine. I believed it so strong that I was ready at any time to teach it to anyone, to discuss or argue that I was right. And I continued in that belief until one day, and I believe that at his own appointed time, the good Lord showed me some of these scriptures, with their true meaning. Then I can say I most surely believed differently than I had believed before. Now I know what I believe, and I know why I believe as I do. I am not saying that only Old Baptists believe this, nor am I saying that all believers are Old Baptist. What I am saying is this. The way I believe is the truth, and is preached and believed by the Old Baptist, more so than any other church I have found. I know I have been given a love for the Old Baptist people that I do believe has been sent down from heaven, because I don't believe Satan, or the world deals in such a love as this.

Again I ask why — can't these plain facts or truths be seen by so many. When you consider and think on this question, it brings you back to — I thank thee Oh Father, that thou has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. Just think about that king, great is the mystery of godliness. Think for a minute of the two disciples walking on the road to Emmaus, when Jesus joined them, walked and talked

with them, yet they did not recognize him, seems almost impossible doesn't it. The scripture says their eyes were holden that they would not recognize him, yet at the appointed time Jesus opened their eyes that they might see and know him. When we consider this do we need to wonder any longer why so many people can't see the true meaning in these plain simple statements in the Bible. Have you not heard some of the grand old preachers of God make this statement. As many times as I have read this scripture, I have never seen this in it before. See, God had not revealed it unto them before, their eyes had been holden by God, then at the appointed time God had opened their eyes so they could see.

Don't you see it is for the building of the body, the edifying of the saints, as you might say, line upon line precept upon precept. Giving each of his children what they need as they need it. Keeping them hungry, always looking for and hoping for a crumb of mercy, to strengthen their faith, which to them is like a anchor, both sure and steadfast. As a earthly father will give to his children, food when they are hungry, other things when they are needed, even more so will our heavenly Father give to his children. What a wonderful God is ours, all these blessed truths revealed at the right time and at the right amount to bring all his little children to the exact place he would have them to be. But as Jacob of old said, It is enough. At times we get low and at times we get hungry, shouldn't it be that way, because even with natural food we need to get hungry to truly enjoy food, the same rule applies to spiritual food. The Good Lord gives to us as he knows our need, and in such a way and time to bring us to the place we need to be, for the purpose, honor and glory of our heavenly Father. Not too much at one time, lest we be exalted above measure, not too little at one time lest we stray but just enough. And again, I thank thee O Father, that thou has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. How sweet and how wonderful when we are given to see and taste of these things, for it carries with it a sweet promise, it isn't hid from you, but rather it has been revealed unto you. As Jesus once said, ***Blessed art thou Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood has not revealed this unto you, but my Father which is in Heaven.*** What a wonderful God is ours.

I desire your prayers,
Frank C. Hunt

With risk of being misunderstood and more than likely criticized by many ministers and brethren, I feel to take pen in hand and and write some of my views on the Holy Writ.

Many who know me and have heard me preach have said that I spiritualize the Bible more than

anyone else they know. To me this is very complimentary, but some who make these compliments mean them to be a bit derogatory.

However, I do believe any comments made that might differ on the Scriptures would be a bit critical or else each one writing would not write them because when one disagrees (even a little bit) they must think they are right.

I have heard many, many, say that the Bible is written to His people, about His people, and for His people, then speak or write pages about the world or ones whose names are not written in the Book of Life.

How would you like to hear about the world, preached, when you go to hear about the salvation of His way-faring children?

Do you not hope you are one of the heirs spoken of, or would you cast aside your hope and love to hear of the chaff that is said to be burned?

One will say that Satan is taking over more and more, another will praise God for all things and say that He is still at the helm and all things are working according to His holy will, and working for good to them who love Him, who are the called according to His purpose. I lean with a whole heart toward the last. We have more population and more children of the world than was in the Garden of Eden, so we can see the works of Satan more abundantly. Now then, lets seek information about this serpent and where he lives, what he eats and thrives on. The Lord God told the serpent (who was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had created) that on thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. He (Satan) shall eat of the dust and dust is exactly what man was formed of — dust of the ground, the most shifting part of the ground, can be blown hither and yon by every wind that blows. So of the weakness (dust) of man is what Satan shall feast on.

Satan was not made more subtil than anything except a created beast so therefore he could not beguile, tempt, allure, or deceive any but the natural dust formed into man. Was Adam a created being and wasn't he formed from dust?

If you can see this, then can you not see that Eve had a natural food for Satan? Do not all the children have a natural earthly body and is not this the natural food for a Satan that has an ending? (Having a beginning, he must have an ending.)

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. Can any believer of the truth say that he is not both natural and spiritual — and agree with many who will say they believe more natural if spiritual at all.

Now, the natural man, both of the elect and non-elect, can not receive the things of the spirit, but the man who is born again is the one which receiveth the spiritual things.

For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man but the spirit of God.

Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

John the Baptist as he went forth in the wilderness crying Repent ye for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand. Where was this kingdom of heaven before John said it is at hand. Who was John crying to? Was it to the chosen in Christ before the world began or the non-elect? Would it have done any good to preach to the ones having no life?

My natural livelihood was selling cars, but I have been given more common knowledge than to go to the cemetery to sell my product. The Bible says go into all the world and preach to every creature, however I believe they must be live creatures. I bring this is to show that no matter how hard we try to place the non-elect guilty of everything, we, yes we, are prone to sin as much as they. But thanks be to God we have an inner being, call it anything you like, but I like to hope it is the spirit that raised our Saviour from the dead, and if it is then it is not I that keep myself under subjection but the spirit of God through the righteousness of Christ our Lord.

God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Notice the "in Him", not on His name, not just believe that God sent Him but in Him. Christ in you the hope of glory. Me in the Father, the Father in me, me in you, and you in me. I quote this Scripture to show that it is only the ones in Him that have everlasting life and not a universal salvation.

The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit neither can he know them because they are foolishness unto him. Again, does this mean the non-elect or can it be talking to the regenerated and enlightened sinner, who has seen the light, and knows just how foolish it was, while in darkness, to hear about the spiritual blessings. The children of God are both spiritual and natural. The non-elect have never seen the light, so why talk to them to tell them how foolish they are. Can a leopard change his spots or an Ethiopian change his skin — can the preaching of the gospel change these spots or his skin? The natural man, even though a child and heir with Jesus Christ, can not inherit anything pertaining to the heavenly, but the inner man, which is spiritual, is the one that is raised up and made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Do not hesitate to entertain strangers for, etc.

If the children were different (after rebirth) we would not have

to look for the fruits they bear. By their fruits ye shall know them.

We can look at a tree and not know what kind it is until it brings forth fruit, then we know if it is bitter or sweet. The thing we do know is it is a tree. So it is with children of God. We know they are by nature the children of wrath even as others. Why do we, as long as we have breath and are in possession of our senses, always try to fit the children of wrath to the non-elect (as we frequently like to call them). Why can't we see and realize that the children of wrath are (as well as the non-elect) God's own children while in the flesh?

How many Primitive Baptists really believe that they are not wicked, evil, and sinful? How many believe that what blessings they receive from the Lord are merited or that they deserve?

Why did God say He came to call the sinner to repentance and yet He really meant He came to call and save the whole Adamic world? This I do not believe, nor do the enlightened children.)

The Apostle Paul said when I would do good, evil is present with me, and also said it is no more I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me. So he said sin has an abode in him — sin lives in him. Now, we are not in any position to say we are any better than Paul. Even the most gifted minister will not, nor can not, boast of more than Paul as we all have sin living in us the same as he did. Why, then, is it necessary to believe the non-elect are the only ones the Bible speaks about when He calls some wicked and evil, when He told Peter to get behind Him, and called him Satan.

Natural, carnal, made of dust, man — yet until he speaks of the things we love to hear he still has all the appearance of a natural man.

How many can keep the commandments? Why can't you? Because this was a law for a schoolmaster unto Christ and the flesh is too weak to keep a law which says thou shall not lust and our old carnal nature does lust.

So why are we trying to avert the truth that we are just as natural as any of the Adamic race and will be evil, wicked etc. until this weakness shall put on strength, the mortal immortality, etc. We are sown natural and (if children of God) will be raised spiritual.

Let us not be quick to say God is not setting forth His when He calls out the evil or wicked, because we, as natural men are evil and sinful and wicked, and weak and totally depraved and hell deserving creatures.

Why didn't the brothers know Joseph in Egypt if he did not show all outward signs of the flesh? They had to be enlightened before they knew their own brother. Joseph kept the family from starving by furnished corn (or food.)

How did I know a minister could preach until he actually did preach, and not by how good he could preach by his merely saying he was a minister or that he looked like a

preacher.

Joseph knew the family, but they did not know him. God knows them that are His, but we do not know if we are His or not. We can only hope we are. God forbid that I ever think that I'm without evil and without sin. And since I have been preaching I seem to be more convinced of my shortcomings than ever before.

My Mother never had to call me to the table but once if I was hungry, and I didn't make myself hungry — it was my nature. My Father was a member of the Kingman, Kansas church for forty-two years and never missed a meeting. No man ever told him it was his duty to go to church. He wanted to go, he loved to mingle with the Saints and hear the preaching of the Gospel. No man can come to Christ except the Father draw him and Christ only will raise him up (at the last day.)

I am of the Old School, believing in the absolute sovereignty of God who has a blueprint of His whole plan of the world and everything in it.

Written in Christian Love,
Elder W.A. Winfrey

PSALM 1:1-2.

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

BAPTISM

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." — Romans vi.4.

Like all the acts enjoined by the authority of our Lord Jesus, the true spirit of this solemn ordinance is infinitely deeper than the outward form. Mere immersion in water is not the whole of this act of obedience, any more than the literal eating of bread and drinking of wine is the observance of the Lord's supper. As it is the remembrance of the death of Christ in the supper which constitutes that ceremony an act of obedience to his command, so, in the burial in the water there must be that faith by which we really follow him, in order that our act may be true obedience to his commandment, and acceptable in his sight. ***"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." — Hebrews xi. 6.*** Then, since ***"Whatsoever is not faith is sin,"*** it is evident that the mere ceremony of immersion without faith cannot be baptism in obedience to the law of the King who reigns in Zion. Even the sincere desire of the candidate

will not answer as a substitute for this necessary qualification.

There is another point on which many dear children of God are bewildered. Having received that faith which is the gift of God, they have been immersed by those who claimed to be ministers of Christ, but who were not in the fellowship of the church at the time. The candidates being themselves sincere, supposed they were obeying the Lord in their immersion, and perhaps felt a joy in the act; but on finding that they have been deceived, they are troubled with the suggestion that they have been baptized, and yet they know that they have no fellowship with the people among whom they find themselves.

Many in this condition are robbed of their privileges in the church, and cannot see how they can enter into those joys. Have they been baptized in obedience to the command of our Lord? They have been immersed, but not in the fellowship of the church of Christ. That cannot be Christian baptism, for the same reason that the church cannot accept the immersion administered by Mormons; that is, because it was not authorized by our Lord, nor done in obedience to his word. Those who are at home among the various orders outside of the church of Christ, are not such as are here referred to. But to those who long for the fellowship of the saints, yet feel themselves imprisoned in those anti-Christian organizations, it is important to ascertain whether their immersion was really baptism.

In order to make this matter clear, let us present an illustration. When the Lord commanded his disciples to baptize believers, if unbelieving Jews had voluntarily gone about performing the ceremony of immersion, would their work have been valid baptism? Certainly not; because not being in the fellowship of the saints themselves, they could not be competent to discern that Spirit of Christ in others which is the only source of genuine faith and repentance. Again, being without the authority of the Lord, it would have been mere mockery for them to use his name in the ceremony of baptism.

Now, for the same reason, none but those in the fellowship of the church are authorized to administer the ordinance of baptism in this age; and when any others presume to do so, it is no more in obedience to the word of the Lord than the unauthorized offerings of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, whom the earth swallowed up, just as the earth now swallows up them who treat with contempt the law of the Lord in this ordinance, by imitating its form while denying its substance by "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Such professors may be highly esteemed by the world, but they are never " approved unto God." The church of Christ cannot consistently recognize the action of any but those who act by the authority of her Lord in administering his ordinances. Con-

sequently she must hold the immersion which is performed by those who are not appointed to that work by his command as being no baptism at all.

To constitute baptism there must be a believing candidate and an authorized administrator. Of the mode it is not our purpose now to write more than that it must be a burial and raising up again, according to the pattern given by our Lord in Jordan. — Matt. iii. 13-17. No argument can make the mode plainer than it is described in the inspired record. Failure to observe any of these particulars destroys the validity of the ordinance; for it can only be administered *"in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,"* when it is done, teaching the observance of all things whatsoever the Lord Jesus has commanded his chosen disciples. — Matthew xxviii. 19, 20.

We have dwelt upon the requisite particulars constituting gospel baptism in compliance with many special requests from believers who have been snared in the net of anti-Christian organizations, who desire to be identified with the church of Christ, but cannot see the necessity of being baptized, as they have once been immersed, as they thought in baptism, by those who were not in the fellowship of the church. We now come to consider the text.

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death." In the preceding verse the fact is cited that as many as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death. This is the reason for our burial in baptism. But in what sense are we thus identified in the death of our Lord Jesus Christ? Certainly not that we were literally nailed to the cross with him. The argument is in support of the fact that we are *"dead to sin,"* as stated in verse two. In this sense all the church whom he redeemed were crucified with him. So Paul says, *"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." — 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.*

This *"baptism into death"* is confessed in the literal obedience of those who are buried in baptism in water in his name. — See Acts ii. 38. This burial declares its subjects to be *"dead to the law by the body of Christ." — Rom. vii. 4. They no longer labor to secure acceptance with God by that law which cannot give life. Their burial signifies this death to legal hope, and consequently their deliverance from the dominion of that law of sin and death. As it is written in this connection, "For he that is dead is freed from sin."* This comforting assurance being expressed by the act of obedience to their Lord in water baptism, it is as declared by Peter, *"the answer of a good conscience toward God."* Therefore they who have hope of the salvation which is in

Christ Jesus are robbed of invaluable comfort when they are beguiled to disobey the command of their Lord which enjoins upon them the duty and privilege to be baptized in his name.

"That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father." The pattern here presented is not merely a restoration to that natural life which was subject to the law, and consequently under sentence of death. *"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." — Gal. iii. 10.* If that were all of the resurrection, the Lord Jesus would not have been *"the first fruits of them that slept,"* since Lazarus and others had been so restored to natural life before our Lord was raised. But the resurrection of Christ was in the power of that glorious life and immortality which is *"the glory of the Father,"* And which had not previously been brought to light. — See 2 Tim. i. 10.

In the flesh he was put to death, bearing all the sins of his redeemed people in his own body on the tree; but in the immortal glory of the Father he lives above the law and higher than the heavens. It is important to observe the fact that this resurrection of Christ is *"by the glory of the Father,"* in distinction from the restoration to natural life which had been effected in previous cases by the miraculous power of God. In those cases no immortality was displayed, but in the raising up of Christ is the manifestation of *"the power of an endless life." — Heb. vii. 16.* This is the peculiar *"glory of the Father,"* which demonstrates the truth of the unity of our Lord with the eternal God, as he says, *"I and my Father are one." — John x. 30.* This is the manner in which he was raised up from the dead; and it is a display of that life which is superior to death and above all law. Therefore, he cannot die again, but is alive forevermore, Amen; and has the keys of hell and of death. — Rev. i. 18.

"Even so we also should walk in newness of life." The example presented is accurately exact. It is "even so" that we also should walk. As he was raised up from under the law, just so are all the members of his body in him exalted above that system of legal bondage; and as he can no more come into condemnation, so are we forever free from that law which was fulfilled by him. Walking in newness of life, we are not to seek justification by the works of the law; but resting alone in the perfect righteousness of Christ, we should walk in his commandments and follow in his footsteps.

In that old life the bondage of perpetual servitude required continually perfect obedience, which was more than we were able to render; yet the first failure involved us in condemnation and death. In this newness of life we are called to glorious liberty. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death. All the requirements

of this law of liberty is freely given us in the unspeakable gift of God, who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Obedience to this perfect law of liberty is the highest privilege of those who are led by the Spirit of God.

This obedience is the fulfilling of all the injunctions, admonitions and exhortations in the law of our precious Lord and King. Walking in newness of life, we have the witness of the Spirit confirming our hope in the salvation which is in Christ Jesus; and in every act of obedience to this perfect law of liberty there is the answer of a good conscience toward God, whereby we have assurance that our walk is indeed in newness of life. While subject to vanity in the body of this death, the saints will not fail to find another law in their members warring against this law of their mind, and bringing them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members; but while they feel that warfare within, they have the evidence that the Spirit of Christ is leading them; and when they walk in obedience to that Spirit they manifestly walk in newness of life.

By precept and example our Lord has enjoined the ordinance of baptism as the open confession of allegiance to his government; and no service is in order in his kingdom until this requirement is fulfilled in obedience to his direction. In this the humble believer acknowledges his faith and hope to be alone in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, and expresses that he is dead to the law by the body of Christ. It is the first act of obedience to the law of the Redeemer, by which self is denied and Christ is confessed before men. In it is included the putting on of the whole law of our King, which is, as he has said, an easy yoke. It is indeed easy to them who are led by his Spirit to love it, and to desire above all things to follow the Redeemer; but it requires that self be denied and crucified, that Christ alone may be all our trust.

This can be done only by the power of the Spirit of God leading us, and working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Thus walking in newness of life, we glorify God in our body and in our spirit, which are God's. Those who hope in Jesus for salvation are commanded to follow him in this ordinance. Obedience will bring them into the manifest fellowship of the church of Christ. Any ceremony which fails to do this cannot be baptism. Certainly the church cannot regard any act as orderly which is not done in her fellowship and by the authority of her King; and he has never given to any but his own disciples the right to administer this ordinance. Therefore, they who have been immersed out of the fellowship of the church cannot be regarded as having been baptized at all in obedience to the command of our Lord Jesus.

Elder Wm. L. Beebe
Feb. 1, 1884

ARGUMENTS DRAWN FROM THE NATURE OF CHRIST'S DEATH.

The security of the people of God is a subject of the first importance to every Christian.

We may enquire with deep solici citude, is my final salvation in Heaven certain, or are there yet uncertainties about it, although I have been born again and "passed from death unto life?" Is there anything in the nature of the atonement, or in the work of regeneration or the character of God that may justly lead me to believe that, where a person has once been cleansed by the blood of Christ, he shall be infallibly saved? It is my object in these pages to show that the scriptures teach that every one who has ever been born again and "passed from death unto life shall not come into condemnation." If this is bible teaching, it is certainly as well calculated to comfort the people of God as any truth revealed therein. Christians of all denominations ought to be acquainted with this truth and enjoy the comforts that the firm belief of it imparts.

It can not be denied that we all sin and forget God and do wrong, some more and some less, and if God marks our sins against us we would fall to be sure, but if God does not impute sin to us we can not fall. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." We here have it that God's way of saving from sin is by not charging, or imputing sin to those saved. Again it is said, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember against them no more." Rom., iv: 8, "Blessed is the man to whom God will not impute sin"; vi: 2, "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works." David also taught that if God should mark sin against us that none of us should be able to stand.

I have referred to these passages for the purpose of showing that God's way of saving sinners is by not charging sin against them.

The "blessed man to whom he does not impute sin" is evidently the christian, and if God does not impute sin to the Christian he can not "fall from grace." This is the only principle upon which sinners can hope to be saved. Satisfaction must be rendered for every sin, and certainly our obedience can not satisfy a broken law. It requires death; and Christ's death is that which hushes the claims of law. Now, if all our sins were born by Jesus and by him satisfied for, the claims of law by him fully met in its very jots and tittles, then the ground of our hope is in what Jesus did and nothing else. Our deeds may be mixed with sin, and we often go astray, but these shall not overthrow us; because the death of Christ is our only hope. "There is no remission without the shedding of blood." "And the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sins." So there never was nor never will be a single sin forgiven on earth only as its remission is procured by the blood of Christ. From the foregoing we see that works are no part of the cause of our salvation; that God does not impute sin to his people; that the only ground of forgiveness is in the

blood of Christ . All these things being true , apostacy is impossible .

We should neither write nor say anything that would license saints to live carelessly and neglectfully . Neither should we teach that the best of works when done tend to procure eternal life , for certain it is that eternal life can not be wholly the effect of the Savior's death and yet in any degree the effect of good works . Many good men , lest they should license men to live in sin , have intruded on the blood of Jesus and ascribed to good works what the bible ascribes to the cross .

I daily feel the importance of obeying God , and with sadness see many professors fall far short of duty ; yet there are good solid grounds upon which to exhort each other to love , and good works without making them to be the cause in any degree of our being saved .

We will notice some scripture further . Eph ., i : 7 , " In whom we have redemption through his blood the forgiveness of sins , according to the riches of his grace ." In this our forgiveness as well as redemption is ascribed to his blood and rich grace . His blood and rich grace is the cause , and redemption and forgiveness of sins is the effect . Also , i i : 5 , " Who died for us , that whether we wake or sleep , we should live together with him ." So that the certainty of our final delivery grows not our of our faithfulness , but out of the very nature of Christ 's death . For he would be disappointed in his death if there should be a failure in a single instance of salvation to those who are interested in his death . Again , " who gave himself for our sins that he might deliver us from this present evil world , according to the will of God and our Father ." From this it is evident that God intended , first , to deliver us from this evil world , and that he , secondly , gave himself for that end — not to make that end possible , but certain . Matthew , xxvi : 28 , " For this is my blood of the new testament , which was shed for many for the remission of sins ." This text shows that the blood was shed to certainly procure the remission of sins . Thus to my mind there is an unfrustrable relation between Christ 's death and our eternal salvation . For further proof see Heb ., ix : 14 , " How much more shall the blood of Christ , who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God , purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God ? " It is the blood of Christ applied to us that makes us serve God and not our service that applies the blood to us . Hence Paul says , Rom ., v : 11 , " And not only so , but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom we have now received the atonement ." Hence , God applies the atonement , and the success or extent of the atonement depends not on the men 's will or works , but on God 's appointment . The certain relation between the death of Christ and our salvation is seen in Eph ., v : 25 and 26 , " And gave himself for it (the church) that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word , that he might present it to himself a glorious church ," etc . Also , Rom ., viii : 32 , " He that spared not his own son but delivered him up for us all , how shall he not also with

him freely give us all things ." The clear reasoning here is, that the gift of Christ for us is a certain pledge that God will never leave off doing good for us till we can say, " blessed be God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ ." " " For I am persuaded that he that hath begun a good work in us will perform it till the day of Christ ."

From the above it is clear that every Christian will be saved ; and who is not glad that God's love to his saints is so strong that all our imperfections can not overcome it ? Isaiah , liii : 10 , " When thou shall make his soul an offering for sin he shall see his seed . He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied ." " And he bare the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors ." So that Christ , in his death, had no uncertain or doubtful end in view, but certainly saw the object of his death accomplished , and this is the joy that was set before him for which he endured the cross, despised , the shame , etc .

Oft have I thought of his suffering; in the garden, before Pilate and on the cross . I doubt not but that he was allowed to see the end and object of his suffering , and this is why he was so firm , calm , serene and unshaken ; why he could with such patience endure his afflictions and death .

Isaiah , xxxv : 10 , " And the ransomed of the Lord shall return , and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joys upon their heads ; they shall obtain joy and gladness , and sorrow and sighing shall flee away ." xxxv : 9 , " No lion shall be there nor any ravenous beast , but the redeemed shall walk there ." This language will not admit the possibility of failure . " Shall return" is God's word . Who dare say they may not return ? Isaiah , xlii : 43 , " But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, oh, Jacob, and he that formed thee, oh, Israel, fear not, for I have redeemed thee ." Why fear not ? Because God has redeemed thee . And, I do say, Oh, Christian, Israel , Jacob , fear not ; I will help thee , saith the Lord , and thy redeemer , the holy one of Israel ; therefore , Christian , fear not . Are not these sentiments precious to all who feel that sin is mixed with all they do ? All our sins born forever away , by the lamb of God , and the word of God for it , that he does not impute sin to us , and that all his ransomed ones shall return , and come to Zion ; that they shall obtain joy and gladness , and sorrow and sighing shall flee away . May God open all our eyes , to see the real riches that lie in this soul cheering sentiment . I hope to pursue this subject in harmony with truth . May I be prepared to write in the fear of God, and you stripped of prejudices, and willing to accept truth , although that truth may be contrary to your previous opinions . How important that we all should know the truth ; for we can not praise Jesus for keeping us , unless we believe he does keep us ; and, if he does not keep us to the end , how foolish we are in singing ,

' Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home ."

Jas . H . Oliphant

MEETINGS

HOPEWELL

The sixteenth annual Fifth Sunday meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with Hopewell Church, Winnsboro, Texas, beginning on Friday, June 28th, 29th, and 30th. Hopewell Church is located about six miles west of Winnsboro. Go west on Coke Road (515) about four and one-half miles and follow signs. We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us. There will be no business, just preaching and singing. We will endeavor to extend a warm welcome in the Lord.

Elder Jimmy Hamrick, Pastor
John Hamrick, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The location of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association has been changed from Union Church to Weatherford Church because of the illness of one of the deacons at Union Church. Weatherford Church is located at the intersection of state road 760 and 763 about 5 miles from Gretna, Va. The association will meet July 12, 13, and 14 which is the second weekend. We invite all lovers of our doctrine and order to visit with us.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 1991

Miss Irene Griffin, NC	10.00
Ms. Catherine W. Combs, NC	5.00
Mrs. J.D. Neely, AR	2.00
Mrs. Grace E. Manly, FL	5.00
Mrs. Lillian Wood, NC	2.00
Mrs. Lester Haning, WV	10.00
Eld. J.Y. McCormick, FL	7.00
Mrs. Alice Johnson, TX	4.00
O.P. Murphy, TX	100.00
Mrs. Mary Amason, AR	7.00
Mrs. Lottie Minter, NC	2.00
Victor H. Laws, MD	40.00
Whitney Mobley, NC	10.00
Dolphus Hall, FL	2.00
Mrs. Martha C. Lunsford, VA	10.00
Mrs. Ada Campbell, VA	2.00
Tommy C. Wall, VA	2.00
Andrew C. Agee, VA	2.00
Mrs. Gayle Phillips, AL	2.00
Mr. & Mrs. Elbert Robbins, MD	7.00

MOVED OR MOVING?

To assure you of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

OBITUARIES

BROTHER LONNIE BANKS

God, in His infinite wisdom took from the midst of Glenwood Park Primitive Baptist Church, our Brother Lonnie Banks on January 17, 1991. He was born August 19, 1908 one of eight children. He was preceded in death by his wife, the former Hazel Marshall, one daughter Aileen Hedrick, one brother Lloyd, and one sister Mayme Horton. Surviving are a daughter, son-in-law and grandson, Mr. & Mrs. Gleen (Ann) Carlock and Glenn Jr. Also three brothers, Waymon, Leonard, and Clayton, sisters Lucille Lewis and Mabel Stanley.

His services were held January 19, 1991 by his daughter's pastor, Dr. William Hasty, in Bluefield, WV and he was laid to rest in Roselawn Memorial Gardens, Princeton, WV.

Brother Lonnie was raised in a home where the Old Baptist doctrine was loved and respected. He traveled many miles attending services for most of his adult life, before being blessed to ask for a home with Glenwood Park Church on September 13, 1980. He was baptized the following day, along with two others, by the late Elder W.E. Branch, assisted by Deacon Richard Lawless. This baptism fulfilled a dream by the late Sister Maggie Priddy, in which she had seen three rosebuds being laid on the table near the pulpit. One brother had asked a home the month prior and a sister joined the same day as Brother Banks.

Brother Lonnie made Glenwood a most diligent member, always mindful of the churchs needs in every way, just as he had done prior to becoming a member. He possessed a quiet and unassuming manner. He almost always filled his seat and served the church as one of our trustees. Thus in many ways the church, as well as the sister churches he often attended, will miss Brother Banks. Yet, we bow in humble submission to the Lord's Will.

The church agreed to prepare three copies of this memorial record; one for inclusion in our minute, one to be given to his family, and one to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Glenwood Park Church in conference the 10th day of February, 1991.

Elder John Wingfield, Moderator
Sister Marilyn Shaw, Clerk

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6 / 91
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

SARAH AGNES WILSON

Sister Agnes was born November 26, 1914 in Stuart, Virginia the daughter of the late Thomas F. and Mary Rakes Edwards. Her death occurred at the Martinsville Virginia Hospital on October 12, 1990. She was laid to rest at Danview Cemetery in Eden, N.C. on Sunday October 14, 1990. Her funeral was preached by her Associate Pastor, Elder Taylor, of the Cascade Primitive Baptist Church. The funeral was held at Fair's Funeral Home in Eden, N.C.

Agnes was survived by one son: James Otis Wilson of Martinsville, Virginia; one sister: Mrs. G.F. Blalock of Prospect Hill, N.C.; five brothers: Howard T. Edwards of Axton, Va.; J. Albert Edwards of Belmont, N.C.; Willie Edwards of Eden, N.C.; Clarence H. Edwards of Julian, N.C. ; Robert C. Edwards of Eden, N.C. and Wayne Edwards of Greensboro, N.C.; one granddaughter: Susan Wilson of Martinsville, Va.

Agnes was married to the late Harry Wilson on September 5, 1930. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church in October 1937, and was baptized by her Pastor Elder David Spangler. She loved her church and the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. There are two verses in Proverbs that especially apply to Agnes in Chapter 31 verses 27 and 28 it reads: *"She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her."*

Although Agnes is sorely missed by her family and friends there are so many wonderful memories of her that I feel truly blessed to have had such a precious sister as she.

Wayne Edwards

GOD'S ATTRIBUTE'S : GOD'S OMNISCIENCE

God's omniscience is that perfection of his nature by which he knows all things most perfectly in himself, by one eternal act, God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things best (John 3:20). God is and always was so perfectly wise that nothing ever did, or does, or can elude his knowledge. He knew from all eternity, not only what he, himself, intended to do but also what he would incline and allow others to do. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. God knows nothing now, nor will know nothing hereafter which he did not know and foresee from everlasting. His foreknowledge being co-eternal with himself and extending to everything that is or shall be done (Heb. 4:13). All things which comprise past, present and future are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do. God did not decree anything, because he saw it as future, but he foresaw it as future because he decreed it. His being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, showing the knowledge is based upon the determinate counsel. As the London confession reads: *"He hath not decreed anything because he foresaw it as future."* But he foresaw it as future because he decreed it.

Signs of the Times

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SONG

I Love thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of thine abode;
The church our blest Redeemer saved
With his own precious blood.
I love thy church, O God,
Her walls before thee stand,
Dear as the apple of thine eye,
And graven on thy hand.

For her my tears shall fall,
For her my prayers ascend,
To her my cares and toils be given
Till cares and toils shall end.
Beyond my highest joy
I prize her heavenly ways;
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
Her hymns of love and praise.

Jesus, thou friend divine,
Our Saviour and our King,
Thy hand, from every snare and foe,
Shall great deliverance bring.
Sure as thy truth shall last,
To Zion shall be given
The brightest glories earth can yield,
And brighter bliss of heaven.

Dwight.

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EDITORIAL

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

Not of works, lest any man should boast.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS

This scripture seems so simple in wording and likely to be readily agreed to by most people that attend church regularly. I think though to really believe this, something has happened to strike down the natural man. By grace means we must receive of God the greatest blessing mankind ever received and that it wasn't in the least, merited. By grace are ye saved through faith. Is there salvation any other way? Do you think you deserve any blessing by any action of the creature? There are none good, no not one, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. I'm so thankful, he poured out his grace to hell deserving sinners or there could be no salvation for me. Through faith, faith must also be present as the scriptures list it as a combination of grace through faith. By grace we also receive the faith. Even in the days of the prophets and apostles they had this faith, God given faith, a reason to believe. We must have this in all generations, to believe He is, to believe He can and He will heed to the cry of his children. We read a mother may forget her child but God will never forget His sons. To-day believers in Him must see with an eye of faith, One seated on the right hand of The Majesty on high making intercession for the saints. One can never really pray or worship until we have faith to believe that He is, that He hears, that He is of a ready mind to His crying children. Natural children cry for notice if not they would soon cease, don't you think?

The followers of God follow by faith they're following God, The Savior of sinners. That not of your-

selves, it is the gift of God. It says plainly it's a gift from God. A gift has never been worked for or it wouldn't be a gift would it? For work we receive wages and we read again the wages of sin is death and that's the wages all men are promised. Then we don't want what works will bring, do we? We want what God has promised, saved by grace through faith a gift of God.

Not of works lest any man should boast. If we came as a little child as the scripture says we must, if we see heaven we could not come as a workman. Do all men say not of works? I hear often people working for the Lord. I hear often about leading people to Christ. I hear what God wants us to do. *Rom. 11:6 and if by grace, then is it no more of works, etc.* How much work? The natural man will insert works in spite of himself. We read all works or all grace they will not mix.

I rejoice that His people are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. This people are created in Him, that new man, that inner man born of God, that man chosen of God before the world was, this is, the we, that is spoken of that is to perform good works, ordained that we shall do if His people.

Never let us think a work, ordained of God, determined that men should walk therein by grace through faith, all a gift and blessing of Him that changes not, was ever devised or thought of by the creature; only by the Holy Spirit.

Let us never surmise one act of the creature is pleasing to Him unless motivated from above.

Elder J.R. Williams

ECCLESIASTES 7 : 1-8.

A Good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.

It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart.

Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.

The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.

It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools.

For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool: this also is vanity.

Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; and a gift destroyeth the heart.

Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.

ARTICLES

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. (Heb. 11:1).

Let us think for a while on the subject of faith. ***In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*** Just think for a minute what is contained in that statement, all the controversy that has been over that one thing, God created. Once we have learned something about the size of this world, we realize more fully the magnitude of what is being said. Out of nothing, God created both the heaven and the earth. Scientists tell us that the size of space is unbelievable, that there is no end to it, they claim there are many more galaxies like ours and an untold number of stars. Be that as it may, I am sure they know more about the size and limits of space then I do. They say it is about 93,000,000 miles from the earth to the sun, and it has been pretty well proven that the earth circles the sun every year, which would make quite a trip, yet these scientists say we see only a speck compared to the whole. Now these men with all their learning and wisdom do not or cannot believe God created the heaven and the earth and all things therein. When you stop to consider, it seems impossible, from nothing this vast universe and this wonderful earth was created. Why do some deny it so strongly, while others believe it so firmly. There is really only one way anyone can believe such a seemingly impossible feat such as this. To believe God created the heaven and the earth, the word has to be mixed with faith, as in Heb. 4:2 where it says about those who had heard the word. It didn't accomplish anything not being mixed with faith. See this is like all of God's mighty works, if a man could believe and understand them with natural wisdom, they would be only man's work, not God's work. This is why we have to believe by faith, God has decreed that we walk by faith and not by sight. This is why the so called wise men do not believe these things and cannot understand them by their natural wisdom, therefore they didn't believe. Whereas a child of God not having all this worldly wisdom, but blessed with a eye of faith has no trouble at all believing.

Look at this wonderful body of ours, from a spiritual point of view we know we have some weakness in the flesh. But still a wonder, as the Psalmist says we are wonderfully made. All these so called men of wisdom can't believe God made man, they can't tell us how man got here, but they still can't believe God made man. A child of God has no trouble believing it, because things one can't see by sight is plain enough by faith. For faith is the evidence of things not seen, see what that means, the evidence of things not seen. Things you can't see with

the natural eye, believe with the natural mind, things too deep for our understanding, faith provides evidence for God's children to believe. We know this earthly body will serve us only as long as the good Lord intended then it will be laid to rest. This is as it should be, dust thou art and to dust thou shalt return. To the world of unbelievers who don't believe God created the heavens and the earth, and made man, this must seem like the end to them. Because if they don't believe all these other works of God, how could they believe it when God says he is the resurrection, stating that he will raise the dead. Just think some of the bodies have lain in the ground for thousands of years, the mighty Pharaohs of Egypt with the slaves who they ruled have long ago returned to dust with countless millions more. But at the command of God, our saviour the graves will open and the dead shall come forth, the sea will give up its dead. Talk about the power of God, sure it will be a mighty and wonderful work, but the children of God do not stagger at the promise of the resurrection; instead they receive their sweetest joy and most comfort from that promise and believe it faithfully.

While we are thinking about the great and wonderful works of our God, consider this one.

The Son of this great God, came down to earth, took upon himself a body like unto ours, (sin excepted) with no earthly father. He came to fulfill the law, to redeem his children from their lost and ruined condition, took their sins upon himself, paid the price of their redemption, gave unto all his children eternal life as heirs and joint heirs with himself to live eternally with him in Glory. In his written word he tells us of these things, but the world cannot believe it, only his children who are blessed with this great faith can lay hold on these promises. The Bible says this faith is sure and stedfast, so as the world with all their mighty men and worldly wisdom, stagger at the words, forever and ever, his little children sing with great joy and much comfort. When we've been there 10,000 years, bright shining as the sun, we've no less days to sing his praise then when we first begun.

Now let us consider 1 Tim. 4:1 *In the latter times some shall depart from the faith.* I have talked with some who believe this scripture to mean, that many who have been blessed with this faith to believe the word and promises of God, will lose this faith, or the faith will get weak and they will not believe in God anymore. Not so. The scripture does not say they will fall from the faith, but rather they will depart from the faith. Doesn't the scripture say, It is sure and stedfast, what God says is sure and stedfast, it will not, in fact cannot fail or grow weak to the point a believer won't believe. The scripture means that many will depart from

this belief and believe other things, such as seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, can't we see already that there are far more, percentage wise following the ways of the world and the evils of the devil, with a lesser number attending church. This all brings out the scripture which says, only a remnant will be saved. The world of unbelievers are following after the things they love, the things they enjoy most, which is out in the world. God's children are also following after the things they love and enjoy most. Those who are blessed with this great faith, love the things pertaining to God, the fellowship of their brethren in the church. So here we see and have the evidence that Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. May some of these words bring a little comfort to some of his dear children, I desire your prayers.

Frank C. Hunt

PSALM 131.

Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me.

Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child.

Let Israel hope in the Lord from henceforth and for ever.

PREDESTINATION

Webster defines the word as follows: *"The purpose of God from eternity, respecting all events."* Certain Sophists have crept into the church and by their fallacy are trying to deceive God's children, teaching that predestination is an act of God. It is not an act of God in the same sense as his acts of creation and providence. Webster defines it as His purpose. It is His decree or decision, purpose or predestination, respecting all subsequent acts of Himself and His creatures.

Thus God decreed what he would do through time, also what he would incline or cause his people to do and what he would do through the instrumentality of the wicked, using them as his hand and sword. It is that eternal, most wise, and immutable decree of God, whereby he did from before all time, determine, and ordain to create, dispose of, and direct to some particular end, every person and thing to which he has given, or is yet to give being, and to make the whole creation subservient to and declarative of his own glory. God is so infinitely wise that he in the government of the world causes all his creatures to praise him, the dragons, owls, the wrath of man, and everything that hath breath praise the Lord. His will is the fountain, his decree cut the channel, his providence directs the stream. All things are for our good and his glory.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

"And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth." (John 11:43).

Jesus spoke to Lazarus whom he loved; and though Lazarus was dead yet he heard the words of his Lord, which were with power, even power enough to cause him to rise from the dead and live again. Now Jesus loved his people when they were dead in trespasses and sin (Ephesians 2:1); and when the time has come in the life of a dead sinner when he is to be quickened by the Spirit of God (God's time), Jesus by the same power by which he raised Lazarus from the dead, speaks to the sinner with a still small voice, and kills him to the love of the carnal things of this world; and makes him alive in Christ Jesus. This is done by revealing to the sinner that he is condemned to death by the holy and righteous law of God, and makes him to know that he is worthy of death. With the burden of sin so heavy upon him he is buried beneath the weight of sin to the extent that he is just as helpless to rise from that condition, and free himself, as Lazarus was to rise from the dead to life again.

So when it pleases God, he sends the spirit of his Son into the heart of one who has been made to know that he is dead (dead in sin), and speaks to him by the power of his Word, which is powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing and dividing asunder the soul and spirit, and joints and marrow; and is a searcher and discerner of the intents of the heart. When this is done it causes the sinner to come forth from the dead to a new life, being born again, not by the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but by the will of God. This is a life that he knows nothing about until he is quickened by Spirit of Christ Jesus; which brings about an awakening to the light and glory of God. Then it is that he can say, or experiences, as Paul did when he said, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." (Ephesians 5:14).

When Lazarus was raised from the dead, he was bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and a napkin was bound about his face; yet he was alive. To free him so he could be active in life, Jesus said, ***"Loose him, and let him go." (John 11:44)*** Now when a sinner is raised (quickened) from the dead, he also is bound hand and foot with the bonds of nature, so that he cannot by his own power enter into the perfection of Christ Jesus; neither can he speak of the glory of God, nor understand spiritual things until he is delivered by the power of God from the imperfections of the flesh and corruption, and is clothed with the righteousness of the Son of God, shutting out thoughts of carnal and natural things from his mind, of the Holy

Spirit (mind of Christ) to enter into the heart and soul, giving him faith in the Son of God, and hope of heaven and immortal glory.

This operation in the heart and soul causes one to be delivered in his feeling from under the curse of the law of sin and death. And when this has been experienced, then it is that he is raised up into the perfection of the Son of God, enabling him to worship God in spirit and truth by this spiritual mind that is anchored in the mind and soul, turning him from the evil elements of this world and the love thereof, to a way that is not of himself — to a way that is in Christ Jesus our Lord: a new and living way. In this he is made to feel the power of God, and forgiveness of sin, and is made a new creature in Christ Jesus. However, the time comes when he will again be brought down in low places, causing him to pray to God to be delivered. I believe that each one of God's people who has been born again experiences the need of being delivered from time to time, as Paul did when he said, *"... though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." (2 Cor. 4:16)*

When one experiences the delivering hand of God, he can witness with David in the 23rd Psalm, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." I believe that David, when he wrote this, was lifted up, and made to feel so close a relationship with God that he desired to continue in this state the rest of his life: and I believe that each child of God is at times elevated by the power of God to the extent that he is blessed to feel this close relationship with God, and see with an eye of faith single to the glory of God, and behold some of the promises of God which He has in store for his people beyond the grave — for them that look for his second coming into the world; which coming will not be for sin, but to gather together the jewels of God's mercy, and take them to that eternal home in heaven to ever be with the Lord . . .

In hope of eternal life,
(Elder) S.R. Boykin

NATURE AND OBJECT OF CHRIST'S DEATH

I urged in my last that there is a certain connection between the crucifixion of Christ and the final salvation of all his people; that is, that the death of Jesus will certainly result in a definite amount of Good. *Isaiah, xxxv: 20, "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion, with songs and everlasting joys upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."*

In this, doubtless, the returning ones are those ransomed. Also, *Isaiah, xlii: 16, "But now, thus saith the Lord that created thee, oh,*

Jacob, and he that formed thee, oh, Israel, fear not, for I have redeemed thee." The reason here assigned why Israel shall fear not is, *"I have redeemed thee."* And, if there is not a certain connection between redemption and salvation, how could the prophet say *"fear not, for I have redeemed thee?"* He also goes on, in this same connection, saying: *"I have called thee by thy name: thou art mine; when thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers; they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shall not be burned; neither shall the flames kindle upon thee; I am the Lord thy God, the holy one of Israel."*

All these consoling words are said on the grounds that *"I have redeemed thee." The prophet continues: "I will bring thy seed from the east and gather thee from the west. I will say to the north, give up, and to the south, keep not back; bring my sons from far and my daughters from the ends of the earth, even every one that is called by my name." "For I have created him for my glory; I have formed him,"* In all candor, what stronger language could be employed to set forth God's determination to save his people, north, south, east and west? *"All that are called by his name."* This is true, and being true, apostacy can not possibly be true.

"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arms and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead them that are with young." Why all this care? Because he, as a *"good shepherd, giveth his life for the sheep."* Therefore, *"they shall not be tempted above that they are able to bear." "Neither shall any weapon formed against them prosper." "Nor shall any ravenous or destructive beast be in their way." "He will give power to the faint among them, and to them that have no might he will increase strength."* Every class is considered. The weak and fainting, the little lambs and those that are with young — all are named. He is a fit person to guide his flock through this desert: 1. Because *"he gave his life for the sheep."* 2. He knows all their foes, both within and without, *"for in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom."* 3. *"He has all power in Heaven and in earth in his hands."* 4. *He himself has passed all the way before them, and it is written of him, "he shall save his people from their sins."* Mark the words: *"He shall save his people;"* and who dare say, *"he may fail in any instance?"* In view of this, David could say, *"The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. He restoreth my soul; yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil. Thou annointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over; surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Psalms, 23rd.*

The very grounds on which this was said was, *"He is my shepherd."* As such he died for me, therefore I will fear no evil. He died for me; poor,

unworthy me. *"Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."* All this, because he is my shepherd. Blessed shepherd is this who has the care of saints. *"He will not suffer thy foot to be moved." "He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold! he that keepeth Israel will not slumber nor sleep."* Oh, Christian! thou for whom Jesus gave his very life; thou also, who art passing through tribulation, tempted, tried, fainting, weak, often exclaiming: *"When I would do good, evil is present with me;"* oft crying: *"Oh! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?"* Don't forget it; God, your keeper, never sleeps nor slumbers.

"The Lord is thy keeper, the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand and upon thy left." I repeat my proposition, *"There is as certain and unfrustrable relation between the sufferings of Christ and the deliverance of his people, as there is between the payment of the price and the delivery of the property thus paid for, 'Who gave himself for our sins that he might deliver us from this present evil world,"* etc. Not that we might become clear of it if we could, but that *"He might deliver us."* Every experimental christian believes that God does seek, find, turn and save his people, and waits not for them to turn or even do anything else, but saves sovereignly. It would have been unlawful to deliver us without first redeeming us, therefore the apostle keeps this order in view. Again, *"By one offering he hath forever perfected them that are sanctified whereof the Holy Ghost is a witness unto us"* — i.e., the Holy Ghost testifies in us and to us of Christ's death, and shows us how that our cruel sins received their due in the sufferings of Christ; how that God is satisfied; how that the law is honored, justice fully met with all its claims, as much so as if you had suffered eternally in hell; how that it was for you and in your stead that Jesus died, and how all this is true and us poor guilty sinners saved. This was Paul's mind when he exclaimed with triumphant joy, , *"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect." "It is God that justifies; who is he that condemeth?"*

The Eternal Judge solemnly and in all truth and verity (in view of the death of Christ) says of us, *"just"*. He says this not for anything in or of us, or done by us, but because of what Christ has done for us. *"Now,"* he continues, *who is he that condemeth?"* Where is a power that can unsay what God has said? Where is the court of appeals? Who can say guilty of those whom God justifies? Now if there is no power above God, and none can set aside his decision, then the final salvation of every one so justified is certain, unless God reverse his own judgment, and this he will not do, for he *"is without variableness or shadow of turning;"* and besides, he knows who and what he justifies, and there can no evil conduct come from one that he justifies that was not by him foreseen, neither can any evil influence beset them that was not also of him foreseen.

Therefore, those whom God justifies are securely *"sealed unto the day of redemption."* To say otherwise is to say that God has taken to himself as a bride, and an heir, and a child, one that he knows will desert him and prove unworthy of the relation in the end, or to say he knew not what or whom he is so loving. Now, just as sure as that God is free of such monstrous imperfections, so sure is the doctrine of the possibility of falling from grace a libel on the character of God.

Paul also assigns the very reason why he justifies, saying *"It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again."* Undoubtedly he understood that Christ's death was the whole ground of our hope, and that in view of his death God could justify, but after showing that Christ has died, thus turning our eyes to the cross where our elder brother and Savior was crucified, he leads us on to his resurrection, as though we were destined to enjoy the same glorious mercy, and that his raising is a pledge to us that our bodies shall participate in the whole of his glory. Then the apostle makes another glorious revelation, saying, *"Who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercessions for us."* Thus showing that Christ after his death, resurrection, and ascension, is still intently interested for us— *"Who also maketh intercession for us,"* as though this gives additional strength to our hope. In all, showing that the heart of Jesus is set for us, to die for us, to raise even to heaven for us, and there before God, like a mighty advocate, to plead for us. All this because we are such poor, erring, sinful beings, so forgetful, so unmindful, that no part of our salvation dare be left for us to make sure. Upon this Paul says, *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us";* not through our own strength or doings, but *"through him that loved us."* What a blessed faith he had here — no faith in nor mention of self, or obedience or anything but Jesus; yet a happy, triumphant faith in Jesus, one that hushes all fears. He is our hiding place from every wind and covert from every tempest. David could say, *"I will praise thee, Oh Lord, my strength"* — *"The Lord is my light and my salvation."* He then asks *"Whom shall I fear?" "The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?"* Oh, Christian! Christian! If God is thy light, life and strength; if he is thy covert from the tempest and every storm, what can harm thee? Danger and deep trouble may be and are before thee. But oh! look, do look! *"To the hills from which thy help cometh,"* and at the mighty bulwarks around thee and sweetly and safely sing praises to God. Christ, as our advocate, has securely guarded every point. To pay our fearful debt of sin, the dagger of justice he received into his own heart, poured out his own blood, not to make

anything possible, but with his eye fixed on one object, i.e., our salvation. He suffered himself reared up on the cross and there, as a true and faithful shepherd, died. Language fails to express the deep intensity of his love to us. Our own imaginations are too weak to mount up to it, and when he arose from the dead he still remembered the object of his death, and now at the right hand of God he prays for us; makes intercessions for us. So, if apostacy or falling from grace is possible, it is also possible that Christ's blood is thrown away; it is possible that the purchase of his blood will remain forever in hell; possible that his father will not hear and answer his prayers, for he intercedes for us, and prays for every believer; possible that Jesus, after all his pains, and after all that has been said of the virtue of his blood, and his power to save, and after all that we have hoped or believed of his influence power in winning the hearts of sinners — yet after all this he may be sadly disappointed. Heaven's expected guests dragged down to hell; seats in heaven unoccupied; God's will not done (which was, that "*of all thou hast given me I should lose nothing.*") The devil a victor (at least to some extent), and we know that such fearful events as these can not occur as long as God is the God of heaven and earth, and therefore we know that apostacy can not be possible.

Jas. H. Oliphant

RECIPE FOR MAKING COMMUNION BREAD

About one-half cup of Plain (not self rising) flour. Sift into a small bowl, and add only just enough cold water to barely moisten the flour. The dough needs to be STIFF. At first it will hardly cling together but, after kneading, the dough gets smoother, and almost "Shiny".

Knead until perfectly smooth, sometimes until you hear the dough begin to "crack", (too much kneading will cause the dough to "blister").

Make out in four small biscuits and roll about as thin as ordinary pie crust, turning round and round to keep it shapely.

Check off with wheel pastry cutter or a dull knife into 3/4 inch squares, which makes it easier for breaking; prick rather closely with fork and bake in NOT too quick an oven. I usually sit right by oven to watch. The bread is nicest when baked to a deep cream shade.

The cakes may be cut square or in banquet cracker shape, if you prefer, but I have liked to make the little round cakes as my mother used to do.

If it should be necessary to make the bread a day or so ahead, by putting it in oven a moment till hot, it will be as fresh and crisp as if freshly baked.

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS

(Last Editorial on the subject by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, in the "Signs of the Times," October 1, 1880.)

The Old School or Primitive Baptists in former years have been very definitely identified and distinguished from all other religious or eccleiastical organizations as Predestinarian Baptists, and as such have borne reproach and vituperation from those who hold more limited views of what we regard as the absolute and all-pervading government of God over all beings, all events, and all worlds. With deep solicitude and painful concern we have witnessed in the preaching and writings of some of our brethren a disposition to so yield or modify the doctrine as to limit its application to such things as the carnal mind of man can comprehend or the wisdom of this world can approve. While some will concede that all things that they regard as pure and holy are ordained or predestinated of God, they deny that the absolute government of God does dictate by absolute decree the wicked works of wicked men and devils, for that, they say, would make God the author of sin. They therefore set up their judgment, and set bounds for Infinite Wisdom to be restricted to, and beyond which limitation He must not extend His government, without subjecting Himself to their censure as an unjust God and the author of sin. But how lamentable is the infatuation of poor, blind mortals, when

> *"The vain race of flesh and blood*
> *Contend with their Creator, God;*
> *When mortal man presumes to be*
> *More holy, wise or just than He."*

There are undoubtedly many of the dear people of God who feel jealous for the glory of God, and who, without any aspiring ambition to be wise above what is written in the sacred Scriptures, from inability to comprehend the two great parallel mysteries of godliness and of iniquity, have felt a commendable concern lest in our weakness we should impute to God aught that would reflect on His adorable perfections, or withhold from Him that which He has ordained for the manifestation of His glory. It certainly becomes us, as finite beings, to speak of Him and of His government with fear and trembling. He is the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, and His name is Holy. His attributes are veiled in that infinity which no finite being can by searching find out. He keepeth back the face of His throne, the place and power of His government, and spreadeth His cloud upon it. As the Heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's ways higher than our ways, and His thoughts higher than our thoughts. The standard of infinite purity and holiness is the will of God. There can be no higher law than the will of God, for only to the standard or counsel of His own will and pleasure does He Himself conform. *"He worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." — Ephesians i. 11. "Declaring the end from the begin-*

ning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isaiah xlvi. 10. In this connection He says, *"I am God, and there is none like me."* And in the revelation of the Lamb, in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells, *"The four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat upon the throne, and worship Him that liveth forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created."—Revelation iv. 10, 11. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor? or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen." — Romans xi. 33-36.*

When God created the Heavens and the earth no other power than His own was employed, no wisdom but His own was consulted, nor was there any other than His own will to dictate what, how, or for what purpose anything should be created. As a potter has power over the clay, it is his right to form his vessels as he please; and if he forms of the same lump vessels to honor and vessels to dishonor, who shall dispute his right to do so? The prophet says God is the potter and we are the clay; then, *"What if God, willing to shew His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory." — Romans ix. 21-23.* Dare any of us poor, finite worms of the dust dispute the sovereign right of God to do all His pleasure in the army of Heaven and among the inhabitants of earth? *"Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"* How appropriate and forcible are the words of Job, *"Hell is naked before Him (God), and destruction hath no covering. He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He bindeth up the waters in His thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them. He holdeth back the face of His throne, and spreadth His cloud upon it. He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end. The pillars of Heaven tremble and are astonished at His reproof. He divideth the sea with His power, and by His understanding He smiteth through the proud. By His Spirit He hath garnished the Heavens; His hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts of His ways: but how little a portion is heard of Him? but the thunder of His power who can understand?" — Job xxvi. 6-14.*

Can we contemplate the awful majesty, profound wisdom, deep and

unsearchable counsel, infinite goodness, unerring workmanship in all that He has condescended to let us know of His great and marvelous works, from the spreading abroad and garnishing of the wide Heavens, down to the formation of the crooked serpent, and still stand in doubt of His predestinating power and unrestricted government over all beings, all worlds, and all events?

Are death and hell and all things naked before Him, and destruction uncovered to His all-seeing eye, and yet unlimited by His power and wisdom? Has He stretched out the north, and balanced the earth upon nothing, without any design, purpose or decree concerning their subsequent destiny? Has God bound up the waters in His thick cloud, and *"given to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment" (Proverbs viii. 29),* and yet left all to the vagary of chance? When He set His throne above the Heavens, was it to be the place of no power in controlling the destiny of all things in Heaven and earth and hell? For about six thousand years the sun, moon and stars have with exactness filled their respective orbits, and without the variation of a second of time from their creation made all their revolutions, in obedience to the decree of the Creator. Is it by chance that *"The Heavens (thus) declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork?"*

But say some to whose minds the doctrine of the universal government is obscure, We admit that God has predestinated some things, but do not admit that He has predestinated all things which come to pass. Let us see how this partial or limited government would accord with the Divine record. Suppose that in what we have been contemplating of the Heavens we should find the sun and moon, and all the stars but one, held firmly to their orbits by the irresistible will and decree of God, and that one solitary star, without any fixed orbit, is allowed to range the infinity of space, wandering with more than lightning velocity, guided only by chance; where would be the safety of all the other stars? what would become of the predestination of those heavenly bodies intended to be preserved from hazard by the decree of God?

To us it has been a comforting thought that God has set the bounds of our habitation on the earth, and the number of our months is with Him, and our days are appointed to us as the days of an hireling, who cannot pass His bounds; but what assurance of safety would that afford, if He has left murderers and bloodthirsty men or devils unrestricted by His predestinating decree? To our mind, either everything or nothing must be held in subjection to the will and providence of God. Even the wickedness of ungodly men is restricted by predestination, so that *"the wrath of man shall praise God, and the remainder of wrath He will restrain."*

"Pains and deaths around us fly—
Till He bids we cannot die;
Not a single shaft can hit
Unless the God of Heaven sees fit."

For death and hell can do no more than His hand and counsel have determined shall be done. Does this make God the author of sin? or, in other words, does this make Him a sinner, or charge on Him an imputation of impurity? By no means. Against whom is it possible for God to sin? Is He amenable to any law above Himself? If so, by what law can He be indicted, in what court can He be tried or convicted? How preposterous! It is His eternal right to do all His pleasure, *"Nor give to mortals an account, or of His actions or decrees."*

It savors of atheism to deny that He is the self-existent, independent God who has created all things for His own sovereign will and pleasure. And if it be admitted that He had a right to create the world, and all worlds, it must then be also admitted that He had a right to create them according to His own will and pleasure. Worms cannot charge Him with error because He did not assign them a more exalted place in the creation, or for creating them worms instead of men. Men cannot justly charge Him for not creating them angels, nor angels because He did not make them Gods. The world, with its infinite variety of living creatures, from the minutest insect to the most huge monster, as well as man, were all made for the pleasure of their Maker, and all must subserve the exact purpose for which they were made. Even the crooked serpent, as well as the harmless dove, all were pronounced good in their respective places; not good in the sense in which God is good, but good because they were precisely what He intended or predestinated them to be. Had the serpent been straight, or the dove crooked, or if the things made had been different from what the Creator intended, there would have been a defect in the workmanship. We cannot, with such exalted views as we entertain, think that God has ever failed to secure the perfect accomplishment of His own design or purpose in anything He has ever done. The entrance of sin into the world, and death by sin, which by the offense of one man has passed upon all mankind, was no unprovided-for event with Him, to whose eyes sin, death and hell have no covering. The eternal purpose which God had purposed in Himself before the world began was sufficiently perfect and comprehensive to include all that could or can possibly transpire, or He would not have declared the end of all things from the beginning. *"Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world."—Acts xv. 18.*

But there are many who admit the foreknowledge of God, and yet deny His determinate counsel, on which the certainty of all the events of time depends. Men may have a limited foreknowledge of things which God has made certain by His determinate

counsel and irrevocable decrees, as it is said, *"The living know that they must die;"* but God's foreknowledge depends on nothing outside of Himself, for He has challenged the universe to tell with whom He has taken counsel, or who has instructed Him. To us it seems perfectly clear that nothing could be foreknown that was undetermined, and that the foreknowledge and determinate counsel of God are inseparable.

It is also generally admitted that in the salvation of His people, *"Whom He did foreknow, them He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son" (Romans viii. 29);* but that the well-beloved Son of God was delivered into the wicked hands of men to be crucified by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, is not so readily admitted. The wicked works of those who crucified the Lord of glory were not foreknown by His murderers; but it was foreknown and determined of God, Peter said, to those whom he charged with the wickedness of killing the Prince of life. *"I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all His prophets, that Christ should suffer, He hath so fulfilled." — Acts iii. 17, 18. "For of a truth against Thy holy child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever Thy hand and Thy counsel determined before to be done." — Acts iv. 27, 28.*

The wickedness of men in betraying and crucifying our Lord had been positively predicted from the days of Abel, in what God spake to the fathers by the prophets, and by what was signified by all the offerings which were made under the former dispensation. The pieces of silver for which He was betrayed were counted and declared hundreds of years before Judas was born; and the dividing of His garments, and the lot cast for His seamless robe, was determined of God and declared by the prophets. The history of Joseph, and the wickedness of his brethren, was in fulfillment of his dreams, and in accordance with the purpose in which Joseph said, God meant it for good.

It has been said by some that these great events which God has overruled for good were ordered of the Lord, but that the smaller matters, and the wickedness of men, were not predestinated. Our Savior has informed us that the determinate counsel of God in His all-pervading providence numbers the hairs of our head, so that not a hair can fall to the ground without Him; even the little sparrows are protected, and the ravens are provided with the food by His determinate counsel. And Paul assures us that *"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."*

It seems to us unreasonable, as well as unscriptural, to say that the

government of God directs and controls some things, and that other things are left to the control of men or devils. If God's government extends only to the good deeds of men, then is His absolute government totally excluded; for *"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Rom. iii. 10-12.* We would not limit the government of our God, nor, because we cannot comprehend His designs, dare to say He has no designs.

"He in the thickest darkness dwells,
Performs His work, the cause conceals
But, though His methods are unknown,
Judgment and truth sustain His throne.

"In Heaven, and earth, and air, and seas,
He executes His firm decrees;
And by His saints it stands confess'd
That what He does is always best."

Men act voluntarily when they commit sin; they have no more knowledge of or respect for the purpose of God, than Joseph's brethren or Potiphar's wife had in his case, for there is no fear of God before their eyes. It is even so with the princes of this world; if they had known Jesus, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But it was needful that Joseph should be cast into prison, and it was expedient that Christ should suffer; therefore that knowledge was withheld from the persecutors of Joseph and of Jesus, until they should fill up the cup of their wickedness. And it is thus in the wisdom of God that the world by wisdom shall not know Him. Yet such is the wisdom, power and righteous government of our God that He can and does set the exact bounds by which the wickedness of men and devils is limited, and beyond which they cannot go. Satan is bound a thousand years with a great chain, and after the thousand years he shall be loosed for a short time. With all his rage and malice he is restricted by the supreme power and decree of God, to do no more nor less than what God will overrule for the good of His people and for His own glory. And thus also, *"God, willing to shew His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction,"* as in the case of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, hardening the heart of Pharaoh until all the plagues and judgments were accomplished, and His own almighty power and glory were then made known in delivering the Hebrews, and in overwhelming Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea. *"Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He Hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth He yet find fault? For who hath resisted His Will ? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" — Romans ix. 17-22.*

The Apostle, fully aware of the disposition of the carnal mind to cavil

and reply against the sovereignty of God in the execution of His pleasure, did not attempt to apologize for God, or so to modify the doctrine as to render it less objectionable to the carnal mind; but he called attention to the infinite disparity between the infinitely wise, holy and omnipotent God, who holds our everlasting destiny, and by whose long-suffering we are permitted to live, and poor, finite, depraved, short-sighted man, and the daring presumption and extreme folly of questioning the justice or wisdom of God in working all things after the counsel of His own will. We regard it as a very serious matter to charge that God cannot govern the world, by His own determinate counsel, wisdom and power, according to the eternal and immutable design or purpose purposed in Himself before the world began, without subjecting Himself to the charge of being the author of sin. Sin is the transgression of a law under which the transgressor was justly held amenable, and to the penalty of which he is subject. But we have endeavored to show that God is under no law but that of His own will and pleasure, and therefore He doeth His pleasure in the army of Heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. He could by no law be held under obligation to leave the affairs of this world or any part of them to be governed by chance, or by the will of men. As He is in one mind, and none can turn Him, His purposes are eternal, like Himself. His decrees being perfect from everlasting, admit of no improvement or change. If He had not the right to predestinate all things pertaining to the events of time before He created the world, we ask what right has He acquired subsequently to execute the orders of His throne? If it had been His pleasure to have prevented sin from entering into the world, can we doubt His power or wisdom or ability to have done so? If sin has entered this world in opposition to His will, or because He had not the wisdom and power to prevent its entrance, what assurance have we that it will not also enter the world to come? But it is to our mind far more consistent with what God has graciously made known to us of His being and attributes to believe that God had a purpose worthy of Himself, however inscrutable to us, in regard to the entrance of sin, as well as in regard to all things else. He bids us *"Be still, and know that He is God."* To our feeble mind the conclusion is unavoidable, that the predestination of God either controls all things or nothing.

We look at a vast complicated machine, with its ten thousand wheels. We cannot comprehend or understand its workings, but we are told that the machinist has a perfect knowledge of all its parts save one; there is a definite use for every wheel and spring, but one is held in the machine which has no certain motion or definite use. How long could that machine run in safety, with the unruly part liable at any moment to throw the whole into

confusion? We cannot see how any part of the government of God can be absolute and secure, if God has not the undivided government of the whole in all its parts; and if He has to-day the full control, had He not the same control yesterday and forever? If He has not the full control to-day, is there any certainty that He will have tomorrow or at any future period? If we admit that God absolutely governs all things according to the counsel of His own will, and that He is immutable, then we must admit that He has determined what shall and what shall not transpire in time or in eternity. But to deny His universal control of all things, including all principalities and powers, thrones and dominions, things persent or to come, whether they be visible or invisible, is to deny that He is the God of the whole earth, and virtually deny His eternal power and Godhead. If He has not the power and wisdom to determine all events, how can He cause all things to work together for good to them that love Him?

But while we hold that He is supreme in power, and that He works all things after the counsel of His own will, we are certain that He reigns in righteousness, and that there is no unrighteousness with Him. To admit the universal government of God, is to admit the predestination of all things, from the falling of a sparrow to the dissolution of a world. In the absence of predestination, with what certainty could the Holy Ghost inspire the holy prophets and Apostles to foretell all that should ever come to pass? If it were undetermined in the purpose of God, how could the Apostles tell us of perilous times that should come in the last days of apostasy from the faith, and spiritual wickedness in high places?

But we will submit these remarks to the consideration of our readers, and desire that what we have written may be carefully tested by the infallible standard, the Scriptures, and received only so far as they are sustained by the word and Spirit of our God.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7 / 91
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

ISAIAH 66 : 1-2.

Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is he place of my rest?

For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

MEETINGS

OLD PINE CREEK CHURCH

An annual all day meeting will be held, the Lord willing, at Old Pine Creek Church on the 4th of July, 1991. The church is located off highway #221, five miles north of Floyd, Virginia. Those coming from Floyd turn left onto road #682. Those coming from Roanoke, turn right onto road #682. All lovers of the truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Hale Terry

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will meet, the Lord willing, fifth Sunday in June at Big Meadows Church, Chatham County. Take 1-85 North and take the Pittsboro - Graham exit on highway #87. Go approximately 17 miles and turn right after crossing Cane Creek Bridge. Go 4 miles to cross roads and turn left — Go 1 mile to church. We invite all lovers of the truth to come and meet with us. Ministers of our faith and order are especially invited. Song service will begin at 10:00 and preaching at 10:30 a.m.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Deacon Casey Johnson, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Tommie Batts, NC 5.00
Ms. Edna Simpson, AR 2.00
Joseph Plaster, VA 5.00
Mrs. Phyllis Farlow, MD 2.00
Tillman R. Pullig, TX 2.00
Eld. Amos Hash, VA 2.00
Bert H. Knox, WA 10.00
J.O. Harrod, AR 2.00
Mrs. Edith Sewell, FL 5.00
Mrs. Mila L. Vantrease, IL 2.00
James B. Pugh, Jr., AL 2.00
Mrs. Ruby S. Barron, LA 7.00
William E. Mitchell, VA 5.00
H.L. Knight, NC 7.00
James T. Howard, AL 7.00
Eld. John T. Wingfield, VA 4.00
Eunice C. Thompson, NC 15.00
Ruby L. Ogburn, NC 5.00
Miss Catherine Houchins, VA 2.00
Eld. Ben F. Preston, OR 7.00
G.R. Slate, NC 2.00

MOVED OR MOVING?

To assure you of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

OBITUARIES

SISTER MARY DIX BRINEGAR

Sister Mary Brinegar (Aunt Mary) of Spencer, Virginia was born December 13, 1900 to Larkin and Mollie Dix. Our Lord saw fit to call her home on January 22, 1991 at the age of 90. Sister Brinegar was married to Hardy Joyce and Alva Pratt, both of whom predeceased her. Surviving are her husband, William A. Brinegar, and one sister, Essie Moose of Reidsville, North Carolina.

Sister Brinegar united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church and attended as regularly as she could. She always enjoyed the preaching and singing and was a firm believer in salvation by grace and the resurrection of the dead. In writings found after her homegoing, she confirmed her belief in predestination saying that she believed God's elect were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world and that the Lord's people are born again of the spirit. She also wrote that she was "looking for that bright and cloudless morning when the dead in Christ shall rise and if we be among the chosen, eternal life will be the prize."

Sister Brinegar's funeral was held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church by her Pastor, Elder Kenneth R. Key, and by Pastor Bruce Hunter. She was laid to rest in the Church cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord when this mortal must put on immortality and death is swallowed up in victory. The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout and with the trump of God and the dead in Christ shall rise first. What a glorious day that will be.

We will all miss her, but we know that our loss is her eternal gain for it must surely be joy unspeakable to be with the Lord. May God comfort the family as only He can.

Jean Moran

THELMA D. DICKERSON

Minnie Thelma Davis Dickerson was born near the Governor Glenn farm in Rockingham County on December 10, 1905, to Richard Barnett and Betty Florence Page Davis. She joined the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in August, 1975. She died on February 6, 1991 after a brief illness.

When her mother passed away while she was just five years old, she and her sister, Bessie, went to live with their Uncle Martin and Aunt Minnie Blackwell Davis in the Mayfield Community.

She was married to James Wesley "Buddy" Dickerson on January 26, 1927. Living on a farm in the Happy Home-Mayfield Community, they reared six children. One son, Harold

Penn preceeded her in death. The surviving children are daughters, Mrs. Ruby D. Moore, Summerfield, NC; Mrs. Louise D. Edwards, Monroe, NC; Mrs. Leola D. Meador, Ruffin, NC; and Mrs. Lucille D. Blankenship, Reidsville, NC. One son, Claude Franklin Dickerson, Sr., Jacksonville, Fl. She is survived by one sister, Bessie D. Barber, Ruffin, NC. There are sixteen surviving grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Her husband, joined Dan River in August, 1954. They were faithful to take the family to church and the annual associations. Her husband helped haul the logs and build the present church building during the early 1940's. He also hauled dirt with his horses and wagon to fill in and get the cemetery upgraded. He was also instrumental in helping establish one of the very first church perpetual cemetery funds for upkeep which has been a forerunner copied by many other churches of several denominations in the area.

Both she and her husband gave of their time and talents to the community. She was a fifty year member of the Happy Home-Mayfield Extension Homemakers, member of the Area Development Association, Rockingham County Beautification Committee, one of the eighteen NC Mothers of the Year honored in 1970, a member of the Rockingham County Farm Bureau Women's Committee and was inducted into the NC 4-H Leaders Hall of Fame in 1987 for over fifty years of 4-H Leadership and service.

She loved to sing and regularly attended the second Sunday night singing at Dan River and often those at Malmaison Church. She and a number of the church sisters attended one of the churches of our faith almost every Sunday throughout the years. They visited in the home of members, the sick, those in nursing homes and hospitals. She enjoyed visiting others and sharing her experiences. She was blessed to be up and around until the last few days of her path here on earth.

In the absence of her pastor, the funeral was conducted by Elder Haywood W. Wray. He used the text from I Thessalonians 4: 15-18. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery under a beautiful mound of flowers to await the glorious resurrection when *"the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise."* She had loved flowers and grew so many beautiful ones in her garden and often shared them with her friends and neighbors.

By her daughter,
Leola D. Meador

PSALM 64 : 9-10.

And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing.

The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.

BROTHER RODOLPH RAYNOR

Brother Rodolph "Roe" Raynor of Richlands, N.C. departed this world December 24, 1990. The funeral services were conducted by Elder Oliver Allen and Elder J.T. Prescott. Brother Raynor was a life-long resident of Onslow County, N.C., born July 31, 1907. He is survived by his widow, Sister Leona Gurganus Raynor, to whom he was married October 14, 1931.

Brother Raynor united with Cypress Creek Primitive Baptist Church April 20, 1976. He was baptized by Elder Harmon Brown, assisted by Deacon Albert Manning. He remained a member there until February 7, 1987. Both he and his wife were received on confession of faith by Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church June 25, 1988.

A great love for the Church was manifested by Brother Raynor. He attended church meetings as long as he was physically able. His presence is missed very much, but we trust our loss is his gain.

Other survivors include a daughter, Lois Dean Horne or Richlands; a brother, John Raynor of Afton, Va.; two sisters, Sister Peanie Yopp of Jacksonville, N.C., and Lucy Petty of Pittsboro; three grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Written by requests of Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church and Sister Leona Raynor.

Evelyn Pratt

BEULAH SKINNER TAYLOR

Beulah Skinner Taylor was born June 1, 1888 to James Rant and Lucinda Skinner. She had five brothers and three sisters. She was married to Henry Taylor who preceded her in death. To this union two children were born, Edgar Taylor and Altha Taylor McGee. Both children are deceased.

Sister Taylor passed away from the walks of this life on Thursday, February 28, 1991 at the age of 102. She was survived by one brother, Gilbert Skinner, four grandchildren, twelve great-grandchildren and five great great grandchildren. She also left a number of nieces and nephews.

Funeral services for Sister Taylor were held at Goodwin Funeral Home at Cadiz, Ky. on March 2, 1991, at 2 p.m. Rev. Shoney Oliver conducted the funeral with music by Mae Pardue. Her body was laid to rest to await the resurrection morning in the Futrell Cemetery on Donaldson Creek at her parent's home place.

Sister Taylor joined Dry Creek Primitive Baptist Church, August 1921 and she was appointed Clerk in 1928. She served as Clerk until 1953. She was a firm believer of the old Primitive Baptist Doctrine and was a faithful member of the church as long as her health permitted her to attend.

In respectful memory,
Dean S. Noel, Clerk
Dry Creek Primitive Baptist Church

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SONG

There is a friend that sticketh fast,
And keeps his love from first to last,
And Jesus is his name:
An earthly brother drops his hold,
Is sometimes hot, and sometimes cold,
But Jesus is the same.

He loves his people great and small,
And grasping hard embraceth all,
Nor with a soul will part:
No tribulations which they feel,
No foes on earth, or fiends of hell,
Shall tear them from his heart.

His love before all time began,
Shall through all time the same remain,
And evermore endure:
Though rods and frowns are sometimes brought,
And man may change, He changeth not,
His love abideth sure.

The law demanded blood for blood,
And out he poured his vital flood
To pay the mighty debt!
He toils through life, and pants through death,
And cries with his expiring breath,
" 'Tis finished," and complete.

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ECCLESIASTES 5:18-20

Behold that which I have seen: it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it is his portion.

Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God.

For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth him in the joy of his heart.

EDITORIAL

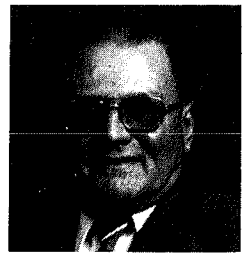

Elder C .B . Davis , Jr .

There is a force of compelling desire to write of an experience I had on the trip we made in May of 1990. I hope to express as best I can what I saw and explained to Brother Jamie Cooper.

In Mitchell, S. D. there is a very unique building called the Corn Palace. The exterior is completely covered with corn of different colors and grains that are grown in the area. There is a large auditorium inside with pictures made with corn of different colors. The pictures were made by an indian who had suffered many afflictions in his life. He desired to learn the language of the white man and because he would slip away to school he was an outcast of his own family. He suffered intimidation, an incurable eye disease and some form of asthma in his later days.

I was totally captivated with what I felt and saw in the pictures and wonder if that indian had his mind on Heavenly thoughts - I shall never know I'm sure. I would like to have talked with this man for I feel he knew something of our God. I feel he had been taught in a way he understood (for Christ comes in a personal way and at a level his people understand) some of the wonders of Grace. I now with fear pursue the task before me.

We saw over the stage a picture reaching from one side of the room to the other. I am no artist but will try to draw enough for you to see the endeavors of the indian.

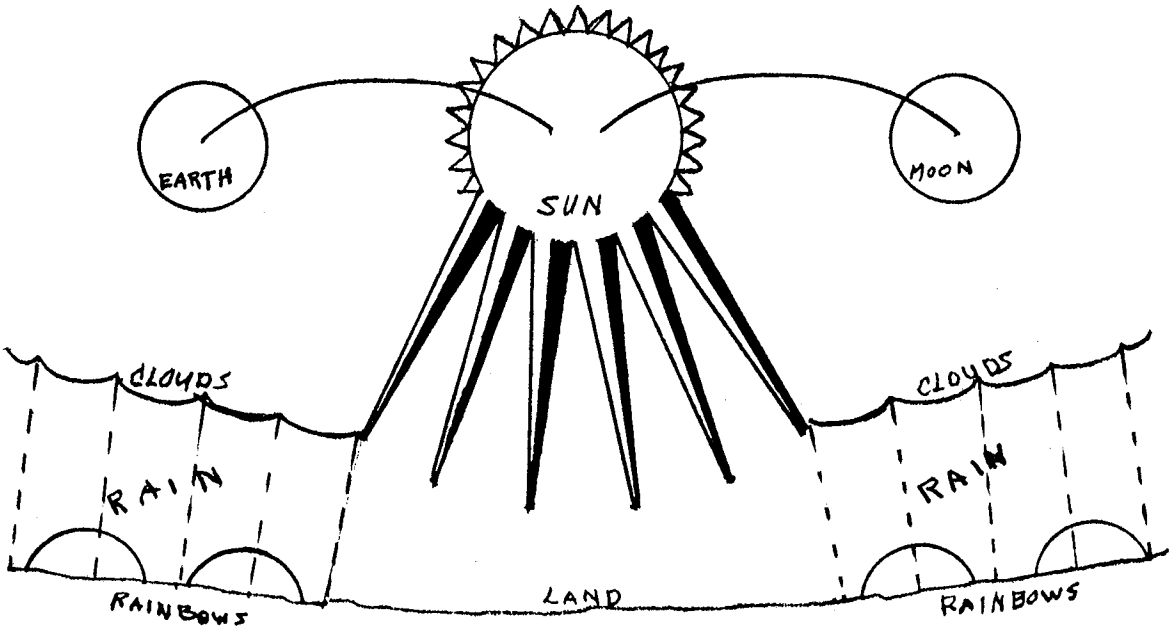

This picture and six others (three on the walls on either side of the auditorium) making a total of seven are what opened to me a realm of heavenly light if not deceived.

Now we begin with what is first and foremost always - three heavenly bodies denoting the deity - God the father, God the Son, and the Holy Ghost. We also consider the number seven as a complete number in the scriptures as well as the seven angels, churches and candlesticks so often mentioned. Did this indian see the fulness of these things?

We see six beams of light coming down to land devoting the six days of creation. These beams are half white and half black as the evening and morning was the first day etc. (Gen. 1) These beams being divided then comprise twelve parts (another complete number) and the number of the tribes of Israel. We know as the beams reach over the land that Israel was to spread over the earth and God commanded and Moses and Joshua led. (Joshua Chap. 4 & 5).

We see clouds spread under the heavens and rain coming down to land. We see in this the heavens opened and the flood of Noah's day. (Gen. 7) We then behold the rainbows or the covenant of God with Noah and all the earth. (Gen. 9) The evidence of this covenant is ours even today for when the storm is past we behold the bow in the cloud which causes us to always look up toward the heavenly bodies.

There is more in the rain that we see than just the flood. There are five lines on either side denoting the five books of the law. The total of both sides is ten, the same as the so-called ten commandments. These commandments touch the rainbows and thus are covered in the promise of God (the covenant) through Jesus Christ. (Gen. 34:28) We also note that Isaiah in chap. 55:10 expresses that the rain comes down and the snow from heaven and the earth flourishes for the benefit of man.

We now will attempt to touch upon other pictures previously mentioned. We will number them 1, 2, 3 etc. as I try to point out views of merit.

1. This picture shows two people with one planting and one harvesting. They are surely trusting in God and mother earth for food on which to survive. The mind considers that God has made a promise that as long as the world stands there shall be seed time and harvest. (Gen. 8:21-22.) We thus understand Solomon writing in Eccl. chap. 3, a time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted.

2. The next picture is one of a person beside a campfire and in the background all is covered with snow. This too embodies the word of Gen. 8:21-22 that heat and cold, summer and winter and day and night shall come and go as long as the earth exists. This one also gives reference to the sun and moon and earth in the large picture before discussed. The warmth and light of the sun which is the natural basis for all living things stems from heavenly power. The light of the moon is a cold light and is borrowed as it were from the sun. The glory of the moon stems from the sun and thus is proof that we as carnal men have no glory (light) of our own but that it is borrowed for a time. God loans us the light of Christ for a season and we are mindful that we cannot bring that light into being.

3. This picture is of a woman giving food to what appears to be a traveler. We thus think of Elizah who asked a woman for food as he traveled. The answer she gave was that she had but a little meal and oil left and she was preparing that knowing when it was gone she and her son would die. (1 Kings 17: 12, 14, 16). We find though that the meal and oil never gave out and this is symbolic of the storehouse of Grace. We find the barrel and cruse (Grace) always in supply and know from whence it comes. God blesses His people in many ways and forms and these blessings oftimes come through another individual because God has touched their heart.

4. This one depicts two indians, one shelling corn and the other preparing some to be consumed. We immediately think of Joseph and Israel (Jacob) and the corn that was shelled and ready for Joseph's family even before the need arose. (Gen. chap. 42) Joseph who as a type of Christ had charge of the storehouses of Pharoah would give to his brethren

freely as our brother in love Jesus Christ freely gives to us. This corn clearly denotes grace and the perfect work of salvation by Christ. The corn was ready in every sense to be poured into the bags of those starving individuals. It takes no effort or self works to obtain Grace or mercy for its free as Joseph's brothers learned it could not be paid for.

Paul wrote in 2 Cor. 4:7 that He (God) has given us treasures in earthen vessels. Thus God pours into our bag (earthly being) that which will cause famine to end. We are a hungering people and surely must depend on heavenly manna as it seemeth good to our God to give. There is also in the background what appears as buffalo and lush vegetation and we think of Joseph sending for Jacob to come and dwell in a land of plenty in Goshen. We believe Christ will come for us some day that we may dwell forever in a perfect world of bliss.

5. This one is of three individuals killing birds for food. This denotes of itself the God head (Deity) for it is He who supplies and feeds us. We know that when Moses was leading the children of Israel through the wilderness they desired meat for food. (Ex. 16:13). God sent quails to be a feast for them and thus theirs prayers were answered. There is also another occasion when God sent quails (Num. 11:30-34) but these were sent to admonish Israel because they were beginning to listen to false prophets. God has many ways of teaching us and always as an expression of His love.

6. This picture shows a being in what appears to be a long robe and there seems to be a halo over the head. This person is looking at what appears a building partially destroyed or not yet complete. We think of a time with Elijah when the alters and temples were torn down and he said they had slain the priests and sought his life also.

We know of the great temple that Solomon built and of the different woods and stones used in its construction. The picture shows different colors in the wall, porch and pillars. We think of all the different peoples that the true temple (church) will be made of. God deals with us in order we be accepted for the temple and as no sound of tool was heard in the building of Solomons temple so no works can make us fit to till our place in the church. (Rev. 5:9) There are three parts shown of the building here pictured and we are reminded that Christ said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again"

(St. John 2:19, 20, 21) We understand He was speaking of His body, His death and His resurection. We believe that because of Him we shall be resurrected on that great day and will have our place in that eternal temple not made with hands.

Now beloved if I have offended anyone please forgive me and count any mistakes as mine for our God has never made any. If there be

any merit in this writing give God all the praise, honor and Glory that He blessed that indian to build and this lovely creature to behold.

Praise His Holy Name,
Elder C. B. Davis, Jr.

NOTICE

May 19, 1991

This is to certify that the church known as Pleasant Valley Primitive Baptist Church of Kingman, Kansas met this day to grant the wish of the pastor, Elder W. A. Winfrey, that the above named church be dissolved.

Pleasant Valley Church was organized in the late 1890's by Elder J. B. Hardy. W. F. and Eliza Winfrey, parents of the present pastor, and A. E. Combs, his maternal grandfather, were charter members.

It is with sadness that he has asked to be relieved of his church duties, but due to the distance Elder and Mrs. Winfrey must travel to and from meeting; both being 82 years of age and neither in good health, they feel that they cannot continue to make the trip.

Elder Winfrey hopes the church in Kingman will someday obtain another pastor and be revived.

With the fondest memories of the love shown by the brethren and friends and of visiting brethren who came in contact with us in Kingman. May you at times remember us in your prayers and have a little love for us in your hearts. Even though we are small in number, we have a big belief in sound doctrine and we have kept the faith. Goodby until we may meet again.

A special thanks to God for the faithfulness of Brother and Sister Richardson.

May the covenant-keeping God keep you as he did Jacob when He found him in the wilderness.

W. A. Winfrey, Pastor
Maradell Richardson, Clerk
Robert E. Richardson, Deacon

ST. MATTHEW 5: 2-11.

And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

ARTICLES

CIRCULAR LETTER

To the Messengers and Elders that compose the Pigg River Primitive Baptist Association and to our Correspondents -

Greetings:

According to the law of averages, this will be the last circular letter, I shall ever write. So we might call it a farewell address.

I implore you that we might make this a time to associate, rather than to legislate and all that is within us seek to keep peace. May this association never attempt to Lord over the churches that it is composed of. May it not interfere with the internal affairs of our Sister Associations. Above all, let us remember that we too are frail.

Let the beautiful words of the bible - grace, patience, longsuffering, forbearance, forgiveness, and chaity, which is the love of God, rule in our hearts. When we add all the good sermons, all the sweet fellowship, all the good meetings, and the precious memories of days gone by, and subtract peace from it, we have nothing left.

The time is soon coming when our voices will be silent. The earth will claim our bodies. " The mourners go about the streets. Because man goeth to his long home." (Ecclesiates 12-5).

Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. (Colossians 3:15).

O. K. Tench

CHURCHES I HAVE SERVED
BY
O. K. TENCH

It won't be too long that my voice will be silent and my service shall end. Not for any glory that's due me, for by the grace of God, I am what I am. If in my life or ministry, someone has felt to have been benefited . . . give God the praise. Perhaps, after I am gone, someone might like to know what I believed and where I served.

I was born January 23, 1911. My parents were Isham F. Tench and Sallie L. "Campbell" Tench. I was the third of seven children. My life was like most of poor boys. I went to school until I was thirteen years old, barely finished the seventh grade. In 1926, my parents sent me to Ferrum Training School which was very religious at that time. The first night I was there, we were told to go to our rooms and pray and if our roommates refused, to report to the authorities and they would take

care of them. At that time, I thought everybody there but me was a Christian. I felt to be such a sinner that I was afraid to try to pray. On Sunday, the only Sunday I was there, we had to go to church. It has been fifty eight years ago, yet I can close my eyes and see that scene. The president sitting inside of the round railing during the service and a group of students kneeling around the outside. This service I witnessed there caused me to want to leave the place more than any other thing. I felt that I would be forced to engage in this worship. So after six (6) days, I came back home. My mother was very disappointed. As time passed, I still had serious feelings about my soul. At a revival meeting, the old minister said, if we would give him our hand or join the church, the things that caused us to sin or our unworthy feelings would be taken away. So I went up with others that were joining. I remember one lady saying to me, " Kinsey, I am glad you have joined the church, you have always been a good boy." Down in my heart, I knew it wasn't true. The next day I was miserable, now I had become a hypocrite. I thought maybe when I was baptized, maybe I would feel better, but this also failed to give me relief. Then I thought when I take communion, I'll feel better. After the one time, I was so condemned, I never took it again. One of the members said to me, you must have done something wrong, yet he would get drunk and still take it. I still went there, but took no part in the service. I started to dance, but never really learned how. But then I began to be miserable on the dance floor.

One Sunday, on the outside of the church a boy said that the bible said, "Jacob have I loved" and "Esau have I hated" and I disputed it but he told me where to find it. I found the scripture and began to read and had never read before. I found that the bible taught election, but I wasn't in it. There became a great conflict in my life. It seemed that there were two of me - one was against the other. I began to talk of the bible to anyone who would listen. I really didn't know who believed this doctrine. But when I went among the Old Baptists, I could detect a difference in their preaching and others. In my mind, I could see each of them building as if it were a house of logs. The difference was the Old Baptists finished it and topped it off, while the others always left it unfinished, as if I had to finish it. I could find no comfort in this doctrine. Also, when I began to talk on the scripture, someone would say, if they didn't believe it, "That's Old Baptist Doctrine". Others who believed it would say, " You are going to preach". I began going down to Old Chapel Church to hear Elder Stegall and I found comfort in the gospel of grace. But I became afraid if I kept going, I was going to join. One Saturday afternoon when they had services down there I had a great conflict of mind, I decided to take the mule and plow that afternoon. I got

about half way to the field when something caused me to rush the old mule back to the farm and get ready as quickly as I could and go to church. In the year of 1930, something very drastic happened to me. I think for a few days, I was very disturbed in mind. I left home on a T-Model Ford car and went to Roanoke. As I think of those days, I have a very hazy memory. I found myself staying just a few doors from the Old Baptist Church. On a Sunday, I went into their service. It seemed I had just found a home. However, I did not join that day. But since that day, I have never doubted the Old Baptist is the true church. These were the depression days, but I got a very poor paying job and worked there a few months. I was satisfied just to go to church for awhile. But one day, Elder J. P. Helms was preaching about the shepherds hearing the angels, saying glory to God in the highest, peace on earth and good will to men. I couldn't keep my seat; I went up and was received in the church. I didn't know anyone there and they didn't know me. They asked me about being baptized and I told them I had been baptized. They said, they didn't accept that, so I left then and came home. After a few weeks I became anxious about it and asked Elder Stegall to baptize me. One cool morning in May, he baptized me, and something was left there that hasn't bothered me since.

I had my membership at Old Chapel. Then I became impressed to preach, and Elder Stegall encouraged me. I went with him to meetings. We went to Town Creek Church and stayed all night at Dock Davis's home. They had a service at someone's home that night and we went. Several preachers preached and I couldn't hold back any longer, so I got up and tried to talk a few minutes. I really don't remember what I said. Elder Stegall was very kind to me under this burden. At times at Old Chapel and Bethel where I was known, I tried to preach without much liberty, until one Saturday afternoon at Old Chapel. It seemed to me as I began to talk, the words flowed to me and the most pleasant sensation I had ever had. The members rejoiced with me. And me a fool, thought . . . Now I have learned how and it is so pleasant and easy. In my folly, I thought now that I had learned how, - I'll dress up tomorrow and come here and really preach.

I believe now the Lord had a lesson for me. The next day it rained so hard nobody went, and it was six months before I had liberty anymore. Now after 50 years, I know that I can't preach, unless it's given to me at the time. In the year of 1937, I was ordained. That year I was called to Union Church. I went the first time on the first Sunday in October 1937. I had married on Friday before.

In the year of 1938, I was called to Weatherford, which I am still serving. After six years, I gave up Union Church because of the lack of interest of the members. I had

concluded that the Lord had not called me there.

In the year of 1946, I was called to Chapel Church, where I am still serving. In 1947, I was called to Springfield, where I am also still serving. In 1952, I was called to Malmaison Church and am still serving there. I think sometimes I am greatly blessed to have these churches.

I was quite a bit younger in the year of 1937, and I would like to recall some of the pleasant memories of the past when I started to Weatherford. There was a little boy named Raymond Goad, just three years old who came with his parents and often sat with his grandfather. I saw him grow up to manhood. In the meantime, I baptized his grandfather and his mother. After he had sown his wild oats, I baptized him and his wife, Phyllis, and his sisters, Mabel and Dianne. I shall never forget going with Raymond and Phyllis' home one day for lunch. We sat down to eat and I felt impressed to encourage them to join the church, they both began to shed tears. The next month, they were received. After a few years, Raymond was burdened to preach. We think he has a great gift. Most of the old members who were there at Weatherford in 1938 have passed on. We now have about 50 or 60. One Sunday, I baptized 12. Some of them went to Springfield, some went to Malmaison and some to Weatherford. We have good attendance. A lot of young people, boys and girls, bring their friends, which we appreciate.

In the year of 1946, after I had served Chapel Church several years as the pastor, Elder Stegall had been absent serving Roanoke Church. After He resigned, they called me to serve. We now have 18 members, as the older ones passed on, others come in. I baptized 5 on one Sunday. We have good attendance.

In 1947, I was called to serve Springfield. Elder Stegall's health had failed. Several years ago, Elder Denver Simpson felt impressed to preach, and is now serving as co-pastor. Under his leadership, the building has had many improvements such as new pews, and an addition with tables and bathrooms. I couldn't name all the members I have pleasant memories of. I think often of brother Louis Willis, a deacon who I baptized-the most spiritual man I ever knew. Sometimes, it seems I can hear him say "Amen" when a preacher said something that he loved.

Another member, Raymond Dalton, a deacon who carried mail until retirement. Before we had telephone service up here, when I needed to conduct a funeral at Gretna, many a night have I heard a car drive up to my yard, and maybe I had already gone to bed, but I'd come to the upstairs window and he'd call, "Brother Tench, they want you to hold a funeral service" - many of them I didn't know.

I wonder how many funerals I have had, and tried to remember them a few years ago, but after four or five hundred, I knew I couldn't

remember them all. I baptized a young man named Melvin Shelton at Springfield, who was impressed to preach. After a period of time, he went to another church and now he is their pastor.

In the year of 1952, I was discharged from Roanoke Church where I'd been supplying.

Upon receiving a letter from Malmaison Church, I went and have been going since. I have many pleasant memories of things that happened there. Years ago, a lady came to me and said, "I am a member of the Methodist Church - they are good friends of mine, but I am not happy there, and I want to join Malmaison." I advised her to go there and tell them just how she felt and then to come back. I thought if she was sincere, she'd be back. She took my advice and came back with the blessings of her former friends. I baptized her and she became a faithful member until she died.

Time and space will not permit me to mention all the members and memories. But sister Kate Dodd, who passed away two years ago, was a person to someone who knew her, you just couldn't forget. She was clerk at Malmaison for many years. She had her place to sit and she said what she thought. She attended long after her body told her she wasn't able to. If one tried to help her, she would say, "Get out of my way." I can still close my eyes and look to the left of the pulpit and see her sitting there looking like she was asleep, but she wasn't.

Sister Mattie Williams who passed away several years ago, had her place that she always sat. When we built the new church, she found the same geographical location in the new church that she had in the old one and sat there. She was facing from the pulpit about the center of the left row of pews about the third pew from the front. She was very kind to me and faithful to the church. It has been a pleasure to baptize two of her sons, Julian and Burnell and the daughter, Naomi. After brother Julian joined the church, he'd write me rich letters. I asked him if he was impressed to preach, he denied it. But it was like fire shut up in his bones, he couldn't resist it. He is now co-pastor at Malmaison and is serving other churches. Brother Burnell Williams is a deacon at Malmaison and song leader - one of the best that I know.

I regret that there isn't space enough or time enough to mention all the members of these churches we've tried to serve. But I'd like to mention the deacons who have taken much of the load and responsibility off of me and are such a blessing to the churches.

As an overseer an elder is called to have faithful deacons to council with; this is a great blessing. The deacons at Malmaison are Burnell Williams and Richard Stegall. At Springfield, Homie Dalton and Walter Hamlett. At Weatherford, Stafford Houston and Marvin Brumfield. At

Chapel, Clay Brown and Fred Murphy.

I don't know how long I'll live or how much longer I'll be needed at these churches, but I have no ambition other than to finish my course in the service that I feel to be called to.

Elder Tench died May 24, 1991.
(See obituary this issue.)

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. (St. John 14:27).

Peace I leave with you, can you think of anything better, Peace — even the word has a sweet peaceful sound — Peace, peace I leave with you. The Good Lord was about to finish his earthly mission, soon to lay down his life here on earth and return to the Father, he would soon be leaving these apostles so he was telling them now. Trying to prepare them for what lay ahead. These apostles at this time were not well grounded in the faith, as they would be later, they had of course been taught by Jesus, learned a lot from being with him all the time. But much more was to come their way with the passing of time. But now at this present time they were disillusioned, they had expected things to be somewhat different, they had been blessed with love for this their friend Jesus, and now he was leaving them. They told him they knew not the way so how could they follow him. Peter said, Lord why can't I follow thee, I will lay down my life for thee. So now as they were in deep sorrow, hurt because of Jesus leaving them, after all they had been together and close for some time, Jesus said unto them. Peace I give unto you my peace I leave with you. Do you know of anything better Jesus could have said unto them, or anything better he could have left with them. In a time of deep loss, grief, sadness and disappointment what could be better then to have peace. This blessed peace that takes away all these troubles and trials from a man's heart and mind. There is a hope instilled within the breast of man, this hope makes one not ashamed, see it is the Holy Spirit abiding within. This action then by its power and growth gives a man what we know as blessed assurance, all this is done by the work of the Holy Spirit, for doesn't the scripture say, the Spirit must the work perform. This I have been describing here is spoken of in the scripture as the new birth or being born again. This action and these things take place with a man at such a time and manner as is pleasing to the Good Lord. The result being, that this person may, can, or will be blessed with this wonderful peace. One way the Spirit accomplishes this is, it causes man to see the natural or material things of this world to be all vanity, the things he once thought to be so important he is now shown

they are less than nothing and will all vanish with the using. Not only is he given to see their unimportance, but the love, the desire for these things have been taken away, the things he once wanted and desired has no appeal to him now. His appetite has been changed, see now it takes spiritual things to satisfy a spiritual man, because now he has experienced a new birth, now he is a different person.

Now with a different love and view of things about him, all these natural or material things which happen and cause trouble, sadness, heartbreak and sorrow, don't bother him now as they once did because he sees they are not that important anymore. So now can come this wonderful blessing, Peace. My peace I leave with you, with natural troubles of this world losing their value to him, this person can now enjoy peace from the Lord. Not as the world giveth, give I unto you, this gift from the Lord is surely not as the world giveth, to begin with the world doesn't have a gift such as this, the world can give troubles, heartaches, sorrows, persecution and all sorts of this type thing. The world can promise this, that and the other but all its promises are subject to the whims of men or laws of government, they are all subject to failure with no dependence to be placed in any of them. However when God makes a promise it is both sure and steadfast, no way possible for it to fail, after all it is impossible for God to lie, and Him with all power how could it fail to happen. So when he told his apostles, my peace I leave with you, he meant just that. He didn't say they would never again have any trouble or sorrow because we are promised that, it is left on record that they did enjoy this blessed peace. For instance once when Paul and Silas was bound in jail, not knowing what the morrow might hold, they were heard singing praises to their God. Do you believe the bars or locked doors had them worried, don't you believe they were enjoying a sweet peace within, My peace I leave with you. Many more examples such as this have been recorded in the scripture, I could look them up and write them here, but I believe this one will suffice.

Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid, ye believe in God, believe also in me. What gracious words to say to this small group of men who were soon to go through such trying experiences, they would see the great mass of people turn against their Lord, see him suffer cruel and shameful things even unto death, and death even by cruel crucifiction. As followers of Jesus, believing his teachings, being his apostles they could under these circumstances expect the worse, Jesus knowing all that was going to happen, also knowing their every fear and weakness, knowing also the heart and minds of the wicked, had this to say. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. How comforting this must have been

to these men at such a time as this, fear not what the world can do to you. Far greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. It is only natural for men to fear the unknown, and at that time death was an unknown something to dread, but no longer does it remain unknown, for God has lain down his life in death, then took it up again, proving that he has the power over death, hell and the grave. Now he can say, O grave where is the victory? So now men don't have the fear of death as they once did, because of what Jesus did and what he has promised. Most all men I guess fear the messenger of death, for we know not what kind of death awaits us, and we all know some are quite painful while others are blessed to pass away quietly in their sleep. But the dread of death, the unknown factor has been removed, and we have this great promise. I am the resurrection, and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. So now to a believer we know that Jesus is there on the other side of death, with power enough to bring us through, power enough to raise us from the grave on that great day, and Love enough that we can rest assured it will happen. Let not your heart be troubled, how we need to heed these words. How often, how many times are we troubled over things that don't amount to nothing. I firmly believe all our blessings come from God, we can't even count our blessings unless he in his tender mercy shows them to us. But I do believe that sometimes we allow ourselves to be troubled or upset over little things that shouldn't matter. Jesus said, I am come that they might have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. I do believe my life would be better if I thought more often on, let not your heart be troubled, instead of the things I do sometime.

All things work together for good, to those who love the Lord, to those who are the called according to his purpose. Some of these things that are working together for our good, does not always have to be good at the present, but like the scripture says, they are working for our good. He also says I will never leave or forsake you. With all these blessed promises from such a God as is ours, why should we not take heed and let not our heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

I desire your prayers, with love
a brother, I hope

Frank Hunt
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ST. JOHN 15: 11-14.

These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

And I, brethren, when I came to you came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of men's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power. (1 Cor. 2:1-4).

As the Saviour came under the law and dwelt among and lived among those under the law, even so, He taught them to pray and His manner of praying while under it. Equally so, when He had finished the days work (John 9:4). He then taught them His prayer (John 17). Thus we find full instruction for every precept and example given in the Bible. This is true in this day of preaching to the Gentiles. The Holy Spirit is our Guide into all truth (John 16:13), and Jesus made the day's journey into this low ground and then performed the day's work to a jot and a tittle. There is a "thus saith the Lord" for every step of the way, and He hath not left us comfortless.

The manner in which Paul came to Corinth is the only way to be found in the written testimony of Jesus Christ, and there is no need to seek any other way among the works of men. Dear yoke-fellow in the ministry of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, will you examine with me the manner in which Paul appeared before these brethren? And will you beg the Lord to verify the truth as He leads us into it by leading us to examine ourselves as to whether we have a "thus saith the Lord" for our manner of appearing before the saints of God? There is an injunction to the man of faith for self examination. (1 Cor. 11:28; 2 Cor. 13:9) Who is going to rule out that examination? We must remember that whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Faith causes the children of God to examine themselves to see if they are walking in truth. When not walking by faith, but some other way, (however cleverly or elaborately, or, for that matter, however humbly) it is wrong. It must meet the discerning eye of the Spirit to be right.

Many false doctrines have been spoken and published about Paul's preaching, as well as what he preached. There is not any doubt at all in my mind about what he preached. It was grace every step of the way. He attributed his being born from his mother's womb to the Lord; likewise he attributed his being called to minister to the grace of God. (Gal. 1:15, 16) Now I do not know a member of a single faction of our people that claims a call to preach that does not attribute that call to the grace of God. However, I know many excellent men that do not have the

same experience as regards his life after the initial call, to the same thing that Paul does. He tells us that what he was, was by the grace of God. However, they utilize the grace, but if business or family or other things come along and get in their way, then the grace is failure. I have searched as diligently as I know how to ascertain the difference in graces, that is, which and how much is it of effectual grace that saves a man the first time and the grace that he wastes and neglects and because of this, that, and the other, he still doesn't get saved. I have found but one grace that saves sinners, and it is the same kind of grace that saved and called him the first time. It's the same grace from that time to the end of his life.

Paul did not preach one doctrine for time and something else for eternal salvation. It is a good work to be called to preach the gospel (1 Tim. 3:1), and since Paul declared that truth to us, I desire to preach the same doctrine that he did, to wit, not to know anything among my people except Christ and Him crucified! If language means anything, that was all that could be preached for the comfort and edification of the Corinthians.

The prophet declared that a virgin would conceive and bear a Son; that His name would be called Immanuel, which being interpreted, is God with us. (Isa. 7:14). Hundreds of years later an angel announced the same good news. That announcement carried with it the message that Israel had been waiting for, to wit, "He shall save His people from their sins." (Matt. 1:21).

As I look back at the long solitary watches of the shepherds as they tended their flocks, and as I look back and hear the groans of Israel as they sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, waiting and watching for the rays of the Sun of righteousness, I think I feel for them. What a tender fellowship springs up in my trembling bosom for that humble servant of God that has persecuted unto death those that called upon the name of Jesus. He was arrested by that same Jesus and sent to that church with his memory blotted out about that he should have done in the name of Jesus. But now he is determined not to know anything save that same Jesus and Him crucified.

His faith enabled him to overcome the world (1 John 5:4), for there has been no greater faith than the kind with which Paul was possessed. It armed him for the great conflict before him, of going out to face his former associates and preaching so boldly to them the opposite of what he formerly preached. I have not time to, and it is vain and useless to talk about a man-made faith. Faith is a gift of God, and it not only overcomes all fears of the world, but it enables us to overcome ourselves, so that we are made willing to go into the very jaws of death with the determination to follow on through thick and thin, through good report and evil, our

blessed Lord and to preach Him as an all sufficient Saviour.

Come poor sin-burdened reader and behold the theme of Paul; Jesus Christ and Him crucified, the Way, the Truth, the Life, yea, the only Name under heaven given among men whereby poor sinners must be saved. At the mention of such a theme my mind is carried to the search that God made for one worthy to bring salvation unto Him. None was found. Ah, dear reader, the world says that we are behind the times, that we are in a worn out rut, because we have depended only on grace, and that we need a modern outlook. Do we? Had an Old Baptist been standing near at hand when the Lord looked and found none to help, we, of all people, would have understood, and would have agreed that there was none able to take the Book and loose the seals thereof (Rev. 5:4), but the world at large (the unborn world) would have persecuted him there as they later did persecute Him on earth, and had the people of God been there in the annals of eternity and have heard the Lord say, *"Since among men I find none to help, therefore mine own arm hath brought salvation unto me,"* we would have heard the same good news that the church has ever heard, to wit, *"The strong arm of God has brought salvation unto Him."*

My friends sometime say to me, " You have an open mind, so don't you think you might be wrong about salvation being solely and wholly of the Lord?" My reply is always the same; "No sir, I do not. My mind is closed about the way sinners are saved. It is by grace! If it is not by grace, then it is by works, for it cannot be this way or that. It is by grace. Paul was separated from his former way of thinking in regard to salvation. When God called him by His grace, He called him all of the way from works, his own testimony and experience bearing him witness in the Holy Ghost (Rom, 9:1). His mind was closed, and my mind is likewise closed to any conditions and works that I must do in order for me to come before God's people.

For Paul to do that, for me to do that, or for any of the people of the Gentile race to do so is to cast aspersion and reflection on the crucifixion of our Lord, for who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Christ has been crucified — is that not sufficient cause for rejoicing in the kingdom of heaven? Was that not sufficient for Abraham to be glad when he, by faith, saw His day? Was that not sufficient for the angel to say unto the people of God, *"Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10-11)?* Was this not reason enough, after Paul had experienced the saving grace of this Saviour applied to him as he journeyed towards Damascus to persecute the saints for him to have this divine determination not to

know anything among the Corinthians save Jesus Christ and Him crucified?

Now let us notice the manner of his coming to them. As we leave the purpose of his coming, let us remember that none of the "lo here and lo there" are to be believed. In fact I have no hesitancy in saying to you that if you have discovered the falsity of Babylon that you come out of her that you be not partakers of her falsehoods and other evil, and that you be partakers with the heirs of the kingdom, Jesus Christ having been crucified for you. That is one of the ways that Paul came to the brethren. He did not tell them that it did not make any difference if you belong to the church or not; he did not come before them telling them fabulous doctrines such as that God is as well pleased with you staying in a false way as He is when you obey His commandments. Paul did not write nor preach that way. This worm of the dust would beseech Him that wisdom be imparted to come among the churches expounding the full doctrine of God, the whole counsel of God, graced by the Holy Spirit to be able to follow the instructions of this servant. Paul, to his own son in the ministry; not to be afraid, not to please men, not to know any man after the flesh, but to preach the word, to be instant in season, out of season; to reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For (verily, therefore) the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, etc.

"And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." No man has the authority nor the ability for long) to be all things to all men. Yet, to be truly and wholly the servant of the Lord, there are times when the servant must be in weakness and in fear, and in much trembling. For a man of Paul's background, the overthrow of his legalistic training and the instilling in him the grace of God was such an experience that he never forgot it. In fact, when a man is spoken to by the power of the Holy Spirit, whatever he does and says in serving God will be in fear and in trembling. The cruelty and audacity of Saul of Tarsus before the Damascus road experience, was such as to make the saints tremble at the mention of his name, but after that experience he, and his former associates, trembled and feared and were abashed in his presence. However, their trembling was not because of the work of God's grace but because of their fear of man.

The demonstration of power of God was such that Paul never did forget it. He worked with the Pharisees before this demonstration of power; even after he openly rebuked them, and the same spirit in one and all that he met afterwards, but also, even after that demonstration, he was filled with a reverential fear of Jesus who demonstrated to him that He was Saviour, and his salutation to all those calling on the name of the Lord was as his brethren

in Christ, and when writing or visiting among them, it was in weakness, and in fear and in trembling, and this spirit was accompanied by much humility and self abasement.

"And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." He separates his speech and his preaching. Putting on in speech is forbidden, and let it be known once and forever that using incorrect language to make it appear that you belong to an ignorant, backwoodsy kind of people is as far from preaching the gospel as it is to make use of a superfluity of words (2 Cor. 9:1) to make people think that you are a learned man. Hypocrisy for either cause is strictly forbidden by common decency (I Cor. 14:40), by the general tenor of the scriptures, but more especially by Paul's appearing before and with the brethren at Corinth. It certainly would take as much forethought and practice to use corny language to create an impression of ignorance, as it would to use too many words to create an impression of learnedness. The instruction of Paul by telling about his appearing among the brethren at Corinth is as much towards too much of a thing as well as to little of it.

He is saying, so it seems to me, that any attempt to be other than what I am, a poor sinner saved by the grace of God, is not according to what was taught me on the Damascus road, and what I learned in solitude in Arabia. It is not too much to say that in this solitude, being in seclusion with only the Holy Ghost to teach and direct and to bring again to Jerusalem, he was taught what and how to preach, and what his manner before the saints should be. And it is exactly right; not too much, and not to little, of the demeanor, both in what is preached and in how it is preached then, now, and forevermore by everyone that is called of God's grace to minister to the churches.

Elder W. D. Griffin

PSALM 142

I cried unto the Lord with my voice; with my voice unto the Lord did I make my supplication.

I poured out my complaint before him; I shewed before him my trouble.

When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path. In the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me.

I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul.

I cried unto thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.

Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I.

Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shalt deal bountifully with me.

MEETINGS

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Smith River Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Old Union Church the first Sunday in September and Friday and Saturday before.

Old Union Church is located in Floyd County. Those traveling from Floyd, take U. S. Rt. 221 south through Willis, turn right on Rt. 787 (Indian Valley Road) go 5.7 miles, turn left on Rt. 622, go .7 miles and turn right on Rt. 754, go 2.2 miles to Old Union Church.

From Christiansburg take Rt. 8 south, turn right on Rt. 693 (Childress Road) go 5.4 miles. Turn left at Rt. 787 (Indian Valley Road) go 8.3 miles, turn right on Rt. 619 (Horse Ridge Road) go 5.7 miles. Turn right on Rt. 754, go .3 mile to Old Union Church.

All lovers of the truth and ministers of our faith and order are invited.

Elder Amos T. Hash, Moderator

ONE HUNDRED FIFTIETH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ORIGINAL SOUTH ARKANSAS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The next session convenes with Pilgrim Rest Church. Located off Highway 167 north of Fordyce, Arkansas. Take Highway 273 about one half mile to Church.

Session beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in September 13, 14, and 15, 1991, beginning at 10:00 a. m.

Frances Townley, Church Clerk

SAINTS REST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

The Lord willing Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas will have a fifth Sunday meeting in September.

We invite all of our faith and order to come and meet with us.

Elder C. C. Morris

SOUTH OUACHITA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The next session of the South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association is scheduled to convene with Rehobeth Church beginning Friday, September 20, 1991 and continuing until noon Sunday, September 22, 1991. Rehobeth Church is located at El Dorado, Ar., 5 miles north on Hwy. 7 and 1/2 mile west on Hwy. 335.

Brethren and friends of the Old School Baptist are invited to meet with us.

Ned Barron
318-778-4217

JOHN 3:1-3.

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 1991

Mrs. Rachel Smith, NC 2.00
Mrs. Connie Page, NC 5.00
Mrs. Kathleen Martin, VA 2.00
Charlie F. Johnston, VA 2.00
Hartzel Nelson, WV 10.00
Mrs. Dorothy A. Smith, NC 10.00
Mrs. Muriel Strader, NC 2.00
Eld. C. M. Haygood, TX 2.00
Mrs. Edward Hodnett, VA 2.00
Lloyd Chance, TX 5.00
E. H. Chandler, LA 7.00
Garner Horne, NC 5.00
Miss Reidy Pickral, VA 50.00
Mrs. Letcher Smith, FL 10.00
Mrs. Joe Kee, TX 15.00
Mrs. Pearl Law, VA 5.00
David M. Spangler, VA 2.00
Mrs. H. A. Harlow, TX 5.00
Marvin A. Curnutt, TX 2.00
Norman Jenkins, NC 2.00
W. D. Godwin, LA 2.00
Mrs. Margaret Smothers, NC ... 2.00
E. R. Graves, AL 5.00
Norris M. Hall, VA 2.00
Mrs. Olive Hastings, MD 10.00
Charlie Fox, AR 2.00
Mrs. Lois E. Cloud, AZ 5.00

ELECTION

The Bible teaches that there is an election of men to Salvation: That this election is absolute and unconditional, that it is personal, and from eternity, that the elect are chosen in Christ, that it is founded upon the everlasting love and grace of God. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father (1 Peter 1:2). According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world (Rom. 8:28; 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 1:9; James 2:5; 1 Peter 1:2). It is absolute because based alone on the good pleasure of God's will (Eph. 1:5). It is personal because particular persons are chosen to Salvation. "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest and causes to approach unto thee" (Psalm 65:4). God's election is from eternity for by one act he decreed all things. The elect are chosen in Christ, and all their spiritual blessings are treasured in him. It pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell. God loves his elect with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee. If God loved his people in eternity, he loves them now. To cease to love them would destroy his immutability. Nothing can separate them from his love.

OBITUARIES

VIRGINIA BUGG CEARLEY

Virginia Bugg Cearley was born on April 9, 1907 to Sarah and Robert Bugg. She was married to John Cearley, who preceded her in death. She is survived by several nieces and nephews. She was a nurse for Dr. Hal Smith in Christiansburg. She was a member of Valley View Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized June 15, 1975.

Her health was poor; however she attended church whenever possible. After a lengthy illness she passed away on August 28, 1990. She will be missed by all that knew her.

Written by request of Valley View Primitive Baptist Church.

In Loving Memory,
Naomi W. Agee

DELMA WHITENECK CUMMINGS

Delma Whiteneck Cummings was born on April 28, 1904 to Eliza and Enock Whiteneck. On January 4, 1937 she married William (Bill) W. Cummings, who preceded her in death. To this union were born two sons. She passed away on September 5, 1990 after a stroke that left her paralyzed and in the hospital for several months. She is survived by two sons and daughters-in-law; Ralph E. and LaRae Cummings; Paul L. and Nancy Cummings. She also leaves behind two sisters; Ella W. (June) Thompson and Blanche W. Duncan and three grandchildren; Ralph E. Cummings, Jr.; Christopher W. Cummings. and Amy Suzanne Cummings. Graveside service was conducted by Elder Raymond Goad. Two great joys in her life were her church and family. She was baptized July 15, 1979. Until her stroke she was an active, independent, and vital person. Her top priority was attending church - especially her home church and listening to the gospel. A memorial service was held at the request of her family on the third Sunday in September, 1990 at Valley View Primitive Baptist Church. She is greatly missed by her family, friends and brethren.

Written by request of Valley View Primitive Baptist Church.

In Loving Memory,
Naomi W. Agee

INEZ STRADER DICKERSON

Sister Inez Strader Dickerson departed this life Dec. 12, 1990 was born January 12, 1928 to the late Andrew Jackson Strader and Allie Martin Strader. Surviving are sons Wayne, Charles and Jerry, daughters Nancy Mosley and Sara Perdue six grandchildren two great

grandchildren, one brother A. J. Strader, Jr.

She joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church July 31, 1977 was baptized the same day, along with her husband who joined a week earlier on July 24, by her pastor Elder D. V. Spangler.

Sister Inez was a quiet little lady who loved her family and church and attended meetings when she was able to, her husband was an invalid for five years, she cared for him with kind and loving care I never heard her complain. She spoke of the church how she missed the meetings.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor Elder Kenneth Key at Dan River Church with a beautiful array of flowers and many relatives and friends burial was in the church cemetery.

Written by,
Gradie Strader

FRANCES BLALOCK KING

Sister Frances Blalock King departed this life December 24, 1990, making her stay here 76 years, 11 months & 24 days.

Surviving, is her devoted husband, Arthur Wilson King. Two daughters, Mrs. John "Nancy" Gant and Mrs. Kirk "Linda" Loy of Burlington, N. C. and one son Gary W. King of Prospect Hill, N. C.

She is also survived by five sisters, Mrs. Amos "Sallie" Aldridge of Prospect Hill, N. C.; Mrs. Charlie "Lizzie" Pritchett of Yanceyville, N. C.; Mrs. Alvis "Margaret" King and Mrs. George "Lou" Blackard of Burlington, N. C. and Mrs. Bernice "Allie" Clayton of Mebane, N. C. Three brothers, Franklin Blalock of Prospect Hill, N.C.; Joe Blalock and William Blalock of Burlington, N. C. Seven grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Sister Frances had a very close and loving family. This was manifested throughout her life and especially during her affliction in the latter part of her life. Not many men could have or would have cared for their wife as Brother Wilson did for sister Frances in her failing years.

She was united with the Primitive Baptists in 1951. She manifested her love for God and his church by showing her love for this people. She and Brother Wilson loved to entertain their brethren in their home, and would visit others especially the sick, far and near; never going empty handed but most always going with a gift of love; a pie or cake or a piece of her crafts made with her own hands, or vegetables from their garden and a smile and lots of love from their hearts. As a virtuous woman "she looked well to the ways of her household, ate not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her." Pro. 31:27, 28.

Her funeral was conducted in McClure Funeral Home by her pastor Elder Kenneth R. Key, assisted by Elder C. B. Davis. Burial was in the Blalock Family Cemetery.

In our book of "remembrance" are written many precious memories of sister Frances of which we thank God for.

May the family be given to know that God has given and God has taken away, and he maketh no mistakes. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Written by request of her husband.

A little brother in hope,
Kenneth R. Key

ORREN KINSEY (O. K.) TENCH

With a sad heart I shall attempt to write a few lines in memory of our dear pastor, Elder O. K. Tench.

He was born January 23, 1911 to Isham Ferguson and Sallie Campbell Tench.

He married Helen Bennett Tench in 1937. To this union was born four children. Betty T. Ellis, Danville, Va. JoAnn T. Meeks, Williamsburg, Va. Darnell T. Barnes, Roanoke, Va. and Orren Kinsey Tench, Jr., Weathersfield, Conn. Surviving also are six grandchildren, and one sister Emma T. McCrickard, Silver Springs, Md.

Elder Tench was baptized 3rd Sunday in May 1932. Ordained as an Elder in the Primitive Baptist Church, August 1937. He was called as pastor at Chapel (his home Church) July 1946.

He served Weatherford Church near Gretna from 1938, Springfield of Gretna at Gretna from 1947 and Malmaison Church near Danville from 1952 until he had a stroke Feb. 16, 1991 which left him totally disabled until his death May 24, 1991.

He was blessed to believe and preach Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. He loved to sing the songs of Zion. Seldom visited in homes that he didn't have song service before he left.

We believe he could witness with Paul when he said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, Henceforth there's laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing."

His funeral was conducted at Lynch's funeral home Rocky Mount, Va. by Elders Julian Williams, Raymond Goad, Marvin Brumfield, Thomas Solomon and Melvin Shelton. Five Elders he was blessed to baptize.

He was laid to rest in Franklin Memorial Park, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. May the Lord be with his dear family, all his Church people and friends through this time of grief and sorrow.

Written by one who loved him and at the request of his dear wife.

Mary B. Brown, Chapel Ch., Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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POEM

Great was the day, the joy was great,
When the divine diciples met;
Whilst on their heads the Spirit came,
And sat like tongues of cloven flame.

What gifts, what miracles he gave!
And power to kill, and power to save!
Furnished their tongues with wondrous words,
Instead of shields, and spears, and swords.

Thus armed, he sent the champions forth
From east to west, from south to north;
Go, and assert your Saviour's cause,
'Go spread the mystery of his cross.'

These weapons of the holy war,
Of what almighty force they are
To make our stubborn passions bow,
And lay the proudest rebel low!

Great King of grace, my heart subdue,
I would be led in triumph, too,
A willing captive to my Lord,
And sing the victories of his word.

Watts

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EDITORIAL

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

When Jesus and his apostles had eaten the last supper and Jesus began to wash the apostle's feet Peter asked, Why? Jesus answered, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. And Peter said, Thou shalt never wash my feet. But Jesus answered, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Peter did not then know — and most of the world does not yet know — what Jesus was setting forth. But the children of God who have received the Holy Spirit and been born again, and have been washed in the precious blood of Christ have been given to understand. We read in Isa. 1:18, *"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."* And David said, *"Wash me with hyssop and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."* All men are sinners, for they fell in Adam when he partook of the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the garden of Eden. However there are many who do not yet know they are sinners. Many of them say they know it, but they give no evidence of repentance. Others simply do not care. Many say that some day they will accept Christ and let him come into their heart and save them. Do they have the power to keep him out now? If so, they have more power than he and have no need of him. We read in Ps. 14:2-3. *"The Lord looked down from the heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one."* Does that leave out any who have ever lived in this world? *That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell from whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."* Even the children of God who have received His Holy Spirit do not know

from whence it cometh nor whither it goeth. Certainly no one in the flesh can discern this, for, *"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*

Dead men can do nothing, and all men were dead in trespasses and sins before any were quickened into divine life. *"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will."* And this is because of his great love wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sins.

I did not say so at the beginning, but the scripture on my mind is, *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life."* Jesus is the way, the only way, that any man will ever see heaven and immortal glory. After Jesus had washed the apostle's feet he told them many wonderful things. And one of those things embraces our most precious hope: *"I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."* There should be no doubt that Jesus did go to prepare a place for his children who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. But where did he go? to heaven to build places of abode? No, heaven was prepared before the foundation of the world: it is the throne of God, and Christ is sitting now on the right hand of his Father making intercession for his beloved saints. Then where did he go? To the cross of Calvary, where he shed his precious blood that poor, helpless sinners might live. He laid down his life, and he took it up again as his Father had given him commandment. Jesus came to do his Father's will, and his Father's will was that of all that he had given him he should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day. And the only way that it could be done was for Jesus to lay down his life: for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. God's just and holy law demanded death, and his justice could be satisfied no other way. The blood of animals could never remove one sin. If it could, then there would have been no necessity for the shedding of Christ's pure and precious blood. But with one sacrifice acceptable unto God, Jesus hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.

Jesus would return unto his Father, but he gave unto us another very precious promise first. *"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall also live."*

The world saw him with the natural eye, but they can no more

see him. If we see him, it is only through the eye of faith which is the gift of God. What a gracious promise is this! *"Because I live, ye shall also live."* Jesus said, *"The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the Son of God, and they that hear shall live."* We are raised out of our dead, alienated state and translated into God's marvelous light. Like unto a natural child born of the flesh, we know nothing; but in God's appointed time we are taught all that we need to know. *"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."*

In another place Jesus said, *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."* The eternal life which Christ gives his children has always been theirs. It was in him before the foundation of the world, but he now makes it manifest unto them: as the scripture says, *"who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."* And it says in another place, *"For in him we live, and move, and have our being."*

Brethren, to those who believe in Jesus, he is our prophet, priest and king; he is our all and in all. And if we believe in him it is because this belief is given unto us. *"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."* Christ was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was despised and rejected of men and we esteemed him not. But he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

Brethren, our Lord and Saviour suffered and died for the sins of his children, and if we be his we must also suffer. The things that we suffer, the world knows nothing about. Our trials, tribulations, and persecutions because of the very things that we believe and preach which are so precious to us, and the pain we suffer because of our sins, they know nothing about. We find that in our flesh dwelleth nothing good; we desire to do good, but cannot. The evil that we would not, that is what we do, and it causes us great pain and remorse, and to cry out as did Paul, *"Oh wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" Brethren, we should thank God that we have a sweet hope that through Jesus Christ our Lord we shall be delivered, We were dead in trespasses and sins, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us*

sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Though we suffer with Christ we also at times are given to greatly rejoice when he makes us sit together in those heavenly places in Christ. Brethren, let us rejoice that we are given hope that we are his when he shall come again without sin unto salvation.

Jesus said, *"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: but strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."* Jesus is that strait gate: he is the door of the sheep. It was not an invitation, but a command, when he said, *"Enter ye in at the strait gate."* He calls us, and we hear his voice, for he calls us by name, and he leads us in and out to pastures that others know nothing about. No one else can find this gate, and must follow the broad way, the way of the world or flesh, for they are not his sheep, and Jesus said unto them, *"And ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life."* Why? *"Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not."* and, *"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."*

Brethren, let us cast not away our hope, regardless of how small it may seem at times, for he that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever. Amen.

May God bless the truth, and pardon the errors.

Elder Clifford Wilbanks

GOD'S ATTRIBUTES: GOD'S OMNIPRESENCE

This attribute of God is defined as follows: That attribute of God by which he is present at all times and places. *"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up to heaven, thou art there: If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me" (Psalm 139: 7, 8, 9, and 10).* Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him? Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord; Am I not a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off, thus saith the Lord. Behold, heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool. Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee. Though he dig into hell, thence shall my right hand take him; though he climb up into heaven, thence will I bring him down; though he hide himself in the top of Carmel, I will search and take him out from thence. In him we live and move, and have our being. He filleth all things. All space is his habitation.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

ISAIAH 2:1-4.

"The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

This is the word that Isaiah received. It is not received by any except those called, as was the prophet. His calling does away with the idea that men can volunteer for the office of a bishop. This message to and for the children of Israel starts out as the work of God in calling the message-bearer, and then it is a certain word that she is to receive. After establishing the fact that the word is sent by the hand of God, we are comforted with further proof of God's unconditional work in caring for this people. It is not sent to just any kind of house, built by just any kind of builder, but it is sent to the house that the Lord builds. He does not build just anywhere, but in the top of the mountains.

How wonderful it is to contemplate the work of God in saving his chosen race from sin and degradation. It is God that chose them before the world began its day and night; bringing forth in due season. This choice was not based on any foreseen merits in the creature. Had the creature been worthy of choice, his worthiness would have abregated the necessity of a choice. By the grace of our Lord, it is our desire to take this irrefutable position, that the creature was without merit when God beheld him in his eternal wisdom before the world was formed. Even now they are as helpless as they were when he looked on them. Thus they were chosen in a safe place, and in a place of eternal righteousness. If I know my poor heart, I am glad that he did not choose them and leave the building of a house to them. There is a laboring in the Lord, laboring in the kingdom of him that has called us out of darkness into the marvelous light, but any laboring for the purpose of building or of keeping the kingdom of heaven is vain. When the blessed Saviour declared his purpose in building a church, not a word did he say about any help. This word does not mention anything about any intermediate agency in the establishing

of this house in the top of the mountains: he does not hint that the Lord is liable to need any help. I have never had any desire to ascribe honor to any man for this wonderful work, either in the beginning of that building or the keeping of it. I hope the dear Lord has given me a desire to comfort, rebuke, reprove in this kingdom, but that not the first thing of it is to purchase blessings beyond those that the Lord procured for us in his offering of his own body on the tree of the cross.

I have not been very apt in the water, but I have found that floating is easy. Yet all that men can do is to float in smooth water. Water cannot be forced up hill without being enclosed in pipes, and this could never mean floating. But this house that is so high is easy for the children of God to get to. I do not mean that they can get there by just a little effort. I mean that the mode of travel is of the Lord and that it is such a wonderful way that they travel in perfect complacency and satisfaction. This house and this traveling is not limited to just the Old Baptists in some sense of the word, but as far as manifestation is concerned it is to them alone. It is all nations that flow unto this house, and I am persuaded that this is the people that Jesus redeemed when he ascended Calvary's hill. As they come to this church they are all just alike, and I am not very patient with the thought I have heard expressed by Old Baptists, that the German people are not worthy to eat anything we have in America. These people are cut down in the forest and each one of them is hewed and made ready by the cunning workmen. They are all floated in it and up hill. How wonderful it is as they travel the road or stream to that dear refuge of God's humble poor, how interested they are in one another and how they speak to one another about the home of the dear lambs of God. Come and let us go to the house of God is their greeting to one another. If this is not a good and precious thing in our lives, as children of God, what would it take to constitute a good and happy home in the Lord? Ah, dear child, do you not remember those first days when these things first became so precious to you. Not a time since then has it been any more pleasant to go to church than it was at that time. We were glad about our companionship, and we wanted to be with those whose minds were inquiring for the house of God. This house is made ready for Jacob and there is not a more fitting character in the Bible for our study than that of this poor pilgrim. I am not glad that I am a sinner and I doubt the propriety of saying such a thing. I am glad that the Lord came to save sinners and prepared a home for them to live in here in the world; that it was such sinners as was set forth in the life of Jacob; that it is called his house because he is the most helpless and dejected sinner the whole Book tells us about, and right at this time the only one referred to as being a worm. It is the habit of worms to cut down and destroy instead of building

up. This is exactly the way with Jacob; he will not do to depend on. It is not best to depend on any man, for their judgment is not to be relied on, having nothing better than the judgment of a worm. Furthermore, how long would Jacob have been in building a house? Was he not lost in the wilderness? And was he not just as lost in the desert as he was in the wilderness? Can a lost man build? No, for he is not interested in staying there, but in getting out. Would he not be as helpless without the presence of the Lord, after being found, as he was before? Then the only building that he would ever have in this place would be one that the Founder built.

Now we come to teaching and to walking. Oh, my brethren that we could some how come to an understanding about teaching and walking. We have spent so much time in throwing brickbats at one another about a thing that we know very little about. We cannot mention the teaching of God in an abstract way without running into somebody that calls our ideas antinomian. Well sir, it is the truth that God alone teaches. It is our main tenet of faith that all of God's children shall be taught of him. If we want to lose our identity let us imbibe the current arminian doctrine that men can climb up to God without any regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. But this teaching of the Spirit, works in his people a teaching of one another. Part of the work of the minister is to teach, but to say that he teaches by the volition of the creature, is running into something that we want to stay as far from as saying that men can, of themselves, know God. Yet when we say anything about this teaching that belongs to the ministers, then we run into another school of thought, and they are just as vehement in their denunciation of that being conditionalism as the other is of something being antinomianism. Our text is plain on the whole thing to me, and I hope if we cannot agree about its contents, that we may yet be blessed to have patience one with another. *"He will teach us" and "we will walk in his paths."* Is that something to spend time contending about? Isn't that consoling to you? Isn't that a wonderful God, for meditating on his glorious name? The teaching comes from God and our walking comes out of the teaching. It is not that we are taught and then we can later walk; but we walk as we are taught to walk. He teaches us to walk, not in the old paths of sin but in his paths. Are his paths the paths of sin? No sir, and I have just as much impatience with the thought, as I do that the creature can walk without the direct and compelling influence of God's Spirit. His paths are the way he has gone and the things that he has done. Left alone Peter went fishing, and all the others went along to keep him company and to make manifest how unable they were to tread the paths of the Lord. Fishing was an old path; and it was a path that belonged to Peter — in fact while he had on his own girdle he always went in those

paths, but when girdled by one mightier than he, he then went in the paths of the Lord. When left alone David could not walk in the paths of righteousness, but went right back to the paths of sin. The Lord loved David and, contrary to David's own feeling of right in the matter after he had been overtaken in his fault, he came and restored to him the joys of those days when he was walking in the right paths, and even enabled him again to walk there. I have been in the schoolroom with my little charges, trying to do that that had been enjoined on me. I never told my pupils how a thing ought to be done and expected any satisfactory results. I showed them; I taught them; I had them to do the thing for themselves. That is teaching; that is the doctrine, child, in this New Covenant promise under consideration. Did you listen at the understanding of the church under the law dispensation? *"He will teach us"* was the sum and substance of their doctrine. We are unable to learn anything without him. We are not able to walk without being taught to walk. Out of that teaching comes our every sermon, prayer, or anything else pertaining to the travel of the church in time. I want to be understood just here. I believe this is a promise for that future day when Jesus shall have finished the will of his Father concerning his mission in the world. It is a day that the children of Israel saw and longed for, and, while blinded to many things, they did not see that in some measure, at least, they were in possession of the substance of that day. My reason for saying that is found in the language of the prophet when he said, *"that unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given."* This would be called a short passage in some respects, yet it covers the whole gospel dispensation. This promise is sufficient to last from the time that Jesus left until he comes again. This is the only scriptural way that the church can ever be like her Lord and Master in time. It is when she can be found walking in his precepts and examples. We hear it said sometimes that a church is a live church. True, for he is teaching them, and that teaching comes right down into their every day lives. The life that they live, they live by the faith of the Son of God, and you could not have faith in God unless he taught you to have it. Here is the simplicity of the perseverance of the saints, of the church of God. He teaches you, and you are taught. What is it that he teaches you? He teaches you to walk. Where? In paths of sin? No sir, not that, and if I was called a conditionalist every moment of my remaining days on this vain and transitory globe, I'd still say as long as breath and accompanied strength remained that the Spirit of my glorious Redeemer has not led any man to sin. But, let abuses be mine to endure, and this world and its perishing cargo be all taken away from me, yet I must ascribe unto him my every step in this kingdom, be that step preaching, praying, singing, teaching, rebuking, reproving, or any

thing else pertaining to the travel of God's poor and afflicted people.

I want to hasten on to the time when the rebuked people shall go to the beating of their weapons into tools. I must cross somebody's opinion about this, for I know that we have people among us that believe in a future and coming millenium. I am not crossing your views to get an argument, but I want to state mine for the sake of my own brethren that made the request for me to write out what I saw in this text. We hear so much about this among the statesman of the day; that some time we will have things perfected where we can beat all our weapons into tools, and our government sometimes scrap quite a few as a gesture towards this beautiful picture. We have not done that yet but that the time soon came when we needed those things to defend ourselves against some enemy that had not yet gotten to the millenium. It will always be like that, because it does not have a shred of reference to such a time.

After this rebuke these nations (many people) shall beat their swords into plowshares. I think the Scriptures are plain on what a blacksmith is for. They had them in the olden days. The ways of a smith have not materially changed. To do much smithing requires much heat, especially in order to do much changing of an item from one thing to another. Now I think I know that God must kindle the fire that brings this needed heat. Not only must he kindle it but he must keep it fueled and lighted. People tell me that there is not a thing for the children of God to do. I do not believe a word of it. Please tell me that there is not any activity about the children of God. I do not believe a word of that fable either. I came into the world a natural man and so did all of Adam's race. We had it deeply imbedded in us that for Christ to win this world and keep it, he needed us. We have never gotten over that when the Lord called us to him, for we see that Peter thought it was necessary for him to fight with carnal weapons. But that material sword was sheathed, and that hateful, domineering, gutting, sword of his mind must be beaten. God did not say that I am going to beat the sword into a plowshare, but he said that they shall do it. They shall do it. And this is experience, this is the place when the Lord begins to work in you. Now dear saints you cannot help this fire being kindled, nor can you help taking this sword in your hands and take it to the fire. You need not be afraid little one, for you remember that you have another promise about handling deadly and poisonous things. This is God at work in you and he has made you willing to this beating. Oh, how trying the day when our sword is being transformed into a tool. We have liked this sword business right well. We liked the folly of war because we got much spoils in the conflict. Now in a glorious way we are brought to the place of beating, and having been born of God and given the

teaching and leadership of his Spirit, and a hope, which hope is Christ, it is in the personage of no less than the blessed Son of God that we do this beating of this sword and spear into a plowshare and a pruning hook. We are thus made to quit fighting to win anything, and put to work in a kingdom that has all things provided. The ground is good. The plants are the planting of God. The church is the place all this takes place in as far as manifestation is concerned. Here is where workmen are sent out to labor in the kingdom with the tools that we could not in ANY WAY escape having. Our work? It is plowing and pruning.

War? It is gone. Forever gone, precious thought. Not another lesson shall we ever learn. Not another time shall we ever lift up a sword again. Oh, that the Lord would keep this foolish, wandering heart of mine on the grand and eternal things of this kingdom, teaching me to walk, holding my weak and sinful hand in his, guiding, my tottering footsteps through all these changing scenes before us, enabling me by conquering, sovereign grace, to keep on approaching the consuming fire to the beating of this sword and this spear into the tools prescribed for the saints of God. Only by this sovereign grace, this kind, providential and parental care, will this poor servant, if a servant, be kept living at the feet of the dear children of God.

Elder W. D. Griffin

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2 TIMOTHY I. 13.

"Hold fast the form of sound words."

Amid the darkness and confusion of this present evil world, God's afflicted and poor people stand out as distinct from the world as an oasis from the desert that surrounds it. To the traveler in the desert the clear, refreshing water and the palm trees are greatly longed for and enjoyed, so the fellowship of the saints and the truth as it is in Jesus is what our souls crave in this wilderness world.

"Behold , how good a thing it is,
And how becoming well,
Together, such as brethren are,
In unity to dwell."

That there are two of us united, is to the praise of the glory of God's grace, for this is not a fleshly unity, a unity of man's devising, but a result of the work of God's Spirit within. If brethren are not dwelling together in unity it is because of the flesh. Not only is it necessary to be brought down and laid low, but we must be kept low in the dust, to dwell together in unity. It is only the mighty power of God that can make the leopard to lie down with the kid. Not only must we be brought low, but the living word must come to us, producing a living faith in us, which faith, being the gift of God, excludes boasting and teaches rather that every man look not upon his own, but upon the things of another. This faith also believes that God's word is true. *"Through*

faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." Thus faith receives and gives credence to the things recorded in God's word, believing God, even though in so doing it gives the lie to the opinions and gainsayings of all flesh. Opinions and ideas of men, be they ever so wise, have always been proven false when contrary to God's word. Men believe a lie, but it is God who has spoken the truth, so Paul saith to Timothy, *"Hold fast the form of sound words."* In Paul's day there were some for Paul and some for Apollos and some for Cephas. Thus some would hold fast to what Paul said, while others would regard Apollos as a man who would be safe to follow, while yet there were those who were positive that what Cephas advanced was sure to be sound. They were all, in so judging, prompted by a wrong spirit, and one need to examine himself, and brethren need in this day, as never before, to examine carefully and prayerfully those whom God has seen fit to raise up among them as elders. *"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."* It is the light that makes manifest, and when they testify contrary to the word, *"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."* Now there was a "FORM" of sound words that Timothy had received from Paul. It was the same form of sound words that Paul delivered to the Corinthians. (1 Corinthians xv.). It is the same that Jesus gave to his disciples when he sent them to teach all nations. *"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." — Matt. xxviii. 20.* In this form of sound words there is a simplicity, so that to the wise Greek it was foolishness. It is foolishness to many to-day in this wise world. May we not thank God if it is not foolishness to us? On the simple words of our Lord the church has been fed and sustained, as the Holy Spirit from time to time has blessed them to her, and she has desired no adding to nor taking from. There have been, and will be until the end of the world, those who, though brethren, oppose the form of sound words, and in so doing oppose themselves (2 Tim. ii. 25, 26), for their only hope is in the fulfillment of every word of God. Perhaps it is because of such men that the church has, from time to time, been forced to express herself in what are known to us as confessions of faith. Forced, we say, because of men who would not hold fast to the form of sound words. Such men have generally been self-seekers, having more thought for themselves than for the flock of God, and such are in the snare of the devil, taken captive by him at his will. How necessary to be vigilant, knowing that our adversary, the devil, as a roaring

lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom, saith Paul, resist in the faith. Eve, our first parent, fell to his snare, and it is easier, while in the flesh, to believe Satan's lie than to cleave close to the word of God. Fleshly men have always erred, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. The disciples, while Jesus was present with them, heard his words, and saw the miracles that he did, yet they did not understand, for they had not yet received the Spirit of truth. They needed their understanding opened, they needed the Spirit that moved holy men of God in old time, and when the Holy Ghost came upon them to dwell with them they understood and remembered the things he had spoken. They immediately began to preach the word, *"God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will."* Thus they were encouraged to "hold fast," and as time went on and evil men and seducers crept in unawares, mixing law and grace, denying the eternal sonship of Christ (1 John ii.22), and the resurrection of the body (1 Cor. xv. 12), denying the second coming of Christ, the end of the world and the eternal judgment (2 Peter iii.), the necessity for holding fast the form of sound words became more apparent. From the days of the apostles until now, there have been men, holy men, led by God's Spirit, who have contended earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, men after God's own heart, who preached his gospel faithfully, the whole and not a part. Such men always carried the sword (Matt. x. 34), and turned the world upside-down, and were called contentious, because they would be faithful to their God.

We mentioned above that churches were forced to declare their belief, in the form of confessions of faith, because of the twisting and denying of the word of God. It was a departure from the form of sound words that led to the Black Rock confession of faith in 1832, for many men and churches were departing from their former confessions of faith, and from the word of God. Of course these designing men thought that the articles of faith of their forefathers were not in accord with the Scriptures, so they were departing from them. The devil, as an angel of light, is very deceptive. If he appeared in his natural form he would deceive no one, but he comes with worldly wisdom and a feigned love, and often his greatest lie is that which has a part of the truth in it. Let us be careful, especially would I address the ministry at this time, let us be careful to hold fast to the doctrine of God our Savior, and remember that nine out of every ten troubles that come in the church come through the pulpit. If you want to poison a people poison their water, and whoever deals out sentiments and expressions contrary to God's word deals out poison. *"Preach the word,"*

was Paul's counsel to Timothy, but it must be in love to be preached aright. There is enough in the word of God that the man of God might be thoroughly furnished, and it is expected of a steward that he be found faithful. We would humbly cry, O God, make us and keep us faithful. It is not hard to be faithful in a truth in which the church is well established, as at present, with most of those with whom we correspond, there is no question about the new birth, and that it is the work of God that we believe on him whom he hath sent. There is very little dissent to the doctrine of predestination (and by this we mean the predestination of all things) among those of our fellowship. We rejoice that this is so, and that brethren are glad it is recorded in the word that it is by grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. We love to preach about the grace of God, and the church rests in the security that such doctrine, which is another word for the "sound words" of our text, gives when preached in love, and we sincerely feel that there are many other things in the "sound words" of our text, things we desire to present to our readers for their consideration. We believe in eternal and unconditional election and the final perseverance and eternal happiness of all the sons of God by grace, and we would hold fast to the form of sound words, sticking to the old landmark that our fathers have set, and here, as our mind is led, we would mention the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment. The Sadducees say that there was no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit. (Acts xxiii. 8.) We do not therefore feel that it is exactly right for any to be called Sadducees who do believe in the resurrection. We question if there are any of our brethren to-day within our fellowship who can be called by that name. Now while there are perhaps none that deny the resurrection, neither angel nor spirit, there are those, like Hymenaeus and Philetus, who believe the resurrection is past already, and there are those who believe that when we die we rise in Jesus' image to be forever with the Lord. There are, of course, those who claim they do not know, and so will not touch upon the subject; in other words, they will not hold fast the form of sound words. To believe that the resurrection of the soul from the condemnation of the law to the liberty of the sons of God, which is known and felt experimentally, is the only resurrection we shall experience, is virtually saying that the resurrection is past already, and such a view is wrong, for it denies the resurrection of the body. To believe that when we die, and the spirit returns to God who gave it, is the resurrection, is just as wrong as the former conclusion, for it is contrary to the form of sound words. There is a resurrection of the dead that is a bodily resurrection, or the question would not have been asked, "How are the dead raised up?

and with what BODY do they come?" and this resurrection is in the future, and the form of sound words says it will be at the last day. All died in Adam, and all must be quickened by Christ, and these characters who are quickened, who were once dead in trespasses and sins, when they die they die in the Lord. These are the ones who are spoken of by John: *"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."* They cannot die in the Lord unless they have lived in the Lord, and if these rise not, then Christ is not risen, but Christ is the firstfruits. There would be no need of the body of Christ to rise if the bodies of the saints shall not rise. We have the assurance of this, that Christ is risen because his Spirit is manifested within us, as we confess that the body is dead because of sin, yet his Spirit witnessing within us is not the spirit of bondage, but the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. We are in the likeness of Adam, but have within us the spirit of adoption which calls God our Father, yet groans under the bondage of corruption. *"The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the ADOPTION, to wit, the redemption of our body."* Thus what we have already tasted as the firstfruits in this spirit of adoption we shall enjoy fully when He shall appear and we shall be like Him. This resurrection of the body is in the future, yet Paul speaks of the dissolving of the earthly house of this tabernacle, and we would here state that dissolve does not mean annihilate. You may dissolve salt in water and it is still salt in a suspended form. Paul prayed a prayer of faith when he told the Thessalonians, *"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."* In the previous chapter Paul has given us the form of sound words when he says, *"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout." — Thess. iv. 16.* Thus adoption seems to be linked up with the resurrection of the body, and much more truth also is vitally connected with this cardinal doctrine, such as a judgment to come and the punishment of the wicked; that is, those who die impenitent. There is a resurrection to glory and a resurrection to damnation, therefore could we prove the annihilation of the body we could also prove that there is no future punishment of the wicked, whether they be devils or men. It is advanced by some that Christ's body did not see corruption and that the bodies of the saints do, therefore the bodies of the saints do not rise. If that be so, why did Paul assure us with "sound words" that the creature would be delivered from the bondage of corruption? and again, *"This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality"?* Why do men in this late day ignore God's word, or try to twist

it? The resurrection of the body cannot be understood by the natural mind. We know in this body we are dissatisfied, and never shall be satisfied until we awake in His likeness. Thus death is spoken of as a sleep, asleep in Jesus, or dying in the Lord, and we believe by the word of the Lord that those who are asleep in Jesus will God bring with him, that the dead in Christ shall rise first. We shall be changed. We are glad it says that. We want to be like him. We are not interested in this opinion or that, we are interested in the word of God and desire to hold fast to it. How much shall we know hereafter of what we have known here? We know in part now, we see as through a glass darkly, but we do learn here, by faith and love, songs of praise to sing above, and we feel that we could not sing the song of the redeemed unless we have some knowledge of what we are redeemed from and are redeemed to, yet the form of sound words says there will be neither male nor female, neither marrying nor giving in marriage.

We have tried to touch upon our subject, but how very much is left unsaid. May God bless all his servants to speak the same things, to be patient, and may the height of their ambition be to rightly divide the word of truth. We are confident that God's word will stand, and our unbelief will not change the purpose of God, but it may cause our brethren distress and bring confusion in the church we love. Let us hold fast the form of sound words in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus, and consider that what was given by Jesus to his disciples and preached down through time until the present day cannot be changed, but must be our testimony if we are what we profess to be. The church we serve calls for these things, confesses them in her articles of faith, the prospectus of the Signs, 1832, calls for these things, and we bless God that he in his mercy hath given us an understanding in these things, and we know by his word that they are true. We do not expect to make brethren believe them, but brethren will believe them, yes, every one who desires to stand or fall by the word of God. We do not know how the three Hebrew children could walk in the midst of the burning fiery furnace, or how Jonah could be in the whale's belly three days and three nights. You say the Lord was there, and that is enough. If our God could and did make the worlds which were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made by things which do appear, can he not at his voice and trump bring at once all his children forth to be forever with him in a world to come, where they shall be like him? Blessed be our God, we know he will, because his word says so. Let us, therefore, not only for our own peace, but for the peace of Zion, *"Hold fast the form of sound words."*

Elder George Ruston
December 1934

"All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."— 1 Peter i. 24, 25.

All flesh, and everything that springs from the flesh, and is connected with the flesh, is as grass, which, for a time, looks green and flourishing, but touched with the mower's scythe, or scorched by the midday sun, soon withers and fades away. Such is all flesh, without exception, from the highest to the lowest. As in nature, some grass grows thicker and longer than other, and makes, for a while, a brighter show, yet the scythe makes no distinction between the light crop and the heavy, so the scythe of death mows down with equal sweep the rich and the poor, and lays in one common grave all the children of men. You have seen sometimes in the early spring the grass in flower, and you have noticed those little yellowish "anthers," as they are termed, which tremble at every breeze. This is "the flower of grass;" and though so inconspicuous as almost to escape observation, yet as much its flower as the tulip or the rose is the flower of the plant whih bears each. Now, as the grass withereth, so the flower thereof falleth away. It never had, at its best state, much permanency or strength of endurance, for it hung as by a thread, and it required but a little gust of wind to blow it away, and make it as though it never had been. Such is all the pride of the flesh, and all the glory of man.

But is there nothing that endures amidst all that thus withers and falls away? Yes, the word of the Lord. *"And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."* Now, the same gospel which was preached by the Apostles is preached unto us in the word of truth which we have in our hands; and if we have received that gospel into a believing heart, we have received for ourselves that word of the Lord which endureth for ever. And thus, though all our own flesh is as grass, and all in which we might naturally glory is but as the flower of grass, and though this grass must wither in death, and the flower thereof shall fall away, when the place which now knoweth us shall know us no more, yet we have an enduring substance in the gospel of the grace of God, and, so far as we have received that gospel, and known it to be the power of God unto salvation, when our earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved,we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

J.C. Philpot

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 9 / 91 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the next session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Stump Sound Church, Onslow County, Holly Ridge, NC on October 12-13, 1991. All who believe and love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited.

The Church is located off US Highway 17 at Holly Ridge on Airport Road. Those coming from the North on US 17 turn left one block before the light and proceed approximately one half mile and turn left on Airport Road. The Church is approximately one half mile at end of the road. Signs will be posted.

Gene Lupton
Association Clerk

EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

God willing the Eastern Kehukee Association will meet with Williams Church near Leggett, N.C. on the first Saturday and Sunday in October which is the fifth and sixth. From Leggett take Rt. 44 West. Turn left on the first paved road. The church is about 1 1/2 miles on the right side. We invite all who are of like precious faith to come and visit with us.

M.W. Lupton, Clerk
Eastern Kehukee Association

GILLS CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH
Minutes of the Presbytery

Pursuant to the request of Gills Creek Primitive Baptist Church, County Franklin, a presbytery met July 13, 1991 at Gills Creek for the examination of brother Jack Walker, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Clarence Stone. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows:
Elder Larry Hollandsworth, Elder Noel Conner, Elder Clarence Stone, Elder Willard Cox and Elder Hale Terry.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Larry Hollandsworth as Moderator and Deacon Guy J. Holley as Clerk. Elder Willard Cox was chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Deacon Fred Murphy having been duly appointed

by Gills Creek Church in conference July 13, 1991, spokesman for the church delivered brother Jack Walker to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder Willard Cox and Noel Conner using scripture reference 3rd chapter of 1 Timothy. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Noel Conner. Elder Hale Terry delivered the charge to the candidate.

The Moderator asked Members of Gills Creek if the church approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to brother Jack Walker and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained Brother was delivered back to the church as an ordained Deacon of the Old School, Primitive Baptist Church at Gills Creek.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Willard Cox.

Elder Larry Hollandsworth, Mod.
Deacon Guy J. Holley, Clerk

Eld. Larry Hollandsworth
Eld. Hale Terry
Eld. Willard Cox
Eld. Noel Conner
Eld. Clarence Stone
Deacon Clyde Johnson
Deacon Posey Lee Poindexter
Deacon Grey Ingram
Deacon H. D. Ingram
Deacon F. W. Murphy
Deacon Guy J. Holley
Deacon Tiras Conner
Deacon H. Clay Brown
Deacon Grover Semones
Deacon Hansil Conner
Deacon T. G. Lovell
Deacon Harry Perdue

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union meeting will be held with Mt. Ararat Primitive Baptist Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in September 1991, the Lord willing.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Elder H.W. Wray, Moderator
Sarah Barker, Church Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will meet with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing, on the fifth Sunday in Sept. 1991 at 10:00 a.m. Preaching will begin at 10:30 a.m.

All Elders of our faith and order along with all lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Pastor
Brother Boyd Minter, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 1991

Mrs. Mabel Ray, NC $2.00
Walter F. Griffith, NC 2.00
Mrs. Fannie Wiles, VA 5.00
Mrs. Minnie L. Barrett, AL 5.00
Donald E. Ferguson, CAN. 12.00
Mrs. Leonard Key, NC 2.00
Nolan Lanier, NC 7.00
F. Mae Williamson, LA
In memory Norman & Fannie Pace
Willie Edd Pace, Alva Pace 100.00
Eld. John F. Simpson, FL 7.00
Marvin Fulton, OH 2.00
Mrs. A.W. Walker, NC 2.00
John T. Brooks, CA 2.00
Mrs. L.F. Kurpies, TX 2.00
Mrs. Ruby T. Gusler, VA 2.00
A.W. King, NC 10.00
Mrs. Ora Adams, VA 5.00

OBITUARIES

ELLEN WALKER BRUMFIELD

God in his infinite wisdom has called home our beloved sister Ellen Brumfield. We wish to bow in humble submission to Him who doeth all things well.

She died in Duke University Medical Center, Durham, N.C. after a six month decline in health.

Sister Ellen was born April 23, 1914, in Franklin, County, VA. She was the daughter of the late William Henry Walker, and Maude Adams Walker. She lived most of her life in the Mount Hermon Community of Pittsylvania County, and retired in 1980 after many years with Dan River Inc.

She was married to Brother Perrow A. Brumfield, who died June 26, 1962. She was the mother of Nancy B. Stow, who died Sept. 28, 1965. Sister Ellen joined Old Mt. Primitive Baptist Church, May 27, 1950, and was baptised with her husband, Bro. Perrow Brumfield, his mother sister Maria Brumfield, and his sister, sister Minnie Willis, by their Pastor, Elder W.R. Dodd.

Sister Ellen was a loving and faithful member, and loved by all that knew her, that was evident by the hundreds of people that attended her funeral.

She looked well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up and call her blessed. Her husband also, and he praiseth her.

She leaves to mourn their loss six daughters, Dorothy B. Emerson, Alese B. Cox, Vickie B. Yorbrour, Lois B. Crane, all of Mount Hermon, Jane B. Hawker and Lucy B. Haynes, both of Danville; one son P.A. Brumfield Jr. of Danville; four sisters, Evelyn W. Hall, Mildred W. Thomas, both of Danville, Mable W. Pascal of Ruffin, N.C. and Ada W. Pleasant of Purley, N.C. one brother, Jeff Walker of Dan-

ville, VA 11 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. The funeral was conducted at Barker Funeral Home by Elder H. W. Wray and Elder Danny Parker.

Her body was laid to rest by her husband in Highland Burial Park, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the glorious day when all the saints will awake with the likeness of Christ and be carried home to ever be around the throne of God to sing endless praise for ever more. May the family be reconsiled to his will, is our prayers.

Humbly Submitted,
Sarah Barker

BERTHA CARTER

Sister Bertha Carter, who was born in Caddo Mills, Texas, on September 22, 1892. She was called home on March 16, 1991, at the age of ninety-eight years, five months, and twenty-two days.

Sister Carter was the daughter of Henry E. Williams and Sarah A. Jones Williams. She was preceded in death by her husband, Brother Edward R. Carter, who was also a member of Saints Rest Church and who passed away on July 30, 1969.

Sister Carter united with Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas, on November 6, 1954. She was faithful in her attendance as long as her health permitted, which was almost up to the time of her departure. Sister Carter rejoiced in hearing the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and salvation provided in His blood and righteousness alone, by the free and sovereign grace of God. She freely talked of her hope in Christ and her love for the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things, letting her beliefs in these precious truths be known in her conversations.

She is survived by her son, Oliver G. Carter; her two grandsons, Major Keith Carter of the United States Air Force and James Carter of Celeste, Texas; her two granddaughters, Rebecca Carter of Los Angelos, California, and Theresa Dixon of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; and three great-grandchildren, and many nieces, nephews, and other relatives.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder C.C. Morris. Her mortal remains were laid to rest beside those of her husband in Simmons Cemetery by Mount Zion Primitive Baptist Church, Cash, Texas, to await the return of her Lord and Savior in that last great day. She is missed and will be missed by all who knew her.

Written by direction of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church in conference on June 2, 1991, with the direction that a copy be sent to her family, a copy sent to the Signs of the Times, and a copy be retained in the church records.

Elder C.C. Morris, Moderator
Deacon Dean G. Connell, Clerk

ARIZONA MOORE PHILLIPS

Arizona Moore Phillips was born on August 10, 1898 to Charlie and Serena Moore. She was married to Perry Phillips. She passed away January 20, 1991. She resided with her daughter, Miss Goldie Phillips of Louisville, Kentucky. She is survived by three other daughters; Mrs. Opie Phillips, Christiansburg; Mrs. Carrie Lester, Roanoke, and Mrs. Lillie Lester, Hardy. She is also survived by one son, Oden Phillips, Hampton, Virginia. Two sons preceded her in death, Lawrence and Clyde Phillips. She also had 14 grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren, and 5 great great-grandchildren. She was a member of Valley View Primitive Baptist Church and has been a member for more than 45 years. She was faithful to her church even though she had poor health in her latter years. While enduring many illnesses, she recouperated and attended church to hear the gospel. Her faith in God gave her strength. As the years passed, she became weaker and life seemed to be a struggle. Elder Raymond Goad and Elder Willard Cox conducted the funeral at Mayberry Funeral Home, Floyd. Her presence will be greatly missed by her family, friends and brethren. Written by request of Valley View Primitive Baptist Church.

In loving memory,
Naomi W. Agee
June 15, 1991

ELDER O.K. TENCH

As I attempt to write in memory of our dear beloved pastor Elder O.K. Tench, who was called home May 24, 1991, it is with deep sadness and an emptiness in our hearts. May God grant that we be exercised in the admonition that he always gave us when we had lost a loved one. *"Think on what you have had instead of what you have lost."*

We at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church have had a faithful and devoted pastor for 39 years. Faithful in that he was always there. There have been times I was not at meeting, and that other members were not there, but he was always there, even though he had to come almost 40 miles. There on Saturday night as well as Sunday, no matter what the weather conditions were. He would say *"you may not need me, but I need you."*

We have had a friend that would listen when our hearts were troubled. Also friendly to his congregations, telling them that they did him a service to come and listen to him. Always wanted to speak to all that attended the meetings.

We have had a peacemaker. *"Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God."* His prayer was sacrifice your feelings for the sake of peace.

We have had his fellowship and brotherly love for lo these many years. With so many blessings why should we grieve.

When he had the stroke back in February, I wanted to be reconciled to God's Holy will, but in my nature I would have liked for his health to have been restored. As time passed, I begin to realize there was very little possibility this would happen. It was as if God was preparing us for the realization that it wouldn't be long before he would be called home.

When the end came and I was notified, I was given to thank God, and felt He was gracious to take him out of his afflictions. Though he is sadly missed we feel he is resting in paradise, awaiting the day the King will say *"Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."*

Besides Elder Tench serving four churches, one of those almost 60 years, he farmed, raised cattle, and ran a one man sawmill operation. He preached hundreds of funerals. There were 13 Elders present at his funeral, five of whom he had baptized, and they conducted the service.

Other than the friends and members of the four churches he served, he leaves to mourn their loss, his wife Helen Bennett Tench, three daughters Betty T. Ellis, JoAnn T. Meeks and Darnell T. Barnes, one son O.K. Tench, Jr., one sisters and six grandchildren.

He was born Jan. 23, 1911, the son of Isham F. and Sally Campbell Tench, His funeral was held at Lynch Chapel in Rocky Mount, VA. Sunday May 26, 1991. Elders officiating were Raymond Goad, Julian Williams, Thomas Soloman, Marvin Brumfield, and Melvin Shelton. Interment was in Franklin Memorial Park. It was said by Elder Raymond Goad "here lies a man that preached what he believed (which was salvation by Grace) and believed what he preached."

His memory will always live in the hearts of the members and friends at Malmaison Church.

In loving memory,
Peggy Wells, Clerk

CARRIE NICHOLS THOMPSON

A dear sister in Christ, Carrie N. Thompson died March 12, 1991, after several years in a Salem Nursing Home. She was 95. On July 17, 1921, she was married to Joshua Walter Thompson, and to this union was born six children — Aileen St. Clair, Avis Beckner, Lois Hammond and Richard, Harding and Roosevelt, two sons, Richard and Harding proceeded her in death.

Sister Thompson also had eleven step children. She, along with five other candidates united with Paynes Creek Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by Elder Odell Thompson August 27, 1954. Sister Thompson was a faithful member and all felt a sweet membership for her. She loved her church and believed in the principles of the Primitive Baptist. She attended her church, and others,

as long as she was physically able.

Her funeral was held at her home church March 15, 1991 by her pastor Elder Hale Terry and Rev. John Ingram. Sister Thompson was laid to rest in Radford Cemetery. We miss her, but believe our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by Ora T. Nichols
Elder Hale Terry, Moderator
Sister Beulah Nichols, Clerk

GAY AKERS THOMPSON

It has been our Heavenly Father's will to remove from our midst another of our dear sisters in Christ, Gay Akers Thompson on May 28, 1991.

She was born in Floyd County, Virginia April 3, 1895. A daughter of Jeff and Della Cannaday Akers, and was married to Elder B. Odell Thompson in 1914. He preceded her in death in 1975.

Sister Gay united with the Primitive Baptist Church on Oct. 4, 1925. She was a faithful member, attending meetings and visiting in homes. She loved to talk on the scriptures and to sing hymns of praise. She often told the writer and her husband that she could sing with us all night and not get tired.

She is survived by a sister and brother-in-law, Irene and Ralph Vest, several nieces and nephews as well as Beloved Friends and Neighbors.

Funeral services were held Friday May 31, 1991 at the Salem Primitive Baptist Church (Head of the River) by her pastor Elder Hale Terry. She was laid to rest in Restvale Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord. We feel our loss is her Eternal Gain.

Written by request of Paynes Creek Church in their conference meeting on June 1, 1991.

Humbly submitted by,
Marie D. Cannaday

Elder Hale Terry, Moderator
Sis. Beulah Nichols, Clerk

CORRECTION

The fourth line on page 174 in the August issue of the "Signs" should read — lowly creature to behold. Please correct this in your copy.

Editors

MOVED OR MOVING?

To assure you of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES , INC .
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SAFELY HOME

I am home in Heaven, dear ones;
Oh, so happy and so bright;
There is perfect joy and beauty
In this everlasting light.

All the pain and grief is over;
Every restless tossing passed;
I am now at peace forever
Safely home in Heaven at last.

Did you wonder I so calmly
Trod the valley of the shade?
Oh, but Jesus' love illumined
Every dark and fearful glade.

And he came himself to meet me;
In that way so hard to tread;
And with Jesus' arm to lean on
Could I have one doubt to dread?

Then you must not grieve so sorely;
For I love you dearly still;
Try to look beyond earth's shadows
Pray to trust our Father's will.

There is work still waiting for you;
So you must not idly stand;
Do it now while life remaineth
You shall rest in Jesus' land.

When that work is all completed;
He will gently call you home;
On the rapture of that meeting
On the joy to see you come.

Sent to Dorothy Smith by a friend in memory of Dora L. Alverson who died Oct. 8, 1990.

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EDITORIAL

When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?

And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS

How wise and powerful were all of Christ's teachings to his people in the days of the Apostles, but no less today. ***Heb. 1:2 "Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."*** We don't believe Christ ever spoke an idle word or ever failed to accomplish it's intended purpose.

The question was asked to hear the response of his disciples, but he knew before what he had been called, as well as what their answer would be, because He is the Son of God.

We may hear similar answers today by an unbelieving world, if not in word, by implication. How many would say He is the Son of God, then deny He was born of a virgin or deny His Father is God. Who would say they believe in God, and deny He has come and has finished the work of salvation the Father gave Him to do. Who can say of all the Father gave Him He has lost none, but will raise all up at the last day. Can we say He is the Son and deny He is in perfect control of all things? Can a sparrow fall without him, are not every hair of the head numbered?

The world could not believe in the disciples day He was the Son endowed with all the power of the Father. The world does not believe it today, especially those along with many others that would take His name in vain. ***"But whom say ye that I am"*** I believe as Christ called

Peter by name, it was an example of being called by an earthly name, that part didn't really matter, to have revealed that He was the Son of God was to be blessed from above?

Today that knowledge can come from no other source. Jesus answered for *"flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."* Does that not dispute worldly wisdom ever teaching one to know God. Of all that saw him, listened to his teaching and beheld His healing power, just those that had this revelation, knew He was the Son of God.

We read "to know God is life eternal." If the world by wisdom can know God, then all have the ability to become Sons. Thanks be to that revelation from on high we know, to be a son we must be born a Son. John Chap. 6:44. *"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him and I will raise him up at the last day."*

What a blessing in every age to have a knowledge of God, he is a Son, he has finished the work, He is the Lord and will not, has not, and cannot change. He declared, *"For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. Malachi 4:6.* Therefore His people, chosen in Him before the world was, do know the Son, are embraced in His promises, and are the ones that make up that Church which He calls His Church built upon this rock, The Christ , the Son of the living God. What joy! the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. He didn't say there would not be trial, but never will prevail. His church is as safe as Christ, all surrounded by the love of God, awaiting that call home at His second coming Amen!

Hopefully,
Elder J.R. Williams

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 10 / 91 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

JOHN 3: 1-3.

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Shipman and Darlene,

I have had a mind to write before, during the fall meetings, but since we got home from Hopewell Association in Ala. last night, it seems I could think of nothing else.

The brethren at all the churches were mindful of your absence, as you could tell by the cards circulated among us. Its been many years we've had you in our home and our meetings, and I prepared for you this time, too. We know our comings and goings are already laid out by the Lord, and we try to be patient, and reconciled to his will, even though it is hard at times. I do hope you are convalescing nicely, and will soon be up and about your daily life in better health. I remember your writing a lovely, comforting letter to Cisco and me, when you had heart surgery before, and hope the Lord blessed your thoughts and mind, as then, through this ordeal.

At this time last year you visited me and the children in the hospital, as we waited by our husband and father, as he left the walks of man in this life. You especially were so comforting the day you spent with me when I was alone. I felt utterly forsaken, till God put it in your hearts to come in that morning, after Ned left. I knew you had driven those many miles to be with the brethren here, and yet spent those comforting hours with someone as forsaken and unworthy as I felt.

Maybe that is why my heart and mind have been on you, in missing our wonderful meetings this year; because I missed them all last year, and can sympathize with your longings to be among the brethren, in the love and sweet fellowship we have for one another.

My heart is most bursting with the feelings imbedded there the last two days, Sisters Clemmie Murphy (Bishop) and Marie Hicks, went to Ala. with Graydon and me. The communion was sweet among us as we rehashed the sermons, prayers and fellowship etc. on the way home.

We arrived at the home of Bro. Ronnie Graves about 8 o'clock Thurs. night and were treated royally there. Then to Pleasant Ridge Church Friday A.M. The drive was lovely, especially as we found the church at the top of this winding climbing hill. The others had been up there before but not at this church, so we all feasted on the beauty of nature.

The meeting was opened by Elder Lon Dee's welcoming speech. It set the stage for a lot of sweet, loving fellowship, and if I know my heart, I was blessed to "hear" the marvellous spoken words of the doctrine of grace as it was richly proclaimed by all his ministers there. Bro. Lon Dee's speech was more of an introduction to Elder Cabbage, who was appointed to preach the introductory sermon.

I feel that association in Powell Valley is richly blessed to have a gift like him, to oversee the flock of God. I was so uplifted during the whole meeting, I enjoyed every sermon and prayer, and the pretty singing. That afternoon Elder Niekirk went forward, followed by Elder Haygood. They both spent time in my home during our association, visiting with each other and hearing them after the meeting was over. I had the Niekirks here till Tues. I played Mary's part that day and enjoyed his fireside preaching, while Sister Niekirk prepared their clothes for the rest of their trip.

On Sat. in Ala. we heard Elders McCormick and Graydon that morning, and Elders Campbell and Cabbage that afternoon. I felt indeed as if "My cup runneth over." I enjoyed the prayers too. Everything seemed so peaceful and lovely, even providentially, the weather was perfect.

We had to come home yesterday for Graydon to fill his appointment at Ringgold, Mt. Olive Church, but my mind has been on the meeting back there. It has been raining all day, and I've been alone in body, but I am still rejoicing and feasting in heavenly places, which I hope are in Christ Jesus.

This has been the loneliest, most sorrowful year of my life. I have felt so forsaken and bare spiritually, until I felt he was clean gone forever. However, I have a hope that our God of mercy, blessed me to go to these meetings and gave me a hearing ear, so that I can rejoice again.

After my last surgery, Graydon and Dale took me to Florida, where we visited in the homes of Elders Niekirk and McCormick. Then in August I went with him to the Memphis meeting, and we spent the night in Elder Chapell's home. During the fall I've been to our own association, the one at Sulphur Fork in Texas and now Hopewell in Alabama. Also the fifth Sunday meetings at Ringgold, La., Hopewell in Winnsboro, Texas. Reflecting back I wonder why I ever murmer and complain, for I don't remember having become weary or disinterested in a single sermon. I should be on my knees in thankfulness to the merciful God who guided my feet to the these places of love and sweet fellowship, where the world and its wicked ways are shut out for a season.

I hope I have not bored you with my scattering thoughts, but felt the need to talk to some one, and chose you. I've missed you so at the meetings, and your visits here. May it be the Lord's will to restore your health and send you our way again soon.

The church folks around here are well as usual so far as I know.

In bonds of hope and love,
Ruby Barron

ACTS 15:18.

Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.

Feb. 28, 1990

Dear Brother and Sister Shipman,

I've thought of you in much love since the Sunday you came by Memphis on your way from Benton, Ill. and being with us at Church that night. I hope you all are well. I wish there were less miles between us all. I have just finished reading March Signs. It may be my age but it seems the warning or admonition in Elder Philpot's article was very timely. We are living in fearful times, but "All our times are in God's hands," David said. It seems T.V. and all the worlds are crushing in upon us. Everyone is too busy with things that are worldly, to have time to sit and talk of God and Godliness and of the Mercy He has shown us. So many doctrines are flowing through the land, radio's, T.V.'s, perhaps it has always been and God is not unaware of it. I try to pray and ask that He will strengthen and keep me in the Truth. I think I know how weak we are in nature — and except He keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. We are so few in number, but I don't believe there will be one child missing for whom Christ died. I love to hear Christ's name praised and His power proclaimed to the highest not man's. I must close — I am one of many words, and I wonder and fear at time, if they are like clouds without water. I have many fears. For I am such a sinner but there are such comforting words about the Fear of God. I hope mine is the right kind of fear. Somewhere one said "Come all ye who fear God and I will tell you what He has done for my soul. I live to hear ones tell how they feel the Lord has dealt with them. Rehearse the pleasing story over and over. Love is a powerful thing.

May His Love and Mercy rest upon us all.

Lucille Young

JOHN 1: 1-7.

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;

(For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

ARTICLES

EXPERIENCE AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY

Dear Brethren: feeling impressed to write some of my thoughts in childhood and youth upon the subject of death and religion, and at the request of many brethren to write my experience and call to the ministry, though feeling incompetent to the task, I attempt it. I was reared between two mountains of the Blue Ridge, where my opportunities were limited. I went to school only three months. No church was nearer than seven miles. My father and mother were Primitive Baptists. My mother's conversation on the subject of death brought solemn thoughts on my mind. On one occasion, at the age of five years, she was taken sick very suddenly, and looked down at me at her feet and said, "Matt, without a change I shall have to leave you, but I have hope that I will be with my blessed Jesus in heaven. Be a good boy, and it may be he will bring you to me." I left the room, but did not get out of her sight. An awful gloom arrested my mind. I felt that I wanted to do as she told me, for I loved her. I could not sleep — when I would retire at night, my mind being so concerned about dying, and being put under the ground. As I grew up to the age of nearly thirteen my mother was taken suddenly ill and in a few days passed away. She called the family to the bed and bade them farewell. When she gave me her hand she said, to me, "I am going to heaven, be a good child. The Lord will bring you where I am." She then sang, "Bright angels crowd around my bed, To carry me home when I am dead," and then passed away. But there was not power enough in her language to make me feel that I was a poor lost sinner. Something very strange took place with me a few months hence. On the 14th day of February, 1848, some of the larger children mortified my feelings, and the first thing on my mind was that I had no mother to comfort me. I went to her grave, and got on my knees to beg the Lord to send her back to me. While there I felt as some voice said to me, It is not my will that she should come to you. But I will bring you to her. I left the grave somewhat reconciled to my lot. I believed that there is a great God, and there must be a great change in me before I could meet him in peace, and that depended on the life that I lived. Many times under the fears of impending danger I would say, if the Lord would let me live I would live a better life. But as soon as danger was past I was the same in practicing the vanities of the sinful mind, but often troubled in mind about death, until about the age of twenty when it was suggested to my mind to not concern myself about religion — that it was an unpopular thing — that the world would slight

me. Wait until you are married. Then will be time enough. On the 18th day of January, 1855, I was married. I passed on in the delight of the world until the 16th of June 1855, when in my field about 1 mile from home, in a moment I felt that I was going to die, and eternal judgment was now what I dreaded. I left work and went to the woods to confess to the Lord what an awful sinner I was, and to beg him to let me live to get home. I returned to my work feeling a little relieved. But in a few minutes the same trouble fell on me again. I left and went home. I wanted to see my wife before I died. When I reached home she came to the door. Her appearance pierced me, for she knew I was a poor condemned sinner. I bursted into tears, and went to search for some secret place to try to pray. I did not want any one to know that I was in any such deep distress. I felt that I had committed the unpardonable sin, the day of grace had past, the door of mercy was forever closed against me. Sometimes my heart was so hard that I could not shed a tear, and yet I felt sensible that I was a dreadful sinner. In a moment I would be in tears and my cry was, Oh Lord have mercy on me, a poor sinner. When I would try to pray my words would seem to fall to the ground. I viewed myself to be so sinful that I became afraid to lie down for fear the Lord would smite me with death. At the same time the breathing of my heart was, Lord, Have mercy on me. I felt that I had some fatal disease that would soon take me away. I thought that every one knew that I was in this condition. I had not told any one, but condemnation must be visible to all. On the 16th day of September, 1856, about 4 o'clock in the evening, I was impressed with the attempt that I had made to pray, and my words did not go above my head and that Jesus was above all heavens. My words could not reach him. No comfort could I find, nothing but condemnation to me in the Bible, and oh that it had been my lot to live when Jesus was in the world, when I could fall at his feet and beg him for mercy, there might then have been some chance for poor sinful me; but wicked men have crucified him, and if I had been there I would have fought for him until I lost my life to rescue him, and thereby there might have been some chance for me. But in a moment I viewed him on the cross with his hands and feet expanded. I felt that I could hear the hammer driving the nails in his hands and feet, and the words sounded in my poor soul, Your sins helped to nail him there. My poor sinful body fell to the ground. I know not how long I lay there, but when my strength returned I went to the house. I wanted to see some of God's children. I loved them, and the great grief with me was that I had sinned against such a good and merciful God, and now to be cast off from him and his beloved children was more that I could bear. The next morning was Sunday. Mother Barnard was going to visit our house. I wanted to see her

come, and felt that I wanted to beg her to pray for me. When morning came I looked for her with eager desire. But when she came in sight with her two little twin boys in her arms, my beloved and much esteemed brethren E.M. and E.P. Barnard, I felt to be too great a sinner to be in her presence. I left and went to the woods remaining there for some time. In the evening I concluded that I would go with her, and help her carry her babies, and ask her to pray for her poor, wicked and sinful son. I went about three hundred yards when I suddenly felt that I was not worthy to be where she was. I made a moan, and she turned and looked at me. I handed her the babies and her looks at me sounded in my soul farewell, poor condemned sinner. I walked a short distance and fell to the ground. I wanted to see some way to be saved if it could be without God changing from his perfect holiness. I could not see how that could be. All that evening and at night when the sun set I bade farewell to it in feelings. I lay down that night, whether asleep or awake I know not. I viewed my life as a candle dazzling in the air. I felt that I was dying and called my wife, and told her that without a change I could not live, and not to sin against a good and merciful God as I had done. I begged her to go after her father and mother to come and pray for me. She cried aloud and said she could not leave, me, to go with her. I made arrangements to go, but was pierced with the feeling that I would commit a sin in disturbing those good people. I told her to lie down. I sat by the bed side, and walked the floor that night. When day broke I felt thankful that the Lord had let me live to see another day. I went to the woods to beg — remained till called to breakfast. I went to the table with my hat on to conceal my grief. I made an effort to eat, but felt that I was not worthy to partake of the smallest of God's blessings, and burst into tears, and left, and went to the woods again. I fell on my face, and wanted to be more humble. Oh that I had never been born was my cry. I wanted to be anything of God's creation but that sinner. I remained there until about 9 o'clock in the morning, when I felt to go in the field in sight of my wife for her comfort. When I come in sight of her she was looking after me. In a moment I felt that I was sinking, and turned to tell her that I was gone. But the burden was gone and I felt that I was changed soul and body. I cried, "as far as the East is from the West, so far hast thou separated me from my sins O God." There were a few minutes that seemed that everything was praising the Lord for his blessed salvation. But it was here, if the Lord has ever called me to the work of the ministry in these words, *"Blow the trumpet in Zion, sound an alarm in my holy mountain."* In a moment the depravity and helplessness of a sinner was presented to me. I cried Lord, I cannot do them any good. In a moment I sensibly felt and

saw that all power is in Jesus, and that every sinner that mourned on the account of sin would be not turned empty away. I stood amazed and wondered what it all meant. I went back to the woods to try to pray again, and when I got on my knees to beg as before, to my surprise I asked the Lord to pardon my sins, if he had not pardoned them. I was amazed at my request, so I paused, and aimed to leave out the if, but it was the same thing again, and I found myself praying for a lady relative who come out of a Methodist family. In less than two years she professed a hope in Christ, and joined the church. I loved the brotherhood. My soul was weighed with prayer, and supplication for sinners, and to try to comfort the mourner.

Owing to my impressions to preach I remained out of the church till July 5th. My distress during that time I cannot express. I concluded that if I would join the church that my mind in regard to preaching might be relieved. I joined at State Line, and was baptized on the 2nd Sunday in September by brother J. Lackey. When he raised me out of the water my soul leaped with joy. As I reached the bank the text again came with great force, *"Blow the trumpet in Zion, sound an alarm in my holy mountain."* It was of such weight that I burst into tears. I hope that I felt the unction of the Holy Ghost. We returned to the house, and at the close of the meeting there were eleven persons came and asked brother Lackey to pray for them. Among them was the companion of my youth who I hope had been in trouble for a long time. I returned home feeling joyful in part. But owing to my impressions I was cast down when I would view the perfect holiness of God, and compare it with my sinfulness, oh how I would shrink, and one scripture after another would come on my mind, *"Let the dead go bury their dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God."* Let me be where I might it was so. I was almost continually begging the Lord to send some other and release me. I was not eloquent, and had no learning, I roved in the mountain to try to ease my mind in regard to preaching, but could not. I think I have realized as loud preaching between my plough-handles as I ever heard. I lived in rebellion against my impressions to the sorrow of my soul. I could not help fearing that it was all imaginary, or Satan was thereby endeavoring to entangle me. I tried to beg the Lord to give me some sign whether he called me or not, and to take me out of the world rather than I should attempt to preach uncalled. Many times did I feel that death would be sweet to me.

When the war broke out I felt that I would rather go to the war than to the pulpit, for I would be in obedience to the law of my country, but could not know that the Lord had called me to preach. I believed the war would test the matter. If I was wounded I might know the Lord had not called me. I served three years and was not

wounded, nor even my cloths cut with a ball, but passed through many dangers. At Resaca, Ga., I well remember, in a charge on the enemy's work, my front man was shot dead, and a cousin on my right was wounded. The line charged to their works. They were firing on me from two ways while I was in a few feet of their breast-works. I believe that the Lord was with me. I feared no danger. It was one of the brightest times of my life. It seemed to be said to me, *"Fear not, no harm shall befall you, for you shall testify of me before many people."* I turned and looked each way, and I was alone. No man except one was on the whole line. I went back to the line, carrying with me a wounded companion, feeling humble and I trust meek. I felt from that time on if the Lord would let me live to get home that I would not rebel any longer. I reached home the first of April, 1865. Oh how thankful I trust I felt to meet with my family, and the dear children of God. Our meeting come off. The brethren, Arrington and Plasters, asked me on the stand, but the cross was too great. I wanted a greater sign to satisfy and confirm me in this great matter. On Sunday evening of our July Meeting, when I left the congregation, in my feelings, I bid farewell to them. I reached my father-in-law's. I felt that the Lord was going to kill me for my disobedience. There was a time I was unconscious, I know not how long. But the first I knew old mother Barnard was consoling my wife in her humble manner, telling her there was no danger of my dying until I had filled my course in the ministry. I reached home that night feeling feeble. I lay down on the bed; my companion standing by me. I was begging the Lord to tell me what my duty was, and I would obey. Oh what vehemency, oh what desire of soul and mind I felt—that I could not live. In a moment I viewed Jesus and the apostles in the kingdom of glory. In a moment I viewed the obedience of them to the fulfillment of the Father's will. I realized my disobedience so sensibly that I was not worthy, and the scripture came again, *"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, sound an alarm in my holy mountain."* I cried aloud and said, "Lord, let me live, and if thou wilt give me one word to say, let it be to the glory of thy name." The next meeting came, I went on the stand with a heavy cross, begging the Lord to convince me by the feelings that followed my labor. After talking some minutes I sat down, and I think I felt as pleasant as I did when I received my hope.

I want to relate two events that I have passed in my ministry. On Friday night before the second Sunday in November, 1865, I dreamed that I was south of my house, standing on the bank of a beautiful stream of water. Some distance in front I saw six beautiful men walking on the water leaning on staves in their hands, and drawing a net having seven wings. One staff there was no man by it. I was taken up and carried,

and my hands placed on it, and it seemed to carry me with ease for a short distance, when I became weighty. I let loose, and I fell into great distress. The next morning I left for State Line where I expected to meet with Elder Cassell and Lackey on a funeral occasion. I met brother Lackey and attempted to preach, and I felt well a few minutes, and stopped in a few minutes, an awful dread came on. I went with brother Lackey to the widow Hill's the wife of Elder James Hill, to attend some funerals on next day. My distress that night I cannot tell. My wife and three children I felt would perish if I did not return and provide for them. About 9 o'clock next morning I parted with brother Lackey in the yard in tears. He went one way and I another. I started to the hills of Dan River to stay till the meeting was over, and then to return to my poor wife and children, to try to care for them and never try to preach any more. I went to the river hill, and looked for the most comfortable place, as it was cool. I made an effort to go, and fell on my face, and felt that I should die. I begged the Lord to let me go home to my poor wife and children and care for them. While there I viewed my wife and the three children between the heavens and earth with a wreath of light around them, and it was said to me, in my soul, *"Let the dead bury their dead. Go thou and preach the kingdom of God. I will sanctify your labor to their support."* I arose reconciled, and went to the house, and met with brother Lackey. We burst into tears and he said to me, "Brother Blanset, you can't get out of the bounds of God's power, go on and preach." I willingly went, and felt in my labors that surely I was not in this sinful world.

Just one year after the church at Bell Spur liberated me to exercise a public gift, they licensed me to preach; and the second year, to a day, they ordained me. I felt that they were too hasty, and that they were putting me under greater responsibilities than I was able to fulfill to the glory of God and the good of the church. But the Lord, I hope, has been my only trust, both in preaching and the administration of the ordinances in the church. But owing to the perverseness of my human nature, it all seems to have been imperfectly done. And, were it not for the evidences received in my labors in preaching and baptizing, and for the dreams and visions of those whom I esteem as being the children of God, I should have sunk in despondency long ago.

I have served five churches as pastor and have baptized three hundred and forty-five persons; and the most of them have expressed in their experiences, in some way or other, some relation to me or my labors. I now have the care (in the true sense I hope) of four churches. I never would accept the care of a church till it had been made known to me that the church was a unit in

the choice made.

Oh, what a joy and consolation we find when we meet all of the brethren and sisters in peace and fellowship, filling their seats and manifesting their love, one to another. But how discouraging it is to find them in confusion and striving one against another. These things ought not to be.

I will now relate one of the most consoling and blessed seasons of my ministerial life. My only son, who was afflicted with a serious lung trouble, and the lord having blessed him with a good hope, sent to me, on Saturday of our July meeting, to have preaching at his house that evening; and that he wanted to see all of the church. He had not been able to speak for sometime above a whisper. So I made the appointment and served in preaching, and when I closed he said, "Pa, I want to talk to the church, if I can be heard. The church assembled about his bed; and, in a few minutes, he received strength in speaking so that those in the yard could hear him. The brethren sisters united in singing "Amazing Grace;" and then my dear niece, that we raised, Molly L. Hall, became so wrought upon by the Spirit that she came forward and was received. It was a time of inexpressible joy realized by all that were present. The next Sunday meeting was set for their baptism. When the time came, my son had not stood alone for about five weeks. Some of the brethren visited him in the morning and gave up all hopes of him being able to go to the church. He said with power, "I want to go to meeting." He arose from his bed and walked alone to the door, and they put him on a buggy with his father-in-law, Brother Simmons. When I met him he was looking very feeble, but was strong in the faith.

After a joyful service at the stand, and after hearing the experience of Brother Ambros Jessup, I said to my son, "Do you want to be baptized?" And he answered, "I do." He was lying on a spring couch, and they picked him up and, as he was being borne to the water, the brethren and sisters sang; and it seemed, to me, that their singing entered heaven, while the holy unction from the blessed Lord filled my soul.

Brother E.P. Barnard helped me carry him, with several others into the water, and I baptized them all, four of old Brother Sanders Jessup's children and a daughter-in-law were of that number. That was one of the most heavenly days of my life.

I have now given some of the reasons why I hope the Lord has called me to the ministry, and some of the blessed seasons that I have enjoyed, which have encouraged me to continue to labor for these forty-five years. I have merited none of the blessings of God; and can truly adopt the language of Jacob, who said, *"few and evil have the days of the years of my life been." — Gen. 47:9.* I only live by hope. For over fifty-six years election, predestination, sanctification, and the holy calling, unmerited by the sinner, has been

my meat and drink, believing it to be the doctrine of Christ and the apostles.

I have given some of my reasons for trying to preach, and would say to all, who may profess a call to the ministry, that they should weigh their impressions by the scriptures, and take the advice of Paul, who said, *"Study to show thyself approved unto God a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."*

Yours in hope of eternal life,

Elder James M. Blanset
Mayberry, Va.

PSALM 119 : 73-80.

Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments.

They that fear thee will be glad when they see me; because I have hoped in thy word.

I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.

Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy servant.

Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for thy law is my delight.

Let the proud be ashamed; for they dealt perversely with me without a cause: but I will meditate in thy precepts.

Let those that fear thee turn unto me, and those that have known thy testimonies.

Let my heart be sound in thy statutes; that I be not ashamed.

TOTAL DEPRAVITY

Webster defines this word as follows: "Crookedness, perverseness, the state of being depraved or corrupted; a vitiated state of moral character, want of virtue; extreme wickedness; absence of religious feeling and principal."

The above definition is in line with the Bible teaching. What then says the Apostle, are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under sin; so it is written there is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seek after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open Sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and misery are in their ways, and the ways of peace have they not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes. They have no ears to hear what the Spirit sayeth unto the churches. There is no soundness in them. Destitute of will and power to serve God, cannot come to Christ except the Father draw them. And all the Father gave Christ shall come to him, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

EXPERIENCE

I was born in the mountains of the Big Sandy River section, on August 3rd, 1869. In this birth I was born of natural parentage, born to die. In August 1914, I was born of a spiritual parentage, born a new birth, and born to live forever. At that time I did not know anything about the Old School or Primitive Baptists. I really thought all denominations that professed to be christians were right. There was an old Methodist preacher, a very pious old man, who lived close to me. I wished to be baptized so this old gentleman baptized me. I began to read the Bible every day, and read it prayerfully. I made a vow to my God that I would take his word for my guide. Soon after I commenced reading the Bible I found that the Methodist brethren and I were far apart, and at this I became troubled. At last I heard a United Baptist preach. I thought he and I agreed, so I joined the United Baptist denomination, was duly baptized and remained with them about ten years. I kept on reading and studying the Bible and contending for the truths I could see that it taught. They soon began to call me a "Hardshell." I dearly loved those people I had lived with so long, but how can two walk together except they be agreed? (Amos iii. 3.) At last I heard a Primitive Baptist preach, and he preached my belief so completely that I was convinced I was one of them, and that they had the true doctrine of the Bible, and that the world cannot overcome, so I am at last firmly settled on the following faith concerning eternal life. It may even be too hard for some of the Primitive Baptists.

The first points we will notice will be regeneration and conversion. A number of our preaching brethren say they both mean the same thing, but I do not understand it that way. The God that I believe in and worship is a God that knew all things; purposed all things in Christ Jesus before time began; never made a failure; never was defeated; never tries to do anything, but speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast; one who does his will in all things.

The difference, as I understand it, I will endeavor to set forth as follows: First, regeneration, or the new birth, or the new creation, or becoming a new creature, is the work of the Holy Ghost, in which a vital change is wrought in the heart of the individual, is the implantation of eternal life in the soul by the operation of the Holy Spirit, for no man can turn himself to God. Regeneration is a passing from death unto life. It is purely spiritual life implanted in the heart. I think much confusion of mind and the consequent error of statement often result from giving the same meaning to regeneration as to con-

version. Regeneration is the creative work, and means to quicken, to be born again, or to give eternal life. Conversion should be used with reference to change of mind, views, intentions or purposes. Men may be converted from one error to another, from error to truth, or from truth to error, for the process is only mental and is generally accomplished by persuasive arguments or evidence (or what is accepted as evidence, be it either good or bad) which they may receive from others, or from their own meditations or reasoning; but regeneration is accomplished only by the direct work of the Spirit of Almighty God in the soul of man when it is entirely destitute of even a spark of spiritual life. The soul, or spirit, of man is entirely passive in this miraculous work, and no earthly hand or influence can possibly aid or assist in the least. So while there are earthly means used in conversion, nothing but the heavenly means of divine power can regenerate men. In their vanity and blinded zeal, men are compassing land and sea making proselytes, but are entirely powerless to give a single one of their converts a new heart or spiritual life. Exhortations, persuasions and arguments may, and very often do, change the mind, but such feeble means can never change one from nature to grace, for that is a radical change. A change of mind or intention is very far from giving life to the dead. Regeneration makes no vital change in the flesh, but in the spirit. There is nothing in the flesh made holy. Conversion may in some respects be called a moral act, but regeneration never is. Exhortations to morality and right living are certainly commendable, but regeneration is not a duty, for men are not commanded to be born again. Men may justly and sincerely thank others who have converted them from errors of any kind, but they should always be very careful to give all glory and honor to the blessed God for the gift of eternal life. If God has through his mercy and pity made one to be partaker of his grace and called him out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light, that one should give God alone the glory and praise for it, for he alone can do it. Men with all their zeal and monied efforts cannot in the least assist the gracious Lord in the genesis of spiritual life, and they should not undertake that which is positively not within their ability to do, for their labors are only destined to failure. Men may aid others to acquire knowledge of many things that may come within their knowledge and ability, and this certainly in many respects is commendable, but they can in respect aid in the giving of life, which work is far above all earthly powers. They may teach the head or cultivate the intellect, but they absolutely cannot change the heart. They may even teach the gospel in the letter of it, but they cannot convey the spirit of it. It surely is an awful delusion to think that the training of the natural mind or the giving

of intellectual knowledge of Jesus Christ is the means of making people His children. If all of any one's knowledge of the blessed Savior is but historical, intellectual or head information, where has he any more valid claim of a better faith than the devils? (Mark i. 24-34.) So if mere intellectual knowledge alone would make one wise unto salvation the devils should have some claims, for they told Christ that they knew him. But they did not know him as the saints do, for it is most surely through the work of free and sovereign grace in regeneration that any one has a saving knowledge of that glorious and blessed Redeemer. God alone has the power to work such knowledge in the heart. Saving faith that trusts and relies upon him alone is the work of his Spirit. The devils never possessed the least particle of this kind of knowledge, neither was salvation ever designed for them. Head knowledge without heart influence will rather lead from God than to God, and to have the understanding convinced, while the heart remains unregenerated, is among the most awful delusions of the present day. There is no doubt but that in point of mere knowledge the devils themselves know more of Jesus Christ than many of his dear children, for we read that when Christ was upon earth the devils came out of many crying out, and saying, We know thee, who thou art, the Holy One of Israel. But what was their knowledge? They knew him in a way of his own eternal power and Godhead, but not in a way of salvation. They knew him as the Savior of his redeemed, but not as their Savior. Devils they still remained, and devils they must remain forever. The natural birth gives no right to grace. The church of Jesus Christ is composed of real regenerated believers. All who join the church of Jesus Christ without this qualification only constitute what may be called a nominal church. Grace when renewing the soul makes no alteration of the flesh. The body is wholly a mass of flesh and blood and bones, and it remains carnal. All its pursuits, desires, affections and appetites are suited to its nature, and it daily tends to corruption, so grace makes no change in this part of our nature, neither was it ever intended to. The original sentence at the fall of Adam must be executed: Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. (Gen. iii. 19.) Hence, it is to be sown at death a natural body as it was first formed in the Adam nature of our creation, but by virtue of our redemption by Christ it will be raised at the resurrection a spiritual body. This is to form the triumphs of Christ in raising our vile bodies to be then fashioned like his own glorious body. This is what the apostle calls the redemption of our bodies, and which they who have the firstfruits of the Spirit wait for. (Rom. viii. 23.) But in the meantime a corrupt, sinful body, whose whole tendencies are corrupt, cannot but be in opposition to the renewed part of the child of God, who by

regeneration is wholly spiritual, being quickened, which was before dead in trespasses and sins. It is no wonder, therefore, that in a constant warfare between the two opposing natures of the child of God that he should go mourning. How shall it be otherwise, when a man's own nature is everlastingly opposing his own soul? The flesh lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit lusting against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. (Gal. v. 17.) The doctrine of regeneration, namely, that God by an instantaneous act imparts spiritual life to the sinful soul without its cooperation or assistance, so that the new birth is not dependent upon or conditioned upon the act of man, but that he is born, not of the will of the flesh, nor of blood, nor of the will of man, but by the will of God. (John i. 13.) Again I state that regeneration is the solemn, holy and instantaneous work of God by the Holy Ghost in the soul, and our will or inclination has no more to do with it than the creation of a world, or or bringing ourselves into existence. It is the God of heaven that works it by his power. Religion to be worth anything must be a living religion, a religion that proceeds from a work of grace upon the heart. Regeneration, or the new birth, by which we experience a change of heart, is to be distinguished from baptism, which is an external rite, though some have confounded them as the one and inseparable thing. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. (Ezek. xxxiv. 26.) So it is a new creature, not merely a new opinion or a new name. I am sure that if our religion has never humbled us it has done nothing for us, but has left us where it found us: in nature's pride and ignorance. The supposition that the Spirit is begging, beseeching and wooing sinners to become saints, but because of weakness it is dependent upon the sinner for success, as often is pictured out, is certainly dishonoring to God. The powerful hand of God is too often overlooked in this vain and fashionable showing, of too much use for the weak and puny hand of man. While the apostle Paul writes the Thessalonians to quench not the Spirit: but as they were already church members, such exhortation must have been intended along the line of obedience suitable to them in that position. Paul was not addressing alien sinners, or unregenerate characters. While I think it possible for those born again to quench the prompting of the Spirit, at least to some extent, I fail to see how the unregenerate can do so, for they are sensual, having not the Spirit (Jude 19), and so of course can have none of the Spirit in them to quench. I believe in the doctrine of election by grace, and that God chose a definite number in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world and ordained them to eternal life and glory. This choice being wholly unconditional upon their part. I believe that Jesus

Christ was set from everlasting as the Mediator of his elect people, and that in the fullness of time he took upon himself a perfectly sinless body and nature, and in that nature and body he suffered and died in the room and stead of his elect only, and that he thereby obtained eternal redemption for them. I believe that sinners are justified before God only through the gracious imputation of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. I believe that God's elect are born again, or regenerated from a dead state of trespasses and sins (or spiritually lifeless state) by the Holy Ghost, and that all shall persevere through God's grace unto eternal glory. I believe there will be a resurrection of all the dead, and the joys of the righteous and the misery of the wicked will be everlasting. I believe that the gospel is to be preached publicly as a statement of the truth and as a witness of Jesus Christ, for his praise and for the comfort and instruction of unregenerated persons, but I deny that it is an offer of salvation to the unregenerate or that it contains any obligation for them to believe that he is their personal Savior. Many errors arise from wrong application of the Scriptures, because they are, with few exceptions, addressed to and therefore should be applied to the people of God, those quickened, or born again, and who alone are given ears to hear and hearts to understand. The power of preaching can reach no further in a spiritual sense than to instruct, comfort, cheer and encourage the weak, wounded and needy sheep of the Lord. We positively have no command to make, sheep, nor to assist the Lord to do so. The church should not be considered some kind of a workshop where children of God are made, for out of such an opinion will grow a false zeal that will lead to many erroneous practices.

In the conclusion of this article I wish to repeat the answer to the statement that heads this letter: Why I am a Primitive Baptist. It is because they are the only ones I ever heard or read after who take all of God's word and explain it in a way that all the wisdom of this world cannot contradict it. My reason for writing the foregoing article is that I might lead one of Christ's little ones from error. Do not for a moment think that I believe it might save one from eternal destruction. Far be it from me, for I believe that the salvation of all who will ever be saved was made secure when Jesus said, "It is finished," and all the gospel preaching, writing, praying and every other effort made by mortal man will not add one to that redeemed number that Christ redeemed from hell on the cross. Christ's precious blood redeemed all his people, and his finished work is being manifested in his dear children, and will continue to be until he comes to take them home.

I do not want any one to think I do not believe in good works, for I believe in them as much as any one can and stay within the Bible, but I do

not believe in works in the way of saving the soul. I believe that good works spring from salvation, and not salvation from good works. Good works are only the result of salvation, the fruits. I have not said much in this article about good works, as I have been considering the doctrinal side of the great question. A great number of preachers will tell you that if you will perform certain conditions Jesus will save you. There are absolutely no conditions in eternal salvation.

I will now bring my remarks to a close, hoping that at least some one who reads this will compare it with the "Thus saith the Lord," and if it is not contradicted by God's word it will stand until judgment day.

Your weak brother in the Lord, I hope,

William Branham.
Hitchins, Kentucky

"But we see Jesus." — Hebrews ii. 9.

Did your eyes ever see him? Do look into conscience — did your eyes ever see Jesus? I do not mean your natural, your bodily eyes; but the eye of faith, the eye of the soul. I will tell you what you have felt, if you ever saw Jesus. Your heart was softened and melted, your affections drawn heavenward, your soul penetrated with thankfulness and praise, your conscience sprinkled with atoning blood, your mind lifted up above all earthly things to dwell and centre in the bosom of the blessed Immanuel. Do you think, then, you have seen Jesus by the eye of faith? Then you have seen the perfection of beauty, the consummation of pure loveliness; you have seen the image of the invisible God; you have seen all the perfections and glorious character of the Godhead shining forth in him that was nailed to Calvary's tree. I am sure such a sight as that must melt the most obdurate heart, and draw tears from the most flinty eyes; such a sight by faith of the beauty and glory of the only-begotten Son of God must kindle the warmest, holiest stream of tender affection. It might not have lasted long. These feelings are often very transitory. The world, sin, temptation, and unbelief soon work; infidelity soon assails all; the things of time and sense soon draw aside; but whilst it lasted, such, in a greater or less degree, were the sensations produced. Now, if you have ever seen Jesus by the eye of faith, and ever had a tender affection going out toward him, you will see him in glory. But you will never see him in glory, if you have not seen him in grace; you will never see him eye to eye in the open vision of eternal bliss, unless you have seen him now upon earth by the faith of God's elect in your heart.

J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

THE PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The Pleasant Valley Association will be held at Shepherd Fold Primitive Baptist Church, 815 Little York Road, Houston, Texas 77060. Commencing on Friday, the first day of November and ending on Sunday, the third day of November. All lovers of the truth are invited. For directions, call O.P. Murphy, (713) 649-5779, or Marvin Curnutt, (713) 987-0250.

Marvin Curnutt
Church Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 1991

Mrs. Frances Townley, AR
Memory Eld. John C. Townley....5.00
Mrs. Amy Heppler, AZ 7.00
Charles F. Stewart, NC 7.00
W.C. Lake, FL 2.00
Mrs. Nannie W. Wiggins, NC 2.00
Mrs. Celeste S. Welch, NC 2.00
Mrs. Vivian Underwood, VA.....2.00
Mrs. Ernestine Sharp, LA 7.00
Walter L. Thomas, LA 2.00
Mrs. Joel S. Alexander, AL.....7.00
H.C. Brown, VA.....2.00
A Sister, NY 2.00
Jesse A. Ramsey, VA.....2.00
A Friend, NC 12.00
Mrs. Pattie Krewatch, DE.....20.00
Mrs. Ida Taylor, MD.....10.00
Alpha Sears, OH.....2.00
Charles V. Kirkpatrick, TX
Memory of wife Mrs. Kirkpatrick ...100.00
L.W. Nichols, VA.....2.00
Eld. James C. Young, NC 7.00
G.W. Carter, NC 2.00
Mrs. Lessie W. Tilley, NC.....5.00
Joseph C. Henry, MA 5.00
Mrs. Mary E. Poff, VA 4.00
F.J. Plaster, VA 2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER MILDRED EASON

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write a Resolution of Respect for Sister Mildred Eason.

Sister Eason was born on May 20, 1926 and died on June 19, 1991, making her stay on earth 65 years. She was married to Elder Lester Eason and to this union were born seven children who survived her. Sister Eason was blessed to have a good family that loved her and stood by her to the end.

Sister Eason joined Williams Church in 1967 and was a strong believer of Salvation by Grace. She knew everything was in the hands of her God and that is where she put her trust.

Sister Eason worked on a public job for many years and had made

many friends during this time. To know her was to love her.

Written by John Coker as requested by order of August conference meeting.

Elder Henry Jones, Mod.
Sister Lovie Thompson, Clerk

ELDER WILLIAM W. FLEET

Elder William W. (Bill) Fleet passed away on May 3, 1990 at the age of 86 years and 13 days. Brother Bill Fleet was born on April 20, 1904 in Dickson, Tennessee, his parents were Dave W. Fleet and Victoria Jones. The family moved to Gladewater, Texas in 1910, which has been Brother Bill's home most of the time since. Elder Fleet was married to Miss Euna Ramey on February 16, 1924 (were married for over 66 years). Three daughters were born of this marriage: Grace Nail (passed away in 1975), Jewell Dooley of Gladewater, and Carolyn Fleet of Irving, Texas. Brother Fleet had one brother and three sisters who survive him, five grandchildren, fifteen great grandchildren, one great grandchild, and a host of nieces and nephews.

Brother William W. Fleet and wife Enua joined the Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church at East Mountain in 1951 where his father who died in 1934 had been a deacon and his mother was still a member (she died in 1952). Brother and Sister Fleet moved their membership to Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, Weslaso, Texas sometime in 1955 and he was liberated to speak in the same year. On 4th Sunday in December 1955, Brother Fleet was ordained to the full work of the ministry. In January 1956, he was called as assistant Pastor of Shepherd Fold Primitive Baptist Church, Houston, Texas and became pastor in December 1956 at the death of the pastor. Elder Fleet served this church through 1961. After this, he was very active in Mt. Olive and Mt. Zion Churches for several years. In the later part of his ministry, Elder Fleet due to poor health was normally only able to go to his home church of Fellowship.

Elder W.W. Fleet was a strong predestinarian minister. He preached a God who was first, last, and only in the salvation of his people. Brother Bill believed in a sovereign God who has all power in heaven and earth and has declared the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure (Isa 46:10). Elder Fleet believed in the predestination of all things.

Elder William W. Fleet's funeral was conducted by Elder Loyd Wall, assisted by the writer at the Stone-Goodwin Funeral Chapel, Gladewater, Texas with the burial in Union Grove Cemetery.

Written by one who loved him,
Elder Gerald D. Shipman

MARVIN HILL HOUSTON

On June 16, 1990, it pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst our dear Brother Marvin Hill Houston. He was born on January 23, 1915 near Beulaville, North Carolina, where he grew up and married Mary Lee Kennedy. To this marriage were born two sons and six grandchildren. Brother Marvin was the son of the late Thomas J. and Mamie Q. Houston, both of whom were born and grew up near Beulaville, North Carolina. Brother Marvin's church membership was, with Hancock Primitive Baptist Church near Ayden, North Carolina, pastored by Elder Joseph Sawyer. Brother Marvin was a faithful member and Deacon, who professed to and gave evidence of a belief in Salvation by grace and predestination of all things. He was much loved by all his brethren who were of that same faith and order. Brother Marvin was 75 years old at his death. The love I had for him grew from what he was enabled to manifest of God having worked upon and within him while I was in his presence. Surely I have missed and will miss him, but not as one without hope, for I remember where it was and is spoken, *"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints,"* and surely his spirit is in the presence of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Written at the request of his companion Sister Mary Lee Houston, and friend, Troy G. Shepard.

NETTIE PAGE RICE

It is with a very sad heart we had to give up a dear and beloved Sister, Nettie Page Rice.

Sister Rice was born December 13, 1897, in Pittsylvania County. She was called away March 22, 1991, at age 93. She was the daughter of Albert Edgar Rice, Sr. and Maniza Page Rice. She was survived by two lovely sisters, Susan Ema Rice and Mary Elizabeth Rice. She had two brothers, Edgar and Eugene Rice who preceded her in death.

Sister Rice spent her life in the Danville area where she was employed as a bookkeeper for 23 years at F.A. Dix Grocery Store and later at Henry & Turner Grocery Store.

Sister Rice joined the Danville Primitive Baptist Church May 10, 1964, and was baptized by her pastor, Elder H.W. Wray She was a faithful member, attending church every time she had the opportunity to go. When she became disabled to go to meetings, she would sit at home and follow through the meetings until time for the meetings to close.

Sister Rice believed in the absolute Sovereignty of God, and Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. It was a real joy to hear her talk of the things she believed.

She was laid to rest in the Highland Burial Park of Danville to await the second coming of our Lord. We hope our loss is her eternal gain.

Submitted by Sister Bernice W.

Marshall, by request of the church.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
R. T. Holley, Church Clerk

IN MEMORY OF BROTHER JOHN B. TATE

On March 14, 1991 the Lord called home Brother John B. Tate at the age of 84. His funeral was held here at Dan River Church the following Saturday by his pastor Elder Kenneth Key and Elder Haygood Wray. He was a native of Rockingham County and the son of the late Ed Y. and Mary Chilton Tate. He is survived by three children, Betty Carol Ellington of Reidsville, Glenda Gunn and Wayne Tate of Eden; five stepsons, four stepdaughters; four brothers, James and Fletcher of Ruffin, Henry of Reidsville, and David of Eden; three sisters, Addie Ellington, Virginia Hylton, and Lillie Wood all of Eden; seven grandchildren and 23 step grandchildren.

Brother Tate joined the Church on May 21, 1966. The Lord blessed him to live a quiet, peaceful life. He was a shy, soft spoken man but was always blessed to lend a neighborly hand. The Lord enabled him to earn his living by the sweat of his brow. I believe he loved being out on his tractor tilling the land. When passing his home, the absence of his garden and the untilled land are silent reminders of his absence. I have many childhood memories of working with him and his family in tobacco. We all miss him but trust that our loss is his eternal gain. May the Lord bless us all, especially his family, to be reconciled to the Will of the heavenly Master in taking him, and may the Gentle Shepherd be their strength and help in the day to come.

Humbly submitted,
Mary Hawkins

PSALM 146.

Praise ye the Lord. Praise the Lord, O my soul.

While I live will I praise the Lord: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being.

Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.

His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God:

Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: which keepeth truth for ever:

Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: which giveth food to the hungry. The Lord looseth the prisoners:

The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind: the Lord raiseth them that are bowed down: the Lord loveth the righteous:

The Lord preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.

The Lord shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the Lord.

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HE MAKETH NO MISTAKE

My hope seems small I know,
My heart may throb and ache,
But in my soul, I'm glad I know,
He maketh no mistake.

My cherished plans may go astray,
My hope may fade away,
But still I'll trust my Lord to lead
For He doth know the Way.

Tho' night be dark and it may seem
That day will never break;
I'll pin my faith, my all in Him,
He maketh no mistake.

There's so much now I cannot see,
My eyesight's far too dim;
But come what may, I'll simply trust
And leave it all to Him.

For by and by the mist will lift
And plain it all He'll make.
Through all the way, tho' dark to me,
He made not one mistake.

---

1 John 4:4

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

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EDITORIAL

We who work to carry on and publish the "Signs of the Times" want to acknowledge a most generous gift from the estate of Donald Elliott Cole. He left notice in his will that we receive one third of his entire estate. We are humbled by this gift as we believe God who controls all things put it in the heart of this quiet, meek and good man to do what he did. We have seen so many times as we look back in the past, and to this present time how the Lord has blessed "The Signs", this being 159 years of continuous publication.

To show more, our appreciation to Brother Cole and to God, we ask each of our subscribers to send us names of anyone you think would enjoy reading the Signs, and who are unable to pay for it, and we will send it to them free of charge. By this most recent gift "The Signs" will be able to operate for many years to come without any increase in subscription rates.

We want to share with our readers the comment below that was attached to Brother Cole's will. The wording of which must have been inspired by God.

Attachment to Will of
Donald Elliott Cole
(Dated January 13, 1978)
— COMMENT —

Inasmuch as Almighty God has graciously and generously provided for my earthly needs and in view of the fact that all which I still possess belongs to him and that I have only acted as his custodian for a little while, I feel that it is both my duty and privilege to distribute such possessions in a manner which is most likely to be pleasing and acceptable to him. Therefore, with whatever wisdom he has seen fit to bless me, I have earnestly, conscientiously, and prayerfully used in the preparation of this will.

Finally, I bequeath my humble but sincere thanks to God for the many great things he has done for me, for his gracious and merciful longsuffering, for his constant and faithful watchcare, and for his bountiful providence. All praise, honor, and glory belong to him, the source of every good and perfect gift.

A sinner saved by God's grace and mercy, if saved at all.

* Donald Elliott Cole, Testator

Elder Julian R. Williams
Elder Kenneth R. Key

ARTICLES

For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Rom. 8:28.

I hope to write a little on a subject that has at times been quite controversial among our people, the subject is absolute predestination, which seems to my understanding taught very clearly in the scripture. Some want to take the word absolute out of the phrase, but why? You can't make the doctrine of predestination any stronger, or any weaker by adding or taking away certain words. The scripture says, ***for whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate,*** isn't that a sure thing, it doesn't say, I will try to predestinate, or almost predestinate, but I did predestinate. Some seem to think when you use the word absolute, it teaches that God makes men sin, I surely can't see it like that. Webster's dictionary defines the word absolute as meaning, "freed from limitation or condition," or unlimited extranous power or control, complete within itself — finished — perfect. Doesn't that describe the doctrine of predestination just exactly, a finished work, a perfect work, it has to be predestination or not predestination. There is no way it can be one half, or almost, but true predestination, the work of predestination is a finished work, a perfect work.

The scripture says, ***"He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him what doest thou?*** That is speaking of a sovereign God, who has all power, who can and does work all things according to the good pleasure of his will. I believe that, I believe it is just as the scripture says, he does all things according to his will, and none can stop him or question why he is doing it.

When he sent Moses to bring the Jewish people out of Egypt, the scripture says, I will harden the heart of Pharoah that he won't let my people go. No doubt some would say, if he wanted Pharoah to let his people go, why would he harden the heart of Pharoah that he wouldn't let them go. That was done according to the good pleasure of his will also, then he states why he is doing this. Speaking of Pharoah, God says, ***for this very reason I raised thee up, to show my power throughout the earth.*** Therefore had Pharoah let his people go there would have been no need to work the mighty work which he did, so no demonstration of his mighty power. I believe any and all of the wants which are taking place today are happening in the same manner, all according to the good pleasure of his will, and I believe they are fulfilling the exact purpose for which they were ordained, as strange as some of them may seem to us, they are all working together for good, to those who love God.

He does according to his will and

none can stay his hand, so when he says, whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. What power, or what group of men, or what court can stop him or question what he is doing. Some would say, why God would be unjust to ordain some to eternal glory and not others, doesn't the potter have the power over a lump of clay to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour. God is not bound by any court, if he takes my life, or your life or 10,000 lives, can anyone call it murder, of course not. The scripture plainly says none can stay his hand or say what doest thou. Who can question God when he takes the life of a young child, while blessing others to live to be 100. He knows and teaches his little children to know that natural life and worldly things are far less valuable than spiritual things, therefore the length of life here is not all that matters.

Some believe that people are predestinated but events are not, look at Rom. 8:28 *"And we know that all things work together for our good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."* I can't possibly see how all things could be working together for our good unless someone was controlling them, now if God is controlling them, and I believe he is, he either decreed, or ordained, or predetermined all these things to come to pass, or to be fulfilled, in the exact manner which they are, in the counsel of God before time, or else he is moving around now, having this one to happen, this one not to happen, and so forth. As Peter said, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God you men have done this thing, I believe all things work the exact same way, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, or how could they be working together for our good?

Remember when Jonah thought he was fleeing from God? He got on this ship and a storm arose, the men blamed him for the storm, threw him overboard and a large fish swallowed him, took him and vomited him out on the ground where God wanted him. Don't you believe God had prepared that fish for that very person? I can't believe God waited until the men threw Jonah overboard, then saw he would have to do something, then quickly prepared the fish. I believe the purpose of that fish was decreed in the mind of God.

We are all familiar with the way Joseph was taken down into Egypt. All the events that came to pass to take Joseph where God wanted him. I don't believe God waited until his brothers threw him into that pit, then saw he would have to help him out, but I believe the caravan which came by and bought Joseph, all the dreams, the false accusations, and the many other events that came to pass which placed Joseph in power there in Egypt were purposed in the counsel of God before time.

As I mentioned earlier, Peter said

by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God you men have done this thing. I can't believe all those events just happened, but they came to pass as the counsel of God had predetermined, even to the casting lots for his nature. Some may object to events being predetermined when there is evil action committed, such as jealousy of Joseph's brothers, the beatings and stonings of Paul, the cruel and shameful treatment of Jesus, if so read this scripture. *Prov. 16:4 The wicked was made for the day of evil.* He made the wicked for this purpose, and I believe they are doing what they were ordained to do Jude 1:4 says they were ordained for this condemnation.

Some people talk about Satan and the great power he has as if he was almighty himself, he may have some great power but only what the almighty God allows him to have. The scripture says all things were made by him, and for him, therefore I believe he made the devil, and I don't believe he made anything he couldn't control. If he did he wouldn't be an Almighty God, with all power. If he couldn't control Satan then how could he say, I know the end from the beginning, and I will do all my pleasure and no one can stay my hand or say why doest thou?

When we read of all the great and precious promises which Jesus has given us in the bible, I have every confidence of these all coming to pass, I also believe regardless of how bad things sometime appear, or difficult they are to understand, I believe they are working together for the good of those who love the Lord, to those to are the called according to his purpose. In these verses of scripture Rom. 8: 28-29, we believe God by the spirit told Paul to write them, I also believe God by the spirit told Paul to write them, I also believe the Apostle Paul had learned something, he had been taught something. He could look back on his life and see the many difficult situations he had encountered, the punishment he had received, all because he was an Apostle for Christ. In one place he said, he counted himself fortunate that he had been able to suffer for Christ's sake. Maybe at times during these trials he was made to wonder, but eventually he was given to see the blessings in these things, and to know they had been working for his good, for he wrote we glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience. Just as when God shows to his people their sinful condition, and they see and feel themselves less than nothing. They could never feel or enjoy the wonderful feeling of being forgiven unless first they were made to see their sinful condition. So we can see how that also was working for our good. Sometimes we seem to be placed under a heavy burden, and we are made to wonder and sometimes despair, finally we are given relief and we feel like the poet who said, each burden only taught me how to pray.

Read acts 4: 26-28 — The kings of

the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. I know this is speaking primarily about the events which took place around the crucification and death of the Lord Jesus Christ. However, I believe this is the way it is today, the way it was yesterday, and the way it will be tomorrow. Any or all of the people on this earth are here to do whatsoever His hand and His counsel determined before to be done. No matter how great the people may be, or how important they seem in the eyes of other men, or how small they are all here to do his will, for doesn't the scripture say, He maketh kings and he teareth them down. Prov. 24:1 Man's heart is in the hand of the Lord, he turneth it whichsoever he will. How could it be any plainer, how sweet it is when one is blessed to see and feel what the merciful God has done for his little children.

Some say this is a hard doctrine, but the hard doctrine is that which says, a man has to do what he can't do, to obtain salvation. This true doctrine states from the written word of God, that God has done it all, for whom he did foreknow them he also did predestinate. It is a sure thing, something no man can help and thank God, no man can hinder or destroy.

May He continue to bless us and keep us thankful, strengthen us in our weakness, and keep us at the feet of our brethren.

A brother, I hope
Frank Hunt

LITTLE THINGS

There are innumerable and great blessings which are graciously bestowed upon us. So good is the heavenly Father to us, that we are often like spoiled children — unappreciative of the little things.

The past few days I have been conscious of the many little, precious things. The larger blessings are not lacking, but for some reason my mind has been occupied by the little, so-often-overlooked-things.

Usually precious things are small, and they are easily lost in the confusion of things with which the life is filled. So often the mind is all absorbed with some great problem which vexes us, and because of this, we are not aware of the many, many little helps, the small deliverances along the way. When we begin to look for them, they are all about us, in too many ways to count them all. The fact that we are such ungrateful and forgetful creatures, and yet the Father continues His blessings upon us is

eloquent proof of His great mercy and goodness.

LITTLE THINGS. The removal of pain; the safe return of a loved one; the improvement in the condition of another afflicted one; the solving of small unhappinesses — these, and many, many more things are usually taken for granted. The little happy things. The well-being-of-the-family-things. The beauty of the season. The happiness of being together things — oh, just the myriad, shining, little everyday things. And yes, the troublesome, fretting, causing-us-to-pray things. These, too, should be accepted gratefully.

"THE LITTLE MOMENT-BY-MOMENT-THINGS." If we could see and realize the blessing of these, we would not be fretful over the many things that vex us. Minds and hearts all absorbed with these cannot become all confused and weary over larger, and often imagined things in the future. Thanking the Father for the blessings of the moment, we do not look with fear into the unknown future. As we fully realize the blessings of the present little, direct-from-the-hand-of-God-things, our hearts know peace.

Life is really composed of these "littles." We do not have a year at a time — a month, a day, an hour. It is a moment by moment experience. Oh, to fully appreciate the blessing of this moment! If we are in pain, it can be borne this moment. It is when we are in real pain or trial that we are forced to narrow our life down to moments. This perhaps is why there is such a blessing in affliction. We live in that moment, entirely apart from past and future. There is enough suffering, but also enough grace for that moment. And as we see this, our hearts trust Him for the next moment. When in sorrow it is His moment-by-moment strength-giving presence which sustains us.

Just today we have a note from a bereaved widow. She says she felt God's arms holding her up miraculously. Though doctors and nurses offered sedation, she needed none. Her life was narrowed down to moments, in each of which He gave her strength. She marvelled at it. She not only endured the sad time, but now looks back upon it with wonder and gratitude at the memory of His help when it was needed.

One time I sat through long hours when the recovery of my beloved companion was in doubt, so far as we and the doctors knew. This was one experience I had thought I could not accept. It had been a grief to me that I had felt there was any trial I could not accept from God's loving hand. But as I faced this possibility, with it came a blessed calm. I was not called upon to accept it years, nor days before it came. But when the moment came when I needed help, there it was, the moment-by-moment strength, just like the breath I breathed. It comes one breath at a time, and we would be foolish indeed to fear we would not be able to breathe

all day. We could not use a day's breath, nor an hour's breath all at once. It is another of the moment-by-moment blessings. It just seems to come automatically, without any effort, and thus does all that we need come from His hand.

Just as surely as this breath endures as long as life, breath-by-breath, breath-by-breath — so will all things needful be supplied until there is no longer a need.

Oh to trust Him, knowing that His loving care flows to us, moment by moment just as the breath we breathe. Then would our troubled, anxious hearts be at peace.

"They that wait on Him shall renew their strength . . . they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." They that wait on Him — not running ahead into the future, but just wait on Him for His moment-by-moment grace.

It is the little things to which Jesus called our attention: The lilies, the birds, the mustard seed, the widow's mite, the little stray lamb, and the many little close-to-the-heart-things. By these little things He taught us to walk prayerfully and thankfully, trustingly, as dear little children. He fondly called His followers, Children. Children are small, and we have a loving, protective care for them, and all little things. Little things were precious to our Lord.

Oh, may we be satisfied, and thankful for the precious, little blessed-of-God-things! And as we are like simple, trusting little children, we are precious in His sight.

(From "Precious Things")
by Mrs. W. J. Berry

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

GOD FORBID

"Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. . . . What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? — GOD FORBID." Romans 5:20; 6:1.

In the first chapters of Romans the apostle Paul carefully explains (1) man's lost and depraved state, (2) the consequent reign of sin, (3) the purpose of the law, (4) man's just condemnation under that law, (5) redemption and justification by faith, (6) salvation by grace, and (7) the consequent reign of grace.

Man's Fall and depraved State

He shows how that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (3:23); that both Jew and Gentile "are under sin" and "there is none righteous." (3:9, 10.) He shows how the whole human race, from the fall of Adam to the giving of the law, lay corrupted in sin "being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, etc... who knowing the judgment of

God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do them, but have pleasure in them that do them." (1:29-32).

The Consequent Reign of Sin

Sinners in this dead state are not only unrighteous, but full of unrighteousness; they are "filled" with fornication, wickedness, etc. They are not only full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, etc., "but have pleasure in them that do them." This was the corrupted and debased condition of humanity not only before the flood, but afterwards, up to this present day, and will continue to "wax worse" unto the end. The presence and reigning power of sin in the world has been well demonstrated from the first fall. The fruits of sin have been grown and produced in every tree of the Adamic root, except the one Man, Christ Jesus. Through the power of the law the sting of it has "reigned unto death," both natural and spiritual. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. ...Death reigned... By one man's offence death reigned. ...Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation... By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." (Rom. 5:12, 14, 17, 18-21). *"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."* (See Rom. 3:10-18, 23).

The Purpose of the Law

While man was guilty of sin and all these fruits of reigning sin, and he knew the judgment of God, there was as yet no law against them. Therefore they were not held guilty or charged with them; as Paul states, *"For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed (charged) where there is no law." (5:13).* We many use the simple illustration of a Stop-sign. Cars may be running through a certain intersection without regard to traffic from the other direction. This condition may exist for some time until several wrecks occur, but no one can be charged before the court of the land as guilty, because no law had been violated (although conscience says to stop). Finally a Stop-sign is placed at that intersection, which indicates there has been a law written against the running of that intersection without coming to a stop, with penalty attached for all violaters. Now the same characters who have been running the intersection uncharged, are found guilty by the law, brought before the court of justice, condemned and punished accordingly.

"Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound." Putting up the Stop-sign did not prevent drivers from running the intersection, neither did it make them run it; but it manifested and held them as violaters when they did run it. Likewise, the giving of the law did not take away sin (that was not its purpose), neither did it cause men to sin; but its purpose was to manifest sin (for by the law is the knowledge of sin) and hold sinners guilty and justly condemned

before God. *"That sin might appear exceeding sinful." (Rom. 7:13) "Because the law worketh wrath; for where no law is there is no transgression." Rom. 4:15.*

Man's Just Condemnation under the Law

"But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?" "But be sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things." "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness." (Rom. 3:5, 6; 2:2; 1:18).

"Wherefore then the law? — It was added because of transgressions." (Gal. 3:19) "For sin is the transgression of the law." 1 Jn. 3:4. "What shall we say then? — Is the law sin? — GOD FORBID. Nay, I had not known sin but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin taking occasion by the commandment wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead ... For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? — GOD FORBID. But sin that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful." Rom. 7:7, 8, 11-13.

That is, it was not God's purpose that sin should remain, as it were, under cover, with the creature unaccountable for it; that it should not only be revealed, but made to appear in all its inherent depths, its blackness and enormity, and how infinitely opposed it is to His holiness and Divine nature. What is God's purpose in showing the wicked power of sin? Why to also show the need for the righteous power of grace over it. The creature had no real knowledge either of the "mystery of iniquity" or the "mystery of godliness." The serpent said, "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof then your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." "The Lord said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, knowing good and evil." (Gen. 3:5, 22). The law is an eye-opener, makes one to know his state: "by the law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. 3:20).

In the revealing of God's eternal design to conform a people to the image of Christ, we see His wonderful but unfathomable purposes in the fall of Adam; and in this fall or disobedience, sin, death and destruction passed upon the whole human race. What was the purpose of this? God said of Pharoah, "For this purpose have I raised thee up — that I might shew my power in thee, and that my Name might be declared throughout all the earth." Ex. 9:16; Rom. 9:17. Pharoah laid heavy

burdens on the Israelites grievous to be borne; but God showed His mighty arm of power and grace in their deliverance. By the entrance of sin through the transgression of the law an unbearable weight of condemnation and bondage rested on Adam and his posterity; but God, for Christ's sake, His own name's sake — brought in a more abundant life, even immortality through the grace of the gospel of His Son.

However, we confuse God's order to say that Adam had to sin, or that it was good that he sinned in order that God might show His grace. In Romans 11:11, Paul says, *"I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall?"* Was that the purpose of God, merely that the Jews should fall? "GOD FORBID: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles." So in the fall of Adam; it was not in the decree of God merely that Adam should stumble in order to fall, but that through that fall salvation should come to man, to the praise of the glory of His grace. No God-fearing child of God will say he is thankful he is a sinner, but he is thankful, since he is a sinner, that Christ died for such.

Could He not have shown His power and declared His name another way? Certainly He could; but He is a sovereign and did not choose to do so. We cannot agree with the sentiment that "God could not manifest His power without the devil." That is limiting almighty God, with whom all things are possible. But for some wise purpose, best known and understood By Him alone, "sin abounded, but thanks be to God, grace did much more abound. That as sin hath reigned unto death — even so might grace reign through RIGHTEOUSNESS unto eternal life BY JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD."

Dead to Sin, Alive to God

But now, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? — GOD FORBID" Because God has purposed that because of sin, salvation should be necessary, and grace might appear and reign; because the truth of God by the effectual working of His grace has more abounded through my life unto His glory; because He has taken up such a polluted wretch to manifest His holiness in; because He has taken my feet out of the mire and clay to set them on a Rock; because He took me as a sinner to reveal His Son and show His mercy and grace in me — shall I therefore continue in sin that this grace may thus abound? — GOD FORBID"!

"How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sin." The child of grace who has been delivered out of a state of death and condemnation is now quickened into divine life, and killed to his former life of sin and death under the law. Therefore how can he live again or longer in that to which he is made dead?

"Know ye not that so many of us as

were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life... "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Rom. 6:4, 6.

"Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God — Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 6:3-11

W.J. Berry

"But we see Jesus." — Hebrews ii.9.

Did your eyes ever see him? Do look into conscience — did your eyes ever see Jesus? I do not mean your natural, your bodily eyes; but the eye of faith, the eye of the soul. I will tell you what you have felt, if you ever saw Jesus. Your heart was softened and melted, your affections drawn heavenward, your soul penetrated with thankfulness and praise, your conscience sprinkled with atoning blood, your mind lifted up above all earthly things to dwell and centre in the bosom of the blessed Immanuel. Do you think, then, you have seen Jesus by the eye of faith? Then you have seen the perfection of beauty, the consummation of pure loveliness; you have seen the image of the invisible God; you have seen all the perfections and glorious character of the Godhead shining forth in him that was nailed to Calvary's tree. I am sure such a sight as that must melt the most obdurate heart, and draw tears from the most flinty eyes; such a sight by faith of the beauty and glory of the only-begotten Son of God must kindle the warmest, holiest stream of tender affection. It might not have lasted long. These feelings are often very transitory. The world, sin, temptation, and unbelief soon work; infidelity soon assails all; the things of time and sense soon draw aside; but whilst it lasted, such, in a greater or less degree, were the sensations produced. Now, if you have ever seen Jesus by the eye of faith, and ever had a tender affection going out toward him, you will see him in glory. But you will never see him in glory, if you have not seen him in grace; you will never see him eye to eye in the open vision of eternal bliss, unless you have seen him now upon earth by the faith of God's elect in your heart.

J.C. Philpot

Dear Brethren:—I have a request from a brother in Texas to write on Genesis vi. 5, 6: *"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and grieved him at his heart."* The Bible says (Numbers xxiii. 19), *"God is not man,*

that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent." In Malachi iii. 6, *"For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."* This does not apply to God the Father, but to God the Son. He could and did mourn and beg and repent. In John xii. 27, Jesus said, *"Father, save me from this hour."* He had just said, *"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour."*

"Wickedness of man was great in the earth." So very great as Paul sets it forth. He says, *"There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace they have not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes."* And it is written, There is not a man that liveth and sinneth not, and there is not a man that sinneth not. There is a great difference of opinion as to how man got to be so wicked. Elder Gilbert Beebe and the Signs never taught that man was sinful like we are now, when God created him. Elder Beebe wrote, "If God could not keep sin our of this world, how do we know he can keep it out of the next world?" There is no worse heresy than to teach God created man a sinner, and caused him to sin. The devil will attend to causing man to sin, and will not let an opportunity slip or escape him where he can cause man to sin.

Paul says the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all, in meekness instructing those who oppose themselves, if peradventure God will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will. Again, Peter says, *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."* In Ephesians ii. 2, Paul says, *"The spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."* James says, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." If any man was wicked and filthy when he came from the hands of the Creator, why would David say in the fifty-third Psalm, *"Everyone of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one."* If they were filthy at first, how could they become filthy? They were not filthy at first; had they been David was mistaken. It is positively proven that man was not as bad at first as he is now. Genesis vi. 11, 12: *"The earth also was corrupt before God, and*

the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth."

Man corrupted his way upon the earth. Who did this? Man. The doctrine of predestination of all things is not a new doctrine. Many years ago the Old Baptists taught it in Wales, England and other places. God predestinated the crucifixion of the Savior, the worst crime man has ever committed, but God did not move, cause of influence the men to kill him. Peter says in Acts, *"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Yes, "by wicked hands."* The Bible says, *"They hated him without cause."* And Jesus said, *This is your hour and the power of darkness.* They did what they wanted to do. The devil and their bitter hatred caused them to crucify him, and when they did this wicked deed with wicked hands they were carrying out and fulfilling the purpose of God. The devil entered into Judas and caused him to betray and sell the Savior for the very price the prophet had said he would sell him for. Zechariah zi. 12: *"If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver."* The exact amount Judas sold Jesus for. Judas did what he wanted to do, and at the same time he was fulfilling the prophecy, and carrying out the purpose of God. Everything else comes to pass in the same way. Men in their wickedness by wicked hands commit crime as they want to, and at the same time are carrying out the purposes of God.

"His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain."

Isaiah xiv. 24: *"The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."* Hated this blessed one, who only did good, healed all manner of diseases, and never charged for any benefit he ever bestowed upon man. Hear him, you little ones who have nice homes, and plenty, and all you poor, destitute, little suffering ones. What did he say? *"The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."*

"Hail the blest morn, when the great Creator
Down from his throne in the heaven descends;
Shepherds, go worship the babe in the manger,
Lo, for his guard the bright angels attend.

Lo, on his cradle the dew-drops were shining,
Low lies his head with the beasts of the stall;
Angels adore him, in slumbers reclining,
Maker and Monarch and Savior of all."

Let us adore him, brethren, as we have divine power given us from on high, sweeter than the honey and the honeycomb.

The old Confession of Faith says, "Man, by reason of the fall, hath wholly lost all ability to will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation." If this is true, man is different from what he was at first. Man gets

worse all the time. 2 Timothy iii. 13: *"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." Again, "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."* The Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. To prove man was not at first like he is now, I will refer you to the language of Solomon. He says, *"Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."* Then if we go by the Bible, and not our thinksoes, it is a positive, indisputable fact, that man was not a sinner when he was created by the Lord. Paul says, The carnal mind is enmity against God, and not subject o the law of God, and neither indeed can be. *"The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." "Cannot do the things that ye would."* You just cannot. Try all you may, determine you will, say, I know I can, Paul says you cannot do the things that you would. For when I would do good, evil is present with me, and the good that I would I do not, but the evil that I would not, that I do. This is Paul's language. Do you believe he spoke the truth? This reads like free will, free moral agency, does it not? Those the Bible says are taken captive by the devil at his will, are they free also? All of you men listen: *"Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her in his heart."* Are you guilty? Could you keep those awful wicked thoughts and desires out of your carnal mind? *"I am carnal, sold under sin."* Sin, evil desires, are a wonderful power. It just takes God's power by his grace to keep you. God's grace teaches *"us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." — Titus ii. 12.* We have on consolation in the midst of all our sinfulness and weakness, faults and waywardness: the Bible says, *"As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."* I feel that there is not a more unworthy sinner on earth than I am. If it were not the comforting language I read in the Bible I would lie down and give up. I go back in my mind over my life and there are so many, many sins charged up to me by my reckoning, and they look so black, so hideous, it seems to me God could not love such a creature, but the Bible says, *"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."* He put away sin by the sacrifice of himself ; no other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved.

"Was it for crimes that I have done
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity, grace unknown,
And love beyond degree."

Yes, Jesus saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and it repented him that he had made man, and grieved him at his heart. Jesus said when they crucified him, *"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."* Some men know not what they do when they write that God created Adam just as sinful as we are. They injure us. We are sin, and God made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. It is so dark, I am so cold and lifeless, it seems to me such wonderful blessings cannot be for such a sinful creature as I am, but the people of God Jesus died for he saved. They will be brought off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him that loved them. Sometimes David would say, Is his mercy clear gone forever? Will he no more be entreated? Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious? Then again he would say, *"Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord,"* and enumerate and specify and call on a great many animals and objects to praise the Lord. Sun, moon, fire and hail, stormy wind, fulfilling his will. (148th, 149th and 150th Psalms.) Sometimes you are just this way. Soon you will be delivered from the bondage of corruption and will praise your dear Redeemer forever, and go no more out to suffer.

Your poor unworthy brother in hope of mercy,

Isaac R. Greathouse

"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto eternal life: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." John 4:34-36.

How much that we do want to mark out and direct the Almighty! How prone we are to bring him into the limits of our narrow vision! How often we do forget our own experience and delivery from sin! The Jews did not deal with the Samaritans, thinking that they were an inferior race. Our Saviour had a conversation with the woman at the well. Not having come into that degree of understanding, they thought he had gotten hungry by his long absence from food, but what a rich and heavenly manna he had to feast on that they, as yet, knew nothing about. *"I have meat to eat that ye know not of."* Some things were not good for them to know, but the time is at hand for them to know. What a Teacher to teach them. Ah, how dark our understanding when the illuminating power of the Spirit is not made manifest. They thought surely some one had fed him. It needs being brought in direct contact with him to learn of and about him. No second hand work will do. The same lack of wisdom in his disciples at that time is

in us now until revealed to us by him as it was to them. Although verily a man yet he had no gluttonous appetite to satisfy. *"My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."* Here is what held him up and enabled him to bear up under the terrible things that came his way. And, dear child of God, this is the propelling power that carries you through every sad trial of life. Unless God's dear children were blessed to leave behind and forget parents, companions, lands and riches there would not be any service rendered to him, but if led by his grace, his desire becomes our desire. Things of nature lose all their significance and our meat is to follow him, but we cannot do this until blessed to do so. We cannot see what a blessed state we are in now; we cannot see that God has elect vessels in Samaria until it is given to us to see. We think times will get better after awhile. We see very little evidence of God's riches and that his children are very few. To us in the flesh it is four (in complete vogue) months until harvest, but when we have a refreshing from him he tells us that such is not the case. What a time of communion is this as he tells us this good news. He tells us to lift up our eyes and to look. Ah, how eagerly do the children of God do this. Winter, spring and summer have been so long, but now that welcome harvest is at hand and we knew it not. We could not know it sooner because we were not looking, we could not look any sooner because we did not know to do it. Now let us look a little closer: *"He that reapeth receiveth wages."* Not he that will reap, nothing like that to these poor disciples that have been deluded so long, but a cheerful, positive statement of truth to a character made ready for it. So long had they been eating perishable meat; so long had they been eating husks, and now the killing of the fatted calf has been made manifest. Too, I would have you notice, Jesus did not say he that reapeth will receive wages, but we have the blessed promise that every one that reapeth receives wages. If you work for a man in nature you must wait until pay day. If you are depending on any conditional God you must wait until he gets ready to pay, but not so in the kingdom of God's grace. You reap because you are commanded to reap, you receive wages because you are blessed to receive them. The harvest, the ability to reap, the wages received all come from the same source. *"And gathereth fruit unto life eternal."* This is a continuation of the same blessing. This gathering of fruit is not for eternal life nor for time blessings, but it is unto eternal life. This is in connection with the Saviour when he said, *"By their fruits ye shall know them."* They have gathered them by his grace or will in them, and have manifested or done them in the same way. This all is that the sower and reaper may rejoice together. In nature husband and wife rejoice together when the harvest is gathered in. Much more in this kingdom of grace. What is lovelier than when he and his people eat, drink and rejoice together,

W.D. Griffin

Circumstances which tend to hopelessness and despair among men should kindle with hope and expectation those who trust in God. Impossibilities with men are not at all difficulties with God. There is nothing too hard for the Lord. (Gen. xviii.; Jer. xxxii 27.) To Abraham one hundred years old, and to Sarah ninety, the fulfillment of God's promise to them seemed impossible. Naturally it was God, the Creator is himself above creation and is himself not bound by the laws established by him to govern nature. He does that which with men is impossible of accomplishment. At the appointed time, Isaac was born. Natural difficulties were overcome. The supernatural became a fact. Vital revealed religion is essentially supernatural, miraculous. Take the miracle element out of the Scriptures, eliminate the supernatural from the lives of the children of God, and the result is hopelessness and despair.

Elijah on Mt. Carmel in the presence of all Israel, proved the reality of his faith in God to whom nothing is impossible, and so confounded the idol worship of the prophets of Baal. Twelve barrels of water were poured upon Elijah's altar, upon his sacrifices and upon his wood. All was water-soaked and the trench about it filled with water. It would have been miracle enough for the fire to fall from heaven to consume the offering; but God does his work in such a way that credit cannot go to man. The wood was saturated so that there could be no possibility of men having anything to do with it. Wherever there are conditions of impossibilities and it is evident that man is powerless, we may watch to see God's power. He reveals himself at, and unto, the "ends of the earth." The one primary purpose and end of all prophecy is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the "seed of the woman" foretold in early Genesis. No man fathered him. He is not the "seed of man." Yet a woman mothered him. The Lord has done "a new thing in the earth. A woman shall compass a man." — Jer. xxxi. 22. The virgin conceived and bore a son and his name was called Immanuel, "God with us." Man had no part in bringing this to pass. The Holy Ghost accomplished it. That which was contrary to all known natural law, and which was impossible with men, God did. Jesus told his disciples that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. (Luke xviii. 24.) In their astonishment, they ask, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus answered, "The things which are impossible with men, are possible with God." Salvation of sinners is impossible with men. (Psalms xlix. 7-9.) It is wholly the work of God. "For this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived." — Rom. xiv. 9. The whole plan whereby sinners are saved was thought out and purposed in the Divine Mind. The mind of man could never have conceived such a Way. Higher than the heavens above the earth are the thoughts of God beyond

the processes of man's thinking. All the searching of human intellects, all the working of human reason, all of what is commonly called "common sense" can never arrive at the truth of him to whom nothing is impossible. To Peter in prison, awaiting execution, escape was humanly impossible. He was absolutely helpless, so were his friends except for the intercessory power of prayer. His jailers did all possible to make his confinement secure. Four soldiers guarded him during each of the four night watches. Between two of them he lay sleeping, bound to them with chains. Two others kept watch. All these precautions were of no avail. God's angel was sent to deliver His servant Peter. The chains fell off him, the iron gate opened of his own accord. Peter passed out into the city free. (Acts xii. 1-10.) Likewise at a former time had another guard kept watch over the sepulchre where lay the body of the Savior, lest his disciples come and steal him away. Powerless were they to hinder the great actual fact of the resurrection. Puny man can do nothing against God. At the time appointed of the Father, Christ arose. The stone, rolled from the sepulchre by an angel, served to prove that the tomb was empty save for certain grave clothes which still lay there.

The great heart-searching truth in all these instances for us is that we should not be daunted by difficulties. Remember that God delights to do the impossible. That which is dark in the path lying before us can be made light in the Lord by his leading. The same cloud which was dark to Egypt so that Pharoah could not see Israel whom he was pursuing, was light to God's people as they stood waiting for the salvation of the Lord. The same water which was condemnation to the antediluvians, was deliverance from destruction to those sheltered in the ark. Let us remember that Noah could not have seen the rainbow of God's promise, had there not been the cloud there for God to paint the rainbow upon. God, who forms light, creates darkness too. Difficulties test faith. Hardships enliven prayer.

"Trials bring me to His feet,
Lay me low and keep me there."

How wonderful are those words of Jesus to his disciples in Luke xxi. 25-28. Jesus told them that before the Son of Man should come again, certain things must be accomplished. "Upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." Note he did not tell them to be frightened when they should see these things come to pass. Quite otherwise, he told them, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Not when these things come to pass, but when they "begin" to come to pass. The beginnings of sorrows which are to ensnare the world, are occasions

for encouragement to the children of God. We should not be discomforted by that which alarms the people of the world. Their calamity, when their fear cometh, is proof that He who rides in the heavens shall laugh and have them in derision.

"Look to the Lord, his word, his throne;
Look to his strength, and not thy own;
There wait, and look, and look again;
Thou shalt not wait, nor look in vain."

Worry does no good. Undue anxiety is forbidden by Him who commanded that we take no thought for tomorrow. Our Father knoweth of what we stand in need. Just to the extent that we worry, either about the present or the future, to that degree are we failing to trust him. He will unfailingly supply our needs; but he, not we, is the Judge of what our needs consist.

What a wise provision of God it was that he did not allow but one window in the ark, and that at the top; so Noah could not behold the calamity and woe occuring all around him, but must look up to Him who so graciously had saved him in the vessel ordered and designed by the Author and Finisher of His people's salvation. What would have been Noah's feelings could he have looked about him and have seen his fellow-men going to their doom? Such he was kept from doing by the fact that the window's position was in the top, not in the sides, of the ark. Let us learn from this not to look too much upon the circumstances and conditions that environ our lives. We have nothing to do with circumstances. God orders and controls them all. To them of faith, mountains are removed and cast into the sea. Nothing is too hard for the Lord. Oh, for a living faith to cast all our care upon him! He has told us he cares for us. Blessed it is for us to wholly trust him, to be wholly yielded unto him, to lean not to our own understanding, but to acknowledge him in all our ways. He will direct our paths.

The children of God are first strangers, then pilgrims, on the earth. (Heb. xi. 13.) Distinguishing grace makes the believer a stranger to human-kind. Because a stranger, he is a pilgrim. He is on a journey. He has not arrived. His destiny is not here, but yonder where glory is. All trials, discouragements and difficulties are reminders that this world is not our home, that here we have no abiding place. We are passing onward to that which God has in reserve for his people in the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwell righteousness and peace for ever,

Lift up your heads, rejoice,
Redemption draweth nigh;
Oh note the varying signs
Of earth and air and sky;
The God of glory comes
In gentleness and might,
To comfort and alarm,
To succor and to smite.

He comes, the wide world's King,
He comes, the true heart's friend,
New gladness to begin,
And ancient wrong to end;

He comes, to fill with light
The weary, waiting eye:
Lift up your heads, rejoice,
Redemption draweth nigh.

Pray for us, brethren, that we may be enabled of the Lord to minister both through the Signs and from the pulpit to the comfort and encouragement of those who are seeking a "better country." As the year 1934 opens, our hope is in God. What lies before us, he knows. We trust him. His grace is the sufficiency of both writers and readers. Let us look up and not down, out and not in, forward and not back, and be helpers of one another's joy in the Lord. The Scriptures declare that in the last days perilous times shall come. They are upon us. The ways of Zion do mourn, the love of many waxes cold and iniquity abounds. We are not destroyed, even though cast down. The Lord God omnipotent reigns. Things declared from ancient times are becoming current history. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah."

Elder H.H. Lefferts

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure your of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

The Editors

MEETINGS

DAN RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God Dan River Primitive Baptist Church looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift. They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed Sunday, September 22, 1991 at 2:00 p.m. at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, Rt. 2, Ruffin, NC, for the purpose of examination of these gift, brothers Curtis Cobb and Allen Carroll and if found qualified be ordained to the full work and service of deacons.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together. The meeting was opened by prayer by Elder H.W. Wray. Elder Kenneth Key was elected as moderator and Elder J.R. Williams to serve as clerk. Brothers Bob Collie and Coley Strader acting as spokesmen for the church delivered brothers Carroll and Cobb to the presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon was read as set forth in scriptures 1st Tim. 3rd chapter by Elder Leonard Brammer. Examinations followed by Elders Brammer, Williams and Carter. The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of these

candidates proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder Lane Carter. The charge was delivered to brother Carroll and brother Cobb by Elder Lane Carter. They were then delivered back to the church as ordained deacons.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. A copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication and a copy to be given to Brothers Allen Carroll and Curtis Cobb along with a certificate of ordination.

Presbytery was dismissed by prayer by Elder Leonard Brammer.

Elder Kenneth Key, Moderator
Elder J.R. Williams, Clerk

Deacons in Attendance

D.H. Sartin	W.L. Neal
W.W. Ashire	S.H. Wood
D.S. Horsley	T.L. Batts
Jamie Cooper	Wilson King
G.R. Slate	Bob Collie
Coley Strader	

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 1991

Mrs. Mamie Bisher, NC 10.00
Howard Peters, VA 2.00
Mrs. N. Hunt, VA 2.00
H.P. Conner, VA 2.00
Mrs. W.L. Simmons, VA 2.00
Mr. & Mrs. B.W. Wade, WV 2.00
Mrs. R.E. Moore, NC 2.00
Mrs. Donnie Strickland, AL 2.00
Mrs. Mary H. Stratton, VA 2.00
J.C. Carroll, NC 10.00
Mrs. Leola D. Meador, NC 2.00
Herman Webb, IL 2.00
William L. Midkiff, VA 7.00
William Vick, TN 5.00
Mrs. Lovie A. Thompson, NC 10.00
Mrs. Dorothy M. Smith, NC 6.00
Mrs. Mary Stratton, VA 2.00
Shelby R. Stratton, VA 10.00
Mrs. Larrie Bowler, VA 2.00
Mrs. Maria Adams, VA 10.00

OBITUARIES

IDA MCCOLLUM BAYNES

Sister Ida McCollum Baynes 93 died Nov. 17, 1990 at Annie Penn Hospital, Reidsville, NC after declining health for several years. Her funeral was at Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church, conducted by her pastor Elder Haywood Wray and preacher Ralph Campbell. Burial was in the church cemetery. She is survived by daughter Novelia Draper, Madison, NC, sister Ela Cartwright and brother Dennis McCollum, of Madison, two grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Sister Baynes joined Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church in mid 60's and was baptised by her pastor. She was blessed with grace to bear her afflictions without complaint and loved her church and was a faithful member to attend as long as she was able. She always so glad to see us and other visitors. She spoke of wanting to go home and be with her Lord, we believe she has entered in to that Eternal Rest with our Lord Jesus. May the Lord comfort the dear family who attended unto her needs and welfare so well.

Elder H.W. Wray, Pastor
Sister Rachel Wray, Ch. Clerk

ELDER DENVER LEE SIMPSON

The dear Lord gave life to Elder Denver Lee Simpson on March 6, 1910 and took it from him on June 14, 1991. Hoping it is the will of the kind heavenly Father that Brother Simpson so often spoke of and in submission to the request of the family, I attempt to write his obituary.

He was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia to Ira West Simpson and Jesse Lee Simpson. He was married to Sister Eunice D. Simpson and to this union were born three sons: Grady Ray Simpson, Carl Edwin Simpson of Gretna and Coy Wayne Simpson of Richmond and one daughter, Carolyn S. Gay of Buena Vista. He also leaves eight grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Elder Simpson spoke to me on two occasions about writing his obituary and the last time he said, whether it be a long or short writing it would be all right. So in this, like all matters I heard him discuss in life, his attitude was of love and peace. It was a great joy to him to have brethren and friends visit in his home and to go visit brethren and churches over many states.

Elder Simpson was baptized into Springfield Primitive Baptist Church in June of 1942 and I heard him often speak of sitting under a certain tree when he first heard the gospel preached. His baptism was important and very dear to him. He was ordained a deacon in 1953 and his love for Springfield, the brethren and friends of the church were his life. He was ordained a minister on January 8, 1972 and that same year was called to serve Richmond Primitive Baptist Church and served until the distance and his health made the trip a burden. Elder Simpson was Assistant Pastor at Springfield and served Cane Creek, Sandy Level and Camp Branch Primitive Baptist Churches. I was blessed to visit all of his churches and felt the love of brethren to each other.

Funeral services were held at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church by Elders C.B. Davis, Jr., Larry Hollandsworth and Marvin Brumfield; followed by interment in Gretna Burial Park. Many brethren and friends were present.

We shall miss this dear Brother and Elder and immediately with this thought is the belief that he is in a much better place than we, and we lift our eyes to Heaven and pray that we may soon be called Home.

Reidy Pickral

ELDER O.K. TENCH

Springfield Primitive Baptist Church is sad with the passing of her beloved pastor, Elder O.K. Tench. We had him as a true servant for many years. He served us in the love he had for us. The way may not have always been the easiest yet

Elder Tench put aside other desires and came to us. I believe my memory picture of him will be of a smile and an outstretched hand. Elder Tench did not come among us with a long face or in an uncertain manner. Humble, yes, in his gift. How wonderful!

I remember Elder Tench from the time I was a young girl. Elder Stegall used to bring him to Springfield and I remember him coming to our house when I was still in school. I used to think that preachers had no questions about anything but over the years, and I hope by the grace of God, I believe they too are but men, yet these men, called of God to feed His sheep, are vessels and servants and they are to us gifts. Elder Tench was a beautiful gift. He preached the Word with power. We think of expressions Elder Tench used, such as "an inheritance" and I loved to hear him read Isaiah 40 and speak as God gave him utterance. To hear him pray was to be comforted.

Brother Tench was a pastor who encouraged trembling souls to tell brethren of the burden on their hearts. I thank the dear Lord that Elder Tench encouraged me. He baptized many dear ones and held many funerals, many of the funerals being for those who had not attended his churches.

In his later years he spoke of being repetitious. I never thought of him as repeating himself too much. The many scriptures that give us comfort are often used by our Elders and the application of the Spirit to our hearts is new each time we are blessed to hear.

Elder Tench served four churches and the members of each visited among his churches. We shall all miss him, yet, because we believe God Himself gave him to us as His gift we also believe God Himself has taken him away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. The dear Saviour taught us saying, *"I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."* We believe that death is not the uncertain dark fear we once thought it to be, but it is the way prepared of the Lord for us to leave this world of sin and sorrow and pain; it is but a small part of the journey of life. We have a very big hope that God hath loved us, we have a very small hope that we love Him. Small or large our hope may be we would not exchange it for all of this world. This hope shall be with us all of our days, it is the gift of God. The gifts of God! So now, brethren, in our hearts and minds the gift, Elder Tench, shall be with us.

May the dear Lord bless us and keep us.

Written with love I hope the dear Lord Himself has given me.

Reidy Pickral

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THE MAN OF GALILEE

A babe was born one starry night
He came for His people a leading light
Laid in a manger for wise men to see
Fulfilling God's promise — this child of Galilee

His life was sought by wicked men
But He must be spared — the law to end
Carried to Egypt where He would be free
Yet still is called the wonder of Galilee

About His fathers business while just a lad
Teaching in the temple and condemning the bad
Telling of Grace to set man free
This amazing boy of Galilee

Teaching and preaching He was the way of life
How in Him we overcome trials and strife
Saying to know Him would truly set free
This humble yet Bold One of Galilee

Speaking in parables to those He knew
Choosing His Disciples — just a few
Performing miracles of healing for all to see
This great Physician of Galilee

He came a price for sin to be paid
For on Him all our guilt was laid
Born unto this time — His death He could see
A perfect sacrifice this Lamb of Galilee

He hanged in shame upon the cross
Sure His purpose would know no loss
Saying "This day be in Paradise with me"
The preserves of life from Galilee

He gave us a hope of eternal life
In a home of no tears or strife
Seated in Heaven for us to see
He who is reigning as Lord from Galilee

May we share in His victory o'er the grave
Praise Him who died our souls to save
And share His Glory for an eternity
Our glorious Savior of Galilee.

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr

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EDITORIAL

THE AUTHOR OF SIN

Elder R.H. Campbell

There has been much written and much discussion on the subject of who is the author of sin and how sin fits into the scheme of things in the mind and purpose of God. What is the purpose of sin? Who is responsible for it and how did it become involved in the plan of God for his creation? There are those who say that the doctrine of the predestination of all things would make God the Author of sin, and therefore tarnish the glory of the creator of all things because he was involved in the evil affairs of man. Their contention, as I understand it, is that God would not be just if he punishes man for things of which he is the cause and for which man is not able to resist or prevent. There is nothing that could be further from the truth, as taught in the scriptures, because they teach that God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. I understand this to mean that God is not in any way involved in the sin of man, neither does he cause man to be involved in sin. This is not to say that God is not aware of sin, for he knows all things that comes to pass in time and uses all things to accomplish his will and purposes by permitting them to happen or over ruling them so that his sovereign will is done in all things man becomes involved in sin when he is tempted and is drawn into sin by his own lust and enticed. He lusts and is enticed because of the vanity that he possesses, was created subject to, and which causes him to desire all things that his eyes behold, for himself.

In the economy of God there is a balance of the forces at work in the world, and in the kingdom of heaven. There is light and darkness, good and evil, strength and weakness, love and hate, peace and war, harmony and discord, humility and pride and many more. Each of these forces serve a purpose and are used in God's plan and in his dealing with

his creation and especially in dealing with his children in their journey here in this time world. They are all good before God because they are used to accomplish his will and purpose and since they do this they are good. As Ecclesiastes states. *"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven:"* he then lists twenty six things, some things we call good and some things we would call bad, but then he says, he (God) hath made everything beautiful in his time. They are all, alike, beautiful, because they accomplish his will, and he has set a season and time for them to be accomplished. Many of the truths contained in the scriptures must be read with the understanding that they are all good before God because they are working together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. It takes them all working together, directed by God to bring about the desired end which is the salvation of the elect.

God is love and all things that were determined in that council which was before time began was because of this love for those who he created by and for himself, and was to make manifest this love for them. This was the plan of salvation of all those who were chosen in Christ and who are, written of, as the children of promise. Paul said, *"They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."* This is declaring the doctrine of election which is surely taught throughout the scripture, and it is the work of a sovereign God. For there to be an elect seed, they must be a portion of the whole of his creation, and not all of them; and there must be a plan which will distinguish the elect from the non-elect so that the difference would be known. The realization and experiencing of this difference causes the elect to love God and to render praise and honor unto his holy name for this marvelous display of grace and mercy to them. The distinction between these two groups of people is made many times in the scriptures, as the Apostle Paul wrote in Romans VIII, vs 22, *"What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he hath afore prepared unto glory, even us whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?"* No reason for the difference between the vessels of wrath and the vessels of mercy in their standing before God except that it was pleasing, to him, for it to be so and therefore, he has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will be hardeneth.

As stated above, for there to be an elect, there must be a non-elect: even so for there to be good there must be evil. This must be so for there to be a distinction of the difference to make manifest which is each. God is good and God is love and to be able to

recognize this love and this goodness there must be the opposites to compare the one with the other. Of necessity, it follows there must be evil and there must be a non-elect or else there is nothing to deliver the elect from and there is no reason for the elect to love and worship God for this special mercy and grace that he has blessed them with. Just as the elect were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, redeemed from the curse of the law and made sure of the salvation of God promised to them in the covenant; the non-elect were fitted to destruction, were of their father the devil and their eternal destiny was just as sure and certain as that of the elect. The way and manner in which these two destinies were to be accomplished in their lives here in time required good and evil, that they were both subjected to, to demonstrate the mercy of God in redeeming the elect from the evil and the wrath of God in judging the others according to their evil deeds.

Jesus Christ came into the world, according to the covenant plan, to take upon himself the sin of the elect so that they stood, before God, without a spot or blemish of sin: He came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. Jesus was the captain of their salvation, the author and finisher of their faith; he was the one who by his own blood entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for all of the elect; for by one offering he hath forever perfected them that are sanctified; the author and finisher of their faith by finishing the work that his father gave him to do. He endured the cross despising the shame and secured the eternal salvation of all of the heirs of grace.

As stated in the beginning of this article, in the economy of God there are many forces at work to produce the evil results as planned by God from before the beginning of time, and many things working together or against each other to accomplish the determined end. There was light, goodness, strength, love, peace, harmony and all of the godly characteristics which were taught and demonstrated in the life and work of Jesus during his ministry while here on earth. These are the positive forces of good and Jesus referred to these in his life in John XVII vs. 4. *"I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work thou gavest me to do."* All of these are the godly characteristics which were manifested by Jesus in his life and these plus his death, burial and resurrection are the works his father gave him to do and was the reason he was called the Author of their faith and Captain and Author of their salvation. These were all with the complete awareness of God and part of his plan of salvation for the saints but Jesus (not God) is indicated as the Author of their faith and their salvation. There was also other forces at work at the same time

which were darkness, evil, weakness, hatred, war and confusion and none of these are mentioned as part of the ministry of Jesus or as characteristics of God. Where did they come from and what purpose did they serve? Who was the Author of these, how did they originate and how did they function in the whole scheme of events.

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon: and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not: neither was their place found anymore in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the devil and satan which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Woe to the inhabitors of the earth and sea! for the devil is come down unto you having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. So, enters the man of sin, the son of perdition who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God — so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God shewing himself that he is God. This is the dragon that stood before the woman that was to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. He has ever been opposed to all that is good and all that is godly: he is a lier and a deceiver of the whole world. His purpose is to make manifest those negative powers of darkness, evil, weakness, hatred, war, confusion, pride, envy, jealousy and anything else that is ungodly in the world. When cast out of heaven he continued to persecute the woman and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, those which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. This he has always done and will as long as he exists because this is his purpose.

In the garden of Eden the serpent appeared to Eve and talked with her regarding the Commandment of God forbidding their eating of the trees of the garden. With his subtilty and deceit he appealed to her vanity, which she was created subject to, and convinced her of the desirability of partaking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and told her that she would not die. This resulted in the first sin of man and this conflict has been going on constantly since that time. The serpent (devil or satan) has been using his cunning evil nature, and the vain nature of the flesh to deceive and lead the man, in nature, into all of the works of sin that so appeal to the flesh, which are, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings and such like; all of which are contrary to the law of God and directly opposite to the teachings of Jesus. The whole warfare is against God and Jesus Christ because of his hatred for them and he is trying to get at them through the seed of promise, the elect, in hurting and deceiving them.

God uses satan and all of his evil schemes in working all things together for good to them that love God. As previously stated, you must have evil to manifest goodness. You must have sin to manifest righteousness. You must have evil and sin for the children of God to worship and praise him for their deliverance from them: also to show them their weakness and dependence upon him for all things that they stand in need of. Job, was a man who was perfect and that feared God and eschewed evil: he also offered sacrifices for his sons and daughters per chance they had sinned, yet, on one occasion when satan came among the sons of men to present themselves to God, the Lord said unto satan, hast thou considered my servant Job? Satan, using a subtle challenge, said doth Job fear God for nought? You've kept him and blessed him exceedingly, take these things away and he will curse thee to thy face. God said, Behold all that he hath is in thy power, only upon himself put not forth thine hand. You see how God used satan and all of his evil characteristics to accomplish his purpose which was to teach Job a lesson; now satan used all of his wiles and cunning on Job, in the nature of the three Comforters, to try to entice him to curse God but in the end Job realized the power and wisdom of God in a way that he had not know before. When satan came before God on this occasion he told him he had come from going to and fro in the earth and walking up and down in it. This is his constant effort in the pursuit of the seed of the woman; to tempt, entice and ensnare them with his wiles if possible. Peter, admonished his brethren, Be sober, be vigilant because your advesary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. He never succeeds in devouring any of the saints of God but he does, as in the case of Eve and Job, lead them into templations and causes them much affliction and trials in this life, but, God delivers them out of them all.

1 Chronicles XXI vs. 1 "*And satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.*" This caused David great trouble because this displeased God and therefore he smote Israel. David realized and acknowledged his sin and prayed that he did not fall into the hands of man for his just punishment, but let him fall into the hands of the Lord who is merciful. Jesus was tempted of satan, in the wilderness for forty days and satan used all of the cunning and wiles at his disposal to tempt Jesus and try to cause him to sin and worship him. This is the purpose of satan's being included in the scheme of things and he has done well on all counts: he does not succeed in destroying one of the elect of God, or cause them to fall from the grace of God but he does cause them misery in the flesh; manifests the opposite of Godliness to prove the case, and cause the saints to worship and praise God for his delivering them from the bondage of sin. It causes

them, sorrow for their sins, and Paul wrote: Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, for godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. Sin causes the child of God to repent unto salvation because of the evil of his sin before God: it only causes sorrow to the non-elect if they are found out and caused to suffer. This is a completely different sorrow than that of the saints, it results in their utter condemnation because they did not repent. This is the reason and purpose of sin in the world, to make manifest the heart by its reaction to the sin in their life.

In this arrangement of things, satan with all of his power and cunning, ability to deceive, power of persuasion, appearing as an angel of light and offering unto man those things that are attractive to the man of flesh; and man who was created subject to vanity which causes him to desire all that his eyes behold, the lust of the flesh for the things of nature, it is inevitable that sin will occur when all these factors come together. The author of sin is the one who is evil from the beginning, has no goodness in him and who utilizes all of his power to try to separate the elect from God by beguiling them with the beauties of the world , to get, them to obey him and disobey God. Satan is the originator of sin, the one who continually brought sin and confusion into the lives of everyone he came in contact with and caused them to suffer the effects of sin. This is his constant effort and purpose; he is the only being that is sufficiently evil to perform this work and sufficiently cunning to accomplish his work without man even being aware of the deception. Whenever sin is committed the devil is present and reigning.

A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. *Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.* Jesus spoke these words in his sermon on the mount, and they seem especially applicable in he subject under discussion. God is light (goodness) and in him is no darkness (evil, sin) at all. Whatever he does is good, because he does it and it cannot be evil. I Kings XXII vs. 20. *"And the Lord said who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth gilead? And one said on this manner, and another on that manner. And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? and he said I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said Thou shalt persuade him and prevail also: go forth and do so."* A lie was needful to fulfill God's will and God cannot lie but a spirit came forth and the deed was done with God's blessing but God did not lie. As we stated above sin is necessary for God's children to be delivered from the power of it but God did not cause the sin: the evil spirit,

satan, devil, dragon or whatever title he operates under is the author of it because he is the head of that domain. He is a corrupt tree that cannot bring forth good fruit just as God is the good tree that cannot bring forth corrupt fruit.

Oh the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God? how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out. We cannot know fully the judgments and ways of the Lord, but from what I have been made to believe about God and his ways, I see them, all as being good. I see and experience sin and I do not believe that it comes from the same source as the love and mercy I also have felt. Surely, sin with all of its afflictions and suffering is not from the same fountain that is opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. Just as Jesus, not God, is declared to be the author of the faith and the salvation of all of God's elect, because of his works, surely the devil, not God, is the author of all the sin and corruption in the world because of his works: yet both do fulfil the purpose of God in his plan of salvation for every heir of promise and both do keep that balance of the forces in using the good to overcome the sin of the saints and the evil to justly condemn those fitted to destruction.

This is not written for controversy, as I am no authority, but, are some thoughts I have had on the subject, and what I trust I have been taught by the way and manner in which I have been led into an understanding of the truth. All scriptures, and the understanding of them, are given by inspiration and are profitable to the church when they are rightly divided and given and received by the brethren in Christian Charity. None knows all, but all know some, because the manifestation of the spirit is given to every man (of God) to profit withal.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

To the household of faith:

It is with awareness of my weakness and self helplessness and unworthiness, I begin this writing; while on the other hand, I do have a deep desire to write down some of what is upon my mind and in my feelings, in the hope (if in accord with His will) The Lord God would lead, guide and direct my mind and pen, in such truths as be to His praise, honor and glorifying of His great and Holy name; that is my only hope and desire, I feel at this time. For I feel so sure it is Holy truth, I shall say — I know that His name is the only name what could ever possibly be worthy of any and all praise, honor and glory, both now and forevermore.

I do not believe there is one iota

of uncertainty with the Three in One God. I believe with all my heart, soul and being, that the almighty God made and created ALL things, and did it all to absolute perfection, in His way and manner; such manner or way (His way and manner) as all comings and events and goings and beings and beginnings and endings, would and shall be to exactness as were in both His mind and purpose in and for so having created and made it all for and to be and do and accomplish in the first place (His place). And that the only uncertainty to exist in all time for this world to stand, exists only in the mind of man, and even that is a certainty with God. It seems to me that, in order for me to in Holy truth believe in and trust in and have a hope in, the One True and living three in one God, with all His attributes; then of an absolute necessity, that belief must also embrace the certain fact that, He did then know all things, fixed and firmly established all things, and all their comings and goings and doings and beginnings and continuations and endings; that it all from beginning unto its ending, was all clear as a crystal before His all seeing eyes, and that the certainty of it all coming in that exact and perfect order, is no less sure, than that He is surely God; for with this "One God" I have reference to, there is no variableness nor shadow of turning, for He is the unchanging God. In fact and in truth, all misunderstandings and or confusion is, with us the created, but assuredly not with the Creator of us all. It is well whenever we are reminded, that God is the Potter, and we are the clay in His hands, with each of us formed in exact accordance with His pleasure to so form us each and all; thusly eliminating any and all possibility of us ever having any rightful room for boasting of ourselves for anything.

Now if it so be (in accord with my hope) that I am a child of God, and that what I write upon these pages be the truth as it is in the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, then from the depth of my heart and soul, I declare unto all who read this, this poor sinner did in no way shape or form aid in it so being, it all came about wholly and Holy thru and by the grace of a most merciful God. All salvation, both in this time world and for heaven and immortal glory, is of the Lord. If, as I feel and hope, I were taught of the Lord, my first experience did show me clearly that I nor any other member of the human race in our fleshly self, are self endowed with any attribute which accords us such reliability, as we might unquestionably place our trust in; even in natural things, much less in spiritual matter; therefore I feel I must place all my trust in the "Lord my God" that one and only One who is infallibly trustworthy, He who cannot lie, He who cannot make a mistake or miscalculation, He who is the very Holy truth in word, in practice, in life and light, and in the perfect fulfillment of His every promise. He who holds and

controls all power in both heaven and earth. He who verily spake all that exists outside Himself into existance by the word of His power. He who by His own volition chose a certain number of vessels out from His creations, as vessels of His mercy, and gave these vessels to His Son. He who holds the keys to both heaven and hell. He and only He who determines who He shall carry to heaven, and who He shall cast into hell; and all this being His perfect and Holy right to do as He pleased to do. Now work mongers and or blasphemers will and do say that He has no right to do those things, and were He to do them, He would be an unjust God. But when they speak in such manner, the god they have reference to, is not that same "God" I feel and hope I am refering to. For the god they speak and write about, exists only in their human natures mind; and therefore comes forth speaking lies, in an attempt at deceiving others into giving their money (even poor widows and children) in order that a few deceivers might live high and go out and win more proselytes and more money and fame for themselves. Did not that same serpent tell Eve that "God" had lied, when He said — ye shall surely die. Well that same thing has not ceased up to this present time by satan and all his coherts, deceiving and being deceived. Though all that being true and not a lie; no part of it has ever come as any surprise whatsoever to God, and He is still at the helm, in total and complete control of its entirety. And so my precious brethren, if God' will, may He, from time to time, bring to our memory this very fact of Holy truth, all what does be, is no more and no less, than the coming to pass of what God saw and purposed and predestinated shall be, from before the foundation of the world, yes even the ragings of the devil and all his coherts, and still it all shall work together for the good of His chosen children, them who are the called according to His purpose. You see, the creation of this world and the fullness thereof, was and is God's business, He needed no help then, nor does He need any help now. So let man and devils rage and lie as they do, it will not, it cannot and it shall not change, even one iota, that direct coming to pass of each and every event, in the fulfillment of every instant of time for this world to stand, in perfect order as was in the mind and purpose of God, in and for His creation of all things.

Now it is said — this is a hard doctrine, and if that means it is hard to believe; I will go so far as to say — except one is taught it of the Lord, it is an impossible doctrine to believe. For to the unbeliever, the lie is truth, and the truth is a lie. There is but one school what can and does teach one a pure knowledge whereby they can separate the lie from the Holy truth, and or properly divide the word of truth, and that is the school of grace. In this school, there are no volunteers enrolled, neither by

child or parent; neither do they go to this school, for instead, this school is brought to them, and all without any payment for tuition or books. The Teacher in this school, is in no wise dependent upon any earthly form of government or individual, for advice or support; for He has all knowledge, and by right of having created all things, He already owns the whole world and the fullness thereof.

If what is written here be supported by the Holy Scripture, then accept it as the truth; otherwise discard it as filthy rags. If the former, praise only God for it; if the latter, lay it at my door.

Troy G. Shepard
103 East Tateway Rd.
Kitty Hawk, N.C. 27949

Dear Elder Williams;

I am enclosing in addition to my check, also my mom's, Lucill Youngs renewal. I noticed that her subscription ran out this year and we were indeed occupied with her illness and broken hip.

God's sweet providence was such that Mom was made to say that "She thanked God for her broken hip." How marvelous to behold God's compassionate dealings with us!

I am also enclosing a change of address card with Mom's new address. She is doing great; in fact she is the "Good news person" of Fox Acre's Assisted Lining Complex.

I feel sure many of your readers who have read some of Mom's articles in the past Signs would love to know that she is well and still contending for the Faith that only God can and does give.

She still is blessed to use her "gift of singing" to the praise, honor and glory of the God who instilled in her mind, heart, and soul a "new song" and whose Love has kept that "song" alive in her heart and causes her to reflect the beauty that is Christ.

In Sweet Hope of Eternal Life,
Carrie Jo Williams

Dear Elder Key,

As the time draws closer for me to graduate from the university, I have repeatedly felt a need to write a few words of my experience here. I hope that God will bless them to be an encouragement to some who may feel that the young have left the church.

In December, I will finish here in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. When I began school here in 1988 there were some who said I'd come away confused and not knowing anymore what I believed. But I had faith that God would hold my course. He shielded me from their philosophies and falsehoods. I did begin, however, to

think very hard about why I believed the way I did. I sat down often and thought about the details of my beliefs. Oh, I knew God had put them there, but I dug even deeper. Someone once said that if you do not examine what you believe, then it is not worth believing. I agree with that. None of us should be content to be idle in our faith. We should ask ourselves questions, pray to God for fuller knowledge, and read His Word often. How else can we speak authoritatively about our beliefs?

My point is this: through all my soul-searching, and faced with the false teachings and blasphemies of the faculty at this university, I came out greatly strengthened in faith and love for God. I marvel at his awesome plans, manifested in the seas, the sky, the mountains. I have been sharply tried here, and my beliefs have been dragged in the dust by many. They would not be satisfied until they had left me speechless, but God lifted me out of their pitfalls and deceptions. He taught me that I do not need to argue with the agents of the enemy. I found strength in II Colossians 2:8, *"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."* Some of you would stand in shock to hear what things they teach here. Some of my own classmates say that religion is for the foolish who cannot cope with real life. Some say that God is a fairy tale. Yet even the Christian students here offered me no comfort, for they treated me strangely when they discovered how I believe. Fellowship with them left me dry and hungry. God Himself stood with me here and He fortified my beliefs. I hope He has set my feet upon the rock.

I will be leaving North Carolina when I graduate. This means that some of the old faces I see back home I will not see again, for nature will run its course. I am still young, but my ageless soul soars when I think of God's predestination and abounding grace. I hope He has seen fit to pour some of it on me and include me in His promise. I feel this has been a poor effort, but if God has been exalted, then I did not write in vain. I ask remembrance in your prayers as I begin life in the real world. My prayer is that He will bless and sustain you until that great day when we shall see Him as He is.

In love and blessed hope,
Scott Collie

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1 CORINTHIANS 15 : 55-58.

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

THE LETTER FROM ELDER GRIFFIN

Covin, Alabama

Mr. and Mrs. Bunyan McGregor,
St. Charles, Kentucky

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

It has been some time since we have anything your way, but it has not been because you were not in our thoughts. The pleasant scenes of yesteryear are not easily forgotten. If they pertained only to this life, we would soon forget them in the press of the daily toil and strife, but they are memories of a little prelude of what is to come. Well, the casual observer might want to know, What is to come? And before I could answer that I would want to know, What has already come?

What has already come? Has something come to pass that is outstanding? Has something come to pass that is different to what has come to pass with many? When we look back in retrospection, look at those with whom we are surrounded, we are well aware that something has come to pass with us that has not come to pass with them. If that, that has come to pass with us is of the Lord, then the world has come to an end for us, but is still standing with them. When the world came to an end it held no more attraction for us. Its glittering joys and objects of time lost all of their luster; the things that we had been doing seemed to matter no more; the things we had been eating and drinking ceased to alleviate our hunger and thirst; the ambitions that pertained to this world were lost in our efforts of survival; our hopes for after life went thru such an abrupt change that we knew that we would never make it by works of righteousness which we had done.

What a vast change all this brought about. To have the world come to an end and yet it be existing as it always had, is a mystery to those that it has not yet ended for. That is the reason Old Baptist doctrine is held in disdain by so many. It is because their world is still standing and ours has fallen. And what vexation of spirit it is to us (as we humbly hope) to yet be in this fallen perishing world. Our affections are set on things above; we are looking (not to this world, but) to that world of immortal bloom, where joys unspeakable and full of glory await all of the redeemed of the Lord.

But, while the change has been wonderful, it has not been as complete as we yearn for. Oh, so much of the time we feel to be at home in the body, and just as often as we feel to be at home in the body, we groan because we are absent from the Lord. How great the change, only those thus exercised know. No

need to talk to those that have not had the change wrought in them, for the only thing they know, or can know, is being at home in the body, and how satisfied they feel to dwell there. How restful that is; how free of vexation and toil; how clear of troubles and sorrow; how precious the goods of that vast dwelling place, and how great the hoard of unused riches; how spacious is the room to move around in, and how delightful to have freedom of will to go whithersoever they would therein, and to even boast of ability to leave that dwelling to live with Christ; how high and broad the doors and windows of the dwelling and what streams of light they give.

But when it is shown to the occupant how unstable the dwelling is, and that he that made it is erasing it, taking away all that we had of armour and light and will, and spoiling all of our goods but leaving them and their stink for our now delicate sense of smell, closing every door and window of escape, how sick we became of our bed. We had rested there a long time, but now could not rest there. We had been strong and healthy there, and had held in disdain those that talked of lack of strength, and that could not enjoy the vain and frivolous things of time. What a spell of sickness that was. It will never be forgotten. Sick unto death, and no quickening spirit, no balm for our sores, no wine to cheer our droopiness, no pure water to wash away our filthiness, no bread, no water of life. No physician came our way. We tried all that we heard of and we got worse. We spent what we had, or what we thought we had, and our troubles grew and mounted up as dark clouds of gloom. We watched our supplies dwindle; we watched them used up; we came to the end, our world ended.

Everything ended. We died to it all. But our dying to it was the height of our beginning. Jesus died but he lives, and he, being our Life, we lived again. Alive unto God, alive unto righteousness. He came to us while helpless on our sick bed. He said something. He spoke with power and authority. *"Take up thy bed and walk".* This has never been said to anybody except God's people. It was a curiosity to the Jews of that day and this day. That excited them in literal things and it is exciting in religious things now to be carrying this dead world (body) around. Oh, day longed for by the trembling saints of God. That day when the change will be so complete, and we shall see our Lord as he is and be like him forever and forever. How sickening it is to be at home in this body or world. How we long for deliverance from the body of this death. How we do long to ground our arms and go to our long sought home of rest.

God has provided us one pleasant boon while here. It is not any small moment to think of what the Lord has done for us here. Oh, my weary, questioning soul, dry all thy tears,

calm all thy fears. He that did not own a home; he that had no place to rest that dear tired body; he that often was alone, and misunderstood by those close to him; he that was forsaken by his Father and died the cruel death of the cross alone, he it was that gave us a home before he left here. Gave us a place to turn aside from the stench and noise and burdens of a dead world to rest. He gave us that resting place and brings us to see the beauty and joy therein. To insure our final home over the way, the Man Christ Jesus the Lord went into glory there to appear for us, but he sent One, even the Holy Ghost to dwell in this home with us. He, the Man Christ Jesus appears today in heaven for us; the Teacher, which is the Comforter or Holy Ghost, appears to us here and leads us to our home in this world.

I will never forget the restfulness of that home when I got there. I thought I would never make it. I had longed for it, I had hoped that some day I might be one with them, but I did not see any way for a sinner like me to enjoy the pleasures of that pleasant land. Something happened to me again. Everything, wife, darling babies, all, all, left me, and someone brought me nearer ever nearer the church of Jesus Christ. One went away, the other came nearer and ever nearer, until I could think of nothing except to be baptized. I believed that I would die if I did not go and ask them for a home.

In the fulness of time I did go. You cannot know how surprising it was to find them waiting as eagerly and anxiously for me to come as I was to go. It was the sweetest experience I've ever had in my life. Something did come to pass, and so it has been coming to pass in the life of the people of God all the way down the steps of time. That, that has come to pass, is the prelude of what is to come yet. We have had the world to end, yes, but we have not been taken out of the world. We have been kept from the evil here, but we have not been delivered from the presence of evil. We have had it made known unto us that the body is dead because of sin that dwells in it, but we have not been delivered from the body of death. The change is not yet full as our desires. But thank his precious name something has come to pass. That which has come to pass is so wonderful that it assures us that something else will come to pass. We have known and felt the image of the earthly, having felt all of its plagues and galling effects, but are assured that we shall also bear the image of the heavenly; we know what it is to be in dishonor and weakness and corruption and dull mortality. Yes, something has come to pass, and it having come to pass, we are looking for a city whose maker and builder is God. We know that we do not have one here. Something has indeed come to pass that is wonderful. We have been taught that we have no continuing city here, and that, that has come to pass is now

causing us to seek one to come. It is a good thing that has come to pass. The world has ended for us. We have lost everything here. But we have been given something else that is much better. We have been made to seek one to come.

Another thing has come to pass. While seeking a city to come, we have a company of kindred spirits on the journey home. I have not, in thirty-five years of writing, enjoyed any more than to send this little epistle to you. God gave you to me. I needed somebody to talk to this morning, and I do hope that you will need these lines when they arrive, and that they will be as crumbs to travel on and on in the heavenly way.

Something else will take place tomorrow. We will be gone. Others, and on my part, I hope more faithful ones, will have taken our place. But our going will not bring sorrow to those of the household of faith, for it is better to die than to live, for living here is not any longer our joy and anticipation, but going yonder to meet our loved ones is the most desirable thing of all. And as I close my enraptured soul feels that, if I do not see you anymore here, that I will meet you over home. To that end I wait.

We love you for Jesus' sake.

Your little brother and sister,
W.D. and Lois Griffin

"In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." — Ephesians i. 13, 14.

Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. Holy are its inhabitants, holy its employments, holy its enjoyments. Therefore unless we know something of the teaching, the work, and witness of the Holy Spirit here, and are made partakers of a new, holy, spiritual, and heavenly nature we have no pledge or earnest of our interest in the inheritance of the saints in bliss. A carnal, unsanctified, unholy, unrenewed heart is utterly incapable of understanding, entering into, longing after, and loving an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. But every holy desire, heavenly affection, gracious longing, spiritual enjoyment, and believing, hoping, loving, looking unto and cleaving to the Lord of life and glory by the power of the Holy Spirit, are all so many pledges and earnests of an interest in the glorious inheritance of the saints in light. The love, the joy, the peace, the calm tranquillity, and holy acquiescence in the will of God; the ravishing views of the glory of Christ which change the soul into the same image, from glory to glory; the delight felt in him, and the whole surrender of the heart and affections to the blessed Lord as the chiefest of ten thousand and the altogether lovely, are all so many earnests of the inheritance above, as being heaven begun below.

J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

THE LORD ADDS TO THE CHURCH DAILY SUCH AS SHOULD BE SAVED

Many years ago, I tried to beg for my dear husband. These words were given to me. "It is good to wait upon the Lord". And then these words came to me. "If He has begun a good work in one, He will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ". As I waited through the years, 26 to be exact, I tried to be patient for I knew without a doubt that He had begun a good work. I felt assured that there was a day for my dear husband to be baptised. I never dreamed that God would give me such a blessed day as He has. I want to try to put some of it on paper if my Heavenly Father will bless me to do so.

We have five precious daughters. I believe each one has a love for the church. One night at the beginning of July 1991, God sent one of my daughters and her family to visit with us. We soon began to talk of God, His goodness, and His Church. Our son-in-law spoke of how he felt that he had to come to the church. After our sweet talk, they left for home rather late. I felt so caught up with joy for them that I slept very little that night.

As I laid upon my bed, it came to me so plain that we would have a baptising at 9:00 a.m. on our Communion Day which is the 2nd Sunday in August. On 2nd Sunday in July, our son-in-law Wayne Sutphin attended church with his little son Riley. Cindy, Wayne's wife, had left for the weekend with their daughter on a camping trip. Wayne said that he had no intention of joining the church that day. He wanted Cindy to be there; however, God had the day set! At the close of our meeting, Wayne came forth and ask for a home at Salem Church. I was so happy for him because I knew this had been troubling him for several years. The baptism was set for 2nd Sunday in August at 9:00 a.m.

The month was passing, bringing us closer to our Communion Day and the baptism. My mind took me back to the days when our precious Minister, Elder Roy Agee, was with us at Salem. Shortly before his death, he sat talking with my husband and me. He told us he felt that we were going to have a revival at Salem Church. I counted the years since his death and it numbered "seven". I then remembered that God gave us three new members the following month after Brother Roy's death. Roy's dear brother Andrew, Andrew's wife Gladys, and his sister Ruby were blessed to come at that time. As I reminisced on the revival, I began to think of all the lovely friends we had that were waiting to be brought into the church. My heart filled to the brim and I begged, "Oh, Lord, if it could be thy will, give us that revival

Brother Roy spoke of".

Saturday morning came for our conference meeting. At the close of the meeting, our daughter Cindy came forth. Oh, what joy we felt that she was blessed to come with her husband to the church. After we dismissed, another one gave in to the church. My Aunt Sylvia Conner had desired a home for many years. She ask that her baptism be 2nd Sunday in September. Her family was away and she felt they would like to be there at the baptism. Oh, what joy it is to see them come manifesting their unworthiness, yet desiring to follow our Lord and Savior in baptism.

My heart was so full I didn't think there was room for anymore; but God had more in store. We had two sisters of the church to spend the night with us. As we sat talking, Sister Elva ask my husband if he thought he could go into the water with our children the next day. He answered that he would like to, but felt so unworthy. I then quoted the words that were given to me long ago. "It is good to wait upon the Lord." I told the sisters that I felt sure there was a day appointed for my dear husband. Little did I know that the next beautiful sunrise was to be the day.

Down by the river that beautiful morning, it seemed that The Holy Ghost surrounded us all as we stood on the banks. Hymns were sung and Elder Cox offered up the prayer. An open door was published for anyone else who wanted a home with the church. Sister Ora King came forth immediately, followed by my husband, Wade Poff. Oh, what joy filled my heart! As I turned, my eyes fell upon another precious one coming in Sister Hilda Ferris. And yet another followed Sister Livie Thompson, who I have loved since high school days. Low and behold, I looked and two more were coming Sister Evoleen Rutrough and husband, Brother Julian, who had given so much help to our church. This, I thought, is the revival which Brother Roy had spoken of. I looked up and yet another was coming Brother Alfred Ratliff, who also had been so faithful to help us at Salem, was asking for a home. We had a total of ten candidates for baptism with each asking for a home at Salem Church. Brother Julian and Sister Evoleen requested for baptism with Sister Sylvia in September. We were left with "seven" to baptise on that day.

Words cannot express the joy that filled my heart. There before me was one of the most beautiful scenes anyone could witness! The seven joined together with Elders, Hale Terry and Willard Cox, and walked into the rippling waters on a beautiful sunny morning. I believe that it was a little taste of Heaven here below on earth. Hearts filled with love and joy and was manifested there by the river.

Our dear pastor, Elder Hale Terry, had felt within his heart that we would have "seven" for baptism that morning after talking with me on Saturday.

I felt some concern for Elder Terry as he baptised each of the seven. He had some serious back problems; but he told me later that he didn't even know he had a back for he was rejoicing so much.

As they all came from the water this hymn was sung. "Oh how happy are they, Who their Savior obey, And whose treasures are laid up above! Tongue cannot express the sweet comfort and peace, Of a soul in it's earliest love"!

What a blessed day! As long as God will grant me a memory, I shall never forget. May He forever be praised! A sinner with a hope that Jesus is mine.

Today, September 18, 1991, if God will grant me the privilege, I would like to write about our revival continuing at Salem Church. The second Sunday in September we had nine candidates for baptism. Three joined at the August baptism: Sisters Sylvia Conner and Eveleen Rutrough, and Brother Julian Rutrough. Three more were blessed to come at the close of the Smith River Association, requesting baptism with the above three, but placing their membership at other churches. Brother Wilton L. Sutphin placed his membership at Paynes Creek, Brother Joseph Holly with membership at Town Creek, and Brother William Earl Mitchell placed his at Little Hope.

With these six candidates, we gathered at the banks of Little River again. Hymns of praise were sung, and prayer was offered. An open door was published for reception of members. Again three came forward: my dear sister in the flesh, Mae Conner Vest, Mae's daughter, Donna West Minnix, and a special friend, Sister Mary Walton Janney, (making the ninth). We rejoiced greatly over the loved ones that God had brought in. The total for Salem Church was thirteen. Sister Eveleen Rutrough had dreamed of being baptised with a total of "thirteen". Thanks be unto His Holy Name.

The Lord of hosts hath sworn saying, "Surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed so shall it stand". I love the song which says, "The Lord moves in a mysterious way, His Wonders to perform — He plants his footsteps on the sea and rides upon the storm ". I have been lifted so high that I'm standing in fear of the terrible storm that may lie ahead, but I know without a shadow of a doubt that He holds it all in His Hands. I just beg that He will bless me with His grace to bear whatever is mine.

A sinner in need of His mercy.
Mary Poff

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 12/91 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

SONG SERVICES

A song service is held each second Sunday night at 7:00 P.M. at Dan River Church. Also each fourth Sunday night at Malmaison Church. All who love to sing or those who love to listen are invited to come to these services.

Editors

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The Staunton River Union meeting will be held with Springfield Primitive Baptist Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in December 1991, the Lord willing.

All Elders of our faith and order along with all lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Springfield Primitive Baptist Church
Oscar Pickral, Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Union Church, a Presbytery met at Union Church on Saturday October 26, 1991 for the examination of Brother Alvis L. Shelton if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of the judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The solemity was begun with prayer by Elder Larry Hollandsworth. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the Presbytery. Those present were Elders Leonard J. Brammer, Kenneth Key, Clarence Stone, Willard Cox, Lane Carter, W.J. Conner, Noel Conner, Larry Hollandsworth.

Deacons present were as follows: Nelson Bryant, Andrew Agee, H.D. Ingram, Donald Agee, Woody Young, Wilson King, Tommy Lovill, Hassell Hale, Oscar Pickral, Guy Holley, G.W. Conner, Woodrow Abshire, Chester Hagood, Grey Ingram, Wilford Larsons, Joe Cahill, Floyd Bryant, Jessie Tyree, Jamie Cooper.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Leonard J. Brammer as moderator; Jamie Cooper as clerk; Elder Kenneth Key was chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate. H.D. Ingram having been duly appointed by Union Church, delivered Brother Shelton to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder Kenneth Key and Noel Conner and all present Elders invited to participate using Scripture reference 1st Timothy 3rd Chap. Verse 8. The presbytery being satisfied examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands, with the Ordination prayer being delivered by Elder Willard Cox. The charge was delivered to the candidate by Elder Lane Carter using Scriptural reference 1st Timothy.

Moderator asked the Presbytery if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brother Alvis Shelton and the right hand of fellowship was given. The ordained Brother was delivered back to the church as an ordained Deacon of the Old School Primitive Church at Union Church.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and approved. The Presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder W.J. Conner.

Leonard J. Brammer, Moderator
Jamie Cooper, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will meet at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing, on the fifth Sunday in December, 1991 at 10:00 a.m. Preaching will begin at 10:30 a.m.

Greensboro Church will host this meeting.

All Elders of our faith and order along with all lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Pastor
Brother Wayne Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 1991

Mrs. Alice Gibson, VA 2.00
Mrs. Christine G. Shelton, VA ...2.00
Mrs. Annie Reed, VA 10.00
Frank Hunt, VA 10.00
Aubrey Oakes, VA 2.00
Irvin Holley, VA 2.00
Eld. Marvin Brumfield, VA 2.00
W.L. Adams, VA 4.00
James L. Howell, AL 7.00
Wilford G. Parsons, VA 7.00
Mrs. Sylvia W. Conner, VA 2.00
Memory of Eld. J.R. Hollandsworth
Mrs. J.R. Hollandsworth, VA.....5.00
Mrs. S.G. Harralson, KY.....5.00
Mrs. Mary Stanfield, VA 2.00
Mrs. Frank Scearce, VA 2.00
Mrs. Donald Arne, SD 60.00
A.J. Dowdy, NC 7.00
Mr. & Mrs. J.M. Marshall, VA 5.00
Mrs. Ruth Sparkman, TX 5.00
Banks H. Conner, VA 10.00
Mr. & Mrs. Charles P. Hayes, AL...5.00
Eld. Bud Smith, CA 2.00
C.V. Ferris, VA 2.00
Eld. R.H. Campbell, TN 7.00
Mr. & Mrs. Bell, VA 5.00
Mrs. Willie M. Ratliff, VA 5.00
Eld. Joe Sawyer, NC 2.00
Floyd Oakley, AR 2.00
C.C. Johnson, NC 2.00
Mrs. Bernice Greer, VA 2.00
Mrs. Annie B. Malone, AL.....12.00
James O. Whaling, OH 2.00
Mrs. Homer Pettis, LA 5.00

Mrs. Nannie Moran, VA 2.00
Ms. Cathy P. Holden, VA 2.00
T.W. Coats, TX 2.00

OBITUARIES

DEACON FLOIS A. CHAPELL

Flois A. Chapell was born July 24, 1901 in Obion County Tennessee to Thomas and Minnie Chapell. He died May 2, 1991.

He was married December 23, 1923 to Ruth Collier and to this union was born two children Wayman and Ramona.

Flois and Ruth both joined the Cane Creek Primitive Baptist Church, in Obion County near Rives Tennessee on November 12, 1971 and were baptized April 16, 1972. They were baptized by Elder H. R. Prince, their pastor, who was assisted by their son, Elder Wayman G. Chapell.

Brother Chapell was ordained to the office of Deacon in the Cane Creek Church, in which capacity he faithfully served until the time of his death. He lived to see his son and daughter join the Primitive Baptist Church, Elder Wayman G. Chapell joined the Memphis Tennessee Church and Sister Ramona Moon joined with her husband Charles Moon at the Bowes Chapel Church near Fulton, Ky. A grand daughter Ginnie Ruth has also joined the Bowes Chapell recently.

Brother Chapell's home was a very pleasant place to visit over the years, a favorite place at their annual meetings or any other time. All lovers of the truth were always welcome. He will be sorely missed by all who knew him, but we realize his race has been run and that he is in a far better place than we which remain.

Richard H. Campbell

ETHEL E. SKINNER

McConnellsburg, Pa. Ethel Elmira Skinner, 96, of McConnellsburg, Pa. died Sunday, Oct. 13, 1991, in the Long-Term Care Facility at Fulton County Medical Center, where she had lived for four years.

Born Nov. 22, 1894, in Needmore, she was a daughter of the late McCauley and Sara Jane Brewer McEldowney.

She was a member of Sidling Hill Baptist Church, Needmore.

Her husband, Elder John Skinner, died in 1941.

Surviving are four nephews: Blair Truax of Needmore, Kermit McEldowney of Manchester, Loy McEldowney of St. Thomas and John McEldowney of Ocala, Fla.

She was preceded in death by a sister and a brother.

Services were held in Sidling Hill Baptist Church by Elders Bill Dillon, William Payne and Raymond

Pressley. Burial was in the church cemetery.

IN MEMORY OF ELDER O.K. TENCH

The dear Lord willing, I will endeavor to write a few lines in memory of my dear Pastor, Elder O.K. Tench. He was indeed an Old Father of Israel, blessed of God with a wonderful gift to preach the Gospel, which is the Power of God. If he was not blessed to preach, he was always blessed to make a beautiful talk. He preached the things that he believed and believed the things he preached.

Elder Tench was born January 23, 1911, to Isham Ferguson and Sallie Campbell Tench. Survivors are his wife, Helen Bennett Tench, three daughters, Betty Ellis, JoAnn Meeks and Darnell Barnes, a son, Orren Kinsey Tench, Jr., six grandchildren, and a sister, Emma T. McCrickard. Elder Tench loved his wife and family and they all loved him, but his Religion was the most important thing in his life and that came first. Mrs. Tench says she has so many questions now concerning the scriptures that she wished she had asked him.

He was baptized the 3rd Sunday in May 1932 and ordained to the Ministry in August, 1937. Elder Tench was called to serve Weatherford Church as their Pastor in 1938. Raymond and I were 3 years old. We cannot remember Weatherford Church without Elder Tench. I can't recall many times his not being there. He was a devoted Pastor, always striving for peace. He was like a Father to Raymond and I. When we were burdened to join the church, he came home with us from church and when lunch was served, there were more tears shed than mouthfuls eaten. We united with Weatherford Church the next 4th Sunday, which was July, 1965 and was baptized by Elder Tench the 2nd Sunday in August, 1965, which was the happiest day of our lives. He was so kind and supportive to Raymond when he was burdened to speak and during the time he served with him at Weatherford — all the things he told us, he meant them for our good.

Elder Tench was a spiritual minded person, blessed to talk on the scriptures in our homes, loved to sing the songs of Zion and was a very good song leader. He was compassionate and affectionate, a Pastor we could go to when we had a problem or a question. He was also blessed to preach beautiful funerals, which were many, of church members and non-members. He had many friends, many who are not Primitive Baptists.

During his ministry, he became concerned who would serve his churches when he was gone and the dear Lord blessed him to baptize 5 ministers during his ministry, Elders Raymond Goad and Marvin Brumfield from Weatherford, Elder Julian Williams from Malmaison, Elder Thomas Solomon from Chapel, and

Elder Melvin Shelton from Springfield, who now serves Banister Springs Church. Elder Denver Simpson was also ordained during his ministry at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church and served with Elder Tench until his death. He baptized most of us who are members at Weatherford at this time. He baptized Raymond's grandfather, his mother, his two sisters, Raymond and I. He also baptized my mother and father.

Elder Tench served Weatherford Church faithfully for 53 years. He suffered a massive stroke the 3rd Saturday in February, 1991, soon after his 80th birthday, when he was preparing to go to Chapel, his home church, and was never able to attend church again. Although everything was done for him that human hands could do, he was not satisfied. He wanted to go to his natural home. Mrs. Tench, a devoted wife, wanted to take him home and was making preparations to do so when the Lord called him home. He wanted to die.

His daughter, Betty, was at his bedside on Thursday and he asked her what day is this, she replied Thursday and he said I am going to die Friday. The dear Lord saw fit to call him home on Friday, May 24, 1991. His funeral was conducted on Sunday, May 26, at Lynch's Funeral Chapel, Rocky Mount, Va., by the 5 ministers he baptized and his body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Franklin Memorial Park to await the Glorious Resurrection. His funeral was attended by a host of Brethren and Friends.

Elder Tench is greatly missed by his dear wife and family, his Brethren and his friends. May all that mourn his passing be reconciled to God's Holy Will and be blessed with sweet memories of him and be given a thankful heart that the dear Lord saw fit to send us our Pastor, Elder O.K. Tench, who served so faithful for these 53 years. We did not worship him as a man, but hope we worshipped the things he set forth.

Written by Phyllis Goad

PSALM 67

God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah.

That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.

Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.

Let the people praise thee, O God; let the people praise thee.

Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us.

God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure your of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

The Editors

Signs of the Times

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THE HAPPY CHILD OF GRACE.

How happy's every child of grace,
That feels his sins forgiven!
This earth, he cries, is not my place,
I seek a place in heaven:
A country far from mortal sight,
Yet oh! by faith I see,
The land of rest, the saints' delight
A heaven prepared for me.

To that Jerusalem above,
With singing I repair;
While in this vale, my hope and love,
My ravished soul is there.
There my exalted Saviour stands,
My merciful High Priest,
And still extends his wounded hands,
To take me to his breast.

What is there here to court my stay,
Or keep me back from home,
When angels beckon me away,
And Jesus bids me come?
Shall I regret to leave my friends
Here in this vale confined?
To Christ, the Lord, my soul ascends;
Farewell to all behind!

O what a blessed hope is ours,
While here on earth we stay!
We more than taste the heavenly powers,
And antedate that day.
We feel the resurrection near,
Our life in Christ concealed;
And with his glorious presence here
Our longing hearts are filled.

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EDITORIAL

Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rod of offense, even to them which stumble at the word being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: which in times past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy but now hath obtained mercy.

Elder R.H. Campbell

This is the heritage of every heir of promise and it is made manifest in their lives as they are called out of nature's darkness and into the marvelous light and love of God. They are born in the flesh, a natural man with no understanding of God and the spiritual realm which is all around. They are without hope and without God in the world; they are satisfied with their life, they enjoy the pleasures of the flesh and would live and die in that condition if left to their own abilities and desires. If it depended on this man, in nature, to make the first move and accept the Lord; how would he begin? They that worship God must worship him in spirit and in truth; how is this man in the flesh going to get into the spirit? ***Jesus, said except a man is born again he cannot see the kingdom of heaven.*** Man cannot have anything to do with their own birth and I believe that this is why Jesus used this analogy of the spiritual awakening that occurs when the Holy Ghost first indwells the individual; it is beyond their ability.

When a person is born of the spirit, they, for the first time are made aware of what they are in nature and what they must be by grace. They realize that they have indeed been without hope and without God in the world but now they are a member of that heavenly kingdom. They know that it was not the results of anything they did; it was just suddenly there and they were completely passive in the change. With some it is a sudden

thing; with others it may develop over a period of time, but the realization of what it is, is always unexpected and sudden in its impact upon them. Then as they begin to read the scriptures they see their own faith discussed and experienced by men in all ages of time; telling them their own thoughts and emotions that they had felt were unique with them. This is what causes the love and fellowship that they feel so deeply for those of like precious faith.

At this particular point in their experience they can understand how that to some the name of Jesus is precious because they have been born of that spirit which he promised to send into the world, and remember how it was with them when they did not understand. They can see how these things were a stumbling stone and a rock of offense because others would try to tell them of the beauties of this kingdom and they just could not see them. They realize that all would continue in the ways of the world if not called out as they were; there is no other explanation for it other than the grace of God.

There is much evidence in the lives of the elect to cause them to fear that they may be deceived and may be deceiving others, but there is a greater witness within that they are in that chosen generation. They now love these things more than life itself and treasure the joys of the seasons when they are blessed to sit together in heavenly places in Christ. There is no joy that the world can give, to one of these peculiar people that will in any sense compare with the joyful hearts of saints as they come together to sing the song of Zion, hear the word preached and to share the experiences with others who have traveled along with them on this highway which is called the way of holiness. They are indeed a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people and the whole desire of their heart is to shew forth the praises of him that has called them out of nature's darkness into his marvelous light. They never feel that they can begin to do this, and do it justice, but they do, among themselves. The world might observe and ridicule them for the simplicity of their service and the old fashioned traditions that they follow, but, to those who have been quickened and changed they are following in the footsteps of those who have gone before and according to the teachings and example of their Lord and Savior. These things are not and have no need to be changed or updated. As the plan of salvation has never changed neither need the recipients of that salvation change their form of worship.

Unto such as have been made to believe these things, the name of Jesus is precious because he is the author and finisher of their faith. He is the giver of every good and perfect gift, and of equal importance is the fact that whatsoever he doeth is done forever. They experience the beginning of this love within their

heart but they will never experience the ending of it because there will never be an end.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Elder Key, I would like to see some space in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for Questions and Answers, A kind of FORUM, Elder Beebe had this years ago, and I believe it would be good now. The people of the SIGNS could ask questions, and then someone could write an answer, or they could specify who they wanted to answer. Hope you and the associate Editors will give this some thought;

Example:

Question? Why was it that Moses could not go with the children of Israel across over into the promise land?

Answer:

Because Moses smote the rock, that the Lord told him to speak to, Numbers 20:11 *And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice; and the water came out abundantly and the congregation drank and their beasts also.*

Moses was a type of the law and the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by which we draw nigh unto God.

Joshua was a type of Christ. The Lord speaks to Joshua in JOSHUA 1:2 *Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.*

Moses received the law on mount Sinai, and there was many sacrifices, offerings, and burnt offerings. Every year and every day the fire did not go out but they could not take away sin. Our Lord offered himself once and for all. That is all that was needed, because His was a perfect offering unto the Father.

With Love & Best Wishes,
Elder Leonard J. Brammer

(We think Elder Brammer's suggestion is good and we hope you, the readers will respond accordingly.)

Editors

ARTICLES

Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. St. John, 5:39.

Christ was talking to the Jews, just before he said these words, and I would feel he was still talking to them at this time.

The Lord said search the scripture, many of the Jews could not know

Christ. Well we know that no man can know him, unless he is revealed to them, they were looking for a king of great pomp & show, and since he came in such an humble way, they did not believe him, but unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Well it is much the same way today, men do not believe him, the doctrine of men is, that you can find eternal life in the bible, by just reading it. I recommend reading the Bible, but it alone will not give life, but is a testimony of him that did give life, I hear men saying that the Bible is the word of God, but the bible is the written word, Christ is the living Word.

Men may think that they have eternal life by reading the bible, but there is only one that can give life and that is Christ, Matt. 28:18 and *Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*

As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. St. John 17:2.

The bible gives testimony, how that our Lord suffered for us, and that he paid the debt that we owed, set us free from the law of sin and death.

And rose from the dead for our justification, He conquered death so that death has no more power over him, he died once to put away sin for us, one offering put away sin so that it will not reign over us, that is to have dominion over us. By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, in other words his whole life from his birth was a testimony or a testament for his people.

When the Lord sat at the table with his disciples, and took the cup and said this is the new testament in my blood, and also in *Heb. 9:19 for when Moses had spoken every precept, to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people. Heb. 9:20 Saying, this is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.*

For without the shedding of blood, there is no remission for sin.

But Christ died and rose from the dead, a victorious conqueror over death, Had he not rose from the dead, our salvation would not be complete, but by one offering, he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.

Jesus has paid the full price of redemption, because if we are his, all of the sins of all his people were laid on him, he carried our sorrow's, and by his stripes we are healed.

Blessed be his holy name, that he has given us a hope in Him, by the witness within, by this we can witness with the Prophets, and the apostles, and our own brethren, it

begets fellowship, and love, we hunger and thirst for the same things in Christ, we want to feed on Christ, we want to eat of him, and drink of him, and also to suffer with and for him, because if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him.

Thanks be to his Holy name, who loved us and gave himself for us. And the testament, and the testimony of our Lord is sufficient, for it was said to Paul my grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

May the Lord bless this to his praise,
Humbly submitted I trust,
Elder Leonard J. Brammer

I Corinthians 2:1-7.

And I brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect, yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that came to naught. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden mystery, which God ordained before the world unto our glory.

The apostle says, he came not with excellency of speech or wisdom. In other words Paul wasn't trying to win anyone by the manner in which he spoke. He wasn't claiming, nor did he want them to think, that he was an excellent speaker. He did not want to leave the impression with them that he was a great or wise man. His aim was not to be rated high in wisdom among men, but he was declaring unto them the testimony of God. This was his one desire, his one ambition to declare unto them the testimony of God. He wasn't there to tell them of worldly things, natural things, or news about some foreign nation. He was declaring the testimony of God. He was declaring this testimony, and he knew what he was talking about. Paul had been shown something, he had experienced something to such a degree that he was now declaring it to the people. Verse 2 *For I was determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified.* This was what he wanted to tell, the fact that Jesus was the Christ, the son of the most high God. How he had come into this world, taken unto himself a body of flesh, and suffered shame, humiliation and death on the cross. He took the sins of the chosen upon himself, paid the price for each one, and answered or fulfilled all the requirements of justice. This was his subject, the subject that was

needed there that day, and this is the subject that is needed today. Paul had been shown the truth. He had seen the light, and now wanted to declare unto the brethren. Paul's subject was Jesus Christ and him crucified. Paul was declaring unto them Jesus, the crucifiction of Jesus, the work done by Jesus, the sacrifice made by Jesus. The salvation not promised by Jesus, not offered by Jesus. But given by Jesus through grace to all his little ones. I hope and I believe this is the subject preached by our preachers in the Old Baptist churches. For I believe they, like Paul, have been shown something. This is a great blessing to us, by the grace of God, and not anything we have done to deserve it.

For I was with you in weakness, and in fear and in much trembling. Have you ever wondered why Paul was so fearful? Think about the duties of an ambassador, for instance the ambassador to Russia from the U.S. He must represent the government of the U.S. to Russia on many touchy subjects. He must speak truthfully the position of his government, knowing at times the people to whom he is talking will not like it. He must be clear on what he is saying or suffer the consequences from home.

The reason the Apostle Paul was in much fear and trembling was because he was an ambassador to the people for the most high God. Just think about that thing, what a responsibility to be placed on the shoulder or mind of a man. It was his solemn duty to represent God to these people. He had to bring the gospel to these people and in such a way or manner that the people would receive such as would please the Good Lord. I believe the Lord will, and does, provide preachers the words to say, but it is still quite a responsibility.

Some, when they first begin to speak, suffer from stage fright, but the Apostle Paul didn't have that problem. He realized the importance of what he had to do. How often I feel for, and think of the burden on our preachers, as they attempt to bring to the people the good news, the truth of Jesus and him crucified. They cannot sit at home and write a sermon, for that would be coming in the wisdom of man, or as in Verse 4, enticing words of man's wisdom. They as did the Apostle Paul came with but one thing in mind to declare unto the people the testimony of Jesus Christ and him crucified. In this day and age the great masses of people go to their church building and listen to the sweet flowering words spoken by their preachers, and believe it to be a wonderful sermon. They hear the very thing the Apostle Paul said he didn't want to do, came before the people with enticing words of man's wisdom. In contrast a true minister, many of whom have no college degree, came not with enticing words of man's wisdom but rather in their own way, and method of speech, according to the gift bestowed upon them by the spirit. Therefore Verse 5;

the belief and faith of those who hear their preaching stands in the power of God, and not in the wisdom of the preacher. The God of heaven and earth is handling all these things. All his little ones will be fed and blessed with a life giving faith. I know the world thinks we are an ignorant people, but the Lord said, if they hated me, they will likewise hate you. I say to anyone who has tasted the sweetness of the truth, they know where their faith is grounded and it isn't in the wisdom of men.

Verse 7: *Howbeit we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world, unto our glory. The wisdom of God is a child being born of a virgin, his divine sonship and trinity of God. Salvation by a crucified Christ, being justified by his righteousness and receiving pardon by his blood, the work of the Spirit in regeneration. Even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world in choosing in himself a people, speaking of the counsel of his will. He would do all his pleasure, electing those whom he chose and securing their salvation by grace, even before the foundation of the world. Many more things could be written about the wisdom of God, yes, even the hidden wisdom, which he has revealed to his people by the work of the Spirit, whereby he says, I will take the things of mine and show them unto you, for the scripture says the Spirit must the work perform.*

It seems that in the later days it has pleased the God of heaven to reveal, by his Spirit and through the written word, many of his blessed truths. Wisdom which at one time, or in times past, was surely a hidden mystery is revealed today. As we see and the scripture says in the later days, things will wax worse, we can see sin abounding an every hand. The scripture says, where sin did abound, grace did much abound, therefore the revelation of much wisdom.

May the God of all mercy, wisdom and truth bless these words, that they may bring a little comfort to his little ones, and may we give him the praise for all our many blessings which we enjoy from day to day. May the Good Lord continue to bless, guide and keep you.

A brother I hope,
Frank Hunt

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

"Great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh."—Timothy iii. 16.

A mystery indeed it is, a great, deep, an unfathomable mystery; for who can rightly understand how the divine Word, the eternal Son of God, was made flesh, and dwelt among us? *"Who shall declare his generation?" (Isa. liii. 8;)* either that eternal generation whereby he is the only-begotten Son of God, or the generation of his sacred humanity in the womb of the Virgin, when the

Holy Ghost came upon her, and the power of the Highest overshadowed her? These are the things *"which the angels desire to look into;"* which they cannot understand, but reverently adore. And well may we imitate their adoring admiration, not attempting to understand, but believe, love, and revere; for well has it been said,

"Where reason fails, with all her powers,
There faith believes, and love adores."

Nor, if rightly taught and spiritually led, shall we find this a barren, dry, or unprofitable subject. It is *"the great mystery of godliness;"* therefore all godliness is contained in it, and flows out of it. The whole of God's grace, mercy, and truth is laid up in, is revealed through, is manifested by, the Son of his love; for *"it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;"* and this as Immanuel, God with us. Thus his sacred humanity, in union with his divine Person, is the channel of communication through which all the love and mercy of God flows down to poor guilty, miserable sinners, who believe in the name of the only-begotten Son of God. If blessed, then, with faith in living exercise, we may draw near and behold the great mystery of godliness. To tread by faith upon this holy ground is to come *"unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Heb. xii. 22-24);* for every blessing of the new covenant, if we are but favoured with a living faith in an incarnate God, is then experimentally as well as eternally ours.

J.C. Philpot

THE SOUL OF MAN

Brother Beebe:—Why is the soul or spirit of man immortal? Or, in other words, why did it not die when the body dies? Be assured, I remain yours with my best wishes.

Wesley Spitler

Reply—The question proposed by our esteemed brother involves a mystery quite beyond our depth. We have never been able to define the soul of man, nor to tell the whys and wherefores of its interminable existence. Aside from divine revelation, very little can be known of the soul or spirit that distinguishes the human family from the rest of the animal part of the creation of God. But the scriptures supply to us that instruction which human physiology is altogether incompetent to afford—"God breathed in man the breath of life and man became a living soul." And Paul has testified that the first man

Adam was made a living soul. Again we are instructed by the words of inspiration in regard to the spirit of man that goeth upwards, in distinction from the spirit of the beast that goeth downward. However impossible it may be for us to comprehend the soul and spirit of man, we all feel a consciousness that we possess both, but why the soul shall survive the dissolution fo the body and continue to be in happiness or misery forever and ever, to our limited mind admits of no satisfactory answer short of the light of divine revelation. God has condescended to inform us of the composition of man as a mere human being, of distinct elements of his composition. The material substance of the man was made of the dust of the earth, but it was not until God breathed in his nostrils the breath of life that man became a living soul. As the union of these elements constitute us living beings, or living souls, so the separation of these component parts is called death; but not, as we understand it, to signify the cessation of existence of vitality only in relation to the body which is composed of the dust of the earth. When the Redeemer died on the cross he committed to the hands of the Father his spirit, and as he said to the dying thief, *"This day shalt thou be with me in paradise,"* we conclude there could have been no suspension of vitality in the soul or spirit of either Christ or the penitent thief to whom this consoling assurance was so graciously given. The soul identifies the man, for man became a living soul, and in the common language of the scriptures, men are called souls. The assurance to the thief could not relate to the body of the thief, for his body was not laid with that of his Redeemer in the new tomb, nor was it preserved from seeing corruption. It was therefore something apart from his body that was with Christ a paradise. The body being of a material substance, we can trace it to its silent resting place in the bosom of its mother earth; we can watch the process of decomposition until the perfect accomplishment of the decree, *"To dust shalt thou return."* We see it so perfectly returned that it can no longer be distinguished from its kindred dust. Were it not for the light of revelation we should there bid it an eternal farewell, without any hope of its resurrection. But the departed soul and spirit we can, by nature's light, trace no farther than the time of its separation from the body, and were it not for inspired instruction, we might conclude that it dies with the body, ceases its vitality and discontinues to be. But, God be praised, the words of truth assures us that the spirits of the just are made perfect, that they are with the Redeemer in the paradise of God. Paul when speaking of his departure from the body spoke of departing to be with Christ. That there is really a separation of soul and body in death we are certain from many declarations of the scriptures—among

others the words of our Lord concerning the rich man. To him it was said, *"Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee!"* *"Fear not him that can kill the body, but after that have no more power; but fear him who is able to cast both body and soul into hell."* The material bodies of the guilty sons of Sodom were probably consumed with material fire which God is righteous judgment rained from heaven upon them, but these very inhabitants of Sodom are now suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. From all of these considerations with many others presented in the scriptures we conclude that in death there is not only a separation of soul and body, but that the soul immediately on its separation enters a state of paradise, or sinks to a state of interminable woe and misery. The spirits of just men are made perfect in glory, and the spirits or souls of the wicked are cast into hell.

Brother Spitler and our readers, permit us to remark that the scriptural word immortal with its derivatives, as used in our version of the Bible are not used in the scriptures simply to express the idea of interminable existence. The wicked must continue to exist in hell under the wrath of God, where the smoke of their torment shall ascend forever and ever, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched; but still this state of their existence is denoted by another word of very different and opposite meaning from that of immortality, which in scripture is synonymous with the words eternal life, and Christ only hath immortality, dwelling in the light, and it is only in him that the saints have immortality.

For this is the record that God hath given us of eternal life, and this life is in his Son. This is the true God and eternal life. This life is hid with Christ in God, and they unto whom it is given shall never perish, but because Jesus lives, they shall live also.

The order of the final resurrection of the bodies of the saints at the last day presents a strong conformation of the position we have taken. For when Christ shall descend from heaven at the last day to raise the dead and to judge the world, according to the scriptures, he shall be revealed personally, from heaven with ten thousand of his saints; that is, as we understand it, with all the spirits of his saints now made perfect. *"For when he who is our Life shall appear,"* says Paul, *"then shall we appear with him in glory."* The dead in Christ shall rise first, and those saints who shall then be living on the earth shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye, and these raised with spiritual and immortal life shall meet them in the air and so shall they be ever with the Lord. These are the children of God which are born of incorruptible seed by the word of the Lord that liveth and abideth forever. *"He that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and he that liveth and*

believeth on me shall never die. Believest thou this?" So spake Jesus to Martha. On another occasion he said, *"He that eateth this bread that came down from heaven shall never die."* There is that then in Christians that cannot die, cannot cease its vitality, but that something is not the vile body, or the mortal body, or the Adamic nature born of the flesh, for all flesh must die, and return to the dust. But that which is born of God is incorruptible and secure from death. The earthly house of our tabernacle must be dissolved and fall; but the children of God have a house which is not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. The outward man decayeth; but the inward man is renewed day by day.

In regard to the bodies of the wicked, it is sufficient that our dear Lord has told us not only that the saints shall rise, that he will raise them up at the last day, but he has also said that the hour shall come in which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and they shall come forth, they that have done good to life eternal, and they that have done evil to a resurrection of damnation. And God will judge the world in righteousness at the last day, by that man whom he hath appointed, and that according to Paul's gospel.

We would not be understood as confounding the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, with the natural soul of man; for all men have natural souls, as we have attempted to show, but all men have not the new man described above. All who are born of God in the new birth receive an implantation of spiritual and incorruptible life. But the soul which is quickened by this implantation and the life implanted in the soul are distinct things in their nature and origin, but identified in the person of the regenerated, in whom Christ is formed, the hope of glory. So at least the subject appears to us. If we are right, may the Lord have all the glory; but if we err, may he forgive us, and may our brethren be blessed with patience to bear with our weakness; for if we know the desire of our own heart it is to utter only the truth as it is in Jesus Christ our Lord. Brother Spitler and brethren, in our experience we feel an internal consciousness that we have a soul that must survive this poor frail body, and that it must exist after the earth and seas shall have passed away. This soul, as well as this body, we found, to our sorrow, was defiled with sin. But the holy law of God spake in thunder when it said to us, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." And until Christ was revealed to and in us we were in bitterness of soul in view of our guilty, helpless and as it seemed to us, our hopeless condition. But—

"When God revealed his gracious name,
He changed our mournful state."

Then great joy and gladness sprang up in our heart, and our sorrowing and sighing, at least for a time, fled away. We have seen the

time that we would gladly have believed that we had no soul to life after the death of the body; but as well might we seek for repose and comfort on a bed of embers, as for a release from the strong conviction that we had a soul all stained with guilt, that must suffer the righteous judgments of God, when time shall be no more, unless God should reveal a way that his justice and truth could be maintained and salvation abound to the chief of sinners. But why it is so that the soul must so exist in wealth or woe forever, we can only solve upon the ground that it was even so because it so seemed good to our Creator to organize us. It is now enough to know that it is so, and to rest assured that God in making man a living soul had an object worthy of himself. And however dark and mysterious the footsteps of our God may seem to our very limited understanding; we desire to be still and know that he is God. May we be preserved from vain speculation on this and on all subjects; may we rejoice in all that has been revealed, and trust him for all that he hath seen fit to withhold from our understanding.

Middletown, N.Y., June 1, 1854
Elder Gilbert Beebe

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1/92
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

MORE ABOUT JACOB

(Genesis xxxii.)

Although Jacob had seen the ladder in a dream at Bethel, and had heard the voice of the Lord speaking to him from above it, and had vowed a vow unto the Lord after he awaked out of his sleep, yet I do not understand that he at that time knew the Lord as his Savior. He knew him as the God of power, but not as the God of grace. While I think he may be regarded as a typical representation of the Lord's people when the presence of God in the law has made them feel that they are in a dreadful place because their sins are manifested and condemned; yet it is evident from what follows that he had not yet experienced that fear of the Lord which is to hate evil, and which causes one to hunger and thirst after righteousness.

In his contract with Laban, after having served him fourteen years for his two daughters, Jacob still manifests the deceitfulness of his nature which his name implies. He agreed to receive as his wages "the spotted and speckled cattle, and the brown cattle among the sheep, and the speckled and spotted among the goats," after all such as were at present among them had been removed; then by an ingenious device he caused the strongest and best of the increase of the flocks and herds to be spotted and brown, and so caused the wealth of Laban to come to himself. This device he kept from the

knowledge of Laban, and evidently also from Rachel and Leah. He was not open and candid, but deceitful still. And even when telling his wives that the Lord had told him to return to the land of the father, he seems to have gone beyond what the Lord had said to him, making it appear to them as though the Lord had spoken to him in a dream about this increase of the ring-streaked, speckled and grisled cattle, as a miracle wrought especially in Jacob's favor, not alluding to his own part in bringing it about. The time had not yet come for Jacob to experience the power of a new name, when he should no more be called Jacob.

Surely those who have felt that fear of the Lord "which is to hate evil" cannot think that sins committed by the Lord's chosen people are any the less vile than those committed by others. All sin is hateful to the Lord, and wherever his Spirit is, there will be felt the same hatred of sin that he has. A lie is no more excusable in Jacob than in Judas; adultery and murder are as terribly sinful in David as in the vilest man. It seems hardly necessary to state what must be so clearly evident to all quickened souls.

The question will often arise, Why were such holy men of old as Noah, and Abraham, and Jacob, and David, left to show in their conduct such weaknesses and sinfulness as they did, and why were such things as they did put on record? I have no doubt that it was that it might be ever known and remembered that in the flesh all are alike sinful; that *"there is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God;"* that by nature no one is more worthy than another, for all are alike *"children of wrath,"* and that even after one has been quickened by divine life his Adamic nature is still depraved and untrustworthy, and is to him a "bondage of corruption," from which he earnestly desires and expects to be delivered. (Romans viii. 19-21.) David seems to present this thought concerning his great transgression in the fifty-first Psalm, in which he so humbly confesses his sin, and so earnestly supplicates God's mercy: *"Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and clear when thou judgest."*

Surely no one "who knows the plague of his own heart" can think that I am taking an unwarranted liberty with the name of the patriarch Jacob, or of "the sweet psalmist of Israel," when I allude to their sins as something to be abhorred. Surely none can think that in loving them we must love their sins, or even excuse them. They themselves abhorred and loathed them, and themselves because of them, and thus was the grace of God magnified and exalted in them. It was by faith, not by works, that they pleased God; by that faith in them to which Christ was revealed as their righteousness, and by which they saw his day and

were glad. We love them not because we see them as better than others by nature, but because we see them as subjects of the glorious grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; and as subjects of that same grace, through that same faith, we, who hate our own lives for their sinfulness, are brought from the ends of the earth to *"sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God." "Through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God."* Jacob must come in that same lonesome path of affliction and soul trouble through which all the saints have come into the knowledge of God's salvation. *"They shall come with weeping, and with supplication will I bring them."—Jer. xxxi.*

Now as Jacob approaches the time and place where the Lord will reveal himself unto him as his Savior, we find him in supplication for the first time, and hear him for the first time in his life humbly acknowledge his unworthiness of the least of all the mercies that the Lord has shown to him. At Bethel, where he had seen the ladder, and had heard the Lord's words in a dream, he made a vow, and promised that if the Lord would keep him in the way he was going, and would give him bread to eat and raiment to put on, and bring him back to his father's house in peace, then the Lord should be his God, and that of all the Lord should give him he would give a tenth to him. But not a word about feeling unworthy, and not a prayer for mercy is recorded of him then. But now he has met the angels of God. What these angels, or messengers, were sent to meet him for, we are not told. He said, "This is God's host." I have no doubt they brought some messages to him from the Lord that stirred his soul, and prepared him for what was to follow.

Jacob now remembers his brother Esau, the borders of whose land he is approaching. It is in the land of Seir, the country of Edom. We may have in mind, as we go along here, that Esau, Jacob's twin brother, older than he, may represent the flesh, from which all our greatest troubles and fears and apprehensions arise. Jacob sends into Esau's land to announce his approach, and with messages to win his favor. But the messengers return with the startling word that Esau is coming to meet Jacob, and with him four hundred men. "Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed." This is indeed "the time of Jacob's trouble."—Jer. xxx. 7. He now made such arrangements for safety as he could, dividing his people, flocks and herds into two bands; and then he prayed, pleading the Lord's command for him to return, and his promise to deal well with him, acknowledging the Lord's mercies and truth which he had shewed to him, and his unworthiness of the least of them, and then pleading for deliverance from his own brother, *"from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children. And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the*

sand of the sea which cannot be numbered for multitude."

Jacob now arranged liberal presents of sheep and cattle and goats in several droves, and sent them on to meet Esau successively. *"For he said, I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept of me."* There was no quiet or rest for Jacob that night. Fear of Esau and gloomy forebodings of evil seem to have taken possession of his mind. *"And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two women servants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok. And he took them and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had. And Jacob was left alone."*

Each of God's children is alone when the Lord is dealing with him. Even though many people should be around him, yet he is alone with God. He can have no one with him this solemn time of intercourse with God. *"He led them forth by a solitary way."* When the Lord has a controversy with his people, and brings them into sorrow for their sins, *"they shall mourn apart; every family apart and their wives apart."—Zech. xii. 12.* No one can help us mourn; no one can know what passes between our souls and the Lord when this wrestling is going on.

"And there wrestled a man with him till the breaking of the day." This man Jacob spoke of as God: *"For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."—Gen. xxxii. 30.* Hosea speaks of him as God, and also as "the Angel."—Hosea xii. 3,4. To me it appears that here is presented the Angel of God's presence in the law, which the Lord said to Moses should go up with him out of the wilderness into Canaan, the promised land. (Exodus xxxii. 12-15.) We may regard Jacob here as representing all that chosen people, his posterity according to the flesh, with whom the Lord made a covenant in Horeb. (Deut. v. 2.) The Angel of God's presence in the law wrestled with that people during all that legal night and prevailed not. *"All the day long (that legal day, which is the night dispensation,) have I stretched out my hands to a rebellious and gainsaying people, who would none of my reproofs."* But that wrestling must cease before the coming of of the gospel day.

More particularly and fully does Jacob here represent that spiritual people called by his name, of whom the prophet Jeremiah says, *"For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. Therefore they shall come and sing in the heights of Zion."—Jer. xxxi. 11, 12.* This one name Jacob stands for all that people as one nation according to the flesh, until the gospel day dawned, when they ceased to be recognized by that name as the people of God. The children of the flesh were no longer known as his people. While the Lord knew that people, as he knew Jacob at Bethel, and again at the brook, yet they as a fleshly people did

not know him a spiritual sense as the God of salvation, as Jacob did not know the Lord in that sense at Bethel, nor yet at the brook until the blessing of knowledge and of salvation came to him with the new name Israel, and with the breaking of the day.

But all the history of that fleshly nation, with that covenant of works, and that worldly sanctuary, and the carnal ordinances, and the first tabernacle, and the gifts and sacrifices, "which could not make him that did the service perfect," with all the rebellions and punishments of that people, and God's long-suffering shown to them; all this had a figurative meaning, and set forth in types and shadows the truth of salvation as shown in the everlasting covenant made with the spiritual Israel, which was to be manifested in the gospel dispensation. All these legal things belonging to this night dispensation were "figures for the time then present," "patterns of things in the (gospel) heavens," "shadows of good things to come." The wrestling which only the Lord's spiritual people among that fleshly nation experienced, was also experienced by all of his spiritual people that had lived from Adam to Moses, and has been experienced by all since, and will be experienced by all that shall come after, till the last vessel of mercy shall be gathered. In the case of each child of God there is the natural state of death in sin; then the awakening to the knowledge of that sin and hatred of it, which brings the soul into the darkness of night; then the struggling and wrestling with the angel of God's presence in the law; then the sense of failing strength, inability to walk in the way of holiness; a recognition of the holiness of the law, but a sense of being helpless and undone because unable to attain unto that holiness, being already condemned by it, and a feeling that the law justly condemns us, and that righteousness requires that we shall give up all hope of God's favor. *"Let me go, for the day breaketh."*

Here is set forth what is in some measure the experience of all the Lord's people. What is true of the whole nation is true of each one composing that nation. What is true of the Head is true of each member of the body. The length of time in each part of the experience is not essential. The night in one case may seem to be for years, while in another case it is but for a moment; but it is night, and is a time of wrestling, a time of fear, and sorrow, and weeping. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

But now Jacob's thigh is out of joint by the touch of the Angel. All hope of righteousness by the works of the law is gone. It is God's law, and it is holy and just and good. It was a righteous touch, a just stroke, that weakened Jacob's strength in the way. We now acknowledge that God is just, and his law is just. It has shown us what we are, guilty and justly

condemned. Jacob never knew that before. But why does he not give up the struggle now and let the Man go? Ah, that cannot be done; that is beyond mortal power to do. Can the thirsty man cease to thirst? Can the hungry man cease to desire food? Can the man who still breathes let go his desire to breathe? Here is a struggle which was begun by the Angel, but is now carried on by Jacob. A new principle has been developed in him. The movement of a divine life is there. In that dark night in his soul, and with the sense of weakness and pain in the very center of earthly strength, there has sprung up a strong, pervading desire for another kind of strength; a longing for a heavenly blessing. Faith in his soul, a principle he knew not before, has taken hold of God's strength, since his own has failed, and now his will is so thoroughly engaged and engrossed in the holy struggle that he cannot let go.

"I will not let thee go except thou bless me." What a wonderful thing is the will. It is the gathering together and the outcome of all that we are at the time. Talk of a man handling his will, changing his will, denying his will! That can only be done by another will in us superior to the first. We may have a will to deny the expression of our will, but that other stronger will must be at hand.

In the case of Jacob we see the work of that God who alone can work in any one *"to will and to do of his good pleasure."* He now has such spiritual hungerings and thirstings as can never be satisified from earthly sources. His whole soul goes out after the blessing of the Lord. *"I will not let thee go except thou bless me."* He cannot have a will to let go that hold. He cannot cease to cry for the Lord's favor, any more than a child burning with a fever-thirst can stop crying for water. Though the babe does not know what it wants so as to tell it, the cry tells it.

Why does the man give the breaking of the day as the reason for asking Jacob to let him go? Because the law must be vindicated and magnified before there can be the glory of a new day. Until the law is satisfied the Sun of Righteousness cannot arise. The law can look over into the gospel land, but cannot go over. When it struck the Rock Christ Jesus so that the waters of salvation flowed out its work was done. Moses is buried by the Lord, so that Israel shall see him no more.

When in the wrestling Jacob loses his strength, then the Angel's work through the law is done, the blessing is given to Jacob, and the Angel ascends as the Sun of Righteousness into the heavens of the glorious gospel day.

But before this blessing comes to Jacob there is on his part a full confession of who and what kind of a man he is. Nothing is kept back, nothing hidden from the Lord. *"What is thy name? and he said, Jacob,"* a supplanter, a sinful man. *"The heart is deceitful above all things, and*

desperately wicked." Whose heart? The heart of some other man? No, the heart of this man. My heart is the vile and wicked heart. I never knew it in this way before, but I know it now, and I confess it. "My name is Jacob." Here is the end of all hope of righteousness through any merit of my own. But my hold is still strong on the Angel; I will not, I cannot, let him go. Day and night my cry is unto him, *"Remember me, O Lord, with the favor which thou bearest unto thy people. Oh, visit me with thy salvation."*

"And he said, Thy name shall no more be called Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." This new name expresses something new in the experience of Jacob. There is a new kind of power in him now, the power of faith. It is manifest, as was the power of Christ in Paul, in weakness. The poor Jacobs through all time must first feel their own strength utterly fail before they come into the knowledge of this new kind of power. In this new strength, this power of faith in Jesus, they prevail over the wrestlings of the Angel of God's presence in the law. His power is with God, and also with men, with all the men of God whom he represents in this great struggle and victory. Through Jesus Christ, by faith in him who was to come, he prevails over the law, whose righteousness is now fulfilled in him. He received the blessing through the law. By his faith it was secured.

He asked the Angel to tell him his name, but the only reply was the question why he asked it. *"And he blessed him there."* And still Jacob is asking after that wonderful name, which no man knoweth but he that receiveth it. The knowledge of that name is in his experience. It is the new name of Jesus named upon him, and the knowledge of Jesus thus felt and known is eternal life. *"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."*

The name of Jacob is now Israel, a prince, a prevailer. Henceforth as a poor, depraved sinner he is Jacob, who questions, and complains, and mourns on account of his corruption; but as a manifest child of God he is Israel, enjoying the prevalence of faith, assured of God's favor, and satisfied that God doeth all things well. *"Jacob said, All these things are against me." "Israel said, It is enough, Joseph my son is alive. I shall go and see him before I die."*

But which ever is speaking at any time, whether complaining Jacob or prevailing Israel, we shall see in this man no more seeking for advantage by deceitful dealing, without a check of conscience; no more lies unconfessed; no more hiding of his ways; no more keeping the fruits of evil doings; but we shall henceforth see in his life and conduct a desire for that which becomes a God-fearing man, candor, openness in dealing, honesty, truthfulness and humble confessions of the evils of his heart.

And Jacob named that place Peniel, the face of God, for I have

seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. And as he passed over Peniel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh." Oh, what a sweet and glorious sunrise was there, following such a sad and sorrowful night. The ford which they had passed over in the night was Jabbok, which means "pouring out." There Jacob "poured out his soul before the Lord." It was at such a place that Jesus "poured out his soul unto death." There he was "poured out like water," and there all poor, troubled souls in their distress "pour out their complaints before the Lord."

But now Jacob has seen God face to face, has been given a new name, has received the blessing of the God of salvation, and sees the breaking of a new and everlasting day. It is no more Jabbok, but Peniel, that he passes over, for the face of God is shining with the expression of infinite love upon his soul. No fear of Esau now. *"Perfect love casteth out fear."* The sun rose upon him as he passed over, and his shrunken sinew and thigh out of joint cannot hinder his progress in the journey now before him, for natural strength is not needed here. Who would not gladly lose all his own strength so that the power of Christ might rest upon him, and the Sun of Righteousness arise upon him with healing in his wings?

Silas H. Durand
December 16, 1903.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 1991

Mrs. Velma Estelle, AR 2.00
Mrs. Ruth Dalton, VA.....2.00
Tim Barron, TX.....2.00
Mrs. Reba Wise, TX.....3.00
Buford E. Thompson, VA 2.00
O.W. Parks, TX 7.00
Mrs. Eva Saunders, NC 2.00
Mrs. Pauline Hutchison, NC 2.00
Mrs. Eugene Osborne, MD 2.00
Norman N. Bird, WV.....2.00
Mrs. Ida Palmer, FL.....2.00
Alton Goodwin, TN.....2.00
Mrs. Kenneth Mathis, TN.....2.00
Mrs. Norma W. Smith, VA.....2.00
John W. Townsend, CA.....5.00

PSALM 26 : 7-12.

That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works.

Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.

Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men:

In whose hands is mischief, and their right hand is full of bribes.

But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity: redeem me, and be merciful unto me.

My foot standeth in an even place: in the congregations will I bless the Lord.

OBITUARIES

BROTHER ROBERT HENRY COX

As I attempt to write this obituary, I might say Robert Henry Cox was my uncle. Uncle in the flesh and brother in the church. Brother Cox was born on December 16, 1901. He was married to Dora Annie Laura Carroll on April 16, 1922 who preceded him in death. To this union eight children were born. Survivors are sons, Fred Elmer Cox, Sr., Pelham, N.C., George Cox, Sr., Ruffin, N.C. Daughters, Lois Gentry, Pelham, N.C., Vivian Riddle, Reidsville, N.C., Hilda Hundley, Danville, Va., Kitty Newman and Coleen Austin both of Ruffin, N.C., Betty Collie of Elon College, N.C., Also 29 grandchildren, 42 great grandchildren and 3 great, great grandchildren.

Brother Robert Cox second wife was Annie Gauldin Kemp. They were married June 5, 1960. She preceded him in death. Brother Cox is also survived by two step children. Step son Porter Kemp and step daughter Betty Kemp both of Ruffin, N.C.

He was a native of Caswell County, but lived most of his life in Rockingham County. He was a barber, farmer, carpenter and brick mason. His work was known throughout this area. He was the brick mason for this church Dan River back in 1940, and also helped with the carpentry work.

Brother Cox joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church September 26, 1981 and was baptized the next day September 27, 1981. He attended his meetings faithfully as long as his health permitted. He believed in salvation by grace and grace alone. *Ephesians 2:8 "For by grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God."* Brother Cox loved his church and He manifested that love by being there as long as He was able to come.

Brother Cox died July 4, 1991. We believe in that blessed hope. *"Hebrews 6:19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil."* We believe that he was looking for the second coming of our Lord. When He comes the dead in Christ will be raised first and caught up to meet the Lord in the air and be carried home to glory to forever be with the Lord. The writer of this obituary believes he has been called from a land of afflictions to a land of peace and joy. No sickness, no sorrow, no death will be there, just love and peace. We will miss him but feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

Written by request of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church.

Written by one who loved him,
Brother R. Allen Carroll

ELDER SAM HENRY DEAN

It is with sadness mixed with joy that the Ebenezer Association in its one hundred fifty fourth session records the death of our dear brother and our moderator for the past 25 years, Elder Sam Henry Dean, Sadness on our part to miss the sweet manifestation of his fellowship with us and joy on the other hand that he is freed from this house of clay to bask in the sunlight of God's love eternally.

Elder Dean is survived by his dear wife of almost 65 years, Sister Eva Foster Dean; one son, Sam Foster Dean; one daughter, Lawrice F. Boan; five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren and a host of relatives and friends of the Mt. Zion and Greenville, Alabama area. Born on May 6, 1900, Elder Sam Dean departed this life on April 16th, 1991 this life on April 19th, services conducted by Elder Donald Ross Smith. Those in attendance sung the hymn "Amazing Grace," at the close of the service.

Elder Sam Dean united with Mt. Zion church by baptism on July 23rd, 1949. He was liberated to speak in 1955 and was ordained to the office of an Elder on the 22nd of January 1956, at the hands of a presbytery composed of Elder J.P. Morgan and the late Elder E.D. Gafford and J. Russell Gibson. He was chosen to serve as moderator of the association in its session the First Sunday, Friday and Saturday before, in October 1966, and served until his health failed. At the 1986 session Elder Dean requested an assistant to help him with the business and this was done. Brother W.W. Odom assisted Elder Dean each year since 1986. Also, Elder Dean was assisted in serving, Mt. Zion, New Providence and Mt. Carmel churches as pastor by Elder Donald Ross Smith since 1986. Although his ability to speak was failing during the last years of his life, not being able to keep his thoughts together, the love he had for our Lord and Master was enduring to the end as recorded in his favorite hymn No. 10, from Lloyd's Hymn Book, "Better than this life of mine, Saviour is thy love divine; Drop the veil and let me see, Rivers of this love in thee."

Elder Sam Dean was loved by all of those who were blessed to know him, his manner of life was very humble and in the meekness of Jesus. We hope through the tender mercies of God given to those chosen in Christ from before the foundation of the world that our loss is his eternal gain. So in the Lord we say farewell, dear brother, until we meet at Jesus' feet.

Elder Donald Ross Smith

PSALM 31:1.

In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness.

ELDER GEORGE W. JONES

In sadness I attempt to write a few words in memory of my beloved father, Elder George Jones.

He was born May 21, 1907, and God in his infinite wisdom and mercy saw fit to remove him from our midst on May 28, 1991. He was my natural father, and if I am what I hope to be, my brother in the Lord.

According to church records, Daddy transferred from Zion's Rest Church to Union Church on November 16, 1955. He was ordained a deacon January 31, 1960, and as an elder on August 31, 1969. The minutes show that he was called with Elder David Turner as pastors on November 15, 1969 for Union Church, and he served until his death. He also pastored Old Goodhope Church, and was pastor of Concord Church many years until his death. He also preached regularly at other churches in the area.

He is survived by his wife, my mother and sister in Christ, Angie Jones, two daughters, and four sons.

He was faithful to the churches and filled his place at every meeting until shortly before his death. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone. Being at church and among the brethren was the brightness of his life.

I, the writer, enjoyed many sweet hours of fellowship with him and he was given to be an inspiration to me. I had the honour of him baptizing me on May 27, 1987, and my dear wife Bobbye, on May 27, 1990. We at Union and the other churches miss him, but we believe our loss is his eternal gain. As I think of him, I think of the apostle Paul's writing in 2nd. Tim. chapter 4, verses 6-8: ***For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give me at that day, but not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.***

Daddy was ready at all times to give a reason of the hope he had in Christ Jesus as his Saviour. He was a firm believer in the resurrection of the body, and I believe that in that day when the Lord shall descend in all his glory that his body will be raised from the tomb, formed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Son of God, to be ever with his dear Saviour.

He was laid to rest in Crowville Cemetery near his home. Funeral services were conducted by Elder Gerald Shipman, Lloyd Wall, Graydon Smith and Clifford Wilbanks, who spoke with power and humility and sweetness of the Saviour he loved and worshipped.

May the peace and love of God which alone can come from Jesus be with his children and loved ones as they journey through this life is my prayer for Christ's sake. Amen.

Written by his son,
Elder J. Theron Jones

ESTHER LOU PERKINS LOVELACE

Our most gracious saviour who works all things to the council of His own will, saw fit to remove from this life our beloved mother, Esther Lovelace, on March 14, 1991.

She was born November 27, 1903 to the late Lucinda and William Perkins.

On January 9, 1919, Esther Lou Perkins was married to Willie Thomas Lovelace who is now deceased. Sister Lovelace is survived by seven children, 10 grandchildren, and 6 great-grandchildren. Upon her death she was survived by one brother, Doyle Perkins, who was a member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. Brother Perkins is now deceased. She was united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on September 25, 1949, and was baptized by her pastor, Elder D.V. Spangler.

She loved the Primitive Baptist doctrine and the members and friends of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church and attended services as long as she was able.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Kenneth Key and Elder Wallace Smith. She was laid to rest in Dan River Church Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

May the Lord reconcile us to his will, and enable us to say "the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away". We will miss her.

Carol Brinson, Daughter

WILLIE THOMAS LOVELACE

Brother Lovelace was born October 25, 1893 and passed from this life July 20, 1987. He was married to Esther Perkins in 1919, who survives along with 7 children: Willie Lee Lovelace, Irene Rogers, Georgia Atkins, Vivian Wyatt, Nick Lovelace, Anderrena Lovelace and Carol Brinson. Also surviving are 10 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren.

Brother Lovelace joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on May 26, 1951 and lived most of his life in Rockingham County, North Carolina. He was a faithful member and supporter of his church as long as his health permitted; he was declining in health for many years and unable to attend the meetings. He was a strong believer in the Doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God and believed all that the Father gave him would have eternal life. He was a kind and loving husband and father and will be greatly missed.

Funeral service was conducted by his pastor, Elder Kenneth Key, Elder Wallace Smith, and Pastor Marvin Bowman. He was laid to rest in the church cemetary to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour.

Carol Brinson, Daughter

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The Editors

Signs of the Times

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POEM

"HIS LOVE TAKES CARE OF ME."

My Father knows that which is best
Whatever it may be;
And in this truth I sweetly rest:
His love takes care of me.
Through Jesus Christ my great high-priest,
My Father works his will;
And though I am his very least,
I know he loves me still.

In Him there is no dark of night,
But only endless day:
I'm ever walking in His sight
I cannot lose my way.
My life is in His holy hand,
In Him I am secure:
All things are at his great command,
He is steadfast and sure.

My holy and righteous Father in heaven, I know that of myself I could never merit thy great love and mercy; but, my Father, there is One in thy presence who has been made to be all things for me, and unto me: His precious name is Jesus my beloved Lord and Saviour.

Ethel Gilland

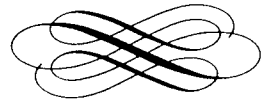

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EDITORIAL

In the book of Ruth Chapter 4, verse 9 we find these words "And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the people, ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi."

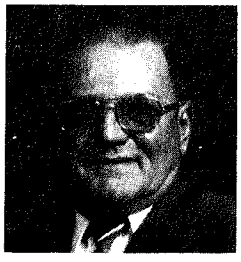
Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

We will find in thought that Boaz is a type of Christ and he purchased the entire inheritance that came through Naomi, a type of the church. It is those who are come in to the church that Christ paid the full price for. There are many who shall never have their name on a church book here but are listed in the Lamb's book of life.

We need to look now at who these men were and how they had a part in the transaction mentioned above. Elimelech was the husband of Naomi and his name in the Hebrew tongue means, "My God is King." He and Naomi had moved from their native land to the land of Moab. The name Naomi means pining for or wishing. We see then that there is not much stability in the two sons.

This family had moved from the land of Judah because of a famine there. This union of marriage is a type of the church for those who are the church are seeking a home where there is no famine. We find there is nothing of earth that causes us to long to remain here. We look forward to a time, known to God, when we can slip away from this earth, that cannot feed the spirit, and go to that city of plenty. This has been the desire of God's people in all generations and will continue until He calls us to come home and leave all things here.

Naomi as mentioned before is a type of the church (the mother, the bride) and Elimelech a prophetic type of Christ for his name denotes My God is King through Christ is not yet born. He must die in order that Naomi might have the right of her part of an inheritance as well as the two sons. Part of this inheritance comes through law (that is natural family) and part through Grace which

is the power that reaches beyond the law. The law part (nature) will be left in time but that of Grace is preserved eternally through our Lord.

Mahlon was the husband of Ruth who was a native of the land of Moab and Chilion was the husband of Orpah who also was a native of that land. Moab was a descendant of Lot because of an act of incest with his oldest daughter. The people of Moab were wealthy carefree ones and it seems strange that Elimelech would carry his family into such a land. We understand though that the will and purposes of God must come to pass. Without the things that are experienced happening as they did the ancestral lineage of Jesus would have been broken.

In the course of time Mahlon was married to Ruth and Chilion to Orpah. The purposes and will of God is now beginning to happen. Elimelech dies and leaves Naomi and the sons and their wives without any other ancestors there. They remained there for about ten years and Mahlon and Chilion died. We see, in the ten years, the law and know that it takes more than that to move a sinner toward the promised land. We see Grace come in view now for Naomi feels there is nothing that will keep her in this strange land. In other words she became as the prodigal son who came to himself and remembered his fathers house as a home of plenty. Naomi remembered her homeland and she was aware that the Lord had now visited with an abundance of bread (heavenly manna). She also know there were there her own people and this points to the fact that God's elect all know where the church is. Naomi was already a native of (predestinated) to live as she (a church type) must exist in this time world of ours. Now beloved if we are what we hope to be we also want to dwell with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Naomi and the two daughers-in-law began the journey to Judah but she told the two girls to turn back to their own people. We find that Orpah kissed Naomi and turned back. We now see the law power being over powered for she is a type of those who depend on the law for salvation. Remember we stated earlier that part of the inheritance would be effected by the law. We shall see later how Grace over came this trust in the law and by whom it came.

Ruth would not turn back and leave Naomi for she was now seeking Bethlehem (the place where Christ was born) for Naomi had told her of a rich kinsman there. I declare to you dear readers that we too have heard of a rich kinsman and seek where he dwells (the church). This kinsman was in the ancestral lineage of Elimelech whose name itself meant my Lord is King.

We see now the working of Grace come into view for Boaz is a type of Christ and it is through him at once that Grace and Godly love is expressed. Ruth desiring to glean (search for heavenly blessing) goes

into a field and the book relates it was her hope (just so happened she came to the field of Boaz) to find sustenance. If we indeed find any comfort of heavenly food it must be found in the field of Grace and it is not happen — chance but the will of (our Lord is King) Himself who owns it all.

Boaz sees Ruth and asks who she is and finds she is related to Naomi (not by law now) but by the eternal spirit (new birth). He commands the reapers (who are a type of minister) that labor in the fields of Grace to drop handfuls of purpose for her and when a minister preaches the Gospel it is indeed a handfull of purpose. God furnishes the grain and as Ruth was allowed to glean from the sheaves (the old dispensation) she could divide her gleanings with Naomi. When one has been filled to overflowing the desire is to share with the church. This is the pleasure we have in talking to each other about our experiences and how indeed God is merciful. We always find the hand of the Lord full and also that the graciousness thereof is for our pleasure, Boaz (Christ) tells his people not to glean in any other field for the gleanings do not exist in the fields of the law. There is only famine and hunger there in for the letter of the law killeth.

When Boaz saw the dedication that Ruth had for Naomi (took notice) his love and compassion went out to her. We find her bowing herself to the ground is a most humble way. My brother and sisters in Christ does this not seem like your own case ? When Christ pours out His love to us as we wander the fields of Grace we question how and why He is so merciful to us. We then thank God that Christ hath been our wealthy kinsman all the while but we knew it not.

Boaz is aware that Ruth left her own people (Adam and Eve — her nature) and has now been brought to a people she knew not. Oh what lovely people we have found gleaning in His fields as we labor there (preach the word). There is such a sense of oneness when we meet another who has not kissed the church and turned back as did Orpah. We never feel that any are strangers and we don't doubt but what it is the love of our kinsman who has brought us to love each other. Boaz tells Ruth she will be rewarded for her love of Naomi and the fact that she has come under the wings of the Lord of Israel.

Boaz commanded Ruth to come at mealtime and feast on the bread and vinegar (a type of passover or ordinance of communion) as she sat among the reapers. She was also given parched corn which is symbolic of the word (Gospel) for it has been tried by fire and sword and has not ever failed in the purposes of God. The fiery furnace did not destroy it nor the sword of Goliath who was a type of satan. David met this giant with the most primitive weapon known to man and its use was a manifestation the the arm of the God of Israel is strong enough to cast the stone of

salvation (Christ) even from the Climes of Heaven.

Naomi tells Ruth that Boaz is her near kinsman (does not the church also tell us) and to be mindful of him as such. There are seventy two generations from Adam to Christ but only one generation of Christ therefore He is indeed our near kinsman. We were chosen in Him before the fields of Grace were even planted and we wander until the time we are brought to the field of plenty by the same power that decreed we are of His generation.

Naomi tells Ruth to make known to Boaz her love (go home to thy friends and tell what great things have been done) and trust that she has in Him. In order she show this love and trust she must lay at the feet of Boaz. We also go to the feet of Christ when we desire comfort and love. Boaz turned at the midnight hour and found Ruth at his feet. Christ also turned to us when we petitioned we were in a state of true nakedness and it was the midnight hour. We desire He cover us with His skirt (robe of mercy) lest the coldness of nature become worse.

Ruth desires to know how Boaz has come to be near kinsman for she has heard there is another kinsman (Adamic nature) also who must be dealt with. Naomi tells Ruth to be patient (sit still) for he will not rest (neither sleep nor slumber) until he finishes all that is necessary to obtain the fulness of inheritance.

Boaz calls the elders of the city (heavenly angels if you please) to come to the gate. We truly believe there is a rejoicing of the angels when one does approach the gate of kinship. The other kinsman who is mentioned before comes by (no chance system) in order that the plan of God be fulfilled. This is that Adamic nature which can come by the gate but can't go in.

Boaz tells him of the fact that he must make manifest his condition (his weakness in nature) to purchase the inheritance under consideration. He tells Boaz he will purchase the part that is coming to Ruth only (we see here satan rearing his head with all kinds of worthless promises). Boaz tells him there must be purchase of the entire inheritance, meaning also the part that (by law) would come to Orpah. Now we see the defeat of satan because this man now says he can't purchase three parts (also Naomi's part) for it would mar his own inheritance. He must openly relate that he cannot be any part of the three (the dirty of God) for if so it would ruin his own plans. He knows of a surety that he has no power equal to the kinsman (Christ) who is the redeemer of sinners.

Boaz purchases all three parts and there are two purposes in the purchase of it all. He must obtain the portions of Naomi and Ruth in order for them to feel secure in that which comes freely as a blessing of God. The inheritance has been there all the time and beloved it has been theirs all the time but it would take a

price for it to mean security. The price was the sufferings and death of our Christ. The part that comes to us has been preserved until the time of harvest (our coming to the church) and is a type of hope and faith. The fact is that Ruth had faith to desire to remain with Naomi (the church) not knowing in any way what was before her but believing her hope would see her through. It is through our faith and hope that we also press on not knowing what is before us but we believe our kinsman (spiritual brother) is directing us toward the Climes of Glory.

When Boaz purchased the part that was legally Orpah's he did so in order that no descendant of hers could ever lay claim to any part whatsoever. We are aware that by law it was hers but remember dear ones that Grace has decreed that all three parts must remain together (the three in one). We thank God that Christ came to redeem all his kinsmen who have been promised the fulness of heaven. The word redeem meaning to get back that which is already yours, so Christ has redeemed us forever from the law.

Orpah went back in the beginning to her people and her gods and that fact remains today because the world is full of those Orpahs who care less about an eternal inheritance. The book proclaims they have their reward in this life and there is no inheritance in Heaven. We feel sure Orpah should have realized that under the law that she should have received Chilion's part but in spite of such those of the world and law are satisfied with such.

In the course of time Boaz and Ruth are married (she is now the bride) and will enjoy all the many privileges thereof. This union brings into the world a son who is to be named Obed (meaning servant) who was the father of Jesse who was the father of David and so on until we come to Christ himself (one generation). We see all these things happen because our Christ must be a descendant of David because the prophecy proclaimed that He would come through the house of David. We know that when the star shown the night Christ was born that an angel declared the baby would be found in the city of David. Let us remember that the beginnings of this travel of Ruth and Naomi was to go to Bethlehem. We still today seek the city of David for the brightness of the star (the Glory) of Christ doth yet shine.

My dear kinsmen take consideration of the thoughts as to the perfection of the purposes and works of God. He controls all that is takes to bring us into the knowledge of our heavenly inheritance which we shall receive when the last harvest has been made. The grain shall all be bound together to make up the sheaves of Glory.

I feel unworthy that I even think I have a part in this inheritance but I don't doubt for one moment that the right arrangements have been made who are made worthy by Christ. We

note in the scripture the reading is that the friends of Naomi and Ruth told them they were blessed to have a child that would be a comfort in old age and a restorer of life. Naomi even spoke as if that baby was hers and indeed our Christ is our babe of Salvation. He has been ours (the church) from the beginning of time and will be forever.

May God be praised as we draw nearer and nearer (age) to the time we receive our inheritance and see He who bought it all.

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

ROMANS 8 : 1-6.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

THE COVENANT OF GRACE

God, having out of his own mere good pleasure from all eternity, elected some of Adam's fallen race to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace to deliver them from sin and misery and bring them to a state of salvation by a redeemer. God had a purpose of grace and love towards his elect people from all eternity and therefore saves them, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. There can be no reason given why God did not embrace all of Adam's family in this covenant, only that it was the mere good pleasure of his will. It is called a covenant of grace because in it is a promise of eternal life and salvation to the elect, to be given them in a way of free grace and mercy (Jer. 31: 33-34). God, the Father, is the party contractor on Heaven's side; the party contractor on man's side is Christ, the chosen of God. The eternal and unconditional covenant was confirmed by an oath and cannot fail. "He shall not fail nor be discouraged. My word shall not return unto me void, but it shall prosper in the thing whereunto it's sent." "By the blood of the covenant, I have sent forth the prisoners out of the pit wherein was no water." The promise was not to seeds as of many, but to thy seed which is Christ.

CORRESPONDENCE

December 26, 1991

Dear Elder Key; & Williams:

Enclosed Money Order for ($20.00) to renew my subscription to The Signs of the Times for two years.

I am also enclosing Elder Amasa J. Slauson's answer to the Pastoral call from The Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church back in the year 1957. This call was made after the death, earlier that year of Elder Arnold H. Bellows. I feel it has much spiritual comfort and would like to share it with the Brethren.

Also some of my thoughts:

I feel all events and things are ordained of God according to His purpose. In glancing at an open Bible one day I saw the words "And it came to pass." I feel all of God's purposes come at the time Predestinated by God before the world was formed.

God, before time began and anything as we know it was created in His Determinate Counsel and Foreknowledge Predestinated all things to occur in sequence according to His purpose.

Starting with Genesis God put His Predestinated Purpose to work. He first created the Heavens and the Earth. Then all things on the Earth according to His Purpose.

Then in the 6th Chapter of Genesis things began to take place according to His Purpose (after the creation of the Earth and all things in it). For it says and it came to pass and so on. In the 14th chapter of Genesis we find and it came to pass that Sodom and Gomorrah were being set up for destruction. Genesis chapter 22 verse 1, And it came to pass to show the testing of Abrahams faith and portraying the sacrifice of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to provide for the salvation of His Elect people. In Genesis chapter 27 verse 1, And it came to pass, the weakness of our carnal flesh is shown, even in the Elect of God. Jacob gains Isaac's blessing by deceit. Genesis chapter 38, and it came to pass, shows the weakness of our human flesh in the troubles of Judah.

Joseph having been sold into slavery in Egypt, God continues to bring about His purposes. In Genesis chapter 40 verse 1, "And it came to pass" telling of the dreams of the butler and the baker. In Genesis 41 verse 1 portraying Joseph as a type of our Lord and Saviour in interpreting Pharaohs Dreams and in providing for his family and the whole nation of Egypt. Joseph was taken from prison and came to be second to Pharaoh.

Also all through the Bible Predestination is shown being fulfilled. All History is nothing but the recording of Predestination in action.

All the things, that we see coming

about in this present day, are the Predestinated purposes of God.

I am thankful that the Lord has led me to see and understand some of the things for I could never have understood it of myself. As an Elder once said at an association on the eastern shore if you believe these things thank God that you do."

In hope,
Woodrow W. Bellinger

September 29th, 1957.

To the Brethren or members of the Middleburg Old School Baptist Church, Dear kindred in Christ I the undersigned, must tell you that it makes me feel very humble to think that you dear ones could have love and esteem enough in your hearts for me to give me a call to be your Pastor, as you have, as you know and I know, that it is a solemn and sacred office to fill, and you taking this step has touched me deeply, and endeared you Dear Brethren to me, so by the will of God, I am with much unworthiness and inability in myself and at your feet accepting your call to become your Pastor, to go in and out among you with such ability as our God will be pleased to give me, Now dear kindred in Christ let us pray God, that he will so enable us to live in each others hearts by the holy Spirit, and the love of God that our hearts will at all times run together like two drops of water, which is the evidence of true children of God, that we may prove to be a blessing to each other, and that our Blessed Lord will so enable this poor weak trembling and God depending creature to be a true Pastor and under Shepherd by the holy Spirit, to be a Father to the Fatherless and a Husband to the widow to visit the sick and give his life for these dear kindred in Christ, that their joys will be his joys, and their sorrows will be his sorrows, and that tears will flow from eye to eye and joy from heart to heart, that we may live together and die together, in the Lord, and there be buried, these rich unmerited favors and blessings we ask in the Name and mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave His life, that we might have hope beyond the grave, Amen;

Elder Amasa J. Slauson

ST. JOHN 14 : 17-20.

Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

December 21, 1991

Elder J.R. Williams:

Dear Elder Williams, I'm reminded that my subscription to the Signs runs out December 1991. I look forward to receiving the Signs, and enjoy reading it, get comfort from them. So thankful I'm still able to read the Bible and Signs etc., and have tapes of singing, prayers and sermons on tape. So thankful I have them as I have been here in California a year. Moved from Arkansas, my son & daughter and others in the family. Grandchildren and great grandchildren live here, I felt I needed to be near them. A time may come when they or some one will need to take care of me. I was 83 in November. I don't know where any Primitive Baptist are here — and would like to know. I sure miss getting to go to hear the Gospel of Christ Jesus preached by the Elders of the Primitive Baptist Church and meeting with the Brothers and Sisters of like faith, but do trust the Lord is with me. If I'm one of his chosen — he states in the Bible he'll never forsake thee. I feel to be the chief of sinners. I confess as Paul does, if saved it's by the Grace of God.

I see in the contributions for Sept, in 12/91 issue of the Signs that Elder Bud Smith of Calif. sent in a contribution. I would like for you to let me know his address if it's not too much trouble. I sure would appreciate this, of course it might be long distance from here.

Do you know of any Primitive Baptist churches in California ?

In Hope of Eternal Life,

Ellen M. Sellars
Gold Star Dr.
Long Beach, Calif. 90810

Please note, above is Mrs. Sellars address. Please contact if you can help with information.

QUERIES & ANSWERS

Dear Elder Williams,

I have a question for your Questions and Answers:

In I Kings Chapter 1 we read that the people brought a fair damsel, Abishag, to David in his old age, "but the king knew her not." Then, Adonijah tried to usurp the throne, but was deserted by his supporters when Solomon was anointed king. Adonijah feared Solomon, but Solomon agreed to spare him if he proved himself worthy, but if wickedness was found in him he would die.

In Chapter 2, David dies and Adonijah petitions Bathsheba to intercede for him and ask Solomon to give him Abishag to wife. She did so and Solomon declared that Adonijah had spoken this word against his own

life and he had him put to death.

What I don't understand is why this request was a reason for death? King David had died; it doesn't say Abishag was his wife or even his concubine. It says she cherished the king and ministered unto him, but he knew her not. How did Adonijah's request convict and condemn him?

Sincerely,
Hazel A. Garland

ANSWER:

1 Kings 1-5 — When King David was old and stricken in years, abishag a young Virgin was brought unto him. Though a marriage was never consumated she served him as wife other than he knew her not.

Before King David died Adonijah exalted himself, saying, I will be King, and prepared himself as such. He prepared chariots and horsemen and fifty men to run before him. He conferred with others to serve with him but the priest, prophet and other mighty men belonging to King David were not called and they were never with Adonijah. But Adonijah reigned for a while and David knew it not.

When Nathan the Prophet learned of this he went to Bathsheba and ask that she go to King David and inform him, and reminded him of his assurance that Solomon was to reign after him, and that Adonijah now reigneth and thou knowest it not.

Now the King being aware called and had Solomon to sit upon the throne in his stead. Now adonijah made his request to Bathsheba and she presented it unto Solomon. Solomon knowing how Adonijah had said, I will be King and had tried once to take over the throne and now asking for the virgin widow of the King to be his wife and believing this to be a plot toward trying to over throw him, considers him as a traitor. Proving him to be unworthy and believing his plot or request to be that of a wicked act, thus condemning him to death.

Please read 1st King, first and second chapters. In doing so keep in mind what I have hinted at that might have been going on in this event.

Kenneth R. Key

PSALM 119 : 65-72.

Thou has dealt well with thy servant, O Lord, according unto thy word.

Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments.

Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.

Thou art good, and doest good; teach me thy statutes.

The proud have forged a lie against me: but I will keep thy precepts with my whole heart.

Their heart is as fat as grease; but I delight in thy law.

It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.

The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.

ARTICLES

I would like to write on Matt. 16: 13-19, to prevent being to lengthy I won't write it all out now, but will take one verse at a time.

Matt. 16:13 "When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Phillippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" Some wonder why Jesus asked this question. He didn't ask it in order to find out what men said, for being the Son of God he knew all things, and surely he knew the answer to this question. He asked it to draw the men out, to get them on this subject, for there was a great truth he wanted to teach them.

The Jewish people had not accepted Jesus as being the Son of God, therefore there was much speculation and guessing as to who he really was. Much of their speculation was due to a wrong interpretation of the scripture, thus they answered in this manner. *Verse 14 " Some say thou art John the Baptist, some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets." They were all wrong, so Jesus then asked, Verse 15 "But who say ye that I am?"* He wanted them to speak out and state who they thought he was, so he put the question to them directly, who do you say that I am? *Verse 16 "And Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ the Son of the Living God."* In the past I have been in some Arminian churches and someone would come forward to join the church. The preacher would say, repeat after me, I believe that Christ is the Son of God. The person would then repeat those words, then he would be baptized. This is a far different situation here with Peter, he knew who he thought Christ was, and he knew why he thought it, no man had to tell him what to say. Notice thou art the Son of the living God, Peter knew this was the real God, no make believe God, no statue, or some idol, but the Son of the living God. *Verse 17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, "Blessed art thou Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hast not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."* Blessed art thou Simon Barjona, and indeed he was blessed. What a wonderful blessing indeed, to know that Jesus was and is the Son of God. This within itself is the most wonderful blessing any mortal man could have. By this knowledge and the way he received it, he had a hope of a home in heaven. For flesh and blood has not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. Think what a statement this was, and about the meaning of it, flesh and blood has not revealed this unto thee. In other words, there was nothing special that Peter had done to attain this knowledge. He had talked to no one to tell him this great truth, no newspaper, or radio etc. It had been revealed unto him by the Father in heaven. This is the way all great and sweet truths came to a child of God. The scripture says, speaking of the Holy Spirit, he will take the things of mine and show them unto you. It is written in another place the Spirit must the work perform.

The God I believe in is working all things after the counsel of his holy will, and he will take his children in the path that he would have them go. He will take the things of his and show them unto his little ones, in the way and manner that will be to his glory and their edification.

Verse 18 "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church." What did Jesus mean when he said, upon this rock I will build my church? There are multitudes of people today who say that Christ, in saying this, meant he would build his church upon Peter. However, I do not believe that Jesus, the Son of the living God, is building his church on any man, but rather on himself. He is the rock, the sure foundation, the church is surely built on the work, death and resurrection of Jesus himself. What I believe Jesus meant when he said, upon this rock I will build my church, is revealed knowledge. The scripture teaches that without faith it is impossible to please God. There are many things we could write about faith, but to do so would prove too lengthy. How does a man attain faith? The scripture says it is a gift of God and surely it is. A man receives faith by a revelation from God, of the things of God. The revelation comes in different ways, sometimes while hearing a preacher, or sometimes while reading the scripture, but it is always the work of the blessed Holy Spirit, showing the things of His to his little children at the time and in the manner pleasing to Him. Like Peter, the Father revealed unto him that Jesus was the Christ, therefore Peter had faith. Consider instances in the scripture when the Spirit revealed the things of God to men. They were all blessed with a God given faith like the Apostle Paul when the revelation was made to him on the road to Damascus. This I believe was what our Lord meant when he said, *"On this rock I will build my church."* He meant the rock, the result of spiritually revealed truths that caused saving faith in God, who is the rock of the church. *"And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."* I didn't know there were gates to hell. I believe what Jesus meant was in a figurative sense, meaning that none of his church would ever be lost, be cast into hell, or in a sense pass through the gates of hell. *Verse 19 "I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."* Jesus, speaking here of the kingdom of heaven, was speaking of the church and his believers here on earth. He is speaking here of a difference between earth and heaven, such as being loose on earth, will be loosed in heaven. I believe the term, kingdom of heaven means the church, or believers here on earth, while the term kingdom of God means the heavenly kingdom. I will give unto you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, I don't believe he meant by

the word keys, that he would give Peter the power, or authority to accept or reject anyone from coming into the kingdom, or the power to expel any already in. But I believe what he meant was that Peter, and the Apostles, were given the knowledge and the authority to unlock the spiritual truths that were revealed to them by the Spirit, when coming into the gospel dispensation. For instance, he was able and did loose the people from many things that was done and was important under the law, but was no longer needed or required in the dispensation of grace. Peter taught (or loosed) the people from having to offer sacrifices. He taught they were no longer needed, because Jesus had made the one supreme and perfect sacrifice, therefore he loosed the people from them. He also loosed the people from observing Jewish sacred days and feast days, such as the Jewish sabbath, holy days, new means, the day of atonement, feast of trumpets, feast of weeks and the feast of the passover. He loosed the people from the natural act of circumcision, which the descendants of Abraham were bound to do. Instead he taught or bound them to the act of spiritual circumcision, of God working on the heart. He taught or bound them to associate with the Gentile people, who before this time had been kept out. He taught or bound them that other meats were clean and good to eat. They were no longer required by Law to obstain from certain meats.

The Lord blessed the Apostles with the knowledge to know and minister these things and said, whatsoever thou shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. We have been shown, through the bible and through the teaching of the Apostles, and by the revelation given unto us by the Holy Spirit, during the christian dispensation, the many changes that have taken place in the method by which we now attempt to worship our God. The difference between the dispensation of grace, which is now and when we were under the law. Many burdens were placed on the people by the Scribes and Pharisee, which had no spiritual value at all. Meats may now be eaten which before was considered unclean. So, let us look at these few things, add them to the long list of other great blessings, and try to thank God from whom all blessings flow.

I hope I have written this in the spirit of love. May the good Lord continue His love and mercy upon us. I desire your prayers,

A brother I hope,
Frank Hunt
102 Lake Ave.
Salem, Va. 24153

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 2/92 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

VOICES OF THE PAST

VITAL GODLINESS

That there is much speculative religion in the world there can be no doubt, and that there may be some that is not genuine among those who stand connected with the church of Christ is greatly to be feared. Every true and legitimate son and daughter of Zion, while in this earthly house of their pilgrimage, experience seasons when it is with them a matter of the greatest importance to know whether they are not of that character. It is not probable that hypocrites and mere nominal professors of christianity are troubled on the same ground, for he who designs to deceive cannot feel that suspense and conflict which doubting christians always feel when the light and comfort of the divine presence are withdrawn from their view. Much is said about vital godliness, and in order that we may know whether we are in possession of it, it is important that we understand what is meant by the terms. Vitality is life, and the word godliness in the scriptures signifies that action which spiritual life in the children of God is calculated to produce. Hence the terms are only properly applicable to those who are born of God, and led by the Spirit to walk in the way of holiness, in whom is developed the fruits of the spirit, which are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance; and all these being fruits of the Spirit are only found where spiritual life has been given. And as they are produced by the Spirit they invariably give evidence of vital union to Christ, who is the life of his people. As the branch of a vine cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, so neither can the people of God bring forth fruits which are unto holiness, the end of which is eternal life, except they abide in Christ, who is the true Vine, and of which the Father is the Husbandman. For without him we can do nothing.

The apostle suggests to us that persons may have a form of Godliness while they deny the power thereof; but we conclude that where the power of Godliness is possessed, there will certainly be at least some of the form of Godliness manifested.

If what we have found to be the fruits of the spirit developed constitutes the form or any part of that form, does it not appear that men may possess a kind of love, joy, peace, and even faith that does not proceed from the spirit as the result of spiritual life implanted? Much that will pass currently for christian love in the religious world is denounced by the apostles as being spurious. He admonished his brethren that such loved not the Lord Jesus, but were enemies of the cross of Christ. They may affect a deceptive counterfeit, and may use soft words and fair speeches while they only flatter to

beguile and allure to entrap. In evidence of their love they may show astonishing zeal and what the world calls benevolence; they may give their goods to feed the poor, their money to support missionaries, and their bodies to be burnt, and still be destitute of anything but the mere form of love. They may also cry, "Peace," when God has not spoken peace, and they may possess that complacency which the strange woman boasted of when she had paid her vows, (See Prov. vii.) and yet only a form. Their joy and faith and all the imitations of Godliness that can possibly grow out of an unregenerated heart are lifeless and formal and, as far as we can trace such characters by the light of revelation, they invariably deny the power of vital godliness and this they do in a variety of ways. The principle way, however, is by denying that the love, joy, peace, long-sufferings, goodness, gentleness, faith, etc., are truly the fruits of the Spirit, the gift of God, but claiming that they are produced by human power by the will and works of men. Their position is like this, "If the branch will bear fruit of itself as a condition, it may then be admitted into the Vine." But all who know experimentally the power of Godliness will acknowledge that the excellency of its power is of God, and not of the creature. The power is in the vine and not in the branch, only as the branch abides in and receives vigour faithfulness from the living Vine. But there are times in which the branches which really abide in the vine seem to be barren, the branches are not always clothed with verdure, and abounding with clusters, but branches vitally abiding in the true and living Vine shall assuredly bring forth fruit in its appropriate season. The tree of life which John saw yielding its fruit every month, and all they who receive life and vigour from Christ will, in due time, present the fruits of the spirit.

Godliness, in the life and conversation of the children of the kingdom, derives all its vitality from Him who is the Head of life and spirituality to His body, the church. All is dry, formal and vain in our deportment that springs not from this union to him. He only hath immortality dwelling in the light, and therefore from him alone can we receive it only as we abide in him as the fruitful branch abideth in the true vine, for the saints are members of him, as the branches are members of the vine. And from him the head, all the members of the body, the church, have nourishment ministered and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. The apostle assures us that all are called in one hope of our calling—one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, one God and Father of all who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

But our design was not only to define the terms, but to offer some remarks upon the subject of its development in the faith and general deportment of those who know and acknowledge its power. The grace

of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. A life of godliness is necessarily a life of self-denial. No man can live godly in Christ Jesus without suffering persecution, nor can we deport ourselves as becometh godliness without denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, for these are the opposites of all that adorn the christian character. But whatever of opposition, persecution, or self-denial may oppose the life and course of godliness, there is a power and virtue in it that will out-live all opposition, and bear its humble possessors above the din of warring elements and safely lodge them ultimately in that happy state where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary shall enjoy uninterrupted rest. If we, through grace abounding, possess vital principle, and possess those things which pertain to life and godliness, we shall know experimentally that godliness with contentment is great gain, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. Then may our enemies exhaust all their stores of wrath upon us.

"We shall perceive their noise no more,
Than we can hear a shaking leaf,
When rattling thunders round us roar."

May the God of all comfort, who has called us by his grace and given us everlasting consolation through grace, enable us to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, and at last take us up out of all our afflictions and tribulations and cause us to bask in the fullness of the eternal fountain of life and godliness in the world that is without end.

"O glorious hour! O bless'd abode!
There to be near, and like my God,
And flesh and sin no more control,
The rising pleasures of my soul."

Middletown, N.Y., May 15, 1854
Elder Gilbert Beebe

CLOTHES

I am well aware of the folly of mentioning the wearing of clothes to those that have no decency, and I am not doing that. However, I also know that there are many decent people that believe that it is honorable and decent and honest to wear clothes. I respect these people that still respect themselves enough to keep decently dressed to hide their nakedness and to keep warm.

However, even that field of the subject is not what is interesting to me at this time. Unless I am sadly mistaken, this world is not my home. I am tenting here for the time being, but I am not afraid to say that I am ready at any time to have my earthly tent folded up and laid away, whatever way that it seems best to say. I do not think of myself nor of my kindred in Christ as being naked or unclothed, but that day by day, I am showing forth

garments either in praise to His majesty and grace, or that I am wearing clothing that is in keeping with His divine justice.

The children of God desire to be clothed upon. There is a sense in which the Lord is unclothing us of our youth and our vigor. To me this unclothing of us starts at the head, and is oftimes many years in being finished. As it starts at the head and goes downward, so, also, our clothing from above comes down upon us and as we are stripped of our natural powers or clothing, so, also, our vesture from above comes from heaven upn us so that we are not unclothed at any time. We are losing one, and as fast as we lose it, we are being clothed upon, so that wer are not naked.

To be sure, I am not writing about clothes that we buy at the local haberdasher, but I do desire to note the spiritual garments the clothing from heaven that the saints are dressed in. It is my firm conviction that the vivid account of God clothing our first parents in the morning of time was literally true. I doubt not the account given of the sinning of them. It is not mine, at this time, to enter into the technicalities of their sinning. I am willing to admit the guilt of my foreparents, and me in them; that we were told in clear concise language that we were not to eat of the forbidden fruit. We did eat, and we were, and we are guilty, of violating the commandment of our Maker. It was a fearful time with them both when they became aware of their nakedness. Like all those that feel guilty, they attempted to hide themselves from the searching eyes of their Maker. I do not hesitate to say that all of their posterity, will, when made aware of their nakedness before God, will attempt to hide themselves. Not one of them will ever prove successful in the attempt. Every one of them will run, will hide, will do anything within their power to evade those piercing, searching eyes. Not a one of them will ever make the grade, for it cannot be done.

Now were they covered? What was the source that brought the covering to them? What were the coats of covering made from? May the Spirit of the Lord lead and guide us into all truth. As far as I am concerned, I beg that Spirit to guide me into all truth (John 16:13), so that I realize my fall and my disobedience, and that my first parents, and me in them, did not deserve the mercy shown us, as I hope, in the morning of time. Let me ask you again this pertinent question, Who was it that gave them clothing? What part did they play in order to get this clothing? Helpless, guilty before their Creator, they awaited in resignation to their deserved penalty. Yes, I say again, their deserved penalty! They had confessed their sin, they knew the just consequences of their disobedience. Think with me about their (our) plight. Afraid and attempting to hide, and facing eviction from the only abiding place that

they know. Tell me once again what and who it was that spared them. Let me tell you (us) what and who it was that alleviated the naked, the fallen condition that they were in. It is the same grand and glorious gospel of the grace of God that has ever been preached to poor naked fallen sinners. Mercy stepped in at the very outset. There has not been in any age a time when mercy was not in the council and the counselling of our God with and for His people. God moved. And Adam and Eve waited, like you and I waited for justice to fall on us. Adam and Eve waited. Naked, exposed to the wrath of God, a vile wretched pair of culprits.

Justice did not appear. The wrath of God did not put in an appearance. But mercy and love did appear in the action of God. I believe just what it says, if you do not, then I am not writing to you. God did not pour out His wrath and His justice on them, but He did shed innocent blood of two animals in order to make a covering to shield them from the penetrating piercing look of divine justice to them and on them for retribution, I am well aware that it is sometimes looked on with disdain to talk about types and shadows. Also, I am well aware that this gift of preaching and writing has perhaps been abused, but the abuse of a gift by those that seem to have the gift does not mean that it is prohibited. To me, this is a precious pointer this early in the morning of time that God is going to put His Son to death in order to clothe these poor sinners with a glorious covering.

What a lovely experience it was to a poor sinner, be he king or peasant. The clothing of which the Bible speaks so beautifully does not have to do with natural wearing apparel. Anything that is comfortable and decent is approved by the apostle in his letters to the churches. The present treatise is not concerned about that phase of our clothing. But am I dressed in that uniform that was designed in the eternal mind of God and described with such glowing glorified terms by the writers in both Testaments? Has the Lord put the suit of armor on me? Am I dressed in the seamless coat that was woven from that fabric that is all so skillfully woven that no wrinkle nor seam can be discerned?

Not only are the soldiers and followers of the Lord commanded to be good soldiers, but they are taught by the grace of God to watch lest a spot be found on it. The petition of the wearers of this seamless robe is that they be kept lest spots or wrinkles be found thereon.

The is not a part of the body that is not provided protection or covering except that there is not any for the back part in battle. The breastplate of righteousness is for battle, facing the front. There is not any retreat, and cringing from the front line, for the battle cry is ever forward. I would beg for guidance as we linger around the battlefront

and behold the soldiers of Jesus Christ. As we speak and write about the relationship between the people of God and their Commander. Sometimes I hear whisperings that break out into street corner loud talk that it does not matter how we walk, how we talk, what we indulge in through the week. Is this the attitude of the saints of God? Is it alright if our garments are soiled? I do not have any idea that there is an Old Baptist in the country that has a spirit of indifference about them like unto that. Perhaps, just perhaps, there are members that have an attitude like unto that, but there is not an Old Baptist that thinks that is the attitude of our people.

Beginning at the head and going down the body, we are commanded to watch the covering for each part of the body, and again I do not think that an Old Baptist will get the idea that I am speaking about the fleshly body. Admitted, it is in keeping with the doctrine of salvation by grace, and it is certainly taught in the scriptures that the children of God be decent and that cleanliness be daily practiced. This does not mean that every one has got to have on an expensive suit of clothes, nor a hundred dollar dress. Neither does it mean that a minister should wear a pair of overalls in the pulpit. On the firing line the whole armour is to be put on. I have heard it said by those seeking eminence as a sound soldier, that they would not do anything until the Lord got hold of them and made them; that coming to the church, or doing anything else in serving God, that He would have to man handle them, that they did not mean to yield to Him in and of themselves. Paul had a better way, even a way that would delight the Master and delight a fellow soldier. My brethren be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your foot shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; and above all, taking the shield of faith, ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watchthereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints. I Eph. 6:10, 18).

As a soldier of the Lord Jesus Christ this is all that you need; it is all that you are allowed. This is the only protection that a soldier of Jesus Christ is ever permitted to use in any conflict regardless of how severe the

tactics of those with whom he is engaged in battle with. None of this armour is physical or fleshly or carnal. None of it comes from any earthly government. They cannot give it, nor can they forbid its use.

The warfare or conflict never ceases once it begins. There is not any furloughs nor any discharge. There is not any substitute for this royal armour. There is not any factory where it is manufactured. No man, by searching, can acquire this clothing, this armour. It is made to order for every soldier, and yet each soldier is equipped with just such things as are necessary to meet the enemy, and especially the enemy in our own house, for this is the worst enemy that we will ever meet. However, that enemy has been subjugated by the Master at the beginning, and not anything is ever from under the jurisdiction of the Captain of the army of the Lord.

This uniform, this support, this protection is given according to the wisdom of the Captain. He gives the armour, and it is He that arms us and that puts the armour on us. There is to be no compromise with the enemy. No quarter is sought, nor none is given.

Whether on missions of goodwill, or correction, or rebuke, or in whatever place that the Spirit leads us, let us, by the grace of God, be ready, in as much as we know not the hour when the trumpet of battle will be blown by our Captain. May we all be found faithful at our post until the time when He bids us to ground our arms, and go home to ever be with the Lord.

Your little brother in hope of mercy,

Elder W.D. Griffin

"Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old." — Lamentations v. 21.

Are you not often destitute of the power to repent, and confess your sins before God? Does not conscience often bring a view a melancholy retrospect of carnal thoughts, wicked desires, vain imaginations, foolish words, frivolous speeches, and all that catalogue of evils, that huge bill which godly fear sometimes files in the court within, as seen in all our departures from the life of God ? But are you able to repent ? are you able to feel cut to the very heart ? are you able to mourn and sigh because conscience brings against you this long indictment? Can you always feel your soul melted down with sorrow on account of it? Are you always able to feel contrition because you are proud, worldly, covetous, everything that is evil, everything that is hateful in God's sight ? But, then, there are times and seasons when the Lord is pleased to work upon the conscience, to move and stir the soul, to touch the heart with his gracious finger — then repentance and godly sorrow flow forth. It is with us as with the rock that Moses struck. There was water in the rock; but it required to be struck with the rod before the waters flowed out. So we may have the grace of repentance in our souls; but it requires the divine hand to strike the rock, to cause the waters of godly sorrow to gush forth.

J.C. Philpot

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FOR DECEMBER 1991

Mrs. Mary Poff, VA.....2.00
Mr. & Mrs. J.B. Blaylock, NC 2.00
Gray E. Hall, AL.....2.00
Mrs. Bessie Barber, NC.....2.00
Walter Hill, NC.....5.00
Don & Sheryl Jackson, TX.....2.00
Kenneth C. Manuel, NC.....2.00
Ms. Ruby Hawley, VA.....2.00
Miss Justine Alexander, AR.....2.00
George W. Hyslip, TN 2.00
Levi R. Mcgough, AL.....2.00
Luther E. Martin, NC 7.00
Woodrow W. Bellinger, NY 2.00
Mrs. Marjorie Cook, TN 20.00
Mrs. W.A. Jewett, Jr., OH.....2.00

OBITUARIES

MR. LOYD U. CHANCE

Mr. Loyd U. Chance was born on January 15, 1908, in Sulphur Springs, Texas.

Mr. Chance never united with any church, but he always faithfully attended the meetings at Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, and her sister churches. Failing health in late 1990 finally limited his attendance and activities. Even then, he occasionally was able to attend church.

Mr. Chance was a strong believer in the gospel of Jesus Christ. He rejoiced in the free grace of God, the blood atonement of Jesus Christ as the only hope for the salvation of needy sinners, and the absolute predestination of all things. He had a firm hope in the resurrection, and he expressed a hope of life in Christ in the hereafter.

He departed from this life on August 22, 1991, at the age of eighty-three years. His funeral was conducted by Deacon Frank Richards and Elder C.C. Morris, both of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church, where Mr. Chance had attended for over 40 years. His body was laid to rest in Restland Memorial Park in Dallas to await the resurrection morning.

Mr. Chance is survived by his wife, Lucille Chance; three daughters, Virginia D'Vincent, Yvonne Breton, and LaVerne Poston; two sons, Loyd L. Chance and Don Chance; three sisters, Oza Hill, Bernice Riddle, and Willie B. Davis; three stepchildren, nine grandchildren, many nieces and nephews, and a great host of friends. He is yet loved and missed by those who knew him.

Written by order of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church in conference, with the directions that a copy be sent to the family of Mr. Chance, a copy be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and a copy be retained in the church records.

Elder C.C. Morris, Moderator
Deacon Dean G. Connell, Clerk

BROTHER EGBERT M. REEVES

On November 19th, 1990, it pleased the good Lord to call from the scenes of this life our beloved senior deacon, Brother E.M. Reeves. He was born in Gwinnett, Georgia on November 15th, 1899. The family later moved to East Texas where it was ordained for him to meet his future wife, Miss Flossie Collins. They were married on September 4th, 1920. Brother Reeves joined Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church on July 14th, 1957 and continued a faithful member and supporter of his dear church even when physically unable to attend. When the rigors of old age along with a history of 5 strokes began to have a telling effect upon his earthly tabernacle, it seemed if possible, his little church became all the more dear unto him. On several occasions he related how when unable to attend, he would keep track of the time and when 10:30 would come around, he would say, "Well, they're starting to sing at Hopewell." What happened next, he would relate with emotion, "Brother Jimmy, I just couldn't keep the tears from flowing down my face at that time." Surely his heart was with us.

Brother Reeves was blessed with many wonderful and beautiful experiences. One night he had a dream about the 23rd Psalm. After delighting in the beautiful scenes depicting the truths of this psalm, he woke up in the middle of the night and couldn't help feeling along with the joy of having such a dream, a disappointment the dream was over. He then went back to sleep and was blessed to pick up where he had left off in a continuation of his wonderful dream. At the request of Brother Reeves, Psalm 23 was used as the text by the writer for his funeral message.

Brother Reeves leaves behind his loving wife of 70 years, Sister Flossie Reeves, two sons: Egbert M. Reeves Jr. of Marshall, Texas and Kenneth Reeves of Camp Verdi, Arizona, two daughters: Lynell Jones of Mineola, Texas and Glenna Farr of Lubbock, Texas, 8 grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren, and 2 great-great-grandchildren.

Brother Reeves was a song leader for many years and among the songs of Zion he dearly loved were "When I can read my title clear" and "Hungry, and faint and poor". The first song closes with the following stanzas:

There shall I bathe my weary soul
In seas of heavenly rest,
And not a wave of trouble roll
Across my peaceful breast.
When we've been there ten thousand years
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise,
Than when we first begun.

We miss our dear Brother Reeves, but our loss is surely his eternal gain.

Written by his pastor,
Elder Jimmy Hamrick

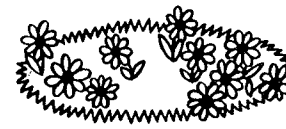

MINNIE SAWYER

Sister Minnie Sawyer was born August 3, 1905 and passed away after declining health from cancer. She joined Hancock Primitive Baptist Church June 14th, 1958 and was a faithful member. She attended her church as long as she was able to go. She loved the church and the brethren. She was baptised by Elder A.P. Mewbern. She is survived by her son Elder Joseph Lee Sawyer of Winterville, N.C.; her daughters Phoebe Cannon of Ahoskie, N.C.; Ruth Gupton of Middleburg, Florida; Shirley Robinson of Greenville, N.C. She has 11 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at Hancock Primitive Baptist Church of Ayden, N.C. and she was buried in the Church graveyard beside her husband. We believe she has entered into that eternal rest with the Lord.

Written in loving memory of our mother by her daughter.

Phoebe Cannon

JESSE PROCTOR SMITH

Jesse Proctor Smith, a member of North Creek Primitive Baptist Church near Belhaven, departed this earthly life on April 12, 1991. She was preceded in death by her husband, John Alva Smith, also a member of the church, and leaves a daughter, Wilma Smith Thompson of Plymouth; two sons, Marvin Smith and Danny Smith, of Belhaven; and several grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Sister Jesse was a Primitive Baptist in life and in death. She believed that grace, freely and unconditionally given by our Master, through faith, was the only hope of salvation. She drew much contentment knowing that her fate was in His hands, not hers nor in the hands of any other mortal.

She was born near Rocky Mount, North Carolina, April 28, 1909. Her earthly parents were Doc Proctor and Pearl Felton Proctor. She married John Alva Smith in 1925 in her home near Rocky Mount and moved to Belhaven shortly thereafter. She remained there the rest of her life, raising a family, toiling daily as a farmer and storekeeper's wife, and comforting all who needed comfort. She cooked often for visiting brothers and sisters of the church, and graciously entertained friend and stranger alike. "Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it."

Sister Jesse was buried in the Pamlico Memorial Gardens near Washington, NC with Elder J.T. Prescott officiating. May God grant her eternal peace and may he have mercy on all of us.

PSALM 46:1.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Signs of the Times

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I love thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of thine abode;
The church our blest Redeemer saved
With his own precious blood.
I love thy church, O God,
Her walls before thee stand,
Dear as the apple of thine eye,
And graven on thy hand.

For her my tears shall fall,
For her my prayers ascend,
To her my cares and toils be given
Till cares and toils shall end.
Beyond my highest joy
I prize her heavenly ways;
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
Her hymns of love and praise.

Jesus, thou friend divine,
Our Saviour and our King,
Thy hand, from every snare and foe,
Shall great deliverance bring.
Sure as thy truth shall last,
To Zion shall be given
The brightest glories earth can yield,
And brighter bliss of heaven.

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EDITORIAL

" And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of the world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were children of wrath even as others." (Eph. 2: 1-3.)

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

The children of God who have not yet been regenerated and those who shall never be regenerated know nothing concerning this state of being dead in trespasses and sin. Only when one has been quickened into life by the Holy Spirit can he know this, " *for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (I Cor. 2:14).* All the begging, pleading, persuasion, etc. of men has never caused anyone to take up his cross and follow Jesus, for he knows nothing concerning what this cross is; and Jesus said, "*No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:44.)* Who does the Father draw unto Jesus? surely not the whole world, for then everyone of them would come unto Jesus: but Jesus said unto some, "*And ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life." (St. John 5:40.)* And he said unto certain Jews when they asked him if he was the Christ, " *I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (St. John 10: 25-28.)* Who are the sheep who follow Jesus and have been given eternal life? Are they not the ones chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love? Did not God predestinate them unto the adoption of children

by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will? (Eph. 1: 4-5). Were their names not written in the book of life before the foundation of the world? All whose names were not found written there shall not worship him, but shall worship the beast. (Rev. 13:8). And an angel said unto John, *"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." (Rev. 22:11). Our righteousnesses is as filthy rags before God, (Isa. 64:6,) but through faith in Jesus Christ his righteousness is imputed unto us who believe. (Rom. 4:6, 11, 22.)* Not only that, but he hath made a covenant, saying, *"For I will be merciful unto their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. 8:12.)* Is our faith and belief of ourselves? No; it is the gift of God, *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2: 8-9.) "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." (Phil. 1:29).* Would a man chose a life of suffering and afflictions? I think not. Of them who worship the beast, that man of sin, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: even him, whose coming after the working of satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (II Thes. 2: 3-12). But in the next two verses we read, *" But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

There are many who profess to be christians and yet deny the election and sanctification of God. They contend that if God chose some to salvation and left others in their sins and did not give everyone a chance to be saved that he would be unjust. May God forbid always that his saints should even think such blasphemy! I am very glad indeed that my salvation is not left to chance or my works, but is according to his grace and mercy. I do not know that my name is recorded in his book of life, but I feel in my heart that I have been given a sweet hope in the death, burial, and resurrection of the Saviour; but

I also know that if I be cast into the lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels that God would be just and righteous in casting me there. The hope that I have seems strong at times and extremely weak at others, yet it is such that I would not exchange it for this world and many others like it.

Before the birth of Jesus, an angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Here are three prophecies that are very important, and all of them came to pass. It is important to note that the angel did not add any of these: if they will let him; if they will only accept him; if they will only ask; if they will perform certain tasks; if they will not reject his offer; nor did he add any thing. No, not only that but the prophecy is sure that "he SHALL save his people from their sins." In the 6th chapter of St. John we read, *"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up again in the last day."* Did Jesus fail to do his Father's will? Of course not. *"For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." (Heb. 10:14.)* And in his prayer to the Father he said, *"I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." And, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." (John 17: 4, 9.) And verse 12 "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled."* Perhaps it may be helpful to read again the whole 17th chapter, for therein is much doctrine of the grace and love of God reported abundantly.

While here on earth in the flesh Jesus performed many miracles to abundantly show the mighty power of God; for he healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, caused the lame to leap and walk with joy, opened the eyes of the blind, and raised up the dead unto life. All of these, even as wonderful as they were in the natural realm, were only figures of that work which he would do after his return to the Father. In St. John 5:25 we read, *"Verily, verily I say unto thee, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."* In this scripture he is telling of the quickening of his children from their dead state in trespasses and sin

and giving them that spiritual life that was theirs and stored in him before the foundation of the world. This is the new birth, and it is the greatest experience a poor sinner can ever have in this world. And next to it is the experience of having our eye of faith opened to behold Jesus Christ as our Saviour. Until this faith is given unto us we struggle and work and attempt to walk in the law, but we find that all our labours are fruitless and we become weary and heavy laden, and then to the end of our strength. Then we hear the command of our Saviour, *"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."* Our works of self-righteousness cease and our souls receive the needed rest. Our works have been for nought, for we find that Jesus has already accomplished for us the very thing which we were attempting to do. His yoke is easy and his burden is light for he does it all. And Paul admonishes us to *"be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" (II Cor. 6:14). Paul also said, "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) proving what is acceptable unto the Lord." (Eph. 5: 6-10).* We can walk in the light only when we are in the Spirit of God; for Jesus hath said, *"I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." (St. John 15: 5). And Paul said, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." (Rom. 7:8). "But we are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwells in us." Rom. 8:9.) And in Phil. 4:13 he said, "I can do all things through Christ with strengtheneth me." Jesus said, "Verily, verily I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things so ever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." (St. John 5: 19).* Neither can any man do anything that is spiritual or good except he be in Christ, and then it is Christ who doeth the work and not the man. The work is only made manifest in the man as it was in Jesus when he was on the earth. We shall do good works even when we do not know when we do them: *"For ye are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2: 10).* In the parable Jesus spake in Matt. 25 he divided those that did no good works

from those who did. Those who did no good works asked when they had failed to do them; but those who did the good works asked when they did them. Of the ones who did not the good works he said, These shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into eternal life.

Eternal means having no beginning and no end. We do not believe that the children of God existed in some form before they were brought forth by natural birth into the world, but that they existed in the mind and purpose of God; for he has the power to bring them forth exactly as he foreknew them. In Ps. 139: 15, 16 we read, *"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."* These members are the body of Christ, for he is the head over all the things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. (Eph. 1:22, 23; 4:15, 16; Col. 1:18). If we be what we hope to be, then we were in Christ Jesus when he hung upon the cross and died with our sins upon him: and when our head died we died in him, we were buried in him, and we arose in him. This is the first resurrection, for Jesus is the resurrection and the life. *"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." (Rev. 20:6).* Read Rev. 20: 6 thru 15 to see who the holy and blessed are and who shall suffer the second death and be cast into the lake of fire.

The last commandment Jesus gave to his apostles before he was received up into heaven was, *"Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."* (Mark 16: 15-16). He that has been baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire, and has had his heart prepared of the Lord and has been ordained to eternal life shall believe. (See Matt. 3:11; Acts 13:48; and Pro. 16:1.) God opened the heart of Lydia that she attended unto the words of Paul and then she was baptized with water. When Paul turned from the Jews to preach unto the Gentiles, as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. When Philip preached to the eunuch he believed and then was baptized with water. When Peter had preached unto Cornelius, the Holy Ghost fell on them which heard the word; and then they were baptized by water. On the day of Pentecost Peter preached, and testified, and exhorted, and they that heard him were pricked in their heart, (not by Peter, but by the Lord.) And Peter said unto them, *"For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, EVEN as many as the Lord our God shall call."* Nowhere in the holy scriptures have I found a commandment unto the ministers who have been ordained,

qualified, and sent forth of the Lord to persuade any to believe in Christ. If one could be persuaded to believe, then one could be persuaded not to believe. Paul said in his epistle to the church at Galatia, *"As we said before, so say I again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Christ Jesus."* Jesus did not tell Peter to persuade men, but to *"feed my sheep and feed my lambs."* If there be any persuasion it is of God, for *"the preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord." (Pro. 16:1).* We read in Eph. 4: 11, 12, *"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."*

I have attempted to set forth a small portion of what is believed and preached among the Old School Primitive Baptists, and have listed a few of the many scriptures that support our belief and our hope that we are a portion of the children of God who have been called out of darkness into his marvellous light: and we know that God has a chosen people among all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues who shall be called and taught by the Holy Spirit, *"Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." (St. John 14:17).* There is much need for admonitions and exhortations of the saints, but neither applies to the ungenerated non-believer.

We have no desire to persecute or even to be contentious with any whose beliefs and faith are not in accord with us; and we remember who it is that maketh us to differ: yet we have been persecuted and hated from the days of the first disciples of Christ, and shall be until the end of time, because of what we believe and preach. This is because Jesus also suffered persecution and was hated because he preached the truth. (St. John 15: 29, 20). But we are waiting in hope for the time when Jesus shall return again without sin unto salvation and receive his children, that where he is they shall be also. The trials, tribulations, and suffering of his saints are not even worthy of being compared with the glory that they shall see in that day when they hear him say, *"Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."*

May God bless the truth, and pardon all errors, and shew his mercy unto all.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES

The Lord willing I will attempt to write something concerning 1 Pet. 1: 2-9.

V.2 — " Elect according to the foreknowledge of God, " these are the people Peter is writing to, the elect, which means people who were chosen by God before the foundation of the world. They were chosen according to the foreknowledge of God; according to the everlasting love of God the Father, and the sovereign grace, good will and pleasure of God. This is the ground and foundation of his choosing them to grace and glory, not by anything in them or, anything done by them. No other reason can be given for it except his own grace, his great love and sovereign good will and pleasure.

The means follow though, by which they were chosen, through sanctification of the Spirit. The act of sanctification, the act of God's grace, by which the affections of men are purified from sin, and conformity to the will of God. Just as in II Thes. 2:13 because God has from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth. The Bible speaks of this as regeneration, the act of regeneration, or producing anew. As the Lord said to his Apostles during the ceremony of foot washing, unless I wash you, you will have no part in me, and another place, except a man be born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

These men have been sanctified unto obedience. The obedience of the faithful to Christ, the belief of the truth, and submission to Gospel ordinances, doing good work in the name and strength of Christ. These are the fruits and effect of being chosen in God, and surely not the cause of being chosen. No where does the bible say nor do I say, these men are perfect, and will not sin again. But they have been brought to the place where they can say with the Apostle Paul. Oh! woe is me, who can deliver me from this body of sin. This is the result of a man being sanctified. He is now conscious of sin, and tries to live above it, and is hurt when he doesn't. Men who have not experienced these things are not bothered in such a manner, and are spoken of in the Bible as children of disobedience.

Unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Christ. The blood of Jesus Christ was shed in abundance to give salvation to all the chosen. However, the Bible speaks of sprinkling often, such as sprinkling of the blood of the passover lamb, or sprinkling of the blood on the book of the covenant. Grace unto you and peace be multiplied, is the wish or prayer of the Apostle to or for these men.

V.3. "Blessed by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant

mercy, has begotten us again unto a lively hope."

The Apostle Peter is here giving praise and thanks to God for his abundant mercy, especially this one act. He has begotten us again unto a lively hope. Of course, he had already begotten us once with a natural birth, gave us life and brought us into this world as all men and women are. We have him and him only to thank for our life here. But, Peter is thanking and praising Him for something far greater than our natural birth. He is thanking and praising him for this lively hope, a new birth, a spiritual birth. The love and grace of God bestowed on poor unworthy sinners here on this earth, elect by the grace and foreknowledge of God, sanctified by the Spirit through faith, and given a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. What a God is ours ! All this work and all these promises would amount to nothing, had Jesus not risen from the dead. Had he made these promises, died, buried and was still entombed, what hope would we have of them being kept? Thanks be to God for all these things. What a wonderful God is ours !

V.4. "To an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away." In this life on earth, and among most all people we see and hear about an inheritance. Children inherit from their parents, men will inherit from their brothers, sisters, or friends what they want to give. Some with an abundance of wealth will leave large sums to institutions, colleges, etc. All these people, when they leave this money to their selected friends or family, attempt to find the best way to make sure it goes where it is intended to go. They hire lawyers and have a will drawn, specifying exactly who gets what. However, regardless of the care, time and expense, we often hear or read where wills have been contested and sometimes broken. But, here it is written, we are left an inheritance which is incorruptible. Nothing will corrupt this inheritance. Wicked men, spoiled or selfish kinfolk, greedy people or anyone else will never change or affect this inheritance, nor will it ever be defiled. There is no way it could ever be unclean or dirty, and it fadeth not away. Haven't you seen old photographs or old papers where the pictures, or printing have begun to fade to the point they are hard to distinguish or read? This inheritance will not fade away or become defiled, and it is reserved in heaven for you, the elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. People go to much trouble here to preserve different things. Sometimes they keep as they are supposed to, sometimes not. But this is reserved in heaven by the power of God and nothing, no body, no thing, or ages of time will ever change it. What a blessed assurance this is.

V.5. "Who are kept by the power of God, through faith." We could say much about faith, but not to get

too lenghty, I will just mention a couple of things. Without faith it is impossible to please God, why? Because without faith we couldn't believe on him. Faith, the anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, is what we are speaking of here. Both sure and stedfast it is kept by the power of God, how could it be more sure than that ? Ready to be revealed at the last time, now the Lord is working with each of his elect in an individual way that is pleasing to him. He does bless, guide, strengthen and comfort each of his elect in a personal way. At the last time they will all be revealed when they hear him say, *"Come ye blessed of my Father."*

V.7. " That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold..." I surely believe all who are blessed with this God given faith have a course laid out for him to run. This course has built into it many things which will surely test this faith. All of this is designed and planned by our heavenly Father for our good and to his glory. Bringing each of his little ones to the exact place he wants them, to the building of a perfect body. There are many things in this world and age which surely make us wonder, and at times our faith is sorely tried. But we have this blessed assurance in the words of our saviour, they will never deceive the very elect. Regardless of the trials, at his good time, this faith, this blessed hope within our breast, is once again made very precious to us.

V.8. " Whom having not seen, ye love ." Here in this life we are given to live by faith, not by sight, therefore with our natural eyes we have not seen our blessed Saviour. But through and by an eye of faith we have been blessed to love and feel his appearing to us. During some of these trials of faith, and after feeling so low, and sinful, when the time is right, once again our blessed Lord makes his power and love felt, and we believe that once again the Lord has appeared unto us with this great comfort that only he can give. Then the scripture II Tim. 4:8 is made dear to us, which is the promise made to us, to those who love his appearing. This is the path, our God has decreed that we should walk in, and are told to walk with patience, the path that is set before us.

V.9. This verse sums up all we have written about, receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls, what more can be asked for ? What more can be said ? When a man receives the salvation of his soul, he can thank God in a way he has never been able to before. He can praise his God with a perfect praise, love him with a perfect love, and sing the song of redemption which even the angels cannot sing.

What a God is ours, all is well.

A brother I hope,
Frank Hunt

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 3/92 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

VOICES OF THE PAST

LIFE AND EXPERIENCE OF MRS. SARAH HAMILTON.

REPUBLISHED BY REQUEST FROM ZION'S LANDMARK OF OCT. 1, 1887.

The following remarkable experience is an authentic narrative beyond a doubt. It has been printed many times, and at different places; and yet, comparatively speaking, but few persons have ever perused, and such as have, will be compensated for looking over it again. The rich display of sovereign grace exhibited in the experience of the subject of the narrative will interest every serious reader.

I was born in Frankfort, Germany, in 1746. In the 7th year of my age my father came to Charleston, in South Carolina : his name was George Beckhouse, by profession a Roman Catholic. He lived at Charleston until I was about 16 years of age, when I was married to Mr. Alexander Hamilton an eminent merchant, who in the contest between Britain and America was shot dead in his own house which was consumed by fire. In this distressing situation, having no children except an adopted daughter, and contemplating my misfortune, my best friend with all our substance snatched from me as it were, in an instant, created in me new and awful sensations which are beyond my power to relate. I then fled to a rich uncle for an asylum, who treated me with the greatest respect and attention, and welcomed me to his house and servants with all the accommodation that they could yield or afford : he offered to make me his heir, and directed his servants to treat me with all the kindness and respect as though they were really mine. I lived there with all the enjoyments this world could afford, but was still disconsolate in consideration of my heavy loss, and dressed myself in mourning and thus passed through some lonesome days and weary nights, for a considerable time; at length, being desirous of obtaining some relief I went to a theatre or playhouse, where I saw divers plays acted on the stage: and one in particular exhibited General Washington and Lady Montgomery, whose husband was killed in battle in Canada and the agitation that she manifested in the scene brought the death of my husband to my mind with such powerful sensations that I had nearly fainted. The shortness of life, and certainty of death, the faded nature of all worldly enjoyments, were then plain to my view, and distress was inexpressible. I went home, took my bed with a heavy heart, drowned in melancholy and with pensive mind and wearied limbs I fell asleep and dreamed.

(Although some people may make light of all dreams, yet I would beg pardon for inserting this, for it

was peculiarly interesting to me, however foolish it may look to others.) I thought I was in as beautiful a place as ever I saw, where there were all the most truly delightful and fashionable things in the world, also cards and dice, plays that I had been familiar with in my younger days. We drank wine out of golden bowls, and had everything the world deems delightful. I sat at the card table with an Episcopal priest, and took a golden bowl and drank a health to him, and then casting my eyes forward, I beheld a beautiful field adorned with flowers of various kinds and fine colors, and a great company of shining people dressed in white robes with white palms in their hands. They all sang with melodious harmony, such singing as I had never heard before. I saw also the angels from heaven, joining their songs with them. The melody, union and harmony of the scene was truly inexpressible. I then looked on the before - mentioned priest, and he looked black and very disagreeable, and myself likewise. I then set down the bowl, and said to them I must be gone. As soon as I rose up, I saw a great wall between me and the shining ones, the materials of which seemed to be of metal, stone and glass. As I looked earnestly, I saw a place where I could get through, only I must take off an extravagent head - dress which I had on. I was determined that no ornament in the world should hinder me from the enjoyment of so happy a situation as I saw at the other side of the wall, or to deliver me from my disagreeable company. So I cast my head - dress into the fire and came to the wall; but I discovered a great sea before me, and must of necessity pass through it in order to get to that beautiful field. While I was meditating how I should get through the sea, a negro came and pushed me into it; and it was very boisterous, and the waves were so high that I was soon driven ashore on dry land again. The captain of these shining ones then came to me and said, Lo, you see a beautiful palace? I answered yes: which was as large as this globe, but it was still above this world, and had seats of solid gold all around it. And this beautiful man asked me if I saw the golden seats. I told him I did; he told me I should have one of these seats, provided I conquered my enemies. And I went with the greatest joy expressible; and there opened a bottomless pit immediately before me, and the mouth of the pit reachen from wall to wall; and about three stories down there was a beam, and with grief I thought it was impossible for me to get to the palace; as I made a turn to go back the ground gave way from under me, and I fell into the dismal pit, but happened to hit upon this beam, and there I sat three days. Then there came another man from these shining ones, and asked me what I did there. I told him the pit was deep, and I could not get out; and then he put his hand in his pocket and took out a small ball of thread,

and told me to take hold of one end thereof. I told him I was afraid the thread would break, and I should be entirely lost; but he told me to take hold nevertheless, for this was Christ the rock. I got hold of it with both hands, and to my inexpressible joy was immediately out of the horrible pit. I then awoke, and behold it was a dream.

After some months' meditation on my dream I fell asleep and dreamed the same dream again, and also a third time. This brought me to such serious reflections that I hardly durst sleep at all ! yet was at a loss for the interpretation of my dream. I arose very early one morning and went to my uncle and aunt, and told them that I saw my uncle and aunt, the priest, and the people, extremely black in a dream, and that I felt very much concerned about it; but not so much as to prevent my going to balls and other public places, where they asked me to tell my dream, out of curiosity. I accordingly told it them frequently; and after a while my troubles entirely left me. But in about a year and nine months there came a gentleman from Georgia to visit me; he was a very rich man, and possessed wealth in abundance. The second time he visited me he invited my uncle and aunt, and myself to visit him and see his plantation; accordingly we all went together, and beheld his situation which was truly elegant. His house was very large, and ornamented inside and out; on the top was a balcony, and a summer seat therein. As he led me to the summer seat I thought of my dream. We returned home from our visit well suited with the place. The third time he came to visit me he brought me just such a head - dress as I dreamed about and it pleased me. We concluded to marry, and appointed a time when the nuptial ceremony should be solemnized. But about that time there was a people called Baptists in that place, who were ridiculed and all manner of evil spoken against them. I confess that I hated the very sight of them, and had it been in my power would soon have banished them out of the sight and the country too. The aforesaid gentleman took a walk one day, and when he returned he told my uncle that one of his slaves was that day going to be dipped by a man that looked more like a hangman than a priest. This much displeased me. I immediately replied that I wondered why gentlemen of note would suffer such fellows to go about the country cheating poor ignorant people in such a manner. My uncle said he would go and flog the slave home, and not suffer the dirty wench to be so deluded, were it not that a gentleman had appointed to visit him that day. I told him I would go if he would furnish me with a carriage. Accordingly I went. I no sooner came to the place than I saw the minister, and knew immediately, although I had never seen him before, that it was the same man I saw in my dream, that handed me the ball of thread and helped me

out of the pit. The sight of this man so affected my mind, that I was as one thunderstruck. He was the very one whom I saw amongst the singing throng of happy people, and I amongst the cursed black crew. I then thought I was cursed in every deed, which flung me immediately almost into despair, and in the greatest agony I fell to the earth. Viewing myself undone forever, and eternally lost, I was in the most deplorable situation conceivable, and despaired of ever going from that place. I thought that the earth was just about to swallow me up alive into everlasting destruction, both soul and body, and really expected to fall straightway into the bottomless pit, where there was no recovery. My distress was so great the people discovered it, gathered round me on all sides, and supposed me in a fit, and sought means to recover me, but in vain, for my distress was of such a nature that medical assistance was entirely baffled; I fainted and fell to the ground; they lifted me in the coach again, and carried me home to my uncle's house. A great company of people followed me. This situation of mine greatly exasperated the minds of the people; some swore they would kill the minister, because they supposed he had bewitched me; and my uncle immediately sent for the Romish Priest to dispel the witchcraft from me; but his presence was very disagreeable to me. I told him to begone, for we were all going to hell together.

Another minister then came to me, but I could not bear the sight of him either; for it appeared to me he had helped me to commit the unpardonable sin. I told him to begone quick; and that he was a wicked wretch, and a wolf in sheep's clothing; that he would neither go to heaven himself, nor let others; and as he was turning to go from me, my aunt told him not to mind what I said for I was crazy. Then the minister began to weep to see me in such a situation, and advised my uncle to send for that Baptist minister to see if he could take the witchcraft from me. He accordingly sent for him seventy-five miles. The minister willingly came — they set victuals and drink on the table for him, but durst not let even a servant go into the room where he was, lest he should bewitch them also. At length he came to speak with me and asked me how I was: I told him I was a poor, miserable, lost creature. He told me if I was lost I was one of these very persons for whom Christ died, and came to seek and to save. I told him that was impossible, for I had committed the unpardonable sin: he said he thought it was my mistake, for I did not know enough. After he had talked sometime, he put his hand into his pocket and took out the New Testament; it was the first that I ever saw. He read the third chapter of Mark, and gave his mind concerning the unpardonable sin. He told me he was going to visit a gospel sinner, whose case he thought was much worse than mine, which fright-

ened me very much indeed; for I thought he did not understand my case at all: he said, God willing, he would see me again tomorrow I said, pray sir, don't forget me ! and when he saw me so afflicted he said shall I pray for you before I go ? I answered, yes. What shall I pray for ? I told him to pray that the Lord might have mercy on me; with these words he seemed affected, which gave me to understand that he thought there was no mercy for me; but he kneeled down and prayed; I kneeled also; and when he spake of the spotless purity of God, before whom sinless angels veiled their faces, crying, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, and that the holiness and purity of God filled immensity, I thought it was impossible that I could have mercy; and when he had finished his prayer he went away. After he was gone, I remembered that the man of God told me that Christ came to save even the worst of sinners, and I thought that I could not be worse than the vilest. I then considered that the spotless angels, of whom he spoke, rejoiced over one sinner that repenteth, though ever so vile. I then imagined myself in a great king's house, who had an only son, and one of the king's servants committed a crime worthy of death, and the executioner was about to strike the fatal blow, when the king's son came forward and offered to die that the servant might live, which he did, and set the servant at liberty; which circumstances most readily applied to my case. I thought I was the very servant. — Surprising astonishment filled my soul. I beheld the Son of God expiring in agonies unknown to gratify the malicious rage of wicked men. I thought he died to save my life, and rose again for my justification. I also viewed him as having died for all, but was at first at a loss to see how one could die for so many; but when I saw and considered that the natural sun could shine on thousands, and each person have as great a share of the sun as though he was alone, I by this similitude understood the mystery, that, although Christ died for many yet each one had a whole Saviour. I then saw that God could be just and justify him that believeth in Jesus, even such a wretch as I was. In this view, no tongue can tell the ecstacy of joy that I was the subject of; my distress left me, and I could give glory to God with all my heart. I longed to praise him with every breath; my prayer was, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Lord speak for thy servant heareth.

Upon my uncle and aunt hearing this of me, they came to the door. I said to them, dear uncle and aunt, I shall not go to hell, for Christ died for me, and I have got a whole Saviour. My uncle then shut the door, but my aunt burst into tears on hearing me talk on this subject. It then came into my mind that Christ was baptised of John in Jordan, and I must follow the example, and convince the world that I was not ashamed to own my

Saviour before men. The next day the minister came, as he told me, with the man whom he went to visit, and I told them that I had found comfort, that Jesus had appeared for my relief, and that I was now willing to take him for my prophet, priest and king; that I felt determined to obey him in all things; that I thought his laws and commands were perfectly just and delightful to every obedient soul. This declaration from me came so unexpected to the minister that he was overjoyed, and said to the other man, that yesterday was the first time that ever she heard anything read from the bible: and now she is able to teach me (said he.) Glory to God in the highest, for he teaches as never man taught, neither is heavenly instruction dependent on human education. I then asked him if he was willing to baptise me; he told me he was glad of the opportunity, if I desired it; I told him I longed to follow my Lord and Master down the banks of Jordan, and that he would have to send for me, for I could not go to the place myself; he told me he would, and accordingly sent for me the next Lord's day morning. When I came down to the water - side, I related the dealings of God with me, which account proved instrumental in God's hands, of the awakening of fifteen souls. After the baptism was administered, they helped me to my uncle's; but behold he shut the door against me, and refused to let me in. I called to my daughter, but she gave me no answer. I now began to conclude, he that would live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution.

I was disowned by all my former friends and relations in that place, and the minister seeing me in this distressed situation, pitied me, and told me, as long as he had one shilling of money left I should share part of it, and desired me not to give way to trouble of this kind. He then carried me away and hired my board for three weeks; at the end of which time he came again and baptised those fifteen persons before mentioned, for they all gave great satisfactory evidence of the work of grace, in their hearts, and also brought a carriage for me to go with him to North Carolina, where I lived among his people three years; and a happy three years to my poor soul, though rejected by my natural relations; yet I think I had daily communion with friends and relations; even Jesus, who was to me the chiefest among ten thousands, and altogether lovely. I really enjoyed that peace of mind which the world can neither give nor take away; yea, this peace was like a river flowing from the right hand of God. So great and inexpressible was this happiness I then enjoyed, that all other happiness looked extremely despicable and unworthy my attention. The world with all its gay and enticing charms, courted my affections to no purpose. I thought I had rather suffer afflictions with the people of God, than enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season, having respect to the recompense of reward,

which I daily enjoyed; esteeming the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, yea, I esteem the present afflictions not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed hereafter; and I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness, being possessed of all the pomp, grandeur and affluence that this world can afford. I think, therefore, that however unworthy I may be of such honor, I wish to invite and exhort all, who know not these things by happy experience, that they would try the experiment for themselves. You may think it strange that I talk as I do; but O, my friends, I long for your happiness; long to see you rejoice in the hope of the glory of God; yea I long to see the saints on earth join their rejoicing songs of praise to God with the seraphic angels in heaven, at the news of the return of one more prodigal.

After living three years in North Carolina, as I observed, I began to think of my father and his family, all buried in misery and Popish superstition, and wilfully ignorant. I thought it was possible in case I could see them that I might be an instrument in God's hands, of leading them to the consideration of the folly of their ways. I therefore felt very anxious about the matter. I also felt a natural affection for them. I also considered that my father was a rich man, and I in a dependent situation, and knew that if he had not lost his former regard for me, that he would help me, notwithstanding our differences of opinion; and that he would delight to have me live with him. When I told my intentions to the brethren, they told me I need not to go away on account of being burdensome to them, for they were willing I should live with them as long as I wished; that I need not regard my expenses, for they had as lief maintain me as one of their own children; for we are one, said they; but still if I could not content myself to stay, that they would help me — which they did. I thanked them and took my leave. I rode in a carriage, and the driver conducted himself very disagreeably; I resented his conduct towards me, and was angry with him, which gave me scruples. I was filled with doubts concerning myself, and began to think I was not a christian, but a mere hypocrite, and had been trying to deceive myself and others, but I could not deceive God, for he knoweth all things. I had thought I never should be angry again, let what would happen to me. This gave me great anxiety of mind, which lasted for a considerable time. We at length arrived within three miles of my father's house, where I stopped in hopes that my father would send for me to come home. But the next day my brother came to the house where I was, and the women of the house said to me, there's your brother. The reader can hardly imagine the joy I felt to see my brother again, whom I had not seen for many years. I thought he would rejoice also to see me, and therefore went to meet him,

and held out my hand as a token of friendship; but shocking to relate, I saw in his face signs of disapprobation; he frowned and stepped back, and refused to give his hand, and said to me, "My father says you shall not enter his house, for you are a disgrace to the whole family. He esteems you as a runaway and deluded heretic."

These reflections from my brother you may well think, excited powerful sensations in my mind; to be disowned by my own father and brother, and called a heretic; now came a fair trial of my faith and confidence in God. I concluded that the cause of their alienation of affection from me was because I was a christian, and if so, it would become me to act like Christ; who when he reviled, reviled not again; and when he was persecuted, threatened not. I think I can truly say, that all he said to me only served to engage my soul to give glory to God, that I was counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake, which I through grace was determined to do; but Satan tempted me to give up my determination to live devoted to God, I was almost tempted to go to my father and feign a repentance of my dissenting from the Romish church. But no sooner had I looked into the consequences of such a thing, but I took up my testament which my brethren had given me, and had a desire to read some directions from God what to do; and the first sentence I read *"He that forsaketh not father and mother for my sake, is not worthy of me:"* and immediately I saw my duty plainly, and felt resolved to obey God rather than man. Nevertheless I thought I would go to the Romish church, where I might see my father, and that he might see me also; peradventure all his parental affection for me was not lost, and that when he saw me in a reduced state of poverty and distress, it might possibly effect his heart. I accordingly went, but, O how my heart ached to see those stupid mortals bowing to their images and priests, expecting they had power to pardon sin. Shocking thought? I even trembled at the sight, and could hardly contain myself. As soon as the exercise was over, my father came out. I went to him but was so overcome that I could not speak for sometime; at length I recovered strength, but could not forbear screaming, and fell down before him; but instead of exciting pity in him, he turned from me, as from a heretic, and would say nothing to me. I then went home again, and hired my board for a short time, with what money I had left, which my brother had given me for the expenses of my journey. Soon after, my father, whom I still hoped had not lost all regard for me, sent a gentleman to me, who addressed me in the following language: — "Mrs. Hamilton: your honored father sent me to state to you the condition on which he will receive you as his child again, and forgive you all your past folly; which shall not once be mentioned against you. In case you comply," he says, "you must return

to the church from whence you have revolted, and confess your sins in revolting as you have, and renounce your frantic notions of witchcraft and christianity, as you call it; and you shall become my beloved daughter: but if not you must expect nothing from me, not even to own you as a daughter; for I am determined to disown you in case of your obstinacy." I told the gentleman that it was impossible that he should disown me, for my name was on the record with the rest of his children, and also my looks so favored his, that all who saw us would know for a certainty that I was really his child. But notwithstanding all my confidence, I considered that I must of necessity leave that place soon, for my money was now almost spent, and where to flee I did not know, being destitute of my christian friends there, which put me in mind of Nicodemus, who followed his Lord by night. But still I had great trouble of mind: I feared that I was like Judas, who denied and betrayed his Lord for filthy lucre's sake, in consideration of the temptation that I before spoke of, concerning my going back to the Romish church, with a lie in my mouth, notwithstanding I thought to serve God privately, which I now disapproved of with great indignation. However my father was unwilling to give the matter over so, without another trial to reclaim me from heresy, as he named it; he therefore employed a Romish priest, and a certain Mr. Smith, who lived near me at that time; crafty men indeed. I had already lived there until my money was about gone, and my clothes were then selling at a low rate, almost nothing, and in this melancholy situation, not a friend to tell my troubles to, I had none but God to appeal to for redress or grievance. The woman of the house where I lived seldom spoke to me on any subject whatever: in this forlorn situation where to go or what to do I could not tell; one consideration still comforted me; I viewed God to be my friend, and would deliver me out of all my trouble in his own way; and felt willing to place my dependence on him. One day, to my great astonishment, my landlady invited me to go with her on a visit: Come, said she, Mrs. Hamilton, go with me to visit Mrs. Smith today, perhaps it may have a tendency to shake this sober melancholy, that seems thus to hang about you. I accepted the invitation, not thinking of any plot against me. Mr Smith began soon after I went in to talk with me concerning my faith and dissenting from the Romish church. I asked him if he believed the bible, I hope so, said he: well, you recollect, sir in Revelation, how St. John attempted to fall down and worship, and angel, who said, *"see thou do it not, — worship God;"* Now if John was forbidden to worship the holy angel, shall, or can I fall down and worship a sinful priest? Jesus had died and shed his blood to pardon my sins, and make an atonement, and now sits as an intercessor at God's right hand:

God forbid therefore that I should worship any other than the living and true God. Upon which the Romish priest sprang from behind a curtain, where he had been concealed, in the greatest haste of passion imaginable.

It so affrighted me to see a man in such a rage, that I rose up to go out of his sight; but it dropped into my mind that there was now an opportunity for God to display his power, and that if the Lord would help me, I would now speak in vindication of his cause. I accordingly stepped back; and I really believe that the Lord assisted me in discharging my duty at that time; yet, notwithstanding all that was said, he accosted me with rough language, which it is unnecessary to repeat. At this time Mr. Smith was so enraged, I saw he would turn me out of his house; I therefore went out of my own accord; and I believe if I ever prayed to God in my life it was then. I had strength from God to talk to them; my tongue seemed to be let loose, and my heart was enlarged; it seemed that my mouth was filled with arguments; the scripture flowed into my mind, text after text, as though the bible was committed to my memory. It being in the city, about two hundred collected before I had done speaking; after which I returned to my former residence. But my brother being fixed against me and the Protestant religion, raised a mob of a considerable number to take me away by force, and what they would have been suffered to do, had they prevailed in their design, the Lord only knows. But happily for me, the man of the house fearing he should meet with difficulty in that case, took me out privately to a back place where he had a horse prepared with a man's saddle on him; the first horse I ever rode in my life. I rode as I could, and he led the horse seven miles, and left me with a Presbyterian minister, where I was treated with great respect and friendship; and he told him how it was and made him promise not to tell who brought me there. The minister concealed me in an upper room, and said he would expose his life to save me in case of need; he therefore told me to fear nothing. The next Sabbath he went to meeting and informed the people concerning me, and they contributed fifteen dollars to my relief. After this it came into my mind that my adopted daughter, who was then living in Springfield, Vermont, if I could find her, would afford me a home the little time I had to live in this troublesome world. With the assistance of my brethren from place to place, I at last arrived at Springfield, where I found to my grief, that my daughter was dead, and her husband moved out of the country. But still I wish to inform my readers, that religion shall, through God's assistance, be my principal object; for I sincerely believe there is nothing more worthy of our highest regard and attention, and I resolve to pray for Zion still, let what will become of me.

Sarah Hamilton

Woodstock, Sept. 26, 1703.

"They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them." — Jeremiah xxxi. 9.

Until God is pleased to pour out upon us the spirit of grace and supplications, we cannot worship him aright; for God is a Spirit, and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth; nor can we without this spirit offer up that spiritual sacrifice which is acceptable to him through Jesus Christ. When this spirit has been once given and kindled in a believer's breast, it never dies out. It is like the fire upon the brazen altar, which was first given by the Lord himself from heaven, and concerning which God gave this command: "The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out" (Lev. vi. 13). This fire might sink low; it might be covered with the ashes of sacrifice, but it never was suffered to go out for want of supply of fuel. So at times it may seem to you as if there were scarcely any spirit of prayer alive in your bosom; and you may feel as destitute of a spirit of grace and of supplications as if you had never known its lively movements and actings. But you will find it drawn out from time to time by circumstances. You will be placed under peculiar trials, under which you will find no relief but at a throne of grace; or God will in tender mercy breathe again upon your soul with his own gracious Spirit, and by his quickening breath will revive, I will not say kindle, for it is not gone out, that holy fire which seemed to be buried under the ashes of corruption, that inward spirit of prayer which he gave you at regeneration, and which will never cease till it issue in everlasting praise.

J. C. Philpot

CORRECTION

We apologize for our typographical errors. Please make the following corrections in your February Signs, it should read:

Page 28, the next to the last line on the page, the first word reads (that).

Page 29, the second column, line 28 reads (the deity of God).

Page 35, the first column, line 14 reads (Abishag) with a capital A, also the second column, line 2 reads (Adonijah) with a capital A.

Page 42, the first column, line 17, reads (upon).

Page 43, the second column, line 32, the first word reads (There).

The Editors

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

The Editors

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 1991

Missed in previous issue.

Thomas C. Nichols, VA	$2.00
Mrs. Julia R. Garner, NC	2.00
J.E. Mosley, AL	2.00
Mrs. Rachel J. Green, WV	2.00
Tommy Middleton, NE	2.00
Mrs. Marcy Burgin, TX	2.00
H. B. Rhoades, TX	2.00
Mrs. Erma C. Sowers, VA	1.00
Eld. Hale Terry, VA	4.00
Mrs. Kelly Watson, NC	2.00
R. Allen Carroll, NC	2.00
Eld. R.H. Campbell, TN. In memory Bro. Flais Chapell	20.00
Robert L. Miles, FL	5.00
Mrs. Virgie L. Griffith, AL	5.00
Mrs. James Meador, VA	2.00
Noel Lavinder, VA	7.00
Billy F. Poindexter, VA	2.00
Mrs. Doris Rowland, VA	2.00
Mrs. Alveta G. Hopkins, VA	2.00
Mrs. Beulah Nichols, VA	2.00

OBITUARIES

OSCAR NEWMAN ADAMS

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst another one of our members, Brother Oscar Newman Adams.

He was born April 15, 1903, in Pittsylvania County, the son of the late Stephen Edward Adams and Martha Dalton Adams.

Brother Oscar departed this life October 9, 1991, after a lengthy illness. He was cared for by his family who did all human hands could do for him.

He united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church July 24, 1949, and was baptized by his Pastor, Elder O.K. Tench, on August 28, 1949.

Survivors include his widow, Nellie Edmunds Adams, one son, Vincent Lee Adams, Rustburg, Va., five daughters, Linda Thacker of Forest, Jacaline A. Shelton of Altavista, Agnes Brumfield of Dublin, Rose Johnston of Lynchburg and Emily Dalton of Gretna; one sister, Helen A. Rowland, Hurt, Va.; one stepson, William Lovelace of Edgewood, Md.; one stepdaughter, Bettie Lovelace of Charlottesville, ten grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren, two great-great-grandchildren and two stepgrandchildren.

His funeral was conducted at 2 p.m. Friday, October 11, 1991, from Colbert-Moran Funeral Home Chapel by Dr. James Worley and Elder Raymond Goad. His body was laid to rest in Altavista Memorial Park.

May all that mourn our loss be reconciled to God's Will.

Written by:
Elder Marvin Brumfield

GEORGE CALVIN MAYHEW

Our Lord called home, Brother George Calvin Mayhew. He passed from this life November 2, 1991.

Brother Calvin was born June 12, 1894; the son of George Thomas Mayhew and Pencie Kessie Mayhew. He was preceeded in death by his wife, Myrtle Shelton Mayhew.

Brother Calvin was a member at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church in Gretna. He was received by Experience and Baptism, June 11, 1966. He attended church as long as his health would permit. He always seemed to love the brethren and always enjoyed the services.

Survivors include three sons; Lanier Mayhew, Stover Mayhew, and Reed Mayhew all of Gretna. Two daughters, Margie Younger and Barbara Bowler both of Gretna; three brothers, Ike Mayhew of Washington, D.C. , Robert Mayhew of Hurt, and Morris Mayhew of Gretna; two sisters, Sister Susie Willis and Brownie Rosengarth both of Gretna. Twelve grandchildren, ten great-grandchildren and four great-great-grandchildren.

May God reconcile all that mourn him and may each one be blessed to feel that their loss is Brother Calvin's eternal gain.

Written in Love and Hope,
Carol R. Pickral

ESTELLE FOWLER STEM

On September 22, 1991, Sister Estelle Stem was called away from this life. She was educated in the Granville County Schools. She married Robert Otis Stem who died in 1967.

Sister Stem was the last member of her immediate family but she leaves a daughter, Ruby Horton, and a grandson, William Robert Wiggins. On June 16, 1974, she was received into the membership of Durham Church. She attended her meetings regularly until her health failed. Worshipping with her brethren was her chief joy and her soul fed on the doctrine of election and salvation by grace.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Cleo Robertson at Eakes Funeral Home in Creedmoor, North Carolina, and her body was interred in the Creedmoor Cemetery.

When I think of this sister I am reminded of the words recorded in Malachi:

> *"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name.*
> *And they shall be mine saith the Lord of hosts in that day when I Make up my jewels ...."*

Written by request.
Catherine M. Humbarger
Church Clerk

FRANK WILLIS

We bow in humble submission to the will of God in the removal by death of our brother, Deacon Frank Edward Willis. Brother Willis was born in Cheroke, WV on August 24, 1911 and died November 11, 1991 at the age of 80 years. He was a son of the late Andrew Jackson Willis and Emma Jane Jarret Willis. He is survived by his wife, Inez Guilliams Willis; one son Robert Franklin Willis; three daughters, Emma W. Lawless, Frances W. Church and Rebecca W. Darago; two sisters Mrs. Melba Perkins and Mrs. Lucy Plank; eight grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted on November 13, 1991 at Lynch's Funeral Home Chapel in Rocky Mount, Va. by the Rev. Keith Simmons and Elder John Wingfield. His mortal body was interred at Pleasant Grove Christian Church Cemetery in Henry County, Va.

Brother Willis united with Zenith Primitive Baptist Church at Crumpler, WV on May 6, 1950 and was baptized on May 21st following, by the late Elders S. J. Priddy and C. A. Marshall. Since Zenith Church had no deacons of her own at that time, she saw fit to set apart and ordain Brother Willis as deacon on July 1, 1950 with Elders Priddy and Marshall and the late Deacon L. B. Hylton serving as the presbytery. He served the church well until Zenith Church agreed on May 5, 1968 to disband, due to declining membership, and to give the remaining members leave to place their membership elsewhere. Whereupon, Brother Willis placed his membership at Glenwood Park Church and continued his service as a deacon there.

During the time that Brother Willis and his family lived in WV their home was a welcome place for his brethren and sisters to visit. Many enjoyable hours were spent in their company and around their bountiful table by his loved ones in the faith. In the mid-1960's he moved his family to the Washington, D.C. area where he was employed for several years. When he retired they moved to the vicinity of Boone's Mill in Franklin County, VA, where he spent the remainder of his earthly life. His health began to decline shortly after this move and he was unable to attend church many times thereafter. Yet, he remained much interested in the welfare of the church.

By mutual consent, the church agreed in our last meeting to prepare three copies of this memorial: one to be included in the church records, one to be given to his family and one to be submitted to The Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Glenwood Park Church in conference the 8th day of December 1991.

Elder John T. Wingfield, Moderator
Sister Marilyn Shaw, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SONG

Behold the spouse oppressed with fears,
Seeking her absent Lord in tears;
In great distress she seems to be,
And pants his sacred face to see.

Like her, my soul has often been,
When clouds and darkness intervene;
I've sought in vain that face to see,
Disfigured once with blood for me.

I sought him in his temple, where
His saints, to worship, oft repair;
Yet even here, so hard my lot,
I sought him, but I found him not.

I sought to find him, on my knees;
I sought him in his promises;
But his dear face I ne'er could see,
'Twas like the barren heath to me.

The sacred page no hope revealed;
This book divine to me was sealed;
Nor hope nor comfort could afford,
For I had lost my only Lord.

At length his lovely face he showed,
And joys divine my heart o'erflowed;
My sorrows fled when Jesus smiled,
And called me still his undefiled.

Sonnets.

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EDITORIAL

In the book of Ruth Chapter 4, verse 9 we find these words "And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the people, ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi."

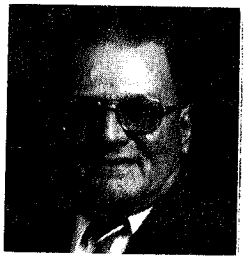

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

We will find in thought that Boaz is a type of Christ and he purchased the entire inheritance that came through Naomi, a type of the church. It is those who are come in to the church that Christ paid the full price for. There are many who shall never have their name on a church book here but are listed in the Lamb's book of life.

We need to look now at who these men were and how they had a part in the transaction mentioned above. Elimelech was the husband of Naomi and his name in the Hebrew tongue means, "My God is King." He and Naomi had moved from their native land to the land of Moab. The name Naomi means pleasant and trusting. We then see strength, virtue and faith in the union of Elimelech and Naomi. There were two sons of this union and their names were Mahlon and Chilion. The name Mahlon means infirm, weak and sickly. The name Chilion means pining for or wishing. We see then that there is not much stability in the two sons.

This family had moved from the land of Judah because of a famine there. This union of marriage is a type of the church for those who are the church are seeking a home where there is no famine. We find there is nothing of earth that causes us to long to remain here. We look forward to a time, known to God, when we can slip away from this earth, that cannot feed the spirit, and go to that city of plenty. This has been the desire of God's people in all generations and will continue until He calls us to come home and leave all things here.

Naomi as mentioned before is a type of the church (the mother, the bride) and Elimelech a prophetic type of Christ for his name denotes My

God is King through Christ is not yet born. He must die in order that Naomi might have the right of her part of an inheritance as well as the two sons. Part of this inheritance comes through law (that is natural family) and part through Grace which is the power that reaches beyond the law. The law part (nature) will be left in time but that of Grace is preserved eternally through our Lord.

Mahlon was the husband of Ruth who was a native of the land of Moab and Chilion was the husband of Orpah who also was a native of that land. Moab was a descendant of Lot because of an act of incest with his oldest daughter. The people of Moab were wealthy carefree ones and it seems strange that Elimelech would carry his family into such a land. We understand though that the will and purposes of God must come to pass. Without the things that are experienced happening as they did the ancestral lineage of Jesus would have been broken.

In the course of time Mahlon was married to Ruth and Chilion to Orpah. The purposes and will of God is now beginning to happen. Elimelech dies and leaves Naomi and the sons and their wives without any other ancestors there. They remained there for about ten years and Mahlon and Chilion died. We see in the ten years, the law and know that it takes more than that to move a sinner toward the promised land. We see Grace come in view now for Naomi feels there is nothing that will keep her in this strange land. In other words she became as the prodigal son who came to himself and remembered his fathers house as a home of plenty. Naomi remembered her homeland and she was aware that the Lord had now visited with an abundance of bread (heavenly manna). She also knew there were there her own people and this points to the fact that God's elect all know where the church is. Naomi was already a native of (predestinated) to live as she (a church type) must exist in this time world of ours. Now beloved if we are what we hope to be we also want to dwell with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Naomi and the two daughers-in-law began the journey to Judah but she told the two girls to turn back to their own people. We find that Orpah kissed Naomi and turned back. We now see the law power being over powered for she is a type of those who depend on the law for salvation. Remember we stated earlier that part of the inheritance would be effected by the law. We shall see later how Grace over came this trust in the law and by whom it came.

Ruth would not turn back and leave Naomi for she was now seeking Bethlehem (the place where Christ was born) for Naomi had told her of a rich kinsman there. I declare to you dear readers that we too have heard of a rich kinsman and seek where he dwells (the church). This kinsman was in the ancestral lineage of Elimelech whose name itself meant my

Lord is King.

We see now the working of Grace come into view for Boaz is a type of Christ and it is through him at once that Grace and Godly love is expressed. Ruth desiring to glean (search for heavenly blessing) goes into a field and the book relates it was her hap (just so happened she came to the field of Boaz) to find sustenance. If we indeed find any comfort of heavenly food it must be found in the field of Grace and it is not happen — chance but the will of (our Lord is King) Himself who owns it all.

Boaz sees Ruth and asks who she is and finds she is related to Naomi (not by law now) but by the eternal spirit (new birth). He commands the reapers (who are a type of minister) that labor in the fields of Grace to drop handfuls of purpose for her and when a minister preaches the Gospel it is indeed a handfull of purpose. God furnishes the grain and as Ruth was allowed to glean from the sheaves (the old dispensation) she could divide her gleanings with Naomi. When one has been filled to overflowing the desire is to share with the church. This is the pleasure we have in talking to each other about our experiences and how indeed God is merciful. We always find the hand of the Lord full and also that the graciousness thereof is for our pleasure, Boaz (Christ) tells his people not to glean in any other field for the gleanings do not exist in the fields of the law. There is only famine and hunger there in for the letter of the law killeth.

When Boaz saw the dedication that Ruth had for Naomi (took notice) his love and compassion went out to her. We find her bowing herself to the ground is a most humble way. My brother and sisters in Christ does this not seem like your own case ? When Christ pours out His love to us as we wander the fields of Grace we question how and why He is so merciful to us. We then thank God that Christ hath been our wealthy kinsman all the while but we knew it not.

Boaz is aware that Ruth left her own people (Adam and Eve — her nature) and has now been brought to a people she knew not. Oh what lovely people we have found gleaning in His fields as we labor there (preach the word). There is such a sense of oneness when we meet another who has not kissed the church and turned back as did Orpah. We never feel that any are strangers and we don't doubt but what it is the love of our kinsman who has brought us to love each other. Boaz tells Ruth she will be rewarded for her love of Naomi and the fact that she has come under the wings of the Lord of Israel.

Boaz commanded Ruth to come at mealtime and feast on the bread and vinegar (a type of passover or ordinance of communion) as she sat among the reapers. She was also given parched corn which is symbolic of the word (Gospel) for it has been tried by fire and sword and has not ever failed in the purposes of God.

The fiery furnace did not destroy it nor the sword of Goliath who was a type of satan. David met this giant with the most primitive weapon known to man and its use was a manifestation that the arm of the God of Israel is strong enough to cast the stone of salvation (Christ) even from the Climes of Heaven.

Naomi tells Ruth that Boaz is her near kinsman (does not the church also tell us) and to be mindful of him as such. There are seventy two generations from Adam to Christ but only one generation of Christ therefore He is indeed our near kinsman. We were chosen in Him before the fields of Grace were even planted and we wander until the time we are brought to the field of plenty by the same power that decreed we are of His generation.

Naomi tells Ruth to make known to Boaz her love (go home to thy friends and tell what great things have been done) and trust that she has in Him. In order she show this love and trust she must lay at the feet of Boaz. We also go to the feet of Christ when we desire comfort and love. Boaz turned at the midnight hour and found Ruth at his feet. Christ also turned to us when we petitioned we were in a state of true nakedness and it was the midnight hour. We desire He cover us with His skirt (robe of mercy) lest the coldness of nature become worse.

Ruth desires to know how Boaz has come to be near kinsman for she has heard there is another kinsman (Adamic nature) also who must be dealt with. Naomi tells Ruth to be patient (sit still) for he will not rest (neither sleep nor slumber) until he finishes all that is necessary to obtain the fulness of inheritance.

Boaz calls the elders of the city (heavenly angels if you please) to come to the gate. We truly believe there is a rejoicing of the angels when one does approach the gate of kinship. The other kinsman who is mentioned before comes by (no chance system) in order that the plan of God be fulfilled. This is that Adamic nature which can come by the gate but can't go in.

Boaz tells him of the fact that he must make manifest his condition (his weakness in nature) to purchase the inheritance under consideration. He tells Boaz he will purchase the part that is coming to Ruth only (we see here satan rearing his head with all kinds of worthless promises). Boaz tells him there must be purchase of the entire inheritance, meaning also the part that (by law) would come to Orpah. Now we see the defeat of satan because this man now says he can't purchase three parts (also Naomi's part) for it would mar his own inheritance. He must openly relate that he cannot be any part of the three (the deity of God) for if so it would ruin his own plans. He knows of a surety that he has no power equal to the kinsman (Christ) who is the redeemer of sinners.

Boaz purchases all three parts and there are two purposes in the

purchase of it all. He must obtain the portions of Naomi and Ruth in order for them to feel secure in that which comes freely as a blessing of God. The inheritance has been there all the time and beloved it has been theirs all the time but it would take a price for it to mean security. The price was the sufferings and death of our Christ. The part that comes to us has been preserved until the time of harvest (our coming to the church) and is a type of hope and faith. The fact is that Ruth had faith to desire to remain with Naomi (the church) not knowing in any way what was before her but believing her hope would see her through. It is through our faith and hope that we also press on not knowing what is before us but we believe our kinsman (spiritual brother) is directing us toward the Climes of Glory.

When Boaz purchased the part that was legally Orpah's he did so in order that no descendant of hers could ever lay claim to any part whatsoever. We are aware that by law it was hers but remember dear ones that Grace has decreed that all three parts must remain together (the three in one). We thank God that Christ came to redeem all his kinsmen who have been promised the fulness of heaven. The word redeem meaning to get back that which is already yours, so Christ has redeemed us forever from the law.

Orpah went back in the beginning to her people and her gods and that fact remains today because the world is full of those Orpahs who care less about an eternal inheritance. The book proclaims they have their reward in this life and there is no inheritance in Heaven. We feel sure Orpah should have realized that under the law that she should have received Chilion's part but in spite of such those of the world and law are satisfied with such.

In the course of time Boaz and Ruth are married (she is now the bride) and will enjoy all the many privileges thereof. This union brings into the world a son who is to be named Obed (meaning servant) who was the father of Jesse who was the father of David and so on until we come to Christ himself (one generation). We see all these things happen because our Christ must be a descendant of David because the prophecy proclaimed that He would come through the house of David. We know that when the star shown the night Christ was born that an angel declared the baby would be found in the city of David. Let us remember that the beginnings of this travel of Ruth and Naomi was to go to Bethlehem. We still today seek the city of David for the brightness of the star (the Glory) of Christ doth yet shine.

My dear kinsmen take consideration of the thoughts as to the perfection of the purposes and works of God. He controls all that is takes to bring us into the knowledge of our heavenly inheritance which we shall receive when the last harvest has been made. The grain shall all be

bound together to make up the sheaves of Glory.

I feel unworthy that I even think I have a part in this inheritance but I don't doubt for one moment that the right arrangements have been made for those who are made worthy by Christ. We note in the scripture the reading is that the friends of Naomi and Ruth told them they were blessed to have a child that would be a comfort in old age and a restorer of life. Naomi even spoke as if that baby was hers and indeed our Christ is our babe of Salvation. He has been ours (the church) from the beginning of time and will be forever.

May God be praised as we draw nearer and nearer (age) to the time we receive our inheritance and see He who bought it all.

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

QUERIES & ANSWERS

It is with a sense of unworthiness and weakness I feel in trying to answer the question about Rev. chapter 13 and verses 16 and 17.

Elder C.B. Davis

Brother Key, Sister Elsie C. Turner and husband, have a Question for the (QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS) Rev. 13 : 16 & 17, (*And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads : And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.)*

Thank you,
Your Brother in love,
and Fear of God;
Leonard J. Brammer

I go back to the old dispensation to begin in order hopefully to see what is beginning to be expressed. In the book of Ezra chapter 2 we find this. *"The children of Adonikam, six hundred sixty and six."* This is the first mention of this number in the scriptures. In the Hebrew and Greek language all the names of people and places have a special meaning. The name Adonikam meant lord of enemies and though he was one of those who returned to Jerusalem after the captivity of Babylon I believe he denotes Rome and all her children.

Beloved get your Bible now and read Isaiah chapter 30 verses 8, 9, and 10. In fact that entire chapter could well have been in the book of Revelation. Then read Isaiah chapter 65 verses 11 and 12 for here we read in verse 11, *"But ye are they that forsake the Lord, that forget my holy mountain, that prepare a table for that troop and that furnish the drink offering unto that number."* I believe that troop to be the enemies (666 children) before mentioned, (that is Rome). The next verse 12 begins, *"Therefore will I number you to the sword" etc.* (the wrath of God).

Read this verse for it touches I feel upon the verses in the question.

Turn now to Rev. chapter 14 verses 8 through 11 and read for they in essence correspond to the writings of Isaiah before mentioned and speak of the mark of the beast in the forehead or the hand. I can't help but feel that still under consideration is as it were Adonikam or Rome.

We find that Rev. chapter 13 verse 16 reads; *"And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads."* I now insert a historical fact; I feel is revelant to the fullness of this verse. Rome marked all their soldiers and men of authority either in the hand or forehead in order that all nations might know from what district they came and who they served as lord and master. Now we go to the 17th verse and read, *"And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name."*
Now beloved not only does the name of Adonikam mean lord of enemies but also the letters of the Hebrew and Greek alphabet were used as numbers. The name of Nero Caesar expressed in number is 666; so we see now a coming together of the descendants of Adonikam as Rome. The troops are all prepared for battle (they have the mark) but they will wage war in vain for God has already won the battle for us through our Lord and leader Christ.

Rome would attempt to starve if you please, the church of the living God, believing grace can be bought, sold or traded. We who have been touched by the compassion of God know that heavenly manna and grace is freely given and preserves every heir of promise who has not the mark and will not bow down to Rome. This wording also denotes that Rome will have no fellowship with us and are we not glad it is thus. We as the spiritual descendants of Abraham are not related in any way to Adonikam. (Nero Caesar or Rome).

We see in our time the church of Rome becoming more lenient in her rules thus enticing her children to return. I do not mean to cast stones at anyone but to state as best I can what is taking place in order all the mentioned scripture be fulfilled. The Episcopal Church, the Lutheran Church and the Christian Unity Church have already signed an alliance with the Pope (Rome) and there will also be others we believe. They all were once hers and still have the mark in their foreheads and hand (haven't forgotten from whence they originated). They all stand ready to re-enlist to help Rome fight (that is have the greatest number of soldiers) yet all the plans are in vain. We think of what a small number there was that went out with Gideon to meet an enemy whose number was more than the grasshoppers of the valley.

Let us now see verse 18 although it was not in the question but is indeed pertinent to the sum of understanding. This verse reads, *"Here is*

wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred threescore and six." This number of a man is early - Adonikam, later Nero and finally the fulness of Rome. We know who the lord of Rome is (lord of enemies) and we rejoice that we have never been a part (have no mark) of the church of Rome. We trust we have a mark of grace upon us but it most assuredly is not the marks of Rome.

Please forgive any mistakes I have made and if this all seems as ignorance then blame me. If these thoughts have merit, if they have in any way answered any question give our God in Heaven all praise and honor whose army in Heaven is always battle ready.

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

The Editors

JUDE VERSE 21.

Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

THE COVENANT OF GRACE

God, having out of his own mere good pleasure from all eternity, elected some of Adam's fallen race to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace to deliver them from sin and misery and bring them to a state of salvation by a redeemer. God had a purpose of grace and love towards his elect people from all eternity and therefore saves them, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. There can be no reason given why God did not embrace all of Adam's family in this covenant, only that it was the mere good pleasure of his will. It is called a covenant of grace because in it is a promise of eternal life and salvation to the elect, to be given them in a way of free grace and mercy (Jer. 31 : 33-34). God, the Father, is the party contractor on Heaven's side; the party contractor on man's side is Christ, the chosen of God. The eternal and unconditional covenant was confirmed by an oath and cannot fail. "He shall not fail nor be discouraged. My word shall not return unto me void, but it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it." "By the blood of the covenant, I have sent forth the prisoners out of the pit wherein was no water." The promise was not to seeds as of many, but to thy seed which is Christ.

ARTICLES

ELECTION

What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; But the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded, Rom. 11-7.

May the Lord bless us, as we try to write upon this lovely subject election. We feel and believe that all Scripture was and is given for our learning and joy and comfort and instruction.

Paul being a Jew himself, was grieved because of their unbelief. Apparently he was called as to the gentiles a Minister. He said in (Cor. 9-20, And unto the Jews, I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;)

Paul said (What then?) The Lord had blessed Paul, to know that in and of himself or the Jews, or anyone else, could not obtain salvation by seeking after it by the works of the law. The Jews were well satisfied with what they felt they had, because they had Moses and the law, they did not need Christ or Paul, to tell them about Christ. But I see such a beautiful picture of election, but the election hath obtained it, the choice of God the election of God.

Oh, How I do hope and pray that election, hath obtained it for me. I suppose that most of the Lord's Children as Gentiles and Jew, are guilty of seeking to the law for salvation. If they could have found it there, they would not have been seeking Christ, as the end of the law for righteousness.

Rom; 9-11 Not of works that Election might stand. (It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy Rom. 9-16).

The last line of the text, and the rest were blinded. I hear so many say that is not fair. If some are elected and some are not, well, God is not under any law, and he is a perfect, and holy, and righteous God. He has a right to do whatever his will is, and no one has the right to question him on anything. (I AM that I AM) Praise his Holy Name.

We find in the scripture that (Rom. 11-25) (Blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.) We wonder if that time is not near. We feel that when the last heirs of promise have obtained the election, when all of them are brought in, then the Gentiles will be to their fullness, then that would be the fullness of the Gentiles.

No one knows the time of his coming, but it looks like we can see some of the signs.

Those that were elected in Christ, who have obtained eternal redemption, will see him coming in the clouds with great glory.

I feel and believe that if we are so

favored to meet the Lord, we will be able to shout perfect praise to him who obtained eternal salvation for us.

One more thought on election; 2 Peter 1-10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall. 2nd Peter 1-1 3rd & 4th. To them that have obtained like precious faith. This strikes another note of joy, concerning the things the Lord has done for his people, not only in the election obtained but faith as well; When we are taught in Peter to make our calling, and election sure, I feel he is telling us not to try to climb up some other way other than Christ. It makes no difference what man may say or teach, there is no way to obtain life, or salvation, or to be elected in Christ, other than to obtain election through the choice, and Purpose, and foreknowledge, and will of the three in one God ; (Father, Son and Holy Ghost) Those that stand on this ground, as Peter said will never fall; Blessed be his Holy name, may He have all the PRAISE.

Elder Leonard J. Brammer

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 4 / 92 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

"Whatsoever Things Are Lovely . . ."

In the midnight hours sorrow over a lost loved one was added to personal care. The heart was too heavily burdened for sleep. A heavy, dreary rain continued to fall all through the night, the drops falling from the eaves like drops of sorrow. The sighing of the wind in the trees echoes our sadness. The rain was needed, and the drip, drip, drip should have been a happy, comforting sound. But perhaps drops never sound happy when they must fall on a new-made grave.

Continuously through the sadness and gloom came the refrain, over and over: "Whatsoever things are lovely ..." "Whatsoever things are lovely..." The words finally sufficiently penetrated my troubled consciousness, that it was as if I said rather crossly: "All right. Paul ! Since you must keep interrupting, what about these lovely things?" He seemed to be, as Paul always was, very courteous: "I'm sorry for the interruption, but you were going

'round and 'round on your treadmill of trials, and you had to be interrupted."

"That's quite all right, dear Paul; but since you have interrupted my thoughts, what about these things which you call lovely? Please show me one lovely thing in this wide, sinful, sorrowful world tonight!"

Well, "... whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, ... if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things."

I said, "I know about those words; I have read them many times; but Paul, please show me just one of the lovely things just now."

He seemed to stand before me poorly clad, great ugly stripes on his poor back, bound with chains about his bruised ankles. The sight nearly broke my heart. The man who was of noble birth; a man of great learning and culture; a man who could stand before kings and give such a wonderful account of his religious belief; a man of quiet dignity. He seemed to remember his poor appearance as he reminded me of what some had said long ago, that his bodily appearance was weak, and his speech contemptible. But oh no, Paul! I see beyond your poor scarred body, beyond your chains and mean attire. At least I am not that blind! You bear the marks of our dear Lord, and your words are not contemptible to me, but weighty and blessed. How lovingly did I then assure him that I did not consider him as some did of old.

This brought us back to one of the causes for present sadness, the death of a beloved one, and my rather impatient request to be shown one lovely thing just now. Well, for instance, he seemed to say, This man of God who has gone to be with Him — can you not see at least one of these lovely things in this? This man abundantly possessed the blessing of Jesus: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." There is no more lovely, beautiful virtue than that. Think on this! This man was deeply loved for the fact that he walked more nearly with his Lord than many do. Could we not see beyond the sorrow of the day, beyond the storm clouds of this sad night? Could we see only the tears mingled with the sadly dropping rain on his grave? Could we see only the sorrow and loneliness of the sad heart mourning his absence? Could we not see that sin is finished for him? The cruel enemy, Death, has no more power over him! As sad ones weep here, can we not hear the angelic hosts shouting praises: "He's home! He's home! Another saint forever at home!"

Paul seemed to say, "Think on these things! Let your heart grieve with the sorrowing ones, but let it also rejoice with those who are never more to know sorrow."

"If there be any virtue,..." Surely there is virtue manifested in many such saints. It is wrought in them by the love of God, and it is truly a lovely thing. Think upon it! As we think upon this virtue — coming from

the very Fountain - head of loveliness — the dark shadows seem to fade away and vanish from sight. The heart glows with the loveliness of virtue and praise, and is sad no more with an unbearable sorrow. We look up to the joy which awaits us, where sorrow and sighing has passed, and think with deep solace filling our heart, of loved ones already there. Though tears of sorrow and sympathy wet our cheeks, the light of such a glorious promise shining on the darkness of our sorrow makes rainbows of our tears. This is a lovely thing. Think upon it !

Continuing, Paul seems to remind me that I had been looking alone on things which are temporal and which must pass away. Things in which there is no lasting beauty or loveliness. I was to look, he seemed lovingly to say, upon things eternal, imperishable, that never fade away; things which never are sick or die. Lovely things !

No wonder the heart could no longer bear the weight! Thinking only of trials, perplexities, sorrow and death; thinking only of things which must end in the mire of the earth, the eyes and weary heart could see and feel only sadness and darkness. But to look at these, knowing there is a glory beyond not yet revealed, we "rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Not only this, but I could see by Paul's patient instruction, that we find glory in these very dark and unlovely things, if we can only look beyond to the lovely things which follow. As surely as there is an "afterward of peace," there is an afterward of loveliness, when we view all the lovely things in this world by the light which dear Paul holds out for us.

Christ, the lowly, lovely Jesus, died one day ! Surely this cannot be one of these lovely things which we are to think upon! Oh, the horror of it sickens the heart that is touched at all with love !

"He dies, the Friend of sinners dies !
Lo, Salem's daughters weep around !"

He died, each poor sinful heart echoes, feeling a guilt that stains it through and through. Oh, how this guilt pierces the soul ! Nothing but a holy sacrifice can ever remove that stain ! Tears of joyful sorrow (what a paradox!) well up and overflow. The pen trembles and falters to form the words! He, Jesus Christ the Son of God, is this Sacrifice ! So He must die ! We must see Him dying. We must feel the weight of His death, the anguish of it. Oh, that our eyes were oceans, that we might weep over Him Whom we have brought to this shame!

Is this one of these lovely things ? No, death is never lovely. It is the dread penalty for sin.

But He is no longer dead ! And Salem's daughters spread the joyful news: "He is risen !" And dear Paul whispers, "ought not Christ to have died and rose again for our justification ?" This is the lovely thing we never tire to contemplate through ceaseless ages. He arose ! And with Him we were raised to a new life. This is inexpressibly lovely to a poor lost sinner. Because He died, I shall

never die eternally in my awful sins. Though this sentence of death is in this body, and it must die, it can no more remain in the dark and lonely grave than the sealed tomb could hold His blessed body. This is a lovely thing !

Just as surely as He died for me, He will come one bright, beautiful day for me. Then I shall live forever and reign with Him. All of His beloved ones shall be there with Him, loving and praising Him. No more sorrows to know; no more pain to endure; no more death to dread. All pain and all weariness forever past; all hatred and strife and conflict removed; all tears forever dry. This is a lovely thing to think upon.

Oh, may the sad heart forget the sorrow and care. May I not be uncaring, but may the care be swallowed up in the lovely things yet to be!

When the heart was all a-glow with the loveliness of Christ, and the many, many lovely things He has done for poor sinners, I turned as if to say to Paul: Oh, I see what you mean, dear, wise, suffering, understanding Paul !" What joy comes with meditating upon them ! But he had accomplished his purpose — to point me to Christ Whom he loved, and he had slipped quietly away in the darkness.

He had shown me so many lovely things ! He had gone, but his sweet words lingered on, and they are recorded in God's Book so that when I forget I may read them again and again, feasting upon them as the Holy Spirit brings them to remembrance.

No longer was I sad with an unbearable heaviness as I thought on the lovely things. There was no possibility of numbering them. They seemed to reach on into infinity. Attempting to think upon just a few of the lovely things, peace came to the troubled, weary heart, and sleep closed the tearstained eyes.

Mrs. W.J. Berry

PSALM 119 : 49-56.

Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.

This is my comfort in my affliction : for thy word hath quickened me.

The proud have had me greatly in derision : yet have I not declined from thy law.

I remembered thy judgments of old, O Lord; and have comforted myself.

Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake thy law.

Thy statues have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.

I have remembered thy name, O Lord, in the night, and have kept thy law.

This I had, because I kept thy precepts.

VOICES OF THE PAST

HUNGER

" ***Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness : for they shall be filled. (Mat. 5:6.)***

Oftimes I hear a perversion of this beautiful beatitude. It is not a good substitute ; it is not a good perversion. This one, together with the other cluster of blessings, is not tinged with creature or fleshly works in them being fulfilled.

If there is a blessing in the lids of the Bible that is entirely free of conditional doctrine, truly this is it. I am willing to rest in perfect complacency that the promise in this passage is a covenant blessing. The hungering after righteousness is as certain as any part of the covenant of redemption. Too, this hunger and thirst never begins until after God has displayed His redemptive powers in a poor sinner. I am sure that no one, no one at all, is going to take a position that a sinner that is dead in sin, one still carnal, still of the earth earthy, is going to hunger and thirst after righteousness. However, if there is a reader that feels himself or herself interested or authorized or that has a part in such a favor, let he or she keep quiet for the present.

I do not have any fault to find with people that hunger and long for the things of the earth. I am not preaching at nor to them, for there is not any use of it to the perishing (I Cor. 1:18). However, if language has ever been put together that said a dead man could hunger and thirst, I have not run across it as of now.

Before one could hunger and thirst after spiritual things, he or she would have to be spiritual. As far as I know, there is not a hereditary gift from our parents that will enable one to do that. The one and only one way for that to ever come to pass is by being born of the Spirit. The first birth, regardless of the proud bloodline, does not, nor cannot, qualify one to hunger and thirst after righteousness.

There is an effort quite frequently advocated that the new born child of God needs special kinds of food, and the insistence is often rather urged that new born infants cannot digest any of the hard doctrinal points; that they will starve to death on them. In order to sound practical and reasonable it is advanced that they should be started on gentle things like love, and good works and the sincere milk of the word. This is to be practiced until such time as they become wary and alert to tell the difference. Just who is it that is to oversee the little children in the kingdom? Is it their human and earthly mother or is it their heavenly mother, wisdom? I had thought that the apostle come before the church (those that composed that church, old, young, the whole church)

at Corinth being determined to know nothing among them save Jesus and Him crucified. Has the church progressed to such an extent that Paul or any servant of the Lord does not need to have that determination today?

Yes, it is freely admitted that the sincere milk of the word is essential that infants grow, but who is to administer it? If Wisdom does not administer the sincere milk of the word, who is qualified to do it? I may have missed something that I needed, but I have always understood that the Holy Spirit called and qualified men to preach the gospel of the grace of God. It has been demonstrated time and time again that what comforted, what fed the aged was just as nourishing to the babe in Christ. If there is two kinds of preaching, and the minister is to acquire and administer both kinds, it seems readily understandable that we get things mixed up sometimes. Let me urge that the only teacher of ministers of the gospel of grace is the Holy Ghost. There is not a set of books that he must study; there is not a board, the chair of which must give his approval before he is qualified to appear before a mixed multitude of God's children.

What a wonderful arrangement it is that our heavenly Father has made for the church of His. What simplicity, what a divine order it is that as soon as a poor sinner is born from above, he or she has a change of appetite. In the first birth, they do not lose the need nor the desire for the provisions that wisdom made for them in the first kingdom into which they were born. To do well, they must continue to have the things of the first birth. They are not qualified for the things of the upper and better kingdom. The reason for this is because that God has fixed it that way. There is not any appetite, any need, and will not be any response from the forced use of things from above.

How different it has been, or, let me say, how different it has been with Bible characters. The evidence, according to the Bible, that comes about when one is born again. He and she still has the need for the things of the earth. They need to do the work of the earth, they need to rest and to sleep, they still need the things of the medical world to heal and to alleviate the sufferings of the natural body. But of the heart (new one), and of the mind (the new one) they have new desires, and a new appetite. While still in need of the things of the first kingdom, they are not slaves to them. Their desires and their appetite for the things of the earth are not as whetted, not as intense as formerly. They have been born from above of a new source, by a new and a living way. That is now become a new and a living way. While the desire and the need of the things of the first kingdom born into are now less important, the things of this new kingdom that they have been born into has become the most important, the most absorbing of anything that has ever been presented

to them.

Or am I spinning a web of sheer fancy? I have been told, Why, I love sin as well as I ever did. I love the dance floor as well as I ever did. I love a game of cards as well as I ever did. I love a drink of whiskey as well as I ever did. My appetite for the things of the earth is as strong as it ever was. The difference is that I have, in addition to what I received from my first birth, have received a new desire a new appetite, but my old desires are as strong as they ever were. The text is, Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Paul was blood thirsty on the Damascus road, but I say that he lost the desire for it on that road. My evidence is found in the fact that he never did display that passion after being struck down. Before his conviction on that Damascus road, he was a coordinator and a conspirator against the servants of Jesus Christ, but not one time did he lift a hand against one of them after his conviction.

(Turn now and read hymn number 492 in Lloyd's, 379 in the Hymn and Tune Book, 913 in Beebe's Hymn Book). It is useless for professors or non-professors to tell me that the children of God do not hunger after the things of the Spirit. To be sure, we are writing about spiritual food. That is the most delightful theme that has ever been given to the children of God. Their desires and their appetites are for spiritual eats and drink. It is not my intention to minimize the necessity for earthly bread, nor would I ever encourage the children of God in carelessness in providing the necessities of the earth for themselves and their families. In fact, it is doubted that having an appetite for the Bread of heaven ever makes a believer have the don't cares about his or her obligations here. However, the true need of the follower of the Lamb is to evermore have that living Bread that we might eat and grow in wisdom and in stature as men in the Spirit and not any longer children in that way. This Bread and the rich provender that is placed on the table of the Lord for His little ones is not of this world. It cannot be mortgaged nor sold, nor can it be exchanged for the perishable things of this earth. And let us repeat that this well set and well provided for table is the same for every member of the body of Christ. Here is the feeding place for he that is a new petitioner at a throne of grace; here is food and drink for he and she that is a thirst and for he and she that is perishing for that living Bread that has been made palatable to one and all. Here is a table, and there is a place of gathering in close with the aged minister and the one that feels his inadequacy for the things demanded of them as an infant in the kingdom of heaven.

This well stocked table is peculiarly situated. Only those hungry for the broken Bread of life, and for the soul cleansing blood of the Lamb know anything about this table and

the suitable and nourishing viands that are provided there. Here is the display of mother wisdom's ingenuity. She brings the needed and suitable provisions for all ages and needs without having to adulterate or disguise the food. How wonderful it is that the feasting of the saints is repugnant to the earthlywise. There is not any need hiding the food that our spirits desire, for it is hid from the wise and prudent that thinks that they know everything, and is revealed to babes in Christ that their daily confession is that they do not know anything as they ought.

Something else about the table of the Lord. It is suitable for every one of the Lord's people from out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people. The table is adjacent to the whereabouts of he in a heathen land or in the most up to date place, and when the poor hungry child of God is set down at the table the heathen and the hypocrite pays he and she no mind.

How thorough the Holy Ghost is in bringing each and every one to the table. Furthermore, one thus brought by divine grace and mercy bows down in humility asking, What is thy servant, that thou shouldst look upon such a dead dog as I am? Let us ever remember that he that is abased shall be exalted. The table had been filled except at the head of the table. When Mephibosheth was brought to the table and was set down, it was a time of joy. The beauty of it all was that the lad was cripple in both feet and could not walk, but when the poor helpless cripple was seated and the cloth of the table was in place, his little crippled feet were covered. O what a happy day. What a rich display of God's gracious kindness to poor sinners. His nurse had dropped him (which was the law) and it left him crippled for life, but what a mercy that the cleansing blood with its curative powers, and the linen tablecloth (righteousness of Christ) had set the everlasting seal of God's love on the poor sinner. He forever ate continually at the king's table, a daily rate a continual allowance given him of the king, a daily rate for everyday, all the days of his life.

Elder W.D. Griffin

HEBREWS 1 : 1-6.

God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.

Brother Beebe: Will you give your views on Ephesians 2:5. "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. (By grace ye are saved.)"

Isaac Briscoe

REPLY.

Alexandria, D.C., February 15, 1839.

In reply to our brother, we will say, Such as we have, we will give; and certainly nothing more can reasonably be required at our hands. We understand the apostle in this epistle to a Gentile church, and with them, to all the faithful in Christ Jesus, to be laboring to show that all spiritual blessings result to us from the fixed purpose and determinate decrees of God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; and flowing to the heirs of promise in precise accordance with the doctrine of election — According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. And having in the first chapter brought to view the firm, immutable and everlasting basis of our hope for life and salvation, dwells, in the immediate connection of our text, on the quickening power of God, in reference to the execution of his eternal and unfrustrable design in the salvation of his people. In the passage presented for consideration, the saints are spoken of as being quickened together with Christ, and saved by grace. We presume the following considerations are fairly involved in the subject before us, viz:

First. The life which the saints had in Christ before they fell in Adam. That the saints had any personal individual existence other than that which was given them in Christ, we shall not contend; but that they existed as the spiritual body of which Christ is the Head, is as clearly proven in the scriptures, as is the existence of Christ as Head of his body; and that the body of Christ was created in Christ, as that Eve was created in Adam; and that they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and in him were predestinated to all that they were by Jehovah destined to be, either in time or eternity, is fully implied in the first chapter of this epistle. The omniscient eye could, and did see the substance of Christ, lying in embyo; and in his book all his members were written, when as yet there was none of them. Psa. cxxxix. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. John 1:4. Do we inquire, What life was in him, who was with God, and who was God? The apostle answers: "Your life is hid with Christ in God." "When he who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Col. 3:3, 4. In perfect harmony with this sentiment, is the expression of the psalmist. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Psa. 91:1: The place where God has hidden the life of his people, must be a secret place, and under the shadow or protection of the Almighty; and that

such is the place of the saints' security, see Deut. 33:27. "The Eternal God is thy refuge," &c. And that such has ever been the spiritual habitation of the saints, see Psa. 90: 1, 2. "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations; before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world; even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God," &c. As we apprehend no danger of these premises being disputed by Old School brethren, for brevity's sake we pass.

Second. The cause and nature of alienation, death, &c. In the preceding part of the chapter from which we have our text, the apostle connects our death with our existence in an earthly Adam, or under the law, as transgressors thereof; dead, he says, in trespasses and sins. He has elsewhere informed us that sin is a transgression of the law; but where there is no law there is no transgression. Hence this death has reference to our law state; and consequently to our relation to an earthly Adam. Now if we were to speak of the first great cause of all causes, we would say with the psalmist, (11:3) "Thou turnest men to destruction, and sayest, Return, ye children of men." Or in the language of the apostle, (Rom. 8:20) "Thou turnest men to destruction, and sayest, Return, ye children of men." Or in the language of the apostle, (Rom. 8:20) "For the creature was made subject to vanity; not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." But when speaking as to the procuring cause, on the part of man, we conceive that our alienation from God, and total depravity, and death in sins, is attributable to the introduction of sin into the world. In Romans 5:17, the apostle tells us, that by one man's offence, death reigned by one, &c. And again in this epistle, (4:18) this apostle attributes our alienation from the life of God, to that ignorance which is, to us, in consequence of our depravity by sin. Hence he very justly denominates it a death in trespasses and sins. The nature of our alienation is properly compared to a state of captivity *"All we like sheep have gone astray." Isa. 53:6, 1 Peter 2:25.* The law under which we were created in Adam required of us perfect and perpetual obedience; and said in a voice of thunder, The soul that sinneth, it shall die. We had all sinned and come short of his glory; hence we fell under the condemning sentence of the law, became lawful captives, were by the law cast into the prison of death, and there held in chains of darkness, without hope, and without God in the world; and, as the apostle here tells us, *"That at this time we were without Christ, (or life — for Christ is our life) being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, (Gentiles literally,) and condemned sinners, in the spiritual view of the subject, and strangers to the covenants of promise."*

The covenants of promise made with Abraham, were figurative of the

provisions of grace locked up in the cabinet of the divine mind, for the heirs of salvation; and in our degradation we were utter strangers to that provision, and equally so to any other way of life and salvation. Notwithstanding our captivity, darkness, bondage, guilt and death, we are not to suppose that what was treasured up in Christ for us, had undergone any change; God is immutable; and Jude assures us that the saints which were sanctified by God the Father, were preserved in Christ Jesus. Jude 1, And Paul has named them as the *"reserved ones;" (Rom. 11:4)* and our text, as we propose to show, forbids the notion that God's love towards us could be abated by any thing which we could do. *"Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it." — Songs 8:7.* Nor can all the substance of poor, lost, sinful mortals buy it; it is sovereign, discriminating, eternal, immutable, and invincible. Could we admit that in our fall in Adam, we fell out of Christ, or that the vital relationship of his children to him was dissolved, in relation to that life which was given us in him, and secured for us in him before all worlds, we should despair of salvation by him; for the lawful captive must be lawfully delivered; and by virtue of the eternal indissoluble union; the right of redemption was vested in Christ; and on this principle he came into the world, and was made under the law, (not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it) to redeem them that were under the law. In this relationship he could, and did as truly represent us, in the obedience which he rendered to the divine law, as Adam had represented us in his first transgression of divine authority; hence, says the apostle, *"Therefore as by the offence of one, judgement came upon all men unto condemnation, even so (or exactly so) by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life; for, as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." — Rom. 5: 18, 19.*

In the foregoing, we have expressed our views of the life we had in Christ from everlasting, of our fallen state, and alienation in our earthly Adam, our captivity, bondage, &c., and also the way of life through the obedience and death of Christ; but our text says, we are *"quickened together with Christ."* Apart from him we must have been, had the preexisting bond been severed; and apart from him there was no way possible for us to be quickened. Our natural head, Adam, was made a *living soul;* but our spiritual representative was made a *Quickening Spirit.* He quickeneth whomsoever he will. Together with him. How sweet! how heavenly the language! Together with him, we had life before the world began. Together with him, we are in due time quickened and raised from the dead. Together with Christ, are we sons of God, and heirs of immortal glory, and so completely

together, or united, that when he died for us all, then were we all dead; dead to the law by the body of Christ; all our accumulated guilt was laid on him; bearing for us all the dreadful curse of the law, billows of divine wrath overwhelming his soul, and baptized him deep in death; but soon the bands of death gave way, soon the auspicious morning dawned, which gave ample demonstration of his complete victory over sin, death and hell, while the radiant flame of his refulgent glory brought life and immortality to light, for all the members of his mystical body.

In the resurrection of Christ, the prophecy of Isaiah (26:19.) was fulfilled. *"Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead"* Having thus in him suffered the vengeance of the law, been crucified together with him, *"Blessed by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance (not to a purchased possession) incorruptible, and undefiled, (notwithstanding our fall in Adam) and that fadeth not away; reserved (not newly procured) in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation."* — See 1 Peter 1:3-5. Hence we see in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, the all-sufficiency of his atonement, complete satisfaction rendered to law and divine justice, the prison doors are unbarred, the jubilee trumpet is blown, liberty is proclaimed to captives, the prisoners are brought up out of their prison houses; and as he bursts forth from the confines of the tomb, his ransomed church is seen emerging from the dead, while from the old heaven, now dissolving with fervent heat, the shout is heard, *"Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in."* Psa. 24:7-9. When God went up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet. — Psa. 47:5. How full of consolation is the contemplation of the union of Christ and the church.

"One in the tomb, one when he rose,
One when he triumph'd o'er his foes,
One when in heav'n he took his seat,
While seraphs sung all hell's defeat."

Lastly. That this astonishing work was done for us when we were dead in sins, is worthy of special attention. Before we were dead, we needed no such work as quickening, or the resurrection of our blessed Lord for us, as the whole need not a physician. *"But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." — Rom.5:8, 9.* And again. This great work being performed for us when we were dead in sins, shows that it could not possibly rest on any merit, work or will

of ours; therefore the apostle adds the words, *"By grace ye are saved;"* and afterwards declares that it is not of works, lest any man should boast; but that we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God had before ordained that we should walk in them.

In conclusion, be it ours to reflect with wonder, joy and gratitude to God, on the revelation of a way of life and salvation so completely adapted to our ruined condition, and so admirably calculated to abase the proud man in the dust before God. Not unto us, not unto us, O God, but to thy name give all the glory. Amen.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, February 15, 1839.)

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OBITUARIES

HENRY CALEB ALEXANDER

We trust it was God's will to call from our midst Brother Henry Caleb Alexander. Brother Caleb was born on April 9, 1902 and died January 10, 1992, making his stay on earth nearly 90 years.

Brother Alexander joined Tarboro Church on January 1, 1971 by letter from Danville Church, Danville, Virginia. He was a faithful member as long as he was able to attend. Due to afflictions, Brother Caleb was unable to attend for the past few years.

Brother Alexander was a great believer of Salvation by Grace and he trusted and thanked his God for all the blessings that had been bestowed upon him. Brother Caleb was a good supporter to his church as long as he was able. We trust he is at

peace with his Maker.

We, at Tarboro Church, send our sincere sympathy to his family. We wish that three copies of this resolution be made: one for the church records, one for the family, and one for publication in "The Signs of the Times".

This done by order of our February conference.

Elder Henry Jones, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

JULIA BYNUM

In memory of Sister Julia Bynum I endeaver to write a few lines; Hoping God will give me the power and ability I need to do so.

Sister Julia was born in Onslow County October 24, 1990. Her parents were George Robert and Racheal Brooks Littleton. They were both active and true members until their death.

Sister Julia was married to Wesley Bynum. He was also a member for a short while until his death March 5, 1975.

They were blessed with two children, Gordon Bynum and Helen Bynum Spanenberg. Each one of them had three children. Gordon had two sons and a daughter. Helen had two girls. Out of her " great love" and devotion for children. She adopted a son. Rick has two sons. Sister Julia was blessed with six grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

All of sister Julia's life she was devoted to her church, until confined to bed. I often heard her say. If she was saved, its by the "Grace of God". Love was always shown in her "Everyday Life".

I started taking her to church in the 1960's. In 1970 my son started going with us.

We didn't mind the distance we had to travel. Always receiving a great blessing, joy and love from the members of same faith who lived in far away places.

In 1983 Sister Julia's health was bad. She was admitted to Britthaven Nursing Home. Spent eight and one half years. Toward the end she didn't seem aware of anything.

On September 28, 1991, sister Julia passed away. Her family has suffered a "Great Loss" but I feel their loss is "Heavens Gain." She heard a voice; come home. With no more sickness or pain, and be with the Lord forever.

To the family :

Be patient press on to the Mark of High Calling and meet her some day is my Prayer. The funeral was conducted by Elder J.T. Prescott at Johnson's Funeral Home. Burial : Memorial Park Cemetery.

By the order of North East Church; In conference third Saturday in February 15, 1992.

Written by Mary Lillie Hall

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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Who?

Who flung the stars out into space,
And holds them in their proper place?
Who, like a curtain, stretched the sky
To make a place for birds to fly?
Who sends the wind and sun and rain
To nourish fields of golden grain?
Who forms the seed that makes the wheat,
And gives us daily bread to eat?

Who, in the winter sends the snow?
Oh, tell me who, if you should know;
Who has designed each lovely flake?
What wondrous power did it take?
Who made the never ending sea?
Who formed the grass, the vine, the tree?
Who made the cattle on the hills,
And creeping things in rocks and rills?

Who holds all things within His hands?
Who owns all houses, fields and lands?
Who keeps our souls each passing hour?
No man has this almighty pow'r!
It is the Lord and He alone!
Man has no glory of his own!
We have no goodness we can claim,
So let us publish His great name!

He takes a sinner vain and wild,
And makes Him as a little child:
Subdues his will and guides his feet,
And draws him to the mercy seat.
Let all creation lift its voice,
And in the Lord let us rejoice!
Let all His works praise and confess
The glory of His righteousness!

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EDITORIAL

ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS

We read of Joshua, the son of Nun and former minister of Moses, gathering all the tribes of Israel and calling for the Elders of Israel, their heads, judges and officers presenting themselves before God. "Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel." The Lord speaking through Joshau related the many times He had favored Israel in their travels through Egypt, from the deliverance of the plagues the Egyptians suffered to the bringing across the red sea safely. He also told them how the Lord put darkness between the Egyptians and Israel. They were so quick to forget how merciful the Lord had been to them as we are today and have been in all ages.

Now we come to a part I think so misunderstood by many in that day and in this day. Joshua, chap. 24 verses 14-15 *"Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord." "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."* Joshua spake of a truth, for the Lord is truth, so they heard with open ears and an understanding heart as this truth, I believe cut them to the very heart.

In that day, as today, if we worship in spirit and truth we must worship the Lord thus, for He is a spirit and seekest such as do worship Him in spirit and in truth. The Israelites worshipped idols and Joshua is telling them of the idol gods, it matters not which one they serve. I believe with the nature of the creature these idol or false gods are still served, but with the mind, that mind of Christ, that is, we serve the Lord, if we so possess this mind.

As stated in this scripture there are gods many, notice written gods which your fathers served. Are we

still serving gods? Does not what we serve, be our God? Think for a minute, what ever is foremost in our daily lives, not just on Sunday or just while at meeting house. Answer truthfully, what are our thoughts on most, things of material value, entertainment at home and away, sports, work, shopping etc. The things we serve, must be our Gods. Joshua is saying if it seems evil to serve the Lord it doesn't matter what other gods you serve. Those that haven't had that hard and stony heart removed and given a heart of flesh will serve other gods, but as sure as He appears that bright and shining star it will blind His people to other gods.

May we be kept with a faith so strong, a hope so eternal and an eye single to the glory of God, that we can see no God before Him, and desire to be some day like unto Him the Keeper of the city who is King forever, O Lord keep me from the evil to come. I want only the Lord to serve.

In hope,

J.R. Williams

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

Will be held the 5th Sunday in May at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing, with Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church being host. We welcome our Brethren, Sisters, Friends and Ministers to meet with us.

Elder H.W. Wray, Pastor
Sister Rachel Wray, Clerk

GOD'S ATTRIBUTES: GOD'S IMMUTABILITY

God says, *"For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore, ye sons of Jacob are not consumed" (Mal. 3:6). "Every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17).* Reason teaches us that God is essentially unchangeable in himself. Were he otherwise, he would be confessedly imperfect, since whatever changes must change, either for the better or for the worse; whatever change any being undergoes, that being must either become more excellent than it was or lose some of the excellency which it had. Neither of these can be the case with God; he cannot change for the better, for that would imply that he was not perfectly good before, he cannot change for the worse for then he could not be perfectly good after that change. God is unchangeable. Thou art the same and thy years shall have no end. But he is in one mind and who can turn him? The hope and comfort of the children of God is that he cannot lie, nor change, but will surely fulfil his promise.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Sister Nellie & Brother Kenneth,

This isolation has been a very trying ordeal, as I have been blessed to go and come when I wanted to — especially since I retired. Yet, it has been good for me to be deprived and shown how dependent I am on the Great Physician. This thought, however seems to linger for only a short time and infrequently. More often my mind strays to what I want to do.

The Malmaison family has been so sweet and thoughtful to call. Did you know I have tapes of the Moon's Creek services in December and January? Brother Richard recorded them for me, and I've enjoyed them so much. Also, I've recorded several others of his of Elder Tench's, Julian's and Malmaison Song Services. I cannot believe I did not realize how precious these services were when I could attend! How unaware could I be?

Another enlightenment has come my way. I had thought that the preaching was the most important part of church service, and I'm sure it is but, you know, that can be taped. Being with His people, singing, and hopefully, enjoying their fellowship ranks of almost equal importance. Some Sundays I shed tears nearly all the way home. First, for joy, that I could attend; then, it is for the emptiness that I feel in not being able to mingle and chat with those I hope I have been made to love.

Yet, just to enter the House of the Lord is a great Comfort more than I had realized earlier. So many of our blessings we take for granted! How long can a Sunday be without church?

In love to you both,
Naomi Houser

P.S. I am improving — slowly.

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." 2 Cor. - 4:17.

QUERIES & ANSWERS

QUESTION : What is the meaning of the word (SELAH) this is found in PSA. 67 : 1-4 may be found in other places also.

ANSWER : The word (SELAH) is a word of praise, or a musical pause or rest, or one that is of power, or that is worthy of perfect Honor and glory, As of a great rock in a weary land, One that is (I AM THAT I AM JEHOVAH), A wonderful counselor, The mighty God, The Prince of peace, And the government shall be upon his shoulders, one that has all power in heaven and in earth. (SELAH)

Elder Leonard J. Brammer

ARTICLES

OUR ARTICLES OF FAITH
Article 15
By J.H. Gosden

"We believe that baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of Christ, to be continued till His second coming; and that the former is requisite to the latter; that is to say, that those only can scripturally sit down to the Lord's Supper who, upon their profession of faith, have been baptized by immersion in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and that, therefore, what is called ' mixed communion ' is unscriptural, improper, and not to be allowed in the churches of Christ."

Having dwelt briefly upon Believers' Baptism as an initial rite to the public profession of Christ's name and a pre-requisite to *church* communion and the scriptural door of entrance to the Lord's Supper, we now venture a few observations upon the latter most sacred privilege. Whilst the formal sacramentalist may over-emphasize his ceremonial and give a disproportionate view of the ordinance, yet the true spiritual significance of the Lord's Supper can hardly be exaggerated. Rightly observed, it is a spiritual communion of the body and blood of Christ. Abused, it becomes an "eating and drinking damnation" (1 Cor. 10. 16; 11. 29). For if Christ *preached* becomes a "savour of death unto death" in those hearers who never receive the truth in the love of it, much more an unworthy partaking of the very emblems of His precious sufferings and death becomes a means of condemnation to the participant. Perilous beyond expression, in this regard, is the continual urging of worldly churchfolk repeatedly to receive the "sacrament" at the hands of a carnal clergyman, as if thereby to extenuate their habitual ungodliness and to provide for impunity in its continuance! We trust we have not so learned Christ. Our trouble is not that we cannot have more of the world's vain enjoyments, but that there is in us a depraved nature disposed to violate the aspirations of the new man of the heart. The papal and (with few exceptions) the Anglican concept of the Lord's Supper is today very far removed from its divine original simplicity. But our present design is rather to attempt a brief outline for our own apprehension of the Scripture doctrine and practice than to expose the abuse and perversion of Christian ordinances.

Unspeakable condescension and majestic simplicity graced every action and word our blessed Redeemer employed at the institution of His divine ordinance. The circumstances of that holy conclave were truly remarkable. Eleven of the twelve disciples were present with

their divine Master in that upper room. Judas had been present at the Passover immediately preceding but not until he had "gone immediately out" after receiving the sop did the Lord Jesus thus tenderly address them: *"Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God be glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall straightway glorify Him. Little children, yet a little while I am with you... A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another . . . A little while and the world seeth Me no more, but ye see Me . . . In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 13. 30-35; 14. 19; 16. 33).* Then followed the holy prayer of intercession to His divine Father — a touching, tender, dignified expression of His affectionate care for His unworthy but beloved people, and a rich epitome of His never-ceasing advocacy for them in heaven. "Father! O Father! Heavenly Father! O My Father! O righteous Father!" Sacred intimacy, clear intimation of essential eternal relationship! "Those whom Thou hast given Me . . . I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it . . . Not ashamed to call them brethren . . . I will declare Thy name unto My brethren." O blessed paternal adoption of the unworthy elect children, through the eternal Son's incarnation and redeeming work! (John 17; Gal. 4.5; Heb. 2. 11; Eph. 1. 5).

And this adoption was not confined to those eleven, nor was the Communion. It did exclude the twelfth, Judas being one of the twelve, but a devil (John 6. 71). True fellowship with the Father and with His Son (1 John 1. 3) extends to all for whom Christ prayed and for whom He died (these being coextensive with all who are by the Holy Spirit made true believers): "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they may be one in Us." "And other sheep I have; them also I must bring." "I lay down My life for the sheep." "Ye believe not, because ye are not of My sheep" (John 17. 20, 21; 10. 15, 26).

Such was the atmosphere of that upper room immediately prior to the awful enactments of Gethsemane and Calvary. "When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples . . . and Judas also knew the place." The traitor had deprived himself of the privilege of hearing the most sacred of all Christ's affectionate utterances, being engaged in assembling the "bands of officers and men" to take Him whom he had all along feignedly owned as his Master. To his own place he soon went, and to this condemnation was he appointed (1 Pet. 2. 8; John 17. 12). From this upper room to the agony and bloody sweat of Gethsemane, and to the betrayal and the judgment hall and the cross, went

forth the great Redeemer and Captain of our salvation, to unfold in awful reality the mystery of the broken bread and the poured-out wine. ("The body [substance] is of Christ"; Col. 2. 17.) Those guileless lips which but a few minutes previously had uttered over the sacred elements the hallowed formula, "This do in remembrance of Me," were now employed — not in self-vindication but in noblest obedience: "The cup which My Father hath given Me shall I not drink it? O Father, if this cup may not pass from Me except I drink it, Thy will be done!" In vindicating His claims He sheltered His faithful followers: *"I have told you that I AM (He): if therefore ye seek Me, let these go their way" (John 18. 8, 12).*

Thus became available for all true believers the Bread of Life and the cup of blessing (John 6. 53; 1 Cor. 10. 16). This is the source of all spiritual communion. And church communion (where real) flows from this, and is regulated by Holy Scripture. In it there is, i. An act of humble obedience of the Lord's own command: "This do in remembrance of Me." ii. A public witnessing to the Lord's death: "As oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come" (1 Cor. 11. 26). iii. An act of worship, a grateful acknowledgment of deepest indebtedness to the Lord of life and glory for eternal redemption (Eph. 1. 7). All such acts of obedience and of worship, fruits of grace in the exercise of faith and love, conduce to a renewing of spiritual strength to the participants; whilst the Lord condescends to be glorified therein. Whenever He by the comfort of His love and felt presence signalizes His approval of such acts, an unspeakable honour is put upon the worshippers. The absence of this, while a matter of soul exercise, is not a reason for discontinuing the obedience.

The requisite preparation is laid down by the apostle: "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup" (1 Cor. 11. 28). By means of sincere self-examination, in the light and power of the Holy Ghost, the believer may come afresh to feel his deep need of that precious sin-atoning sacrifice which is represented in the Lord's Supper. Confession of all discovered transgressions and sins will follow, and a believing application to the throne of grace for mercy and pardon. Faith thus working by love purifies the heart, dissolves it in contrition; sin is hated and forsaken anew, and Christ becomes again the Chiefest among ten-thousand and altogether lovely to the soul. Then, as Christ's body is discerned, there will be an intelligent, reverential, humble partaking of the sacred elements as the divinely-selected symbols of a crucified Redeemer and His dying love.

"He took the bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said: Take, eat; this is My body which is given for you. This

do in remembrance of Me." The mystery of Christ's broken body is too sacred to allow of any deviation from the very elements Himself defined and used in that inaugural Supper, Bread, as broken by Himself, the dear Saviour chose to be the ceremonial representation of His sacred crucifixion. It is not less than sacrilege to use any other substance or adopt any other manner. Wafers are not bread. Cutting is not breaking. Christ took bread, and He blessed it (gave thanks), and brake it.

"This is My body" — represents My body, now to be given by way of sacrifice — "given for you." For you? Yes, to make atonement for your sins: "Who His own self bear our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Pet. 2. 24). O the ugliness of sin! O the love of Christ, the Lamb of God, in bearing away the sin of the world (John 1. 29)! And O His condescension in instituting this solemn ceremonial remembrance, and saying to sinners: "This do in remembrance of Me!" O the unworthiness of the sinner! Worthy Christ and His death to be had in everlasting remembrance! "Memory," says Bunyan, "is an act of love." Divine love says:

"I ask no price for all I give,
But O remember ME !"

I give Myself, and with that gift all others. *"He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8. 32).*

To eat the emblem of Christ's broken body is a public profession of having received Christ crucified by faith as the very life and nourishment of the soul. *"I am the Bread and Life."* Here is a substantial repast for the famishing poor. Here is life for dying sinners. *" 'Tis by Thy death we live, O Lord."* What mind of man will ever fathom the deep significance of Christ's word: *"As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me" (John 6. 57)?* The doctrine of Christ is solid nutrition to faith (1 Tim. 4. 6). This partaking does not depend upon the ordinance. It is to be feared that many partake of that who never spiritually receive Christ by faith; while some have real communion with the Lord who never sit down at His table here below. But the due observance of public church communion at the Lord's Supper, according to His example and command, is frequently the means of grace to the soul whereby the Holy Ghost strengthens faith and grants "the substance with the sign."

Hereby, also, mutual love between members is sustained, revived and increased; love being the *"bond of perfectness" (Col. 3. 14).* For in the self-examination prescribed as a preparation for the holy Supper, there will come into consideration, among others matters, our attitude and behaviour and feeling towards our fellow-members. There cannot be communion where discord prevails.

All selfishness, pride, jealousies, animosities, hypocrisies, envies, malice, evil thinking and evil speaking must be studiously eschewed and emphatically renounced, and grace sought to pardon and subdue. The very holiness of the Feast precludes an approach to it while harbouring unkind feelings against any saint.

The least felt realization of interest in "Christ our Passover slain for us" (under whose shelter alone there is deliverance from the "wrath to come") produces a humbling sense of deepest obligation to loyalty to Christ's Lordship. And as that obligation to loyalty to Christ's Lordship. And as that obligation is mutually felt, bands of fellowship and communion will be fostered in a sober attendance upon the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. Tender love and reverential fear thus flowing out to the great Head, the members partake of that "precious ointment that ran down" to the skirts of Aaron's garments. Good indeed is it for *"brethren thus to dwell together in unity" (Psa. 133).* As says Paul: *"Ye are one body and one bread" (1 Cor. 10. 17),* referring to the Communion. Flowing from this "dew of Hermon" will be a united striving for the good of the church and the honour of Christ, a mutual prayerful interest, exhortation, and provocation unto love and good works (Heb. 10. 24). As the Feast is to be partaken of *"with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth," and "they have no right to eat who serve the tabernacle,"* there must be a going forth without the camp bearing Christ's reproach — a godly separation from the world, in all who would manifest a loyal subjection to the King of grace. It is a shame and disgrace to the Christian profession when persons appear at the communion table in the livery of the enemies of the Holy One of God. Of all places, this least becomes wordly conformity.

In the Levitical dispensation, the eating of the blood was expressly forbidden: *"For the life is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev. 17. 11).* But in the gospel dispensation, the blood is to be partaken of — ceremonially in the ordinance, and spiritually by faith: *"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you" (John 6. 53).* That not a bodily but a believing partaking is the chief intention, Christ Himself clearly stated: *"The flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are life" (v. 63).* As the disciples of old, so every true believer is compelled to depend upon communications from Christ for spiritual life: *"To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life" (v. 68).*

The Church of Rome (and the imitators of that foul system, the Anglo-Romanists) deny the cup to the laity. But the Lord Christ said, as He took the cup and gave thanks and handed it to His disciples: *"Drink ye*

all of it; for this cup is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Presumably those clerics wish to reserve to themselves the sacerdotal power to remit sin, and think to do so by exclusively drinking the sacramental wine. An arrogant and blasphemous claim indeed! We are neither dependent upon ecclesiastics nor upon the sacrament for divine pardon. But since we all need the remission of sins, and there is none apart from the shedding of blood, Christ emphasized their all partaking of the "blood of the grape, the fruit of the vine." An apt representation of the manner in which Christ's most precious blood was shed: the pressure of divine wrath, the weight of imputed sin, the agony of His holy soul; the piercing of that sword of inflexible justice awaking against the Man Jehovah's Fellow! *"This do in remembrance of Me!"*

But there is the testament. "A testament is of force after men are dead." Settled upon all the elect is God's eternal good will, everlasting blessedness, great and precious covenant promises. They are heirs of promise, joint-heirs with Christ Jesus. As God-Man, the eternal Son of God incarnate, He received the inheritance of a more excellent name than angels (Heb. 1. 4). He is exalted at the right hand of the Father, sits with Him on His throne, and is King of Zion. His people are His inheritance. Their inheritance they receive as adopted sons through the redeeming blood of the everlasting covenant (Gal. 4. 5; Rom. 8. 17). All Christ is and has is theirs. These things the sacred cup in the ordinance sets forth. Eternal salvation from sin, death and hell, and an eternal inheritance according to the new testament — the will of God in Christ Jesus. A full cup of salvation for sinners in consequence of the drinking by the Lord Jesus of the bitter cup of wrath due to their sin. *"O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me. Nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done." "Drink ye all of it" — the cup of remembrance. "This do in remembrance of Me"* O the costliness, O the freeness, O the fulness, O the bitterness, and O the sweetness of salvation!

We would speak tenderly with respect to the necessity we feel of confining the ordinance of the Lord's Supper and church privileges strictly to those who have been baptized on a profession of their repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. By this restriction we do not say or imply that none but those who thus obey their Lord are saved. This we have already noticed in our remarks upon Believers' Baptism. The distinction must be preserved between spiritual private communion and public church communion. We firmly believe that our practice of admitting only baptized believers to the communion service is strictly according to Scripture revelation, apostolic procedure and early church practice. That other methods have been adopted by some

who truly fear the Lord is mysterious. But the fact that they are godly people must not allow us to exercise what is miscalled Christian charity, and modify what we solemnly believe to be Christ's order. He is the only Head of His church, and our esteem for the best of men must be always subordinate to our loyalty to our only Redeemer and Lord.

That the primitive form, unmodified, of the Lord's Supper and of Believers' Baptism is to continue in the church to the end of time, we have express Scripture proof. "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: *and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."* "As oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death *till He come"* (Matt. 28. 18-20; 1 Cor. 11. 26).

We therefore re-affirm our belief in the truth of our 15th Article: *"We believe that Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of Christ, to be continued till His second coming; and that the former is requisite to the latter. That is to say, that those only can scripturally sit down to the Lord's Supper who, upon a profession of their faith, have been baptized, by immersion, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And that, therefore, what is called 'mixed communion' is unscriptural, improper, and not to be allowed in the churches of Christ."*

O that the Holy Ghost would return in His unctuous power, to revive us in knowledge, love, humility and zeal for the Lord's glory!

JUSTIFICATION BEFORE GOD

Justification: (Theol) Act of justifying or state of being justified in respect to God's requirements (Webster). To regard and treat as righteous on the ground of Christ's mediatorial work (Funk and Wagnall). Justify the act of God's free grace whereby he freely pardons the sinner and justifies him in Christ, notwithstanding all his own unrighteousness and transgressions, delivering both from the guilt of sin, the dominion of sin, and the punishment due to sin; accepting him in Christ and blessing him in and through the finished salvation of Jesus Christ, our Lord (Hawks Com. 457).

By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their infirmities (Isa. 53:11). Being justified freely by his grace through redemption that is in Christ Jesus (Rom. 3:24). But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness (Rom. 4:25).

It is God that justifieth, and by him all that believe, are justified from all things from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses (Acts 13:39). Therefore, by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect. It is God that justifieth.

JUDAS ESCARIOT

Judas Escariot - a child of God? God forbid. It seems there is a growing Tendency among Primitive Baptists that Judas was a child of God, one of the chosen elect before the foundation of the world. I have been a member of the Primitive Baptists over 60 years and been attending their services ever since I was a young boy, carried by my father as long as I can remember. In those days it was unheard of among the primitive baptists that this belief existed among them. This is no more than the doctrine of men and devils. It should not be advocated by people calling themselves primitive baptists. It matters not to me so much that the worldly religionists advocate such a doctrine, but it is hurtful when those people I have been with these many years bring in such damnable heresies. History of the primitive baptists gives no indication that this theory was believed among primitive baptists who have gone by this name since the general division in 1832 between the Old School Primitive Baptists and the New School Baptists, known as Missionary Baptists. This division was primarily because of arminianism, missionary and Sunday School movement infiltering among the Baptists of that time.

The Lord willing, I will endeavor to present scriptural authorty which will I believe without successful controversary contradict this theory, or heresy which I believe it is. In Matthew Chapter 10, is given the names of the 12 apostles He called, and among the 12 was Judas Escariot as shown in verse 4 - *"And Judas Escariot, who also betrayed him"*. We also read these words: *"Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the Living God. Jesus answered them: Have not I chosen you twelve and one of you is a devil. He spake of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon; for he it was that should betray Him, being one of the twelve". (John 6:68-71). Also, "Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out." (Acts 1: 16-18). Also, "And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias, and they prayed and said, Thou Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen. That he may take part of the ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles". (Verses 23-26.)*

In this connection, Jesus spoke these words concerning the sheep and the goats. *"And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall*

separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And he shall set the sheep on the right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say to them on the right hand, come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matthew 25: 32-34). "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." (Verse 41) "Then shall he answer them saying, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not unto the least of these, ye did it not unto me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous unto life eternal." (Verses 45-46). This is very strong language from the Lord himself, where the devil and his angels will be after this life. So where does Judas Iscariot fit into these words since it has already been quoted *"One of you is a devil."*

We further read: *"He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit. And ye are clean but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore, he said ye are not all clean." (John 13:10-11). And again we read: "I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen, but that the scripture may be fulfilled, he that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me." (Verse 18). "When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake". (Verses 21-22). "Jesus answered, He it is to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly". (Verses 26-27).* I will not quote further from here on, but please read the balance of Chapter 13, and you will see what took place following.

Further in John 17, in what is known as the Lord's Prayer, we read: *"While I was with them in the world I kept them in thy name; those that thou gavest me I have kept and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled". (Verse 12).* This was referring to Judas Escariot who betrayed the Lord. The question may be raised as to the reason the Lord would choose Judas as an Apostle had he not been one of the elect family. In answer, will first say that the Lord needs not give a reason for anything He does, and quote the following: *"At that time, Jesus answered and said, I thank thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." (Matth. 11:25-26). Also, in Paul's writings: "Nay, but O man, who are thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay of the*

same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?". (Romans 9:20-21). Yes, He is the potter and we are the clay as spoken in the Old Testament by the prophet Jeremiah: *"And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the Lord came to me saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord: Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel." (Jeremiah 18: 4-6).* Yes, he is the potter and we are the clay. And what God does is just and right because he does it. And man's poor infinite mind cannot understand or fathom the things of God, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned.

We also read in the prophet Isaiah's writings: *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither your ways my ways saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:8-9).*

They that advocate that Judas was a child of God, will sometimes use this scripture: *"When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor. Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself." (Matth. 27:1-5).* The statement "repented himself" does not carry with it a true repentance that comes through the workings of the Holy Spirit, but was only a 'head repentance', when he saw that he was condemned. And only because he was caught up with. And even went so far as to throw the thirty pieces of silver at the feet of the priests and elders. And as was the custom in that day, when sums of money was cast at the priests and elders, it was usually put into the treasury to be distributed to the poor. But because this was "blood money", this money could not be used for this purpose, but was put in the potter's field to bury strangers in. And the fact that he hanged himself and went to his own place (eternal punishment) is sufficient evidence that Judas certainly did not give sufficient evidence that he was a child of God. In contrast to Judas' attempt to repent, we call to your mind the apostle Peter. It is written: *"Peter answered and said unto him, though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. Jesus said unto him, Verily, I say unto thee, that this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt den me thrice." (Matth. 26: 33-34).* Now after they had laid hold on Jesus and led him away to Caisphas, the high priest, where the

scribes and the elders were assembled, and sought witness against Jesus, to put him to death, we have this recorded: "Now Peter was without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest. And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man. And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech betrayeth thee. Then began he to curse and swear, saying I know not the man, and immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly." (Matth. 26:69-75). Isn't it so clear the difference of Peter's denial and repentance than that of Judas. Again we read: *"And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I? And he answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. The Son of man goeth as it is written of him; but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born." (Matthew 26: 22-24).*

In conclusion let me say this is the words of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as recorded in Matthew: *"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" (Matth. 7:15-16). "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity". (Verses 21-23).* There have been many in the world, and still are, who are merely "professors" and not "Possessors". And it is not for me or you to make a judgment as to who they are, but this is a fact, *"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour." (2nd Tim. 2: 19-20.)* Will close with these words: *"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord". (1st Cor. 15: 57-58).*

Farewell in the Lord.

Humbly submitted,
Robert L. Miles

VOICES OF THE PAST

"I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me. Come my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages. Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth; there will I give thee my loves. The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved. (SS 7:10-13).

Methinks that I shall never tire in speaking and writing about the divine relationship that exists between Christ and His chosen people. With all of the ties known in this time state there is not anything known among the children of men as lovely as that of the nuptial relationship between a man and a woman. Modernism has lost sight of the sanctity of matrimony, but it is a sign of its decay, not a sign of the decay of holiness before the Lord. That holy state of matrimony was given and approved by Him with whom we all will have to do, either as His children, or His enemies. How blessed is that people that knew the beauty of this happy state in time, and have been so highly favored of God that they also knew Christ as their spiritual Husband.

In the state of matrimony which God appointed, the wife owns as much of the common property as does the husband. Before the nuptials are said the husband to be will call his farm or field as his, but after the ceremony is said she has every right to say our fields. She may have been reared in abject poverty, but, marrying a millionaire, she will be a joint sharer in that million. Such reasoning does not do justice to the holy ecstasy of a poor fallen woman that is brought into divine relationship as the bride of the Prince of Peace.

As this bride breaks forth in ascribing glory and honor to her state, she is talking the doctrine of God's saving grace. Her statement has all the doctrine that the church of Christ is preaching. He loves her. His manner of love is everlasting. It is not based on futurity of the sinner's action. God has not said, If you will love me, I will love you. He has said that we (His people) love Him because He first loved us. The unbeliever says that if we will love God He will love us. God says, I have loved thee with an everlasting love (Jer. 31:3), and I am sure that this reaches back into all the time of God. If one can tell me how old God is, I will tell you how long that God has loved His chosen people. God is writing to them in time, and His use of the word "therefore" is a deathknell to all brands of a conditional love. He loves us in time to the same degree that He loved us in eternity, and proves it to us by drawing us with loving kindness. Thus, in a time unexpected, He draws

us to Him in holy allurement and betrothal and marriage and pledges us a joint relationship with Him for time and eternity. Thus, dear humble child of God, we are blessed to look into the eyes of our Redeemer God and say, *"I am my beloved's, and His desire is toward me."*

Job tells us thousands of years ago that God has a desire towards the work of His hands. To you I write: If a child of God, for your comfort; if a gainsayer, to stop your cavelling. This was the way it was fifteen hundred years before Christ came into the world; this was the doctrine on which the relationship between Christ (in type) and His church or bride existed about a thousand years before He came in the flesh; in the last book in the Bible (about four hundred years before Christ came), God reiterates His statements to Job and to Jacob (Israel), and while He was with that bride while in His flesh, His desire was always to His people, and I am not ashamed, but, rather delighted, to tell you that any doctrine promulgated in this time state by any creature that would talk to you about a conditional love for dead alienated sinners to use and exercise in order to get God to love them, is not the truth.

What a miracle has been performed. At the first she said unto Him, "Look not upon me, because I am black," now she says, "I am my beloved's and His desire is towards me." How precious. How my heart is made to leap for joy that although she sold herself into bondage by transgression and was thrust into a wilderness of sin, yet, that He went after her. He went after Jacob; He crossed the sea to reach the lunatic; He went to the blind boy; He went to the well to meet the woman; He visited Saul; He went down into the wilderness to bring this chosen bride out; He went to the cross for her; He went to the grave for her, but why go on? The doctrine of grace gets more beautiful and more precious. He starts all of the activities that saves a sinner; He makes all of the moves to bring her into holy relationship with Himself. In good society (it seems that not much of that kind remains) the man always goes to the girl. In religion (that is in the pure and undefiled kind) the Man always approaches the maid, not the maid the Man. It is not that it is too wonderful the way of a woman with a man, but it is too wonderful the way of a Man with a maid. (Pro. 30:19).

Christ loved us while we were dead in sin. If He had waited on us to approach Him He would have waited for a bride a long time. I leave it to unbelievers to say how long. But He did not thus wait. I leave it for believers to praise His high and lofty name for that. He loved her and quickened her into life, cleansing her (experimentally), dressing her and presenting her unto Himself a chaste virgin and they were living in holy wedlock at the time of our text, and it being a part of the Bible written aforetime for our benefit, I am sure that they are now engaged in lovely

union.

Now the Husband talks. Has He talked with you? Has He gently whispered in the midst of your doubts and fears that I love you, and will fight your battles, heal your foul backslidings, and bring you off more than conquerors through my love? Yes, yes, dear reader, He has thus addressed you. In the morning, when the dew of youth is on His lips, He walks in His garden saying, *"My people shall be willing in the day of my power,"* and thus you leave what you are doing and go with Him into the field. You may have sat with Luke with a scalpel in your hand; you may have sat with Matthew in the custom house; you may have been at sea in fishing clothes and a net in your hand; you may have been on the road to persecute the saints of God, but when He called you, there was a laying down of the physician's robe, the pen of the scribe of the tax gatherer, the fisherman's rig, the role of persecutor, and an humble following of the Lord.

Let us go into the field. Note, dear brethren, that He had the field. They did not buy the field together, He paying half and her half. She did not pay a farthing; He paid it all. Ruth did not contribute anything to the field of Boaz, nor to the bountiful harvest in it. He bought it at a great price, and bought it for Ruth, and had it ready for her in her hour of need. This is the nucleus of the doctrine of Old Baptists. It doesn't matter who they are, there is not a people that can claim the doctrine of grace save our people. Everybody else tells you that you will have in the kingdom of God's dear Son according to what you do about it. But that is not God's way. Even before we sinned, yea, before the world Jesus Christ was set up (Pro. 8:23). Everything a sinner was going to need in time was in Him, and every blessing set in Him, and was pledged to sinners. These blessings would reach each and every case. No trial unprovided for, no work unprovided for, no need unprovided for, no sickness but that what would be needed to cure it, was provided in Christ.

This field, this garden, this city, this country belongs to the Lord and to His people. It is His by work, by purchase, by death, by gift from His Father; it is ours by gift, by grace, by love, by mercy. Everything in it belongs to us in this way. It is worth exploration; it is enticing; it is exhilarating to him or her that has travelled much in the dark, that has known much of hot searing desert travel, that has often felt to be on a wilderness road. To go into a well kept field, a field that another has kept, calls for awe inspiring adoration, and especially is this true when the companion of the keeper of the field is one that has not kept their fields. (S.S. I: 6)

As the children of Israel had drinking and eating places set for them by Him that sent them on that route, as the timber was placed together in floats (rafts) and floated upwards to the building place, as the table of the Lord is spread where hungry children are, even so in this lovely field of the Lord, there are

villages for lodging. As this bride travels she has need of refreshing seasons wherein water and bread are found for sustenance. The husband plants these villages (churches) for resting, for watering, for feeding of the old and footsore, for the application of ointment (gospel) to the wounded and wearied, for the tender care of the little ones. (S.S. I:8)

How glad we are that One with a learned tongue was given to us, and that He is ever able to give a word, a fitly spoken word, to him or her that is weary. (Isa. 50:4) It is morning by morning, day in and day out, night in and night out. The night watches are so long and weary. At the first watch, soon after having been delivered from the reigning power of sin, watching is not so tedious, but as His appearance is delayed, as the monsters prowl and shadowy and delusive spectres make their appearances, the watching gets more tiresome, and, after being filled with sorrow (Luke 22:45), and have a multitude of watchings (2 Cor. 11:27), they get so burdensome. What joy as dawn begins to come, and weeping begins to cease (Psa. 30:5). The long night of sorrow is over, the watchings through the lattice work of the soul (S.S. 3:9) have come to an end, the rising of the Sun of righteousness is at hand (Mal. 4:2), the day dawns. As the Husband, the Day Star of her soul, kisses her and comforts her from the agony of the long night watches, she is ready to go early out into the garden of the Lord. They now watch together; gone are the long watches, gone are the nightmares of the soul when trembling on the ledge not knowing whether they are to live or die. His interest is her interest. His vineyards are her concern. Her love has been stirred by the appearing of her Beloved. Thanksgiving floods her heart and mind and soul as she contemplates the vineyards, knowing that she has not had any hand in planting them. She watches with Him the coming up of the little vines, the small plantings which He has planted for the furnishing of wine on the lees for those that needed a spiritual cordial. Ah, poor sinner, what is it that causes you to follow Him early in the morning? It may seem strange, but I say unto you that it is because you are worn out. If it seems strange, look back to your long watches, look back to your tossings to and fro, look back as you watched in vain for the dawning, look back dear child when you were laboring in the long law night. The morning has come at last, and with it the Voice of your beloved, Let us go forth into the field, or, come unto me you that have labored through the law night, and I will give you rest in my shaded and watered field of grace. You may be called to preach; you may be a deacon in the house of God; you may be a little one that mercy has given you a place at the feet of saints; you may still be getting crumbs beside the Shepherd's tent, but how ever much that He sends forth as a maiden in the harvest

field (Ruth 2:8: Pro. 9:3) to do, it will be the most restful days of your life. There are not any burdens under laboring in this field. All of it is a labor of love; all of it is restful to the soul.

The law night was fraught with slinking creatures spying out your liberty; leeks and onions filled the night with their stink to your tender nostrils, but the Saviour says, Let us get up early to see the vineyards that I have planted for you; let us see if the plantings of my hand, the trees of righteousness which is of me (Isa. 61:3) are flourishing; let us see if the tender grape appears; let us see if Caleb and Joshua had a delusive dream about the rich clusters that they said were in Canaan (Num. 13:23); let us see if the pomegranates of that goodly land are now transplanted in spiritual Canaan and are settled and grounded and growing in this field of ours; let us see if the pomegranate is budding that we might have its sweet smelling fragrance to perfume our bed (S.S. 3:5,7). His promise, after all of these sovereign "lets" are brought forth, is that He will give her His loves. All of His plantings shall perfume the church of God, the bride of the Lord Jesus Christ. The lily and the rose, the plant of renown, the pomegranate, the aromatic scent of tall and stately cedars, together with the budding and flowering of every planting of His right hand, yea all of His love shall be displayed in that field and she shall sing,

"'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home,"

and in this hidden and enclosed field and garden and pasture she will be led by the word going forth out of His mouth to her in a beckoning directive that shall enable her to go in and out and find the sweet smell of the mandrakes (love apples) for her enjoyment, and how wonderfully gifted is this people, this church of the living God. The building which Solomon erected unto the Lord had entrances on each side and they were not closed day or night. There is not anything at all that is as inviting as the doors or gates into the church of the living God. Even as a poor sinner enters he or she is faced with the most lovely declaration of welcome that they have ever heard, to wit, *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."* Ah, my soul, look up, for your redemption draweth nigh and our salvation is nearer than when we first believed (Luke 21:38; Rom. 13:11). You will find inside this gate all that your poor soul has ever desired. All, all is ready and waiting for your Adored Lover to speak the word calling you home. This field, this garden, this pasture, this church home was prepared for you before you get there. In the midst of this city in the middle of the street of it you will find a river of pure crystal clear water flowing out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, and the Tree of Life will be there with fruits

being yielded at all times. It is true that offences will come, but placed before you will be the gospel declaration that not anything shall ever be able to separate you from the love of God which is in your Lover and Husband, the Lord Jesus Christ, and from His divine hand you shall evermore be fed on that which was laid up for you before the world begin, and wrought out for you in time (Psa. 31:19), and you shall be preserved from all apprehension of destruction by being hid in the pavilion of love.

Elder W.D. Griffin

MEETINGS

HOPEWELL

The seventeenth annual fifth Sunday meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with Hopewell Church, Winnsboro, Texas, beginning on Friday, May 29th, 30th, and 31st. Hopewell Church is located about six miles west of Winnsboro. Go West on Coke Road (515) about four and one-half miles and follow the signs. We would love to have you with us as we endeavor to worship and adore our wonderful Sovereign God. If you can't be with us, please remember us in your prayers.

Elder Jimmy Hamrick, Pastor
John Hamrick, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 1992

C.M. Kearns, NC 2.00
Miss Clarisee Brooks, NC 7.00
Mrs. Wanda Thompson, NC 2.00
Mrs. Patsy R. Mitchell, TX 2.00
Donald R. Arrington, NC 2.00
O.P. Murphy, TX 100.00
Mrs. Ruth Blair, VA 2.00
Joe L. Hill, TX 2.00
Mrs. Charles T. Philpot, VA 2.00
Mrs. Wylie H. Spires, VA 2.00
Mrs. Myrtle T. Daniel, FL 2.00
Mrs. Alice Johnson, TX 6.00
Robert A. Gambrill, KS 20.00
In memory of Mother Minnie Gambrill
Mrs. Lester Hanning, WV 10.00
Gene H. Lupton, VA 7.00
Mrs. Bennie Clifton, VA 2.00
Mrs. Lois E. Cloud, AZ 7.00
W.P. Potter, VA 2.00
Raymond Clayton, KY 7.00
Mrs. John O. Mitchell, VA 7.00
Mrs. Florence D. Maxey, VA 5.00
Richard Stegall, VA 2.00
Mrs. Audrey Glidewell, NC 2.00
Mrs. Lessie Sladky, NC 40.00
Burnell B. Williams, VA 2.00

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 5 / 92 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

OBITUARIES

ETHEL HILL AGEE CANNADAY

Sister Ethel Cannaday, was born Oct. 24, 1984. She was the daughter of the late James Hill and Octovia Radford Hill of the Payne's Creek vicinity. Sister Ethel, was married to Luther Thomas Agee, May 3, 1904. To this union was born 4 children, Wilson, Obie, Hilland and a daughter Claudine Agee Blankenship, she was married by Elder Joseph L. Turner at the home of J.H. Hill. Her husband died Feb. 25, 1920.

Later she was married to Andrew Luther Cannaday, June 30, 1938 of Floyd County by Elder Odell Thompson. The two united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Payne's Creek.

Brother Cannaday was called to be with the Lord just before their baptism.

Sister Cannaday was a lovely sister, so humble and soft spoken, and always a warm and kind smile, who was loved by all who knew her. She attended her church as long as her health permitted. In later years she made her home with her daughter Claudine and Garland Blankenship in Martinsville. Later she attended Martinsville Church, Elder Lane Carter is Pastor there.

Sister Cannaday departed this life Dec. 6, 1991. Three children Wilson, Obie and Hilland Agee, preceded her in death. She was survived by one daughter and son-in-law Claudine and Garland Blankenship. Two daughters-in-law, Vivian Agee and Mable Agee and one step-son, Stan Cannaday. Ten grandchildren, 22 great grandchildren and 20 great-great grandchildren.

Funeral was conducted Monday Dec. 9, 1991 at Hoads Funeral Home by Elder Hale Terry and Elder Lane Carter. Her body was laid to rest at the Moran Cemetery in Floyd, Va. Sister Cannaday, will be missed by her family, church, community and those who knew her, our loss is her eternal gain.

An unworthy sister,
Agnes Sutphin

MAE P. GRIFFIN

Sister Mae P. Griffin was born September 15, 1904. She died October 9, 1991 at Nash General Hospital in Rocky Mount, NC.

She was first married to Jim Flood who died in 1954. In 1967 she married Brother Johnny Griffin. He died March 3, 1988.

Sister Griffin united with Pleasant Hill Church fourth Sunday in February 1954. After her marriage to Brother Griffin she moved her membership to the church at Elm City, NC. A few years later the Elm City Church closed and she moved her membership back to Pleasant Hill.

Sister Griffin loved the church and was faithful to attend as long as she was physically able.

She was not blessed with any children but she had several nieces and nephews who loved her.

Her funeral was held at Johnson Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder Henry Jones and Elder Lester Eason. She was laid to rest at Williams Family Cemetery to await the resurrection of the children of God.

Written by Alvin E. Lancaster
Elder Henry Jones, Moderator
J. Carroll Williams, Clerk

MAZIE BOAZE PAYNE

It has been the will of our Heavenly Father to call our Dear Sister Mazie Boaze Payne home to Glory on December 31, 1991, just three days before her 99th birthday. She was born January 3, 1893, to George Boaze and Lucy Murrel Boaze. She was married to George L. Payne on November 7, 1909. To this union was born five daughters and five sons. Two sons and three daughters survive to mourn their loss, Nellie Winstead, Ruth Zimmerman and Ella May Haas, all of Danville, Va; Lester Payne of Durham, NC and Carlton Payne of Danville, Va, 25 grandchildren, 44 great grandchildren and 15 great great grandchildren.

Sister Mazie joined Strawberry Primitive Baptist Church June 7, 1912, and was a member for more than 79 years. She loved her church and was a faithful member as long as she was able to attend, due to a heart condition, she had not been able to attend in many years, although she stood firm in her belief. She was always so glad for her church members and Pastor to visit her and met them with a smile.

Her funeral was held at the Chapel of Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Home by her Pastor, Elder Thomas Soloman and Elder Wallis A. Smith. She was laid to rest in the Boaze Family Cemetery, beside her husband, beneath a mound of beautiful flowers to await the Resurrection Morn.

Her meek and humble way, she loved her family dearly, and they did everything that loving hands could do to keep her comfortable.

She was a good mother and a good wife, she kept the faith.

Be it resolved that we bow in humble submission to His Holy Will, who never makes a mistake.

May the Lord Bless and Comfort and give reconciling Grace to her loving family. We feel our loss is her eternal gain.

May a copy be sent to the Family,
One copy put on church Record
One copy sent to The Signs of Times for Publication

Written by one that loved her,
Sister Gertie C. Holley

MARY H. PARSONS

It is with sweet memories that I attempt to write the obituary of Sister Mary H. Parsons.

She was born March 25, 1905; a daughter of Brother David Lee Hamblett and Sister Elizabeth Mann Hamlett. Sister Parsons passed from this life Jan. 13, 1992.

Sister Mary was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by experience and baptism May, 1924. Sister Parsons always had a lovely smile and hand shake for everyone. She loved her church and brethren. She attended meetings as long as her health would permit.

Those left to mourn Sister Parsons are; two daughters, Sister Ruby P. Atkins, Gracie P. Mohrs. Two sons, Courtney Parsons and Fred Parsons. Five grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, and one sister, Rozell H. St. John. Sister Parsons' husband, Brother D.B. Parsons died Feb. 9, 1975.

Sister Mary's funeral was conducted by Elders Raymond Goad and Marvin Brumfield.

Sister Parsons will be sadly missed and we pray that God will reconcile each one to His will.

Written in Love and Hope,
Carol R. Pickral

Elder Marvin Brumfield,
Acting Moderator
Oscar Pickral, Clerk

W.D. ROBERTS

Brother W.D. Roberts was born January, 1908 and lived on this earth some 82 years. Brother Roberts was united with the Newport River Primitive Baptist on June 30, 1985 and was a faithful and true Brother in Christ until his death. He was ordained a deacon on May 21, 1989. Those Elders present at the ordination were J.M. Horne, Richland, N.C., Devon Harris, Pittsboro, N.C., Paul Lamb, Greensboro, N.C. Brother Sam Underwood opened the service with prayer.

Brother Roberts departed this life on August 6, 1990. All his life he was a firm believer in election of the saints of God. It is with a sad heart I write these truths concerning Brother Roberts.

He is survived by his wife of over 50 years Sister Signa Simmons Roberts, three daughters; Josephine R. Chapman of Garner, N.C., Signa Faye R. Spence of Kinston, N.C. and Sarah R. Winberry of Cape Carteret, N.C. and one son, Danny Roberts of Newport, N.C. We miss him very much but our loss is his eternal gain.

This written by Gordon M. Lockey deacon of Newport River Primitive Baptist Church.

JOHN 3:16.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Signs of the Times

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Route 1, Box 420 Keeling, Virginia 24566

WONDER AND HOPE

'Tis a wonder, 'tis a wonder great,
If the Lord did think of me;
If He did view my lost estate,
When they nailed Him on the tree.

If indeed He died to save me,
Can that purpose ever fail?
Did not His blood make me free,
Will not my soul to Heaven sail?

My only doubt is whether I am one,
Whom the Father gave to the Son;
If I am, while but a wandering sheep,
"Not one of my sheep shall be lost."
Is His promise you understand,
His own precious blood they did cost-
"No man shall pluck them from my hand."

Sometimes I'm made to fear,
Sometimes to cast a sorrowful tear;
And the evidence seems very small,
That I'm an elect one at all.

The promise is "By this we shall know,
That we've passed from death to life:
If we love the brethren it is so,
And we'll live beyond this world of strife."

(Miss) ETHEL JEFFERSON.
Elamsville, Va. - 1925

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EDITORIAL

ELDER R. H. CAMPBELL

And I will pray unto the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him: for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you.

These verses of scripture are the words of Jesus as he spoke to the Apostles on a very special occasion. It was the last time, during his earthly ministry, that he could talk to them freely and openly and he began to tell them of things that should shortly come to pass: things that were different from anything that they had ever known or experienced. He wanted to tell them so that they would understand when they happened and would know that they were of his kingdom. The time was after he had eaten the last passover with them, he had washed their feet and Judas had left them to betray Jesus unto the Jews. Jesus had completed all of the work that his Father gave him to do, except the cruel death on the cross, and when that was accomplished, the things that he was teaching them of would begin to unfold and his earthly mission would be fulfilled. He will have met the requirements of the law to a jot and a tittle in the room and stead of every heir of grace and the law will have no more dominion over them. Jesus, in this intimate moment in time is telling them for the first time of things that are coming to pass in the near future, as a result of what he had done, and the way that they are going to be made manifest in their lives. He has just told them, *"I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me."* And the things he is telling them is how this is going to be accomplished. In his death on the cross he will have satisfied all of the requirements of the law regarding sin and death and will have won the victory over death, hell and the grave for all of the elect and secured that inheritance that is reserved for them in the eternal heavens.

Jesus is speaking to them of a new era or dispensation that will replace the current order of things which is the law, how it will affect them and how that it is not new, but rather that

which was typified in the law since the beginning. Just as all things written in the law and prophets of Jesus must be fulfilled in his ministry here on earth, even so, all of the things accomplished and taught during his ministry must be manifested in the lives of the beneficiaries of the inheritance which he secured for them. This is so that they would be witnesses to the generations following that they might understand their way. All of this was promised in the covenant made before the foundation of the world, but there is a season and a time for them to occur and they must follow that schedule. It is as sure and certain as the schedule set for day and night, summer and winter: these are so regulated that man can ascertain far in the future or distant past events with exactness; not because of their wisdom but because of the certainty of God's schedule regulating all things.

Before the morning of time, man was created in the image of God: male and female were they created and placed in a garden where all things necessary for their well being and happiness were provided. Man was created upright and was given dominion over all that he surveyed: God told them to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, subdue it, and the only reservation was that he was told not to eat of the tree of life, for in the day that he ate of it he would surely die. Man did eat of the tree, and man did die; just as in nature when man dies he ceases to exist as he has lived and goes on to that which awaits him beyond this life. In like manner, Adam and Eve ceased living as they had lived, in the presence of God walking and talking with him: they were driven from the garden of Eden and placed in the earth to live as man continued to live until the time Jesus was referring to. Because of sin they were banished from the paradise into which they were created in the image of God: and they were given coats of skin (human fleshly nature) for to dwell on the face of the earth, separated from the presence of God as they had formerly lived. They were made to eat bread by the sweat of their brow, and toil for a livelihood in a hostile environment, very different from the life in the garden of Eden. They were driven from the garden, lest they put forth their hand and take of the tree of life and live forever.

The tree of life was created for man, as recorded in Genesis I vs. 29 *"And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat."* Yes, the tree of life was created for all of the children of promise which was created in the image of God in the sixth day of creation, but it was not created for those who came into existence when God greatly multiplied the conception of Eve, because of sin, who were of their father the devil. There was enmity placed between the children of promise and the children of the serpent and it has existed since that time and will as long as they dwell together. They are allowed to grow up together, as in Jesus' parable of the

tares and the wheat, but they have never been the same and this difference will be made manifest in the harvest. The children of the devil never had any part or any inheritance in the garden of Eden or the inheritance of the seed of promise. All were driven from the Garden lest the seed of the serpent should put forth his hand and take of the tree of life which was created for and is reserved for the seed of promise.

Yes, God drove out the man, and all of his posterity yet to be born, both good and evil and placed eastward in Eden Cherubims and a flaming sword to keep the way of the tree of life. The Cherubims and the flaming sword are representative of Christ and the Holy Ghost and their work in keeping the way of the tree of life for those for whom it was created. The way of the tree of life is referred to in Isaiah as a highway and a way and it shall be called the way of holiness, the unclean shall not walk there but the redeemed of the Lord shall walk there. The Cherubims represent Christ the word of God which declared and accomplished the way of salvation at the time under consideration above and the flaming sword is the Holy Ghost which is about to make his entrance and dwell in the seed of promise and reveal the truth to them, giving them eyes to see, ears to hear and hearts to understand. This occurred when the day of Pentecost was fully come and the tree of life was available to them again and they once again walked and talked with God. The Apostle Paul wrote of this to the church at Corinth 2 Cor. III vs. 13-18 *"And not as Moses, who put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not look stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament: which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail is taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."* Oh, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

The fall of man into sin did not change the will, purpose or plan of God respecting the salvation of the heirs of promise, but rather established the sovereignty of God over all things and demonstrated how all things work together for good to them that love God. Without sin there would have been no savior, no plan of salvation and no reason for the praise, honor and worship of God by those who were created in his image for that purpose. The way of the tree of life was just as surely and certainly reserved for the elect under the law of sin and death as it was in the garden of Eden and as it is in this day and age. The number of those for whom the tree of life was created and the way of

the tree of life has been preserved has not increased or diminished over the course of time and in spite of all that has occurred, but ever remains the same. There is no cause for alarm, in this day and age, because of the way in which the world seemingly is victorious over the ways of truth: to the Jews in Jerusalem they were seemingly victorious over Christ, in his death, and yet they were but fulfilling prophecy according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and so it is today. We would have things different today, but God would not, or else, they would be.

As Jesus is teaching the Apostles these new things, he is on the way to the cross where his death will initiate these changes he is telling them of. He is telling them of the day of Pentecost when the Holy Ghost will come down from heaven as a rushing mighty wind and for the first time will indwell man (other than Christ) and will cause them to declare the wonderful work of God to men from every nation under heaven. Then they, for the first time, will take freely of the tree of life: they will understand mysteries of the kingdom of heaven which from the beginning of the world had been hid in God, ordained unto the glory of those who were created in the image of God: reserved in the hands of the mediator until the time of the reformation. As new creatures in Christ, they will dwell in the presence of God, as he indwells them and they will rejoice in partaking of the fruit of the tree of life. They will now enter boldly into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for them through the vail which is to say his flesh. They no longer need an earthly priest to intercede for them but rather they are become kings and priests unto God and they commune with him.

Jesus has taken away the curse of sin from them and they stand having their loins girt about with truth, having on the breastplate of righteousness, their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, taking the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, triumphant over principalities and powers, the rules of darkness and spiritual wickedness in high places. David in the first Psalm describes the position of these, showing that the same truth has alway been, as he said, the lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places yea I have a goodly heritage. He referred to these blessed characters thusly, *"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be as a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season: his leaf also shall not wither: and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."*

The blessedness spoken of here in Psalms I vs. 1-4 is referring to the man who was created in the image of God and who takes of the tree of life freely; not the natural man in the flesh because all flesh is grass and all the

glory of that man is as the flower of grass. The grass withereth and the flower falleth away: among the flesh there are none good or that seeketh after God. Only those who are born of the spirit; those who with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord, as Paul wrote to the Corinthian Church II Cor. vs 18. This the Apostle had experienced and he is declaring that, when the vail is removed, and the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit only can remove the vail, the new man is in the image of God as he was created and can enter into the holiest and commune with God again. Regeneration means restored to a position once occupied, and in the beginning man was created in the image of God.

This is the heritage of all of the children of promise and the will and testament whereby it belongs to them was signed and sealed in the annals of eternity before any man was created. The terms of the will declaring who the heirs would be and the conditions under which the heirs would, and must, receive the inheritance were clearly established; and the execution was made sure by the determinate counsel and the foreknowledge of the testator who has the wisdom and the power to assure the outcome. The heritage is sure to all of the seed of promise and Christ is beginning to tell unto the Apostles of this in the above scriptures. He is telling them that it will last forever, that the world cannot receive it, could not receive it but that they would because the Spirit of truth would dwell with them and be in them eternally. He had told them earlier, *"He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also and greater works than these shall he do: because I go unto my Father."*

All of these things are true because Jesus went unto the Father, finishing the work that he gave him to do, bringing all of these things to pass according to the prophecies written before of him.

As the Apostle Paul wrote, Eph. I vs. 10-11, *"That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are in earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ."* This is the plan of salvation of every heir of promise; the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen.

The last words above were, "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you." Oh, the glory of those seasons when Jesus comes to see you. There is nothing that this world has to offer that can compare with those precious moments of love and communion with the savior. They do not come often but the comfort that they bring, and leave with you, can carry you for many days. As Paul said, *"The Spirit itself witnessing with our spirit, that we are the children of God."*

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

ARTICLES

If it could be pleasing to the Good Lord, I will try to write a few lines on the scripture found in 1 Peter 2:3-9. I won't write all verses now, but I will take them verse by verse as I go.

V.3. *"If so be you have tasted that the Lord is gracious."* If this has happened to you, and you have been blessed to experience this wonderful blessing, then you will be desiring spiritual food, things pertaining to the spiritual realm. The law of other things will have been taken from you. This experience is that which builds up a good hope in a man's breast, which is the Lord Jesus Christ within you. Some speak of this experience in different ways, but you don't have to have a bolt of lightening knock you off your feet. You don't have to see a light in such a manner as the Apostle Paul saw, many times when this change takes place, it is slow and is done quietly, in such a manner that the believer doesn't know it is happening. However the result is always the same, a person who has been blessed with this experience will realize the effect of the change even if he wasn't aware of it being done. He realizes things are different with him, now he doesn't enjoy worldly things as he once did, but now things of the spiritual realm seem to interest him more, he loves to talk, read and hear about Jesus. In short he is now tasting that the Lord is gracious.

V.4. *"To whom coming, as unto a living stone disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious."* Peter here is comparing Jesus as a stone, but not to any stone such as you can see lying around on the ground, but a living stone, a stone with life, life of himself and life of everyone else. Natural life for all here on earth, spiritual life and life eternal for all his church, the source of all life. *"I am come that ye may have life and have it more abundantly."* Disallowed indeed of men, the Jewish leaders all rejected Jesus as their spiritual leader, or as one sent from God. They did not believe his teaching, the scribes and Pharisees rejected him in every way, choosing their own dead works, their self made traditions, their own self righteousness over and above what Christ was bringing. This of course had to be, for according to prophecy, He would come unto his own, and his own would receive him not. But chosen of God and precious, chosen of God to be sure, He was made precious, given a place, or made higher than all the kings on earth, over and above even the angels in heaven, a name given him above every name, yes and made to set down beside the majesty on high. God himself saying, *"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."*

V.5. *"Ye also, as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."* Ye also, as lively stones, these believers are like all other men until the work of God is done within them,

then there is this difference, there is a separation from their former ways, actions and thoughts. Now they are spoken of as lively stones, before this work by the Spirit of God they were like all other stones in a quarry, all laying side by side. But once they were dug out, something was done for them, due to this work done in them, they have been reclassified and now called lively stones. Separated from other stones, or natural men by the powerful efficacious work of grace, where they are hewn out and made fit for the building, they are now lasting and durable, will never perish. A spiritual house, all these lively or living stones are made perfect stones by the power and work of God. So now they all fit together to form a spiritual building. The church of God is a spiritual body, made up of living souls, redeemed, and kept by God in this way or method until that great day when they shall be revealed. Now they are a holy priest hood, in camp arisen to the priests under the law who was set apart and sanctified for that office, in which only the tribe of Aaron could serve as priests. But now under the gospel dispensation, all saints or believers are priests to God, and all are appointed to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God. Their selves, soul and body as a living sacrifice, their prayers and praises, and all good works done in faith and love to the Glory of God. Such as acts of kindness, and things beneficial to the brethren, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. All these type sacrifices and praise which are made to God has a sweet smelling savor to God, accepted by our blessed saviour and mediator.

V.6. "*Wherefore it is contained in the scripture, Behold I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect and precious.*" "*Is.28:16. I lay in Zion, for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a sure foundation.*" This prophecy was given many years before this time, and as in all true prophecy it came to pass at the appointed time. Look how well this describes our blessed Saviour, a sure foundation, a tried stone, a precious corner stone. Any building which is well built will have a good support at the corner, otherwise it won't hold up. This building, the church of Christ has a sure foundation, a tried stone, a living stone, which supports, unites and welds all the parts together whether they are Jew or Gentile, both in ages past and in the distant future. Therefore he is the elect of God, sent for this very purpose, chosen of God and precious, both in the eyes of God and the believers. Of course in the eyes of some men he is not seen as such, but to all who love his appearing, who has tasted that the Lord is gracious, he is precious indeed.

V.8. And a stone of stumbling, a rock of offense, is what Jesus was to those unbelieving Jews, who couldn't believe their expected Messiah would come in such a manner. They couldn't quite see their expected Lord being the son of a carpenter, or his mother being a poor woman, the thought that he was born of a virgin was too much for them. They were looking for him to come from some noble family, they

just couldn't believe things as Jesus taught them. They stumbled also at his education, they couldn't understand from whom came his wisdom, never having been trained in any of their better schools, or by any of their great teachers. They stumbled also at the company he kept, the poor people, publicans and harlots, they stumbled at his doctrine, they were not given to understand his spiritual teaching, so by all these things, Peter is here saying, he is a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at his word, whereunto they were appointed.

Here is the sum and substance of the whole manner, they were appointed to stumble at the word of the gospel and at Christ, all this was set in the counsel and purpose of God, as for the saving of some, and the stumbling and falling of others. For there are some whom God has appointed to believe in Christ, and whom he has determined to bestow true faith in him. In contrast there are others, whom he has determined to leave in their disobedient state, where as they stumble at Christ and his word, therefore they justly perish.

"But ye are a chosen generation", the bible plainly teaches that we are a chosen people, chosen by God, through and by his own good will and pleasure, surely not for anything which we have done to earn it.

A royal priesthood, yes a people who have experienced work within themselves to turn them, disobedient, unbelieving people, to people who have a witness within. Who have a love for Christ in their heart and soul, and can offer up spiritual worship to God through love and prayer. A holy people because God has forgiven them their sins, and worked a holy work within them. Now they are known and seen as a peculiar people, people who desire the love of Christ over and above the riches of the world. People who the love of worldly things have been changed to a love of the things of God. Now they, like Abraham, are looking for a city not built by hands, they no longer feel at home in this world, therefore they seek a better place, whose maker and keeper is God. They like Moses desire the love of God more than the riches of this world.

May the God of heaven bless us that we may be given to count our many blessings, to feel that through his great love our sins have been forgiven, and may we be able to see that surely all these blessings are by his marvelous grace, and not by anything we ourselves have done.

I desire your prayers,
With love - Frank Hunt

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2 Samuel, 7:8 "Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel:"

May the Lord lead us and guide our mind and thoughts as we attempt to write on this great subject, If I may, I would like to relate some of the feelings I have had about this subject. A year or two back, I was

down low and was troubled in mind and thoughts. The meeting at Laurel Ridge was coming up and it seemed I didn't have anything to go with. If memory serves me right I had looked for a text, but I wanted the Lord to give me one and I asked the Lord if it was his will to give me a Scripture, that I was not acquainted with one that I did not know for sure was in the Bible, and one that I had never heard anyone else use, and if it would please him to give me, an understanding of it. The next thought that came to mind was sheepcote, I was not sure it was in the Bible, but as soon as I could get to it I looked it up and found it as I asked for, never heard it preached, was not sure it was in the Bible. I do believe the Lord answers prayer. Now to get back to the subject.

David wanted to build an house for the Lord, and the word of the Lord came unto Nathan, saying go and tell my servant David, thus saith the Lord, shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in? Whereas I have not dwelt in any house, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle, moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel.

The text I took thee from the sheepcote, webster says, sheepcote is a sheepfold. Now David was a shepherd boy, Samuel was commanded of the Lord to go I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided me a king among his sons, when David came before Samuel, the Lord said arise anoint him. For this is he, and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David, But the spirit of the Lord departed from Saul.

The Lord brought up David to be king of Israel, I believe God's children are brought up also, may not be from the sheepcote but amounts to the same thing, you were delivered from one thing, me another. As I think of David as he was called from the sheepcote to be king, I don't see where he himself did anything to merit this, but was called of God, see your calling not many mighty not many noble are called, But God has chosen the weak things, We long since have learned that of ourselves we can do nothing, I believe it was Jacob that said he brought me up out of an horrible pit, out of the mire and clay, and set my feet upon a rock, If I may go back to my boyhood days, I don't feel worthy to compare myself with David, he being a man after God's own heart, but if David and you and me are children of God we have some things in common, when I was a barefooted boy about ten or twelve years of age, I would go to the store for mother, and the man and his wife that run the store, were thought of as wealthy people, and me, I had nothing, and if someone should have told me that this man and this woman, his wife, would sometime in the future be members of the Church that I was pastor of, and the man a deacon, I would not have believed them. In thinking of this made me feel that the Lord had brought me up from the sheepcote, not to be King like David, but I hope a servant of the Lord, also was called to have the man and his wife's funeral. God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform, he plants his foot steps on the seas and

rides upon the storm, the Lord leads us in ways that we have not known, and paths that we have not seen, he makes the crooked ways straight and the rough places plain, turns darkness into light.

It is not any wonder that David could say, the Lord is my light and my salvation, of whom shall I be afraid or whom shall I fear, Paul also could speak the same things, yet he was brought up according to the perfect manner of the law, blameless. But he counted all things but loss that he might win Christ, not having his own righteousness but the righteousness of Christ. Oh how I desire that righteousness of Christ the Lord, I know there is none in man but what the Lord has given them.

I believe that the Lord will bring his children in a way, that they will be stripped of all their self works, sometimes I think the Lord will let his people go all the way to the bottom, until they know that nothing but the mercy of the Lord can reach them. They think they are a dead weight, and that the Lord would not be just if he should save them. Then Bless his holy name He breaks into the soul and brings comfort and joy, and delivers them from the sheepcote. The Lord made it plain to David that he would not build a house, but his son Solomon would, it must have been a great mercy to David when the Lord reminded and refreshed his memory that he had called him from the sheepcote, to serve him as king of Israel. I love the scriptures where it says the old man waxes old and decays but the new man is renewed day by day. When the Lord renews the spirit in our mind it is like apples of gold in pictures of silver. We think of so many of God's children that have been delivered from the things of this world into the things of him. We think of Jacob, Daniel, and Joseph, and Abraham, the Hebrew children, Paul and Peter, you and I if we are what we profess to be.

Hope the Lord will bless this that someone may be comforted.

Elder Leonard J. Brammer

VOICES OF THE PAST

DOCTRINE TO WHICH WE ARE PLEDGED IN OUR PROSPECTUS, New Vernon, N.Y., January 2, 1833.

In our prospectus we are pledged to maintain inviolably the several scriptural sentiments embraced in the respective items which were named. We intend to notice them severally in the order in which they were presented.

The first that comes under consideration is "the Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfection of the Great Jehovah - the revelation which God has given of himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost." "These three are one." - 1 John v. 8.

That God exists, we need no further demonstration than what is presented to our view in creation and in providence. In the former "the heavens declare his glory, and the firmament showeth forth his handy work." In the

latter, "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge."

The well established laws of summer and winter, of seedtime and harvest, the waxing and waning of the moon, the revolutions of the earth and the planets, all proclaim the existence of the Great First Cause of all causes - a supernatural power; and we are taught by divine revelation that, that first cause, that supernatural power, is God. But as the existence of God is seldom denied, we will pass on, and with the most profound reverence consider some of his perfections.

And first,

God is a Sovereign.

By the term sovereign, as it applies to God, we are not to understand an arbitrary or tyrannical being, but quite the reverse; an all-wise disposer of all events, an independent, self-existent, and omniscient God; one who holds the eternal destiny of his creatures in his own almighty grasp, working all things after the counsel of his own will, even as he has ordained all things for his own glory; and being independent of and superior to all beings in heaven or on earth, has an incontestable right to do his pleasure in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; having a right to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor; to have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will to harden; to reveal his gospel unto "babes and sucklings," and to hide the same from the "wise and prudent;" to love Jacob and to hate Esau, to save his people with an everlasting salvation, and to turn the wicked into hell, with all the nations that forget God.

In view of the sublime doctrine of the divine sovereignty, the inspired writer inquires, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being his counsellor, hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed unto him the way of understanding?"- Isaiah xl. 13, 14. The full display of this attribute of the Deity would require a development of all his perfections, but particularly that of his independence and omnipotence, of which we shall have something to say hereafter. But first we will consider his right to dispose of all events according to the pleasure of his own will. And who is prepared to dispute this right? "Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" "Wo unto him that striveth with his Maker. Let the potsherds strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say unto him that fashioneth it, What maketh thou? or thy work, he hath no hands? Wo unto him that saith unto his father, What begettest thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth?" - Isa. xlv. 9, 10. If then we admit that it was God's sovereign right to create a world, we must acknowledge that it was his right to determine what kind of a world to create, and for what end it should be created, or else we must conclude that he was not absolutely independent; and to form such a conclusion would certainly be a great derogation from his divine perfections.

If while we gaze with admiration and delight upon the beauties of creation, we should believe that God was bound by some law or power independent of and superior to himself, to create things in the exact order in which they are and were created, we could no longer enjoy the delightful reflection that our God is the Most High. We must therefore conclude that it is his sovereign and eternal right to do his pleasure in heaven and on earth, or we must say with the fool, *"There is no God."* But the more resplendent is the manifestation of the righteousness of God, when we contemplate him in connection with his independence. *"He is before all things, and by him all things consist."* Thus, for instance, in imagination, strike from the scale of existence every created object, and what would remain? Nothing but God alone, and inasmuch as he existed before all things, he must have existed independently of all things, and we must deny his immutability, or admit that he continues to be the same independent God now that he was before the highest parts of the habitable world were made. He is self-existent and self-sufficient. He speaks the word and it stands fast, he commands and it is done.

The extent of God's sovereignty is commensurate with his infinity. It is displayed in all his works of creation, providence and grace. In creation serpents as well as doves were made-some men and some angels-all were not made alike, nor for the same end. In providence, we see the beggar raised from the dung-hill to the throne, and the proud monarch hurled from his royal seat down to the most abject state of wretchedness and misery. To some men God has given riches, and to others poverty, to one sickness, and to another health. *"There were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah,"* in the time of severe famine, &c. *"But unto none of them was Elijah sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow."* To make known to the king of Babylon this divine sovereignty, the Lord drove him from his palace and from the society of men, to range with the beasts of the field till seven times were passed over, until in providence he should learn that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, and as a sovereign giveth the kingdoms of this world unto whomsoever he pleaseth. The display of divine sovereignty in the kingdom of grace is most striking. The election of his people in Christ Jesus before the world began, unmoved by any regard to their virtues or good works. *"Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." - 2 Tim. ii. 9.* And in further testimony of God's sovereignty we hear an inspired apostle say, *"Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." "Unto you therefore ,which believe, he is precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling,*

and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed." - *1 Peter ii. 7, 8. "Thou wilt say them unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? who hath resisted his will? Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?"*

God is immutable.

"For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore, ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."-Mal. iii. 6. "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth that he doeth."- Job xxiii. 13. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever."- Heb. xiii. 8. "The Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."- James i. 17. Farther testimony to establish the doctrine of God's immutability seems to be quite unnecessary; were we for a moment to suppose God to be a mutable being, unto ourselves, we might then say with the fool, *"There is no God."* In giving up the immutability of God we would give up all; for if it could be proved that God ever changed it would prove the forfeiture of his truth. He says, "I change not;" and could his truth fail, his holiness could not remain unimpaired, his wisdom would stand impeached, and his glory forever be eclipsed. Again, if God has changed, or ever should change, that change must be either for the better or for the worse; if for the better, he was once imperfect, and if for the worse, he is now imperfect. The awful absurdity and blasphemy of the doctrine is enough to make one tremble.

God is Omnipotent.

By the Omnipotence of Jehovah we understand that universal and almighty power which is essential to his being as God, and that this power is an attribute peculiar to himself. This divine perfection of the Godhead was manifested in the creation of the world. He said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And also in providence, as exemplified in the entire history of the children of Israel, in their elevation above all other nations under heaven, in their redemption from Egyptian captivity, in their passage through the Red Sea, in the miraculous manner in which they were fed with manna, and supplied with water, and in the signal victories given them over their enemies. Nor is the manifestation of omnipotent power confined to any particular event, or train of events. It shone in dreadful majesty from Sinai's flaming top, nor with less grandeur from Mount Calvary, when the meridian sun was dressed in sack-cloth, the rocks were rent, the dead were raised, the vail of the temple was rent asunder, and the most holy place exposed to view, while frighted nature, as with a voice of mighty thunder, proclaimed the doctrine of God's omnipotence. If a further illustration or demonstration of the almighty power of God were necessary, we might advert to the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, when *"God went up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet."*

In the economy of salvation, too, God has made ample display of his omnipotence. The fulfillment of the holy law, the perfect satisfaction rendered to divine justice, the opening of the prison doors to them that were bound, and the emancipation of the prisoners, the conquest of our beloved Lord over death, hell and sin, the destruction of death, and him that had the power of death, which is the devil, the regeneration and quickening of his elect, together with their preservation in grace unto eternal glory, the resurrection of their bodies in the likeness of his own glorious body, and the consummation of their everlasting happiness in the world to come. The man must surely be a stranger in Israel who cannot trace the power and Godhead throughout the whole work of salvation, from the foundation to the top stone.

The perfections of God are eternal.

It cannot reasonably be expected of finite beings that they should be able to comprehend the eternity or infinity of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? We are therefore able only to contemplate the divine perfections of Jehovah, as far as they are revealed to us by his word and Spirit, and if through the abundant revelation made we could vie with the brightest prophets and inspired men of God in our conceptions of the Holy One, or with the tongues of men or angels, could set forth our views of God, we would be with them constrained to say, *"Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him; but the thunder of his power, who can understand?"*

That God is a being of infinite and eternal perfection, but few in our age are bold enough, in so many words, to deny. But yet while many will admit this truth in general terms, they will deny it in all its particular bearings on the redemption and salvation of sinners. Many very zealous professors of religion will form in their own imagination a standard of right and wrong, and then say, if God should vary from their standard he would be unequal, unjust or imperfect. But we know of no higher standard of perfection than God himself, hence all that is done or decreed by him is perfect, because it is done or decreed in accordance with his own mind and will, and must therefore be compatible with his nature. It cannot be the prerogative of creatures of yesterday, whose breath is in their nostrils, to set up a standard of human wisdom by which to scan the perfections of their Maker. If it be admitted then that God is perfect, it needs no more than the admission of his immutability to establish the doctrine of the eternity of his perfections. As far as God has been graciously pleased to reveal himself unto us, we have been constrained to pray that he would conform us to his will, and by his sovereign grace, which is treasured up in Christ Jesus our Lord, conform us to the image of him who is

the *"brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person."* The above brief statement of our views of the "existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah," &c., are sentiments which we hold dear to our heart, and such as we stand solemnly pledged to inviolably maintain in this paper. The doctrine is neither strange nor new to the Baptists of the school of Christ.

In the revelation of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. *"These three are One."-1 John i. 5, 8.* On this important point of doctrine our views are happily expressed in the above scripture, quoted from the apostle John, while all human language utterly fails in setting forth the mode of God's existence. We rejoice that the record which he has been pleased to give of himself in the bible contains all necessary information on the subject; at present we shall for want of room omit giving our views at large on this point; we will only say that we shall cautiously avoid all such doctrines as do either deny or refuse to acknowledge the eternal power and Godhead of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

This God is the God we adore,
Our faithful, unchangeable friend;
Whose love is as great as his power,
And knows neither measure nor end.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 6/92 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

SOLOMON'S SONG 3:7,8.

Dear Brother Beebe: - Some time ago I requested your view on Solomon's Song 3:7,8, and I still desire you to give them, and oblige your friend,

William P. Robertson
Gentryville, Ind., August, 1862

REPLY:

If we do not in all cases comply withthe desires expressed by our brethren for our views on such passages of the Scriptures as they send us, it is not from any indifference felt by us in regard to their wishes, or from lack of inclination to oblige them. Sometimes it is for want of time to attend to so many calls as are made upon us, but more generally because we have no satisfactory light upon the subjects on which light is sought for.

The passage now proposed by Elder Robertson reads as follows: *"Behold his bed, which is Solomon's; threescore valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Israel. They all hold swords, being expert in war: every man hath his sword upon his thigh, because of fear in the night."*

Solomon throughout this song very fitly personates our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom, as the son of David, king of Israel and builder of the temple, he was a brilliant type, and the spouse is quite as clearly a chosen and appropriate figure of the church of God, which is known as the bride, the

Lamb's wife. In the text before us our attention is called to behold Solomon's bed. As Solomon himself is a figure, his bed must also be considered in a figurative sense, and is used to signify something of importance in regard to Christ, which is particularly interesting to the church of God. Beds are commonly regarded as places of rest and comfort for the weary, and are exceedingly useful in the night, when the feeble wayworn pilgrim or weary laborer can stretch himself upon it and enjoy a peaceful and refreshing slumber. But there were some peculiar excellencies in the bed which is Solomon's, which, especially to his love, his undefiled, could be found nowhere else. Solomon's bed was in a royal pavilion, possessing elegance and comfort suited to the high position of its august proprietor. It was a place of comfort as well as a place of rest, and in addition to these advantages, it was a place of safety, as we see it was guarded by valiant armed men.

All these figures, we think, are applicable to the glorious gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, which gospel is the place of the sweetest rest that was ever enjoyed by the weary and the heavy laden, who have been permitted by abounding grace to recline upon its ample space for rest and comfort. The gospel is set forth by the apostle as a rest that remaineth to the people of God. It was figuratively set forth in the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, and rested on the seventh day from all the works which he had made, and blessed and hallowed that day. The seventh day Sabbath instituted under Moses, and all the Sabbatic days and years in the ceremonial law, were typical of the gospel as the rest for weary and heavy laden sinners who are called by grace. The inspired exposition of the subject in the New Testament, especially in the epistle to the Hebrews, thus explains their figurative import and design. Every weary and sin-burdened sinner that ever came to Christ is a witness that we which have believed do enter into rest, and that *"He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."* The prophet foresaw and proclaimed of Christ that his rest should be glorious. We think then that the royal bed of Solomon must refer to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the only place of rest and comfort for those who can rest nowhere else. Taking this then as the correct design of the figure, let us notice this bed of Solomon's, namely, the gospel. First, we observe that it is Solomon's, or, as the figure implies, it is Christ's; it is the gospel of Christ, the gospel of the Son of God. Paul speaks of some who preach another gospel, which is not another, etc., but he would admit of none as genuine but that gospel of Christ, of which he said he was not ashamed. Men may invent a multitude of schemes and theories to rest upon, but their beds are too short for one to stretch himself upon, and their covering is too narrow to wrap themselves in it. The strange woman in the seventh chapter of Proverbs boasted that she had decked her bed very extrava-

gantly, and in a very costly manner, and perfumed it with myrrh, aloes and cinnamon, but with all the allurements of her harlot bed no weary sinner ever found either rest or comfort on it. Her house, we are told, is the way of hell, leading down to the chambers of death, and the prophet of the Lord proclaims in thunder tones that, *"The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest."* No, it must be his bed.

"Behold his bed, which is Solomon's." The bed, or resting-place of Solomon, was the resting-place of his spouse. To her alone belonged the right and privilege of resting with her Beloved in all the pleasures of the consecrated couch. So in the glorious gospel of the grace of God none but the bride, the Lamb's wife, shall rest upon the gospel bed. His marriage bed is undefiled, no stranger ever has or shall be allowed to pollute it. There certainly is this peculiarity in the comforts of the gospel, none but the members of Christ can possibly rest in them; nor have they in reality any desire, for it is not calculated to be appreciated by them.

"The softest couch that nature knows
Can give the conscience no repose."

But the gospel gives rest and comfort to all who are allowed to enter into his rest, and this embraces the weary, to whom Christ says, *"I will give you rest."* and the troubled saints, to whom Paul says, *"To you who are troubled rest with us."* Even the Christian can rest only on this bed, for the spouse says in the first verse of this chapter, *"By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not."* It is a restless place for the children of God when they get upon their own bed, they cannot find him there who alone can calm their fears and cheer their hearts.

"And whilst upon my restless bed,
Among the shades I roll,
Till my Redeemer shows his head,
'Tis restless to my soul."

The perfect security of Solomon's bed is indicated by the royal guard of armed and valiant men which were stationed around it. It is true the gospel of Christ cannot be endangered by all the powers of earth and hell, but still the gospel church is not in a militant state, or in a state of warfare; hostile enemies have conspired to invade and spoil the resting-place of the church of God, and they sometimes succeed too well in terrifying the timid saints. Doubts, fears, unbelief and lack of confidence often cause the saints to tremble, and forbid their rest, but to protect the saints from these a royal guard is provided.

"Threescore valiant men." These may represent the gospel ministry, they are entrusted with the watch-care of the churches, and made overseers of the flock, and their business is to stand upon the watch-tower, and by the faithful discharge of their duties to meet every invading foe at the threshold, whether such foes approach in the form of men, or devils, or in doubts, fear or unbelief. Hence valiant men are required; those timid

ones who leave the flock as soon as they see the wolf approaching are not reliable, for they are not of the valiant of Israel. The number, *"threescore valiant men,"* makes a strong and sufficient guard; it is not to confine the number of the ministry to that number literally, but as in the figure, sixty men, well armed, would seem to be a very strong guard for one bed. So we infer that the gifts for the comfort and protection of the church from surprise or invasion are full and complete, embracing the apostles and all who are called, equipped and placed for the defense of the gospel of Christ.

"They all hold swords." They are prepared for the conflict, and ready to confront any approaching foe. Their swords are not made of steel to shed the blood of their opposers, for the weapons of their warfare are not carnal, but spiritual, and mighty through God in pulling down strong holds. The apostles understood the sword to be the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, as it comes from the mouth of God. John saw in his vision a sharp two-edged sword proceeding out of the mouth of him whose name was written upon his vesture and on his thigh, and whose name is called The Word of God. It is with this sword (namely) the words which God hath spoken, that apostles, evangelists, pastors and teachers are to resist error, contend for truth, and with this two-edged sword, which cuts both ways, offensively and defensively, they are to fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life. *"They all hold swords."* What would all their valor be to them when assailed if they could not meet the adversary with a *"Thus saith the Lord"?* They are all expert in war; God has taught their hands to war and their fingers to fight, as he did David and Paul. He makes them expert, for they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful; novices will not do, lest being lifted up with pride, they fall into the condemnation of the devil; not such watchmen as Isaiah described, which were dumb dogs, that could not bark, sleepy dogs, lying down, loving slumber, nor greedy dogs, that can never have enough. The wisdom of Solomon would be impugned by the supposition that he would entrust the security of his bed to an inefficient guard, and behold a greater than Solomon is in the church, to order all things in wisdom and righteousness.

"Every man hath his sword upon his thigh, because of fear in the night." The sword of the warrior is usually fastened on his thigh, as the most appropriate and convenient place, ready to be drawn in an instant. He has not to go to some distant armory to procure a sword, every man on guard has one with him. The word is nigh thee, even in thine heart, and in thy mouth; even the word of faith which we preach. This is very essential, because of fear in the night. The night is the time when thieves and robbers and murderers are busy in pursuing their work; the night is the time for those who love darkness more than light, and it is in the darkness of the night the psalmist says all the beasts of the forest creep forth. It was in the

twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night, that Solomon saw the strange woman (Antichrist) sally forth on her errand of abomination. Naturally, men are more timid in the night than in the daytime, and it is truly so in a spiritual sense with christians; when the light of the countenance of the Redeemer is hidden from their view, dark, dismal thoughts and boding fears intrude, and then the valiant of Israel require to use their swords.

"Happy the church, that sacred place,
The seat of thy Creator's grace;
Thy holy courts are his abode,
Thou earthly palace of our God.

Thy walls are strength, and at thy gates
A guard of heavenly warriors waits;
Nor shall thy deep foundations move,
Fixed on his counsel and his love.

Thy foes in vain designs engage,
Against his throne in vain they rage,
Like rising waves, with angry roar,
That dash and die upon the shore."

Much more might be written on the subject, if we have not missed the true design of the figure. The subject is instructing, and full of comfort and interest to those who can find rest in the gospel; but none but quickened souls can be weary, therefore none other can truly appreciate rest. The dead can no more rest with the saints upon Solomon's bed than on the stormy billows of the troubled ocean; the gospel is the rest that remaineth, and shall evermore remain to the people of God; therefore we say:

"Go, ye that rest upon the law,
And toil and seek salvation there;
Look to the flame that Moses saw,
And shrink, and tremble, and despair.

But I'll retire beneath the cross,
Savior, at thy dear feet I'll lie,
And the keen sword that justice draws
Flaming and red, shall pass me by."

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y., Sept. 15, 1862.

GOD OF ALL POWER

967 Maxey Street
Memphis, Tenn.

"These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son may also glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." (John 17: 1, 2)

We understand that there is no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God; and that everything is subject to the power of God, from the first to the last of all things. I do believe that God is able, and does control everything that he made, and that without him there was nothing made. So, from the very smallest insect to the largest animal, including man, everything is under His control: even man's goings are of the Lord, and his steps are directed according to God's will.

All flesh is in His hand; and how wonderful to know that He prayed for those the Father gave him out of the world. These are the ones that are given eternal life. He is the way, the truth, and the life; and there is none other name given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved. He is our resurrection also, for Jesus told Martha that he was the resurrection and the life, and he that believed on him, though he were dead, yet should he live. (John 11:25) So we know by the eye of faith of God's power in all things.

O, I think of the prophets and the fathers of old, how they were comforted of the Spirit by the same God we hope to worship today; how they were moved by the Spirit to go places, and to do as they were told to do. We think of the Prophet Elijah, the Tishbite, whom God talked with, and caused him to go according to His power. We find in the 17th chapter of 1st Kings, some things that God commanded Elijah to do: *"The word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Get thee hence, and turn eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith . . . and it shall be that thou shalt drink of the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there."* The ravens brought him bread and flesh in the evening, and he drank of the brook. Here God's power is demonstrated in man and in the fowls of the air.

To my mind we here have the law demonstrated. We see that the brook dried up, and that Elijah could no longer drink of it. The ravens fed him no more; and Elijah had to go at God's command to the widow woman for sustenance. This means to me the Grace Covenant at the end of the Law Covenant; and God's mighty power is shown, which is the same power that causes the lame to walk, the blind to see, the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak. As we go a little further in the life of Elijah, we find that he proved that the true God was Israel's God, when he said, *"How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word."* (1 Kings 18:21)

The people did not believe in Elijah's God until God answered with fire from heaven. Then they said, *"The Lord, he is God."* It takes the power of God to cause men to see and believe in him, in every sense of the word; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believe in God: no more, no less.

. . . Has God ever changed? No! He is the same today as he ever was. The Prophet Malachi says, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Christ told his disciples, "Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." That which God has done is done forever, and nothing can be added or taken away from his work, for his work is a perfect work in all things both visible and invisible.

The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. His people are kept as the apple of his eye, and none of them will ever be destroyed. The Apostle Paul says that life nor death, things present or things

to come, shall not separate us from the love of God. If we love Him, it is because he first loved us; and he called us out of nature's darkness into his marvelous light, not because of our work's but because of his purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

The power of God sends his servants to preach the Gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew and also to the Greek. The preaching of the cross of Christ is to them that perish foolishness, but unto those who are saved, the power of God. The children of God are justified by faith, and have peace with God through their Saviour Jesus Christ. God works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure; and it is his good pleasure to give them the kingdom. This is a precious gift; it is a perfect gift, because it comes down from above, from the Father of Lights in whom there is no variableness, neither a shadow of turning.

These things are not learned in the schools of men, or come from them. God teaches his children, and they learn obedience; *"they rejoice in hope of the glory of God, and not only so, but they glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience hope: and hope maketh not ashamed: because the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given them."* God has power over all flesh to do as he pleases with his own. I believe that every living thing praises God in the purpose he had in it. The reason we can't see into all mysteries, is because His ways are higher than our ways as the heavens are above the earth; and they are past finding out by men.

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind but now I see."

How amazing this grace is! Even when we were dead in trespasses and sin God loved his own. *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2: 8-10)* The workmanship of God shows the power of God in making one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor; and none can call him in question, because he has power over all flesh.

When his children are gathered together in his name, we often think how powerful He is. He brings them from the ends of the earth, and makes them sit in heavenly places in him and worship their King of Kings: to whom all honor is due. He causes his servants to preach the Word, reproving, rebuking with all long suffering and doctrine; and gives food which gives them strength for each day of their lives.

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be

the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Romans 8:29, 30) Aren't you glad to know that God's foreknowledge and predestination will never become obsolete in the hearts of those whom He justifies and glorifies. I love the predestinated purposes of God: whatever they are, He brings them to pass according to his will. May we not preach anything else other than the absolute truth as it is in Christ Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith. And faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

May the grace of our Lord be with each of his children.

Elder H. R. Prince

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 1992

Mrs. Julia Sowers, Va 2.00
Mrs. Susan Cutts, Va 7.00
B.E. Moroe, TN 7.00
Mrs. Jacob Atkins, MD 9.00
Mrs. Grace Manly, FL 2.00
Mrs. Erby Dalton, Va 2.00
Whitney Mobley, NC 10.00
Joseph Plaster, Va 2.00
Dan Anders, AL 2.00
Ms. Armedia Taylor, LA 2.00
Herbert Dodson, VA 2.00
Bert H. Knox, WA 15.00
Mr. & Mrs. W.W. Stutts, TX 2.00
Mrs. J.D. Neely, AR 2.00
Eld. L.L. Eason, NC 2.00
Mrs. Lawrence A. Myers, VA 2.00
Mrs. Pearl A. Law, VA 5.00
Mrs. Flora C. Vest, VA 2.00
Mrs. Graham C. Lovitte, NC 2.00
R. Allen Carroll, NC 10.00
Hartzel B. Nelson, WV 5.00
Lonnie W. Nichols, VA 2.00
Mrs. Muriel M. Strader, NC 2.00
William E. Mitchell, VA 2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER LILLIAN MCLAUGHLIN

In January 9, 1992 the toils of this earthly life were ended for our dear sister Lillian McLaughlin. We are saddened by her passing and made to realize how fast our membership is diminishing. When I think of sister McLaughlin my mind is carried back a number of years to when she had retired and I had not yet gone to public work. I would go and pick up sister Kate Dodd and sister McLaughlin and we would visit our members that were shut-in. These were such good times of fellowship. Due to her failing eye sight and declining health she had not been able to attend meetings often in the last few years.

Our sister was born Oct. 31, 1900 in Pittsylvania Co., Va. She united with Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church in August 1956.

She is survived by two sons Landon and Edwin McLaughlin, one sister Mildred Fulton, 5 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at Barker Funeral Chapel in Danville, Va. by Mr. Luther Leman. She was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park, to await the glorious resurrection of the saints of God.

May God grant that we all be made reconciled to His will.

Submitted by
Peggy Wells

SISTER GERTRUDE SANDERS

Sister Gertrude Hobbs Sanders entered into eternal rest December 20, 1991. She will be long remembered by all who knew her.

Sister Sanders was a strong pillar in the Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church, Holly Ridge, N.C., where she had been a member since May 27, 1956. She was baptized by the late Elder L.L. Yopp. For a number of years she was the only active member at Stump Sound. She served the church as clerk from June 1967 until September 21, 1991.

Her faith in Sovereign Grace never waivered, and the great love she had for the church and others of the same beliefs was manifested in many ways. She loved to have them visit in her home. She took delight in cooking and serving good food to all. She also loved and was loved by a host of friends and neighbors.

Sister Sanders was born March 15, 1909, the daughter of Albert and Lena Wilson Hobbs. She was preceeded in death by her husband Roy Sanders, whom she married November 28, 1934. She is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Lena Hobbs Ritter, and a son, Edward B. Sanders, both of Holly Ridge, N.C., and three grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Sunday, December 22, 1991 at Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Oliver Allen and Elder J.T. Prescott. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Evelyn R. Pratt, Clerk
Stump Sound Primitive
Baptist Church

SISTER ZORA HOBBS SINGLETON

Sister Zora Hobbs Singleton, beloved member of Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church, entered into eternal rest November 15, 1991, after suffering a long illness. She was born February 24, 1911, the daughter of James and Elizabeth Porter Hobbs King.

Sister Zora united with the Wilmington Primitive Baptist Church February 21, 1937. She was baptized by the late Elder R.W. Gurganus. Sister Zora was a firm believer in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace, and Grace alone. She manifested a great love for the church and her fellow man. Given to hospitality, she enjoyed preparing food for her family, members and friends of the church, and her many other friends and neighbors. She would often prepare food and carry it to her friends, particularly those who were shut-ins. She continued this just as long as she was able to cook and drive her car.

Sister Zora will long be remembered by Old Baptists far and near. She loved to entertain them in her home, and also visiting our correspondents as long as she was able. Blessed with a strong, beautiful voice, she enjoyed singing the beloved hymns of Zion.

She was preceeded in death by her husband Fred Singleton and their son Col. James Singleton. She is survived by a daughter, Ms. Betty S. Croom of Wilmington, N.C., six grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Oliver Allen and her nephew, Dewey Hobbs. She was laid to rest in Prospect Cemetery, Wilmington, N.C.

Evelyn R. Pratt, Clerk
Stump Sound Primitive
Baptist Church

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 420 Keeling, Virginia 24566

JUDGMENT

The end of time is coming soon,
That's what our Lord doth say,
And for those that He has chosen
'Twill be a glorious day.

For all the other people.
Who have made their heaven here,
When their deeds are put before them,
There'll be frustration and great fear.

They followed the path of Satan,
The world was their delight;
They heeded not their conscience,
There was no wrong or right.

They gloried in their own self works,
And feared not God above,
Now they have to face the judgment
Without a Savior's love.

Those who look for His coming,
Joyously await the day,
When they can join their Savior;
For this, they watch and pray.

For all the Saints of Jesus
That He called to be on high,
The second death hath no power
And they will never die.

They'll be caught up in Glory
To be with God above,
To worship, praise, and adore Him,
And to know a Savior's love.

The late Elder Reeves O. Smith
November 1972

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EDITORIAL

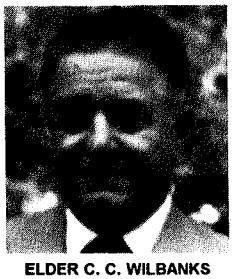
ELDER C. C. WILBANKS

ST. JOHN 6: 37-39.

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing but raise it up again at the last day."

The entire covenant of grace which the three-in-one God of heaven and earth made before the world was is enclosed in these three verses. If we had no other scriptures, but were blessed to believe these, they are all that we would need. But all of the holy scriptures are profitable unto us while we remain here in the flesh, for we read, *"All scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works."* Regardless of what the wisdom of man teaches, the holy scriptures are not for the entire world: they are for the man of God. *"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned."* Until one has been born again of the Holy Spirit he cannot discern anything that is spiritual. He must be born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. In the flesh all men are born dead in trespasses and sin, and we know that anything that is dead can do nothing. Death is the state of being separated from something, and when our fleshly progenitor Adam partook of the forbidden fruit he died: for God had said, *"In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."* God cannot lie, therefore we know that Adam died; not a corporeal death, but he was separated from God. He fell from his upright and sinless state into a state of sin and condemnation, and because all his posterity was in him they also fell. And they shall remain separated from God until the appointed time of their regeneration or new birth. No man has ever had any-

thing to do with his fleshly birth, neither can he have anything to do concerning his spiritual birth. *"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."* Who are those who are born of the Spirit? Are they not the ones chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world? We read Eph. 1: 3-4, *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."* It was according to the good pleasure of God's will that he chose us in Jesus Christ before the world was spoken into existence. The wisdom of the world will deny this, saying, How could God chose us before we existed? But known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world, and he hath said, *"I am God and I change not."* We read Psalms 139: 15-16, *"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."* Fleshly wisdom cannot truly understand this scripture, but the prophet was given to write this concerning the body of Christ. Paul tells us we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. Christ is the head of the church which is his body, and if we be what we hope to be then we are his body, and our names will be found written in the book of life. If our names are not found written there we shall be cast into the lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

As Jesus declared, he came to do the will of his Father. Can anyone dare say that he failed to do it? Jesus said in his prayer to the Father in the 17th chapter of St. John, *"I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do,"* and as he hung on the cross, *"It is finished."*

In his Godhead Christ could not die, therefore he must become incarnate; for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. *"Forasmuch then as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."* He did not take on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham. And in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

The ultimate purpose of the work which Christ came into this low ground of sin and sorrow was to save his people from their sins; but there was much more that he did to comfort, heal and teach them. Even as a boy of twelve years he was found of his mother in the temple teaching the

doctors, and he said unto her, *"How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"* What an amazing question this must have been to all who heard it. Jesus went about the land healing the sick, causing the lame to walk, opening the eyes of the blind and preaching the gospel to the poor. And he abundantly shewed his mighty power by raising the dead. The people could find no fault in the miracles that he did, yet they desired to kill him because many of his miracles were done on the Sabbath day: and even moreso when he said, *"My Father worketh hitherto and I work,"* shewing that he was the Son of God and equal with God. Jesus also said, *"For as the Father raiseth up, the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son of man quickeneth whom he will,"* Not only did Jesus raise some who had died a corporeal death, but he also quickens into life his children who are dead in sins, even as many as the Father hath given him. He said, *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."* Many have heard his voice, and there shall be more before his glorious return: not one of his children shall be left behind. Jesus said, *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life."* The world knows what it is to pass from life unto death, but none know what it is to pass from death unto life. Neither do they know what it is to truly believe in the just and holy and living God: for if we believe it is given to us from above. *"Unto you it is given in the behalf of Jesus Christ, not only to believe on him, but to also suffer for his sake."*

The children of God are called sheep, and Jesus said, *"I am the good shepherd, and I know my sheep, and am known of mine."* But when he was speaking to unbelievers he told them, *"But ye believe not, because ye are not my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."* The eternal life that Jesus gives his sheep has ever been theirs. It had no beginning and it shall never end: for that is the meaning of eternal. The life that Jesus gives was in him before the world was, but is now made manifest by the new birth. A birth never gives life, for the life must be present before a birth. Christ is that life. He is the way, the truth, and the life. In him we live and move and have our being. This is a great mystery, *"Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you the hope of glory."* In his prayer to the Father he prayed for them that shall believe, *"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be*

one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them: that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."

Oh, how sweet and joyous it is when we are given from time to time to feel that we have a blessed hope in Christ, and yet how dark and dreary when he turns away from us for a moment. But he has promised that he will never leave us nor forsake us, and all of his promises are sure. A short time before he was to return to his Father he gave this very precious promise: *"I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."* What a gracious promise this is! How sweet it is to feel his presence from time to time! Praise his holy name! Without his promises how desolate and forsaken we would feel to be. But he has left us his peace, peace that the world can know nothing about. *"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid,"* This is a commandment that we cannot carry out of ourselves, but when he speaks it is with power; it is done. Without him we can do nothing, but through him which strengtheneth us we can do all things.

Jesus stood as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and when our Saviour hung on the tree of the cross he commended his spirit into the hands of his Father and gave up the ghost. Yet at that moment our salvation was not yet complete, for he had not yet risen from the grave. (However it was not possible that he should fail to rise.) Had he not risen we would still be dead in our sins. But Christ was the perfect sacrifice acceptable unto God, and by his sacrifice he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. When Christ died for his bride she died in him. He did the suffering, bleeding and the dying, (for it was not possible for any to help,) for her sins were charged unto him as her husband and he must pay the debt that God's holy justice demanded. But she was in him when he died, for she was chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that she should be holy and without blame before him in love. The chosen children of God are the bride of Christ, and in him they live, and move, and have their being. We read Isa. 63:9, *"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old."* When Christ was buried his bride was buried in him, and when he arose she arose in him. *"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized*

into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin."

Brethren, if we have been baptized into the death of Christ, (not the baptism of water which cannot take away sin, but is the answer of a good conscience toward God,) we have been freed from the law of sin and death, for God's holy justice can never demand more than the death of the transgressor. And if we be dead with Christ, we believe we shall also live with him.

Christ was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification. Jesus the good shepherd lay down his life for his sheep, and he said, *"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."* He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and by wicked hands was crucified and slain; but he himself gave up the ghost when he commended his spirit into the hands of his Father. On the third day he broke the bands of death, for it was not possible that he should be holden of it. This was the first resurrection: blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. Those who have no part in the first resurrection and whose names are not found written in the book of life will be cast into the lake of fire with death and hell, which is the second death.

Beloved brethren, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is coming again as he hath promised with his holy angels in a cloud of glory to receive unto himself his redeemed children and present them before his Father holy and blameless. And he is now sitting at the right hand of the Father making intercession for his saints. Praise his holy name that he hath given us a sweet hope that we will be numbered among that blessed people who will hear these blessed words from his lips, *"Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."* Praise God for all of his blessings toward undeserving sinners, especially the gift of his beloved son Jesus Christ.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES

John 6: 37 & 44.

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."

I will, the good Lord willing, attempt to write a few lines on these two verses of scripture. I don't mean to take scripture out of context and try to prove a point, but we can see these two verses speak of the same thing.

"All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me." What a statement, just think of what that sentence means. All that the Father giveth me, Jesus here is saying that at some time or other, the Father had given him a certain number of people.

The bible tells us in the book of Ephesians, the Father had chosen a people before the foundation of the world, predestinated these people unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself. So now we see who Jesus was speaking of, people chosen by the Father before the foundation of the world, and predestinated unto adoption of children by Jesus Christ.

Since this choice was made before the foundation of the world, it had to be before the birth (natural birth) of any of this number. Therefore the choice was made before any of this number had done any works, either good or bad, so the choice was made strictly by grace, according to the good pleasure of His will.

Now we see who the people were, now let us look at the number of people we are speaking of. Again the bible tells us in the book of Rev. that the number was as the sands of the seashore, so many that no man could number them. The number is beyond the ability of man to number, but not too many for our saviour to number, for he said, all the Father giveth me shall come unto me, so he must know the number. And again he said, his sheep hears his voice and He calls them by name.

We have seen who Jesus was speaking of when he said, all the Father giveth me, shall come unto me, and we have seen the number. Now let us consider the rest of that verse, shall come unto me. Remember these people were chosen before time, and now Jesus is saying all that the Father gave me will come unto me. This means of course that as these people were born into the world, sometime in their lifespan here on earth, they would come unto Jesus. This includes all time from the days of Adam, all down through the ages to the present, then down through the future until the last heir of promise has come unto Jesus.

We see Jesus was making quite a promise, to say all this vast number, down through all the ages of time, would come unto me. Some may read this and question the ability of Jesus to have the power or the ability to accomplish this.

But let us remember, we are speaking of a sovereign God, one who knows the end from the beginning, saying my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure, working all things after the counsel of my will. For he said, *"I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that all that which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.*

The Bible also tells us how this work is accomplished, for Jesus said, *"Ye*

must be born again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." So before any of this number can come unto Jesus, they must be born again, by the Holy Spirit."

Jesus when explaining the operation of the Spirit to Nicodemus, described it this way, he likened the Spirit to the wind, saying, The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but can't tell where it cometh or whither it goeth. So Jesus is telling us that the Spirit goes to those whom it pleases, performs the spiritual birth on the ones of this number that was given to Jesus. When this work has been performed, the poor soul has been shown a vile, worthless sinner he is. He needs help and he has been shown he can't help himself, he sees Jesus as the only one who can save, then he is made to say, oh help or I perish. He has been made quite willing to come unto Jesus, for isn't this what is meant, where it is written, they are made willing in the day of his power. Those who come unto me, I will in no wise cast out, those who come unto Jesus by or from the work of the Spirit, will surely not be cast out. For it is written, Jesus loves a repenting sinner.

John 5:44 Jesus says, "

"No man can come unto me except the Father which has sent me, draw him." We know a carnal minded person can't come unto Jesus, for he doesn't know Jesus, and he can't know him because of the carnal mind. A dead alien sinner, which all men are until they have been changed by the work of the Spirit, don't know Jesus, and can't come unto him. So we clearly see the only ones who can come unto Jesus are the ones who are drawn by the Father, through the work of the Spirit, and they will in no wise be cast out.

We see in all this, the surety of the promise, the wonderful and sure working of our God to secure salvation for all his people. Yet we see among many people in the world, through their false beliefs, their efforts to gain salvation for themselves and others by their own works. They are printing their pamphlets, tracts, teaching their missionaries, all of them getting busy in doing what they call God's work. They read *" No man can come unto me except my Father draw him,* they say God is drawing everyone and only those who accept will actually be saved. After all the begging, counseling, false promises etc. they succeed in talking some into their church, they don't know they have made them two fold more a child of Satan than before. Some way they don't seem to be able to read, any plant which my Father has not planted will be rooted up. I feel they have read in the scripture, that a leopard can't change his spots, nor a Ethiopian the color of his skin. Yet they seem to think they can turn or change anyone, but we know it is written, turn me, and I will be turned. In my experience only the work of the blessed Holy Spirit has the power to remove the love and lust of the worldly things, and replace them with the love of God, the joy of fellowship, and love

for the brethren and things spiritual. Then and only then will a man be turned.

We see what these people believe, and we feel sure it is a false doctrine, for we have been given eyes to see and ears to hear. Yet we can't judge or condemn these folks, for they believe the way they must. Would we not be in the same way, had God not shown us mercy. So let us thank God as much as it is in us to do so.

It is written in the scripture and I have tried to write here, that the Spirit must the work perform. So the way I see it is, if I was to try, by my own works and efforts to persuade someone to come unto Jesus. Or attempt to save someone's soul, I would have to be able to direct the Holy Spirit to the same one I was trying to save. I could more easily step out in a 100 M.P.H. wind and try to change the way it was blowing. Man doesn't have that power, and for that I really feel thankful. The Spirit must the work perform and it is a perfect and holy work. So let us hope and pray, the good Lord will be merciful to us. Knowing all things are in his powerful and competent hands, may we be given to enter into that blessed rest, leaving the work of the Spirit to the Spirit, fully confident that all the Father has given unto him, will come unto him.

May we be given to thank God for all our blessings, and we be kept at our brother's feet. I desire your prayers.

With love,
A brother, I hope,
Frank Hunt

MY PRAYER IN THE NIGHT

Dear Lord we desire to humble ourselves before thee, and petition unto thee for thy great mercy. We think of thee as a great Shepherd, and thy children as sheep, Thy ministers as under shepherds. We see, by faith we trust, thy sheep led out into the meadow to be fed, but there in the thicket is the wolf watching, in disguise, to pounce upon the sheep to overcome them. Our prayer is that thou dear Lord would watch over the flock, and bless them to be on their watch guard, because some of the sheep should stay behind, or become a distance, from the other sheep, and not huddle together that they would become a prey for the wolf. Dear Lord if I be one, bless us that is thy sheep to stay close together, and thy Spirit in the midst of us to keep the enemy out, that we be not overcome by his devices, we know that satan is ever on the lookout for the weak ones, and I feel to be one of the weak ones, If satan can find one sick, or weak or wounded, he would if he could destroy them, because he does not love the sheep.

But Thou, blessed by thy holy name, has loved them with an everlasting love, and they are thine, we hope that we are in that number. Thou Oh Lord who is our hiding place, and our peace, and our comfort, and joy, and the horn of our salvation, and our high tower that we run to for safety. Thou Lord has brought us up out of an horrible pit, and give us strength, set our feet upon a rock, and put a new song in our

mouth singing praises to thee, oh how I do want to praise thee, and to extol thy name above every name, that has ever been named in all the world, Also desire to have thy spirit to lead us in the right way, and to keep us so that the wolf, and our enemies will not reign over us. We desire to thank thee, for the hope that thou dear Lord has given thy life for us, that thy blood was shed for us, and over came the cross, and gained the victory over death, rose from the dead, burst the bonds of death, sweetened the tomb for us.

Now dear Lord we do not feel worthy, of the blessings that has been ours, but thou has been good to us all the days of our lives, and thou has not dealt with us according to our follies. And when our days here are over, we beg of thee to take our spirit to thee, and in the resurrection raise our body and take us home.

Elder Leonard J. Brammer

"FORSAKE NOT THE ASSEMBLING OF YOURSELVES TOGETHER"
Feb. 1972

On occasion letters to the Signs have indicated that groups of believers, in various parts of the country, have ceased to come together in regular meetings because there was no minister left in the area to speak to them. Or on other occasions regular meetings were postponed or called off because a minister was not able to make his regular appointment because of sickness or some other detainment.

It is, of course, a pleasant expectation that is experienced when we plan to go and hear some able brother preach with inspired words; and this is to be desired. But what of the times when a minister is sick, or when one is taken from us, and there appears to be no one to fill the stand? This seems to be a situation that, in these latter times, is faced by more and more congregations.

We read in the 10th chapter of Hebrews, beginning at verse 24, *"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see that day approaching."* This is, as you know, where Paul is exhorting the church to hold fast the faith. And he does not preface it by any qualification that an ordained minister be present before they meet themselves together. Neither should the brethren put this qualification on assembling themselves together in these latter days. Concerning this, we have a very dear promise from the Lord, *"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."*

We see by the quotation in Hebrews that we should consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works. The manifestation of how we consider one another is shown in the assembling ourselves together. And we see in I John 4:12, *"No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us."* Also in verse

20, "...for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" Then it follows that the assembling ourselves together is, to a great extent, to show our love to one another, and thus is made manifest the love of God: *"We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."* Nowhere, that I am aware of, does the Bible indicate that it is necessary for a minister to be present for God to be worshipped, for love to flow from breast to breast, for us to prefer one another, for us to come together with songs of praise and prayers of thanksgiving. In fact, this part is seldom mentioned.

Some of the brethren at the Salem church in Benton, Illinois, tell how the church met regularly, sometimes for many months without anyone to fill the stand. Sometimes there would be only a few to come, sometimes several. They found it desirable to select one of the brothers as moderator for the conducting of necessary business. When it was possible for someone to come by and preach, some visiting minister, it was a thankful occasion. But having a minister was not a qualification for having a regularly scheduled meeting.

In thinking about this, and what the scriptures say about assembling ourselves together, the purpose for it, and the needfulness of it, we should carefully examine our position when we do neglect this assembling. The refreshment of the Spirit is beyond describing, just to see the brethren and to know that they care. And even greater is to realize that the reason they do care and do love, is because that God dwells in them. God is love, and this outpouring of God's love is reflected toward one another.

Sincerely,
(Elder) Wayman G. Chapell
Reprint from Signs 1972

EXPERIENCE

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a check to renew our subscription for the Signs for two years; and as I am feeling low this morning, I want to send a little of my experience, which was written the night after I joined the church.

Dear brethren and sisters, as I seem to have been living my life over for the past two days, I will try to write some of my feelings. I know that I am just a poor sinner, and I don't deserve any of the things I have that God has given me.

I was raised in a Primitive Baptist home, but that did not have anything to do with my feelings. I went to church when I was small, but it was just some place to go; and I had to go where my mother went. I did not know that some day I would be brought to the place that I looked forward to where I wanted to go the next weekend - to church.

I am not proud of my life. I know I have done things that are wrong; but I am so thankful that the good Lord has brought me down to a place so

low that I fell to my knees, and tried to beg Him to forgive my sins. God showed me the love for the brethren of the Primitive Baptist faith at a funeral. There seemed to be a great light that surrounded them from everyone else. I was made to know that I was out in the dark; and I wanted to be one of them.

That love is something I can't explain except to those who have experienced it. I went for over two years carrying a burden to join the Primitive Baptist Church, - something I had remarked I would never do; but the Lord has his way of making you do the things you did hate, and the things you said you would never do, to love. When they would sing the breaking-up song and shake hands, I wanted to be one of them so badly; but I did not feel I was fit to be with them - and I still wonder sometimes why they took a weak sinner like me.

The 3rd Saturday in October, 1967, my husband and family went to his mother's. We went to the basement, and I was looking at her canned fruit. I saw what I thought was grape wine - I knew they used to make the communion wine for the church. I have never been able to tell anyone my feelings about it. Something came over me, that it wasn't wine. That it was the blood of Christ. I couldn't say anything; I just started up the stairs. My husband knew something was wrong, but did not say anything, for he had carried the burden to join the church longer than I had.

That Saturday night was preaching time at Bellview Church which I loved; and went all the time. It just seemed there was something different about the little church. I just couldn't wait to get there that night, I was so filled with love. When Brother Brammer announced an open door, I held on to the bench - I wanted to go but just couldn't go ask for a home with these dear people. I will never forget his sermon. It seemed the pulpit was in a glow. If I was just worthy of having a home with them!

After we started home, my husband said, *"You came away not satisfied, I know."* I couldn't sleep: I cried and begged the Lord to show me the right thing to do. I thought I would be alright by morning. But when I got to church, I had the same feelings. I knew I had to ask for a home with them; and when an open door was announced, the next thing I knew my husband went up, and I followed him. We were received in the most wonderful love and fellowship.

We were baptized the 3rd Sunday in November. If I am not deceived, God was with us that day - his love was surely with us. I wish I could express my feelings for the brothers and sisters who were there that day: you could just feel the love go out from one to another. The water was cold going in, but the warmest feeling came over me as I was coming out, and I was not conscious of even being wet. The love I had for them with outstretched hands as I came out of the water! There is just not anything else like it. I wish I could find words to express how I have felt since being baptized.

I know brothers and sisters, that you understand what I am trying to

say. I try to pray for peace, love and fellowship among our people, and to be kept at my brethren's feet; for I am just a poor unworthy sinner.

Love,
Thelma Carter
(Mrs. W.L. Carter)
Reprint from Signs, 1972

VOICES OF THE PAST

EDITORIAL FROM EDITORIALS OF GILBERT BEEBE, VOLUME II

New Vernon, New York,
December 1, 1846

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Matthew 28:20.

In offering a few remarks upon this part of the commission which was given to the apostles, by our Lord Jesus Christ, when His mediatorial work was finished, and He was about to ascend to heaven, we wish to call the attention of the children of God, and especially of the ministers of Jesus, to the importance of this charge.

The field which would require to be explored, were we to dwell upon the whole of the commission, would involve all that belongs to the proclamation of salvation through the crucified, risen, and exalted Redeemer, together with the administration of the ordinances, the field of their labors, the manner and amount of their qualifications and the prospect of their success, &c., but this would present a greater range than we desire at this time to occupy. We by no means think these considerations less important, but we are strongly impressed with the idea that the nature of a call to the work of the ministry, the doctrine to be preached and the ordinances to be administered, are more fully understood and more faithfully regarded among our Old School brethren, generally speaking, than the solemn charge which we have placed at the head of this article.

Those to be so taught are the same that were to be baptized, hence according to the common acceptation of the term they were to be Baptists, or baptized believers in Christ. These were not to be any longer confined to the cities of Judea, or the people of the house of Israel, but they should be found in all nations. So the pupils, or disciples to be taught were to embrace in every nation such as the Lord our God shall call. The commission to teach was in this case given especially to the apostles of the Lamb of God. And according to their instruction and decision, those who in succeeding ages of the church should hold the office of Bishops or Elders, must also be divinely qualified with an aptness to teach. It is to be feared that there are some, if not many, who have a much greater aptness to interest, to excite and to please, than to teach or instruct the children of God; and many who do possess a talent to an eminent degree, to teach, instead of teaching the children to observe what Christ has commanded, are teaching for doc-

trines the commandments of men; or, in other words teaching to observe things which Christ has never commanded. How important then that the New Testament be diligently searched, both by preachers and hearers, to see whether all the things taught by the preachers, are what Christ commanded the apostles. The commission, or command of Christ to teach all that He commanded them, fully implied that they were to teach nothing else, and as we have noticed the importance of the churches and the ministers searching the record of the commands to be observed, we will add that Christ has by His apostles taught, that when one speaks the others shall judge. And as all the Lord's messengers are called angels, it is said that the saints shall judge angels. There is an awful responsibility resting on the churches, that they should judge righteously on this subject. They are not however, to judge of a minister by the length of his face, nor the number of his admirers. He may be very grave in his appearance, and eloquent in his discourse, and still be no more than a sounding brass or tinkling cymbal; but the standard of judgment is the New Testament. *"Beware of men who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, (that which Christ and his apostles taught,) receive him not into your house," &c.* If Paul, or an angel from heaven preach as the apostles did not preach, let such be accursed. And the necessity of ministers searching the New Testament as their standard, is fully implied in their commission, for where else shall they look for His commands? In the scriptures the man of God is perfect, thoroughly furnished to every good work; and as every good work is thoroughly furnished in the scriptures, no work can be good in the divine estimation which the word does not enjoin.

To speak of every particular thing which Christ has commanded, would require more space than we can find for this article. And, although we have no right to attach more or less importance to one command of Christ than to another, yet such as seem to be the most neglected, or the least understood by the saints, should be dwelt upon more especially on that account.

One very important command, although a new one, is that the saints should love one another. Now who will presume to think that it is sufficient for the minister of Jesus simply to remind his brethren that there is such a command, if the ministers are themselves indulging in biting and devouring one another? They are to be ensamples to the flock, and so teach by example as well as proclamation.

Christ has commanded that all who love Him should keep His commandments; and through His apostles He has taught us that to fulfill His law, we must bear one another's burdens. Christ has commanded that all who would be His disciples, should deny themselves, take up their cross and follow Him; and the grace of God that bringeth salvation, which hath ap-

peared unto all men, (Jews and Gentiles,) has taught us, or is teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. Here a command of Christ is implied, that self shall be denied of all ungodliness; the flesh is depraved, and the carnal appetite is craving that which is ungodly, evil, pernicious and contrary to the faith. Let the ministers of Jesus solemnly, faithfully and in the fear of God teach, in their preaching and by their example, that these things are to be denied. Teach them how to live. Ministers are to institute no new laws or rules, for the law is laid down, the rule is given. Let it be enforced, let it be taught by precept and by practice. Live soberly, not drunken with wine, wherein there is excess. It cannot comport with the high and holy and heavenly calling of saints, that they should be tipplers or given to much wine, for in such carnal indulgence they find not the footsteps of Christ, nor of His flock. Teach them to live righteously, and remember that nothing can be righteous which is not embraced in the examples and commands of Jesus Christ, and that nothing can be unrighteous that He has enjoined. Teach them to live godly, possessing the love of God, the fear of God, and a desire above all things to glorify God, in their bodies and in their spirits, which are His, let the cost be what it may; although it is certain that if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution. But to avoid persecution, no child of God is at liberty to depart from a strict and undeviating course of godliness.

Christ has given commands in regard to the order of His church: who are to be admitted, and who retained in the fellowship of the church. He that believeth and is baptized, whether Jew or Gentile, whatever he may have been; whether a moralist or a murderer, a persecuting Saul or a devout Pharisee; if born again, and recipients of the faith of God's elect, gladly receiving the word, they must be baptized and added to the church, received into the fellowship of the saints, and admitted to all the privileges of God's house.

He has commanded how ministers and other members are to conduct themselves in the church; all the rules of order and discipline are given perceptively in the New Testament. To watch over one another; exhorting, admonishing, warning, encouraging, comforting and edifying one another; speaking in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, and not forsaking the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is. He has commanded what course shall be observed when one brother has ought against a brother, or when one brother has trespassed against another. All the steps that are lawful or expedient to reclaim the offender, are clearly laid down, and the servant of Jesus should teach the saints to observe them all. The course to be observed by the church when her members are come together in the name of the Lord Jesus;

how she is to dispose of heretics, after the first and second admonition. If any is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one no not to eat; therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person. Let the saints of God be taught by the faithful ministry of the word to observe all these commands, together with all others enjoined by Christ.

Gilbert Beebe

"EVERY ONE THAT LOVETH IS BORN OF GOD."

The heading of this article is a portion of the 7th verse of 1 John, 4th chapter. Please Please get your bible and read the entire chapter before reading this treatise any further. Now, let us meditate together upon the wonderful doctrine of LOVE.

This epistle is written to the BELOVED. Those who are embraced in the dear love of God are the ones addressed. John is writing to them whom he loves. The ones who can hear these admonitions of John are in possession of a love that the world knows nothing about. The world cannot hear these glorious things because they are of the world and not of God. John said, *"...He that is not of God heareth not us." (1 John 4:6)* This is sufficient reason for limiting the subjects of address to the BELOVED. He said in the same verse, *"He that knoweth God heareth us."* This fact is sufficient to encourage John to exhort his brethren to love one another. He knows that his words will not be in vain because they will heed his admonitions. He is confident that they will be successful in this venture, *"Because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world."* He writes with the assurance that the beloved will be enabled to rightly try the spirits.

The text says, *"Everyone that loveth is born of God."* He bases this statement upon the glorious truth that, *"God is LOVE."* He does not leave us to surmise concerning those who love not. He emphatically says, *"He that loveth not knoweth not God".* When we are confronted with such plain statements we have a well-marked rule to use in trying the spirits. We can do it well when we are provided with the love of God in our hearts which enables us to see the marks. No one who loveth is excluded because the text says EVERYONE. Then, love is the testimony of the Spirit of God. Everyone who is in possession of the Spirit of God loves God and loves those who are begotten of Him.

The text says, *"Everyone that LOVETH".* Let us, then, apply the well marked rule to ourselves. Do we love God and those who are begotten of Him with that perfect LOVE? We must properly examine the term, love, before we can give a true answer to this vital question. Some may consider love as a feeling of warm personal attachment or deep affection for another or others. Others may regard love as outward expressions of be-

nevolence in words and acts which benefits others. Some consider love as the internal emotion, while others consider it as the outward acts. I am persuaded that perfect love, in its full and proper sense, is the union of the two schools of thought. I do not believe that either wishing good or doing good to another could properly denominate perfect love. Some perform outward acts of benevolence only because they see others doing them. They may do these acts in order to gain a higher reputation from their fellowmen. Others may think they are in possession of warm and deep affections for others; yet, this feeling and seeming devotion be so weak that it is not manifest in their actions. Some do good in order that they may receive good from another. Actions motivated by selfishness could not fit in the category of perfect lovely actions.

"The LOVE OF GOD is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." (Romans 5:5) Everyone who is born of God is in possession of this love of God. *"...God is love: and he that DWELLETH IN LOVE dwelleth in God, and God in him." (1 John 4:16)* The love of God is a strong and an abiding love. This love is so strong that it makes us not ashamed to manifest it in our talk and actions. It inspires us to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and visit the sick. It will cause us to surrender personal ambitions in order to devote our time to the welfare of others. The Love of God is the only element that is strong enough to result in the complete abandonment of self in our deep devotion to others. This is in accord to Christ's commandment: *"This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15: 12-13)* If we love one another as Christ loved us, we will lay our lives down for our friends. This means the complete surrender of our personal ambitions and selfish interests to the extent of sacrificing reputation for the benefit of others.

Do I lay down my life for my friends? What type of questions come to my mind in determining whether or not I shall attempt a certain venture? The following group of questions belong to the category of selfishness: Will I gain a higher reputation by doing this? How will this action affect my prestige? Will it tend to cause people to think that I am careless concerning the class of people with whom I associate? How will this venture help me financially? Will I lose or gain? Will it cause people to consider me unstable or unestablished? How will it affect my reputation of being firm? Such questions are the fruits of pride and have their origin in the carnal mind. This type of reasoning is known by the whole universe. Every intelligent person is acquainted with such questions in determining his actions. There is a love that *"passeth knowledge"* which puts all such questions as the above in the background. This love will cause you to lay your life down for your friends. It will cause you to love them as He loved you.

Do I lay down my life for my friends? Jesus *"made Himself of no reputation." (Phil. 2:7)* If I love as Jesus loved, all questions concerning my reputation will be disqualified. This love makes me willing to sacrifice reputation for the welfare of my friends. Jesus associated with publicans and sinners, which was certainly against His reputation. When the Pharisees and Sadducees, who thought themselves to be above association with such people, accused Him, He did not cease His attention to them. Even in the house of a Pharisee He gave words of comfort to a woman, who was a sinner, in the midst of a flood of accusations. He made it plain that He came to save those who were least esteemed among men. God chose the foolish, the weak, the base, and the least as objects of His love. He *"took upon Him the form of a servant"*. I will take a servant's place when I am motivated by that love - even to washing the feet of my friends. I will be found doing the things that servants do for the welfare of my friends. I shall never forget the lasting impression that I experienced when a highly refined lady stooped low enough to shine my shoes. Jesus *"humbled Himself"* to perform many services to the poor, the halt, the maimed, and the blind. He administered to those who were in prison. Am I too good to visit a prison? Am I willing to lay down my life for the less-fortunate?

I have visited in homes for the poor. My heart has burned within me as I have listened at the experiences of those who have sacrificed their own personal ambitions in order to provide a real home for the poor, the diseased and the aged. I have lamented my own carelessness while observing the untiring acts of servitude of those who have used all their savings to provide food, clothing, and shelter for the helpless. They have not only laid down their financial security for the less-fortunate, but they have, also, laid aside their occupations and professions in order that they may serve with their hands. They lay down their lives for their friends. Jesus *"became obedient unto death."*

Those who love will risk their own lives for their friends. There have been those who have died in the attempt to rescue others. Many have gone through flames of fire to keep others from burning to death. Some have run into the path of vehicles to snatch loved ones from their pathway. Some have plunged into dangerous currents of water in attempt to save from drowning. Some have died in battle in order that their loved ones might enjoy freedom. Those who are filled with such devotions will not stand idly by and allow loved ones to be the subject of ridicule. Love flies into action without awaiting decision based upon reason. Good reasoning and sound logic is disregarded when perfect love abounds. When this love is prevalent you will not wait to consider what people will think of your actions. You will not take time to discourse at length upon how much you love before acting. Talking about love and love in action are two different things. You may proclaim from the mouth your

great love for others, yet, you prove by your actions that it comes only from the mouth and does not originate in the heart. I have more confidence in the ones who act it out, and is quiet, than I have in ones who uses up his time in talking about it.

You have heard it said, *"Love is blind."* Actions prompted by love may be rightly considered to be unreasonable, illogical, and unintelligent. They may be considered foolish when measured by the rule of natural reasoning. Did you ever do anything for anyone when afterwards you wondered why you did it? Then, after meditating for a long time, you came to the conclusion that the act was foolish and unintelligent. You pondered the puzzling question, Why did I do it? I am persuaded that it was love, over which you had no control, which prompted you to perform this act for your friend. Can you control love to the extent that you can give it to whom you decide upon after much reasoning? Can you control it to the extent that you can withdraw it from anyone, or ones, that you naturally decide to be to your best interest? Anyone having this idea of love knows nothing of the Love of God. This love controls you. You cannot give or withdraw upon volition of the natural will based upon logic and reason. If you have been born of God you love those who are begotten of Him. He is the one Who determines the objects of your love. You can truthfully say about many persons, I love them, but, I cannot explain why.

This love is strong enough to include your enemies in your embrace even though they despitefully use you. You pray for them while they are cursing you. It is certainly unreasonable to render good for evil. Love alone could be responsible. Jesus said, *"Love your enemies."* He could not have meant for you to love them whom you hate. This would be a contradiction and an impossibility. The meaning of this command is that you love those who hate you. Can there be room for hatred in the heart possessed with God's love? If you only love those who love you, your love is no greater than the love the world has. Why? Because the world loves its own. Do you do good only to those who do good to you? Do you speak kindly of those who speak well of you? If your answer is, Yes, to these questions, your love is not the fruit of the Spirit of God. Do you speak evil of those who speak evil of you? Do you attempt to retaliate by severely criticizing the ones who criticize you? If this be your condition there is no evidence of godly love. God said through His inspired writings, *"Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord."* The Lord does not put vengeance in the hearts of His people to administer to those who deserve it.

The commandment of Love is strong enough to hold up all the law and prophets. Jesus said, *"Upon these two commandments hang all the law and prophets"*. The first commandment was to love God. The second was like the first, *"Love thy neighbor as thyself"*. Then, *"Love is the fulfilling of the law"*.When you love, His commandments are not grievous. Jesus said, *"If ye love me, ye will keep*

my commandments". The person who complains of having to make such great sacrifice in order to keep the commandments of Jesus, proves by his complaints that he knows nothing of godly love. Love is the quintessence of all points of the law and prophecy. Love does not teach you to violate, nor lightly consider, any point of the law of God. It rather provides the desire to walk in His statutes. The Ten Commandments, which are negative commandments, are based on the principle of love. Anyone having the love of God in his heart could only desire to keep them all.

The Love of God is so pure that it makes manifest the vanity of pridish natural reasoning. Pride is one idol of the heart that requires godly love to make it manifest to the person who tries to hold on to pride. When it is made manifest, you pray God to *"tear it"* from my heart. Do you fall back into the rut of inactivity because people censor your actions? I have complained of being illy treated and have tried out for sympathy. I have been hurt and have given vent to my feelings by sitting down and pouting as Jonah did. It took pure love to teach me that all of this was hurt pride. I may cry out that I am forced into the, *"rut of sitting on the 'stool of do-nothing', in order to please some of my friends."* This is a cry from pride because I was criticized for doing something when I thought they ought to praise me for it. Love has branded my pride as vain. I am thankful to God's love for this lesson. Now, I can rejoice and be exceeding glad when men revile me, persecute me, and say all manner of evil against me falsely. These revilings, persecutions, and false accusations were experienced by the prophets, Jesus Christ, and His disciples. His followers are experiencing them today. If my actions are prompted by love, then, my persecutors are falsely accusing me. If these accusations be false, they can do me no harm; but, rather work for the success of my endeavors for good. If I do things in order to be persecuted I am asking for revilings. Such actions deserve persections, and accusations against me could not be considered as false accusations.

Love will not permit us to sit on the *"stool of do-nothing".* It spurs us on to action in the face of persecutions, revilings, and false accusations. It causes us to do good unto all men, especially the Household of Faith. It will cause us to walk humbly before one another. Love teaches us to strive for peace. It will cause us to work for the uniting of those of like precious faith. It dispels the idea of setting up bars of non-fellowship because of some trivial difference in opinion or expression. It causes us to look for the good instead of the evil in our neighbors. It enables us to count our blessings instead of thinking upon the things that tend to be against us. Those possessed of the love of God do not have time for whisperings, backbiting, slandering, tale-bearing, and fault-finding. Love prompts positive thinking, talking, and acting for the good and peaceful welfare of Zion and all of its inhabitants. May this love

enable us to think upon the true, the honest, the just, the pure, the lovely, things of good report, and also virtue and praise. (Phil. 4:8) May we talk about His wonderful goodness to the children of men. May we converse upon the good characteristics of our associates. If we fail to find something good to say about a person, say nothing. *"Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law". (Romans 13:10) Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law". (Romans 13:8)* May the Lord enable us to try the spirits by the rule, *"EVERYONE THAT LOVETH IS BORN OF GOD."*

Elder E. J. Lambert

MEETINGS

GREENSBORO PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God Greensboro Church looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift. They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed Sunday, June 7th at 2:30 p.m. at Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church, Greensboro, N.C., for the purpose of examination of this gift, brother George F. Blalock and if found qualified be ordained to the full work and service of deacon.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together. The meeting was opened by prayer by Elder Clarence Stone. Elder Kenneth Key was elected as moderator and Deacon Bob R. Collie to serve as clerk. Brother Tommy Batts acting as spokesman for the church delivered Brother Blalock to the presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon was read as set forth in scriptures 1st Timothy, 3rd Chapter, beginning with verse eight (8) by Elder Clarence Stone. Examinations followed by Elders Clarence Stone and Haywood Wray. The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of this candidate proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder Haywood Wray. The charge was delivered to brother George F. Blalock by Elder Haywood Wray. He was then delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. A copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication and a copy to be given to Brother George F. Blalock along with a certificate of ordination.

Presbytery was dismissed by prayer by Elder Clarence Stone.

Deacons present: Brothers -

Irving Holley	Curtis Cobb
A.C. Byrd	Tommy Batts
Casey Johnson	Wilson King
Bob Collie	Wayne Edwards
Coley Strader	Glenn R. Slate

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Deacon Bob R. Collie, Clerk

OLD PINE CREEK CHURCH
(Meeting Changed from 4th to 3rd of July)

The annual Old Pine Creek Church meeting will be held this year on the 3rd of July in place of the usual fourth.

The church is located off HWY. #221, 5 miles north of Floyd, Va. Those coming from Floyd, turn left on to road #682. Those coming from Roanoke, turn right on to road #682.

All lovers of the truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Hale Terry

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

Pigg River Association to be held 1st weekend in August at Franklin County High School, same as last year, in Rocky Mount, Va on Rt. 40 in town.

Bro. Jamie Cooper, Assoc. Clerk
Brother Edwin Dyer, Church Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Association will be held with Weatherford Church, Saturday and Sunday, July 11th and 12th. The Church is located at the intersection of state road #760 and #763 about 5 miles from Gretna, Va.

We invite all lovers of our doctrine and order to meet with us.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 1992

Mrs. Etta J. Humphreys, VA	$2.00
Morris M. Hall, VA	2.00
Alpha Sears, OH	2.00
Mrs. Connie M. Page, NC	5.00
Ms. Reidy Pickral, VA	25.00
Mrs. Armedia Taylor, LA	2.00
R. Vernon Furr, NC	2.00
Mrs. Eunice Thompson, NC	15.00
A.H. Tucker, LA	2.00
A.R. Patterson, LA	7.00
John D. Manning, NJ	5.00
Elijah Palmer, AL	2.00
J.C. Carroll, NC	10.00
Mrs. Helen Womble, NC	2.00
Mrs. Ollie Gauldin, NC	2.00
Mrs. Kathleen G. Martin, VA	2.00
M.M. Richardson, MS	2.00
Eld. L.J. Brammer, VA	2.00
Mrs. S.L. Walker, VA	7.00
Orville R. Beatty, PA	2.00
Eld. H.R. Toney, MS	2.00
Frank & Ella Simpkins, VA	20.00
Mrs. H.A. Harlow, TX	5.00
Mrs. Clemmie Bishop, AR	2.00
Oscar Pickral, VA	2.00

OBITUARIES

JOSIE RUTH GRAHAM FOLEY

At our conference meeting January 4, 1992, as requested by Liberty Primitive Baptist Church, to write the obituary of Sister Josie Ruth Graham Foley.

Sister Foley was born in Patrick County, at Patrick Springs, Va. to Jacob Isaiah and Mary Ruth Adams Graham.

She was married to the late Wess Foley. They were blessed with four children, Lois Clark, Margaret Burchell, Louise Donley, and Ann Hurd all of Eden, N.C. She has 22 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren. She also had two sisters, Rosie Ratliff, Betty Custer and one brother Ed Graham, all deceased.

Sister Foley joined Liberty Church by experience June 1, 1940, along with her sister Rosie Ratliff both were Baptized by Elder Sam Koger, Moderator of Liberty Church, who is now deceased.

Sister Foley died December 14, 1991, at the age of 96 after a long life. She was not able to attend Church for several years and had moved away to be near her family. She had lived at the Brithaven Nursing Center for sometime.

Her funeral was held December 17, 1991, at Fair Funeral Home in Eden, N.C. Burial followed in the Liberty Church Cemetery at Patrick Springs, Va. She will be missed by her family and friends.

May we all be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father who does all things well and never makes mistakes.

Done in conference meeting at Liberty Church Jan. 4, 1992. It was voted to send a copy of this obituary to the family, Signs of the Times, and for the Church Records.

Elder John T. Wingfield, Moderator
Deacon Paul Puckett, Clerk

LILLIAN MORTON HENDERSON

In memory of Sister Lillian Morton Henderson; I endeavor to try and write a few lines. Without "God's Power and Strength", I'll not be able to do so.

Sister Lillian was born in Onslow County November 1, 1990. Her parents were Elder Henry and Sister Phoebe Morton.

Elder Henry preached for many years at "Ole Primitive Baptist Church" at North East.

Sister Lillian grew up in a large family. With six sisters and seven brothers.

Among her survivors are two sisters. Cora Littleton and Ella Meadows, both are members here at this church. Also two brothers Ransom and Navi Morton.

Her husband was Raymond Henderson. A devoted member until his death in 1962. They were blessed with one lovely daughter Virginia. Also three devoted sons Raymond Shelton and Ray.

Sister Lillian's family circle was filled with "Thirteen Grandchildren" and twenty-two "Great Grandchildren" of whom she was very proud.

She was a true "Faithful Member" as long as her health permitted. Her Hope and Love was shown in her "Everyday Life".

Sister Lillian was baptized 1st Sunday in November 1937. A total of fifty-four years in this church.

In 1980 she was admitted to the "Rest Home". Spent eleven years there.

Sister Lillian had a coronary; and passed away November 30, 1991.

Her family has suffered a "Great Loss," But I feel their Loss is "Heaven's Gain".

Her funeral Services were conducted by Elder J.T. Prescott.

Burial was in Memorial Park.

By the order of North East Church in conference third Sunday in May 1992.

Written by,
Mary Lillie Morton Hall

MARTHA TEXAS ADAMS TURNER

With sorrow for our loss but joy for her eternal gain, we record the death of our beloved sister in Christ, Martha Texas Adams Turner. Sister Turner was born in Patrick County, Virginia on July 16, 1898 and died on January 26, 1992, at the age of 93. She was a daughter of the late Joshua Richard Adams and Betty Hancock Adams.

On September 16, 1917 she was united in marriage to the late Leonard Tyler Turner, who subsequently served in the army during World War I. To their union were born seven children, all of whom survive. They are: four sons, Nesco, Edwin, Elmo and Junior Turner, all of Patrick Springs, Virginia; and three daughters, Sis. Hestell T. Foley of Stuart and Mrs. Lelia T. Bowles and Mrs. Velda T. Handy of Patrick Springs. Mr. Turner died in 1934 and Sis. Texas never remarried. By God's grace she managed the responsibility of raising the children left at home who were deprived of their earthly father.

In July 1926, she united with Liberty Primitive Baptist Church by experience and was baptized by the late Elder Lemley Gilbert. She remained a faithful and devoted member for the balance of her life, a period of some 65 years, always filling her place-unless providentially hindered-and doing her part for the welfare of the church, as long as she was able. She was well known, highly respected by the people in her community, and she had many friends both inside and outside the church.

Following her death after declining health for over a year, her funeral service was conducted at Moody Funeral Home Chapel in Stuart, Va. by her current pastor, Elder John Wingfield, assisted by Pastor Wayne Hannah of Pleasant View Baptist Church. Her mortal body was laid to rest by the side of her late husband in the Adams Cemetery, near where she lived for many years. There, she sleeps the peaceful slumber of the redeemed, waiting patiently for the Second Coming of her Dear Redeemer.

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." Rev. 14:13.

In addition to her children, Sister Turner was survived by sixteen grandchildren, six step-grandchildren, ten great-grandchildren and three step-great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews.

By unanimous vote the church agreed to prepare three copies of this obituary: one for our church records, one to be given to her family and one to be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Liberty Church in conference the 1st day of February 1992.

Elder John T. Wingfield, Moderator
Deacon Paul Puckett, Clerk

• •

PSALM 62:1.

Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation.

• •

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 420 Keeling, Virginia 24566

CLOSE TO THEE

Close to thee, O matchless Saviour;
Close to thee, thou Sovereign God,
Father, Son, and blessed Spirit,
Draw this cold and feeble clod.

When the storms of life are sailing,
And dark billows o'er me roll;
O, for mighty grace prevailing--
Grace to comfort my poor soul.

Close to thee in mid-night's hour,
And at noon-day time as well;
Keep me by thy mighty power,
Save me from the gates of Hell.

Close to thee, O Lord, Emmanuel;
Draw me nearer, Prince of Life,
God of Abraham and David,
Leave me never in the strife.

O, for grace to love and trust thee,
And to worship at thy feet;
Is there cause (O, sure there must be;)
For this fellowship so sweet?

Sure there is a Cause and Reason:
Christ the only answer is;
Cause us, in and out of season,
To proclaim the glory His.

May we know no name, or care to,
Save the Holy Lamb of God;
Grant that we may never dare to
Question when He sends His rod.

Both His rod and staff are needful--
His dear people to refine,
And to make them duly heedful--
All the glory, Lord be Thine.

Now, I'm near my journey's ending,
And my stay here can't be long;
Be thy grace my path attending,
Make it in my heart a song.

May I sing the song of angels,
And of Moses and the Lamb;
Join with saints of all the ages,
To adore the Great I Am.

Elder John Lee Smith

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EDITORIAL

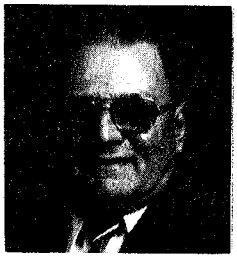
ELDER C.B. DAVIS, JR.

I enjoyed what we have just heard. I do not have any desire to take from that which you have heard. I certainly, in reality, could add nothing to it. But I thought, as Elder Hash mentioned the fact that Mary was a virgin, that our faith and our hope are virgin also because they are untouched by the defiled hands of man. So those things that He has blessed us with are virgin in every sense of the word because they come from Him just as surely as the promise came through the prophet that His Son would come and would save His people.

I can't tell you why, necessarily, but my mind seems to be taken over in a sense by Christ. Christ is mentioned many times in the scriptures concerning what He paid in order that we might stand justified in the sight of God. I desire to read scriptures found in some two or three places and then if He might bless us, that we might have our minds turned towards the essence of some of the scriptures.

In the 11th Chapter of the book of Zechariah we find a prophecy being expressed and we each know that the prophets were spiritually inspired. God controlled their minds and their hands for the writing and what they penned down was for the comfort of those of like precious faith, as you've heard. The world does not understand the scriptures, they are not supposed to, weren't written for them. So they are left out. I thought as Elder Hash touched upon the fact that he was stranded on one occasion, I feel rather to say, and yet I don't mean to be judgmental, the man he was talking about evidently is stranded; he's stranded outside of the gospel taught in this Book.

But we find that Zechariah says in the 11th Chapter, 12th and 13th verses, *"And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prised at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord."*

Then we find in the gospel according to Matthew, the 27th Chapter, the 9th and 10th verses, and let us remember that God controlled all things and does control all things: *"Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me."*

We think as we think of potter's field, and it was considered a place that the poor were buried, oftentimes in the past years when there was such -- in our area and I suppose in the State of Virginia -- we had what was called poor houses or county homes and those who were termed homeless were taken care of by the county or by the State. They had a cemetery where these people were interred once they died and we could consider that indeed it too was a potter's field in the sense that those that were destitute, those who had no relatives in the natural sense would be placed there so we think then that indeed they would have or could have been called a potter's field.

Then we go to the writings of Paul of which you've heard much and we go to 1st Corinthians -- I thought I could find it immediately, but it seems I can't -- any way, we find Paul touching upon this price: the thirty pieces of silver as he speaks of the essence that they embodied. But as I mentioned earlier, as we think about "price" we think about not just thirty pieces of silver but we think about the price that is paid for sin, for the complete disregard of God Himself. And this began in the Garden of Eden. For we find God there gave Adam and Eve His just and holy law telling them what they should do and shouldn't do and He exacted a price on that occasion for sin and corruption and that was death.

For He said, in the day, and there's nothing whatsoever conditional about what took place there, God didn't say to them, if you eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that ye should die, but He said, *"in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."* So He left, in reality, no choice and so it is indeed that we must pay the debt of death because the scripture relates that death is the wages of sin and so that's what brings sin to an end. So long as we are creatures of time, as long as we are creatures of carnality, we are sinful creatures.

Though I know that the world teaches that there are those who are no longer sinners, I feel that they are deceived in what they believe. And going back to what Elder Hash said a few moments ago, they don't like the word "hope." The reason they don't like it is because they are not embodied in it, it's never been revealed to them. But they are in a deplorable condition and so are we as far as death is concerned.

God has given us something that reaches beyond death. He has given us a hope, He's given us faith that looks beyond the realm of sin and carnality and suffering and grief. We look to that as our source of comfort. He gives us experiences from time to

time and yes, I agree with Elder Hash: He not only spoke in the days of old, He speaks today to His people, a small still voice ofttimes, gives us to remember a time and a place when He spoke to us the first time, when He revealed Himself as a loving Saviour, when He assured us, spiritually, that there was stored up for us something of more value than all the world might amass at any one place or time. This is that faith and that hope that abides within us. It overshadows us, as it were, and it causes us to feel the security of the shadow of the wing of Christ Himself.

And so that price is the first place that's mentioned in the scripture. That is the price that man must pay for an act committed thousands of years ago in the Garden of Eden. But not only committed then but committed today again and again by we who have the nature of Adam and the blood of Adam within our being.

We think then, as we think of the thirty pieces of silver, the first time the number thirty is mentioned in the scripture it's mentioned in association with the building of the ark. We find that God laid out a plan, He placed the plan in the mind of Noah. There's nothing in the scripture that causes us to believe that He drew a plan. He placed the plan in the mind of Noah as to how long and how wide and how tall the ark should be.

And one of the measures is thirty cubits, He said it should be thirty cubits high and He said that there shall be a window in the uppermost part and here is where the figure thirty plays into our hope and our faith of eternal life. For the hope being that it was in the top or in the uppermost part of the ark, opened as it were an avenue to heaven, for when they sought to look out they must look up.

When we seek to look beyond this world of perilous times of trial, tribulation, sickness, suffering and death we must look up. When Christ hung between the earth and the heaven and His side was opened and the blood of cleansing flowed out, it was that which was expressed symbolically by the window in the uppermost part of the ark because Jesus Christ is the true Ark of Salvation. We think again as we think of this and how we find that God touched Noah in such a way that he was willing to undertake this great job, this great task, and we think of how there surely were those who looked at this man laboring, as it were, and thought: what a foolish man he was. Here he is possibly hundreds of miles from the ocean, from the sea or from a body of water large enough to accommodate such a vessel, and yet he's laboring.

We think as we come from time to time of how we labor too. We labor as we journey from place to place desiring to meet with you, my beloved, desiring to express to you some of the things we feel, if we are not deceived, we have learned from His teaching, that we could express to you the things of His loving care and tender mercy that He has given us that no other power known to man can give or express. And so we find Noah laboring because he believed the word of God.

And we who labor here also believe, not only the ministers, but the members, those who have come to the knowledge of hope and faith that reaches beyond the carnality of this world. They are those who trust in the word of the Lord and they believe in that word, they believe in what is laid down in this Book, that it was written in order that they might be able to witness, as it were; the spirit within is a witness to these things that were written. They were written in order that we might again and again turn to these things as a source of comfort, as a source of strength and, yes, He does speak to us today and He directs us. Don't ever be deceived into believing that He does not direct us in our thoughts and in our journey because that's what He blesses us with as we go.

We think again then as we think of the thirty pieces of silver, and we know that Judas was the man that had the thirty pieces of silver. We have ofttimes heard, and just a short time ago I heard one of the world -- one of the theories of doctrines if you might call it that and they cling tenaciously to such doctrine - talking about Judas and how he was cursed from the time he was born to be the one who would deceive and bring death to Jesus Christ and I wondered what kind of Bible he was reading.

We find that these people were chosen, they were chosen by Jesus Christ himself. Now let us look at this. He said after He had chosen these twelve individuals, one of you is a devil; He didn't say which one, but when they were assembled to partake of the Last Supper, as it is expressed in the scripture, He said to them, this is not the scripture verbatim but this is the essence of it, one of you shall betray me, and they began to question among themselves. I can see them, as it were, looking at each other, *"Does He mean me?"* Ofttimes in our experience we feel that very thing. Are we the ones who have betrayed Him through our sinful nature and our sinful ways? Yet, when they began to question Him, Is it me, Is it I? He said, *"He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me."* And the scripture relates that immediately Satan entered into Judas.

Until that time I can feel to say to you that as far as the scripture is concerned there had been no decision made, now don't misunderstand me, God knew this was going to happen, and He knew who it would be from the very beginning of time. Satan entered into Judas and he became the cursed individual. For thirty pieces of silver he had betrayed the Lord, he had betrayed our Saviour, and he turned Him over, as it were, to the judgment hall of Herod and Pilate where He would suffer.

We find in 1st Corinthians where Paul said, Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men. Who is Paul talking to when he said that, when he writes that? He's talking to the church. Because it was the price of standing in the judgment hall of Pilate and Herod and having the Roman whip placed upon His naked back, the shame of being stripped of His

clothing, the shame of going and being counted with the transgressors, the shame of what He must bear upon Himself and that was the sins of His people, and He bore them all, my beloved, for His people. He didn't bear the sins for those of the world, but for His people He bore them all. Now when Paul says as he uses the expression there, he's not talking about the thirty pieces of silver purchasing the condemnation of Christ by those of the world, but he's talking about the church. We find that the thirty pieces of silver was the price that was paid for the church. Paul says that was the price, ye were bought with a price, thirty pieces of silver was a price that was paid for the church.

It didn't matter except for the fact that it was prophesied in Zechariah that there were weighed out thirty pieces of silver at His worth. But he even there is not only talking about the person of Christ, he's talking about the church because when they talked about Israel, He who was esteemed as such by Israel, they are talking about spiritual Israel, they are talking about the living church or the living God. They are not talking, necessarily, about just the person of Jesus Christ. And so then we understand in a measure the opening of the wound in the side of Christ as He hung on the cross and we can see, in a sense, the essence of that which took place on that occasion for there were those who stood around that cross who had no understanding of what was taking place as they so often did in the life of Christ when He performed the so-called miracles and there were many. He still today performs miracles.

What greater miracle could you experience than the hope and faith that He's given you to believe? We believe His voice for it has said: thy sins are forgiven thee; it speaks such peace to the troubled soul, speaks such a measure of joy to the extent that the tears that we ofttimes weep as tears of sadness can become the tears of rejoicing. For it is that in which we rejoice. We don't rejoice in the fact that we have been made aware that we are sinful creatures. No, we feel a sense of shame and guilt and yet we know that God has set us free from that guilt through the person of Jesus, if I might include Him for myself in such a thought. And we know that He hung on the cross and said, as He bowed His head, IT IS FINISHED.

Last Sunday I attempted to speak on the word "complete." When He said, Father it's finished, the work of salvation was complete. Anything that's complete is absolute, nothing can be added to it and nothing taken away. If you take something away, then it's not complete anymore. So when He bowed His head and said, it is finished, He meant exactly that. The completion of salvation for all the heirs of promise was wrought in those words. And, yes, we do know because this Book says so, and we believe it, that He was interred in a borrowed tomb. I say to you this morning that we too shall be interred in a borrowed tomb. It won't belong to us and we can't carry it with us. When we leave this world we are going to leave that tomb there and we

are going to leave in that tomb this old sinful body, this sinful clay from which we are made is going to remain there.

And I can't begin to tell you what the body shall be like that shall burst forth from that tomb when the word of Christ says, Come forth, for I don't know. Paul, I believe, writes that it does not yet appear what we shall be like. So by our faith and our hope that He has given us we trust that we shall be involved in that which shall call us. All of God's people from the depths of the ocean, from the heights of the mountaintop, from the depths of the graves, no matter where, He knows where the sleeping dust of every heir of promise is today. He will never forget it.

I want to call your attention to one more thing pertaining to Christ. Moses, because he disobeyed God, paid a price. That price was that God would allow him to climb to the side of a mountain and behold distantly the promised land but He wouldn't let him enter at that time. When we are lifted, my beloved, when we are lifted to the heights of Mt. Zion in a spiritual sense through the workings of this hope and this faith that He has given us, we have moments when we can view, as it were, the promised land even though seen through a glass darkly. Yet, these are moments that are as close to the heavenly climes as we can come, when we can feel the presence of He who died, feel it so closely, but we can't enter that promised land yet. But the time shall come, my beloved, when we enter, as the time would come for Moses. The time shall come when we shall enter the promised land and there spend an eternity with He who went to the cross to bear our sins and destroy them forever that we might be called the sons and the daughters of God. Is there any such power on earth that you know of? No. I can ask the question and I can answer it.

As Elder Hash said a few minutes ago, we are indeed living in perilous times. None of us, in reality, know what to expect or what's going to happen next. I am not a prophet, I wouldn't dare insinuate that I am. But in seeing what is taking place in Russia in the last few months, and we find that Russia is mentioned, but not called Russia, in the scriptures. What is taking place there I can't help but believe there is a time of peace that is going to overspread Europe. I believe it is because we are approaching so closely the time when Christ is coming again and that God is setting things in order. Don't ever be deceived into believing that there is not order in all things that God sets because there is. And I believe that He's setting things in order, that He's preparing, as it were, and my prayer is that He might give us understanding in some manner that, yes, the time is fast approaching when He shall come with a shout of victory, not coming to suffer again, not coming to be betrayed for any amount, but to come with the shout of victory and to call us from the depth of that dark grave to carry us to the climes of eternal life.

We find, as I mentioned earlier, that Israel was told to prepare to purchase potter's field with the thirty pieces of

silver that was weighed when he said, If ye think good, give me my price. We find Judas, when he realized that he had been given over to Satan on that occasion, was so concerned that he cast that silver down in the temple and the priest knew that it was wicked money and they told him it couldn't be left there, there was no place for it there. The same is true today, there is no place in the true temple of the true gospel of Jesus Christ for filthy lucre. It would not obtain anything for any individual and they told Judas to cast it in potter's field and he went out and hanged himself. Oh, what thoughts he must have had, that God had turned him over to Satan and he had committed the crime that he committed. I don't know that he had any understanding whatsoever that this was God's will that it be that way. But I declare to you that it was God's will that it be just that way. And God's will stands today just as sure as it did on that occasion.

May God bless you and keep you is my prayer for Christ's sake. And may He continue to bless each of us with an abiding hope and faith that causes us to love each other to such an extent that we are never wearied with traveling no matter how great a distance to visit with those of like precious faith because it, too, is a foretaste of heaven just to be gathered with the saints, sing the songs of Zion, hear the word, feel in some marvelous way we are a part of that living Word. May God bless you.

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

ARTICLES

"BUT IN WORKS THEY DENY HIM"

"Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth. Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." (Titus 1: 14-16)

These words of Paul to Titus are as much the word of God in its setting as John 3:16, or the 1st chapter of Ephesians. I cannot believe that one passage of Scripture contradicts another; whether we understand them or not.

Jesus said, *"He that denieth me, him will I deny before my Father which is in heaven; and he that confesseth me, him will I confess before my father.* These people that Paul was writing to Titus about, were denying the Saviour; and that because their mind and conscience was defiled. They professed that they knew God, but in works they denied him. I believe that God's people are in good works, because they are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, for God hath before ordained that they should walk in them. Do we believe that His sheep hear his voice and follow him? I am persuaded that they do. When they follow him

they walk with him; and they have been baptized with him: *"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." (Romans 6:4-5)*

But those who profess to know God, yet in works deny him, are the ones who preach, teach, profess, and worship the small gods of the world: *"Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thes. 2: 9-12)* Those who believe in the frail, weak, and without-foreknowledge god, are the ones who deny the all wise, and powerful, and invisible God of heaven, earth, and all deep places. *"I will not give my glory to another." "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."* These are the same ones under consideration: in works they deny Me. Whenever anyone tells me that he can fall from grace, right then I know he has never been in grace.

God did not choose his church up to just a few steps of him, and then turn them loose to make the last step or so of themselves. *"He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."* Who was it that began a good work in you? it was God himself. *"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."* Now God's church is his own choice: certainly they were chosen in his Son before the world began; and surely they were treasured up in the One that finished the work, and went back to sit on the right hand of the Father, to make intercession for the saints. Was this according to man's will? no, but according to the unchangeable will of God: The God who was able and powerful enough to declare the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that were not yet done, saying my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure.

If I understand this matter at all, this takes care of all time and timely things, and, if he declared the end from the beginning, I am persuaded he surely knew all things that would come between the end and the beginning. *"I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it that men should fear before him. That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past." (Eccl. 3: 14-15)*

It seems to me that just a few profound statements of this kind should

tell all the world, that God spoke and it was done, commanded and it stood fast; and that man and his natural wisdom cannot help or hinder God's eternal mind and purpose in saving his church, which is his choice. Those who deny him in works, are the ones that shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings; and they that are with him are called, chosen and faithful. *". . . and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is." (Rev. 17:8)*

Dear reader, if you don't understand these things, don't feel alone, for they are deep, deep matters; but don't go to some man made institution, thinking you will learn it there. They shall all worship the beast, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. *"If any man have an ear, let him hear what the Spirit sayeth unto the churches."* Yes, dear reader, they are denying him ever, and at all times, by accepting the one of their choice. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people *"whom he would choose if he could."* Their God is trying every way, and at all points of the compass, to convert the entire fallen race of Adam; and, I have to say, that in my short stay in this sinful world, it is getting worse as the days come and go.

Now back to the passage: *"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." (Psalms 33:12) "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you."* Surely these are the disciples of Christ: the Bible speaks only of two kinds of disciples: the disciples of Christ, and the disciples of Satan. Which reminds us that there are only two kinds of doctrine: true, and false. God's choice, which is his elect -- his church, shall travel the strait and narrow way which is to heaven. The broad and crooked way is the road to Hell. God's choice is traveling today; and have been, and shall be with him along the strait and narrow way. Those who are with him, are called, and chosen, and faithful. Others claim they make their own choice. The false prophets and the beasts would deceive the very elect, if it were possible.

These elect were told at one time: *"For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people." (Deuteronomy 7:6,7)* We can see that God Almighty had a chosen people among the Jews, and he has chosen people among the Gentiles. *"For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision in that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is*

not of men, but of God." (Romans 2: 28, 29) These make up the church of Christ; the called out. They are God's people by the new birth, and are the ones that are born of the incorruptible seed. *"Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."*

Consider the word "blood" here for a moment or so: *"Where there is no shedding of blood, there is no remission."* No remission of what? No remission of sins! *"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." (Acts 20:28)* Sometimes it seems plain to me that the ones who purchase themselves by doing good works in order to give their small god a chance to save them, are the same ones mentioned in Titus 1:14-16 (which please read). In works they deny the Lord.

The ones who are in Christ Jesus (the Christ Jesus I am speaking of), are the ones of whom he said. *"At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matthew 11: 25-30)*

It is to be understood that the people unto whom he spoke the above, hear his voice, and follow him. For they are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, that God hath before ordained that they should walk in them. Walk in what? good works that God had set apart for them to walk in. If they don't do it, tell me why they will not! Again, *"My sheep hear my voice and they follow me."* Tell me how it is that *"my sheep hear my voice, and follow me"*, if they don't walk in the good works that God hath before ordained that they should walk in. If it is not so, then you have God's people walking along with Satan and the satanic forces of this world.

The same people who hear his voice and follow him, are the same ones who were pricked in their hearts on the day of Pentecost; and asked the question, *"What shall we do?"* and Peter said unto them, *"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, For the promise is*

unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." (Acts 2: 37-39)

Now, little flock, I think it would be proper to consider the thing that pricked their hearts; It was the same thing that opened their ears to hear, that made them ask the question, *"Men and brethren, what shall we do?" "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." (Acts 2:33)* Do you not believe that the ones who were pricked in their hearts, are the ones who saw and heard this? See and hear what? the promise of the Holy Ghost! Surely they did see and hear, for it was the very thing that pricked their hearts; or would some go so far as to say that the people pricked their own hearts! Did they ask the question before they were pricked in their hearts? No! the pricking of their hearts motivated the asking of the question.

We may ask ourselves also, Was this the same thing that shined around and about Paul, brighter than the noon day sun? Should one deny the pricking of the hearts, or the light that felled the apostle, I believe he is manifesting that he is of the class Paul wrote to Titus about: *"They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." (Titus 2:16)* It is to be remembered that these denied him by their works. Plainly whenever the creature proclaims his work in order that God can then do the thing he has been waiting to do for so long, but couldn't do it until the creature made up his mind, I am persuaded this is what Paul meant when he said, *"in works they deny him."* You may recall in John 6:28-29, *"Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, this is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."*

Now let us look at Ephesians 1:18-19, *"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye might know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of the inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead." etc.* If these passages do mean what they say, tell me what they do mean! I say without fear of contradiction, It just means that it is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. In Acts 13:48, we read, *"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."* Were there more who could have believed?

Finally, dear ones, as many as were ordained to eternal life have believed, are believing, and will believe; not any over the number, not any under the number. In Ecclesiastes 3:14, we read, *"I know that whatsoever God doeth, it*

shall be forever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it; and God doeth it that men should fear before him."

Let us notice Acts 2:39, again: *"For the promise is unto and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."* You notice the passage says, *"Even as many as the Lord our God shall call."* I know those who are on the other side say that God calls, and some won't answer. If such were true, I would have to go along with the free moral agent; for if they are right in their will-worship, God's choice is null and void. But let us look into this so called free-agency situation, for this seems to be the great gulf that is fixed so that the sheep and goats don't mix in spiritual knowledge. On the one hand we have those who *"choose God"*; and on the other, those whom God chose in his darling Son before the world began. Jeremiah 10:23, says, *"O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."*

God's little children feast upon the doctrine of God's choice, and they thrive upon it; but the world and man made doctrine is foolishness unto them. Where do the free-agents come from? can they stand in Jeremiah 30:23? In Acts 13:41, we learn, *"Behold ye despisers, and wonder and perish, for I work a work in your days, a work in which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you."* Now would one tell me that these people are going to believe. Free-agents, so called, say It is left up to you: You can believe if you will just come to church and sunday-school, etc. This is far from the truth. The passage says, *"Ye shall in no wise believe."* The free-agent preaches that the gates of hell are prevailing against the heaven born child. The Bible says it is not so. They preach that a man can accept or reject Him: They can accept or reject the one they worship, for they do all this themselves.

"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Now don't tell me that the Lord built the city, and is trying to get all the fallen race of Adam into it! *"To sit on my right hand, or on my left hand, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared." "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*

Dear readers, I realize the surface has scarcely been scratched. May God's richest blessings be yours, world without end, is my prayer. A sinner saved by grace of an all wise, all powerful, invisible, eternal and self-sustaining God, I hope.

David E. Turner

ROMANS 10: 1-4.

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

FIFTEENTH CHAPTER OF FIRST CORINTHIANS

In writing on this important subject, I know that God must guide my pen if I present to you that which is to the glory of God, and the edification of his people. I hope to be able to present scriptural proof in support of whatever I write; yet I know there will be many mysteries not understood until we cross the river of death, and are brought to the full fruition of our hope.

There was a period of several years when the writer was confused about the subject of the Resurrection, and was fearful of preaching on the subject, because many things pertaining to the subject were very unclear.

While reading in the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians, the fourteenth verse, which reads as follows, *"It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."* I humbly hope God settled my mind in many ways concerning this important subject. Since that day I have held a more charitable attitude toward those who do not see as I do. I have thanked God many times for the comfort He brought to my poor troubled heart when this verse was brought to light.

It appears that every scripture in the New Testament can be united in some way with the fifteenth chapter of Corinthians.

I would like, the Lord willing, to take up the subject in the following way:

1st. The gospel preached unto the Corinthians, here set forth, had already been preached to them.

2nd. Proof of Christ's resurrection.

3rd. Our hope of being raised from the dead tied to the resurrection of Christ.

4th. By man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

5th. Christ the first fruits.

6th. Christ shall reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet.

7th. The difference in our bodies in death, and when raised from the grave.

8th. We shall not all sleep: the mystery of how quickly a change takes place.

9th. The victory.

In the beginning of this chapter Paul says, *"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand."* Showing that whatever the apostle has reference to in the word "Moreover" is an extension of the same truth that had already been set forth unto them. Also they had received and accepted it. It is here made clear that no new doctrine is to be set forth. Paul makes it very clear that the blessed truth set forth here had been received by him -- how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures: and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures: Here are traced out three things, that He died, that He was buried, and that He

rose again: attaching the same importance to each.

As further proof of his resurrection, we are told that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once. After that he was seen of James: then all the Apostles. At last of all he was seen of Paul also. What abundant proof of the resurrection of the body of Jesus from the grave.

These are not the only proofs of the resurrection of the body of Jesus from the grave. In John 20:20, *"He showed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord."* In Luke 24:39, Jesus said to his disciples, *"Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he has thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet."* What a wonderful way for our Lord here, not just to tell his disciples to behold his hands and his feet, but in some wonderful way to make bare to them his precious hands and feet; which had been pierced for them.

My dear readers has our dear Saviour in some special way, ever shown you his hands that were nailed to the cross for you? and his feet? those hands that were often weary, that were carried so willingly to meet those who would nail them to the cross. Does it appear that you were graven in the palms of these hands: that every movement to Calvary, was but another manifestation of his great love for you? No doubt, these disciples as they were shown the hands and feet of Jesus, could join with the poet, and say:

"All hail, my risen Lord
Triumphant Saviour now,
Sin, death, and hell, with one accord
Before thy footstool bow.
One day amidst the place
Where my dear God hath been,
Is sweeter than ten thousand days
Of pleasurable sin."

All the hope of the people of God of all ages, is tied to the resurrection of the body of Jesus: that body that God prepared him; the body that carried all the sins of the church of God in it; the body that was raised for our justification, to free us from God's holy wrath. If the grave could have held our Lord's body, which was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification, then all our preaching would be in vain, our faith in vain, and we would be false witnesses of God yet in our sins; and they who are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished. Thank God that He showed them his hands, his side, and his feet: and ate fish in their presence, and told his disciples to handle him, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

"But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept." Paul here likens the resurrected body of Christ to the first fruits of the crop. In Leviticus 23: 10-11, the children of Israel are commanded to bring the first fruits of their harvest to the priest, and he was to wave it before the Lord as a promise of a crop to follow. Even so, when the body of our Lord was raised from the grave, as the first fruits of the crop. In

Leviticus 23: 10-11, the children of Israel are commanded to bring the first fruits of their harvest to the priest, and he was to wave it before the Lord as a promise of a crop to follow. Even so, when the body of our Lord was raised from the grave, as the firstfruits of his people, it was a promise that the crop, or all those represented in him, will be raised in like manner.

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive, but every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming." In comparing our body with the body of Jesus, let us remember that the body of Jesus saw no corruption, but our body will return to dust; yet this does not change the fact that Jesus was the firstfruits. In Psalm 16:10, in reference to Jesus we read, *"For thou wilt not leave my soul in Hell (Christ's agony on the cross) neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."*

It is no wonder that our Lord said to Martha, *"I am the resurrection and the life,"* when Martha was grieving over the death of her brother Lazarus. Jesus said unto her, *"He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, (here is where spiritual life is given) and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believeth thou this?"* The first verse affirms that though a man is dead in sin, yet through believing in Jesus, he lives spiritually. The second affirmation is that those who have been made alive spiritually, shall never die, but fall asleep in Christ. Paul mentions that if Christ be not raised from the dead, then they who are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished.

Sleep is referred to as embracing three conditions in the scriptures. Death is referred to as a sleep when Lazarus was raised from the dead, after being dead four days. The body can be referred to as asleep when it lies in the grave destitute of life. When news was brought to Jesus of Lazarus' death, he said, *"Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep."* The disciples told Jesus that if Lazarus was sleeping, he was doing well. *"Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead."* On another occasion Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, approached Jesus, informing him that his daughter was dead, but if Jesus would come he could raise her from the dead. When Jesus approached the place where the damsel lay, and saw the weeping of the people, He said unto them, *"Why make ye this ado, and weep? The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth."*

Another condition of sleep: In the eleventh chapter of first Corinthians we read, *"For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep, (inert, careless, and indifferent)."* So we find a Bible record of three conditions of sleep: As the dead body of the saints sleeping in the dust as described in Daniel 12:2, an unconscious state of slumber as Jairus' daughter; and a careless, or indifferent state among God's people.

Death for a believer is described in various ways in the scripture. In 1st Thessalonians 4:13,14 we read, *"But I would not have you ignorant, Breth-*

ren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." In 1st Corinthians 15th chapter, those described as sleeping in Jesus, are said to perish, if Christ be not risen.

Paul speaks in Philippians 1:23, *"For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ: which is far better."* Peter describes the same thing in 2 Peter 1:14, *"Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as the Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me."*

(From time to time the theory has been advanced that the souls of the Lord's people, sleep in the grave after death. These have been referred to as *"soul-sleepers."* In the days of John Gill, those holding this idea were called Cata-Baptists. I have never found this doctrine in any Article of Faith of Primitive Baptists that I have read.)

In 1 Thessalonians 4:14, we read that those who sleep in Christ will God bring with him when he comes for his people; and in the 15th verse, *"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep."* I now move on to the description of the wonderful change that will take place with the people of God in the resurrection.

In 1st Corinthians 14:35, we read, *"But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?"* In verses 36, 37 and 38, we read, *"Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body."* The expression, "Thou fool," shows that the subject of resurrection of the body, is no new question. The Apostle likens the resurrection to the sowing of grain, and that every seed brings forth of its kind. We cannot sow corn and expect wheat. When we sow a grain of wheat, and it springs out of the earth, we would not recognize it as the seed we sowed, but God giveth to every seed his own body. It is the same grain, but its form has been changed; and God giveth to it its own body.

In 1 Peter 1:23, we read, *"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."* This change is further described as being sown in corruption, and raised in incorruption: sown in dishonor, raised in glory. It is sown in weakness and raised in power: It is sown a natural body, and raised a spiritual body. Here the difference is shown between the body sown, and the body raised. The Apostle plainly tells us there is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. According to God's word, the body sown will not be raised and changed into a spiritual body, but is raised a spiritual body. None of us have ever seen a spiritual body; but that is the kind of body God will raise in the

resurrection. No where do we find that they will be raised, and changed.

In our earthly pilgrimage here, we are of the earth earthy. We bear the image of the first man, who was earthy; but believers are promised that, as we have born the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. What a wonderful anticipation and longing for poor sinners: To bear the image of Jesus. *"It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like him: for we shall see Him as he is." "But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."* God has revealed these things to his people, spiritual men.

"Now this I say, Brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." The apostle uses the word Brethren three times in this chapter, showing the close unity and relationship he holds with them: as his relationship in Christ. He uses it in the first verse, *"Moreover, brethren."* In the last verse his expression is, *"Therefore my beloved brethren,"* showing that because of the things set forth in this chapter, the relationship is so strong in his heart that he says, *"Beloved brethren."* This close tie is presented in the 50th verse, showing that flesh and blood does not inherit the kingdom of God, neither does corruption inherit incorruption. We might look at this from two angles: First, that none enter the kingdom because of any earthly tie or nationality.

Second, the fact that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God is further expounded in the scriptures: neither does corruption inherit incorruption. Five times in the Word we find the expression, *"Flesh and blood."* (Matthew 16:17; 1st Cor. 15:50; Gal. 1:16; Ephesians 6:12, and Hebrews 2:4) All except Hebrews 2:4 refer to our mortal life, or natural life, or body, and the wisdom or knowledge we have of earthly things. This is continued by the expression, *"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."* The definition of the words Corruptible and Corruption refers to decay, decomposition and putrefaction. In 2 Corinthians 5:2-4 we read, *"For we know that if the earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened, not for that we would be unclothed but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."*

If we should attempt to show that the expression, Sown a mortal, raised in immortality; sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body, as being separate bodies, then we must discard the expression, *"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."* When we further inquire as to how we will be, we must abide in the expression of Jesus while conversing with the Sadducees in Mark 12:24, 25, *"And Jesus answering said unto them, do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God? For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels which are in heaven."* It is true that Moses and Elias, when they appeared with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, were known by them, yet it was a revelation, as neither Peter, James or John had ever seen either of them, yet they did actually appear to them.

In bringing this article to a close, I would offer this brief summary of the things contained in it.

1st. Whatever Paul set forth to the Corinthians, was a doctrine already preached to them.

2nd. All the hope of believers being raised from the dead to immortality and endless joy, is tied to the resurrection of Jesus.

3rd. The resurrection of Jesus' body, as the first fruits of them that slept, was an assurance that their bodies would also be raised from the dead as the crop that was to follow in like manner: His resurrection.

4th. That the bodies of the people of God would not be raised and changed, nor raised a mortal or corrupt body, but would be sown a natural body, and raised a spiritual body; sown in corruption: raised in incorruption.

5th. That there will be a future resurrection of the dead, both the just and unjust, as recorded in John 5: 28, 29, *"Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."*

I have dwelt mostly in this article on the resurrection of God's people, with no desire to evade the truth, that all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and come forth: the wicked to everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord; yet our deep concern is in enjoying those things that God has prepared for them that love Him. Paul warned the brethren of those who would preach that the resurrection is past already, as taught by Hymeneus and Philetus in 2 Timothy 2:18.

Cast the mantle of charity over this article, and may God bless it to someone.

Elder D.V. Spangler

JOHN 1:1.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The wise and foolish virgins all slumbered and slept while the bridegroom lingered. (Matt. xxv) During all that time no difference could be seen between them. No mark appeared by which it could be told who were wise and who were foolish. No one could tell whose vessels had oil in them and whose had not. So it was with the nation of Israel during the legal dispensation. The Lord's people could not be distinguished from the others; the legal works could be done as well by one who had no grace in his heart as by one who had; all appeared alike, as do those who sleep. This was the sleeping time, the night dispensation, and no fault is found with them for sleeping. But when, at the end of that legal day, at midnight, the announcement was made, *"Behold, the bridegroom cometh,"* then the difference between the wise and foolish was made to appear. Those who had oil in their vessels were ready to go in with the bridegroom; those who were without oil could not go in. The difference between the two characters, those who had grace in the heart and those who had not, was as great before the bridegroom came as after, but that difference could not be manifest until he came. The wise were not made wise because they took oil, but they took oil because they were wise.

So also with the foolish; they were not foolish because they took no oil, but they took no oil because they were foolish. They wisdom of the wise was, and always is, a gift to them from the Lord, and so is the oil, or grace, by which they have the light of life, which shineth in the darkness of our nature, but is not perceived by the darkness. The wise went in with the Bridegroom and the door was shut. That door between the legal and the gospel dispensation was never opened but once, and then Jesus entered into his gospel kingdom with all his redeemed. *"By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."* When the legal character, represented by the foolish virgins, comes, he must necessarily come knocking, for the door was shut as soon as Jesus entered in. One who knocks implies that there is some good reason why the door at which he knocks should be opened to him. Those to whom Jesus says, *"Knock, and it shall be opened unto you,"* are gospel characters who desire gospel blessings, and they knock in the name of Jesus. But these are asking in their own names, because of good things they have done. The oil they have has been purchased by them, for which they have paid in their own good works, and it will not be received; it does not make gospel light. The true oil, the Spirit and grace of God, cannot be bought. So the Bridegroom says to them who come with that oil which they have bought, I know you not.

All of the Lord's people, from the beginning to the end of time, went in through that gospel door with Jesus, and none who ever have entered there experimentally, or ever shall, will ever make mention of any other name but Jesus as the way by which he entered in, and because of this there will be on

the part of living souls, but no others, a strong and deep exercise of soul from time to time, by the power of this sweet command of Jesus: *"Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."* Every experience of the coming and power of Jesus, and every temptation to doubt and question concerning our knowledge of him, will lead us more carefully to consider how all of our experience of an entrance into divine favor, from the very first, has been an entrance with Jesus, and in his blessed name, and will lead us to watch that we do not ask for or seek for any entrance into his favor because of any fancied merit of our own. How careful and watchful we are, and need to be, lest the light that is in us be darkness, lest the oil we have has been purchased with our own fancied goodness. *"For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart."*

Silas H. Durand

"Work our your own salvation with fear and trembling." - Philippians ii.12.

None but God's people under the teachings of the Spirit know what it is to *"work out their own salvation."* And all who work out their own salvation will work it out *"with fear and trembling."* For when a man is taught by God to know what he is; when he feels what a deceitful heart he carries in his bosom; when the various snares, temptations, and corruptions by which he is daily encompassed are opened up to him; when he knows and feels what a ruined wretch he is in self, then he begins to fear and tremble lest he should be damned at the last. He cannot go recklessly and carelessly on without *"making straight paths for his feet,"* without *"examining himself whether he be in the faith."* And whenever a man's dreadfully deceitful heart is opened up to him; whenever the hollowness of an empty profession is unmasked; whenever he feels how strait is the path, how narrow the way, and how few there are that find it; whenever he is brought to see how easily a man is deceived, and how certainly he must be deceived unless God teach him in a special manner; - whenever a man is brought to this point, to see what a rare thing, what a sacred thing, and what a spiritual thing religion is, that God himself is the author and finisher of it in the conscience, and that a man has no more religion than God is pleased to give him, and cannot work a single grain of it in his own soul; when he stands on this solemn ground, and begins to work out that which God works in, it will always be *"with fear and trembling;"* with some *"fear"* lest he be deceived, until God assures him by his own blessed lips that he is not deluded; and *"with trembling,"* as knowing that he stands in the immediate presence of God, and under his heart-searching eye.

J.C. Philpot

GOD'S OMNIPOTENCE OR INFINITE POWER

God's omnipotence is that perfection of his nature by which he can do whatever he pleases in heaven and earth, in the seas and all deep places (Psalm 135:6). His infinite power extends to all things possible. Though limited by his will to those things only which he has decreed to be done, God manifests his power in Creation, Providence, and Redemption. His omnipotence is represented as an infinite capacity, while his omniscience is represented as an infinite act. It is he who created, preserves, actuates and directs all things; causing everything to fulfil the counsel of his will. If the Bible teaches God's omnipotence, it also teaches his universal agency. All of God's creations, visible and invisible, are subject to his divine control. God is the author of all the good we do. He works in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, he worketh all in all. Lord, thou hast wrought all our works in us. He works in us both to will and to do his good pleasure. His power and wisdom is such that he causes all occurencies to praise him, the wrath of man included and the remainder he restrains.

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FOR FEBRUARY 1992

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Mrs. Allyne Page, TX 7.00
E.C. Redman, AL 7.00
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OBITUARIES

SISTER MATTIE HINTON

Sister Mattie Lee (Williams) Hinton, born November 14, 1903, united with Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church November 26, 1932 and was called home by our heavenly Father on March 18, 1992.

She was the widow of Charlie Hinton. Surviving her are a daughter, Annie Lee Brice of Stantonsburg; a son, Edward Hinton of Sumpter, SC; a brother, Roy Williams of Raleigh, NC and a sister, our own Sister Fannie Mae Calhoun of Rocky Mount, NC. Fifteen grandchildren and eighteen great grandchildren.

Sister Hinton quietly walked among the brethren and in her soft and gentle voice expressed her love and concern for the church. She often expressed

her unworthiness and was always afraid she would get in the way or say something that might offend her brethren. She expressed her love for the church by her presence in the meetings. She was almost sure to be there until a stroke handicapped her and made it necessary for her to spend the last seven years of her life in a nursing home. Even though she could not attend her meetings anymore, she was concerned about the brethren and wanted to hear from them as long as she was of sound mind.

Her funeral was conducted on March 20th at Johnson Funeral Home Chapel, Fairview Road, by her beloved pastor, Elder Henry Jones. She was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery, Rocky Mount, NC.

The church at Pleasant Hill will miss having her but feel she is at rest and would not wish her back here. Our memory of her will linger with us.

Written by order of conference at Pleasant Hill Church, April, 1992, by one who loved her.

J. Carroll Williams

LIZZIE MAE BLALOCK PRITCHETT

Our sister Lizzie was born April 1, 1912 and passed from this life July 13, 1991.

She was married to the late Charlie William Pritchett.

She was preceded in death by her parents James Weldon and Mary Oakly Blalock, and one sister Frances B. King. She is survived by four sisters Sallie Aldridge, Allie Clayton, Margaret King and Nannie Lou Blackard. Three brothers Franklin, Joseph and William Blalock.

Lizzie asked for a home with the church at Moons Creek in October 1987 with her membership being placed at Greensboro Church. She loved the church and the brethren. She attended as long as her health permitted.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor Elder Kenneth Key. She was laid to rest in the Longs Chappel Church Cemetery near Haw River, N.C.

May we be reconciled to His will.

A brother,
George F. Blalock

CLIFTON C. ROBERTSON

On November 13, 1991, I lost my best friend, counselor, brother in Christ, deacon and earthly father. Clifton Caesar Robertson was born January 23, 1918, in Caswell County to Henry Arthur Robertson and Fannie Apple Robertson. His sojourn in this life covered 73 years and nearly 10 months.

Though he had only an eighth-grade education, God blessed him with much common sense and many gifts. He was a farmer, builder, writer and retired from American Tobacco Company with 35 years of service.

When a young boy, he was shown his sinful condition one day as he was plowing in the field. He felt the awful condemnation of the law as it was

applied to him. Killed to the things he once loved, he now walked in a newness of life. He went before Williamsburg Primitive Baptist Church on Saturday night before the fifth Sunday in October 1949 and was received. He was baptized the following day in a nearby creek by Elder Roy Smith, assisted by Elder Golden Harris. When trouble arose, he stood firm for truth and order. He and several others withdrew from the disorder and were recognized as the true church. On Saturday before the second Sunday in August 1955, he asked for a home with Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church and was received on confession of faith. He was a member 26 years. When confusion again raised its ugly head, he stood without wavering and labored long and hard for peace. Upon the division of churches and associations, he again was without a church home. But on July 21, 1985, he came before the church at Durham and was received on confession of faith. Recognizing the qualifications of a deacon in him as set forth by the Apostles, the church ordained him to that office on July 20, 1986. He had already proven his calling over the years and served the office well before the presbytery ever laid hands on him. I never knew him to waiver, regardless of the opposition when he felt the scripture supported his position. His few years at Durham Primitive Baptist Church were some of the most enjoyable and peaceful of his life.

He had a gift to write and wrote numerous articles published in the Signs of the Times, particularly during the 1960s and 1970s. He wrote many obituaries often at the request of churches other than his home church.

When he was told that he had a brain tumor, his God-given faith was sufficient. He felt his death was imminent. He made sure all of his affairs were in order to make it as easy on his family as possible. He called Elder Haywood Wray, whom he had known and worked with for many years and who was a close personal friend, and requested that he preach his funeral, and there must be no praise of man.

As my mother and I, with two sisters in Christ, stood by his hospital bed, his spirit took flight, freed at last from this tabernacle of clay. The last act of this earthen vessel was the closing of his mouth in death, bidding farewell to all fleshly ties.

The last service he attended was the fourth Sunday in September at Durham. He requested the hymn, There is a House Not Made with Hands and requested his wife to lead it. Most fitting, his funeral was held at Citty's Funeral Home on Saturday before the third Sunday in November. This was the regular meeting weekend at his home church.

He leaves to mourn his wife of 53 years, Sadie Saunders Robertson; his mother, Fannie A. Simmons; one son, Cleo D. Robertson; and two grandchildren.

You fought a good fight. Goodby dear one and rest on.

Cleo D. Robertson, Moderator
Catherine Humbarger, Clerk

Signs of the Times

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SONG

Afflicted saint, to Christ draw near;
Thy Saviour's gracious promise hear;
His faithful word declares to thee
That, as thy days, thy strength shall be.

Let not thy heart despond, and say,
How shall I stand the trying day?
He has engaged, by firm decree,
That, as thy days, thy strength shall be.

Thy faith is weak, thy foes are strong;
And, if the conflict should be long,
Thy Lord will make the tempter flee;
For, as thy days, thy strength shall be.

Should persecution rage and flame,
Still trust in thy Redeemer's name;
In fiery trials thou shalt see
That, as thy days, thy strength shall be.

When called to bear the weighty cross,
Or sore affliction, pain, and loss,
Or deep distress, or poverty,
Still, as thy days, thy strength shall be.

When ghastly death appears in view,
Christ's presence shall thy fears subdue,
He comes to set thy spirit free;
And, as thy days, thy strength shall be.

Fawcett.

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EDITORIAL

ELDER KENNETH R. KEY

The following is an article written a long time ago by Sister Mary Ellison of Topeka, Kansas. I want to present it to you as our editorial for this issue. I hope you will be given to enjoy the sweetness and the similitude of the days of a tree as the days of the Lord's people. Please read on.

"They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." (Isaiah 65:22)

I have thought that the ***"tree"*** here spoken of represents Christ, who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and as his days so shall the days of his people be. As I lay back, with closed eyes, I seemed to see a little tree in all its verdant, springtime beauty, clothed with leaves and blossoms. In the warm sunshine and gentle breeze it waved and beckoned with its spreading branches, and how sweet to rest beneath its shade, enjoy its fragrant bloom, and reflect on the prospect of fruit to follow. So shall the days of my people be. Where is the similitude of the days of a tree and the days of the Lord's people? Let us go back to the early experience of a child of God,

"When converts first begin to sing,
Their happy souls are on the wing;
Their theme is all redeeming love,
Fain would they be with Christ above."

Oh what lovely blossoms, and what a sweet savor of Christ they send forth as they call and beckon to us to ***"come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." "Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein."*** The trees of the field do clap their hands, the cedars of Lebanon (the older brethren) bow at

his feet, and praise him in fullness of joy, resting in the blessed promise that the Lord will not leave himself without witnesses. Perhaps the little tree had stood unnoticed, apparently dead, until the little leaves began to grow and the signs of life involuntarily began to appear. What rejoicing now that we see it is not dead, as it appeared, and now we hope to see the sweet fruits of the Spirit evidenced later on, for they shall take root downward and bear fruit upward. But, as the days of a tree, by and by the sun does not shine so brightly, clouds appear, and oh how dark it becomes. A storm arises, and in the raging the poor little tree sways and bends, the lovely bloom is beaten off and swept away, or covered with earth. The storm passes, and the little tree is left standing, not so proudly, perhaps, but of a more sore dignity, as, the promising bloom gone, the fruit buds begin to appear, and as the fruit increases in the upward branches the root is taking deeper hold in the earth. So are the days of my people.

"It is not long before they feel
Their feeble souls begin to reel;
They think their former hopes are vain,
They're filled with sorrow, grief and pain."

Cannot every child of God go back in memory to the time they thought they would always go on their way rejoicing in the bloom of their earliest love, believing the enemies of their carnal nature were all slain, and would never vex or annoy them any more? But alas, the little clouds begin to arise, vexations come, and the lovely bloom is beaten off as the sorrows of the world worketh death to the sweet spiritual enjoyment, perhaps leading them as far as Peter, to even deny the Lord, saying in doubt and unbelief, that after all it is only a delusion, and they were deceived and had deceived others. Where now is the blessedness ye spake of? The beautiful promising bloom which looked so pleasant is gone from their view, swept away and buried in the storm of earthly cares and sorrows that has so unexpectedly fallen upon them. ***"But the root of the righteous shall not be moved."*** The storm passes, and they find themselves still standing in the faith of God's elect, cast down, but not destroyed. Oh then the fruit buds begin to appear, as in humbleness they are brought to see that it is not in their own strength they stand. ***"I am the root and the offspring of David."*** This is the Root that extends downward in the earthen vessel of mercy. Each can say, O Lord, ***"my goodness extendeth not to thee,"*** but his goodness does reach down to every vessel of mercy. The strong downward Root holds firm, and will not let them be overwhelmed. They are made to realize that ***"the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit,"*** which is borne upward in praise and thanksgiving to God for deliverance from the storm. The many storms of affliction and sorrow, trials and tribulations, perils and persecutions break and beat upon the ***"trees of righteous-***

ness, the planting of the Lord," until they bow and bend, so shaken in mind they fear they cannot stand; no, not another day.

"I fear at last they I shall fall,
For if a saint, the least of all."

Yet when the storm passes, and the Son of righteousness once more beams forth, then in this light, and not their own feeble sight, they see it is not in their own strength they still stand, but the Strength of Israel has held them. Not by works of righteousness which they have done, not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord. Much more of the cherished fruit is gone. But when blooming youth is gone, and old age comes on, we are made to realize that it is the bitter, gnarly fruit of self-confidence and fleshly ambition that is being beaten off. It came from earth, and must fall back from whence it came, for ***"Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up," but the "tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord,"*** its fruit shall remain. One by one we see every earthly hope and joy beaten off and swept away, but the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace and fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, oh nothing shall ever be able to separate us from that. How gladly we should have the gnarly, poisonous fruits of the flesh pruned away, so that we might shine forth as the morning, with not a cloud to intervene between us and our Rock, who shelters us in this weary land of storms and trouble. As the tree grows older, as the growth in grace and in the knowledge of truth increases, the poor tempest-tossed child of God seems to gain strength in the storms, often stands more firm, and is not so easily tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine; does not so lightly bow and bend to the lo heres and lo theres, but the sweet fruits of the Spirit are borne upward to him, the Strength of Israel, the Root of David, in the earthen vessel, has kept him from falling, and enables him to say, I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me. If it is his will that I shall weather another storm he will give the old trunk, stripped of all the foliage of youthful hopes and ambitions, every branch of earthly aspirations and joys broken off, strength to endure. But oh the weakness of the flesh. How we do shrink and dread when we see the storm coming, though there is a *"needs be"* for it all, and we know that

"Not a single shaft can hit,
Until the God of love sees fit."

How we do feel the need of the prayers of all saints, for it does seem at times that this flesh and heart will surely fail. Oh may he, by the power of his might, when the adverse winds do blow, give me strength to still stand in the way, ready for whatever is in the counsel of his will to come next.

"As the days of a tree." How often have we seen the tall cedars, the sturdy oaks, beaten by the storms of many seasons almost to the ground, nothing left but their bare old trunks,

and to all appearance have lived their time and served their purpose, yet they do not quite fall; not yet, their downward roots have not yet parted from the earth, they must wait the appointed time to fall. So shall the days of my people be. Old age is come, the bare old trunk is stripped of every alluring earthly joy, until there is nothing left to live for, and *"I long to lay my armor by, and dwell with Christ at home,"* for

"Surely like a withered tree,
No fruit to me is found,
Why do I live, O Lord, I cry,
A cucumber of the ground?"
"When a few more days I've wasted,
When a few more scenes are o'er,
When a few more griefs I've tasted,
I shall fall, to bloom no more."

But not yet. The downward Root has not yet parted from the earthen vessel, and though I often feel, especially in the heart-rending trials I have endured of late, that there is no fruit borne upward from such a withered and weather-beaten old trunk, yet all the days of my appointed time I must wait until my change comes.

One night as I lay thinking of the trials and conflicts of the Lord's peculiar people these words came to my mind with force, *"I see men as trees walking,"* and I thought how like a tree is the walk of the Lord's people. None can see men, nor the people of God, walking as trees, until led out of the town, or world, as was the blind man, by God's own hand, and how short the time until made to see that as the days of a tree, so are the days of the Lord's people. He sometimes lays his hand heavily upon us, showing us what great things we must suffer for his sake, until we cry, *"Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me."* Whom he loves he rebukes and chastens, and it is his chastening hand that makes us look up, until we see clearly every man, every child of God, walking the same path, every one enduring the same storms and afflictions, for if ye be without chastisement, then are ye bastards and not sons. There is no place of rest for us in the town, or world; we cannot go back there, or tell to any in the town of the things we see clearly. They know nothing of the reproach of the cross, and have no sympathy for the mourning people of God. But to our own house, there we may freely go, sure to find there the sympathy and fellowship we crave. There all speak the same language, weeping with those who weep and rejoicing with those who do rejoice. Here we see men as trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, walking the same road, buffeted on every hand by storms without and within. The same storms that beat and bend one old tree beat upon all, and though one may feel that the storm has brought him a little lower than the rest ever get, yet all the rest feel the same way: less than the least of all saints. But in this is our fellow-

ship and our love made perfect, and we often find the lowest tree bears the sweetest fruit, as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood. What a comparison. The low apple-tree is the one that bears the fruit. The ones that stand the highest are not always the most fruitful. But ***"as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons." "Though the Lord be high, yet has he respect unto the lowly."*** His loved ones among the sons of earth are lowly. A proud look he hates and abominates. The proud he knoweth afar off. But the fruit of his love on the lowly trees is sweet to our taste; yes, sweet, because when we are made to look up we see that his banner over us is love, and know that, ***"Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me." "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."***

As the days of a tree, so are my people. As the tree falls, there shall it lie. It falls to earth, and returns to the dust as it was, and so shall it be until the bright morning of the resurrection, when the Lord shall bring again in power that which fell in weakness, and will clothe it again in the beauty of holiness, then shall we be satisfied. Every idol that now intervenes between us and our love will be swept away, and we shall see his face, and never, never sin. No more storms of darkness and sorrow falling upon us, no more crying of pain and anguish, no more griefs and heartaches, no more trouble and mourning, no more losses and crosses, no more wars and fightings, the conflict will be over, our warfare ended, and God himself shall wipe the tears from off all faces, for, ***"as one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you."*** Then shall we see him as he is, and be like him. ***"As the days of a tree [He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief] are the days of my people."***

Elder Kenneth R. Key

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

CORRESPONDENCE

Route 1, Box 101
Willis, Va. 24380

Dear Editors,

Please renew my subscription to the "Signs of the Times" for two years. I am, I hope one of the Lords poor and afflicted. I am afflicted with MS and have been confined to a wheelchair for five years.

With the help of my husband and my brethren, I am yet able to go to meetings at my home church, for which I hope I am thankful. It would be a weary life if I could not go and hear the gospel preached and meet with my brethren occasionally.

When at the throne of grace, remember me.

With love for Christ's sake,
Margaret H. Quesenberry

ARTICLES

ADMONITION

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." (1 Timothy 4:6)

This is an exhortation written to Timothy, the preacher, by Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ. Timothy was an ordained preacher, chosen and set apart by God, to comfort and feed his little ones, while they sojourn in this world of sorrow. Since preachers this day and time have the same calling, to comfort and feed the sheep, the exhortation to Timothy is also applicable to them.

We are blessed in this section of the country, with a marvelous portion of the Lord's servants. There are many oases where his children may rest and be comforted. Any Sunday, churches are in driving distance, where those who are thirsty or hungry may be fed by the overseers, who were made such by the Holy Ghost. The doctrine is proclaimed in all its wonders as dictated by the Spirit. The writer, at times, if not deceived, has been made to rejoice under the dew drippings of the sanctuary.

To be taken out of one's self and lifted up to behold with the speaker, power, justice, glory, mercy, grace, hope, love and all other attributes of the Saviour and King, are ours to enjoy and feast upon as the Spirit directs the preacher and hearer. For these reasons, it is the first phase of Paul's exhortation to Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself," of which I wish to write.

When a comforter is lead to comfort one of God's little ones, both parties are acted upon by the Holy Spirit, neither having merited the favor. At other times this same comforter and comforted one may be left to themselves, in the flesh, without inspiration, and try as they will they cannot attain the blessing, as before. I believe they both have to be inspired or receive a revelation before they can speak or hear the mysteries of godliness. The little child, who has been fed through the preacher, is puzzled, when that same preacher tells him that only the prophets, apostles and disciples of the Bible days, were given such inspiration. That he is only a vessel of mercy, subject to mistakes, like other children, with only a hope. I believe that when Christ wants a child soothed and comforted, made richer in the knowledge of Grace, He prepares the particular preacher who is to comfort him. I also believe, that the words meant for that child, whether by mouth or pen, will be spoken by the Spirit "through" the preacher and he could not make a mistake, if he tried. In taking heed unto himself that minister should ask, ***"Am I feeding that little one, saving it from doubt and worry?"***

The preacher has a very special calling. ***"Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:60)*** With the word of a king there is power. He was not only told to go and preach but also what to

preach, the kingdom of God. Furthermore he receives his sheep food by revelation, as it is meted out to him, not his own preparation before the services: ***"For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Galatians 1:12)***

A few months back I was wallowing in the slough of despair. It seemed the wings of His love were closed from under me and I was falling to destruction. My prayer for deliverance was answered through a discourse, by one of his enlightened ministers, and the way was light again. His love and mercy had only been hidden from me for a season, for my own good, He explained to me through the lips of this elder. I feasted on it there at the church and at home that night my bed was easy and restful for the first time in months. From my window his handiwork shone forth from heaven in all its glory and I delighted in the works of the Lord. ***"Neither pray I for them alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." (John 17:20)*** It seemed my happiness knew no bounds, through this preached word.

But sometime later, while talking to another elder, I asked him what he thought of the sermon that had meant so much to me. His answer was, *"I didn't get much out of it. It sounded like a good deal of speculation to me."* I have heard very comforting sermons from this minister too, and could only question in my mind, ***"How can these things be?"*** Could Paul's exhortation mean that such careless remarks are not calculated to save the child from pain and anguish, when he said, ***"Take heed to thyself, etc."?***

While enjoying the doctrinal sermons and feeding on the food sent through these ordained elders, in a relaxed, confidential frame of mind, are his children asleep in Zion? Is the watchman asleep on the wall? Such questions can be raised in a little child's mind, when it hears one elder criticize the other ministers, all who are supposed to be overseers charged by the Holy Ghost. Paul, to those who should hereafter believe on him to everlasting life, said, ***"No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." (Cor. 12:3)***

When a poor, groveling worm of the dust, who is nothing and less than nothing, with the weight of his sins pushing him into a smoldering pit and the flames of destruction are closing in forever, feels all of a sudden a calm; a sabbath from all his writhings and is freed, he longs to hear more of the one who eased his pains. He hungers and thirsts for the soothing assigned to the preachers of the Gospel.

Many are called, but few are chosen. The chosen are the guards who are placed around the walls of the city to cry to the inhabitants that the wall is secure. That the enemy will never molest them again because of the strength of the wall. These chosen guards around the city have the proper authority and know what to cry to comfort the hearers.

The natural man, no matter how great he is in oratory, cannot expound the riches of the saving grace of our Lord

and Saviour Jesus Christ in fullness and truth, unless he is given light of thought and liberty of speech or pen, by inspiration. ***"But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." (Job 32:8)*** This inspiration works on the speaker and hearer alike, giving them tongues to speak and ears to hear, so that the comforter and comforted are one in Christ.

On another occasion, the writer heard a minister take a text and preach a long, comforting discourse. As we often say, the text took him, and he was made to show me green pastures and still waters of rest and peace. Before me spread a beautiful picture of the things bought for me, unworthy though I be, by the blood of the crucified one. The river of the water of life seemed to flow from the throne of God, through the soothing voice of the speaker into my very heart and swell it most to bursting with happiness.

The very next day, an elder of my acquaintance said the text of the night before had been misapplied, that the scripture had another meaning and could not mean what the preacher had interpreted it to mean. My heart sank and a lump came into my throat.

The question comes to mind, if we are his workmanship, made able to speak and hear these wonderful promises, by the Spirit working in us through inspiration and revelation, how can these things be? The joy and gladness in my poor soul, when permitted to feast at the table of God's love, or to be given just a crumb, when I am so hungry, is almost unspeakable. There are no words to express a broken heart, a despairing soul, made glad through the ministrations and comfort, channeled through the vessels, chosen by God to feed his sheep.

Several months ago I had an illness that was accompanied by severe pain and emotional depression. It seemed, when I was almost at the breaking point, our dear pastor happened in. Did I say "happened"? To me it seemed Providential. He talked of neighbors and friends, of brethren and sisters, of the sick he had visited, of correspondence with other ministers and brethren, all this interspersed now and then on the scriptures and the greatest of all Physicians. It was hard to be depressed or think or feel pain, and when he was gone my mind and heart kept feasting on the "medicine" he had left me. He has always filled such a need, since we united with the church. ***"As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things."***

Because we love them, we hope, for the Truth's sake, as brethren, and because we lean on them as staffs of comfort, when activated by the Spirit, we admonish with Paul, ***"Take heed unto thyself."***

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Lillie, La.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 9 / 92 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE GREAT SERMON OF SERMONS
(Matthew, fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters)

My Bible has been before me for a long time opened at the 5th chapter of Matthew. My fervent prayer has been, Lord, make these words real and alive to me! I am not satisfied with the natural meaning of these simple statements, as they appear in this material Bible, -- I want to experience hearing these words accompanied by divine revelation in my soul. I want to feel their power in my life. I pray that you empty my mind of all that is carnal and past: -- yea, fill it with living words of Eternal Life! Carry me back in Spirit to the time and place where these words were spoken upon the mountain to your disciples. I have been patiently praying and waiting amidst impatience and despair. Lord, reveal.

Jesus speaks peace to my soul as He reveals to me things I have never seen before, You do not know what you are asking. You don't need to be led back to the place and time to experience this. These things are spiritual and eternal. That was a natural mountain in the place where I sojourned for a little season in time. I have raised you up out of the slough of despondency and have carried you upon the spiritual mountain of Zion. Our conversation is in heaven. I am the great Teacher who teaches My teachers to teach. I have ordained you to write and publicly proclaim that which I reveal unto you. My sayings are appropriately written in red. It took my blood to clothe the naked law with the color of hope. It took my righteousness to over-arch the pathway of your life with the splendor of the heavenly bow. My grace and truth converts duties to privileges. I set my commandments as gems in your soul. I move your heart gently, calmly, and slowly in the way of peace and understanding.

You have thought of the kingdom of heaven as something that you would never enter until after your life on earth is over. Your carnality causes you to so reason. You are no different from others in your carnal ideas. I want to show you this Kingdom is not of this world but it is now being experienced by my brethren. I, the Son of Man and of God, am King of this Kingdom. My Father gave me this kingdom. I intercede for it now. My Father, Jehovah, has no rival. There is none beside Him. He does according to His will and works all things after His counsel. The devil, Satan, is my rival, my enemy, and my evil. I am Father of the subjects of my kingdom; Satan is father of the subjects of his kingdom. Satan's subjects shall ever be willing to do his will. Satan hinders you as he hindered Paul. My Father is faithful to His promise that I shall overcome to the extent of destroying Satan and all of his works. Every time I appear to you, Satan flees. When I disappear, Satan enters. Satan torments and confuses. I comfort, encourage, and

soothe you with peace that passes understanding. It is for your good that I disappear for a season; else, you would not know from whence comes your salvation. I deliver you, or save you, many times from the pitfalls of Satan.

You are resting awhile in this heavenly conversation in seclusion. Your question, Why speak to me of them?- you speak of others when you say, ***"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*** I, Jesus, say to you: It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. Preach the Word. Out yonder among the multitudes are many of my people who greatly desire to hear proclaimed these words of mine which I have received of My Father. I was telling these few disciples who sat in a circle around me that those who possessed these god-given characteristics among the multitudes we had left, were in this kingdom, even though they were not present with us. They were children of the kingdom. They were sheep among the goats who would follow my undershepherds. I am the chief shepherd and teacher. I instruct you how to teach my people by speaking and writing. I will be with you in your attempts to preach and write; My spirit shall guide you in all truth and take of mine and show it to you while you are speaking and writing.

I show you a chain of precious gems in the beatitudes. Each is connected with another, and the last is connected with the first. This forms a ring of brilliant divine jewels of the subjects of my kingdom. Each and every subject of grace makes manifest each and every one of these jewels. These are as chains of gold about the neck and rows of jewels on the right cheek. I am the CENTER. When I am in the midst of just a few forming this circle, each right cheek is toward me. Where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am in the center. My first words after baptism and the temptations as recorded in the Bible were, Repent, for the kingdom is at hand. I chose natural fishers and ordered them to be fishers of men. The gospel net will catch men who are blessed with divine characteristics. You cannot see your gems and jewels that I have adorned you with; but your brethren can. You can see their gracious adornments that I bestow upon them; but they cannot. People who are self-centered have their fill of self-gratification. They are full of self-praise and boasting. They are rich in spirit according to their own estimation. It is an agonizing experience to be emptied of selfishness, pride, and worldliness; yet the naked law is designed for this purpose. The law is a school-master to bring you unto me. When you come, you are empty and desolate. When you are full, you have need of nothing. You come to me empty. I pour into your fainted and empty soul enough to sustain you now. The soothing oil of grace lifts your bowed down head as I pronounce the blessing of being poor in spirit. You are being rewarded by the revelation that all such are members of the Kingdom. You are being filled with

the riches of amazing grace. It does not mean that you are poor in material things. Material things have lost their brilliance and enticements to those who have been emptied of the love of self and the satisfaction of carnality. Your interest is in the kingdom of heaven. You have just been weaned from the breasts of natural consolations. Kingdoms of this world can no longer suffice to satisfy your desires. Tribulations have worked patience in you and has resulted in humility. No philosopher has listed humility as a virtue. Being poor in spirit is not a condition of life, it is the temper and state of the mind. It does not denote circumstances, but inward character.

Your soul mourns because you are poor in spirit. I comfort you with the blessings of my promise to wipe away the tears of humility, repentance, and love. Self-love, pride, and covetousness, have their tears which cause carnal mourning; but, until you are emptied of them, I cannot comfort you. The grace that lies at the foundation of every other, is to depend upon Me for all things. You must feel so dependent upon Me that you realize that without me you can do nothing. You mourn because your vain confidence is broken up, and your presumptuous self-righteousness is cast aside, your vain life with its thousands of violations of the holy law floods your mind! I comfort you by revealing to you that I took the slashing and piercing of the sword of divine justice in your stead. My spirit makes you free from guilt.

Meekness is the opposite of all that is arrogant, forward, and self-asserting. The meek will not demand his rights, but will suffer wrongdoing at the hands of enemies rather than to retaliate. You do not demand your rights but you inherit them as my gift to you. Yea, you inherit the earth as my reward which is a result of your meekness. A soft answer is mighty to turn away wrath. Satan cannot stand meekness; he will flee from it. Meekness is humility in the midst of persecutions. I prove to you that the quiet might of gentleness puts the arrogant to flight. Patience and submission is more powerful to subdue your persecutors than the attempt to affirm your rights by words or force. I teach you to pray to God for reconciliation to your lot, rather than to retaliate against your persecutors by grievous words and actions. Grievous words stir up anger: I teach you to be quiet and do your own business. Nothing necessary for you shall be taken away by your enemies. All you need of earthly things, you shall have as an inheritance. Natural bread for your body as well as spiritual bread for your soul, keep your soul and body from famishing. You can eat but one meal at a time, wear only one suit, occupy only one place, take one step, speak one word, have one thought, and do one thing; if you are enabled to do this, What more do you need for this moment? You need not store up food, clothing, money, real estate, and other earthly treasures in order to survive this day: I know what you need; I will supply your every need. The mighty shall be brought down by my Father. This kingdom which is not of this

world shall finally subdue all the worldly kingdoms. Kings of worldly kingdoms are arrogant, forward, and self-asserting. I, Jesus, am meek and lowly, yet the Heavenly Kingdom is built and ruled over by me. My subjects are poor in spirit, they mourn when I am absent, meek, hunger and thirst for righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, and are peacemakers; yet, they esteem me as their prophet, priest, and king! The subjects of my kingdom overcome the world because I dwell in them: yea, I am in their midst.

My people hunger and thirst after righteousness. I sprinkle your parched lips with living waters now and then. I sup with you on the wine of the kingdom. Your soul is sprinkled with the water of life. You sometimes wade and swim in the Holy Waters for a moment. You look forward to passing from time into eternity for the fullness of satisfaction of never thirsting. You hunger and thirst after righteousness when you are made to know that you have none of your own, -- nor any means to purchase it. I purchased it for you. I give it to you as you have need of it. I am the bread of Eternal Life. I am your righteousness. My doctrine is your bread for your soul. I give you water springing up into everlasting life. I have set you apart to especially favor you with my righteousness. I have sanctified you unto a most-holy climax.

"Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy." It is not that you obtain mercy by virtue of your mercifulness, but rather your mercifulness is the stamp that I have given you as proof that you are an inheritor of free forgiveness. I stamped your heart, mind, and soul with the divine favor freely given you of mercy. Your reaction is that you are merciful to others as I have forgiven you. ***"Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God."*** You cannot purify your own heart. When I purify it, you detest even the best of your own righteousness. You then converse with God in prayer through me. As I reveal the Father to you, you see Him. I prepare you to see Him. You can only stand short glimpses of Him. Be patient. When you awake in His likeness, you shall see Him as He is. I am eternal. You are not in time when you see me. I raise you up into the eternal NOW. You have experienced being lifted up beyond the timely realm. I have shown you things unlawful to utter in time. I sympathize with your cast-down feeling when you re-enter the timely realm. You grieve because you cannot call to remembrance the things you saw and heard. This brief moment in eternity causes you to pray for its fullness.

I have divinely favored you with the gift of peace. It is so stamped upon your heart that you hate confusion, trouble, disturbances, debates, and wars. When you attempt to negotiate peace, you are ready to sacrifice anything and everything that could be considered as personal opinions, worldly, or sensual. You cannot sacrifice the gifts and graces of the Spirit, because they are yours. God is the only one who can take them away! Peace be unto you.

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The first beatitude is tied unto the eighth beatitude with the words, ***"For theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*** These eight jewels signify the eight characteristics of each and every one of this kingdom. Your enemies shall persecute you because you are poor in spirit, and mourn, hunger and thirst for righteousness. They will revile you because you are meek and lowly. They will scorn you because you take persecutions without retaliation, forgive without being even asked, and do everything you can to live peaceable with all men. They even call you cowards because you do not fight for your rights. This sermon on the mountain is as fresh and beautiful today, as when my lips first parted to utter it to my disciples. These sayings of truth shall ever shine as the most precious jewels in the hearts of my people. My people rebel at the reasoning that the Bible is obsolete. Those who say that this sermon only belonged to my disciples who were with me at that time know not the truth. I make it fresh to you now. These words live for they are *WORDS OF TRUTH.*

I, E.J. Lambert, do testify that the words afore-written are my feeble attempts to express extemporaneously a very small portion of revelations that I have experienced while sitting at this typewriter. They have come with such authority that I did not hesitate expressing them as though Jesus was speaking. I am so finite that I only skimmed the surface of this conversation in heaven. I make no claim that it is infallible. Cast a mantle of charity over the many mistakes. I trust that while you read this article that it inspires you to again read the Sermon on the Mount as recorded in Matthew. May Jesus open unto you the scriptures of eternal truth. We pray God to enable us to write further upon this Sermon. This we will do, if God permit.

E.J. Lambert

THE FUTURE

At this time let us notice the following Scripture: ***"But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us (2 Cor. 1:9, 10)."*** This is a history of the apostle's salvation. Is it the history of yours?

Let us notice John 6:37. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. We have in this passage three of the fundamental points of doctrine. Election, effectual calling, and the preservation of the saints, is clearly and emphatically taught here. To deny one of these points is to deny the whole. If one is left out of God's choice; if one thus chosen is not brought; if one thus brought is not kept, then the doctrine is worthless. This is the history of the salvation of

the people of God. Is it the history of your salvation?

What did this declaration of truth do for you? Not the first thing. The choice of God did not bring you to Him; the declaration of His effectual work in bringing men and women to him, and in keeping them from every enemy that would arise did not do a thing for you. God's truth must be made to live in us; there must be a manifestation in our lives of the doctrine. This manifestation was made to one, a pattern left on the sacred pages of the New Testament, to wit, the apostle Paul. This work is shown in types and shadows, in figures and allegories all through the Bible, but brought to its full prominence in the history of Paul's life, and in a marked degree in every child of God.

As we look in on the Apostle in his second letter to these Corinthians, it is with delight that we read of his knowledge of the travel of a child of God. He had learned contentment in whatever state that he was in (Phil. 4:11), and his afflictions and his comfort were all tied in with the past and the present and the future. This sentence of death was not something acquired or apprehended or intercepted, but it was placed in him by the Spirit's mighty power. I have the Scriptures on my side about the past, both as to my experience and Paul's; likewise it is on our side about the present. If his testimony by inspiration, and mine (I hope) by revelation, does not convince, then it is not because of the weakness of what he and I have been delivered from, but because that the sentence of death is lacking in unbelievers. His trust for deliverance was justified just before his death, was made manifest in complete triumph. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Were the disciples ever commanded to have faith in themselves? Did the New Testament writers give us one example whereby we were to have faith in ourselves or in one another?

Trees always come before fruit. It is the tree that makes the fruit. The fruit does not bear the tree, but rather the tree bears the fruit. Any source of fruit receives credit for the fruit. Have we got a tree, either in reality or in a symbol, that is set in the nature of men, which will enable us to have faith in it for the future? Which of nature's gifts will we have faith in? It can not be the sword, for if we use that, we shall perish by it (Matt. 26:52); it can not be the natural mind for certainly our hope for the future must be in something more than foolishness (1 Cor. 2:14; it can not be, in the carnal mind for it is not, and can not be, subject to the law of God and is death (Rom. 8: 6,7); it can not be money for it had to perish with the user long ago (Acts 8:20); it can not be by the mighty and wise and noble, for but few of that kind are called and in that call they become the least; then in what shall we believe in for the future? Where is our faith coming from? It is all coming to us as a fruit of the Spirit. Faith is the gift of God, the product of the mighty working power of the in-wrought energy of God's Spirit (Eph. 1:19, 20; 2:8; Gal. 5:22). This faith is in God.

We sing:

" 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far
And grace will lead me home."

And we haven't had a hymnologist or chorister that would dare make two kinds of grace out of the experience of John Newton or Paul, but we sometimes, in this enlightened day, find folks preaching two kinds of grace. One kind saves, the other would, if you would. My future, as well as the future of the church of Jesus Christ is dependent on saving grace.

There are two kinds of looking to the future. One is begging God to lead and show us the way; the other is a dead traditional belief in the past, resting (not in his love (Zeph. 3:17), but) in laurels of long ago, pointing with pride to this man or that man or the other. What are we looking to for deliverance? Is our hope in God that raises the dead? Or is it in the name of yesterday's leaders? I would feel indeed sorry for the man that is not worried about present conditions among the Old School Baptists, but as bad as his condition would be, it is not as bad as it would be if I got to the place that I believed that about face was all that was needed to remedy the situation. How full of unbelief I am when I say one that has wandered away is able to find the way back. If the future of the church has depended on that in the past we are singing the wrong song, and we are preaching the wrong doctrine, and it would be becoming in us to change accordingly. If I did not know the way any better than to deviate from it, and my works were not the kind that keeps me, I feel mighty poorly about me getting to a former position. Lack of wisdom will not improve one's perception of the right way as we travel along further away; then I do not see how to get back. Lack of power to stay in the right way will not improve as I remain without it; then I do not see how that I can return, seeing that I am weak in both wisdom and power.

But, dear brethren, there is something much better than all of this, for, if you have been on a prodigal road, you learned that all this is a mess of husks. This kind of doctrine (if you will, God will) was placed on our brethren many times in the past. It is a galling doctrine and the church has not come to where it is by trusting in it. Grace and the in-wrought righteousness of Jesus Christ is a balm for the poor and needy. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for their's is the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5:3). It was given to the poor, and the poor we always have them with us (Matt. 26:11), thus as long as we have them with us they will have the kingdom of heaven. It used

to be the pleasure of our heavenly Father to give the kingdom to the little flock, which is as poor as it is little. If he gave this kingdom to the poor, since when has it become their's by their wisdom, ability, riches of the flesh?

The poor own this kingdom. It is a rich kingdom, and they are joint heirs with the King of it. The subjects of this kingdom are brought into its pleasant borders by the quickening power of God's Spirit. Being begotten again to an inheritance that is beyond this life, they are not left to shift for themselves, but are kept ready for that which is to come. Let me state here that if I am not deceived, my being kept ready is just as sure as the inheritance is safe in its laid up place (Psa. 31:19; Col. 1:5; 2 Tim. 4:8). I do not see any way for enemies, inwardly or outwardly, to get into that sacred abode and destroy that inheritance. He who called me, as I humbly hope, out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God, has promised to never cast out, never leave, not to leave comfortless.

In the days of Gideon a small remnant was saved. This salvation was of the Lord. In the days of Daniel a small remnant was saved. This salvation was of the Lord. In the days of Elijah a remnant according to election was saved. This salvation was of the Lord. In the apostle's day there was, at the precise time of which he spoke, a remnant according to the election of grace and they were saved by grace. If we are preaching what Paul preached, we, as boldly as he ever said it, are preaching salvation by grace for the fiery trials ahead, and, since I believe that when the Lord comes the second time without sin unto salvation that he will find faith in the earth, I feel just as sure as God is on his throne that those faithful people will be saying then, That there is a remnant today according to the election of grace.

This church was alright when I came to it. I am not condoning the evil among us; I will rebuke and reprove, exhort and admonish as long as I find it in my people. I will thank God for this church as long as breath is in this body, just like Paul did the Corinthians, even though I find in the body things that ought not to be there just like he did there. That little church is still alive down in Alabama that gave me my first taste of heaven below in a church capacity. As I have said, she was alright then, and as I have many times since then sat in her midst, sharing her joys and sorrows, I feel today that she is still faithfully keeping house for the Lord. Her membership has rose and fell over the years, but I am sure that when it was the least in numbers that God was taking care of her then; that every blessing belonged to those members as much as when the membership was larger. Now that I am a member in Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore, I feel that I can thank God for her, as I can thank him for past blessings down in Alabama. The two churches will survive as long as it is the will of our Father. They will be in a sad way when Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or some weakling like the writer, has to back track and get them

contented is that church, at home, abroad, on the land, on the sea, in times of sorrow, in times of weal or woe, in times of thanksgiving, in times of brotherly love and affections is blessed to sing

"The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures."

for ere long we shall sing the song of triumph in yonder's world and shall render all praise and honor and glory to the Captain of our salvation, past, present and for all time to come.

Elder W.D. Griffin

THE PRODIGAL SON

"And he said, A certain man had two sons: and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living." I quote only this much to conserve space: Please read the entire parable, Luke 15: 11-32.

his subject has been on my mind intermittently for a few months, causing a great burden of desire to write upon it, and offer a few thoughts on what I feel is encouched in this wonderful narrative. I have striven to get by without presenting my views, realizing this is a most sacred subject even for angels to tread upon, and I am only a poor dust worm. I know I cannot penetrate or discern the vital living substance and truth that is so mystically sealed and hid in this parable, except I be led by the unerring spirit of God; nor can any other man with the wisdom of this world, understand this or any other scripture. I do not profess to have any infallible light on the subject... but I hope I have not grasped the shadow and missed the substance. I have wrestled in the deep, yea, in the still night watches with this subject. Its first presentation was while bowed in humble pleading before my God in prayer. An humble hope wells up within me that through grace I have something in common with this Prodigal Son.

Dearly beloved: I would love to call your attention to the truth as laid down in the parable; that is, the two sons were both sons of one man (brothers). So far as birth, nature, or natural relationship, or ties of flesh and blood are concerned, they did not differ one whit - what one possessed, so possessed the other. A parable is a figure, a proverb, a dark saying: Jesus used parables to set forth or portray what has always been true. Please read the 7th and 10th verses of this 15th chapter of Luke.

In this particular parable I see two conditions set forth. The eldest, or first born of the two brothers - the one who stayed at home, the good boy, was only good in his own estimation, in his own carnal blindness, his own self conceit: he had not experienced the treachery of his own heart. He

frowned criticism, ridicule and contempt on his erring brother; even refused, in what he thought was his righteous anger, to take part in the feast which was spread for his brother: he with boasting, aired, even before his father's face, his own virtue and goodness, (see verse 29) confessing that he had not at any time transgressed the commandment of his father. Thus painting the poor, deluded, deceived mortal who is trusting in his own goodness, creature obedience, legalism, or law worshipper. His staying home represents to me no depths of experimental travel; (and we have this element about us,) even in the Old Baptist Church; for we have some who evidently feel they have at least just a little something to boast about - just some little element of good in them. Whereas, if they had the depth of experience of the Prodigal, they would know that they were not even worthy to be called a son.

Notice that it was the younger son who asked for his portion, *"the portion that falleth to me."* And his father divided unto them (the two) his living. This asking for a portion, signifies a state of unrest - a desire to come into his rightful heritage. But as soon as this was granted, he took his journey into a far country (experimental travel) and there wasted his substance in riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

Dear prodigal child of Zion's blessed King, do you see any likeness or resemblance of your own travel in this wilderness journey? If you do, I say unto you, Be of good cheer. It is for you, and all like you, that the fatted calf is killed. It is you who are adorned with the ring on your hand after your own strength fails - after your own ability to do something praiseworthy in God's sight fails. It is then He adorns your hand with a ring, a signet, a seal of his everlasting love; an evidence of your oneness in Him, His immutable omnipotence leading you gently by the hand. And from henceforth, all your labor is a labor of love.

"And shoes on your feet." He is your protector, keeper, leader, shielding your torn, bleeding, weary feet. He is leading and directing you in the Way (Christ) unto the end; so that you may tread upon scorpions, or drink the poison of asp or any deadly thing unharmed.

"The best robe upon you." The imputed righteousness of Christ.

"How far this heavenly robe excels
What earthly princes wear!
Nor can the tongue of angels tell
How bright the colors are."

This best robe supplants our own righteousness, which is but filthy rags, and hides all our hideous deformity of sin.

Humbly and conscientiously presented.

H.J. Bird

(This was written April 6, 1950, by the late Elder H.J. Bird.)

Editors

WHAT GREAT THINGS WE LEARN THROUGH TRIALS

Box 3,
Denison, Washington

Dear Editors and Readers:

It has been brought to my mind to write, and if I am given strength, and God so directs, I will try; without Him I can do nothing.

I have been blessed to enjoy the wonderful writings in the Signs, for they are the things I believe. God's people are made a willing people, and the things they experience today, are the same as those experienced by those long gone before. God is still the same eternal, steadfast, unchangeable, all powerful God.

I will try and tell of one of my experiences. My oldest daughter was missing all of one cold day and night. Her Dad and I started our search for her, but it was many hours of searching in vain. I was made to realize the helplessness and weakness of the flesh; but I was determined I would find her on my own, after having tried to pray, and knew that my efforts there, too, were all in vain. Oh, the bitterness and rebellion that befell me! It seemed to me He had turned his back and closed the door, saying, ***"I know you not."*** Oh, the torture I suffered in that state! I tried to pray, and couldn't. I tried to beg for mercy, and couldn't do that either. After what seemed an eternity, I was made to ask, ***"Almighty God, if you will, give me strength. Stand by me, and comfort me in my hour of need."*** I was made more calm now, praying for strength He alone could give; and was made to know that God is all power, and that of myself I had nothing - not even the power to pray. I believe all things come from God; and I mean all things.

It was near noon the following day when I was told to call a certain phone number; which I did. I placed the receiver to my ear, and heard my daughter's voice. ***"Oh, God!"*** I cried. I felt ashamed for the way I had acted; and my thoughts and heart uttered groans I could not utter. I feel sure that you, dear ones, who have had any of these experiences, know how I felt. I did then beg for His mercy; and to forgive this wicked, helpless mass of utter confusion, called man; this lump of clay; this lump of nothingness.

Yes, I believe we are made a willing people. He opens and none can shut; He shuts and no man can open. He gives, and He takes away. And I am made happy, and glad, for if He is with us, who then can be against us? He makes the lion to lie down with the lamb. He calms the storm. He, and He alone, comforts my heart and heals my sufferings; He humbles my heart and soul, and leads me in the way of his will. He makes me to know that he is GOD; and to know him is to fear him. And I am made willing for his will to be done. He is the potter, and I the clay to be moulded to his will and purpose.

My prayer is that I might be made humble, and to wait upon him. One of the very least, if one at all.

Hasseltine Allen

"But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." - 1 Peter v. 10.

If ***"the God of all grace"*** has indeed ***"called you unto his eternal glory,"*** - if he has touched your heart with his blessed finger, - remember you will have to walk, from beginning to end, in a path of suffering; for the whole path, more or less, is a path of tribulation. And, while walking in this path, and suffering from sin, Satan, the world, and the evil of your own heart, it is only to lead you up more unto ***"the God of all grace;"*** it is only that God may, in his own time, ***"make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle you."*** And when your soul has passed through these trials, you will see God's hand in all, praise him for all, and will perceive how good it was for you to have been afflicted, and to have walked in this painful path; that having suffered with Christ Jesus, you might sit down with him in his eternal glory!

J.C. Philpot

PSALM 11 : 1 - 2 .

In the Lord put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?

For, lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart.

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the next session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church, Duplin County, North Carolina on October 10-11, 1992. All who believe and love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited.

The Church is located on NC Highway 41 between Beulaville and Potters Hill. Traveling East from Beulaville, the Church is on the right and on the left traveling from Potters Hill.

Gene Lupton
Association Clerk

EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

God willing the Eastern Kehukee Association will be held with Stewarley Church in Williamston, N.C. on the first Sunday and Saturday before in October, which is the 3rd and 4th. The church is located on Route 17 in Williamston. We invite all who are of like precious faith and believe that salvation is by grace and grace alone to come and visit with us.

M.W. Lupton, Clerk
Eastern Kehukee Association

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Smith River Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Knob Church the first Sunday in September and Friday and Saturday before.

Those coming from the North on 220 exit right on route 605. Those coming from the South on 220 exit to the left on route 605. Follow route 605 to state route 798 and turn left to the church.

All lovers of the truth of our faith and order are invited.

Elder Hale Terry

ROMANS 8 : 30 .

Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 1992

H.M. Pullig, LA	$2.00
Mrs. Ina Hendrix, TN	7.00
Mrs. Roma Smith, AL	7.00
E.R. Graves, AL	5.00
Mrs. Minnie L. Barrett, AL	2.00
Mrs. E.G. Wilson, NC	2.00
Eld. W.M. Burkhalter, TX	2.00
Mrs. Harold May, AL	7.00
Mrs. G.B. McAdams, MS	2.00
Mrs. Fannie D. Wiles, VA	5.00
Milton Lupton, VA	2.00
Mrs. Ida Taylor, MD	10.00

1 CORINTHIANS 13 : 13 .

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

OBITUARIES

MEREDITH "DOC" ROBERT ARRANT

Brother "Doc" Arrant was born Aug. 12, 1908 and was called home to glory by his Lord May 17, 1992 at the age of 83 years.

Bro. Doc joined Union Primitive Baptist Church in July, 1984, and his wife, Sister Louise Arrant, joined Union at the same time. Bro. Doc was always faithful to attend and support the church until his health failed and he had to move to Texas to live with his son, and eventually to a nursing home until his death in the Atlanta Memorial Hospital in Atlanta, Texas.

Bro. Arrant is greatly missed by his family and all the brethren and sisters of the churches and by his many friends; but we believe he is now in the presence of the Lord whom he loved and worshipped. He was laid to rest in Union Church cemetery after a memorial service at the funeral home chapel conducted by his pastor Eld. C.C. Wilbanks.

Bro. Arrant is survived by his wife Sister Louise Edwards Arrant, one son, Roy Arrant, two brothers Ted and Van Arrant, and one sister Mrs. Clarice Young.

Submitted by,
Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

BROTHER LEE GOOCH

The time has come for us to pay our respects to Brother Lee Gooch. He was born March 18, 1902 and died May 18, 1992, making his stay on earth 90 years. He joined Tarboro Church on July 1, 1956 and was baptized by Elder R.B. Denson.

Brother Gooch loved his church and would always fill his seat as long as he was able. He enjoyed visiting the churches and associations, far and near. Brother Lee was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace and he enjoyed talking about the scriptures and what God had done for him in all of his trials and tribulations. He got much joy from the singing and raising the hymns in church.

The Church at Tarboro feel and trust Brother Lee is resting in the peace and love of our dear Saviour. We send our sympathy to his family and trust God will send them comfort. Therefore we resolve that three copies of this respect be made: one for the church records; one for the family; and one for publication in The Signs of Times.

Elder Henry Jones, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

PSALMS 138 : 3 - 4.

In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.

All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O Lord, when they hear the words of thy mouth.

SISTER ALINE BROWN GRANT

Sister Aline Brown Grant of Norfolk, Va., died March 9, 1992. She was born September 19, 1900, the daughter of the late Brother Duncan Brown and Sister Emma Brown. Her husband, John D. Grant preceded her in death February 25, 1992. Several years ago they moved from Wilmington to live with their daughter in Norfolk, Va.

Sister Grant united with the Wilmington Primitive Baptist Church December 20, 1931. She was baptized by the late Elder Ransom W. Gurganus. She remained a faithful member and attended meetings as long as she was able before moving to Norfolk.

Survivors include her daughter Mrs. Mary G. Hirsch of Norfolk, Va., five grandchildren, ten great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild, and a sister, Miss Olive D. Brown of Durham, N.C.

Written by order of the Church in Conference.

Sister Evelyn Pratt, Clerk

JESSE ROBERT RHUE

The good Lord, by his kind Providence and Tender Mercy, called our dear Brother Deacon from this life January 15, 1992 at the age of 95 years. Brother Jesse was the oldest of nine children, born to T.D. and Noma A. Rhue of Stella, N.C.

Those still living are: Mrs. Naomi Vinson of Stella; Roy T. Rhue of Newport, N.C.; W.R. Rhue of Cape Carteret, N.C.; Mrs. John Weeks of Swansboro, N.C.; Mrs. Eunice Norris of Newport, N.C. Three brothers preceeded him in death: Elder Z.L. Rhue and Joseph R.

Rhue both formerly of Winston-Salem, N.C. and Elder J.J. Rhue formerly of Swansboro, N.C.

Brother Jesse was first married to Lillian Mooney in 1920. Three children were born to that marriage: one son, J.R. Rhue, Jr. who preceeded his father in death; Two daughters who are Mrs. Vernona Draper of Weldon, N.C. and Mrs. Hellen Lee Williams of Fayetteville, N.C. His second marriage was to Francis W. Graham in 1970. She also preceeded him in death.

Brother Jesse was an educator serving in our public schools as a Principal until his retirement from public service.

Brother Jesse moved his church membership from Bunker Hill Church to Hadnot Creek Church by letter in June 1961. He was ordained a Deacon there in March 1962 and served faithfully as his health permitted.

Brother Jesse was a humble man. He was slow to speak but those of us that were blessed to serve with him felt that God gave him much wisdom. He always considered the welfare of the Church. He loved the Doctrine of God our Savior and enjoyed the sweet fellowship of the Brethren.

All of us, together with his family, miss him very much. We also would not wish him back. But we would say, ***"Sleep, on, take thy rest, for surely there remaineth a rest for the People of God." As David said, "When I awake with his likeness, not only to be like but satisfied."***

We pray God's Blessing upon the family and all who loved him.

His funeral was conducted by the writer of this at Jernigan Warren Funeral Home in Fayetteville, N.C. Burial was in Lafayette Memorial Park.

Done by order of the March Hadnot Creek Conference 1992.

Elder J.T. Prescott, Moderator
Vilma Rhue, Clerk

MRS. MELCINI ELLEN "MELLIE" SHARP

Mrs. Mellie Sharp of Bastrop, La. was born Aug. 25, 1912 in Allen Parish, La., and passed away July 2, 1992, at the age of 79 years. Funeral services were held at Golden Funeral Home July 12, 1992, conducted by Rev. Allen Eppinette and Elder C.C. Wilbanks, and she was laid to rest in Memorial Park Cemetery at Bastrop.

Mrs. Sharp was not a member of any organized church, but she had a sweet hope (and we believe) that she is a member of the church of Jesus Christ which he built and not man. We never hesitate to call her Sister Mellie. She was always faithful to attend the Old School Primitive Baptist churches in this area, and especially Concord Church. All those who knew her greatly miss this charming sister, but we believe that she is now in the presence of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Mrs. Sharp is survived by one sister, Mrs. Odell Anderson and one brother Mr. Elwood Baker, both of Bastrop, La., and a host of nieces and nephews.

Submitted by,
Elder C.C. Wilbanks

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 420 Keeling, Virginia 24566

THE LITTLE FLOCK

By Randolph Perdue - Jan. 1926

The little flock which God has blessed
With hope beyond the grave,
Is the dear bride that Jesus bought
By fruits that never fail.

Her name is written in His book,
Although she be but few,
And He'll bestow redeeming grace
On those He did foreknow.

The promise to the little flock,
Stands perfect and secure;
Not by the labor of her hands,
But what He did endure.

The little flock will surely see
The way the Pilgrims trod,
And travel in the narrow way
That leads to Christ, our God.

The words He spoke while here below
Are still forever new:
Be ye not fearful, little flock,
The kingdom is for you.

The kingdom is the gift of God,
Though we have won it not;
But Heaven's Jewel paid the debt,
And sealed it for the flock.

Reprint by request of L.J. Brammer.

(Elder Perdue was a former Moderator of the Pigg River Association.)
The Editors

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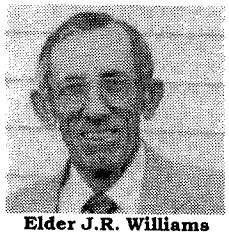
Elder J.R. Williams

Hebrews 8:6-11. ***"But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.***

For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.

For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:

Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."

Dear reader also read the 10th chapter, 16th verse slightly different but meaning the same.

We find that many covenants have been made in the bible, but for a covenant to be made it takes two people or two parties. In this arrangement God and man and man has always broken any part he was to keep, has not the ability to keep his word, promises more than he can do, Does he not, I do, do you?

In Genesis 9: 11-12, the first covenant I find, God gave a token of the covenant with man. His law in the cloud a promise that waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. Can we not rejoice that in seeing this, law after rain, realize that God's covenant is before us and as

strong as when it was made, after the flood.

I seem to see this new covenant as still based on two parties, His Son and the Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost which He promised to send in His name. Therefore this covenant was, not dependent on man to keep any part, established on better promises.

This is stated, I will do the writing in the hearts, I will put my laws into their minds. No part depending on the action of man to write or do any action, but not to even think, he will put His laws in their minds. Can we imagine anything more complete or perfect.

Not a law that could never bring life, only condemnation, not a law if ye keep my laws and my statues, then will I bless you with blessings, but a new covenant that promises life, and made only to Israel. He does the writing and the placing, in a part of the body that mankind doesn't have power to control nor access to, for that part, to cause to change or act differently. He controls body and mind.

Controlling heart and mind, by a change in desire and action. Oh what mercy is this, by the Lord of bliss. He will be God to all His chosen, they will run after no false God's or worship any idols, for they are His, this is a new covenant, all depending on His grace given us before the world was.

Then we come to a most beautiful part to me, telling us no man can teach one to know the Lord. "Wonder if all versions of the bible have this." For all His people shall know Him from the least to the greatest. We read to know Him is life eternal, can any fail to know Him? Can any be lost? if so He can not keep His covenant which is entirely established on the promises of God.

We then rejoice in a covenant that states we, if in that number, will know His laws, which I believe are as righteous, holy and just as God himself, will follow after, begging Him to enable us to live in a way acceptable to Him at His second coming. His law ever present in His people's heart.

We trust in that faith,
Elder J.R. Williams

PROVERBS 3:1-10.

My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:

For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.

Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:

So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil.

It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.

Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:

So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

ARTICLES

These thoughts have been running through my mind, and for the last few days I feel led to write about them. I don't want to take a portion of scripture and use it as though it was a text, but rather to write of these thoughts. I am hesitant to write this but seems I must. I do believe if it is God's will I write this, then write it, I will. For if it is God's will, there is no power that can prevent it being written, for he is working all things after the counsel of his will. As to why he would want it written, who can understand the mind and ways of God. If he wants it written, he has a purpose in it, what that purpose may be, I don't know, but that purpose will be fulfilled. Has he not declared the end from the beginning, saying my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. This is a positive statement, it is surely being carried out and it is not up to man to question in any way, or try to change. All the effects of all the men combined together could not change or turn his counsel one bit.

When we hear the news on T.V., radio and read the newspaper we learn of some terrible things happening, earthquakes, tornados, droughts, terrible diseases some of which seem awful bad. As we read and hear of all these things we can't help but wonder at times about the outcome. It seems the moment of weakness soon passes and the blessed Lord comforts us with such scripture as, fear not, for these things must surely come to pass, we are given the wonderful assurance that he will never leave or forsake his children, saying fear not the world, for greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. Fear not those who can harm the body, but rather fear Him who can cast the body and soul into torment.

We are shown this world is not our home, so the Lord in preparing us for our home, has taken away the love we have had for many things here, also the dread or fear of the things here which at one time, would bother us. However bad these things may seem, I believe they are all coming to pass exactly as God had decreed since before time began, of all the people on this earth, they all must die (except those who are alive at Christ's coming, they will be changed) for it is appointed unto man once to die, and after this the judgment. Therefore something has to kill or be the cause of man dying, God in his infinite wisdom has chosen to take some by wars, some other ways, and no one can question him in this, or say what doest thou.

The scripture says there is a time to live and a time to die, I believe we all will live out that appointed time to the exact second, not sooner, not later. We read where some of the would be wise men of this world say it is hard to determine the exact time of death, God knows. I believe if God has ordained some specific thing for a person to do before he leaves this life, there is nothing that can take him out the world before he does it. The power

of the devil and all his workers, any of these so called accidents or anything else.

Read in Eccles. 3:15 for nothing new is happening, anything that happens or comes to pass, has already come to pass in the mind and purpose of God. So, I would ask you, what about all these things which happen, that men call accidents?

The devil with all his power, men with all their greed, lust and evil ways will not change one of God's appointed things, as I have thought, so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed, so shall it stand.

In the beginning, God said, let there be light, and the sun shown forth in all its splendor, see the word let, when used by God, has power. When man says let, something has to happen. We read where he spoke of the light to shine out of darkness. Think about that, a light to shine into darkness is one thing, to shine out of darkness is something else. He came to this earth, He was that light, He did shine out of darkness, even so, man was so weak. God so great, man couldn't even see that light until God opened his eyes to see it. Now man has the gospel preached to him and all around him, and he can't hear it either until God gives him hearing ears, to hear.

I wanted to write a few lines about the power of an almighty God, showing some of the ways he has dealt with all things down through time. I want to write just a couple words about the 2nd covenant, first, God said, "they shall be unto me a people and I will be unto them a God." This is one instance of the wills and shalls of God, from which we the Hardshells got our name. In times past they spoke so much of the wills and shalls of God, later using the word, hard shalls of God. In time with much use, the phrase became hardshells instead of hard shalls. These words will, and shall, as used by God carry the same power as the word let, which we just wrote about, they are sure, and the power complete, no way they could fail. As I have thought so shall it come to pass. Speaking of the 2nd covenant God said he would put his laws in their mind and write them in their heart, saying also, they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying know the Lord, for they all shall know me from the least to the greatest. He will take the things of mine and show them unto you, no one else could write his laws in their heart.

We see great masses of people who profess belief in God, most of them believe they have the power, the ability the right to either accept or reject the offer of salvation by God. They believe if they have the desire to, they can say yes, I accept, write their name on their church book and they are saved, or they can say no until such time as they may want to change their mind. I am writing of these things as if I know something about them, indeed I do. I at one time was an Arminian, enrolled in a church of another faith. I attended church ever Wednesday evening and twice on Sunday, I was one of the good boys, I would carry my bible under my arm and by attend-

ing church services, I was doing my duty to God, and I did believe I was surely better than most. Please understand this is the way I saw myself at that time. I was so good and knew my bible so well. I felt bound to teach and save others by my efforts.

I had an older brother, named Landon who was a member of the Old Baptists. I didn't know a lot about their doctrine, or his belief, however I had heard they believed in election, they believed God had a people chosen in him before the foundation of the world. This group, or these people would be saved while all others would be lost. Why I had or knew scripture to prove that wrong. So I decided to go have a talk with him, I was going to show him where I was right and he was wrong.

Here I want to bring in some of my experience which may not seem much to others, but it is precious to me. I won't bother you readers with different things that have happened down through the years, but I do want to write about this one thing I won't attempt to use all the scripture that was involved that day, there was too many, just a few to show you what happened.

I was alone at home one Sunday afternoon, and I decided to write down some scriptures and where they could be found in the bible. I wanted these ready so when I could go talk with my brother I would have them.

Jo. 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

This is the first scripture I wrote down, because the whosoever in my mind, showed me that anyone could believe on him and be saved. This I thought surely taught, that more than that little group the Old Baptists spoke of would be saved.

Matt. 23:37 Oh! Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killeth the prophets and stoned them which are sent unto thee, how often I would have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathered her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.

This is the second scripture I was to use, here in my mind the Lord was telling the people how he would have gathered them all together, protect them and treat them as a hen would her chickens, but they would not. I saw this as a clear invitation from God to these people, and they would not, in other words it was up to these people, and their own free will, they could accept, or reject as they themselves saw fit, or so chose.

Matt. 11:28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

These three scriptures are all I am going to write about to prevent being too lengthy, there was however quite a few more. This scripture, Matt. 11:28 as I saw it then, meant God was pleading with people to accept him, to come unto Him and He would give you rest.

There could be much said about all these scriptures but I only want to point out the one thing that would

most surely show, I was right and my brother wrong.

I had stopped writing for a moment and was sitting there trying to think what scripture I would next use, when all of a sudden it seemed as if I was looking down through a long dark tunnel or tube, and scripture verses were coming into view down at the other end of this tunnel. They would appear small at first, getting larger as they came toward me, then passing on by, they seemed to be lit up so they were plain to see. I won't attempt to write all the scripture that was shown me there, because it was quite a bit of it. The 1st scripture I had written was John 3:16 Whosoever believeth, all the scripture that was shown to me then, was scripture concerning belief in God. Out of them all the one verse that impressed me the most concerning belief in God was this one. ***John 6:29 This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.*** I can't begin to tell you how this affected me. I knew the answer then to, whosoever believeth. I was shown quite clearly, without doubt, that all who believed would be the ones the good Lord taught or led to believe. Then they would know the truth, and the truth would make them free. I then decided I wouldn't use that verse of scripture when talking to my brother, so I crossed it out.

To prevent writing too much I will list the other two verses together. 1st there was Matt. 23:37 speaking of people who would not come unto Jesus, and 2nd Matt. 11:28 Come unto me all ye that labour. Once again as I was thinking about my next scripture to write, the same thing happened, all this scripture began appearing as if coming up through a tube or tunnel. This time in answer to my question, come unto me, and the other verse which read, and ye would not. In my mind at that time these verses proved that Jesus was pleading for people to come unto him, and they would not. Here are just a couple of the many scriptures that answered that question for me, that day. No man can come unto me, except the Father which sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day. Any plant which my Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of god who showeth mercy.

What shall we say then to these things? Every verse of scripture I had written down to prove my brother's belief or doctrine was wrong, proved to me without question, he was right, I was wrong. No more can anyone tell me Jesus is begging or pleading for people to come unto him, and they would not. No more can anyone tell me a person has a free will to believe or reject as he thinks. To begin with Jesus is not offering salvation to anyone, as I thought he was, at that time. He did offer himself as a sacrifice to God the Father, which was accepted, making salvation sure to all the Father had given him. I now know the meaning of the words, He will take the things of mine and show them unto you. I now firmly believe God is a

sovereign God, and is working all things according to the good pleasure of his will, both in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. How could it be any other way when the preparation of the heart and the answer of the tongue is in God's hand. I know the meaning of turn me and I shall be turned. All I can say is, the great mystery of why would such a Holy and Great God, be so good to me, I hope I can live to thank him and in some small way, I hope down in my heart I can praise his holy name.

I do believe there has been placed within my breast a love for the brethren, that was beyond my power of putting there. May God in his infinite wisdom and mercy bless me to continue with or in this love.

I know when you speak of a sovereign God who has all power, and who is working all things after the counsel of his will, that there are some who won't believe and dislike hearing it preached. He has shown me, that those he wants to believe, will believe. The scripture says he will harden the hearts of any he so chooses, so where does that leave us?

Some say hard doctrine, but I say the sweetest thing under heaven, because this doctrine tells us, that all who believe in God, will spend eternity with him, with this doctrine your salvation is sure, not subject to failure because of the weakness of the flesh. What could be sweeter? Forgive the mistakes, I desire your prayers.

A brother I hope,
Frank Hunt
102 Lake Ave.
Salem, Va. 24153

If I am truly aware of what my feelings are, when I write, it is without any intent whatsoever, to hurt anyones feelings in what I write; and yet I have every intent, to not shun writing down exactly, what I feel to be the Holy truth, as I feel and hope, I was shown by the Holy Spirit; only the three-one God knows for sure. From time to time with me, I feel so very sure, the Lord has come into this poor sinners heart, that I do not question it at all; and yet still I am brought to remembrance, that we live by hope, and so therefore, I must not falsely claim to know the mind of God; and so therein, I must (if Gods' will), continue within the bounds of a hope, while hoping it could be a lively hope; God knows for sure.

I do feel that if what I feel and write, be supported by the Spiritual meaning of the Holy Scripture, then all is well with me; but if that not so be, then it can be no more than filthy rags in His sight; so you see, it must and does go right back to hope.

I do believe that my awareness of my weakness, is a gift from God; for I do not believe that human nature of itself, could ever come to that conclusion.

From time to time, I feel to say - I am what I am by the grace of God; I hope, "God" knoweth for sure.

I am reminded of a passage of scripture (I may not quote word for word) - When a man thinks he knows much, he knoweth nothing or no thing as he ought.

Whenever I write down my feelings concerning these things, it is with fear and trembling; not of man, oh no not that; but of the all wise "God" who knoweth all things, even long before they are a time reality, even from before the foundation of the world.

Oh yea, my brethren, He being the Creator of our brain and our heart, it is an entire impossibility for any feeling to enter our heart, or any thought to enter our brain, but exactly those for which He created them for and to feel and think, for He is the perfect God; He always has known, and always will know all things.

True answerable prayer unto God, is in nowise, an attempt, to inform God of anything; for He is already fully aware of all things, for He is everywhere present and nowhere absent, and is always fully aware of the intent of both the mind and heart of everyone; and furthermore, all True answerable prayers are placed within the heart of every one who utters or groans such prayer; not only does He prepare the one for to pray, and what to pray for, but also, His answer to that prayer, was already prepared, from the foundation of the world; you see, nothing has ever, or will ever, come as a surprise to this God.

For you see, God provides both the preparation of the heart and the answer of the tongue; so making it an entire impossibility, for any unforseen thing taking place with Him.

Oh yes, man devises; but "God" accomplishes; man walks; But "God" directs his footsteps; In Jonah's mind and intent, he was running away from what God had in store for him to do, but unknowing to Jonah, his every step was in that exact path God had mapped out for him to follow, Yes even his three days and nights in the belly of the fish.

You see, it takes strength to think, speak, move or have our very being; and all strength is derived from some power source; and so almighty God having all power both in heaven and earth, and all powers, what be, are ordained of God. Leaves it unquestionable that He assuredly is in absolute and complete control over all things at all times.

Now if that leaves man any room or ability to alter or change what God purposed to be, then I know nothing about anything.

So you see, His name, must be and is, the only name, ever worthy of any praise, honor or glory.

From time to time, I so much desire to praise my God, I feel that I would gladly (and I hope thankfully), leave this earthly world, just to be able to praise His worthy and Holy name, as I would that I could; and yet I feel for sure, His way is the only way that is perfect and Holy. I just hope I could be, one of His little ones.

I love (I hope for Christ sake) these words - Praise God from whom all blessings flow, praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above,

ye heavenly host, Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. (704 in Lloyds).

My papa was an Old School Primitive Baptist in this life here upon this earth, who soundly believed in the Absolute Predestination of all things, by the Almighty and Merciful God.

I so very clearly remember saying to him, as he lay upon his death bed, just a short time before he died - Papa I do not know for sure if I have ever been truly thankful unto my God, or have ever in Holy truth praised His Holy name, but have so very much desired to do so; Papa said to me, son if a desire such as you express, is not so doing, then I know not what it is either. But those words he spoke to me then, has been much comfort to me, many times since.

Dear chosen vessels of God's mercy: In as much as be in accord with the will of God; let us be in remembrance of Thy greatness O God, of Thy long suffering, of Thy great mercy and grace to usward, of Thy love and kindness toward us who have never (of ourselves) earned even your notice, much less the great shower of blessings Thou hast showered upon us all the days of our lives, let us have just enough worldly riches that we will not steal, but not enough that we shall forget Thee O God; we do so hope to have ask these blessings in remembrance of Thy Dear Son Christ Jesus and for His sake amen.

As it were when almighty God said, Let there be light and there was light. And so it was, and is, and ever shall be, if He let it be, it is; otherwise it shall not be.

With mankind, there are big things and little things, important things and unimportant things; While with "God" it is All things.

In hope of eternal life, I am (I hope),
Your brother in Christ Jesus, The Lord,

Troy G. Shepard
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VOICES OF THE PAST

THE WAY OF A MAN WITH A MAID

In the Proverbs of Solomon we find that in all his wisdom, he said, ***"There be three things which are too wonderful for me, yea, four which I know not."*** The fourth thing being, ***"the way of a man with a maid."*** I would not tell you that I understand this, for no words can describe the beauty therein; but I do feel that the man and the maid are figures of Christ and the church.

I would like to start with Adam being a figure of Christ; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. ***(Christ said, "No man can come unto me except the father which sent me draw him.")*** Adam said that this is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. ***"Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife;***

and they shall be one flesh." I feel that there is nothing on earth as precious to a man's heart as his bride. There is also nothing on earth as precious to Christ as the church. A man's bride is to forsake all others, just as the church is to forsake the world for her husband (Christ).

We find that the angel appeared unto Joseph in a dream, saying, *"Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost."* I hope I believe in predestination; for I believe that in the foreordination of God, Mary was the wife of Joseph. And I believe that the church was predestinated to be called, justified, and glorified; and I believe that Christ feared not to come into the world and cleanse her for himself; for the Spirit of Christ that is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

We find in Genesis 3:16, *"Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."* Ephesians 5:22 *"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord."For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."*

We find in I Corinthians 14:33, *"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. Let you women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church."* This I have experienced; for when our deacons were laboring so hard for peace, and to hold the church together, the women started making motions, and seconding them, and caused division. I see the regret of this shameful act.

I know that I am poor and ignorant, but some things come to my mind; and I am made to wonder. With all due respect to ministers, I wonder if this scripture could apply to them. For the bride has many members in one body, and all members have not the same offices; so we being many are one in Christ. I realize that the minister has to present himself a living sacrifice, not knowing if he will be blessed by the Husband with the gospel; and, if not, and he preaches in the flesh, he will preach the things of the flesh; and fleshly things are shameful things.

We find in Acts 20:28, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath pur-

chased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." To me, an overseer is an adviser; not a ruler. He has rules with which to advise, just as the minister has the Holy Writ with which to advise. I feel our deacons are to watch over the table, which is the pulpit, and to see that the food is fit for the flock. The deacons are to take care of the church of God.

Those that are married know the ties of natural love; and those that are married to Christ know the ties of spiritual love. I like to think back over my experience, if indeed I have one, when I felt my burdens to be more than I could bear. I had been out in the darkness of the night crying and begging God for mercy, the forgiveness of my sins. I couldn't live; and I couldn't die. When I came in, my wife met me, and said, ***"You can tell me your troubles, for I have known this for a long time."*** I believe that only the children of God; know the works of God; and I felt very small to think that I had tried to hide these things from one so precious to my heart. ***"Houses and riches are the inheritance of fathers: and a prudent wife is from the Lord."*** (Proverbs 19:14)

I realize that it is impossible to tell all the glorious things about this Husband and wife, so I would like to close with the beautiful sight the angel showed John in Revelation 21: 9-11: ***"And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal."*** This is the bride that He cleansed to present to himself a glorious church, not having spot, wrinkle, or any such thing; but that is should be holy and without blemish.

If I am not deceived, he shewed me this church in a dream. They were all clothed in solid white, no male or female; and the beauty thereof I cannot describe. I hope I love this church with such a love that, as Paul said, if eating meat offends her, I will eat no more meat. I know the Bible says that it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh! It is better to have a millstone tied around my neck, and be cast into the sea, than to offend one of these little ones. And I hope that God will bless me and enable me, should at anytime my presence cause confusion and unrest among the people I hope I love, to step aside, that the sea might be calm, and the ship cease to rock.

I realize that the belly of hell is an awful place; but it is not a new place for this poor sinner. I believe with all my heart that the only road to heaven

is through hell. My prayer is to be kept humble at my brethren's feet; for he that exalts himself shall be abased. I don't mean to be offensive to anyone, but the word of God is offensive to unbelievers. ***"The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going"***, for the truth causes us to judge ourselves, and not others.

The bride shall not be judged, for He has cleansed her with his blood; and she shall be acceptable to her husband on that day for which all other days were made.

Clifton Robertson,
Reidsville, N.C.

A TALK WITH DEATH "O DEATH, WHERE IS THY STING? ..." (1ST COR. 15:55)

The thoughts of death have terrified me with such horrors that I have had no desire to talk to it. It has heretofore appeared as a terrible monster most willing and anxious to devour me at the least provocation. I have seen it as an adder ready to pounce upon me and to insert the deadly poisonous venom in the sting of death. These horrifying experiences have caused me to cry aloud for mercy. I have viewed it as my greatest enemy. Of course, I have for many years tried to shun the thoughts of it and was far from wanting to talk to it. Lately, I have thought differently about it. I have been given a hope that some day I can gladly talk to it realizing that it is not as powerful as it has appeared. I have anticipated saying to it when my journey comes to an end here, "O DEATH, WHERE IS THY STING?"

I have stood by the bedside of loved ones and watched them slip from time into eternity. I have been amazed as the frown of death was changed into a smile of life. I have watched troubled expressions turn into a peaceful calm. I heard the dying groans of one person cease and the same voice utter the sweetest words that could be imagined as she drew in the last breath of natural life. I have of late wondered if they were having their last talk with death by asking it, "O DEATH, WHERE IS THY STING?"

I do not wish death to answer when I talk to it because I believe its power shall have been subdued and it cannot answer when I shall be privileged to talk to it. I do not expect the dead to answer because we read in Eccles. 9:5 that the dead know not anything. I want the answers to come from God through His saints. As I begin to meditate upon this subject that has so terrified me before, this question comes to mind: O DEATH HAVE NOT I TALKED TO YOU IN THE PAST?

The Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write, in 2nd Cor. 1:10 "Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust he will yet deliver us." Paul talked of a past deliverance from a GREAT DEATH. He must have been acquainted with it. He met it face to face when sin revived as a result of the law being indelibly written in his heart by the operation of the

Holy Spirit. He confirms in Romans 7:9 that once he was alive without the law but when the commandment came the result was the revival of sin which slew him. Using Paul's words to express it - he plainly affirmed, "I DIED." I feel that he suffered the sting of death to such an extent that he lost his life. His soul fainted in him. The pangs of death got hold of him and he experienced the great sting of it. I conclude that the infusion of the Spirit of Eternal Life brought death to him.

We read in Ezekiel 18:4, "** The soul that sinneth, IT SHALL DIE" Paul experienced the death of his sinful soul when his soul was eternalized by the infusion of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus. We note that, "Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; to DELIVER THEIR SOUL FROM DEATH, and to keep them ALIVE in famine." (Psalms 33: 18-19) David said, "He restoreth my soul." Have not I talked to death when I found it to be powerless to destroy my soul even though my soul had been killed? I am persuaded that the death experienced in regeneration had the greatest sting of any experience that I shall ever again have with death. Have I not talked to it daily as I have been delivered from its clutches and sting by the grace of God? Paul said, "I die daily." (1st Cor. 15:31) I wonder if I have talked to it each time in my deliverance. The next question relative to death is, O DEATH, WHAT IS THY STING?

Let us listen to Paul as he testifies, "The STING of death is SIN" (1st Cor. 15: 56) If sin be the sting of death I first tasted its sting when I was convinced that I was a sinner. When I was convinced I was chief of sinners I experienced its greatest sting. When I was brought into the captivity of sin and realized I was imprisoned in it I suffered its awful sting. Sin is that which kills, for the wages of sin is death. James affirms in his epistle, "**Sin, when it is finished bringeth forth death." (James 1:15) My next question that I shall seek for an answer is, O DEATH, WHAT IS THE STRENGTH OF THY STING?

Paul answers this question by saying, "The strength of sin is the law." (1st Cor. 15:56) Then, death cannot have dominion over any other ones than those who are under the law. Paul concludes in the next verse, "But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Death then can be swallowed up in victory. Read the Scriptures and you will find that death does not have dominion over those for whom Christ died. Death cannot conquer those for whom He accomplished the law. The victory of Christ over death is given to all those who were chosen in Him. Paul wrote to "The beloved of God, called to be saints" these comforting words in Romans 6:14, "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are NOT UNDER THE LAW, BUT UNDER GRACE." If we are not under the law then sin cannot reign over us. If sin cannot reign over us we have eternal life and can never die. If we have eternal life we have passed from death unto life and shall never perish in eternal death. In this sense we can-

not sin because we are born of God and His seed remaineth in us. See 1 John 3:9. Sin does not reign in those who are born of God. The carnality or sin that dwells in us serves the law of sin which is that flesh of ours not yet having experienced the quickening of the Holy Spirit. Our minds and hearts have experienced this quickening, but we are awaiting the quickening of our mortal bodies by this eternalizing Spirit. The next question in our talk with death is, O DEATH WHAT ART THOU?

We find that the first mention of death in the Bible was a fore-warning of consequence placed upon Adam and Eve for partaking of the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil. It was declared they should lose their freedom. Death was a penalty for the transgression of the law, and is the wages of sin, as has already been shown. Death is passed upon all men for all have sinned according to Romans 5:12. Death is the cessation of natural life. I feel that when Adam and Eve partook of the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil they became as God in the sense of knowing good and evil as the Scriptures bear us record. Read Genesis 3:22-24. Since that time the TREE OF LIFE has been so hedged in and even the TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL that man has been dependent upon God's grace to partake of either.

Man ceased to have his freedom in the garden and the high privileges of all the things pertaining to God and godliness was taken from his reach. Death is a separation from something, or things, which the subject was before in possession of. The last phase of death is explained in Ecclesiastes 12:7: - "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." It is referred to in the Scriptures as, "Giving up the ghost" in Acts 5:10. In other places it is termed a sleep, a departure, a going the way of all the earth, a dissolving the earthly house of this tabernacle, and a being absent from the body and present with the Lord; as well as, sleeping in Jesus. The next question we shall pursue is, O DEATH, HOW DIDST THOU EFFECT ME WHEN I FIRST DIED?

Paul catalogued DEATH among the ALL THINGS that work together for good as noted in the 8th chapter of Romans from the 28th verse to the conclusion of the chapter. I maintain that the death experienced by Paul spoken of in the 7th chapter of Romans, 9th verse, was a blessing in disguise. Surely Paul was made somewhat better by having experienced it. If you compare Romans 7:9 with Romans 7:17 you will find a changed "I". After he had experienced this death and the resurrection from it he said, "It is no more I that do it but SIN THAT DWELLETH IN ME." There is a great deal of difference in sin dwelling in a person than SIN REIGNING. Paul did not serve sin any longer even tho it dwelleth in him. It was no longer the reigning influence of his life. The death that I died in my experience many years ago was the tool used in God's

hands to cause me to hate sin and its consequences. Before experiencing this death and the entrance of the divine law, I rejoiced in things sinful, and was the servant of sin. Afterwards, the best of my own self righteousness is filthy and sinful to me. Death killed me to the love of self and confidence in the flesh.

My next question: O DEATH, HOW DOTH GOD CONSIDER THEE RELATIVE TO SAINTS? God answers through the Psalmist, "PRECIOUS in the sight of the Lord IS THE DEATH OF HIS SAINTS." (Psalms 116:15) Our Lord considers death of great value to those whom He hath set apart to lavish His mercy upon. It is used in the sanctifying process. The term, SAINTS, mean sanctified ones. They were set apart from all eternity by God. They were sanctified in Christ Jesus. They are sanctified by the blood of Christ, the Holy Spirit, and by all the graces contained in the new covenant. Even this first death experienced in regeneration is precious in His sight. It was awful for us to experience but I trust that I have been given to thank God for it many times. I feel that I now see how valuable it was in separating me from self confidence and yearning desire to please my carnal nature. The death I die each and every day of my life is being shown to me a thing ordained for my good instead of being against me. I can look back and see the value of the death experienced thus far; but, I cannot see the death I am experiencing today so precious. I may be given to see it tomorrow. Of course, the final phase of death will be precious. This final separation from all things natural, carnal, material, and timely will be of great benefit to the saints of God. Surely it will be precious to the Lord when all the saints whom He loves so dearly shall have been separated from time by death, and shall have been gathered together in Heaven with Him. The next question: OH DEATH, WHAT SHALL I CALL THEE WHEN I SHALL HAVE FINISHED MY COURSE?

Paul talked much of death in his epistles. He talked of the horrors of it and the need of sinners to be delivered from it. He talked about it as a judgment of God upon those who followed after the flesh. He thanked God for having delivered him from it. He rendered praise unto Him for constant deliverances. He trusted Him for future deliverances. When he had finished his course and came face-to-face with the death of his natural body he had a different attitude toward this phase of it. Read II Timothy 4: 6-8 and you will find that he was ready for it. He did not term this phase as death but rather "MY DEPARTURE". When he had finished his course he was READY TO BE OFFERED. I do not believe he was ready before then even though he termed it as more to be desired than dwelling in his earthly house. I firmly believe Paul welcomed this departure. When we are so thoroughly convinced of the frailties of our earthly house and the imprisonment that it proves to be, I feel, we shall rather desire this departure from this earth into Heaven. When I come to the end of my course here I trust by

the grace of God through the Merits of Jesus Christ to term death my departure. When I shall reach the end of the way of all men and my departure is at hand, I trust I shall talk to death victoriously. I shall talk to it of its benefits. I shall term it many things beautiful and precious.

I shall say, O DEATH, INSTEAD OF A STING THOU ART A RELIEF. No more physical pains to torment me. No more suffering of conscience shall make me so despondent. No more sins shall hamper or frustrate thoughts, acts, and words that my pure mind and heart would have me think, say, and do. There shall be no more separations from loved ones. There shall be no more weakness of body to become weaker and weaker as natural life wanes. My eyes shall no longer need glasses. My ears shall not become duller of hearing. My dwelling place shall no longer be in a body subject to death. I anticipate saying to it, O DEATH, INSTEAD OF DREADING YOU, I WELCOME YOU. YOU ARE MANY THINGS WONDERFUL TO ME.

Instead of the end, you are the beginning. You are the passageway from earth to Heaven. Instead of the wall, you are the doorway. You are the dressing room where mortality shall be clothed with immortality. You are the anesthetic God uses to condition one for the major operations necessary for all the saints of God to be properly adapted to live eternally in Heaven with the Lord and all of His angels.

I have enjoyed my talk with death but have not depended upon death to answer any of the questions. I fondly anticipate talking with it when my time here ceases. May God bless these thoughts to your comfort and edification.

E.J. Lambert

THE CHURCH OF GOD WHAT IS IT?

How indefinite and vague is the popular idea of the church of the Living God; and how various are the applications of the word church in the parlance of the learned and unlearned theologians of the present times. A building erected for the convenience and accommodation of religious convocations, by almost universal consent, is called a church; and by that name, with great ceremony, is frequently consecrated, and with much parade given to the Lord! A church made of wood, or of bricks and mortar, so consecrated is by many regarded as a most holy place. Others with scarcely less absurdity apply the term to all religious organizations; as the Catholic church, the Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, or Mormon church: and these with very many other religious bodies are very generally regarded as churches of God, but of different denominations, alike entitled to be known as churches of God, and all in their different ways, real worshipers of God, and alike acceptable to him. But the Scriptures of truth can only recognize the church of God, as one body, having but one head, built upon one rock, by but one builder.

The inspired apostle Paul says, "There is one body, and one spirit; even as ye are called in one hope of your calling: one Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Will this apostolic description of the church of God apply to all the discordant and conflicting organizations which claim the name, but deny all the essential characteristics which divine inspiration has shown to be indispensable to the church of God? Do all these towering piles of brick, or lumber which men call churches, stand vitally united to Christ as their head? Have all the various denominations alluded to above, kept the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace? Have they all but one Lord, one faith, and one baptism? Are they all one body, having but one spirit; and do they all even profess to be called in one hope of their calling? They certainly do not.

If then these great popular denominations, when weighed in the balance, are found wanting, and when tried by the Scriptures are rejected; does it not become us, who profess to be Old School, or Primitive Baptists, most carefully to examine, in the light of divine revelation whether we possess the marks by which the holy Scriptures identify the church of God?

When the rising Savior brought the immortality of his church to light; when he had vanquished death and finished transgression, made an end of sin, having obtained eternal redemption for all his members; he ascended up on high; went to his Father and our Father, to receive the kingdom which the Father had appointed him, and his coronation as King of Righteousness and Priest to the Most High God; he was raised up far above all principalities and powers; and all thrones and dominions were made subject to him; and he was given to be Head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. In evidence of all this He sent the Spirit down, as he had told his disciples he would, which came like a rushing mighty wind, immersing all who, obedient to his command, were in the house, and recognizing them as the only body vitalized by his Spirit and Baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. On this occasion the church appeared in the first disclosure of her gospel organization; and was expressly recognized as the church, unto which God continued to add such as should be saved. The constituents of the church of Christ are, first, Our Lord Jesus Christ himself, as the Head, the King and only and blessed Potentate, the Prophet and Priest, the Way the Truth and the Life. In whom is vested exclusively all legislative power. Second, the Apostles of the Lamb, seated, by the special command of Christ, on twelve thrones of judgment, not of legislation, immediately inspired by the Holy Ghost to rule in Judgment, as infallible expounders of the laws, ordinances, doctrine and order of their Sovereign. Next to the apostles, are Evangelists, and pastors and teachers. These are solemnly required to recognize, and be governed by the laws of Christ the King, as laid down and expounded by

the enthroned apostles; with express instructions to be governed by the laws and institutions of Christ, without presuming under any circumstance to alter, revise, add to or diminish from the decisions made and recorded by the apostles. Deacons, exhorters, helps and every gift as found in the apostolic rules, are to recognized precisely as it has pleased God to distribute them among the members of Christ's body for the profit and benefit of all the church.

All the members which the church has power to recognize, must come in by the door; all who would climb up some other way, are thieves and robbers, who come in only to steal, to kill and to destroy.

As all the laws of the church of Christ are immutable and irrevocable, the same rule which was observed at the day of Pentecost for admitting to fellowship are in force throughout all ages in Christ's church; and any community claiming to be his church that does not recognize them is an harlot and not the church of God. This declaration may seem uncharitable; but let those who fear God beware how they controvert it.

We hold, first, that Christ has no church in earth or heaven over which he does not positively preside.

Second, There is no church existing over which Christ presides except where his apostles rule in judgment. For he himself has said, "When the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory; (his Mediatorial throne is the throne of his glory) then shall ye also set upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." We know that the apostles are not here now in the flesh, nor is the Savior now here in the flesh; for henceforth know we them no more in the flesh. But all their doctrine order and decisions are here in every church or branch of the church where Christ presides as the King; for Christ has further said that whosoever rejects his apostles rejects him also. They cannot be separated in the organization of his kingdom or church.

Now then, Let the laws of Christ, embracing all the doctrine which he established, as settled forever by the decisions of the holy apostles, as left on record in the New Testament, be regarded as the infallible standard or test by which the church of Christ is identified, and, it must follow that all who are deficient in these essential and indispensable points are weighed in the balance and found wanting. This cannot be the case with the church of Christ; for she is the Ground and Pillar of the Truth. She is the perfection of beauty. She is the workmanship of God, and All his work is perfect. It therefore follows inevitably that all who profess to be the church of Christ, and reject him, his apostles, his doctrine, his ordinances, or his government, are base impostors.

In view of these well defined principles, let us look well to the order established by the apostles, for the reception of members to church fellowship and membership. Of those who were received on and about the day of Pentecost it is written, that the Spirit was poured out in a most astonishing manner, in fulfillment of the

prophecy of Joel, by virtue of which many heard the preaching of the apostles, so that they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Thus quickened by the Spirit and made to feel and know their lost and helpless condition, their minds were directed to the apostles for instruction, and when the way of life and salvation was opened to their understanding, and the word applied to them by the Holy Ghost, they gladly received the word. A wonderful change was wrought in them; insomuch that the word which had no attraction, and of the spirit and power of which they had always been so profoundly ignorant before, now seemed to them as apples of gold, in pictures of silver: as words of life, peace and comfort to their hearts. The apostles' doctrine, which so recently they could ridicule and reject with scorn, was more to be desired than all the glories of the world. Without reluctance now, they gladly received the word. It was perfectly adapted to their renewed state; for now being born again of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, they desired the sincere milk of the word, that they might grow thereby. Hitherto they had despised and hated the apostles and their doctrine; but now by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit which God had poured upon them, they not only received, but gladly received the word, and according to the word as preached to them by the apostles they were baptized, and added to the church. That is, they were brought manifestly into the fellowship of the apostles, and the apostolic church. And they continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine; having gladly received it, they continued to be perfectly satisfied with it. The record given that they continued steadfast in the apostles doctrine, implies that they encountered opposition; which they certainly did, for it was a time of severe persecution. But so deeply were they rooted and grounded in the truth, that neither the bitterness of cruel persecution, nor the specious allurements of new doctrines zealously promulgated by Judaizing, or other teachers, could shake their confidence in the apostles' doctrine. The apostles' doctrine, and the apostles' fellowship are so joined together that they cannot be separated. If steadfast in the one we are equally so in both. But if we depart from the one, we cease to enjoy the other. In departing from the apostles' doctrine, we may secure the fellowship of the world, or of anti-Christ; but we cannot depart from their instruction, and still retain their fellowship.

Thus, quickened by the Holy Ghost, recipients of the doctrine of the apostles, baptized on profession of faith in obedience to the command of Christ, fully recognizing Christ as the Head over all things to his church, and the apostles as divinely authorized and qualified exponents of all the laws, order, ordinances and doctrine of his kingdom, we have described the Old School, or Primitive Baptist Church, built upon the foundation of the apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief corner Stone. And being thus stead-

fast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, they will be steadfast also in prayers, and in breaking of bread; and they may confidently expect the Lord will add to them such as shall be saved. How very different in all respects is the church of the First Born, from those humanly constructed religious organizations which have become so numerous and diversified in these times. However much they may differ from each other in some characteristic peculiarities, they are all alike in adopting the spirit of the proposition of the "Seven women, who shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." Isa. iv. 1. They dislike to be called anti-Christian, or false churches, as that would be too humiliating: but to live on every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, by no means suits their taste. They have no relish for the apostles' doctrine, nor do they desire their fellowship; they desire rather to make a figure in the world, and be at liberty to believe whatever doctrine they please; conform to such rites and ceremonies as they please; get religion when they please, of whatever kind or quality they please; keep it as long as they please, and lay it aside or exchange it when they please. Such churches as they presumptuously call themselves churches, are fond of receiving such members as will find themselves, having self-righteousness enough to live upon and only desiring to have a name to life while they are dead. For them the apostles' doctrine is quite too stale; it is behind the age of progression in which we live; it is too slow, it waits for God to add to his church such as shall be saved; while their plan is to add themselves such as shall not be saved; or such as give no evidence that they shall be saved.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, March 15, 1866.)

"Having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." - I Timothy iv. 8.

rue religion lies deep; it is not a balloon hovering over us miles up in the air. It is like truth - it lies at the bottom of the well. We must go down, then, into religion, if we are to have it really in our hearts. The Lord Jesus Christ was "a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief." He took the lowest, last, and least place. He was always down; so that if we are to be companions with the Lord Jesus Christ, we must go down with him - down into the valley, down into suffering, down into humiliation, down into trial, down into sorrow. When we get puffed up by worldly joy, or elated by carnal excitement, we do not sympathize with the Lord Jesus Christ in his suffering manhood; we do not go with him then into the garden of Gethsemane, nor behold him as "the Lamb of God" on the accursed tree. We can do without Jesus very well when the world smiles, and carnal things are uppermost in our heart.

But let affliction come, a heavy cross, a burden to weigh us down, then we drop into the place where the Lord Jesus is only to be found. We find, then, if the Lord is pleased to bring a little godliness into the soul, and to draw forth this godliness into vital exercise, that it has "the promise of the life that now is." There are promises connected with it of support and strength, comfort, consolation, and peace, that the world knows nothing of; there is a truth in it, a power, a reality, a blessedness in it, that tongue can never express. And when the soul gets pressed down into the vale of affliction, and the Lord is pleased to meet with it there, and visit it then, and draw forth godliness in its actings and exercises, then it is found to have "the promise of the life that now is." Faith, hope, love, repentance, prayerfulness, humility, contrition, long-suffering, and peace - all these gifts and graces of the Spirit are exercised chiefly when the soul is down in affliction. Here is "the promise of the life that now is" in the drawing forth of these heavenly graces in the heart.

And godliness hath the promise also of "the life which is to come." It supports in life and in death; and takes the soul into a happy and blessed eternity. Grace will end in glory; faith in sight; hope in fruition. The soul taught of God will see Jesus as he is. Thus godliness has "the promise of the life which is to come," when eternal peace shall abound, tears be wiped from off all faces, and grace consummated in endless bliss.

J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

SAINTS REST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH AT DALLAS, TEXAS

Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church, 2710 Engle Street, Dallas, Texas invites all brethren and friends to meet with us in our annual three-day fall meeting.

The Lord willing, the meeting will begin at 7:30 P.M. on Friday, November 27, 1992, and continue through the fifth Sunday, November 29, 1992.

Telephone numbers for contact:
Deacon Frank D. Richards,
817-467-0005
Elder C.C. Morris,
903-769-4822
Deacon Dean G. Connell,
214-298-8068

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 26 & 27, 1992.

Union Church, located about five miles Southeast of Marion, Louisiana, will host the association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barren,
Association Clerk
318-778-4217

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 1992

Elder C.B. Davis, NC	$2.00
Larry H. Gibson, NC	12.00
Mrs. French Hogan, VA	2.00
W.L. Neal, NC	7.00
Elder Willard Cox, VA	2.00
Elder Carl Terry, VA	2.00
Julian Ray, NC	2.00
A.W. King, NC	10.00
W.W. Abshire, VA	2.00
Mrs. Dorothy M. Craighead, VA	2.00
Garner Horne, NC	5.00
Harold T. Clayton, NC	2.00
Mrs. James D. Marze, LA	2.00
Mrs. Frances T. Jarvis, MD	2.00
C.N. Barron, LA	2.00
Kineth Hollandsworth, VA	2.00
Elder Raymond Goad, VA	2.00
Mrs. Mary D. Stanfield, VA	2.00
Mrs. Lessie Tilley, NC	5.00
Ray Cunningham, OR	7.00

OBITUARIES

ALONZO B. BISHOP

Alonzo B. Bishop, son of John and Charlote Lester Bishop, was born in Wyoming County, West Virginia on July 2, 1902 and passed from this life on July 26, 1992 after suffering a stroke in January of this year. He leaves behind his wife of nearly sixty two years. The children of this union are: John Bishop, David Bishop, Charlote Fish, Janice Clark, Gayle Palmer, Glenda McKinney and Loretta Clark, deceased. There are twenty one grandchildren and twenty two great grandchildren. Brother Bishop was a retired coal miner. He was added to the New Found Primitive Baptist Church in Wyoming County, West Virginia and was baptized on the same day, October 24, 1977. He was a good and kind husband and father and was sound in the doctrine he loved. He attended his meetings faithfully as long as he was able. His funeral was preached at Tankersley Funeral Home in Mullins, West Virginia by Elder W.E. Harvey and his body was laid to rest at the Roselawn Cemetery at Princeton, West Virginia. He will be sadly missed by his family and church.

Written by Ethel Bishop,
Elder W.P. O'Neal and
Elder J.B. Farmer.

MEMORIAL - DOYLE M. PERKINS

This memorial summary is in remembrance of our dear and beloved brother, Doyle M. Perkins, who was called home from his cares and sorrows of this life on May 26, 1991.

He was born on May 28, 1900 in Caswell County, N.C., to the late William and Lucinda Perkins.

He was married to the late Lillie M. Somers on May 28, 1934. Surviving are their children, Paul William Perkins and Marie Louanne Perkins of Danville,

VA. Also surviving are two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

He united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on Sunday morning, August 24, 1947, and was baptized by our late Pastor, Elder D.V. Spangler.

He was a loyal and faithful proclaimer of the Primitive Baptist doctrine.

His funeral was conducted by Elder Kenneth Key and Elder Wallis A. Smith at Swicegood Funeral Home Chapel and internment at Danville Memorial Gardens, Danville, VA.

May those of us that mourn our great loss be reconciled to God's will, who never makes a mistake.

Written by Carol Brinson, niece, with assistance from Marie and Paul Perkins,children.

WYATT HENRY SIMPSON

Brother Simpson was born on June 11, 1907 in Pittsylvania County, and died December 24, 1991 in Bishopville, South Carolina. He lived in Danville, Virginia for a number of years. He has two sons, Melvin Simpson of Danville and Donald Simpson of Bishopville, South Carolina. Brother Simpson was united with the Danville Church on September 13, 1958. He was a faithful member as long as he was able to attend. When the Danville Church was built in 1970, Brother Simpson was there to help most everyday. He was a lovely Brother. We all miss him.

Irvin Holley

ANNIE HILL WILLIAMS

It is with a sad heart that I shall attempt to write the obituary of my mother, Sister Annie Hill Williams.

Sister Williams was born in Beaufort County, Route #1, Chocowinity, N.C. to William Henry and Betsy Taylor Hill. She was married in 1932 to the late Roy B. Williams, a devoted member of Hancock Primitive Baptist Church, until his death in 1963. To this union was born one daughter followed by two grandchildren. After the death of her husband, she lived with her daughter.

Sister Williams was received in the Hancock Church on the third Saturday, July 1955, and was baptized by the late Elder Ap Mewborn. She was a true faithful member as long as health permitted. She believed very strongly in predestination and was so thankful for the hope of someday meeting her Heavenly Father who does all things well and never makes a mistake.

Her funeral was conducted January 18, 1991, at Farmer Funeral Home in Ayden, N.C. by her pastor Elder Joe Sawyer. She was laid to rest by the side of her late husband in the Ayden Cemetery, near where she lived for many years.

Written by her daughter who loved her and misses her every day of her life.

PSALM 119:81.

My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word.

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 420 Keeling, Virginia 24566

Friends On a Tour In USA

We started on ribbons of roadway
Desiring we might be Blessed to see
Many things of which we could say
Most surely have come by Thee

With love for all who came
With true fellowship so sweet
We travelled on in thy name
Our desires and dreams to meet

Where our Savior surely dwells
Is in our hearts and souls
And on the mountains and in the dells
Precious scenes and wonders unfold

His presence was with us if not deceived
There even to calm our worldly fears
His peace we have all surely received
Which caused the shedding of many tears

May all praise be given our eternal God
Who blessed us to walk in ages past
Where He in His creation trod
And we could come and see at last

We saw mighty trees, enormous in size
And know their age goes back in time to His Son
Fulfilling for us a great design in His eyes
For we know Him as The Tree, eternal one

We saw many areas that were completely bare
We wondered about their usefulness
Yet know they also have His loving care
And them even He can and does bless

So may we remember a time in May
When some said it won't be like before
They didn't know our God planned the way
And the trip would be an open door

A dream for me has been fulfilled
And I feel a strong endearing praise
To believe our Father fully willed
We would spend those fruitful days

Now dear travelling ones we must part
To go home to our natural way
But absolutely not separated at heart
And hope for yet another travelling day

When a final trip already prepared
With His chosen day to depart
Where Heavens beauty will be shared
There in a glorious eternal spot

Written with the earnest desire to give Him all Praise and dedicated to all who went and others who desired to go but couldn't.

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.
May 28, 1992

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EDITORIAL

ELDER R. H. CAMPBELL

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

There are untold millions of people now and in the generations past who believe that they are worshipping serving God who in fact have never known him or believed his doctrine as it is set forth in the scriptures. They are serving the letter of the law, as they understand it, but they have never known or understood the giver of the law, or discerned the truth that is typified in the law. Man as he is born into the world is flesh and only knows the things of nature and the world around him which he discerns by the five senses that he was given in the day he was created. He can learn and experience many things in life with these five senses but only such things as pertain to the realm of nature into which he was born: in this state he cannot discern the existence of God or the spiritual realm which is all around him by the use of any of the fleshly faculties that he was endowed with by his creator from his mothers womb. Yet these countless millions of people armed only with fleshly wisdom and his natural senses proclaim long and loud of how they are helping God to complete his work of salvation and increase the

population of heaven. This is directly contrary to the scriptures which declare, "but the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

The scripture above is a statement made by Jesus in a conversation with a Samaritan woman at the well John IV vs. 24. Samaria was a nation consisting of the ten northern tribes of Israel who rebelled in the reign of Rehoboam and who were ruled by Jeroboam. Jeroboam made the people calves of gold to worship lest, as he said, in their going up to Jerusalem to worship their hearts would turn again to their lord and they would kill him and go back to Rehoboam and the Jesus in Judah and join again with them. From that time till the time Jesus spoke to the woman the Samaritans had no part in Judah: Jesus in his instructions to the twelve Apostles was that they enter not into any city of the Samaritans. As Jesus began to speak to the woman at the well, the return from isolation of this people began: he told her things she could not understand at first but then he began telling her of things that made her believe that he was a man of God. She then questioned him of their different places of worship and Jesus told her that the time is coming and now is when the place of worship is nothing but the manner of worship is everything. The time is coming and now is when the true worshippers (Jews, Samaritans, Gentiles) shall worship the Father in spirit and truth for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit and they that worship him must be in the spirit, spiritual eyes, ears, faith and discernment to enable them to comprehend the things of the spirit, or in other words, they must be born again to see the kingdom of heaven.

Since man as he is born in nature possesses none of these characteristics, how will he be able to worship God in spirit and in truth. The fact of the matter is that in this condition he never would or could worship God or even be aware of his existence or of his ways. He would live out his life in nature and go the way of all flesh and never know of the spiritual realm that was all around him all of his life. These, although they know not God, will as man has always done create their own god and set him up in their minds and hearts and ascribe honor and glory unto him, and worship the creation of their own hands: they will, when asked how they came to know and serve God will relate a time of decision reached in their life when they made a choice or a decision to give their heart to God and dedicated their lives to the work of building his kingdom and populating heaven. Some say circumstances, a friend or loved one, severe trauma or loss of a loved one caused them to change their life style, forsake the ways of the world and serve God. This is reasonable and rational to the world, who knows not God also, but it is not the way of those who have gone before and who, according to the scriptures, were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world.

There is indeed a change wrought in the lives of those who worship God but the change is wrought by the power of God with or without the cooperation of the individual and in spite of any conflict or turmoil that it may cause in their life. They are changed within from walking after the flesh to walking in the spirit: the change is complete and perfect, as all his works are, and man has never improved or hindered this work by anything that he did or anything that he failed to do.

Saul of Tarsus is a classic example of this change which occurs in the lives of God's children: he was well established in the Jewish religion, he served the law, blameless, and profited more than many his own equal in his own nation. He felt that he was secure, with God's approval of his life, and persecuted anyone that did not agree with him and served God in the same manner that he did. He was present at the stoning of Stephen, the martyr and sanctioned the actions of those who killed him. With all of his zeal and religious fervor for his way of life he was in the same condition as all of those millions today who travel under the guise of Christian piety: but who have never been changed from walking after the flesh except in their own vain, self serving imagination.

Jesus told Nicodemus, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of heaven: he must be born of the flesh (to see the earth and all the wonders of nature) and he must be born again, of the Spirit (to enter into the kingdom of heaven and behold the glories thereof). Man has no part in bringing to pass his natural birth, in causing it to be so, accepting or rejecting life, nationality, gender, size, temperament or anything else regarding being born into the world and Jesus is saying that so it is with the spiritual birth. Both are the sovereign work of God and he does as is pleasing unto him.

Saul of Tarsus was on his way to Damascus, one day, with letters of authority from Jerusalem to bind any who called on the name of Jesus and to bring them to Jerusalem for judgment. As he journeyed, suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and his life was changed forever. Jesus did not ask Saul if he would serve him; if he would believe in him or if he would stop persecuting his church. He did not need to: the persecutor of the Church, the blasphemer, the one with a desire to execute those letters of authority was no longer there. Instead there was a new creature in Christ; the old things (hatred, enmity, vanity and haughty character) were passed away and all things (love, compassion, and humble servitude) were become new. The man who started to Damascus on a mission, arrived in Damascus with a calling: the one who began his journey in the flesh arrived in the spirit, and instead of persecuting them he was one of them. Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out. Man in the flesh will never understand these mysteries because God's ways are as

much higher than man's ways as the heavens are higher than the earth and his thoughts than their thoughts. The gulf between is so wide that man in nature can never bridge it.

The Apostle Paul in his letter to Timothy was surely referring to this experience when he wrote, " This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them that should thereafter believe on him to life everlasting." Surely if this is true, and it is, then all who are brought from nature's darkness to light are brought as per the pattern: the light shines round about them from heaven, wherever they are and whatever they are doing and they are quickened of the spirit and go forth walking in the newness of life. They have been saved and called with an holy calling; a salvation and a calling that is just as sure and certain as the one who called them. They cannot fail because they are from God the giver of every good and every perfect gift.

God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth, and this is the only way that man will ever be enabled to worship God in the spirit. All who have experienced this change rejoice in God's plan of salvation and, as Paul, love to tell of their change and thrill to hear of the experience of another as they were quickened by the spirit and began to walk in newness of life among the members of the church of the living God.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

ARTICLES

" Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. "

If it be pleasing to the good Lord, I will attempt to write a few words concerning this great thing called love, which I believe it far above my understanding. But, I feel led to write, so may the blessed Lord guide my hand and my thoughts. I pray that I may have one reason for writing, which is to give praise to the great God in heaven and maybe a word of comfort to one of his little ones.

Just think what a wonderful thing has been said here in these few simple words. That is one amazing thing about the bible, there are just plain simple words to describe such wonders and such great things. What manner of love God has bestowed upon us, how can anyone describe such love as this? That we should be called the sons of God, the poet wrote in times past, "what wondrous love is this, that caused the Lord of bliss, to

lay aside his crown for my soul. Think about that for a while, the God who created this earth and hung it out in space, on nothing. The God who created all the stars and the planets, and set them in motion, and we who have been blessed with faith, believe they will remain in motion exactly as he has purposed, until they fulfill the purpose for which they were intended. A God who said, let there be light, and the sun in obedience to his word appeared in the heaven. A God such as this, has bestowed such love upon his people, that they can be called the sons of God.

This great God who sent his Son down to redeem man from the sinful state he was in, looking down on those poor sinful worms of the dust, knew even while he was sending his Son down to redeem such creatures, that these worms would reject his Son, refuse to believe him, and put him to death. Yes, even the cruel death of the cross, with all the suffering and shame that went with it. What manner of love, sure enough has God bestowed upon us? Yes, even when he chose his people back before the beginning of time, he knew, and was prepared to pay the price to redeem them. So we have to ask again, what manner of love, for this love he paid the price, suffered the shame and accomplished his desire.

This same manner of love he has bestowed upon his children in such a way as this. We should, through the gift and power of this love, be kept at our brothers feet, to consider our brethren as better than ourself. I will be the first to say, that it is asking more of this natural man, than he can do, to ask him to keep himself at his brothers feet. But, it is not required of this natural man, it is done by this love which God has bestowed upon us, under the power and influence of the Spirit. This is the only way we see and understand a little more deeply the wonderful love that is spoken of here in this scripture. I do believe there is a love between the brethren that the world knows nothing about. It is the same love I have been writing about, bestowed upon the brethren through the power and love of our wonderful God. What a wonderful experience when we can feel this blessed love. Then, when at times this love is withdrawn for a season and we are left to our sinful and weak ways, we see ourselves as we are without his wonderful love and guidance. I feel sometimes we are made to know the meaning of the words, Amazing Grace, consider one more thought about this amazing love, which is this; Love covers a multitude of sins. We can see, from what I have just written, that love has covered all our sins. God knowing all our sins and sinful ways from beginning to end, had such a wonderful love for his church, his bride, that he gave himself for our atonement. This same love is what we feel within ourselves when we feel love for the brethren. This way we can esteem our brothers better than ourselves, for who can see anything wrong in someone you love so deeply. Haven't you seen mothers who love their children

so much, that they can't see any harm, or anything wrong in things they do?

As we said, love covers a multitude of sins. The number the good Lord has redeemed with his amazing love is as the sands of the seashore, so great no man can number them. All who love his appearing, all who have had a good work performed in them, all who have been shown what sinners they are, all who have felt their sins forgiven, those who have been blessed to say, "My Lord, have mercy on me the sinner that I am." This entire number who have their names written in the Lamb's book of life, all have been redeemed by this great love that god has bestowed upon them. There isn't a single one in that whole number who can accept merits of his own for having a place in glory. There isn't a one who can say, I didn't do this bad thing, or I did these good works. But, rather they all know, and have been made willing to give all the praise to God their saviour, the Son of the living God. They can say with the poet, "Jesus paid it all, all to him I owe."

Those whom the blessed saviour has seen fit to bless with this love, are surely a most blessed people. Anyone who has felt this love within their breast has this blessed assurance that they will never lose it. The following scripture lets us know we won't be separated from it:

Romans 8:38 & 39. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Doesn't that make it sure? Doesn't that cause cover everything? There is nothing that scripture doesn't cover. What a wonderful thing to know our salvation, our well being, our gift of this love, the love of Christ and the love of the brethren does not depend on our weak sinful selves. The scripture teaches, and we are shown, it is all by grace. What a wonderful God is ours!

May the Lord of all mercy see fit to bless these few words to the comfort of some of his chosen, and may he bless his children with love one for another.

I desire your prayers,
With love, A brother I hope,
Frank Hunt

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Editors

WHO ARE THE CHILDREN OF GOD?

The afore chosen; the vessels of His mercy; the children of His promise; the children of His grace; the children of His everlasting love; the children of inheritance of the seed of promise; they (and only they) who shall ever walk upon that highway of holiness; the redeemed of the Lord; the only ones ever given a Spiritual eye and ear to see and hear and a heart to understand any Holy Spiritual language; the only ones Christ came down for and died to save for heaven and immortal glory; the only ones Christ the Lord shall carry with Him back to His Father in heaven. When this time world is no more; the only ones whom shall be like Him and be satisfied, when they meet Him in the air, at the end of time; the only ones ever given a true knowledge of the goodness and greatness of the three in one God; the only ones ever given that Holy fear of God, that is the beginning of true Holy wisdom concerning the God of heaven; the only ones ever given that same pure love wherewith He first loved them, and also that same pure love for each other; the only ones to ever in Holy truth praise God; the only ones having a lively hope in their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; the only ones to ever be enabled to in Holy truth vow that assuredly Salvation is of the Lord; the only ones who can in truth say - I do truly feel and believe in the absolute predestination of all things, by the almighty and merciful God; they are the only ones who will (from the depth of their heart and soul) confess to their awful sinful sins against their God; they are the only ones who are what they are by the grace of God; they are the only ones who will and do confess of their complete and total self helplessness in all things both natural and spiritual; they are the only ones who will confess that within their flesh there dwelleth no good thing; they are the only ones who will readily say and feel that, I would that I could do good, but how to perform it I find not; they are the only ones who are blessed with all Spiritual blessings in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus the Lord. They are of whom God spake and said I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people; they are them who are given to love the wills and shalls of their God and Father in heaven; they are them who feel to know for sure - if any good thing were ever performed by or through them, then it surely had to come only by reason of His working in them, both the will and the to do of it, they are them of whom it is given to feel and believe that there is absolutely no evil in money, but that love of money is wherein lieth that evil, and is the very root of it all; they are them whom Christ suffered for, shed His blood for, hung on the cross for, died for, and arose for, and ascended to His Father in heaven for; and as sure as truth is truth, they are those whom He will come back for to carry them every one on the wings of His love unto His Father in heaven, where there will be

no male or female, no pain or sorrow, no heartache or ever another thought of this time world, but everlasting love and praise and honor and glory unto God forever thereafter; they are the only ones who desire the love of God more than the riches of this world; they are the only ones who shall ever freely confess from their heart and soul that, all these precious blessings came to us as a free gift from "God", and assuredly not for anything which we have done to earn them. As it is impossible to buy true friendship; so is it impossible for mankind to buy grace or earn himself a place in heaven and immortal glory; you see, true friendship is freely given and received from the heart, and can last a long time, while so called friendship that is bought, lasts only so long as the buyer keeps giving. As for grace, it is a totally free and unmerited gift from God; and as for one's place in heaven and immortal glory, all things pertaining to that becoming a reality, was and is already taken care of, by Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God. They are the only ones who in Holy truth love to hear the whole counsel of God declared, why? one reason is, - such declaration is totally expounded without any fear of man, nor any thought of offending the worldly; after all - did Christ hesitate, to call the worldly vipers, or the children of the devil? indeed not; and it is certain they were offended in their fleshly nature; But that offense, is by no means, that that the Scripture had reference to, concerning the offending of one of His little ones, I believe. Just so sure as one or more of the worldly, listen to an Elder speak as the Holy Spirit gives them utterance and control their tongue; just that sure is it, their fleshly nature (the worldly) will be offended; For the flesh is the flesh, and the Spirit is the Spirit, and each are always in opposition to the other; just as filth, is the very opposite of purity; as darkness is to the light; as wickedness is to Holiness, etc.

Now, if my hope be a lively hope, one to live by, until the appointed time, for life to leave this body of flesh; then surely what I have written above, must be and is, the revelation of Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit; God knoweth for sure.

Troy G. Shepard

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE LIVING SACRIFICE PRESENTED, AND THE WILL OF GOD PROVED ACCEPTABLE

Preached on Lord's Day evening, August 10th, 1856 at Gower Street Chapel, London

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." (Romans 12:1&2).

The precepts of the gospel are, or should be, as dear to the child of God as the promises. They form part of the same inspired testimony, rest upon the same immutable basis, and are applied to the heart, as needed, by the same blessed Spirit. But, as the promises if they are intermixed with legal conditions, lose all their sweetness and blessedness, so the precepts, if blended with, or suspended upon, any supposed creature strength, are thrust out of the place which they occupy in the gospel, and become mere legal duties. It can never be too much insisted upon, that promise and precept belong to, and are integral parts of, the same gospel, are alike unconditional, and that the same Spirit who applies the promise gives power to perform the precept. If we stray from this simple line of truth we fall, on the one hand, either into Antinomianism, by neglecting or despising the precepts altogether, or, on the other, into Pharisaism, by making them legal observances. Betwixt the barren heights of Antinomianism and the deep morass of Pharisaism, there lies a very narrow line. It is something like the paths in the Swiss Alps, where on one side a steep rock rises into a mountain height, and on the other a perpendicular precipice sinks into an unfathomable depth, whilst the line of safety runs as a thread between the two.

See how this blessed Apostle, Paul, handles the precept here: "I beseech you by the mercies of God." "I do not come," he would say, "with a rod, to flog you into obedience; I do not hold over your heads the thunders and lightnings of Sinai, to frighten you into a performance of the gospel, but I come before you almost upon my knees of supplication; and I beseech you, dear Christian friends, by the mercies of God felt in your souls, to present your bodies a living sacrifice." This is the only way by which any minister of truth can safely and soundly enforce gospel precepts. He must set them forth utterly untainted with legality and selfrighteousness, and base them - as the gospel and all that is connected with it is based, upon the free grace of God. With God's blessing, then, in attempting, with His help, to address you from the words before us, I shall endeavor,

I. First, to open up a little of those mercies of God, which form the basis of the precept.

II. Secondly, to show you what it is to "present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service."

III. Thirdly, to point out what the Apostle means by the solemn warning, "Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."

IV. Fourthly, how we thus "prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

I. We are surrounded with mercies - mercies for the body, and mercies for the soul. But, in order to arrange them somewhat more clearly, I shall look at them, first, as belonging to the Church of God at large; and, secondly, as personal and individual.

i. In looking at mercies as belonging to the Church collectively, let us cast our eyes back to the spring head, go at once to the original fountain, where we see mercy welling forth from the bosom of the Triune God. Mercy presided at those eternal councils, wherein salvation was planned by the holy Three-in-One. The sure promise is, "Mercy shall be built up for ever"; but the foundation was then laid in the predestinated incarnation of the Son of God. We pass onward, and see this mercy revealed in the garden of Eden. Directly man sinned and fell, mercy stepped forth out of the bosom of God into visible manifestation, in the first promise, that "the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head." What God promised in the garden He fulfilled at the cross, when "He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all." Would we see and feel the mercies of God, we must see them in the sufferings and sorrows of the Lord Jesus, and hear Him whispering to our souls, "Sinner, I suffered all this for thee."

But the mercies that chiefly concern us are those which are personal and special, which come into our own hearts, and are made manifest to our own individual consciences. And who here present, that fears God, has not mercies, many mercies, to revolve in his bosom? Who has not a catalogue, and some a long catalogue, to be thankful for? We may bless the mercy of God for preserving us during our days of unregeneracy, raising us up, many of us, from beds of sickness, when death stared us in the face; keeping us up to the time and moment when His grace entered into our heart, and quickened us into spiritual life. We see the mercy of God in giving us to feel the weight and burden of sin; in sending into our soul the Spirit of grace and supplication, enabling us to pour out our hearts before Him with groans, and sighs, and tears. We see the mercy of God in making known to us the plan of salvation; discovering unto us that wondrous way whereby His jarring attributes were all harmonized in the incarnation and death of His dear Son, giving us to see that salvation was all of grace, and thus raising up a blessed hope in our soul. We can see the mercy of God revealing Christ to us, making Him known by a divine power, holding Him up to our believing eye, and raising up that special faith which takes hold of His blood and righteousness, and shelters itself beneath the skirt of His dying love. We can see the mercy of God in establishing us in His truth, when so many are left to believe a lie, to drink down delusion, to be entangled in every error that Satan spreads before them. We see His mercy also in carrying on the work begun, in maintaining the faith He imparted, cherishing the hope He inspired, reviving the love He shed abroad. It is one of the choicest mercies bestowed on us that we love the gospel, because we have felt its power and tasted its sweetness in our soul. Nor is it merely in His grace that we see and feel the mercy of God. We are daily surrounded with them in providence. The bread we eat, the raiment we wear, the house we live in, the kind

friends that God has raised up for us, the social ties and intimate relationships with which He has blessed us, as husbands, wives, or children - what daily mercies are there in all these daily providences! And if our lot be rough and thorny in providence, or His mercies in this channel be hidden from our eyes, this may only enhance the more His mercies in grace in providing for the afflicted and distressed a throne of grace, giving us a mercy-seat, seating there a Mediator to whom we may approach, and freely tell our wants and woes; thus amply compensating for every loss and bereavement by a larger portion of spiritual consolation.

There are, indeed, times and seasons when all the mercies of God, both in providence and grace, seem hidden from our eyes, when what with the workings of sin, rebellion, and unbelief, with a thorny path in the world and a rough, trying road in the soul, we see little of the mercies of God, though surrounded by them. Like Elisha's servant, though the mountain is surrounded by the horses and chariots of fire, and the angels of God are round about us, yet our eyes are holden, we cannot see them; and at the very moment when God is already showering mercies upon us, and preparing others in reserve, through some trying dispensation, we are filled perhaps with murmuring and rebellion, and cry, "Is His mercy clean gone for ever? will He be favourable no more?" This is our infirmity, our weakness; but it no more arrests the shower of God's mercies than the parched field arrests the falling rain. The mercies of God, like Himself, are infinite, and He showers them in rich profusion upon His Church and people. They come freely as the beams of the sun shining in the sky; as the breezes of the air we breathe; as the river that never ceases to flow. Everything testifies of the mercy of God to those whose eyes are anointed to see it, and are interested in it. To them all things in nature, in providence, and in grace, proclaim with one united harmonious voice, "The mercy of the Lord endureth for ever."

Now, as these mercies of God are sensibly felt in the soul they soften, meeken, and subdue the spirit, melt it into the obedience of faith, and raise up in it the tenderness of love. By this we are prepared to enter into the beauty and blessedness of the precept as an integral part of the gospel. If I take a review of the mercies of God, and feel no interest in them; if they are not personally and individually mine, I slight, perhaps even rebel against the precept as too hard and severe. The yoke is too heavy for my neck to bear. My Jewish mind, my stiffnecked disposition, shrinks from obedience to God's word. But let my soul be favoured with a sweet discovery of the mercies of God; let them reach my heart, soften and subdue my spirit; then there is no cross too heavy to be taken up, no trial too hard to be endured, no path of suffering and sorrow in which we cannot patiently, if not gladly, walk. The reason why the precepts are not obeyed is because the mercies of God are not felt. Love

and obedience attend each other as the shadow awaits upon the sun.

II. But I pass on from considering the precepts generally, to examine the particular precept, as it stands revealed here for our obedience by the pen of the Holy Ghost, "That ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." My friends, if the Son of God has redeemed us by His blood, all that we are and have belongs to Him; our body, soul, and spirit are His. Nothing is our own; we are bought with a price. In laying down His precious life for us, He has redeemed us unto Himself, that we should be His peculiar people, and not only render to Him the calves of our lips, but give Him body, soul, spirit, substance, life itself; all that we are and have being His by sovereign right. He lays claim to them all, not only as our Creator, but as our Redeemer, having bought them by His precious blood. When we feel this mercy warm in our soul, can we keep body or soul back? Look at Abraham. When God called to him, and said, "Abraham"! what was his answer? "Here I am." "Here is my body, here is my soul, here is my substance, here is my wife, here is my son; all are at Thy disposal. What shall I do, Lord? Take them; they are all Thine. Thou hast a right to them, and Thou must do with them, and Thou must do with me, what seemeth good in Thy sight."

i. Under these feelings, then, we should "present our bodies," not, indeed, leaving our souls behind. For what is the casket without the jewel? what is the body without the soul? Will God accept the body if the soul be left behind? That is popery; to give the body and keep back the soul. Not so with the dear family of God; they present their bodies, but with their bodies they present the soul that lodges in their body - the house with its tenant, the jewel-case with the jewels in it. But what is it to present their bodies? They must be presented as "a living sacrifice." God accepts no dead sacrifices. You will recollect, under the Jewish law the sacrifice was to be a living animal, and that without spot or blemish. No dead lamb or kid, but a living animal, perfect in its kind, was to be the victim sacrificed. So if we are to present our bodies, there must be "a living sacrifice." It may well be asked, what have we sacrificed for the Lord's sake? Have we been called upon to sacrifice our property, prospects, idols, affections, name, fame, and worldly interest; and have we obeyed the call? Abraham did not offer Isaac until the voice of the Lord called him to make the sacrifice; but when the Lord called him to do so, Abraham at once rendered obedience to the voice. So must it be with those that walk in the steps faithful Abraham did. If they are called upon as all are, sooner or later - to make sacrifices, those sacrifices they must make. Their good name certainly will be sacrificed. Or, you may be called upon to sacrifice even your worldly substance. God may require this at your hands. You may be in some position of life, some occupation or profession, which you cannot carry on

consistently with the requirements of the gospel; of this, then, you must make a sacrifice. Or if not called upon, as I and others have been, to make these personal sacrifices, you will have to sacrifice your pride and self-righteousness. Many of your fondly cherished schemes, many of your airy castles, and even things that you might legitimately and with a good conscience enjoy, but which would stumble others you must give up; in a word, everything that interferes with the claims of God upon your Christian obedience.

ii. Now, in thus presenting our bodies "a living sacrifice," it becomes also a "holy" offering, because what is done in faith is accepted of God as being sanctified by His blessed Spirit. If we make a sacrifice without the blessed Spirit's operation upon our heart, it is a dead sacrifice. Men go into monasteries, deluded women enter convents, become sisters of mercy, and what not, offer their bodies a sacrifice to God, but it is not a living sacrifice, because there is not spiritual life in either offerer or offering. But when we sacrifice our warmest affections, our prospects in life, everything that flesh loves, because the gospel claims it at our hands, and we do it through the constraining love of Christ, that is a living sacrifice, and is "holy," because springing out of the sanctifying influences and operations of the Holy Spirit. We indeed, looking at ourselves, see nothing holy in it, for sin is mingled with all we do, but God's eye discerns the precious from the vile. He sees the purity of His own work; and He can separate what we cannot, the acting of the Spirit and the working of the flesh. God looks at that which His own Spirit inspires, and His own grace produces, and He accepts that as holy.

iii. And, therefore, it is "acceptable" unto God. Let us not suppose that God looks idly on, whether men live to His glory or not. Let us not think He is such a God as the Epicureans imagined Him to be, that sits enthroned upon some cloud, and takes no notice of the inhabitants of the earth. Was it the same thing in God's sight whether David committed adultery and murder, or whether he spared the life of Saul, when that life was in his hand? It would make God an immoral Being, it would make Him worse than ourselves, to say that this holy God who sits enthroned in glory takes no notice of the deeds of man upon earth, and that it is indifferent to Him whether His children live to themselves or live to His glory. This would be abusing the truth of God; using one part of God's truth to wrest out of His hand that which He dearly loves - His own holiness, His hatred of sin, and flaming indignation against transgression. When the widow dropped her two mites into the treasury, it was acceptable unto God; when the disciples forsook all things and followed Jesus, it was acceptable to Him. So what you are enabled to do by the grace of God; the sacrifices that you have made or are making; the tears, sighs, groans, cries, longings, and breathings that you experience, springing out of His grace - these are acceptable unto God.

J.C. Philpot

ECCLESIASTES 4: 9, 12.

Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor.

For if they fall the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up.

Again, if two lie together then they have heat; but how can one be warm alone?

And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a three fold cord is not quickly broken.

It would indeed be a miserable as well as a difficult effort for me to come before the people of God if I had to come in my own name. Therefore, the text becomes in the outset a bulwark of strength. It enables me, as I humbly hope, to venture forth with Him on my side (Psa. 124). It is not my intention to set forth that He is in need of my effort in order to make the two a formidable pair, but it is my desire to lift up my sinking head and to praise Him from whom all of my blessings, all of my strength comes. Definitely, there is not any desire to picture Him as being destitute with out my efforts, but I hope that my desire is to tell my experience and that of all the family of God both individually and collectively.

It is a good text. It starts off in a way that causes the lifting up of the low spirited children of God everywhere. Among all of the named children of God mentioned in the Bible, there is not one that could be so presumptuous as to say that one would be good enough to climb the rugged mountains before them and bring down help to the church of God while journeying here below, nor not one would ever feel able to cross the rolling sea to get to one poor demented Gaderene. Incidentally, we have all been out of our mind, and it does not matter how much that we may think ourselves capable of snapping out of it, we are laboring under a false delusion. God has not given us the spirit of fear but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind (2 Tim. I:7). This kind of a mind did not originate in the mind and in the power of the first man Adam. This came from the second man in this union of the two. The mind and power of the Christ-man when He got across the sea to where the Gaderene was in his demented condition. We, you and I, and all of those chosen in Christ, were as helpless to get into a sound mind as was the Gaderene. Our text becomes an outstanding text when viewed in the light of the fact that we were all in a dead lifeless condition while standing in the merits of the first man Adam.

There is not an exception to the text. There never has been, nor never will be one of the sons or daughters of the first man Adam that will not, sooner or later, bow down to the doctrine of the text. There is not any room for dispute; there is not a foot left to stand on that he or she might declare that a sinner is far better off alone than when he or she are two together. Two are better than one.

The two together will have a good reward for the labor done. However, we must ever remember that the poor sinner, who is worthless when standing alone has not, nor will not, nor cannot, do any of the labor. In order to arrive at the truth of that statement let us ask what the Gaderene could have contributed towards righting his mind from a demented condition to a stabilized mind. How much do you think that he would have done towards such a feat? For fear that somebody has a notion that we poor sinners other than the Gaderene, could furnish a part of what it would have been needed to given Paul and Timothy a sound mind. Do not, I beg of you, call names. Do not belittle and besmirch anyone. Just answer the question, What part of the work do you think that Paul and Timothy supplied in order for them to be out of an unsound mind into a sound minded person. It seems clearly exemplified to me that Solomon had such cases in mind when he declared that two are better than one.

We have an example of one who was alone. As far as he knew, he had no one to look to at all. He fell and he was alone as far as he knew. All of the history of that pathetic lonesome man is seen and experienced by all of his offspring ever after. His Creator did not lift him up; He did not offer any condolence to the poor fallen fellow. When his Creator come to him for a reckoning, he had no one to look to for help, no one to lift him up, no spoil to divide with him. He was driven out from the presence of God, and barred from returning. His posterity has felt the wrath of his Creator ever since. What a pathetic picture we find of him as he endured the scorching desert sand with the poisonous vapors from the polluted waste howling wilderness, and the burning sun beating down upon him. I speak of Jacob, and I ask once more what would have been his final lot had he been left alone in that condition. I am sure that one and all must admit that the proof of the text is found in the case of Jacob. Left alone to his own resources,there is not any logic of men that would have ever got him acquainted with the Lord alone. I am so glad I well know, and I truly hope that I am thankful that two are better than one. With one there would not have ever been any saved, but by there being two, all of the Jacobs will be saved. I call on the poor and needy, the broken hearted, the lost and ruined sinner, even the one that so much interest is used in His behalf, and yet not one in the whole train of would be worshippers that is able to lift him up when he falls; not one among them all that is able to warm him when the cold of the Lord is striking at his vitals, as the burning sand and sun alternates with the shivery cold and evil smelling stagnated waters of the waste howling wilderness, not one of them are able or willing to lift him up when he falls in the crevices that are in his pathway of parched ground, or when he slips because of the miry ground in the waste howling wilderness.

What goodness does do poor old Jacob good. Two is the answer. Not just any two, but just One glorious Personage to be with him. Not one of

many kings, not one of many lords, but the Lord from heaven, Jesus Christ the Saviour.

It is Jesus that saves. In order that it be perfectly and completely wrought to perfection who was the help? Who was the one that made two better than one? Who was it that found the poor sinner Jacob, and proved beyond any doubt that two are better than one? Had not Jesus come and done the work of salvation it would not have ever been done. God's people had to be saved. Peter declared that God's children must be saved. Then, dear brethren, He was the One that made all of the single ones better. Jesus had to do the works of God while it was day, for, it not, it would have been a time when even two, one of them being Jesus Christ, would not have availed anything (John 9:4). The fact that Jesus had to do the work, signifies that none of the apostles could do this important work, therefore, in their case, as in all other cases where salvation of a sinner is involved, two are better than one. There are not any exceptions to this rule. No poor sinner could ever save themselves, thus, in each and every case, two are better than one.

Ofttimes the path before us seems to have been closed in on each little child of God. Not does it seem to be, but it would be if it was left to poor sinners. And as little as is thought about it, this means there would not be any salvation for any of Adam's posterity. When Pharaoh had run the children of Israel out of Egypt, he had All of the folks that God loved (Jacobites) on a ledge at the end of the mountain pass. Each and every one of them faced destruction, sure and simple. There was not any way for any one of them to escape. What saved them? Was it their dexterity in mind, or in physical training, or if any of my readers has found out that any one can save themselves without the second being present, let them come forward and tell us how they were saved. It does seem, since we have so many occasions when any and all poor sinners would have perished without two being better than one, that some one of those people would undertake showing and telling us how that a single sinner (or a houseful of folks for that matter) could be saved with the better one of two doing it.

They stood still. They did not move until the God of all grace commanded them to move. The second of the two gave them the command to go forward. Had they went forward without Him, they would have been lost, but the Captain of each two told them when to move and they were saved. Now in no case, not even one case at all, did one ever get saved on their own, but each time, when the second one, the better One of the two, gave the command they were warmed by His presence, they were given the benefit of His labor, they were picked up when the weaker of the two fell, when the journey got too far and too rugged for the weaker of the two, they were always picked up.

Two are better than one. The poor little child of God could never withstand the heat or the cold that they are subjected to, for His Spirit is a con-

suming fire, and who can withstand the cold of the Lord? But when the better one of the two is present, the standing and security of the children are in the better of the two. Let me ask a question. It is a Bible question, and it pertains to the subject. If the three Hebrew children had to stand in their on resistance to fire, if they had to stand in their own strength, tell me how long would they have lasted? All of the court knew and certainly expected the intense heat to make quick work of consuming the three Hebrew children. Now that is correct, isn't it? Perhaps, this will be my dying testimony to the saving power of the second of the two. I do not want to die with a lie on my lips. Am I laboring under a myth, a falsehood, one of Satan's lies? If I am will he or she that knows better enlighten me before it is too late? Was the salvation of the three in their hands or in the hands of the one who was in their midst walking about and his likeness was like unto the Son of God. Have you got anything in any of your gods that can match that? Have you the authentic record of any one of the sinful race of Adam that can withstand the fire for himself and for his helpless brother. And I will answer. You have not. You have not had, and you do not now have, nor you never will have a sinner that can save himself, much less another.

Soon, soon my summons will come. I am not afraid. I am not uneasy. Without Him (the best of the two) I cannot do anything, but when He is with me, when He is on my side, nothing shall shake my sure repose in Him. He is mine, and I am His. I do not own anything, but He possesses everything, and if He is mine, then life and death are mine, and He has conquered death for His people, and if I am His, He is on my side, and one bright and cloudless tomorrow I shall be with Him and like Him, and will know the joy in the knowledge that two are better than one.

This is in compliance with hearers at the Five Mile Creek Union Meeting in Alabama.

Elder W.D. Griffin

THE COMMISSION

"And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel unto every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16: 15, 16.

It is a matter of deep interest and pleasing contemplation that the great Jehovah has, in the plentitude of his goodness and mercy, ordained that the gospel of his grace should be proclaimed unto any of the guilty sons of men; and especially that apostles and other ministers of the word should be raised up and qualified to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. When we remember the fallen state that the whole human family was plunged into by our transgression of the law of our Creator, it truly seems astonishing to us that instead of the rich provisions of grace and mercy displayed in the gift of God's dear Son and the way of life and salva-

tion through the abounding grace of God that we were not consigned to the perdition of ungodly men, and made as miserable as we had become sinful before our God. But instead of vengeance justly due to our transgressions, the eternal purpose of grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ, is revealed from heaven, and a commission is given to the apostles of the Lamb, and to all others to whom it has been the pleasure of our God to apply that commission to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

Christ had made his advent to our guilty world, had done and suffered all that was written of him in the law and in the prophets; and bearing all the sins of all his people in his own body on the tree, had suffered bled and died, the just for the unjust, to redeem his people unto God.- He had risen from the dead and was about to ascend in triumph to the skies; but before he left the little band of his disciples he had one more solemn charge to give them, and one more lesson of instruction to impart to them. This he prepared them for by breathing upon them, saying, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost"; thus signifying that without an unction of the Holy Spirit no man can be qualified to preach the gospel. He then informed them that "All power in heaven and in earth" was vested in him; and that no less than all the power of both worlds was indispensable to give validity to a gospel commission. No set of ecclesiastical dignitaries, however learned or celebrated for wisdom and piety, can without presumptuous arrogance pretend to direct, commission, or send forth missionaries to proclaim his gospel. All power in heaven and in earth was, and still is, necessary to defend and prosper the ministry of the gospel. Now risen from the dead, and seated upon his Mediatorial throne, his arm was mighty to rule for him. His power was over all flesh that he might give eternal life to as many as the Father had given unto him. "And he said unto them, Go ye," etc.

But unto whom did he say, "Go ye"? The popular missionists of our day contend that this commission was given to all the church, and some of them contend that it was given to all men; but we learn from the connection, as well as from the words of the commission that it was given only to chosen disciples of our Lord; to those on whom Christ has breathed, - those whom he had instructed and qualified for the work. Unto these he said, "Go ye!" But he did not say unto them, "Send others"; but "Go ye"' and he possessed all power, his word is as effectual in sending them forth as it was when he said, "Let there be light, and there was light"; for we are informed in the 20th verse that they went forth and preached, etc., as they were commanded. Jesus is the King of saints, and where the word of a king is, there is power. He speaks the word, and it stands fast; he commands and it is done; none can stay his hand, or prevent the accomplishment of his decrees. But where did he commission these, his apostles, to go? Just

where we understand he commissions all his ministers since the apostolic age to go; namely, into all the world. Circumscribed by no parish lines, to be restricted by no barriers that men can raise; the whole world opens before the called, qualified and commissioned servants of the Lord as the appointed field of their labors, wherever God, in his providence, shall open a door for them. Before the crucifixion and resurrection these disciples, and the seventy also, were forbidden to go in the way of the Gentiles, or into any city of the Samaritans, but they were to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. But now the middle wall of partition between the Jews and Gentiles was thrown down, the hand-writing of ordinances by which Israel was distinguished and the Gentiles excluded, was nailed to the cross, the enmity, even the law of commandments taken out of the way, and the whole world presented under the dominion of him unto whom the Father has given the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, that he might break them with a rod of iron, and dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel. Psa. ii. 8, 9. Now therefore the time had come for the enlargement of the commission. Therefore He said unto them, "Go ye into all the world." No more confine your ministry to the cities of Judea, or to the people of a fleshly circumcision, but into every nation, kindred and tongue he bade them go; for this gospel of the kingdom must be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Having learned where, we will now enquire unto whom the ministers of Christ are commissioned to preach his gospel. This question is met and settled by the words of the commission. They are commanded to preach it to every creature. To preach the gospel, be it remembered, is to proclaim in Christ's name and by his authority, that perfect, finished and complete salvation which is in Christ Jesus. It is not the reading of Moses, or the setting forth the demands or curses of the law; neither is it the calling on men to save themselves, nor commanding them to repent or to believe, or to exercise faith, nor is it to tell them that they are free agents, and have all power in their hands to make their peace with God. Christ has given no man or set of men authority to preach in that manner to the children of men; for such preaching is false, and a perversion of the gospel of our blessed Redeemer. There is much said by will-worshippers and arminians at this day about preaching the gospel to sinners; and they charge that we Old Baptists do not preach to sinners. And why do they thus charge us? Simply because we do not apply the promises and blessings of the new covenant to unregenerate men, - because we do not say to them what Christ said only to his disciples, "Seek and ye shall find: knock and it shall be opened unto you; ask and it shall be given unto you," etc. And while they proclaim the doctrine of free will and human agency in the salvation of sinners and offer Christ and salvation conditionally to

the ungodly, they claim that they are fulfilling the commission and are preaching the gospel to every creature. The truth is, they preach the gospel to nobody, neither to saints nor sinners; for they know nothing of the gospel themselves. They are blind leaders of the blind, and they shall all fall into the ditch together; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it. To preach the gospel is to preach the Word. It is to preach Christ and to proclaim to Jews and Gentiles, to saints and sinners, that he is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and that no man cometh unto the Father but by him: - that all that the Father giveth him shall come unto him, and he that cometh unto him he will in no wise cast out. And also, "No man can come unto me except my Father which has sent me draw him; and I will raise him up again at the last day." It is to preach repentance and remission of sins in his name, that He is exalted a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance unto Israel and the forgiveness of sins; - that repentance is as truly and exclusively the gift of the exalted Prince and Savior as is the forgiveness of sins. We speak of that repentance which is unto life. To preach that Salvation is of the Lord: He is God, and beside him there is no Savior. Neither is there salvation in any other name. Will our opponents deny that Paul preached the gospel when he proclaimed among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and when in so preaching Christ he affirmed that God had blessed his people with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he had chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. - That God had saved and called them with a holy calling, not according to their works but according to his own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. - That whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified. And when he declared that God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and he will have compassion on whom he will have compassion; and whom he will, he hardeneth; that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God that sheweth mercy. Also when he proclaimed to the saints which were a Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus saying, "And you hath he quickened which were dead in trespasses and sins." "For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast; for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God had before ordained that we should walk in them."

This, together with all that Paul and all the other apostles preached, comes to us under the high authority of divine inspiration, as the gospel of Christ. And if any angel from heaven

should preach any other gospel than that which was preached by the apostles, let him be accursed. This is the gospel of the kingdom, and it is to be preached in all the world, wherever God shall send his ministers, and to every creature; that is, to Gentiles as well as Jews, to sinners and to saints, and never to be withheld. God's ministers are not to shun to declare this glorious gospel on all suitable occasions, and as they preach, "Let him that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." All who are born of God love this gospel, as far as they understand it, they rejoice in it; it is their meat and their drink; while on the other hand, all who hate God and love sin will as certainly hate his truth. Hence this gospel of the kingdom is a witness, discriminating between the quickened and the unregenerated sons of men. Those who can understand what the gospel in reality is will readily perceive that the thousands who in this day boast of their missionary spirit, and of their zeal in causing what they call the gospel to be preached throughout the world, would be among the very first, if they had the power, to stop the mouths of every minister of Jesus who faithfully proclaims the gospel to every creature. The gospel which Christ commissioned his apostles to preach in the power of God, through faith unto salvation to every one that believes. But the gospel which ungodly men admire, and which they are ever ready to embrace and support is, in its theory, the power of men, through works, means, and instrumentalities, unto what, in their delusions, they regard as salvation. Let us not mistake, as some have, and conclude the preaching is the power of God unto salvation. The preaching is one thing and the thing preached is quite another, and the excellency of this power is of God, and not of the preacher. Men may, and often do, hear gospel preaching, but they always remain strangers to the gospel until God applies its power to their hearts, unto salvation. But we must pass-.

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Certainly not as a reward for believing or being baptized; for then would salvation be by works and conditional, which the scriptures quoted above fully prove to us in not the case; for if it be of works, then it is no more of grace, otherwise work is no more work; and if it be by grace, it is no more of works. It cannot be of both, for if of the one, then it is not of the other, and we have proved beyond all successful contradiction that it is of grace, and equally positively that is not of works. That faith by which we believe the gospel of Christ is the gift of God, the fruit of the spirit, and Christ is himself both the author and the finisher of it. Hence we are told that *"As many as were ordained to eternal life believed."* And Paul said to the Thessalonian saints, *"We are bound to give thanks unto God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you unto salvation through sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth."* Baptism is indeed an act of the believer, in obedience of a divine command, which command is given only to believers. "If

thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." So said Philip to the Eunuch. As therefore we cannot possess saving faith until born of that spirit of which faith is the fruit, so neither can any man obey Christ in being baptized until he has become a regenerated person, a believer in Christ. The faith and obedience of the children of God are not the cause but the evidence and effects of their salvation. And thus they are given in the commission, as the essential marks or evidences by which all of Christ's commissioned apostles and ministers shall also recognize them as his saved people, and by which they shall also recognize each other. But what are they to believe? They are to believe the truth as it is in Jesus; for they who believe that which is not truth are deluded, and they to whom strong delusions are sent, as we are informed, believe a lie, that they all many be damned. To believe that we are able to save ourselves by our own works, or that there is salvation in an anxious bench, or in anything short of the person, blood, and righteousness of God our Savior, is a delusion, and all who are suffered to live and die in that delusion shall be damned; for so the scriptures positively affirm. As these were the evidences of a regenerated state when the gospel commission was given, so they continue to be down to this day. We fairly infer therefore that none but Baptists, of the old apostolic school, or order, can exhibit the full and clear evidence that they are regenerated and born of God. Neither faith nor baptism is regeneration; but both are evidences of a regenerated state. He that believeth and is baptized is, of course, a baptized believer, and as in the mouth of two witnesses, under the ceremonial economy every word was required to be established, so now under the gospel dispensation a profession of faith alone, however satisfactory it may be as far as it goes, does not entitle a person to the privileges of the house of God. That faith, if genuine, must be expressed by obedience as well as by words; and when these two witnesses are presented, they are all that we have a right to ask by way of testimony that they who give them are of that people whom God has saved with an everlasting salvation. Where these evidences are given, and they who present them, continue to walk in all the ordinances of the house of God blamelessly, so long they are entitled to all the privileges of the church of God, and to the fellowship of all the saints.

Middletown, N.Y., March 1, 1854.
Elder Beebe

MEETINGS

DAN RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Dan River Primitive Baptist Church will be host to the West Country Line Union meeting the fifth Sunday in November, 1992. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and meet with us.

We especially invite Elders of our faith and order to come.

Brother Boyd Minter, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Union meeting of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist will be held, the Lord willing, with Canaan Church the fifth Saturday and Sunday in November 28 and 29, 1992.

All who believe and love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

Elder J.R. Williams, Pastor
Mozelle B. Lacey, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 1992

Tommy Clayton, NC	$2.00
T.E. Hall, NC	2.00
Warren Brown, VA	2.00
Hassell A. Hale, VA	7.00
Alan McDaniel, VA	2.00
Mrs. Odell B. Anderson, LA	7.00
Garman Perkins, AL	
Little Hope Church	5.00
Eld. J.T. Prescott, NC	7.00
A.J. Dowdy, NC	2.00
Alvin Agee, VA	2.00
C.W. Wood, VA	7.00
Herman Webb, IL	5.00
Mrs. Lovie A. Thompson, NC	10.00
William Vick, TN	5.00
Mr. Mittie Walker, LA	2.00
Mrs. J.T. Flippen, VA	7.00
Homie C. Dalton, VA	2.00
Mrs. Ora Adams, VA	2.00
Mr. & Mrs. J.M. Marshall, VA	5.00
Mrs. Mae B. Hudson, VA	2.00

OBITUARIES

BROTHER J.D. BROWN

It pleased our Lord to call home Brother Joseph Daniel Brown (J.D.). He passed from this life June 10, 1992. Brother Brown was born November 26, 1910; a son of William D. Brown and Betty Parker Brown. He was predeceased by his wife, Sister Angie Cundiff Brown.

Brother Brown was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. He was received by experience and baptism May 13, 1990. Brother Brown was faithful to attend church many years before he united with the church, and he came as long as his health permitted.

Those left to mourn Brother Brown, include four sons; Calvin Brown of Hurt, Orie H. (Pete) Brown of Martinsville, Brade G. Brown of Danville and Virgil Brown of Gretna, one daughter Bernice B. Richardson of Danville and one sister, Maggie Cundiff of Moneta, and four grandchildren.

Brother Brown's funeral was held at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Marvin Brumfield. His body was laid to rest in the Highland Burial Park, Danville, Va. to await the coming of our Saviour. May each and everyone be reconciled to say God's will be done.

Written in Love and Hope,
Carol R. Pickral
Moderator-Elder Marvin Brumfield
Clerk-Oscar D. Pickral

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 420 Keeling, Virginia 24566

Greetings

If God had purposed we should know
The date of birth of Christ His Son,
His word would plainly, clearly show
The hour and advent of this one.

The day, the week, the month or year
Is not important to our ear
For let us not exalt a day
Apart from Christ, who is the way.

We would not celebrate one day
As separate from the heavenly way
For all the work of Christ, the king,
To Him we would our praises bring.

To exalt one day above another
In honoring Him, our elder brother,
I'm sure that we forgetful be
That He's truly deity.

His birth, His life, His blood, His cross
Makes all things else appear as dross.
He is alpha and omega, too;
The beginning and ending, Oh how true.

I remember the day, the month, the year
He was born in me. My Saviour dear,
The cross and trials along the way
Has made Him more precious, day by day.

If round a tree your family meet
In spirit bow at His dear feet
Behold in Him abounding grace
And find in Him a hiding place.

This tree of life is ever green
T'was in the garden, first was seen
In Revelation Twenty-Two
We there behold, what it can do.

By Elder D.V. Spangler

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EDITORIAL

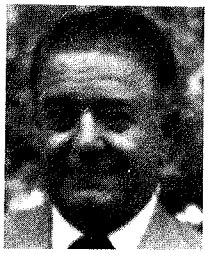
ELDER C. C. WILBANKS

" I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." (Isa. 45:7).

In this treatise I wish, if it be the will of God, to concentrate on the EVIL that God creates. ***"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible, and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." (Col. 1: 16-17).*** There are those (I hope not many) who say that sin is a 'thing', and that God created it; and yet they profess to believe that God is not the author of sin. This is a contradiction, for whosoever creates, makes, or originates any thing is the author, according to Webster's dictionary. The apostle John tells us what sin is: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." Did God transgress his own law? How absurd, how preposterous! Is there any one of any being that he could transgress against? God is the law giver and there is none greater than he. He has declared that he is God and there is none else beside him. Paul tells us in Rom. 5:12; ***"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death hath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."*** Can you not see from this that man is the author of sin? God created man, and all men are sinners, but did God create them sinners? No. Absolutely not! Could God judge men in righteousness as sinners if he had created them as such? Surely you do not believe that he could. We read Eccles. 7:29: ***"Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."*** When God created Adam and placed him in the garden of Eden Adam was pure, innocent, and upright, knowing neither good or evil, and he had communion with his creator.

However, God had a purpose worthy of his holy name for sin to enter the world. Sin could not have otherwise

entered, for God is omnipotent, and omniscient. He knew perfectly what he was doing when he placed the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden, and when he formed the crooked serpent with his own hand. This was the way he prepared for sin to enter the world. We know also that God gave Adam a commandment to not eat of that tree, but he knew that Adam would eat of it, for he said, ***"for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."*** He did not say, If ye eat of it, but ***"In the day that thou eatest."*** Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast which the Lord had made, and he beguiled the woman Eve, who was a figure of the church, which is the bride of Christ, and she did eat, and gave unto Adam and he did eat. Eve was deceived because of being made subject to vanity. (See Rom. 8:20). But Adam was not deceived, for he was a figure of him which was to come, which was Christ; and we know that Christ cannot be deceived. It was because of his love for his bride that Adam partook of the forbidden fruit and died with her. He had no power to redeem her, therefore he must go to her. At the moment Adam ate the fruit he transgressed the law, and sin entered the world. Adam was instantly a sinner for he now had the knowledge of good and evil. Paul said, ***"I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law said, Thou shalt not covet."*** (Rom. 7:7) And God's holy justice decreed, ***"The soul that sinneth shall die."*** (Eccles. 18:4). Adam was the figure, but Christ was the substance, and because of his everlasting love for his bride, whom God chose in him before the foundation of the world, he came into the world, took her sins upon himself, and died to redeem her from the curse of the law. His death paid the penalty that justice demanded, for he had no sin of his own to die for. ***"Forasmuch then as the children (His bride) were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."*** (Heb. 2: 15). This was determined in eternity, for Christ stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and their names were written in the book of life of the Lamb. (Rev. 13:8). And by one sacrifice offering to God he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. (See Heb. 10: 12-14. Better yet, read the entire chapter.)

All men in nature are the offsprings of Adam for all were in him when he fell from his innocent and upright state into a state of sin and corruption, therefore we inherited his corrupt nature; for a corrupt tree cannot bring forth any thing but corrupt fruit because God gave every living thing its own seed and each seed must bring forth its own kind. Man is only Adam multiplied.

Now let us consider a few of the things that God created: wild fires, storms, earthquakes, wars, diseases, sicknesses, pestilences. All of these

things destroy property and lives and therefore can be considered evil; and God creates and controls all of them. Each and every thing that God sends upon the earth because of man's sins is certainly in his will and purpose and it always accomplishes every thing whereunto he sends it. God hath sworn, saying, ***"Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed so shall it stand."*** (Isa. 14: 24). And we read Isa. 55:11, ***"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it."*** There is nothing which comes to pass that God did not foreknow before he spake the world into existence, for he hath ***"declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure."*** (Isa. 46:10.)

Regardless of what men may think of the evils that God sends upon us because of our sins they are working for a good purpose, for we read Romans 8:28, ***"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose."***

The evil things that men do are entirely different by nature, for they are all against God's holy laws and are sin. I do not feel that it is necessary to prove that all flesh is absolute corruption, but I will quote a couple of Scriptures. "The fool said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Ps. 1: 1-3). Paul said in Rom. 7:18, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."

Now let us go to the things or works of the flesh. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like." (Gal. 5: 19-20.) All of these things are against the law; and James tells us, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." (Jas. 2:10.)

The only one who ever kept the whole law was our Saviour Jesus Christ; and he kept it to a jot and to a tittle. In the flesh we can do no good thing, but we are not always in the flesh. Paul says in Rom. 8-9, ***"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."*** And if we are led by the Spirit of God, then we are the sons of God. In Rom. 8: 1-14 we read, ***"But if the Spirit of him that raised up***

Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." To be led by the spirit of God is the only way a man can ever do any thing good, and if we be sons of God we will do good works, ***"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."*** (Eph. 2:10.)

God is not the author of confusion (I Cor. 14:33,) for man is the author thereof as well as all the evil works of man listed above, and we should not try to hide behind the doctrine of predestination, saying, ***"I could not help it. God made me do it." Every transgression and disobedience shall receive a just recompense of reward."*** (Heb. 2:2.)

Brethren I am only a man and subject to error. Therefore I suggest that you search the Scriptures and prove or disprove what I have written to your own satisfaction. May God be your guide.

Brethren, my hope is that I am one of those who were created in Christ Jesus, and that the Saviour has already paid the penalty for my sins. But if this be so or not, I know that God's judgment is just unto all.

May God bless the truth and pardon all my errors.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES

EXPERIENCE OF ESSIE BANE
(Written August 30, 1992)

I was born December 17, 1904. My family lived on a farm in Maben, West Virginia. I had three brothers and three sisters. My father farmed in the summer and worked for a lumber company during the winter months. I have worked all my life. When I was six years old my mother used to wake me up early to grind coffee. When I was 12, I did the washing for the whole family. My parents were Primitive Baptists and took me to their meetings when they went.

On March 29, 1924, I married Fred Bane, a coal miner. We lived in Ravenscliff, West Virginia. I gave birth to nine children; three girls and six boys. One boy died at birth. He was a twin. I lost my oldest daughter when she was just eight years old. She was lying sick one day when she just brightened up, as if she had seen something. I asked her if she had seen something pretty and she said "yes". I think I have one in heaven. She passed away on December 31, 1934. This was a hard experience for me.

I still did my work, but I had lost interest in everything. Up to this time, I didn't think I was such a bad person. Then I began to feel like the worst sinner in the world. I tried to talk to my husband but he couldn't seem to understand my feelings. From New Years to August I was in a terrible shape. I begged God for mercy. One day, when the others were outside, I was on my bed, begging for mercy. These big, black letters appeared to me which spelled out " My grace is sufficient. " After this I began to feel better.

I wasn't able to go to church very much. I had children to care for and there was a long distance to travel. My husband was not interested in going, but I was able to go to meetings at times with my parents. I really enjoyed these times. If I attended any other churches I felt condemned. I felt that I should be with the Old Baptists.

My husband passed away in February, 1972, and I came into troubles again. During this time, this scripture came to me: " In this world, ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." I still think on the scriptures but they do not appear the same way as they did at those times.

I was at the third Sunday meeting of the New Found Primitive Baptist Church in November of 1973, when I found myself going forward. I did not know I would do this. I was given a home. I enjoy going to meeting and go as often as I am able.

Sister Essie Bane is 87 years of age and attends her meetings regularly and faithfully (even when she does not feel well). She is a sweet comfort to her brethren.

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE LIVING SACRIFICE PRESENTED, AND THE WILL OF GOD PROVED ACCEPTABLE

It is also "a reasonable service." Does He not rightfully claim all the powers of our mind, all the obedience of our heart? Is it not reasonable that we should give Him all that we are and have? Is true religion not consistent with the highest dictates of enlightened reason? It is true that our reasoning mind, unenlightened by the Spirit of God, does set itself against the truth of God; but when the eyes of our understanding are enlightened, the truth of God is commended to our reasoning faculties. I can say for myself that I at times see with my enlightened understanding the greatest beauty and glory in the Word of God. The truth of God is not only dear to my heart's affection, and is commended to my inmost conscience, but my enlightened understanding, my reasoning powers influenced by grace, can see in it an inexpressible beauty and glory. The service, therefore, I render on that ground, is a "reasonable" service; and may it ever be such! Our prayers, when they are dictated by the Spirit of God, are not effusions of nonsense, but petitions agreeable to the Scripture and an

enlightened understanding. Our preaching, too, if we are taught of God, if we have a ministerial gift, if we can open God's precious truth, will commend itself to the enlightened understanding of the children of God. The world, it is true, will count these things idle tales, and despise and ridicule both us and them; but the children of God, if we preach the truth with purity and power, are sufficient judges that what we speak is commended to their understanding, as well as approved of by their conscience, and embraced by their affections. Why should I have this evening so large a congregation? To hear falsehood or nonsense? I should insult you, and you would cast insult upon me, unless we met together this evening for a reasonable service - for prayer, for praise, for the preached gospel, such as our understanding, as illuminated by the Spirit's teaching, is satisfied with. We speak the words of soberness and truth, things known, felt, handled, and tasted. We preach truth commended to our understanding by the Spirit of God, and enshrined in our warmest and tenderest affections. We love God's truth, because we have felt its power; and we preach God's truth to you who have felt the same power, who understand it, feel it, and love it; nor would I wish to preach to any people who do not spiritually understand and experimentally feel what I lay before them.

III. But I proceed to what the Apostle enforces as to not being "conformed to this world, but to transformed in the renewing of our mind." Now, why does this immediately follow? For this reason. Because, in proportion as we are conformed to the spirit of this world, our understanding becomes dull in the things of God, our affections cold and torpid, and our consciences less tender and sensitive. There is an eternal opposition between God and the world lying in wickedness. In order, then, that our spiritual experience of the truth of God should maintain its ground, it must not be dulled and deadened by conformity to the world. It is like the sabre that the soldier carries into battle; it must not trail unsheathed upon the ground lest point and edge be dulled; both must be kept keen and sharp, that execution may be done upon the foe. So it is with our enlightened understanding, with our tender conscience, and our heavenly affections. If we let them fall upon the world, it is like a soldier trailing his sabre upon the pavement; every step he takes dulls both edge and point. If we are conformed to this world, we lose the sweet understanding that we had before of the precious truth of God; we lose that tender sensitiveness of conscience, whereby sin - any sin - becomes a grief and a burden to the soul. A Christian should be what was said of any ancient knight, "without fear and without reproach." The least suspicion of either would have been a blot upon Bayard's scutcheon. So the Christian's shield should be without a stain, his reputation without a blot. His character should not only be free from blemish, but even from suspicion - as untarnished as the modesty of a

woman, or the honour and bravery of a man.

Now, we often get into this worldly conformity, and run the risk of dulling the sword and sullying the shield, by degrees. We give way in this and that thing. We are hedged in, it is true, by the precepts of the gospel, the alarms of a tender conscience, and many powerful restraints - so many banks and dikes to keep out the sea of the world; but, as in Holland, if one breach be made in the dike, the sea at once rushes in, so, if one gap be made in the conscience, then the sea of worldliness rushes through the breach, and but for God's grace would soon deluge the soul. But even apart from having any peculiar temptation to make a wide breach like this, our social ties, our daily occupation, the friends and relations whom we love in the flesh, all, through their power over our natural affections, draw us aside from time to time into this worldly conformity. Here, then, is the point where we have to make our chief stand; for if we are conformed to the maxims, the principles, the customs, and the spirit of the world, we so far lose that spiritual position which is a believer's highest blessing and privilege. We descend from the mount of communion with the Lord, and fall into a cold, miserable spot, where the life of God, though not extinct, is reduced to its lowest ebb. The Apostle therefore says, "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." As worldly conformity is subdued and departed from, there is the transforming process of which the Apostle here speaks, whereby we become renewed in the spirit of our mind. In other words, the Holy Spirit, by His work upon the soul, renews the life of God, revives faith, hope, love, prayer, praise, spirituality of mind, with every tender feeling and every godly sensation that stirs and moves in a living heart. As, then, the Spirit of God renews His work upon the heart, He brings us out of this worldly conformity. He discovers to us the evil of it; He makes and keeps the conscience tender and sensitive; He shows us that if we get conformed to the world we lose our evidences; that they become dulled and obscured; that we are soon deprived of communion with God, of comfortable access to our best, our heavenly Friend; that our taste and appetite for spiritual things get palled; and that our very profession itself becomes a burden. As the conscience then gets more and more awakened to see and feel these things, we become convinced that we do but reap what we have sown; and the Spirit of God, by pressing the charge more closely home, shows us, and sometimes by painful experience, such as long days of darkness and heavy, dragging nights of desertion, the evil of worldly conformity. Now, as He thus brings us out of worldly conformity, by showing us the evil of it, and that by this miserable cleaving to earth we rob ourselves of our happiest hours, our sweetest hopes, and our dearest enjoyments, He draws the soul nearer to Christ; and as He keeps renewing us in the spirit of our mind, by dropping one

precious truth after another into the heart, He revives faith, renews hope, communicates love, draws forth prayer, bestows spirituality of mind and affections; and by these means a transforming process takes place, whereby the soul is brought out of worldly conformity, and is transformed into the likeness of a suffering Jesus.

To produce this conformity is the work of the blessed Spirit, whose office it is to take of the things of Christ and reveal them to the heart. Thus He takes of His blood, His righteousness, His holy life, His agonizing death, brings to the garden of Gethsemane, carries to the cross at Calvary, and by opening up the sorrows and sufferings of "Immanuel, God with us," conforms the soul to His marred image. In proportion, then, as the blessed Spirit brings us out of worldly conformity, He renews us in the spirit of our mind, and transforms us into the image of Christ. The understanding now becomes more enlightened, the conscience more sensitive, the affections more fixed on heavenly things; there is more peace in believing, and the soul rejoices more "in hope of the glory of God." but take the converse. As we get into the world, we become gradually conformed to it, and soon lose that spirituality of mind, that tenderness of conscience, those heavenly affections that formerly prevailed. We get cold, stupid, lifeless, sink into a barren spot, where we are of little comfort to ourselves, and of little use to the Church of God. How we need, then, the blessed Spirit of God to be renewing us daily in the spirit of our minds, and thus transforming us into the suffering image of the sorrowing Son of God. For there is no medium between spirituality and carnality, between the image of Christ and conformity to the world. As there is no middle path between the strait road and the broad one, so there is no middle way between fruitfulness and barrenness, prayerfulness and prayerlessness, watchfulness and carelessness, repentance and hardness, faith and unbelief, the life of a Christian and the life of a worldling.

IV. I now proceed to show you the connection of this being renewed in the spirit of our mind with "proving what is that good, and perfect, and acceptable will of God." The will of God is "good, perfect, and acceptable." How are we to prove personally and experimentally that it is all this? That good and perfect will runs counter, over and over again, to my natural inclinations, sets itself firmly against my fleshly desires. God's will calls for self-denial, but I want self-gratification; it requires obedience, but my carnal mind is the essence of disobedience; it demands many sacrifices, but my coward flesh revolts from them; it bids me walk in the path of suffering, sorrow, and tribulation, but my fleshly mind shrinks back, and says, "No, I cannot tread in that path"! As long, then, as I am conformed to the world, I cannot see the path, for this worldly conformity has thrown a veil over my eyes; or if I do dimly and faintly see it, I am not willing or able to walk in it, because my carnal mind rebels against all trouble or self-de-

nial, or anything connected with the cross of Christ. But, on the other hand, if by any gracious operations of the Spirit on my heart I am drawn out of this worldly conformity, am renewed in the spirit of my mind, and transformed into the likeness of the suffering Son of God, then "that good, and perfect, and acceptable will of God," becomes commended to my conscience.

1. First, I see how "good" that will is. It may be, nay, it is very contrary to my will; it points out a very rough and rugged path, in which it bids me walk; it calls for crucifixion of the flesh in every direction; it overturns scheme after scheme, destroys castle after castle, pulls down all lofty buildings and fond imaginations with a long succession of fairy paradises, and loved, almost idolized plans and dreams of earthly happiness; but still, it is a "good" will, as issuing and emanating from Him who is supreme in goodness and mercy, yea, goodness itself. But we only see, acknowledge, and submit to it as a good will when we are renewed in the spirit of our mind, cast into the mould of the gospel, and conformed to the suffering image of Jesus. What said the suffering, agonizing Lord in Gethsemane's gloomy garden? "Father, let this cup pass from Me"! But how at once His holy soul, in the midst of agony and suffering, resolved itself into obedience! "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." There we see how the suffering Son of God accepted His Father's will as a "good" will, though that will led Him through agonies unutterable.

2. Again, it is a "perfect" will. There is no spot, stain, or shadow of weakness, error, or instability in it. It is and indeed must be necessarily as perfect as God Himself; for it emanates from Him who is all perfection - a discovery of His mind and character. But when this will sets itself against our flesh, thwarts our dearest hopes, and overturns our fondest schemes, we cannot see that it is a perfect will, but are much disposed to fret, murmur, and rebel against it. That "perfect" will may take a child out of your bosom; may strike down a dear husband, or tear from your arms a beloved wife; may strip you of all your worldly goods, may put your feet into a path of suffering, and lay you upon a bed of pain and languishing; cast you into hot furnaces or overwhelming floods, and make your life almost a burden to yourself. How then, under circumstances so trying and distressing as these, can you say, "It is a perfect will. I acknowledge and submit to it as such. Let that will be my will, and reign and rule in my heart without a murmur of resistance to it"? It is certainly impossible to do so as long as the world is conformed to, for the very spirit of that is opposition to the perfect will of God. Until, therefore, the soul is brought out of worldly conformity to view things, not with carnal but with spiritual eyes, it cannot be reconciled to it, acknowledge it as a "perfect" will, and as such submit to it.

3. And "acceptable", too; not, indeed, to our natural reason or to our carnal heart, which see no glory in anything heavenly or divine; not to our earthly affections, which it continually thwarts and crosses; but acceptable to our renewed mind, to our enlightened understanding, to our spiritual will, as they are melted and moulded into conformity with God's will. This good, and acceptable, and perfect will is far, far out of the sight of the carnal eye, out of the sound of the worldly ear, out of the worldly hand; but is made manifest to the spiritual eye, listened to by the spiritual ear, and laid hold of by the spiritual hand. To realize this for ourselves, we shall find it good sometimes to look back and see how that divine will has, in previous instances, proved itself acceptable to our renewed mind. We can see too how supremely that will has reigned, and yet how supreme in all points for our good. It has ordered or overruled all circumstances and all events, amidst a complication of difficulties in providence and grace. Nothing has happened to our injury, but all things, according to the promise, have worked together for our good. Whatever we have lost, it was better for us that it was taken away; whatever property, or comfort, or friends, or health, or earthly happiness we have been deprived of, it was better for us to lose than to retain them. Was your dear child taken away? It might be to be safely housed, or to teach you resignation to God's sacred will. Has a dear partner been snatched from your embrace? It was that God might be your better Partner and undying Friend. Was any portion of your worldly substance taken away? It was that you might be taught to live a life of faith, not only on the grace, but on the providence of God. Have your fondest schemes been marred, your youthful hopes blighted, and you struck in the warmest affections of your heart? It was to remove an idol, to dethrone a rival of Christ, to crucify the object of earthly love, that a purer, holier, and more enduring affection might be enshrined in its stead. All this we can now see, looking back on the past; but the present is dark and obscure. How shall we find the will of God acceptable now? Only as we are renewed in the spirit of our mind, and are transformed and conformed to the suffering image of the sorrowing Son of God. How fearful, then, how dangerous, and yet how ensnaring is that worldly conformity which sets us in deadly opposition to that good and perfect will of God which was, and is "acceptable" to His dear Son, to all the holy angels round the throne, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to His spiritually - minded people upon earth, and hateful to none but devils and carnal, ungodly men. And how truly blessed to be brought out of the power and prevailing influence of this worldly spirit, and to be cast into the gospel mould, where, being renewed in the spirit of our mind, we prove that the will of God is not only "good," pure goodness, and "perfect", worthy of all His glorious perfections, but "acceptable" to our heart and affections, which therefore tenderly em-

brace it, and thus, as it were, incorporate it into our will, making the two wills one. To bring us to this point is the grand object of all gospel discipline; and one may say that the ultimatum of gospel obedience is,

" To lie passive in His hand,
And know no will but His."

Here then only can we fully enter into the beauty and blessedness of gospel truth; here only can we submit to the weight of a daily cross, glory in tribulation, patiently endure afflictions, feel the sweetness of the promises, walk in obedience to the precepts, and tread the path that leads to endless glory. Here only is our rebellious will silenced, our carnal affections restrained, the raging strength of sin curbed, and the heart softened and melted into an obedient acquiescence with the will and word of God. Now view the contrast. If we begin by degrees to drink into the spirit of the world; if the things of time and sense engross all our thoughts, cares, and affections, and if we gradually drift into a course of carnality and slothfulness, carried away by a flood of earthly pursuits and cares, how rugged, steep, and up-hill the path of obedience becomes. Prayer and supplication, reading and meditation, converse with the exercised people of God, the very house of prayer itself, and the hearing of the gospel, those blessed privileges so dear to a child of God in a spiritual frame, become a weariness when the heart is in the world.

But one thing we must deeply bear in mind, that as we cannot deliver ourselves from worldly conformity, so we cannot renew ourselves in the spirit of our mind. The blessed Spirit must do both for us, and work in us to will and to do of His good pleasure. But as we are led to feel the misery of the one state, and the blessedness of the other, we shall seek after these gracious operations and divine influences; and as the blessed Spirit from time to time brings the soul out of this worldly conformity and transforms it into the suffering image of Christ, it sees more and more the beauty and blessedness of walking in this path; and cleaving to Christ and His cross with its tenderest affections proves for itself the goodness, acceptability, and perfection of the will of God.

J.C. Philpot

"WHO MAKETH THEE TO DIFFER?"

1 Cor. iv. 7.

That there is a difference in the condition and future prospects of the children of men, but few, if any, will pretend to deny; but in what the difference consists, and by what power it is established, is a matter of great contention and strife with the theologians of our age. That this difference does not consist in our relation to or creation in Adam, is very fully demonstrated in the scriptures. "For God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to

dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." - Acts. xvii. 26. And that all are alike condemned in their relation to Adam, is plainly asserted in the words: "Death has passed upon all men, because all have sinned." Nothing is more clearly revealed or fully demonstrated in divine revelation than the fact that we are all by nature on an equal footing, as to original purity and subsequent depravity and condemnation. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." - Rom. iii. 25. "And every mouth is stopped, and the whole world is guilty before God." We require then, where is the difference, seeing that in regard to sin and human depravity all are alike? We conceive a vast difference in regard to the spiritual condition of mankind. Some there are who have been delivered from the curse of the law, the guilt and consequence of sin, and made the subjects of regenerating grace, redeeming love, and living faith; these are made to love God, to love holiness, to understand, believe and rejoice in the truth as it is in Jesus. These have Christ formed in them the hope of glory. These being the sons of God, are heirs of him, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ; heirs to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that cannot fade away. These are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, &c.

Widely differing from the people of God, there is another class of the human family, described in scripture as a generation of vipers, a seed of evil doers, of their father the devil, cursed children that cannot cease to sin; these know not the way of peace, they neither know nor love the truth, but delight in sin, error, delusion and falsehood. These stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed. These shall die in their sins, go away into everlasting punishment; be turned into hell with all the nations that forget God.

Here is certainly a difference, a very wide difference, in the spiritual condition, prospects, disposition and final destiny of the two classes described; they are known by different names. The former are called children of God, dear children, sons, Bride, Lamb's wife, a peculiar people, chosen generation, royal priesthood, holy nation, elect, &c., while the latter are called children of the devil, cursed children, aliens, strangers, serpents, vipers, dogs, sorcerers, &c.

The questions returns, Who maketh thee to differ, or who makes them to differ? As those who are saved by nature children of wrath, even as others, we are sustained by the infallible testimony of truth in saying that every soul that is raised from the lowest depths of sin and depravity is raised up by the power and grace of the sovereign God. There is salvation in no other name, hence the true difference consists in what God has been graciously pleased to do for his people, in a way of grace, for nothing short of grace could rescue them from awful wrath and fiery indignation.

The question why God has not bestowed the same grace on all men that

he has on some men, is about as reasonable as the question why men are not angels, or angels are not gods. He has been pleased only to inform us that he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. The saints of God cannot believe, that wherein they differ from those who go down to perdition is based on works of righteousness which they have done, or that they have made themselves to differ. By grace they are saved, through faith, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, &c.; hence their anthem of eternal worship shall be, "Not unto us, not unto us, O God, but to thy name give the glory."

On earth, not in heaven, not in hell, but on earth, among infatuated mortals, the question is agitated, whether God, as a sovereign, did, according to his own eternal counsel and immutable will, fix the destiny of beings and of worlds, according to his unsearchable wisdom and goodness from the ancients of eternity; or was he by some law of necessity or unforseen events driven to the necessity of making the children of men to differ? In the discussion of this question, dear reader, you are engaged on the one side or the other; none can be neutral on this subject. Trifling as this inquiry may seem to some, in it is involved the grand controversy between sin and holiness, truth and error, predestination and Arminianism, the doctrine and practice of Old School Baptists, and that of the New Schools in divinity.

The word of God assures us that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; and challenges an infatuated world to declare "With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding?" - Isa. xl. 14. And that his purpose was mature and complete, appears not only from the immutability of his nature, but also from his "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." - Isa. xlvi. 10. Hence the apostle says, "We are bound to give thanks unto God alway for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth." 2 Thess. ii. 13. Chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world; predestinated us to the adoption of children, &c. Eph. ii. Saved us and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. 2 Tim. i. 9.

Of the other it is written, "These were of old ordained to this condemnation." - Jude 3. But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things

that they understand not, and shall utterly perish in their own corruptions." - 2 Peter ii. 12. "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." - 2 Thess. ii. 11 - 12. From the scriptures above quoted we prove that every link in the chain of causes and effects is placed and secured by an unerring hand, and that all the wheels of the (to us) complicated machinery of creation, providence and grace, although their revolutions may seem to us to be in direct opposition to each other, yet all are wisely supplied, and every movement was determined before the machine was put in motion. He who will deny this will deny the foreknowledge of God, his truth, holiness and immutability, and finally his being, and at last unite with the fool and say, "There is no God."

This subject opens a field to our contemplation, but we have not room to enlarge. We have merely glanced at some important things in connection with the sovereignty of God, and with the following reflections on the subject we close this article:

First. God having made mankind to differ, and that according to his eternal counsel and sovereign will, is it rational, reasonable or scriptural for men to get up and organize societies, powers, armies, or anything of the kind, for the express purpose of obviating that difference which God has made! Is there a prospect of success in their heaven - daring enterprise! What mad infatuation! As well might men attempt to annul the everlasting decrees of God, abolish the difference between light and darkness, cold and heat, seed - time and harvest, beasts or men, or men and angels; let them change the skin of the Ethiopian, and the spots of the leopard; change and equalize according to their standard of wisdom the laws of nature, and then think of altering the things which have gone out of the mouth of God.

But let not the saints forget the principal design of the apostle in his use of our text. This question is calculated to humble the redeemed people of God in the dust; all they have, they have received, and all that makes the saints on earth or those perfected in glory differ from the most abandoned wretches on earth or in hell, is alone what God has done.

Elder Beebe

St. John 14: 15-20.

If ye love me, keep my commandments.

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

Even the Spirit of truth; who the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knowth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall also live.

At the day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

THE HOUSE OF WORSHIP

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the House of the Lord."
Psalms 122:1

My soul leaped with joy from it's fainted condition the other day when an Elder softly said to me, "Let us go into the house." I was within the city limits of one of the largest cities in our nation. Everyone on the streets and highways seemed to be in such a hurry. I was meditating upon the fact that things are so swiftly coming to pass that it is very difficult to believe such drastic changes are taking place. I began to realize that I was so heavily involved in this great turmoil of swift and rapid events to such an extent that my mind was in a whirl, my heart was troubled, and my soul was fainted -all because I could not keep up. What great relief of mind to enter upon the grounds of this house of worship and to be warmly invited into the house for the purpose of pausing in our hurryings to worship God. How good it is when you feel so cast down, unworthy, and unfit to be noticed by anyone, to hear them say, ***"Let us go into the House of the Lord."*** Aren't you glad that they even remember to invite you into such a sacred place as the Place of Praises. Aren't you glad, also, that others have a desire to go into the House of Prayer and Praise.

Get your Bible and turn to the 122nd Psalm and read with us as we meditate upon some of the glorious expressions of the Psalmist. The second verse reads: ***"Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem."*** We recall that in Psalms 100:4 it says, ***"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise ..."*** Jesus said, ***"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."***

When I entered the door of this building and beheld such smiling peaceful expressions on the faces of those who so joyfully greeted me, I felt to be standing within the gates of the City of God with a number of its citizens. No one there needed to say to any other, "I love you." The love of God was so manifest in each and every face, word, handshake, and embrace that we all had a foretaste of Heaven. When we had settled down to singing hymns of thanksgiving to God even for the tribulations that had been ours to endure, I gazed at the open door through which we had entered. Then I thought of the gates through which we had come to this place of joy and peace. I thought of the first gate that leadeth unto life, to wit: tribulations. Peace, joy, and happiness cannot be experienced while in confusion, sadness and misery; but after being exercised by these tribulations, we experience the peaceable fruits of righteousness which are patience, faith, hope, love, and joy of life. ***"Go through, go through***

the gates..." is an expression found in Isaiah 62:10. It must be through the gate of tribulations and persecutions that we learn to be submissive and to rely upon God for all things pertaining to God and godliness. This painful gate could be termed the gate of regeneration. You can not climb over the wall to avoid this gate. If one gets into the position of indulging in special favors peculiar to the afflicted and poor people of God, this one would be classed as a thief and a robber. The walls are too thick to be penetrated; too high to be climbed over; and too strong to be overthrown. You must enter through the gate of tribulations which is the gate of regeneration. This is the evidence that brethren look for in listening to the experience of candidates for church membership. This being "born again" is manifest when their testimony proves that they have suffered to the extent of being brought into the knowledge of being unable to do anything of themselves to merit any blessing from God.

I went back into my experience and was given to re-live for a moment the period in my life when it seemed the mountains of my many sins were crushing me to death. The gates of hell seemed to be opened unto me and that I was being swallowed into its clutches. Every straw to which I so greedily clung could not so much as slow down my descent into the depths of such a horrible pit. I re-lived for a moment my cries out of the depth of hell. I remembered the groans, the fastings, and the awful miseries of hell with all the doors closed and locked fast. I could not open any door of faith or hope. How I did knock and seek and ask but I had no faith. I wept bitterly with no hope for mercy because my sins demanded that I should forever be in misery. While in this awful condition and after I had exhausted all of my strength and energy it pleased God in his gracious providence toward me to put it into the mind of one of my friends to invite me into a house of worship. He kept insisting against my wishes that I should accompany him to a place of worship to hear a certain minister preach. I had read the Bible: it had condemned. I had listened to preachers: they had condemned me. I talked to my close associates: they all thought I was crazy when I would tell them of my hopeless condition. I learned in the pit that God was sovereign and holy and that no man could come unto Him. I felt that I had blasphemed against God under the cloak of a gospel minister in declaring the power of man unto salvation to such extent that I could never have forgiveness here nor in the world to come. This man who said unto me, "Let us go to meeting," saw something in me that I could not see. This is why he kept insisting that I go. His care concerning my spiritual welfare astonished me. I shall forever be thankful to God for that man who kept insisting, "Let us go to meeting." I had thought that I knew how to read and interpret the Holy scriptures.

God opened the second gate unto me when He opened the *"door of faith"* thru the preaching of the gospel of this minister that night. *"And*

when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles." (Acts 14:27) "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching" to set before me an open door. God opened this minister's mouth to preach this precious faith. God opened my heart to understand it. As soon as it was opened unto me I gladly went through it to such extent as to receive and embrace it with all my heart. I did not have to go to Heaven after it. I did not have to go across the seas and oceans to get it. You cannot open the door of faith yourself. It must be opened to you. Paul says, *"A great door and effectual is opened unto me."* (1 Cor. 16:9) When the door of faith is opened how devotedly we cling to the Lord Jesus Christ. The gate of faith being opened I saw the maneuverings of my Saviour. I saw him come through the gate of Heaven. I saw him descend toward the pit. I saw Him descend low enough to reach me who was the vilest of the vile. I saw Him wash me whiter than snow with his blood. I saw Him pay my penalty by His dying in my stead. I saw Him merit a home in Heaven for me with His life. I heard Him plead in my behalf before the Father. All of this led me to the door of Hope. In Hosea 2:15 we read of a door of hope. On that memorable night for a fleeting time this gate of Hope was swung wide open and I was blessed to experience the entrance to that within the veil: *"Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil."* (Heb. 6: 17-20.)

The opening of the gate of hope gave me to see that within the veil. The opening of the gate of faith gave me to believe in Jesus, the perfect and powerful Saviour of His people. The opening of the gate of hope gave me to trust that I was one of His people and that all of the benefits He merited would be mine to experience in the future. These gates lead into the inner place of the King. The most innergate, or door, must be the gate of Love. In the Song of Songs we read, *"My Beloved put in His hand by the hole of the door."* (Solomon 5:4) We read in Revelations, *"After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven..."* (Rev. 4:1) When this gate of love is opened in Heaven to us our hearts overflow with this Love of God. Perfect love casteth out fear. O what joy, what peace, and happiness we do experience as a result of the foretaste of Heaven itself. It is too wonderful to tell. It is too much for poor earthly creatures to experience but for short seasons. I am made to believe that God has ordained these wonderful banquets of the King to be participated in most gloriously here in

His banqueting houses of worship. God's children will travel thousands of miles to one of these banquets. God meets His people with the gifts of love within these Houses of praises. Sometimes we hear the voices of angels coming from the mouths of men as we worship God together.

While meditating in this meeting-house on the gates of tribulations, (or regeneration), faith, hope, and love, my question was, Are there any other gates? John gave me the answer in 1st John 4:16: ***"God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him."*** There is no gate beyond the gate of love.

When I came to the reality of my surroundings I felt that God had cemented everyone present in that congregation together so firmly with a heavenly mixture of grace and love that nothing could break fellowship. I felt that everyone there including the many young people were lively stones, made to be lively by the love of God and washed clean in the blood of the Lamb. I saw the manifestation of their labor of love as I gazed upon the newly finished walls, furniture, and fixtures of this House of Worship. I knew that it had taken many hours and dollars to bring this into reality. I said in my heart, ***"Thank God for such evidences of a God-loving people who will gladly sacrifice their bodies and earthly treasures in providing a meeting place for the members and friends to worship God together."*** Recall that the 3rd and 4th verses of the 122nd Psalms says: ***"Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together: Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord."*** A company of believers blessed to worship God in unison in prayer, praise, and preaching is a wonderful experience of being compacted together both in body and Spirit.

I saw the Heavens open unto me a book of remembrances of the testimony of God's love and mercy. I remembered the 1st Heaven which was a paradise when the Lord first remembered me as related in this treatise. I called to remembrance the 2nd Heaven when a door was opened to me to be baptized and to be married to the particular church in covenant-relationship which holds to the Gospel Faith and Practice. I had been given the wonderful relationship to trust that God would providentially care for me and finally save me in that eternal abode because of His love and through the merits of Jesus Christ. Yet, I thought that I had so blasphemed His power to such degree that none would receive me into their fellowship here on earth. How glad I was when they received me and welcomed me into their fellowship. My joys in participating in the special privileges and ordinances allowed only to members of the church are considered as precious and sacred. Being caught up in the third Heaven for moments is enough foretaste to make me yearn to live there eternally with the redeemed of the Lord.

It is wonderful in this church relationship to be compacted together to mourn with those who mourn; to re-

joice with those who rejoice: to be so united in affections one for the other that each one will be willing to make great sacrifices for the other ones' good. It is wonderful to be united in agreement upon religious beliefs. Being "Compact together" in love, belief, experience, and hope: all this causes a yearning to meet often together in worship of God for His benefits to us. All this causes the lovers of the truth to be glad when someone suggests, "Let us go into the House of the Lord."

We go to the House of God in unison to give thanks for His wonderful works. We listen prayerfully as the minister of the Gospel gives testimony of the will of God, the word of God, and the simple commandments of our Lord, Jesus Christ. The minister comforts us as he is blessed to speak of the sovereign God who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will. We experience a feeling of security as the minister brings testimony from the Holy Scriptures to prove that God's will of purpose is solely, wholly, perfectly, and completely worked by Him, to the praise of His own glory and to the completion of salvation of each and every one of His children, without a hint of any jot or tittle of His will of purpose being disobeyed because He works it himself; and, it embraces all times, events, words, thoughts, actions, and all creatures and things both visible and invisible. We are edified as the minister preaches the Word of God bringing a multiplicity of testimonies from the Book of books, proving that the will of God relative to the salvation of God's elect is because of God's great love for us through the merits of Jesus Christ, Who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. We eagerly listen as the minister preaches to us God's will of precept as he rightly divides the word of truth in warning the Lord's people of dangers and exhorting them to keep the commandments of Jesus, and to be fervent in charity.

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the House of the Lord."

I wanted to praise Him publicly for His divine providence, amazing grace, gifts of the Spirit, His great love, and gospel of Jesus Christ. I wanted to participate in the ordinances of Jesus Christ and His Church. There are two kinds of extremists relative to public praise. One is the child of God who is fearful of man to the extent that he will not participate in public praise. The hypocrite will engage in public praise to be commended by men. The proper Christian in not fearful of the frowns of the world, nor is he a public worshipper in order to be commended by those who profess to be Christians.

David said, ***"Give unto the Lord glory due unto his name: bring an offering and come into his courts."*** You may ask, "What shall we bring? Our strength will not help Him for He is all-powerful. Our wisdom will not direct Him for He is all-wise. Our God is so great that he does not require our wisdom to direct Him nor our power to assist Him. He owns all things; therefore, He does not require our wealth to enrich Him. He is so effectual in His works and so convincing relative to

His greatness that He does not need our reputation to advance Him. What does He require of us? He requires us to fear Him because of His greatness, He requires us to love Him because of His goodness. ***"What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits towards me?"*** (Psalms 116:12) What offering shall I bring? The sacrifice that the Lord loves is a broken heart and a contrite spirit. The word contrite means bruised. Paul says, ***"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies as living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."*** (Romans 12:1) God does not need our help in any but we certainly need His strength in all of our affairs. It pleases Him that we are to help one another in word, deed, and prayer. Bring an offering of your material possessions for the support of the ministry, maintenance of the house of worship, and the poor of the flock. The Scriptural rule for this is called an order to the churches which is plainly and simply stated in 1st Corinthians 16: 1-3. (Read, if interested in giving according to this rule.)

"I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving." (Psalms 116:17). I will thank Him for His deliverance from death; for His deliverance of me from the clutches of law and death; for His setting before me the open doors of faith and hope; and, for His love that flooded my soul through the open door of Heaven. I will thank Him for Jesus Christ, my King, Saviour, Friend, Priest, Way, Truth, and Life.

When I come to the courts of the Lord and in the midst of His people, I pray that I will be given to remember my vows. May I be given to say as David when I am inside the place of worship: ***"I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all His people." David said, "God is the Lord which hath shewed us light: Bind the sacrifice with cords even unto the horns of the altar."*** (Psalm 118:27) Unless these instructions can be experienced, none of our sacrifices will be acceptable to God. All acceptable sacrifice is fervent constant confident devotion. That which binds is faith. Streams of God's love are the cords. The altar is Christ. Christ's merit and power are the horns of the altar. I find it to be more blessed to try and fail than not to try. I find that my conscience is more at ease when I go to the House of God and fail in my attempts at worship than when I fail to present my body. O that our people would more often say to their children, relatives, and friends, ***"Let us go into the House of the Lord."*** It is very encouraging to see parents bring their children to church meetings. A greater percent of our church meeting congregations are young people now than when I first united with the Primitive Baptist Church. Let us bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Let us teach them to obey their parents, speak the truth, read good literature, to behave themselves conformable to high morals, and to respect the elderly. We know that it is God's work to regenerate and save eternally each and everyone of

his people; yet, it is our obligation as Christian parents to discourage our children from becoming involved in religious organizations whose object is to work zealously to influence young minds to embrace their doctrines and practices which you know to be false and erroneous. It is your duty to encourage them to consider the Bible as the Book of books worthy to their reading. It is your duty to encourage their attendance at the place where you go to worship. You consider your particular church of your membership as being more right in its doctrine and practices than any of the organizations whose main purposes are to convince the young and to convert them to their ideas and doings.

The minds of children are very easily impressed and they are prone to follow anyone who takes a great interest in them. Take care that your children be not as those referred to by David in his prayer: ***"Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children whose mouth speaketh vanity and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood."*** May we do our duty and pray God: ***"That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as cornerstones, polished after the similitude of a palace: that our garners may be full, affording all manner of store: that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets: that our oxen may be strong to labour: that there be no breaking in, nor going out: that there be no complaining in our streets. HAPPY IS THAT PEOPLE THAT IS IN SUCH A CASE; yea HAPPY IS THAT PEOPLE, WHOSE GOD IS THE LORD."*** (Psalm 144: 11-15) May we assemble ourselves together more often, and often say, ***"LET US GO INTO THE HOUSE OF THE LORD."*** MAY GOD BLESS YOU. AMEN.

Elder E.J. Lambert

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Mrs. Nannie Moran, Va 2.00
Charles Hatchett, OK 2.00
Mrs. Ruth Sparkman, TX 2.00
Billy F. Poindexter, VA 5.00
Willie M. Ratliff, VA 7.00
Donald Agee, VA 2.00
Alonza Davis, Va 2.00
Mrs. Addie Vest, Va 2.00
Mrs. Donald Arne, SD 55.00
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Mrs. Bertie Brown, NC 2.00
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Mrs. Ada Campbell, VA 2.00
Mrs. Sallie Hodges, VA 2.00
Mrs. Lessie S. Sladky, NC 7.00
Mrs. Opelene Cunningham, AL 2.00

OBITUARIES

JOSEPH J. "JIMMY" ADKINS

Brother Jimmy Adkins, son of the late Edgar Q. Adkins and Sister Elizabeth "Betty" Holloway Adkins, was born November 25, 1924, and died September 5, 1992, making his earthly journey 67 years.

Although Brother Jimmy was handicapped, he made known his love for the Lord's people and asked for a home with the Forest Grove Old School Baptist Church, Parsonsburg, Maryland, on September 28, 1975. He was joyfully received and was baptized October 5, 1975, by Elder James Poole.

As long as Sister Betty was physically able to care for Brother Jimmy he remained at home and attended meetings regularly.

But as his health failed, he became a resident of Holly Center, Salisbury, Maryland, and later Berlin Nursing Home.

Each time his pastor and brethren visited, Brother Jimmy would recognize them and smile with joy over their visit. It is with deep sadness that we see one more of our small membership laid to rest. We believe, however, that our loss is Brother Jimmy's eternal gain. He was laid to rest in the cemetery adjoining the Forest Grove Meetinghouse with graveside services by his beloved pastor Elder Julian Williams September 8, 1992.

Survivors are two sisters Bernice Blades of Snow Hill, Maryland, and Mary Louis Hadder of Showell, Maryland, and six nieces and nephews. A brother Reginald Adkins and a sister Dorothy Wilgus preceded him in death.

We few that remain anticipate a joyful reunion with those of like faith who have gone on before us.

Elbert Robbins, Church Clerk

LAURENCE SMITH HOLLOWAY

Brother Laurence Holloway, son of the late Ina Perdue and Handy Holloway, was born December 30, 1906, near Parsonsburg, Maryland, and died October 3, 1992, making his earthly journey eighty-five years. He is survived by his wife, Sister Ethel Morris Holloway to whom he was married on July 25, 1930, a brother Louis and several nieces and nephews.

He was led to ask for a home at Forest Grove Old School Baptist Church, Parsonsburg, Maryland, on June 14, 1971 and was baptized on July 11, 1971, by Elder Arthur Warren assisted by Elder D.B. Stokes. Brother Laurence was appointed deacon by the church on March 23, 1972, in which capacity he served well. The Salisbury Association appointed him to the Board of the Primitive Baptist Home Fund in October 1972, and he was elected by the Board as treasurer in May 1976. He served in this office until his resignation in 1981 after a severe stroke.

Services were held October 7, 1992, at the Forest Grove Meetinghouse by his beloved pastor Elder Julian Williams. Burial followed in the cemetery adjoining the church.

Brother Laurence had travelled extensively among the churches and was loved by all whom he met. It is with sorrow that we lay to rest another of our flock leaving only four members. Yet we know that "all things work together for good", and in that we can rejoice in full hope of resurrection to eternal life with our blessed Lord. Fittingly the congregation sang together "Amazing Grace" and Brother Laurence's favorite "Jerusalem My Happy Home."

We bow in submission to the will of the Omnipotent God.

Elbert Robbins, Church Clerk

SELMA JAMES ROEBUCK

I believe the Lord rejoiced on January 16, 1992 at the death of Sister Selma Roebuck (Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints. Psalms 116 V.15). I feel this dear Sister was one of his Saints, and he called her home.

Sister Roebuck was born April 15, 1907, the daughter of Samuel Ashley James and Kate Crandell James. She was married to Samuel Harcum Roebuck on April 6, 1923. They were blessed with four children, Harcum, Mary Kathryn, Ashley, and Sallie Jo. She is survived by Harcum, Ashley, and Sallie Jo.

Sister Selma joined Flat Swamp Primitive Baptist Church in May, 1959 and was a very devoted and loving member. She loved her church and always wanted to do her part in supporting the church. She enjoyed having the brothers and sisters visit in her home. She will be missed in her home church and the other churches she was blessed to visit.

We, the members of Flat Swamp Church, extend our deepest sympathy to the family, and pray that God may fill that vacancy with the presence of His love. We too will miss her very much, but she is now enjoying that rest which God promised her.

It was agreed in our conference in June that I be a committee to write this obituary, and that a copy be sent to the family, a copy spread on our church record, and a copy sent to Signs of the Times.

Elder Joe Sawyer, Moderator
Hassel Allen, Clerk

PSALM 138: 1-4.

I will praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.

I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy word above all thy name.

In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.

All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O Lord, when they hear the words of thy mouth.

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Signs of the Times

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NEVER ALONE

"How many times discouraged
We sink beside the way;
About us all in darkness,
We hardly dare to pray;
Then through the mists and shadows,
The sweetest voice e'er known,
Says, Child, am I not with thee,
Never to leave thee alone?

O soul, hast thou forgotten
The tender word and sweet,
Of him who left behind him
The print of bleeding feet?
I never will forsake thee,
O child, so weary grown;
Remember I have promised
Never to leave thee alone.

Take courage, way-worn pilgrim,
Though mists and shadows hide
The face of him thou lovest,
He's ever at thy side:
Reach out thy hands unto him,
And lo, the clouds have flown;
He smiles on thee who promised
Never to leave thee alone."

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EDITORIAL

ELDER R. H. CAMPBELL

Dear Elder Key:
Please find enclosed an article for publication in the Signs, if you think that it would be acceptable to the brethren.

We are nearing the end of another year of associations and we have had some enjoyable meetings in our area. I trust that you have also, and we would loved to have had you visit us.

Best of love and fellowship to those I have met in your Country.

In bonds of love,
Richard.

No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgement thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me saith the Lord.

I read the above scripture a few days ago and the part that remained with me was, this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and it stayed on my mind for several days. I tried to talk on it at the Soldier Creek Association and as I said then it was a subject that could not be covered in one discourse if it lasted for hours. I did not even begin to explore it then and probably won't this time but it is such a beautiful subject and so vital to every heir of grace as they travel their course here in this time world. It encompasses all of their travels, experiences, hopes and trials as they run that race that is set before them, with patience; that race that must be run by faith using those guideposts left by former generations which does indeed lighten their way and lifts up the feeble hands and strengthens the weak knees as they press on. This heritage includes every step they take, every lesson they learn and every affliction that they bear in their journey of faith.

All men born in nature are endowed with a natural heritage which is common to all men; it includes all that makes him what he is in the flesh, his nationality, health, intellectual abilities, physical and mental abilities, likes and dislikes environmental position,

temperament and character. All these things make him who he is and are what determine what his aims and goals will be in this life. All men were created with these attributes, abilities and desires to qualify them to fulfil their place in history and fulfil the purpose for which they were created. This heritage includes only those things of the realm of nature and is bestowed upon them by the sovereign power and wisdom of God who rules heaven and earth, things natural and spiritual, and works them together to fulfil his own will and pleasure.

Man's heritage is the earth and the fullness thereof which were created by God for man's pleasure, comfort and sustenance of his necessities in life here in this time world. Man was given dominion over the creatures and commanded to be fruitful, to multiply, replenish the earth and to subdue it. This has been his quest, his occupation and his desire since that time but he has never attained to that goal. Solomon said, "I have seen the travail which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it. He hath made everything beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from beginning to end." This is as true today as it was in the day that it was first written. Man's heritage is the natural world and all that it contains to supply his needs and his desires but he will never, in the flesh, understand the reason and the meaning behind it all. As Isaiah wrote, God's ways and thoughts are as high above man's as the heavens are higher than the earth. Man with all of his boasting of his advance in knowledge and intelligence is still limited to this natural realm into which he was born, and he has no means whereby he can go beyond those bounds which were set for him when God divided to the nations their inheritance and set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.

In Psalms XVI vs. 6, David said, "the lines are fallen to me in pleasant places: yea I have a goodly heritage. I will bless the Lord who hath given me counsel: my reins instruct me in the night seasons. I have set the Lord always before me; because he is my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope." David here is not referring to his earthly heritage or anything pertaining to the natural blessings with which he was endowed. He was speaking of a goodly heritage which he possessed, which included those lines that were fallen to him in pleasant places: lines of truth that were let down to him in heavenly places enabling him to bless the Lord who had given him counsel; lines of truth to instruct him in the night seasons; lines of truth to cause his heart to be glad and to rejoice and his flesh to rest in hope. This is the goodly heritage and it is common to all to whom these lines have fallen to manifest their portion in this goodly heritage of the saints of God. These lines of truth cause them to fear the Lord and this fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom: natural man does not pos-

sess or ever attain to this wisdom because they do not know nor fear him. These lines of truth are a basic part of this goodly heritage in the lives of all of the elect in all ages of time and they have not changed since the beginning of time. This is why David refers to their falling to him, they were ever there but were let down to him in heavenly places for instruction in righteousness and holiness. From the time that David was anointed by Samuel in the midst of his brethren the spirit of the Lord came upon him and he went forth in possession of this goodly heritage. It included all of his life from that time forward; his being taken from being a shepherd over his father's flock to being made the king over his Father's flock, the kingdom of Israel. It included all of his triumphs as well as all of his trials in life but through them all God sustained him and David was made to declare "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee."

When man is born of the spirit of God, he is a new creature in Christ, old things (earthly values pride, self esteem, confidence in the flesh) are passed away and all things are become new (faith, hope, realized weakness and depending upon God) and all things are of God, and work according to his own good pleasure. Man for the first time is made aware of this spiritual realm around him and of his part (heritage) in it: and sees all scriptures of God's dealing with his people down through the generations as part of his own goodly heritage and claims all of the promises as his own by way of the spirit of adoption whereby all cry Abba Father. When he reads of the experience of others who have been brought from nature's darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of this blessed heritage of the chosen vessels, he rejoices as though it was his own deliverance. When he meets brethren from afar, after only a few words of their travels he has the same love and feeling of kinship for them as for those closer whom he has known for a long time. Time is irrelevant in the things of the spirit as to love, fellowship, experience learning etc., the Apostle Paul was a mature Christian in an instant on the road to Damascus. Immediately he loved those he once hated, preached the doctrine he had once attempted to destroy with all the fervor he could muster. When one is changed by the entering into their lives of the holy spirit, it is a complete change dependent upon nothing but the will and purpose of God. The change is for a purpose, it is permanent and the purpose will be made manifest in the life of the individual as that which is wrought in them is worked out in their journey here in time.

Many obstacles will confront them as they travel in this new way, obstacles that are caused by this new way, things that would cause the natural man to turn back to the ways of the world so that they would not have to face these trials brought on them because of their turning from the old

ways of the world. These are trials to prove the faith that they now have; to prove to the individual that this is of God and not of man because they would not and could not continue in their own strength. As one sister said, in the early days of her experience, if she continued in this way for the remaining years of her life she would know that it was of God because she could not keep herself for a day or an hour. This statement was made almost sixty years ago and she is still travelling in the way and confessing that she can't keep herself.

This seems to be what the old prophet is declaring in the above scripture: there will be weapons formed against you, to try your faith, but that none of these weapons that are formed against you shall prosper. They were weapons of destruction but they shall not destroy you but they shall try you. As Paul wrote "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able: but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." The weapons and the temptations are all part of the plan and are under the control of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, for your good and his glory. Peter speaks of the trial of your faith which is more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. These trials of your faith makes the appearing of Jesus in relieving you more precious to you each time. When Paul prayed three times for the thorn to be removed, the Lord said my grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness, and Paul proclaimed "Most gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." Paul was made to rejoice when he knew that the thorn in the flesh, as distressing as it was to him, was also included in his way and that Christ was with him in all things.

The prophet then goes on to say, "This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me saith the Lord." Oh, what a grand and glorious heritage it is that has been reserved for them that love God; those who are the called according to his own good pleasure, those who are blessed with a plan of salvation that cannot fail. A plan that was conceived in the mind of God before time began, assured by the death of his only begotten Son on the cross at Calvary and is being made manifest in the lives of every heir of grace by the Holy Spirit quickening them and leading them in paths of righteousness for his own holy names sake. This is the heritage that the prophet is speaking of and it is theirs with the gift of faith which they receive from the giver of every good and perfect gift. Their righteousness is of him because it becomes theirs with the entering into their lives of the spirit of God as the earnest of the inheritance that is to be realized in its fullness when their earthly journey is completed.

The goodly heritage of the children of the heavenly king is the most pre-

cious possession that they have in this time world: it is something that they will never lose because it is as the giver, eternal and sure to every one. It is the sum total of all of their experiences, hopes and fears, dreams and desires, memories, fellowship and love that they have had since they were made aware of their portion in this heavenly kingdom and of the glory that is reserved for those who are blessed to inherit it. In looking back over their lives it seems that everything of any importance began when this wonderful change came into their life. They remember the precious loved ones who were such a blessing in their lives as they first began on this journey, the love and fellowship that they shared with each other, the older ones gently leading the way as the younger experienced things for the first time and rejoiced with joy unspeakable as the beauty of this glorious heritage unfolded before them. How the younger would love to go once again to the older, after many trials of faith and express the love and appreciation for their contribution toward making the way a little easier and joyful. They fear to claim a part in this glorious heritage as theirs but how else can they explain their way, in lieu of the scriptures written by others who have been brought this way in generations past. One cannot return to former times but down the way others have come along bearing the same goodly fruit and a bond is formed, the same love and fellowship as with those of yesterday and you travel along together sharing the same hopes and fears, trials and deliverances drawing ever closer together by the mutual love that only the children of God share.

All of these experiences and blessings, as beautiful and glorious as they are to the chosen vessels, in this time world are not worthy to even be compared to that portion of this blessed heritage that is yet to come. We have all of these blessings and joys in an earthen vessel which, by design, cannot truly understand and rejoice in the things of the heavenly realm as well as in that future time. When quickened by the spirit the child of God, in time, can only see as through a glass darkly the glory of this spiritual realm toward which they are looking, but it cannot fully comprehend the beauty and glory that is to be revealed to those for whom this heritage is prepared. They are as the ones of whom the Apostle Paul was writing, "When I was a child, I spoke as a child. I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things." The children of God in this time world clothed in this body of flesh even though quickened by the spirit of God are as the child who knows in part and sees in part; but when delivered from this body of death and changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye they shall be delivered from these bonds that hinder them and they shall know even as they are known. They shall behold the fullness of the glory of God and rejoice and praise him in a way and manner that they could never do in these bodies of flesh. They shall understand the

mysteries and the reasoning and the purpose in all things being as they are, and shall spend an eternal span of time in the presence of God seeing him as he is and experiencing the reality of being spiritual and basking in the pure and undiluted love of God because of the absence of the flesh and the natural influences on the creature as he is here in this time world. They cannot really realize what that will be like but it will be far beyond the wildest imagination of man for the sheer beauty, glory and for the experiencing of utter joy, peace and happiness.

All of these things are also a part of this heritage of which they only have the earnest in this present time world, a little here and a little there, but that is to come, is just as sure and certain to every heir of promise as that which is now and that which is past. They are all part and parcel of this heritage that the prophet said is the possession of the servants of the Lord. Given by grace, received by faith and kept safe and secure through time by the eternal God ready to come to full fruition at the appointed time.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

PSALM 73:26.

My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

NOTE FROM EDITORS

With this issue we enter into the one hundred and sixty first year of continuous publishing of the "Signs of the Times". We could not do so without looking back and realizing how good the Lord has been to us all. Many of the editors and associate editors were blessed to serve for many years, and wrote many beautiful articles which was a blessing to many.

As we go forward now we pray God's blessings to be with us, we want you to participate by sending us articles to publish. Our readers are always requesting more articles of experience. We are admonished to be ready always to give a reason for our hope! Write your reason and share it with others.

We would like also to enlarge our subscription list. You can help us to do this, tell others about the Signs and maybe give a subscription to someone as a gift. We think every believer should have the Signs in their home.

Any suggestions on how to improve the Signs will also be appreciated.

May it please God to bless us in such a way that as each year passes we can count our blessings and say this is the best yet, and as the outer man perish, the inward man grow stronger. Bless us with enough afflictions to keep us humble and to esteem our brother as better than ourselves.

Editors

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Readers of the Signs:

We have received a basket full of cards and letters and appreciate and cherish all of them but would like to share this one with the readers of the Signs.

Elder and Sister Lloyd Wall

Dear Elder and Sister Wall,

Who am I to try to write words of encouragement to anyone, especially to two precious, much esteemed children of God? Yet, I feel that I want you to know how much we missed you at the association and how our hearts go out to you during this trying time.

After I received your first thank you note, Sister Wall, I felt your sorrow and suffering in each line of it. I felt that I must attempt to pray for you notwithstanding my own cold-heartedness and my own feeling of emptiness. My thoughts were; Who am I to try to pray for them? Surely my prayer would avail nothing. That is true. If I in my carnal nature attempt to pray, it goes no higher than my head. Yet, I felt that I must make the attempt. There have only been two or three times that I have felt that I actually prayed for anyone. This time I did feel that the Lord heard (if He ever has heard me) my question that He have mercy on you, that He give you the strength to bear what you must, that He go with you all the way.

We know that there is so little that we can physically do for you. However, we desire to help in some way. We do know that the dear Lord is our only source of help and strength. May He continue to give you grace to feel His presence even in your suffering. We do believe that we do not bear any needless pain. He has a gracious, glorious purpose in every affliction His children bear. Many times we cannot see His purpose. Then we are called to walk by faith, not by sight. We must trust Him, for we have nowhere else to go. We believe that He feels all of our pain, our grief and our distress and holds us up so that we can bear it. Each one of us is made to look to Him for our all in all. He knows what each of us needs and has promised to withhold no good thing from us. How thankful we are that all of our salvation and all of our blessings are bestowed by His grace. Nothing depends on us or our efforts. All things are freely given us in Christ. May He ever keep us at His feet, praising and adoring His holy name.

In bonds of love,
Joyce Pittman

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

The Editors

QUERIES & ANSWERS

Query:

Should the churches ever allow the Association, or any body of men formed by their combination, to dictate to them against their consent, it has ever been held that their liberties in such case will have passed away, and they become no longer churches of Christ, but tools of tyrants. A church of Christ has ever been considered, by genuine Baptists, the highest ecclesiastical power on earth.

Answer:

Associations are not considered absolutely necessary for the existence of a church or churches, but only as a convenient method of correspondence and intercourse among the churches, so that acquaintance and personal contact might be promoted among a larger circle of brethren than could be done in a single church or neighborhood. Much satisfaction also is found in obtaining the views and advice of each other on questions of importance in the kingdom of Christ. "In the multitude of counsellors there is safety," has been long held as a wise adage among the people of God.

Hassell History

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1 / 93
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

ARTICLES

CIRCULAR LETTER
(Written 1960)

With a deep feeling of love, I would like to extend a hearty welcome to each of you ministers, messengers and churches of the Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association, our correspondents and visitors. We hope we are thankful to God for you all, and most grateful to Him for your fellowship.

David said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." David lived in a time when there were many wars and many battles to be fought. After the battles were fought and the victories won, surely he could have said with the Apostle Paul, "thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." We too, live in an age when peace on earth seems to be so unpredictable and the world is so tense. But you may be assured that God still rules all things, is still Captain of the battles and His banner over us is love. Not a single one of His will be lost.

So as I think upon this meeting as we are gathered together, many who have come from lands far distant, who have been given a mind to leave their homes and their work, others from our own little flocks nearby, the rich and the poor, the young and the old, with a desire to come together in unity to worship God in spirit and in truth.

Unity means a state of being one. Paul to the Ephesians said, "there is one body, and one spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord and one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, through all and in you all."

Christ is the head of the body, all believers in Him who have been born of that uncorruptible seed are members of His body, all together, one perfect body in Christ. So my dear beloved, as we hope to be members of this one body, how good and how pleasant it is that from time to time God does bless a broken remnant of His creation to be gathered together in unity. To speak of that great love that flows from heart to heart and from breast to breast. To render praise and thanksgiving to His great and matchless name and to talk of His mercies that endure forever. When the spirit is manifested, there is unity. There is love one for another, we can look over our brethren for good and not for evil. We are made to be humble; we walk and speak in fear and trembling trying to work out that which has been given us. Salvation is of the Lord.

We are not always blessed to dwell in unity. We are not always made to feel that great love, that closeness to the saints of God. Sometimes we feel to be on the back side of the desert. We become hungry and thirsty and you know just as the Lord appeared to Moses there, and Jonah in the belly of the fish and sent Phillip unto the eunuch down by the roadside, He knows where you are and though you become hungry, you will never perish, though you are cast down, never will you be destroyed.

So my dear brethren, sisters and friends, may God bless us to dwell in unity. May we journey on together feeling that we are not alone, but that the Lord is our Shepherd. That we are one family, rejoicing together, sharing each others burdens, feasting upon the same spiritual food, drinking from that same fountain of living water and that some day we shall reach that city that is made not by hands but is eternal and in the heavens. We know that we have no continuing city here, that soon we too, will enter into the eternal, that the places that know us now shall know us no more forever.

May the love of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Your little brother in hope,
Kenneth R. Key

HEBREWS 4: 1-4.

Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

AGREEMENT BETWEEN ELDER JOHN LELAND AND JAMES MADISON COMMEMORATED

JOHN LELAND

An interesting and important event in American history was recalled on October 4, 1953, when the Leland-Madison Monumental Park was dedicated near Orange, Virginia. The site of the park marks the place where Elder John Leland and James Madison met to discuss their differences pertaining to the ratification of the Constitution of the United States. This was in 1788.

The Constitution, as it was drawn up by the Convention in Philadelphia in 1787, did not contain a guarantee of religious liberties and free speech. Elder Leland, and those he represented, opposed the ratification by Virginia unless such provisions were included. This was a large and influential group of citizens, and it was not likely that the Constitution would be ratified without their support.

The following is quoted from an article in a Washington newspaper by Dr. Joseph M. Dawson:

"Authorities agree that Leland was a key man in obtaining Virginia's ratification of the Federal Constitution. Without Virginia's favorable action, in all probability the Constitution would never have been ratified.

"The Rev. John Leland though a native of Massachusetts, owes his place in history to his activities in Virginia from the time he went to Culpepper in 1775 to his return to Massachusetts in 1791. In that 16-year period, he proved to be a statesman as well as a flaming evangelist. Elected to the Virginia Assembly, he collaborated with Washington, Jefferson, Madison and Mason in behalf of religious liberty. He also baptized more than 700 converts in the region between the Ketockton Mountains and the York River. He was affectionately called Parson.

"While Leland enjoyed the friendship of the leaders mentioned above, he opposed Madison's election to the Virginia Ratification Assembly because Madison's document lacked a Bill of Rights. At a picnic near Orange, the two men composed their differences and agreed on an amendment. Then Leland pledged his support, with the result that Madison was seated and Virginia ratified the Federal Constitution as amended.

"In the meantime Leland, on behalf of the Baptists, had written George Washington, saying, "when the Constitution first made its appearance in Virginia, we, as a society, feared that

the liberty of conscience, dearer to us than property or life, was not sufficiently secured . . . . Under the regal government mobs, fines, bonds and prisons were our frequent repast."

"Although Washington belonged to the Established Church of Virginia, he sympathized deeply, as evidenced by his reply: "If I could have entertained the slightest apprehension that the Constitution formed by the conventions where I had the honor to preside might possibly endanger the rights of any ecclesiastical society, certainly I would have never placed my signature to it; and if I now could conceive that the general Government might ever be so administered as to render the liberty of conscience insecure, I beg you will be persuaded that no one would be more zealous than myself to establish effectual barriers against the horrors of spiritual tyranny and every species of religious persecution."

The first amendment to the Constitution, referred to above, reads as follows.

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press; or the right of the people peacefully to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

There is little mention in secular history of the part our religious forefathers took in securing this freedom for us, but we should be most grateful that in the purpose of God, He gave us men of courage to fight for and secure our priceless heritage.

J.D.W.

FREDERICK W. KEENE

Keene, Elder Frederick W. The subject of this notice was born in London, England, March 28, 1856, moved with his parents to Montreal, Canada, in his fourteenth year, united with the New School Baptists in 1873 and began preaching for them in 1875. But becoming dissatisfied with their doctrine and practices he publicly withdrew in 1880 and in February, 1881, united with the Old School Baptists, was baptized by Elder William L. Beebe, soon ordained and served several churches, including Oakwoods Baptist Church, North Berwick, Maine. He was a gifted preacher, a fluent writer and greatly beloved for the truth's sake. In regard to his Christian experience he wrote as follows,

"During my boyhood days I lived and walked in the lusts of the flesh and shrank from nothing to gratify my carnal appetite. But God arrested my wild career. On the first Sunday in April, 1871, I sat in a New School Baptist Church in the city of Montreal and the preacher gave out his text, 'Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.' Instantly my soul was stricken, and all my vile anticipations were blasted, and the terrors of the Almighty made me afraid. What the preacher said in his sermon I have not the slightest remembrance of. I was a vile condemned sinner before the

Lord. My sins revived, they stared me in the face and I felt myself a fit subject for damnation of hell. I feared that the awful curse of God would be poured forth upon me and perhaps before tomorrow. I shall die, and I shall go to hell. God will say to me 'depart ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil, and his angels.' My trouble over my sins continued and increased and I could see no ground for hope that there could be mercy for one so wicked as I. I began to loathe my sins, to sigh and mourn over my vileness, but no relief could I find. Again I attended preaching, and the minister announced his text, 'God is love.' I felt, 'Can it be so?' A little ray of hope shone in, and I wished it might be so. But in a moment all was dashed away, for I felt, if it be true, it could not be God loved me, and I sank yet lower in despair. But the Holy Spirit's still small voice said to my sin stricken heart, 'God is love.' Then indeed my heart was broken, and melted in sorrow before the Lord, and with a contrite spirit, I prayed for salvation, but the way of salvation for a sinner like me I could not see. Indeed, I thought I was adding to my guilt to think there could be pardon for such a sinner. Night came and I retired to my room imploring mercy, every moment I felt the Lord must soon come, or I must perish. While thus crying to the Almighty God, there came before me a vision of Jesus on the cross, and a voice said in my soul, 'Salvation is in my dear Son.' This was a gracious revelation, and while I was wrapped up with this sight, my heart went forth with all desire to Jesus that I might know He was mine, that He died for me. Then I thought He looked upon me, so pityingly and said, 'Look unto me.' O my heart with all entreaty looked to him, and he looked upon me, and said, 'I suffered for thee.' Immediately my burden was gone and sweet joy and peace flowed into my soul. I wept and cried aloud for joy. This was the beginning of my hope of salvation in Christ, the Lamb of God. To write all the experiences of my soul from that sweet day till now would fill volumes. I was led by the Lord soon after this into the knowledge of the glorious doctrine of God our Savior." Elder Keene was a faithful pastor and his labors were blessed with abundant fruit.

Elder Keene has written many articles for the Signs in the past.

Editors

VOICES OF THE PAST

PLENTY.

April, 1938.

Charles Wesley wrote, "Plenteous grace with thee is found; grace to pardon all my sins," and I am made to wonder if he was entirely destitute of that grace, even though he wrote and preached in defense of Arminianism for years.

Sometimes in looking back over past trials and tribulations we think we just were delivered - that if it had come any later we would have been gone completely, but, dear child of God, it cannot be too late. Neither can it be lack-

ing in power, grace and love to effectually deliver out of whatever may be our trouble. To talk about deliverance being too late, or insufficient, is to talk about God failing in some particular to fulfill his promises. Banish the thought! How can he fail? Not because of a lack of power, because all that is in heaven and in earth was given into the hands of our glorious, conquering Immanuel, that he might give eternal life to as many as were given him. Will he give unto them that life? Ah yes, little doubting one, he will, because he is faithful that promised. So faithful is he that all the glory, power, honor, majesty, love, mercy and grace are behind the promise. If the promises of God were based on the ability of man to the least degree then there certainly would be room to fear a famine, or to look for an insufficiency in the grace of God. But, dear brethren, sisters, strangers in the land, wayfarers and sojourners, it is not of man. It is wholly and without instrumentality the work of God. The Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent. (1 Sam. xv. 29). So you can see that there is plenteous grace for all of our needs. Moreover, every good gift comes from him, and what a Giver of gifts he is!

"My soul, repeat his praise
Whose mercies are so great;
Whose anger is so slow to rise,
So ready to abate."

"High as the heavens raised
Above the ground we tread,
So far the riches of his grace
Our highest thoughts exceed.
His power subdues our sins;
And his forgiving love,
Far as the east is from the west,
Doth all our guilt remove."

Nothing lacking. Plenteous supplies for everything, and they come from a Giver who is without variation, and who is so much in one mind that there is not a shadow of turning. Here is a safe and secure place, dear saints, to find refuge. Here is a resting-place for the weary and wayworn. Here is strength, plenteous strength, for the weak-handed and feeble-kneed. Here is grace sufficient for those who are fearfully asking, When saw we thee sick and in prison and came unto thee? One of the beloved disciples leaned on the bosom of Jesus, and how longingly do we look toward such a haven, and how we would like to reach there.

What a sweet story of Rebekah! It would seem that she is a figure of the church. Behold the servant of Abraham as he comes to her and tells her of the richness of his master. He is greatly blessed (Gen. xxiv. 1, 35) of the Lord, and all of it belongs to his son. My dear children of God, when the Holy Spirit arrested you it made Jesus as the chiefest of ten thousand unto you. You were enabled to see him as having all power in heaven and earth, and you were compelled to say that you would go with the man. (Gen. xxiv. 58.) What was it that was done for you? It was plenty, and as far as you could see, beyond measure, because you had to sing with the poet,

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me."

Unto her was given hearing, and the writer of old has declared, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance."-Psalms lxxxix. 15. And none can ever hear unless the deaf ears are unstopped by the Spirit. Then on her hands are put bracelets, representing, to my mind, that unto the church are given the holy Scriptures as having everything necessary for all of her rules and regulations. Furthermore, that a bracelet is a complete circle, without beginning or ending. So is the love of God to his people. It is complete to them, and is from everlasting to everlasting.

It is written that this Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and that he was full of grace and truth. (John i. 14.) If he was full of it nothing could be taken from him nor added to him. Is not this plenty? Is not this everything that a poor sinner needs? But listen what is said in verse sixteen: "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." As he was full of it, so his children receive his fullness and lack nothing. Paul's letter to Rome tells us what a wonderful source of plenty and completeness the children of God have in him. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."-Rom. viii. 16, 17. Everything that Jesus possesses in heaven is ours, because we are joint-heirs with him. Oh what a land of plenty! Ofttimes we feel weak and heavy laden here and are almost ready to faint by the way, but ere long our Husband will come for us, and then we shall be carried home. Going home! What does it mean? Like a little child that has been long in the dark and thorny wilderness and is brought safe home. To a land of plenty; to a land of joy and peace; to our long sought home, where the sun never shall go down.

Submitted in love.
Elder W. D. Griffin

Philadelphia, Pa., June 1, 1905.

Elder F.A. Chick - Dear Friend: - I would like to address you otherwise, but am not at liberty to do so. No doubt you will be surprised to receive a letter from me, but probably you may not receive this, as I may be ashamed of it before I get through and destroy it. A desire was created within me to write to you, telling some of the ways in which the Lord has led me for over forty-seven years, and his dealings with me. This feeling or inclination to communicate to you, manifested itself at the time you preached the funeral sermon of my brother-in-law, which is nearly two and one-half years ago. Why it should do so at that time I am unable to say, as I cannot call to mind now a single word you said then, but somehow

there was a peculiar drawing toward you at that time which I am unable to describe. I have refrained from undertaking the task, as I am so much of the time carnally minded, and it was my desire that when I did write I might be entirely free from all worldly cares or thoughts; but that time never appears to come, and I am made to repeat the expression which has been repeated so often, that when I would do good, evil is present with me, and always seems to be uppermost in my mind, which unfits me entirely for the task which I have undertaken; nor do I now feel any more fit for the duty than I did two years ago, so if I continue to write now I will have to depend upon the Lord to guide my thoughts; I hope I may be led by him, as I know full well unless he takes me in charge and guides my thoughts this epistle will be of no interest to you.

In viewing my past life it appears like a blank. Of what use have I been upon this earth? I remember Elder Wm. J. Purington made the remark at the funeral of my sister, in May, 1868, that I was spared for some wise purpose (as I was then the only child living out of five). All these years since, I have failed to see the wisdom in that purpose, although there is wisdom in it. I have that faith, even if I am too blind to see it. It appears to me that it would have been better if I had been taken away when I was young like the rest; I know that I would have escaped much vexation and sorrow, which torture me day after day; I know I should not murmur, but at times I cannot refrain; I know I am a very rebellious creature, yet there are times, thanks be to God, when I am quieted for awhile; I am also at times led by the still waters, and made to lie down in green pastures. O what a pleasant place it is to be, no other place is to be compared with it. O could I always remain there, I am loath to leave it; but it is not the will of the Lord to allow me to remain in that place long at a time, nor does he allow me often to enter into such a blissful abode, but he knows what is best for me. He has marked out my road, and I must travel that road, and none other, although at times it may appear dark and gloomy.

This reminds me of an incident that occurred twenty-five or thirty years ago: I was away from home over twenty miles, and when I started for home it was raining, and very dark, too. The first few miles all went well, but it was not long before it grew very dark, and I could not recognize anything along the road; everything appeared strange; I became bewildered, I did not know where I was. I traveled on, passing numerous objects that I had seen many times before, but all looked strange now until within two or three miles of home, when a set of farm buildings that I approached looked familiar; then my mind went back over the road that I had come, and the various objects I had passed, and the numerous turns I had made, crossing over a railroad, turnpike, bridges, up hill and down dale, and at one time I crossed over a very prominent and wide road down into a narrow road with trees upon each side; it looked very gloomy, but on I went, knowing

not whither I was going. All this looked familiar when I looked back over the road that I had come, as I had traveled the same road many times before. I felt simple and foolish, and wondered how it was possible for me to travel over that road which I was so familiar with, and not recognize anything by the way. Thus does it appear my life has been spent. As I said, my road is laid out for me, and I must travel that road all the time, but I do not seem to know it; all the time I seem to want to go some other way, I am not content to travel the road that is laid out for me. To look back over the road, it seems as if any road would be all wrong, but the wisdom of an all-wise God is shown in laying out such a road. But while I am traveling this road it appears different from any road that anybody else travels: I do not seem to see anybody else in the same road, I appear to be traveling all alone; it is a lonely road for me to travel. True, at times I seem to cross the road that others travel, I see them occasionally, but they are traveling a different road from what I am, which makes me feel as if I certainly am on the wrong road, which troubles me. This brings to my mind the hymn 1033:

" 'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought,)
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not? "

But there are a few things that comfort me: one is, I trust that I have a hope, if I did not, I would be much more miserable than I am. Another is, I love to meet and mingle with those who I believe are the children of God, although many times I feel as if it were no place for me, and that I am not welcome among them. I many times am made to feel as if they had no love for me. But I know not where else to go to receive real enjoyment, and I feel like saying as did Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee," &c. I also feel that if this people knew me as I am, if they knew my thoughts, they could not possibly have any love for me, and they would no longer have any use for me. This road that I am traveling, and in which I am beginning to recognize the familiar objects by the wayside as I am nearing my home, is indicative that I am nearing my heavenly home, (I hope) and that the end of this pilgrimage is drawing near, and that this world is not my home. I feel like saying with the poet, I am a pilgrim and I am a stranger, I cannot tarry but awhile, do not detain me, for I am going to where the streamlets are ever flowing. While I do not wish to hasten the time of my departure, I do not wish it to be postponed, but I wish to wait with patience my Maker's call, wait until he says, Child, thy Father calls, come home. I have no fear of death, but believe it will be a happy deliverance from this vile world of sin and sorrow. There appears to be nothing worth living for; it is better to be at home with my God. My dearly beloved wife and I have been journeying along down through this pilgrimage together happily over thirty-eight years, yet I

find I am not traveling the same road that she is. I am very much like the dog that starts out to follow after his master's wagon through the country, and instead of trotting along in the road behind the wagon he is roving over the fields or through the thicket in search of game, and only when he crosses the road over to the other side to continue his hunt is he in the road. So it is with me, I am continually going in by and forbidden paths, gratifying the lusts of the flesh, and occasionally I cross the road that I should be traveling in, and am found on the other side, still continuing my hunt for something to gratify my sinful carnality. Thus does it appear that my whole life has been spent, making resolutions one after another to do better in the future, only to be broken as often as made.

My mind is carried back about forty-eight years, or probably more, when Elder Daniel L. Harding was pastor at Southampton, who preached from the text found in Deut. xxxii. 11, 12: "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." That sermon has come home to me a great many times since. I am told the eagle selects some crevice among the rocks high up in the cliffs to build her nest and rear her young, and when they become old enough and strong enough to fly, the mother bird begins to tear up the nest, tearing away a stick at a time. In the language of the text, she stirreth up her nest until they are compelled to make an attempt to fly, but as their first effort proves a failure they begin to sink, and down, down they go, and would be dashed to death upon the rocks below, did not the mother dart down underneath them and bear them upon her wings, as is said in the language of the text. Thus does it appear with me; my nest, so to speak, that is, this carnal nest which I have so often nestled in, has just as often been stirred up, and at such times I feel as if I were sinking down, down, each time lower than the previous one, and much deeper than any other mortal possibly can go, and if it were not for his everlasting arm, which is always ready to bear me up, I would give up in despair; but that blessed hope (although very small) still lingers with me and holds me fast. O what would become of me if I should lose that hope? But I have the blessed assurance that this will never be, so my poor soul at such times is made to be still and know that my Redeemer liveth.

Since writing the above I have been reading a few letters in the last Signs, and I find in each one many expressions that seem to speak my feelings, and describe my travels through this pilgrimage here below so much better and clearer than I am able to do. This makes me feel as if I had better stop and destroy the whole of it; but I have written just as my mind was led, and if there is nothing in it interesting to you, you may destroy it and attribute

all to my ignorance of the whole matter. I hope you will overlook all my shortcomings, which I know are numerous. I know it is impossible for me to even think a good thought, much less to act a good deed, unless directed by my heavenly Father.

I fear I am wearying you with this, but bear with me a little longer; it appears as if I cannot get at what I want in a satisfactory manner, but hope you may be able to glean a little of my thoughts and feelings. I know I am only skimming over the surface, not entering any depth as I wish, and if I should go on and write as much more I would not be able to tell the half; like the queen of Sheba, the half was not told her, as she said. I feel as if this subject is exhaustible, no terminus to it; it matters not how much is said or written upon this subject, there is just as much left as when we began, in fact it seems to expand, and its beauties seem to loom up with greater brilliancy. The noonday sun appears gloomy when compared with its effulgence.

But, my dear friend, I will close; I find I am not capable of doing as I would like. If you feel like answering this, or can give me any comfort in any way, I shall feel very thankful to you for it. I feel as if I needed support every day of my life, and perhaps the Lord may be pleased to send through you some message to me that will prove a "balm in Gilead" to my soul.

Ever your friend,
C.S. Fetter

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Pigg River Primitive Baptist Church, a Presbytery met at 10:00 A.M. Saturday on November 21, 1992 for the examination of Brother R.W. Akers if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of the judgement, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Marvin Brumfield. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the Presbytery. Those present were Elders: Lane Carter, Willard Cox, W.T. Conner, Noel Conner, Junior Conner, Marvin Brumfield and Larry Hollandsworth.

Deacons present were as follows: Herbert Dodson, Hancil Conner, Canton Akers, Lawrence Myers, Grey Ingram, Edwin Dyer, C.T. Abshire, Clyde Johnson, Posey Poindexter, H.D. Ingram, A.L. Shelton, Guy Holley, Donald Agee, Hassell Hale, Nelson Bryant, Jessie Tyree, Ira Powell, John Plunkett, Jamie Cooper, Woody Young, James Holley, Woodrow Abshire, Chester Haywood, Tommie Lovell, F.W. Murphy, and Tiras Conner.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Lane Carter as moderator; Jamie E. Cooper as Clerk; Elders Noel Conner and W.T. Conner was chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate. Brother John A. Plunkett having been duly appointed by Pigg River Church, delivered

Brother R.W. Akers to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder Noel Conner and W.T. Conner and all present Elders invited to participate using Scripture reference 3 Chapter, 1st Timothy. The presbytery being satisfied examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands, with the Ordination prayer being delivered by Elder Larry Hollandsworth. The charge was delivered to the candidate by Elder Junior Conner using Scriptural reference 4 chapter, 2nd Timothy, verse 1.

The Moderator asked the Presbytery if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brother R.W. Akers and the right hand of fellowship was given. The ordained Brother was delivered back to the church as an ordained Deacon of the Old School Primitive Church at Pigg River Church.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and approved. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Willard Cox.

Elder Lane Carter, Moderator
Jamie E. Cooper, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 1992

Mrs. James Burgin, TX $2.00
Mrs. Rachel J. Green, WV 2.00
Mrs. Reba Wise, TX 2.00
Mrs. H.W. Jones, SC 2.00
R.L. Fleenor, TN 7.00
Mrs. Velma Estelle, AR 2.00
Mrs. Beulah Nichols, VA 2.00
Joe L. Hamrick, TX 12.00
Dale Haygood, TX 2.00
Hassel Allen, NC 10.00
Mrs. Frances Townley, AR 7.00
J. Allen Carroll, NC 2.00
Mrs. Hazel F. Jackson, NC 2.00
Mrs. Warnard Locke, KY
In memory of Warnard Locke 5.00

OBITUARIES

BERLINE COX

God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to remove from our midst our esteemed and beloved brother, Berline Cox. He was born to the late Franklin and Isabell Oakley on May 23, 1931 and died on July 19, 1992. He was married to Norma Smith in 1945 and to this Union were born two children, a boy and a girl. Brother Berline is survived by his wife Norma, his son Danny Noah, his daughter Betty Jean, one sister Mrs. Alice Manning and three grand children.

Brother Berline was a gentle and kind person one who extended his hand to those in need. He loved peace and tried to never offend anyone. He was a firm believer in Salvation by the Grace of God and on a confession of faith, he joined Hancocks Church on September 14, 1974 and filled his seat regular unless providently hindred. He loved the church and the members and could be found, at church meeting time, at the door of the church, greeting the people as they entered. He not only attended his church but visited many others of the same faith

and order. He was blessed to attend his home church on the day that he died that night. He was ordained a deacon of the church in August 14, 1982 and God blessed him to perform the duties of this office faithfully.

His funeral was held at Farmers Funeral Home in Ayden, N.C. by his pastor, Elder J.L. Sawyer in the presence of many relatives and friends, and He was laid to rest in the Cox Cemetery there to await the resurrection.

We shall miss Brother Berline but feel that our loss is his eternal gain. May God bless the bereaved family is our prayer.

Done by order of the church while in regular session of conference.

Elder J.L. Sawyer, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

BROTHER FRANK HALL

With sorrow for our loss but joy for his eternal gain we record the death of our dear friend and brother in Christ, Frank Clifford Hall, on July 5, 1992, following a lengthy illness. He was 61 years old at the time of his departure.

Brother Hall was born in Patrick County, Virginia on April 21, 1931, a son of the late George Hall and Beadie Hopkins Hall Craddock. He was a veteran of the Korean War and a longtime employee of Bassett Furniture Industries.

He was first married to Catherine Ahern, by whom he had two children: Frank William Hall of Myrtle Beach, S.C. and Mary Lou Hall of Martinsville, Va. In November 1966 he was united in marriage to Estelle Koger, who survives him. His other survivors include two half-brothers Charlie Hall of Modesto, Calif. and Curtis Hall of Martinsville; two sisters Everine Chaney of Stuart and Mae Chaney of Ferrum; one half-sister, Ethel Greer of Ferrum; his two children.

In the mid 1950's Brother Hall joined Charity Church by experience and was baptized by the late Elder J.G.L. Hash. On the first Sunday in October 1969 he was received by Liberty Church and was rebaptized by the late Elders Bennie Clifton and Ben Martin. He was a loyal and faithful member the balance of his life, attending often during the afflictions of his last days.

His funeral service was conducted at Collins Funeral Home Chapel by Elders Bernice Joyce and John Wingfield and Pastor Eugene Koger. His mortal body was laid to rest in the Center Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery.

Be it resolved: first, that we extend our heartfelt sympathy to Sister Hall and the other members of his family; and second, that we prepare three copies of his obituary, with one to be included in our church records, one to be given to his family and one to be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Liberty Church in Conference the 1st day of August 1992.

Elder John T. Wingfield, Moderator
Paul Puckett, Clerk

ELDER AMOS I. HASH

"O Lord give me a quiet and peaceful hour in which to die" This I feel sure was granted our dear Brother, Pastor and Friend on July 17, 1992 when it pleased the God of Heaven to call Elder Amos I. Hash from his labors here in this time world. Elder Hash was the son of the late Elder J.G.L. Hash and Mrs. Nannie S. Hash, born June 8, 1916 making his stay here a few days over 76 years. Elder Hash is survived by his devoted wife of more than 48 years Anita Hash of Ferrum, Va. Also by three children, one daughter Brenda Hash Fariss, Buffalo Junction, Va. two sons Lane Hash, Sorrento, La. Phillip Hash, Ferrum, Va. Also four grand daughters and four grandsons. He is also survived by one brother John Hash, Nashville, Tenn. four sisters Ora Thomas, Stuart, Va. Gustava Sutphin, Hyattsville, MD. Ruth Jones and Virginia Hash both of Ferrum, Va.

Elder Hash lived most of his life in Franklin County, Va. except for a short period of time in Lee County. After this period of time he moved back to his native county to live out the remainder of his days. Elder Hash was a veteran of World War II and he was retired from J.P. Stevens Co.

In December 1954 he was received into the fellowship of Long Branch Primitive Baptist Church upon confession of faith and the reason for his hope, in Jan. 1955 he was baptized by his father. He was soon chosen Church Clerk which office he held for several years. In May 1959 he was ordained to the office of Deacon. For many years prior to this date he was burdened with visions of the ministry. In June 1959 Brother Amos began his labors in the ministry. He was soon granted liberty to exercise his gift where ever the Lord cast his lot. He was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry in Sept. 1961.

He served his home church from 1961 till his death, at the time of his death he was also serving Knob and Rocky Mount Churches. Bro. Amos also served Bell Spur Church for many years. He visited many churches and associations of our faith and order preaching salvation by grace. Bro. Amos was elected Clerk of the Smith River Association in Sept. 1959. He served this office until he was elected Moderator in Sept. 1984 which he faithfully served until his death.

Funeral services were conducted July 19, 1992 at Flora Funeral Chapel, Rocky Mount, Va. with Elder Hale Terry, Elder H.W. Wray and Elder Clarence Stone officiating. He was laid to rest in Pigg River Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery to await the summons "Come Ye blest of my Father inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." We believe that Bro. Amos is at complete rest. He will be missed by many and especially by the writer but we believe our loss is his eternal gain. May we all be made reconciled to His will for God knows them that are His.

May a copy be given the family, one for the Signs of the Times for publication and one retained for our Church records. Done by order of Long Branch

Church in conference Oct. 3, 1992. Humbly submitted in love and hope by W.G. Parsons.

Clarence Stone, Moderator
W.G. Parsons, Clerk
Nelson Nester, Asst. Clerk

PSALM 23.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

ELAH L. HEARNE

Elah L. Hearne was born November 2, 1899, the 6th child of the late Robert B. and Nora H. Bailey. She died October 24, 1992, of heart failure at the home of her daughter, Nancy Harris. Her husband, the late Thomas M. Hearne died in 1978.

Sister Elah was a member of Little Creek Old School Baptist Church near Delmar, Del. where she had attended since she was a very young girl. She was a faithful member and a firm believer in salvation by grace, and her trust was in the Lord. She will be missed by her church and other sister churches of this area, as well as her relatives and all who knew her.

She was a jolly person with a great sense of humor, always ready to relate some childhood experiences about tricks her brothers and sisters played on each other when they were growing up, and she could always tell some kind of a humorous or witty story. She enjoyed entertaining in her home, but when she was no longer able to have dinners, she would invite church folks or relatives for a covered dish dinner at the home of her son-in-law and daughter, Morris and Nancy Harris.

Besides her daughter, Nancy of Delmar, Del., she is survived by another daughter, Marian Lee Gordy of Laurel, Del., a sister Pattie Krewatch, and a brother, Robert Bailey, both of Delmar, Del., a foster brother, Leonard Bailey of Wilmington, Del., 12 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. A son, Robert Alexander Hearne, died in 1983.

Her funeral was conducted at the Short Funeral Home, Delmar, Del. by her pastor, Elder C.B. Davis and her body was buried at Little Creek Church Cemetery beside her husband.

Sister Elah's earthly journey covered nearly 93 years, and I think she fully believed that the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Elsie R. Huston, Clerk

FRANK THEODORE SIMPKINS

Brother Frank Simpkins was born in Bluefield, West Virginia March2, 1903. He was the son of the late Jessie Wade and Cora French Simpkins. The family later moved to Roanoke, Virginia where Brother Frank was reared in a Primitive Baptist home. The Lord saw fit to call our Brother from this low ground of sin and sorrow on June 7, 1992 at the age of 89.

He is survived by his wife Ella Conner Simpkins, one daughter, two sons, five grandchildren and four great grandchildren. He was a printer by trade and was retired from the Federal Housing Authority, Washington, D.C. in 1962. During his tenure of service with the Federal government, Brother Frank and his wife, Sister Ella, resided in Manassas, Virginia but moved to Roanoke, Virginia in August, 1968.

He was received into fellowship of the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on August 21, 1982. To all the church family who knew Brother Frank, he was a lovely member; a person with such a wonderful countenance - loyal to his church, a believer of the Truth and one who was often heard saying while he was sick, "I love the Brethren; the Doctrine; if God loves us that will be enough - I believe He does". He would often sing the beautiful hymns of Zion and pray. The writer feels so blessed to have known this Brother. I remember the seat he took in church and the joy which shown on his face while he was able to attend the meetings. When he became physically unable to attend, the absence saddened him. Nevertheless, he kept the faith and took his sufferings in stride. Most often he, or Sister Ella, would call to say that they would be unable to attend the meeting but to give their love to the members and friends and tell them they missed them.

Brother Frank loved for the members and friends to visit his home. Visitors were always made to feel welcome and loved and his conversation quickly revolved around his God and the blessings he felt he had received. Our Brother shall be missed by all who knew and loved him.

Brother Frank's funeral was held a Oakey's South Chapel on June 10, 1992 and was conducted by his beloved pastor, Elder Kenneth Key. Burial was in Rest Vale Cemetery at Salem Church, Floyd County, Virginia. May our loss be his eternal gain.

Written by request of Dan River Church.

Bob R. and John S. Collie, Jr.
November 21, 1992

ST. JOHN 17 : 1-3.

These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

Signs of the Times

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THE END OF THE PATHWAY

When we come to the end of the pathway,
Our weary feet wounded and sore;
When the last weary step has been taken,
And the steeps of this land are no more
When there's no longer need to strive upward,
No more torturous heights to ascend,
Then the pathway that leads up to Heaven
Has come to its glorious end.

When the last rugged peak is ascended,
The last fearful storm over past,
To the weary one, then sweet deliverance,
To rest in His bosom at last.
When our souls are received up in glory,
To sigh and to suffer no more,
Then we'll sing with a glad Hallelujah,
All pain, and all weariness o'er.

Till then we will press on with patience,
The race though so toilsome and long;
We will strive ever onward and upward,
Cheering our sad hearts with song.
With our Lord close beside through the night-time,
With renewed pace we then hasten on;
And the trials of this wearisome pathway
Shall end on that beautiful Dawn.

Mrs. W. J. Berry

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EDITORIAL

ELDER J. R. WILLIAMS

We shall try again as we've been asked, to write some of our thoughts on a following scripture. That not by our knowledge, but by faith, some thought will be to some one's comfort.

First may we list a scripture found in Matt. 10: 18-20 ***"And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles, But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."***

This very attempt to write seems to me to trust not in the ability of the creature, but try our faith in God. Do we lack faith as we go speaking? Do we prepare a sermon? I, at least go most of my time in fear, what have I to present, and we know before hand nothing. I've been amazed to speak thoughts I never had until that time while standing and again having different thoughts after sitting down. Maybe this isn't the way of one called of God. I've never been sure of this, but this one thing I think I know, my path leads me in a way I knew not before. While I could beg for a smoother path, I can't ask for it to change, can you?

Such has the Lord's people gone in every generation, I believe, wanting to know what's ahead. We ministers, if indeed I am in that number, go seeking and searching as we stand before a God fearing people, afraid many times to go, feeling to have nothing, yet fearful not to attempt when asked. We never know the mind of God. He has declared that His thoughts and His ways are as far above our thoughts and our way, as the heavens are above the earth. Isn't this, if the above text was given in a natural sense, also in a spiritual way to all that fear His name, you are only a mouth piece for God. Men in their speaking as well as writing would like to know what's ahead, what man might say about it, think about it longer, research etc., that is man's way. If the thoughts or words or writing is directed of God, can it be

wrong? "For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."

An elder once asked me to write some. I answered I couldn't, He said, don't say no if you've never tried, you don't know. We may take notes or memorize a long sermon or article and still be of no value to those that are searching for that God instilled truth. Those apostles had to be inspired, what food they carried for the sheep was from God, and so it still is today. The minister or under-shepherd is only the carrier. Let us all be blessed not to try to add natural food to spiritual manna, it won't mix, if so it would spoil that of the spirit by pollution. He said we'll be hated of the world if we be His. Are we drawing closer to the world in our manner, or closer to the commandment of God. "Think not what ye shall speak." May His grace abide.

Elder J. R. Williams

CORRESPONDENCE

Brother Bill and Sister Mable:

Another year has passed and we have only grown older. Since Elder Preston's passing a year ago we have not attended church for lack of a pastor. But are blessed to feel the Lord's presence from time to time so we know that his promise to not forsake his little ones is as true today as it was to those to whom he spoke almost 2000 years ago.

In gospel bonds,
Lloyd and Florence Spikes
Elgin, Oregon

ARTICLES

LAZARUS AND THE RICH MAN
LUKE 16: 19-31

Much has been said and written concerning this parable, and the Lord willing, I will give some of my thoughts and what I feel it teaches.

1. Verse 19: "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day." This is the state of all those who are rich in this world's goods. Also, they that are rich in their own righteousness and feel they need not the help of the Lord, in providing the means of their own salvation. The purple and fine linen represents their own works and self-righteousness which has been provided by their own efforts. And for the most part, they have much of this world's goods and temporal blessings, which they depend on to get them to heaven. They pay tithes to what they call "giving to the Lord," but the fact is that nothing can be given to the Lord, for all things are already his, and he said "if I was a hungered I would not ask you." And "what his soul desireth that he doeth." And Paul said in 1st Corinthians Chapter 1, "Not many mighty, not many noble are called." So this individual to his own satisfaction, has all that he

feels he needs to meet the requirements of being the Lord's disciple.

2. Verse 20 & 21: "And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores." Here we have a poor child of God, who in the early days of his realizing his helpless and ruined condition, that is willing to try anything to relieve his afflictions, and in this condition being so destitute, he grabs at straws so to speak. He felt to be the chiefest of sinners, undone without hope and God in the world. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. Here we have the "do-gooders" or "miserable comforters" who came to Job in his afflicted condition. In substance, they were saying, if you will just do this or that, then your troubles will go away. But they could not reach his case. When Job was afflicted in a similar condition, and his "so-called" friends came to offer help, he spoke to them in this manner: "But ye are forgers of lies, ye are physicians of no value." (Job. 13:4). Nevertheless relief was to come to poor Lazarus, but man could do nothing for him.

3. Verses 22 & 23: "And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lifted his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." The poor beggar, Lazarus, having his trials and afflictions in this life, when he died was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. We read this scripture, "And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." (Matth. 8: 11 words of Jesus.) Note the difference in the place where each one went - Lazarus to Abraham's bosom and the rich man was buried. Also, Jesus told the thief on the cross, "today shalt thou be with me in paradise." When the rich man died and was buried, a different situation than that of Lazarus, who was taken to Abraham's bosom. It is said "in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments." Right then he realized the torments of being in hell, afar off from where Lazarus was. The reprobate feel their torment and in my opinion, they have a certain knowledge of their punishment and also a certain knowledge of the joys of the righteous. For the rich man saw Lazarus afar off in Abraham's bosom. In this life, their situations are reversed. The reprobate have plenty-feel no need of anything, do not even feel the need of mercy, but always have the good things of this life, but lack that rich life of being with the Lord Jesus in heaven. But the Lord's people are poor and afflicted in this life, and as the poet said "poor and afflicted Lord are thine, among the great unfit to shine." No, they do not shine among the great of this world. Yet they trust in the Lord to be with them and he will in all circumstances, though at times we feel as David did on one occasion "has the Lord clean gone forever?" They will never, most of them, be blessed with

great riches in this world's goods. But they are the richest people on the face of the earth, having the Lord's rich mercy, grace and love.

4. Verse 24: "And he (the rich man) cried and said Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in torments in this flame." We also read "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." (Mark 9: 47, 48). Surely hell is a place of everlasting punishment as heaven is a place of everlasting life. The fire is not quenched - means it never goes out. This is not a place for the Lord's people at any time, even though in this life they have many trials and afflictions, but they are not everlasting. They shall never perish nor be consumed. Now the rich man did refer to Abraham as his father, but this was in the sense he was of Abraham's lineage, and he was not his spiritual Father. We read the scripture - "They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our Father. Jesus saith unto them, if ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham." (John 8: 39, 40). So you see, though they were natural descendants of Abraham, they did not do the works of Abraham; or in other words, they did things Abraham did not do.

5. Verses 25 & 26: But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime received thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence." This seems to settle the matter - Lazarus in Abraham's bosom (paradise) and the rich man in torments (hell). Even if they would, there is a great gulf fixed (yes' fixed by the eternal decrees of God.) God in his determinate counsel and foreknowledge, and by his eternal election of his people to eternal glory, has determined the destination of all mankind. And because He changes not, and what he does is done forever, as given in this scripture: "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever; nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him. That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past." (Eccles. 3: 14-15). Also, "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." (Mal. 3:6). There is no way by which a child of God can go away into torments; nor any way by which a child of the devil can go away into eternal life and joy. God's decrees are sure and certain. There is a remnant according to the election of grace, and those that were not embraced by that election and choice before the world began, will go away into everlasting punishment, pre-

pared for the devil and his angels. I am unable to conceive at any time that God's children are in torments, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched.

6. Verses 27-30: "Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house; for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith, unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham; but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Just what the five brethren represents I cannot say, though I have heard several different versions of what they represent. But Abraham gave the rich man assurance, that if they would not hear Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead. True repentance only comes one way and through the Lord Jesus Christ. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance; that is, you receive the gift and calling first and that then brings about repentance.

Many people witnessed the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, but the fact they beheld these things with the natural eye, and saw him in person, heard him speak on many occasions - this in itself was not the means by which one would believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. You remember on one occasion when he was talking to the Jews and they asked him how long dost thou make us to doubt, he answered them in this manner: "Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you, My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." John 10: 24-30). As Jesus told Nicodemus, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but cannot tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the spirit." (John 3: 7-8). And no man can come unto me except my Father which is in heaven draw him. "So it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." (Romans 9:16).

In conclusion, as previously stated, it is inconceivable that the elect or chosen of God shall at any time be in torments, or experience the wrath of God as did the rich man. While in this life, Lazarus had many trials and afflictions, but was comforted being in Abraham's bosom. David said, "Many are the affliction of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." (Psalms 34:19). There is no indication in this parable that the rich man ever experienced after death, anything other than torments.

By the grace of God I am what I am, and may the Lord's name ever be glorified by His children in this life. I know, at most, I only have a few more years in this life, but one thing I know, the Truth I have endeavored to defend by the grace of God, will stand forever. Farewell vain world, I'm going home, My Saviour bids me come, Sweet Angels beckon from on high, then O how sweet to die.

Just a poor sinner saved by grace.

Elder Robert L. Miles
Plant City, Florida

"EXPERIENCE"

Dear Ones that I love,

May the Lord give me strength and words to write a few things that have taken place in my life which give me a reason for my hope in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I felt for some time I was a most peculiar person and no one could have the thoughts that I had or act like me. I was a sinner and there was nothing I could do but beg the Lord for mercy.

In the year 1932 I dreamed I was in a crowd of people. A bright star slipped over the crowd and some way it was made known to me that the star was sent to me. As the star began to leave, it looked like a mourning veil lifted off of me and went with the star. This was a pleasant dream and I wondered what it meant. Some time later it came to me that my sins were forgiven, which gave me great relief.

I loved being with the Primitive Baptist people and hearing them talk of God and His mercy. I felt that I would love to have a home with them. I wanted so much to be baptized but felt I was not worthy and must keep this to myself.

As time went on the desire to be baptized became stronger and stronger. When I was outside of the house I would think when I go inside I would tell Mama how I felt and she could tell me if it was my imagination but I could never seem to tell her.

My father was sick and the Brethren came to our house and held services for him. He was received into the church and it seemed the time had come that I must tell them part of what I have written. I was received also and baptized August 22, 1936 with my membership at Laurel Creek. I have enjoyed many happy seasons but have had many doubts about myself. I cannot do the things that I should, but do and say the things that I should not. I have no doubt where my strength comes from. The Lord has been so good to me.

On February 14, 1988, I felt so bad in different ways. I was on my bed early in the morning when a scene came before me. First it was an object that did not look very good, but a voice spoke and said, "Get behind me Satan" and then it was gone. Then a beautiful object appeared before me. A voice said, "We have come to be with you and comfort you", then it disappeared. The memory of this is still with me giving me much comfort at times. It seemed to me that the first

was the devil and the second was the Angels.

I have experienced some things that seemed very hard at the time but later I could see that it was for my good. I have had many blessings from the hand of the Lord for which I hope I am thankful.

I cannot write or tell it all as I would like but may He have all of the praise for now and always.

A Sister in Christ I hope.
Annie Reed

VOICES OF THE PAST

As found in the first pages of Elder Lamberts book, "Tried In The Furnace"

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. He so minutely numbered the generations, set the bounds of their habitations and destined their paths, companions and maneuvers that I, Elbert Jefferson Lambert, should make my natural appearance on September 28, 1906 as the firstborn son of Charles B. and Ida Burchfield Lambert near Amity, Arkansas. I am the oldest of four children born to that union. My grandfather, father and I were born within one half mile of each other.

I came up the "hard" way. My father was physically weak, suffered much, and met many hardships trying to "eke out a living" on a little rocky farm in Clark County, Arkansas. He was very zealous, but because of physical handicaps, was unable to realize his ambitions.

I received my early education at Elm School and Amity High School. It became necessary that I stop my pursuit for a higher education in order to help support our family. Therefore, I acquired a teaching license and began teaching school in my sixteenth year. I taught my first school at Dobyville, near Okolona, Arkansas in 1922-23. I taught at Dobyville, Hickory Grove, Lenox, Alpine, Elm and Cedar Bluff, all in Clark County, Arkansas, for the next few years. I was politically inclined and made every effort possible to become acquainted with all the people of that county.

When I was about seventeen years of age, I became a member of the Shiloh Church of Christ (Kelly division of Missionary Baptists) and began teaching Sunday School classes. I can well remember my first "testimony" given in a "testimonial meeting" at Shiloh Church. I quoted John 3:16 and explained it to the best of my ability. The brethren began at once to solicit me to enter the ministry. As a result of my attempts in speaking upon religious subjects, I was ordained to the work of ministry by order of Shiloh church while yet in my "teens."

I pursued the vocations of preaching, teaching, and farming several years. All this afforded me opportunity to give vent to my great zeal and high ambitions. I was very conscientious in everything I attempted. Continuous study and strenuous activi-

ties in early life had its lasting effect upon my nervous system.

On November 17, 1928 I was married to Myrtle Hancock, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Tom Hancock, granddaughter of the late Elder J.H. Langston, of Alpine, Arkansas. She gave birth to our only son, Charles Thomas, on April 6, 1930. She was immediately possessed of pneumonia and departed this life May 3, 1930. I adored her so greatly that the shock of losing my companion drove me to the point of insanity.

The year 1930 was an epochal year in my life. All earthly possessions were taken from me and debts accumulated. My health was impaired for life and my ambitions thwarted. Confidence in myself was destroyed and I was forced to give up teaching. Three cars were wrecked and I was made to "look up to see the bottom." Little did I know that behind a frowning providence was the smile of a gracious God! In that same year (1930) a son was born, Jesus appeared as my Savior, and I was added to Cedar Hill Primitive Baptist Church of Christ near Amity, Arkansas. I was baptized by Elder A.D. Wall and began to be exercised as a minister of God's grace in the same year.

Four years were spent wholly in the college of tribulations located in the Furnace of Affliction. The relief I experienced during this time was during the fleeting moments in communion with God and my brethren. I could never adjust myself to fit in the home of my father and mother who were keeping my son. I could not feel at home anywhere and felt this would always be the case. I did not think I would ever marry again because I felt unable to assume the responsibility as the head of a family and that I would never be able to love anyone else enough to engage her companionship for life. I was mistaken in this idea.

I met and married Dessie Mae Williams, daughter of Leander and Mary E. Williams of Dalark, Arkansas, in the year 1934. The wedding was solemnized by Elder John T. Everett, November 18, 1934. This gave me a new lease on life. The Lord blessed us with mutual love to the extent that she was and is a real, true companion to me.

I was ordained to the officeship of elder by order of Cedar Hill Church, while the South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association was in session with Whitewater Church, near Fordyce, Arkansas, third Saturday in September, 1934. We lived at Dalark, Arkansas for some time and I assisted in serving churches in that vicinity for several years. New Hope Church of Near Hope, Arkansas, was the first church I attempted to serve as pastor without assistance of other brethren.

We have had our place of residence at Dalark, Camden, Cullendale, Hampton, Tinsman, and Calion, Arkansas as well as Lillie, Louisiana before moving to Winnsboro, Texas in 1949. I re-entered the teaching profession during the period of World War II when there was a shortage of teachers and took the responsibility of principal, Tinsman High School, Tinsman, Arkansas and taught in the high school

there four years. With exception of this I have devoted my time to serving churches and visiting the brethren in the different sections of the country from 1934 until the present time (1955). I have visited churches in the states of Arkansas, Alabama, California, Delaware, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Tennessee, Virginia and Washington as well as in the province of Ontario, Canada. I am now attempting to serve four churches as pastor; Hopewell and Good Hope Churches near Winnsboro, Texas; Paran near Hawkins, Texas; and Bethel near ElDorado, Arkansas.

Elder E.J. Lambert

"So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do." - Luke xvii. 10.

The lesson taught in these words of our Savior to his disciples is that in nothing can we be of profit to the Almighty; and some reflections growing out of this are in my mind this morning to speak about. It seems exceeding hard to divest our minds of the idea of human merit in what we may do or say. We even turn the special gifts of God into occasions whereby to exalt ourselves, as though we had originated them, and out of our own storehouses had offered gifts to God whereby his infinite fullness had been added to. And so again and again we are reminded in the Scriptures of our dependence and unprofitableness, that our pride may be humbled and our vainglorying silenced.

Jesus had just before spoken to his disciples of faith which could work miracles; and faith always does work miracles, in the sense that it always does what sense or reason or human power can never accomplish. But though faith is itself the gift of God, the fruit of the Spirit, and being of divine origin works with divine power, so that human power is all excluded from any participation in the matter, yet we are all the time saying, "My hand hath wrought this great work, and my wisdom hath planned it;" and therefore Jesus proceeds to remind the disciples that after having done the mightest works which faith can produce, they were not to boast themselves, as though they were thankworthy, or were in any way profitable to their Maker. Yea, more than this; so far would they be even then from putting God under obligations to them, that he would have a right to demand still more service at their hands. After they have plowed the ground or fed the cattle, he still has a right to demand that they shall gird themselves and wait upon him at his table; and even then they deserve no thanks. If afterward they sit down and eat, it is of his bounty, for which they are bound to return him thanks.

It must not be forgotten that this parable was spoken to eastern people,

the whole structure of whose society is different from ours. Their idea was, and is, that servants are bound to render all demanded service to their masters. In our day and land, where the relations of men to each other are different, any such service rendered from one to another would most frequently be met by the courteous phrase, "I thank you." But such an expression would be entirely foreign to all the ideas of eastern nations. There, a master would never think of thus acknowledging a service rendered by a servant. The master does not consider himself under any obligations to the servant, but the servant owes all his life and powers to him; and it is of his bounty if the servant receives his daily bread. Now the Savior uses this condition of things as a parable, and by it presents our relation to God. So likewise ye, after that ye have done all that is commanded you, count yourselves unprofitable servants.

1st. We are the creation of God. He has made us, and not we ourselves. He is the only self-existent Being, the only Being of whom eternity can be predicated. We owe our existence to his will. We are, because he is, and because he willed that we should be. Surely the creature must receive all. He can by no means render anything to his Creator. Therefore, when we have done all his will, we have only answered the end for which he created us; we have only rendered back to him that which came out of his own hand. In the Scriptures man is often said to have robbed God, but never to have added anything to him. He said, "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine and the fullness thereof." - Psalm 1. 12 See also the connection. As God has made us, we ourselves are his; and as he has created every power within us, and all that we have, these things are also his; and so neither our persons nor our works can profit him anything, or deserve any thanks from him.

2d. It is God that upholds us and preserves us. "In him we live, and move, and have our being." - Acts xvii. 28. He gives us our breath, and upholds us by the word of his power. - Acts xvii. 25; Hebrews i. 3. How little conscious of all this are we! Yet he is so close to us that we exist in him, act in him, and without his presence we should perish. He has made us in order to do his will in us and by us, and daily he renews our strength. Each daily breath is proof of his continued sustaining power. If he withdraw, we shall cease not only to live, but we shall cease to be. Therefore all our service of praise and obedience is only the expression of power from God, every instant imparted to us, that we may be kept in life. We have therefore put him under no obligation to us.

3d. Not only has he created us, and daily preserved us in existence, but he gives us all things. Man in his vanity gathers the fruits of his husbandry into his barns; with the profits of his labor he builds houses, and purchases the comforts and luxuries of life. By his learning and wit he gains a great name among men, and he says, "See what my power hath

wrought!" Vain thought! Who gave him mental and physical power? Who sent down the heat of the sun and the showers of the early and latter rain upon the seed which he has sown? Who gave life to the seed, and prepared the soil in which it grew? Who saved it from mildew and rust and blight? Who gave favoring gales and smooth seas to his ships? Who kept his houses from the storm or fire? What has he that he has not received? - John iii. 27. Why boasts he as though he had not received it? How little we live in a realizing sense of the constant providence of God! He is the Giver of all. If any streams flow back to him, they are but seeking the place from whence they came out. If every river flows into the ocean, wherein is the ocean profited? Does it thank the rivers? Their cheerful and mighty and beneficent flow can continue no longer than old ocean wills. God in his immensity is the ocean, and all we do and say in his service are but the return of him of what he gives; therefore he owes us nothing. We cannot borrow from him to pay the debt which we already owe him. Therefore, from these three considerations it is manifest that we can yield him nothing. We are unprofitable servants if our whole lives are his.

4th But we have to do with sin and sinners. We have not rendered him his own. We have denied his power and goodness, and set at naught his authority. We are in debt to him. We have failed to obey his commandments. We have fallen from our uprightness, and are enemies to God. As such the Bible speaks of all men. In connection with this also, some reflections grow out of these words of our Savior of which I wish to speak. Could an unfallen man, who should perfectly do God's will, have any merit before God? Could such a man present any holiness to God that would place him under any obligation in return whatever? A man can render service to his fellow-man that can rightly demand reward, because he meets his fellow-man upon an equal plane; but can he render any such service to God? It is manifest that the first essential quality that must belong to any meritorious work is that it shall be "self-originated;" that is, that it shall be performed entirely out of a man's own self, without being originated from any source outside of himself. If it be originated from any source outside of himself, it is to the praise of that source, and not himself. A man may demand praise or reward from his fellow-man for service rendered, because with regard to him the act was self-originated - it was performed from an equal to an equal; but we are not in any sense equal with God. It has been before proved that we must receive all from the Creator. No good work is from self. All our good works, if we have any, must be from God. We cannot take one thing which God hath wrought in our hearts and make it the ground of a demand for more. If God originates our good works, they cannot constitute any merit in us. If God has originated them, they must be to his praise forever. Can we then originate any good works, such as faith,

love, obedience, &c.? In answer, let us first consider that the Scriptures teach that man is wholly unclean, and his heart wholly evil. It must be manifest that evil cannot originate good. Evil only originates evil. To this the Scriptures and reason both agree. Let us look at the testimony of the Scriptures for a little. "A good tree cannot bring forth corrupt fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."- Matt. vii. 18. "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." - Matt. xii. 34. That all men by nature are sinful altogether, is declared again and again. See the first three chapters of Romans, in which Paul draws up an indictment against the whole world, and declares that none are exempt from the condemnation there pronounced. Sin and death are the condition and doom of all men. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one. God only can work good or originate it in us. If any man does work good works, it is because God has created him to good works, and foreordained that he should walk in them. - Eph. ii. 10. Every good and perfect thing is declared to be the gift of God, and to come down from him. - James i. 17. Repentance is his gift. - Acts v. 31. Faith is his gift. Eph. ii. 8. Love, hope, faith, and all the Christian graces, are declared to be the fruit of the Spirit. - Gal. v. 22, 23. Our good works he is declared to be the author of. - See again Eph. ii. 10; Isa. xxvi. 12. From all these scriptural testimonies we may surely conclude that in point of righteousness we deserve no thanks, and cannot be profitable to God.

5th. From all this is manifest that we cannot make an atonement for our sins. If any price can be rendered to justice, it must be a holy ransom, such as justice can approve. But we have before seen that holiness is not in man except God create it there; and it is manifest that we cannot render to God his own work as our merit. Because I have one good thing from God I cannot rightly say, "Therefore I deserve another." Our works, which God has wrought within us, cannot atone for past sins; and all in fallen man is sin, except the works which God works within him. Redemption therefore must be of God; it cannot be of ourselves. Of myself I can neither pay the debts I owe, nor lay up treasures of righteousness after my debts are paid. Human merit is excluded from redemption, both as regards the atonement for sin and the sanctification of the sinner. Salvation must be of divine grace and not of creature works. Even the works wrought within us, of faith, love humility, &c., are not capable of paying the debt which we owe to divine justice, because they are the fruit of the Spirit; and the Spirit is not given until after Jesus has paid all the debt we owe, neither could it be given until after the atonement was made. In salvation, atonement for the sins that are past must precede all else. To this agrees the type. The people could not come near the sanctuary, and no worship could be offered there, until it was sprinkled with the blood of atone-

ment. To this agrees all Christian experience. No man has ever yet felt that he had one spiritual blessing from God, until he has felt himself sheltered by the blood of the atonement. If our works were perfect they could profit God nothing; they could not atone for sin. They must be created in us of God.

6th. But our works, even the best of them, are not perfect. Imperfection is true of all Christians and of their best works. To this the Scriptures agree. Disciples are taught to pray, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive," &c. - Matthew vi. 12. Paul complains that he sins, and does what he would not. - Rom. vii. - John, in his first epistle, first chapter, says, "If we say that we have (present tense) no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." The record shows that they were imperfect, and they did not hesitate to confess their sins and failures, as did Noah and David. Christian experience and Christian testimony to-day are the same. Not only do we positively and willfully sometimes go astray, but even when we are striving to do the will of God with the most earnest desire, we have to confess that there is often a mixture of wrong motives. Selfish desires arise and spoil our best work. There are often flies in the most precious ointment of the apothecary.

"If I pray, or hear, or read,
Sin is mixed with all I do."

If this be true of the Christian, the renewed man, certainly the unregenerate man can do no better. If the best offering of him in whose heart Jesus abides needs the cleansing blood to make it acceptable to God, surely the work of the unrenewed man must be wholly hateful and horrible in the sight of God. If he that does all is unprofitable, where shall he stand who never has known what love to God and obedience to his law mean? Surely from all this the exceeding riches of the grace and kindness of God take on a new meaning, and must appear immeasurable. If a man is saved, how great is the exhibition of the love of God to him!

7th. From the text we may learn humility toward God. Humility is one of the graces of the Spirit. It is not a thing that can be created or called into exercise at our own will. As a principle, God himself creates it. It is not a subject of exhortation when we consider the principle in the heart; but it is scriptural and proper to exhort Christians to put it on in their life. As a principle in the heart, it springs out of right views of ourselves and just conceptions of God and of our relations to him; and what would be better calculated to increase a feeling of humility in our hearts than a consideration of the text at the head of this article? To feel that our God does not need us, that we can add nothing to him, but are unprofitable at the best, and must receive all from him, is a most soul-humbling consideration. And accompanying this grace, we shall also be humble in our deportment toward all our fellow-men. Since we ourselves are of no profit to the Almighty, none can be behind us. We are better than

no one else; and the feeling of the heart will be, Surely I am most unprofitable of all. It will not be hard then to esteem others better than ourselves. This also will make us lenient and forgiving to the faults of others. Ashamed of our own shortcomings, we shall feel how little right we have to judge others. The humble man is slow to condemn. He judges himself by a far sterner rule than he does any one else.

8th. From a consideration of the text we may also learn gratitude to God, the Giver of all. He does not exact from us even that which it is his right to demand; and, all undeserving as we are, he never wearies of supplying all our needs. We owe no thanks to him who pays a just debt; but how grateful should we be to him who, being under no obligation to us, yet does us a thousand favors, knowing that we can never by any means recompense him again.

9th. The text is also well suited to stir us up to obedience to God. Thus, and thus only, can we exhibit our gratitude and love. We know that we can be of no profit to God, but yet humbly and lovingly we desire to acknowledge his favors in the only way possible to us. Here speaks the spirit of the true Christian. The spirit of the flesh says, If I can put God under no obligation to me, so that I can secure some favor from him for what I do, what is the use of serving him? But the spirit of love and gratitude speaks another thing altogether. It says, "What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits toward me.?"

Thus I have suggested some things that seem to me pertinent to the text. Many precious truths I have not alluded to. I have found profit to my own soul in these reflections, and I hope they will profit some one else.

I remain, as ever, your brother in hope of life through Christ,

F.A. Chick.

(The above was written by Elder F. A. Chick, Feb. 11, 1885.)

THE FLOCK

John x. 14-16. I am the good Shepherd, and I know my sheep, and am known of mine; as the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

And other sheep I have; not distinct from those for whom he laid down his life, but from those who were under the Old Testament dispensation, and who heard not the thieves and robbers that were before Christ, verse 8, others besides the lost sheep of the house of Israel, or the elect among the Jews to whom Christ was sent, and by whom are meant the chosen of God among the Gentiles, who were sheep, though not called and folded, for the reasons

given in verse 3. These though uncalled, belonged to Christ, he had an inheritance in them, they were given him by his Father; he had them in his hands and upon his heart; his eye was upon them, and they were under his notice, inspection and care: which are not of this fold; of the Jewish nation and church, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise; were as sheep going astray; and were scattered about in the several parts of the world, and were to be redeemed out of every kindred, tongue, people and nation: them also I must bring; out of the wilderness of the world, from among the men thereof, their former sinful companions, from the folds of sin and Satan, and the pastures of their own righteousness, to himself and unto his Father's presence, to his house of ordinances, to good fold of green pastures, an I at last to his heavenly kingdom and glory."

"There was an necessity of doing all this; it was the Father's will and pleasure, his purpose and decree, who had resolved upon it; and it was on account of Christ's own engagements, and obligations to do it; as well as because of the case and condition of these sheep, who otherwise must have been eternally punished.

"And they shall hear my voice; not only externally, but internally; which is owing to his powerful and efficacious grace, who quickens them, and causes them to hear and live; unstops their dear ears, and gives them ears to hear, and opens their hearts, to attend to his word, and gives them an understanding of it. Therefore, the gospel was sent among them: and there should be one fold and one Shepherd; one church state, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles; the middle wall of partition being broken down, these two coalesce in one, become one new man, and members of one and the same body. And of this fold or flock, there is but one Shepherd, Jesus Christ, who is the rightful Proprietor, and whose own the sheep are, and who knows how to feed them, and does take care of them; though there are many under shepherds, who are employed in feeding them."

John x. 27-30. My sheep know my voice, and I know them and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one. (Read carefully the 15 and 16 chapters of this book; they are very instructive.)

John xvii. 6-10. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine. And all

mine are thine and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. (Read the entire chapter.)

The Acts of the Apostles. "This book in some copies is called, The Acts of the Holy Apostles. It contains an history of the ministry and miracles of the apostles of Christ, and is a sort of a journal of their actions, from which it takes its name. It begins at the ascension of Christ, and reaches to the imprisonment of the Apostle Paul at Rome; and is a history of upwards of thirty years; it gives an account of the first Gospel-church at Jerusalem, and of the progress of the Gospel there, and in Judea; it shows how the gospel went forth from Jerusalem, and was spread in the Gentile world, especially by the Apostle Paul, whose companion Luke was the writer of this book; for that it was written by him is very evident, from the beginning of it, it being dedicated to the same person, his gospel is, and of which he makes mention, and in the Syric edition, the book is called, The Acts of Saint Luke the Evangelist collected for the Saints. It was by him written in the Greek language, and, we are told, that there was a version of it into the Hebrew language, which was laid up in the library of the Jews at Liberias. Of the authenticity of this book, there has been no doubt among the ancients, only Cerinthus the heretic endeavored to discredit it, and it was not received by another sort of heretics, called Severiani, from Severus, a disciple of Tatian. It is a most excellent and useful work, showing the first planting of Christianity, and of the Christian churches, both among the Jews and Gentiles, the spread and progress of it in the various parts of the world; what sufferings the apostles endured for the sake of it, and what success attended them, and is a standing proof and confirmation of the Christian religion."

The footsteps of the flock, are so plainly and connectedly marked in this entire book, that he who runs may read; comment is therefore not needed. I think it unnecessary to say more than to ask everyone of my readers, to read the book of Acts for himself.

J.K. Booton

"AND THOU SHALT REMEMBER"

"And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years into the wilderness, to humble thee and to prove thee . . . And He humbled thee and suffered thee to hunger and fed thee with manna which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know . . ." (Deuteronomy 8:2 and 3)

"For the Lord thy God hath blessed thee in all the works of thy hand: He knoweth thy walking through this great wilderness; these forty years the Lord thy God hath been with thee; THOU HAST LACKED NOTHING." (Deuteronomy 2:7)

To the Household of Faith,
Dearly Beloved:

Recently, as I have read the aforegoing verses, I have felt a compulsion to write a little of the sweetness they have brought to me as I meditated upon them, and "The years that are past."

The book of Deuteronomy was written by Moses in the last years of his life, to the stiff-necked and gainsaying nation of Israel whom he had led forty years through the wilderness from Egyptian bondage even to the very border of the promised land. The book consists largely of parting counsels, exhortations, warnings and above all, reminders of the way the Lord had led them, of His great faithfulness while He had been with them those forty years in the great wilderness. He brings to mind their rebellion, their gross ingratitude for all the Lord's benefits to them; how they murmured against the Lord, saying He had brought them into the wilderness to die; how they had looked back with desire even to Egypt; how the Lord, in His wonderful faithfulness, had afflicted them, then healed them; had suffered them to hunger, then fed them with manna; had permitted them to wander, then restored them - that He might humble them and prove them and make them to know the source of their supply. He reminds them tenderly that the Lord their God had known their walking through the great wilderness; that He had been with them, and says, "THOU HAST LACKED NOTHING."

If we are of the Lord's redeemed ones, I believe when we read these wonderful and precious reminders, we are moved, in loving gratitude, to fit them to our own pilgrimage as we have walked through the great wilderness of this evil and perilous world; which inclines me to speak briefly of some of the way over which the Lord has led me these past FORTY YEARS. My experience has been so unlike most I have read in the Signs that I've been reluctant to write of it. Indeed, at times, I have wondered if I had ever had an experience - at other times I have known I did. In the beginning, I did not experience the terrible condemnation for sin which some relate. This has come to me from time to time throughout the years as my experiences have taught me how frail and weak I am, and as I have been blest to see the loveliness, humility and holiness of my dear Redeemer; neither have I ever been given very much to doubts, as so many seem to be. But then, what parent finds it necessary to deal exactly alike with each of his children? The body of Christ is made up of individuals, with individual characteristics, individual desires, individual short-comings and individual needs, and I believe the Lord, in His great wisdom, love and mercy, deals with each of us as He alone knows best.

Forty years ago, in the fall of 1922, when just a young girl, I met and fell in love with a man - the best man, the most wonderful man who ever walked the shores of this world. One night that Fall, when I was going through a

bitter experience, He spoke to me, told me to look unto Him; that He would give me peace and supply all my needs. This wonderful man had written, rather had dictated, a great book, filled from cover to cover with "the things concerning Himself" and the bride He would one day take to be with Him forevermore. He sent me this book and I have had it these forty years, and, with exception of the Man himself, it is my most precious possession. Truly, each time I read it with supplied understanding, I find a new loveliness in the Man that I had not seen before. It soon became apparent that this wonderful man had loved me before I loved Him - before I even met Him, even before I was born; in fact, that my loving Him was BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED ME; moreover, His love for me was so great that, however unfaithful I might ever be, He would never leave me nor forsake me; that nothing either in life or in death could ever separate me from his great love. Oh, my dear Brethren, this wonderful man was The Man Christ Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. As I meditate upon the verses quoted in the beginning and look back over my own forty years walking through this great wilderness, I see myself just as Israel was - stiff-necked, hard-headed, wanting my own way and failing to see the Lord's gracious hand as He led me on. So many have been the pitfalls in my pathway, and it seems to me I have walked headlong into every one of them; so many have been the snares of Satan and I've been the victim of them all; so many times I've looked with wistful gaze at the world and all its charms; so many times when the going was hard, I've wondered why and wished my lot were different. But in all my unfaithfulness, the Lord has been faithful, chastening me often and afflicting me, that He might humble me and prove Himself to me; and through it all, I can say with an overwhelming sense of gratitude, I HAVE LACKED NOTHING. His gracious and bountiful hand has supplied my material needs. It is true I don't have very much of this world's goods, but I have never had to go hungry or cold, and so far, I've never had to be a burden on or dependent upon anyone but the Lord. God forbid that I should ever, for one small moment, feel independent of Him!

He has also met my spiritual needs as He fed me with the gospel from the written and spoken word, has blest me with sweet fellowship and communion with Himself and His dear saints. Sometimes the waves of His great love have flooded my soul, bringing forth loving response from my heart. He has shown me so many times and in so many ways how much better are the things He has for me than anything this changing world could ever afford. Human beings change, even those we love the most, but He changes not! In the depths of distress and sorrow, He has spoken to me and comforted me. Not only that, He has given me a little foresight of that city to which I humbly hope I'm traveling, so that I do not dread, indeed sometimes I anticipate the prospect of leaving this old house for that eternal city

where the glory of our dear Redeemer will be the light; where there will be no more temptation, no more sin, no more need for chastening; where darkness shall nevermore dim our view of His dear face. What a glorious day that will be!

Just a few words concerning chastening and afflictions which I've been taught these forty years in this great wilderness. Paul tells us "no chastening for the present seemeth joyous but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." How very true! I have learned through the years that each chastening has brought me closer to Him who inflicted it, and made me to love Him more as I was blest to see the tender love in the chastening hand. Many years ago when I was teaching, I found it necessary, because of disobedience, to punish a little boy of whom I was very fond. After I had punished him, I took him in my arms, told him I loved him, that it grieved me to have to punish him and I hoped I would never have to do it again. Through his flowing tears, the little fellow looked up into my face and said, "Miss Dykes, I love you more than any teacher I ever saw." In the years that followed, I have sometimes been like the little boy, when in affliction my heart was melted and I was made to look into the face of my dear Redeemer and say, "Lord, I never loved you before as I love you now." You see, the Great Teacher had assured me of His love, even as He found it necessary to chasten me.

These experiences on the way are teaching me, little by little, that His way is best for me, and I am instructed: "In all things give thanks, for this is the will of God, in Christ, concerning you."

Dear Brethren, in closing, I wish I could say, as Paul did, "I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith," but I cannot say that. The faith has kept me and so I can say, as Paul did on another occasion, "The life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." By the faith of the Son of God! Let us watch closely for His footsteps as we journey through this great wilderness, until He comes again, whether the years be many or few.

Yours, in that inseparable tie,
Mildred V. Dykes

MY LOVED AND ESTEEMED SISTER: - I am going to try to write you a letter. This is the first I have attempted to write with a pen. Lila said she would write for me, but I thought I would try and write myself, as I have often been writing you in my meditations during my wakeful hours. Some nights I sleep and others I do not. Brother Alexander Campbell has passed away. Sisters Christy Graham and Annie Gillis are gone, too.

"As star by star decline,
Till all are passed away."

Oh how I appreciated the love and esteem of the church when they as-

sembled at our home at the November meeting. Surely it was a time of the singing of birds to my poor soul. I was brought into his banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love. When I awoke in the morning these words were upon my lips, He came leaping over the mountains, skipping over the hills. My Beloved is mine and I am his. I felt at that time it was all I needed and I truly was on the mountaintop for a long time. The time came when something began to tell me, Your Beloved only follows you on the top of the mountain, he does not know you when you are in the valley and in the caves of the earth, in your distress, and again I was brought low and began to murmur and complain. It seems so fresh to my mind. What was to become of me? On January 4th, after a night of no sleep, I felt I was tired out. The next night these words dropped sweetly into my mind, as if spoken by some unseen person,

"Though thy path be dark and drear,
And thy nights be filled with fear,
There is one who loves thee ever,
He will leave thee never, never."

I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.

Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner.

I have written this with great imperfection. When I tried to read it I did not know whether to send it or not, but I am glad I can write even an imperfect letter.

Sarah Sinclair.

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

Greensboro Church will host the meeting of the West Country Line Union at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church the fifth Sunday in January, 1993.

All are welcome to come and be with us and a special welcome to all Elders of our faith and order.

Wayne Edwards, Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Paynes Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Floyd County, Va., a presbytery met December 5, 1992 at 2:30 p.m. for the examination of brother Wilton Supthin, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Junior Conner. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elder Junior Conner, W.T. Conner, Carl Terry, Willard Cox, Clarence Stone, and Hale Terry.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Hale Terry as Moderator and W.G. Parsons as Clerk. Elder Willard Cox and W.T. Conner was chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Elder Hale Terry having been duly appointed by Paynes Creek Church in conference October 31, 1992 spokesman for the church delivered brother Wilton Supthin to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder Willard Cox and W.J. Conner using scripture reference Acts of the Apostles and 1 Timothy Ch. 3, vs. 8-13. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Clarence Stone. Elders Junior Conner & Carl Terry delivered the charge to the candidate. Scripture reference Holy Word of God.

The Moderator asked Paynes Creek if the church approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to brother Wilton Supthin and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained candidate was delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon of the Old School, Primitive Baptist Church at Paynes Creek, Floyd County, Va.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Carl Terry.

Elder Wm. Hale Terry, Moderator
W. G. Parsons, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Union meeting of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist will be held, the Lord willing, the fifth Saturday and Sunday in January, 1993 with Weatherford Church.

All who believe the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

Phyllis Goad, Clerk

NOTICE

Copies available of TRIED IN THE FURNACE by: Elder E.J. Lambert. $7.00 per copy, includes postage and handling.

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FOR NOVEMER 1992

Mrs. Audrey Dyer, VA	7.00
Homer Pettis, LA	5.00
Jimmy Cote, ME	10.00
James W. Huber, MD	2.00
Mrs. Erma C. Sowers, VA	2.00
Mrs. James Hutchinson, KY	2.00
Floyd K. Morgan, AR	2.00
Raymond M. Clayton, FL	7.00
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Mrs. Albert H. Davidson, LA	12.00
Mrs. Marie D. Cannaday, VA	2.00
Ms. Amy Cruise, VA	7.00
Mrs. Lavenia Biggs, TN	7.00
Mrs. Vera N. Potter, MS	2.00
Mrs. Della M. Swan, LA	2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER JESSIE ALTIZER COX

It pleased our Lord to call our Dear Sister Home on September 16, 1992. She was born May 16, 1904 making her stay here 88 years 4 months. She was the Daughter of Johnny Lee and Lizzie Altizer. She was married to Poage Cox who preceded her in death in the year 1961. Unto this union were eight children born.

Surviving are five sons and daughters-in-law Philip Cox, Bernard and Bessie Cox; Piney Woods, Radford Virginia; Russell and Louise Cox, Radford Virginia; Coleman and Eunice Cox, Lynchburg, Virginia; Allen and Geneva Cox, Christiansburg, Virginia. Three daughters and sons-in-law Effie and Troy Higgs, Willis, Virginia; Reba and Esker Wade, Radford, Virginia; Glenda and Arnold DeHart, Bent Mountain, Virginia. One sister Georgia Roop, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. One sister-in-law Elsie Altizer, Maumelle, Arkansas; 22 grandchildren, 35 great-grandchildren, 4 great-great-grandchildren, many nieces, nephews, and friends.

Sister Jessie had been in declining health for many years being hospitalized many times. Her desire was always to be able to be out and go to Church again. She was a True Believer in Salvation by Grace Alone and loved to hear that preached. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church in the year 1948. She fought a good fight and kept the faith. Her funeral was held at Old Union Church on September 19, 1992 by her Pastor Elder Hale Terry and Elder Larry Hollandsworth. She was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in the Sumpter Cemetery to await the resurrection where all the redeemed will be with the Lord forever. We miss her at Old Union Church. Written by request of the Church at our last Conference Meeting by Dorcie Semones.

Elder Hale Terry, Moderator
Dorcie Semones, Clerk

SISTER LINA POLLARD

It is with sad hearts that we, the members of Newport Primitive Church, attempt to write the obituary of our Dear Sister, Lina Pollard. She was born on August 27, 1904 at Veronia, North Carolina, and departed this life July 9, 1992, at Britthaven Nursing Home, Jacksonville, North Carolina. Her life span, that God gave her, was almost 89 years.

She was first married to Mr. Lloyd Thomas and after his death she married Mr. Roy Taylor and after his death, in 1966 she married Brother Lee Pollard of Newport, North Carolina.

Survivors include a daughter, Ruth Sanders and a son, William Thomas, both of Jacksonville, North Carolina, a step-son, Bobby Pollard of Newport, North Carolina.

Sister Pollard first united with the Old Bay Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by the late Elder Hill Edwards sometime in the mid forty's. She later moved her membership to the Primitive Baptist Church at Wilmington, North Carolina, the one located on the Silver Lake Road. After she married Brother Lee Pollard, she made Newport her home as well as her church home. Our church records show that she was received by letter into the fellowship of Newport Primitive Baptist Church on September 17, 1966. Sister Pollard was a kind and loving member. She did not believe in sowing seeds of discord, but was one who worked for peace.

We were very close to Sister Pollard and her dear husband. From time to time they travelled many miles with us to church meetings. She cooked many good meals for church company and always welcomed the Lord's people into her home as long as her health permitted.

We feel that her step-son, Bobby Pollard, was a special blessing to her. He was very caring and even bought and furnished her with a car to drive, so long as she was physically able. Bobby would also cook her favorite foods and take them to the nursing home, where, due to blindness in her last few years, he would hand feed her.

Her funeral was held on Saturday, July 11, 1992, with a grave side service at Cedar Grove Cemetery in Newport, North Carolina, by Elder Johnie Carroll. Elder Carroll gave out one of Sister Pollard's favorite hymns, No. 38 in Lloyd's Hymn Book, and the little group from Newport Primitive Baptist Church along with some dear ones from Cypress Creek Primitive Baptist Church sang:

"Dark was the night and cold the ground
on which the Lord was laid,
His sweat like drops of blood ran down
in agony He prayed, etc., etc."

Though Sister Pollard is gone from us, her sweet memory will live on in our hearts. To know her was to love her. She was truly a Dear Humble Sister for her walk was orderly and her conversation was Godly. "The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord."

Family, Friends and neighbors gathered at the grave site to pay their last respects and say their goodbyes. We know that in this present life we will see her no more, but we hope to see her in that world that knows no end. When Jesus comes back to gather his elect from the four winds, we hope to be included in that blessed number that were predestinated unto the adoption before the foundation of the world.

It is agreed that we send one copy of this resolution to the family, one to Zion's Landmark, one to the Signs of the Times for publication and one to be recorded in our church records.

Approved in Regular Conference, this 20th day of December, 1992.

Elder Johnie Carroll, Moderator
Shirley Carroll, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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" ROCK OF AGES "

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee!
Let the water and the blood,
From thy wounded side which flow'd,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.

Not the labors of my hands
Can fulfil thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears for ever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring!
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die!

While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eyelids close in death,
When I soar to worlds unknown,
See thee on thy judgment throne,-
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee!

Toplady.

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EDITORIAL

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

That Jesus came into the world to save sinners surely no one professing to be a christian will dispute, but there is obviously a great diversity of opinion among the people as to whether he accomplished his mission, or left a portion for man to complete. However, the ones who have been quickened into life by the Holy Spirit and made to see their lost, ruined condition, and then given to see a crucified and risen Saviour, have no doubt that he did indeed do what he came to do. Their only doubt is, Did he die for me?

Let us examine what the Holy Scriptures say, for they are the record that God has graciously, and in his loving kindness and mercy, given to his elect children. In 2 Tim. 3:16 we read: ***"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."*** By this we find that the Scriptures are not written to all mankind, but to the man of God: the man of God being one who has been born again of the Holy Spirit. All men in the flesh are sinners and will be until death. John tells us that if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. (1 John 1:4) John also tells us: ***"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for he cannot sin, because he is born of God."***

The nominal professors of the world teach that if a man will only believe in Christ and accept him as his Saviour he will be born again; but Jesus said, "Marvel not that I said unto you, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." If a man can chose his own natural father then might he choose God as his heavenly Father. Perish the thought! " The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14). All men are born dead in trespasses and in sins. Death means, to

be separated from; and when Adam partook of the forbidden fruit he died. No, he did not die a corporal death, but he was separated from whatever standing he had with God, for God had said, *"In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."* When Adam died all of his posterity died in him, for they were created in him. Therefore all who are born of the flesh are born dead in trespasses and in sins; and we know that a dead man can do nothing. Therefore man has no choice in the matter. But if it were possible for man to choose, he would not choose God, because in the flesh he has only a carnal mind, and the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. To be carnally minded is death: but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Therefore they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. (See Rom. 8:6-9). Neither have the children of God chosen him, but, *"God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." (Thes. 2:13).* There are those who are left to perish in their sins, and Satan works in them with all deceivableness of unrighteousness: because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (2 Thes. 2: 9-12). But unto the chosen Paul said, *"Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."*

In these Scriptures we see a line drawn between the elect children and all those who are left to perish in their sins. The nominal professors say that God would be unjust if he chose some and left others to perish, and did not give all alike a chance to be saved. But God is just and holy in all his way, and if he cast all men into hell he would be just; and we believe we have already given scriptural proof that men would not choose to be saved even if given a chance. Jesus said, *"No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."* And *"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."* And unto some he said, "And ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life," Thanks be unto God that salvation is not of chance, but of the Lord. In Christ only can we have any hope of heaven and immortal glory, for *"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12).*

We read in Eph. 2:1: *"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."* All who have been quickened, and given a hope in Jesus Christ, have asked, If it be so, why me? Why should God choose to bestow his mercy and grace upon such a wretched, vile, black sinner as I?

How can he be just and holy and yet justify me? These are questions of great concern to all who are blessed to ask them. Yes, blessed. To be blessed in this fashion is an evidence that you have been quickened into life. Those who have not been quickened cannot ask such questions, for they have not experienced this quickening. You may have many doubts and fears as to the truth of this, for Satan works mightily to deceive and destroy you. Yet do you not receive comfort from those who tell you of having the same doubts and fears? Did not Paul declare, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus came into the world to save sinners: of whom I am chief?" Jesus himself said, "They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Jesus also said, "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders: insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Surely we can rightly judge that it is not possible. Yet, as a son of God, you must suffer manifold temptations, "that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." (I Peter 1:7). And James tells us, "Blessed is the man who endureth temptations: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord promised them that love him."

When one has been quickened into life he is given faith, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." And you are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." You who are kept by faith are "begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." (I Pet. chapter 1). Faith to believe in Christ is always accompanied by hope, for without hope, of what good is faith? "But hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for it? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (Rom. 8: 24-25).

"Unto you it is given, in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." To whom is this faith given? It is not to the natural man, for he cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God, but it is to those who have received him. We read John I: 11-12: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," Now the question my be asked, Who are they that are born of God? God hath revealed this unto his elect in the Holy Scriptures in both the old and new testaments. In the 8th chapter of Proverbs we may read a very

beautiful description of the Son of God as he was with God before the foundation of the world. Read it yourselves, for it is too long to be copied here, but we will copy a few verses. *"The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." (V. 22-23). And, "Then I was by him, as one brought with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing in the habitable part of the his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men."* The finite mind of man cannot comprehend our infinite God. We can in no wise conceive a being that had no beginning and will have no end, but by faith given unto us we believe it to be true. Christ said his delights were in the sons of men even before the world was spoken into existence, because he could see all things from the beginning to the end, for he had *"declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."*(Isa. 14:10). In Ps. 139:15 we read, *"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."* The members which were written in God's book are the substance of which Christ's mystical body was formed in the mind and purpose of God before there was any of them. In I Cor, 2:27 we read: *"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."* These members hath God blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love: and all of this was according to the good pleasure of his will. (See Eph. ch. 1) These children which were given a life in him before the world was, were also given a life in Adam. In Heb. 2:13-14 we read: *"Behold I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil: and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage". "In his Godhead Christ could not die, therefore he took on him, not the nature of angels: but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."*

The children were under lawful bondage because of sin, and they were held in the prison house of death. This bondage meant that a price must be paid for their redemption, and the price demanded by God's holy justice was the blood and death of Christ; for he was the only one pure enough to pay the price, and the only one who could pay, for they were his own. They were

held in bondage under the curse of the law, but, *"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree," (Gal. 3:13).* As our high priest he offered himself without spot to God, and by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. If Christ had not risen from death, justification would not be ours, and we would yet be dead in trespasses and sins; but when Christ died, we as his body were baptized into his death, therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. (Rom. chapter 6). By his death and resurrection Christ has freed us from the law of sin and death that we might live unto God, and it is in Christ that we live and move and have our being.

The Scriptures often refer to us as sheep, and Jesus as the Shepherd, and Jesus said unto certain Jews, *"But ye believe not, because ye are not my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish."* The eternal life that he gives was already theirs, for it was in him before the foundation of the world, but is given unto them at the appointed time of God when they are quickened out of their state of death. *"The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." (John 5:25).* This life can never die, for that which is eternal had no beginning nor end. Jesus is the firstborn from the dead: that he might have the preeminence, and he is the only begotten Son of God. We read Ps. 2:7: *"I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee."* This was fulfilled when God raised him from the dead, (See Acts 13: 32-33, and in another place he said, *"Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."* He is the only begotten, but if we were chosen in him then are we sons by adoption, for God hath *"predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."* And we read in the 8th chapter of Romans, *"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God,"* and, *"but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."* There is much more in this chapter concerning this, but read it for yourselves.

Jesus Christ is also the resurrection, and the life, and, *"he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and*

believeth in me shall never die." Our mortal body is going to die and return to the dust, but our life that is in Jesus Christ will never die; for it shall return unto the One who gave it. There is going to be a resurrection of the dead, when Christ shall return without sin unto salvation. The good and the evil alike shall come forth from the grave; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. (John 5:29). We read in the book of Revelations what John saw. *"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."* Praise be unto God for he hath given us life and a blessed hope in Jesus Christ the Saviour, for he is the first resurrection. And, *"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power."*

This is very long, but it is only a small portion of the things that have come to mind, and I trust that he has guided me to write to his praise, honor and glory. May he bless one or more of his saints to be comforted and edified by it.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES

THE FEARS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

(Author of "Rock of Ages")
By Agustus Montague Toplady
(1740 - 1778)
"Within were Fears" (2 Cor. 7:5)

Fear is, properly speaking, that uneasiness of mind, which arises from the apprehension or some impending evil.

Spiritually taken, fear, as it respects God for its object, is of two kinds, legal and evangelical:i.e. law fear and gospel fear.

Legal fear is an horror, occasioned by the mere expectation of punishment, without any mixture of love to the punisher. Such is the fear of the apostate angels; and such the fear, which agitates reprobate souls, when conscience is let loose, and when the thunderings and lightenings of God's fiery laws set themselves in array against the haters of Christ.

On the contrary, evangelical fear is peculiar to God's regenerated people and consists in a melting humiliation for sin, accompanied at times, especially in secret prayer, with gracious groanings which cannot be uttered; with a degree of self-abhorrence and of self-renunciation; with a longing for the favour, the resemblance and the presence of God in the soul. And all this, not from a mere wish to avoid punishment, but likewise from a concern for having lost the image of God's holiness, for having crucified the Sav-

iour of sinners, and for having grieved and been estranged from the adorable Spirit of grace. It is easy to observe, that here is a strong mixture of love toward all the persons of the Trinity; and it is by this love (though perhaps weak as a burning thread, and small as a grain of mustard-seed) that evangelical fear is chiefly distinguished from legal. The letter is the unaffectionate awe of an indignant slave, who is forced to submit against his will, who hates the hand that strikes, who loves nothing but ease and dreads nothing but the lash. While the sinner, who experiences the fear which is evangelical, abhors sin for its own sake as contrary to the nature and command of the blessed God, and abhors himself for sin's sake, and because he is the subject of that detested principle which sets him at so great distance from the mortal likeness of infinite purity and excellence.

Concerning legal fear, we read, that *"there is no fear (i.e. no fear of that kind) in love: for perfect love casteth out fear"*; meaning, that the sense of God's love is no sooner shed abroad with full lustre and efficacy in the soul than legal fear vanishes away, and continues extinct during the shine of God's Spirit on the conscience. Concerning evangelical fear, we read, *"Blessed is the man that feareth always"*; who is tenderly solicitous to avoid any thing and every thing, which may render him spiritually unlike that holy, glorious and gracious Being, whom he ardently wishes to resemble and hold communion with.

But besides this filial, salutary fear, which is one grand mark of regeneration, a believer, while he sojourns upon earth, is liable to fears of a mixed, heterogeneous kind, which seems to be partly legal and partly evangelical. To this head may be referred anxious doubtings, painful misgivings and evil surmisings of remaining unbelief. These are occasioned, directly and immediately, by the imperfections of inherent grace below, and, remotely, by the permissive appointment of God, who has decreed, that perfect happiness must be waited for till we get home to heaven. Where our graces complete, our bliss would be complete too, for perfection of grace is glory itself.

In the meanwhile, it is even needful for the Christian traveller to be exercised with a thorn in the flesh; and to be at times in such a state as may convince him that earth is not his rest, or a mount whereon to pitch tabernacles of continuance; that he must carry his cross before he receives his crown; that he must combat before he conquers; and sow in tears antecedently to his reaping in joy. I believe from Scripture, from observation and from experience, that all God's people do occasionally pass under the cloud, and are baptized unto Christ in the cloud and in the sea of spiritual darkness and distress. Jesus Himself, though He had no sin, was thus baptized. All Thy waves and storms (said David, in the Person of the Messiah, and addressing himself to God the Father) are gone over me. Even from

my youth up, Thy terrors have I suffered with a troubled mind.

No wonder then that the members should be sprinkled with those waters, which were poured in torrents on the mystic Head. And let the suffering members of Christ's elect body remember, to their great and endless comfort, that even tormenting fears are perfectly consistent with the reality of grace. This was the psalmist's state and the psalmist's experience: Though I am sometimes afraid, yet put I my trust in Thee.

Hence it is evident that faith and fear, though not good friends, are sometimes very near neighbours; yea, that they often lodge in one house, i.e. in one and the same heart. Indeed, they seldom appear together: for when the one walks abroad, the other usually keeps within doors. When faith is alert and active, fear hangs its head and pines. When fear is lively, faith takes to its bed and languishes. So strong is the antipathy of the two principles, that the sickness of one is the health of the other.

They are perpetually quarrelling and skirmishing. And though fear now and then gives faith a home thrust, faith will most certainly (and sometimes she knows it) get the better at last, and survive her adversary. Yet, though faith will infallibly outlive fear, faith is not immortal. She too must die, and that by God's own hand: for she is so strong, even when weakest, that none can deprive her of existence but He that gave it. Her death will be a willing and a delightful one. When the hour comes, she herself will not wish to live a moment longer. The soul, in which she dwells, being severed from its body and taken up to heaven, faith gladly and triumphantly expires under the meridian blaze of sight. In the meanwhile, there are times when, brightening into full assurance, she longs for her own annihilation, and is even straitened until it be accomplished. At length, having acted as the believer's companion and guide through the wilderness, she sees him safe to the threshold of heaven; and, the very instant he steps over that threshold, and enters within the veil, she takes her leave of him for ever.

As to fear, though she may, in some believers, keep pace with faith and even outrun faith during the greatest part of the earthly race, yet the waters of death (if she die not before) will kill her effectually and finally. The mere prospect of that stream may perhaps give her fresh vivacity and strength; but no sooner does she begin actually to touch that water, than she expires, and the renewed soul which had been, through her means, all its life-time subject to bondage, passes the river with courage, serenity and joy. Holy desire cuts the cable. Faith hoists the flag. Prayer spreads the sail, and God's Spirit breathes the auspicious breeze. All the graces of the heart are in exercise and ply their oars to the music of hovering angels. The dividing waters present a smooth expanse for the ransomed of the Lord to pass over. All is harmony. All is bliss. And thus does the precious freight, the disembodied soul, land in triumph on the golden coast, and hardly staying to take a

view of her dead enemies on the opposite shore, makes directly to the presence of God, and to the throne of Him that was slain.

Unwillingly I return to earth, and withdrawing my mind from a contemplation of the glory that shall be revealed, descend to consider the various fears to which all God's converted people, and myself among the rest, are subject while imprisoned in a body of clay.

Within are fears. For that sorceress, whose name is fear, can transform herself into a multiplicity of shapes, though she is in reality the same identical hag in all.

Sometimes she assumes the mantle of pretended humility, and whispers that "we must not give absolute credit to God's covenant and promises, nor aspire to the comfort and enjoyment of them, for fear of being presumptuous."

Anon, she wears the mask of caution: "Do not rejoice in God's election, and in Christ's righteousness, for fear of being a self-deceiver." Whereas, in reality, all who can embrace the free favour of God, and all who can lay hold on the righteousness of Christ, have a covenant right to both. And why should not they, who have a right to these, rejoice in the God to whose rich and immutable grace they are indebted for it?

At another time, fear accosts us in the garb of affected holiness. "You must bring," says she, a price in your hand to God the Father, or Christ's redemption will profit you nothing." Do not undervalue yourself by supposing that you can do no good work before you are justified. I tell you, that you must work for life and justification. You must do good works in order to be accepted, and fulfill a string of terms and conditions, seeing you are to be saved for your works, because of your works, yea, according to the merits of your works." But thou, O believer in Christ, flee these abominable doctrines. Harken not to them, as you value the glory of God, the freeness of grace, and the riches of Christ, and interests of real holiness and your own happiness. Remember that the conditions of fallen man's salvation are two, and no more: namely, perfect atonement for sin and perfect obedience to the law. Both these conditions Christ has completely fulfilled, in the stead and for the infallible salvation of every soul that comes to His blood for cleansing, and to His righteousness for clothing. "To what end, then, serves faith?" To let thee into the knowledge, possession and enjoyment of this free and finished redemption. "And to what end serve good works?" Not to entitle us to God's favour, or even to pave (much less to pay) our way to His kingdom; but to glorify His name, to adorn His gospel, to evidence our adoption and benefit others on our road to heaven.

Fear very frequently mimics the voice of prudence and advises us as a friend, "not to bring odium and inconveniences upon ourselves by too strict a moral walk, and by a too resolute assertion of the doctrines of Christ." How bitterly did poor Peter weep for

having listened to this serene song! And what rending agonies of heart did he feel for his sham prudence, after the arrow of recovering grace, shot from the eye of Christ, had pierced his inmost soul! O Thou almighty Son of God, save Thy people from the fear of man. Not only pray for us, as Thou didst for Peter, that our faith fail not (and Thy prayer was heard: for his faith itself failed not, though his profession of it did); but pray also in our behalf that our faith may never even seem to fail.

Fear is sometimes apt to beset those who, of all persons in the world, should have nothing to do with it, unless to trample it under their feet. I mean, the ministers of God's Word. O Ye standard bearers of the Most High, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Good Mrs. Ayscough, who was burned for the Protestant faith, when she was offered her pardon at the stake on condition she would renounce the truth, cried out with holy indignation, *"I did not come hither to deny my LORD and Master."* I desire to remember her words, every time I ascend the pulpit. A mincing, timid, partial declaration of the gospel is a virtual denial of Christ Himself. Rather die with the gospel standard in your hands than resign a thread of it to the enemy: like heroic Valasco, the Spanish general who, when the Havannah was taken by the English, scorned to surrender the national flag, and nobly expired with his colours wrapped round his arm.

But there are seasons of personal dryness when fear, like an armed man, assaults the faith and liveliness of God's ambassadors. They are perhaps at a loss even for a subject to preach from. All resources seem to be shut up. They flit in their own minds from text to text, and for a long time can fix on none. They cry in secret, *"Lord, how can we spread the table for Thy people except Thou bring the venison to our hands?"* Or, with the disciples of old, *"Whence shall we have bread for the multitude, here in the wilderness? The dear people flock to the Word, as doves to their windows, and we, alas, have little or nothing to feed them with."*

At such times of doubt and barrenness, cast yourself at large upon God, and distribute the Word as you are enabled. In all probability, the fishes and the loaves will increase in your hands, and God will administer bread enough and to spare. It is kind and wise in the Holy Spirit to make us feel that we are nothing, and that the excellency of the power is of Him and not of us. The lesson of dependence upon His arm of grace alone is profitable, though not always palatable, to our proud, deceitful hearts. To the glory of the divine faithfulness I say it, that for my own part some of my happiest pulpit opportunities have been when I have gone up the stairs with trembling knees and a dejected spirit: nay (twice or thrice in my lifetime) when I have been so far reduced as to be unable to fix on a text till the psalm or hymn was almost over. These are not desirable trials but they redound, however, to the praise of Him who has said, *"Without Me ye can do nothing"*; and whose

almighty love can elicit light out of darkness, even out of darkness that may be felt.

On the whole, let all God's people, both ministers and private Christians, come to the Lord by prayer for deliverance from the fears that do most easily beset them. Bind them up in a bundle, and throw them at the foot of the cross, and implore God's Spirit to shine them away. Be humbled on account of them, but not discouraged. Proclaim eternal hostility against unbelieving fear in all its branches; but know that it is God who must teach your hands to war and your fingers to fight.

No man appears to have been more subject to fears and cares than David, though he had been enabled to vanquish a lion and to slay a giant. What course did he take for relief in his hours of distress and tremor? He prayed to Him that is mighty to save. And his success was answerable. I sought the Lord, and He heard me; yea, He delivered me out of all my fears.

Several of the fears to which God's people are exposed have already been considered. The enumeration of a few more shall conclude the subject.

By Agustus Montague Toplady
From Gospel Standard
October & December 1990

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 3 / 93 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

To the Household of Faith:

That there is wickedness abounding and increasing in (so to speak) leaps and bounds, here in America, of that I have no doubt; and that we, in our flesh, cannot understand why God the Creator would let such occur, of that I have no doubt; but by the grace of "God," my mind is brought to remembrance of a passage of Scripture - sin abounds, that grace might much more abound and also - vengeance is Mine, saith the Lord. And after all; who or what is man? that he may question God's way or manner in His operation of His government as is His own good will and pleasure. There is oh so very much that is far beyond our understanding and except for those things of His that He is pleased to reveal unto us, we have absolutely no rightful understanding of them at all. Now I feel fully aware that God is in no need of my defense, but would (if God's will), remind us of some of His Holy words of Holy truths - I create evil, I made some vessels unto honor and some unto dishonor; some vessels of mercy, and some of wrath; Jacob have I loved. Esau have I hated, neither of them having yet been born to know good or evil. And to His afore chosen vessels of His mercy - My grace is sufficient for thee; I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and whom I will I hardenth.

The very nature of man, in his flesh, is sinful, wicked and selfish; therefore he is totally without any self ability to determine any Holy truth concerning

the true and Holy attributes of "God," his (man's) Creator; thereby confirming that Scripture that saith - none are good no not one; as He looked down upon mankind upon the earth.

It is far beyond the comprehension of man, to even remotely perceive of what is - absolute perfection, why? by reason of man's own self's imperfection. Not by any means to infer of God's lack, in His creation of man and all things else, oh no not that; for on His part, as He looked upon it all, it all was good and very good, as is all that He doeth. Man is the committer of sins against his Creator God and His enlightened children are fully aware of the fact, that their sins against their "God" is exceedingly sinful; and yet with all the awful sins mankind has committed it has not changed even one iota, that which God saw would and shall be, all the way thru, from the beginning of time unto its ending, and all resultings that derive from it all so being.

But for the grace of God, hell would surely be the stay of all mankind, after this earthly world is no more, and that justly so; for no fleshly man or woman, has ever done even one thing, to merit a place in heaven and immortal glory. And so it is - Salvation is of the Lord. While God's afore chosen children walk upon this sin cursed earth, they are unable to fully comprehend of just how greatly and wonderfully they were graced, with God having sent His only begotten Son Jesus Christ down upon this earth, on their behalf; to do everything necessary, to pave that strait and narrow way, for their travel on the wings of His everlasting love, unto heaven and immortal glory, to ever be with their Holy Father, God, and to evermore sing ceaseless and undivided praise unto His great and Holy name; and so it is with His little children, while they walk in this wilderness and lowground of sin and sorrow, they (and I hope I) must remain, with only a sweet and precious hope in their breast, for a better place after this world is no more. I just so hope, this hope I feel, could be a lively hope in my Lord. I do so much desire that ALL my trust be in the Lord and God, for I can think of none other who could possibly be trustworthy, surely not in myself, of all things.

I am so sure that I have no doubt of this one thing, the merciful God has showered His blessings upon this poor undeserving sinner, all the days of my life; oh I would be so very thankful unto Him, if I could; but without His furnishings - I can do nothing, not even life, breath or have my being, I am just totally and completely helpless.

This past October 1992, my Creator God had kept and sustained this poor sinner for 80 years; I cannot tell you why He chose to sustain my unprofitable life, Lo these many years; except to say, it was His will, and so He has His Own purpose in and for so doing; and therefore, I must (if His will) accept it all as just that; for I feel and believe, that the fulfillment of His will, purpose and pleasure, is all that could really and truly matter, or be of importance in the whole being of all things. This hope I feel in my breast, is oh so

sweet and precious (it seems) to my very soul; and if it (as I hope) be a lively hope, then it must be and surely is - A free gift from God; for I assure you of this one thing, I never no never did even one thing or deed toward the earning of that hope.

The Old School or Primitive Baptist militant churches, in this part of the country, are dwindling down in numbers of members in each; and many of the church meeting houses are closed for good; and surely this seems so very sad to us; and yet whenever He be pleased to remind us of that very fact of Holy truth, that except it be His will, purpose and pleasure, for it so to be, then all the devils on earth and in hell, could not make it so; it is then and then only, we are enabled to in truth feel and say - Thy will be done O God.

Since the days of Adam, mankind has tried in every devise he could muster, to prove his Creator "God" to be a liar, that His word is false, thereby that Christ is non existent; for Christ, the Son of God, is the word of God.

The worldly of mankind to this day, are either saying there is no God, or in effect saying, He is weak, and of less intelligence, than is man. Some say man came from the monkey, some say he came from a fish, some say he evolved from one thing or another; While some say that there is a God, but yet He is in need of man's help; while either of the above does in fact say - there is no Three-in-One, true and living almighty God. To say that any man of himself can, in any way shape or form, aid another, even one iota toward heaven and immortal glory, is in effect denying every word of Holy truth, and so is saying that Christ the only begotten Son of God, was and is without purpose. When it is said - this is a hard doctrine; if it is meant, it is hard to believe; I would say this - except one be taught it of God, it is entirely impossible to believe. Once one has been shown what he really is by nature, and what he must be by the grace of God, and has been given to in Holy truth love the Old School or Primitive Baptist and what they stand for, then that one will go to his grave still an Old School or Primitive Baptist.

For God's work in one is never in vain, for what God does is done forever. The riches of Jesus Christ, are indeed and in truth unsearchable; and so whenever we are blessed to hear an Old School or Primitive Baptist minister who is enabled to declare the whole council of God, what uncountable blessings were involved, in just this one enjoyment coming to pass; both minister and hearer were blessed with a desire to go, and blessed with a way to get there, and blessed with an Holy ear to hear, and a heart to understand, what the minister was blessed with or given, those precious words of Holy truth to speak. It is just as impossible for us to count all the blessings bestowed upon us, as it is impossible to count all the grains of sand upon the sea-shore. O that I might be enabled to in Holy truth, Praise "God" from whom all blessings flow. In hope, I could be one among you, I say - Dear Brethren: there just is no other name in heaven, or among the inhabitants of

the earth, could possibly be worthy of even one word of praise, honor or glory, both now and forever more. I say this to anyone, who may receive any good feeling, while reading this, praise only "God the Three-in-One" for it all.

Troy G. Shepard

VOICES OF THE PAST

Jesus completely calls and equips His ministers. Tells them what to say. They don't go for money.

St. Luke 9:6 "And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere."

In the previous verse, Jesus called His disciples to Him and gave them power over unclean spirits, and commanded them to go and preach. I would like to call your attention to the teaching of Jesus to these He is sending to preach. He told them to take nothing for their journey, no script, nor purse, and not even two coats. This shows how completely He equips them for this work. Also how vain, and futile all the frivolous things of this world are, so far as even helping to prepare them for this work. You will note by reading the preceding verses of this chapter that Jesus both calls, sends, and qualifies His preachers. Also you will note in Matt. 10:7, He tells them not only what to do but also what to say. Read, also, several verses below this last reference. He tells them how to act when coming into a house or city, what to do in case of those who reject the gospel, and what they are sent to preach. so it is all very completely arranged. They do not have to go to some earthly preachers' school as is the foremost thought of those who preach an earthly gospel, or as Paul puts it: another gospel.

Dear reader, let me ask you a question here. How many, so called, preachers do you suppose there would be today if there were no consideration of purse, script, shoes, education, nor a desirable livelihood? I feel they would be few indeed, were it not a fact that with the most of them purse, script, shoes, clothes, and a livelihood is the first consideration with them. The ones Jesus sends are different to this. They will go, and they will preach, and do the things that Jesus has sent them to do. The results of their preaching will fulfill the holy purpose of God. Like the rain and the snow that cometh upon the earth to water it, and to cause it to bud, and bring forth seed to the sower and bread to the eater: ***"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isaiah 55:10, 11.*** So, it is to be like the snow and rain. Do you know of anything we can do or learn of men that will cause rain? Do you know any way the grass and plants of the earth can keep from being watered when the rain falls? Can the grass, plants, or trees keep from

producing fruit, when everything is sent from God, and prospers to that end? I do not, though it often seems that rain does but very little good, that we are able to see. But, be it little or much, God sends it upon both the just and unjust - Matt. 5:45. Which is a figure of the preached word. When it comes it revives, and makes the grass, which is alive, grow and flourish, and bring forth fruit, some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold, as in the parable of the sower. To the grass which is dead it only serves to further its motification, or causes it to rot.

2 Cor. 2:15, 16 - "For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?" So, we are not surprised when we see a child of God rejoicing and flourishing under the dewdrippings of the sanctuary of God's gospel nor, when on the other hand, we see one who is mortified, and who cannot see nor hear anything about it. That is not in any way comforting to them. The dropping of the rain makes manifest that which is alive, and also that which is dead.

Now let us quote St. Luke 9:6 again. *"And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere."* What were they preaching? THE GOSPEL, GOOD NEWS. To everybody? No, it is only good news to the poor, and that because of the blessing of God. He sends the preaching to them not in word only, but also, in power and in much assurance, and the Holy Ghost. That is why it is good news to them. On the other hand, those who have eyes and cannot see, ears and cannot hear, and hearts and cannot understand, it is bad news and a stumblingblock, and foolishness, as is plainly stated in 1 Cor. 1:23. This accounts for the reason that the Gospel does not affect all the same way. So they went everywhere, preaching and healing, to the glory of God.

St. Luke 20:1 - "And it came to pass, that on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priest and the scribes came upon him with the elders." It is very significant to my mind that the reason the chief priests were so concerned about Him, and what He did and what He preached, is that He was preaching the truth, the good news, to the poor and brokenhearted, and to the glory of God, and not to the praise of men, and not the doctrine and commandments of men - Matt. 15:9. So, if He had been teaching anything else all the chief priests and all the high moguls would have been for Him, and would have been ready to receive Him with open arms. The reason they rejected Him and His gospel was as Jesus told them: *"Because I tell you the truth ye believe me not." - St. John 8:45.* As much as to say, If I would tell you something that was not the truth, then you would believe it, because you are equipped to grasp an untruth and would like it. So it is yet, in our day and time. The Lord's gospel truth, as it is

in Christ Jesus, none of the chief priests, or the high and lofty, and worldly preacher do not, and cannot see and believe it. They will do the poor servants of God the same as these did our Saviour. They will oppose and question those grand and glorious things of God, and His gospel. Not because they are not the truth, because they are the truth, but because they are not blessed to see the truth.

Jesus said on one occasion, ***"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."*** - Matt. 11: 25, 26. Not only could they not see, but this Scripture says these things of the gospel, and of the miraculous power of God was hidden from them, and was revealed unto babes. Do you think, dear reader, that they could find something that God has hidden from them? Regardless of the very extensive explanation that could be made on the above text, God was perfect in hiding the things from the wise, the prudent, the chief priest, and I think that He is the same perfect God now as He was then. The chief preachers of this land are in the same shape they were then. God also shows, in this text, He is perfect in revealing these same things to those referred to as babes, which shows they are not capable of themselves to receive these things, that God might be glorified in this work of revealing, as well as in this hiding it from the wise.

Now we come to ***Acts 8:25*** - ***"And they, when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the Gospel in many villages of the Samaritans."*** First I want to show, from this passage, that the two words, namely the Gospel, and Word, are used interchangeably, so wherever Word is used in connection with preaching or otherwise in the inspired writings of the Bible it means, or is equivalent to the Gospel. Christ is the Word, and Christ is the Gospel, or the good news to sinners, who have been made alive by the Spirit of God. To prove that He is the WORD we have only to refer to the inspired record in ***Rev. 19:13. "And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and His name is called the WORD OF GOD."*** Also, you should notice, and consider the language recorded by John, or St. John 1:1 - ***"In the beginning was the WORD and the WORD was with God, and the WORD was GOD."*** So from a Scriptural standpoint, the Word is God, and the WORD is Christ, and the WORD is the Holy Ghost. It is recorded, ***"there are three that bear record in heaven, the FATHER, the WORD, and the HOLY GHOST, and these three are one." - 1 John 5:7.*** Inasmuch as the three are said by inspiration to be one, then when the WORD is preached, GOD is preached, the HOLY GHOST is preached, CHRIST is preached, the GOSPEL is preached.

Now let us ask a few questions along this line. When the true WORD, or CHRIST, or GOSPEL, is preached,

does it do the person any good unless the Holy Ghost accompanies it? My answer is and the Scriptural answer is, NO. Take the language of inspiration, *"Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus asscursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." - 1 Cor. 12:3.* You can see that the entirety of the Holy Trinity is involved, and are inseparably connected.

How could it do a poor lost and ruined sinner any good to preach to him, either the Father, God, or the Holy Ghost, as God out of Christ is a consuming fire - Heb. 12: 29. You may read also in this same chapter where even the greatly blessed servant Moses, when brought to the mountain of God's Holiness, did greatly fear, quake, and tremble. Neither he nor any of the children of Israel dared to touch that mount, without that Spiritual Rock that Moses smote, contrary to God's commandment, out of which WATERS gushed forth and they did eat and drink of this same Spiritual Rock, which Rock was, and is, Christ, 1 Cor. 10:4. There can be no gospel, or good news, to poor sinners, to the brokenhearted (and that is who the gospel is to) without Christ. No man can receive Christ without the Holy Ghost as I have already shown by 1 Cor. 12:3. So there is not any way for mortal men to describe the wonderfulness, mysteriousness, gloriousness, and sublimeness of Christ, the Holy Ghost and the gospel, and what it teaches, and implies in the good news from heaven and immortal glory to a poor condemned sinner before a Just, Merciful, Holy, Righteous, Eternal, Unchangeable, Sovereign, All Powerful, Self Existent God. It is entirely beyond the description of mortal tongue or pen. The more we are given to see, taste and handle of it the more we are made to see our nothingness, our sinfulness and our short comings. The more we see the oceans of His love, mercy, pity, and compassion toward His covenant people, whom He chose in Christ Jesus before the world began as recorded in Ephesians 1:4, and many other places in the Holy Word of Inspiration, the more we see the greatness of God.

Dear reader, may God enable us to feel and taste these heavenly and glorious things, and feed there on, and grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth, as Peter admonishes in 2 Peter 3:18. That we might be blessed to grasp the grand and glorious teachings, and implications, in behalf of God's children. No wonder Paul said, *"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" - Romans 11:33.* It is unsearchable in its fullness even to the children of God, but those from whom it is hid there is not even the very slightest degree of any possibility of them being able to see into these gracious things. 1 John 5:7. The only reason why they have ever been understood by God's dear children, is it seemed good, as Jesus said in this last reference, to reveal these things to His people.

Acts 14:7 - "And there they preached the gospel." Preceding this short verse of Scripture, we find that envy, jealousy and hatred, toward the apostles had waxed very great in Iconium, where they were. They fled to the cities of Lystra, and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia. If they had not been true preachers of the true gospel, they would have quit preaching. The reason they preached it was because they were sent by the Lord to preach His gospel. If you will notice here in the reading of these circumstances in connection with what Jesus said to them when He was sending them to preach, you will find evidence that He had sent them and they were carrying out the instructions of their Master, and so will all the true servants of God.

In Matt. 10:23, we read, ***"but when they persecute you in this city flee ye into another."*** That is exactly what they were doing in the above reference. Jesus had warned the apostles when He sent them out, they would be hated, and persecuted of all men for His name's sake - Matt. 10:22. If a man preaches a gospel today, in these times of great liberty, that is not hated, and despised, and persecuted, then you may know that it is not the gospel that the Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles preached. Let me drop a thought here. Do you know of a people anywhere that are persecuted, and derided, and despised, and rejected as the poor, scattered and despised Primitive Baptists? The doctrine they preach is one of the main ones most of the religious professors instruct everybody to be against. The only way any of them can escape this persecution, and derision is to tone down on the preaching of the true doctrine, and mix in at least some works of the creature - in some measure, at least, conform to this world. I know some who like the name Primitive Baptist who have done that, and they are getting along far better in appearance than those that do not do this. They have more members and larger crowds, but Jesus said, ***"Fear not little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." - St. Luke 12:32.***

Elder R.W. Rhodes

EXPERIENCE
January, 1949

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us." - 1 John 1:3

On this beginning of a new year we are mindful to meditate upon the things which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled out of the word of life. We have a desire to review the Lord's dealings with us, giving diligence to make our calling and election sure. We are writing this epistle to the household of faith beseeching you to note the waymarks along the path we have traveled. If it so be that you recognize the markers along the way as being the path you have traveled, then you have fellowship with us; if they be strange to you, then you can class us as a stranger to the household of faith.

It has been so long since we have written you that we feel some kind of explanation would be appropriate. A few months ago we were employed by a concern that required our services from eleven to seventeen hours a day for six to seven days each week. We were content to pursue this with the vain thought that at an opportune time we could again take up our communion with brethren and meditations upon the Scriptures. We held this position three months and upon its termination tried fervently for one month to renew our relationship with brethren and lay hold on the Spirit of God. It pleased God to cut us off and to make us know that our trials were in vain.

When we had given up all hope and were persuaded that we had been a deceiver and that our lot was with the wicked, the Lord graciously came to our rescue, renewing our interest and relationship with Him and our brethren. Prior to this wonderful renewing of the Spirit we tried many times to pray, meditate, write and sing, but it was so cold and formal that it made us shudder. As in the case of John we had to be shown again that Jesus was the Christ. Do you ever go down into the valley so low that you forget your dependence upon the grace of God and strive in vain to deliver yourself? Are your strivings and seeming zeal ever so formal and cold that you are condemned as a hypocrite?

Now I would like to go back in my meditations, the Lord willing, and briefly state to you some of the highlights along the pathway that I have traveled. I was born September 28, 1906 in Amity, Arkansas. I was brought up under the tutorship of religious parents of high moral character who taught that a home in heaven was gained by good works done by individuals here. I was taught that I was capable of performing these good works upon my own volition. I grew up as a regular attendant in Sunday School and church, and zealously studied the Bible from my earliest recollections. I began to speak in public before I was ten years old and was given the position as Sunday School teacher in my early teens. When I was fifteen I became a member of the Kelly Division of the Missionary Baptist Church, and on the next night gave a prepared lecture on John 3:16. I was often called upon to speak in the absence of ordained ministers, and while yet in my teens was ordained to the full work of ministry in that denomination. I had a bad case of "I-itus" feeling myself to be worthy of imitation and classing myself as being the most influential speaker in that section of the country. I was very zealous in revival meetings trying to show sinners that they were treading the path that leads to hell and urging them to turn, do right and be saved.

During this period of my career I think God taught me my first lesson. An ordained minister from Hot Springs, Arkansas had been selected to conduct a revival in the community where I was teaching school. Night after night he vehemently warned sinners to flee the wrath to come. He had labored hard to move them to action but not

one had come to the "mourner's bench." The night before the meeting was scheduled to close he came to me and told me that he had done all that he could do and had gotten no results, requesting me to take charge the next night and see what I could do. I agreed to do this as I saw that it was an opportunity for me to make a greater reputation.

I carried my Bible and notebook with me to school the next day and on my return stopped beside a brook and outlined a sermon on the theme, ***"Sinners in the hands of an angry God,"*** using as a text, ***"Thou shalt be cut off and that without remedy."***

I was anxious for the meeting to begin that night. I was blessed with oratorical eloquence to such an extent that hell was pictured so awful, and God as being so angry at their unconcernedness that when the altar call was made, many people flocked to the altar. I have never forgotten the anxious expression of fear amidst the tears on the face of the first one who extended her hand toward me at that time. Neither shall I forget the awful tones of the voice of Almighty God when He spake to me just before I took her hand in mine. This voice thundered, "Who are you, that you should invite?" My fears were made more terrible when that same voice convinced me that I was a sinner, a hypocrite and a liar. This was the first time that I had ever realized myself as a sinner. The blackest, vile person that I had thought of before seemed then to be my superior.

While I was in this awful frame of mind people tried to tell me how proud I should be to be able to move the people in such a way. Their intended flowers were as thorns that condemned me more. I slipped out of the house as soon as possible and tried to flee from that terrible condition. I tried to get myself right with God. The things that I had glorified in before were as filthy rags. For months and months I moped about as a condemned sinner finding no comfort or consolation in anything. I finally had given up the idea of making myself right with God when it pleased Him to teach me another lesson.

Circumstances over which I had no control placed me in a community far distant from my home where they had heard of me as being a preacher and had arranged for me to preach one Sunday night there. I was given this information only one hour before the service was to begin. My pleadings would not convince them that I had quit appearing before the public as a preacher. Being caught in such circumstances, I was finally persuaded that I could act the hypocrite at least one more time. I thought I could pick up one of my old themes and lecture to them, but I could not think of anything other than that I was a sinner.

Up to this time I had never heard of anyone posing as a preacher who would be so disgraceful as to confess himself to be a sinner. I went before a big audience unprepared, with a blank mind concerning the Scriptures. My foremost thought was that I was a

sinner. I was so upset that I did not go into the form of prayer, but groaned within myself, "God, have mercy on me." I have never known whether I read any scripture or not, but I was given to feast upon the power, wisdom and holiness of God. God revealed Himself to me that night as having all power in heaven and earth; who spoke and it was done; who commands and it stands fast. I saw Him as being so wise that He could consecrate the acts of men and devils to His own praise and glory. He appeared as being so holy that He had a wonderful and righteous purpose in everything. When I came to realize where I was that night, I closed the services, yet feasting upon the characteristics of God. I continued to enjoy these thoughts enroute home that night in my car alone. When about midway home, my thoughts were reversed from thinking upon God to thinking of myself. I saw a great gulf between God's power and my inability; God's wisdom and my foolishness; God's holiness and my sinfulness. I tried again in vain for months to span this gulf and get myself right with God. When I had given up all hope it pleased God to teach me another lesson.

Several months later I was teaching in this little town where I had this last related experience, when a member of the school board especially requested me to attend with him a Wednesday night service in the home of one J.H. Langston. Elder A.D. Wall, who then lived in Arkansas, was scheduled to preach. Up to this time I had never associated with Primitive Baptists and did not know anything about them. I had heard that there was an ignorant people who lived in remote places who where called "Hardshells" whom I was taught to fear and ignore. I was informed that they justified themselves in the many devilish acts that they performed and charged all their meanness to God. I had heard that Uncle Henry Langston was a "Hardshell" and I quickly informed this man that I did not care to attend the service with him, giving him my reason. He immediately told me that he was surprised at my attitude and further added, "If I have ever heard a Primitive Baptist sermon you preached it here in this town." I told him that I would go with him for curiosity's sake as I had always wondered what I said that night, and that I had yearned for such experience again.

I went and Elder Wall was blessed to take up every question that had bothered my mind and answered it with the Bible to my entire satisfaction. Before he was through speaking that night I was blessed to view a character that I had never seen before. I saw Jesus who was very God and very man span the gulf that was between me and my God. I saw that dual character loom up before me with one foot upon the earth, and the other upon the throne of God in heaven. I saw Him stoop lower than the angels, yes lower than men. I saw Him as He reached down into the miry slime of the slough of sin, and even reach low enough to reach vile me. I saw Him as He picked me up and

washed me whiter than snow with His blood, and presented me without blemish, spot or wrinkle carrying me across the gulf and presenting me in the holiest of holies in the presence of Almighty God as a fit subject for that eternal city.

Such mercy and amazing grace I had never been able to behold before. I was made to cry out praises to His adorable name. I thought I had confessed Jesus as my Savior but found I had known nothing about Him before. I found myself speaking in a strange language that all my former associates knew nothing about and they concluded I was crazy. I began attending Primitive Baptist churches and to my surprise found that the ministers were telling my experience and thoughts far better than I could express them.

In the year 1930 all my earthly possessions were taken from me; my first wife died; my body was afflicted and my parents turned a cold shoulder to me feeling that I had disgraced their good name. In the midst of all this, and my feeling of unworthiness, I became a member of the church that same year and was liberated to speak in the name of Christ. I was ordained in the year 1934 and married a Primitive Baptist girl whom the Lord has blessed to be a sweet companion to me. She understands my infirmities, and overlooks my many faults and patiently shares with me the heartaches and tribulations attached to the career of a minister of the gospel. I have traveled among this people in the different sections of the country and find such unity in belief that I am persuaded that all are taught by the same Teacher. I am determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. He is our salvation both for time and eternity.

God has taught me in His wonderful dealings with me the doctrine of salvation solely upon the merits of Jesus Christ to such extent that any other doctrine is strange to my ears. I believe Jesus accomplished the law to a jot and a tittle, and His accomplishments were accredited to the account of the people who were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. His blood covered all the sins that God's people have ever committed, are committing now or ever shall commit. This is not proclaimed because of any theory advanced by anyone, but because of the things that I have experienced.

Elder E.J. Lambert

MEETINGS

SOUTH OUACHITA UNION

The South Ouachita Union Meeting will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, April 17 & 18, 1993.

The meeting will be held at Union Church, located about five miles Southeast of Marion, La. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
(318) 778-4217

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 1992

Mrs. Charles Lovell, Va.	2.00
Eld. J.T. Austin, PA	7.00
Mrs. Lawrence Holloway, MD	2.00
Mrs. Elizabeth Helms, VA	2.00
Charles P. Hayes, AL	5.00
Mrs. Rosalie J. Biano, TX	2.00
John W. Townsend, CA	2.00
Mrs. Mila L. Vantrease, IL	10.00
Eld. W.P. O'Neal, WV	7.00
Eld. Graydon Smith, LA	2.00
Mrs. Meta Mills, AR	7.00
Mrs. Robert Myers, VA	2.00
Charles Alders, TX	12.00
Eld. Gerald Shipman, TX	2.00
Mrs. Isabel A. Dickinson, MI	2.00
Mrs. Elizabeth Adkins, VA	3.00
Ms. Anne M. Pearson, MI	50.00
Mrs. Pauline Hutchisson, NC	4.00
Mrs. Myrtle Thompson, VA	7.00
M.T. Dalton, VA	7.00

OBITUARIES

MRS. OKLEY MARY BREEDLOVE

We bow in humble submission to the will of a merciful and kind Heavenly Father, who in his mercy has seen fit to call from our midst our dear sister and mother in Israel. Mrs. Okley Mary Breedlove. Although this brings sadness to our hearts for we shall see her no more in this life. But let us rejoice and believe that God has removed her from a world of sin and sorrow and she fell asleep in Jesus, to wait for that call to be changed unto the likeness of Christ's Glorious body and to be ever with him in Glory. Believing that when Christ shall return to call (Awake O Sleeping dust) those that are his shall be changed in a moment and twinkle of an eye and the spirits of them he shall bring with him. Sister Breedlove became a member of Fairview Primitive Baptist Church in Jan. 1975 along with her husband Elder Ernest Breedlove who preceded her in death. She was born Nov. 11, 1903 and died Nov. 28, 1992 at the age of 89. Sister Breedlove was a believer of salvation by the Grace and the truth as it is in Jesus. At her passing she leaves to mourn two daughters, and five sons, 17 grandchildren, 20 great grandchildren, two sisters, and a host of friends. And we pray that God in his wisdom and mercy will comfort them in their time of need.

Services conducted at the funeral home by Elder Harold Johnson and she was laid to rest at Valley View Memorial Park, Hurricane, W.Va.

Written by request of Fairview Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder Ronald K. Crouch - Moderator
Elder Harold R. Johnson - Asst. Moderator
Brother William A. Johnson - Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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NEVER ALONE.
By Eben E. Rexford

"How many times discouraged
We sink beside the way;
About us all in darkness,
We hardly dare to pray;
Then through the mists and shadows,
The sweetest voice e'er known,
Says, Child, am I not with thee,
Never to leave thee alone?

O soul, hast thou forgotten
The tender word and sweet,
Of him who left behind him
The print of bleeding feet?
I never will forsake thee,
O child, so weary grown;
Remember I have promised
Never to leave thee alone.

Take courage, way-worn pilgrim,
Though mists and shadows hide
The face of him thou lovest,
He's ever at thy side:
Reach out thy hands unto him,
And lo, the clouds have flown;
He smiles on thee who promised
Never to leave thee alone."

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EDITORIAL

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

As our editorial for this month we are republishing the following.

Written in 1966.

GOD'S LOVE BESTOWED UPON US

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure." (John 3:1-3).

This is the season of the year when everyone is talking of brotherly love, and peace on earth and good will to all men. The world says that God's love is to all men everywhere; and that the only thing that is required of them, is that they accept it. This is not the love of God that is set forth in the above scripture; and is not the kind of love that says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."

I believe that one of the things that all of God's children have in common, is a heartfelt love for such scriptures as the one above, because their experiences teach them these truths. They may have many and varied experiences as they travel in this life: the Lord leads them in the way that pleases him, in making himself known to them as their Saviour and King.

They may have been brought thru heavy trials, sorrows and heartaches; or He may have revealed himself to them in a sudden mysterious revelation of his love, mercy and grace, in a way they themselves can't explain. There is one thing sure, however, it will be in a way and manner that will cause them to realize that it was performed by the sovereign work of God; and not the result of any works performed by the creature. They will begin immediately to search the Scriptures; and they love to hear of the

grace and mercy of an all wise, all powerful, omnipotent God, who works his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

They are made to acknowledge God in all their ways, and will no longer claim to be directing their own steps; or performing the works of God. They realize that they never would have chosen Christ as their Lord and Saviour since they did not even know that he existed until he made himself known to them. They now feel to know what the writers are speaking of in the scriptures, because the scriptures agree with their own experiences.

This love is bestowed upon God's children sovereignly, and independent of any conditions met by them; in the same manner as the rain and snow falls upon all the earth according to God's own pleasure. They realize that something wonderful has been done for them, and they sing, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound." Or they read, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us;" and rejoice with joy unspeakable, because they now have a hope that they are included with this people. This also causes them to understand the scripture, "Except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." They feel to be, indeed, a new creature since this change occurred.

Their walk, their talk, and their whole life has been transformed within them. It is not visible to the world at large, but it is readily visible to those who have been along the same path. The individual may think that he is doing a pretty good job of hiding it, but this is the lamp that is not set under a bushel. It is seen by those who have been given an eye to see. The individual feels to be one alone at this time, for he desires to be accepted among the beloved; and yet he feels too unworthy to be counted among the children of God. These feel to be getting worse, instead of better. Their sincerest desire is to be kept from doing anything that would bring harm to the church, or to this precious truth, which is now their whole life. Oh, if they could only know the love and longing, reaching out to them from those who have seen the evidence manifested in their careful, fearful walk.

Their desire to be with the brethren, and hear them talk of these things, and sing the beautiful songs of praise; and to hear the gospel of God our Saviour proclaimed to their comfort and understanding. They love to hear of the power, predestination, foreordination, and purpose of God in saving his people from their sins, according to the good pleasure of His own will. How wonderful it is to believe a doctrine such as this, and then to have a hope that you see things in your travels that indicate God has so looked upon you!

As they continue to travel in this low ground of sin and sorrow, reading the experiences of others, hearing the gospel preached, reading the Scriptures, and, finally, after all attempts to be better (in their mind) as a child of God, they are made to acknowledge that it is not in man that walks, to direct his steps; and to acknowledge

that it is only through the loving mercy of God that any will reach that heavenly home. All through this uneven journey they never lose sight of that hope that was set before them, when they were turned from their former ways. Though they will continue to have trials as long as they live in this world, in them all they will never lose that hope. "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither our forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." There is no foundation to which their hope could be anchored, to be more secure. It is as sure as God is God, and that Jesus Christ the Son was sent into the world to redeem that which was lost. This is the hope that purifieth the man in whom it dwells. (1 John 3:3)

This love that is bestowed upon the children of God, causes them to love one another with the same love wherewith they themselves are loved. It causes them to have all things in common, and each to prefer his brother above himself. It causes them to desire to be found at their brethren's feet in humble submission to that bond of love that unites their hearts and minds in prayer to God, for the manifold blessings which they have received from His bountiful hand, and his loving kindness towards them.

Yes, what wondrous love is this, O, my soul! May it ever fill the hearts of God's children while they travel this wilderness of sin. This love is what lifts them up above the things of this life, and makes them sit together in heavenly places in Christ, and feast on the tender riches of God's grace. As it is written, "And now abideth faith, hope, and charity; but the greatest of these is charity (love)." The greatest gift is love. This is a beautiful gift, for nothing except good comes from any actions prompted by this love dwelling in the hearts of His children.

God is the giver of every good and perfect gift. The scriptures teach that "God is love," and, "We love him because he first loved us." Therefore, God in the riches of his mercy and grace, has given a little of himself to everyone of his children; and this is sufficient for time and eternity, assuring all the heirs of promise an everlasting abode with him. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God."

"When love in one delightful stream
Through every bosom flows,
And union sweet and dear esteem
In every action glows.

Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above:
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

Herein lies their hope and prayer that this is the love that passeth all natural understanding, and that this is the seal wherewith their hope with Christ in God, is sealed.

May God bless the truth and seal it to his children to their joy and salvation for time and eternity.

Richard H. Campbell,
Memphis, Tenn.

CORRESPONDENCE

January 11, 1993

Dear Elder and Sister Williams,

How time seems to fly and especially as the years go by. But are we not surely thankful that God is in control, and it matters not that these finite minds are slowing down. And as we are blessed to meditate upon His precious word, there are times when we are surely given to "rejoice in hope of the glory of God," if we're not deceived. I surely believe that as Paul wrote in the 4th & 5th Chapters of Romans of the faith of Abraham, he was also talking to all of the household of faith in verses 23 & 24 of chap. 4, as he says, Now it was not written for his sake alone, that is was imputed to him, But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification," and then in the 1st 5 verses of Chap. 5, can we not take comfort! Surely that sweet hope is what sustains us as we sojourn here - can we wish for more? Indeed not, for we do believe, in God's grace and mercy we've given to feel that "He is our strength and our refuge, a very present help in trouble, unworthy as we know ourselves to be.

Dear Ones, I do hope all is well with you and your sweet family. And may God bless you with strength and guidance throughout this new year. We look forward to a visit from you sometime this year.

With much love, in Christ I hope,
Cloma McLaughlin
Eustace, TX.

Brother Williams,

Having been led of God in the last year to give myself to diligent study of his word and particular of his sovereignty, the subject being much on my mind, while I was at work tonight I began and finished the following article. Thoughts came to my mind and I wrote them down on scratch paper to be rewritten later. I am submitting this to you and if you deem it fit and worthy to help any of God's people that are traveling this road below, please print it in the Signs of the Times. If deemed unworthy please discard it and I will be none the less well off.

This I believe the doctrine of God's absolute sovereign, predestinating, foreknowledge, that is not contingent upon man's believing but necessitates that the sheep shall believe. Whereby God elected, predestinated, chose, called and effected their new birth totally by his grace apart from any thing that the dead sinner could do. He effected this by the same power with which he raised Christ from the dead. Eph. 1:19-20.

The sheep's names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life before the foundation of the world. Not one name

shall be added nor one name deleted. Also the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. The deceived and the deceiver belong unto the Lord.

The doctrine of God's absolute government of all worlds, ages, times, things and men is the only doctrine that gives God absolute glory and shows the absolute depravity and inability of man to affect his salvation whatsoever. This leaves the unbeliever and nominal believer to cry, why doth He yet find fault. It leaves the believer prostate before his Savior giving all praise, honour, and glory to God the Father and saying though you should cast me into the regions of the damned yet will I praise thee but O Lord be gracious and have mercy on this poor wretched sinner.

Where does all this leave me, it leaves me saying, I believe, Lord, help thou mine unbelief and what if some shall charge me with folly in this statement. I shall reply with the same question asked by the Apostle Paul. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect. What if some shall become irate and angry, to which I reply the wrath of man shall praise the Lord and the remainder of wrath He shall restrain.

This doctrine in no way impugns the righteousness, holiness and love of God. For all men stand justly condemned, their nature and sinful condition demand judgement. For truly Light is come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light. Yes he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy.

Thank God for shining such light of hope into this heart of mine II Cor. 4:6 May He spare me from the pious religionist that deny the Power of God that purchased them when they say He cannot save because man will not let him.

Not one shall attain heaven that is not purposed to be there. Nor shall one be in hell that does not deserve that just punishment of perdition.

To The Praise of His Glory Jesus, there is no other name under heaven whereby we must be saved. Faith is believing that God is and that he shall do what he has said he will do. Surely the just shall live by faith. Jesus said ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free. If the Son shall set you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Your in the hope of that high calling,
Larry W. Gibson

ARTICLES

Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun. (Eccl. 7:11)

he wise man of the world, is guided by his conscience to live morally right, and to walk uprightly before his fellow man. The spiritually wise, who are called foolish by the world, are guided by the Holy Spirit to walk uprightly before God. This spiritual walk of those guided by spiritual wisdom, is what

we hope to discuss, God being our strength.

The children of Grace once walked as the foolish. Their eyes were blinded and they sought their joys in the decaying things of the world around them. They were very busy choosing whom they would serve among the little gods of the earth. They were wise in their own eyes, following the way that seemeth right to a man, and crooked paths of self-righteousness. The blind led the blind and walked after the counsel of the ungodly. Those who walk after the flesh, mind the things of the flesh and not of the Spirit. This is not a good inheritance, for the simple inherit folly, therefore they cannot inherit the kingdom of God, because they are flesh and blood. The things of the kingdom of God are spiritually discerned. Though they count themselves wise, in the light of spiritual wisdom and truth they are foolish and simple minded.

The question is, how can the blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, to find the good wisdom with an inheritance? "Where shall wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding?" "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil that is understanding."

Dear reader, do you ever try to remember when the fear of the Lord entered your heart? When the scary tales of the devil and his cohorts took flight, as the evil spirits entered the swine and were choked in the sea? Do you yearn and long and try to pray, with me, that you actually experience Godly fear, and that you are one of the foolish things of this world, that He chose to confound the wise? Did you turn from your former life of folly and begin to fear God of your own free will? Did you lift your feet from the miry clay and place them upon the rock, the sure foundation? I think not. You were told in your heart to "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord."

Though we see through a glass darkly, and walk by faith and not by sight, if we are what we hope to be, the foolish things of this world have passed away, for us, and the inheritance that comes with spiritual wisdom is our meat and drink. Christ's sermon on the mount gives in detail the good inheritance; and those who will receive it.

Let us reread the text, "Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun." By it, there is profit. If we are wise in the fear of the Lord, and receive an inheritance (an unearned legacy) that profits us, the profit is as much a gift as the inheritance. Christ with whom we are heirs and joint heirs we hope, died to satisfy the law in our place, and gave us redemption from the law and salvation to life eternal. He took away our stony heart and gave us a heart of flesh. With this gift, he gave light, truth, and wisdom to understand there is no other way to enter the climes of immortal glory except by himself. He is the only door.

The new heart of flesh is wise to the source of its profit. It knows the roads it followed in folly. It knows the miry clay, the desert land, and howling wilderness from which it was rescued.

This heart that now is lowly, meek, humble, poor, and wise to its own short comings, looks to the Giver of its inheritance, for wisdom, strength and comfort. It dwells in the wisdom that, "Man's goings are of the Lord, how can a man then understand his own way."

How do those who are wise in the fear of the Lord profit by this inheritance? They are filled with the needs of the inner man as dictated by the Spirit. He knows and supplies our every need, but not the whims and fancies of the flesh. We are held down and made humble, lest we become puffed up, but then He promised Paul "my grace is sufficient for thee." No matter what the problem, or thorn in the flesh, the child of God is hemmed in, and hedged about, by his promises, which are yea and amen.

They that mourn shall be comforted, the meek shall inherit the earth, the pure in heart shall see God, the merciful shall obtain mercy, and they shall sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. "With the lowly there is wisdom," says David, "and the wise shall inherit glory."

Every good and every perfect gift is from above. The wise man knows himself to be lost and without hope, unless a power outside himself intervenes. All of his efforts have been fruitless, and judgment seems his doom. When Christ enters his heart and makes a new man within him, then can the little child of God say, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Even though, to himself, he feels sinful, unworthy and unfruitful, his brethren can see his new way, and his good and perfect gifts, shining through the old man. Faith, hope and charity are gifts that wisdom bids him use wisely and are profits from his inheritance. How wonderful to watch a Christian on the new road, as he is guided by wisdom. He walks it by faith, also a part of the inherited gift. Even though it is strait and narrow and hard, and though he falter and fall along the way, he is never lost nor utterly cast down. Why? Because his way is in the light and he is one of them that sees the sun. His feet are planted and kept in the way of life by the wisdom of that sun shining in his heart; by the love and mercy of that one that neither sleeps nor slumbers. To a way worn sinner, who knows his own wickedness and vanity; who has been taught his own foolishness, and has been made to know it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, then to him, "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun."

As all scripture is written for a profit to the man of God, to the children of God instead of the whole world, so is the wording of this text written to a certain people: "To them that see the sun?" Broken into segments it means: wisdom is good to them that see the sun, or an inheritance to them that see the sun, or profit to them that see the sun. So in reality, we have wisdom, which is the fear of God; inheritance, which is the promise of God; and profit, which is the comforting faith and hope in the fulfillment of those

promises, all pertaining to this certain people that see the sun.

I believe "Them that see the sun," are his people, chosen in Christ Jesus from the foundation of the world, and that the sun in this instance is God. "For the Lord God is a sun and a shield." (Psalm 84:11) He chose them as heirs of promise and set their hope and faith before them, as the path they must walk, on which they will continue until they come into full possession of the profit of their inheritance, within the veil.

These are thoughts, poorly presented, on a deep and wonderful subject. I hope that I have not been allowed to do violence to its meaning, and would love to hear some gifted, inspired brother proclaim its deeper meaning.

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Spearsville, La.

PSALM 119: 129-136.

Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them.

The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments.

Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.

Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.

Deliver me from the oppression of man: so will I keep thy precepts.

Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; and teach me thy statutes.

Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.

VOICES OF THE PAST

EXPERIENCE
Signs of the Times, January, 1938

Elder W.D. Griffin

Dear Brother in Bonds:

E.J. LAMBERT

I received your very comforting letter about a month ago, and was certainly elated over the contents, but wonder why anyone would stoop so low as to even notice such a wretched character as I am.

Brother Griffin, I feel to hope that we have a few things in common. You age exceeds mine only about four years. In relating your experience you gave the "waymarks" so plainly that I believe we were brought over the same road. We are both members of the same faith and order. We have both been placed under the same yoke of the ministry. Having so many things in common, I am impressed to relate to you by pen some things of my experience along life's way if it be God's will. I have never attempted to write it before, but have been blessed to tell it in public a few times. It seems so different from the experience of most people that I very often doubt it being an experience of grace.

I was reared by very religious parents, my father being an ordained minister of the "Church of Christ"

(Kelly division of Missionary Baptists). Very few Sundays did I miss Sunday School and church services. I was reared in an Arminian atmosphere. I do not remember ever hearing the term "Primitive Baptist," or ever meeting a "Hard Shell," until I was grown. I was taught that there were a very few ignorant, devilish people, who lived in the backwoods, who were called "Hard Shell," whom I was to shun as a wild beast. Of course, I did not want to even meet one. At a very early age I, too, joined the organization of my parents. Being termed as one of the best "kid speakers" in our community, I was solicited to take part in the testimony meetings. When I was sixteen years of age, I obtained a teacher's license, and began to teach both literary and Sunday School. This, of course, helped me "practice up" on public speaking. Being first in the school-room, first in the Sunday School class, and first in the other community socials, gave me a good case of "Big I," and the foremost symptom of self-righteousness. Then I was solicited to preach, and having such a good opinion of myself, and seeing so many of my fellowmen falling so far short of me, I also thought it prudent that I should be clothed with the authority to tell them of their wicked ways, and admonish them to "get right." Therefore, I was ordained, and zealously pursued my task, and went along smoothly for a while.

Now dear brother, the saddest, most heart-rending and serious part of my experience I am about to tell. The thoughts of it even now makes me shudder. One certain night, during a protracted meeting in our community, I was called by the "big preacher" from the city, to take full charge of the service. He called me the night before, and spoke thus: "Brother Lambert, I have been preaching here every night for almost a week with no results. No mourners have come forward. Tomorrow night I want you to make the altar call after you have preached." Of course I was elated over the opportunity to try my luck. The next day I studied the proposition seriously. I decided on the theme, "Sinners in the hands of an angry God," using "Thou shall be cut off, and that without remedy," as a text. That particular night I must have been blessed with rhetorical eloquence, for when I made the altar call, old men, old women, boys and girls began at once to flock to the altar. Dear brother, I suppose you think I should have been somewhat overjoyed. Naturally I would have been, but alas! there seemed to be an audible voice which spoke, "Who are you, that you should invite?" This would not have been so bad if the answer had not come immediately by the same voice, "You are a sinner vile and needy." I wanted to run out the door and hide from every one. As soon as I could, I went away from there. Oh how miserable I was! On that night I saw myself a sinner for the first time, and I went about to right myself. The more I tried to do the deeper in sin I sank. I tried until I could try no more, and gave it up as a hopeless task. Of course I gave up trying to preach, but

I was still in possession of my credentials.

Some little time after that, I drove into a little town quite some distance from home, about sundown. Some of the people there knew I was coming, but did not know I had given up trying to preach, and had given out an appointment for me that night. As I drove in town the church bell began to ring, and I asked the one that I was stopping with what it meant, and he informed me that I was to preach that night. I told him I could not do it, but he informed me that it was too late to back out then. I saw the trap I was in. I was in a strange community, so decided to act the hypocrite and get up one of my old themes and texts and raise a reputation for myself in that community. But alas! I could not think of a thing. I tried to think of some Scripture and to take some of my Sunday School knowledge, but that had all sunk into oblivion. I know I tried to think soberly on the Scriptures, but I could not. I could think of nothing except how sinful I was, and I knew it would not do to tell them that, for instead of giving me a reputation I would lose it. A great audience was in front of me when I went behind the pulpit, and I was as blank of thoughts of the Bible as any one could be. If I ever prayed I did then. I groaned, "Lord, have mercy on me a sinner." I became unconscious of action or thought, and when I became conscious I was exhausted and was standing there feasting upon the power, holiness and wisdom of God. I left that place thrilled to the highest, still feasting upon several of the attributes of God. I was driving home in my car that night myself, still feasting, when the train of thought was turned. I saw myself the blackest of black sinners, and then glimpsed God as the holiest of holies. I saw myself as most foolish and God as all-wise. I saw myself unable to perform anything, and God as having all power. What a great gulf there was to be spanned between my condition and the requirements of the law.

I went along groping in this predicament for quite some time. Finally the sweetest of my experience came. I was teaching school in the community where I had witnessed that glimpse of God, when one day a neighbor came to the place where my wife and I resided. He suggested that we go to a home that night to preaching. He said Elder A.D. Wall, of Amity, Arkansas, would preach. I asked if they were "Hard Shells," and told him if they were I did not care to hear them, because they believed that a man was justified in killing another because God predestinated it. He answered thus: "I just supposed you would be interested, for if I ever heard a Primitive Baptist sermon you preached it here last year." I answered, for curiosity's sake, "I will go." I have never been able to recall anything that I said that night, as I seemed to be in a subconscious state, and have often wondered what I did say. Therefore, I consented to go for the first time, to hear a "Hard Shell" preach, and I was glad I did go.

I accused Elder Wall of being a mind reader that night. He was blessed to

take up each question that came to my mind and to thresh it out to my satisfaction. That night I was blessed to see another attribute of God: that of mercy. I saw the character who was able to span the gulf between my sinfulness and God's holiness; my inability and God's power, my foolishness and God's wisdom, I saw Jesus, who was verily God and man, with one foot on God's side of the gulf and the other on puny man's side. I saw Him, as it were, pick up sinful men, whom God had chosen, and cleanse them with His blood and place them safely on the other side, without spot or blemish, to bask in the sunlight of God's eternal love and power forever on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance. Jesus died in my low room and stead, tread the winepress alone. In my stead (as I hope) He kept the law to a jot and tittle. The keeping of this law by Jesus was accredited to my account, my sins were laid on His shoulders and He bore the penalty. His life's blood was shed while hanging on the cross of Calvary for the remission of my sins, as I hope.

This experience was so consoling to me that I thought my troubles were over. But my lot seems to be akin to Job's. The last of my experience told was at the dawn of the year 1930. I will tell briefly some of the things that took place with me that year. Three cars were wrecked for me, a son was born to us and in about a month my wife died with pneumonia. I lost my position and health. I had to give up teaching because I was not able to meet the requirements for license. Of course, with all this, and doctor bills, funeral expenses and other things, I suffered a nervous breakdown. In that year I was received in Cedar Hill Church. In September I was visiting the South Ouachita Association, among strangers in the flesh. I was so nervous and burdened down with something that I could not face any one. One night, at the home of Elder J.R. Evers, a sister (who was a total stranger to me) requested I be called in, and God blessed me with the light and liberty of unloading that burden. In the course of time I was licensed to preach. Then, against my protests of not being qualified, called for my ordination, which was carried out while South Arkansas Association was in session, in September, 1934. I met and married my second wife in that year, and God blessed me with the privilege of baptizing her last year.

Brother Griffin, I have tried to give you some marks of the road I was forced to travel. I am glad that God blessed you to come to Arkansas, and hope that we may meet again. If you receive any comfort from this give God all the praise. Pray for me at the throne of grace.

Hoping in Christ for my soul sufficiency, I am your brother,
E.J. Lambert

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1 CORINTHIANS 15:10.

But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

"Man's goings are of the Lord; how can a man then understand his own way?"-Proverbs xx. 24.

Does not your heart sometimes quake with fear lest you have nothing but a nominal profession, lest the god of this world be blinding you, and lest your conscience be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin? It is good to have such fears. He who feareth not, who has no solemn apprehensions, no anxious inquiries, who is never exercised with some internal trepidation of soul, it is much to be feared has never known what it is to have "the candle of the Lord searching the inward parts of the belly." But if God has quickened your soul into spiritual life, and you have ears to hear, I would just put two questions to you: Have you obtained righteousness by a manifestation of Christ's righteousness; pardon by the application of Christ's blood; love by a shedding abroad of love; deliverance by a discovery of God's outstretched hand? My other question is this - If you have not, and let conscience bear its honest testimony - if you have never experienced righteousness, pardon, love, and deliverance, is there a cry in your soul after them? Is there anything like fervent supplication that God would bestow them? Is there anything of a groan in the depth of your spirit that the Lord would reveal them? These are marks of life; and he that has these marks will have the blessing, because God has quickened him into spiritual life. It may be long delayed, but it will come at last; "it will surely come, it will not tarry." It may be withheld for wise purposes, and you may have to travel through many a dark season and many an anxious hour, but deliverance is sure; it is reserved for you in Christ, and you are reserved for it, kept by God himself unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

J.C. Philpot

DEUTERONOMY, 11: 18 - 21.

Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.

And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates:

That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the Lord sware unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth.

THE FEARS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Weak believers are sometimes apt to be afraid that they are not in the number of God's elect. They can indeed say with David, "Blessed is the man whom Thou choosest, and causest to approach unto Thee": but they are not clearly satisfied that this blessedness is theirs.

For my own part, I look upon it as one of the best symptoms of a regenerate state, when a person is ardently desirous to know his election of God. It is an inquiry which the generality of mankind never trouble themselves about, and which none but a true believer is concerned for in earnest. We read of some, in the Acts of the Apostles, who had never heard of such a Person as the Holy Ghost; and, I fear there are too many who have hardly ever heard whether there be such a thing as eternal gratuitous, personal and immutable election. Of those who have, too many set themselves to oppose it, and labour (though blessed be God, they labour in vain) to stop up the very fountain of salvation, and to cut down that tree of life, whose leaves and fruits are for the healing of the nations. A fierce free-will sister in Cornwall was lately heard to say that she dreaded to open the Bible, for fear of meeting with predestination and election. And it has been affirmed of a very noted Arminian clergyman that he should, one day, address his audience as follows: Brethren, many people talk about an electing God. I, on the contrary, assert, that there is no such Being. If there is an electing God, why does He not strike me dead before you all? But you see, my brethren, I am not struck dead. Therefore, there is no electing God.

Very different are the ideas of Christ's humbled, awakened servants. When a ray of God's everlasting love shines in upon their hearts, they cry out, with the royal and devout predestinarian of ancient Israel, "How dear are Thy counsels, "i.e. Thy purposes and decrees," to me, O, God! O, how great is the sum," i.e. how inestimable is the value "of them! If I should declare them, or speak of them, they are more than I am able to express." The Lord has some, yea, many names, even in our Sardis, who not only profess to believe the Scriptures of truth, but also make good their profession by believing and by practically adorning the truths of the Scriptures. Such enlightened persons will ever be desirous, not barely to admit those truths in a mere doctrinal way alone, but to experience the efficacy of them, and to be feelingly interested in the blessings themselves.

Granting, however, that thousands of converted people have not attained to those heights of exalted consolation as to be able to say, with an unfaltering tongue, "Thou hast chosen me, and not cast me away"; yet is there some secret comfort even in waiting upon God for the joy of His salvation, in seeking the light of His countenance, and in crediting the

truths and promises of the gospel at large. To those who are by grace led thus far, I would beg leave to propose the following questions, without presuming to wade more deeply into the sacred profound of those decrees which lie hid in God than His written Word permits. By way, then, of combating your fears, let me ask:

Art thou desirous of choosing God in Christ to be thy Father, thy portion and thy covenant God, here and ever? If you are, it is one happy proof that God has chosen thee to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. You could not choose Him, if He had not first chosen you.

Is love to God, in any measure, kindled in thy Heart? Or, if you are in any doubt as to this, do you wish to love Him? Would you be glad to receive Him, to embrace Him and to hold Him fast, as your chief and only good? Take courage. Wishing is a degree of love. No man ever wished for the thing which he altogether hated. A wisher for Christ is a lover of Christ. And you could not love Him if He had not first loved you. Wishing is a fruit of the Father's drawings.

Is the law of God written on thy mind? That is, can you say with the apostle that "to will is present with you," and that you "delight in the law of God, after the inner man"? Would it make you easy and happy, and would you have the supreme desire of your heart, were you to be holy as God is holy, and pure as Christ is pure? Then you may add, as the apostle does, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ." The Lord would not thus have written His law (however imperfectly at present) upon thy heart, if the pen of His own free grace had not first written thy name in the book of life.

This is a blessed consideration, and as sure as it is blessed. Yet, stop not here; but pray for the witness of the Holy Spirit, to bear unclouded testimony to thy spirit that thou art a child of God. Say, as the psalmist did, "Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that Thou bearest to Thy own people! O visit me with Thy salvation, that I may see the good of Thy chosen, that I may rejoice with the gladness of Thy nation, that I may glory with

Thine inheritance." Wait the appointed time, and God will set that promise, as a seal, upon thy heart: "Fear not, for I have redeemed thee: I have called thee by thy name thou art Mine."

Saints are subject to another fear: viz, that they are not truly converted, and that their spot is not the spot of God's children. Nor do I wonder that, when grace is not in lively exercise, they are liable to apprehensions of this kind, when I consider man's absolute unworthiness, even in his best estate, and that astonishing mixture of good and evil which is more or less visible in saints below.

Though I am by no means an advocate for doubting, I am yet of opinion that, though the alchemy of divine, even doubts and fears, though not desirable in themselves, are ultimately subservient to the advantage of God's chosen: just as in the material world,

not a thorn is without its use, and every bramble has its value.

Spiritual distresses and misgivings have a tendency, through grace, to keep us sensible of our sinfulness and helplessness (as Paul's temptations clip the wings of his pride, and restrained him from being exalted above measure). They conduce to make us watchful and circumspect; to make us feel the pulse of our souls, by frequent and severe self-examination; to kindle longing aspirations after God and communion with Him; to lay us low at the footstool of Jehovah's sovereignty; to endear Christ's blood, righteousness and intercession; and put us upon looking up to the Holy Spirit in prayer for the support of His presence, and for the unction of His comforts, which alone are able to enlighten and to chase away the darkness of our minds.

There is likewise another particular which ought to encourage the mourners in Zion: namely, that it is impossible for any, who have not been spiritually quickened from above, to pant for God as a thirsty land; to grieve, evangelically, for a heart-felt sense of sin; and to be pained, after a godly sort. A good man, of the last century, somewhere observes that "he who cries out, I am dead, proves himself by that very cry to be alive." Can a dead person feel? Can a dead man complain? A believer may lament his deadness; but he cannot lament his death, without his lips refuting themselves. There must be spiritual life, or there could be no spiritual sensibility, no spiritual motion, no spiritual breathings. The pregnant woman that longs must be alive. If the Lord had not drawn you, you would not follow hard after Him. Nor could you say, "The desire of my soul is to Thy name, and to the remembrance of Thee," unless God's Spirit had awakened that desire in your heart. If you were not truly converted, you would not be so anxious about the truth of your conversion. It is not the untamed bird of prey that pours the plaintive strain. No, it is the dove that mourns; it is the nightingale that sings with her breast against a thorn.

However, though a weeping state is a safe one and not without its advantages, yet there is a still more excellent way. The diffident should be encouraged; but diffidence itself should not. Covet earnestly the best gifts. Aspire to the choicest attainments. Pray for unclouded manifestations. Cultivate spiritual fellowship with God, in all the means of grace, both private and public. Endeavor to drink deep into holiness, and to be fruitful in every good word and work. Conversation with experienced Christians operates frequently as a step to gracious improvements. God's people are sometimes blessed to the rubbing off the rust of unbelief, and to the mutual elision (emission) of light and heat from each other. Lay hold on Christ, as well as you can, for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, committing yourself, for better for worse, to His grace which worketh all in all. Thus it would be evident that you are indeed planted in the Lord's house, and belong to that

invisible church which He planted in the Lord's house, and belong to that invisible church which He purchased with His own blood. Nay, you will gradually flourish in the courts of God, grow as the lily, and cast forth the root as Lebanon. Your conversion will be made clear to you. You will see your tokens. You will no longer have reason to doubt whether the good work of grace is begun in you; but your path, like a burning light, will shine more and more (in general) to the perfect day.

Believers are sometimes prone to fear that they have no real covenant interest in Christ, or that they are not in a state of pardon and justification, "O", says the doubting Christian, "if I could but know that I have redemption through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of my sins, that Christ undertook for me in the eternal covenant of grace, and that He is the Lord my righteousness, I should be happy indeed; but, alas! such knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for me; I cannot attain unto it." Be it so that you cannot attain to it; God is not the less able to give it. He can, as the apostle expressed it, not only grant you, but even fill you with "the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him."

Therefore, if you want assurance of salvation, ask it at the throne. But ask it with submission, and with a reserve to the will of God. Do not let your desires terminate in anything short of God Himself, nor so hang upon comforts as to overlook the Comforter. Assurance are the brightest bridal jewels of a soul that is married to Christ; but the Bridegroom Himself is better than the jewels He gives, nor does He in general allow His bride to shine in them every day. He keeps them under His own key, and lets her wear them when He pleases. At worst, remember that He is your Husband still, and the God who changes not. Venture yourself, therefore, on board His blood and righteousness, as a mariner trusts himself to the vessel in which he embarks. Do this, and you shall be carried safe to the haven where you would be. You may be shaken on your passage, but not forsaken; tossed, but not lost. The mediation of Christ, the faithfulness of your covenant Father and the never-failing love of the Holy Ghost will bear you up, and bear you home. No man ever suffered final shipwreck, who ventured his soul, his salvation, his all, on that bottom. If you cannot wrap yourself up in the mantle of Christ's righteousness with an assured faith, yet, if you touch but the hem of His garment with a weak faith, with a faith of longing and desire, or even (if I may so speak) with the very tip of faith's little finger, you have a capital evidence of interest in Him. "As an infirm hand," say an excellent person, "can tie the marriage-knot, so a weak faith can lay hold on a strong Christ."

The Lord's people are frequently harrassed with a fear that the work of sanctification in their souls is either not begun, or at a dead stand; that they do not increase with the increase of God, nor resemble Him in holiness more and more.

If any fear may be called a good fear, this may, supposing it does not flow from a principle of legality, and be not carried too far. It is a blessed sign when we mourn under a sense of our shortcomings, and burn with intense desire to rise higher into the likeness of God. For this also, seek unto Him. He is also to accomplish in you all the good pleasure of His will, and the work of faith with power. If He give you grace to put yourself as a blank into His hand, His Spirit will delineate His sacred image upon your soul and, in the article of death, heighten the outlines and finish the sketch into His own perfect likeness.

Be diligent to use all the appointed means of sanctification, which providence favors you with. Be careful to shun all evil and the very appearance of it. Walk in the path of duty marked out by the written word. Nor need you fear God's making good His covenant of promise, by making you such as He would have you to be. Be not discouraged, but rather excited to hope, to pray and to believe, by the sense of your remaining corruptions. "The field," as one says, "that has millions of weeds in it, may be a cornfield. One rose upon a bush, though but a little one, and though not yet blown, proves that which bears it to be a true rose tree." Despise not, then, the day of small things, but pray God to enlarge them. Bless Him even for the grain of mustard-seed; but, at the same time, beg His Spirit to water and increase it.

The fear of temptation keeps many of God's people in bondage. And happy are we, if we so fly from it as to shut our eyes and ears and hearts against it. We know not what we are, nor what we are capable of, if left to ourselves. Yet do not let the fear of what may be cast a damp upon your present comforts, nor abate your confidence in the Lord. Prudent fear is wisdom; but much fear is unbelief. A believer cannot trust in himself too little and, bless be God, he cannot trust too much in the all efficiency of divine grace. If therefore, you are cast down, by a sense of your liability to temptations, and of your proneness to fall by them, bring your temptations and your weakness together to God the Holy Spirit, and beseech Him to get Himself the victory in you, over you and for you. Let watchfulness and prayer thus set a guard upon the outworks, and Jesus will throw in the succors of grace, and preserve the citadel from bring taken by the enemy. He is faithful, and will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able to bear. He will either hide you in His pavilion and keep from the fiery trial, or, if He bring you into the field, He will save you from being overpowered. The archers may sorely grieve you and shoot at you, yet shall your bow abide in strength, and the arms of your hands be made strong by the mighty God of Jacob. But, should the enemy of souls be even permitted to gain some advantage over you for a season, yet, cast not away your confidence, but look to the hills of covenant love, from whence cometh your help. Christ will deliver you, as at the first, and restore you, as at the beginning. What was prophesied concern-

ing Gad (Gen. 49. 19) shall be spiritually fulfilled in you: a troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at the last.

A sixth fear occasions no small uneasiness to weak believers: namely, a fear lest they should not be faithful unto death, nor hold on in grace to the end. But if God has given thee good evidences of thy being truly regenerated, and of thy being His child through faith in Christ Jesus, thou mayest, upon the strength of thy adoption, be as certain of thy final perseverance as if thy warfare was actually accomplished, and the crown of glory set upon thy head.

The invisible, or elect, church consists of only one and the same innumerable family; part of which is in heaven and part on earth (Eph. 3:15) Every individual member of this family, whether militant below or triumphant above, is equally safe in the hands of Christ. Saints in glory are, indeed, happier than saints on earth; but saints on earth are no less eventually secure of salvation than saints in glory. The spirits of just men made perfect might as soon fall from their state of heavenly blessedness as a sanctified person here fall from a state of grace. The names of both are in the book of life. They are alike interested in God's everlasting and unalterable covenant. What the Father's love has given to the glorified will be also given to them that are yet behind; for to this end Christ died and rose again, that He might gather together in one the children of God that are scattered abroad (John 11:52), and, by the single offering of Himself, He has perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Saints are not their own keepers, and it is well for them that they are not; they would be sorrily kept, if they were. Adam was his own keeper; and what did he get by it? The fallen angels were their own keepers. Peter kept himself; but how long? God's chosen are not thus finally left in the hand of their own counsel, nor trusted to their own management. All His saints are in Thy hand, i.e. in the hand of Christ, Deut. 33:3; from whence none can pluck them, John 10. Which general promise of the perseverance of God's elect, taken as a collective body, ascertains and ensures the perseverance of each believer in particular. For the whole necessarily includes every part; and, where any individual part is absent, it destroys the entireness of the whole; just as the human body is not complete, if only one limb, or even a single finger, or so much as a piece of a finger, be wanting. For what is affirmed concerning the aggregate is equally affirmed concerning the constituent members respectively, of which that aggregate consists; otherwise the affirmation would be essentially untrue, which to charge Christ with were blasphemy.

Let the follower of Christ, therefore, dismiss all slavish fear as to his continuance in grace, and in well-doing leave the care of that to God. They who belong to Him are kept, and will be kept, by His power through faith unto salvation itself, and may sing with him that was caught up into the third heavens, Who shall separate us

from the love of Christ? Neither life nor death, nor things present, nor things to come, shall ever be able to do it. There is no being disinherited of the blessings entailed by God's covenant, and bequeathed in Christ's last will and testament, signed with His own blood, and sealed by His own Spirit. Saving grace is the good part which shall not be taken away. Whatever you lose, it is impossible for you to lose that. It is bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God, and hid with Christ in Him. And when Christ, who is your life, shall appear, then shall ye also, who have believed, appear with Him in glory.

I shall mention one other fear common to many of God's redeemed, viz. the fear of death. Some true believers are apt to cry out (as the human nature of Christ Himself did). Father, save Me from this hour.

But why are you so dismayed at the prospect of getting home? Are you afraid of dying, or of what you may suffer in your last conflict? Turn again to your rest; for the Lord will deal bountifully with you, and be better to you than your fears.

"Who can take
Death's portrait true?
Fear shakes the pencil: Fancy love excess:
Dark ignorance is lavish of her shades;
And these the formidable picture draw.
Man forms a death that nature never made,
Then on the point of his own fancy falls,
And feels a thousand deaths in fearing one."

None return from the grave to tell us what it is to die. Some happy believers have indeed sung in their last moments, "O death, where is thy once-imagined sting? Can this be termed dying?" And, very probably, the passage is both sweeter and smoother than living imagination is apt to suppose.

I lost an excellent parishioner in the year 1765. Though he had not the least doubt of his salvation but, as far as spiritual and eternal things were concerned, lay for many weeks triumphing in the full assurance of faith, yet he still dreaded the separation of soul and body, from an apprehension of what nature must endure in the parting stroke. Some little time before the knot was actually untied, God was pleased to indulge him with a foretaste of death. He was, for near an hour, quite gone in appearance; and his family began to conclude that the final struggle was over. By degrees, however, he came to himself, and on my asking him how he did, he answered, that God had give him a specimen of death, and found it not so terrible as he apprehended. From that period, all his dread of dying vanished away, and he continued without any shadow of fear, filled with the peace which passeth all understanding, until his disimprisoned spirit flew to the bosom of God.

O then, whosoever thou art that art troubled in like manner, cast thy burden on the Lord. You have found Him faithful in other things, and you may safely trust Him for this. He has delivered you in six troubles, and in the seventh He will be nigh unto you. The water-floods shall not overflow thee, neither shall the deep swallow thee up. The rock of ages lies at the bottom of the brook, and God will give you firm footing all the way through.

Or, are you afraid of the consequences of death, and what will come after? Throw yourself upon God in Christ, and you are safe. "Christ's righteousness is law-proof, death-proof and judgment-proof."

Are you fearful what may become of your family when God calls you away? Make your family over to Him. Nominate Jehovah for their guardian and trustee. Cast anchor upon that comfortable promise: Leave thy fatherless children; I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in Me.

Do you dread the buffetings of Satan? God will not let him take advantage of your weakness. You shall overcome, yea, you shall be more than conquerors, through the blood of the Lamb and the word of His testimony.

Are you apprehensive lest your faith be small, and you sanctification imperfect? Christ will be praying for you that your faith fail not; and the Holy Ghost will take care not to leave His work of grace upon thy soul unfinished.

You tremble, perhaps, at the thought of laying aside your weak, sinful, mortal body. But you will receive it again: not such as it now is, frail, defiled and perishable, but bright with the glory, and perfect in the image of God. The body is that to the soul which a garment is to the body. When you betake yourself to repose at night, you lay aside your clothes until morning, and resume them when you rise. What is the grave but the believer's wardrobe, of which God is the doorkeeper? In the resurrection morning, the door will be thrown open, and the glorified soul shall descend from heaven to put on a glorified robe, which was indeed folded up and laid away in dishonour, but shall be taken out from the repository, enriched and beautified with all the ornaments of nature and of grace.

Should I be asked, What is the grand remedy against undue fear of every possible kind? I answer in one word: Communion with God. "He," says good Dr. Owen, "who would be little in temptation must be much in prayer." Ply the mercy seat. Eye the blood of Christ. Cry mightily to the Spirit of God. To which I add: Wait at the footstool in holy stillness of soul. Sink into nothing before the uncreated Majesty. If He shine within, you will fear nothing from without. What made the martyrs fearless? Their souls were filled with Christ. Jesus lifted up the beams of His love upon their minds, and they smiled at all the fires which man could kindle.

To enjoy communion with God, you must be found in the way of duty. (The author does not mean this legally.) If you play the truant, no winder you are afraid of being whipped. "Those trees," says the excellent Mr. Gurnall,

"bear the sweetest fruit, which stand most in the sun." Take heed to the thing which is right, for that shall bring peace at the last. The meaning of which text is that by virtue of wise connection which infinite wisdom hath established between antecedents, holy walking is the high road to holy comforts.

Your walk, perhaps, is strict and conscientious; and yet it may be you complain of doubts and darkness notwithstanding. Here, examine yourself:

1. Whether you do not work from legal principles, and to legal ends? If so, no wonder that, like a slave with the lash at his shoulders, you toil all day and take nothing. Christ alone is the righteousness of them that believe. God will never set the seal of His gracious presence to the broken Sinai covenant. Whoever enjoys, or thinks he enjoys, comfort and peace from the works of his own hands, and from the duties he performs, is blind and deluded into a fools paradise by the god of this world. The Lord meets His people in the way of duty, but not for it, as a father, who meets his son on a journey, at some appointed house, meets him in that house, but not for the sake of the house. Live upon what Christ is made to you of God, and you will find comfort. But if you seek happiness and establishment from yourself, or from any thing wrought by yourself, you will receive no solid nourishment from the breast of that sham consolation.

Or, 2. Christ may be all your hope, and yet your fears may continue to run high. Look narrowly into your heart. See that there be no Achan in the camp, no beloved lust in the tent. I dare not say that the sense of God's love is always connected with the actings of faith, and with the concomitant exercise of holiness. But I suppose that faith and sanctification are the usual correlatives of joy in the Holy Ghost. Art thou melted by grace into a final fear of God? Go on to fear, to love, and to obey, whether the Lord guide thy path with sunshine, or darken it with gloom. He is the sovereign dispenser of His own comforts, and may withhold or confer them as seemeth good in His sight. But it is thy indispensable duty to follow the Lamb, and to do His will, whether He cheers you with His consolations or not. Certain it is, from the infallible Word of His grace, that to you who look unto Jesus, all the sweet privileges of the gospel belong; and joy is one of them. Though it tarry, wait for it, for it will not deceive thy expectation; it will surely arrive at the appointed season, and will not linger a moment beyond. O ye of fearful hearts, be strong: your God will come with a recompence, He will come and save you. Your prayers may not be answered immediately, but they are all strung on the file of His remembrance, and shall be answered after many days. Your fears are in His phial. Your groans are noted in His book. Delight thou in the Lord, and He will give thee thy heart's desire; hold thee still in the Lord, and abide patiently for Him. Commit thy way to the Lord; put thy trust in Him, and He shall bring it to pass.

I knew a most valuable Christian, who died in the year 1760, and in her last illness was greatly exercised with darkness of soul; which, however, did not finally continue. While God was leading her through the wilderness of mental distress, she still anchored on the promises, though she had lost sight of the Promiser; and, as a proof of her absolute dependence on the faithfulness of a withdrawing God, she directed, that (instead of the usual inscription of name and age) the following text should be engraven (and engraven it was) on her coffin: Deal with me, O God, according to Thy name, for sweet is Thy mercy. Thus, as the great Dr. Manton long ago expressed it, "Faith accepts God's bond, and patience waits for payment."

Augustus Toplady
From Gospel Standard
October & December 1990

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 4 / 93 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

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OBITUARIES

It is with a sad heart I try to write the obituary of our dear friend and neighbor, a dear loved one of Strawberry Church, Lillye Claire Hundley.

She never had the pleasure of her name on the Church Record, but we feel she was one of God's Children.

She was always there to fill her seat at Strawberry Church, as long as she was well, and supported the Church in many ways.

Lillye was born February 29, 1904, to James Henry Hundley and Sister Minta Oakes Hundley in the Swansonville Community of Pittsylvania County, VA, where she spent her entire life.

She graduated from James Madison University and taught school for a while. Her Mother's health was failing, so she stayed at home and helped take care of her as long as she lived. Then she helped her Brother Guy work on the farm as long as she was able.

She was stricken with a stroke in May, 1990, so she spent two and a half years in Roman Eagle Memorial Home, never able to speak again.

The Lord called her home to Glory December 17, 1992. Lillye left to mourn her loss a brother, Brother Guy Hundley and a sister, Sister Mary H. Stratton.

Her funeral was held at Swicegood Funeral Home Chapel, Danville, VA by Elder Thomas Solomon and was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park, Danville, VA, beneath a mound of beautiful flowers to await the coming of her Blessed Saviour to gather his jewels home.

Lillye believed in Salvation by Grace. She was a lovable person, to know her was to love her. We miss her so very much, but feel our loss is her eternal gain.

May we bow in humble submission to his Holy Will, Who never makes a mistake, The Lord giveth and the Lord takes away, Blessed be His name.

May The Good Lord Bless, comfort and give reconcilling Grace to her dear family.

Written by a Sister in
Hope who loved her,
Sister Gertie C. Holley

Eunice Lewis Martin

In memory of Sister Eunice Lewis Martin who departed this life on October 5, 1992. She was born on March 29, 1908, having lived for 84 years.

The writer grew up with Sister Eunice and from a child until she was grown she was a kind and loving person. Always afraid she would hurt someone's feelings.

She did not get to visit her Church much, but the last time I saw her she said, "Liberty Church was a sacred place to her. That she felt on each First Saturday and Sunday that she could hear them singing and praising the Lord." We feel that our loss is her gain.

She leaves the following children: Mrs. Christine Hensley, Mrs. Alice Boyd, Mrs. Thelma Griffith, Mrs. Shirley Griffith, and Mrs. Helen Griffith all of Mt. Airy, N.C., Henry Martin of Ararat, Va. and Leon Martin of Stuart, Va. Also three brothers: Eural Lewis Meadows of Dan, Va., Virgil Lewis Roanoke, Va., and Robert V. Lewis of Martinsville, Va.

Her funeral was held at Moody Funeral Home Chapel on Wednesday October 7, 1992. Internment was at the Martin Family Cemetery near Stuart, Va.

Written by a Sister In Hope, Clara Harbour Freeman, by request of Liberty Church while in conference on November 7, 1992.

Elder John T. Wingfield, Moderator
Deacon Paul Puckett, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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THE PATH OF GOD'S CHILDREN

By E. J. Lambert

There is a God who rules
All things by His own hand;
He knows how to use His tools
In all nations of every land.

Everything redounds to His praise;
Or else 'twould never have been,
His people - He knows how to raise
From the terrible pitfalls of sin.

He teaches them, it is by grace
That they're redeemed from the fall.
If justice were meted to the Adamic race,
Hell would be the place for all.

They are taught by the Spirit of God
That they are at best but vain;
In the paths of sin they trod,
Thus have that crimson stain.

Nothing can cleanse so white
As Jesus' precious blood,
Nothing else can make them right
Nor cause their hope to bud.
Ephraim is His firstborn.

He brings him through the fire.
As with the unicorn's horn,
He pushes him into the mire.

Drives him to the end of the earth;
Then we hear Ephraim weep,
He is undergoing the new birth
That manifests him as a sheep.

Yes, we hear Ephraim bemoan
Saying, "Thou hast chastised me,
I am but vanity when alone;
I solely depend upon Thee.

"Turn me and I shall be turned -
Lead me and I shall be led;
Thy Holy law I have spurned;
I am as powerless as one dead.

"In ashes I am made to repent,
And even my thoughts I hate.
If justice upon me was sent,
I would be in a terrible state."

Sometimes, I hope, 'twas the law
Written in my inward parts
Which revealed to me the flaw
Of possessing this sinful heart.

Thus, a hope to me is revealed
That it takes that godly light,
To show me I need to be healed
Before I could be made right.

Then according to my convictions
We must be ruled with a rod;
Chosen in the furnace of afflic-
tion,
To be the tried children of God.

-Composed November 9, 1934

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EDITORIAL

THE VALLEY OF FIRE

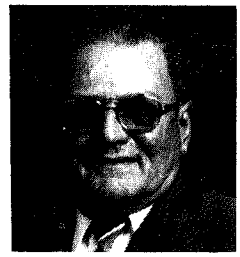
ELDER C.B. DAVIS, JR.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil" Psa. 23:4.

I begin this article with a sense of fear and wonder. The expressions I use in many instances are assumptions and yet I feel there is reasoning for my thoughts. May God direct my thoughts and bless me to state what I feel I saw

and felt. The interpretations herein mentioned were made by men who deciphered the language of a people of ten thousand years ago according to modern aging process.

In May of 1992 thirty-eight of us began another trip through the western states that we did not visit on the trip in 1990. We beheld many beauties of God's creations and wonders of nature. We also experienced love and fellowship that cannot be fully expressed. I write this article and leave it for a memorial to all the lovely people who traveled with us.

In the state of Nevada approximately half way between Las Vegas and the southwest border of Arizona there is an amazing spectacle. There is a canyon which has on the left side as you enter; a perpendicular wall possibly one hundred feet tall. This canyon is in an area that is red as red can be as far as the color of the earth is concerned. There are many caves all around in the area which once was home to the people previously mentioned. This wall contains many sets of drawings made by the people that lived here. This wall is covered by a black substance called desert varnish and these people with some tool or stone carved into this wall many emblems that I feel are symbols of their belief of an unseen power and hope of a better place to dwell. These drawings held me spellbound and I stood in awe at what I feel was seen and felt.

There are several sets of drawings along the wall (and some farther down I did not see) but the same drawings are in each set and put in the same order. There are some places where the drawings have faded but still you can determine the order. This order places the drawings in all instances in relation to each other. I feel they saw this order was necessary to adhere to as we also have order in our beliefs. We do know that scripture tells us there is order in all things.

The drawing at the very top is of what appears to be a scepter. I thought of the scripture mentioned in the book of Esther. The golden scepter there mentioned is a rod of power and authority. The law proclaimed that no one could approach the king unless he reached out to that one the scepter (Grace). Read if you will Esther Chap. 4 and verse eleven to see how this scepter was extended to Esther although she had not been told to enter the throne room. It is the scepter of Grace that reaches out to man and bids him come (an experience of Grace).

The next drawings in order are three bodies that are round circles that symbolize the earth, sun and moon. It has been accepted that these people worshipped the spirit of light and the sun symbol was largest and in the center. I thought what is so strange about worshipping the spirit of light. If we truly worship it is done in spirit for God is spirit and we cannot worship Him otherwise. We then must say we worship the spirit of light also. Christ is our light of salvation and except we abide in Him we dwell in darkness. Read John Chap. 8: verse 12 and Chap. 9: verse 5.

There are two circles under the ones just mentioned and one is three circles within each other and one seems to be a wheel. The one of three circles meant all things contained and controlled as a body by one power. This fits our belief for we know God controls all things. The one like a wheel reminded me of the vision of Ezekiel that said as it were a wheel within a wheel. This drawing has a center (hub) with spokes seemingly reaching from a circle around the hub out to the rim in all directions. Read Ezekiel Chap. 1 and especially verse 16. God who is the center of our belief reaches out to us with the attributes of Christ (spokes) for we are as a rim (on the outside). We exist in the outer reaches of nature and carnality and if He never reaches out to us we remain in that condition.

Next on the left of these drawings is a ladder reaching up to a level of the first bodies drawn. These people saw it as a means of reaching a better life and higher plane of existence. There is no way we can be lifted above our sin and have hope of a perfect life except we view the ladder of grace. We are lifted in the spirit again and again as Jacob saw in his vision. There is the ascending when He is manifest and a descending when we are left to ourselves. On the right side at the level of the ladder is a rectangle approximately two feet long and six inches wide. This symbolized a land of plenty and exists in the same realm as the ladder (that is in close proximity to the heavenly bodies).

We see next what to me is an expression of the understanding of creation. The left side of the group has a tree as does the right side but the tree on the right is much smaller. Read Chap. 2 of Genesis concerning creation and the garden of Eden. I then pondered how these people knew of the larger tree (Christ) and the smaller one (tree of the knowledge of good and evil). Now below the land of the trees is a serpent (how amazing) and I could hardly believe what I saw. Who showed these people this if not God himself for we are looking at drawings thought to be 10,000 yrs. old. There was no bible that we know of and no evangelists out to save souls there the answer is always revealed religion.

There are on the left about the level of the trees ten perfectly straight lines approximately two feet long. They were accepted as lines of perfect life and we believe the ten commandments are perfect lines of life but find we have broken all of them. The right hand side has five wider and shorter lines evenly spaced apart and these meant wisdom lines to these people. The five books of law are none else than Godly wisdom expressed in prophecy.

There is next a curving wandering line coming down that seems a stream ending in a body of water. Gen. Chap. 2 verse 10 tells of a river that divides into or is parted into four heads that to me denotes the four Gospels. There is also a stream seen by John in Revelation that flows out from the throne of God. These people saw it as for cleans-

ing and we ponder then was it to be a place of baptism and given as a symbol of being cleansed.

There is in the center next a strange drawing that resembles the Biblical candlesticks although it is inverted or upside down. It has seven points that caused me to think of the seven churches and seven seals and seven angels. There was no mention of this drawing in any interpretation but it had its place among their other beliefs.

Now to the left of this drawing is a group of sheep and a group of goats (the goats are distinguished by their horns). The sheep are in the top group and the goats at the bottom. They are completely separated and this arrangement fits our feeling exactly. The right hand side has the drawing of a foot and in all drawings it is the right every time. This meant to them travel and I thought of David, Psa. 40: verse 2 for only after He lifts us from the horrible pit and clay can we feel we are traveling the road to eternal life. I also thought of Israel traveling through the wilderness. I also thought of how we have all been to Egypt (slaves of sin) and have been led out and that Moses told Pharaoh that not a hoof should be left there. God has removed our tracks of bondage and we are set free indeed.

The next drawing on the left appears to be a white dove with its head pointed down. There appears to be something in its beak. I never saw an interpretation of this but dear ones as you know of the dove of Noahs Ark, it must come down as it came in unto him for the wisdom was in the top. Read Gen. Chap. 6: verse 11 and 16.

We now see in the center a cross and the cross is in every set of drawings although some of the others are not. This was interpreted to be where two paths came together. The cross is the center of our hope of salvation and I thought of Psa. 85 verse 10 - "Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other." My thoughts also took me to the cross of death for our Savior for there the pathway of Holiness met the pathway of sin and carnality.

There is on the right of the cross a drawing of twelve bodies holding hands. These could be the twelve sons of Jacob (tribes of Israel) or since they are near the cross I rather think of the disciples. The two realms of Godliness both embody Christ. The old dispensation expressing the love of God, the perfection of His laws and the coming of Christ. The new dispensation is a fulfilling of the old and our salvation being manifest in God's own son.

There are on the left side three bodies holding hands and I see these as God the father, God the son, and God the Holy and eternal spirit. I believe that all three hovered there near the cross when our Savior died.

Now we come to the foundation of all the drawings in another drawing. This one is of an open hand and it appears in every group at the same location, that is at the bottom. The regular interpretation was an open hand of giving and power. I see it as yes, giving support to our hope and

faith and also being an abundance of all our needs and embodying the graciousness of God. If our faith, hope, order and discipline is not supported by His hand it most surely will fail.

There now is a question - who were these people? I have no way of knowing but wonder if they are of the lost tribe of Israel. The tribe of Levi (Jacob's son) who were called Levites did not have a portion of land set apart for them, Joshua Chap. 14: verses 3 and 4 (read entire chapter). This separation was because of disobedience and the tribe was divided so they could never become a people of power. They were divided as best I remember into forty-eight different places.

There is speculation with geologists (and its accepted) that the earth at one time was one continent. Were these people sent to a portion of land that eventually separated from other land and they found themselves on a separate continent?

There are two strange objects in the western states beside the drawings we saw. I feel they are a part of the puzzle and I know God had the answer and it probably will never be known by man.

In a cave in that area (I forget where) there is a great amount of writing in the Hebrew language. It has been dated at thousands of years before Christ. This was translated but it did not reveal who the people were so there is yet no answer. There is also a strange plant that grows in southeastern California and along the border of Nevada and Arizona. It is called the Joshua tree because it grows no where else in the world except the area where Joshua crossed and settled at the river Jordan. Why these trees just in two locations on earth and how?

This article has become longer than I intended and so I will close with these thoughts. I stood alone for quite a period of time looking at the drawings on the wall. The others of the group had gone further down the canyon to see other things. I was alone yet suddenly felt surrounded by a multitude of beings. I believe I could feel their closeness, love and fellowship. I felt that I should remove my shoes for this I am sure was Holy ground. My dear ones in hope I sensed that I walked, stood, wept and rejoiced in the very same spot that our brothers and sisters in Christ did the same things 10,000 years ago.

I trust I am not deceived in what I felt and what I saw. If it be that I am then put all blame on the weakness of my mind and my flesh for God is blameless in all things. I am sure that whoever these people were and wherever they came from they had in their bosom an abiding faith and hope that reaches beyond this world. They had trust in a power that though unseen yet was felt in the heart, may it be there with us.

If these thoughts seem worthy give God all praise and honor for the revelation and give thanks that He is the same God today as He was 10,000 years now past.

In bonds of love for Christ sake,
Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

CORRESPONDENCE

EXPERIENCE
1992

Dear Brethren and Sisters,

I feel so unworthy of the love and sweet fellowship the dear brethren have shown me, before and since I was received in the Church.

I'm not very good with words, but will try, if it be the Lord's will, to write some of the feelings I have in my heart.

I have had a love for the church for many years. Although I feel unworthy and unfit to sit on the same bench with the lovely Children of God, I could see the love that flowed from heart to heart. I felt to be so alone and left out, just an unworthy sinner hoping for a little crumb of His goodness and mercy.

I don't have a great experience to tell as some are blessed to write. But I feel I have many blessings that are a gift of God. I think my sweetest experience was the two beautiful baptisms in August and September 1991.

It was a beautiful morning as we gathered at the river on the second Sunday in August. There were three to be baptized, and seven more came forward at the water. It was so beautiful, and I was overwhelmed with desire to be with them, but I couldn't. Three had asked to be baptized at our September meeting. I had thoughts and hopes that maybe the Lord would bless me to ask for a home then. I went to church on Saturday thinking I could ask for a home and be baptized with the others, but I couldn't. We sang the song "I am a stranger here below." I thought, that song sure does fit me.

Sister Mary said she loved me, and the others did too. I thought how could they love someone like me.

When I left the church I felt so burdened I cried all the way home, and off and on all evening. I was made to feel by the Grace of God I hope, that the brethren had shown me they loved me. It wasn't them I doubted - it was me.

The next morning, I felt so burdened. My thoughts were, I couldn't go yesterday and I don't guess I can today. I took some other sisters with me. When we got there a large crowd had already gathered at the river. Sister Annie said let's go up this way (to the far end); she thought we could see better. I walked with her a little way, then something turned me around; I found myself standing as close as I could to the ones to be baptized. Then they began to sing "Amazing Grace" I had never heard it sung more beautiful. I had no doubts that God had turned my feet around -I had to go.

I was received and baptized with the others. It was the sweetest most peaceful feeling I will ever have here on earth. As we came out of the water I looked at the crowd. There was so much joy and love, I wished I could gather them all in my arms and tell them how much I love them.

My burden was lifted and I was happy for a few days. Then one morning I woke up crying "Oh! Lord what have I done? These precious people welcomed me with open arms. Have I made a mistake and deceived them."

It is so precious to feel that peace in your heart and know that only God could have put it there. We are carried up on the mountain top to sing His praise, then cast in the valley once again to beg for mercy. I hope He will always keep me humble.

I still have doubts and fears and I know there is nothing good in me. The Lord is my help and strength. That little hope He has put in my breast is worth it all. In our darkest hour when it seems like everything is gone, how sweet it is to see that little ray of sunshine and feel that all is well for a little while.

It is such a sweet privilege to gather with the brethren and enjoy the love and fellowship.

An unworthy sister,
Mary Janney

P.O. Box 403
Poca, W.V. 25159
March 19, 1993

Dear Elder Key,

Thank you very much for sending me copies of articles that were written by my uncle, Elder J.W. McClanahan, and above all the ones he wrote on his experience, and call to the ministry, it was sad at the beginning but the out come was beautiful.

Elder Key, the short note you sent me along with the articles meant a lot to me, just writing that you knew I would be glad to receive a copy of my uncles experience, and call to the ministry let me know that we share the same hope, and belief in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace.

I am enclosing a letter I received from Elder H.J. Bird when I was in Vietnam, and hope you will consider it for print in the Signs of the Times.

Thank you again for the articles I requested.

In hope of a Hope,
J.F. McClanahan

ARTICLES

Jo. 3:7 Marvel not that I said unto you, ye must be born again.

Jesus is speaking here of something that must be very important, something that must be done. He doesn't say you should do it, or you might do it, but ye must be born again. When Jesus, the Son of the living God, says ye must be born again we know there is a necessity for its being done. Let us look for a minute or two and see if we can see the importance of this new birth.

Jo. 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. This is the key to the thing, all who are still in the flesh, all who haven't been born of the Spirit are still flesh. So we see from this scripture, you have either been born of the Spirit or you are still in the flesh.

It is written, God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in truth. There is one reason why it is so important to be born again, for you must be born again, born of the Spirit, or else you cannot worship God, for God says you must worship him in Spirit.

Among all the many professing believers or so called Christians there are in the world today, one hardly ever hears the new or spiritual birth mentioned. It seems many believe in the works system and through their own works, and their own self-righteousness, they believe they have worked their way into the good graces of God, and have reached such a level they feel God owes them for all these things they have done, therefore they can accept the salvation which they feel is theirs for the taking. But I find when I read the bible, the same God who says you must be born again has also said, a mans work availeth him nothing.

It is written 1 Cor. 2:14 - But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned.

The natural man receiveth not the things of God, we have a perfect illustration of this where Jesus spoke to and Nicodemus answered and said, can a man enter again into his mother's womb, and be born. Nicodemus was a man who I believe had better than average education and worldly wisdom. However these things of the Spirit was foolishness to him, as it is written, these things are foolish to a fleshly man, they believe them not and they can't understand them. As the time Jesus asked his Apostles who do ye say that I am and Peter answered and said unto him, ye are the Christ the son of the living God. Jesus answered and said blessed art thou Simon Barjona for flesh and blood did not reveal this unto you but my Father which is in heaven. These things show us that a person must be born again of the Spirit to receive these spiritual things. Not only do we see this from thing's in the scripture but we see and experience them in our daily walk and among the brethren. As our pastors are blessed to have some spiritual truth revealed unto them, then given the ability and knowledge to pass them on to the brethren at meetings. How many times have you been reading some scripture that perhaps you have read many times before, when all of a sudden you are blessed to see something in it you never saw before. Try to tell someone about the joy of attending meetings, explain to an unbeliever what you mean when you speak of spiritual food. Why? Like the scripture says, it is foolishness to them, there is no way they can understand or believe any thing spiritual.

Speaking or I should say, thinking of the new birth, I believe that is the first of any or all spiritual blessings a man may receive, it has to be first. To begin with a man must believe, without faith it is impossible to please God. So faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. I have already written a fleshly man receiveth

not these things, so where does faith, hearing and believing come in. Remember, the Spirit must the work perform, so the Spirit gives one a hearing ear, else how could he hear? Next how could he believe except he had a heart, or understanding to be able to hear and believe the gospel. There again the Spirit must the work perform. When these things have happened, a person hears the gospel, understands and believes what he hears, that man has experienced the new birth. That is the only way he could have heard and believed, because a natural man receives them not.

I believe when this has happened to a man, through the new birth he is born into the family of God, he became a child, once a person is in that family he is there to stay, as it is written, I in you and you in me. I believe many more spiritual blessings will follow, there will be times of rejoicing also times of despair, all of these will come in such a way and manner that is pleasing to our heavenly Father, we need the valleys as much as we need the mountain top, when we are in the valley or on our knees we have to look up at our brethren. I surely believe a man is much more blessed looking up at our brethren than looking down on them.

I believe the very first dealings a believer has with God is the work of the Holy Spirit, such as a hearing ear, heart of understanding, blessing a man with faith, belief, etc. We know and believe by the scripture that the Spirit, like the wind, goes and comes as it is pleasing to God, no man can stop it, direct it or change its course as I have stated, and as it is written, the Spirit must the work perform. This teaches me very clearly that the doctrine of free will believed by so many has to be false. As it is written, all those he foreknew, he also did predestinate, also all that he did predestinate, them he also called, and the promise is to all that the Lord our God should call. So may we be strengthened in the faith, blessed to believe in our Father's love tender care and mercy, to the extent that we will have love for the brethren, giving all thanks to our heavenly Father.

Marvel not that I said unto you, ye must be born again.

A brother - I hope
Frank Hunt

VOICES OF THE PAST

Jan. 2, 1967

S.S.G. Joseph McClanahan,

My Precious Friend, and Brother In Hope In Christ: your very gracious letter of Oct. 9, 1966 is open before Me. First I very sincerely beg your forgiveness for my long delay in my feeble endeavor to answer your excellent letter. I have not been so well, and I am just weak enough in my sinful depraved flesh, to let the trials of the way, hinder me in so many ways. I freely confess, that of myself; I can do nothing praiseworthy in the sight of

God. Your letter came as a cup of cold water to my thirsty soul, it is richly laden with the doctrine of truth. I suppose you know that just recently I lost my last earthly brother Benjamin B. Bird. I miss him so very much. My Father died July 17, 1913. I miss him unto this day. You do have my sympathy in your grief. I know what the grief is. We mourn because we suffer loss, but we do have the sweet solace in the full conviction of belief that they are far better off than we who are alive and remain here in this sin cursed world. I believe, and I think you believe, that your Father, and my Father, and my brother, and who die, of like precious faith as they are at rest, and at peace with God. They have been called to lay their armour by to be at home with God.

No more to suffer pain or loss.
No more to bear the painful cross.
But God and Christ, and Heaven to see;
In perfect bliss and true felicity.

Yes the little hope within our breast; that when our weary race is ended here, and we have received our discharge from this mortal state of life, that by reason alone of what Jesus our Friend and Elder Brother, has done in behalf of the election of grace, saving, redeeming them, from all their sins, clothing them, with His own righteousness, freely imputed to them, and thus arrayed in the royal wedding dress, that they, without the loss of one, in that blessed day, they shall be ushered in to the fullness of the presence of God; where they shall see Him as He is, and be like Him, and be forever satisfied. (We do not see God as He is, while we are in the flesh.) Now do we know in part, but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. Then shall we see him face to face, then shall we know, even as we are known, a perfect knowledge. See 1 Corinthians 13 Chapter, 9 to 12 verses. Our hope embraces that through grace we may be of that blest number. We rejoice in the belief that the children of God will know each other in Heaven, after a perfect order of knowledge, yes after an heavenly order of knowledge.

I hope I have made my convictions clear. I believe that when the children of God put on the likeness of Christ in His resurrection, that they will be like Him in Holiness, in perfection, in mind, in glory.

Oh glorious hope! Oh blessed thought.
My soul leaps forward at the thought.
When in that happy land;
We'll no more take the parting hand.

I do not know just why I have wrote as I have. Only this I do know, these weak phrases bear out a little of what I most surely do believe. I carry you in the bond of love. I esteem you highly for the truth sake.

May the protecting care of God be over you always.

Grace, mercy, and truth be unto you, the comforting influence and overshadowing of His spirit adorn your soul, for Jesus sake, amen:

Your little brother in hope in Christ
H.J. Bird

Stantonsburg, N.C. 27883

Greetings to the Household of Faith, Old School Predestinarian Baptists:

This year is fast coming to a close, and none of us knows what the future holds. All that we know is past, or present. In my fifty-three years as a member of the Primitive or Predestinarian Baptists, I have enjoyed the happiest, and the saddest days of my life. I am sure that you who have tasted the goodness and mercy of our God, can witness with the testimony of the prophets and the apostles, and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that we are pilgrims and strangers in a strange land. This world is not our home; we have no abiding city here, but we seek a city that hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God.

I am made to realize, my dear brethren, that my race is almost at an end. Of course, I do not know when the end will be with me, but according to the average life of men, I cannot expect to remain on earth more that a few more years. God has been good to me; and He still is. Oh! if I could but praise his name forever. But I have fallen so short of living to the Christian standard. I have to go weeping and mourning. When I am blessed to think upon the name of the Lord and his wonderful love and mercy which he has bestowed upon me, a hell deserving sinner, it makes me hang my head in shame: to think that the Lord of glory had to suffer on the cross in my room and stead; that is, if I am a vessel of mercy which God afore prepared unto glory.

He took my sins and yours, if we are the children of God. Though I have a precious hope, sometimes I doubt and fear, and often ask myself the question, "Do I love the Lord, or no? am I his or am I not?"; that is a point I long know, with the poet, "Oft it causes anxious thought." I am so imperfect that almost all I do, or think, or say is wrong. "Oh! is there any one like me?"

Dear brethren, I confess I am a poor, unlearned man, but I believe there is a God in heaven, who has by the word of his power created this world, or universe; and inhabited it with people, animals, fowls, insects, and every living thing for his own glory. There was not a man to help in any way whatsoever, for man was the last thing that God made. I believe that God in the annals of eternity, before the creation, foresaw everything in his infinite wisdom that he would bring to pass in the process of time, from the beginning of the creation to the final consummation of all things. I believe that God chose his people (his church) in Christ before the creation; that He saw the fall of man (Adam); and that he made provision for the redemption of all saints in Christ Jesus long before the first sin was committed. And, inas-

much as the church spiritually was in Christ before the world was, Adam, being a type of Christ, and Eve his bride being in him, was a type of the Church in Christ before the world was.

Some have asked me if God did not have a purpose in sin entering into the world, and my answer is and has been, Yes. Then they ask if God did not make sin. My answer to that is, No. Sin is something that was not made, but was and is the act of the creature. Some say that God made them to sin. But I find that one of the writers in the New Testament said that God cannot be tempted with evil; neither tempteth he any man. But somebody wants to know is God's purpose in sin. Elder Griffin mentioned in an Editorial sometime ago that the wicked are the sword of the Lord. Now the first cause of wickedness is sin. Dear brethren, as I see it God's purpose in sin entering into the world was that He would make his power known unto the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory. (Read Romans ninth chapter.) Had sin not entered the world there would have been no sinners to be saved from sin. So this was God's way of manifesting his power in his love and mercy upon the vessels of mercy. God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God."

Man in nature has never been satisfied to do God's will, for in the dead state of nature he has never known the Lord God of heaven, nor his Son Jesus Christ, Only those know him to whom Christ is revealed; and revelation comes to man by spiritual birth. Jesus in the third chapter of John told Nicodemus that except a man be born again he could not see the kingdom of heaven. And on the occasion when Jesus asked his disciples whom men said that He was, some said one thing and some another. So it is today. But Jesus asked, "Whom do ye say that I am," and Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus said to him, "Blessed art thou Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee but my Father which is in heaven." So we see that the spiritual birth is through and by the revealed power of God in man.

Elder W.B. Barnes

"My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word." - Psalm cxix. 81.

How difficult, for the most part, it is, and we may add, how rare to be able to realize for ourselves, with any degree of abiding permanency, a sweet experimental sense of, and an assured interest in those spiritual blessings with which, so far as we are believers in the Son of God, we are blessed in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Glimpses, glances, transient views, sips and tastes, drops and crumbs sweet beyond expression whilst they last, but rarely given and soon gone, are, generally speaking, all we seem to get after much hard labour, many cries, earnest entreaties, and vehement longings before the Lord, as he presents himself to

our faith, seated on the throne of his grace. How many there are who are daily and sometimes almost hourly crying out, if not in the exact words, yet in the substance of them:

"O come, thou much-expected guest;
Lord Jesus, quickly come!"

And yet how long he seems to delay his coming! How continually are they looking upward till eyes and heart seem alike to fail, waiting for his appearing more than they that watch for the morning; how willing to make any sacrifice, to do anything, be anything, or bear anything, if he would but manifest himself to their souls. How often are they searching and examining their hearts, lips, and lives, to see if there be any evil way in them which makes him hide his lovely face, and not drop one word into their longing breasts, whereby they might hold sweet communion with him! How they desire to be blessed with real contrition of heart, and godly sorrow for their sins, and be melted and dissolved at his feet, under a sight and sense of his bleeding, dying love!

But whence spring all these longing looks and waiting expectations? Do not all those earnest desires and vehement longings shew that those in whom they so continually are found are begotten again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead? It is divine life in their souls which is the spring and source of these inward breathings, lookings, and longings; and this divine life arises out of a new and spiritual birth, which is itself the fruit of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. It is not the still-born child that cries; it is the cry of the living child which so goes to the heart of the mother. Thus the cries of which we have spoken shew that there is life. But with life there is hope; for why should a man be ever crying after, waiting for, and anxiously expecting a blessing which he has no hope ever to obtain? If, then, these had no living hope, would they cry? There are no cries in a dead hope. It is because the grace of hope in their breasts is like every other grace of the Spirit, alive unto God, that it acts in union with faith and love, to bring them and keep them earnest, sincere, and unwearied before the throne, expecting and anticipating what God has promised to bestow on those who wait upon him.

J.C. Philpot

From Elder Lamberts book, "Tried In The Furnace".

AM I A GOD-CALLED MINISTER?

Elder E.J. Lambert

You will note from my autobiography that I came under the hands of two presbyteries-being ordained twice by man in each of two organizations to the work of the ministry. One of these acts must have been a mistake, maybe, both of them. The great question: am I a God-called gospel minister? Let us try these two calls by analysis and contrast to determine whether or not either be of God.

I was in my "teens" when hands were laid on me by the first presbytery. I was of the opinion that the plan of salvation was offered to everybody.

Each and every one of the family who came to the "age of accountability" possessed equal and sufficient ability to "accept the plan" by complying with certain conditions and thereby earn Heaven as their home by their own merits. I consented to that ordination or "call" upon the following basis of reasoning:

1. I had accepted the "Plan."
2. I had complied with the requirements.
3. I was prepared to teach others these conditions.
4. I was able to speak fluently and interest the hearers.
5. My walk and conversion was more becoming than others.
6. This demanded their high esteem and great respect for me.
7. It gave me opportunity to build a greater reputation by influencing others.

As the reader will note in my other writings relative to my experience, the time came when this was all proved to be vanity. I had greatly deceived myself and others. The thought that I had so vehemently spoken untruths completely banished from my mind any thought of ever again speaking publicly in the name of the One whom I had so greatly blasphemed!

The day I was received into the fellowship of Cedar Hill Primitive Baptist Church of Christ near Amity, Arkansas was one of the greatest surprises of my life because I realized myself to be the chief of sinners. I was worse than any other because I had used God's name in vain while wearing the cloak of religion from the pulpit! I had pretended to be something when I was worse than nothing! I thought this would forever bar me from such a sacred place as the pulpit. The high privilege of sitting silently with the brethren was too sacred for so great a sinner as I felt myself to be.

Soon after I was received into the fellowship of the Church I was attacked with such despondent and depressed condition of mind that I felt to have but few more hours to live at most. This continued without a moment of relaxation for days and weeks that seemed to be ages. I was so burdened with an unbearable weight that I felt my life was being crushed. Many nights I went to my room convinced that I would never see the sun rise again. Such loneliness and heartache is indescribable. All my dreams were as vexing as my daily thoughts. Groanings and yearnings for God's mercy availed nothing. I was convinced one night that all this was upon me because I had deceived the people of God. I must have fallen asleep, for either in a vision or dream I was standing before a congregation of people preaching upon the text: "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." I received such joy in my confessions that I awoke rejoicing in mind for the first time in weeks and months. I immediately reached for the bible and searched for some text of Scripture that would harmonize with that expression. I was somewhat surprised when I found it verbatim in Job 42:6. This was the first time the thought occurred to me concerning preaching with the Old Baptists. The thought

caused me to shudder and I began to argue my disqualifications. "I am ignorant and my brethren are wise. Their walk is godly and my walk ungodly. They are content and I am disturbed." These arguments became so numerous that the idea of preaching was dispelled from my mind and I was again possessed with the same melancholy state of mind.

I recall one night that I tossed in my bed for hours and tried to pray that the burden be removed. When I became exhausted I was suddenly impressed with the thought, "There is something you must do." I asked, "What is it, Lord?" There was no reply, thus no relief. I began to reason. "I am unfit to be a member of the church. I have deceived these good people. I must frankly confess to them and ask them to exclude me from their fellowship." "Lord, if this be what I must do give me relief." Yet no relief came! I asked the same question concerning many acts that came to mind. Still no relief. Frustrated to the extent of insanity, I felt I must die. The reality of dying in this condition so horrified me that I cried in exasperation, "Lord, anything!" The command came like a thunderbolt, "Preach Christ the Way." I answered aloud, "I will preach." Suddenly my body ceased its trembling. My aching heart soothed. My surging and throbbing breast was calmed. The terrible weight was lifted and the burden removed. I went to sleep praising God for the relief of a troubled mind that had tortured me for many days. I had the first hours of peaceful sleep that I had enjoyed in weeks.

I awoke the next morning as convinced that I would preach as any one has ever been impressed of something they must do. The relief did not last long. My disqualifications came to mind again. Finally I thought of one possible qualification: "You have experience in public speaking." This one sunk into oblivion when I considered:

1. Heretofore you have been sure of yourself concerning the subject matter and preparation; now, you are uncertain and unprepared.

2. Before, you felt to have more knowledge on the subject than your hearers; now you are more ignorant than any one of them.

3. Before, you felt they would listen because they esteemed you as their superior; now, you feel to be less than the least.

4. Before, you were without fear and boldly appeared before any congregation; now, you are even fearful of yourself.

By this time I was strolling down a country road and must have gone into unconsciousness, because when I became conscious, words were flowing with ease from my mouth and a peculiarly constructed pulpit was before me. Tears of joy were flowing from my eyes. I looked out before me for the congregation and could see nothing but a winding road in front and trees on both sides. I reasoned: "This pulpit is an imagination of the mind caused from the tears that beclouded my eyes. I dried my eyes, blinked them, looked again and the pulpit was still there. I was walking, but this last sight so excited me that I

stood still, closed my eyes for awhile, opened them again, but the pulpit was still in front of me. Something said, "I will put thoughts in your mind and words in your mouth when you are behind the pulpit." Then, the pulpit vanished and I was trembling from head to feet. I was so weak I could hardly stand and was about four miles from home. While walking home I feasted upon this new experience and conclusion that God speaks through His ministers. I thought I would tell this experience to my brethren but soon it seemed so unreasonable that doubts began to haunt me and I have kept it until this day with this exception: once, while speaking for the first time in a meetinghouse, I looked down and saw this peculiarly constructed pulpit in reality and paused in the discourse to say, "I have seen this pulpit before." Even though I have not told this, it has been a great encouragement to me many times when going behind the sacred stand, feeling so unprepared.

A few days later, (September 1930), I attended an adjoining association near Eldorado, Arkansas. It was the first time I had been outside my home vicinity while among this people. They were strangers in the flesh but yet I felt drawn toward them. While there I visited in the home of Elder T.J. Evers where some visiting elders were scheduled to preach. My feeling of unworthiness would not permit me to be in the room during preaching but I listened from the outside. When they had finished preaching, someone called my name, came after me, ushered me inside, and informed me that I was requested to preach. I was never so shocked in my life as I thought no one had any idea that I would ever attempt to preach, especially to make my first attempt away from home among strangers. I had not hinted to anyone of such impression. I do not know anything I said that night. However, I experienced some relief of mind in the exercise. When I finished I walked from that room into an adjoining room to be alone. I was shocked with the sight of gray-headed elders sitting in that room with their heads bowed. I thought, "What a fool I must be to attempt to speak in the name of the Lord in the presence of these great men of God." I was so ashamed of myself.

The next meeting at my home church I was called upon to introduce services with hymn and prayer. Since that time I have attempted many times to speak, accompanied with great fear and much trembling. My deep-felt sense of unworthiness and inability has been so uppermost in my mind that I have wondered much of the time, "Do I have the right to occupy such a sacred position and attempt to speak in the presence of God's people?"

I bored the listeners for months by using much of the time in trying to express my unworthiness and inability. My estimation of myself as being so sinful was so impressed on my mind that many expressions relative to this conviction were made each and every time I appeared before a congregation. It gave me relief but I

was not aware of being so boresome to the hearers. God saw fit to use a sister to bring this to my attention. She told me of a conversation she overheard between a daughter and her father. Her daughter announced, "Dad, I am going over to Oakland Schoolhouse today to church." Her father answered, "What? Do you want to hear that mean man tell of his meanness?" This caused much meditation. I have felt as unworthy, sinful, and unfit since then but have been cautious to brief my expressions concerning it. This conversation proved to be a great blessing to me and (I am persuaded) to those who have to sit under the hearing of my voice.

Many times in the exercises of speaking in the presence of this people I lamented much in the closing remarks upon how God had withheld His Spirit from me and that I had been given "no light" upon the subject under discussion. One day I heard an elder preach. His discourse melted my heart and I experienced exultant joy from the beginning of his sermon throughout. His words were heavenly and the thoughts expressed were rapturous to me. He paused at the end of this glorious sermon and said, "I have had no unction of the Spirit while speaking. What I have said has been wholly formal and strictly mechanical." This was like pouring ice water on me. It made me shudder. Since that time I have not expressed these lamentations in closing - though I have felt it. It may be mechanical and formal as far as the speaker is concerned, but God is blessing the hearer with the unction of the Spirit. Since then I have been more content with the thought that God blesses me to the extent that it pleases Him and consecrates it to the hearers to the degree of His pleasure. Who am I to lament if He holds all joy from me and blesses the hearers with exceeding joy? Sometimes when feeling the coldest in delivery of a discourse I have seen the Spirit manifested in the faces of the hearers. Could such a sermon be classed hypocritical, formal, and/or mechanical?

Praying in public was such a task for me. I felt it to be the greatest sin to utter words intended to be directed to God without feeling to be in the spirit of prayer. I refused to engage in public prayer many times when called upon because of this conviction. I recall once being in the predicament when I could not refuse even though I was convinced it would be formal and hypocritical! Words flowed fluently from my mouth but I was so cold that they seemed to mock me with the cry, "Hypocritical, hypocritical." When I arose from the form of prayer I felt to be the greatest blaspheming hypocrite in the world! I was greatly surprised and astonished when something very unusual took place. One man immediately arose, came toward me with tears streaming down his face, took me by the hand, and exclaimed, "What a wonderful prayer. You worded the yearning of my heart." I was then convinced that God was pleased sometimes to put the yearnings in one's heart and the words to express these yearnings in another's mouth. May I ask the reader, "Could this prayer

be classed as an hypocritical prayer?" Since that time I have not refused to engage in public prayer when called upon.

My wife was the first one that I baptized. Officiating in the ordinances of the church seemed too high for me. I felt so unworthy to officiate that I felt so weak I could hardly stand and was trembling when I led her into the beautiful Caddo stream near Amity, Arkansas to baptize her. I felt that I could not go through this ordeal. I shall never forget the calmness and strength I suddenly experienced when I began the baptismal ceremony. Some of the most glorious experiences I have had was in the act of putting beneath the water candidates for church membership. God has always come to my rescue and converted the fear into sublime calmness in my attempt to engage in this sacred ordinance.

It seemed to be impossible for me to be used to comfort those who were bereaved because of a death in the immediate family. I shuddered at the thought of ever being called upon. If not deceived, the Lord has taken care of that also. I have been surprised and astonished at the words that have come from my mouth that were appropriate on such occasions.

I have had like experiences in visiting, praying for the sick, encouraging those who were so low in spirit, giving solutions to baffling problems, averting brethren from detrimental procedure, and striving for peace among troubled brethren. In every case that my efforts have been successfully used, it has been beyond any question with me concerning the source of strength. In every case all false ideas of authority being vested in me have been burned out through fiery trials and God has revealed Himself as the Author of all good acts which are godly. When it pleases God to work the will in you there is no shifting from His will to yours. His will has been so convincing to me that there has been no halting between opinions when it is placed in my mind. I have learned by sad experience that it is best to do nothing regarding a matter until you are made certain concerning what ought to be done. God has so thoroughly worked the do in me in many cases that I was unaware of what I was doing until it was already done. Could I give myself a pat on the shoulder and congratulate myself for doing something that had been done through me and I was unaware of it while it was going on?

I felt many times in years past that I ought to lay aside my encumbrances and dis-engage myself from the vocations of this world and devote what little strength and mind that God had blessed me with to the service of the churches who were looking to me as their pastor. Circumstances over which I had no control brought me into this position. I was forced to give up my worldly career. I receive no salary nor wage from any one or ones. It has been so for years, but God has taken care to impress the hearts of friends and brethren to freely give of their means to us that we have not suffered in want of the necessary things of this natural life. Funds have

come when needed without any solicitation to such an extent that I am fully persuaded that God controls the minds of the contributors even to the amount of contributions.

When I am given to review my life as a minister of God and pastor of churches, I feel that I have been very unprofitable. I have failed in many duties. I have fallen so far short of performing the duties incumbent upon a pastor that I am made to say, "I surely have been mistaken in it all." My brethren have been very tolerant toward me in bearing with my infirmities. Should they have been exacting I would have been severed from their fellowship long ago. I beg an interest in the prayers of each and every one of you who reads this. After writing this imperfect treatise upon this question it remains an unanswered question to me: "Am I a God-called gospel minister?"

MEETINGS

DAN RIVER CHURCH

Meetings at Dan River Church located on Highway #700 between Highway 29 North and Eden, N.C.

4th Sunday in May our semi-annual communion service.

5th Sunday in May the West Country Line will hold its Union Meeting.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Both of above meetings will meet at 10:00 a.m.

Kenneth R. Key, Moderator

HOPEWELL

The eighteenth annual 5th Sunday meeting, the good Lord willing, will be held at Hopewell Church, Winnsboro, Texas, beginning on Friday, May 28th, 29th, and 30th. Hopewell Church is located about six miles west of Winnsboro. Go west on Coke Road (515) about four and one-half miles and follow the signs.

We welcome you to join us in endeavoring to render glory and praise to Whom it is so richly due. In an age when it is becoming increasingly popular to take the Lord's name in vain, how appropriate for those who love the Lord to gather together and by grace fulfill Psalm 148:13 - "Let them praise the name of the Lord: for His name alone is excellent; His glory is above the earth and heaven." As increasing pressure is brought upon God's people to conform to the ever deteriorating standards of this world, may it be our happy lot to have the Spirit which was given unto Joshua to enable us to boldly, yet humbly declare, "But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

When at the throne of grace, please remember us in prayer.

Elder Jimmy Hamrick, Pastor
John Hamrick, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union Meeting will be held the Lord willing, the fifth Saturday and Sunday in May at Strawberry Church located on road 750 turn off Rt. 41 at Woods Store on 750 about 1/2 mile to Church.

All lovers of the truth come and worship with us, special welcome to all Elders of our faith and order.

Gertie Holley Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 1993

Mrs. Virginia Apple, NC	$2.00
Charles M. Coates, VA	7.00
Ms. Joyce Farley, TX	15.00
D.H. Richardson, FL	2.00
Mrs. Bonnie R. Moyers, TN	2.00
Mrs. Cathreine W. Combs, NC	5.00
Edwin F. Dyer, VA	2.00
Mrs. Marjorie Cook, TN	2.00
Mrs. Dorothy M. Cassell, VA	2.00
Ted & Linda McDaniel, VA	2.00
Mrs. Aline C. Jacks, AL	2.00
Mrs. Cliff Weaver, WA	7.00
Ms. Mary W. Janney, VA	2.00
Mrs. Mildred W. Hanks, VA	2.00

OBITUARIES

KENNETH LEON JACKS

Brother Kenneth Leon Jacks was born on May 13, 1943, in Sabine County, Texas. He was called home to his eternal rest on October 24, 1992, at the age of 49 years. He was the grandson of Elder Noah King.

Brother Jacks was united with Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church by letter from West Fork Primitive Baptist Church of Akron, Ohio, on October 14, 1979. Fellowship Church elected him as clerk on December 12, 1981. On November 13, 1983, Brother Jacks was ordained as deacon of Fellowship Church. In 1988, he was elected clerk of the Sulphur Fork Association. He was a faithful and fearless defender of the gospel of his Lord and Savior. He served faithfully as deacon, church clerk, and association clerk until the day of his departure.

His tireless devotion to his church and his brethren was beautifully described by the following poem, written by his mother:

A Tribute To My Son,
Kenneth Leon Jacks
(A Faithful Servant)

As a deacon of your church,
You served it to the end,
Second weekend of each month,
Your labor of love begin.

You took care of your church's needs,
It was a priority for you;
You didn't falter by the wayside
When there were things to do.

You mowed the lawn, you lit the fire,
You opened and closed the doors,
As a deacon of your church
You took care of all your chores.

You transported elderly sisters
So to church they could come,
And from the Master's table
Pick up a little crumb.

God blessed you with three beautful children,
And a sweet grandchild too,
And the best wife and mother
Whom anyone ever knew.

God granted me the blessing
To go with you to see,
Your faith and trust in an all powerful God,
Was very plain to me.

While working on the church grounds,
A tree on you did fall;
You thought you'd met your death then,
But God had another tree growing tall.

In relating your experience to me,
You got a glimpse of another realm,
In which you hope to go some day,
So you could be with Him.

You left this world before,
Caught up in the spirit of your God;
He gave you a glimpse of a better place,
While on this earth you trod.

There are no accidents with God,
You knew that very well;
If you could talk to us today,
A greater story you could tell.

My son, it would be selfish in me,
To wish you back to stay,
But I hope it's the Lord's will
We meet again some day!

Love, Mother

The above sentiments are the heartfelt thoughts, not only of his mother, but also of his brethren among whom he traveled extensively for many years.

Brother Jacks was survived by his wife, Sherrie Sharpton Jacks, whom he married on June 5, 1965; one son, Russell Jacks of Gladewater, Texas; two daughters, Kendra Jacks and Kristi Davis; his father and stepmother, Elvin and Ann Jacks of Woodville, Texas; his mother, Mrs. Abilene McBride, of Woodville; one brother, Lamar Jacks, of Jasper, Texas; one sister, Mrs. Sandra Murphy, of Mt. Shasta, California; and one grandchild, Loren Davis.

Brother Jack's funeral was conducted by Elder C. C. Morris, assistant pastor of Fellowship Church, assisted by Elder Lynwood Jacobs. Brother Jacks was laid to rest in Pleasant Hope Cemetery, near Pleasant Hope Primitive Baptist Church, south of Atlanta, Texas, there to await the resurrection morning.

Written by direction of Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church in conference, with the direction that a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times*, a copy be sent to brother Jacks' family, and a copy be retained in the church's records.

Lovingly submitted,
C. C. Morris

ELDER LOYD WALL

Elder Loyd Wall of Bivins, Texas, was born on January 27, 1919, in Cass County, Texas. After an extended illness, he was called home to eternal glory on January 30, 1993. His pilgrimage here below was seventy-four years and three days.

Elder Wall married Ruby Lee Driskell Wall on January 14, 1939. He united with Pleasant Hope Primitive Baptist Church in 1942, where his membership remained for over fifty years. He was baptized by his father, Elder T. A. Wall, on the fourth Sunday in June, 1942.

Elder Wall was ordained to the ministry on October 30, 1955, over his protests of his own unworthiness. From then until he could no longer go due to his final illness, he traveled extensively among the brethren in Texas, Kansas, Oklahoma, Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Kentucky, and Tennessee.

Elder Wall was called to pastor five churches and served them faithfully until his death: Pleasant Hope Primitive Baptist Church, south of Atlanta, Texas, where his membership was for over 50 years; Prospect Primitive Baptist Church, near Simms, Texas; Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church near East Mountain, Texas; Providence Primitive Baptist Church, south of Mt. Vernon, Texas; and Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church of Cash, Texas.

During his ministry of over forty years, he traveled untold hundreds of thousands of miles serving the churches, attending associations and special meetings, visiting the sick and elderly, visiting among the brethren, and conducting over four hundred funerals. He served the Sulphur Fork Association in east Texas as its Assistant Moderator from 1961 through 1972, as Moderator from 1973 through 1981, and again as Moderator from 1989 until the time of his death.

He had a good report of them which are without. He was an industrious and hard-working man, laboring all his life in the fields and woods near where he was born and raised. He was a good neighbor, loved and respected by his neighbors and his community, and for a time he served on the local school board.

What Paul said to Timothy, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine," certainly applied to Elder Wall. He was solid, sound, and primitive in order, belief, doctrine, and practice. Elder Wall mourned his own depravity, often shedding tears over his feelings of his own sinfulness and unworthiness. His only hope, constantly expressed both from the stand and in conversation, was his hope in the eternal, electing love, grace, and mercy of his God, and the all-sufficient blood and merits of the One whom he preached, the only Savior, Jesus Christ. Without compromise, and without consideration of either the fear or the favor of man, Elder Wall believed and preached the absolute predestination of all things, down to the smallest details in creation and in our lives.

No man around him was ever more willing than he to discuss the scriptures at any time, nor did any seem to have a better God-given understanding of the Bible. Elder Wall always made it a point to say that, if he did not prove what he said by the scriptures, it was not to be received. Whenever he was called upon to speak, his clear voice was lifted up like a trumpet, and he spoke as the oracles of God. When he ministered, it was as of the ability which God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

Now, in the wisdom and providence of our God, Elder Wall's clarion voice has been silenced until the end of time. Those left behind, grieving, nevertheless feel that our temporal loss is his eternal gain, for his sufferings have now ended. Words cannot tell the sadness which the loss of Elder Wall has brought to the brethren at home and across this land. Yet, if he were here today, we have no doubt he would say that he attended every appointment, took every step, preached every sermon, and breathed every breath which God from all eternity had predestinated for him.

Elder Wall is survived by his wife, Ruby Wall, of Bivins, Texas; one son and daughter-in-law, Joseph and Connie Wall of Bivins, Texas; two daughters and sons-in-law, Dorothy and Kenneth Cook of Gonzales, Louisiana, and Glenda and Wayne Dayton of Austin, Texas; three sisters, Ellen Bradshaw of Linden, Texas, Ettie Hutchen of Mesquite, Texas, and Evelyn Rhoades of Mt. Vernon, Texas; six grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

Elder Wall's funeral, attended by many hundreds of his friends and mourners, was conducted by Elder C. C. Morris, assisted by Elder Graydon Smith and Elder Shannon Vaughn. As Elder Wall so highly valued and appreciated the deacon brethren, it was beautifully appropriate that the final grave-side prayer was worded by his long-time friend and brother in the church, deacon Frank Pilgreen of Union Primitive Baptist Church of the South Ouachita Association.

Elder Wall's mortal remains were laid to rest in Pleasant Hope Cemetery near the Huffines community, south of Atlanta, Texas, to await the resurrection at the second coming of our Lord.

Written by direction of Pleasant Hope Primitive Baptist Church in conference, specifying that a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, a copy be furnished to Elder Wall's family, and a copy be retained in the church records.

Unworthily submitted in love,
C. C. Morris

ISAIAH 33: 5-6.

The Lord is exalted; for he dwelleth on high: he hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness.

And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation: the fear of the Lord is his treasure.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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LORD I DESIRE

Lord I desire, with thee to live
To live and never die,
To praise thy name, with every strain
with thee amid the skies.

Lord thou art good, and very good
and holy just and true,
So let us watch and pray and sing
In all our life way through.

Lord we do hope that we are dead
to sin and death made free,
Now we do wait, and walk by faith
of our dear Lord to see

Lord bless us now, this one more time
that we be strong and bold,
And when the storm'y clouds arise
Thou would onto us hold.

Thanks be to thee dear blessed Lord
That thou has made us see,
Our Jesus as the end of law
To set poor sinners free.

By L.J. Brammer

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EDITORIAL

"For the Lord's portion is his people: Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." (Deut. 32: 9-10).

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

It is indeed a time of rejoicing for the saints of the God when they are blessed, from time to time, to view with some understanding what the old Scriptures are pointing to in the new testament. I do not claim any special understanding of the things I propose to set forth for your consideration, but these are only my views of things that may be touched upon in this article. My views may be very imperfect, but the Scriptures of truth are always perfect. Compare the two, and if they be in harmony all is well, but if not, then reject my views.

It is my desire to set forth, in small part, the way God led the children of Israel in days of old, and compare them with the travels of the children of today. God chose his children in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, and He said of them, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." (Isa. 43:21).

Let us begin with Abraham. Unto him God promised a son when he was about an hundred years old, and Sarah his wife being ninety was past the normal time of life for child bearing; but Abraham believed God, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness; and if we believe him it shall be accounted unto us for righteousness also. But this belief must be given unto us from above. (Phil. 1:29) In the set time Sarah did conceive and bare a son, and Abraham called his name Isaac: and of him God said, "And I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him." That covenant is in full force today. However, before that Isaac was born, Sarah had become concerned that Abram, (as she and he were first called,) had no children, therefore she gave him Hagar her

Egyptian handmaid to wife, that she might obtain children by her. Hagar conceived by Abram, and when she had conceived she despised Sarah her mistress. Sarah told this to Abram, and he said unto her, "Do unto her as it pleaseth thee." And when Sarah dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face. But an angel of the Lord found Hagar and told her to return and submit herself to her mistress. And the angel said unto her, "I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude." Also, "Behold, thou art with child, and shall bear a son; and shall call his name Ishmael; because the Lord hath heard thy affliction. And he will be a wild man; and his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he will dwell in the presence of his brethren." Hagar therefore returned and Ishmael was born, and grew up as the son of Abram; but he was not the son that God promised Abraham afterward that would be born of his wife Sarah. And God said of Sarah, "And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her." Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, "Shall a child be born unto him that is a hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?" And Abraham said unto God, "O that Ishmael might live before thee!" And God said, "Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed, and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget and I will make of him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac." Can we not see here a line drawn between the elect people of God, typified by Isaac, and the non-elect by Ishmael? for Ishmael was born according to the will of the flesh, but Isaac according to the promise of God. Almost as soon as Isaac was born Ishmael began to mock him; and does not this mocking continue unto this day by his seed against the seed of Isaac? When Sarah saw the son of Hagar mocking she said unto Abraham, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac." This grieved Abraham, but God said unto him, "Let not this be grievous in thy sight - for in Isaac shall thy seed be called."

Let us now move forward to the days of Abraham's old age. He called his eldest servant and made him swear by the God of heaven and earth, that he should not take a wife unto his son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom he dwelt: but that he would go into the country from which God had called him out, and to his kindred to take a wife unto Isaac. The servant questioned what he should do if the woman would not be willing to return with him. Abraham told him that the Lord God would send his angel before him and that he should

take a wife unto his son from among his people, and, if the woman should not be willing, he would be clear of his oath: and he was not to take a wife unto Isaac from among the Canaanites under any circumstances.

It is our understanding that Isaac was a type of Jesus Christ, and the wife that should be taken for him was a figure of the church. The servant was not to do the choosing, but God; and he prayed unto God to shew him in a particular way who this woman should be. Even before he was done praying to God Rebekah came out to him, for she was the chosen one. She was of Abraham's kindred, for she was the daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, Abraham's brother. "She was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her." As a type of the church these were qualifications that were absolutely necessary, for she must be holy, and without blame before him in love; and in the Song of Solomon she is described as "the fairest among women," and "as the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters." Rebekah quickly took him to her kindred, and after he had informed them of his mission, he asked if she would go with him, and they said unto him, "This thing proceedeth from the Lord: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good. Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken." And they called Rebekah and said unto her, "Wilt thou go with this man?" And she said, "I will go." She could in no wise refuse, for God hath called his people with a holy calling, and it would not be a holy calling if it could be rejected. And God had said, "Thy people shall be a willing people in the day of thy power." Therefore she willingly went with him to be the wife of Isaac. And when she had come to Isaac he took her to his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her.

After Sarah died Abraham again took a wife and she bare him sons. And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac. But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, into the east country. Here again we see a separation of the elect of God and the non-elect.

Isaac's wife Rebekah was barren, and he entreated the Lord for her. And the Lord was entreated and Rebekah conceived, and the children struggled in her womb and she wondered, Why? She inquired of the Lord, and he said unto her, "Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger," Paul said of this in Romans 9, "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger." And, "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." God's hatred is just as holy as his love, and not the hatred of the flesh, for there is no

unrighteousness with God. God forbid! "For he said unto Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." Also, "And whom he will he hardeneth." Does he not have the right to do with his own as seemeth good in his sight? God has a purpose in all things, and he brings them to pass, for "he doeth his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand." In this we again see the line between the elect and the non-elect. God hath mercy upon his elect children, and by his grace he gave them eternal life in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world; but the non-elect he hath left to perish in their sins. He is just and holy in all of this, and could not be less so had he left all people to perish in their sins, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Esau and Jacob were the sons of Isaac and Rebekah. Esau was a hunter, and Isaac loved him because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob. Esau sold his birthright (he being the firstborn,) to Jacob for a mess of red pottage. Would we not do the same if God did not restrain us? But God has bestowed his grace upon us that we should eat only of that food that cometh down from above, which is the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. If we eat his flesh and drink his blood we have eternal life, and he will raise us up at the last day. If we do not eat and drink his flesh and blood we have no life in us. (John 6: 53-54.)

Jacob was a deceiver or supplanter as his name implies, and when Isaac was old and could not see, with the urging and help of his mother he deceived his father that he might receive the blessing that should have been bestowed upon Esau. Being deceived into believing that Esau was before him, Isaac bestowed his blessing upon Jacob; and when he knew that he had been deceived he yet said, "I have blessed him, yea, and he shall be blessed." He also blessed Esau, but with a lesser blessing. (Read for yourself in the 27th chapter of Genesis the blessings of each.) And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father had blessed him, and he purposed in his heart to slay his brother, but Rebekah was told of this and she hurriedly sent Jacob away to her brother Laban from whom she had been brought to be the wife of Isaac. She also had another reason for sending him away, for she did not desire to live any longer if Jacob should take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as those which were of the daughters of the land. Isaac also called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him not to take a wife from among the Canaanites, but from among the daughters of Laban, Rebekah's brother. When Esau saw that which was done, that the daughters of Canaan pleased not his father or mother, then he went and took a wife from among them. Is not this the way of all flesh? We seek to avenge ourselves instead of waiting upon the Lord: but it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Sorrow shall surely overtake us if we undertake to avenge ourselves.

As Jacob fled from Esau he came to a certain place, and there he lay down to sleep. And he dreamed that he saw angels ascending and descending a ladder that reached unto the heaven, and the Lord stood above it. In his dream the Lord told him that he was God, saying, I AM the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac," And God gave unto him great promises, and he said, "Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." All of the people of God are represented in Jacob, or Israel as he was later called of God, and these precious promises apply to them also. And, as we quoted at the beginning, "For the LORD'S portion is his people - and he kept him as the apple of his eye." As with Jacob, the Lord finds all of his people in a desert land and waste howling wilderness. Does this not describe perfectly the world in which we live, and also our sinful flesh? We were polluted in our own blood, and cast out in the day that we were born: but God looked upon us and said, "Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live." (Ezek. 16:6). As surely as he speaks this unto each of us in his own time, we live. Jesus said, "The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." Only the ones that hear his voice shall ever live, and that life is eternal. I have not found in the Holy Scriptures nor in my experience (if I have had an experience of grace) that he has taken any out of this desert land and waste howling wilderness while he yet lives in the flesh. He leads us about, and instructs, and keeps us as the apple of his eye; yet, in seasons, he hides his face from us, leaving us in darkness, and we know not how to find our way. We become very barren, thirsty and hungry. We become poor and needy and seek water and there is none, and our tongue fails us for thirst. It is then that we cry unto the Lord and he hears us; for he said, "I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them, I will open rivers in high places, and foundations in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and dry land springs of water." These are soul refreshing waters, and we are made once again to rejoice in his love and mercy. Jesus said, "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." What beautiful promises these be!

When Jacob's dream was ended and he awoke, he said, "Surely the Lord was in this place and I knew it not." Jacob saw and heard God, but not as his God, for he had not yet been given faith to believe; and he vowed saying, "If he will be with me, and will keep me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God." Jacob was attempting to put God under his conditions, not knowing that he was in the way the Lord was directing, and that the Lord would

provide all his needs. Is this not what all of us have done when we knew him not? Paul thought he was in the right way and doing service unto the Lord until he was stopped in his way. But, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps." Then Paul was made to say, "Who art thou, Lord? And after Jesus had revealed himself unto him, his question was, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Our question is the same, and the answer is the same: it will be told us what we MUST do. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps," "A man's heart deviseth his way; but the Lord directeth his way." "In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instructions, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man." If we could devise and carry out our own purpose we would be filled with pride: and pride cometh before the fall. Praise God that he directs our way!

Jacob traveled on until he came into the land of Abraham's nativity, and to his uncle's house. There he found Rachel, the daughter of Laban his uncle, and he immediately kissed her and wept, for she was the one he would love and labor for. Laban had two daughters, and the elder was Leah. Leah was tender eyed; but Rachel was beautiful and well favoured. Here we see Rachel as a type or figure of the church, which is beautiful and well favoured, the bride of our Lord Jesus Christ. Laban said unto Jacob, "Surely thou art my bone and my flesh." And Paul tells us of Christ that, "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Can we not see how beautifully the old and new Scriptures are in harmony?

Jacob loved Rachel, and when Laban asked what his wages should be, he said, "I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter." To this Laban agreed, and when Jacob had served his seven years for Rachel, (and they seemed but as a few days to him because of his love for her,) he said unto Laban, "Give me my wife, that I may go in unto her," But Laban beguiled Jacob and gave him Leah instead. When Jacob demanded why this was done Laban said, "It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn." Laban was only carrying out the custom of the land. It was customary at that time for a man to have more than one wife, therefore Laban said, "Fulfill her week, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve me yet seven other years." Jacob therefore fulfilled her week, and Rachel was then given him to wife, and he went in unto her. And he loved Rachel more than Leah, and he served Laban seven other years for her. The Scriptures do not tell us that he served anytime for Leah, but the fourteen years he served were for Rachel. And when the Lord saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb: but Rachel was barren. When Leah bare her first three sons she thought these might turn Jacob's love to her, but they did not. When she bare her fourth son she then said, "Now will I praise the Lord: therefore

she called his name Judah; and left bearing." It was from the tribe of Juda, (or Judah,) that our Lord sprang forth as our High Priest. Do we not also fail to praise the Lord for all things, and not just the good? even if we praise him then.

Both Rachel and Leah did as Abraham's wife Sarah: each gave her maid to Jacob to wife; and both bare him sons. After this Leah bare two more sons and a daughter. Then God opened Rachel's womb and she bare a son whom she called Joseph, and she said, "The Lord shall add to me another son." And it came to pass as her soul was departing, (for she died) and she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin.

Jacob was the father of twelve sons by his wives Rachel and Leah, and these became the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel and Judah.

Dear brethren, I have barely touched upon a few of the things that I had purposed to write about, but already this had become lengthy and I must stop. If God be willing, I will continue it in the near future. Again I say, search the Scriptures to see if these things be in accord with the truth.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

HEBREWS 10:23.

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brother and Sister Williams:

I wonder what makes it so hard to send what you have written. Every word is the truth and I love when folks share their thoughts and spiritual experiences with me - yet there always seems to be a hesitance in me to send a letter to the Signs. If we knew it would mean anything spiritually to anyone I could freely send it without a worry. I believe I sent in my experience a long time back. I could tell it every day and relish it, it is my meat and drink. I love telling it for all glory is God's - I would never have known Him but for His drawing Love.

I hope the joy in my heart this morning is because of the appearing of Jesus. Paul said "There is a Crown of Righteousness laid up for me, and not for me only, but for all those who love His appearing." And I believe if not totally mistaken, I know and love His appearing. I was raking leaves this morning and my mind was so full of the meeting at Friendship Church near white House and the song 276 was going over and over in my mind and the line that says "My glittering crown appears in view gave me much thought I had never thought of the crown Paul spoke of, it seemed that if I was one so blessed to be taken to heaven, that was enough, but I love the song. We've just recently learned the tune, it gives

such sweetness of soul and my heart seemed full of that sweetness as I raked leaves. I wore myself out talking, and wished for someone to talk to. I looked over at my neighbors house and wished I could share my beautiful thoughts. I notice more writers speak of their unworthiness and their down sittings than their joys. It is when (I hope) the Holy Spirit comes in with its good tidings that my heart swells, and almost bursts to talk and shout it from the housetop one is just as much praise to God as the other. While I was thus filled with thoughts of Praise. I thought of the time I was wandering along in a worldly wilderness lost, and did not know it. When God turned my thoughts and mind toward Him it was then I thought about Salvation, and wanted it, but was so far away how could I find it.

I wanted what my parents had I guess I've always believed the Primitive Baptist was the true church. I tried to read the Bible, may be that was the way to find salvation. Well you (talk about a sealed book) I could not read it. It didn't seem to be what I needed, yet I knew it was the true word of God.

I spent a lot of time thinking about these things and wanted something - I thought (after much trying to understand) of an old saying "There's a black sheep in every family, and perhaps that is why I can't know what to do. I felt burdened, I was morally clean, for I had been brought up in a good way. I would go to baptisings and other demonstrations and so wished I could be like them (as I thought them to be) but there was a block. I was sure as I could be that nothing could make me feel I was saved and express it in words and join any church. I now believe it was God making me ready for His appearing.

One morning I was doing the regular chores and noticed I was filled with a joy I could not understand. It would take too long to tell all the thoughts and questions that went through my mind concerning this joy. It was different and it went on two or three days. I often think about the third day it became so strong I stopped washing dishes and went and sat down to try to understand the reason for this joy. I sat a long time as tho in a spell cast upon me and I thought of God. The moment I did it seemed as though He were in the room and if I reached out my hand I would touch Him. It was such a wonderful feeling, I was almost afraid to move lest I would lose it. I wanted to go look out the back door - felt sure there was a sign in the sky that it was from God. Finally I (tho feeling a little foolish) went to the door and looked out. Nothing was there, no sign, my heart fell in sadness and while standing there pondering these things, it was as tho a voice said "The change is not out there - it is within you. You've been baptised with the Holy Spirit and your hearts been washed in the blood of the Lamb. (I could hardly believe it) so this was why all the joyous feelings I had been feeling. I will never be able to tell how my mind soared upward and as I write this now. I believe I became a new creature, I feel every line of the song 215 in the Goble book- it says better than I can. Like the song

147 in Lloyds book, I think of it each time we sing it. Is not my case amazing, what a saviour I have found (or found me).

This stayed with me I really don't know how long and I was so happy I thought I would never be sad or disturbed about salvation again. But it would fill a large book to tell how sadly I discovered the barren places, the dry desert without water. I think satan really works in those places and would (if possible) keep us there. But thanks be to God, who cares for us that satan can only go so far.

This is the way God was pleased to bring me into the knowledge and love of Him. He has been so gracious and merciful to me in His dealings about the way I should go. He led me to many green pastures and through many dark valleys and the shadow of death. But somehow I felt that He was always there and with me. It is such a mystery.

I now and then after this experience read the Bible and with enough understanding that it seems to me. Whereas before I couldn't read it with any sense at all. I am jumping from one thing to another in thinking of how I was brought to hope in God.

I heard a brother tell this, he was loading firewood on to a wheelbarrow and had it loaded and heard a bird chirping somewhere in the wood. He tried to find it, finally unloaded the wood, no bird anywhere. He loaded it again and the same thing happened. He told me how many times he loaded and unloaded it and it suddenly was made known to him it was God. I believe God uses many ways and means to cause his children's minds to turn to Him. He draws their minds in the way best suited to the person.

I believe His doctrine falls into their hearts and distills, as the dew - then at the right time and purpose of God they are quickened by His spirit and made to know Him. No matter how small, or insignificant it might seem to be, there is power enough with it to cause them to know it was not from man, and they are caused to walk in a way that pleases Him.

Oh how I often wish it was possible to retain that spirit and never let it go, but as brother Wayman said in his article "How would we ever grow in grace. My experience teaches me that we must go through many trials and feel forsaken, feel many long periods of fasting to make us realize it is not in man to direct his steps.

We would (in nature) many times go around these things. If so how would we know or long for His appearance? Many time, I've gone so long suffering this barrenness to the point, I actually fear and wonder "Is it possible that I may have imagined this beautiful (born again feeling?) that is a fearful feeling indeed.

We go to the scriptures for comfort and find much written about the "fear of God." I think, if He has taught us to love Him and honor Him, who is spotless and pure. We also fear Him who has all power in heaven and earth. I think I know to fear Him but words won't comfort us. The Spirit alone can give us peace and free from fear. So having all these things as witnesses may we with patience run the race set before us - laying aside all the weight,

worries and sin, according to the measure of faith He has given us. By nature I am not a patient person, tho lately, a few times, (tho far from God) I am given a little patience and wait in hope of His appearing again. I feel now I could write a book, I hope this will mean something to somebody, tho satan has already whispered "tear it up".

Lucile Young,
Memphis Church,
Memphis, Tenn.

Roanoke Virginia
April 25, 1993

Dear Elder and Sister Williams,

In sending in my renewal to the Signs, my mind began to remember you both, because of seeing and hearing you at County Line the few times you have been there. Also I thought back to April (3rd Sun) 1933 when I was baptized with three others. Only two of us still living.

I was born in Will County, Illinois Oct. 21, 1910, as you can see I am now 82 years old. As a member for 60 years, I was 22 years old when baptized. I subscribed to the Signs in Aug. or Sept. in 1933 nearly 60 years ago and have been taking it ever since. We learn "of" many things as to events, in trials and sorrows, but ever, and always having to ask for the Lord's gracious mercy.

When I read the 11th Ch., 29th verse of St. Matthew, I ponder in my mind of these words in particular, "And learn of me" rested in my heart. Not learn just about me but "Of me". Do I know Him? Do I see and feel Him as my Redeemer. I believe I was shown I was lost. There is a seeking, there is a need of rest, and only god can show the lost condition of a sinner. And can give rest. Learn "Of" Him!

In the year of 1932 Elder H.V. Cole preached God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost these "3" are One, and preceeded upon that "Oneness". I have not forgotten how Eld. Cole looked, but in his declaring that "Oneness" it so spoke the teaching that is needed, the learning "Of" Him that grants Peace and the needed mercy. It seemed to flow all around and in my heart. All from and in the Lord Jesus Christ. Becoming flesh so as to lay it down in the redeeming price, for poor one's that had not a way. Jesus has said "I am the Way, Truth, and the Life, and He gave it. I hope I am one, though so unworthy. Why am I called an Old Baptist? I have heard many beliefs expressed. Not from parents, grandparents or even great grandparents, even though many were called Old School Primitive Baptists. I love what I was told all of those believed, but I did not know until after several years being a member. There may be loud thunderings, earthquakes, etc., yet it comes in, or came in a still small voice, to and in the heart. When I was about 12 1/2 years old, as I stood one cold day, ice covering all the trees and land. We were not allowed to go to school because of the danger of falling trees across the roads. As I looked at a beautifully formed tree sparkling in the sun shin-

ing up on the ice on it. It seemed to come alive and moved toward me with something that demanded perfection. I had none, and I seemed to dissolve into a mess of ugly corruption. Then a light soft, and full of Life came in, lifted me up and away from corruption into a feeling of being accepted. Only in that wondrous gracious mercy that seemed to be given me! Was it a delusion of mind? Even so, I have not yet forgotten the utter corruption and the being lifted up and away from it, as mercy and love seem to flow. When I went in doors my mother looked at me strangely and said, You knew it was cold outside. I was shaking, but I did not feel the cold. A fear, and a Hope that I was lifted away from utter corruption. Imagination! Maybe, but I yet remember it.

County Line Church was organized in 1869, not as old as some places of worship is. There has not been but 3 clerks since then, the first one a charter member, when County Line came into existence, and served until 1916 or 1917.

My grandfather Elder Ash D. Shortt was pastor (after Elder Amos Dickerson the first to serve) for 35 years. I was only 6 1/2 years old when grandpa died, so I do not remember much about him, and only through reading some of his writings in Zions Landmark, Messenger Of Truth papers.

The last time Grandpa went into the stand, he had to be carried in, and as he sat and listened to two others he motioned for the testament, and read Eph. 2:1-3 and Eph. 2:4-9. This recorded by the 1st. clerk, What is interesting to me, may not be of interest to you or others, but to me may mean much, as it gives me some idea of his mind.

If you do not read through this, I will understand, I hope you may visit us again at County Line. "In Rock Of Ages" hymn, a line in 3rd verse "Simply to thy cross I cling" is expressing my feelings as well as an 98 year old member in a nursing home, said to us as she stretched forth both hands, I Cling to that Cross.

Humbly,
Catherine A. Houchins

ARTICLES

MARK 16:15 REVISITED

The instruction, or authority given by Christ, to carry out any action should be seriously considered and followed in this day if the circumstances, under which they were given, apply. If there is some question, or seemed vagueness about the application, the incidence that follows in the scripture and what the disciples did will often give further light on the lessons that are taught. This would seem to be the case in Mark 16:15. "And he said to them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Similar verses are also in Matt. 28:19, and Luke 24:47.

In discussing this subject among brethren some feel strongly that the scripture just cited should be taken literally and applied today. Others

seem to feel that since the "commission" of Christ was after the resurrection that it applies to all them that are spiritual and thus to be carried out by ministers today, although the preaching will only be spiritually heard by believers.

There is no intent here to cause confusion or controversy, but would ask that the scriptures be examined in the light of the circumstances then and also in light of things that followed, according to the scriptures. Consider the following:

1. The Jews did not consider the Gentiles to have any part in any of the promises or heritage of God. Jews were the "chosen" people. Jesus himself said, "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," when the Gentile woman from Tyre and Sidon came asking for mercy on her daughter who was vexed with a devil. Matt. 15:24. Jesus, in effect, called her a dog when saying, "It is not meet to take the Children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." Matt. 15:26. With this background, and more, it seems only reasonable that the disciples, when they heard him say, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature", would have questioned him sharply if they had thought that the gentiles were included. But, they had no questions. It was agreeable with their understanding that this was the religious world of his chosen people, the Jews. Religion and the religious world was what was under consideration - not geography.

2. It follows naturally then, that they which were scattered following the persecution that arose about Stephen "traveled as far as Phenice and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but the Jews only." Acts 11:19. This would have been in contradiction to Jesus's instructions if the "world" that Jesus spoke of had included the Gentiles.

3. On the day of Pentecost there were Jews dwelling at Jerusalem," ....devout men, out of every nation under heaven." Acts 2:5. They were there for the feast day. When they heard about what had happened they came together, the Jews, and marveled that they heard the apostles speak in the native tongue of the nation from which they came, Acts 2:6-11. There is no evidence that any Gentile experienced this great event. The fact that the Gentiles also had a part in the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ had not then been manifest.

4. When Peter was called to go down to the house of Cornelius, Acts Chap. 10, he told Cornelius it was unlawful for him, a Jew, to keep company, or to come into one of another nation, meaning the Gentiles. But, the reason that Peter gave for coming was that God had showed him, in the vision on the housetop, of a vessel like a great sheet, "....that I should not call any man common or unclean." It is important to note that Peter did not refer back to the "commission" of Christ as his authority for coming down to Cornelius. In fact no scripture writer appears to ever again refer to the "commission" as their authority for doing anything. Nor is it ever referred to except in places like Acts 10:42,

where an overview of the gospel of Christ and a sequence of events is being given.

5. Those of the circumcision, or Jews, that were with Peter at the house of Cornelius "....were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 10:44. Why should they have been amazed if Christ, in Mark 16:15 had truly meant that they were to go into all the natural world, including the Gentiles, or if there had been Gentiles present at the day of Pentecost? Christ spoke plainly. Did they not understand? No. They understood correctly, they were to go to the Jew only - the Hebrews. The good news of the gospel was first to be preached to the Jew. It was not shown until Peter's vision on the house top and the following experience at the house of Cornelius that salvation was to the Jew and Gentile alike. This further revelation, that the Gentiles were also to receive the gospel, was given through Peter, who was given the keys of the kingdom. This shows the great importance of apostolic authority, through the Spirit. The scripture states that Jesus taught until the day he was taken up," ....after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen." Acts 1:1,2. This then was one of the commandments given to Peter, and is a further step in the progress of the gospel revelation.

6. If there is yet any doubt that the disciples understood, and understood correctly, that the gospel was to the Jew only, as of the time of the commission of Mark 16:15, then read Acts 11:1-17. "And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, "Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumsized, didst eat with them." It should be noticed that they did not compliment him, or in any way condone his action, which they should have done if indeed the instructions of Christ truly was to go into all the literal world and preach the gospel to the whole Adamic race. Peter had to defend himself.

7. Until it was revealed that the gospel and salvation was to the Gentile as well as the Jew, which was by Peter's revelation and his experience at the house of Cornelius, there was no need for an apostle to the Gentiles. But now, the time was right, the need existed and the purpose of God was further revealed when one Saul of Tarsus, on his way to Damascus was shined about by a light from heaven and instructed by Jesus. Acts 9:1-9 The disciple Ananias was instructed by Jesus to go to Saul (apostle Paul). ".... the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles ...." Acts 9:15.

8. When Paul and Barnabas came to Antioch in Pisidia they went into the synagogue and were ask to speak, Acts 13: 14-15. But, on the second day the Jews were filled with envy and spake against them. "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but

seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." Acts 13:46.

Paul, it should be noted, had not yet been called, and was not present when Jesus gave the "commission" as recorded in Mark 16:15. He received his "commission" at a later time, or about the time that Peter had the revelation on the housetop showing that Gentiles were also cleansed and were to receive the gospel, which was manifest by the Holy Spirit.

Considering the points just presented, it would seem that there was a progressive order to the revelation of the gospel, in the early apostolic age, and also an order concerning when and to whom it was to be preached. The order would seem to be as follows:

A. Jesus himself began his ministry after being baptised by John and tempted of the devil. "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. 4:17.

B. The twelve apostles were given unusual powers and sent, apparently to the Jews in the southern portion of the divided kingdom, Juda, and not to the Gentiles nor to the northern portion of the divided kingdom which was Samaria. Matt. 10:1-5.

C. Seventy disciples were sent into every city and place which Jesus would come Luke 10:1. The territory to which they were to go appears to be expanded to the northern kingdom of Samaria, because we see in John 4:4, that Jesus "....must needs go through Samaria." So the expanded territory of the gospel now included all of the native land of the Hebrews - both Judah and Samaria. But the Jews (Hebrews) were scattered to other parts of the world as well.

D. Mark 16:15. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." This sends the disciples to other lands beyond Judah and Samaria where the Jews had been scattered. This includes the Jews everywhere. Some of these are the Jews that were gathered together on the day of Pentecost. Jews, devout men out of every nation under heaven. Acts 2:5. See also Col. 1:23.

E. Peter was shown, in the housetop revelation, Acts 10:9-16, that the Gentiles, which had been considered unclean, were also cleansed by the blood of Christ. Although the salvation, that was to the Gentiles also, had been spoken of in prophecy and also by Jesus, see John 10:16, and other places, this housetop revelation and the following experience at the house of Cornelius was the first revelation, to the disciples, that the gospel of salvation was to be preached to the Gentiles.

F. Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles and was called for this purpose. Since the authority for the preaching of the gospel was through the hands of the apostles it is understandable that the calling of the apostle, that was to the Gentiles, was not until the revelation was made that the gospel was also to the Gentiles. Thus the step by step, or progressive revelation of the gospel and the purpose of

how it was to be carried forward was established and completed - precept upon precept.

Although the evidence of the scriptures would seem to deny that the "commission" in Mark 16:15 was universal, nor any more applicable to the church today than is the "commission" where Jesus sent out the 70. Luke 10:1, it should in no way be inferred that the gospel should not be preached, both then and now. It simply means that the "commission" of Jesus was carried out then and that Mark 16:15 is not the authority for the gospel message today, any more than it was at the house of Cornelius.

The scriptural accounting of the events are rather for our learning in viewing some of the marvelous ways that Christ has provided for his bride, and to show again that "....there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven." There was a time for the gospel to be revealed and preached to the Jews and a different time for the Gentiles. Both were by the authority of God and in the instructions given to the apostles.

There are many examples in scripture that demonstrate that the gospel is to be proclaimed today. But they are directed to none other than "....the vessels of mercy, which he hath afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?" ("What if" omitted) Rom. 9:23, 24. Considering that the scriptures are only to and for the benefit of the church and the children of God, and do themselves testify to this fact, 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:20, one does not have to look far for a "commission", or authority that fits these latter days. Such authority that fits these latter days. Such authority seems to be primarily in two areas: First, feeding the flock of God is clearly stated in 1 Pet. 5:2. "Feed the flock of God which is among you..." The second would seem to apply to those without, but does not exclude those within the church, and is expressed in Jude 3 "...ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints." See also Phil. 1:27, 28 and others. In Matt. 24:14 we see that the gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come. This, unlike Mark 16:15, does proclaim the universal nature of God's workings, and it will be done through the manifold ways of the calling of God's ministers.

Perhaps an additional consideration should be given to the two areas that are expressed above. In a more personal way the individual saints are to put on the gospel, as is expressed in the 6th Chapter of Ephesians. In putting on the whole armor of God we are to have our "....feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." Eph. 6:15. "....and having done all, to stand." Eph. 6:13. This armor of God is defensive, thus the people stand - not attack. But in this defense the brilliant flashing of the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, pro-

claims the gospel in a magnificence that will be seen with rejoicing by his people in every kindred, nation and tongue.

Elder Wayman G. Chapell

If Jehovah is infinite in all His ways,
Giving life to man and numbering his days,
Did He not have a right in His sinless decree
To mark out the way both for you and for me?
If He did decree just what we should do
I can't arraign Him: brethren, can you?

If all things were in the decree of His will
And all things are working the same to fulfill,
Who but a vile sinner too wicked to bow
Would call Him to question, or say, What doest thou?
If He did decree the sad death of His holy Son,
The sinless, the righteous, the most holy One,
And this did not make Him the author of sin,
To make Him the author where will you begin?

Will you begin with Judas whose acts were foretold
And as was determined his Master sold?
Did not the dear Saviour say, Woe to that man?
I go as determined in God's holy plan.
If Pharoah be one you think would no doubt
Prove that God's purpose was not carried out,
Did not God command him by Moses you know,
"Thus saith Jehovah, Let my people go."

Yet I will harden, yea, harden his heart
That he will refuse, and not let them depart
Till I bring my just plagues on all your foes
And thus get me honour on him and his hosts.
But sinners most wicked will oft Him arraign
And against His just counsel they often complain
And say if He decreed all things to the end
Then He is unjust and the author of sin.

The heathen may rage and imagine vain things
The lowest, the highest, yea, even their kings
And shout till the world hear the sound of their din
The author, the author, the author of sin.
But his saints will still praise Him and shout as they go,
Jehovah, most holy, all things doth foreknow.
His counsel did settle just how they should be,

So shout on you heathen, you don't disturb me.

We learn from an angel that time shall soon end
And saints shall be welcomed by Jesus their friend.
This established by holy decree
For thus it is written and thus it shall be.
If all things are certain, how came they so?
If they were not certain, how would God foreknow?
Were all things to which foreknowledge relate
Made certain by the old heathen goddess of fate?

We surely all know at thought and a glance
Things were not left to haphazard chance.
Will someone tell me, that I may see,
How things can be certain yet uncertain be?
Now while you are thinking I'll come to a halt.
If you don't get the point, it isn't my fault.
But brother, please tell me how this thing could be
That all things were made certain without a decree.

Author Unknown

PSALM 61:2.

"From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I."

VOICES OF THE PAST

"Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him." Psalm lxii. 8.

Have we not sometimes been enabled to pour out our hearts at a throne of grace, and tell the Lord what we really wanted, what we really asked for, and tell him that nothing but that which he alone could give would satisfy our souls? There have been such times of access to the God of grace. And afterwards perhaps we have forgotten the things we told him of; we have been heedless of the prayers we laid at his feet; and though very earnest at the time in seeking after certain blessings, we left them at the Lord's feet and forgot them all. But the Lord does not forget them; they are treasured up in his heart and memory; and in his own time he brings them to light, and gives the fulfillment of them. But before he does it, he will bring us into the spot where we want them again; and then we have to tell him, and supplicate and ask him again, ashamed of ourselves perhaps that we should have asked the Lord for these blessings and been as heedless of them as though we did not care to receive them at his hand; but still, under trouble, under soul necessity, under grief, we go and tell him again. And then the Lord, in his own time and

way, brings about the very things we desired of him; opens up ways, lifts out of trials, removes burdens, makes a way in the deep, which no eye but his could see, and no hand but his could open, - leads the soul into it, brings the soul through it, and then hides all glory from the creature, by making us fall down before his feet, and ascribe glory and honour and power and thanksgiving and salvation unto God and the Lamb.

J.C. Philpot

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 6 / 93 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

From Elder Lamberts book, "Tried In The Furnace".

THE TRANSFIGURATION ON THE MOUNTAIN

Signs of the Times, June 1938

Elder E.J. Lambert

In my mind the transfiguration on the mountain was the most beautiful scene to be witnessed by man on this earth. If it pleases God to enable me, I desire to write of some of the beauties I see in meditation upon the grand story. Jesus took Peter and John and James and went up into a mountain to pray. He chose the ones to go with him. He did not give a broad opportunity to the multitudes, disciples or apostles, with the invitation "whosoever will," but "took" a special three of his special twelve of the disciples. These three that He took with Him up into the mountain were the same three that He took with Him down into the garden of Gethsemane. Peter, John and James not only witnessed the most agonizing scene, when Jesus was agonizing in prayer and sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, but also witnessed the most beautiful scene of His transfiguration. The thought we get from this fact is that those who are destined to suffer the greatest afflictions and tribulations in the valley of distress are also blessed to experience the greatest joys and brilliancy in the mountain of gladness. Peter, John and James must have not been of the progressive type of Christians we have today, who seem to think Jesus needs help. Instead of helping Jesus pray they were "heavy with sleep" both in the garden of Gethsemane and also on the mountain of transfiguration. "As he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias."

The questions that come to mind are, Who was Moses? and who was Elias? We find that the law was given to Moses by Jehovah. The law is referred to in the Bible as "the law of

Moses? (Ezra 7:6; Neh. 8:1; Ezra 6:18). The ten commandments on tables of stone, together with ordinances, were given to Moses, who taught the law to the people. We find Moses connected with the law all along, therefore we conclude that Moses represented the law in that trio of talkers on the mountain.

Who was Elias? Elias was that great prophet who predicted the drouth to king Ahab (1 Kings 17:1). Elias hid at the brook Cherith and was miraculously fed by the ravens. He raised a widow's son and contested with Baal's prophets, by whom God manifested Himself as God. He later slew these prophets at Kishon (1 Kings 18). God so blessed him and honored him that Elias ascended into heaven (2 Kings 2:11). He was the most honored of the prophets, therefore we conclude that Elias represented prophecy in that trio of talkers on the mountain.

The third in that trio was Jesus Christ. They spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem (Luke 9:31). In meditation, we hear Moses, representative of the law, giving the requirements of the law, that the law must be kept, and punishment for disobedience of the law must be meted out and justice satisfied. We hear Elias, representing prophecy, saying that these requirements of the law, and penalty for disobedience, will be completed and justice satisfied. Then we hear Jesus saying, Think not that I am come to destroy the law (Moses), or the prophets (Elias); I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. Then Moses and Elias departed and Jesus was left alone. Peter said, Let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, one for Moses and one for Elias, not knowing what he said. In my experiences I have wanted to make three tabernacles. I have desired to live up to the law requirements of duty as we read in Ecclesiates 12:13, "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Thus erect a tabernacle to Moses. I have desired to fulfill prophecy, in accomplishing the warfare and obtaining pardon for my iniquities (Isaiah 40:2). Thus erect a tabernacle to Elias. And at the same time I have desired to pay homage to that Scripture which reads, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:8-10). Thus erect a tabernacle to Jesus. In my experience there was a time when I verily thought the law, prophecy and grace were contrary. As Peter, I could not see how the three tabernacles could be constructed in one. While Peter was in a confused state of mind the God of heaven spoke thus from the cloud, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him." It was needless to build three tabernacles. The law of Moses and the prophecy of Elias were being

fulfilled by Jesus Christ. This command from the clouds (I verily believe) removes the seeming contradiction of the Scriptures. The requirements of the law must be met, and Jesus was the only One who did it. Prophecy must be fulfilled, and Jesus was the only One who did it. Therefore, pay no more heed to the law and the prophets, for they were fulfilled by Jesus.

"Jesus was left alone." Yes, He was sufficient to tread the winepress alone. He did not need Moses and Elias any longer. His services pleased the God of heaven. It so pleased the Father that this command from the clouds means (to me), pay no more attention to the law and the prophets, for they were fulfilled in Jesus Christ, therefore, "Hear ye Him." What do we hear Him saying? We hear Him saying, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." "I am the door, by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture" (John 10:9). "No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day: (John 6:44). we are made to realize we are not saved according to our power or works, but according to the power of God, who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began (2 Tim. 1:9). Therefore, the law system has disappeared as Moses disappeared. This law system was not destroyed, but fulfilled by Jesus Christ. If I am one who was chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the law for me, and my account is so accredited. All the sins that I have committed, or will commit, were laid upon Jesus' shoulders and He bore them on the cross and paid the penalty by shedding His precious blood for me.

Brethren, my mind has traveled faster than I could write, and I know this is very imperfect and scattering, but may God be pleased to enable us by His grace to feast upon some of the beauties contained in the record of the transfiguration on the mountain.

Elder E.J. Lambert

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 1993

Mrs. Ella Simpkins, VA In memory Frank Simpkins	$100.00
Tim Barron, TX	2.00
Russell Erbaugh, IL	20.00
O.P. Murphy, TX	100.00
Mrs. Ruby Barron, LA	2.00
Maurice Webb, IL	2.00
L.D. Conner, VA	7.00
H.L. Knight, Jr., NC	5.00
Mrs. Betty Nutter, MD	2.00
James Brown, TN	2.00
Tommy Wall, VA	7.00
S.R. Fanning, TN	2.00
Bill G. Clinton, CA	2.00
Mrs. Grace Berry, TX	20.00
Eld. W.G. Chapell, TN	20.00
Mrs. Lester Haning, WV	10.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER DELPHIS BLACK

Sister Black was born on June 6, 1907 in Carter County, Kentucky. She was the daughter of Elder H.L. and Martha Mullins Rogers. Her husband, Chester Black preceded her in death. Her survivors include: two brothers, Harmie Rogers, and Grover Rogers; four sisters, Madgel Rogers, Lorene Bellew, Irene Watson and Mayve Cooksey; and a host of other relatives and friends.

Sister Black was a faithful member of the Lost Creek Primitive Baptist Church at Denton, Kentucky. We have many pleasant memories of our dear sister and her faithfulness in attending the meetings at home and with the sister churches until she was no longer able to go. She was also gracious in receiving the brethren and sisters into her home.

After a long illness, Sister Black passed from this life on February 18, 1993 at the age of eighty-five.

The funeral services were conducted by Elders W.P. O'Neal and J.B. Farmer and she was buried in East Carter Memory Gardens.

Her labors, sorrows and sufferings are over and she is now asleep, we hope, in Christ where she will be kept until His coming, at which He will receive His own unto Himself.

This was written by one who loved her, I hope in Truth, at the request of the Lost Creek Church in conference.

Approved in conference on April 4, 1993.

Elder J.B. Farmer, Moderator
Sister Sherry Farmer, Clerk

MEREDITH H. DENT

On February 14, 1993, GOD saw fit to call from our midst Meredith H. Dent whom I called brother, although he was not a member of the CHURCH he had a hope that CHRIST was his Savior. He believed in the finished work of GOD and not what man could do for his eternal salvation. He believed that GOD chose a people in his SON before the foundation of the world and all that he died for would be saved, and at his appearing that all that remained would be changed with those that are asleep in JESUS and be caught up together to meet him in the air to ever be with him. For we are sown in weakness and raised in power sown a natural body and raised a spiritual body, sown in corruption and raised incorruptible. Our loss is his eternal gain. Let us bow in humble submission to the will of GOD who does all things after the counsel of his will. He leaves to mourn his passing, his wife Ima Hodges Dent, two sons, one daughter, three grandchildren, three great grandchildren, two brothers, and one sister.

Services were conducted by Elder Ronald Crouch and Elder Harold Johnson. He was laid to rest at Mount Vernon Cemetery.

Written by request of the CHURCH.

Resolved:

One copy for the CHURCH records

One copy for the family

One copy to be sent to the Signs Of The Times.

Elder Ronald K. Crouch,
Moderator
Elder Harold R. Johnson,
Asst. Moderator
Brother William A. Johnson,
Clerk

SISTER MILDRED VIRGINIA DYKES

It is with sadness that one begins to write the obituary of Sister Mildred Dykes who died in the Salisbury Nursing Home on October 15, 1992. Her true friendship and fellowship in the church will be sorely missed. Yet our loss is her gain, for Sister Mildred's walk in life gave evidence that she was truly one of God's little children.

She was born on a farm on the Snow Hill Road near Salisbury, Maryland on September 23, 1900. Her parents were the late Alonzo Dykes, Sr. and Annie Belle Reddish Dykes. Her grandmother (Sally Ann Staton Reddish), whom she dearly loved, was a devout believer and member of the Nassaongo Old School Baptist Church. Sister Mildred often reminisced about that grandmother's unwavering steadfastness and staunch belief in her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

After graduating from the Wicomico High School in 1918 (when she presented the class history), Sister Mildred became a teacher for several years. Later she went to live with her brother Ralph and his family in Omaha, Nebraska. She returned to Salisbury in 1932 to give years of loving care to her aged parents. After their death she purchased a home in Salisbury, worked for various lawyers, and retired from the Maryland State Department of Unemployment in 1965. During this time she was given a hope in Christ Jesus and asked for a home in the church. She was baptized by the late Elder David V. Spangler and served the church faithfully as its clerk for many years. Her home was a haven for believers who came from afar.

Around 1987, after experiencing a devastating fall in her home, she sold it and entered the John B. Parsons Retirement Home in Salisbury. She continued to attend church services. Her health remained remarkably good except for the growing dimness in her only eye. In early adulthood she had suffered the loss of an eye due to the unsuccessful surgery of a doctor who was operating on her face for the painful malady of tic douleureux. Over the years she bore her loss with patience, never blaming her doctor.

In the fall of 1990, Sister Mildred fell in her room at the Parsons Home and broke her hip. Then began serious circulatory problems which resulted in the loss of one leg and confinement in three different nursing homes. But

through it all she remained cheerful and uncomplaining. Her nurses loved her. When she discovered that her leg had been severed at the knee she was glad for she had feared in her mind that she had no leg at all. Though her eyesight dimmed, her faith in her Lord did not. It was a joy to visit her and read (and sing) with her favorite hymns and nuggets of scripture most of which were still stored in her memory.

For over sixty years my sister and I knew, admired, and came to love Sister Mildred Dykes. For the last twenty years we were intimately associated with her in the church. We see her life as one of courage, hard work and personal sacrifice - many of life's natural joys were denied her but fellowship with her Lord was not. From a young girl she had been a student of the Bible and she loved it all her days. She was kind and compassionate and often helped others in need. But, like each of us, she was not perfect, and she knew this too. We feel blessed that God touched our lives with hers.

Sister Mildred is survived by several nieces and nephews. Her only surviving brother, Alonzo Dykes, Jr., died January 11, 1993.

Her funeral services were conducted by Elder C.B. Davis, Jr. at the Bounds Funeral Home in Salisbury. Elder Davis also knew the true Mildred Dykes. Interment was in the Wicomico Memorial Park Cemetery.

Submitted in Love,
Frances Parish
and
Alice Majors

SADIE WARD WALKER

It is with sad heart that I attempt to write this obituary of our dear Sister Sadie Ward Walker. It pleased our Lord to call her home on September 16, 1992 at the age of 84.

She was born in Rockingham County, N.C. on March 6, 1908, the daughter of Robert Thomas and Mary Elizabeth Pruitt Ward. She was married to George Walker who preceded her in death in 1959. There were no children born to this union. She is survived by one brother, Harry Ward of Danville, Va. and a number of nieces and nephews.

Sister Walker united with Dan River Church on August 28, 1960 and was baptized by her pastor, Elder D.V. Spangler. She was a faithful member, strong in the faith and loved the doctrine of salvation by grace. As she did not drive and had no car, she had to depend on her brothers and sisters of the church to carry her to its meetings.

Her funeral was held at Dan River Church on September 19, 1992 by her pastor, Elder Kenneth R. Key. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the coming of our Lord.

Written by request of Dan River Church.

Respectfully,
Connie M. Page

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1 TIMOTHY 3:16.

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

Signs of the Times

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GOD'S GRACE

God will teach his child of grace,
Though hard afflictions he will taste.
He'll learn about his love.

God's grace is sweet and so amazed,
The child of God has been abased,
But filled with things from above.

Tears of sadness will annoy,
But then there'll be the tears of joy'
He'll share with gifts of Zion.

Grace is the sweetest thing they'll know,
When God has entered in he'll show.
In love there is no time.

Their hearts will swell and almost burst!
When they witness the new birth,
This earth will not be seen.

For in the elected child of grace,
They only want the perfect way,
That leads them to their Lord and King.

To sing sweet songs and praise God's name,
To be healed from all earthly shame,
To live forever more.

To know that God has foreordained,
And in his care they will remain.
And new white robes they'll wear.

With this we hope to be a saint,
And worldly things won't make us faint,
Or lead us to despair.

For if God saved a wretch like me,
Mine ears to hear and eyes to to see,
Then none can deny,

That his elect was foreordained,
To have his love and will remain,
Will live, shall never die.

Kate Mathews

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EDITORIAL

ELDER R. H. CAMPBELL

am the good shepherd and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

There are many scriptures in both the old and new testaments which refer to the relationship of Christ and his church as that of a shepherd and his flock. Certainly, in natural terms, this is a very good analogy of the bond that exists between Jesus and his chosen people. They are his sheep because he bought and paid for them with his own precious blood and he knows everyone that is included in that flock. His sheep know him because at a certain time in their life he came to them and revealed himself to them and called them unto himself: and they will always remember and respond, to that voice that called them from nature's darkness. They acknowledge that but for that call they would have forever remained at home in the world, an alien from God and would have never known of the things that are so sweet and precious to them since that time. They will ever trust and depend upon him for all of their need because he is their only source of help.

David was a shepherd in the flesh, and as such knew the total commitment and devotion required on the part of the shepherd to provide the necessary care for the sheep and the extent to which that care must go. Sheep are the most defenseless of all animals, incapable of defending themselves and are totally dependent upon the shepherd for food, water, protection from the elements and enemies and for keeping them in the sheepfold at night and in the flock during the day. Knowing all of this, from experience and realizing that this very closely parallels the relationship between God and man David wrote the most beautiful psalm on this subject which is very dear to every child of grace. And comforts them on their journey in this wilderness of sin. They see and experience the truth and beauty of this psalm and realize it is an allegory of their travels here in this time world under the leadership of their shep-

herd. They are totally dependent upon him for all of their needs both natural and spiritual.

Isaiah writes, by the inspiration of God, "Comfort ye Comfort ye my people saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hands double for all her sins." This was written by one living under the law, which says, do and live, sin and die and yet he writes of comforting the Lord's people. This must have been strange to the people living in that day because the law demanded complete obedience and yet gave nothing in return, that was but what your duty was to do. Surely Isaiah is prophesying of a time that is to come; a time when there will be no striving under the law: a time when the law will be taken away. He speaks of the coming of the voice crying in the wilderness (John the Baptist) and Christ the glory of the Lord being revealed: the mountains being made low, the crooked places straight and the rough places plain. I don't believe even Isaiah understood fully what he was speaking of: Peter speaks of the prophets, inquiring and searching diligently who prophesied of the grace that should come; wondering what or what manner of time the spirit of Christ which was in them did signify. They did not understand fully where of they spake, but the one who inspired them knew and it is he that has fulfilled it here in our day. Isaiah also told how this comfort would come when he said, "Behold the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." This then is the way in which Jerusalem would be comforted, her warfare accomplished and her iniquity pardoned. The shepherd will come, whose sheep they are, will take the law of commandments out of the way, nailing it to his cross and secure their eternal salvation: he will also secure for them a rest from all their strife. Surely this is receiving more than double for all their sin.

We are living in that rest which the shepherd secured for his flock and we are comforted by his presence in our life. We face trials similar to those faced in Isaiah's day but we can look to and depend on the shepherd for help in time of need and believe the promise that no weapon that is formed against us, by the enemy, shall prosper.

Jesus said, speaking of himself as the shepherd, "the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out." A sheepfold is a place, in sheep country, where all flocks gather at night for protection from the beasts of the field: it is an enclosed area safe from danger where the flocks rest at night. In the morning when the shepherd comes to take them out to pasture he calls his sheep and they follow him. They are familiar with his voice, as distinct from all others, and each sheep responds

to the voice of their shepherd. As cowboys sing to herds of cattle to soothe them the shepherd sings and talks to his sheep to calm them and assure them that all is well. Jesus uses this illustration to show that only his sheep, his elect which he knows and calls by their name will respond to his voice: for they know and trust the voice that first called them from nature's darkness and has been with them since that time, manifestly. Jesus likewise told others, "But ye believe not, because you are not my sheep, as I said unto you, my sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me." He calls only those that are his, were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and none others. He came only to seek and to save those that were lost in the sheepfold of this world and to call them unto himself.

God's people are asked many times why they go hundreds of miles to attend church when there are churches all around home that would welcome them. The world cannot understand that church is not a social gathering unto the children of God but rather a place where the shepherd convenes his flock and they sit and hear his voice: none other will do regardless of how much scripture they may quote. The truth spoken by the shepherd is as those golden bells on the hem of the garments of the priest as he ministered in the holiest of holies offering the sacrifice for the sins of the people: as long as they heard the tinkling of the bells they knew that all was well and God was pleased with their offering. Hearing the voice of the shepherd gives the same comfort in this day because it encourages the children of God in their journey here in time: it strengthens their hope and faith that he is still at the right hand of God making intercession for their sins.

Surely this is the comfort that Isaiah is speaking of that will be in that day. The comfort in this day is because of the indwelling of the holy spirit in the hearts of the saints. As Paul wrote in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." They did not have the same intimate relationship with the shepherd in the same way and manner as the flock has in the gospel day. The shepherd has come into the world, made the sacrifice required by the law and returned unto the Father. Because he went unto the Father, he has sent the comforter which is the Holy Ghost to apply these truths to the heart of every heaven born soul: to comfort them in the midst of this world of sin and sorrow in which they live; even as Lot, whose righteous soul was vexed from day to day by the sin that surrounded him. The shepherd is able to deliver the godly out of temptation and reserve them unto himself for his own holy name's sake.

This is the better thing which we have in this day than those who died in faith under the law. The shepherd has come and is caring for the flock, supplying all of their need and leading

them in the paths of righteousness for his own name's sake.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Key,

I hope the Lord in heaven will bless me and enable me to write a few lines of the things on my mind in such a way that it may bring comfort to some of his little ones. It seems in my weak way and feeble attempts that what I write would accomplish nothing. But who knows the mind of the Lord, for through man's weakness his power and wisdom is made known, therefore if I do write this article, I am persuaded it will accomplish whatsoever purpose the Lord had for it to be written.

Heb. 10:16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.

I hope to write concerning the laws or covenants mankind has been under and are still under in their relationship with God.

The first law spoken to by God unto Adam, later to all Israel from fiery Mt. Sinai, was then delivered to them on tables of stone. This law which came from Mt. Sinai, was spoken of or called the letter that killeth, or the ministration of death. The people soon realized they couldn't hear or live up to the law given to them from this fiery mountain, so they besought God that they wouldn't again hear his voice or see this great fire. The Lord then promised to raise them up a prophet from among their own people, and he would speak unto them everything that He would command Him. In due time it came to pass, far from the mount of transfiguration a voice from God, this is my beloved Son, Hear Ye Him. Therefore the believer now is under the gospel which comes from Christ. Hear Ye Him, Man was first under a direct commandment of God, of all the things in the garden, the fruit of the tree of life, thou shall not eat thereof, later under the leadership of Moses and the preaching of Noah this system was in effect for some time. This system was such that bound Adam (or mankind) under every obligation and every circumstance which could ever happen between God and man, this was called the law of sin and death, for it was judged and passed upon man when he transgressed. At Mt. Sinai, the ten commandments were given, they had the same principals of righteousness and agree or correspond with the statues already given with the approval of the creator who is the judge of all his creation.

All this was given, and was laid in the wisdom of God for the many instances under the law which makes sin abound, that it (sin) might become exceedingly sinful, under the dispensation of grace, by the operation or work of the Holy Spirit which guides them to Christ, who is the truth.

In the coming to pass of all things, the law first, and the Gospel (Christ) was second. The Lord took away the first that he may establish the second. Now we have been delivered from the law, that we may worship in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter. Here is where Christ becomes the end of the law for every believer, he ceases to speak through the law and speaks to them through Christ. The first has now been taken away, and the second established. The law was not made void by Christ, but rather it was fulfilled by Christ, so therefore none of the demands of justice have been denied. All of the obedience of God's children are done by faith, a God given faith, where Christ is the author and finisher thereof. For there is therefore now, no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

Heb. 10: This is the covenant I will make with them after those days, we have seen how the great Jehovah dealt with his people all down through the ages. Now it came to pass according to the good pleasure of his will, he puts into effect a new covenant. No longer will the people have to gather at fiery Mt. Sinai, no longer will they have to search or wait for a priest to intercede for them, because God says, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.

Now under this new covenant, through the work of the Holy Spirit, man is led into the great truths and mysteries of Christ, through the leading and guiding of the Spirit, all of God's children are led into this marvelous light, being taught great truths and having revealed unto them great mysteries which have been hid from the beginning of time.

It is true that God has called out and ordained men for the work of the ministry, revealing unto them some wonderful truths concerning Jesus and his gospel. He then blesses these ministers with power and the ability to deliver these, and reveal these things to his children in such a way as to feed and comfort them exactly in the manner to meet their individual needs. The children are all blessed this way but it was pleasing in the mind and purpose of God to have it in such a way that none of his little children would have to depend on the ministers, or any other man to hear or learn of Christ. Because he said, "Every one shall know me from the least to the greatest, Jesus also said, I will send the comforter, and he will take the things of mine and show them unto you."

How sweet it is when sometimes we have a certain scripture on our mind which seems to be quite a puzzle and we are given to think and meditate on the true meaning when suddenly the revelation comes to your mind so clear and plain that you are made to rejoice.

From time to time when we are blessed to feel the great love of such a wonderful God and Saviour, then I believe for a short while we can thank and praise God in Spirit and in truth.

So as not to be too lengthy, I will try to close, may we all be blessed with

brotherly love, loving instead of finding fault with our brethren. May it please the God of mercy, grace and love that we all may grow in grace, to the honor and praise of his great and Holy Name.

A brother, I hope
Frank Hunt
102 Lake Ave.
Salem, Va. 24153

QUERIES & ANSWERS

(June, 1852)

QUESTION:

To some of the children of God about here, the, to them, new doctrine that God does not chastise his people for their sins has been preached. The main arguments for the doctrine seem to be, that, as all the sins of the elect were laid upon Christ, therefore God does not punish his people for their sins; beholding no iniquity in Jacob or perverseness in Israel. Also that when in the Psalms mention is made of "visiting their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes," it does not refer to the people of God, but refers to Christ. Also, that the chastening, rebuking, and scourging spoken of in Hebrews xii. refer to a law work.

ANSWER:

No error is worse, for none is more deluding, than that which consists in perverted truth. This, indeed, is the chief feature of the errors that Satan sows in the visible church. Gross error would not serve his turn. It would at once be rejected. But error in the dress of truth, error gilt over by truth, error putting truth in the front and slightly bringing up the rear, may hope to pass muster and escape detection. Such is the error mentioned in the inquiry before us. There is in it a little truth and a great deal of error. Its preachers and promoters have gilt their error over with a small modicum of truth. But we will, with God's help and blessing, drive a nail through this bad sovereign and fasten it to the counter; for, however many hands it may have passed through, it was first coined in the devil's cellar, and he cast the mould, cut the die, and stamped the impression.

But first look at the gilding. A bit of sterling gold is spread over the base metal. That truth is, that "God has laid the sins of the elect all upon Christ, that they are all eternally blotted out; and that, therefore, God sees no iniquity in Jacob nor perverseness in Israel." This is sound, blessed truth, the joy and consolation of the family of God. But underneath lies the base metal: "Therefore," (O what a therefore!) "as God sees no sin in his elect, he cannot punish them for the sins that he cannot see." O lame and impotent conclusion! In one sense, God may see no sin in his people; but in another, he may see a great deal. Because God sees no sin to punish hereafter, does he see no sin to punish here? Because the blood of Jesus has

washed away sin in its penal and eternal consequences, has it removed sin out of the heart of the family of God? Is sin become a nonentity in the same way as a cloud is a nonentity when the sun has dispersed it from the sky? As a cloud of eternal wrath, sin is for ever blotted out; but not as a cloud that gathers over the soul and hides the light of God's countenance.

But the experience of God's people in all ages is point-blank against such a doctrine. Does sin cease to be sin because Christ died for it? When David committed adultery, was that a sin! When Peter cursed and swore, was that a sin? When the Corinthian took his father's wife to his bed, was that a sin? To say, "No: these would have been sins in others, but not in the people of God," is an outrage upon common decency, and degrades religion below the morality of a brothel. Then it must be admitted that the sins of believers are sins; and if sins, then they have an existence; and if they have an existence, then sin is not a nonentity; that is, a thing which has no being nor existence. It is a real thing - a fearful, a dreadful reality - as thousands of groaning saints of God daily feel, in spite of all mere metaphysical arguments to the contrary.

But now comes the next question. If sin exists in the hearts of the family of God, does God ever chasten them for it? Here the testimony of God is conclusive: "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless, my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David." (Ps. lxxxix. 30-35.) But it may be objected, "This is the old covenant, the ancient legal dispensation." Is it? O no; God has blocked out this argument most effectually by expressly declaring it is the new covenant of which he speaks: "Then thou spakest in vision to thy Holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people." (Ps. lxxxix. 19). Who is the Holy One to whom God spake in vision, the Mighty One upon whom he has laid help? Who but Jesus, who, as God-Man Mediator in the days of his flesh, cried, "Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my Salvation?" Of whom but Christ's spiritual seed is it promised, "His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven?" (Ps. lxxxix. 29). Now observe it is of this same seed that the declaration is made, "If his children forsake my law and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes." (30-32). "If his children!" Who are his children but Christ's spiritual seed and family - the elect of God? What, then, can be clearer than the declaration, "I will visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes?" A man

who can deny and outface this express testimony will deny and outface everything.

But how plain are Scripture examples as well as Scripture declarations! God put away David's sin; but look at the chastisement: "Now, therefore, the sword shall never depart from thy house." "Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die." (2 Sam. xii. 10, 14). The cases also of Eli, Solomon, and Hezekiah, are all to the same point. The Corinthians were guilty of disorderly conduct at the Lord's Supper. "For this cause," says Paul, "many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." (1 Cor. xi. 30-32). How expressly is it declared here that the Lord chastened them for their conduct by weakness and sickliness!

But nothing can be more decisive than the declaration, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." (Heb. xii. 6-8). Chastening and scourging are here given as express marks of sonship. Those, therefore, that deny chastening proclaim loudly they are bastards. But, to evade this testimony, they say that this chastening refers to a law-work. Two strokes of Paul's broad sword cut that ground from under their feet: "For they verily for a few days chastened as after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Heb. xii. 10, 11.) Do we become partakers of God's holiness by the law or the gospel? By the gospel surely: "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life." (Rom. vi. 22). There is no holiness but by the Holy Spirit who is the alone Author of it, and he produces it not by the law but by the gospel. It is "the new creature" (which the law knows nothing about) "which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Again, does the law produce the peaceable fruits of righteousness? No. All that the law produces is bondage, guilt and death. The peaceable fruits of righteousness grow on the gospel graft and not on the legal crab.

In fact, men who hold such views are clearly out of the secret. The rod of God is not upon them; and when such doctrine is proclaimed from the pulpit, the best answer from the pew is, "Mr. Preacher, there is every reason to fear that you are a bastard, and are now only proclaiming you own base

pedigree, and foaming out your own shame."

J.C. Philpot

ARTICLES

Whenever I begin to feel a desire to write down what my feelings are, concerning what I believe, as having to do with the three-in-one God and His government, and His operation of it; my deepest desire is, that I might (above all else), not write anything that could even hint at an untruth, contrary to that Holy truth as it is in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Feeling an awareness of that weakness of my flesh in its nature, my deep desire is that - if it could be His will, He would lead, guide and direct my mind and pen, in that strait and narrow path, wherein lieth His truth. The great and merciful God and Lord in heaven "only" knoweth for sure, if ever I did utter or groan a true prayer unto Him, were ever truly thankful to Him, or were ever enabled by Him, to in Holy truth praise His great and Holy name. I only can say for sure - I have from time to time surely desired to do so, and from time to time have felt hopeful that I were enabled by Him to do so. But here is how it is with me "Dear Brethren", though I feel more sure at times than at others, that maybe I had been truly thankful unto Him etc. But in the knowledge that I do not know the mind of God; I therefore must limit my certainty of those things, to my precious hope, that it were so. If indeed I do know my feelings, I do truly desire, all my trust be in the three-in-One God; for I can think of none other who could possibly be worthy of my trust, either in this world or for that world to come. Now Dear Brethren, this is not by any means meant to reflect upon any less feelings of my love for you; for it is my feelings and my hope, that this love I feel for you, is based and founded upon "only" that what you have been enabled to manifest of the Lord's working within you; and after all, if that be so, all the good in and of, from it all - came directly from He who does all things well. Dear Brethren, whenever we are enabled to experience that feeling what brightens our hope in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, is it not oh so extremely precious to us! I feel that it surely is; for as the Scripture sayeth - we live by hope. If in accord with His Holy will, may we ever be reminded that whatsoever of a Spiritual nature we may feel or experience, while we sojourn here in this low ground of sin and sorrow, that its entirety did come "only" from the three-in-one God; and assuredly not any portion from any man; and of that same equal importance - that it all came as a totally (and unearned and unmerited our part) free gift from God.

It is my understanding; in all the Holy Scripture, there is no provisions indicated, whereby boasting is permitted by His chosen children. For after all, (it is my understanding) to boast, is to add to that what did actually exist, or in fact commit a falsehood; which (to my mind) would surely

apply, where man should boast of himself.

From when "God" by the word of His power, brought this time world into being, there was and is a "process" by which every instant of time for this world to stand, shall be fulfilled to exactness, without variation or any such thing, be it birth, death, calm, storm, heart, cold, wet, dry, night, day, rain, sunshine, health, sickness, famine or riches, wars or peace, each and all has and shall come to exactness as its Creator God did (from before the foundation of the world) foresee, foreordain, fix, establish and predestinate that it all shall be, in exact like manner, time and place, as He did foresee, foreknow, purpose and determine that it all shall be. As having to do with His fixedness, and as to how all things do come about, or come to pass, in Holy reality, I believe that there is absolutely no such thing as what man calls an accident, a happen so, a probability or any such thing; but is just as sure to come to exactness, as it is sure that "God" does sit upon His throne in heaven.

The Old School or Primitive Baptist believing and expressing those things like those above mentioned, of the unhindered certainty of God, His unchangeableness etc.; is what the arminians or work mongers, base their claim of us being do nothings etc. But that is just how it has been since Adam and Eve; the Spirit maketh alive, while the flesh profiteth nothing; the Holy Spirit does lead, guide and direct one, in the way of Holy truths, while satan or the fleshly way of man, lead, guide and direct one in the way of death and lies and tells one he or she can please "God" with the work of their hands, and their fleshly plans and words in begging for to fulfill their love for ever more money; saying in effect, you can buy your ticket to heaven, by giving us all your worldly goods, and we will see to it, that the Lord receives it on your behalf. But the scriptures sayeth, the Love of Money, is the root of all evil. I still remember some of the words spoken in prayer, by an Old Baptist minister, many, many years ago; O "Lord" if in accord with Thy will, let me have just enough so I will not steal, but not enough so that I will forget Thee. And if I know my heart, that is my feelings from time to time. Oh my precious Brethren; it is a deep desire with me, that I could live out the remainder of this life with you, die and be buried with you, and be called forth with you and be placed on the right hand of the Lord God with you, on the morning of the resurrection; and be carried along with you to heaven and immortal glory, and forever sing ceaseless and undivided praise unto our heavenly Father. It is, it seems, most of the time with me, I feel that surely this world is not my home; that most of the time, I am surrounded by people who could not care less, about the things I feel and hope, I love with an everlasting love. Sometimes I find myself oh so much desiring, that those whom I feel a natural love for, could be made to see what they are by nature, and what they must be by the grace of God; But then my mind is arrested, and brought

to remembrance that it is all in God's hands; and that His promises to His children, was not to supply all their wants, but just their needs; and I feel so ashamed for even desiring to live here in this world continually on a flowery bed of ease, when He never did promise any such thing; but instead did promise that we shall surely experience many trials and tribulations, while we live upon this sin cursed earth; but praise His Holy name, He also promised to provide a way of escape. When enabled to look upon it with a Spiritual eye, is it not a most beautiful sight, whenever one of His little children's mortal life ceases to be; just think of it this way; they are then gone from that evil to come, they never again have to suffer in any way, shape or form, but instead, with them it will be like unto just a restful night's peaceful sleep, until the morning of the resurrection, when they are called forth with an immortal body, to meet their precious Lord and Savior in the air, and what wonder of wonders, they (and I hope I) will be like Him and be satisfied, Now dear child of His grace, what more wondrous hope, could we possibly desire for? None I feel, for then that hope, will be replaced with an absolute certainty. If I were enabled to relate to you, some of what is my feelings and belief, concerning the almighty Creator "God", you might say, that I do believe that "God" did absolutely predestinate that all things that be and take place, in all time for this world stand; are exactly as they have come and shall come in the remainder of time left; I would have to agree with you one hundred percent, on that point; for I do not, to any degree, believe that the God of whom I refer, has ever, or will ever, be surprised, or ever gain any knowledge that He has not always known to its fullest extreme; and that does also include from everlasting and eternally (both) before this time world were created and on after this time world has burned with fervent heat.

For them (and I hope I) who are the afore chosen children of God; that morning of the resurrection of their changed bodies, will in Holy truth be, that everlasting morning, where never again will there come night or darkness, but just one continuous never ending day of perfect happiness, far beyond what mankind could ever find sufficient words to explain. With this next statement, I will try and close out this writing, which has been rather lengthy. Though the flesh in its nature, will surely disagree; yet I must confess; the merciful Lord and God has fully supplied my every need, now for more than 80 years, and I trust will continue to do so. I just have none other whom I desire to place my trust in.

In precious hope, I could be numbered with you; I say to all you children of God's grace and mercy; let us not be ashamed to show and express our love for each other, while we live here in this low ground of sin and sorrow; for let us ever be reminded of this one thing, to be ashamed of our love for each other, is to also be ashamed of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; for in Holy Truth have that love

wherewith He first loved us with, then we shall surely and absolutely love both He and His; for it is entirely impossible to separate one from the other.

In hope, Troy G. Shepard

MATTHEW 6:33

The exhortations of the scriptures are many and diverse, appearing in every book of the new testament. They come from both the mouth of our Lord and from the writers of the testament and are, by no means, to be taken lightly, or of less authority than the scriptures that declare attributes of God and His actions.

In the teaching of Christ to his disciples, in the mountain, he teaches primarily the fullness and the perfection of the law. This is the law that he came to fulfill. Part of the fulfilling the law was in teaching it. He was a teaching priest, teaching it and fulfilling it in every jot and tittle. But in teaching the law there were many gracious things taught and exhortations given.

One of the exhortations given, that seems to have particular significance, in contrasting natural things from spiritual things, is first found in Matt: 6;33, "....seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." The things under consideration, that shall be added unto you are the needs of this natural life, but the other is to be sought first.

Of course, the immediate question is, "who is to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and how can it be done?" First, it seems clear that the exhortation was directed to his disciples, his followers, his people, and to no wider audience. "....his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth and taught them...." Matt. 5: 1,2. There are many scriptures that could be used as strong evidence, yes even proof that the scriptures are written to the Lord's people and to them only. Of course, there are statements made, that are made by the prophets, the Lord the apostles, etc., to wicked men. But the making of those statements and the recording of them was for the benefit of the Lord's people then and now. They are for our learning. Not the learning and benefit of those evil individuals. "All scripture is given.... That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. II Tim. 3: 16, 17.

If it is then understood that the scripture under consideration is to God's people only, then it is to a people that have been given a mind that can understand beyond the natural desires of the flesh of food, clothing and drink. It is to a people that have been spiritually taught the things of Christ.

The scripture under consideration does not say "Seek ye only the kingdom of God," but seek it first. It should be the most important thing sought by God's children. But, if it were the only thing, and to the exclusion of natural things, then I Tim. 5:8 would be hard to explain. "....if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his

own house, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." There are needs of this life, and not to be ignored. But, in their proper place they rate much lower than second place to the things of God. The strength of the scripture says to take no thought of them. Or, don't be burdened down by them, having your thoughts consumed by them, as the world does.

The affairs of this life may take up more mental and fiscal labor and more time, than the things of God, but they should never even be compared in importance, desire and commitment. And, if I understand the scriptures, his disciples, including his children today, are exhorted to seek to keep the things of the kingdom of God as uppermost, or as the peak of importance in this life.

Of course, it should always be understood that none of the exhortations, or anything else spiritual, can be carried out by the old man, the carnal man. Without the Spirit working within there is nothing profitable. It is the new man, the new spiritual man, to whom the exhortation is intended. None of the exhortations can be carried out without the Spirit working within - they are done of the Spirit. It is only the indwelled subject that is given the understanding of this exhortation, or any other exhortation. Not only this but the indwelled subject is given the desire and the ability, by the Spirit, to carry out the exhortation, and this is the "ye" that is under consideration.

What, then dear disciple do "ye" seek? What is this kingdom of God and his righteousness that "ye" are to seek. It is certainly not a place, as a natural kingdom. Is it not the kingdom that is from generation to generation, that is within his people? Are not the manifestations of it comparable to the food, drink and clothing, that are the needs of the natural man, that it is compared to? His children do desire to drink freely from the fountain of life and with joy to draw water from the wells of salvation. His children do desire to eat of that spiritual manna that comes down from heaven, even to partake of the flesh of our Lord in communion with our brothers and sisters. And of course, "ye" do desire to be clothed upon by His righteousness.

But how are these things to be sought? How are the wells of salvation to be found or made manifest in your life? How do you locate the spiritual manna? Is there any other way it can be done than by seeking the will of God? Aren't you seeking this kingdom and the sustenance from it when you seek to know His will and what he would have you do or think when confronted by the many temptations of the day?

Yes, of course his children should seek His will, and in doing so seek the kingdom and the things of the kingdom of God. But the apparent problem is that the will of God, except in a general way, can be known only in hindsight.

Of course it is his will that the elect be gathered together in Christ. It is his will "....that all things work together for good to them that love God, to

them who are the called according to his purpose." But, in the race that is set before us in this life we cannot know, beforehand, what his Will is. For example, could Abraham have known the will of God about Isaac when God instructed him to offer him for a burnt offering on the mountain? Could the Hebrew children have known or found out the will of God when they were about to be cast into the fiery furnace? Even Moses desired to see the glory of God, but he could only see His backparts as He took away his hand (the revealing Spirit) from the cleft of the rock (Christ) where he had been placed. Ex. 33.

Do these things not show that God's people are given to understand that the things that have happened to them, and all other things that have taken place, are the will of God? God is sovereign and he has abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence and He has not changed from the time when King Nebuchadnezar was given to proclaim that God reigns in the armies of heaven and the inhabitance of the earth and none can stay his hand. If the will of God could truly be known in your life beforehand, what would be the need for faith? You would walk by the knowledge of his will. Faith would not be needed.

Even though it is understood that the will of God cannot be found out for your life it no way takes away the need for searching, and to the best of your understanding and God given ability, to follow the teachings, warnings and exhortations of the scriptures.

When the problems and temptations of this life overtake you the approach needed or answer is usually scripturally clear. Evenso, the old nature often clouds the picture to the point that the answer seems hard to find, The struggle can often be severe. But when you have exhausted every effort to find and follow the directions laid down in the scriptures, labored in prayer and sought council from spiritual brothers and truly desiring to find His direction, then it seems clear that the exhortation has been followed, "....seek ye first the kingdom of God..." We should act accordingly. If God intercedes with something different and better, as He did with Abraham and with the lame man at the gate called Beautiful, Act. 3, then you can praise him for his teaching.

The last portion of the scripture under consideration has to do with the things that will be added unto you. David says, Psm. 37:25., "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

Yes, the natural blessings of this life are many. But the meaning of this scripture must surely go beyond the natural blessing of this lifetime. Has He not blessed his children with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ? Eph. 1:3. Aren't the adopted children kings and priests unto God? Rev. 1:6. Will the children not reign eternally with Christ? Rev. 3:21 and 22:5.

".... all these things shall be added unto you", according to the scripture under consideration. With such blessings the natural food, clothing and drink are as nothing, and when in your

right mind, they will be of little concern compared to the spiritual blessings. Yet, they have their place and are supplied.

Elder Wayman G. Chapell

VOICES OF THE PAST

DEAR BROTHER GRIFFIN:

May the grace, mercy and peace of God the Father and of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ be with you.

I feel thankful for being given to meet you, especially since I have desired this for many years. I also hope to be thankful for your kind and gracious letter.

The Lord willing, I will try to answer your letter. I am hoping to be given grace to be brief and to write words which are acceptable unto God.

Dear brother, there was a time years ago that I walked with those who taught that the works of men were the way to salvation. Being in darkness, I tried to follow their teaching. Looking back, I now understand that I was seeking some relief for the continual sorrow and grief for my wretched sinful state.

They taught if one would only do certain things such as believe in Lord Jesus Christ and be baptised and attend and pray and give and study and witness and obey, one would be happy and blessed and finally would be saved.

I found that I could not believe of myself and that the submitting to baptism or trying to do any of the works they required brought no relief to my misery.

Next, I thought that by studying the scriptures I would finally learn the truth and that this truth would bring some comfort. I found that the Scriptures greatly condemned me and brought me into confusion especially concerning grace and works and so called "free will" and predestination.

I then reasoned that if I could only learn the original language of the New Testament Greek, I could then understand these deep mysteries. At this same time those who taught works began to encourage me to learn to minister as a preacher. They pointed to a college of their persuasion which taught Greek and their religion.

My dear wife and family consented to sell our home and to leave our family and friends and to leave my job and to begin on a journey. We did not know where the way would lead but I believe we were given a deep desire to please the God of heaven.

I entered this college which those who taught works recommended. As I studied there, I believe I was taught that the truth cannot be taught of the carnal mind and in fact that the carnal mind is enmity against God. I found that I could not preach by their methods (sermon outlines etc.) as they only caused me confusion. I found I could not accept the teaching of their professors since it seemed to be so contradictory to the things I was being given to believe. I found that I could not promote their system of teaching (Sunday schools etc.) or their financial programs etc.

About this time I met Fred Neikirk's son Michael who brought me to meet his father. From them I first heard of Primitive Baptists. They explained their understanding of grace and predestination of all things. I had never heard men speak such things before. At first I kicked against these things. Then I was made to search the scripture anew. It was as if heaven was opened up and the light of truth shone round about. The scriptures were full of the grace of God and of mercy and of the knowledge and wisdom and power of God who works all things after the council of His own will.

I was made to believe that if any man was ever saved it must have been by the grace of God and not by any of the works of men.

I continued to preach among those who taught works. I could not help from bringing forth the things I was being taught (out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh). Opposition mounted and after a season we were thrust out from among them.

About this time the Neikirks were also thrust out from among those they were walking with. The Neikirks were made to affirm the grace of God and true order and many of the people could not receive it.

We found that there were then several families of us who seemed to believe the same things and who had no place to go. We began to meet together in the homes and had prayer and preaching and singing for our mutual comfort.

We had no order as far as constituted and set in order by faithful churches. Greatly desiring to be set in order, we consented to have others we believed to be faithful brethren and churches to help us. They attempted to set us in order, but when trouble came to us it was manifest that those who attempted to help us were in confusion themselves.

We then withdrew from those who made the attempt to set us in order and continued to meet together without being orderly constituted. We continued this way for a season. Then each family went its own way.

My family and myself visit several churches in the Little Vine Association in Kentucky and West Virginia which are within one hundred and fifty miles from our home. We also visit churches in the Soldier Creek Association which are about three hundred and fifty miles away.

Dear brother, we have had so much sorrow and disappointment in the past, we are made to desire to be careful and not hasty in any thing.

If I am not deceived, I am made to love the gospel of the grace of God and rejoice to hear the doctrine of election and the people who desire to walk in the light by the grace of God are very dear to me.

I do hope that it has been ordained that we will be given a home with these precious ones even though I feel and know myself to be unworthy according to the flesh. We feel that this world is not our home but is rather vanity and vexation of spirit.

We do feel to be drawn toward you all but the closest church (in correspondence with you all) we know of is

about three hundred and fifty miles away.

My dear wife has been with me through all these things and has been taught the same truths.

I did not intend to write this much but I do not know how to answer more briefly.

May God be with you all your days.

Jerry Farmer
(Sent in for publication
by Elder G.D. Shipman)

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." 1 John v.4.

If we are to be saved our faith must gain the day; we must have a faith that shall triumph over death and hell and gain a glorious conquest over every external and internal foe. This is just the state, then, in which the matter stands: we must either conquer or be conquered; we must either gain the day and be crowned with an immortal crown of glory, or else sink in the strife, defeated by sin and Satan. But none of God's people will be defeated in the fight; and yet they often seem, as it were, to escape defeat by the very skin of their teeth; yet faith will sooner or later gain the day, for Jesus is its finisher as well as its author. He will crown the faith of his own gift with eternal glory. He will never suffer his dear family to be overcome in the good fight of faith, for he will give strength to every weak arm and power to every feeble knee, and has engaged to bring them off more than conquerors. Thus as the Lord the Spirit is pleased to work in the soul by his living energy, he strengthens faith more and more to believe in the name of the only begotten Son of God, to receive more continual supplies out of his fullness, to wrestle more earnestly with God for a spiritual blessing, to stand more firmly in the evil day against every assaulting foe, to fight more strenuously the good fight of faith, and never cry quarter until faith gains its glorious end, which is to see Jesus as he is in the realms of eternal day.

J.C. Philpot

From Elder Lamberts book,
"Tried In The Furnace"

THE SEVEN SAYINGS OF OUR SAVIOR WHILE ON THE CROSS

Signs of the Times, April, 1939

Elder E.J. Lambert

Brethren, it is my desire to write a few lines, using Paul's language as recored in 1 Corinthians 2:2, "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." I cannot find one thing in myself to boast of, therefore all the goodness I have any hope in is that which Jesus accom-

plished while here on this earth. I believe that He fulfilled the law to a jot and tittle, and suffered the penalty for the many sins of God's chosen by shedding His precious blood on the cross of Calvary.

Feasting upon the thoughts of the crucifixion of Jesus, brings to mind the seven statements that He made while hanging on the cross. Matthew and Mark record the fourth statement, Luke records the first, second and seventh, while John gives the third, fifth and sixth. Seven signifies fullness and completeness, and I verily believe the full and complete doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is given in these grand utterances Jesus made while suffering the intense pain and agony being nailed to the cross.

Let us first notice the first statement Jesus made, which was a prayer to His Father, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 13:34). I verily believe this was a true prayer, inspired by the God part of the character that was hanging on Calvary's cross. I further believe that all true prayers are answered, therefore conclude that all whom Jesus was praying for were forgiven. He was praying for those who had nailed him to the cross. We find that those who crucified Him consisted of both Jews and Gentiles. Those who naturally crucified Him were typical of those whose sins were laid upon His shoulder. Figuratively, God's chosen among both Jews and Gentiles nailed Jesus to the cross with their sins. "The wages of sin is death," and Jesus died in the stead of God's chosen. In fact, He died that God's people might live. In the death of Jesus justice was satisfied and the sins of God's people were forgiven. We, therefore, finally conclude that Jesus' prayer while hanging on the cross was answered.

His second utterance was, "Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in paradise: (Luke 23:43). He was addressing these words to one of the malefactors crucified with Him. This one realized (as do all of God's children) that His crucifixion was just. He was also blessed to realize that Jesus was the Christ. Therefore he besought Christ to "Remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Each time the penitent child of God realizes his own hopeless condition unless he be "remembered" by that Christ who is the sufficiency of God's chosen. The other malefactor spoke as the ridiculing sarcastic world, who have never been brought to repentance and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Jesus said to that penitent one who was crucified with him, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." I believe it is a paradise for God's chosen who feel justly condemned to die to realize that Jesus has remembered them.

The third statement of Jesus was to his mother and the disciples He loved: "Woman, behold thy son! Then saith be to the disciples, Behold thy mother!" (John 19: 26, 27). The natural mother of Jesus represented Mother Wisdom, or the Holy Spirit. John, whom Jesus loved, represented those for whom He died. God's wis-

dom had designed the way by which justice must be satisfied. You will notice that John took the mother of Jesus unto his own house. Jesus told His disciples (John 14:18) that He would not leave them comfortless, but would pray the Father and He would send another comforter (John 16) which would guide them into the way of all truth. The mother of Jesus (Wisdom, the Spirit of truth) has abode in the city of God, the house of God's chosen, or in the hearts of His elect, the people for whom Jesus died. This Comforter is a grand Comforter, crying to Jerusalem, the city of God, that her warfare is accomplished; that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

His fourth cry was, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34.) You will notice that the Son of God did not realize His relationship, by noting the difference in address. He formerly addressed god as "Father," but after being forsaken He addressed Him as "My God." Jesus was forsaken that those He died for might be owned. He could not have died had He not been forsaken. Jesus was bearing the penalty for the sins of God's elect, the mercy could be extended to them and the grace doctrine be the truth. Jesus was as destitute of the wisdom as to why He was forsaken as any of God's children are when it pleases God to withdraw His Holy Spirit.

The fifth saying of Christ on the cross was, "I thirst" (John 19:28). The result of being forsaken after enjoying the sweet relationship was this thirst. When Jesus thirsted He was given vinegar to drink. He was given something bitter to drink so that when God's children thirst they might be given something sweet. Jesus said in His sermon on the mountain, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Jesus drank the bitter cup that the people of God might be blessed to drink of that fountain of life. Yes, He wore a crown of thorns that God's elect might wear a crown of glory. He was forsaken that we might be owned.

The sixth saying that Jesus made while nailed to the cross was, "It is finished" (John 19:20). He had fulfilled His mission upon earth. He had completely fulfilled law and prophecy. He had kept the law in behalf of God's children. He had suffered the agonizing pains of death as the penalty for the sins of God's people. Therefore, justice was satisfied and every one of God's elect was blameless and without blemish. "It is finished." Jesus said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day" (John 6: 38, 39). Again, in John 4:34, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." There on the cross He said, "It is finished."

We notice in the seventh saying that He was in possession of this wonderful relationship again as he addressed Jehovah as "Father." This alone

shows that God was well pleased with His Son's accomplishment. In this seventh and last statement He said, "Father, into thy hand I commend my spirit" (Luke 13:46). Then He gave up the ghost. This was a crowning work, worthy of acception with the Father. The voice which spoke out of the clouds to those on the mount of transfiguration proclaimed concerning Jesus, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Jesus said, I am the way, and the truth, and the life. I believe He is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the Author and Finisher of our faith, therefore my determination among God's people is not to know anything save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

In conclusion, permit me to say the editors and contributors to the Signs have been blessed to stay closer to this determination than have the writers of any periodical I have been blessed to read. May God forbid that private opinions, personal differences and confessions ever be published in this good paper which would mar the harmony of its contents. God grant its continuance. This wonderful doctrine of grace and love is soothing and comforting to this poor, sinful, wretched mortal, who through sad tribulations and experience has lost all confidence in self and the arm of flesh. As Job, my earthly possessions and wealth have been taken away, to make me realize that even temporal and natural things are unmerited and blessings of God.

Elder E.J. Lambert

CONTRIBUTIONS

For April 1993

Mrs. Grace Manly, FL	$5.00
John F. Simpson, FL	7.00
Robert G. Thomas, TX	2.00
Edwin Vrell, CO	3.00
Ms. Reidy Pickral, VA	25.00
Mrs. J.D. Neely, AR	2.00
Raymond Oxley, WV	2.00
Mrs. Edith Sewell, FL	2.00
Mrs. Whitney Mobley, NC	5.00
Joseph Plaster, VA	2.00
Bert H. Knox, WA	10.00
Hartzel Nelson, WV	2.00
Mrs. Rebecca S. Smith, FL	2.00
Mrs. Rachel A. SMith, NC	2.00
MRs. Iva L. Souter, TX	5.00
Eld. James C. Young, NC	7.00
Eld. J.C. Carroll, NC	2.00
Mrs. Beatrice Miller, NC	2.00
Ms. Catherine A. Houchins, VA	3.00
Mrs. Annie Bell Malone, AL	7.00

MEETINGS

OLD PINE CREEK

The annual Old Pine Creek meeting will be held this year on Monday the 5th of July.

The church is located off Hwy. #221, 5 miles north of Floyd, Va. Those coming from Floyd, turn left on to road #682. Those coming from Roanoke, turn right on to road #682.

All lovers of the truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Hale Terry

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Springfield Church but the meeting location will be at Weatherford Church located at the intersection of highways 760 and 763 about 5 miles from Gretna, Va. The time will be Saturday July 10th and Sunday July 11th. We invite our Sunday July 11th. We invite our correspondents and visitors to this meeting.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

PSALM 17: 1 - 3.

Hear the right, O Lord, attend unto my cry, give ear unto my prayer, that goeth not out of feigned lips.

Let my sentence come forth from thy presence; let thine eyes behold the things that are equal.

Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited me in the night; thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing; I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress.

OBITUARIES

ELDER CLYDE RAY DANIEL

I feel the Lord called another one of His saints home on September 6, 1992, with the passing of Elder Clyde R. Daniel. He attended Flat Swamp Church, where he was a member, on Saturday, September 5, and was blessed to speak very strongly and seemed to enjoy the service; as if it was a very special day for him. The next day, when Sister Daniel called to tell me he had passed away, it was certainly a shock and surprise.

Elder Daniel joined Rosemary Primitive Baptist Church the first Sunday in September, 1966. He was a very loving and faithful member and enjoyed visiting other churches far and near.

He was liberated by Rosemary Church to speak at churches in fellowship with his church on the first Sunday in June, 1973. He was very humble and understanding and spoke under this liberation until he was ordained an Elder on the fifth Sunday in October, 1982. He was blessed to fill in for many of his Elder brethren for them to visit distant churches.

The Rosemary Church discontinued its services in 1990, and Elder Daniel and the other two members moved their names to Flat Swamp Church on the first Saturday in May, 1990. He was in declining health, but he attended church as often as he could and was always very supportive of the church.

Elder Daniel is survived by his wife, Sister Lucy Daniel; one son, Clifton R. Daniel; one daughter, Clara D. Freeman of Roanoke Rapids, N.C.; three sisters, Mrs. Ethel Stone of Rocky Mount, N.C.; Mrs. Hettie Taylor of Enfield, N.C.; Mrs. Alma Smith of Glenview, N.C.; one brother, D.A.

Daniel of Roanoke Rapids, N.C. He was also blessed to enjoy his nine grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren.

Elder Daniel was laid to rest in Crestview Memorial Cemetary on September 9, 1992 in the presence of many friends. His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder Joe Sawyer, assisted by Rev. Clyde Alderman.

We miss him very much at Flat Swamp Church, but I feel he is at rest in that rest which Jesus promised all his believing children, where one day he will be called from that rest to inherit that home prepared for him in yonder world.

We express our deepest sympathy to his precious companion and all who were near and dear to him by the ties of nature.

Done by the order of conference the first Saturday in March, 1993. A copy to be spread on the church record, a copy sent to Signs of the Times, and a copy sent to the family.

Written by a Brother, I hope,
Hassel Allen
Elder Joe Sawyer, Moderator
Hassel Allen, Clerk

DEACON RUFUS JACKS

Rufus L. Jacks was born October 7, 1919, the son of Berton and Lillie Jefferies Jacks, and died March 4, 1993 at his home near New Market, Alabama, making his pilgrimage here in time 73 years.

He was married September 18, 1940 to, Wilma Simmons, and to this union was born two sons, Tracy and Clay and two daughters, Carol and Brenda.

Rufus joined the Primitive Baptist Church July 15, 1956 and was baptized September 29, 1956 by the late Elder R.L. Biggs pastor of the Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church. He was ordained to the office of Deacon on November 15, 1958, in which he served faithfully until the time of his death. He was also Clerk of the Church for many years.

I have known and loved brother Jacks since first meeting him in 1955, before either of us joined the Church, and the love and fellowship that we have experienced over those thirty-eight years is something that I will never forget: And is one of the closest that I have experienced among the brethren. Rufus traveled extensively among the Churches in the United States and was loved and respected, by all who were priviledged to know him, because of his humble, friendly manner toward his brethren. I have been with him more often and at more different Churches and Associations than anyone else.

Rufus is survived by his lovely wife Wilma, four children, nine grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor Elder R.H. Campbell and Elder Hale Terry of Virginia, at the Spry Funeral Home in Huntsville, Ala. and the internment of the body was in the

State Line Cemetery in Madison County near his home.

This is written at the request of the Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church while in Conference with instructions to send a copy to The Signs of The Times for publication, for brethren in other areas, and a copy to be sent to the family that they all may know of the esteem in which brother Jacks was held in his Church, and among the Primitive Baptist in general.

Elder Richard H. Campbell,
Moderator
James Howard, Clerk

IN MEMORY OF OUR MOTHER
BETTIE BATTS SWAIM
Born - November 7, 1900
Died - August 1992
United with the church

We were so blessed to have had a Mother like ours. She taught us how to deal with life, and was always there to guide us. Among her many lessons, she instructed us on the virtues of courage, trust, faith, and honesty.

As the book of Ecclesiastes (3:1) describes, "To everything there is a season, and time to every purpose under the heavens." This verse, as well as the ones that follow, sums up a great deal of what Mama believed. Her life overflowed with purpose, meaning, love, friends, and she was guided by routine. No one ever loved their family, home, and church more than Mama.

In her life she overcame innumerable odds. She entered this world at the turn of the century, next to the oldest of twelve children. She was raised on a farm, and only finished the ninth grade. However, she spoke often of many happy memories: a Saturday afternoon drive into town with her Father in horse and buggy, the beauty of the country-side, and scents such as frying fish that characterized her life. She knew the adoration of our Father, James Henry Swaim, and together they survived the Great Depression. And yet she experienced many miracles, marveling of having lived to see Man walk on the moon.

Not only was she valuable to us, but she was always a dependable friend to all her many neighbors. She never failed those who relied on her, despite their sex or the color of their skin.

She lived such a meaningful life. She often spoke of how blessed she was to have loving brothers, sisters, four children, seventeen grand-children, and twenty-eight great grandchildren.

However, it is we who are fortunate.

Her life was filled with happiness to the fullest. We children grew up knowing a good Father and Mother's tender love and devotion.

She will always remain with us. "A Mother like ours is more than a memory. She is a living Presence."

We children,
Merle, Margaret, John and Barbara

Signs of the Times

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HYMN OF PROMISE

In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;
in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be, unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

There's a song in every silence, seeking word and melody;
there's a dawn in every darkness, bringing hope to you and me.
From the past will come the future; what it hold, a mystery, unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity;
in our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity.
From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery, unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

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EDITORIAL

ELDER R. H. CAMPBELL

But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead. Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son upon the Altar. Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect. And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

There has been much written and much discussion on the book of James and the way that he handles the subject of the works of the child of God. Remember, the letter was written to the saints, those who were quickened and travelling the journey of faith here in this time world: he was not addressing the world and those who were walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that the children of disobedience followed. His epistle is to the twelve tribes scattered abroad.

There have been many major divisions in the Churches through the centuries over the issue of the works of the creature in the plan of salvation of the saints of God and the importance and position of those works in this matter. There are those who believe that the works of the creature are of paramount importance since they are the means of pleasing God, letting him know of their belief, faith and sincerity and that having done this they have obligated God to fulfil his part of the covenant and forgive them of their sins; save them from the torment of hell and write their names in the book of life. This may be an over simplification of their belief, but, seemingly they believe that the first move must be made by the sinner, an alien from God, and that he can make it, accept Christ as their savior and be saved, or not make it and be damned

for their unbelief and rejection of the truth: then their standing in the kingdom of God is relative to their good works, giving to the cause winning souls to Christ and all of the many other works which further the cause of Christ in the world. They, with this doctrine, have in essence replaced the sacrifice of Christ with the work of man since they say he died for all and their decision and actions make the difference.

There are others who, possibly because of those divisions in the past, and the hurt and destruction that they caused in the churches, believe that the works of the creature have no part or place in the plan of salvation: they resent anyone admonishing the brethren or encouraging the faithful to do those things which Jesus and the Apostle taught and instructed the Christians of that day to do. If you take all of the scriptures out of the bible in which the writers were admonishing the believers to do those things which are needful for the peace and welfare of the Church and encouraging to the Church, you would have a much smaller book. There was reportedly an occasion in which a Church was asking for donations to build some steps for the Church and one member refused to give and his reason was that if God wanted new steps for the Church, he would build them. I don't know if this story is true or not, but I have seen this spirit exhibited when a church was trying to do something: I have seen this same negative attitude even when the subject of works is brought up for discussion.

We all know and believe that God could build the steps, if he wanted to, but this is not the way that he works his will and plan: he indeed sees that the project is completed but it is usually working through men. When God was instructing Moses in the building of the tabernacle, he said, ***"See I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge and in all manner of workmanship."*** This is the way that the work in gold, silver, brass, cutting of stone and carving of timber was accomplished in the tabernacle: it was the plan of God working in the heart of his elect, but the physical work was accomplished, naturally speaking, by the efforts of the individual. The individual himself does not realize from whence this motivation came in fulfilling the plan of God. Bezaleel just had a talent for the artistic work required, loved doing it never realizing that the talent and desire was a gift from God to fulfil his plan in building the tabernacle. This is true in all of the, "good works" that are done in bringing about the things that are decreed of God, but, as far as the world is concerned they are the results of the works of the creature.

The Apostle Paul wrote, ***"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God***

hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Now, if this statement is true, and I believe that it is, there are good works that the children of God will surely do because they were created unto that end: they are to be done to manifest the faith that they possess which was God's gift to them. They are to show forth praise to his holy name: to edify the body of Christ, the Church and to promote peace, love harmony and fellowship among the brethren. They come forth spontaneously from the heart in love and the one who does them is not aware that it is the spirit working in them: they do them because they want to, to let the brethren know how much they love the Church, not to receive a reward or blessing for doing them, in fact, it never enters their mind to receive anything from it but the joy of their serving the Church in any and every way that they can. Just as with Bezaleel, God has called them by name, filled them with the spirit and sent them forth to do those things which are good for the welfare, peace and harmony of the household of faith.

James said, ***"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled: notwithstanding ye give them not those things which, are needful to the body: What doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works is dead, being alone."*** James, realized that faith and works are two sides of the same coin, one cannot exist without the other; they are both elements of the same gift and are given as a matched set: if one has faith they will perform the good works and if they do not have faith they cannot perform good works. Remember! ***"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."*** if they are good works they are from God. We see them as the natural every day efforts of the creature but we never see the cause, (primary cause) behind them, so why would anyone be suspicious of anyone doing good works. As we say in nature, "give them the benefit of any doubts," rejoice and be glad, trusting that they are of God and will be a blessing to all of the Church of God: don't discourage anyone who would admonish the brethren to show forth their faith by their walk, works and ways. Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered Isaac his son upon the Altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? The faith was given for the purpose of performance of the work, and without either of them, the perfect deed would not have been accomplished. In the economy of God there is a definite order in all things, in bringing events to pass as he has determined them: he could have done it in any manner pleasing unto him but this is the way he planned it and so it happened. James uses this example

and that of the harlot Rabab as illustrations of how faith and works are the way and manner in which God works his will among the inhabitants of the earth.

James Closes Chapter 2 with this scripture, ***"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."*** Brethren, it cannot be stated any plainer or more candidly than this: even to the most extreme on either side of the issue, one that believes it all rests in the faith of an individual and the other believing it is determined solely by the work or efforts of the individual. This verse clearly declares that they are both wrong. The body without the spirit of life is just a lump of clay: it cannot move, think, pray, praise God or perform any action, respond to anything or thought directed to it, in other words, it is just as the other clay that has not been formed into a body; and James Compares this lifeless lump of clay to faith without works. The body with the spirit manifests the fact that it is not as the other clay, it moves, feels, thinks, worships and praises God, because, it has that necessary component the spirit of life. Works makes manifest the faith that dwells in the individuals heart: it is the only evidence that you have of the existence of the faith of the believer. They could tell you daily that they had faith but, you would not really believe it until you see it displayed in their walk and their conversation; then you believe it even if they deny having it.

It is distressing to hear a brother demean or ridicule good works in the Church as though it was something to avoid or be ashamed of: when it is indeed the most beautiful of all of the manifestations of the spirit among God's people. All of us know and have known of brothers and sisters who, just to think of them, brings a smile of sheer joy to our hearts as we remember their good works, their dedication, sacrifice and perseverance in the Church all of their lives until God called them from the shores of time to their eternal haven of rest. Surely, these are the works that accompany that faith that James is speaking of: it is not, necessarily, their benevolence or kindly deeds in the flesh which man in nature may possess, but those acts of love for the heavenly kingdom prompted by being filled of the Spirit of God, as Bezaleel was, for the purpose of the work that they were called to do.

If one speaks lightly of good works it is because they only understand what they can see, which is the actions of the man, and since they cannot see the faith which motivates it they assume that it doesn't exist. If we take this attitude that, because we can't see it, it doesn't exist, then we cannot verify most of the things that we hold dear in our faith, we cannot prove our spiritual experience because we can't display it, but, by our deeds, actions and walk and this is what the scriptures refer to as good works. These are the only things that manifest the indwelling of the spirit of God in the heart of an individual: these include loving and attending the church, visiting and praying for the

sick and afflicted in body and spirit, laying down their lives for the brethren and doing all things as unto God. These are the marks of a child of God as he humbly treads the path laid out for him in this life: these are the good works that he was created in Christ Jesus and ordained to walk in to manifest his faith which was given him by the grace of God. We should never treat these casually or look with disdain on the efforts of one who is striving to fulfil their heavenly calling.

The Apostle Paul wrote, (Gal. V vs. 16) "Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." And this is what James is referring to in his epistle as the good works. These are the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance and surely no one would speak harshly against actions which are motivated from these sources which are the fruits of the spirit that dwells within. When one is occupied with this activity, he is walking in the spirit and is not fulfilling the lusts of the flesh: he is bearing witness to the household of faith that he is a doer and not a hearer only: for the hearer is as a man looking at himself in the mirror, and goeth his way and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. The hearer only is as the one who saw the brother and sister destitute of their daily food and said unto them, be ye warmed and filled but did nothing for them: even as the man who said, if God wants the steps built, he will build them. Can anyone, when faced with this situation, of the destitute brother and sister, fail to see the need and the purpose of the good works of the faithful, for the good of the Church. This seems to be the whole thrust of the message of the general epistle of James: to bring out the purpose and the necessity of the "good works" and to specify the position that they occupy in the plan of salvation of the saints of God. They occupy a very prominent and important place in the lives of the elect and the Church in general. They are a joy to the doer and they bring much comfort, hope and strength to those in need and who are blessed as the results of these handfuls of purpose that they find in the way; because they know from whence they came and they glorify their heavenly Father.

Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editors of the Signs of the Times:

In these latter days of the alloted time for this world to stand, and with the dark clouds of depravity and infidelity are already upon our nation, and ever increasing day by day in leaps and bounds; as I read an article by Elder Gilbert Beebe, dated October 1, 1861. I was made to wonder, if it would not be appropriate, to insert it in the Signs,

as a way by which its readers might be once again reminded of (among other Holy truths), the certainty that our Father and our God was and is the merciful Ruler and super Ruler over any and all events to ever take place, or come to pass, for all eternity. I leave to you Editors, whether or not to insert it in the Signs.

Elder Beebe's article - Psalm 97: 1,2.

"The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof.

Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne." Psalm 97: 1,2.

"When overwhelmed with grief,
My heart within me dies,
Helpless, and far from all relief,
To heaven I lift mine eyes,"

"O! lead me to the Rock
That's high above my head;
And make the covert of thy wings,
My shelter and my shake."

Despairing as we must of finding substantial joys or lasting happiness on earth, it is consoling to those who know and love the Lord, when they can turn aside from the perplexing cares and distracting turmoil of earth, and in peaceful seclusion from noise and strife, by faith look up to him who has entered for us within the veil, and contemplate the eternal perfections of our Savior God, who inhabiteth eternity; whose name is Holy, whose dwelling is also in the humble and contrite hearts of those who fear his name. While strife and bitter hate marks and mars the character of men, the ruthless wars are drenching the earth with rivers of human gore, while brother in fratricidal strife seeks the life-blood of his brother, and while the general clammer of kindred and relatives tax all their energies to darken the dreadful scene around us; what would become of us, if there were no overruling hand to curb the deadly violence, and bid the maddening tempest cease to howl?

Often when sweet peace has smiled upon us, and all things have seemed to contribute to our comfort, have we looked forward to the grand and terrible scene, which will assuredly come, when the earth and skies shall pass away - when the sun in the heavens shall be put out and cease to shine, and when death and hell shall deliver up their dead - and in the contemplation, we have felt convinced that there is nothing short of the blessed assurance that the great and glorious God, at whose bidding the uprising nations of the dead shall come forth, who is our Father and our God, could possibly allay the terror of the contemplation.

Having hope in God, which is sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that which is within the veil; a hope so full of immortality that we can contemplate with joy the coming of the great day, when our God shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, to take vengeance on them that know him not, and to be admired in all who love his appearing, can we not, by the same

faith in God, meet the cheerless conflicts of this mortal state, and even amid the dread confusion of war, and the clash of arms, the booming of cannon, and the death-cry of the slaughtered victims of the battlefield, be still and know that Jehovah is God? There are times when the faith of God's people is severely tried, in regard to his supreme control of all events - when the turbulent passions of men seem unrestrained - when the wicked rise and spread themselves like the green bay tree; - when God's holy name is blasphemed, his law transgressed, his truth opposed and derided, his people persecuted, and when the ways of Zion mourn, and doubting, we enquire:

"Is there a God who hears and sees
The things below the skies?"

But with the Psalmist we are at length constrained to acknowledge, "This is my infirmity." Our infirmity and imperfections conceal from us his hand in turning and overturning, and causing the wrath of man to praise him, and in restraining their wrath to such limits as he has wisely appointed. Truely God is his own interpreter, and until he makes known to us his boundless wisdom and power, his ways are past finding out. But still, although our unbelief so often assaults our faith, there is a fixed conviction in our minds, that the Lord God omnipotent doth reign, and this conviction affords us consolation.

The Lord Reigneth. Having all wisdom to direct and all power to accomplish, his government is absolute and sovereign, he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. No higher law can possibly exist in heaven or earth than the will of God. It cannot be improved, for it is perfect and holy in all respects, and all the saints on earth and glorified spirits in heaven pray, "Thy will be done." Not because they doubt that it will be done, but because God's own spirit helpeth our infirmities, and knoweth what is the will of God, and therefore maketh intercession for us, according to his will, with groanings that we cannot utter. That will, though higher than the heavens, and broader than eternity, perfectly comprehends the smallest, as it does the greatest objects that exist. From the vaulted heavens to the deepest earth, and from the mightest angels to the minutest insect, it directs the destiny of all. The sparrow in its flight - and the numbered hairs upon our heads are all secured in being and in destiny by the will of God. In the execution of his will, the Lord reigneth. Not as some impiously represent, that he attempts to reign, or wants to reign. But with irresistible power and might his purpose stands and he does all his pleasure. He speaks the word, and it stands fast; he commands, and it is done. He is of one mind and none can turn him.

"He looks and ten thousand of angels rejoice,
And myriads wait for his word;
He speaks - and eternity filled with his voice,
Re-echoes the praise of her Lord."

When we contemplate the infinite and perfections of Jehovah, contrasted with the highest attributes or attainments of mortals, to bear the government; we have the greatest reason to reiterate the language of the inspired Psalmist, "Let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof." Let them rejoice that the absolute government of events are not left with finite beings. All their powers are limited, and under the providential government of God himself. His prescience can clearly foresee all the events that time can possibly develop, and his wisdom is sufficient to provide for all emergencies. He is capable of holding the end of all things with the beginning. No lapse of ages, or intervening contingencies can becloud his omniscient vision, or hide the smallest particle of creation, or the most trivial circumstance from his view. Possessing all knowledge, all wisdom, and all goodness, how important that he should govern and control all things.

Chain'd to his throne a volume lies,
With all the fates of men;
With every angel's form and size,
Drawn by the eternal pen.

His Providence unfolds the Book,
And makes his counsel known;
Each opening leaf, and every stroke,
Fulfills some deep design."

We are filled with amazement while we trace his government in nature. The heavens declare his glory, and the firmament his handy work. The regularity in which each heavenly body moves is obedience to his decrees. Seed time and harvest, winters and summers, days and nights, respond with the most exact precision to the orders of his throne. And can we doubt that in the history of mankind - their rise and fall - their present and future destiny - are bounded by his all - wise decree?

We can no more deny or doubt his providential supervision of all the affairs of men and angels, than we can doubt his very existence. And we know that he exists, because we exist; and we could have no existence if he did not exist. And it is equally clear that he reigns, as it is that he exists; for no power inferior to that which created the universe could possibly sustain it one moment, and in this also we have cause for joy and gratitude.

Early as the entrance of sin, and the fall of man, was a Savior promised - and how could a promise be made, requiring four thousand of years for its fulfillment, with any degree of certainty, if he who made the promise had not a full control of all the events which were necessary for its fulfillment? Or how could he "Declare the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," if he did not hold the reigns of universal government in his own almighty grasp?

But while we are constrained to confess the power and absolute government of God - we have also to acknowledge our utter inability to comprehend his universal government. His footsteps are in the mighty deep; and

his ways are past finding out. High as the heavens are raised above the earth, so are God's ways and thoughts higher than the ways and thoughts of men - for

"Clouds and darkness are round about him."

Our vision is too weak and feeble to gaze upon the unveiled glory of the eternal God. Look we, which way we may, the impenetrable cloud conceals the dazzling splendor of his glory; or we should be consumed. He keepeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it. Before, behind, on his right hand and on his left, the intervening cloud conceals from human sight the insufferable splendor of his eternal throne. O, where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, "For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."

Yet, notwithstanding the impenetrable darkness which hides his person and his government from human scrutiny, the faith of the Son of God, implanted in his quickened saints, is permitted to view the bow which God has, by his spirit, disclosed upon that cloud. And the darker the cloud appears to our natural vision, the brighter does the bow present its living beauties to our faith, giving us the most joyful assurance that "Righteousness and Judgment are the Habitation of his throne."

The depravity of our nature inclines us to question the righteousness of the divine government, because from our eyes the cloud conceals the wisdom, majesty and holiness of God. But while the infidelity of our fallen nature doubts and disputes the righteousness of divine government; and we murmur, complain, find fault, and rebel; the assurance is unmistakably given that righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. His throne signifies his power and dominion, and that power and dominion is founded in Righteousness and judgment, and therefore can never depart from the immutable principles of Righteousness, however dark and mysterious his government may seem to our reason. Sometimes we are subjected to trials which seem to us to bear no impress of the judgment, or decree of God, and we are perhaps inclined to attribute them to chance, or to some cause over which the throne of God bears no control; but however wrongly we may judge, all that concerns us for time or eternity must be controlled by the righteousness and judgment in which the eternal throne of God is founded.

When smiling mercy bestows our pathway with every desirable blessing, the throne from which our mercies proceed is to our eyes involved in darkness, and we enquire, "How can God bestow such mercies upon us consistently with his eternal perfections, when we are so very sinful, ungrateful, and undeserving? Again

when he recalls these mercies, our gourds are blasted, our comforts dashed, our dearest treasures torn from our fond embrace, the darkness of his cloud hides from our view the gracious hand of our kind and covenant God, and again we cry out in amazement: Lord why is this?

"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his works in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain."

Middletown, N.Y.
October 1, 1861

P.S. I would just like to say, that I fully agree with what Elder Beebe was blessed to pen down in the above. I have read volumes of his writings, and I feel from the depth of my heart, he was a greatly God blessed child of God, who was enabled to pen down so clearly, some of the deep and great things of God and his government; and all this, without ever any praise of mankind for it so being. And that my Brethren, is what I so dearly love.

Your in hope of eternal life,
Troy G. Shepard
103 E. Tateway Rd.
Kitty Hawk, N.C. 27949

Psalm 1:1.

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

ARTICLES

EXPERIENCE

Danville, Virginia
June, 1926

To Elder W.R. Dodd

It is with fear and trembling that I make this attempt to comply with your request that I write you my experience. It makes me indescribably humble that you should desire such a thing of poor insignificant me. You said if I had a mind. I have for a long time felt that I would love to leave behind me a written testimony of some of God's wonderful love, mercy, and tender care for me, a wretched hell-deserving sinner; yet, to this time I have never before ventured to try to pen any part of it, realizing that neither tongue nor pen can express what I have seen, felt, and handled of His goodness. I shrink from this attempt, feeling that those who know me best are ready to say (and truthfully) "She does not live up to her profession." Alas, "I am so vile, so prone to sin, I fear that I am not born again." Yet, as I go back, as it were, to Bethel, and feel surely there has been some kind of change; since the things I once loved I now hate, and the things I once hated I now love; yet I don't know how to tell about it. When I can exclaim with the poet, "I once was lost but now I'm found, was blind, but now I see," the whole story is told.

In my nineteenth year I attended an association at Senaca meeting house in Campbell County, Virginia.

I was having quite a nice time with the young folks (according to my raising). When services began I would find a seat and listen to the preaching. I got a close seat in the afternoon on Sunday, and heard, as I had never heard before, the closing sermon delivered by Elder E.V. White. The text was "But it has happened unto them, according to the true proverb: The dog is returned to his vomit again, and the sow that is washed to her wallowing in the mire." Oh! how plainly I could see that my profession at a Methodist Camp Meeting six years before was but filthy rags, and that I was a vile, helpless sinner. I found myself so miserable and undone. As they sung the last song and took the parting hand, I would have given all the world had it been mine, to have been one with them. Plainly did I see myself on the "left hand", with not one ray of hope. My sins, like mountains, rose before me, and I could see no way of escape from the justice of a sin-avenging God. I went home with a burdened heart, which seemed unbearable; but would not for anything have let my people know that I had a serious thought.

I often read the Bible for my mother, always finding it a dull, tiresome task, and would feel much relieved when she would say, "Daughter, that will do for this time." But now I had a desire to read it in search of some promise for a vile, penitent wretch. I would steal my chance to read it after this manner: I kept a novel on the same table with the Bible; the novel I kept laying open, while I intently searched the Scriptures. But if I heard foot-steps down would go the closed Bible, and I would appear much interested in my novel. This searching continued almost three years; and instead of promises I found condemnation everywhere. The promises were there, but I could not claim them.

A few months after the association referred to above I was (in the absence of my mother) entertaining a Primitive friend. Elder Wright was having an appointment at Whitehorn, three miles from home. I really wanted her to want to go, so there would be no suspicion that I cared anything about it (it being in the week at a busy time). No arrangement could be made for us to ride so I casually suggested that if she cared to go I would be glad to walk with her (fearing that she would not go). But God gave her a mind to say, "Alright." There were just a few old brothers and sisters present; the preacher, an ordinary looking stranger, came forward, and to me preached a wonderful sermon along the line of experience. While he described conviction, I could but wonder how that stranger could tell exactly how I felt; but alas, when he began to describe deliverance I again saw myself "cut off." None of that fit my case. My burden of sin grew heavier all the time, as I journeyed on, trying to do something to induce God to be merciful to me.

But by and by the secret of my soul trouble leaked out, (It was in God's

time). People would talk to me on the subject of religion and before I would hardly be aware of it, I would be praising a sovereign God; that though He sent my soul to hell, His righteous law approved it well. In my poor heart there was a constant yearning that God would have mercy, and not mete out to me justice. I firmly believed that He had a chosen people; and that all for whom Christ died, would be everlastingly saved; but did He die for me? No not for so hell-deserving a sinner as me (words fail me here). Sinking, yes sinking into utter despair, there came into my mind a blessed hymn (I knew but little about singing, but this one line). I must have sung with the "Spirit" and understanding." I sung as I had never sung before, and have never sung since, - that pleading hymn, "Father, I stretch my hand to thee, etc." I did not finish all my words, for my soul burst forth in such rapturous adoration to Him, who I then felt had, for Christ's sake, heard and answered my fervent prayer. I could not see then, as it were by an eye of faith, how our dear Redeemer had (before I drew my breath) with His precious blood, paid all that justice claimed. In the place of despair, there sprang up in my breast a hope that has been an anchor to my poor tempest-tossed soul on to this present time. Many the times I have felt that the anchor was gone and the old vessel must sink, each time to find it still there, only down under the deep water just out of sight. On that memorable day, with my burden gone I knew not where or how, I enjoyed undisturbed bliss of mind for just a few hours. After which period God, for a purpose of His own, let the Devil say to me "You are deceived, there is nothing to it." Then doubts, yes doubts that have followed me on and on, sprang up within me. What? hope all the way and doubt all the way? yet not contradictory, but too deep for finite minds. Now when I read the Bible, I dare claim those sweet promises as mine too.

I soon was given a desire to follow my Lord and Master in the ordinance of baptism (the form of which I had never a doubt). To do this I must ask a home with the people of God. I dearly loved them, and desired to be with them; but the feeling of unworthiness that followed me I cannot describe; neither can I describe my longing to be with them.

It was in the month of July, 1886, that my hope of deliverance came. The third Saturday of that year I went before the church at Whitethorne; could not tell them anything, only that I wanted to live with them, but was too unworthy. Oh, how deeply I felt it. They received me, and I was baptised the next day, with a sister who had freely talked to the church before me. As our pastor, Elder G.W. Hundley, raised me from the watery grave, I strangled just a little, but gave it no thought in my happiness, for this happiness was to be mine for only a few minutes. As we went up from the water to the mill-house to change our clothing the other sister just behind me remarked (it was thoughtlessly, I am sure) to a friend: "I am so glad I did not strangle; I have always heard that

it was a sign they were not changed." Dear old sister Hodnett, who walked beside, lovingly put her arm around me, saying, "Don't let that bother you." But alas, it had taken hold on my very heartstrings. I saw myself deceived; and I had a public manifestation of it to so large a crowd of people. I was a reproach to the Church of God; and many other similar things I felt. But there was a deep yearning of heart that God in Mercy would (in His own way) show me clearly if I was deceived, that I might have my name removed from the church book and turn back from it all. My eyes closed in slumber that night with that petition in my soul. God gave me a dream, (you see it is said we cannot get along without a dream) of a most beautiful baptism and I the candidate. I awoke with a feeling of satisfaction concerning my baptism. I might write on and on but half would not be told of how God, in His love and tender mercy, has brought me on these many years. Sometimes on the mountaintop, but more frequently deep down in the valley, sometimes the deeper down the more beautiful the Lily I see. I am still clinging to that little hope, be it imaginary, or be it real, it is mine for God gave it to me.

Pardon me. I have written too much. May God give you, and all the household of faith a mantle of charity to cover my imperfection.

That means me.

Belle Neal

The above experience is of the mother of Brother Willie Neal. (See his obituary.)

IS GOD LIMITED?

R.F.D. 3, Box 123,
Axton, Virginia

To the Signs of the Times:

Is God a limited God, or is he just limited in the minds of men? I believe it was David who said that they limited the Holy One of Israel; and I believe David also said that He does his will in the sea and all deep places.

We find in the Old Scriptures that there isn't anything too hard for God; and in the New Testament that all things are possible with God. Yet some say He wants to save everyone, but some won't let him.

The Scriptures say that Abraham believed that whatever God promised, he was able to perform; and, since the Scriptures also say that God cannot lie, and the impossibility of it, it would seem that, if God has promised to save every man that ever lived, it would be impossible for anyone to be lost.

I hope I believe in the sovereignty of God, - yet I doubt that everyone who says so, does. I have heard some say that they believed it, and then say that it is impossible for God to save a man unless the man "hears" the Gospel. And then some say that God can't hate, even though the Bible says that he did. And some say that He can't be displeased, even though he was displeased with some of the things that David had done. I don't believe in a God that can't be displeased; but I hope I believe in one that can do, and

does, as He pleases, and has a perfect right and the power to do so; one that is not limited in any direction by what I believe, or by what any other man or group of men might believe; though most men claim to have a lot of wisdom.

Paul said that our faith is not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Some say that God's people can't be disobedient, but, if that is the way it is, then I am not one; for it is how to perform that which is good I find not. No man, except Jesus, ever lived in perfect obedience, and pleased God at all times. This is the reason I would hate to think that anything was conditioned on man's obedience. I believe God predestinated all things, but I do not believe that limited him, or made a sinner out of a man; for I read where Paul said that by the disobedience of one man, many were made sinners; and that by the disobedience of one man sin entered the world. So disobedience is what made me a sinner, and I do not believe that anything can justify man in what he does or does not do, but God. Jesus is the only reason I have a hope; and I wouldn't trade my hope for what most people claim they know, even if I could.

I hear some say that it doesn't make any difference what we do, but I do not get the idea. I do not believe that salvation is by man, but rather that salvation is of the Lord. And I fail to see how Adam, or any man, could sin, if he had a right, or was free to partake of any and everything. I also feel that anything we can't freely partake of, is just at much sin now as ever.

These are just a few thoughts I would like to send along. If there should be anything that is in error, I hope you could feel to forgive, as I am very limited in knowledge. I don't want to hurt anyone, unless with the truth.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Howard T. Edwards

BLESSING HIS PEOPLE

Often we speak of the finished work of Christ and of the many wonderful activities that he did while here on earth in fulfilling that work, and fulfilling the will of the father that sent him. The will of him that sent him was, in short to glorify the father and to bless his people.

The fullness of the blessings of God are hard to comprehend when viewed from this low ground. Yet both the old and new testaments are well documented with these blessings even in trouble, "....I "will" acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out... for their good. For I will set my eyes upon them for good..." Jer. 24: 5,6. And of course, Rom. 8:28. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

It is a glorious thing to think that Christ's activities toward us were all in blessing us. Even his last act on earth was blessing his people. "And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried

up into heaven" Luke 24:51. Even with the scripture stressing the fullness of his blessing toward us it is still one of the most difficult things, it would seem, for the human mind to comprehend that God does not need man's help or permission to do anything. No, not just difficult, but impossible for the human mind, and often difficult for the spiritual mind considering the conflicts that rage within. The natural mind with it's pride and self-will does not want to consider that it's help is not needed, nor is there room or reward for doing God's work, because the work is finished, the way prepared, and He is our "....exceeding great reward" Gen. 15:1. As the warfare rages within, the spiritual mind is made to see that there is nothing good that man can do. We are defeated before we start. But it isn't an empty defeat, when we are given to see that our righteousness is as filthy rags. Then we are given beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Isa. 61;3. Yes, in our defeat, being cast down, he gives understanding. We are given a glimpse of where our hope is anchored. It is in God's sufficiency in both time and eternity. He is complete within himself needing nothing from man. He needed no one, nor asked for any opinions in creation, but did it for his own pleasure. Rev. 4:11. "Neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;" Acts 17:25. See also Ps. 50:10,13. & Rom. 11: 34,36. Is it any wonder that Job would ask, "What is man that thou shouldest magnify him? "Have you not asked the same when you are given to believe that some light of understanding has been given you? Light to see that not only was the work of creation finished by God, but also that the work of salvation was finished by Christ in his death, burial and resurrection. Finished, though it is not made manifest to the individual saints until they are quickened or born again in time. Then ".... with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation," Then you read with thanksgiving, as the apostle Paul said of himself, and what had happened to him, "For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God." 2 Cor. 4:15.

Then if his purpose is to bless his people, and if he requires nothing from them that he has not already blessed them with, then shouldn't we give earnest heed to those blessings. God has "....blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Eph. 1:3.

I would refer you back to Luke 24:51 in which Christ was blessing them or explaining the blessings that were their's and those to come. He told them to wait, or tarry until they be endued with power from on high. In other words they were to wait until Pentecost when wonderful things, that had never before happened, would take place. The Holy Ghost, which Christ said he would send, came and filled the house, and cloven tongues like fire sat upon each of them and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.

This sending of the Holy Ghost and filling of the Holy Ghost is the completion of the double measure of blessings given to God's people, as is illustrated in Elijah's mantle that fell from him when he was taken up. II Kings. 2: 9-14.

You will recall that Elisha ask that a double portion of Elijah's spirit be upon him after he departed, and it was so. Now, in a very real sense the church and the individual saints have a double portion.

We would be much poorer indeed if we were only given spiritual life and left to wait until after death to understand anything else. What poverty to wonder what great thing had happened to us and had no understanding of how or why. But God has not left us there. We are blessed with the newness of life, and as new born babes need a teacher and comforter, so the Holy Ghost is given us. He speaks to us of the things of Christ, He does not speak of Himself. He is our revelator and does not leave the scriptures to our private interpretation. He is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. And the highlight of his teaching, it would seem, is that the spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are the sons of God.

Is not the Holy Ghost our double portion? Without the gift of the Spirit He would not have blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. We would not have a guide into all truth. John 16:13.

"He lives to bless me with his love.
He lives to plead my cause above."
He lives to give me full supplies.
He lives to bless me with his eyes."

He lives to calm my troubled heart.
He lives all blessings to impart."

Elder Wayman G. Chapell

VOICES OF THE PAST

HABAKKUK 1: 12,13.

Signs of the times,
January, 1940

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

My mind is now being exercised on some wonderful truth expressed by Habakkuk in the first chapter. The first paragraph expresses "the burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see." The burden was why he beheld grievance, spoiling and violence, and why there were those who raise up strife and contention. It is evident that the wicked doth compass about the righteous and wrong judgment proceedeth. We are sometimes made to wonder with Habakkuk why these things exist. Some would have us believe that this is the work of the devil over which God does not exercise control. But that god is not Israel's God. Our God works all things. We hear Him saying, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there

is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My cousel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isaiah 46: 9, 10). "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? (Dan. 4:35). We see the fact revealed in the second paragraph of the first chapter of Habakkuk that the raising up of the "Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces which are not their's" is the work of God. God declares through the prophet that the heathen will not believe this though it be told them. The heathen of today will not believe that the raising up of the bitter, hasty and wicked people is the work of God. In relating the characteristics and actions of this bitter and hasty nation he also makes plain that "their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves." They are not forced to do these things, but do them of their own accord. This is their nature and delight. This thought is in harmony with James 1:13,14, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." Nay, the Chaldeans could not charge their wrong judgment and actions to the predestination of God, because it was their desire to do what they did do. Neither can man charge God with being the cause of his sins, even though the predestination of God embraced them, for man "is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:14,15). Yes, God created the waster to destroy, and the waster has pleasure in destruction. God also created the wicked for the day of evil, and the wicked hath pleasure in wickedness.

The twelfth and thirteenth verses of the first chapter of Habakkuk give sufficient explanation of the purpose of God in raising up the bitter and hasty nation that deals treacherously and oppresses the righteous. God is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look upon iniquity, therefore it is not for the sake of evil and iniquity, that these things are prevalent, but "O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and O Mighty God, thou hast established them for correction." They are established and ordained for judgment and correction of the chosen of God. The wicked are the sword of the Lord, and they are raised up for the purpose. God hath a noble purpose in all things, and, as Paul states, We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. I believe it takes the wicked, the waster and all other things opposing godliness (even our carnal minds) to make up the furnace of affliction in which God's people are chosen. Ye are refined, but not with silver; ye are chosen in the furnace of affliction.

Now let us quote the complete twelfth verse of the first chapter of Habakkuk, "Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord, my God, mine Holy One? We shall not die. O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction." The first part of this verse is an interrogative affirmation, ascribing all power to God. As He is from everlasting, and beside Him there is none else, let us conclude that nothing has transpired without His establishment and ordination. In the phrase, "We shall not die," "we" embraces all those whom "they" oppose. There are two classes of people under consideration in this chapter. "They" include the wicked and "we" include the righteous, or children of God. Even though the righteous are oppressed and persecuted by the wicked (whose aim is to harm and destroy the righteous), God hath even established and ordained their wicked acts to the good of His children. He plainly states it is for judgment and correction. Instead of being for the destruction of His people (as the wicked aim) God hath established and ordained them for the judgment and correction of His chosen. "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of His correction: for whom the Lord loveth He correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth" (Prov. 3:12,13) (See Job 5:17). "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Heb. 12:6). "But if ye be without chastisement ... then are ye bastards, and not sons" (Heb. 12:8). In Psalms 136:10-15, we read that God smote Egypt in their first-born and brought out Israel from among them with a strong hand and an out-stretched arm, and divided the Red Sea into parts, and made Israel to pass through the midst of it, but overthrew Pharaoh and his host into the Red Sea. God was using Moses to lead the children of Israel, and the enemy to drive them. The Egyptians were zealously pursuing the Israelites, with a motive in mind different from the purpose of God, which was to drive them to deliverance. Just as soon as Pharoah and his army had completed the purpose God had in raising them up (to push the Israelites to deliverance) they were drowned. This brings to mind these two Scriptures: With lovingkindness have I drawn thee, and, as with the horns of an unicorn Ephraim shall be pushed to the ends of the earth. The Israelites were drawn by Moses and the cloud, pushed by the enemy and hedged in by the walls of water.

I know this is considered hard doctrine by carnal reasoning, and does not give any credit or praise to man, but it pleases God to use the furnace of affliction to reveal this fact to God's children. Thus they are "driven to the ends of the earth." They are driven to the end of their own ability and made willing to comply with that effectual command of sweet deliverance: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa. 45:22). The journey to the "ends of the earth" is extremely unpleasant, and the "furnace of afflic-

tion" well describes this process of the new birth. But this well qualifies the child of God to deeply appreciate the paradise which is the result of the remembrance of Jesus Christ being made manifest unto them.

From Elder Lamberts book, "Tried In The Furnace".

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

Pigg River Association to be held the 1st weekend in August, 1993 at Franklin County High School, same as last year, in Rocky Mount, Virginia on Route 40 in town.

Brother Jamie Cooper, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, N.C. Highway No. 700, the Fifth Sunday in August, 1993. Services beginning at 10:30 A.M. All lovers of the truth are invited. A special invitation to ministers of our faith and order.

Pleasantville Church will host this meeting.

Sister Rachel Wray, Clerk

REVELATION 21:6.

And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of MARTINSVILLE CHURCH, a Presbytery met at 2:30 p.m. on May 15, 1993, for the examination of Brother Tommy C. Wall, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of GOD, at the satisfaction and discretion of the judgement of the Presbytery, ordain the above to the full work of the office of DEACON.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Carl Terry. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the Presbytery. Those present were; Lane Carter; Clarence Stone; Hale Terry; Larry Hollandsworth; Carl Terry; Junior Conner.

DEACONS PRESENT WERE: Chester Hagood, Herbert Dodson, Jamie E. Cooper, Tommy Lovell, Fred Murphy, Joseph Cahill, R.W. Aker, Alvin Shelton, Floyd Bryant, Jessie Tyres, H.D. Ingram, Woody Young, C.T. Abshire, W.W. abshire, Jimmy Holley, Wilford Parson; Nelson Bryant.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Lane Carter as Moderator. Jamie E. Cooper as Clerk. Elder Larry Hollandsworth was chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate. Having been duly appointed by Martinsville Church Brother Willard Potter delivered BROTHER TOMMY C. WALL to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder Larry Hollandsworth and Clarence Stone

and all Elders present were invited to participate using Scriptural references 6th Chapter Acts; 1st Timothy Verses 8-13.

The Presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate administered the laying on of hands, with the ordination prayer being delivered by Elder Junior Conner. The charge was delivered to the candidate by Elder Hale Terry & Lane Carter using Scriptural reference Book of Numbers, Book of Solomon.

The Moderator asked the Presbytery if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of Ordination was presented to Brother TOMMY C. WALL, and the right hand of fellowship was given. The ordained Brother was delivered back to the church as an ordained Deacon of The Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Martinsville.

The minutes consisting of the work of the Presbytery were read and accepted. The Presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Larry Hollandsworth.

Elder Lane Carter, Moderator
Jamie E. Cooper, Clerk

ECCLESIASTES 5:18.

Behold that which I have seen: it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it is his portion.

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Salem Primitive Baptist Church, Floyd County, Va. A presbytery met June 12, 1993 at 10 o'clock for the examination of Brothers Wade Poff, Alfred Ratliff & Julian Rutrough and if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacons.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Junior Conner. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were Elders Hale Terry, Noel Conner, Larry Hollandsworth, Willard Cox, Raymond Goad, Marvin Brumfield, Cleo Robertson, Junior Conner, Leonard Brammer, Lane Carter and W.T. Conner.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Hale Terry as moderator and W.G. Parsons as clerk. Elders Junior Conner, W.T. Conner and Willard Cox were chosen to perform the examination of the candidates. Deacon Andrew Agee having been duly appointed by Salem Church in conference May 8, 1993 as spokesman for the Church delivered Brothers Wade Poff, Alfred Ratliff & Julian Rutrough to the presbytery.

Examination was made by Elders Junior Conner, W.T. Conner & Willard Cox using scriptural reference 1 Timothy 3rd ch. 8-16v. & Acts 6th chap. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidates administered the lay-

ing on of hands with the ordination prayer being delivered by Elder Cleo Robertson. The charge was delivered to the candidates by Elders Lane Carter, Leonard Brammer, Raymond Goad & Hale Terry, using scriptural reference the written word of God.

The moderator asked Salem Church if they were satisfied with the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brothers Poff, Ratliff & Rutrough and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained candidates were delivered back to the Church as ordained Deacons of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Salem. The minutes consisting the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Marvin Brumfield.

Wm. Hale Terry, Moderator
W.G. Parsons, Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Smith River Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church located just off the Blue Ridge Parkway, Carroll County, Va. on the highway between mile post 183 and 184. The time will be Friday September 3, 1993 thru Sunday September 5, 1993. We invite our correspondents and visitors to this meeting.

Wilford G. Parsons
Association Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The union meeting of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Church will be held, with Mt. Ararat or (Old Mountain) church, the Lord willing the fifth Saturday and Sunday in August 28th and 29th, 1993

We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Take Mt. Cross road (750) from River Side Drive go approximately 13 miles to the church on right.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
Sarah Barker, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 1993

Eld. John Wingfield, VA	$7.00
Lonzie W. Nichols, VA	2.00
William A. Johnson, WV	5.00
Mrs. Joel Alexander, AL	7.00
Hassell Allen, NC	5.00
E.H. Chandler, LA	7.00
Mrs. Muriel Strader, NC	2.00
Garner Horne, NC	5.00
Mrs. C.B. Richardson, VA	2.00
Norman Jenkins, NC	2.00
Eld. B.K. Smith, CA	2.00
Mrs. Eunice Thompson, NC	10.00
Mrs. Connie Page, NC	5.00
Mrs. H.A. Harlow, TX	5.00
Mrs. Nary L. Hawkins, NC In memory Jesse Somers	32.00
James B. Pugh, AL	2.00
W.D. Godwin, LA	2.00
Larry H. Gibson, NC	20.00

OBITUARIES

WILLIAM LEWIS NEAL

I have been requested to write a memorial to a dear brother in Christ, William Lewis Neal. Born June 10, 1900, he departed this life March 8, 1993. He was the son of James William and Sarah Belle Riddle Neal. Surviving are his wife Alice Lillian (Lillie) Lovell Neal and his two sons William Lovell Neal of Roanoke, Va. and James Lewis Neal who lives in Boston, Mass. also six grandchildren and two great grandchildren. He was the youngest and last of three children, his two sisters having predeceased him. They were Lenna Neal Goodson and Ruth Neal Lovell.

Brother Neal enjoyed a long and fruitful life. He and sister Neal were a devoted couple and were able to celebrate their seventieth wedding anniversary at home in November of last year. Except for the last few weeks of his life when failing health necessitated a change, he lived all his life in the ancestral home on the family farm in Caswell County, N.C. His father died when he was only sixteen years old, leaving the responsibility of being the man of the house falling on his young shoulders. This prevented him from furthering his education. Nevertheless he was a knowledgeable man with a keen interest in life and blessed with a remarkable memory. A successful farmer and business man he was known for his integrity. He believed in living with his fellowman by the golden rule and was loved and respected by all who knew him.

Brother Neal had a great interest in the Church long before he was brought to ask for a church home. He and his wife were received together into the fellowship of Moon's Creek Primitive Baptist Church in September, 1977. An ardent soldier of the cross he desired no honors and felt to be only a servant. He worshipped the God of all power, believing "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." He loved the doctrine of salvation by grace and manifested his love of God through his love for the brethren. His Church soon recognized in him the qualities of a deacon and he was ordained to this office.

A humble and peace loving man he had a quiet, easy manner of attending to the business at hand. He was a true servant indeed, not only in his church where he was ever ready and willing for whatever the need might be but to his neighbor and fellowman as well.

His pastor Elder Kenneth R. Key conducted his funeral rites at Barker Funeral Home Chapel in Danville, Va. adhering to brother Neal's wishes, he did not eulogize the man but rather used scripture to extol his Saviour. His earthly body was then laid to rest in the old church yard cemetery of Moon's Creek Church in the family plot by his parents. Along with the final remarks and prayer a group sang

"Father We'll Rest In Thy Love," a short hymn that meant much to brother Neal.

May the family be given to feel this same inner peace and assurance their loved one felt, especially his "adorable Lillie," who was unable to attend the service.

Humbly submitted,
Mary G. Blaylock

Proverbs 15: 31-33.

The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise.

He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding.

The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility.

CLARENCE P. PRESCOTT

It pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst, our dear brother & Deacon on Jan. 11, 1993.

He was born Jan. 10, 1912 to Ivy Floyd & Beulah G. Prescott, the third of seven children.

He joined Hadnot Creek Primitive Baptist Church June 11, 1986 and was ordained a Deacon Sept. 3, 1989 serving faithfully until he was called home.

Clarence was married first, to Fannie Lee Hill Prescott on Sept. 19, 1931 who preceeded him in death. They were blessed with four children, Geraldine Moore of Carthage, NC, Ray Prescott of Greenville, NC and Gordon Prescott of Greenville, NC, grandchildren and great grandchildren. His second marriage was to Lillie Mae Brown Prescott of Snow Hill, NC who survives.

He suffered much afflictions in his last days, but was not one to complain, rather it seemed to confirm him in the faith that was once delivered to the Saints. His love for the brethren was greatly manifested in so many ways, especially by his desire to be at his meetings when it seemed almost impossible (him being so weak).

Two brothers preceeded him in death, Leo and Manly which leaves I.J. Prescott of Winston-Salem, NC, Irvin F. Prescott of Winston-Salem, NC, Mrs. Leola Bright of Snow Hill, NC, and the writer J.T. Prescott of Swansboro, NC.

I trust we are all thankful for the Gift of him for a brother but to me he was much, much more than a natural brother.

We all miss him greatly but would not wish him back, but sleep on, that blessed sleep, waiting for that blessed call, "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit that kingdom prepared for thee from the foundation of the world."

His funeral was conducted at Edwards Funeral Home in Snow Hill, NC with Elders Jessie Foreman, Joe Sawyer, O.V. Allen, and the writer of this. This was his request while living.

His body was laid to rest in the Snow Hill Cemetery.

Done by order or Conference March 1993.

Elder J.T. Prescott, Moderator
Vilma Rhue, Clerk

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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NO NEEDED HEADSTONE

The promise came in the form of a child
To live in a world both wicked and wild
To fulfill a will that was not His own
But in time would have the grace as a home.

He was tempted and tried more than all men
Teaching that in Him our trials would end
He walked and preached with power to save
And before Him always the knowledge of the grave.

He accepted in love all persecutions that came
And expressed love and forgiveness in His Fathers name
He willingly suffered all the world gave
For the cause and the hour of the unknown grave.

We find Him prisoner in judgements hall
In anguish and pain as the whip would fall
Yet not giving in to all the law gave
Knowing the hour was nearing to fill the grave.

Now hanging between thieves on a wooden cross
To fulfill that God's people would suffer no loss
Joseph comes with a plan His body to save
Yet our Christ had no prearranged grave.

A borrowed tomb would end earthly ways
Borrowed for use but three prophesied days
We too shall have but a borrowed tomb
Even in nature we came from a borrowed womb.

Pilate said place a stone and set my seal
So His dedicated people His body can't steal
Then the women came for the anointing day
And lo they are surprised the stone's rolled away.

Now His work is all finished, He bowed His head
The soldiers came and say He's already dead
Let the world boast He could not Himself save
Yet Praise God - Behold The Empty Grave.

C.B. Davis
June 1993

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EDITORIAL

ELDER R. H. CAMPBELL

When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people: Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. (Deut. 32, vs. 8-9)

The above scripture is found in the song that Moses was instructed, of God, to teach to the children of Israel just prior to his death. God had told Moses that he would sleep with his fathers, and he told him the things that would befall the nation of Israel after his departure: they were a stiff-necked and a rebellious people, as all men are in the flesh, and the song prophesied of the things that would happen to them and was a testimony of the goodness and mercy of a loving God to his chosen people. The children of Israel, as a nation, would utterly corrupt themselves and turn away from all the ways in which Moses had taught them and commanded them to go. They would go in the vanity of their natural minds, lusting after the things of the flesh and striving for the treasures and valves of the world, all of which perish with the using and which lose their appeal, when achieved. In spite of the warnings, in the son, man, in nature, continues to do those things, never learning from the mistakes of former generations: they are still walking in these ways, boasting of their accomplishments and the advances made since the beginning: never realizing that they are still the same stiff-necked and rebellious creatures that they were in that day, and still as blind to the treasures of the heavenly kingdom.

The song began, by setting forth the same glorious doctrine that the saints of God have treasured down through the corridors of time: the same sovereign work and power of the creator that is preached in the pulpits of His church in the present day. One of the most beautiful and comforting attributes of the doctrine is that it was, is, and always will be the same: the truth will always be true and will be believed by the chosen generation in

whatever age they may live. There are no old truths and new truths, there are only declared truths which are as eternal as the originator of them. Ps. XVI vs. 6, David expressed it this way, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea I have a goodly heritage." Surely David knew the truths that he received were not for him alone, but, were the same things that had been let down to all, in their time: the same things had been revealed to Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Samuel and David and would later be revealed to Peter, James, John, Paul the Apostle, and even to people in this day in which we live: the same glorious truths, not diminished by the disbelief of some but the same as in the beginning. The song, as sung, in that day is just as precious and comforting today, to the vessels of mercy, as it was to the chosen in that time: to all, in all ages of time, who have been blessed to see what they are in nature and trust in the one who made them in the flesh, to remake them a new creature in Christ.

They love the words of the song, "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is a Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment; A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he," because they set forth their experience, and bring again to their remembrance the solemn way and manner in which the precious and glorious truths were revealed unto them. The song is from God, and he addresses the heavens and the earth, which are his creations, along with all of the inhabitants of both, and then declares the way and manner in which his glorious doctrine will be sent forth and the way in which it will be received. It will be as sovereignly dispensed as the rain which comes forth from heaven, at his command, refreshes and gives life to the herbs and grasses: the dew which is the same cleansing and purifying substance which distills and beautifies the plants, and cause them to radiate their beauty as they are cleansed from the dust and contaminates of the world, as a beautiful field or forest after the rain. This is the effect of the doctrine and the word of God upon those heavenly plants here on earth dwelling amidst the sin and corruption of nature: they hear the word, understanding the pure language which is for them and them alone of all of God's creation, they publish it abroad to all who will listen and ascribe all glory and honor to the Rock.

The song then refers to another people, those who have corrupted themselves whose spot is not the spot of his children, and tells them that they are a perverse and crooked generation, and says, "Do ye thus requite the Lord. O foolish people and unwise? is not he thy father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee and established thee." These are indeed part of God's creation but they

are not of his elect: they are of those referred to later in vs. 31 of this same chapter when it stated, "For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges." The Apostle Paul spoke of these same people (Rom. IX. vs. 22, 23) "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured, with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he hath afore prepared unto glory." The song was not to make the rebellious and stiff-necked to repent and believe, but rather, to make manifest the differences between the vessels of wrath and the vessels of mercy. The vessels of wrath, in all ages, have always rejected the truth and gone their own way deceiving and being deceived and fell to stand in need of no help from anyone. There are those today who say there is no revelation or spiritual birth, but that God's gift to the world is in the scriptures and any that will read and follow them are children of God; they teach for doctrine the commandments of man, glory in the respect that they receive one from the other and deny the creator who made them and gave them breath, life and everything they have. They charge that God would be unjust to create a people for himself and others who were fitted to destruction and yet the scriptures teach this over and over in both the old and new testament.

The scriptures above were written thousands of years ago and they are speaking of a work that was done a long time before that time. Moses said, "Remember the days of old, Consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee: thy elders, and they will tell thee." This was ancient history at that time and was a work that God had, done independent of man or any actions or input on his part, and was, as all of his work, certain, sure and eternal, and here is the work being referred to. "When the most high divided unto the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lords portion is his people: Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." As man would say, this was a done deal at that time, whenever it was and nothing can be added to it and nothing can be taken away or fail to go according to that decree. The bounds are set by the Most High and they are set not to exclude the vessels of wrath but rather to include every heir of promise and to absolutely insure the eternal salvation of every child of grace.

All of those who are included in the Lord's portion are always keenly aware of the fact that this is the only way that they could ever have had a hope in this precious plan of salvation: they readily admit that if any part depended upon them to make it sure, they would have no hope at all, because they know the weakness and instability of the flesh. Just as God found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness and led him about and instructed him: they too were in a wilderness of sin, were saved and called with a holy calling

and have been led about and instructed in the truths of the kingdom of God. They know that, naturally speaking, there is no reasoning that can explain this marvelous occurrence other than the fact that the bounds were set in such a way that they were included in the Lord's portion. Proceeding on this basis then it is understandable: they are still sinners wandering in the wilderness but in spite of the vanity of the flesh and the sin which so easily assails them, they are still kept and made to ride upon the high places of the earth. The Apostle Paul stated the same basic truth this way. But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace are ye saved) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." In all ages of time, the testimony of those who are of the flock, will leave footsteps in the sands of time, that will be evidence to those in later generations, that this is the way of salvation; this is the old path in which the saints of God have all trod in their search for that city.

Many times in different generations, separated by thousands of years: under the law or in the gospel dispensation, the writers use similar expressions in telling of their experience and sometimes use even the same words although in a different land and culture. These are times when those lines are let down to them in those heavenly places and they will say with David. "Yea I have a goodly heritage." These are timeless truths in a world of time and nature and the Saints must be raised up above time and nature and be given of the eternal spirit to understand and to know them.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

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To the Editor,

For the most part of this year, 1993, I have been in attendance at various Primitive Baptist Churches. I have by God's grace learned much about the primitive baptist, what you believe and why you believe it.

Today August 8, 1993 have been a most spirit filled day for me, if I be not deceived, having attended services with Elder J.R. Williams and then tonight attended the song service at Dan River Church.

My heart has been moved greatly by the love exhibited among the Old School Baptists, even in times of disagreement.

God blessed me with an experience to be in attendance at a particular service where there was a disagreement concerning certain matters of

church business. At first I was inclined to excuse myself from the service but for what ever reason, God knoweth, I remained until the end.

A concern I had had about Old School Baptists was that they lacked the will or desire, in order to maintain harmony, to reprove, rebuke and exhort as the Apostle Paul so instructed in his writing. That day God revealed to me that the Primitive Baptist Elders truly know how to handle disruptions and can reprove, rebuke and exhort and do it with a love that must emanate from God himself.

For I saw this particular Elder stand and handle a very difficult situation in a most noble manner, that could only bring honour and glory to God.

While I am not a member, as yet, of the primitive baptists I have truly been blessed to be in you midst and in your churches, worshipping if not deceived the God and Christ whom I love because he first loved me.

I realize that as long as we are in the flesh there are going to be problems, but I have been moved by the love shown between members of the primitive baptist churches and their willingness to reach out to a stranger, that God in his providence has moved into their midst, and show a love and concern for such a one as I.

Having by God's grace studied and read much about the absolute sovereignty of God by such men as Augustus M. Toplady, Elder Gilbert Beebe and Elder D.V. Spangler. I have a much better understanding of my God and who he is. While the depth of what I have read and studied has often times been too deep for me. I have come to realize that the primitive baptist are not as I had come to believe, through my own ignorance, as a people always hiding their sin behind predestination, but as one dear Elder, whom I have come to love in the Lord wrote to me and said, quote "I am satisfied that those that truly believe absolute predestination have no desire to "blame" God when they sin. I have nothing but self loathing when I sin against God and yet I am satisfied that I will in time commit every sin that the dear Lord died for. It is hard to even see the glorious doctrines of grace when we live in sin. Rather we are made to join with Paul saying "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death end quote. How often in the years gone by have I made that same cry with the Apostle. Then God, I hope, in his wondrous and loving mercy showed me the way to repentance, forgave my sin, and returned peace to my wretched soul.

How often have I been able by his grace to claim the promise of forgiveness time and time again. May he grant me the same grace, as he told Peter in Matt. 18:22 to forgive my brother in like manner until seventy times seven or in other words endlessly even as he forgives his own elect, which cry unto him night and day, of which number I have the hope of being included.

I have to say with Cowper, God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform. For I feel that He has given me an ever growing love for a people

that just a few years back I only knew existed as hard shell baptists.

May God bless and keep you all in his ever abiding love.

In the hope of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Larry Gibson

ARTICLES

SALVATION

The Lord willing, and trusting He will give me grace and mercy, will submit some of my thoughts on the above subject. For the past almost 60 years that I have been among the Primitive Baptists, from time to time I have heard expressions such as "Eternal Salvation" and "Time Salvation". I have searched the scriptures and have been unable to find only one scripture that specifically uses the words "Eternal Salvation"; i.e., "Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. (Heb. 5: 8-9). Nowhere have I been able to find the phrase "time salvation". However, before going further, I will cite to you a scripture that has been used with the assertion that it has the meaning of "time" salvation, but I feel this is in error. "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." (Jude 1:3). This does not have reference to "time" salvation as some have taught, but just means that it is that salvation that is common to all the household of faith (Elect). We find these scriptures: "And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possession and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need." (Acts 2: 44-45). Also, "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the thing which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common." (Acts 4:32). In these two scriptures we have the assertion that those that believed had all things common. So it appears that the "common" salvation spoken of by Jude refers to all believers that are embraced in it. I do not think we should change the word "common" to "time". The word "salvation" is used many times in the scriptures, but notice it is always used in the singular form and nowhere have I been able to find where it is used in the plural, which confirms that there is only one salvation, and that it is of the Lord. Salvation means deliverance, and certainly we as God's children experience that while in this life, but in every instance, it is always "salvation is of the Lord." I hope to bring out other scriptures to support the doctrine that this is the fact.

Sometime ago I read an article concerning salvation, and the writer made mention of "two salvations"; "Eternal Salvation-God's work"; "Time Salvation-man's work". There is no salva-

tion, whether we receive the benefits in this life (which the elect do), or in the world to come "eternal life" (which only the elect do), that comes from any source other than from the Lord. We have this scripture - "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. "(James 1:17). The "good gifts" embraces those things which are of a temporal nature, that God's elect (as well as others, receive in this life, and even these temporal blessings are of the Lord. The "perfect gift" is of course, the Lord Jesus Christ, from whom flows every gift of grace both in time and in eternity.

Jonah's experience when he was in the belly of the fish is a very identifying experience of his afflictions in this life, and he said - "I cried by reason of mine afflictions unto the Lord, and he heard me. Out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice." (Jonah 2:2). Herein is the basis of a child of God calling upon the Lord in afflictions. As long as things are going along smooth and well with us, we are sometimes forgetful of the Lord's delivering power. David said, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." (Psalms 34:19). Great were Jonah's afflictions in the belly of the great fish, where waters compassed him about, weeds wrapped around his head, and he experienced other great depths of afflictions (and these things actually took place with him - not just words to fill up space in the scriptures; though it does foreshadow or typify a spiritual condition of the Lord's people). There are many in the world today who deny that many things the scriptures spoke of actually took place, for they say with human reasoning that it could not have come to pass as scriptures testify. Jonah was in an awful situation that he could not of his own strength extract himself, and realizing he needed help from another source, he spoke thusly: "But I will pay that I have vowed, salvation is of the Lord. And the Lord spoke unto the fish (yes spoke to the fish) and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land." (Jonah 2: 9-10). This was a deliverance of Jonah during his life span upon the earth, and he very clearly and emphatically stated "salvation is of the Lord", and if it is of the Lord, man has nothing to do with it in bringing it to pass.

As previously stated "Salvation is always spoken of in the singular in whatever circumstances it is spoken of. It would not be expedient to herein quote all, but will call your attention to a few of the more powerful passages, it seems, both in the Old and New Testament. "The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my SALVATION: he is my God and I will prepare him an habitation; my Father's God, and I will exalt him." (Exodus 15:2). "He also shall be my SALVATION for an hypocrite shall not come before him." (Job 13:16). "Behold God is my SALVATION; I will trust and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my SALVATION; (Isaiah 12:2). "He that is our God is the God of

SALVATION, etc. " (Psalms 68:20). "But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting SALVATION; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded, world without end." (Isaiah 45:17). These are a few of the Old Testament passages testifying to the truth "Salvation is of the Lord". The Old Testament scriptures are just as important as the New for the benefit of the Lord's people. For it is written, "All scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2nd Tim. 3:16-17).

Now to the New Testament for a few scriptures concerning "Salvation". "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be SAVED. (Acts 4:12). "And in nothing terrified by your adversaries; which is to them an evident token of perdition; but to you of SALVATION, and that of God". (Phil. 1:28). Paul speaking here of the adversaries of the saints at Phillippi, giving a token that they (the adversaries) were those included who the Lord spoke of thusly: "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name, those that thou gavest me I have kept; and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition: (the adversary) that the scriptures might be fulfilled." (John 17:12). And Paul spoke of them in this manner: "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." (2nd Thes. 1:3). Herein is described those that were not chosen to be vessels of mercy before the world began. Now, latter part of Phil. 1:28, "But to you (the saints) of salvation and that of God." Here again we find that SALVATION is alone of the Lord, and no one will ever know anything (from the heart) of this great truth except the Lord's elect. And they all, without the loss of one will receive that gift of eternal life. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 6:23). A very prominent scripture quoted, "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works least any man should boast." (Eph. 2:8-9). Here again we have "SALVATION" (one) and that by the grace of God. Nothing here indicated that there is salvation in various natures or times. No separation between "time" and "eternal". Just "saved by Grace".

Again the words of the Apostle Paul, "Who hath (past tense-already done) saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." (2nd Tim. 1:9-10). In the mind and purpose of God, we were saved in His Son before the world began, having our names written in the Book of Life by God Himself, but is made mani-

fest to each one when they are born of the Spirit. Jesus spoke of this and how it is accomplished with these words: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." (John 5:25). This voice, which is the "living word" (Jesus) is heard in the heart of the individual to whom it is spoken. The prophet Ezekiel spoke this way: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." (Ezek. 36: 26-27). And no matter how much "religion" one seems to have, and may appear to have the truth in word, but if it is just in the head and not in the heart, the Lord will not hear the supplication made unto Him. For Paul wrote: "Who hath also made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." (2nd Cor. 3:6) And again, "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew, which one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." (Rom. 2:28-29).

"Ye must be born again" are the words of our Lord and Master and "except a man be born of water (not fleshly baptism, but the washing of regeneration) and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (John 3:5). And further, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (John 3:6). The nature of the flesh is not changed in the new birth, so that following being born of the spirit, the flesh is not better able to produce good works than it was before. Paul certified this when he said: "For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." (Rom. 7:18). So if there be nothing good in the flesh, how could it perform any good works? Isaiah wrote: "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities like the wind, have taken us away." (Isa. 64:6). Paul again said: "Now if I do that I would not it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." (Rom. 7:20). It was that inward man within Paul, as well as any other child of God, that caused him and enabled him to serve God. "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." (Rom. 7:25).

Certainly faith without works is dead, and because we have been brought into the marvelous light of the Son of God, the responsibility of the child of God is that he might serve the true and living God. Not in order that he might receive the blessing, for the blessing always comes first. Our obedience is in the Lord Jesus Christ, and we are enabled to do these things "because

of" and not "in order to". The blessing is in having the desire from the Lord for the things pertaining to practical godliness. Grace produces the fruits of the Spirit. Paul said, "And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." (Rom. 11:6). There are no conditions in what God had done for his people, and nothing we do at any time will bring God under obligation to do for us.

The Lord said: "So likewise, ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants; we have done only that which was our duty to do." (Luke 17:10). Does this sound like we should receive some of the glory? Or receive blessings for that which we do in the flesh? No, not at all. In the latter verses of the first chapter of 1st Corinthians, the Apostle notes several things what God had done, and what man cannot do, then says "that no flesh should glory in his presence, and he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

Oh, that I may be counted worthy, not of my own worth, but by the blood of the Lamb, to be numbered with those who will, when the Lord comes again with a shout, and the voice of the archangel, to raise the dead from the graves, meet the Lord in the clouds, taken above to that city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God, eternal in the heavens, and this vile body will be fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Son of God, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself, world without end. Amen and Amen.

Submitted in love by the
leastest, if one at all,
Elder Robert L. Miles

SPACEMEN FIND UNIVERSE'S LOST DAY-IN BEGINNING OF PROGRAM

Mysterious events in space exploration found a missing day on the universe to prove supernatural phenomena, reported in the Bible but classified as myths by many scientists and students of religion, according to a long-term space program consultant.

Space program consultants in orbital mechanics for 11 years - since the Mercury-Gemini program began, said God gave the missing day to Joshua and Isaih.

Mysterious events took place as astronauts and space scientists in the space Astronomy Laboratory at the University of Wisconsin, checked positions of the sun, moon and planets 100 and 1,000 years from now.

"WE HAVE TO KNOW THIS, so we don't send a satellite up and have it bump into something later on its orbits. We have to lay out the orbits in terms of the life of the satellite and where the planets will be, so the whole thing will not bog down."

Astronauts and space scientists reportedly ran the computer measure-

ment back and forth over the centuries and it came to a halt, then the computer stopped and a red signal indicated something was wrong, either with information fed into the computer or the results as compared with the standards.

The service department checked out the computer and computer programming by the space team, then reported, "Its perfect."

Nobody was able to explain "a day missing in space in elapsed time," but a space team member referred them to Joshua 10: 12-13 in the Bible. The biblical reference tells of God stopping the onslaught of the nightfall to give Joshua "about a day" of extra daylight to help his army overpower the enemy.

SPACEMEN CHECKED the computers, going back into the time of Joshua and found their calculations were close - but not close enough. The elapsed time missing in Joshua's day was 23 hours and 20 minutes - not a whole day.

The space consultant said astronauts and scientists remained puzzled and "still in trouble because if you can't account for 40 minutes in space science, you'll be in trouble 1,000 years from now; 40 minutes had to be found because it can be multiplied many times over in orbits." The space team was then referred to II Kings 20: 3-10 when God "Let the shadow return backward 10 degrees for Isaiah". Ten degrees is exactly 40 minutes. Twenty-three hours and twenty minutes in Joshua, plus forty minutes in II Kings make the missing twenty-four hours the space travelers had to log in the log-book as the missing day on the universe.

EDITORIAL
WHEN THE LORD SHALL COME AGAIN

From Zion's Landmark 1976

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:28.

He is coming the second time without sin unto salvation in glorious celestial splendor. This is taught, it is said in twenty-three of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament and by all the writers. In fact, the main emphasis in the Old Testament is on the prophecy of His first coming, and in the New Testament the emphasis is on His actual coming the first time and the promise that He will return again the second time to gather His blood-bought jewels and carry them home that where He is that they may be also.

How shall He come? He shall come visibly. Revelation 1:7 reads, "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him." He will appear bodily, because in Phil. 3:21 it is recorded, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." So, this time He will not only appear visibly, but every eye shall see Him. This time He will appear in an incorruptible, immortal, glorified body,

and the precious promise is that He will raise His blood-bought jewels in a glorified body like unto His own that Paul referred to as incorruptible, immortal, and spiritual. Paul makes it clear that it is the same body, but it has been changed and fashioned like unto that of Christ Himself. That, surely, is sufficient for the elect lady who is embraced in this hope. Who will be with Him? I Thes. 3:13 says, "WITH ALL HIS SAINTS." That "He may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ WITH ALL HIS SAINTS." Matthew 25:31 records, "WITH ALL THE HOLY ANGELS." He says, "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and ALL THE HOLY ANGELS with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory." And so it is clear that He will not reappear in a body showing those nail pierced hands and feet, but in a glorious, glorified body. He will have the redeemed of the Lord with Him; He will raise these bodies into an immortal state and reunite the soul, body, and spirit of every saint.

Matt. 25:32 reads, "And before Him shall be gathered all nations; and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." He will appear suddenly. I Cor. 15:52-55 says, "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" And so the complete victory (the final destruction of the last enemy, death) will not have been won until these saints are raised in the same glory in which their Master now enjoys.

He will appear, not only suddenly, but also unexpectedly. Matt. 24: 37-39 has left on record. "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For as the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the Ark. And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be." It is also a complete secret as to the time, for the angels do not know, neither does the Son, but the Father only. (See Matt. 24:36, also Mark 13:32). The promise is unto them who look for His appearing.

II Peter 3:10, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." What does the scripture say will take place when He comes? I Thes. 4: 16-18 records, "For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in

Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

For one who hopes he has felt His presence just for a few minutes here in time, it is a great comfort to hope that we may be in that number so that we may be not only with Him just a few minutes as it is here, but will be with Him forever. It will not be as it is promised here, in a world where you shall have tribulations, but where you will have perfect and continual peace forever, for where Christ is there is peace. He promised while here on earth that His people will be forever with the Lord. It is, indeed, something with which we are comforted and in which we comfort one another when one is blest with the same spirit that Paul was when he wrote this epistle.

The question was asked, What will take place at the second coming? The great thing that this elect lady is interested in is the resurrection. St. John 5:28, 29 reads, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." This eternal life is based on an inheritance, and an inheritance is not worked for. To receive an inheritance, one must be born into it. This elect lady has done good that was appointed unto her, as all the children of God have done. They do not do this for reward, but it is because the spirit of Christ is worked in them, and His Spirit bears witness with their Spirit that they are the children of God. IT is strictly by inheritance. Again, St. Matt. 25:34 has said, "Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Since it was by inheritance and was prepared before the foundation of the world, works were excluded. That is, the conditional works of the flesh are certainly excluded. But, the work that His Spirit works in you also bears witness with your spirit. It keeps you nourished, alive and well in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is a spiritual work under consideration in the scripture mentioned above. This applies to those who have done good. The Lord burns out any trust in conditional, self works in this elect lady, so she would have no confidence in them. This would be true even if Isaiah had not said they were as worthless as "filthy rags." See Isa. 64:6. His people, the elect lady, are made perfect in every good work to do His will, working in them that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ. See Hebs. 13:21.

Peter explains this inheritance exceedingly well in I Peter 1:3, 4: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth

not away, reserved in heaven for you." This reinforces the other scripture that is his by inheritance, and that it is reserved in heaven for you; also, that while this elect lady is still here in the world that she does not keep herself, but she is kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation. See 1st Peter 1:5. Jesus is portrayed in the scripture as the elder brother of this elect lady, and so as the resurrection was with Him, so exactly will it be with her, the church. The reader will notice that all this is done by the abundant mercy of God.

As stated before, no man knoweth the time of His coming, but there is some reference made in the scripture concerning it. This is found in Heb. 10:37: "For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Counting time as God does, it may be centuries yet before Christ comes, "yet only a little while" on God's calendar. For in II Peter 3:8, "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

The scriptures give abundant proof of Christ's resurrection. One place is found in I Cor. 15:6: "After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once." After that He was seen of all the Apostles. Paul says He was seen of him also as of one born out of due time, for he considered himself the least of the apostles. See I Corn. 5:8,9.

There is much discussion about with what body shall it be raised, or in which it shall come forth. Paul says in I Cor. 15: 42-44: "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." That "IT" is referring back to the body that is sown in the grave. It is changed, but not exchanged.

The reference to the elect lady is taken from II John 1:1: "The elder unto the elect lady, and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth." This elect lady referred to here, of course, is the church. She is always given in the feminine gender. She is a chosen generation who obtains her salvation and her keeping here in time by inheritance and by promise through faith and by grace. She has been taught by experience here in time that her salvation is entirely and completely by grace and not by works. Her great hope is that the Lord will appear from time to time in order that she may be kept alive spiritually by the renewing of the Holy Ghost and of your mind. She, also, earnestly hopes that she may be kept as Peter wrote about, for she knows full well that she cannot keep herself. As she gets older in years here in time her great interest is in the resurrection. Paul says, "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." I Cor. 15:14. Also, "Then they also which are fallen

asleep in Christ are perished." I Cor. 15:18.

As we have previously said, the evidence is overwhelming, for in twenty-three of the twenty-seven books in the New Testament the resurrection is referred to. Christ was seen by all the Apostles and by over five hundred brethren, not just 500 witnesses as some quote it. See I Cor. 15:6. The evidences are rich to this elect lady, especially as she grows older in years. She hopes to see her Master face to face and know that she is His forever. Her Bridegroom has conquered death, hell, and the grave for her. More than all she wants, or desires, the final evidence on that glorious morning when she can know in the everlasting joy of God that her hope has now become a reality and that her faith has become sight. How we long for this! Paul's writing confirms that it is the same body that is sown that will also be raised in a glorified state like unto that of her Master, that the same body that is sown in dishonour will be raised in glory. The evidence is that she will know of a truth that it is she herself who is raised. That her body has been changed and that it has not been exchanged, for she wants to know Christ, indeed, and know that she is His forever.

George A. Fulk
December 17, 1975

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9 / 93
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

VOICES OF THE PAST

Zion's Landmark
Jan. 1, 1932

My dear Brother Dodson,

Your good letter was received in due time and much appreciated. Yes, my brother, Joseph is a very bright type of Jesus, our blessed Lord and Saviour. We find in Genesis, 37th Chapter, that Jacob loved Joseph more than all his brethren, and he made him a coat of many colors and when his brethren saw that he was loved so much of his father, they hated him. Joseph's conduct was not the cause of their hatred, but the love of his father. So it is and always has been that the dislike the world has for Jesus and His dear people is not because of wrong doing, but because of the love of God manifest in them. The more Jesus manifested the love and power of God, the more they hated Him and sought to destroy Him, and it is so today that the more the love of God that is manifest in the Lord's dear people, the more the worldly minded hate them. It is not men that the world hates, but God. Jesus said they have hated me, they will also hate you; showing that the hatred for the disciples was because of the Spirit of Christ in them. The carnal mind is enmity against God. The world is full of religion, but Jesus is not loved by the world any better than He was when He was on earth in His human body; but he whom

his brethren hated proved to be their saviour from starvation they came to him in their time of need. He knew them, 42nd chapter and 8th verse reads, "and Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him." They did not know to whom they were appealing. Some natural causes occur to me as a reason why they did not know him. He was a boy of seventeen years when they last saw him. Now he is a full grown man. Then they had sold him to be a servant and if they had any idea that he was alive they supposed he was a servant. But Joseph knew them. They were men when he last saw and had not changed as he had, and they never would have known him had he not made himself known to them. So Jesus knows His people or brethren. They have not changed. They are the same old sinners they have always been, the difference being that they feel their poverty now and come to Him as beggars. God brought the famine that caused Joseph's brethren to come to him, and God brings the famine in the soul of Jesus' brethren that brings them to Him, and they find that all their good works are rejected as the money of Joseph's brethren was returned in their sacks' mouths, and they are given what they ask for and more, for they are brought into the land over which their own brother is governor and given the best land and furnished all they need without money and without price. Do not these things preach in type the doctrine dear to God's people today? Salvation by grace without the deeds of the law? Though they have a righteousness it is of the law and Jesus will not have it. The only righteousness acceptable is the righteousness which is of God by faith, and this is the perfect obedience of Jesus Christ which He gives poor sinners. The faith to see is by Him imputed to them. So they say not unto us, O Lord, but to Thy name give glory, for Thy mercy and for Thy truth's sake. Notwithstanding the great sin of Joseph's brethren against him, he even afterwards dealt kindly with them, and so, despite the sin of Christ's brethren against God, the consequences of which Jesus has borne in His own body on the tree, yet He deals kindly, mercifully, lovingly, all sufficiently and constantly with them. David truly said His mercy endureth forever. O, that men would praise the Lord everywhere for His goodness and for His mercy unto the children of men.

Let the redeemed of the Lord say so.

Elder Joshua T. Rowe

PSALM 15.

LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?

He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.

He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.

In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth to own hurt, and changeth not.

He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.

From Elder Lamberts book, "Tried In The Furnace".

LIGHT AND TRUTH

Signs of the Times, August, 1945

"O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles." Psalms 43:3.

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

Light and truth are the prerequisites of one who worships God in spirit and in truth. Neither this light nor truth is among the characteristics composing the natural man as born of a woman. This light and truth is foolishness to natural reasoning for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him." this light and truth cannot be acquired by study because in the same verse just quoted the scripture says: "neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Then it behooves God's people to look to another source - other than themselves - for light or truth. Then they are made to pray to God for both light and truth. Both light and truth must be present at the same time in order that the saint of God be enabled to joyfully praise God in sincerity. "Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God, my God" (Psalms 43:4). The truth is foolishness to the natural man and unless accompanied by the light cannot be appreciated. The truth is that God determined "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou?

Unless this light accompanies this truth to show us our inability and it lieth not in man to direct his steps and that all things work together for good to them who love God we cannot realize his sovereignty nor appreciate this truth. The truth is, God chose His people in Christ before the foundation of the world; that His people are the elect according to the foreknowledge of God. As John puts it, "ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Unless we are in possession of the light that reveals our inability to choose good things and that we naturally take darkness for light and light for darkness we cannot believe or appreciate the truth. The truth is that "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2: 8,9). Until we are enlightened to the fact that the carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, and with men it is impossible; but with God all things are possible, we cannot believe this truth. Our seeming ability vanishes when the light manifests the gross darkness of our rea-

soning abilities. We are made to realize that God begins this work in us.

Unless we are shown in our experience that we are not able to perform it after God has begun it in us we would be as the foolish Galatians. "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" Yes, it is needful that we undergo experiences as Paul, "to will is present with me: but how to perform that which is good I find not," before we can realize the truth that "it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Peter was in possession of the will to stand by Jesus Christ; yea, to go with Him even to prison and in death, though He be slain; yet it was necessary that they go through the sad experience of denying Christ, cursing and swearing, in order to convert him that it took more than the will to enable him to confess Jesus Christ. Peter learned that God must enable him with the Spirit and truth in each experience before he could truly worship Jesus. The fact that he knew Him was not sufficient in this trial. It takes such experiences as these to enlighten and convert the individual to the truth that he cannot of himself do anything that is good in any part of the journey of the saint of God, and to bring about the confidence thus, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Then he is convinced that salvation, in any phase, is solely by grace.

The truth is clearly expressed in the scriptures thus, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11). The scriptures pointedly teach that the prerequisite for entrance into the kingdom of God is a radical transformation wrought by the Spirit of God Himself. And since this work on the soul is sovereign and supernatural, it may be granted or withheld according to the good pleasure of God. Consequently, salvation to whomsoever it may be granted is entirely of grace. The born-again person comes to see that Jesus is in reality "the author and finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12:2). When Jesus said, "Lazarus, come forth," a mighty power went with the command and gave effect to it. Lazarus probably was not conscious of any other than his own power working in him, but when he was enlightened to the situation he undoubtedly saw that he had been called into life wholly by divine power. God's power was primary - his was secondary and would never have been exerted except in response to the divine. The truth is as Paul teaches, that believers are not under law, but under grace. "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace" (Rom. 6:14). Sin cannot cause their downfall for they are under a system of grace and are not treated according to their deserts. "And if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace" (Rom. 11:6). "Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no

transgression" (Rom. 4:15). "For without the law, sin was dead" (Rom. 7:8). That is, where the law is abolished sin can no longer subject the person to punishment. "Ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ" (Rom. 7:4). The one who attempts to earn even the smallest part of his salvation by works becomes "a debtor to do the whole law." (That is to render perfect obedience in his own strength and thus earn salvation) Gal. 5:3.

When God sees fit to chastise His children by temporarily withdrawing His Holy Spirit or His providential mercies, or His light and truth - the poor child of God is corrected and converted from any trust or confidence in himself and will again by praying to God (not to himself) for both light and truth. This is the truth as proclaimed in the scriptures but light must accompany this truth before it can be believed or appreciated. Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). If you contend that you are any part of that way you deny the words of Jesus. "The Spirit of truth, will guide you into all truth," (John 16:13) and will enable you to realize that Jesus is the truth. Yes, Jesus is the life. When the divine operation of God's Holy Spirit is inactive the individual is dead as far as ability to do good is concerned. My experience harmonizes with Paul's experience when he said, "I die daily." We are made to realize that God must work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure before we can walk godly in this present world. When God sends forth His light it manifests man's righteousness as filthy rags in God's sight. Thus this life in and of ourselves that we have had confidence in has been worked out as God works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. The farmer works in his crop and thus works our the obnoxious weeds and everything else that hinders his crop. Man's confidence in his own righteousness or anything of himself that he depends upon for salvation, whether in time or for eternity, must be worked out or abolished.

The truth is, that we do not reach perfection in this present life; that evil is mixed with all we do, and that the children of God must be delivered (in the future) out of this bondage of corruption into the glorious liberties of the children of God. Unless this light shines into our hearts and makes us to see our vile nature, the filthiness of our own righteousness and the imperfection of all our deeds, we cannot realize this truth. We are mortal creatures hoping someday to be raised as immortal. We are corruptible desiring to be clothed with incorruption. We are natural and yet carnal but we have hopes of being made spiritual. The natural blood runs through our veins now which inspires our fleshly lusts, but we trust in some wonderful way that the spirit of eternal life will replace the natural blood we now possess when we become residents of that eternal city not made with hands.

Elder E.J. Lambert

ECCLESIASTES 5: 19-20.

Every man also to whom God hath given
riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God.
For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth him in the joy of his heart.

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the next session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Red Banks Primitive Baptist Church, Greenville, North Carolina on October 9-10, 1993. All who believe and love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited.

For location of Church refer to map contained in the 1992 Contentnea Minutes.

Gene Lupton
Association Clerk

EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

God willing, the Eastern Kehukee Association will convene on Saturday Oct. 2nd and Sunday Oct. 3rd with Old Sparta Church which is located on Rt. 42 in Old Sparta, N.C. If traveling by Williamston, N.C. take Rt. 64 west and turn left on Rt. 42. If traveling by Tarboro take Rt. 64 east and turn right on Rt. 42. The Church is about 5 or 6 miles from Rt. 64 on the right hand side. We invite all who love the Doctrine and who are of like precious faith to come and visit with us.

M.W. Lupton
Association Clerk

SAINTS REST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH AT DALLAS, TEXAS

Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church, 2710 Engle Street, Dallas, Texas invites all brethren and friends to meet with us in our annual three-day fall meeting.

The Lord willing, the meeting will begin at 7:30 P.M. on Friday, October 29, 1993, and continue through the fifth Sunday, October 31, 1993.

Telephone numbers for contact:
Deacon Frank D. Richards, 817-467-0005
Elder C.C. Morris, 903-769-4822
Deacon Dean G. Connell, 214-298-8068

SOUTH ARKANSAS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The One Hundred Fifty Second Annual meeting of the South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association is to be held with Pilgrim Rest Church, Dallas County, Arkansas September 18-19, 1993. The Pilgrim Rest Church is located off Highway 167 North of

Fordyce, Arkansas. Take 273 about 1/2 mile to church. Session begins on Saturday before the third Sunday in September (September 18-19, 1993 Saturday and Sunday.)

We invite all brothers and sisters and friends and especially all preaching brothers to come and be with us.

In bonds of love,
Frances Townley, Church Clerk
301 Trout Street
Benton, Arkansas 72015
Phone 501-776-2726

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 25 & 26, 1993.

New Hope Church, located at Spearsville, La., will host the association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron,
Association Clerk
318-778-4217

CONTRIBUTIONS

Mrs. Ruth Dubois, NY	$5.00
Don & Hazel Garland, MD	25.00
W.C. Lake, FL	2.00
James O. Whaling, OH	2.00
Eld. J.Y. McCormick, FL	7.00
A.W. King, NC	2.00
Mrs. Alice Gibson, VA	2.00
Mrs. Margaret Smothers, NC	2.00
A Friend, NC	7.00
Wallace E. Harvey, WV	5.00
H.C. Brown, VA	2.00
Mrs. Ida Taylor, MD	10.00
Charlie Fox, AR	4.00
Mrs. Jesse, NC	2.00
Mrs. Mary D. Stanfield, VA	2.00
Mrs. Lessie W. Tilley, NC	5.00
Mrs. W.L. Simmons, VA	2.00
Howard Peters, VA	2.00
H.P. Conner, VA	2.00
Mrs. N. Hunt, VA	2.00

OBITUARIES

CLARENCE ALFRED HUSTON

Clarence Alfred Huston was called from this world December 15, 1992. It is with a lonely heart and a mind full of memories that I begin to write his obituary. He was my husband, companion, and a brother and deacon of Little Creek Old School Baptist Church near Delmar, Delaware, where he attended faithfully until the time of his last illness.

He was the son of the late Frank Anstine and Bessie Brooks Huston and was born June 26, 1910 near Seaford, Delaware.

Clarence and I were married September 22, 1934 by the late Elder H. C. Kerr. We were blessed to become parents of three children. Surviving are a son, Richard E. and a daughter, Norma R. Dukes. One son, Raymond A., died March 6, 1952. Three grand-daughters also remain and one great-grand-

daughter. He is greatly missed by all of us, but we feel to say "May God's Will Be Done." Our Lord makes us willing in the day of his power.

When Clarence and I first met in the spring of 1930 he had never heard of the Old School or Primitive Baptist religion. I had attended Broad Creek Church near Laurel, Delaware, with my parents since I was born. Clarence's home town of Seaford was only seven miles from our town of Laurel, but he didn't know there were any such churches in existence. When I first began to tell him about my church, I mentioned that I felt quite sure he wouldn't like it, as it was different from churches of other beliefs. I also mentioned we had no music, and he probably wouldn't be able to sing our hymns. I also assured him we didn't try to pressure people into believing the way we did. However, before we were married he did start going with me to church sometimes, and he did sing.

He was brought up by parents of another belief, and after we were married we attended his church for a few years except the one Sunday each month when there was a service at Broad Creek. Then I would tell him he didn't have to go with me if he would rather stay home, that I would understand. Anyway, most of the time he went, but later he gradually began to find fault with the preaching at his church and other forms of their practice. As time went on he no longer had a desire to go to his former church, and for a number of years we attended all the churches of the Salisbury Association. We helped with yearly meetings and associations and enjoyed having church people in our home. We were not members, but everybody treated us as though we were. However the time came when both of us wanted to be baptized and we went forward and were received into fellowship of Little Creek Church on the fourth Sunday of March 1975. Elder J.T. Prescott was serving, following the death of our former pastor, Elder Arthur Warren. We were baptized April 1 of the following week by Elder James Poole.

Clarence never talked much about religion, but believed in salvation by the grace of God and grew to love the Old School Baptist people. For several years we had the pleasure of visiting brethren and churches of some of the other states and Canada and met many lovely people and were blessed to have several of them visit in our home.

He had surgery for cancer three years ago and since then other changes in his health followed. His funeral was conducted December 19, 1992, at Yates and Watson Funeral Home in Seaford by his pastor, Elder C.B. Davis. Elder Julian Williams also read a hymn and made some comments. Burial followed in Odd Fellows Cemetery, Seaford.

May we be reconciled to feel that our loss was his gain.

Written with love and gratitude
for blessings shared,

Elsie Huston

SISTER JULIA DORELLA SPENCER NESTER

We the church at Liberty deeply feel the loss of our dear friend, Sister Julia Dorella Spencer Nester. It pleased our Heavenly Father to remove her from our midst on January 24, 1993. She was very faithful to fill her seat at Liberty Church as long as her health permitted her to, we miss her very much.

Sister Dorella was born September 25, 1906, and was the daughter of the late Joe Ben and Minnie Ingram Spencer; she was a native of Henry County but lived in West Virginia and most of her life in Patrick County, Stuart, Virginia. She was married to Perless Nester. He was a well devoted husband to his wife during her long period of illness.

There was one daughter who survives, Irene Nester Willard, who made their home together. Also she is survived by two brothers, Carl Spencer, Vienna, Virginia; Leo Spencer, Martinsville, Virginia; one sister, Virginia Spencer Zeigler, Stuart, Virginia; and also one half brother, James Cleave Shough, Patrick Springs, Virginia; four half sisters: Sister May Shough Snider, Patrick Springs, Virginia; Fay Shough Snider, Stuart, Virginia; Rada Shough Durham, Bassett, Virginia; Reta Shough Martin, Archdale, North Carolina.

She was predeceased in death by a brother, Cecil Spencer, and half-brothers, Akers Shough and Raymond Shough.

Also surviving are two grandsons; one great-grandson; and one great-great-granddaughter.

Sister Julia Dorella united with Liberty Church on September 1, 1961 by experience and was baptized by Elder Bennie Clifton moderator of Liberty Church. Her funeral was conducted by Elder John T. Wingfield, moderator of Liberty Church and assisted by Elder Randall Saunders and was held at Liberty Church, with Moody Funeral Home Services in charge.

She was laid to rest in the Nester and Largen Cemetery at Laurel Fork, Virginia on January 27, 1993.

Therefore, we the church at Liberty Primitive Baptist resolve that three copies of this resolution be made, one for Church records, one for the Family and one to be published in the Signs of the Times, done by order of the church in conference May 1, 1993.

Committee of:
Elder John T. Wingfield, Moderator
Deacon Paul Puckett, Clerk
Sister Virginia Zeigler
Sister May Snider

ISAIAH 26: 1-3.

In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.

Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
Route 1, box 420, Keeling, Virginia 24566

STEP BY STEP

Lead me Lord just step by step
For I am lost without Thy help
Guide me with all love and might
Keep me headed in Thy light.

Lift me up and hold my hand
Or I shall stumble upon this land
Look and see my awful slight
Fix mine eyes on Salvation's light.

Search me out of darkness here
And let me know Thou art near
Teach me in Thy ways so right
Bathe me in the Glory light.

Help me seek the King's highway
A road that leads to endless day
The battles of sin Lord help to fight
This darkness dispel with Godly light

Tune my heart in joyful lays
That I might praise Thy righteous ways
Remove the sin and cares of night
And let me awake in Grace's light

Give me the Hope to rise again
Free from sin, sorrow and pain
Behold, I long to see the sight
And be with Thee in Heavenly light

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

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EDITORIAL

MIRACLES

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

Though we have many miracles of God recorded in the Holy Scriptures, many of them are denied by much of the world, This denial is caused by unbelief; for they simply do not believe what the Scriptures so plainly state. They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him. (Titus 1:16) One sample of this is the very first verse of Genesis. *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."* Can any thing be more plainly written or spoken? Yet there are many who believe it not. and some of them are searching for how the earth was formed, for they seem to think that it is a part of another planet that exploded in what they call the 'big bang'. Even if this were so I would want to know, Who made the planet that exploded? However, we know that the Scriptures were not written to all the people of the world, but only to the children of God who were chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, and even these do not understand what is written until they have been born again; ***"for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*** All men are only earthly and natural and not spiritual until they have experienced the new birth. We read 2 Tim, 3:16,17: ***"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."*** It is only unto the "man of God" that I now attempt to write, believing that most, if not all, the readers of this are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, (1 Pet,2:9), and are spiritual and have the mind of Christ. (1 Cor.2:15,16)

God created the heaven and the earth and all that is in them. ***"For he spake, and it was done: he com-***

manded, and it stood fast." (Ps.33:9) "He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing." (Job 26:7) God said, "Let there be light, and there was light." Truly these are miracles that no mortal can comprehend, but by the grace of God we are given faith to believe God's holy record. A portion of the record is: ***"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." (1 John 5:10,12).*** Who is he that believes? only he that is given to believe. ***"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." (Phil. 1:29).*** Who are those to whom it is given? Are they not his chosen children who were chosen in his beloved Son before the foundation of the world? They are the ones Christ came into the world to redeem; and how could he redeem them if they were not his? for only an owner can redeem any thing. In the 8th. chapter of Proverbs we find that even before the world was spoken into existence, before God's works of old, that his Son was with him, and his Son rejoiced in the habitable part of his earth; and his delights were in the sons of men. How was that possible? Because with God there is not time: he is an eternal being: all things existed in his will and purpose before they were ever brought into existence or came to pass. He knew each and every person who would be born into this world even before the world was; and he chose a certain portion of them and gave them to his Son in covenant. These are the body of Christ and he is the Head; for we are told in Eph. 5:38, ***"For we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones." We read Ps.139:15,16: "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest part of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there was none of them."*** The book mentioned here is also mentioned in Rev. 20:15: ***"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."***

The same children who were given an eternal life in Christ before the world were also given a life in the first man Adam, for he is the federal head of all mankind. Adam's wife Eve and all his posterity were in him when he was created from the dust of the earth and God breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, just as the bride of Christ, his church, was in him; for Adam was a figure of him that was to come, the second man Christ. This was a great miracle, yet it cannot be seen nor believed by any but those who have a life in Christ revealed unto

them. In the second chapter of Hebrews we read: ***"Behold I (Jesus) and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is. the devil."*** In his Godhead Christ could not die; therefore he must become incarnate, because without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin.(Heb.9:22). And we read: ***"For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." (Heb.2:16,17).*** As our merciful and faithful high priest, Jesus offered himself a perfect sacrifice acceptable unto God, and by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. (Heb.10:14).

All of these things are miracles, but now let us go to the miracle of Jesus' birth into the world. Isaiah prophesied of this long before it came to pass. ***"For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder." And, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel." (Isa.9:6 & 7:14).*** Unto men this would seem to be impossible, and when the angel of the Lord told the virgin Mary that she would bring forth a son she questioned how this could be, because she knew no man. And the angel replied, ***"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." (Luke 1:35).*** Let me digress for a moment to say that I believe the new birth is brought about in this same manner; for Jesus told Nicodemus, ***"Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." (John 3:7,8).*** And the 6th. verse says, ***"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."*** Therefore we must conclude that no man is spiritual until the new birth, and therefore cannot receive or know the things that are of the Spirit of God; certainly he cannot ask to be born spiritually any more than he can ask to be born of the flesh.

The birth of Christ by the virgin Mary was indeed a marvellous miracle, and it is celebrated throughout most of the world even unto this time; at least it is in pretext, for it is now little more that a commercial venture to most of the world. To many the birth of Christ was good news from a far country, but others were troubled by it. When wise men from the east followed his star and came to Jerusalem to worship him, saying, Where is he that is born

King of the Jews? king Herod, the chief priests, and all Jerusalem were troubled at this saying, and they sought to find and kill him; and this continued throughout his life on earth, but they could not, until the appointed time of God.

Jesus came into this world for the purpose of saving his people from their sins. An angel said unto Joseph, ***"--and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people." And Jesus said, "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."*** But while he was in the world he showed forth many miracles, some of which are recorded for the benefit of his saints, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works. See 2 Tim. 3:16,17 as quoted earlier. But as John said, there are also many things which he did, if all were written, the world could not contain all the books that should be written. However, God has given us all the Scriptures that we need, and we should search them daily, for we are forgetful and doubting creatures. John proved this when in prison, after baptizing the Lord and seeing the Holy Ghost descend upon him like a dove, by sending his disciples to ask Jesus if he was the one that should come. or should we look for another? And Peter indicates that we need to be reminded of these things, though we know them and are established in the truth. (2 Pet.1:12). Paul exhorted Timothy to, ***"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Tim.2:15.*** What is the word of truth unless it be the word of God recorded in the Holy Scriptures? And how could we rightly divide them if they were not recorded for our learning and instructions? Praise God that he hath given them to us!

The miracles that Jesus did while here were numerous, but I will mention only a few, and comment upon some of them, if God be willing, for I believe you already have knowledge of most, if not all of them.

The first was that he turned water into wine. The second was to heal a nobleman's son who was near death. As soon as Jesus said to the nobleman, ***"Go thy way; thy son liveth,"*** the man believed the words that Jesus had spoken, and he went his way, and his son lived. Oh, how I wish I could always have like faith, and not doubt so often; but, alas, I do not. I know , however, that faith is the gift of God and not of ourselves. (See Eph,2:8). His apostles asked Jesus to increase their faith, and he answered, ***"If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be planted in the sea; and it should obey you" And in another place he said, when they asked why they could not cast out a certain devil, "Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, if ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say to this mountain, Remove to***

yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." This should be proof enough that we have no faith, only as God giveth.

Jesus also healed many lepers. Leprosy in the Scriptures often is a figure of sin. One leper said, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, "I will; be thou clean." And his leprosy was cleansed. It is so often that I feel to be as that leper, and greatly desire that Jesus reach out and touch me. Do you at times feel that way? or am I alone? In another place Jesus met ten lepers who begged for his mercy, and he healed them, but only one returned and fell at his feet and gave thanks: and he was a Samaritan. Are you as this Samaritan, or one of the nine? If you feel that your sins have been forgiven, and have seen Christ as your saviour, I feel sure that you have fell at his feet and worshiped, and gave thanks and praise unto God with your whole heart.

Jesus opened the eyes of many who were blind. In one place his disciples asked who had sinned, the man or his parents, that he was born blind. Jesus answered, ***"Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him."*** Not in this case only, but in many, if not all, of the things Jesus did made manifest the wonderful works of God to his saints. His works were done in the fleshly realm, but they were typical of the works that he would perform in the spiritual realm. We read John 9:39: And Jesus said, ***"For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind."*** And the Pharisees said, Are we blind also? And Jesus answered, ***"If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sins remaineth."*** The man that hath been made to see, with a spiritual eye, has no sin, for he is born of God and he cannot sin, for his seed remaineth in him.(1 John 3:9). This man can see Jesus his Saviour, and the things of the Spirit of God, by the eye of faith which is opened. Jesus did not tell the Pharisees that they would always be blind, but only that their sins remained to that time.

In Mark 7:37 we read: ***"And they were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak."*** This was said after he had opened the ears, and loosened the string of the tongue of one who was deaf and dumb. Spiritually speaking, all men are deaf and dumb until the Holy Spirit quickens them into spiritual life; removes the stony heart and gives them a heart of flesh; puts a new spirit within, and gives them the mind of Christ. (See Ezek. 11:19, 1 Cor,2:16 and Rom. 8:6,7). Only then can they hear the Spirit, and sing praises unto God for his mercy, and tell of his love for poor, undone sinners. What a great blessing it is to be enabled to do these things! Praise his holy name! for his mercy remaineth for ever!

Jesus healed the lame also that they might walk as natural men, but in the

spiritual sense they became lame, as did Jacob. Jacob walked in what he thought was his own strength until the night he wrestled with a man until the breaking of day. To me, Jacob in type represents all the children of God, and our experiences must coincide with his if we be the children of God. In Genesis chapter 32 we read: *"And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh: and the hollow of his thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me."* What a marvellous change was made in this old deceiver that night! I believe that the man Jacob wrestled with represents the first or old law covenant which was in darkness and gave no light; but the breaking of day brings in God`s marvellous light in the new covenant of grace. When Jacob was made to see the breaking of this new day, the Gospel day, he saw that he was now crippled, and he begged for a blessing, and he was blessed there, and his name was then called Israel, a name that is applied to all the children of God. Being now halt brought about a need for a staff to lean upon, and Israel leaned upon this staff,(his faith in Jesus Christ), until his death. (See Heb.11:21). Dear brethren, do you not also need and rely upon this staff of faith. I feel that I could not live without it. Much more could be written concerning this, but I must pass on or make this too lengthy.

All the miracles and works of Jesus are marvellous to believers, and if there is one miracle greater in our sight it is his power to raise the dead, and himself from his tomb after his death on the cross. I will mention only one example to make this as brief as possible. Jesus stood at the cave where Lazarus was buried, and cried, *"Lazarus, come forth,"* and he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes. At the call of Jesus, Lazarus, who had been dead four days and was bound hand and foot and his face was bound with a napkin, came forth immediately. There are those who say this represents the resurrection at the last day, but with all due respect I beg to differ. I believe this represents those who are called out of their dead alienated state in Adam, and given an eternal life in Jesus Christ. This life was hid with God in Christ before the foundation of the world, but it is now made manifest unto them. Lazarus would die a natural death again, but the one given an eternal life can never die. Jesus said, *"I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish."* I understand that Lazarus was bound head and foot by the old law covenant (the graveclothes) and his eyes were blinded to the new covenant of grace, therefore the napkin was about his face. But Jesus said, *"Loose him, and let him go."* I believe that he was then released from the old law covenant, and was given sight to behold the new covenant of grace. This is the experience of all the saints, for Jesus said, *"The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear*

shall live." (John 5:25). He is speaking here of our death in Adam and not our natural death, for in the next verses we read, *"--for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."* Jesus said, *"I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." (John 11:25,26.)*

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Jesus laid down his life for his friends, (and he hath called us his friends, John 15:15), and he rose again for our justification. He said, *"No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."* He proved this when on the cross of calvary he yielded up the ghost, was buried, and rose again the third day as promised. That he arose was abundantly proved when he showed himself unto his apostles on several occasions, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. Then he ascended in a cloud into heaven while they watched, after that he had given his last commandment, *"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. And he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."* Jesus had preached the gospel to the poor in spirit while here, and it is still being preached by his servants who are called and qualified by him to do so: and, *"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*

Jesus Christ the Saviour is coming again to receive his bride, the church, unto himself and present her to his Father, that she may live with him eternally in that kingdom that was prepared for her before the foundation of the world. My hope is that I am a part of that blessed church, and I believe it is also your hope.

Yours in blessed hope,
Elder C. C. Wilbanks

ECCLESIATES 7: 7-13.

Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; and a gift destroyeth the heart.

Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.

Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.

Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this.

Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun.

For wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence: but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it.

Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked?

CORRESPONDENCE

TO THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:

If I say, that I believe Adam did not stand, but did fall; and then say that he was able to stand; is what I have then said a contradiction in terms, of forming of words?, I believe it surely is. And if I then also go ahead and add, - but I believe he was liable to fall, have I not then added still another contradiction in terms, of forming of words? I believe so. For, if I accept the Scripture as being the truth; and the Scripture does sayeth that Adam did surely fall; then where is any evidence of his ability to stand; and as for Adam's liability to fall; indicates of a likelihood, that there did exist a possibility of Adam's not falling. But where does the existence of a possibility of Adam's actions, being unsure of a certainty, as to whether or not he would or would not fall, leave "God?" Would such not surely indicate of "God" being less than sure in His operation of His government. I believe, it surely would.

As having to do with God's operation of His government; I am unable to believe there could ever exist, any (even the remotest) possibility, can FAILURE and SUCCESS, go together, to mean the same thing?, or are they opposites from each other in their meanings? I feel they are surely opposites in their meanings. Although Adam, before the fall, stood as a man without sin, without transgression; and therefore was, as God said, in looking upon all His creations, they were good and very good; but I have been unable to find in the Scripture, where God ever said Adam was Holy, in himself; before his fall or transgression. And therefore, as having to do with Adam's self standing or attributes or self abilities, to perform any Holy Spiritual actions, even before his fall; I must confess of my inability, to accept any theory, that could indicate of Adam himself (before his fall), being some sort of God, who could (on his own) have chosen to do otherwise than fall or transgress, just exactly as he did do; and so, it is my feeling that, that good and very good, God was referring to, was and is, His good and very good work, He had done in His creation of all things, in exact like way, as was His will, purpose and pleasure in and for so having created it all for and to be, in the first place, His place. Now if I be wrong in my feelings of this; I do desire an awareness of the truth; and therefore would welcome anyone's comment that could possibly shed come better light, upon this subject for me.

Now, if I truly be aware of my heart's desire, I have absolutely no desire, to cause controversy or ill-will within the household of faith; by any means, controversy for the sake of controversy; Oh no, not that; but only desire to know that Holy truth as it is in my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and for His sake; and my comfort in feeling an awareness of having some pure knowledge of His truth; that is my only

desire at this time, so far as I am able to discern, what are my true feelings.

I am just a poor self helpless, worm of the dust of the earth; and yet, somehow feel a sweet and precious hope in my breast of a better place after this earthly world is no more. My God (and I hope, my Father) brought me into this world and has furnished me with my every need now for more than 80 years; and, as for my fleshly ways and actions, I could not possibly deserve anything better or higher than the bottomless pit of an ever burning hell; and yet, even that being true, I am still being let to hope, my Lord could be all my justification for a better place, after this world has burned with fervent heat. And so I say to any who feel you have been given light upon this subject; please share with me, your experience or feelings.

In hope, I could be your brother in Christ Jesus the Lord.

Troy G. Shepard
103 East Tateway Rd.
Kitty Hawk, N.C. 27949

PSALM 112: 5-7.

A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion.

Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.

He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.

Greenville, Alabama
Signs of the Times,

Dear Brethren!

I am renewing my subscription, and if God will direct my pen, I have a desire to write a few words on the washing of the Saints feet. This has always been a sweet part of the communion service to me. How else can you be more humble than at the feet of the brethren. A dear sister, 95 yrs. old, visited us at New Providence for our communion service. It fell my lot for this dear sister to wash my feet. Oh! how sweet this was to me. I remember how kind she was and how tenderly she held each foot, as she dipped her hand in the water, letting it run down to cover the foot and gently drying them with a towel. Dear beloved brethren, my cup was filled and did run over with joy. My mind was called to remembrance of what the Lord said to Peter in St. John, 13. "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Ye call me master and Lord; and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

Oh! dear gracious omnipotent God, How sweet is communion with the Saints.

In Bonds of Love and Hope,
Emmie L. Grayson

ARTICLES

Dear Elder Key:

Was sitting here this morning meditating on the meaning of Justice and Mercy. The word Justice means a reward or a punishment as deserved. Mercy on the other hand is the kindness to the wrong doer or the enemy.

I would like to give my views on them if I may. Of course I could be wrong. In many discourses, and editorials, they address him as a just God.

The worldly judges not out judgments to those brought before them. If guilty they are sentenced according to the penalty of thy love. If innocent they are set free. If he would sentence the human race for their wrong doings, they would all be doomed for destruction. We ask the question are we looking for Justice or mercy. We readily admit mercy. Are we in fact trusting in a just or merciful God. We have to admit the later.

This chastening love that is meted out from the high courts above is the mercy that is rendered to this believing family. The judgments set up in the hearts of this believing family is what sustains them. When they stray or commit a wrong then is when this chastening power takes its abode, repentance will follow because of the godly sorrow. The born again believers are the ones who can testify to this. They are the ones who have come to the knowledge of his precious truth, which is hidden in him and revealed at his good pleasure.

Prayer is a word that is often misused. Carnally, literally, fleshly, we often ask for the things suitable to these three. This is an utterance of words which doesn't ascend any higher than the head. In this literal, carnal, or fleshly condition we don't know what to ask for. When the petition comes through the streams of his precious mercy, only then its prayer and thus fulfilled, and answered. In essence if the petition isn't in harmony with his will, it is completely fruitless.

When Christ spoke to his disciples he spoke to them in parables. Many present could not comprehend. Today when the gospel is set forth, only those enlightened by his grace are enabled to feast, those who have deaf ears are in a dead state.

Being in this helpless condition they can't see, hear or comprehend. They are completely helpless to act in anyway Spiritually.

The primitive baptists are a chosen few who advocate a belief, that controls the believing family, and sustains them in this helpless condition.

He that hungers and thirsts after righteousness shall be filled. When these fleshly bodies hunger, we eat this earthly food to satisfy this. When the enlightened family hungers for this spiritual food, from the courts of glory, they are made then to feast from this heavenly manna, sent forth through the streams of mercy, by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. How beautiful it is when one is favored to sit in these heavenly places, and feast from this, from the king of all kings.

My twin brother has been serving the public for forty five years in the barber business. All we hear in regard to religion is a torment to the graceful belief, I know we shouldn't be critical of them. They are first as helpless in their belief as we are ours. We say he has all power both in heaven and on earth, and no one can question this. They advocate a belief giving the flesh the power to reject or accept this salvation. If this salvation is the deliverance of God's goodness in the hearts of the believers through this precious grace, How can one grasp this fully?

By grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, but it is a gift of God, not of works least anyone should boast, but we are his workmanship created unto good works, that every believer should be thoroughly furnished unto good work. This completely eliminates the power of this carnal flesh. All things pertaining to salvation are hidden in his precious love and revealed only when it is pleasing unto him. In closing I would like to say I didn't mean to make this as long as I did. If this grace is an unmerited favor through the realms of his love. How does the flesh have the power to accept or reject his graceful gift?

In bonds of his precious
Love, I hope,
Riley Justice

P.S. Here is a song I have composed, I sing it in a common meter.

In His Precious Name
You don't join the church of God,
by the carnal of fleshly power.
This comes through abounding grace
at his appointed hour.

He adds to Church daily,
Such as should be saved.
He brings them from this darkness,
in the way he has saved.

By my loving kindness,
I have drawn thee
giving this guiding light,
that you shall come to see.

In the day of his power,
He enters the heart within,
and they come forth rejoicing.
When he forgives their sins.

This birth is brought about,
By his chastening love,
administered to the saints
from the shining courts above.

And at the end of time
when he reaches from above
He'll call this earthly family home
who were kept, by his love.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10 / 93
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

VOICES OF THE PAST

From Elder Lamberts book, "Tried In The Furnace".

HOW LONG HALT YE BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS?

January, 1946

"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word." - 1 Kings 18:21.

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

This text has been misinterpreted and misapplied by many worldly wise professors. Most of the people try to change this important question that Elijah asked to why halt ye between two opinions, and they try to make it applicable to the whole Adamic family. This question does not even favor why but how long halt ye between two opinions? You will find by reading the context that the question does not apply to the entire Adamic race but specially to the children of Israel. I believe Elijah knew how long they would halt between two opinions. He knew that they would halt between two opinions until God made Himself manifest unto them that He was God. Then they would cease to halt between two opinions. I think that this text was for the specific purpose of showing Israel that the Lord was God; and to eradicate the other opinion that was possessing their hearts that Baal was God. Baal had 450 prophets and Elijah was the only true prophet at that time (as they thought). The hearts of the children of Israel were halting between two opinions. Outwardly, Baal had 450 prophets to one of the Lord. False prophets today are about the same ratio and even the children of God, when left to themselves, wonder if there is something to their false doctrine, seeing that they have so many advocators. You will notice, in the text, that Baal's prophets were to choose between two bullocks. False prophets today make their own choice; they even advocate that the people may choose their Savior and direct their own steps and seal their own destinies. This is a false opinion as we hear Jesus saying: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Yes, Paul wrote to the Thessalonians that "God hath from the beginning chosen you."

Peter said: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood." Paul writes to the Ephesians: "According as he hath chosen us in him." This is the opinion as rendered in the Bible, which is different from the opinion as advocated by the false prophets. Thus here are two opinions; one is opposite to the other. False opinion: You are obliged to choose God. True opinion: God hath chosen His people. This false opinion will even be in the hearts of God's people until God sees fit to

burn out this false opinion by making Himself manifest.

Baal's 450 prophets were to have the choice of the two bullocks, the first call to their gods and the heat of the day as well as the dry wood on the altar to prove their gods. They called loud and long and even cut themselves until blood gushed forth for their gods to answer by fire. At the time of the evening sacrifice, Elijah repaired the altar by building one of twelve stones and ordered great quantities of water to be poured on the wood and around the altar so as to fill a trench. After doing this he prayed quietly to the Lord to make Himself manifest and to prove to Israel that He was the Lord God and that He had turned their hearts back again.

"The fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God" 1 Kings 18:38, 39.

Yes, our God is a consuming fire and it burned up every trace of man's work and left nothing. The false opinion had been burned from the hearts of this people and then (not before) did they cease to halt between two opinions.

Dear child of God, have you not experienced the consuming fire of Israel's God? Have you not experienced the burning that consumed every false opinion; all of your self-righteousness; every ounce of your seeming ability - in fact, every thing, deed, or thought that you had ever trusted in a natural way? Yes, our natural opinion is that we can direct our steps. The opinion as stated in the Bible is, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." How long will ye halt between the two opinions? Ye will halt between the two opinions until God the Lord makes Himself manifest by proving to you that you cannot walk as you would.

It is the opinion of the natural man that he can choose light; yet, the true opinion is that man chooses darkness rather than light. The opinion of man is that the natural man can receive the things of the Spirit and by studying and applying himself know them. This opinion is a contrast to the scripture; "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Man's opinion is, that surely, part of the way to heaven and eternal life is by the works of the creature. Yet, the opinion of the Bible is: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."

Peter was halting between opinions on the mountain of transfiguration when he said: "Let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." I think Moses represents the law, and Elias represents prophecy in that trio. Peter was halting between two opinions as to which should be given the most honor. He continued to halt between these opinions until Moses and Elias

disappeared and the Lord God answered from the cloud and said: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." The false opinion of the law having any dominion over God's children was eradicated. We hear Jesus saying, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Then it is not part of law and part of grace but solely an unmerited favor through Jesus Christ. The opinion of some men is that they are enabled through the act of regeneration to perform or not to perform upon volition of their own will and receive blessings in this time because of their obedience and cursings because of their disobedience notwithstanding the scriptures which say, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Also, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." And many other scriptures too numerous to mention which is in contrast to this false opinion.

It is the opinion of man that he can live perfect in this present life. This opinion is not in accord with apostolic experiences; therefore, it is a false opinion that must be burned out. People of God will halt between these two opinions - opinion of man and opinion of God - until the opinion of man is burned out. The opinion of the apostle is plain, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." "For that which I do I allow not; for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I." And "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me." Also, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

So, we are hoping and looking forward to the day when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality and this natural body shall be raised a spiritual body. Yes, we are awaiting the time when the creature shall be delivered out of the bondage of corruption unto the glorious liberties of the children of God, then we will cease from every false opinion.

Elder E.J. Lambert

CIRCULAR LETTER

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting while in session at the Mount Zion Meeting House October 17, 18, and 19, 1962, send greetings in the Lord to our correspondents and sister churches.

Dear Brethren:

It has long been the custom of the brethren of the various churches when they meet in an associated capacity, to send greetings to their brethren of other churches and Associations, and give an account of their faith and order, that there might be a mutual thanksgiving for the evidences of God's mercy and longsuffering among them.

When we remember that we are as brands plucked from the burning fire, and that it is wholly of the mercy of God that we are not as those who are blown about with every wind of doctrine, but are firmly embedded in that which the Lord teaches, we walk softly as becometh those who receive so great a blessing. We cannot boast as if we have received a reward, but must humbly acknowledge our poverty and our unworthiness in receiving such great things, which are beyond the reach of mortal men themselves.

So our present theme will be centered around the questions of the Apostle to the Corinthians: "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what has thou that thou hast not received? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hast not received it?"

The very foundation of God's dealings with us, is his grace and mercy, which are prompted by his great love for us; and this is apparent throughout all his dealings with us, and our relations with him. In our penury we have received bountiful gifts. We were dead in sin, and unworthy of his notice, but he made known his great love towards us. We need not remind our brethren that our salvation and redemption comes this way. And it would seem that the weight and importance of it would keep us mindful of it, to the exclusion of any thought of pretense or boasting.

But we deal with realities, we do become exalted, we do sometimes boast, as we and many of our brethren in the scriptures prove. Even the apostle who wrote the above to the Corinthians, was given a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him, lest he become exalted above measure; and that he might learn that only the grace of God was sufficient for him in all things; and that, though he was weak, God was strong.

Thus we find Peter strengthening his brethren after he was made aware of his weakness; and we find Paul doing the same out of the depths of his experience. The true minister of the things of the Lord is taught in the school of grace, and learns his weakness by actual experience, and also his only source of strength, that he may strengthen his brethren; and on occasion reprove and rebuke with all longsuffering and doctrine. These things are food for the children of God, and they grow in the grace thus manifested.

Though these brethren composed the Church at Corinth, being sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints, and had received the grace of God, for which the apostle expressed his thanks, saying, "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Christ Jesus," yet there were contentions among them, envy, strife, and divisions, which made manifest the carnality, and their walk as men. Paul and Apollos were only their ministers, even as the Lord gave to them. Some become a fool, that he may be wise." And said also, "...let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things

present, or things to come: all are yours; and ye are Christ's and Christ is God's."

Thus, required to be faithful as a steward, Paul brings them again to recall from whence they had received their call and sanctification; and to consider the truth which was in their hearts, as to the source of all their blessings. How startling is the truth of Peter's query when it is brought home: "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

"Who maketh thee to differ from another?" the apostle wrote. And he might have answered by asking, Who called you out of darkness into light? Who sinned in your hearts? Who revealed to you that Jesus was the Christ? Who is it that shall confirm you to the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ? Who? Yes, who brought you into the knowledge of the glorious truth as it is in Jesus, and distinguished you as a light in darkness?

Then he asked, "What has thou that thou hast not received?" And he would have answered by asking, Is there anything pertaining to Jesus, the church, your hope, your joy, that you did not receive solely by the grace of God? You know there is not! then why do you glory as if it were you own doing? Why do you act one toward another as if these things were of yourselves, giving you advantage one above another?

These are things which sometimes bring us abruptly to see ourselves in a true light - when they are applied in our souls with power; and bring us to confess our faults and short-comings one to another, and to walk in true humbleness. When such is the case, we are glad to be blessed to be a little one among the brethren.

The apostle said of these Corinthians, "For ye are yet carnal? for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" The carnality that is in each of us, when it takes form as manifested among those brethren, is the cause of divisions and strife. Without it such would not be. The carnality in brethren causes them to follow men, and this same carnality causes men to want others to follow them. Without a following, no new thing would get far. So it behooves us, as we are given to be concerned in these matters, to prayerfully consider this or that; before we lend support to anything that would break the fellowship and peace of those we love.

The same Spirit that gave rise to the language of our text, also caused the following to be recorded a thousand years before: "These six things doth the Lord hate, yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren." A faithful steward will declare these things to his brethren.

We value your love and fellowship, brethren, and are glad to have your

correspondence; and we are glad to have all of you who were able to visit us this year. May the God of all grace ever keep us mindful that it is by His grace that we are what, we are; and keep us little in our own feelings, that we may behold the image of christ in our brethren.

John D. Wood

The following ministers were present at the above meeting:
Elder John D. Wood, Elder George L. Weaver, Elder J.P. Helms, Elder Author Warren, Elder C.N. Bunn, Elder W.B. Barnes, Elder S.R. Boykin, Elder Cecil Turner, Elder J.R. Lane, Elder B.O. Thompson, Elder G.G. Trevathan, Elder J.L. Agee and Elder J.L. Smith.

WHAT IS TRUTH? TRUTH IN ITS PURITY, POWER AND PRODUCTS

By J.C. Philpot
(Sent in by Elder Noel Conner)

1. Truth in its Purity

I want truth in its purity. If I go to fill my glass at a fountain, I want pure water. I do not want water mixed with sewage. The purer and cleaner the water the better. The Lord said to the woman of Samaria, "If thou knewest the gift of God and who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." This is the water I want - "living water" - the Lord's own gift, and in me too, as He said in the same blessed discourse: "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Of this living water, of its source and nature, we have a beautiful description in the last chapter of Revelations, where John saw "a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." I do not mean to say that this river in its primary signification represents truth, for it rather represents divine life and love – the life of God and the love of God – but we may take it as an emblem of truth in its purity. For as the river of water of life proceeded out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, it may so far exemplify truth as stored up and flowing out of the Person of Christ.

But let us look at this point, truth in its purity, a little more in detail. There are certain grand foundation truths of our most holy faith, without holding which we cannot hold truth in its purity. Upon two or three of these points I shall briefly touch that I may answer the question, "What is truth?" in harmony with the oracles of God.

1. I commence, therefore, with the Trinity, that grand and glorious fundamental truth of three Persons in one God: a Unity of the divine essence in a Trinity of three distinct Persons. This is a grand, cardinal, foundation truth, manifested in Christ as "the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His Person," revealed in the Scriptures, and more fully in those of the New Testament, and made known to believing hearts by the teaching and testimony of the Holy Ghost. Upon this grand foundation truth the whole revelation of the character, mind and will of God is based, and therefore every branch of divine truth stands fully and firmly in connection with it.

He therefore that is unsound here is unsound everywhere, be it in doctrine, experience, or practice; and as no one can know the mysteries of the kingdom of God unless they are revealed to him from heaven, as the Lord told Peter (Matt. 16. 17) and the rest of His disciples (Matt. 11:25; 13:11), we may boldly say that if a man knows not the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost by some discovery of these three Persons in the glorious Godhead to his soul, he cannot be said to have a vital acquaintance with any one branch of gospel truth in its purity, or with any one mystery of the kingdom of heaven in its power.

2. The Person of the Son of God – by which I mean His complex Person, uniting essential Deity with a pure, holy and sacred humanity, having two natures, yet being but one Person – is another foundation truth of our most holy faith, a cardinal branch of truth in its purity. His essential Deity is so closely and intimately connected with that vital, fundamental doctrine of His eternal Sonship, without which, in my judgment, the Trinity itself cannot be rightly or scripturally maintained, that, not wishing to speak controversially, I unite them for the present together as one. When, therefore, I now speak of the Person of Christ, I mean not so much His divine Person as the Son of God from all eternity as His complex Person as the great and glorious God-man, Immanuel, God with us. In His Person thus continued, as all truth was by the Father eternally lodged, so in Him as manifested, all truth necessarily centers, and from Him as revealed, all truth essentially flows.

Truth therefore in its purity embraces all the covenant offices and gracious relationships of our most blessed Lord – everything in fact that Christ is in Himself, and everything that He is to the church of God. It embraces Him therefore in His incarnation, as taking into union with His own divine Person in the womb of the virgin the flesh and blood of the children. It embraces Him in all His course through life, from the manger at Bethlehem to the cross at Calvary, throughout which He was a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, with all that obedience which He rendered to God's law, and whereby He wrought out a perfect righteousness in which the church of God might stand for ever justified. It embraces and comprehends His dolorous sufferings in the garden, when the weight of sin imputed to Him and the hiding of God's face forced from His surcharged brow that terrible sweat which fell in great drops (or, as the word means literally, "clots") of blood. It comprehends and embraces more especially that sacrifice and blood-shedding for sin which He accomplished upon the cross, when He offered up His sacred humanity upon the altar of His essential Deity, and thus as the Holy Ghost testifies, "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself," and "by one offering perfected for ever them that are sanctified." It therefore embraces that sacred and solemn giving up of the ghost, or the voluntary yielding up of His life, which He had taken for that very purpose, whereby He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, and which was an integral part of His sacrifice; for the death of the victim was needful that the sacrifice might be completed. It embraces His lying in the sep-

ulchre, where He was entombed, not only that He might fulfil the Scriptures and especially the type of Jonah, but that He might perfume the grave for us; that we might not only die with Him mystically in soul, and thus know what it is experimentally to be buried with Him in death spiritually by vital union, but die also with Him in body, and be thus buried with Him literally and corporeally in the bowels of the earth. It embraces and comprehends His glorious resurrection from the tomb, when He was declared to be the Son of God with power, God setting His own attesting stamp upon His meritorious sacrifice, blood-shedding and death by raising Him from the dead. It embraces and comprehends His ascension up on high, in the sight of His disciples, when a cloud received Him out of their sight. It follows Him up as they did in heart and affections into the courts of God, and embraces Him where He now is, as the great High Priest over the house of God, the mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.

Thus truth in its purity, as stored in the Person of Christ, embraces all those sacred transactions which were carried on in the days of His flesh by the Son of God, and are now being carried on upon our behalf by Him in the very courts of heaven. It embraces, therefore, and comprehends also all that the risen Son of God is to His church now. It embraces His priesthood, for He is now a priest, as the Holy Ghost declares: "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens; a ministry of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Observe the words, "we have such an high priest," that is, have now. And you will bear in mind that this is one part of the peculiar blessedness of the priesthood of the Lord Jesus that He is executing it now, even now, for us who are still here below. The high priest under the law, you will recollect, performed two special offices for the people. First he offered the sacrifices, and particularly on the solemn day of atonement, when he killed the goat of the sin offering outside the veil. But secondly, he offered intercession for the people when he took the blood within the veil and sprinkled it upon and before the mercy seat. Christ, as the great anti-type of the high priest under the law, executed one part of His priesthood here below when He offered Himself as a sacrifice for sin; but the other part of His priesthood He is executing now, having gone Himself within the veil, and, by the virtue and efficacy of His blood once shed upon earth, there ever liveth to make intercession for us.

It embraces Him also as our prophet - - our prophet for the present, as well as for the past and the future; for our Lord's teaching as a prophet not only embraces the days of His flesh and His gracious words as preserved in the New Testament, but His present teaching when, as our ever-living prophet, He still communicates to us from time to time sweet instruction by opening our understanding to understand the Scriptures, and especially by sending the Spirit down into our hearts to testify of Himself, to reveal Himself to our souls, and to make

Himself near, dear and exceedingly precious.

It embraces also His kingly office, whereby He sits enthroned as Sovereign Lord in the courts of heaven; for "all power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth," and "He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet." Truth, therefore, in its purity embraces His kingly sceptre, which He sways from time to time over believing hearts, and His sovereign rule and dominion which He exercises over the church and the world -- over all men, all things and all circumstances. It looks also into the future, for it embraces His second coming, when He will "appear the second time without sin unto salvation, "shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe."

Thus I have endeavored to show you briefly, yet summarily, how truth in its purity is stored up in the glorious Person of Christ, and therefore embraces all that He has been, all that He now is, and all that He ever will be to the church of God. But how little is He known, believed in, resorted unto, and lived upon as the truth, the living, incarnate truth -- not truth as a thing, a doctrine, a creed, but truth as a Person; and O what a Person! none less than the Son of God, and as such containing in Himself all truth as the sun contains in itself all light and heat, and is ever giving them out of its inexhaustible fullness as the very nature and character of its existence. O how few so know, believe and feel this, as to live daily unto and upon Him, and thus be continually receiving grace out of His fullness, so as to drink truth from the Fountain head in all its divine purity, sweetness and blessedness. And yet how tenderly He invites us to come to Him and drink. "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink." And again, "Whosoever will let him take the water of life freely." Even to the poor woman of Samaria, He could say, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink: thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." Encouraged by these invitations, may we leave those earthly streams which men have fouled with their feet (Ezekiel 34, 19), and by prayer and supplication, with continual reading of the Scriptures and secret meditation, may we ever seek to drink into truth in all its original purity as stored up in the glorious Person of the Son of God.

3. But if truth in its purity centers in the Person of Christ, it must be in perfect harmony with all that grace which is eternally in Him, and which He came to reveal to us; for "the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." It was therefore in Him that this grace was manifested to believing eyes and hearts, according to that testimony: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Truth therefore in its purity embraces all the doctrines, or as I prefer to call them, the truths of grace. It thus comprises election, for the remnant who are saved are chosen according to "the election of grace"; special redemption also, for "in Him we have redemption

through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace"; justification also, for, "we are justified freely by His grace," and to sum up the whole, the fullness and fixedness of salvation, or certainty of perseverance unto the end, for "by grace we are saved."

4. But I stated that truth in its purity was lodged and stored out only in the Person of Christ, but in the Scriptures which have been given to us by the special inspiration of the Holy Ghost, as a gracious revelation of the character, mind and will of God, which I gave as a simple definition of truth. It is indeed primarily in Christ that this character, mind and will or God are revealed to us: for He is not only "the brightness of the Father's glory," but "the express image of His Person," where the word translated, "express image" is literally "character," or stamped impression. In Him, too, is the mind of God seen, for He has made known to us the thoughts of God's heart, and the will of God also, for He came to do it and reveal it to us.

But that this revelation of the character, mind and will of God should be preserved safely for ages, and be made known to each successive generation of believers, it has pleased the God of all wisdom and grace to write it down for their instruction. O how blessed it is to have the Word of God -- the inspired Scriptures, free from all intermixture of error, as a special, infallible revelation, that in them truth may shine forth in all its purity, and that we may daily read and search them, understanding their meaning by divine teaching, and drink into their spirit by a personal, experimental application of them to our heart.

MEETINGS

NOTICE OF MEETING

The Pleasant Valley Association will be held with Shepherd Fold Primitive Baptist Church, 815 Little York Road, Houston, Texas, on November 5, 6, 7, 1993. For directions or other information, contact Marvin Curnutt, (713) 987-0250.

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the Staunton River Union is to be held, the Lord willing with Malmaison Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in October.
A cordial invitation is extended to our ministers, brethren, and friends.

Elder Julian Williams, Mod.
Peggy Wells, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 1993

Jerry P. Cockran, NC $7.00
Alpha Ramsey, VA 2.00
Rudy L. Ogburn, NC 7.00
Mrs. Ruby Wall, TX
In memory Eld. Lloyd Wall 15.00
Mrs. Phyllis Farlow, MD 2.00
Mrs. Marjorie Cook, TN
In memory Minnie L.
Atwood Biggs 25.00

John D. Manning, NJ 5.00
Mrs. Nannie W. Wiggins, NC 2.00
Mrs. Minnie Morgan, AR 4.00
Mrs. Anita L. Hash, VA 2.00
Eld. Hale Terry, VA 4.00
G.W. Carter, NC 2.00
Mrs. Larrie Bowler, VA 2.00
Mrs. Geneva Scarce, VA 2.00
Eld. Willard Cox, VA 2.00
Eld. Larry Hollandsworth, VA 2.00
William Nidkiff, VA 2.00
Mrs. Amy D. Heppler, AZ 12.00
Mr. & Mrs. J.M. Marshall, VA 5.00

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

OBITUARIES

IN LOVING MEMORY OF OUR DADDY: JOHN IVEY MOBLEY

Daddy was born February 12, 1911 and departed this life March 27, 1993. He and mother raised 6 children, by God's help and grace. There were 4 boys and 2 girls.

He was preceded in death by the oldest son, Elwood and a grand-son, E.C., who was drowned in a boating accident July 4, 1969.

Daddy and mama Gertrude were married July 30, 1934 at Jacksonville, NC by Elder Ed Pollard, they were married for nearly 59 years.

We were privileged to live beside daddy and mama after we married and we became very, very close to them. Daddy was a very humble man, and very easy to love, always willing to help in any way he could. He loved to work with wood and build things.

We were privileged to see daddy baptised in his seventies by Elder J.C. Carroll. I well remember times we would return home at night, and I would go in our back door. I would always look to see if I could see daddy through the window sitting in his chair. I would wave goodnight and blow him a kiss and he would wave back. Each time the thought would come to my mind, that one day we would wave for the last time.

We have many good memories, the times we went to the mountains and daddy fished in the trout ponds, the trips we took together to the ocean, and visiting the sick, but the greatest memory is the times we shared in God's Word - daddy's voice would break many times and tears flow down his cheeks as he would talk about God and His goodness, one scripture daddy quoted was Ephesians 2: 8&9, "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast."

In my memory I can still hear daddy as he would return thanks at the table and "thank God for His blessing." These are memories to treasure.

Daddy's funeral was March 29, 1993 with Elder Johnny Carroll officiating.

Daddy loved him very much. At his departure he left our mother, (his wife) Gertrude, whom we are so thankful to still have with us, also, 5 children, 16 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren, 2 sisters and 1 brother.

Daddy was laid to rest at the Batchelor Family Cemetery, close to the home-place in Richlands, North Carolina.

We miss him dearly, this poem God gave me the night daddy passed away has been a great consolation to me.

A SPECIAL DADDY'

Daddy Heaven is more real today
Because of your presence there-
Rejoicing in the Savior's Love-
no sorrows, pain or cares.
Reunited with loved ones gone before
Just waiting for us to come
and sing a song around God's throne-
A song no one has known.

You were so very special
In oh! so many ways.
You'll always live within our hearts
and abide for all our days.
Until the Lord then calls us home
To meet you some sweet day.
What a blessed, blessed happy time
Reunited in Heaven to stay.

Written by his daughter:
Elizabeth Simpson
Richlands, NC
June 26, 1993

GENOVA LUCILLE RUSHING

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write an obituary of our beloved Sister Genova Lucille Rushing. Sister Rushing was born to Inez and John M. Musgrove at Bastrop, La. May 11, 1943, and was called home by our Heavenly Father August 13, 1993. She leaves behind her husband, Ellis M. Rushing; her father John M. Musgrove; two daughters, Susan Rushing, and Mrs Paula Manning; one son, Steve M. Rushing; four sisters, Phyllis Musgrove, Patsy Barton, Caroletta Ogima and Lucy Hutson; six brothers, Jim Jr., Terry, Phillip, Douglas, Juan, and Madison Musgrove.

She was preceded in death by her mother Sister Inez Musgrove, her sister Shirlyn Musgrove, and daughter Becky L. Rushing.

Sister Rushing was a firm believer in the doctrine preached by Old Primitive Baptists for many years, but did not ask to be baptized until about three months before her death. She was sick with cancer and could barely walk with help, but she so greatly desired to follow her Lord's example that she braved being led into the waters of a bayou during a rain, and was baptized by her pastors Elders Theron Jones and Clifford Wilbanks. She was able to attend church services only one time before God so graciously and in mercy called her home.

Sister Genova is greatly missed by all who knew and loved her.

Submitted in love,
Elder C.C. Wilbanks

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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HOW FIRM A FOUNDATION, YE SAINTS OF THE LORD

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!
What more can he say than to you he hath said,-
You, who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?

In every condition, in sickness, in health,
In poverty's vale, or abounding in wealth,
At home, and abroad, on the land, on the sea,
As thy days may demand, shall thy strength ever be.

"Fear not, I am with thee; O, be not dismayed!
I, I am thy God, and will still give thee aid,
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.

"When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of wo shall not thee overflow;
For I will be with thee thy troubles to bless
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress

"When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace, all-sufficient, shall be thy supply;
The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.

"E'en down to old age, all my people shall prove
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;
And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,
Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne.

"The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake."

G. Keith.

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EDITORIAL

ELDER R. H. CAMPBELL

And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness, the unclean shall not pass over it: but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.

This scripture is found in the thirty-fifth chapter of Isaiah vs. 8, and it is written by the prophet, referring to a time that would be in the future, in which things would be very different for Israel than the time in which this prophecy was written. Isaiah lived under the law, which demanded complete obedience but which gave nothing in return; and it continued its demands as long as they lived. As our civil law today demands perfect adherence but gives nothing in return: A lifetime of obedience gives nothing in return, but the moment you break it judgement is rendered and you must pay the penalty required.

There is no joy in living under the law, no mercy or compassion just unyielding demands upon all who live under its dominion. As in our day, seeing a policeman especially a traffic officer makes us check our speedometer and automatically slow down a little because of the authority and power that the law has over your life. If we get a letter or any official correspondence from the I.R.S. we will immediately become apprehensive and begin to wonder what the problem is and to wonder what you have done wrong, because if they begin investigating you it can lead to serious problems even if you can eventually prove that you are not guilty of any wrong doing. This is the way it was with Jesse, David's father, when he heard Samuel, the judge was coming to their city; the scriptures state that the elders of the town trembled, at his coming, and said comest thou peaceably. They were not guilty of any wrong doing but, because of the authority and power of the judge, they trembled and became fearful of what his coming could mean, and how it could affect their lives.

Isaiah, living under the law with the stern and foreboding effect that it has

on the lives of those who are under its dominion, is by inspiration, writing of a time in the future in which it will not be so with the children of Israel. He speaks of a time when the wilderness and the solitary place (the place where God found Jacob and led him about and instructed him) shall be glad: where the desert shall rejoice and blossom as a rose: shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing. How strange this must have sounded to those who were so accustomed to the sacrifices and offering required of them and their strict adherence to the demands of the law of Moses: those who as the children of Israel who exceedingly feared and trembled when God spoke to them that they prayed that he would speak to them only through Moses. How strange it must have been to hear the prophet speak of a time of joy and gladness and to hear him say, Be strong, fear not, behold your God will come with vengeance, even with a recompense; he will come and save you. How different from the God who they had known through the law and in the thunderings and lightnings, and the noise of the trumpets and the smoking mountain, when he spoke to them in the wilderness.

Isaiah, speaks to them of a time when God will open the eyes of the blind, unstop deaf ears, Cause the lame to leap and the dumb to speak. This is referring to the day in which we live and we have seen these things fulfilled in our experiences and the lives of others. The book of Isaiah begins by saying. "The vision of Isaiah the son of Amos," so Isaiah could prophesy because of the revelation, but, those living in that day could only ponder of the meaning of these words. God gave this knowledge to his servants to prophesy of them so that Israel may know that it is of God as they see these things unfold even though it may be hundreds or even thousands of years later.

And an highway shall be there and a way. This is speaking of Christ and his coming into the world, the way the truth and the life; the bringing in of a better way which is established upon better promises and will stand forever. This is the kingdom that will break in pieces and consume all others. Christ is the highway, the only way of salvation. As the Apostle Paul wrote, "Having therefore brethren boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. By a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say his flesh."

And it shall be called the way of holiness. There is nothing holy that is not so determined by God and consecrated by him for a specific purpose as, holy mountain, holy place, holy seed, etc. and only God can cause anything or anyone to be holy. The way of holiness must therefore have been so decreed by God for a specific purpose and that purpose is to bring all of his elect unto himself holy and without spot or blemish; and he sanctified this way of holiness by the sacrifice of his only begotten son to redeem them from under the curse and demands of the law, so that they stand

before him holy and without blame. This way of holiness is the way and manner in which all of the children of the heavenly king are delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of his dear Son: who of God is made unto them wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption; all that is needful to insure their inheritance in that heavenly kingdom.

Jesus, during his ministry here on earth fulfilled all that was written of him in the law and the prophets but all of his life on earth was spent under the law and only his death on the Cross and resurrection could secure the way of holiness for every heir of promise. The way of holiness is the way of the spirit and this began in the household of faith on the day of Pentecost; for the first time the spirit of God indwelled the saints of God and they spoke with tongues as the spirit gave them utterance of the wonderful truths and the wonderful works of God. They understood for the first time the wonderful truths of the teachings of Jesus and the miracles performed by Christ and the truths set forth in them. Jesus told them, while he was with them that the Comforter (Holy Spirit) would not come except he went away, but if he went away he would send him to them. This is the beginning of this, way of holiness, where only the redeemed shall walk and where the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their head.

The way of holiness is experienced only by the new man, the new creature in Christ; the one of whom John wrote. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin: for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." It is never experienced by the man of flesh because he continues to serve the law of sin. This causes a great conflict in the life of the individual as these two entities continue to live in one body. This is the cross that all must bear: the cross that Jesus spoke of when he said." If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." It will be their lot as long as they live in this body of flesh but at the same time, as much as it distresses them, it is evidence that they are going in the way of holiness because the natural man does not have this burden.

Jesus told his disciples just before he ascended unto the Father, "ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." This was fulfilled when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place and the promise of the Ages was made manifest among them; they were filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance, of the wonderful works of God, of his kingdom and of the truth and glory of the way of holiness that they were entering into. This is the way that they were to witness unto the way of the Cross, the spirit that indwells them and leads them in

the way of holiness and they for the first time understand the teachings of Jesus and truth of the scriptures in the writings of the holy men of old: men who wrote and spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

When an individual is born again he is born of the spirit and is a new creature in Christ, old things pass away and all things become new. And all things are of God. Their sense of values change, their love for the things of the world change and their desire now becomes the things of the spiritual realm and more knowledge of this new life which is so dear and precious to their soul. They love to read of the experiences of others who have come this way, and to bask in the loves and fellowship of their newly found family who they love and cherish above all others. They have learned to put things in their proper perspective and realize that the riches of the world, fame and esteem of their peers in this world are as nothing and even less than nothing when compared to the beauty and glory of the heavenly kingdom that they have been blessed to see and to inhabit. They realize that the things of this world perish with the using and attaining of them while the treasures and experiences of the spiritual realm remain ever lovely and precious regardless of how many times they experience the joy of their presence in their life. Their initial change will always be a bethel spot in their memory: They will tell it to each new brother and sister they meet and will rejoice in its memory every time. I have heard the experience of some brothers and sisters many times and I still love to hear it because it reminds all of the beauty and mystery of this miraculous transforming from the natural to the spiritual kingdom. It will never cease to cause a thrill to course through the veins of the believer.

But the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Surely this scripture embodies more of the substance of, the way of holiness, than I could ever do even though I do hope to have a part in that way. It is where only the redeemed of the Lord can walk, there are no places to get on or off, they are placed there and nothing unclean comes near them. It is a one way thoroughfare going to only one destination, the holy city new Jerusalem: and they come with songs and everlasting joy on their heads. Surely singing the songs of Zion is one of the most joyful aspects of the journey on this way of holiness: it is those living now joining into the experiences of those of other times and expressing joy and praise of the God of heaven and earth who is the common bond or link between them. The oldest scriptures and the oldest song still stirs the heart and soul of those living today as much as they did in the day they were written. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh to the Father, but by me." Surely this is the way of holiness and the only way unto the Father.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

ARTICLES

My Dear Brethren:

hat I am (the Lord willing) about to write, is not intended to reflect upon my fellowship for you, but is only in the hope it might stir up our pure minds to such a degree that we might stand still and give serious thought and consideration to this subject and ask ourselves these questions (and God willing) with a prayerful heart;

1. Do I believe that Christ came down upon this sin cursed earth to suffer, bleed, die and arise, for His Church?

2. Do I believe He finished what He came down to do?

3. Do I believe His Church are His people whom His Father gave Him?

4. Do I believe those people His Father gave Him are ALL that go to make up His body the Church, Him being her Head, He being her Groom, and her being His bride?

5. Do I believe that on the morning of the resurrection each of His people, whom His Father gave Him, shall be like Him and be satisfied?

6. Do I believe He, Christ, will take them each and every one to heaven and immortal glory on the wings of His everlasting love?

7. Do I believe He, Christ, will present them to His Father and say - here they are Father, of them all, I have lost none?

8. Do I believe that no hand of man, had any part in the forming or building of this Church?

9. Do I believe that this (Christ's) Church, or any part or portion thereof, does - not consist of any nails, any mortar, any lumber, any brick or stone, or any other natural material?

10. Was my answer Yes, to all the above questions?; and if it were Yes; upon what solid and truthful foundation would or could I base a belief, or reference to, a man constructed building or meeting house, AS THE CHURCH?

11. Now after I have given serious though to this subject, do I believe this Subject to be of sufficient importance, to abstain from referring to a building or meeting-house, as a Church?; or do I believe that referring to that man constructed building as the meeting house, would be so out dated, or old timey, that the true Old School Primitive Baptist membership would, either resent it, or not even know (perhaps), what were being referred to?' or do I fear the ridicule of the world toward the Old School or Primitive Baptist for being a backward people.

Well my Dear Brethren, the worldly have always ridiculed the followers of the Lamb of God and His truths, and so long as time lasts, I feel sure they will continue to do so; and that being the case, could to my mind be some portion of evidence, that the Old School or Primitive Baptist faith and order are in accord with that same faith and order as were John the Baptist.

Now Dear Brethren; it is neither my place, nor is it my intent, to even attempt to try and tell you what you

should do but as I indicated in the beginning of this writing was only for the purpose of stirring up our pure minds; and leave each of us, where we already were; in the hands of our Lord and God. I do desire to just add this - I was raised by Old Baptist parents, and grew up among Old Baptists, and as my memory serves; until I was about thirty years of age, I cannot recall of ever hearing an Old Baptist, referring to their meeting house as the church in any way shape or form. Of course all the different worldly denominations of work mongers in that section of the country always referred to their meeting house as their church. And then, once in a while I began to hear one here and there (members of the Primitive Baptist Churches) refer to their meeting house as the church; and slowly, over the years, I began hearing more and more members doing that same thing; at the time, I just wondered, why the change?; it was not of any great concern to me at that time of life for my interest then was limited only to a respect for them. But lo and behold, many years later, practically all of the membership were calling the meeting house the church, in both their speech and writing. Now to more questions to us all; Do I believe the Primitive or Old School Baptist did adopt that saying, and writing, from the work mongers? and if so; for what reason or purpose?; Was it because of a desire for more membership, more attraction to larger crowds of people at meetings?; or was it from a desire to be more like the world?; or does it just not matter, one way or another, what we call our meeting houses?

I just desire more light upon this subject, and request of the Editors of the Signs, to please give your views upon this through the Signs, or to me personally, by letter, or come to see me, and give me your views; for it has burdened me now, for many years. If in accord with God's will, may He grant us with more knowledge of His greatness and goodness and a thankful heart for all His gifts of His mercy and grace to usward all the days we have spent upon this earth. I have absolutely no desire whatsoever, to argue religion with anyone, I just desire for Holy truths, that my speech and writing, might not be mixed with untruths.

Your brother in Christ (I hope),
Troy G. Shepard
103 East Tateway Rd.
Kitty Hawk, N.C. 27949

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE FULFILLMENT OF THE SCRIPTURES
By Elder H.M. Curry

I suppose that every one who professes to believe the Bible at all, looks for the fulfillment of the prophecies. To what quarter then are we to look for this fulfillment? How can those who deny predestination, either in part or in whole, ever expect the exact, timely and certain fulfillment of any or all of the prophecies of the divine oracles?

God has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. Part at least of this declaration he has made known unto us by the mouths of his prophets as recorded in the holy Scriptures. The events thus foretold must certainly have been foreordained or predestinated, and therefore must be fulfilled, each in its time and season. The Saviour said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass, until all be fulfilled."

When God says a thing shall come to pass, does he mean that he will bring it to pass? When he says a thing shall be done, does he not pledge his word for its performance? Were the prophecies of the Scriptures uttered upon any other authority than the authority of God's decree? Do they rest upon any vicissitude of time for their fulfillment that God's decrees do not embrace? Would mere foreknowledge, or bare permission warrant or even justify the expression, "It shall come to pass?" or the expression "Shall," in any sense of the word? In this part of the country people read and notice Hick's weather forecasts. When such changes come as have been prophesied, they will say, "Hicks hit it this time;" when the forecasts fail, they say, "Hicks missed it this time." Are we to look upon God's prophesies in this way? Are we to say, when we see the Scriptures fulfilled in this thing, God hit it this time? or when we fail to see them fulfilled in that thing, God missed it this time.

Are we to treat his prophecies as mere prognostications? One would say, O no, God knew all these things would come to pass, and so he was kind enough and thoughtful enough to tell us of them beforehand. This is a very puerile makeshift, a very fallacious and deceptive subterfuge, and involves the one accepting it in a difficulty far more serious and ungodly than he supposes the one to be which he is trying to evade, to wit, God's decree of predestination; for if God knew that an event would transpire, that event is inevitable, that is, it cannot fail to come to pass exactly as foreknown; if inevitable, then it has been determined, and if determined, who determined it? If God did not, who did? The difficulty that I meet here, is an absolutely determined future, and with no determining power outside of God, and independent of him. This is fatalism, and the one accepting such a theory is a fatalist in the fullest sense of that word. So here he is plunged into the very thing which he flattered himself that he was avoiding. In endeavoring to shun an imaginary Scylla, he has fallen into a real Charybdis.

How often do we come upon the expression in the New Testament, "This was done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled." When Herod sent forth and killed the little children in Bethlehem and all the coasts thereof, it was said then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "In Ramah there was a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for

her children, and would not be comforted because they are not." Suppose Herod had not sent forth and killed the little children, then the words of Jeremiah would not have been fulfilled; if his word should fail in one thing, what confidence would his prophecies be entitled to in anything? But it is not Jeremiah's word which is at stake here, it is God's word that must be fulfilled. Herod's persecution also caused the flight into Egypt, and this was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son." On the return from Egypt, notwithstanding Joseph had been warned of God to take the young child and his mother and go into the land of Israel, he through unbelief, fearing Archelaus, turned aside and dwelt in Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene." Here not only the wicked persecution by Herod, but also the unbelief of Joseph alike fulfilled the Scriptures.

When the time arrived that Jesus should be betrayed into the hands of wicked men, the betrayer was at hand, not as one who accidently turned up in time of the emergency, but one who had been foretold by prophecy. David had given a pen picture of him hundreds of years before. It had also been said by the Christ that one of the twelve should betray him. Not only was the man marked out by prophecy who should do this, but it had also been foretold how much the traitor should receive for his work; and also what should be finally done with the money. The son of man truly went as it was written of him. He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and when Herod and Pilate and the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together against him, they were gathered to do whatsoever God's hand and God's counsel determined before to be done. (Acts 4:27, 28).

When the Saviour was crucified, he was put to death between two thieves. This was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled which said, He was numbered with the transgressors. Suppose there had been no thieves or transgressors, how then could the Scriptures have been fulfilled? It was the custom to break the legs of those who were put to death by crucifixion, but on this occasion they broke the legs of the thieves, but did not break the legs of Christ. This was done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled which said, "Not a bone of him shall be broken." This prophecy was fulfilled in its reference to the literal body of Christ, but it still remains in force in its relation to his spiritual body, and must be fulfilled to the utmost in this also. So this prophecy warrants the eternal security of all the redeemed family, for we are members of his body and of his flesh and of his bones; so not a bone of him shall indeed be broken. Instead of breaking his legs according to the custom and the request of the Jews, they pierced his side with a spear. This was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled. "They shall look upon him whom they pierced." When in his last agony he said, "I thirst," they in their fiendish cruelty, gave him vinegar to

drink. This was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "They gave me vinegar to drink." And after all, when they came to dispose of his raiment, they gambled for that, in order to fulfill the Scripture, "They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture did they cast lots." In the most exact way, the Scriptures were fulfilled in the life and death of Christ, so that it may well be said, He died for our sins according to the Scriptures.

Men are saved to fulfill the Scriptures. "Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion," is a prophecy that must be fulfilled; but for it to be fulfilled, the redeemed of the Lord must return and come to Zion. This prophecy cannot be satisfied as long as one for whom Christ died, is away from Zion. "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me," saith the Son. The righteousness, wisdom, power and grace of God are all engaged to fulfill these words, therefore there is no power or contingency that can ever interfere with the timely and triumphant victory of all the election of grace over every enemy. On the day of Pentecost, when that great number of people cried out, "Men and brethren what shall we do?" was exemplified in the fulfillment of prophecy. A great number of these men were Jews, those who only a few days before had crucified the Son of God with wicked hands: they had spit upon him, had called him Beelzebub, the prince of devils; and to express their resolution never to repent, they said, "Let his blood be upon us and our children." But their obduracy could not hold out - God's prophecy must be fulfilled. The redeemed of the Lord must return and come to Zion. When Abel offered unto the Lord a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, this prophecy lay at the root of the matter. In the days of Seth, when men began to call upon the name of the Lord, the words of the prophet, "Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion," was being fulfilled in them. One might say that this prophecy had not been written in the days of Seth. It had not been written upon parchment, but it had been written in the book of God's decrees, and experienced in the hearts and consciences of men. All the prophesies of Jehovah are from eternity, and are yea and amen in Christ. Every poor pilgrim, whose anxious heart and weary footsteps seek that city whose builder and maker is God, is upheld, forwarded and guided on his journey by the immutable decree that the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion; and through the certain fulfillment of God's word, he shall reach the holy city and rest forever in her sacred palaces.

Men are lost to fulfill the Scriptures. Is this a hard saying? Can you not hear it? I am not responsible for the saying, however hard it may appear to be. The Saviour said to the Father in speaking of the twelve, "All of them have I kept, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled." (John 16:12) Had Judas not been lost, the Scriptures would have been broken. The thoughtless and presumptuous man

would say, If Judas had to do what he did, he would have been exempt from crime; he would have had no sin. Upon what ground would he have been without sin? What law would exempt him? According to whose judgment would he be innocent? State the law and name the judge, and if it be the law of God and God himself be the judge, then I will agree that the conclusion is the correct one. Jesus, who is himself the embodiment of all law, and the judge both of the living and dead, said with regard to this matter in reply to Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." Instead of the judgment of Christ in this matter concurring with the judgment of men, that under such circumstances a man would be without sin, he declared that for this very reason, he had the greater sin. Here is a question of responsibility for some of the champions of that cause to settle. And here is another one: Christ said to the Jews, "Behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city, that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of righteous Zacharias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar." (Matthew 23: 34, 35) The Saviour here declares that these men should fill up the measures of their fathers. He also designates the crimes that they should commit in order to do this, not only generic crime but specific crimes; and the end to be answered thereby was that upon them might come all the righteous blood that had been shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel to the blood of their most recent victim.

Now upon what principle of justice and judgment could four thousand years of crime be required at the hand of one generation? Let some of the champions of free agency solve this problem from their favorite standpoint of accountability. I have been accused of denying human responsibility, but in this as in many other things, I have been willfully misrepresented. I have only denied that the atonement of Christ left any responsibility upon his people: and further, I have denied the foolish, imaginary, sentimental and ungrounded conclusion that predestination relieves men of accountability and acquits them of crime upon principles of equity and justice, and that therefore in order to be accountable, a man must be what men are pleased to call a free agent. I have here referred to these things to show that in the fulfillment of God's decrees according to his word, a deeper principle of justice is involved, than human standards set forth, or human pleaders comprehended.

Again it is said of some in the divine record, that they were before of old ordained to this condemnation. Now if they were before of old ordained to condemnation, when the condemnation came, did it not come in fulfillment of a decree? Who made the de-

cree? Some would say that God made it, but he made it upon conditions. This they think necessary in order that the character of God stand above reproach in the judgment of men. They admit that the decree of election unto life is unconditional, but that the ordination of condemnation is conditional, and that the subjects of this decree are endowed with a free agency whereby they are permitted to work out their condemnation. This notion involves a monstrous absurdity, and that absurdity is this, That God has denied to man the freedom and ability to righteousness whereby we must be saved, but that he has endowed man with that freedom and ability whereby he may and can work out a sure and foreknown condemnation. And this is resorted to in the vain imagination that the character of God is thus vindicated from the charge of unrighteousness, and be justified in his ways to man. Peter in speaking of certain ones, says they were appointed to disobedience and stumbling. (I Peter 2:8) Now if they were appointed to disobedience, must they not fulfill the appointment? This they must do, even though God sends them strong delusions to accomplish it. (2 Thess. 2:11)

Many are ready to exclaim now, If this be true, who is to be blamed? This is an old question, and I will give an old and authoritative answer. I will first state the question in its ancient form: "Thou wilt say unto me then, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" Reader, do you recognize your question? If you have never seen it before, if you will read the ninth chapter of Romans, you will find it. I will now give the ancient, time honored answer: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" Do you recognize the answer? If not, read the ninth chapter of Romans and you will find it. This is not your question; this is not a question of this age only. This question was asked two thousand years ago. Neither is this my answer. This is God's answer, and I am satisfied with it. This question comprehends everything that the cavilers of all ages have urged against the doctrine of God's sovereign decrees. Is not the answer of inspiration plain and decisive? If the solution of this problem is to be found in exceptions to God's decrees, and in making excuses for him, would he not have put a very different answer in the mouth of his inspired apostle? Is not this the place above all places for such an excuse to be given? Is not this question sprung here for the express purpose of giving a decisive and unequivocal answer? Is not such an answer given? Shall we receive it as final and decisive, as coming from God himself, or shall we seek another, which, although necessarily false, is more pleasing to our pride and presumption, and more acceptable to ignorance and unbelief?

The unbelief of the Jews fulfilled the Scriptures. It is recorded by John that, although he had done many miracles, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias, the prophet, might be fulfilled: "Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, that I might heal them." (John 12:37-40) Here it is expressly stated that the reason they could not believe, was that Esaias had foretold their blindness and hardness, and further that this blindness and hardness of heart was given from God. The object of this blindness and hardening was to prevent them from being converted that he might heal them. This language seems to imply that there might have been a possibility of their believing and being converted, had not God's decree intercepted and cut them off.

Heaven and earth shall pass away, said Christ, but my word shall not pass away until all be fulfilled. Whatever the divine record says shall be, must be. The same authority that says, The redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion, has also said, The wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand. The same book that says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me," has also said, "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse." The same God that opened Lydia's heart, that she attended to the things spoken by Paul, hardened Pharaoh's heart that he would not let the people go. The same God that works in his people both to will and to do of his good pleasure, has also put it in the hearts of wicked rulers to fulfill his will, and to agree and give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God be fulfilled. (Rev. 17:17)

When Paul was arraigned by the Jews for preaching what was to them an obnoxious and destructive doctrine, his defense was that he had preached nothing but what Moses and the prophets said should come. If I am censured for what I have herein written, I have but one defense to make, and that is, I have only written what Moses and the prophets and Christ and the apostles have said should be.

(The above is copied from the Signs of January 15, 1900. We feel that the subject is presented clearly and is worth the close attention of our readers. - Editors.

ROMANS 9: 8-11.

That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son.

And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac;

(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)

Williamston, Kansas
Jan. 28, 1952

Dear Brother Winfrey:

I am writing you my views on the absolute predestination of all things.

We are living in an evil age and a terribly disrupted world. Wars and rumors of more wars. Blood shed and all manner of debauchery, graft, and corruption is being practiced on every hand from our highest public officials and down to men and women of low rank. Truly it was foretold in the Scripture, - "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse deceiving and being deceived." And again, "Now the spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter day perilous times shall come." One need not be a sage to see the development of these divine prophesies. Recently the doctrine of God's absolute Predestination has been assailed. And having a faint hope that God has placed me as a watchman upon the walls of Zion, I feel it is my duty to at least sound a warning and to offer what defense God will enable me to render. I feel it is no small matter when God's wisdom and power are assailed for these are some of the very attributes of God.

His very name, "God Almighty" implies there is no power but of God, and I find this agreeable to Scripture testimony, to wit: "There is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God." I can find no exception to this divine expression. Therefore the influence of these powers, whether it be for good or evil, it is irrefutable, they were ordained of God. But though evil is everywhere extant there is no danger that it will ever get beyond the control of God who ordained it. These ordained powers are limited while the power of God knows no limit. Thus He has ordained that "The wrath of man shall praise Him and the remainder of wrath thou shalt restrain." Just why one should doubt or deny the absolute government of God is beyond me. Indeed, one cannot deny this without acknowledging another power somewhere that controls that part that is not controlled of God, or else to say a certain part just goes at random, which, of course, would be the height of absurdity; or to say God has a superior rival. I would say Superior rival from the fact there is a great deal more wickedness extant in the world than there is good. Therefore, this fancied power, whatever or wherever it may be has great superiority over God Almighty. This idea is no less absurd than the other and it is easily defeated by a thus saith the Lord. "I am God, and besides me there is none else, I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." "Yea, thou art worthy, oh Lord, to receive glory and honor and power for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created." Who would dare make the claim that these things, or any of these which are and which were created for

His pleasure should react to the contrary.

Satan, the serpent, is a conspicuous element in God's creation. God endowed him with a power and subtlety such as none of the beasts of the field possessed. He was ordained to perform his work which none other could perform and all of his devilish work from Eden down through the ages responded to the eternal purpose for which he was created. Through his influence, man sinned, but consider well. Was this a sign of laxity in the government of God; Was it the part of wisdom or lack of wisdom on the part of God when He placed these elements all in the garden of Eden; Did the serpent sneak in unawares to God; Was God disappointed in the outcome of this venture; If so, then we must yield the point and confess that God is not absolute. We must confess that matters begin to go awry right from the start and that God had created a something that he could not control.

Such a conclusion is worse than folly. God is absolute. His purposes are laid deep in divine wisdom. The devil and all his creation cannot thwart Him in one of His purposes. He created the devil and He created man and made him susceptible to the wiles of the devil that in the end Jesus should be glorified in saving His people from their sins. To say that man, or Adam, was made able to stand but liable to fall would be equal in substance that God willed that he should stand but the devil overruled Him in that purpose. Why did the law enter; Does this betray a lack of foresight in God. Was it not that the offense might abound? And why should the offense abound only for the paving the way for the operation of sovereign grace. It is written. "The law entered that the offense might abound but where sin abounded grace did much more abound." It is therefore quite evident that God had a purpose even in the entrance of sin into the world. How could Jesus have been glorified otherwise? One might inquire, Why did God create an evil nation. Was it not that His power over evil should be made manifest? His decree to Abraham was that his seed should serve an evil nation 400 years. Their bondage was timed, I should dare say, to the very moment when they should be liberated. Was this Predestination? What power but that of God was at the controls in this affair. It was no accident that the seed of Abraham came down to this evil nation, for inasmuch as God had decreed it everything else must of necessity work in harmony with that decree. It necessitated suffering on the part of Israel to bring them to this evil nation but their deliverance was also predestinated just as surely as their bondage.

The arrangement for their sustenance while they were there was also fixed and this involved suffering on the part of Joseph. It was not a voluntary act of Joseph that he dreamed dreams that caused his brethren to hate him. But as a brilliant type of Jesus they hated him without a cause. They abused him and they meant it for evil but God meant it for good. Why

did God harden Pharaoh's heart repeatedly and effect his final destruction in the Red Sea? God, Himself, gives the answer: "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up that I might show My power in thee and that My name might be declared throughout all the earth." Israel could not come forth until their bondage was complete. They were a long time in bondage but God is not slack concerning His promise; 400 years and after that they shall come out with great substance. "To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven."

Why did not David allow his servant to slay Shimei as he cast stones at David and cursed him as he went along? David said let him alone. God hath commanded him to curse. Should one question the justice of God in this and similar acts? God is absolute. His decree and His government, His predestination and indeed, all the attributes of God are absolute. He governs the movements of all His creatures yet He Himself is above reproach. All creation is His and He holds the undisputed right to use His creatures and dispose of them in any way as it may seem good unto Him.

Why should anyone heap this indignity on His pure and holy name by saying, "If you say that God predestinated the evil acts of man you make Him the author of sin." Since God is under no law by what law can He be judged and tried? By the law, no man, of course. But this verdict will not stand in the court of divine justice. He has declared, "I am the Lord. That is My name and I will not give My glory to another, neither My praise to graven images." God has reserved unto Himself the right to do His will and this He doeth "In the armies of heaven and amongst the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay His hand or say unto Him, what doest Thou?" "Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor." "What if God willing to show His wrath and make His power known endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction or that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy which He afore prepared unto glory;" What if God does this? Must His divine wisdom suffer impeachment in the laws of puny man?

It cannot be questioned but that God could have softened the heart of Pharoah just as well as to have hardened it if that had been agreeable to His will. But it pleased Him to harden his heart because His decree must be fulfilled. Some will say God is unjust if He has not given every one an equal chance to be saved. But the Scripture answers this contention: "Nay but oh man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, Why hast Thou made me thus?" God has declared "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and whom I will I hardeneth." Does this make God the author of sin? The deeds of a man do not made him either good or bad but they reveal the true character of the man. His deeds are commensurate with his

nature whether they be good or evil. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Jacob and Esau, which is Israel and Edom, God loved and hated respectively before they were born. Thus it cannot be established that their works were a factor in shaping their final destiny. Their destinies were sealed before they were born," neither having done any good or evil that the purpose of God according to election might stand. It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger." The purpose of God in this as in all cases is preeminent. No power but of God was employed in shaping this allegory. So may I repeat, their works are merely commensurate with the nature God has given them.

Now to the climax of the whole story culminating in the crucifixion of our Lord. God has said "Awake oh sword against My shepherd. Against the man that is my fellow. Smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered and I will turn My hand upon the little ones." The wicked are designated as His sword. Hence the wicked come and go at His command and are made just as subservient to the will of God as the weakest saint. So in response to this divine command, wicked men led Jesus as a lamb to the slaughter. Hence it is recorded: "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God Ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." And again, "For as a truth against thy Holy child Jesus whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the people of Israel were gathered together to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. They could do no more and they could do no less, for in the words of Jesus, "How could the Scripture be fulfilled, that thus it must be."

Thus we see a glorious triumph for the complete Absolute Predestination of God, overruling the powers of darkness to His glory and ultimate salvation of all His elect people. Jesus died but it was not possible that He should be holden of death. He is risen from the dead, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who through the fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage. He thus addressed His elect, saying, "I am He that was dead but behold I am alive forevermore and because I live ye shall live, also." So to the wicked all down the line it may be said as it was said to Pharaoh: "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up that I might show My power in thee and that My name might be declared throughout all the earth." Christ crucified is our theme. Nothing but the blood of Jesus can do helpless sinners any good.

I have by no means exhausted the great array of testimony relating to the Absolute Predestination of all things, but this may suffice for the time being. Thanks be unto God "who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."

L.L. Schenck

From Elder Lamberts Book, "Tried In The Furnace".

SPIRITUAL INVENTORY

May, 1946

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fail. - 2 Peter 1:10.

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

This language is addressed "to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior, Jesus Christ." It is not addressed to any other than children of God. None can receive these sayings save the called and elected. Those who are the called and elected were so solely because of the righteousness of God and our Savior, Jesus Christ. Let us now proceed in our meditations to make our calling and election sure by using the same formula advocated Peter in this same scripture. I have termed this formula a lesson in Spiritual Mathematics.

First, he says: "Add to your faith virtue: and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 1:5-8).

All these that we are to add must be of the same denomination and we must be in possession of them before we can add them. If we can determine the source of faith then we must conclude that these other things are from the same source in order to be of the same denomination. "By grace are ye saved through 'faith'; and that not of yourselves: it {faith} is the gift of God."

Faith is the gift of God, so all these other things we are to add must be gifts of God. If the virtue and these other things be good they must be gifts of God. James says: "Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." So all these are good - thus gifts of God, and we must be in possession of each of them before we can add them.

So, in this problem of Spiritual Mathematics, it does not concern any works of righteousness that we may perform but our pure minds being stirred up by way of remembrance of these wonderful gifts that God hath bestowed upon us. When we are so enabled by the Spirit to study ourselves (as being) approved unto God: we make our calling and election so sure in our minds that we are enabled to rejoice and not fall into despair. In working out our own salvation by recalling all the things that we have experienced we fear and tremble. We wonder has God been so gracious unto us as to work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

Now in solving this problem for our own consolation, we must now consider: do we have faith in God and Jesus Christ as our Savior? If we find that we have any trust or confidence in ourselves for any part of salvation, to such extent we are void of faith in Jesus Christ but if we find that our experience teaches us that we must be saved solely upon the merits of Jesus and have no confidence in ourselves then we may conclude that we are in possession of faith.

Next, let us consider virtue. We fear and tremble now because in our flesh we can find no good thing. We are but sinners, vile and needy. Sin is mixed with all we do. We are comforted with this thought, surely it takes virtue to reveal to us our sinfulness. Were it not for this virtue we would be righteous in our own eyes. Surely, then, God hath given to us this virtue. This pure heart or virtue enables us to see ourselves as we are. It enables us to behold that sin is mixed with all we do. We see that in us (that is in our flesh) dwells no good thing.

Next, we are glad to add knowledge. His children grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. God had taught us through experience more and more of the meritorious, complete work that Jesus has performed, is performing and will perform for God's chosen. Surely knowledge may be added in the meditations of the pure mind concerning our experience.

Next, we are to add temperance. Have our experience and belief tempered our actions? Have we not been restrained in some degree from thinking and acting as we have thought and acted heretofore? Are we not more sane minded in our estimation of others as well as ourselves? Have we not been restrained from trusting in ourselves? This peculiar experience has tempered our actions and even our associates and ideals are not the same. Now we see temperance added to the list in our meditations.

Next on the list is patience. Paul said: "We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience." Through much tribulation we have learned to patiently wait upon the Lord. We have been taught by that great Teacher that we are depraved and have no ability to lift ourselves from this condition but God has been so merciful unto us that when we were deepest in despair He has reached us many times. These experiences have wrought in us a degree of patience. we now see that God has blessed us with patience.

"And to patience godliness." God has been so gracious to us and has blessed us in so many ways. There is such vast difference between us and God. No comparison, but what a contrast! We are incapable; God is all powerful. We are foolish; God is all wise. We are sinful; God is all holy. We are creatures of time; God is eternal. We are finite; God is infinite. We are mortal; God is immortal. It is with reverential fear and amazement that we are made to bow to the shalls and wills of Jehovah and trust through Jesus Christ the God-man that His abundant mercy may even reach us.

May we not add godliness to the list being possessed with this reverential awe and fear?

To godliness, brotherly kindness. Once my earthly father, who was an ordained minister in another religious organization, accompanied me to a Primitive Baptist Church. While we were enroute home I noticed tears trickling down his cheeks as he said, "I would to God that the brotherly love you people have one for another was practiced by us." I asked him why he made such a remark, and he said, "Everyone can see that you folks love one another, the lovely smile, the warm hand clasp and the smiling countenance on your faces shows that you really love one another. In our church, there is confusion, strife and pride displayed in a big way."

Even the heathen can say, "The Lord hath done great things for them." They can see the brotherly love that exists between brethren. When a brother rejoices, the brethren rejoice with him. When a brother mourns, the brethren mourn with him. Surely brotherly kindness may be added to our characteristics.

"To brotherly kindness, charity." Do we possess charity, which is love? We love God because He first loved us. We love the brethren with that godly love. This love is not akin to natural love. The same love God loves us with goes back and loves God and goes out and loves the brethren. We cannot be so selfish as to retain this love but it is efficacious - reciprocates - it loves God and the brethren and enables us to do good to all mankind, especially to the household of faith.

Now, we have worked out our own salvation with fear and trembling. We have added each of the gifts that God had so graciously blessed us with. We have made our calling and election sure by the Spirit stirring up our pure minds by way of remembrance of the things that we have experienced. We will not fall in despair; our minds have been gladdened and we are made to rejoice over our experience that God has so graciously blessed us to enjoy. Now we praise His holy name for His goodness to the children of men.

Dear Sister Donaldson,

I hope you and Hovis had a good trip. And both are well, and enjoying good health. I went to LA last week to a meeting, we had a good meeting. I was glad to see all the brothers and sisters. It was a joy and love in Christ I hope. There are some scriptures still on my mind. Exodus 33: 21, 22, 23, and the Lord said: Behold there is a place by me, and thou shall stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cliff of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen. I know that the Lord was talking to Moses. But I believe this was surely God's people in Christ. In verse 21 and the Lord said. First I would like you notice who was talking, it is the Lord. Next he said, Behold there is a place by me. I believe this place was for Christ. Before the high-

est hill was ever formed. This place was for Christ to set down on the right hand of God, Where he is sitting now. And thou shall stand upon a rock. And I believe what the scripture said. I believe every child of God shall stand on that rock. For he said upon this rock I will build my Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I believe this is that sure foundation for God's people. And it shall come to pass. It can not fail. It must come to pass. For God has spoken and his word shall not return to him void. But shall accomplish that where unto I send it. While my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cliff of the rock. I believe we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. We were in him when he hung on the cross. And we were in him when he was buried in the grave. And we were in him when he arose. This was our part in the first resurrection. Where the second death had no power over God's children. Will cover thee with my hand while I pass by. I believe that hand was the hand of God. That did all the work when he said it is finished, and gave up the ghost. And he has covered all their sins, and never remembers them any more. He has cleansed them and justified them before this great God. Who can lay any thing to their charge. And I will take away my hand. This is where God took Christ out of this world. For I believe Christ is his hand. And thou shall see my back parts. But my face shall not be seen. Thou shall see my back parts. This back parts is the righteous work that Christ has revealed in his little ones. That is so marvelous in our eyes. We see this with the eye of faith. We don't see his back parts with these natural eyes. But my face shall not be seen. This is the same shall, that he has been using in the other places. You shall not see my face. You cannot look at God's face and know as he knows. For you are not equal with him. You cannot see my face and live. This is the glory that he said he would show you while he passes by. He has called them with a holy calling in Christ. He has loved them with an every lasting love. Exodus 33:12 I know thee by name and 33:13. Show me now thy way. I believe the things we have been talking about is His ways. I believe Christ is our way. If I can be in this matter, this has got too great for me. O what love is this. He has called us the sons of God. I believe in this God. That works all things after the counsel of his own will. A brother in hope, if one at all.

Both our love for Christ's sake,
Elder J.C. Townley and wife

HEBREWS 11: 1-3.

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

For by it the elders obtained a good report.

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 1993

Andrew C. Agee, VA	$2.00
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Mrs. Lottie Minter, NC	2.00
Mrs. James Meador, VA	2.00
Elder C.M. Haygood, TX	2.00
Mrs. Edward B. Hodnett, VA	2.00

This contribution list should have been published earlier, please pardon the delay.

Editors

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 11 / 93 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

OBITUARIES

SISTER MAMIE LEE BRUMFIELD

It is with A sad heart that we try to write a few lines in memory of our dear Sister Mamie Brumfield. Sister Mamie Brumfield 82 of 1327 Claiborne St. Danville, Va. died in Danville Memorial Hospital, April 14, 1993.

Born Jan. 19, 1911 in Pittsylvania County, the daughter of the late Robert Lee and Maria Brumfield. She was married to the late Albert C. Brumfield.

She joined Old Mt. Primitive Baptist Church June 21, 1952. A faithful and loving member, attending regular as long as her health permitted, and loved by all who knew her, the idol of her children.

Although not able to attend church for several years, her faith and love for the church remained strong, telling the writer the day before she went back to the hospital, (I can't help what the Dr. says, I will live every day and minute the Lord intended.) When the Dr. told the family that she only had a short time to live, her granddaughter wrote this poem.

Our Grandma

Her skin is soft and silky;
Her hair is like untouched snow.
Her eyes are tired and weary,
She knows its time to go.

But she is the one who loves us, cause
She's our grandma you know.
She raised us up from babies;
Thats why it is so hard to let go.

She has been there through the years
For each and every one.
Now we are all grown up and married;
Her work is finally done.

There will be no other one to take her place,

I hope she is in a place,
That is quiet and
Full of grace.

For she will be remembered
Long after our tears are wiped dry.
Because we hope Grandma's gone,
To be with our Father in the sky.

Written by Penny Reid Dooley for
her Grandma, Mamie Brumfield.

She leaves to mourn, four sons, Robert Lee Brumfield of Sutherlin, Lours Brumfield of Greensboro, NC, Larry D. Brumfield of Danville and Edward Lee Shaw of Roanoke; Four daughters, Francis B. Buchanan, Effie B. Davis, and Susie B. Brooks, all of Danville, and Faye B. Brooks of Eagle Rock; two sisters, Sister Doris Rowland and Sister Carrie McDaniel, both of Danville; 17 grandchildren, 20 great grandchildren; and five great-great-grandchildren.

The funeral was conducted Sat. April 17, 1993, at 2 p.m. at Barker Funeral home Chapel, by her pastor Elder H.W. Wray, and Elder Marvin Brumfield. May the family be reconciled to God's will.

Her body was laid to rest in Danville Memorial Gardens, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, A token of love from her family and many friends. Where her body will rest until that Great day, WHEN Christ, the righteous Judge shall come to take His ransomed people home, Written at the request of Old Mt. Church.

Sarah Barker

WALTER CLEVELAND HAMLETT JR.

Brother Walter Cleveland Hamlett Jr. Passed from this life April 1, 1993. He was born in Prince Edward County, September 5, 1942. He was the son of the late Walter C. and Lottie Nash Hamlett.

Brother Hamlett was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, Gretna, Va. He was received by experience June 9, 1985. Brother Hamlett didn't attend Meeting very often but when he did, he seemed to always enjoy preaching and fellowship.

Brother Hamlett was preceded in death by two sons; Anthony Wayne and Howard Cleveland Hamlett and one sister, Carrie Hamlett Leftwich.

He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth (Libby) Younce Hamlett. Three sons; Carrol Ray Hamlett of Flora City, Florida, Steven Greg Hamlett of Tampa, Florida and Chris Wayne Hamlett of Rustburg, Va. Two brothers; Herbert Hamlett of Evergreen, Va. and John Hamlett of Kenbridge, Va. Four sisters; Mrs. Garland (Joyce) Harris of Evington, Mrs. Reid (Janie) Sapp of Chesterfield, Mrs. David (Jean) Phelps (twin sister) of Brookneal and Mrs. William (Dorothy) Foster of Phenix and seven grandchildren.

Brother Hamlett was laid to rest in the Hamlett family cemetery at Charlotte County.

May all who mourn say "Thy Will Be Done".

Written in love and hope,
Sister Carol R. Pickral
Oscar D. Pickral, Clerk

ALVIN E. LANCASTER
December 23, 1924 - June 30, 1993

Quiet, soft spoken, stern, loving, peacemaker, and helpful are qualities that describe Brother Alvin E. Lancaster who departed this life on June 30, 1993.

Brother Lancaster was a quiet and gentle person moving among the brethren enjoying their fellowship and greeting them in his soft spoken tone. He was always helpful when duty called at his church, always a caretaker performing any tasks that are required in keeping the meeting house and grounds in operative order. Brother Lancaster possessed a special love for his family, wife and two daughters, was always excited when his girls came home, and spent much time traveling to see them.

He was also a peacemaker. Not always did things go as he would rather, but usually he was willing to abide by the wishes of the brethren rather than create confusion. He wasn't a "yes" man, but a man with convictions and once made this statement that continues to ring in my ears - "when a man does anything against what he feels he's been shown by God, he's on dangerous ground."

In times of controversy he would let the brethren know in a stern tone his feelings about what went on at home or abroad.

Brother Lancaster united with the church at Pleasant Hill April 24, 1954 and was baptised the same day by his beloved pastor, the late Elder C.N. Bunn. On September 22, 1974 he was ordained a deacon and served his brethren faithfully until his death.

We at Pleasant Hill Church miss our dear brother, but know it would be selfish to wish him back, therefore we say to his wife, Mae Flood Lancaster, his daughters Margaret L. Neikirk, Alice L. Pettitt, and his sisters, Sisters Lessie L. Lancaster, Fannie Mae Calhoun, and Mrs. Martha L. Brake that we extend our love and sympathy to you at this time when we share your great loss.

Brother Lancaster's funeral was conducted at Johnson Funeral Home, Sunset Avenue, in Rocky Mount, NC by Elders D.B. Stokes and Henry Jones. His body was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery, Rocky Mount, NC.

Sleep on Brother Alvin, we hope you are resting in God's love awaiting the second coming of Christ when your hope in Christ will know redemption.

Written by one who served the church with him, respected him, and now feels so lost and insufficient.

God's will be done.

J. Carroll Williams

PSALM 148: 1-5.

PRAISE ye the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise him in the heights.

Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.

Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.

Praise him, ye heavesn of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens.

Let them praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded, and they were created.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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TRUTH PASSED

I searched my soul, and found me clothed,
With nothing but sin and rags,
I desperately tried, these things to hide,
With all my lies and my brags,
But when the one, much stronger than I,
Began to intervene,
I knew he'd won, and with a sigh,
I surrendered to my King.

I didn't know the joy I'd feel,
When he brought me to my knees.
And taught me that I'd do his will,
To wait for his expertise.
The threshing floor was a guide for me,
To follow in his steps,
And I'm so glad I was made to see,
And tribulations made to accept.

This world has lost it's beauty for me,
I'm looking for much, much more,
A continuing city to always be,
My home forever more.

Katherine Mathews

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EDITORIAL

LOVE

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

A portion of a prayer by David was, ***"God be merciful unto us, and bless us: and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah. that thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let all the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee."*** If I know truly the thoughts of my heart, this is also my prayer for the saints of God the world over; and it should be the prayer of all His beloved children. ***"That thy way may be known upon the earth." Jesus christ is "the way, the truth, and the life." No man can come unto him, "except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." Neither can any man know the Father or the Son except they be revealed, "and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."*** This revelation does not come to the natural or carnal man, for we have only a natural or carnal mind; and ***"the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."*** The word enmity means hatred, not enemy, for an enemy may be changed and reconciled, but hatred must be destroyed. Also we read 1 Cor.2:14: ***"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*** If Jesus revealed the Father unto us we have eternal life: for Jesus said in his prayer,(John 17:3,) ***"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."*** This eternal life is a spiritual life, ***"which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."*** To receive this spiritual life we must be born again, for ***"that which is born of the flesh is***

flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." This birth cannot be obtained by man asking God for it, for it is *"not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."* To whom is this life given, and why? It is given to the children who were chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world. *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."* It is according to the good pleasure of his will that all things that are, and all things that shall come to pass, were ordained or predestinated to be by him. Their names were also written in the Lamb`s book of life; and he stood as a Lamb slain before the foundation of the world to redeem them from the curse of the law. He was made a curse for them; for, *"Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."* These same children that were chosen in him are partakers of flesh and blood. We read, *"Behold I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same: that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil"* These children are also called sheep, and Jesus said of them, *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish."* This life that he gives has ever been theirs, but is given to them in the new birth: for they are dead, and their life is hid with Christ in God; and it was in him before the foundation of the world. Birth does not give life, but only brings forth the life already there. There are many more scriptures that prove who the ones are that are given this eternal life, but these should be sufficient. God is love, and he spake unto Jeremiah, saying, *"Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."* God`s love for his people is the reason that he hath redeemed them from their sins. His love and his mercy did not save them, but was the reason. It took the shed blood of His beloved Son to make the atonement. *"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God: for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live." "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ,(by grace are ye saved;) and hath made us sit together in heavenly*

places in Christ Jesus." As we stated before, God's love did not redeem his beloved children, but was the cause. The words love, loved, loveth and charity (Godly love) appears in the Holy Scriptures 380 times, and most of them have reference to the love of God. Paul speaks of charity in 1 Cor, chapter 13, in this way: *"Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, does not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth."* These are things concerning brotherly love, of which Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, *"But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another."* There are various other loves, such as love between husbands and wives, parental love, love of children for parents, love of other relatives and friends, etc. There is also love that is evil, as, *"The love of money is the root of all evil."* However it is the love that God has bestowed upon his people that we are considering most at this time All of God's attributes are perfect and they are equal. One cannot override. or cancel, or void another, therefore neither his love nor his mercy can take the place of his justice. His justice must be satisfied, and his perfect law says, *"The soul that sinneth, it shall die."* We have been found guilty and sentenced, *"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."* There is not a just court any where that would allow one person to die in the room and stead of one that has been sentenced to death; but even if it was allowed would justice be served? No, for the guilty one would still be just as guilty as ever. Yet Jesus Christ came into the world to suffer, bleed and die for guilty sinners. How could God's justice be satisfied with the death of Jesus for his people? Paul gives the answer in Eph.1:22-23. God *"hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."* And in Eph.5:30 Paul says, *"For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."* Therefore we have a living unity or oneness with him. When Jesus the head died, we must conclude that the body also died, for the body cannot live without the head. We were in him when he hung upon the cross of Calvary, and we were buried with him, and we arose with him. We read Rom.6:4-6. *"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into his death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this,*

that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not live in sin." Jesus said, *"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."* Jesus is the first resurrection, and we are told in Rev.26:6 that *"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power."* Brethren, if we were in him when he hung on that cross, we had a part in the first resurrection, and shall not be cast into the lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels, which is the second death. How wonderful, how comforting, how refreshing, and yes how astonishing it seem to us at times, that we have been given a hope in Christ! For this hope is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. This hope is that we are one of those who were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, and that he is coming again, without sin unto salvation, to receive us unto himself in heaven and immortal glory. As we said before, if we are what we hope to be then we have a living unity or oneness with him. In his prayer,(John 17:21,) he prayed to the Father, *"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us."* And in verse 24 he said, *"Father I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."* Can there be any doubt that what Christ prayed for will be given him? In the 11th. verse he prayed, *"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me that they may be one, as we are."* Surely God keeps his children as long as they live in this sin filled world, but in the flesh they continue to transgress his laws and commandments, which is sin. In Psalms 89:31-33 we read, *"If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail."* God uses the rod of afflictions when they go astray, to bring them back into the right way, for they are a stiffnecked and rebellious people, and will be as long as they remain in this world. It is said in Ps.119:6-7, *"Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word."* In the 12th. chapter of Hebrews we find: *"And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with*

sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." (verses 6-8.) Our fathers in the flesh chastened us after their own pleasure, but he (God) for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. (Verses 9-10) John said, ***"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."*** What is the manner of his love? It is the manner or way that he hath, and does, bestow his love upon us, ***"For God so loved the world , that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life."*** And in Phil. 1:29 we read, ***"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Jesus Christ, not only to believe, but also to suffer for his sake."*** It is only to the children of God that this belief and suffering comes by his grace. And, ***"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall follow." (Rom 8:16-18).*** A portion of his way with us is his chastisement of us, as mentioned above, when we err from the way of righteousness. In the 1st. chapter of James we read, ***"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." (v.1-2) "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lusts and enticed."*** Yes, brethren, God blesses us even in our temptations, and we read, ***"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able: but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (1 Cor, 10:13).*** Brethren, we are told that in this world we must suffer trials, temptations, persecutions, tribulations, etc., but God gives us strength to bear them, for he will not suffer us to become completely overcome. In all these things we should be of good cheer, for Jesus hath overcome the world. (See John 16:33). And Paul tells us, ***"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long: we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than***

conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." How wonderful to know that there is nothing that can separate us from the love of our God! *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."* All of our days are not consumed under the chastening hand of God, for there are times of refreshing and great joy in his love because of the faith and hope that is given unto us. We read 1 Peter 1:1-8: *"Blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."* Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." We read in 1 John chapter 4: *"And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in the world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also."* Brethren beloved, let us love one another with godly love, always esteeming others better than ourselves. Written in the spirit of love to the beloved brethren in Christ Jesus our Saviour by a poor worm of the dust. I feel the need of your prayers of faith. May God bless the truth herein and pardon all errors.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

PSALM 148:1.

Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise him in the heights.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Signs of the Times:

While it is fresh on my mind, here are a few thoughts about the 103rd Association of the South Ouachita Primitive Baptists.

What a blessing it is when His little ones can meet together in love and sweet fellowship.

I don't believe I have ever been involved in such an occasion before when there was no interruption of any kind to take away the joy that was being shared there. We had many visitors from other parts of our country who shared this feeling with us. Never have our visiting ministers seemed so humble and yet so completely full of the spiritual news, nor the members so ready to hear.

After the meeting was over, the husband of a sister of one of our members (he belongs to the Methodist Faith and Order) said to me "wouldn't it be a blessing if what I saw and heard in this building today could be shared by other churches all over." I believe he did see something he had never witnessed before. This meeting was something that had to be shared to know about it. You cannot tell it to anyone.

I believe this two-day Association we have shared was prepared for us by our Heavenly Father for our comfort and consolation at this specific time, yet will not suffice for tomorrow or next week or next month. We need a new supply day by day. How blessed are we to have such Elders who are called, set apart, taught the right way by the right Teacher, and therefore qualified, to bring a fresh supply when needed.

They spoke to us of how the Word that was made flesh and dwelt among us, shares all our trials and sorrows and promised to never leave nor forsake us. That Word teaches and makes us believe He is the Way, the Truth and the Life. He tells by opening the scriptures to us that because He lives we may live also. He is now seated on the right hand of His Father making intercession for us with words we don't have. They, through inner working of the spirit and the power of the gospel, convince us of that glorious truth contained in the scriptures, that this truth shall make you free, not in order to become sons, but because you are sons of God. God sends forth the spirit of His Son into your heart crying Abba Father. This spirit places within our heart faith, hope and love that carries us safely through this lifetime we spend here.

How good and pleasant it is when brethren can meet together in unity.

Remember me in your prayers,
Elder Graydon Smith

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 12 / 93 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

September 15, 1993

Dear Elder Key:

As far back as I can remember I can remember going to Norkfork Church with my family. My mother's father and mother (Mammy & Pa) to me were members there. I loved that little church then and I still love it. I still don't feel worthy to have a home with the church but wouldn't take a million dollars for this little hope I have in my breast sometimes. Every month when I get the Signs of the Times I read it through and I really enjoy the letters the brothers and sisters write in there. I was born a farmer's daughter. It was 11 of us children. Six girls and 5 boys. There is one brother and 4 sisters still living. I lost my Father, Mother, 1 sister, 4 brothers, husband, baby and a nephew, all of them I loved dearly. I am the third child and when I was 17 yrs. old I got a job and went to public work.

I remember the Sunday Brother Paul Wyatt joined Norkfork Church. The song they sang was "When I can Read My Title Clear." After this me and my mother, he and his wife would go to meeting every weekend. I remember one Sunday at Martinsville Church (The Church then was on college St. and they was having their meeting at the city park. We had good preaching and lunch. After lunch some of the brothers and sisters talked of their experiences and I began to cry. I remember Elder Cecil Turner shook my hand and asked if I belonged to a church I said no. He said you are an Old Baptist. He didn't know how I loved those words. I never got to tell him how good he made me feel.

After Brother Paul Wyatt wasn't able to go to church a lot; Sister Odell Wells joined the church at Norkfork. After this she came to see me during the week when I got home from work and we always went to meeting together and I enjoyed her a lot. We went to Chappel one Sunday and when the singing began Elder Tench asked if anyone had a song. This man, woman, and two young boys were sitting in front of us. The smallest boy sang every word of the song. I was so full I couldn't sing but from that day to this I will never forget that song.

One Sunday at Malmaison Elder Noel Conner preached about seeing a picture of the Lord that he had seen on a wall. I don't remember if it was a dream he had but I had the same experience happen to me in a dream and I wished I could have told him about how I felt then. I loved every minute of it. These sweet feelings don't last long but the ones that have had them knows what I am talking about.

When the association was held at Canaan Church it was held out doors. It seemed that every preacher that day (I don't know how many was there) fed me a crumb. I was so happy. We were singing the closing hymn and Elder Raymond Goad said (I don't know what you are waiting for?) The next meeting day at Norkfork I sat at my usual seat because I didn't feel worthy to ask for a home with these good people. I prayed and cried a lot and on Saturday before the 2nd Sunday I

played the record ("In His Arms I'm Not Afraid",) by Jim Eanes (my cousin). I work, prayed and cried all day long asking God to have mercy on me a poor sinner and to let me feel good enough to ask for a home with these dear people.

On August 14, 1988 after Elder Goad had preached and when they started singing ("Amazing Grace") I couldn't hold to that bench no longer. I found myself going down the isle and asked Elder Goad for a home with these dear people. I was received and I think that was the happiest day of my life. The next 3rd Sunday at Martinsville, Elder Carter announced about me joining Norkfork and would be baptized the 2nd Sunday in September in Roger Hatcher's Pond at the end of that meeting they started singing the song ("Amazing Grace") and a dear brother joined the church.

The 1st Sunday in November me and my sister went to Union Church. After church we rode with William and Sister Larry Bowlin. Elder Goad, Sister Phyllis and a large number of people went to Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.'s church and after service and communion a lot of us went with Elder C.B. and Sister Davis home. After supper we sang a lot of hymns and Elder C.B. had wrote 2 more verses to the song ("In His Arms I'm Not Afraid") which we sang and this brought back all of my sweet memories.

The 2nd Sunday in November Elder Davis held service at Norkfork he went home with us for lunch after lunch he told us why this song meant so much to him. On the 5th Sunday in November the Union meeting was held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. They had five preachers to preach and I really enjoyed all of them? When Elder Joe Sawyer preached about a dream he had (I think) this carried me back about forty years ago I had a dream about seeing miles and miles of muddy water I had a 40 Ford Coupe, and me, my Brother (Clinton) and Sister (Ranie) were caught in that car and were going down in all of that water and a white dove pulled the car from all that muddy water. So this dream was brought back to me so sweet. On Friday night before Christmas I was blessed to be with a lot of Brothers and Sisters that met at Elder Lane and Sister Carter's home. We had supper and sang a lot of hymns and I really enjoyed this meeting. These are just a few of my experiences. I know God is a just God and I try to thank him every day for being so good to me a poor sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

A Little Sister in hope,
Sallie Hodges
Rt. 1, Box 580
Martinsville, Virginia 24112

ST. MARK 1: 1-3.

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;

As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

ARTICLES

To the household of faith:
Which faith is, a free gift from God:

In recent years, it seems, that more and more frequently with me, the question comes to my mind, with more and more seriousness in my feelings; what do you in truth really feel and believe, concerning the attributes of the true and living, three-in-one God?; well, here I sit this morning, with a mind, to attempt writing some of what I feel, concerning this most sacred subject; feeling deeply of my own self complete helplessness; and feeling to know full well, that ALL success in this endeavor, is absolutely and entirely dependent upon, what is the mind, purpose, pleasure and will of God.

I feel and believe that, even before, God began His creation of ALL things; in both His mind and purpose, ALL that was to be or take place or come to pass, was already seen, fixed, established, and absolutely predestinated to be, in that exact manner; time and place, as He did see it ALL would, and shall be, and come to pass. That it was and is an entire impossibility, for Him to ever be surprised, in any of what should ever transpire, in ALL allotted time, for this world to stand; not only the final out come of any certain things, but any and ALL things, surrounding them, both great and small, that were either (seemingly) directly or indirectly connected with its arriving at its final consummation; and ALL after effects evolving, as a result of it so having come about as it did. That, He holds and controls ALL power, from which ALL strength that exists does come. That God is Self existent, and therefore is without beginning or ending. That every word what goeth out His mouth, never returns unto Him void, but does alway and always accomplish ALL that for which He spake them each and every one. That the fulfillment of His PLEASURE, (as having to do with the existence of this time world, and the fullness thereof); completely encompasses, every importance, connected with its being herein the first place. That, He is an unchanging God; therefore ALL that He does, is done forever. That, His ALL seeing eye, does see ALL things at ALL times, and eternally before, during, and after this time world is no more. That, ALL that will be or takes place, in ALL time for this world to stand, has come, and shall come, by His appointment of them ALL; for there exists no thing, with anything, to either hinder, or hasten, or prevent, either of them from their appointed rounds. That He has and does, indict true prayer, into the hearts of His chosen people, that they be made to realize from whence all their help does come; and within His indicting of that true prayer unto one, also goes a willingness, that, God's will be done, both in heaven and earth; and further still, He already knows our hearts, and what our needs are; and so, has already prepared the supplies for our needs; and just so sure as that

prayer was groaned or uttered, just that sure is it, that true prayer will be answered, in His good time and way. That, He is so full of grace, that His shedding of grace upon ALL His little children, does in nowise deplete His supply. That, His supply of mercy, upon whom He will, does in nowise diminish of His mercy. That, His school of grace, is the one and only school, whereby one could ever learn, even one iota of Him and His Holy truths; for He Himself, not only owns that school, but He is its very One and only Teacher. That, He is verily life and light itself; therefore, without His furnishings, total darkness would surely be the results; and outside Himself, there could exist no life at all. That, that love He centered upon, each and every one of His vessels of His mercy and honor, was and is so very great, that His beloved Son, went and prepared a place for them in heaven, that they should (after this time world is no more) spend a never ending immortal glory, with their Heavenly Father; singing ceaseless and undivided praise, unto His great and Holy name forever. That, by His appointment, this body of flesh of us all, both lives and dies. That, as when He said, "Let there be light, and there was light, so it is all, that be outside Himself; if He let it be, it then is; otherwise, it just simply cannot be. That, His purpose in and for, His creation of this world, and the fullness thereof, is fulfilling that exact purpose, for which He did bring it all into being, in the first place. That, this One and only True and living three-in-one God, has never (as if it were left up to man) invited anyone; for to do this or that; for, He speaks and it is done, He commands and it stands fast, for His almighty unhindered power, goeth along with His every spoken word; and also, even, as He has thought, so shall it be. That, He has never once, asked for assistance or help, from anyone; for He owns all, to do with as He pleases; and so, it is impossible, that He could be in need of anything; and especially that, that mankind might do or offer; for, what man claims, of worldly things are his, are like as it were a loan, for a short period of time, at most; and furthermore, all those worldly goods or things, that man claims are his, shall melt with fervent heat, at the ending of this time world. During my eighty years here, upon this sin cursed earth, I have heard numerous people, speak of their place of abode, as their home, the same as I myself have said, but the very truth of the matter is, their stay in that place, was only for a short period of time, as measured by, how long this earth has been here; many of those buildings that were called home, have burned down, during its inhabitants earthly life; then they either built an other building, or moved to another location; but in either case, that burned building no longer existed, and no longer could it be rightly called, either home, or a place of abode; in speaking of the above, its just my poor way of an illustration, as to just how temporary, even this time world is, as to be considered, as any where near, our permanent home; much less, to consider a particular spot or build-

ing upon this earth, as our permanent home; for in Holy truth, all appointed time, for this world here to stand, is but just a day, as compared with, forever after this world is no more. It seems to me, that somewhere, within my sweet and precious hope, I feel to say, this world is not my home, but, is just a temporary place, for me to await the return of my Lord and Savior; He knoweth for sure; I must just continue in hope, if so be His will, for my hope to continue with me in this earthly life. I just feel to know for sure, of this one thing; In my fleshly self, I could not possibly be worthy of even one, of the blessings He has showered upon me, all the days of my unprofitable life here. I do desire a thankful heart unto God, for them all; but except He place that thankfulness within my heart, it is entirely impossible with me; for without Him I can do no thing or nothing. I feel to know, that there are many, many volumes more (perhaps, more than this world could hold), of Holy truths, concerning the attributes, of this true and living three-in-One God; But it is my desire, that I might be so led and directed, as to refrain from the writing of such, as that, that I have not, been given light upon; that light referred to, which is not that, that the light bulb emits, but is that which gives knowledge; far above, what fleshly mankind is capable of acquiring. The Spirit maketh alive, while the flesh profiteth nothing. It is not in the fleshly nature of man, to even desire, a true knowledge of that truth, as it is in Jesus Christ.

I feel and believe, there surely was and is a process, a certain unchangable process, whereby, all things shall work in perfect order, that it shall be for the good of His Chosen ones, and to His Own glory. I do so hope, this love I feel for you all, could be, that same love, wherewith He first loved His chosen ones. May we all (in as much as be in accord with His will), be truly thankful unto our God, for His grace and mercy, toward us all the days of our lives.

In hope, this hope I feel, is not in vain.

Troy G. Shepard
103 East Tateway Rd.
Kitty Hawk, NC 27949

VOICES OF THE PAST

2 JOHN 10.

"If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed."

What is this doctrine without which one cannot be received into the houses of the church and without which one cannot be bade Godspeed? Doctrine is here declared by the inspired apostle to be the essential thing, the real test of one's being a true follower of Jesus. Without this doctrine, one lacks the necessary qualification for the fellowship of the saints. Since, then, this doctrine is so important, let us inquire what it is. In doing this, we shall not do better than to consider other expressions in this second epistle of

John. For instance, in the seventh verse: "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist." Here it is plainly stated that not to confess the coming of Christ stamps one as being a deceiver; that is, not to confess Christ's coming in the flesh. The Scriptures plainly teach that Jesus Christ, the eternal son of God, was born of a woman, that he took not on him angelic nature, but the seed of Abraham. Now, the seed of Abraham comprises the elect family of God, chosen before the world began. This chosen seed was not elect angels, but elect human beings. So Christ was made a little lower than the angels, and came in the flesh for the suffering of death. To deny this coming in the flesh, to deny that Christ was as truly man as he was truly God, is antichrist and a deceiver and such is not to be countenanced by the house of God. However, it is not enough that we confess the coming of Christ as a historical fact. That, anyone could do, just as easily as he could say that George Washington or some other man lived years ago. There must be a confession that Jesus Christ has come in one's own flesh, that he has come in the individual experience of the believer himself. In other words, a living experience of Christ is the real test of genuineness. This doctrine or teaching of Jesus, more than any other one thing, was the test of discipleship when Jesus was here in the world as a man among men, and this teaching of his caused many who had been following him to withdraw from him. For proof of this, turn to the sixth chapter of John and read the wonderful discourse on the bread of life, from the thirty-second to the fifty-eighth verses. In these words Jesus taught that He himself is the bread of life and that the eating of his flesh and the drinking of his blood are an essential test of whether one has eternal life, that "except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." In the sixty-sixth verse, we are told, "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." Jesus was not here referring to the gospel ordinance of the Lord's supper, but was plainly stating that without which one is brought into a living fellowship with Jesus in his sufferings on account of sin and into a living knowledge of the cleansing power of his blood, there can be no such thing as one's possessing eternal life. Life is knowledge, and there is always a certain amount of knowledge accompanying a certain amount of life. Eternal life is always accompanied with a certain quality of knowledge. Wherever eternal life dwells, there cannot help but also dwell the knowledge that one is a sinner and that his condemnation on account of sin is just. But spiritual knowledge does not stop there. It teaches that human nature is altogether unprofitable in the way of righteousness, that it is wholly incapable of any good thing in the sight of God. In a living way, and not out of books nor by tradition, the sinner continues to be instructed by the Spirit of the

great Teacher until he fully realizes his utterly lost condition and is made to throw himself entirely upon the mercy of God, without one jot of anything to merit that mercy. He becomes a beggar, but being really a beggar in heart and not merely by word of mouth, he is not turned empty away from Mercy's door. Christ Jesus appears for his relief and reveals himself to and within this beggar's soul as the Savior, the only name given under heaven among men whereby that beggar must be saved. By the grace of God now appearing through Jesus to this beggar, the beggar is lifted from the dunghill of total depravity and is set among princes, is manifested as the son of the King; that is, as a child of God. From now on the believer finds his struggle has but begun. The burden of condemnation lifted from him and his heart singing for joy because of the new hope springing within him, he finds himself in the company of all the people of God from Abel to the present time; but finds himself, like them, engaged in a warfare, one from which at times he would fain be free, but which cannot end until natural life ends: the warfare of flesh against Spirit and Spirit against flesh. He finds a dying daily going on within him, a continual being delivered unto death, a ceaseless rendering of his body a living sacrifice. In some such way as this there is a continual confession in heart and life that Christ Jesus has come in the flesh. It need not be that one is all the time confessing this by word of mouth, but the confession nevertheless will show itself in the outward life, in the actions of the individual; it will manifest itself in the conduct of the one having this living experience, shining out through the hands and the feet, bringing forth the fruits appropriate to repentance. Without this manifestation of Christ in the flesh one is a deceiver and an antichrist and cannot be in the fellowship of the house of God. When Christ came in the flesh it was not in order to reinstate or to reinforce the covenant of Moses. That covenant could never bring in salvation to the children of God, but Jesus came to make an end of the old ineffectual covenant and to establish a new and successful covenant. The covenant became a vital reality to the children of God through the death and resurrection of Christ. This new covenant was promised to be put in the new heart of the child of God and to be imprinted in his mind. In other words, the new covenant or new law was not to be something abstract from the child of God, but was to be part and parcel of the new creature in Christ Jesus. It was not to be a covenant conditioned upon the volition of the believer, but was to be enforced in the life of the believer by the "wills" and "shalls" of God. Christ, after his resurrection, said "go" and they went, he said "come" and they came. All gospel obedience is this way and no other. It is obedience springing from the manifestation of Christ in the life of the believer. He said to his disciples, A new commandment give I unto you, That ye love one another. This loving one another is not something we can bring about ourselves. Might just as well try to make the sun

shine as to try to make one's self love the church of God. It cannot be done by one's own effort. But how easily one loves the brethren when this commandment is written in the heart by the finger of the Holy Spirit. This love is Christ manifest in the flesh. God is love, and love is God, and whosoever loveth is born of God. If we love God we love those who are begotten of God. If we love not our brother whom we have seen, it is vain to say we love God whom we have not seen. Not having this love, we are deceivers and an antichrist. No wonder, then, Paul says in the thirteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians that charity (love) is the one thing without which we are unprofitable to the house of God. Having not love, no matter what else we have or think we have, we are nothing. We might be able to speak ever so angelicly, might be able to dive down into the deep mysteries of God, might be able to expound all prophecies, make great sacrifices or expend ourselves and our substance bountifully, but if it be not prompted by love, have not love in it, what does it all amount to? Nothing. It seems to us that this is the doctrine without which John said a man was not to be received into the house or church. In order to gain admittance there, one must have a vital knowledge of the coming of Jesus in the flesh, and the essence of this living experience is love. Having not this love, one is classed a deceiver. In another place the inspired writer tells us to mark them that cause divisions, and have nothing to do with them. One who would divide asunder brethren in order to establish his own cause has not the love of God, therefore he does not confess that Christ is come in the flesh. From such, turn away. It is like those two women who brought a child to King Solomon, each woman claiming to be the mother of the child, and asking Solomon to decide the matter. Solomon called for a sword, and was about to divide the child when the woman, who was really the child's mother, called out to the king to let the other woman have it. Thus the woman who really and rightfully loved the child was willing to relinquish her right to it rather than see the child killed. True love in the church of God will always seek the good and welfare of the church itself before the personal good and advantage of one's own self. This is the living teaching or doctrine that Christ is come in the flesh, this doctrine gives one an open door into the houses of the saints; without this doctrine or teaching of love in one's own life one fails to possess that secret of God which gives access to the holy of holies. There is no sight on this earth more pleasant than a church of the saints where all love each other, where each esteems the others better than himself, where all are imbued with the desire to spend and be spent for one another, and any individual who would mar that peace to serve himself would most assuredly not have within him that doctrine of the Master, Love one another. Not having this love he could not confess that Christ is come in the flesh, therefore must be a deceiver and an antichrist. From all such may the Lord deliver his people.

Elder H.H. Lefferts

CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR

"But, if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Tim. 3:15)

Christ has delivered us from the law of sin and death, therefore we owe complete allegiance to him - as "being under the law to Christ." (1 Cor. 9:21) ***"The people of God, who are purchased with such a cost and set free by such power, are constrained by a sense of deep love to live a Godly life."***

The first lesson we learn in the school of Christ is self-denial. (Matt. 10:37-39, 16:24-28).

The heart of religion is living our profession. A dead profession is worth nothing. ***"This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men."*** (Titus 3:8) ***"And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful."*** (Titus 3:14).

Notice the religion of the dead professors: ***"They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."*** (Titus 1:16).

Working for life or blessings is a fruitless task and lost labor. But working from life is a glorious privilege and sets the seal upon the reality of our profession and evidences a living experience of the power and grace of God in his predestination and purposes. (See James 2: 14-26).

Notice this command which is applicable to the Children of God: *"Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."* (Mark 5:19) Beware of satan's temptations to take the Sovereignty of God and present it in such a way that would discourage us even to the extent of being unconcerned about our duty in keeping his commandments and precepts, and to charge our negligence to the sovereignty of God by such expressions as this: "When the time comes I will join the church." This is true, for there is a time for all things in the secret purposes of God. Yet, who are we to attempt to follow the secret will of God as a rule of our life and conduct?

Let us be concerned with exhortations in the Scriptures: *"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."* (Romans 12:2) This is the revealed will of precept and commandment that we should be very careful to seek after and follow. There are many exhortations that the Apostles were given to write. They were given for the welfare of the church. *"But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another."* (Gal. 5:15)

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." (1 Peter 1:22) ***"And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins."*** (1 Peter 4:8) The church should "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel." (Phil. 1:27; also see 2 Cor. 13:11, Rom. 12:15).

The Brethren are exhorted to help the poor, and to contribute to the needs of the Pastors. (Rom. 12:13, 1 Cor. 9: 7-14). As to ministerial support, I would like it to be understood I am certainly against salaried and the hireling system so popular in the religious world. (John 10: 10-15). A minister is a servant of his flock. (Matt. 23:11). He is under Christ and is set over the flock to lead and oversee them. (Acts 20:28, 1 Tim. 3:5, John 21: 15-17).

The minister should not be greedy of filthy lucre. (1 Tim. 3:3) The ministry is not for lazy persons and any minister who will not work with his own hands to care for the necessities of his household is not worthy of the name of a minister.

Of course, it is the duty of the church to help the pastor so that he can direct his labors to the spiritual welfare of his flock, freely giving his time, strength, health, etc. We should watch over one another for good, and bear with one another our weakness. ***"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak." (Rom. 15:1)*** The Children of God should walk in newness of life, and should be faithful to attend church meetings. (Hebrews 10:25).

Dear ones, the life we manifest is of vital importance. It proves whether we have a profession or possession of true religion. One cannot hold to the world with one hand, and hold to the church with the other. The people of God in the Old Testament were a separate people from the other nations around them. Therefore, we are in the world, but not of the world.

We request the reader to read the 9th chapter of Ezra, and we quote a portion of verse 2: "...so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands..."

It is the work of satan to entangle the children of God into his net of the pleasures of this world. He tells them, "this is all right, there is not any harm in this, etc." Little by little our minds are taken away from God and godliness to the extent that we seldom open the Bible. Oh! how many hours do we spend with our minds taken up in the pleasures of this life. What profit has all this vain pleasure been to us? May we be given the spiritual mind and Grace to choose "that good part." (Luke 10: 38-42) Pleasure seeking is a temptation of young followers of Christ. (see Luke 8:14, 12:19, 1 Tim. 5:6, 2 Tim. 3:4) Satan promises everything, as he tempted Christ, but gives nothing. (Matt. 4:11)

As we read the book of Ecclesiastes, we notice the general teaching of it is to expose the vanity of all worldly enjoyments. Furthermore, it shows that a person's happiness does not lie in natural wisdom and knowledge, nor in worldly wealth, nor in civil

honour, power and authority, nor in the mere externals of religion; but in the fear of God and the worship of him. The fear of God encourages man to a free use of good things of life in a moderate way with thankfulness to God.

In his search for the true and best way to use this world for our good and profit was not found in worldly wisdom. (Eccl. 1: 12-18) It is not to be found in carnal pleasure. (Eccl. 2: 1-3, 7:6) It is not found in great possessions. (2: 7-11) (Here is where Satan tempts us to put temporal interests before worship.)

May God keep us from coveting the vain things upon the world. (Read Acts 5: 1-11, Luke 12:15, Eph. 5:3) May we follow this exhortation: ***"And they that use the world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away."*** (I Cor. 7:31) It behooves God's people to live a life of Godliness. It is profitable unto all things. (see Tim. 4:8).

Dear reader, please look up the Scripture references. These are a few of the great precepts and commands laid down for our good for the directions of our lives while we live here in this world. ***"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work."*** (2 Cor. 9:8)

"And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ." (Phil. 1: 9-10).

(Elder) C.M. Haygood

From Elder Lamberts book, "Tried In The Furnace".

HOPE

September, 1946

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

For some reason I am impressed to write a short article on the subject of hope. I desire to use Romans 8:24, 25 as a scriptural basis of reasoning. "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."

Before treating directly on this subject, permit me to state that I believe the Holy Scriptures are to the children of God who have been born of the Spirit of God. Restating in other words - the Bible can be received only by those of God's children who have been born of the Spirit of God. When Paul speaks using the present tense of a verb it is experienced in time by those who have experienced this call to be saints. When he speaks using future tense it is yet to be experienced. When Jesus said, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted," I think he meant that God's children are mourners in this present world after they have received this pure heart, but shall be completely comforted after their sojourn here in time.

According to Webster, hope is a "desired expectation." According to Paul the things you have experienced

is not a hope but a reality. Hope looks to the future. We do not hope for that we are experiencing, but these experiences enliven within us a hope for something that is yet future. Paul reasons that we have the first fruits of the Spirit in this present life. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. All these proceed from the new heart that God has given His children. We yet bear about the body of this death. This pure heart enables us to see the vileness of our sin-polluted bodies. This pure heart reveals to us our awful condition and makes us to cry unto the God of heaven for deliverance from this sinful state. Although we are in possession of the first fruits of the Spirit, the creature itself is yet in the bondage of corruption. It is yet natural and thus subject to sin and death. We expect deliverance from the bondage of corruption solely upon the merits of Jesus in accordance to God's amazing grace. We desire this deliverance because the new God-given heart has made us to hate sin and love holiness.

Paul said, "The body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." This is our state of being if Christ dwells in us. The creature that sins is the body of death that the child of God bears about in this present world. These sins cause the child of God to groan within himself waiting the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. This will be realized when "the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." The word "also" in the above scripture means in addition to that which has already been experienced by us, to wit, the change of heart. Those who are in possession of God's Spirit are new creatures in Christ but have not realized the redemption of the bodies. He comforts us with this grand hope, "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." A quickened mortal body would be immortalized, thus would never die. I do not think God's children experience this immortalization of the body in this present time. This promise inspires us to patiently await this grand change. Paul did not expect it in this life as he said, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." So this hope goes beyond this life. He anticipates this change when he says, "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

Death and the grave are things that we cannot converse with triumphantly until the grave has given up its victim, to wit, this body of death. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we

know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him." This is the reasoning of John and should suffice for us. "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness" (Psalms 17:15). I am not concerned over the question of whether we will know each other there, or any speculation concerning things yet to be experienced beyond that which is written. My only concern is, will I be among the number to enjoy eternal life wherever and whatever it is?

May God grant that we who have this hope implanted in us be enabled, by His grace, to dwell together here in time, in sweet communion and fellowship with and for each other. May He grant us the spirit of forbearance and humility. May He enable us to strive for peace and edification instead of strife and destruction.

MEETINGS

MT. OLIVE CHURCH

The annual 5th Sunday meeting at Mt. Olive Church (La.) will be held, the Lord willing, on Jan. 30, 1994.

Mt. Olive Church is located about 5 miles south of Jamestown just off La. Hwy. 154. Turn at the Sailes fire tower.

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Elder Graydon Smith, Pastor
(318) 778-3801

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 1993

Eld. Robert L. Miles, FL	$5.00
A Friend, VA	7.00
William Vick, TN	5.00
Mrs. Donald Arne, SD	55.00
Mrs. James Burgin, TX	2.00
Mrs. Nannie Moran, VA	2.00
Wallace Harvey, WV	2.00
Mrs. Lovie A. Thompson, NC	10.00
Floyd Oakley, AR	2.00
Herman Webb, IL	7.00
Mrs. Bernice Greer, VA	2.00
Jamie Cooper, VA	1.00
Mrs. Clinton V. Ferris, VA	2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER CLARISSE BROOKS

We who are left as members of Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church near Woodsdale, N.C. feel a great loss in the death of Sister Clarisse Brooks. She was the daughter of the late Reuben Phillip and Alma Hall Brooks. Her dear mother was a long time member of Shiloh and though her earthly father never joined he was indeed a strong believer.

Sister Clarisse was a school teacher and taught for thirty-two years in the southeastern part of North Carolina. She had received her degree in music

as well as others from Meredith College, Duke and U.N.C. at Chapel Hill. She was truly dedicated to the profession and loved a good and pleasant relationship with those she had pleasure in teaching.

The twenty-second day or August 1926 she asked a home in Shiloh Church and was unanimously received. She attended as regular as possible during her years of teaching and after retirement did not miss a meeting unless sick. Sister Clarisse served as our clerk for many years until her health and mind began to fail after which she could not attend meetings. This bothered her much for she had visited far and wide enjoying the love and fellowship, yet bore her bodily afflictions with patience. She was a great lover of singing and the expounding of the Gospel.

The long days and nights of afflictions ended for our dear sister on Saturday before the first Sunday in March of 1993 making her time here on earth ninety three years. Her seat is empty now as are those of her mother and many other close relatives who were also members at Shiloh. She leaves to mourn two sisters, Sister Dorothy Brooks of the home and Margaret Brooks Reade of Woodsdale, N.C.

We who remain miss her but would not desire her back feeling that her trials, afflictions and illnesses are over and she is resting in peace promised all of the Elect of the Lord. May we be blessed to say, "Thy will be done in all things."

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The funeral was held in Shiloh meeting house by this writer and her body placed in the family plot of the Church Cemetery to await the shout of victory we all shall await.

Written with love and esteem,
Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

PROVERBS 7: 1-3.

My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee.

Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye.

Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart.

LELIA HALL LAWSON

It is with a sad heart that I try to write the obituary of another one of our Dan River members who was also a neighbor for fifty-six years.

Lelia Hall Lawson was born July 31, 1902, daughter of Charlie and Eliza Hall.

Sister Lawson died suddenly January 9, 1993 at the home of her daughter and son-in-law Lois and Mack McMichael.

She joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church August 23, 1964 and was baptized by her pastor, the late Elder D.V. Spangler.

For several years she was not able to come to church, but was faithful to attend as long as she was able to do so.

She was the wife of the late John Riley Lawson. They both attended church as long as I knew them. To this union were born two girls and three boys: Lois Lawson McMichael of Eden, NC, Mae Belle Lawson who died at birth, the late Charles Odell Lawson who lived in Pelham, NC, the late James Lloyd Lawson who lived in Eden, NC, and Morris Lawson of Danville, Virginia. There are nine grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

Her funeral was at the Fair Funeral Home Chapel and was conducted by her pastor Elder Kenneth Key. Her body was laid to rest in Overlook Cemetery, Eden, NC to await the coming of her Lord. She was a strong believer in Salvation by the Grace of God.

May the Lord comfort us at our church, and give the family sufficient Grace to reconcile them to His will.

Written by request of Dan River Church in conference.

Lottie Minter
Elder Kenneth Key, Moderator
Bro. Bob Collie, Clerk

BROTHER ROBERT MURPHY

We the members at Oak Grove Primitive Baptist Church, bow our heads in humble submission to the Heavenly Father's pleasure to take from our midst our precious brother Robert Murphy, whom we loved so dearly and miss so much. Brother Robert was a peace loving gift to our church He had so many trials and troubles in this life, but God gave Him strength to bear all the sufferings.

Brother Robert united with Oak Grove Church June 7, 1958 and was ordained for deacon October 7, 1975. He was faithfully present at church until several years ago, his health failed him and he had to go into the nursing home and even then he came when he was able.

Brother Robert was 88 years of age when he passed away April 2, 1993 in the Lincoln General hospital in Ruston La. He was preceded in death by his wife Mrs. Allie Beatrice Murphy, and two sons Robert Wayne Murphy and Tommy "Doc" Murphy.

Survivors include one son, Jerry Marvin Murphy of Hattiesburg, MS; Four daughters, Mrs. Girline Smith and Mrs. Allie Lunsford, both of Jonesboro, La. Mrs. Lois Carlile of Rocky Branch, and Mrs. Eula Futrell of Quitman, La.

Two sisters, Mrs. Ellie Greer of Jonesboro, La. and Mrs. Velma Hammons of Hiddenite, North Carolina; 18 grandchildren and 25 great grandchildren.

Funeral services was held April 4, 1993 at Southern Funeral Home Chapel with Elders David Godwin and Rev. Tommy Long officiating. Burial was in the Springhill cemetery under the direction of Southern Funeral Home of Jonesboro, La. with his grandsons serving as pallbearers: Shawn Murphy of Jonesboro, La., Tom Murphy of Garland, Texas, Randy Murphy and Ricky Murphy both of Houma, La., Matt Lunsford of New Orleans, La.,

Dennis Futrell of West Monroe, and Adam Futrell of Jonesboro, La.

We at Oak Grove Church feel that Brother Robert fought a good fight and is now peacefully sleeping, awaiting for his Lord to carry him home to his mansion prepared for him to forever be with his Lord.

Requested in church conference.

Elder Godwin, Moderator
Sister Kate Mathews, Clerk

JESSIE PAGE WHALEY

Sister Jessie Page Whaley, a member of the Durham Primitive Baptist Church was called to her eternal home on May 10, 1993. She was the daughter of James and Zona Page. She was educated in the schools of Durham County. On February 19, 1944, she married Douglas Whaley. They were blessed with a happy marriage and became the parents of two sons.

Her funeral was held on May 12, 1993 at the Howerton-Bryan Funeral Chapel. The service was conducted by her pastor, Elder Cleo Robertson and Elder C. B. Davis. Interment was in Woodlawn Memorial Cemetery. She is survived by her husband, Brother Douglas Whaley, Two sons: Gerald Whaley and Douglas Whaley, Jr; two grandchildren, Luke and Shannon Whaley; one brother, Emerson Page of Durham, N.C.; four sisters: Frances Brinkley of Durham, N.C., Dorothy Brinkley of Fortville, Indiana, Catherine Wychoke, Westchester, Illinois and Zona Scitar of Romeoville, Illinois.

Sister Whaley was received into the fellowship of The Durham Primitive Baptist Church on April 19, 1959. She greatly enjoyed attending her church and visiting among the Primitive Baptist Churches. She believed the doctrine of election and salvation by grace and her hope was based on the finished work of Christ. She had been sick for several years but she endured her affliction with faith and hope and waited with patience for the Lord to deliver her from her suffering.

Her patience and faith were reflected in the beautiful hymn written by the poet Watts:

"When I can read my title clear
to Mansions in the skies
I bid farewell to every fear
and wipe my weeping eyes.

Let cares like a wild deluge come
And storms of sorrow fall
May I but safely reach my home
My God, my heaven my all

There shall I bathe my weary soul
In seas of heavenly rest
and not a wave of trouble roll
Across my peaceful breast."

We believe her spirit has entered the haven of rest to await the resurrection of her body unto everlasting peace and joy.

Catherine M. Humbarger, Clerk
Durham Primitive Baptist Church

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THE HOUSE OF GOD

O Come into the house of God,
The temple of our Lord;
Thou pilgrim of the earthly sod
What joy, what peace afford.

"Tis here we come to worship him,
The author of our faith,
The finisher also to them -
His own, the Scripture saith.

Where two or three meet in my name,
I'm in the midst of them;
So does his holy word proclaim,
And prayer is made to him.

The word of truth is sweet to hear,
The gospel sound is great:
On wings of glory, he'll appear;
His mercies is made to him.

His gracious, heavenly love we crave
To save from shame of sin;
His holy, righteous life he gave
To blot the guilt we're in.

May we our hope in Christ defend
The sinner's race we run;
By faith we view our journey's end
Praise Father, praise the Son.

By Charles B. Osborne

See brother Osborne's obituary this issue.

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EDITORIAL

ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS

Isaiah 9th chapter, verse 6; ***"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."***

"For unto us" meaning that in the preceding scriptures a promise is being made by Isaiah that in spite of all that has gone on before there is a change coming, ***"The people that walked in*** darkness have seen a great light." This light is to be seen by his people, a promise of God through Isaiah, he being God's mouthpiece as all true prophets are of God. Let us think for a moment now, if God did not control all events in the future no prophet could declare with certainty events to come 771 years before they came to pass, could he?

Matthew chapter 1, verse 21; "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."

This is the angel of the Lord speaking to Joseph in a dream.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." Can we for any reason imagine anything so exact unless it be of God. A son born, it was sure to be born alive, a child born and as told by the angel she shall conceive, not a doubt about the conception was there? A child born unto us a son given, it had to be a son or else the prophet wasn't correct. Let's pause here, unto who was this son given, unto us, this us in every case is the Lord's people, people chosen in Christ before the world was, could be to no other and not to us, unto us. Born unto us for born in us the hope of glory. Farther on in Matthew and she shall bring forth a son, named Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins. He was sure to be conceived, Mary overshadowed by the Holy Ghost, His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save His people from their sins.

Can we ever surmise that any of these events were more likely to happen than another or possibly they would not come to pass.

A son sure to be born, sure to be called Jesus, sure to save his people from their sins. Notice his people, not the whole earth, sure to save from all danger or events that could take any until the appointed time of God for their departure. But to His people sure to save from their sins. From whose sins, their sins, no one elses, no one caused them to sin, their sins, we can't stress too strongly who they belong to.

Then is there not a reason for His name being called Wonderful. Truly a wonder, a mystery, one to take their sins in His body and die in their stead. Each convicted soul needs a Counsellor, one to plead our case to the Father, He paid the price for their redemption. The mighty God, endowed with all the power of the Father, came to do the will of the Father, saying I came not to do my will but the will of the Father that sent me, and this is the will of the Father that sent me, of all that He has given me I have lost nothing, but will raise them up at the last day. As everlasting as the Father, I in the Father and the Father in me, Surely The everlasting Father.

None shall know of even peace, if they haven't been in conflict, as speaking of things in nature, or our world. Our world is the place we live, also the things that surround us. The Lord's people have been, are today and shall ever be in warfare, the flesh warring against the spirit, the spirit against the flesh, but thanks be to God He has given his people the victory. He has to be their prince of peace, for He has spoken peace into their souls. They no more fight with the powers of this world, but look to Him for their salvation. With no end in praising, the end is in Him for we know He is the beginning and the end.

Elder J.R. Williams

CORRESPONDENCE

Elgin, Or. 97827
Dec. 6, 1993

Dear Elder Williams,

We once again have came to that time of year set aside by the religions of the world to remember the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and many exhibit in pompous ceremonious programs, preformed to excite the populace of this carnal world, giving little thought for lack of knowledge to this wondrous birth.

Some five years ago I received the enclosed letter from Elder Cleo Robertson wherein he expressed a view that I have nowhere seen in print nor heard from the pulpit and because this Dear Brother expressed it so sweetly and with such loving kindness I have kept this letter all these years and have re-read it many times.

Now, as I have found it so up-lifting to my poor soul, I am sending it to you to be published in the Signs if you see fit for there are many who will lift up their voices in thanksgiving for he has promised that where two or three are gathered in his name that he shall be in their midst.

In bonds of love,
Lloyd C. Spikes

February 28, 1989

Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Spikes
Post Office Box 357
Elgin, Oregon 97827

Dear Brother and Sister Spikes:

Although I have had a desire to write to you since receiving your letter of December 12, I seem not to have had the occasion to do so until now. I do want you to know how very much I enjoyed hearing from you. Your letter was very meaningful as I have attempted to speak on the subject of the birth of Christ and in the same light as you set it forth.

Matthew 1:18: "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise." Mary was flesh, as you and I, and was of the earth earthy. She was a sinner and never reached perfection in this life in the flesh. The scripture says there is none righteous. There is none that doeth good; no, not one. Sin is a transgression of the law. It is all unrighteousness. And it is anything that is not of faith. Therefore, Mary was a sinner. Yet, God chose her to experience this wonderful and miraculous birth. She, indeed, was blessed. She was a virgin. She had not known a man and therefore, this birth could not be said to be by the works of the flesh or carnal man. Mary was overshadowed by the power of the Highest or by the Holy Spirit. This birth takes place in the hearts of his elect in exactly the same way. You are overshadowed by the Holy Spirit and Christ is born in you the Hope of Glory. Then, you experience the reality of Isaiah's prophecy, "Unto you a child is born. Unto you a son is given." You, too, are a virgin in the sense that this birth was not by any works of men. Joseph could take no credit for this birth. He was not the father of Christ though the world thought so.

The shepherds abiding in the field were keeping watch over their flock by night. You will notice they were in the field, not many fields. It was night because Christ was not yet born; therefore, they were said to be abiding or waiting with patience. Tribulation worketh patience, patience experience, and experience hope. They were a type of God's ministers. Though they were abiding in the field and keeping watch over the flock, yet it was night. They could not yet preach the gospel. Then, suddenly, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them. The message given to them was "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Then, they were given a sign. They would find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. The sign was the revelation they experienced of Christ bound by the purposes and decrees of his father. He was under the law and obedient to it. No other way could he fulfill it for God is under no law nor subject to any law.

Swaddling clothes also indicate death. He was born of a woman though his father was God. He was without sin. He was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death. He was delivered by the foreknowledge and determinate counsel of God. No

man could take his life. He lay it down willingly. The ram that Abraham saw and that was the sacrifice instead of Isaac was a type of Christ. He was laid in a manger. No more appropriate place for our saviour. A manger is the place where food is put for the animals to feed. Christ said he was the bread of life. What more could the shepherds be given to preach: This was the gospel. They must experience this and therefore were led to this babe. They, then, made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. When the angel and a multitude of the heavenly host appeared unto the shepherds, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men was proclaimed. This was not for all of Adam's race, but only to those who experienced this marvelous birth. We only have to look at history and our present state of worldly affairs to know this proclamation was not to all mankind. Only those to whom this child is born ascribe all the honor and glory to God. Only they know and feel the glory of God as they experience this birth and feel their sins forgiven. We experience these feelings from time to time, but it seems only for a moment at the time. The peace proclaimed came with the birth of Christ and was for this earth that we dwell in. Christ said, "My peace I give unto you." Christ is our peace and only when this birth takes place, do we know his peace. His good will covered every heir of promise and therefore, not a one shall perish. Not one who experiences this birth can be plucked from his hand.

Now, there came wise men following a star to worship this child that was born. The bible does not say three wise men nor any other specific number. These men were made wise by the Holy Spirit. They were not following a star because of any carnal wisdom. The star was Christ, high and bright but revealed only to those wise in the wisdom of Christ. He was leading them to himself. They came bearing gifts. Not presents, but gifts. They came bearing those things which they had been given. Every heir of promise comes bearing faith, hope, and charity. When the wise men saw Christ, they could not go back the same way they came. They went a different way from that time forward.

We do not worship nor celebrate the date man has established as the birth of Christ as the world does. We rejoice in the birth of this glorious savior within us. This is a place that He prepared.

I did not mean to be so lengthy, but did desire to write you. The Lord willing, we are planning to visit you again the second weekend in August if this is agreeable. We have a few other people who want to go with us. I will let you know details later.

In bonds of love,
Elder Cleo Robertson

PSALM 27 : 1-2.

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.

November 7, 1993

My dear ones,

It's Sunday morning, first Sunday. I think of the meeting places where you are now assembled. I love to think of you. It would be very nice to meet with you but we are not all blessed alike. The dear Lord has blessed me very much all the days of my life. He blessed me when I knew it not and then He put in my heart, I do hope, a love for you, a desire to hear His holy name, and even, I trust, a love for Him. I was assembled with some of you last Sunday and Saturday in one of these meeting places. I yet eat that food that was given unto me. I hope many of you are able to go and meet with those of like precious faith.

And some of you have been unable to attend meetings for some time. May the dear Lord meet with you, may He bring your mind to Him, may He give you that soft heart from which love flows for Him and His people. How wonderful it is to think on this God of love who has all wisdom and power and gives us love for the brethren.

My mind has been drawn much to the texts I was blessed to hear expounded. First came Elder Campbell from Memphis to speak so softly and firmly from the 8th Chapter of Romans. I thought of Elder Plybon and how he used this text often - I remembered a sister saying how she loved to hear him speak of Romans, 8th Chapter. Elder Key came forward and spoke from Ephesians, 1st Chapter, reminding us, with love, that not only do we have the 8th Chapter of Romans but also the 1st Chapter of Ephesians to testify of spiritual blessings. Elder Davis spoke from Acts, 13th Chapter and I believe 22nd verse. These visiting Elders came in love to see us and speak of the love of the dear Heavenly Father. Another text I remember is I Corinthians, 15th Chapter, which was used by one of our "home Elders." To this poor one the Heavenly Father blessed these brethren to speak and me to hear. May all praise be unto Him.

Brother Julian Williams I missed you at meeting and do hope your health has been strengthened and you are this day speaking to dear ones of spiritual blessings. We are a hungry people and the dear Lord has said, feed my sheep. You and Sister Mae have been in my thoughts much this week. Sister Susie Willis, I was sorry you were not at meeting and I though you and Sister Mary Hedrick may enjoy seeing some of the texts we heard.

My attempt to tell you of the beauty and wonder of the blessings received is very poor indeed, yet, know ye that He who blesses shall never be any less rich with the giving of a multitude of blessings!

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickeral

Romans 15: 4-5.

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

ARTICLES

EXCERPTS.

(From an article written by Lawrence Keister, Scottsdale, Pa.)

Our first topic is the minister under criticism - nothing new - nothing idealistic - nothing that can be avoided.

Criticism seems to be inevitable. It comes without invitation, and must be met in some way. A minister has enough to do without having this additional burden. Surely he deserves the support of all who pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done."

Any active minister is almost sure to suffer persecution and feel the effects of criticism, sometimes friendly and just, sometimes false and unfounded. Only a few friends will be kind enough to tell him his faults without telling anyone else. Ill will is sure to express itself, and now and then a minister is singled out as an object of dislike. Something he says or does is misinterpreted or he may be charged with words and deeds of which he has no thought.

Of course a minister expects the opposition of worldly minded people. Our Lord foretold this fact, but, strange to say, He offered it as one ground of happiness. "Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake."

There are three ways to meet criticism: ignore it, resent it, or bear it and profit by it. The Christian must be Christian under all circumstances.

No minister can afford to devote his time and energy to self-vindication. A good man will have his defenders as well as his accusers and though the latter may be vociferous the former will be victorious. God is on the side of right and God and one man have often been a majority. (Examples: Jonah, Daniel and others.)

"Blessed are ye," are the Lord's words to courageous Christians. The faithful words of a minister are committed to the care of Providence, for God's word never returns to Him void; but prospers in the thing whereunto He sent it.

(True), Religion asks no outside aids. It meets every need and hence Jesus says, "This is the work of God that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent.

Paul makes the sweeping assertion, "Ye are more than conquerors through Him who hath loved you."

A wise minister perseveres under persecution, but seldom seeks or prays for popularity. Paul said, "We preach not ourselves but Christ the Lord." The Christian should seek glory at the proper place. "How can ye believe," says Jesus, "who receive glory one of another and the glory that cometh from the only (true) God ye seek not." "Glorify Thy Son," is the prayer of our Lord. He was dishonored on earth, He is to be honored, also. It is the work of the Holy Spirit. "He shall glorify me for He shall take of mine and declare it unto you." The prayer and answer have meaning for every one who knows, (by faith) "That the Son was dead; but is alive forevermore."

Paul summarized our religion as it is recorded in personal experience. "For whom He foreknew, He also foreordained to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first born among many brethren; and whom He foreordained, them He also called, and whom He called them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified."

"If believers are not yet glorified the Head already is," he says, "and they are virtually so in Him." Each successive grace is, as it were, implied in the preceding and so we conclude that the glorifying of the Christian is not all left to the future."

"We have been raised up together with Christ," says Paul, "and made to sit together (with Him) in heavenly places. We are (thus) directly related to the risen and ascended Christ, the Christ who promises to be in the midst when two or three are gathered, or assembled in His name. The Christ who is manifested through the Spirit and who is exalted above all authority and every name that is named." "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

No wise minister prays for popularity because there is something better, something more enduring, more to be desired. Applause dies away; but the Crown of Life endures because it is the gift of God.

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1 CORINTHIANS 13: 13.

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"O wretched man that I am!" - Romans vii. 24.

Now, these feelings which this Apostle groaned under are experienced by all the quickened family. Blessed then be the name of God most High, that he inspired him to trace out and leave upon record his experience, that we might derive comfort and relief from it. What should we otherwise have thought? We should have reasoned thus: 'Here is an apostle perfectly holy, perpetually heavenly-minded, having nothing but the image of Christ in him, continually living to the Lord's glory, and unceasingly enjoying communion with him!' We should have viewed him as a perfect saint, if he had not told us what he was; and then, having viewed him as a perfect saint, we should have turned our desponding eyes into our own bosom, and seen such an awful contrast, that we should despair of ever being saved at all! But seeing the soul conflict which the Apostle passed through, and feeling a measure of the same in our own bosom, it encourages, supports, and leads the soul on to believe that this is the way in which the saints are called to travel, however rough, rugged, and perplexing it may be to them.

Be assured, then, if you have never cried out from the depths of your soul, "O wretched man that I am!" you are dead in sin, or dead in a profession. If internal guilt, misery, and condemna-

tion never forced that cry from your bosom, depend upon it, the life and power of God is not in your soul. But if there has been, and still is, from time to time, this cry in your breast, forced out of it by the pressure of sin and guilt, you have a testimony that the same Lord who taught Paul is teaching you.

J.C. Philpot

EPHESIANS 6: 14-17.

Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

DEAR BRETHREN:

By request I will try to write an account of my experience and call to the ministry.

First, I will speak of my nationality: on my father's side I am Irish, and on my mother's side Dutch, but both of my parents were American born, and I was their fourth child. At the age of ten years, it pleased God to take my mother away from me, to her long home, and although it was forty-two years ago, I have never forgotten her kind words and christian like looks. The night she died she called us children to her bedside and bid us farewell. It seemed to me that my best friend on earth was gone; I can never describe my feelings. I had no mother to speak to, and O, how lonely I felt, yet I thought my mother had gone to rest.

Now while feeling so serious about the death of my mother, I resolved that I would try to live the life of a christian, so I set about it with all my might; I would slip off from the other children and try to pray to God to fit and prepare me for heaven, so that when I died I would meet my mother there, and after a few weeks I thought that I was getting to be a pretty good boy. Then I thought that I would try to save my sisters that were older than I was. I approached them upon the subject of religion, and told them that they must quit their laughing and joking one another so much, and quit all their bad habits, and that I had done so, and that I felt a heap better. What a poor, deceived mortal I was, not knowing that I must have the life of Christ before I could live as a christian. But as young as I was, by my natural notions I was a complete Arminian. As time passed on my sorrow and care wore away. Now mark, it was not a godly sorrow which worketh repentance. Now I concluded that I would just lay my religion aside, and that I was too young to undertake to live such a particular life, and that it would be an easy matter to get religion again. I thought that a few prayers, and some good resolutions would put me in good shape again.

At the age of twenty, I was married to my first wife. During her life we were attending a meeting which was going

on in the neighborhood held by the Missionary Baptists, and I was enjoying myself finely, playing pranks with the young fellows, and having a good time, as I called it. But one day, right in the midst of my sport, a fear took hold upon me which made me tremble, it appeared to me that hell was my doom, I slipped to the side of my wife and told her that I was going home. She said, "Wait till meeting closes." When we got started for home she asked me what was the matter? I told her that I could not tell her, but that I felt that I was going to die, and that hell, was my portion; I had sinned away the day of grace. This was the first time in my life that I ever felt to be a sinner in the sight of God. I was here in a sin-cursed world, without God, or any well grounded hope after death. I thought, "O, that I had died when I was young, then this trouble would have never been on me."

Like many others, I fled then to the law, thinking to obtain righteousness by it, and feeling that I must work a work which would initiate me into God's favor. I would slip away into some secret place, where I thought no one would see me, and there would try to pour out my soul in prayer to God for mercy. For four long years I labored to do right in order to be saved. I lived in a neighborhood where they were principally Missionary Baptists, and they invited me to attend their meetings, and I did so; they preached the do and live system. So, with her fair speeches and enticing words, I went the way to her house not knowing the dead was there. I went to their social meetings, and they would tell how well they were getting along, and how determined they were to make heaven their home. O, how I wished that I could feel as they claimed to feel, but instead, I felt that I was a poor sinner, and with every effort I made, I only got worse.

About this time my wife was taken sick and died, and I was left with two little children. She left a bright evidence of her acceptance with the Lord. About twelve months after, I was married again. I was now laboring hard, clearing up my land, and nights I would read my Bible, searching for comfort to my troubled soul. In my wife's sickness I had gotten in debt, and had sold the only horse that I had, so that season I was compelled to carry everything that we had to eat on my back, a distance of seven miles. One morning I started to go after some provisions; I had to go through the wood some two miles, and as I was walking along it appeared to me that I was the greatest sinner that had ever lived on the earth, and that I was bound for torment, which would only be just. In a moment a feeling took hold upon me so that I could stand upon my feet no longer, and

While prostrate on the ground I lay,
Not knowing help was near me,
A heavenly whisper seemed to say,
"Poor sinner I have saved thee."

I sprang to my feet feeling that God for Christ's sake had forgiven my sins; I praised my blessed Lord aloud; it seemed that out of the mouths of babes and sucklings he had perfected praise.

Here I saw the church of Jesus Christ saved and complete in him, and washed with the washing of regeneration. The time had come when I could say, He hath taken my feet out of the miry clay, and hath placed them on a rock, and put a new song in my mouth, even praise to my God. It seemed to me that even the twigs on the trees were wafting their praises to God. After some time I went on my journey to secure my provisions. I hurried home so that I could tell my wife that my burden of sin was gone, and when I got to the door my little children met me, and then my wife came, and I began to tell her what great things the Lord had done for me, whereof I was glad. I went about my work feeling that I would have no more trouble. The next morning, however, I was in the yard cutting wood, when all at once, darkness seemed to shut me in. O, what oppressed feelings I had; I thought that I had grasped the shadow, and missed the substance. I stood there for a while with my head down studying about the peace which I had felt the day before. Just then a voice seemed to say to me, You must cry. I said, Lord, what shall I cry? The voice said, Cry unto Jerusalem. All at once light took place of the darkness. I began talking and crying. My wife and little children came to where I was. She wanted to know what was the matter with me. I told her the Spirit of the Lord was upon me, and that I could not help talking. She said, "You are going crazy, come and go with me to the house." Here was my first impression with regard to preaching. Now I tried to beg the Lord to put this on some one else, for I could not preach. I was slow of speech, and of a stammering tongue, and had no learning. Then the inward voice would say, I have made your mouth, and I can fill it.

I then thought I would let no one know anything about my impression to preach, but it was forcibly pressed upon my mind, day and night, that I must preach. My Missionary friends soon found out that I had professed a hope, and that I was in opposition to them, that now I believed salvation was wholly of the Lord from first to last. They would gather up by the road, and wait for me, to attack me about my dangerous doctrine of election and predestination. They would say that Christ was the elect, and no one else. I would ask them if they believed that he was the head of the church? and they would confess that he was. "Well," I would say, "if the head is elect, is not the body equally so, with him? Can they be separated?" The Lord says, "Because I live, ye shall live also." His life is their life, and their life is hid with Christ in God.

Now I wanted to hear the people preach that I had once despised and hated; they were the old order of Baptists, but there were none in my neighborhood; I mean no members of the church. One man who lived about a mile from me was contending for that doctrine, his name was Melton, he was a son of Elder William Melton. I went often to his house to hear him talk, and he was much comfort to me.

The time of the Hopewell church meeting was the First Sunday in each month, and the Saturday before. I had by this time bought me a horse, and on Sunday I started to the meeting, a

distance of ten miles. On my way I had to go by Elder Melton's. He with his wife came to the road, just as I came up, and we went together. We had not gone far when Mrs. Melton asked me where I was going? I thought that she mistrusted something, but told her that I was going to the meeting. Elder Melton took for his text that day the words, "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities." O, how I was carried away in my feelings, and I went home rejoicing.

The next spring, brother Melton preached for a few members that lived at Melton Creek; I went, and at the close of his sermon he said, "O that it would please God to call some young blue eyed person to the ministry, as I am old, and feel that my time is about out." It appeared to me that he knew about my feelings, and I wondered why this was, as I had never told any one my feelings with regard to preaching. I went to dinner with a cousin who was a member of the church, and after dinner we were sitting talking of our hope in Christ, when his wife came in and joined in the conversation with us. All at once she turned to me and said, "Well, I think that the old man got close to you today." My blood almost run cold, I knew that I had never said anything about my impressions to any one, and wondered why she singled me out. It appeared to me that she and my cousin knew my feelings, so I soon started for home, feeling that I would wear that impression out.

One night I dreamed that I was standing in the presence of a great congregation. All at once a man came to me and handed me a chain and an ax. I thought he was the loveliest person that I ever saw. I thought he said the chain is the gospel chain, and that the ax was to score to the line, no matter where the chips may fly. After this I felt impressed to go to the church and follow my blessed Lord down into the liquid grave, if the church could fellowship me; yet I felt too unworthy to be with them. I believed that the Primitive Baptists were the church of God, yet I stayed away eight years on account of my impression about having to preach. I thought in this way to wear out the impression, but finally I was made willing to go, and to relate a part of what I have here written, and was received, and baptized by Elder Wm. L. Melton. Now, I thought, perhaps this impression would leave me, but it was not so; the impression still remained. With Charley Melton, a son of the minister, I was on my way to the Friendship church to the meeting, when I concluded to tell him my troubles about this matter. I had the utmost confidence that he was as sound in doctrine as any Baptist that I ever knew. We had been together more or less all our lives. I said to him, "I have something that I want to tell you." He said, "Well, tell it, I want to hear it; they all know it, it is not hidden from the church." As I began to tell him my feelings, he burst into a flood of tears, and said, "You ought to confess it to the church, and not confer with flesh and blood." He asked me if I had ever said anything to his father about it? I replied that I had not. We both went on our way crying. He had a rich experience, though he never went to the church. Shortly after this he was killed.

I went to brother Melton's, and unbosomed myself to him. He said that he would attend to the matter at the next meeting. So he called the church together after preaching, and then told me to relate my call to the church. I did so, and they gave me license to exercise my gift in the bounds of the Pocatalico Association. This was done at the December meeting, and the next January I was ordained, and I have been trying to preach ever since. I travel over six or seven counties every season, and preach with the liberty that God gives me. I am now fifty-three years of age, and my health is not good. I often start away a distance of thirty or forty miles, leaving my wife and daughter by themselves. I have a feeling I cannot express; the call says, Go, while my mind says, Stay. I love to meet the dear children of God, and hear them tell what the blessed Lord has done for their souls. I love the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone. It was grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved.

From your brother,
J.W. McLanahan

HEBREWS 13 : 5-6.

Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

For the benefit of our readers we will quote the second and third of the seventh chapter of Romans: ***"For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man."*** While we are convinced that this concerns chiefly the church and her glorious Head, we, at the same time, are satisfied that it has a literal application, and we will first consider our subject from the latter angle. We cannot condemn too strongly loose living on the part of members of an Old School Baptist Church. The people of God are referred to in the Scriptures as being the ***"salt of the earth"***, but the Savior said, ***"If the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under the foot of men." - Matt. 5:13.*** This matter was of sufficient importance for Jesus to give forthwith another simile, which he did by saying, ***"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick: and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works,***

and glorify your Father which is in heaven." - ***Matt. 5: 14-16.*** Of all people on the face of the earth, Old Baptists should live honorable and circumspect lives, in every sense of the word, so far as it is humanly possible to do. The marriage relationship is unquestionably the most sacred of all earthly relationships and it should be kept inviolate. Human beings, however, are weak, and from time to time situations arise which definitely call for relief. A careful reading of the fifth chapter of first Corinthians will show clearly what we mean. The Corinthians were apparently as incestuous as any people could possibly be, and the apostle shows conclusively that some of the things which they were guilty of were not to be condoned by-the-church. He urged them to ***"purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump."*** He says, ***"I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."*** - ***Cor. 5:9-13.*** Jesus said, ***"Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery"*** - ***Matt. 19:9.*** Certainly, no one could ask for any higher authority on this or any other matter than the Head of the church, but we have heard the point raised that Jesus was here addressing the Pharisees, and not his disciples. The very next verse, however, shows conclusively that his disciples were present and continued the discussion with him. Neither does the language used by Jesus permit of any discrimination, for he said, ***"Whosoever shall put away his wife."*** etc. If this does not cover the entire field, we do not know what manner of speech he could have used that would. If we turn to Matthew 5:32, where Jesus was addressing his disciples only, and no one else, we find in substance the very same language. He said to his disciples, ***"But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced comitteth adultery."*** Dr John Gill, of England, regarded by some as the most outstanding commentator of all time, places a comma after the word "divorced" in the above quotation, which to our mind clarifies the meaning somewhat. Whether we so divide it or not, the meaning is, unquestionably, that whosoever shall marry her that is put away, or divorced, saving for any other cause than that stated, which is fornication,

committeth adultery. The gospel writers (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) did not always use the same language in quoting the Savior, and with reference to this matter we find that Mark only says, ***"Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery."*** - ***Mark 10: 11-12.*** On this occasion Jesus had also been addressing the Pharisees, but his disciples, ***"in the house", the record reads, "Asked him again of the same matter."*** We find another instance of the gospel writers not agreeing exactly: in the case of the two thieves which were crucified with Jesus. In Matthew 27:44, it says, ***"The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth."*** In Mark 15:32, the record is, ***"Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him."*** In Luke 23:39-40, we find a different account. It says, ***"And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering, rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we received the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss."*** We believe that all accounts were true and correct: that in the beginning, both railed on him until there was a change of heart in one, when he confessed his guilt and declared that Jesus had done nothing amiss. With regard to the divorce and remarriage question there are two statements by Matthew having the same meaning, according to our interpretation, while Mark did not quote Jesus as fully as Matthew did. If Jesus said more on one occasion than he did on another, or was more fully quoted by one than another, we are certainly justified in accepting the full and complete statement in preference to the one where he did not dwell upon the subject at the same length, or where he was quoted only in part. May we ask that our readers examine for themselves very carefully both Matthew 5:32, and 19:9, and see if they do not mean the same thing. According to our understanding, then this is the one and only Bible ground upon which a man can put away his wife and marry again without committing adultery. The sin of fornication, in our mind, is a sin unto death. If the law of the land was built upon and confined to this principle there would be far fewer divorces in the country. The laws of many states are unquestionably too loosely drawn in this respect, and while divorces may be granted on various and sundry grounds, leaving the parties free to marry again under such laws, the Lord's people are under a higher law than that of the land, and they should obey God rather than man. We repeat that the only ground which we believe warrants a man putting away his wife, or the wife her husband, is that of fornication. Nothing else, however grievous and hard to be borne, is justified by the Scriptures, in

our opinion. Where there is guilt for this cause, the innocent party can have the marriage tie annulled and be free to marry again, without being guilty of adultery. We cannot conceive of a more horrible existence than for a virtuous woman to be tied to a licentious husband, who persists in living a lewd life with another woman, or vice versa. Under the law such an one was actually stoned, or put to death, according to Leviticus 20:10, which reads as follows: ***"And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death."*** If this was carried out to the letter under the gospel, and the guilty ones were literally put to death, there could be no question as to the right of the innocent, living survivor, whether husband or wife, being free to marry again. In the gospel church, however, they are not actually put to death corporally, but such a sin is deserving of death, or separation, and if the guilty party is put away and accounted dead by the innocent party and the church, the latter is freed from the former and at liberty to marry again without committing adultery.

In our text, the apostle undoubtedly had under consideration mainly Christ and his church. He said, ***"Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?"*** He then went on to show that the woman is only bound to the law of her husband so long as he liveth, but that if her husband be dead, she is free from that law, and is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Paul was writing to the gospel church at Rome, which was composed of both Jews and Gentiles, and he would have them (the Jews especially) understand that Moses, who typified the law, was dead; that all of the obligations of the church to the law had been met and satisfied by Christ, and that henceforth she owed all of her allegiance to him. When Jesus talked with the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well, he had a definite purpose in saying to her, ***"Go, call thy husband, and come hither." She answered, and said, "I have no husband." Jesus then said to her, "Thou hast well said, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands: and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly." - John 4: 16-18.*** Here is an illustration, in part at least, of what we have heretofore tried to set forth. He whom she then had was evidently still alive corporally, but there is also a sense in which he was evidently dead to her, else Jesus would not have said to her he ***"is not thy husband."*** Her five husbands no doubt represented the five books of the law; or the fullness thereof, but she had now reached the place where she could no longer receive any comfort or draw any consolation from the law, and being dead to the law, she was a fit subject of gospel address and was free to be married to another, even Christ. The apostle emphasized this in the verse next following our text, by saying, ***"Wherefore,***

my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." The Scripture is a thorough furnisher unto God's children as to how they should live in this evil world. There is nothing wrong with the Scripture, but the difficulty is the inability of the creature to measure up to the standard set. It is in this very chapter that Paul stresses the weakness of the flesh. He says, ***"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do."*** He further enlarges upon this by saying, ***"I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." - Rom. 7: 21-25.*** How corrupt and loathsome, indeed, is ***"the body of this death."*** Well did the apostle ask, who shall deliver us from it, and he gave the only possible answer to the question by pointing out our escape through our Lord Jesus Christ. How diligent we should be then in all things pertaining to the cause of our Lord, ***"who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our words, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."*** There is a grave responsibility devolving upon those who have separated themselves from the world by uniting with the true church. How extremely careful, then, they should be to avoid even the appearance of evil and to refrain from spiritual adultery of all kinds, by not affiliating with or partaking of the things of Mystery Babylon. Of one thing we are definitely sure and certain, and that is if they are kept from such things, it will be by the grace of God, and not of themselves, lest any man should boast. It is only through the Spirit that we can mortify the deeds of the body. John wrote, ***"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." - 1 John 2:1.*** What a wonderful gospel is that which we have to proclaim, declaring as it does that the vilest of the vile may come and find forgiveness with God, by and through our Savior, Jesus Christ, and though one may so live as to be deprived of the love and fellowship of the church here in this wicked world, yet our heavenly

Husband is merciful and faithful and will not put away his bride in eternity.

Submitted in love for the consideration of the household of faith.

Elder R.L. Dodson

ST JOHN18: 7-9.

Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way:

That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.

WHY DO CHILDREN OF GOD SUFFER?

January, 1947

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." 2 Tim. 2:12

Elder E. J. Lambert

It is evident in all the experiences of the children of God as recorded in the Bible, that they all suffered in many ways. It is also evident in the experiences related by God's children in this age that suffering is yet common. They are all experimentally acquainted with grief, temptations, persecutions, tribulations and all manner of suffering. Job was afflicted in body and had all earthly possessions taken from him. All the Israelites suffered under Egyptian bondage. David was sorely oppressed and conscious of his great sins. Paul was beaten with many stripes and was made to exclaim, ***"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"*** Yes, this suffering is necessary, but why?

We do not suffer in order to merit a home in heaven, because Jesus fulfilled the law to a jot and tittle for us. Therefore, it is solely upon His merits that we shall inhabit that place prepared for His saints in after life. He has merited our salvation in heaven by His obedience.

We do not suffer in order to merit blessings in time for these were included in the ***"all things that pertain unto life and godliness"*** that was given to us by the Father through merits of Jesus. These blessings that we enjoy in time are not merited by us as Paul says, ***"By grace are ye saved (in time) through faith; and that (faith) not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should boast."***

We do not suffer to satisfy justice; nor to merit any blessing in time; nor to gain a home in heaven. We suffer because it was appointed unto us to suffer; God appointed to us this suffering just as He appointed Paul to suffer as an apostle, a preacher and teacher of the Gentiles (1 Tim. 1:11, 12). In 1st Thessalonians 3:3 we read, ***"That no*** man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto." So then, this suffering comes by the appointment of God. It was also appointed unto Jesus to suffer and as it was necessary for Him to have suffered so it is necessary

that we suffer. Paul reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered (Acts 17:3). It was not only necessary that Jesus suffer because of our sins, but it was also necessary in order to learn obedience. Paul wrote to the Hebrews concerning Jesus, ***"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered" (Heb. 5:8).*** So Jesus was taught obedience through suffering. We learn obedience by the things we suffer.

Paul told the Philippian brethren, ***"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Phil. 2:29).*** Even the suffering of God's children is a gift. It is a valuable gift for it teaches obedience. We are made obedient through suffering. Paul did not preach the gospel for filthy lucre's sake nor for any glory for He said, ***"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" (1 Cor. 9:16).*** The sufferings that Paul experienced drove him to obedience. God is a perfect Teacher and will make His children obedient as it is said in Psalms 110:3, ***"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."***

How could we have believed that Jesus was the Christ had we never suffered? It took the suffering of trials, heartaches, disappointments, vexation of our natural spirits, and failures in all our undertakings to teach us that we were not capable of saving ourselves and to make us to cry to some power other than ourselves to save us. Thus, by this suffering God taught us faith. How could we believe in an all-wise sovereign God had we not suffered so many disappointments to teach us that we are at best but vanity and foolish, and to teach us that ***"It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps"?*** By these experiences God teaches us that there is a power that is sovereign and worketh all things after the counsel of His own will and no power is able to withstand Him.

It takes the sufferings that we experience to teach us daily that we are nothing - yea, less than nothing and vanity. This suffering is necessary to keep us humble and dependent upon the grace of God. This suffering makes us to be constant in prayer to the God of Israel for His mercies. We cry unto Him daily for His continued mercies, realizing that we do not merit anything but His hot wrath. If justice were meted out to us according to that we deserve, hell would be our doom.

Now we are comforted with this thought, ***"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him."*** Oh, blessed thought! Paul reckoned in his letter to the Roman brethren, ***"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us"*** (Rom. 8:18). Now we experience sufferings; then, we shall experience glory. Now we experience death; then, we shall experience life. Now we experience sin; then, we shall experience holiness. Now we experience foolishness; then, we shall

experience holiness. Now we experience hope; then, we shall experience reality.

No other people suffer as the children of God suffer. No other people has experienced that pure heart that teaches that the best of man's righteousness is but filthy rags in God's sight. No other people are convinced that without Him we can do nothing. Other people conclude that they have some power vested in them upon the volition of their own will. They think that they can, at least, accept or reject. We would be of the same opinion were it not for the sufferings that we experience that teaches us otherwise. This lesson is learned through suffering. May God be praised for blessing us with suffering to keep us humble and submissive to His will and at each other's feet.

Elder E.J. Lambert

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the Staunton River Union will be held with Springfield Church, the Lord willing, the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in January 29th and 30th, 1994.

We invite all our ministers, brethren and friends to come and be with us.

Oscar D. Pickral, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

A Friend, VA	$7.00
Eld. Marvin Brumfield, VA	2.00
Mrs. Charity Dowdy, NC	2.00
Eld. Joe Sawyer, NC	7.00
Mrs. Sylvia Conner, VA	2.00
Wilton L. Sutphin, VA	2.00
Mrs. Betty D. Southard, NC	2.00
Aubrey Oakes, VA	7.00
Ms. Valsie Akers, VA	2.00
Mrs. Woodrow Blankenship, VA	2.00
Mrs. Nannie Trevathan, NC	2.00
Mrs. Julia R. Garner, NC	2.00
W.H. Norman, NC	7.00
Casey Johnson, NC	2.00
Mrs. Kelly Watson, NC	2.00
Billy Poindexter, VA	7.00
Mrs. Rachel J. Green, WV	2.00
Mrs. Glenn Savage, KY	10.00
Mrs. Grace Locke, KY	
In memory Warnard Locke	5.00
A Friend, VA	
In memory of former Pastors	25.00
Bro. & Sister Osborne, MD	2.00
Russ Erbough, IL	50.00
Mrs. Mabel Hedrick, VA	2.00
Mrs. Ruby T. Gusler, VA	2.00
Mrs. Norma Smith, VA	2.00
Charles F. Pratt, Sr., NC	2.00
Guy J. Holley, VA	2.00
Mrs. Geneva Pettie, LA	2.00
Charlie Johnston, VA	2.00

We acknowledge a sizeable gift from the estate of Elder Ben Preston. See his obituary this issue.

OBITUARIES

WILLIAM A. GRAY

Mr. William A. Gray 83 passed away Sunday the 29th of December 1991. Funeral service Tuesday at 2 p.m. in Wilkerson Funeral Home Chapel. Burial in Winterville Cemetery. He was a native of Pitt County and grew up in Winterville. He lived in Farmville, N.C. for 31 years and in Greenville, N.C. for the past 21 years. He was a retired farmer and a member of Handcocks Primitive Baptist Church.

Surviving his wife Susie L. Gray, daughters Clarice G. Riggins and Sue Gray Stoneham both of Greenville, N.C., one son L. Gene Gray of Morehead City, brother Brunis Gray of Texas, sisters Ruth Flake, Bessie G. Gray and Joan Crawford all of Winterville, N.C. Ruby Gray of Goldsboro, N.C., Gladys G. Gray Nichols of Bell Arthor, 4 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.

I hope you can read this I am 84 years old and I had not seen my husband's obituary in the Signs. Please print this in the Signs of the Times if you can read it.

Susie L. Gray
2482 Stantonburg Rd.
Greenville, N.C. 27834

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 1 / 94 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

CHARLES B. OSBORNE
May 24, 1901 - March 11, 1993

HAZEL OWEN OSBORNE
February 4, 1905 - April 19, 1993

To depart and to be with Christ is far better, and to die is gain; nevertheless, we that abide in the flesh hold in sweet remembrance the departed and we miss the sweet countenances of our elder brother and sister, their hospitality, love, fellowship and wise counsel.

Charles and Hazel observed their 54th wedding anniversary in 1992 having married August 23, 1938. They were remote cousins having a common ancestor in Capt. Enoch Osborne who commanded a frontier New River fort on the Virginia-Carolina border and a company of mountaineers that fought at Guilford courthouse during the Revolution. Survivors of this marriage are sons John D. and Donald L. of Quarryville, Pa. and daughter Ruth Ellen, wife of Donald McCullough of Peach Bottom, Pa., seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren all in Lancaster County, Pa.

Brother Charles was born in the Idlewild area of Ashe County, NC on May 24, 1901, the son of Isom and Rosa Miller Osborne. After extensive medical support and confinement as an invalid, in the providence of God death came March 11, 1993 at the onset of the blizzard of '93. Sister Hazel was born in White Top, Grayson County, Va. on February 4, 1905, the daughter of Arthur and Nancy Osborne Owen. Weakened by the stress of 24-

hour care of her beloved husband (with the help of her children, grandchildren and visiting nurses) Sister Hazel suffered injuries as a passenger in an automobile accident while visiting her sister. Recovery seemed apparent, but God's purpose differed and faithful Sister Hazel was called to join her husband in death on April 19, 1993 (just five weeks later) at the Fallston General Hospital, Fallston, Md.

Brother Charles and Sister Hazel have joined the Lord's humble poor to sleep in Jesus until He appears on wings of glory at the resurrection morning. At their personal requests, funeral services on March 16 and April 23 were conducted by Elder Raymond L. Goad of Gretna, Va. The services were well attended by friends, relatives and neighbors of several religious denominations indicating an humble walk and a good report from without the Baptist communion.

Charles and Hazel now rest from the pains and trials of this life and sleep side-by-side in the Rock Springs Old School Baptist Church Cemetery, U.S. Route 222, PA-MD line, having lived with that precious hope that anchors the soul.

Surviving Brother Charles are three brothers: Vaughn W. of Rising Sun, MD; Bliss Enoch of El Paso, TEX.; and Eugene F. of Westminster, MD; and two sisters, Brucie, wife of Wm. Teal, and Barbara Grace, both of Nottingham, PA.

Surviving Sister Hazel are a brother, Cody Owen of Kettering, Ohio and six sisters: Sybil Kilby and Alma White, both of Marion, VA; Margaret, wife of Herbert Jones, Forest Hill, MD; Blanche, wife of Herbert Francis, Crumpler, NC; Ruth, wife of G.H. Cornett, Jr., Mouth of Wilson, VA; and Faye, wife of Charles Fluty of McDermott, Ohio.

Charles joined the Rock Springs P.B. Church of the Delaware Assn. He was baptized July 24, 1932 and was ordained Deacon, Sept. 24, 1933. Charles was firm in his convictions and beliefs in the Old School Baptist persuasion. He stood for unity and peace among the brethren, for like minds and the faith that was once delivered to the saints. He was concerned that the word of truth be rightly divided. He had compassion for sinners, but opposed popery in all its forms while standing for orderly practice within and among the churches and associations. He opposed those who would sow disorder among the brethren and churches heaping unto themselves the vanity of pre-eminence before men. During his long membership, absent the blessings of material wealth and formal education, he faithfully lived as a servant of the church and denomination in keeping records and maintenance of the cemetery and meeting house. He served as a trustee and officer of the Primitive Baptist Home and its successor - Old School Baptist Aid Assn. During his final years he felt forsaken by some of his brethren who chose to follow disorderly men causing divisions.

Being sanctified in her marriage to Charles, for many years Hazel faithfully attended the church. With such as the Lord provided she maintained a good home where travelers from near and far were welcomed with hospital-

ity, food and lodging. She was moved to confess Christ as her Saviour in 1984, was baptized and became a member of the Rock Springs Church. In our visits to their home, we always observed a manifestation of mutual respect and love from their children and grandchildren who I believe will long cherish memories of their grandparents.

During the final years as his flesh weakened Brother Charles composed poems which were set to music by Sister Connie Page and the late Sister Irene Setliff of Dan River Church, NC.

They have fought the good fight, they have endeavored to keep the faith.

Eugene F. Osborne, Sr.

PSALM 104: 33-34.

I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.

My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord.

ELDER BENJAMIN F. PRESTON

Elder Benjamin F. Preston was born Nov. 29, 1911 at Madras, Oregon to Benjamin F. Preston, Sr. and Nancy Jane (Lee) Preston.

Elder Preston's Father passed away when young Benjamin was only five years old and his Mother moved to the Portland, Oregon area where she struggled to provide for her five small children. At that time and place Elder Samuel B. Moffitt served the Church as Pastor that young Ben was privileged to attend and he grew to young manhood loving the doctrine of Salvation by Grace.

After being honorably discharged from the Army where he served during World War 2 worked as a surveyor for the State of Oregon Highway Dept. until his retirement.

Elder Preston asked for a home and was baptized in the Grande Ronde River at Elgin, Oregon on Aug. 25, 1968 by the late Elder David V. Spangler who made several trips to the Northwest to visit among the brethren.

God's gift to him as a speaker and expounder of the gospel was soon recognized by the brethren so he was called upon by the late Elder Ernest J. Attebery to help conduct the meetings as Elder Attebery's health was deteriorating and the burden of serving four widely scattered Churches was taxing his strength.

On Aug. 12, 1972 Pleasant Grove Church of Yakima, Wa. called for his ordination, a presbytery was formed and the charge was delivered by Elder D.V. Spangler. After that time Elder Preston was called to the pastoral care of three Churches that he faithfully served until his death Dec. 8, 1991. The location of these Churches required for him to give of his time in travel for they were all in excess of 100 miles from his home in The Dalles, Oregon.

In addition to his brethren and friends he leaves to mourn his sisters: Mrs. Margaret William and her husband Harold of Arizona, Mrs. Minnie Cunningham and her husband Ray of Portland, Or., nephews Charles

Cunningham of Portland, Or., Ralph and Larry Nelson of California, nieces Juanita Claflin of California and Shirley Reynolds of Portland, Or. Besides his parents he was preceded in death by his sisters Hester Dawson and Miss Jessie Preston.

Elder Preston's greatest love was in serving the Lord's people and on every occasion preached Jesus Christ and him crucified.

His funeral was conducted by Norman Wells of Grace Baptist Church The Dalles, Or. and was laid to rest in Mt. Jefferson Memorial Park Cemetery Madras, Or.

This notice is submitted in loving memory for publication in the Signs of the Times at the request of his family.

Lloyd C. Spikes

BROTHER FRED R. SIMPSON

Brother Fred R. Simpson was born June 15, 1907 in Iliff, Colo. He moved with his family at an early age to Naches, Washington where he grew up and attended school.

Being a lover of nature he worked in the forests of central Washington for many years before being employed by Boise Cascade Corp'n. in Yakima, Wn. where he remained until his retirement in 1974.

He was united in marriage to Mildred (Dorn) Simpson who survives him together with two sons Fred O. and Jim D. Simpson both of Naches Wn., one daughter Eanne Blalock of Issaquah, Wn., and one sister Violet Rader of Naches, Wn. Brother Simpson was preceded in death by one daughter Rosanne Alice Lindgren.

Elder Ernest J. Attebery told this writer, that when Brother Simpson first started coming to Church that they met in a home to hold services and that Brother Simpson would bring his wife (Sister Mildred) but would retire to an adjoining room while services were being conducted. After a period of time Elder Attebery said that Brother Simpson started moving his chair closer and closer to the door of the room in which services were conducted and before many meetings he joined the body in worship.

He soon ask for a home and was received and baptized by the late Elder Ernest J. Attebery into the fellowship of Pleasant Grove Church of Yakima, Wn.

He was a faithful Brother who loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace and loved to entertain the Brethren in his home.

Brother Simpson passed away Sept. 13, 1989 and was laid to rest in Wenass Valley cemetery near Yakima, Wn. His funeral was conducted by the late Elder Benjamin F. Preston.

Submitted at the request of the family in loving memory.

Lloyd C. Spikes

ISAIAH 33: 5-6.

The Lord is exalted; for he dwelleth on high: he hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness.

And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation: the fear of the Lord is his treasure.

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
Route 1, box 420, Keeling, Virginia 24566

Shepherds! rejoice, lift up your eyes,
And send your fears away;
News from the regions of the skies,
Salvation's born to-day.

"Jesus, the God whom angels fear,
Comes down to dwell with you;
To-day he makes his entrance here,
But not as monarchs do.

"No gold nor purple swaddling bands,
Nor royal shining things;
A manger for his cradle stands,
And holds the King of kings.

"Go, shepherds, where the infant lies,
And see his humble throne;
With tears of joy in all your eyes,
Go, shepherds, kiss the Son.

"Thus Gabriel sang, and straight around
The heavenly armies throng,
They tune their harps to lofty sound,
And thus conclude the song:

"Glory to God that reigns above,
Let peace surround the earth;
Mortals shall know their Maker's love
At their Redeemer's birth."

Lord, and shall angels have their songs,
And men no tunes to raise!
O may we lose our useless tongues
When they forget to praise.

Glory to God that reigns above,
That pitied us forlorn,
We join to sing our Maker's love,
For there's a Saviour born.

Watts.

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EDITORIAL

For so many things we owe thanks to the subscribers of the Signs. Those who have taken time to write and tell us how they have enjoyed reading the good articles published, this encourages us to work even harder. There are those who request more articles of personal experiences. We urge you to write us and share your experience with others. This is a way of comforting each other.

I have never known a time when words of comfort are more needed than now. We are now living in a time of fiery trials and so many adversities. These have been promised by our Lord and we have been admonished to think it not strange when they come. We know He will not put more burdens on us than he will give us grace to bear.

We have the following article written by the late associate editor Elder W.D. Griffin which has not been published before. We think it is very appropriate at this time.

Editors

Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. (Psa. 34:19).

What a wonderful consolation is found in this statement. Of one thing we are certain, the Lord is not afflicting us because of our unrighteousness. This statement calls for comments in two ways at least. None of us feel that we are righteous, even Christ not excepting himself, And yet a wonderful meditation awaits he and she that has their mind staid on Him. As the sin bearer of His chosen flock, he was guilty by reason of our transgression on him; in His relationship with His father He was all fair, no spot in Him.

It is my own feeling that in the text, He is speaking of His people and the tender relationship that exists between He and them. In the outset let us ever remember that:

Not from the dust afflictions grows
Nor troubles rise by chance.
Yet we are born to cares and woes;

A sad inheritance.

As sparks break out from burning coals,
and still are upwards borne,
So grief is rooted in our souls
and man grows up to mourn.

When called upon to watch during the trying hours of our often long night watches, we are inclined to feel that the reason of our afflictions is because that the Lord is displeased with us. Oh, no, no, not that. If His servants are righteous surely it is He that dwells in them as the Lord their righteousness. Whatever his dealing with us, it is then in righteousness. How bright the picture becomes as He teaches us that He loves us, and that all things given us are in love and in mercy given, and that not only are they given for our direct and immediate good, and that ultimately there can be no question, there can be no doubt but that it works together with every experience that we have for good and the glory of He whom we are His and He is ours.

I hope dear reader, that you have noted that these afflictions are many. How can that be? How is it that He esteems me righteous in that He gives me many of these tokens of His love. His messages that when each and every affliction has brought me to lose confidence in myself, then that He overwhelms me with His love by delivering us from every affliction.

I do not come to you in a scolding attitude. Oh, yes, my soul knows the sad lamentations of Jeremiah and Job. I have been hid behind the hedge when the sun has gone down, and the Lord has hid his face. I too have sent inquiries to Him, Art thou the Christ or shall we look for another. I know the long flickering, grotesque shadows when He is seemingly gone forever. But that is why I desire to write to you poor afflicted saint. If I am not mistaken I have felt the dismal feelings when He is eclipsed from my peering eyes, and my heartstrings are seemingly broken asunder because He is not present. But such a thing cannot be. If he is ours and we are His, sores and losses and crosses may multiply on our body and in our mind, but He is not gone. That will never be that cannot be. Oh, yes He seems to go, He seems to hide Himself from us, but that is an affliction sent in mercy to teach us our frailness, our dependence on Him.

Everything pertaining to life and godliness has been freely given. The thorn to Paul was at first hard to be borne, but when seen as an affliction from His Elder Brother to teach him, to wean him, strengthen him, then it was not a token of His displeasure, but a remembrance of the everlasting love of He that had called him out of darkness into His marvelous light.

Wisdom has indeed built her house. The wisdom of God has given his children every affliction. Not one of them has come by satan's hand, nor has God nor Christ nor the Holy Spirit sent one of them as punishment. Perish the thought. God the Holy One, the Perfect Rock who never made a mistake never sent an affliction on a righteous man or woman to punish he or she for their transgression. My soul knows right well better than that. This is a righteous Father giving gifts to

His obedient children for their instruction and teaching.

To the afflicted saint it would not do to belittle or to minimize their afflictions. At the time of enduring them, as it was with Paul in regard to the thorn in the flesh, it seems ofttimes, that their afflictions are far more than they can bear. How wonderful that Paul learned the intent of His Lord and Master. This dealing with Paul continued (and with us, if we are subjects of His work) and becomes more glorious as we explore the amazing blessings that were taught him. He says to Paul, For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God, for which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day, for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more and exceeding weight of glory (2 Cor. 4: 15, 17).

As the Lord prospers our investigation may we rejoice and be exceedingly glad with unspeakable joy and full of glory at the difference between what David sang long years ago and what the apostle affirmed two thousand years ago. We are not calling in question the number of afflictions of the righteous. They came in great numbers upon every member of that righteous nation whose God is the Lord. However, there is a so called system of salvation that makes a spurious claim that God's children bring afflictions, adversity, tribulations upon themselves by a neglection of their Christian duties. David did not say, many are the afflictions of the negligent and indifferent and careless. He did not say that. Why is it that in the face of the inspired evidence that this is not true, people continue to make this claim?

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory (II Cor. 4:17). Did you listen carefully to that? Did it strike a note of praise to your Redeemer God? Yes, we all that are experienced in the dealings of God with us, can readily agree with David that the afflictions of the righteous are many. There are many trials (God sent trials); there is a fiery trial accompanying each child of grace, but the sweetness of the morsels of the feeding time for the sheep, the unity, the togetherness of each delivered child, leads them to join in union of mind and heart as we survey the shortness of those moments of holy ecstasy. They are many, and yet they are light when attended by whispers of His love.

Let us go over that again. This is worth repeating time and again. These numerous afflictions come as a dark and gloomy cloud at times, but there is not a frown in a single one of them. There is not a time when all that occurred in the life of Paul of sorrow and trials and persecutions and tribulations that anything was working against anyone at Corinth. Everything that occurred in the life of Paul, as he wrote these wonderful things that was against them. Perish that thought. Let it ring out loud and clear, as the song of the triumph in the hearts of God's

humble poor. Let Mount Zion say, The Lord afflicts His children in love, and that each one of them is in mercy sent, and that every one of them is in the hands of our kind and gracious Father too good to make a mistake and too wise to err.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith, into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. And not only so but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us Rom. 5: 1,5)

What an array of covenant blessings. Yet, if I had a nation of people under my thumb that I desired to herd them into prison and to deal with them in a harsh manner because of their shortcomings, I would not seek any further. But to the contrary, instead of sending hard tribulations upon them, our kind and gracious Father works right opposite to that way of doing business with them. This gracious God tells us that He has justified them by faith which He has given them. These poor sinners in His charge have peace freely bestowed upon them. And that is not all. They have access by faith into this grace wherein they stand (are now standing), and their hope of better things to come is founded in the glory of God. No poor sinner would ever think of asking more, but the good things the sweet mercy of God still comes stealing in upon us and we are indeed in wonderment and amazement. But there is more yet, Not only so, but we glory in tribulations also. Ah, dear brethren and sisters, What a great mercy it is to have Him on our side (Psa. 124). He is not the hard taskmaster that conditionalists would make Him out to be. Instead, behold how good and kind that He is to His poor weak children. Instead of sending tribulations for punishment for our shortcomings we have better news to tell you. God takes the things that seem so strongly entrenched against us, and we are found rejoicing in those things. Have you ever heard of anything better than that? Has any of the wild fire doctrines every had the allurement and captivation of your mind like the doctrine of God's sovereign care for poor sinners? Tribulations are not an enemy to the saints of God when they are heaven sent. We glory in them, not in they themselves, but in what God brings out with and by them. I am an impatient person. I am always in a hurry, always a minute man. But God has placed in my life, as I humbly hope and believe, tribulations, and they are as effectual to produce results, being sent, as I hope, by the Sovereign Ruler and in His hands they bring about, again, as I hope, some degree of patience. That much is good; no man has a better doctrine than that, but that is not all. The Lord always has supplied our needs, and He always will. With patience wrought effectually by the Strength of the Lord, any

problem ceases to be a stumbling block and becomes a stepping stone to higher ground. Ah, what triumphs are brought about through patience. She is indeed a virtue unexcelled. Of course, we have the full weight of resourcefulness working on our side, and for us, and in us. She works an experience in the children, and those wrought in and wrought out experiences are never forgotten. In exchanging interviews about where we have been, and what we have been taught, are the things we have discussed when we remembered always and all the ways through which He has led us on.

With the cluster of blessings, all in the hand of He that loved us unto death, green fields of living verdure will be opened to us. That lovely gift from God's dealings with us will be in His hands to give us additional beauty to enjoy. This is all the mighty, and yet tender love of God in brightening our little hope. That is the best news of all other messages. To have our hope revived; to have the borders of the kingdom of heaven enlarged to where we are not ashamed, but rather blessed to lift our feeble voices in praise to He that has delivered, and, by reason of this revival, not afraid, nor not ashamed to claim a hope in the merits of the risen Lord.

And when the borders of the land of Israel are enlarged to you by reason of shedding in our hearts by the Holy Ghost the love of God, our hearts will be melted together in love to God our Father, Jesus Christ, our Saviour, and the Holy Ghost, who is the only Teacher that Wisdom our mother has sent us.

Rejoice evermore, brethren.
Elder W.D. Griffin

VOICES OF THE PAST

DEAR BRETHREN: -- By request I will try to write an account of my experience and call to the ministry.

First, I will speak of my nationality: on my father's side I am Irish, and on my mother's side Dutch, but both of my parents were American born, and I was their fourth child. At the age of ten years, it pleased God to take my mother away from me, to her long home, and although it was forty-two years ago, I have never forgotten her kind words and christian like looks. The night she died she called us children to her bedside and bid us farewell. It seemed to me that my best friend on earth was gone; I can never describe my feelings. I had no mother to speak to, and O, how lonely I felt, yet I thought my mother had gone to rest.

Now while feeling so serious about the death of my mother, I resolved that I would try to live the life of a christian, so I set about it with all my might; I would slip off from the other children and try to pray to God to fit and prepare me for heaven, so that when I died I would meet my mother there, and after a few weeks I thought that I was getting to be a pretty good boy.

Then I thought that I would try to save my sisters that were older than I was. I approached them upon the subject of religion, and told them that they must quit their laughing and joking one another so much, and quit all their bad habits, and that I had done so, and that I felt a heap better. What a poor, deceived mortal I was, not knowing that I must have the life of Christ before I could live as a christian. But as young as I was, by my natural notions I was a complete Arminian. As time passed on my sorrow and care wore away. Now mark, it was not a godly sorrow which worketh repentance. Now I concluded that I would just lay my religion aside, and that I was too young to undertake to live such a particular life, and that it would be an easy matter to get religion again. I thought that a few prayers, and some good resolutions would put me in good shape again.

At the age of twenty, I was married to my first wife. During her life we were attending a meeting which was going on in the neighborhood held by the Missionary Baptists, and I was enjoying myself finely, playing pranks with the young fellows, and having a good time, as I called it. But one day, right in the midst of my sport, a fear took hold upon me which made me tremble, it appeared to me that hell was my doom, I slipped to the side of my wife and told her that I was going home. She said, "Wait till meeting closes." When we got started for home she asked me what was the matter? I told her that I could not tell her, but that I felt that I was going to die, and that hell, was my portion; I had sinned away the day of grace. This was the first time in my life that I ever felt to be a sinner in the sight of God. I was here in a sin-cursed world, without God, or any well grounded hope after death. I thought, "O, that I had died when I was young, then this trouble would have never been on me."

Like many others, I fled then to the law, thinking to obtain righteousness by it, and feeling that I must work a work which would initiate me into God's favor. I would slip away into some secret place, where I thought no one would see me, and there would try to pour out my soul in prayer to God for mercy. For four long years I labored to do right in order to be saved. I lived in a neighborhood where they were principally Missionary Baptists, and they invited me to attend their meetings, and I did so; they preached the do and live system. So, with her fair speeches and enticing words, I went the way to her house not knowing the dead was there. I went to their social meetings, and they would tell how well they were getting along, and how determined they were to make heaven their home. O, how I wished that I could feel as they claimed to feel, but instead, I felt that I was a poor sinner, and with every effort I made, I only got worse.

About this time my wife was taken sick and died, and I was left with two little children. She left a bright evidence of her acceptance with the Lord. About twelve months after, I was married again. I was now laboring hard, clearing up my land, and nights I would

read my Bible, searching for comfort to my troubled soul. In my wife's sickness I had gotten in debt, and had sold the only horse that I had, so that season I was compelled to carry everything that we had to eat on my back, a distance of seven miles. One morning I started to go after some provisions; I had to go through the wood some two miles, and as I was walking along it appeared to me that I was the greatest sinner that had ever lived on the earth, and that I was bound for torment, which would only be just. In a moment a feeling took hold upon me so that I could stand upon my feet no longer, and

While prostrate on the ground I lay,
Not knowing help was near me,
A heavenly whisper seemed to say,
"Poor sinner I have saved thee."

I sprang to my feet feeling that God for Christ's sake had forgiven my sins; I praised my blessed Lord aloud; it seemed that out of the mouths of babes and sucklings he had perfected praise. Here I saw the church of Jesus Christ saved and complete in him, and washed with the washing of regeneration. The time had come when I could say, He hath taken my feet out of the miry clay, and hath placed them on a rock, and put a new song in my mouth, even praise to my God. It seemed to me that even the twigs on the trees were wafting their praises to God. After some time I went on my journey to secure my provisions. I hurried home so that I could tell my wife that my burden of sin was gone, and when I got to the door my little children met me, and then my wife came, and I began to tell her what great things the Lord had done for me, whereof I was glad. I went about my work feeling that I would have no more trouble. The next morning, however, I was in the yard cutting wood, when all at once, darkness seemed to shut me in. O, what oppressed feelings I had; I thought that I had grasped the shadow, and missed the substance. I stood there for a while with my head down studying about the peace which I had felt the day before. Just then a voice seemed to say to me, You must cry. I said, Lord, what shall I cry? The voice said, Cry unto Jerusalem. All at once light took place of the darkness. I began talking and crying. My wife and little children came to where I was. She wanted to know what was the matter with me. I told her the Spirit of the Lord was upon me, and that I could not help talking. She said, "You are going crazy, come and go with me to the house." Here was my first impression with regard to preaching. Now I tried to beg the Lord to put this on some one else, for I could not preach. I was slow of speech, and of a stammering tongue, and had no learning. Then the inward voice would say, I have made your mouth, and I can fill it.

I then thought I would let no one know anything about my impression to preach, but it was forcibly pressed upon my mind, day and night, that I must preach. My Missionary friends soon found out that I had professed a

hope, and that I was in opposition to them, that now I believed salvation was wholly of the Lord from first to last. They would gather up by the road, and wait for me, to attack me about my dangerous doctrine of election and predestination. They would say that Christ was the elect, and no one else. I would ask them if they believed that he was the head of the church? and they would confess that he was. "Well," I would say, "if the head is elect, is not the body equally so, with him? Can they be separated?" The Lord says, "Because I live, ye shall live also." His life is their life, and their life is hid with Christ in God.

Now I wanted to hear the people preach that I had once despised and hated; they were the old order of Baptists, but there were none in my neighborhood; I mean no members of the church. One man who lived about a mile from me was contending for that doctrine, his name was Melton, he was a son of Elder William Melton. I went often to his house to hear him talk, and he was much comfort to me.

The time of the Hopewell church meeting was the First Sunday in each month, and the Saturday before. I had by this time bought me a horse, and on Sunday I started to the meeting, a distance of ten miles. On my way I had to go by Elder Melton's. He with his wife came to the road, just as I came up, and we went together. We had not gone far when Mrs. Melton asked me where I was going? I thought that she mistrusted something, but told her that I was going to the meeting. Elder Melton took for his text that day the words, "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities." O, how I was carried away in my feelings, and I went home rejoicing.

The next spring, brother Melton preached for a few members that lived at Melton Creek; I went, and at the close of his sermon he said, "O that it would please God to call some young blue eyed person to the ministry, as I am old, and feel that my time is about out." It appeared to me that he knew about my feelings, and I wondered why this was, as I had never told any one my feelings with regard to preaching. I went to dinner with a cousin who was a member of the church, and after dinner we were sitting talking of our hope in Christ, when his wife came in and joined in the conversation with us. All at once she turned to me and said, "Well, I think that the old man got close to you to-day." My blood almost run cold, I knew that I had never said anything about my impressions to any one, and wondered why she singled me out. It appeared to me that she and my cousin knew my feelings, so I soon started for home, feeling that I would wear that impression out.

One night I dreamed that I was standing in the presence of a great congregation. All at once a man came to me and handed me a chain and an ax. I thought he was the loveliest person that I ever saw. I thought he said the chain is the gospel chain, and that the ax was to score to the line, no matter where the chips may fly. After this I felt impressed to go to the church and follow my blessed Lord down into the liquid grave, if the church could fel-

lowship me; yet I felt too unworthy to be with them. I believed that the Primitive Baptists were the church of God, yet I stayed away eight years on account of my impression about having to preach. I thought in this way to wear out the impression, but finally I was made willing to go, and to relate a part of what I have here written, and was received, and baptized by Elder Wm. L. Melton. Now, I thought, perhaps this impression would leave me, but it was not so; the impression still remained. With Charley Melton, a son of the minister, I was on my way to the Friendship church to the meeting, when I concluded to tell him my troubles about this matter. I had the utmost confidence that he was as sound in doctrine as any Baptist that I ever knew. We had been together more or less all our lives. I said to him, "I have something that I want to tell you." He said, "Well, tell it, I want to hear it; they all know it, it is not hidden from the church." As I began to tell him my feelings, he burst into a flood of tears, and said, "You ought to confess it to the church, and not confer with flesh and blood." He asked me if I had ever said anything to his father about it? I replied that I had not. We both went on our way crying. He had a rich experience, though he never went to the church. Shortly after this he was killed.

I went to brother Melton's, and unbosomed myself to him. He said that he would attend to the matter at the next meeting. So he called the church together after preaching, and then told me to relate my call to the church. I did so, and they gave me license to exercise my gift in the bounds of the Pocatalico Association. This was done at the December meeting, and the next January I was ordained, and I have been trying to preach ever since. I travel over six or seven counties every season, and preach with the liberty that God gives me. I am now fifty-three years of age, and my health is not good. I often start away a distance of thirty or forty miles, leaving my wife and daughter by themselves. I have a feeling I cannot express; the call says, Go, while my mind says, Stay. I love to meet the dear children of God, and hear them tell what the blessed Lord has done for their souls. I love the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone. It was grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved.

From your brother,
J.W. McLanahan

From Elder Lamberts book,
"Tried In The Furnace".

CHARITY
May, 1947

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

It is alarming to me when I am given to meditate upon the strife and confusion that exists in Zion today! It is heart-breaking to find brethren trying to devour and subdue one another! It makes me shudder to note the coldness that seems prevalent in our

own midst. All this perplexity of mind has made me to inquire the Lord for an understanding of His Spirit of love. May He define charity for us and make manifest that spirit in us.

Let us now consider the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians where Paul was inspired to write to the Church at Corinth on this grand subject. I realize the modern usage of the word is the giving of alms, but the 3rd verse of this chapter states the possibility of bestowing all goods to feed the poor, yet be destitute of charity. I am persuaded to believe that charity is the love of God, love of Christ, and love to saints. God loves us with a godly love. This same love is reciprocated and also includes Christ and the brethren. We love God because He first loved us. God's children do love one another. I think that Paul in the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians was blessed to treat upon the greatness of charity and its properties. He says, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal." To be enabled to speak with the tongues of men is a natural gift from God, but to be able to speak with the tongues of angels is a spiritual gift from God. Man naturally cannot learn the language of the truth as pertaining to God and the holy Scriptures. Though a man be spiritually blessed to speak fluently and eloquently of the doctrine of God our Savior and have not charity, he is as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. If a person be blessed so that he can understand all mysteries and knowledge and have all faith both believing and doing miracles and have not charity, he is nothing. Paul does not mean that these gifts are nothing but that the man possessing these gifts is nothing, destitute of charity. If I bestow all my goods to feed the poor in order to gain the reputation of men or for the purpose of obtaining eternal life it would be not profit to me. These deeds must be motivated by love to God or to Christ or to the saints before they could be rightly considered as profitable for me.

Now let us consider the properties and characters of love as Paul was inspired to note them. "Charity suffereth long." The person blessed with charity is patient. He is slow to anger, and not hasty to revenge. He is enabled to bear much; has the grace of forbearance, and is blessed to forgive. "And is kind." He does good to all men, even to his enemies. "Charity envieth not." He that is possessed with this wonderful grace of God's love does not envy the temporal happiness of others. He rejoices when he beholds a brother is blessed with gifts both temporal and spiritual. He does not envy the happiness of others even though they are decidedly more blessed than he. Joseph's brethren were not charitable when they envied Joseph because he had a greater share in the affections of their father. The charitable person does not envy one of God's children whose usefulness and success in spiritual undertakings are decidedly greater (seemingly) than his. "Charity vaunteth not itself." He does not boast of either his natural or

spiritual wisdom or possessions. He does not boast of what he does as his motive is love and not for the applause of men. "Is not puffed up." He is not swelled with pride but is humble. "Doth not behave itself unseemly." He is not unbecoming in his conversation or actions and has due respect for the aged and those of authority. "Seeketh not her own." He is not seeking to promote his own selfish ambitions and desires but his care and concern is to the glory of God and to the children of the kingdom. "Is not easily provoked." He is not easily offended. "Thinketh no evil." Not that he is free from evil thoughts such as are sinful and vain, for testimonies throughout the holy scriptures affirm to the contrary. God's children are forever desiring to be delivered from these sinful thoughts that are daily experienced. But I think that this character will forgive a brother his trespasses and will not try to find some way of revenge. He thinks not upon how to get even with someone who has wronged him.

"Rejoiceth not in iniquity." He mourns because of his own iniquities. He is grieved because of the sinfulness of professors. He is troubled when he meditates upon the profanity and immorality of the world. "But rejoiceth in the truth." He rejoices in the doctrine of God, our Savior, he is pleased when God is praised and man is set forth as nothing, yea less than nothing. Salvation by grace is his meat and drink. "Beareth all things." He feels that all things work together for good to them who love God, even the suffering, persecution, and affliction is not in vain. He bears them without complaint, feeling that if justice were meted out they would be more intense. He does not feel that he should revenge wrong doing. "Believeth all things." Everything that exists is according to the decrees of God. All things are for the praise of God and for the perfecting of God's saints. None of the things existing is by chance. "Hopeth all things." All things yet future is predetermined so that nothing will frustrate any of the promises of God from being fulfilled. "Endureth all things." He is confident that all things are embraced in the eternal decrees of an all-wise and all-powerful God. He endures all the afflictions and persecutions for the elect's sake and for Christ's sake. The last to be endured is death.

"Charity never faileth." It may fail in the lively exercise of it. Selfishness and the cares of the world may be prevalent at times, but the love of God will not permit a child of God to fall finally into perdition. Charity is everlasting. It is ever the same. Prophecies will be fulfilled then cease to be prophecy. Hope will become a reality thus cease to be hope. Faith will terminate into a reality. Charity will be charity in the beyond the same as it was before the beginning of time. Every object of God's love is just as certain for heaven and immortal glory as before time began. There is no change in the love of God for His people.

Now, I feel that the Lord has blessed us with a few sweet thoughts on the properties and characteristics of

God's love as made manifest in brethren. Permit me to say, "By their fruits ye shall know them." I wish to suggest to the citizens of Zion, that you beware of impostors. Beware of those having a form of godliness but not manifesting the grace of charity. I believe the time has come to watch as well as pray. May God grant us the grace of charity and the eye of watchfulness.

Elder E.J. Lambert

Atlantic, N.C., Sept., 15, 1924

Dear Brother Vaughn: Why have you been in my mind all day? Are you a sunken island like me? All last week I was under a terrible heavy, dark cloud, and probably as full of grief as I have ever been at any one time in all my life. I saw myself to be a sunken island, with the boisterous billows of the sea over me and God's waterspouts all about me. This state of things continued until I saw that the sunken islands of the sea are only the tops of the hills and mountains in the waters, which God has placed beyond destruction, and that they go on downward until they all join in the one continent body, and that this continent is joined to continent, and island to island, to form the one body, the earth. Even so are the little ones joined one to another, and away down in these deep places is where we are so joined that we learn the sweet fellowship of the Spirit, and are led into the fellowship of the Lord Jesus Christ. There in much fear and great trembling we are led to desire the will of God to be done. If we live it is the Lord, and if we die it is the Lord. He is the God of life and death. The light is but his revelation, and the darkness is his pavilion where he hides his face in sweet communion with his bride. There he teaches her the sweet lessons of his grace and shows her that in him is all her life and her salvation. Satan may be near, and roar as the fierce lion, and make the already troubled soul tremble, but he can do no more than our Father pleases. When our God has done his will with the typhoon he will say, "Peace, be still." It will obey his voice, for it is his faithful servant. Then the waters will cease to rage, and there will be a great calm, accompanied with the knowledge that that poor tempest-tossed one is delivered safe on the shore of divine mercy, and into the green pastures of the great Shepherd of the sheep. Here they are given to see that they are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand. Here we can trust the Lord. Oh just now we could not trust him, even though the word said, Trust ye in the Lord, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. Is that what we desire? Yes. Where do we experience it? Surely in trusting the Lord. Then why not trust him? The question repeats itself, Why? The poor soul has to answer, I would, but I cannot. That is it. I am as helpless to trust the Lord as I am to make a world. I would, but I cannot do it. It may be in a minute of time that all my confidence is in him, and I cannot see any reason why I had not done this before. It was on the third Sunday in August, 1878,

that I had walked ten miles to Old Blounts Creek, in Beaufort County, N.C. and had preached to the people. I ate dinner with one of the brethren, and was walking back to our humble home when I began to question why the Lord had required such hardships of me? There were others who were as able to preach his word as I was, and they had conveyances to go and come, but the burden was on me, who had nothing. I became very stubborn, and felt that the lines had fallen to me in weary places. Presently my mind was taken back through my experience from seven years old up to my deliverance at twenty years old, and through many of the mercies of God after my deliverance up to that time. When this meditation had ended my whole being was filled with love to God, and my soul was made to praise him for giving me such an easy task to perform. Then I questioned, Why could I not have looked back and remembered all these things before, and not have been so stubborn and rebellious, and angry at the Lord's dealings with me? Then these words came to me, If I go away I will send Him, and when he is come he shall bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Thus for the first time I was given a little understanding of God's sweet promise in giving us the Holy Ghost to be our comforter and guide, to keep us in distress and to shine in us when his blessed day should dawn in our inward parts. It is thus, my brother, that our dear Lord has taught me in all his blessed gospel which he has given me to see, and it is the only way I have understanding in his glorious way. Therefore all the things of his kingdom are hid from me only as he leads me to them and gives me to taste the things he has in store for me. I am given to see that my dark days and the clouds are just as much the blessings of God to me as are the brightest of times and the gentle showers on the newly mown field. How wonderful is our God, and how sure is his blessed love.

I am glad to say that our church is in peace. We received one in December, two in May and one last Saturday. The next church to us has baptized seven this year. We desire to bless the Lord.

I do not want to tire you, so I will close, with lots of love to Sister Vaughn and to all the dear ones at Hopewell.

Your little brother in a good hope,
L.H. Hardy

PSALM 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

THE CITY WITHOUT A TEMPLE
By H.M. Curry

Ed. Note: We are often amazed when one finds we are Predestinarian Baptists and responds: "Oh, you are one of those that do not believe in education." Where they got that foolish notion, we can't ascertain.

Elder H.M. Curry is listed as an important figure in laying the foundations of secondary education in the post Civil War South. Retained by the Peabody Foundation, he taught public school at the Rodger's School in Pike County, Alabama near Troy. Many of our old brethren at Beulah Church, and churches of the Conecuh River recall him vividly, and hold him to high esteem as a servant of God. Originally, he was from Lebanon, Ohio, where he gained great respect among the saints of God. We trust our readers will once again enjoy this selection from the SIGNS, 1964.

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"And I saw no temple therein." (Revelations 21:22)

We have read this morning from the inspired record a striking description of the city of God; the city of which we have heard, and read, and sing from our earliest childhood; but we have heard that it was far away above the skies; we have sung that it is among the stars; we have read in popular religious fiction that it is the place where good people go when they die. All these notions are no better than the various fabrications of heaven, and are foreign to the true location and nature of the city as the sensual paradise of Mahomet, or the happy hunting grounds of the American Indian. Our eyes have been so long blinded by tradition that we scarcely see the plainest facts of Bible truth; our ears have been so completely stuffed with fables from our early youth that we are deaf to the plain declarations of the inspired record; and our understanding is so darkened by material affections that it is indeed difficult for us to conceive the most prominent principles of the doctrine of Christ. May the God of all grace enlighten our eyes, unstop our ears and open our understanding this morning, that we may hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

First, let us have a proper understanding of the location of this city. It is not in heaven, for John saw it coming down from God out of heaven. It is declared to be the tabernacle of God with men; God dwelling with men, and not men gone above the sky to dwell with God. This city then is in the world, though not of the world; it is the present abode an inheritance of the saints, and not something they come in possession of at the close of their mortal pilgrimage. It is the new Jerusalem, arrayed in the splendor of the covenant of grace revealed in living contrast with the old Jerusalem, clothed in the blackness of legal servitude. It is the gospel church revealed in the perfection of her living worship, contrasted with all humanly devised and conditional systems of religion.

The jeweled walls, sparkling, gleaming and glittering with all manner of

precious stones; the new earth upon which it stands stretching away in all the beauty of its virgin landscape; the new heaven spread above like a tent of righteousness; the pure, peaceful, gladdening river; the tree of life in the midst of its street of gold, each furnishes a theme for a thousand volumes; but more significant to me than all these this morning, is the absence of the temple: "I saw no temple there."

What a novel sight to a Jew was a city without a temple! And what would a modern Arminian think of a city without a church? The religious prosperity, the state of morals, the degree of intelligence, and even the social and business advantages of a village, town, or city, are all estimated by the number and height of its steeples; and if a community could be found without a church, the unfortunate inhabitants would be stigmatized as heathens, notwithstanding they may have attained to a high standard of morals, intelligence, piety and virtue. But the gospel church, walking in the Spirit, is the perfection of society; and the perfect society is revealed from heaven under the similitude of a city without a temple, or, in modern parlance, a city without a church.

The absence of the temple suggests, first the complete removal of the law of Moses. The temple was a symbol of the law, and an almost necessary attendant of all law worship. Jerusalem was the pride of the Jews; and the glory of Jerusalem was the temple. The carnal Jews were less boastful of their temple privileges as a mark of special distinction, than of their fleshly relation to Abraham. They saw nothing in the goodly stones of the temple but the gratification of their own pride; they saw nothing in the streaming blood and quivering of the evening sacrifice but the things which Moses commanded; they beheld nothing more in the gorgeous trappings and imposing ceremonies of the high priest than the pomp and splendor of an earthly priesthood. But to the remnant according to the election of grace, "who were born, not of blood nor the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, but of God," the temple with all its service spoke a different language. They looked beyond the matchless pile of stones, to that temple that was to be thrown down and in three days raised up again; they saw beyond the blood that daily drenched the Jewish alters, the blood of the everlasting covenant that was to be shed for the remission of the sins of the many; they recognized in their high priest the type of Him who should "offer Himself without spot to God, and by that one offering perfect them forever"; they heard in the tinkling of the golden bells upon the high priest's garment the joyful sound of the gospel of their salvation.

They groaned under the bondage of temple service, and waited and longed for "the consolation of Israel". There was no hope for the flesh in the deeds of the law, and no rest for the spirit in the earthly Jerusalem. But God had provided some better things for them, and in the fullness of time the new Jerusalem was revealed from heaven, arrayed in bridal splendor, enshrouded

in gospel glory, clothed in vestments of peace, with gates wide open to receive all those predestinated to enter its walls of salvation, its towers of refuge and palaces of peace.

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus spiritual Israel was redeemed from the law of Moses, having become dead to it by the body of Christ, and by Him were led out of bondage, and brought with singing unto Zion, which is the new Jerusalem. They saw from afar the heavenly city. Joyous welcome greeted them, written above the gates in letters of gold, "Come, ye blessed of My Father. "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden." They gladly entered, and, to their increased delight, they find no temple therein. No more sacrifices, no more burnt offerings, no more Sabbath keeping, no more observance of new moons, feasts and holy days. Even the sun and moon which mark times and seasons, days and months, are obliterated from the sky. No Easter celebration, no Christmas frolics. Every vestige of the law removed, and no temple to bring these buried things to remembrance. The justified inhabitants find themselves possessing what angels have desired to look into, and what the prophets of their fathers had searched diligently concerning.

The absence of the temple signifies the perfect deliverance of the elect Gentiles from every species of vain philosophy and esteemed and cherished idolatry. The Gentile Christians (sic) were under equally a galling bondage as were the Jews, although they owed no allegiance to the law of Moses. They were under the law of sin and death, and were by nature alienated from the life of God through their ignorance, and were brought into bondage by the lusts of the flesh and the wiles of their priestcraft. The temple is not only a symbol of the law of Moses, but is a universal attendant of every form of Gentile idolatry. Stupendous temples adorned the cities of Egypt five thousand years ago. These temples were the homes of Egypt's gods, sources of revenue to Egyptian priests, and the oppressors, enslavers and robbers of Egypt's people. Marble shrines of exquisite beauty brightened the cities of ancient Greece; massive temples of costliest design contributed to the imposing grandeur of the once mighty Rome; and gorgeous temples of gold, of fabulous wealth, dazzled the eyes of Spanish robbers in the far away mountain recesses of Mexico and Peru. The gigantic remains found in every quarter of the earth proclaim in tongues of crumbling stone, the universal reign of temple service over the benighted sons of men. The reign of grace has broken the reign of sin, and the Gentiles have seen the salvation of God. Grace searched the dark places of heathen idolatry, and brought forth to the light of the glorious gospel of the hidden objects of electing love.

Many of the saints at Ephesus had served in the bondage, in the temple of Diana; many of the "washed, justified and sanctified" ones of the Corinthian church had been gathered from the temples of Olympian Zeus, which adorned and burdened that

opulent city; and many of the called saints of Rome had been led out of the temples of Jupiter. When Paul declared to the Athenians of Mars' Hill that God dwelleth not in temples made with hands, some who worshiped at the altar of the unknown god cleave unto him and believed. All the inhabitants of this city, whether Jew or Greek, bond or free, have learned that God dwelleth not in temples made with hands, but that He is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit. They have found to the joy of their hearts, that where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. The truly spiritually minded seek no temple, but God Himself. In Him they live and move and have their being, and in this gracious environment they enjoy all the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

The absence of the temple signifies the breaking down of the "middle wall of partition between the Jews and the Gentiles." The Jewish temple was the great objective distinction between the Jews and all other nations, and stood as an outward evidence of God's favor to the Jews and rejection of the Gentiles. But, as an outward evidence that GOD is not a respecter of persons, and that the Gentiles are "brought nigh by the blood of Christ" and reconciled in the same body with the Jews, the temple of Jerusalem was utterly destroyed, completely thrown down, so that "not even one stone remained" upon another, as Christ had said before should be done. In addition to this outward evidence, the new Jerusalem was revealed to the eye of faith with no temple in it, so that the believing Jew can no more be offended by bringing Gentiles into the temple. The grounds of disputes concerning Jewish prerogative have been completely removed from the church under the gospel dispensation, and now representatives of every nation dwell together in unity in this spiritual commonwealth, each esteeming others better than himself, all hearts having been purified by faith which works of love. All have God for their Father, having been born again; all washed in the same blood, and all possessing one life, live together in the unity of the Spirit and in the bonds of peace.

The absence of the temple signifies the absence of priestcraft. There is but one city in which priestcraft is not to be found, and that is the city of God. Priests have sought to rule the world; and are still seeking. A priesthood is a necessary element of all formulated religions, whether Jewish, Mohammendan, Catholic or Protestant. The priesthood of all will-worshipping idolaters has always pretended to stand between the people and their gods, and that in some way or other they are instrumental in bringing about reconciliation between offending men and offended gods. This important element is common to all carnal religious systems; it is found alike in heathen, Catholic and Protestant, and is plain evidence of the common origin and common interest of all religious enterprises. The Catholic priest assumes to forgive sins for a stipulated sum, and pray souls out of purgatory for wages. The different Protestant hirelings will not exactly

promise to do this, but they are equally cunning, and as little to be trusted. They hold out that men cannot be saved unless they hear them preach, and believe them; and some even go so far in their blasphemous presumption as to say that the heathen cannot be saved, neither can God justly damn them, until they preach to them. They array themselves in hypocritical robes of false christs, and profess to be commissioned to evangelize the world and bring it to Christ. They even ascribe the salvation of their children to their incantations, to penny tracts (Not now with billions of dollars collected annually...pennies are not welcome anymore! ED.) and religious fiction. They have invented hundreds of schemes and tricks to delude the people, and meeting in conventions from year to year to devise new fables, to send out their agents with new demands for money.

The absence of the temple implies the absence of all these workers of darkness and propagators of iniquity. The inhabitants of this city have been delivered from the base deception of both Catholic and Protestant priesthoods. They have learned that there is but one mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus. They are themselves a royal priesthood in Christ, prepared by grace to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. In this new creation they worship God in the spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh. They have no need of a candle, or the light of the sun or moon, all of which are emblems of worldly wisdom, as claimed by the carnal priesthoods; but the Lord God giveth them light, and the Lamb is the light thereof. Carnal worshippers seek a temple, but the spiritually minded seek no temple but God Himself; the carnal worshipper delights in rites and ceremonies, but the spiritual seeks the secrecy of his closet; the carnal worshipper seeks the intercession of priests, but the spiritual is satisfied with no intercession outside of the unutterable groanings of the Spirit Himself.

The absence of the temple signifies the absence of all fraud, deceit and violence. All the great temples of the world, from Thebes to Athens, from Athens to heathen Rome, from heathen Rome to Catholic Rome, from Catholic Rome to Protestant London, have been intimately connected with the blackest crimes of history; they have been the cradles of superstition, folly and vice, the nurseries of the antichrist in every phase and form, the despots of hypocrisy, the resorts of religious deceivers and oppressors; the sepulchers of liberty, prison house of saints, and the high seats of spiritual wickedness. The absence of the temple from the city of God is evidence that all the works of the flesh are unknown either to Jew or Greek in pure spiritual worship. This city is redeemed from all iniquity, and in this spiritual city, the true gospel church, no guilt is found. The deeds of the body are mortified, and the fruit of the Spirit abounds, The inhabitants are blessed with good and upright hearts and are in possession of charity which thinketh no ill of his neighbor.

The contrast was no greater between this city and old Jerusalem, than between this city and the communities of carnal religionists now. This is an age of extravagant temple worship. The chief ambition of the different sects is to surpass each other in temple building. Religious societies in every place from the country cross-roads to the metropolis of the nation, render themselves a pest to their neighborhood and a disgrace to the name of Christianity, in going beyond their means to gratify the foolish, wicked, antichristian pride in erecting fine places of worship. The huge piles of stone and stained glass, thrown together in all the fantastic forms of heathen architecture that adorn our towns and cities, are regarded with quite as much reverence and admiration by their benighted votaries, as the temples of any of the ancient heathen nations.

This city is the whole election of grace, as they in one body worship the Father in spirit, as they stand holy and without blame before Him in love. God Himself dwells in them and with them, and He is their temple, and they are His.

The glory of the city is seen only by faith; the carnal senses of the saints themselves have never seen it. But the time shall come when still more grace shall be brought to them. The city shall be unveiled until all shall see it plainly and all earthly cities with all their temples and idolatry shall be finally and forever overthrown, and the city of God shall stand a living, enduring, eternal monument to the love, mercy and power of God, and the victory of Christ over all enemies.

H.M. Curry, May 14, 1893

(Copy from September 1980 Predestinarian.)
Sent to Signs by
Elder Noel Conner.

MATTHEW 5: 11-12.

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 1993

Alton Goodwin, NC	$2.00
Mrs. Kenneth H. Mathis, TN	7.00
Billy Weatherford, VA	2.00
Mrs. Ruth Dalton, VA	2.00
Troy Shepard, NC	2.00
Mrs. Coro Brinkley, NC	2.00
Thomas C. Nichols, VA	2.00
O.W. Parks, TX	7.00
Mrs. Reba Wise, TX	2.00
Mrs. Oza Hill, TX	5.00
W. Noel Lavinder, VA	7.00
Mrs. Mildred Plaster, VA	2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER ODESSA DUDLEY BROWN

We have lost another precious sister at Gill's Creek Church, but we feel our loss is her eternal gain.

She was born November 7, 1927 in Franklin County, Virginia as the daughter of Thomas and Maggie McCall Dudley. She was married on November 7, 1947 to Warren Davis Brown, To this Union was born seven children: Chester Brown, Gary Brown, Betty Brown Perdue, Bonnie Brown Harlow, Danny Brown (Deceased), Earnest Brown, Janet Brown Hogan, 13 grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

Sister Odessa joined Sandy Level Primitive Baptist Church in February, 1967 and was baptized in March, 1967 by Elder Leonard J. Brammer and Elder Rufus Brown.

As Sandy Level's turn came to host the Pigg River Association, she and Sister Ruthie Walker were hosts to the Association. Being faithful to the Church and her brethren and sisters in Christ, even though she was suffering from cancer.

When there seemed no way to continue, Sandy Level Church disbanded and she moved her membership to Gill's Creek Church on May 9, 1993.

The love she had for her children, the Church, and her love for the Lord was her life. She fought a good fight and kept the faith. She was given grace to bear her afflictions, and when the time came, she was given grace to die.

Her children's love toward her could be seen by their care for her during her suffering and at her death. I found this very touching.

Only God can join his children together with the cords of his love. When death comes, we are separated for a while from each other. But there is a sweet rest for God's children until the Lord comes again to bring us forth in that glorified body and carry us home on the wings of his love to that eternal home in heaven.

I believe Sister Odessa had that precious hope, that someday she would see Christ for herself and be satisfied.

She fell asleep in Christ on September 29, 1993. Her funeral was conducted at Lynch Funeral Home in Rocky Mount, Virginia by Elders W.T. Conner and Larry Hollandsworth. She was laid to rest at Dudley family cemetery, awaiting the second coming of the Lord, Jesus Christ.

Written by a brother in hope,
Elder Larry Hollandsworth

GRACIE PAULINE TOWNLEY NORRIS

It is with sad heart to try to write the obituary of Gracie Pauline Townley Norris. Who God took from our midst on August 9, 1993. She was 79 years old.

Born March 19, 1914 in Tinsman, Arkansas. A daughter of Wylie Townley and Belle O, Mary Townley. She was a firm believer of the Old School Primitive Baptist doctrine. And

went to church as long as she could. Her health got bad, and she had to go live with her daughter.

She is survived by three sons. Douglas A. Norris and Dennis Ray Norris of Saldtna, Alaska, William Buddy Norris, Stockton, California. One daughter Dorothy Jean Norris, Cottage Grove, Oregon. Two brothers Troy Townley, Oxford, Alabama and Doyle Townley, Maysville, Oklahoma. Eight grandchildren and ten great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held in the Benton Funeral Home Chapel on Friday, August 13, 1993 at 10 A.M. by Elder Theron Jones. Burial was in Chapel Hill Cemetery by Benton Funeral Home. We will miss her so much in so many ways. But our loss is her gain in Christ Jesus. Written by her sister in law in love.

Mrs. John Clovis Townley
Frances Townley, Church Clerk

THELMA CLAY OAKLEY

It is with sad heart that I attempt to write an obituary of our beloved Sister. Our Lord and Savior called her home on September 12, 1993 at University Hospital at Little Rock, Arkansas at age of 86 years. Born on July 23, 1907 in Dallas County. A daughter of William C. Scraggins and Ada Wood Scraggins. She was a firm believer in the doctrine preached by all Primitive Baptists for many years. She asked for a home with the Church May 16, 1981. Was baptized by her Pastor Elder John C. Townley on May 17, 1981.

She is survived by her husband Floyd Oakley of Fordyce, Arkansas also a member of Pilgrim Rest Church. One son Rayboro Oakley of the home Fordyce Arkansas. Two daughters; Sarah Jean Strankevitz of Little Rock, Arkansas. Reba Hibes if Southhaven, Miss, and four Grandchildren.

Funeral was held in the Benton Funeral Home Chapel on Tuesday Sept. 14th at 10:00 A.M. by Elder Theron Jones. Burial was in McDonald Cemetery by Benton Funeral Home.

She will be missed by all that knew her. Family, Friends, Church Members. This was requested in Conference at Pilgrim Rest Church.

Frances Townley, Church Clerk

BROTHER CLEMMON WARREN SMITH

Brother Clemmon W. Smith, a lifelong member of North Creek Primitive Baptist near Belhaven, North Carolina, departed this life on August 11, 1993. He was born in Pamlico County, North Carolina in 1902 on the 19th day of November to Johnny W. and Bessie Potter Smith. While still young, he moved to Beaufort County where he spent the remainder of his earthly life first as a barber, store owner, and owner of a trucking company. Farming was always his favorite occupation, though, and he spent many long hours in the tobacco fields of Eastern North Carolina.

In 1925 he married Marjorie Moreslender, and from this union there were six children born, five of whom survived. His wife died in 1980. He had four brothers, now all deceased, three of whom were also members at North Creek. Three sisters preceded him in death and two are still living.

Brother Clemmon was strong in the faith and was always present at meeting when his health would allow. He spoke fondly of coming to North Creek by horse and buggy as a young child, and was, at his death, the oldest member of the church. He would speak without hesitation of the blessings that the Lord had given him and left no doubt that his faith was not negotiable. Surely the saints will rejoice upon his arrival, and those of us who mourn his departure from this earth will be comforted in knowing that God gave us so many wonderful years with him.

Elder J.T. Prescott, Moderator
Tom G. Thompson, Clerk

MARY HUNDLEY STRATTON

It pleased our Heavenly Father to take Sister Mary Stratton Home to Glory on October 7, 1993.

Sister Mary joined Strawberry Primitive Baptist Church on July 3, 1920. She was a faithful member and attended services as long as she was physically able. She loved Strawberry Church and was an active supporter.

Sister Mary was born April 23, 1902 in Dry Fork, Virginia to James Henry Hundley and Sister Minta Oakes Hundley. She was a graduate of Harrisonburg State Teachers College, and she taught school in the Pittsylvania and Henry County school systems for many years.

She met her husband-to-be, John Stratton, in Henry County and to this union was born three sons - John, James and David. The Strattons called Ridgeway, Virginia their home.

Her husband and two of their sons, James W. Stratton and David Lee Stratton preceded her in death.

She leaves one son, John H. Stratton, and daughter-in-law Sandy of Fairfax, Virginia, two grandsons, and a brother - Brother Guy H. Hundley of Dry Fork, Virginia.

Sister Mary believed in Salvation by Grace. She was a lovely Sister - to know her was to love her - and we miss her so very much.

She lived her last days at Roman Eagle Nursing Home in Danville. She had her suffering here - now she is resting from all her labors.

Her funeral was conducted at Swicegood Funeral Chapel in Danville by her Pastor Elder Thomas Soloman. She was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park beneath a mound of beautiful flowers to await the coming of her Blessed Savior to gather his jewels home. May the Good Lord comfort, bless, and give reconciling Grace to her loving family.

Written by a Sister in Hope,
Sister Gertie C. Holley

SISTER EMMA SWINSON

My request of Cypress Creek Primitive Baptist Church of Onslow County, I will attempt to write the obituary of Sister Emma Swinson, who was born October 15, 1907 and departed this life May 7, 1990. Her husband, Mr. Leslie Swinson, died in 1953.

Sister Swinson was received into the fellowship of Cypress Creek Primitive Baptist church, of Duplin County, on November 14, 1937 and was baptized by the late Elder R.P. Batchelor. In the year of 1970, she became one of the charter members of the Cypress Creek Primitive Baptist Church of Onslow County who's pastor was Elder Horace Bryan. Sister Swinson was truly a kind, humble, precious member.

On my first day of serving the Church as their pastor, I took special notice of this little sister in Christ. This was Saturday before the 2nd Sunday in November of 1982. I believe I saw that same little jewel as spoken of in Ezekiel, 16th Chapter 12th Verse, that was placed in the forehead of that little girl child that was cast out in the day she was born. We believe this little girl is symbolic of the Church, the Bride, that Christ died to redeem. This little gift was placed in the forehead where the subject of His grace could not see it, but brethren of like precious faith can most always detect this special gift. We also believe that Sister Emma was girded about with fine linen and covered with silk, verse 10, which we believe to represent the Grace of God.

Sister Swinson's life was clean and her walk was orderly. "The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord." Several times we took her home from Church meetings. She lived alone in a neat little house, well kept, both inside and out. A well groomed lawn and a clean little garden, well tilled, with flowers in her yard and some chickens in the lot. We feel that she desired nothing more than just to live a simple life, enjoying the sweet fellowship with her Church and friends, and most of all, sweet fellowship with God.

During the last few weeks of her life, she spent in declining health. While in the hospital for several days, some of the sisters, namely Sister Sarah Williams and Sister Inez Humphrey, would try to visit with her daily and would hand feed her hoping to encourage her to eat so as to gain her natural strength. But when God's appointed time came to call her home, and there, we believe, is the time when there comes a separation of the spirit from the body. We believe that Sister Swinson's Christ-like spirit took its flight back to the Father who gave it, and when Jesus comes back to call for the sleeping dust of his little ones, that were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, we believe that she will be included in that blessed number that the Bible speaks of as a certain number.

Her funeral was held at the family cemetery and a grave side service conducted by this unworthy writer.

Written by her Pastor,
Elder J.C. Carroll

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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AMAZING GRACE

Amazing grace (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved:
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the vale,
A life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine;
But God, who called me here below,
Will be forever mine.

Newton.

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EDITORIAL

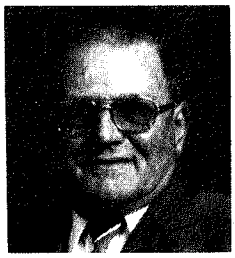

ELDER C.B. DAVIS, JR.

I came into possession of a book about the lives and experiences of many of the hymn writers that wrote the poems we use as our hymns in our churches. I feel that many church members and attenders would enjoy reading of the lives and works of these writers. The poems are expressions of any experience of Grace or some manner that God used to bless them with manifestations of His love and mercy.

I will endeavor to write what I read in the books and though not always quoting give as best I can a view into the lives of the writers and the wonders in words they wrote. I trust I shall be Blessed to convey to those who are interested a measure of the dedication and love the writers had for their Blessings at His Hands.

Respectfully Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

JOHN NEWTON

Newton was born in London, July 24, 1725 and was an only son. His mother was highly educated and devout in her belief in the church. She hoped her influence would have effect upon John that would make him a worthy citizen. She began teaching him very early in life and by age four he could read most any ordinary book. The happiness of life with his mother was short lived as she died when he was just seven and then his life of sin and wild ways began. His father, being a ship's Captain at sea, was very seldom seen by John.

When John was twelve years old and bitterly refused any and all discipline his father had no choice but to carry him to sea. This gave him a chance to learn the ways of seafaring men and especially their evil ways and wrongdoings. He learned the ways fast and at age sixteen he was ruthless and wicked enough that his father all but denied him as a son. He applied at that time for charge of a ship in order to begin the slave trade. He made many trips to Africa to bring to England and other countries many blacks as slaves even one ship load to Charleston, S.C.

He showed no interest in religion although his mother had attempted to instill in him satisfactory knowledge of Godliness when he was a young lad. John was intent in but one thing, that being to bring more slaves from Africa than any other captain. He made many trips and had no mercy on the crew or his load of blacks. There were times when there would be plots against him but (unknown to him at the time) God brought these plots to naught.

John was captured on one trip and was slave to a prosperous black woman. He was fed with just crust and crumbs from the table and came near starvation. He nearly lived the life of a dog until such time as his crew effected his escape. While a prisoner there he began to think about his mother's teaching and yet was not convinced that God was in the matter of happenings in his life.

God has His own way and time to deal with His people and that time came with John Newton on one of his voyages to Africa. He was returning with a load (one hundred and four) of slaves and a great storm broke upon them. The ship began to take on water where the sea had broken loose boards on the side. Newton and the crew pumped with all effort and baled water with cans, buckets and any other containers but to no avail. John began to wonder if God indeed was bringing this upon them to destroy all on board because of his wicked doings, his words I here quote; "I knew I was indeed a Jonah on the ship."

The boat seemed indeed doomed to sink with all its company for the storm seemed to worsen all the while. Newton tied himself to the wheel post with rope in order to try and control the ship. The sea swept across the deck with every wave carrying two of the crew to their deaths. There then happened the providential care of God as Newton suddenly felt a great desire to pray though never attempting such before. He first prayed for those slaves deep in the hold of the ship chained together, then for the crew and last for himself though feeling it would serve no purpose for himself for he now saw himself as a hell deserving sinner.

In a short time the sea calmed, the moon appeared and the wind changed to a favorable position for the safety of the ship. While Newton was there on his knees a piece of board that had broken loose in the storm floated against his leg. He took the board to his cabin and wrote the first lines of Amazing Grace, finishing it after he arrived safely in port. There was at this time a wonderous change in his life and he was Blessed to finish the course of life as one of the greatest ministers of the Gospel that England ever knew. He died on Dec. 21st, 1807 and just before doing so answered his niece who was attending him when asked if all right; "I am satisfied with the Lord's will."

Amazing Grace is considered one of Newtons greatest poems but during his years of writing he composed over two hundred. The hymns of this man have been sung and still are today by every denomination known. He

left with the world a treasure of the work of God within and the power of expression in his writings.

There is in the church in London that he served twenty-eight years a mural tablet that he wrote the words of himself and reads thus.

John Newton, Clerk

Once and infidel and libertine,
A servant of slaves in Africa,
Was, by the rich mercy of our God
and Savior Jesus Christ,
Preserved, restored, pardoned,
and appointed to preach the faith
He had long labored to destroy,
Near sixteen years at Olmay in Bucks,
And twenty eight years in this Church.

There are many who never knew nor saw Amazing Grace as originally written so I am enclosing a copy from the library of London sent me by Elder Alex McCall of Canada some years ago.

THE ORIGIN OF THE HYMN, "AMAZING GRACE"

John Newton, the celebrated English preacher and hymn writer, realized that he was a trophy of divine grace. A while before his death, a brother minister came to have breakfast with him. Family prayers followed the meal. Mr. Newton's sight had almost failed him, and he was unable to read. He sat and listened to his friend as he read the 15th chapter of I Corinthians. When the tenth verse was read, "By the Grace of God I am what I am," Mr Newton began to speak: "I am not what I ought to be. Ah! How imperfect and deficient! I am not what I wish to be. I abhor what is evil, and I would cleave to what is good. I am not what I hope to be soon. Soon I shall put off, with mortality, all sin and imperfection. Though I am not what I ought to be, nor what I wish to be, nor what I hope to be; I can truly say that I am not what I once was, a slave to sin and Satan; and I can heartily join with the apostle, and acknowledge, by the grace of God I am what I am."

John Newton could say that with conviction and joy. What had he once been? When he was seven years old, he lost his mother. A little later, he went to sea with his dad and learned all the evils of the seaman's life. Still later, he was forced into the Navy. He deserted, but was caught and stripped and beaten until the blood flowed from his wounds. He had now become a hardened infidel. He fell in with African slave traders. He went from bad to worse until he himself was sold as a slave. It was a Negro woman who bought him, and she gloried in her power over him. She made him depend for his food on the crusts she tossed under the table. He had fallen to the depths of human degradation. And yet the grace of God found him, and saved him, and made him one of the greatest ministers of Christ, and a writer of hymns that have stirred the hearts of men the world over. Truly, he could say, "I am not what I once was."

And truly he could say, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

Knowing this do you wonder at John Newton's message in the grand old hymn:

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound.
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."

When we read this account of John Newton's life, we can understand why he wrote the nine verses (along with the regularly sung verses) which are so seldom used today. Read carefully the nine "missing" verses:

"AMAZING GRACE"

In evil long I took delight,
Unawed by shame or fear;
Till a new object met my sight
And stopped my wild career.

I saw One hanging on a tree,
In agonies and blood;
Who fixed His languid eyes on me
As near His cross I stood.

Sure, never till my latest breath,
Can I forget that look;
It seemed to charge me with His death,
Though not a word He spoke.

My conscience felt and owned the guilt,
And plunged me in despair;
I saw my sins His blood had shed,
And helped to nail Him there.

Alas, I knew not what I did,
But all my tears were vain;
Where could my trembling soul be hid,
For I the Lord had slain!

A second look He gave that said,
I freely all forgive!
This blood is for thy ransom paid,
I died that thou mayest live.

The Lord has promised good to me,
His Word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be,
As long as life endures.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease;
I shall possess within the vail,
A life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow
The sun forbear to shine,
But God who called me here below
Shall be forever mine.

(Selected from the "Baptist Examiner," June 29,1974, page 5.)

John 1:1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

CORRESPONDENCE

Signs of the Times:

I feel the Lord, once he has quickened us Eph. 2:5, chosen us, Eph. 1:4, predestined us Eph. 1:5, drawed us John 6:44, called us 2 Tim. 1:9; He may very well use us as instruments or servants to do as He would direct us. I feel we must be directed and prompted to do His will and would never be able to do it on our own. A man's way is not in himself nor in a man to direct his steps Jer. 10: 23-24. A servant must do what his master says. Does an instrument or servant have a choice?

Once He has quickened, prompted, directed, touched, whatever word you prefer, then and only then, are we able, with the help of God and holy spirit to bear good fruit, do good works, etc. Noah and his family were spared by the grace of God, all men are sinners, God did not have to spare him and direct him to build an ark. They were told what to do Gen. 6:14.

Acts 9:1 Paul here breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord. Paul thought he was doing a service to God and I don't think any man could have changed his mind. Did he or could he have chosen to do different of his own free will? No, the Lord had to reveal Himself to Paul and direct him to go to the city and there you will be told what to do. Acts 9:6 He was an instrument, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name Acts 9:15. A slave or tool or servant, so to speak, to do His will. Paul was under compulsion to preach 1 Cor. 9:16-17. No choice, willing or unwilling Ananias was directed and sent to Paul by the Lord Acts 9:10 and 9:17. He did not do this on his own, he was told, directed, chosen, whatever word you like, to do this by the Lord. You might want to notice, only after all this, was he baptized 9:18 God had already chosen him, baptism does not save. Cornelius and Peter were told what to do Acts 10:3-5 Peter did not choose to obey, he had to be told or directed what to do and said "no" at first. Acts 10:13-14.

Surely you don't think that David just happened to be at the battlefield with his brothers when he slew the giant? No, he was brought up to do this by God. Predestined to do this and be king. Everything about David was written in the book before David was born Psalm 139:16. Thine eyes have seen my unformed substance; and in Thy book they were all written, the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of them.

The holy scriptures are for the men of God only. The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit 1 Cor. 2:14, but will choose darkness over light John 3:19. It does not depend on the man that wills or the man who runs, but on God, who has mercy Rom. 9:16 for this scripture says to Pharaoh, For this reason I raised you up 9:17 He has mercy on who He desires and hardens who He desires Rom. 9:18 The thing molded will not decide to be saved. Does not the potter have the right to

make one honorable and one to dishonor? Rom. 9:21 They have no choice. Some for destruction and some for glory Rom. 9:22-23 For all men? No, only to those who are chosen, Paul endures for these, 2 Tim. 2:10. And these who will go away to eternal punishment (goats) and the righteous to eternal life (the sheep) Matt. 25:46 All the Father gives me shall come to me John 6:37 All that He gives me I lose nothing John 6:39. Jesus came not to do His own will, but God's will John 6:38. Nothing can change God's will, not one name will be added to or taken out of the book of life. God said I will not take you out of the book of life Rev. 3:5

It is quite clear to me this choice was made by God before the foundation of the world, before any was born or did any works, good or bad, and was done solely by the grace of God and the good pleasure of His will, for we are His workmanship created in Jesus Christ for good works which God prepared before hand Eph. 2:10 sealed Eph. 1:13 Any good choice or good works, etc. must come from God, not of ourselves. Every good and perfect thing is declared a gift of God James 1:17 Repentance is His gift Acts 5:31 Faith is His gift. Love, hope, and faith and all Christian graces, the fruit of the spirit Gal. 5:22-23 Jesus Christ said to His disciples, you did not choose me, I chose you. Your salvation is secure and safe with God and as Paul said no power anywhere (that includes your puny and weak power) can change it Rom. 8:38-39 I will not take you out of the book of life Rev. 3:5 The antichrist would fool even the elect if it were possible. So as to deceive, if it were possible, the elect Matt. 24:24 It is not possible, show me anywhere the bible says have faith in yourself, trust yourself. I will show you where it says not to 2 Cor. 1:9 We should not trust ourselves, but in God who raises the dead and delivers us. Don't be a fool, we can do nothing on our own. No man can come to me except the Father in heaven draw him, not of him who willeth or runneth Rom. 9:16.

My eye tires of looking up scriptures so I will say a few words of my own. Of what shall you teach? Teach Jesus Christ, born of a virgin, scorned and crucified for our sins, raised from the dead, ascended to heaven and will come again on that glorious day for all of God's children. The chosen ones, the ones created to honor, and the ones created of dishonor to destruction. He will teach them to love one another, to forgive one another, and to help one another. Teach them of the patience and love of God for His chosen (not all men) as I have shown you with scripture.

He will teach them that not one name in the book of life got there by their own doing, not one of his own merit to have a place in heaven. He paid for it all, He and only He, nothing you could do will have anything to do with it.

I would have rejected all of this 10 or 15 years ago, I believed as you believe, but was never, for some reason, satisfied and I cried out almost daily for understanding. I hope the Lord unplugged my ears and opened my

eyes. I have been made to understand that I will never understand all. Now we know in part, but when the perfect comes the partial will be done away 1 Cor. 13:9-10 The Bible may seem to contradict itself, but it does not, we just don't understand all.

A servant of God; I hope and pray.

Russ Erbaugh
Rt. 1, Box 132 - Ipava, Ill.

Dear Editors of the
Signs of the Times:

I just felt impressed with a desire, to write a few lines of explanation to you, of my feelings, concerning your dedication of effort, in your editing, and correcting misspelled words (especially my own), in writings sent to you. My awareness of my poor spelling, along with that of being able to erase some of my misplaced words; are my reasons, for my use of pencil, instead of pen. I do feel very sure, that your efforts in getting the Signs out to us, must be tiring and maybe even frustrating at times; and so, I do wish to thank each of you, (I hope) from the depth of my heart; for I do receive much comfort from reading and re-reading those precious writings in the Signs; and especially, those that be a witness, to what I feel. But, while I do desire to thank you Brethren, for all your efforts in your endeavor: I feel it of uppermost importance, that I be enabled to thank our God, for giving you all a mind to do, and His furnishing you all things necessary, for its completion; and His enabling this poor worm, to receive some comfort from its so being. So once again, thank you all so very much. As much as be, in accord with His Holy will, may His visits with you, and me, and all His children, bring comfort to our (if I could be one amongst you) souls, and brighten our precious hope in our Lord, and keep us ever loving both Him and our Brethren, and all this be in the name of Jesus Christ and for His sake AMEN.

Troy G. Shepard

To the Dear Editors of the Signs:

Question, - What could have been God's purpose in and for, having let sin into this world?; Well, do these, of His inspired words, not somewhat, give an answer; where sin abounds, grace does much more abound; and to His chosen vessels, - My grace is sufficient for thee; and By grace are ye saved etc.; and also, for to make His power known, in His school of grace, wherein all His chosen vessels, do become enrolled by Him, for their good, and for His glory; I believe so. I believe, all who have tasted of His greatness and goodness, would gladly agree, God is full of grace; and so, in light of that; were there no sinning in this world, by His chosen vessels; what part or purpose, would or could, His grace serve? again - by grace are ye saved etc; and further still, if none had ever sinned; from what, would or could any be saved? Now, it is surely not my intention here, to in any sense of the meaning of words, of trying to defend sin; nor to in any way or man-

ner, lessen the awfulness of sin in mankind; but only, to give my view, as to God's purpose in it so being here. For, as is my understanding, and my belief, and feelings; except for what God had and has a purpose in it being here, then there exists absolutely no possibility of its existence. Had the vessels of His mercy never sinned, what could have been His purpose, for having sent His beloved Son down upon this earth?; for, according to the Scriptures; His beloved Son Jesus Christ, came down for a specific purpose, that being, to save His people from their sins; of which, He did surely do. I feel and believe, and all whatsoever God does, is for a (His) purpose; and each and all shall surely serve that very purpose for as God is God and beside Him, there is no God, and that all power (the only source of all strength) that is, is only that ordained of God; and therefore is, entirely under God's complete control at all times; and therein, it would seem to me, to be firmly and unalterably established, that there could exist no thing or nothing, outside God Himself, what could alter or change any thing, from its set and established course; and furthermore, God is God and He changeth not.

As it has been with me in the past, so was it the same with me this time, concerning this writing; that question, as to whether I aught to, or aught not to write, whenever these things are bearing upon my mind and feelings; and also, these questions come to mind, just what or who do you (me) think you are, to even consider, writing upon so sacred a subject?; what is your motive or intent, while writing?; are you expecting some personal gain, or recognition from others, as might cause them, to boast of you in some way or manner? But I was just reminded, of what I heard an Elder say, many years ago; when some one or more came to him, after his discourse, wherein he was greatly blessed to speak; and apparently, were praising him; the Elder said, please do not pat me on the back, as if I had done some great thing, for I myself, will do more than enough of that. I do so hope and desire to be kept, so as my motive for writing, would not be, from a desire for self praise; for I feel, such would be, a most awful frame of mind to be in. Mark this, just so sure as flesh is flesh, its very nature is, to hunger for and love its own being praised. But satan or the devil, is no more unworthy of such praise, and is in fact the instigator of it. And whenever our fleshly nature, is desirous of this praise, that is what I call, walking hand in hand, with satan or the devil. Now even though, all that being true; (and in no part, giving any excuse to man, for his transgressions; nor any good marks to satan or the devil); and yet still, is it not true, that satan or the devil, is fulfilling to exactness, that very purpose for which God had in and for his being here? and also, is man's carnal nature, not reacting to satan's influence, in exact like manner, as God foresaw and knew that it would?; Yes, I believe so. Now, what rightful room does this leave, for man's boasting, of either himself, or any other

man or group of mankind? none, I feel. For no man of himself, can preach the word of God, than can he reach up to heaven with him arm, and bring God down from His throne. Therefore, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, the Three-in-One God; is the One and only name, ever worthy, of any and all praise, honor and glory, both now and forever more, AMEN: and yet, all that being true, does in no way shape or form, lessen that extreme importance, of that love, each of His children, aught to have for the others. For, if God loves us, that love wherewith He first loved us, will surely, in His time, work in us, that same love, for both Him and His; For it is all that same love, and from that same source, from God. There is no other source, from which such love could come; and that love is so effective, that there is not enough devils on earth or in hell, to take away that love entirely, from one who has received it. Now, what manner of love is this love, referred to here; it surely is not that natural love we have for parents, or relatives, or wife or husband, or our children, or any other natural physical love we may have; But it is (if we have it) a Holy Spiritual love, of which, was and is God's gift unto us; and therein lieth, that absolute assurance and certainty, that love could not possibly be for the fleshly body of a Brother or Sister in the church, but it is by reason, of having seen evidence, of the Holy Spirit having worked within One; for such love, extends to all that be Holy; and that love for one, is in no way or manner, influenced or effected by, whether or not, that one's face be wrinkled, he or she be rich or poor in worldly goods; or they be (what we call) handsome, pretty or homely, in their natural features. For this love is, a God implanted inner love; and right along within that God given love, goes an eye, and an ear, that is enabled to see and hear Holy sights and sounds; therefore, that inner eye and ear, looks and listens, for that inner sight and sound, and not that outer sight or sound, that all the world can see and hear, with the natural eye and ear. And so, my belief of these things, as being Holy truths, and within my sweet and precious hope, goes a desire, that I might be kept in such a way, that my expressions of my love for the Brethren, might be understood, as not being for the outer man, but, for that inner man, or that inner implantation of God, of which I feel, I have seen outwardly expressed from them. Now, if what I have thus far written, be the Holy truth, then He has already blessed them; and if they not be Holy truths, they are already condemned; If the latter, may God have mercy on my soul; Nonetheless, may His name be praised AMEN:. Now, what I have written thus far, may have somewhat, not kept directly to that subject purposed in its beginning; I can only say to that; I have written, as it came to my mind and feelings; and so, if it be in accord with the Holy truth; then, that is what is of the uppermost importance, to this poor sinning worm of the dust of the earth. And so I say to you, (if I be in that number), try to look over my many mistakes in spelling or otherwise, with

a mantel of charity. In as much as be, in accord with the will of God; may our love for each other, and all that be Holy, continue, throughout our remaining days here in this lowground of sin and sorrow, and ever after this world is no more.

Troy G. Shepard
103 E. Tateway Rd.
Kitty Hawk, N.C. 27949

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33 Hillcrest Ave.
Roanoke, Va. 24012
Jan. 7, 1994

Dear Precious Ones in The Lord:

Enclosed is our check for two years renewal, and an extra $2.00. It is a check of $20.00.

We love and value the dear writings that appear in our Signs of the Times. And we sometimes realize that a lot of effort is put into it's publication from start to finish. Yet the Signs is from cover to cover its own expression of love and praise. It is sweet fellowship for each other and all praise, honor and glory to our Saviour. We are glad it has remained that way all through the years and we hope it always will! May the valuable truth as it is in Christ Jesus continue to be the source of loving encouragement to God's people. And though we do not know when, where or how, we are sure it will when our Saviour purposes it to be.

With Love and Fellowship,
Mrs. J.B. Ferguson,
Sister Mamie Rose
(for both) The Fergusons

ARTICLES

WHAT IS TRUTH? TRUTH IN ITS PURITY, POWER AND PRODUCTS

By J.C. Philpot

Truth in its Products

This brings me to my third point, which is, Truth in its products, or its fruits and effects.

I said that God had lodged His truth in three depositories: the Person of His Son, the Scriptures of truth, and the hearts of His people. Now, was His truth dead or dormant in His dear Son? Or is His truth dead and dormant in the Word of His grace? How, then, can it be dead and dormant in believing hearts? If, then, God has lodged His truth in the hearts of His people, it is His will that they should manifest the fruits and effects of His grace in their lips and in their lives. I have no opinion of a loose and careless profession, and I have a worse opinion of a loose and careless life. Depend upon it, a loose and careless walk, conduct and conversation never bore the stamp of God upon it. A man may slip and fall, and be by the grace of God recovered: but if there be anything more than another which has cast discredit upon truth in its purity, upon the doctrines of grace, it has been the loose, licentious, careless, ungodly lives of many of its professors. Therefore look to it. If you hope you know truth in its purity, and if you have felt truth in its power, look to it, and examine well

whether there are corresponding fruits and effects manifested in your lips and lives. Time and opportunity will allow me to name only a few of them.

1. What, then, is the first main fruit and effect of receiving truth in its power? Separation from the world. The first precept to which a promise is attached is this: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." Where, then, there is no separation from the world, there is no manifested interest in that promise; and if you believe that you are a son or daughter of the Lord Almighty, and have not yet come out from the world, whether dead in sin or dead in profession you do but hold a lie in your right hand, if this be your faith. Such a faith and such a profession, if Scripture be true, are not of God, "for whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

But how can we be said to have overcome the world unless we are separate from it? Separated from it, we overcome it; united to it, it overcomes us. Separation, therefore, full, lasting unqualified separation must ever be a fruit of God's work upon the soul - the sure effect of receiving truth in its power. I know what God's grace did for me in separating me more than thirty years ago from the world, and from everything dear to nature and the flesh. I know, too, what sacrifices this separation entailed upon me, and how it compelled me to sacrifice my position in life and all my prospects in life, and abandon the prizes of all my studies and labours for many years at a public school and the university when just within my reach - prizes which were my just due, and on which my eyes had long been fixed. Yet I was compelled so to speak and act as to separate me eventually from all the cherished projects and prospects of my worldly ambition, and to give up everything through feeling the power of the truth of God in my soul. I always therefore contend that separation from the world and everything worldly is one of the first fruits and effects of the grace of God in the heart.

2. The fear of God, as manifested by the possession and actings of a tender conscience, is another fruit and effect of truth in its power. And O what a blessing it is to have the fear of God in a tender conscience! It is spoken of in the Scriptures as being "a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death." If, then, you have the fear of God in your breast, you have a fountain of life; and what is that fountain but the "well of water" of which our Lord spoke as "springing up into everlasting life?" Having then that fountain of life, you depart from the snares of death; and as this fountain is not a muddy pool but a springing well, it will water your own soul, it will water the souls of others, it will make you fruitful in every good word and work, and will at last issue in all the bliss and blessedness of everlasting life.

3. Cleaving to the truth of God, His people, His cause, His ordinances,

His servants, His house, His promises, His precepts, and everything connected with God and godliness, and that in a spirit of love and affection from a deed sense of their value and a warm realization of their preciousness, is a mark also and fruit of knowing the truth of God in its power. Wherever the Lord by His own secret work upon the heart makes His truth precious, the very first effect is love - love to the Lord and to His people. "Whom having not seen ye love." "We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." There is such a love to the Lord and His people in that spring-time of the soul when Jesus first makes Himself known and precious. O there is a spring-time of the soul like our present month of May. How beautiful the country looked yesterday as I came up by the train from Croydon! Nature, like a young blooming bride, shone and glittered in all the greenery and bravery of her new apparel. So is there a spring in the soul when every grace of the Spirit shines and glitters with an unspeakable beauty and freshness - the day of its espousals, when it first embraces the happiness of its virgin love. And in that spring-time of the soul, what love there is to God's dear people, what love to God's truth, what love to everything connected with God and His Word!

4. Uprightness of conduct, integrity before God and man, honourable actions and transactions in our business (if in business), obedience to God's revealed, preceptive will, in all the various relations of life, are fruits also of receiving the truth of God in its power. Where grace lays hold of a man's heart and comes into his conscience in purity and power, it must make him an upright, consistent man. He must be an honest man, or he is nothing. And if an honest man, he will carry his honesty into his business; he will carry his integrity into all the walks of life; he will make it manifest day by day by his conduct and conversation that uprighteousness and integrity are stamped upon him by a divine hand; and even the world itself will acknowledge it.

This recalls to my mind a good man, a deacon of a church in the country, though but a farm labourer, who was called under my ministry when I was in the Church of England. The farmer, and he was in a large way of business, came to him one day with tears in his eyes and said, "O, you are the only man I can trust upon my farm. They are robbing me in all directions. Will you take the oversight of the men?" He hated the man's religion, but the only one he could trust of all those by whom he was surrounded was this godly deacon now gone home. Was not that a testimony to a despised religion that its professor was alone worthy of trust? So if grace has laid hold of our heart, it will make us upright in our conduct, in the church and in the world, and influence our movements at home and abroad. And though in these days perhaps a man who truly fears God can scarcely live, or at least much thrive, when all around are engaged in dishonest or dishonourable practices, yet to part

with his integrity is to part with both his conscience and his hope; he will therefore and must be an upright man, come what will.

And so in the various relationships of life - as a father, as husband and a faithful friend. Thus you may follow him through the walks of life and say, "Here is grace; see one who fears God above many; it is stamped upon the man. You can see he is what he professes to be, and that the grace of God is in him of a truth."

Thus I have endeavoured in a feeble way to give you an answer to the question - "What is truth?" I have endeavoured to show you truth in it purity, truth in its power, and truth in its products, or its fruits and effects. Can you set to your seal that these things are true? Are they things, the life, reality and power of which you have felt in your own breast, so that you can say, "Yes, I do know these things, or some good measure of them, by vital experience; for blessed be God I have felt them in my soul, and I am glad to have heard this morning the answer to What is truth? so as not only to receive it from your lips, but to be able to bear witness that it is a right answer from God's own attestation to the power of His truth in my heart."

Gospel Standard: May 1993
Sent in by Elder Noel Conner

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." - 2 Corinthians iv. 17.

O ye suffering saints of God! ye tried and afflicted children of the most High! raise up your thoughts as God may enable you - lift up your eyes, and see what awaits you. Are you tried, tempted, exercised, afflicted? It is your mercy. God does not deal so with every one. It is because you are his children, that he lays on you his chastening hand. He means to conform you to the image of his Son in glory, and therefore he now conforms you to the image of his Son in suffering. 'O but,' you say, 'I cannot believe it is so!' No; if you could, it would not be much of a trial. This is the trial of faith - to go groaning on, struggling on, sorrowing on, sighing on; believing against unbelief, hoping against hope; and still looking to the Lord, though there is everything in nature to damp the hopes and expectations of your waiting souls. Yet all will end well with the people of God. Their life here is a life of temptation, of suffering and trial; but heaven will make amends for all. And if our faith is now tried as "with fire," it will one day "be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." In that day when the secrets of all hearts will be brought to light, the faith of thousands will be found to be little else than presumption; but the faith of God's dear family will then be crowned with "praise and honour and glory;" and they shall see the Lamb as he is face to face, when all tears are wiped away from all faces.

J.C. Philpot

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

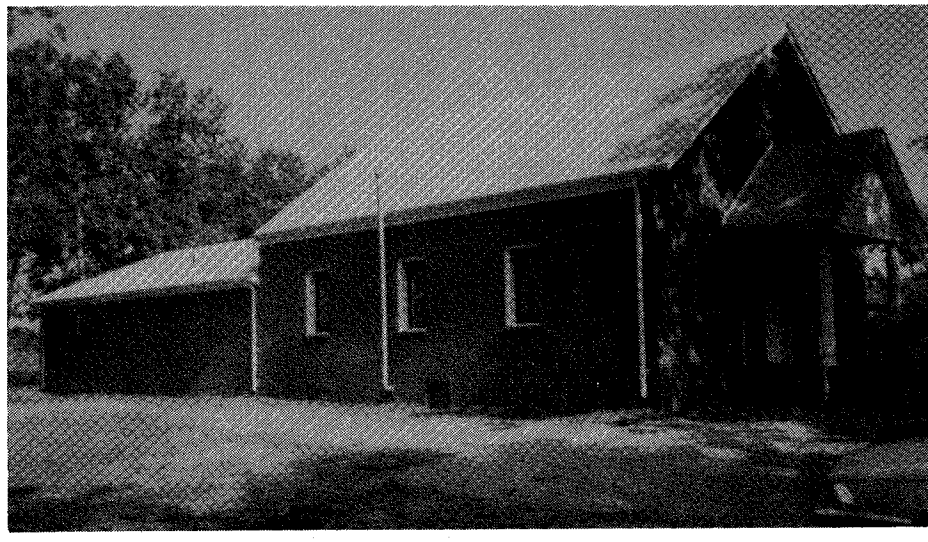

CANAAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

CANAAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Canaan Primitive Baptist Church was established on March 8, 1913. Land for the church was donated by Mrs. Pattie Thomas Dodd, Elder W. Robert Dodd's mother.

The first building's wood frame, constructed in 1913 was badly in need of repairs by 1956 so a cinder block building was erected on a part of the old foundation using some materials from the old building.

In 1990 with a generous gift from Sister Ruth Blain, in memory of her husband, Brother Ernest Blain who was a member of Canaan, an addition and renovation was added to this building, completed in Sept. 1992. Sister Ruth Blain is also a member of Canaan Primitive Baptist Church.

The records show that Elder George W. Hundley was her first pastor and Brother R. Y. Blain Deacon.

After the ordination of Elder W. Robert Dodd on August 15, 1914 he became assistant pastor and in 1925 was called and remained permanent pastor until June 17, 1939. Elder George Doss served for several years, next Elder Raymond Payne served from June 1944 until Sept. 1963. Elder Rufus Brown served the church for a few months following Elder Payne. Elder Robert A. May was pastor from 1964 until 1976 due to his failing health he was unable to attend meetings anymore.

On November 5, 1977 Elder Julian R. Williams was called and is our present faithful, beloved pastor. Deacons are Brothers Harvey Wood and Fred Murphy.

Canaan Church is located on State Road No. 844 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. Meetings are held each second Sunday at 10:30 a.m. Communion services are held in June and November.

VOICES OF THE PAST

From Elder Lambert's Book, "Tried In The Furnace."

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT
Old Faith Contender, September 15, 1947

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

"What then? shall we sin because we are not under the law but under Grace? God forbid. Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey: whether of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness." Romans 6:15, 16.

Before regeneration we were servants of sin. Our lusts were reigning over us. We loved it to such an extent as to be in full agreement and unity. In this charitable state lust is conceived and brings forth sin, and sin, when it is finished bringeth forth death. In regeneration it pleased God to take from us this stony heart of flesh, which was so enticed by lust, and to give us the heart of flesh, which has no affection for lust. It pleased Him to write His laws as commandments in this new heart which makes manifest this sin. "The commandment came, sin revived and I died" stated Paul. I believe Paul died to the enticement of this lust. After this time he no longer served sin willingly but loved righteousness. Yet sin dwelled in him. He was no longer so enticed by lust as to love it with his whole heart. His desire was to live righteously; but he was conscious of the presence of sin; for he expresses himself in Romans 7:17-20, "Now then it is no more I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me; for I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: For to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me."

We delight in the law of God after the inward man but we still bear about the body of death. We serve the law of God with our minds but with the flesh we serve the law of sin. This presence of sin in our mortal bodies is made manifest to us by the Spirit. The Spirit causes us to realize our wretched condition and enables us to pray for deliverance. When it pleases God to work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure we are made to realize it is solely by grace and we are blessed to be thankful to Him for these blessings.

Thence, after regeneration grace reigns over its subjects to produce the fruits of the Spirit. The greatest of these fruits is love, love of God, love

to God and love to the brethren. This same love that God loves us is reciprocal. It causes us to love Him with this same love. It also embraces the brethren. God's people do love one another. How can you love God whom you have not seen if you love not your brethren whom you have seen? Another fruit of the Spirit is joy. None but sinners who have experienced the exceeding sinfulness of their sins and their inability to extricate themselves from its penalty, power and consequences, can appreciate and realize the joy of being delivered from sin by God's amazing grace. What a joy for a chief sinner to be remembered and loved! It is joyful for brethren to meet together.

That Spirit produces peace. There is such rest experienced by that troubled soul which has been calmed by the still small voice that whispers sweet peace. What blessed peace to be remembered so graciously. One who has been convinced so thoroughly that hell would be his just abiding place realizes when a ray of hope of deliverance shines in his darkened and troubled soul. This peace flows from one to another. God's people strive for peace and are peacemakers because they realize the undesireableness of troubles. Those who are wrought upon by God's Spirit are longsuffering. They esteem each other higher than themselves, thus forbear one another's weaknesses. They forgive each other his trespasses realizing that God has forgiven so much. If God has been so gracious as to forgive me of my many transgressions how can I not forgive a brother his trespasses, seeing his trespasses are so little and insignificant compared to my sins?

God's Spirit produces gentleness. God's people are kind to each other and to all with whom they come in contact. They are not harsh in conversation or dealings. They are not offensive even in rebuke. A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger. It were better that a millstone be hanged about your neck and you be drowned in the sea than to offend one of these little ones. May God grant us to be gentle and kind to each other.

When it pleases God to work in His people both to will and to do of His good pleasure they are good. Their walk and conversation are godly. They walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called. Their conduct is upright and commendable, even though that it does not so appear to them.

This spirit produces faith. We are confident that God will fulfill His promises. We feel that God will finally save us in heaven. We trust in the efficiency of the atoning blood of Jesus Christ and His righteousness. We have confidence in brethren of their sincerity and fidelity.

God's people are meek. They had rather yield than to cause trouble or confusion. They do not ride some particular hobby-horse or opinion of their own that they feel might bring discord among brethren. I do not like the expression, "I will stand alone before I will submit to such." That spirit is not

akin to meekness. A "holier that thou" attitude is not characteristic of God's people. Their life is tempered with these graces. They are not fanatical in practice or conversation and it their dealings moderation is practiced.

Paul instructs the church at Ephesus in Ephesians 5:3,4, "But fornication and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you as becometh saints: neither filthiness nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks." Is it then godly that our conversation run along these lines? May He awake us out of sleep and bid us rise and walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise!

Elder E.J. Lambert

THE VICARIOUS SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.

The question often arises in our mind and seems to be of great importance, how God can be just, and the justifier of sinners, since it is written, "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to God?" - Prov. xvii. 15. Yet in the sufferings of our Redeemer, we see one who is holy, harmless, separate from sinners, as the just and holy one of Israel, who is his own most sacred person knew no sin, who was immaculately pure, made sin for us, bearing the sins of many, numbered with the transgressors, condemned to die the just for the unjust, and the wicked freely justified through the redemption that is in him. Is not this a mystery that the angels desire to look into? This mystery is not obviated by the contemplation of the sovereign right of God to do all his pleasures; for justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne. He is a just God, and we are told that he "will by no means clear the guilty." Yet we see the vicarious sufferings of the spotless Lamb of God, when "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment [or as in the margin, He was taken away by distress and judgment, but] and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief." - Isa. 53: 5-10.

In all that we have thus far noticed of the divine testimony the sufferings of our dear Redeemer seem to have been vicarious, or substitutional. One who is just and holy suffering for others who were guilty and righteously condemned by the holy, righteous and just law of God; but unless we can find something more than substitution in the sufferings of our Lord, we shall fail

to discover the justice of the just suffering for the transgressions of the guilty.

Should a citizen of this world commit a crime against the laws of his country, no principle of common law or justice would allow an innocent person to bear the penalty in his room as a substitute. Such a substitution would be a gross violation of justice. Should a criminal convicted of murder, condemned to suffer the extreme penalty of the law, procure an innocent person to suffer death in his room and stead, it would not meet the demand of justice; and if such a substitute should be accepted and executed, it would be a clear case of murder, an outrage against law and justice, and would by no means make the transgressors any less guilty. Substitutions or vicarious suffering alone could never put away sin, meet the stern demands of the holy law of God, or answer the ends of justice. There must therefore be found a principle of relationship identifying the sin-bearing sufferer, before we can trace the justice of God in laying the iniquity of his chosen people on the sinless victim, who himself bare our sins in his own body on the cross. For this relationship let us search.

An owner or shepherd of a flock of sheep may in strictest justice be held for the trespass of his flock. He alone has the right to redeem them because they are his own sheep, and were his before they went astray and committed the trespass for which they are held by law. He is the shepherd whose own the sheep are, and the law justly holds him responsible for expiation. So Jesus says, "I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." - John x. 11. And the dread command is sounded from the throne of God, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the Shepherd," &c.-Zech. xiii. 7. Here is justice and equity. The sheep have trespassed, and the unoffending Shepherd suffers. But, in the absence of this relationship where would be the justice? Had it been the sheep of some other owner, could justice have laid on him their iniquity? But now as we have seen, "All we like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

Should a wife become indebted to the merchant, or to any other creditor, the relationship subsisting affords the only ground on which the husband is held responsible for the amount of the debt; but the law could not in justice substitute another woman's husband and make him responsible for the amount. In the absence of the relation of husband and wife neither law nor justice would allow the demand. Our Lord Jesus Christ claims his church as the bride, the Lamb's wife. He says he is married unto her, and in that relation holds himself responsible for her debts. And by his apostle he says, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." But apart from this relationship is a husband bound to love, by substitution, and give himself for some other husband's wife, as for any but his own wife? Christ loved

and gave himself for his own wife, the church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. - Eph. v. 25-27.

Children may be involved in trouble, trepass, or debt, and the father is held responsible, because he is their father; not merely as a substitute for them, but by virtue of the relation which he bears to them he is held in law; if it were only by substitutions, he might be held as well for the debts or trespass of all other children, as for his own. All whom Christ has redeemed are his children. He is there everlasting Father, and was held responsible for them as such. A surety is also held in justice for the payment of the bankrupt debtors for whom he has endorsed. But for capital offenses, in which life is required, and for which death is the penalty, still nearer and more vital relation is required; neither the husband for the wife, the parent for the child, nor the surety for the debtor, can be accepted. Should a wife or son or daughter be convicted of murder, no innocent husband or parent can be accepted as a substitute for the offender. A vicarious sufferer would not meet the demand of law and justice. But while Jesus sustains all the relations to his church which we have named, and in them all his sufferings may be regarded as vicarious, there is a more vital connection in which he is identified and held to answer all the demands of the law and justice of God.

The church for which our Lord laid down his life, is his body, and he is her head, (Eph. i. 23) and as her head he was numbered with the transgressors, and bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. Isa. 53:12. The transgressors of the divine law for whom he was stricken were all the members of his body. The iniquity of them all was demanded at his hand. If the members of a body commit a crime involving life, it can not be expiated by cutting off such members from body. Suppose a man's hand has plunged a dagger into the heart of a person, that hand if it were cut off would not satisfy the demand of the law which requires the life of the murderer. The hand could not have committed the murder if it were not connected vitally with the body, nor could the body without a head commit the act; therefore the head is justly held for the whole body of which he is the head, the shepherd for the sheep, the husband for the wife, and the parent for the child.

And thus we see the Son of God, the brightness of his Father's glory, and express image of his person, in his mediatorial humiliation, made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, made flesh and dwelling among his members, demanding of his disciples who were slow to believe all that the prophets have written, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" And responsive to that important interrogative, positively declar-

ing "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead on the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." - Luke xxiv. 26, 46, 47. The point to which we desire to call special attention is the necessity of a vital relationship between Christ who makes the sacrifice, and the church for whom the sacrifice was made, to make the sacrifice available to them. If all the holy angels of heaven had been offered for the transgressions of man, such a vicarious or substitutional offering could not have been accepted by the law of God, and must have utterly failed to redeem the transgressors from their sins. Boaz could not have redeemed the inheritance of Elimelech, if he had not been vitally related, as a near kinsman who by vital relationship had in himself the right of redemption. - Ruth ix. 1-9. If our neighbor's sheep have trespassed and are lawfully held for the damage which has been sustained, none but the owner of the sheep can, simply by paying the ransom demanded, make them his own sheep.

The spiritual, eternal life which was with the Father co-existent with his eternal being, was given to his children, in the Son, even that life which was, and is, and forever shall continue to be hid with Christ in God, and constitutes a vital relationship which secures to him the right to take on him the seed of Abraham, when that seed had in the flesh transgressed the law of God, and thus identify himself with them in their flesh, partake of the same flesh and blood of which they are partakers, assume a body made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, in which to suffer and bear their sins in his own body, be put to death in the flesh, that he might redeem them from the sins of their flesh, and bestow on them that eternal life which is the gift of God through him. In his begotten and born of God, even as in his supreme, unbegotten and self existent Deity he is One with the Father in the Godhead. In his begotten Sonship he is the Mediatorial Head of the church, and the "First born among many brethren." Of these brethren, it is written, "For it became him, for whom all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold, I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children [brethren of him that sanctifieth, and children which God hath given him, and whom he is not ashamed to call BRETHREN] are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise [or in like manner] took part of the same," &c.

Their partaking of flesh and blood no more made them the children of God whom he gave to Christ, than

Christ's incarnation made him the Son of God. Christ in his Mediatorial Sonship existed with the Father from everlasting, but was made flesh and dwelt among his children in the flesh when the fullness of the time for his incarnation had come; then, as he himself has declared, "I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me." - John viii. 42. "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." - John xvi. 28. Also, John xvii. 6-8, "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee: for I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me."

This record of the Son of God, as proceeding from, and subject to the will and control of the Godhead, we understand to relate to his Mediatorial, or begotten Sonship, and by no means in disparagement of his unbegotten, independent, eternal Godhead; for he is not only the Word which in the beginning was WITH God, but he is also the Word which in the beginning WAS GOD, and that is the most unlimited sense of the words. In his begotten Sonship we understand that he is the Elder Brother of all who are born of God, and the First Born among many brethren. In his Godhead undivided and indivisible, there being but One God. The head of Christ is God, even as the head of the body or church is Christ. Therefore as the atoning sacrifice for his people we regard him as being infinitely superior to a mere substitute. The atoning sacrifice was made by Christ for his own body, the church, therefore he, in treading the wine press, says, "And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation UNTO ME; and my fury, it upheld me." - Isa. lxiii. 5. Whatsoever is done to any, even to the least of his members is done unto him.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe July 1, 1881).

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 1993

Mrs. Bessie Barber, NC	$2.00
Wilford Parsons, VA	2.00
George W. Hyslip, TN	2.00
T.R. Pullig, TX	2.00
Buford Thompson, VA	2.00
Levi R. McGough, AL	2.00
Ms. Janie Fanning, LA	100.00
(In memory of Mrs. Minnie L. Atwood)	
Charles P. Hayes, AL	5.00
Mrs. Beulah Nichols, VA	2.00
Mrs. Elva Mitchell, NC	2.00
Mrs. Audrey Glidewell, NC	2.00
James L. Howell, AL	7.00
Walter Hill, NC	5.00
Mrs. Elva C. Martin, VA	2.00
Gray E. Hall, AL	2.00
Mrs. Pearl McNelia, MD	2.00
Lowell G. Martin, NC	2.00
Woodrow W. Bellinger, NY	2.00
Tommy Middleton, NC	2.00
Don E. Ferguson, B.C.- Can	7.00
Mrs. Ellen Sellars, CA	2.00

PSALM 8

O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

For thou has made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:

All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;

The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.

O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!

OBITUARIES

LUCILLE LAUDERS

Lucille Lauders, age 91, of Coleman died Tuesday, Jan. 4, 1994 at Coleman County Medical Center.

Funeral services were held at 2:00 p.m., Friday, Jan. 7, 1994 at Stevens Funeral Home Chapel with Elder Lynwood Jacobs officiating. Burial was at Coleman Cemetery under the direction of Stevens Funeral Home.

Mrs. Lauders was born Nov. 1, 1902 in Stephens County, Texas, the daughter of the late J.J. and Belle Vick Sikes. On Nov. 2, 1921 she married Charles Urbane Landers. He preceded her in death on July 26, 1976. She lived in Texas and Oklahoma before moving to Coleman. Mrs. Lauders was a homemaker and a member of the Primitive Baptist Church.

Survivors include four daughters, Sybil Lauders Berry, and Pauline Lauders Roberts Stanley, both of Coleman. Patsy Lauders Berry of Abilene, Tx., Nan Lauders Miller of Royce City, Tx. and a son, Charles Jack Lauders of Auburn, Indiana. 15 grandchildren, 33 great - grandchildren and 2 great - great grandchildren.

Serving as pall bearers were grandsons - Dewayne Berry, Douglas Roberts, Jack Roberts, Johnnie Berry, Tony Berry and David Lauders. Honorary pall-bearers were grandsons-in-law. Roy Rhoads, Benny Barker, Bill Scott, Dickie Reid, Ralph Moten, Brian Rogers and Matthew Russell.

FRANKIE JONES MARTIN

We, the Church at Banister Springs, humbly bow in submission to the will of Almighty God, in-as-much as it has pleased Him, to remove from our midst our beloved Sister Frankie Jones Martin. We believe, as Sister Martin believed, that there is a time to be born, and time to die. These times were established by Almighty God before the world began and as He thought so shall it come to pass and as He has commanded so shall it stand. God is unchangeable, He is just in all His works and ways

and there is none that can stay His mighty hand and there is none worthy to question Him. His will must be done both in heaven and in earth. He has given and He has taken away - Blessed be the name of the Lord God forever.

It pleased the Lord, by His grace and mercy, to deal with Sister Martin at a young age and on the 3rd Saturday in May 1941 united her with Banister Springs Church where she remained a good and faithful member for the rest of her life here on earth.

She was born into this world June 13, 1911, a daughter of Brother Joel Fletcher Jones and his precious wife Sarah Merricks Jones of Pittsylvania County, Virginia. She had one brother, Raleigh Jones, who predeceased her several years ago. She also has a surviving sister, Laila Dove of Danville, Virginia.

By the grace of God, Sister Frankie was united in marriage to Brother James Wesley Martin on April 18, 1927. To this union was born six children. One daughter, Dora Evelyn died as an infant. Five of the children survive: one son - Curtis Martin of Gretna, Virginia; four daughters - Sisters Ruth Taylor and Charlotte Hastings, both of Chatham, Virginia. She is also survived by 18 grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren and 3 step-great-grandchildren.

True love, which can only come from the Lord, was manifested by Sister Martin for all, but especially her dear husband who predeceased her in death in 1969. She never ceased to mourn her great loss of him but, her love for her family seemed to soothe her aching heart. She was always so glad when another baby was born into her family. She loved the Lord and the Church so much and all her many friends were precious to her. Sister Martin was in poor health for several of her final years. She became unable to stay by herself so her precious children took her to stay with them. She would stay with one awhile and then stay with another. They were good to her. It pleased the Lord to bless her to be with Sister Ruth Taylor at the time of her death. The Lord called for her and she obeyed in the night of October 14, 1993.

Sister Martin's funeral was held at Banister Springs Church on October 16, 1993, by her pastor Elder Melvin Shelton and Elder H.P. Somers, who she loved so much. Her body was taken to the Gretna Burial Park and laid to rest beside her precious husband.

We at Banister Springs Church commend the children, in-laws, grandchildren and all who assisted Sister Martin throughout her journey here in this world. May the Lord's grace and mercy be with all so that when that sweet day of the Lord appears, we shall be all gathered together with Sister Martin to meet the Lord and ever be with Him, like Him and be satisfied forever.

Written by one that she loved and one who loved her as a "Mother in Israel" - her pastor I hope,
Melvin R. Shelton

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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POEM

Your tender heart is broken
There is but One who knows
No other one can measure
Just how deep it goes

The sorrow overwhelms you
And pulls you to the ground
You think your Hope has failed you
No comfort can be found

But He will come and heal you
As time goes rolling past
And give to you the courage
For you to say at last

His will is truly perfect
His purposes are wise
His Way is far above ours
As high as are the skies

The stream of grace and mercy
To you in kindness flows
No other one can measure
Just how deep it goes

Anonymous

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EDITORIAL

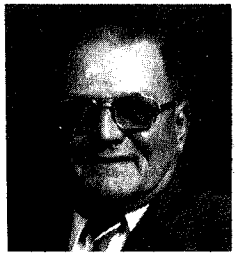

ELDER C.B. DAVIS, JR.

Copy of a Sermon by Elder C.B. Davis, Jr. at the Smith River Association in 1993.

In October of 1968 the deacons of our home church asked me to speak. I made the attempt by using the 23rd Psalm and this morning it seems strongly on my mind.

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters, He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

David, as you Bible scholars are aware, was a shepherd from his early life, even when just a lad of a boy the care of the flock of sheep was in his hands. He writes this as if he were the sheep and he gives God all the praise, honor and glory as being the caretaker. And He is the caretaker of every sheep of promise, of every lamb of grace. So when he says, ***"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want,"*** he means just that. He knows he is totally depraved as far as being able to care for himself - just as a natural sheep is. We know that he looks to the Lord as the source of peace and the source of comfort. Thus he shall not want. There is not a single one of you who - when God is manifest, and when you feel truly that He is your shepherd - has a desire left for anything except that His presence be with you and you desire that it come again and again.

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." I don't know how many there are here in the sound of my voice that are familiar with sheep in the natural sense, but a sheep is a

strange and curious animal and so are we. We learn that in the spring of the year when the grass breaks out abundantly green and tender, the natural sheep will in just a few hours eat enough to bloat himself and die immediately. So what David is touching upon here is that He makes us willing to lie down in the green pastures of sin from which we have feasted throughout all the days of our time until such time as He shows Himself as our shepherd. He makes us willing to lie down right in the midst of that and be satisfied, knowing that indeed because He is the shepherd we shall not want.

"He leadeth me beside the still waters." Sheep will not drink from standing stagnant water. The only place that they will drink is a place where the water is trickling over the sand or gravel in the bed of the stream. Think about this, my beloved, in your own condition. Are you willing to drink, as it were, from the stagnant pools of the sins of this world? Are you willing to drink the stagnant fears and doctrines, if they might be called doctrines, that are set forth in this time world? No! You want to drink of the moving water. You want to drink of the living water. Last Sunday there was one down in the Staunton River Association who mentioned an occasion when there were two doves who were brought as a sacrifice and one of those doves was killed and the blood of that dove was sprinkled upon the waters. It was moving water, it was the evidence that because of the shedding of the blood there is the moving water, the water of life, on our behalf, everyone of us, if I might include myself. And so we won't drink of the stagnant, sin-encrusted things of this world, in this life, for He has taught us that indeed therein there is death, just as He taught us that if we continually feast upon the green pastures of sin, it is nothing but death. And we know that death shall be upon us once. But there is another death that is promised - that is the second death and that is the death that we are so much concerned about. So we want no part of that. So we find Him then leading the sheep, leading me, beside the still waters. We know indeed that still water is deep water, dangerous water, and I say to you this morning that there are those pools of stagnant and contaminated theories of the world that indeed are dangerous and don't you forget it. If you take any part in it, you are dealing on dangerous ground. Thanks be unto God that because He is our shepherd, our great shepherd, that He has taken that desire away from us. And we can feel that, yes, ***"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want."***

"He restoreth my soul, He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." We know that indeed the sheep, the natural sheep is dependent upon the shepherd to lead him to the places where there is sustenance, to lead him in the path that is safe, to lead him in such a way that there shall be a time of rest when the end of the journey is over. We trust in His word in the self-same way that Christ has indeed restored our soul, for we know that with the transgres-

sion in the Garden of Eden, in essence, we were alienated from the very presence of God, never again to gain any sense of comfort and peace from Him until such time as He saw fit to send His son from the climes of glory to shed his blood on the cross and become He who would be between us and God as he sits today at the very throne of God making intercessions daily for his people. So it is in that sense that he felt that ***"He restoreth my soul, He leadeth me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake."*** A path of righteousness is a perfect path and though we ponder in our mind if we've ever had our feet thereon, yet we know as it pleases God He can direct our feet indeed to a path of righteousness. To a sheep it is that path that has been made smooth by those who traveled before, those who came the same way. If we are what we hope to be, my beloved, we trust that we are walking in the same path, the righteous path that Christ himself walked here on earth, that He has removed the stumbling blocks and that He has been our guarantee of a place of peace and rest when the journey is over. Thus we can lie down again in peace, knowing that ***"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want."***

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." We know that, yes, we walk through the valley of the shadow of death every day as the sheep walk through the valley of the shadow of death in nature - that which was above them on the side of the mountain in the form of the wolf and the bear and the lion. Indeed those things that are fearful we have on either side of us as we travel the journey of life. All of those things that are evil to us, if we should partake of them, we know indeed that again it would be nothing more than death, but thanks be unto God that He directs us in such a way that we fear no evil. As you heard in the foregoing, we are not afraid of each other but we fear the wrath of God. We don't have that fear that the world seems to have of mankind and we remember that Christ said on one occasion himself, ***"Fear not them which kill the body but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matthew 10:28).*** And so we have a sense of comfort and peace in this that in the end we shall find peace and rest and we shall be comforted.

And he said, ***"Thou art with me."*** What would we be, where would we be and how would we be if He was not with us this morning. We would all, each of us, be out in the world following after the ways of sin and transgression just as surely as we are breathing the breath of life today because except He keep us, except He be with us, we have no power to obtain merit with God. I know the world would have you believe and I had one to ask me sometime ago as I worked one day just last week, in fact - "I hear that you serve several churches." I said, "I am trying to by the grace of God, I do the

best I can, and that's all I can do, but I feel such a weakness." He said, "You shouldn't feel weak, you should rejoice because each time you go to serve one of those churches God is making a mark on the walls of glory on your behalf." And I wanted to say, "How foolish you are," but I didn't answer him as I was waiting on another customer. But I thought how frail, how vain is the mind of man to think that I, or he, or any other individual, could do anything to obtain merit with God because it all belonged to Him in the beginning and He chose His church, as you've heard, before the foundation of the world.

We find in the Book of Proverbs that the writer speaks of that in the 8th Chapter, I believe, when he writes that I was with Him even before the dust of the highest hill was laid; I was with Him daily rejoicing in his habitation, I was as one brought up with him. My beloved, we are the same age spiritually. It doesn't matter what age we might be when we come into the knowledge of the truth or when we can feel in some marvelous way to say, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." It doesn't matter how old we might be or how young we might be, spiritually we are the same age because God chose each of us, if I might include myself, at the same time before He ever created, as it were, this earth on which we dwell. We don't have to depend upon the vanity of our mind, the frailty of our bodies and our works. Think about it, my beloved, if an individual has to perform some work to enter the climes of glory, think about those that are sick and infirm and not able to care for themselves as far as nature is concerned, where would they be? They'd be left as a sheep without pasture, but my beloved, it is not so. God has made all the plans, the arrangements have been certified in the blood of Jesus Christ and He has set us free. Christ himself said, "If you know the truth, the truth shall set you free and ye shall be free indeed." Aren't you thankful this morning that we stand on those grounds?

You heard Brother Sawyer say, ***"My sheep hear my voice and they will follow me, but a stranger they will not follow."*** When I was a lad of a boy we had sheep at home and my Grandfather would have the care of the sheep so in essence he was the shepherd to those natural sheep. Oftimes they would get out and we children would delight in the fact that we could chase them and try to get them back in. But they would just scatter in every direction and he would come out when he would hear us laughing and screaming and he would say, "Stop, stop right now." He has a bucket that he used when he would feed those sheep and he always kept ground feed and he would take his pocket knife and knock on the side of that bucket. Those sheep would stop immediately where they were and you would hear one say, "Baa" and he would say, "Come on," and that's all he had to say. They'd follow him right to the gate and they willingly went in. They knew that sound and a stranger they would not follow. We couldn't do anything with them, but he could do anything with them

that he so desired to do. We think of the natural sheep and the only thing that looks to be worth anything about them is the wool on the body. It's that that covers them up. But there comes a time when they have to be sheared. My beloved, have you ever seen a freshly sheared sheep? It's one of the ugliest creatures you ever looked at and when you have been to the shearing time yourself and God has sheared you of your self-righteousness, of all of your covetous thoughts, of all of those things you term that make you worthwhile in this world, you are looking at the most ugly creature you've ever witnessed.

And so it is even with a natural sheep when that takes place, their own lambs don't recognize them. When we are brought into the knowledge of the truth and we have been sheared, our own children don't understand what it is all about. Our own children don't know us and sometimes ask why we drive hundreds and hundreds of miles, why we go so far to serve churches. They say, "You are traveling highways that are dangerous," but I have said to them, "If I am not deceived, the Lord is my shepherd and I shall not want." He has already taken care of me in one dreadful wreck that totally destroyed an automobile and yet I was not injured. Then I can feel to say, ***"Yes, He restoreth my soul, He leadeth me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake."***

"For Thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me." The rod and the staff are just as necessary, my beloved, to the life of a sheep. I am talking about spiritual sheep as it was to the natural sheep. Their rod was used as a tool of correction and except He give us that same rod placed upon us as a tool of correction we shall wander aimlessly as it were, but He indeed chastises us with the rod of correction just as the good shepherd chastises the sheep when there is an indication that they want to run amiss. And we find that the staff was a long piece of reed that had a crook on the end and when one of the aged or infirmed sheep or one of the lambs would slip from the pathway, as they traversed the mountainside from time to time, the good shepherd could take that crook and catch that sheep by the neck and lead him back to the path. When our feet stumble on the road of life, when we feel that, yes, we are slipping away, thanks be unto God that the staff of grace that is his arm of grace reaches out and is sufficient to pull us back and keep our feet on the path that leads to eternal life.

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." What kind of table is he talking about? He is talking about the table of communion and He prepares it in the presence of mine enemies. I say to you that the greatest enemy that He prepares in the presence of us is this individual, this earthly body, this body of clay. Not too long ago in the experience of one of the old hymnwriters, he said that he had more trouble with Mr. Myself than he ever had with anybody else that he ever met. It is thus with each of us. So we

find that He prepares the table of communion and He does it in the presence of this old natural body.

"Thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over." We know, my beloved, that we beat our heads on the wall of time to such an extent that oftimes we feel that we are injured just as the natural sheep would from time to time thrust his head into the thorns among the rocks to graze just a few morsels of food. We, too, thrust our heads into the thorns and into the rocks as we attempt sometimes on our own to find a morsel to eat. Thanks be unto God that indeed those sores that occur from time to time He anoints with the same oil of perfume that was poured on Aaron on top of his head that flowed all the way to the bottom of his garment. It is the same oil that was poured into that sin-encrusted individual that lay on the road to Jericho when the good Samaritan came by. He poured in that oil and it is the same anointing oil and it has the same effect. It is never used but what it has its healing qualities. I say to you this morning that nothing done is ever done that there is anything left that can be improved upon. There is no way to make the oil or the ointment any stronger and we find that under the old dispensation, I don't remember the book at the moment, but when the Lord gave Moses (Exodus, ch. 30:34-38) the mixture of that ointment, that oil of perfume, that oil of ointment, that should be used in the anointing process. He says that it is not to be used for anything else and he spoke of how dangerous it would be for any individual to put some of it on his own body. What was he saying? It's a dangerous thing when man thinks that he can clothe himself in a portion of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, that he can take it upon his body and it shall alleviate his pain, his suffering, his trials and his tribulations because it is not possible.

"My cup runneth over." The aged sheep and the little lambs are truly afraid of water for they know that their wool will absorb water immediately and they will sink if the water is deep enough to drown them. We find a few times when we knew that we would sink if left in that condition, but the shepherd carries a cup and he knows who those are who cannot care for themselves, so he fills the cup and they drink from the cup - they don't drink from the stream. We drink from the cup of the righteousness of God many, many times. With these sermons that we have heard this morning, we drink from that cup and indeed we find it running over.

If not deceived, I believe that because the "Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want" and my hope is that "surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

We might take note of one other thing in the beginning of this Psalm. *"The Lord is my shepherd."* These are five words. Paul says, he'd *"rather speak five words with my understanding than 10,000 words that have no meaning in an unknown tongue."*

May God bless you and keep you.

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

CORRESPONDENCE

SOME DREAMS AND TRIALS ON OUR JOURNEY IN OUR LIFE

My husband, Kermit Campbell, departed this life the thirteenth day of January in the year nineteen hundred and eighty-nine. He was involved in an accident on Highway 220, south of Martinsville, Virginia, and died on the way to the hospital. His funeral was conducted at McKee Funeral Home in Martinsville. Elders Raymond Goad and Lane Carter officiated.

Kermit was the son of Jake Campbell and Lee Hankins. He was raised up in a church of a different faith from mine but he seemed to love my church and we were blessed to go to church about every Sunday the rest of our life together. I think the Lord dealt with him and he seemed to enjoy going as much as I.

I dreamed a month or so ago, he and I were going down this rainy, muddy tunnel. We were in a hurry, I don't know why but he was in front, pulling me by the hand and when we got to the end of the tunnel it was like an underpass. He was in front and he could see around but I couldn't see, and he wouldn't let me look but he acted as if he saw the awfulest thing he had ever seen. I tried several times to look around but he wouldn't let me. I believe the Lord was showing me I didn't have to see the awful thing that happened to him. He was dead when I got to the hospital.

About a year before he passed away, he started talking about religion and preachers explaining Scripture so well. He couldn't hear too well with his hearing aids but he enjoyed going to Norfolk Church. He could hear Elder Goad so much better than a lot of the other Elders. One night on TV someone was singing "Amazing Grace" and he said, "Well, they are singing 'Amazing Grace'." I said, "Most churches sing some of 'Amazing Grace.'" He said. "Well, no church nor anyone sings it as pretty as you all do." And I think he really meant it. He seemed to be really moved by it. Well, I didn't get to say "Goodbye" or anything. He has been gone four years now, and I thought it strange that I hadn't dreamed anything about him since he left. So a few weeks ago, I guess I was asleep about four in the morning, and I heard a door open, so I raised up and looked at the bedroom door, and he was standing there in the door, life-size, looking at me and smiling. I was not scared but I can't explain how I felt. I just got up. I think the Lord showed me that he is at rest and is or will always be happy, but I hope he is resting in God's love, and waiting to see Christ for himself and not another on that Great Day.

Ada Campbell
Member at Leatherwood Church

ARTICLES

THE NATURE OF THE NEW BIRTH

In pursuing the subject further, I shall insist that where the conscience is once purged from sins, it can never again be contaminated with sins. Proof: "He bore our sins in his own body"; not part, but all of our sins. "He put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself." Also, "His blood cleanseth us from all sins." Certainly we are to learn from such passages that each and every sin of all his people was "borne" and "put away" by him; and, if put away by him, salvation to his people is the inevitable result; for what is there to condemn us when all sin is put away? To say all our sin is not put away, is to deny the bible, and to say that we can be lost, is to say we can be condemned when we are without sin. This great truth is set forth in type by the scape - goat, Leviticus, xvi:20, "And when he hath made and end of reconciling the holy place, he shall bring the live goat and confess over him all of the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness, and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities into a land not inhabited." None I suppose can doubt this being a type of our Savior, and in it we see every sin and transgression, by this ceremony, put away. Then may we not reasonably suppose that every sin of ours, great and small, in word, thought or action; yea, every transgression of ours over which the law has cognizance, were all laid upon the head of our Redeemer, and by him forever borne away? This thought, though poorly stated, is full of sweetness to every Christian.

If you can feel that Jesus bore all our sins, past, present and future, and made complete satisfaction for them, how can you despair; and what surer basis could our hope have, and what could so fill us with love to Christ, and so inspire us with obedience? No thought so encouraging as that "Jesus paid it all, all the debt I owe." Again, Hebrews, x:2, "For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purged, should have had no more conscience of sin." Let us inquire of Paul about the text. If one's conscience is purged from sins, then what? "They have no more conscience of sins"; thus showing that whatever is washed by the blood of Christ remains clean eternally. Again, "For, by one offering, he hath forever perfected them that are sanctified." Certainly the sanctified ones referred to in the text are the saints. Query: By what are they perfected? Answer: By the one offering. Query: How long shall this perfection last? Answer: Forever. The word "forever" may be used in a limited sense, in some places, but evidently, in this, it is used in its most extended sense. The Savior gives us the same thought in the sixth of John: "This is the bread which cometh down from Heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die"; "If any

man eat of this bread he shall live forever"; "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day"; with many more such sayings. Now let us ask, what is the state of those that eat his flesh and drink his blood? They "have eternal life"; "They shall never perish"; "They shall live forever"; "I will raise him up at the last day." If one of them could be lost, would the Savior's words be true, when he says, "I will raise him up at the last day"? or, "He shall never die"? Or, could Paul's words be true, "They have no more conscience of sins"? Or, is it true that the "one offering" does "forever perfect"? And this is what the Holy Ghost testifies in every saint; and would the Holy Ghost testify correctly if he should breathe the sweet words in our heart that the offering of Jesus "has obtained eternal redemption for us"? Is that eternal redemption that is liable to be overturned, or reversed, any day? Can we eat the flesh of our Savior to day, and drink his blood, and to-morrow die, and be lost? Is this what our Savior calls living forever? Is this eternal life? Nay, verily, such was not in his mind when he uttered these words; but he saw and well knew the safety of all who "taste that God is gracious"; and he spoke these words for their comfort. First John, v: "For, whosoever is born of God overcometh the world." "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth them not." The Savior tells Nicodemus that he must be born again, and that without it he could neither see nor enter the kingdom of God. I can not speak at length of the new birth, but I will venture a few things about it. It is not of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man, but it is of God. It is of the spirit; it elevates one to be a son of God. He can say, Abba, Father! He is an heir of God, and a joint heir with Christ. Do not forget it; he is a joint heir with Christ. He is a partaker of the divine nature. The eternal God is his keeper; and more, he keeps him as the apple of his eye, and "that wicked one toucheth him not." He overcometh the world, because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world."

Oh for the evidence from day to day, that we are interested in this wonderful and secure plan of salvation - to feel that the strong arm of Jehovah is around me as a tender husband, and that I am a plant of his own planting that shall never be rooted up. If such thoughts as these would not encourage and comfort his poor tried ones of earth, then I confess I am a stranger to all the sweets of the gospel. David in his affliction would say, "Show me thy loving kindness, oh thou that savest by thy right hand them that put their trust in thee." "Keep me as the apple of thine eye." "Hide me under the shadow of thy wing." If David needed such a Savior, can we do with less than this? If he felt his need of being kept, do not we need also to be kept "by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time"? It is marvelous loving kindness in our God to be

so intent in saving us. Perhaps some objector would say, it is unsafe to set up the safety of saints in such strong terms; you will encourage them to be careless in their lives. Now, dear reader, if you feel that you are licensed to sin by the security that God has thrown around you, you have not been rightly taught.

Rom., vi: "What shall we say, then? shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" Here, we have this objection named in the scriptures, showing that this objection was brought against the apostles; that their doctrines tended to carelessness and living in sin. The very fact that such an objection was brought against them, in evidence that there was something in their preaching that led many to think that they did not believe in obedience to God. But let us hear his reply: "How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein," plainly showing that the Christian is dead to sin, and that this is the reason why he does and should obey God. He has lost his delight in sin - he is dead to it. Again he says, "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law, but under grace;" you are far removed from the law with its curse, and you are under grace, and he asks, "Shall we sin because this is so?" Again, "And not rather as we be slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say let us do evil that good may come." Who can doubt from these passages that the apostles taught that salvation was wholly of grace, and not in any degree of works? We see now that those who teach salvation all of grace, are charged and slandered just as Paul was in his day. Also, see First Peter, ii: 15, "For so is the will of God that with well doing you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men as free and not using your liberty as a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God." These foolish men are those who say, "If I were saved as you describe, I would go my length in sin; if my works can neither make nor keep me holy, I shall not care how I live." But God's will is, that his people shall silence such nonsense by a godly life; showing to the world that we are the sons of God, and that it is our highest pleasure to obey him; that we feel grateful to him for what he has done for us in the past; yea, more, that sin has become exceeding sinful to us, so that we flee from and dread it as poison. We have found that all the misery that has ever been, was brought by sin, and all our happiness is the hope of being delivered from sin. The scripture exhortation is, "I exhort you by the mercy of Christ," not by the fear of hell or apostasy, but by the mercies of Christ. Your greatest incentive to obedience is to think of Christ on the cross; his groans and death. If this will not prompt you, it is not worth while to threaten you with "falling from grace."

When you review the whole history of the Savior in his life and death; his nights of care and prayer; his agonies in the garden; the fearful night he passed before his crucifixion; his despairing cry, "My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me!" Think how faithful he was to you; many nights

alone in some cold mountain he staid in solemn prayer to God - and all this for you. He suffered all this not for himself, but for you - you were ruined. It was for you he toiled all his life of care - it was your miserable sins that crushed him in the garden.

Oh, Christian! Christian! do not forget that you are not your own, but that you are bought with a price, and that price was the life of the Lord Jesus; therefore, glorify him in your bodies and spirits, which are his; fill your seats in his house; tell your wants often to him in prayer, and when you are vexed with care, tried and distressed, cast all your care on him, for he cares for you. His all-seeing eye is always upon you, and he never will leave nor forsake you. He feeds the sparrows that have neither barn nor store house. There is not a living thing but that he keeps it, and why should we fear that he will not keep us? The very hairs of your head are numbered.

Again, we have been created in Christ unto good works, and these good works God has before ordained that we should walk in them. Dear reader, I am sure we should love God all the more and serve him all the better, when we feel that he is a fire around us, and that he is engaged to save us, in spite of all our foes without or within. There is gratitude even in a dog when you give him no more than a bone. Then let us think that we were poor, starved rebellious dogs, who have been fed on the very flesh and blood of Christ, who has stooped to bind and heal all our wounds, and when we were lost, poor, starving and friendless, he hunted us from every place where we had wandered, took away all our grief and made our eyes overflow with tears of joy, astonished us with tokens of his wonderful love, forgiving, sweetly forgiving, all our sins, and last of all, pointed our feet the way he would have us go. Yea, more, he showed us by example the way. Dear reader, have you forsaken him or left off following him? Are you tired of his service or company? Do let me exhort you, and may I suffer the same word of exhortation. Christians should never murmur; why should they, who are servants, murmur, when the master murmurs not, though his suffering be greater than all the suffering of all his servants? Let us learn patience by looking at the sufferings of Christ. Houseless, homeless, often fatigued and wearied, and yet not a murmur escapes his lips - these are the best thoughts to stir us up to duty, and not the fear of apostasy.

J.H. Oliphant

NOTICE

WANTED:

Old "Signs of the Times," and related writings of the Old School Baptists. Preferably from the 15th through the 19th century. Please state your price.

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VOICES OF THE PAST

"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." - Romans v. 21.

This is the mercy for mourning saints who are sighing and groaning under a body of sin and death, that God has decreed that grace not only may reign, but that it must reign. Were it left to us, we could not more rescue ourselves from the dominion of sin than the children of Israel could deliver themselves from the house of Egyptian bondage. But they signed and groaned by reason of the bondage, and their cry came up unto God. He had respect unto his covenant, and looked upon them and delivered them (Exodus ii. 23-25). So God has determined on behalf of his people that sin shall not be their eternal ruin; that it shall not plunge them into crime after crime, until it casts them at last into the gulf of endless woe, but that grace "shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life." But it must reign here as well as hereafter, for by its reign here its eternal triumph is secured. It must then subdue our proud hearts, and never cease to sway its peaceful sceptre over them until it has secured in them absolute and unconditional victory. Now this is what every sincere child of God most earnestly longs to feel and realize. He longs to embrace Jesus and be embraced by him in the arms of love and affection. As the hymn says,

> ***"But now subdued by sovereign grace,***
> ***My spirit longs for thy embrace."***

He hates sin, though it daily, hourly, momently works in him, and is ever seeking to regain its former mastery; he abhors that cruel tyrant who set him to do his vilest drudgery, deceived and deluded him by a thousand lying promises, dragged him again and again into captivity, and but for sovereign grace would have sealed his eternal destruction. Subdued by the sceptre of mercy, he longs for the dominion of grace over every faculty of his soul and every member of his body. "O", he says, "let grace reign and rule in my breast; let it not suffer any sin to have dominion over me; let it tame every unruly desire, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ!" Thus, he who truly fears God looks to grace, and to grace only, not merely to save, but to sanctify; not only to pardon sin, but to subdue it; not only to secure him an inheritance among the saints in light, but to make him meet for it.

J.C. Philpot

DEUTERONOMY 30:6.

And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.

CORRECTION

The obituary of Lucille Landers is spelled incorrectly in the March 1994 issue of the "Signs". Please correct your copy on page 71.

Editors

ACCEPTABLE WORDS
October, 1947

"The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth." - Eccl. 12:10.

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

It is my purpose to address this article especially to God's called and qualified ministers. May the God of heaven be pleased to so direct my mind and pen that His purpose may be served in this attempt. May the words written be God-honoring and "words easy to be understood." I trust that God will be pleased to bless the reader with an understanding heart to rightly understand the thoughts that I desire to convey in this attempt. I am persuaded that misunderstandings among God's people have prompted some divisions, strifes and confusions. Some confusions in the church have been the result of strife over words of none effect. Isaiah prophesied of a time when those "that make man an offender for a word" are cut off (Isa. 29:21).

Solomon says, "A word spoken in due season, how good it is" (Prov. 15:23). Considering the many divisions in the churches of this country that hold to the same principles of doctrine, I am convinced that a treatise on this subject would be in "due season."

We read in Prov. 15:26, "The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord: but the words of the pure are pleasant words." I believe God gives His people a pure heart that seeks to praise, honor and adore Him; and to comfort, console and edify one another. This pure heart enables them to see themselves so vile and sinful that they esteem one another so highly that it is not their desire to offend. I believe those who are meek and humble and inspired by the Spirit of God are gifted to use pleasant and acceptable words even in rebuke. I do not think, however, that words that are not upright and true are to be used in order that they be acceptable and pleasant words to the hearer.

We quote from Isaiah 50:4, "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary:...he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned." This prophecy especially concerns Jesus, but I believe that the same Spirit of God has the same effect upon God's called ministers. God blesses His ministers with the tongue of the learned to comfort and edify the wearied. The Psalmist

prayed, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee" (Ps. 51:12,13). When it pleases God to restore the joy of that salvation to one of His ministers, and blesses him with light of thought and liberty of speech; the result is that the minister is blessed to teach sinners God's ways. God's way of being merciful to their unrighteousness and His way of saving sinners by the merits of Jesus Christ, solely unmerited by the sinner, is comforting and edifying to such sinners that God pleases to waken His ear to hear. The result of the operation of God's Spirit upon the ministers and the hearers is the conversion of sinners.

According to Paul's letter to Timothy, a qualification of a minister is "apt to teach". I think it is just as certain that someone learns as it is that someone preaches. I do not think words inspired by the Spirit are spoken in vain but they find good ground in some heart that God has prepared. God's children are converted day by day, thus growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I believe God's called ministers are blessed to comfort, console and edify. It is their desire to do this rather than to establish some peculiar point in theology of their own conviction that is not believed by the brethren. Their desire is, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer." Their desire is to please the Lord, not to offend anyone. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "Except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air" (1 Cor. 14:9). If we use words or terms of which the meaning is controversial among the brethren I would consider them not easy to be understood.

Many times expressions are misunderstood among brethren because of difference of opinion concerning particular definitions of words used in these expressions. It behooves us to refrain from using expressions that tend to cause controversy among brethren. It is our desire to heed Paul's instructions to Timothy, to wit: "Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker" (2 Timothy 2:14-17). Paul gives an illustration in the next verse of an expression of vain and profane babbling thus, "the resurrection is past already." Expressions as follows are misunderstood, thus misleading among the brethren: "God is the author of sin"; "God predestinated sin and wickedness"; "We will know each other there"; "This same body will be raised from the dead"; "I believe in eternal children"' and "The creature

is not changed in the new birth." Difference of opinions on the words, "author," "predestinated," "same body," "eternal children" and "creature" make these expressions and many others not easy to be understood. "Foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth" (2 Timothy 2:23-25). I think the traits of patience, gentleness and meekness are made manifest in God's called ministers. I have received more comfort from wrong expressions in the spirit of meekness than right expressions that are motivated by a haughty spirit. Before we accuse brethren of departing from the doctrine let us first be convinced that we understand their position, and that their position is decidedly contrary to the words that are upright and words of truth.

In meditating upon the aforestated thoughts we are mindful to pray to God that He bless us not to know anything among God's people save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. As Peter said to Christ at one time, "Thou hast the words of eternal life." His words were, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." So when we are blessed to speak words of truth, we are blessed to preach Jesus as our Savior. We trust that He speaks these words to us when we are troubled which results in sweet consolation and confidence in God who saves to the uttermost by His amazing grace.

Elder E.J. Lambert

HEBREWS 13: 20,21.

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Why is it that we always have a benediction at the end of our services? This is not a word that the translators gave us in our version of the Bible, but at the end of each letter (except James) there is a prayer or short benediction. At the end of all Bible prayers there is an amen. This word has a meaning that is not easily set aside. In fact, the theologian that would belittle the world or berate those that use the word, does not have the religion of Jesus Christ. It is a word that He used to verify his veracity, and it is a word that was handed down from the ancient people of God to express a wish. This is why that the end of prayer has the "amen" at the end of it; it is for the purpose of expressing a wish, to wit, So be it. The promises of God are all yea, and all Amen, unto the glory of God by us. (2 Cor. 1:20) There is not a single prom-

ise that is nay. They are all yea and amen through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Since all scripture is given by inspiration of God (2 Tim. 3:16), it would be sacrilegious and blasphemous to say that the use of this word is not of the highest importance in our preaching and writing on sacred topics.

"Now the God of peace." O, dear child of God, what comfort is found in these words. To read that, to hear that, that he is the God of our peace is indeed rich. It abounds with much promise to him that has known the ravages of war. As far as God the lawgiver, there could never be any peace coming from him to us. If we could have kept all of God's laws, we would have made peace with him. If this had been true, then this text would not have appeared in the Bible. God has always disproved of sin. I may end up in the housetop alone for saying it, but I'd much rather end up there than live in a house with a brawling woman who would hide behind the purpose of God for their sins. (Prov. 21: 9; Rom. 6:1,2) As long as the sins of God's people remained unatoned for there could never be any peace. If this does not teach the warlike characteristic of God against sin I do not know what it would take. I have said this: If God is pleased with our sins, he perpetrated the greatest fraud in sending His Son into the world to die for sinners, and yet that He was pleased with their sins. For me, I know that this is not the truth. God, as our Lawgiver, was at war against all of his people. This war went on unabated until it was atoned for. At no time, from the moment of our disobedience in the morning of time, until atoned for, did the wrath of God abate in the least degree. In our efforts to expound the beauty in the text, it is my desire to not leave a stone unturned in bringing out that "God is our peace." He had been at war from all eternity against sin. I get lost when I get to exploring in the grandeur of the Godhead, but it is lost in holy ecstasy, not in gloomy and dismal swamps.

As long as God has been, he has been the God of wrath, the God of war, the God against sin. If this had not been true, how could God have counselled to send His own Son to die to satisfy the wrath of God and the justice of God and to become the God of peace? Too, we must be just as emphatic that he is the God of peace as that he is the God of wrath or war.

For him to cease being a God of wrath, there had to be somebody to atone for the sins of those with whom God was wroth. This Atonement could not be found among the sons of Adam. If it could have been found there, our text would have said, "Now the peace which is by Adam, etc." When the law was given it was given to be kept, not to be defiled, not to be despised, not to be nullified by man, not to have any mercy in it. Manifestly, from the time of its being broken, God has been at war against sin. There could not be any peace without a reconciliation. When man fell, he was depraved from the sole of the feet to the crown of the head. He could not keep from sinning; he could not bring reconciliation, seeing that he could not turn and do

good. (Jer. 13:23) This rule has never been abrogated by him that made it. Many people, the majority of the human race, have changed it (so they think) to suit their fancy, but God has not changed it, therefore all of the religion in the world that has come by efforts that the sinner conceived and carried out is not the truth; all the peace that man has brought, whether in the natural realm of existence, in the so-called religious world, even in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is all vain, all useless, all perishable, if it came about by the action of this dead sinning creature.

God moved to bring peace, therefore it is a wonderful text that embraces Him as being the God of peace. What a blessing it is to be given this all prevailing peace in our experience; what a high and exalted calling it is to be called of God, to preach and to write about the peace that passes all understanding, which peace keeps our hearts and minds through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Phil. 4:7) It is not any small wonder that Paul was determined to know nothing among the Corinthians save Jesus Christ and him crucified. (I Cor. 2:2) God raised Him up and sent Him forth from His bosom to bring peace out of chaos. That was the beginning of the peace of God - the peace which God brought. It is presently the work of God's Holy Spirit to keep our hearts and our minds in this peace. If you understand this peace you will attribute it to men; if it passes all understanding you will attribute it to God.

"That brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ." It is not a question of not bringing Him from the dead, but how could He fail to bring Him from the dead, seeing that He sent Him forth to redeem them that were under the law. Poor frail human beings will never be able to more than grasp the surface of the love of God in this bringing Him forth from the dead. But we must not get the last things first. Order is heaven's first law, and in no place is it out of place as much as it is in expounding the gospel. God sent Him forth to do His will. This will is that all given Christ must be brought into peace with God. God could not be at peace with his own Son had that Son failed in bringing many sons to glory. (Heb. 2:10) I have said, I repeat it here, that if the common idea about the work of Christ was true (that is, that he failed in saving those given him) that he would not have been received into heaven - yea, he would not have been raised from the dead. Here is that delightful order of heaven: God sent His Son to redeem the chosen people of God, to reconcile them to God and Him to them; to come as the One and only peace-offering, being named the Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. (Isa. 9:6) While here, He brought peace to His people; and when He died, He brought peace to God and to all the heirs of promise. He did the work that His Father gave Him to do. How peaceful it was with Satan writhing in death, with all the enemies of God as dead men, with the holy and righteous and

good law filled to a jot and a tittle. God can not deny himself (Num. 23: 19; 2 Tim. 2:13), and, seeing that Christ was the mighty God and the Everlasting Father, all of God's power and glory and honor was pledged to raise and bring from the dead His Son and our Saviour.

"That great shepherd of the sheep." How lovely the scriptures set Him forth in this capacity. This shepherd, this Saviour, was set up from everlasting. (Prov. 8:23) The eyes of wisdom saw His substance from everlasting, and in his book all His members were written, yet they were unperfected, and not manifest, even as Jesus was not yet manifest. But he did not come to become a Saviour, not at all; He was born the Saviour. His delights were with the sheep before they were manifest sheep; he rejoiced among the sheepfold and its occupants before the world had an existence. (Prov. 8:31) Since it is the work of a shepherd to look after his flock, this Shepherd went about doing the work of his Father while it was day, while a Man could work. He did do His Father's work while here, and, at his departure, sent another Comforter who is continuing on the same line of work, taking the things of Christ and presenting them to the sheep. As the Shepherd, he found them all dead in sin. He gave unto them eternal life according as his Father had given him all power to redeem and to reveal unto them the redemption. (Matt. 11:27; John 10:28; 17:2)

This great Shepherd is often pictured in the saddest of terms. He is often set forth as a hand-wringing shepherd. He is shown (?) unto us as a shepherd that would like to lead the sheep by still waters; that would like to have them lie down in green pastures; that would like to lead the sheep in paths of righteousness; that would like to comfort his people with the rod and the staff; that would like to prepare a table for them; that would like to anoint our head with oil; that would like for our cup to run over, but the sheep just will not let him do this.I do not know which is the most unreasonable and unscriptural doctrine, to not be able to make sheep manifestly, or to be able to make them without their help and then lose control over them after that He makes them sheep. It seems good to me to discard both.

"Through the blood of the everlasting covenant." The translators were not agreed about this word "covenant" some of them thinking that this was the better word, while others thought that the better word was testament. I do not know a word of Greek, but I am inclined to agree with the minority report in this case. The covenant is one thing, but the Testator of that covenant is another. It is true, however, that Moses referred to blood as being the covenant blood; but it would seem, from a careful reading, that this covenant was not the one that is in our text. Too, the writer of Hebrews tells us that sore punishment awaits him that treads under foot the son of God, and counts the blood of the covenant as an unholy thing. (Heb. 10:29) As it was with Moses, and as it seems certain the writer of Hebrews, they had in

mind a figurative sense; so it would seem that way here, to wit, that it is through the blood of Jesus Christ.

We do remember that Jesus is the Testator of a better covenant. Even the first covenant was dedicated with blood. It was the blood of calves and goats used in type for the blood of Jesus. Moses said, This is the blood of the testament which god hath enjoined unto you. (Heb. 9: 18,20) As the types had to die in order for the comers thereto to have blood, just so did Jesus, the Lamb of God, have to die that the comers thereto be made perfect. (Heb. 10:1) A man's testament (will) is not in force as he lives. Only after his death does his will come into force. Thus it behooved Christ to die that his testament benefit his people. When he administered the supper to the disciples he called the wine the blood of the new testament.

"Make you perfect in every good work to do his will." Whatever the true meaning of the blood of the everlasting covenant, whether understood in a figurative sense, or that Jesus in sum and substance is the covenant himself, it does not lessen the force of the doctrine that is being taught in the text. The perfection prayed for is not of the creature. Whoever heard of praying for that which the creature can do? You haven't heard that? That is the common ignorance of mankind. Every religion except the Absolute Predestinarian Baptists believe that God is dependent on the creature for the success of his venture and church and kingdom building, and yet they pray like Hercules to God for help in them doing it. This prayer is from the heart of a poor dependent creature. He knows that he must have grace to perform all the requirements of God; that his present salvation is based on God's saving grace. This prayer of the apostle comes to this: May the God of peace, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will. I do not intend to sell out my pen to anybody, and I will say to my brethren that it is not in evil works that God is to enable us to do his will. We are not doing the will of God when we do evil works. The writer did not pray for God to enable us to do his will in wickedness. He did not do that. Reason how we may, call our loved ones in the Lord what we may, the Lord does not forbid things in his written word and then influence us by his Spirit to disobey that command. God does his will in heaven and in earth, whether it is by the power of His Spirit in our hearts and minds, or by the wielding of His sword. Of one he is the direct and immediate cause, by the other he is simply taking that which is already wicked and using it as it seems good unto Him. Of one thing I am sure. We will never perfectly do his will until the perfect gift (James 1:17) is given to us. And I am sure that this perfect gift is given his people that they may perfectly do his will in every good work.

"Working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight." Let us go to another notable letter of Paul. "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence,

work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Phil. 2:12,13) How often have we heard it said that "God works the will and the do in you, but you must work it out." Only an ignorant one (letter ignorant as well as grace) would make an application like that of the work of God in his people. They either have forgotten, or they never did know, that God works effectually in his subjects. (Eph. 3:7; I Thes. 2:13) The prayer is seeking for God to make us perfect in every good work. How many good works? I did not say, dear critic. But the prayer of Paul begs for grace from the God of all peace that the children of God be perfected in every good work to do his will; not just begging for grace that will work it in the children of God, not that at all, but begging in every good work to do his will. That is the prayer. That is the prayer of every dependent sinner; but, regardless of the niceties of speech-making to God in prayer, the prayer of others do not mean that they are helpless and dependent. Now link up this prayer with Paul's charge to the Philippians. His charge to them is to work out that which God has wrought in, and this prayer is to the God of peace that he would make them perfect in every good work to do his will, working in them that which is well pleasing in his sight.

The text heretofore has set forth God as doing great wonders through the Lord Jesus Christ. However, have you noticed that it is God the Father that has done all this first for the Son? He sent forth his Son, He sent angels to administer to him; He raised Him from the tomb. This was as the manifest Son of God. This is in keeping with the expression: Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. (Psalm 2:7) Earlier in this article it has been noted that the Son was ever with the Father. This being true, He could not have been begotten, but in His relationship with His people it truly can be said that He was begotten of God. Then the writer prays that the wonderful blessings of obedience be given unto the Hebrew brethren. He prays for that which is well pleasing in the sight of God. He does not ask God to make them perfect in every evil or sinful work, for this could never be well pleasing in his sight; and that would apply to him working it in them as well as after it is wrought in and by them.

I sometimes hope that I have a calling from God to preach the gospel; to preach Jesus Christ and him crucified. I feel in my heart and mind that I have told you the whole truth in what I have said about this text. It is my hope that it was the God of peace that visited me more than forty years ago, breaking down my opposition to His rule over me, and reconciling God to me through my blessed Lord. The answer to this prayer was predicated upon the will of God being executed through the Saviour Jesus Christ. My will was not consulted in the outset, and thus I am not a sharer in glory with him there. Since that day, if this was the day of the Lord with me, I have been willing to follow him, to count it a joy in tribulations, to submit to all

the indignities that are heaped upon me; to know that our God is still the God of all vengeance as well as the God of peace, and that whatever it is, He will carry all of his pleasure out; and that now, and forever and forever, all glory belongs to Him.

As the shadows lengthen out and the end of day approaches, I would to God that I die with a hearty Amen upon my dying lips to all that his providence and grace has brought to me; that he has ruled over (not overruled) all his creation to where not a shaft has hit me to ruin, but rather for good; that He has supplied my needs, both natural and spiritual, that He has enabled me to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him," and that, As I have received good at his hand, I expect to receive the same kind of evil that Job did, and that whatever comes, whether good or evil, whether in giving or in taking, that His name is blessed forever more.

Elder W.D. Griffin

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 1994

Miss Justine Alexander, AR 7.00
John & Alice Swilley, AR 12.00
Mrs. Velma Terral, TX 2.00
Whitley Mobley, NC 10.00
Mrs. John W. Mitchell, TX 12.00
John R. Copelin, TN 10.00
Eld. Robert L. Webb, IL 2.00
Mrs. Audrey Hamrick, TX 2.00
Mrs. Allyne Page, TX 7.00
Mrs. Mamie D. Ferguson, VA 2.00
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Burnell Williams, VA 2.00
Mrs. Christine S. Payne, VA 2.00
Garlon Vick, NC 5.00
Mrs. Melvin Dalton, VA 7.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER EFFIE HEWITT DAVIS

In memory of Sister Effie I endeavor to write a few words. With God's help I'll have the ability to do so. I know all my power comes from him.

Sister Effie was born in Onslow County November 19, 1896. Her parents were Ella Morton and Jack Kellum.

She was first married to Stephen Hewitt. The Lord blessed them with six children. Three daughters; Ruby, Louise, and Minnie Lee. Three sons; Winfield, Mance and Jack.

Her second marriage was to Zennie Davis. They didn't have any children.

Sister Effie joined the Primitive Baptist Church at the age of thirty-five. For sixty years she supported her church; was a devoted, faithful and loving member; as long as her health would permit her to do so.

She was in poor health for about nine years. In the home and May 13,

1993 was admitted to Rest Home. Stayed there five months. Total years of confinement was about nine years.

Sister Effie passed away October 15, 1993. Preceded by three children; Minnie Lee, Mance and Wingfield. She is survived by two lovely daughters, Ruby Morton, and Louise Humphry. A devoted son Stephen Jackson Hewitt. Also twenty-two grandchildren and thirty seven great-grandchildren.

Her family has suffered a great loss. To them I say; Press Onward to the Mark of the High Calling; which is in our Lord Jesus Christ. Even though there's a vacant place in your hearts; I feel your loss is "Heavens Gain"!

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Jake Prescott. Burial was in the Jacksonville City Cemetery. Sister Effie was laid to rest beneath a mound of flowers.

By the order of North East Church. In conference the third Saturday in February 1994.

Written by;
Mary Lillie Hall
1597 Halltown Road
Jacksonville, N.C. 28546

BROTHER HENRY J. POWELL

It has been requested that I once again write a memorial for one of our special members of Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church, Brother Henry J. Powell.

Brother Henry was born August 5, 1900 in Pittsylvania County, Va. and passed away November 10, 1993 in Roanoke Memorial Hospital. He was married to Sister Lutie Holly Powell August 7, 1926. She passed away February 2, 1977. They both joined Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church December 1, 1956 and was baptized the next day by their pastor, Elder Cecil E. Turner.

He was ordained deacon November 1, 1969 and was also a trustee and assistant clerk and these offices he served well. He was faithful to the church, always filling his seat unless providentaly hindered. He was in the hospital only about six weeks before his departure to that "Better World". His mind was keen and he had a wonderful memory up until his death. The church has lost a faithful servant but we feel our loss in his eternal gain. His trials are all over now and at the coming of the Lord, he together with Sister Lutie and all whom the Lord suffered and died will be raised to ever be with the Lord.

He loved the song and requested it often, #452 in Lester Hymn Book:

"When thou my righteous judge shalt come
To take thy ransom people home
Shall I among them stand?
Shall such a worthless worm as I
Who sometimes am afraid to die
Be found at thy right hand?"

He is survived by one son and daughter-in-law, Ray and Trilby Powell; two daughters and son-in-laws, Lois and Elbert Huddleston; Linda and Jack Guttman; 7 grandchildren; 12 great grandchildren; one sister and one brother.

His funeral was conducted at Oakeys North Funeral Home on Saturday November 13, 1993 by his pastor, Elder Leonard J. Brammer and his grandson, Mr. Gary Powell, after which he was laid to rest in Sherwood Cemetery beside his beloved wife of more than fifty years under a beautiful blanket of flowers.

May the Lord give grace to all who mourn that they be reconciled to their loss and truly say, "Thy will be done."

This memorial was written and humbly submitted by and unworthy sister,

Mrs. H.C. (Rlee) Houchins
Elder Leonard J. Brammer, Mod.
Bro. Hassel A. Hale, Church Clerk

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 4 / 94 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

BROTHER LOUIS SAMMONS

I will endeavor in my great weakness to write a few lines with the ability that God blesses me with. Brother Sammons was the son of John Sam and Josephine Sammons. Brother Sammons was blessed with three children Judy Sampson Dalton and Vernon Sammons and one Sister Gladys. Brother Sammons wife's Sister Ruffy is still living. Brother Sammons was born 1908 and died August 8, 1993 making his stay on earth 84 years and 9 months. He was a member at North East Primitive Baptist Church for 49 years he joined in 1944 and he was a loving member and always glad to see members and friends come to visit him his wife stood by him to the end.

Brother Louis Sammons was appointed Clerk the third Saturday in May 1971 he remained Clerk until he got disabled.

Now to Family: Press on keep the good faith I know you all loved him but God loved him more. I know you all have a vacant place in your heart as well as in your home. I hope the good Lord will bless you all and keep you in his care and be a Father to you all in time of need.

Brother Sammons funeral was conducted by Elder Oliver Allen at Johnson Funeral Home in Jacksonville. He was laid to rest in Kellum Cemetery with a beautiful mound of flowers.

This filing written by the request of the church at North East Conference in November 1993. Three copies, one to family, one to church and one for the Signs of the Times. Written by one living in hopes of eternal rest in our Lord and Saviour.

Sister Effie Morton
1162 Wolf Swamp Rd.
Jacksonville, N.C. 28546

HEBREWS 8:10.

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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Route 1, box 420, Keeling, Virginia 24566

FOREVER

I learn as the years roll onward
And leave the past behind,
That much I have counted sorrow
But proves our God is kind;
That many a flower I have longed for
Had a hidden thorn of pain,
And many a rugged by-path
Led to fields of ripened grain.

The clouds but cover the sunshine,
They cannot banish the sun.
And the earth shines out the brighter
When the weary rain is done.
We must stand in the deepest sorrow
To see the clearest light,
And often from wrong's own darkness
Comes the very strength of right.

We must live through the weary winter
If we could but value the spring,
And the woods must be cold and silent
Before the robins sing.
The flowers must be buried in darkness
Before they could bud and bloom
And the sweetest and warmest sunshine
Comes after the storm and gloom.

So the heart from the hardest trial
Gains the purest joy of all,
And from the lips that have tasted sadness
The sweetest songs will fall.
For as peace comes after suffering,
And love is reward of pain,
So after earth comes heaven
And out of our loss the gain.

--Anon.

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EDITORIAL

PREDESTINATION

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

Fact or fiction; applies to some things or all things: Fatalism, or a planned, purposeful accomplishing of the sovereign will of an omnipotent, omniscient and holy God who created all things for himself and utilizes them according to his own will and purpose.

There have been many volumes written on the subject of predestination by learned men of all faiths and there is no more agreement on the subject now, than there was in the beginning. No one has presented the evidence that will convince, all, of the validity of the doctrine and neither will I. My purpose is not to try to convince anyone of the truth of my convictions, but, just to put down in writing what I believe, for myself, and for others who may understand the subject as I do, that we may agree that this is what we believe and know that we are not alone. In the parable of the sower, the sower was just to sow the seed, not to cultivate it and make it grow, that is in the hands of the husbandman.

Fact or fiction - Predestination is a fact that has been in the old and new testaments and is, in fact, the foundation upon which the faith of the children of God rests. It is the assurance and confidence that the things promised will be the things received. It is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen, as yet, with the natural eye. They are seen by the eye of faith, as through a glass darkly, but enough to keep them pressing on to the mark. The first Chapter of Genesis is a classic example of this doctrine, as it relates the creation of all things, by God, and declares the purpose of, and the reason for, each in his plan for the world, and the proof is in the fact that they are still fulfilling that decree today. This is predestination in its most graphic form and is a demonstration that the most avid critic must surely see is absolute proof of the facts of the doctrine of foreordination, and the determinative decrees of God. The sun is still coming up each

day, (never missed one) because its mission is to rule the day: it does not come up each morning because of a new command, it is still completing it's daily orbit in response to God's command when he set it in the firmament of the heavens to give light upon the earth. The herbs, the trees and man are still replenishing and bringing forth after their kind in obedience to that command, given in the day they were created. This is the simplest, on going and often overlooked demonstration of this doctrine that is observed and experienced by all on a daily basis.

In God's judgement pronounced upon the serpent, in the garden for beguiling Eve was, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shall bruise his heel." And I believe that this is most universally believed to prophesy of the crucifixion of Christ, as the bruising of the heel of the seed of the woman; and his resurrection triumphant over death, hell and the grave, as the bruising of the head of the serpent. This was all declared in the morning of time and yet the occurrence was thousands of years later but it occurred as decreed by the Creator. Can anyone actually believe that this was just a coincidence?

Joel 2 vs. 28. "And it shall come to pass, afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams. And your young men shall see visions." This prophecy was declared by the prophet Joel under the law and was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost when the Gospel Church, as we know it was established, and men began to worship God in spirit and in truth. This experience was determined long before it happened, and it's coming to pass is evidence that it was not by chance or a random occurrence but rather ordained by the one who revealed the prophecy to Joel many years before. Acts 15 vs. 18 reads "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world," so we can see that this too, being the work of God was known by him and therefore predestinated from the beginning of the world. God declared it by the mouth of the prophet, confirmed it by Jesus in his conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well, brought it to pass as evidenced and it was witnessed to by the Apostles, to whom it happened and they went forth, in the Spirit declaring the fulfillment of the prophecy. Predestination in action.

These and many more of the scriptures establish the fact that the doctrine of predestination is taught in the scriptures by the inspired writers of the bible. Experience and revelation teaches it to those who have been given eyes to see, ears to hear and hearts to understand the scriptures, in the same spirit that the writer was given to pen them down for their learning. One of the gifts of the spirit, according to the Apostle Paul, is to discern the spirit and the teachings of the scriptures. John, says try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out in

the world; the false prophets are setters forth of the false doctrines to distort the truth. John is saying to try the spirits and the scriptures to compare with your experience to determine if they are from the same source. If they are both from God, each will agree with and will support the other.

The fiction regarding predestination is taught by the false prophets, who go forth as angels of light, when in fact they are the angels of the serpent and go forth declaring and teaching lies. Fiction on this subject is the doctrine of the gainsayers who contend that predestination is just a theory of man that would remove man from the equation altogether and therefore he is accountable for nothing. They proclaim that it is just in the imagination of man and formulated to excuse himself for his failures and mistakes and place the blame on God: making him the author of sin, and man but a pawn in a game in which he is but a passive participant with, no duty, no obligation, no sin and no reason to feel guilty before God because he is not accountable for his actions. This is as much in error as the pharisees who approached Jesus with the question of the seven brothers who had the same wife: and questioned whose wife she would be in the resurrection. Christ's response was, " Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God, for in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage" even so the gainsayers do err not knowing or understanding the scriptures nor the power of God: they are using natural reasoning to attempt to discern spiritual truth and all who do this are in the same dilemma. They must first have the spirit to interpret the scriptures and to see and realize the power and wisdom of God.

The doctrine of the gainsayers is that God wants to save everyone if they will just cooperate and let Him; He has made the way available to all and they can, at any time of their own will, get on the bandwagon and be assured that all of the promises of God, in Christ, are theirs. This is the doctrine that is popular with the world today, we have all heard it proclaimed, long and loud, all of our lives and the mystery to me is how they can declare this and use the bible as their reference book: the book that declares by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah, Isa. 14 vs. 24. "The Lord of hosts has sworn, saying As I have thought so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand," And again in vs. 27. "For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disanull it? And his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back." Where is the wanting, on the part of God, and where is the letting on the part of man, in this declaration? Fiction, pure fiction originating in the mind of the man in nature to supplant the truth with a doctrine that will sell to the seed of the serpent; the flood that went out of the mouth of the serpent, in the great wonder, in revelations, to overcome the woman, but the earth opened up and swallowed the flood. The world loves and thrives on this doctrine of the gainsayer, and always has.

Some things or all things. Most bible readers who study the scriptures will agree that some things are predestinated of God, but, refuse to believe that all things are. Some believe that God only predestinates the good things that happen in the world but that he does not predestinate the evil things in the world. This would severely limit the power of God since it seems that he would, not have control, over more things than he has control over, and if he does not determine or control them what is he more than man. Man in nature has no problem believing that God had a chosen people, in Israel under the law; that he led and directed them in their way, watched over them in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillow of fire by night; told them where they would go and the things that would befall them along the way. These things they will acknowledge, but don't tell them that he is in control of their lives and disposes of their times as he did then. They will agree that Christ's coming into the world, his virgin birth, dying on the cross and arising from the tomb was foreordained by the determinate counsel and the foreknowledge of God, but, don't tell them that their race is set, their course is determined and that they cannot influence their destiny by their own actions or wills.

That God predestinates all things, is the only position that is consistent with the other attributes of himself; he is absolute and complete in all his ways and does not give his glory (control over his domain) to another. To have things occurring at random and not in harmony with everything else would result in chaos and nothing would be certain. Isa. 46 vs. 9, 10, 11. "Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure; calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country; yea I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." This one scripture, if properly understood, should quench all the fiery darts of the doubters and silence the cries of the gainsayers. God is saying, by the mouth of prophet that he declared the end from the beginning and all things in between as they are all ever before him; declaring from ancient times the things not yet done, and saying his counsel shall stand and he will do all his pleasure. The things not yet done is an all inclusive statement, not some of the things, but the things, all of them, and the declaring that this shall stand. Yea verily he hath said it, and because of his power, it shall come to pass, as ordered.

The Apostle Paul in his epistle to the church at Ephesus states Eph. I vs. 11 "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," There's that phrase, all things, again in the same sentence which is ascribing honor and glory

unto him for what he has done, not because of something or someone, but, according to his own purpose and plan. The entire first Chapter of Ephesians is declaring the power of God in determining the salvation of the saints, and in this verse he goes further and places all things in the category of what he has done. God's will is the only one involved in the creation of all things, the disposing of all of his creation and the choosing of a portion of his creation for his own peculiar treasure. Deut. 32 vs. 8, 9 "When the most high divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." This theme is to be found throughout the scriptures as this choice and election is being made manifest and the chosen vessels come onto the stage, run the race that is set for them in this time world. Whether under the law as was Moses, Samuel, David and Isaiah, or, in the Gospel day as Peter, James, John and Paul they were called out and chosen for a particular work; and the choice and selection was always by God, none volunteered, but all responded and did that which was required of them.

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven; a time to be born and a time to die;" many will concede to this fact, but, Solomon went on to name many other things for which there is a time and a season set. Some of these are important issues, such as life and death, but, others are small and trivial in the mind of man; such as a time to sew and a time to rend, a time to gather up stones and a time to cast away stones, a time to weep and a time to laugh. Since Solomon said at the beginning of this lesson, to everything there is a time, he is listing these to show that there is a particular time set for all events great and small; because it takes each and everyone of them to make the whole. As in the scheme of nature everything has a cause from former events and effects future things. One cannot be removed from the scene without affecting the balance of all events.

Fatalism of Design. Fatalism is a theory that all events are determined by blind fate and are therefore inevitable. They just happen without any rhyme or reason, no purpose or plan, no intelligence or power in the scheme of things. There is no organization of things and no way to know what will happen next. It is just nature gone wild with no control or guiding force. This theory, as ludicrous as it is, when compared to the scriptures is as reasonable as the theory that some have, that a God who created the earth and all the host of it, the forces of nature and the mysteries of the universe is subject to the whims and desires of his own creation; that he wants and is trying to accomplish a desired end, but must enlist the aid or consent of his creation. Man with all of his weakness and vanity is not capable of contending with his maker, much less have to let him have his way. One of

these theories is as incompatible to the teachings of the scriptures as the other and both are the products of the natural mind of man.

The truth as set forth in the scriptures is that God alone inhabited eternity before time began and of his own sovereign will and purpose created the heavens and the earth. And all the host of them. God looked upon the face of all his work that he had and declared it was very good. As he created the living Creatures; on the earth he declared the characteristics they would have and that they would perpetuate their species because they each contained their seed which would bring forth of their own kind as long as the earth stood. Man was created in the image and likeness of God, was given dominion over the balance of God's Creation, and told to go forth and replenish the earth and subdue it. God planted a garden eastward in Eden and there he placed man to dress and to keep the garden. He gave him to eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; which he was commanded not to eat, for, in the day he ate of it he would surely die.

Man was made in the image and likeness of God but without the wisdom and knowledge of God, and he was also created subject to vanity which is completely contrary to the characteristics of God. This vanity together with the lack of wisdom and knowledge made him a perfect subject for the serpent who was more subtle than any beast of the field and also man. And through man the serpent was waging war with God because his desire was to have the preeminence over God in the world.

The Vanity in man was not a flaw in the workmanship of God, but rather, the plan of God whereby man would love and worship him because of his care and love for them. In their created state without the fall into sin, from which they could not retrieve themselves, they would have no need of a savior; they dwelled in the presence of God and were given all things that were needful for life and happiness, so, where is the praise and adoration to come from, their life was perfect then.

In the fall and because of sin, judgement was pronounced upon the man, the woman and the serpent. The judgement on the serpent was that he was cursed above all the cattle and the beast of the field, he would crawl on his belly and would eat the dust of the earth all of his days; the judgement on the woman was that God would greatly multiply her sorrows and her conception and the judgement on Adam was he would no longer just dress and keep the garden, but the earth was cursed for his sake and he would live of it by the sweat of his brow. As a results of the fall, man was driven from the garden, lest he, put forth and take of the tree of life and live forever. A completely different scenario from before, not by accident but by design, and still part of the all things that work together for good to them that love the Lord, although it may be pretty obscure, at times, how this could be.

The serpent is relegated to his proper place in the scheme of things; the woman by virtue of the curse of multiplying of her original promised conception, will give birth to the seed of the serpent among others, and there will ever be enmity between them, the seed of the woman by promise, and the seed of the serpent, because of her yielding, to him in partaking of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; now she will be the mother of both the good seed and the evil seed. (The bruising of the heel of the seed of the woman and the bruising of the head of the seed of the serpent) these are all, people, involved in the crucifixion of Christ; Christ and those who crucified him, and Eve is the mother of all living. Adam was driven from his paradise and made to work for his living in a hostile and forbidden environment as compared to the garden of Eden. Cherubs and a flaming sword was placed at the east of the garden to keep the way of the tree of life; not to keep man away from it but to keep the way of the tree of life, for those for whom it was reserved. See the wisdom and the providence of God as it is woven in among all of the other scenes and is just as much a part of the plan of salvation as the wrath and the judgments that the chosen vessels endure in their travels here in time.

Just as the first chapter of Genesis, this third chapter, is prophesying of scenes to come many generations in the future and the same power that is declaring them must have the power and the consistent resolve to bring them to pass according to the described plan. This is the predestination which is so necessary to insure to the children of God that their faith is not in vain and that what was the intent at that time is still the same purpose in today's action.

Down through the ages of time God has raised up prophets to speak to the people and give them his word and counsel; revealing to the prophets his words of truth, of things present at the time, and of things to come; of judgments and of deliverences which they will encounter in their travels. All of these require the wisdom to reveal and the power to bring them to pass; this is the substance of the hope of the children of God and faith is their assurance of the fulfillment of the promises of God. Without this assurance there would be no peace and Jesus, in telling them of the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, promised, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." This gift of peace, like all of the other blessings are not given, as the world giveth, they are permanent, they are everlasting and enables them not to fear with all the storms around them and the opposition to these truths that are so prevalent in the world today. This peace, in the heart and soul, thrives in the midst of chaos in nature because they know that these things too shall pass.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called ac-

cording to his purpose," Again we have the, all things, working together for the good of the saints of God: and since they are all working together, they are according to a master design to a determined goal, which is the salvation of the elect. The scriptures and the experiences of these chosen vessels harmonize and teach them that God is supreme, and perfect in all his ways, leaving nothing to chance and therefore all things occur according to his own good pleasure and they believe that the future promises are just as sure.

The doctrine of predestination is simply the belief of the saints of God that in the beginning God had a master plan of salvation which he has revealed down through the ages, by his prophets, and that no power in heaven or on earth can thwart or change the, all things, included in that plan.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

PSALM 28: 1-4.

Unto thee will I cry, O Lord my rock; be not silent to me: lest, if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit.

Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee, when I lift up my hands toward thy holy oracle.

Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity, which speak peace to their neighbours, but mischief is in their hearts.

Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours: give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert.

CORRECTIONS:

On Page 63 in the March 1994 issue - Church Of Our Faith. The name Blair was printed as Blain. Also Brother R.Y. Blair was their first Clerk instead of Deacon. Please make these corrections in your copy.

Also in the March issue of the Signs there was an error in the name of the person being memorialized and the address of the Donor.

As listed:

Ms. Janie Fanning, LA.....100.00
(In memory of Mrs. Minnie L. Atwood)

Should have read:

Ms. Janie Fanning, ALA.....100.00
(In memory of Mrs. Minnie L. Biggs)

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1 PETER 2: 1-6.

Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings.

As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,

Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

CANAAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Canaan Primitive Baptist Church was established on March 8, 1913. Land for the church was donated by Mrs. Pattie Thomas Dodd, Elder W. Robert Dodd's mother.

The first building's wood frame, constructed in 1913 was badly in need of repairs by 1956 so a cinder block building was erected on a part of the old foundation using some materials from the old building.

In 1990 with a generous gift from Sister Ruth Blair, in memory of her husband, Brother Ernest Blair who was a member of Canaan, an addition and renovation was added to this building, completed in Sept. 1992. Sister Ruth Blair is also a member of Canaan Primitive Baptist Church.

The records show that Elder George W. Hundley was her first pastor and Brother R. Y. Blair Clerk.

After the ordination of Elder W. Robert Dodd on August 15, 1914 he became assistant pastor and in 1925 was called and remained permanent pastor until June 17, 1939. Elder George Doss served for several years, next Elder Raymond Payne served from June 1944 until Sept. 1963. Elder Rufus Brown served the church for a few months following Elder Payne. Elder Robert A. May was pastor from 1964 until 1976 due to his failing health he was unable to attend meetings anymore.

On November 5, 1977 Elder Julian R. Williams was called and is our present faithful, beloved pastor. Deacons are Brothers Harvey Wood and Fred Murphy.

Canaan Church is located on State Road No. 844 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. Meetings are held each second Sunday at 10:30 a.m. Communion services are held in June and November.

VOICES OF THE PAST

" FINAL PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS "

The scriptures teach that God possesses the attribute of love: " God is love." Also, that salvation's plan, in all its parts, is the fruit of that love. God did not give his son, to die for us, that he might love us; but he loved us, and for that love his son was sacrificed for us. "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us;" so that his love toward us, even when we were sinners, was sufficiently intense to effect the putting to death of Jesus. We are not told just when this love began to exist, but it is said: "He is in one mind, and changes not "; " Without variableness, or the shadow of turn. " Therefore, God, who " is love," has loved us as long as he has been what he is now; but, if he is unchangeable, we can not say he ever began to love us. Therefore the gift of Jesus, and the salvation that is inseparably joined to that gift, are the fruits of God's everlasting love. But not only is it true that God's love underlies the giving of Christ as a Redeemer, but it also produces and underlies our delivery from sin. " But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love, wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us, together with Christ; by grace are ye saved." We are not quickened and saved, and therefore loved, but loved, and therefore quickened and saved.

"We love him because he first loved us." God's love to us has " causative power," and produces love to God in us. " Love (in us) is of God," and " He that loveth is born of God." We can not comprehend any one of God's attributes. The thought that God loved us before the world began is incomprehensible to us; yet we have seen that the gift of Jesus is a fruit of that love; and as "grace" was given to us, in Christ, before the world began, so we know that God loved us before the world began; hence there is nothing older than God's love to us. Thousands of years have fled away and gone, and yet it exists and bears the most precious fruit. No saint can say that he loved God and obeyed him, and that God loved him as a consequence; but certainly God loved us, and our loving God and obeying him is a fruit of that love. You can not believe that God's love is directed by perfect wisdom, and yet believe that it will ever be taken off of any object. For instance: He loves you today; his perfect wisdom comprehends, not only what you are now, but what you ever will be; therefore he is not disappointed in what he loves. You never can become worse than he knows you will be; and, in fact, he loved you while you was dead in sin, and certainly you can never be worse than dead in sin. Therefore, to say that God will cease to love you is to impeach his wisdom, and charge him with misplacing his love, and attribute changeableness to God.

But, if it is argued that God loves character, and that he only loves persons as they produce that character, we would answer, that every grace of the Christian is produced in him by God; and it is simple nonsense to say that God clothes his people with every benefit of the cross, and then loves them for that dress. "The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith," etc. Also, it is given to God's people to believe on him, and their love to him is a fruit of his to them. Hence he loves none of us for our good character, but our good character grows out of his love to us; if he had not loved us and given his son to die for us, and also loved us and quickened us, and wrought in us all that makes up the difference between our present selves and our former selves, we had never had a good character. You can not conceive of an immutable God, with mutable, changeable love, affectionately embracing an object today, and tomorrow casting that object down to hell; today calling one an heir of Heaven, beholding his name written in the book of life, and to-morrow erasing that name and disinheriting that heir. The bible gives no account of such a God; neither do we poor, sinful, erring beings need such a God. Reader, have you never, thought of the tenderness of a parent's love toward a prodigal son or daughter? Though that child goes away in sin and disgrace, until others have forsaken and cast it out of their hearts, yet that good father loves him still, and that mother wets her pillow with tears, as she thinks, in the stillness of the night, of her erring child; and they both lift their petitions to God, to save the wanderer. Few children know how much parents love them till the parents are cold in death; so, few Christians know how much God loves them, and how carefully he watches them. We admire pure disinterested love in parents; love that floods can not drown, or turn away; that will follow their offspring as long as life lasts; love unchangeable, unalterable, constant. Is this the highest and noblest perfection of men, and yet God destitute of it? Shall we measure the perfection of creature love by this standard, and throw it aside as too glorious to measure God's love? If God's love to his children be fickle, changeable, dependent on changing circumstances, alternately given and taken away, then, to my mind, the case is made out; God's love is imperfect, and he is imperfect. But, if God loves those whom he loves at all, eternally, infinitely and perfectly, then is his love directed in wisdom, and God is perfect; and one sweet thought here is, that the evidence that God loves me now, or ever did love me, is a certain, unalterable, irreversible title to Heaven.

The Savior prays, John xvii: "That the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou has loved me." He desires the world to know a great truth here, to-wit, that, as God loves the son, so he loves his children. And a little further, he says: "Thou lovedst me before the founda-

tion of the world." So, if God loves us as he loves his son, and loved his son before the foundation of the world, then he loved us before the foundation of the world; and as the son lives by the Father, even so he that eateth of the son shall live by the son.

God has said: "I will visit their transgressions, with a rod, and their iniquities with stripes, but my loving kindness I will not take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." Again: "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember against them no more." If any one is "Without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, he is a bastard, and not a son." The chastening rod is in the hand of a Father, and "Shall yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness"; it is for our profit that we are chastened, and not for our destruction. How delightful the thought that God never changes, and that, though we are prone to wander, God never forgets, nor forsakes us. Our own experiences will bear out this thought. We have left undone the things we should have done, and done many things we should not have done; yet God has not turned his back upon us, and we can sing,

"Oh, Lord, thou never changest;
It is because I stray;
Lord, guide me by thy spirit,
And keep me in the way."

The Christian may apply the following lines to himself:

"So nigh, so very nigh to God,
I can not nearer be;
For, in the person of his son,
I am as near as he."

So dear, so very dear to God,
More dear I can not be;
The love wherewith he loves his son,
Such is his love for me.

Why should I ever careful be,
Since such a God is mine?
He watches o'er me night and day,
And tells me "Mine is thine."

James H. Oliphant

Taken from a sermon " MARRIAGE UNION " by, William Gadsby.

It has been justly observed, that the woman was not made from the superior part of man, that she might be thought to be above him: nor from any inferior part, as being below him. So allow me to observe, that she was not taken from his head, that she might not be supposed to reign over him; nor from his eyes, that she might not be supposed to see for him nor diligently search for his imperfections; nor from his ears, that she might not be supposed to listen to false accusations against him; nor from his mouth, for fluent as she may be in speech, she is not to be her husband's spokesman; nor from his arms, or hands, for she is not to fight his battles for him; nor from the front part of his body, for she is not to be set at the front of dangers and difficulties; nor from his back, for she is not to be treated with contempt, and set behind him; nor from his legs, or thighs, for

she is not to bear the principal part of his burdens; nor from his feet, for she is not to be trampled upon by him; but out of his side, and from one of his ribs, that she might appear to be equal to him; and from a part near his heart, and under his arms, to show that she should be affectionately loved by him, and be always under his care and protection. So that a wife is not to be tyrannized over by her husband, nor made into a slave, much less to be abandoned by a voluptuous husband, and exposed to all the frowns and enmity of selfseeking reptiles. No, beloved; she is designed, by the providence of God, to be a help-meet for her husband; "For the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help-meet. And if so, there is to be freedom and familiarity between a man and his wife; and there should be a mutual concern for each other's real welfare. Strictly speaking, their concerns are one, and demand a oneness of care and attention; and as far as either husbands or wives act contrary to this, they violate the laws of God, and dishonour their own persons."

Copy from page (202) Memoir
of William Gadsby.
Sent in by Elder Noel F. Conner

JOHN 4:7.

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

EXPERIENCE OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief (I Tim. 1: 15)."

We are acquainted with an individual whose history we will give in the following words, viz. He was (like all the race of which he is a member) conceived in sin and shaped in iniquity. He was born in the eastern part of the State of Connecticut. He was a religionist from his birth, yet an enemy to God and a stranger to grace during the first seven years of his natural life (for he was alive before the commandment came.) He had at this period been taught to say his prayers, but had never been taught to pray; he had made some progress in the "Westminister Catechism", and, in short, as touching the religion of the Pharisees he excelled many of his equals. It would have terrified him exceedingly to have gone to sleep at night without counter-balancing all the sins of the day by a repetition of his forms of worship. But on all occasions when he had paid his vows he had peace offerings at home. Up to about this period of his life he was led to suppose that as touching the righteousness of the law he was blameless. We cannot describe to our readers the mortification and disappointment of this young lad when being suddenly arrested by an arrow from the quiver of the Lord he was sum-

moned to stand at the dreadful bar of divine justice and give the reason (if any he had) why the tremendous sentence of the law of God should not be executed upon his guilty soul. Great was his consternation when he cast his eager glance around in search of those fancied treasures of personal holiness which he had believed himself to be in possession of. Alas, his stronghold failed him in this very critical moment, he felt that he was ruined, but like Edom, he said, I am impoverished, but I will return and build again my waste places. Great were his efforts, his labors, toils and pains to mend again that holy law which he had broken. He would have prayed, but he could no longer view the great, the dreadful God as a being that might be trifled with, or pacified by what he could do. He struggled, but the harder he struggled the deeper he seemed to be involved in an horrible pit and miry clay; these exercises continued for many days and weeks. Sometimes he meditated a retreat from this awful, wretched state, but whither could he flee? If on the wings of the morning he flew to the uttermost sea, God was there, everywhere present, beholding the evil and the good; there could be no retreating from God, before whose flaming eyes all things are naked and open. At length the day seemed to arrive when the dreadful sentence of the inexorable law of God must be put in execution. Now blackness and darkness and tempests gathered round his frightened soul, hell yawned before him, justice stood with uplifted arm, and the flaming sword of vengeance was drawn from its scabbard and brandished over his guilty head; the books were brought, the arch accuser was also there, and what was to him more dreadful still than all, the piercing eye of God brought the black crimes of years to light, and what had been transacted in midnight darkness was now exposed upon the housetop. Chilled thus with horror, and pressed down to death with intense despair, remorse, guilt and keen anguish throbbing in his breast, tell us, dear reader, did he need an anxious bench, or knives, or lancets, to secure his conviction? Or would it have comforted him to have been informed by some "Universalist" that there was no hell, when the very pains of hell had hold of him? As well might he be told when writhing on a bed of embers that there was no heat in fire. The spell of such delusion was now broken, the Spirit had moved upon the face of the great deep of his inmost soul, and although all had been without form, and void, yet God had said, Let there be light, and light broke in upon him, and in this light that heart which he had thought was a temple meet for the Holy Ghost to dwell in, was now manifestly the habitation of dragons, etc., the hold of every unclean and hateful bird. It was thus when in or about his eleventh year he went to a distant barn, under an impression like that expressed by the post:

"I can but perish if I go,
I am resolved to try;
For if I stay away I know
I must forever die."

He fell upon his bended knees, but he could not pray; a rustling leaf, a turning straw, frightened his guilty soul and chained his speechless tongue; awful apprehensions and fearful forebodings pursued him back to his chamber, when despairing of mercy he threw himself upon a bed to die and meet his fiery doom. Worn out with labor and want of rest, nature sank beneath the load, he fell into a sleep. Unconscious of what passed while sleeping, he woke himself singing these words:

"How glorious is our heavenly King,
Who reigns above the sky;
How shall a child presume to sing
His dreadful majesty?"

He seemed indeed in a new world,
his loss of guilt and sin was gone,
the love of God shed abroad in his heart.
"His tongue broke out in unknown strains,
And sang surprising grace."

At the age of eleven years and four weeks, on the second Sunday in December 1811, he was permitted to be buried with his precious Lord in baptism, in the river Thames, in the city of Norwich, Conn., by Elder John Sterry, who has since fallen asleep. After remaining eight years a member of the Baptist Church in Norwich, he removed his relation to the church in the city of New York, then under the pastoral care of that defender of the truth, Elder Jonathan Van Velsen, who also has fallen asleep. While a member of the Ebenezer Church, in New York, the subject of our narrative, when in his twentieth year, was licensed to preach the gospel. The peculiar circumstances of his call to the work of the ministry our present limits will not admit; let it suffice to say that being experimentally, he could not help being doctrinally a Predestinarian. For more than fourteen years he has been lisping the name of Jesus with such ability as the Lord has been pleased to bestow, without any of the polish of Gamaliel's school, and although it has been his privilege to suffer some persecution, yet he has not resisted unto blood, striving against sin; he finds by every day's experience that he is a sinner yet, his nature is evil as ever it was. To will is present with him but how to perform that which is good he finds not. He is still the chief of sinners, and if a saint, the least of all.

New Vernon, N.Y.
April 30, 1834.

(The above article was first republished in 1865 by request of Elder Beebe's daughters.)

Sent to the "Signs"
by Elder N.F. Conner

ECCLESIASTES 5: 18.

Behold that which I have seen: it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it is his portion.

From Elder Lamberts book, "Tried In The Furnace."

PRAYER

January, 1948

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

One subject of vital importance to the child of God is prayer. True prayer is a sincere desire of the heart prompted by the Holy Spirit. One prays sincerely for that to be done for him that he has learned by sad experience that he cannot perform himself. When you are brought down to feel your dependence and inability and you are sinking in despair, and God reveals Himself to you as being willing to save to the uttermost; then you are blessed to pray.

Hypocritical prayer would be an attempt to ask God to do something for you that you feel able to perform of your own strength, or to ask for something you do not believe He will perform. I believe all true prayer inspired by the Holy Spirit is answered. The promise is, "Ask and ye shall receive." Many times we ask in vain, but this is because our desire is prompted by a selfish spirit. We are so ignorant that we do not know the things we stand in need of, but our heavenly Father knows and the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

When we realize our infirmities we pray God to do according to His will and to reconcile us to our lot in the matter. Sometimes tribulations are best for us even though we may feel they are against us. Afflictions are grievous to us while being experienced but afterward yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness to God's people. Then we are made to "glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulations worketh patience, and patience experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed: because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost."

I believe all the disciples of Christ pray the prayer Jesus taught His disciples to pray in full faith that every syllable will be answered. They may not utter the words but when that Spirit intercedes they desire the essence of it and are confident of it being answered.

Now let us examine this prayer. "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name." In the salutation we acknowledge Him as being supreme. Those who have been blessed to believe Jesus is the Christ is born of God. That Spirit in us makes us cry "Father." What a wonderful relationship to be enabled by His Spirit to feel that we are His children. We realize His name is to be hallowed rather than ours. No one who feels to deserve any credit or praise whatsoever can pray for God's name to be praised. Yes, all things praise Him. The things that would not be to His praise God will prevent. In Psalms 76:10 we read, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."

"Thy kingdom come." We do not pray for our kingdom, but we pray for

His kingdom to come. There is a King who reigns over the subjects of a kingdom. God is King of this kingdom. He is the supreme Ruler. When He speaks it is done. When He commands it stands fast. The words that go forth out of His mouth shall not return unto Him void but shall accomplish that which He pleases and prosper in the things whereto He sends it. This King spake through His Son concerning this kingdom when He said, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." There is a kingdom of men and there is a kingdom of God. The kingdom of men is built by men and will come to naught but the sole builder of God's kingdom is the Lord and it will stand. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain." God's people are confident that His kingdom will not fail for He is the Builder and the Keeper and He makes His subjects obedient. He has the power to make them willing and enables them to perform. "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." According to the scripture, "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doeth thou?" He "worketh all things after counsel of his own will." Yes, He has declared "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." God's children are consoled with the fact that God rules over all things. The devil with all of his hosts cannot frustrate or interfere with God's will and purpose. Those things that men and devils ordain for the ruin and destruction of that peculiar people of God - God has ordained them for the good of His people and for the ruin and destruction of men and devils!

"Give us this day our daily bread." If we feel competent to acquire this bread by the work of our own hands it would be hypocritical to ask Him for it. If we felt to deserve this bread we could only ask Him to reward us with it. But our feeling of unworthiness as well as our inability prompts us to ask Him to give us this day our daily bread. Our confidence, that He will never forsake His children but will give unto them daily the things they stand in need of, suffices us with faith to believe that He will administer unto our needs. God is not only mindful of our spiritual needs but is also mindful of our temporal needs. When treating upon the natural necessities of life Jesus said to His disciples, "But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Luke 12:31). God will provide His people sufficiently with the natural necessities of life as well as the spiritual bread which is Christ and His righteousness in them.

"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." According to Luke the wording is, "And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us." God's children realize that they are transgressors of the law. They are made to exclaim,

"when I would do good, evil is present with me." They realize that with the mind they "serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." We are made to acknowledge our sins. Faith and trust in the merits of Jesus christ and in the sufficiency of the atoning blood of Jesus to pay the penalty imposed because of our sins and to satisfy justice, emboldens us to believe that God with a forgiving heart. God has taken from us the stony heart and has given us a heart of flesh. This heart forgives a brother his trespasses. One characteristic of a child of God is to forgive. Jesus said, "Cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye." The fact that you can behold a mote in your brother's eye makes manifest that you have a beam in your own. If God has forgiven me of so great sins how shall I not forgive a brother his trespasses seeing that they are so little and insignificant in comparison with my sins.

"Lead us not into temptation." James says, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." God does not lead His people into temptation. It is the agreement of man with the lustily desires of the flesh that produces sin. It is the enticement of the lust which is the temptation.

"But deliver us from evil." When we would do good evil is present with us. This causes us to desire to be delivered from evil. Because of our many infirmities we are made to cry out as Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Our trust in the efficacy of the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. Evil is present with us yet, but we hope some day to be delivered from it. We trust that when this mortal shall have put on immortality and when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption then we shall have been delivered from evil. When this natural body shall have been raised a spiritual body then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" I believe it pleases God to deliver us from evil continually in this present life but the climax of that deliverance will be the resurrection.

"For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen." In closing this prayer we acknowledge that the kingdom belongs to Him. We grant that He has all power to enforce His decrees concerning this kingdom. At last we think of Him as eternal. He is ever the same and changes not. The subjects of His kingdom will finally abide with Him forever and ever on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance where no one hungers for bread, no sin shall be there; no other kingdom to contend with, and no evils to molest a life of joy, peace and happiness.

Elder E.J. Lambert

Guthrie, Okla., August 10, 1903.

Dear Brother Beebe: - When I was in trouble I went an uninvited guest to the house of Elder John R. Respes, editor of the Gospel Messenger, and pastor of the Primitive Baptist Church at Butler, Ga. I found him seated with his son-in-law, in the spacious veranda of his fine old southern mansion. Being an utter stranger I declined a proffered seat until I told my name and the object of the coming, which was to get some information on religious subjects, and be shown the way of salvation; that I had come to him for this purpose at the suggestion of Deacon Digby, of Brownsville, Alabama. I told him I desired to ask some questions, but not to argue any point in theology, though not pretending to be an ignoramus in current denominational tenets and views; that I had heard he was "A guide of the blind, a teacher of babes, and instructor of foolish," and that I needed that kind of help, for I was in unspeakable distress on account of my sins and hopeless condition. The interview began at 1:11 p.m., and continued with intermissions for sleep and eating until 1:11 p.m. next day, when I took the train and left on my regular business.

Never before or since has it been given to me to hear the truth so plainly stated in its entirety, and so forcibly demonstrated as on that occasion. Somehow I asked just the right questions, and got just the answers my soul was hungering for. I saw the scheme of redemption as he expounded it. For the first time I understood the Old Baptist doctrine with the clearness of conviction of its truth. But the clearer the view of the infinite holiness of God, and the atoning blood of the Lamb of God, "shed for many," the more oppressive became my burden of sin and guiltiness, and the more depressed my spirits. For the next five days I was with Jonah in "the belly of hell," beyond reach of any life-line human soul-savers could throw out, and utterly helpless in myself. I, too, saw that "Salvation is of the Lord" only, and my deliverance came at nine o'clock Tuesday morning, Sept. 28th, 1886, but the manner of its coming was as surprising as the joy of it was heavenly, unspeakable by word of man. I hope to talk it over with many ten thousand years from now.

Elder Respes was one of those rare great thinkers whose names are kept alive through the centuries by some formula containing "the sum of the matters," sayings to which reference is made when it is said, "A knowledge of the best things that have ever been said is called learning."

To present to the church one of his demonstrable conclusions, is the object for which this article is written, and sent for publication in the Signs.

As stated, Elder Respes in this interview was very cordial and profound, treating of subjects in bulk, and by no means in a "katydid wrangle" sort of way. His was a peculiar mind in this, when once a subject or text came before him for examination, (he said it of himself) he was unable to get rid of it until he had made an exhaustive

investigation of it. He was once called to the charge of a certain church, and for a whole year preached on one text: "If I perish I perish." There were forty accessions to the church that year. There was little about him but mind. His bodily presence was not commanding, and for many years he was an invalid. He was a rich man, a graduate of the Georgia State University at Athens, and had served as a member of the State Constitutional Convention. But all there was of him in the days that I knew him, he was an Old Baptist editor and preacher, towering and thrilling in the pulpit, but greatest in conversation with friends, for when heart talks to heart, things find lodgment. He was a man of convictions, humble, yet positive and frank in his expression of them. It is safe to say he seldom sent any caller empty away.

This preamble, not without interest in itself, I am hoping, prepares the reader for a saying of the Elder, to whom the Lord, who has led me about and instructed me all my days, sent me for "sweet counsel" that twenty-second and twenty-third of September, 1886. After he had expounded to me the doctrine of salvation by grace, for which the Primitive Baptist Church stands representative, he said with the solemnity of the full assurance of understanding, "That is it, or there is just nothing of it all." Words that sank deep into my heart. I saw it then; I see it clearer the more I see of the goings on of the bewildered sects, teaching that repentance, baptism, contributing to missions, supporting societies and good works generally, are conditions of salvation. For it is the organic constitution of the universe that "the soul that sinneth it shall die," or as not less graphically stated in Romans vi. 23, "The wages of sin is death." Not repentance, not reformation, not charitable deeds, not human endeavor, but death. A death must intervene; either the sinner must die for his sins, or as the Old School Baptists teach, Christ must die for him, the just for the unjust. "By his knowledge shall my righteous justify many." How? "For he shall bear their iniquities." That is the only "how." So taught Elder Respes, so teach the Scriptures in the law, the prophets and the Psalms; so taught our Lord himself, and God has raised up the Old School Baptists to keep alive that doctrine: the atonement, the experience of grace, the eternal purpose, foreknowledge, election, predestination, and as Jonah expressed it, "Salvation is of the Lord," and of which Jesus on the cross said, "It is finished." And now the reader will concur with Elder Respes, "That is it, or there is just nothing of it all."

Not satisfied with establishing the doctrine of salvation by grace, he fortified it, making it to his hearers look stronger, by contrasting with it the absurdity of conditionalism, a process of logic of which he was a master.

Sister R. Anna Phillips related to me an incident of a doctrinal import occurring in his last illness that will thrill the heart of every Old School Baptist that reads it. She was sitting at his bedside. He reached and clasped her

hand, and with great yearning of soul said repeatedly, "I want to love Jesus." She told him he did. "For have you not," said she, "as my pastor, often taught me from the pulpit, If in our heart we desire a thing spiritual we have it? Now you want to love Jesus, which is proof to me that you do love him." Thereupon they both broke down in tears.

All yours,
Wm. S. Speer

"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." - Jeremiah xxix. 13.

After the Lord has quickened our souls, for a time we often go, shall I say, blundering on, not knowing there is a Jesus. We think that the way of life is to keep God's commandments, obey the law, cleanse ourselves from sin, reform our lives, and cultivate universal holiness in thought, word, and action; and so we go, blundering and stumbling on in darkness; and all the while never get a single step forward. But when the Lord has suffered us to weary ourselves to find the door, and let us sink lower and lower into the pit of guilt and ruin, from feeling that all our attempts to extricate ourselves have only plunged us deeper and deeper, and the Spirit of God opens us to the understanding and brings into the soul some spiritual discovery of Jesus, and thus makes known that there is a Saviour, a Mediator, and a way of escape - this is the grand turning-point in our lives, the first opening in the valley of Achor of the door of hope. And when the soul has once seen that there is a Jesus, and once felt a measure of the power of his resurrection, it never goes to any other quarter for pardon, justification, and salvation. When the Spirit of God begins to open up with power in his conscience that there is a Jesus, that he is the only Mediator, that the Son of God has come down and taken a holy human nature into union with himself, and is now at the right hand of the Father, it is the first break of day, the first dawn of hope; and upon that bright spot does the shipwrecked soul fix his longing eyes till the Sun of righteousness arises upon it with healing in his wings. It is a great step in a man's experience to turn wholly and solely to the Lord, and renounce all creature righteousness, all forms and ceremonies as a way of salvation. It is a great mercy to turn away from them, as the shipwrecked mariner turns away from his sinking ship, and looks to the rising sun to shew him some way of escape, and thus afford him some gleam of hope.

J.C. Philpot

"Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" - Romans vii. 24.

If the Lord the Spirit has implanted that piteous cry in our soul, "O wretched man that I am? !" this will follow as a necessary consequence - "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Where shall I look for deliverance? From what quarter can it come? Shall I look to the law? O no! that curses and condemns me, because I am continually breaking it. Can I look to friends? They may pity and sympathize; but they cannot remove the body of sin and death; it is too fast linked on for them to remove.

Shall I go to ministers of truth? I may hear what they say with approbation; but there is something more wanted to remove this chilling embrace of the body of sin and death. Shall I look to the Scriptures? They contain the remedy; but I want that remedy to be sweetly applied - "Who then shall deliver me?" What refuge can I look to? Whither can I go, or whither shall I turn? From what quarter can help or deliverance come? See the embarrassment! view the perplexity of an exercised soul! - looking here, and looking there; turning to the right hand and turning to the left. Yet from one quarter only can the deliverance come. And thus, when the Apostle was brought here - when he was sunk down to a low spot, and anxiously turning his eyes to every quarter to see whence deliverance could come - God blessed his soul with a view of his precious Son. God the Spirit wrought in his heart that living faith whereby he saw Jesus, and whereby there was a communication of the blood and love of the Lamb to his conscience.

J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held, the Lord willing, on the fifth Sunday in May. The meeting will be held at Dan River Church with Greensboro Church being the host church. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us with a special invitation to all ministers of our faith and order.

Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Wayne Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 1994

Ms. Dorothy Brooks, NC $7.00
C.B. Richardson, VA 2.00
Alvis G. Beacham, NC 2.00
W.W. Abshire, VA 2.00
J. Cline Chandler, NC 2.00
Ms. Joyce Farley, TX 10.00
L.C. Hornsby, GA 2.00
A.R. Elmore, NC 2.00
Mrs. Carl R. Bryant, LA 2.00
Dan Anders, AL 2.00
John Collie, NC 2.00
Phil & Joyce Pittman, TX 7.00
Victor H. Laws, MD 50.00
In memory of Mrs. Maud Truitt Laws
Ms. Annie M. Pearson, MI 25.00
Mr. & Mrs. Nummie Dickerson, NC . 2.00
Enos Gingerich, NC 10.00
Mrs. Lester Haning, WV 2.00
Mrs. Ada Campbell, VA 5.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER JULIA METTS BROWN

We bow in humble submission to the will of our Lord who doeth all things well.

Sister Julia Metts Brown was called from our midst July 1, 1993. She was born February 1, 1898 to the late Thomas I. and Mary Bishop Metts in Franklin County, Virginia making her stay on earth 95 years and 5 months.

She was preceded in death by a son Wilbur Brown, husband John Brown, granddaughter Karen Shea and son-

in-law James Shea. She is survived by one daughter Doris (Dottie) Shea, one granddaughter Joyce Ann Shea, one daughter-in-law Dora Goad Brown, one sister Lucy J. Mitz and special friend Bill Collins.

Sister Julia united with Bethel Primitive Baptist Church June 5, 1965 and was faithful to attend the meetings as long as she was able. She manifested a love for the church and when unable to attend she would always ask about the meetings. I believe her to be a Mother in Israel, setting an example worthy to be followed. The welfare of the church seemed to be her greatest concern.

She taught school for many years, a profession she loved. She was active and instrumental in many respectable community activities, holding several state and national offices. She was loved and respected by those who love the way of truth.

Funeral service was conducted from Lynch's Chapel by her pastor Elder Junior Conner and Elder W.T. Conner. She was laid to rest in Franklin Memorial Park.

Written by request of the church while in conference.

Elder Junior Conner, Moderator
Elsie Poindexter, Clerk

PSALMS 116:14-15.

I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people.

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

ROBERTA SPANGLER WILSON

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write a memorial for Sister Roberta Spangler Wilson.

Sister Roberta was born December 17, 1915, in Danville, Va. She was the daughter of Noah Spangler and stepmother, Mary Jessie Dixon.

She married H. Coleman Wilson and they were blessed to have three children.

Sister Roberta joined Dan River Church October 28, 1973, and was baptised by her pastor the late Elder David V. Spangler. She loved, attended, and supported her church faithfully until in declining health she and her husband moved to California to be near their daughter.

Sister Roberta departed this life January 9, 1994, in El Cajon, California. Her survivors include a daughter, Sylvia Floyd, two sons, H. Coleman Wilson, Jr. and Jack Wilson, several grandchildren, great grandchildren, six sisters and two brothers. Her husband preceded her in death. Her funeral was conducted January 15, 1994, in Dan River Church by her pastor Elder Kenneth Key and Elder H.W. Wray. Her body was laid to rest beside her husband in Dan River Church Cemetery.

We pray that her family may be reconciled to her passing and us to feel our loss is Sister Roberta's eternal gain.

Written by Phyllis Snyder

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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THANKS FOR SUFFERINGS

I thank my God, for the flames of fire,
That burns out the chaff, of the fleshy desires,
And made me look to my heavenly King,
For he gave me a hope, of the glory in him.

I thank the Lord, for the fiery darts,
That shot like an arrow, through my heart,
For the understanding, that he gave to me,
So I might walk in faith, through eternity.

I thank my Lord, for the chastening,
That brings me down to my Lord on knees,
For though I am saddened, with grievous sounds,
I know that his grace did much more abound.

I thank the Lord, that he shook this clay,
Of this earthly creature, to make it obey,
Destroyed and condemned, sin in the flesh,
And gave it a spirit, anew and afresh.

I thank my Lord, that he died on the tree,
To save such sinners and wretches like me.
And preserved us for his purpose and will,
For his counsel shall stand, his elect shall live.

Katherine Mathews
Shreveport, La.

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EDITORIAL

Matthew 17, Verses 1- 5.

ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS

"And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,

And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.

Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."

First we admit these scriptures are too great for me, but we see we as humans must be taken to a high place, I think meaning thus. My thoughts and my ways are as high above your thoughts and your ways as the heavens are above the earth. Then we can't receive the things that be of God in our present surroundings. Also into an high mountain apart.

We must be taken, not go, he bringeth them up into an high mountain apart. We read many times of a mountain as a holy place, apart, separate from the world separate from other people, but we see this apart as also meaning separate from our worries of nature before we can see the power of God manifest.

Then and only then could they see Him transfigured before them. His face did shine as the sun. We cannot with natural eyes look at this brightness but shortly without blindness, as the Apostle Paul experienced, when struck down - Raiment white as the light, surely this event left them in a spiritual blindness as they wanted to make three tabernacles, each similar it

seems. They with us must see him with an eye single before we can see him as the only begotten of the Father, the only one to be adored, alone.

While he yet spoke, I think meaning before anymore natural speech or thoughts could be expressed, a bright cloud overshadowed them, covered their bodies as well as thoughts also hid them from the world, then let us consider a bright cloud.

Today as I write there are dark clouds, and many times black clouds surround us, can't see the brightness of the Sun or Son. On this occasion there was a bright cloud. It must be a bright cloud in my life, before I can see spiritual things. I hope today as I write, although in nature a black cloud, is there a bright cloud overshadowing my thoughts, if so, with us and all of His elect a bright cloud must be present to teach us the beauty of God in His glory. His apostles heard the voice they beheld his face shine as the sun, will not His people one day experience such, when all sight of nature is hid, the bright cloud revealing to them the true meaning of that voice out of the cloud which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

As we stated these things are too great for me. It is so large a picture my natural mind cannot frame it.

I continue to hope,
Elder Julian R. Williams

ROMANS 15 : 13.

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

ARTICLES

FROM THE GOSPEL STANDARD, NOVEMBER 1991: JEHOVAH-JERITH

Sermon preached at the Meetings of the Gospel Standard Societies at Rochdale Road Chapel, Manchester, on September 7th, 1991.

Text: "And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireth: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen" (Gen. 22.14).

Moriah was a mountain to Abraham, wasn't it? A dark, gloomy mountain, the place where God had commanded him to sacrifice his own beloved son. You think of it, beloved friends. This afternoon we know the end of it, we know what happened, we know the deliverance; Abraham did not. He had that solemn command to take his only son, and there to sacrifice him on an alter on one of the mountains of Moriah. There were very many things. There was not only his natural feeling, this being his own dear son whom he had to slay, to sacrifice, but hadn't he been delivered from idolatry and all those awful practices of human sacrifice? But more than that, more than anything else, what of the Lord's gracious promise, the promise made concerning Isaac, and not only concerning Isaac, but concerning the promised Messiah, concerning the promised Sav-

iour? What of God's faithfulness? What of God's promises? What of God's eternal covenant purposes if Isaac were to die? Moriah was a dark, black mountain to Abraham. Yet we are told in Hebrews 11, he was blessed with faith, even to see that his God was able to raise Isaac from the dead.

So we see that humble, loving obedience. O beloved friends, was there ever obedience like the obedience of Abraham, unless it be the obedience of Isaac? Never forget Isaac. How easy for him to flee from his aged father! But that willing sacrifice! If it be God's will, Isaac was willing to die. I wonder sometimes if this was the best day in both Abraham's life and in Isaac's life. It is not often we have days like that. But that day when Isaac was completely surrendered to the will of God, and that day when Abraham was so blessed in his soul. You remember how the Lord Jesus said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." Wasn't it on Mount Moriah that took place?

Now this was a dark mountain, a dark gloomy mountain, but "in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." It almost seems from the way the context runs that this had become a kind of proverb in Israel, "As it is said to this day" - "In the mount of the Lord It shall be seen." Well, it was not only said to the day when Moses wrote this passage, but it is said to this day, "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen."

But you say, these dark, black, gloomy mountains - you cannot call them "the mount of the Lord," can you? Yes, beloved friends, we can. God Himself does. He says, "They are My mountains." And then He makes that gracious promise, "I will make all My mountains a way." That has been a good word to me over the years: "I will make all My mountains a way." These awful, gloomy, black mountains which comes in our lives: you cannot get over them, you cannot get around them, there is no way through them, and then the Lord says, "They are My mountains, all of them, and I will make them a way. They are My mountains because I appointed them. They did not come by chance or accident. "They are My mountains because I am going to deal with them." "I will make all My mountains a way." I believe at last we shall look back from the swellings of Jordan: We shall see God's faithfulness to that promise, and we shall see every mountain made a way. O but these mountains! And yet, "As it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." It is in these mountains of difficulty, trial, temptation and sorrow that we see things we never saw by nature, we never saw before. Well Abraham did, didn't he?

"As it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." Well then, what did Abraham see in the mount? What were these things that he saw? Of course, there were many things, but let me just mention three of them, three things that Abraham specially saw in the mount. "As it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen."

Now first of all, and most important of all, and above all, I believe he saw his dear Lord and Saviour, Jesus. O

what a revelation there is in Genesis 22 of a substitutionary atonement! Substitutionary may be a big word for some of you, in simple language it is this, and there is heaven in it: He instead of me. That is substitution. "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." That is substitution. "Behold a scene of matchless grace,! Tis Jesus in the sinner's place." That is substitution.

How was it revealed to Abraham? Well, there was Isaac laying on the alter, and there he was, ready to die, appointed to death, and there was that sharp knife raised to be plunged into his heart. But then something takes place. Abraham's hand is stopped. There is a ram caught by his horns in the thicket. Now that ram must be taken. Isaac is set free. The ram is laid on alter. The ram is slain. The knife does not smite Isaac, it smites the ram instead of Isaac, and Isaac is set free. That is substitution.

O, I believe Abraham by faith saw the day of Christ on Mount Moriah, and he rejoiced to see it, and was glad. Why did he rejoice to see it? Because as a guilty sinner, feeling his ruin and guilt, he saw "a Lamb as it had been slain," the Lamb of God that was, "slain from the foundation of the world." But by faith, Abraham went to Calvary, and there he saw an innocent Lamb, the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." O, do you believe it? Do you believe in substitution? Do you love substitution? Have you no hope, apart from substitution? Is this the ground on which you are going to get to heaven? To see and painfully feel your sin and guilt, and the wrath of God that you deserve against your sin, and hell which is your just but dread desert; and then by faith to be led by the Holy Spirit to Calvary, to see that cruel cross and divine wrath poured out there, that is the place where you should have hung, where you should have suffered, where you should have endured divine wrath against your sin personally. Yet there - O the wonder of it - you see divine wrath poured out, not upon the guilty sinner, but upon the innocent Lamb of God, He who is God's dear, eternal Son incarnate. You see the Innocent suffering in the place of the guilty, sin laid upon Him, His people's sin punished in the Saviour, and for ever taken away. Sin must be punished, either in the sinner or in one who takes his place. And there you see the amazing transaction. You see the sword of divine justice drawn out of its sheath, and you see what Ralph Erskine solemnly said, that the sword of divine justice, once drawn from its sheath could never be returned unless drenched in the blood of God's incarnate Son. Now do you believe it? "Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the Man that is My Fellow, saith the Lord: smite the Shepherd." So the Shepherd is smitten that the sheep might be free. The ram must die so that Isaac might not die. This is our only hope of heaven: a substitutionary atonement.

People sometimes speak rather carelessly about Christ dying for sinners. What does this little word-for-

mean? Our godly forefathers used to put it clearly. (You remember some of them, don't you?) They used to speak about Christ dying in "the room, place and stead of His people." That was good divinity. That is substitution. If you go back further, the old divines used to speak about Christ dying in the law-place of His people. But no-one put it more clearly than our dear hymnwriter:

"He took the dying traitor's place.
And suffered in his stead:
For man (O miracle of grace!)
For man the Saviour bled."

Now that will endear the Lord Jesus to you. Then by faith you will behold the Lamb of God. Then this will make Him precious to your soul.

"In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." Well, that was the first, the most blessed thing that Abraham saw that day on Mount Moriah. Now the second thing he saw was this: the Lord's blessed ability to deliver. There did not appear to be any way of deliverance, did there? It was God's own commandment. The sentence had gone forth. Abraham and Isaac had travelled this journey, and now the mountain is pointed out, and the alter prepared. There is the knife and there is the wood. It all seemed too far gone. God Himself had commanded it. There just didn't seem any way out, any way of deliverance. "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen" that the Lord is able to make a way where there is no way, that the Lord is able to deliver where there is no way of deliverance. "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." And He is an almighty Deliverer.

This is one of the great deliverances of the Word of God. But let us be clear, beloved friends, the whole of Scripture is a Book of trials and deliverances, and the whole experience of the people of God is an experience of trials and deliverances. So you will be brought into these mountains where there is no deliverance, where you cannot even see how the Lord can come. O but "the voice of my Beloved! behold, He cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills." It is an easy thing for Him to come over all these dark mountains to command deliverance for Jacob. There will be many times when you need deliverance and you have to seek for it and pray for it-spiritual things, providential things - and perhaps this afternoon some of you are in some concern and you want the Lord to deliver, but you cannot see how he can. You cannot see any way out. "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." It shall be seen how the Lord touches the mountains and they smoke. It will be seen how the great mountain becomes a plain before Zerubbabel. "Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me."

"In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." Well, some of you have seen it many times in the mount, haven't you, the Lord's blessed ability to deliver? Some of us have seen it over and over again in our darkest hour, haven't we?

"Then let our humble faith address

His mercy and His power;
We shall obtain delivering grace,
In the distressing hour."

Remember, child of God, you will not have one more trial than deliverance.

However many trials you have, you will be delivered from them all. O that word! On one occasion the Apostle Paul gave a great catalogue of trials, and he said: "Out of them all the Lord delivered me." I remember once in my life there seemed to be so many trials and problems and difficulties. I sat down and I scribbled them one by one on a piece of paper, and just looked at them, almost in black despair. There were so many. But months afterwards, it may even have been years afterwards, I suddenly found that scrap of paper. At first, I hardly knew what it was, and then I remembered. I began to read through the black, dark catalogue of all these trials, and as I went through them one by one, I could see how the Lord had been with me and brought me out of them. As I came to the last one, that word dropped in sweetly: "Out of them all the Lord delivered me." The apostle says, "Who delivered us from so great a death." Beloved, that is your past. "And doth deliver." That is the trouble you are in today. Now this is the whole or your unknown way: "In whom we trust that He will yet deliver us."

"In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." The third thing that Abraham saw that day in the mount was the Lord's ability to provide, and so he called that place "Jehovah-jireh" - the Lord will provide. It was something he saw. Of course, really this third point embraces the other two: "The Lord will provide a way of deliverance and he saw that the Lord will provide a Lamb to suffer in the sinner's place. "He called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh." The Lord will provide, it means. "As it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen."

Well, then, what a beautiful title this is, isn't it - Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide?" Didn't our godly forefathers used to love this title of the Lord, especially in this terrible days of poverty? They had to live on it day by day: "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." No doubt many of you remember years ago in so many of the houses of our people there used to be a little poem hanging on the wall and the title of it at the top was, "Jehovah-jireh." This was the little poem:

"Say not, my soul, from whence can God relieve thy care,
Remember that Omnipotence hath servants everywhere
His method is sublime, His thoughts supremely kind;
God never is before His time, and never is behind."

Jehovah-jireh. "Abraham called the name of that place, Jehovah-jireh." There is such a beautiful suitability in it. It touches everything, doesn't it? It is suitable for a young person in whose heart the fear of God has been placed. It is suitable for a dying saint coming down to the swellings of Jordan. "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide."

Well, some of you may at present be having difficulties in your lives and in your circumstances. There may be providential difficulties. You do not know how you are going to manage. You do not know how you are going to go on. Now this is the answer: "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." "When, and where, and by what means, to His wisdom leaving." You may think it is going to be this way, but the Lord may work a completely different way.

Perhaps the best commentary on this point is I Kings 17, Elijah, the terrible dearth, the drought. "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide - provide the brook Cherith when all the other brooks are dry. Provide ravens: "But sooner all nature shall change, than one of God's promises fail;" supply all Elijah's needs, for, "When the Lord's people have need, His goodness will find out a way." You remember that Question after Elijah had ascended to heaven: "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" That is Jehovah-jireh, the One who supplies the ravens, the one who commands the brook Cherith. Where is He? He is still on the throne, still in heaven, He still cares, and He is still faithful to His promise. What about when your brook begins to run dry? Why, Jehovah-jireh is not dependent on one little brook Cherith. He has a widow woman to sustain you, a barrel of meal that will never be completely empty, a cruise of oil that will never be completely dry. "All creatures obey His command." Dear child of God, and in providence you will always have a handful of meal in the bottom of your barrel and some oil in your cruise.

"Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." There may be some of you and you are having difficulties in the church. You may be having problems; it may even be trouble, or it may be needs you have. You cannot see how those needs are ever going to be supplied. Or it may be that you are seeking ministers to preach, or even a godly pastor. "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." You say, "How can it be?" "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." What about those godly women by the river at Philippi? They had not got a man to do anything. What did they do? They were not satisfied with some compromise or worldly device or some second best. They met for prayer, and the Lord sent the Apostle Paul.

"Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." Now there are a few dear ministers here today. What about us? You know, the Lord's day morning comes very, very quickly after Saturday afternoon and evening, and there is no discharge in this warfare. Week by week and year by year, and sometimes you have said everything you have got to say, and sometimes you cannot think of anything else, and sometimes you cannot find a text. "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." When you are at your wits' end, perhaps you will be able to say, like I so often have to do,

"Thou hast helped in every need;
This emboldens me to plead;
After so much mercy past,
Canst Thou let me sink at last?"

"Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." Then you see, there are family things. Some of you may have problems and difficulties and trials in your families, concerning those you love. You hardly know how to manage things. You hardly know what to do. "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." No doubt a few of you, if not many, this afternoon are in trouble, in difficulty of one sort or another. "The heart knoweth his own bitterness." If you are in trouble, you know it, and what is a trouble to one is not a trouble to another.

"Did ever trouble yet befall.
And He refuse to hear thy call?"

"Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." Then there is the unknown way stretching before you. What about tomorrow, and next week, and the coming days? What about those mountains that loom in your pathway? You cannot face them. You shrink from them. You are ready to flee, ready to turn back.

"Jesus Christ, your Father's Son,
Bids you undismayed go on."

"Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." Some of you may be crying, "You are getting a bit too much on providential things. I am plagued with the conflict, and temptation, and indwelling sin, and fresh contracted guilt." Well this word covers every spiritual concern, every spiritual trial. "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." There is your Pilgrimage you have to walk out; perhaps you find the road is rough. There is the heavenly race that you seek to run. There is the conflict with sin and Satan and death and hell. "The Lord will provide." A young pilgrim sets out, and in our foolishness we think we are somehow going to manage it ourselves. An old soldier once said that when a soldier is accepted into the army, there is only one thing to do-obey. We have to walk it out. "Tis mine to obey, 'tis His to provide." But your supplies are sure for every step of your pilgrimage, like Israel's manna. You and I would like the Lord to provide for next week's trials today, wouldn't we?

"No stock on nature's barren ground,
My all is in Thy storehouse found."

It is like the manna, day by day: when you need it, it is there. He will not give you any stock in hand to make you independent. You have to go all the way leaning, hanging, depending.

"Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." So many things were said this morning about the state of the world and our church. If only the Holy Ghost drop this into our hearts, then this is the answer, that complete sufficiency that is in God, that fullness which dwells in His beloved Son. "What'er we need in Jesus dwell." "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." In Romans 8, Paul had such a beautiful view of it. He saw how the Father provide His dear Son as a saviour, provided Him to open a fountain for sin and for uncleanness; and pro-

vided Him to suffer such ignominy and shame and sorrow, even to death. It is very beautiful reasoning of the apostle. He argues from the greater to the less. He said, "He that spared not His own Son." Go to Calvary, beloved friends, and see that, He spared not His own Son. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all." Now this is it: "How shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" That is, if He sent His dear Son to calvary to die, then He will not fail to supply all your needs, whatever they are in your pilgrimage, all your way to heaven.

"Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." So may we view this especially in the Person of the Lord Jesus. William Gadsby used a delightful expression. He used to sing of Him as "Jehovah-Jesus." "Jehovah-Jesus is the sinner's Friend" "Jehovah-Jesus, we will Thee adore," I have never come across any other writer or preacher who used that expression, but it is a scriptural one-Jehovah-Jesus. "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." We can apply it to the dear Saviour of sinners, the wonderful fullness that dwells in Him. "What'er I need in Jesus dwells." Jehovah-jireh, Jehovah-Jesus, "the Lord will provide."

Now I am going to tell you something, beloved friends. Faith adds various bits and pieces at the end. Faith looks at a word like this: "The Lord will provide," and here is this sinner in all his felt need and emptiness and ruin and guilt and shame and helplessness, and faith looks at a promise like this and puts bits on the end. Things like this. "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide" divine help. That is what I need. I am so helpless. But is His name Jehovah-jireh? Then He will provide that help I need, "Jehovah." What a beautiful expression that is, "His riches in glory by Christ Jesus"! That is what John Newton called "a never-failing treasury filled with boundless stores of grace."

"His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." They are inexhaustible, full, free, but it is according to. This is one of the beautiful Scriptures which is often misquoted. How often people say, God will supply all out of His riches in glory! That is true, but it doesn't say "out of His riches in glory"; it says, "according to." What is the difference? If a man is exceedingly wealthy, and you went to him in great need, he might give you a penny. That would be out of his riches; but it would not be according to his riches. If it were according to his riches; you would get a rich gift. William Gadsby seems to come right to the very heart of it. He says, "My every need He richly will supply." It is not in an unwilling way, not in a niggardly way. "My every need He richly will supply." There was a tried, tempted saint I knew once, and Satan came to him, and he could not tempt him out of his standing in Christ, but he came something like this. Satan said, "well you will get to heaven at last, but the Lord will do it unwillingly, and He will only do it because He cannot break His promises." Do you know what the old man said, he said "Satan, the Lord has said to me, "It is the Father's good pleasure to

give you the kingdom." That is the way grace works. That is the way the Lord Jesus deals. It is His good pleasure to give you the kingdom. It is His good pleasure to provide. It is His good pleasure to supply all your need. "According to His Riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

"And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen."

This article sent in by
Elder Noel Conner.

VOICES OF THE PAST

From Elder Lamberts book, "Tried In The Furnace".

A FIRM FOUNDATION

"Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars."

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

The above scripture is found in the ninth chapter of Proverbs and if you will read the entire chapter you will find that two houses were under consideration. One house was the product of wisdom, and the other house was of the foolish woman. I think wisdom's house is figurative of the Church of Christ, and the other represents the false church. All has been done to make the Church of Christ secure and firm, but the foolish will fall by the wayside. I believe this house to be composed of all the children of God as chosen in Christ before the world began. It is not our desire to consider the house at this time, but to consider the foundation upon which this house is built. Surely the foundation is Christ Jesus and all who were chosen in Him will finally be blessed to view the seven pillars or principles of the doctrine of God, our Savior. The abstract of the faith of God's elect may be summed up thus: 1. Sovereignty of God. 2. Total depravity of man. 3. Unconditional election. 4. Limited atonement or special redemption. 5. Irresistible or efficacious grace. 6. Preservation of the saints. 7. Resurrection or complete immortalization of the saints. I believe these phases of the doctrine are experienced in the order named. The first six are experienced here in time and the seventh is to be experienced in the beyond.

This first lesson to be revealed to the child of God is His sovereignty. We are thinking in terms of seven so we think of God as eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, holy, loving and triune. Yes, He is eternal. One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. He is of one mind. He has never learned anything new nor has He forgotten anything. Everything that has ever taken place, is taking place, or that ever will come to pass is just as present and vivid in His mind as if it were (at this very moment) taking

place. Things that we experience are past, present and future with us because we are creatures of time and finite, but all things are as present with God. We wonder what the future holds for us and forget things that are past, but God being eternal sees it as now transpiring.

The second part of the first pillar of this firm foundation is the omnipotence of God. He is all-powerful. God says through the prophet, "I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass."

In the Scriptures it is said of God; "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" God spake this world into existence. He only had to say, "Let there be light: and there was light." "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." He is God "who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."

God is omniscient. He is wise to the extent that His knowledge embraces all things because He has decreed them and is abundantly able to bring them to pass. There is not a thought or act of man that God does not know about. "He is before all things, and by him all things consist." Though the world seems to run at random, and events huddled together in blind confusion to our finite minds, God is so wise that He knows the outcome of all causes and effects, and so governs them that He makes perfect harmony out of all those seeming jarrings and discords. He is so wise that all things praise Him.

God is omnipresent. He is present at all places at the same time. He is at all times at the same place. There is no possibility of hiding from God. In Him we live, move and have our being. He fills the universe.

Another characteristic of God is His eternal love. God is love. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." He loved His people even when they were dead in trespasses and in sin. This love of God is the basis of their salvation. It is the characteristic that is planted in the hearts of God's people by the Holy Spirit.

God is holy. "The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works" (Psalms 145:17). There is no unrighteousness with God. He is of purer eyes than to behold evil and canst not look upon iniquity, therefore He consecrates the wicked acts of men to His own glory and praise and to the good of His chosen people.

The seventh phase of His sovereignty is that He is triune. God, the Father; God the Son; and God, the Holy Ghost. God the Father, chose His people unto salvation before the foundation of the world. God, the Son, accomplished this salvation by performing the requirements of the law,

and suffered the penalty of sin and satisfied justice by shedding His precious blood on Calvary's tree for the remission of their many sins. God, the Holy Ghost, operates upon them here in time by taking from them the stony heart and giving them a heart of flesh; reveals to them the truth as it is in Christ Jesus; comforts and consoles them in this life; and will (in the resurrection) baptize them with immortality.

Now let us consider the second pillar of this firm foundation. According to my experience, I was given a glimpse of the sovereignty of God. This was the stimuli that made manifest the fundamental truth of the total depravity of man. Job had a similar experience as recorded in Job 42: 5,6, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." Isaiah speaks likewise in Isaiah 6:5. "Then said I, woe is me for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." God, first, revealed Himself to each of these causing them, secondly, to see their depravity.

What a contrast! God is eternal; I am timely. God is all powerful; I have no ability. God is all-wise; I know nothing as God knows. God is everywhere at all times; I can be nowhere at any time upon volition of my own will, for I find myself a victim of circumstances over which I have no control. God loved us even when we were dead in trespasses and sin; I naturally love no one but myself. God is holy; I am unholy. God is triune in complete agreement; my natural desires war against the Spirit. I find myself totally depraved, not able to extricate myself from this terrible state. This experience agrees with Jer. 13: 23. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." Jesus expressed this incapacity of man to recover himself from this fallen state he is in when He said as recorded in John 6:44, No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." As long as the skin of the Ethiopian is black and the leopard is spotted there is no reason to expect goodness to spring from man. It is just as possible for the Ethiopian to change his skin or the leopard its spots. We must look to some other source than ourselves for anything good. We are so naturally constituted that we will trust in our own ability until God sees fit to reveal to us our true condition by His Spirit. Then we are made to "cry unto God, the most high; unto God that performeth all things for me." In this state of mind it is with pleasure and heart-felt thanks to God that we view the third pillar of this firm foundation, unconditional election.

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4). Paul trusted in the power and amazing grace of God as stated in his letter to Timothy, 2 Timothy 1:9, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but accord-

ing to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Thus, it is not according to our works. Our finite minds would argue that surely it is according to our will even granting that it is not according to our works. The Spirit teaches us contrary to natural reasoning so let us see what Paul has to say about it in Rom. 9: 11-18. "(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharoah, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy upon whom he will have mercy, and whom he will be hardeneth." Jesus said to His disciples, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." So we are unconditionally elected according to the good pleasure of God's will.

Let us further view this foundation by noting the fourth pillar or principle of truth, limited atonement. God's people were chosen in Christ Jesus. Christ's life and death must have been for them only. Concerning Jesus before His birth the angel said, "And she (Mary) shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." The work of Christ was for God's people, not for the entire Adamic race. Christ said in John 10: 14, 15, "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep." Christ died for the sheep, not for the goats. Christ said in His prayer to God as recorded in John 17: 9, "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." Christ did not pray for the entire Adamic race. Paul tells the ministers of Ephesus in Acts 20: 28, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." His blood was shed for the church, not for the world. Christ said in Matt. 20: 28, "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." He gave His life for many, not for all.

The fifth pillar is that of irresistible or efficacious grace. The teachings of the Scriptures is such that we must say that man in his natural state is radically corrupt. He is spiritually dead and must be saved by Christ if at all. He does not desire God; therefore, must have a new disposition before he can love God. He loves sin, therefore can never desire to be redeemed

from it until he is wrought upon by the effectual working of God's mighty power. Jesus said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). This inward change wrought by supernatural power is termed in the Scriptures as "Called out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9). A passing out of death into life (John 5: 24); a taking away of the heart of stone, and a giving of the heart of flesh (Ezek. 11: 19); and the subject of the change is said to be a new creature (2 Cor. 5: 17).

We had nothing to do with our physical birth but received it as a sovereign gift of God; we likewise have nothing to do with our spiritual birth but receive it also as a sovereign gift. Each occurred without any exercise of our own power, and even without our consent being asked. We no more resist the latter than we did the former. Consequently, salvation to whomsoever it may be granted is entirely of grace. The ones so wrought upon are made to see "Jesus the author and finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12:2). There is no such thing as a "self-made man"; the highest type man agrees with Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am." God said through the prophet, Isaiah 56:11, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth, it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it." When God says repent, you repent; when He says come, you come; when He says go, you go.

The doctrine of election and efficacious grace logically implies the certain salvation of those who receive these blessings. Therefore let us consider the sixth pillar, to wit: the perseverance of the saints. Those who have been brought to Jesus for refuge have a firm foundation upon which to build their hope of eternal life. The iniquities of their own hearts together with all the Satanic influences will never cause them to fail. The same amazing grace that has brought us thus far will lead us home. Paul said in Rom. 8: 29, "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." It is an evidence that God has predestinated the recipients of these gifts to be like Him in character, destiny and glory and that He will infallibly carry out His purpose. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6). This day of Jesus Christ will be the crowning work of immortality in the resurrection. Psalms 138:8 reads, "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O Lord, endureth forever." Paul states that "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." So God's dealings with His children are never ending, but will finally save them in heaven without the loss of one.

In this life God's people may experience a close view of the six fundamental principles or pillars of this firm foundation as God sees fit to reveal to them, but the seventh, or that of the immortalization or resurrection of the saints, is yet to be experienced in

reality. Now we see as through a glass darkly but then face to face; now we know in part but then we will know as we are known. Now we look forward with deep anxiety and precious hope toward the reality of the seventh principle, the resurrection, which is to be the crowning work of salvation and is yet to be experienced actually and really by all the children of God. I desire to close this treatise by quoting 1 Cor. 15: 51-58, "Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that you labor is not in vain in the Lord." Amen.

Elder E.J. Lambert

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1 PETER 1: 24-25.

For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:

But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

FAITH

Dear Sir: - Not having been a reader of your paper, I may in the following question repeat one which during your editorial labors you have often had propounded. It is on the subject of faith.

Will you, or some of your correspondents, be so kind as to give your views on the proposition whether the creature can or does have anything to do with the creation or operation of his faith, or whether it be the exclusive gift of God? If your time and space will permit, your answer in the "Signs of the Times" will be very welcome. Very truth yours, R.W. Monroe. Evansville, W.Va. Jan. 25, 1865.

By faith, we presume our correspondent means evangelical or gospel faith, that faith without which it is impossible to please God. According to Webster, and other standard lexicographers, the term may be variously applied, and the Scriptures speak of the faith of God, the faith of Christ, and faith of God's elect, and also the faith of men, of devils, or living faith, and of dead faith. The Spirit of inspiration has through the apostles particularly described the origin, nature, power and vitality of the faith of the gospel, as faith that works by love and purifies the heart, which subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness made strong, waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens, etc.

From all that is said in the Scriptures of true, living and triumphing faith, we may infer that there is in the world a spurious, false, lifeless and deceptive faith, or what is called faith, and so received and regarded by the religious world. In the creation and operation of the faith of men and of devils, men and devils have much to do, and we need only to sum up their own testimony to show that it is a creature of their own; indeed, it bears their image and their superscription. So indeed they seem to understand it, and to speak of it as something which is required of and to be produced by ungodly sinners, as a price or condition of salvation.

As in their appeals to the unregenerate, they represent that however destitute sinners may be of faith, they can originate it if they will, and that, too, without much cost or labor. It has often been asserted by their preachers that it is as easily produced as for a man to turn his hand over. The very presentation of the appeal of our correspondent for our views affords evidence that the power of the creature to create faith, and when created to put it in motion and control its operation, is contended for by many, and it is well known to be a cardinal doctrine in every Arminian work mongrel creed. Of that kind of faith it would be folly for us to deny the power of creatures to create and manage. The machinery of antichrist is apparent to every intelligent observer.

History points us to ecclesiastical councils, in solemn convocation from time to time, under the protection of human powers organized expressly for the purpose of making creeds, to be enforced by pains and penalties, flames and faggots, racks and tortures, upon the children of this world, and their humanly devised creeds are received by millions as saving faith.

In modern times, and in our own country, the machinery for the manufacturing of faith and piety embrace infant schools, Sabbath Schools, Bible classes, catechisms, scientific lectures, Theological Seminaries, and even our public district schools are almost universally used for the same deceptive purposes. All these, beside the drilling, forging and blowing, so common at excitement meetings, anxious are in requisition. The kind of faith engendered by the power and ingenuity of men, by whatever means, mode or machinery, like the idols of the ancients of which we read, is destitute of vitality. There is no breath in the midst of it, unless it be the inspiration of delusion, fanaticism and will-worship, breathing slaughter against the cause and people of the living God.

According to the solemn predictions of inspired wisdom the faith of antichrist in the last days should be greatly facilitated by signs and lying wonders, and by all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (II

Thes. 2: 11-12) (See also Rev. 13: 12-14.) But the faith of which we understand our friend to inquire is as distinct and opposite to the faith of men and devils as holiness is opposite to and distinct from sin, as heaven is from hell. No creature can have anything to do, or in other words, can do anything in its creation or its operation.

First. No creature can have anything to do in creating it, because we are expressly told in the sacred record that Christ is the author and the finisher of it, (Heb. 12:2) This declaration leaves no room for creatures to operate in its creation. He who is the author is also the finisher. As in the creation of the world, God began and God finished the work, leaving no other beings room to claim that they had participated in its creation, so creatures are equally excluded from participating in the creation or production of the faith of the Son of God. HE did not merely begin, and leave creatures to finish the work, for all his works are perfect, and that which is perfect, and that which is perfect cannot be improved.

1. Creatures, or created beings, are natural, all their powers and perceptions are natural, and must fail to comprehend or perform spiritual things; and faith is a spiritual and vital creature agency. All the faith that men can create is like themselves-natural. As a spider cannot spin a web from any material that it does not possess in its own filthy bowels, so the faith produced by creature is not in whole nor in part the faith of the Son of God.

2. The faith of the gospel is spiritual, for it is the fruit of the spirit. (Gal. 5: 22) All fruits of the Spirit must be spiritual. That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit; (John 3:6) and the faith of the saints is born of God; (I John 5:4) and it must therefore be spiritual, for being borne of God, it must possess the life, power and immortality of God, and therefore is able to, and does overcome the world.

3. Creatures can have no part in the creation of the faith of Christ, nor can they even bring themselves into possession of it, or under its power, for the apostle positively declares that it is not of themselves, but it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. (Eph. 2: 8,9)

4. If it were the creature or production of men it would be the property of men, whereas the Scriptures declare that it is the faith of the Son of God. Gal. 2:20 says, "And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Paul had not therefore had anything to do in its creation. Again, it is called the faith of God, (Rom. 3:3) as it could not be called if it were of the creature.

The second inquiry submitted is, whether the creature can or does have anything to do with the operation of his faith? The answer to this, as well as the other inquiry, must depend on what is intended by "his faith." If the creature is a member of Christ, and, like Paul, living by the faith of the Son of God, then, as a member of the body of Christ, the faith of the Son of God is his faith, for of Christ's fullness has

he received, and grace for grace, because Christ in all his fullness is given to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. In this relation the faith of the Son of God, as the life, righteousness, sanctification and redemption of Christ, is his, and he is the author and finisher of his faith. As there is but one Lord, so to the head and body of the church there is but one faith and one baptism, and the redeemed of the Lord shall all come in the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:5, 13).

Having already shown that the faith of human origin must be operated by the power which gave it being, we shall now consider the inquiry to be concerning the operation of the faith of the Son of God, as existing in the children of God. To answer the question then requires that we consider, What is faith? And what are its operations? And by what power are they controlled?

1. The faith of which we now speak is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. (Heb. 11:1) It is that living principle in the quickened family of God which realizes and actualizes to them those spiritual things which no human power or discernment can comprehend, by which the saints "look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. (II Cor. 4:18). Even as Moses by faith endured as seeing him who is invisible. (Heb. 11:27). It is to the child of God what the eye is to the natural body. As our natural eye beholds natural objects which we could not see without the eye, so faith looks within the veil, beholds the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and makes real to us that which without vital faith would only be at best a vain speculation. It is through faith that the Spirit reveals all spiritual things to the saints; while here we live by faith, we walk by faith and are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation; hence it is evidence of things not seen, things which the vulture's eye hath not seen, which God hath hidden from the wise and prudent, but hath revealed to the faith of his children.

2. The operations of faith are confidence in God, reliance on his counsel, wisdom, goodness and grace, perceptions of his power and glory, confident trust in his gracious promises, discoveries of his dealings, the revelation of Christ in all his Mediatorial fullness and glory, a clear apprehension of his truth, and of all things pertaining to his purpose and grace in the salvation of his people.

Faith also in its operation suppresses fear, triumphs over doubts and infidelity, strengthens and confirms the Christian's hope, overcomes the world and all worldly powers and influences which war against the soul. It glories in the cross of Christ, it discovers and points out the pathway of holiness, directs to the throne of

grace, inclines those who possess it to follow Christ in his ordinances, to obey him in all his precepts and makes them dearly love his service. It inspires courage to face the enemy, to endure hardness as good soldiers, to suffer the loss of all things and to count not their own lives dear unto themselves, so that they may finish their course with joy.

The operations of faith are most gloriously exemplified in the cloud of witnesses presented in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, in the patriarchs, prophets and men of God, from the days of Abel until the apostolic age, and from that period the subjects of this holy faith have known and testified of the power and triumphs of faith over all the opposing powers of darkness in their lives and in their deaths. How often have some of us witnessed the powerful operations of faith making the dying bed of the saints feel softer than the downy pillow, in disarming death of all terror and the grave of victory, lighting up the otherwise dark, dreary and gloomy passage with immortal radiance and refulgent glory. These are what we understand to be some of the operations of the faith of the Son of God, as it operates in and upon the saints until they shall need to walk by faith no longer; until

"They shall see and hear and know,
All they desired or wish'd below,
And every power find sweet employ
in the eternal world of joy."

3. The power which conducts the operations of faith must be at least as great as the faith its operations are. As we have seen that this faith of the Son of God, which is born of God, overcomes the world, if we believe the testimony we cannot admit that the world has any power to control its operations. As there is a divine power in faith, as it is the faith of the Son of God, the faith of God, as well as the faith of God's elect, it cannot be governed or controlled by any power out of itself. Even the Christian who has often felt its power, labors in vain to control its operations.

God, its author, has ordained that it shall be tried, for the trial of it is precious, and shall result in its final victory and his declarative glory. The Christian would naturally desire to be always exulting in its victories, or rejoicing in its discoveries, dreads, but cannot prevent, the fiery ordeal by which it is to be tried. The Christian to whom God has given the precious faith of his dear Son, although he has no power to create or control it, yet has much to do with its operation; but let us understand, although he cannot govern its operations, he can and must be governed by it. *He cannot exercise faith, but faith can exercise him.* This much he has to do with the operation of faith: he has to feel it, to love it, to cherish it, to testify of it, to be led by it, to walk by it and to life by it. Yea, the children of God are called to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, and labor to suppress all their carnal corruptions of the flesh which are at war with it, by crucifying the old man with its affections and lusts, and when the powers

of the flesh seem to prevail, and doubts, and fears, and darkness and temptations make them tremble and faint, they then have something to do; they are constrained to cry out, in the full conviction of their own weakness and inability to exercise faith, "Lord, increase my faith." "Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief." Thus acknowledging that God's power in keeping them is through faith unto salvation.

In conclusion, we will give some discriminating marks by which the honest inquirer after truth, if God has given him an ear to hear, and a heart to understand the truth, may distinguish between the faith of the Son of God and that which can be produced by men. The true is born of God, and lives and abides with hope and charity in the hearts of God's quickened children; the false is a bastard, and shall dwell in Ashdod. (Zech. 9:6) The true is a living or vital faith; the false is dead, or totally destitute of spiritual life. The true conquers the sinner, and prostrates him as a willing and joyful captive at the feet of Jesus; the false is conquered by the sinner, and wholly under his control and management. The true humbles its possessor before the majesty of the Lord; the false inflates with pride and self-importance. The true is immediately from God; the false is from the devil. The true leads the child of God through great tribulations up to the paradise of God; the false leads down to the chambers of death. The true makes the penitent publican stand smiting on his breast; the false inclines the Pharisee to boast of his own works.

True faith inclines the heart to listen to what God the Lord has said, to believe what God has said to rely alone on what God has done for life and immortality. False faith leads men to reject the testimony of God, to trust to their own vain imaginations and rely upon their own works for acceptance with God. True faith works by love, and purifies the heart; false faith works by the carnal, depraved impulses of the mind, which is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. True faith stands not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God; false faith stands in the wisdom of men and in the power of darkness, of free-will and human agency. True faith relies on what God has done; false faith on what men intend to do. True faith looks for redemption, justification and acceptance with God, through the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, while false faith confides in human merit, self-righteousness and will-worship. True faith feeds on every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God, while false faith thrives upon false doctrine, false philanthropy, false worship and feeds and fattens on its own flesh. The faith of the Son of God leads those to whom it is given to his church, his people, his ordinances, his precepts and his examples, but false faith leads men to seek the society which is more suited to their depraved taste, and which they find in the various branches or departments of Babylon. True faith purifies the heart, but false faith vitiates the heart, and fills it with envy,

wrath, hatred, malice, revenge, murder, seditions, heresies and all that is vile and abominable.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y.
May 15, 1865.

(This article was sent in by Elder Noel Conner.)

ROMANS 8: 10-11.

And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

MEETINGS

HOPEWELL MEETING

The good Lord willing, the nineteenth annual 5th Sunday meeting, will be held at Hopewell Church, Winnsboro, Texas, beginning on Friday, May 27th and continuing through the 28th and 29th. Hopewell Church is located about six miles west of Winnsboro. Go west on Coke Road (515) about four and one-half miles and follow the signs.

So often it seems like spiritual barrenness is the order of the day. How wonderful then, when the Spirit of Almighty God lays hold upon our hearts and sweetly brings forth the same desires as the Psalmist had when he wrote, "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; to see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary. Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice." Psalm 63: 1-7.

It is our prayer that you will be given a mind to be with us and that together, we will be blessed to rejoice "in the shadow of Thy wings." Please remember us in prayer.

Elder Jimmy Hamrick, Pastor
John Hamrick, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union meeting will be held the Lord willing on the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in May. The meeting will be held at Union Church on SL Rd. 605.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us, a special invitation to all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
Silas Payne, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The one hundred fifty-third session of the Staunton River Association will convene, the Lord willing, at Malmaison Church the second weekend in July 1994 which will be July 9th and 10th.

Malmaison Church is located in Pittsylvania County on state road 726 about 5 miles from Danville, Va.

We will welcome people of our faith and order.

Burnell B. Williams, Association Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 1994

Floyd Bryant, VA	$5.00
Mrs. Carla T. Horton, VA	7.00
Clarence M. Kearns, NC	2.00
L.D. Goad, VA	5.00
Mrs. Catherine W. Combs, NC	5.00
Richard Stegall, VA	2.00
Gene Lupton, VA	7.00
Ms. Betty Nickelton, VA In memory of C.L. Underwood	5.00
Joel S. Miles, FL	7.00
James T. Howard, AL	7.00
Mrs. Mary N. Phillips, TN	2.00
Mrs. Virginia W. Gladding, MD	7.00
Mrs. Sara Collie, NC	2.00
Mrs. Wilma S. Jones, NC	10.00
James D. Whaley, NC	7.00
Bill Clinton, CA	3.00
Mrs. Patsy R. Mitchell, TX	2.00
Mrs. Bennie Clifton, VA	2.00
Mrs. Jean Moran, NC	2.00
Mrs. J.D. Marze, LA	2.00
Raymond Clayton, KY	7.00
Mrs. Florence D. Maxey, VA	2.00
Mrs. Myrtle T. Daniel, FL	2.00
Mrs. Betty M. Nutter, MD	2.00
W.P. Potter, VA	2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER ROSA TANKSLEY DALTON

It pleased our Lord to call home, Sister Rosa Tanksley Dalton. Sister Dalton passed from this life January 17, 1994. She was born September 8, 1905; the daughter of Will Tanksley and Ida Pruitt Tanksley. She was married to Brother Ollie David Dalton, who predeceased her.

Sister Rosa was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by experience and baptism August 12, 1962. Sister Rosa was a faithful member and always enjoyed coming to church and showed love for all her brethren.

Sister Rosa's survivors are four sons; Roy Dalton, Clifton Dalton, and M.T. Dalton all of Gretna and Lester Dalton of Hurt; three daughters, Alice Gatewood of Danville, Eva Woodson of Lynchburg and Jerlene Dalton of Gretna; 16 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren.

Sister Rosa's funeral was conducted by Elder Marvin Brumfield and Elder Raymond Goad. Her body was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park to await the coming of our Lord and Savior. May all that mourn her passing and love her memory be given to say, "Thy will be done."

Written in love and hope,
Sister Carol R. Pickral

Elder Marvin Brumfield, Moderator
Oscar Pickral, Clerk

IN MEMORY OF BROTHER JAMES BOYD MINTER

Brother Boyd Minter was born October 25, 1903 exactly 50 years before my birth. He was a native of Henry County, Virginia and a retired Fieldcrest Mills employee. He was called home by his Lord on April 20, 1993. Surviving are his wife, Sister Irene Scott Minter; daughters, Lorene M. Mattox of Martinsville, Va., Helen N. Naff of Bassett, Va.; sons, James Melvin Minter of Chesapeake, Va., Joseph Clyde Minter of Eden; stepdaughters, Millie Shumate, Inez Baynes, both of Reidsville, Brownie Toler of Ruffin; sisters, Lila McGuire, Alma M. Scearce, both of Martinsville, Va., Ada Pulliam of Greensboro, Dorothy M. Corum of Eden; brother, Richard Minter of Ridgeway, Va.; 10 grandchildren; and 10 great grandchildren.

Brother Boyd was accepted into full membership of the Church on December 22, 1957 when I was four years old. He served Dan River Primitive Baptist Church as clerk from February 26, 1977 until his death and as cemetery trustee from September 27, 1980 until his death.

It is very humbling to be the one to write the memorial of someone who, I esteem to be of a certainty, a child of God. Though he was 50 years my senior, much wiser, and much more blessed with the fruit of the Spirit, I trust there was a God-given kinship between us. Some of the most wonderful memories I have are of taking my grandparents to visit him and Sister Daisy. I would sit on the front porch and listen to him and my grandfather discuss the Scriptures. He read his bible often and it was his standard against which he measured all doctrine. Brother Boyd was a large man in stature and yet there was a gentleness about him that is only characteristic of the Lord's people. It could be seen in how he cared for Sister Daisy when she became unable to care for herself. After the Lord took her, He blessed him with Sister Irene. They were married in October of the same year that my husband and I were married in November. The Lord blessed them with about ten years before they both developed some health problems.

I did not get to see Brother Boyd before he died but Brother Bob Collie told me of his last visit with him. According to Brother Bob, one of the last things Brother Boyd said was "God has blessed me with a good life - so whatever comes, it will be all right." I believe with all my heart that he could say with Paul "I have fought a good fight; I have kept the faith: Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." May his family be blessed with the consoling Spirit of the Good Shepherd.

Humbly submitted I trust,
Mary Hawkins

PSALM 62 : 8.

Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah.

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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SONG

How tedious and tasteless the hours,
When Jesus no longer I see;
Sweet prospects, sweet birds, and sweet flowers
Have lost all their sweetness to me:
The mid-summer sun shines but dim;
The fields strive in vain to look gay;
But when I am happy in him,
December's as pleasant as May.

His name yields the richest perfume,
And sweeter than music his voice;
His presence disperses my gloom,
And makes all within me rejoice:
I should, were he always thus nigh,
Have nothing to wish or to fear;
No mortal so happy as I,
My summer would last all the year.

Content with beholding his face,
My all to his pleasure resigned,
No changes of season or place,
Would make any change in my mind;
While blessed with a sense of his love,
A palace a toy would appear;
And prisons would palaces prove,
If Jesus would dwell with me there.

Dear Lord, if indeed I am thine,
If thou art my sun and my song,
Say, why do I languish and pine,
And why are my winters so long?
O drive these dark clouds from my sky;
Thy soul-cheering presence restore;
Or take me unto thee on high,
Where winter and clouds are no more.

Newton.

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EDITORIAL

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

"Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine own holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleanness: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen. Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel."

We will notice here that these are words spoken by the LORD GOD and they contain many wonderful promises. They also tell us of our

own evil nature, our filthiness, our worship of idols, our cold and stony heart, etc.. These scriptures are recorded in Ezekiel 36:22-32, but I would suggest that you read the entire chapter and consider it carefully and prayerfully. In types and shadows the 'house of Israel' represents the whole church of God, from the beginning until the end of time, therefore all these things apply to the children of God today as well as then: and we know that, ***"All scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be made perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim 3:16)***

God had brought Israel up out of the land of Egypt where they had been in bondage 430 years. He had caused them to pass through the Red Sea (representing the blood and water of Jesus Christ), and then had drowned their enemies that chased them (their sins and iniquities). He went before them in a pillow of a cloud by day and a pillow of fire by night. Their raiment waxed not old, neither did their feet swell during the forty years in the wilderness. They ate manna from heaven and drank water that flowed from the rock (Jesus) struck by Moses at God's command. When they complained of the manna from heaven, God gave them quail meat, but sent leanness into their soul. God gave them commandments to keep. (for they were under the old law covenant), and they said with one voice, "All that thou commandest us we will do," yet they never kept one of his commandments, and walked in their own wicked ways. Jeremiah said later unto this people. *"And now I have this day declared it to you:(the commandments of God) but ye have not obeyed the voice of the LORD your God, nor any thing for the which he hath sent me unto you." (Jer 42:21).* Because they sinned and kept not his commandments God chastened them with a mighty hand. When Korah and two hundred and fifty princes rose up against Moses and Aaron, God caused the earth to open her mouth and swallow them and their wives and their children and all that they possessed. When the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way they were led, and would have gladly returned to bondage in Egypt, they spake against God and against Moses (who represented the law,) saying, *"Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water: and our soul loveth this light bread. And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people: and much people died." (Num 21:5,6).* The people were then made to see that they had sinned when they were bitten by the fiery serpents, (which , to me, represents their sins), therefore they came to Moses and admitted they had sinned, and asked him to pray unto the Lord for them. Moses prayed for the people, and the Lord told Moses to make a serpent, and put it upon a pole, and that every one that looked upon it after being bitten would live. This is a figure

of Christ upon his cross when we look unto him.

While Moses was upon the mountain to receive the law written by the finger of God upon tables of stone, the people caused Aaron to make a golden calf, and they said, ***"These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."*** And they offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings, and they sat down to eat and rose up to play. God saw this worship of idols, and his wrath waxed hot, and he would have destroyed all of them had not Moses interceded. I am sure this intercession was according to the will of God, for, ***"he doeth his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth."*** When Moses saw the molten calf, and saw and heard the people, he threw down the tables of stone on which the law was engraved by the finger of God , and break them. He then burned and ground into powder the calf, and put it in their water and caused them to drink of it. Then with a "thus saith the Lord" he sent the sons of Levi to slay many men with the sword, ***"and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men."***

There are numerous instances when God chastened Israel because of their sins and iniquities, yet he continued to shew mercy, and lead them through the wilderness, and fight their battles for them. Many times he caused their enemies to fall or flee before them, yet there was times when he caused their enemies to prevail and slay many of them because they kept not his commandments. This was to teach them, as a father teaches his son. We read Deut. 8:5-6: ***"Thou shalt also consider in thine heart that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the LORD thy God chasteneth thee. Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him."***

God chose Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt - the land of darkness and bondage - and through the wilderness for forty years. It was through Moses that God made his laws and commandments known, therefore he typifies the law. They passed through the Red Sea, a figure of the blood and water shed by Jesus Christ. The waters of the sea stood up in heaps on either side of them, showing that half flowed toward the former sea, and half to the hinder sea, washing and making atonement for those who lived before the death of Christ as well as those who lived afterward. (Ezek 14:8). In a figure they were translated from nature's darkness into God's marvellous light, but they must continue under the law for a time, for Christ had not yet been made manifest. That is the way it is with a born again child of God today. Though dead in trespasses and sin, when Jesus speaks to one he lives. For Jesus said, ***"Verily, verily I say unto you, The hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live."*** This is concerning the new birth that the children of God must experience, for Jesus had said unto Nicodemus,

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." After one has been given this life, the life that was hid with Christ in God;(Col 3:3), his sinful and lost condition in the flesh is revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit, and finding himself condemned he tries to justify himself by the works of the law: but, *"-for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."* Try as he may to improve himself, a man finds that he only grows worse. He finds that the law demands every thing, but gives nothing. How long he stays in this lost and helpless condition may vary from a very short time to many years, and he almost gives up in utter despair, but at the appointed time of God Christ is revealed unto him as his Lord and Saviour, and that Jesus had already accomplished that which he could not do for himself. He is astonished that Jesus had given his life for such a vile, sinful worm of the dust as he felt himself to be; but a love is shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Spirit, and he falls upon his knees, and worships the true and living God. He is given faith to believe in Jesus as the Saviour of his people, and he is given a hope to believe that he is one for whom Christ died, that his name was written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world and that Christ will come again on that resurrection day and receive him into heaven and immortal glory. Yet he also realizes that if this be not so, and he should be cast into hell, God's righteous law approves it well. The law that he had been kept under was only his schoolmaster to bring him unto Christ, that he might be justified by faith, for we are justified by faith, and not by the works of the law. After that faith is come he is no longer under a schoolmaster, for he is a child of God by faith in Christ Jesus. This faith is not of himself, *"For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."*

Under the old covenant Moses represented the law, and because of this he was not permitted to cross over into the land that flowed with milk and honey which God had promised to give to Abraham and to his seed for an inheritance. This was because the old law covenant was to pass away and a new covenant made. There are some who believe that the crossing over here represents passing from this life into heaven, but I believe that the Israelites were, typically, leaving the law covenant and entering into the new covenant, for they would still be facing their enemies and have to fight. and they would continue to transgress the commandments of God, and be chastised. It was because they defiled and polluted this land of milk and honey with their idols that God scattered them throughout the heathen countries. There they would remain under the law until the death and resurrection of Christ when he blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. (Col.2:14). Jesus did not destroy, but fulfilled it to jot and to a tittle, and he brought in the new

covenant of grace and truth. In Hebrews 8:8 we read: *"For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt: because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws in their minds, and write them in their hearts: and I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."*

Brethren, the Gentiles were never under that old law covenant, for, *"That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: BUT NOW in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." (Eph.2:12-13).* The blood of Christ has washed all his children whiter than snow, freed them from the law of sin and death, and perfected them forever by the sacrifice of himself, but as long as they remain here in the flesh they will continue to sin and God will continue chastening them, *"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons." (Heb.12:6-8).*

Brethren, I ask you to receive this only as far as you find it to be in accord with the Holy Scriptures. Some of these things are only my views of what the scriptures say. I may be wrong, but the scriptures are always truth. May God forgive all errors.

Written in love to the household of faith.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

VOICES FROM THE PAST

JESUS THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE

Part One

Preached at Providence Chapel, Oakham, on Lord's Day Afternoon, June 11, 1865

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

"And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?"

John xi. 25, 26.

What a beautiful, what an interesting family picture has the Holy Ghost, by the pen of the apostle John, drawn in the sacred narrative of the gracious household which once dwelt in the little village of Bethany, near Jerusalem. In it we seem to see the rare spectacle of a family living together in happy harmony, united by the strong ties of nature, and united still more closely by the firmer and more enduring bonds of grace, - Martha, Mary, Lazarus. What an echo there is in our heart to these names. May we not also picture to ourselves our gracious Lord, when He had been at Jerusalem wearied - for we know He was subject to human infirmity and could be weary, for He sat weary once on Samaria's well - when our gracious Lord returned from Jerusalem, wearied in body and grieved in spirit, how He would come to this happy household, and there solace Himself with the company of these two gracious sisters and their no less gracious brother? for we read that "Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus." (John xi 5.)

Our Lord went about doing good, and spent much of His time and exercised much of his ministry in Galilee; which being situated in the north part of the Holy Land, lay at a considerable distance from Bethany. But it would appear that at this time He was not in Galilee but beyond Jordan, in the place where John at first baptized, which lay at some distance to the east of Jerusalem. Now when He was thus absent, engaged in performing His gracious errands of mercy, a dark cloud began to gather over this happy household. It might have been at first only as small as a man's hand, but it gathered thick and fast, and every hour seemed to hang upon them more and more densely. Lazarus had fallen ill. Now the first movement of his gracious sisters was to send a message to their dear Lord, that he whom He loved was sick. They knew His power as well as His love; and that as by the one He would at once come, so by the other He could at once heal. They naturally therefore expected that He would come speedily in a case so urgent as this, for in that climate disease makes rapid progress, and were doubtless looking out every day and almost every hour for His arrival.

But Lazarus gets worse and worse every hour. Denser, darker are the clouds which hang over the house. Jesus tarries; for we read that "when He heard that he was sick, He abode two days in the same place where He was." Jesus comes not. All hope dies in their breast. The disease gradually increases until at last Lazarus sinks under its pressure. Now what a mercy it was for these two sisters, and their brother too, that Jesus did not come; and may I not add, for the Church of God also for all time? What treasures of mercy and grace were involved in His delay. What a stupendous miracle gave occasion for Him to work. What a demonstration of His power it afforded that He was truly the Son of God, and what a lasting blessing has it been made to successive generations of saints. Though the Lord well knew, in His omniscient mind, all that

was transpiring in that little household, yet for His own wise and gracious purpose His footsteps tarried, and mercy made Him stay for a while as mercy made Him come at last.

I need not dwell further upon the features of this interesting narrative, though every part of it is pregnant with holy instruction, but shall come at once to that part which precedes our text. It is the interview of Martha with the Lord at Bethany. Martha, true to her character, could not stay at home; she was a restless body, for on a later occasion when she had obtained the Lord's company she could not be satisfied with merely listening to His gracious conversation. She must needs think about the dinner, nay come and ask Him to bid her sister help her to set it out properly, and not spend her time so - I will not say unnecessarily, but so long sitting at the feet of Jesus. Like many of our Marthas, she loved religion and the things of God; but being a bustling, active character, worldly business would intrude on her mind, and to this she would sometimes give a first place when it ought to have had but the second. Are you not sometimes like her, thinking more of business than of Christ, and even in the house of prayer, instead of listening to the word are thinking about the dinner?

Martha, then, true to her character, leaves Mary at home, praying, watching and waiting upon God in secret, and hurries out at the very first tidings of His arrival; but as soon as she meets Him, almost in the language of reproach not very unlike the way in which she addressed the Redeemer with respect to her sister upon another occasion, says, "Lord if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Do not the words sound almost as if she was reproaching the Lord because He was not there? And yet the blessed woman, with all her infirmities, had faith in her soul, and this faith manifested itself in the midst of her complaint. "But I know that even now," - though the case seems so desperate - "I know that even now, whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God wilt give it Thee." O, Martha, thy faith was somewhat lacking here. Thou shouldest have looked a little higher than this, and seen that he was the true God Himself who stood before thee, and that He had but to speak the word, and Lazarus would rise. Thou shouldest have seen that He held creation in His fists, and that life and death were at His supreme disposal. Jesus, in that calm, blessed manner in which our Lord ever spoke, unruffled, unmoved, in all the quiet dignity and glorious majesty of God-head, saith unto her, "Thy brother shall rise again." Martha still shows faith, and yet evidently mixed with much weakness. "Martha saith unto Him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Then the Lord uttered those words which I shall, with God's help and blessing, endeavour to lay open and bring before you this afternoon: "Jesus saith unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and

whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?"

I think we may observe three leading features in our text.

I. - "First, the gracious declaration, "I am the resurrection and the life."

II. - Secondly, the two gracious consequences which are connected with, and flow out of this declaration: 1, "He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live;" and, 2, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die."

III. - Thirdly, the gracious appeal. "Believest thou this?"

I. - How blessed are the gracious declarations which the Lord has given of Himself, His own testimonies to His Person and work, such as, for instance, "I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me;" "I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep;" "I am the bread of life." What grace there is in these declarations of Himself, and how He seems to unfold Himself in and by them to the Church of God that she may receive these words from His lips and exercise faith upon them. Let us then view this gracious declaration, and observe in it two things which our Lord declares Himself virtually to be - "The Resurrection and the Life:" Let us consider each of them separately.

I. "I am the resurrection." The Lord does not say "By Me shall men rise," or "I at the last day will raise the dead." But he declares of Himself, "I Myself am the resurrection." Surely, there is something deep in these words. Surely there is some profound truth, if we can but penetrate into the bosom of it. Let us see, then, whether, with God's help and blessing, I can take you by the hand and lead you into the very bosom of this truth, that you and I may walk in it, feed upon it and know what it is to the joy of our souls.

1. The resurrection of Christ is, in the first place, the grand cardinal doctrine of our most holy faith. And why? Because on it our faith virtually rests. Our faith, if it be the faith of God's elect, is that Jesus is the Son of God. Now that our faith may not be a shadow but a substance, it must rest upon some solid foundation. What proof then have we that Jesus is the Son of God? His resurrection. We therefore read that He "was declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead." (Rom. i.4.) His resurrection was thus God's own attesting seal that He was his dear Son. He was put to death as a blasphemer, because He said "I am the Son of God." When God therefore raised Him from the dead, He set his own attesting seal that Jesus really was what He said He was - the Son of God. It is for this reason that the resurrection of Christ is the grand cardinal, fundamental doctrine of our most holy faith; for upon it hangs the substantial proof of His declaration, that he was the Son of God, and had come as the Son of God from the bosom of the Father to do the work which the Father had given Him to do.

2. But there is something more in the resurrection of Jesus Christ than the mere attestation of God and the declaration with power from on high

that He was His dear Son. When our gracious Lord rose from the dead, the whole Church virtually and mystically rose in and with Him. We therefore read in the epistle to the Ephesians, that God "raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ." (Eph. ii. 6.) How and why? Because the Church of God mystically and virtually rose together with Christ. No sooner did the Head lift Himself up out of the grave than all the members rose together with Him. It was with Him spiritually as with us literally when we rose from our bed this morning: every member rose with our Head. So the Church of Christ as members of the mystical body of the Lord the Lamb, virtually and mystically rose together with her rising Head.

3. But there is something in the resurrection of the Lord more than this. On the resurrection of Christ hangs what He now is to the Church of God. If He had lain beyond the due time, lifeless in the tomb, not only would there have been no attestation by the power of God that He was His dear Son; not only would the Church have lain dead and buried with Him in the tomb where He lay; but He could not have fulfilled those present offices which He now sustains at the right hand of the Father as "the Mediator between God and men." He could not have been "the High Priest over the house of God." He could not have been King in Zion, waiting "till all His enemies should be made His footstool." He could not have sent the Holy Spirit down to testify of Himself. He could not commune with us from off the mercy seat, and unfold the glories of His lovely Person, the efficacy of His atoning blood, and the beauty and blessedness of His justifying righteousness. Our faith would have had no Object, our hope no anchorage within the veil; and where would our love have been without a Person upon whom that love could have been fixed?

Every grace of the soul, therefore, hangs upon the resurrection of Christ from the dead. If we believe, we believe in a risen Christ; if we hope, we hope in a risen Christ; and if we love, we love a risen Christ; for a dead Christ is no Christ to us who want a living God to fulfil the desires of a living soul. But blessed be God, Christ is risen from the dead; He is gone up on high: He is even now at the right hand of the Father, interceding for us. He has opened a way through the veil of His rent flesh, and our prayers, desires and supplications, with all our loving affections, may ascend to Him within the veil and enter into the holiest, even the presence of God, where He has gone as our forerunner, to sit down there until He comes a second time without sin unto salvation. Thus not only every doctrine of our most holy faith, but every experience of a living soul hangs upon the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

Look at this in the light of your own experience. I was speaking this morning of the Son of God being come and our knowledge of it, and I endeavored to show that one way whereby we know that He is come, is because we

follow Him up by faith to where He is come, is because we follow Him up by faith to where He is at the right hand of God, and communes with us from off the mercy seat. Faith must have a divine Object on which it may fix its eyes, which it may embrace, to which it may cleave and round which it may twine. This Object is Jesus as risen from the dead, and now at the right hand of the Majesty on high. He says, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved all the ends of the earth." To Him therefore looking "as the Author and Finisher of our faith, we run with patience the race that is set before us" in the lively hope of His bringing us off more than conquerors over every foe and every fear. But if He be not risen from the dead, then of all men we are most miserable: we have no hope beyond the grave; no sins pardoned, no transgressions forgiven, no righteousness brought in, no present grace, no future glory. This is the reason why the apostles in all their sermons, as recorded in the Acts, preached the resurrection of Jesus Christ: "And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all." (Acts iv. 33.)

II. But our most gracious Lord is not only "the resurrection" - I shall bring that point to bear more fully upon your experience when I come to my second part - but he is also "the life." Adam had life, for God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul" (Gen. ii. 7), but he lost it in and by the fall; and the image of God in which he was created was thereby thoroughly marred and defaced. He thus became dead in trespasses and sins; and as he begat a son in his own image, after his own likeness, and we all partake of this fallen, corrupt nature, we come into this world dead in sin. But what union, what intercourse, what communion can a soul dead in sin have with the living God? Will you take a corpse into your bed, and embrace it as a suitable wife for a living husband? Our blood runs cold at the thought. When death seizes the wife of your bosom, you say with Abraham, "Let me bury my dead out of my sight." A cold clay corpse is no longer the partner of your bed; the coffin and the grave are now its fitting place.

How then can you think that Jesus can take to His bosom a dead bride? Or how can a dead soul enter into the courts of a living God? What union, what communion can there be between a soul dead in sins and a God living in the light of His own holiness? Life, therefore, must be communicated and breathed into a soul before it can have union and communion with God here; before it can be fitted for His presence on earth, or enjoy the mansions prepared for it before time began in heaven. Now that this spiritual and eternal life might be breathed into, and communicated to the church, it pleased the Father that the fullness of this life should dwell in Christ: "As the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." This life, of which the Lord thus speaks, is not His life as the eternal Son of God, but His mediatorial

life, which can be communicated; for there is this difference between His life as the Son of God and His life as Mediator, that the one is communicable and the other not. Thus when Jesus says here, "I and the life," He speaks of His mediatorial life, that spiritual and eternal life which was treasured up in Him as Mediator, that it might be imparted and communicated to the members of His mystical body. We, therefore, read, "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." (John i. 4.) So also, "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son." (1 John v. 11.) He therefore says of Himself, "I am the way and the truth and the life.

How often we are looking and looking in vain for life in ourselves. True it is that if God has quickened our souls we are partakers of life divine, of life spiritual, of life eternal, of the life that is in Christ and comes from Christ; and yet how often we vainly seek to find it warm and glowing in our breasts. If once given it never dies; but it is often hid beneath the ashes, and thus though it slowly burns and dimly glows, yet the ashes hide it from view, and we only know it is there by some remains of warmth. "Your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. iii. 3); and therefore not only hidden as treasured and stored up safely in God, but hidden from the world, and even hidden from the eyes of its possessor. Christ is our life. There is no other.

To look, then, for life in ourselves independent of and distinct from the fountain of life is to look for that in the creature which is lodged in the divine Creator, is to look for that in man which dwells in the God-Man; to look for that in self which is out of self, embosomed in the fullness of the Son of God. And observe that it is not merely that life is in Him, but He is the life itself. As the sun not only has light and heat, but is light itself and heat itself, so the blessed Lord not only grants life, but He Himself is what He grants. As a fountain not only gives water but is itself all water, so Christ not only gives what He is but is all that He gives. Not only, therefore, is He the "resurrection," centering in himself everything both for time and eternity which resurrection contains and resurrection implies, but He is "the life," being in Himself a fountain of life, out of which He gives from His own fulness to the members of His mystical body. But as He has to teach us what He is thus in Himself by lessons of personal experience, I shall now, with God's help and blessing, enter upon the second branch of my subject, in which I was to show

II. - The two gracious consequences which are connected with, and flow out of the Lord's being the resurrection and the life.

These two consequences are, 1, "He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live;" and, 2, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." If you read these words with any measure of gracious understanding, you will see in them a bearing upon the two characters which the Lord claims for Himself as "the resurrection and the life," and will perceive

in them a remarkable fitness as a connecting link between His being the resurrection and the life and the two gracious consequences which arise out of it.

I. The first gracious consequence is connected with His being "the resurrection." He says "I am the resurrection." Now see how there flows out of this declaration a spiritual consequence, which very much meets the experience and feelings of God's family; and as such I shall unfold it. "He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

1. What is resurrection? What does it imply? Out of what state does resurrection bring? A state of death. Death is necessary to resurrection. Was not our Lord dead when He was raised from the grave? So His resurrection, viewed with a believing eye, as pregnant with gracious fruits, carries with it this most blessed consequence, that it meets the case, is adapted to the experience, and embraces the spiritual state and condition of those who are dead. It will do so one day as regards the body. Christ is the resurrection both of body and soul. When then He comes again a second time without sin unto salvation, His voice will quicken the dead; the graves will burst open, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible; for His voice will call the sleeping dust of the saints out of the tomb, and they will stand up in all the glorious vestments of immortality. Do we not, therefore, read "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at His coming." (1 Cor. xv. 20-23.)

2. But His resurrection has also a spiritual import - a gracious fruit in this life, as well as that which is to come. There is a spiritual resurrection consequent upon His resurrection from the dead, as there will be a literal resurrection when the body is raised from the tomb at the great day. As, therefore, none can and will be raised but the sleeping dead, by virtue of His being the resurrection, so none can be raised from a spiritual death but by His power and influence as the same. But whom does the text mean by the dead? Let me open this. It does not mean the dead in sin; I will tell you why. The character pointed out in our text is said to believe, which no man dead in sin does or can do. Look at the words: bring to them your spiritual understanding. Follow me, if you have any confidence in me as a spiritual guide: see whether I cast any light upon the meaning of the words, and if you see with me then follow me on. I will lead you safely, if God give me ability. I would not deceive you, for I would not deceive myself. The dead spoken of in the text are not then those who are dead in sin or dead in a profession; because they are said to believe, which no man dead in sin ever did. "He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." But how can one who is dead

believe? He can, or our Lord would not have said so. I will show you how. He is a living man as quickened into life by the power of the Spirit of God, and yet he is dead. How can we reconcile this mystery? It is one of those paradoxes which form a part of the great mystery of godliness.

(a) First, he is dead as slain by a killing law. He is alive unto God, and yet he is dead in law. The law has come; it has discharged its fiery contents into his bosom and slain him outright. Therefore, though he is a living man, has the love and fear of God in his soul, he is dead in law and dead also to the law, because he is slain by it as to any hope of justification. Thus he is dead.

(b) But he is dead in another sense: according to the verdict of his own conscience. Take a man upon whom the law has passed its condemning sentence. The judge sentences him to death; he is taken away from the bar, and shut up in the condemned cell. Though not yet set upon the scaffold, though not yet executed, he is virtually a dead man. The law has condemned him; he is condemned in his own feelings; he knows he must die; and therefore he feels to be a dying man. Thus when a man's own conscience seconds the verdict of God's holy law, and he falls down before the throne of God, slain by its condemning sentence, and this is ratified by the verdict of his own guilty conscience, he is dead as falling down dead before God. And yet he is a living man. The man in gaol is a living man, and yet the law pronounces him dead; for every gloomy hour, and every gloomy hour, and every tolling bell, and every striking clock, falls upon his ear and strikes the deathknell into his soul, as knowing how soon he must before assembled spectators make an awful end.

(c) But he is dead also in a third sense: as to any exertion of his own strength, wisdom or power to do his soul any spiritual good; for he feels unable to raise up any living faith - and he knows that nothing but living faith will be of any avail - any gracious hope, or any warm, living love. So he is dead by law; he is dead by conscience; and dead by a sense of his own spiritual helplessness and inability. As Abraham knew that he was dead in body, so he knows that he is dead in soul.

Now see how suitable to this dead man is the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is said to believe: mark that: "He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." There is then in the breast of this dead man a living faith. This is the deep mystery, that though he is dead in law, dead in conscience, dead in helplessness, yet God the Holy Ghost has breathed into him and deposited in him a seed of living faith. By this faith he cries, by this faith he sighs, and by this faith he hungers and thirsts after righteousness: yea, more, by this faith he looks unto and believes in the Son of God. He scarcely knows that he has faith. His faith is so weak and so small in his own estimation, that he dare not say he has faith; and yet he has all the fruits of faith, all the marks

of faith, and all the evidences of faith. Take as a parallel case Jonah in the whale's belly. Had he faith or had he not faith? How low he sank when the waves were heaped over his head, when carried through the boundless deep in the belly of the whale. Yet even there he could say, "I will look again toward Thy holy temple." Had he no faith? Yes, he had; and by that faith he was saved, justified, accepted, brought out and delivered, and able to say, "Salvation is of the Lord."

Take Jeremiah in the low dungeon, when it seemed as though every hope was closed, and he sank deep into the mud and mire. Even there, when the waters flowed over his head, his prayer could enter into the ears of God and bring down a gracious answer. Does he not say: "I called upon Thy name, O Lord, out of the low dungeon? Thou hast heard my voice: hide not Thine ear at my breathing, at my cry. Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon Thee: Thou saidst, Fear not." (Lam. ii. 55-57). Take Hezekiah upon his bed of sickness. Had he no faith? How then could he turn his face to the wall and pray unto the Lord? How could his eyes fail with looking upward, when he said, "O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me." Take David in his mournful journey, when he went up by the ascent of Mount Olivet, and wept as he went up barefoot, with his head covered, at the time of Absalom's rebellion. Had he no faith? How then came he to pray? "O Lord, I pray thee turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness." And why did the Lord answer that prayer, if it were not the prayer of faith?

In all these men of God, sunk though they were almost to the last and lowest point, there was still the life of faith; and by that faith they called upon God. They looked unto Him and were lightened, and their faces were not ashamed. Here then is the connection between the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead and the experience of this seemingly dead soul. When Christ died, He bare the sins of this poor dead soul in His body on the tree, and thus atoned for them and put them away. When Christ rose from the dead, this poor dead soul rose with Him, as a member of His mystical body. When Christ went up on high, he ascended with Him. And when Christ sat down at the right hand of the Father, he virtually and mystically sat down with Him in heavenly bliss. Therefore, because Jesus is the resurrection, and because as such he has an interest in Him, he that believeth in Him, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

How often, dear friends, we sink into places where we are in our feelings dead men. Has sin never slain you? Have convictions never, so to speak, knocked the life of God out of your soul? Has Satan never come with his fiery darts, with all the artillery of hell, and sought to scorch up every gracious feeling and every living desire? And have you not sunk at times in your soul into such miserable deadness of spirit, that it seemed that not only there and then you were devoid of all grace, but that it was an impos-

sibility for grace ever again to renew and revive your soul? Here you were dead. I have been often here which enables me to describe it to you. Yet with all this there is a longing look, a heartfelt groan, a heaving sigh, a resisting unto blood, not an utter giving way, nor sinking down into miserable despair.

God the Spirit kept alive His work upon the soul, and Christ Himself as the resurrection dropped into our bosom, raised up and drew forth towards Himself some fresh movements of that life which is in Him. There was thus fulfilled that gracious consequence of His resurrection, "Whosoever believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." O, amidst all our deadness, all our gloom and desolation, all our emptiness, barreness and helplessness, if there be in our souls a longing look, a heart-felt cry, an earnest groan, a sincere desire toward Him who is the resurrection, our prayer will ascend into His pitying, sympathizing ear; and as He is the resurrection, He will once more raise up into life and feeling our dead and drooping soul. We have no other source of life. If we were altogether and really dead, we should always continue dead unless He were the Resurrection. But because He is the Resurrection, He can re-animate, revive, renew and requicken us by pouring into our hearts fresh life and feeling. It will be our mercy to be ever looking unto Him, hanging upon Him, believing in Him, trusting to Him, and giving Him no rest until He appears again and again to the joy and rejoicing of our heart.

I fully believe that very many, perhaps I may add, the large majority of the people of God feel much of this death which I have been describing; and perhaps, though it may seem singular so to speak, those who are most lively feel it most. Were we totally dead, we should have no sensible feeling of our death at all, but should be like those described by Heman: "Free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom Thou rememberest no more: and they are cut off from Thy hand." (Ps. lxxxviii. 5.) Were we half or three parts dead we should feel it just in proportion to the amount of our life over our death. It is in spiritual things almost as in natural; the more a person is paralyzed the less feeling he has. Thus, though it may seem a paradox, the more life that you have the more do you feel your death. How light and trifling, easy and unconcerned most professors are. Why? Because they have not enough life to feel their death.

It is good then that we should feel our death; for it not only shows us more clearly and sensibly our wretched case and state by nature, but by driving us out of all help and hope in self, makes us to prize more dearly the life that is in Christ. How suitable then, how comforting, how reaching down to the utmost extremity of our case, are the words, "He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." When, too, we see and realize the connection of every gracious revival with the resurrection

of Christ, how sure and firm it makes those revivals to be, those visitations which preserve our spirit. This made Paul long so ardently to know the power of Christ's resurrection. (Phil. iii. 10). It was not the bare doctrine or the mere fact of His resurrection that he wanted to know, but the power of it as revealed and made manifest in his own heart. But it is by believing in Him that we receive these gracious revivals - not by looking to ourselves, but to Him who is the Resurrection and the Life.

J.C. Philpot

AS I WATCH THE SNOW FLAKES FALL

I arose this morning to see the fields covered with snow, even the rough places looked so white and smooth. I think of the scripture, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they be as white as snow." It was so pretty, I stood wondering if I would ever see the great white throne that John saw.

As I watch the snow flakes fall, I think of precious Brother Elder Harvey Smith, from whom the Lord called his spirit home only a few days since. I can see him in my mind as he spoke from a text he loved so well (Isaiah 55:10), "For as the rain cometh down and the snow from Heaven." And if not deceived, I felt the Gospel raining down and the snow covered the earth; for everything was beautiful.

These thoughts may be mine alone; but seeing the grieved hearts at our union meeting this snowy fifth Sunday in January has caused me to realize the mutual love and fellowship we shared for our beloved Brother. I wish that I could tell you the thoughts and precious memories I have as I think of his humble walk, and watch the snow flakes so softly fall.

I feel I shall never forget our last afternoon together. It was a Heavenly place to me, not knowing our earthly ties would soon be broken. We parted in love and fellowship and a better understanding than we had before. When we can feel the love that flows from heart to heart and breast to breast, we are drawn together as one people. The snow flakes fall together, and I cannot tell one from the other.

My heart was grieved when I heard the Lord had called his spirit home from his sleeping body, where there was no evidence that a muscle had moved in pain. I thought of his prayer I so often heard him say, "O Lord, give us a peaceful moment in which to die." Truly the sincere desire of his heart was answered.

As I watch the snow flakes cover the earth, my heart is filled with sympathy for his daughter in the flesh and sister in bonds of love, who awoke that sad morning upon the bed of affliction, singing praise to God and knowing in her heart that her beloved father had passed on to that peaceful sleep in Jesus, where it will be as but one night before the elect come into their inheritance of Heaven and immortal glory.

As I think of his lovely family who walk today with a heavy heart in humble submission to His righteous will, my prayer is that they be comforted be-

yond all the gracious deeds human hands have been blessed to do.

May all the honor and glory go to our Lord and Saviour; for I know if Elder Harvey Smith lived today, he would rebuke me if I attempted to give him any praise.

He preached the doctrine of election by divine grace with power that cometh down from heaven, as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven. This truth will stand when this poor mortal shall cease to watch the snow flakes fall.

Clifton C. Robertson

PSALM 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

From Elder Lambert's book, "Tried In The Furnace"

TAKE HEED TO YOURSELF
April, 1949

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Acts 20:28.

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

Paul had called all the elders of the church at Ephesus together to give them his last instructions before he took his departure to Jerusalem. He was aware that he would not see all of them again face-to-face so he was burdened of the Spirit to exhort them with spiritual instructions. He was prompted of the Spirit to warn them of the trials and persecutions that lay in store for them. He must also tell them that even some of them would rise up speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. In Acts 20: 17:35 is recorded the full text of Paul's words to the elders of Ephesus in that meeting at that time. As these were appropriate words spoken to the elders of the church by Paul at that time of strife and confusion that was beginning to be made manifest in the church at that time, I believe they are just as appropriate to the elders of the church in this country at this time. This same exhortation and instruction is neces-

sary to the elders for the welfare of Zion today. When elders are blessed to obey these instructions Zion is not troubled. When elders take heed unto other elders to watch them and take a great interest in other flocks to dictate to them to the extent of not being mindful of their own condition nor the flock of their pastorate, Zion is troubled.

Paul said to the elders at Ephesus, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves." He said unto Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself" (1 Tim. 4:16). Just before he said this to Timothy, he had enumerated some of the things Timothy was to watch concerning himself. He told Timothy, "Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." I am persuaded that elders will have plenty to occupy their minds and time to take cognizance of their walk and conversation without meddling into the affairs and critically watching the walks of others. Paul further added, "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all."

I am quoting to you some of the things that daily confront me.? Do I manifest an humble or proud spirit? Do I believe in God's promises or do I just say I do? Do I realize the exceeding sinfulness and vileness of my sins or do I just take them for granted justifying myself because of my weakness? Do I seek those things that are pure and from above or do I mind earthly things? Do I desire to live more godly and think more upon spiritual things or am I satisfied with my activities and thoughts as they are? Do I read the Bible and writings of the saints of God as much as I ought or am I satisfied with the puny knowledge that I now have? Do I exhort when I feel impressed to do so or am I afraid I will be dubbed as a Conditionalist if I speak anything pertaining to duty and righteous living in this life? Do I speak the words that are well-pleasing to God or am I seeking to please men? Do I press toward the mark of the prize of the high-calling in Christ Jesus or am I content to drift along the path of least resistance? All these questions and many more come into my mind daily to condemn me which causes me to cry unto my God for His amazing grace to sustain me and keep me from falling!

Paul told Timothy to "neglect not the gift that is in thee." May I say to the elders of the church of this time that God hath wondrously blessed you with a precious gift that has been so recognized by the church that you were brought under the hands of a presbytery and ordained to the officeship of an elder as a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ. Shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness. Paul says if a man purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work. Flee also youthful lusts; but follow

righteousness, faith, charity, peace with them that call upon the Lord out of a pure heart. How carefully we ought to conduct ourselves as we sojourn here in this unfriendly world. This gift is sacred; our ordination is no light thing; and the confidence our brethren have in us as being vessels of honor is precious. The doctrine we are blessed to preach is God-honoring. Are our acts and conversation God-honoring? I am persuaded that if our acts and conversation in everyday living are lustful and ungodly, our preaching is hypocritical and vain. Your words from the pulpit may be in accord with the words spoken by the inspired writers and speakers, but if your life does not manifest the fruit of the Spirit, what evidence do brethren have that you have experienced the grace of God in your heart?

When brethren have so much confidence in the operation of God's Holy Spirit in your heart that they receive you into their fellowship embracing you in that precious faith; and, that confidence mounts higher to the extent of calling for your ordination as a minister of Jesus Christ; and, then you betray that confidence by ungodly conversation and lustful living, how great is their grief and hurt! It were better that a millstone be hanged about your neck and you drowned in the sea than to offend these little ones! May God give us grace to neglect not the gift that is in us and to enable us by His Spirit to take heed unto ourselves. May He enable us to watch our deportment and to profit by our mistakes.

Paul further adds: "And to all the flock." One who is called to the officeship of an elder is instructed to take heed unto all the trophy of his grace. A true elder has the interest of the lambs as well as the sheep in mind. He is tender and patient in his dealings with them for fear of wounding one of the little lambs. He is just as anxious for the welfare of the insignificant and timid ones as he is of the bolder and more prominent ones. He does not devote his time and attention to just a few to the exclusion of others, but watches over the entire flock to shield each and every one of them. He is not to take heed to another outside of his jurisdiction. He is not to consider the goats to please them nor to score them, but his interest is to be confined to the flock. I do not believe that a God-called elder has any time to waste outside of the flock skinning goats or petting them. May God enable us to stay within our calling being attentive to all the flock.

"Over the which the Holy Ghost made thee overseers." Elders do not fill this place upon their own volition. They have not fitted themselves for this place by their own activities. Others have not called them into this noble position. Schools of men have not prepared them as overseers. The Holy Ghost is the agency that God has used in making them overseers of the flock. True elders are ordained by the Holy Ghost and this ordination is assented to by the laying on of the hands of a presbytery. This officeship was given you by the Holy Ghost. No man or group of men is able to ordain one

to such a high position. No school or university is able to qualify one and place him in such high position. If this position is given us by virtue of the Holy Ghost what a high and exalted calling it is! I am persuaded that the position of elder in the church is much more to be coveted than that of the officeship of President of the United States. People may elect presidents but it requires the election of God for a person to serve as a true elder. How thankful we ought to be that God has chosen us to this high and exalted position to be counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake!

"To feed the church of God." We are not left to guess or speculate upon the purposes of elders or to the extent of their work. Paul is very specific in this. We are not to dabble with anything or anyone outside the church of God under the cloak of an elder. I think it is unbecoming for elders to use the cloak of a minister of the Lord to gain worldly gain or to pursue some political venture. They are not to preach to the world for the world will not hear them. They are not to bring sheep into the fold for that is the work of Christ. They are not to add them to the church for that is the work of the Lord. They are to feed the church of God. They are not to prepare the food for that is the work of Wisdom. Yes, they are to read and study but not to think what they shall say, for it is given them by the Holy Spirit in the selfsame hour that it becomes them to speak. As all the writing of the saints, as recorded in the Bible, were addressed to God's children or the church, so all the preaching and writing of the elders should be addressed to the children of God or to the church of God. I do not believe this church of God under consideration is any organization in its entirety, that it is visible here in this world to the exclusion of all outside the visible organization; but I do believe this church to be the invisible, complete kingdom of Jesus Christ including all the children of God. I believe many members of this church are not members of any organization here upon this earth. I do not believe that all of the members of any organization here upon this earth as the organized church are members of this church that Paul had under consideration as he defines it in the remaining words of our text.

"Which he hath purchased with his own blood." All for whom Christ died are members of this church under consideration. Your efforts nor the efforts of any other ordained elder has added any one or excluded any one from this church that Christ purchased with His blood. Christ did not try to purchase the whole Adamic world but He did purchase the church. God's called elders preach the efficacy of the blood of Jesus Christ in atoning for all the sins of all the members of this church. The doctrine of Christ includes limited atonement and special redemption with efficacious grace being applied continuously to the objects of His grace until the complete and ultimate salvation shall have been experienced by each and every member of this church. What great price was paid for your redemption.

My sins and your sins, if we be members of that church, caused the Holy One to suffer, bleed and die on calvary's tree that we might be freed from sin! If Christ suffered, was forsaken and died for us, is it a great thing that we should suffer persecutions here in this world? If Christ devoted His entire life to the service of others and was not even provided with a place to lay His head - as were the foxes and birds - is it a great thing that we should devote some time to the service of others, and not be blessed with some of the luxuries of this world?

May I conclude this script by stating that I have no apologies to give for the things that I have written in this epistle as I have been somewhat burdened along this line of thought. I have no person or persons in mind to profit from this other than myself. I stand condemned and guilty of treating the officeship of elder very lightly. I have been so concerned over my unconcernedness of late that I am made daily to cry to God for mercy. I have written this in the fear of God and not to please men. May God awake us from our cold state and bless us by His grace to earnestly contend for that precious faith. May He stir up our pure minds and enable us to walk and talk as we ought while we are in this earthly tabernacle of clay awaiting to be clothed upon with immortality when this life is over that we may be received into that heavenly clime where all will be perfect forever, Amen.

Elder E.J. Lambert

MEETING

OLD PINE CREEK CHURCH

The annual Old Pine Creek Church meeting will be held this year on the 4th of July.

The church is located off Hwy. #221, 5 miles north of Floyd, Va. Those coming from Floyd, turn left on to road #682. Those coming from Roanoke, turn right on to road #682.

All lovers of the truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Hale Terry

PSALMS 25: 12-15.

What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.

His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth.

The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.

Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 1994

Joseph Plaster, VA	$2.00
Mrs. E.G. Wilson, VA	5.00
Mrs. Mary Banks, NC	7.00
Mr. & Mrs. B.W. Wade, WV	2.00
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In memory Audrey H. Tucker 20.00
Lawrence W. Myers, VA 2.00

DANIEL 9:18.

O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousness, but for thy great mercies.

OBITUARIES

JOHN MARK MUSGROVE

Brother Mark Musgrove was born in Rapides Parish, La. Feb.11,1913, and was called home by our heavenly Father Feb. 11, 1994 at the age of 81 years. Although Bro. Mark's name was never recorded on any earthly church book we surely believe, as did he, that his name is recorded in the Lamb's book of life. This was his professed hope in Christ Jesus.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Sister Inez Musgrove, and one daughter, Sister Genova Lucille Rushing. He is survived by 4 daughters: Phyllis Musgrove and Patsy Barton of Bastrop, La., Caroletta Ogima, Tickfaw, La., and Lucy Hutson, Archibald, La.: 6 sons: J.M.,Jr., Terry, Phillip, Douglas and Madison Musgrove, all of Bastrop, La., and Juan Musgrove, Roanoke, Va.: one sister, Sister Geneva Pettis, Bastrop, La.: 2 brothers, J.J. and George Musgrove,Sr. of Bastrop, La.: 29 Grandchildren, 34 Great Grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

Bro. Mark also had many friends, and every one who knew him loved him and will greatly miss him.

Services were conducted by Elders Theron Jones and Clifford Wilbanks, and he was laid to rest in Concord Cemetery to await the coming again of his Lord.

Submitted by
Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

OBITUARY OF SISTER DOVIE C. MARTIN

With a mixture of both joy and sorrow in our hearts we record the passage from this life of Sister Dovie Cox Martin, at the age of 89. Sister Dovie was born in Patrick County, Virginia on December 25, 1904, a daughter of the late Charlie P. Cox and Sister Nannie Hall Cox. She was united in marriage in April 1944 to the late Elder Benjamin H. Martin, who was at that time a widower. Their union was blessed with two sons, Benjamin

F. and Jerry L. Martin, both of whom survive.

Sister Martin joined by experience at Goblintown Church on the 3rd Sunday in July 1922, at the tender age of 17. After her marriage she moved her membership elsewhere to accommodate the wishes of Brother Ben. She came to Liberty Church by letter in November 1967 and remained a faithful member until her death on February 25, 1994 at the Blue Ridge Nursing Home in Stuart, Virginia, where she resided the last few years of her life.

In addition to her sons, Sister Dovie was survived by four grandchildren; two step-sons, Willie and Harry Martin of Bassett; two step-daughters, Sister Ellen M. Adams and Sister Dora M. Adams, also of Bassett; sixteen step-grandchildren; two sisters, Sister Addie C. Wright of Martinsville and Sister Elsie C. Turner of Bassett; and several nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by all six of her brothers, Willie, Jessie, Frank, Joe, Paul and Silas Cox; and three sisters, Sister Gladys E. Haynes, Mrs. Loraine (Veva) Harbour, and Dollie B. Cox.

Funeral Services for Sister Dovie were conducted at Collins Funeral Home Chapel by Elders Kermit Via and John Wingfield. Her mortal body was laid to rest beside that of her husband in Old Center Church Cemetery to await the coming of the Lord.

Done by order of Liberty Church in conference on the 2nd day of April, 1994.

Elder John T. Wingfield, Moderator
Paul A. Puckett, Clerk

DELLA MAE SWAN

It is in sorrow and with a great feeling of loss as I write this obituary of our beloved Sister Della Mae Swan. Sister Swan was a faithful member of Union Primitive Baptist Church for the last ten years of her life although she was able to attend very little for the last three years because of poor health. Our most wise and merciful God called her home May 17, 1994. Although we are in sorrow because of our loss of our loved one we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. Sister Swan had often spoken of her hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, and we believe she had a true hope.

Sister Swan was born Dec. 13, 1911 in Butler County, Mo., making her stay on earth 82 years, 5 months, 4 days. She is survived by one son and daughter-in-law, Orval and Martha Swan of West Monroe, La.: three brothers, Chester Harwell, Dittmar, Mo., Edwin Harwell, Yakima, Wa., and Clyde Harwell, Poplar Bluff, Mo.; 4 Grandchildren, 9 great Grandchildren and a large number of nieces and nephews.

Memorial services were held at Kilpatrick Funeral Home, and she was buried in the Twin Cities Memorial Gardens in West Monroe, La. by her husband and youngest son. The service was conducted by this writer.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

PROVERBS 4:1.

Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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PRIDE - Prov. xxix. 33.

Innumerable foes
Attack the child of God;
He feels within the weight of sin,
A grievous, galling load.

Temptations, too, without,
Of various kinds, assault;
Sly snares beset his traveling feet,
And make him often halt.

From sinner and from saint
He meets with many a blow;
His own bad heart creates a smart,
Which only God can know.

But though the host of hell
Be neither weak nor small,
One mighty foe deals wondrous woe,
And hurts beyond them all.

'Tis pride, accursed pride,
The spirit by God abhorr'd;
Do what we will, it haunts us still,
And keeps us from the Lord.

Thou meek and lowly Lamb,
This haughty tyrant kill;
That aim'd at thee, though thou wast free,
And grieves thy spirit still.

Our condescending God -
(To whom else shall we go?)
Remove our pride, whate'er betide,
And lay and keep us low.

Thy garden is the place
Where pride cannot intrude:
For should it dare to enter there,
'Twould soon be drown'd in blood.

Hart

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EDITORIAL

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

This scripture describes the blessedness that is the heritage of the saints of God and is a most precious consolation to them as they travel their journey here in this time world. They are blessings that are sovereignly bestowed upon them by God because he loved them from before the foundation of the world and has displayed that love by providing everything to insure their eternal salvation. The heirs of these blessings can see the evidence of them in their brethren but when they turn their eyes within they are fearful to claim them as their own. The key is the fact that all of these blessings were bestowed upon them before the foundation of the world and are not the result of what they may, or may not, have done. All flesh is grass and all the glory of man as the flower of grass; so don't expect much when you turn your eyes within, if God judged on that basis, there would have been none saved. Just as man is of a particular race, has physical abilities and temperament; things beyond his influence, so these things are received simply because God loved his people and created them for his own peculiar treasure.

Ye are a chosen generation; a part of the whole of God's creation that he reserved unto himself as is declared many times in the words of the inspired writers, as Deut. 32 vs. 9 ***"For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."*** And this is referring to a chosen generation. This was declared by Moses, when he was to die and is part of the song he was to teach the children of Israel, to influence them in the generations ahead, and in it he referred to generations before them who were included in this portion. They were not chosen because of any superior or unusual qualities that they pos-

sessed but because he loved them and made them lovely in his sight. Isa. 43 vs. 1, ***"But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel. Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." The choosing, the separation of them*** unto himself, was done in the day of creation and will stand as long as God is God. He is of one mind and will never change his love and his care for them.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is given to the saints of God that they may be strengthened and comforted in this life of sin and sorrow, by the witness from within. This causes them to have hope in spite of the vanity and pride of the flesh and the vexation of the heart and soul with the filthy conversation and life style of the nations around. They have hope because of the witness within which was placed there by the spirit and they realize that this was not learned from man or by study; it appeared mysteriously and they began to see all things differently, they had a new set of values and loved their brethren above all others.

Jacob, whose name meant supplanter, was not the son who, according to the law, should have received his father's blessing yet he collaborated with his mother to obtain it by deceit. His mother had been told before Jacob and Esau were born that the elder should serve the younger and so it was. In looking at the facts in this set of circumstances according to the law Jacob should not have received the blessing but God had determined that he should, and this is the same as the circumstances of the chosen generation above, the choosing was by God and the will and purpose were his own. God gave Jacob the blessing, led and directed him all the days of his life and blessed all nations through him. Jacob was a plain man, in the eyes of the world yet God chose him for his portion: Jesus came not to call the intelligent, or kings or men in authority, but he came to the poor the lost and the offscouring of the world and saved them from their sins. No cause or reason other than that it was his good pleasure to do his Father's will, the same as the reason for the chosen generation is being selected.

1st Cor. 1 vs. 26, 27 ***"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things, that are mighty:"*** Very different from the way that man would do it, and it is done in this way, I believe, that it should be made manifest that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. O, how many times these same fundamental truths are set forth, by the inspired men in all ages of time, to support and strengthen the weary pilgrim in his travels in this veil of tears. These scriptures are a great source of comfort to one who sees themselves

as poor weak, ignorant and unloved; and then to learn that these are the marks of the chosen generation and that they have been loved with an everlasting love, and this drawing that they feel is the lovingkindness of God through the spirit.

But, ye are a royal priesthood: under the law of Moses, which was to the flesh, there was an hierarchy set up by God through Moses for the orderly worship of God and for the systematic governing of the children of the kingdom. It began when God called Moses and began to tell him what was required of him and that he was to speak to Pharoah and tell him to let his people go. Moses began to excuse himself because he was of a stammering tongue and asked God to send someone else. God gave him Aaron as his spokesman, saying, he shall be unto thee instead of a mouth and thou shall be to him instead of God. When the law was given and the tabernacle and vessels were ordained God commanded Moses to take Aaron and his sons who were to minister unto God on behalf of the children of Israel; to offer sacrifices and the offerings required under the law for sin. The priests alone could prepare and offer the sacrifices, and that was according to specific guidelines; to be offered regularly, first for themselves and their sin and then for the sins of the people. The offerings did not put away sin but was typical of and referred to the true offering that would atone for and put away sin once for all time when this true sacrifice, Jesus Christ, came and finished his work in cleansing the elect from their sins there was also a change in the priesthood and in the way that it functioned. Previously, under the law the priest offered yearly the same sacrifice for the same sin, not putting them away, but acknowledging them unto God; now that the perfect (actual) sacrifice was made Jesus ascended to the Father, is seated on the right hand of God, a high priest making intercession for the saints. The high priest is Jesus Christ Rev. 1 vs. 6 ***"And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."***

This is the royal priesthood as it exists today. There is the high priest, Jesus, over the house of God and the royal priesthood which is the entire household of faith who enter boldly into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for them through the veil, that is to say the flesh. They draw near, with a pure heart, in full assurance of faith having their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and their bodies washed in pure water. This is because of the anointing of the Holy Ghost, at the time appointed of the Father and they become priests unto God, a holy priesthood which offers up sacrifices unto God continually, that is, the fruit of the lips rendering praise unto his holy name. Even as the incense flowed up from the altar in a cloud of a sweet smell unto God, so the prayers of the royal priesthood is an odour of sweet smell, pleasing unto God.

But, ye are an holy nation; Israel, the spiritual Israel, is this holy nation and

it includes all of the elect family of God, in Christ, both under the law and under grace. They are the holy nation because that the Lord has designated them as such, and for no other reason. They were anointed in much the same way as the judges, priests and kings were anointed under the law; the power was from the anointing and reflected the power of the one anointing them. They were anointed with oil but this holy nation is anointed by God with his Holy Spirit and they go forth with power and bear witness to him that hath called them. Even as Jesus told the disciples, Acts 1 vs. 8, ***"But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth."***

When God began to tell the children of Israel of the land which he would give unto them, he told them how they were to conduct themselves as relating to the nations that occupied the land. They were to smite and utterly destroy them and shew them no mercy; they were not to make marriages with them, they were to break down their altars, cut down their groves and burn their graven images with fire. These nations were greater and mightier than Israel, but the differences was that God was with his people and would sustain them in their battle; as he was, with David, against Goliath: the three hebrew children and many others or as Paul said ***"If God be for us who can be against us."*** Oh, the heritage of those that fear God, they cannot fight the battle but there is one who can.

The reason that God gave, to the children of Israel was, Deut. 7 vs. 6,7, ***"For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all the people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye are the fewest of all people."*** There is the reason, pure and simple, he did not choose them because they were the fewest, he chose them because he loved them, he chose them because he had formed them for himself and had led them and kept them all the days of old as the apple of his eye. He had called them out of all nations, and that is the same way that the holy nation is designated today. They are chosen of God as his portion and they are still the fewest of all people: they are still commanded to come out from among the idol worshippers, or the nations around them and to be separate, and he will receive them. This is not speaking of nature, that you remove yourselves from everyone, but when the spirit comes into the heart, it separates, them in their allegiance to the things of the world and they are no longer yoked together with them is lusting after the sinful pleasures of the world. There's no difference in their physical appearance but there is a grand and glorious difference in their spiritual standing; they are kings and priests unto their God.

But ye are a peculiar people. The children of God are, and always have been, peculiar in the eyes of the world. They do not conform to the ways of the world and the world does not understand them; they have their own set of priorities and the things that the world seeks, is not the things that are important to them. They are even peculiar to themselves because they do not fully understand their way and walk by faith and not by sight. Their hope is in things of the spiritual realm and yet they see so much in themselves that makes them fear that they are just mistaken in their claim to a spiritual quickening, and wonder if their change has just been a figment of their imagination. They do not feel at home in the world because they can see that their desires are not the same as their fellow man, and yet they fear that they do not belong in the church because they do not feel worthy of claiming that heritage as theirs.

Many believe the doctrine and have followed it for many years, love the church and rejoice in the fellowship of the brethren yet do not respond and ask for a home with the Lord's people. This is peculiar, when you think of it; this is something that is the most important thing in a person's life, we are talking about eternity and yet they won't take a stand for what they believe. They say they do not feel worthy, well, they are not, and neither is anyone else. If they are waiting to feel worthy, then they don't need Jesus, because he is What makes all worthy; he, who of God is made unto his people, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, everything they will ever need. As the last phrase of our text says, ye are all these things, ***"that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."*** How does one show forth the praises unto God but in following him in all things, As Paul said, ***"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."***

The Apostle Peter begins his epistle, to the strangers scattered abroad, Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the spirit; strangers to the world yet elected of God to be a very precious possession unto himself.

The prophet said of this people Mal. 3 vs 6,7 ***"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord harkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I shall spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."*** Does this not remind you of the brethren as they come together in God's name and talk of the Glories of the kingdom? And he says when God comes to make up his jewels, (precious possessions) unto himself he will treat them as his own son. How much more could words be used

to describe the love of God for his chosen generation than to put them into the category of a father's love for his own son that serveth him. Many times, in the scriptures, the Son is mentioned in the relationship between God and his beloved Rom. 8 vs. 3 ***"God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:"*** and again Rom 8 vs. 32 ***"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not freely give us all things."*** The bond between God and his elect is the strongest force in existence, there is nothing that can separate them from his love.

Chosen generation, royal priesthood, holy nation, a peculiar people, all describing the children of God, and all are in terms that clearly demonstrate the fact that they had no part in causing it to be so. The reason declared was and is the sovereign work of God in their lives. May God in his infinite wisdom and purpose enable them all to see, from time to time evidences that they are included in these blessed categories, in spite, of what they see themselves to be in nature.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

ROMANS 8:28.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

ARTICLES

AN INFIDEL TURNS TO GOD

Joseph Hart spent the best years of his life denouncing the Bible and everything it stands for. Not content with merely being a non-believer himself, he devoted his marked literary talent to the spreading of propaganda against all religious faiths.

Attendance at church, with Joseph Hart, was for the sole purpose of finding fault and gathering themes for his venomous pamphlets. In the town of Sheerness, where he taught languages, Joseph Hart became so obnoxious that citizens demanded that he leave town.

While infidel Joseph Hart was being invited to leave a town in England, Swiss-born Frenchman Jean Jacques Rousseau was being expelled from France for his outspoken views on politics. No less an infidel than Hart, Rousseau was an egotistic misfit who seemingly could get along with nobody.

Failing at several enterprises, Rousseau is said to have dozed off one day in 1752 and dreamed that he heard beautiful music. Awaking, he tried his hand at composing an opera. Its success so inflated Rousseau's ego that he was never able to compose anything else worth mention. At sixty-six he committed suicide.

Expelled from the town of Sheerness, Joseph Hart returned to his native London. One Sunday afternoon in

1757, when he was forty-five years old, the infidel teacher-writer wandered into a church to find more fault with religion. The preacher's text was from Revelation 3:10. God and the preacher did a remarkable job that Sunday. "I had hardly got home," Hart wrote of the sudden change that had come over him, when I "flung myself on my knees before God." He said he felt as if a "heavy weight" had been suddenly lifted from his shoulders.

Joseph Hart never wrote another pamphlet against religion. In two years he wrote enough hymns to fill a book, and he published the collection in 1759. Then he started preaching in an old frame building in London. When, eight years later, he died, twenty thousand people attended his funeral.

The strange birth of a hymn! Written by a converted infidel - sung to the music of a suicidal atheist!

Jean Rousseau's opera has been forgotten. The only music he wrote that survives today is that part of his opera which is sung to this hymn by Joseph Hart.

This, incidentally, was a favorite hymn of financier Cornelius Vanderbilt. Requesting its singing at his deathbed, the multimillionaire reputedly remarked, "I am poor and needy."

Come, ye sinners, poor and needy,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore;
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, love and pow'r;
He is able, He is able,
He is willing; doubt no more.

Sent in by Larry Gibson

VOICES OF THE PAST

JESUS THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE

Part Two

Preached at Providence Chapel, Oakham, on Lord's Day Afternoon, June 11, 1865

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: "And whosoever liveth and belieth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?"

John xi. 25, 26.

But I now come to the other gracious consequence, connected, like the last, with the gracious declaration which fell from the Lord's lips, ***"I am the resurrection and the life."*** It would almost seem as if the Lord divided His people into two classes. They are both believers, for you will find the same thing spoken of each. ***"He that believeth in Me,"*** and ***"Whosoever believeth in Me."*** They are therefore both partakers of the same faith, for there is but ***"one faith;"*** and yet our Lord speaks of one class as dead, and the other class as living. How is this paradox to be explained? I will endeavour to show you. The dead I have described as those not dead in sin, nor dead in profession, but dead in feeling.

We have then to explain the living in a similar way. ***"He that liveth"*** is one

who has the life of God warm in his soul; one that knows something of the living experience of faith and hope and love; one who can and does rise by the power of God out of darkness and death, and knows something of living union and living communion with a living Lord; one in whose heart the kingdom of God is set up with a divine power; one who has righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; in whose heart the holy Dove nestles; over whose soul He sheds his gracious influences; whom He stirs up as the eagle stirs up her nest, and makes him alive and lively too.

You will find this striking difference among the family of God. There are some who scarcely seem to have, or at least to realize the life of God in their souls. You will find them almost always complaining of a body of sin and death; always full of doubt and fear, always crying out bitterly against themselves and mourning and sighing under the pressure of heavy burdens, constant trials and continual afflictions. Now and then it is true they get a little relief, a little lightening of their burdens, tokens for good, helps from the sanctuary, encouraging promises, and gracious gleams of light and life across their path. But for the most part their almost daily experience is to feel and bewail their own deadness. Now to these the resurrection of Christ is blessedly adapted. He who is the Resurrection folds them in His loving embrace, though they can hardly realize His sustaining arms. But who keeps them from utterly falling, or from time to time revives their drooping hope? None but He who is the Resurrection. The gracious Lord who feeds his flock like a shepherd, gathers these lambs with His arms, carried them in His bosom and gently leads those that are with young.

But there are others of God's family, a small minority perhaps, who are more favoured, more blessed, whose souls are kept more alive and warm in the things of God. I have known a few of these in my time, though but a few, for we live in a dark and gloomy day when the Spirit of the Lord seems much straitened, and His gracious consolations little vouchsafed. But these are the most profitable Christians that we can have intercourse with; for sometimes they seem to warm us by the influence of their own warmth, are made instrumental in stirring up our sleeping graces, or reprove us in our consciences for our coldness and deadness.

Thus we get good from their company and find their society strengthening and profitable. Their prayers, too, whether in public or private are a blessing to the Church of God; and if they be ministers, as having life and power in their souls, they can speak with more unction and savour to the hearts of God's family than their brethren who are more borne down by a body of sin and death. Not but that the Lord makes use of both - His tried and tempted servants to feed His tried and tempted people, and those who walk more at liberty to feed that part of the family who are similarly favoured and blessed. And yet they are as dependent on the Lord of life as the others.

They have to believe and do believe in the same Lord, hang upon the same atoning blood, shelter themselves beneath the same justifying righteousness, trust to the same faithfulness, and cleave to the same blessed Redeemer as their less favoured brethren. But to them in an especial manner He is *"the Life,"* as to the others He is *"the Resurrection."* Sitting in His risen glory at the right hand of the Father, He contains in Himself life in all its fulness; and as they feel and realize this, it draws them up into sweet communion with Him.

The Lord Jesus is first the Resurrection and then the Life, for necessarily He rose from the dead before He ascended on high. Each has its special power and virtue. By virtue of His resurrection He quickens the dead; by virtue of His life He maintains the life that He gives. Thus as dead, we both need and realize His resurrection; as living, we feel and realize His life. But it is by looking unto him and at Him, by contemplating His Person and work, by going out after Him in earnest breathings and desires and by receiving out of His fulness that we realize Him to be the life, and draw life out of Him into our needy and empty souls. As then those that live thus believe in Him, He indulges them with visitations of His presence and grace, communes with them from off the mercy-seat; keeps their souls tender in the fear of God; separates them in person, in heart, in affection from an ungodly world; makes them spiritually-minded, which is life and peace; and draws them near to His bosom, where they find food and shelter.

And yet it is the same living faith, though stronger, which we have seen acting in those who are lamenting their death; and as stronger exposed to sharper trials, weighted down by the pressure of heavier afflictions, carrying a more heavy daily cross, and fighting harder against the world, the flesh and the devil. This may seem strange; but was it not Paul's experience to be "sorrowful yet always rejoicing?" So it is with these. None more burdened, none more blessed; none more afflicted, none more favoured; none fighting harder battles, none gaining greater victories. Thus their very afflictions are made use of as goads to urge them forward; their crosses though heavy to bear, are employed as means to make them move on, if more slowly, yet more surely; and those very circumstances which most deeply try them prove in the end their richest mercies. Thus, take the whole family of God, whether they be in the class which I have first described, dead in law, dead in feeling, as Berridge says, "Self condemned and self abhorred," scarcely able to trace the life of God in their own souls, and often sunk very low in gloomy fears, still they are believers in the Son of God; for He who is the Resurrection can and does raise up in their hearts some living faith in Himself. And yet for the most part they drag wearily on from this deadness of spirit and coldness of affliction. But the other class, fewer indeed in number, yet still partakers of the same

faith, and looking to the same Lord, enjoy more of His manifested presence and love.

Now see the two promises which are made to each. Of the first it is said that *"he shall live;"* of the second, that "he shall never die." How precious are these promises in themselves. How much more precious is, or should be, the Lord Himself who made and gave them, and who is Himself their sum and substance! I could wish for myself and you, to find their fulfillment in our daily experience; that we might prove the firm foundation on which they rest, and that as spoken by the mouth of Christ, they are spirit and life to our souls. We shall never get the least benefit by looking to ourselves; for all that we are and have is sin, darkness and death. We must look out of ourselves, come out of ourselves, live out of ourselves to find resurrection and life in the risen Son of God.

But we may stretch our thoughts a little further still. The promise has a future aspect as well as a present one, a literal as well as a spiritual meaning. One part of it embraces those who are gone before and now lie sleeping in their graves. As Christ is the Resurrection, these though dead shall live again when He comes to call forth their sleeping dust; for they will hear and answer His voice. As Job says, "Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: Thou wilt have a desire to the work of Thine hands." (Job xiv. 15). And so speaks Paul: *"Behold, I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."* (1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.) The second part of the promise where the Lord declares that *"whosoever liveth and believeth in Him shall never die,"* seems to have a reference to that change which will pass upon the living saints when Christ appears; for these will not die but be changed in a moment, death being swallowed up of life (2 Cor. v. 4), and they caught up together with the risen dead in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. (1 Thess. iv. 17.) O that we could live in the daily experience and blessed enjoyment of these divine realities. What an effect they would have on our daily walk and life.

III. - But I come now to our last point, which is the gracious appeal which the Lord made to Martha's faith; and I would use the words of our gracious Lord as if they spoke individually to my and your conscience: "Believest thou this?"

Can you then by a living faith set to your seal that these things are true, for this was the meaning and import of the Lord's address to Martha? And you will observe that His appeal embraces the whole of His declaration, *"Believest thou that I am the Resurrection? Believest thou that I am the Life? Believest thou that he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live? Believest thou that whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die?"* How close the appeal!

How piercing the enquiry! How is seems as if the eyes of the Lord looked into her immortal soul. And those same eyes, which are *"as a flame of fire,"* now also read the thoughts of our heart. If, then, you have the life of God in your bosom; if you are amongst those who believe in Christ, in which of these two classes do you rank yourself? How shall I put my hand upon you that I may guide my fingers aright? Ephraim and Manasseh stood before Jacob, each to receive a blessing. God guided his hands aright, though his eyes could not see. I cannot see your hearts. God guide my hands aright, that a suitable blessing may come to each as I lay my hand upon you!

I. I will first take those who feel much of the state of death and darkness into which sin has brought them, and who for the most part are little able to rise out of it. And I would say to you, *"Believest thou this?"* Believest thou that though thou art condemned by law, condemned by conscience, condemned by the feelings of thine own soul, as being much shut up in darkness and death, there is in thee some living faith in the Son of God?

Dost thou believe that Jesus is the Resurrection? What evidence has thou that He is? Has He quickened thy soul? Has he convinced thee of thy sins and given thee repentance for them? Has he brought thee out of the world? Has he turned thee from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God? Has he raised thee from the dead - that death in sin or death in profession in which thou once walkest? Dost thou ever feel any movements of divine life in thy soul, such as sighing, crying, groaning, hungering, thirsting, longing, panting and mourning? Hast thou any spirit of prayer in thy breast? Any earnestness, sincerity, self-abhorrence? Hast thou any contrition, brokenness, humility, softness of spirit and tenderness of conscience? Hast thou any godly fear working in thy bosom in buying and selling, in you daily walk, in your families, in your business, in the various matters and movements of your daily life? Do you find a fountain of life in you to depart from the snares of death, and some power and strength communicated to fight against your corruptions and overcome them? Has Jesus at any time or in any measure manifested Himself as a suitable Saviour to your soul? I say suitable, for that is sometimes the first view which we have of Him. Has He in any measure drawn out a faith in Himself as such, and in the power and experience of that faith you have received and embraced Him as the Son of God?

Believest thou that He is the Resurrection? Why do you believe it, and that Jesus has risen from the dead? What evidence have you of that cardinal doctrine of our most holy faith, that vital, glorious truth, which shines in the world like the sun in the sky to illuminate the whole page of revelation with its gracious and glorious beams? Is this your evidence that you have seen Him as such by the eye of faith, and life flowed through it into your soul? Then you have a real, ex-

perimental evidence, though perhaps not a very sure one in your own feelings, that He has quickened you into divine life; that He raised you up with Himself when He rose from the dead, and that you are a member of His mystical body.

Do bear in mind that these things can only be received and realized by faith. Your faith may be small and yet blessedly real. But you say, ***"The law condemns me, my conscience accuses me, my sins are a heavy burden to me, under which at times I seem almost ready to sink, and I do feel such thorough inability to bring myself any relief, such complete helplessness and miserable impotency to deliver myself out of my state, that it seems as if I shall die in my sins. O that pardon would reach my breast."*** But is there no longing look to the risen Son of God, no ardent cry, that He would manifest Himself and drop a word into your soul? Is there no breathing in your heart after Jesus that He would graciously come over the hills and mountains of your sin and shame, and break in upon you with some beams of heavenly light? Have you never seen Him suitable to your case? Have you never beheld his Person by the eye of faith as the great and glorious God-Man? Have you never seen the efficacy of His atoning blood, the beauty and blessedness of His justifying righteousness, and have you never heard some gracious words from His mouth? Has His holy word never been opened up to your mind so that you have seen light in God's light, and believed what you read from the sacred, solemn power which attended it to your Soul? Have you never been blessed under the preached word, and found faith raised up to receive and believe what dropped with sweetness into your ear and heart? This was faith; for ***"faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."***

Then, though you feel dead, as slain by the sentence of the law and the verdict of your own conscience, yet if you find any living faith in the Son of God as the resurrection, you shall live. The Lord has declared it, and His word will stand when the world is in a blaze, "Thou shalt live." Thou shalt live here by a life of faith in the Son of God. Thy small faith shall be increased, thy hope be enlarged, and thy scanty love, which now steals through the weeds almost unseen, like a little tiny brooklet, will open into a stream, and before thou art laid upon a dying bed, or perhaps there, thy peace shall flow like a river. It is hard to believe this, for we look so much to self and so lose sight of the freeness and fulness of sovereign superabounding grace. But do weigh these things in the balance of the sanctuary, and especially by the word of the Lord in our text. Do you not find in your own bosom these two things - death and life? Your own death as a condemned sinner and your life which is hid with Christ in God. Then, by this death and by this life you have a manifested interest in the promise, ***"Though he were dead, yet shall he live."***

II. But now I will take the other character, of whom the Lord says, ***"Whoso-***

ever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." And may I not also say to you, "Believest thou this?" "Yes," you answer, *"I do believe it; for I feel the sweet assurance and blessed earnest of it in my own soul. I know that Jesus is the life, because I live upon him, and he sustains my life by daily supplies. Sometimes I get a sweet portion out of His word to comfort my heart; sometimes a touch of His soft hand to melt my soul; sometimes a smile from His loving face to cheer my spirit; sometimes a word from His gracious lips to instruct my understanding; and by these things I live."*

"I find," you say, "that these things separate me from the world, make me live much alone, teach me to prize my Bible, bring me often to close dealings with God, favour a spirit of prayer in my breast, and make me feel that there is a blessedness in the things of God which nothing else can give. But I have my changes and these very many; for I cannot keep alive one warm or tender feeling. *'If two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone?'* (Eccl. iv. 11). When I am left alone I soon grow cold; and when the Lord suspends His gracious operations upon my heart, I sink down into carnality and death. So that I do believe He is 'the life;' for I am sure I have none in myself, and it is only because 'He lives that I live also'.

Then you can set to your seal that Jesus spake words of grace and truth when He said, *"I am the resurrection and the life."* Your faith, my dear friends, will ever be embracing Him in these two characters: sometimes dead and embracing Him as the resurrection; sometimes living and embracing Him as the life. But whether He be the Resurrection to raise up our dead and drooping souls, or whether He be the Life to maintain in our bosom the life He gave, we come to this one point, that the only life we can live worthy of the name, or attended with any fruitfulness in any good word or in any good work, is by a life of faith in the Son of God. And do bear in mind that the life of Christ within must be evidenced by a corresponding life without. Wherever there is faith there will, there must be the fruits of faith, and these will be manifested in a godly life, in the performance of every good work to which we are called by our station or position, so as to make it manifest that our faith is not a dead but a living principle, and that by it we glorify God in our body and in our spirit which are His.

I shall add no more. I have laid before you according to my ability the way in which the Lord for the most part leads His dear family; and if you can find any clear mark or blessed evidence of the grace of God being in your breast, thank God and take courage. Jesus lives at the right hand of the Father: He lives to save, He lives to bless, He lives to bring you off more than conquerors through His own blood and love and grace.

By J.C. Philpot

From Elder Lamberts book, "Tried In The Furnace."

PREPARATIONS OF THE HEART AND TONGUE

September, 1949

"The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord. All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the Lord weigheth the spirits." Prov. 16: 1,2.

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

The Natural Man who is born of natural parents, who is not yet born of the Spirit, reasons that all of his own ways are clean. He is confident that his walk is more righteous than his fellowman. He is certain that he knows right from wrong, and that he is capable of choosing and pursuing the right course in this life. He glories in the idea that he can direct his own steps, prepare his own heart, and choose his own destiny. He justifies himself in every act he performs. All of his ambitions are motivated by selfish desires. He loves himself and strives to prove to his fellowman that he is superior. Any ideas contrary to these ideas are foolishness unto him and he will not receive them as truth.

The Bible contains many plain statements that are contrary to the ideas conceived by a natural man. I desire to quote just a few of these statements: ***"Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God." - (Jesus) "Are we better than they? No, in no wise." - (Paul) "There is none that doeth good, no not one." - (Paul) "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." - (Jesus) "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." - (Jeremiah) "A man's heart deviseth his way but the Lord directeth his steps." - (Solomon) "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." - (Psalms) "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you" - (Jesus). "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" - (Paul). "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" - (Paul). "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" - (Paul).***

Considering the things that are written above, we realize the necessity of the direct operation of God's Holy Spirit in the heart of man in order for him to receive these things as true. No wonder that Jesus said, ***"Ye must be born again."*** There must be a change of heart before the natural man can receive the things of the Spirit. This changed heart must further be prepared by the Lord. The Lord does not stop with just one preparation but it is a progressive work requiring several preparations. ***"The preparations of***

the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." We would like to consider some of these preparations.

Let us read from Ezekiel 11: 19-20 concerning the first preparation of the heart in man that is done, solely, by the work of God Himself. ***"I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God."*** Many years ago, I begged people to give their hearts to God. I honestly thought that each human being was in possession of a heart that was sufficient as a sacrifice and worthy of acceptance with God. I thought we were capable of doing things for Him. Alas! I did not know Him; neither did I know my wicked and ungodly heart that I possessed! If it were possible for a man, upon the volition of his own will, to give his heart to God, what value would it be to God considering the wickedness of the natural heart of man? There is no scripture that intimates that the stony heart of man would be worthy of God's acceptance. God takes this old heart from man and gives him a new heart. There is heart-giving in the act of regeneration, but instead of the sinner giving his heart to God, God is giving the sinner a new heart. God is successful in this operation and has never lost a case. When we are on the operating table of God's amazing grace, and He is performing that wonderful operation, we are in close touch with him. He is near unto us and may be found. We behold Him as all powerful, all wise, and most holy. It is while we are in this position that the scripture is applicable unto us which says, ***"Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon him while he is near."*** This first preparation of the heart in man humbles him and gives him a desire for godliness.

God does not stop in His preparations, for we read in Psalms 10:17, ***"Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble; thou wilt prepare their heart."*** This initial operation has awakened the creature to his unworthiness, wretchedness and inability. As a new born babe it causes him to cry. He is crying unto the Lord to further prepare him. Let us read from Jeremiah 31:33, concerning further preparation of the new heart God has given His children: ***"I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people."*** Paul explains to the Corinthian brethren further concerning this writing as he says, "Written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart" (2 Cor. 2:3). The creature with the new heart is not dependent upon the study of the Scriptures to know the Lord or the law of the Lord. This knowledge is indelibly impressed by the direct operation of God's Holy Spirit. The Scriptures were not written to incite us to our duty but ***"Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through***

patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." The scriptures, ***"Seek, and ye shall find," "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you," "Ask, and it shall be given you,"*** were not written in order to exhort you to seek, ask, and knock for this is done by the Holy Spirit, but to comfort you with the thought of the results of this asking, knocking and seeking.

The command, ***"Love one another"*** is written in your hearts for Paul says, ***"But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another"*** (1 Thess. 4:9). We quote from Christ's sermon on the mount to His disciples according to Matt. 7:12, ***"Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."*** Jesus said again as recorded in Matt. 22: 37-40, ***"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hangs all the law and the prophets."***

These are so indelibly impressed in the heart of each of God's children that ***"His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night"*** (Psalms 1:2). The child of God would perform it to a jot and tittle but realizes the infirmities of the flesh, and the thorn in the flesh so that he cannot do the things that he would. Paul said, "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin." This knowledge can only be experienced by those to whom it has pleased God to reveal the holiness of His law and the unholiness of man. All our righteousness appears as filthy rags when compared to the standard of that written law that has been so indelibly imprinted in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. We witness further with Paul when he said, ***"For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that I do not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."*** (Read Romans seventh chapter.)

The heart is now well prepared for another preparation which we shall consider. The failure to comply with this law causes such grief and sorrow until we are without hope. Hungering and thirsting for righteousness that we cannot perform causes our souls to faint within us. We realize that the law is just and holy and that if we offend in one point we are guilty of the whole. We are made to exclaim with Paul, ***"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"*** We have lost all confidence in ourselves and cannot any more depend upon the puny arm of flesh to save us. Christ comes to us in this distressed condition and takes up His abode in our hearts. We

now quote from 2 Cor. 6:16, ***"As God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."*** This is the opportune time that Jesus says, ***"Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."*** Jesus comes to us in the day of adversity and speaks sweet peace to our troubled souls! He tells us that He has brought us out from under the dominion of the law by keeping it in our stead to a jot and tittle, and that His obedience is accredited to our account. He informs us that He took our sins upon His shoulders and that they were nailed to the cross; that our sins were charged to Him; and that He satisfied justice by paying the penalty with His own blood on the cross of Calvary. He has stripped us of the filthy rags of our own righteousness and clothed us with the robe of His righteousness. He intercedes to the Father for us and blesses us with His great love shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. He not only accomplished the law for us and paid the penalty for our sins; but, also gives unto us eternal life. ***"And this is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life"*** (1 John 5:11, 12). We hear Jesus saying to the Father as recorded in John 17: 22, 23, ***"And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."***

Last December while everyone was celebrating Christmas in the customary manner of modern frivolity I was very much concerned about the right way and right time to celebrate such an occasion. While I was so perplexed my nearest neighbor, who is clerk of Bethel Primitive Church here in this community, asked me if I knew when God's children celebrated the birth of Christ. Feeling that he has an appropriate answer I asked him to answer his own question. I want to pass his answer along to you and see if it does not fit in your experience as it did in mine. His answer was, ***"God's children truly celebrate Christmas when Christ is born in them."*** Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Jesus told His disciples, ***"It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will send him unto you."*** He terms the Spirit of Truth as the Comforter. It soothes our troubled souls, heals our broken hearts, guides us into all truth, and glorifies Christ. This spirit dwells in us as Paul states in 1 Cor. 3:16, ***"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"*** If so be that the Lord has taken from you the stony heart and has given you a new heart, has written His laws in your heart and imprinted them in your mind; and Jesus has come to your rescue as your Savior; and the Spirit of Truth, the Comforter, has taken up His abode in your heart; you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit. Your heart has been prepared to receive and be comforted

by the following quotation: ***"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Rom. 8:9). "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear: but ye have received the Spirit of adoption" (Rom. 8:15).*** Space will not permit us to consider the various minute preparations of the heart in man that are from the Lord as affirmed by the Scriptures. Let us now take up briefly, ***"The answer of the tongue, is from the Lord."***

Paul said in Rom. 10: 9-11, ***"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."*** God causes us to not be ashamed to own Him as our Lord. We do not have to be prompted by man to confess Him as our Savior for the Lord so blesses us. ***"He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God" (Psalms 40: 2,3).*** God has put this new song into the mouth of His children, and I am persuaded that they sing it. They render praise unto God for all things. They realize that it is solely by the grace of God that they are saved both in time and for eternity. ***"No prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:20,21).*** God has never changed in His way of dealing with His children. I believe that it is just as true now that confession is made unto salvation by the promptings of the Holy Ghost as it has ever been. I do not believe it is in the province of natural man void of the Holy Spirit to even confess with the mouth. He may make statements that favors a true confession but I am persuaded his language will betray him.

It is natural for a man to want to take some of the praise unto himself and regardless of how much he may try to imitate the speech of a child of God, he will fall far short of speaking in this new tongue. In Luke 12:12 we find this statement, ***"For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say."*** God is perfect in His work and does not only prepare our hearts but also gives the answer of the tongue. He does not depend upon us to search out what we shall say in advance, but relieves us by putting the words in our mouths by the direct operation of His Spirit at the time we shall say them. I am impressed that I have experienced that very thing in speaking publicly from the pulpit. At times words flow so fluently without any labor upon my part that I feel to know that it is the work of God. I have been blessed to speak upon texts

upon which I have not had previous meditation, with all ease and so true to scriptural teachings that it astonished me when I would be given to compare the things that I had said with the scriptures later. Prior to becoming affiliated with the Primitive Baptists I outlined the sermons beforehand and tried to deliver them in accordance. Now I study and outline them after they have been delivered.

I trust that I have been made to believe in the effectual working of God's mighty power which is far superior to the wisdom of this world. I have only hinted at this far reaching subject but now must submit it for your consideration. May God bless it to your comfort and be pleased to further prepare our hearts and give us the answer of the tongue as it pleases Him.

Elder E.J. Lambert

THE PURPOSE AND FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD

God is known in the bible as a God of purpose, as working *"all things after the counsel of his own will."* Hence, what we see produced by the hand of God is not the product of chance or accident, but the fulfillment of purpose. All this universe, sun, moon and stars, the earth and its fullness, are now as God, before their being purposed they should be, and as he had no pattern to work by they are an exhibition of his wisdom as well as power.

It is said of him, *"The Lord of hosts has sworn, saying, surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Isaiah, xiv: 24.* Reader, did God ever think he would save any one and yet that one fail of salvation? 27th verse, *"For the Lord of hosts hath purposed; who shall disannul it? And his hand is stretched out and who shall turn it back?"*

If God's hand is stretched out to save his people, is it not wicked to contend that his hand can be turned back? *"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning." Acts, xv: 18, "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works."* The work, then, of conversion is God's work, and not the work of chance or accident; it is one of the works which he does according to his purpose. *"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of sons."* So that our being sons is the result, not of chance or human appointment or agency, but of predestination of God.

Our regeneration is an inheritance, which we have, not for our works, but as the end of God's purpose. *"In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."* Here, our being born again is the result of our being predestinated; hence, we were predestinated to this end by *"him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."* Therefore, our being made to possess this inheritance, was in the mind of God long before; and just according to that mind we are blessed.

Now, I ask, will these be saved - whom God has appointed to salvation, and who in harmony with that appointment have obtained their inheritance? In Eph., iii: 11, *"According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."* Here then, let us ask, what that eternal purpose is? *"And this is the will of him that sent me, that of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing."* So this eternal purpose, counsel, will, is, that all given to Christ shall be saved; and *"Thou shall call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."* Will he fail? Will God's eternal purpose be defeated, and his will unexecuted?

Falling from grace argues that he may fail; and, if he may fail to save all given him, and all his people, he also may fail in his blood, and the cross may be a failure. God's purposes, counsel and will may be a failure, and the holy spirit may fail; and there might well be a song of triumph in hell; and all heaven might be clothed in sack cloth and mourning; and Christ might be mocked, saying, *"This man began to build, and was not able to finish." Luke, xiv: 28.*

We also learn that God possesses foreknowledge, to the highest conceivable perfection; hence all his works are in perfect harmony with perfect wisdom, love and power, and where he has begun a good work, he will perform it until the day of Christ. I would argue the truth of the final perseverance of every saint, upon the grounds of the covenant of grace. Psalms, lxxxix: 18, "For the Lord is our defense, and the holy one of Israel is our King. Then thou speakest in visions to thy holy one, and said, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people." And of this chosen one he says: *"Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Isaiah also says, liii: 5, "And with his stripes we are healed." 6, "All we, like sheep, have gone astray. We have turned, every one in his own way, and the Lord hath laid, on him the iniquity of us all," 8, "For he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken." "When thou shall make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed; he shall prolong his day, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." 11, "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities."*

The many justified are the many whose sins are born; the bearing of sin results in justification. These two things are tied together so inseparably in each of these passages, that any one willing to see truth can see it. While his soul is being offered, he shall see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied. The end and object of his death shall be seen by him, and he be satisfied; and what would satisfy him but the ultimate salvation of all his people? It is the stripes that heal; or

we are healed because he is striped. In all these passages we are presented as one, with Christ in the covenant. So that our release from suffering is a necessary consequence of his suffering.

Psalms, lxxxix: 27, "Also, I will make him my first born; higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep forever more, and my covenant shall stand fast with him." "His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven."

Acts, xiii: 34, Paul calls Christ the sure mercies of David; and this covenant was confirmed before, of God in Christ which the law could not disannul, or make the promise of none effect. Now, if the children of this covenant *"forsake my law, and walk not in my judgment; if they break my statutes and keep not my commandments"* - shall they fall from grace, and be lost? No. "Then I will visit their transgressions with a rod, and their iniquities with stripes. Nevertheless (mark this), my loving kindness I will not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail."

Now, does God's faithfulness to his Son demand that his children, redeemed by his blood, shall be saved? Unquestionably it does, and God's word for it, he will not suffer it to fail, and he will not utterly take his loving kindness from him. *"My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips; once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David, (Christ), his seed shall endure forever and his throne as the sun before me"* Paul refers to the same when he says, *"But God willing, more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor both sure and steadfast."*

Now, I ask, is this covenant mutable, changeable, or is it immutable? Can it be altered or changed? No; it is secured by the oath of God and all is confirmed in Christ. Hence, the blood of Christ is called *"The blood of the everlasting covenant,"* and this covenant is called the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Titus, i:2. God, who can not lie, promised eternal life before the world began, and also, grace was given us in Christ before the world began, and we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. All of which proves the existence of an everlasting covenant, which related not only to the crucifixion of Jesus, but to the eternal salvation of all his children; not only is the death of Jesus a subject of appointment in this covenant, but the result of that death. So David could say, *"It is ordered in all things and sure."* Everything appertaining to that death, as to its time, and manner, and as to its object - nothing left to uncertainty. So, all *"Israel shall be saved in the Lord; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end." Isaiah, xlv:17.* Here is a salvation certain that shall reach even to eternity. *"Can a woman for-*

get the child she bear that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?" (Think what a forcible figure is here used.) ***"Yes, she may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold! I have graven thee on the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me."*** Do these words look like falling from grace is possible? No, not till God is foresworn, nor till the everlasting covenant is disannulled, nor till Christ, who is one in covenant with us, is dragged down from his throne of power and hurled into hell. ***"Christ is made a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec"; also, "Over the house of God"; "And after the power of an endless life."*** As a priest of this order and over this house, he procures endless life. He is the captain to bring many sons to glory, and for this work he is made perfect through suffering. He is the wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption of all his people, and he will be to them a God, and they shall be to him a people. From what we have seen, the salvation of God's people depends on the success of Christ as the surety of the better testament, and as he can not fail, the salvation of all his people is certain.

Elder J.H. Oliphant

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting sill be held, the Lord will, on the fifth Sunday in July. The meeting will be held at Dan River Church with Moons Creek Church the host Church. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us with a special invitation to all ministers of our faith and order.

Kenneth R. Key, Moderator

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

220 North, or South to Route 40. Take 40 East about 3.6 miles to Route 655, turn left. Go about 4 miles to Route 834. Turn left and to about 4 miles to church on right.

From Gretna take 40 West to Route 834. Turn right and go about 8 miles. Church is on right.

If coming 122 to Burnt Chimney, turn on 670 and go to Dick's Food Center. Turn right on 834. Church is on left. August 5th, 6th and 7th. Please bring chairs.

Hope to see you there!

Jamie Cooper, Association Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 1994

Mrs. Connie Page, NC	$5.00
Mrs. Edith Sewell, FL	2.00
William Edwards, NC	2.00
Eld. G.D. Shipman, TX	2.00
Graham Lovitte, NC	2.00
R. Vernon Furr, NC	2.00
Mrs. Eunice Thompson, NC	10.00
E.R. Graves, AL	5.00
Tom G. Thompson, NC	2.00
Mrs. French Hogan, VA	2.00
Eld. Richard Campbell, TN	7.00
Mrs. Julia H. Ada, MD	2.00
Mrs. Helen M. Womble, NC	2.00
Mrs. S.L. Walker, VA	7.00
Eld. Leonard Brammer, VA	2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER VIRGINIA HORSLEY

At the request of Old Mt. Church, I will try, with the help of the Lord to write an obituary in memory of our dear Sister Virginia Horsley, who the Lord called home, Feb. 2, 1994, while in Duke University Medical Center, Durham, N.C. After a decline in health for two weeks. Sister Horsley was born in Pittsylvania county Nov. 19, 1914. The daughter of John H. Holley and Jinnie Holley. She lived her entire life in the Whitmell, and Mount Hermon area. She was married to Brother Edgar Samuel Horsley, Dec. 8, 1934. To this union was born two daughters.

Margaret H. Munford, of Dublin, Ga. and Jone H. Wyatt of Wilmington, N.C. Six grand children and five great grandchildren.

Sister Virginia and Brother Edgar joined Old Mt. Primitive Baptist Church May 19, 1984. They were baptised July 15, 1984. Sister Virginia was a faithful member, always there unless sickness prevented. A firm believer in predestination of all things. She loved caring for her church, cooking and entertaining Primitive Baptists in her home.

Always preparing food when a friend or neighbor was sick or had a death in the family. She used a cane to walk, because of a broken hip years ago, but that never kept her from doing for others in need. A devoted wife and mother, grandmother and neighbor. She will be greatly missed by all.

May the family be reconciled to the will of the one that never makes a mistake. One that can fill the void in their heart with the finger of his love.

Her funeral was conducted at 2:00 p.m. Sat. Feb. 5, 1994 at Old Mt. Church by her pastor Elder C.B. Davis and Elder H.W. Wray.

Her body was laid to rest in the Holley Family Cemetery, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, a token of love, from the family and many friends, to await the resurrection morn, to meet Christ in the air and be carried home to be with the Lord.

Written by one who loved her.
Sarah Barker

PSALM 93.

The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.

Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting.

The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.

The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.

Signs of the Times

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IN THY HANDS

In thy Hands are all things;
All things whatsoever
Exist for thy purpose.
Plan, creation and fulfillment
Are thine alone.
Omnipotence is thy attribute,
All power anywhere
From eternity to eternity
Belongs to Thee.
Omniscience is thine,
Thou has no birth, no death;
All times are plain before Thee.
Thou art omnipresent
Throughout the universe art
thou Forever.
Laced like a silver cord
Through the dark fabric of time
Thou hast a people
Who manifest thy fruit
At the touch of thy Hand.
O Infinite God
Great and holy
Beyond our finite comprehension,
Look in mercy upon us
Who have no hope
Except in Thee.

Florence A. Gibson

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EDITORIAL

WALK

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

"And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." Isa.30:21.

There are many ways that the word 'walk' is used. One way that Webster defines it is, to follow a certain course of action. Whatsoever one does or says is his course of action, or the way in which he walks; and there are only two ways in which he will walk; either in wickedness or in righteousness. There is no other path for him to follow. Either a thing is right and just or it is wrong and unjust, either good or evil. Unless God works in us to do righteousness we will always do evil, for in the flesh all men are sinful and evil. ***"Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand."*** When God made man (Adam) he knew no sin, for he knew neither good nor evil. Adam and Eve were naked and knew it not, but as soon as they ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil their eyes were opened, and they saw they were naked, and they tried to hide their nakedness with fig leaves. They had disobeyed the commandment or law of God and sin therefore entered the world; for sin is the transgression of the law. Adam fell from his pure and upright state to a state of sin and death; and he being the federal head of all mankind we all fell in him, for we are only Adam multiplied.

Before Adam sinned he walked and communed with God there in the garden of Eden, but he died, (was separated from his standing with God,) and God drove him forth from the garden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. God cursed the ground for his sake, and told him that in sorrow he would eat of it all the days of his life. It would also bring forth thorns and thistles, and that he should eat of the herbs of the field. In the sweat of his face he would eat bread, till he would return to the ground from whence he was taken: for he was dust, and to dust he would return.

Adam was not deceived as was Eve, but he ate of the forbidden fruit because of his love for her. Adam was not deceived because he was a figure

of him that was to come (Christ). Christ also loved his bride (the church) and he came into the world to redeem her from her fallen estate, and take her to heaven and immoral glory to be with him eternally when time shall cease forever.

There are those who say that God has two wills, one revealed, and the other secret, and that Adam disobeyed the revealed will of God, but obeyed his secret will. This is utterly impossible, for these are opposites and would clash head-on. Adam did as all men do; he disobeyed the commandment or law of God, but did the will of God, for the scriptures tell us that, ***"he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and non can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou." (Dan.4:35) Also we read Phil.2:13: "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."*** Although God had given a commandment or law unto Adam that he was not to eat fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil it was in his will and purpose that Adam should disobey, and he knew that he would, for he said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." He did not say, "If ye eat of it - but in the day you eat of it." No man has ever kept the commandments or laws of God except Jesus Christ, and he kept it to a jot and tittle that we might be redeemed from the curse of the law. The apostle James wrote, ***"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."*** Therefore we must conclude that his commandments are not always his will, but only if they are in complete accord with his will; and then he works in us to will and to do them.

Adam was fulfilling the will and purpose of God when he transgressed the law. We know that God has a holy hatred of sin, and all of his wrath is against it; yet he had a just and holy purpose for its presence in the world or it could not have entered. God made man according to his own will and purpose, making him subject to vanity; he placed the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden; he commanded Adam to not eat of it; and he formed the crooked serpent to deceive. Had any one of these things not been done sin could not have entered the world. God is omniscient, therefore he did not do these things in error, but according to his own holy purpose. Had Adam never sinned he would still be in the garden of Eden in his pure and innocent state, but he would still not be a fit subject for heaven and immortal glory. We know however that Adam walked the path laid out for him before the foundation of the world, for the scriptures tell us, ***"O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps." Also: "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps."*** Why do the scriptures tell us that Jesus stood as a Lamb slain before the foundation of the world if God had been unsure that his chosen children would need

redemption? After that he was driven out, Adam knew his wife Eve and she conceived, and bare Cain, and gave God the praise, for she said, "I have gotten a man from the Lord." And she again bare his brother Abel.

Before the foundation of the world God chose a people in his son Jesus Christ and blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. Able is a type or figure of the chosen children of God, and Cain is a type or figure of those who were not chosen. Cain was a tiller of the ground and Abel was a keeper of sheep. In the process of time Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord, and Abel offered the firstling of his flock and the fat thereof. The fruit that Cain offered was from the works of his hands, therefore God had no respect unto it nor Cain, but the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering, for the offering Abel made was not of the works of his hands, but of the sheep the Lord had given him to be the keeper of. Does not Cain and his offering set forth the way the world is today? Many people are begging money daily in their efforts to evangelize the world and save sinners from hell, not giving credit nor praise unto the Lord for what he has already accomplished; and not knowing that they themselves may be in need of a Saviour.. The poor soul who has been made to know his ruined and lost condition, and that he has nothing with which he might save himself, but that Jesus has already offered himself unto the Father in his room and stead, and by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, offers nothing except his prayers, supplications and praise unto the One that has given him faith to believe in the work that the Saviour has already accomplished and a sweet hope that he is one of those for whom christ died. He is made to understand the meaning of David's words when he said, ***"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: and a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."***

In his wrath, because that God had no respect for his offering and had respect unto Abel's offering, Cain slew his brother. Cain's offering, as we noted before, was of works, but Abel's by faith; and ***"Without faith it is impossible to please him." (Heb.11:6) Faith is the gift of God, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph.2:8-9).*** Does not the world follow after Cain? All of God's chosen people would be slain by them,(if it were possible,) simply because they believe and preach the truth. The world cannot tolerate the truth, for it condemns them. They sought to kill Jesus himself because he preached to them the truth. They continue to work to justify themselves, attempting to put God under obligation to save them, and they send missionaries into all the world to save lost souls. What did Jesus say unto these? ***"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypo-***

crites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more a child of hell than yourselves." And, "Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Enoch, the son of the unrighteous Cain, was a chosen child of God, for we are told in Gen.5:24 that *"Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him."* And in Heb.11:5-6 we read, *"By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please him."* As we have quoted before, faith is the gift of God. Elijah was also given faith in God, and God took him into heaven in a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and a whirlwind." (2 Kings 2:9).

In the 6th chapter of Genesis we find that *"God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."* Therefore he said he would destroy man whom he had created, and all beasts, creeping things and fowls of the air; for it repented him that he had made them. Yet God bestowed his grace upon Noah, and he found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Because of the grace bestowed upon him Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God. God commanded Noah to build an ark, and told him exactly how it was to be built, and blessed him with faith, knowledge, and perseverance to do all that he commanded, for it took many years for it to be completed. Peter tells us that Noah was a preacher of righteousness, but it is evident that none believed him, for there were none called into the ark by God when it was finished, other than Noah`s wife, his three sons, and their wives. Only eight persons were saved to again begin the repopulation of the earth. In Heb.11:7 we read, *"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house: by the which he condemned the world, and became the heir of the righteousness which is of faith."* It is only through God given faith that anyone shall ever walk in the commandments of God and become an heir of righteousness.

I believe all of you know something of the faith and walk of our father Abraham; not our heavenly Father, but the father of all them that believe.(Rom 4:11, James 2:21.) And in Gal.3:7-9 we read, *"Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham, And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham,*

saying, In thee shall al nations be blessed, So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." If we be what we hope to be, then are we the heathen (Gentiles) who are justified through faith and are blessed in Abraham.

By faith Abraham obeyed the call of God and went out of his native land, from his own people, seeking a place that he should after receive for an inheritance, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. I believe that every child of God, when he is born again of the Holy Spirit, leaves his native land (the world) and seeks a new city made not with hands. This new city is the church of Jesus Christ, and he is the builder and the foundation thereof; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. He not only seeks the church here on earth, but by faith he looks for the second coming of his Lord and Saviour who will take him to heaven and immortal glory. The strangeness of the land in which we sojourn is only because we had not walked there before; but, as we walk through it, it becomes more and more beautiful and blissful as God reveals it unto us.

We dwell here in an earthly house of clay (our bodies), and we suffer trials, tribulations, afflictions, etc.; but we must suffer these things if we walk after Christ, for he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we are told that, "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for his sake." This is part of the cross we must take up every day to follow him. But as we suffer, let us consider this - ***"And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."*** Our earthly house shall be dissolved, but this we desire, ***"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."***

Dearly beloved brethren, seeing that you have hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, I would beseech you as did Paul in chapter 4 of his epistle to the Ephesians: ***"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherein ye are called, with lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unit of the Spirit in the bonds of peace."*** And when you hear that word behind you saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it," do not resist, but walk willingly; for it is God working in you to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Dearly beloved brethren, it is my sincere desire to walk with you in love and peace in the sight of our most holy God.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES

"Then I cut asunder mine other staff, even Bands, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel." Zech. LL:14.

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.", 2 Cor. 13:5.

To the militant (visible) churches, to the sanctified in Christ Jesus, and to the saints that lament in Zion:

The breaking of brotherhood is a serious event deserving the attention and concern of the saints for they are admonished to be of one and the same mind, a mind like unto the mind of Christ, they are to dwell together in unity,and are commanded to mark them who cause divisions and avoid them.

It is with fear, dear Reader, that this attempt to write may be presumptuous of me, yet I am moved to encourage professed Baptists to search the scriptures with me and to seek that unity of the spirit of Christ that accompanies brotherhood among the saints who are to judge the world and small matters that pertain to this life, 1 Cor. 6: 2-5. The motive is that God be glorified and that order prevail in and among the churches so that ye may be comforted.

As pertaining to "those things which are most surely believed among us", in the preface of his Gospel, St. Luke declared, Chap. 1: 1-4, that "It seemed good .... to write ..... That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed." For the militant denominations of churches, our fathers in Zion have published landmark documents as their banners of truth and belief. From the era of dissent and civil strife in England we have the Westminister Confession of Faith of 1647 which was a pattern for the later London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689. More recently we have the Kehukee Declaration of 1827 and the Black Rock Address of 1832. For a time thereafter it seemed that Old Baptists were blessed with prosperity, yet within the lifetime of this writer the candlestick has been removed from many Old Baptist churches. Meetinghouses across the land sit desolate while others are occupied by adversaries to our cause. The scriptures read of "wolves of the evening" that would devour us, of "cunning foxes" that will spoil the vines (churches), and the "boar of the wood" that would break down and waste the hedges about Zion so that the "wild beast of the field" doth devour the vine. These members of God's creation are ample reasons for the command to prove all things and try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. God does, in his displeasure and according to his purpose remove the candlestick, Rev. 2:5, also Gal. 5: 12-16.

The psalmist prayed, Ps. 19:13, that he be kept back from presumptuous sins. But David, being tempted by

Satan, forced Joab to number Israel at the displeasure of God and for his sin David was compelled to choose between the three pestilences, 1 Chron., Chap. 21, and 2 Sam., Chap. 24. O Brethren, does Satan likewise tempt us to look about the land to number the members among Old Baptist congregations and then conclude that surely we must be his chosen remnant? God forbid such presumptuous pride! The Lord knows the names and the number of his chosen but to us the book of life is sealed. Would you agree, dear Reader, that the falling away prophesied for the last times is quite different from a removal of a candlestick?

Needful instructions, admonitions, ordinances, and precepts are recorded in the inspired scriptures both for comfort and for profitable guidance of believers, churches and denominations of like believers. The apostle Paul sent epistles to the church at Corinth and "to all that are called to be saints in every place". But after his departure from Corinth, that church being influenced by false teachers became contentious and disorderly with divisions and schisms - not unlike the history of professed Baptist churches. At Ephesus the whole city fell under confusion and idolatry as certain craftsmen in the church, for material wealth, insisted on making shrines to the goddess Diana. After the uproar subsided Paul took leave to go into Macedonia. Traveling through Ephesus on the way to Jerusalem Paul called the Ephesian elders to meet.

The record in Acts 20: 28-38 contains Paul's admonition: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."

Beloved saints, is it not so of all religious persuasions few if any have suffered more than Baptists from those within who would seek power or money or both to establish preeminence over their peers by drawing away the membership after themselves? As God permits, Satan works even yet among Baptists to establish petty popery, cultism and idolatry under brutish pastors causing divisions and scattering of the flock, Jer. 10:21.

But God's universal Church is fitted together "That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all rejoice with it", 1 Cor. 2: 24-26. The Apostle was persuaded "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord", Rom. 8: 38-39. Has not Jesus said "If ye love me, keep my

commandments", John 14: 15? "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another", Gal. 5:15.

Thoughtful Readers, may I entreat your consideration of the shortcomings and the conduct which has brought, in the providence of God, so many divisions and such great desolation in many regions of the United States among Primitive and Old School Baptists. "Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord", Lam. 3: 40 and "Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old.", Lam. 5: 21. So, if God wills "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves ....", Cor. 13: 5. I know that I daily stand in the need of personal self examination and repentance. But, dear Readers, does not the plural language of these passages require plenary examination by the whole body of every organized militant church and by the full denomination of like believers for their common benefit?

However, to try ourselves there must be standards for the measurement of our condition. Some members believe that these standards are embodied in traditions established by our recent fathers while some reject all of the rules of men for orderly behaviour in church assemblies and use their thought freedom from the law as a license for mischief. Some believe that the standards are found in the New Testament alone - that the Old Testament no longer applies. Agreeably, the rule of life for God's children, "to love God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind" and "to love thy neighbor as thyself" is stressed in the New Testament, but it is not exclusively absent from the Old Testament, Deut. 6:5, Lev. 19:18. But we are a frail and backsliding people. If on examination of ourselves we find error should not corrective steps be taken? Are there broader instructions, precepts, or commandments for the organization and practice of militant church assemblies?

In writing to the Corinthian Church, 1 Cor. 10: 1-12, Paul declared "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; .... (6) Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted .... (11) and they were written for our admonition, ..." In Rom. 15:4 we read "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.", See also Ps. 48: 12-14. Thus, does not peace and tranquility in the orderly administration of a militant church and a denomination of like believers require all scripture, 2 Tim. 3: 16-17? A proverb of Solomon reads, Prov. 25:2, "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter." What in your view, O Beloved Reader, has God revealed within the mysteries of the scriptures in the matter of fellowship and brotherhood?

In Zechariah, Chapter 11, God has revealed that the Lord, the Good Shepherd, for his purpose and pleasure in feeding the flock, has taken two staves that are called "Beauty" and "Bands". The staff called "Beauty" was cut asunder that God might break his covenant with all the people. Unless deceived, I believe it was the covenant of works made with Adam and his posterity that stands broken. This broken covenant with all the people is superseded with a new covenant of grace - an everlasting covenant that shall never be broken for it is sealed by the precious blood and the resurrection of Jesus, our Lord and Redeemer, our Shepherd who sits at the right hand of God the Father making intercession for the saints of His elect chosen ones whose names are written in the sealed Lamb's book of life. This new covenant of grace is based upon better promises of mercy through the loving kindness of God, of the immutability and eternal faithfulness of God to his promises, and of an effective government upon the shoulders of a risen Christ. With a staff of grace the Lord has fed and continues to "feed the flock of slaughter". I believe the staff called "Beauty" was cut asunder in the garden of Eden, that Adam did fall from a state of perfect righteousness that original sin should enter and a portion of Adam's posterity should be cut off and not be fed, Zech. 11: 9-11.

The mystery continues as to the second staff, called "Bands" and how the cutting asunder, verse 14, of it broke the brotherhood between Judah and Israel which were favored Hebrew nations of God among men. The marginal reference of the Bible gives "Binders" as an equivalent of "Bands". It was noted above that in the mystical body of Christ, i.e., in the universal Church of God, separation from the love of God and schisms or divisions are impossible. Let us pray that God will give us understanding and wisdom in the application of "Bands" to the feeding of the flock of slaughter as it is scattered among the militant churches in this age of the gospel dispensation. Without an unbroken brotherhood can there be fellowship? Without an orderly and defined assembly of saints in church brotherhood can there be an effectual feeding of the flock by the preaching of doctrine alone? Does man live by bread alone? There is comfort as well as life in the feeding.

The 23rd Psalm of David reveals that the Lord has a "rod" and a "staff" that comforted him and that the Lord prepared a table for him in the presence of his enemies. A rod is symbolic in one sense of an office of authority and in a second sense of an instrument for discipline by punishment or chastisement. We know from civil life that disaster awaits anarchy. So, is there a relation between "Bands" and the "rod" of the 23rd Psalm?

Though it may seem a diversion from the subject at hand we have the report of Paul that the Lord "gave some, apostles; and some, prophets: and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of

Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and in the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;...", Eph. 4: 11-16.

In significant contrast, Paul also reports that "God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues", 1 Cor. 12:28. Why the difference? God is not confused nor will his purpose(s) be frustrated. "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: ....", Eccl. 3:14. Our Father knoweth what his militant churches have need of and the promise is that through Christ Jesus he shall supply all our need, Matt. 6:8.

In comparison of these verses from Ephesians and 1st Corinthians one may see that God has provided for more than the work of the ministry for perfecting the saints and edifying of the body of Christ. It is to be noted that it is not one government or one help or one tongue but it is plural helps, plural governments and diversities of tongues that are set in the church. Furthermore, it seems significant that helps, governments and tongues are identified and listed separately from the ministerial offices of pastors (prophets) and teachers. It is to be recognized that the ministry of the apostles stands complete, 1 Cor. 4:9; that the government of the Church (universal) of God is on the shoulder of Christ our Lord, our Priest, our King, and our Judge, Isa. 9:6; and that the Holy Ghost is our Teacher, John 14:26. In an application to militant churches and denominations, if any part of that which God has set be lacking due to omission through ignorance of God (see Hosea, Chapter 4) or through negligence, or lacking by dismissal by men as being unnecessary then how can such a militant church or denomination claim favour as a portion of the elect body of Christ? Will they come to the bridal chamber with essential elements missing as did the five foolish virgins? Is it a presumptuous sin to deny the need of helps, of governments, of teachers, and diversities of tongues in militant Baptist churches or do you, dear Reader believe their presence and role to be insignificant?

O praise the Lord for our heavenly Father knoweth what things we have need of before we ask him. His love and compassion works through the Holy Spirit to effect the miracles of rebirth and the healings of sick and sinful souls. Among the "Bands" by which brotherhood flourishes and is preserved are the helps and governments that have diversities of voices (tongues) active therein. But what are the characteristics and scope of the helps and governments that God hath set in the militant churches? Shall we pray for spiritual understanding and guidance in the matter of Bands that are acceptable unto God? For Jesus'

sake let us pray that God enable enlightened servants to do the work of evangelists by publishing for our better understanding adequate definitions of those helps and governments that are pleasing to God.

As I attempt this writing I feel a great inadequacy for the task which is great. Should I stumble, dear Reader, I hope that you can forgive my errors. We as poor worms of the dust cannot help God in the unfolding of his creation, in the exercising of his providential guidance and care, in the eternal salvation of lost sinners chosen from the beginning, etc. God helps (works) and men receive unmerited gifts and from time to time his adopted children receive well deserved chastisements. Saints will give thanks and all praise and honour to God for every blessing comes down from Him.

But there are helps set in the militant churches that are to be exercised by saints who have received the gift of faith which is the substance of their hope of eternal life. By these helps, as we have opportunity, we are to "do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.", Gal. 6:10. In the exercise of these helps "whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Cor. 10:31, and let us not boast in our works for God will not give his glory to another, Is. 42:8. Helps set in the churches flow within and without the fold; they flow from brother to brother for they are to care one for another and bear one another's burdens; they flow from the members to maintain the pastor and officers who have the rule of the church; They flow from the church to members that are afflicted, to the fatherless, and to the widows who are widows indeed; and, they flow among militant churches of like precious faith and persuasion. Thus there are a multitude of helps. There are spiritual helps and sacrifices and there are material helps that serve to glorify God.

Should we examine and prove ourselves as we are commanded to do, in what state or condition will we find our Primitive and Old School Baptist Churches? Will we discover a gift or unction (religious fervor) or a state of apathy? The Apostle has written "He which soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.", 2 Cor. 9:6. J.C. Philpot, a Strict Baptist of England has written that the pathway for the journey of God's children has the ditch of pride to one side and the ditch of despair to the other side. Without the guidance of our Lord where do you suppose our journey will end?

As examples related to helps in the churches what are your experiences and observations? Do the members share their burdens and care one for another or do they disappear between scheduled church services? Does the spirit of the Good Samaritan prevail or do we pass by on the other side when we see a dear member of a church of like faith in difficulty or in disorder, giving the excuse that it isn't our problem and we mustn't interfere or become involved even though the problem may bring reproach upon the good

name of our churches and denomination? It is reported, Acts 11:26-30, that the disciples at Antioch determined to send, according to their ability, relief to the brethren in Judea. Again, in Macedonia and in Thessalonica the Philippians sent necessities to Paul, Phil. 4:15-16. Are these examples repeated or commonplace in Baptist churches?

Are the churches prepared to provide relief to them that are widows indeed, 1 Tim. 5:16? Do our deacons generally understand that it is a function of their office to care for the needy and the widows, Acts 4: 35 and 6:1-6, and do they understand further that the examples of Stephen and Philip, Acts, Chapters 6-8, require them to assist the ministry in preaching? Let every "help" be acceptable and such as will glorify God.

But what about the material support of the Churches? "But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he swore unto thy fathers, as it is this day", Deut. 8:18. Ah, dear Reader, in addition to personal and ministerial helps, God has set material helps in the militant churches. How can the churches operate without hymnbooks to assist us in singing praises to His holy name, without bibles for searching the scriptures, indeed without highways and vehicles to enable face-to-face assembly of the saints, yea, and without money for heat and water and for making it all effectual? Though the forces of Satan shall despise the gospel and the saints, nevertheless the militant churches must have a good report from without the camp. The properties of the churches must not bring ridicule or reproach, Luke 14: 27-30. The meetinghouses and grounds should be adequate, well kept and consistent with the communities in which they are placed. As a minimum "there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covering from storm and from rain", Isa. 4:6. The beauty of the house of the Lord is pleasing to God, Isa. 60:13, Ezra 7:27. To repair the house of the Lord will be right in his sight - read the full account of the procedure given in II Chron. 24, and again in II Kings 12 for the gathering of money for the repair of the house of the Lord, which act of Joash is reported as "right in the sight of the Lord". How many Primitive and Old School Baptist meetinghouses do you know of that exist in the need of beautification and repair? To sow sparingly is to reap sparingly! Let us pray that God will give us wisdom and understanding of his use of wealth, which he has given us power to get, in his establishment of his covenant.

And God has set governments (plural governments) in his church. For the universal (or catholic) Church the government is on the shoulder of our Lord Jesus who rules from the throne at the right hand of God, the Father. But what do we find among the militant Old School and Primitive Baptist churches? As we examine ourselves do we find effective governments?

We have from ages past the traditions of our fathers and assorted outlines of militant church governments, however as a denomination of the like believers Old Baptists lack a universally accepted constitution. Now at the end of this century one merely needs to observe the rampant confusion, disorder, disobedience and apathy that prevails. "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it so...", Jer. 5:31. "By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through.", Eccl. 10:18. But the saints shall, each and all, reign on the earth for they are "unto God kings and priests,", Rev. 5:10.

O woe are we! It is a fearful and treacherous task, if we haven't divine guidance in searching the recorded word of God, for an individual or any small group of individuals to define the form of the government set by God in the militant churches. for as there are false professors of religion, and false prophets (or preachers) so also there are false governments set by "the prince of this world" and "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience", Eph. 2:2 - that are set by none other than Satan "going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it", Job 1:7. The soldiers of the cross will rejoice in the salvation of the Lord and they will set up their banners, Ps. 20:5. "... lift up a standard for the people." Isa. 62:10; "Set up the standard toward Zion...", Jer. 4:6; "Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard; publish, and conceal not...", Jer. 50:2; and "Set ye up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations...", Jer. 51:27. So the task falls upon Old Baptists to prepare and publish a document setting forth in unambiguous terms detailed provisions for the government(s) of the denomination!

The task requires knowledge, understanding, and wisdom - gifts to be received in God's time and according to his purpose. From the prophet Hosea 4:6, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children." From the proverbs of Solomon: "Where there is no vision, the people perish..." Prov. 29:18; "Where no counsel is the people fall: but in a multitude of counsellors there is safety.", Prov. 11:14; and "Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in a multitude of counsellors they are established.", Prov. 15:22. Beloved Readers, may the good Lord bless you and move you to counsel one with another that the purposes of Old Baptist churches be established in a manner that shall glorify God's attributes of Love, Mercy, and Compassion, that the churches may escape His displeasure and prosper, Rev. 2. In contrast to the safety that is to be had in a multitude of counsellors, inspired of the Holy Spirit, "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.", Prov. 12:15 (See Luke 18:11). Also,

"Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the Lord pondereth the hearts," Prov. 21:2 and 16:2. The Lord has commanded otherwise: "Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man Whatsoever is right in his own eyes.", Deut. 12:8. A prior chapter reads thus: "And thou shalt do that which is right and good in the sight of the Lord: that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest go in and possess the good land which the Lord swore unto thy fathers.", Deut. 6:18. Thus if purposes are to be established multitudes of counsellors are essential among the governments that God has set in his church, for as individuals we are prone to err, rebellion, and frequent backsliding.

One may observe some congregations where the membership seems to place the entire burden of church government upon their pastor who may in some cases come to believe that is his sole privilege: then there are other cases where deacons believe that privilege is theirs. Certainly such practice is inconsistent with establishing purposes by the actions of a multitude of counsellors.

Once there was a man of great ability and competence called of God to lead his people out of bondage. This man, for a time, sat alone in judgment of the peoples' matters from morning unto evening. His father-in-law told him "Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and the people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone." And, "Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over the, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, ruler of fifties, and rulers of tens: And let them judge the people at all seasons:.... and they shall bear the burden with thee...," Ex. 18: 13-26.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee. And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone.", Num. 11:16-17. "Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment.", Deut. 16:18. (See also 2 Chron. 19:5-10, Rom. 12:6-8, 1 Cor. 12:4-6; Is. 1:26)

As you know, after the death of Moses the mantle fell upon Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord, that he had done for Israel.", Josh. 24:31. And so the elders of the people sat at the gates of the cities to rule upon the matters of the people. We read of Boaz, Ruth, Chapter 4, approaching the elders at the gate to purchase and redeem the inheritance.

It is apparent that representative forms of governments were set by

God in the early congregation. These governments were of the people, by the people and for the people: governments for the smallest of communities, governments for cities, governments for tribes, and a government for Israel. The rulers were elders of the people - not of the priesthood. After the deaths of Joshua and the elders that overlived him the people of Israel forsook God and followed gods of the peoples round about them. The anger of the Lord was hot against Israel and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers and enemies, nevertheless the Lord raised up a number of judges to deliver Israel from the spoilers and enemies, yet the children of Israel continued whoring after other gods (read Judges, Chapter 2, etc.). "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes", Judges 21:25. Ah, dear reader, did not the Lord command "And thou shalt do that which is right and good in the sight of the Lord: that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest go in and possess the good land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to cast out all thine enemies from before thee, as the Lord hath spoken.", Deut. 6:18-19. Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments", John 14:15.

Perhaps you may question - What does this have to do with the government of the militant church in the age of the gospel dispensation? Let us recall 2 Tim. 3:16, Rom. 15:4 mentioned above herein. Contrary to popular belief that the church dates from the day of Pentecost, Stephen in answering the accusation of blasphemy declared, Acts 7:38, "This is he (Moses), that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the Mount Sinai, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us:" (note Rev. 12:6, 14).

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, do you or your church believe your pastor to be more capable than Moses, that you may cast the burden of judgement of the multitude of small matters that arise in the affairs of today's church upon him? Pastor, do you presume your mission in the ministry includes autocratic rule - that you may do that which seems right in your own eyes and thus be lord over God's heritage?

Again from the old scriptures, during a period of repentance the Lord raised up Samuel who judged Israel all the days of his life, 1 Sam. 7:15. When Samuel was old he made his sons judges over Israel but they turned aside for lucre. All the elders of Israel (pride having entered) demanded of Samuel, "now make us a king to judge us like all the nations", 1 Sam. 8:5. The people had rejected the Lord that he "should not reign over them", verse 7. They refused to obey the protest given by the voice of Samuel, verse 19. And so, as you know the Lord directed Samuel to anoint Saul, a man that "was higher than any of the people" as king over all Israel, 1 Sam. 10:23. As king, Saul did foolishly having failed to keep the commandment of the Lord then offering a sacrifice as an afterthought. But to obey is better than sacrifice. Saul rejected the word

of the Lord and the Lord rejected Saul from being king over Israel. The Lord sought a man after his own heart. He made David king with an everlasting covenant to establish his throne in his seed to all generations, 2 Sam. 7:13, 23:5 and Ps. 89:3-4 and 28-37.

The throne of David passed to Solomon, his son of Bathsheba, who desired of God "an understanding heart to judge the people, that I may discern between good and bad". The Lord was pleased and a great gift of wisdom was given of God along with riches and honour that there should be no king like unto Solomon, 1 Kin. 3:9-13. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. The heart of Solomon was turned from the Lord when he was old. He had taken many strange wives who turned his heart after other gods for whom he built high places where his wives burnt incense and sacrificed to their gods. Now the Lord was angry with Solomon, 1 Kings 11, because he had not kept the covenant and statutes as commanded. The Lord said to Solomon, "I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen", verses 11:13.

Among the adversaries that the Lord raised to oppose Solomon was Jeroboam, a mighty man of valor, which Solomon made ruler over the house of Joseph. Ahijah prophesied that Jeroboam would be given a kingdom over ten tribes of Israel therefore Solomon sought to kill Jeroboam. But Jeroboam fled to Egypt until the death of Solomon and Rehoboam reigned in Solomon's stead. It came to pass that all Israel, bringing Jeroboam as a spokesman, came before Rehoboam to request "Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee." Rehoboam consulted the old men, the elders, that served Solomon while he yet lived as to how he should answer Israel. The elders advised him "If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever." But Rehoboam had sent Israel away to return after three days. Rehoboam rejected the advice of the elders and went instead (in today's parlance) to his pals - the young men that grew up with him. When the people returned the third day Rehoboam answered the people roughly following the counsel of the young men, saying "My father made your yoke: my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." Rehoboam forsook the counsel of the old men and would not listen to the cries of the people for the cause was of the Lord so that his promise to Solomon and the prophesy of Ahijah unto Jeroboam might be fulfilled. (Have we forgotten the promise to Abraham that he should be the father of many nations?)

When the people heard the saying of Rehoboam ten tribes of Israel rebelled against the house of David. The tax collector sent by Rehoboam was stoned that he died. Rehoboam fled to Jerusalem where he reigned over the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. Jeroboam was called to the congregation and was made king over all Israel. This was the beginning of a separation of the Hebrew peoples into two nations, i.e., the house of Judah and the house of Israel. Now Rehoboam, upon reaching Jerusalem assembled the warriors of Judah and Benjamin to fight against Israel to restore the kingdom but the Lord intervened, "Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; for this thing if from me."

The bulk of the peoples of the house of Israel lived to the north in the area of Samaria. Jeroboam, fearful that the people might return to Jerusalem to sacrifice in the house of the Lord and turn again to Rehoboam, made two calves of gold for gods which the people did worship. He made priests of the lowest of the people which were not of the sons of Levi and a house of high places. At a later time in the history of the Hebrew peoples these ten tribes of the nation of Israel were carried into captivity by the Assyrian nation from whence they were scattered to the north and west. For the report of the breaking of brotherhood read all of Chapter 12 of the book of 1st Kings.

The Lord cut asunder his staff, called Bands, that he might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel. From the history of this great division in the Lord's chosen people, are the "Bands" that unify the brethren and make impossible schisms in the Church of God revealed to us? Perhaps there are many bands that have been or will yet be revealed to the saints. "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.", Isa. 33:20.

Dear brothers and sisters of the faith, may I offer for your consideration at least the following three bands which may be cut asunder to break our brotherhood in the militant church. First, there is the cord, or band, of charity which is the love of God that is spread abroad among the saints by which they are knit together rooted and built up in Christ to share one another's burdens and provide the "helps" that God hath set in his church. I believe the cord of love was cut asunder that the Lord might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel for there was enmity between Solomon and Jeroboam, between Rehoboam and Jeroboam, and between the children of Israel and the children of Judah. I further believe that in the days of the gospel dispensation every breach in our brotherhood is accompanied by the cutting asunder the cord of love and though professors of religion may continue to proclaim with the tongue and voice their love for the brethren

their walk and their deeds discover them, 1 John 3:18.

Second, I offer for consideration the cord of faith, which is the gift of God to the saints, given from time-to-time as needed, that they believe in the resurrection and the power of the redeeming blood of a crucified Jesus for salvation and eternal life; a faith to believe and worship only the true and living God, a Triune God; a faith that brings repentance and cries for mercy when the saint is left to his own lust to be tried by fire, 1 Pet. 1:7, and is taught by the law that he is a sinner; a faith that is capable of seeing the spirit of Christ dwelling within each brother and sister upon which fellowship and brotherhood flourishes. In the breaking of the brotherhood between Judah and Israel I believe the band of faith was cut asunder as when left to their own lusts both Solomon and Jeroboam worshiped false gods without evidence of repentance.

A third cord offered for your consideration as a "Band" effecting brotherhood of the saints in the militant church is the governments that God has set in the church. Governments provide the rod of discipline, which is not grievous to them that obey, which establishes and maintains order so that members of the assembly are assured of righteous judgment and comfort. Effective governments are like fetters in that they restrain men left to their own lusts from wicked practices, see Psa., chapter 2. Was the government of the Hebrew nation cut asunder for the breaking of the brotherhood between Judah and Israel? I believe the government was cut asunder. Rehoboam rejected the legitimate counsel of the Old men who had proper credentials as elders of the people, having served Solomon, his father. Instead Rehoboam sought counsel of novices, young men who had no standing in governing the congregation of Israel. Rehoboam refused to hear and righteously judge the appeals of the people. The cutting asunder of the government was further compounded by the rebellion of the ten tribes that rejected the authority of the throne of David to kill the tax collector and to establish a separate government under Jeroboam. Disorder prevailed in the congregation.

These bands: charity or brotherly love, God given faith, and unambiguous effective government form a threefold cord that if present in the militant churches and denomination they shall be most difficult to break. We can be confident that in the true Church of God it is impossible to break God's love for his little chosen ones, to break his faith for He is the source of all faith, or to break His government which rests on the shoulder of Jesus - the eternal Son of God. But man was made only in the image of God. We are not gods by nature children of wrath even as others. Likewise, I believe the militant church can be no more than an image of the true Church of God and thus an imperfect body for if the "tools" of men touch it we shall surely pollute it.

Regarding this great division between Israel and Judah, perhaps you

may have noticed the word of the Lord in 1st Kings, Chapter 12, verse 24, sent to the house of Judah, etc., "Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; for this thing is from me." God had a purpose in the breaking the brotherhood and this division. This division was required that prophesy might be fulfilled and that God might be true to his promises. God had promised Abraham, Gen. 17:4 that he had made him the "father of many nations" and that he "will make thee exceeding fruitful." So Abraham was not to be the father of one nation called Israel but of many nations. Thus it was necessary that there must be first two nations called, the house of Judah comprising the tribes of Judah and Benjamin and a remnant, and the house of Israel comprising the twin tribes of Joseph (Ephriam and Manasseh) and the remaining nine tribes of the sons of Jacob. The identity of these ten tribes of Israel had to be "lost" from the knowledge of mankind but never from God for a thousand years later Jesus sent the twelve apostles "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," Matt. 10:6. The nation of Israel was carried captive and made slaves by the Assyrians from whence they were scattered to the "north" and "west" and to the isles of the sea," that is, throughout the continent of Europe.

Significant today in the militant church as in ages past are the words of the Lord given through Jeremiah 10:19-25, wherein he has said "For the pastors are become brutish and have not sought the Lord: therefore they shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered". (the dictionary gives the definition of brutish as irrational, stupid, or gross.) Yes, we know from history, it has been and continues to be the brutishness of kings, popes, and indeed ordinary pastors that scatter the flocks. Most notable were the religious wars and persecutions of the middle ages that led to vast migrations of peoples out of Europe in the 17th-19th centuries to colonize the continents of the Western Hemisphere, Australia, and to a lesser extent Africa. Thus the seed of Abraham and Jacob, Gen. 22:17 and 32:12 that were promised to be as the sand of the sea which cannot be numbered for multitude are found scattered throughout the earth and the gospel is preached not so much by missionaries trying to convert heathen as by the plantings of God of his people within every kindred, nation, and tongue.

In the militant church God does have a purpose, which may not be understood by carnal men, for the breaking of brotherhood and divisions. He has created the wicked for the day of evil. He sends the waster to destroy. God requireth that which is past, Eccl. 3:15. For a breaking of brotherhood there must have first been a unity in the belief and understanding of the doctrine of the gospel and a fellowship of brotherly love among the saints. To "let brotherly love continue" assumes that it did previously exist. The saints of the militant church must not be "unequally yoked with unbelievers:

for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?", 2 Cor. 6:14.

Our beloved Saviour, Jesus, has said, Matt. 18:7, "Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe unto that man by whom the offense cometh!", (See also Luke 17:1-2). In the letter of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 11:18-19, "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." Dear reader, does Paul's explanation comfort you and satisfy every occasion? Just perhaps as we view ourselves approved we might have the mote in our own eyes. We should take note, of course, that the word Paul uses is "approved" and not "saved", which we shall not know in this life. The brethren are admonished by Paul, Rom. 16:17-18, to "mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."

From time-to-time there are men, often sincere, who attempt a reversal of the breaking of the brotherhood and bring about a reconciliation to repair the militant church or the denomination. Prior to a division and the breaking of the brotherhood such effort is commendable for the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law, Gal. 5:22-23. And "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.", Gal. 6:1. But however, if the division and the breaking of brotherhood has been consummated and the church or denomination is rent asunder then prudence which is the companion of Wisdom suggests that "whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him," Eccl. 3:14. And let us remember the words of the Lord sent to the house of Judah which desired to reunite the twelve tribes by force that "Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; for this thing is from me," 1st Kings 12:24. Paul has admonished us to redeem the time. In the words of Jesus, Matt. 15:13-14, "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."

Dear brothers, dear sisters, if it is God's will to turn a division about, it shall be turned. For at least 100 years there have been sincere men among Primitive and Old Baptists who have sought to repair the breaches among the factions claiming the name, yet without success to date. Though grievous and painful as it may be, it is with much prayer and supplication that we must wait upon the Lord for it is he alone that can heal a broken fellow-

ship and restore brotherhood. We might do well to read again the book of Lamentations where Jeremiah prays, at 5:21, "Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old.

Jesus has promised to send a Comforter. The saints shall be comforted and shall rejoice as "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose", Rom. 8:28. (I believe also that all things and events work to the glory of God, his glory that he will not give to another, Is. 42:8) May we ever be thankful to Him and pray that he will lead us in pathways that are pleasing to him and that will glorify his attributes of love, tender mercies, and compassion and deliver us from behaviour that glorifies his wrath and vengeance.

Dear brothers and sisters of the faith in Christ please understand that this has been written that it might encourage the saints to study the scriptures that my errors may be found and that some enlightened ones of the flock may witness those things that have been revealed to them so that we may all be edified. It has been written with much hesitation and fear for I know nothing as I ought, except that I know myself to be the chief of sinners and fear, as Paul, that indeed I may be a castaway. If the Lord so wills pray for me.

In hope that I am one of the flock,

Eugene F. Osborne, Sr.
3000 Old Taneytown Rd.
Westminister, Md. 21158

PSALM 110.

The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.

Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.

The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.

He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries.

He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Ms. Earnestine Sharp, LA	$7.00
Walter Griffith, NC	2.00
Mrs. Mary Stanfield, VA	2.00
Mrs. Lillian Wood, NC	2.00
William E. Mitchell, VA	2.00
Julian Ray, NC	2.00
A.J. Griffin, AL	5.00
Mrs. Marta Coleman, KY	10.00
Mrs. H.R. Toney, MS In memory of Eld. G.W. Jones	50.00
Larry Gibson, NC	7.00
Mrs. Minnie Barrett, AL	2.00
Gladsten Newman, TN	2.00
Mrs. Margaret Quesenberry, VA	2.00
Mrs. B.T. Hollandsworth, VA	3.00

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

ANNOUNCEMENT OF DEDICATION

Valley View Primitive Baptist Church will hold a special all day dedication service on Saturday September 17th with singing at 9:30 a.m. and services beginning at 10:00 a.m. An invitation is extended to all ministers, members and friends of other churches of our faith and order to attend the dedication. From Roanoke take Interstate 81 South then take Exit 114 Christiansburg turn left to Riner on Route 8 then about 5.5 miles turn left on Rustic Ridge Road then right on Valley View Church Road. From Bristol take Interstate 81 North then take Exit 114 turn right and follow same directions to Riner as 81 South.

Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
Vance Duncan, Deacon
Donald Agee, Deacon
Members of Valley View

VALLEY VIEW PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

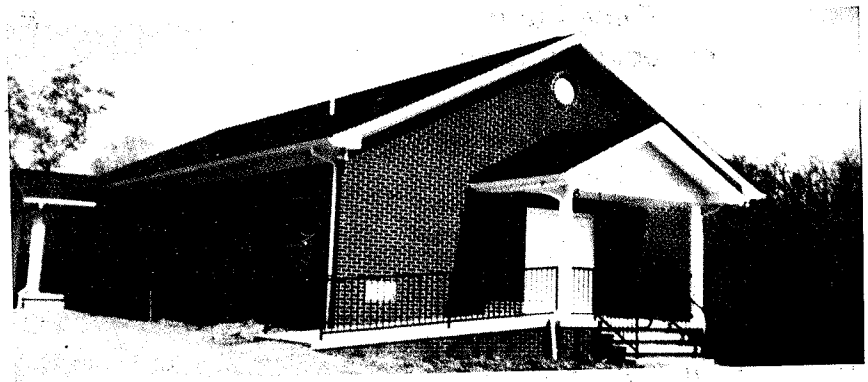

MEETINGS

3604 Blackberry Lane
Northport, Al. 35476

Dear Elder Key,

For several reasons the Buttahatchie and Hopewell Associations will meet together. Would you please put this announcement in the Signs.

"The merged Buttahatchie - Hopewell Association will be held at Zion Church October 14, 15, & 16, 1994. Zion Church is North of Gordo, Al. just off Pickens County Highway 59."

Charles P. Hayes,
Moderator Buttahatchie Association
Kenneth Evans,
Moderator Hopewell Association

CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the next session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church, Lowland, North Carolina on October 8-9, 1994. All who believe and love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited.

The Church is located in Pamlico County. From the Greenvillle area, take NC 33 East to Hobucken, cross the draw bridge, travel 0.7 miles and turn left on Lowland Road SR1230. Travel 3.5 miles and turn right on Middle Prong Road SR1231. The Church is on the right.

Gene Lupton,
Association Clerk

EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

God willing the Eastern Kehukee Association will convene with Flat Swamp Church on Saturday the 1st of October and continue on through Sunday October 2nd. Service will begin at 10:30 on Saturday and 11:00 on Sunday. The church is located on Package Craft Road off Rt. 11 in Bethel, N.C. For those traveling North toward Bethel on Rt. 11 go right on Package Craft Road just past F&D Ford Motor Truck lot. For those traveling South on Rt. 11, turn left on Package Craft Road just before F&D Ford Motor Truck lot. The church is about 4.5 miles on the left hand side.

We invite all who believe that salvation is by the grace of God to come and be with us.

M.W. Lupton,
Association Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 24, & 25, 1994.

The meeting, sponsored by Rehobeth Church, will be held at New Hope Church, located at Spearsville, La. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron,
Association Clerk
(318) 778-4217

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Smith River Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Knob Church the first Sunday in September and Friday and Saturday before.

Those coming from the North on 220 exit right on route 605. Those coming from the South on 220 exit to the left on route 605. Follow route 605 to state route 798 and turn left to the church.

All lovers of the truth of our faith and order are invited.

Elder Hale Terry

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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HIS SAVING GRACE
by Charles B. Osborne

His saving grace! His saving grace!
By love of God to men;
Though they'll not run a perfect race
And have their guilt in sin.

By saving grace he chose his own,
A remnant to the end;
The born again - their sins condone -
Their life in Christ defend.

Their names are written in his book,
The Lamb's own book of life;
And may his truth be not forsook
By thoughts of fear or strife.

No boast of works, but God of love
Can ever enter in;
No salvation but from above,
His saving grace to win.

O, praise him for his saving grace,
Ye children here below;
O, come, dear souls, and run your race,
Your God does love you so.

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EDITORIAL

GOD'S PLAN

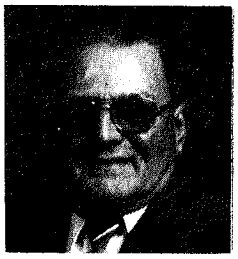
ELDER C.B. DAVIS, JR.

In the beginning of the writing of St. John, first chapter, read thus: ***"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. In Him was life and the life was the light of men. And the light shined in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."***

Then we go to the beginning of the Book, which possibly I should have read first, and we find virtually the same language. The time of creation. ***"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said Let there be light and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day and the darkness He called Night and the evening and the morning were the first day."***

As I mentioned a few moments ago that my thoughts this morning, and I trust that they are worthy, I think of all that God created and all of the work that He accomplished, not only through Himself but through Christ, His Son, and I want to call it a "Plan."

The word, Plan, is not in the Bible. But it is a plan. God had a plan for everything that He did, no matter what it was. The world would deny that He planned hell as well as heaven, but He did. He planned hell for the wicked and He said that they were made for the day of evil. He said they have their reward already here on earth. They delight in the things of the world, in riches, and so on. So they already have their heaven. There is no heaven awaiting them. But as we think of the plan of God and how it was perfect in every sense of the word; How He made the earth and the moon and the sun and the stars and He placed them

in their orbit and they exist today just as He placed them. The wonder that I have beheld, and many of you have, in His creation is to think that He filled the seas with water and He set those seas in motion and they run in waves, as we use the terms of the beaches of the world today, just as they did when He started it so. That He divided the Day from Night and He gave us the sun as the light of the day and the warmth thereof and He called it the greater light.

The lesser light he called the moon and the moon has no glory of its own. It is indeed a borrowed light. It borrows its light from the sun. If we have any light that attains unto love of God unto salvation, it is borrowed. It is borrowed from Christ. He loans it to us through this time world. We have access to it by the Grace of God and it is what causes us to cling tenaciously to the truth and to the gospel, knowing that it has merit, knowing that it is sustenance for a hell deserving sinner when we come into the knowledge of the condition that we are in.

God had a plan when He grieved at his heart that He had made man and placed him in the Garden of Eden and he, in essence, became a disappointment. Don't misunderstand me. God knew what would take place. God knew that Adam and Eve would transgress, or He knew that Eve would transgress. The scripture relates that Adam was not deceived, but rather Eve was. For He used the expression when he admonished them about the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, He said *"In the day thou eatest thereof of the fruit, thou shalt surely die."* He didn't say *"if you eat of that fruit."* He said, *"In the day that thou eatest thereof."* So His wisdom caused Him to know and that was a part of His plan, because without the transgression in the Garden of Eden there would have been no need for our Saviour to come. Think what a condition we would be in today had Christ not come and suffered and bled and died on Calvary's Cross to cleanse us eternally from the scourge of sin that began in the Garden of Eden.

God had a plan to fulfill His wrath because of the wickedness of man and to bring about the destruction of all things on earth that breathed air. He had a plan and He gave that plan to Noah, because Noah was a part of the eternal plan of salvation. He was, in essence, typical of the very person of Christ, because he performed the work that God gave him to do. God gave him an architectural plan, if we might use that term. There are those of you brethren this morning who have worked in the construction business, and you know you need a plan. You need something that is devised that you know what direction to turn and what to use and how to accomplish that which is necessary to fulfill the plan. God gave that plan to Noah. There is nothing in the scriptures that ever refers to any document being drawn up, but He gave it to him in his mind and in his heart.

If we are what we hope to be this morning, we are a part of His eternal plan of salvation through Jesus Christ and we don't have a document except

this Book that we can read that clarifies that plan on our behalf. But He has taught us in our mind and our heart and the very depths of our beings that indeed in some marvelous way we are part of His plan of salvation. As you know, He destroyed all living creatures on the face of the earth that breathed air. And yet He had a plan of compassion, a plan of mercy, a plan of love and because Noah had been found devout in the beginning, and had found favor in the sight of the Lord, so the scripture says; let's not relate how he found favor, but the favor came through the person of Jesus Christ in the covenant that was made between God and His Son Christ before He made the earth and the heavens thereof. A part of that plan, that eternal plan! But we find He had compassion upon mankind and He commanded Noah and his descendants to go out and replenish the earth.

We find that He had a plan for Moses and Moses was carnal, as are we, and when He expressed His plan to Moses that he must go down into Egypt to save His people from the bond of slavery, Moses began to, in essence, complain. He said, "I am slow of speech and stammering tongue. I can't go down there." But God's plan is forever. Man does not change it, though man, now today the world over, is striving to change the plan of salvation. Ofttimes we hear over the radio and we read in the newspapers of the great and magnificent works that man is performing and that God is going to reward him greatly or her greatly because of what they have done. I can say to you that the reward in this time world, as far as salvation is concerned, is the gift of Grace that brings us into the knowledge of His perfect plan and gives us to believe and trust by faith that we are a part thereof. We find here something that is symbolic with the inner spirit that we have, that God has touched, that new birth that He expressed to Nicodemus, because that spirit that is within belongs to God. It is the only thing about us that is perfect, so God told Moses not to be concerned with his weakness, (He has told us that also, our weakness in nature) not to be concerned about that weakness and about his affliction. He said, ***"I will send Aaron with you and he'll be a mouthpiece."*** Aaron typifies the spirit. If we go to church or we go anywhere else and if any minister stands up and he tries to get away from the fact that the only thing that can give him any utterance that is worthy is that spirit that God has given him to go with him, or if you have assembled here this morning and He has not given you the spirit of unction and love to come, you may as well be on the lake fishing. That sounds like a strong statement but that's the truth, My Beloved. But that's not His plan that it be thus. So you are here according to His plan.

He had a plan also for David. And David didn't realize that, just as we in our time don't realize what His plan is. We are not blessed to see it until He makes it manifest. David started out as a young individual, a keeper of the sheep, which is symbolic of being a

type of Christ or a minister to the Church, a part of God's plan. In time he became a saviour for Israel. He walked out to meet this giant of a man with the most primitive weapon known at that time, a sling and a stone, symbolic of Grace. The only weapon that we have that will subdue satan (and that is what is under consideration there) is Grace. And except God's plan has already won the battle for us, it is a futile battle.

We can't of our own power overcome the wiles of satan. Let us remember that in the beginning of the Book, God Himself said that he is the most subtle of all the beasts of the fields, meaning that his conniving ways are considered the wisest and that he knew where to go to bring about the transgression. He went to Eve because she was made of the flesh of Adam. He knew the flesh was weak. He didn't go to Adam, because Adam was a spiritual individual. Let us remember what the scripture says and that is God's plan. The first man Adam was of the earth, an earthy creature and the second man Adam, a quickening spirit. So he didn't approach Adam. He approached the flesh and that is what he comes to time and time again. And except God has made the plan that we can stand steadfastly against the powers of satan, we stand no chance whatsoever. Oh, I know the world would tell you, "Oh, you have a chance. All you have got to do is make a decision. Just make a decision that you want to be a Christian and that is all that it takes." There are multitudes in that condition because they don't understand that the plan of God is to save His people. And those of the world are not known unto him in the spiritual sense because even in the end, when He said, ***"Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you,"*** He knew them as creatures of the earth just as He has known us as creatures of the earth, but according to His marvelous plan, He has known something else about us and that is the spiritual man. That is the spiritual man that shall stand justified around the throne.

Last night, and I wouldn't attempt to improve upon what Elder Brumfield said, but last night, as he spoke, he spoke of the experience of Lazarus and of that rich man in the depth of hell and how the rich man looked over that great gulf and he beheld Lazarus in the bosom of Abraham and how this man in his urgency of thought, because of the condition he was in and the eternal fire of hell, he cried out that he had five brothers and he wanted somebody to go and warn those brothers lest they fall into the same condemnation that he himself had fallen into. We talked about that after we went to his home. I feel that those five brothers are the five books of the law, because he had trusted in those five books. He had trusted in the law. He had trusted in nothing else. Therefore, he was not of the eternal plan of salvation. You will remember that even Abraham said, ***"There is betwixt us and thee that great gulf between which we cannot come to thee and thou cannot come to us."*** He was begging for just a dip of a finger in

cool water to touch his tongue. Think of what a condition he was in and one reason I believe his five brothers were the five books of the law, when you go to the Book of Revelation, you will find there that when the books were opened (It's plural. It doesn't say how many, but I believe there are five. I think they are the five books of the law there at that throne.) When those books were opened, those who are of the world their names are read from those books of whatsoever they have done and they are judged out of those books by their deeds. And God says to them, *"Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity"* and so on, and they are cast into the burning lake of fire and the books are cast into the burning lake of fire.

But there is another Book that was devised in the mind and according to the will and purpose of God and that Book is the Book of the Lamb, the Book of Life, and it is sealed. It was sealed a long, long time ago. Christ, with the indelible blood of Himself, wrote the names in the Lamb's Book of Life, and when He breathed out His last breath on the cross and said, *"It is finished"* that book was sealed, never to be opened until such time that it is opened in the climes of glory. Those whose names are read from the Lamb's Book of Life stand justified in the sight of God. John writes on the same occasion, that those whose names are read from the books stand as dead men around the throne. We shall stand alive as living spirits. They stood as dead individuals never having their spirit awakened, never experiencing a new birth.

We think again as we think of a plan of God and how, as I touched upon David a moment ago and then my thoughts seemed to wander, as you know that in due course in time, that David became a murderer. He became a very wicked man, and yet he must be preserved because God's plan was that Jesus would come through the House of David. The prophets wrote about it. Isaiah, especially, mentioned many times the coming of Jesus through the House of David. And David had to be preserved even though the world would say, *"There was no justification in him being preserved and he was not justified, even to be a part thereof because of his wicked and evil deeds."* But God told him, because of what he had done -- that he had Uriah slain in order that he might take Bethsheba for his wife -- God told him, *"That sword is going to remain in your house forever."* What God was telling him was that He also had a plan of wrath, and He has that plan of wrath today, and He was going to pour out that wrath upon the family of David, and He did. David saw murder within his own home, rape, incest. Most anything you can think of, he witnessed it in his own children, his own family. Yet he must be preserved in keeping with that eternal plan that God so arranged before time was, because he was a part of that covenant of love that He made with Christ. And as you know, had David been slain, had God dealt with him as the case was with others, as it

was with Cain, had David been banished never again to have any part in that, where would that have left us, because Boaz was a descendant of David. So coming through that house must be Jesus Christ. Do you see the eternity of these plans that God had made before the foundation of the world?

There are those things that we have become a part of, not because we are worthy, not because of something that we have done or our ancestors have done. Somebody said to me one time, "I believe you became a member of the Old Baptist Church because your grandfather and your great-grandfather were." I said, "I became a member in spite of what they were." Paul wrote, ***"By the grace of God, I am what I am."*** That's the only thing I feel that can justify me, if truly I'm justified; if I'm a part of that plan of justification, it has come about by the Grace of God. There is no other way, My Beloved.

The world has many different ways. The world has many different plans, many avenues they say that lead to salvation. But our God writes through the hand and mind in the gospel, "that the way is straight and narrow and few be they that find it." That's the way of eternal life; that's the way to stand justified before the throne of God. The other way is easy to find. "Broad is the road that leads to death" and so on.

So God has a plan. He has had from the very beginning. And each act along the way, the acts of the priests, that deliverance of Jacob and Esau that expresses the two nations, again the just and the unjust, the birth of Isaac and Ishmael, still touches upon the just and unjust.

We go back to the beginning of the Book, God speaking a plan to the serpent after he had beguiled, as it were, Eve, He said, ***"I will put enmity between her seed and thy seed and it shalt bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel,"*** talking about mankind. And we can find that they were a part of a plan, and you can go through the scriptures and there are several references made to that very thing.

When Christ was assembled with those disciples and the preparation was made to partake of the last supper, Christ Himself said, "My own familiar friend has lifted his heel against me." This was an expression of that plan that the time was at hand when He Himself would be tried to the utmost extent and that though Judas, I am sure, didn't know at that time that he would be the individual that would have a part in the betrayal of Christ, and then here is the part of the plan that is hard to understand. I am not supposed to understand it. In the old dispensation the priest was considered one of the most important individuals as far as religion was concerned. Christ had not come. The church had not been established. Baptism was not an ordinance. It was the duty of the priest to admonish Israel and to make sacrifices daily on the alter for those who had committed some sin. So they were indeed considered the greatest, as far as religion was concerned, but have you ever

considered the thought of God's plan, that when the agreement was made between an individual and another person to betray the person of Christ to his captors that he went to the high priest. When Judas bargained for the price that would be paid, the price was agreed upon by the priest, the high priest. Think about that! But this was a part of God's plan. When Christ said to those disciples (this is the essence of the scriptures), ***"That one among you shall betray me,"*** they began to question each other and themselves, ***"Is it I?"*** They asked Christ Himself, ***"Am I the one?"*** He said, ***"It is whom I will dip with"*** and He dipped and He gave to Judas and the scripture relates that instantly satan entered into his heart. I don't believe until that moment that Judas knew that he would be the one to betray Christ. God's plan!

We find that Pilate and Herod were the two who had power to reign over those things that might be called the necessities of law and order. And so Christ was carried to them. Pilate could find no fault and he said so, but the cry was by the people to crucify Christ. Pilate sent Him back to Herod and Herod didn't want to have anything to do with the situation but he agreed that He would be stripped of His clothes in the judgment hall and be whipped with the Roman whip. Then He sent Him back to Pilate and Pilate still could find no fault. He said, ***"I find no fault with the man. He has done nothing amiss unto death."*** But God's plan must be fulfilled, so He was turned over to those who would place Him upon the cross and crucify Him. But there is something about what Pilate did on that occasion, when he wrote an inscription on a slab of wood and placed it over the head of Christ on that Cross and it said, ***"This is Jesus Christ, King of the Jews."*** He was reprimanded because he had written this, one said you should have never put that there. And he said, ***"What I have written, I have written,"*** and so it stayed. That was a part of God's plan.

We also find that being a part of His plan, we can see that in evidence today in mankind. Pilate and Herod had been enemies from the very beginning. I mean great enemies, great battles had been fought between the armies of the two individuals, but in the coming together in the condemnation of Jesus Christ, the scripture says they were made friends, made friends! A part of that eternal plan!

I've witnessed a few times the evidence of this. That there are individuals who ofttimes have no use for each other, but God begins to work within their hearts and their minds and in due course of time, you see them embrace in the aisles of a meeting house. Because of their condition of sin and the fulfillment of God's plan, they have become friends. They have become friends in grace, friends in salvation, friends in hope and faith. I witnessed some few years ago the coming back to the house of an individual who had caused a problem in a church down in our area. When she was brought before the church and the charge was read, she called the

clerk a liar and they excluded her. About 20 years later I was present when she came back. She said, "All these years God has whipped me." She said, ***"I had to come back. I don't want to spend the rest of my days and die in this condition."*** They accepted her back and she and the clerk of that church embraced in front of the book board. My beloved, God can make peace. He has the plan of peace and He has a plan of wrath.

He can make peace regardless of what man says or thinks, and yet I am appalled at some of the circumstances that are taking place in this nation today, and the world over, to some extent. On the Continent of Asia there has never been peace. Think about it. Go back to this Book. It began in the Garden of Eden; started with Cain and Abel; Ishmael and Isaac; Jacob and Esau; there is no end to that enmity that God placed between the serpent and Eve. It existed all the way to the last act when Christ would die on the cross. That brought an end to that enmity. But there are those who are the leaders of this nation and other nations of the world who think they have a plan. They have a plan that by sending soldiers over there and loads of money over there and loads of food over there and missionaries over there, that they are going to make peace on the Continent of Asia, but I feel I can tell you of a sure truth, that it's absolutely impossible. Don't misunderstand me. God can make peace over there this instant if He wants it over there, but it hasn't been His will so far. It hasn't been a part of His plan to have peace on the Continent of Asia since the beginning of time.

There shall be peace in the climes of glory. It is the only peace that we shall ever know. I am talking about absolute peace. Christ said, ***"My peace I give unto thee, My peace I will give, not as the world giveth, giveth I to thee"*** and so on. That is peace of soul, peace of spirit, and it is the only peace we have here because life indeed is perplexing (I don't know the term to use) but it is indeed a plague, so to speak, with what we have to put up with, not only of ourselves, but of the world. So it is a perplexing situation to go through life and think how much more so it would be if we had not been blessed by the Grace of God to know what we are by nature and what we must be by Grace and that we have been a part of the plan that has brought that about.

So we thank God that indeed through His loving kindness and tender mercy, we became a part of His plan of salvation and justification and so on. But we think of the futile efforts of mankind since the very beginning of time. There were those early who wanted to work themselves into favor with God, but God's plan was that the favor had already been there through the person of Jesus Christ. That is why Noah was considered a devout man, and many others in the scripture.

The time of pentecost, in the days of Paul, when Israel was admonished to seek out (I believe is the wording) or choose from among you seven men,

full of the Holy Ghost and the Spirit, devout individuals and to set them apart as deacons. They were the first deacons in the church. To set them apart to perform the work of deacons and those deacons were given the liberty in the same sense that ministers today are given a liberty. Go back and read it, it is in the Book. They went about preaching and healing, raising the dead, healing those who were lame from birth, those who were blind and so on. And if you go to Hassell's History, you will find recorded there by those most eminent men, as far as gospel truth is concerned, that deacons in years past were instructed to administer all of the ordinances of the True Church of God. It made no difference, they were to preach, they were to baptize, whatever became necessary. When there was not a minister present, they were instructed to administer those things themselves. So God had a plan, working it through Paul.

And let us always, in our minds, be mindful of the plan that Paul had, a plan similar to Jonah, that he was going to go his own way. God had a plan with Jonah. Jonah said, *"I am not going to Nineveh, over there with those wicked people."* He didn't think it would be any use to go and preach to those individuals that he knew were so sinful and wicked. And I can see him in my mind's eye, going down to a dock and making his way to get on a ship and going his own way, and thus we are in the same state that Jonah was. We begin to feel, *"just cast me aside. Let anything happen that will, I am guilty."* But God has a plan to forgive that guilt through the person of Jesus Christ.

Paul had a plan that he thought he was verily fulfilling the will of God, persecuting the so-called Christians, having papers that were similar to warrants that we use in this term to arrest those who called upon the Name of Christ, and put them in prison and bond and even put them to death. Let us remember that he watched those who stoned Stephen to death. But God has a plan. On that road to Damascus, He struck Paul down to the dust of the earth and a light shined about him brighter than the noonday sun, and it so blinded Paul that he had to be lead the rest of that journey by the hand, because he couldn't see. When we are brought to view, as it were, the majestic miracle of the Glory of Christ, it is indeed the whitest thing we have ever seen. It takes a spiritual eye to see it. And we have to be lead the rest of the journey, because we are blinded, as it were, to the lusts of the things of the world. That's what was under consideration. Paul was blinded to the devices and cunningness of his own mind. He was blinded to those plans he carried in his pocket. Blinded, to be lead the rest of the journey.

So are we. God, if it is not His plan that He lead us and direct us to the way of righteousness and the paths of salvation and the love and the fellowship that is expressed in us for each other and the fellowship of the church, we are lost worlds without end. It

makes no difference what kind of plan we have, it won't work. We can't devise any plan whatsoever that shall carry us to the climes of glory. But thanks be unto He who hath the power, He has devised a plan and has set that plan in the person of His Son and that plan was magnified on earth through all of the so-called miracles that Christ performed and that plan was perfected when He bowed his head on the cross and said, ***"Father, it is finished!"*** The work of salvation was complete then. The fullness of the plan had been magnified.

There were those who stood nearby and saw with their own eyes what happened and yet didn't understand. There was a thief on either side of Christ and one of those thieves was embodied in the plan of salvation and the other was not. Those soldiers that came to take those bodies down were part of a plan. It had been prophesied thousands of years before this happening that He would keep all His bones, talking about Christ. A psalmist on one occasion said ***"Not a bone of His body should be broken."*** When those soldiers came and took those bodies down from the cross, which they were required to do. A body could not hang upon the cross until sundown, a Jewish law. They came to Christ and they said, ***"He is dead already,"*** so they break not His bones, but the scriptures said on that occasion that it was not the fact that they knew He was dead already, but that the prophets had written that He keepeth all His bones and not a bone of His body should be broken. And that is where we stand today, My Beloved. If we are in that eternal plan of salvation, we are bone of His bones. Let us go back to the beginning of the Book and God's plan with Adam and Eve. He said, ***"She is now flesh of your flesh and bone of your bone."*** If we are what we hope to be in that body of Christ, and that is what we are if we are of the true church, we are bone of His body. He has kept us until this time and we shall not be broken off in the final calamity of the destruction of all things. Be assured of that, My Beloved, because this thing is sure.

May God bless you and keep you. I feel like my thoughts have more than wandered this morning. As I said initially I didn't know whether what I would say and my thoughts would be a text, but it seems it has pressed on my mind for several days. The majestic wonder of God's plan! And if I should live a hundred years, I could never touch on all the aspects of the perfection of His plan that He gives to His people that He loves through Jesus Christ. May God bless you and keep you is my prayer.

Sermon by Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.
North Fork Primitive Baptist Church
Sunday, November 14, 1993

ROMANS 8: 24, 25.

For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

CORRESPONDENCE

Margaret H. Quesenberry
Rt. 2, Box 101
Willis, VA 24380

Dear Brethren:

Please renew my subscription to the "Signs of the Times" for two years. Since I am afflicted with M.S. and confined to a wheelchair, I do a lot of reading. I look forward to getting my "Signs" each month.

The Lord is yet blessing me to be able to attend meetings at my home Church and other places occasionally. I don't get to go as often as I would like to but I hope He will keep me wanting to go even when I can't. If God makes me to hunger and thirst after the things that be of Him then He won't let me starve. He even knows what I need.

I am becoming more disabled in body but He still, from time to time, gives me a mind to be thankful and want to praise Him from who all blessings flow.

Many of the brethren live with affliction, pain and sorrow, as I do. Dear ones this is as it should be. In Psalms 34:19 "Many are the afflictions of the righteous but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." This is what we hope for and look forward to. Sometimes I am made to anticipate and long for that day when this will all be over and we will see our Saviour and be with Him where He is and be able to praise Him as we ought. Until that day let us keep looking up and remember each other in love and prayers.

I would like to hear from anyone who loves the things that be of God and has a mind to write.

I hope you will all remember me in prayer when you have a mind to pray.

A sister in hope,
Margaret H. Quesenberry

To the dear members and friends of Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church:

I wish I had the time to write to each of you individually but I am afraid I would not if I tried. Phil and I enjoyed being with you at the Staunton River Association so much. It was so good to see your sweet faces and hear your dear voices once again. You are all so precious to me. It cheered me to see how you so lovingly labor to host the association in your care of the church building, the grounds, in the food you provided, in taking care of visitors in your home and all of the unseen and maybe even unnoticed work behind the scenes. Your labors of love are appreciated. I feel so unworthy of the love and fellowship of such warm, loving, zealous people. I missed the absent members who were sick and unable to attend. We also missed those who have been called home. Yet, how thankful we are for you who love the dear saints of God and desire to be assembled with them. Your love for

one another and for the entire household of faith and your zeal in laboring on behalf of the comfort of the Lord's people are gifts of God for which we are thankful. May the Lord ever keep us close in Spirit although we do not see each other as often as we wish we could. May our Lord stir up His love within us and draw us ever closer to one another in sweet fellowship as we are drawn nearer to Him.

You will always be dear to my heart and I still think of Malmaison as my home church although I am more unworthy than ever of your love and fellowship.

I miss seeing you and wish I could be closer. Yet, I feel that my lot is to be here in Texas now. I am blessed with the love and fellowship of dear Brethren here and feel that I am doubly blessed to have two groups of Brethren where I feel especially at home. If we feel the love of God for someone, there is a closeness to them that distance cannot sever.

May the Lord keep you and us until we meet again.

In bonds of love, Joyce
(Elder Julian Williams &
Sister May's daughter)

Elrin, Oregon 97827
July 3, 1994

Dear Elder Williams:

After Mother's passing: Among her things we found a copy of a letter that she wrote to a beloved, Aunt who in growing old had suffered the loss of her sight. Although this letter was written sixty years ago the beauty of the theme of the subject has in no way diminished. Therefore if you deem it worthy of space you may publish it in the Signs.

In bonds of Love,
Lloyd C. Spikes

Dear Aunt Susie;

I have been wanting to write you ever since I heard of your blindness and in my mind have written you many letters. As I wanted to write some little word of comfort I kept putting it off as I am a poor hand to express my thoughts. But today I have been thinking and thinking about that pure river of water of life spoken of in the 22 ch. of Revelations and hope I may be enabled to express some of the beauties of that great and wonderful river and of that tree that stood in the midst of it and on either side. Such a marvelous and wonderful tree which stood in the midst of the river of water of life and on either side. Can you see that?

Christ in the midst of the river for he is the head and fountains of that great river which is the waters of salvation. And that great river comes down to us who were captured and led into condemnation of sin, and it extends on either side of the river. What a glorious thought that is, or rather what a wonderful truth that his mercies and waters of salvation extended just as much to those who worshiped under the law before the crucifixion as to those on the other side which are those who worship in this the Gospel day. This one great sermon if only we have the eye of understanding, with all it's connecting thoughts cover the

whole great plan of salvation which our Lord wrought there on Calvery.

I see Christ coming in the midst, right between the law and the gospel and his one atonement for the whole family of God who were captured by the old serpent who is the devil and led into condemnation. But thanks be to God that one atonement gave us Sure salvation.

This great tree of life bare twelve manner of fruit and yielded her fruit every month and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nation. In this one figure if I could just find words to tell it, is the salvation of the Lord's people brought to bear in a beautiful manner. As the putting forth the buds of the leaves is the first manifestation of life in, a tree, such is the case of this great tree when we first hear and see with the spiritual eye and hear with an understanding heart. Then is the first signs of life manifest in our hearts and we are born to the knowledge that we have been healed of our sinful ways, such are the leaves. After the leaves are manifest then all those who are hungry can partake of the fruit of this great tree which is meat to them. What a wonderful thing it is to sit in that banqueting hall eating and drinking. What is the banqueting hall? Whenever the children of God are gathered together partaking of the truth which is the word and the word is God and if we are partakers of the truth we receive our fruit or meat or bread from this tree which is never without fruit for it bears fruit every month.

Aunt Susie what a great and wonderful thought that our salvation is sure and steadfast, that Christ paid the debt for our sins and that it doesn't matter what trials and tribulations we are called to pass through, that it is with the assurance that his everlasting arm is underneath and when the time appointed comes we will be taken home and be with him in glory.

No matter how low we get in spirit or how far we have wandered astray there is always one great thing that we know, that being that by the blood of Christ alone we are saved. Many times we may think that we have lost our way for God has purposed that often our eye of understanding become dimmed, but the Lord said, "I will be to them a God and they shall be to me a people". Old satan can't quite deceive the elect of God. He will try but it is not possible.

We may even think that we have lost sight of our Saviour. Would it be anything to wonder about when John, after he had baptised the Saviour, got so low in Spirit that he sent word asking, " Art thou the Christ or shall we look for another? The Lord sent word back to go tell John again the things you have both seen and heard, and not only that, but told them what we had seen and heard, and that being, that the deaf ears were unstopped and the eyes of the blind were opened ect. That is the reason it is necessary for us to hear again and again the wonderful truths concerning Christ and he being a risen Saviour.

None of us can forsee the trials that we will pass through but we do have the assurance that he will be with us and there will be no trial which shall

be to great for us to bear for he will give us strength to hold on our way.

Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, thy rod and thy staff shall comfort me. I have no doubt that when we are at last brought to the place where we can say, Thy will not mine be done, we shall then be pure Gold all the dross shall be burned away and we shall be taken home.

Dear Aunt Susie I hope you receive a little comfort from some of these wonderful truths in Christ Jesus. May God bless you Dear Auntie and keep your mind on his wonderful mercies is the prayer of your niece.

Elva (Spikes)

ARTICLES

" For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."

The children of God are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ but rather are made to love it and embrace it, to uphold it and defend it and to hope in it as the promise of God unto them.

They are made to be ashamed of the wretchedness of the flesh and the things it produces but are in no way ashamed of the glorious gospel of the grace and mercy and love of God.

This gospel is good news from a far country. It is a drink of cold water to one about to perish in the wilderness. It is food to the hungry soul. It tells us of the clothing given to hide our nakedness. It reveals the remedy for sin, the fulfilling of the law, the perfect sacrifice by which the sins of the children of God are atoned. It shows the great love of God for His people and tells of His power and wisdom and majesty.

This gospel, the sentence of death to all false religions of works, is therefore hated by all who hope in the works of the flesh. The world hates the true gospel of Christ because it brings the hidden works of darkness to light and makes it plain that all who hope in the flesh will be disappointed.

The gospel is good news to the children of God because it reveals that our God is over all, that He is all wise, all powerful, all knowing and is in full control of all things to such an extent that He works all things together for good to them that love Him, to them that are the called according to His own purpose and grace. It reveals that He loved them with an everlasting love and chose them in Christ before the world was, and that He also wrote their names in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world.

The gospel is good news because it reveals that His work is a finished work. Nothing can be added unto it and nothing can be taken away from it.

It is a perfect work lacking nothing. When Christ was asked "what may we do that we may work the works of God", His answer was "This is the work of God, that you believe upon me whom He has sent".

The work of God is to believe on Him and one can only believe by faith and faith is the gift of God. So the whole matter is with God. Christ said "No man can come unto me unless my Father which sent Me draw him," and "He that cometh to Me, I will in no way cast out." The gospel is good news because the whole matter is taken out of our hands. God loved His people, chose them, called them, gave them faith to believe and come to Him and will keep them forever.

Some say that God has saved us in eternity but it is up to us to obey Him in order to secure the blessings of God. This is bad news because we are made to know that we can do nothing good of ourselves. The apostle Paul said "how to perform that which is good I find not" The good news according to the true gospel is "He which has begun a good work in you shall perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. "He is our obedience. According to this glorious gospel "by one man's obedience many were made righteous" He is all and all to the little weak and trembling children of God. His strength is made perfect in weakness. They are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

This means that all their days they will be led about and instructed of Him and kept as the apple of His eye. This means that their idols will be taken away and like Jacob of old there will be no false god found with them. This means that sin will not have dominion over them and that they will be given to be faithful unto death that they may receive the crown of life.

To be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation means to be kept until the Lord comes again in power to receive His own into glory. The good news of the gospel of Christ reveals that the children of God will have part in His resurrection, that they are given the victory over this world, over Satan, over sin, over death, hell and the grave. Christ has conquered over all and has given to you the victory.

The children of God are made to rest in this wonderful gospel of the perfect, finished work of God. Jerusalem's warfare is accomplished, her iniquity is pardoned and she has received double at the Lord's hand for all her sin. ***"By grace are you saved through faith, not of works lest any man should boast, for you are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God has before ordained that ye should walk in them."***

The conclusion of these things, if there can be any, is that all the promises of God in Him are yea and amen, all things are for you. there is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus who walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh, none that trust in the perfect finished work of God will be disappointed at that day.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He did also predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Submitted in love, I Hope,
Elder J.B. Farmer

VOICES OF THE PAST

From Elder Lambert's Book,
"Tried In The Furnace."

AS AN EAGLE
January, 1950

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

"As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." Deut 32: 11, 12.

Elder Williams of Decatur, Mississippi, has requested views on this scripture. May God bless us with light of thought and liberty of expression to comfort God's little children with some thoughts on the wonderful care God exercises upon His own. We enter into the discussion of this Scripture with a deep felt sense of inability. We fully realize our dependence upon God to stir us up at this time to properly meditate upon this Scripture.

Jacob, who is the "lot of his inheritance" is the object of these expres-

sions. As God dealt with Jacob, He deals with each and every one of His children. Read the context and you will find that Jacob was passive in the hands of a merciful God. It was God who found him; it was God who led him about; it was God who instructed him; it was God who kept him; and it was God who made him ride on the high places of the earth. Jacob could not claim any credit for anything, but must bow to God and realize that it was by God's mercies that he was so wonderfully delivered.

In this text God is likened to an eagle in some of His dealings. The kings of Assyria, Egypt and Babylon were likened unto eagles for their power and dominion. The Chaldean armies were likened unto eagles because of their swiftness. The Edomites exalted themselves and made their nests high as the eagles. It is said that the eagle builds its nest in high places in the tops of the rocks -- in the highest rocks which no man can reach. Of course the outer part of the nest is constructed with rough, jagged, course and thorny material. The innermost part is lined with smooth, soft matter that affords the eaglets a place of sweet repose. This is certainly a comfortable place of refuge until the nest is stirred up. The soft down that interlines the eagle's nest typifies the seeming righteousness of the flesh and the confidence that the unregenerated child of God has in his own cleanness and ability. He is content with himself and with his place of abode. He is at ease and does not care to venture from this sweet place of self-righteousness and carnal affections. *"All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes."*

As the eagle stirs up this soft nest and makes it a bed of thorns to the eaglets, so the Lord stirs up the souls of His people, and makes bare the thorn in the flesh so that their place of sweet repose becomes a miserable place of abode. When God begins His work there is a stirring in the soul that nothing can still, silence, quench or quell. When this begins with you, you become very greatly alarmed and anxious. This anxiety becomes so miserable that you try to rid yourself of this condition by your own activity. You become just as restless as the eaglets with the same results-- the thorns prick you more every turn you make. You are pricked in the heart as those spoken of in Acts 2:37. As the God of Israel stirred up the spirits of the kings of Assyria and prompted them to action, He awakens and disturbs you and causes you to become much concerned over your miserable condition.

Have you ever been awakened to the fact that you are a sinner? Have you made resolutions to better that condition? Have you tried to deliver yourself and found that all your trials availed nothing? Have you been shown that all your righteousness is as filthy rags in God's sight? Have you lost confidence in your own self? Has there been a time that your soul fainted in you and you had no hope in this world or that to come ? If you can answer the above questions in the

affirmative, (I am persuaded) God has stirred up your nest and has fluttered over you. You have been shaken from that nest and you are falling toward the abyss below. What a fear accompanies this fall! You have nothing to rely upon! You fear the consequences of the jagged rocks and the abyss below which surely means sudden destruction to you! I experienced this falling for many miserable months. I could see nothing before me but this blackness of darkness forever. I was afraid to live and afraid to die. I cried in anguish of soul, "Woe is me! for I am undone!" As the eagle watches the young eaglet as it falls toward the abyss below, I trust that God was watching me. As the eagle swoops down beneath the falling eaglet, "Spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings," I feel that God so dealt with me. What a glad surprise when He came to my rescue !

The thought that God watches us and protects us before regeneration brings to mind that He was the God of Jacob. Jacob is the unregenerate name of Israel. Who is this God of Jacob? The God that gave him the blessing of the birthright though he was a junior; the God that delivered him from the murderous hand of his brother in the day of trouble; the God that protected him and manifested Himself to him; his covenant God. God sometimes says, I am the God of Jacob. This means I am your God before regeneration, as well as after when you attempt to supplant me with proud free will and blunt my sovereignty with your rebellion; when you took my covenant name in a covenant character, I am your God still.

Yes, it was a day of rejoicing when God came to your rescue to prevent you from being utterly destroyed by the jagged rocks and the abyss beneath. He rescued you on His wings of love. He whispered to you, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." He informed you that He was a merciful and gracious God. He restored your soul. Jesus informed you that He had fulfilled the law to a jot and tittle for you. He told you that He had taken your sins upon His own shoulder and had paid the penalty, satisfied justice by shedding His own blood for the remission of sins and had died in your stead. He spoke sweet peace to your soul that He had wrought out eternal salvation for you. He put a new song in your mouth that praised God and confessed Jesus as your Savior. You are resting in the sweet embrace of His love. Your soul is absorbed in this experience. You are blessed to exclaim, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." You can say with one of old, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." You feel that your worries and fears are in the past and that you will ride forever upon His wings. You can see the Father, Son and Holy Ghost enacting, determining and covenanting for, and mutually swearing each to each for the accomplishment of your salvation. Did this sweet experience continue? No, if your experience coincides with my experi-

ence, it did not continue. It was of short duration.

After the eagle rescues the young and bears them comfortably upon her wings for awhile, she tilts her wings and permits them to fall again toward the abyss below. Did God deal with you as the eagle deals with her young? While you were riding joyfully, upon His everlasting love and sweet promises, all was well with your soul. You said, "my God reigneth," and "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Then, all at once, you realized that you were again falling toward destruction. The sweet embrace of that love was gone. Your former experience taught you that there was One who did rescue you, but would He rescue again? You looked for Him but you could not find Him. You sincerely asked, "Will the Lord cast off forever? and will He be favorable no more? Is His mercy clean gone forever? Doth His promise fail forevermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies? (Psalms 77:7-9.) You are falling down, down, down! You yet have a faint hope that almost vanishes away. Just before you would die in despair, God rescues you again from destruction. The wings of God's mercy and love comes underneath you and raises you up, and soars high above the cares and troubles of this world, and you again rejoice because of His amazing grace that can descend low enough to prevent you from dashing your head against a stone. It is our lot to be shaken many times from the wings of God's manifest love and mercy, but He yet cares for us and carefully watches over us.

It is necessary that we be taught again and again of our infirmities and weakness in the flesh and our total dependence upon Him. We are made to cry out so often to Him to be merciful to our unrighteousness. We shall have tribulations and suffer trials and afflictions here in this world, and to realize that, "here have we no continuing city. "These joyful experiences are not continuous but are mixtures of joy and sorrow.

We trust that the grace of God enables us to "Press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3 :14). At the time when He shall take us upon His wings it will be forever. All will be joyful forevermore. No more trials and tribulations. No more heartaches nor fear of falling into utter destruction. When He takes us upon His wings and carries us into the Holiest of Holies where Jesus dwells we shall forever be satisfied.

Elder E.J. Lambert

MEETINGS

October 30, 1993

The New Dan River Primitive Baptist Church called for a presbytery to meet on Saturday before the fifth Sunday in October to look into the qualifications of Brother

J.L. Cassell for the full work of the ministry.

The presbytery was organized by electing the following:

Elder Paul Hopkins, Moderator

Brother James L. Shelor, Clerk

Deacon Raymond Vipperman, Spokesman for the church and to deliver the candidate into the hands of the presbytery Elder Leonard Brammer to question the spokesman of the church. Elder Leonard Brammer to lead in questioning the candidate. Elder Clarence Stone, to pray the ordination prayer. Elder Hale Terry, to deliver the charge.

Elder Leonard Brammer made some remarks and questioned the spokesman. The spokesman answered that Brother Cassell met all the requirements as outlined in the third chapter of II Timothy.

Elder Brammer asked Brother Cassell how he viewed the difference of the doctrines of the world as compared to Dan River Church. He answered the world tries to bring God into obligation unto them, but we can do nothing that would bring God under obligation.

Elder Brammer asked Brother Vipperman if the church was in favor of taking Brother Cassell into its membership when he asked for a home. Brother Vipperman stated that the vote was unanimous and no one objected. Elder Brammer asked if the church was satisfied with Brother Cassell's baptism. Brother Vipperman stated yes. Elder Hopkins stated that for everyone's understanding, Brother Cassell came to the church when it was in sorrow. The baptism was performed by two of the deacons of Dan River church, Deacon Raymond Vipperman and Deacon Donald Scott.

Article # 8 of the Pigg River and Smith River Association was read. Elder Hopkins asked if there were any objections to please raise them now in love. All were satisfied with Brother Cassell's baptism. Elder Hopkins. refered to the scripture of Phillip (who was only a deacon) baptizing the eunuch. Elder Terry stated when New Dan River Church was taken by all for fellowship, any questions concerning this baptism should have been addressed then.

Elder Brammer asked the candidate did he believe that the whole body or just the spirit would be raised in the resurrection, he answered that the whole body would be raised.

Verse 28 of the 20th chapter of Acts was read by Elder Clarence Stone concerning the undershepherd and overseer of the church and asked the candidate his views. Brother Cassell stated that this church is a body of Christ, independent, that the pastor should lead and guide but not lord over the members.

Brother Cassell asked Brother Brumfield and Elders of Independent Churches for comments. Brother Brumfield stated he hoped he loved Brother Cassell for Christ's sake. Brother Davis asked Brother Cassell how he stood on election. He an-

swered that he felt that the children of God was elected in Christ Jesus before the world was formed. Brother Cassell asked the Brethren if they saw any shortcomings in his actions that they would teach him correctly. The Brethren felt this was a good spirit.

Brother Brammer asked Brother Cassell about his calling into the ministry. He stated that he felt and feared for over forty years that he would have to stand and defend the word of truth. Brother Cassell related some of his experiences that has led him to where he is today. He told of his first attempts to speak in public. He was shown that he had to be, shod with the preparation of our Lord or he could not speak.

Brother Cassell removed his shoes the first few times before entering the pulpit to speak.

Brother Hopkins asked for other questions. Elder Noel Conner asked about absolute predestination. The candidate stated that he felt that men would do all of God's will but God would not cause man to sin. Nor would the elect fall away from the graces of God.

Elder Larry Hollandsworth asked if Brother Cassell felt he had been relieved of any of the burdens placed upon him. He stated sometimes for a few hours or a few days he felt to be relieved, but it soon left him.

When asked about good works by Brother Stone, he replied if anyone does good works it is by the grace of God.

Brother Conner made comments on our general views of marriage and divorce, and stated there was no separation with God, therefore he viewed the one who seperated as the offender. Brother Cassell stated that he believed that Deacons and Elders should be the husband of one wife. Also the church was espoused to one husband, brothers and sisters alike. All agreed this was spiritual application. Brother Stone asked if Brother Cassell would lay hands on a candidate with two living wives, he replied he didn't think he could. When asked as to receiving members into the church that had two living wives or husbands, he stated he would advise the church to take the matter under consideration before making a decision.

Elder Clarence Stone prayed the ordination prayer, and all ordained authority present administered the laying on of hands upon the candidate. Elder Hale Terry delivered the charge.

Then being found qualified, Deacon Raymond Vipperman delivered Brother J. L. Cassell back to the church as Elder J. L. Cassell.

Elder Paul Hopkins, Moderator
Brother James L. Shelor, Clerk

Ordained Elders Present:
Leonard Brammer
Clarence Stone
Wm. Hale Terry
C. B. Davis
Carl E. Terry
Marvin Brumfield
Larry N. Hollandsworth
Paul W. Hopkins

Ordained Deacons Present:
Donald Scott
Andrew Agee
Wilford G. Parsons
Hassell Hale
George Conner
Hansel Conner
Tiras Conner
Wade M. Poff
Alan Terry
Howard L. Peters
H. D. Ingram
Donald L. Agee
Vance V. Duncan
A. L. Shelton
Edwin F. Dyer
Joseph J. Cahill
Grover Semones
Raymond Vipperman

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 1994

Mrs. Harold May, AL	$7.00
Mrs. Ina Hendrix, TN	2.00
Mrs. Frances Jarvis, MD	2.00
Mrs. Pearl H. Pendleton, VA	2.00
Mrs. Ora Adams, VA	3.00
William R. Adcox, AR	2.00
Mrs. G.B. McAdams, MS	2.00
H.C. Ellwanger, SC	2.00
Mrs. W.N. Tilley, NC	5.00
Mrs. Fannie D. Wiles, VA	5.00
C.N. Barron, LA	2.00
Mrs. H.C. Houchins, VA	2.00
Mrs. Mannie A. Carter, NC Memory of Mildred Strader	25.00
Wallace E. Harvey, WV	2.00

OBITUARIES

IN LOVING MEMORY
ASYLINE DAVIS HERSHMAN

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write the obituary of another one of our Dan River members. In the past several months God has seen fit to call home some five or six from our church family and all of them will be sorely missed.

Sister Asyline Davis Hershman was called to her eternal home on July 17, 1994. She was a daughter of the late James Robert Davis and Susie Ayers Davis, affectionately known as "Rob" & "Sue".

Sister Hershman was born in Danville, Virginia on August 4, 1920. Her family later moved from Virginia to Rockingham County, North Carolina (Mayfield area). She attended Rockingham County Schools and graduated from Ruffin High School.

On June 17, 1939 she married James Howard Hershman, Sr. They were blessed with a good marriage and became the parents of one son, James Howard Hershman, Jr.

Sister Hershman was received into the fellowship of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on December 21, 1985. As long as she was able she enjoyed attending her church and visiting other Primitive Baptist churches. She believed in the doctrine of election and salvation by grace. She was in declining health for a number of years and

for the past two and on-half years was in a Nursing Care facility.

Her funeral was on July 19, 1994 at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. The service was conducted by her Pastor, Elder Kenneth Key. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the coming of her Lord.

Sister Hershman is survived by her husband, James Howard Hershman, Sr. of the Home; Son, James Howard Hershman, Jr. of Leesburg, Virginia; Sister, Hazel Turlington of Newport News, Virginia; two grandchildren.

May all who mourn say, "thy will be done", and may the Lord grant the family grace to reconcile them to His will.

Written by request of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in conference.

John Collie
Elder Kenneth Key, Moderator
Brother Bob Collie, Clerk

GERTRUDE DALTON MYERS

With much sadness in my heart, the Dear Lord willing, I will endeavor to write a few words in memory of one whom I loved, and not only me, but I believe she was loved by her brethren and friends.

Sister Gertrude was born in Pittsylvania County on July 22, 1915, daughter of the late Charlie A. Dalton and Sister Molly Yeatts Dalton. She was married to the late Robert Lee Myers and to this union two sons were born; Oscar Lee Myers, Sr., deceased; survivors include one son and daughter-in-law, Donald Myers and Linda M. Myers of Hurt; five sisters, Sister Irene Myers, Vivian Dalton and Sister Reba Myers all of Gretna, Pearl McCracken of Lynchburg, and Frances Marsh of Chatham, Va., one grandson and one great-granddaughter.

Sister Gertrude was in the hospital for eight weeks having a long hard struggle. I feel her suffering is over now. During her stay in the hospital, the family did all hands could do for her. Linda stood by her like a daughter.

I feel we have been highly blessed of God to have had Sister Gertrude's fellowship and friendship. May we all that mourn her loss be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father who does all things well and never makes a mistake for it is He that giveth and He that taketh away.

Sister Gertrude was received by experience July 24, 1949, and was baptized August 28, 1949. She was a faithful member at Weatherford Church as long as her health permitted.

Funeral services were conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder Raymond Goad, and Elder Marvin Brumfield. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the second coming of our Lord and Savior.

Written by, Elder Marvin Brumfield
Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
Phyllis Goad, Clerk

Signs of the Times

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In Memory Of My Dad
Elder Noah E. King
March 1901 to June 1974

My dad was a special kind of man,
A God called preacher on this land,
When the Lord first began knocking at his door,
He wanted to run and hide, forevermore

He even thought if he moved away,
He'd leave the burden that was in his way,
As he plowed in the field through a flood of tears,
The bib of his overalls showed his fears.

Sometimes he would stop his mule out in the field,
It appeared he was making some kind of appeal,
From afar, I couldn't hear what he had to say,
Only the Lord knew then, and knows today.

As I learned, he didn't want to yield to the Lords command,
To feed His sheep in a wayfaring land,
He felt inadequate, not knowing what to say,
But as long as he could resist, he had to pay.

The debt grew larger, and became so great,
He had to give in and face his fate,
Tho his long hard struggle had just begun,
He had to face every enemy under the sun.

He had no transportation to take him far,
Tho he had served time in a seminar,
The kind Jonah served in the belly of the whale,
No, he didn't graduate from a school called Yale.

So, he would start out walking with a prayer in his heart,
Feeling uneducated, and not very smart,
Leaving his family far behind,
He'd soon catch a ride, and arrive on time,

His family felt the brunt of his burden too,
Our weekends with him were very few,
My mom worked hard to keep his clothes ready to go,
She seemed to understand his burden, and his woe.

But he answered his call, and served to the end,
He delivered every sermon which God did intend.
In later years he was blessed with a car,
Then, his family traveled with him near and far.

In the year 1974, having served his mission of love,
The Lord called him on to his home up above,
His trials and troubles he had finished with grace.
There can never be another who can take his place. "Fathers Day" 1994

I love you dad,
Abilene McBride

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EDITORIAL

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

"To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven."

This short verse of scripture, as recorded by Solomon, is the sum and substance of the whole book of Ecclesiates; and is the conclusion reached by him as a result of the wisdom, which was a gift of God, his experiences which it seems exceeded those of any man who was king before or after him. He had sought and searched out, by his wisdom concerning all things that are available to man in nature and to learn what was good for the sons of man, which they would do all the days of their lives. He wanted to learn and to prove, for himself the reason for and the profit in all things in nature; and to teach the children of Israel that they might know and benefit from the wisdom that had been given him for that particular purpose.

Solomon was the son of David, by Bethsheba, who was raised up and set upon the throne of his father by God according to his promise to David and made a wise and benevolent ruler over the kingdom of Israel. The Lord appeared to Solomon, in Gideon, in a dream shortly after he ascended the throne and told him to ask what he should give him. His response was, "And now O Lord my God, thou hast

made thy servant king instead of David my father; and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out and to come in, and thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?" Solomon seemingly already possessed wisdom because he saw himself as he was in nature and realized his need for the task that lay ahead of him. *Isa. 65:24 "And it shall come to pass, that before they call I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear."* Oh the depths of the wisdom and the counsel of God. He gives them the realization of their need so that they pray for the things he is going to give them. This request was pleasing to God and he granted Solomon's request for wisdom and also told him that he would give him much more than his petition in that he would grant him riches and honour above any of the kings of the earth all his days.

This wisdom, given to Solomon, was not just the natural intellect or knowledge that all men possess, in some measure; this wisdom excelleth the intellect and knowledge of the man in nature as far as the spiritual realm exceeds the realm of nature. This wisdom includes the ability to apply knowledge and is an understanding of the reasons and the underlying truths in all things, and this is only received from God in a very special way as it was by Solomon. It was given him for a very special reason and that was for the benefit of the whole household of faith; in his ruling of the kingdom of Israel at the time then present, and as a teacher of the generations to come as he left on record the truths as revealed unto him; words of comfort to strengthen them as they encounter the afflictions and trials in their journey through this life. *Eccl. 12:9, 10, 11 "And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge: yea he gave good heed, and sought out and set in order many proverbs. The preacher sought to find acceptable words: And that which was upright even words of truth."* Words fitly spoken are like apples of gold in pictures of silver and are precious treasures to God's children in all ages of time as they run their race.

Man wrestles with his lot here in time world trying to see what is good in his travels and to discern the reasons for it all. It is then a great comfort to learn that the wisest of men, in all of his travels and searching came to this conclusion; "There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink and that he should make his soul enjoy good in all his labour. This also I saw that it was from the hand of God." Man does not stray or wander outside of the bounds of their habitation as set by their creator and whatever they may find their lot to be, at any given point in time, it too, is among the all things that work together for good, which is to their everlasting salvation. "The lot is cast into the lap;

but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord," and therefore be ye reconciled to it.

The text, "To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven," is one of the stronger support scriptures for the doctrine of predestination to be found in the bible, because it covers everything and the purpose of it. This is the testimony of one who was given wisdom above all others, except Christ, and he declares that the seasons and the times for all events, not some of them, are set and concerning all God declares they are beautiful in his time or realm. The only questions remaining are; did he know what he was talking about? and did he mean what he said? We must concede that the answer is, yes to both questions. As to knowing what he was talking about, the scripture states "the preacher sought to find acceptable words, and that which was written was upright even words of truth," and they were written by inspiration of God. And carries the full authority the godhead as to the doctrinal truth; and as to meaning what he said, this truth is in harmony with all of his other teachings and the inspired teaching of others unto whom the word of God came in all ages of time.

Solomon sought out and set in order many proverbs and he sought out acceptable words to teach basic truths in terms that the people would understand, realizing that they are only to those who have been given wisdom from the same source. Jesus taught in parables using natural illustrations to set forth spiritual truths but it took the revelation of God for the truth to be discerned. As Paul wrote *1 Cor. 2:13 "which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual."* Man can read or hear the parables or proverbs and understand gramatically what is being said but unless they have been born of the spirit they cannot compare spiritual with spiritual. This is experienced and understood only by those who have read and heard the scriptures with a natural understanding, and later, with a spiritual understanding. The scriptures are but history with no revelance to current times, to the natural mind, but they cease to be history and are the key to the future and eternal life through Jesus Christ their Lord and savior. to those who are given spiritual discernment.

In the text above Solomon is declaring that there is a time and season for all events and that they shall occur on schedule. Time is but a measured portion of eternity, set aside to accomplish all of the things that were declared from the beginning and each event occurs in its allotted sequence. They are each a necessary part of the whole plan designed to produce the desired results in the end just as each member of the body of Christ is necessary for the completion of the whole household of faith. All things are ever present before God who sees the end from the beginning and all things in between but man sees and experiences them as separate incidents and does not realize the completeness of the scheme of things.

God said, in the beginning, let there be lights in the firmament to divide the day from the night and be for seasons and days and years and man uses these constant occurrences to measure what we call time; to identify the occurring of the all things that are determined to be, both those that have been and are yet to come. ***Eccl. 3 vs. 11 "He hath made everything beautiful in his time; also he hath set the world in their heart so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end."*** Man can only live in and know the present and soon forgets the past, while God is always seeing, as present, all things from beginning to the end; therefore all these things are determined and of necessity will occur in their proper sequence of events. With God they already are, not, will be.

Eccl. 7 vs. 14 "In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider; God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find out nothing after him." Solomon learned that in spite of his wisdom and experiences in the things of the world, time and events happen to all men, and where then is the wise in any better circumstance than the fool; as one dieth, so dies the other. A man may live long and accumulate much of earthly treasures yet he dies and leaves it to another who may be wise or may be a fool; so what is the profit of all his labor, except in the beholding of it with his eyes. Solomon saw not the riches as an evil because they were God's gift to him, for his pleasure and enjoyment of them. Any evil would be if they became an obsession with him and his desire being for the gift and not the giver of it, because man cannot serve God and mammon. Solomon served God and was given great riches but he used his riches and wisdom for the good of Israel and was happy in prosperity. Adversity also is a gift of God and works together with prosperity in the lives of God's children, lest they forget from whence their help comes, as they are made to seek his face again in their time of need. Without adversity they would soon forget God and become so absorbed in their prosperity and themselves that there would be no fear of the Lord in their lives. ***Prov. 15 vs. 33 "The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom and before honour humility."*** Wisdom enabled Solomon to learn the balance of these forces in his life, fear, humility and honour; and these fruits of wisdom are the characteristics of all who have been called into the glorious light and liberty of the kingdom of God. ***James 1:3,4 "Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience, but let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."***

Wisdom and patience are pearls of great value to the weak and weary travelers as they journey thru this wilderness of sin; and they are born with neither. They are received from the giver of gifts to ease their burden and strengthen their faith.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

ARTICLES

WHO MAKETH THEE TO DIFFER
1 Cor. iv. 7.

The following is the writing of a greatly blessed minister; Elder Gilbert Beebe, Editor of Signs of the Times; dated March 1, 1839.

That there is a difference in the condition and future prospects of the children of men, but few, if any, will pretend to deny; but in what the difference consists, and by what power it is established, is a matter of great contention and strife with the theologians of our age. That this difference does not consist in our relation to or creation in Adam, is very fully demonstrated in the scriptures. ***"For God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."-Acts. xvii. 26.*** And that all are alike condemned in their relation to Adam, is plainly asserted in the words: "Death has passed upon all men, because all have sinned." Nothing is more clearly revealed or fully demonstrated in divine revelation than the fact that we are all by nature on an equal footing, as to original purity and subsequent depravity and condemnation. ***"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God."-Rom. iii. 25. "And every mouth is stopped, and the whole world is guilty before God."*** We inquire then, where is the difference, seeing that in regard to sin and human depravity all are alike? We conceive a vast difference in regard to the spiritual condition of mankind. Some there are who have been delivered from the curse of the law, the guilt and consequence of sin, and made the subjects of regenerating grace, redeeming love, and living faith; they are made to love God, to love holiness, to understand, believe and rejoice in the truth as it is in Jesus. These have Christ formed in them the hope of glory. These being the sons of God, are heirs of him, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ; heirs to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that cannot fade away. These are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, &c.

Widely differing from the people of God, there is another class of the human family, described in scripture as a generation of vipers, a seed of evil doers, of their father the devil, cursed children that cannot cease to sin; these know not the way of peace, they neither know nor love the truth, but delight in sin, error, delusion and falsehood. These stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed. These shall die in their sins, go away into everlasting punishment; be turned into hell with all the nations that forget God.

Here is certainly a difference, a very wide difference, in the spiritual condition, prospects, disposition and final destiny of the two classes described; they are known by different names. The former are called children of God, dear children, sons, Bride, Lamb's

wife, a peculiar people, chosen generation, royal priesthood, holy nation, elect, &c., while the latter are called children of the devil, cursed children, aliens, strangers, serpents, vipers, dogs, sorcerers, &c.

The questions returns, Who maketh thee to differ, or who makes them to differ? As those who are saved are by nature children of wrath, even as others, we are sustained by the infallible testimony of truth in saying that every soul that is raised from the lowest depths of sin and depravity is raised up by the power and grace of the sovereign God. There is salvation in no other name, hence the true difference consists in what God has been graciously pleased to do for his people, in a way of grace, for nothing short of grace could rescue them from awful wrath and fiery indignation.

The question why God has not bestowed the same grace on all men that he has on some men, is about as reasonable as the question why men are not angels, or angels are not gods. He has been pleased only to inform us that he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. The saints of God cannot believe, that wherein they differ from those who go down to perdition is based on works of righteousness which they have done, or that they have made themselves to differ. By grace they are saved, through faith, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God; not of works &c.; hence their anthem of eternal worship shall be, *"Not unto us, not unto us, O God, but to thy name give the glory."*

On earth, not in heaven, not in heaven, not in hell, but on earth, among infatuated mortals, the question is agitated, whether God, as a sovereign, did, according to his own eternal counsel and immutable will, fix the destiny of beings and of worlds, according to his unsearchable wisdom and goodness from the ancients of eternity; or was he by some law of necessity or unforseen event or events driven to the necessity of making the children of men to differ? In the discussion of this question, dear reader, you are engaged on the one side or the other; none can be neutral on this subject. Trifling as this inquiry may seem to some, in it is involved the grand controversy between sin and holiness, truth and error, predestination and Arminianism, the doctrine and practice of Old School Baptists, and that of the New Schools in divinity.

The word of God assures us that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; and challenges an infatuated world to declare *"With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding?" - Isa. xi. 14.* And that his purpose was mature and complete, appears not only from the immutability of his nature, but also from his *"Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." - Isa. xivi. 10. Hence*

the apostle says, "We are bound to give thanks unto God always for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth." - 2 Thess. ii. 13. Chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world; predestinated us to the adoption of children, &c. Eph. ii. Saved us and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. 2 Tim. i. 9.

Of the other it is written, ***"These were of old ordained to this condemnation." - Jude 3. But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not, and shall utterly perish in their own corruptions." - 2 Peter ii. 12. "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." - 2 Thess. ii. 11-12.*** From the scriptures above quoted we prove that every link in the chain of causes and effects is placed and secured by an unerring hand, and that all the wheels of the (to us) complicated machinery of creation, providence and grace, although their revolutions may seem to us to be in direct opposition to each other, yet all are wisely supplied, and every movement was determined before the machine was put in motion. He who will deny this will deny the foreknowledge of God, his truth, holiness and immutability, and finally his being, and at last unite with the fool and say, ***"There is no God."***

This subject opens a field to our contemplation, but we have not room to enlarge. We have merely glanced at some important things in connection with the sovereignty of God, and with the following reflections on the subject we close this article:

FIRST. God having made mankind to differ, and that according to his eternal counsel and sovereign will, is it rational, reasonable or scriptural for men to get up and organize societies, powers, armies, or anything of the kind, for the express purpose of obviating that difference which God has made? Is there a prospect of success in their heaven - daring enterprise? What mad infatuation! As well might men attempt to annul the everlasting decrees of God, abolish the difference between light and darkness, cold and heat, seed-time and harvest, beast or men, or men and angels; let them change the skin of the Ethiopian, and the spots of the leopard; change and equalize according to their standard of wisdom the laws of nature, and then think of altering the things which have gone out of the mouth of God.

But let not the saints forget the principal design of the apostle in his use of our text. This question is calculated to humble the redeemed people of God in the dust; all they have they have received, and all that makes the saints on earth or those perfected in glory differ from the most abandoned

wretches on earth or in hell, is alone what God has done. End quote.

A few remarks about the above:

In the hope I could be a brother in spirit and in truth, I say; if what Brother Beebe was blessed to write in the above; not be in accord with the Holy truth as it is in the Lord Jesus Christ; then, I have no knowledge of what be that Holy truth; for in reading it, I found it to be a desired witness to what I believe and feel to be that truth; and therein received much comfort, that seemed to brighten my hope. And that was my reason for sending it to you Dear Editors, for your consideration, as whether or not to insert it in the Signs; and that if you do decide to print it; may it serve to be some comfort to one or more of His little children. For that was and is my only purpose in and for sending it to you.

May His and only His name be praised, both now and forever more, is my heart felt desire, if, in truth, I am aware of what be my feelings are. The Lord knoweth.

In hope,
Troy G. Shepard

PSALM 33: 1-5.

Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright.

Praise the Lord with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings.

Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise.

For the word of the Lord is right; and all his works are done in truth.

He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.

THE PIGG RIVER DISTRICT PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTY NINTH SESSION

Dear Brethren,

I desire to greet you in the name of the Lord. I would like to call your attention to Matthew 10:16, "Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." Then I say, who am I to even think of preaching? For to be wise as a serpent is the gift of the Lord, because he slips through the grass and weeds and blends in this the leaves, until the human eye does not behold him, sometimes he is under your feet, sometimes over you head, or lying across your path. God has given him wisdom to watch for his own livelihood, and most of the time will not bother human life unless provoked.

The Dove is natured altogether different from the serpent. I have never seen two doves fighting. It is not any wonder then that King Solomon said in ***Solomon 6:9, "My dove, my undefiled is but one, she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice of her that bare her."***

The preacher must be bold as a lion also, ***Luke 10:3 and 4, "Go your ways, behold I sent you forth as lambs among wolves. Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes, and salute no man by the way."*** John came preaching repentance, dressed in camel hair and girded with a leathern girdle. I wonder what people

would say today if one should come dressed like John, eating locusts and wild honey. But Christ himself came preaching and was called a wine bibber and he ate with publicans and sinners.

After Christ rose from the dead, before he ascended in the clouds; Mark 16:15, 16, 17 and 18, "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe. In my name shall they cast out devils. They shall speak with new tongues. They shall take up serpents and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them, they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover."

I love the writing in Matthew 28:18, 19 and 20, "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Now I desire that the Lord will bless this meeting that the Gospel may be preached and that fellowship may abound. May we all feel our inferiority, also feel our infirmities, confessing that we are nothing but poor pilgrims and strangers in the land, seeking a city that hath foundations whose builder and maker is God. Amen.

With love and fellowship,
Leonard J. Brammer

Alpha Sears of Randolph, Ohio requests views on the following subject. **Reprint from "Signs" Jan. 1988)**

"Mine heritage is unto me as a SPECKLED BIRD, the birds round about are against her; come ye, assemble all the beasts of the field, come to devour." Jeremiah 12:9.

I cannot see to read the Bible anymore, so I asked my wife, Ruby, to look it up for me. She did and read it to me. I felt already that the Lord had revealed to me sometime ago that the SPECKLED BIRD is a type of the church, Christ's, the Son of God's, inheritance. And lo and behold, it read, "Mine heritage is unto me as a SPECKLED BIRD, the birds round about are against her," with the beasts of the field ready to devour, etc.

Heritage is defined as that which is inherited; inheritance; God's chosen people, or Israel, or the church of the true and living God. This is evidence enough that the scripture is referring to Christ's own who are His inheritance whom His soul loveth so much that He was willing to leave all the glory He had with His Father in the high court of glory, to condescend to the low estate of His heritage, who being lost in sin, shame, misery, degradation, darkness, death and eternal gloom, whom His Father had given Him before the foundation of the world, to purchase it with the shedding of His

own blood and for His eternal and everlasting love for them He was made willing to do it.

Christ referred to this heritage as a little child. They are humble even so much that when we see one, it makes us want to take them up into our arms and kiss them. So it is with one of these little ones of the Lord's people. Christ said, ***"Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." Luke 7:28.*** Who is the least one? The Lord's people are made to feel little.

In the 18th Chapter of Matthew is recorded where Christ set a little child out in front of the people and said, ***"Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 18:3,4*** When God has truly humbled one in His sight, that person, be he man, woman or child, is surely the least in God's kingdom. Little children are humble, and if they become angry, it does last only a few minutes. They do not nor will they hold a grudge.

This heritage of the Lord, which is the church, greatly feels her black spots, even also as the speckled bird. They are put on this bird in nature, but these little ones to whom Christ has referred to feel that their many sins have put them on them, and they cannot erase them anymore than can that speckled bird. The fact that all the other birds and beasts of the field are against her and are ready any minute to devour her gives one of these little ones, His little children, whom Christ has referred to as the least but also greatest, even more evidence. All that one has to do to get one of these big ones to walkaway with a devouring spirit is to tell just how little he feels and what he believes. In most instances they immediately take off and their humor is not good. Paul is a good example. He said he was the chief of sinners and felt to be nothing, yea less than nothing. One often wonders just what is the size and measurement of this garment, "less than the least," in which His heritage is robed and attired.

A good example of some of these beasts, assembling and coming together, as mentioned in the text, was when they placed Paul and Silas in prison. They whipped them with many stripes because they had been preaching just what these little ones, of whom the SPECKLED BIRD is a type. Paul said that he even fought with these beasts at Ephesus. See 1st Cor. 15:32. Paul felt those black spots on him of which the spots on this bird are a type of. Let us remember that the Old Testament scriptures are written in types and shadows.

That speckled bird cannot help being speckled. Neither can we help being sinners. Paul wrote, ***"For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I no; but what I hate, that I do." "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which***

I would not, that I do." "Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelt in him."

The spirit of the greatness of the little ones that comes through their meekness is recorded in Samuel where David sent for and fetched into the King's palace Jonathan's son who was lame in both feet to eat at the King's table. David did this because of the love he had for Jonathan whom he loved as his own soul. This is a type of the same love that Christ has for His heritage of which this speckled bird is a type. It is not just any bird. It is a SPECKLED BIRD and those black spots represent the same ones on this heritage. Anything that is speckled contains specks and spots. Christ had to come and remove those black spots from off the ones His Father had given Him for an inhertance. Those spots and specks serve a good purpose for the knowledge of their existence upon them keeps them down at their brethren's feet because the feet are the lowest part of the body that one can get to. That is the reason Christ told Peter that He need only wash his (Peter's) feet.

Jonathan's son, who was lame in both feet, certainly showed how little the Lord's people are by type and example because he referred to himself as a "dead dog". He sat at the table in the King's palace in a way so that his lameness could not be seen. Here is the church, the SPECKLED BIRD. We may look out at a congregation of believers, collectively as an audience while in worship, and yet not literally behold this lameness, although it is there in large proportions. God sees this lameness in the hearts of His people. The world cannot see it. It is hid from them.

Even when it came down to it. His chosen disciples, yet being under the law of sin and death in their experience, fled and forsook Him. Peter denied Him three times, cursing and swearing that he had never known Him. This is the way all those other birds fly off and leave this SPECKLED BIRD. The very spirit that was in Christ is also in His people when He visits them and causes that Spiritual wind to blow. All the other birds will fly away when that Spiritual wind blows upon the Lord's people. May the Lord comfort us when those other birds fly on and leave us. Surely, it strengthen's one's hope when they fly away.

Those birds that fly off and leave this speckled bird are a type of those who had gathered once at a place called Calvary saying, ***"He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God." Luke 24:25.*** The one just to his left said, ***"If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." Luke 23:29. These are the ones who are a type of the birds that fly off and leave the SPECKLED BIRD. The one just to His right had the same humble spirit as the poor publican who smote upon his breast saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Luke 18:13.*** The one just to His right, like the poor publican in God - given humbleness declared, ***"Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation. And we indeed justly; for we***

receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss." Those who fly away are a type of those who spit in his face, struck (slapped) Him, nailed His hands and His feet to the cross, pierced His side, mocked and scoffed at Him until He said, ***"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Then one named Joseph, whom the scripture says was "a good man, a just man," (See Luke 23:53).***

Now concerning the resurrection, recently being burdened, I begged the Lord to give me some evidence that my hope might be strengthened. One night in a dream I was shown a body lying in a coffin in a grave with the man's head cut off even with his body. That worried me very much for a while. Finally, it was show me that the headless body, lying there in the grave, is a figure and type of the body collectively of all the Lord's people, the chosen, elect church and family of God, awaiting the first resurrection of the just at Christ's second coming. The Head that was missing was Christ, the great Head of the Church, who has risen from the dead and is now at the right Hand of the Father in Heaven.

The Lord has blessed me to see that truth of the resurrection many times since Paul wrote in ***II Thessalonians 4:14, "Them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." Christ said to the thief on His right, of whom the speckled bird is a type, "Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Luke 23:43.*** Christ referred to the soul and spirit of that thief that was about to leave the body of that thief. This body of the thief is also a part of the same headless body that was shown to me lying there in the earth, peacefully awaiting the time when that great Spiritual Head, the Lord Jesus, will, as He promised, come back again to raise the sleeping dust of that same body and reunite it with soul and spirit in the same Paradise. The bodies of His saints are only asleep now in the grave or tomb or in the sleeping dust, awaiting the fulfillment of their election and redemption at that eternal day of endless life when the soul and spirit, now resting in the Paradise of God our Saviour, will again be reunited with that same identical body in which they resided while in this natural life and world.

When Christ was here in the flesh and upon earth, He restored life to the twelve year old girl. See Luke 8:42. The power of the same resurrection was made manifest in Elijah's day when the widow of Zarephath's son had died. It says, ***"His sickness was so great that there was no breath left in him." 1st Kings 17:17.*** Her prayer to God was answered for the return of his soul and life when Elijah, at the command of God, stretched himself upon the child three times and cried unto the Lord, ***"O Lord my God, I pray thee, let his child's soul come into him again. And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; AND THE SOUL OF THE CHILD CAME INTO HIM AGAIN, AND HE REVIVED." 1st Kings 17:21, 22, 23.*** Here is proof that the soul, as well as the spirit (for the soul cannot live without the spirit) returns back to the

body. Christ also raised Lazarus from the grave after he had been dead four days. All of these cases illustrate and illuminate the glorious truth in the resurrection of the body in the Trinity of God and of the trinity of man as taught by the Apostle Paul. He said, ***"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole SPIRIT and SOUL and BODY be preserved BLAMELESS unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." 1st Thess. 5:23.***

There is much discussion as to the kind of body with which they shall be raised. Paul made that clear. That same corporal body that was shown to me, lying in that grave, will be changed to a Spiritual Body when reunited with the great Head in the first resurrection. ***"It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a Spiritual body." 1st Cor. 15:42, 43, & 44.***

The little birds here in time sin with all their power each clear morning without clouds just after the breaking of day when the natural sun is rising out of the east. But on that happy Morn of all mornings, these glorified ones at the coming of their Spiritual Son, the Lord Jesus, shall rise when He comes from the east to carry that Heritage of God, that GREAT SPECKLED BIRD, home with Him for whom He gave His life as a ransom. She will give a shout of praise and hallelujah to Him, resounding into that glory land, to Him who give her home of eternal rest and final victory over all her enemies, sin, death, hell, the grave and the devil. John tells us what that song of praise and triumph will be in a hallelujah chorus that man never composed as He opens the gate and portal of immortal glory where He will present them to His father" without SPOT, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." WORTHY IS THE LAMB THAT WAS SLAIN TO RECEIVE POWER, AND RICHES, AND WISDOM, AND STRENGTH, AND HONOUR, AND GLORY AND BLESSING, "forever and ever Amen. (Revelation 5:12.)

The following verses come to my mind as I close this article concerning that great SPECKLED BIRD. I heard them quoted many years ago:

THE GREAT SPECKLED BIRD

What a wonderful thought I am thinking.
Concerning a Great Speckled Bird !
You remember her name is recorded
In the pages of God's Holy Word.

All the other birds flock around her.
And she is despised by the squad,
For the Great Speckled Bird of the Bible,
Represents you, the great Church of God.

Always desiring to lower her standard,
They watch her every move that she makes;
How they long to find fault with her teaching,
But really they find no mistakes.

She is now spreading her wings for a journey,
That she is going to take by and by,
When the great tribulation is over,
She will meet her dear Lord in the sky.

I am glad I have learned of her teaching,
Yes, I'm glad to hope my name's in her book;
For I want to be one never fearing
On the face of my dear Saviour to look.
When He comes descending and shouting from Heaven,
On a cloud as He writes in His word
We'll be joyfully carried to meet Him ON THE WINGS OF THE GREAT SPECKLED BIRD.

Geo. A. Fulk
January 15, 1987

(Reprint from Zions Landmark)

AARON'S ROD THAT BUDDED

(Numbers 17:8. Hebrews 9:4)

It has been requested by an Elder that we write upon the above subject, which we shall do, the Lord enabling us.

Aaron was the elder brother of Moses and is first mentioned in Exodus 4:14 as "Aaron the Levite, thy brother," God Himself saying. ***"I know that he can speak well."*** A God that works at both ends is here seen, giving Aaron a mind to set out from Egypt to go and meet his brother Moses, whom God had commanded to go down into Egypt. God said to Moses, ***"Behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart."***

In Exodus 4 we see that God had instructed Moses, first his rod turning into a serpent, then at God's command he took it by the tail and it became a rod again. God then commanded Moses to put his hand into his bosom, and when he took it out, his hand was as leprous as snow. Again God commanded him to put his hand into his bosom and when he took it out, it was turned again as his other flesh.

When Aaron met Moses it was at Horeb, in the Mount of God, where Moses had seen the Angel of the Lord in a flame of fire out of the midst of the bush. Exodus 3. In this lovely, but awe-inspiring place, the favoured brothers met, here they greeted one another with a holy kiss, here they were united in a common cause, to walk in God's command even though it meant to face a frowning world. They went from the Mount of God to visit the people and elders of Israel, where Aaron spake all the words which the Lord had spoken to Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people. ***"And the people believed: and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that He had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped." Exodus 4:31.***

In Exodus 7, the Lord said to Moses, ***"See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh, and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet."*** In the same chapter, verse 10, we find Aaron casting down his rod before Pharaoh and before his servants and it became a serpent. Pharaoh then called on his wise men and the sorcerers: ***"Now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments and their rods became serpents."***

We do not believe that they could by their magic produce the same effect,

but we do believe that our God caused the same result in their effort, so as to harden Pharaoh and his people against letting God's people go. The wonder to us is that Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods, it brings to mind that ***"God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty: and base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things that are not, to bring to naught things that are."*** It shows that before God's authority every false way was to disappear. We see in this instance in the purpose of God, that the magicians could do as Moses and Aaron did in the first three miracles, but in the plague of lice, they could not bring forth lice by their enchantments and they admitted their failure and said, ***"This is the finger of God."***

Aaron, the spokesman and prophet, seems to be set before us as standing between God and His people, chosen of God. ***"No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron."*** Aaron, the Levite, who had dwelt in Egypt, and witnessed the distress and enslavement of his own people, and was acquainted with their grief and sorrow, was a suitable companion for Moses, his brother, even though we see in him weakness, a man subject to temptation. In the office of High Priest which he was later on to fill, his brother would be a strength to him, for had he not heard God's word and seen the burning bush and the Angel of the Lord in the midst of the flame? After events prove that Aaron, left to himself, could turn to the ways of men to worship gods of their own making.

When Israel had encamped before Mount Sinai and Moses went up the mountain to receive the Law from God, in his absence the people murmured and said to Aaron, ***"Up, make us gods which shall go before us, for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what has become of him." Exodus 32:1.*** Aaron said, Break off the golden earrings of your wives and sons and daughters and bring them to me, and of them he made a molten calf, and they said, ***"These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."*** Aaron, the good talker, the one whose rod had swallowed up the rods of the magicians of Egypt ! O Aaron! How couldest thou fall so low? No doubt this was God's way (as in Peter's terrible denial of his Lord) to banish self-confidence and to cause a self-loathing. What a failure he must have felt himself to be, how ashamed he must have felt that he, who had seen the power of God to sustain them before Pharaoh and his wise men, should so forget the power of Israel's God, as to foolishly make a molten calf and listen to their rebellion, becoming a leader of them in their false worship.

Aaron, chosen of God, in his confession to Moses (on his return) exposes his own weakness when left to himself, and his putting the blame on the people, saying that they wanted it so, did not fail to heap upon himself

self condemnation that would affect his walk all the days of his life. How shocked Moses was in Deuteronomy 9:16-20. ***"And I looked, and behold, ye had sinned against the Lord your God, and had made you a molten calf: ye had turned aside quickly out of the way which the Lord had commanded you. And I took the two tables, and cast them out of my two hands and brake them before your eyes. And I fell down before the Lord, as at the first, forty days and forty nights: I did neither eat bread, nor drink water, because of all your sins which ye sinned, in doing wickedly in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger. For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure, wherewith the Lord was wroth against you to destroy you. But the Lord hearkened unto me at that time also. And the Lord was very angry with Aaron to have destroyed him; and I prayed for Aaron also the same time."***

The intercession of Moses which was effectual, and the humbling consciousness of his errors, made Aaron, under God's abounding grace, a fit man to stand before Israel as their High Priest.

Israel did not travel for long after that distressing experience before they began to murmur and find fault with Moses and Aaron, saying, "Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them, wherefore lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?" Read Numbers 16 to see what awful rebellion showed itself, and there we see that the earth opened and swallowed Korah, Dathan and Abiram and all that appertained unto them. Aaron stood between the dead and the living and made an atonement for the people and the plague was stayed. Then a long-suffering God commanded them to take each one a rod for the house of his fathers, and Aaron's rod was to be the rod for the house of Levi. Thus twelve rods were brought to the Tabernacle with the name of each man upon his rod, and Aaron's rod was amongst them.

These rods Moses laid up before the Lord in the Tabernacle of Witness. ***"And it came to pass that on the morrow Moses went into the Tabernacle of Witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms and yielded almonds.... And the Lord said unto Moses, bring Aaron's rod again before the testimony to be kept as a token against the rebels and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from me that they die not."***

Aaron's rod that budded and blossomed and bare fruit was therefore kept in the Ark of the Covenant, it was there as an everlasting testimony against rebels who would ever dare to do contrary to God's ordered way, a proof in all ages that God, the God of Israel, had established His worship, chosen Aaron as His High Priest and the house of Jacob as His chosen people.

What were these rods but dead sticks that man had cut down, sticks with

no life in themselves? Nothing that Aaron had done by nature made him to differ from the other eleven. The office of Priesthood was bestowed on him by his God, and the life manifested in that rod while in the Tabernacle of Witness that night (the night being a type of the night of the legal dispensation during which time the Aaronic priesthood flourished) was from an entirely different root than the natural root of the tree from which the rod was taken. This of course, was in God's purpose. Our Lord, coming from the tribe of Judah, could not be a priest under the law, the rod of Judah remained a dead stick when Aaron's rod lived, yet we are told in Matthew 2:2 that the wise men said, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews ? for we have seen His star in the East and are come to worship Him." He must live and die, becoming a dead stick, cut off from the land of the living for the sins of His People. God was His Father, though He was also the seed of the woman, yet there was no sin found in Him, only by imputation. "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth." This was in obedience to the law to produce a righteousness that would fit us, and to cleanse us from all sin by His precious blood.

In Aaron there was a God revealed, living testimony, he, in his person, had to be a man without blemish. Before the Lord he must carry the twelve tribes nearest to his heart, as the breastplate had twelve stones enclosed within it, also the Urim and Thummim, shedding light and beauty over them all. He must sprinkle the whole tabernacle with blood, he must make the various sacrifices. We see him performing his many duties faithfully, surely there were evidences of life in his authority. In all he did, even to his going once a y ear into the Holy of Holies, we see, as in the rod that budded and blossomed, promises of better days to come. When he returned and Israel rejoiced in sins forgiven, we see the fruit of his intercession, forgiveness was felt by the whole of Israel at the High Priest's return. It was felt by some when they laid their hand on the victim's head, (the lamb about to be offered) when blessed by faith to see Jesus, the innocent dying for the guilty.

Not only Aaron, the High Priest, but the prophets all spake of Jesus, His sufferings and the glory that should follow. Like the bud and the blossom they carried promises of fruit to come. The joy to which they gave vent when feeling the favour of God showed that many were given to taste of the fruit of God's love and mercy. Under those types and shadows they were encouraged to speak of a day to come when One would come as King and Priest, who would give even the stones of their temple a glory beyond the glory of Aaron and those who followed him in the same office. Thus the testimony of Aaron, his offerings and all that he did, testified of Jesus. If Jesus had not come, the budding and blossoming would have been of no value. The fruit being seen showed the certainty of His coming. No wonder Moses prayed ***"And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it." Psalm 90:17.***

To accomplish this that had been a mystery hidden from those of old but

revealed in the Gospel, ***"God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."***

"Almighty God sigh'd human breath!
The Lord of Life experienced death !
How it was done we can't discuss,
But this we know 'twas done for us."

Our Lord must die, as the Lamb of God, to bring forth much fruit. He must come alive again to be a High Priest for ever, He, who was not of the tribe of Levi, but of Judah, whose rod remained dead, arose from the dead and was declared to be a Priest for ever after the power of an endless life. He has gone, as our High Priest, by His own blood, into the Holy of Holies, which is Heaven itself, and has poured out His blessed Spirit upon us, enabling us to walk in love and do those things that are well-pleasing in His sight. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is spoken of as the firstfruits, and Christ Jesus' body is the firstfruits, for He only hath immortality, but when He appears the second time, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. Through the Spirit's work we cry Abba Father, His Spirit bearing witness with our spirits that we are the children of God.

"To all eternity our King
And Priest shall be adored;
Sinners from Satan's power released
Shall ever praise the Lord."

Elder George Ruston

From Elder Lambert's book, "Tried In The Furnace".

DEVILS' BELIEF VERSUS PERFECT FAITH

May, 1950

"The devils also believe and tremble." - James 2:19.

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

I have tried to write for many hours, weeks and months in vain. I have become so exhausted and nervous in the many attempts, that I am thoroughly convinced that I am just as dependent upon the direct operation of God's Holy Spirit to write as I am to preach the gospel of the blessed Son of God. I am making the attempt again with fear and trembling, trusting that God will be pleased to lead my mind into a fruitful field of thought, and give me the words to comfort, console and edify God's little children.

I am now reminded of a request made by P.L. Kenly of Roanoke, Virginia, to write upon James 2:19 especially the last part, to wit: "The devils also believe and tremble."

James did not say that the devils had faith. No place in the Scriptures do we find any statement that would intimate that the devils trusted in God or were in possession of faith. We are forced to admit that the devils gave assent to the fact that there is but one God, even to the acknowledging of Jesus - the Holy One of God-as we shall find when we consider certain Scriptures. We would like to compare and contrast belief and faith to further clarify that expression of Scripture.

Belief is the mental assent to a statement, proposition, or existing condition of things. Belief is simply an act of the understanding, but trust and faith are

active moving principles of the mind. Belief does not extend beyond the assent of the mind, but trust and faith compel to action. Belief is speculative while faith and trust are operative. Belief is common to all religions, trust and faith are peculiar to those who believe in divine revelation and salvation by the grace of God. Theorists substitute belief for faith. I trust that the reader will be blessed to keep this in mind as we further meditate upon this expression of Scripture.

Yes, the devils believe there is one God. They do not choose to believe this just because it is pleasing to them, but because that God exercises power over them. No man or devil can believe anything without evidence. God sets the bounds of the devil's maneuvers and they can go no farther. This is proved in the case of Job when the devil had to secure permission from God each time he chose to hurt Job. Each time the devil was told how far he could go and where he must stop. The devil was forced to believe that he was absolutely controlled by Almighty God. It could not be said of the devil that some people proclaim that he believes in God because their devil has free-will sailing and is so powerful that even though God is trying to save everybody, the devil will be victorious in getting the largest number. A devil with that kind of power could not believe in God. Remember that James says, "The devils also believe and tremble."

I want to call your attention to the eighth chapter of the gospel according to Matthew 29, "And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" The devils were forced to recognize Jesus as the Son of God. They cried out unto Him fully aware of His power over them. Let us consider their question, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God." They had nothing indeed to do with Him. They had no interest in His grace, blood or righteousness. He was no Savior and Redeemer for them. But contrary to this they realized that He had to do with them. They trembled at His presence and knew they would have to obey His all commanding voice, though terribly against their wills. They knew He had power to cast them out, "so the devils besought Him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine." Jesus bade them go and they went into the devils to the extent that His word returned not unto Him void, but accomplished that which He pleased, and it prospered in the thing whereunto He sent it. It was astonishing to the observers to see a character who exercised such power and authority that He could command the unclean spirits to come out of men and they would come out.

Let us now notice Acts 19:15, "and the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?" Paul had been disputing daily in the school of Tyrannus for two years. During this long time both Jews and Greeks were privileged to hear the word of the Lord. God wrought special miracles by the hand of Paul in healing diseases and casting out evil spirits. This became so well known that even exorcists at-

tempted to imitate. Some vagabond Jews, who were exorcists, attempted to imitate Paul and Jesus in casting out evil spirits. They would say to the evil spirits, "We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth." These evil spirits recognized this false claim of power as evidenced in their statement and question. "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye?" They knew that Jesus had the power to cast them out because He had done so in many instances. It was an intimate knowledge because they had heard His command and had been forced to obey Him. They had come in direct contact with Him in the demonstration of His power over them. They had also come in direct contact with Paul and He had commanded them to depart from individuals and they were forced to obey His command. They knew Paul to be a servant of the Lord because He was given power over them. The question, "Who are Ye?" suggests that they did not believe that these vagabond Jews were given this power over them. The evil spirits proved that their surmise was true when they that were possessed of the evil spirits pounced upon these Jews, overcame them, and were victorious over them so that these exorcists had to flee wounded and naked.

I am of the opinion that those who are possessed of these evil spirits today may and do fight among themselves, but they are made to tremble when they came into contact with the true servants of the all powerful God. The devil is as a roaring lion, walking about, seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8). He is made to know that some he cannot devour. Those who resist the devil are empowered to do so by Almighty God, and the consequence is that the devils flee from them (James 4:7). It is indeed comforting and consoling to me to think that the devils are subject to the power of God and can do no more than what my Father pleases. They must bow to Him and tremble.

May we now consider the subject under discussion by James when he made this statement, "The devils also believe and tremble." He was treating upon the subject of the perfect faith. He was exposing the folly of those who boast of faith without works. He was insisting that true faith was made perfect by works. He makes the statement in James 2:17, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." Not only are works without faith dead works, but it is just as true also, that faith without works is a dead faith. The faith that is a gift of God is a living faith. It is not that works are the life of faith, but that good works are the second act necessarily flowing from the life of faith. It is not that we exercise faith by our works, but that faith exercises us into the performing of good works. It is a vain booster who boasts of his faith in God and by his works denies him. The faith that God gives is not dead, but produces good works. Faith is to works as cause is to effect.

James uses two characters to prove that works accompany faith. He cited the works of Abraham and of Rahab, the harlot; and asks if they were not justified by works. As you recall, Paul used these same two characters in his treatise on faith in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. He is contending that faith prompted them to do these things. Paul says that

faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. This substance and evidence comes only from God as a gift to His children.

There are no contradictions in the writings of James and Paul concerning the subject of faith and works. We would like to examine ***Eph. 2:8-10, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."***

Salvation, both for time and in eternity, is the gift of God. Through His mercy, goodness and gifts we are saved here in time. This is proved by the tense of the verb used in the expression, "By grace are ye saved." We are saved through faith, and not of ourselves. This faith is not to be obtained through our merits. It is not as a result of any good works of ours, but it is the gift of God. It is not an offer or proposition conditional upon any acts of man, but it is the gift of God. "Not of works least any man should boast." Boasting is excluded. No man can rightly glory in himself nor boast of his goodness. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus." God is the workman, we are His workmanship; God is the creator, we are the creatures. "Unto good works - not by good works. It is not that good works beget faith, but faith begets good works." It is by the grace of God that we are enabled to walk godly in the present world. "Which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." God said through one of His prophets, "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; as I have purposed, so shall it stand." If this be true, surely, if He ordains something it will be just that way. We find the word "ordained" as being rendered "prepared" when we consult the marginal reference. I believe God prepares His people to walk in good works by working in them. He works in them "both to will and to do of his good pleasure." The good works are just as certain as is the faith, and is as much the gift of God as is the faith. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Your walk and conversation will be godly in this world. We conclude that James and Paul contended that faith and good works were characteristic of God's little children.

A child of God need not boast of his faith and love for these are manifest in his deeds. He feels little, insignificant and unworthy, and much of the time wonders whether or not he be in possession of this faith and love. If you watch his walk and listen to his conversation, you will find him doing good deeds for his fellowman, and preferring others above himself. There is a change wrought upon one in which it has pleased God to implant this faith and love. It affects his actions and stimulate his conversation. His desires are to obey the commands of Jesus Christ, do the will of God and to praise Him from whence all blessings come. Because of the infirmities of the flesh - the thorns that buffet him about lest he be exalted above mea-

sure - he is not able to do the things that he would. This forces him to be constantly in prayer to Almighty God to be merciful unto his unrighteousness and to forgive him of his sins. This character boasts not of his faith nor of his works. Paul exposed the vanity of those who boasted of their works. James called those who boasted of their faith, "vain men." We see then that boasting either of faith or works would be erroneous, and does not characterize God's little children.

May God grant us this living faith and enable us by His grace to walk worthy in good works. May He bless us to give Him the praise for it all. May we look forward and press toward the mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus when we shall be called from this low ground of sin and sorrow up into that heavenly realm where and when we shall perfectly praise Him in that endless eternity. May He add His blessings to this writing as edifying to the household of faith. Amen.

Elder E.J. Lambert

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OBITUARIES

IN MEMORY OF SISTER LUCY HERSHMAN DAVIS

My heart is filled with much sadness as I try to write this obituary for dear friend and sister in Christ, sister Lucy Hershman Davis. She died in her home in the Mayfield community on June 9, 1994.

Sister Lucy was born on December 26, 1908 in Chase City, Virginia, one of eight children of Jessie Howard and Emma Wilson Smiley Hershman. She graduated from high school in Chase City, Virginia and attended Averett College in Danville, Virginia.

On April 19, 1930 she married John Marion (Alex) Davis who predeceased her in September, 1971. They had no children. She and her husband operated the Chevrolet automobile dealership in Gretna, Virginia for a number of years before moving to the Mayfield community near Ruffin, N.C. in 1937 where she resided until her death. After her husband's death she continued to manage the farm.

She was a much respected citizen of our community and a member and past president of the Happy Home Extension Homemakers Club.

She was received into the membership of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in November 1945. She loved her church and was strong in the faith. She was a faithful member and attended the services regularly almost up to the time of her death. She was always concerned about the well being of its members. Although her physical health deteriorated, her mind remained very alert.

She is survived by one sister, Rosa H. Troutt, and one brother, James H. Hershman, both of Ruffin, N.C. and a number of nieces and nephews.

Her funeral was held on June 11, 1994 at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder Kenneth R. Key, and Elder Julian R. Williams, and her body laid to rest beside her husband in the church cemetery there to await the second coming of our Lord. May we who mourn her be made to realize that our loss is her gain.

If I may add a personal note, I would like to say that my husband and I were away on vacation at the time of her death. We are sorry that we could not be here for her funeral. We would have liked so much to view her face one last time. we were deeply moved, however, that the family asked our two sons to be pallbearers to help carry her body to its final resting place.

Written by one who loved her and misses her so much.

Connie M. Page

BROTHER RALPH POTTER

We have lost another of our precious members at Chapel Church.

He was born May 15, 1910 to Lewis and Nannie Potter. Brother Ralph was married to Hester Bousman Feb. 15, 1939. To this union was born four sons and one daughter. Kenneth, Dennis, Joe, Calbert and Betty. He was blessed with 11 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Brother Ralph joined Chapel Primitive Baptist Church in April 21, 1968 and was baptized in May 19, 1968 by Elder O.K. Tench.

He was given grace to bear his afflictions during his sickness with cancer.

Brother Ralph died at the age 83. His funeral was conducted by Elder Thomas Solomon and Elder Raymond Goad at the Flora Funeral Chapel. He was laid to rest September 20, 1993 in the Potter family cemetery to await the second coming of the Lord.

We miss Brother Ralph dearly at Chapel Church.

Written by a brother in hope,
Elder Thomas Solomon

Signs of the Times

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SONG

Love of Jesus.

LOVE divine, how sweet the sound
May the theme on earth abound;
May the hearts of saints below,
With the sacred rapture glow.

Love amazing, large, and free,
Love unknown, to think on me;
Let that love upon me shine,
Saviour, with its beams divine.

Better than earth's gilded toys,
Or an age of carnal joys;
Better far than Ophir's gold,
Love that never can be told.

Better than this life of mine,
Saviour, is thy love divine;
Drop the veil, and let me see
Rivers of this love in thee.

While in Mesech's tents I stay,
Love divine shall tune my lay;
When I soar to bliss above,
Still I'll praise a Saviour's love.

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EDITORIAL

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

"For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it."

There are many ways to approach this marvelous text to which there is no end; but it is my desire to dwell upon one word within it, if it be pleasing to the One who spake it. That word is "word". Words spoken or written are the principal, but not the only ways, that God and men communicate. Paul wrote, ***"Except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air"*** Surely it is my desire to speak and write so as to be easily understood; for misunderstandings lead to confusion. Neither do I wish to deceive, but to speak the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. Jesus said there are false Christs and false prophets, (I hope I am not one of them,) who would deceive the very elect if it were possible. The elect cannot be deceived, but those that perish will be, for God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; because they received not the love of the truth; that they might be saved. ***"The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born. speaking lies." Paul wrote, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy: having their conscience seared with a hot iron."*** These same spirits are among us in these latter times, and when possible we should avoid them. The expressions of their eyes and face and the tone of their voice

often give evidence of the lies which they speak.

In the beginning the world was of one language, and of one speech, but the people then, (and they continue to do so to this day,) thought to build a tower that would reach unto heaven. (See Genesis chapter 11.) But the Lord came down and confounded their language so that they could not understand one another's speech, and in this way the Lord scattered them abroad on all the earth. That is why we have many languages in the world today, and why the scriptures had to be translated from the original language. The bible which Old School Primitive Baptists use and believe is a translation by renown scholars appointed by King James and is believed to be the best translation ever written, and when rightly understood every single verse is in complete accord with all the others. The revised versions of today have changed the words to what some think they should be, and thereby they have changed the meaning of many scriptures. We are told that these revised scriptures only make them easier to interpret and understand. What does the Holy Scriptures tell us? *"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."* Even the prophets of old did not know what their prophecy did signify, therefore they searched diligently for what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify when it did testify beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister these things. (1 Peter chapter 1). Jesus himself taught his disciples, yet they did not understand what he taught until they had received the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. Jesus spake many parables unto the multitudes; *"And without a parable spake he not unto them: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, saying, I will open my mouth in parables: I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world."* Jesus revealed the meaning of the parables to his disciples, and they asked him why he spake unto the multitudes only in parables. *"And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: that seeing they might see, and not perceive; and hearing they might hear and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven."* Can we not see from this that the scriptures are not to the world at large, only to his elect children?

In the parable of the sower Jesus explained to his disciples that the seed sown is the word of God. It is sown in many places, but only in good ground, which is an honest and good heart, does it bring forth fruit with

patience. This honest and good heart is one that God promised to give after he had taken the cold and stony heart out of our flesh: ***"that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God." (Ezek.11:19-20).*** There is obviously a people who do not receive a new heart: are they not the same ones who are not given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God? And God said of them, that he will recompense their way upon their own head. (verse 21). The non-elect will say, This is a hard doctrine: who can believe it? Paul said, ***"What then, are we any better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin: as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one." (Rom.39-10).*** But we read in Rom.15 & 18, ***"For he saith unto Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."***

In the beginning God spake into existence the heavens and the earth and all that is in them. ***"For he spake, and it was done: he commanded and it stood fast." "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."*** Before he did any of these things he chose a certain people in his Son Jesus Christ, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. They are the ones whom Jesus came into the world to save. He did not come to save every man, nor to offer them anything, for nowhere in the scriptures can we find that he offered eternal life or anything else to any man: but we do find that he offered himself without spot unto God: ***"and by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."***

The children of God are called sheep, and in John chapter 10 we find that Jesus told certain Jews, ***"But ye believe not, because ye are not my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life."*** Jesus gives, but does not offer eternal life to his sheep; and he does not give eternal life to any which are not his sheep: and the life that he gives his sheep was in him before the foundation of the world. How did God choose his children in Christ before there was any of them? God is an eternal being, having no beginning and no ending. He is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent: having all power to do all things as it pleases him; having all knowledge, for he knows nothing now that he did not know eternally; and he is everywhere present and nowhere absent, for he filleth eternity. God knew every being that he would give life to in the world, and he gave a portion of them life in Jesus Christ, a life that can never perish. These are the ones described in Ps. 139:16-17: ***"My substance was not hid from thee,***

when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there was none of them." Paul tell us ***"we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." "And he is the head of the body, the church." No man has the power to add himself to God's book, which is the book of life. This book of life is, I believe, Jesus Christ, "For in him we live, and move and have our being." It is written in Rev. 20:15, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."*** This is the second death, which God`s elect shall never suffer, for they have been given eternal life, and had a part in the first resurrection which is Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is the WORD of God. ***"In the beginning was the WORD and the WORD was with God, and the WORD was God." John 1:1.*** In Rev.19:13 we read, ***"And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name was called The WORD of God." In 1 John 5:7 we find, "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the WORD, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."*** Therefore when we speak of God`s word we speak of Jesus and also of the spoken word. These are synonymous, and they bear the same power. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." In Heb. 4:12-13 we read, ***"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder the soul and the spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."*** In Ps.139:1-4: ***"O LORD, thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and my uprising, thou understandest my thoughts afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether."*** When Adam transgressed God's commandment and died, all of his posterity was in him and all died in him. This was not a corporeal death, but a separation from God. (Death is but a separation from something.) This being true, all men are born dead to God, for we are only Adam multiplied. We are earthly and have the sinful and depraved nature of our earthly father, and Paul tells us," ***But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*** The non-elect do not, and cannot, understand this, and they say that a man must do

something to be saved; but how can a dead man do any thing? He cannot; therefore something must be done for him if he is to ever see God in peace. He must be quickened out of his dead, alienated state and given life, for life must precede action. Jesus said, *"The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."* And, *"For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will."* Also, *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."* The non-elect understand passing from life unto death, but they cannot understand passing from death unto life. Jesus did not say, He that wants everlasting life must hear and believe, but if he hears and believes he already has life everlasting. One must have this life if he has an ear to hear spiritual things, and 8 times in the four gospels, and 8 times in the book of Revelations it is written, *"He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear."*

The two-edged sword mentioned before can cut with both edges. The word of God also cuts in many directions; for it can kill and make alive. *"See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand." Deut.32:39.* When many of the people heard the words preached by Stephen, they were cut to the heart, and gnashed upon him with their teeth; they cried out and stopped their up their ears; they cast him out and stoned him to death: and Saul , who would later be converted and given an ear to hear, gave his consent unto it. But on the day of Pentecost those who heard the words of Peter were pricked in their heart and said, Men and brethren what shall we do? Peter was not speaking to the non-elect, but unto those who had been given to hear and had been called of God. Therefore he told them to repent and be baptized, *"For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."* Not one more nor one less, but even as many.

From the day that we are born everything that we hear, see, taste, smell and feel has an effect upon us, imperceptible though it may be, and these things shape our lives, our every thought and action. Being made subject to vanity we follow the desires of the flesh; but Paul tells us, *"For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself shall also be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."* Most men believe they have complete control over their own lives and destiny, but they know not that God is in complete control of all things. We read, *"I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end*

from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isa.46:9-10. Did he leave out any of the things not yet done? Certainly not. In Prov. 16:9 we read, *"A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps." Jer. 10:23 said, "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps."* These scriptures, as well as many others, should prove beyond all controversy that no man controls his own way and destiny, and I am glad that it is so; for if left to myself I would quickly perish, and my destiny would be in hell: but by the grace of God I am what I am.

We know that no man would choose to suffer, but if we are led by the Holy Spirit to follow in the footsteps of our Lord and Saviour then we must suffer; for he was a man despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. *"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."* No man can suffer as did the holy Son of God, yet his elect children do suffer, *"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."* We are also told, *"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things he suffered."* We must also learn obedience by the things we suffer: not the suffering that is common to all mankind, but sufferings that the non-elect know nothing about: such as fiery trials, persecutions, temptations, afflictions and tribulations, and many of these are imposed upon us by the non-elect. We know however, *"that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings."* If we suffer, we shall also reign with him. We read in 1 Peter chapter 1 that, *"if need be ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."* James said, *"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive a crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."* Jesus said, *"- but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you."* Our afflictions are appointed unto us as Paul wrote, *"That*

no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto."

Beloved brethren, God has given us the Holy Scriptures, which are his written word; and, ***"All scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."*** He has also given us his holy Son whose vesture was dipped in blood and whose name is called The WORD of God. His word shall never fail. May God bless us to always praise, honour, and worship him who hath appointed us unto salvation. ***"Christ was once appointed to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear a second time without sin unto salvation."*** May we always be looking for him.

These are only a few of the many thoughts I have had concerning this marvelous text, but may God bless them to his praise, honor and glory, and to the comfort, and edification of his beloved children. May he bless the truth and pardon all error. Pray for this poor sinner when at the throne of mercy.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

ST. JOHN 1:1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

ARTICLES

THE OBLIGATION OF CHURCH MEMBERS

The privilege of membership in the church of Christ is a great one indeed. The church furnishes a safeguard against the temptations of the world when its privileges and obligations are understood. Having the association of the people of God and hearing the gospel preached, is a great comfort. That this privilege may be continued and enjoyed, certain obligations are assumed by those who become members of the church.

ATTENDANCE: The church could be of no benefit to the members, nor to the world, if the members did not meet together; hence arises the obligation of attendance at the regular meetings of the church. Paul gives a rule which should be observed by all the members of the church. "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is." (Hebrews 10:25). Neglect of this duty is discouraging to the church and to the pastor. We should consider that this is a service we owe; and when we are "making" excuses for staying away, we should consider whether it is valid, and to remember that the Lord knows the very thoughts and intents of the heart would He have approved it? The searching test, would the Lord excuse me? ought to be ever before us.

We may be tempted to stay away because of what someone has done,

or not done. but are we justified in treating the services of God with contempt because of what someone in the world does? We are not serving men, but God; and what we do should be done as unto Him, and not as unto men. It is a matter of great importance that churches are justified in requiring their members to attend the meetings; or that they have justifiable grounds for staying away. If the members have the right feeling about it, they will be willing to let the church pass on their reasons for missing the meeting.

THOUGHTFUL OF EACH OTHER: It is the duty of members to be thoughtful of each other. We should think more of the members of the church than we do of the people of the world; and we should show it by our actions. If one of the members is sick, other members should at once show their love and kindness by doing whatsoever may be needful to be done for the comfort of the sick. Jesus showed a sympathetic nature, and helped and comforted the sick. They were glad to see his face and, hear his voice. His followers should walk in his steps.

Let the sick see your face and hear your voice, and feel the willingness of your hands to help them.

RESPECT FOR THE PASTOR: The church members should show proper respect to the pastor of the church. While he is not to be considered infallible, yet if the Holy Ghost has made him "overseer" of the church, and the church has recognized that appointment by a "call" to the pastorate, his counsel should be sought and his instructions followed, unless positively contrary to the teachings of the word of God; and in such case the matter should be discussed with him seriously. It is contrary to the word of God to treat the pastor lightly, and to pass his advice and instructions by with contempt. No doubt in many cases neither the pastor nor the church has given the office the consecration they ought.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS: Every member of the church should realize that there is expense connected with the keeping up of a church and its services, and to be honorable with the other members in bearing such burdens. It is not any more honorable in a member to let others pay in the church what he himself should justly pay, than in a business way to fail to pay his just debts. None can bear more than he is able, and we should not expect all to bear an equal amount, but we should not expect others who are in no better circumstances than ourselves, to bear more than we do. We should make it our business to know that we are bearing our share; it does not show a becoming interest in the church to be indifferent in this matter. The following question should be asked by each member, and he should not be satisfied until he is informed on each of them:

Am I bearing as much of this according to my circumstances as other members are according to their circumstances?

Not to desire to share equally with other church members according to our ability, is to shrink the responsi-

bility which we solemnly assumed when we asked the church to let us become members. If we are not willing to bear the obligations of membership, we should hesitate to take the privileges and comforts of membership. It is so easy and pleasant when the members consult one another, and all are willing to do what is right. We should meet our expenses cheerfully. A church home is what the members make it. If they are selfish, contrary, covetous, and peevish, and do not bridle their tongue, it will become unpleasant and a burden instead of a joy. If they are loving, kind and forbearing, like the Master, it will be a pleasant place, a glad retreat from the world, where the pure, sweet song of peace and love is sung, and the presence of God is enjoyed.

CARE FOR THE POOR: The members of the church should be careful to look after the poor. Though it is especially the duties of the deacons to relieve immediate needs of the poor it is the duty of every member of the church to be thoughtful in this direction, and to keep the deacons supplied with funds when there is need, and then give personal attention to the poor who may feel to be neglected. The Master was himself very tender toward the poor, and we cannot feel that he would at all approve our course if we neglected them.

TO BE LOVING AND KIND: The members of the church should be very loving and kind toward each other. They are brethren, and they should treat each other as members of one family. This will require that they be forebearing, for there is none perfect. Should we require perfection in others, it would be more than we could give in return, and it would be very unkind of us. We should be forgiving, for we shall need to ask others to be forebearing and forgiving toward us. Jesus taught his disciples to pray to be forgiving as they forgave others.

SHOULD BEAR PERSONAL WRONG: We should make a distinct difference between bad treatment of ourselves by members and conduct which shows disrespect for the church, and is hurtful to its interests. We can afford to carry a great deal ourselves, but we must not sit by and see others tear down the home which has been established for all the children. The Saviour bore personal abuse silently, but when he went into the Temple and saw it being profaned, he drove out those who showed no respect for his Father's house. If we reverse this, and give a great deal of concern to what others may do to us, but show little interest as to what the church must suffer, we shall not be following the Master.

THE CHILDREN: The members of the church should encourage those who have a hope in Christ, to come to the church, if they receive the preaching of the cross gladly. Especially should this interest be shown toward their own children, the Lord having laid it upon his people to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. They should use every endeavor to keep their children from hurtful associations with such things as will prejudice them against

the truth, and the true church. While they cannot regenerate their children, nor be the means of it, yet they should seek to do their whole duty by their children as regards the teaching of the word of God; and especially so when there is evidence that they have been enlightened by the Holy Spirit.

(Author Unknown)

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Sent to us by Elder Leonard Brammer
Editors

THE BOOK OF ESTHER WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO CH. 7-VERSES 9-10

The two verses referred to above, read: *"And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, Behold also, the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman. Then the king said, hang him thereon. So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified."*

The Lord willing, and desiring that he give me by the Holy Spirit, the understanding and knowledge to write some words that might be comforting to the Lord's people, I make this effort in much fear and trembling. I hope to be able to put in writing some of my thoughts concerning certain events that came to pass as recorded by the writer in the Book of Esther. I desire to make particular reference to Queen Esther, Mordecai and Haman, and the part they occupied in the narrative.

As we read in the 1st Chapter of Esther, we find that king Ahasuerus, who reigned from India to Ethiopia, 127 provinces, prepared a feast unto all his princes and his servants, and all the nobles before him. He showed the riches of his kingdom and the honor of his majesty many days, even a hundred and four score days (180). The decorations were all of fine linen, silver rings and pillars of marble. Much royal wine was in abundance to be served. At the heighth of the celebration, the king commanded that the Queen Vishti be brought before the king to shew her beauty for she was fair to look upon. But the queen refused to come and this angered the king, and he was very wroth. And because of this the king decreed that the honor of queen be given to another. The fact that the queen did not give honor to the king, he made a decree that all wives shall give honor to their husbands, both great and small. Here perhaps we may have a figure of the church (the bride of Christ), must give honor to the husband, the head of the church, Christ Jesus our Lord.

Now back to the text. After Vashti had been dethroned as queen, the king decreed that fair young virgins be brought to him for the purpose of choosing another queen to replace Vashti. And when the months of purification which was necessary for one of the virgins to become queen had been fulfilled, there was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai, who had been carried away from Jerusalem, and had become a leader of the Jews.

And he had taken Esther (his uncle's daughter) who he had brought up due to the death of her parents. She was fair and beautiful and Mordecai had taken her for his own daughter. During the reign of king Ahasuerus, the Jews were being persecuted, and the life of Mordecai, because he was the leader of the Jews, was sought. And after all the purification, Esther was chosen Queen over all others. And it is said the king loved Esther above all others and she obtained grace and favor in his sight. The queen had certified and made Mordecai, the leader among the Jews, who sat in the king's gate. And during those days, two of the chamberlains, Bigthan and Teresh, sought the king's life, but when Mordecai told the Queen, she ordered that they be hanged on a tree, and this accomplishment was carried out as ordered. The attempt during those days to destroy the Jews and their leader Mordecai, perhaps is figurative of the attempt to destroy the Lord Jesus and his followers in the grace dispensation. But all attempts have failed and always will, for our God is in complete control of all things both in heaven and in earth, and satan and all his cohorts will never be able to overthrow or thwart the purposes of the eternal God, who has declared the end from the beginning.

Now following the hanging of the two chamberlains, the king promoted Haman and set his seat above all the princes that were with him. And all the king's servants that were in the gate bowed and reverenced Haman as the king had commanded. But there was one that did not reverence him or bow down to him, and that was Mordecai, the leader of the Jews, whose lives were being sought by Haman. There was during the days of the prophets, and also in the grace dispensation, a people that God has called out and chosen, who will not bow down to the dictates of men.

Haman continued his assault on the Jews, particular Mordecai, and said unto King Ahasuerus, "There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all provinces of the kingdom. And their laws are diverse from all people, neither keep they the king's laws; therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them. If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed: and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to those that have the charge of the business" Esther 3:8-9. Letters were sent to all provinces to destroy, kill and to cause to perish all Jews, both young and old, little children and women. This effort to destroy the Jews, the chosen people of God, is also figurative of the effort in the grace dispensation to destroy spiritual Israel. You will recall King Herod made the attempt to take the life of the Lord and Saviour at his birth, but was hindered in this attempt, because God had determined and decreed before the world began that Joseph should take the baby from that country.

Haman continued in his efforts to take the live of Mordecai, who was the leader of the Jews, but they all failed. I believe we have here three types or shadows of things to come. Haman

figurative of Herod, who sought the life of the Son of God shortly after his birth. Mordecai figurative of Christ and the Jews figurative of Spiritual Israel under grace. But Haman's attempt to take the life of Mordecai failed, so also did Herod fail in his attempt to take the life of the Son of God. So when Herod ordered that all male children under the age of two should be killed, thinking surely that would remove the Lord by death, he was no longer there as Joseph had fled with him to Nazareth. There is so much contained in 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th chapters of Esther in connection with Haman's efforts to destroy the Jews and Mordecai, that it would not be expedient to try to pen them down in this writing. But in all efforts, the Lord always intervened so that his efforts failed, So in all ages of time, the Lord through his mighty power and control of all things, even the smallest to the greatest that we might deem the efforts, has kept them safe and secure in his arms.

In Esther, Ch. 5, at the banquet of wine that Queen Esther had prepared, the king and Haman being present, the king told Esther any petition she desired he would grant. Haman was invited to the feast, and he apparently took this as a great honor, probably thinking the Queen would assist in disposing of Mordecai. But when Haman saw Mordecai at the king's gate, he was full of indignation against him. But he held his temper, as the saying goes sometimes. We can see Haman "gloating" over the fact the queen had promoted him, and she did not let any man come to the banquet of the king but himself. Yet he said all this availed him nothing because Mordecai was still sitting at the gate, and he thought the queen would not give the honor to Mordecai. So a suggestion was made by Haman's wife, Teresh, and his friends, that a gallow should be built for the purpose of hanging Mordecai. Continuing in the 6th chapter, we find that the king was told of what Mordecai had done in the death of Bigthania and Teresh in preventing them from taking the king's life. And the king desired to know what honor had been given to Mordecai for this act, and he was told that nothing had been done. At this time Haman was in the court to speak to the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows, and the king said let him come in. The king then asked Haman what should be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor? Now Haman thought the king had him (Haman) in mind to do this honor, and he said let royal apparel the king wore be brought to be given to the man the king was to honor. All these royal things to be brought by the king's most noble princes and array the man, ride him through the street and proclaiming before him. Then Haman who had thought he was to be the man so honored, was commanded to put the apparel on Mordecai and arrayed him on horseback throught the street of the city. Then Haman in his wrath, hasted to his house mourning. And told his wife and all his friends what had befallen him. Then his wife and friends told Haman in these words: "If

Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, thou shall not prevail against him, but shall surely fall before him. It would appear now that Haman was beginning to see his downfall and that he would not be able to destroy Mordecai and the Jews.

Now Haman and the king came together to the banquet with Esther the queen. The king had previously told Esther he would grant whatever petition she desired. "Then Esther the queen answered and said, If I have found favor in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request: For we are sold, I and my people to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue, although the enemy could not countervail the king's damage. Then the king Ahasuerus answered unto Esther the queen, who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so? And Esther said, the adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman. Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen. And the king arising from the banquet of wine in his wrath, went into the palace garden: and Haman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen, for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king." Esther 7: 2-7. The king then knew that Esther was telling the truth, and he ordered that Haman should be hanged on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Thus was Mordecai's life saved, and the very one who had sought his destruction and the Jews as well, was eliminated by death. We will reiterate here that all of man's efforts to eliminate the Lord's chosen people from the earth will always fail.

Following the death of Haman, as recorded in 8th chapter, Mordecai was given the ring Haman had and was made ruler over all the Jews. And was given authority to destroy all those who array themselves against the Jews. We continue to see here, Mordecai being a figure of Christ, who as God had the authority and power to destroy those who rise up in opposition to the chosen people of Jesus Christ, which is the church. Satan and all his followers, ministers and angels, will never be able to overthrow or consume the Church of Jesus Christ. She is kept by the power of God in all ages, and will so be kept until the end of this time world.

Farewell in the Lord, and please remember this poor sinner when at a throne of mercy.

Just a worm, saved by grace if saved at all,

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For some reason I feel led to write something on the 8th Chapter of Revelations. I know unless the Lord guide my pen and direct my thought, this will amount to nothing, yea, less than nothing. For it is not in man who walketh to direct his steps. So may it please the Almighty God of the Universe, to so direct his steps. So may

it please the Almighty God of the Universe, to so direct, that this may bring a little comfort to some of his little ones.

"And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour."

There was silence for about 1/2 hour. I believe this is the silence before the storm, so to speak, a sort of hush of awe before the awful judgments about to come, sort of like the oppressive silence before the burst of battle.

"And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets."

John saw the seven angels standing before the throne of God, to whom were given the seven trumpets. The seventh seal therefore, embraces these angels and their trumpets, and what they did in the following verses belong to this seal.

"And another angel came and stood at the alter, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne."

The scene reveals the altar of the tabernacle, a pattern made after heavenly things. This is the altar of sacrifice from which the coal was always taken to light the incense (Lev. 16:13). This angel receives the incense and offers it upon the golden altar. The incense is the prayers of the saints, these to reach the throne of God must be lighted from the altar of sacrifice, or by faith in the blood of the Lamb.

"And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand."

And the smoke rose before the throne, so the prayers of the saints in the name of the crucified savior arise to God. The real significance of all this is in the terrible judgments about to follow, the prayers of the saints will come before God, and his care and providence will be over them.

"And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake"

There were thunderings, lightning, and an earthquake. Fire is usually a symbol of suffering, which indicates that the judgments of God are about to fall on the earth. The earth in the sense used by God is the great Roman Empire, which embraced the civilized world. An earthquake, thunderings, etc. are indicative of the terrible scenes to follow when the angels sound their trumpets.

"And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up."

The first angel sounded. When the first trumpet is blown John saw a mighty cloud rush over the Earth. From it pour hail and fire mingled with blood. This falls upon the earth and a third part is scarred and blasted. The blood indicates the destruction of destroying armies. This verse implies a terrible judgement descending upon a third of the world known to John.

"And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea; and the third part of the sea became blood;

And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed."

A great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea, again there is carnage and destruction. Before it was a third part of the earth, now it is a third part of the sea. The symbols imply that some mighty power shall be turned upon the sea, and make it a scene of awful warfare and destruction.

"And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the foundations of waters;

There fell a great star from heaven, a great burning star falls upon a third part of the rivers and upon the fountains of the waters. A third part of the earth, a third part of the sea, now a third part of the rivers was subjected to judgments.

"And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter."

Star satan is called wormwood, that is, it is bitterness, because it will fill the world with bitter sorrow. A star is the symbol of a great leader, such a star as this, a blazing meteor, is a symbol of a leader who suddenly appears, rapidly does a terrible work, then disappears.

"And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise."

Now it is a third part of the sun, moon, and stars that are smitten, and darkness follows. The sun is the symbol of a great ruler, and the moon and stars of inferior rulers. If the Roman emperor should be cast from power, his empire withdrawn, the consuls, senators, and great men who supported his power would be cast down, and a period of intellectual and moral darkness would follow. It would freely meet the symbolism.

"And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabiters of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!"

This angel cried woe, woe, woe, because of some judgement yet to come, which would indicate these judgments from these seven angels were over.

I have written briefly of the symbols that are used in these few verses concerning this prophecy, now I will look to history to see if I can find anything that seems to answer these descriptions.

I will get the following information from the book, THE FALL OF ROME, written by E. Gibbon. I believe the destruction prophesied by the four great winds started about the year AD 400.

A people known as the Goths gathered out of the then unexplored north, and like a mighty torrent threw themselves like a mighty angry horde upon Rome.

Barbaric as the Indians of the desert, they left behind their march scarred, scorched, blackened, bloody, and desolate lands. Countries blooming like gardens were turned into treeless deserts. In AD 409 under Alaric, their king, they descended on Italy, which had not seen the face of a foreign ship for hundreds of years. Finally the armies gathered around the Imperial city. After a long

siege, the gates were opened, in the dead of the night, and the barbarians rushed in. For three days the terrible sack went on before they were glutted with blood and spoil. Then, their leader having been killed, they left, loaded with spoil.

The hail of war, the fire of burning towns and cities, mingled with the blood of slain defenders, the scorched and blackened lands denuded of their fruit trees, the grass trodden underfoot by the march of armies, all correspond surprisingly with the lanquaqe of the Scripture. This I believe is a remarkable fulfillment of the prophecy that follows the first trumpet.

"The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up."

The second trumpet implies a warfare upon the sea. The Goths completed their work about AD 409. About ten years later another mighty horde of warriors was sweeping south. The principal tribe was called the Vandals. They rushed over Gaul, swept through Spain, leaped over the narrow Straits of Gibraltar, and took northern Africa from the Roman dominion. Then they threw themselves like a burning mountain upon the sea and filled it with fire and blood. In order that they might assail Rome on the seas, and carry their armies to the islands and to Italy, they built fleets and fought for mastery of the Mediterranean. For 600 years no ship hostile to Rome had disputed the mastery of the sea, but now it becomes the theater of war. Fleets meet in battle, the sea is reddened with the blood of the slain, the Roman ensign goes down dyed in blood. The islands of the sea fall into the hands of the barbarians and, at last, nearly thirty years after the contest began, their fleet lands their armies in Italy, and they rush upon Rome. The city is besieged, falls, and for fourteen days a pitiless barbarian soldiery spare neither age or sex. The spoil gathered for eight hundred years, from a hundred conquered nations is carried away and loaded upon the Vandal fleets, and the blasted, scorched, pillaged capital is abandoned as unworthy to be held as a permanent possession. Surely these facts seem to fulfill the prophecy of the 2nd trumpet.

And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;

The star, or blazing meteor, that fell from heaven does imply some mighty leader who suddenly appears and enters on some baleful work; was there such a leader? Before AD 440 the Romans knew nothing of the Hungarian nation. About that time there suddenly appeared as a meteor would flash in the sky, a warrior upon the banks of the Danube, with eight hundred thousand fighting men under his banner. They had come from the depths of Central Asia, through Russia, and now knocked at the river boundary of the Roman Empire. Fighting their way across the Danube, they rushed westward, crossed the river Rhine, and the river Marne, were met in conflict by the hosts of Rome. The historians tell us that the blood of slaughtered soldiers made the river run with blood, and that from one hundred and fifty thousand to three hundred thousand bodies of the dead attested the fury of the conflict. Then they deserted the river Rhine, turning

southward on the banks of the river Rhone, the armies met again in combat. Then descending from the Alps, the fierce warrior, on the banks of the River Po, fought for the mastery of Italy. Victorious, he marched southward to seize the imperial prize. Unable to fight longer, by rich bribes and priestly deputation Rome got him to depart. He then made Buda, on the river Danube, his capitol, and founded the Hungarian nation. When he died, his followers turned the waters of the Danube from its course, buried him in its bed, then let the river return to flow over the grave of their hero. Beneath the waters of the river Danube still lie the bones of the star called Wormwood, that fell upon the rivers. The trumpets have blown, three awful blows have been struck,and the weakened empire is ready to fall when the fourth trumpet sounds. I believe this has fulfilled the prophecy of the third trumpet.

"And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of the waters;

and the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter."

"And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise."

The fourth trumpet, the Goths struck about AD 409, the Vandals from the sea about AD 422, Attila upon the rivers about AD 440. Next came the final invasion of that great Roman Empire. About AD 476 Odoacer, king of Herule, a northern race, seeing the apparent weakness of the falling empire, besieged and took the weakened city. The feeble emperor was hurled down, the Roman senate that had met for twelve hundred years, was driven from the senate chambers.

The mighty fabric of empire fell to the dust, and the great men were humbled never to rise again. Sun, moon, and stars, emperors, princes, and great men are smitten, lose their powers and cease to give light.

There now begins the period called by all historians the Dark Ages. The fall of Rome brought on this period, when intellectually and spiritually the day and night were darkened, when the minds of men were blinded, and when the church, falling gradually into apostasy, gave fourth for ages only a feeble light.

"And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabiters of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!"

I have tried to show the Judgements God sent upon the earth, that was prophesied in this vision to John. Now we can see by this 13th verse that more is yet to come. Whither we see all this clearly or exactly as it was, there is one thing these revelations should surely show us. Of all the many and wonderful blessings which God in his loving kindness and mercy has showered upon us, there is one we should think of above all. That is we escaped many of these terrible judgements and tribulations. I hope I thank my Lord that I am living now in this age. May God bless this writing for whatever purpose he had me write it, I pray it may be a comfort in a small way to some of the brethren.

In bonds of love,
Frank C. Hunt

VOICES OF THE PAST

From Elder Lambert's book, "Tried In The Furnace."

PASSING UNDER THE ROD
September, 1950

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

"And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant." Ezekiel 20:37.

I received a request some time ago from W.A. Chandler, Jonesboro, Louisiana, to write upon the text of Scripture quoted above. I undertake to do so fully aware of my inability, trusting that God will grace us with His Spirit to illuminate the mind with spiritual meditations. I have found by sad experience that I cannot command the Spirit at my will.

We desire to consider first, the people to whom this is addressed, the "YOU" in the text. We find this addressed only to the house of Israel. God spake through the prophets in olden times to the Israelites - national Israel. These same words are now applicable to spiritual Israel, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God." Spiritual Israel is now scattered in every nation, kindred, tongue and people throughout the earth. God is not speaking to every one of Adam's race, only to the Israelites. All the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments are addressed to God's children. They are the only ones who can receive them. You will note that all letters recorded in the New Testament are written to a people of certain characteristics. There is not a command, exhortation, invitation or promise recorded in the Bible without a character description attached thereto. I feel that I would be guilty of high treason before Almighty God should I attempt to apply any of the Scriptures as addressed to all of Adam's race. So, in this treatise I want the readers to consider that the "You" in the text applies to all who are included in the everlasting covenant, all those who shall finally be saved in heaven and immortal glory. Sometimes I think it may be boresome or monotonous to those who sit under the sound of my voice, or read my writings for me to stress the fact that all Scriptures contained in the Bible are written to God's people only.

Let us notice next, the "I" in the text. As stated above, it is God speaking. The One who created the heavens and the earth makes these assertions. The One who worked all things after the counsel of His own will is the author of these expressions. The One who doeth according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth decreed these things. The One who said, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it," spake these

words. He that speaks and it is done, commands and it stand fast, made these declarations. He has spoken it, He will also do it; He has purposed it, He will also bring it to pass!

Jehovah says, "I will cause you to pass under the rod." What does He mean by this statement? What is the rod, anyway? When I think of a rod I am reminded of the adage, "Spare the rod and spoil the child." I think of the proverb, "He that spareth his rod hatheth his son." The Lord chasteneth and scourgeth every son that he receiveth according to Hebrew 12:6. When I think of a rod I think of a whip. I think that troubles, trials, temptations, afflictions, tribulations, and all things that sorely oppress God's children are the smartings of the rod. These things do not come about accidentally. They do not occur haphazardly because God causes you to pass under them. They are in your path and you cannot escape them. God has ordained them for your good and even though they are not good to you, they are good for you. Some people would have you believe that trouble is solely of the devil, but I am persuaded that it is a blessing of God. He says through the Psalmist, "I will be with him in trouble." I dare say that your brightest experience immediately followed your greatest distress. According to the Psalmist, He makes the clouds his chariot. It is in the darkest hours that He appears to His people as their deliverer. We would not appreciate the bond were it not for the rod. We would not appreciate the staff were it not for the rod. David said, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." The rod beats us down to lean upon the staff, Christ Jesus. The chastening rod of Almighty God causes us to know the filthiness of our own righteousness, and how destitute we are of ability thus fitting us to call upon Him. When we are given to trust in Him, our past troubles then become a comfort to us, for we learn that God used even these as means to bring us unto this trust in Him. Paul said, "We glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulations worketh patience; and patience experience," etc. Paul realized that these tribulations were necessary means that God used in bringing us into that hope that maketh not ashamed. The rod is not applied to us in order to punish us for our sins, because Christ paid the penalty. This penalty is not against those who are encouched in the covenant, for Jesus satisfied the law in our stead. The rod is applied to us in order to make right. It is applied to us to whip us into the right path. It beats pride out of us and makes us humble. The effect of the rod is that we learn obedience. Paul told the Hebrews that Jesus learned obedience by things he suffered. If Jesus was taught obedience by the things He suffered is it a terrible thing that we should learn obedience the same way? Then surely it is a wonderful blessing indeed that He causes you to pass under the rod!

The last portion of the text is "I will bring you into the bond of the covenant." You will notice that our Lord said, "I will bring you into the bond of the covenant," not into the covenant.

I think all God's children were in the covenant in eternity before time. They have always been embraced and included in the covenant, having been chosen in Christ Jesus from before the foundation of the world, but they must pass under the rod before they can embrace the covenant and come into its relationship. You were chosen into the covenant but you must be brought into the bond of the covenant by the power of Almighty God.

What is the bond of the covenant? Could it be that precious hope that is experienced by you? When hungry and thirsty, your soul fainted in you and you were without hope and felt hell would be your just doom; God was gracious to you, He restored your soul and spoke sweet peace to you. Could the bond be that personal stamp of mercy and grace that is imprinted in your heart? Could the bond be the fruits of the spirit that characterizes God's children such as love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance? Could it be the shalls and wills of Jehovah that makes the covenant sure and certain to all those embraced therein?

I like to think of the shalls and wills of Jehovah. It is expressed in this covenant that "I will be to them, a God, and they shall be to me a people." God says in Psalm 91, I will set him on high...He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him. With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation." Jehovah promises, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." Space will not permit me to list the many shalls and wills of Jehovah that is now flooding my mind. Suffice it to say that there is not a single condition left for man to perform. Could the setting on high be the bond of the covenant? The rod brings us low and makes us to realize that we are in the miry pit, sinking down, seemingly, into perdition. All our feeble attempts sink us deeper and deeper. He comes to our rescue, takes us up out of the pit and sets our feet upon the rock, Christ Jesus. Is it not a setting on high to see Jesus as our Savior? Is it not an elevation to be raised from the fellowship of this world to the fellowship of the children of God? I well remember the joy experienced by me when the church received me into their fellowship. It is indeed a high place to be graced by the Spirit to sing praises unto Him, to pray to Him, to meditate upon His wonderful promises to the children of men, to write and preach His wonderful doctrine of love and grace! Could the bond of the covenant be the full fruition of it? Could it be heaven and immortal glory that awaits you who are kept by the power of God? Could it be the final fulfillment of all the obligations and vows expressed in the covenant that will be experienced in eternity after this time world?

I am persuaded that the bond of the covenant is the earnest of the inheritance that is experienced by God's children here in time. This foretaste of His love is sweet. The experiences of these many deliverances are wonder-

ful. The few moments spent in prayer are sacred. The joy of His fellowship is sublime. The tie that binds us together in sweet fellowship one with another is great. All His gifts are matchless. These fleeting moments of enjoyment make us yearn and look forward toward the prize of the high calling when we shall quit the walks of men and be received into the full fellowship of God and all His dear little children.

I submit these few columns over my signature to the readers of the Signs trusting that God will bless as He sees fit. May I add that I have been much concerned about this periodical. I feel it a high honor to be on the editorial staff because I feel that God has blessed it to the comfort of Zion for more that a century. Its writers are contending for the same things that the writers were in 1832. May God bless us to make an attempt to enlarge its circulation. God has blessed it to be the oldest and best periodical of its kind among us and I deem it worthy of our support.

Now may the grace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, the sweet communion of the Holy Spirit, be ours to grace us with a godly walk in this life, choosing our changes in this life, and making us submissive to His choice. May He comfort us across the chilly waters of death and finally receive us up into the better clime where no sin or shame shall be, is my prayer if not deceived.

Elder E.J. Lambert

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OBITUARIES

FANNIE MAE HARPER

March 25, 1896 - June 15, 1994

Fannie Mae (Parker) Harper, a member of Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church since April 12, 1950 was called to her eternal home on June 15, 1994 at the age of 98.

She was a devout member of her church, stern in her belief, and de-

sired to hold steadfast to the principles and doctrine the Primitive Baptist had practiced and preached since she could remember. Though her mind and body had grown weary with age, she still had a desire to attend her meetings on fourth weekends, and did so with very few exceptions, last attending in March prior to her death in June.

She was graciously cared for at home by her son and daughter-in-law, Lester and Isabel Harper, until the last few weeks when the hospital and nursing home were required by her doctor. To her family, the church wishes to convey our sympathy and say to you "a job well done" in caring for your loved one in the confines of her home.

Her funeral was conducted at Johnson Funeral Home, Fairview Chapel, by her beloved pastor Elder Henry Jones assisted by Elder Lester Eason. Interment followed in Pineview Cemetery, Rocky Mount, N.C.

In addition to her son and his wife, she is survived by two grandchildren, John who resides in North Carolina and Frank of Wisconsin and two great grandchildren.

We at Pleasant Hill mourn her death as she has been taken from our midst-but rejoice for her as we do have a sincere hope she is resting in the arms of the Saviour she so much liked to talk about.

Written at the request of Pleasant Hill Church in conference June, 1994.

J. Carroll Williams

HENRY VERNON JENKINS

I was appointed by Flat Swamp Church to write the obituary of Brother Henry Vernon Jenkins, who died March 13, 1994. He was born near Robersonville, N.C. on May 25, 1909, the son of Chalmers D. and Hettie Jenkins. He spent his entire life in this community, where he was a hard worker, a good neighbor, faithful husband, and loved father.

Brother Vernon was married to Mary Johnson on October 13, 1931. They were blessed with only one child, David, who was a very close and devoted son. Davis later married and they were blessed with only one child. Davis' wife, Betty Ann, was more like a daughter to Brother Vernon and Sister Mary. In their sickness, while Davis had to work, she did all she could to make their afflictions as easy as possible. Brother Vernon lived with his son for some time until his condition got so they could no longer take care of him, and he was put in a nursing home in Windsor, where he died.

Brother Vernon joined Flat Swamp Primitive Baptist Church on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1970. His wife also joined that day, and they were baptized by Elder J.T. Prescott and Elder N.L. Ambrose. Brother Vernon was a very strong and faithful member, always willing to visit and go as messenger from his church. He and his wife made their home a place of rest for lots of visitors from far and near. Brother Vernon was ordained to deacon at Flat Swamp on

Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1972. He made the church a good and dependable deacon.

I was exceptionally close to Brother Vernon as we lived near each other and were blessed to visit often. He did many things for me which were very special, and I will never forget. His wife, Sister Mary, died on January 7, 1982, and she and Brother Vernon were so close he grieved so much and just gradually felt he had nothing to live for. I visited him often after her death and hope I helped in some small way. I miss him as a brother deacon and as a true friend.

His funeral services were held by his pastor Elder Joe Sawyer at Biggs Funeral Home in Robersonville. He was laid to rest in Robersonville Cemetery where the flowers and friends showed how much he was loved.

We miss him very much, but feel he is at rest in that which the Lord had prepared for him and him for it.

Brother Vernon leaves to mourn his passing the one son, one brother and one sister. We of Flat Swamp extend our deepest sympathy to the family.

Done by the order of Conference Saturday before the first Sunday in June.

Hassel Allen, Committee
Elder Joe Sawyer, Moderator

SISTER ELSIE C. TURNER

At His appointed time God, in his mercy, saw cause to carry home the spirit of our beloved sister in Christ, Elsie Cox Turner, and thus bring to a close her earthly toils and suffering, at the age of 70.

Sister Turner was born on May 27, 1924 in Patrick County, Virginia, a daughter of the late Charlie Cox and Sis. Nannie Hall Cox. At the age of 16 she was united in marriage to James Ervin Turner. Their union brought forth one son, J.D. Turner, who now lives in Scottsmoor, Florida.

On the third Saturday in April 1960 she related a lovely experience of Grace to Goblintown Church. She was received into fellowship and baptized the next day by the late Elder Bennie Clifton. For the remainder of her lifetime she was a loyal and faithful member who was truly blessed to manifest her faith by her works. She had a good report of all who knew her, both within and without the church. Her memory will long be cherished by all of us who knew and loved her for Christ's sake.

Following a long and very painful illness, Sister Turner died in the hospital at Martinsville, Va. on July 25, 1994. Her funeral service was conducted on July 28 at Collins Funeral Home Chapel by her pastor. She was laid to rest in the Cox Family Cemetery, just a short distance from Goblintown Church. There, she now sleeps the peaceful sleep of the redeemed, waiting for the appearing of her Blessed Redeemer.

In addition to her husband and son, Sister Turner was survived by three grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, one sister, Sister Addie C. Wright of Martinsville, and a goodly number of nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by six brothers and four sisters.

It was agreed that three copies of this memorial record be prepared: one for the church records, one for her family and one to be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Goblintown Church in conference the 20th day of August 1994.

Elder John T. Wingfield, Moderator
Sister Lena Clark. Clerk

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THE UNCLOUDED DAY

I dreamed one night of a storm so dark
And saw I had no shelter to use
The raging storm deadly and stark
Was for me a time of earthly dues

I felt great horror and deathly fear
Feeling my end would surely come
Yet through the storm a break so clear
And I thought of a Heavenly home

It sumed a voice loud and plain
Said " The sun still shines out of sight "
I know my soul searching was in vain
And I longed for more revealing light

Alas I feel I saw a city fair
In wonder I lay amazed
For all was peace with who were there
Having no troubles to mar the days

I hope some day to see that beautiful place
With the fulness of the single eye
And know I have finished this earthly race
To dwell forever with the Saints on high

The brighness of the glory of the Son
Will light that entire world of bliss
And Heaven shall ring with praise of one
Who for the love shared with us Graces' kiss

We long for such a perfect time
As we travel a pilgrim's road
Oftimes wandering here as if totally blind
Carrying a burden of such carnal load

At last a home of rest our own
His promise eternal and true
That we have a portion of even His throne
We then can praise forever as praise is due

We find on record in Samuel 23 and 4
A time waited for after losing our shrouds
And see and be with our Christ forever-more
As a perfect morning without clouds

With thanks for such a day,
Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

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EDITORIAL

WILLIAM COWPER

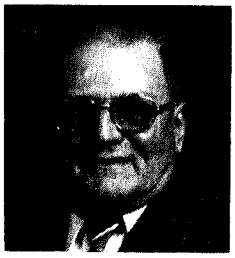
ELDER C.B. DAVIS, JR.

Cowper was born at Berkhampstead in Hertfordshire on Nov. 15, 1731. He started his schooling at 10 years age in Westminster School learning Latin and Greek being taught by a Dr. Nicholls who was thought by all to be the best in religions discipline. The students in the school were touched by his manner and yet Cowper felt something was lacking. He writes that in his childish way he tried to pray in secret and was frightened at his own insensibility for lack of effect.

The mother of Cowper had died when he was about six years old and this struck a dreadful blow to his life. When 13 he had a severe case of smallpox and after much suffering desired death. This brought about a feeling of rejection as far as God was concerned and he began days of lying and cheating until 18 years old. He was forced to leave Westminster and returned home to find no peace of mind. He was sent to law school at age 21 and his studies of law but further condemned him.

The father of Cowper died when he was 25 and still in school. This came as another blow to his reasoning concerning religion and his spiritual welfare. He remained in a terrible state of depression because of sin and his

doubts about the mercies of God and at this time he suffered his first attack of insanity. He existed in this state of mind for a period of time and losing all interest in what he had studied turned his thoughts to suicide. He felt if he destroyed his body of weakness and sorrow that all would be well.

Cowper did not realize he had now been overtaken by the Schoolmaster of Grace and his weakness of body and mind was but teaching him in a strange but an effectual way. God has His way of bringing understanding to His own and no matter how impatient we may be, in His own time and season He gives the spirit a sense of peace. There Cowper still from time to time was bent on self destruction because of the continuing doubts that satan was sending him in his nights of no sleep. He now set forth a plan to bring an end to it all.

In November of 1763 he purchased half an ounce of laudanum (a tincture of opium) which was deadly poison. He went into the field near his home and lay down in a ditch planning to drink the poison. His thoughts turned to the beasts of the field and the scavenger he knew would devour his body and arose and returned to the house. He placed the vial on a bedside table and lay down on the bed and while reaching for the poison was startled by a knock on the door. In the excitement of the fear of being caught in the act he tries to hide the vial and pours out the contents on the floor.

This attempt being prevented he designed that he would hang himself. He took a garter strap and placed it around his neck and while standing in a chair hooked the strap over the top of the tall door. He then kicked the chair away and beginning to lose his consciousness thought that at last his peace had come. He did not yet realize that his peace was procured in the death of Christ rather than death to himself. The strap broke and he fell to the floor and was heard by a cleaning woman in his struggles. His plan was thwarted again but now he had a bruised streak around his neck and both eyes black from the clotted blood.

The friends of Cowper now seeing his wounds became very concerned about his desires of self destruction and tried to console and comfort him not knowing that man cannot console such a mind and spirit in despair. Cowper now calls a coachman and hires him to take him to Tower Wharf in order that he drown himself. When they arrived the tide was out and there was not enough water to effect drowning. He asks the coachman to carry him to another location but due to a blinding fog and night's darkness they became lost. The hand of Grace again is manifest and when Cowper leaves the coach he finds himself at his own home.

God now gave him understanding that all the times he tried and failed was indeed Divine intervention. He now declared that thus did He (God) break me and bind me up; then did He wound me and make me whole. He now began to rejoice and praise a God who was so merciful. His delight throughout his remaining years would be his work in poetry giving thanks

and praise always. In such a mind of relief of his burdens he goes to his desk and writes the hymn - God Moves in a Mysterious Way which is considered one of his greatest. He wrote and had published in the Olney Hymn book sixty eight wonderful hymns of praise and thanksgiving.

Cowper became acquainted with John Newton in 1767 and they enjoyed a treasured friendship discussing their experiences and both writing their poetry. He and Newton labored in a bond of love in the church and in poetry and Newton's death left a void in the life of Cowper from which he never recovered.

This information taken from a book on the lives of the hymn writers printed in the 1800's. Humbly submitted for the enjoyment of those who rejoice in giving praise to an eternal God.

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

ROMANS 15 : 1 - 4.

WE then that are strong ouget to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

2 Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.

3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

ARTICLES

WILLIAM GADSBY

his is the last will and testament of the William Gadsby, of the township of Cheetham, in the parish of Manchester, in the county of Lancaster, Baptist minister of the everlasting gospel of God our Saviour, by the matchless grace of God, through the invincible power of God the Holy Ghost, made and published as follows: that is to say,

First, I am brought firmly to believe and maintain that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the Word of God, and the only certain rule of faith and practice. And I also further observe that : I firmly believe in Three equal Persons, namely, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost, in one glorious undivided Jehovah; and that each glorious Person is an object of spiritual worship, and is loved, praised and adored as such by all the heaven-born family of God; and that a denial of this glorious truth is altogether Anti-Christian, and repugant to the glory of God. I also believe in the glorious doctrine of absolute, personal and unconditional election; and that God's dear elect were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, both to grace and glory.

I believe in effectual grace in calling; and that God the Holy Ghost both has made and will make all the elect willing in the day of God's power. I believe that all the sins of the elect are absolutely pardoned through the glo-

rious atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ; and that their persons are justified in His glorious righteousness, without any idea as to their works, worth or worthiness as the cause, in any sense whatever, of their justification before God, but absolutely in and by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them; and that they stand complete in Christ. I believe in the eternal and inseparable union of the elect to the Lord Jesus Christ, as the glorious Head of the church. I believe that all spiritual blessings are treasured up in Christ, and that all grace and glory, necessary for the holiness and happiness of God's elect, are secured in Christ for them, and made sure to them.

I believe that nothing short of the divine quickening power and special teachings of God the Holy Ghost can make a sinner spiritually acquainted with the glorious truths of God's grace; and that all religion short of that which God the Spirit teacheth and leadeth into by His glorious, quickening, enlightening, teaching, guiding, anointing sealing power is at best but a fair show in the flesh; and every elect sinner must have his fleshly religion rooted up by the roots,to be fuel for the fire, in the day when God purgeth His people "by the spirit of burning" (Isa.4.4); for every real believer in Christ must and shall in this world have his works tried by fire (I Cor. 3.15).

I believe that the kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom in all its bearings; and that God the Spirit sets up and maintains the kingdom of grace in the hearts of all His people, and by His invincible power enables them to give God the whole of the glory. I believe that while God's quickened children remain in this vale of tears, there will be a constant warfare between flesh and Spirit, the old man and the new, but that "grace shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life." I believe that when God's people walk contrary to the will of God in Christ, as the Lord and Head of the church, He will visit (as a Father) their transgressions with the rod; nevertheless, He will not cease to love them, nor suffer faithfulness to fail. I believe in the final perseverance of all real saints to glory.

I believe in believers' baptism, by immersion, to the total exclusion of infant sprinkling; and that the Lord's supper is a privilege belonging to the church of Christ, to show forth the death of Christ till He come.

I believe in the resurrection of the body, both of the just and the unjust; and that the bodies of the saints will rise a glorious body, like unto the body of Christ, and that they shall live and reign with Him in glory, in the presence of the Three-one undivided Jehovah, for ever and ever. I believe in the last judgment and eternal punishment of all the ungodly.

The above solemn truths in direct union to and immediately connected with them, I firmly believe and maintain; and I pray that, if it be the will of God, the Lord will make all my dear family acquainted with the same.

(From January Gospel Standard, 1994)

VOICES OF THE PAST

FALLEN ANGELS

ALEXANDER D.C. JAN. 15, 1840

Our attention has been called to the subject of the "fallen angels which kept not their first estate", Etc. by Brother Gaines, of Kentucky, who desires our views on Jude 6, and 2 Peter 2:4. It is rather a thankless undertaking to set forth our views upon a subject on which we must necessarily come in collision with the long established opinions and deep rooted traditions of others, among whom are to be found some friends for whose opinions and feelings we entertain sentiments of the greatest regard. When called upon, as to the present case, however, we feel bound to set before our readers such views as we have.

The celebrity of Milton's views, as given in his "Paradise Lost" has become universal. A few men of our age are found able to compete with that distinguished poet in eloquence of style or language, few have ventured the risk of their own popularity by offering a different view of the subject from that which he has given, while at the same time a child may easily detect and expose the fallacy of his reasoning concerning the angels. We have not been able to see with Milton and others, either beauty or scriptural authority for the notion that the angels here spoken of were ever residents of that heaven above, where the saints are ultimately to rest, nor that they had an existence prior to that date to which God created the heavens and the earth, and all the hosts of them - to believe that they were once associated with those holy angels that sang the joyful anthems to the shepherds in Judea; nor to believe that in their creation they were created for or capacitated to enjoy the immediate presence of their maker, or that he designed them for any other purpose than that which is and shall be fully accomplished in their case, to us seems to conflict seriously with divine relation. Can we rationally suppose that the place originally provided for one description of beings shall ultimately be occupied by another so essentially different, without relinquishing the doctrine of the immutability of God. Or, if the saints are finally to occupy a place originally prepared for the devil and his angels, how can it be said in truth that the heavenly kingdom was prepared for the saints before the foundation of the world, when, according to Milton, it was not known that the place would be vacated until the world was founded, and the decree of bringing his Only Begotten into the world, and that all the angels should worship him? Again, would not the saints feel sad in prospect of being placed where angels could not stay? If a higher order or beings, holy, happy, and in a place where temptation and sin could not enter, and such beings as could have no predisposition to sin, did fall from that estate, and were cast over the battlements of glory, wouldn't the poor

lambs of Jesus who have all their lifetime been tormented with temptation and struggling against inbred corruptions, have great cause to fear that they also might fall from the height of glory and sink at last among the damned? But lest we be tedious, we will leave the negative part of our subject, and give our opinion of the angels.

By the angels that kept not their first estate, we understand the children of the devil. Satan is called an angel, and sometimes transforms himself into an angel of light; and as far as we have been able to discover from revelation all the names by which he is known in the scriptures are applicable to his seed. Hence satan is called "That old serpent, which is the devil and satan, "(Rev. 20:2) his children are also called "a generation of Vipers," (Matt. 3:7) also 23:33. So also is Satan called an angel, and in Rev. 12:7, his children are also thus denominated; "There was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought, and his angels."

The term angel also signifies messenger, and hence every emissary of Satan employed to disseminate heresy, to oppose the gospel of Christ, to afflict and persecute the children of God, are properly denominated as his angels. It can be by no means difficult to perceive that the dragon and his angels, mentioned in Rev. 12, are designed to show the power of darkness in array against the cause and church of Christ. Michael, the only archangel spoken of in the bible, is none other than Christ; his angels are those who are denominated. "The remnant of her (the church's seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" - Rev. 12:17. Admitting then, as we are compelled to do, that the disciples of Christ, in this case, are his angels, it is perfectly plain that the opposite angels are those unto whom Christ said, "Ye are of your father, the devil" (John 8:44). These two descriptions of angels, in our opinion, include the whole human family; the chosen generation, or that seed which Jesus saw when he poured out his soul unto death; a seed that should serve him, and that should be counted to him for a generation; these constitute the one family, and are all in time born of a spiritual birth, by the Holy Ghost, and when discipled in the ranks of the followers of the Lamb are known as his angels, keeping the commandments of God, and having the testimony of Jesus Christ. In the other division are found all who are without, such as dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. (Rev. 22: 15) These are called the seed of the serpent, (Gen. 3:15) a generation of vipers, etc.; and these are known as the dragon's angels. The angels spoken of by Peter and Jude, we understand to be such as were found in the family of national Israel, and were then known as false prophets, children of Belial, etc. Their first estate, confining the idea to those angels, was intermixed with the people of God under the legal covenant; here they had an habitation in Abraham's house, claiming him to their father, as when they come to John's baptism

(Matt. 3) and as they asserted and Christ admitted. (John 8:33-44). Both Peter and Jude, in the connection of our subject, are found exhorting their brethren to beware of false teachers, which admonition they enforce by the example of these angels; and then, going still further back, they mention the destruction of the old world, and the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, etc., the judgement of which our Lord had said was more tolerable than that which awaited Jerusalem and the other cities of Judea.

We shall be understood to believe that the first estate and their own habitation of these angels was in the worldly sanctuary under the ceremonial law. Here they had rights in common with the rest of Abraham's carnal seed, of which they were not dispossessed until the breaking up of that disposition. The manner of their leaving their own habitation and losing their first estate is very clearly illustrated in Rev. 12. It had long been foretold that the day would dawn on Israel, when the children of God should, in a clearer light discern between those who served God and those that served him not; at length the voice of one crying in the wilderness is heard, the morning star sheds forth a glimmering light; the day spring from on high visits the benighted Jew. The people that sat in darkness discovered a light; and our Lord says, that which maketh manifest is light. To their great amazement, there appeared a great wonder in heaven a woman clothed in the sun, elevated above the moon, etc. By which we understand the church of Christ, emerging from Judaism, and brought, by John's preaching and baptism, to view in her connection with Christ, into whose name John baptized them, and thus raised above that ordained to rule the night dispensation of the old covenant, whose borrowed rays were given through prophecy, types and figures, pointed forward to the day of our Lord Jesus. Above this moon the church was discovered in her connection with Christ her Son, and eventually the Head of the church, or woman, crowned with a crown of twelve stars. The church now looking forth as the morning. Cant. 6:10. According to the similitude of the morning, from the appearing of John, who was the day star, or harbinger of the rising Sun, the light must increase; and as the light became more clear, other objects were also discovered. The seed of the woman is born, Christ appears in the flesh as the promised Messiah, or as the archangel Michael; the Prince that standeth for the children of thy people. (Dan. 12:1) The same light that revealed the Redeemer coming out of Zion to turn away ungodliness form Jacob, made manifest the dragon, as first personated by Herod, standing before the woman, for to devour the child as soon as it should be born. "And there was war in heaven". Not in the world of glory above, nor in the Gospel Church, but in that heaven where these things appeared, viz. Israel. Christ is now born, has taken his place at the head of his little flock at Jordan, where he

was recognized by John and his disciples, as their head and ruler, their leader and king, by the descent of the Spirit like a dove, and the voice of the Father, who from his awful throne and majesty proclaims, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Immediately after this revelation of the Son of God, Christ was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil; and on this occasion the war broke out. Michael, the archangel, contended with the devil, the dispute was then, and has continued ever since to be about the body of Moses, i.e., the law. Here the great Captain of salvation leads on to battle, followed by his angels; the dragon also marshals his troops. "And the dragon, fought, and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the devil and satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." In view of this glorious triumph Jesus said to his disciples, when they returned and said,:Lord even devils are subject to us through thy name.: "I beheld satan as lightening fall from heaven. Nevertheless, rejoice not that devils are made subject to you, (or are cast down) but rather that your names are written in heaven; that you were not included in the number of the vanquished." Here then is where the angels that sinned left their own habitation and their first estate. "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony," etc. In anticipation of this glorious victory, the prophet cries,: Awake, awake! put on the strength O Zion. Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the daughters of the uncircumcised and the unclean. "Isa. 52:1. "There, rejoice ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and sea; for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. "Rev. 12:12. The vanquished legions of the old serpent are cast down, and are held under chains of darkness, unto the judgement of the great day. All the angels of satan are thus bound in chains of darkness and Jesus rejoiced in spirit that it was so, saying, "Thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou has hid these things form the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes." Not all the infant Schools, Sabbath or Theological Schools, Missions, Tract or even Bible Societies with all their machinery, brake asunder these everlasting fetters of ignorance of spiritual things, to which the devil and his angels are doomed; nor can all the preaching, praying or exhortations, anxious benches or protracted meetings, conducted by men or angels, ever make one of these fallen angels

wise unto salvation; they are chained, and in fetters of darkness they must remain for ever. Those angels particularly alluded to by Peter and Jude, were in a special manner chained in darkness concerning the true Messiah, the spirituality of his Kingdom, and particularly in regard to the fulfillment of these predictions of the destruction of Jerusalem, of their consequent judgment at that time, and of all those signs which should indicate the near approach of the judgment of that great and terrible day. From all these considerations, let the saints throughout all subsequent time be admonished. The destruction of these false teachers and prophets among the Jews, as also the destruction of the old world, the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, were all presented by these faithful prophets as examples of what should be developed in the last days, when perilous times should come; when false teachers should come among the saints, bringing in damnable heresies and doctrines of devils, when they should turn away from the truth, and be turned unto fables; (crafts, fictitious stories, dairymen's daughters, and the like) and when they with feigned words, (professing great reverence for God, and extravagant love for souls, etc.) shall make merchandise of the saints; but the apostle adds, *"their judgement now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."*

"But on! their end, their dreadful end,
Thy sanctuary taught me so;
On slippery rocks I see them stand,
And fiery billows roll below."

Elder Gilbert Beebe

VOICES OF THE PAST

From Elder Lamberts book, "Tried In The Furnace".

BAPTISM
February, 1951

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

The subject of baptism has been a subject of great controversy throughout the centuries. Many false and erroneous theories have been advocated which have tended to confuse the minds of God's little children. This is due to the fact that theologians have attempted to supplant a theological meaning of the term that is foreign to the classical meaning in order to prop up their false theories in trying to hinge salvation on the volition and work of the creature. This has narrowed the conception of the term, baptism, to that ceremonial use of water to admit members into an organized body here upon earth termed the church. I do not believe the term is so narrow in its scope. When I think of baptism I like to meditate upon the classical meaning instead of the theological use of the term.

To baptize is to immerse, submerge, envelope, overwhelm or sink; to dip,

wash, or drench; to consecrate; to completely subdue. This is the essence of the classical meaning. Even theologians who advocate sprinkling as the proper mode of baptism admit this. I think that baptism in literal water is figurative and typical of the baptism that is essential unto salvation. No man is able, empowered or authorized to do that. This is the work of God.

I want to call your attention to one Scripture that will conclusively prove that water baptism is not meant every time the term is used in the Scriptures. Jesus said as recorded in Luke 12:50, "But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." The word straitened means pained. He was undoubtedly speaking of His baptism in death. He was speaking of the time when death would envelop Him, when He would be overwhelmed with suffering and submerged into death. This statement was made approximately two years after His baptism in Jordan. (I think His baptism in Jordan was pointing to, and figurative of, His baptism in death.)

Now, let us consider Romans 6:3. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" Paul did not say or hint at water in this expression. If Paul had said, know ye not that as many of us as were baptized in water were baptized in Jesus Christ and into His death; then, the modern theorists would have something to base their arguments upon. Since he did not say this, let us take for granted that he said what he meant and meant what he said. He said, "were baptized into Jesus Christ." Can any man immerse one into Jesus Christ? We may baptize in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost but man cannot baptize into Jesus Christ. I believe that God chose His people in Christ in the annals of eternity before time ever began. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4). "Whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son" (Rom. 8:29). The entire family of God was baptized into the body of Christ by God, our Father. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body: so is Christ. For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body" (Cor. 12:12, 13). "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:10). If we were chosen in Him, created in Him, and baptized in Him, we were mysteriously in Him being bone of His bone as He accomplished the law to a jot and tittle while He sojourned in this world of sin and sorrow. I believe that as Jesus performed the law to a jot and tittle, Jehovah could see the entire family of God performing it as they were members of His body, being baptized in Him. The one baptism spoken of in Ephesians 4:5 is that performed by God, the Father in the Son through the operation of the Spirit upon His children. This baptism is essential unto salvation but cannot be performed by man.

Yes, God's children were "baptized into His death." They went down with

Him into death because they were chosen, created, and baptized in Him. If we be children of God we paid the penalty of death in Him! This being true, justice is completely satisfied in Him for each and every child of God. Nothing can be charged to them.

We have touched upon the subject of baptism relative to all the family of God being baptized at once together into Jesus Christ and into His death. Now, we want to meditate upon the experimental phase of baptism. We want to consider the individual, personal baptism that is experienced by each and every child of God. This experimental phase of baptism is progressive in its application as we shall see, the Lord willing. It begins in regeneration and ends in the immortalization of the body. John preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins as recorded in Mark 1:4. All those who made manifest that they were in possession of this baptism by confessing their sins he baptized in the river Jordan, (Mark 1:5) which was an outward manifestation of being in this condition. The rule is according to the words of Jesus as recorded in Mark 16:16, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." The form of the verb used shows that it is not water baptism that is under consideration. The present tense of the verb shows that it is a condition they are now in. They are overwhelmed, immersed, or enveloped now. Are they now enveloped in water by the administrator? No, they are now enveloped in repentance by the Holy Ghost! This being submerged in repentance affects the cry for deliverance or salvation from their sins. This salvation is promised in this statement by Jesus. The hope of each child of God, who is so baptized in repentance by the Holy Ghost, is salvation from their sins through the merits of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. When one is baptized in water he outwardly manifests this condition and hope through the grace of the Father, the merits of the Son, and guidance, operation and revelation of the Holy Spirit.

"John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire" (St. Luke 3:16). The effect of the Holy Spirit baptism is regeneration. The souls of God's people are baptized into death and resurrected unto life here in time; and, the bodies of God's people shall be baptized into death and resurrected unto life immortal into the great beyond - the end of this sphere of time. This is that for which we patiently wait and hope.

The natural soul trusts in natural man being inspired by the natural carnal spirit. This is the soul that sins. It shall die (Ezek. 18:4). All people are born naturally in this condition. When it pleases God to baptize the soul of one of His people by the Holy Spirit, He kills and makes spiritually alive the soul. Yes, the soul is overwhelmed, immersed, and submerged into death and resurrected into a new life. The soul that has been so wrought upon by the Holy Spirit shall

never die. It is a new creature. According to Psalms 107 the experience of the redeemed is, "Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their troubles and he delivered them out of their distresses." This is brought about by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We read in Luke 3:3, "And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." This does not say baptism of water but of repentance. This means that you must be overwhelmed, submerged, and immersed with repentance. It is a godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of (2 Cor. 7:10). When you are overwhelmed with repentance you abhor yourself; you repent in dust and ashes. When you abhor yourself you die to the love of self. You sink into despair; you are immersed in trouble and distresses. As He did not leave Christ in the grave He does not leave your soul in despair but raises it up a new soul. This is verified in Psalms 23:3, "He restoreth my soul." You are then a new creature motivated by a spiritual soul. The mortal soul which is subject to death, has been baptized with immortality. This makes the soul immortal. Now, you are an immortal soul dwelling in a mortal body. This body has not yet been baptized with immortality. That will be the crowning work of the Holy Spirit.

Paul says in Romans 7:24, "Oh wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Paul realized the sinfulness and mortality of his body. All God's children are possessed with the thorn in the flesh and infirmities of the flesh. Our bodies are subject to weaken and die. We cannot do the things we would because of the evil that is present in our fast decaying bodies. The body becomes lame and tottery with age. Our bodies become weak because of disease. Our natural eyes become dim and our natural ears deafen. Our memory fails and our ability to comprehend is affected. Our natural minds fail to function as they once did. I feel that as we experience these things we become more and more desirous of the immortalization of the bodies. "Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. (Rom. 8:23). Yes, the bodies of the saints shall be baptized into death and shall be completely submerged, enveloped, swallowed up, or baptized with immortality. "So, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15: 54). This will be the answer to the prayer as recorded in 1 Thess. 5: 23, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The baptism in water is figurative of this baptism that is essential unto salvation. This is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God: which is a figure of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. See 1st Peter 3:21. There are two kinds of conscience. There is a natural conscience and there is a Holy Spirit

conscience. A good conscience is a Holy Spirit conscience. I believe that God's people are wrought upon by His Spirit and are made anxious to follow Jesus in baptism. They are desirous to outwardly manifest this faith in the Father baptizing them in the Son by the Spirit by submitting themselves to baptism in water in the name of the Father, and the son, and the Holy Ghost. As the candidate for baptism is passive in the hands of the administrator in the act of baptism in water, so he manifests that he is passive in the hand of God in Holy Spirit baptism which is essential unto salvation. He manifests his faith in being in Christ as He went down into the grave and came up out of the grave. As baptism into Jesus Christ and into His death is the door of entrance into the Church which is the one invisible body including all the children of God, so baptism in water is the door of entrance into the church in its organized form upon earth.

John required those whom he baptized to bring forth fruit worthy of repentance. I believe such characters are the only ones worthy to be received into the organized Church. When one comes confessing his sins, and considering himself as the chief of sinners and less than the least of all saints, speaking of his unworthiness, my heart goes out to him and I am given to fellowship him. When such an one comes testifying that his hopes for salvation from sins is solely based on the grace of God and the merits of the Lord Jesus, I consider him as a proper subject for baptism in water into the fellowship of the organized Church. None but those who have been baptized with repentance would come bringing such testimony from the heart desiring a home with God's people. The Church receives such into their fellowship and one properly ordained will gladly administer the ordinance to that character.

I realize that I have just hinted upon this grand subject. These thoughts are my earnest and conscientious convictions. If they be true, may God be praised. If they be false, charge them to my ignorance and vain imaginations. May God bless this to your comfort and edification, if it be His will, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Elder E.J. Lambert

LAW AND GOSPEL

(Part of a letter by J. C. Philpot, 1861.)

My dear Sir – In one of your letters you express the wish that I should give my views upon this point – Why, in my judgment, the law is not a believer's rule of life . . . In doing so I shall take occasion to offer my thoughts on these three distinct points–

1. Why the law is not the believer's rule of life.
2. What is his rule?
3. Disprove the objection cast upon us that our views lead to doctrinal or practical antinomianism.

By a believer, I understand one who by faith in Christ is delivered from the curse and bondage of the law, and who knows something experimentally of the life, light, liberty, and love of the

glorious gospel of the grace of God. By the law I understand chiefly, though not exclusively, the law of Moses. And by the rule of life I understand an outward or inward guide, by following which a believer directs his walk and conversation before God, the Church, and the world.

It is very necessary to bear strictly in mind that we are speaking here wholly and solely of a believer. What has the law to do with a believer in Christ Jesus? Is he required by the revealed will of God to take the law as the guiding rule of his life? I answer, No; and for several reasons.

1. God does not leave us at liberty to take at will one part of the law and to leave the other. It must be taken as a whole, or left as a whole, for God has so revealed it. I cannot find in any part of God's Word any mitigation of its terms, or any halving of it, so that, according to the views of many divines who have written on the subj ect, we may be dead to it as a covenant, and yet alive to it as a rule. The essential and distinguishing characteristic of the law is that it is a covenant of works, requiring full and perfect obedience, and attaching a tremendous curse to the least infringement of its commands. If then I, as a believer, take the law as my rule of life, I take it with its curse; I put myself under its yoke, for in receiving it as my guide, (and if I do not this, it is not my rule), I take it with all its conditions and become subject to all its penalties . . . The indispensable connection between a covenant and its rules is clearly shown in Gal. v. 1-6, where the apostle testifies to "every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law". It is idle to talk of taking the law for a rule of life, and not for a covenant; for the two things are essentially inseparable; and as he who keeps the whole law and yet offends in one point, is guilty of all (James ii. 10), so he who takes but one precept of the law for his rule, (as the Galatians took that of circumcision), by taking that one, virtually adopts the whole, and by adopting the whole puts himself under the curse which attaches to their infringement.

People speak very fluently about the law being a rule of life who little think of the resulting consequences; for amongst them is this, that its written precepts and not its mere spirit, must be the rule. Now, these precepts belong to it only as a covenant for they were never disjoined by the Authority that gave them, and what God hath joined together no man can put asunder. To show this connection between the precepts and the covenant is the chief drift of the Epistle to the Galatians, who were looking to the law and not the gospel, and having begun in the Spirit were attempting to be made perfect by the flesh. Read with enlightened eyes, this blessed Epistle would at once decide in favour of the gospel as our guiding rule of Christian conduct as distinct from the law which was never given to believers in Christ as the rule of their daily conduct and conversation. Observe how Paul chides those who would so act; he calls them "foolish

Galatians", and asks who hath bewitched them that they should not obey the truth (that is, the gospel), "before whose eyes Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth, crucified among them". He appeals to their own experience and asks them: "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?" He draws a line of distinction here between those works which are done in obedience to the law as a guiding rule, and that power of God felt in the heart which attends a preached gospel when heard in faith, and asks them under which of the two they had received the teaching and testimony of the blessed Spirit. But observe, further, now he bids them "walk in the Spirit" (Gal. v. 16). Now, to "walk" is to live and act, and the rule which he here gives for this living and acting is not the law but the Spirit, and he tells them the blessedness of this divine leading and guiding: "If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law"; that is, neither as a covenant or as a rule – that they were free from its curse as a condemning covenant, and from its commands as a galling yoke, which neither they nor their fathers could bear (Acts xv. 10). But to show them that this deliverance from the law did not set them free from a higher and more perfect rule of obedience, he bids them "fulfill the law of Christ", which is love, a fruit of the Spirit and not produced by the law which worketh wrath and gendereth to bondage (Rom. iv. 15; Gal. iv. 24).

If we are willing to abide by the inspired Word of Truth, we need go no further than this very Epistle to decide the whole question, for in it we have laid down the rule according to which believers should walk, which is "a new creature" (or a new creation): "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and on the Israel of God" (Gal. vi. 15-16). Is the law or the Spirit's work on the heart held out here as the rule of a believer's walk? The law is strictly a covenant of works; it knows nothing of mercy, reveals nothing of grace, and does not communicate the blessed Spirit. Why, then, if I am a believer in Christ and have received His grace and truth into my heart, am I to adopt for the rule of life that which does not testify of Jesus either in the Word or in my conscience? If I am to walk as a believer, it must be by a life of faith in the Son of God (Gal. ii. 20). Is the law my rule here? If it be, where are those rules to be found ? "The law is not of faith." How, then, can it lay down rules for the life of faith? If I wish to walk as becometh a believer with the Church, what help will the law give me there? To walk as such must be by the law of love as revealed in Christ and made known in my heart by the power of God. If I am to walk in the ordinances of God's house, are these to be found revealed in the law?

We give the law its due honour. It had a glory, as the Apostle argues (II Cor. iii.) as the ministration of death and condemnation, but this glory is done away, and why are we to look to it now as our guiding rule? The minis-

tration of the Spirit, of life, and of righteousness "doth much more exceed in glory", and why are we to be condemned if we prefer the Spirit to the letter, life to death, and righteousness to condemnation? A rule must influence as well as guide, or else it is a dead rule. If you choose to be ruled by the killing letter which can only minister condemnation and death, and we choose for our rule that which ministers the Spirit, righteousness, and life, which has the better rule? It is much to be feared that those who thus walk ancl talk have still the veil over their heart, and know nothing of what the Apostle means when he says: "Now the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. But we all with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (II Cor. iii. 17-18).

But not only have we these deductions to influence the mind in rejecting the law as a rule for a believer's walk, but we have the express testimony of God as a warrant for so doing. We read, for instance, that "I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God" (Gal. ii. 19); that "I am become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that I should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that I should bring forth fruit unto God" (Rom. vii. 4). As a believer in Christ, the law is dead to me, and I am dead to it. The Apostle has clearly and beautifully opened up this subject. He assumes that a believer in Christ is like a woman who is re-married after the death of her first husband; and he declares that "she is bound by the law to her husband as long as he liveth, but if the husband be dead she is loosed from the law of her husband" (v. 2). Of course the first husband is the law, and the second husband is Christ. Now, adopting this figure of Paul's, may we not justly ask: Which is to be the rule of the wife's conduct when remarried, the regulations of the first or of the second husband?

2. What, then, is the believer's rule of life ? Is he without rule ? a lawless wretch who because he abandons the law of Moses for his rule has no guide to direct his steps? God forbid! for I subscribe heart and soul to the words of the Apostle: "Being not without law to God, but under law to Christ" (I Cor. ix. 21). The believer then has a guiding rule which we may briefly call the gospel. This rule we may divide into two branches. The gospel as written by the divine finger upon the heart, and the gospel as written by the blessed Spirit in the Word of truth. These do not form two distinct rules, but the one is the counterpart of the other; and they are mutually helpful to and corroborative of each other. One of the four promises of the new covenant (Jer. xxxi. 31-34; Heb. viii. 8-12 compared), was: "I will put My law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts." This writing of the law of God in the heart, I need not tell you, is that which distinguishes it from the law of Moses which was written on tables of stone; and becomes an internal rule whereas the law of Moses was but an

external rule. This internal rule seems to be pointed out in Romans viii. 2 where we find these words: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." By "the law of the Spirit of life", I understand that guiding rule (for a rule in Scripture is frequently called a law; the word law in Hebrew signifying literally "instruction") which the Spirit of God, as communicating life, is in a believer's heart. It is therefore, the liberating, sanctifying, guiding influence of the Spirit of God in his soul which, as a law or rule, delivers him from "the law of sin and death"; by which I understand not so much the law of Moses, as the power and prevalency of his corrupt nature.

If this then be a correct exposition of the text, we have a guiding internal rule distinct from the law of Moses, and a living rule in the heart, which that never was nor could be; for it did not communicate the Spirit (Gal. iii. 2-5). But this internal rule, as being "the law of the Spirit of life", has power to lead all the children of God; for in the same chapter (v. 14) the Apostle declares that "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God". This leading which is peculiar to the children of God and is an evidence of their sonship, delivers them from the law; for "If we be led of the Spirit we are not under the law" (Gal. v. 18) either as a covenant or as a rule, for we have a better covenant and a better rule (Heb. viii. 6). What is the main use of a rule but to lead ? But who can lead like a living Guide? How can a dead law lead a living soul? The very proof that we are the children of God is that we are led by the Spirit; and this inward leading becomes our guiding rule. And is it not a disparaging of the guidance of the blessed Spirit to set up in opposition to His guiding rule a dead law and to call those Antinomians who prefer a living Guide to a dead letter? This living Guide is that holy and blessed Spirit who "guides into all truth" (Jn. xvi. 13). Here is the main blessedness of the work and grace upon the heart, that the leading and guiding of the blessed Spirit form a living rule every step of the way; for He not only quickens the soul into spiritual life, but maintains the life which He gave, and performs (or finishes, margin) it until the day of Jesus Christ (Phil. i. 6). This life is eternal, as the blessed Lord at the well of Samaria declared, that the water which He should give the believer should be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life (Jn. iv. 14). It is then this springing well in a believer's soul which is the guiding rule, for, as producing and maintaining the fear of God, it is "a fountain of life to departfrom the snares of death" (Proverbs xiv. 27).

But lest this guiding internal rule be abused, which it might be by enthusiasm, and that they might not be left to substitute delusive fancies for the teaching of the Holy Spirit, the God of all grace has given to His people an external rule in the precepts of the gospel as declared by the mouth of the Lord and His apostles, but more particularly as gathered up in the epistles as a standing code of instruc-

tion for the living family of God. Nor do these at all clash with the rule of which I have just spoken, but on the contrary harmonize entirely and thoroughly with it; for, in fact, it is one and the same rule; the only difference between them being that the blessed Spirit had revealed the one in the written Word, and by the application of that Word to the soul makes the other to be a living rule in the heart.

Now there is not a single part or particle of our walk and conduct before God or man which is not revealed and inculcated in the precepts of the gospel; for, though we have not minute directions, we have what far excels all such unnecessary minutiae - most blessed principles enforced by every gracious and holy motive, and forming, when rightly seen and believed, a most perfect code of inward and outward conformity to the revealed will of God, and of all holy walk and conduct in our families, in the Church, and in the world.

I would say then that a believer has a rule to walk by which is sufficient to guide him in every step of the way; for if he has the internal quickenings, teachings, and leadings of the Spirit to make his conscience tender in the fear of God, and has the law of love written upon his heart by the finger of God, and if besides this he has the precepts of the gospel as a full and complete code of Christian obedience, what more can he want to make him perfect in every good word and work (Heb. xiii. 21) ? Can the law do any of these things for him? Can it give him life, in the first instance, when it is a killing letter? Can it maintain life, if it be not in its power to bestow it?

But it may be asked: Do you then set aside the two great commandments of the law: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," etc., and "thy neighbour as thyself"? No, On the contrary, the gospel as an external and internal rule fulfills them both, for "love is the fulfilling o£ the law" (llom. xiii. 10). So that this blessed rule of the gospel not only does not set aside the law as regards its fulfillment, but so to speak, absorbs into itself and glorifies and harmonizes its two great commandments, by yielding to them in obedience of heart, which the law could not give; for the believer serves in newness of Spirit, not in the oldness of the letter (Rom. vii. 6), as Christ's freeman (Jn. viii. 32), and not as Moses's bondslave. This is a willing obedience and not a legal task. This will explain the meaning of the Apostle: "For I delight in the law of God after the inwald man"; for the new man of grace, under the powerful influence of the Holy Spirit, delights in the law of God, not only for its holiness, but as inculcating that to do which fills the renewed heart with inward delight–love to God and His people . . .

(From the December, 1961 issue of the Gospel Standard of England.)

PSALM 117

O PRAISE the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people.

2 For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth for ever. Praise ye the LORD.

"For I will pour water upon hlm that is thirsty." - *ISAIAH xliv. 3.*

THIRST, as a feeling of the soul, in a spiritual sense, is certainly indicative of divine life. It is as impossible, spiritually viewed, for a man dead in sin to thirst after a living God, as for a corpse in the grave) ard to thirst affer a draught of cold water from the well. I know for myself that such a feeling as thirsting after God had no place in my bosom until the Lord was pleased to quicken my soul into spiritual life. I had heard of God by the hearing of the ear. I had seen him in creation, in the starry sky, in the roaring sea, in the teeming earth; I had read of him in the Bible; I had learnt his existence by education and tradition; and I had some apprehensions of his holiness in my natural conscience; but as to any spiritual thirsting after him, any earnest desire to fear him, know him, believe in him, or love him,--no such experience or feeling, I can say for myself, ever dwelt in my bosom. I loved the world too dearly to look to him who made it, and myself too warmly and affectionately to seek him who would bid me crucify and mortify it. A man, therefore, I am well convinced, must be made alive unto God by spiritual regeneration before he can experience any such sensation as is here conveyed by the figure " thirst," or know anything of the Psalmist's feelings when he cried, ';As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God" (Psalm xlii. I, 2). Now wherever God has raised up in the soul this spiritual thirst after himself, he certainly will answer that desire, "the desire of the righteous shall be granted" (Prov. x. 24). His own invitation is, "Ho ! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters" (Isaiah lv. I); and Jesus himself says with his own blessed lips, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink " (John vii. 37). Nay, he opened his ministry by pronouncing a blessing on such, *"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."*

J.C. Philpot

PSALM 95

O COME, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

2 Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

3 For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

4 In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.

5 The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land.

6 O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.

7 For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice,

8 Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work.

10 Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways:

11 Unto whom I sware in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 1994

Mrs. Annie C. Lawrence, VA	$2.00
Mr. & Mrs. J.M. Marshall, VA	5.00
Donald R. Arrington, NC	2.00
Mrs. Ruth Anderson, LA	7.00
G.M. Lockey, NC	2.00
Mrs. Opelene Cunningham, AL	2.00
Mrs. Dessie Goodman, AL	102.00
R.L. Fleenor, TN	7.00
Mrs. Ida Taylor, MD	10.00
Mrs. Ethel Holloway, MD	2.00
Mrs. Frances Parish, MD	2.00
Mrs. Leola Meador, NC	2.00
Mrs. Ada Campbell, VA	2.00
Mrs. Sallie Hodges, VA	2.00
R. Allen Carroll, NC	2.00
Homie Dalton, VA	2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER VALSIE PETERS AKERS

God in His infinite wisdom has seen fit to call our precious sister from this world of suffering. Sister Valsie Peters Akers was born September 3, 1903, died August 12, 1994. She was a daughter of the late William and Laura Dowdy Peters and the wife of the late Peter D. Akers, Sr. Surviving are one brother and sister-in-law Howard and Clara Peters, Bassett, Virginia. One sister-in-law, Elsie Peters, Roanoke, Virginia, a special friend, Katie Bennett, Rocky Mount, Virginia, special nieces and nephews, five step-daughters and sons-in-law, Eleanor A. Bowling, Vinton, Virginia, Thelma A. Montgomery, Boones Mill, Virginia, Beatrice Akers, Boones Mill, Virginia, Ruby and Jack Prillaman, Vinton, Virginia, Merle and Thomas Prillaman, Roanoke, Virginia. Four stepsons and daughters-in-law, C.W. and Mildred Akers, Rocky Mount, Virginia, P.D. and Ideal Akers, Jr., Rocky Mount, Virginia, John Herbert and Doris Akers, Culpeper, Virginia, E.C. and Irene Akers, Roanoke, Virginia. Several step-grandchildren, step-great grandchildren and step great-great grandchildren.

She was a faithful member of Republican Primitive Baptist Church for 54 Years. She and her husband, a former deacon of Little Creek Primi-

tive Baptist Church, loved to entertain the church and friends at their home with a bountiful meal and much love.

I believe she died in the triumphs of faith.

Funeral service was held Sunday, August 14, 1994 at 2 PM at Pigg River Primitive Baptist Church by the writer and Elder Lane Carter. She was laid to rest in Pigg River Primitive Baptist Church Cemetary while the congregation sang some of her favorite songs.

Written by request of Republican Primitive Baptist Church while in conference September 17, 1994.

Elder Junior Conner, Moderator
Grey Ingram, Clerk

ROSA MARTIN STULTZ COX

It is with much sadness that I endeavor to write the obituary of our dear beloved sister In Christ, Sister Rosa Stultz Cox. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh... bless His holy name.

Sister Cox was born July 22, 1899 in Patrick County, Virginia. She was the daughter of the late Flem Lee Martin and Mary Elizabeth Martin and was reared by foster parents Mr. and Mrs. Larkin Cockran in Vesta, Va.

Sister Rosa was a firm believer in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. She joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, Ruffin, NC on January 29, 1929 and was baptized in March, 1929 by her pastor, Elder D.V. Spangler. She attended her church regularly until her health failed but continued to be able to attend sporadically until her death. She died at Morehead Memorial Hospital, Eden, NC on May 11, 1994.

Sister Cox was a retiree of Fieldcrest Mills, Eden, NC and a member of the Happy Home Extension Homemakers Club. Sister Rosa married Mr. J. Henry Stultz on October 8, 1916 and to this union was born one daughter, Sister Margaret S. Carter. Sister Margaret and her husband, Brother Spencer Carter, kept Sister Rosa at her home in her latter years and gave her all loving care.

On July 10, 1956 Sister Rosa was married to Mr. Willie Cox who preceded her in death on August 16, 1978.

Sister Cox's other survivors are a grandson and two great grandsons. Also, six stepchildren who called her "Mama Rosa". They were as one family. The stepchildren are: Preston Cox, Ruffin, NC, Helen C Richmond, Danville, Va., Lucille C. Stone, Burlington, NC, Mabel C. Hurd, Reidsville, NC, Doris C. McAlister, Ruffin, NC, and Edna Earl C., McCormick, SC.

Sister Cox also leaves three sisters to mourn her passing: Flemmie Kinard, Orlando, Florida, Lula Cook, Reidsville, NC, Vioma Handy, Hebron, Md. Also Bessie Eggleston who predeased Sister Cox several years ago.

Her funeral was held at Fair Funeral Home Chapel and was conducted by her pastor, Elder Kenneth Key. Her

body was laid to rest in Dan View Cemetery, Eden, NC.

May the Lord reconcile all that mourn her loss as only He can do.

Written by request of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church while in conference.

Lottie Minter
Elder Kenneth Key, Pastor
Bob R. Ccllle, Clerk

HILDA MOSELEY

In loving memory of my natural sister, and Sister in Christ, I hope, Hilda was my oldest sister. She was the daughter of Eugene Compton and Mae Hoskins Compton. She was born in the year of November the twenty fourth, 1901 and departed this life September 23, 1994 at Martinsville General Hospital. She was married to Lester Moseley and to this union was born one son David Moseley. She leaves to mourn, a granddaughter and a grandson David Moseley, II. Two great grandchildren, Dustan & Savana Sloot. She also leaves five sisters, and one brother and a number of nieces and nephews Hilda joined Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church at the tender age of sixteen.

She believed in the doctrine of Election and Salvation by Grace. She passed away after suffering a stroke. She was laid to rest beside her husband and son at Norfolk Church Cemetery.

Her funeral was held at McKeys Funeral home by her Pastor Raymond Goad & Elder Lane Carter. I feel she is now waiting for the gloriest coming of our Lord and Savior. She is sadly missed.

Written by a sad Sister,
Ada Campbell
Sallie Hodges, Clerk

BROTHER ROBERT B. SHELTON

Another one of our faithful members of Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church has fallen asleep in the arms of Jesus. Brother Robert B. Shelton passed away at his home on Monday, Sept. 19, 1994. He was born Oct. 1, 1899, making his stay on earth almost 95 years. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Sister Jennie D. Shelton Dec. 18, 1976. Also two sons. Robert A. Shelton and Carl W. Shelton predeceased him.

He is survived by his second wife, Sister Meta D. Shelton; one son Vern R. Shelton; five daughters; Odessa S. Moorman; Danes S. Naff; Katherine S. Short; Linds S. Stultz; Brenda S. Chittum. Seventeen grandchildren; seventeen great-grandchildren; two great - great grandchildren; two step children, Jeanette Hughes and Morris Dalton; three step grandchildren and one step great grandchild. One brother, Mr. James Shelton; four sisters, Sister Bertha Short; Mrs. Laura Parker; Sister Lucille Goad; Mrs. Hilda Hines.

Brother Shelton joined Roanoke Church June 20, 1943 and was baptized by the late Elder J.F. Stegal on

July 4, 1943. He was ordained deacon Nov. 1, 1969 and was a trustee of the church. He served these offices in much humbleness and he sat at the feet of his brethren in much love and meekness. His home was always open to the comfort of his church. He remained faithful to his belief – salvation by grace – to the end. We have lost a dear father in Israel and we will miss that sweet smile that seemed always present as he greeted his brethren, sisters and friends.

His devoted wife, Sister Meta was so good and kind to him and stood by, doing all for him that human hands could do. It was over two years since he was able to attend his church. His children were so kind and they too did all that loving hands could do. Some of them were there with him most of the time to minister to his many needs.

His funeral was conducted at Oakeys Vinton Funeral Home on Wed. Sept. 21, 1994 by his pastor, Elder Leonard J. Brammer and Elder Lane Carter. After which he was laid to rest in Blue Ridge Memorial Gardens under a beautiful blanket of flowers - there to await the day of the resurrection when his hope will become a reality.

May his beloved family be blessed to feel that their loss is his eternal gain.

This memorial was written and humbly submitted by an unworthy sister.

Mrs. H.C. (Rlee) Houchins

Elder Leonard J. Brammer, Mod.
Brother Hassell A. Hale, Clerk

SISTER LEAH THOMPSON STANLEY

God in His infinite wisdom has seen fit to call our precious sister from this world of suffering. Sister Leah Thompson Stanley was a daughter of the late Samuel J. Thompson and the late Laura Turner Thompson.

She lived 93 years and fell asleep in the arms of our Lord on August 10, 1994 at Eldercare of Franklin County, Virginia.

Surviving are two daughters, Nell Mullins of Collinsville, Virginia and Margaret Touchton of San Angelo, Texas, four sons, Lane Stanley ot Roanoke, Virginia, James (Jimmy) Stanley of Tucker, Georgia, Warren Stanley of Ferrum, Virginia and Charles (Chris) Stanley of Roanoke, Virginia, seven grandchildren and six great - grandchildren.

She asked for a home with the church several months before she died and was graciously received by Republican Primitive Baptist Church. Although she was never able to be baptized, we feel her to be a member of the body of Christ. She was blessed to manifest a love for the church and her God by her walk and talk.

A graveside service was conducted August 13, 1994 at Republican Primitive Baptist Church Cemetary by Elder Lane Carter.

Written by request of Republican Primitive Baptist Church while in conference September 17, 1994.

Elder Junior Conner, Moderator
Grey Ingram, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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HUMBLE PLEADING

O GIVE me, Lord, my sins to mourn,
My sins which have thy body torn;
Give me, with broken heart, to see
Thy last tremendous agony.

O could I gain the mountain's height
And gaze upon that bleeding sight;
O that with Salem's daughter's I
Might stand and see my Saviour die!

I'd smite upon my breast and mourn,
And never from the cross return:
I'd weep o'er an expiring God
And mix my tears with Jesus' blood.

I'd hang upon his breast and cry,
Lord, save a soul condemned to die,
And let a wretch come near thy throne
To plead the merits of thy Son.

Father of mercies, drop thy frown,
And let me shelter in thy Son;
O with my earnest suit comply
And give me Jesus, or I die.

O Lord, deny me what thou wilt,
Only relieve me of my guilt;
Good Lord, in mercy hear me cry,
And give me Jesus, or I die.

Show pity, Lord, and send relief,
To a poor sinner drowned in grief,
Who has no plea to bring him nigh,
Lord, save a soul condemned to die!

Didst not thou send thy Son to die
For guilty worms who pine and cry?
O let the vilest now come nigh--
Lord, save a soul condemned to die.

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EDITORIAL

ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS

Again I'll try to write, if some unseen hand might guide my pen and thoughts.

I've thought recently of the end of all things, as we know it, which is sure to come and is near for some of us and ever drawing nearer and nearer for all. The bible promises such a time and we see it come daily to our brethren and friends, but the end of all things isn't yet.

Matthew 24:14 "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

This is the words of Christ while he was yet on the earth preaching and teaching his people. He is telling of the many false prophets that were to come crying, here is Christ or there; believe it not. We read the very elect would be deceived, if possible, but we see this gospel shall be preached.

By this promise of God that the gospel shall be preached in all the world, we believe it means to all the world of believers, although for a witness unto all nations. No doubt in my mind that God has a people in all nations, kindred and tongues, surely stating no one can say we never heard the truth, if not through the natural ear, then in the heart. Sure there are people that don't believe this gospel of the kingdom, but his people shall know the truth and the truth shall make them free. We see this same gospel that Christ preached here on earth in his day, still being preached by a few of his called preachers, yet claiming no credit for themselves, only fulfilling his promises, it shall be preached.

The end can't come until that is complete, preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations. At this moment the end will come, or this promise isn't true. I can't help but believe when the last heir of promise is born in this world and hears this gospel, either with natural ears or in the heart, (some are born deaf) the end will come. This good news to the believer in Christ is a living witness to the gospel of the kingdom, it being

that of all the Father gave me, I have lost nothing but will raise up at the last day.

Matthew 24: 35-36 "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only."

We can rejoice that though all else shall pass and cease to be, that the word of God shall not pass away. This isn't only in the recorded word left on record, but all words spoken in every period of time. Every word spoken in person or by a small still voice, that commands to a believer, come out from among them, and be ye a separate people saith your God.

We do believe an end shall come at His time, but not until all is accomplished, but to those that have heard this gospel of the kingdom preached, there is no fear of the end of the earth, but joy everlasting that their hope of heaven and immortal glory is fixed on his words of life hereafter to all that call on his precious name. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

May His name have all praise,
honor and glory,
J.R. Williams

PROVERBS 7: 1-4.

MY son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee.

Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye.

Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart.

Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman:

ARTICLES

The Lord willing I would like to share some thoughts with you on Luke 7:20 & 22. When the men were come unto him, they said, John the Baptist has sent us unto the, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way and tell John what things ye have seen and heard, how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.

When we consider this verse of scripture it gives us a lot to think about. Here we see John asking, art thou he that should come, or should we look for another? Lots of people could ask this question and we wouldn't think much about it, but John the Baptist.

Let us look now and see just who this John was. According to the words of Jesus, there was no greater man born among women than he. He was chosen before time began by the God who created this universe to be a forerunner of his Son, Christ, to make straight the way for Christ. He was blessed by the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb. He went out in the wilderness, forsaking friends and the comforts of home, preaching Christ who was to come, saying, He that is to come is greater than I, whose shoe laces I am not worthy to unlace. He was blessed by the God of heaven to baptize his Son, on whom he saw the

Holy Spirit descend in the form of a dove. After all this we now hear him asking, art thou he who should come, or do we look for another?

In all fairness to John we will have to say he had faced some difficult times. While living a honest and moral life, we believe as much as it was possible in man, doing the will of God and preaching Christ as he was called and ordained to do, not joining with the worldly men and all their wicked ways. He was hated and rejected by men, and for an unjust cause was cast into prison. We can see where a man would have cause to wonder and begin to doubt. But John the Baptist, after all he had been blessed to see. And the messenger asked Jesus, art thou He that came, or look we for another? Jesus replied, Go show John again.

In just reading this, after seeing the wonderful blessings of John, the ways the Lord had dealt with him, we think maybe he should have been given a better answer. But wait, let us pause and consider this answer. Show John again.

We know that Jesus could have done any number of earth splitting wonders to reveal to John his true identify, such as he did for Stephen when Stephen was shown the glory and majesty of heaven. But he had a reason for this type answer.

The scripture says you must walk by faith we are saved by grace through faith. It also says, if you are my disciples you will have tribulations the world will hate you. We know through the Bible and living through the years, we can see how these things have been. Some areas of the world are worse than others, some times are worse than others, these times during this period of change from sacrifices and the law of Moses to Jesus and grace was rather hectic sometimes, for followers of Christ. Back to the answer to John, we were talking of faith, and see Jesus wanted John to walk by faith, as he had decreed in ages past that his children would walk by faith. So he wanted to answer John in such a way as to increase his faith. Had he opened the heavens with a beautiful display, the answer would have been by sight, but the children of God must walk by faith.

Let us look at the wonderful wisdom in this answer. The God of heaven has laid out a course for each of his little children, and he said, walk with patience the race that is set before you. He has by his wisdom, foreknowledge and predestination placed each of his little children in such a place that they all just like John will be faced with problems, situations and times where they will be made to wonder and doubt like the poet said, cast down but not destroyed. All this is done to purify the gold and burn out the dross, to the building up of a holy temple. So we now see why John was given this answer. Jesus is giving this answer, made a promise, so to speak, set the pattern for all the ages to come, as his children found themselves in like situations, they would be brought to cry unto Jesus for deliverance. God's people are a begging people who have been shown from whence cometh their help. Show John again these things,

what blessed assurance we have as we live in this life facing the many trying and troublesome times, filled with doubts we know we have a Saviour who is able to take care of our every need. How sweet it is, who can understand the wisdom and the mercies of God? God's children are given a little bit here, a little bit there, precept upon precept.

They are given enough to build up their faith, to the point the Spirit within them cries Abba Father and they thank their God who has blessed them in such a wonderful way. They are blessed by God with a desire to meet with brethren and often times able to meet with them. Given spiritual food to meet their individual needs. While others who are on the sick bed, may not be able to attend meetings are often times blessed and fed by the same Spirit are often given to praise and thank their God and Saviour.

We know Jesus could have kept John out of that prison, but see it was beneficial for him to be there and a wonderful message to us. See all things are working together to those who love God, those who are the called.

May you be blessed with the loving kindness and tender mercies of God.

Your brother, I hope,
Frank Hunt

ECCLESIASTES 11:7.

Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun:

VOICES OF THE PAST

MATTHEW 25:14- 30.

We have often been requested to give our views on this parable, and we have sometimes ventured to give such views as we have had on the subject; but we have never pretended to have any special light upon this subject, nor do we now feel competent to the undertaking. We have always found it difficult to explain satisfactorily to our mind any of the parables contained in the sacred volume, excepting so far as their obvious intention may be inferred from the subjects and circumstances on which they were spoken. God has been pleased to open his mouth in parables and to utter dark sayings of old (Psa. 78:2) and it was the practice of our Redeemer in the days of his flesh to use parables, and without a parable spake he not unto the multitude. (Matt. 13:34) "And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing

ye shall see, and shall not perceive." (Matt. 13: 10-14).

Herein is the wisdom, purpose, and pleasure of God displayed in hiding these things from the wise and prudent of this world, and in revealing them unto babes in his kingdom; that no man shall glory in his presence; but he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. The very parables which involve the instructions of Christ in impenetrable darkness to the multitude are employed by the Spirit to illustrate the same things to those unto whom it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom. A parable is in itself simply a similitude, or a supposed case, used to illustrate a reality. And these similitudes and comparisons are so chosen and used by infinite wisdom, as to secure the great design of God, both in concealing the things of the Spirit from the carnal, and in instructing his disciples. Thus, like the cloud which attended Israel in the wilderness, it afforded light and protection to them, while it was darkness to their enemies.

The parable now to be considered is given, with several others of like importance, for the special admonition of the disciples, as it was not addressed to the multitude, as there were none present but disciples, who had asked him certain questions privately, as he sat with them on the mount of Olives, and was therefore spoken to them for their exclusive benefit. (See Chapter 24:3.)

The subject on which these parables were spoken must be understood in order to know their designs and application. Our Lord had been personally with these disciples from the time they were called to be his servants, but now he was soon to go into a far country, or to suffer, and die upon the cross, and then arise from the dead and ascend up into heaven, which from earth is a far country; but he was also to return again in due time. One of the three questions which they had asked him was, "What shall be the sign of thy coming?" To this he had replied, "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh. Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But, and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. 24: 42-44; 46-51.)

From all these preceding admonitions in the twenty-fourth chapter we may safely infer that the three parables in the twenty-fifth chapter were used by our Lord to solemnly impress his

disciples with an understanding of the importance of their obligation to obey him as their divine Master, and especially when he should go to his Father, and they see him no more in the flesh. For although he was about to go away, he had assured them he would come to them again, and as a Master, who had an undisputed right to their service; he would hold them to a rigid account of their stewardship, at his coming. Now speaking of the time of his coming to reckon with them, he says, "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, etc. That is, at the time of his coming, which time they did not know for it should be as a thief in the night. The wise virgins represent the faithful servants, who shall be prepared for the coming of their Lord, as they were with lamps trimmed and burning at the coming of the bridegroom, and the foolish virgins represent the wicked and slothful servants which had concluded their lord delayed his coming and were carelessly mingling with the drunken. And in applying the parable of the virgins, he adds this parable of the talents, saying, "For the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, etc. These italicized words are supplied by our translators. Should we omit them, the text will read, "For, as a man traveling into a far country, called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another, one; to every man according to his several ability, and straightway took his journey." If we have understood the foregoing correctly, Christ alludes to himself as the Lord, or Master of the servants, and to his being about to leave them, as stewards, in charge of his goods. The servants are said to be his own servants, and he invests them with talents, according to their respective ability. The talents and the ability of all the servants of our Lord Jesus Christ are furnished them by him. He is their Lord and Master; all that they have and all they are, are his property, and they are not their own hence he has a right to direct and control them, and to discriminate in the amount of talents and responsibility. And certainly Christ has done this: "When he ascended up on high, he gave some apostles, and some prophets; and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." There is a diversity of gifts, but all by the same spirit, and this diversity is set forth in our parable as five, two, and one talents. Having thus commissioned his own servant's straitway he took his journey. The very last interview he held with his disciples he breathed upon them and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost;" and bid them, "Go, teach all nations, etc., "And straitway a cloud received him out of their sight." But an angel informed them that he would return again in like manner as they had seen him go up into heaven; all of which

seems to agree perfectly with the import of this parable. But when he should so return he did not tell them; but bid them watch -- for it should be like a thief in the night, or at least at a time when the unruly servants would least expect his return. The servant which had five, and he who had two talents improved them, and received the approbation of their Lord at his coming, and were welcomed into the joy of their Lord. This was not, however, as a reward of merit, for they being servants, as we have before said, with all their ability and talents, belonged to and were the property of their master. This idea is expressly stated - these were his own servants, hence their service belonged to him; as a gracious act, he made them partakers of his joy. Thus Paul, while disclaiming all merit , says, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; hence forth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give me at that day; and not me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." The crown is a gift, not a debt, or payment for service rendered; and as to Paul so also to all who love the appearing of Christ.

Thus far perhaps, our views of the parable may seem sufficiently clear to the sister who asked, and others, but the more difficult part of the subject remains to be discussed, or elucidated. The wicked and slothful servant also had a talent and did not improve it, and it is taken from him and given to him that had ten talents, and he is cast into outer darkness, and there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The supposed difficulty will be obviated when we consider the difference between servants of the Lord and the children of God. Christ not only is the everlasting Father of that seed which God has said shall serve him and be counted to him for a generation, but he is also their Master, their Owner, their Lord, and their King. In all the parables and figures as in every express declaration of the Scriptures where God's people are brought to view in the relationship of children, their vital and indissoluble union and joint heirship with him is distinctly expressed, and they can no more fail of their inheritance of glory than Christ can fail of the glory which he had with his Father before the world began. But when the disciples are presented in the relation of servants, their relative duties, obligations, and punishment for delinquencies are implied. The servant abideth not in the house forever, but the son abideth ever. The discipline of the servant and that of a son, until the son becomes of age, may be alike, but the privilege and certain inheritance of the two are widely different. As it is said, "A seed shall serve him," etc. (Psa. 22:30). We infer that all the seed, or children of God, are called into the service of Christ, to obey his commands, walk in his precepts, and keep his judgments, and in doing this they are servants, as well as sons. But we presume Christ has servants which are not sons; or at least not manifest as sons. A servant

of Christ is equivalent to a disciple, and a disciple of Christ is one who serves, and obeys whatever he commands them. But Christ himself has said, "And whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple." (Luke 14:27) But he does not say they cannot be his children. To be a child depends wholly on relationship; but to be a servant, on allegiance and service. "His servant, on allegiance and service. "His servants ye are to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey."

The difference will more clearly appear by considering the disciples, or servants of Jesus to whom this parable was originally spoken. They were all certainly the servants of our Lord Jesus Christ, for he said he was their Master. But of at least one of them we presume it will not be contended that he was a son. Judas Iscariot was a disciple. Jesus called to him twelve disciples, whom he named apostles, and Judas was one of that number. And according to the sense of this parable, he received a talent - or a part of the ministry. "And in those days Peter stood in the midst of the disciples, and said, Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of David, spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry." "For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein; and, his bishoprick let another take." (Acts 1:15-17, 20).

Now should we suppose Judas to have been a servant, or disciple, as he is really called, and this ministry to be the goods divided among the servants, and Judas to have received one talent, and Paul to have had received five, and he labored more abundantly than all the servants, to have gained the other five; the one talent was ultimately taken from Judas, and given to Paul, for Paul, was called to take the bishoprick vacated by Judas, and Paul as we have shown, did finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received, and had entered into the joy of his Lord, to wear the crown of righteousness which the righteous judge has given to him; and Judas is fallen, and goes to his own place where there is darkness, weeping, and gnashing of teeth. The case of Judas among the disciples - his wickedness, and punishment, answers well to the servant who was cast out into outer darkness.

But not only Judas among the apostles, but there were multitudes of disciples who called Jesus Master, who could not endure his doctrine, and turned away and walked no more with him.

But as we have presented some servants who give no evidence of being sons, before we close we will enquire if there be not some sons or children who are not, strictly speaking, servants or disciples? Are there not some, yea, many, who have passed from death unto life, have tasted the good word of life and of the joys of the

world to come: - who have seen themselves poor, guilty, lost and perishing sinners, justly condemned by the righteous law of God; who in their extremity cried out, "Lord, save or I perish," who have felt the joy of pardoned sins, unto whom Jesus has been revealed as their Savior, the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely, who have never taken up their cross and followed their Lord and Master in baptism, or any or his ordinances? If there are such, and we believe we know of many, they certainly are children, for they are born again, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God - can they be disciples? Jesus says they cannot; and if they do not obey him, how can they be his servants? "A son honoreth his father, and a servant his master, if then I be a father, where is mine honor? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts?" (Mal. 1:6) But how is it that a son who loves his father should withhold the honor due by obeying and serving him? How is it set forth in the parable? The undutiful servant says, "I knew thee, that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed; and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth." In the application of the admonition presented in this subject, let us enquire whether there be not some of God's children who are reasoning as did the slothful servant, and saying their Lord's requirements are hard and unreasonable? If he requires me to come out and improve my talent, by public profession of his name, and obedience to his command, he would reap where he has not sown. If he would sow more plentifully, that is, if he would relieve me of all my doubts and fears, and give me more light, joy and comfort, more zeal and strength, and remove this troublesome cross out of my way, and give me a full assurance that my pathway shall be smooth and pleasant, then I would not think it hard that he should have my service.

Not only are there multitudes of this class of delinquents, but also among those who have publicly espoused his cause, there may be found those who say, "If the Lord would give me a greater gift so that I could speak like some who have five times the amount of talent that I have, I would lift up my voice as a witness for God and truth; but as it is, Why should I show my ignorance by exhibiting my one talent, and so perhaps bring down on me the scorn and reproach of the enemy?" And among the ministers of the word there may be some who say, "Alas! for me. The Lord requires me to preach his gospel that he has sowed sparing. I know so little, and am surrounded by so many hindrances which the Lord could, if it were his pleasure, so easily remove. My time and attention is so closely occupied to know how to answer the questions, What shall I eat? What shall I drink? And where withal shall I be clothed? How can I neglect my farm or merchandise, or whatever my worldly occupation may be, without injustice to myself and to my family?" Thus the earth of our carnal reasoning, and the affairs

of the world, may bury up, to some extent, if not altogether, the talent. But let us be assured, if we are the Lord's children, we shall be saved, yet as by fire; and as his servants, we shall feel his chastening scourge, and go into outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Of course, we do not mean that God's children shall finally fail of their inheritance in glory, for God is faithful, he will not deny himself; but he is also righteous, and he will visit our transgressions with his rod, and our disobedience and slothfulness with many stripes.

When Israel for their disobedience and idolatry were sent down into Babylon, there some of them wept when they remembered Zion; it was to them a place of darkness - of weeping- and lamentation; while there was also, on the part of their adversaries, gnashing of teeth. The tumults which now prevail in the world, the wars and rumors of wars which agitate the nations of the earth, and especially our own beloved States, should admonish us that God's righteous judgments are abroad; that the day of reckoning is at hand; that the Lord cometh in an hour when transgressors think not. And the prophet saith he cometh suddenly to his temple. But Who shall abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth?

Whatever our ability or opportunity may be, our Lord has given us the full amount of talent that he requires us to improve. He will reap no more than he has sown, he will not gather what he has not strawed. He will not require of us the improvement of talents given to others. Where much is given, much will be required, and where little is given, but little will be required. If any of us cannot reap, perhaps we can bind some of the sheaves. Let us be active, for the harvest is great and the laborers are few.

Middletown, N.Y.,
November 15, 1861.

"Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law."—PSALM XCIV. 12.

We may observe in the words before us, that the Lord *puts chastening* before *teaching.* Is there not something, remarkable in this? Why should chastening precede teaching? For this reason. We have no ear to hear except so far as we are chastened. It was so with the prodigal. Until he was brought to his right mind by strokes of hunger, he did not think of his father's house; he had no heart to return; but a mighty famine sent him home. So it is with God's children; as long as they are allowed to wander in their backslidings, they have no heart to return. But let the rod come; let them be driven home by stripes; then they have an ear to listen, while God teaches them to profit, instructs them by his blessed Spirit, and speaks into their heart those lessons which are for their eternal good.

" And teachest him out of thy law." " The law " in the Scriptures has a very

wide signification; it means, in the original, *instruction.* The word is *Torah,* which signifies "teaching," or "direction." Thus the word "law" is not confined to the law of Moses given in thunder and lightning upon Mount Sinai; but it includes also the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ--" the perfect law of liberty; " " the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus;" that law which was in the heart of the Redeemer, when he said, " I come to do thy will, O God; yea, thy law is within my heart."

Now, as the Lord teaches his children "out of the law," strictly so called, so he teaches them "out of " the gospel; and to my mind, there is something exceedingly sweet and expressive in the words "out of the law." It seems to convey, not only that the law is a treasure-house of wrath, but that the gospel also is a treasure-house of mercy. And as those who know most of the law are only taught " out of the law," and not the whole of the law, only a few drops, as it were, out of the inexhaustible wrath of God; so out of the heavenly treasure-house of the gospel, " the perfect law of liberty," it is but a little of grace and mercy that in this life can be known. As Christ said to his disciples in promising the Spirit: " He shall take *of* mine, and shall shew it unto you." He cannot take "all," and shew it unto them; for none could live under the sight. The Spirit, therefore, takes *of* the things of Christ, and shews here a little, and there a little; some little blessedness here, and some little blessedness there; a suitable promise, a gracious testimony, a comforting text, an encouraging word, a sight of atoning blood, a smile of his countenance, a view of his Person, a discovery of his righteousness, or a glimpse of his love. This is taking, of the things of Christ, and revealing them to the soul. And thus, the man whom the Lord takes in hand, he teaches ' out of" the gospel by making Christ experimentally known, and revealing his dying love. And thus he teaches each and all " out of his law"-- both the law from Sinai, and the law from Zion.

J.C. Philpot

I CORINTHIANS 2: 7-10.

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

From Signs of the Times, (May, 1950)

"The devils also believe and tremble." James 2:19

I have tried to write for many hours, weeks and months in vain. I have become so exhausted and nervous in the many attempts, that I am thoroughly convinced that I am just at dependent upon the direct operation of God's Holy Spirit to write as I am to preach the gospel of the blessed Son of God. I am making the attempt again with fear and trembling, trust-

ing that God will be pleased to lead my mind into a fruitful field of thought, and give me the words to comfort, console and edify God's little children.

I am now reminded of a request made by P.L. Kenly of Roanoke, Va. to write upon James 2:19 especially the last part to wit: "The devils also believe and tremble." James did not say that the devils had faith. No place in the scriptures do we find any statement that would intimate that the devils trusted in God or were in possession of faith. We are forced to admit that the devils gave assent to the fact that there is but one God, even to the acknowledging of Jesus - the Holy One of God - as we shall find when we consider certain scriptures. We would like to compare and contrast belief and faith to further clarify that expression of scripture.

Belief is the mental assent to a statement, proposition, or existing condition of things. Belief is simply an act of the understanding, but trust and faith are active moving principles of the mind. Belief does not extend beyond the assent of the mind, but trust and faith compel to action. Belief is speculative while faith and trust are operative. Belief is common to all religions, trust and faith are peculiar to those who believe in divine revelation and salvation by grace of God. Theorists substitute belief for faith. I trust that the reader will be blessed to keep this in mind as we further meditate upon this expression of scripture.

Yes, the devils believe there is one God. They do not choose to believe this just because it is pleasing to them, but because that God exercises power over them. No man or devil can believe anything without evidence. God sets the bounds of the devil's maneuvers and they can go no farther. This is proven in the case of Job when the devil had to secure permission from God each time he chose to hurt Job. Each time the devil was told how far he could go and where he must stop. The devil was forced to believe that he was absolutely controlled by Almighty God. It could not be said of the devil that some people proclaim that he believes in God because their devil has free-will sailing and is so powerful that even though God is trying to save everybody, the devil will be victorious in getting the largest number. A devil with that kind of power could not believe in God. Remember that James says, "The devils also believe and tremble."

I want to call your attention to the eighth chapter of the gospel according to Matthew 29, "And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" The devils were forced to recognize Jesus as the Son of God. They cried out unto him, fully aware of his power over them. Let us consider their question, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God." They had nothing indeed to do with him. They had no interest in his grace, blood or righteousness. He was no Savior and Redeemer for them. But contrary to this they realized that he had to do with them. They trembled at

his presence and knew they would have to obey his all commanding voice, though terrible against their wills. They knew he had power to cast them out, "so the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. Even Jesus exercised power over the devils to the extent that his word returned not unto him void, but accomplished that which he pleased, and it prospered in the thing whereto he sent it. It was astonishing to the observers to see a character who exercised such power and authority that he could command the unclean spirits to come out of men and they would come out.

Let us now notice Acts 19:15, "And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?" Paul had been disputing daily in the school of Tyrannus for two years. During this long time both Jews and Greeks were privileged to hear the word of the Lord. God wrought special miracles by the hand of Paul in healing diseases and casting out evil spirits. This became so well known that even exorcists attempted to imitate. Some vagabond Jews, who were exorcists, attempted to imitate Paul and Jesus in casting out evil spirits. They would say to the evil spirits, "We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth." These evil spirits recognized this false claim of power as evidence in their statement and question. "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye?" They knew that Jesus had the power to cast them out because he had done so in many instances. It was an intimate knowledge because they had heard his command and had been forced to obey him. They had come on direct contact with him in the demonstration of his power over them. They had also come in direct contact with Paul and he had commanded them to depart from individuals and they were forced to obey his command. They knew Paul to be a servant of the Lord because he was given power over them. The question, "Who are Ye?" suggest that they did not believe that these vagabond Jews were given this power over them. The evil spirits proved that their surmise was true when they that were possessed of the evil spirits pounced upon these Jews, overcame them, and were victorious over them so that these exorcists had to flee wounded and naked. I am of the opinion that those who are possessed of these evil spirits today may and do fight among themselves, but they are made to tremble when they come into contact with the true servants of the all powerful God. The devil is as a roaring lion, walking about, seeking whom he may devour. (1 Peter 5:8) He is made to know that some he cannot devour. Those who resist the devil are empowered to do so by Almighty God, and the consequence is that the devils flee from them. (James 4:7) It is indeed comforting and consoling to me to think that the devils are subject to the power of God and can do no more than what my Father pleases. They must bow to him and tremble.

May we now consider the subject under discussion by James when he made this statement, "The devils also believe and tremble." He was treating upon the subject of the perfect faith. He was exposing the folly of those who boast of faith without works. He was insisting that true faith was made perfect by works. He makes the statement in James 2:17, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." Not only are works without faith dead works, but it is just as true also, that faith without works is a dead faith. The faith that is a gift of God is a living faith. It is not that works is the life of faith, but that good works is the second act necessarily flowing from the life of faith. It is not that we exercise faith by our works, but that faith exercises us unto the performing of good works. It is a vain boaster who boasts of his faith in God and by his works deny him. The faith that God gives is not dead, but produces good works. Faith is to works as cause is to effect.

James uses two characters to prove that works accompany faith. He cited the works of Abraham and of Rahab, the harlot; and asks if they were not justified by works. As you recall, Paul used these same two characters in his treatise of faith in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. He is contending that faith prompted them to do these things. Paul says that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. This substance and evidence comes only from God as a gift to his children. There are no contradictions in the writings of James and Paul concerning the subject of faith and works. We would like to examine Eph. 2: 8-10, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Salvation, both for time and in eternity, is the gift of God. Through his mercy, goodness and gifts we are saved here in time. This is proved by the tense of the verb used in the expression, "By grace are ye saved." We are saved through faith, and that not of ourselves. This faith is not to be obtained through our merits. It is not as a result of any good works of ours, but it is the gift of God. It is not an offer or proposition conditional upon any acts of man, but it is the gift of God. "Not of works lest any man should boast." Boasting is excluded. No man can rightly glory in himself nor boast of his goodness. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus." God is the workman, we are his workmanship; God is the creator, we are the creatures. "Unto good works" - not by good works. It is not that good works beget faith, but faith begets good works. It is by the grace of God that we are enabled to walk godly in this present world. "Which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." God said through one of his prophets, "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; as I have purposed, so shall it stand." If this be true, surely, if he ordains something it will be just

that way. We find the word "ordained" as being rendered "prepared" when we consult the marginal reference. I believe God prepares his people to walk in good works by working in them. He works in them "both to will and to do of his good pleasure." The good works are just as certain as is the faith, and is as much the gift of God as is the faith. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Your walk and conversation will be godly in this world. We conclude that James and Paul contended that faith and good works were characteristic of God's little children.

A child of God need not boast of his faith and love for these are made manifest in his deeds. He feels little, insignificant and unworthy, and much of the time wonders whether or not he be in possession of this faith and love. If you watch his walk and listen to his conversation, you will find him doing good deeds for his fellowman, and preferring others above himself. There is a change wrought upon one in which it has pleased God to implant this faith and love. It affects his actions and stimulates his conversation. His desires are to obey the commands of Jesus Christ, do the will of God and to praise him from whence all blessings come. Because of the infirmities of the flesh - the thorns that buffet him about lest he be exalted above measure - he is not able to do the things that he would. This forces him to be constantly in prayer to Almighty God to be merciful unto his unrighteousness and to forgive him of his sins. This character boasts not of his faith nor of his works. James called those who boasted of their faith "vain men." We see then that boasting either of faith or works would be erroneous, and do not characterize God's little children.

May God grant us this living faith and enable us by his grace to walk worthy in good works. May God grant us this living faith and enable us by his grace to walk worthy in good works. May he bless us to give him the praise for it all. May we look forward and press toward the mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus when we shall be called from this low ground of sin and sorrow up into that heavenly realm where and when we shall perfectly praise him in that endless eternity. May he add his blessing to this writing as edifying to the household of faith. Amen.

Elder E.J. Lambert

PSALM 103: 17-22.

But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;

To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.

The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

Bless ye the LORD, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.

Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul.

From Elder Lambert's Book, "Tried In The Furnace."

A SAVIOR BORN
MAY, 1951

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." — Isaiah 9:6

MORE THAN seven centuries before the birth of Jesus in the city of Bethlehem these words were written by the prophet, Isaiah. There can be no doubt in the minds of true Bible readers that Jesus Christ is the character under consideration. We pray God will bless us to consider this text in such a wonderful way that we may be comforted and edified. May we be blessed to gloriously rejoice upon some of the beauties contained in these thoughts. We desire to consider the text by phrases in the order in which they are written.

" Unto us a child is born." Who is included in the term "us?" Isaiah is writing to the Israelites, the chosen people of God. National Israel is a type of spiritual Israel. Spiritual Israel is in existence today. Paul was an Israelite as he stated in his letter to the Corinthians (2 Cor. 11:22). I believe that all God's children who are chosen unto eternal life are members of spiritual Israel. True Israelites are the only ones who are included in the pronoun us in this text. If you are a child of God you are included in this term. Isaiah did not say unto each and every Adamic creature, but "unto us a child is born." He is born unto a specific people. Yes, He is born to you. He was born of the virgin Mary, in the city of Bethlehem almost two thousand years ago, and people have set a date to annually attempt to celebrate His birth; but when did you and do you actually celebrate the birth of Christ? You actually celebrate His birth when He is born in you as your precious hope of glory (Col. 1:27) . When God knows a person by the direct operation of His Holy Spirit in individual relationship there is a conception. The result of this conception is a birth, the birth of Christ in you as your hope of glory.

"Unto us a son is given." This Son is peculiar in the fact that He is the Son of God as well as the Son of man. He is both human and divine. There are two erroneous theories concerning Jesus Christ prevalent today. One theory is that He was solely divine which would deny Him as being the Son of man. The other theory is that He was solely human which would deny Him as being the Son of God. Jesus, as the Son of man, was acquainted with grief, was tempted, wounded and bruised, and did suffer and die on the cross. Jesus Christ, as the Son of God, performed miracles, was glorified, overcame temptations,

accomplished the law, conquered death, and is at the right hand of the throne of God making intercession for the saints of God according to the will of God. This Son is *given.* He is not offered subject to acceptance or rejection of the creature. If it be necessary to raise a hand, say a word or do anything in order for the creature to receive this Son it would not be a gift-- it would be an offer or reward. I believe this Son is given to each and every one who has learned through sad experience appointed to them that they are unworthy, unable, and that it is utterly impossible to do anything to merit any favor or mercy of God. Paul said, "We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is *given* unto us" (Rom. 5 :3-5)."

"And the government shall be upon his shoulder." This one who is given unto us is our King. The preacher said, " Where the word of a king is, there is power" (Eccl. 8 :4). This King has all power in heaven and upon the earth. This being true, when He speaks it is done, when He commands, it stands fast. The word that goeth forth out of His mouth shall not return unto Him void; but it shall accomplish that which He pleases; it shall prosper in the thing whereunto He sends it (Isaiah 55:11).

We, being creatures who are created equal, believe in the democratic form of government as being proper in our political and earthly organizations. Even in our organized churches we do not believe that one creature should have the authority to lord anything over others with exception of that One who has the government upon His shoulder. We maintain that Christ is the Head of His church. He calls, qualifies, sends and uses each and every one of His subjects when, where and how He pleases. He never makes a call in vain. He never fails to qualify; when He sends they go. Each and every one fits and functions properly. You show me any church that places the government of that church upon the shoulder of any mortal man or group of men, and I will show you one that is not the Church of Christ. You show me a church that has to have boards, auxiliary societies and many organizations to assist in the business of the church, and I will point to that one as not the Church of Christ. The government of Christ's Church is upon His shoulder and He is sufficient to attend to its business. No business is good business when it concerns the Church. Some think that gathering sheep into the fold is the function of the Church. This is the work of Christ as He said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice" (John 10:16). If the government be upon His shoulder-- and His words are true -- do you think He needs any assistance in this work? They tell us of a person who is begging, pleading and trying to get people to accept Him; thousands of people and organizations who are

assisting Him and holding Him up; notwithstanding all this He is unsuccessful to the extent that the devil gets the majority of them. This person is not the One under consideration in the text.

"His name shall be called Wonderful." He is wonderful. When I think of wonderful I think of something astonishing and singular. Words cannot express the amazement I experienced when I was given to trust in the work of Jesus Christ as accredited to my account. I was astonished that He should have compassion upon a hell-deserving wretch such as I felt myself to be. His name is above every name. It is the only name given whereby we must be saved. He is the Way, the Truth and the life of each and every one of God 's children. It is wonderful that He is God manifest in the flesh. It is wonderful that He could accomplish the law to a jot and tittle for His people. It is wonderful that He could pay the penalty and satisfy justice for His people's sins by dying on the cross. It is wonderful that He could conquer death, hell and the grave and come forth from the tomb and walk and talk with His disciples. It is wonderful that He could ascend into the heavens and leave the comforting thought with His disciples that at some future time He would come again without sin unto salvation to gather His people into that eternal home. It is wonderful that He is so acquainted with all your temptations and troubles, that He can intercede to God for you as your Counsellor.

Yes, His name is to be called *Counsellor.* You hire and pay your counsellors in earthly courts, but this Counsellor is given to you. He is the one who pleads your case before the Judge. He is in a position to tell the Judge that He met all the requirements in your stead. Earthly counsellors do not agree to pay the penalty assessed against you by the court, but this Counsellor paid the penalty assessed. When you look for one to represent you in the courts of the land you want one who is thoroughly acquainted and experienced with your type of case. Here is the Counsellor who was tempted in all points like as we (Heb. 4:15) . He was forsaken, grieved, suffered, and experienced poverty. He also experienced inability as he said, "I can of mine own self do nothing" (John 5:30). When you give all the facts in the case that you can think of to earthly counsellors at their inquiry you find later that you have left out something vital to the case that you wished you could have told them. This Counsellor already knows your every trouble and has all the facts in your case. Earthly counsellors may be busy and you have to wait for your time before you can talk with them, but this Counsellor is not neglectful and has ample time and ears to hear your cries and beseechings. You may have tried to tell your troubles to your friends here and pour out your heart to them, but have you ever experienced the relief of mind and peace in your heart as you did when you poured out your heart and was blessed to pray through this Counsellor to Al-

mighty God? As long as you are capable of handling your affairs, even as long as you think you are capable, you have no use for a counsellor. When things get beyond your knowledge and power you seek a counsellor.

I maintain that as long as a person feels capable of pursuing any distance toward gaining eternal life upon his own merits he does not feel the need of a counsellor. He is acting upon his own strength and self-righteousness and will not call upon this Counsellor. When a person learns by sad experience that he is nothing and all his seeming self-righteousness is but filthy rags in the sight of God, he feels the need and desires the aid of the Counsellor. Jesus Christ is officiating as Counsellor when He is at the right hand of the Father making intercession for the saints of God according to the will of God. He is officiating as the Counsellor when He is speaking words of comfort to the trembling child of God. He is officiating as the Counsellor when He is calling, qualifying, sending forth, and using each child of God to the praise of His glorious name. Dear trembling child of God, do not put your trust in any man upon earth, or any set of men to give you wisdom. James was inspired to say, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God." May God grant you grace to trust all to this Counsellor!

This same character is also to be called *"The Mighty God."* The scriptures affirm that the three in the Godhead are *One.* God the Father; God the Son; and God the Holy Ghost; these three are *One.* Jesus Christ was once without power but now He has all power in heaven and on earth. If Jesus Christ be the *Mighty God* He has all power in heaven and on earth. He worketh all things after the counsel of His own will. " Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isa. 46:10). If He be the *Mighty God* do you think He will fail in bringing any of the subjects of His grace to the knowledge of the truth? Do you think that any one for whom He gave His life will fail to be saved in heaven and immortal glory in the end of this timely sphere I cannot conceive the idea that any of His purpose will fail in the least degree.

His name is rightly termed *The everlasting Father.* He is because He is founder and builder of His Church. Jesus Christ is Father because He is the Chief Ruler of His people. He is King of His kingdom. He is the Author and Finisher of our faith. The term *everlasting* signifies unchangeableness. We change but His care for us never wavers. He loved us even when we were dead in trespasses and in sins. When we are cold and careless He is interceding and caring for us. He is the everlasting Father because He finishes anything He begins. Our earthly fathers may forsake us but He knows what we need and gives us exactly what is best for us though we may not think it best. He keeps each and every one of His people from falling finally away and saves them eternally from the dominion, power and presence of sin.

His name shall be called *The Prince of Peace.* Those of you who have been in severest of troubles, and have experienced that deep soothing calm that came from no earthly source can rightly call Him the Prince of Peace. I heard a soldier once relate an experience concerning this peace. He said he was in the midst of one of the severest battles of World War II where bombs were exploding all around. Every one of his comrades had been critically wounded and killed by falling shrapnel. He was so afraid and distressed that there were indescribable throbbings and surgings of his troubled and depressed mind. All at once there was such a wonderful, deep, calming influence that affected him that he was not afraid or troubled even though the bombs were still exploding, and shrapnel still falling all around. He was made to know that God absolutely controlled everything and that nothing could hurt him. This Prince of Peace caused this boy to peacefully rejoice in the midst of battle. This Prince of Peace causes His people to be content with their lot and gloriously reconciles them to His will. Is it not a peace that surpasseth all things else to realize that God cares and is mindful of you He takes care of sparrows and not one falls without Him, and even the hairs of your head are numbered. He understands your thoughts afar off and there is not a word in your tongue that He does not know altogether. He becomes your Prince of Peace when He causes you to feel that His providence will protect and His grace will direct you aright. He becomes your Prince of Peace when He takes your feet up out of an horrible pit of self dependence and places them upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, as your hope for eternal life. He becomes your Prince of Peace when He puts a new song in your mouth which sings praises unto God instead of the old song of praise of yourself. He comes as a Prince of Peace when He picks you up on the balmy wings of His love while you are hopelessly falling down--down into the abyss of destruction and ruin. That wonderful peace that you experienced when you are blessed to pray, sing, speak, write and meditate upon His wonderful goodness to the children of men is inexpressible. What a calming peace when you are blessed to speak kind words to some cast down individual. What a blessed peace when you are given to assist some fallen creature and do deeds of kindness to the less fortunate.

May the Prince of Peace be pleased to soften the hearts of the political leaders of the countries of this war-torn world that lasting peace be the result. If this be contrary to His will may He cause us to be content with our lot and make us reconciled to His will, for He knows best. May God direct the words that have been written to the comfort of some poor soul is my desire. Pray for me because I feel to be the chief of sinners and less than the least of all saints so much of the time.

Elder E. J. Lambert

... PRAYER ...

No subject of the Bible holds more interest than this. Perhaps, we do not understand much about it. I am sure that I do not, and I realize how presumptuous it is for me to think I could teach any one how to pray. This world professes to teach that and some theologian has gone to the trouble to write a book called "God's Minute." In the book he has a short prayer for each day in the year. Not being able to give you that many in advance. While I do not know that I have ever prayed, and if I have that I will ever be blessed to do so again it does not mean that it is not gospel subject. If it is, it certainly is profitable, under spiritual guidance, for our discussion and examination..

By way of encouragement to the dear saints I want to say to you that none of our leaders have a monopoly on prayer. Although prayer is a gift it is not one we *can* use any time men call on us to pray. If I am mistaken about it do not follow me, but I believe that any minister feels a great hesitancy offering prayer at times.

Prayer is, after all, a close-up with God, a veritable talking face to face. When we are really and truly given to see our sins, it is enough to cause a trembling in body and spirit to ask God for anything, seeing that it is the prayer of a righteous man that avails anything. In this connection let me say that I have impressions to pray just like I trust I do to preach. At these times it is the sweetest yielding and compliance to his blessed command as it is in standing in the pulpit and preaching the doctrine of grace. Trying to pray is like trying to preach--it is mighty hard work--in fact it cannot be done. While *trying* to pray, we invariably are in the flesh and our object is selfish, begging for the things that we want. But that is not all, trying to accomplish a thing not only shows a lack of how but of what and why. I believe we pray as we preach and live and die, depending on the eternal fixed purposes of God. It is in faith that we come to him at all. This faith, at all times, is the substance of the things hoped for. This has never been changed and, although it moved Abel, Daniel, Jacob, Paul and all those gone before and will move every communicant that is yet to come, it is as unchangeable as God. In every step of our obedience to his commandments, it is faith that goes before, revealing the eternal perfection and sovereign purpose of God in disposing of all created things. Faith does not go before, bringing to light the unfinished things of God, as though he was a little undecided as to his rule of conduct, but it is the substance of our hope.

Now come hither little child and let us look at our hope. We do not hope that we will exercise faith to the end, but we hope that God eternally arranged for our salvation in Jesus Christ. Our prayer is not an effort to change God, but it is because he is unchangeable. The world (that is, the ungodly world) may swerve and tauntingly tell us that if they believed everything was fixed they would not pray, we know better things than that. We know our eternal destiny is fixed and that all our spiritual blessings are as settled and stable in the mind and purpose of God as is his choice. Furthermore, we are assured that he has given us all things pertaining to life and godliness. It is according to this knowl-

edge that every prayer is uttered. If we must try to pray then we must guess as to what to pray for. Guessing, we are told is all right when it hits, but unless we ask according to his will, our will would, if permitted to pray, ask for things that would forever remove us and land us away from every providential and parental blessing. If we must try to pray (that is, if we must pray more often, or more fervently) then we must guess as to what to pray for and, on that conditional basis, we would have a right to ask why if it was not answered.

A prayer is not something excited in you by the widom of this world. Just think of the prayer (that is, words called prayers) addressed to God (as they suppose) for favor in converting the heathen. That is a conditional, selfish, carnal utterance. If it was asked according to the will of God he would certainly grant it, because God answers that kind. We sometimes are motivated in like manner in the dear old church. We get over zealous and ask God promiscuously to bring the regenerated into the church. He does not answer this kind of prayer because it is not prayer.

This is a wonderful subject, it is a blessing from God. We cannot pray unless blessed in spirit, yet the apostles commanded us to pray. We are told that we ought to pray. Now we realize that it is a gift from God. Would God give us a gift to ask that any will be done except his own? Is not all prayer a complacent acknowledgement of his will being done in heaven and in earth? Having been taught his sovereignty, and being kept by his power do we not have a desire to see and feel the doing of that will?

Elder W. D. Griffin (Sept., 1947)

CONTRIBUTIONS

DECEMBER 1994

Mrs. Ralph C. Lucas, VA	10.00
Smith Walton, VA	2.00
Mrs. Meta Mills, AR	2.00
Mrs. Anna W. Harper, NC	2.00
Vance Duncan, VA	2.00
Mrs. A.R. Patterson, LA	7.00
Mrs. Myrtle Thompson, VA	7.00
Mrs. Charles M. Lovell, VA	2.00
Charles Alders, TX	7.00
Eli T. Smith, Jr., NC	2.00
E.F. Dyer, VA	2.00
Marian Meaks, NC	2.00
M.T. Dalton, VA	7.00

OBITUARIES

OBITUARY OF MARTH PEARL MIRRITT ARNOLD

It is with sad heart to write obituary of our beloved Sister Arnold. She was 80 years old. Our Lord and Saviour called her home September 26, 1994 at the V. A. hospital in Little Rock, Arkansas.

She was born in Nevada County, Arkansas December 22, 1913 to G. W. Dixon and Annie Mirritt. She was a member of Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church. Was baptised by Elder Clovis Townley. She came to her Church every time her health would let her. She loved the Preaching and Brothers and Sisters. She believed The Doctrine of Old School Baptist.

She was the widow of John H. Arnold. He was also a member of the

Church. He passed away November 17, 1986.

She is survived by one son Johnny Arnold of Stuttgart, Arkansas. Two Brothers: Tom Dixon of Tenn,and Jim Dixon of Arkansas. Three Sisters: Ruby McCeby of Florida, Opal McCullanig of Arkansas and Seloma Sheppard of Texas.

She will be missed by all that knew her; Family, Friends, Church Members.

This was requested in Conference at Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church.

Frances Townley
Church Clerk

THE OBITUARY OF SISTER MAE SHOUGH SNIDER

We, the members and friends of Liberty Primitive Baptist Church deeply feel the loss of our dear friend and Sister Mae Shough Snider

It pleased our Heavenly Father to remove her from our midst August 31, 1994. She was faithful to the church when her health permitted her to go. For several years she had health problems. We will miss her very much.

Sister Mae was born September 18, 1917, one of a set of twins in Patrick County, Virginia to Thomas Shough and Minnie Ingram Spencer Shough.

She was married to Watson Snider on November 7, 1952. He was a devoted husband to Sister Mae.

Sister Mae joined Liberty Church by experience on August 3, 1964; and was baptized by then Elder Bennie N. Clifton, Moderator of Liberty Church.

She is survived by an adopted son James Snider, two grandsons, one granddaughter, and her husband Watson. Also brothers Leo Spencer of Martinsville, Virginia and James Cleve Shough of Stuart, Virginia. Also three sisters Sister Virginia Ziglar of Stuart, Virginia; Rada Shough Durham of Bassett; and Reda Shough Martin of Archdale, North Carolina.

She was preceded in death by Cecil Spencer, Carl Spencer, Akers Shough, Raymond Shough, and Dorella Spencer Nester. Her twin Sister Faye Shough Snider followed her in death by approximately 24 hours.

A double funeral was conducted by Elder John T. Wingfield, Elder Leonard Corns, and Reverend J.C. Spence at Howell Funeral Chapel for Mae and Faye on September 3, 1994. They were laid to rest at Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery.

Therefore we the church at Liberty Primitive Baptist Church resolve that 3 copies of this resolution be made. One for the church record, one for the family, and one to be sent to the Signs of the Times.

Done by order of Liberty Church in conference October 1, 1994.

By Committee of
Sister Clara Freeman
Sister Iris Puckett
Sister Virginia Ziglar

Elder John T. Wingfield, Moderator
Deacon Paul A. Puckett, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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POEM

BEHOLD the lilies, how they grow!
They toil not, neither do they spin;
Yet Solomon could never show
Such raiment as God clothes them in.

And you, poor souls, who weep and mourn
Because your works cannot supply
That spotless robe that must be worn
By all who dwell with God on high;

Blessed are you if you strive in vain,
And all your works no comfort yield;
For when you cease to toil and spin,
You are as lilies of the field.

And he who richly clothes the flower,
Which passes almost as a breath,
Will show his richer grace and power,
In you, O ye of little faith.

Infinite wisdom, power and love
Prepared the robe that you shall wear;
And in the realms of bliss above
'Twill shine forever bright and fair.

As sun and dew afflictions come,
Making the heavenly lilies grow;
And bringing forth a lovelier bloom
Than all the fields of earth can show.

Through trials thus prepared to wear
The robe of righteousuess, they prove
Their heavenly Father's tender care,
And reach the fullness of his love.

Silas H. Durand

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EDITORIAL

THE WINDS OF GOD

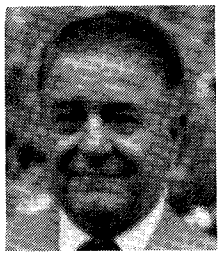
ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

The winds upon this earth move gently or with great force. Not men nor devils have any control over them, for God hath gathered them in his fists.(Pro.30:4). The freezing arctic winds, the warm gentle, southerly breezes, the winds that move the clouds which bring rain, sleet, hail and snow, that causes great storms upon the seas and the lands are all obeying the commands of our omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent God. Did not Jesus rebuke the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm? And the men marvelled and said, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him! Every wind that blows accomplishes the purpose of God whereto it is sent. Without the winds to bring water when needed, all living things, plants, animals and people would soon wither and die. ***"For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it to bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so is my word that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it." (Isa.55:10-11).*** Not only does the wind bring the water that is necessary to life, but it also brings death and destruction with violent force. Not only do the winds kill and destroy by force, but at times decreed of God it brings water in such abundance that it causes great floods that kill and destroy. There are many people who say that nature causes these things, not God. Let us ask, Who made and controls nature as well as all other things? God himself declared, ***"See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and make alive: I wound, and I heal; neither is there any other that can deliver out of my hand."(Deut.32:39). "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth,***

visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him." (Col.1:16). Surely he did not create any thing that he does not have complete control and power over. ***"For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God". (Rom.13:1).***

By his almighty power God sent his rain upon the earth for forty days and nights, the fountains of the great deep were broken up. and the windows of heaven opened. Flood waters covered the earth, even over the highest mountains, and all the things that had breath of life, except those shut into the ark by God, were destroyed. The waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days and then God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged. Is this not a comforting figure to the chosen children of God who were lifted up from the depths, when the storms of life threatened to overcome them? They will never be overcome by the trials, tribulations, and persecutions that they must face in this sin filled world, for they are secure in Christ Jesus (the Ark) by faith which is given them, and he hath said, ***"Be of good cheer; for I have overcome the world." (John 16:33).*** Neither shall they be tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine. (Eph.4:14). Christ is their hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest. Isa.32:2).

Now let us move on. God sent his people, the Israelites, into Egypt, where they were to be in bondage four hundred and thirty years. God raised up Moses in that time, that he should lead them out of Egypt. God sent Moses to Pharaoh, saying, Let my people go. But God hardened Pharaoh's heart that he would not let the people go. Then God sent several plagues upon the Egyptians, one of them being the plague of the locusts. The LORD brought an east wind upon the land all that day, and all that night; and when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts. They filled the land, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every green herb that was left in the land, and all the fruit of the trees which the plague of hail had left. The Israelites dwelt in the land of Egypt in the country of Goshen, yet none of the plagues that God sent upon the Egyptians fell upon them. God protected his beloved children then even though they rebelled against him often, and he protects his children even to this day, and will continue to do so. We read ***Ps.89:31-33: "If they break my statutes and keep not my commandments: then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness I will not utterly take away from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail."*** What a glorious and consoling promise from our everloving Father! And in Heb,12:5-8 we read, ***"--My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye***

endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."

Pharaoh in haste called for Moses and Aaron and begged them to entreat the LORD to take away the locusts. Moses entreated the LORD and he turned a mighty strong west wind, which took away the locusts, and cast them into the Red sea. Not one remained. Still Pharaoh refused to let the children go and more plagues were sent upon them. Pharaoh continued his defiance of God until the death angel slew all the firstborn of both man and beast in the land of Egypt. Then Pharaoh quickly sent them out, but after that they had gone out God again hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he pursued them with his armies to bring them back into bondage as servants, but the LORD protected his children, and Pharaoh and his armies could not overtake them. They drew nigh unto the children at the Red sea, and when they were seen the children were sore afraid and cried unto the LORD. Is this not the way we do today? We go as far as we can in our own strength, but when we have exhausted all we cry unto God for mercy. And, praise his holy name, he always hears and answers! His answer is most always different to our request, but he surely knows what we need, and we do not. As he said to Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee." The Israelites complained to Moses that he had brought them out into the wilderness to die. They thought it was better to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness. And Moses said unto the people, "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD." There was nothing else they could do, for they were completely cut off by the mountains, the sea and Pharaoh. We find ourselves in that same condition at times, but Jesus speaks peace unto us, saying, ***"In this world ye shall have tribulations: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."*** What a wonderful consolation it is when he applies these words of comfort to us personally.

God again used a strong east wind to divide the waters of the Red sea, and the children went into the midst of the sea upon dry ground; and the waters were walls on both sides of them. To me these walls represent the walls of salvation to the chosen children of God, but unto the Egyptians, the ones who would keep the children in bondage, they are the walls of death. We are now able to sing the song that Moses and the children of Israel sang--***"I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously.***The LORD is my strength and my song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God."***

As the children of Israel traveled in the wilderness of Sin they again murmured against God, for they hungered for the flesh pots and bread of Egypt. The LORD heard them and rained bread from heaven upon them. They were commanded to gather a certain rate each day, and on the sixth

day they were to gather twice as much that they might have enough bread for the sabbath, for there was no work allowed on the sabbath. The people did not keep the LORD'S commandment, but gathered more than they needed for one day and kept that which was left over for the next day. But it bred worms and stank. That is the way it is with us today. God feeds us each day that which is sufficient, and it will not suffice for tomorrow, except he blesses us to feed upon it on the morrow as he did for the people on the sabbath days.

The bread that God rained upon them they called Manna, for they knew not what it was, but it was a perfect food and all they needed during the forty years they travelled in the wilderness. But again they wept, saying, Who shall give us flesh to eat, for they remembered and desired again the flesh pots of Egypt. They said, "But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes." The anger of the LORD was kindled and he gave them meat to eat, but said unto them, ***"Ye shall not eat one day, or two days, or five days, neither ten days, nor twenty days; but even a whole month, until it come out your nostrils, and it be loathsome unto you: because ye have despised the LORD which is among you." (Num.11:19-20).***

The meat which the LORD gave them was quails. He sent forth a wind that brought quails from the sea, which covered the face of the ground as it were two cubits high. The people gathered them for two days and a night and did eat. ***"And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD smote the people with a very great plague."*** And those who had lusted after the flesh were buried there. Should not this be a warning unto us now that we should not lust after the things of the flesh? The Israelites ***"lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. And he gave them their requests; but sent leanness into their souls."*** Brethren, let us beware! Let us always remember to thank God and praise him for the love, mercy, and all good and perfect gifts that come down from above, and not seek after the rudiments of the world: which perish with the using thereof.

Now let us move forward lest this writing become far too long.

You know how it was that Jonah fled from the LORD after he was commanded to go and cry against Nineveh because of their wickedness. He paid his fare and went into a ship going to Tarshish, but did not know that he was going the way that the Lord had prepared. He did not know that a man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps. that it is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps. But he did learn and confess that salvation is of the Lord. The LORD sent out a great wind to accomplish his purpose. This wind caused a great tempest in the sea, and because of it Jonah was cast overboard, and as

soon as he was cast out the sea ceased her raging. The crew of the ship, as well as Jonah, surely believed that the sea would claim him in death, but they did not know the power nor purpose of God, for he had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah and he was there just at the moment needed as purposed by God. Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. Jesus spoke of this as a sign, saying, *"An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas; for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."*

"Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly. And said, I cried by reason of mine afflictions unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice. For thou hast cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. Then said I, I am cast out of thy sight; yet will I look again toward thy holy temple."

Brethren, have you ever felt cast out into the deep, into the belly of hell when your sins rose up before you as mountains, and rolled over you as great billows and waves? Were you not made to know that God was the one who cast you into the deep, and into the belly of hell? Did you not then in great fear and trembling cry unto him for mercy? Did he fail to answer your prayer? When you are faced with afflictions, trials and persecutions do you not cry unto him? And does he not always deliver you? God always hears prayers of faith and always answers, for he said, *"And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking I will hear."* What a gracious and comforting promise this is to a troubled and cast down child of God! God hath also said, *"When thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."* How wonderful it is when we are blessed to remember and believe and rest upon the promises of our great Jehovah! And he hath also said, *"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."*

Jesus was in a little ship with his disciples and he was asleep on a pillow when a great tempest arose. His disciples awoke him in fear, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and there was a great calm. When we feel endangered by the storms of this life we also greatly fear because our faith is so weak, but when we call upon our Saviour he calms us as nothing else can.

I realize I have barely touched on a few scriptures concerning this text, but I have written the thoughts that

came to my mind and some of the scriptures that came to mind, and I trust that the Lord has directed me. If any one receives any comfort from this, may God receive all the praise, honor and glory.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

Elder Key,

I had what is to me a most precious moment and up lifting experience and if the editors of the signs deem it worthy I would like to share it with the readers.

I awoke this morning as I do at times and could not go back to sleep. I went into the living room weary and longing for more rest, but as the vain world would say, by chance I turned on the T.V. If one understood my life style and how I feel about most of what is on T.V. they would see the sovereignty of God at work.

There was a documentary on and it was discussing the ant. It said that when the ants home is invaded by the caterpillars, the ant does not attack or try to kill the enemy, but diligently watching every move the enemy makes sets about with hard labor to repair all damage. After a while the caterpillar for whatever reason moves on to another place. Well as primitive baptists we certainly know the reason and who it was that moved the caterpillar to another place.

OH MY! If the world had eyes to see as they set about worshipping the creation more than the creator Rom. 1:25. It would frighten them to death to know what lay ahead for them. OH! that God would prompt us to pray that his word would have free course II Thess. 3:1 for brethren we all know that if God, the holy trinity, the omnipotent God, does not move us to pray we will not know what to pray for as we ought Rom. 8:26.

I thought what a beautiful picture the ant makes of the Christian that follows the meek and lowly Jesus, for he hath taught us to love our enemies and feed him as the ant did the caterpillar Rom 12:20 leaving it to God to heap coals of fire upon his head. For he hath promised us with promises that are yea and amen in Christ Jesus II Corinth. 1:20 that he will handle our enemies for we know him that hath said vengeance belongeth unto me I will recompense saith the Lord and again the Lord shall Judge his people Heb. 11:30.

May God be pleased to bless this article to the hearts of his people whom he is saving from their Sins. Matt. 1:21 For he hath given us this promise that all the world shall bow at the lovely name of our Lord. How beautiful are the words THOU SHALT CALL HIS NAME JESUS.

Brethren though I am not a member, as yet, I take the liberty of calling you Brethren for you have become dear to my heart and though the number are small he hath assured us that a remnant shall be saved and when the enemy shall come in like a flood the

Lord shall lift up a standard against him. Isaiah 59:19.

OH! how beautiful is the sovereignty of God in the absolute predestination of all his firm degrees. Including moving the caterpillar from the ant's home.

Brethren PRAY for me II Thess. 5:25.

Larry Gibson

ARTICLES

RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS

In the third chapter of Acts the miraculous healing of the lame man is recorded. The apostle Peter uses this restoration of the strength and the curing of the man, that was lame from his mother's womb, as the background for presenting the doctrine of ***"...the restitution of all things,..." Acts 3:21.*** It should be noted that this took place shortly after the day of Pentecost when the Holy Ghost filled them and brought about a response that had not happened before; they began to speak with other tongues, and when the Jews, devout men from every nation came together they heard the disciples speak in his own language. Yes, something new was taking place, Peter explains, in the 18-20 verses of Acts 3, that God had foretold these things by the mouth of his prophets how Jesus must come and suffer and "Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things....". So if Jesus is now in heaven, where he ascended, until the restitution of all things, and if we are to watch and pray expectantly, then does it not follow that the restitution is in progress now, in time? Because, when restitution is complete He will return.

In the 18th chapter of Jeremiah we are given, I believe, a capsule picture of restitution. Even though the example is given to the house of Israel, to me it is also applicable to spiritual Israel and thus to the whole elect family of God.

In the 18:3, of Jeremiah he writes, "Then I went down to the potters house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make it."

Do we know of any vessel that is marred and that needs restoring? The image of a marred vessel appears clearly any time we look in a mirror. This vessel is marred by sin and needs to be restored if it has not already been accomplished. But, restored to what? Or, when did the marring start? Where did sin start? Was it not in the garden of Eden? Sin marred our Adamic head when he disobeyed the command of God. "Hast thou eaten of the tree, wherefore I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?"

"So he drove out the man; and placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." This is what we often call "the fall," and which is the root of "original sin".

In this fall, or in this marring, what did Adam fall from? "And God said, let us make man in our own image and after our likeness ....." Gen. 1:26. Thus man, in the garden was, in some way, in the image of God. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth." John 4:24. In there any image other than a spiritual image in which man could be in His image", seeing that God is a spirit? So, does it not follow that if man, Adam, was made in God's image that Adam in the garden was spiritual? Adam was in a generate state. He could eat of the tree of life in the midst of the garden, (the tree is Christ figuratively), and he could talk with God.

In the fall Adam fell from a state of generation into degeneration. "...the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden..." This sinful, degenerate state is the condition of the whole family of man, and would forever be except that God, in his infinite wisdom, determined from all eternity to save his people. They will be born again; they will be quickened; they will be regenerated: all being similar phrases describing the restoration. This renewing, or restoring will include the whole family of God, the church, before Christ's return. It will be experienced by each individual saint through the change wrought by the Holy Ghost. See John 3:3 and Titus 3:5.

If the fall was in the garden of Eden, then when does the restoration take place, when does it start? As we mentioned above Peter stated that Jesus must be received in heaven until the restoration of all things.

It is apparent that the apostles understood something of the restoration, and understood that it had not yet been. Acts 1:4-6. It was after the resurrection that Christ instructed them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait," ... ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." Then they ask ".... wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Even though they may not have understood that the restoration was to be a spiritual, and not a natural restoration of the natural kingdom, they did understand that it was to take place after the coming of the Messiah. Christ also emphasized that it was associated with them receiving power after the Holy Ghost had come upon them, which is Pentecost. See Acts 1:7-8. This also related back to John 7:39, "....for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified".

The Holy Ghost was not given, in a restoring sense, in olden times but the restoration is given of the Father, through Jesus Christ by the Spirit in the latter days. Jesus tells his apostles in Luke 24:49"...behold I send the promise of the Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. Although they did not know then what was being told them, but did later. They were being told to wait until the coming of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost where restoration was first experienced.

A fuller appreciation for the greatness of this restoration and the fulfillment of promise which was first realized on Pentecost can be seen by reviewing the 11th chapter of Hebrews. Great things were accomplished by our old testament forbearers through faith, yet they received not the promise (were not restored in Christ). "And these, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Heb. 11:39-40.

The fullness of the promise is, of course, in Jesus Christ with the application of his finished work, in the generation of his elect, by the Spirit. Those of the old testament did not receive the promise, which is the restitution in Christ, but looked forward to it. Saints of today receive the promise in being born again, or quickened, or made alive unto Christ and look back to what made it possible in the full and finished work of Jesus Christ. And, look back to when the restitution first began at Pentecost when the Holy Ghost infused, or indwelt, in a different way." ....if any man be in Christ he is a new creature...." 2 Cor. 5:17.

The promise to the old testament saints, is it not the former rains spoken of in the second chapter of Joel? Did salvation not flow to the former seas from Christ? In like manner do not saints of these latter days rejoice in the salvation of the latter rains? Does salvation not flow from Christ to the saints of today, which are of the hinder seas? Notice in Joel that the former rain and the latter rain came in the same month. With this can't we say that salvation for the old testaments, as well as the saints of these latter days, came from the same source and in the same reason - the death burial and resurrection of Christ?

In summary thus far we have looked at (1) the fall of Adam, (2) the prophets foretelling of Christ's coming to restore, (3) the foreshadowing of the law in showing the things to be done by Christ, (4) Christ coming and fulfilling the law, being crucified, buried, and raised again to make the restitution possible, and (5) the coming of the Holy Ghost to institute the beginning of restitution.

It seems to me that the same story of the restoration is told to the church, or illustrated in the "keeping of the way of the tree of life." You will recall that when God drove man out of the garden he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way, to keep the way of the tree of life. Man, being driven out of the garden, could no longer eat of the tree of life, as he could when he was in the garden. But, there was, and is a way kept of the tree of life. The keeping of the way, it seems to me, is kept sealed until the restitution, and opened to His people in their restoration. Is not this flaming sword, that is accomplished by Cherubims, the porter that openeth to the shepherd of the sheep? John 10:2-3. Is this flaming sword not the Comforter that will receive the things of Christ and show them to his people, John 16:7-14. And lastly, is this not

what John the Baptist was speaking of, one that cometh, Christ, that "....shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." Mat. 3:11?

In the restoration, it seems to me, that his people are restored to the place where they can eat of the tree of life, the way of which is kept by the Holy Ghost. This is what his people spiritually partake of, in this life, which is symbolized when partaking of the bread and the wine at the Lord's table. In a figurative as well as a real sense the saints are restored to where they can eat of the tree of life, which is Christ, in the spiritual garden of Eden. This is the spiritual place, while yet in this wilderness, prepared for his people, the bride, the church. See Rev.; 2:14. "And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she was nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." What wonderful nourishment to be able to feed upon the tree of life. And the tree of life is still in the spiritual garden of Eden, which is the place to which the church has spiritually flown to be nourished.

And now to return once more to the text, Christ "Whom heaven must receive until the time of restitution of all things..." If the restitution began at Pentecost, then when is it fulfilled or finished? There would seem to be a marked order to the events of the fulfillment. In Romans 11:25 we read ".... blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." So, the restitution of the Gentile will come first, as is now taking place in our time. Then does it not follow that blindness will be taken away from Israel and by grace they will receive spiritual sight, be born again, which is regeneration and restoration and all the words that relate to salvation?

Concerning the latter days and the bringing in of Israel see Isaiah 66:5-12, particularly part of verse 8. The answer to the question seems to be in the affirmative, "Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once?" When the nation Israel is born the restitution of all things, that began at Pentecost, will be complete, and it seems to indicate that the restitution of Israel will be done quickly, as if in a day. Then with the restitution fulfilled Christ will return. He will return mighty to save for the church, but to visit vengeance on the wicked. Isaiah 63:1-4.

The above touches only lightly on many points of doctrine relating to the restitution of all things. It is hoped however, that the reader be able to see a thread of the plan of restitution presented in the scriptures from Genesis to Revelation. A clearer picture might be seen if some of the points were more fully explored. But there is never an end to this matter or this subject, for it is all centered in Christ. With many words or few, if the Spirit gives understanding, there will be understanding.

Wayman G. Chapell

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE LORD REIGNS

The Bible tells us that God made the earth and all things in it, and we Old Baptists believe what the Bible says. He is the King of all the earth and will do right in adversity and prosperity. He is our only hope. In the midst of this fearful drougth now afflicting our beloved nation, God reigns and will mete out to the nation, and to individuals, only that which is just and right. We have turned away from Him and His judgment is upon us. The rain cometh down from heaven; in other words, God sends the rain upon the just and the unjust and withholds it when he pleases, and we believe that all His ways are right and when He judges and punishes us it is for our good and His glory; although no affliction for the present is joyous, but grievous, nevertheless, it worketh the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them who are exercised thereby.

I once heard the late Elder Andrew J. Moore, of N.C., say that in the thick of battle of the Civil War, when as yet he had no hope, a bullet whizzed by his ear so near that he felt the wind of it and a still small voice said, "God reigns." He answered "what? Here among these Bullets?" The voice said "yes, among these bullets." And so they could not kill him. He was to preach the everlasting gospel of the Son of God. So despite all our fear and worry in every affliction that comes, the Lord will do the thing that is right, according to His love and mercy. If we are brought to want and suffering, the Lord deals with us in righteousness. And He sends His judgments that men should fear before Him.

The world has gone wild over what it calls a good time. Lovers of pleasures more that lovers of God. And many of the Lord's people are gone with the world. I am reminded of the poet who said:

Scarce in this cold declining day,
Can one for God be found,
Christians have lost their zeal to pray,
And yielded up the ground.

Yes, many have forsaken the assembling of themselves together for the worship of God.

They are too tired, or not well enough, but can attend to their secular affairs, seemingly not stopping to think that without the Lord's blessing upon their labor, it will not bear the desired fruit. Ye earn wages to put it into a bag with holes. Dear ones, let me ask you to read and consider that short prophecy of Haggai, also the 9th and 10th. Verses of the 3rd chapter of Malachi. God does not change. So He will as surely judge and punish us for our sins as He judged and punished His people in the days gone by.

May the God of our Salvation lead us to consider our ways and return us unto the Lord, Who will have mercy, and abundantly pardon; and to His name be the praise forever.

Elder Joshua Tillman Rowe
Printed in Zion's Landmard
Sept. 15, 1930.

FELLOWSHIP

Elder H.H. Lefferts

Fellowship between the children of God is of two kinds. There is church fellowship and there is Christian fellowship. Church fellowship exists between members of the church; that is, between baptized believers of the same faith and order. Christian fellowship is wider, and exists between all who are believers in Christ, whether baptized or not.

Fellowship is always between equals. It cannot exist between individuals of different standing or of different experience or condition. There must be equality of condition in order for there to be true fellowship. For instance, fellowship cannot exist between an unbeliever and a believer, because there is a difference of condition between the two which cannot be bridged. Further, there cannot be church fellowship existing between one who has been baptized and is obedient to the ordinances of Christ and one who, though a believer, has never been brought into subjection to his brethren. Here, too, is a difference in condition, and while there may be, and truly is, Christian fellowship existing in this last instance, there cannot be church fellowship.

This matter of fellowship does not come and go according to our will; it is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, and not to be controlled by the human will. When one has ever had real fellowship for another it cannot be forfeited.

To make our meaning clearer; if one is a member of the church and becomes guilty of some breach of church order, it may become necessary to set that one aside from the fellowship of the church, but if that one has ever been in the hearts and affections of the church he will still be loved, and for him there will still be Christian fellowship, even though he be cut off from partaking of the privileges and ordinances of the church.

Thinking of the church as the spiritual mother of us all, fellowship is the great, brooding, yearning motherheart that watches over all her children. If they stray from the fold fellowship goes after them, seeking to reclaim them. If they behave themselves unseemly, fellowship seeks their correction, not their destruction.

Mother-love is one of the most beautiful things in all nature. How insistently a mother will cling to an erring child, how longingly goes out her heart after the wanderer, earnestly desiring that he may realize his wrong and come back to her feet for forgiveness.

If spiritual things transcend the natural (and we all believe they do), then how patiently and prayerfully should the fellowship of the church go out after that one who, pursuing wrong, seems blinded to his course. The fellowship of the brethren will long and gently labor with that one to endeavor to show him his wrong; they will pray the Lord to grant him repentance, that thus he may be saved to the church, and not be cast off from it.

Exclusion is an ugly word. The church should not have much use for

it. It is never to be employed except as a very last resort to the house clean after all efforts at reclamation have availed nothing. The whole purpose of Christ and his gospel is to save, not to destroy.

Christ himself sought the lost sheep to restore them to the fold. He himself says he came not to destroy the world, but that the world through him might be saved. No one ever loved the sinner more, or ever served the welfare of sinners more wholeheartedly than the blessed Jesus. He bared his back to the scourgers for sinners, he even gave his cheeks to the spittle of his enemies, that sinners through him should be cleansed from sin, raised from the dead and restored to the glory of the Father which they had with him before the world began.

The gospel which Jesus sent his apostles to preach is filled with love and mercy and patience, and long-suffering to poor, erring creatures. By no means did the disciples have the patience with men which Jesus himself had. The disciples rebuked mothers for bringing children to Jesus that he might lay his hands on them. But Jesus quickly showed them their shortness of sight when he said to them, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." Again when the disciples came across a man who was healing in Christ's name they asked Jesus to command the man to stop it. Jesus, however, told them to let the man alone, that he who is not against us is for us.

Thus we shall never while in the flesh be able to comprehend the great heart of Jesus. His love is high enough, deep enough, wide enough, to embrace sinners of every class and condition. Where once he bestows his love he loves unto the end. He never casts away. He does reprove our backslidings, corrects our ignorance, instructs us in righteousness and rebukes our sins. He chastens his children with his fatherly chastisements, but never with the rod of wrath or condemnation.

Following out the great principle of the gospel of Jesus, which owes its vitality to the eternal love of God and his inexhaustible grace, what use can the church have for exclusion? Certainly it is so harsh, and an instrument of such severe discipline, that never should it be employed by any church until every shred of patience has been utterly worn out in seeking the restoration of the erring.

If ever we need the mother-love of the church it is when we are weak and easily yielding to wrong. Should the brethren desert us in that cruel time of our deepest need, where then is the evidence that Christ is in their midst?

By all we have said we do not mean to imply that the church should be slack in keeping its house clean, that it should cease to administer the discipline of the church to its members as laid down by inspiration. Of course all this must be done, but very many times churches are too quick to condemn a brother for a fault, without due examination into the matter; too quick

to exclude without first laboring with the sinner and seeking to reclaim him or to save him to the church.

Fellowship is a precious thing. It is not to be tossed about like a rubber ball, as though it were something to be treated with lightness and insincerity, yet at times we talk of fellowship, and about taking it away from this one or that one, as though it were something that we could handle, like sugar or some other commodity. The Spirit of Christ can alone give us spiritual fellowship for another, and when so given cannot be taken away.

It has been our privilege to have this fellowship with the Lord's people, and we feel that no matter what they might do to us we could not cease to love them. It would be a shame could we not have like confidence that no matter what we might do the fellowship of God's people would still be ours. Nor does such confidence in the fellowship of the church encourage us to want to do wrong. No, but rather spurs us to maintain a good behavior, that we may, in some slight measure at least, be worthy of their love and fellowship.

Salvation is ministered through the fellowship of the brethren to each member of the church. Many things which one might do if one were not in the church, one does refrain from doing because he fears to offend the brethren. This fear is not because one fears exclusion, but fears to hurt the feelings of those one loves.

The more we reflect upon what fellowship means the more should we exercise great care and longsuffering in dealing with transgressions against the order of the church. Too much patience there cannot possibly be, but too much haste there certainly often is.

As to what is the order of the church our people are not unanimous. Various constructions are put upon certain passages of the New Testament, which leads to variations in church order throughout the country. In view of this variation, whenever any one church is considering a matter of discipline or order, it is well to get the mind of the whole church before taking any radical action; not simply to be guided by the pastor, who is but a man and may err as easily as any, nor simply to be guided by a section of the church, but labor to get the minds and counsel of the whole church, and then in the light of such counsel proceed to act.

Part of a church might not see any given matter in its right light, but the whole church, if left to act with perfect freedom, and without any coercion whatever, will seldom decide any matter wrongly. The Catholics have unbounded confidence in the infallibility of the Pope. We have no confidence in any man, but we do have confidence in the infallibility of the whole church, for the mind of the whole church is Christ himself. He never errs.

Editorial of Elder Lefferts
Feb. 1, 1921.
Republished by request.)

" Who loved me, and gave himself for me." -- GALATIANS ii. 20.

MANY of the saints of God may not be so highly favoured as to take up into their lips Paul's language of strong, personal assurance. They may hope, and at times may rise beyond a hope, into a sweet confidence, by the shining in of the Sun of righteousness, that the Son of God has loved them, and given himself for them. But the strength of Paul's persuasion and the full expression of his confidence so far outstrip both their assurance and their language, that many real saints of God confess they come short both in heart and tongue. Yet their coming short of this blessed certainty as an enjoyed reality in the heart, and as a declared confidence by the mouth--for conscience and tongue must move together where God works--does not affect the fact. Clouds and mists sometimes obscure the sun, but they do not blot him out of the sky. So the mists and fogs of unbelief may obscure the Sun of righteousness, yet they do not blot him out of the spiritual hemisphere. He still loved you and gave himself for you who believe in his name, though you may not be able to rise up to the faith of Paul, or speak with the same fulness of assurance. The bud has the same union with the vine as the branch, but not the same strength of union; the babe is as much a member of the family as the grown-up son, but has not the same knowledge of its relationship; the foot is as much a part of the body as the eye or the hand, though it has not the same nearness to the head, or the same honours and employments.

Elder J.C. Philpot

From Elder Lambert's Book, "Tried In The Furnace."

"THE STEPS OF A GOOD MAN ARE ORDERED BY THE LORD"

December, 1951

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

THE expression that heads this article is found in Psalms 37:23. We trust that we have learned by experience and revelation the truthfulness of this statement. There was a time in our sojourn here that we could not receive this as a true statement. We thought we could order, command, decree, or perform our own steps within and of ourselves. We thought this was the right way and that we possessed the ability to direct our steps aright. But, alas! we found by sad experience that this was the way that seemeth right unto man but the ends thereof are the ways of death! In our desperation we were made to cry out as the prophet, "O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23). We did not know this until we had tried with all our might to walk aright and every trial met with defeat. All of our own devising was fruitless. Then we were made to trust no longer in ourselves for deliverance; we were forced to look to another source for salvation; we were made to cry to God; and, He heard our cry! We trust that we experienced the deliverance as recorded in Psalms

40:2, "He brought me up, also, out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings."

Have you ever been in an horrible pit and tried to walk when your feet were in miry clay? Your feet slip and slide so that you cannot direct your steps. Every trial leads you deeper into the mire until you are stuck. It is in this helpless condition that you pray for deliverance. When the Lord hears your cry and brings you up out of the pit and miry clay and sets your feet upon a firm foundation and directs your steps - you are, then made to agree with Proverbs 16:9, "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps."

Is it your experience that you have to be shown again and again these things? My experience is that this primitive deliverance and primary experience was not sufficient to make me to be at all times conscious of my dependence upon Him. Sometimes, it seems, that God graces me with a godly walk for a period of time and my body is kept under subjection and I begin to gloat over my steadfastness in my walk and feel that I shall never stray from the paths of righteousness. Then I am brought to my true status and made to embrace the language as expressed in Psalms 73:2, "But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped." I notice in Psalms 37:24 regarding the good man of the text the psalmist says, "Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand." If I know what this fall is I have experienced it many times in my pilgrimage here. I believe Peter experienced it when Satan was permitted to sift him as wheat. Jesus did not tell Peter: I have prayed that you fail not: but, "I have prayed that thy faith fail not." Peter failed to do that he had avowed to do. He desperately failed, but that faith that had been given him by the Lord was not faith in Peter but faith in Jesus Christ. These falls are destined to strengthen our faith in Him who is able to deliver us from these terrible conditions. These falls enable us to rejoice in the mighty Hand of the Lord that upholds us so that we shall not be utterly cast down.

We read in Psalms 37:31 of a good man that, "The law of his God is in his heart: none of his steps shall slide." None of his steps shall slide because God orders by His law; directs by His spirit; and, enables and performs for him by "working in him both to will and to do of His good pleasure." We are informed by Proverbs 16:1 that the preparations of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is of the Lord. According to the Scriptures He takes from us the stony heart, gives us a heart of flesh, writes His law in our hearts: and, enables the heart to believe and the tongue to confess by the direct operation of His Holy Spirit. It is no wonder that none of the steps of God's children shall slide when we consider that He is so gracious to them by establishing their goings and causing them to know from whom cometh their strength!

We want to consider now some of the steps that are ordered by the Lord. The steps that God orders would not

be the steps that man would voluntarily take upon his own initiative. Man would naturally try to escape the first step that we shall mention. We maintain that man is not able or desirous to take any of them.

Suffering must be a step, for we read in 1st Peter 2:21, "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." This emphatically states that you are called to suffering. Suffering is necessary in order that we reign with Him according to 2 tim. 2:12. The writer to the Hebrews in speaking concerning Jesus said, "Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered and being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him" (Heb. 5:8,9). Suffering was necessary in order that Jesus learn obedience. Suffering is necessary for us in order that we obey. We learn obedience by the things which we suffer. Were it not for suffering we would yet be satisfied with our own righteousness and ability. Severe afflictions were blessings in disguise, causing us to realize the filthiness of ourselves and our need of Him and His guidance, love and mercy. "Not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulations worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us."

Yes, severe afflictions work patience, the next step the Lord orders. We are brought into humble submission to His ruling. He causes us to be still and know that He is God (Ps. 46:10). He makes us to know that He works all things after the counsel of His own will. We are made to be content with our lot and reconciled to His will. We are blessed to endure hardships and constantly look to Him for deliverance.

Experience is the next step recorded by the apostle. After that we have been caused to suffer until we have been made to patiently wait upon Him - then we begin to experience and realize the hand of God in the matter. He comes to our rescue and begins to manifest Himself as our deliverer. We experience His grace, loving-kindness and tender mercy. We begin to look upon Him as our Rock, our Refuge, and our hiding place. He has stilled the tempest, calmed our minds, and delivered us from trusting in self and has caused us to look to the merits of the blessed Son of God for our salvation. This has worked a hope.

We are not yet delivered from sin for we find that sin is mixed with all we do and "When we would do good evil is present with us." We earnestly desire and expect some day to be delivered from the presence of sin through the merits of Jesus and the amazing grace of Almighty God. This is the hope of God's children. "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Rom. 8:24,25). When

blessed to be in the sweet embrace of His love, we realize, "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil? (Heb. 6:19). This hope maketh not ashamed.

The subjects who have been ordered to take the aforestated steps are not embraced to own Him as their total Savior. Jesus will not be ashamed of us because we are made not ashamed of Him. We are not of them that Jesus referred to as recorded in Mark 8:38, "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his father with the Holy angels." Do you consider it a disgrace to believe and avow that God is sovereign over all things? Do you blush in contending for the doctrine of salvation solely by grace through the merits of Jesus?

Ashamed of Jesus! Sooner far
Let evening blush to own a star;
He sheds the beams of light divine
O'er this benighted soul of mine.

Ashamed of Jesus! yes I may,
When I've no guilt to wash away,
No tear to wipe, no good to crave,
No fears to quell, no soul to save.

Repentance is a step that is ordered by the Lord. No doubt Ephraim of old tried to repent of himself thereby ordering his own steps. He certainly was unsuccessful in the attempt and was made to cry to God, "Turn thou me and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord, my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented" (Jer. 31:18, 19). You see that repentance must be ordered by the Lord. When it is so ordered it is sure. It is certain because Christ gives it to spiritual Israel for it is recorded in Acts 5:31, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, the forgiveness of sins. When God revealed Himself to Job it caused him to say, I abhor myself; I repent in dust and ashes" (Job. 42:6). We are made to hate sin and pray for deliverance from it.

Faith is a step that is ordered by the Lord. Faith is the evidence of the new birth. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God" (1 John 5:1). The faith that was once delivered to the saints is the trust in the three-one God. Do you have faith in the Father who chose His people in the Son; predestinated them unto salvation; made all the provisions for their salvation; and who is so perfect in power and wisdom that none of His decrees shall faith but all shall have the desired effects - all things were ordained by Him and for the perfecting of His grand purpose, the salvation of His people? Do you possess faith in that Son who accomplished all the requirements of the law for you; took your sins upon Himself, paid the penalty, satisfied justice by shedding His blood for you; is now at the right hand of God's throne making intercessions for you according to the Father's will? Have you been made to feel the calming influence of the Holy Spirit that reveals these things to you that the Father has designed and the Son has accomplished? Has the Com-

forter ever soothed your aching heart and made you to cry with joy, "My Redeemer liveth"? This faith is the gift of God, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that [faith] not of yourselves: it [faith] is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8). We find by reading further that it is not of works but unto good works. So, the next step we find ordered by the Lord is good works.

These good works are the result of that faith which is a living or working faith - not the dead faith spoken of by James 2:17, "Even so faith, if it hath not works is dead, being alone." This living faith activates the subjects and causes them to "... warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men" (1 Thess. 5: 14,15). When it pleases God to work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure a godly walk is the result and our conversation is godly. All these good works are inspired by faith and motivated by love.

We love God because He first loved us (1 John 4:19). He did not love us because we loved Him, for "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). We are not capable of loving divinely until He manifests His love toward us in giving us this divine love by the Holy Spirit. Then, we love Him and love one another. It is an order of God that we love one another and this order is effectual. He said through the mouth of the prophet, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it." Love is one of the fruits of the Spirit and is made manifest in the lives of God's children. Those who are not born of the Spirit act solely upon selfish desires in hope of reward or in fear of punishment. Those born of the Spirit are stimulated by love in their actions to one another. Love is a step that is ordered by God. Love is the law He in-delibly imprinted in this new heart of yours.

Many of God's children are ordered to follow their Lord in being baptized in water which is an outward manifestation and figure of being enveloped by the body of Jesus - being in Him as He accomplished the law, paid the penalty of death, and was resurrected. (See Romans 6:3). Baptism in water is an outward manifestation of being enveloped and immersed in repentance. Baptism in water is signifying a hope of the mortal body being some day baptized with immortality. As baptism into Jesus and His death by God creating them in Him was the entrance into the Church universal, so then, baptism in water is the proper entrance into the church militant.

God orders, directs, inspires and empowers His children in the steps of singing, praying, preaching, communing, and doing all that is becoming to saints. When He says, "sing," we sing with the Spirit and understanding. When He says, "pray," we pray without ceasing. When He says, "preach," we preach

the Word. When He directs us to teach we teach transgressors His ways. When He directs us to run, we are enabled to lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us and run with patience the race that is set before us - looking only to Jesus as the Author and Finisher of our faith.

Time, space, nor ability will permit us to put in words our many thoughts upon this great subject. We have briefed the steps mentioned. Many steps that arrested our thoughts have not been written in this manuscript. Suffice it to say, we trust that God will bless these few hints to your comfort and edification. May He stir up your pure minds to recall the many steps in your experience that God has ordered. I desire to close this article on "The Steps of A Good Man Are Ordered By The Lord" by quoting Philippians 1:6: "Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

Elder E.J. Lambert

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 1994

Buford Thompson, VA 2.00
Mrs. Geneva Pettis, LA 5.00
Mrs. Lavenia Biggs, TN 2.00
Mrs. Rachel J. Green, WV 2.00
Mrs. Dorothy Gould, LA 2.00
Mrs. Hazel F. Jackson, NC 2.00
Cleo Underwood, VA 5.00
Mrs. Lula E. Sloan, NC 2.00
Mrs. James W. Huber, MD 2.00
Mrs. James Burgin, TX 2.00
Mrs. Ruby A. Hawley, VA 5.00
Hassell Allen, NC 5.00
Mrs. Mildred Loftis, NC 2.00
Mrs. Dorothy M. Craighead, VA .. 3.00
Eld. Carl Terry, VA 2.00
Charles E. Hatchett, OK 2.00
Walter Hill, NC 5.00
Mrs. Albert H. Davidson, LA 20.00
Mrs. Iva L. Souter, TX 7.00

OBITUARIES

Ballard E. Barker

It is with a sad and lonely heart, I will try to write in memory of my loving husband, Brother Ballard Barker. He was born May 2, 1912 in Pittsylvania County, A son of William B. Barker and Mitchel Jennings Barker. The last member of his immediate family. His early life was devoted to his family, He kept his mother and dad as long as they lived. His dad died May 16, 1947. His mother died June 13, 1959. Oct. 25, 1959, He married Addie Henderson Williams, Who died March 1, 1972. He married Sarah Harward Walton Barker on Nov. 27, 1975. He leaves to mourn, 6 step children 15 step grand children and 3 step great grand children,Who loved Him as their own. He was A firm believer in Salvation by Grace,And predestination of all things.He joined Old Mountain Primitive Baptist Church April 17, 1977,at the water, and was

baptised with his wife by Elder Julian Williams. A faithful member, always ready and willing to do any thing he could for the church as long as health permitted. Always enjoyed the meetings and entertaining Primitive Baptist in our home. Having suffered so much in 1987, The loss of A leg in 1988, and open heart surgery in 1993. Was in a wheel chair or walker until he was called home, Sept. 30, 1994. Where there will be no more pain (cerebral hemorrhage) Never complained, but often spoke of how good the Lord had been to him,who felt so unworthy. His Funeral was held at Wrenn and Yeatts Funeral home chapel, Oct. 2,1994 at 2:00 P.M. by his Pastor Elder C.B. Davis. He was layed to rest in Highland Burial Park, beneath A beautiful mound of flowers, A token of love, from his family and many friends to await the sound of the trumpet,When Christ will call his children home. Done in conference at Old Mountain Church. Jan. 15, 1995.

Written by one who loved him.
Elder C. B. Davis. Moderator
Sarah Barker, Clerk

IN MEMORY OF GUY OWEN DALTON

If the Lord will bless me, I will endeavor to write the obituary of our beloved Brother Guy Owen Dalton. He was born June 24, 1909, in Pittsylvania County and passed away November 21, 1994, at his residence at the age of 85.

He was the son of Joe Terry Dalton and Sister Dolly Dalton. He was married to Mildred Younger Dalton and to this union ten children were born.

He is survived by his wife, Mildred Younger Dalton of the residence, seven sons, Berkley of Hurt, Jerry of Penhook, Gary, Malon, Ronnie, Doug and Guy Jr. all of Gretna, four daughters, Barbara Hawkins of Lynchburg, Louise Woolard of Altavista, Betty George and Geraldine Ayers both of Gretna, one brother, Bill Dalton of Lynchburg; 20 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren.

Brother Guy was given hope and joined Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on July 25, 1993 and was baptized on August 22, 1993 by Elder Raymond Goad. He was sincere in his convictions and believed in Salvation by Grace.

Brother Guy was blessed with hospitality to divide what the Lord had given him naturally with his brethren and friends. The door of their home was always open with warm love and wanted all that visited them to eat and feel welcome.

Brother Guy became ill and was confined to Lynchburg General Hospital several times but was blessed to come home a few days before his death. His wife and family stood by his side and did all human hands could do for him to make him comfortable. The Lord saw fit to call him home on Monday evening November 21, 1994. His funeral was conducted at 11:00 a.m. November 23, 1994 by Elders Raymond Goad and Marvin Brumfield. His body was laid to rest

beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the glorious resurrection morning.

He will be greatly missed by his wife, family, church and friends. May all that mourn his passing be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father.

Written by: Pam Betterton

Elder Raymond Goad - Moderator
Elder Marvin Brumfield - Assistant Moderator
Phyllis Goad - Clerk

MAIDLINE MCLAWHORN DORMAN

God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to call home my mother, Maidline Dorman. She passed from this life May 16, 1994. She was born October 28, 1908, the daughter of the late Alexander and Ida Susan Robinson McLawhorn. She was married to Lynwood Dorman who preceded her in death.

Her survivors include a son Robert L. Dorman of Morgan Hill, California, a daughter Frances Tripp of Tarboro, N.C., three sisters Nina B. McLawhorn and Mabel C. McLawhorn bath of Ayden, N.C. and Lavenia Tripp of Stokes, N.C. a brother William E. McLawhorn of Warren, New Jersey, two grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

She joined Hancock Primitive Baptist Church on June 15, 1958 and attended faithfully as long as she lived. She never missed a meeting unless providently hindered. She not only attended her church but visited many others of the same faith and order. She enjoyed being with the brethren and God blessed her to attend Hancock's yearly meeting the day before she died. She enjoyed it very much.

She lived a simple quiet life and her greatest pleasures was working in her flowers and attending her church.

She will be truly missed by her family and all that knew and loved her, however we feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted at Farmer's Funeral Home by her pastor Elder Joe Sawyer. Her body was laid to rest beside her husband in Evergreen Memorial Estates at Grifton, to await the second coming of Christ.

Written by her daughter,
Frances D. Tripp

OBITUARY OF HELEN A. ROWLAND

With much sadness in my heart, the dear Lord willing I wili write a few words in memory of our beloved Sister Helen A. Rowland. She was born June 20, 1914, in Pittsylvania County, the daughter of Stephen E. and Martha D. Adams.

She is survived by two sons, Marvin C. Rowland and wife, Doris and Edward L. Rowland and wife, Geneieve, four grandchildren, Cheryl R. Layne, Madelyn R. Meadows, Bryan L. Rowland and Suzanne M. Rowland.

She loved her church. She was a good wife, mother and grandmother. They all loved her and did all human hands could do for her.

Sister Helen was given hope and asked for a home with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on September 14, 1952, and was baptized by her Pastor, Elder O.K. Tench, on September 28, 1952. She was faithful to attend her church meetings. When she was unable to drive, her family members saw to it that she had a way to church-her granddaughter, Cheryl, brought her on several occasions.

Sister Helen departed this life on October 20, 1994. Her funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church at 2:00 p.m., October 22, by Elders Raymond Goad and Marvin Brumfield. Her body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Altavista Memorial Park to await the glorious resurrection. She wiil be greatly missed by her family, church and friends.

I feel we have been highly favored by God to have been blest with sweet fellowship with this dear Sister who worshipped with us at Weatherford Church.

May we all who mourn her loss be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father who never makes a mistake; it is He who giveth and He who taketh away. Blessed be his holy name.

Written by: Phyllis Goad at the Request of Elder Marvin Brumfield

Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
Elder Marvin Brumfield, Assistant Moderator
Phyllis Goad, Clerk

MARY JEANETTE SMITH

With sadness in our hearts we attempt to write a few words in memory of our dearly beloved sister in the Lord, Mary Smith. God, who does all things well, saw fit to remove her from our presence on October 1,1994. She is sadly missed by all who knew and loved her, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. She was born July 26,1905, making her age 89 years, 2 months and 6 days.

Sister Smith was baptized into Union Primitive Baptist Church in 1941, and was a faithful member, always filling her favorite seat, unless providentially hindered, until her death in Homer Memorial Hospital at Homer, La.

Sister Mary leaves behind her faithful husband Deacon John Eliga Smith of Homer, La., 1 daughter and son-in-law, Mary Irene and Franklin Williams of Magnolia, Ark,; four sons and daughters-in-law, William Franklin & Doris Smith of Ohatchee, Ala., John Thomas & Betty Smith of Alexandria, La.; Alton Clyde & Faye Smith of Marion, La.; and Fred & Nary Smith of Homer, La. Also thirteen Grandchildren and twenty-one Great-Grandchildren.

Memorial services were conducted before a large crowd of friends and relatives by her co-pastors, and internment was at Union Church Cemetery,

Co-pastors
Eld. J. Theron Jones
Eld. Clifford Wilbanks

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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STRING OF HOPE

In nature I'm a sinful wretch,
Sometimes I feel that I'm a goat,
But I thank God that he has let,
Me have a little string of hope!

I have no confidence in my flesh,
With trials sometimes are hard to cope,
When in confusion I'm a mess.
But thank God for the little string of hope!

By the Grace of God, I'm what I am,
In worldly things I win no votes,
But I thank Christ the perfect Lamb,
That he gave me a little string of hope!

I'm weak and needy in this life,
So many times I felt the jolt,
But through my Lord and Savior's stripes,
I'm thankful for a little string of hope!

Some troubled times have cast me down,
I groan within me proned to mope,
But through the blood of the precious Lamb,
I'm thankful that I'm given a little string of hope!

Katherine Mathews

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EDITORIAL

For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is me if I preach not the gospel. 1st Cor. 9 vs. 16.

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

The Apostle Paul was, in the hearts and minds of most Christians, the most gifted of men in the revelation and the understanding of the doctrine of God our Savior and his Son Jesus Christ. He was given the most fluent knowledge of the mysteries of God's plan of salvation and the way and manner in which man is involved in this plan. He was blessed to leave on record, in his epistles to the churches and to the brethren more of the experimental knowledge and instructions to those who were to follow in this way than any other man and yet he said he had nothing to glory of because he did it as a result of the necessity that was laid upon him.

Saul was a Jew, grew up under the teachings of the law and was a strong defender of that form of worship, and well versed in the knowledge of the Mosaic law and the ordinances contained therein. As he stated in Gal. 1 vs. 14-15 he was exceedingly zealous of the traditions of the fathers and was successful in his endeavors among the people of his own nation. He was satisfied in his religion and aggressively persecuted those that did not agree with him in an attempt to make them see the error of their way. He even went to the extreme of obtaining letters of authority from the rulers in Jerusalem to act in their behalf in his pursuit of this goal. It was at this particular point in his career that the Lord Jesus was revealed unto him, and made known unto Saul his plans for his future and told him the things he must do. After this encounter, Saul was blind and had to be led about by the hand of those who were with him to complete his journey into Damascus. The necessity was made very plain, here to Saul and he was given further instructions by Ananias of the things he must suffer for Jesus' sake. Jesus had told Saul that he was ap-

pearing to him to make him a minister and a witness of the things being revealed unto him then and the things that would be revealed unto him in his journey the remaining days of his life.

The Apostle Paul, when relating of this experience in his letter to the Church at Galatia simply said "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen: immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were Apostles before me; but I went into Arabia and returned to Damascus." The only reason he gives for preaching the gospel was that it had pleased God to reveal his Son in him; no reference to anything that he had contributed to the calling, it was simply because it was God's pleasure for it to be so. Then he said immediately he began to preach the gospel without conferring with those who were Apostles before him: he did not need to know of their experience or calling, for he could not preach from that: he would preach Jesus who had appeared unto him in the way, and the power of that appearing. As he wrote to the Colossians Chap. 2 vs. 6, "As ye have therefore received, Christ Jesus the Lord so walk ye in him." Each one is saved and called with a holy calling and their faith and hope of salvation is based upon their own experience: even moreso the preaching must be based upon the necessity, urgency and power of that calling that sends forth those that are to preach the gospel.

In the verses preceding the above text the Apostle had been writing on the subject of the care and sustaining of those who preach the gospel and the logistics of how this would normally be done in the economy of the Church. He referred to the law and how that it made provisions for the priests and how it would be normal that those who preach the gospel should live of the gospel, even to the point of saying that the Lord had ordained this. 1st Cor. 9 vs. 14. But Paul says immediately, "But I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things that be so done unto me: for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void." Paul said in 1st Cor. 6 vs. 12, "All things are lawful unto me, but not all things are expedient: all things are lawful unto me, but I will not be brought under the power of any." It was lawful but the Apostle did not feel that it was expedient for him in this matter. He felt, as Peter did, that money had no part in this matter and he would not reduce his ministry to the level of including a temptation that could become a stumblingblock in his way, or have it considered that way in the mind of others. His calling was not of man, his gift was not from man and he did not want his reward to be in the things of this world.

The Apostle had nothing to glory of because his preaching was not in his power or wisdom but rather a burden that had been placed upon him. It is not something that natural men can do of themselves and yet they cannot fail to do it when called by God to so

do. A God called minister is not preaching for what he can receive as a results of his labors but rather because of the necessity that is received in his calling: he will not even acknowledge that he has been called until he can contain it no longer. Elihu said, Job 32 vs. 18-20 ***"For I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me. Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burst like new bottles. I will speak, that I may be refreshed: I will open my lips and answer."*** When he reaches this point, in his experience, he goes forth and proclaims the gospel when and where called upon, but in fear and trembling not proud and boastful. They go forth and fellowship Paul when he said, ***"As much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. "***

A sister was once talking to a minister that the church had called as their pastor and was apologizing for their calling him since he lived over two hundred miles from the church and his response was, dear sister I am not coming up here because the church called me but because of a higher calling I felt to have received years ago. Any number of churches may call a minister to serve as their pastor but the reason they go is because of the higher calling and this is just another part of that calling.

The Apostle Paul says, following the text, ***"For if I do these things willingly I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me."*** If one is called to preach, they will preach, willingly or unwillingly. Moses was not excused from his calling because he had a stammering tongue and could not speak: nor Jeremiah, because he was but a child, and could not speak. Jonah was commanded to go to Ninevah and preach against it: instead of going willingly, he paid his fare and boarded the ship to go to Tarsish from the presence of the Lord. In all three of these instances what was commanded was done even though all were unwilling to do it in the beginning. I think that all ministers will acknowledge that when they first experienced an impression to speak they could give dozens of reasons, including those above why they could not do that which they felt that they would do in time.

Man cannot volunteer to preach the gospel because man has nothing to preach but the things of man. To preach the gospel he must first be partaker of the afflictions of the gospel and this he can only do as they are applied to him by the power of God. God is a spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth and surely they that preach him must also be a partaker of that spirit and heavenly calling which enables them to do what is impossible for the man in nature. As Paul said Eph. 3 vs. 7 ***"I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power."*** Surely Paul was not on his way to Damascus to volunteer to become a Christian and certainly not to be made a preacher of the gospel, in

his own mind, but, in the mind and purpose of God that's exactly why he was going to Damascus. Necessity was laid upon him in the appearing of Jesus and that was sufficient, and is in every case.

These are the reasons why the Apostle Paul took the position that he did in this matter and, I believe is the reason God's ministers do today. There may be nothing unlawful about paying the preachers to preach but personally I could not accept the position on that basis. Just as oil and water do not mix, neither does the idea of a heavenly calling and a salaried ministry. The Apostle Paul went as a servant and preached the power of his calling to all who would listen to his message and said, "I am made all things to all men that I might save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you." There is the reward that he looked for: that he might be a partaker of the blessings promised to those that love the appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and that he might see the proof of his calling in the love and fellowship among the brethren to whom he ministered.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

ISAIAH 40:31.

But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

ARTICLES

HEBREWS 10:14.

"For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."

With the help of a merciful God, I hope to write a few lines on this verse of scripture.

For by one offering, this one offering contrasts sharply with the many offerings made by priests under the Mosaic Law, where the priests had to stand daily, ministering and offering, sometimes the same sacrifices, which could never take away sin. Under the law the priest laid his hand upon the head of the lamb, confessed his sins. Although innocent the lamb was slain and consumed upon the brazen altar by fire into ashes. Jesus lived a perfect and holy life, from the manger to the cross meeting all the requirements of God's holy law, thereby producing a righteousness that presents his bride perfect before God. He was taken and crucified by wicked hands, nailed to that cruel cross by his hands and feet. He endured the wrath of a offended God for us, while he lived, not after he died. His blood was so much better than that which Abel offered, and while Christ poured out his blood, God saw the travail of his soul and was satisfied. By this sacrifice God's righteous servant will justify many, for he bore their sins. Surely he hath bore our griefs and carried our sorrows. Therefore by this one offering he has per-

fected forever them that are sanctified.

By one offering, he has perfected forever-see what this verse is saying, he has perfected forever. What God does, is done forever, with no variables or shadow of turning. This is not something that is done for a year or two, but this is a finished work, it does not depend on any act or work of the people. Where then is all these claims and beliefs of all these false doctrines who say and believe that a man has to do all these so called good works, such as tithing, witnessing, etc. the same with all the little things that he better not do or he will be lost. The scripture says that no man can live without sin, and yet even against such clear words as these, all these self-righteous people and their false beliefs are all ready and able to cast the first stone at anyone who makes a small mistake. I don't intend to run down or condemn other doctrines and beliefs. I only intend to set forth the difference between right and wrong for everyone believes what they have to believe. I am only trying to set forth the wonderful work of God in this one offering, compared with the false beliefs the devil has instilled in the hearts of many. So to sum up the truth, God has done it all with this one sacrifice, there is nothing we have to do, and when we go astray, now that has been taken care of also, even like the thief on the cross. Perfected forever - one other thing, this is a finished work and to show more clearly the great power of the blood of Jesus, this is done forever. Yes forever, not until we make a mistake, or fail to witness, or fail in our tithes, but forever. Webster's dictionary defines the word perfected as meaning to be near perfect. So who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect, it is God who justifies us.

Sanctified - Webster says it means to be set aside, from what, or to what. I believe this is to be set aside means, to be set aside from the love of worldly things, to be set aside from false doctrines, to be set aside from unrighteous and ungodly things, to set aside to the love of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, the love to the brethren, and things pertaining to the gospel, all those that believe Jesus is the son of the living God. Now the question will surely arise, when are we sanctified, and I will say, at God's appointed time. God sanctified Jeremiah while still in his mother's womb, he was set aside to be a prophet, others for different reasons. In other words they were sanctified to be translated (1 Col. 1:13) into the kingdom of his darling son.

We sing of amazing grace, just think, elected by God before you were born, perfected by his one offering, set aside to be translated into the kingdom of his darling son. How could it be any better? Thank God from whom all blessings flow. May these few lines be a blessing to some of his dear ones, love and peace to you all.

A brother, I hope,
Frank Hunt

TO THEM WHO BELIEVE IN THE ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS:

In the beginning of my endeavor to write this, I desire to say this; If it so be, that I have any knowledge of the truth, as it be in the Lord Jesus Christ; then, it had to have come unto me, as a free and unearned and unmerited (on my part) gift from God. And that very same does apply, if I be so blessed, as to write down any of His truths here; for I do feel and believe that, He is the one and only source, by which any Holy truths could ever come unto a poor sinner, such as I feel myself to surely be.

This question often comes to my mind; what could be God's purpose in, keeping this poor sinner here, now for more than eighty two years, showering His blessings upon one such as I; not that I have any doubt, that He does have His purpose in it so being; for otherwise, I just simply would not be here. But it is just, that I feel to be of no profit at all to anyone, by staying here. Though I do feel and hope, that in my feelings, concerning these things; I would not dare question God's perfect and Holy right, to do His every pleasure, both in heaven and upon the earth. For I feel, that the fulfillment of His pleasure, is the sum-total of, His purpose in and for, bringing all things into existence.

Sometimes, when thinking about the robbing, stealing, raping, maiming and murdering, and other such wicked actions of mankind; I, in my fleshly ways of thinking, I find myself wondering, if all is not completely out of control; and then, by the grace of the merciful God, my mind is arrested, and removed from thinking in such fleshly manner; and then for a little space of time, I find my thought and feelings dwelling upon the greatness of the almighty God; and their feel the certainty of His absolute power and unhindered control, over all things, beings and activity; whatsoever be or exist throughout all eternity; it is at such blessed time, I feel there is not enough devils on earth and in hell, to cause doubt to enter my mind and feelings, concerning the absolute certainty of my God and Lord, having full and absolute control over it all; and therefore, all what be, shall surely come at its exact appointed time, place and manner, as already foreseen, foreordained, and established by Him, back in the annals of eternity, before His creation of this time world.

Just as it were with Joseph, his brothers, the king of Egypt; and all what had to do with all events concerning them; it all was a direct proportional part of the whole, of what shall be, in the exact fulfillment of every instant of time so allotted, for this world to stand; just as it is with any and all events, to ever take place in all time; and that does apply also, to all activity of satan or the devil; all shall serve to that very end, whereby God's power, shall be made known; and all shall work together for the good of His chosen people; and to the glorification of Himself. That was His purpose in and for having brought all things into existence; and there is no

thing, with anything, what could ever hinder or alter its exact fulfillment to every jot and tittle. For without His furnishings of strength, no thing or being could ever exist or function, outside Himself. Man, in and of his fleshly self, is of such weakness, that satan or the devil has power over him; But, thanks be unto God, He has power over the devil; and so, the devil can do no more, than just what, God furnishes him with ability to do with; of which points directly unto that fact of Holy truth, all existence, outside God Himself, is under Him, and therefore is always and all way subject to and under His absolute control; in other words, all, is already weighed and measured, and all consequences developing from them. Which brings my mind to the subject of the Predestination of God. Not, that man concocted (so called) predestination, of just some things, but not all things. But, that Predestination of all things, that be absolute, by reason, it is "God", who Predestinated it all.

No, the true and living "God," I refer to here, would never, no never, leave any part or portion of the operation of His government, up to man and his chance system. For with Him, absolute certainty, is His only way and working. For with "God", success, is alway absolute. Even, as He has thought, so shall it be. His thoughts are, in perfect accord with His purpose; and, as is His purpose, so shall it stand. His will is, to do all His pleasure, in both heaven and earth, and none can stay His hand or say, what doeth Thou. He holds it all in His hand, to do with as He pleases. And so, His thoughts, are His purpose, are His will, are His pleasure; and, in that He holds and controls all power both in heaven and earth; and, in that all powers that be, are only those that He ordained; and, in that all strength, must come from that power that He holds and controls; therein, establish that Holy truth; that His will, confirms that very fact, that all outside Himself, Shall be and do in complete accordance with, what He did foresee and foreknew, that it all shall surely be and do.

Now, the worldly religionist would no doubt say to the above remarks; what then could be the purpose in prayer? Well, my answer in part, would have to be thusly, Every true prayer ever uttered or groaned unto God, during all time for this world to stand; was already known, back in the annals of eternity, before this time world were a time reality; and also, all answers to all those prayers, were already provided for and prepared; and His answer to them everyone, is just as sure, as it is sure, of them being uttered or groaned; And all that, simply, by reason, He is "God".

Some say, it is not necessary to use the word "absolute;" when referring to the Predestination of God, for with Him, it must be absolute; I could not agree more, so far as be His working of all things; but I feel as some Old Baptist have expressed their reason for using the word absolute; that it might convey the message to others, that I do not hold with any, partial Predestination; but with all Predesti-

nation, or either, none at all; for I feel and believe, "God" to be, the all in all God; that, He never left anything up to chance, or maybe so; for, to be unsure or uncertain, of anything whatsoever, to be or come or take place, in all eternity; is to be subjected to a state of confusion; of which is, a complete opposite, of all the attributes, of the true and living God.

In accord with the inspired word of God, He choose His people in His Son, back in the annals of eternity, before this world were a time reality; and so therefore, it can rightly be said, all His children, are, of the exact same age; and in that they shall all arise, on the morning of the resurrection, be like Christ and be satisfied; they all must be the same size, and of the same importance, in the sight of God; for He sees them through the shed (pure) blood, of His Son Jesus Christ. And as to whom the Law does apply, when Christ, while still hanging upon the cross said - it is finished; from that instant forward, none for whom He died, are under the law, but are, under Grace; Why? because He (Christ) had fulfilled every jot and tittle of that law for them; He had done for them, that which were an impossibility for them to do. He had then cancelled all their debts owed, for all their sins ever committed, or ever to be committed, while living here in this world. He said every farthing for them; of which, they had not even one farthing of their own, for to pay with; which does point directly unto that Holy truth of God's word, when He said - My grace is sufficient for thee. It was the application of that sufficiency, through His Son Christ Jesus, He spake of; And it is that very same grace, will deliver them every one, unto heaven and immortal glory, And every one, through and by His arising and coming forth from that tomb, fully justified them, for a place with Him and their Heavenly Father forever. The Father sees his chosen children, through the shed blood of His only begotten Son; Holy innocent and white as snow; with not one blemish or charge against them; For Christ washed them every one with His pure shed blood; all their sins were banished away into the sea of forgetfulness, to never again be remembered. Now that, is just how everlastingly thorough and complete a work, the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ did for them (and I hope me), while He was down here in this lowground of sin and sorrow. He just completely finished all that His Father sent Him down here to do, shall never effect, even one iota of change, in that whole process; for that simple reason, God is God, and changeth not. And that, my precious Brethren, is that "One and only God" I have any desire, that my trust and hope be in.

May His name be praised, honored and glorified, both now and forever more, Amen:

Troy G. Shepard
103 East Tateway Rd.
Kitty Hawk, N.C. 27949

P.S. If I never again meet any of you Dear Brethren, while on this sin cursed earth; I have a hope, that is so very sweet and precious to me; that I could be gathered to gather with you, on the

right hand of our Lord and Savior, on that final morning or day of the Resurrection, and carried on the wings of His love, to the presence of our heavenly Father; to ever sing undivided never ceasing praise, unto His great and Holy name; the one and only name, ever worthy of any praise, honor and glory, in all eternity. May we be blessed, to prayerfully ask ourselves; what do I have, which I did not receive? and I feel the answer shall be, No thing or nothing. Of which does surely include our very existence and being; for without Him, we could neither be anything, nor do anything; not even have a soul, much less, a body or form. And so, when tempted, to praise any of mankind; may we be reminded of, from where and who, comes our every furnishing.

Troy G. Shepard

VOICES OF THE PAST

ACTS VIII. 33.

"In his humiliation his judgment was taken away."

We have been asked by a sister to use the above words at the head of an editorial. As much as in us is we desire to comply with such requests from our kindred in Christ. If the Lord stirs up the pure mind of his people and implants in their hearts a desire to know what the Scriptures teach, he is able to give the pen of a ready writer whereby their questions will be answered to their satisfaction, edification and comfort. All who have been taught of him know full well that he must enlighten the mind of his servant and give him understanding in order that he may be able to set things in their proper place. If we know our own heart we earnestly desire, both in speaking and in writing, to shew ourself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. While we do not wish to court the favor of man, we are confident if we give expression to the things of God they will find lodgment in the hearts of those begotten of him and we will have their approval. There is abundant scriptural proof of the fact that God dwells in his people, and we can trustfully affirm, if we have any knowledge of the Lord's mercy, his longsuffering, his forbearance and lovingkindness, it has come to us in a way of life at the hands of our brethren. Surely they have not dealt with us as we have deserved to be treated by them. It has greatly encouraged us at times to realize that we have brethren who can and do feel for us, whose prayers are continually going out to our covenant keeping God to make bare his arm in our behalf and fill our mouth with such things as will be suited to the needs of his children.

The words referred to are only a portion of the thirty-third verse of the eighth chapter of Acts, and considered by themselves at best can present only a part of the picture. In order that we may have a more complete background it will be necessary to bring to view some of the surrounding scenery, or the conditions leading up to

and following after the utterance. In those days, as in these times and all other ages, the world was not a friend to the cause of righteousness. The forces of good and evil have ever been arrayed against each other. Paul tells us in the beginning of the chapter, "At that time there was a great persecution of the church which was at Jerusalem." He, himself, as Saul, having no knowledge of God, "made havoc of the church, entering into every house and haling men and women, committed them to prison." Because of this persecution, the saints were "scattered throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria," but "they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." Though scattered, they were the "elect according to the foreknowledge of God," and "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." God's people can never be so scattered, or so far off but that his all-seeing eye is ever upon them, and he supplieth all their needs. "The angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south, unto he way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert." The eunuch of Ethiopia is a type of the church in nature; she is black as the tents of Kedar, and her place of dwelling is desert, and she is as powerless to change her condition as the Ethiopian is his skin or the leopard his spots, but God having begun a good work in the eunuch's heart, continues that good work by sending Philip to meet with him. As the eunuch read Esaias the prophet, "The Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest what thou readest?" Philip's heart seemed to have delighted toward this one with whom the Lord was dealing, for he "ran thither to him," and the question he asked of the eunuch was evidence of the bond that bound them. It was the very question which he desired most of all to have answered. As the king of old was troubled about his dream, which none of his wise men or magicians could tell him, and Daniel, the prophet of the Lord, came telling not only the dream, but the interpretation thereof, so Philip saw into the very depths of the secret places of the soul of this one who realized he was black and in a desert land, and as he spoke the language of his heart he had the witness within that Philip was a true prophet of the Lord. His reply could only have endeared Philip to him more than ever: "How can I, except some man should guide me?" What a confession to helplessness and dependence upon the great Teacher. "And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him." Oh how the poor heart that is hungering and thirsting after righteousness yearns for the messenger of the Lord to come this way, that he might come in and tarry in his house, in the place where he dwells, and deliver the message of the power and the peace of the gospel of the Son of God. "The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the

slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth; in his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth." What an appropriate figure inspiration uses here to typify the spirit that moved every thought and action of our blessed Lord. Guile was never found in his mouth, and when he was reviled he reviled not again. As a sheep, inoffensive and harmless, he was led to the most ignominious slaughter of all ages. While his humanity was weak and cried out against the bitterness of the cup, being led of the Spirit, he could say, "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done." He "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." When his hour had come, he opened not his mouth to utter a word of complaint or objection, not a single struggle did he offer against his crucifiers. Unto such an hour and to die such a death came he into the world, according to the will of God. What great condescension that the King of glory should bow the heaven and come down into this world of degradation, to hang upon Calvary's cross between two thieves, and yet without assemblance of revenge or pride in all that he said or did. He was thus manifested to be the Son of God, or the Son of love, for God is love.

"In his humiliation his judgment was taken away." In his mortification and abasement he was deprived of his capacity to judge, and as they crucified him, "and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left," he said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." In the Spirit he was perfectly resigned to the Father's will, and there is nothing on record to indicate that he desired any compromise, or that his own will should prevail in any way whatsoever, for he rendered a perfect obedience. Who, then, shall declare his generation? Who shall tell of the manner of his coming? He was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of a virgin, in a manger, and there was no place for him in the inn. Who shall declare the purpose of God in his advent into the world, his sufferings, death and resurrection? Who shall explain the necessity of his life being taken from the earth, the dying of the Just for the unjust, and the power which wrought in him when God raised him from the dead? There can be but one answer to these queries: Those to whom is given "power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Only they that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep. They must pass through the gall of bitterness, and be made to know that vain is the help of man, and cursed is the man that maketh the arm of flesh his trust, before they can discover the pearl of great price and know that great and marvelous are the

works of our God in the salvation of his people. No others can declare the generation of him whose life was taken from the earth, whose kingdom was of this world. "And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh he prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?" What is the answer? "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" they prophesied of one whose name was "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Truly he was full of wonder, the man of wisdom and the government of his kingdom is upon his shoulder. In that kingdom where Jesus reigns, peace prevails and he is the "Prince of Peace," and those who are bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh seek peace, and pursue it. In the day when the Lord alone shall be exalted the lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down. "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." How wonderful when the Lord fills the mouth of his servant and he is enabled to preach Jesus, the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end, who liveth, and was dead, and, behold, is alive for evermore; preach Christ, and him crucified, as the Way, the Truth and the Life. The Scriptures testify of him. Therefore, whatever Scripture is used, whether in the Old or the New Testament, Jesus is the sum and substance of it, and "the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." This is the word that searches all things, yea, the deep things of God, and when it is preached in demonstration of the Spirit and with power to one it shows him all things whatsoever he did, and he is made to ask, Is not this the Christ? It shows him that Christ is all his worthiness and that he should not trust in himself; that to be like Jesus he must be humbled, brought low, and "in his humiliation" his judgment must be taken away. He is thereby made willing to submit his case to the brethren and be subject unto them. In the case of the eunuch it had to do with one outside of the visible church, and there was such power and sweetness in the opening up of the word to his understanding he was made to say, "Here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both unto the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." There are evidently many who are followers of the flock to day who have not been brought sufficiently low as to have their judgment taken away in their humiliation, who do not really and truly believe with all their hearts that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, else they would do as the eunuch did

and follow in the footsteps of their Lord and Master. We would that it might please our heavenly Father to lead in a plain path and make straight the way of the Lord before them, that they might take up the cross and follow him. This matter is one between the individual and his God. All the servant can do is to preach Jesus, and this is done only as he is endued with power from on high. We wish to emphasize, however, that the humility of Christ did not end at the water's edge. Truly he did humble himself in demanding baptism at the hands of John, and none realized this more keenly than did John, as was clearly shown by what he said, but the humility of Jesus was unchanging, everabiding. There are those in the church to-day who act as though they left their humility outside when they were received into the fellowship of the church and were baptized. They are no longer willing to subject themselves unto the brethren, but in the lusts of their pride and desire for leadership boast that they will not take orders from any one on earth. Nothing but wreck and ruin can follow such a course. We would to God that he might make known unto them that he dwells in his people, that "the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" One may proclaim love and peace from the housetop, and yet every action proving selfishness to be the foundation upon which they are building. Let the servant remember Peter's exhortation to "feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder: yea, all of you be subject to one another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." We would like to impress indelibly upon the mind of all the inspired writing: "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings." In other words, how beautiful is the walk, the life, that makes for peace, and unity, and love. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Brethren, let us be nothing, and less than nothing, that Christ may be all and in all.

"Jesus the great, the mighty God,
A man of grief became;
In paths of meekness here he trod,
And bore the sinner's shame.

Humility, how bright it shined
In every act he wrought;
What lowliness of heart and mind,
Appeared in all he taught.

His love to men of sinful race,
Glowed in his tender breast;

For man be yielded to disgrace,
Forsaken and distressed.

Led as a lamb to meet the sword,
He bowed beneath the stroke;
Not one revengeful, angry word,
The dear Redeemer spoke.

Oh may his meekness be my guide,
The pattern I pursue;
How can I bear revenge or pride,
With Jesus in my view?"

Elder R.L. Dodson

PSALM 119: 129-136.

Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them.

The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments.

Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.

Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.

Deliver me from the oppression of man: so will I keep thy precepts.

Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; and teach me thy statutes.

Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.

From Elder Lamberts book, "Tried in The Furnace."

TONGUES
SEPTEMBER, 1952

BEFORE ENTERING upon the discussion of the text of this article, I beg to make an apology. I have been so nervous the past several months that it has been impossible for me to sit still and concentrate long enough to write a letter. I trust the readers of the *Signs* will find in their hearts a spirit of forgiveness to forgive me for not writing before now. I have to be convinced over and over again that the will to write is not sufficient. I must be given the ability in the self-same hour that I attempt before I can write.

May I evade further to tell you that we have been highly honored to have Elder Spangler and Sister Spangler, Elder Griffin and Sister Griffin to visit us in our little home, as well as the homes and churches in this vicinity since writing you. Their graceful preaching at the churches and over the radio will long be remembered in this section of the country as inspirational, edifying, and very comforting. Now, may the Lord bless us to meditate upon the text in answer to a request from an esteemed elder.

The best definition of tongue, as used in the Scriptures, is that it is a particular language or dialect spoken by any particular people. We want to base our remarks upon one of the five signs that shall follow them that believe, as recorded in Mark 16:17, "They shall speak with new tongues." The

believers are the particular people, and the new language given them by the Lord by the direct operation of His Holy Spirit, is the new tongue. We maintain that the new language spoken by God's people after the work of regeneration is unknown to the world and cannot be learned or understood by them.

The early ministrations of the Spirit in the manifestation of the power thereof was evidenced in the performance of natural miracles which were signs, types or figures of spiritual miracles. Jesus raised the natural dead, signifying His power to raise the spiritual dead unto spiritual life. Natural blind eyes were opened; natural deaf ears were unstopped; the lame walked; the palsied were made whole; they spake in different natural languages;--all to figurate the spiritual work in regeneration of His people. This was evidenced on the day of Pentecost according to Acts 2:3,4, "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them: and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance." Even though there were people of many different languages, each heard in his own tongue. Today, if we speak the truth to the edification of the Lord's little children we have to speak as the Spirit gives utterance with the tongue as of fire from heaven. All hear in his own language.

I shall never forget attending a meeting of colored people one time. The colored minister was so blessed to tell my experience and to speak my thoughts and belief that I said to those accompanying me, "They speak our language." It is marvelous to note the similarity of expressions in the different parts of the country. I was so deeply impressed on my first trip to the east coast that I said to those strangers in the flesh, "I am persuaded that we all have the same Teacher, as we speak the same language."

I am glad the record says that, "On the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost, for they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God" (Acts 10:45, 46). This new tongue magnifies God, thus abasing man. The gift of tongues in those days caused them to Prophesy according to Acts 19:6, *"And when Paul laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied. "Paul said in Cor. 12 :4, "He that prophesieth edifieth the church."* Jabbering that can neither be understood by the speaker nor any of the hearers could not be edifying.

I do not believe God gives gifts in vain. I believe the gift of tongues is the gift of a particular language--not something that is a language that cannot be understood by anyone. We ean see the necessary use of these special natural gifts of the Spirit as several languages were spoken by the people of the same locality. It would be foolish for me to make a display of the gift to speak the French language in a congregation where there were none who understood French. If I should go to a country where the people only

spake and understood Latin, it would be improper for me to speak English in the church there unless there was an interpreter, according to 1st Cor. 14:27, 28.

If my lot were cast among people who spoke many different natural languages, to prophesy there would be a necessity for the gift of speaking different languages. I believe this could be just as possible in this day as in days gone by and is the case when necessary. I know of men who have the special gift of speaking several languages. Paul said in 1 Cor. 14:9, *"Except ye speak words easy to be-understood, how shall it be known what is spoken for ye shall speak in the air."* Paul said he had rather speak five words with understanding in the church than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue (1 Cor. 14 :19).

I think the true significance of the gift of tongues as prevalent today is whether they speak with the tongue of men or the tongue of angels. Paul inferred a possibility of being in possession of the gift of the tongue of angels and at the same time having not charity. He states that the result of this would be as "sounding brass or tinkling cymbal." This would give an uncertain sound (See Cor. 13 :1). We would like to contrast the "tongue of men" and " the tongue of angels " or the " old " tongue and the " new " tongue.

We call your attention to Psalms 58:3, " The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray, as soon as they are born, speaking lies. " So, the tongue of men is a lying tongue. David's natural tongue was a false and deceitful tongue, as he prayed, "Deliver my soul O Lord, from lying lips and a deceitful tongue. What shall be given unto thee or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue?" (Ps. 120:2,3.) David realized something had to be given to, or done for that terrible tongue which he was unable to do. Therefore, he prayed to God. In Proverbs 4:24, we read of "A froward mouth and perverse lips."

This kind of tongue speaks contrary to right reason, contrary to the law of God; things that are foolish, filthy, unjust, and untrue. According to Eccl. 5:2,3 and Prov. 10:19, hasty speech and multitude of words are sin. The tongue has to be restrained, bridled, and tamed. The tongues of men enter into contention, become a snare to their soul, and are as whisperers and tale bearers as proved by Proverbs 18:6-8. Yes, it talks of fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, foolish talking and jesting; (Eph. 5:3,4) anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, and filthy communication (Col. 2:8).

James 3:5 says that the tongue is a little member and boasteth great things. The natural tongue boasts of the ability of man. When we hear one boasting of what he can do we may be assured that he is speaking in the old or natural tongue which has never been supplanted by the new. The natural tongue boasts of self-righteousness.

When one speaks boastfully of his own righteousness, we may know that it is the old tongue. James also says that it defiles the whole body, being an unruly evil which is full of deadly poison.

Can the tongue be tamed? Man may put bridles into horse's mouths and direct them. He may tame beasts, birds and serpents, and may direct a ship with a very small helm wheresoever he desireth even against fierce winds, but

can he tame the tongue? According to the third chapter of James many may do all the above ***"but the tongue can no man tame" (James 3:8).***

According to the words of James and my experience, it is impossible for a man upon the volition of his own will to tame the tongue that it will not lie, deceive, wound, talk foolish and jest. If man cannot tame or bridle the tongue, then I want to know as David did, what must be given or done to it? and who can do it?

I am persuaded that the Lord must give us the new tongue by the direct operation of His Holy Spirit before we can manifest a bridled tongue. If you will notice in Mark 16 :17, that it says, ***"They shall speak with new tongues,"*** not in new tongues. The tongue must be given them.

Let us read Isaiah 50:4, ***"The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: He wakeneth morning by morning. He wakeneth my ear to hear as the learned."*** If I am in possession at any time of the learned tongue it is because it has been *given* me by the Lord. I believe there is a time and a season for every word properly spoken to the weary to their comfort and edification.

I cannot learn how to do this. I do not know when certain words ought to be spoken. Even though I try to learn when, how, and what to say to certain people on certain occasions, I learn by sad experience that I cannot learn those things, but must depend on the words being put in my mouth that would edify and comfort. The learned tongue is the *gift* of God. The learned tongue speaks words in proper season. The learned tongue gives a soft answer that turns away wrath. The learned tongue confesses Jesus as our Savior. Quoting Romans 10:10, ***"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."***

God does not begin sometlling that He doesn't finish. He begins by giving the new heart that believes. He continues that good work begun by giving the new tongue that confesses. You may be a believer and think you are hiding it, but are not, your *speech betrays you. You* talk of your unfitness, unworthiness, and of your inability; you say if you are saved it will be solely because of God's mercy and grace based on the merits of Jesus. You speak a different language; you sing a different song.

Let us meditate upon Psalms 40:3, ***"He hath put a new song in my mouth even praise unto our God."*** You sing of His mercy, grace and truth; you sing of His power, wisdom and holiness. Your song is now in harmony with the Scriptures. It is in perfect accord with the experience of your brethren. The old song was sung in the key of man--the praise of man being the keynote. The new song is sung in a different key--the key of Jesus. This new song praises God. If you want to hear a discord in natural singing try singing in a different key to the others in the class. If you hear some praising man and some praising God, you hear a discord. The old tongue can't learn to sing a new song. The new song must be put into the mouth by the direct operation of God's Holy Spirit, thereby the new tongue is given to sing the new song.

We read in St. Luke 12:12, ***"For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say."*** The instructions say to take no thought how or what ye shall answer. As I stated before, I am guilty of taking thought, which manifests one of my many weaknesses. I learn continually by sad experience, that my efforts are in vain. I am allowed at times to speak upon the subject that I have premeditated to use at a certain time, and often it makes me sick. Sometimes I have tried to re-use a line of thought that was so inspirational to me when I experienced it, but behold, worms have gotten in it and it is stale; it has lost food value.

James says, ***"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain" (James 1:26).*** True religion must manifest a bridled tongue. No man is able to bridle it; so, it must be the new tongue that God enables you to bridle. This bridled tongue is a wholesome tongue. In Proverbs 15:4 we read, "A wholesome tongue is a tree of life..." It is soothing and healing to be in the company of those who speak words that are edifying. The wholesome tongue speaks sound doctrine which cannot be condemned. Those in possession of this tongue speak healing words to wounded consciences. They speak of the pardon, peace, righteousness, redemption and salvation through the life and blood of Jesus, motivated by the love, mercy and grace of God, our Father.

May God bless us with this new tongue that drives away wrath instead of stirring up anger. May He bless us to edify, comfort and heal. May we not be hasty in speeeh, but may we speak ***"As the oracles of God." Peter wrote by inspiration, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God... " (Peter 4 :11)***. If man speak as the oracles of God it is by divine utterances. It would be in accord with the Scriptures.

I realize that I have not been enabled to do justice to the text. I trust that the readers will be charitable to forgive imperfect expressions and that you realize all errors are expressions of the old tongue. If there be anything wholesome in this article, it is evidence of the new tongue, and be assured that God is to be praised for it.

Elder E.J. Lambert

MEETINGS

HOPEWELL MEETING

The good Lord willing, the twentieth annual 5th Sunday meeting will be held at Hopewell Church, Winnsboro, Texas, beginning on Friday, April 28th and continuing through the 29th and 30th. Hopewell Church is located about six miles west of Winnsboro, Go west on Coke Road (515) about four and one-half miles and follow the signs.

By God's sovereign grace, and in accordance with His Holy Word, we are encouraged to gather together for singing -- "Oh, sing unto the LORD a new song; for He hath done marvelous things: His right hand, and His holy arm, hath gotten Him the victory." -- Ps. 98:1; praying -- "He will

regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer." Ps. 102:17; preaching -- But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all Thou works." - PS 73:28; and sweet fellowship - "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" - Ps. 133:1.

We pray you will be given a mind and a way to be with us. God is so good.

Elder Jimmy Hamrick, Pastor
John Hamrick, Clerk

REHOBETH CHURCH
Destroyed By Fire

Early in the morning of January 28, 1995 an arsonist burned the Rehobeth Primitive Baptist meeting house to the ground. Rehobeth church has met at this location north of El Dorado, Arkansas since 1891. The original frame building was enlarged and bricked in the 1940's. The fire has been a great emotional and financial trial for the members and friends of Rehobeth. We plan to rebuild on the site as soon as possible. The church had no insurance on the building, so we will need to raise the entire replacement cost. Thanks to the gracious providence of God and the loving generosity of many friends, several thousand dollars have been donated already. If anyone reading this notice desires to contribute to the rebuilding fund, contributions may be sent to either of the following:

Rehobeth Church Improvement Fund
First National Bank
Main St. and Washington Ave.
El Dorado, Arkansas 71730

Mrs. O. E. Bishop (Church Clerk)
208 South Flenniken St.
El Dorado, Arkansas 71730

Due to the loss of the meeting house, Rehobeth church will not host the South Ouachita Association union meeting in April. The union meeting will be held, God willing, with New Hope church at Spearsville, Louisiana on the first Sunday in April and Saturday before. All who love the truth are invited to visit with us.

Shannon Vaughn, Moderator
Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the Staunton River Union Meeting will be held the Lord willing at Strawberry Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in April the 29th and 30th.

Take State road 41 to Woods store turn on road 750 to church about one half mile on right.

We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us, a special invitation to all ministers of our faith and order.

Sister Gertie Holley,
Church Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 1995

Cecil Crawford, OK	$2.00
Mrs. Susan Chandler, FL	2.00
J. Cline Chandler, NC	2.00
Mrs. Elizabeth Helms, VA	2.00
Mrs. B.J. McLaughlin, TX	2.00
Mrs. Phyllis Snyder, VA	7.00
Mrs. Phyllis Farlow, MD	2.00
Hoyt Sparks, NC	2.00
Millard F. Sizemore, WV	5.00
Mrs. Virginia Apple, NC	2.00
Mrs. Emmie L. Grayson, AL	2.00
Mrs. Pearl McNelia, MD	2.00
Mrs. Audrey V. Dyer, VA	7.00
Mrs. Vera N. Potter, MS	7.00
Bruce Barron, LA	4.00
Mrs. C. Weaver, WA	15.00

OBITUARIES

ELIZABETH BARLOW GEARHART

It is with much sadness that I endeavor to write the obituary of our dear sister in Christ, Sister Elizabeth Barlow Gearhart. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh...bless His holy name.

Sister Gearhart was born November 21, 1934 In Floyd County, Virginia and passed away October 1, 1994, making her stay on earth 59 years. She was the daughter of the late Zebadee and Ethel Barlow. She is survived by her husband Floyd Lewis Gearhart , Floyd Virginia; one son and daughter-in-law, Jeffrey L. and Charlotte V. Gearhart, Chesapeake, Virginia; three grandsons, James and Thomas Gearhart and Horace Cooper III, all of Chesapeake, Virginia; four brothers, Grover C. Barlow, Panama City, Florida, Earnest A. Barlow, Floyd, Virginia, Frank D. Barlow, Bassett, Virginia, and Fred H. Barlow, Floyd, Virginia.

Her funeral was held at Salem Church and was conducted by her pastor, Elder Hale Terry. She was laid to rest in the Barlow Family Cemetery, Floyd County, Virginia.

Sister Elizabeth was afflicted with several health problems but attended church whenever she could. She joined Salem Church and was baptized by Elder Roy Agee on April 14, 1968 along with her little son, Jeffrey who was only seven years old. How well I remember that special day.

May the loved ones left behind be blessed to feel that their loss is her eternal gain.

This memorial was written at the request of Salem Church and humbly submitted by an unworthy sister.

Mary Poff

FLOYD LEWIS GEARHART

On November 11, 1994 it pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst Brother Floyd Lewis Gearhart, just 42 days after his lovely wife had been laid to rest.

Brother Lewis was born April 4, 1934 to Curtis and Pearl Gearhart of Floyd

County, Virginia. His funeral was conducted at Salem Church by his pastor, Elder Hale Terry, and he was laid to rest by his wife's side in the Barlow Family Cemetery, Floyd County, Virginia.

He is survived by one son and daughter-in-law, Jeffrey L. and Charlotte Gearheart, Chesapeake, Virginia; three grandsons, James Gearheart, Thomas Gearhart, and Horace Cooper III, all of Chesapeake, Virginia; one sister, Oweeda Conner, Pulaski, Virginla; two brothers, Lenwood Gearhart of Floyd, Virginia and W. Wayne Gearheart of Pilot, Virginia.

Brother Lewis was baptized October 15, 1994 by his pastor Elder Hale Terry. He was blessed to attend church the last few times under heavy afflictions from terminal cancer.

The members of Salem Church send our sincere sympathy to Brother Jeff and family, trustlng that God wlll be their comforter.

Written by request of Salem Church and humbly submitted by one who loved this family.

Mary Poff

ALVETA GASKILL HOPKINS

Sister Alveta Gaskill Hopkins, a member of the Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church, Lowland, North Carolina, passed from this life November 16, 1994. She was born September 29, 1906, the daughter of Elder James G. and Sister Challie H. Gaskill.

She married Robert A. Hopkins of Hobucken, North Carolina. To this union was born one daughter, Doris. Besides her daughter Doris, she is survived by 3 grandchildren, 3 great grand children, and 2 great-great grandchildren.

Her daughter and son-in-law cared for her as long as they possibly could at their home in Winsor, Virginia. She spent the last year and a half of her life in a nearby nursing home in Waverly, Virginia.

She joined Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church in February, 1950 and was baptized by Elder William Barnes.

As we reflect on the sweet memories of Sister Alveta, we remember her strong faith and belief in the doctrine of Election and Salvation by Grace. The Lord blessed her with many beautiful experiences which were very precious to her. She was given a hope that God loved her and that hope remained with her throughout her days.

She was laid to rest in Barnett Cemetery in Hobucken. Funeral services were conducted by E\ders Henry Jones, Oliver Allen, Jesse Foreman, and Lester Eason who all spoke with power and humility and the sweetness of the Savior she loved and worshiped. May God grant her eternal peace and may He have mercy on all of us.

Written at the request of
Goose Creek Island
Primitive Baptist Church
by her niece and Sister, I hope,
Ila D. Leary

SISTER MARY TAYLOR HEDRICK

It pleased our Lord to call home,Sister Mary Taylor Hedrick. Sister Hedrick was the daughter of Charlie Douglace Taylor and Beaulah Brunfield Taylor. She was born February 28,1907. She passed away from thls life November 19,1994.

Sister Hedrick was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by experience and baptism, July 29,1947.

Sister Hedrick was married to Russel Berkley Hedrick, who preceeded her in death in 1962. She was preceeded in death by two sons; Clarence Berkley and James Elbert Hedrick. Her survivors include one son, Shirley " Tee " Hedrick of Danville; three daughters; Elizabeth H. Adkins of Martinsville, Gladys H. Milam of Ringold and Gypsy H. Farthing of Gretna; one sister Beulah T. Adkins of Gretna and one brother, John R. Taylor of Danville; 20 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren.

Sister Hedrlck wasn't able to get to church often, but she always enjoyed the love and fellowship of her brethren. Her funeral was conducted at Springfield Prlmitlve Baptist Church by her Pastor Elder Marvln Brumfield. She was laid to rest in the Chatham Burial Park. She will be missed by all that loved her. May each one be reconciled to God's will.

Written in love and hope.

Carol R. Pickral
Elder Marvin Brumfield - Moderator
Oscar Pickral - Clerk

IN MEMORY OF SISTER MILDRED STRADER

Sister Mildred was called home to be with her Lord on July 6, 1994. She is survived by her dear companion, Brother Coley Strader, her daughter, Colleen Shumaker of Greenville, S.C.; son, Jerry W. Strader of Reidsville; brothers Wharton Carroll, Brother Allen Carroll, both of Reidsville, David "Harvey" Carroll of Ruffin; eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. She asked for a home in the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on May 26, 1951 and was baptized on June 24, 1951.

Attempting to write of one who, I feel, was truly a mother in Israel and who daily bore the fruit of the Spirit in her countenance and walk is a very humbling thing. I've known Sister Mildred since childhood and she has always been a very special lady to me and, I hope, sister in Christ. One of my most precious memories of her is how she always treated me just like one of her own children. I remember on the night of my high school graduation, when I arose to deliver the farewell address, seeing the faces of Sister Mildred and Brother Coley in the audience. I was not, at that time, a member of the church, but I remember the comforting warmth of knowing they were there.

The Scriptures tell us in Proverbs 31:10, 28 *"Who can find a virtuous woman for her price is far above rubies. Her children arise up and*

call her blessed: her husband also, and he praiseth her." Sister Mildred walked in an humble and meek manner and would never have taken praise unto herself or have wished to be eulogized. The Lord blessed her to always be there for her Church, her companion of over 50 years, her children, and her friends and neighbors. She will be sorely missed. There are no words to express the loss, but I feel confident that she could say with Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

Her final years were shadowed by physical ailments and yet she was blessed to bear those with her characteristic gentle spirit. May the Lord bless her family, especially our dear Brother Coley, to view their loss as she did her physical pain -- in the words of the hymn writer, "Not a single shaft can hit, unless the God of love sees fit." May the kind, heavenly Master bless them with his Presence in the days to come.

Humbly submitted
Mary Hawkins

EPHESIANS 4: 4-6.

There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;
One Lord, one faith, one baptism,
One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

MRS MITTIE MAE WALKER

It is in sadness that I attempt to write this obituary of ourbeloved friend and sister in Christ Jesus, but we bow in humble submission to the will of God who does all things well, and we believe her spirit is now dwelling in the glorious presence of her Saviour in whom she trusted and had a good hope. Sister Walker expressed her faith and hope many times to us, but. never was blessed to ask for a home. She was as one who was "fed by the shepherds' tents." Unless providentially hindered she was always present at our meetings, many times even when she was barely able to do so.

Sister Walker (Aunt Mittie, as she was lovingly called) was born March 4, 1909 and was called home January 16, 1995, making her age over 85 years. Her survivors are 2 sons: Billy C. Walker of Albuquerque,N,M. and Jerry Walker of Choudrant,La.; 2 daughters: Barbara Walker of Ruston, La. and Johnnie Impson of Choudrant, La.; 1 sister: Mrs O.C. Parks of Spencer, La.; 4 grandchildren, 1 great-grandchild, a host of nieces and nephews, and many friends.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Graydon Smith on January 17, 1995 in Kilpatrick Funeral Home at Farmerville, La., and interment was in Union Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery, Linville, La. beside her beloved husband Will E. Walker.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

Signs of the Times

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SONG

I LOVE thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of thine abode;
The church our blest Redeemer saved
With his own precious blood.
I love thy church, O God,
Her walls before thee stand,
Dear as the apple of thine eye,
And graven on thy hand.

For her my tears shall fall,
For her my prayers ascend,
To her my cares and toils be given
Till cares and toils shall end.
Beyond my highest joy
I prize her heavenly ways;
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
Her hymns of love and praise.

Jesus, thou friend divine,
Our Saviour and our King,
Thy hand, from every snare and foe,
Shall great deliverance bring.
Sure as thy truth shall last,
To Zion shall be given
The brightest glories earth can yield,
And brighter bliss of heaven.

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EDITORIAL

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven".

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

This scripture is one of the most popular and often quoted scriptures to be found in the pages of inspired writing and yet I wonder how often people are blessed to really stop, analyze, and realize the depth of the wisdom contained in this short verse of scripture. It seems that this one verse, if completely expounded, would surely cover the whole of wisdom as revealed unto the saints of God as they journey in this time world. It states as simply and as matter of factly as only Wisdom can, the only way in which the heirs of God can come into possession of the kingdom of God. These are the words of the only begotten of the Father; the only Person born into this world with sufficient wisdom to declare the whole truth and the whole counsel of God. Jesus was speaking to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, who came unto Him in the darkness of human wisdom inquiring of Jesus, who He was; and regarding the kingdom of God. He stated, ***"Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him".*** And Jesus answered him with the above statement. In nature's darkness man cannot know the things of the kingdom of God.

For man to inhabit the earth he must be born into the world of nature in the way and manner that God has decreed for the population of this planet earth. It is according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of the eternal God of heaven and earth and is true of all except the first two. Adam was created of the dust of the ground and a rib removed from Adam's side was made Eve. When ***"God created man in His own image, male and female created he them"***, He said unto them, ***"Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it".*** This has continued down thru the annals of time as children are born unto men

according to the laws of nature. Each man, at the time appointed of the Father, has a beginning as a creature of flesh in his mother's womb, is separated from her and becomes an individual of the human race. This, in nature, is the way in which man is born into the world.

Man's being born into the world is in such a manner that the most intelligent or the most unlearned of men would concede that it was by no effort, thought or action on the part of the one being born. The one being born has no consciousness or knowledge of the world into which they are being born until they are a part of it. They have no opportunity to decide or to determine any of the circumstances into which they are born, no option as to race, sex, or physical form, and have no prior knowledge upon which to base such a decision if they had the opportunity.

This man that is so born into this world is of the earth, earthy, and has a knowledge only of the earthly kingdom and the things that he can learn by the use of his natural senses. Many are born into this world of the flesh and live few or many years and die having known only those things of this natural physical kingdom of the flesh into which they were born.

I do not believe that Jesus just happened to use this illustration, *"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"*, when talking to Nicodemus on this occasion. He was setting forth that basic truth that *"the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him. Neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned"*. The things of the spiritual kingdom are in a different realm from the things of the flesh and just as a man must be born of the flesh to be a part of the natural kingdom and know and realize the things pertaining thereto, so he must be born into the spiritual kingdom to see the things of the kingdom of God, and enter into it.

Jesus further tells Nicodemus, *"Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the spirit."* Nicodemus replied, *"How can these things be."* In nature's darkness, with only the wisdom of the world, man cannot understand the mysteries of the spiritual realm. The realization of a spiritual birth can only be known by those who have experienced it, in the same way that the natural man can understand his natural life by the experiencing of it. Until one is quickened by the Spirit and experienced the change of heart and mind his question will be the same as Nicodemus, *"How can these things be"*.

The experiencing of having been born again was for the Apostles, on the day of Pentecost, and again it is referred to as compared to the wind like Jesus has said to Nicodemus. *"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled*

all the place where they were sitting, and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance". What a wonderful experience of these Apostles and yet every child of God will acknowledge that there is a fellowship for these brethren because there is a degree of this same blessed revelation in their own experience. For the first time they understood the expression, "Ye must be born again". As fearful as it is to claim this precious heritage, you must acknowledge that your whole hope of eternal life is in the fact that you believe that you, too, have been born of the Spirit of God. As the Apostles began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance, so did you. You began to speak of things you had not before. Your mind and your speech was of things that you had no knowledge of before. You may not have thought that you said very much, but those who have been there could see in your countenance, your conversation, and your careful fearful walk that you were alive unto the things of the Spirit. You, as they, no longer ran eagerly in pursuit of the fleshly pleasures of life. You had been born of the Spirit and your whole desire was to show forth the love that you had for God and for those of kindred spirit.

As on the day of Pentecost those round about the Apostles said, "What meaneth this?" They, as Nicodemus could not understand what was happening. Some mocked and some thought they were drunk. This is true today as each tells their experience they will invariably relate how friends and loved ones in nature became estranged and separated from them because they could not understand what had happened to the individual. They were left behind in nature's darkness to question and wonder, "What meanth this". They have no basis for comparison and therefore will never understand unless blessed by God with the same wonderful change from nature's darkness into the marvelous light and life of the children of God. This experience, I believe, is what Jesus is referring to as being born again. They are certainly made alive to the things of the Spirit and immediately have fellowship for all who have been quickened within their very heart and soul.

The Prophet Zephaniah records, *"For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent".* This scripture was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost as the Apostles began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. There was no period of learning for the Apostles, they spoke it as soon as they were filled with the Holy Ghost in the same manner as when God breathed into Adam the breath of life and he became a living soul. It was instantly complete, a finished work, a new beginning, a new birth, if you please, and it is the sovereign work of the God who created the heavens and the earth. The pure language that they speak is the language

of love, love for God and all His creation but especially for those who understand the language and speak it also. This is the joyful sound that the saints of God hear. Psa. 89:16, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day; and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted". This is the hertitage of all that are born of God.

If man's being born into this natural realm is the sovereign work of God and Jesus uses this term in stating the only way that man can see kingdom of God is to be born again then it, too, must be the work of God alone. One is just as impossible, for the thing being born, as the other, since the birth is the beginning and not a transition or transformation. It is the beginning of that which is born. Man will agree with you unanimously as regarding the natural birth and yet deny that this is true regarding the spiritual birth. They do not truly believe in God the Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent Creator of all things that are and do not believe the things that He says. They do not realize that when He speaks it is done and when He commands it stands fast regardless of whether all the wisdom and efforts of man are aligned with or against it. They will not concede that when He says something that it is true, absolute, no variance, and that it will be forever true whether it is believed by all or none of His creatures.

Jesus told the woman at the well, "God is a spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth". This confirms the necessity of all of the saints of God being born of the Spirit, since they were not created with a spiritual nature, originally. This is why it is such a wonderful experience when they are born of the Spirit and simultaneously realize the need and the full meaning of it. At that time they feel that the world is so complete that they will never be in the ruined undone condition again, but will ever praise and adore this Giver of every good and perfect gift for this mercy so graciously bestowed upon them. They learn though by experience that this is not the way that it is to be with them. Just as the baby in nature must experience a long and tedious learning process before it reaches maturity in becoming a man or woman, so must this new born child of grace also experience a long and tedious learning process and it will consume the rest of their natural life. They will grow in grace and in the knowledge of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, but they will never reach full maturity in this life. That will only be realized when they are raised in the likeness of their Elder Brother, when they will know even as they are known. This is reserved until they all come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

They will never reach the fulness of maturity in this life, but this new birth is the beginning of a spiritual life that

will reach full maturity in that world that will be. God does not begin a work that He will not finish. He does not quicken one to see it they meet certain standards. His work is only making manifest what was determined before the beginning of time and will stand when time is no more. It is to honor and glorify His Holy Name and to acknowledge the atoning work of the only begotten of the Father, in the sacrifice of Himself for the sins of all that were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world.

The atonement has been made, the bride has been chosen, and being born again is but the manifestation of these truths in the heart of the individuals at the appointed time of the Father. The new birth is manifested in their walk, their talk, and the* heart's desire being set on things above They, for the first time, acknowledge the weakness and unprofitableness of the flesh and long for the time when they will reach maturity in the Spirit and lay aside the vanity and pride of this body of clay and dwell in the presence of God; in the fulness of His love and in the full knowledge of the glory and blessedness of that Kingdom into which they were born, while yet living in the body of flesh.

In bonds of love,
(Elder) Richard H. Campbell

JOEL 2:21.

Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the Lord will do great things.

CORRESPONDENCE

433 Heritage Place
Morehead, Kentucky 40351
March 2, 1995

Dear Brethren:

I want to say that I am so thankful, I hope, for the Signs of the Times. No other paper contains so much good spiritual reading, at least as far as I know. Whether written in this day, or brought back from years gone by, there is manifest a kindred of spirit in the writers. Also, if written in a way of exposition, or written as experience, they all speak of salvation by the grace of God. Each article exalts God as Absolute Sovereign in all things, and each gives all praise to Him. I certainly would miss the Signs, if I were not able to receive it.

May it please the God of all grace to continue to bless the editors, and all who labour to send forth the Signs of the Times each month.

May I ask an interest in your prayers?

Yours in hope,
Bill Slack

LUKE 1:35.

And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

March 9, 1995
Elgin, Or. 97827

To the Occupants of the
Household of Faith:

As I reach the eventide of this natural life, I desire to leave a testimony as to the mercy of an all wise God to a Hell Deserving Sinner.

"Go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." Luke 5-19.

I was born 5/1/15, the first of seven children born to earthly parents who loved their children and often did without the necessities of this life in order that their children could be fed and clothed.

In the year of 1921 my mother joined the Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by the late Elder C.W. Bond, and from that time forward the Baptist people visited our home and I often remember the discussion of the word of God and his way of salvation, Jesus Christ.

When I was ten years old, I being a sickly child, had dyptheria and was isolated from the rest of the family except for my mother who tended my every need. During this illness she spent much time with me and read aloud from the Bible. One day she read the text, "And again I say unto you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God." Matt. 19-24. To this I said, "Mama that don't mean that the man had a lot of money, but means that he thought himself to be very very good," and on hearing this my mother stooped over and Kissed me.

During this time, even into young manhood a Brother Peter Jones, whom I loved dearly and was later ordained to the work of a Gospel Minister, often visited our home and talked long into the night about Jesus the way of salvation. This dear Brother often visited our home after I was united in marriage, in 1936 to Miss Florence Walter by the late Elder C.W. Bond. This dear man worked for my Father and was called upon to return thanks at every meal and I so well remember the ending he uttered at each thanks offering saying, "Pardon our transgressions and guide our minds in the way of alltruth." How beautiful these words seem as I reflect upon them.

During World War II I was drafted into the U.S. Navy and served in the Pacific Theater of War.

On one occasion I overheard a young man who's ship was sunk and during the course of battle found himself in the ocean with all the sea ablaze from oil burning upon the water and he told of praying for deliverance and that the Lord rolled back the fire upon the water and a corridor was formed through which he swam to safety. This young man was injured and on his way back to the States for hospitalization. Yet he was praising God for his mercy and said that when the war was over he was going to a school of theology and devote the rest of his life unto the Lord. I could not help but believe that this young man was right then and there being schooled by the

hand of God. Even so he was the only one that I met who gave thanks unto God for his tender and loving mercy.

I served as a Carpenter's Mate and spent most of my time when not on duty in the carpenter shop away from the idle chatter of my fellow seamen. This gave me many hours in which to correspond with my family and to read the scriptures.

Many is the hour that I searched my soul and finding nothing within, was caused to pray that I might be given a sign for the hope that I felt within. Then one evening while reading Luke 5/31/32, "They that are whole need not a Physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but the sinner to repentance." What a joy I then received for it was like as though two gentle hands reached within my breast and for the space of but a few seconds held my heart in the sweetness of endearing love. I cannot describe it in all it's fullness except to say that were it possible to set upon a journey that would take me away from friends and family for a two year period knowing that this same gentle expression of love would be waiting for me, I would gladly forsake all and leave within the hour.

Upon returning home Elders Bond and Jones soon passed away but God by his mercy sent another to serve in their stead and I was received into the Church and baptized by the late Elder R.R. Wolf who later moved to Colorado. We were once again blessed for God raised up one from among us to preach the word of God. Ernest J. Attebery was ordained and served as pastor until his health deteriorated at which time the burden fell upon the late Elder Ben F. Preston.

Prior to my being received into the Church I was so burdened by the evil within that I cried again and again for his mercy and that I might again receive a sign to substantiate that hope within. Had my home burned down or had I had an arm or leg severed I would have praised God for this token of mercy, but God's mercy was provided in another way.

I went hunting in the fall and as the weather was cold, in addition to a heavy coat I wore two pair of pants and in the late evening hours on a rather dark and cloudy day when the shadows cast dark forms among the trees, another hunter in the same area mistook me for an elk and shot. His bullet passed across my back cutting the suspenders off from my out pants and cut the belt into on my inner pants and only marked my back in a spot no bigger than my thumb nail. I was immediately made to give thanks unto God once again for an answer to my prayer and though like Paul who felt to be Chief among sinners, I was made to praise his Holy Name.

Since that time my blessings are beyond measure for my Dear Wife has grown to love the doctrine of salvation by grace and was baptized by the late Elder David V. Spangler on one of his several trips to the Northwest.

Though God from time to time withdraws his restraining power, that we might know to what depths we as sinners may sink into the mirey clay.

He has assured us that he will never leave nor forsake one of his little ones.

Rejoice, Rejoice the Lord is King.

"The Lord found Jacob in a desert land (void of anything worthy of God's love) and in a waste howling wilderness; (the condition of sin) he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." Deut. 32/10. Oh! Dear Friends is this not the state in which he finds us all? Let us praise him for his goodness and mercy to usward all the days of our lives.

"And Jacob was left alone; (no help from any flesh) and there wrestled a man (Jesus) with him until the breaking of day." Gen. 32/24 This being the beginning of knowledge that Salvation is of the Lord. Thereafter Jacob's walk was halted and he leaned upon a staff (Jesus) for all confidence in self was destroyed.

Thus Dear Ones is the way in which we all must be led and my hope is, that I have tasted a small bit of this Wonderous Grace.

Remember this poor sinner when at the Throne of Grace.

Your unworthy brother if one at all;
Lloyd C. Spikes

PSALM 150:4-6.

Praise him with the timbrel dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs.

Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.

Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.

ARTICLES

THOUGHTS ON JOB

he Lord willing, I desire to make some comments on the Book of Job. There are a great number and a variety of subjects in this marvelous book that might be expounded if the Spirit of the Lord would enable me to write upon one or more of these subjects. But in all scriptural comments that may be written or spoken, the one and only name that can be honored and glorified is that of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is embraced in the one true and living God: The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

In order to describe Job we will quote Job 1:1: ***"There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job, and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil".*** Let us not get the idea or thought that Job was perfect in the sense of being without sin for that is not the case, for he was of the posterity of Adam and thus a sinner by nature as well as by practice. I believe the perfection of Job spoken of here was that he was able by the Spirit to worship and serve God in spirit and in truth. The same way as the ones spoken of by Paul in Ephesians 1:4: ***"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love".*** Not in action for all have sinned and come short of the glory of

God. The only one born of a woman without sin was our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Job's perfection in serving God was a direct result of being guided and directed by the Holy Spirit. But there was one present named Satan who gave another reason and said that he was hedged in by God's great blessings. This was in answer to the Lord's question to Satan ("Hast thou considered my servant Job?" Job 1:8). The Lord permitted or suffered Satan to afflict him in many ways which I will not take the space to relate as I am sure you are acquainted with the many afflictions Job was persecuted with; but one thing Satan was told he could not do was to take Job's life. Satan's power was limited to the extent that God had delegated to him. This is proven by Romans 13:1: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God".

Job was so sorely afflicted and tried that even his wife said to him: "Curse God and die". But Job answered and said: "What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips". Job 2:9,10. He also said: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" Job 1:21. I speak these things to show that no evil or unrighteousness originates with God in the carrying out of His divine purposes. He does, when it pleases Him, overrule evil for good; as the scriptures say: "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain". Psalm 76:10.

Let us go a little further in Job's trials and afflictions. Job had three friends (?) whose names are Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. (The reason I question these three as being true friends, I will bring out later in this writing). They had previously made appointment together to come to mourn with him and comfort him. It is said they sat down with him on the ground seven days and seven nights and none spoke a word to him for they saw that his grief was very great. (Job 2:11-13).

It would seem to me that if they were truly his friends that this would have been the very time he would have needed comfort from them. James 2:15,16: "If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?". Jesus Himself told those on the left hand: "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me". Mt. 25:44.

No doubt Job was in a very low frame of mind, having lost all he had, including his children. Cast down in every way for he said: "Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived". Job 3:2. The three "friends" continued much speaking to Job and said many things in an effort to give him encouragement. But it would appear that during their efforts to console him, they would say

things that would indicate that they thought Job had the ability to bring himself out of the condition he was in; that by his own efforts he would be able to return to his former joy. Zophar said: *"If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands toward him; if iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles. For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear; Because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away".* Job 11:13-16.

The condition here stated was that if Job would do these things then the Lord would restore him to his former state. Then Job answered and said: *"No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you".* Job 12:2. He continues on to estabiish God's eternal existance and sovereign power over all things. I will not quote all he has said in this connection, but one of the statements he made was: *"Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one. Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass".* Job 14:4,5.

In chapter 15, Eliphaz continues to speak to Job in such a way as to criticize Job for the things he had spoken as being directed in the wrong way. He said: *"Should a wise man utter vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the east wind? Should he reason with unprofitable talk? or with speeches wherewith he can do no good? Yea, thou castest off fear, and* restrainest prayer before God. For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, and thou chooseth the tongue of the crafty. Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I; yea, thine own lips testify against thee". Job 15:2-6.

Much more follows along the same lines berating Job. Then in the 16th chapter Job sort of sums up what they have been saying to him and replies: *"I have heard many such things: miserable comforters are ye all."* (Job 16:2). Then following more words from these "miserable comforters", Job replied to them much more but one specific answer is this: *"How then comfort ye me in vain, seeing in your answers there remaineth falsehood?"* (Job 21:34). This was Job's answer to those who were supposed to be his friends; but whom he regarded as "miserable comforters". Dear brethren, think on these things. Prayerfully read and consider all things said. Many truths were expressed by these "friends" but in substance their theme was admonishing Job that he could by his own free will and actions bring about a change in the trials and afflictions he was beset with. But let us remember that in the very beginning of this book it is written that Job was perfect and upright, one that feared God and eschewed evil.

The children of God desire to do the will of God in all things, and to be able to follow more closely in the footsteps of our dear Lord. But the scripture says that when we do all these things we have only done that which is our duty. And the very best of our righteousness is as filthy rags. We will

never be free of afflictions in this life; and ofttimes in the very midst of these trials and afflictions we are made to cry as did Jonah: "I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord". Jonah 2:2.

While in the book of Job, I will now attempt to mention some thoughts in regard to the sovereignty of God. "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him". Job 23:13-14. God is eternal and His promises are eternal. Man in his finite mind cannot understand the workings of God. Until one is born of the Spirit, he cannot understand the things pertaining to God only in the sense of the letter. The letter killeth; but the Spirit giveth life. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?" Rom. 11:33-34.

Now let us go to the 26th chapter of Job. There is too much to try to quote all of it here. But dear reader, carefully consider the things that are said. This so beautifuily outlines the supremacy of the Godhead. We are only able to understand a small portion of the wonders of God. But when it is said so plain; just what the facts are; we dare not try to change what it says. John said: "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book". Rev. 22:18,19. (This certainly does.not mean that one of those for whom Christ died will ever lose his inheritance in heaven and immortal glory).

Now a few more thoughts in connection with the 26th chapter of Job. In this chapter Job clearly declares the sovereignty of God and the indisputable fact that He is God and there is none like Him. Job says: "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?". Job 26:13,14.

Now in conclusion I will say just a little more in connection with Job's three "friends". "And it was so, that after the Lord had spoken these words unto Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends; for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you; for him will I accept; lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job". Job 42:7,8.

"Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquain-

tance before, and did eat bread with him in his house; and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him; every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold. So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters." (Job 42:13)

There is no end to the things contained in this wonderful book. For it is said the half has not yet been told. So I will say in conclusion, please remember that I am very imperfect in my ways, but the perfection of holiness can be seen and felt by His children in this life as they are led by the Spirit. I trust that I have heen so led in what I have written. Pardon all errors for they are mine and if anything has been said to comfort you in a small measure, the glory and honor belong unto God. Farewell in the Lord and pray for me.

Yours in afflictions of the Gospel
Elder Robert L. Miles

DEUTERONOMY 32: 10-12.

He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.

As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings:

So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"I will cry unto God most High; unto God that performeth all things for me."—PSALM lvii. 2.

In the word " most High," there is something to my mind very expressive. It is to "God most High" that prayers go up from broken hearts, in all parts of the world where the Lord has a quickened people. "Unto God most High" every eye is pointed, every heart is fixed, and every breath of living prayer flows. Jesus sits in glory as "God most High," hearing the sighs and cries of his broken-hearted family, where they dwell in the utmost corners of the earth; and he is not only sitting on high to hear their cries, but also to bestow upon them the blessings which he sees suitable to their case and state. Now when shall we thus come "unto God most High?" When we are pleased and satisfied in self? when the world smiles? when all things are easy, without and within? when we are in circumstances for which our own wisdom, strength, and righteousness are amply sufficient? We may, under such circumstances, appease our conscience by prayer, or rather its form; but there is no cry "unto God most High." Before there is a real, spiritual cry raised up, we must be brought to that spot, "Refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul" (Psalm cxlii. 4). Here all the saints of old were brought; Job upon his dunghill, Hezekiah upon his bed, Hannah by the temple gate. All were hopeless, helpless, houseless, refugeless, before they cried "unto God most High." And

we must be equally refugeless and houseless before me can utter the same cry, or our prayers find entrance into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. "Unto God that performeth *all* things for me." If God did not perform something for us; nay more, if God did not perform *all* things for us, it would be a mockery, a delusion to pray to him at all. "The Hope of Israel" would then be to us a dumb idol, like Ashtaroth or Baal, who could not hear the cries of his lancet-cutting worshippers, because he was hunting or asleep, and needed to be awakened. But the God of Israel is not like these dumb idols, these dunghill gods, the work of men's hands, the figments of superstition and ignorance; but the eternal Jehovah, who ever lives to hear and answer the prayers that his people offer up.

J.C. Philpot

From Elder Lambert's Book, "Tried In The Furnace."

SPIRITUAL SONGS ACCORD WITH GOD'S STRINGED INSTRUMENTS

January, 1953

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

My late visit with the editors and many readers of the Signs in Virginia, Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania and other places has stimulated me with a greater desire to write to the Household of Faith through this medium. The visit with the Welsh Tract, Hopewell, and other historical meeting places of God's children through the centuries past has peculiarly affected me. It is inspirational to learn that the same principles of Truth have been loved, cherished and contended for by His people these hundreds of years in the same meeting place.

While attending Salisbury Association held at Delmar, Delaware, the text of this article began to arrest my attention. God willing, I shall use Isaiah 38:20, as basis for my remarks: "The Lord was ready to save me; therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord." We shall attempt to prove that the songs of God's people are their spiritual experiences and the stringed instruments are the harp of God, the hearts of His people, the Bible, etc. We want to show that a psalm or an hymn is not necessarily a spiritual song to one of God's people at all times. We expect to show that the stringed instruments under consideration are not pianos, organs, or any like instrument made and tuned by man - which will get out of tune - but, that which God has tuned, strung, and prepared, which never gets out of tune.

Re-read the paragraph above and may it become fixed in your mind before we meditate further upon the text. Read Isaiah 38, and then prayerfully consider the following meditations.

The expression found in the 20th verse was made by Hezekiah, King of Judah, after undergoing critical experiences brought about by the Lord dealing with him. Even though he be

king he was brought low by the Lord. He was sick unto death, and word came to him from the Lord, "Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die and not live" (Isa. 38:1). We read a similar command in Amos 4:12 to Israel, "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." I am persuaded a similar command comes to every spiritual Israelite in the beginning of an experience of grace. When we try to cope with the situation in trying to set our house in order in preparation to meet God, we find ourselves as miserable failures in the attempt. This forces us to pray to God for mercy. Surely Hezekiah's attempts were in vain to set his house in order and he was made to depend upon God for this. We would all sink into death were it not for what the Lord adds unto our life. Our life is sinful, He adds holiness; our life is unstable; He adds stability; our life is earthly, He adds heaven; our life is ungodly, He adds godliness. We come to the end of our path. He leads us into a new path. We die, He adds life. Dear trembling child, has the Lord added unto your life? Our life is unstrung and untuned. He tunes and strings our hearts to sing His praise! This must have been Hezekiah's experience as he said, "The Lord was ready to save me."

We learn that we cannot save ourselves. It is not the question: am I ready for the Lord to save me? But, is the Lord ready to save? All things are so ordered and arranged, tuned and strung by the Lord that events so fall in perfect order and rhythm that a fixed time, place, and circumstance comes for the Lord's salvation to be made manifest to each and every one of the trophies of His amazing grace.

Because the Lord was ready to save me - "we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments." We read in Ephesians 5:19, of "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." What were the songs Hezekiah had under consideration? Psalms and hymns would include all compositions written with natural verse to be used in religious worship. When any hymn or psalm is in perfect harmony with our experience and feelings, it becomes our spiritual song. Paul says in 1st Cor. 14:15, "I will sing with the understanding also." There is a natural song and there is a spiritual song. There are experiences that are natural and there are experiences that are spiritual. The song that is natural is the old song and the song that is spiritual is that the Lord adds by putting into your mouth the new song. We would like to contrast the old song and the new.

The old song is sung in the key of man - man being the central keynote. The new is sung in the key of Jesus Christ - He being the foundation key. If you want to hear a discord, try singing the old and the new together. They will not harmonize, for the old song praises man the new song praises God. The old sings of the ability of man and the new song proclaims man's inability. The old song utters salvation is hinged upon the volition and works of the creature, while the new bases the creatures' salvation upon the volition and

work of the three-one God. The new song being opposed to the old prevents the harmonization of the two.

You will note that Hezekiah says, "my songs." This means his own personal spiritual experiences. Unless the Lord has added to your individual life you cannot sing these songs. There are more spiritual experiences than one. Sometimes you sing, "All things work together for good." Sometimes you feel, "All things are against me." Sometimes you are asking, "Is God gone forever?" Sometimes you say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Sometimes you sing, "Jesus, Lover of my soul"; and at other times, "I am a stranger here below." Sometimes you ask, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Sometimes you sing, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want."

The stringed instruments these new songs perfectly accord with are the instruments God has prepared, strung, and tuned. The word "instrument" is translated from a word meaning "prepared." Our songs are sung to that which God has prepared. We find recorded in Proverbs 16:1, "The preparations of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." When the Lord strings and tunes the hearts of His people there is perfect harmony in their experiences. When your experience harmonizes with the experience of Hezekiah, Jacob, Paul, and others whose lives are recorded in the Bible, it is singing your songs to the stringed instruments. When your experience harmonizes with the fundamental principles expressed in the Scriptures, and held sacred by your brethren, it accords with the stringed instruments.

Pianos and organs are made, strung, and tuned by man. These may be damaged, get our of tune, and the strings broken. Natural musical instruments only give forth natural mechanical tones. The instruments under consideration give forth spiritual godly melody. The command to the Church is to "speak to yourselves, singing," - not, to play a mechanical instrument. The question should be, "Is our singing to accord with the mechanical instruments or spiritual instruments? Is our singing to be in accord with the piano, organ, or heart? I am persuaded the singing should be in harmony with our hearts that God had prepared, tuned and strung; thus, "making melody in the heart." When brethren are blessed to come together and sing with the Spirit and understanding in sweet fellowship and harmony it is much greater and sweeter melody than the best of singing without the Spirit accompanied by the best mechanical musical instruments. The accompaniment of mechanical musical instruments is pleasing to the natural ear. The accompaniment of the Spirit and understanding is pleasing to the spiritual ear.

We read in the Psalms of the harps of God, and also in Revelations. According to Josephus and what we can find in the Scriptures, these harps had ten strings. We can call your attention to Psalms 33: 2,3 "Praise the Lord with harp; sing unto Him with psaltery and an instrument of ten strings. Sing unto Him a new song. We want to

quote the following stanzas from the hymn "There Is A Fountain':

Lord, I believe thou hast prepared
(Unworthy though I be)
For me a blood-bought free reward -
A golden harp for me.

'Tis strung and tuned for endless years
And formed by power divine,
To sound in God the Father's ears
No other name but thine.

Hezekiah stated in the same chapter from which the text of this article was taken, "He hath both spoken unto me and himself hath done it" (Isa. 38:15). Here is a double. He commanded "Set thine house in order," and He performed the command Himself by setting it in order.

He works both the will and the do. Children of God receive "of the Lord's hand double" (Isa. 40:1). Scores of doubles come to our mind that neither time nor space will permit us to mention. Suffice it to suggest that the harp of God consists of a number of double strings. If the harps used back at that time under the ceremonial worship had ten strings, the spiritual harp must have five doubles which results in ten. Let us turn to the 8th chapter of Romans to find these five principles of the doctrine briefly stated. As we read them let us keep in mind that He has both spoken and Himself hath done it. Now, "For whom He did (1) foreknow, He also did (2) predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also (3) called and whom He called, them He also (4) justified: and whom He justified, them He also (5) glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8: 29-31).

This foreknowledge is an intimate relationship with His people even before the manifestation of His decrees in time. He chose them in His Son. "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect and in Thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there were none of them" (Psalms 139:16). He knew them in eternity; they shall know Him in time. He predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son. He has ordered, arranged, and fixed all things to fall out at appointed times and seasons so that all things work together for the fulfillment of this grand purpose. See Romans 8:28. He calls and they shall answer. He performs the double as the word that goes forth out of His mouth returns not to Him void, but accomplishes that which He pleases and prospers in the thing whereunto He sends it. He decreed the justification of His people and He justifieth them by sending His Son into the world to pay the penalty for their sins, thus satisfying justice. The just bore the sins of the unjust that justice divine might be perfectly satisfied. He not only justified them but also glorified them through the divine righteousness of His own Son. "For if, when we

were enemies, we were reconciled (justified) to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved (glorified) by His life" (Rom. 5:10). We are glorified by the imputed righteousness of His Son. These five wonderful things are both spoken and performed by God the Father, Son, and Spirit. These ten strings ring clear the melodious song of praise to Him. This ten-stringed harp becomes ours when it pleases God to give it to us that we receive it with praise and thanksgiving. Then we are harpers harping with their harps. See Revelation 14:2. We have the harps of God (Rev. 15:2). We sing to the accompaniment of these harps in the "house of the Lord," Zion, the new Jerusalem, the Church, or with the children of God. We sing "all the days of our life." Sometimes the day is gloomy because of the clouds of trouble and despondency which hides the view of the brightness of the Son of Glory. Sometimes the day is cold because of the felt sense of our unworthiness. We experience cloudy and bright days; but, they are all days because it takes the light to manifest the darkness that is in our heart and the coldness in our thoughts. Nevertheless the expression of days in the plural shows that there are night times in our experience.

We hang our harps upon the willows by the river, Babylon, during the nights of our experience (Psalms 137). We have no use or regard for the Lord, nor Zion nor His people during the night. We are then resting in our own carnality and we are at ease. We do not think upon Zion nor His people. We forget Zion as is intimated in the expression, "We wept when we remembered Zion" (Ps. 137:1). When the dwellers in Babylon require of us in mirth to sing one of the songs of Zion, we are made to realize we cannot sing the Lord's song in a strange land. We must be brought again out of Babylon into Zion before we have any more use for the harp. It is not in the night that we feel unworthy, unfit, and so wretched but on dark and cloudy days. In the night we have no feeling, no sense of guilt, no deep concern over our spiritual welfare, neither any regard for His house. It is when we are awakened in the morning that we are made to weep because of our forgetfulness and unconsciousness of His providential care over us. It is when we are awakened by His Spirit before the rising of the Son of glory. Thanks be to God, when the Son rises and we see the brightness of His face whose rays warm and calm our troubled breasts, fear is driven from our souls and love springs forth. Songs of praise again are sung to His matchless and glorious name for His amazing grace toward us.

You notice that Hezekiah says "our life" in the text. It seems to the natural mind that he should have said, "my life" or "our lives" to have been consistent with the proper usage of language. Let us see. The Lord added unto his life. My life had its end as my life when the Lord added His life to my life. My natural life ended as only a natural life when the Lord added that which is spiritual to my life. The life of

a child of God prior to regeneration (or the addition of the graces of His Holy Spirit) is only a lustful fleshly life. After God adds that which is spiritual it becomes our life. When the Lord adds His Spirit there is set up a dual character in one. This results in a warfare. The flesh lusts against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh so that you cannot do the things that you would, these being contrary one to the other. See Gal. 5:17. What the Lord adds is contrary to that naturally possessed.

One more thought and I shall close. The last night will be when death shall come at the end of our sojourn here. Then will be the dawning of the final day when we awaken in His likeness and shall be satisfied. There will be no night there but one eternal Day of perfect joy and peace. No cloudy and cold times to mar our peace. There will be no night nor river of Babylon. There will be no hanging of harps in the willows. We will all sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb harmoniously to the harps of God forever and forever.

Elder E.J. Lambert

ROMANS 15: 4-6.

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our leaning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

NOTICE

If it is agreeable with you and the other editors of the "Signs of the Times," would you please let your readers know about the book our mother has compiled of the lives and experiences of herself and her late husband, Elder Bennie N. Clifton, entitled "As the Days of A Tree." She compiled the book from writings he left behind, adding her own experience, in a desire to leave on record the things Elder Clifton believed and stood for during the thirty-three years he was blessed to preach and to serve the flock.

Should anyone have an interest in purchasing the book, they can contact Edrie Clifton, at Post Office Box 30, Vesta, Virginia 24177 or by calling (703) 952-2083. She has books bound in hard back for $12.00 and in soft back for $7.00.

In appreciation,
The Children

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 1995

Homer E. Wade, VA	$2.00
Mrs. Garlon Vick, NC	10.00
Mrs. Beatrice Miller, NC	2.00
Mrs. Lottie Minter, NC	2.00
Lloyd C. Spike, OR	7.00
Mrs. Rosa Troytt, NC	2.00
A Friend, VA	100.00

Mrs. Bruce McKinney, VA..... 46.00
Mrs. Catherine Combs, NC..... 5.00
Mrs. F. Mae Williamson, LA 4.00
Mrs. Alice Johnson, TX 7.00
Mrs. Herman Alders, TX 7.00
Reed Harper, TX..... 2.00
Tommy Wall, VA..... 2.00
Mrs. Dorothy M. Cassell, VA 2.00

OBITUARIES

TROY H. BAILEY

We bow in humble submission, in the taking from our midst, Brother Troy H. Bailey. He was born December 28, 1908 in Mercer County, W.V., the son of the late Jameson and Virginia Bailey, and died December 23, 1994. Brother Bailey was the last of his immediate family of eight brothers and three sisters, surviving are several nieces and nephews.

Brother Bailey asked for a home with Glenwood Church August 14, 1983, the first time he was in our midst, as a stranger to all. He was baptized September 11, 1983 by the late Elder W.E. Branch assisted by Deacon Richard Lawless. He remained a faithful member until his death. Brother Bailey had concern for the welfare of the church and supported her in all ways, attending some meetings when ill health could have kept him home. Brother Bailey had a quiet, humble manner and loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. He will be missed at Glenwood Church. We desire to be submissive to the will of the Lord.

Services for Brother Troy Bailey were held December 26, 1994 at Bailey Funeral Chapel, Princeton, W.V. by his pastor Elder Larry Hollandsworth, with burial in Roselawn Memorial Gardens.

Resolved that three copies of this Resolution of Respect be made, one for the Church record, one to the niece, in whose home he spent his last months, one to The Signs of the Times for publication. Done by order of the Church while in conference January 15, 1995.

Elder Larry Hollandsworth,
Moderator
Sister Marilyn Shaw, Clerk

Sister Nellie Kellum Morton Gray

In memory of Sister Nellie I endeavor to write: Even though I'm weak. With God's blessing I'll be able to do so. For all power comes from him.

Sister Nellie was the daughter of Bryant and Sue Kellum. Born Jan. 1, 1907, in Pamplico County.

She married Bannister W. Morton the first time. The Lord blessed them with two children. One daughter and a son.

Her first husband died April 25, 1955. Major Gray was her second husband. He passed away June 12, 1982.

Sister Nellie attended a quarterly May meeting at Sister Susan Humphry's in 1942. She asked a home with the church that night there. Making her a member for about fifty-two years.

She was a faithful, loving member and supported her church. Until health problems arose. Great hope and love was shown in her everyday life.

In 1987 she was admitted to Charles McDaniel Rest Home. Then to Britt Haven in Jacksonville 1988. Was there for six years.

Sister Nellie passed away October 25, 1994. Her survivors are Marie Riggs of Jacksonville, Millard Gene Morton of Texas. Two sisters; Beulah Shipley and Dorothy Welton of Portsmouth, Virginia. One Brother Herman Kellum of Long Beach, California. Ten grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren.

Sister Nellie left a lovely family and to them I say; press onward to the Mark of the "High Calling" which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Try to walk that straight and narrow path; which leads to "Life Eternal" - and in the "End meet her There" where there's no more Sickness, Pain or Sorrow.

Place of Burial: Bannister Morton Family - Jones Funeral Home Cemetery - Oct. 27, 1994. Funeral services were conducted by Elder J.T. Prescott.

By the order of North East Church in conference third Saturday in February 1995.

Written by Mary Lillie Hall
1597 Hall Town Road
Jacksonville, N.C. 28546

SISTER PEARL AKERS LAW

Safe - Oh so safe in the arms of Jesus is our precious Mother in Israel, Sister Pearl Akers Law, member of Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church.

Sister Law was born March 21, 1900 in Franklin County, Va. and passed away at Brandon Oaks Nursing Home in Roanoke, Va. on Jan. 21, 1995. She was married to Brother D.A. (Ford) Law Dec. 26, 1921. He passed away March 1, 1978.

She joined Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church Sept. 4, 1955 and was baptized by the late Elder Cecil E. Turner Sept. 18, 1955.

She is survived by her son and daughter-in-law Max C. and Anne Johnson, Alexander, Va., one Sister Ms. Grace Waddell, Richmond, Va. and many devoted nieces and nephews.

Mrs. Waddell passed away two weeks after Sister Law and was buried in Roanoke, Va. Feb. 6, 1995 with Elder Leonard J. Brammer conducting a lovely service at Oakey's North Funeral Chapel.

Nothing was left undone that could have been done for this dear one. Her son and daughter-in-law was most caring and devoted to her. They visited her so often and after her stroke in Nov. they were there most of the time, assuring her of their loving care.

She loved her church and her pastor and was always interested in their welfare. She was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace. Whenever we visited her, we left feeling that we had attended a church service. She spoke

so sweetly of her hope and belief, always of the Goodness and Mercy of God. Her mind was clear up until the stroke struck her about two months before her death.

The Church sorrows because of her passing but rejoices in a precious hope for her in her safety in her Heavenly Home.

Her funeral was conducted at Oakey's Roanoke Funeral Chapel Jan. 23, 1995 by her so comforting to the almost filled chapel of her Brethren, Sisters, Family and Friends - after which she was laid to rest in Mountain View Memorial Park, Franklin County, Va. by the side of her beloved husband. There with Brother Law she sleeps, to await that bright and glorious day when Christ shall bring them forth to forever be with Him in all his Glory.

What can we then say? Safe - oh so safe in the arms of Jesus.

We at Roanoke Church will always cherish her memory in our hearts.

Written by an unworthy sister, but one who loved her dearly.

Mrs. H.C. (Rlee B.) Houchins

IN LOVING MEMORY OF ESSIE DIX MOOSE

Sister Essie Dix Moose was born on August 19, 1910 to Mollie and Larkin Dix. in 1932 Aunt Essie was married to Bedford Apple. To this union was born one daughter, Mary Wallace Apple Riggin of Butner, North Carolina. But this marriage did not last and in 1953 she was married to Eugene Moose who predeceased her.

Sister Moose united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on Sunday, April 27, 1947 and was baptized on June 21, 1947. She loved her church and enjoyed meeting with her brethren and friends. She was a very happy outgoing person who loved to be with people...she stayed on the go, choosing not to be alone to brood. She was always laughing and talking and enjoying life. She attended church regularly, even after she was unable to drive. She loved going to her meeting, and to the "singing". Though her short term memory was greatly affected in her last few years, when weekend approached, her spirit stirred, knowing it was nearing church time, and she began bright and early calling those with whom she rode to church. It is mysterious how our minds can be so totally forgetful of some things but be brought to remembrance by things of God. God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform.

The night of her homegoing, Aunt Essie again expressed a desire to leave this world. I believe God prepares His people for Heaven and enables them to say, "Come welcome Death, I'll gladly go with thee." "Oh, death where is thy sting, oh grave, where is thy victory."

Sister Moose departed this life on September 2, 1994 and was laid to rest in the church cemetery on September 5 to await the second coming of our Lord when the dead in Christ shall rise

to meet Him in the air and ever be with the Lord. What a glorious day that will be!

We, as humans, feel much sorrow when a loved one is called from our midst, but the inner man rejoices when a soul departs to be with the Lord in the place He has prepared for us. To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. For this reason we can not grieve as others who have no hope.

May God be with her family and cause them to say "Thy will be done". For it is far better to depart and be with the Lord than to remain in this wicked world.

Written by request of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church while in conference.

Jean Moran

WILLIE ROBERT MUNFORD

We believe that GOD in his infinite wisdom and mercy has called another one of his loved ones home. Brother Willie Robert Munford passed from this life on December 6, 1994. Brother Robert was born on March 31, 1929 to the late Boyd and Hattie Munford.

On May 30, 1947 he married Margaret Eubanks who survives him. To this union, one son Willie R. (Bobby) Munford, Jr. was born and preceded Brother Robert in death on August 26, 1982. He is also survived by two sisters, Maggie Parham of Roanoke, VA and Marie LeVine of Clarlton, NC.

Brother Robert was received into the fellowship of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church at Grantsboro, NC on October 5, 1980. He was ordained to the office of Deacon on August 12, 1984 and served faithfully until the onset of his illness. He was the clerk and last member of Bethel Church.

From time to time he traveled many miles in North Carolina and Virginia to attend church meetings. He was a firm believer of Salvation by Grace and Predestination of all things. Brother Robert especially enjoyed Church Unions and Associations where he often used his gas grill to cook fish and hush puppies. This was Brother Robert, always willing to share his worldly goods with friends, neighbors and the brethren.

During the last two years of his life Brother Robert suffered much. He was taken ill just after Christmas in 1992 and remained in the hospital and nursing home until his death. Through it all, I never heard him complain. Elder Marvin Brumfield, Elder Jesse Foreman and I visited with Brother Robert in the hospital just a few days before death came and although very weak, he was receptive to the prayers offered by the Elders and reconciled to the will of GOD.

We miss Brother Robert at our Church meetings but I feel he is at rest waiting for the return of his Lord who will one day call him from that rest to inherit that heavenly home prepared for him.

His funeral was held at Pollock-Wells and Best Chapel, New Bern, NC by his Pastor, Elder Jesse Foreman. He was

laid to rest in the Eubanks Family Cemetery at Pollocksville. We express our deepest sympathy to his wife Margaret and all who were near and dear to him by the ties of nature.

Done by request of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Union in Conference on 29 January 1995. A copy to be included in the Union Record, a copy for publication in the Signs of the Times and a copy for the family.

Written by a brother, I hope
Gene Lupton

SISTER LAURA LEWIS WOLF

Sister Laura Lewis Wolf was born October 8, 1911 in Rooseville County, New Mexico (near Clovis, New Mexico) to the home of Ina and T.D. Lewis. It pleased our Heavenly Father to call Sis. Wolf from the walks of this life on December 8, 1933 in a Portales hospital.

She was reared in Clovis, New Mexico and was blessed to, have Primitive Baptist parents. She graduated from Clovis High School in 1979, she also attended business college in Waco, Texas.

On November 4, 1935 she was united in marriage to the late Elder Reggie R. Wolf. To this union one son was born.

They lived in Colorado, and Oregon most of their married life. After her husband retired they moved back to, New Mexico settling in Mountainair. In the early eighties she lost both her husband and son.

She soon moved to, Clovis, New Mexico to live with one of her sisters, later to a retirement at Portales.

She joined the Little Flock Primitive Baptist Church, Altus, Oklahoma in May 1987 and remained a faithful member as long as health permitted; traveling many miles by bus to church. It was surely a long and trying trip. Sister Wolf was a firm believer in the doctrine of grace. Between those long trips and not getting to come to Church she was blessed to have many sermons of Elder Spangler, Lambert and many other ministers to turn to for comfort.

Surely we can say with David, Psalms 34:19, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. "Sister Laura surely was one of the righteous and one of many afflictions along the way, but we must say we truly believe she is now asleep in Jesus awaiting His second coming.

She was laid to rest in Mission Garden Memories Clovis, New Mexico.

She is survived by two sisters, Eva Crumley of Clovis and Elsie Stroud of Portales, several nieces, nephews and her church family and friends.

Her funeral service was conducted by her pastor, Elder C.M. Haygood.

It was requested that a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times, to her sisters and a copy be placed in the Church records.

Written in love for my
dear sister-in-law,
Elder C.M. Haygood

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SONG

In heaven my choicest treasure lies,
My hopes are placed above the skies;
'Tis Christ, the bright and morning star,
Draws my affections from afar.

O that my anxious mind were free
From this vile tenement of clay,
That I might view th' immortal word,
And live and reign with Christ my Lord.

Then should I see, and feel, and know,
What 'tis to rest from sin and woe;
And all my soul be tuned to sing
The praises due to Christ my King.

Hail, blessed time! Lord, bid me come,
And enter my celestial home,
And drown the sorrows of my breast,
In seas of unmolested rest.

Gadsby's Col.

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EDITORIAL

IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

After God had created the heavens and the earth and every living thing thereon, God saw that it was good. It was then that he said. ***"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness:"*** (Gen. 1:25-26), and in verse 27, ***"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him: male and female created he them."*** In the 5th chapter verse 2 it is written also that he created them male and female.

Before I attempt to address this marvelous, amazing, soul inspiring text, I would like to state emphatically that I do not desire to discredit, undermine, invalidate or find fault with the views, witnesses or beliefs of any of the brethren whom I deem to be the children of God. Nor do I desire to set forth my views as being superior to any. Yet I do feel a strong desire to write my views on what I understand these Scriptures teach for the prayerful consideration of all who may read them.

There is truly only one Interpreter of the Holy Scriptures, and he will open our understanding to any Scripture, that we may know the true meaning as soon as we have need of it. When any one presents a view or interpretation of a Scripture to us, regardless of how eloquently put forth, or how plausible and good it may seem to be, we are not to accept it as truth unless the Spirit commends it to our hearts, and when it is seen and felt to be in accord with the inspired Scriptures. If it is commended to us by the Holy Spirit then it comes to us in the sweet power of His light.

My understanding of these particular Scriptures did not come suddenly and at one time, but began a number of years ago, and when I am blessed to mediate upon them, I am given, at times, to see even more of their beauty than before. What I see now is not different from my first view, but I see things that I had not before seen; and O, how sweet it is to view even a small portion! May God direct my thoughts to express to your understanding what I see, if it be his good pleasure to do so.

Now to the subject. An image or likeness of any man, or of any thing, is a representative figure of that man or thing. In that respect in which it is an image it must of necessity be exactly like the original; not almost like it, but exactly like it. An image may be made of any material, as silver, gold, wood or stone, and may be of any size; but the form and features must be exactly imitated so that it cannot be mistaken or it is not an image. The question now is, In what sense can man be said to be in the likeness of God? Surely not in his body, we must all acknowledge, for God is a Spirit and man is a flesh and blood creature made of dust. Neither can it be in mind or ways, for God hath said, ***"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."*** (Isa.55:8-9). God`s understanding, his will, his judgment, his affections and his every attribute is perfection and infinite. In that respect we cannot be in his likeness, for we are finite and all of our attributes are directly opposite to his.

As mentioned above, an image must be an exact likeness of that which it represents, but may be different in size, and it must be of different material. If not of a different material then it would not be an image, but the real thing. But an image or likeness of an invisible thing, such as mental or spiritual capacities, must be simply the same thing. This is so with Christ, for it is said that he is ***"the image of the invisible God;" and "the express image of his person."*** (Col.1:15, Heb.1:13). He was in the "form of God," and "equal with God." (Phil.2:6). And in Col.2:9, ***"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."*** In all these things he is the image of God, and is God, and yet he is distinct from the invisible God of which he is the image, in the fact that he is the Son, the Head of the church, which is his body and bride, for whom he would suffer and die in his flesh as the Son of man. In his Godhead he could not die, therefore he must become incarnate. ***"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."*** (Gal.4:4). ***"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."*** (Heb.2:14). This he did, ***"that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."*** (Eph.5:27). God sent his Son ***"in the likeness of sinful flesh,(man), and for sin, to condemn sin in the flesh."*** He had all of our infirmities and temptations, bore all of our shame and guilt and the curse of our sins; and yet he was holy, harmless, and undefiled. He knew no sin, and no guile was found in his

mouth. The preceding Scriptures show that Christ is the express image of God in his Godhead, and that he became incarnate in the likeness of man. Now let us consider in what sense man was made in the image of God. If at this point I have not proved to you that it cannot be in body, in mind, in spirit or in attributes, then it would be useless for you to read further. Yet to my understanding the Scriptures very clearly and very distinctly show the nature and character of the similarity to God in which he created man.

There are those who suppose that Adam was the image of God in a spiritual sense; but the Scriptures deny this. Adam was made of dust, and God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. Nothing here was said about a spirit or spirituality. (Gen.2:7). In 1 Cor.15 we read, ***"There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last man Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven."***

When God made Adam he made him upright (Eccles.7:29), he was sinless, for sin had not yet entered the world, and sin is the transgression of the law, and no law had yet been given. Adam knew neither good nor evil, for God said after Adam transgressed his commandment, ***"Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil."*** (Gen.3:22). God said, "as one of us." Which one? Was it not Christ who was to come? We read in Rom.5:14 that Adam is a figure of him that was to come. Being a figure of Christ, he was necessarily in his likeness or image. Adam was the name given to the first man, but that name applies to all mankind, both male and female. In Gen. 1:27 we read, ***"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."*** And in Gen.5:1-2: ***"This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created."***

Eve was in Adam in the creation, and God took one of his ribs and made he a woman. When God brought her to the man, Adam said, ***"This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: and she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and they shall become one flesh."*** (Gen.2:24).

Adam was the progenitor of all mankind, and Eve was the mother of all living. (Gen.3:20). Adam was a figure of Christ and Eve was a type of the church. Join these together and we have a lovely image of Jesus and his bride, for she was in him before the foundation of the world. (Eph.1:4). Before the earth was made Christ said,

"Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was his delight, rejoicing always before him, rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." (Pro.9:30-31). And in Ps.139:15-16: *"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth, Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; when in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."* To me this shows that as all mankind were in the loins of Adam, so were the members of Christ in him. Paul wrote in Eph.5:30-32, *"For we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."* This is in perfect accord with Gen. 2:24. And in Col.1:18 he said, "And he is the head of the body, the church."

The serpent tempted and deceived Eve, and she did eat of the forbidden fruit, and gave to Adam and he did eat. *"Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."* (1 Tim.2:14). God said, *"In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,"* therefore Adam knew when he ate the forbidden fruit that he would die. He could not restore life to his wife, therefore he willingly, because of his love for his bride, ate the fruit that he might be with her. This was in likeness of Christ, for Christ also loved his bride with an everlasting love, and he took her sins upon himself and would lay down his life for her, that he might redeem her from the curse of the law. He was the only one who could redeem her, for he had no sin of his own to condemn him; and she was his own. No man can redeem something that did not belong to him. She also has a living unity with him that can never be separated.

I would ask you to read Paul's admonition to wives and husbands in Eph.5, especially verses 22 through 33. I will here only quote a portion of them. *"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved his church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word. That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, of any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."* Christ offered himself once without spot to God, and by one sacrifice he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. (Heb.9:14 & 10:14). *"For both he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren."* (Heb.2:11). I have a hope, small as it may seem at times, that I am one whom he has sanctified with his precious blood.

Brethren, I hope that I have presented my views in such a manner

that you will understand what I see, at least in part, as the image in which God created man. If you do not now understand what I have written, I believe it would be of no value to you to extend my views further. May God bless you to understand each and every scripture according to his own good pleasure.

Brethren, my hope also is, that I am a part of the church, which is his glorious body, and at that last day when he shall return in the clouds with great glory, I shall see him as he is and be like him. We have borne the image of the earthly; let us hope that we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editors of The Signs of the Times:

I do, so much love to read the "Signs". "O how I long to be blessed to see His Face in that sweet happy home." Hope I am one CHOSEN through God's eternal sweet love.There are so many dear sweet letters by the dear one's in the Signs. They are so sweet to my hungry, weary soul. I do love to read them. I am about 230 miles from my home church. The dear sweet ones are missed so much. I can't get used to not meeting the Dear Ones at Union Church. I am so weak I can hardly sit up long enough to write a letter. May the Blessed Lord Jesus continue you Dear Editors with his loving mercy like He has thus far, if it be the Blessed Lord Jesus' will.

The reason I am just sending for the Signs just one year, I am almost ninety years old. God Bless you every one, and may it please him to Bless you all to pray for me, a poor sinner I need him to keep me. My prayers don't seem to go over my head and O how I long and crave the loving, guiding and keeping of our Blessed heavenly Lord Jesus. Certainly your least and less than the least Sister I hope in sweet Jesus.

Callie Clark

ARTICLES

BAPTIST MINISTER REMEMBERED FOR ROLE IN RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

SHOCKOE - Dan River Chapter of the Virginia Society Sons of the American Revolution remembered Baptist minister John Weatherford on Saturday Nov. 5. A wreath was placed on his grave near Shockoe in Pittsylvania County.

Weatherford played a significant role in obtaining religious liberty for all Americans.

He was born around 1743 in Charlotte County just a year after his parents moved from Hanover County. His family was among the dissenter families in the Richmond area dissatisfied with the established or state supported Church.

As a teenager, Weatherford was converted under the preaching of Samuel Harris, an inspirational Bap-

tist minister. Weatherford began to study the scriptures but could not understand them in light of Samuel Harris' preaching.

He went to various "divines," but found no satisfaction. Finally one is reported to have told him, "I perceive you will be a Baptist, and the Lord be with you."

Though uneducated Weatherford began to preach. In time and through hard study he learned to read the scriptures and successfully attracted listeners.

Like other dissenting preachers who did not support the state church, Weatherford was required to be licensed by the General Court at Williamsburg and preach only in a registered meeting house. Of course, only one was allowed per county.

By failing to comply with these laws, he was often fined and imprisoned, yet he remained courageous and would preach from a jail cell to crowds outside.

His preaching gained an audience because people realized that the established church was "religion created by law, devoid of genuine piety, with small emphasis on the saving grace of God."

The laws of colonial Virginia had required the people to pay taxes to support the established church and its clergy. Citizens not only resented this, but the inability to worship God according to their own initiatives, build their own churches, and have their own preachers. It left them disenchanted with "royal religion."

The simple services of the Baptist as well as the democratic government of their churches and the emotional approach appealed to the common people. They flocked to hear the dissenting preachers whose influence alarmed royal authorities.

The persecution of these nonconformist ministers brought lawyer Patrick Henry into the forefront of colonial politics as a powerful advocate of religious freedom.

Henry became a friend of persecuted preachers and especially helped Weatherford.

In 1773 Henry obtained an order for Weatherford's release after he had been in Chesterfield County jail for five months. Having no money to pay his jail fees, Weatherford was released after Henry anonymously paid them. Twenty years later, when they were neighbors in Charlotte County, Weatherford found out about Henry's generosity.

In the intervening years came American independence and by 1786 Virginians were granted the complete religious liberty that Weatherford insisted upon.

Weatherford reared a large family while living on the Charlotte - Campbell County border. In 1813 he moved to Halifax County and to Pittsylvania County in 1823.

Weatherford died Jan. 23, 1833, and is buried at Shockoe Baptist Church. His grave is a simple stone marker in a wooded area bearing the initials "JW."

A stone monument was erected in the church graveyard by the Roanoke

Baptist Association in 1906. Weatherford's role in obtaining religious liberty is memorialized by the inscriptions "An earnest and faithful minister of the Gospel" and "A sufferer for conscience sake."

During the upcoming Thanksgiving season, Dan River Chapter president Larry Aaron said we should remind ourselves of the perseverance and courage of men like Weatherford.

REVELATION 7

And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on the tree.

And after these things, which means things that happened in the preceding chapter, and after opening six of the seven seals, after the demolition of heathen deities, worship and magistrates in the Roman empire, this vision seems to point to a time when the church will enjoy a period of peace and tranquility after the blustering storms of pagan persecution ceased, and great numbers of God's elect were converted and sealed, between the time of the sixth seal and the seventh seal which brings on the seven trumpets. Before John sees that seal opened, a pause is made, and this vision is shown him to assure him that is spite of the devastations by the Gaths and Vandals, the rise, progress and power of Mahamet, the dreadful apostasy of the church of Rome, and all the miseries of it, yet God would have throughout all this, and in every age of time, a sealed number, a true church, hidden and secured until the seventh angel has sounded his trumpet and time shall be no more, and the mystery of God shall be finished.

And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea. Saying, hurt not the earth neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

Hurt not the earth, etc. There was to be period a of time of peace for the church before the blowing of the seven trumpets, they let loose the winds which blew in the Gaths, Huns, Vandals, Sacraens and Turks into the empire and after that poured out the vials of God's wrath upon the Roman antichrist. Until we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads, men who serve God with grace in their hearts, from a principle of love, in the exercise of faith with reverence and Godly fear, with a view to his glory and worship him in spirit and in truth. The sealing of them does not mean the seal of the spirit, which is common to all the saints in all ages, but it denotes the hiding and concealing and so securing the saints amidst all the calamities of the empire and throughout the whole time of the Roman apostasy, from the first to the last, and respects the time when the church

fled into the wilderness and was hid and nourished with the hidden manna for a time and times and half a time. (Rev. 12-14).

And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. Of the tribe of Judea were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand. After this I beheld and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindred, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

And to a great multitude which no man could number, which pictures all the elect of God in the new Jerusalem church state, the bride, the Lamb's wife; these will appear to be a great multitude, not in comparison of the inhabitants that have dwelt upon the earth, with respect to these they are but few, a seed, a remanent, a little flock, but as considered in themselves, they are many who are ordained to eternal life, whose sins Christ has borne, for whom his blood has been shed, whom he justified, and who are called by his grace, who are brought to glory, and who make up such a number as no man could number. Man can't number them, but indeed God can. He calls them all by name, and their names are written in the Lamb's book of life. They will be of all nations, kindred, people and tongues, therefore must consist of Jew and Gentile. These were some of all nations, and such as God has chosen, Christ has redeemed, and the Spirit called. God has not chosen all the Jews, but a remanent, according to the election of grace; nor all of the Gentiles, but has taken out of them a people for his name.

Stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands. The throne of God will be in new Jerusalem. The tabernacle of God will be with men, and He will dwell among them. The Lamb will then be presented to the church, his bride, without spot, wrinkle or any such thing, and they will behold his glory and see him as he is, clothed with white robes, which shows their complete justification by his righteousness, and likewise, their spotless purity and holiness, sanctification and them being now perfect, which was before imperfection for now they will be clothed upon with their house from heaven and will have put off mortality and corruption and have put on immortality and incorruption and appear with Christ in glory.

And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God.

This is a wonderful picture of how the saints of God will be able to worship their God and savior in heaven. It will be perfect love, fellowship, adoration, praise and worship with nothing to hinder, slow down or stop this amazing worship. Talk about heaven, words can't describe it, but all his children here on earth who have tasted of this love have a faint but wonderful idea of the sweetness pictured here.

Saying Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

Here a seven-fold praise is given to God by the angels. They rightly give blessings to God who is blessed within himself and is the source of all blessedness to his creatures, angels and men, and also glory, the glory of his divine perfection who is the God of glory and of all his works of nature and providence and especially of men. And wisdom, by being the only wise God, where wisdom is to be seen in all the works of creation and in the government of the world and the scheme of redemption for fallen men; and thanksgiving for all mercies and favors temporal, spiritual and eternal enjoyed by angels or by men; and honor which is due him from all his creatures, as he is the creator of them, and from all his children, as he is their father; and power which he has exerted in making all things out of nothing, supporting the whole universe in its being and in saving and preserving his own people; and might as he is the almighty God.

And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

These are they that came up out of great tribulations. I believe this group is the group of saints who lived and have suffered such great and terrible things during the first three centuries of the church here on earth. The persecutions of the Christians by the Jews at the first publication of the Gospel, the persecution under the Roman emperors, both Pagan and Arian, and the cruelties and barbarities of the Roman antichrist, during the time of that apostasy, and particularly the last struggle of the beast which will be the hour of temptation that will come upon all the world.

Washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, not in the blood of bulls and goats which could not take away sin nor in their own blood, their sufferings for Christ on which they could not depend, nor in any works of righteousness done by them which are imperfect and filthy and need washing, but in the blood of Christ which cleanseth from all sin. The robes which they wear were robes

of righteousness and garments of salvation, or their justification, which is by the blood of Christ. The act of washing from sin by the blood of Christ is here ascribed to these saints, and pictures the concern which faith has in the blood of Christ which deals with it for justification, peace and pardon for the removing of sin from the conscience and from cleansing from all impurity both of flesh and spirit. The effect of this is that their robes were made white, that is they were free from all sin, were without fault before the throne, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. This shows that these persons had no trust in themselves or dependence on their own merits and works, but wholly trusted on and were dependent on the blood and righteousness of Christ which is the only way to come out of tribulation and enter the kingdom.

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Just look at the situation these saints are now in. They are now before the throne of God continually. Can you even imagine anything that could be better? There will be no more hunger or thirst, no more sorrow, no more pain, no more tears. This sounds wonderful to us here now, but think how much it must mean to a group who have passed through periods of great tribulation. Many in this group knew the hardships of suffering, hunger and persecution in so many ways that believers of today know nothing about. This chapter or the prophetic vision, I believe, show faith or pictures a great victory for the young church here on earth. The church had suffered much during that first 300 years of its building, but this vision here sets forth its victory. It pictures a relative peace for the church while God is sealing vast numbers of his chosen, but as it stated in verse three of this chapter, hold back the winds, hurt not the earth until God has sealed these chosen ones.

The book of Revelation shows some wonderful and, yes, some terrible things but one thing it shows throughout the book, regardless of how awful the scene, God is always taking care of and protecting his own. This peaceful scene here will soon change on earth as it is pictured in the next chapter. The people responsible for some of the suffering of the church will see things they need to see and realize that there is only one true and living God. In verse three it says "hold back these things for a little while". In the next chapter they are turned loose.

I hope and pray that I have been directed in writing this by the blessed God in heaven. I hope if offends no one, but rather it may be a little comfort to some.

A brother, I hope,
Frank Hunt

VOICES OF THE PAST

WALKING IN LOVE

By J.C. Philpot (1802-1869).

The gospel directs and regulates our walk with and before our believing brethren. In that as in the service of God, "Love all defects supplies." Without a loving, affectionate spirit, it is impossible to perform those precepts which inculcate mutual forgiveness and forbearance, "kindness, tenderness of heart, bowels of mercies, humbleness of mind, meekness and long-suffering." To do all this from the heart, and not merely in lip, we must "walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us and given Himself for us." Without this love we may have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; we may bestow all our goods to feed the poor, and give our body to be burned, and yet be nothing and have nothing. But if blessed and favoured with this love, we shall obey those precepts which direct our walk with our brethren unto God and from the heart.

Who that has seen much of Christian churches does not know the difference between the hard, cold, contentious, unforgiving spirit of some, and the tender, loving, affectionate spirit of others? Who that has a feeling heart has not been cut, wounded and grieved by the pride, obstinacy, selfishness, hardness and unkindness of the one, and been softened, melted and blessed by the tenderness, meekness, humility, loving and affectionate spirit of the other? Love is so the spirit of the gospel, and therefore of the precept as a part of the gospel, that we may unhesitatingly say that few more break the precept than some of the very persons who most contend for what is called practice.

Practice is excellent, admirable, indispensable; and the want of it grievous, lamentable, disgraceful. But let us be clear in our views as to what practice is and what it means. If it be the mere doing of what are called good works, as alms-giving, visiting the sick, strictness of life, dress, deportment, accompanied with unblemished conduct, a sister of mercy will outshine us all, and Father Ignatius be pattern of holiness. It is plain, therefore, that something more is needful for acceptable obedience than external practice, and this something is love - love to the Lord and to His people.

Nor is it less evident that this love must be made manifest by our general spirit as well as our conduct; for love is not a mere occasional spurt, a now and then warming up, like a hot fit of the ague, or the slow, relenting gripe of a miser over a charity plate, but a living principle, ever discovering itself in words and acts of kindness, forbearance, self-denial, self-restraint, consideration of the feelings of others, meekness, gentleness, and a humble, affectionate, conciliating manner and bearing. You may be outwardly very consistent; but if you are harsh, censorious, self-willed, obsti-

nate, unforgiving; if you would sooner see the church torn to pieces with strife than give way on some point which involves neither truth nor conscience, but merely some concession of opinion, you are breaking the precept as much by your disobedience to its spirit as others by their disobedience to its letter. God, who searcheth the heart and reads our inmost thoughts, feelings, and motives, descries with unerring eye our spirit as well as our conduct; and if, indeed, we see light in His light, we shall read our own heart too, and distinguish between the proud, obstinate, self-willed, contentious spirit of the old man and the humble, forgiving, affectionate spirit of the new.

As, then, love must animate every precept that teaches us what we owe to the Lord for all His goodness and mercy to us, so must love equally animate every precept that guides and regulates what we owe to our believing brethren. Look at the following precepts and see if love be not the ruling, animating spirit of them all: "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." What but love can enable us to walk "worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called?" Are we not called according to God's purpose, that we may love Him? And called also to walk in love with His people? How plain too are the words: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Be ye, therefore, followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour." In a similar spirit writes the same "apostle of Jesus Christ" to the Colossians. "Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And, above all these things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness." O that this kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearance, and forgiveness more animated our spirits and guided our words and actions. There would then be no stormy church meetings, no broken friendships, no shy looks, no harsh words, no resentful memories, no magnifying and dwelling on infirmities and defects, no raking up of buried injuries, no malicious insinuations, or slanderous reportings. Having had so much forgiven us, we should freely forgive our offending brethren; and feeling ourselves to be the chief of sinners and less than the least of all saints, we should rather wonder at their forbearance of us, and admire their kindness to us, than cherish a resentful, unforgiving spirit, even

against those at whose hands we may have suffered real or imaginary wrong.

Elder J.C. Philpot

From Elder Lambert's book, "Tried In The Furnace".

WHAT SHALL I CRY ?

February, 1953

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

Please get your Bible and open to the 40th chapter of Isaiah and read the entire chapter. May the Lord now enable us to meditate together upon this Scripture using the first part of the 6th verse as basis for our meditations: ***"The voice said, "The voice said, 'Cry,' and he said, 'What shall I cry?'"***

Cry means to utter, proclaim, groan, shriek or speak. When you cry it is involuntarily brought about by a stimulus that causes you to speak, proclaim, and say things that, were it not for this stimulating influence, you would not utter. We believe that the "Spirit of the Lord" is the stimulating influence that prompts God's people to cry. When the "Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon" us it prompts the opposite cry from that of the spirit of man. (See 7th verse). There is such a drastic change brought about by the direct operation of the Spirit that there always is a question. A question intimates that you do not know.

When the Spirit fell upon them on the day of Pentecost they asked, "What shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). When it arrested Paul on the way to Damascus he asked, "Who art thou, Lord?" and, "What wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9: 5,6). Those who were pricked at heart by the Spirit on the day of Pentecost did not ask what may we do? But "what shall we do?" Paul did not ask, what do you want me to do? But, "What wilt thou have me to do?" The one in the text did not ask, what may I cry? but "What shall I cry?" All upon whom the Spirit of the Lord has blown are made to realize that God has all power and that they have no power. They are made to realize that "He speaks and it is done; He commands and it stands fast." When I was identified with another order of religion I outlined my sermons before-hand and delivered them according to outline. I knew what to cry because the Spirit had not withered my flesh and caused my goodliness to fade. I was certain, sure and proud of myself. Since my flesh withered until I have no power and the goodliness thereof faded until I have no self righteousness, I have been entirely dependent upon God to give me at the selfsame hour light of thought and liberty of speech. I go groaning, wondering, "What shall I cry?" (I trust this has been brought about by the Spirit of the Lord blowing upon me.)

It has already been intimated that those who cry the Truth do so because of the stimulating influence of the Holy Spirit. They wonder what to cry because they have nothing of themselves to cry. When the voice says, "Cry," they know they must cry. I am persuaded that every time the Voice commands to cry the child of God does cry that which God puts in his mouth. Now, "What shall I cry?"

"All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass" (Isaiah 40: 6,7). How is all flesh as grass? The grass withers. Therefore, all flesh withers. How is all the goodliness of the flesh as the flower? The flower fadeth. Therefore, all the righteousness of the flesh fadeth. What causes the flesh to wither and the righteousness thereof to fade? The Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it. Has the Spirit of the Lord ever blown upon you? If your natural power has so withered that you realize you cannot lift yourself up to the extent to be approved of God I am persuaded that the Spirit of the Lord has blown upon you. If all your righteousness has faded in beauty that it appears as filthy rags, I am convinced that the Spirit has blown upon you. "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness is as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away" (Isaiah 64: 6).

What shall I cry concerning all nations as a whole? Can they combine and unite their strength and accomplish anything of their own power? Let us see. All nations are "counted as the small dust of the balance" (Isa. 40:15). The small dust upon the balances that the merchant uses in weighing his commodities are so insignificant that no purchaser would ask the merchant to remove the small dust from the balances before weighing in order that what he has purchased would weigh less. If all nations combined would be so insignificant, what would one man be? We are to cry that they are less than that! (Isaiah 40:7). *"All nations before Him are as nothing; and they are counted to Him less than nothing and vanity."* If all nations are counted to Him as nothing and less than nothing - what would one man be counted as? Using the expression of the late Elder A.D. Wall of Amity, Arkansas, *"Nothing split open and both halves thrown away, would be about the best way I know to express the size of one man's power as counted by God."* Who can boast of the power and righteousness of puny man in the face of these startling statements! God forbids His people to boast of their righteousness and power because of the withering and fading effects brought about by the Spirit.

What shall I cry concerning God? *"It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers." "That bringeth the princes to nothing; He maketh the judges of the earth as vanity"* (Isa. 40: 22,23). He did this to Hezekiah though he was a king. Each and every one upon whom the Spirit blows (read v. 24) is brought to nothing and vanity whether they be king, prince, judge, rich or poor, bond or free, - regardless of their status in this world they are all brought to the same low level. What shall I cry concerning that which God does for those upon whom He hath blown His Spirit to wither and fade into faintness and weariness? *"He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength"* (v. 29). When their life ends; He adds His life. (See

Isaiah 38:5). When their power becomes as vanity He gives His power. When they are weak then they become strong in the Lord. When the Lord is your strength you run and do not become weary because ***"He is strong in power; not one faileth"*** (v. 26).

What shall I cry to the Lord's people? ***"Behold the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him; behold His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. He shall feed His flock like a shepherd; He shall gather the lambs with His arms, and carry them in His bosom."*** I am persuaded that Jesus and the Spirit are the strong arm and hand that shall rule for Him in the lives of His people. He gathers, carries, and feeds those that are His. Jesus came to seek and save that which was lost. It is not left upon the volition of the creature to find God. This is the work of the strong arm and hand of God. He carries them in His bosom. They were chosen in Him before time began. They are bone of His bone. None of these shall fail for the Lord carries them and feeds them. ***"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand"*** (St. John 10:27-29). We see the certainty of all the sheep of God hearing the voice, following after, and persevering unto life eternal without the loss of one.

What shall I cry to Jerusalem, God's people? ***"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins"*** (Isa. 40: 1,2). Take notice that the cry is to be made only to God's people. This cry is to be of comfort to the church - or those whom He hath called out. God's ministry tells her that Jesus was the lone Warrior who accomplished this warfare by fulfilling the requirements of the law in her stead. He is a Warrior in whom God was well pleased. He came to ***"give eternal life to as many as thou hast given Him"*** (St. John 17:2). "And this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son" (1 John 5:11).

Not only did He accomplish our warfare but also paid the penalty for our iniquity! He suffered and died that Holy Justice might be perfectly satisfied, the penalty for our sins fully paid; that we might appear before His judgment seat with a record without blemish. He did not stop by just accomplishing the law for us, which would have left us with our sins against us. Neither did He only atone for our sins, which would have left the task to us of strictly obeying the ten commandments with all of its supporting laws. But, He performed double for us. He reconciled us unto the Father by His death, and He also saves us by His life. (See Rom. 5:10.).

We receive of the Lord's hand double in all things pertaining to eternal life. He speaks and also does it. He commands and causes it to come to pass. Jesus is Author and Finisher of our faith. He works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. He commands to repent, and gives you repentance. He says, "Awake," and awakens you. He commands to live, and gives you life. He says, *"Come unto me,"* and draws you to Him. He says, *"Hear,"* and gives you a hearing ear. He says, *"Cry,"* and puts the words into your mouth to cry. He says to Zion, *"Get thee up into the high mountains,"* and sets them on high.

What shall I then cry concerning the salvation of God's people? I must cry that salvation is solely by the grace of God through the merits of Jesus Christ both in time and unto eternity. I must do as Jonah, acclaim that salvation is of the Lord. I must cry that it is certain and sure to each and every one of the subjects of His amazing grace. I must cry that boasting is excluded. I must praise Him from His wonderful goodness to the children of men. In Him we move and have our being. The breath that we breathe belongs to Him. Even natural possessions are in His hand and He distributeth them to whomsoever He will. All the hairs of your head are numbered by Him and not even a sparrow falls without Him.

What shall I cry to the discouraged? God providentially cares for you and so sovereignly controls all things that they work together for your good. God has a noble purpose for you to fulfill in life and He will so protect you and guide you that you will completely fulfill this purpose before He takes you from this sojourn of sin and sorrow. Even though you feel so insignificant, God's purpose in your being here is just as important as the greatest ministerial gift that has ever graced the pulpit. May God bless you to take courage with these thoughts and press on toward the mark of the prize of the high calling - looking unto Jesus who is the Author and Finisher of this precious faith. God had so arranged, fixed and decreed that we have need of each other and we do serve one another; thereby serving Christ. (See Matt. 25:31-40). We are made to do as Paul - thank God for the brethren.

What shall I cry concerning our conduct one toward another? Forgive a brother his trespasses as our heavenly Father hath forgiven us. Esteem a brother higher than ourselves. Do good unto all men; especially unto the Household of Faith. As much as in you is, live peaceably with all men. Do unto them as you would have them do unto you. *"And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God"* (1 Peter 4:8-10). *"But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief or as an evil doer, or as a busy body in other men's matters - yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf"* (1 Peter

4:15, 16). As the body has need of each and every one of its members, so the church has need of each other.

What shall I cry to God? *"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness: according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me"* (Psalms 51: 1,10). Perform for me that my walk and conversation may be godly in this life. *"Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion."* Cause strife and confusion to cease - if it be Thy will - that God's little children may live together in sweet fellowship one with another. Cause us to be content with our lot and reconciled unto Thy will. Give us this day our daily bread. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Finally, save us in that eternal abode where and when all will be peace, love, joy, and fellowship forever and ever is the prayer that we beseech in the name of Jesus Christ who art Thy Son, and our Redeemer. Amen.

Elder E.J. Lambert

"And the cup was found in Benjamin's sack." (Genesis 44:12)

The sons of Jacob had already been down to Egypt for corn, and had left Simeon there bound and in prison. When the corn was gone their father said unto them, "Go again, and buy us a little food." Judah assured his father that they could not possibly go unless Benjamin accompanied them. Jacob hesitated, for he had lost Joseph, and Benjamin, the only remaining child of his beloved wife Rachel, was very dear to him; but at last he bade them take of the fruit and carry it down to the man as a present. Also said he, Take double money in your hand, and the money that ye brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand, and take Benjamin; and Jacob concluded, I am bereaved."

They returned to Egypt with Benjamin, and when Joseph saw them, he commanded the ruler of his house to slay and make ready, for these men shall dine with me at noon. The brethren were filled with fear because they were brought into Joseph's house, thinking that Joseph sought occasion against them. They communed with the steward of Joseph's house regarding the money that was returned in their sacks, but he said, "Peace be to you! fear not." When Joseph came home they bowed themselves to him to the earth, and he lifted up his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his own mother's son, and said, "Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son."

Joseph made haste, for his bowels did yearn upon his brother, he sought where to weep, and entered his chamber and wept there. After he had washed his face and refrained himself, he commanded his servants to set on bread. His brethren were then seated before him, the first-born according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth; and the men marvelled one at another, and Joseph sent messes unto them from before him, but Benjamin's mess was five times as much as any of theirs. Then Joseph commanded his steward to fill their sacks with food, as

much as they could carry, and to put every man's money in his sack's mouth; and to put his silver cup in the sack's mouth of the youngest, as well as his corn money.

When they were gone out of the city, and not yet far off, Joseph commanded the steward, "Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good?" He overtook them, and spake unto them these words. Then took they down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack. The search began at the eldest and left at the youngest, "and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack."

Here we shall cease to follow the narrative, as our intention is to write of the cup in its spiritual significance; also of the characters with whom this cup is found. Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, bear him two sons: Joseph first and then Benjamin. Jacob loved Joseph more than all his sons, and Benjamin, being the youngest, was also greatly beloved, for it is written, Jacob's life was bound up in the lad's life. Joseph was therefore Benjamin's elder brother, and Joseph being a lively type of Christ, Benjamin, to our understanding, is a wonderful type of the church in the gospel dispensation. The steward is the servant of Joseph, and represents the gospel ministers, who are stewards of the manifold grace of God.

It was the steward who ministered to the brethren when in distress over their returned money. He said, "Peace be to you! fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks." He it was also who searched the sacks; he stood in Joseph's stead and spoke the words given him by Joseph. He also declared that they had the divining cup, and they denied it, for the thing was impossible with them. So wherever there are those whose iniquities encompass them around, they stand before their Judge self-condemned, depending entirely upon the mercy of him with whom they have to do. Such, in their confession, deny that they have the cup.

The cup represents the sorrows, travail and separation which Joseph experienced while passing through the afflictions that were his lot according to God's purpose. The cup therefore was a type of the cup of our Lord Jesus Christ. He came down to the Egypt of this world where he was crucified, was sold by his brethren, and at Gethsemane he said, ***"My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death."*** He fell on his face and prayed, saying, **"Oh my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! never-the-less, not as I will, but as thou wilt."**

"How bitter that cup, no heart can conceive, Which he drank quite up that sinners might live."

As Joseph partook of his cup, he divined the very things transpiring in his life to be according to the purpose of God revealed to him in the two dreams given him long ago. It was in a sense of loneliness he partook of that cup. It could not be shared with the Egyptians: he was alone. As our Lord partook of his cup, he divined, and could say, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." He had a full cup. "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep

before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." This blessed Person is none other than our Elder Brother, though we knew it not. We have seen him pierced, and we mourn for him; when brought into judgment, we expect chains and death, and say, "What shall we speak?" We know not what to say, nor how to clear ourselves.

The brethren on their second visit for corn, dined with Joseph; and it is written, "Joseph made haste, for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there." Whilst here on earth our dear Redeemer ate with publicans and sinners, and his bowels of love yearned over them. Often in the secret chamber of his solitary life, he offered supplication with strong cries and tears for them, and for all his brethren. It is said that Joseph took and sent messes unto all of them from before him, but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of their's.

The least notice or favor of our Lord to a poor sinner, is not according to good works, but according to his love, and love is the fulfilling of the law. While the brethren representing the Jews received the law, yet Benjamin (the gospel church) received five times as much: which signifies a fulfilled law. With those who are born of the same mother (Jerusalem above) the cup is found. They say it is not in their sack of life, yet they are grieved for the afflictions of Joseph: they are vile, sinful. When they would do good, evil is present with them. This is my cup. Yet when it is shown to them, they tremble, for they fear it is stolen, that they are taking that which belongs to another. They feel God-forsaken, are fearful of death and offer supplications with strong cries and tears; they hate sin, but find it in their members, and are made to cry out, "Not my will, but thine be done."

As the steward, or preacher, by the Holy Spirit's guidance, searches, the cup is found: and it is in Benjamin's sack; that is, in his who is the smallest and least in the family. There is little Benjamin with their Ruler, partaking of the same cup. "And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders."

The rest of the brethren could return to their father, but Benjamin shall dwell in safety by him. Only in a realizing sense of our own weakness, is there safety; and then we know we have no righteousness; nevertheless our near kinsman Jesus the Lord shall cover us with his righteousness all the day long, and we shall dwell between his shoulders. What a safe place for poor weak sinners: between his shoulders. He carries the lambs in his bosom. It is also written, "The government shall be upon his shoulder." As partakers of his cup, though babes, they yet divine and see things that are hid from the wise and prudent. They clearly discern what holy men of old wrote as moved by the Holy Ghost. To the Jews under the legal covenant, it was not revealed, but it is revealed unto us. In these things we have fellowship with God, and are partakers of his cup. Not one shall come short of his glory, for if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him. The father's life was bound up in the life of the child. Jesus, our Elder Brother, is God-man, therefore in him God's life is bound up in our life.

As Joseph made himself known unto his brethren, so does our Lord Jesus make himself known with the glory of a risen Lord, who, like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. He showed to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus that his going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it. His blessed presence gives joy and gladness; and the five changes of raiment given Benjamin, are but a faint type of the blessed raiment with which, from time to time, his bride, the gospel church is adorned.

G.R.

(The above Editorial by Elder Ruston was published in the Signs August 1, 1923. It was his first after his announcement that he would consent to be an associate editor.)

MEETINGS

OLD PINE CREEK CHURCH

The annual Old Pine Creek Church meeting will be held this year on the 4th of July.

The church is located off Hwy. #221, 5 miles north of Floyd, Va. Those coming from Floyd, turn left on to road #682. Those coming from Roanoke, turn right on to road #682.

All lovers of the truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Hale Terry

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Knob Primitive Baptist Church, Franklin County, Virginia. A presbytery met March 11, 1995 at 2 o'clock PM, for the examination of Brother Wayne Hundley and if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgement ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Larry Hollandsworth. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were: Elders Clarence Stone, Hale Terry, Carl Terry, Larry Hollandsworth, Junior Conner and Leonard Brammer.

All Deacons were asked to sit together. 24 were present.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Clarence Stone as Moderator and Deacon W.G. Parsons as Clerk. Elder Leonard Brammer was chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Deacon Joe Cahill having been duly appointed by Knob Church in conference Feb. 11, 1995 as spokesman for the Church delivered Brother Hundley to the presbytery.

Examination was made by Elder Leonard Brammer using scriptural reference: The Acts Ch. 6 V. 3-6 and 1st Timothy Ch. 3. V 8-13. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands with the ordination prayer being delivered by Elder Carl Terry. The charge was delivered to the candidate by Elders Hale Terry and Junior Conner

using scriptural reference the written word of God.

The Moderator asked Knob Church if they were satisfied with the work of the presbytery which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brother Hundley and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained Brother was delivered back to the Church an ordained Deacon of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Knob. The minutes consisting the work of the presbytery were read and adopted.

The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Larry Hollandsworth.

Elder Clarence Stone - Moderator
Deacon W.G. Parsons - Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Thompson Grove Church, a Presbytery met at Thompson Grove on 4-1-95 for the examination of Brother Robert Smith if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of the judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Willard Cox. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the Presbytery. Those present were Elder Lane Carter; Elder Willard Cox; Elder W.T. Conner; Elder Hale Terry; Elder Larry Hollandsworth; Elder Noel Conner and Elder Junior Conner.

Deacons present were as follows: Jamie Cooper; R.W. Akers; Herbert Dodson, Lester Hagood, Wilton Sutphin; John Plunkett; Tiras Conner, Woodrow Abshire; Jesse Tyree; C.T. Abshire; Alfred Ratcliff; Grover Semones; Grey Ingram; Andrew Agee; Wade Poff; Julian Rutrough; Allen Terry; Donald Agee; Guy Holly; Hansel Conner, Fred Murphy; Harry Perdue.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Lane Carter as moderator; Jamie Cooper as clerk; Elders Hale Terry & Larry Hollandsworth were chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate. Elder Noel Conner having been duly appointed by Thompson Grove Church, delivered Brother Robert Smith to the presbytery. Examination was made by Eld. Hale Terry and all present Elders invited to participate using Scripture reference 1st Timothy Ch. 3 - V 1-14. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands, with the Ordination prayer being delivered by Elder W.T. Conner. The charge was delivered to the candidate by Elder Junior Conner.

The Moderator asked the Presbytery if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brother Robert Smith and the right hand of fellowship was given. The ordained Brother was delivered back to the church as an ordained Deacon of the Old School Primitive Church at Thompson Grove. The minutes consisting of the work of the

presbytery were read and approved. The Presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Hale Terry.

Elder Lane Carter, Moderator
Jamie E. Cooper, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 1995

Maxey R. Delp, VA	$10.00
Mrs. Mary Russell, TX	
In memory Eld. E.J. Lambert	32.00
Mrs. Lillian C. Wood, NC	2.00
Joseph Plaster, VA	2.00
Victor H. Laws, MD	17.00
Bill Slack, KY	2.00
Levie D. Goard, VA	5.00
Carl L. Bryant, LA	2.00
Otis N. Freeman, AL	10.00
Levie Thompson, VA	2.00
Mrs. Reba Wise, TX	3.00
Banks H. Conner, VA	2.00
Mrs. Glenn Savage, KY	10.00
Tim C. BArron, TX	7.00
Frank Hunt, VA	12.00
A Friend From NC	482.00
Mrs. Frances Townley, AR	2.00
Charles Oakley, NC	2.00
Ms. Joyce Farley, TX	10.00
Tom G. Tompson, NC	2.00
Edgar & Carlie Cook, FL	5.00
Mrs. Rebecca Smith, FL	2.00
Raymond Oxley, WV	2.00
Samuel Blankenship, VA	2.00
Mrs. Mildred Hanks, VA	2.00
Eld. Noel F. Conner, VA	12.00
Mrs. E.J. Marslender, NC	2.00
Mrs. Clara Jones, VA	7.00
Pete Phillips, VA	2.00
Tiras Conner, VA	2.00
Eld. Theron Jones, LA	2.00
Eld. Robert Miles, FL	2.00

OBITUARIES

BROTHER LEMUEL C. BRANCH

With sorrow for our loss but joy for his great gain, we record the death of Brother Lemuel Carlos Branch on October 22, 1994 at the age of 77.

Brother Branch was born in Premier, West Virginia on September 4, 1917, a son of the late Thomas Green Branch and Lucinda French Branch. On October 27, 1942 he was united in marriage to Hildred Napier. To their union of nearly 52 years were born five children: Alfred "Bill" Branch and Carlos R. Branch, Mrs. Sylvia B. Nolte, Mrs. Linda B. Margraff, and Mrs. Pearl B. Koch, all of whom survived him.

For a number of years Brother Branch lived in Ohio and West Virginia, where he worked in coal mines for his natural living. During that time he united with Davy Primitive Baptist Church at Davy, West Virginia, and was baptized by the late Elders S.J. Priddy and C.A. Marshall. Later, he removed his membership to Glenwood Park Church at Princeton, West Virginia. He and sister Branch came to Liberty Church by letter during the 1st weekend in May 1990.

In his last years Brother Branch was much afflicted by sickness and disease. He spent a good bit of time in the hospital at Roanoke, Virginia, but was at home when the Lord called him from this life. His funeral service was held at Arrington-Bussey Chapel in

Rocky Mount, Virginia by his pastor, Elder John T. Wingfield. His body was laid to rest in the Liberty Church Cemetery, to await the Second Coming of the Lord from heaven.

In addition to Sister Branch and the children, Brother Branch was survived by two brothers, Brother Howard Branch of Sophia, West Virginia and Bernice Branch of Phoenix City, Alabama; and three sisters, Mrs. Sylvia Barber of Abingdon, Virginia, Mrs. Goldie Saunders of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and Mrs Allie Cook of Damascus, Virginia; eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

We agreed to prepare three copies of this obituary: one for our church records, one to be given to his family, and one to be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Liberty Church in conference, the 31st day of December 1994.

Elder John T. Wingfield, Mod.
Brother Paul A. Puckett, Clerk

OSCAR PERRY MURPHY

It is with sad heart I attempt to write brother Oscar Perry Murphy's obituary. He was born July 31, 1903, in Union County, Smackover, Arkansas. He lived in Houston, Texas, for the last fifty plus years where he passed away December 22, 1994, at age of 91 years. Brother Murphy was the son of brother George Francis Murphy and Sister Jennie Murphy who were members of Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church at Eldorado, Arkansas. His Father was a deacon. Brother O.P. married Lucille McBee some forty plus years ago. He had two sons and a daughter, Francis Perry Murphy and another son preceded him in death, and Mary Helen Murphy Knighten both of Houston, Texas. Brother O.P. had 12 grandchildren, 27 great-grandchildren, and 1 great, great grandson. He has two surviving sisters, Emma Dell Murphy of Smackover, Arkansas, and Patty R. French of Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Brother O.P. Murphy joined Shepherd Fold Primitive Baptist Church on November 6, 1960, and was baptized by the late Elder W.W. Fleet. Brother Murphy came under the hands of a presbytery and was ordained as a deacon of Shepherd Fold Primitive Baptist Church on January 28, 1989. He served the church well as a deacon and dearly loved the church and his brethren. Brother O.P. believed in the doctrine of grace and the sovereignty of God. He was faithful to help his church and brethren. Brother Murphy dearly loved to hear preaching and sing the songs of Zion. His funeral was on December 23, 1994, and Forest Park Lawndale Funeral Home Chapel with Elder G.D. Shipman, his assistant pastor, officiating. He was laid to rest in the Forest Park Lawndale Cemetery to await the second coming of Christ.

A copy to be sent to his wife, and one to the Signs of the Times, and one to be put on the church book. Approved in conference on April 1, 1995.

Written by Elder Gerald Shipman

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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Route 1, box 420, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

I LOVE thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of thine abode;
The church our blest Redeemer saved
With his own precious blood.
I love thy church, O God,
Her walls before thee stand,
Dear as the apple of thine eye,
And graven on thy hand.

For her my tears shall fall,
For her my prayers ascend,
To her my cares and toils be given
Till cares and toils shall end.
Beyond my highest joy
I prize her heavenly ways;
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
Her hymns of love and praise.

Jesus, thou friend divine,
Our Saviour and our King,
Thy hand, from every snare and foe,
Shall great deliverance bring.
Sure as thy truth shall last,
To Zion shall be given
The brightest glories earth can yield,
And brighter bliss of heaven.

Dwight

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EDITORIAL

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

Many scriptures in the bible refer to God and to Christ as a shepherd, and to the children of God as sheep. This is, in fact, a very good analogy of the bond and the relationship that exists between them as they live out their lives here in this time world and experience their salvation as it unfolds in their life. It is a beautiful description of the total dependence of the sheep on the shepherd for their every need, and the care, concern and commitment of the shepherd to the sheep. He is constantly with the sheep and never leaves nor forsakes them day or night; so is God's care for this chosen vessels of mercy prepared unto glory. As David said Psa. 139 vs. 7-10 "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or Whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven thou art there If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea: Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." He could never stray away and become lost because God is everywhere present and aware of everything that affects the elect, and manifests himself to them in ways that causes them to realize that he is still there.

David was a shepherd in his young life, tending his father's sheep, and he knew, from experience, the care and the concern that the shepherd had for his flock. He experienced it to the point of placing his own life in peril for the sake of his own, when he faced the lion and the bear that attempted to take a lamb from the flock. He slew the lion and the bear but he knew the concern that he felt in defending his own. When David came to the battle lines as the children of Israel faced the Philistines and Goliath challenged the Israelites to face him; David told Saul that he would fight the Philistine giant. Saul said he could not fight him because he was but at youth and Goliath had been a man of war from his youth. David then related his experience as a shepherd and said as the

Lord had delivered him from the paws of the lion and the bear he would deliver him out of the hands of this Philistine: and Saul said to David, go and the Lord be with thee. When David faced Goliath he did not say what he was going to do to him, but rather, ***"Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the Armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied."*** David knew where his strength was and that it would not fail him because it was always present with him.

In the entire Twenty Third Psalm, David was blessed to leave on record, in just six short verses, volumes of truth that have given comfort and inspiration to the wayfaring pilgrims down through the ages as they trust in the glorious doctrine of God to strengthen them in their travels under the watchful care of the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls. They have provided love to comfort them in times of distress; deliverance from enemies that would overwhelm them if left in their own strength; food to sustain them when they hunger and thirst after righteousness; restores their hope when they are cast down and fear that it is clean gone forever. The shepherd never leaves nor forsakes them regardless of what they may do, as David said in his last days ***"Although my house be not so with God; yet he had made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow."*** David fell and did things that were a grievous sin against God, but God did not cast him away, but continued to be with him in all of his ways, to the end. David realized that God was with him when he fled before Saul and his son Abraham when they were seeking his life: he could witness with Paul when he wrote, ***"What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us.***

Ezekiel Chap. 34 vs. 11-12 "For thus saith the Lord God: behold I even I will both search my sheep, and seek them out, as a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered: so will I seek out my sheep, and deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day." The false shepherds had ceased caring for the sheep in Ezekiel's day and began feeding off of the flock in the same manner that the sons of Eli had ceased to follow the law in eating of the sacrifice in their day: they refused to eat the boiled meat and insisted on taking their portion out, before it was boiled, and roasting it on the open fire. The shepherds in Ezekiel's day had thus ceased to follow their mission and left caring for the sheep. He is writing, above of the day in which the true shepherd (Christ) will come and seek out his flock that have been scattered and confused by the false shepherds. The true shepherd will, in that day, gather the scattered sheep, bring them to their own land and feed them upon the mountains of Israel; the land which he gives them, and

cause them to lie down in a fat pasture. God's promise, in that day is that he will set one shepherd over them, even his servant David, he shall feed them and he shall be their true shepherd: He will make with them a covenant of peace and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness. The sure and certain promises of God, by the mouth of Ezekiel, declaring the coming of the Messiah who will fulfill all things that are written of him, as the shepherd of the sheep.

Before Jesus was born into the world there was a period of about five hundred years in which there were no inspired writings to give a record of God's dealing with his people; there was no open vision and seemingly the scattering of the flock mentioned by Ezekiel continued so that the temple and temple service were far removed from what they were in David's day. The worship service had deteriorated so that they were mere formalities and Jesus told them, *"Ye have made the commandments of God of none effect by your tradition."* It was into this setting that Jesus was born and began to preach and to do all of the things that the law and the prophets had written about him. He began to do, in deed and in spirit those things that David recorded in the twenty-third Psalm. As the work of the Shepherd; the providing of all things needful to the sheep.

Luke 19 vs. 10, *"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."* These words were spoken by Jesus to Zacheus when he went to his home to abide with him. Jesus did not come to make sheep or convert and save the world, but rather he came to seek and save those that were scattered and lost from the fold as recorded in Ezekiel: those that had wandered aimlessly in the wilderness with no one to guide or to direct their way, or comfort their souls. They were in a land of great darkness with no light and Jesus came to them saying, *"I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."* Oh, the joy that fills the heart when one has lived all of their life in darkness, not even realizing it, and are suddenly made to see the light and bask in the beauty and glory of it. This is what happened to the Apostle Paul, on the road to Damascus and to all of God's children when the light first shines in their heart and soul. They then can shout from the house top, the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want: I shall not fear what man may do to me; I will not want for anything because I have everything; I know the shepherd. Jesus told them, *"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep and an known of mine. As the Father knoweth me even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep."* And by revelation of the spirit they believe and rejoice in these truths and claim them as their heritage and go by faith in the way of peace. Jesus told others, *"But ye believe not because ye are not my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life: and they shall never*

perish. Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

John 10 vs. 2, *"But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth: and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out, and when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers."* In the sheepfold there are many flocks kept at night that they not wander off and get lost or killed. When the shepherds come in the morning to take the sheep out to pasture he does not have to find a brand or identifying mark to know his sheep: he calls them by name and they follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow another shepherd even if all of the rest of the sheep follow one shepherd: they will follow the voice of their shepherd, the one who has protected them and demonstrated his care for them: the one who would leave the ninety and nine and come to them in their time of need or distress. They will follow the one who has found them the green pastures, the still quiet waters and who restored their faith when they found they could not hold onto it in their own strength.

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: "The analogy continues to the end; The shepherd who has led them all the days of their lives; calls them all by name and leads them out of the wilderness where they have been; separates them from the world around them, and proclaims that they are his; the ones for whom he laid down his life. As Jesus said in his prayer unto the Father, "I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work thou gavest me to do."

The Apostle Paul's benediction in his letter to the Hebrews Chap. 13 vs. 20, *"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant. Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and forever. Amen."* Surely goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our lives and we shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

ARTICLES

THE JUSTIFICATION OF THE UNGODLY

Sermon preached by Mr. J. Raven (either at Smallfield or Redhill) on Easter Sunday, April 9th, 1950

TEXT: ***"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Rom. 833, 34).***

The apostle sets before us in this chapter the ground of his rejoicing, of his rejoicing over sin, indwelling sin and all the power of the enemy, and he opens the chapter on this note: ***"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." "He found that good and solid ground to stand upon. The ground upon which he stood was nothing other than the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ, yea even "God which always causeth us to triumph in Christ"; and in the midst of all the soul agony that he experienced by reason of the sin that dwelt and worked within him, he was enabled to "rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."*** He realized that though he found so much evil within him as he said, ***"In me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing,"*** although he had continual matter for mourning and for self-loathing, yet he was enabled to believe this, to find comfort and sure standing in this: ***"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."***

Then in the words preceding our text he says, ***"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"*** He had just spoken of the foreknowledge of God and His predestinating grace, His purpose of grace toward His people, and we have that wonderful chain, as it has been called: ***"Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"*** He saw salvation to be the work of God alone. Salvation had its rise in the bosom of God; it was the product of His eternal love and of His mighty power. So the apostle goes on to say, ***"If God be for us, who can be against us?"*** O happy is the man that has the God of Jacob for his Refuge, happy is the man who has the Christ of God for his Friend.

"He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things." We notice in reading our lesson (Romans 5 and 6) how that the apostle, in setting forth the wonders of divine love and what that love had done, said, ***"When we were yet without stength, in due time Christ died for the***

ungodly"; and again, "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. The business of the Lord Jesus Christ as He dwelt here below, was with sinners. The gospel He had to preach, the things that His Father commanded Him to preach, were for sinners. *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor"*; and He said in His message to John the Baptist, "The poor have the gospel preached to them," The gospel which the Lord Jesus preached was only suited to sinners, to poor people: there is nothing in it for the Pharisees or the Scribes, or for the lawyers who were so full of pride and self-conceit, who had so much religion that was only of the flesh, and thought themselves to be healthy and in no need of a Saviour. There is nothing in the gospel for them. *"Woe, woe it was to them. "Woe unto you that laugh now!"* O how unspeakable solemn it is to come under the woe pronounced by the Christ of God! But the gospel that He preached was for the healing of the broken hearts and wounded spirits. It was for the comfort of those who were cast down, for the relief of those who were burdened and the deliverance of those who were captives and in the prison house.

So in that wonderful fifth chapter we see the love of God set forth in this: *"God commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."* Are you a sinner? *"Though all are sinners in God's sight, there are but few so in their own,"* said Mr. Hart. Where are the people who are sinners in their own sight? Sinners by deep, heart-felt conviction? Sinners who can do nothing towards their own salvation, and who can produce nothing, no not a thought that is good? Guilty, polluted, helpless? O the gospel is for such. *"While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."* And that was the outpouring of the love of God, as we read, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." The Father draws poor sinners to Himself through His dear Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who said, *"No man cometh unto the Father but by Me."*

"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" God's chosen ones, people whom God hath set apart for Himself. *"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?"* However men may quibble the fight against it, the doctrine of election and of predestination shines like a sunbeam throughout the whole of the Scriptures. From Genesis through to the end of Revelation you find that doctrine clearly set forth, and you cannot deny it without making a lie of the Word of God.

Well, here the apostle says, *"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth."* Now, those who are called "God's elect," His chosen people whom He foreknew and whom He had predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, and whom He had justified in

and through Christ Jesus, and whom He ultimately will glorify, these people are, every one of the, sinners worthy of everlasting condemnation. One says, *"My sins deserve eternal death,"* but then God had found a way whereby His justice can maintain all her rights, whereby the perfections of the Godhead can receive the fullest honour, and yet sinners be justified. O, it is a wonderful thing to contemplate that God can be just and yet be the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, Of course, if you think of sin as a trifling thing, then justification will be in your view a trifling thing, but if you are led to view sin and feel sin as that hideous monster, that hateful thing that it really is, to be justified will be a great matter to you. *"How should man be just with God?"* How can a sinner stand in the presence of infinite holiness, in the presence of Him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity? *"Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God?"* Such questions will be burning questions in your heart and conscience, and until the Spirit of God reveals Himself the way of salvation, you will not, for the life of you, be able to see how the thing can be done. You may be familiar with the letter of the gospel, you may be familiar with such phrases as this, *"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,"* and the chiefest of them, but the words alone will convey nothing to your heart. It is when the Holy Spirit conveys the words with power and unction to your heart that you feel and rejoice in the truth of them.

Well, for God to justify a sinner is a great matter. How can He do it? How does He do it? Why, He sent *"His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfuilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."* That is the way God has taken. *"He spared not His own Son." "God so loved the world, That He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." He "spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all."* We read of Christ that *"being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."* O what does it all mean? There was something more in the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus than His being taken by wicked hands and crucified something more than that. *"It pleased the Lord to bruise Him"; "The Lord hath laid on Him,"* said Isaiah, *"the iniquity of us all."* The Lord Jesus Christ stood as the responsible Surety of His people. He loved the church and gave Himself for it, He bore her sin in His own body on the tree. He stood before His Father with the guilt of innumerable transgressors, the guilt of multitudes of people, laid to His charge, and that guilt was punished in Him. *"It pleased the Lord to bruise Him."* It means just this, that the God against whom we have sinned, came and took the punishment, yes,

"The Offended dies to set the offender free."

The God who made all things, the eternal Word who built the earth and skies, came into the world to save sinners, and to save them by bearing the curse and the condemnation due to their sins. One may well say.

"On such love, my soul, still ponder,
Love so great, so rich, so free;
Say, whilst lost in holy wonder,
Why, O Lord, such love to me?"

O, if this is brought home to you, it will break and melt your heart. It will be to you the fulfilment of that Scripture, *"I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and will give you an heart of flesh."* Nothing can melt the heart but the love and blood of Jesus.

Well, *"It is God that justifieth."* A holy God takes His stand to speak upon the Person, the righteousness, the atoning death and resurrection of His dear incarnate Son, and on that ground He pronounces the sinner just. He is *"just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."* He is just, and the justifier of the ungodly. O that precious declaration: *"To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly!"* I am ungodly, I have been ungodly all my life, I was born in born in sin and shapen in iniquity, and one can hardly bear the thought of sins that one has committed in the course of one's so sin-polluted life. Ungodly! People may say, *"Well, you never seem to do much that is wrong."* Ah, but God knows what my heart has been privy to. God knows what a cesspool of iniquity my heart is by nature, and that word has been to me a great word: *"To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."* If God were not the justifier of him that is ungodly, the justifier of the poor, ungodly sinners, I should have no hope. My works could not procure justification for me; not my fears, nor my prayers, nor my preaching, nor anything else that I do that may appear to others to be right and godly, none of these things can procure justification for me. The only ground of my justification is the atoning death and the obedience of the Lord Jesus.

"Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness,
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

The Lord grant that the substance of all that may be revealed and wrought in our hearts.

Well, *"it is God that justifieth,"* and there is no higher court. There is no appeal from this judgment. *"It is God that justifieth,"* and if God pronounces me just, who can say that I am unjust? If God pronounces me just, who can lay anything to my charge?

"Who shall lay anything to charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." Look for instance, at the penitent thief on the cross. I often

think of him when I think of those words: ***"To him that worketh not but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly."*** My mind, when I repeated the words just now, went at once to the thief on the cross. What had he done? Why, he had lived a life of crime and violence, and richly deserved the death he died, and he was brought to confess it when he believed on Him that justifieth the ungodly. An amazing act of faith was that wrought in the dying thief. "Lord," he said. And you thing of the scene. There was Jesus of Nazareth surrounded by a mocking, howling mob, surrounded by people who hated Him and thirsted for His blood, who rejoiced to see Him brought so low. Yet that thief on the cross looked upon that bleeding form, and he saw something that drew this prayer from his heart: ***"Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom."*** It was an amazing act of faith to see the glory of the Son of God shining in the mangled form, that bleeding, dying Man. The thief was justified - a remarkable instance of an ungodly man being justified by faith and having peace with God through Jesus Christ.

"Who is he that condemneth?" Do you ever condemn yourself? Do you ever have to look at your sinful self and look back upon your sinful life and condemn yourself? The publican did, for hear what he said: "God be merciful to me a sinner," the sinner. He condemned himself; he bore witness against himself that he was a sinner. But ***"Who is he that condemneth?"*** Then again, conscience condemns; and the devil is called the accuser of the brethren, he condemns. Martin Luther tells how one day Satan presented to him a long list of his transgressions, and Luther stood and looked at it and said, ***"Satan, it is all true and more besides, but write underneath 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from all sin.'"***

"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died." I remember years ago having this feeling, that though my sins caused me much pain and shame, and my sinful heart was a continual source of trouble to me, yet these things did not terrify me because ***"it is Christ that died."*** There seemed so much in that: "It is Christ that died." Had any other stood in Christ's place and attempted what Christ did, it would not have done us an atom of good. But since it is Christ that died, all the blessings that flow from His death, the peace that comes by His death, the forgiveness of sin, the free justification, all comes to sinners through His atoning death.

"It is Christ that died." What a victory! What a sacrifice! What a death! The poet said, ***"The rocks could feel Thy powerful death."*** O, there is something inexpressible about the death of Christ, as there is something inexpressible and inexplicable about the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. I was thinking as I sat in the vestry just now of when I heard a minister preaching somewhere about fifty years ago. And as he preached I had this thought: ***"O, I love to hear great things of Christ!"*** It was wonderful to my heart to hear great things spoken of Christ.

Would you say to your minister, *"Minister, lift up Jesus Christ. Lift Him up. Preach great things concerning Him."*

Well, the apostle here says, *"It is Christ that died."* When He died He offered a mighty offering, an offering of infinite virtue and sufficiency, so that His death cancelled all the sin that was imputed to Him. He made an end of sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and the Father looks with infinite satisfaction and approval and delight upon the Person and offering of His dear Son. That was a little sweet to me while I was ill for a short while earlier this year. It came to me in a dream which was presented to me like this: that the Lord Jesus Christ was in His Father's eyes an Object of ineffable delight and perfect satisfaction, and that He was in the eyes of infinite justice fully satisfying and perfect. When I awoke, the savour of it still remained with me, and it gave a turn to my thoughts for a little while afterwards, and I did feel that in some measure and degree my thoughts were harmonious with the thoughts of the Father concerning His Son. I hope I know what it is to look upon Christ and think upon Christ with some sense of His preciousness and some realization of the infinite satisfaction the Father has in Him, and the satisfaction that justice has in Him, that the Father is satisfied, that infinite justice is satisfied. O how good it is for a poor sinner to be satisfied with the same precious Object!

"It is Christ that died." "Who offered Himself without spot to God." But then, the apostle does not stay there. He says, "Yea rather." He does not stop at the cross. Some people are very fond of setting up a crucifix, and putting it about their homes and churches, or images representing the crucifixion, and in some cases the burial of the Lord Jesus, or His agony in the Garden. But the apostle leads us beyond all that. It is not a dead Christ that he preached but a living Christ, who said, *"I am He that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore."* The apostle says, *"Yea rather, that is risen again."* There is a note of triumph in those words of the apostle in the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians where he says, *"Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept."* He had been saying what the consequences would have been had Christ not risen from the dead: *"Then is our preaching vain...your faith is also vain, yea and we are found false witnesses of God"; and, "Ye are yet in your sins" if Christ not be risen; and "We are of all men most miserable."* The men of this world have as least sort of satisfaction out of this world and the things of it, but to the people of God who, for His sake have renounced the world and have for His sake gone forth to Him, if Christ be not risen, then for nothing have they followed Him. But the apostle triumphantly says, *"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and became the firstfruit of them that slept,"*

"Yea rather, that is risen again," in token that the debt is paid, that the

redemption is accomplished, that the Father is well pleased, that the God of peace hath *"brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant."*

"Yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God." Here is another precious thing for believers to keep in mind. It is well to have this in view, that Christ is not only risen from the dead but was raised by the right hand of the Father and set with Him upon His throne. "Him hath God highly exalted, and given Him a name which is above every name." "Who is even at the right hand of God in all the sufficiency and validity of His atoning sacrifice, His everlasting righteousness, His finished work, As Toplady beautifully phrases it,

"His love intense, His merit fresh,
As though but newly slain."

"Who is even at the right hand of God." In the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Apostle Paul tells us of the Lord Jesus Christ, that because He continueth ever, (He) hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.

"Who is even at the right hand of God, who also makest intercession for us"; that is to say, presents the merits of His atoning death and the glory and the preciousness of His obedience continually before His Father. The Father looks upon His Son with infinite satisfaction and delight, and the apostle said, "Hath made us," that is, made His people, "accepted in the Beloved," "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

"Who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and for ever, is at the right hand of God; Christ Jesus the propitiation, Christ Jesus who hath obtained eternal redemption for us, Christ Jesus who is the righteousness of His people, who is their prophet, their sacrifice, their wisdom, is eternally and unchangeably at the right hand of the Father.

"Who also maketh intercession for us." O, His thoughts are with His poor people, His thoughts are with those for whom He died, and He maketh intercession. I like that word in Isaiah 53, where he said, *"He made intercession for the transgressors."* It might have been said that *"He made intercession for the elect,"* and it would have been true. It might have been said that *"He made intercession for broken-hearted sinners and for the penitent souls"* - it would have been true. But it says, "He made intercession for the transgressors." There He meets His believing people at the lowest point, where they feel their deepest woe, where they realize their utterly undone condition. There He meets them in that Scripture: "He made intercession for the transgressors." The poet says,

"He passed within the veil,
Did on His bosom bear,
Those worthless names, that did prevail

With Him to enter there."

"Who also maketh intercession for us." He ascended into heaven itself, the firstfruits, *"Christ the firstfruits, afterwards they that are His at His coming."* And as He is the firstfruits, so ultimately and most surely all His redeemed, every member of His mystical body, will be with Him in glory, according to His own request: *"Father I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am that they may behold My glory."* Do you covet an interest in that? Do you ever wonder if Christ had you in His thoughts when He said, *"Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am"*? Do you covet an interest in Christ? Is it your desire to be enabled to look up to Him and say with Thomas, *"My Lord and my God"*? If so, the Lord fulfill all your petition for His name's sake. Amen.

Sent to "Signs" by Elder N.F. Conner
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PSALM 89 : 6-9.

For who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD?

God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.

O LORD God of hosts, who is a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?

Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.

WILLIAM TYNDALE

Recently most Christian magazines have been publishing articles on William Tyndale, the reason being the 500th anniversary of his birth.

Who then was Tyndale? Certainly no one has ever surpassed him in the influence for good that he had. In 1526 he produced the first New Testament ever printed in the English language. Only the great day will declare the effects of that little book, under the blessing of the Holy Spirit, in the hearts of men and women.

Five hundred years ago, probably at the end of 1494, William Tyndale was born somewhere in Gloucestershire. He studied at Magdalen Hall, Oxford, and later probably at Cambridge. Early in life he proved to be a brilliant scholar, specialising in languages. In fact, he could speak seven languages so fluently that people could not tell to what nationality he belonged. Quite early in life he was graciously dealt with by the Spirit of God, though we do not know any details.

The influence of the "new learning" was spreading, and Erasmus had produced in print a New Testament in the original Greek. The seeds began to be planted in young William Tyndale's heart of a longing to see the Bible in English so that all could read it.

At that time Bibles were in Latin, which few could understand; the Roman Catholic church wanted the people to remain ignorant. An ancient law dating from 1408 forbade anyone to attempt to put the Latin Bible into

English. About the time when Tyndale became concerned, six men and one woman were burned at the stake for the sole crime of teaching their children the Lord's prayer, the ten commandments and the apostles' creed in English. The result was that people were utterly ignorant of what the Bible taught, and the way of salvation. So, as to result, on the one hand there was terrible superstition; numerous pilgrimages took place to see holy relics, supposedly of the Lord Jesus or New Testament (and later) saints. On the other hand, immorality was rampant.

There were a few Bibles in English circulating, produced by the Lollards, followers of Wycliffe. However, here were two difficulties. There were no printed copies; all were laboriously written out by hand - and so they were scarce. But also, the translation was inaccurate, having been translated from the faulty Latin Vulgate version, not from the original language.

Now Tyndale's desire was that there should be a good, faithful translation in English. But was it possible? Could it be done?

After leaving university, Tyndale (as was the custom) would have been ordained as a priest. As such he took up residence in the home of Sir John Walsh, Little Sodbury Manor, not far from Bath. Here he would conduct prayers and no doubt act as tutor to the children.

It was at Little Sodbury he made the statement for which he has become famous. There were various visitors to the manor, among them clergy as well as laity. It was to one of these (speaking of how terrible for ordinary people to have the Bible in their native tongue) that young Tyndale (now in his 20's) exclaimed, "By the help of God, I hope to see the day when any ploughboy in England will understand the Bible better than you" (or words to that effect). The manor house still stands, and we understand visits can be made by appointment through the local vicar, Mr. Ensor, who loves the reformed faith, and is an enthusiast for William Tyndale.

From this time, Tyndale was a wanted man, and as such hunted for the rest of his life. Hearing that Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of London, was favourable to the new learning, he sought an interview with him, only to have his hopes dashed. The Bishop was afraid, and still clung to the Roman faith. Not only did he forbid any translation of the Word of God, but Tyndale began to realise his life was in danger.

For a time he found sanctuary in the house of a wealthy merchant, Humphrey Monmouth, and attempted to begin the translation - but soon he realised that there was not only no place for him in the thoughts of the Bishop of London, or in the house of Monmouth, but also not in the whole of England. So he determined to go into exile, where he spent the rest of his life, chased and hounded, yet determined with God's help to provide an accurate copy of the Word of God in English: "God's outlaw" is the way he has been described. The statue to his memory on the Thames embankment has on it beautiful lines concerning his forsaking his beloved land for Jesus' sake.

On the continent he was hounded from pillar to post. An order went out from King Henry VIII for his arrest. So we see him fleeing from place to place, first Hamburg, then Cologne, then other places, hiding away in cold attics or cellars, anywhere he could find refuge, still laboriously translating. At Cologne his work went on well, till he was betrayed by one of his helpers who, plied with drink by spies from England, told all about his master's whereabouts. At last, going to Worms, he finished the New Testament. Long days and nights of weary study, solitary confinement, hardly seeing a soul, hardly able to venture out - just the one object: that England should have the Word of God.

At length it was ready. But how could it reach England? Protestant merchants began to smuggle it to England,at times hidden away in bales of cloth. At last hundreds were circulating in England (3s. 11d. a copy - a week's wage for a skilled labourer).

The Bishop of London and the Roman Catholic church retaliated; if any of these copies were found, they were burned. So keen were the authorities to seize them that they paid high prices for them. So a godly man gathered them together, sold them to the authorities, and then forwarded the money to Tyndale - with the result that he could produce many more Bibles, of better quality!

As well as translating the New Testament (and later parts of the Old), Tyndale wrote godly books himself. One book, on loyalty to the King, actually reached Henry VIII via Queen Anne Boleyn, always sympathetic to the cause of the Reformation. So the King, impressed by this, now sought Tyndale's aid - only to find he refused as Tyndale had no sympathy with the King's divorce proceedings, and wrote against the evil of divorce. So Henry redoubled the efforts to capture this outlaw. In this he was aided by his Chancellor, Sir Thomas More (whom the Roman Church has now canonized). More was virulent against Tyndale, calling him "that beast and hell-hound of the devil's kennel." Tyndale's only crime was to desire that his fellowcountrymen might read the precious Word of truth.

At length Tyndale settled in Antwerp in Belgium, where his work seemed to proceed well. Here he was encouraged by an apparent friend, an Englishman, Henry Philips. But Philips proved to be a traitor, and betrayed him to his enemies. He was one of the King's spies.

For a full year and 135 days Tyndale languished in the prison at Vilvorde, near Antwerp. A pathetic letter he wrote still exists, speaking of his ill-health and his desire for some warmer clothes because of the cold; also aids for his writing and translating. For, even in prison, he faithfully continued with his loved work.

As last, broken in body and in poor health, he was condemned to death, on seven grounds:

1. He believed a sinner is justified by faith alone.

2. He believed that faith in Jesus is sufficient for forgiveness and salvation.

3. He believed that conscience should not be bound by tradition.

4. He said we do not have a free will.

5. He said there was no purgatory.

6. He said neither Mary nor any of the saints pray for us.

7. He said Scripture forbids us to pray to Mary or any of the saints.

On October 6th, 1536, he was brought out by the executioner to the stake prepared for him. Having been chained to the stake, he was strangled and then burned. "A monument now marks the spot.) Before he died, one sentence could be heard: "O Lord, open the King of England's eyes." He died praying for England. He was only about 42.

Was William Tyndale's prayer answered or not? In one sense it was not, for Henry VIII lived and died an ungodly man. But the very year after Tyndale's martyrdom, the King was prevailed upon by new advisors, Thomas Cromwell and Thomas Cranmer, to give orders that a Testament in English should be placed in every parish church. It did not appear under Tyndale's name, but almost all of it was Tyndale's work.

The British Museum is housing a most interesting William Tyndale exhibition. This is in the Crawford Room and entry is free. The exhibition continues till February 19th.

Among items of interest are: an original Lollard Bible, handwritten; early copies of Foxe's Book of Martyrs; a book written by Cuthbert Tunstall; a first copy of Luther's Bible in German; Tyndale's works and fragments of his Old Testament translations. Pride of place, in the centre of the exhibition, is a 1526 William Tyndale New Testament, the only existing copy. This the British Museum has purchased for L1,000,000. (The word of God is, of course, worth far more than this! Our wonderful authorized version follows Tyndale very closely.) By the side of the 1526 New Testament is the original letter that Tyndale wrote in Vilvorde prison, the only thing we have in Tyndale's own handwriting.

The Editors

ST. MATTHEW 6 : 1-2.

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

VOICES OF THE PAST

OCTOBER 27.

"Peace, peace to him that is far off." ISAIAH lvii. 19.

FAR OFF! What means that? It means that the soul passing through that experience is separated, in its feelings, and at an infinite distance from God. Now this inward sense of being " far off " is one of the most painful feelings that a quickened soul can experience. The ungodly, who are really Far off, know nothing experimentally of distance from God, for they have never been brought spiritually near. They have felt no "cords of

love, no bands of a man" drawing them with sweet attraction to the throne of the most High; they have never sighed after the sweet manifestations of God's mercy and love; but they live gladly, and wallow wilfully in those things which separate the soul from its Maker. But those who are "afar off" in their feelings, are such as have seen something of the beauty of the Lord, and felt the evil of sin, who spiritually know Jehovah's purity and the creature's impurity, and have experienced the inward curse, bondage, and condemnation of a holy law. A spiritual discovery of his purity and holiness, making manifest their own vileness, has thrust them down from their self-righteous or presumptuous standing, and made them far off from him; not daring to draw near, nor able to approach; not feeling any spiritual access, but sighing and mourning over their evil hearts in the wilderness, in desolate places; and unable to move a single step forward, because the Lord does not draw them by his smile. A man must know something experimentally of this before he is brought near. How can we know a feeling of nearness if we have not known a feeling of distance? How can we know what it is to be brought "from the end of the earth" (Psalm lxi. 2) by the manifestation of God's mercy and love, unless we have been driven there, in our feelings, by some manifestation of the wrath of God against sin? But to see the blessed Lord, and not be able to draw near to him; to view his atoning blood at an infinite distance from us, his glorious righteousness well-nigh out of sight, and his lovely Person out of the reach of our spiritual view, so as not to enjoy any access to these glorious realities -- to know this experimentally and feelingly, is to be " far off " from God. And I believe that God's people know very much of this feeling. There is not much nearness in our day; not much dandling upon the knees, not much smiling upon the soul, not many love visits, nor love tokens communicated. There is, indeed, a great deal of talking about them; and there are abundance of people who profess to have them; but I fear they are, for the most part, cheats and counterfeits. The real people of God, the true-hearted family are, for the most part, " afar off upon the sea, " for it is a dark and cloudy day in which we live.

Elder J.C. Philpot

ST. JOHN 14 : 1-6.

LET not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

From Elder Lambert's Book, "Tried In The Furnace."

BACKSLIDING ISRAEL AND HOPE OF RESTORATION

July, 1953

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

"I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him." Hosea 14:4.

The above quotation is a stated promise of God to raise again each and every one of His people from backsliding and His reason for such a wonderful promise. May God grant us, first, to meditate upon backsliding; and then, discuss the reason for this promise; finally, study the certainty of this promise being fulfilled.

A thorough understanding of what is meant by the term backsliding is necessary before we can determine whether or not we have experienced it. If the true meaning is revealed to us from the Lord and we have experienced it, then, not until then, we will truly know what it means. Backsliding is falling from or sliding back from a higher position you once occupied. Sliding back is returning toward a lower position from which you were once raised. Have you experienced it?

Have you experienced the backsliding heart? Solomon says in Proverbs 14:14, ***"The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways ..."*** The heart being the seat of affection (or love) sometimes becomes cold and leaves the "first love" as did the Church at Ephesus. ***"Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love" (Rev. 2:4).*** Have you experienced a falling from the joy of salvation and made to pray as David, ***"Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation" (Psalms 51:12).*** Have you ever fallen from the sweet enjoyment of that precious faith in Christ to such an extent that you are finally made to cry, ***"Help thou mine unbelief"? (Mark 9:24).*** Do you ever question and pray as Cowper expresses in the hymn we sometimes sing:

Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I saw the Lord?
Where is the soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus and His Word?

What peaceful hours I then enjoyed!
How sweet their memory still!
But now I find an aching void
The world can never fill.

Return, O holy Dove, return,
Sweet messenger of rest;
I hate the sins that cause my mourn,
And so disturb my breast.

We are made to realize an aching vacancy caused by the absence of the Holy Spirit that once so wonderfully calmed our troubled breast. Sometimes we cherish the memories of the soul-stirring experiences we once had and long for their return. We fall into many temptations and wonder if God has forgotten to be gracious. We get so cold and lifeless in our feelings that when we attend church, converse, and sing with the brethren we are convinced that our actions are mere formality and the very essence of hypocrisy! I am persuaded that each and

every one of God's little children many times experience this backsliding of heart when the brethren do not see anything amiss in their conduct. This backsliding in heart is the experiences within the child of God that affects his conscience and inner thinking that sometimes results in great turmoil within, that is not necessarily made manifest at all times in conduct. Inward backsliding results in great grief to the person experiencing it while backsliding in conduct affects others. We now want to consider backsliding in conduct.

When the walk and conversation of a child of God is contrary to that which is becoming to His saints, backsliding in conduct is experienced. Sometimes our conduct grieves the brethren and causes them to lose confidence in our sincerity and profession. Sometimes our conduct is so obviously ungraceful that it "gives occasion for the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme." Read the 11th and 12th chapters of 2 Samuel which give an account of David's disgraceful conduct, Nathan's conversation with David, and David's confession; and you note an outstanding example of backsliding in conduct. You will also see why this terrible sin haunted David all through his life even though he repented and was given the promise that he would not die. Read the 22nd chapter of St. Luke and you will find that Peter was delivered to Satan for a sifting and that Peter denied three times that he had any knowledge of Jesus even though Peter had affirmed that he would follow Jesus into prison and death. One of the writers said that he cursed and swore. Peter fell from the remembrance of his oath to Jesus and what Jesus had told him he (Peter) would do. This outward unbecoming conduct of Peter proved to him his utter inability of himself to stand even though he had once been enabled to stand. Past grace does not suffice for the present or future. When God withholds His grace (unmerited divine favor) from us we are as certain to fall as Peter and David did. When we are shown that we are in this fallen state it causes us to do as Peter, "weep bitterly," and to greatly yearn and pray for the lifting up that only the unmerited divine favor of God can perform!

We stumble and fall so often that we are made to pray to God to give us grace, give us grace! Thanks be to God that "we have access by faith into this grace, wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." ***"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10:12).*** Paul gave the experiences in the travel of the Israelites in the 10th chapter of 1st Corinthians to warn us that even though we be baptized into Jesus Christ and into His death; have eaten of the spiritual meat and have drunk of the spiritual drink; that we may murmur, commit fornication, tempt Christ, be an idolater: thus, not be well pleasing unto God" (1 Cor. 10:5). All this happened to Israel for examples or types and are written in the Scriptures for our admonition (1 Cor. 10:11).

Paul exhorted the brethren to flee from these ungodly things. John was ordered of the Lord to write to the seven churches of Asia pointing out to each church its characteristics -

some of which were not very becoming-exhorting them to repent or turn from their heretical departings from doctrine and practice. God-called, God-qualified, God-sent, and God-used ministers of this age exhort and admonish brethren and churches to turn from these unscriptural doctrines and practices which are of men and to implore God's grace to lift them by His power from the fallen state which they are in.

The spirit of jealousy prompts brethren and ministers to stir up strife and confusion and falsely accuse brethren. Self-conceit prompts some to stubbornly contend for their petty opinions to the extent of causing divisions. Ministers and members of the church seeking praise of men and self-exaltation design and scheme, using the corrupt tactics of politics, to set themselves on coveted high places to the destruction of the peace in the church and churches. Bars of fellowship are raised against brethren and churches to execute the spirit of vengeance under the false cloak of standing for *"right order and doctrine."* These things ought not to be! May God fulfill His promise to heal our backsliding!

May God enable us to see our many faults, confess them to our brethren and repent. May we seek to unite instead of divide; acknowledge our wrongs instead of justifying ourselves for unbecoming actions; forgive our brethren instead of taking vengeance; esteem them instead of considering them less than we; do good unto them instead of evil; yet, love them instead of hating. It must be revealed unto us that we are at fault before we can desire to be rid of it. It must be proved to us through sad experience that we cannot rid ourselves from these ungodly actions before we can sincerely pray to God for deliverance. If we are caused by revelation and experience to earnestly and fervently pray to God for this deliverance, He hears our cry and will fulfill his promise by healing our backsliding.

His promise to hear our backsliding is positive and sure. He says, *"I will [not, I may or I can] heal their backsliding."* It is God that does it and His people are made to know it by revelation and experience. It is because of God's great love for us and that freely (without merit) given that we are lifted up by His grace from these backslidden positions.

We do not deserve it, but He raises us up and sets us on high. We deserve to be cast down to never rise again but because of His great love, God extends His mercy toward us, lifting us up many times so that we do not fall finally away. Have your thoughts been so sinful and your actions so ungodly that you felt it would be unjust for God to forgive you? Notwithstanding this just banishment you deserved, God's anger was turned from you and you again experienced God's mercy and grace. Why? *"For mine anger is turned away from him."*

God's anger was appeased. His anger was not withdrawn without due punishment. This punishment was turned from God's people upon His only begotten Son, Christ Jesus. He bore the punishment for our sins, past, present and future, that we might enjoy His mercy. If Christ was punished on account of our many sins is it a great thing that

we should be scourged, chastened, and rebuked by Him in order that we be corrected, brought into the right path, and learn obedience by the things we suffer? His promise is to do an effectual work of it. It is because of God's love for us that we are chastened by the rod of correction. It is because of His wonderful love that we are forgiven for our many sins. If God forgave us so much is it a great thing for us to forgive those who trespass against us? Our sins are so great that when we are enabled to behold our true position regarding holiness, the little offenses of our brethren sink into insignificance and unimportance. We are then in the position to forgive our brethren. We can pray from the heart, *"Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."* When it has been revealed unto us that God is so merciful to us, then we are merciful unto those with whom we come to contact. When the love of God dwells in our hearts it causes us to have love one for the other and to manifest it in our actions and conversation. These graceful experiences quoted above show that He fulfills His promise to heal our backsliding.

Time will not permit us dwelling longer upon this subject in our written meditations, and it is needless to say that volumes of our thoughts while writing, are unexpressed because of the infirmity of not being able to write as fast as thoughts came into the mind. We trust, however, that God will bless you to glean some edification and comfort from the words that are written. May He enable us to see our own faults instead of the petty faults of our brethren that we may be meek, humble, and lovely, in our walk and conversation. May He heal our backsliding that we may be raised up closer unto Him and to each other. May we be enabled to repent - individuals and churches - that there might be uniting instead of dividing.

Elder E.J. Lambert

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church, Carroll County, Virginia. A presbytery met May 20, 1995 at 10 o'clock A.M. for the examination of Brethren Mark Terry and Tony Horton and if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgement ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Raymond Goad. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present: Elders Hale Terry, Carl Terry, Leonard Brammer, Junior Conner, W.T. Conner, Lane Carter, Larry Hollands-worth, Willard Cox, Clarence Stone, and Raymond Goad.

All Deacons were asked to sit together. 27 present.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Hale Terry as modera-

tor and Deacon W.G. Parsons as clerk. Elders Lane Carter and Junior Conner were chosen to lead in the examination of the candidates. Deacon Alan Terry having been duly appointed by Bell Spur Church delivered the candidates to the presbytery.

Examination was made by Elders Lane Carter, Junior Conner and others using scriptural reference 1st Timothy, Chap. 3, v 1-13.

The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and the answers given by the candidates administered the laying on of hands with the ordination prayer being delivered by Elder Leonard Brammer. The charge was delivered to candidate Mark Terry by Elders Carl Terry and Raymond Goad, and to candidate Tony Horton by Elders Larry Hollandsworth and Hale Terry using scriptural reference the written word of God.

The moderator asked Bell Spur Church if they were satisfied with the work of the presbytery which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate or ordination was presented to Brethren Mark Terry and Tony Horton, and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The Brethren were delivered back to the Church, ordained Deacons of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Bell Spur. The minutes consisting the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Clarence Stone.

Wm. Hale Terry, Moderator
W.G. Parsons, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Association will convene, The Lord willing, with Canaan Church but the meeting location will be at Weatherford Church located at the intersection of highways 760 and 763 about 5 miles from Gretna, Va. The time will be Saturday July 8th and Sunday July 9th. We invite our correspondents and visitors to this meeting.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 1995

Whitney Mobley, NC	$10.00
David N. Bailey, WV	2.00
Eld. Jim Poole, MD	2.00
Eld. T.J. McMarrain, GA	2.00
Harold T. Clayton, NC	2.00
Mrs. Charles P. Hayes, AL	5.00
Mrs. J.D. Neely, AR	2.00
Mrs. Willie M. Ratliff, VA	5.00
John F. Simpson, FL	7.00
Ercy Redman, AL	8.00
Mrs. Marjorie Cook, TN In memory Mrs. Mamie Cook	7.00
Mrs. Gayle Phillips, AL	20.00
Norman Jenkins, NC	2.00
Mrs. Ora Adam, VA	2.00
Mrs. Clara Jones, VA	1.00
Mrs. Zelma DeLancey, NC	2.00
Eld. J.D. Hamrick, TX	2.00

OBITUARIES

RALPH LUCAS

In obedience to the request of the Valley View Church members, I shall, God willing, attempt to write an obituary in memory of our precious, beloved Brother Ralph Lucas. Be in resolved that We, the Valley View Primitive Baptist Church at Riner, Virginia wish to bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, who on July 20, 1994 called from our midst our beloved and devoted member - Brother Ralph Lucas.

Brother Ralph was born on December 27, 1908, the second son to Mr. Mont J. Lucas and wife Vergie Lester Lucas, making his stay on earth 83 years 7 months. He was a life long farmer of Montgomery County.

Brother Ralph joined Valley View Church together with his dear, loving and devoted wife of 62 years, Sister Fannie Sue Lucas. They were baptized the third Sunday in September, 1960 by Elder Odell Thompson in the Little River.

Brother Ralph was a loyal, faithful member, always ready and willing to give his service to the needy and to the upkeep of the Church property.

His funeral was conducted by our pastor, Elder Raymond Goad and Elder Willard Cox, with a host of relatives and friends to mourn his passing.

Our prayers, sympathy and love we extend to Sister Fannie Sue. May she be given to look to the Lord for comfort and guidance.

May God reconcile us to His Holy and Righteous will and to realize our heartfelt loss is his eternal gain.

Humbly submitted by his sister,
Irene L. Thompson

DANIEL 2 : 19-20.

Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his:

KATHLEEN GRAHAM MARTIN

It is with a sad heart I will try with God's help to write the obituary of our precious Sister Kathleen Graham Martin. She was born on August 22, 1910 and departed this life on December 18, 1994, the daughter of William M. Graham (a deacon at Valley View) and Maude Akers Graham. She was married to Samuel W. Martin in 1927 who died in 1956.

She united with Valley View Church in September 1941 and served faithfully as their clerk for over 26 years. She was truly a mother in Israel and a virtuous woman. She loved her Church and as long as she was able she loved to have the Brothers and Sisters in her

home as well as visit other churches. Her face would light up when they came to see her up until the very end.

She was blessed with a fine family that were always seeing to her every need, encouraging her with her art and taking her on trips. They made it possible for her to stay at home and did everything that human hands could do.

She is survived by two daughters and a son-in-law: Betty Hanberry, Christianburg and Barbara and Mark Lloyd, Christianburg; a son and daughter-in-law: Phillip and Rhonda Martin, Florida; six grandchildren, four great-grandchildren; one sister: Ruth Heavener, Blacksburg; and one brother: William (Junior) Graham, Christiansburg. May the Lord bless her loved ones to feel their loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted by her Pastor Elder Raymond Goad. She was laid to rest in Sunset Cemetery.

Written by request of Valley View Church by one who loved and misses her.

Lena Duncan, Clerk
Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator

BENJAMIN P. STANALAND

Brother Benjamin P. Stanaland was born November 15, 1900 near Fellowship Church. He spent his life near where he was born. He was carried to fellowship church as an infant and grew to manhood with a love and respect for the church. He joined fellowship church in his early years and was ordained a Deacon more than fifty years ago. His passing from this life on December 31, 1994 leaves the Mt. Enon Association without a deacon.

In life he was a successful farmer and citrus grower. A friend and neighbor to his community. While a young man he married Juaneta Holland who preceeded him in death, about 10 years ago.

He is survived by five daughters, Vila Clark, Dean Paterson and Jean Thomas of Lithia, Fl. Adelle Hagadorn and Johnie Ash of Riverview, Fl. Two Sons; Stuart of U.S.A.F. and Ben of Lehigh Acres, Fl. Two Brothers; Tommy of Wimauma, Fl. Worth of Thonotosassa, Fl. Three Sisters; Magdalene Holland of Ft. Meade, Fl. Viola Kennard of Denham Springs, La., and Daphne Curlee of Larkspur Co. 25 grandchildren; 33 great grandchildren; and 4 great-great grandchildren.

He was laid to rest under a beautiful floral offering in fellowship cemetery after services by Elder J.Y. McCormick. Elder Fred B. Neikirk on January 4, 1995.

Many times after preaching, with a smile on his face, he would say (well done). We can conclude that his life was well done, yet with a severe loss. We feel our loss is his eternal gain. Done by order of Fellowship Church with a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times.

J.Y. McCormick

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SONG

With joy we meditate the grace
Of our High Priest above;
His heart is made of tenderness;
His bowels melt with love.

Touched with a sympathy within,
He knows our feeble frame;
He knows what sore temptations mean,
For he has felt the same.

But spotless, innocent, and pure,
The great Redeemer stood,
While Satan's fiery darts he bore,
And did resist to blood.

He, in the days of feeble flesh,
Poured out his cries and tears,
And, in his measure, feels afresh
What every member bears.

He'll never quench the smoking flax,
But raise it to a flame;
The bruised reed he never breaks,
Nor scorns the meanest name.

Then let our humble faith address
His mercy and his power;
We shall obtain delivering grace,
In the distressing hour.

Watts

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EDITORIAL

RESURRECTION

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

I have never spoken from the pulpit nor written upon the resurrection as a text, and I hesitate to do so now, for I am aware there is much controversy concerning it; yet it has been upon my mind for some time to express my views concerning it for the consideration of all who may read them. At this moment I do not know what I may write, but whatever I may write is not intended for controversy, but only to set forth what I believe the Scriptures teach. I hope that what I believe has been taught of the Holy Spirit: if not, then I am not a son of God, for it is written in the prophets, ***"And they shall be all taught of God."*** (John 6:45). If I be a son of God, which is my hope, then am I led by the Spirit of God. (Rom.8:14).

Although a man may never use the resurrection as a text to preach, if he preaches the gospel of Jesus Christ he must of necessity preach the resurrection, for, ***"But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain."*** (1 Cor 15:13-14). I do not believe that any one who has been born again of the Holy Spirit will deny the resurrection of Christ, yet some have doubts about the resurrection of the bodies of his children, the ones who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and whom he came into the world to save. This is because of men like Hymenaeus and Philetus, "who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some." (2 Tim.2:18). In 1 Tim. 4:1 we read, ***"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils."*** Are we not now in the latter times?

There are those who teach that it is not the body that is raised, but something within the body, as the soul or spirit. Is there something put into the

grave other than the body? In 1 Cor 15:42-44 we read, ***"So also is the resurrection of the dead. IT is sown in corruption; IT is raised in incorruption: IT is sown in dishonour; IT is raised in glory: IT is sown in weakness; IT is raised in power: IT is sown a NATURAL BODY; IT is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."*** The IT that is sown is the same IT that is raised. If we deny this, we deny what the Scriptures say. But IT must first be changed. In verses 51 thru 56 we read, ***"Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep (die) but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall all be changed. For this corruptible (those who are still alive as well as those who sleep in the grave) must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."*** If our body does not come forth from the grave, then the victory would belong to the grave. A grave does not necessarily mean a hole in the ground. Jesus was laid in a new tomb hewn out of a rock, and we know that many bodies are in the depths of the sea and many are incinerated and their ashes scattered in the winds. In Rev. 13 we read, ***"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them."*** God made man from the dust of the ground and he told Adam, "for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Does it seem incredible to any that the Lord who made us should gather us together again?

The resurrection is not of the Saints only, but of all men. Jesus said, ***"for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."*** I will not now show the difference between the "good" and the "evil" except to say that if one does good it is God that works in him to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Phil.2:13). Paul said, ***"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."*** (Rom.7:18). Paul is here speaking of his fleshly body, and in the 21st verse he says, ***"I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me."*** And in verses 24 & 25, ***"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I***

thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." This is a body of death (not a dead body) in which the children of God dwell when they have been born again of the Holy Spirit. John tells us, ***"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."*** (1 John 3:9). These are the only ones who shall ever do good. for, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." Paul speaks of this as a mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but is now made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. (Col.1:26-27). In Gal.2:28 he says, ***"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God. who loved me, and gave himself for me."*** Our natural body shall die, but if Christ dwelleth within us we have a life that shall never die. This is eternal life: life that was given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. After Lazarus died Jesus came to the place where he was buried. Martha, Lazarus` sister, met Jesus and said, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. Jesus said, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha said, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said, ***"I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believeth thou this?"*** Lazarus had been dead four days when Jesus raised him up again to natural life. If the resurrection is at the time of our corporeal death, as some believe and teach, then the body of Lazarus would not have been there. There are some who believe that when Jesus raised up Lazarus he was showing forth the resurrection of that final day when he shall return again without sin unto salvation . I do not understand this to be what Jesus is showing, for Lazarus was raised to natural life again, and he must again die a natural death. Lazarus was, as all men are, born dead in trespasses and sins; just as David described us, "Behold I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Ps.51:5). I believe that Lazarus was at that time raised up out of that dead state in which he was born. When Jesus said, "Lazarus. come forth," "he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go." (John 11:43-45). To me the graveclothes represents the old covenant laws from which he was released, and the napkin was removed that he might see the new covenant of grace. In John 5:24-25 we read, ***"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my***

word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily I say unto you. The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." Lazarus heard the Son of God and came forth to live: he passed from death unto life. That life is eternal and shall never die, though our earthly body must die unless we are here when Jesus shall return again. That life in not made manifest unto the sons of God until they are born again of the Holy Spirit. For some this birth comes early and some at the last hour. To John the Baptist it came while he was yet in his mother`s womb, but to the thief on the cross beside Jesus it was at the last hour.

There were others who were raised from the dead by Jesus while he was here on earth, and shows forth his power to quicken whom he will. In John 5:21-23 we read, ***"For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honour the Son."*** This quickening is in our earthly existence only, for who would need quickening to honour the Son if he were already in the realms of heaven above? If what Jesus said in verses 24 ***& 25 means the resurrection of our body to heaven and immortal glory there would have been no need for*** verses 28-29, "for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth***." Let us notice that he did not say, "and now is," for he had not yet been resurrected himself, and he is the first resurrection. We read Col.1:18, ***"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."*** There must none be raised before him, for he must have the preeminence in all things. Consider the ones who lived and died before the death and resurrection of Jesus; were they then in heaven or are they asleep in Christ, waiting for the resurrection? Consider Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the old prophets. Consider David: Peter tells us that David is dead and buried, and that he is not ascended into the heavens. (See Acts 2:29-34). David himself said, ***"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness."*** After the resurrection of Jesus, many graves were opened and many bodies of the saints came out and appeared in the holy city. I believe this was to show that our bodies will be raised. Those bodies had not been changed, as they shall be in the final resurrection, that they might be seen with natural eyes. This should strengthen our hope that we shall also be raised in that day. We read Matt. 27:52-53, ***"And the graves were opened; and many of the bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his***

resurrection, and went into the holy city and appeared unto many." Regardless of how long one must sleep in Christ awaiting the resurrection, it will be only as a moment, for one who sleeps, even in natural sleep, there is no awareness of the passage of time.

The Scriptures tell us that Christ is the head of the body, the church (Col.1:18), and that we, his children, are the body of Christ, and members in particular. (I Cor.12:27). When Christ the head died, did not his body also die? ***"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."*** (Rom.6:4-5). My understanding is, that being his body. we had a part in his death, burial and resurrection. Christ is the resurrection and the life, and if we have a part in him we are blessed and holy. ***"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power."*** (Rev.20:6). This death is not the death of our mortal body, but the death of those whose names are not found written in the book of life. They will be cast into the lake of fire with death and hell. This is the second death. (Rev. chapter 20).

"As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." Brethren, this is my hope and yours. I have only touched on a few of the many scriptures concerning the resurrection, but if God is in the matter it is enough for this time. I will close by quoting 1 Thes.4:15-18. ***"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this I say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (go before) them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words."***

These words are very comforting to me. Are they comforting to you also? I surely hope so.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

CORINTHIANS 3: 1-2.

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

VOICES OF THE PAST

MATTHEW 8:11, 12.

"And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east, and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Agreeable to the request of our correspondent, William Dine, of Ohio, we present to our readers such views as we have on the passage proposed above. After our Lord had delivered to his disciples what is commonly called his sermon on the mount, and had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. The miracles which wrought had produced much excitement among the people, insomuch that he had taken occasion to retire from the crowd and to instruct his disciples alone in the discourse, the record of which occupies the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of this evangelist. But the eager multitudes were ready to crowd around him again as soon as he returned from his retirement. The multitudes appear to have been composed of a variety of classes of the community, and among them the comparatively small band of his disciples, others desiring to be healed of their infirmities and some undoubtedly to gratify their curiosity. Some of the vast assemblage were Jews, some Samaritans and some Gentiles, Scribes, and Pharisees, publicans, and sinners. Among the rest a centurion, or commander of a small party of Roman soldiers, the captain of one hundred men; this man seemed deeply impressed with a sense of his own unworthiness to receive so distinguished a guest under his roof, besought him on behalf of his servant who was grievously tormented with palsy, that he would speak the word only and he was perfectly confident that his servant would be healed. At this display of unexampled faith and that, too, in an officer in the Roman army, a poor Gentile sinner, our Lord said that he had not found such faith; no, not in Israel. And then he added the words which are placed at the head of this article.

"And I say unto you." The sayings which he uttered were of the very highest authority; their truth and power were inferrable from the fact that they proceeded from his unerring lips. They were addressed to the great multitudes which followed him, and were full of comfortable instruction to the poor Gentiles who had hitherto been unaccustomed to receive such intimations that God had a people among them which should be called by his grace and made meet to be partakers with the children of light. This instance of a Gentile sinner having faith in Christ should not stand solitary and alone upon the future records of the grace of God abounding to the chief of sinners. "And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west." This declaration though new to the astonished multi-

tudes was well known to him, when as yet there were no depths, and before the worlds were made. It was embraced in the settlements of eternity not only that many should come from the east and the west, but also that the "north should give up, and the south should not keep back His sons should come from far, and his daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by his name; for I have created him; for my glory I have formed him. Yea, I have made him, saith the Lord." Isa. xliii. 5-7. Again, chapter xl. 3, "And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Again in Isa. xli. 9, "And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people; all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed." Compare these predictions of Isaiah with the words of Christ in John vi. 37. "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me, and he that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." And also John x. 16, "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd." Our text assures us that many shall come, and John who saw them in his vision says that no man can number them, and this assurance is sufficient for the faith of God's elect, the promise embraces, "every one that is called by my name." Every such one God has created for his glory, and Christ has promised that he will raise them up at the last day. The promise is therefore to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call .

"And shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." The kingdom of heaven, though prepared for the heirs of glory as an inheritance before the foundation of the world, was not seen descending from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride for her husband, until in the order of time Christ had redeemed the subjects of it from under the law, and freely justified them through the redemption which is in him. When he had done and suffered all the demands of law and justice on their behalf, and had risen from the dead for their justification, he ascended up on high, and in that exhalation he told his disciples that he went to receive the kingdom. His Father had appointed him a kingdom, and he had appointed unto them in like manner; and it was the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom to his little flock. This is the kingdom which David said the God of heaven should set up, that should never be destroyed, and it is frequently in the New Testament called the kingdom of heaven. Christ says that it is not of this world; John says it came from God out of heaven, and Jesus says it was prepared for them who are on his right hand from the foundation of the world. A more particular description in agreement with our text is given in Hebrews xii. 18-29. In this the inspired writer says to those who have come and still are coming to sit down in it, "For ye are not come to the mount that might be touched, and

that burned with fire, unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more," etc. showing that the kingdom of Heaven, the gospel church, is not set up under the Levitical priesthood, nor under the Sinai covenant, for under that dispensation all was toil and labor, no rest, no sitting down. but in the setting up of the gospel kingdom Moses the servant is dead, Jordan is passed, and Canaan is entered. Sinai's thunders are hushed, the voice of words which terrified the carnal Israelites are no more spoken, but these who have "come from the east and the west are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." etc. This mount Sion, this heavenly Jerusalem, this city of the living God, is the kingdom of heaven, and the kingdom into which all the redeemed of the Lord out of every nation, kindred, language, and tongue are brought, when translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. And hither they are brought not to terrors and toils of the law, but to the rest and liberty of the gospel of Christ; and here they sit down in the kingdom of heaven, though they were strangers and foreigners, they are made nigh by the blood of Christ. They are born of the spirit, and by that birth qualified for spiritual enjoyments. Except a man be born again he cannot see this kingdom; except he be born of the water and of the spirit he cannot enter into it. Christ is himself the door, by him they enter, and he gives to them eternal life, and they shall never perish; the kingdom into which they have come is an everlasting kingdom, and a dominion that can never end. They are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of faith. Their fellow-citizens and associates in this heavenly Jerusalem are an innumerable company of angels, in general assembly convened, including all the church of the First Born which are written in heaven, the spirits of just men made perfect are included in this general assembly, consequently Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob are there, and with them are poor Gentile sinners, redeemed from sin and wrath, by the blood of Christ and called by grace, renewed by the spirit, and taught of God, sit down. The patriarchs and prophets and all the Old Testament saints are equally with those of the present dispensation, interested savingly in Jesus the Mediator of the New Testament, and in the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. Hence they all sit down together in this kingdom of Heaven, as the spiritual and loyal subjects of the king whom God has set upon his holy hill Zion. Here they receive a kingdom which cannot be moved, in which:

"The saints on earth, and all the dead

But one communion make;
All join in Christ, their living Head,
And of his grace partake."

Christ as the Mediator has but one kingdom they are informed of, and that kingdom embraces all which are written in heaven. The spirits of many of the justified family of God are now above, some of them are still upon these low grounds of sorrow and affliction; and some, we hope, are yet to come from the east and west until every one that is called by his name, and created for his glory take their seats with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Nor can these seats be deranged. The sons of Zebedee could not be accommodated according to the desire of their fond mother; for the seats were already appropriated, and shall be given to those for whom they were prepared by the Father. So perfect and complete are the provisions of grace and mercy, in the preparation of the kingdom and destination of its subjects that no change can improve it. No other disposition of the seats will ever be made, for God who had designated the occupant of each is of one mind, and changeth not. His plans cannot be improved, for they are established in infinite wisdom and goodness.

But in the consummation of all this gracious purpose, "the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness." By the children of the kingdom which shall be cast out we understand the fleshly descendants of these holy patriarchs, the Old covenant was to give place to the new. The Old Jerusalem was to be destroyed and her subjects scattered abroad in outer darkness, their temple prostated, their rites and peculiar institutions abolished, and the handwriting thereof blotted out. This had long been predicted, and the execution of the predictions was near at hand when Jesus made the declaration in our text. Their organization as a kingdom or commonwealth was but a limited one, and by its original limitation was to continue only until the Shiloh should come, and at his advent the gatherings of his people should be unto him. He should gather his sheep from all the regions of Judea, and them also which were not of that fold, he also must gather, and the carnal Israelites should be driven into outer of heathenish darkness utterly dispossessed of all their former privileges, in darkness and blindness, to remain until the fullness of the Gentiles shall be gathered in.

"There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." In the execution of the judgments of God upon them, they would weep; but not with that penitential grief which results from godly sorrow for their sins, but that sorrow which is of the world, which worketh death, and which is connected with gnashing with their teeth. While smarting in keen anguish under the mighty hand of their avenging God, they would resent his righteous judgments and blaspheme his holy name. This has been clearly exemplified in their rejection and crucifixion of Christ, and in their bitter persecution against the apostles and early saints; and their

settled opposition to the cause of christianity down to the present day.

Perhaps we have written enough to express to our friend, Dine, and to our readers in general, what are our views of the text. If our views were better, more lucid, and clear, he and they should be just as welcome to them. They are such, however, as we have, and we only ask that they may be read carefully and prayerfully, tried by the unerring standard, and received only so far as we have been enabled to present them in harmony with the word and spirit of truth and righteousness.

Middletown, N.Y., May 1, 1854

Elder Gilbert Beebe

VOICES OF THE PAST

LIFE AND EXPERIENCE OF ELDER LEWIS EDWARDS of the Primitive Baptist Church of Sand Lick, Dickenson Co., Va.

August 1st, 1893

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Old Baptist:

Faith and Order: I have been impressed in mind for a long time to leave for you and my dear children a short history of my life, and the many sins I have passed through since I have been a pilgrim through this unfriendly world, from the year 1812 to 1893. I, Lewis Edwards, was born in Franklin County, Va., March 10, 1812. My parents were Brice and Jane Edwards. I was raised by pious parents, they taught me to be strictly honest and never to use profane language, and I can say now I never swore an oath in my life. My father moved to Patrick County in my 15th year, and though I was called a pious youth, I was a sinner, and sin was sweet to the flesh. I loved the company of young people and their sinful ways until I was about 16 or 17 years old, when my mind began to be troubled about my condition. I saw I was a sinner and not ready to die and the Bible said the wicked should be turned into hell. I became uneasy, for I knew I was a sinner. I became so uneasy and could see no rest; I thought I must try to pray; I did not want anyone to know that I was trying to pray. At last I went off in a lonesome dark hollow where I thought no one would see me. There the devil tried to shame me out of it; he said I was too young to begin now; I would be slighted by all my comrades; I might have yet a great deal of pleasure with them, and then there'll be time enough when I was much older. But I can say bless the Lord, He is above the devil.

I did not know how soon I might be called to die, and then I would be forever gone to that awful place, forever there to dwell. At last I ventured to get on my knees; I didn't know what to say, I could only say, Lord have mercy on me, a poor wretched sinner, I still went to myself and tried to pray, and I never got entirely shut of my troubles until the Lord set me free, though it sometimes wore off and I did

wrong. I would make promises to try to do better, and sometimes I would fail, then I would feel dreadful. I went on in that way trying to do something good in the sight of God and failing until I lost all confidence in myself. The Lord spared me until I was 20 years old, and in my 21st year I was married to Nancy Howell, in Floyd County, Va., daughter of Benjamin Howell. After I was married I think it was the blessed will of the Lord to make my condition plain to me in a dream, it was so great I never can forget it.

I dreamed I was going to school with all of my playmates, we were all assembled at the school house, and I saw our teacher, he was an uncommonly large black man. It seemed I was badly dissatisfied with the teacher, and some of the scholars told the teacher I was going to run away and leave him. I thought he said if I did he would bring me back and burn me in hell fire. I started to run with all my power, for I expected he would follow me, and I awoke running. When I awoke none but the Lord can tell my feelings, the dream was made so plain to me. My playmates and myself had been going to school to the devil; he was our teacher. My brethren, I then saw my condition, but feared I had seen it too late. I intended to pray as long as the Lord would spare me, I felt like there was no chance for me. I wandered from place to place in secret places, feeling lost and undone forever until at last I dreamed another dream with a circumstance in connection with the other dream.

I dreamed I was standing at the door of torment and the keeper was standing at the door, one said to the keeper, "let us see the souls of some that's gone to torment," he opened the door wide and brought out three set them on the ground, and they burned continually with a blue blaze like brimstone. I thought he said they must go back; I thought the poor creatures crawled back in a place which looked melting hot, and they held up their heads blowing; it looked like their condition was dreadful indeed, beyond expression.

I then turned and walked away; I seemed to have a load on my back, and in very bad clothing; I was going straight up to a fine house where sat Col. Jacob Helem at an upper door of his house. I thought I looked mighty low going up to such a fine gentleman, but I thought it was made known to me that he would, in a short time, have to die and go to that dreadful place I had just passed. In a short time, when working in my field, a man passed by me and said, "Col. Helem is dead." My dear brethren, it was dreadful to me, I never will be able to tell my feelings. I then had no hope, my trouble, it seemed, was more than I could bear. I wandered through the wild woods with my Bible in my hands crying, Lord have mercy on me, a poor sinner, and save me ere I am gone. I had tried all my good works and all had done no good; I saw I was gone unless blessed Jesus was pleased to help me. I thought I was in a strange way that no man ever was in before; I did not think the Lord ever would have

mercy on such a wretch as I was. I cried, Lord, if I must go to torment, let me go a beggar. In that dreadful condition I went to meeting to see my sister Sarah Arrington baptized. We met at the place and after preaching the church was called together, they began to sing, and their song I never can forget, I was sitting off like a poor criminal, their song was:

"What a mercy is this, what a heaven of bliss,
How unspeakably favored am I,
Gathered into the fold with believers enrolled,
With believers to live and to die."

My feelings I never can tell, it did seem my very soul hungered within me. I would have given all the world if it had been mine, to have had a seat with the true church. I saw my sister baptized, we then started home, it looked like my sister and I were parted; it was a dreadful day with me; we went to my father's and stayed all night, in the morning we started home. We had to go along a spur of the Blue Ridge, called Witt's spur, just before we got to the top, my mind was off of my condition; when I got to the top my mind returned to my condition and was entirely easy, the next thought was, what is the cause? It seemed like something answered in feelings; "your sins are forgiven." My mind answered it can't be possible, such a wretch as I am can have such good news to tell. In a moment my soul was running over with joy; I felt like all my trouble was gone and I had awoke, in a new world, everything looked new; the trees and the mountains looked new; and I felt new. It was the best day I had ever seen. I had been so lost, and had thought there was no mercy for me, then to be filled with the love of God. Oh, my brethren, I want you to help me praise the Lord for what he has done for me. I want to praise him while I live. I thought I was free from trouble, free from pain of all kind. I could not see what could trouble me, but alas was badly mistaken. I have found it a world of trouble. I now wanted to go home to my father's house and tell them what great things the Lord had done for me. I went to Jack's Creek church, was received; there was an arm of Jack's Creek church given off, called Green Hill, in Patrick County, Va., and there I was baptized by old brother John Conner, there was a great rivival at Green Hill, and from three to twenty persons were baptized in one day. I was one of the deacons chosen when the church was fully organized. I was delighted with the church and had a great feeling for mourners. I felt like I ought to tell them what a Saviour I had found, and exhort them to look to God for he is all in all. After awhile I began to think seriously about what I was doing, and the greatness of the cause, and whether I was called or not of the Lord. I did not think the Lord would call a man that could not preach, and I had but little learning and hardly common sense, and I began to be badly alarmed, I thought I had dishonored the good cause of my blessed Lord, and I did not think I ever could live in that country where I had so dishonored the cause of my Lord. So I thought I would

leave my native country and go among strangers and it should never be known that I had ever tried to speak in public, but when I got to Russell county, the weight of preaching was worse than in my own country. Often in my mind I was preaching, then I would shake my head and say in mind, "I never will try any more, I have once done wrong and left my old country to get shut of the great reproach, and I never will try it again." My troubles got worse and I would leave home and wander in Clinch mountain alone, trying to pray to the Lord to show me what was the matter. At last one of my children, about three years old, having clear blue eyes, was suddenly blind. It greatly alarmed me, I thought my child was entirely ruined. I did not know what to do, it came to my mind to go and pray to the Lord, and if He had anything for me to do, He would make it known by restoring my child's eyes. In a very short time it was all right, though yet I could not believe such a being as I, would be called. I went in trouble day after day. At last my life of religion seemed to be taken away and I was left in a miserable condition. I felt like my peace on earth was gone. In that condition I promised the Lord if He was pleased to set me free once more, I would try, let the case be as it may. So I went to meeting and went home with brother Shadrick Williams, and my trouble was so great I could not stay with him in the house. I wandered from place to place by myself. At last on Sunday morning, suddenly, as I walked alone, these words came on my mind with such power it nearly took the use of my limbs. The words were: "The day is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and those that hear shall live." Now the request is granted, what will you do? Now came my trial. Will you do what you promised, or lie to God? Lord have mercy on me. Lord, I am willing if I knew I was called, but I can't believe; I fear I shall dishonor thy cause. My troubles were so bad I told a brother my feelings. He says: "Appoint a meeting at my house next Sunday." I did so, and that same passage of Scripture was my text, it was with power all the week. On the next Saturday I started to my meeting. Dear brethren, that was one of the times I never can forget. My trouble, none but God knew, I was greatly afraid I was going to bring a reproach on the good cause of my blessed Lord. I tried to pray to the Lord if I was not called of God, I might be dumb, not able to speak the next day, so I could go home in peace and then I would know I was not called, if the Lord was pleased to answer my prayer in that way. But it was not to be. My tongue seemed to be soon in a different way to what it ever was in life. It was, I hope, God's will to show me on that day I had to go. I was made willing to try on that day. I promised the Lord if he would be with me I would try as long as the Lord let me live. So I have been trying in my awkward manner ever since. But my beloved brethren I often think if I have a gift from God I am one of the least and not hardly worthy of the name of a preacher.

Then in a short time I bought land in Dickenson County, Va., it was then Russell County. In a short time moved to my land near the Sand Lick Church. The church was without a pastor, and the church called no one to be their moderator, so I could not refuse and in a short time they sent for a Presbytery to ordain me and brother Morgan F. Lipps and brother Shadrick Williams ordained me, so by the request of the church I took the care of the Sand Lick Church. In a short time the Union Church in Buchanan County, called on me and I took the care of the Union Church and then the Mount Pleasant Church was constituted and I was chosen their first pastor. Then Johnson's Bottom Church was constituted and I was chosen their moderator. Then the Cedar Grove Church in Pike County, Kentucky, called on me and I took the care of the Cedar Grove Church. Part of my time there was a considerable number of members received and baptized at all the five churches named.

Then the Union Association was constituted and I was chosen their first moderator. Brethren I never could tell why it was that I was chosen either by the churches or the Associations, when it did look to me that I was the last and the least of all. It did seem to me nearly any of my brother preachers had a better gift than I, though I tried to always conduct the business of the churches and Associations strictly by my Master's rule laid down in His word, though with tenderness and brotherly kindness. All my churches have generally treated me with more respect, it seemed to me, than I deserved. My Association never would give me up until I got so old and deaf I could not do the business. Brethren, if I have ever been any benefit in the cause of my Master the Lord is to be praised, for I am nothing to myself. Brethren, I have traveled over the high and rugged mountains, often alone, wandering and thinking could it be possible if the Lord had sent such a being as I am I am to do such important work as it appeared to me to be. Brethren, if I am saved I am saved by grace alone, if I ever have preached, God is to be praised; if I have ever done any good in the churches or Associations, the Lord is to be praised, for I am nothing of myself, if I ever had any true hope in the Lord, it was the last day of December, fifty-six years ago. About fifty-five or nearly that time, since I first began to speak in public. Brethren, the Lord has spared me a long time in this poor world of trouble. I often think it won't be long before the summons will come, then, brethren, it will be well with all the children of God, we then will no more sigh and mourn for fear we are deceived but then all the children of God will get home to their father's house, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, where they will see their blessed Lord, who bled and died to set them free. Dear brethren of the Old Baptist faith, I love you all you are my people. I want to live with you, I want to die with you, I want to go home with you, there to part no more.

My beloved brethren, Paul says, "eye hath not seen nor ear hath heard the good things that is laid up for them that love the Lord." Brethren, I have went through many hard trials in this poor world. I lost my first wife the 20th of January, 1860; I have lost three daughters and one son, all nearly grown; I have raised twelve children. I have always been a poor man, sometimes in great trouble, sometimes it seems, for a short time, all my troubles are gone when it is God's will to speak peace to my weary soul. My dear brethren I am now about to wind up my little book, many of you I shall never see in this world, but when you read these lines, remember me, and that Jesus Christ died to set the mourning free, and you, my dear children, when you read my little book perhaps years after I am gone to my long eternal home and you are left here in a world of dangers, sorrows and troubles, I want you all to have my little book, and to take good care of it; and think you once heard the old white head preach and tell that Christ died to save the true mourners, I want every one to take care of my little book.

I am now in my 82nd year, and will shortly have to bid you all farewell, but I hope I shall meet you beyond this vale of tears, where partings is no more. I hope to meet my old father and mother, I hope to see my children. I now say to all my friends when you hear that I am gone, weep not for me but rejoice that I am gone from the evil to come. Farewell.

Elder Lewis Edwards

From Elder Lambert's Book, "Tried In The Furnace."

HOW CAN WE KNOW THE WAY?

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

Sitting alone this Sunday morning, sensing my infirmities so greatly, I can sympathize with Thomas when he asked Jesus, "How can we know the way?" I am convinced by sad experience as the prophet of old when he prayed, "Oh Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. "Just about the time I am convinced that God has granted me strength to walk in paths of righteousness, I fall by the wayside and great is the feeling of grief and condemnation when my feet slip from the way of righteous walking. It does my poor grieved heart good with so great comforting and consoling thoughts to meditate upon the answer Jesus gave Thomas. When Jesus said, "I am the way," it forever banishes sinners' hopes of saving themselves by their own goodness.

Paul was possesed with a thorn in the flesh to buffet him lest he be exalted above measure. He prayed thrice for the removal of this thorn, but each time the Lord answered, "My grace is sufficient for thee." This thorn made Paul to cry out, "Oh wretehed man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of deatht" He thanked God through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Paul was possesed with a thorn in the flesh to buffet him lest he be exalted above measure. He prayed thrice for the removal of this thorn, but each time the Lord answered, "My grace is sufficient for thee. " This thorn made Paul to cry out, "Oh wretehed man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death" He thanked God through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

David's sin was ever before him and caused him to utter many expressions that only those who are grieved because of their sins understand. The sins of David kept him constantly at God's foot stool, praying to Him for mercy. The presence of a wicked heart and a wrong spirit was the stimuli that caused David to pray, "Create in me, O God, a clean heart; renew a right spirit within me." God's people are sinners but none of them are satisfied about it.

Peter, no doubt, thought he was treading the way fairly well and thought he knew the way when he told Jesus that he would go with Him all the way even unto death. Peter found by sad experience that he was mistaken when he denied Jesus, cursed and swore. Jesus had told Peter prior to this, "When thou art converted, strengthen the brethren." Peter had to be converted to the fact that he had not been strengthened sufficiently to know the way. When Peter told this sad experience to brethren, proving to them he was a sinful man as they were, it was strengthening to them. It is strengthening to me, a sinner, to hear brethren whom I esteem so highly, confessing their sins.

It was strengthening to me to hear a deacon of one of our churches, whom I had deemed to be perfect in walk and conversation, confess to the brethren in church conference of having erred greatly. It was grievous to think of his experience, yet strengthening to learn that he was imperfect as well as I, and that he too, must depend upon the merits of Jesus and the mercies of God for salvation in both time and eternity.

Elder E.J. Lambert

SOLOMON'S SONG II. 9.

"He standeth behind our wall."

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH: - It is unto you that these glorious promises are left on record. It is for thee that He stands behind our wall. No other can ever realize the sweetness of having the glorious manifestation of his royal presence brought to us. The world, with all it ingenuity, can never pierce the ways of the King Jehovah and find out the dealings that he had with those who are bought with so great a price. From the teaching of God's word there must be more that one sense that God stands behind our wall, because we do not understand that he has left the wicked to their own devices. We believe that he is ever overruling all the schemes of wicked men and devils for the final triumphant deliverance of his chosen people into the glorious city beyond these things of time. Not only is that the belief of the Baptists in this part of Alabama, but we contend, and

desire, if the Lord will be our stay and guide, to defend, that the Lord's people have always taught, that God overruled all things for the good of his people. But just now our mind is not concerned so much with the sovereignty of God, but will say that we do not believe that God is in any way the author of sin. We are perfectly willing to take the Bible for our guide. We find that Joseph told his brethren that God sent him to preserve much people alive, and that though they meant it for evil, God meant it for good. (Gen. xlv. 5; I. 20.) God did, in some wonderful way, bring this about without coercion. Men, and good brethren at that, are very much concerned over the way God works all things and still not be the author of sin. I used to spend much time in speculation on the same idea, but long since I have, as I hope, been shown the glorious beauties of his magnificent power, and it does not bother me so much any more. If God is so wonderful in power and wisdom that he can bring a blaspheming Saul to the earth crying. "Who art thou, Lord?? that he is coming again to earth to gather from the grave all his little children, and raise them to immortality without the stains of sin; that, if not deceived, he found the poor unworthy writer among the thorns of infidelity and self-righteousness and planted in his sinful heart a little ray of hope that all is well with my soul, then may he not work all things after the counsel of his own will? But let us not be content there. Paul tells us that God gave them (the wicked) up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts. (Rom. i. 26.) James tells us that God is not tempted, neither tempteth he any man, but man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lusts. (James i.13,14.) It is only as the sovereign Ruler of all things that he stands at the wall of the wicked. But, to the poor storm-tossed child of God, there is a more precious way that he stands behind our wall. According to my understanding, The wall is our flesh. Just as long as the poor little pilgrims sojourn in this time state we shall be looking through a glass darkly. Paul tells us that the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things ye would. (Gal. v. 17.) All of God's dear children who have been called out and given to know the truth know that this is true. When the Sun of Righteousness subdues the flesh and melts down the wall, it is then that we are exalted upon the mountains of his love, and are then obeying and keeping his commandments. We hear the Savior say, "Without me ye can do nothing." Oh! to be left down in the land of Lodebar, to our own sinful selves. Indeed, we must wait on the Lord for a visitation of his healing power.

If a man is in the flesh is he partly so, or is he completely under the influence of evil? It is not part Spirit and part flesh that prompts evil, nor is it both that prompts righteousness. It is sin that dwells in us that leads us in forbidden paths. It is the Spirit of Peace that leads us to do righteousness. Now Paul says that they that are in the

flesh cannot please God. Peter thought that he never would deny the Lord, but as soon as the Lord withdrew from him he did deny him. He continued to do so until the Lord turned and looked on him. Just so it is with us. When the Savior melts the barrier down, and steps from behind our wall, we are like Peter, we are made to weep bitterly.

I have heard dear old soldiers speak of their ups and downs in this life, and say their downs were many more than their ups. But nay, not so. Our downs are so much longer. We only get a glimpse now and then of his beaming countenance. With the poor writer the glass is very, very dark. If I have ever been under the smiling rays of his shining wings it has been very fleeting. He only shows himself at the lattice. It is here a little and there a little. Sometimes it seems that I can never again grope in darkness, and then I am made to again be as "a pelican of the wilderness," as "an owl of the desert." But blessed thought indeed that he knows our way! Even when the influence of his healing wings is not being felt he is watching over and caring for us. He will never leave nor forsake us, and is mindful of us when we are not mindful of ourselves. He will watch over and keep us in this world, and will watch our sleeping dust until he bids it arise. Then we shall be where he is and be like him, and this old wall, the flesh, shall be done away with and all will be heaven and eternal. This will be enough for a poor sinner like me.

May the Lord continue to enable the publishers and editors to print a paper that contends for the doctrine that has identified the church for ages.

Yours in hope of continued mercy,
Elder W.D. Griffin

ADDRESS CHANGE

All letters for The Signs of the Times containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder J.R. Williams, at the new address herewith!

Signs of the Times, Inc.
1012 Bennett Circle
Keeling, Va. 24566

All letters and articles for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed as before to:

Elder Kenneth R. Key
721 Willard St.
Greensboro, N.C. 27405

CHAPTER 4: 1-3.

NOW the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

NOTICE

An Expression of Thankfulness

The members and friends of Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church at El Dorado, Arkansas wish to express sincere thanks to all who helped In the project of rebuilding our meeting house. After the fire, which destroyed the old building, floods of contributions came in from many individuals and sister churches who knew of our loss. After the appeal for help appeared in the Signs of the Times and The Remnant, many more contributions were sent from friends from afar. Through the grace and providence of Almighty God, we were blessed to rebuild on the site of the old building and enter the new building debt free.

Thanks to the editors of the Signs of the Times and The Remnant, for publishing the notice of our loss. Thanks to all who contributed money, labor and encouragement to Rehobeth Church. Especially, thanks be unto Almighty God for His gracious undertaking for us in all things. The new building was sufficiently complete for us to meet in it on the second Sunday in April--two months and two weeks after the fire. This is an incredible miracle of providence, for which we hope we are truly thankful.

Your little sister,
Rehobeth Church

MEETINGS

UNION MEETING
UPPER COUNTY LINE

The Upper County Line Union Meeting will be held at Greensboro Church on Sunday, July 30, 1995 at 10 o'clock.

All lovers of the truth, especially Elders, are invited to meet with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Wayne Edwards, Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Paynes Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Floyd County, Virginia, a presbytery met Dec. 5, 1992 for the examination of brother Wilton Supthin, and if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgement, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Junior Conner. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders Junior Conner, W.T. Conner, Carl Terry, Willard Cox, Clarence Stone and Hale Terry.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Hale Terry as moderator and Deacon W.G. Parsons as clerk. Elder Willard Cox and W.T. Conner were chosen to perform the examination of the candidate Elder Hale Terry having been duly appointed by Paynes Creek Church in conference Oct. 31, 1992 spokesman for the church delivered brother Supthin to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elders Willard Cox and W.T. Conner using scriptural reference 1 Timothy ch. 3 v. 8-13. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Clarence Stone. Elder Junior Conner and Carl Terry delivered the charge to the candidate, using scriptural reference Holy word of God.

The moderator asked Paynes Creek Church if they approved the work of the presbytery which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to brother Supthin, and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained brother was delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Paynes Creek Floyd County, Virginia.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Carl Terry.

Elder Wm. Hale Terry, Mod.
Dea. W.G. Parsons, Clerk

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Pigg River Association will be held, the Lord willing the first Sunday in August; Friday and Saturday before, August 4, 5, & 6, 1995.

Thompson Grove Church is the host for the setting of this Association. The meeting place will be Rocky Mount High School, Rocky Mount, Virginia.

Come into Rocky Mount on highway 220 and exit on highway 40, going west. Take second street to left to the high school.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

Elder Lane Carter, Moderator
Jamie E. Cooper, Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Smith River Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Salem Church located on State highway #221 between Copper Hill and Check, Virginia. The time will be Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, September 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, 1995. We invite our correspondents and visitors to meet with us at this meeting.

Wilford G. Parsons
Association Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 23 & 24, 1995.

Union Church, located about five miles Southeast of Marion, Louisiana, will host the association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
318-778-4217

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 1995

Mrs. Rachel A. Smith, NC 2.00
Mrs. Helen L. Pittman, TX 2.00
Mrs. Nova L. Coleman, VA 2.00
Mrs. Mary Hawkins, NC
In memory Sis. Emma Somers 32.00
Mrs. Beulah Nichols, VA 2.00
Wade M. Poff, VA 2.00
Andrew C. Agee, VA 2.00
A.J. Griffin, AL 10.00
Mrs. Muriel M. Strader, NC 2.00
Eld. J.Y. McCormick, FL 7.00
Mrs. Connie Page, NC 5.00
W.D. Godwin, LA 2.00
Mrs. Julia R. Garner, NC 5.00
Mrs. Mary W. Janney, VA 2.00
Walter F. Griffith, NC 2.00
Richard Lawless, WV 2.00
G.R. Slate, NC 2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER BESSIE DENNY CURRY

Sister Bessie Denny Curry daughter of the late Thomas Jefferson Denny and Indiana Gaulden Gorden Denny was born April 18, 1903 and passed from this life December 22, 1994 at her home in Eden, North Carolina.

She was married on December 25,1919 to the late Brother James Ernest Curry. A son. Walter Thomas Curry preceded her in death. She is survived by one daughter. Thelma C. Pullium of Greensboro, NC and a son Ernest Madison (Bill) Curry of Wilmington, NC. She is also survived by eight grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Sister Curry joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on July 22,1934 and was baptized by her Pastor, the late Elder David Spangler.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Kenneth Key after which she was laid to rest in the church cemetery beside her husband: there to rest until the day of resurrection when her hope will become reality.

Sister Curry was a quiet person who loved her church and her family. She was in declining health for two years prior to her death. A faithful member, she was blessed to attend her church up until the last and always in her favorite seat.

May the Lord bless her family in their great loss, and give each of them peace, comfort and consolation, that none but the Lord can give.

We feel our loss is her eternal gain and may we all be reconciled to the will of our

Heavenly Father, who does all things well and never makes a mistake.

Written by the request of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church while in conference.

Juanita Law
Amanda Saunders
Elder Kenneth Key, Pastor
Bob R. Collie, Clerk

SISTER ELSIE B. HOUCHINS

Sister Elsie B. Houchins born March 18th, 1906. Died Feb. 3rd, 1995. Elsie is a 1st cousin. She joined County Line Primitive Baptist Church June 6th, 1933. We were not together too many times before we joined, but soon found we loved to be together.

As my mother's home place was near County Line, we often walked back there to visit my Aunt Lucinda Mary Shortt after meeting. My aunt would say, "I declare, you are just like father coming back from meeting, "talk, then walk a few steps, and stop and talk." My grandfather Elder Asa D. Shortt while he was able had company to bring home for dinner, and they would talk on the way home. My aunt did not want dinner to get cold.

Sister Elsie always expressed herself with few words, and always to the point, well understood. Dependable, and a strength to me.

Her funeral was Sunday Feb. 5, 1995 at Wood Funeral Home in Floyd Virginia and buried beside her father and mother in County Line Church cemetery. Elder Noel F. Conner preached the funeral.

Survived by one brother: Tyler T. Houchins, three sisters: Linda H. West, Anise B. Houchins, and Irene Houchins; also several nieces and nephews.

Catherine A. Houchins

BROTHER JOSEPH MORTON

In special memory; I'll try to write: asking God for great strength, guidance and knowledge. To Honor and respect our "Beloved Brother" and friend to all who knew him.

Brother Joe was born in Onslow County Dec. 12, 1916. His parents were Edward Ward and Alice Gertrude Morton. He was raised in a large "Family Circle". A total of thirteen brothers and sisters.

In the thirties he was married to Effie Mae Humphry. The Lord blessed them with three sons. They were taught to work from "Early Childhood;" As he himself had been all his life.

Brother Joe asked a home with the church May 16, 1954. Was a faithful member for forty years.

Ordained as deacon. Served in that capacity until his death.

He was devoted and supported his church in every way; financially, also in the time and labor he gave so freely. "Great love and hope was shown in his everyday life.

Brother Joe passed away November 17, 1994. His survivors are his wife Sister Effie Morton; two sons of the home: Shirleen and Jimmy Morton,

five grandsons and five great grandchildren. Three sisters: Sister Blanche Collins of Jacksonville, Eula Lovitt and Ada Newman of Texas. He was preceded in death by a son Bobby Morton.

Our departed Brother was a good husband and a very devoted Father. To the family I say!! You have suffered a great loss, but I feel your loss is "Heaven's Gain." I pray God will reconcile each one of you, and fill that empty spot with "Love."

Try to realize God chose a "Precious Jewel" Brother Joe and just keep that in mind. Press onward to the Mark of the High Calling which is in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Funeral conducted by Elder J.T. Prescott and burial in Onslow Memorial Park, laid beneath a mound of flowers.

Written by and for the order of North East Church in conference third Saturday in May 1995.

Written by a Sister in Christ I hope,
Mary Lillie Hall
1597 Halltown Rd.
Jacksonville, N.C. 28546

FOREST L. SHORTT

Forest L. Shortt born Oct. 17, 1899 died May 11, 1995.

Forest, a second cousin to me, and lived at one time near our home in Floyd County, more like a brother to me, as I have known him as long as I can remember anyone.

His mother was a member at County Line Church also an older sister was a member too. We felt if "Cousin Mary Elize" was in our home in sickness everything would be well soon. She and Forest was much alike in their kindness toward sick ones.

Forest never joined the church, but came Saturday and Sunday every month as long as he was able. He was loved and respected by all. Helped in any of our need at County Line Church. He, while he was able, built a fire in the stoves, swept the floor, dusted. He so liked to help. Money, he often gave. Helped on the mowing of yard and cemetery. Took company home with him from meetings, bringing water for the pitcher and etc. Little things, but so needed. Elder and Mrs. Noel F. Conner visited him, in hospital and nursing home. I went twice. Last time, as I came near his bed, he faintly called my name, "Catherine". He seemed to care so much for Elder and Mrs. Conner. He called them "Noel and Nellie".

Funeral at County Line Church Sunday 1 p.m. May 14, 1995. Funeral conducted by Elder Noel Conner. Burial in Church Cemetery.

Survived by his wife: Lala Pendleton Shortt; two sons: McCrey Shortt, Marshall Shortt; grandsons: Calvin Shortt, Timothy Shortt, Mark Shortt, and Michael Shortt, and granddaughters: Vera Thompson, Cathy Bratton, and Vicky Wade; also twelve great-grandchildren.

Catherine A. Houchins

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

MY God, my life, my love,
To thee, to thee I call;
I cannot live if thou remove,
For thou art all in all.

The smilings of thy face,
How amiable they are !
'Tis heaven to rest in thine embrace
And nowhere else but there.

Not all the harps above
Can make a heavenly place
If God his residence remove,
Or but conceal his face.

Nor earth, nor all the sky
Can one delight afford;
No, not a drop of real joy
Without thy presence, Lord.

Thou art the sea of love,
Where all my pleasures roll;
The circle where my passions move,
And centre of my soul.

To thee my spirits fly,
With infinite desire;
And yet how far from thee I lie!
Dear Jesus, raise me higher.

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EDITORIAL

THEIR ROCK NOT OUR ROCK

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

"For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges." (Deut. 32:31)

This scripture is thousands of years old, and yet it is still just as applicable today as it was when first written. This is true of all Scripture however, because the truth and the wisdom of the inspired Word of God is ageless. God is unchangeable and so is his word, it is the same today, yesterday and forever. Man is also the same as he was after the fall of Adam: he is corrupt, and if there is any good in man it is by the grace of God that there is. It is because God has shown mercy upon him, and has placed something within him that not all men possess,-- and that is the Holy Spirit.

The above scripture is recorded in the song that the Lord told Moses to write unto the children of Israel just before Moses was to go up onto the mountain and die. God is referring in the song to Jeshurun and ones who forsook God who made them, and lightly esteemed the Rock of their salvation. Then still referring to these individuals, he states the text, ***"For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges."***

Can this same scripture not be quoted today regarding the religions of the world around us? Their rock is not our Rock, and they will be the first to acknowledge it to be the truth. According to their own testimony, they walk without any fear at all, and by the lighthearted, carefree manner of their worship services, it is evident that their rock is not as our Rock, They believe that their God has done all he can do, or is willing to do, to save the inhabitants of the world; and now the decision, the power, and the final results of the whole work is in their hands: they can accept it and live eternally in heaven or they can reject it and dwell forever in the fiery pits of hell.

In reality, what is the difference in this doctrine and the belief in the god those people in Moses' day? They made a replica of four footed beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air, and fell down and worshipped them. They cut down a tree, used it to cook their food, warm themselves, and then of the ashes they made a graven image, and fell down and worshipped it, praying, Deliver us for thou art our god." (see Isaiah 44th chapter) It is sheer nonsense, and yet it seems that the same thing is happening all over the world today among people who are considered intelligent individuals. The people of olden times worshipped images which had eyes but could not see, and feet but could not walk -- they had to be carried wherever they went. The image itself had no power at all, and the point is that the people could determine among themselves the power, wisdom and characteristics the image was supposed to possess, according to what the people wanted. If things went well, it was their god's pleasure in their actions, if not, it was punishment for something they did wrong, or something they failed to do.

The masses today believe in a God that is just as subservant to their wishes as the inaminate objects of stone, ash, or what have you, that their fathers worshipped. Man has not really changed with all the technical and cultural advances made by the human race since the foundation of the world. They will tell you that they believe in the biblical account of the creation, the theory of an omnipotent being who is all wise, and then tell you that the supreme being cannot save a single individual unless that person will let him. I have difficulty understanding how intelligent (wisdom of the world) people can honestly believe this, but they are constantly affirming it on the radios, from the pulpits, and whenever given an opportunity and someone will listen. Therefore, their own judgment is that their rock is not as our Rock.

Many times I get low in spirit, and I am made to wonder if the things that I hope to believe, are really the truth of the God of heaven and earth, or am I just building on the sand something that will not stand the test of time. With all of the testimony that I hear constantly from the world, is it possible that I could be deceived in the matter, and the religions of the world are actually the truth? They have the majority, they have the evidence if it is actually observed by the natural eye, and their doctrine is appealing to the natural mind. It causes me deep concern sometimes, and I believe that but for the grace of God I would be overwhelmed by it all.

Thanks be unto God these seasons pass, and we again believe in the true and living God, who has promised that he will never leave nor forsake his children. If indeed one has the Holy Spirit dwelling within him, then all things are for their sake and work together for their good. This is a very contrasting relationship to the one between the gods of this world and their worshippers. The one is sure and steadfast and under the complete

control of a sovereign Creator, who works all things after the counsel of his own will, and if we are what we hope to be, He is our Rock. The gods of this world are powerless, lifeless, and in reality, are only the extension of the vain conceit of those who worship them.

The song in which this scripture is found, begins with, ***"Give ear, O ye heavens and I will speak: and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth."*** This is a God of power who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. This is the one that is designated as Our Rock. He is considered, feared and reverenced as such today by those He has saved and called with a holy calling. If he calls and the heavens stand up, will not puny man do the same? Will they not give ear and hear if spoken to by such a God? I believe that they will, and I do not believe that they will ever be found contending that they are in any way responsible for being called into or kept in the way that they are traveling.

"My doctrine shall drop as the rain my speech shall distill as the dew. As the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the shower upon the grass." This is a most beautiful text to one as he is made to remember the sovereign work of grace in God's making known unto him the beauties of his doctrine. As the earth is dry and cold with no moisture, so was his heart. As the earth has no power of its own to bring down the rain, or to cause the dew to form upon it, so is the natural man. But suddenly, mysteriously there is the moisture, or spirit in the case of the natural man, and suddenly he is alive. Just as the rain causes the earth to bring forth bud, green leaves and fruit, so does the Spirit cause man to come alive unto Godly things, and yield fruit in the form of praise unto God their Heavenly Father.

"Because I will publish the name of the Lord: Ascribe ye greatness unto our God." This is now the heartfelt song of the new heaven born soul. Now their whole desire is to publish the news of this miracle in their life, and ascribe greatness unto the God of their salvation. There is such sweetness and freedom in their soul, and they feel that surely others can see and feel it too. They learn though that this is just for them. Others can only receive it in the same way they did--by the sovereign grace of Almighty God. They are made to know that they are not acting, but rather being acted upon by a power other than their own, and one that is independent of any efforts on their part.

This seems to have been the experience of Moses, in that he was called at a time and place that we have no record that he was concerned with God and godly things. He knew the way of those around him in the same way that we observe those around us today. And, although we cannot know that we are children of God, we can say that their rock is not our Rock, they themselves being judges.

"He is the Rock, his way is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." Is not this the Rock that

we worship today? If I have any understanding of what I believe, and what the Primitive Baptists contend for today, that is exactly the same Rock that Moses was writing about. It is the only foundation upon which a hope is based of heaven and immortal glory, because of the frailty of the man of flesh, and the changeableness of his nature.

Down through the ages of time God in his own infinite wisdom and power, according to my understanding of the scriptures, has in his own time revealed himself unto his own, and called them from nature's darkness into His marvelous light. Also I know of no case on record where he ever let one stray back into that state of darkness and complete lack of understanding of Him, as he was in before He appeared unto them. This is because, "He is the Rock and all his ways are judgment." And He never changes his mind or reverses that judgment. Man can change his prior judgment upon receiving additional evidence concerning the thing upon which he passed judgment. God had infinite wisdom, and changes not because all of that knowledge is behind every judgment that He makes, and He is too wise to err.

It seems to me that were it otherwise there could be no peace or comfort, and none could have the blessed assurance of a heavenly abode, if things could change because of some future unknown development--something that was not anticipated by the great I AM. I see him as a supreme being incapable of making a mistake. *"Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."* In this Isaiah expressed the same sentiment as Moses did when he said, *"He is the Rock, his work is perfect, for all His ways are judgment."* They are both stating that all things are brought to pass according to God's own will and purpose, and because of judgment of the whole situation respecting those events. They are not just random coincidences but a perfectly planned sequence of events.

The world says that their rock desires that they send the gospel into all the world and save as many as they can. This requires seminaries, boards, money, volunteers, and a good sound promotional program to accomplish, and they acknowledge that they are falling far short of the goal. When God commands his servants to go, he goes. On one occasion the Angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought his servants out, and told them, *"Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life."* Where the word of a king is, there is power. And this is just as true today as it has ever been. Christ told Peter after his resurrection, *"When thou wast young thou girdest thyself, and walkest whither thou wouldest, but when thou shall be old, thou shall be stretch forth thy hands and another shall gird thee and carry thee whither thou wouldest not."* This is saying that they will go, not because everything is made easy, but rather in spite

of all the obstacles that may be in their way. If there is one of God's little ones that is to receive His word, such as Cornelius, the commandment will go forth, and a way will be made for it to be accomplished, and all the praise and honor will be unto God. This will be true in the heart of the newly manifested child and in the heart and soul Of the servant. It will be as the servant Of Abraham who was sent to seek a wife for Isaac. It will all be the sovereign work of God, and will accomplish the desired results, because, *"His work is perfect."*

Many times as we behold the world around us, we are made to wonder why we are so different from the majority of the people that we come in contact with. Why is it that what is so sweet and precious to us, should be so hated by the world? Then as we read the scriptures, we find that it has ever been so. In John 6:66, Christ told his disciples, *"Verily, verily I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles but because ye did eat of the loaves and are filled."* The same is true today: the world in general follows after the various religions because they are appealing to the natural senses of man, and fulfill their vain conceited sense of self-importance, and need to belong. Later Christ told them, *"It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you they are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you that believe not. Therefore I said unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father."* It says from that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him. The truth has ever been the thing that separates the Children of God from the children of the world, whether we like it or not. It was true in Christ's days upon the earth; and it is true today. Only those who have been born of the Spirit of God can witness to the truth of God. The others cannot because they do not know anything about it: as the Apostle Paul wrote, *"No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." And, "No man speaking by the Spirit calleth Jesus accursed."*

God told Moses, *"Now write this song for you, and teach it to the Children of Israel: put it in their mouth that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel."* This is, therefore, the witness that God placed on record for all future generations of the children of Israel, as a remembrance of the Rock of their salvation. It does not leave them to guess as to the attributes of the Rock of Moses, and it also spells out the fallacy of the new gods that are newly come up. We have the same evidence among us today, for God has not left himself without a witness, and when blessed with the wisdom of the Spirit of God, as we hope to have been a few times in our life, we have felt that we would say, "For their rock is not our Rock." It is a grand and glorious feeling to be so lifted up that, for the moment, it seems that you can say, *"I know that my Redeemer liveth,"* not just that there is a God, but that he is *my God, my Rock, my Strength, my For-*

tress, and my Deliverer. At such times as this, it seems that it would be sin not to confess this in view of the strong impression. At other times you fear to claim these precious truths as yours.

May God bless the above to the comfort and edification of his children. May He grant you the wisdom to recognize, understand, and rejoice in the Truth, and the compassion to overlook the error, and forgive the writer. If not deceived, my prayer is that all has been done in love for the truth, and for those who love and believe the truth. Just as surely as the truth separates the children of God from the world, it binds their hearts and souls together with a force stronger than any of the ties of nature. The love that they have for these things, is the sweetest of God's gifts to the children of men. It is greater than the faith and hope that accompany it.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

ARTICLES

MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR THEE 2 Cor. 12:9.

Dear Child of your Father God, when He speaks those precious comforting words to you, His little chosen ones; it is with such power, that it penetrates the very depth of the mind, heart, soul and being; those precious words, removes all fear, one may have ever had; of what all mankind or devils might do to him or her; they then feel something like unto this, - Oh they might be let to destroy this body of flesh of mine; but, never can they destroy, or even touch my soul; nor can they effect or remove this love I feel, for my Lord and Saviour, and His little children. Oh dear Child of God's grace and mercy; the importance of this time world, compared with, our sweet and precious hope of that world to come, is as nothing: That great and awful suffering, dying and arising, of your (and I hope my) Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, was, that very sufficient grace, applied, on His little children's behalf; it completely cleared and opened that way, God's way, for you (and I hope me), to reach our heavenly Father, in heaven and immortal glory. Oh, it is just too great, for me to find sufficient words, to say or write.

It is far beyond the comprehension of our poor weak minds, to fully comprehend the reality, of, never again to feel pain, in mind, body or soul; to never again, feel sickness, or concern for health, of self or others; to never again, have a thought, concerning this cruel world of sin and sorrow; to never again, shed tears of sorrow; but instead, experience Holy and Righteous peace, and complete and perfect satisfaction, to everlastingly, sing praise, honor and glory, unto our heavenly Father, forever after. For while we live in this time world, we can only experience a little taste of those heavenly feelings, sometime, as the Precious Lord be pleased to give unto us. And to be given to realize, of a truth; that

we of our fleshly self, have NEVER turned a hand, or done even ONE single thing, to merit or earn, even ONE of the multitude of blessings He has bestowed upon us, all the days of our lives; that they each and everyone, were freely given unto us; simply, and only by reason, it was His good pleasure so to do. And so, if we are given to feel and realize those truths, we then know full well, self boasting, is completely and wholly out of the whole picture all together; and that His name, is the ONE and only name, could ever be worthy, of any praise, honor and glory, both now and forever more.

When the afore chosen children of God, are carried on the wings of His everlasting love, to heaven and immortal glory; they will be of one mind, and have but one interest; and that will be, to praise the great and Holy name of their (and I hope my) heavenly Father, forever without ceasing; without ever another thought, of this time world; for it will have passed away, into the sea of forgetfulness. No one there, will ever again, know hunger or thirst, hot or cold, sickness or pain, or any discontentment; for all will be perfectly satisfied, forever and ever more, in the presence of the Lord God, wherein perfect peace and happiness dwelleth forever.

How can one glory in, and take pleasure in, infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake?, this is made possible with one, ONLY; when it pleases the Lord God, to show him or her, that His grace is sufficient for them. Without God's grace being applied to one, he cannot even think a good thought, much less, perform a good act, that is good in His sight. Every second, of every minute, of every hour, of every day, of every month, of every year; mankind is boldly demonstrating, his total disregard, for "God," having anything whatsoever to do with, the operation of His government; of which does include, the entire fulfillment, of every moment of time, He allotted, for this world to stand; that does involve, everything to ever be or do or take place, in all time and eternally, in both heaven and earth. Now that is, to some degree, a measurement, of the untruth, of mankind's self boasting, of his and her greatness and or self goodness.

There are many of mankind, who have not been given to see, just what they are, in their own self's selfish fleshly nature; who read the 31st verse, of the 1st chapter of Genesis; who evidently accept those words VERY GOOD; as applying to themselves as their own fleshly nature's selves. Of which I feel, is as far away from the truth, as is hell, far separated from heaven. But instead, does mean that good and very good, of God's work, in His Own creation and making of all things, for the perfect fulfillment, of His every purpose in and for having created it all. For an evidence of this, when looking down upon mankind, God said, I find none good, no not one. And so therefore, any and all good ever performed through any one of mankind, was and is, only, that what God did work in him, both the

will and to do of it; that leaves man without, any right for self boasting, in any way shape or form. And so, all praise or honor, alway and alway belongeth to God, but never, to man.

There were many who did see the body form of Christ, while He walked upon this earth, who were only aware, that He was just another man; not having the least idea of who He really were; for they saw Him only with the natural eye; while there were some, who recognized Him as the very Christ. Now, what was it, that made that difference, when both did see Him, with their natural eyes? them who saw Him only as just another man, had not been given an inner eye of faith, therefore, they could only see the natural; while the others were given that inner eye of faith, which is able to see, even that which is Spiritual; or, in other words, Christ had revealed Himself to them. Which is clear evidence that, - without that revelation unto one, from on High; it is entirely impossible for one to see, that what be Holy and good, as be good in the sight of God; For the three-in-One God, is the very One, and only One, who is the Creator, and distributor, of any and all that is good in His sight. For man of himself, to do such good, is just as impossible, as it is impossible, for him, to remove God from His Throne in heaven, and replace Him, with himself. Man is so boastful, of man's own self's greatness as to even say of some; now he is a self made man; while, either not knowing, or ignoring, the true fact of the matter is, - even though man walketh, yet, he is NOT the director of his steps; his believing that he is; does not alter of change that fact of truth, (that he is not), even one iota; he is just denying the truth, and believing a lie; just as the worldly religionist believe, preach and teach, now. The fleshly nature of mankind is such, that he gives little or no thought, to the reality, of his total and complete self helplessness; not only to the Spiritual, but also, even the natural; his fleshly self's selfcenteredness, tells him that falsehood; that he is independent, not that very Holy truth; that, without God's furnishings, he could neither BE anything, much less, do anything; not even think a thought, perform an act; not even breathe a breath or have a being; except, God furnish all that makes it all possible. And may we be thankful unto God; there never was, and never can be; any, self made man.

Almighty "God," was and is, the one and only One, who did Create all things; (outside Himself). He made all things that were made, and without Him, there was no thing that were made, but what He made.

God is Self existent; He has always and eternally been God, and will always and eternally be, the same unchanging God. He has no beginning, and no ending. He ever was, is, and ever will be, the same yesterday, today, and forevermore. He holds and controls all power, both in heaven and earth; and His power, of which, He is the holder and controller of it; is that one and only source, from which, every ounce of any and all strength to ever exist, is derived; therein is proof

positive; without Him, we can do no thing or nothing. And that very same does apply, to satan or the devil, and all his angels. And though, God said - I create evil; all things together, does, in no way, shape or form, even remotely, furnish any foundation, upon which, "God" could ever rightly be accused or charged, with being the author of sin, or any unrighteousness.

The sins, mankind commits, derives from those devilish intents, that is in both his mind and heart, while he thinks and or acts. If a man has a desire, in his mind and heart, to murder someone; even though, he does not go through with that physical action; and yet still, in his heart, he has committed murder. Like as Christ said, of a man, who looks upon a woman with lust; he has committed adultery, in his heart. And so, mans weakened intent, is a sin, equal to, whatever be his intent. Yes, dear child of God's grace and mercy; with "God," all is fixed, weighed and measured, from before the foundation of the world.

SIN, is a transgression of God's Holy Law. Without the law, there is no sin; for there could be no transgression. Up to the time of Adam receiving the commandment of God, concerning the law; that said - thou shalt not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, there was no sin in the world. But, when Adam did eat of that forbidden fruit, of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; thereby, 'sin' entered the world, by man; through and by his transgression, of the Law of God.

Now, God being ALL WISE: He assuredly did know full well, and to exactness, what Adam would do, in his transgression of that very law, or commandment, which He gave Adam; just as He has always known; of every transgression, of every one, who followed after Adam into this world. For, it to be otherwise, He could not be the all wise God; and in fact, no God at all. For to be, the true and living God, as He is; there can be absolutely NO guess work, or just happened sos, or ensured, of anything, to ever be or do or take place, in all time and eternity; before, this time world, during this time world, and after this time world is no more; in both heaven and earth, and also in hell. And it is within that very exact framework; all provisions were provided; all times, were set and established, for each and everything to ever be, within that total time He did allot, for this world to stand. And not even one minute alteration, can there ever exist. And that, simply by reason, He is God, and He changeth NOT. And, there was and is, a certain and exact number of people or souls, whom He did choose for Himself, from before the foundation of the world, who He calls the vessels of His mercy; shall be carried on the wings of His love, to forever be with Him, in heaven and immortal glory. While there are, another, certain exact number of people or souls, who He calls the vessels of His wrath; shall be cast into the bottomless pit of the ever burning hell. And the souls of neither group, shall ever die. The first mentioned group, shall forever be happy; while the sec-

ond mentioned group; shall forever be in tormented misery. Now, if it so be, that what I have written here, is in accord with that truth, as is in the Lord Jesus Christ; let it be understood here and now; the Lord God did everything, what made it possible, certain and sure. And so, may His name be praised for it all.

In hope, I could be your brother in Christ,

Troy G. Shepard
103 East Tateway Rd.
Kitty Hawk, N.C. 27949

VOICES OF THE PAST

VITAL GODLINESS

That there is much speculative religion in the world there can be no doubt, and that there may be some that is not genuine among those who stand connected with the church of Christ is greatly to be feared. Every true and legitimate son and daughter of Zion, while in this earthly house of their pilgrimage, experience seasons when it is with them a matter of the greatest importance to know whether they are not of that character. It is not probable that hypocrites and mere nominal professors of christianity are troubled on the same ground, for he who designs to deceive cannot feel that suspense and conflict which doubting christians always feel when the light and comfort of the divine presence are withdrawn from their view. Much is said about vital godliness, and in order that we may know whether we are in possession of it, it is important that we understand what is meant by the terms. Vitality is life, and the word godliness in the scriptures signifies that action which spiritual life in the children of God is calculated to produce. Hence the terms are only properly applicable to those who are born of God, and led by the Spirit to walk in the way of holiness, in whom is developed the fruits of the spirit, which are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance; and all these being fruits of the Spirit are only found where spiritual life has been given. And as they are produced by the Spirit they invariably give evidence of vital union to Christ, who is the life of his people. As the branch of a vine cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, so neither can the people of God bring forth fruits which are unto holiness, the end of which is eternal life, except they abide in Christ, who is the true Vine, and of which the Father is the Husbandman. For without him we can do nothing.

The apostle suggests to us that persons may have a form of Godliness while they deny the power thereof; but we conclude that where the power of Godliness is possessed, there will certainly be at least some of the form of Godliness manifested.

If what we have found to be the fruits of the spirit developed constitues the form or any part of that form, does it not appear that men may possess a kind of love, joy, peace, and

even faith that does not proceed from the spirit as the result of spiritual life implanted? Much that will pass currently for christian love in the religious world is denounced by the apostles as being spurious. He admonished his brethren that such loved not the Lord Jesus, but were enemies of the cross of Christ. They may affect a deceptive counterfeit, and may use soft words and fair speeches while they only flatter to beguile and allure to entrap. In evidence of their love they may show astonishing zeal and what the world calls benevolence; they may give their goods to feed the poor, their money to support missionaries, and their bodies to be burnt, and still be destitute of anything but the mere form of love. They may also cry, "Peace," when God has not spoken peace, and they may possess that complacency which the strange woman boasted of when she had paid her vows, (See Prov. vii.) and yet only a form. Their joy and faith and all the imitations of Godliness that can possibly grow out of an unregenerated heart are lifeless and formal and, as far as we can trace such characters by the light of revelation, they invariably deny the power of vital godliness and this they do in a variety of ways. The principle way, however, is by denying that the love, joy, peace, long-sufferings, goodness, gentleness, faith, etc., are truly the fruits of the Spirit, the gift of God, but claiming that they are produced by human power by the will and works of men. Their position is like this, "If the branch will bear fruit of itself as a condition, it may then be admitted into the Vine." But all who know experimentally the power of Godliness will acknowledge that the excellency of its power is of God, and not of the creature. The power is in the vine and not in the branch, only as the branch abides in and receives vigour and faithfulness from the living Vine. But there are times in which the branches which really abide in the vine seem to be barren, the branches are not always clothed with verdure, and abounding with clusters, but branches vitally abiding in the true and living Vine shall assurely bring forth fruit in its appropriate season. The tree of life which John saw yielding its fruit every month, and all they who receive life and vigour from Christ will, in due time, present the fruits of the spirit.

Godliness, in the life and conversation of the children of the kingdom, derives all its vitality from Him who is the Head of life and spirituality to His body, the church. All is dry, formal and vain in our deportment that springs not from this union to him. He only hath immortality dwelling in the light, and therefore from him alone can we receive it only as we abide in him as the fruitful branch abideth in the true vine, for the saints are members of him, as the branches are members of the vine. And from the head, all the members of the body, the church, have nourishment ministered and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. The apostle assures us that all are called in one hope of our calling - one Lord, one faith, and one baptism,

one God and Father of all who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

But our design was not only to define the terms, but to offer some remarks upon the subject of its development in the faith and general deportment of those who know and acknowledge its power. The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. A life of godliness in necessarily a life of self-denial. No man can live godly in Christ Jesus without suffering persecution, nor can we deport ourselves as becometh godliness without denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, for these are the opposites of all that adorn the christian character. But whatever of opposition, persecution, or self-denial may oppose the life and course of godliness, there is a power and virture in it that will out-live all oppostion, and bear its humble possessors above the din of warring elements and safely lodge them ultimately in that happy state where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary shall enjoy uninterrupted rest. If we, through grace abounding, possess the vital principle, and possess those things which pertain to life and godliness with contentment is great gain, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. Then may our enemies exhaust all their stores of wrath upon us.

"We shall perceive their noise no more,
Than we can hear a shaking leaf,
When rattling thunders round us roar."

May the God of all comfort, who has called us by his grace and given us everlasting consolation through grace, enable us to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, and at last take us up out of all our afflictions and tribulations and cause us to bask in the fullness of the eternal fountain of life and godliness in the world that is without end.

"O glorious hour! O bless'd abode!
There to be near, and like my God,
And flesh and sin no more control,
The rising pleasures of my soul."

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y., May 15, 1854

HEBREWS 12: 5-7.

And ye have forgotten the exrhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

"Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law. —PSALM xciv. 12.

We may observe in the words before us, that the Lord puts chastening before *teaching.* Is there not something remarkable in this? Why should chastening precede teaching? For this reason. We have no ear to hear except so far as we are chastened. It was so with the prodigal. Until he was brought to his right mind by strokes of hunger, he did not think of his father's house; he had no heart to return; but a mighty famine sent him home. So it is with God's children; as long as they are allowed to wander in their back-slidings, they have no heart to return. But let the rod come; let them be driven home by stripes; then they have an ear to listen, while God teaches them to profit, instructs them by his blessed Spirit, and speaks into their heart those lessons which are for their eternal good.

"And teachest him out of thy law." "The law" in the Scriptures has a very wide signification; it means, in the original, *instruction.* The word is *Torah,* which signifies " teaching," or "direction." Thus the word "law" is not confined to the law of Moses given in thunder and lightning upon Mount Sinai; but it includes also the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ--" the perfect law of liberty; " " the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus;" that law which was in the heart of the Redeemer, when he said, " I come to do thy will, O God; yea, thy law is within my heart."

Now, as the Lord teaches his children "out of the law," strictly so called, so he teaches them "out of " the gospel; and to my mind, there is something exceedingly sweet and expressive in the words "out of the law." It seems to convey, not only that the law is a treasure-house of wrath, but that the gospel also is a treasure-house of mercy. And as those who know most of the law are only taught "out of the law," and not the whole of the law, only a few drops, as it were, out of the inexhaustible wrath of God; so out of the heavenly treasure-house of the gospel, " the perfect law of liberty," it is but a little of grace and mercy that in this life can be known. As Christ said to his disciples in promising the Spirit: " He shall take *of* mine, and shall shew it unto you." He cannot take "all," and shew it unto them; for none could live under the sight. The Spirit, therefore, takes *of* the things of Christ, and shews here a little, and there a little; some liltle blessedness here, and some little blessedness there; a suitable promise, a gracious testimony, a comforting text, an encouraging word, a sight of atoning blood, a smile of his countenance, a view of his Person, a discovery of his righteousness, or a glimpse of his love. This is taking of the things of Christ, and revealing them to the soul. And thus, the man whom the Lord takes in hand, he teaches " out of" the gospel by making Christ experimentally known, and revealing his dying

love. And thus he teaches each and all "out of his law"-- both the law from Sinai, and the law from Zion.

J.C. Philpot

"By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew."—PROVERBS iii. 20.

WHEN the Lord said, "Let there be light," instantly there was light. So when the Lord says, "Let the earth open," the heart immediately opens, the conscience is made tender, and the soul hears and receives what God speaks. And what follows this opening? The heart receives the dews and showers of God's grace that fall into it; and these dews and showers of God's grace communicate to it softness, fertility, and productiveness. O how we have to learn this by painful experience! Is not our heart as hard sometimes as the nether millstone; and to our feelings, utterly destitute of light, life and power, without one grain of brokenness, contrition, godly sorrow, spiritual desire, or fervent breathing after the Lord? This painful experience the Lord's people have to pass through perpetually, that they may know that" in them, that is, in their flesh dwelleth no good thing," and that "power belongeth unto God." Could I make my own heart soft, should I want the Lord to do it for me? Could I communicate fertility to my own soul, should I ever pant after the dews and showers of the Holy Ghost? Could I bring pardon and peace into my own conscience, should I need the Lord himself to speak with power? Could I believe, hope, rejoice, and have at my own command every gracious and blessed feeling that I desire to experience, there would be no pleading the Lord's own promises, no wrestling in importunate prayer, no taking the kingdom of God by violence, no longing and panting for the Lord to appear in our souls. The Lord therefore sees fit that we should walk in these paths, that we may know, *"it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."*

J.C. Philpot

From Elder Lambert's Book,
"Tried In The Furnace."

"WHAT IS YOUR LIFE?"
James 4:14
APRIL, 1954

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

YOUR NATURAL life is "a vapour that appareth for a little time and then vanisheth away." You cannot say with assurance that you will be living tomorrow. As vapour only appears within certain circumstances and conditions upon which the vapour has no control, so is your life. When these circumstances and

conditions are changed your life vanishes as the vapour. The flowing of the blood, the functioning of the mind, and the movement of the muscles are evidences of natural life. This life is given upon the volition of the will of God and it is taken at His appointed time. When the mind ceases to function, the muscles to move, and the blood to flow; a person is pronounced naturally dead. This natural life is timely. It has its beginning and it has its ending.

It is a true Biblical saying that ***"Life is in the blood."*** The expression in Leviticus 17:11 says, ***"the life of the flesh is in the blood."*** The flow of the blood stimulates the muscles and mind. When there is a change in the flow of the blood there is a change in the functioning of the mind and movement of the muscles. Heart stimulants affect mind and muscle. When one is under the influence of alcohol, which stimulates the flow of blood, it is often truly said, ***"He is not himself."*** His actions and conversation are changed.

The Lord willing, we desire to meditate upon the functioning of the natural mind before comparing and contrasting natural and spiritual life. We want to say to the reader who is wondering what our object is in this treatise that we desire to prove a true and experienced state of life that exists in the regenerated child of God; why that regeneration is necessary; how that Jesus is our life; and, devine eternal life.

The nature of the natural mind is to function within a natural realm. This nature would have to be changed before it could act within the spiritual realm. We reason according to our understanding. When we have only natural understanding our reasoning is according to natural wisdom. Our affections by nature are carnal, earthly, and sensual--bent on gratifying self. The approval or disapproval of the natural mind is based on a natural conscience which is forever changing with the changes of social customs and ideas. The will of the natural mind chooses that which is evil, indulges in the lusts of the flesh, and chooses to please self. This is the mind of natural life.

What is your life? Have you been elevated above that which is natural to such an extent that you are never bothered with this old nature, conscience, will, understanding, or affections? Have you been wrought upon in such a way that you are living a pure, holy, spiritual life, void of fleshly inclinations? Is your life so holy that you never have a doubt concerning your future abode? I must answer, "no" to all these questions. My experience proves that I possess a darkened understanding, an unregenerated will, and earthly affections. That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. There is a natural life and there is a spiritual life. I maintain that God's children who have been born again and are yet living in this natural world are characters who possess dual lives. This conforms to the expression of the prophet Isaiah, 38:20, ***"All the days of our life."*** "Our life" is an expression that is inconsistent with

the proper usage of language unless it could mean two characters in one person. There is the Spirit of God and there is the spirit of man. As long as we live in this natural tabernacle we will be beset at times with this old depraved nature, hardened conscience, darkened understanding, *unregenerated will,* and earthly affections.

God infuses eternal life into one of His children by His Spirit in enacting the new birth. When this is done the one being born again is given a new nature, an enlightened understanding, a new conscience, a renewed will, and heavenly affections. This act of God does not do away with his natural birth nor his natural life. To the regenerated, born again, child of God may I ask, "What is your life?"

May I answer as God will direct God has *added* His life to your life. You are not only born of the flesh but of the Spirit. Yes, you are given a new nature by which you are enabled to see the depravity of your old nature. Your understanding is enlightened that you may realize the darkness of your natural understanding. You are given a will toward God and godliness that proves to you that your natural will is to choose evil rather than good. These heavenly affections that God has implanted in you shows how selfish and earthly are your natural affections. Has your life been changed Yes, as a person. You do not esteem yourself as highly as you once did. This experience has humbled you and caused you to realize your dependence. You find that where as you were in peace with yourself there is now a warfare. The flesh is lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh. These are contrary one to the other so that you *cannot do the* things you would. Neither time nor space would permit treating upon the extent of the change. May I ask another question !

Has your flesh been purified, renovated, refined, or made better to know. Your experience is as Paul wrote to the Romans concerning himself, even though he had been graced by this new life being added to him. He expresses in ***Romans 7:19, "For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do."*** If you read his experience you will find that when he would do good evil was present with him. You will find that sin was mixed with all he did. He realized that he served the law of sin with his flesh. He considered himself as chief of sinners, less than the least of saints, and a wretched man who needed and prayed for deliverance. He possessed the thorn of the flesh which was a messenger of Satan to buffet him about lest he be exalted above measure. He rejoiced in physical pains and personal persecutions but the indwelling workings of sin in his carnal mind, the opposition of his depraved nature to the grace of God, caused him to cry out concerning his wretched condition. You will find that Peter possessed his old nature after being so wonderfully blessed with such special divine gifts. His regenerated will was to follow Jesus to the extent of death but there was another characteristic abiding with him that resulted in his deny-

ing any knowledge of Christ, not just once but three times, confirming with an oath, cursing and swearing. Job abhorred himself. An old prophet considered himself as being a man of unclean lips. Many wonderfully gifted characters, whose experience is recorded in the Book of books, were affected with the same evil tendencies as you are. May I ask again, ***"What is your life?"***

Your life is a mixture of joys and sorrows. Sometimes you are on the mountain top rejoicing in the grace and love of God but so much of the time you are in the valley of woe. Sometimes your hope of eternal abode in heaven is so little that you wonder, "Do I have a hope?" And sometimes it is an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast that entereth within the veil. Sometimes you doubt you have grace; at other times you are convinced of His gracious care for you. Probably much of the time the Bible is a sealed book to you; but, sometimes it is as God speaking to you. Sometimes you want to talk of God's love for His people; but, much of the time you are shut up and have no desire to meet one who believes in God. Sometimes the minister preaches directly to you with comfort and edification; but much of the time, though you try to listen, you are cold and lifeless. Why am I thus tossed and have this cross?

You would depend upon the goodness of your own life were it not for this tossing to and fro that you experience. You must be given to know the vileness of your life, the weakness of your understanding, the deceit of your heart, the evil of your will, and the carnality of your affections before you can obey the command of Jesus to *deny yourself. You* must possess this cross of flesh against the Spirit before you can obey the command of Jesus, "Take up your cross. " You must realize the vileness of your own life before you can be made submissive to Jesus' command, "Follow me." You must realize these infirmities through the remaining part of your life, else you would not pray for salvation from sin, look to God for grace, depend upon Jesus for your merits, or hope to be finally delivered from evil into the glorious liberty of the children of God. What is your life?

Your natural life is in evidence when the flow of the blood stimulates the activity of the natural mind and the movement of the muscles. Your spiritual life is in evidence when the flow of the Spirit of God stimulates the spiritual mind (or heart) resulting in a godly walk and conversation. When the blood flows and the mind functions there is action of the muscles. When the Spirit flows, and the godly mind functions, there is action consisting of good works. These good works are done only by the stimulation of the Spirit of God. Thus it is by the grace of God that we are what we are.

What is your life? ***"For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God; when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col. 3:3,4).*** We have a foretaste of Christ appearing here in time which is glori-

ous. These experiences last only for fleeting moments; but, the glory of them encourages us to press on with renewed hope and a strengthened faith. Christ is our life because we have been made to depend upon His righteousness. Christ is our life because He suffered the penalty of death, blotting out our sins by dying, that we might live. He is the Author of our spiritual life; the Fountain from whence flows the water of life; the Root of our godly life; and, He is our Head which stimulates a godly walk and conversation. ***"Your life is hid with Christ in God."***

Yes, your life is hid from the world. You cannot make known to the world the precious things of this life. You cannot cause the wise and the prudent to see it. It is hid from them. Jesus thanked God that He had hid these things from the wise and the prudent and revealed them unto babes. Your life is hid from the law in Christ. The law can have no dominion over you. Your sins are hid from God by the blood of Christ for it is impossible for Him to see your sins through the blood of His Son. Those who would destroy your hope and faith cannot because your life is hid with Christ. Is it not true that your eternal life is hid from you much of the timet Two of the three things that abides *now,* according to Paul's letter to the Church at Corinth, proves that your eternal life is hid from you. ***"Now abideth faith, hope, and charity" (1 Cor. 13:13). "Faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen."*** *If a* thing is not seen it is hid. Paul said, ***"We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Rom. 8:24,25).*** If *we see not* that which is hoped for it is *hid.* If then, we are saved by hope, surely our life is hid with Christ. Take courage, brethren, and may God comfort you with the thought that now we see ***"through a glass, darkly; but then face to face." (1 Cor. 13:12).*** Sometimes His smiles are hidden from us. We grope about in darkness. Our minds are taken up with the vain things of this world so that we are made to realize,

I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know,
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again.

What is your life? You are a stranger to yourself. Your life is so hid that you are fearful that you are not born again. When He ***"shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory."*** These foretastes of His appearing here in time renews our hopes and strengthens our faith. We wonder so much of the time, is He coming again? Our faith and hope is that when He appears we shall appear with Him in glory. We look forward to that grand appearing when He shall take us into that glonous home where we shall live and abide with Him eternally. What is *eternal life?*

The word *eternal* indicates that this life under consideration is endless. It

shall never cease but persevere without a break into an endless eternity. Those who possess this life shall never perish. They shall live forever without any danger of dying. No power is able to destroy it for this life is in Christ. *"He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 John 5:12).* This eternal life is interlinked in the golden chain of eternal life and includes therein all of God's chosen people for we read, *"I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one" (John 17:23).* The Father is in His Son, His Son is in His chosen. His chosen is in the Son and His Son is in the Father. This interlinking is why Jesus could say, *"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my father's hand" (St. John 10:28,29).* The children of God are so interlinked in the Father and Son that it would be just as possible for God to be dethroned as for one of them to perish or lose that life ! It would be denying the power of God and blaspheming His Son to proclaim that any who have this eternal life shall ever be severed from it so that the second or eternal death shall have power over them! What is eternal life? *"And this is life eternal, that they might lknow thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17 :3).*

If you know God and know His Son, you have eternal life. If He has seen fit to reveal Himself to you, then you know Him. Peter had eternal life as was manifested in his answer to Jesus, recorded in *Matt. 16:16, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."* This answer of Peter was given, not because he had learned it from flesh and blood, but because he had been divinely favored by a direct revelation from God as you shall see in reading the statement of Jesus following this answer. It takes the life of God imputed to an individual by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit to enable one to know God or Jesus Christ *"He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).* The revelation of God unto His people causes them to cease to believe in themselves, placing their trust in Him. This life of God imputed to you makes you lose confidence in yourself. This eternal life has saved the soul in regeneration and we are confident that the same spirit will save the body in the resurrection. The work of salvation that has been begun in us experimentally will surely be performed and perfected unto the deliverance of our bodies from sin and death. As this life immortalized the soul in regeneration, this life will immortalize the body in the resurrection. As we now have the first-fruits, being a foretaste, we shall come into full fruition in heaven. We shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption

into the glorious liberties of the children of God. What will be your life then?

Your life will then be free from imperfections, warfares, tribulations, doubts, fears, persecutions, thirst, hunger and confusions. You shall have uninterrupted joy, peace and happiness forevermore. There will be no dying as experienced daily in this life, but you shall live, live! live! What a wonderful and glorious life is *eternel life!*

Elder E. J. Lambert

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Chapel Primitive Baptist Church, a Presbytery met at Chapel Church on April 15, 1995 for the examination of Brother Gene Potter if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discreation of the judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of deacon.

The solemity was begun with prayer by Elder Raymond Goad. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the Presbytery. Those present were: Raymond Goad, Marvin Brumfield, Julian Williams, W.T. Conner, Clarence Stone, Larry Hollandsworth, and Thomas Soloman.

Deacons present were as follows: F.W. Murphy, Larry Poindexter, Clyde Johnson, Wilton Sutphin, Alan Terry, A.W. Akers, Irvin Holley, Richard Stegall, D.S. Houston, T.K. Lovell, C.T. Abshire, Jack Walker, James Holley, Silas Payne, Clay Brown, Burnell Williams, and Jesse Tyrell.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Thoma Soloman as moderato; B.R. Williams as Clerk; Elders Larry Hollandsworth and Clarence Stone was chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate, Brother Clay Brown having been duly appointed by Chapel Church, delivered Brother Gene Potter to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elders Larry Hollandsworth & Clarence Stone and all present Elders invited to participate using Scripture reference 3rd Chapter, Timothy 1-13 verses, Elder Stone Acts a chapter.

The presbytery being satisfied by examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands, with the Ordination prayer being delivered by Elder Marvin Brumfield. The charge was delivered to the candidate by Elder J.R. Williams.

The Moderator asked the Presbytery if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brother Gene Potter, and the right hand of fellowship was given. The ordained Brother was delivered back to the church as an ordained Deacon of the Old School Primitive Church at Chapel Church.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and approved. The Presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder W.T. Conner

Elder Tom Soloman, Moderator
Burnell R. Williams, Clerk

EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

God willing, the next session of the Eastern Kehukee Association will be held with North Creek Church starting on Saturday September 30th and continuing through Sunday October 1st. Services will begin at 11 o'clock on Saturday and 10:30 on Sunday. The church is located near Belhaven, North Carolin on Route 99. Take route 264 to Belhaven then route 99 south to the church. It is about 12 miles on the right hand side. All those who love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited.

M.W. Lupton,
Association Clerk

ORIGINAL SOUTH ARKANSAS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

One Hundred Fifty Fourth Session to be held with Pilgrim Rest Church, Dallas County, Arkansas. The next session convenes with Pilgrim Rest Church off Highway 167 north of Fordcyce, Arkansas. Take 273 about 1/2 mile to church. Session begins on Saturday before the third Sunday on September 16-17, 1995. Beginning at 10:00 a.m. We invite our correspondents and visiters to this meeting.

Frances Townley, Church Clerk
301 Troutt St.
Benton, Arkansas, 72015
Telephone 776-2726

CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, Hancocks Primitive Baptist Church, Ayden, North Carolina will host the next session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association on October 7-8, 1995. All who believe and love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited.

The Church is located in Pitt County. From the Greenville area, take NC 11 South to Ayden, turn left on NC 102, go through town and about three miles turn left on Country Club Road. The Church is a short distance on the left.

Gene Lupton
Association Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 1995

Mrs. David A. Phelps, WV	$2.00
John M. McCullar, TX	50.00
Mrs. Grace Manly, FL	5.00
Eld. James Young, GA	2.00
Ms. Amy Cruise, Va	7.00
Marvin Curnutt, TX	2.00
E.R. Graves, AL	5.00
Edward B. Hodnett, VA	2.00
Mrs. Louise Stanley, NC	2.00
Mrs. Margaret Smothers, NC	2.00
Mrs. Minnie L. Barrett, AL	2.00
Joe L. Hamrick, Jr., TX	12.00
Mrs. Nannie W. Wiggins, NC	2.00
Ms. Reidy Pickral, VA	25.00
J.C. Carroll, NC	7.00
Nolan Lanier, NC	7.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER NEMHY ALBRITTON EVERETT

Nemhy Albritton Everett age 90 of Sparkman, died April 5, 1995. She was the widow of Richard Albert Everett, who died in 1986. She was a member of Chapel Hill Primitive Baptist Church She joined in April, 1951. And was faithful to her Church as long as she was able to go. But due to health, didn't get to attend much the last 2 or 3 years. She was deep on the Bible and injoyed her visits with the Brethren and Sisters. Survivors include a daughter and son-in-law, Lorene and Dewey Derrick of North Little Rock, Arkansas, two grand daughters, Mary Alice Martin of Mayflower, Arkansas, Melinda Mitford of Richardson, Texas, and one great grandson. Two sisters, Susie Stone of Altheimer, Arkansas and Zylpha Berlier of Hayward, California. Several nieces and nephews. Funeral services was held at 2 p.m. Friday April 7, 1995 in Chapel Hill Primitive Baptist Church near Sparkman. Burial was in Chapel Hill Cemetery by Benton Funeral Home. Her funeral was conducted by Elder Gradon Smith. We fell our loss is her eternal gain. She will be missed by all that knew her. Done by the order of Pilgrim Rest Church, with a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times and one to the family.

Frances Townley
Church Clerk

DEACON JOHN E. SMITH

It is with sad hearts that we attempt to write this obituary of our beloved brother, John Eliga Smith, but yet we believe that our God who knows all things well has called him to a much better home in heaven, and we would not wish for him to return to this world of sin and sorrow.

Brother Smith was a faithful member and deacon of Union Primitive Baptist Church at Linville, La. for many years, and his wife, Mary, was also a faithful member until her death Oct.1,1994. Brother John always contended for the faith of the doctrine believed and taught by Old School Baptists, and he often expressed his hope that he was one who had been chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world.

At the age of 86 years Brother Smith passed away on Saturday, June 17, 1995 at Homer Memorial Hospital at Homer, La. following a brief illness.

Survivors are his daughter and son-in-law Irene and Franklin Williams of Magnolia, Ar.; 4 sons and daughters-in-law: William Franklin and Doris Smith of Ohatchee, Al., John Thomas and Betty Smith of Alexandria, Al., Fred Weyland and Mary Smith of Homer, La., & Alton Clyde and Faye Smith of Marion, La., plus thirteen Grandchildren and twenty-one Great-Grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at Kilpatrick Funeral Home at Farmerville, La. before a large audience of friends and relatives, and was conducted by his Co-pastors Elders Theron Jones and Clifford Wilbanks. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the return of his blessed Saviour Jesus Christ.

Elder Theron Jones
Elder C.C. Wilbanks

OBITUARY FOR RUBY BARRON

It is with a great sense of unworthiness that I attempt to write an obituary for a true friend and precious member of New Hope Primitive Baptist Church.

Our hearts were saddened by the passing of our dear friend and sister, Ruby Barron. Sister Barron was a dear and precious "Mother in Israel." She loved the doctrine of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. She loved the church. She delighted in hearing the preaching of the gospel and entertaining visitors from all over the country who came in the name of Jesus Christ. Our gracious Lord blessed her to be able to attend meetings and entertain company unto the end of her days on earth. She was present through the 1994 session of the South Ouachita Association, rejoicing in the truth. She had a house full of company. Her home was a delightful place for visitors.

Ruby Smith was born on September 7, 1907 at Spearsville, Louisiana. She was the first child of Tom and Edna Smith. Her grandfather was Elder W. K. Smith. She was married to Cisco Barron on January 27, 1929. Sister Barron asked for a home with New Hope Primitive Baptist Church on the Saturday before first Sunday in August of 1933. She was baptized by Elder R. W. Rhodes on the following Sunday.

Over the years, Brother Cisco and Sister Ruby Barron entertained elders from all across the United States and beyond. She made you feel at home. One of her greatest joys was to sit down in the living room with her guests and have a good scripture discussion. She always had spiritual, penetrating questions. She also was given much spiritual insight to weigh the things she heard in the balance of scripture. We are convinced that sister Barron was a deeply exercised child of God with a rich experience of grace. Sister Barron was blessed to write many articles for the Signs of the Times over the years. Many Old Order Predestinarian Baptists rejoiced in the doctrine and experience set forth in her articles.

Ruby Barron passed from this world on Friday, October 28, 1994. She was 87 years old. She is survived by two sons: Ned Barron and wife, Mary of Spearsville, Louisiana; Bruce Barron and wife, Betty of Haughton, Louisiana; one brother: Elder Graydon Smith of Spearsville; one sister: Dale Haynes of Spearsville; four grandchildren: Tim Barron and wife, Della of Plano, Texas; Pam Tolhurst and husband, Willie of Atlanta, Georgia; Clint Barron and Kelli Barron of Haughton, Louisiana; one great grandchild: Justin Tolhurst of Atlanta, Georgia.

Funeral services were held on Sunday, October 30, 1994 at the New Hope Primitive Baptist Church at Spearsville, Louisiana. The meeting house was filled to overflowing as friends and family gathered to honor their loved one.

Submitted in love
by Shannon Vaughn

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

JESUS' NAME THE SWEETEST SOUND.

HOW sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear !
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole,
And calms the troubled breast;
'tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary, rest.

Dear name, the rock on which I build—
My shield and hiding-place—
My never failing treasury, filled
With boundless stores of grace.

Jesus, my shepherd, husband, friend,
My prophet, priest, and king,
My Lord, my life, my way, my end,
Accept the praise I bring.

Weak is the effort of my heart,
And cold my warmest thought;
But when I see thee as thou art,
I'll praise thee as I ought.

Till then I would thy love proclaim
With every fleeting breath;
And may the music of thy name
Refresh my soul in death.

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EDITORIAL

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

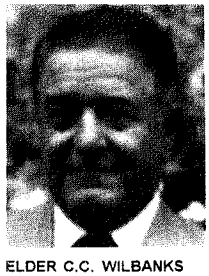
ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

It is my desire, and I pray that God will direct my every thought, to rightly divide the word of truth. Of myself I cannot accomplish this. I am aware there are conflicting opinions concerning this particular doctrine, even among Old Baptists believers. I do not seek controversy in any matter concerning the Scriptures, but desire to set forth my own beliefs and views for the prayerful consideration of all who may read. It is my hope,(and hope is all I have,) that I have been taught of God. Compare the things that I may write with the Holy Scriptures, and if you find them to be not in complete accord then cast them aside.

In the Scriptures the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven are apparently the same. In Matt.19:23-24 Jesus spake of the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God, saying, ***"That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."*** Considering this, can any say that these are different kingdoms?

Where there is a kingdom there must be a king, and the king must have subjects or servants to rule over; and ***"where the word of a king is, there is power." (Eccles 8:4). "For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."*** (Rom 13:1). Jesus is declared to be the Lord of lords and the King of kings. (1 Tim 6:15, Rev 17:14).

The servants of the King of kings are the ones chosen in him before the foundation of the world by God the Father, and they were predestinated unto adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. (Eph 1:4-5). These same children are partakers of flesh and blood, and all of them fell in our federal head Adam when he ate of the forbidden fruit. Under the law of sin and death they became lawful

captives, for, ***"the soul that sinneth, it shall die."*** (Ezek 18:4,20.) They had nothing with which they could redeem themselves, therefore Jesus Christ their King must pay the ransom demanded by God`s holy justice. He was the only one who could pay the ransom for they were his. That ransom was his pure and holy blood; but in his Godhead he could not die, therefore he must become incarnate. This he did when he was born of the virgin Mary. ***"But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal 4:4-5) "Forasmuch then as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them, who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*** (Heb 2:14-15). Because of his everlasting love for his elect children, which are also called his bride and his church, he shed his blood and lay down his life on the cross of calvary, and,"by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." (Heb 10:14) Therefore let us ***"look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith: who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."*** (Heb 12:2).

This should be sufficient proof. if proof is needed, that Jesus is the King. and his elect children are his subjects or servants.

There are some, even among the Old Baptists, who say we do too much spiritualizing of the Scriptures. Spiritualizing cannot be done by natural man, for ***"he receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*** Any spiritualizing must be done by the Holy Spirit, and he gives the children of God`s kingdom wisdom and hearts to understand what he says. In his natural wisdom the apostle Paul did not understand the meaning of the scriptures until the Holy Spirit quickened him into life and converted him, then he was made to speak as the Spirit gave him understanding. Thereby he was able to say in truth, ***"The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."*** Paul tells us what the kingdom is not, and in the same verse he tell us what it is. ***"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink: but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."*** Natural man must have food and drink and other natural things to sustain life, and the spiritual man must have spiritual food and drink. Jesus said unto the Jews, ***"I am the bread of life.***This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever: and the bread that I***

give is my flesh, which I will give for the world." The Jews asked how he could give his flesh, and Jesus answered, *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life: and I will raise him up at the last day."* Jesus was speaking spiritual words which they could not understand, for they were yet in the flesh: they had not yet been born again of the Spirit of God. Jesus said unto Nicodemus, *"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,"* and *"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."* (See the 3rd and 6th chapters of John.) Paul tells us that the kingdom of God is "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." The natural and carnal man has nothing but selfrighteousness, and all of our righteousness is as filthy rags before our God. (Isa 64:6). Jesus said, *"That except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of God."* If we have any pure righteousness it is imputed unto us by faith, which is the gift of God, as it was unto faithful Abraham, who against hope believed in hope, and it was imputed to him for righteousness. And it shall be imputed unto us also if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. (See Rom 5:18-24.)

Peace! O how marvelous it is to feel peace in our soul when it is given. Jesus said, *"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."* How can we be troubled or afraid when Jesus commands peace? This is peace the world knows not. And joy in the Holy Ghost! Does not your heart rejoice when the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, appears and brings to your remembrance the words and promises of Christ? Peter tells us, *"That the trial of your faith being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."* Can there be any greater joy for us in this world? Only the fulfillment of our hope that we are his when he shall appear again without sin unto salvation will give us any greater joy, which shall never end.

The kingdom of God is in this world, but it is not of this world. When Jesus stood before Pilate he answered him and said, *"My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of the world, then would my servants fight." Pilate therefore asked, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, "Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world."* After Jesus was born there came wise men from the east seeking

him, saying, "Where is he that is born king of the Jews?" Although he was born a King, when the people would take him by force, to make him an earthly king, he departed from them, (John 6:15), for his kingdom is not of material things or the things of earthly nature. His kingdom is strictly spiritual, and when the Pharisees demanded of him when the kingdom of God should come, he answered, ***"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation."*** (Luke 17:20). The eyes of natural man cannot see his kingdom, for it can only be seen by the eye of faith, for, ***"The kingdom of God is within you."*** God dwells within his saints and makes himself manifest unto them. Jesus was asked how he would make himself manifest unto us, and not unto the world. Jesus answered, ***"If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."*** (John 14:23) How do we love him, and keep his words? ***"We love him, because he first loved us." (1 John 3:22). And, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."*** (Phil 2:13). There are many more scriptures that might be used to verify that God`s kingdom in this world is spiritual only, but these should be sufficient. Jesus has finished the work that the Father gave him to do here on earth, which was to save his people from their sins, and he is now in heaven on the right hand of God: angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him. (1 Pet 3:22) Just before Jesus ascended to the Father he told his apostles, ***"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."*** Our King is now in his kingdom on high, and reigning over all things with his great power. He is not just waiting for that final day when time and timely things shall be no more. He is coming again at that day, not to set up another kingdom on or in the earth, for this earth is God s footstool (Ia.66:1), and, ***"Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance"*** The heavens and the earth shall be burned up. ***"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth and the works therein shall be burned up " (2 Pet 3:10).*** Jesus is coming again as he hath promised, but it is only to receive his saints, his bride, unto himself. In John 14:2,3 we read, ***"I go to prepare a place for you And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."*** Jesus went to the cross of Calvary to prepare that place, for it cost him his precious blood to make that preparation for us. The kingdom itself isalready prepared, and in that day he shall say, ***"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."***

Paul writes in Phil 3:20,21, ***"For our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven: from whence also we look***

for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." And in 1 Thes, 4:16.17, *"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."* David said in Ps.17:15, *"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." And John wrote, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."* (1 John 3:2).

Brethren beloved, If we be the sons of God when our Saviour shall appear again, which is our blessed hope, then it will be of no concern to us where the kingdom is, for we will be with him.

Praise God for all his mercy and grace unto such vile sinners as we be. May he continue to bless us is my prayer for Christ's sake.

(Elder) C.C. Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

August 15, 1995

Dear Elder Williams:

I see that my subscription to the Signs is due. Enclosed please find my renewal. Every time I go to the mailbox and see the Signs I think of Elder Spangler and how he started sending me the Signs around 35 years ago. I had an uncle, Charlie Helms, who took the Signs for as long as I could remember, and I would see the Signs when we went to visit. Being a young boy I was embarrassed to let the older people know that I was interested in the Signs. After my Aunt and Uncle had read the Signs, they put them in a stack in a pack house. So when we went to visit, I would go to the pack house and read through the old issues. I thought the older people thought I was outside playing. I have passed many a Sunday evening reading old issues of the Signs in that pack house. Back then the Signs contained many experiences, as well as expositions on scriptures, sent in by people. I especially enjoyed reading the experiences and how people would tell of how they had been led from law to gospel and how they had been shown what they were by nature and what they had to be by grace.

Somehow Uncle Charlie knew I was reading his old Signs. One day we visited and Elder Spangler was there. Uncle Charlie told Elder Spangler

about me reading his old Signs and Elder Spangler starting sending me the paper. I have been taking the Signs ever since.

We went to North Fork Church yesterday (2nd in August) and surely the Lord was with Elder Goad. I know that what fell from his lips yesterday came from the Lord and not man.

We often think of you, Elder Brumfield, Elder Goad and Elder Davis and our other friends in the Staunton River Association. Every time we go among you people we are met with kindness and friendship. We count you people among our dearest friends. I daily thank God that we live close enough that we can go among you.

Judy and I both send our love.

Bill Poindexter
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ARTICLES

Whenever I write; what I feel and hope, is touching upon those truths, as they be in the Lord Jesus Christ; it is because of what are my feelings, at the time of my writing. Feeling to know full well; if it be done of my fleshly self; then, it will be no more than filthy rags, and less than nothing, in the sight of the Lord and God. But, certain things come into my mind and feelings, from time to time; of which, seem so impressed upon my feelings; I feel I must lay aside everything else; and try writing down words, that might say, to some degree, of what my feelings are; hoping upon hope; it could be, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; leading, guiding and directing me, in His truths. For I feel, that His way, is that one and only way, of pure and Holy truths. For His truths will firmly stand; when this world is on fire; and forever after this earth has melted with fervent heat, and all earthly worldly things, are never again remembered.

It is my hope, I could be, one among His chosen vessels; whom are carried upon the wings of His everlasting love, to heaven and immortal glory; where every thought and desire, will be centered upon the heavenly Father; where all will be filled with unspeakable, never ceasing adornment for Him; who chose us out of the world, and delivered us safely, out of this low-ground of sin and sorrow; and where pure and everlasting Holy love for each other; will be our only theme; and, where praising and honoring, of His great and Holy name, will be our only song. I know not, how it will be with this poor worm; I now, can only hope, for a better place, after my unprofitable life here is spent; but, be that as it may be; nonetheless, I do feel so wonderfully blessed, to have been able to feel this hope; as I sojourn here in this cruel world; For from time to time, this hope I feel, is far more sweet and precious meaning to me; than all my eighty two years here upon this earth. The Lord God knoweth for sure; I am just limited too, and within the bounds of my hope. It seems to be, that much of the time, I go along in fear and trembling;

wondering, if my hope could be a lively hope; that hope, spoken of in the Scripture, where it is said that, His children live by, while in this world. But thus far, I am still let to hope; and, oh what a blessing that is.

In the feeling, I were given to know, of the weakness and weakedness, in and of man, in his carnal fleshly ways; and in the knowledge that I am right there in their midst; I sometimes fear that I may be deceived in my own mind and heart; and that I may have (so to speak), just dreamed up this method of mine; in an attempt to deceive, you Old School Baptists, into believing, I could be one of you; and so therefore; maybe I should stop writing and sending to the Signs, or expressing what I feel, amongst you. But then, (I hope), by the grace of the merciful God; I begin to feel this way about you; who have been taught of His truths, - that, surely you could not be so deceived, over these years; that surely you would have detected such deception by now; and brought me before the Church, for dismissal; for I have, from time to time, over many years; expressed my feelings and belief, among you Old Baptists; whom, I feel to have a love for you, and those things, you have been enabled to profess and express, in your walk and talk. I feel and hope, I have no confidence in the flesh; but that I do have every confidence, in He who did teach you Old Baptists; that pure and true doctrine of, Jesus Christ the Lord; that same doctrine, John the Baptist were taught. When at the throne of grace, (if you can), please remember this poor worm. I believe it is a truth, - God will furnish His little children, their every need; and I also believe that their every true and pure prayer is, a direct part or portion, of that need; For I believe that each and every one of those prayers that be uttered or groaned, must and do come into being, only; after God has indicted that prayer, into ones heart. For I feel that, He is the Preparer of all, that He receives unto Himself. By reason of sin, the flesh of man is unclean, for sin has contaminated it; therefore, whatever man doeth, in and of his flesh; be it thought or act or speech; it all, is unclean; and in that, God is too pure and Holy, to look upon an unclean thing; and so, as the Scripture sayeth He seeth His people, washed white as snow; would seem to point to it as a true fact that; God does look upon His chosen children; through the pure shed blood, of His only begotten Son Christ Jesus the Lord; but not, their unclean flesh.

The Holy Spirit, maketh alive; while the flesh profiteth nothing. The flesh is flesh, and remaineth an unclean thing, in its very nature, so long as it liveth; while, the Spirit is Spirit and is Holy, and also, remaineth the same; so long as it liveth; of which be, forever and eternally, without beginning or ending. Being born again, is the working, within ones heart, of the Holy Spirit; that is, the removing from the heart, that which is stony and hard; and replacing that hard and stony, with soft and tender disposition; what Scripture call, - a heart of flesh; of which is the implantation with ones heart; an humble and contrite spirit;

which is susceptible, or prepared; to receive a visitation, from the Holy Spirit; which bringeth that implantation, unto active and humble life; wherefrom, comes an ability, to love with purity; both, God and His Church; which is His Chosen Children, and His Son; who is, the Head of His Church, who are Christ's body; them whom Christ suffered, bled, died and arose for; to pay all their debts owed, for their sins; and for their justification, as the sons of God. And Christ the Lord now, is at right hand of His Father God, making intercessions for them, whom His Father gave Him; awaiting the morning of the resurrection; to come back and gather them every one; and carry them, upon the wings of His everlasting love, back to His and their Father in heaven and immortal glory. Then will all be consummated; as to that purpose God had, in and for His Creation of all things; His power will have been made known; His Holiness and Righteousness will have been shown, unto His vessels of His mercy and grace, and all will then be accomplished; whereby His great and Holy name, shall hence forth and forever, be praised, honored and glorified, without ceasing.

May His name (the only name ever named, could ever be worthy) be praised and honored both now, and forevermore. AMEN.

This day (according to mans devised calendar), is Saturday, July 29th, 1995. I sit here hoping and wondering, if I may be enabled to go, and meet with the Brethren, at our Union meeting tomorrow; I feel to know, that all is in His hands; and so, if it's His will, that I be there; then, neither man, nor all the devils on earth or in hell, can be of any hindrance at all, to my arrival, at that meeting place; and that exact principal, will apply; if it not be His will, for me to arrive there. For I feel that, His will, shall surely be fulfilled, to every jot and tittle. For what could be more beautiful, and sometimes comforting; than these words He spake, I will be unto you a God, and you shall be unto me a people. I feel to dearly love, His WILLS and SHALLS from time to time; for there is no uncertainty there.

Troy G. Shepard

VOICES OF THE PAST

EARLY PARTICULAR BAPTISTS

he falling away of the early churches from the doctrine and practice of the Apostles, culminating in the rise of popery, obliterated for several centuries the divinely-given ordinance of baptism of professed believers by immersion, and placed in its room the sprinkling of infants. England in common with other countries walked in this darkness of human tradition, and it is not until the times of the Protestant Reformation that a definite and organized return to the Apostolic practice is to be observed. Those who advocated baptism upon a profession of faith, both on the Continent and in this country, were at first reproachfully termed Anabaptists, or "baptizers again",

because they could not allow infant sprinkling to be a baptism according to Scripture. Some of these early Anabaptists were entangled in error and held extravagant views, which added to the stigma of the title; but it is believed there were some who not only advocated Scriptural baptism, but were also sound in doctrine and practice, and Baptists of this kind are to be found amongst those who suffered persecution during the reigns of the English Tudor Queens, both Mary who enforced popery, and Elizabeth who insisted on conformity to the English Prayer-book. These persecutions caused many to make their escape to the Continent, where churches were formed on the Independent system. Some of these refugees who held Baptist principles returned to this country in the times of the Stuart Kings James I and Charles I, and became the founders of the Baptist churches in England. The Arminian section of these returning exiles gave rise to the General Baptists, while those who held the doctrine of particular redemption constituted the Particular Baptists. Later on, the name Strict Baptists was introduced to denominate those who adhered to the church order of strict communion, as opposed to the open communion which was being advocated by Robert Hall and others about 1816.

The Arminian Baptists may be said to have their rise under John Smyth, who had taken refuge in Amsterdam and joined a church there under the pastorate of Francis Johnson, In course of time, a breach arose owing to the Arminian tendencies of Smyth, as well as his belief in the baptism of professed believers by immersion. A Baptist Church was formed with Smyth as pastor, who, however, died a few years later in 1612. He was succeeded by Thomas Helwys, who came to England shortly afterwards with John Morton, and these two may be regarded as the pioneers of the General Baptists in this country.

The Particular Baptists had their rise from an English church in Middleburg under the pastorate of Henry Jacob, who with some of his members returned to England and started an Independent Church in London in 1616, when he with "each of the rest made some confession or profession of their faith and repentance... Then they covenanted together to walk in all God's ways, as He had revealed or should make known to them." Later, Jacob went to Virginia, and another pastor, John Lathorp, was appointed over them, "a man of tender heart and a humble and meek spirit, serving the Lord in the ministry about nine years to their great comfort" (Jessey Records, as quoted in Early English Dissenters, by Champlin Burrage). Owing to persecution, the church had to move its place of assembly from house to house, until eventually Lathorp and several of his members were taken and imprisoned. After about two years, the members were released; but Lathorp could get no liberty, until at length he obtained permission to go to America about 1634, which he then did. He was succeeded in the pastorate by Henry

Jessey, the author of the above-quoted MS. Records.

The question as to the right mode of administering baptism, and who were the right subjects for the ordinance, had been for some time exercising the minds of many gracious people in England, a fact to which reference is thus made by an author of those times, Edward Hutchinson, in A Treatise concerning the Covenant and Baptism. He says: "Divers pious and very gracious people, having sought the Lord by fasting and prayer that He would show them the pattern of His house... resolved by the grace of God not to receive or practise any piece of positive worship which had not precept nor example from the Word of God. Infant baptism coming of course under consideration, after long search and many debates, it was found to have no footing in the Scriptures ... but on the contrary a mere innovation, yea the profanation of an ordinance of God. And though it was purposed to be laid aside, yet what fears, tremblings, and temptations did attend them, lest they should be mistaken, considering how many learned and godly men were of an opposite persuasion! How gladly would they have had the rest of their brethren to go along with them! But when there was no hope, they concluded that a christian's faith must not stand in the wisdom of men... and so resolved to practice according to their light. The great objection was the want of an Administrator, which as I have heard was removed by sending certain messengers to Holland, whence they were supplied" (Quoted in Ivimey's History of the English Baptists, Vol. I, p. 142).

It will be perceived from this account that the question of baptism was causing separation amongst the churches of those times, and it appears that several members of Lathorp's Church obtained dismissal upon these grounds, and a Baptist Church was commenced at Wapping under the pastorate of John Spilsbury in 1633. Also when Henry Jessey was pastor of the Independent Church, others left for the same reason to unite with Spilsbury's church, amongst whom was William Kiffin; and later on, Jessey himself was baptized by immersion. The incident of sending to Holland is confirmed by some MSS, written by Kiffin, in which he says that several of the godly "being convinced of baptism, that also it ought to be by dipping the body into water, resembling burial and rising again ... after prayer and conference about their so enjoying it, none having then so practiced in England to professed believers, and hearing that some in the Netherlands had so practised, they agreed and sent over Richard Blunt (who understood Dutch) with letters of commendation, who was kindly accepted there, and returned with letters from them... Mr. Blunt baptized Mr. Blacklock, that was a teacher amongst them, and Mr. Blunt being baptized, he and Mr. Blacklock baptized the rest of their friends that were so minded, and many being added to them, they increased much." In a few years, the Baptists had so increased as to "become seven churches in

London" (Kiffin MSS, as quoted by Burrage).

William Kiffin has been termed the "Father of the Particular Baptists"; and indeed he was a notable figure amongst them, being a man, not only of some substance and influence, but also blessed with grace and with a call to the ministry, becoming eventually the pastor of the P.B. Church in Devonshire Square, London, which position he maintained for sixty-one years until his death in 1701. Convinced when fifteen years of age, under a sermon by Mr. Norton in London, that he could have no true peace with God without an interest in Christ, he every day saw himself more and more vile and sinful. "Pray I could not", he says; "and believe in Christ I could not. I thought myself shut up in unbelief." After a time, hearing Mr. Davenport at Coleman Street in London, he found many of the objections of his unbelief answered, and felt his heart "greatly to close with the riches and freeness of grace which God held forth to sinners in Jesus Christ." His fears vanished, and his heart "was filled with love to Jesus Christ", and with and abhorrence of sin. Then, again hearing Mr. Norton, his "faith was exceedingly strengthened in the fulness of that satisfaction which Jesus Christ had given to the Father for poor sinners, and was enabled to believe his interest therein" (Ivimey, Vol. II, pp. 299, etc.) He was a great advocate for strict communion, and wrote a work on the subject, entitled, A Sober Discourse of Right Church Communion.

Another of the early Baptist Churches in London was that under the pastorate of Mr. Hanserd Knollys. He resigned his living in the Church of England, and opened a meeting in Great St. Helen's in London, where he was ordained pastor in 1645, and often had as many as a thousand hearers. Through persecution he was forced to leave this church, and indeed was often compelled to move from place to place, proceeding at one time to America, and again to the Continent. In a retrospect of these afflictions, he says: "My wilderness, sea, city, and prison mercies afforded me very many and strong consolations. The spiritual and providential presence of my Lord Jesus Christ, and the joys and comforts of the Holy and eternal Spirit communicated to my soul, together with suitable and seasonable Scriptures of truth, have so often and so powerfully revived, refreshed, and strengthened my heart... that the sense, yea the life and sweetness thereof, abides still upon my heart, and hath engaged my soul to live by faith, to walk humbly, and to desire and endeavour to excel in holiness, to God's glory and the example of others. Though I confess many of the Lord's ministers, and some of the Lord's people, have excelled and outshined me" (Ivimey, Vol. II, p. 356).

Another of the first Baptist Churches in London met in Coleman Street, and had for its first pastor Thomas Lamb, who frequently suffered imprisonment for his nonconformity. Indeed, he "was in almost all the gaols in and about London, as he always used to return

to his work of preaching as soon as he got free from confinement. He was a zealous and popular preacher, and a man of great courage; he used to say that a man was not fit to preach who would not preach for Christ's sake though he was sure to die for it as soon as he had done. It was very common for the Baptists at this time to use Old Ford River, near Bromley in Middlesex, as a baptistery. This place was much frequented for that purpose. Mr. Lamb being employed in baptizing a woman here, her husband, a bitter enemy to the Baptists, brought a great stone under his coat with and intention, as he afterwards confessed, to have thrown it at Mr. Lamb while he stood in the river. But he was so affected with the prayer before the administration of the ordinance that he dropped the stone, fell into tears, and was himself the next person baptized" (Ivimey, Vol. I, pp. 171, 172).

P.B. Churches were formed also in other parts of the country, notably one at Bristol, the very interesting account of which is given by one of their elders in The Broadmead Records, and another in Bedford, over which John Bunyan was later the pastor. The Broadmead church in Bristol had its rise from a number of godly people who separated from the National Church about the year 1640, through the preaching of a Welsh minister named Wroth, called in these Records, the Apostle of Wales. In a few years time, some of the members wished to be baptized in the Scriptural mode by immersion, and they were allowed by the church so to walk in that ordinance, one of them being baptized by Henry Jessey in London, whither he had occasion to go, and others in a river. Later on, the pastor and the ruling elder also went to London and were baptized by Jessey.

The Bedford Church was formed in 1650 under the pastorate of John Gifford, who had been an officer in the army of Charles I during the Civil Wars, and coming later to Bedford, lived in much wickedness there, until he was arrested by sovereign grace and "brought into a great sense of sin, wherein he continued for the space of a month or above. But at last God did so plentifully discover to him by His Word the forgiveness of his sins for the sake of Christ, that (as he hath by several of his brethren been heard to say) all his life after, which was about the space of five years, he lost not the light of God's countenance, no not for an hour, save only about two days before he died." There were several godly people in the town with whom Gifford felt a union, and "when it pleased God... to show this mercy to this people, He placed Mr. J. Gifford among them for their minister in Christ Jesus, and to be their pastor and bishop, and the steward of God to communicate to them the knowledge of His will in the holy mysteries of the Gospel." Their manner of forming a church is thus described: "After much prayer and waiting upon God, and consulting one with another by the Word, they upon the day appointed for this solemn work, being met, after prayer and seeking God as before, with one consent jointly first gave

themselves to the Lord, and one to another by the will of God." Mr. Gifford, although a Baptist, did not insist on strict communion, in which he seems to have followed Henry Jessey of London, and the Bedford Church continued in this practice also under John Bunyan (Ivimey, Vol. II, pp. 18-22). Gifford lived only a few years after the church was formed, as did also his successor, John Burton, for whose recovery the church held frequent prayer meetings. "But neither their prayers nor tears availed", and he passed away in 1660 (p. 30). Later, in 1671, John Bunyan was called to be their pastor, having joined the church under Mr. Gifford's ministry.

With a view to removing charges of holding Arminian and other errors, the P.B. ministers of the seven London churches published in 1643 a Confession of Faith embodied in fifty-two articles. In concluding this Confession they say: "We desire to live quietly and peaceably, as becomes saints, endeavoring in all things to keep a good conscience... Also we confess that we know but in part, and that we are ignorant of many things that we desire and seek to know, and if any shall do us that friendly part, to show us from the Word of God that which we see not, we shall have cause to be thankful to God and them. But if any man shall impose upon us anything that we see not to be commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ, we should, in His strength, rather embrace all reproaches and tortures of men, to be stripped of all our outward comforts, and if it were possible to die a thousand deaths, rather than do anything against the truth of God, or against the light of our own consciences" (Neal's History of the Puritans, Vol. III, P. 161).

By this time, Parliament had set aside the bishops, and had appointed the Westminster Assembly of Divines to examine the whole question of the kind of church order, and the doctrinal basis, to be observed in future in the National Church. On the point of baptism, however, the Assembly, being largely Presbyterian, advised the continuance of baptism of infants, although the Baptist objection to this course was ably set before them by a Baptist minister, Mr. John Tombes of Bewdley. The P.B. Confession of Faith, however, came into the hands of many Members of Parliament, and was a means of convincing them of the orthodoxy of the doctrines held by the Particular Baptists, and consequently of ameliorating the persecution to which they had been subjected.

Under the Commonwealth, when Oliver Cromwell was made Lord Protector in 1653, the churches throughout the country were supplied with pastors by a Board of "Triers", on which were representatives of the Baptists, as well as of Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Independents, so much was Cromwell in favour of religious toleration. The Baptist members were John Tombes, Henry Jessey, and Daniel Dyke, and their inclusion resulted in several of the National churches being provided with ministers of the Baptist persuasion. The three just named, in particular, were appointed to livings, namely, Tombes

to Leominster in Hereford, Dyke to Great Hadham in Hertfordshire, and Jessey to St. George's in Southwark, London. Jessey also continued his own Baptist Church in London, preaching to them on Lord's day afternoons, and at St. George's in the mornings.

After the death of Oliver Cromwell, and the short succession of his son Richard, this toleration came to an end, and the monarchy was re-established in the person of Charles II in 1660. The bishops were also reinstated, and soon the infamous Act of Uniformity followed in 1662, when over two thousand ministers left their Church of England livings rather than submit themselves to a conformity which was against these noble Nonconformists were some twenty-six or more Baptists, including the three ministers already mentioned. Attempts by these Nonconformists to hold services were visited with violent persecution, the dragoons being used to break up their meetings in various parts of the country. At a meeting in Buckinghamshire where Benjamin Keach, a notable Baptist minister, was preaching, "they came with great rage and violence upon the assembly, and swore they would kill the preacher.

Accordingly he was seized, and four of the troopers declared their determination to trample him to death with their horses. Having bound him, they laid him on the ground for this purpose, and had actually prepared themselves to accomplish this horrid design. but the officer, discovering their intention, rode up to them just as they were going to spur their horses to ride over him, and interposing his authority prevented them. He (Keach) was then taken up and tied behind one of the troopers across his horse, and carried to gaol, where he lay some time and suffered great hardships" (Ivimey, Vol. I, pp. 338, 339).

Several times Keach was imprisoned for his nonconformity, and in 1664 was made to "stand upon the pillory at Aylesbury in the open market from 11 o'clock, and again in the following week "to stand in the same manner and for the same time in the market at Winslow", for publishing a book called The Child's Instructor, in which baptism by immersion was advocated (Ivimey, Vol. I, p. 351). Kiffin, Knollys, Bunyan, and other Baptists also suffered imprisonment under these persecutions, increased zeal being afforded their oppressors by the passing of the Conventicle Act in 1664, which stipulated that, "if any person above the age of sixteen...shall be present at any meeting, under colour or pretense of any exercise of religion, in other manner than is allowed by the liturgy or practice of the Church of England, where shall be five or more persons than the household, shall for the first offense suffer three months' imprisonment... or pay a sum not exceeding L5; for the second offence six months' imprisonment, or L10; and for the third offence the offender to be banished to some of the American plantations for seven years, or pay L100." Informers were encouraged to spy and disclose these meetings, for which they were paid from

the fines imposed, and many evil-disposed people made money by these means (Neal's History of the Puritans, Vol. IV, p. 394). Added to this, there came the Five Mile Act in 1665, which prohibited nonconforming ministers from coming within that distance of a city or corporation, or of any place where they had been in the custom of preaching.

But the persecuted Baptists, as others who suffered for the truth's sake, found often that these were times of spiritual favour in their own souls. Bunyan, who was kept in prison twelve years altogether, says of his imprisonment: "I never had in all my life so great an inlet into the Word of God as now. Those Scriptures that I saw nothing in before were made in this place and state to shine upon me. Jesus Christ also was never more real and apparent than now. Here I have seen and felt Him indeed... I never knew what it was for God to stand by me at all turns, and at every offer of Satan to afflict me, as I have found him since I came in hither... But notwithstanding these helps, I found myself a man encompassed with infirmities. The parting with my wife and poor children hath often been to me in this place as the pulling the flesh from the bones... especially my poor blind child, who lay nearer my heart than all beside... But that which helped me in this temptation were divers considerations, of which ... I will name these two Scriptures: 'Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive, and let thy widows trust in Me'; and again, 'The Lord said, Verily it shall go well with thy remnant'" (Grace Abounding).

In 1675, when a somewhat easier atmosphere prevailed, owing to the desire of the King to grant more religious toleration, but chiefly for the advancement of popery, the London Baptist Ministers "addressed a circular letter to the churches both in England and Wales, inviting their brethren of the Baptist persuasion to meet the following May in the metropolis, with a view to forming a plan for providing an orderly standing ministry in the church, who might give themselves to reading and study, and so become able ministers of the New Testament. This was signed by Kiffin, Dyke, and William Collins and other London pastors" (Ivimey, Vol. I, p. 416). Probably arising from this letter, an assembly of pastors and elders met in 1677, who amongst other things issued again the Confession of Faith of the Particular Baptists, which they conclude with their "earnest prayer that the God of all grace will pour out those measures of His Holy Spirit upon us, that the profession of truth may be accompanied with the sound belief and diligent practice of it by us, that His name may in all things be glorified, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen" (Ivimey, Vol. I, pp. 425, 426).

Benjamin Keach, whose sufferings for the cause of Christ have already been mentioned, was baptized in his fifteenth year among the General Baptists in Buckinghamshire, and was sent out by them to preach in his eighteenth year. Later, when in London, he was brought to receive the

truth as held by the Particular Baptists, and continued with that body until his death. He was ordained over a church in London when twenty-eight years of age, which had to assemble in private houses owing to persecution; and it was not until the indulgence granted by Charles II for a short period in 1672 that a meeting-house was built for him at Horsely Down in London. The reign of the popish King James II, who succeeded Charles III and Mary, who peacefully entered England from the Continent, and being zealous Protestants, granted a general religious toleration in 1689. Writing of these privileges, Keach says: "We do believe that their present Majesties are raised up to be glorious instruments in the hand of God... I am sure we cannot sufficiently adore the Divine goodness for that salvation wrought by His own right hand. Let us strive to be thankful to God, and labour to live in love one with another, and improve the present providence" (Preface to Distressed Zion Relieved).

With these objects in view, and desiring to strengthen and unite the P.B. Churches, Keach, together with Kiffin and Knollys, called a General Assembly in London, to which over a hundred churches sent their ministers or other messengers. The first Assembly met in 1689, and continued for eight or nine days in fasting and prayer, and in conference on the state of their churches, and what should be done for their mutual good. While disclaiming "all manner of superiority and superintendency over the churches", they sought "to be helpers together of one another by way of counsel and advice", resolving that whatever should be determined by them in any case should "not be binding on any one church till the consent of that church be first had". They also established a central fund for the assistance of poorer churches and the ministry, and recommended "churches that live near together and consist of small numbers... to join together for the better and more comfortable support of their ministry, and better edification one of another" (Ivimey, Vol. I, pp. 478-502). Year by year, the General Assembly met in London to seek to promote the welfare of the churches, and later on similar meetings were held at Bristol and other places in the West.

Keach was instrumental in introducing congregational singing among the Baptists. In his own church it was decided at first to sing only at the conclusion of the Lord's Supper, and then at public thanksgiving. Later on, they agreed to sing on Lord's days after the concluding prayer, so that those who objected could leave. Eventually these objectors withdrew, and commenced another Baptist cause at Maze Pond, two of the chief pastors of which were, Edward Wallin and his son Benjamin. Keach was succeeded at Horsely Down by his son-in-law, Benjamin Stinton, in 1704. After his death, which occurred suddenly in 1718, when he was only forty-three, the church became divided, one part settling under the pastorate of John Gill, and eventually meeting in Carter Lane.

Dr. Gill was brought into soul concern under a sermon by William Wallis of Kettering, preached from the piercing question to Adam after the fall: "Where art thou?" This became also a solemn question in Gill's conscience. "He considered himself as summoned before the Judge of all to answer for his conduct... Now he began more clearly to see the depravity of his nature, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, his need of the Saviour and of a better righteousness than his own, even the righteousness of Christ, to be received by faith. Shortly after, he was favoured with a comfortable persuasion of interest in Him, through the application of several exceedingly great and precious promises to his heart by the blessed Spirit of God" (Dr. Rippon's Life of John Gill, pp. 6, 7). He was soon called to preach at Kettering and the neighbourhood, until his invitation to the London church.

One of the fruits of Gill's ministry was John Brine, who was brought to a knowledge of the truth and called to the ministry at Kettering, and later came to London as pastor of the church at Currier's Hall, which is believed to be that commenced by Hanserd Knollys. Brine was chosen pastor in 1730, a move which was the more acceptable to him, as it brought him again in contact with his former friend and pastor, Dr. Gill. During his thirty-five years in London, Brine took a principal part in all the public transactions amongst the Baptists, and was much respected by his brethren. His dying words express what he was, under the teaching of the Spirit: "I think I am of sinners the chief, of saints the least; I know that I am nothing. But by the grace of God I am what I am" (Wilson's Dissenting Churches, Vol. II, p. 576).

S.F. Paul

From Elder Lambert's Book,
"Tried In The Furnace."

LETTER TO ONE BAPTIZED

Dear Sister Irene,

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

Words sound empty and inadequate in attempting to express to you our appreciation for your good letter and remembrances on my birthday. Unless there is such a thing as "Spiritual Telepathy" you will never know how deeply impressed both of us have been concerning you.

Since I had the high privilege of taking your hands in mine and leading, you into the river "Jordan." The spiritual glow on your face startled me as I looked upon you before beginning the Baptismal Ceremony. It has arrested my thoughts many times since then and has made deep impressions that I shall not soon forget. Dessie Mae took two pictures of this scene, one while the ceremony was being said; another, while you were beneath the water's surface. When we get some extras made we will send you one each.

You know there is a love that is so far superior to natural love that the same terms will not suffice. You plainly stated this in your letter. I heartily agree with you. Let us distinguish the two by calling one natural love and the other, godly or spiritual love. One is selfish and the other unselfish; one is liable to be turned into hate; the other, lasting; one is sensual and the other is pure. One may possess natural love for someone and be disappointed because it is not reciprocated--godly love is always reciprocated. We love Him because He first loved us. We love each other because He has indelibly written that commandment in our hearts. What wondrous love is this !

Some of God's people are especially endowed with characteristics and providentially led through circumstances so that they experience the extreme of both joy and sorrow. I am persuaded you are one of that special group. Peter, James and John witnessed the greatest sorrow in the garden of Gethsemane and the greatest joy on the mountain when Jesus was transfigured. None of the others witnessed these scenes. We cannot really enjoy the joys God blesses us with unless we have been through the sorrows Satan is permitted to put upon us. Satan can do no more than what my Father pleases. The only reason Satan is in existence is because God has a purpose in him. God is sovereign; Satan is under His direct control! Satan realizes God has control over him. He had to get permission from God to afflict Job. These afflictions Job had were blessings in disguise. Satan meant it for harm but God meant it unto good. This is expressed verbatim in regard to the treatment of Joseph by his brethren. See Genesis 50:20. I am persuaded that ***"All things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are called according to His purpose."*** See Romans 8:28. God uses darkness to make light glorious; the furnace of afflictions to make the deliverance marvelous; in fact, it is good that all things have their opposite in order to prove to the children of promise that which is good and acceptable to God. We cannot understand it now, but we shall some day.

Elder E.J. Lambert

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 1995

Mrs. James Meador, VA	$2.00
A.W. King, NC	2.00
Eld. Jack Cox, VA	7.00
Eld. Hale Terry, VA	2.00
Kenneth Thompson,VA	2.00
Mrs. Joel Alexander, AL	7.00
Charlie Fox, AR	2.00
Mrs. Alice Gibson, VA	2.00
Mrs. Frank Scearce, VA	2.00
W.C. Lake, Fl.	2.00
Ted G. McDaniel, VA	7.00
A Friend, NC	25.00
Mrs. Mary Stanfield, VA	2.00
Mrs. Lessie Tilley, NC	5.00
Mrs. Pattie KreWatch, DE	20.00
L.C. Ashworth, WV	2.00
Alvin Agee, VA	2.00

OBITUARIES

A TRIBUTE TO BURCH BLAYLOCK

In remembrance of my husband of twenty-eight years, John Burch Blaylock, I would like to pay tribute to the most special person in my life. Others have spoken words of praise and written eulogies that would have humbled him immensely. Though honored, he would have reminded them that if there was anything good about him, it was by the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving his Lord and Saviour all the credit.

Burch was of the Primitive Baptist faith. Though he was never brought to ask for a church home he had a great love and high regard for the Church and supported it. I fully believe he felt the free and unmerrited gift of God's grace in his trials of this world and had a ray of hope in his breast that all was well with his soul. I feel he was given a sweet hope in Christ many years ago. He felt a brotherhood to the Lord's people that the Apostle Peter describes in I Peter 2:9 and I quote "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light". He strongly felt that God is all powerful and none can help and that He is always present, believing as the scriptures describe as being an Omipotent and Omnipresent God.

Burch enjoyed hearing the scriptures expounded. While able to do so, he recorded many sermons on tape and enjoyed listening to a number of them again later at home, especially after becoming disabled to attend church. In years past when we were both in better health, it was a joy to have the brethren and sisters and especially the ministerial brethen to visit in our home and to listen to them discuss the scriptures and at times for a minister to expound a particular text or subject. To see Burch on such occasions was like watching a thirsty man drinking water.

Burch was born June 6, 1909 in Caswell County near Prospect Hill, N. C., to the late William David and Sarah Delilah Stadler Blalock and slipped quietly from this world April 2, 1995. He was the youngest of five children, all having predeceased him. They were in sequence, Robert P. Blalock and Willie J. Blalock of Prospect Hill, N. C., Mary Blaylock Couch of Bridgeton, N. J. and Lester A. Blaylock of Prospect Hill, N. C. In 1941, Burch first married Isla Mae Coward of Wake County. After a lengthy illness, she died in 1963 and is buried in the Dean-Coward Family Cemetery in Raleigh, N. C. They had no children.

In the fall of 1917, when Burch was only eight years old, he had an infection in both legs that required amputation, having to remove all of the left leg, requiring two or more surgeries and the right leg to just below the knee. This caused him to have to spend most of that winter in the hospital and to miss a year's schooling. In time, when he was able to wear a prothesis on the right leg and with the use of crutches, he led a near normal life. I

never heard him complain once about his condition, but have heard him say many times he thanked the Lord for leaving him a way to walk. He was ever grateful to family, other relatives and friends for all their help and support during what had to be a trying time.

After finishing high school and a year of business schooling at Elon College, he ran for the office of Register of Deeds in Caswell County in 1934 and won the election. He remained Reqistrar of the county for forty-two years, never having any opposition at the polls. For many years he worked long hours and without any help. He enjoyed his work and the people appreciated him and his work.

Burch had many interests in life. For several years he was active in the Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs. At one time, he had a small woodworkinq shop at his home. His specialty was making picture frames. He also framed pictures. In time, he began to pursue his interest of family genealogy. Realizing there were others that had the same interest, he started collectinq items of genealoqical and historical value. At the time of his death, there was over seventy thousand index cards for his collection.

Mr. Houston G. Jones, who once worked as State Archivist, was acquainted with Burch's interest in preserving the county's old records, plus his personal collection. He wrote in eulogy that he recognized Burch as the most history conscious of our state's county officials. Also that Burch's life should be an inspiration to young people. In spite of his handicap, Burch lived a full life for most of his near eighty-six years and accomplished much. I feel he stood tall in many ways. To me his integrity, his patience, an appreciative heart and the respect for his fellow man, framed his daily life.

Burch retired in 1976 at the age of sixty-seven years. After a heart attack on Labor Day in 1983, his heart was so weak it required a pacemaker for the rest of his life. In recent years with more health problems, he began to fail steadily, eventually confining him mostly to the house and much of his last year to the bed. He was a good patient, so appreciative of every helping hand, often saying "thank you again" to the one helping him.

Burch's funeral was held at the Hooper Funeral Home Chapel in Yanceyville, N. C., conducted by Elders Kenneth R. Key and C. B. Davis, Jr. By Burch's request, hymn No. 559 in the Hymn and Tune Book was read - "A child of Jehovah, a subject of grace, I'm of the seed royal, a dignified race". The words of this hymn discribed what he felt and believed and it meant much to him. Another favorite, "Amazing Grace", was sunq. Also "Jesus before Thy face I fall, my Lord, my life, my hope, my all". His body was laid to rest in the Blalock Family Cemetery, not far from where he was born and reared, to await that glorious resurrection day.

With precious memories, I wait,
Mary Gordon Blaylock

GLENNA FLINT KEATON

God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to call from our midst another dear member, Sister Glenna Flint Keaton.

Sister Glenna was born January 15, 1918 in Roanoke, Virginia. She was the daughter of the late Calvin Flint and Maude Brindle Flint.

She married James Reid Keaton and they were blessed with four sons. Her husband and two sons, Danny Garth Keaton, and Jerry Reid Keaton and her sister, Sister Clara Cumbo predeceased her.

Sister Glenna was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace. She received a precious hope and asked for a home at Dan River Church on Sunday, August 27, 1967,and was baptised by her pastor, the late Elder David V. Spangler. Sister Glenna attended church every opportunity she had. Since she didn't drive, Sister Glenna was dependent on someone to bring her to church. She enjoyed the fellowship of the brethren which was manifested by the sweet smile she always had.

Sister Glenna departed this life on January 24, 1995. She is survived by two sons, Michael Wayne Keaton and Roger Lee Keaton, a sister, Juanita Grubbs, eight grandchildren and ten great grandchildren.

Graveside services were held January 26, 1995 at 2:00 P.M. in Danville Memorial Gardens, Danville, Virginia by her pastor, Elder Kenneth Key and Mr. Ralph McCormack.

May all who mourn her death be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father who never makes a mistake. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away...bless his Holy name.

Written by request of Dan River Church while in conference.

Phyllis Snyder
Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator

ODESSA MIERS MARZE

God has called from our midst a precious sister in Christ, loving mother, and believer in the doctrine of Christ and of God, Odessa Marze, age 93 of Merryville, La. She died Thursday, July 13,1995, at home.

She was a member of Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church near Merryville having united with the Primitive Baptists in September, 1940, and was a faithful and fruitful member for nearly 55 years.

Sister Dessie was the mother of 13 children, 12 of whom have survived her departure. Her husband and a daughter and sister in the church, Verb Mae, preceded her in that restful sleep from which we believe they will awaken on that glorious dawn when they wil arise forevermore.

Survivors include three sons, Everett L. Marze of Call, Texas, Archie Lee Marze of Humbk, Texas, and Alvin B. Marze of Cleveland, Texas; nine daughters, Armedia Taylor of Anacoco, Roxie Miller of Moorefield, W. Va., Eula Marie Chaney of Denver, Colo., Sadie Bowman of Westlake, Ama

Erwin of DeRidder, Josie Harper of Fierson, Carol Ann Bowman of Lake Charles, Isabelle Eaves of Merryville and Ceilestia Terrell of Merryville; two brothers, Jerome Mers and Ben E. Miers, both of Anacoco; 47 grandchildren, 101 great-grandchildren and 41 great-great grandchildren.

Written by request of her family by
Elder Lynnwood Jacobs.

OLLIE W. PARKS

With much sadness I attempt to write about the death of a good friend and I trust, Brother in the Spirit.

Brother Ollie W. Parks was born May 13, 1910, and passed from this life July 28, 1995.

He was a firm believer that our Savior is The Way, The Truth and The Life. He dearly loved to sing the old songs of Zion, and when singing was going on in the Church, Brother Ollie was always with them singing bass.

He and his wife, O. C. and many times, daughter, Patsy and husband, Bodie Lankford, were with him going to church. When the week-end came, if there were Church Services anywhere in driving distance, he was always there if possible.

He loved company and scriptural discussions, and when visitors were in his part of the country they were always welcome in his home. Many Old Baptists have been entertained there.

He was loved wherever he went and will be sadly missed by those of like precious faith with whom he shared that precious love and sweet fellowship. He traveled wherever our doctrine of salvation by grace was preached.

He left to remember, his loving wife of 63 years, O.C. Parks; one daughter, Patsy Lankford and husband, Bodie; one brother, W. S. Parks and wife, Hazel; four grandchildren, Sam Lankford and wife, Mary; Ron Lankford and wife, Mary; Don Lankford and wife, Brenda; Catherine Gainey and husband, Dan; and nine great grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Graydon Smith July 31, 1995, at Union Primitive Baptist Church with a host of friends and relatives in attendance.

Written by one who loved him.
Elder Graydon Smith

SUSAN EMELINE (EMA) RICE

With much sadness in my heart, I will try to write a few words in memory of one whom I have loved all of my life.

Susan Emeline (Ema) Rice was born Nov. 16, 1899, in Pittsylvania County, Va., the daughter of Albert Edgar Rice, Sr. and Maniza Page Rice. She is survived by a sister, Mary Elizabeth Rice of Danville. She was preceeded in death by two brothers and one sister.

When she was five years old her father died, leaving her mother with five small children. In the years that followed, she became a strong, hardworking person who seemed to know just what to do.

She was the main and the family members depended on her. When she was old enough she quit school and went to work to help support the family. During those years she made a lot of friends whom she loved and often invited them to her home for a meal, always giving of herself - She was witty and loved to play little pranks on us, always jolly and fun to be around. When I was growing up I was invited to go along on vacation trips. She had all of the responsibility, did all of the driving, and always eager to please those of us who went along. Those trips were so enjoyable and it pleased her to see that we were having a good time, but she knew that it was the will of our Almighty God that blessed her to get us safely back home.

At age sixty two she retired from Johnson's Dept. Store. She was blessed with good health most of her life until she contracted arthritis. As this affliction grew progressively worse she bore the pain and suffered in silence and never complained. For many years she looked after her family and felt blessed by God to be able to do so.

She joined the Danville Primitive Baptist Church Aug. 11, 1979, and was baptized by Elder Julian Williams. Ema had attended this church all of her life. She enjoyed going to all of the meetings and showed love for all of the brethren. She attended regularly as long as she was able. To every meeting she took as many as she could of those who had no way to go. Always thinking of others. She enjoyed going to other churches and to the associations, loved having the pastor and the brothers and sisters in her home after Sunday services. She loved the Doctrine of Election and Salvation by Grace. She was steadfast in her belief.

When she broke her hip she realized she would never be able to resume her responsibilities. It grieved her to think she had to leave the home she loved, where she had lived all of her life. On July 23, 1991, she entered a nursing facility. Over the next three and one half years her condition continued to deteriorate. Through all of her pain and suffering she never complained. She was always thinking of others. The last few months of her life, she prayed that the Lord would take her, but she knew she had to finish her course here, and she awaited patiently. She fought a good fight.

Her last words to me before she lapsed into a coma was her concern for me and my health. She was called home on April 4, 1995 to await the second coming of our Lord and Savior.

Her funeral was conducted by her beloved pastor, Elder C.B. Davis who so eloquently spoke from her favorite scripture, the Twenty Third Psalm. His words brought much comfort to all who grieved. The beautiful song that was sung Father He'll Rest In Thy Love, made me to feel that she is resting in His Love, where she'll feel no more pain and sorrow. May God reconcile us to our loss. She will be missed and we mourn her absence. She was laid to rest April 7, 1995 in Highland Burial Park.

I feel that my life was blessed by God to have had her love and kinship. Written by a cousin who dearly loved her.

Virginia McKinney

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CHRIST MY STRENGTH.

I know I'm weak and sinful,
My very nature's vile,
But Jesus Christ will guide me,
And lead me as a child.

His special care engages
To be my strength and shield
Against the wiles of Satan,
In all the doubtful field.

My strength is often banished,
And I'm left alone to mourn,
But then I'm made to witness
The strength of God alone.

His strength is only perfect
When all my own is gone,
And I am less than nothing,
Bewildered and forlorn.

My sins will not allow me
To merit one kind word;
They make me know my weakness,
And rob me of all good.

I must rely on Jesus
For all things here below,
And all my hope of heaven
His goodness must bestow.

I stretch my arms to Jesus,
And crave supplying grace
To lead, uphold, support me
Till I have run my race.

J.G. Eubanks

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EDITORIAL

GOD'S WRATH

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

Our God is love. He said, ***"Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."*** He is also the God of mercy, compassion, and grace. He is our Saviour, our redeemer, our comforter, and our hope. The world will agree to most, if not all, of this. However, many of them will disagree strongly when we declare that he is a God of great wrath also. Yet 'wrath' is in the Scriptures nearly two hundred times, and most refer to the wrath of God. God`s 'great wrath' is written four times. (2 Kings 23:26, Jer. 21:5 & 32:37, and Zech. 7:12.) We quote Jer.21:5: ***"And I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath."*** These are God's words unto Jeremiah concerning the king of Judah and his servants and the people of Judah. This surely came to pass when he delivered them into the hands of Nebuchadrezzar: and these were the people of God under the old covenant.

God's wrath fell upon king Pharaoh and all of Egypt when he sent many pestilences because of Pharaoh's refusal to let his people go as God had commanded. Then he sent the death angel to slay all of the firstborn of man and beast in that land. After this he drowned Pharaoh and all of his army in the Red Sea.

Let me now say that the wrath of God is certainly not the same as the wrath of man. Man's wrath is always for an evil purpose, because of hatred, jealousy, pride, revenge, etc., but God's wrath is as holy and just as all of his other attributes. His wrath is against sin which he hates, and when we transgress his laws we sin: for sin is the transgression of the law. God's wrath is for the benefit of his people and for his own glory. Even the wrath of man shall praise him, and the rest he shall restrain. ***"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to***

them who are the called according to his purpose."

God's wrath was upon his people many times as recorded in the old testament, and this record is for our profit, for, *"All scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."*

The Israelites saw all the things God did unto Pharaoh for their sake and they sang this song unto the Lord, saying, *"I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him."* The entire song is too long to copy here: read it for yourself in Exodus 15th chapter. In the 12th verse we read, *"Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation."*

All of these things the Israelites no longer remembered when they became hungry as they came into the wilderness of Sin. And they complained unto Moses and Aaron. saying, *"Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full."* At that time they would have gladly returned into Egypt, (which represents this sinful world.) Do we not in this time do the same? Yes, we do, unless we are restrained by the hand of God; but, *"It is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps." "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps."* God gave his people the only perfect food ever eaten by man. They called it manna, because they knew not what it was. Against the commandment of God many of them gathered up more than enough for each day, and overnight it bred worms and stank. In the gospel dispensation God feeds his people daily exactly what they need, and they cannot store it even for one day, except by God's grace, which he bestowed upon Israel for the sabbath day. This was a holy day when no work was to be done. Although the people ate this perfect and savory food they grew tired of it and complained, saying, "Who shall give us flesh to eat?" They wanted to go back into Egypt and fulfill the desires of the flesh, and were not thankful for the food from God. They attempted to change this manna by grinding it in mills, beating it with a mortar, baking it in pans, and making cakes of it: and the taste of it was as the taste of fresh oil. The world today has done the same. They have changed the Holy scriptures of truth into words that suit their own carnal nature and taste and belief, and are leading all who will follow them with their false doctrines. These are the false prophets Jesus spake of, saying, *"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and won-*

ders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect". Jesus would not have used this language if it were possible for his elect children to be deceived. All who have been born again and taught of God will know the truth, and false doctrines will be very unsavory to their taste. God must be the teacher, not man. ***"And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord: and great shall be the peace if thy children."*** Even God`s elect children cannot correctly interpret the prophecy of the Scriptures, for they must be revealed by the Holy Spirit. ***"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."***

When the Israelites desired meat instead of manna God gave it to them, but he told them they would eat it ***"until it come out at your nostrils, and it be loathsome unto you: because that ye have despised the Lord which is among you."*** Brethren, let us not despise the blessings of our Lord, and let us beg daily for his grace and mercy to lead us in the path of righteousness. God gave the Israelites their request, and by a great wind delivered unto them all the quails they could gather, ***"And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote the people with a very great plague."*** Let us remember this and ask that he give to us only that which is good in his own sight, be it pleasant unto us or afflictions. We are appointed unto afflictions (1 Thes.3:3) and should praise him in these as well as the pleasant things, for, ***"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."***

God had raised up Moses to lead his people out of Egypt and through the wilderness, but Korah, Dathan and Abiran rose up against Moses, saying that he had made himself a prince. They gathered together two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly and went unto Moses and Aaron, saying, ***"Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation is holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation?"*** As soon as Moses heard it he said, ***"Even to morrow the Lord will shew who are his, and who is holy: and will cause him to come near unto him: even him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him."*** Does this not set forth clearly that God has a chosen people, children that he chose in his Son before the foundation of the world? Does he not call them and cause them to come near unto him? ***"--who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."*** (2 Tim.1:9).

The men that rose up against Moses and the Lord had been separated by

the Lord, to bring them near to him and do the service of the tabernacle, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them. But these same men thought this was a small thing to do, and they sought the priesthood. (See the 16th chapter of Numbers.) They followed the instruction of Moses however, and on the morrow they stood before the tabernacle with their censers, with fire and incense, two hundred and fifty of them: and all the congregation was gathered together before them: and the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the congregation, We note that only unto the congregation, not unto those wicked men, did the glory of the Lord appear. God then told Moses and Aaron to separate themselves from the congregation, that he might consume them in a moment. I believe that Moses was a type or figure of Christ, and he interceded for the people then as Christ intercedes for his people now. God told Moses to tell the congregation to get up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan and Abiran. This Moses did, saying, ***"Depart I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins."*** And in Rev. 18:w we read, ***"And I heard another voice from heaven saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."*** This was written of Babylon, that great city (the world) that is the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. (See Rev.18:2). This is not an invitation to the elect people of God, but an holy calling of God and must be obeyed. His people will do it willingly, for he has said, ***"Thy people shall be a willing people in the day of thy power."*** The congregation obeyed Moses and fled, but these three wicked men stood in the door of their tents with their wives, sons, and little children. God caused the earth to open her mouth and swallow them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They went into the pit and perished with all they had, and all Israel that were there fled. ***"And there came out a fire from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense."***

In another place Israel sinned when they spake against God, and against Moses, saying, ***"there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread."*** The Lord therefore sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died. The people therefore came to Moses admitting that they had sinned against the Lord and asked that he pray the Lord to take away the fiery serpents; and Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said unto Moses, ***"Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole: and it shall come to pass, that when every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten a man, when***

he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." It was because of sins by the people that they were bitten of the fiery serpents. They did not bite all the people, but those bitten were made aware of their sins and they knew they would die if God did not deliver them. Therefore they had good cause to call upon him for mercy. Those who looked upon the brass serpent lived. Those who were not bitten had no cause to call for mercy. This was a natural figure to show forth the spiritual. Those who are given to feel the fiery bite of sin in their soul and look to Jesus for mercy and redemption shall also live. Those who are never bitten because of their sins do not truly know that they are sinners and therefore they feel no need for a Saviour. The brass serpent was surely a figure of Christ, for Jesus said, *"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."* Only those who look upon him and believe in him have eternal life. That eternal life was in Christ before the foundation of the world, but is made manifest in time to each individual elect child of God. And when that life is made manifest by the Holy Spirit after the new birth he is given grace to believe in Christ. *"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."* Our sufferings now are not worthy of even being compared with the sufferings of Christ. *"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." "--and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." "Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin."*

All of God's wrath is because of sin, and by nature his elect children were the children of wrath even as others, for in times past they fulfilled the lusts of the flesh and of the mind. But Jesus stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and at the appointed time he came into the world to redeem his elect people from the curse of the law, for, *"Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."* Jesus suffered the curse that was ours when God the Father laid upon him the iniquity of us all. *"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" God hath said, "If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments: then will I visit their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take away from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail."* O what a wonderful and gracious promise this is to his elect children! to those who have been shown that they are sinners, lost and undone and helpless. Jesus Christ bore the wrath of

God in the garden of Gethsemane, and upon the cross of Calvary when he offered himself a sacrifice without spot to the Father, and ***"by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."***

Beloved brethren, if we be among those sanctified by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ the Saviour he will return at that final day and receive us unto himself where there shall be no more sin, sorrow, suffering nor wrath. All will be perfect peace, and we shall worship at his feet as we should. Praise God that he hath given us such a blessed hope in Christ.

Brethren I realize fully that I have only hinted at this wonderful text. Charge all errors unto me. Praise God for any comfort or edification you may receive from it.

In hope of eternal life,
(Elder) C.C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES

Bruce Atkisson
606 Rebecca Lane
Munford, Al. 36268
August 14, 1995

Dear Elder Key,

I have been blessed to receive the "Signs" in the past, the subscription was a gift from a dear brother in Christ.

I was not able to keep up my subscription due to personal finances at this time. I enjoyed the publication very much indeed, and want to thank you and all the staff for your labors, may God continue to lead and guide you in your work.

Enclosed you will find and article of my impressions on Isaiah 57:15. I am currently the pastor of Sardis Primitive Baptist Church in Talladega, AL. Our little Church is independent from any associations as we are in an area where there are no predestinarian churches.

If not deceived, my dependence is upon Jehovah God, and I endeavor to preach only the Doctrines of Grace held by the Old School Baptist ie: Absolute Predestination, Eternal election, Particular atonement, Eternal Security, etc.....

Please read the article, if you would, and if you find it worthy of publication, please do so, however, if found unworthy I certainly will understand if you do not. Either way, I am yours in the bonds of Christ,

Bruce Atkisson

Isaiah 57:15.

"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; etc...."

To read this portion of scripture is to be brought low into the dust, to feel oneself to be no more than a dust worm of the earth beneath the felt presence of his Majesty. Upon reflection on the first part of this verse, we are made to feel how sublime this statement appears to us, how true this is to us. To contemplate

the attributes of the great Jehovah, is likened unto ones digging at Mt. Everest with a pick and shovel in order to bring down its heights to eye level. The finite mind of man cannot begin to explore the depths of the wisdom and knowledge of the great I am. Ever existent, totally sufficient, from everlasting to everlasting he is God. He sits upon his throne, shrouded in the mist of eternity, the folly of man cannot penetrate them.

The world, in vain, attempts to bring the Almighty down to its level, and to altogether make him over, like his creature man. They would seek to limit His power and authority only to what they deem as "Fair" to them. They would make Him slave to His own creation. Even when some would concede of his sovereign power, they would still limit to only those good and righteous things, but still would usurp the will of God by placing it conditionally upon the will of man. They say that the evil acts of men and devils are far from his control, admitting, only after some reservations, that he has only permitted these things to be, but he must quickly get, contingently, to preserve his glory.

How absurd this seems, but were not many of us, at one time, in this same frame of mind, until God in his great mercy toward us, was pleased to reveal to us the great mysteries of his sovereign will. We too, came to see in due season, that he works all things after the counsel of his own will, even according to the good pleasure of his will. Oh what humility we experienced when we were made to see his almighty, universal government over all creation, both visible and invisible. Now we see the further portion of our text revealed to us, experimentally, ***"with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit,"*** has he not made us humble in his own way and in his own time? As long as there was somewhat for us to glory in, that we felt that our obedience to his will was in our own hands, that our will was free and independent from his, there remained room for boasting; but now we are made to see the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ. By grace are we saved, through faith: and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God. Not of our works, lest we should boast. It was necessary that we have all of our creature helps stripped away from us, that it should be revealed to us the pride and vanity of our own corrupt hearts. When pride cometh, then cometh shame: what shame we felt when first we realized that we had sought to limit God to our conditions, to extract from him temporal rewards, and to make him a debtor to our so called good works. With deceptive pretention, we made our attempts to keep the law, and even, at times, felt quite secure and confident that we were doing well. Woe unto them that are at ease in Zion, then the commandment came, sin revived, and we died. How utterly futile were our works then, claiming to have put on the imputed righteousness of Christ, but in reality, only being robed in our own filty rags. ***"But with the lowly is wisdom."***

Words cannot express the feelings of our heart when brought to this horrifying position, thinking that we were wise, we were made to realize that we knew absolutely nothing as we ought. Now the last part of our text can be applied to our condition, ***"to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."*** Lest, dear reader, you think we have been speaking of events that took place during regeneration and the process of the new birth from above, please do not be deceived. We speak of things that have occurred since that time, if not deceived. The ever progressive work, here in time, that God the Holy Spirit is performing in every little child of grace, only to be perfected in the eternal realm of heaven. Yes, we were reared on the doctrines of grace, and were blessed to find a home among those dear ones known as the Old School of Christ or Primitive Baptists, however there was a serious error that had crept in among them, like the leven of the pharisees of old, it had begun its work called ***"time salvation or two salvations"***, and having been exposed to this more or less all of our lives, we knew no other way. Thanks be to God that he was pleased, in his own good time and way, we hope, to reveal to us the truth of the matter. The Thrice - Holy- God raised us up from the miry pit of self righteous works and establised our goings, a new song did he place in our mouths, even praises unto his great and holy name. All our sufficiency is of Christ. In him we live, move, and have our very being. We eat, sleep, and breathe only according to Divine Providence, whether it be in nature or grace. His eternal predestination has established all our ways, governing even our sins in his eternal decree or purpose, having chosen us in our Head, Christ, from all eternity, not from the lump of fallen humanity in Adam, but from the great lump of clay, the eternal Potter formed us as his own vessels of mercy, that he might make known the riches of his glory. As his vessels, we are to be used by him, filled up with his mercy and grace, for he works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure to shew forth his glory. Other vessels he has formed also, from all eternity, vessels fitted for destruction, that he has endured with much long suffering; but soon he will display his wrath toward sin and all unrighteousness toward them. Behold the goodness and the severity of God.

The vessels of mercy he presented to his only begotten son, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. In the everlasting covenant of grace, the son agreed to go forth in the body prepared for him, to redeem them from sin, hell, and the grave, to present them without spot or blemish, to his Father, and now the Holy Ghost dwells with his children, leading and guiding them into all truth (their experience). What a Comforter he is indeed, to his poor, afflicted people. He has not left them nor forsaken them, but holds us within the palm of his hand, which no one is able to pluck them from. The body is secure with its Head, the bride is wedded to the husband, the twain

are now one; having been so from eternity, but now made manifest, no danger, no hazard now.

Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty which was, and is, and is to come...

Thou art worthy, O Lord to receive glory and honor and power: For thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

I pray the Lord we are not deceived concerning our feelings.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen!

Bruce Atkisson

VOICES OF THE PAST

FOUNDERS OF THE GOSPEL STANDARD BAPTISTS

The new prosperity which the Dissenting churches enjoyed under the Toleration Act led in the course of time to a gradual decline and decay, and both among themselves and in the National Church a form of godliness replaced in a great measure the power that had characterized more troublous times; while a general religious apathy pervaded the people. This continued until about 1740, when it pleased the Lord to grant a reviving, largely through the itinerant preaching of such evangelists as Whitefield, Cennick, Grimshaw, Berridge, and others whose labours were owned and blessed of the Spirit to the conversion of many. The fruit of their labours, however, though extensive, was somewhat lacking in depth; and the mercy of the Lord is to be observed in the gift of a further line of ministers, deeply taught in their own souls, and fitted to take forth the precious from the vile (Jer. 15. 19) by a powerful and separating ministry, with which they were remarkably endued by the Holy Spirit. Amongst the Independents, William Huntington stands out most prominently; while among the Particular Baptists were William Gadsby, John Warburton, and John Kershaw, whom we may regard as the founders of the Gospel Standard Baptists. These men were raised up from the depths of poverty and consequent illiteracy, and made mighty in the ministry by the power and teaching of the Holy Spirit within them.

William Gadsby was born in 1773 at the village of Attleborough, near Nuneaton, where he grew up a lively and frolicsome youth, a ringleader amongst his companions. But God met with him when he was seventeen years of age, and by inward conviction of sin and implantation of grace brought him effectually from his evil ways and companions. Instead now, he felt an attachment to the good old people who worshipped at the Independent Chapel at Bedworth, and while attending there was favoured with a blessed deliverance. "Oh, God's peculiar love!" he says, "that was shed abroad in my heart by His blessed Spirit, and which brought me to feel the love and blood of Christ.... I was then solemnly and blessedly led to believe in God's free mercy and pardon, and could look up and say. *'He loved me, and gave Himself for*

me' (Memoir, by John Gadsby, p.10). Later on he was led to join the Particular Baptists at Cow Lane in Coventry, and three years afterwards was transferred to the P.B. Church at Hinckley.

There the work of the ministry was laid on his mind, which was a great trial and exercise to him, as he realized his insufficiency. "Do not let me preach, Lord," he said; "send by whom Thou wilt send, but not by me." But the Lord graciously removed his opposition with this word, "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise," etc. "Well, Lord,", he replied, "if this is the way Thou workest, Thou never hadst a better opportunity, for Thou never hadst a bigger fool to deal with" (Memoir, p. 19). Expounding of the Word at prayer-meetings was followed by his first sermon preached in a room at Bedworth in 1798, and from that time he continued to preach at Hinckley and Desford and other places round. Early in 1800 a Baptist Chapel was built for him at Desford, and he was "ordained" there at the opening by three ministers, namely, Mr. Aston of Chester, Mr. Vorley of Northampton, and Mr. Hall of Irthlingborough (Memoir, p. 21).

At Hinckley his preaching commenced in an old barn. *"Truly",* he says, "we had many precious visits from the Lord, which made the old barn a consecrated place to our souls, notwithstanding the thatch was off in so many places of the roof that we could see the sky through the numerous holes, so that when it rained the people had to remove from one part to another, during preaching, to prevent *getting wet through"* (Memoir, p. 23). In a few years, however, a chapel was built there also, where he continued to labour until, in 1805, he removed to Manchester, becoming pastor of the Backhouse Baptists Chapel in St. George's (now Rochdale) Road. He was "greatly affected at leaving the dear people at Desford, to whom his very soul was united; but he watched the hand of the Lord, saw the cloud move, and followed it; and the Lord was with him to bless him" (p. 43).

Once a year he went to London to preach, and to beg for assistance in the removal of the debt on the Manchester Chapel. Of one of these visits, about the time of Huntington's death, he says: "I went and preached three times a day at the little chapel in Red Cross Street. At first, you may expect, I did not get on so well; but in a few weeks there was a congregation at the doors when the morning service ended, ready to go in for the afternoon; and at the end of the afternoon's service, there was another ready for the evening. I can assure you that I had a good deal of difficulty to get in myself to preach; for I had to clamber over the seats to reach the pulpit, the aisles all being closely packed" (p. 31). He returned home with nearly L400, and in the course of time the debt on his chapel was settled, and enlargements made.

After Huntington's death, some of the people separated from Providence Chapel and commenced a meeting in Conway Street, London, and Gadsby was one of the ministers who sup-

plied there. The numbers so increased that it became necessary to build a larger chapel in Gower Street in 1820, which was opened by Mr. Gadsby, who continued to pay them an annual visit. He also came annually to Zoar Chapel, London, and was the means of nearly forty chapels being opened in Lancashire, Yorkshire, Derbyshire, and Cheshire (pp. 65 and 66).

"In his first years at Manchester he found all the ministers banded against him, for he drew away their hearers. But it was not long before he established his position. In the course of nearly forty years of his pastorate there, he is said to have travelled some sixty thousand miles in his preaching tours, and to have delivered between ten and twelve thousand sermons" (The Seceders, by Dr. J.H. Philpot, Vol. II, p. 26). For this reason Mr. Philpot used to refer to him as "the great Apostle of the North" (p. 19); and writing after his death, says: "We believe we are but speaking in full unison with the feelings and sentiments of the living family of God in this country when we say that, taking him all in all, we have lost in Mr. Gadsby the greatest minister that God has raised up since the days of Huntington... The Lord had appointed Mr. Gadsby to be a leader, and to stand for half a century in the front rank of His spiritual army. He therefore bestowed upon him a mind not to be daunted with difficulties and dangers, but to rise with, and to be ready for, every new emergency" (G.S., 1844, pp. 150, 151).

The next to be mentioned in this line of Baptist ministers is John Warburton. He was born five miles out of Manchester in 1776, where he grew up in very poor circumstances, and was taught by his godly mother to read and write. He lived in wickedness, until the time came when he was arrested and convicted under a sermon preached in a church at Bolton by a Mr. Jones, from the text: ***"Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."*** He continued in distress for some months, until he went to hear, as he thought for the last time, at Mosley Street Chapel; and indeed he came out from the service more despairing than ever. But wandering about the streets, he came to the chapel where Mr. Roby preached, and going in, he was blessed with a wonderful deliverance. As the good man preached, love, peace, and joy broke into poor John's heart. "I looked for my sins", he says, "for my burden, for the wrath and misery I had so long carried in my poor distracted soul, and could find neither guilt nor sins, wrath nor bondage; for the Saviour of my soul had taken them all away" (Mercies of a Covenant God, p. 18).

At first he joined the Independent Church in Mosley Street, Manchester; but being directed to hear William Gadsby, he became united there and was baptized, and to his astonishment Mr. Gadsby concluded the baptizing service by asking the Lord to raise him up as an instrument for His own glory, and the cause of truth. But it was only after much exercise and prayer that Warburton could think the Lord would send such a poor creature

as he felt himself to be. At length one of the deacons asked him if he was not exercised about preaching, and he could hide it no longer. "The more we make it a matter of prayer to God", said the deacon, "the more liberty and freedom we find, and we verily believe that He has designed you for the work of the ministry" (Mercies, p. 56). So he had to venture forth, speaking at first in a room at Bury and in various causes round, until he became settled at length over a people who had separated from Mr. Littlewood's church at Rochdale in order to hear Mr. Gadsby. This issued in the building of Hope Chapel, Rochdale, where Warburton continued pastor for a few years, until he received a call from the P.B. Church at Trowbridge. On his way thither to take up the pastorate, he heard Mr. Gadsby preach at Manchester from the words: "Drink waters out of thine own cistern," etc. (Prov. 5. 15-17). "I have indeed reason," he says, "to believe that God designed that sermon for me; and I must confess I never heard a sermon in all the days of my life that was for such a length of time made so great a blessing, for it never failed me when I was brought to despair that I should be able to preach again" (Mercies, p. 99). At Trowbridge he continued to labour, first in a room and then in Zion Chapel, built for him in 1815, until he died in a good old age of fourscore years.

Writing afterwards, Mr. Philpot says of him: "It was not his gifts of eloquence, or powers or thought and expression; it was not the beauty of his language, or the force of his arguments (for in these eternal things he did not shine), that drew such crowds to hear him in London and the country, but the peculiar savour and sweetness that dropped from his lips. He was truly and peculiarly an experimental minister of God's truth... No minister in these last fifty years, except Mr. Huntington and Mr. Gadsby, his been so blessed to the church of God, or had so many seals to his ministry" (G.S., 1857, pp. 190-195).

Now follows John Kershaw, who was inseparably connected with Hope Chapel, Rochdale, and with Warburton and Gadsby. Mr. Kershaw himself, speaking of these links, says: "We have often been spoken of as three links in a chain - Mr. Gadsby the first link; Mr. Warburton the second, being the first-fruits of Mr. Gadsby's labours at Manchester, and sent out by that church to preach the Gospel; myself the third link, being a member of the church at Rochdale under the care of Mr. Warburton, and sent out and encouraged by them to preach the Gospel" (Autobiography of John Kershaw, p. 240).

Like his two contemporaries, Kershaw was arrested by the power of the Spirit in his youth, whilst in the persuit of vanity: "I felt the powerful hand of God had laid fast hold of my poor soul. Death, the day of judgment, and the realities of a vast and awful eternity oppressed my thoughts and harrowed my feelings in a manner I can never describe." (Autobiography, p. 12). Under the fear and perplexity occasioned by this exercise, he went at length to Bacup to hear Mr. Hurst, and

under a sermon preached from the words, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved," etc., he was sweetly persuaded of the ability of Christ to save him, and "went home rejoicing that there was a new and living way whereby God could be just and save poor guilty sinners" (p. 33).

Leaving the Independent Chapel where his father attended, John went to the P.B. Cause at Rochdale under Mr. Littlewood, and later on joined those who separated and formed the church at Hope Chapel under John Warburton. Despairing of attaining the full persuasion of Christ's willingness to save him in particular, he was concluding that he had better endeavour to be comfortable without it, when the words sounded in his heart as though with an audible voice: ***"Oh wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"*** This led him to read the 7th of Romans, and when he reached the first words of the 8th chapter, "their blessed contents", he says, "were brought into my soul with power and glory. I saw and felt that I was in Christ Jesus, saved with an everlasting salvation. The burden of sin was removed, my conscience cleansed by an application of the precious blood of Jesus Christ. I felt the sealing testimony of the Holy Spirit of God that I stood complete and accepted in the Beloved" (p. 59).

The little church at Hope Chapel was formed by William Gadsby, the members being baptized in a stream in the open field. "When the day came, nearly two thousand people were assembled. Professor and profane were gathered together to witness the ordinance of baptism by immersion. Mr. Gadsby stood on the bank of a reservoir, which served as a kind of gallery where many sat, the great body of the people being before him in the field. He preached from John 5. 39: 'Search the Scriptures,' etc. At this time he was about thirty-six years of age, and such was the power of his voice that the sound of it was heard nearly a mile off, but not to distinguish the words" (p. 64).

Concern about the solemn work of the ministry was awakened in John Kershaw through the power of the Spirit upon him, and although he received testimonies that this was the Lord's will, he kept silence. At length John Warburton, being persuaded of the matter in his own mind, could no longer forbear, and said that he had come to the determination that Kershaw must speak amongst them, naming a time. There was no drawing back, and the first attempt to speak was made, the Lord abundantly helping His servant. Eventually Warburton was removed to Trowbridge, and the Rochdale church gave Kershaw a call to the pastorate in which he continued for over fifty years. His labours round about were very many, extending through Yorkshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, and Cheshire, with occasional visits to London.

These three gracious ministers may then be regarded as the founders, under the blessing of the Lord, of the Gospel Standard Baptists, and it is now necessary to consider how that

name arose, and became applied to the churches which their ministry was instrumental in forming and establishing. It was in the year 1835 that William Gadsby's son John, a vigorous and enterprising young man in the printing trade, prevailed upon his father to assist him in starting a monthly magazine to be called *The Gospel Standard, or Feeble Christian's Support.* Writing later of this, John Gadsby says: "There was at that time no periodical to advocate the sentiments which had been for years dear to my father, and which were becoming increasingly dear to me... I therefore proposed to my father that he should assist me in the publishing of a magazine specially devoted to the supporting and advocating of those sentiments" (G.S., 1871, p. 166). Another magazine, called *The Gospel Herald,* had been commenced two years previously, advocating the erroneous views then being broached by Mr. John Stevens, as to a supposed pre-existence of the human soul of Christ before the incarnation; and it is likely that one of Gadsby's aims in launching *The Gospel Standard* was to counteract this error. This view is confirmed by a MS. note written on a copy of a tract published in July, 1835, by W.H. Colyer of Farningham, against the error of Stevens, and entitled *"Five Questions* to the Five Country Ministers who signed The Friendly Address to Mr. John Stevens, of London, which appeared in *The Gospel Herald* for June last." This note says: "The heresy of Stevens caused John Gadsby to start *The Gospel Standard."*

Shortly after Gadsby had commenced his magazine, John M'Kenzie, and later Joseph Charles Philpot, were asked to give their assistance in the work of editing, and, by 1840, they had become the sole Joint Editors. In early life M'Kenzie, of Scottish origin, was occupied as a commercial traveller in the North of England, and coming under conviction of sin, he sought to attain a righteousness by his own works. Now, while on his travels about the country, he would be seen "under the hedge and in the ditches, praying", so that people called him "the mad Scotsman". But his eyes were enlightened to see the way of salvation of grace. "The scales of ignorance and his bondage under the law fell from his eyes; the Bible became a new book... his old things passed away, and a clearer view of the plan of salvation was opened to his spiritual view" (*The Seceders,* Vol. II, p.40). He had joined the Independents in Preston in 1833, but his new views could not be received by them, and they cast him out. He then became united to a few Particular Baptists who met in a room in Preston. The reading of Mr. Philpot's sermon entitled *Winter afore Harvest* occasioned in him a deep concern for a clearer manifestation of Christ and witnessing of the Spirit as to his sonship, which issued in the remarkable blessing related in his *Sealing of the Spirit.* "I felt as persuaded", he says, "as I did of my own existence, that it was the blessed Comforter that was shining into my heart, and revealing Jesus so gloriously, and making the truth of

God so sweet; the change in my feelings was so clear and sovereign, and the delight, pleasure, and gladness I felt so precious and supernatural-like" (g.S., 1838, pp. 185-9). M'Kenzie had begun to speak among the Particular Baptists, who at length chose him as their pastor, and he laboured amongst them in Vauxhall Road Chapel, Preston, and in many places round, as also at Eden Street, London. Later on he accepted a pastorate in Liverpool, but died soon afterwards in 1840.

The death of M'Kenzie, left Mr. Philpot as sole Editor of *The Gospel Standard,* which he continued until his death. He had been educated at Oxford University, and appointed to a curacy in the Church of England at Stadhampton. The work of grace had been begun while he was shut away in Ireland as tutor to a gentleman's sons, and this now becoming deepened in his soul, his ministry was made more and more separating, and he became increasingly uneasy in the Church of England. This feeling was shared by a neighbouring clergyman, William Tiptaft, to whom Philpot found a growing attachment; and eventually they both had to resign their cures and come away from the erroneous teaching and formalism of the National Church. Mr Philpot published his reasons for seceding in a *Letter to the Provost of Worcester College,* which had a wide circulation. He had become acquainted with the Particular Baptists, hearing John Warburton and others at Tiptaft's Chapel in Abingdon, and his ministry amongst them commenced in Wiltshire through the influence of a farmer named Joseph Parry of Allington, near Devizes. "When first he came amongst us", says Parry, "he was very close and searching in his preaching, and it was enough to make a living man tremble... He was made a great blessing to many souls around us, though at first some could hardly understand his line of things, and thought him too cutting...There was life indeed amongst us at that time as a people, and the neighbourhood all round used to flock to Allington from nearly all the different parts of the country, many walking twelve and fifteen miles to hear the word of life" *(The Seceders,* Vol. I, p. 102).

John Warburton baptized him in September, 1835, "with the greatest solemnity, unction, and affection" *(Memoir of J.C. Philpot,* p. 55). However, his lot was not to be at Allington statedly, although he continued to visit them. A greater sphere of labour opened for him at Oakham and Stamford, where he became the pastor. "The opening for truth at Oakham and Stamford", he writes, "is very great, and persons come from distances which put you to the blush. Twenty miles is not thought much of a distance in this country" (*Memoir,* p. 62). He laboured also amongst other causes, including Manchester, and Gower Street and Zoar in London, until his failing health made it necessary for him to give up this pastorate, and remove to Croydon, where he continued his editorial work, with occasional preaching, until his death in 1869.

John Gadsby then undertook the work of editing until 1878, when he

handed the magazine over to the Committee of *The Gospel Standard* Aid and Poor Relief Societies.

This is just a brief sketch of the principal founders of *The Gospel Standard,* and of those churches whose views and activities may be said to be in accordance with that magazine, and for that reason may be correctly denominated, "The Gospel Standard Baptists".

S.F. Paul

EXCERPT FROM ELDER A.P. MEWBORN'S EXPERIENCE

After speaking the first time in Farmville Church in February, I did not attend meeting third weekend at all, on fourth Sunday I spoke at the Meadow, and on the same Sunday the Church liberated me. They licensed me to preach where ever I felt to be called. Lord knows I thought I was in trouble enough before, but I did not even know what trouble was. Now I could not go to Church without being called on. Where ever you think to be called includes just about every place you have any desire to go. I was not thrilled by this liberation (so called) at all, but my burden was heavier than it had ever been, and I was convinced it was more than I could bear.

I tried not to go to Church, but always went, tried to preach when called upon, but never felt I was successful, had to preach, tried to preach, and knew I could not preach. For the first time in my life I could understand Job when he wished he was a worm and not a man.

Some of the brethren, trying to console me told me that this condition would improve, and I would get so I did not dread to go before the Lord's people so much, but this did not happen for me. Now I knew I was a failure, felt convinced that I had deceived the Church; I was so afraid of the wrath of God, that I felt I must find some way to appease His awful wrath. I so much wanted again to go to Church and not be called upon to preach. How I coveted the others who could go to the meetings and enjoy the sermons, the fellowship and the love that exist in the Church of the living God and not be afraid they would be called upon to try to preach. I was so afraid I could not ever expound the scriptures or prove my experience by them. I was afraid then and even now after thirty-three years I am still not convinced that I have ever preached the gospel of the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ. But to get back to the predicament I was in, felt I would die if I did not go to Church, knew if I went I would be called on to preach, and I knew I could not preach, and unlike some of the young preachers of that day, and extending on until the present, I had no desire to preach. I felt that if the word was never mentioned to me again, I would be most happy. I felt I could honestly say with Saul as he spoke to David, "Behold, I have played the fool and have erred exceedingly." I could not remember that Paul had written First Corinthians 4-10, "We are fools

for Christ's sake." About this time of panic I remembered reading in the Kehukee minutes about a Church in Norfolk, Virginia. I did not know anything about it, or know the pastor, or anyone there, so I felt this would be the proper place to go, if they did not know me they would not know that I had been "liberated" and they would not call on me to speak. I saw the address, but that did not help me in the least to locate the Church. My wife had a sister that lived on 19th Street and I knew how to get there. So we went to visit Doll and her husband, and this is the purpose I gave my family as my reason for going. But alas, before this, at this time and ever since then, every time I lied about the Church or anything pertaining to the Church, I have had to suffer indescribable agony. When we got to Norfolk and I asked the people there about a Primitive Baptist Church, they had never heard of one. But on Sunday morning, I knew I had to try to find it. I told my precious wife that I would go in the direction the address indicated, and I would ask people on the street how to find it. I felt I would not have any problems finding the Church, because I truly felt that God had ordered me to go, and I knew He could locate the Church for me. However, for me it has never been easy, and it was not easy that day, I could get only three people to talk to me at all and they had never heard of a Primitive Baptist Church on that street. I was hurt, disappointed, and cried out loud that this is evidence I had no calling to the ministry, that my brethren were deceived, and I even was convinced that I had no hope. Then I began to look for a place to turn around and go back, and if you could only know of all the times I have tried to turn around and go back, it would amaze you, but just before I came to a street to turn on I saw the "CHURCH" and it will always be more than just a building to me. I saw people outside the Church and I knew I was at the right place. I knew these were the Lord's people, and now all my fears were gone, my faith had returned and I felt that I must shout aloud for all the earth to hear. "See what my Lord has done, He did not turn me around He turned me about and I saw Him." How wonderful it would be if this feeling would last, but alas, as I turned and approached the building, the first and only person I recognized was the pastor, Elder R.B. Denson, who lived about thirty miles from my home, and was pastor of a Church in the Contentnea Association. I knew I could not escape being called on now. After trying to preach, I felt relieved.

My being lifted up did not last long, even before I reached my home I was made to ask, "What now, where does this leave you?" If there was one lesson He taught me on this trip, it was and is, that you can't run away from God or His Church, for the times we feel we are the furthest away, we are the closest to Him. He creates problems for us, then He solves these problems for us, and we can only stand in awe and utter, "The Lord be Praised."

Elder A.P. Mewborn

It is now the seventh day of December, 1906. Forty-two years ago a council met at my former home in Herrick, Bradford Co., Pa., in accordance with the request of the Middletown and Wallkill Church, in Orange Co., N.Y., to consider the question of ordaining me to the gospel ministry. On account of the inability of my father and mother to travel a distance, the meeting was appointed at our home, about two hundred miles from the church of which I was a member. Of the six ministers who constituted the presbytery only one is now living. Elder Gilbert Beebe was the moderator. The examination and a sermon occupied the first day. The ordination services were on the 8th. The weather was pleasant, and there was a very large congregation both days. What my feelings were at the time, a mingling of hopes, doubts, fears, zealous desires, I would like to tell, but cannot. As I look back how short the time seems, which would have appeared so long to look forward to at that time. How little I thought I should live forty-two years. Though the time seems so short to look back to, yet how few of those who were present then are living now; of those who were the council I do not remember of but two now living. Of my father's family and the families of two brothers living near, there were eleven who were members of the church at Vaughan Hill in 1865; only two of these are still on earth: my sister Bessie and myself. What questionings were mine at the time as to whether the Lord had called me to preach, and what questionings many times since. I was Baptized on the second Sunday in June, 1864, by Elder Beebe, in Middletown, N. Y., and from that time I had but one subject to talk about, and that was salvation by grace. But it was near the last of August that I was told by the Spirit that I must preach. I had listened to a sermon in which there was no gospel, but error from beginning to end. My desire was to get up in that congregation and tell the people that this that they had heard was not the truth; that if they knew what the text meant it would comfort them. I had been a member there, and would have felt no hesitation in speaking, but the Spirit suffered me not; but in an instant it was made known to me that I must preach. My one desire was (and has been ever since) to go and tell to all the ends of the earth that salvation is of the Lord. I wrote Elder Beebe, and asked him what such feelings meant. He replied that the church had thought I had a call to preach, and was waiting till the Lord should let me know it. Well, sometimes I feel that my work has been of the poorest kind, not worthy to he called preaching, and Sometimes it seems to me that it has been a glorious work, and that all the praise belongs to Jesus, the dear Savior, who has at times filled my heart with love to him, and has filled my soul with laughter and my tongue with singing. But O, the dark nights, the terrible afflictions, the awful desolations of soul that have been mine to experience; they cannot be told. During these years I have traveled much, and spoken often, and met many kinds of

people, and experienced many wonderful things. There are many of these experiences and incidents that would be of interest, I know, to the brethren, and I have sometimes thought I would try to tell some of them, and recount some of the circumstances of my travels, and tell of the ministers I have intimately known. I know of only one now who has been ordained a longer time than I. How poor appears my work, and myself. Truly I can say I feel to be the least of all saints, if I am one. But how sweet is the fellowship of the saints to me. If I ever write of these things I hope it will surely be by the direction of the Lord, so that I may write nothing that will hurt the cause of truth or any of the Lord's people.

Silas H. Durand

EXCERPT OF A LETTER TO AN INQUIRER

Dear Sister Irene,

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

Did you know that a true analysis of the mind has to be made by a supermind beyond the one that is being psycho-analyzed? You are your own psychiatrist only when blessed with the super-mind which must come directly from God referred to in the scriptures as the Spirit of God. When God adds His mind to yours you are given a new mind. As is said in the scriptures, "I will write my laws in their mind and I will put them in their heart." When this is done you are in possession of two minds. Two wills, two hearts (seats of affection), two principles, and two consciences. Thus you possess a dual personality which works inter-changeably causing you to be a peculiar person. These two spirits (Spirit of God and spirit of man) making manifest two characteristics, one natural and the other spiritual, makes you cry out, "I am a stranger here below, and what I am 'tis hard to know." It is the Holy Ghost conscience that causes you to brand your natural conscience as inferior and changeable. It is the new heart that censures your natural heart as being selfish. It is the will of Christ imputed to you that causes you to see your unregenerate will so unable to choose the things that are right. It is the enlightened understanding that causes you to see how dark your natural understanding is. It is this supermind shining that points out the inferiority of yourself. I am persuaded to believe that all God's people who have been born again are somewhat perturbed by what might be classed as "inferiority complexes." . . .

With Christian love
and communion,
Elder E.J. Lambert

PSALM lxii. 8.

"Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him."

"Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion; and unto thee shall the vow be performed."—PSALM LXV. 1.

WHAT a sweet thing it is to bless and praise God! There is no feeling upon earth equal to it. But how often are we in that state when we can neither pray nor praise, when sullenness, frowardness, and peevishness seem to take such complete possession, that, so far from praising God, there is no power even to seek his face; and so far from blessing him, there are even dreadful things working up in the heart against him, which awfully manifest the enmity of the carnal mind. Those who are painfully exercised with such feelings are certain, therefore, that it is God's work to enable them to praise and bless his holy name. And does not the heaven-taught soul come sometimes into this spot, " O that the Lord would give me something to praise him for, would bring me out of this trial, break this wretched snare, remove this awful temptation, lift me out of this providential difficulty, bless and water my soul, comfort my heart, strengthen my spirit, give me some sweet testimony of his covenant love ! " " O," says the soul, " how I would then bless and praise him! I would spend all my breath in exalting his holy name." But when the Lord withholds from the soul the blessings it so eagerly covets, it can only look at them at a great distance, view them wishfully, and long to experience them. But it says, " Until they come with power, until they are brought in with sweetness, until they are sealed upon my very heart, so as to take full possession of my breast, I cannot, I dare not, bless and praise God's holy name." O what a dependent creature a heaven-taught soul is! How it hangs upon the Spirit of God to work in it that which is well-pleasing in his sight; how convinced it is that it cannot feel sin nor confess it, that it cannot breathe forth prayer nor praise unless the " God of all grace " creates by his own powerful hand these blessed fruits of the lips (Isaiah lvii. 19). Are you so helpless in your feelings as this? Are you such complete dependents upon sovereign grace? Then you are spiritually taught of God; for it is God's teaching in the soul which brings a man to an experimental knowledge of his own complete helplessness before him.

J.C. Philpot

"Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof."-Ecclesiates vii. 8.

THUS saith the wise man, and it is often true in natural things, but invariably so in divine. Rarely at first can we foresee what will be the issue of any matter which we take in hand. We may begin it with much hope, and find in the end those hopes sadly disappointed. We may begin it with much fear, and find from the event those fears utterly groundless. Whatever we take in hand it is very rare that our expectations are fully carried out, for we have again and again to learn that " man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps," and that there are many

devices in a man's heart, nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that and that only, shall stand. But so far as we are amongst the family of God, and as such are under especial guidance and divine teaching and leading, whether our first expectations are accomplished or not, the end stamps wisdom and goodness upon all the dealings of God with us both in providence and in grace. However chequered his path has been; however, as Job speaks, his purposes have been broken off, even the thoughts of his heart; however when he looked for good, then evil came unto him, and when he waited for light there came darkness; whatever bitter things God seemed to write against him when he made him to possess the sins of his youth, yet sooner or later every child of God will be able to say, *"O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee I" and this will embolden him to add, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me, as they have already followed me, all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."*

J.C. Philpot

ADDRESS CHANGE:

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Signs of the Times, Inc.
1012 Bennett Circle
Keeling, Va. 24566

All letters and articles for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed as before to:

Elder Kenneth R. Key
721 Willard St.
Greensboro, N.C. 27405

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

West Country Line Union meeting will be held with Moon's Creek Primitive Baptist Church the 5th Sunday in October.

The Church is located off of Hwy. 86 between Danville, VA. and Yanceyville, N.C. From Danville turn left at the Parks Spring Crossing go one-half mile and Church is on the left. From Yanceyville turn right off of Hwy. 86 and go about one-half mile, Church is on the left.

All lovers of the truth are invited and especially ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Sister Sue Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 1995

Paul Chilton, KY	$2.00
Mrs. Vivian Underwood, VA	2.00
Mrs. Hazel A. Garland, MD	25.00
William Vick, TN	5.00
Mrs. Novaline Steward, NC	7.00
Mrs. William A. Ramsey, AL	2.00
Mrs. Ella C. Simpkins, Va	50.00
Mrs. Doris O. Rivard, TX	2.00
James O. Whaling, OH	2.00
Alpha Ramsey, VA	2.00
Mrs. Larrie Bowler, VA	2.00
William Midkiff, VA	2.00
Ms. Sylvia W. Conner, VA	2.00
Bill & Judy Poindexter, VA	5.00
James W. Brown, TN	2.00
W.H. Norman, NC	7.00
Mr. & Mrs. J.M. Marshall, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

OBITUARY OF HENRY BUFORD COOPER

Henry B. Cooper was born on Feb. 4th, 1919, passed away on Feb. 5th, 1995. He was born in Callaway, Virginia. His parents were the late William Jackson Cooper, and Pearlie Martin Cooper. Henry united with RIVERVIEW PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH on September 23, 1989. He was baptised the next day at Philpot Lake by his pastor Elder Carl Terry. Henry loved his Church and the Brothers and Sisters. He is greatly missed by his loving wlfe, Irene C. Cooper. One son, Brady W. Cooper, two daughters, Elizabeth C. Shires, of Wilmington, N.C. and Gloria C. Dillion of Axton, Va. One step-son William Loyd Turner of Martinsville, Va. One step-daughter, Judy Lane of Richmond, Va., five grandchildren and 2 step-grandchildren. He was a kind gentle man, a good husband and father. He was laid to rest in Cooper Cemetery in Callaway, Virginia, among a mound of flowers. Our loss is Heavens gain. We are hoping to be blessed to meet him again in that sweet Happy Home with Jesus.

Elder Carl E. Terry, Moderator
Irene C. Cooper, Clerk

ELDER THOMAS HILTON MERCER

We at Oakgrove Primitive Baptist Church bow our heads in humble submission to our gracious Lord, who has seen fit to take from our midst our dearly beloved Elder Hilton Mercer.

Elder Mercer spent much of his time comforting the flock, not only our church but others as well. We suffer our loss greatly but we are thankful God has made us to see that it is gain for Elder Mercer and glory for our God.

Elder Mercer was 80 years old and was united with Oakgrove church August 4, 1956 and was ordained to preach along with another Elder David Godwin who said they were like twins, where one was preaching the other was there also. Both were ordained Oct.17,1959.

Elder Mercer was faithful to the end. He came when he was needed and was always there for services even when he wasn't able to come. He suffered much affliction, trials and had many wars to fight and we believe he won them all or as he would say his Lord won them for him.

Elder Mercer had a good wife who was always there for him. She took care of him and made sure he got to his place of worship after he was unable to drive himself.

Elder Mercer died June 3,1995 at Lincoln General Hospital in Ruston, La. after a lengthy illness. He was a native of Jackson Parish where he lived all his life. He attended school at Weston High.

Survivers include his wife Nova Lee Neal Mercer of Jonesboro, La. One

Son Prentice Neal Mercer of Zachary, La. Three daughters, Gloria Sexton of Clearwater, Fl. Silvia Archer and Becky Talton both of Minden, La. A brother-in-law Richard Bryie of Beaumont, Tx. Thirteen Grandchildren and sixteen great grandchildren.

Pallbearers were Kenny Irvin, Turett Irvin, Butch Johnson, David, Horton, Elwood Johnson and Ralph Brown.

Services for Elder Mercer was held at 2:00 p.m. Sunday 4,1995 in Edmonds Funeral Home Chapel in Jonesboro, La. with Elder Henry Camp, Elder David Godwin and Rev. Tommy Long officiating.

Burial was in Springhill Cemetery in Jonesboro, La. under the direction of Edmonds Funeral Home. He was laid to rest under a mound of beautiful flowers to await the second coming of our Lord.

Church Moderator,
Elder David Godwin
Church Clerk,
Kate Mathews

DEWITT RAY

God, who does all things well, called Home our dearly beloved Dad, Dewitt Dorris Ray, Sr. of Steens, MS. from our presence on March 26, 1995, at the age of 80. He was born July 3, 1914, to the late Robert and Sister Ida Dorris Ray. He was married to Sister Amy Lee McNees Ray who preceded him in death in 1962. To that union 9 children were born. Dad and Mother were both baptized by the late Elder W.D. Griffin into Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, on Nov. 15, 1952. How well we remember that day.

He is survived by his dear devoted wife, Helen D. McCool Ray, whom he married in 1963. She has been a faithful and loving wife. One infant daughter, Paula, preceded him in his death in 1952. He is survived by his 8 children, 3 sons, Robert D. Ray, Dewitt D. Ray Jr., Ronnie B. Ray; 5 daughters: Shelby Ray Stratton, Glenda Ray Hamilton, Sister Amy Doris Ray Heppler, Jimmie Ray Cook, Deborah Ray Hall, and 2 step-daughters, Valeria M. Crosby and Betty M. Smith, 3 brothers, 5 sisters, 25 grandchildren, and 15 great grandchildren.

He was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace and Predestination of All Things. He was ordained on April 12, 1953, a Deacon of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, a faithful member always ready and willing to do anything he could for the church. He always enjoyed attending church and did as long as health permitted.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder H. R. Toney, his Pastor, at Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, Millport, Al. and laid to rest beside our beloved mother.

Written by his loving children
and Elder H. R. Toney.

PSALM 18:32.

It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again.

When I experience call to mind,
My understanding is so blind,
All feeling sense seems to be gone,
Which makes me think that I am wrong.

I find myself out of the way,
My thoughts are often gone astray,
Like one alone I seem to be;
Oh! is there any one like me?

'Tis seldom I can ever see
Myself as I would wish to be:
What I desire, I can't attain,
From what I hate, I can't refrain.

So far from God I seem to lie,
Which makes me often weep and cry,
I fear at last that I shall fall;
For if a saint, the least of all.

I seldom find a heart to pray,
So many things step in my way;
Thus filled with doubts, I ask to know-
Come, tell me, is it thus with you?

So by experience I do know
There's nothing good that I can do;
I cannot satisfy the law,
Nor hope, nor comfort from it draw.

My nature is so prone to sin,
Which makes my duty so unclean,
That when I count up all the cost,
If not free grace, then I am lost.
(#380 Lloyds song book)

Sent in by Troy G. Shepard

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EDITORIAL

ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS

We shall try again as we've been asked, to write some of our thoughts on a following scripture, not by our knowledge but by faith some thought will be to some one's comfort.

First may we list a scripture found in Matt. 10: 18-20 ***"And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles, But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."***

This very attempt to write seems to me to trust not in the ability of the creature, but try our faith in God. Do we lack faith as we go speaking? Do we prepare a sermon? I, at least go most of my time in fear, what have I to present, and we know before hand nothing. I've been amazed to speak thoughts I never had until that time while standing and again having different thoughts after sitting down. Maybe this isn't the way of one called of God. I've never been sure of this, but this one thing I think I know, my path leads me in a way I knew not before. While I could beg for a smoother path, I can't ask for it to change, can you?

Such has the Lord's people gone in every generation I believe, wanting to know what's ahead. We ministers, if indeed, I am in that number, go seeking and searching as we stand before a God fearing people, afraid many times to go, feeling to have nothing, yet fearful not to attempt when asked we never know the mind of God. He has declared that His thoughts and His ways are as far above our thoughts and our way, as the heavens are above the earth. Isn't this, if the above text was given in a natural sense, also in a spiritual way to all that fear His name, you are only a mouth piece for God. Men in their speaking as well as writing would like to know what's ahead, what man might say about it, think about it longer, research etc., that is

man's way. If the thoughts or words or writing is directed of God, can it be wrong? ***"For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."***

Some elder once asked me to write some. I answered I couldn't, He said, don't say no if you've never tried, you don't know. We may take notes or memorize a long sermon or article and still be of no value to those that are searching for that God instilled truth. Those apostles had to be inspired, what food they carried for the sheep was from God, and so it still is today. The minister or under-shepherd is only the carrier. Let us all be blessed not to try to add natural food to spiritual manna, it won't mix, if so it would spoil that of the spirit by pollution. He said we'll be hated of the world if we be His. Are we drawing closer to the world in our manner, or closer to the commandment of God. "Think not what ye shall speak." May His grace abide.

Elder J. R. Williams

ST. JOHN 3: 5-6.

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

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PSALM 23
A Psalm of David.

THE LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE ONE STONE

Sermon preached by John E. Hazelton (1853-1924)

TEXT: ***"For behold the Stone that I have laid before Joshua: upon one Stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day (Zech. 3.9).***

God's servant and prophet Zechariah has been well called the prophet of glory. In his prophecy, in common with the unfulfilled prophecies of all the host of Old Testament prophets, there is much which to us is still dark and mysterious, but which will become plainer as the time draws nigh for the fulfillment of the events predicted herein. But in this prophecy in an especial manner we have beautiful and glorious truth displayed concerning the kingdom and the glory, the Person and the office, and the high priestly work of the Son of God. Here in this prophecy we have the price given for which our blessed Lord was to be betrayed. Here we have the prediction of the effusion of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, the calling of the Gentiles, the spiritual privileges of the church of God, and the final victory which our most blessed Redeemer will have over all the foes of Himself and of His people.

Zechariah's name takes us at once to covenant realities and covenant truth: "The Lord remembers." We have a very blessed instance of this in the first chapter, where the Lord is described as speaking to the angel concerning His people, "good words and comfortable words." There was inwrought in the soul of God's servant Zechariah, amidst much that was distressing to him, the blessed and glorious truth that Jehovah remembers, that He "hateth putting away," that, whilst a woman may forget her child, our God will not forget one poor sinner whose hope is a precious Christ, and who is looking to the Lord alone for mercy and salvation.

The whole prophecy is full of grace. I dislike more than I can tell you what I sometimes read in works upon the prophets, that "the style of this book is very noble," and that the style of the other is "broken and disconnected.: It is nothing of the kind. That is simply the utterance of carnal men. Every book in God's Word is in perfect order, and whilst to the untutored eye the heavens may appear without plan, each orb has its own place.

And so we have in the prophecy of Zechariah, from beginning to end, our precious, glorious Christ as the substance and the light of the book. We have set forth here those truths which, applied by the Spirit, confirm the soul, satisfy the hunger and longing of the human heart, and give to us meat to eat which the world knoweth not of.

The older I grow, the more I feel that the Bible is practically the only book worth the attention of men and women. Not that I wish you to suppose that I neglect the reading of other books,

but I trust I can say this Book appears to grow more wonderful and precious. Dear John Newton in one of his letters says, "I have many books that I cannot sit down to read: books that are sound, but books that are like halfpence, and there go a great many halfpence to represent a small amount.

Then there are silver books, and a few golden books, but I have one that outweighs them all, and that is the Bible, the charter of my hopes and the declaration of my God to me."

Now we see here in Zechariah, Haggai, Joshua and Zerubbabel, four men who the Lord says are "men wondered at." Those around could not understand them; they listened to them urging the people to go on in the erection of the second temple, and they could not understand it. And so down all the ages, the church of the living God, the children of God scattered here and there, have been, and are, men and women that are wondered at. A friend of mine was talking to me the other day. He is a gracious man, but at home he has no sympathy whatever; his wife and children look upon him as an eccentric person, and only that day they had said, "We wonder that a man of your education and ability can go to such insignificant places, and believe in such strange things." "Men wondered at," but how great the mercy to be taught and blessed of our Lord.

In this prophecy we have everything pointing for its great and glorious fulfillment to the manifestation of Christ the Branch; from beginning to end we have here the manifestation of a precious Christ. I love that word that Stephen Marshall, the author of The Gospel Mystery of Sanctification, spoke when he was upon a bed of sickness which proved to be the bed of death. Someone came to see him and began to speak about a well-spent life, and that therefore it would be all right with him in Jordan. And Stephen Marshall replied, "I cannot say as you do, that I have so lived that I should not be afraid to die, but this I can say, that I have so learned Christ that I am not afraid to die." There is the secret of it all, dear friends - not a well-spent life, not usefulness, and so on; but O what a mercy so to know Christ under the teaching of the blessed Spirit, and through the manifestation of His grace and glory to the heart, as not to be afraid to die!

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness.

I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.
On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand."

Now let us, in looking at our text this morning, speak first of the STONE: secondly, of the EYES; and thirdly, of the GRAVING. The Stone, the eyes, and the graving.

It is the Head Stone, the Christ Stone, the Stone - the word "one" means the particular and special Stone, to which all others stones in type and prophecy pointed - the Stone, the "one Stone."

Jacob is dying, and he says to his son Joseph in the blessing which he

pronounces upon him, ***"The Shepherd, the Stone of Israel, has been my blessing!"*** The stability of Jacob's faith amidst deepest trial rested upon Him who is the Stone of Israel. We see the Stone again that Samuel set up - Ebenezer - ***"Hitherto hast the Lord helped us,"*** the Stone of Israel and the Stone of help. We see the Stone again in the prophecy of Daniel. The Stone cut out of mountain without hands completely overthrows the fourth empire, and after that it fills the whole world with peace and blessing. We see the Stone again in Matthew 16. Turning to poor inconstant Peter, the Lord said, ***"Thou art Petros, but upon this Stone (Petra) - thy confession of Me as the Christ, the Son of the living God - I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."***

We see the Stone in Isaiah 28, where God says He will lay in Zion a precious Corner Stone, a tried Stone for the help and succour of His people. We find the Stone mentioned again in 1 Peter 2, where Peter, moved by the Holy Ghost, speaks of this blessed and precious Corner Stone. Again we have it in Ephesians 2, where we see the living Stone and the lively stones being built up upon Him, growing into a holy temple in the Lord. The Stone, a precious and glorious Christ, who alone can sustain the weight of my soul, the weight of myself with all my troubles, the Stone that is laid in Zion, the Stone that is precious in God's sight, the Stone of a precious, living, glorious Christ, to whom the Stone of Bethel, the Stone of Israel, and all the other stones to which I have referred very blessedly point.

Now we must remember in connection with this Stone the peculiar position in which Joshua stood. He was the high priest of the Jewish people at the time of the rebuilding of the temple (the second). The Stone which in this figure was laid before Joshua partakes of a twofold character. Zerubbabel had laid the foundation of the temple. The foundation stone is then here referred to. The hands of Zerubbabel laid the foundation, and he was also to complete it. But as Joshua stood before the Lord, his mind must have been filled with visions of those wonderful stones which glittered in the breastplate of the high priests of old, and of the onyx stones upon the shoulders.

Now we cannot rightly understand the reference here without first looking at Joshua as the ecclestical head, the high priest of Israel: and then as representing all poor sinners, stripped of self-righteousness and brought to trust in a great and glorious and blessed Redeemer.

Joshua is there, but where are the garments of glory and beauty that Aaron and his successors were clothed with? The second temple has been completed, and when the old men who had seen the glory of the first temple beheld the second, they wept and mourned because it was such a mean building in comparison with that which was "exceeding magnifical." There stood Joshua, a dejected high priest, called to minister in a temple which was, as it were,

but a shadow in greatness and glory to that which Solomon built and opened. Then when Joshua looked at his raiment, it is described as "filthy:" the garments of glory and beauty were missing, and Satan stood at this right hand to resist him. He said in effect, "You are a fine high priest; this is a poor, wretched place that you call your temple, and where are the garments of glory and of beauty, and the anointing oil? You are deficient." And so Joshua felt a dejected and broken man, and Satan was in this respect furnished with a pretext to resist the exercise of his high priestly office by Joshua.

There were five things missing in the second temple which had a place in the first. In the second temple there was no ark, no holy fire, no Shekinah cloud, no Spirit of prophecy on the priest, no Urim and Thummim by which oracles of God, the mind and will of God, were made known. There was a priest without an ephod, without a breastplate, without the shoulder pieces which upheld the breastplate. Well might Joshua be dejected! The word might be read: "Behold the Stone which I have set before Joshua." Joshua, be not discouraged as to thy garments! The word went forth, "Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him He said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." Joshua, not that the garments of glory and of beauty, which thy predecessors before the captivity wore, have vanished; mourn not that the ark of the covenant and the mercy-seat have disappeared. Here is the reality. The Lord had set before Joshua a Stone, and upon that Stone there were seven eyes.

Now for the gospel of all this. We stand before the Lord in our filthiness. A thousand things there are within and without to deject us. We ask ourselves, Where is the glory of the past days? We feel ourselves to be mean and weak and worn indeed. We can understand some of the exercises of the heart of Joshua, but there was "set," to be removed no more for ever, there was "set," not as a shadow but as a reality, the Stone that was laid before Joshua. What did the Lord say to Joshua? What in effect our beautiful hymn expresses, for it contains the very marrow and fatness of the gospel:

"O! my soul, what means this sadness?
Wherefore art thou thus cast down?
Let thy grief be turned to gladness,
Bid thy restless fears begone.
Look to Jesus,
And rejoice in His dear name."

He is the Stone, the Foundation Stone, on which there are the seven eyes: that precious Corner Stone upon which no poor sinner has ever trusted and has perished, or been cast out at the last. "Set" before Joshua, "set" before the dejected and tried of His servants, "set" before the poor sinner feeling that his own righteousness is but as filthy rags. The Stone set there to be removed no more for ever.

"Now I have found the ground wherein,

Sure my soul's anchor may remain;
The wounds of Jesus for my sin,
Before the world's foundation slain."

Here, then, is the reality. In the first place, the person of Joshua is accepted; in the second place, his person being accepted, his sacrifice and service are well pleasing unto God.

"A debtor to mercy alone,
Of covenant mercy sing,
Nor fear, with Thy righteousness on,
My person and offering to bring.
The terrors of law and of God
with me can have nothing to do;
My Saviour's obedience and blood,
Hide all my transgressions from view."

Here is the Stone, the precious Stone, the tried Stone Here is the Foundation upon which a poor sinner is brought to rest. Here is the ***"foundation opened for sin and for uncleanness." Here is the "righteousness which is unto all and upon all them that believe."*** Joshua here does not say a word. He stands before the Lord a dumb man, but he has an Advocate. There is One who stands before Joshua; the Lord rebukes Satan. And we have "an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" - one Stone with a glory that excelleth; one Stone laid before Joshua - one Stone, the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ in His mediatorial character and work. This one Stone is ever there, for "if the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" But the Foundation can never, never be destroyed. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid"- the Stone laid before Joshua, even Jesus Christ our Lord.

In the 3rd chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians the apostle says, ***"I have laid the Foundation, and another buildeth thereon."*** What does that mean? Ministerially and declaratively he had laid the Foundation. All the prophets of Old Testament and the apostles of the New alike testified to the Stone, the one Stone, the precious Corner Stone. O what a mercy it is to be shut up to Christ, to be cut off and cut out of all hope of everybody and everything but the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

We are to understand in Zechariah the head Stone to be not chiefly the top Stone, but the chief, the principal Stone. We are told the word rendered "head" in Hebrew means the "indispensable" Stone, the Stone without which all would fall into confusion. And Christ our Lord is the first Stone; first in the dignity of His Person; first in choice, for He is God's Elect in whom His soul delighteth. He is first in suffering, first in resurrection and in power. ***"Behold," says the Lord to Joshua, "behold the Stone that I have laid before Joshua."***

The "law made nothing perfect," and Joshua had found that out. The "law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did." The poor sinner in filthy garments stands before the Lord, and he looks up and sees nothing but the justice of a holy God. He looks at the law, and sees nothing but wrath and bondage and misery and condemnation. He looks

into his own heart and sees a mass of unbelief, a sink of corruption of one kind or another, and he is dumb. "Behold, Joshua, I have laid the Stone that exactly meets thy case; I have set the one Stone that exactly meets and satisfies thy necessities. Justice and the law condemn thee; thine one heart can yield no spring of peace or satisfaction, but the Stone that I have laid before thee is the Stone that has satisfied justice, fulfilled the law, and yields that wondrous medicine and balm and supply which entering into the heart, like the branch that was cut down and cast into Marah's waters, turns their bitterness into sweetness."

A precious Stone, a glorious Lord, was laid before Joshua, and as Joshua heard those words and was favoured with a sight of a precious and glorious Christ, his faith was drawn forth, his doubts and fears vanished, and he stood before the Lord a reconciled child, cleansed from his filthiness, and clothed with the robe of a Saviour's imputed righteousness.

Secondly, the eyes. ***"Behold the Stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one Stone shall be seven eyes."*** Now you will remember that the Urim and Thummim was something in the breastplate of the high priest of Israel which no one exactly understands. By means of them the high priest, under the blessing of God, was enabled to know God's mind and will. The words mean "light" and "perfection" respectively. Seven eyes are upon this Stone. No figure in and of itself can completely set forth the glories and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Think for a moment or two of the human eye. What is the human eye? It is the expression of the soul. The human eye is the window out of which the soul looks, so that when a soul is in sorrow the eye bears witness to it; when glad, the eye sparkles; when you have had bad news your eyes tell the story, and when you have had that news which gladdens your heart your eyes show it, so that we know a little of the language of the beaming eye. Intelligence looks out of the eye. Love looks out of the eye. Watchfulness looks out of the eye, and power looks out of the eye. Those who have noticed some of the world's great men have noticed the wonderful power in their eyes. I have not seen many of them, but one or two especially I remember; there was no mistaking the power of the man with that penetrating eye. It is, as it were, the oracle of life.

Now on this Stone there is the perfection of vision represented by the seven eyes. This is a Stone which in its fulness and glory says, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go; I will guide thee with Mine eye." A Saviour who is the Foundation Stone bears my spirit up; a living Saviour, a Saviour whose eyes of love, grace and compassion rest upon every Joshua of His; upon every tried, seeking sinner, upon all His tried and exercised people.

"Upon one Stone shall be seven eyes." Does not this speak to you about the vision in the Apocalypsa - the Lamb with the seven eyes? What does that mean? It means that Christ

our saviour, as the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world in God's purpose, raising to die no more, in the heavens of eternal bliss is the Lamb with the seven eyes, the perfection of vision, and that His eyes rest upon every poor, trembling child of God here below. His eyes look upon the unnumbered myriads in the glory. His eyes rests upon every poor sinner who is saying, *"God be merciful to me a sinner"*; upon you who say, *"Can ever God or good dwell here?"* His eyes rest upon you, dejected in service, and cast down by this and that around and within you; upon you who are exercised in your family or in your business. In other words, the Saviour upon whom your soul has sunk, the Saviour whose everlasting arms are underneath you, is the Saviour with the seven-fold vision, and the Saviour of perfection of intelligence, compassion and watchfulness, and of power.

Our blessed Saviour, Christ, the eternal Son of the Father, manifest in human nature as the Mediator, as the incarnate Son, has the fulness of the Spirit. O what a mercy that everything pertaining to our salvation has the fulness of the Godhead in it! In Christ Jesus there is the fulness of the Father. In Christ Jesus there is His own fulness as the eternal Son of the Father. In Christ Jesus there is the fulness of the Spirit. We have this sevenfold anointing of the Spirit, the sevenfold vision of the Mediator through the power of the Spirit resting upon Him, set forth in Isaiah 11. There we have it in connection with the Branch, and there is a remarkable parallelism between this 11th chapter of Isaiah and that which we have before us: "will bring forth My Servant the Branch."

Now what are the seven eyes but the sevenfold anointing of the Spirit? I will just enumerate the seven described in Isaiah 11: *"I will give unto Him the Spirit of wisdom, the Spirit of understanding, the Spirit of counsel, the Spirit of might, the Spirit of knowledge, the Spirit of fear of the Lord, the Spirit of quick understanding."* The Man Christ Jesus in His divine nature, the Son Eternal, the Man Christ Jesus bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh, anointed by the Holy Spirit, filled by the Holy Spirit with wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, the fear of the Lord and of quick understanding. The very Saviour I want, the Saviour of quick understanding. We say concerning one another, "I did not quite understand what you meant," and there we often make sad blunders, and wound where we mean to heal, because we are so stupid and slow, because we cannot put ourselves in the place of someone else. But here our blessed One is of Quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, knowing the desire of my heart before it is expressed, knowing me altogether. Joshua, behold the Stone, the one Stone upon which are seven eyes. He thus contains every qualification as Redeemer. One word from Him makes darkness light. The eye of His love and sympathy is a blessing indeed to us.

"One look from that dear Lord,
Whose brow compassion wears,
Will much of heavenly bliss afford,
E'en in this vale of tears."

Lastly, ***"Behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day"*** - the affirmation of Jehovah of hosts, That is very beautiful - the affirmation of Him who cannot lie, the affirmation of Jehovah of hosts! Poor Joshua must have felt awfully lonely as he stood there. The enemies were all about him jeering, sneering; there he was with his companions, "men wondered at, "but Jehovah of hosts, who does as He pleases "in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth," has affirmed that the Stone shall never be removed, that He has graven upon that living Stone with the graving thereof that which shall cheer and bless and draw and direct poor sinners. The graving, an inscription on a foundation stone.

Yes, the graving of an inscription upon a precious stone. Take the two together. You see right through the whole of this chapter the stones in the breastplate of the high priest, considered here as the one Stone, representing the heart of love of our dear Lord. Behold, I will engrave the graving thereof in the Lamb's book of life and upon the heart of love. Look at the lapidary. All his attention is given to his work. The work as it proceeds appears marred, but when it is finished there is complete beauty and value. Now look at the Stone, the tried Stone that has been graven with the graving thereof. ***"It pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief." I will engrave the graving thereof." "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow." "I will engrave the graving thereof."*** Graven in Gethsemane's Garden; graven at Calvary's cross: graven with those deep lines - all tell us of a law honoured and fulfilled. Graven with the inscription that declares that God's justice has been satisfied, sinners have been pardoned and righteously saved. "Behold, I have set, I have laid, this Stone which My own hands have graven," says Jehovah of hosts, Jehovah the Father. Behold the whole church of God, before every seeking sinner, before every one here today who has a hope or a desire in his soul for the mercy of God in Christ. "In all our afflictions He was afflicted." "I have graven the graving thereof."

Apply this to Scripture. Think of our dear Lord who said, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "I have engraven the graving thereof." "All the promises are yea and amen in Him." Jehovah of hosts hath affirmed this, and as dear George Doudney somewhere sings:

"Come, troubled child, with fears oppressed,
By sin defiled, by guilt distressed:
The fountain open stands for thee,
Of priceless power both full and free."

And as the poor sinner draws near, and is favoured with a sight of a precious Christ, he is enabled from time to time to say, "He loved me,

and gave Himself for me." The apostle to the Galatians says, "When it pleased God to reveal His Son in me." Then he goes on to speak of the blessedness that sprang up in his heart: "He loved me, and gave Himself for me." Here is the tried believer's strength and power. Here is our peace. Christ our Lord removed the iniquity of His church in one day. Whatever reference this has to the future of the Jews, it will be gloriously fulfilled; but I have sought to set before you the glory and the grace and beauty of the everlasting gospel, which sometimes fills our souls with music now, and which shall "bear our spirits up" in the hour and the article of death.

John E. Hazelton

ROMANS 15: 29-33.

And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;

That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints;

That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.

Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

"MARK THEM WHICH CAUSE DIVISIONS."

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." - Rom. xvi. 17, 18.

I realize the subject is one of great importance, I fear too great for such as myself, yet, dear brethren, in much weakness I attempt to discuss this subject, I hope trusting in him who alone can guide to our profit.

One peculiar thing to observe regarding divisions is, that the different factions among the Baptists use this passage of Scripture to justify themselves in causing divisions. Now as "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace," we must, it seems, know that some one has perverted this Scripture. It cannot mean that God's people are justified in raising bars indiscriminately against each other. This Scripture evidently condemns just such actions. Now if to live as though Christ is divided is condemned by the Scripture, then any Scripture used to justify God's people in living as though Christ is divided, must be perverted. This I feel sure all will admit. In this text we observe two classes are referred to, one is the deceiver, the other the deceived. Now the question is, Shall God's people

treat the deceiver and those deceived all alike? Of course the deceiver will say yes, treat them all alike; but what do you say, dear children of God, you who love peace? Notice the text says, ***"Mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."*** Paul has not said to avoid those deceived, but to avoid the deceivers. Let us think on these things, think how cruel on our part to treat the one who by good words and fair speeches is deceived, the same as the one who practices this deception in order to deceive. I ask, Is it in harmony with the teaching of Paul to treat the guilty and the innocent alike? Let us think on these things, then let us answer this question, If we treat all alike, are we not ourselves transgressors against Christ? I think, evidently, this must be true. Read Acts xx. 26-31. Paul begins by saying, ***"Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men."*** Now let us think about the wilful perverters, whose object is to draw away disciples after them. Can it be said of them they are pure from the blood of all men? Paul said, "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." It was because of the wolves that Paul knew would enter in among them, not sparing the flock, and also of their ownselves men would arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them, that caused this great concern on the part of Paul as to warn for the space of three years with tears. O what a contrast between Paul and those perverters of the truth. Now the question for us to consider is, Shall we treat these wolves and the perverters of the truth, and those who are deceived, the same? Let us think on these things. If we treat the innocent lambs of God, who have fallen a prey to the wolves, perverse teachers, the same as we treat the perverse teachers, I ask, are we not equally guilty? Can we say we are pure from the blood of all men, and at the same time help the cunning wolf kill the sheep? Dear brethren, I fear we have thoughtlessly been the tool to accomplish for the wolf and perverse teacher that which they could not have done otherwise, only by the aid of the unsuspecting. This is accomplished by good words and fair speeches. I believe after giving this subject candid thought, that we who lament the sorrowful condition of Zion to-day, can but admit that all are more or less to blame for the sad condition that now exists: we are not to blame for the wolves and perverse teachers, except in that we help them to carry out their designing plans; for the work of the wolf is to kill and scatter the sheep, the object of perverse teachers is to draw away disciples after them. By this we see the result is the same, either means the destruction of the sheep.

I think it safe to say the wolf's principal plea will be, he is a great stickler for sound doctrine and good order, as he calls it. John said, ***"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the***

spirits whether they are of God." This trying of the spirits is for the church to do, because there are many false prophets gone out into the world. Here again the same question arises, Shall we treat the false prophets and those deceived by them the same? To do so would most certainly help to carry out the end designed by the false prophets. Now let us make an illustration. The wolf and the perverse teacher are working hand in hand, as far as destruction is concerned; we will suppose they succeed in getting a following by their good words and fair speeches; divisions are brought about, or these perverse teachers may carry churches, or many churches, after them; much depends upon their ability in good words and fair speeches. Suppose there are those who can see this state of affairs has been brought by the cunning wolf and perverse teacher, then suppose those who know these things raise bars and declare nonfellowship for all led away by these perverse teachers. Do we not see at once that this is the very thing desired by the wolf and perverse teachers? By our actions we say, Go, wolf, with all the sheep you can catch, we have no use for sheep which can be caught by your cunning trickery. We also say to the perverse teacher, You have accomplished your ends by good words and fair speeches, we will just declare nonfellowship for those you have deceived, and let you have them; in fact, we will raise bars so high that if any not deceived go among those sheep that have been deceived we will cut them off from our fellowship. Now could we do anything more disastrous? Is this not the very way these perverse teachers want those whom they have deceived to be treated? It is purely selfish ambition that causes these perverse teachers to do these things. Paul says, They "serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly," (that is, their carnal cravings.) Now these are the people that Paul commanded to mark and avoid.

As before stated, these perverse teachers apply this Scripture to justify themselves in making divisions; this we would expect. O how careful we should be least we be ensnared by their, good words and fair speeches. If this is only of trival consequence, Paul certainly would not have said, "Therefore watch, and remember, not to warn every one night and day with tears." O did Paul see these cruel days when men are lovers of self, rather than lovers of God? Paul had been forewarned of these wolves and perverse teachers, hence his warning with tears because of these things. Let us keep this constantly before us; that is, Paul's great interest in the welfare of the church, also his words, "I am pure from the blood of men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." Let us notice that the reaon assigned by Paul for being pure from the blood of all men was because of the fact that he had not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God. Paul's argument is evidently like this: that if he had shunned to declare any portion of the counsel of God, he could not have

said, *"I am pure from the blood of all men."* God spake the same to his prophet Ezekiel. Read the thirty-third chapter. The sixth verse reads thus: *"But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will require at the watchman's hand."*

Paul was blowing the trumpet, he in faithfulness gave warning; this he did in this instance day and night with tears for the space of three years, therefore he could say, *"I am pure from the blood of all men."* We see perverse teachers dividing the church of Christ; and let me ask you, dear brethren, you who love to see peace, Are we free from the blood of all men if we behold these things, yet we do not faithfull do our part to warn and do as commanded? The faithful ministers are to warn, the faithful hearers are to do as commanded by our Lord and his inspired prophets and apostles. God has seen fit to make all his people accountable to him; there is no place given to the idler and unconcerned.

I believe all Primitive Baptists profess to believe that Christ's body is one body, that the church is the body of Christ, represented as the bride, the Lamb's wife, and that Christ is the head of that one body, and the husband of the bride, which is the church. Now let me ask, If I profess to believe these things, and at the same time I am going over the country trying to get believers to follow me, and get them to raise bars against those who differ from me in regard to some belief I may entertain, and at the same time I know they are God-fearing brethren, who do not believe as I do, I ask, if I am engaged in making or causing divisions, have I the right to expect to be treated as a faithful servant of Christ? Paul says, *"They that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."* Now if I had the ability of those who by good words and fair speeches do deceive the hearts of the simple, and my ambition was to have a following, it does seem nothing would be more in line with carnal desires than to have my followers raise bars and declare nonfellowship for all those who are not carnally minded. This is where the sad part comes in, that the carnal leaders deceive the innocent and get them to do the cruel work against those of their own brethren. The leader is harmless in and of himself if he does not get followers, therefore of such Paul said, Mark and avoid them. Now we see that it is not by their words and speeches that we can detect them, for their words are good and their speeches are fair, but it is what they cause: divisions which they cannot cover up. With sorrow I think we must all confess that some are engaged in causing divisions, and meeting with comparatively little opposition in the headway they are making. The great and essential question is, Is any church guiltless that will receive these

division-makers into their house? Are they not by so doing bidding them Godspeed, which is forbidden? Read 2 John x. 11. This is a reasonable duty enjoined upon God's people, that they should live in honor to their profession. Therefore if there be any who are so carnally minded as to cause divisions, the duty of the spiritually minded is to restore rather than to sanction the carnally minded, by receiving them with open arms, and at the same time knowing that death and destruction mark their pathway. As before stated, these Scriptures are referred to by all factions to justify themselves in causing divisions and offenses. God's people should keep in mind that it is the one who is causing divisions that Paul is warning against, instead of those who are deceived by good words and fair speeches; it is the guilty party who is condemned. You will observe those division-makers make no distinction or difference as to whether they bar out God-fearing brethren or not; any one who may chance to differ with them is barred out, regardless of his walk. This of itself would seem conclusive evidence that such ones have no love for the kingom of Christ, therefore serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but are serving a selfish ambition, are carnally minded; they are feeding fleshly desires. Another thing to be observed about those division-makers is, to hear them tell it, that they are greatly persecuted, and the sad part of it is they by good words and fair speeches have so completely deceived many of God's humble poor that they give these perverse teachers words of consolation and sympathy. O how cunning! This is all accomplished by good words and fair speeches. Dear brethren, do you not know, have you not observed, that these division-makers will turn upon their best friends if they chance to cross their views? They have no use for any one they cannot use to advantage to carry out their ends, which are to divide God's people. Many of you know these things to your sorrow, yet these leaders claim to be suffering great persecutions from their supposed enemies, the children of God. The question is, Are they persecuted for righteousness' sake? Do we read of one instance where a righteous man ever labored to divide God's people, and to cause offenses? Jesus said, *"Blessed are the peacemakers."* He also said, *"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven."* If wars, fightings and divisions are righteous things, then it might be proper for those who by good words and fair speeches do deceive the simple, to claim for so doing they are wonderfully persecuted. Remember Paul said, *"Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."* What could be more perverse than to claim they were persecuted for righteousness' sake, and at the same time are engaged in trying to divide the body of

Christ? "Such," Paul says, *"serve not our Lord Jesus Christ."* Then how careful we should be lest we bid such Godspeed.

Joseph Ford.

EXCERPT FROM ELDER A.P. MEWBORN'S EXPERIENCE

Before we go any further with this, we look back at the poor beginning, and will try to give some background of my being here. You see, I had a long hard road to travel, heartaches to suffer, sickness and sorrows to endure, love to share, lessons to learn, school to attend and a family to share before the beginning of trying to preach publicly. In school I managed to get along with my classmates, get good grades and get along with those who were in authority. Still I was shy and retiring in some ways, I would not speak before class or render my lessons orally, I stuttered and felt so insignificant that I would forfeit a grade rather than speak before the class or the teacher.

I was born of good parents, some would say "Godly", but they were earthly too, and I loved them dearly, and respected and obeyed them both with all the ability God gave me until He took them away on that trip that is required of "all the earth". Both were given a good hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, and loved and cared for the Church in a beautiful way. I believe this way was given them by their saviour. They lived to see two sons baptized into the fellowship of the saints, and to see one of them ordained a deacon to serve the Church with his daddy, and the other to try to serve the Church as pastor. They were faithful messengers of the Meadow Church and were known and loved by the brethren in all the surrounding Churches and Associations. They lived long and useful lives in the Church and fully believed that they could serve God, only as they could serve their brethren, their children and their neighbor. I am glad they were mine and I could live with them and hopefully serve with them. As I remember the beautiful life we shared, I can only describe it as a "Joy unspeakable and full of Glory, and the Lord Praised."

As a boy I was different from the rest of the boys in the neighborhood and the mothers would often say, "Ap is a good boy, he isn't into everything and not as mean as the other boys." Lord knows I loved to hear this, I didn't believe it, but I loved to hear it. You see the real truth was, I was sick and not able to be actively disobedient, as the others were. I tried to hide this fact and soon my egotism had grown so much that I truly felt I was just as good as anybody and a little better than most. I believed in God, but it was not the same God I hope to believe in now. I believed in a God that was endeavoring to save the whole world, all the people, and I knew that as good as I believed I was, that any time I chose I could bring about the "blessed assurance" that I heard so often about. There was a faint feeling in me, my soul?, my heart?, my spirit?, I still don't know which that salvation did not come as the neighborhood reli-

gious fathers said it did, this faint and still small voice kept saying, "God is not poor, He doesn't need your money, He doesn't need your works, He doesn't need anything you have but will supply your every need. This gnawing voice caused me, and still does a great deal of concern, you see I wanted to listen to the people of the neighborhood, who spoke so highly of me, and they taught that God would do anything you wanted Him to do, if you would just let Him. As I look back I wonder why they didn't do better. I was told by the Arminians that this gnawing voice that was beginning to give me so much trouble would cease and go away, that it was sent to me from God to cause me to make up my mind, and if I would just join the Church, and really apply myself to the work and support that was necessary then all my troubles would vanish and be no more. This gnawing, still small voice did not let up, it was continually there, always accusing me of the sinful deeds of my flesh, and the evil thoughts that possessed me, until I was so much in despair, that I was willing to try anything; I set about to do better. I was not going to do anything wrong, or have sinful or evil thoughts anymore, and I was going to join the Arminian Church that promised so much to poor sinners, but still I had not seen these promises fulfilled, still this was the only hope I had; the only hope I had been given, and with all the doubts that possessed me, I had to try. About this time my best friend came to see me and he wanted to discuss salvation. He felt to be condemned to death, and was told that he must attend revival, "so called", being held next week and obey the voice of the preacher, and that he must ask me to attend with him, so we both could be saved and begin to feel good again about our lives. Well I agreed to go, first for my friend's sake, so he could feel he had done his duty, and also because I was so miserable, I thought perhaps this might help. I still had not approached my Father and Mother about my condition, because I was so mortally afraid that they would agree with that still small voice that had not let up at all, but was still gnawing at me. I went to the revival hoping that at last I could feel some relief and get rid of the sinful condition that I had lived with so long. But alas, this "noted" Evangelist preached only to those who were saved, and his sermon did not offer the local heathens, or the unregenerate, or the unsaved any hope of salvation at all. His text was the 40th Psalm, first verse, and for the life of me, then, and even now, I cannot see that this would do much for those who knew no troubles as I felt one who was saved would be. When the invitation was issued my friend and I, who were sitting side by side, arose to go up and be saved, but when we reached the aisle, and he went to meet the minister, I weeping bitterly went out the door. The tremendous crowd, which were present, were my neighbors, my friends and my people, but when they filed out of the meeting house, and saw me leaning against a tree weeping out loud, they all went by except

one real old man, a friend of my Grandfather and family, he came and embraced me and said, "Son, another time, another place," and God only knows how much that beautiful message has comforted me time after time when I have been made to return to that old tree. But my troubles were still present, no relief at all had been given me, so I concluded there was no more any need for me to attend Church services, for to me the hymns has lost their melody and message and the sermons only reiterated the sinful condition and terrible plight I was in.

It was summer time and instead of going to the meetings with my Mother and Daddy, I went swimming. There was a hurt look in their faces when they asked if I were going to Church, but they never told me I aught to go. Peter went fishing and I went swimming. I felt that with the boys I would not hear praying, or preaching, or anything to remind me of what a wretched, and hell deserving sinner I was and am. But even this would not work for me. One Sunday morning one of the boys, who was accustomed to attending Sunday School and Church, said he felt condemned, that he should be in Sunday School and Church. My older brother, Joe, was present and promptly told him, that while he did not believe in Sunday School, we could have singing and prayer at the swimming place. He then began to sing Amazing Grace, and nearly all the others joined in. Upon the conclusion of the hymn, Joe asked me to lead them in prayer, and I could not refuse, I tried to pray, to pray for sinners, and to pray that God would continue to supply the needs of His people, and show them the way.

On the next Sunday, when Joe asked me to pray, he asked me to also speak, if I would of the things that were troubling me and the others of the Lord's people. I was afraid to try to speak, but more afraid of not trying to, and I felt that if I failed no one would know about it but just the boys who were present. I began to try to speak, I don't know what I said, but this should not be strange, because I don't know what I said last Sunday, but I do know that when I had tried to dismiss the group, I felt some relief for the first time in many months. This was a regular appointment for us for the remainder of the summer and extended into the next when the weather permitted. We went swimming and had our meeting. Word of our attempted worship service soon spread in the neighborhood, but I did not know it, and my Father, being so much against mockery or anything sacrilegious, and was so afraid that this was what was going on at the swimming hole, until he stayed home from Church one Sunday morning, and carefully hid himself that he might see and hear the worship services he had heard about, unobserved. I knew nothing about this until many years later when my Mother told me about it. She said, "Your Pa came from the swamp weeping, and told me that whatever was said and done that morning was what he hoped to believe, and that it edified him and did praise to the name of our Heavenly Father, and Jesus who He has sent."

He never went back to my knowledge, and never mentioned his going at all to brother Joe or me.

Oh, that I could return to this time of my youth, when I was blessed to worship our Lord, and not know of any trouble that could mar it's beauty. I know this trouble must come, see John 16, 33. "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me you might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

But alas, we cannot recapture, or even capture, anything, and cannot even remember the beautiful things except our Lord recalls them for us. Even now he recalls for me the fact that I have written seven pages in the book and have not even identified myself. Even today as I think of the sweet promises of God to his children, I am just a child and my prayer is that He will ever keep me as a child.

I, Albert Parrott Mewborn, was born in Greene County, Carrs Township, May 26, 1919. My father is Levi Andrew Mewborn and my mother Nancy Jane (Mewborn) Mewborn. They have both "gone the way of all the earth, 'but I cannot say' they were", they are my Father and Mother today. My Grandfather's Dad was Elder Parrott Mewborn, my Father's Grandfather and my Mother's Great Grandfather. He was a Primitive Baptist Minister, and had three sons in the ministry. The best known of the sons in the ministry was my Grandfather, Elder D.A. Mewborn. This is becoming most confusing to me, I am definitely not a genealogist, but the best conclusion I can come to is that I am my own third cousin.

Elder A.P. Mewborn

THE BELIEVER'S DEATH AND HIDDEN LIFE

By Henry Fowler (1774-1838)

"For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God"(Col. 3.3).

Not dead in sin, which they had been, as also all others quickened souls, till God, who commands the light to shine out of darkness, shines into their hearts, but dead unto the law by the body of Christ (Rom.7.4). Paul exorts the called in Christ Jesus to recon themselves- "dead indeed unto sin; but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6. 11). This death to the law and to sin is by the body of Christ,or the complete obedience of Christ, both active and passive: by virtue of which all the elect are delivered from the pit wherein is no water, no spiritual refreshment, no hope, no comfort. "You hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins' (Eph.2.1). What an awful state do all men stand in by nature! They were conceived in sin,shapen in iniquity, and brought forth, not in purity, as some teach, but "children of wrath; and they go forth speaking lies as soon as they are able to articulate.

Reader, has no change taken place in thy heart since thou wast born? Then, be assured, thou art dead in sin, but not dead to sin, as were the Colossians; and living and dying in

thy present state, where Christ is thou wilt never go, for, for *"except a man be born again, he cannot: see the kingdom of God" (John 3.3).* But if the Lord hath quickened thy poor soul, and thou feelest thyself a poor tempest-tossed, ship-wrecked sinner, having lost thy all, and brought to complete destitution and spiritual beggary, I have good news to tell thee, namely, thou art dead, and "thy life is hid with Christ in God: Thy carnal reason, thy powerful unbelief and thy slavish fears may prevail over thee at present, so that thou mayest not be able to enjoy the comforts of thy free and complete justification; but still these mountains (and terrible mountains they are) shall come down before thy great and almighty Captain of salvation, Jesus Christ. "Is any thing too hard for the Lord?

It may be profitable to enquire how we become dead unto sin, and dead to the law; the right and proper apprehension of which momentous subject, which is only by the Spirits teaching, will assuredly constrain the sinner to glorify God in heart and with the tongue, as upon an instrument of ten strings. In Isa. 53.6 the prophet says, *"The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all";* that is, God our Father hath imputed our iniquities to Christ; and they were so made His own sins by this strange act that they cannot be considered ours again in strict justice. So the Holy Ghost testifies by His servant Paul: *"For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him"(2 cor. 5. 21).* It was an act of the Father to lay our sins upon Christ, and to make Him to be. sin for us; by which He shewed His boundless Love and compassion, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."(John 3. 1:6).

Those were matters transacted between the eternal Father and His eternal and only begotten Son, independent of man. In some sense this might be figured out in Abraham and his son Isaac: "And they went both of them together" (Gen. 22. 6). The Father to offer him up, and the Son to be offered up, without a murmur, a sacrifice. So the antitype: "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth" (Isa. 53. 7).

This most astonishing mystery confounds all our carnal wisdom. There is nothing that man's fleshly wisdom stumbles at more than this branch of gospel truth, and the prince of darkness helps him on. To hinder the poor sinner from rightly receiving this precious gospel truth is satan's constant aim; or if the sinner hath rightly received it, satan tries all manner of schemes to make it of no value to receiver, either by working upon his fleshly and vile lusts to make him live wantonly, and so to abuse his Christian liberty, or by drawing him into some dark and legal notion, disposing him to add something of his own to the finished work of Christ. But between these two extremes, wild libertinism and dark legality, the child

of God must steer his vessel; and difficult indeed he would find it, as he may be variously exercised, to avoid the rocks on the right hand and on the left. He has need to be daily on the look out, and watch unto prayer; for nothing preserves the child of God from the dangerous extremes alluded to like a constant cry to the Lord for help, wisdom and strength. This the flesh hates, and makes a determined stand against and would sooner sink into any dangerous vortex than be thus drilled from day to day.

Ah! believer, thy salvation is sure and certain; but thy possessions must be fought for all the way to glory. However, as Israel got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them; so it is, and so it will be with thee. God will make thee know that thou must fight the good fight of faith, but it is He that giveth thee the victory. To accomplish our redemption, Jesus "trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with Him." In that glorious warfare of His, He spoiled principalities and powers, and made a shew of them openly" demonstrating by His resurrection that He had abolished and destroyed that monster's power, a blessing He had long promised to the church: "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction"(Hos. 13, 14.)

"Death is no more the king, of dread.
Since our Immanuel rose:
He took the tyrant's sting away,
And nailed it to His cross."

Death is no more a penal evil to the heirs of promise; therefore, death is in the inventory of the saint's property: "For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death"(1Cor. 3.21.22). Paul reconed it. gain to die, saying, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain"(Phil.1,21). If a sinner be dead in sin, and not dead to sin, he gains nothing by dying, but suffers an irreparable loss: he is "driven away in his wickedness; but the righteous hath hope in his death" (Prov. 14. 32). Sin, the only revealed cause of condemnation, being removed by the grand obedience and blood-shedding of our Immanuel, and the virtue of it being applied to our conscience by the most Holy Spirit, which is received by faith,a blessed hope, full of immortality, springs up in the believer; and he rejoices that he is dead to the law by the body of Christ, and delivered from the curse and from all liability to eternal death by the blessed Daysman, his kinsman; Redeemer, *"in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." (Col.1.14).* This knowlege of God, and of Jesus Christ in His saving benefits, is eternal life; and though the believer must die the death common to man, yet shall he live and reign with Christ, and there shall be no more death, nor sickness, nor pain. *"Blessed is he that hath part in the first resurrection;on such the second death hath no power."*

But though the believer is dead to the law, dead to sin, and dead to the world, being crucified with Christ (Gal.

2.20); yet he has a hidden life which he can never lose: *"Your life is hid with Christ in God"* Here is abiding interest, permanent security. Christ is in heaven; and He said to His disciples before He left them to return to His and our Father, *"Because I live, ye shall live also"(John 14.19).* While the Head lives above, the feeblest member of His body cannot perish, being in union with Him. The heel of Christ, His church, is often bruised by Satan, sin and the world; *"but not a (mystical) bone of Him shall be broken"; for "He holdeth our soul in life, so that our feet cannot be moved" (Psa. 34.20; John 19.36; Psa. 66. 9).* This is a blessed foundation for encouragement to the poor, tried, tempted soul, who sometimes seems driven to desperation, and is ready to cry out with Job in his agonies, *"Wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?" Satan is hunting after thy "precious life,"* but he cannot find it; for it is hid with Christ in God. Cheer up, therefore, ye weary pilgrims; you shall be made to set your foot upon the neck of these your terrible enemies, who now mock and triumph over you. *"The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly"(Rom. 16. 20).*

Art thou risen with Christ, and dead to the law by the body of Christ? Hath thou the promise of the life that now is, as well as the life to come? Then set thy affections on things above, and show to the church and to the world that thou belongest to and art looking after another kingdom. Shape thy sayings and thy doings by the rules laid down in the Word of God, and put off the old man with his deeds. *"If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye Shall live" (Rom, 8. 15).*

copy from: GOSPEL STANDARD, DECEMBER 1992

"For thou, O God, hast proved us; thou hast tried us, as silver is tried"—PSALM lxvi. 10.

The Lord's dealings with his people in the wilderness are very much to this purpose and to this end--to prove them, and to know what is in their hearts. Has the Lord implanted life in your soul? Has he touched your conscience with his finger? Has he begun a work of grace upon your heart? If so, in your travels through this wilderness there will be things from time to time to prove tbe reality of this work upon your soul. You will have temptations; now, when temptation comes, it will prove whether you have the fear of God in your soul to stand against the temptation, or whether you fall under the temptation; or, if you fall under the temptation, whether you are ever recovered out of it. And if you are a living soul, the Lord will keep bringing circumstance upon circumstance, event upon event, one thing after another; and all these things, as they come upon you, shall be made to prove whether the fear of God be in our soul or not. Now, if the fear of God be not in

a man's heart, he must decline, he must fall away. Satan will be more than a match for every one except God's own family; sin will overcome and destroy every one but those whose sins are pardoned through atoning blood and dying love; and the world, sooner or later, will overcome every one who has not the faith of God's elect whereby alone the world is overcome. Thus the Lord, in his mysterious dealings (and how mysterious his dealings are !) proves the reality of the work of grace in every heart where that work is begun, and proves the hypocrisy of all who have but a name to live while their soul is dead before God.

J.C. Philpot

ISAIAH 26:12.

Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 1995

Howard Peters, VA	$2.00
W.G. Parsons, VA	2.00
Ms. Rachel Green, WV	2.00
A Friend in Ca., CA	38.00
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R. Allen Carroll, NC	2.00
Mrs. C.V. Ferris, VA	2.00
Floyd Oakley, AR	2.00
Mrs. Clarice C. Moore, NC	2.00
Mrs. Donald Arne, S.D.	65.00

OBITUARIES

FLOYD KNIGHTON MORGAN

It is in great sadness that I write this obituary of our beloved brother, Floyd Knighton Morgan, whom God hath in his love and tender mercy called home from this world of sin, sorrow, and pain on the 18th. of August,1995. He was 83 years old.

Brother Morgan had believed the gospel doctrine of salvation by the grace of God, and had attended Concord church and others faithfully for many years before he was blessed of God to be received into full fellowship with Concord Church only last year. He was blessed to attend services only a few times before he was stricken with illness and could no longer attend.

He leaves behind his wife, Katy Jo Morgan, Crossett, AR: one son, Kenneth Morgan, Ashdown, AR: one daughter, Martha Holland, Ashdown, AR: one brother Lem Newton Morgan, Crossett, AR: 7 Grandchildren: 8 Great Grandchildren and a great host of friends.

Funeral services were conducted at Jones Funeral Home, Crossett, AR by this writer, and internment was in the family cemetery.

Elder Clifford Wilbanks

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Song

Blessed be the everlasting God,
The Father of our Lord;
Be his abounding mercy praised,
His majesty adored.

When from the dead he raised his Son,
And called him to the sky,
He gave our souls a lively hope
That they should never die.

What though our inbred sins require
Our flesh to see the dust;
Yet as the Lord our Saviour rose,
So all his followers must.

There's an inheritance divine
Reserved against the day;
'Tis uncorrupted, undefiled,
And cannot waste away.

Saints by the power of God are kept
Till the salvation come;
We walk by faith as strangers here
Till Christ shall call us home.

Watts

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EDITORIAL

SIN

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

The subject of sin has been upon my mind for some time. therefore I feel a need to write something concerning it. This is a subject far too vast for any man to cover in a short treatise; for even volumes could be written if one is blessed of God to do so; yet I will attempt to set forth a few thoughts for your consideration, and pray that God will guide my every thought.

That the world is filled with sin and sinners I think no one will dare deny, yet there is much contention concerning the author of it, why it is in the world and the effects of it. I do not know who or how nor when the term "author of sin" originated, but I have never found it in the Holy Scriptures. The word "author" is found only in the new testament, and that only three times. 1 Cor 14:33 reads, ***"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints."*** Sin is the cause of much confusion, and often brings war instead of peace. I believe there would be more peace among the people of the church if the term was never again used. In Heb 5:9 we read. ***"And being made perfect, he (Christ) became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him,"*** And in Heb 12:2 we find that ***Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith. Christ was delivered for our offenses (sins), and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*** (Rom 4:25 & 5:1).

We know that God hates sin, and all of his holy wrath is against sin: yet we know also that sin could not be in the world if God had no purpose in it. In Rev 4:11 we read, ***"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."*** Every thing that God created or made was very good for the purpose it would fulfill; even Satan, who was formed by

God`s own hands. ***"And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good."*** (Gen 1:31). Sin, however, is not a `thing` made or created. for it is only a transgression of God`s just and holy laws, as John wrote in 1 John 3:4, ***"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."*** James tells us, ***"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."***

God did not make or create sin, but he did provide the way for it to enter the world, which was by man. God made man subject to vanity, he put the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden of Eden, he commanded Adam to not eat of it, and he purposed that the serpent should be there to deceive Eve. Had any one of these things not been done Adam would be in that garden today as upright and sinless as in the day he was created, and he would still not be a fit subject for heaven and immortal glory; for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, and he was only flesh and blood; and we are only Adam multiplied in the flesh. In Heb 9:27-28 we read, ***"And as it is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many."*** Adam knew neither good nor evil, there was neither sickness nor pain, all that he wanted to eat was in abundant supply, and he had communion with his Maker. There was nothing that he needed or wanted that he did not have, therefore he had no reason or need to worship, praise, offer thanks or cry unto God for any thing. But in the counsel of our three-in-one God man must do these things, therefore sin must enter that Adam should die; for the wages of sin is death. ***"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death is passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."*** (Rom 5:12). God did not make Adam transgress his holy law and die, but he knew that he would, for he said, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.' He did not say, "If thou eatest thereof," but, "In the day thou eatest thereof." When Satan deceived Eve and she ate of the forbidden fruit she gave also to her husband and he did eat. Being a figure of him that was to come (Christ) Adam was not deceived, but because of his love for his bride he died that he might be with her, for he had no power to redeem her. Jesus also loved his bride, the church, whom his Father had chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and he would die to redeem her from her sins. Jesus said, ***"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. This commandment have I received of my Father."*** Jesus came into the world to redeem his bride only and not the whole world. His bride had sinned, and being her husband he must pay the debt incurred by her. She, being

his church, is also his body, and he is the head of the body. In Eph. 5:38 Paul wrote, ***"For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." In 1 Cor 12:27 he wrote, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." And in Col 1:18, "And he is the head of the body, the church."*** This establishes the vital unity we must have with him in order to have eternal life, "for in him we live, and move and have our being." (Acts 17:28). If we be what we hope to be, the chosen children of God, the bride of Jesus Christ, then we have a life in him, a life that was given us before the foundation of the world, but is only made manifest to us in the new birth. As sure as God chose a people in Christ, there must be also a people he did not choose. In the Scriptures his chosen children are called saints, sons, sheep, bride, a peculiar people, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, the election or elect, etc., and Jeremiah said, ***"The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Jesus said, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up again at the last day."*** All of the seed of Adam who were not chosen in Christ are described as a generation of vipers; workers of iniquity; of your father the devil; natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed; cursed children that cannot cease from sin; dogs; sorcerers, etc. These are those that perish; ***because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. These are also those who stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed; whose names shall not be found written in the book of life, and shall be cast into the lake of fire with death and hell. (2 Thes 2:11, 1 Pet 2:8, Rev 20:14-15).***

This is a hard doctrine and will not be accepted by the fleshly, carnal mind of anyone. ***"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be." "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."*** Those who have not the Spirit of Christ will tell you that God would be unjust to chose some and leave others to perish, and not give every one a chance to be saved. Praise be unto God that salvation in not left to chance, nor to the will or works of man, and may he forbid that his children should ever call him unjust, for every thing that God doeth is holy and just: there is no unrighteousness with him. All men are dead in trespasses and sin until born again of the Spirit of God. How, then can a dead man do any thing? There must be life before there is action. Also,

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." I would also ask, Would a mind that is enmity (hatred) against God chose to have God save him? Of course not. The Scriptures tells us that God hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Does not God have the right to do with his own exactly as it pleases him? He is the potter that hath formed all men from the same lump of clay; one unto honour and one unto dishonour. Shall we then say unto him, Why hast thou made me thus? That would be as foolish as asking why he did not make us angels. There are those who are vessels fitted to destruction, and vessels of mercy, which he hath afore prepared unto glory. If we then be among those prepared unto glory, and have been given a hope in Christ that we are so prepared, what better reason or motivation could we have for worshiping, praising, glorifying and loving God with all our heart, and soul and mind? which is the first and great commandment. But in the flesh are we any better than others? No, in no wise: for we are all under sin: as it is written, *"There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that seeketh after God: all have sinned and come short of the righteousness of God."* The only difference between us (I hope I am included) and them is that we are *"justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."* All of our sins were imputed unto Christ, and his righteousness is imputed unto us through faith (which is the gift of God) if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. Our belief in Christ is also given, for, *"Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."*

The redemption that is in Christ Jesus, as noted above, is in his pure and precious blood that he shed upon the tree of Calvary; *"for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin."* All the rivers of blood shed by animals and fowls in ceremonial sacrifices under the old law has never atoned for one sin, but those sacrifices were only patterns of heavenly things, pointing to the sacrifice of Christ, *"and by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."* Who are the sanctified? They are God`s chosen, *"Because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."*

"The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through out Lord Jesus Christ." "And sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" Paul said, "For I was alive without the law once: but when the law came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained unto life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me,

and by it slew me." This is one of the deaths that is precious in the eyes of the Lord. *"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."* The other death is when he calls his saints home to heaven to be with him forever. Brethren, if God has put his laws into our minds, and written them in our hearts, then we have also been slain by sin. We have become dead unto sin, but alive unto God. Therefore Paul exhorts us to, *"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."* Brethren, let us pray that God will give us grace to do these things, working in us to do those things that are pleasing in his sight, because we know not how: *"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that which I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." John tells us," Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin: for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."* Paul tells us of the old man which is born after the flesh and is evil; and of the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. The old man is not changed with the new birth, and his works always have been and always will be evil; which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, wrath, strife, etc.. But the new man is Christ in you the hope of glory: and by his Spirit will lead you: *"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "Now the fruits of the Spirit are these: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."* The old man and the new man occupy the same body, therefore we have a continual warfare, *"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law."* Paul tells us that if we live after the flesh (the old man) we shall die; but if we through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. In another place he tells us. *"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." And,"So with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."* John said, *"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this*

life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son hath not life." Again Paul said, ***"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death"*** And in Rom.4:6-8 we read, ***"Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whom the Lord will not impute sin."***

Brethren, seeing that we have been freed from the law of sin and death, and are now under the law of life in Christ, let us pray daily and continually that the Spirit of Christ will lead us in the path of righteousness, and cause us to worship him in spirit and in truth.

This was written in the spirit of love to the beloved children of the most high God. Should you find any part of it not in accord with the Holy scriptures, cast it aside; and put a mantle of charity over this poor sinner. I would suggest that you read and study especially the 6th, 7th,& 8th. chapters of Romans for a much better description and understanding of the law of sin and death, compared with the law of life in Christ Jesus. May the grace of God be with you always. Your prayers of faith are needed and desired by this poor sinner.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES

Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son. (Col. 1:13).

Jesus told Nicodemus, ye must be born again. Except a man be born of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. Jesus told Nicodemus ye must be born again, and we see now why a man must be born again, and we see why a man must be born again, because it is a Spiritual kingdom, things of the spirit and things of the flesh don't mix. Since it is a spiritual kingdom a man of the flesh cannot enter in, nor can he see or understand the things of the spirit. Because they are spiritually discerned. 1 Cor. 2:14.

Nicodemus, who I believe was a well educated man, couldn't understand this one spiritual truth, ye must be born again. When a man is born again, there is the seed, a spiritual seed, born into the very heart or soul of a man, which grows and had conflict with the natural or fleshy man, causing much tribulation, teaching this man to lose dependence or trust in his own work or ways for salvation, and to trust in the work of the Saviour. This belief in Jesus is known as faith, without which it is impossible to please God. This faith is wrought in you by the work of this new spiritual being, it is called and rightly so a God given faith, we believe this belief and

this doctrine is what we know as justification by faith. Volumes could be written on this subject alone, but I will move on with saying, this could not happen without the new birth. Another thing about this spiritual birth is this. 2 Cor. 4:7 We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. Think about a treasure, can you even in a small measure, think of any treasure near so great. See a spiritual birth means a spiritual man and you are given to believe Father, and that you are a son of God. Consider the richest family on earth, what it would mean to be their son, but it would be nothing compared to this. Like Moses of old, the riches of the world was no value, compared to this. As the poet wrote, a child of Jehovah, a subject of grace. I'm of the seed royal, a dignified race.

This treasure we now have in earthen vessels, think about that thing, when people have what they consider a treasure, they seek a safe place for it, such as a bank, a vault or such. But this treasure has been placed in the hearts of men of flesh, and we all know the weakness of the flesh, even as we also know the power of God. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. This is the wisdom and power of God, such is his wisdom, same people live here, are blessed with this spiritual birth, the conflicts and blessings which comes with it, and their close friends know nothing of it. They may notice a change in a man, the things he now likes in comparison to what he used to like, his everyday actions, his talk, but there is no way he can see or understand the peace, the deep personal feelings when blessed with a crumb from the Father's table. God's kingdom is a spiritual kingdom and can only be seen and entered by one who has been born again.

I often think about the difference between the great masses of people who are attending church regularly, and like the Pharisee, offer their own works, their own self-righteousness and know nothing of the inner peace and blessings of one, blessed with faith in the sacrifice of God and sees the great salvation which is theirs.

Now we see the men I have been writing about, those who have been born again, who have been blessed with this God given faith are now translated into the kingdom of his dear son Col. 1:15.

However this doesn't mean translated into the glorified kingdom where saints will spend eternity with their blessed saviour. This will be a part of the kingdom of God here on earth, which the believer can feel and enjoy, but the world knows nothing of. This doesn't mean the body will be translated as with Enoch, but more like moving from one office to another, like now their citizenship is in heaven, while their body waits for the day the Lord has determined to remove them from this world to be with him in glory. Now we see this believer as a person we could call a misfit, living here on earth, in a body of flesh, tied to this world with natural ties, but at the same time a citizen of heaven. His heart and desires, the things he wants and loves are no longer things of the flesh, but spiritual things of heaven. He has been blessed to taste of the love and tender mercies of heaven so now that is his desire. He now feels as the part did when he wrote, this world is not my home. He can't hasten the day of his departure, but he now has a God given faith to wait for and trust in God.

He has been translated into God's kingdom, delivered from the power of darkness, and waiting for the day of redemption, to leave flesh and troubles of this

world behind and realize and enjoy the blessings of heaven in their fulness.

May we be blessed with more faith and understanding of God's love and tender mercies, toward his bride, the children of God.

A brother, I hope
Frank Hunt

VOICES OF THE PAST

From Elder Lambert's Book, "Tried In The Furnace."

PREACHING THE CROSS
October, 1954

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

Paul says in his first letter to the ***"Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ"; "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1:18).*** The preaching of the cross is far more extensive than proclaiming that Christ was crucified on the cross on Golgotha Hill almost two thousand years ago. May God reveal unto us and inspire us to grasp a little of the "greatness" of the subject of the cross.

The construction of two pieces of timber so that one crosses another results in a cross. Two lines drawn so that one crosses another is said to be a cross. Figures of the cross both in nature and craftsmanship are too numerous for you to count, even from where you are now sitting. One principle contradicting another principle creates a cross. Trials and tribulations are crosses because they are the result of conflicting principles. When life comes into contact with death there is suffering which manifests a cross.

Proclaiming the contrasting characteristics of Christ would be preaching the cross of Christ. The subject of the cross of Christ would necessarily embrace all His life from the time He was born as Son of man until the time He was resurrected from the tomb. Paul was inspired to write in Ephesians 2:15, 16, *"For to make in himself twain one new man, so making peace: and that he might reconcile both unto God by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby."* It was befitting that the final climax of Christ's sufferings be on a cross. He took up His cross when He was made lower than the angels. When the Son of God took upon Himself the character of the Son of Man the cross was made manifest. The new man was the cross-breeding of God and man. We must proclaim the dual characteristics of Christ to preach the cross. When we preach Him as God-man, Divine-human, King-priest, Master-servant, abased-exalted, and crucified-resurrected, we preach the cross. When we declare Him to be possessed of both strength and weakness; flesh and Spirit; us and Him, and, the Cre-

ator and creature we are preaching the cross.

He being both divine and human, He was possessed with the cross of wills. The human will prayed, ***"If it be possible let this cup pass"***; yet the divine will said, ***"Not my will but Thine be done."*** Jehovah was the Father of Jesus and Mary was His mother. As the Son of God, He lives eternally; as the Son of man He had a timely existence which began to be made manifest when He was born of the virgin, Mary, and ended when He died on the cross. Did the body of Jesus come to an end when He died on the cross. Did the body of Jesus come to an end when it was placed in the tomb? No! No! No!

There was a dissolution of His body and Spirit on the day of crucifixion. His Spirit was commended unto His Father; the body was laid in the tomb. This same Spirit raised Jesus from the dead on the third day. He became the "firstfruits." His body was the first human body to be clothed with immortality. The Man, Christ Jesus, was raised from the dead! This was accomplished in His resurrection. He being a cross of Himself and us, we being in Him, He being raised from the dead, gives us the basis of our hope of the resurrection of our bodies by the same Spirit. (See Romans 8:11).

Jesus Christ was King-priest. He was ruler over His own body. He was the first and only one born of woman who was able to keep His body under subjection to such extent that He did not sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. His composition being such, His body was an acceptable sacrifice and gift to the Father for His people. We find in Hebrews 5:1 that the duties of a high priest were to ***"offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins."***

This High Priest forever perfected His people in the sight of God by offering His own blood as a sacrifice and His body, the life He lived here, as the acceptable gift unto His Father. He is our King-priest. He is the sole head and governor of the church, those who are called out by Him. His divine generation, His royal descent, His perfect nature, His wonderful offering, all this well qualifies Him to atone for His people. It further qualifies Him as the perfect King and Priest to illuminate His people with His light and nourish them with His wonderful gifts of grace and peace. He blesses them with that consoling peace that the world knows nothing about. He orders His people to walk in paths of righteousness. He leads them and holds them steady with His hand. When they falter and fall by the wayside, His eye is ever on them and His hand beneath them so that He gently picks them up and encourages them with the wonders of His power and grace. He purifies their souls with the washing of regeneration and promises purification of their bodies. He intercedes for them to the Father within the Holiest of Holies. Priests before Him could only offer sacrifice of the blood of animals; He offered Himself. It was necessary for high priests before Him to offer sacrifices daily. He offered Himself once. They offered for their own sins as well as the sins of

the people; He being without sin, could offer Himself for the sins of His people only. He entered once into the Holy Place and obtained eternal redemption for us by His own blood which could take away sin; they could only enter into the shadow of the Holy Place in the worldly sanctuary by blood of goats and calves which could not take away sin. The maneuvers of the high priests of the Levitical Priesthood were only shadows and types; His was the real and true.

We must preach Him as being both Master and servant if we preach the cross. As master His demands were that the law be kept to a jot and tittle; as servant, He perfectly fulfilled the law. As master, He demanded that the sinner be punished, as servant, He took upon Himself this punishment in behalf of His people. As master, He instructs His people; as servant, He comes into their hearts and enables them to carry out His instructions. He orders them to perform and performs for them that which He orders.

He is great and small. He is so great that all His people are in Him. He is small enough to dwell in the heart of one of His little ones. He is strong enough to have power over all flesh, yet weak enough that He said while upon earth, ***"The Son of Himself can do nothing." "The Father worketh hitherto, and I work."*** He was rich and poor. He was so rich that He owns all things; so poor that He said, ***"The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head"*** (Matt. 8:20). He experienced all the crosses of opposing characteristics and experiences. We must preach this in order to preach the cross.

Dear ones, is it not a comfort to you to realize that your Savior knows how to sympathize with your cross? You have never felt grief more than He. Your temptations have never been greater than His temptations. You have never experienced being forsaken to a greater extent than He experienced. Is He not a wonderful sympathizing Savior? He knows by experience your every trial and sorrow.

Preaching the cross includes not only the Cross of Jesus Christ but also the cross of His people. We read in Matt. 16:24, ***"Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me."*** The cross of two opposing characteristics consisting of the flesh and the Spirit must have been the cross under consideration. Each child of God ***"takes up his cross"*** when he is born of the Spirit. He is not familiar with the cross before this time because all he knows is his carnal natural desires, thus he is in fellowship with himself. He is in perfect agreement with himself before this miraculous work of the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit takes up its abode in the soul of an individual he begins to experience the cross the world knows nothing about. A child of God soon learns, ***"That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit" (John 3:6).*** We learn by sad experience that

we cannot spiritualize the flesh nor "fleshilize" the Spirit. (Pardon the newly coined word, but this is the only way I know to make it plain.) There is no blending the two together in this world, thus, the cross. The flesh shall be spiritualized in the resurrection. The soul is spiritualized in being born of the Spirit in this life. We cannot reform nor renovate the flesh so that it can agree with the spiritual, neither can we bring the Spirit down so that it can agree with the flesh. Paul said in Galatians 5:17, *"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: [the cross] so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."* Those born of the Spirit are possessed with dual contrary characteristics and experiences. No wonder we are strangers to ourselves!

The Spirit is spiritual and the flesh is natural. The flesh is carnal and the Spirit is holy. The Spirit is immortal and the flesh is mortal. The Spirit is righteous and the flesh sinful. The Spirit is living and the flesh is dying. The regenerated mind serves the law of God but the flesh serves the law of sin. We experience the cross of life and death, joys and sorrows, good and evil, abased and exalted, humility and pride, forsaken and owned, and many, many other conflicts too numerous to mention.

Hart was inspired to write many hymns in harmony with the strange conflicting crosses of a child of God. He wrote:

"How strange is the course that a Christian
must steer,
How perplexed is the path he must tread!
The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
And his life he receives from the dead.

His fairest pretensions must wholly be waived,
And his best resolutions be crossed;
Nor can he expect to be perfectly saved,
'Til he finds himself utterly lost.

When all this is done, and his heart is assured
Of the total remission of sins,
When his pardon is signed and his peace is
procured,
From that moment his conflict begins."

How strange that one must lose his own life to find it! He must feel himself to be lost before he can be saved. He must die in order to live. He must fear before he hopes. The righteous views himself as sinful and the greatest is made to feel *"less than the least."* The way up is down.

The text says, *"The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness."* It has a reverse effect upon those who perish. Those who are not born of God cannot receive the things of the Spirit. Preaching the

cross "cuts them to the heart" while it "pricks us in the heart." It antagonizes them and comforts us. It drives them away while it draws us. It edifies us and confuses them. It is to us, "the power of God"; to them, "foolishness."

It is foolishness to them because they feel capable of performing righteousness, atoning for their little mistakes, reforming and renovating themselves, dedicating their lives to God, and making heaven their home; so, why the cross? Why was it necessary for Christ to perform righteousness and it be imputed to them? Why was it necessary for Christ to die on the cross considering they are able to take care of themselves?

Why is it necessary for the Spirit of God to directly work in their hearts when they feel capable of performing the work required with the spirit they naturally possess? Why is the Spirit of God a cross to the spirit of the carnal or natural mind when the natural mind itself seems to them to be sufficient to choose God and work righteousness? Why are they not in strict agreement?

The aforestated questions above I know to be in harmony with the thoughts of the unregenerated mind. Preaching the cross was to me foolishness for years after I was ordained by man to preach! I religiously preached the power of man and the wisdom of man to make heaven his home! I have no stones to throw at them because I was as conscientious and honest in my convictions as anyone could be. I had not experienced the cross; therefore, I could not preach it. I know that something occurred to me one night as I closed a discourse on the subject, "Sinners in the hands of an angry God." This mighty something that took hold of me crossed everything I had ever known and brought to nought all I had thought myself to be. I trust this was the Holy Spirit that manifested my righteousness as filthy rags in His sight. I trust that I was given the Holy Ghost conscience which was a cross to my natural conscience. My life since that time has been full of conflicts and crosses. I have been convinced that it is through hell we enter heaven, and by the cross we obtain the crown.

"But unto us, which are saved, it is the power of God." God's power caused us to look to the cross of Christ for remission of sins. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission for sin. It is through the power of God that our sins are remitted because it required the blood of His own Son shed on the cross to justify the remission of our sins. It is through the power of God that we are given His Spirit which is so contradictory to our natural carnal spirit that it is neither desired nor can be obtained by the power. The things we naturally love the cross causes us to hate. The things we naturally consider wisdom the cross manifests as foolishness. What a cross between the natural and spiritual mind! What a rugged cross experienced by those upon whom the power of God hath wrought a work!

Sometime ago at a funeral the choir sang, ***"The Old Rugged Cross."*** As

they sang the words, ***"I'll exchange it some day for a crown,"*** my mind was deeply impressed upon that grand exchange. A crown of immortality awaits the mortal. A crown of righteousness awaits the enlivened sinner. A crown of glory is laid up for those who feel so low and insignificant. A crown of eternal life will swallow up those who die in the Lord. The incorruptible crown shall clothe the corruptible body. We experience the cross here, but beyond this sphere of time we shall realize the crown.

It was said of Jesus in Hebrews 12:2, ***"Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."*** We are to follow Him. Because of His accomplishments, that joy is set before us. We press towards the mark of the prize of the high calling when we shall be called upon high to sit with Him. Should we not be emboldened to endure the cross and be encouraged to run the race that is set before us seeing that such a crown is our reward and prize at the end of the race. May God give you strength and courage to endure the cross with patience and persevere in the race with faith. May He grace you with the gifts of His Spirit so that you can fight as a good soldier the foes that dwell within. May you be supplied with all your need so that at the end of the way you may say with Paul, ***"For I am now ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: not to me only, but unto them also that love His appearing"*** (2 Tim. 6:6-8). May God bless these thoughts to your comfort and edification.

Elder E.J. Lambert

WHAT IS PRAYER?

In the preceding number of the SIGNS, sister Gentry asked for our opinion and for the views, of others, on the subject of prayer. The subject of prayer has occasioned us much reflection at times, for the last forty-five years, and yet we have been so dull a scholar in the school of Christ, if indeed we are a pupil of his school, that after almost half a century's tuition on the subject, we have not to confess the humiliating truth, that we often ask and receive not, because we ask amiss; and to this day we know not how to pray as we ought. In the year 1811, when but young in our profession, we resolved to be much engaged in prayer, and, as we had read somewhere that,

"Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees,"

we were fully resolved to make him tremble continually. We supposed

then that prayer consisted in periodical forms, in which we were required to humble ourselves before God, and ask of him whatever we were in need of. To our inexperienced mind there was much virtue in prayer, that is, in the form and language of prayer, and it was our impression that the poet was right when he said,

"Restraining prayer we cease to fight;
The weakest saint upon his knees,"

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"Restraining prayer we cease to fight;
Prayer makes the christian's armor bright,

And we verily thought, by our constant praying, we should avoid temptation, and live above doubts and fears. We should keep the old tempter so terrified with our devotions, that he would not dare assail us with any wicked suggestions. But we soon learned that our prayers were not the right kind to keep Satan at bay, for it was not long before it really appeared to us that we were much more annoyed with his company when performing our solemn devotions, than at any other time. Often, when the hour of prayer, which we had set, came, we were either inflated with pride that we were so devout, or crushed down with such a sense of our sinfulness that it seemed wicked and presumptuous to call upon the name of the Lord. Sometimes, when about to rush into the presence of the Lord like the unthinking horse into battle, we found our thoughts, like the fool's eyes, were wandering to the ends of the earth, and we have been unable sometimes to utter one word of supplication. Self-abased before the Lord, we have risen up from our knees, and left the place, concluding that we could not pray, and perhaps in reality praying, or breathing forth the heart-felt and heaven-inspired desire of our inmost soul, that God would manifest himself as our God and portion and give us grace whereby we might serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

These earnest desires breathed forth to God, we hardly dared to call them prayer, for we have imbibed the idea that prayer must have more formality about it, that we must go into some closet, or secret place, literally, and fall on our knees, or prostrate our body before the Lord, and then and there utter our prayers in an appropriate utterance of words. Often like sister Gentry, we have been in great heaviness because we could not pray, or rather because we were unable to satisfy ourself that we had prayed. But

we are now led to believe that the most fervent prayers we have ever offered to God, were indicted by groanings which we could not utter. There have been times when it has really seemed to us that the Spirit truly helped our infirmities, and made intercession for us in that way, and we were made more sensible of our entire dependence on God, than we could have been if we had believed that we had ability to pray when and as we pleased.

Volumes might be written in reply to the inquiry of our sister, "What is prayer?" without exhausting the subject. But in this short article, we can only touch briefly upon the subject. Secret prayer, or that prayer of the saint which is poured forth as a communion between God and the individual worshiper, we believe is often made when we may be in the open field, on the public highway, or when lying upon our bed, but it is always when none but God, who seeth in secret, knows the emotions of the suppliant's heart. And this is what we understand to be entering into our closet and shutting the door; here it becomes a matter between the God of heaven and that saint on whom God has graciously poured the spirit of prayer and of supplication.

Social prayer is that in which a number of christians are led by the same spirit to call upon the name of the Lord, and in which one is mouth for them all; such praying must necessarily be audibly uttered, so that all who are present may understandingly unite in the prayer. This public or social devotion is as important in its place as the secret aspirations of the praying saint in the closet. But all vain show and ostentation parade should be avoided. We are to remember that God is in heaven, and we are on his footstool, and it is becoming that our words should be few, for his people are not heard for their much speaking, nor for their loud speaking, nor for the sanctimonious tone in which the words of prayer are uttered. In the public assemblies of the saints, we do not find that every praying soul has been distinguished with the gift to be mouth for the church, but all the saints are blessed with the gift of prayer, whereby they may unite in the petitions offered, so far as they are indicted by the Spirit of God.

In regard to the answers of prayer, we are not to expect that there is either power, merit or efficacy in our prayers, in themselves considered, to entitle us to the things which we pray for. God, who has all things needful for us, either for time or eternity, in store, gives the spirit of prayer to his children, and that spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God; it knoweth what is the will of God, and it invites within us the desire for what God designs to bestow in answer to prayer. So, instead of our bringing the Lord under obligation to bestow blessings on us for our prayers, here is an additional dependence on God, not only for the things that we need, but also for the spirit to ask him for them. And when we speak of our children and neighbors being quickened and born of God, in answer to our prayers, we mean to be understood that God

has not only made bare his holy arm, and revealed his salvation in the conversion of sinners, and in reviving his church, but that he has made his children desire, and by the spirit of supplication, has led them to pray for the accomplishment of all these things. There are many things connected with this subject, on which, at this time, we cannot dwell. Among others, faith is indispensable. Not a faith of human origin, that we can create or exercise, but that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit and the gift of God; that faith of which Christ is the author and the finisher, and which is called the faith of Jesus Christ, by which we live spiritually, and that faith which is of the operation of God. He that cometh unto God must believe that he is. How can we devoutly pray to a God, the existence of whom we doubt or disbelieve? And if we believe there is a God, how can we ask of him for blessings, unless we have faith to assure us that God has them in store for us, and that he will freely bestow them upon us through Jesus Christ our Lord? Without faith it is impossible to please God. Faith lays hold on his promises, and gives us confidence that they shall all be fulfilled. Faith looks to Jesus as the only medium through whom we may approach the Father; for he says, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." He is also the only medium through which spiritual blessings are sent down from heaven upon the saints. God has blessed his children with all spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world; so we have no reason to expect any spiritual blessing out of Christ, or in any other way than according as he hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world.

Middletown, N.Y., April 1, 1856.

Elder Beebe

From the book "The Hope and Calling" written by A.P. Mewborn.

I have a desire to write some of what I hope to be the dealings of the Lord with me, and if I do, I must have a starting point. When I was seven or eight years old, I was fascinated when I could be in the presence of my Grandfather, especially if there were other ministers present, and there often were, to hear them discuss the scriptures. He was gifted in prophecy, and when they would discuss the things that must surely come to pass, I would be both horrified and completely enthralled with their conversation. I remember on one occasion when he became irritated because I had used his bible, and lost a place he had left a marker in, he requested my Daddy to take him to town. When he returned, he came to me and said, "Albert it came to me that if I would give you a bible, you would let mine alone." My first bible, oh what a treasure. I firmly believed in that hour, that before I was a man I would completely master it. I really believed that any person who would apply themselves properly, could indeed know the bible

and all things taught in it. I began to study and have studied in my own way ever since, but all I have learned is that if God does not reveal the sacred truth therein contained that no one can really know the bible, or any part of it. I am also convinced that at the age of seven or eight years, I believed and hoped in the same conception of Christianity that I love and believe in today. I am also persuaded that I did advocate in a small way, the very same doctrine I try so hard to preach today. Sometimes I am comforted by some of the experiences of my youth that strengthens my hope even now.

As a child, I was sometimes very impressed with the scripture, 1st Corinthians 13-11, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things." We hope to hear Paul preach the above as he was inspired by the Holy Spirit. What I heard often made me wonder if the ambition to become a man is not opposite of things that would bring joy, happiness and pleasant living to us.

We hear by faith our Lord Jesus Christ speak of children, Luke 18-16, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." Also He teaches Matthew 18-3, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

When I was a child of eight years old, I remember many things I wished for. I could not wait to become a man, but tried to describe these desires to an adult, who the neighbors looked up to as a profound Christian, I was told by him that my conception of heaven was childish, that I was looking for something for nothing, and that heaven was for only those that were willing to work for it. He intimated that one can become a child of God only by sacrifice, giving, christian works and christian living. I remember thinking, "But I thought as a child." The description of a Christian that he gave me was certainly filled with high ideals, and was truly a covetous position, but again I wondered, where is the child of GRACE? Where is the child of MERCY? Where is the repentant child? But alas, I could not then, even as I cannot now answer the numerous questions that plague my mind. However, I was admonished just to wait until I became a man, and these childish questions that I asked him would be answered. Oh how I wanted to be a man! I needed some answers. I was enshrouded with a dense cloud of darkness and the weight of it kept pressing me down, down, until I was sure the cloud would never lift, until I became a man, and was able to put away childish things, as the neighbor "man of God" promised I could. I visited him again, (although right now, I wonder why), and was told to "go to work, search the scriptures and in the cloud of darkness, I would be instructed by God to find my way, and then I could see for myself what I must do."

About this time I continually sought for a formula that would make me feel like a man, so I could perform the

things the Arminian neighbor and his Evangelist has instructed me to do, assuring me that I too, could become a Christian if only I would, "Study to show myself approved of God, a workman who needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." But even as he instructed me, in the back of my mind I could not help but hear, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." But alas, as I compared to this minister, I was yet a child and to him this kind of thinking would be indeed childish and I did not want to be a child, but a man with enough knowledge and prestige to advise "children" like me to grow up and be kind of Christian and citizen they wanted to be.

I began to study the Bible to try to find a doctrine I could prove, that would allow one to become a man, who was able to stand on his feet, and hold up his head, and know that he was a Christian, and be able to point the unsaved in the right direction. The more I searched for the light, the more darkness I beheld. I branched out with my study, I began to read all the books I could get about religion. My Grandfather, who was a Primitive Baptist Minister, had not long ago died, and he had a good library of religious books, and I began to read them, but the more I studied his books, and the Bible, the more I doubted the advisability of becoming a man. As I read after ministers like Gill, Huntington, Cowin, Hardy, Cold, Pittman, the Hassells and too many more to name here, I became more confused than ever.

It appeared to these men to be a wonderful thing to be kept small and dependent as a child, helpless and needing always the "Father" as a counselor and looking to Him, not for help, but for every good that was given them. I tried to talk to my parent's pastor, and he seemed to turn away from my questions. It seemed to me that no one knew and no one seemed to care about the fact that I could not ever be anything but a helpless child. Oh how I tried to pray that I might be like other children seemed to be, not concerned about death and the hereafter, but no relief came to me.

About this time in my life, I became stricken with acute Bright's Disease (uremic poison). As the Lord would have it, I over heard the doctor tell my Daddy that I could not live, and that my time could only be a few hours. At first this frightened me, and I remember waking each morning and feeling of my body to see if I were dead. The doctor ordered a special nurse (RN) for me. She was real good to me and tried so much to comfort me. She would each day, at my request, read to me from the Bible. One day as she was reading to me, it seemed to me that I was more convinced than ever about not being able to "put away childish things," then her voice sounding to me to be very far away was saying in the language of Jesus "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God." Oh, I cannot describe the relief that flooded through me. How wonderful it was that God loved my being as helpless as a little child! My hope

was not dead! This was my first knowledge of a HOPE, it was so alive that right then I was not afraid to die. I wanted to shout this wonderful news to everyone, especially to those who felt to be helpless, and as a child, no longer was it important to me to put away childish things, because MY GOD loved children. But alas, I could not tell anyone of this joy. I was afraid my parents would not understand. I was afraid my brothers and sisters would not care. Somehow I felt it to be too precious not to share, but my lips were sealed, and the only joy that came from this hope was within me.

As my sickness grew worse, and continued on, I grew more and more despondent about living, and my only comfort came as God gave me to understand something of what the nurse read to me. I knew that those who loved me had very little hope for my recovery and I was convinced that if I could just pass away in my sleep, it would be better for all concerned. But just as I could not live, I could not die. I could not grow up to be a man and put away childish things because I could not live. I could not bring any relief to my wonderful parents, who worked so hard to support a large family, because I could not live, you see I was taught in that furnace of affliction that life and death is in His hand. I finally went into what the doctor called a "coma". He told my parents that I could not hear or feel anything, but I could. I could hear them talking, always seemingly in whispers, and I was immensely thirsty. I knew they believed I would die at any time, and that was no longer important. I wanted water! I remembered that God had used water as an example of His love, and nothing seemed more beautiful to me than this water, a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal. I could see this precious water, but had no power to get to it. Nothing has ever been more beautiful or desirable to me than that beautiful water. I felt that if I could just get to that river of water, all my troubles would be over, and I would thirst no more forever. Here again, I was that helpless child, and had not the power to reach that water. Then again, I seemed to hear my nurse reading in that faraway voice, "Without the shedding of blood, there can be no remission of sin." It was about dark, or so it seemed to me, there were several visitors in the room, some I knew and some I did not, when suddenly without any effort on my part, I sat up in bed and blood came from my nose with such power that it went on the floor at the foot of my bed. My first thoughts were, now I can ask for water. My Mother has always been a beautiful woman, and a wonderful person to me, but she was never more beautiful than when she brought me a glass of that wonderful water. I could see the "Mother of the Church of The Living God," as she administered a "Cup of water to one of these little Ones," for it is life unto them. How wonderful are His judgements and His ways past finding out!

As I began to improve and to go about being a child again, I was oftimes reminded that I had promised God that I would tell His people, "His chil-

dren," about that wonderful water, "LOVE," that He had given me. However, I am not different from other helpless creatures, and as soon as I was not thirsty, that water lost it's wonderful value and it seemed again, I was shut up, my lips were sealed, and I could never say, "How great things God had done for me."

Not long after this, a mule kicked me and crippled me for life. Again, I was made as helpless as a child, and made dependent on some other power for every ministration of life that I received. I am now (69) sixty-nine years old, and since that time that has been the story of my life, something always comes along to keep me down, small and always dependent on a greater power.

Now organized religion says it should be our ambition to give up, become a worker, put away childish things, and to use our lives to to teach others to turn from the error of their ways, and thus cause their manhood to be used for the glory of God. But when I remember that our Lord has taught, "Everyone that is exalted shall be abased, "I am persuaded that it is better for me to remain a child.

During the remainder of what men call "childhood," this still small voice continued to remind me of the promise I made to God to tell His people of His wonderful love, grace and the power to forgive sins for His humble poor. But I felt so unqualified, and knew my inability, and more than anything else that my ability to live in the way I felt that I saw the Lord's people live was completely nil. I know that I was a man, about six feet, four inches tall and weighed about two hundred-fifty pounds, physically I felt second to none, but when I compared myself to the people who composed the membership of the Church of the Living God, I fell so short of what I was convinced was required. My eyes were opened, I was able to see myself as I really was, and am, so small, so insignificant, so dependent and more than ever a child needing the guidance of Grace, the comfort of Mercy and forgiving love of the eternal God, who loved children. My ambition was no longer to become a man and put away childish things, but to remain a child, even if a guilty and disobedient child, that with the presence of guilt should be kept small. The urge to tell people about this God who loved children, became stronger and more emphatic as time went on. Oh how I begged Him to relieve me of this burden, so many young and healthy men would appear to me as being so much more qualified for this sacred duty than I. But God would not hear me. I am convinced that my attempts to pray were selfish, but experience made me know that the Old School Baptists would not let anyone preach if they were not of the Church membership, and I knew that I was not a fit subject for Church membership, and even if I could offer, my Father, who was a deacon certainly knew me as a misfit and the Church could not grant me the much desired home.

About this time the Lord blessed me to meet the wonderful woman that He predestinated to be my wife, and soon

He gave her to me. A precious helpmeet to meet with me the joys and sorrows that came our way.

I was working in a merchandise store six days a week, and went fishing every Sunday. I loved to fish, loved the outdoors, loved the rivers, the creeks, the ocean and the sound I fished in. Now I felt I had the proper formula worked out. A beautiful, talented woman to love and live with, a job that required six days and on Sundays I could fish. I felt surely that would cure any urge to preach, my time was full, and as long as I fished on what I felt to be the sabbath, I could not go to Church, and then I could not join, and therefore I could not preach. I was sure in my little mind that with this formula, I would no longer need to worry about my ability or inability to preach.

About this time, Elder J.B. Roberts, my parents pastor saw me, and asked why I had stopped going to Church. I immediately told him I fished every Sunday, and needed to be outdoors because of my health. I was trying to justify myself, that because I worked six days a week, Sundays were the only time to be outdoors. I can still see the expression on his face, kind and tolerant, as he stated that in his opinion my suffering was a result of my disobedience, and the great physician could heal all manner of disease indoor or out. He questioned me further and asked if I felt fishing on Sunday was all right. I, being full of the powers of Hell, retorted to him, "If you can show me in the Bible where it is written, thou shalt not fish on Sunday or the Sabbath, I will stop and go to Church." Today I know that at that time I did not know what the Sabbath is or when it comes. His answer was, "Son, I hope to love you for the gift I have seen in you, and I am not worrying about the gift. If you have it, you cannot exercise it or keep from exercising it, because God, the giver of every good and perfect gift will exercise you.

A.P. Mewborn

CHRIST'S INCARNATION
From Jonathan Edwards
(1703-1758).

Christ became incarnate or, which is the same thing, became man, to put Himself in a capacity for working out our redemption. For though Christ as God was infinitely sufficient for the work, yet to His being in an immediate capacity for it, it was needful that He should not only be God, but man. If Christ had remained only in the divine nature, He would not have been in a capacity to have obtained our salvation; not from any imperfection: for Christ, merely as God, was not capable either of that obedience or suffering that was needful.

The divine nature is not capable of suffering; for it is infinitely above all suffering. Neither is it capable of obedience to that law which was given to man. It is as impossible that One, who is only God, should obey the law that was given to man, as it is that He should suffer man's punishment.

And it was necessary not only that Christ should take upon him a created nature, but that He should take upon Him our nature. It would not have sufficed for Christ to have become an angel, and to have obeyed and suffered in the angelic nature. But it was necessary that He should become a man, upon three accounts:

1. It was needful in order to answer the law, that the very nature to which the law was given, should obey it. "Man's law could not be answered but by being obeyed by man. God insisted upon it that the law which He had given to man shall be honoured and fulfilled by the nature of man, otherwise the law could not be answered for men. The words, "Thou shalt not eat thereof," ect., were spoken to the race of mankind, to the human nature; and therefore the human nature must fulfil them.

2. It was needful to answer the law that the nature that sinned should die. These words, "Thou shalt surely die," respect the human nature. The same nature to which the command was given was that to which the threatening was directed.

3. God saw mete that the same world which was the stage of man's fall and ruin should also be the stage of his redemption. We read often of His coming into the world to save sinners, and of God's sending Him into the world for this purpose. It was needful that He should come into this sinful, miserable, undone world in order to restore and save it. For man's recovery, it was needful that He should come down to man, to man's proper habitation, and that He should tabernacle with us: "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

copy: (1984 Standard).

THE NECESSITY OF THE BLOOD
From Robert Trail on "The Throne of Grace"

Let us consider Christ's death for encouraging us to confidence in coming to the throne of grace. This is the main ground of boldness in coming (Heb. 10:19): "Having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." Precious blood must be shed, or we cannot enter; we must see it by faith, or we dare not venture. We must "come to the blood of sprinkling" (Heb. 12:24). We dare not step one step into God's awful presence unless we see the way marked, consecrated and sprinkled with the Mediator's blood. How shall the unholiest of sinners venture to come into the holiest of all, God's presence? Yes, saith the Holy Ghost, such may "by the blood of Jesus." Let us therefore consider what this blood of Christ does and speaks in order to our boldness in approaching to the throne of grace.

This blood satisfies justice, and answers all the claims and charges of the law against us. What mars boldness like fears of a standing controversy betwixt heaven and us? God is holy, we are vile sinners; God's law is strict, we have sinfully broke it, and deserve hell most justly. No answer can be given but by this blood. What would the law have, but Christ gave? Would the law have a sinless man to answer it as it was first given to sinless Adam? "Lo, I come," saith our Lord Jesus, without all sin;

a Man against whom, for Himself, no charge or challenge. Would the law have perfect sinless obedience? Christ did perform it. Must the law have life and blood for every breach of it? Christ never broke the law; but the burden of millions of breakers and breaches of it lay on Him, and His blood was shed for them: and hereby He fulfilled the law, "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb. 9: 26); "finished the transgression, made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, brought in everlasting righteousness, sealed up the vision and prophecy, and anointed the most holy" (Dan. 9:24).

You can never have boldness at the throne of grace unless this blood is applied. "Christ is set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in His blood" (Rom. 3:25). The propitiation is in His blood; faith in it makes it our propitiation.

Copy, Dec. 1992, Gospel Standard

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 1995

In memory Mr. DeWitt D. Ray, Sr.
Ms. Amy Heppler, AZ 32.00
Mrs. Lessie S. Sladky, NC 10.00
Mrs. Nannie C. Trevathan, NC 2.00
Jerry P. Cockman, NC 15.00
Mrs. Kelly Watson, NC 2.00
Mrs. Lovie A. Thompson, NC 2.00
Charles F. Pratt, NC 2.00
Mrs. Minnie Ledlow, AL 10.00
In memory Mr. DeWitt D. Ray, Sr.
Shelby R. Stratton, MS 22.00
Eld. C.M. Haygood, TX 2.00
Mrs. Geneva Pettis, LA 5.00
H.P. Conner, VA 2.00
Thomas C. Nichols, VA 2.00
Mrs. O.W. Parks, LA 2.00
Ms. Annie Malone, AL 2.00
Don & Ron Parker, NC 2.00
Mrs. Jesse W. Ray, NC 2.00
Tommy Middleton, NC 2.00
Ms. Delphis McDaniel, VA 2.00
G.W. Carter, NC 2.00

OBITUARIES

LINWOOD COKER

It is with sad heart that I attempt to write a respect for my brother, both in the flesh and the church, Linwood Coker. Brother Linwood was born April 19, 1910 and died August 14, 1995, making his stay on earth 85 years. He was blessed to join Tarboro Church on December 3, 1982 and attended as long as his health permitted it.

Brother Linwood was the twin brother of Elder Leslie Coker. He was a strong believer of Salvation by the Grace of God. He was a humble, kind person and to know him was to love him. Linwood loved to have company and to tell about the mercy of God and how he was blessed in so many ways. He was blessed to have five children who saw to it that he was well taken care of.

We, the church at Tarboro, resolve that three copies of this respect be made: one for publication in the Signs of the Times; one for the family, whom we send our sincere sympathy; and one to be placed in the church records.

Written by his brother that loved him dearly.

John H. Coker

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

WHO?

Who flung the stars out into space,
And holds them in their proper place?
Who, like a curtain, stretched the sky
To make a place for birds to fly?
Who sends the wind and sun and rain
To nourish fields of golden grain?
Who forms the seed that makes the wheat,
And gives us daily bread to eat?

Who, in the winter sends the snow?
Oh, tell me who, if you should know;
Who has designed each lovely flake?
What wondrous power did it take?
Who made the never ending sea?
Who formed the grass, the vine, the tree?
Who made the cattle on the hills,
And creeping things in rocks and rills?

Who holds all things within His hands?
Who owns all houses, fields and lands?
Who keeps our souls each passing hour?
No man has this almighty power!
It is the Lord and He alone!
Man has no glory of his own!
We have no goodness we can claim,
So let us publish His great name!

He takes a sinner vain and wild,
And makes Him as a little child;
Subdues his will and guides his feet,
And draws him to the mercy seat.
Let all creation lift its voice,
And in the Lord let us rejoice!
Let all His works praise and confess
The glory of His righteousness!

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EDITORIAL

ELDER KENNETH R. KEY

The following is an article written a long time ago by Sister Mary Ellison of Topeka, Kansas. I want to present it to you as our editorial for this issue. I hope you will be given to enjoy the sweetness and the similitude of the days of a tree as the days of the Lord's people. Please read on.

"They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." (Isaiah 65:22).

I have thought that the ***"tree"*** here spoken of represents Christ, who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and as his days so shall the days of his people be. As I lay back, with closed eyes, I seemed to see a little tree in all its verdant, springtime beauty, clothed with leaves and blossoms. In the warm sunshine and gentle breeze it waved and beckoned with its spreading branches, and how sweet to rest beneath its shade, enjoy its fragrant bloom, and reflect on the prospect of fruit to follow. So shall the days of my people be. Where is the similitude of the days of a tree and the days of the Lord's people? Let us go back to the early experience of a child of God,

"When converts first begin to sing,
Their happy souls are on the wing;
Their theme is all redeeming love,
Fain would they be with Christ above."

Oh what lovely blossoms, and what a sweet savor of Christ they send forth as they call and beckon to us to ***"come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." "Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein."*** The trees of the field do clap their hands, the cedars of Lebanon (the older brethren) bow at

his feet, and praise him in fullness of joy, resting in the blessed promise that the Lord will not leave himself without witnesses. Perhaps the little tree had stood unnoticed, apparently dead, until the little leaves began to grow and the signs of life involuntarily began to appear. What rejoicing now that we see it is not dead, as it appeared, and now we hope to see the sweet fruits of the Spirit evidenced later on, for they shall take root downward and bear fruit upward. But, as the days of a tree, by and by the sun does not shine so brightly, clouds appear, and oh how dark it becomes. A storm arises, and in the raging the poor little tree sways and bends, the lovely bloom is beaten off and swept away, or covered with earth. The storm passes, and the little tree is left standing, not so proudly, perhaps, but of a more sore dignity, as, the promising bloom gone, the fruit buds begin to appear, and as the fruit buds begin to appear, and as the fruit increases in the upward branches the root is taking deeper hold in the earth. So are the days of my people.

"It is not long before they feel
Their feeble souls begin to reel;
They think their former hopes are vain,
They're filled with sorrow, grief and pain."

Cannot every child of God go back in memory to the time they thought they would always go on their way rejoicing in the bloom of their earliest love, believing the enemies of their carnal nature were all slain, and would never vex or annoy them any more? But alas, the little clouds begin to arise, vexations come, and the lovely bloom is beaten off as the sorrows of the world worketh death to the sweet spiritual enjoyment, perhaps leading them as far as Peter, to even deny the Lord, saying in doubt and unbelief, that after all it is only a delusion, and they were deceived and had deceived others. Where now is the blessedness ye spake of? The beautiful promising bloom which looked so pleasant is gone from their view, swept away and buried in the storm of earthly cares and sorrows that has so unexpectedly fallen upon them. ***"But the root of the righteous shall not be moved."*** The storm passes, and they find themselves still standing in the faith of God's elect, cast down, but not destroyed. Oh then the fruit buds begin to appear, as in humbleness they are brought to see that it is not in their own strength they stand. ***"I am the root and the offspring of David"*** This is the Root that extends downward in the earthen vessel of mercy. Each can say, O Lord, ***"my goodness extendeth not to thee,"*** but his goodness does reach down to every vessel of mercy. The strong downward Root holds firm, and will not let them be overwhelmed. They are made to realize that ***"the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit,"*** which is borne upward in praise and thanksgiving to God for deliverance from the storm. The many storms of affliction and sorrow, trials and tribulations, perils and persecutions break and beat upon the

"trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord," until they bow and bend, so shaken in mind they fear they cannot stand; no, not another day.

"I fear at last they I shall fall,
For if a saint, the least of all."

Yet when the storm passes, and the Son of righteousness once more beams forth, then in this light, and not their own feeble sight, they see it is not in their own strength they still stand, but the Strength of Israel has held them. Not by works of righteousness which they have done, not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord. Much more of the cherished fruit is gone. But when blooming youth is gone, and old age comes on, we are made to realize that it is the bitter, gnarly fruit of self-confidence and fleshly ambition that is being beaten off. It came from earth, and must fall back from whence it came, for *"Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up,"* but the *"tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord,"* its fruit shall remain. One by one we see every earthly hope and joy beaten off and swept away, but the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace and fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, oh nothing shall ever be able to separate us from that. How gladly we should have the gnarly, poisonous fruits of the flesh pruned away, so that we might shine forth as the morning, with not a cloud to intervene between us and our Rock, who shelters us in their weary land of storms and trouble. As the tree grows older, as the growth in grace and in the knowledge of truth increases, the poor tempest-tossed child of God seems to gain strength in the storms, often stands more firm, and is not so easily tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine; does not so lightly bow and bend to the lo heres and lo theres, but the sweet fruits of the Spirit are borne upward to him, the Strength of Israel, the Root of David, in the earthen vessel, has kept him from falling, and enables him to say, I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me. If it is his will that I shall weather another storm he will give the old trunk, stripped of all the foliage of youthful hopes and ambitions, every branch of earthly aspirations and joys broken off, strength to endure. But oh the weakness of the flesh. How we do shrink and dread when we see the storm coming, though there is a *"needs be"* for it all, and we know that

"Not a single shaft can hit,
Until the God of love sees fit."

How we do feel the need of the prayers of all saints, for it does seem at times that this flesh and heart will surely fail. Oh may he, by the power of his might, when the adverse winds do blow, give me strength to still stand in the way, ready for whatever is in the counsel of his will to come next.

"As the days of a tree." How often have we seen the tall cedars, the sturdy oaks, beaten by the storms of many seasons almost to the ground, nothing left but their bare old trunks, and

to all appearance have lived their time and served their purpose, yet they do not quite fall; not yet, their downward roots have not yet parted from the earth, they must wait the appointed time to fall. So shall the days of my people be. Old age is come, the bare old trunk is stripped of every alluring earthly joy, until there is nothing left to live for, and *"I long to lay my armor by, and dwell with Christ at home,"* for

"Surely like a withered tree,
No fruit to me is found,
Why do I live, O Lord, I cry,
A cucumber of the ground?"
"When a few more days I've wasted,
When a few more scenes are o'er,
When a few more griefs I've tasted,
I shall fall, to bloom no more."

But not yet. The downward Root has not yet parted from the earthen vessel, and though I often feel, especially in the heart-rending trials I have endured of late, that there is no fruit borne upward from such a withered and weather-beaten old trunk, yet all the days of my appointed time I must wait until my change comes.

One night as I lay thinking of the trials and conflicts of the Lord's peculiar people these words came to my mind with force, *"I see men as trees walking,"* and I thought how like a tree is the walk of the Lord's people. None can see men, nor the people of God, walking as trees, until led out of the town, or world, as was the blind man, by God's own hand, and how short the time until made to see that as the days of a tree, so are the days of the Lord's people. He sometimes lays his hand heavily upon us, showing us what great things we must suffer for his sake, until we cry, *"Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me."* Whom he loves he rebukes and chastens, and it is his chastening hand that makes us look up, until we see clearly every man, every child of God, walking the same path, every one enduring the same storms and afflictions, for if ye be without chastisement, then are ye bastards and not sons. There is no place of rest for us in the town, or world; we cannot go back there, or tell to any in the town of the things we see clearly. They know nothing of the reproach of the cross, and have no sympathy for the mourning people of God. But to our own house, there we may freely go, sure to find there the sympathy and fellowship we crave. There all speak the same language, weeping with those who weep and rejoicing with those who do rejoice. Here we see men as trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, walking the same road, buffeted on every hand by storms without and within. The same storms that beat and bend one old tree beat upon all, and though one may feel that the storm has brought him a little lower than the rest ever get, yet all the rest feel the same way: less than the least of all saints. But in this is our fellowship and our love made perfect, and we often find the lowest tree bears the sweetest fruit, as the

apple-tree among the trees of the wood. What a comparison. The low apple-tree is the one that bears the fruit. The ones that stand the highest are not always the most fruitful. But ***"as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons." "Though the Lord be high, yet has he respect unto the lowly."*** His loved ones among the sons of earth are lowly. A proud look he hates and abominates. The proud he knoweth afar off. But the fruit of his love on the lowly trees is sweet to our taste; yes, sweet, because when we are made to look up we see that his banner over us is love, and know that, ***"Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me." "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."***

As the days of a tree, so are my people. As the tree falls, there shall it lie. It falls to earth, and returns to the dust as it was, and so shall it be until the bright morning of the resurrection, when the Lord shall bring again in power that which fell in weakness, and will clothe it again in the beauty of holiness, then shall we be satisfied. Every idol that now intervenes between us and our love will be swept away, and we shall see his face, and never, never sin. No more storms of darkness and sorrow falling upon us, no more crying of pain and anguish, no more griefs and heartaches, no more trouble and mourning, no more losses and crosses, no more wars and fightings, the conflict will be over, our warfare ended, and God himself shall wipe the tears from off all faces, for, ***"as one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you."*** Then shall we see him as he is, and be like him. ***"As the days of a tree [He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief] are the days of my people."***

Elder Kenneth R. Key

CORRESPONDENCE

October 30, 1995

Dear Editors:

Just trust all is well with you, I am renewing for "Signs of the Times". I sure enjoy reading last of the month (when it comes.)

The older writers are good so are the younger ones.

We have lost loved members, but we feel they are at rest, I think it was end of their journey here on earth.

I enjoyed two associations in Sept. one in S. Arkansas ours in La., my membership is at Rehobeth, El Dorado, Arkansas.

In 1st Timothy 2 Chapter 19th verse is found - nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having the seal- The Lord knoweth them that are His.

And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

Remember me when at the throne of Grace.

A sister I hope,
Jane Carroll

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE SOUL OF MAN

Brother Beebe: - Why is the soul or spirit of man immortal? Or, in other words, why did it not die when the body dies? Be assured, I remain yours with my best wishes.

Wesley Spitler

Reply - The question proposed by our esteemed brother involves a mystery quite beyond our depth. We have never been able to define the soul of man, nor to tell the whys and wherefores of its interminable existence. Aside from divine revelation, very little can be known of the soul or spirit that distinguishes the human family from the rest of the animal part of the creation of God. But the scriptures supply to us that instruction which human physiology is altogether incompetent to afford - ***"God breathed in man the breath of life and man became a living soul."*** And Paul has testified that the first man Adam was made a living soul. Again we are instructed by the words of inspiration in regard to the spirit of man that goeth upwards, in distinction from the spirit of the beast that goeth downward. However impossible it may be for us to comprehend the soul and spirit of man, we all feel a consciousness that we possess both, but why the soul shall survive the dissolution of the body and continue to be in happiness or misery forever and ever, to our limited mind admits of no satisfactory answer short of the light of divine revelation. God has condescended to inform us of the composition of man as a mere human being, of distinct elements of his composition. The material substance of the man was made of the dust of the earth, but it was not until God breathed in his nostrils the breath of life that man became a living soul. As the union of these elements constitute us living beings, or living souls, so the separation of these component parts is called death; but not, as we understand it, to signify the cessation of existence of vitality only in relation to the body which is composed of the dust of the earth. When the Redeemer died on the cross he committed to the hands of the Father his spirit, and as he said to the dying thief, ***"This day shalt thou be with me in paradise,"*** we conclude there could have been no suspension of vitality in the soul or spirit of either Christ or the penitent thief to whom this consoling assurance was so graciously given. The soul identifies the man, for man became a living soul, and in the common language of the scriptures, men are called souls. The assurance to the thief could not relate to the body of the thief, for his body was not laid with that of his Redeemer in the new tomb, nor was it preserved from seeing corruption. It was therefore something apart from his body that was with Christ in paradise. The body being of a material substance, we can trace it to its silent resting place in the bosom of its mother earth; we can watch the

process of decomposition until the perfect accomplishment of the decree, ***"To dust shalt thou return."*** We see it so perfectly returned that it can no longer be distinguished from its kindred dust. Were it not for the light of revelation we should there bid it an eternal farewell, without any hope of its resurrection. But the departed soul and spirit we can, by nature's light, trace no farther than the time of its separation from the body, and were it not for inspired instruction, we might conclude that it dies with the body, ceases its vitality and discontinues to be. But, God be praised, the words of truth assures us that the spirits of the just are made perfect, that they are with the Redeemer in the paradise of God. Paul when speaking of his departure from the body spoke of departing to be with Christ. That there is really a separation of soul and body in death we are certain from many declarations of the scriptures - among others the words of our Lord concerning the rich man. To him it was said, ***"Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee!" "Fear not him that can kill the body, but after that have no more power; but fear him who is able to cast both body and soul into hell."*** The material bodies of the guilty sons of Sodom were probably consumed with material fire which God in righteous judgment rained from heaven upon them, but these very inhabitants of Sodom are now suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. From all of these considerations with many others presented in the scriptures we conclude that in death there is not only a separation of soul and body, but that the soul immediately on its separation enters a state of paradise, or sinks to a state of interminable woe and misery. The spirits of just men are made perfect in glory, and the spirits or souls of the wicked are cast into hell.

Brother Spitler and our readers, permit us to remark that the scriptural word immortal with its derivatives, as used in our version of the Bible are not used in the scriptures simply to express the idea of interminable existence. The wicked must continue to exist in hell under the wrath of God, where the smoke of their torment shall ascend forever and ever, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched; but still this state of their existence is denoted by another word of very different and opposite meaning from that of immortality, which in scripture is synonymous with the words eternal life, and Christ only hath immortality, dwelling in the light, and it is only in him that the saints have immortality.

For this is the record that God hath given us of eternal life, and this life is in his Son. This is the true God and eternal life. This life is hid with Christ in God, and they unto whom it is given shall never perish, but because Jesus lives, they shall live also.

The order of the final resurrection of the bodies of the saints at the last day presents a strong conformation of the position we have taken. For when Christ shall descend from heaven at the last day to raise the dead and to

judge the world, according to the scriptures, he shall be revealed personally, from heaven with ten thousand of his saints; that is, as we understand it, with all the spirits of his saints now made perfect. ***"For when he who is our Life shall appear,"*** says Paul, ***"then shall we appear with him in glory."*** The dead in Christ shall rise first, and those saints who shall then be living on the earth shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye, and these raised up bodies, raised with spiritual and immortal life shall meet them in the air and so shall they be ever with the Lord. These are the children of God which are born of incorruptible seed by the word of the Lord that liveth and abideth forever. ***"He that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and he that liveth and believeth on me shall never die. Believest thou this?"*** So spake Jesus to Martha. On another occasion he said, ***"He that eateth this bread that came down from heaven shall never die."*** There is that then in Christians that cannot die, cannot cease its vitality, but that something is not the vile body, or the mortal body, or the Adamic nature born of the flesh, for all flesh must die, and return to the dust. But that which is born of God is incorruptible and secure from death. The earthly house of our tabernacle must be dissolved and fall; but the children of God have a house which is not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. The outward man decayeth; but the inward man is renewed day by day.

In regard to the bodies of the wicked, it is sufficient that our dear Lord has told us not only that the saints shall rise, that he will raise them up at the last day, but he has also said that the hour shall come in which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and they shall come forth, they that have done good to life eternal, and they that have done evil to resurrection of damnation. And God will judge the world in righteousness at the last day, by that man whom he hath appointed, and that according to Paul's gospel.

We would not be understood as confounding the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, with the natural soul of man; for all men have natural souls, as we have attempted to show, but all men have not the new man described above. All who are born of God in the new birth receive an implantation of spiritual and incorruptible life. But the soul which is quickened by this implantation and the life implanted in the soul are distinct things in their nature and origin, but identified in the person of the regenerated, in whom Christ is formed, the hope of glory. So at least the subject appears to us. If we are right, may the Lord have all the glory; but if we err, may he forgive us, and may our brethren be blessed with patience to bear with our weakness; for if we know the desire of our own heart it is to utter only the truth as it is in Jesus Christ our Lord. Brother Spitler and brethren, in our experience we feel an internal consciousness that we have a soul that must survive this poor frail body, and that it

must exist after the earth and seas shall have passed away. This soul, as well as this body, we found, to our sorrow, was defiled with sin. But the holy law of God spake in thunder when it said to us, *"The soul that sinneth it shall die."* And until Christ was revealed to and in us we were in bitterness of soul in view of our guilty, helpless and as it seemed to us, our hopeless condition. But --

"When God revealed his gracious name,
He changed our mournful state."

Then great joy and gladness sprang up in our heart, and our sorrowing and sighing, at least for a time, fled away. We have seen the time that we souls gladly have believed that we had no soul to live after the death of the body; but as well might we seek for repose and comfort on a bed of embers, as for a release from the strong conviction that we had a soul all stained with guilt, that must suffer the righteous judgments of God, when time shall be no more, unless God should reveal a way that his justice and truth could be maintained and salvation abound to the chief of sinners. But why it is so that the soul must so exist in wealth or woe forever, we can only solve upon the ground that it was even so because it so seemed good to our Creator to organize us. It is now enough to know that it is so, and to rest assured that God in making man a living soul had an object worthy of himself. And however dark and mysterious the footsteps of our God may seem to our very limited understanding; we desire to be still and know that he is God. May we be preserved from vain speculation on this and on all subjects; may we rejoice in all that has been revealed, and trust him for all that he hath seen fit to withhold from our understanding.

Middletown, N.Y., June 1,1854

Elder Beebe

"The Hope and Calling of Elder A.P. Mewborn"

(Continued from last issue.)

Elder J.B. Roberts, my parents pastor saw me, and asked why I had stopped going to Church. I immediately told him I fished every Sunday, and needed to be outdoors because of my health. I was trying to justify myself, that because I worked six days a week, Sundays were the only time to be outdoors. I can still see the expression on his face, kind and tolerant, as he stated that in his opinion my suffering was a result of my disobedience, and the great physician could heal all manner of disease indoor or out. He questioned me further and asked if I felt fishing on Sunday was all right. I, being full of the powers of Hell, retorted to him, "If you can show me in the Bible where it is written, thou shalt not fish on Sunday or the Sabbath, I will stop and go to Church." Today I know that at that time I did not know what the Sabbath is or when it comes. His answer was, "Son, I hope to love you for the gift I have seen in you, and I am not worrying about the gift. If you have it, you

cannot exercise it or keep from exercising it, because God, the giver of every good and perfect gift will exercise you.

Needless to say this did not comfort me at all, this was, if it were true, an upset of all the planning I had done. I could not help but wonder who had told him of my fears, or my promise to the Father to tell His people of His wonderful love and mercy. I had told no one of my promise and I could not see how he knew so much about the things that were true in my life that I had never told anyone. He closed the conversation by asking that I pray for him, and now I knew he needed looking after, because I could not possibly see how one who was as wonderfully blessed as he was could ask such a rebel worm as I to pray for him. I left him for fear he would see the tears running down my face. I had no desire to discuss religion with him anymore. As I left him feeling so miserable, I remembered an instance not many years before when Elder Pollard and Elder Yopp had spent the association time at my parent's home. It was the custom of my Father to ask the ministers present to preach and pray for our family at these meeting times. I usually enjoyed this a lot and Elder Pollard was a favorite minister of mine. Elder Pollard spoke of Joseph and his brethren, and one point I have never forgotten is that Jacob could not go to the King's house and enjoy the wonderful things therein contained until he was convinced that Benjamin, that last son of his old age, the last thing he could depend on, was dead. The last idol was gone. Now he had nothing of his own left. Now he was willing to go. Oh how I enjoyed that wonderful servant as he exercised the sacred gift that God gave him. I was so lifted up in my feelings, that I really knew how it is to shout the praises of Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. Brother Yopp at that time was liberated and when He was called on, I felt sorry for him. I knew that to follow such a wonderful discourse must be horrible for anyone and especially for one not ordained. He rose to the floor and stated he did not have a scripture to read. He told us his mind was continually asking him, "Is there not yet another?" My love ones, I feel the heavens were opened for me and I was made to see, if Jesse could not hide his shame, Son, (David) from Samuel the prophet, then how could I ever hope to hide my shame from God, who knows all things, lo the deep things of God. I ran from the room crying aloud, hoping to go to sleep and forget all that had been said. But alas, I could not rest or sleep. My lovely Mother came to me, trying to comfort me with the promise that tomorrow we could go and hear more good preaching. Now with Job I could say, "Oh miserable comforter." I had no thoughts of going to the association the next day, or ever again going to Church any place. I knew God as a God of wrath, to whom I had lied repeatedly. I felt to be lower than the dogs we kept in the back porch, and I knew that when one of them died they would go to the woods and die alone. I went quietly out of the house and into

the swamp, wishing I were dead, but afraid to die. I felt the need to pray, but the only words I could utter were, "Lord have Mercy." I don't know how long I stayed in this condition, but only one scripture came to me and the balance of the entire Bible was blank I remembered that on one occasion, when a servant faced death and the terrible wrath of God, that he was granted an extension of time, as a reprieve from death. Oh I felt that if He would just be that merciful to me, just give me one more chance, I would go indeed unto all the world telling His precious children of His wonderful Mercy, His abounding Grace, His terrible wrath and His loving kindness that is indescribable and full of Glory. I promised that I would go without price and tell about the riches of His Glory and that He does not need us for anything, but loves His people just because they belong to Him. I begged, I cried, I promised while lying on my belly in the muddy swamp, that I too might be given another chance. How little I knew! Suddenly a feeling of relief came over me, and this is yet indescribable and full of Glory to me! I went back home and into my room and have never slept more soundly or more restful or peaceful in my life.

The next day I went back to the association, but I heard no preaching. A new song was put in my heart, and was being sung to me. I had another chance, this time I would not forget my promise. I would preach and be happy all the rest of my life. Here again, I must inject, "How little we know." The disease (sin) was gone, and I did not need the remedy, I was not suffering, and I promptly forgot all the promises I had made to God. I was convinced now that it was all a figment of my imagination, and I like those of old, in His absence went fishing. Again I felt no guilt about fishing on the day men call the Sabbath.

There is no way I can write about all the experiences of my life. This is not the purpose of this instrument. Neither do I expect to write of all the troubles that caused me to quit writing. Now after fifteen or twenty years, I am trying again. I hope to continue to write what I hope to be the calling and some of the experiences of a corn field uneducated preacher.

I went back fishing, it was the best formula I had. I joined a group of three of my friends, who shared the cost, and enjoyed fishing. We went every Sunday, summer and winter. When I remember the neglect that this behavior brought my precious wife and my sweet children, even today, I am so ashamed. We continued to fish and I suffered the vengeance of God. My health went from bad to worse, I could not sleep or rest at night, my work was not at it's best and when I was not fishing, I wanted to be alone. I really hoped that my wife and parents did not know of my suffering. I hoped that they did not know of my troubles, and certainly I did not want them to know what caused them. I know now, and probably did then, that man cannot run or hide from God, but I continued to try, it seemed the only option I had. I believe now, and I believed then, that

God works all things and caused them to be, and as I look back at the disobedience in my life, I can see the chastisement of the Lord, and continue yet to feel it.

On third Sunday in September, 1952, I of course went fishing. The group and I set out early, and when we stopped to get breakfast, a feeling came over me that hurt so bad the others could see I was in trouble. They offered to bring me home, but I refused, not only because I did not want to be a bother to them, but because it would defeat my purpose. I was determined not to surrender to this awful feeling that I needed to be in Church. We went to Core Creek on the Inland Water Way, and the fish would not bite for anyone but me. Everywhere I fished, and anyway I fished I caught a beautiful drum or trout. This was a fisherman's dream come true, but there was no thrill for me because every fish I caught looked exactly like Elder J.B. Roberts frowning at me in a condemning way that I had never seen on his face. I quit fishing on the boat; I felt something terrible was going to happen to me and I didn't want anyone else hurt because of my disobedience. I lay on an oyster bed; threw my hook out baited with oysters and I still caught fish. No one else had caught anything and they were disgusted and ready to go home. I agreed, and as we approached the pier to tie up the boats, I shouted, "LOOK!" We saw a car full of people approaching a barricade at a goodly rate of speed. The bridge was turned; a boat was going through, and nothing to stop the car except the two barricades across the highway. I said, "That car is not going to stop; its going over and they will be drowned." One of the group retorted, "Ap are you a damn fool? You know they will stop." But they didn't; they crashed one barricade then the other and plunged into water thirty feet deep. We rushed to the place they went over and I began to undress to dive in and try to help. A Marine grabbed me and forcibly held me, and told me the under tow in that water, with the wind and the tide as it was would break my body to pieces. I could only look as the air bubbles came to the top as each occupant of the car died. Now I was a murderer, I really felt these people had to die in this manner because of my disobedience. Although I knew the courts of this world would not try me; I was already, "Tried in the furnace, and found guilty." I could hope for no reprieve; God had already granted me one, and now I felt that any hope I ever had was completely and finally gone. I told the boys on the way home that I would not go with them anymore; that I would pay my part until they could get someone else to take my place. They could not understand the guilt I felt, but assured me to get someone else would not be a problem. I got home and put the fish down in the yard. This was not like me; I had always dressed the fish I caught; I was trained to do this while a lad by my Daddy, but I didn't want them. Loraine knew something was troubling me, but she said "Carry your Mother and Daddy some fish; they love trout and drum." I knew she was right, but I did

not want them to see me. I was afraid they would be able to see I was a murderer, because now I felt I could hide my guilt from no one. I took the fish and went to the farm and I saw Elder Robert's auto in the yard, but I felt I had to deliver the fish. I went in the back door and put the fish on a counter by the pump, and went into the back bedroom to enter the house. As I entered I heard Elder Roberts say, "He has been preaching for twenty years." I knew he was talking about me and I left. I did not go where they could see me; I just went home. Loraine had cleaned enough fish for us and I gave the rest away. I had never known guilt as I felt it then. I was not fit to be with my precious family or any other people. I just wanted to die and face the horrors I knew I must face and not hurt anyone else.

I stayed home until fourth Sunday. My Mother was sick, Loraine and the children had gone to Norfolk to see her sister, who lived there. This was planned while I was fishing every Sunday; thus it offered no problem. I was going to go and stay with my Mother while my Daddy went to Church. When I arrived at my parent's home, Elder Roberts had come to visit Mama because she was sick, and was praying as I entered the room. I was glad to see him and hear him pray because you see I was not going to the meeting. The Lord of Host had decreed it different; my Mother said she was better and insisted that I go with Daddy to Church. Again I was afraid, however, I felt I had to go. I was as obedient to my parents as I could be. We went to the Meadow; Elder W.C. Edwards was there and brother C.L. Coker, who had recently joined the Church, (he was later ordained to the ministry), and about the usual crowd. Sister Sallie Mercer had joined the Church a month ago and I was especially glad to see her. Elder Edwards opened and spoke first. I don't remember any part of his sermon. Then Elder Roberts read the scripture about Joseph and his brethren; as he preached I was so interested in the sermon that I forgot to be afraid, but as he closed and told us Jacob could not go until Benjamin was no more for him, I was astounded. Elder Pollard had preached the same thing many months before; and again I was afraid. The meeting was over; I had made it again and I did not know if I was relieved or not; I wanted to join, but knew I had no right to ask. It was quarterly meeting and when my Daddy went into the back room to get the communion basket I felt that I would go outside to wait for my Dad where it was safe. As I moved to go out; I went to the table in front of the stand and as I approached Elder Roberts I looked and brother Isaac Horton also approached the table. I had not seen him and he had not seen me until we met at the table and Elder Roberts took both of us by the hand. He presented brother Horton to the Church first, who stated he wanted to be a member, that the Meadow Church had always seemed like home to him, and he wanted to live with the Church. Then he presented me and I told them I was in a storm and wanted so much to come into their house and stay. I fur-

ther stated that I had nothing to offer the Church except my life and my corrupt body; I was a guilty sinner and felt all alone in my sins, and wanted so much to live and die with them. They received us both unanimously, and Elder Roberts wanted to know when we wanted to be baptized. I told him I had never had any thoughts about baptism, but I was ready right now. We agreed to be baptized at 2:00 p.m. that day, and Elder Roberts said he would be able to baptise me. He had to be helped into the pulpit that morning, and I knew he was not physically able, so brother Horton and I agreed to ask Elder Edwards to do it.

My wife, as I have stated, was gone to Norfolk; my Mother was sick and I wanted them to be with me so much. Brother Coker and perhaps some others went home with my Daddy, and I stayed for lunch, but all I could think of was, "What have I done?" I did not want to bring the shame of the betrayal I felt on the Church and my precious family. Brother Coker wanted to come with me to change clothes. Mama said she could go if Papa would get her close to the water so she could see. I did not want a large number of people to be there, and felt there would be just a few, but God fixed it different. Friendship Church, a FWB Church in our neighborhood had a baptizing just before us, and a tremendous crowd of my neighbors were there and stayed. I was in a daze speaking to the people, who were offering their congratulations when I felt they should be offering me their condolences. I don't really know what went on in the services on the bank but I remember them singing, "Children of The Heavenly King" as we went into the water. Brother Horton had joined first, but he baptized me first. This is the custom practiced among many of our people. Brother Edwards had no trouble putting me under the water, or bringing me up, but when he tried to dip brother Horton under; he did not get his head under. He tried again with the same results. He then looked at me in panic and said, "Brother Mewborn, what am I going to do?" Without thinking I said, "Say those words again," and as he said them, with much ease I put our brother under the water and lifted him on his feet again. Brother Horton exclaimed, "I mean I went under that time!" I was happy; I was so elated that I felt I must be indeed wearing the "Golden Slippers" I had heard our people describe. As I approached the car I heard sister Mary Lang, who was sitting with my Mother say, "Ap has already baptized his first candidate. "I lost my "Golden Slippers" right then and there! Again, I was afraid! What reason or excuse could I give to God now? I knew I would be expected to go to the meetings because I was a member, so in despair I could only cry, "Lord have Mercy." As I had these thoughts; I looked toward the highway and believed I saw my beautiful family coming home. How could I tell her what I had done? She knew me better than anyone else, and would know positively I had no business doing what I had done. She confirmed later that it was them who had passed, and started to stop and see who was

baptized but did not and went on home. As usual she was kind and seemed happy for me and told me she hoped we could be very happy now.

Elder A.P. Mewborn

VOICES OF THE PAST

From Elder Lambert's book, "Tried In The Furnace".

"I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHICH STRENGTHENETH ME" (Philippians 4:13)

January, 1955

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

Did you ever try with all your strength for days to do a certain thing and utterly fail? You tried so persistently that you became mentally and physically exhausted to such extent that your hope fainted? If so, you know what I have gone through in an attempt to write an editorial. I concluded this morning that it had been proved I am a miserable failure and all my exercises of preaching, praying, singing, writing and conversation with saints were vain imaginations and hypocritical actions which had come to an end! The fact that I had failed in this attempt climaxed the proof. Deep, grievous, heart-searching meditations proved that I did not have one qualification that I had been called into this work! No one has ever been so weak as I ! Then, as lightning suddenly flashes into darkness, came these startling words, ***"When I am weak, then am I strong, I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."*** The words of Christ followed, ***"My strength is made perfect in weakness."*** This soothed my aching heart and calmed my troubled breast. It need be that I be shown many times ***"That the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them" (Matt. 11:5).*** It does no suffice just to tell the children of God these things. They must be shown again and again. They must experience it time after time.

I cannot see when left to my own natural resources. When Christ opens my blind eyes and give me spiritual sight then I ***can see.*** The fact that I can see now does not suffice for tomorrow. Today, I may see that all things work together for good including my troubles and trials. Tomorrow, I may be persuaded that all things are against me. Yesterday, I was persuaded that my entire life had been wasted, all my efforts useless, and that it would have been better had I never been born into this natural world. Today there is new light to lighten my pathway so that I have hopes for the morrow. I trust Christ has opened my eyes to see that God has provided for me all through my life, sustained me with His grace, and will not let me fall finally away; but will uphold me with His hand through the severest of trials and finally raise

me triumphant over it all through Christ which strengtheneth me.

I cannot walk upon volition of my own will, by my own ability but must realize that I am lame. I must be shown that the lame walk through Christ which strengtheneth. *"I can walk through Christ which strengtheneth me." "A man's heart deviseth his way but the Lord directeth his steps,"* is not learned by reading the sixteenth chapter of Proverbs, but by actual experience. When the strength of Christ is imputed to the individual he is not lame but strong in the Lord, walking, taking the steps that God directs certainly and steadily. His strength is not somewhere afar off, just being accredited to our account, but it is imputed to us, strengthening us to walk in paths of righteousness. He has placed our feet upon the rock and *established our goings.* We are far from sitting on the stool of *"do-nothing"* when we are blessed to be in this state. We are walking in His steps. We suffer, become humble, believe, confess, pray, repent, love, and hope through Christ which strengtheneth us. I can do the seemingly impossible through this strength which is imputed to me.

A few months ago, I was deeply impressed to accompany Elder Rhodes on a tour west to visit Elder T.R. Jefferson and wife and the brethren in Washington, Oregon and California. I was unable financially, physically, and in every other way to make the venture. It seemed as though I was pressed against a wall that could not be pierced. I was so depressed and everything looked so gloomy that I said to my wife before leaving, "Dessie Mae, let us ask Elder Rhodes to pray for us." We knelt in our home and Elder Rhodes was wonderfully inspired to pray God to divinely strengthen, direct and protect us on this trip. While he was praying the wall disappeared, my troubled breast was calmed, and I was strengthened to such extent that I enjoyed that trip as much as any other venture I had ever made. I have gone into the sacred stand many times trembling because I was so weak, being void of spiritual thoughts, that I could not see how I could speak intelligently on anything. My mind would be so confused that I would think it impossible to have connected thoughts on any subject. I verily believe the mind of Christ has been imputed to me on such occasions that the meditations of the mind and the flow of words came calmly and fluently with all ease. *"I can preach through Christ which strengtheneth me."*

Some time ago a church called me to serve it in the capacity of pastor. The first thought came into my mind and I expressed it thus: *"I cannot serve you." A thought followed and I expressed it also, "I can serve you as pastor through Christ which strengtheneth me."* Is it not a wonderful, mysterious thought that it is the blind who are blessed to see; the lame are blessed to walk; the unclean are cleansed; the dead are raised; the deaf hear, and the poor have the gospel preached to them? Jesus performed all these natural miracles here

while in this world as types of miracles more sublime. The imputation of His spiritual strength by His Word is much more sublime! ***"The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life"***; says Jesus as recorded in St. John 6:63. When Jesus speaks directly to you it enlivens you because He imparts to you His Spirit and life. It works in you ***both to will and to do.*** It is Christ in you who walks.

A sister, whom I was blessed to baptize in the state of Washington, wrote me an inquiry on the subject of predestination relative to the objection that it tends to suppress action. The fact that some who professed to believe in the doctrine of predestination were at ease, being content to sit on the "do-nothing" stool, justifying their inactivity upon this point of doctrine, disturbed her because of her impelling desire to study the Scriptures and tread the steps of the faithful. I quote a part of my reply.

"Did you know that the idea of predestination has spurred people to action in the face of many difficulties?" Instead of causing them to be content to sit on the stool of 'do-nothing' it has rather encouraged them to persevere to action to make their desires a reality. You feel impressed to do something, you feel this impression is from God, you undertake it with the thought that you can because God has predetermined that you should do it regardless of so many obstacles that seem to be in the way. You are impressed that God is for you and nothing can be against you. If God be for you, you will realize your ambitions. Your desires and your actions are as much predestinated as your home in heaven as one of God's elect family. In Romans eighth chapter, the thought expressed is that God has predestinated us to conform to the image of Jesus. He does this partly in this life by conforming our desires and characteristics of the inner man to that of Jesus. He will perfect it in the resurrection when the outer man will be adopted into the family by the immortalization of the mortal body. May I add, this conforming to the image of Jesus is the imputation of His strength to us.

When our natural thoughts are brought to a state of confusion and vanity, it is an appropriate moment for Christ to strengthen us by imputing His thoughts to us. When this is done, our thoughts are conformed to the image of Christ; our minds are upon godly things. Our desires are for a closer walk with Him. I can think through Christ which strengtheneth me. These thoughts are sublime. These thoughts conform the will to the will of Christ because this will is worked in us. ***I can will through Christ which strengtheneth me.***

God's people must learn by sad experience that the will alone is not sufficient. If you read the account of Peter's denial of Christ, you will find that he had to be converted to this fact. You must be converted in the same manner of Peter's conversion. Did you ever have a godly desire and find that all your efforts were unsuccessful and vain? Were you ever fully persuaded in mind to do something that would be becoming to a child of God and then have your thoughts entirely changed so that instead of doing that which you were impressed to do, you did the opposite? My experience is such so much of the time, that I have been made to know many times

the necessity of the *do* being worked also. Many times I can say with Paul, ***"To will is present with me but how to perform that which is good I find not."*** Do you know why Paul said this? He had searched and tried all of his resources and all of them had failed. All our resources must be tried out and proved as vain before Christ imputes His strength unto us. When He imputes His strength is when I can truly say from the heart, ***"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."***

It is Christ who strengthens the weak hands, confirms the feeble knees, and says to them of a fearful heart, ***"Be strong, fear not."*** He says to the fearful, ***"Fear not."*** He makes the lame to leap as an hart and the tongue of the dumb to sing. (See Isaiah 35). If Christ be speaking through me, then I can say to you as the writer to the Hebrews said, ***"Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees. Make straight paths for your feet."*** You can lift up the hands that hang down, confirm the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, when Christ imputes His strength to you. I have often been so low and discouraged that I could not go on. A brother would notice me when in this condition. He would say comforting words of kindness and encouragement to me and I would be immediately strengthened. My hands would be lifted up and my feeble knees confirmed by these words of my brother. Could it have been Christ in my brother speaking to me? The words of Christ are ***spirit and life.*** The words of Christ are strengthening. I have been persuaded that Christ speaks often to me through my brethren because of the strength that has been imputed to me while under the influence of these words.

Have you ever visited the sick and seen their countenance brighten when you enter the room? Have you ever visited people and hear them say so enthusiastically, ***"I am so glad you came, your visit has meant so much to me"***? You have administered to those who were in need and have witnessed their being strengthened by this ministration. They have seemed to want to give you the praise for it and you have conscientiously told them that no praise was due you and advised them to thank God for any benefit they had received. Your kindness indeed strengthened them and the appreciation manifested by them strengthened you. ***"I can strengthen others through Christ which strengtheneth me."***

David prayed, ***"Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, uphold me with thy free spirit; then, will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee" (Psalms 51: 12,13).*** One great epoch in my experience came to me while being enhanced by the preaching of an elder who was blessed to teach me how mercy could be given and justice satisfied. One of the qualifications of an elder is ***"apt to teach."*** If there be no evidence that God's little children have been taught through a man's preaching, I am persuaded, that the man ought not to be ordained as an elder because he is lacking in qualifications. Paul was blessed to ***"teach in every church" (1 Cor. 4:17).*** Paul taught Timothy, his son in the ministry. He commanded Timothy to ***"Command and teach."*** ***"I***

can teach through Christ which strengtheneth me." I have been encouraged by many who have come to me and convinced me that many questions had been cleared up through my preaching. Does this have a tendency to exalt me in my estimation of myself? No! No! No! It humbles me instead. The thought that God has graced me, who am less than the least of all saints," with such ministration, causes me to realize more fully my littleness and dependence upon Him.

I have heard brethren discourage others from expressing to a minister their appreciation and enjoyment of his sermon on the basis that ***"It might puff him up."*** If such would ***"puff"*** one up, it would be better for the church to ***"puff"*** him up until he burst. I say, give vent to your feelings. If you have profited in a sermon and enjoyed it, express your sentiments to the speaker. Many of God's ministers, who grope along, battling with many doubts concerning their call into this position, have been strengthened by words of encouragement from the hearers. You, no doubt, have felt impressed to go to your pastor and let him know how much you appreciate his efforts in visiting, preaching, advising, praying, laboring for unity and peace among brethren, and his readiness in administering in all other duties of a pastor. You may have failed to do this, excusing yourself with the thought, ***"What I may say to him would be of no benefit."*** Your pastor is your servant. A servant is always benefited and strengthened by kindness of his master! A true pastor considers himself less than the least; thus, esteeming the least as greater than he. He sees Jesus in you but cannot see Him in himself. ***I can strengthen my pastor through Christ which strengtheneth me.***

It pleased God to give us each other. The words that we speak and the things we do have their effect upon each other. Words and deeds are not without effect. They either discourage or encourage, please or displease, lift up or cast down, yea, weaken or strengthen. Jesus said, ***"Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone be hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matt. 18:6)*** May we be given to pray God that we be strengthened in conversation and deed that we may say appropriate words and do the things that are becoming to God's little children lest we offend one another. May we be strengthened to give thanks unto God for each other. Paul was bound to give thanks unto God for his brethren. My brethren means so much to me. I have been made to thank God for their ***"labor of love"*** seeing their labor is stimulated by love instead of hope for reward. The doctrine John talked about was the doctrine of love. The commandment received by the direct operation of the Spirit of God is love Him and love one another. This commandment comes to us by the imputing of Christ's love into our hearts. When we are strengthened by the love of Christ we can love Him and our brethren. ***I can thank God for my brethren and love them through Christ which strengtheneth me.***

Space will not permit us to write upon the many other things that have come into our mind relative to this great text. I trust God will strengthen the reader to

enlarge upon these gleanings with many precious thoughts of Christ and His imputed strength unto us. Bear in mind that it is the ***weak who are strengthened by Christ.*** If we felt we had the ability to perform anything of ourselves we would not feel the need of the strength of Christ for this thing. If we felt we could do one thing without Christ then we would be strong enough that the language of Paul as expressed in the title of this article could not apply to us for we would have to say, ***"One thing I can do of myself but can do all other things through Christ which strengtheneth me."*** Realizing my weakness to so great extent that I cannot do just one thing godly of myself, then I must depend upon Christ's strength to perform all things. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Elder E.J. Lambert

February, 1945

IF I MAY BUT TOUCH HIS CLOTHES

Matt. 9:20; Mark 5:25; Luke 8:43

This episode in the ministry of Jesus is interesting for meditation. Let us approach the scene and gaze in wonder and admiration at the lowly Nazarene as his disciples hover 'round him and the multitude stand in awe at such as the world had never been blessed with prior to this time. He is going from place to place preaching the gospel of the kingdom. With their diseases, trials and troubles the people come to him. Have you ever noticed the condition of those that come? They are not people that are able to do things for themselves, but rather they are people that have exhausted their power and they come to him because there is nowhere else to go. Just such a case is this woman that we desire to notice. In the first place she is a certain woman. In the kingdom of which Jesus is the King nothing is done in a haphazard way. Not the least detail is left to chance, but rather all things have order and precision to them. Just any woman of the multitude would not do, but it must be that one whose heart has been searched and displayed to her. Her disease was a dreadful malady and is worthy of comparison to sin, that dreaded devastating disease that Adam's children are all partakers of in its worst form. It had gotten such a hold on her that she had sought a remedy. Had she just looked for one a little while? Had she given just part of her worldly goods to stay the terrible flow? No sir! this poor woman had been hunting and looking for twelve long years. She had suffered many things from many physicians. So it is to every child of God when sin revives (Rom. 7:9) and starts that flow. We begin to try to stop it. After we have tried and tried and tried we find that we are unable to cope with it. If this is not a "can't-help-it" I wonder what kind of language it would take to describe one. We can well understand how we would go to this clinic and to that hospital; to this physician and to that specialist if we were suffering from some such malady. Nature would force us to do just that. There is not a condition in the world that this matter is hinged on. Some of our people get scared to death of a little too much doctrine and long and

yearn and plead for our preachers to preach a little less doctrine. Very well, may God give me grace to write experience. Let us look close at this woman and her experience. Do you suppose she volunteered to take this disease? No sir! this woman did not (and is not) a volunteer. She found out one day that she had a terrible malady. Oh, what pain, misery and discomfort it caused her. Tell me that it will not cause a person to move, and in the same breath I will tell you that the movement of the Spirit in showing sin to a child of God will not cause movement because the Savior used this woman to teach us our travel in the spiritual kingdom. After she had spent all she had did she still have something left? Oh, how destitute and helpless the Lord's people become in trying to arrest sin! Now brethren this is experience and if it is not the hardest kind of a doctrine I confess that I do not know it. She spent all she had. How descriptive of God's people not allowed to keep back a thing. If a thing is kept back then she was not a fit subject of salvation (see Mark 12:44; Luke 15:14). But I am glad that she spent her living; that she was not improved; that she was getting worse. If this is not a helpless, destitute, undone woman I know not the use of words to convey ideas. This is all I care to preach. I just hope that God will always bless and keep me to declare to my precious kindred that salvation is of the Lord. If preaching abases the creature and exalts the Lord I love it, and when blessed to that end I enjoy it. Now this woman is ready for the manifestation of Jesus' healing power to her. She is in the crowd at this particular time. If she had been in a crowd around the Savior earlier she would not have been a fit subject of salvation. She would not have had all her living spent, but the glorious set time to visit Zion has come. Here is Jesus being shown to her. Here he is in his garments; here he is in his glorious apparel and traveling in his strength, mighty to save (Isa. 63:1). She is drawn to him, faith is given her and she has a desire to touch his clothes. That faith is moving faith. This woman did not have the conditional brand of faith, in fact the Scriptures do not mention that kind, but nevertheless we hear much about it and that among people that profess to be the church. At long last she reaches him and touches his clothes. Jesus felt it as he feels all the movements of his dear, little children. At that moment she was healed. The flow of blood stopped! What is more she felt it. Oh, my dear readers, how did you feel when you came in touch with him? Sin was stopped, brought to a standstill, held in abeyance, but let us linger a little longer. Let us draw nearer for this man is going to speak. Remember that Peter, that bold apostle is there as well as all the others. The Savior feeling the touch asks, "Who touched my clothes?" Brethren is that to find out who did touch Him? Did Jesus not know everything that went on around him? If he could read their minds and know all their thoughts surely he knew the movement of the multitude. To me this woman is the church. It is represented here by this woman. He is talking to her, he is asking her the question. He knew Peter could not tell him. Just listen to his meek explanation. Oh how weak are all of our explanations unless the Spirit leads. but again, who touched me? Ah, little one,

has he asked you that soul-searching question? He knows and she knows. Peter (preachers) knew nothing about it. How wonderful the union between Christ and his church. Often-times they are in communion and those closest by nominal ties know nothing about it. She knows that her every movement has been under the closest scrutiny. She has nothing to hide because she realizes her insignificance. Notice her approach. Is there anything suggestive in it? Does your mind look back to that set time when the Lord asked you, who touched me? She comes fearing and trembling and falls down before him and tells him all the truth. My precious readers, I trust I am comforted as I write these lines to you. What a scene we have beheld! It was in some degree of fear that we looked on, but now our souls leap up, and we have found our own experience being unfolded before our eyes and now we are indeed glad. The church is always glad to hear another come to her and tell her all the truth. If nothing depended on Jesus after having been healed she acted the hypocrite in coming to him, fearing and trembling, falling down before him and telling all the truth. For me I believe she told him how gracious he had been in healing her, but I am not content with that, I believe she, at that time, realized her helplessness for the future as well as the past. The disease came on her unexpectedly. It might come again unless he keeps her healed. She told him all the truth. The church is telling all the truth now and will forever.

Elder W.D. Griffin

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 1995

T.T. Hall, NC	2.00
Alan Terry, VA	2.00
Mrs. Norma Smith, VA	2.00
H. Nelson, WV	5.00
Wilton L. Sutphin, VA	2.00
Maurice Webb, IL	7.00
Mrs. Bernice Greer, VA	2.00
Troy G. Shepard, NC	10.00
Mrs. Elva Martin, VA	2.00
Mrs. Doris Rowland, VA	2.00

OBITUARIES

RUSSELL THOMAS HOLLEY

It is with a feeling of sadness and unworthiness as I attempt to write and obituary of this humble man. He was born December third 1905 as the son of the late Charlie Lester Holley and Susan Brumfield Holley. He died February twenty-second 1995 making his stay on earth eighty nine years.

Brother Russell joined Danville Primitive Baptist Church June thirteenth 1953 and was baptized the third Sunday of June by his Pastor Elder Robert Todd. He was elected clerk of his church August the seventh 1954 and served well the office for forty years. His church felt to see a gift in Brother Russell, and he was ordained deacon October the ninth 1954.

He served as a deacon with love, caring, and humility. He was always there to accommodate those without

transportation and carry such to the meetings. He always was eager to have all things done in order in this Church. Brother Russell's health began to fail, and he gave up fhe office of clerk.

He was married to Mary Oakes Holley who still survives. They celebrated fifty years together several years ago. They had four children born to them and three still survive. Their son, Raymond, died in September of 1994. their daughter, Peggy Holley Nolen, of South Carolina and sons, Calvin and David, survived to witness Brother Russell patiently await his departure from this world of trial, tribulation and sickness. There are also several grandchildren who survive along with great-grandchildren.

He left also one brother and four sisters, Brother Irving Holley, Sister Inez Hollie, Sister Gladys Stigall, Viola Davis, and Mabel Wilson. These were soon visited by death again in their loss of Mabel.

The funeral was conducted by Elder Julian Williams and myself, and his body placed in the tomb to await the time when he can share in the victory over death. His church requested I write his obituary and yet, I could not touch upon his many merits.

May those who are left, especially his wife and children, be blessed to think of what they were blessed to have, rather than what they lost.

Humbly submitted as a token of love and esteem for Brother Russell and lhe Church and his family.

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

JULIA MAE HUNDLEY POTTER

Sister Potter, daughter of the late Daniel W. Hundley and Sallie Donley Hundley, was born January 10, 1911. She passed away July 24, 1995 at Martinsville, Virginia.

She married Brother Willard Paul Potter January 12, 1929. Sister Potter was preceded in death by a daughter, Sister David (Frances) Mason. She is survived by her husband, Willard Paul Potter, two daughters, Sister Lois P. Gunter and Rebecca P. Farrar and three sons, Willard L. Potter, Perry G. Potter and Posey S. Potter. She is also survived by three sisters, twelve grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

Sister Potter Joined the church on September 19, 1948 and was baptized October 1948. Her funeral was conducted by Pastor Elder Lane Carter. She was buried at Roselawn Burial Park in Martinsville, Virginia, there to await the resurrection day, then her hope will be fulfilled.

Sister Potter was a gentle person who loved her church and family. She was weak and in poor health for a long time. She was a faithful member and enjoyed her meetings very much.

May the Lord bless her family and give each of them peace and comfort and love as only the Lord can give.

I was given a love and fellowship for Sister Potter that we feel only Zion's children know. We loved her but feel the Lord loved her best.

Written by request of brother Willard Potter.

Elder Lane Carter

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

The congregation of the Lord,
As they did journey here;
Tasted the wilderness of sin,
God's glory did appear.

There was no water there to drink,
No place to plant their seed;
There were no vines, or figs to eat,
They found thernselves in need.

There was no comfort for their souls,
As they did plead their case;
And wherefore have you made us come,
Unto this evil place?

When Moses and when Aaron fell,
Their faces to the ground;
The glory of the Lord appeared,
And mercy there they found.

Hear now ye rebels ye must fetch,
Your water from this Rock;
Then Moses lifted up his hand,
And with his rod did smote.

Two times he smote the Living Stone,
Before their very eyes;
To bring the water from the Rock,
Amazing and surprise!

Yes, water flowed abundantly,
The congregation drank;
It was sufficient for their need,
When in despair they sank.

Oh! sanctify me in their eyes,
Our God commanded them;
To travel on the King's highway,
Until we're free from sin.

Prayerfully submitted,
By: Elder V. B. Linn,

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EDITORIAL

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and God said "Let there be light and there was light."

These three verses, the first three verses of the bible, set forth the doctrine that the Primitive Baptists believe in this day and age and upon which all of the inspired writers have declared in the generations following this declaration. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost one eternal God who pre-existed everything that has been, is, or ever shall be, by the greatness of his own power and infinite wisdom spoke everything into being and endowed them with all the characteristics that they possess. Just as he said, let there be light and there was light, he spoke and all the hosts of heaven and earth were, and he said what they would do to fulfill their allotted place in the plan which proceeded from the mind and purpose of God. Everything that was formed, in the day of creation will continue to perform according to that eternal will which gave them a being, originally, there can be nothing added to it nor anything taken from it.

This is the foundation upon which the faith of the children is based, the fact that God is of one mind and none can turn him and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. This is the substance of things hoped for in those who have been given to see and realize the weakness and unprofitableness of the flesh and have fled for refuge to the source of that light that shines around them in this world of darkness and sin.

There is no record in all the inspired writings of the bible that indicate that God has ceased, to any degree, to be the same supreme being that he was declared to be in the day of creation. Isaiah 46 vs 9:10 declares, ***"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else. I am***

God and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure:" No indication here of a loss of power at this stage of the game, is there? The same absolute power and control is manifested throughout the scriptures by those who were inspired with the same authority that Moses possessed when he penned the above scriptures, and the ancient times referred to by Isaiah was the time in which Moses wrote when all thing were determined in the mind of the Trinity.

God inspires men to write and leave on record his doctrine, oracles and laws which are to govern his people as they journey in this low ground of sin and sorrow but God himself causes that light to shine into the heart and soul of those to whom these truths have been revealed. Just as the earth and the heavens would have forever been without form and void without the power of God moving upon them, to change them and commanding the light to shine upon them, even so, would all of mankind have forever remained in darkness regarding the truth and with no realization of the spiritual kingdom that is all around them. This light is not to all the world because God made a lesser light to rule the day and another to rule the night and to give light upon the earth for the natural man. The light referred to above is the one that shined around the Apostle Paul on the road to Damascus, above the brightness of the noon day sun, which showed him that his religion was with form and void of any substance and from this light came the voice of Jesus, the light of every heaven born soul.

For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater; So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. The same seal of authority here that was in the scriptures recorded in the beginning, no hesitancy, no conditions, no dependence on other things, no qualifications: just a positive declaration of the way things are going to be, and as in all instances, according to the will and purpose of God. This scripture and many, many, others are the foundations of the faith of the children of God, the confidence in the God who spake and it was done; commanded and it stood fast. They glory in the declaration of the words of the psalmist, *"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord: and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance,"* because this is the only plan of salvation that can fill their need. If it was based upon the qualifications of the man in nature or their coming to God they realize that they would have ever been in darkness and without any hope or knowledge of these things.

God told Moses, the writer of the above text, *"I will have mercy upon*

whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Oh the comfort and the joy that fills the heart of those who have evidence of a work of grace in their lives to know that it is of God according to his good pleasure and cannot be altered or changed by things that may occur in the future.

I, Jesus have sent mine Angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. Surely this also, found in the last chapter of Revelation, is in reference to the light that God spoke into existence in the beginning; it is referred to in all of the writings and the source of that light is God, and the results is revelation to those whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance. John 1 vs 4 in speaking of Jesus said, ***"In him is life; and the life is the light of men,"*** and the true light was to those who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Jesus said, I am the way, the truth and the life, and again, I am the light of the world.

The light that God created in the beginning, when he said let there be light, is the light that is still shining in the world to make manifest the works of God in the hearts of the chosen generation, for whom all things were created. II Cor. 4 vs. 6 ***"For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,"*** to the vessels of mercy which were afore prepared unto glory, even at that time of creation: but as all things, the manifestation of the creation of them occur in what is called time, over many generations. They were just as sure and certain then, as now, but there is a trial of faith that must be experienced by all in this life, that are so exercised, to teach them patience that they may be perfect and entire realizing their total dependence upon their Creator for life and for salvation. As one Elder used to say, patience is endurance and they must all endure the fleshly life and trials before they inherit the spiritual life in its fullness. And praise and adore the giver of that good and perfect gift.

The world has what it calls the eternal flame which man attempts to keep burning. The light that God brought forth in the beginning is the only eternal light. It will light the way of the saints of God on earth and in the climes of Glory.

In bonds of Love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

HEBREWS 13: 1-3.

Let brotherly love continue.

Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"The Hope and Calling of Elder A.P. Mewborn"

(Continued from last issue.)

On Monday when I was at work, my boss (Mr. T.C. Turnage) called me to his office. He told me he saw me baptized and was happy. He believed the same gospel I did, but was never able to join. He told me he would prophesy that in a short time I would be preaching, and I must remember that my work must not interfere or prohibit me from any Church duties I might have, to do my work at times that it did not prohibit me from the duties of the Church. I was thankful for the stand he took but I felt there would be no preaching problems. He again said while he would be interested in what I was doing, I need not ask him, or anyone else, but go and do the things the Lord bade me. He also stated he would like to assist me in any way he could. Now again, I began to wonder who had told him anything about my fears of preaching. My Daddy told me when I asked him, that he had said nothing of his feelings to my boss. Sometimes I still wonder.

October was the association month, and I visited the Kehukee, Contentnea, White Oak and Black Creek. After this I continued to go with my parents and wife to the meetings around here.

Fourth Sunday in November, Elder Roberts asked me if I would open the meeting with hymn and prayer. I told him I had no desire to open the meeting, and contrary to what he evidently believed, I had no burden to speak at all. What a liar I am! I found some comfort in the scripture, "Let God be true, and every man a liar," but I had still lied to my pastor, who I loved dearly. He looked hurt but said he felt sorry for me, and went on with the meeting.

I loved and felt especially close to Elder G.G. Trevathan and Elder W.E. Turner, and I am sure I plagued them often. I was seeking something, I did not, (and don't know now) what I was looking for, but I went to see them often. We cried together and agreed on the teachings of the scriptures, had good fellowship for each other, but these sessions accomplished nothing. Elder Trevathan's son, Fred, operated a shoe repair shop only about a half block from where I worked, and "Pop" his Daddy stayed with him a lot. Every day at my lunch hour, I went to his shop. I am sure brother Fred got tired of me going so often, but he was kind to me. I remember at one of these sessions, Elder Trevathan said to me, "Son, I can't tell you how to preach." My temper flew hot, I said too loud, "Hell, I don't want you to tell me how to preach, I want to know how to keep from preaching." I abruptly left by the back door; my head hung down and tears flowing. I felt I had lost him, and did not go to the shop again to talk with him. I felt I had no one I could discuss these things with. I remembered that Job had written, "The thing I feared the most has come upon me." This is probably not verbatim, but it is how I felt. I had insulted Elder Roberts

and Elder Trevathan and I felt they had passed on my rash behavior and insulting remarks to many of the brethren. I honestly tried to stop going to the Churches again; but that did not help. I worked on Saturdays and could not attend my conference meetings, and I felt this was just a little more evidence that I had no calling and no promise of God in the ministry, nor even in the Church. I felt that the only help or recourse I had was to visit other Churches any place where they would not believe I had any burden to preach, or know the fears that possessed me much of my time. I felt then I could enjoy the meetings, the singing; the preaching; one more time.

I went to Mewborns Church, my Mother's family Church, hoping to hear the ministers there, (Elder J.E. Mewborn and Elder W.B. Kearney) preach in a way that would comfort me again. I enjoyed meeting the people, many of them family, also the brethren. The singing was beautiful and Elder Mewborn preached first. I enjoyed him, but I don't know his text. I felt that this was indeed the right way to go, for I had no guilty feeling and was blessed to rejoice again at that certain sound that comes when one can really hear God's ministers bring His message to His saints. I should have left when he stopped, and gone home. Elder Kearney began to read the scripture. *"My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power."* I don't know even now, how the others could continue to sit there. He spoke only to me, and if a poor worm was ever made to feel small, it was me. He knew nothing of my sufferings, my doubts and fears; nothing of the pitiful plight I was in, but preached in such a manner, my poor mind was locked on the scripture that tells the experience of that poor woman at the well. ***"Come, see a man, which told me all the things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?"*** My troubles returned with such force that I could not hold the tears back any longer and kept begging from within, Lord have mercy on me!

I continued to go to the Meadow through some sense of duty. On two occasions Elder Roberts asked me if I had a mind to speak to the Church. The first time I told him no emphatically, the second time I asked him if he had lost his mind. He gently told me that he may have, but he was only doing what he felt he must do, and maybe he would ask me again some time.

He got weaker and very sick, and was confined to his bed. Elder Edwards served the Churches he was pastor of, and although I did not visit him; I felt condemned for not going. Then he asked my parents and Elder Edwards to tell me to come to see him, to pray for him so he could die in peace. I felt I had to go; the Lord knows I loved him, but I knew I could not pray before the others. On one occasion when I was younger; my Grandmother, who was real sick, asked me to pray for her and I had tried; so I felt I must go and try. The day before we were scheduled to go to his home; that night I was so burdened with a scripture I had not ever read, that I remembered but once. ***"We have a little sister, and she***

hath no breast: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for?" I knew nothing about it, but it would not go away. No answers came; just lots of questions. When we reached his home; he was in bed, not able to sit up and he was suffering a great deal. I felt my disobedience was the cause of all this, and I suffered also. My parents and Elder Edwards were there, together with him and his sweet wife. I sat beside his bed, completely ignoring Elder Edwards and all the others and began to talk to him. He caught hold of my hand and held it, and asked me to pray for him. I tried to pray; I could not refuse. There was nothing negative about me. When finally I could stop speaking in prayer; he asked if there had been any scripture on my mind, and I could not answer, because I was afraid to say no. I quoted the scripture and then automatically began speaking about my little sister, which depicts God's Church to me, and having no breast, could not feed her children, but was totally dependent on another, a higher power for her children's bread. When at last, (it seemed a long time to me) I quit speaking; he asked us to sing a hymn and Elder Edwards had a dismissal prayer. Oh, if I could only describe the feelings of the ones there, the tears and the remorse I felt, for I knew again most emphatically that I had failed.

The next meeting time was second Sunday at Damascus. I went only because I felt if I disobeyed God one more time I would die, and wanted to live with my precious wife and children. On Wednesday night before this I had a dream. I dreamed I was at Farmville Church and it was people there, who in my life in the Church, had never been there before, and some of those who were regulars were not seated in there usual place. I saw my Aunt Lula Mewborn, who had been turned out of the Meadow Church, and when she begged forgiveness, asking to be reinstated, my Grandmother refused. I saw Herbert Kemp, who seemed to hate the Primitive Baptist which a passion. His wife is a member at Farmville and her family are all of the primitive belief. She worked with me in a dry goods store and we were close because we had a strong belief in the doctrine of the Church. For the first time, her Mother, sister-in-law and brother were there, and Herbert with them. I enjoyed the meeting in my dream, but did not know the preacher and could not retain anything he said. I told sister Sybil about my dream, and she laughed and said, "It certainly was a dream; for you will never see Herbert in an Old Baptist Church except perhaps at a funeral." The house was about two thirds full, which was a large gathering for that meeting. Sister Sybil got a good laugh as I told her my dream, but to me it was so real, that it was not funny. She asked who was preaching, and I told her I did not know. She asked if I enjoyed the preaching and I told her I believed what I heard, but I did not like his delivery because he seemed so afraid. I promptly forgot my dream and life went on. I wanted to

go to the Churches, but was afraid to go to the Meadow.

On second Sunday, I asked Loraine if she was going to the meeting with me, and she said she would stay home and prepare lunch. I went unafraid; I knew they could not embarrass me there for I was a member at the Meadow. As I entered the Church; I saw my Daddy and the other deacons hovering around Elder Roberts. I looked and could tell he was sick and I wanted to take him home. He would not agree to go, and I quickly asked where Elder Edwards was. He had gone to Red Banks Church; they had no pastor and he was filling in for them. About eleven o'clock, Elder Roberts cried out, "Jonah, don't let my people die, its all right if you and I suffer for your disobedience, but don't let my people die!" I immediately told him I could not speak here; I was a member at the Meadow. He retorted, "All the deacons from the Meadow and Damascus are here and if it is agreed on by them, it is in order for you to speak now. I looked in despair at the congregation and nearly fainted! This was the people I saw in my dream, sister Lula Mewborn and her sons were there, brother Owens and sister Julia, and "Ma Hales", and with them were sister Sybil and Herbert Kemp. Now I was truly afraid; for I knew I could not preach, and I told Elder Roberts I couldn't. He said, "Son, just open the meeting with hymn and prayer and I will be satisfied." I opened the hymn book to "Love Divine" (number 10) and read the hymn and got on my knees behind the table and tried to pray. When finally I could stop; I rose to my feet and glanced down at the Bible the deacons had placed on the table. It was open and my eyes were drawn to the scripture Isaiah, forty, the first verse. I found myself saying, ***"God was speaking to someone, when He said comfort ye, comfort ye my people saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received at the Lord's hand double for all her sins."*** I don't recall anything else I said for about thirty minutes, then I was returned to myself, and said, *"Let me sit down."*

I had left the table and was standing in front of my Daddy and Elder Roberts, who were sitting on the first pew at the front. I was exhausted, frightened and weeping. Elder Roberts got up; went into the pulpit and said to the people, "This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased, a more beautiful and more comforting sermon, I have never heard." Sister Kemp's mother came through the crowd saying, "I went to see the young preacher. "Herbert Kemp had tears in his eyes: he embraced me; turned and left the Church.

When I could get out; I went home. I related the events to my precious wife, who loved the Church, but did not want me to preach. I told her that she had no cause to worry; for I had failed and I was sure I would not be called on again.

This was second Sunday; I stayed home on third Sunday, and on fourth

Sunday, the Church went in conference and agreed to liberate me. Brother Pasper Dupree made a motion that I be given liberty to speak wherever I felt to be called. This motion was seconded and with a standing vote the membership voted in agreement one hundred percent. Liberty? I found no liberty, but felt bound, and where ever I went I was called on to preach, and I got an obsession to go to Church, enjoy the singing, the fellowship and the preaching without being called on.

In the beginning of this epic; I wrote of the remedy I concocted for this, but like most remedies it was not a cure. After about thirty-six years I have not learned how to go before the Lord's people without much dread, fear and trembling. There were times I felt He blessed me, but I never knew if He would come back the next time.

I don't know how many times I have tried to preach. My grandfather, Elder D.A. Mewborn, kept a diary, showing where he went, the text he read, and the contributions he received. I have a copy of this diary and prize it highly. I set out to do the same thing, keeping a record in much the same manner that he did, but it was not for me.

In 1955 I had surgery on my leg. I signed a paper giving my permission to amputate it, but the doctor decided to try to repair it instead. It took 97 stitches to sew up the incision he made and then he felt for a long time I would lose it. Now thirty-two years later; I still have the leg. I have suffered in a way that I cannot describe, but I can still walk. While I was in the hospital at Chapel Hill; I remember very little of what went on. I knew they were fearful of death, but some how I was not concerned about it. I remember while lying in my bed there, (I still don't know if I were dreaming or not) I saw in a large room all the people I had baptized seated together. It was such a pretty sight I cried out, "Now Lord, show me the ones I will baptize," and He took them all away. I have not made an entry in the diary since. It was shown me; they belonged to Him not to me. Then the scripture came to me, "My witness is in heaven and record is on high," and I know that I cannot keep that record.

Elder A.P. Mewborn

BORN OF GOD

Excerpts of Sermon Preached in Rochdale Road Chapel, Manchester on Lord's Day Morning, June 29th, 1862

"Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1: 13.)

The immediate connection in which these words stand is as follows: Our Lord Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah, ***"came unto His own, and His own received Him not."*** By ***"His own"*** we are to understand the whole of the Jewish nation, which are nationally His peculiar people; He came unto them, but they received Him not, but conspired against Him, and said, ***"This is the heir; come, let us kill Him, and the inheritance shall be ours."*** Peter charges the horrid deed upon them;

they ***"killed the Prince of life;"*** but ***"as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on His name."*** None ever did, can, or will receive Christ, believe in His name, and enjoy their relationship to a covenant God as His sons, but such as are ***"born, not of blood, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."***

Paul draws a line of distinction between natural and spiritual Israel: ***"They are not all Israel which are of Israel, but in Isaac shall thy seed be called;"*** a remnant according to the election of grace. So that whether Jew or Gentile, Barbarian, Scythian, bond, or free, if they be the sons of God, by eternal adoption, they must in God's time and way be born again, ***"not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, but of God."***

In endeavouring to make a few remarks from the words we have now read, to the Lord's honour and our spiritual comfort and consolation and establishment in the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, we would notice three things.

I. The ***necessity of the new birth.*** The necessity appears from the solemn, important, and interesting conversation which took place between Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Nicodemus comes and speaks of the great miracles that the Lord had wrought, which were evident displays of His eternal power and Godhead. Our Lord makes no reply to Nicodemus in reference to the miracles that had been wrought by Him, but directs his attention to a great work, in which there is a greater display of His almighty power than in these miracles to which Nicodemus refers; and at once insists upon the new birth: ***"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John 3:5)***

Here the Lord insists on the necessity of being born again, and follows it up: ***"Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."*** The kingdom of God is a kingdom prepared by our heavenly Father, in which all His saints shall be landed safe, and appear for ever in His presence. And this kingdom shall be given to none but to those for whom it is prepared; and while the kingdom is prepared for a people, the people that are to be put in possession of it are prepared for the enjoyment of it. Hence we read of ***"vessels of mercy which He had afore prepared unto glory."***

This preparation for immortal glory, commences in regeneration, in being born again, ***"not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."*** It is impossible in every sense of the word, for an unregenerate person to enter heaven; it would be no heaven to him. He sees beauty, no glory in, no need of, a precious Christ. The spirits of just men made perfect would be no company for him; he could not enter into their joys; there would be no comfort, no happiness, no bliss, no blessedness, no joy in heaven for him. I can recollect the time when the company

and conversation of God's people, when the assembling of His saints, and the preaching of His gospel, were a burden to me. When I was compelled to attend, and be confined in the chapel, it was a prison to me, and why? Because when we are in a natural state we have no spiritual feeling, no spiritual desire, and see no beauty, no glory, no comeliness in a precious Christ. And, had we died then we had indeed died in our sins, not prepared for heaven, but prepared by our transgressions for destruction.

So, it is those who are born again by the Spirit of God, made new creatures in Christ Jesus, led by the Holy Spirit to see and feel the need of Him, to believe in Him, to glory in His Person, triumph in His finished salvation. These are the people who are born again, who love each other as members of the household of faith and have a hidden melody in the heart, and can sing, *"Hallelujah to God and to the Lamb,"* and can also join in the chorus, *"Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."*

Before I dismiss this branch of the subject, beloved, a solemn thought presents itself. Death and eternity are before us. Some of us are advanced in years; there can at the most be but a short space between us and the grave for the body, and eternity for the soul. The question arises in much solemnity, Are we, or are we not, born again of God? Are we, or are we not, in a prepared state for death and the kingdom? How frequently, when musing on this important subject, do the following lines drop into my mind:

Prepare me, gracious God,
To stand before thy face;
Thy Spirit must the work perform,
For it is all of grace.

II. The power by which the great change of being born again is effected. The evangelist in our text speaks particularly of this power, and in order that the transaction may shine the brighter and appear the more distinct, he couples three negatives with the positive declaration. Let us first notice the negatives, and then proceed to the positive. We shall say a little upon the *negatives.*

1. "Which were born, *not of blood.*" God's grace does not run in the blood from father to son. The abominable and filthy thing, sin, that our God hates, is hereditary; it runs in the blood from father to son. Adam begat sons and daughters in his own image, as a depraved creature. How explicitly David speaks of it. He says, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." How frequently is it seen that gracious, God-fearing parents, parents that are born of God, have profligate sons and daughters. See it in Eli; behold it in David; and in many among ourselves. On the other had, there are the most profligate parents, whose offspring, born in actual sin and transgression, have been, by the grace of God, regenerate and made new creatures in the Lord Jesus Christ. See Abijah in the

house of an adulterous king, even Jeroboam. So that the Lord has mercy upon whom He will have mercy, and compassion upon whom He will have compassion. Our religion is therefore not of blood, but by the teaching of the Holy Spirit of our God.

2. *"Nor of the will of the flesh."* What are we to understand by the will of the flesh, this portion of God's Word? Paul, speaking of this subject, says, *"I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart; for I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh."* His desire was that they might be saved. As a Christian and a man of God he had great desires for the spiritual and eternal welfare of those who were allied to him by nature. We see this desire shine very prominently on a very memorable occasion. Behold him declaring what God had done for his soul in the presence of King Agrippa and a splendid earthly court, before which he had to appear as a witness for the precious name of the Lord Jesus Christ. He speaks of the miraculous manner in which he was converted and called to his apostleship; of the revelation of Christ to his soul; of the preciousness of Jesus and how he was commanded to proclaim the glorious glad tidings of salvation to perishing sinners. He also reviews the birth, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ, and His ascension to glory; and he declares these things are the records of heaven, and puts it all to King Agrippa, who believed the prophets, and knew that these things *"were not done in a corner."* Paul's powerful language has an effect upon the king's mind, so that he exclaims, *"Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."* Now mark the feeling of Paul's mind. And Paul said, *"I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds."* Now we see the fleshly feeling and desire of the apostle was such that he would, had it been in his power, have regenerated the king and all that were then with him; but he could not reach the case; it required a greater Power.

Let us bring this down to our own feelings. Where is the minister that stands up to preach, that is concerned for the salvation of his hearers, who would not, if he could, carry the Word with power to their souls and convert them to God? Where is the God fearing man, who has a wife that knows not the Lord, but is concerned for her to know God as her God? And where is the wife that has an unbelieving husband, but is concerned for his salvation? Where are the God fearing parents who are not concerned for the salvation and welfare of their children? This is commendable so far as we view it subservient to the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush. We can do nothing without the Lord; it must be the power of God alone.

3. *"Nor of the will of man."* A great deal is said of man and of his free will, we unhesitatingly grant; but what is that will free to do, while in a state of unregeneracy? The will is one of the faculties of the mind, a depraved fac-

ulty; so that men willingly drink in sin, like thirsty oxen drinking in water; they lie down, as thousands do as some of us did, in the sink of sin, and wallow in it and delight in it like a sow wallowing in the mire. Man's free will in a depraved sinner leads him from God in the broad and downward road; it leads him to eternal destruction, if not prevented by the free and sovereign grace of God.

"O," says one; "has not a man a will to choose the good and refuse the bad; to turn to God, and repent, and believe, and be saved?" We answer the question in the Lord's own way, and propose this question as a reply: "Can the Ethiopean change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" No; it is impossible; for, if so, "then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil," So then, "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." Our salvation, our regeneration, is not to be traced to the will of man, but to the sovereign will of God. Mark the notable passage: *"Of His own will begat He us."*

Now let us look at the positive declaration. **"But of God."** O that we could pronounce this short sentence with the gravity and solemnity that its nature demands. "But of God." All human power must sink and die, "as a dim candle dies at noon;" and the great and almighty power of Jehovah, the Creator of heaven and earth, be exalted; for He is King of kings, and Lord of lords above all praise and power, and above every name that can be named; and at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and tongue confess, that He is Lord.

Whoever is born again of the Spirit of God is regenerate; and, mark it: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." There is a creation, a new creation. We ask the Christian, who can create but God? Man can perform wonders if you put something into his hand to work upon; but if he has nothing whereon to display his wisdom and demonstrate his handiwork he can do nothing. I was forcibly struck with this while walking through the International Exhibition in London. I beheld many things in the rough state as they were found in or on the earth, and I saw the wisdom and handiwork of man in bringing them forth to perfection, in a way that fills the mind with admiration. But had these man had nothing put into their hands to work upon, they could have displayed no power. So, none can create but God; and the same God, the same power displayed in the creation of the heavens and earth, is displayed in producing this new creation of grace in the soul of a sinner.

Paul, in speaking of this, says, *"according to the exceeding greatness of His power."* O the exceeding greatness of His power in the works of creation, and in the works of providence! But there is a greater display of Jehovah's power in the regeneration of one soul than in all the works of creation and providence. When the Lord by His almighty power spake the world into existence, there was none to oppose; He spake, and the thing was done. But in regeneration of a

sinner, there is an allied power fighting against the power of God; there is Satan, the god of this world, in the sinner's heart; there are the allurements of the world, all uniting to prevent the Lord from accomplishing the good pleasure of His will. But when the appointed time comes, the stronger man armed enters the sinner's heart; makes him willing in the day of His power; brings down his lofty looks; abases his proud and hard heart; lays him in the dust and upon the dunghill, at the feet of a dear Redeemer; and He exerts His power, not by creature might nor by creature power, but by the power of God.

A sinner is born again by the power of God Himself. Sinners in a state of nature cannot take to themselves this power; they must be born of God. Lazarus had no power in himself to rise from the dead; neither had his sisters or friends any power to raise him. And we may further say, but with all solemnity, there was no power in the sighs, and groans, and tears of Jesus, as a man, to move Lazarus unto life. Where is the power then? In Christ's eternal power and Godhead. Then behold it; He speaks the word: *"Lazarus, come forth!"* and we see the dead come forth, bound hand and foot in the grave clothes. So, when sinners are converted to God, the word of the Lord regenerates the heart as on the day of Pentecost. If we are born again it must have been the power of God to begin the work; the power of God to maintain it; and the power of God to complete it. If we have not the power of God, the soul is dead, religion is dead, and all is dead.

III. Now let us proceed, in the last place, to notice the marks and evidences of a sinner's being born again.

Is it not a subject of vast importance to know whether we are born again? We all know we must die and that after death is the judgment; and if we are not born again, eternal destruction will be our destination. Whatever we may know, whatever we may profess, if we are not changed by divine grace we shall never enter into heaven; for the word of the Lord is explicit here. We must keep to the metaphor. Some people will have it religion begins in joy, and love, and peace. I have not so learned Christ, neither did Paul, nor the thousands at the day of Pentecost, nor the Philippian jailor; but more of this as we enter into the evidences of being born again.

1. Look at it in the familiar style in which it presents itself to us. We must borrow from nature. When a child is born alive, as a token of it birth and the life of the child, it is heard to cry. When its cry is heard there is a token, an undeniable evidence, of the birth. Just so in a spiritual point of view. Men, before they are born again, may say prayers, make long prayers like the pharisees, or like Saul of Tarsus; but Saul never did cry, he never did pray spiritually, till Jesus met him on the way to Damascus; not with offers and overtures that if he would turn, and repent, and believe, and so on, He would save him. My soul abhors offers and overtures made in this way, because, in its very language it tends

to the exaltation of the creature and to the abasing of the mighty power of God. Christ met Saul of Tarsus with new covenant blessings in His own heart; such as, *"I will and they shall." "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest."* And the Lord reached his soul with power; His arrow was powerful; Saul was humbled, and lay down at Jesus' feet. Now here we see the power of God. The Lord directs Ananias to go and speak words of peace and comfort to him.

All you that are born of God are praying souls; the soul born of God cannot live without prayer. God's sword is two-edged, cuts both ways. O that it may be so this morning! Have I any this morning that are careless and graceless? Have I any that are content and satisfied with a form of prayer in words, that pray not in their hearts? If so, God is against you. But if you are born of God you are a praying soul; you have inward sighs and groans because of your sin and sinfulness; you have spiritual hungerings and thirstings after Christ, and you cannot live without pouring out your heart and soul unto God. The Holy Spirit pours down into your soul a spirit of supplication and you are enabled to spread your case before Him, and your prayer is the prayer of the publican; and it will be your cry on your dying bed: "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" "Lord save, or I perish!"

2. Let me notice another of the evidences of being born again. The apostle Peter uses the figure of a new-born babe: *"As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word."* The God of nature has implanted in the very constitution of a new-born babe a desire for the breast and milk of its mother. See her take the babe; and with a mother's heart she clasps it in her arms and blesses it. This is an emblem; for so in grace; as sure as a sinner is born again of the Spirit of God, in the very constitution of that regenerated soul there is a spiritual desire, an inward thirst for the sacred Scriptures, for the preaching of the Word of God, for the company and conversation of the saints of God. Hence "we know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

As sure as a poor soul is born again of God there will be a thirst for God; I speak it experimentally. When my father insisted upon my reading a chapter and insisted upon my going to the house of God, I say it to my shame, I felt as if I could have cursed him in my heart, and I said, "If ever I become twenty-one years of age I will have my own way." But, bless the Lord, He will not let us have our own way; no; He will bring us to His feet with weeping and supplications. When the Lord laid hold of me what a thirst I had for the Word of God and for the conversation of the saints. When we have a new heart, new desires, and new affections, we must walk in new ways.

See these marks confirmed by the apostle's declaration: "Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away;

behold, all things are become new." What are these old things that must pass away, and the new things to come? When a sinner is born again he becomes a new creature; he cannot keep company with old companions any longer; he cannot walk any longer in his own sinful ways. O no; the grace of God has taken possession of his heart, and it never did and never shall fail to produce the effect God says it shall produce; namely, *"teaching us that, denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."* The Lord hunts His people out, and brings them, with a broken heart and guilty conscience, to weep at His feet, and His words sound in their heart like an alarm: *"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate."*

What a remembrance I had of this very passage last night. After tea I took a walk on Kersal Moor (where the Manchester races then took place); went round the church, and thought of former times when I tried to run away from God. I got up early in the morning and went to the races. I got on the race ground; but O the misery and wretchedness and great terror my soul felt! I could no more abide in the camp of the wicked than I could cease to exist; necessity was upon me, and I looked to find a field where I might be alone, and pour out my soul to God. Heaven-born souls cannot revel and delight in sin. Sin lives in them, but they hate it, and abhor it; for if any man be born again he is a new creature. They are not of the world; God has called them out of the world, and they shall by the grace of God, show forth the praises of Him that hath called them out of darkness into His marvellous light.

Men regenerate of the Spirit of God have new views of themselves, and new feelings and new desires after Christ and His salvation, as the people of God, as His elect. The people of God appeared to me poor melancholy fools, men of no pleasure and no enjoyment; and their prayers and talk were a plague and torment to me. But after God had wrought this change in my soul, and I was made alive from the death of sin, and I saw my need of a Saviour, I cried, "I will go with you, for I have heard that God is with you." And O what delight I took in the conversation of these very people I had turned my back upon. Thus there are new connections, new feelings, and new desires; old things have passed away, and all things are become new.

3. Now we have another evidence, which will lead us into the marrow of the gospel. The regenerate soul has a spiritual appetite. We have each a body, and a soul inhabiting that body. Now our bodies are earthly bodies, sensual bodies, for we were originally created out of the dust of the earth. Hence it is that the food the earth produces nourishes and strengthens our earthly bodies. The labouring man following the plough, or whatever labour it may be, perceives his strength fail, and he wants dinner time to come, that he may sit down at the table, and be refreshed in his body. The food he takes strengthens and refreshes him,

and he is again able to follow his employment.

Look at one circumstance in the Bible. The prophet Elijah is fleeing from Jezebel; he comes to the wilderness, and sits down under a juniper tree, hungry and faint for want of food, and requested for himself that he might die; but the Lord sent His angel to him, with meat; and the angel said, *"Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for thee. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat for forty days and forty nights, unto Horeb, the mount of God"* (I Kings 19:7&8).

A man that is born again of the Spirit of God; can his soul feed and be satisfied with the luxuries the world produces? O no; let him have ever so splendid a table, and ever so much wealth, and heap upon him all the honours, titles, dignities, that a man on earth can bear, and in the heaven-born soul there is a vacuum, an aching void, that neither gold nor silver, nor wealth, nor dignities can fill. Do you want his song?

Were I possessor of the earth,
And called the stars my own,
Without thy graces and thyself,
I were a wretch undone!

What will satisfy a soul born again? We have a satisfaction, and that satisfaction is Christ. If we are born again of the Spirit of God, no provision will satisfy us but the Bread of eternal life, which comes down from heaven. Christ is the provision of the Father's house, and this provision alone will satisfy a heaven-born soul.

If you and I are born again of God we cannot be satisfied with the world and things of the world; and if you and I are born of God we are not, nor can be, satisfied in or of ourselves. I firmly believe from my own experience, that the longer a heaven-born child of God lives here, the more dissatisfied he will be with himself; the more he will sink in his own esteem; loathe and abhor himself, and repent, in his soul-feeling, in the dust before the Lord. On the other hand, if we are born again we shall feel a growing need of a precious Christ, of His glorious Person as the God-man and Mediator. We need Him as our covenant Head, and to feed upon Him as the mystery of godliness, God-man in the flesh, and we adore Him. We see Him fulfil the law of ten commands; we rejoice in His righteousness, and hunger and thirst after it. We also see Him in His blood-shedding; we see the work is finished, and our soul feeds upon a finished and complete salvation, all of grace, from first to last.

O, there is that in Christ that satiates the soul that is born of God. He is all and in all. It is of importance for you and me and every child of God to learn that He is our Saviour and Redeemer. We read in the prophecy by Ezekiel about a new-born babe being cast into the open field. O! How helpless it is! It can do nothing for itself; it must have all done for it. Now, if you are born again of God, you are yourself as helpless as regards saving yourself, and washing yourself from your sins, and clothing yourself in the robe of righteousness, and justifying yourself in a

spiritual point of view, as that little child was. If we are born again we are like the babe cast out, helpless and crying, bewailing our condition, knowing that no man can help us. But when the Lord passes by, He spreads His skirt over us, and feeds and nourishes us with the Bread of heaven, and gives us all that we stand in need of. Heaven-born souls can do nothing for themselves. Christ and Christ alone is all and in all. Amen.

John Kershaw

From Elder Lambert's Book, "Tried In The Furnace."

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS

Dear Sister Kennedy:

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

I received your good letter and was glad to hear from you. Dessie Mae had just written you. We planned to go to meeting at Rehobeth yesterday but the buses were snow-bound and we did not get to go. We have not been since last third Sunday and I am very anxious to attend again. Sister Kennedy, I will be very glad to send in your remittance to the *Signs of the Times* for you and I will do it as soon as I can get to it. I have been so busy lately that I have not had time for any correspondence. I like my work very well, but I have to work night and day and then it seems I never catch up. I am teaching science, but the trouble is that when I am preparing for class I am thinking of the only true Scientist, *"Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times, the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."* It was He who fixed the earth, stars, sun, moon, and everything else so that all things move precisely in their predestined paths. The minds and environment of all human beings, as well as animals, are so fixed that everything, act and thought, comes into reality just as God has fixed it. He has so arranged all this so that everything works together for good to those whom God has chosen in Christ before the foundation of the earth.

I am teaching arithmetic, but the trouble is that when I am preparing for the next class, I am thinking of how God enabled His little children to add to their faith, virtue, and to virtue, knowledge, etc. I think of Paul's words that were addressed to Timothy when he said, *"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."* I think of how that God will multiply the peace and grace of His children. I think of how He will take away their sins, and will remember no more their transgressions. I am teaching typing, but the trouble is when I am preparing for an assignment I am thinking of the types and shadows of the Old Testament. I think of the Typist who makes no typographical errors, but who reveals the true meaning of these types to his servants whom He has qualified

and sent out for the purpose of making plain these things to His children.

I am teaching bookkeeping, but the trouble is when I am preparing for the next class, I am thinking of a partnership of Christ, and the church where all the assets are in Christ Jesus and the liabilities are in the people but the liabilities all sink into oblivion through the proprietorship of God, the Father; Christ, the Son; the Holy Ghost; dissolved into the church. We have no merits to list as assets. All we have are debts which were well disposed of when Jesus' obedience of the law was credited to our account.

I am teaching history, but the trouble is when I am preparing for the next lesson, I am thinking of the history of the world and church. I think of Adam, the first man, of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Noah, David, Solomon, the flood, the old covenant, the new covenant, Jesus, the great Ambassador from the Father. I am also made to meditate upon the terrible chaotic condition of this sinful, warring world. Were it not for the confidence I have in the Upholder and Disposer of all things, I feel that I would sink by the wayside. I am made to be comforted with the thought that God controls every bullet, bomb, cannon and all destroyers. He controls all generals, kings, governors and presidents, as well as, each and every soldier, marine, sailor, WAVE, WAAC, and even the hairs of the heads of each and every one who is engaged in this terrible and awful war.

I believe God has a grand and noble purpose in each and every battle, and that He will take care of all His children and nothing can befall them beyond His determinate counsel. I believe God's people will be brought closer to their Maker, and be made to depend entirely upon Him for all things. I believe the nations will all be made to bow to His majesty.

Now, Sister Kennedy, I realize that I have written far more than I felt that I could when I started, but I hope that you have not been too wearied reading this. I realize that it is very imperfect, but I hope you will at least forgive me for relieving my mind. It is late now, so I will let Dessie Mae finish the letter. Let me say, however, that it is always a pleasure to read a letter from you.

Elder E.J. Lambert

From Elder Lambert's book, "Tried in the Furnace."

SMILE AT DIFFICULTIES AND PRESS ALONG

My dear friends, if you wish to succeed.
The journey is not smooth like a song,
All the power that you have you will need—
Smile at difficulties and press along.

All ambitious people have a goal,
Hardships seem to make them very strong.
Let us work with our might and be bold—
Smile at difficulties and press along.

Brace up friends, persevere with the fight
Even when everything seems wrong,
If you do your burdens will be light—
Smile at difficulties and press along.

This poem was used by the author as the subject of "Graduation Address" delivered in graduation exercises.

March 26.

"All thy children shall be taught of the Lord."— ISAIAH liv. 13.

The teaching of God can only be known and realised by those who have seen an end of all creature perfection, and who are completely and experimentally destitute of all wisdom in the flesh. And God's teaching does not leave a man where it found him, dead, stupified, worldly, unfeeling, and carnal. If he is in distress, it does not leave him in distress; if he feels guilty, it does not leave him guilty; if he is in darkness, it does not leave him in darkness; but it lifts him out of these evils. Thus God's people are continually led to come unto him for his instruction, because they feel that without his special teaching they can know nothing as they ought to know. Nay, the more they have, the more they want to have; for no sooner is the light withdrawn, than the darkness is more sensibly felt. If any text of Scripture has been opened up to them, it makes them want to have others made known in a similar way; if they have had any consolation, and it is taken away, it makes them want it again. So that the more wise and spiritual God's people become, the more foolish and carnal they appear in their own eyes; the stronger they are in the Lord and in the power of his might, the more sensibly do they feel the weakness of their flesh; and the more they are enabled to walk closely with the Lord, the more they discover the wretched wanderings of their base and sinful hearts.

Elder J.C. Philpot

June 8.

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."— 2 CORINTHIANS iv. 17.

O Ye suffering saints of God! ye tried and afflicted children of the most High ! raise up your thoughts as God may enable you--lift up your eyes, and see what awaits you. Are you tried, tempted, exercised, afflicted? It is your mercy. God does not deal so with every one. It is because you are his children, that he lays on you his chastening hand. He means to conform you to the image of his Son in glory, and therefore he now conforms you to the image of his Son in suffering. 'O but,' you say, 'I cannot believe it is so!' No; if you could, it would not be much of a trial. This is the trial of faith--to go groaning on, struggling on, sorrowing on, sighing on; believing against unbelief, hoping against hope; and still looking to the Lord, though there is everything in nature to damp the hopes and expectations of

pectations of your waiting souls. Yet all will end well with the people of God. Their life here is a life of temptation, of suffering and trial; but heaven will make amends for all. And if our faith is now tried as "with fire," it will one day "be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." In that day when the secrets of all hearts will be brought to light, the faith of thousands will be found to be little else than presumption; but the faith of God's dear family will then be crowned with *"praise and honour and glory;"* and they shall see the Lamb as he is face to face, when all tears are wiped away from all faces.

Elder J.C. Philpot

PSALM 43.

Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation: O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man.

For thou art the God of my strength: why dost thou cast me off? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.

Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God.

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

FOR DECEMBER 1995

Staunton River Union

The Union meeting of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist will be held, the Lord willing, with Canaan Church the fifth Saturday and Sunday on March 30 and 31, 1996. The church is located on 844 in Pittsylvania County.

All who believe and love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

Elder J.R. Williams, Moderator
Geneva B. Scearce, Clerk

FOR DECEMBER 1995

CONTRIBUTIONS

Mrs. Allyne Page, TX	$7.00
Buford E. Thompson, VA	2.00
Carroll Cruise, VA	10.00
J.H. Hershman, NC	2.00
Mrs. Ruby Hawley, VA	5.00
Mrs. Cliff Weaver, WA	15.00
Cleo L. Underwood, VA	6.00
Herman Webb, IL	7.00
Mrs. Dora E. Vick, NC	10.00
Mrs. Charles Lovell, VA	2.00
G. Franklin Blalock, NC	2.00
Mrs. Mae Dee Johnson, OK	2.00
Mrs. Mildred Plaster, VA	2.00
Herbert Dodson, VA	2.00
Noel Lavinder, VA	7.00
Dan Anders, AL	2.00
Mrs. Jean Moran, NC	12.00
Mrs. Peggy West, NC	4.00
Lovie C. Hornaby, GA	2.00
Mrs. Iva G. Quesenberry, VA	2.00
Mrs. Charity Dowdy, NC	2.00

OBITUARIES

HOWARD FRANKLIN BRANCH

Glenwood Primitive Baptist Church bows in humble submission in the taking of our Brother, Howard Franklin Branch on November 12, 1995, of Tams Mt., W.V. He was born May 26, 1926 at Premier, W.V. the son of the late Thomas Green Branch and Lucinda French Branch. Also preceding him in death were eleven brothers, including Elder Ernest Branch and Brother Lemuel Branch. Surviving are three sisters and one brother. Brother Howard also leaves his wife Marie B. Branch, daughters Brenda Sue Parker, Sharon Kay Branch, Teresa B. Redden and granddaughter Ashley Beth Redden. Brother Howard was a 30 yr. retired coal miner.

Brother Howard came to Glenwood church by letter from Palm Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, Fla. on May 11, 1974. Brother Howard will be greatly missed by Glenwood church. He was a firm believer in Sovereign Grace, loved to talk on the Scriptures and sing the songs of Zion. Only illness prevented him from filling his place each meeting time. Toward the end of his long illness he still talked of the goodness of God, when it seemed he had little breath left for talking. He chose the songs to be used in his service, and longed to be released from his painful life on this earth. The Lord blessed him in his leaving, going to sleep that last night, to wake no more. We feel our loss is Brother Howard's gain.

His service was held November 16, 1995 at Williams-Blue Ridge Funeral Home Chapel at Sophia, W.V. with Elder Larry Hollandsworth officiating. Burial in the family cemetery at Tams Mt., W.V.

Our sympathy is extended to all of his family and may God grant them comfort and submission to His Holy Will.

Done by order of the church in conference December 17, 1995, with copies to be given to his family, placed on the church book and sent to The Signs of the Times for publication.

Elder Larry Hollandsworth, Mod.
Sister Marilyn Shaw, Clerk

ERMA LEE BROACH

It is with sad heart that I attempt to write an obituary of our beloved Sister. Our Lord and Savior called her home on November 10, 1995 at St. Vincent Hospital at Little Rock, Arkansas at age 95 years. Born August 15, 1900 in the Pine Crest Community, she was the daughter of the late Isaac Alexander Barnes and Levonia Ball Sotver Barnes. She was a firm believer in the Doctrine by the Original Old School Primitive Baptist Church for 52 years. She asked for a home with the church on August 14, 1943. Was baptized by the Pastor, Elder J. T. Everett on August 15, 1943. Was Clerk from Dec. 1943 to Dec. 1971.

"Miss Erma", as she was known by family and friends, was a devoted

helper to her community and spent the last nine years of her life as a resident of the Dallas County Nursing Home.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Henry Broach Sr. who died in 1984.

Survivors include one son and daughter-in-law, Henry Broach Jr. and Joy Cox Broach of Little Rock,; three grandsons, Drew Ashley Broach and wife, Robin Peters Broach and daughter Flannery Peters Broach of New Orleans, La., Whitney Cox Broach of Dayton, Ohio and Desten Alexander Broach of Palo Alto, Cal.

Funeral services was held at the Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church at 3:00 p.m. by Elder Theron Jones Monday November 13. Burial was in Stoney Point Cemetery by Benton Funeral Home, Inc.

She will be missed by all that knew her; Family, Friends, Church Members. This was requested in Conference at Pilgrim Rest Church Dec. 1995.

Frances Townley,
Church Clerk

MARIE CANNADAY

It is with sadness that I attempt to write in memory of one I dearly loved, Sister Agnes Marie Dobbins Cannaday. She was born August 6, 1923 and died at her home October 28, 1995. She was preceded in death by her husband, Brother Harry Cannaday in 1988.

Sister Marie was born to the late Peter and Audrey Dobbins Akers and raised by an aunt and uncle, Eula and Omen Whitlock. She was married to Brother Harry Cannaday on December 26, 1942 and to this union was born three children: Brenda Gayle Cannaday, Harry Brammer Cannaday, Jr., and Roger Dale Cannaday, and five grandchildren.

Sister Marie and Brother Harry joined Mt. Olive Primitive Baptist Church on June 8, 1944 and were baptized by Elder Odell Thompson with their memberships at Paynes Creek Primitive Baptist Church in Floyd County. Both were firm believers in Salvation by Grace.

Sister Marie suffered through a lot of pain but as her body grew weaker, her faith grew stronger. Her funeral was held at Oakeys Funeral Chapel in Vinton on October 31, 1995. The service was led by her pastor, Elder Lane Carter before a large audience of relatives and friends.

We believe our loss is her eternal gain.

Ora T. Nichols

MAGGIE TILLEY JACKSON

Our Lord in his infinite wisdom has called home Sister Maggie Tilley Jackson on September 21, 1995. Sister Maggie was born January 19, 1912 the daughter of Edward Thomas Tilley, Sr. and Maggie Oakley Tilley. She was married in Au-

gust 1934 to Garland Jackson, who survives her. There were no children born of this union.

Sister Maggie joined the Durham Primitive Baptist Church by experience on March 20, 1949. She faithfully attended the meetings and was a true and outspoken believer in the *"Doctrine of Grace"*. She often lovingly talked about the "trees" and how they are spoken of in the scriptures. (Isaiah Chapter 55 verse 12) This verse says, ***"For ye shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace. The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing; and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands."***

Recently, Sister Maggie's health problem became a great hindrance to her, but she attended and enjoyed the meetings as long as she was able.

She is survived by one brother Edward Thomas Tilley, Jr. of Timberlake, North Carolina and four sisters of Durham: Mable Carroll, Lottie Mae McPherson, Gladys Hobbs, Alma Overman, and several nieces and nephews. We will all miss her.

Written and humbly submitted by an unworthy sister.

Frances Brinkley

ELDER WILLIAM PATTON O'NEAL

May we be bowed down in humble submission to God in His will to remove from our midst Elder William Patton O'Neal 79, of Turkey Creek, Marianna, West Virginia, where he had resided forty six years. He was born October 16, 1916 to Daniel Harrison and Martha Mitchem O'Neal. He married Mae Lane and to this union of 60 years came eight children: five boys and three girls; two boys preceded in death, the others mentioned survive. Elder O'Neal came to Old Guyandot Church in 1944 on a profession of faith and was baptized by Elder Otto Tilley in answer to a good conscience toward God. But he became alarmed again and could not rest night or day until the church gave him liberty to speak in love of God our Saviour. He was well received for he brought forth fruits meet to all likewise exercised thereby. Oh praise God for this one whom He has called away from sin and degredation to be forever with the Lord on the 14th of November, 1995.

He preached for 45 years, a great predestinarian of absolute stock, bold as a lion, for he knew he had God's Holy Bible to fall back on. He attended several associations of primitive faith and order. He preached at Hopewell Church and a very aged Elder Josh C. Hammond told him when he sat down: "Elder O'Neal, that was the ablest sermon I have heard preached on the absolute predestination in forty years or when Elder Jonas C. Sykes came through here from Texas preaching."

His funeral service was conducted by Elder Wallace Harvey and Elder Jerry Farmer on November 17, 1995, at Tankersley Funeral Home, Mullins, West Virginia.

Oh God be with us we pray.

Elder Wallace Harvey

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

WHAT IS LIFE WITHOUT LOVE ?

Is there anything I can enjoy
That will not create love in my heart?
Should there be anyone in employ
Who cannot love with the art,

I have seen people work very hard,
When each task would produce a big frown.
For their work they would have no regard,
Their efforts will not meet with renown.

For they lack the great love for their work
That should prompt anyone in the choice,
Who intends to work and not shirk,
And in every act choose to rejoice.

It is, also, important that we
Learn to love all our friends whom we meet;
And to try to admire and agree
To make life very pleasant and sweet.

E'en in choosing companions for life
Burning love should be active so strong,
In the hearts of both husband and wife
That they'll smile e'en when everything's wrong.

What is Life without Love? I'll request.
And your answer will evidently be,
"It's a failure without comfort or rest,
Destitute of all joys that should be. "

February 16, 1928

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EDITORIAL

ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS

We would desire that as this attempt is made our thoughts and guidance of pen be of things we experience on this earth as they relate to The Almighty God that controls all things on earth and above.

The past two days we have seen a small demonstration of both as snow covers the earth. This bringing to mind the following scripture. ***Is. 55 - Ver. 10 & 11. "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."***

First lets look at this natural weather and see if we don't also see it comparable to the spiritual reign of God over all things to his people.

The rain that cometh down and the snow, notice both came down from heaven, both water the earth, both are cursed at times by some people but God sends both as He does his word to accomplish His intended purpose.

I can see the snow so much different from the rain, could we not say it's like the grace of God to a poor hungering soul. The snow blots out all the blackness of earth for a spell, falls gently not to pack as a hard rain would, makes low places high or smooth. Yet it meets evenly and slowly so that the earth may reap it's full benefits. On hard ground heavy rain runs off mostly. Can we see this grace of God as like snow to the earth, so is His grace to them that truly cry to Him from the anguish of their souls. Their robes washed white as snow in the blood of the Lamb. Do we see or know of anything whiter on this earth than snow. Or is there any blackness worse than that of a sinner's heart, when that heavenly light shines inwardly and he see where he stands before God. This grace as we try to compare it to earthly snow ***"My grace is sufficient for***

thee", softness is required before it is penetrated, but then how mellow and His word as a melting snow sinks so low to that hard heart, it melts as the Sun does the snow, so much more the Son as it shines inwardly.

This rain or snow that comes down, never goes up by human effort or otherwise but maketh the earth bring forth and bud. Does not this sin sick soul bud to bring forth new life, a bud in nature new, never seen before, may be some nearly alike, a bud or newness in spirit never seen before like its springing up as a well to eternal life. Oh for the purity of both, the snow and rain, because it comes from heaven, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth.

I believe we can rejoice together when we can know that as natural things are pictured as spiritual, we see all shall accomplish that which He pleases.

So often we ponder, why such a hard rain, why such a deep snow. Also snow is said to contain more nitrogen than rain, many more reasons perhaps we don't know, but it isn't our's to question.

His word that goeth forth out of his mouth shall not return unto him void.

Then we are convinced, we hope made to believe, the rain, the snow His word, along with all things seen, not seen or imagined and working together for good to those that are called of God, that will some day see Him in His glory.

Might we be blessed to see and praise His matchless name in all of nature and grace knowing that He doeth all things well from the snow to the calling of His saints, to the knowledge of the truth. It shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it. It shall grow & bud and flower unto a beautiful plant for the Lord.

In Hope,
Elder J.R. Williams

ARTICLES

PSALM 89:15.

"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.

Should I act now according to my feelings, I would lay my pen aside, dispose of the paper, and do something besides attempt to write this. I feel as if I am attempting something I am not capable of doing. However it seems I have no choice in the matter, I widely do believe in a God that has all power, both in heaven and on earth, and in all the hearts of men, the preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord.

I want to write about Ps. 89:15, blessed is the people that know the joyful sound. There seems to be just one sound in mind here, a joyful sound, but in this world we live in today there are many sounds, lets think about a couple of them, some of them are joyful, some sad, and some just plain irritating.

Where I live I am always hearing sirens, it seems they make a lot of noise, I wonder at times if it is all necessary. I don't like to hear them because to me it means that some one is hurt, probably in pain, this wouldn't be a joyful sound. Someone who had a friend in the ambulance, or maybe the man in the ambulance, would consider it a joyful sound, because it would mean he would soon have help.

Think of another sound, the crying of a baby sometimes it may be the baby is sick or in pain which wouldn't be a joyful sound, other times it may show the baby is well, which surely is a joyful sound.

There is yet another sound spoken of in scripture 1 Cor. 14:8 a uncertain sound, for if the trumpet gives a uncertain sound, who will prepare himself for battle? So we see there are many different sounds with many different meanings, as with this uncertain sound, no meaning at all.

However what we are interested in is the joyful sound. As in all the others I have mentioned, there is also a lot of joyful sounds. Think of all the musical instruments, if they are in the hands of the right person, they can surely produce a joyful sound.

Back when I was younger I worked quite a few 10 hr. days at sawmill work. When the boss would stop that engine and say, lunch time, or quitting time, that was a joyful sound.

None of these sounds, however joyful, are not the joyful sound spoken of here in Ps. 89:15 let us think of a couple of joyful sounds that are more joyful than any we have named here.

There is a people who were chosen in Christ before Adam & Eve ever walked on this earth, these people have all been placed in their appointed places, at the appointed time according to the purpose of God. These people have the way of all mankind enjoying the lust of the flesh, and pleasure of their sinful ways, until the time set by God according to his own purpose, to reveal himself to them. Give them faith to believe in the God who created both heaven and earth. Now these people have all been blessed to know the joyful sounds maybe some with different ways, but all with the same result.

Some attend church at a time the blessed Saviour has sent a preacher there with a message, the preacher will be blessed to preach, these people will be given ears to hear.

Now we are getting to the joyful sound spoken of in Ps. 89:15, speaking of joyful sounds, it is so sweet, a person has to experience it to believe it, only these people can know the joy of that sound. Like the poet said, his voice was so sweet the birds hushed their singing. There are times when these people are blessed to hear this joyful sound during the singing of a hymn, or sometimes while having a conversation with a dear brother or sister, who has been blessed with the same God given faith and love to speak of their blessed saviour.

There may be times when these people are in a place where there is no help or comfort, where they feel lost and helpless, as Jonah did in the belly of the whale, and they are blessed to

hear a small still voice, no sound on earth can compare with it.

These people rejoice and enjoy the true gospel as preached by one of Gods ministers, but if one of satan's ministers, although he has been transformed into a minister of righteousness 2 Cor. 11:15, and speaks fluently with enticing words of man's wisdom, there is no joyful sound for these people and they will not allow this person. For Jesus said, *"my sheep hear my voice and they will follow me, but the voice of a stranger they will not follow."*

These people were placed here in this time world at their appointed time, the time appointed by God, and at the time set by God, He has called or will call, yet in time, all of his chosen few. His work is effectual and sure, all of these people will know the joyful sound, they will walk in the light of thy countenance, O Lord, no longer will they be grasping in darkness, wondering about the right doctrine, because they will be shown and led by the Lord. There will be times when they will falter, but not fall, cast down by not destroyed. These people will be led, guided, taken care of, blessed in many ways, suffer trials and tribulations until the day of redemption when they will hear the one joyful sound that all of God's children are earnestly and expectantly hoping to hear. Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

What a wonderful Saviour we have, I ask for your prayers.

A brother, I hope
Frank Hunt

APPOINTMENTS

It is well known, by mankind that some appointments he makes are kept; while some; for one reason or another is unkept. But such is never the case with the Lord God. For His appointments are never early or late or unkept; but always and alway, on exact time as appointed by Him; even before times beginning. There is a time to be born and a time to die; for all mankind. And neither man nor devils can ever alter that appointed time even one iota. That being my feeling and belief; I therefore feel free to say this - In exact accordance with, the appointment, the purpose and will, of Almighty "God;" He brought me into this world; on the twenty fifth day of October, nineteen hundred and twelve; after Christ was born into this world. And, as a wonderful blessing to me; He delivered me unto the loving arms of my God fearing parents - George Riley, and Mattie Viola (Edwards) Shepard; who taught me many things, about that vast difference between Right and Wrong. Which, after 83 years have passed; their words to me seem just as fresh and adored, by me, as if they spake them yesterday. They professed and manifest a belief in that doctrine that set forth the unsearchable riches of Christ Jesus the Lord,

and His truths; that declare, Salvation is only of the Lord Jesus Christ, the grace of God applied, on behalf of His children whom He chose out from the world, for Himself; from before the foundation of the world. And in the absolute predestination by Him, of ALL things to ever be or take place, in all time He allotted for this time world to stand and throughout all eternity. In other words; all is sure and certain, with this one and only true and living God. That with Him, all that is to be; has already been, in both His mind and purpose. "God", in His choosing of them, in His only begotten Son; was absolute assurance; that every one would meet Him in heaven and immortal glory; after His Son, Christ Jesus; had come down, and paid all their debt for them, for all their sins; of which He has already done. As I look back upon my past life here I am made to wonder in astonishment: at the multitude of His blessings He has bestowed upon me from my birth and on up to this present time of my unprofitable life here in this world of sin and sorrow. I here and now confess to all; with God being my witness; I, of my fleshly self, have never earned or merited even one of His multitude of blessings He has bestowed upon this poor sinner; and so, they all had to have come, as a FREE gift, from the merciful God. What do I have, that I did not receive? no thing, or nothing. God created and made all things; and without Him; no things were ever created or made. "God", not only created man; but also, created that substance, from which, man were made; and that substance He used, in His forming of man; it was not of silver, or gold, or diamonds, or rubies; or any other, of what man considers of great value; but instead; man was formed, from what man, does consider to be; the most worthless, and useless, and aggravating, substance on this earth; the dust of the earth; that flies with the wind, whethersoever it bloweth or listeth; getting into his eyes, his nose, his ears, his mouth; on and in his clothes, and on himself; in his tent or house; in his food, and onto all within his dwelling place; and many other places; of which, he considers it to be, a real and present nuisance. And yet, that very same man, who is, of himself; no more of real value, than a lump, of the dust of the earth, of which he is; while he strut around, bragging and boasting, of his own importance; and of so great and marvelous accomplishments he has performed; even, to the helping and assisting his "Creator God," in His efforts, to save the souls of mankind, for heaven and immortal glory.

Now the above does (I feel and believe) give a small description of mankind; in his and her ownselves, unworthiness; to be praised or honored, in any way, shape or form. Except, when it pleased "God" to hinder, him or her, from doing, what their very own fleshly nature, would do, if let; they (we), stand ready and willing to lie, steal, commit adultery, murder, rape, cheat or rob, or commit general mayhem; and yes, even the unpardonable sinning against the Holy Ghost. Now that gives a small but true pic-

ture; of the lack of greatness and goodness and trustworthiness; that lieth within the very nature, of fleshly mankind. And so, with one whom God is pleased to reveal those truths unto; of just what man is in his own fleshly natural self; that one no longer wonders why he should not have his confidence in the flesh of mankind; nor does he wonder why "God" said- I find none good no not one; as He looked down upon mankind.

If I be truly aware, of what my feelings are; they are thusly; - my desire is that I might be kept by Him; in such way and manner; that, all my trust and hope be, in my "Lord and God," and His way and working. Feeling to know full well; without His Spiritual guidance; I cannot do anything, as I aught. Now, with those above things in mind; I say to you Dear Brethren; it is my feverent hope; this love I feel for you all; could be, only, by reason of what I feel I have seen of the working within you of the Holy Spirit, of the "Lord and God," who is full of mercy and grace.

Troy G. Shepard
103 E. Tateway Rd.
Kitty Hawk, N.C. 27949

EPHESIANS 2:8-9.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

Not of works, least any man should boast.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

By
Elder Norvel P. Mann

PURPOSE

This writing is offered for the purpose of introducing interested persons to the basic principles and practices held by the Primitive Baptist Church. It is, of necessity, brief but hopefully contains enough information to provoke the inquiring mind to look further into these things and be like the noble Bereans who "searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:1 1).

OUR THEOLOGY

Primitive Baptist theology is that set forth in the system known as the Doctrines of Grace. These doctrines are briefly stated: (1) Total Depravity, (2) Unconditional Election, (3) Particular Redemption, (4) Effectual Calling, and (5) Divine Preservation of the Saints.

TOTAL DEPRAVITY is a result of Adam's disobedience in eating of the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. As a result of this original sin, man fell in his every faculty, thereby becoming dead in trespasses and sin and incapable of recovering himself from this fallen state by his own free will or ability (Rom. 5:12-21, Eph. 2:1-5, Col. 2:13).

ELECTION is unconditional on the part of the sinner and is eternal in its consequences. Before the world began, God elected, or chose, his people in Christ and predestinated them to be heirs of eternal glory (Rom. 8:28-34, I Pet. 1:2-4, Eph. 1:3-6).

PARTICULAR REDEMPTION occurred when Jesus Christ died for His elect family. All for whom He died were completely redeemed, by virtue of which they will without fail live with him in heaven (John 6:37-40, Rom. 8:29-30, Heb.10:14).

EFFECTUAL CALLING is experienced by all the elect sometime between conception and death. The Holy Spirit imparts eternal life to the dead sinner by the sovereign will of God alone. This call from a state of death in sin to a state of life in Christ Jesus is irresistible on the part of the sinner (John 3:8, John 5:25, Rom. 8:30, Eph. 2:1).

DIVINE PRESERVATION insures that none of God's chosen children will ever finally fall away. The saints, who are the foreknown, the predestinated, the called, and the justified, will also be glorified in eternal heaven after the toils and cares of this life are over (John 17:24, Rom. 8:28-30, 38-39, John 10:27-29).

OUR HISTORY

Primitive Baptist doctrine is in harmony with the basic doctrines taught by the ancient WALDENSES, LOLLARDS, ALBIGENSES, NOVATIONS, DONATISTS, and others who worshiped God independent of the Roman Catholic system all through the bloody centuries of Pagan and Roman persecution prior to the Protestant Reformation. During these times, these people were often described as ANABAPTISTS, meaning rebaptizers, because they refused to recognize Roman Catholic baptism.

The major doctrines which produced and emerged from the Reformation were those of the Doctrines of Grace. Our Baptist fathers, however, were never connected with the Roman Catholic system, and therefore were not protestants. That system of theology which came to be known as reformed theology or Calvinism was essentially nothing more than what our Baptist foreparents had been teaching since the days of the apostles and Jesus Christ himself.

Although Martin Luther, John Calvin, and other reformers ably defended the basic Doctrines of Grace, their practice soon undermined their theology and limited their usefulness. These men attempted to reform a faulty organization and from this effort came the denominational system as we see it today.

In the 1830's a major division developed in the Baptist family. Those Baptists holding to the General Atonement theory and supporting missions as a means of saving lost sinners came to be known as New School or Missionary Baptists. Those Baptist holding to the doctrine of Particular Atonement (or Particular Redemption)

and salvation by free and sovereign grace came to be known as Old School, or Primitive Baptists.

OUR PRACTICE

Primitive Baptists believe in the simple New Testament pattern of divine worship. Services consist of hymn singing, prayer, and preaching. Musical instruments are not used in the service simply because no New Testament command or precedent is found for them. Furthermore, the use of instruments is undesirable in that it tends to bring in carnal entertainment as a substitute for the real melody of the heart (Eph. 5:19).

Primitive Baptists do not have Sunday Schools or any of the auxiliary attachments so common in the denominational world today. Again we notice that there is no command or precedent for the practice. Sunday Schools are modern in origin, not existing in the gospel church for almost 1800 years. Primitive Baptists believe that the gospel minister is the only public teacher of the word authorized of God in the New Testament era. Private instruction is the responsibility of heads of households (Eph. 6:4). Further objections to the Sunday School system of today can be raised on the grounds that it denies the plain teaching of the Apostle Paul in I Timothy 2:11-12, *"Let your women learn in silence with all subjection, but I suffer not a woman to teach nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence"* (See also I Cor. 14:34-35).

Primitive Baptists believe that Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the only two ordinances prescribed for the New Testament church. The washing of the saint's feet is an example given by our Lord that should be practiced by New Testament churches (Matt. 28:18-20, I Pet. 3:21, Matt. 26:26-28, John 13:3-17, I Tim.5:10).

OUR VIEW OF EVANGELISM

Primitive Baptists believe in Bible evangelism. As in the early church, *"They went everywhere preaching the word"* (Acts 8:4), so Primitive Baptists today go as the Spirit directs them. Wherever *"effectual doors"* (I Cor. 16:9) are opened, Primitive Baptists will be found. It is recognized, however, that on one occasion the apostles were forbidden by the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia (Acts 16:6), and in Bithynia (Acts 16:7). Evangelistic effort, therefore, is at the direction of the Holy Ghost. Primitive Baptists believe that the Doctrines of Grace are the only true bases for Bible evangelism.

OUR VIEW OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

Primitive Baptists believe that God's house (the local church) is a resting place for world-worn travelers, born again believers in Jesus Christ who strive to lead a godly life and have given themselves to Christ and to one another. These, having been baptized on a profession of their faith in Christ Jesus, have bound themselves by this solemn ordinance to live in compli-

ance with the doctrine which is according to godliness: to attend constantly upon the public worship services, to minister to the saints, and to be holy and just in their everyday dealings with their fellow men. Only by so doing can believers properly glorify their Father in heaven which is the true purpose for the church.

FINALLY

Primitive Baptists believe in the resurrection of the body, and a general judgment at the end of this present world, and that the punishment of the wicked and the joys of the righteous will both be everlasting (Isa. 26:19, Matt. 25:39-46, I Cor. 15, I Thess. 4:13-18, Rev. 20:12-15).

Elder Norvel P. Mann

PSALM 100.

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.

Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

VOICES OF THE PAST

From Elder Lambert's Book, "Tried In The Furnace."

ANSWER TO A RADIO LISTENER

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

(Who, being interested in church history, requested a copy of a sermon delivered over radio station KDMS in ElDorado, Arkansas)

Mr. F.H. Gilbert
Cale High School
Cale, Arkansas

Dear Mr. Gilbert:

I was very glad to get your letter of the 16th in regard to the address delivered from the studio of KDMS. I spoke extemporaneously in such address and do not have a recording of this particular address. Therefore, it is impossible to give you verbatim what was said.

I think I made a few remarks that time regarding a recent trip to the first Baptist Churches organized in America that still contend for the same doctrine and order of their constitution. These churches have never had a division nor deviated from their first Articles of Faith.

I had the pleasure of preaching from the pulpits of Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware and Hopewell

Church, Hopewell, New Jersey. Welsh Tract was constituted in Wales in 1701. The pastor and seventeen members immediately set about to come to America in a body. They continued their services while coming over and set up a place of worship on the tract given by William Penn to the Welsh. I saw the markers of the early ministers in this ancient cemetery which surrounds the present meeting house. The marker over the grave of Elisha Thomas who died in 1730 is engraved in Old English, part in Welsh, and states that he was pastor of Welsh Tract Church and that he died in 1730. The present meeting house is an old building constructed with imported brick. The building has a patched place on each side marking entrance and exit of a cannon ball during a battle. A new history is now being prepared of this old church. (If interested write me.) As stated in beginning of this paragraph, I also spoke at Hopewell Baptist Church, Hopewell, New Jersey. This church was organized April 23, 1714. John Hart, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, was buried in this cemetery within ten yards of the present meeting house. You will see his monument there. Hopewell Church has preserved all of its minutes.

I visited Southampton Church located in Southampton, Pennsylvania. This church has records of meetings in homes in 1697, first meeting house built in 1731; present building constructed in 1772-3.

The most impressive thing to me is that there has been no changes whatever in their articles of belief and mode of worship. There are no auxiliaries. There have been no changes or additions in practice.

Should space and time permit I would like to tell you of my association with brethren composing many of the old churches in that section of the country. Suffice it to say that my recent trip in Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware and New Jersey was the most inspirational of any trip among Baptists I have ever taken.

I would be glad to hear from you again.

Sincerely yours,
Elder E.J. Lambert

THE HOPE AND CALLING
Written by A.P. Mewborn

I shall not attempt to record the experiences I have had, the things I did or did not do in the thirty-six years I have been trying to preach. I am still trying and I know I am too old and weak to try to enumerate the events that have brought me to this day. My desire in this effort has been to tell of some experiences and particularly the calling of an uneducated preacher who honestly feels and hopes that he is called of God, to feed the flock of God that He has put under the sound of my voice. This I have tried to do, and although I cannot describe the events of my ministry; I agree with the hymnodist, they are full of "joys and sorrows". I shall continue this with some of the experi-

ences that hopefully give me a reason for my "hope".

Soon after I was ordained, I helped to conduct my pastor, Elder J.B. Roberts' funeral. Afterwards, I was called as pastor of White Oak, Damascus, Meadow and Hancocks Churches. Before Elder Roberts death; I was invited to go to Mewborn's Church for a yearly meeting. This was the Church my Mother's people were in and she grew up in. I was hesitant because I knew that here, my gift, if I had one, would be compared with Elder J.E. Mewborn's, by my kinsmen there, and I was afraid. However, my Mother wanted me to go and I knew brother and sister Lloyd Bartlett and they meant a lot to me. Their daughter, a beautiful person, both naturally and spiritually also had asked me to go if I had a mind to. Elder Roberts had asked me before I ever tried to preach to stay with him on second and fourth Sundays, and because I loved him and saw or felt no reason not to; I had promised I would. I spoke with him and he seemed in agreement for me to go. He loved their pastor and the membership there dearly. I was glad; for after sister Barbara asked me; I felt compelled to go. The attendance was large; the house full, and as I entered the building I felt a burden I knew was more than I could bear. They called on me to preach and I read the scripture. ***"I am the true vine and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."*** Although many years have passed I have never forgotten the text, the people and many of the things I said, but I will not try to incorporate them here. I never forgot the day of the meeting; The Lord was good, and I met sister Betty Gray West, Barbara's sister, and the love we were given has lasted until this present hour. Although men and devils have tried to destroy the love Loraine and I were given for Barbara and Betty Gray, and their precious families, they could not, because men cannot destroy God's gifts. My great desire is that God will keep us in such a way that we may be a comfort to each other in the time remaining.

Another experience I wish to record here; came as my Mother, sister Thelma Rose and sister Annie Mae Potter were scheduled to go to the Staunton River Association. The night before; I felt again I had a dream or vision, and I still don't know. As we were traveling early in the morning; I told my dream to them. I had dreamed I was at a Church I had never been to; it was Elder Boykin's appointment and I had gone to hear him.

He enjoyed preaching, when he was blessed, as much as anyone I have ever known. As I entered the door; he was in the pulpit and seeing me, he said, "I see Elder Mewborn coming in the door, and I want to ask him to come and preach for you." In my dream I went into the stand; turned and faced the congregation and said," Isaiah has said, ***"For the child shall die an hundred years old."*** I had told my Mother and the sisters that this

dream must have come from eating too much meat, for not only would Elder Boykin never give up an appointment, but that quotation was not in the Bible. My Mother assured me it was scripture; she could not say where it was recorded, but it was scripture. I still could not feel it was in the Bible is both truth and common sense.

It was our custom to go early; get a motel room as near as we could: so Mother and I could get some rest before going to the meeting, and if Mama began to feel bad we had a place to take her. We got a motel room early; one for the three ladies and one for me. When I had showered and sat on the bed; I saw and reached for a Bible (Gideons), and it was open; my eyes fell on the above scripture I had said was not there.

We went to the meeting, and met brother and sister Pernell Williams; they told Mama that if we would go and stay with them, I could have a bed on the first floor and not close to the others, so if I had a bad night I would not disturb anyone. I could tell all of them wanted to go, and I told them that if we felt like it we would spend Saturday night with them. Saturday after the meeting we went to the Williams home. As I entered the living room; I saw on the piano a picture of Elder T.A. Stanfield. He was a very favorite minister at our house. His brother married a brother Lewis' daughter from the Meadow Church. He was an active deacon and singing teacher. He had a beautiful lead voice, and Elder Stanfield had a tenor voice, as beautiful as I have ever heard. I had sung with him at the associations and the Churches he had visited in our area. I was astonished and asked Sister Williams what she was doing with my preacher's photograph. She told me he was her Daddy, and we shared some precious moments of memories. She insisted I rest in the bedroom; while brother Williams went about farm chores, as it was a busy time for them. I lay down knowing I would not sleep, but I was tired and felt I would feel better if I did. I slept; I don't know how long, but when I awakened I heard the ladies in the kitchen. Sister Williams was saying, "Brother Ap has had a good rest; perhaps he will feel like going to Springfield tonight to hear Elder Boykin." We had an early supper and while we were eating I asked brother Williams if it were custom at an appointment such as Elder Boykin had tonight to preach all the ministers that went or just the one that had the appointment. He told me that they went and sang, but just the one that had the appointment spoke. I told them then if they wished to we would go, and they were all elated to hear this. When we reached the meeting house; we were a little late and we hurried to enter the building. I knew I had seen this Church before though I had never been there, but I still felt I had been there before. As brother Williams opened the door; we saw Elder Boykin in the stand. He had opened the meeting and now was opening the Bible; as he looked up and saw me he said, "Brethren, I see Elder Mewborn coming in the door; I don't feel impressed to speak and I

want to ask him to come and preach for you." Now I remembered my dream and I was so afraid. However, I did not protest in any way but went into the stand, and turning to face the people I said, "Isaiah has written, For the child shall die an hundred years old." As I looked to my left, I saw a beautiful sister holding a tiny baby in her lap, and I asked her, ***"How old are you sister?"*** She replied, ***"I will be a hundred in a few days."*** I then asked, ***"How old is the baby?*** And she said, ***"She is on the way home from being born."*** Then I tried to preach; I don't remember anything else I said. This association was one of the high places that God ordered, as a reason for my HOPE for me.

About fifteen years later; I was again at the Staunton River Association. This time at Danville, Virginia; when on Friday afternoon a very prominent and well loved Elder, preached. His topic was television, and he depicted all the horrors there of. It was terrible for an Old School Baptist to own one. He had one, but when he learned they were the "devils window", he wanted to take an axe and destroy it, but he sold it and gave the money to his wife. I thought now he has sent an instrument of hell to someone else to buy. I was glad it was late and I would not be called on right now. I felt it would be like a little lad disciplining his parents, but you guessed it, I'm sure. I was called on to follow this giant. The people had responded so favorably to his efforts that I was "sore afraid". When I began to speak; I told them as usual I had learned something, but I had a television I could cut off as well as on. I told them that if a ball game or the news was on, I would gladly cut it off at anyone's request, but if "Gun Smoke" was on I did not want anyone to bother it. I also told them that God had made this instrument of hell and He would control it. Somehow, and I don't know how; it will finally be to the praise of His Glory. As I came down from the stand; the meeting dismissed. A mother, father and young girl came up to meet me the girl was weeping aloud, embraced me, and said, ***"I love you."*** Later she visited in our home for a week and we became very close. I shall not try to describe all the joys and sorrows we shared, but in a few months she united with the Church at Springfield. She called and asked that we go to her baptism, and sister Ruby Coward, brother Ennis, sister Jean and Edna, my sweet wife and I, and there may have been more, went to Gretna. On Sunday morning when I was called on to speak; I told the brethren I had been there once before and my text had been, ***"For the child shall die an hundred years old,"*** and that was the only scripture I could think of right then. For fear of sounding like, or being like a bowl of warmed over peas, I was fearful, but yet I had to try. Again, I cannot recall all I said, but I described the dear old sister with the infant in her lap. I later found out she had lived to be one hundred years old. As we recessed for lunch and I left the pulpit; I saw my people rejoicing, shedding tears, and looking so happy.

The little girl met me crying, ***"I was that baby."*** Her people verified this. There was much evidence of the Holy Spirit in our midst. Many years have passed, circumstances and trouble have prohibited me from continuing to go that way to Church. For a goodly length of time we kept in touch, but she grew up and living the life allocated to her, we don't hear from her anymore. I pray God has given her a good life, and that from time to time she may think of us.

In 1955 on one fourth Saturday night we were at the Meadow Church. Prior to this Loraine had a vivid and frightening experience, and although she had never been reconciled that I must preach; one night she awakened me; she was weeping and asked that I pray for her. I will not try to write her experience here; that is hers personally and I think it's her option to tell it or not. I tried to pray and we wept together, and I tried to be thankful she had asked me to pray with her. My text on the above described night was, "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath delivered from the hand of the enemy." After the sermon; we closed with "Rock of Ages", and I had as I usually did, announced an open door of the church. I had always been real formal when someone offered to the Church, and waited for them to come to the front and state their desires, but this night as Loraine stepped out in the aisle to come to the front; the heavens opened for me, and I forgot all about being formal, and met her as she came to offer to the Church. The Church received her with much joy and I asked her who she would have baptize her and she asked me to do it. I looked up and my brother Joe left the Church crying out loud. We were very happy, and about ten o'clock that night she asked me to call "Pop" (Elder Trevathan), and ask him to come to her baptism. I began to feel full of doubts, and was afraid she did not want me to do it. She felt so close to me now, until if she had wanted him to baptize her; I would still be happy. When I asked her; she said she wanted him to have the ceremony from the shore, but wanted me to baptize her. I called "Pop" and he told me they had a baptizing at Lower Town Creek also, but when I told him it was Loraine, he said, "Son I will be there, if my car won't run I'll start walking, and God will have someone to carry me to my daughter's baptizing." I believe her to indeed be his daughter in God's Church, and I felt happy that he would be with us. He came on Sunday, and was blessed to preach in a wonderful way. After trying to preach, I announced an open door of the Church, and after much suffering my brother Joe came up. He was hurting so severely that I wanted to meet him, but "Pop" said, "Wait Son." As he came saying he wanted to join the Church, his wife Hazel also came, and I truly felt our Lord had opened the windows of heaven, and caused me to look in. The baptism was beautiful; it was a happy time for me, and that joy was shared by a goodly number of people there. Someone took photos of the baptism, and now after thirty-three years; I still enjoy looking at them.

I have said that I could not hope to enumerate all the experiences I have had, some beautiful, some seemingly horrible. My life has been full of joys and sorrows, but when I remember Soloman has said, ***"God requireth that which is past."*** (Ecclesiates 3-15), I have to concede that "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." I don't pretend to understand, but when I am blessed; I surely believe it. I have served five Churches; for a time I was serving all of them at once. White Oak, from the Black Creek Association was the first I agreed to try to serve; then Meadow, Damascus, Hancock and Tysons, all from the Contentnea Association. I am currently trying to serve Meadow, Damascus, Tysons and with Elder Kenneth Windham supply for a newly formed Church, (Grace) at Lowland, North Carolina.

The trouble that has crippled the Churches has been tremendous. I will not attempt to discuss those troubles, but I am convinced after all these years, these troubles are caused by some form of jealousy, and that God has a purpose in them.

The brethren and friends of the Church have been wonderful to my family and I. As I look back I am not satisfied with my life, but I have given of myself and of what I was given, and I have done what I could. My sweet wife has given me much hope as I look at our life together, and as I have said from the pulpit, "I don't know that I am a minister of the Lord's Church, but I know he gave me a minister's wife." Our sweet son and precious daughter have blessed our life in such a beautiful way, until I just know they too are a gift of God. Our son, Albert Ray, and his good wife, Pat have two nice and sweet sons, Albert Ray, Jr. and Ricky Lyn. They are both married to precious girls and Al has a daughter, Crystal Lynn that makes me a great grandfather, and it feels great. Our daughter, Julia and her husband Perry are currently living with us and have for about six years. They and their darling daughter, Amy Loraine are such a comfort to us that to try to describe all the care they give us is an impossible task. Paul said, "This is the sum of it," and if I were to try to sum it up; the sweet joys, our children, our grandchildren, our great grandchildren have afforded us; it would really be "indescribable and full of glory". The brethren have been kind and good to us, and we hope we are thankful for this. I have not accumulated any of the treasures of this world as many have, but God gave us a home, and until now we have had good food to eat, and been able to pay our expenses. We have no retirement except social security, and we are both sick and not able to work or earn wages, but God has covered our needs by His grace and the gifts we receive, and the loving care our children give us. I am sixty-nine years old, afflicted with closed arteries (causing my feet and legs to hurt nearly all the time), an aneurysm and a colostomy, but with all the hurt that comes; the blessings far exceed them, and I can really say, ***"The Lord is good."***

As I look back in my life, there has never been a time when I did not love the brethren. I cannot say (like some) I love them all the same; because I have felt closer to some than others.

I cannot begin to number the ones that have been such a comfort to me, but my Lord has said, *"Sufficient for the day is the grace given."*

To have written this has been a great comfort to me. It is not for publication, but for those that my sweet wife and precious children wish to share it with. This will conclude the epic I have endeavored to write; so I bid you, my loved ones, farewell. The poet has described my feelings and my hope right now as he writes:

Farewell vain world I'm going home,
My Jesus smiles and bids me come.
Sweet angels beckon me away,
To sing God's praise in endless day.

I remember being in the funeral home with a dear sister, as she said goodbye to her son, daughter-in-law, grandson and granddaughter; as she left the room, never to see them on earth again; she said, "Children, brother Ap preaches that through God's mercy I can see you in the morning." David said, and I echo him to you, my loved ones. *"When I behold thee in righteousness, and wake in thy likeness, I'll be satisfied."* Now may the God of grace, love and mercy often reveal himself to you in the present world, and in that *"great and notable day;"* assemble you with His saints in glory. God bless you and make you to know that I am forever grateful for His love and the love He has given us to share.

AMEN
A.P. Mewborn

MEDITATIONS ON JOSEPH
From the Book of Genesis

by T. Floyd Adams
Willow Springs, N. C.

PART ONE

"But bring your youngest brother unto me; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die;" and they did so.

The above quotation will be found in the 42nd chapter and 20th verse of Genesis. They are the words of Joseph to ten of his brothers when they came down to Egypt to buy corn.

For many months I have had some desire to write some of my meditations on the above scripture, but feeling my weakness and barrenness of mind most of the time I have put it off until now. As I fully realize that writing is like preaching, if it is profitable to the household of faith, we must be endued with power from on high.

If I should undertake to write the life and travels of Joseph from early childhood to the time that he was made Governor of Egypt, as it is recorded in the scriptures, it would require many pages, even if I were blessed to do so.

But I would like to say just here, that as an obedient son of his father and being persecuted by his brothers, tempted by Potiphar's wife, cast into the dungeon, and then mounted to the throne of Egypt, speaking roughly to his brothers, putting them into prison, storing away corn in the years of plenty to be freely meted out to his brothers without charge in the days of the famine, and then revealing himself to his brothers as their precious brother: in many respects beautifully portrays in types and shadows the work of the Father, who taught us through the law, the Son who suffered for our sins under the law, and the Holy Spirit or Comforter who revealed Jesus to us as the way, the truth and the life.

It will be noticed that when Joseph's brothers came down to Egypt they made obeisance to him, which was in part a fulfilment of the dreams which he had when he was yet a small boy while living with his father. Joseph called them spies as a reminder of their transgressions. He uses these words to stir up their evil conscience and make them mindful of the sin they had committed. Now Joseph knew his brothers and he was fully aware of the fact that their evil deeds were the cause of his sufferings and sorrows, yet he loved them. Like Jesus who ***"loved his people with an everlasting love, even when we were dead in trespasses and in sin."*** He said, ***"Nay, my lord, but to buy food are thy servants come."*** Joseph spake roughly unto them, and put them into ward or (prison) three days. In my meditatations I can see them conversing in sorrow over their past wicked life, when they put their brother into a pit, then sold him for twenty pieces of silver, after which they killed one of the kids of the goats and dipped his coat of many colors into it and sent it back to their father in order to try to cover up their wicked acts. We are told, ***"Be sure your sins will find you out."*** Num. 32:23. And they said one to another, ***"We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us, and we would not hear therefore is this distress come upon us."*** Can you not, dear reader, see from your own experience how their sins rolled up before them like mountains? Trace your own experience as a convicted sinner under God's just and holy law, when you came to the end and was shut up under the law, without God and without hope in the world. The unworthy writer while under this heavy guilt and condemnation often looked at the beasts of the field and said I had rather be in their place than in mine, for I could not see how God could justify such a sinner as I felt myself to be. Yet my breathings were like the poor publican, who stood afar off (in his feelings) and said, ***"God be merciful to me a sinner."*** Often when I lay down at night I would wet the pillow in part with tears from my eyes while under conviction of God's just and holy law.

Now back to my narrative. Joseph spake to his brothers by an interpreter and he continues to call them spies. This expression causes their guilt and

sorrow to mount up before them and to further serve to sink them into despair. Yet, they vainly tried to vindicate themselves, saying, ***"Thy servants are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not."*** Again Joseph said unto them, ***"That is it that I spake unto you, saying, Ye are spies."*** Gen. 42.14.

Now, when his brothers said, ***"Thy servants are twelve brethren, and the youngest is with his father and one is not"***, of course, he knew he was the "one is not." He now puts the burden of proof on them to prove that they are not spies, by saying, ***"Hereby ye shall be proved; by the life of Pharoah ye shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither. Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and ye shall be kept in prison that your words may be proved."*** At this point, Joseph modifies his previous statement by saying, ***"If ye be true men let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison; go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses."*** But remember, that he makes it mandatory upon the part of his brothers that they can not get any more corn unless they bring their youngest brother.

Several years ago, after reading the above quotation of Joseph, I wondered in my mind, just why, he made it imperative that the youngest brother (or Benjamin) must come before they could get any more corn. The thought lingered with me occasionally for a period of about two years. I am convinced ***"That the secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong unto us and our children forever."*** Deut. 29:29. Is it not true that we must be overshadowed by the Holy Ghost today to understand the revealed things of God?

Would it be too much for me to say that the Lord was gracious in revealing to me in a dream who Benjamin represents in the type and shadows? One night while I was asleep, a wheat field appeared in front of me and a voice spoke and said, ***"Benjamin is the corn."***

I awoke and meditated over the dream, but I could not understand it. I fell asleep again and a second time, this wheat field appeared in front of me and the same voice said again, ***"Benjamin is the corn."*** I awoke and I said to myself that I cannot understand how that Benjamin could be the corn when his brothers were going down to Egypt to get corn. A third time I fell asleep and the same field appeared before me. It seemed to be about twelve or eighteen inches high, and the same voice said, ***"Benjamin is the corn."*** It made such an impression on me that I called my wife, and I said, "Mother, I have dreamed three times of seeing a wheat field in front of me, and each time a voice' would say, "Benjamin is the corn," And I cannot make any sense out of it as I thought they were going down to Egypt to get corn, but the voice said that Benjamin is the corn." Immediately my wife said, "That is plain." She said, "Benjamin

is the evidence that his brothers are not spies." I still seemed to be at a loss to understand. She said, "Benjamin is the fruit." All of this was foreign to me, then she said, "Benjamin is the youngest brother." *In a flash,* the whole dream was clear before me. Surely Benjamin is "Christ formed in you the hope of glory." HE MUST COME. Then I could understand what John taught when he said, ***"And of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace."*** That is, when you bring grace you get grace, when you bring the evidence you get the evidence, when you bring the fruit you get fruit, when you bring corn you get corn. Is not this the same doctrine that John preached in the wilderness of Judea when the Pharisees and Sadducees came to his baptism, and brought such flimsy evidence that they were the children of God because Abraham was their father John said, ***"O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance."*** Matt. 3:7- 8. Is not love, joy, peace, happiness, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, patience and kindness which Paul says are fruits of the Spirit, always found in the youngest brother?--Christ formed in you the hope of glory?

Many people wonder today why it is that we do not seek for large numbers in our churches and because we do not, many have said that we are selfish, but this is not the truth. I will only answer for myself. I like large numbers provided they bring the FRUITS or "Benjamin the youngest brother." The inspired apostle Paul taught by divine revelation that they were not all Israel that are of Israel, neither are they children, because they are the seed of Abraham, but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. He was born out of due season. His mother, Sarah, was ninety years old and Abraham, one hundred years old when he was born, which to my mind is a true type of every heaven-born soul, for the spiritual birth is contrary to all human understanding and human reason and all of His people were saved in the mind and purpose of God before the world began, for Jesus said, ***"Thine they were, and thou gavest them me."*** John. 17:6. Paul said, ***"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."*** 2 Tim. 1: 9.

While I am writing about this youngest brother I would like to relate a beautiful scene which took place one night during a commencement exercise at our school. My wife and I went into the auditorium and took a seat near the back of the room and there were two girls sitting about three seats in front of us. They looked back at us and bowed their heads. One of them was so full that she began shedding tears. I turned to my wife and said, ***"There is a child of God."*** At that time I did not know either of them. About eighteen months after this I had the gracious privilege of baptising this same little girl. Now, when she came

before the church, was it necessary for her to relate any of the dealings of the Lord with her, in order for us to have confidence in her? My answer is no, for I saw the fruit or evidence the night we were in the school auditorium.

While Joseph's brothers were yet in prison, it will be observed in Gen. 42:22 that they continue to talk about the sin that they committed against their brother, and moreover, they are branded as spies. All the evidence that they could produce, even the money that they brought to pay for the corn could not appease the justice of their just condemnation. But charity never fails. The love which Joseph has for his brothers is now made manifest in part. Although, while he bound Simeon in their presence and kept him in prison until Benjamin came, he released the others and commanded that their sacks be filled with corn that they might carry it to Canaan for the famine of their houses and to restore every man's money into his sack. Let it be fully understood that Joseph did not release them from prison and put them under bond because of any evidence that they gave or even the money which they brought, but it was because of the great love he had for them, their father and families. Is this not agreeable with the language of Peter who said, *"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers: but with the precious blood of Christ." 1 Pet. 1:18-19.*

"Faith Is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. — HEBREWS xi. I.

WHEREVER there is faith, there is desire; and as faith embraces heavenly realities, desire embraces that of which faith testifies. Now as the soul is wrought upon by a divine power, and faith is drawn forth into blessed exercise upon the promises of which it is persuaded and which it embraces, desire is kindled for their enjoyment. Religion is not a burdensome, painful, melancholy, wearisome, and toilsome task or employment as many think. It has indeed its trials, temptations, afflictions, cutting griefs, and depressing sorrows; but it has its sweetness, its peace, its delights, and its enjoyments. And it is the sweetness that we feel, the enjoyment that we have, and the delighting ourselves in the things of God, which hold our head up and encourage us still to persevere and travel on through the wilderness. It is not all bondage, nor distress of mind, nor sorrow of heart, nor perplexity of soul which the heirs of promise feel. There are sips and tastes, drops and crumbs, and momentary enjoyments, if not long nor lasting, yet sweet when they come, sweet while they last, and sweet in the recollecfion when they are gone. The Lord gives that which encourages, strengthens, comforts, and delights, and enables us to see that there is that beauty, blessedness, and glory in him which we have tasted, felt, and handled, and which we would not part with for a thousand worlds.

August 1.

" For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."— ROMANS viii. 2.

WE by nature and practice are bondslaves to sin and Satan. We are the sport of the prince of the power of the air, who takes us captive at his will. We are held down also by many hurtful lusts; or, if free from gross sin, are bondslaves to pride, covetousness, or selfrighteousness. Perhaps some idol is set up in the chambers of imagery which defiles all the inner man; or some snare of Satan entangles our feet, and we are slaves, without power to liberate ourselves from this cruel slavery. We groan under it, as the children of Israel under their burdens, but, like them, cannot deliver ourselves. But sooner or later the truth comes to our aid; the truth as it is in Jesus flies to the rescue of God's oppressed family; the blessed Spirit opens it up and seals it upon the heart with a divine power. As, then, under his gracious influences they believe the truth, and feel its power and savour in their heart, a liberating influence is communicated; their fetters and shackles are loosened; the bondage of sin and Satan, and the power and strength of evil are sensibly broken, and a measure of holy freedom is enjoyed. There is no other way of getting from under the bondage of the law but by the application of the gospel, and by believing what the gospel reveals. As the truth, then, comes to the heart as the very word of the living God, power comes with it to believe; faith is raised up to credit the testimony; and as faith begins to credit the truth *of* God and receive it in hope and love, there is a sensible loosening of the bonds; and then the chains and fetters drop off of themselves. It is with the soul as it was with Peter in prison: when the angel came, and a light shined in the prison, and the angel's words fell upon his ears, " the chains fell from off his hands." There remained nothing then to bar his exit; for "the iron gate that leadeth unto the city opened to them of its own accord." So whatever chains or fetters may hold the soul, let the angel of mercy come; let the message of salvation be revealed, the chains of unbelief drop off, the iron gate of hardness gives way, and the truth makes the soul blessedly free (John viii. 32).

J.C. Philpot

PROVERBS 3:13-20.

Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.

For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver. and the gain thereof than be gold.

She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.

Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour.

Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her.

The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens.

By his knowledge the depths sre broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union Meeting will be, the Lord willing, at Big Meadows Church the 5th Sunday in March. The church is located in Chatham County.

Take 87 South from Graham to Pittsboro. Go approximately 17 miles after crossing I-85. Just after crossing Cane Creek turn first road to right at top of hill. Go approximately 4 miles to cross road and turn left. Go 1 mile to church.

We welcome all lovers of the truth to come & be with us.

Kenneth R. Key, Pastor
Casey Johnston, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 1996

Mrs. Jenneye A. Osborne, MD 2.00
Mrs. Charlotte B. Richardson, VA . 2.00
Mrs. Ruth Sparkman, TX 2.00
Tillman R. Pullig, TX 2.00
Woodrow Bellinger, NY 2.00
Mrs. Justine Alexander, AR 2.00
M.L. Richardson, FL 7.00
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In memory Jessie & Emma Somers 10.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER ISLA FLOYD

Sister Isla Floyd, beloved member of Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church, was called home by God in his love and tender mercy, from this world of sin, sorrow and suffering May 19, 1995.

Sister Floyd was born July 2, 1899 in Horry County, South Carolina, the daughter of Hezekiah and Scottie Stevens Hinson. She was preceded in

death by her husband Wilbur L. Floyd. Surviving are two sons, Franklin Floyd of Wilmington, North Carolina and Lamar Floyd of Charleston South Carolina and two daughters Sybil Hewlett of Emerald Isle, North Carolina and Doris Cantrell of Fort Walton Beach, Florida; two sisters and a host of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Sister Floyd was baptized the third Sunday in 1922 by Elder George Gore in the Mill Branch Association. She remained a true and faithful member of the Primitive Baptist Church the rest of her life. She was blessed with deep understanding of doctrine, and also great wisdom in church matters. She was faithful to attend meeting as long as she was able. Although she suffered much in her last years, she never complained, but repeatedly thanked God for his mercy and blessings. She is greatly missed by all who knew and loved her.

Graveside funeral services were conducted by her pastor Elder Oliver Allen in Greenlawn Memorial Park, Wilmington, North Carolina.

Written by request of Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church by one who loved her.

E. Pratt, clerk
Elder Oliver Allen, pastor

SISTER LEONA G. RAYNOR

Sister Leona G. Raynor, beloved member of Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church, was called from this world of sin, sorrows, and suffering September 1, 1995. She was born November 3,1906 in Onslow County, North Carolina; the daughter of James Nixon and Zonnie Gurganus. She was preceded in death by her husband, Brother Roe Raynor. Surviving are her daughter Lois Dean Home and her husband J. M. Home, three grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.

Sister Raynor was received into Cypress Creek Primitive Baptist Church August 10,1975, and was Baptized by Elder Harmon Brown and Deacon Albert Manning. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace through Jesus Christ. She was faithful to attend church meetings as long as she was physically able. She is greatly missed by all who knew and loved her.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor Elder Oliver Allen and Elder J.T. Prescott. Internment was in the Gurganus family cemetery at Cypress Creek, N.C.

Written by request of Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church.

E. Pratt, Clerk
Elder Oliver Allen, Pastor

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

THE good old way that leads to God,
Which saints in every age have trod,
Was Christ alone, they saw his day,
And him pursued, the good old way.

When Adam sunk his unborn race
In ruin, guilt, and deep disgrace,
The promise, with celestial ray,
To Jesus points, the good old way.

Th' apostles all proclaimed him thus,
Jesus the Lord, or God with us,
Who did by death our ransom pay,
The truth, the life, the good old way.

'Tis true, there's one exceeding broad,
Cast up by men, a dangerous road,
Where thousands to destruction stray,
Who never found this good old way.

Cheer up, believer, courage take;
Why should thy heart with sorrow break?
Eternal joys shall soon repay,
The sorrows of the good old way.

Should foes and fears on every hand,
Thick as the leaves in autumn stand,
Still forward press, the day is yours;
The good old way the crown secures.

Kent.

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EDITORIAL

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

"Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile."(Ps 32:2-Rom 4:8). "Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD: and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." (Ps 33:12).

We would ask, Who is the man, and what is the nation and the people who are so blessed of God? Ask this of the unregenerate people of the world and you will receive many different answers, but let us inquire in the holy scriptures, and may the Holy Spirit be our guide so that we rightly divide the word of truth. We know that many natural blessings come to all men, ***"for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust," (Matt 5:45),*** but spiritual blessings are not received by natural man, for, ***"the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned."(1 Cor 2:14).*** Before any man receives a spiritual blessing there must be a new birth, ***"which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Col 1:27).*** Jesus said unto Nicodemus, ***"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto you, Ye must be born again."*** This new birth is surely a blessing from on high for ***"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17).*** To whom is this new birth given? Are they not ***"the saints which are at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus?"*** and who are blessed of God ***"with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having pre-***

destinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." (Eph 1:1-5). If we be the children, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." (Rom 8:16).

Regardless of what worldly men may teach, there is not a man-made nation in the world that is ***"the blessed nation"*** spoken of in Ps. 33:12. The nation spoken of is "the nation", not "a nation"; and this nation is a spiritual nation whose name is Mount Zion. This nation was born of God in one day, and he shall dwell in her for ever. (See Isa 66:7-8 and Micah 4:7). She is ***"Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the Great King. God is known in her palaces for a refuge." (Ps 48:2-3.)*** The people who dwell in Mount Zion are the chosen heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ according to the promise of God. (Rom 8:17). What a wonderful blessing this is!

In the new testament Mt. Zion is called Sion, and the prophets of old wrote, ***"Tell ye the daughters of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass." (Matt 21:5).*** In Rom 9:33 we read, ***"as it is written, "Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling stone and a rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."*** Surely we must believe that Jesus is the "him" of whom we shall not be ashamed if we believe, neither is he a stumbling stone or rock of offence to us. But to those who do not believe on him he is a stumbling stone and rock of offence. Why do we believe? ***"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." (Phil 1:29). Also, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." (John 6:29).*** There are very many people in this world who are working hard, spending millions of dollars, and begging for more while they attempt to do the work that only God can do. Out of him who is blessed to believe shall flow rivers of living waters, which is the Spirit who lives in him. (John 7:38-39).

Abraham believed God, and ***"He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief: but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed unto him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed unto him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead." (Rom 4:20-24).*** We are all as an unclean thing, and all of our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. (Isa 64:6): and Jesus said, ***"Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."*** All unrighteousness (self-righteous-

ness) is sin, but, ***"Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin," (Rom 4:8).*** This blessing comes only to those who are given to believe on Jesus Christ as did faithful Abraham.

"For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what sayeth the scriptures? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." In Matt 7:22-23 we read what Jesus said. ***"Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity."*** These are the ones who trust in their own works, and not in the finished work of Jesus Christ. Paul tells us, ***"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do."*** Are we not as Paul who also said, ***"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."*** Paul also tells us. ***"So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you."*** If we are in the Spirit, and he in us, then we have the mind of Christ,(1 Cor 2:16), and we can serve the law of God. This we can do if ***"we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph 2:10).*** We must walk in good works for they are ordained of God, but yet we do not know when we do them. In the 25th chapter of Matthew the righteous asked Jesus when they had done the good works he had spoken of, because they did not know that they had done so. The unrighteous wanted to know when they had not done so. To the righteous he answered, ***"In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."*** Unto the others he said, ***"Depart from me, ye cursed, into the everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."*** The children of God are not cursed, but greatly blessed to keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. (1 John 3:22). And Paul exhorts us to ***"work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil 2:13).***

There are two principles in the man who has been born again. Paul speaks of them as the new man and the old man. which represent the flesh and the Spirit. The old man is as corrupt, deceitful and full of lust as he was before the new birth: but the new man is created in righteousness and true

holiness. (Eph 4:24). These are contrary one to the other so that we cannot do the things that we would. When we are not being led of the Spirit we are very prone to turn to the lusts of the flesh; for which we immediately receive the chastisement of God. This chastisement is indeed a blessing, for it is not to punish us, but to correct. ***"My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: for whom the LORD loveth he correcteth." (Prov. 3:11). "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law."*** It is the chastening of God that causes us to fall at his throne of mercy in prayer. In Isa. 26:16 we read, ***"LORD, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them."*** There is an exhortation unto us as children; ***"My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." (Heb 12:5-6).*** And in verse 8, ***"But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons."*** God's chastisement is a portion of the manner of his love for us. ***"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." (1 John 3:1).*** In the Psalms we read, ***"If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail."***

There are far too many ways in which we are blessed for me to mention all of them in this treatise, but I will mention three more which in my opinion overshadow all the others, for without these three our salvation would not be accomplished.

First. God's choice (or election) of us in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, and blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. (Eph 1:3-4).

Second. The birth of Jesus in the flesh. In his Godhead he could not die, therefore, ***"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal 4:4).***

Third. The death, burial and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour. God's holy law demands the death of the transgressor, and without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin (Heb 9:22). Only the pure blood of Christ could achieve this, therefore he shed his precious blood upon the cross of Calvary and by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. (Heb 10:14). He was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification. (Rom 4:25).

When Christ died, his children were in him, they were buried with him, and they arose with him. (Read Rom 6:1-

10.) If we were in him then we surely had a part in him. Jesus said to Martha, ***"I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." (John 11:25).*** And in Col 1:18: ***"He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."*** In Revelations we read, ***"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power."***

Beloved brethren, Jesus is coming again in that last day, "and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (Heb 9:28). Then shall we hear these blessed words from his lips, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." PRAISE HIS HOLY NAME!

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

PROVERBS 6: 1-3.

My son, if thou be surety for thy friend, if thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger,

Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth.

Do this now, my son, and deliver thyself, when thou art come into the hand of thy friend; go, humble thyself, and make sure thy friend.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brother Williams:

Enclosed is a check for the amount of $20.00, $10.00 for renewing subscription for the Signs of the Times. $10.00 for helping to keep the Signs coming or whatever the cause to help. I enjoy reading the Signs very much. I am hoping God will bless you and others to keep writing such good news especially for such sinners as I am. I have been hoping I could sometime in the future write my experience. But it seems something keeps me from doing so. Anyway I hope the good Lord will bless you Christian Hearted people to keep the good news from a far country - to such a thing as I feel to be. Will ask for your prayers. May God Bless.

From a poor sinner,
Whitney Mohly

---

433 Heritage Place
Morehead, Kentucky 40351
March 14, 1996

Dear Brethren,

Each year I desire to do better in renewing my subscription, and each year I seem to do worse. I would ask your pardon, and hasten to say thank you for your patience with me.

I feel like that line fits my case which says, "Worse and worse myself I see,". As time passes I seem to feel my need

of salvation by grace more. If the least part depended on me, I would be lost without hope. The least crumb of mercy is more that I deserve, and increases my debt of praise and thanksgiving to the Author and Originator of every good and perfect gift.

Each month the Signs reaches me full of good spiritual articles setting forth salvation all of God and of Grace, which exalts God and not man.

May it please this God of all Grace to continue to bless the Editors of the Signs, and every one who has a part in sending out the Signs each month.

Please pray for me.

In Hope,
Bill Slack

ARTICLES

Writings of my mother, Julia H. Potter

June 9, 1994

I Julia H. Potter, am feeling lonely, or maybe I should say unfit. I've meant to try and write something in the way of my feelings and this goes back to my childhood days. I always seemed to be a lonely or unworthy person, not being able to fit in with ones my age. Now I'm 83 years old and I'm still a strange person to myself.

I fall short of not counting my blessings enough. I know the blessings come from above, and how wonderful when you can feel this, a lifting up. I wanted to Join a church and be baptized when I was 14 years of age. They were having a revival at this Missionary Baptist Church. I Joined and was baptized in the summer of 1925 and went to church regular until 1928. I met my husband Willard P. Potter in 1928. We were married January 12, 1929. We were living in town at the time in Henry County, Martinsville, Virginia. My husband's people lived in Franklin County. They were farmers so we went to live with his family for our first year. Our first child was born on November 9, 1929. In the first of the year in 1930, we moved out on our own nearby. They (my husband's people) being primitive Baptist, I started going with my husband to his church and never went with the missionaries any longer.

Not long after we moved into our first home, it was the winter of 1930, I saw Christ come one night down in the form of a cloud and spoke the words that time wouid be no more. I pondered over this a lot thinking that this was a new beginning for me. Then, not long afterwards, I awoke one night and saw a beautiful light to the East side of our bedroom. I woke my husband and asked him to look at this light and he said he did not see it. I went on like that until the summertime. My husband was working in the field with neighbors Just over the hill from us. I had taken my baby out in the yard and close to me there came a whirlwind close by. It seemed to get close to me and I was afraid it would Just pick us up. I had never seen a whirlwind like this one. I started away from it to go over to where my hus-

band was working. I thought to myself, what could I tell them, so I turned around and went back in the house.

October 27, 1994

It's been several months since I've had a feeling of writing anything pertaining to the works of the Great I am, or the Lord. But this morning, while I was eating my breakfast, where my kitchen and living room joins. I was sitting with my face to the living room. Everything Just lit up. I had never seen such a beautiful light in the room. I even got up from the table to see if all the lights had come on. To my amazement, it was the sunshine from the window, that everything in the room was shinning as I had never seen before. It Just lifted me up.

Sent in for publication by Lois Gunter

A. Romans 8:7. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

B. 1 Corinthians 2:14. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

C. Ephesians 2:14-17. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were far off, and to them that were nigh.

D. James 4:4. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

When Adam fell he took with him every person who would be naturally born, because he was the Federal head of all to be born, and thereby when he fell all of mankind fell with him. In this fall there was a death or spiritual separation by man from God, which then was passed upon all of mankind to be possessed with a natural mind. This natural mind is what needs to be examined in context with the above scriptures. In what is professed to be the Christian world there are only two foundations of belief and both claim that Christ is the head: one believes that man has the ability to acquire salvation through Christ and good works earns him a place in heaven eternally; the other believes they were chosen by God's election because it was simply God's will and not merited due to any thing man does or does not do. Normally,

the first is usually referred to as a works doctrine, while the second is a doctrine of election. Also, in the first or works doctrine there are many variations within those who profess belief concerning what happens after someone works themselves into favor with God. Some believe that after they obtain their salvation they can never lose it; while some believe that after they obtain their salvation they can put it aside at any time they choose and once it is put aside they can never take it up again; and some believe that after they obtain their salvation they can put it aside any time they choose and thereafter they can take it up again, anytime they so choose. As an opposition to the works doctrine there is election which was put into place by God before the foundation of the earth, and has no dependence upon mankind. Arguments and disagreements have raged for many, many years between those advocating a works doctrine and those advocating a doctrine of election. Let us examine the works doctrine in light of the above scriptures to see if there is any whole or part truth in which a claim of correctness can be made for which a surety can be held or cling to for comfort. The central or common thread running through the above scriptures is that the natural man, carnal mind, friendship of the world, etc., all being the same, is an enmity with God and as such can not spiritually discern on matter, this not being subject to the law of God. Works doctrine proclaims good works causes God to accept the person and these good works gets the person to heaven, and therein lies the paradox, because the scriptures plainly state that the natural mind can not produce anything pleasing to God. If man is possessed of a natural or Adamic mind which was brought about out of Adam's fall, and this natural mind can not do anything pleasing to God, what then is the process by which election is the answer or truth? I have not read nor heard as to why God chose the process of election. All I know is He chose election and that is explanation enough. Within God's elect family each individual is spiritually born somewhere between natural conception and natural death. At some point during this natural lifetime of an individual child of God who has been spiritually born there is a quickening of the spirit wherein the individual is made aware that something has taken place to cause them to inquire and desire after or about those things of God, that is to follow in the seekings of spiritual matters. (Some believe that the spiritual birth, which is bestowed by God on his chosen ones, takes place at the same time the person is made aware there has been a change which causes them to search and desire to learn of things spiritually. This point may be or possibly could be true, for which I think there is not a reason to contend or argue, because either way it does not have a bearing on the salvation of a child of God. And in either case there is no dependence upon the creature or natural mind.) Upon being made aware of this change the person hun-

gers and thirsts after righteousness to learn of Christ (to grow in grace).

Election doctrine is driven home in a forceful and finite manner in Romans 10:20 "But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me." It is impossible for a natural mind to initiate a cry unto God and ask for a spiritual birth or anything else spiritually, is plainly set out in the beginning scriptures referenced, and this passage in Romans eloquently states that those (children of God) were found of God even though they were not seeking Him and God was made manifest to them without them asking. How plain, how simple; but yet how unclear and confounding to those to whom God chooses to not reveal the truth as it is in Jesus Christ.

Expressions used by those of the works persuasion try to show that the individual can cry out to God to be saved; can accept Christ as their savior; can ask God to give them a new birth (spiritually); and that Christ offered himself on the cross for and to all of mankind. These expressions are man-made and are not grounded in scripture, especially in St. John 3:3 where Christ plainly tells Nicodemus that except a man be born again he can not see the kingdom of God. And on further in this same chapter Christ explains that the new (spiritual) birth is a gift of God at God's own choosing without any action on the individual's part.

After an individual has been spiritually born and made aware of a change, then he is a teachable character in Christ, grows in grace for the remainder of their years. This desire implanted by the Holy Ghost is effectual and gives the individual a desire toward obedience (to do those things which are right in Christ.) With Christ's finished work the eternal destiny of his family is made sure and steadfast, without any action (works) on the part of the individual. Proverbs 16: 1-4 points out that both the preparation and answer is of the Lord, and the Lord made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil. Romans 11:1-7 clearly shows that it is either of work or grace; and Paul plainly points out that it is of grace and not works, plus Paul states that election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. Hebrews 6:1-6 shows that a person was enlightened and if they fall away, they cannot be renewed again unto repentance, for this process would be testament to crucifying Christ again; but this shows a person can not fall away to be eternally lost if they are a child of God, however, this does not mean they cannot be disobedient while on this earth, for sure they can be disobedient but God's rod of correction will fall at God's own good time.

The above is not meant to be an all exhaustive list of things to show God has an elect family. The whole of the Bible, from the first word in Genesis to the last word in Revelation, teaches election, predestination and foreordination with no restriction on God's power or will. All that is presented here is to show clearly that the fallen creature in Adam cannot discern or

ask concerning spiritual matters. Spiritual matters come only after God bestows a spiritual birth and awareness, which is done only at God's choosing. After God gives the spiritual birth and awareness then the person can attain toward obedience. There is nothing in the Bible to show a person has the power to choose eternal salvation, it is a gift of God, not as a reward for doing good, but simply that it pleased Him to do so. Also, there is nothing in the Bible to prove that a child of God will be judged at the end of time. (If anyone can use the Bible as a whole, not take anything out of context, and not render a private interpretation, and show me a person can save themselves (or have a choice or influence on the matter), or can show me where a child of God will be judged at the end of time, please let me know.

Submitted in bonds of love and friendship for Christ's sake.

Hoyt Sparks

VOICES OF THE PAST

GREETINGS FROM
ELDER BARNES
Rt. 1, Box 119,
Stantonsburg, N.C. 27883

Greetings to the Household of Faith, Old School Predestinarian Baptists:

This year is fast coming to a close, and none of us knows what the future holds. All that we know is past, or present. In my fifty-three years as a member of the Primitive or Predestinarian Baptists, I have enjoyed the happiest, and the saddest days of my life. I am sure that you who have tasted the goodness and mercy of our God, can witness with the testimony of the prophets and the apostles, and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that we are pilgrims and strangers in a strange land. This world is not our home; we have no abiding city here, but we seek a city that hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God.

I am made to realize, my dear brethren, that my race is almost at an end. Of course, I do not know when the end will be with me, but according to the average life of men, I cannot expect to remain on earth more than a few more years. God has been good to me; and He still is. Oh ! if I could but praise his name forever. But I have fallen so short of living to the Christian standard. I have to go weeping and mourning. When I am blessed to think upon the name of the Lord and his wonderful love and mercy which he has bestowed upon me a hell deserving sinner, it makes me hang my head in shame: to think that the Lord of glory had to suffer on the cross in my room and stead; that is, if I am a vessel of mercy which God afore prepared unto glory.

He took my sins and yours, if we are the children of God. Though I have a precious hope, sometimes I doubt and fear, and often ask myself the question, "Do I love the Lord, or no? am I his or am I not?"; that is a point I long to know, with the poet, "Oft it causes anxious thought." I am so imperfect that almost all I do, or think,

or say is wrong. "Oh! is there any one like me?"

Dear brethren, I confess I am a poor, unlearned man, but I believe there is a God in heaven, who has by the word of his power created this world, or universe; and inhabited it with people, animals, fowls, insects, and every living thing for his own glory. There was not a man to help in any way whatsoever, for man was the last thing that God made. I believe that God in the annals of eternity, before the creation, foresaw everything in his infinite wisdom that he would bring to pass in the process of time, from the beginning of the creation to the final consummation of all things. I believe that God chose his people (his church) in Christ before the creation; that He saw the fall of man (Adam); and that he made provision for the redemption of all saints in Christ Jesus long before the first sin was committed. And, inasmuch as the church spiritually was in Christ before the world was, Adam, being a type of Christ, and Eve his bride being in him, was a type of the Church in Christ before the world was.

Some have asked me if God did not have a purpose in sin entering into the world, and my answer is and has been, Yes. Then they ask if God did not make sin. My answer to that is, No. Sin is something that was not made, but was and is the act of the creature. Some say that God made them to sin. But I find that one of the writers in the New Testament said that God cannot be tempted with evil; neither tempteth he any man. But somebody wants to know what is God's purpose in sin. Elder Griffin mentioned in an Editorial some-time ago that the wicked are the sword of the Lord. Now the first cause of wickedness is sin. Dear brethren, as I see it, God's purpose in sin entering into the world was that He would make his power known unto the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory. (Read Romans ninth chapter.) Had sin not entered the world there would have been no sinners to be saved from sin. So this was God's way of manifesting his power in his love and mercy upon the vessels of mercy. God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God."

Man in nature has never been satisfied to do God's will, for in the dead state of nature he has never known the Lord God of heaven, nor his Son Jesus Christ. Only those know him to whom Christ is revealed; and revelation comes to man by spiritual birth. Jesus in the third chapter of John told Nicodemus that except a man be born again he could not see the kingdom of heaven. And on the occasion when Jesus asked his disciples whom men said that He was, some said one thing and some another. So it is today. But Jesus asked, ***"Whom do ye say that I am,"*** and Peter answered, ***"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."*** And Jesus said to him, ***"Blessed art thou Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee but my Father***

which is in heaven." So we see that the spiritual birth is through and by the revealed power of God in man.

Elder W. B. Barnes

"And Gideon said unto God, Let not thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once: let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the fleece; let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew. And God did so that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground."— JUDGES vi. 39, 40.

MANY of the Lord's people labour under doubts and fears, questionings and suspicions as to the reality of the work of grace upon their hearts; whether their convictions were not merely convictions of natural conscience, and whether their joys have been anything else but the joys of the hypocrite. " O," they say, "what would I not give to have a divine testimony that the blessed Spirit was leading me in the right path I " It is through these very doubts that the evidence is obtained. Doubts lead to cries and groans after a divine testimony; and in answer to these cries the heavenly witness is given. A man without doubts is without testimonies. Doubts are to testimonies what the mortise is to the tenon, the lock to the key, the enigma to the solution. Testimonies are Ebenezers, " stones of help " (I Sam. vii. I 2, marg.); but the stone must have a hole dug for it to stand in, and that hole is *doubt.* Doubts of salvation are to manifestations of salvalion what hunger is to food, nakedness to clothing, a thunderstorm to a shelter, a gallows to a reprieve, and death to a resurrection. The one of these things precedes, prepares, and opens a way for the other. The first is nothing without the last, nor the last without the first. Thus, next to testimonies, the best thing is spiritual doubts. To know we are right is the best thing; to fear we are wrong is the second best. To enjoy the witness of the Spirit is the most blessed thing this side of the grave; to pant after that enjoyment is the nest greatest blessing. I am speaking, my mind, only of spiritual doubts; that is, doubts in a spiritual man, for natural doubts are as far from salvation as natural hopes. The path through the valley of Baca is " from strength to strength," that is, according to the eastern mode of travelling, from one halting-place to another, where wells are dug, and " the rain filleth the pools" (Ps. lxsxiv. 6, 7). We do not learn either God or ourselves, sin or salvation, in a day. The question is not so much whether you have much faith, but whether you have any. It is not quantity, but quality; not whether you have a very great religion, but whether you have any at all. A grain of true faith will save the soul; and I have known many, many seasons when I should have been glad to feel certain that I had the thousandth part of a grain. A grain of mustard seed is the smallest of all seeds; and even faith as small as that can move mountains. Happy is he that has one divine testimony to his

eternal interest in the electing love of the Father, in the atoning blood and justifying righteousness of the Son, and in the divine teachings of the Holy Spirit.

Elder J.C. Philpot

PETER 1: 18-20.

Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.

MEDITATIONS ON JOSEPH
From the Book of Genesis

by T. Floyd Adams
Willow Springs, N. C.

PART TWO

Some time ago, I was speaking upon this subject, about Joseph's brothers trying each time they returned, to pay for their corn and every time it was put back into their sacks. When the services were closed, a sister came up to me and said, "Brother Adams, don't you believe that we too, try at times to spend a little of this money?" I paused for a moment, then said, "I believe you are right." I can see now, that in my nature I am still possessed with self-works, and self-righteousness. I believe that Peter was possessed with self-confidence the night our Master was crucified. He said, "Lord, I am ready to go both into prison and into death." It is only when we are clothed and in our right mind that we can fully understand the truth of the scriptures which say, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, etc." By grace through faith, and every blessing that we receive is a free gift, without any merit on our part. Joseph taught this lesson over and over again to his brothers about which I hope to discuss more fully later in this article.

They are now on their way back home to carry corn for their families. While they have been released from the prison, yet Simeon is still there, and they dread the thought of having to introduce the subject to their father of having to bring Benjamin back to get any more corn. This was indeed distressing to them. Their conscience stings them severely for taking vengeance on their brother, the man whom they did not know down to Egypt who "spake roughly to them", also, they realized that they would soon have to face him again, not knowing what the consequences would be. All of the above was enough to sink them into gloom and despair. There is no doubt that they wished they had never been born. I speak this from my own experience, but, dear reader, this is the only route of travel to get any more corn, for we must "through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." Acts 14:22. So it was with Joseph's brothers, they had a long way to go under God's just and holy law before they could meet Joseph face to face in peace.

Now, they approached their father with the sad news that Benjamin must go down the next time if they got any more corn. Jacob was in despair. He said, "Joseph is not and Simeon is not and ye will take Benjamin away; all these things are against me." At first he refused to let him go. But ah! when the corn gives out and the famine gets to be sore in the land (or soul) Jacob's heart begins to soften, for our God knows how and does make His people willing through suffering in the day of His power. How well do we remember the sufferings that we went through before we were made willing to present the corn (or the youngest brother). If I am not mistaken, the Lord called me one day when I was about thirty-four years old, at about two o'clock p.m., and said, "Show my people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins." I said, "Lord, I will die before I will go." Oh, the suffering I went through for several weeks will never be described by mortal tongue. May I ask this question - Are there any volunteer ministers in God's kingdom who can preach the gospel? Are they not all conscripted? Yet, we fully realize that we are a failure without the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Now, let us view the scene a little further and see how Jacob endeavors to appease the wrath of the man in Egypt. He said, "Take the best fruit in the land in your vessel and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, myrrh, nuts, and almonds. And take double money in your hand; and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand, peradventure it was an oversight." You perceive, he is still trying to pay for the corn as well as to appease Joseph's wrath. Now all of this amounts to nothing, but are we not like Jacob? We have to learn this lesson by experience again and again. Jacob's heart is getting much softer at this period, for in Gen. 43:13, he says, "Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man" and his prayer is that "God Almighty give you mercy before the man." Judah said before this that "I will be surety for him." "If I bring him not again, let me bear the blame forever."

When they came into Joseph's presence and he saw Benjamin with them, he said to the rulers of his house, "Bring these men home, and slay and make ready' for these men shall dine with me at noon." Notwithstanding the fact that Joseph's brothers presented Benjamin by his demand and he manifested his love for them by giving them food and lodging, also had their sacks filled with corn and restored every man's money in their sacks; he still speaks to them by an interpreter and has not yet made himself known to them. The climax of their sufferings is yet to come as will be seen by the finding of Joseph's silver cup by his steward. He put the silver cup into Benjamin's sack according to Joseph's instructions. Is not this cup a type of the law? It was by the finding of this cup in Benjamin's sack that Joseph's brothers found out his righteous indignation against them for their evil deeds which they had

committed against himself. They were able to present Benjamin which was required by Joseph as true evidence that they were not spies; yet, now they are at their wit's end, for Joseph has accused them of taking the cup, which of course, each one knew that he did not, but they were not able to prove that the other did not, for the evidence is beyond questioning, as it was found in Benjamin's sack. Please remember, that this cup is used by Joseph to drink and DIVINE. Read Gen. 44:5. "Is not this *it* in which my Lord drinketh, and whereby indeed he divineth? Ye have done evil in so doing." Could his brothers when they returned and were in the presence of Joseph, a man clothed in royal apparel, sitting upon his throne, and one who had power to execute judgment, even think, much less express that they were not guilty? How dare they say that they did not take the cup? The evidence is too plain.

Dear reader, please observe again that this cup is put into Benjamin's sack for the purpose of divining, and it well served the purpose for which he had it put there. It brought out the wickedness which was in their hearts before God. For Judah said, "What shall we say unto my Lord? What shall we speak? Or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants." They had a sense of their guilt long before Joseph called them spies. But now God has found it out and made them acquainted with the fact that through the finding of the CUP that He knows all about their evil conduct. There is no alibi which they can plead, the secret of their wicked hearts is fully opened up, for God has found it out. They are at their wit's end; there is nothing to say but GUILTY, GUILTY, GUILTY! Divine justice must be satisfied. Oh, how they felt their just condemnation. "How shall we clear ourselves?" If you, dear child of God, should chance to read these meditations, you may say, "I have not had quite as bitter an experience as you have described." May I ask: Have you ever heard a still small voice speak in the court of your conscience? - "Guilty, behold, I am vile." If you have not heard the voice you evidently felt the power of it.

Is not this CUP a clear type of the law? Paul said by the LAW is the knowledge of sin. (Rom. 3:20.) Again he said, "Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay I had not known sin, but by the law." Rom. 7:7. I have often said that the law is a straight edge. When it is applied to a sinner it shows him how crooked he is. When I was a small boy, I watched those old hewers of timber. When they cut the tree down, they would stretch a string from one end of the log to the other on the side which they desired to slab or hew off, then saturate the string with lamp black, then pull it up in the middle and let it spring back on the log. This would make a black line from one end to the other. Now, this line did not straighten the log, but it showed the hewers just how crooked the log was. So it is when we are brought under the law, as the log is lying under the line. It reveals the secrets of our heart and causes us to exclaim as Job did, "Behold, I am vile. What shall I answer thee?" Job. 40:4.

Inasmuch as the finding of this cup by Joseph's steward in Benjamin's sack, brought the most excruciating pain and sorrow to his brothers, just so, when God's just and holy law was written upon this hard and stony heart of ours, and his continual wrath and judgment poured out upon us, and that without mercy. It brought us down as poor penitent sinners before Him. Through this experience we learned one lesson that we will never forget, that is, to never plead that we are not guilty before Him again. Now, the only thing that we can plead, that is acceptable to God is the imputed righteousness of Jesus. Our sins were imputed to Him and His righteousness was imputed to us. "He was made to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." So Jesus said except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

The finding of the CUP in Benjamin's sack (bear in mind that he is their youngest brother) is the cause of their returning to Joseph, so "The law is our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ" and let it be observed that as they stood before Joseph (the man whom they did not know) sitting upon the throne of His Royal Majesty, that they never again uttered one word to try to prove their innocence, they never muttered again that they were not spies, they did not say again that they were true men; they never said again that we are all the sons of one man and "one is not."

They did not say that none of them stole the CUP, all of which expressions they previously used before in order to prove and plead their innocence. Now the finding of the CUP IN Benjamin's sack, has stopped their mouths, so when this LAW revealed the secret of our hearts, it stopped our mouths. For Paul says, "Now we know that what things soever the LAW saith, it saith to them who are under the LAW. That every mouth may be stopped and all the world may become guilty before God." Rom. 3:19.

Now if we try to justify ourselves by continually pleading our righteousness, are we not found to be liars? For Paul said, "By the deeds of the law shall no fresh be justified." It only remains to be seen that through the goodness of this great and mighty ruler of Egypt, in restoring Benjamin to them is the only hope of ever having any peace now or ever, for he is "their youngest brother." - "Christ formed in you the hope of glory."

Now, inasmuch as God has let them know that He knows all about their iniquity, they said, "We are my lord's servants, both we, and he also with whom the cup is found." Now, Joseph brings them into the full extremity of their sufferings, for he said, "God forbid that I should do so: but the man in whose hand the CUP is found, he shall be my servant; and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father." Now hear the pitiful pleas of Judah, who is spokesman for all. Dear reader, I ask your patience just here, while we see THE SHADOW TURN ON THE DIAL. They are yet experiencing sore trials

under the Governor (or law) who sits upon his throne, for Paul said, "The law having a shadow of good things to come." So the good thing is yet to come. Does not Judah now become a type of the Son of God? For his past sufferings made him willing to be surety for Benjamin's safety and return to his father and he manifested it fully by more sufferings when he said. "Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren. Then I shall bear the blame to my father forever." By the opening of the 45th chapter of Genesis we can see from what follows that divine justice has been satisfied, and THE GOOD THING HAS COME.

Do we not see the Son of God manifested in this shadow? "Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered: and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him." Heb. 5: 8-9. It may be said that Judah was not perfect. To this inquirer I will repeat the language of Paul: the shadow is "not the very image." For proof of this read Gen. 49: 8-12.

Now, Paul said, "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament." Please take notice that Jesus is not our SECURITY but our SURETY, for if I become security for Someone, this means that I will pay if he fails. Let it be remembered, that the righteous indignation of God against His children was charged to the Son in the mind and purpose of God before the world began. "For lo, in the volumn of the book it is written of me, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." So He, Jesus, took all the blame and bore our sins in His own sinless body, (no sin except the imputed sins of His people). He suffered shame and was nailed to the cross, bled and died that we, poor, evil, vile and wretched sinners "might have life", and not only have life but that we "might have it more abundantly." And through His sufferings you were set free, and I have an humble hope that I was remembered in His sufferings too.

Now their suffering has reached a climax and begins to subside while Joseph makes himself known unto them. He is so overcome with tenderness and love for them that he can not refrain from weeping aloud, He said, "Cause every man to go out from me." Dear child, may I ask, was there anyone present but you and Jesus when He made Himself known to you? He said, "Come near to me." What sweet and gracious words from our elder brother to such sinful and guilty rebels. "I am Joseph, your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt," Gen. 45:4. Their great burden of sin and condemnation is gradually being removed by these words. ***"Be not grieved, for God did send me before you to preserve life."*** Could there be any life for Joseph's brothers except through his sufferings and then mounting to the throne of Egypt, to store away corn in the years of plenty to meet their need in the years of famine? As the type, so is the reality. Was it not through this crucified and risen Savior that we poor mortals are blessed to eat His

flesh and drink His blood. Jesus said, ***"My flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed."*** May I ask this solemn question: Have we really been a partaker of the sufferings of Jesus? Have we been made a partaker of His joy after the sufferings? If so, we have eaten His flesh and drunk His blood. We know from experience that all the things on the "menu" are not good to the taste, but ah, bear this in mind that all the things in the listing such as sorrow, grief and trouble are not palatable to our taste like love, joy, peace and happiness, but remember that all of this is good for the body. ***"For if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." 2 Tim. 2: 12.***

PSALMS 2:6-12.

Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.

I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

Kiss the Son, least he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Republican Primitive Baptist Church, a Presbytery met at Republican Church on January 20, 1996 for the examination of Brother Curtis Cundiff if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of the judgement, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The solemity was begun with prayer by Elder Marvin Brumfield. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the Presbytery. Those present were. Jr. Conner, Lane Carter, Clarence Stone, Carl Terry, Larry Hollandsworth, Hale Terry, Marvin Brumfield, Julian Williams, Leonard Brammer, W.T. Conner, and Lic. Allen Terry.

Deacons present were as follows: Jamie Cooper, Wade Poff, Jimmy Holley, Nelson Nester, Gene Potter, Tommy Wall, Joseph Cahill, Howard Peters, Oscar Pickral, Jessie Tyree, Carlton Aker, C.T. Abshire, A.L. Shelton, Tony Horton, Edwin Dyer, Posey Poindexter, Wayne Hundley, W.G. Parsons, Clay Brown, H.D. Ingram, Mark Terry, Clyde Johnson, Herbert Dodson, Robert Smith, Wilton Sutphin, Hassell Conner, Donald Scott, Woodrow Abshire, R.W. Akers, Guy Holley, Grey Ingram.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Junior Conner as mod-

erator; Jamie Cooper as Clerk; Elder Hale Terry was chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate. Brother Guy Holley having been duly appointed by Republican Church, delivered Brother Cundiff to the presbytery. Examination was made by Eld. Hale Terry and all present Elders were invited to participate using Scripture reference First Timothy Ch. 3. The presbytery being satisfied with examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands, with the Ordination prayer being delivered by Elder Larry Hollandsworth. The charge was delivered to the candidate by Elder Leonard Brammer using Scriptural reference First Timothy.

The Moderator asked the Presbytery if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery which was answered in the Affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brother Curtis Cundiff and the right hand of fellowship was given. The ordained Brother was delivered back to the church as an ordained Deacon of the Old School Primitive Church at Republican. The Presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Clarence Stone.

Elder Junior Conner, Moderator
Jamie E. Cooper, Clerk

JOHN 1:13.

Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Republican Primitive Baptist Church, a Presbytery met at Republican Church on January 20, 1996 for the examination of Brother Paul Jones if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of the judgement, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The solemity was begun with prayer by Elder Marvin Brumfield. All Elders of faith and order present constituted the Presbytery. Those present were. Jr. Conner, Lane Carter, Clarence Stone, Carl Terry, Larry Hollandsworth, Hale Terry, Marvin Brumfield, Julian Williams, Leonard Brammer, W.T. Conner, and Lic. Allen Terry.

Deacons present were as follows: Jamie Cooper, Wade Poff, Jimmy Holley, Nelson Nester, Gene Potter, Tommy Wall, Joseph Cahill, Howard Peters, Oscar Pickral, Jessie Tyree, Carlton Aker, C.T. Abshire, A.L. Shelton, Tony Horton, Edwin Dyer, Posey Poindexter, Wayne Hundley, W.G. Parsons, Clay Brown, H.D. Ingram, Mark Terry, Clyde Johnson, Herbert Dodson, Robert Smith, Wilton Sutphin, Hassell Conner, Donald Scott, Woodrow Abshire, R.W. Akers, Guy Holley, Grey Ingram.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Junior Conner as moderator; Jamie Cooper as Clerk; Elder Hale Terry was chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate. Brother Grey Ingram having been duly appointed by Republican Church, deliv-

ered Paul Jones to the presbytery. Examination was made by Eld. Lane Carter and all present Elders were invited to participate using Scripture reference First Timothy Ch. 3. The presbytery being satisfied with examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands, with the Ordination prayer being delivered by Elder Larry Hollandsworth. The charge was delivered to the candidate by Elder Julian Williams using Scriptural reference.

The Moderator asked the Presbytery if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery which was answered in the Affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brother Paul Jones and the right hand of fellowship was given. The ordained Brother was delivered back to the church as an ordained Deacon of the Old School Primitive Church at Republican. The Presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Clarence Stone.

Elder Junior Conner, Moderator
Jamie E. Cooper, Clerk

EPHESIANS 1:8-10.

Wherein he hath abounded toward us in al wisdom and prudence;

Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

That in the dispensation of th fulnes of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:

OBITUARIES

WALTER VERNON ABRAMS

January 30, 1927 - December 11, 1995

Brother Walter Abrams, a lifelong acquaintance with the Primitive Baptists was diagnosed with terminal cancer only three months before his death. He had never indicated to the brethren his interest in the church, but during his illness he talked with those who visited him in a manner that was somewhat astounding. It seemed to be a perfect example of ***"He opens and none can shut."*** His conversation was on Godly things and concerning his belief from childhood, which he had not talked to those who knew him best. The things he had strived for through life for the betterment of his family, was taken from him. They apparently were no longer of any concern to him.

He expressed a desire to unite with the church at Pleasant Hill, stating he had for so long wanted to go to the church but that was something he had not been able to do.

A meeting of the brethren and friends of Pleasant Hill Church was called at the church on November 3, 1995 for the purpose of hearing Brother Abrams' testimony. He satisfied the church with his expression of unworthiness and long standing desire to be with the church, but having been unable to satisfy that desire.

He was unanimously received into our fellowship and the baptismal date

was set for Sunday, November 5th. On the morning for which the baptism was scheduled, he called to get word to the brethren that his physical condition was such that he felt unable to be baptized, so that was called off.

The writer visited him soon thereafter and his conversion was praising God who did all things right and he realized it was in God's plan that the baptizing would not be at that scheduled time. Why? He didn't try to answer that, but he still expressed a desire to be baptized.

On December 11th God called Brother Abrams home to peace, I do believe. He was begging to die and had surrendered all things earthly. None of those things, he expressed, made any difference anymore.

He was never baptized in the liquid grave, but I do not believe that is essential to enter God's kingdom. The visible shroud of God's love and His manifestation to him was baptismal enough. The following verses found in Let Worldly Minds the World Pursue, seem to fit the description of what I saw in him.

"As by the light of opening day
The stars are all concealed,
So earthly objects fade away
When Jesus is revealed.

'Creatures no more divide my choice,
I bid them all depart;
His name, and love and gracious voice,
Have fixed my roving heart."

Brother Abrams left a kind and devoted family who mourn his passing, and the church at Pleasant Hill join them in their mourning. We would, however, beg God's grace upon them and hope they can feel, as we do, he has gone to rest and does not now desire to be in nature's world of woes. He is survived by his wife. Lizzie Lancaster Abrams of the home in Pinetops, NC; one son and daughter in law, Joseph Vernon and Pamela H. Abrams of Macclesfield, one daughter, Terry A. Phillips of Pinetops; One grandchild, Kelly Leanne Abrams of Macclesfield. Five sisters, Mavourneen Owens of Pinetops, Hazel Worrells of Tarboro, Thelmas Garris of Wilson, Elma Wass of Rocky Mount, and Hilda Carter of King; Two brothers, Roy Thomas and Cooper Pitt Abrams, both of Pinetops; One half sister Mary Elizabeth Stallings of Smithfield; Five half brothers, Carl Abrams of Crisp, George Abrams of Pinetops, Henry Abrams of Rocky Mount, James Abrams of King, and William Abrams of Sims.

Funeral service was conducted by Elders Henry C. Jones and Lester Eason (both of whom were brothers in law) on December 13th at Carlisle Funeral Home in Tarboro. His body was laid to rest in the Williams Family Cemetery in Edgecombe County to await the call home.

This tribute of love written by order of Pleasant Hill Church in conference December 23, 1995, by one who was blessed to hear Brother Walter relate his thoughts, hopes, and fears in a new perspective.

J. Carroll Williams

J. Carroll Williams

Elder Henry C. Jones, Moderator
J. Carroll Williams, Clerk

ERNEST LINWOOD BLAIR

Brother Ernest was born in Pittsylvania County, Va. in the Vance Community on August 8, 1901 to the late Brother Robert Young Blair and Louisa Oakes Blair. At the time of his death on June 10, 1988 he had one living sister, Mrs. Irma Blair Walker and one brother Joe Blair, both now deceased.

He was first married to Gladys Lee Hundley Blair who died Jan. 10, 1972. On Nov. 3, 1983 he married Sister Ruth Walker Inge Blair who survives. Brother Ernest asked for a home with Canaan Primitive Baptist Church on August 29, 1984 and was baptized on Sept. 2, 1984 at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church by his pastor Elder J.R. Williams.

For many years before uniting with the church he was a strong supporter and always interested in the welfare of the church and attending regularly.

His funeral was conducted at Swicegood Funeral Home by his pastor, Elder J.R. Williams and Elder O.K. Tench. He was buried in Highland Burial Park in Danville, Va. He is sadly missed but may we all be reconciled to God's will.

Elder J.R. Williams, Moderator
Geneva B. Scearce, Clerk

JOSEPH "JOE" BLAIR

Brother Joe was born on Feb. 17, 1909 in Pittsylvania County, Va. in the Vance Community. He was the youngest of thirteen children born to the late Brother Robert Young Blair and Louisa Oakes Blair. At the time of his death on July 19, 1990 he had one living sister, Mrs. Irma Blair Walker, now deceased. He was predeceased by a four year old daughter, Jo Ann Blair.

Brother Joe asked for a home with Canaan Primitive Baptist Church on June 13, 1988 at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church by his pastor, Elder Julian R. Williams. He attended the Primitive Baptist meetings his entire life and was a firm believer in the Doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God.

He is survived by his wife, Sister Gertrude Carter Blair and one daughter, Carolyn Blair Harrison and one son-in-law Robert Harrison and three grandchildren, Chad Blair Harrison, Martha Lyn Harrison, and Martin Leigh Harrison, and a number of nieces and nephews.

His funeral was conducted at Swicegood Funeral Home by his pastor, Elder J.R. Williams and Elder O.K. Tench. He is sadly missed but may we be reconciled to God's will.

Elder J.R. Williams, Moderator
Geneva B. Scearce, Clerk

IRENE BLACK JEWETT

Irene Black Jewett, 84, of Bristol Village, Waverly, Ohio, died January 27th at Waverly.

She was born near Ralston, Iowa on October 21, 1911. She was a retired elementary school teacher.

Irene was the second child of Walter W. and Myrtle (Jones) Black. She joined the Deer Creek Primitive Baptist Church at Battle Creek, Nebraska on September, 1927 and attended services whenever she could. The last churches she was able to attend were Harmony P.B. Church at Washington Courthouse, Ohio and Turkey run P.B. at Ashville, Ohio.

Irene was proceeded in death by her Parents and two brothers.

She leaves to mourn, her husband, Bill, two daughters, a son and two grandchildren. Also two sisters, Lois Cloud and Sara Cody of Sun City, Az.

Memorial services were held February 10 at Bristol Village Community Center. Elder Durward Edwards of Edison, Ohio and Pastor Roger Horton, Bristol Village conducted the services.

Lois E. Cloud

SISTER ANGIE JONES

It is with a feeling of sadness and unworthiness as I attempt to write an obituary of this precious person. At his appointed time, God, in his mercy has cause to carry home the spirit of our beloved Sister in Christ, Angie Jones, and thus bring to a close her earthly toils and sufferings, at the age of 89.

Mother was born March 29,1906 and passed away October 5, 1995. She was preceded in death by her husband Elder George Jones, my father, and both were members of Union Primitive Baptist Church for many years. She leaves behind four sons, Gerald, Preston, Wendell and Elder John Theron Jones: two daughters, Carolyn Spence, and Pauline Toney: several grandchildren and great grandchildren and a huge host of friends who will greatly miss her.

I can't put into words what my heart would like to say, but if not deceived, I feel that I was richly blessed to have a mother like her which can only come from our dear Lord. My walk in life with her was a blessing, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain Though the earth mourns, the Heavens rejoice.

Funeral services were held October 7,1995 at Cox Funeral Home in Delhi, La. Services were conducted by our dear Elder Gerald Shipman and Brother Alford Garvin who were blessed to speak with sweet humility and words of comfort. She was laid to rest beside her dear husband at the Crowville Cemetery near her home As her body sleeps, may the Lord give grace to all that mourn, that they be reconciled to their loss and truly say, Thy will be done, Lord.

Written by her son,
Elder Theron Jones

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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Editors

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EDITORIAL

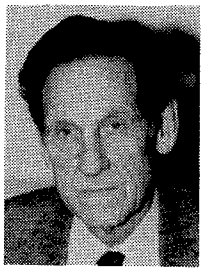
ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

This verse is beyond doubt the most often quoted scripture in all of the bible. It has been used as a text for many sermons to show that God loves the world, and everyone in it, so much that he gave his Son that anyone who would believe in him could be saved without exception; just make a decision, accept Jesus as their savior and they are assured of a home in heaven. This is an example of the extreme measures to which man will go to take scriptures out of context and attempt to use them to support their belief.

This one verse of scripture is only one sentence in a conversation between Jesus and Nicodemous, a ruler of the Jesus, who came to him in darkness inquiring of his doctrine and the works he had done; knowing they were beyond the power of the flesh. He said, ***"Rabbi we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him."*** He knew that the natural man could not give life, restore sight heal the lame and cure the sick just by commanding it to be so, and believed that he must possess the powers of God. He did not understand how these things could be, just as he did not understand how a man could be born again, but that did not keep him from believing in the evidence he had witnessed. If the natural man had to understand everything that he believed to see the kingdom of heaven there would be none to enter therein. Jesus told him ye must be born of the water and the spirit but added, ***"Marvel not that I say unto thee, ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit."*** No one has control over the wind or the air cur-

rents of the earth and can only discern their presence by seeing the effect of them and feeling them as they blow on the man in nature. Jesus uses these illustrations of the experience of the children of God and both are beyond the power of man in nature; just as on the occasion when some asked Jesus, what they must do to work the works of God and his reply was this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. In like manner these things are the work of God, not man.

Nicodemus questioned these sayings and Jesus said, ***"We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen, and ye receive not our witness. If I have told ye earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?"*** This was true of all the teachings of Jesus to his disciples; he talked to them in natural terms of things that contained deep spiritual truths and they did not learn the lessons til the day of Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection, and they were born again. He told Nicodemus that no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. This was something that Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, was familiar with, he knew of the experience of Moses in the wilderness and the story of the brazen serpent; how it was made, per God's instruction and of the results when one who had been bitten by the fiery serpents and looked upon the brazen serpent which was lifted up on a pole. When those who were bitten beheld the brazen serpent they lived and did not die from the bite of the fiery serpent. Nicodemus knew that the effect was not to everyone in the world or even in Israel, but only those who were bitten: so when Jesus quoted the text scripture and compared it to the raising up of the brazen serpent it referred only to those that had been born again of the water and the spirit.

For the text to be interpreted as the world proclaims it, would mean that the doctrine of Christ was changed during the conversation and that they no longer must be born again, but just believe, and that anyone could do this. This could not be true because James 2, 19 states, ***"Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe and tremble."*** Surely they don't believe that this scripture includes the devils. The whosoever in verse 16 is the same as the born again in verse 3 and it is as the wind blowing: outside of the ability of man to control. 1st John 5, 1 ties it down completely when he says, ***"whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God."***

John 1 vs. 12 says, ***"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."*** and many sermons have been preached using this as a text supporting the Armenian doctrine and ignoring verse 13 which says, ***"Which were***

born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man but of God." This contradicts entirely what is preached based on vs. 12 alone, by the world, just as the sermon based on John 3, 16 is contradicted by the context in which the text is written. A text that is preached and not based upon the context in which they are written considering who is speaking, to whom they are speaking and the topic under discussion is a wresting of the truth to appeal to the natural mind of man; because the truth excludes the wisdom of man.

To my understand and experience, the text is not that God gave his only begotten Son because he loved the world and all of the inhabitants so much, but rather he loved the world for the sake of his elect that dwelled therein. As the man who formed a treasure of great value in a field and went and sold all that he had and bought the field, not for the sake of the field but for the sake of the treasure that it contained. Many times the scriptures refer to the Lord's portion as his treasure or his jewel and his love is for them and not for this world which is their temporary dwelling place. ***Psa. 135 vs. 4 "For the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself and Israel for his peculiar treasure." And again Deut. 7 vs. 6 "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth."*** Any faith or hope that I have in things eternal is that the whosoever referred to in the text is the same that God had chosen as a special people unto himself and that they are the ones that are born again. My prayer is that I have been born again which is evidence that I shall not perish but have everlasting life.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

NOTICE

901 Ave. O. N.E.
Winter Haven, Fl. 33881
June 8, 1995
1-941-294-3804

Dear Brother Williams:

Would you be so kind to send a note "Free" I have the Signs books to 1902, some good books, 2 book cases.

Due to old age and nobody to give them to. I would love to give them to someone who loves the doctrine set forth by the Signs which I love.

John J. Simpson

PSALM 2: 11-12.

Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

ARTICLES

TO ALL WHO FEEL A DESIRE, ALL THEIR TRUST BE, ALONE IN GOD:

Sometimes; it is within, the realization of my weakness and self-helplessness; I become aware of His almighty power; and given to feel and say, of a truth; through His furnishing; I can do all things; Even to the praise of His great and Holy name. But, let it be known fully; without Him, I can do no thing or nothing. For in and of my own self, I am only a tiny speck, of the dust of the earth. Which earth is, His footstool. Therefore, the extremity of my own self worth; is lower down than the sole of His feet, and not worthy to even be stepped upon, by Him. Man's self worth, cannot be measured; for, how can a measurement be made; of nothing and less than nothing. Now that is the sum total, of man's complete lack, of any self greatness or goodness. Now that being said; it is my wish; that no one come to me; telling of some great or good thing, any person has done; as if that person, of himself, or herself; had done it. For though I do not say one word in response; I shall not believe it. For I feel fully convinced; that, within mankind of themselves; there is absolutely no ability, or even a desire; to do any good, as be good, in the sight of "God". For all such good is of, and by, and from; He alone, who does all things well and good. And so, any and all such good ever performed THROUGH (not by) a person; came into being, only, through and by, the Holy Spirit of "God", having worked within them; both to will and to do, of that good. So therefore; for us to render praise and or honor, unto that person alone; is a denial, of God the Holy Spirit, having any part, in bringing it all unto fruitition. Which is the same as saying; that person is, the father, or mother, or controller; of the Holy Spirit. Of which is, a complete opposite, of the Holy truth. Now, what has been said thusfar; is in no way; meant to deprive any one, of their just dues; but, is only to point out, what I feel to be the truth; whereas, the "Three-in-one God," is the only one, who is qualified, to impute Righteousness or honor, unto anyone; whomsoever He so pleases; which righteousness, is, in and of, Christ Jesus the Lord. So it is with man; his very existence, his very life, the function of his brain to think thoughts, and his every function, of all what has to do with his very being; requires strength; and all strength that exists; must and does, have some power source, from which, that strength does come; and in that, almighty "God", being the Holder and Controller, of all power that be; and that all powers that be, are ordained by God; thereby establishing, that very fact of Holy truth; Man, is NOT, his own; but is wholly and entirely, dependent upon His Creator; for all he ever is or does, both naturally, and Spiritually. And therein, being proof positive; that man in and of his own self; could never no never, be

self worthy, of any praise or honor; for any thing, he may, or may not do.

I have heard men praised highly; for what they (supposedly) had accomplished, on their own; some were Kings, some were Presidents, some were Farmers, some were referred to as Preachers; and etc. and etc. Whereas, it would have been as well, or even better; had they rendered praise to a fence-post, for holding up a fence. For at least, that fence-post, was not a sinner.

Now some might derive, from what has been written thusfar; that I have no confidence, in the flesh of man; Well, if that should be their opinion; then, I sure do hope; their opinion is correct. Whether or not, I have ever praised my Lord and "God"; only He knoweth for a certainty; I just feel to hope, I have. I feel, I have surely, desired to do so. I do feel and believe this though; any and all that be, pure and true praise unto, His Holy and Righteous name; can never no never, be mixed with any praise, of fleshly mankind. For such, it seems to me, would be like, the mixing of heaven, with hell. For, were man's fleshly thoughts and actions, any determining factor; in where, his eternal stay would be, after this time world is no more; then, we all would surely be cast into that ever burning hell. But thanks be unto God and His Son; His merciful grace was and is, sufficient; to save a Remnant. Them whom God choose in His Son, out from the world; and did so, from before the foundation of the world. Yes, them who are His Jacob's; them He has loved, with an everlasting love. And all others, the Esau's, He has hated, everlastingly. And all that being, His Holy right. Ephesians 2:8, For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:, Not of works, lest any man should boast. I feel and believe, there never has, and never shall, exist, any circumstance; under which; any humankind, could ever have a RIGHT, to boast of SELF; for any thing he has ever done, or not done. FOR though, he give all his goods or holdings, to the needy; there still exist, that very fact of Holy truth; but for "God," he never would have had, any of those goods or holdings, to begin with; either, for the keeping, or giving. Therefore, all boasting, is excluded. Even the praising, honoring, and glorifying of "God", is not boasting; for it is just the expressing; of a pure fact, of Holy truth. I have heard it said; No little baby could possibly be born into this world, already bound for hell, or be hated by God; but such reasoning by one, is their measuring of God; according to their own rule of measurement of themselves, in their own carnal ways, of thinking and reasoning. God who cannot lie said; Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated; when neither of them had as yet been born, to know good or evil. Isaiah 55:8, For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For any one of us, to know of God and His way; we must wait for, His Revelations unto us. While with "God," in His infinite wisdom; He has forever known all things. It is impossible, for any thing,

to ever come, as a surprise to Him. For back in eternity, before He ever brought this time world into existence; in both His mind and purpose; He saw it all, knew it all, fixed and established it all, and Predestinated it all; from its beginning, and all the way through, and unto its ending, or consummation; and all heaven, and hell, has received their eternal inhabitants. And within the whole entire process of it all; there never has been, and never shall be; even the slightest, or minutest, variation; from that which, "God" foresaw would, and shall, unhenderedly come and be. Now that is the One and only, "God and Lord" in whom, I desire, my trust and hope is. One who created it all; set and established all bounds and habitations; and super rules, all comings and goings, all beginnings, continuations, and endings. "He" who said; As I have thought so shall it be, as I have purposed so shall it stand.

In hope, of a better world; after this time world has passed away, and gone forever.

Troy G. Shepard

VOICES OF THE PAST

SERMON BY
ELDER D.V. SPANGLER
AT THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION
AT ROANOKE, VA. - 1964

Elder Turner told me this morning that there was an afflicted brother here who has hoped someone would talk on the scripture which is found in the 30th verse of the fifth chapter of Ephesians: ***"We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."*** I am sure this is a wonderful text.

One of the things that stands out in the Scriptures, is that wherever God has brought his church to view, he has presented her as something complete. When he refers to the church of God, he speaks of that church being the bride, the Lamb's wife. And we find also that he tells us how, at some time in the future, he will present that church unto himself a glorious church, not having spot, wrinkle, blemish, or any such thing. When the Lord has brought Zion to view as the church, he presents her as a city set upon a hill, that cannot be hid. When he has spoken of the safety of this city, he has told us that salvation shall be her walls. Not the salvation that men talk about, but the kind that God Almighty appoints, for he said that salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.

When God brings Zion for his people to view, he brings her to view as absolutely complete in him; he brings her to view as bring watered by the river of the water of life; and that stream, he tells us, makes glad the city of God. Now if your heart has ever been made glad as you heard the gospel of Christ preached, as you mingled with your brethren, it is evidence that some of the streams have reached you.

"Makes glad the city of God." I like to think about the effectiveness of this stream - that there has never been one too poor but that the stream will reach him. Last night, as we sat on the

brother's porch, I talked about people going home to the church, for I feel in my ministry to encourage God's people: if they love His name, to stand up as God blesses them, and be counted with his people. And I saw a tear in a friend's eye; and I said, "My friend, there's room for you in the house." He said, "I'm unworthy." A very acceptable answer, wasn't it?

We want to talk about the text, but we must first get to it. We want to show, the Lord willing, that we are a part of the body of our Saviour. And we are going to show, the Lord willing, that Jesus Christ did not come into the world to make a decision as to a single person going to heaven. Somebody has brought forth such false doctrine that they advance the idea that men are helping other men to go to heaven - to make a decision for Christ. Christ taught that he himself never made the decision while in this world, as to a single person who would be in glory. We find, in her earthly understanding of Christ, that a woman approached Him, and said that she had a request, that she had two sons and she would like for one to sit on his right hand and the other on his left, when he entered into his kingdom, And Jesus said, ***"Woman, you don't know what you ask; it is not mine to give."*** He didn't come into the world to decide who would go to heaven, but to make it sure to every one that was chosen in him before the world began. He said, "It shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." If any man has advanced the idea that Christ went about upon the earth trying to save sinners, making decisions as to who would enter the kingdom, this scripture forever sets it at nought.

But he brings this matter to you and me, for it is said that we are members of his body, of his flesh, of his bones. There is a depth here that I doubt whether any minister has ever reached; there is a depth here wherein our Saviour, (I hope I can say, our), has taken our flesh and our bones. We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. As we look back at the wonderous work of grace, we find that when God created a man of the earth earthy, (and in a sense a type of our Lord Jesus Christ), the woman was in the man, and a part of the man, before she was ever taken from him; and that the law that God gave to Adam, was given him while Eve was yet a part of his body. That is why Adam said, ***"She is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh."*** That is why Paul, in his epistle to the Ephesians, said that a man has never hated his own flesh, but he nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the church. "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church." In the preceding verses, how wonderfully he said, ***"Husbands love your wives, even as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it."***

There a few things in my life that have been most humbling to me; one is, that God would love a sinner like I am; another is how brethren could love me. Another humbling thing to the minister is when God's people tell him, "You were blessed to preach the

gospel to me." This never exalts one of God's ministers. Oh, no! but the devil does sometimes. He will sometimes tell one that he preached a wonderful sermon; but a tear in a person's eye is more humbling than all the Devil had ever said to him.

He took the woman out of his side. The Bible doesn't say his side, but He took a rib, and that is where the side is; and He gave her to him to be a helpmeet. The side of Jesus Christ was torn when he hanged on Calvary's hill, when darkness covered the earth. The soldier pierced the side of Jesus. Why did he pierce his side? Two reasons: prophecy had said it would be; and the soldier didn't know what he was doing - he knew nothing about the purposes of God. Men today are living out the purposes of God blindly, but I assert that the purposes of God shall stand. If I didn't believe that, I would be afraid to start home this afternoon. Someway, I believe with all my heart that in our journey here, the angels of God have been our protection.

But. I want to talk about the text. "You are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Eve received the law through Adam, and the Ark was the only thing that could weather the storm of the wrath of God, when his wrath for sin was poured out upon the world. The door of the Ark, the Bible says, was in the side. It didn't have two doors; it had one door, - in the side.

When Abraham sent his servant to seek a bride for his son, he caused him to swear that he would not go among strangers, but that he would go among his own kindred. What does it show? that Jesus Christ came into the world to save a people that already belonged to him - that were united with him. And the servant wanted a sign; and he said, "When I reach a certain well, have somebody there to draw water for the camels." And we find a willing Rebekah there. She even ran to meet him; and said, "Drink my Lord." And when the question arose, when the servant had told his business, "Will you go with this man?," her parents said leave her a little while, and then she can go. But they left the answer with Rebekah; and she said, "I will go." I like a doctrine that brings about in the heart a willingness to do the will of God; that not only brings about a willingness, but makes every particle of His service a delight.

"You are flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bones." We find in the wonderful works of grace that God Almighty has brought home to his people throughout the ages, two things clearly brought to view; One is, that he has saved them because he had an everlasting love for them; and the other is, that they are unworthy of everything that God has done for them.

I remember that when David went out to fight the battle for his brethren, he was just a lad; and his brethren rebuked him, saying that the naughtiness of his heart had brought him down to see the battle. Here is a giant! if we can't overthrow him, we know you can't: Goliath, the giant of the Philistines. David was of the bone and the flesh of his brethren, wasn't he?

And David said, *"Is there not a cause?"* Yet they did not believe in him until he manifested to them his power to fight the battle. And that is when every sinner believes in Jesus Christ. David's brethren would scorn him, but he said that he would fight the battle; he would meet the giant; but he would not take the armor of Saul, for he had not proved it. David went forth saying unto Goliath, *"I come to thee in the name of the Lord."*

They were David's brethren, and nothing they could say would ever change his love for them; no rebuke from them would change him. Neither will anything, my friends, ever change the love of God for you; for Paul said, "I am persuaded that neither death nor life, things present or things to come, principalities or powers, etc., nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

"Flesh of his flesh; bone of his bone." Let's find out more. Joseph was a beautiful type of Jesus Christ. We find him hated by his brethren - hated because he had a dream. Did the devil give him the dream? Oh, no! But it caused his brethren to hate him. God gave him a dream in which he saw his brethren bowing down to him. One of the things that Elder Helms spoke so clearly in his Introductory was that all things worked together for good to them that love God. The hatred and malice of Joseph's brethren would have done away with their brother; but it couldn't be. They put him in a pit; and but for the grace of God they would have left him there to die. But he had a brother to speak for him. The Midianite merchantmen come by, and he was sold for twenty pieces of silver. God took care of the situation. Sometimes in my mind I have seen that boy being led off, with his brethren watching, no doubt glad to get rid of him, thinking it was the last time they would see him. But then we find that there came a time when it was God's time to bring them to him - through famine and hunger, which God alone could bring and control. Someway I believe that every drop of water that falls on the earth, God sends it; every famine that comes, God sends it.

And, finally, I like to think of Joseph when he couldn't refrain any longer. He knew his brethren all the time: he knew them because they were flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone. They were a part of him. *"Come near me; I am your brother."*

Has the Lord ever drawn you near him? Have you ever felt the encircling arms of Christ? I remember what dear Elder Gilliam said, when he was at the point of death for days: *"I felt those arms under me."*

I'm your brother - you thought evil - God meant it for good.

Now to reach our case He came all the way to where we were. Our Saviour must take our flesh, since, as the Scriptures say, the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he himself likewise took part of the same, that he might destroy the works of the Devil. How must the Lord Jesus Christ come into the world? He must be found

under the law. Paul tells us in Galatians so clearly, that when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law. He took our flesh and blood as the Son of man, taking it in union with him as the Son of God - our very flesh and blood. ***"God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law to redeem those that were under the law."***

I like to think also that it is said that he took not the nature of angels; for an angel could never reach our case. But he took on him the seed of Abraham - our flesh and our blood; and we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones; and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in their likeness, he humbled himself. Men did not humble our Saviour - he humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross. Why? because from all eternity his people had a standing in him: they were chosen in him, and their life was in him before Adam fell. They fell in Adam, but they were safe all the time. To reach his bride, Jesus could not come as an angel, but must come as the Son of man. We are glad that he spoke so many times of himself as the Son of man - more than he spoke of himself as the Son of God.

I like to think of the expression of the Apostle that there is one Mediator between God and man. Talk about the Pope, talk about the Priests of the land being mediators between God and man, there has never been a greater lie preached under heaven than that. To believe that, you would have to burn your Bibles; to believe that doctrine, you would have to preach that Jesus Christ didn't come to save a people who were already his; and to take in union with himself the flesh and blood and bones of his people.

There is one Mediator! None of these preachers here are mediators between God and man; there's never been but one. Who is he? the man Christ Jesus. The one of whose body we are members. Think of it, my friends! People of God members of the body of Christ! the mystical body of Christ, of his flesh and of his bones. We never know the full force of salvation until we have known something of how low our Saviour came: If we only know of his humiliation, and not of his glory, it won't do us any good. I cannot speak of his glory, and know the wonderful love he had for us, unless I see his humiliation.

I went for years wondering what it means when it is said in the 8th chapter of Acts, ***"In his humiliation his judgment was taken away; and who shall declare his generation, for his life is taken from the earth."*** Then I saw it one day. I saw that God left his Son hanging in the body that would satisfy as a sacrifice. He left him hanging there, and turned his face away; and Jesus cried out and said, ***"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"*** If we are his people, every one of us was hanging there - represented in him. To be a complete sacrifice, he must be left to die.

Have you felt my friends, that He died for you? What a wonderful thing! ***"Gave himself," Paul said, "for***

me." I like to think of Him who took our flesh and blood in union with himself, when he was held up before the people of old: I like to think that every time the high priest went with the names of the tribes of Israel on his heart - with their names on his shoulder, he showed that the people of God were represented in him. I think of the high priest going once a year into the most holy place, making atonement for himself and the people, that he couldn't put away sin; but I think of one who went into the most holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. The high priest couldn't feel the groans of his people: he hadn't experienced them. But, my brethren, today we have and high priest who can be touched. We have one who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was tempted in all points. I like to think that when Stephen was dying, he said, *"I see Jesus standing on the right hand of God."* Standing, waiting to pour out his wrath upon the people.

What a blessing to have a great high priest in heaven, who is brought near as our brother, our very brother. We read that he who sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. These are my brethren; Who? He that doeth the will of my Father, the same is my mother, my brother, my sister. He is not ashamed to call his people brethren, because they are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. The only way there can ever be a people prepared for heaven whom God will not be ashamed of, is for he himself to prepare them.

The doctrine I am preaching to you today, will be preached on and on, until the Lord of glory comes from heaven; and the people I am talking to and about today have the grace of God wrought so perfectly in them, that God in heaven will never be ashamed of one of them.

We are told that Abraham, when he was called out, went not knowing where he went; that he sought a city which hath foundation, whose builder and maker is God. He was looking for a place where God is not ashamed to be called our God.

"We are members of his body, of his flesh, and his bones." He didn't come part of the way under the law; he didn't come just to make an offering for sin, and leave the acceptance to men, but He came to redeem us from the curse of the law. The Scriptures say that he went to heaven, having obtained eternal redemption for us. Do you know why he is coming again; and who he is coming for? He is coming for his bride; he is coming for those who are members of his body, of his flesh, of his bones.

"As by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead, he said, Now is Christ risen and become the first fruits of them that slept." When Christ rose from the dead, he said, *"Now is Christ risen and become the first fruits of them that slept."* When Christ rose from the dead, it was a promise that there was a crop coming: The people of God - their bodies are going

to be raised. Not like you are as I look at you now, but fashioned like His glorious body; and will be prepared to praise him.

When the priest under the law took the sheaf from the people and waved it before the Lord, it was saying, There is a crop like this. So is the resurrection of the body of Jesus Christ from the dead. He was the first fruits of his people; and they will be like the first fruits. The glorious day is coming - the day all the saints have looked for, the day of all days, when we will be taken home. I have been coming here almost forty years; most of the old ones who were here when I began coming, are sleeping somewhere. In a few years we will all be sleeping, laid away somewhere in the silent people; and they will be like the first fruits. The glorious day is coming - the day all the saints have looked for, the day of all days, when we will be taken home. I have been coming here almost forty years; most of the old ones who were here when I began coming, are sleeping somewhere. In a few years we will all be sleeping, laid away somewhere in the silent tomb; but, bless the Lord, He will not deny his own. When he comes the dead will be raised. It is the resurrection of the dead, not merely from the dead.

You that love his name - it will be you that day. It will be the redeemed sinner; it will be one whose vile body is changed, and fashioned like the glorious body of Jesus Christ. Lift up your heads, my brethren; praise the Lord! No wonder when David started in the 22nd Psalm he said, *"My God, why hast thou forsaken me."* and said in the 23rd, *"The Lord is my shepherd."* Then in the 24th, he said, *"Lift up the everlasting doors that the King of Glory might come in. Who is the King of Glory The Lord of hosts is the King of Glory."*

(The above is taken from a recording, and is somewhat condensed. - J.D.W.

Elder D.V. Spangler

MEDITATIONS ON JOSEPH
From the Book of Genesis
by T. Floyd Adams
Willow Springs, N.C.

Joseph no longer speaks to his brethren by an interpreter, but he comes to them face to face. Now this wonderful secret which has been kept from them so long is now revealed, "I am your brother." *"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past (law days) unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days (Gospel Day) spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things." Heb. 1 :1-2.*

Joseph has the keys to the corn houses in Egypt, and he freely hands it out to all of his brothers, as will be seen by the wagons loaded with provisions going back to Canaan, to spread the good news that *"Joseph is yet alive, and he is Governor over all the land of Egypt."* He sends for their father, their families and all of their kindred, in the land of Canaan and settles them down in the goodly land

of Goshen. Now they eat bread from this great store of CORN, for which they have bestowed no labor.

Lest I forget, I will now mention the charge which Joseph made to his brothers before they left to bring their families--*"Also regard not your stuff; for all the good of all the land of Egypt is yours." Gen.45 :20.* Why did he render this charge? He well knew that they had a lot of possessions that they would not want to leave behind, all of which have now become worthless, for the store houses in Egypt are open to meet all their requirements in time of NEED. Furthermore, there is no room in the great store houses of Egypt to shelter such for these houses are filled with CORN.

Now, would Joseph's brothers question his right and ability to deliver to them this serious and solemn charge-- "Regard not your stuff?" The man who sits upon his throne in his royal majesty, and is governor of all Egypt. He also has the gift to divine. Is he not fully qualified to tell them what to bring and what to leave behind, First he tells them to bring Benjamin (the corn, or Holy Spirit); second, bring your families and father and kindred. That is all. Then he tells them, *"regard not your stuff."* For this store house in Egypt is a place to get as a *"free gift"*, and not a place to exchange our *"stuff"* for corn. Regardless of how we may present our *"stuff"*, we will never be able to exchange it for CORN, because all our *"righteousnesses are as filthy rags."*

That which I have written above is only a faint type, or as Paul said *"a shadow of good things to come."* Now, this Great God who sits upon His throne clothed with ALL POWER and authority, who says that *"Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool and the cattle of a thousand hills are mine, if I were hungry I would not ask you"*, and further says that *"the lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof, is of the Lord."* Who would question His right and ability to teach and give instruction to us poor mortals, for *"all of thy people shall be taught of the Lord" and "great shall be the peace of thy children."* So this Great Giver, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift (Jesus), for *"every good gift and every perfect gift comes down from above, from the Father of lights in whom there is no variableness neither shadow of a turn." "And he spake as never man spake."* How fitting are the words of the poet:

"Keep silent all created things,
And wait your Maker's nod,
My soul stands trembling while
she sings, The honors of her God."

As Joseph administered to his brothers out of the store houses of Egypt, so Jesus administers to us out of His great store house of mercy. For John said, "and of His fullness have we all received and grace for grace" or spiritual blessings of Benjamin. The bringing of Benjamin was all that Joseph

required of his brothers for them to get corn, and the only time that we can get corn or Jesus, is when we are made willing through sufferings to present Christ who is formed in us the hope of glory. Oh, how often we try to present our "stuff", such things as good works, self-righteousness, which is compared to filthy rags. We make vows and promises, self-confidence creeps in and many other things too numerous to mention, that we are continually trying to exchange for a blessing (corn). Ah! hear servants of God, was this not a serious and solemn charge that Paul rendered to Timothy, "PREACH THE WORD"! How careful we should be to make a clear distinction between our filthy works and the precious works of Jesus, ***"who works in us both to will and to do of His own good pleasure."***

Ah! my dear friends, this market or great store house of our God is not a place to exchange our silver and gold, for the precious blood of Jesus. Joseph used the barter system in trading with the Egyptians, but to his brothers, it was a free gift.

When we come to this great treasure house and present our works (stuff) we only find the door closed against us. This is another lesson that I too, have to learn again and again. Often do I feel at a loss when our Master hides His loving face, I get to my wit's end. This is the time that Satan makes his worst attack. He will say to me as Eliphaz, Job's miserable comforter, said to him, ***"Acquaint thyself with him."*** This is what I have tried to do for many years. "And ***be at peace."*** This is what I greatly desire. ***"Thereby good shall come unto thee."*** Do you believe it? Sometimes I do. "Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth and lay up his words in thine heart." I have made an honest effort to do this. ***"If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy Tabernacles."*** How hard I have labored to get away from this iniquity. No wonder Job said, ***"Miserable comforters, ye are." "Acquaint thyself with him, and be at peace. Lay up his words in thine heart. If thou return to the Almighty thou shalt be built up." Job 22:21-23.***

WHAT LIES ! This may be an exaggerated expression, but I wonder if I could not build a world like this just as easily as I could do what this "Tenamite" told Job to do. Those Tenamites and Midianites are a great pest in our lives. They tell us that a ***"hope is not sufficient, you ought to know you are a Christian,' "you are the cause of so few people joining the church"; "you ought to cry a little louder from the pulpit and spare not."*** I make the feeble attempt by trying to obey his bidding, but all in vain, only to hear my feeble voice echo back again. Ah! dear child, do not become discouraged, this is just another experience that we have to pass through to learn from "whence our help comes." Now our precious Redeemer speaks," Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." Now deliverance

has come. The joy of God's salvation is restored for a short season, but alas, we again sink down, but we never get out of His reach or hearing. He sweetly whispers these words to us, ***"Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world, for I am he that was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore;" "and as I live ye shall live also."*** Live where? Right here in the flesh. But how? By the faith of the Son of God, for Paul said, ***"I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me."***

Now, let us go back just a little and pick up a few threads and see if they are types of our experience. We talk a lot about sin, but first, let us get a clear picture in our mind and a well defined answer. Just what is sin? Paul gives the correct definition. ***"Sin is the transgression of the law, and by the law is the knowledge of sin."*** There is a vast difference in our experience between a pardon for our transgression of the law and a knowledge of the sin that remains with us after the offence has been committed.

When our Federal Head, Adam, transgressed God's law, it swept the whole human race into death and destruction and our only remedy is through Jesus Christ. For Paul said ***"Who was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification." Rom. 4:25.*** We too, were tried, convicted and crucified by this same law. But when Jesus died (or laid His life down) and lay in the heart of the earth three days, then arose a conqueror over death, hell and the grave, He brought us back through Him freely justified and put a new law in our heart and mind, a law that gives life and peace, and not a law like the first law that brought conviction, and condemnation. then put us into prison and finally we were sentenced and put to death. Now when we were brought back through Jesus Christ and were put under this new law which Paul says ***"is the law of the spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus,"*** it took all the guilt and condemnation away from us, for Paul said that ***"there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit, for the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death." Rom. 8:1-2.*** He further says, ***"He that is dead is freed from sin."*** Remember, dear reader, that we are not freed from the KNOWLEDGE of the fact that we were justly condemned for our sins. Joseph granted a free pardon to his brothers for all their sins and transgressions which they had committed against him, but they always were mindful of their sinful and wicked acts, and because of this KNOWLEDGE of their just condemnation under the law, they were continually reminded that they were still sinners for Paul said, "By the law is the KNOWLEDGE OF SIN. Now when this knowledge of sin continued to revive in them, they began to have doubts and fears. So do we. When

they saw that their father was dead, ***"They said, Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us for all the evil which we did unto him." Gen. 50:15.*** But Joseph, like Jesus, is always a very present help in time of need (not needs). Now his pledge and promise is renewed again, as will be seen in Gen. 50:21. ***"Now therefore, fear ye not: I will nurse you and your little ones."*** And he comforted them and spake kindly unto them. ***"Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good".*** Such manifested love as this can never be described by mortal tongue.

Now through the suffering and death of Jesus, who satisfied the demands of the law, were we not freed from the sins which we had committed? The unworthy writer felt as though he would never have another evil thought, which lasted only a little while, for he had been in bondage for twenty-one years Is it not true that we are out under bond most of the time? But like Joseph's brothers when he saw fit he put them behind the bars in the prison walls. I have often compared my experience with that of a bird that had been caged for a long time, and when the door was open it flits around from limb to limb, and often soars high in the air, but when it gets thirsty, tired and hungry, it is forced back to earth to get a fresh supply.

Now, I will say just a few more words about this ***"knowledge of sin."*** Paul, the great apostle, through divine revelation left nothing for us to guess, for he brings the subject clearly to the light and said, ***"Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound."*** Among the many things which this law taught us when it entered into our hearts are three important things. First, that we have always been sinners even before we had any knowledge of the law. Second, we are sinners after we trangressed the law. Third, we are still sinners after we are resurrected from the dead, that is, after we have been delivered from our sins, and the reason for this knowledge that we are still sinners is because the offense still abounds. The knowledge of our sins, and the fact that we have to carry a dead body around the remainder of our lives, often causes us to cry out as Paul did and say, ***"Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death."*** The very scent of our bodies together with the "knowledge of sin" is extremely nauseating to us at times. It is through those sore trials in the night that we get a little glimpse of the great and marvelous works of God. David said, ***"Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night sheweth knowledge." Psa. 19:2.***

Through this sore affliction we learn a great many lessons, one of which is this, that the great mountains of sin that we could see in our brother has not become a molehill, and the little mole hill that we could only see in ourselves now becomes a mountain of sin. We may fight many battles with our brother and the world, because of SIN, but when the fight is finished we then learn that the greatest SIN al-

ways rages most within. Now when we are brought to the knowledge of the fact that the greatest sin rages most within, we can then see that the victory is only won through Jesus Christ. Paul said, ***"But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 15:27.***

And when the fight is finished,
And the battle is won,
Then we can see that Jesus
Was the conquering One.

Through this experience, this scripture sweetly comes to our view: ***"But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Rom. 5:20.*** Now, it is through the abounding grace of God that we can look over one another for good. It is through the abounding grace of God that we can see the imperfections in ourselves. It is through the abounding grace of God, that we have love for one another. It is by the abounding grace of God that we can preach, pray, hear and sing. It is by the grace of God we can render equal and undivided praise to the everlasting Father, Son and everlasting Spirit. It is through the abounding grace of God that we can get a peep through the lattice work and glimpse the heavenly scene beyond and forget momentarily that we ever commited a sin.

Now what I have written above is some of the sweet meditations that I have had for several years, but mostly for the last three weeks, and I realized that it is like the writer, very imperfect and only to be accepted so far as it is supported by the word of God. But I will say as Paul said, ***"Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out." Rom. 11:33. "Lo, these are parts of His ways: but how little a portion is heard of Him? and the thunder of His power who can understand." Job 26:14.***

May I close with the words of the poet:

"Deep in unfathomable mines,
Of never failing skill,
He treasures up His bright designs
And works His sovereign will."

T. FLOYD ADAMS
Willow Springs, N.C. March 27, 1945.

May, 1948

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." 1 Peter 2: 2-3.

I have a desire to write on this Scripture to the household of faith. I want to remember that this household is composed of little children, some of whom are not able to understand the things we see promulgated in the pulpit and on the printed page. But while this is so, I want to be explicit and declare to you that does not give me a right to change what I

write just because of the inability of any to not see. The gospel is the gospel all the time: it is Jesus Christ and him crucified, and he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. Not only is the gospel the same but the characters that is for remain the same. As far as ability goes we never have any of our own, but all we have is just the measure of faith that is given us. We must keep in mind that this measure is not turned over to us; that dispensing grace is not the work of the children of God.

I hear a lot about not preaching so much doctrine, but rather to preach the sincere milk of the word to the babes, for they cannot understand the hard doctrine. That is right that they cannot, but I trust I am thankful to Almighty God that he will teach his doctrine to them. These babes would not have any better judgment about milk than they would meat, would they? In fact if we are out to solve the problem by our observation of natural children, then my analysis would be that more babies would gnaw on a piece of meat than would try to drink out of a cup. Now to follow up the idea of this milk, let us remember that this milk has got to be handled by the mother instead of the baby. Just imagine a tiny babe holding it's own cup. If you want conditions in this sincere milk of the word, here are all of them anybody can desire. Just turn the babe loose to get its milk. Now while you have given the little one over to the task of getting its milk, will you please remember that the Gentile church does not have any breasts. What a hard doctrine! What a dry, starving, husky doctrine! And what an awful thing it is to preach a theme to little, storm-tossed, sin-smitten children of God, that mocks them into believing they can find their mother and that she is well qualified for feeding her brood! The church has not milk, bread or any other nutrition for the children. She is barren anyway and it was all done that no flesh should glory in His presence.

Three times I have seen my wife go down into the valley, giving birth to a baby boy. One of them has long since passed on and the other two are now grown and by the time this appears in print will be men of their own. My mind is enraptured with the picture coming before me of the zeal and motherly devotion that has been given to them. Did she tell the first one that he could find his own food the best way he could? We read in the book about some one having their part in the book taken away if they add anything to the words of a certain prophecy (Rev. 22), and I do not know of a greater adding or taking away than to mock a baby by telling him to help himself. That is the nucleus of conditionalism, and we cannot avoid the dilemma it places us in to talk about the sincere milk of the word, as though we could milk it out and give it to another. If one of the family is able to preach, it is not that God has given

him more than some one else. But just as sure as a man has ever preached, it is just as sure that some one has been fed from that soul-lifting milk of the word. Now I want to say that there is such a thing as sincere milk of the word, but you just cannot say that it is something we can handle. The church is often spoken of as a woman in the Scriptures, but she is not equipped for nourishing children. The whole family is fed alike; every age of the church has the same appetite, the same desires, the same need. The apostle could not, and did not. claim anything except that which comes from the Spirit; the patriarch David was led and made to lie down; the "lot of the inheritance" was touched in the place that made him a cripple the balance of his life. Time and space would fail us to cite the cases of the different saints in all times that were helpless except when led by the Spirit and grace of God.

Preaching practical godliness is another favorite pastime of people that seem to fear too much strong meat. I do not know just what kind of godliness that is, anyway the Bible does not mention that kind as though you preached that kind when you wanted to preach to the babies, but that you had another brand for the old sheep. Anyway now if you were going to experiment about which were the nearest able, old soldiers of the cross of babes, to receive this "practical godliness business," do you not honestly believe that it would be better to preach it to the older ones than it would to be felling the little fellows about it? If a thing is helpless, are you going to tell it to milk out the fatness and grow? Now I do not mean than either the older children of God, or any other saint can do a thing apart from the Grace of God. No, I am not in sympathy with this idea that we are progressive in complying with the admonitions laid down in the Scriptures. If we can do better as we go along it would mean that we could get sanctified after awhile and there would not be any need for grace.

Let us read the text again. Before we do let us look back at some of the things Peter has said. We, the children of God, are born again of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which lives and abides forever. This word is the same word that was made flesh and dwelt among men. This is a scriptural birth and there is not any way under heaven to make the two births related: one being flesh, earthy, the other spiritual, heavenly; the first getting its supplies from perishing sources, the other from living, eternal. Every sinner born of this spirit, knows very little about it; he cannot tell with any degree of certainty, where it came from; he professes to know but little, if anything, about what is going to be the end of it all. I thought at one time that our inability to tell about this birth was at the time of its taking place, but the very language forbids any such interpretation. It says "so is everyone that is born of the spirit," and that covers the ground from the time on earth until we quit the walks of men. Now child, this word endures, it remains the same

yesterday, to-day, and forever. This birth is as lasting as the source from which it comes. But this flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man is as the flower of grass. The best thing about us as men is about as lasting and dependable as the grass and the bloom of it.

Now this text does not tell us to get to desiring the milk of the word. It is not a thing that we can preach (as though we could preach without the nourishment of the milk) to the little children of God, thinking that this is something the unlearned can do and understand, and that they can take hold of it better than they can the hard points of the gospel, but this is the only gospel that has ever been preached for "this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." This desire is in every heaven born soul; it is something given you in the birth, and has sin been taken out of our mortal bodies, instead of merely being condemned in the flesh, we would have never known the sorrow of warfare. There is in a wonderful sense two plants or at least two natures here, and this sincere milk of this living word causes, or makes, or produces, a growth in these new-born babes. I do not care how this is said as long as it is not a conditional growth. I do not want to strive about words nor to make any child of God an offender for a word, but I do want to, and, God being my helper I will, contend most tenaciously that salvation is of the Lord. I will not say, and certainly do not believe, that this growth is in sin. I had as soon have any other rotten or blasphemous doctrine as to have the kind that would say that this milk of the word causes the children of God to grow in sin. But they grow in grace and in a knowledge of the truth. Just as long as they grow, they grow away from self. They are grown in nature: they are grown in sin, but how little in grace they feel to be. But that desire continues for the milk, and just as long as it continues, just that long will they be nurtured by it. Just as long as they are nurtured by it, they shall be growing. When they stop growing away from self, then they get strong in self. This old plant of nature will produce all kinds of wild fruit and bitter gourds, and sometimes it has a form of sweetness, (2 Tim. 3:5) but you had better watch it for it will even deny the power it comes from, claiming that bitter and sweet comes from the same place. Growing in ability to do the things of God, and growing in sin by this milk being given us, are neither caused by the milk but we are making manifest that we came into the world grown in nature, full of sin, completely under its power and influence. May it please Almighty God to give each child his portion in due season, that there be normal, healthy growth in the kingdom.

Elder W.D. Griffin

MEETINGS

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

The good Lord willing, our annual 5th weekend meeting will be held at Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church on June 28th through June 30th in Winnsboro, Texas. The Lord delights in the worship of His people. Psalm 149:1 states, ***"Praise ye the Lord. Sing unto the Lord a new song, and His praise in the congregation of saints."*** Verse 4 states, ***" For the Lord taketh pleasure in His people. He will beautify the meek with salvation."*** We cordially invite all who desire to humbly worship our sovereign Lord.

Jimmy Hamrick, Pastor
John Hamrick, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union meeting will be, the Lord willing, at Union Primitive Baptist Church, the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in June. The church is located on 605 off Rt. 40 and 799.

We welcome all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

Raymond Goad, Pastor
Silas Payne, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1996 Staunton River Association will convene the Lord willing, at Weatherford Church meeting house. The host church is Danville Primitive Baptist Church for this our one hundred fifty-fifth session. Services will begin at 10:00 a.m. Saturday July 13 and on Sunday July 14.

Weatherford Church is located about five miles from Gretna, VA. in Pittsylvania County at the intersection of highways 760 and 763.

We invite visitors and correspondents to attend this meeting with us.

Burnell B. Williams,
Association Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be, the Lord willing, at the Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church the fifth Sunday in June 1996. We welcome all lovers of the truth to come & meet with us. The song service will begin at 10:00 a.m. The church is located on Tate St. near the UNCG which is just off highway #6 or West Lee St. as you come into Greensboro.

Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Wayne Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 1993

Mrs. Frank Sizemore, WV 10.00
Mrs. Erma C. Sowers, VA 2.00
J. Cline Chandler, NC 2.00
Mrs. Helen Teach, VA 30.00
Mrs. Ralph Lucas, VA
In memory of Ralph Lucas 25.00
Mrs. Foye Cole, NC 2.00
Mrs. Carrie Jo Williams, TN 5.00
Mrs. Agnes Sutphins, VA 2.00
Alvis G. Beacham, NC 2.00
Joel S. Miles, FL 2.00
Mrs. Sarah Barker, VA 2.00
Eld. Walter B. Wilson, CA 7.00
George W. Hyslip, TN 10.00
Mrs. Virginia Apple, NC 2.00
Eld. Jesse A. Foreman, NC 2.00
Ila Leary, NC 5.00
W.L. Knight, NC 7.00
Mrs. Lois Cloud, AZ 10.00
Mrs. Ed Glidewell, NC 2.00
Mrs. Joyce Farley, TX 15.00

OBITUARIES

MARIE CANNADAY

It is with sadness that I attempt to write in memory of one I dearly loved. Sister Agnes Marie Dobbins Cannaday. She was born August 6, 1923 and died at her home October 28, 1995. She was preceded in death by her husband Brother Harry Cannaday in 1988.

Sister Marie was born to the late Peter and Audrey Dobbins Akers and raised by an aunt and uncle, Eula and Omen Whitlock. She was married to Brother Harry Cannaday on December 26, 1942 and to this union was born three children: Brenda Gayle Cannaday, Harry Brammer Cannaday, Jr., and Roger Dale Cannaday, and five grandchildren.

Sister Marie and Brother Harry Cannaday joined Mt. Union Primitive Baptist Church on June 18, 1944 and were baptized by Elder Odell Thompson with their memberships at Paynes Creek Primitive Baptist Church in Floyd County. Both were firm believers in Salvation by Grace.

Sister Marie suffered through a lot of pain but as her body grew weaker, her faith grew stronger. Her funeral was held at Oakeys Funeral Chapel in Vinton on October 31, 1995. The service was led by her pastor, Elder Hale Terry, Elder Willard Cox, Elder Junior Conner, and Elder Lane Carter before a large audience of relatives and friends.

We believe our loss is her eternal gain.

Ora T. Nichols

DESSIE MAE CONNER

Sister Dessie Mae Conner was born January 2, 1911 and died March 4, 1996 making her stay here on earth 85 years. She was the daughter of the late Brother Guy and Nellie Conner. She is survived by one sister and brother-in-law, Sister Aldene and Brother Thomas Nichols; one brother and sister-in-law, Alvin and Attaway Conner and a step-mother, Sister Ora R. Conner.

She has been a member of Salem Church since October 24, 1965, attending church as much as her afflictions would allow. I shall never forget the day that Sister Dessie was baptized. The wind was blowing with snow flurries and I was freezing but not our dear sister. She came from the water rejoicing greatly and there wasn't a chill bump on her. I truly felt the Lord's presence there that day. Just a few weeks before her death, an angel visited her in a dream. Before he left the angel told her that he would be back for her.

Funeral services were held at Salem Church by Elders Leonard Brammer, W. J. Conner and Larry Hollandsworth. She was laid to rest in the Restvale Cemetery. We feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by request of Salem Church by one who loved her.

Mary Poff

GUY HENRY HUNDLEY

In memory of Brother Guy Henry Hundley, who departed this life January 4, 1996, having lived for 87 years.

He was born September 13, 1908, in the Swansonville Community of Pittsylvania County, VA (Dry Fork, VA). He was the son of James Henry Hundley and Minta Oakes Hundley.

He was never married and was the last of his generation.

He lived at the Hundley Home Place and farmed there all his adult life, with the help of his sister, Lillye Claire Hundley. They also took care of their parents as long as they lived.

He joined Strawberry Primitive Baptist Church on December 31, 1955 and was a faithful member and a firm believer in Salvation by Grace.

Brother Guy became disabled and could not live by himself. He was very fortunate to have a dear and compassionate couple (Len and Christine Herndon) to take him into their home and care for him. His condition improved so much, he was able to attend his church regular for several years prior to his death.

The last of November, 1995, his health began to fail and he was admitted to the hospital. He realized his condition was worsening, so he talked with his pastor, when he was visiting him, and told him he would be leaving this world soon. He told his pastor he loved him and loved his church and friends. He passed away shortly after that.

His funeral was conducted at Swicegood Funeral Home, Danville, VA on Saturday, January 6, 1996 and was buried in highland Burial Park, Danville, beside his family to await the coming of his Blessed Savior. His funeral was conducted by his Pastor, Elder Thomas Solomon.

He is greatly missed by his friends and church. We feel our loss

Written by:
Sister Gertie C. Holley, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

SWEET was the time when first I felt
The Saviour's pardoning blood
Applied to cleanse my soul from guilt,
And bring me home to God.

Soon as the morn the light revealed,
His praises tuned my tongue;
And, when the evening shades prevailed,
His love was all my song.

In vain the tempter spread his wiles,
The world no more could charm:
I lived upon my Saviour's smiles,
And leaned upon his arm.

In prayer my soul drew near the Lord,
And saw his glory shine;
And when I read his holy word,
I called each promise mine.

Then to his saints I often spoke
Of what his love had done;
But now my heart is almost broke,
For all my joys are gone.

Now when the evening shade prevails,
My soul in darkness mourns;
And when the morn the light reveals,
No light to me returns.

Mv prayers are now a chattering noise,
For Jesus hides his face !
I read, the promise meets my eyes,
But will not reach my case.

Now Satan threatens to prevail,
And make my soul his prey;
Yet, Lord, thy mercies cannot fail,
O, come without delay !

Newton.

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EDITORIAL

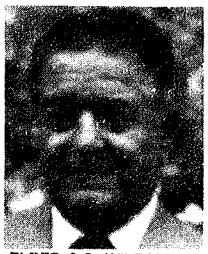
ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your soul. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

The one who spake these words is the same one who said, ***"Let there be light, and there was light":*** the one who said unto his apostles, ***"Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men,"*** and they immediately left all and followed him. Every child of God who has been born again and taught of the Holy Spirit of truth knows this is a commandment, not an invitation as taught by unregenerate men of the world. The world does not know the truth, ***"Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him ; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." John 14:17.*** I do not purpose to cast stones at any one`s religion or beliefs, but only desire to point out errors, and rightly divide the word of truth, using the holy scriptures as the truth, and praying that God will direct my every thought.

There was a time in my early life when I believed this was an invitation to lost sinners, and I tried to persuade others to accept this invitation. I laboured long with them, but I was not heavy laden, for I felt sure that my salvation was secure. There came a time, however, that I was made to see that I was a sinner, perhaps a chief sinner among sinners, and totally lost. That was the time when I truly began to labour and became heavy laden. I sought with all the powers of my mind to find a way, something I might do, to make myself acceptable to God so that he would forgive my sins. I believed that forgiveness of sins was all that was necessary. The more I tried, however, the worse I became. I felt sure that hell was my eternal destiny and that God would be just in his judgment of me. I think I prayed often for relief of the burden that I carried.

Relief did not come suddenly as it has to many others, but there was a gradual awakening, as I hope. Within myself I believe I heard Jesus say, *"Come unto me."* My labours ceased, and I began to cry and beg, for I was made to see that my labours were useless. I had come to the end, and had no place to go but to Christ. Is this the way it was with you? Eventually I was given to see that Jesus had already accomplished what I had laboured so hard to do for myself. I cannot say when I was given a little hope in Christ, as I hope, but on the day that I asked the church for a home with them and was baptized, there was a rejoicing in my soul that I had never experienced before, a rejoicing that was impossible for me to describe. I understood very little, if any, of the doctrine they believed and preached, but I had loved them for a long time. Unworthy as I felt to be among them, I was given a desire to live the rest of my life with them; a desire I could not resist. I was soon tempted to believe that I was deceived and had deceived the brethren. When at meetings I often sat by myself, not wishing to pollute them with my vileness. I still feel unworthy of their fellowship, but as long as they will let me I hope to live with them. I told them of my unworthy feelings and was surprised to learn that they also felt unworthy. Their fellowship became my chief joy. The scripture that says, *"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren,"* took hold upon me, and I greatly rejoiced for some time. Then came doubts and I wondered if I truly loved them, or was deceived. Yet, if the feeling I have in my heart is not true love for them I am totally deceived.

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me." I do not believe any man can of his own power or desire take this yoke upon himself. This is the yoke of Christ, and it is he who must put it on whom he will. When in the flesh a man will resist this yoke, but, *"Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." Rom 8:9.* The yoke of Christ is not put on the natural man, for, *"the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." 1 Cor. 2:14.* Before a man is born again of the Spirit he is yoked together with unbelievers, and he is quite satisfied this way. But when the Spirit is come into his heart and teaches him, he is turned into a new path. The old yoke is broken and a new yoke is put upon him. He knew something about the Lord before. but now he is taught OF him, for the Spirit of Christ must do the teaching.

"For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." I know from experience that a man will resist having this yoke put upon him because of his feeling of unworthiness and fear. He will use every excuse he can find, but finds that none of them avails him any thing; for God hath said, *"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." And, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."* Who can successfully resist the will of God? After being made willing, one finds that the

yoke is indeed easy and the burden light. Why does he find it to be so? Because he is yoked together with Christ,(and not unequally yoked with unbelievers,) and it is he that bears the heavy load, and gives us the strength to bear what we must. Jesus said, ***"Without me ye can do nothing."*** Paul said, ***"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."*** And Job said, ***"But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? What his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him."***

The chosen children of God are the mystical body of Christ, which is his church. Christ is the head of the body and the children are the members of his body. God has set the members every one of them in the body, as it has pleased him, and there must be no schism in the body. One member cannot say to another member, I have no need of thee. Even those who seem to be more feeble are necessary. And on those members, whom we think to be less honourable, we bestow more honour. (See 1 Cor. ch.12.) Every member must perform the work that is laid upon him from above, for God has tempered the body together, that there should be no schism in it; but that we should have the same care one for another. Paul wrote, ***"Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample."*** The things that were laid upon Paul are examples of the things laid upon us. Regardless of what is laid upon us, we must do. As Paul said, ***"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me."***

Beloved brethren, you have found, or will find, as I believe I have, that there is a reward in willingly doing that which is laid upon you. I did not say you would receive a reward for doing it: for the reward or blessing is in doing it. Yea, and it is in righteousness that ye do it, for the work of the Lord is in righteousness. Men of the world may persecute you for righteousness' sake, but, ***"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of God."*** What a holy blessing this is!

Brethren, the works that we do must be of faith, but, ***"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."*** Also, if our works be not of faith, they are dead works. It is said by the world that we must exercise our faith by works, but we find that it is faith that exercises us. What is faith, and how do we obtain it? ***"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." And, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast."*** It is in the finished work of Jesus that we have faith and hope. Jesus said, ***"Verily, verily, I say***

unto you, He that believeth on me,the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to my Father." He said that we shall do the works that he does, not different or greater works than he, but the same works. It is he that does all the works, and the works are made manifest through us, if we believe. How do we believe? ***"Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."*** Christ was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. In all of our afflictions he was afflicted, he carried us all the days of old, and in his love and in his pity he redeemed us. It pleased the LORD to bruise him, to put him to grief and make his soul an offering for sin.(Isa 53rd ch.). Christ was crucified upon the cross of Calvary. He suffered, bled and laid down his life for his people, and "by one offering he hath perfected for ever them who are sanctified." Jude wrote to those who are sanctified, saying, ***"To them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called: Mercy unto you, and peace, and love be multiplied. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints."*** We should study the scriptures and contend for the truth found there as revealed by the Holy Ghost, and not accept what worldly men may teach, regardless of how pleasing and tempting it may sound. This exhortation is needed as much now, or maybe more so, than it was then. If we have been born again of the Holy Spirit there is now two principles within our one body. Paul refers to them as the "old man" and the "new man'. The "old man" has the evil, sinful nature inherited from our federal head Adam, and the "new man" is holy and righteous, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Because of these opposing principles there is a continual war within us, ***"for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that we cannot do the things that we would."*** When we would do good, we find that evil is with us, therefore we cannot find how to do that which is good. Yet we are admonished not to walk after the things of the flesh, for the works of the flesh are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, etc... Against all such things there is a law, but there is no law against the fruits of the Spirit which are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. ***"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."*** We are tempted by the lusts of our flesh daily, but. ***"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able: but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."***

Brethren, let us not yield to the lusts of our flesh, but seek the escape pro-

vided of God through the Spirit. ***"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye thru the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."*** When we are tempted, let us pray, ***"For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."*** What a blessing it is to be able to go to God in prayer in our times of need!

Brethren, rest for our souls is found in Christ Jesus our Lord. When he says, ***"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you,"*** I believe we should and will ask, seek, and find. John said, ***"Beloved, if our hearts condemn us not, then we have confidence in God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things which are pleasing in his sight. And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him and he in him. And we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us."***

Brethren, rest for our souls is in our God given faith that his Holy Spirit now dwells within us, and that he will come again and receive us unto himself, and that we shall hear these precious words from his lips, ***"Come, ye blessed of my Father. inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."***

Brethren, I have not written the things that I had purposed to write before I began, but I have written the things that have come to mind, and I hope and trust they have been given from above. May he bless the truth herein, and pardon my errors. Praise God's holy name, and pray for this poor sinner when blessed to be at his throne of grace.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

Route 1, Box 101
Willis, VA 24380
June 3, 1996

Dear Elder Williams:

It is again time to renew my subscription to "The Signs of the Times". Please renew for two years and use the remainder where needed.

I look forward to getting my "Signs" each month. I enjoy the correspondence of the brethren and wish more people would write.

Although I am afflicted with MS and am steadily getting more disabled I feel, yet, to be richly blessed. God blesses me from time to time to think on Him and Heavenly things. He gives

me a heart to be thankful that things are as well with me as they are.

I need your prayers and the prayers of the brethren everywhere.

A sister in hope,
Margaret H. Quesenberry

ARTICLES

GENESIS - CHAPTER 1, VERSE 31.

"And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day."

Now, there are at least two, different interpretations, of what God meant, in the above quoted Scripture; and especially, in those words, - (and, behold, it was very good.) Now, if God's will, let us prayerfully consider, those two different interpretations, while particular noticing, those words used, by both groups of people; who differ so greatly, in their interpretations, or beliefs; - First, let us hear, some of those words or sayings, used, by those whom we refer too, as the worldly religionist; who profess to believe that; God is in dire need, of mans help, in His efforts, to save the souls of all mankind, whom He loved them every one. Therefore, if we are to assume, that the grouping of their words, has meaning; it would seem that, there is but one conclusion to arrive at; and that being thusly; they interpret His words, - (very good), in the above quoted verse; as, applying to man himself, as being very good; and even so, following after, Adam and Eve had transgressed God's Holy Law. Of which, would amount to no less than their denial of God's word, when He said, - Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated; when neither of them had as yet been born, to know good or evil. Also, a denial of God's word, when He said, - He had chosen His people, through His Son, out of the world; and that, from before the foundation of the world. Also, a denial of the function or working, of God the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit. And a denial of the Almighty power and preeminence, of the very Holy and Righteous God Himself; and of His every word of Holy truth. And further - more is; a denial of what the Holy word sayeth, concerning, why Christ the Lord did come into this world FOR; and DID accomplish, while He were here; and, in Holy truth is, a denial of that very Holy true Principal; wherein lieth every pure meaning, of every Holy word, ever spoken or inspired, by the three-in-one God; God the Father, God the Son or word, and God the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit.

Now, let us take notice of that other, but smaller, group, and of what they profess, practice, walk and speak; as God may be pleased so to enable them. Now this smaller group, are known, amongst themselves; as, Old School, or Primitive Baptist, or Predestinarian Baptist; of which mean one and the same thing, in principal of doctrine; wherein does embrace (first

of all) that, God is, ever was, and ever will be, the One and only Almighty, Self existent, all in all, infinite God; of all knowledge, wisdom, truth, Holiness and Righteousness; who is full of, never depleting grace and mercy; of which, He has and does, shed upon His children; whom He chose for Himself; from before the foundation of the world. That in Him, is truth and life and light eternally. That He is the Creator, and Dispenser, of all things outside Himself; just as His pleasure is; to either sustain, keep for Himself; or destroy; and that, He does hold it all in His hand, to do with, as His pleasure so to do. That He holds and controls all power, both in heaven and earth, and that none can stay His hand or say what doeth Thou. That His infinite wisdom and knowledge, is limitless, and eternally in His presence; and so, therein is absolute assurance; that, whatsoever He now knoweth; He has ever known; and therefore, there is no new thing, for Him to ever become aware of; and so, making it impossible, that He ever be surprised. That His allotted time for this world to stand, be in ten thousand, a hundred thousand, or a million or more years; yet, it is but a day, within an everlasting eternity, with God. For He is the eternal God, without beginning or ending; He never sleeps, and His eyes see all things, at all times, and eternally has; and so, there can come no new thing, with Him. He has forever, clearly seen, and fully known, every scintilla, of all, what does ever be or take place, in all time and eternity. He is everywhere present, and no where absent; He covers all the limitless universe; and yet, He inters the very heart and soul, of His little children. He is in need of nothing, for He has all things in His hands, to do with as He pleases; and so, mankind, has nothing of his own, to offer him; of which, He would not accept; if offered; for all that man handles is filthy; and furthermore; God will accept no thing or nothing, what He Himself did not prepare, in its entirety. God is the Giver, of every good and perfect gift, unto His Chosen people. May we be kept mindful; it is "God," and not man; to look to, for our every good and perfect gift. Even though, we receive a good gift through a man; yet still, may we be reminded that, that man was given the mind and desire, to do that very thing. It may be well, to thank that man; but, keeping in mind, God is the one, who brought it all into being; and so, is worthy of all honor and praise. I am reminded of, - Praise God, from whom all blessings flow, Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host, Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. (704 in Lloyd's Hymn book.) Of which wordings, have many times, coincided with my own feelings; and with a desire, that I might be enabled to, in Holy truth, do as those words say. But I readily confess to this truth, - without God, I can do nothing; not ever naturally; much less Spiritually. For of my own fleshly self, I am just a poor self-helpless sinner; and in that state of being, I know nothing as I aught. but feel that surely, the Lord has done for me; that, which is impossible with man; For I feel, I was shown enough,

of what the carnal fleshly man consists of; that I just simply must not, place my confidence in the flesh of man; and especially that of my own self. Therefore, to my feelings; that good and very good, recorded in Genesis 1:31, was and is, - that very good "God" accomplished, in His work of creating and making all things, in exact accord with His will, purpose and pleasure.

It is within the bound of my hope, I could be one among His little children; I say, Dear Brethren in the Lord; do with this writing, as your mind leads you; and all will be well.

Troy G. Shepard
103 East Tateway Rd.
Kitty Hawk, N.C. 27949

"MY LITTLE HOPE"

My desire is, if the Lord directs me,
To pen a few lines, that you may see,
How He who suffered bled and died,
Heard when my heart so piteously cried.

"O Lord Jesus", I could only say,
"Have mercy, or I must die".
Soon I that awful debt must pay,
with none to hear my wailing cry."

This prayer for many a day was mine,
While not one ray of light did shine;
"O Lord I am a sinner great,
But surely, surely I have a mate."

"Did deliverance then come?," you say;
No! No! there was a sad delay;
For I must yet realize that state
When I should feel to have no mate.

And soon, yes soon, this hour came,
"A greater sinner, Lord, I can not name;
"Reveal thyself to me, I pray,
Or in this world I can not stay."

When I arose and looked above,
I saw a large and lovely face;
Then all within my heart was love,
I then did feel His pardoning grace.

My burden at once was taken away,
My song was changed to praise;
"Oh! now I feel I can truly say,
Jesus has died my poor soul to raise."

Before this a desire to go to the church I'd had,
Even while my burden was so heavy and sad;
But knowing I wasn't fit nor ready to go,
I resolutely said to myself, "No! no!

To some extent this impression passed away.
After I felt Jesus was my head and stay;
Oh! surely this was enough for a while.
To have a sweet hope that I was a child.

But once again came the desire of my heart,
To go to the church and tell them a part,

Of what I hope the Lord had done for my soul,
Asking with those dear ones to be enrolled.

Though feeling so little, so unworthy so weak,
I found myself in the pulpit trying to speak;
There among the friends I felt to love best,
Seeking a place in that warm nest.

The vote was taken, I was received,
Ah! how my heart was then relieved;
Yet one thing none my soul did crave,
That I might be buried in the liquid grave.

In August 1922, on a very beautiful day,
Beneath the waves our pastor my form did lay,
Oh, when I was raised, I was carried so high,
Was ever a mortal so happy as I!

Now, Brethren sisters and friends,
One I loved this feeble call;
As on it's journey time trends,
If it be God's will, may He bless you all.

I ask an interest in the prayers of all,
That my race I may well run;
In behalf, dear ones, to Him please call,
Of your little sister, Ethel Jefferson.

Ethel Jefferson.

BAPTISM

I, being burdened for sometime past, attempt to pen a few words at last, on the sacred burial in the liquid grave, 'Tis sweet and good but does not save.

One graved example I now behold, Jesus meeting John where great Jordan rolled; There demanding baptism He who was sinless.

"For it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness."

Then John into the water our Saviour led, Baptized Him, who coming out straightway, Rec'd the Spirit, as a dove, upon His head, "I am well pleased a voice was heard to say.

The water baptism doesn't save us at all, Salvation's by Jesus to all whom He will call. We must be baptized by fire and the Holy Ghost. None of our works save us lest any man should boast.

Baptism, by and of the called of God, Is a very lovely and sacred view to me, It manifests a death to the joys of this sinful clod,

An answer toward God of a conscience that's free.

Composed by,
Ethel Jefferson,
Elawsville, Va.

This was printed in Zion's Landmark in 1924.

VOICES OF THE PAST

MEDITATIONS ON THE TEMPLE OF SOLOMON

For sometime I have had a mind to write on the scriptures at the head of this article, but as I have said many times, that if preaching or writing is profitable to the household of faith, it must first be taught in our experience, by the Son of God, and then revealed, or brought to our remembrance by the Holy Ghost. Jno. 14:26.

When someone is talking or writing about a great person he is very apt to inquire in his mind, who is this man? Where did he come from? Who was his father and mother? Where did his ancestors come from? In answer to some of the above questions, may I add that according to Holy writ, Solomon was the son of David who was king of Israel; his mother was Eliam's daughter and the wife of Uraih the Hittite. It may be of interest to the readers to know that David had Uriah put in the forefront of the battle, so that he was smitten. Then David took Uriah's wife to be his wife, and she was Solomon's mother. His grandfather was named Jesse, and his ancestors were of this same notable family Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

I have regarded Solomon, in many respects, as being a type of Christ. First, he possessed more wisdom than any other man, and if my memory serves correctly we are told that none shall come after him that is as wise as he. Second, he was a kind and gentle ruler over all of Israel, and rendered just and righteous decisions before the people.

"In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, ask what I shall give thee." 1 Kgs. 3:5. Solomon prayed to God to "Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart, to judge thy people, that I may discern between the good and bad; for who is able to judge this thy so great a people." "And the speech pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this thing." So the Lord did not only give him wisdom, but riches and honor also.

When I was a boy I read this scripture and I thought that it was a matter of choice for which he could ask. (Of course it was a matter of choice, but not in the sense which I thought). I had an idea he could ask for riches, wisdom, honor or anything of his own choosing. In other words, I thought it was about like this: if I should go to town and buy several presents and say to my little girl take any one that you want, and in all probability, I would not know which one she would take before she made her selection. I also thought that I certainly would have asked for riches, then I could discharge all my obligations and probably give a little to the poor, but make sure that I would reserve a sufficient amount for future use, and there is but little doubt in my mind but that Solomon would have asked for riches had be been possessed with a carnal mind at the time.

But ah! How different do I look at the scene now. Does God ever put the burden of prayer in your heart, before He first makes you feel the need of the thing that he purposes to give you? Can we pray for mercy before we feel the need of mercy? Can we pray for help before we feel the need of help? Solomon felt the need of wisdom more than anything else, for he was now beginning to reign in the place of the father David, and he was conscious of the fact that many perplexing problems would arise among the people, which would require the guiding hand of God; therefore, he said, ***"Give thy servant an understanding heart, to judge thy people that I may discern between the good and bad."***

Dear servants of God, have you not had the same experience as Solomon did, many times in your feeble efforts in serving as a servant among the people of God? I know that my dear wife and I have felt this to a great extent in our family circle, in the rearing of our children.

Before I was married I thought that I knew all about rearing children, and I had a fixed rule in my mind that I would follow, which was something like this. If I ever married a wife and any children were born in our family, I would use the lash in making any corrections, but ah! how mistaken I was. May I say that if your child knows nothing but the rod of correction laid on his or her back every time he does something wrong, you have a poorly brought up child, for I have learned by experience that it takes a great deal of patience, kindness and teaching, mixed with firmness, to get the proper respect and confidence of our children in order that they may obey from a standpoint of love rather than fear.

When our boys grew up into the teen age, they would come around and say, ***"Father, I want your car to go to a ball game, picture show or some worldly amusement."*** My preference was that they be content not to go, but I began to realize that I was once a boy and I enjoyed parties and dances and I wanted them to have reasonable privileges with other boys, lest they think that their mother and I were too strict on them. But the great problem was this; when they repeated this request, which I thought, was too often, shall I say yes, or shall I say no, and for fear that I was not in the frame of mind to make a proper decision I would say, go and ask your mother, and she would say, go back and ask your father. We have often been brought into a great strait in making up our minds, and many times we said, ***"Oh, Lord, decide this matter for us, that we may train our children up in the way that they should go that when they get old they will not depart from it."*** The same has been true regarding our girls.

One notable circumstance which was brought before King Solomon was the case of two women who lived in the same house and each gave birth to a child about three days apart. One of the women overlaid her child and it died. About the midnight hour she laid the dead baby in the bed of the other woman and took the living child and

claimed it as her own; the other woman awoke in the morning to give her child suck, and upon finding that she had been defrauded of her child she made complaint to the other woman that the living child was hers; but the other contended that the living child was hers. In as much as they could not settle the matter they brought the case before the highest tribunal on earth. So Solomon heard the testimony of each, both testifying that the living child was hers. No other witnesses were present, which of course made it much harder to decide. I am sure that nothing short of divine wisdom could render a righteous verdict in this case. May I repeat again that King Solomon had prayed and said, ***"Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart that I may judge between the good and the bad."*** He said to his servant ***"Bring me a sword,"*** which they did, and the King said, ***"Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one and half to the other, then spake the woman whose the living child was unto the king, for her bowels yearned upon her son, and she said, O my Lord, give her the living child and in no wise slay it. But the other said, let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it. Then the king answered and said, Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. She is the mother thereof." 1 Kings 3:25-27.***

This one decision was published abroad throughout the land, and the people feared him, for they saw that the hand of God was with him. The vast number of horses and chariots, and the great number of beasts that were slain each day to satisfy the hunger of those of his household, and the men servants and maid servants that were in attendance at his command, are beautiful types of the bountiful storehouse of our Great Emanuel, who sits upon His throne and metes out justice and mercy to all of his poor, hungry, and tempest tossed children. As Solomon was Governor over all of Israel who would say that God does not govern the universe, from the huge monsters down to the smallest insect. For He has said in His word that ***"The heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool. For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains and the wild beast of the fields are mine. If I were hungry I would not tell thee: for the world is mine and the fulness thereof." Psa. 50: 10-12.*** But ah! before we can fully realize the truth of this we have to be brought down from our throne of self-works and self-righteousness, then we can appreciate the true value of this inspired word. When the great King Nebuchadnezzar was dismounted from his throne and was made to eat grass like oxen ***"and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, until his hairs were grown like eagle feathers and his nails like birds' claws." Dan. 5:33.*** Then he could say with a true and understanding heart that ***"all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, and He, God, doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants***

of the earth and none can stay his hand or say unto him what doest thou?" Dan. 4:35.

I can appreciate and sympathize with our brethren when they get in a low state, and the Lord seems to hide His face. We see so many of the dear fathers and mothers passing out and so few joining the church to fill the vacancies. We often wonder and feel that we have been remiss in our duty. Such has been my own feeling many times. When we are brought to this low ebb, and darkness enshrouds our souls it is then that Satan makes his worst attacks, but when the day dawns and we are again illuminated by the Holy Spirit, the evil one flees like the darkness before the beaming sun. And as these Temanites were a great pest in the life of Job, you may be sure that they will pester you. How good it is to remember the words of the inspired apostle which was directed by the Holy Ghost, *"and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Acts 2:47.*

The eagle is a faint type of the church and I would not say that during her molting season that she is entirely free from her prey, but when she feathers out she soars high above the clouds. The old prophet Elias, was reduced to a low state when he made intercession to God against Israel saying, *"Lord they have killed thy prophets and digged down thine alters! and I am left alone, and they seek my life."* But what saith God unto him? *"I have reserved to myself seven thousand men who have not bowed their knee to the image of Baal."* And the Apostle Paul referred to this and said, *"Even so then at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace." Rom. 11:5.* Jesus said, *"Fear not,* little flock; *for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Luke 12: 32.*

I will now attempt, if God is willing to explain what I see in the scripture at the head of this article. *"Wisdom has builded her house."* The house which Solomon built was to my mind a type of the heavenly Church which the Lord has or is building, for He said, *"And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Matt. 16:18.*

This house was not so large, according to the dimensions, but it was an expensive one. It took one hundred fifty-three thousand and three hundred men, seven years to build it. Cedar and stone were the principle materials that were used in the construction of this building. Cedar is a highly typical material, because of its long life and preserving qualities. It kept the moths out, and the stones made it burglar proof, which compares favorably to the language of Jesus. *"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth or rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal." Matt. 6: 19-20.*

These trees were hewn out chiefly by the servants of Hiram from the cedars of Lebanon. Each piece of material was so minutely dressed out, we are told that *"neither hammers nor ax, not any tool of iron was heard in the house, while it was in building." 1 Kgs. 6:7.* As the type so is the reality, when the Lord began His work you were in the forest of nature. *"And were by nature the children of wrath even as others." Eph. 2:3.* He first cut you down, and each stroke was indeed necessary, in order to hew off the roughage, straighten you out and make you fit meat for the Master's use. The reader may inquire, "Have I been properly dressed out?" I have said that this is a fairly good rule by which to tell. If we are back-biting, fault-finding, contending about trifling things, and striving about words of no profit, among and with our brethren, it is good evidence that a few more knots need to be slabbed off, which God alone can do.

Long before you united with the church you may have thought that there were certain members on the inside you could not fellowship, but ah! how different when you were carried there on the wings of God's love. There was then no thought in your mind of "Who can I fellowship," but the great wonder now is, who can fellowship me? How good if we could always be possessed with this spirit.

Several years ago I had an appointment at a church during the week. Upon approaching the ground, several brethren gathered around me and said, "Brother Adams, there is a man here that we want you to encourage to unite with the church. I said, "What is his reason for staying out." They said that he stated that there was a member that he could not fellowship. My reply was, "You had better let him alone until God completes His wok with the hewing ax." About two years later, the unworthy writer was present when his brother came pleading for a home and was happily received into the fold.

It will be noticed that when these timbers were hewn out that they were floated to Joppa by way of the sea. The word "sea" often when used in the scriptures signifies trouble. We see the waves and billows as they roll to the shore. David said, *"All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." Psa. 42:7.* Dear child of God, have you ever felt any of those waves and billows come over you, while you are floating by the way of the sea? If so, be not discouraged, for our God has spoken by the mouth of His Apostles and said, *"We must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God." Acts 14:22.* The materials that were used in the construction of this building was not dead, rotten or decayed materials. They were sound and seasoned materials. So is the Church of God. She is built out of living materials, living by reason of Christ who lives in her. Peter said, *"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ," 1 Pet. 2:5.* Which is in harmony with the testimony of the Apostle Paul, *"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ*

himself, being the chief corner stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." Eph. 2:20-21.

Elder T.F. Adams

Sent in by Sister A.E. Hailinger

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION

Our Standard Lexicon defines absolute to mean, in its literal, or general sense, free, independent of anything extraneous. 2. Complete it itself; positive, as an absolute declaration. 3. Unconditional; as an absolute promise. 4. Existing independent of another cause; as, God is absolute. 5. Unlimited by extraneous power or control; as an absolute government or prince. 6. Not relative; as absolute space. See Webster's definition. As this word is nowhere used in the Scriptures to qualify the word Predestination, we will not contend for it, especially as the word predestination when rightly understood needs no such qualification, as it cannot be otherwise than absolute. We merely use the word absolute to distinguish our views of predestination from those who, while they admit that the term is frequently used in the Scriptures, deny its plain and obvious meaning, as though it were only vaguely used by the inspired writers, without any positive or unequivocal meaning.

On the signification of the word predestination, our brother is correct; it means foreordination by an unchangeable purpose. But the grand question on which we are principally at issue, is, whether the predestination of God extends to the wicked actions of men or devils. We have rejoiced greatly in the firm belief, that God's government is universal, that there is not a sparrow or a worm, but is found in his decree. That sin, and death, and hell are under his control, so that the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain. If the Scriptures do not authorize us so to believe, we know not at what hour we may fall a prey to the unbridled rage of the enemies of God and of his people. If the divine government of Jehovah only extends to the good conduct of his creatures, his government is much more limited in regard to this world, than we had supposed, for he has informed us that there is none that doeth good; no not one. But that he has set limits to the wicked men, we should infer from his declaration, "I have formed the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and bringeth forth an instrument for his work; I have created the waster to destroy. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that riseth against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." - Isa. liv. 16, 17. If God has created the smith, and the waster, to destroy, and so limited their operations that they cannot go beyond his decree, and if this is a part of the heritage of his servants, they cannot yield it without marring their inheritance. We confess that to us this part

of the saints' inheritance is too valuable to be sold for a mess of pottage. Paul has said, that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; and God has told us, by the mouth of Isaiah, that he has declared the end from the beginning, &c., "saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravening bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass, I have purposed it, I will also do it." How unmeaning would all this language be to us in the absence of predestination! The end declared from the beginning, and yet not determined in the mind or purpose of God, how preposterous! We cannot believe that our God would declare a thing beforehand that he was undecided upon, and which might be quite different from what he had declared; and if he has only declared what he had determined on, that is the most absolute predestination that we have any knowledge of. This predetermination of events extends throughout all the intervening space, from the beginning to the end, and consequently embraces all things. When wicked men conspired against the life and liberty of Joseph, and against the predestination of his and their own destiny, as signified by Joseph's dreams, they intended evil, but God intended all for good. If God had not previously intended to harden Pharaoh's heart, he would not have told Moses that he would do so. If he had not predestinated that the children of Israel should sojourn in a strange land, and be afflicted by the Egyptians four hundred years, he certainly would not have told Abram so; read Gen. xv. 12-16. Let it be remembered that God told Abram this long before either the children of Israel or the Egyptians, who were to be concerned in it, were born, and the things which the Egyptians were to do to the children of Israel were such, as God told Abram he would judge and punish them for.

The Son of God was delivered into the hands of wicked men, that they should, with wicked hands, do to him what God's hand and counsel had before determined to be done. He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.

Paul writes to the Thessalonians concerning the manifestation of that wicked people, whom the Lord would destroy, and says,

God will send them strong delusions that they may believe a lie, that all may be damned, &c. God said by the mouth of Isaiah, that he would choose their delusions. This is solid Bible testimony, and it is what he intended to express by the words absolute predestination. And pray brother, what objection have you to it? Would you wish the right, the power, or the government of God to be circumscribed? Would you wish to restrict his government, and confine his dominion to good people and their good works and leave the powers of darkness to rage at random, without the restraint of God's predestinating decrees? Are you fearful that this view reflects upon the purity and holiness of God? But why these fears? Are not

the inspired Scriptures sufficiently guarded to secure the honor of their supreme Author? If not, all our attempts to supply the supposed deficiency, will be as vain, if not as presumptive, as Uzzah's attempt to protect the ark of God. Because God controls, restrains, overrules and disposes of all beings, and all events, precisely as he eternally designed to do, it does not by all means follow that he is the fountain from whence impurity proceeds. He is perfectly holy, just and good; but he has all power to set bounds and limits to that which is unholy, unjust and wicked. If it be admitted that God now has power to restrain the wickedness of men and devils, according to his sovereign pleasure, and that he is immutable, then it follows, that he always had that power. If it be denied that he has that power, where is the safety of his church? Of if he has now a perfect knowledge of all beings and of all events, then he must always have had that knowledge. It certainly does not become us to say that either his wisdom, holiness, prescience or power, are at fault, that he has allowed his creatures to rebel against his government, when he had power and wisdom enough to have prevented it, if it had been his pleasure so to have done. We do not charge our brother, nor those brethren who are associated with him, with attempting to limit Jehovah, or set bounds for him to be governed by, but we would give and take the admonition, *"Be still and know that he is God."* If we cannot comprehend him, it still is our privilege to confide in him, for he is too wise to err, and too good to do that which is wrong.

We have no disposition to press our views on those who do not understand the Scriptures as we do, on every subject. But we wish all our readers to understand that we do as firmly believe, and as greatly rejoice in the doctrine of Predestination, and its extension to everything in heaven, earth and hell, as we do in any other part of divine revelation.

Middletown, N.Y., July 1, 1855

Elder Gilbert Beebe

" My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him. —PSALM lxii. 5.

I BELIEVE that the Lord, before he ever communicates a real blessing to the souls of his poor and needy children, not merely convinces them by the Spirit of the depth of their poverty, of their truly ruined and lost state by nature, of the destitution of everything good in them; but he opens their eyes in a mysterious manner to see certain blessings which are stored up in Christ; for instance, righteousness to cover their nakedness, blood to atone for their transgressions, grace to superabound over all the aboundings of sin, faith to be the evidence of things not seen, hope to anchor within the veil, and love to be a foretaste of eternal bliss. These and similar blessings the Lord presents before their eyes, and gives them a spiritual understanding that these mercies are stored up in Christ; and as he gives them this perception

of what the blessing is, and shews them that these blessings are not in the creature, but in Christ, he draws forth the desires and sighs and ardent affections of their souls after these blessings so that nothing but these special mercies can really satisfy them, ease their minds, assuage their troubles, bind up their wounds, and pour oil and wine into their conscience. And thus he brings them to be suppliants, he lays them at his feet as beggars. Yet, base though they feel themselves to be, black though they know they are, there is that mysterious attraction of the Spirit, as well as that mysterious fitting together of their poverty and Christ's righteousness, their nakedness and Christ's justifying robe, their helplessness and his almighty strength, that they never can be satisfied, unless an experienced and enjoyed union of the two takes place in their conscience.

"In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."–EPHESIANS ii. 22.

THESE words will apply both to the whole body of Christ viewed collectively, and to each separate member of that body viewed individually; and what the Church of God is in its completeness in Christ, as it will be in heaven above, and what it is in its visible and militant state on earth now, so is every individual member of that Church in this time state; and it is this solemn truth which makes the words before us to have such a forcible application to every individual believer. As we shall all have to answer for ourselves, " to die," as one said, "alone," and as religion is a personal matter, how careful should it make each individual believer so to walk before God and man that he may have both an inward and outward evidence that his body is the temple of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. vi. 19), and that he is a habitation of God by the Spirit. If he realises this, and lives under its solemn weight and influence, how careful he will be not to defile that body which is the temple of the Holy Ghost; how desirous and anxious not to defile his eyes by wandering lusts, nor his ears by listening to worldly and carnal conversation, nor his lips by speaking guile, or indulging in light and frothy talk, nor his hands by putting them to anything that is evil, nor his feet by running on errands of vanity and folly, but to view his body as a member of Christ (1 Cor. vi. 15), and therefore sanctified to his service and to his glory.

J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Pigg River Association will convene the Lord willing; with Little Hope Church; as the host church. The meeting place will be at Republican Church in Franklin County, to begin on Friday before the first Sunday in August. (Aug. 2nd, 3rd & 4th).

Those coming from the south: go 220 North; from Bassett Forks go 8 miles. Turn left on state road 605 (a blinker light designating a sharp curve). Go 9 miles (as a marker, go past Town Creek Church) stay on the Henry Road, turn

right on 778 - go 2 miles. Church on right.

From the north: go route 40 west to Ferrum exit on Fieldcrest Road - go 100 yards - cross railroad tracks, bear right - you will be on route 623 - (Ingramville Rd.); turn left on rout 778- church will be on left.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

Elder Lane Carter, Moderator
Jamie E. Cooper, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 1996

Burnell Williams, VA 2.00
Ms. Tina Walker, MS 7.00
Mrs. Doloris Weatherford, VA 2.00
Hoyt Sparks, Overseas 35.00
Gene H. Lupton, VA 7.00
Richard Stegall, VA 2.00
Claudis Tucker, LA 2.00
Charlie Alston, NC 2.00
Mrs. Betty H. Lovitte, NC 2.00
Mrs. Emma Mitchell, VA 7.00
Mrs. Edrie Clifton, VA 2.00
Eld. Fred Neikirk, FL 2.00
Whitney Mobley, NC 10.00
Mrs. Patsy Mitchell, TX 2.00
Mr. & Mrs. J.B. Neely, AR 2.00
L.D. Goard, VA 4.00
J.E. Fortner, TX 7.00
Raymond Clayton, KY 10.00
Woodrow W. Abshire, VA 7.00
Eld. Tom Solomon, VA 2.00

FOR APRIL 1996

Mrs. Carmen Abernathy, NC 7.00
Mr. & Mrs. B.W. Wade, WV 2.00
Lynn C. Kendrick, VA 14.00
Mrs. M.M. Richardson, MS 7.00
Mrs. Edith Sewell, FL 2.00
Bill G. Clinton, CA 5.00
Mrs. Flora C. Vest, VA 2.00
Mrs. Nannie A. Carter, NC 2.00
Billy Weatherford, VA 2.00
John Collie, NC 2.00
Eld. W.T. Conner, VA 7.00
Hassell Allen, NC 5.00
William & Nancy Pullig, LA 7.00
Dale Haygood, TX 32.00
Mrs. Joe L. Hamrick, TX 2.00
Mrs. Odell Anderson, LA 7.00
Mrs. Marjorie Cook, ... TN
In memory of Mrs. Lucille Young 25.00
John M. McCullar, TX 7.00
Mrs. H.R. Toney, MS 7.00

OBITUARIES

BROTHER ALPHA ADAMS

Again we bow in humble submission to God's will in removing from our midst another lovely member Bro. Alpha Adams. Malmaison Church, our sister churches and associations will greatly miss his faithful attendance.

He had remarked that he hoped he would be able to go to church as long as he lived. God granted him this blessing. He attended meeting on Sunday before he was hospitalized on Thursday and Saturday night he passed away. God graciously relieved

him of the struggle to breathe, For several mouths he had to carry an oxygen tank with him.

Bro. Alpha had told the ministers that he wanted to conduct his funeral to tell the people what he believed. The Lord certainly blessed each one to preach the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace, giving God all honor and praise.

When the preaching service was over we sang one of his favorite hymns "How Great Thou Art" I could have almost shouted praises to His Holy name and thought how appropriate this song was after such able sermons. I believe Bro. Alpha would have said amen and amen.

Our brother was blessed to willingly support the church and left her a generous donation in his will. All these things are evidence to me of his love and devotion for his church.

Bro. Adams was born in Pittsylvania County, Va. August 11, 1920 and departed this life Dec. 23, 1995. He united with Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church along with his wife Sis. Maria Adams Sept. 1983.

Survivors include his wife, 3 sisters and 1 brother. Funeral services were held at Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Home, North Main Chapel by Elder Julian Williams (his pastor) and by Elders C.B. Davis, Jr. and Raymond Goad.

He was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park to await the glorious resurrection of the saints of God. May God give us reconciling grace to say "Thou will be done".

Written by one who loved him,
I trust for Christ's sake.
Peggy Wells

SISTER VILMA GARNER RHUE

In sadness I attempt to write of Sister Vilma Garner Rhue who died February 5, 1996, after an extended illness. She was the daughter of Irvin S. and Pearlie McCain Garner of Newport, N.C. and was eighty - five years of age. She was preceded in death by her husband Elder Jabez Rhue. Elder Jabez and Sister Vilma joined Hadnot Primitive Baptist Church at September Quarterly Meeting in 1948. She served as clerk from 1957. Sister Rhue owned and operated Swansboro Beauty Shop from 1950 to 1970. Elder and Sister Rhue traveled extensively throughout the United States and also visited Canada and Europe, meeting with the brethren whenever possible. They enjoyed having company from the church and always made everyone welcome. She was blessed with a loving family who did everything humanly possible for her comfort.

Survivors include three daughters Agnes Burton of Cape Carteret, N.C. Melba Tripp of Greenville, N.C. and Barbara Cunningham of Morehead City, N.C., two sons, Reginald Rhue of Cape Carteret, N.C. and Joseph Rhue of New Bern, N.C., a sister Mrs. Nell Edwards of Newport, N.C., nine grand children and one great grand child.

Her funeral was held at Munden Funeral Home in Morehead City, N.C. conducted by her pastor, Elder J.T. Prescott and Elder Marvin Brumfield. Burial was in Gethsemane Cemetery.

The many floral arrangements and monetary contributions to her home

church attested to the love and esteem in which she and her family were held. We miss her but would not wish her back in this world of suffering. Written and submitted by a sister, I hope.

Leola Bright

SISTER MARY SHORT SAMUELS

It pleased our Lord to call home Sister Mary Short Samuels. Sister Samuels was born October 2,1908 and she passed from this life October 29, 1995. She was a daughter of John H. Short and Hester Dalton Short. She was married to Walter Jack Samuels, who predeceased her.

Sister Samuels was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by experience and baptism September 14,1952. Sister Samuels was a faithful member-she always seemed to enjoy the fellowship of the Brethren. She will be sadly missed by all who knew and loved her.

She is survived by one sister, Virginia S. Shelton of Gretna, Va.

Fannie S. Rowland and Ora S. Doss-two brothers; Jehue Short and C. H. Short.

Her funeral was conducted at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church by Elders Marvin Brumfield and Raymond Goad. Her body was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park, to wait to coning of our Savior.

Written in Love and Hope,

Carol R. Pickral

Elder Marvin Brumfield, Moderator

Oscar D. Pickral, Clerk

SISTER EMMA SOMERS

Sister Emma Stanley Somers was called home by the Lord on March 12, 1995. Her funeral service was held at Dan River Primitive Church by her pastor, Elder Kenneth Key, on March 17, 1995. She was born April 18, 1900 in Rockingham County to the late Felix Edward and Sally Bell Hubbard Stanley. She was preceded in death by her husband, Brother Jesse Robert Somers, and her son, William Edgar Somers. Survivors include two daughters, Lillie Mae Hiatt of Statesville, and Mary Ruth Lee of Eden, nine grandchildren, eleven great-grandchildren, and two great-great-grandchildren.

Brother Kenneth's choice of the scripture, Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her." found in Proverbs 31:10,27-28, was most fitting in the funeral service of our grandmother. The Lord blessed her to live her life in such a way that she always put her church, her brethren, and her family above herself.

She asked for a home in the church on July 7, 1929 and was later baptized by her former pastor, Elder David Spangler. The words of her grandson, Steve, best describe her life after that: "After God's light shined in her heart, she never looked back. Her faith was tried over and over again, but it never failed. She was always watching over others, to sacrifice of herself, for them.

Everyone, who knew her, can recount without hesitation the godliness that she possessed and that her life exemplified.

Her life was one of a virtuous woman through her Savior who dwelt in her. She did not eat of the bread of idleness, and she so unselfishly cared for those she loved for as long as she was able. Her joy was to have the brethren visit in her home, which was always a place of warmth and love both to her spiritual and her natural families. Thoughts of her bring to mind the scripture, Isaiah 40:31, ***"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."***

My grandmother would never have wished to be eulogized, and I would never wish to do so. She was a very special lady to me, an inspiration, and an example of one in whom Christ dwelt. She was a blessing to my natural family and to me, unworthy though I am, in our spiritual relationship. We all miss her so very much. The following are some thoughts shared by her grandson and my natural brother, Steve, which describe what she meant to us:

"A few years ago, one of her grandsons was having a heart attack. While in the emergency room, aware of his condition, he was naturally frightened. After first having the natural feeling, he smelled the smoke from his grandma's cook stove, and knew that God was with him.

We feel that our cup ran over, when God blessed us with Granny and Papa Somers. Our love for them is best explained in the book of Ruth 1:16-17: ***"And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest, will I die; and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me and more also, if ought but death part thee and me."***

We were totally helpless the last week of Granny's life while she was hospitalized. We prayed that she knew we were there and that we loved her with all our hearts. Our hearts are comforted in knowing God's promise that he would never leave her, and that he would be with her always, even until the end."

The first two lines of one of her favorite hymns, ***"O when shall I see Jesus, And reign with him above,"*** describe her feelings in her latter years. We feel she can say with Paul in 2 Timothy 4:7-8, ***"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."*** May the Lord comfort all of us who feel such a loss and grant us grace to accept his will and in all things may the Lord be praised.

Humbly submitted by her granddaughter and one who loved her so very much,

Mary Hawkins

SISTER LAURA LEWIS WOLF

Sister Laura Lewis Wolf was born October 8, 1911 in Rooseville County, New Mexico (near Clovis, New Mexico) to the home of Ina and T.D. Lewis. It pleased our Heavenly Father to call Sis. Wolf from the walks of this life on December 8, 1993 in a Portales hospital.

She was reared in Clovis, New Mexico and was blessed to have Primitive Baptist parents. She graduated from Clovis High School in 1929, she also attended business college in Waco, Texas.

On November 4, 1935 she was united in marriage to the late Elder Reggie R. Wolf. To this union one son was born.

They lived in Colorado and Oregon most of their married life. After her husband retired they moved back to New Mexico settling in Mountainair. In the early eighties she lost both her husband and son.

She soon moved to Clovis, New Mexico to live with one of her sisters, later to a retirement at Portales.

She joined the Little Flock Primitive Baptist Church, Altus, Oklahoma in May 1987 and remained a faithful member as long as health permitted; traveling many miles by bus to church. It was surely a long and trying trip. Sister Wolf was a firm believer in the doctrine of grace. Between those long trips and not getting to come to Church she was blessed to have many sermons of Elder Spangler, Lambert and many other ministers to turn to for comfort.

Surely we can say with David, Psalms 34:19, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." Sister Laura surely was one of the righteous and one of many afflictions along the way, but we must say we truly believe she is now asleep in Jesus awaiting His second coming.

She was laid to rest in Mission Garden Memories, Clovis, New Mexico.

She is survived by two sisters, Eva Crumley of Clovis and Elsie Stroud of Portales, several nieces, nephews and her church family and friends.

Her funeral service was conducted by her pastor, Elder C.M. Haygood.

It was requested that a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times, to her sisters and a copy be placed in the Church records.

Written in love for my dear sister-in-law,
Elder C.M. Haygood

PSALM 4: 4-8.

Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.

Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the Lord.

There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? Lord, life thou up they light of thy countenance upon us.

Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased.

I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.

Signs of the Times

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SONG

Courage, my soul, behold the prize
The Saviour's love provides:
Eternal life beyond the skies
For all whom here he guides.

The wicked cease from troubling there,
The weary are at rest;
Sorrow, and sin, and pain, and care,
No more approach the blest.

A wicked world, and wicked heart,
With Satan now are joined;
Each acts a too successful part
In harassing my mind.

But fighting in my Saviour's strength,
Though mighty are my foes,
I shall a conqueror be at length
O'er all that can oppose.

Then why, my soul, complain or fear?
The crown of glory see!
The more I toil and suffer here,
The sweeter rest will be.

Newton.

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EDITORIAL

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

Though a sinner does evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him: But it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days which are a shadow, because he feareth not God.

Solomon was a man of God who was given great wisdom beyond that of any man born of a woman other than Jesus Christ himself who was also the Son of God. He had asked this of God when he was anointed king over Israel; God appeared to him in a dream and said, ask what I shall give thee. Solomon's request was that he might be given wisdom and an understanding heart that he might be judge of Israel and discern between good and bad to render righteous judgement. The Lord was pleased that he requested wisdom rather than riches and granted his request, giving him a wise and understanding heart and declared that there was none like him before nor would there be any after him. He also gave him riches and honour for which he did not ask; double at the Lord's hand.

This gift to Solomon of God was for a specific purpose and that was that he might lead the nation of Israel in the ways of peace and teach them the truths of God. Solomon set in order many proverbs and sought out acceptable words that were written even words of truth. He taught the truths of God as they had not been taught by those who had gone before. This wisdom was given to Solomon for this purpose and has been a blessing to the following generations as they come on the stage of life and are given, in measure, of the wisdom which the preacher was given in his day.

Generally one thinks of the sinner and the wicked being one and the same; the wicked referring to the man who is a sinner or a man in the act of sinning, but Solomon draws a different conclusion between these two

words. All men sin but that does not mean that they are all wicked or evil, it just means they are human. Man was created subject to vanity which is the source of the sin he is susceptible to; he sees and desires the things that are pleasing to the flesh and this causes him many times to go astray and transgress the laws that were laid down to govern his life. The difference between the sinner and the wicked is the motivation behind the things that they do; their regard or lack of regard for God who created them and their fear or lack of it for Him.

The wicked are those who from an evil heart rebel against all law or restraint against anything they desire to do. They have no regard for their fellow man and there is no fear of God before their eyes; they are not aware of God because he has not revealed himself to them. They are not inhibited by virtue, knowledge of good vs. evil, integrity or compassion for their fellow man. They are proud and boastful of their own wisdom and abilities of the children of God, morals and genuine love and concern for their neighbors and friends.

The wicked are those who were created for the day of evil and this mission they shall fulfil in this life. This does not mean that they go around as a roaring lion seeking who they may devour, but they are of their father the devil and the lusts of their father they shall do. They appear as ordinary people, respected in the eyes of the world and are righteous when judged by the standards of the world. This should not seem strange since satan himself is transformed into an angel of light and his angels appear as ministers of righteousness, but whose end shall be according to their works for there is no fear of God in their heart. The world in which we all live is their home, they seek nothing more than the things of nature because they have never known anything else.

The sinners, as referred to in the text are those who know and fear God; who live their life here in time looking for a city built by God for them, desiring to do that which is right and good but find themselves failing everyday of their life in the accomplishment of their goal which is to show forth that work of grace which has been wrought in them. They are made to realize that they cannot, of themselves, live up to that law that has been written in their heart and can only plead for mercy and forgiveness for their sin. They find themselves doing the same things again and again after they have solemnly determined that they would not. They find comfort in the above scripture because it declares that it shall be well with them that fear God though they sin a hundred times and their life be prolonged: because this is one thing they feel to know - that they fear God. They fear God and love him at the same time as a child fears and respects their parents yet loves them as much as they know how.

There are several scriptures that refer to the fear of the Lord. One is "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" another "The fear of the Lord, this is wisdom" and "The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wis-

dom." All knowledge of the Lord begins with the fear of the Lord and it imparts wisdom to them that know it. There is nothing that gets the attention of man quicker than fear and to know God and his omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresent being instills fear in all who know him. At the same time they feel to know that the very fact they have suddenly been made aware of him is because he has revealed himself to them. As Manoah (Samson's father) said when he saw the Angel of the Lord, we shall surely die because we have seen God, but his wife said if the Lord pleased to kill us he would not have shown us these things; this is their feeling at this time and they are made to marvel at the wonder of it all.

In the beginning of what I trust is an experience of grace there was a long period of time, three years as I recall, that I felt to be lost in the wonder of God's love and rejoiced in it continually. I seemingly could read with understanding and enjoyment all time. I would read hours each day and rejoiced in the preached word and the love and kindness of the brethren. Then there came a time when it seemed the beauty and sweetness began to dim; I became afraid that I was losing the thing that was more precious to me than life itself. One day while pondering the situation, the thought struck me with force that if God called me and set me apart from the life I had previously lived, when I was not concerned about him, surely he would not forsake me now when I needed and wanted his love so badly, or as Manoah's wife said, if the Lord pleased to forsake me he would not have revealed himself to me as I surely believed that he had.

When man has an experience of grace and basks in the joy of the love of God and then finds that he continues to sin it causes him great concern and fear that he was mistaken in his call. He tries to do better and manifest the miracle that has happened to him in his walk, talk and in all his ways, but learns that he is just not able to direct his steps; then when he reads scriptures such as the text he rejoices to know that even his sins cannot separate him from God's love; from these things which are his heritage among the children of God. He believes with all his heart that he is one of those who fear God and the scripture says that it shall be well with them though they do evil and sin a hundred times.

The Apostle Paul confirms this when he writes Rom. 8 vs. 35. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" vs. 38 "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Sin and the things that surround the Lord's people daily as they journey in this low ground of sin and sorrow, distress them greatly but they shall never nullify that work of grace that is the gift of the Father. Whatsoever God doeth it shall

be forever nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it that men shall fear before him.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

ARTICLES

THE COMMUNION RING

How many people today remember the communion ring? Some of my memories center around that sacred occasion.

On "Communion Day" my family would be up early to get ready. The chores had to be done and the lunch must be prepared. All of the children had to lend a hand.

When we arrived at the church, Papa would tie the horses under a shade tree off to one side. We all went into the house and singing was begun. It sounded so beautiful, all the different voices mingling together. I remember so well, my Mother's high tenor voice, which could be heard blending so beautifully with the other voices, the soprano, bass and alto. There was no need for musical instruments. There was music there that only those with a "hearing ear and heart" could understand. The hymns were in praise to God. No whispering and laughing was heard. It seemed like all the congregation felt the sacredness of the occasion.

After singing for a while the ministers went into the pulpit and the service began with a short hymn and prayer by one of the ministers.

After the preaching service ended, there was a short intermission. The people went outside and the men began carrying the church pews out in the yard. They placed them in a large circle, with a smaller circle inside. A table was placed in the center of the ring and the bread and wine was placed on it with glasses and plates.

I knew about the bread and wine. I had seen it prepared with great care by my Mother. I knew there was something very special about it.

The deacons sat on the benches in the inner circle and the rest of the members, together with the visiting members, sat in the outer circle. It was a very solemn occasion. I, as a small child, stood outside the circle right behind Mama. The silence could almost be felt. I watched as the bread was broken and wondered how the bread could be the Body of Jesus Christ when I had seen Mama bake it. At that time, I didn't know what the word, "Emblem," meant. I hope that it was later revealed to me the sacredness of the scene I had stood and watched. I could feel, even then, that there was something very precious taking place. Many of the people were in tears, all very attentive and quiet.

The deacons passed the bread around the circle with the same quietness which I saw in the congregation.

The wine was served with the same solemnity as with the bread. In my childish mind, I wondered about what I was seeing and wished I could be a part of it.

Now I have a Hope in my breast that I have had a small part, unworthy as I feel to be. I don't know if I have taken the communion unworthily, but at times I have been given a joy that cannot be described. I wouldn't trade the precious privilege of communing with the dear saints for all the wealth this world has to offer. That joy can't be bought nor sold, neither can it be described. It must be felt in the heart. My hope is that I am not mistaken in the whole matter and in the end be a cast-away. If so it will be just, for I know there's nothing good in me. I desire to praise this God who never makes a mistake. To Him be honor, glory and dominion forever.

Edrie Ruth Clifton

THE BAPTIZING PLACE

Memory carries me back to my early childhood. My parents were members of Old Bell Spur Church long before the sad division which took place in the early 1930's. My father was ordained a deacon there, I suppose before I was born.

We would get to the church very early on Sunday morning when there was to be a baptizing. The congregation would gather in the church house, take the songbooks and Bible and walk in a body from the church down a little graveled road for a few hundred yards, singing hymns as they walked along till they came to the water. This water was in a natural basin formed out of solid rock. The water flowed over the edge of this basin at the upper side, filling the basin with crystal clear water, deep enough to easily baptize in.

When they were at the place, they would sing another hymn. Then the minister would kneel there by the water and I can remember how his voice would ring out across those hills as he earnestly prayed the Lord's blessing on the occasion. I would stand in awe at the sight and sound, not fully understanding what was happening. But in my childish mind, I thought it the most beautiful and sacred sight my eyes had ever beheld. I knew there was something taking place beyond my understanding but, Oh! how I did wish I could be a part of it. I knew these people had something in which I had no part. I could see the love manifested for each other - All seemed to be perfectly at peace.

I wanted so much to be baptized and be one of them, but I seemed to realize it was not for me.

After the baptizing was done the members gathered closely around giving the new member and the others the right hand of fellowship and welcome to the church. They all walked slowly back up the road to the meeting house, went in and sang hymns while the minister and new member changed clothes at a neighbor's house nearby. When they came back in the church, the regular services went on as usual.

As we were leaving the water, I looked back and could see no sign of anything having taken place, but the very place looked sacred to me. Later

on I could understand they were following in the way our Lord and Master had gone and had followed His example!

Now, when I pass the "Baptizing Place," I am filled with sadness. That beautiful basin, the handiwork of none other but the Lord, has filled up with dirt and debris. It does not look beautiful and sacred anymore.

I realize the Lord knows all things and if it is His will He will give someone a desire to restore that baptizing place as it once was because His will is done in earth and Heaven.

But I wonder, is this and similar things only a sign of the "falling away" as told in His Holy Word, the Bible?

Now, in my old age, these childhood memories are precious. I feel I was being given a tiny glimpse of the wonderful workings of that all wise God, who created Heaven and earth, who has never made a mistake and never will. Praise His Holy Name!

Edrie Ruth Clifton

PROBERBS 22: 17-21.

Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowlege.

For it is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee; they shall withal be fitted in thy lips.

That thy trust may be in the Lord, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee.

Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge,

That I might make thee know the certainty of the words or truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE EARNEST CONTENTION FOR LIVING FAITH

Preached on the Monday of December 25th, 1840 at the Opening of Trinity Chapel Alfred Street, Leicester

"That ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Jude:3.

We often read in books the praises of primitive Christianity, and there seems to be a general persuasion in the minds of men that primitive Christianity was, with scarcely any exception, of a superlatively excellent nature; and many speak and write as if the churches mentioned in the New Testament consisted entirely of such eminent saints as have never since appeared, and will never appear again. Now whence are we to derive our evidence of the nature of primitive Christianity? Our only certain and infallible authority must be the Word of God; by which I mean, in this instance, the Epistles of the New Testament. But what do we gather from these epistles but the startling fact that though persecution in its most dreadful form stared them in the face, there were some of the vilest characters possible in the churches formed immediately by the apostles! The saints among them were saints indeed; "great grace was upon them;" and their "work of faith, pa-

tience and hope, and labor of love" abounded exceedingly. This fact admits of no denial; but this acknowledged truth seems to have thrown another no less certain fact into the background, namely, that there were very rank tares among this wheat, "ungodly men who were before of old ordained to this condemnation;" and that these vile characters, described at large in the second Epistle of Peter, and in this Epistle of Jude, were members of these primitive churches. And thus the New Testament churches seem to have closely resembled Jeremiah's baskets of figs: "One basket had very good figs, even like the figs that are first ripe; and the other basket had very naughty figs, which could not be eaten, they were so bad" (Jer. 25:2).

Now it appears that the discerning eye of Jude saw these evils in the churches; and that they were not confined to one or two churches, but were spread through them all. Under heavenly inspiration, therefore, he wrote this "General Epistle," so called because not addressed to a particular church, as at Corinth, Rome, Ephesus, or Ghessalonica; but directed and sent abroad to the whole body of Christians, all the visible churches then existing. His mind seems to have been impressed with two prominent feelings. First, "to write to them of the common salvation;" that is, to set before them the glorious truths of salvation, common to the whole body of the elect; and secondly, to "exhort them that they should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." But why was he so pressed in spirit to exhort them thus earnestly to contend? Because his discerning eye saw a dark cloud coming over the churches. The faith once delivered unto the saints was in danger; not in any eternal danger as to the faith of the elect failing, or of God's ceasing to have a Church on the earth; but in temporary danger; and that not from without, but from within; not from open persecutors, but from false brethren.

Time will not allow me to enter fully into this Epistle, nor trace out these blots in the primitive Church, these "spots in their feasts of charity." And yet it may be as well to endeavour to throw a little light on these characters, as briefly as possible, since the same awful characters infest, more or less, most, if not all, of the Calvinistic churches now; and some light may also be thus shed upon the text itself.

It is necessary, then, to observe that these characters were not casual hearers, outer court worshippers, merely members of the congregation, but that they were members of the church. They were clearly in church fellowship, for they sat down to the ordinance. "These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear." These feasts of charity (or love) were not indeed the same thing as the Lord's supper, but they always followed the ordinance, and none sat down at the one who did not sit down at the other. They were therefore in church communion with the rest. They are said also to have "crept in unawares;" that

is, into the church, but in an underhand, crafty, and deceitful manner. But, as Jude has drawn their characters, we will, with God's blessing, enter a little into the description that he has given.

They are said, then, "to speak evil of those things which they know not, but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves" (Verse 10). There were things then which they knew not, and there were things which they knew. They spoke against the one, and they corrupted themselves in the other. What were the things which they knew not? The work of the Holy Ghost on the heart, the manifestations of God's presence, the shedding abroad of His love in the soul, the application of the blood of sprinkling, as well as the trials, difficulties, temptations, exercises, doubts, fears, and buffetings that are the lot of the people of God. These were the things that "they knew not;" they had no personal, inward, divine, experimental acquaintance with them; they therefore "spoke evil of them," and called them madness, nervousness, enthusiasm, excitement, delusion, gloom, melancholy, or any plausible or evil name which they could devise, whereby they could cast a slur upon the teachings of God in the soul. But what were the things which "they knew naturally?" The doctrinal truths which they had received in their judgment, the glorious truths of salvation which they had learnt naturally, and therefore only knew naturally. For we must bear in mind that Arminianism had not then been introduced into the churches, but the pure truth was still preached by the apostles. But "in these things they corrupted themselves," that is, they held truth in unrighteousness, sinned that grace might abound, and "turned the grace of God into lasciviousness," that is, abused the doctrine of grace as encouraging licentiousness. And why? because they never knew the doctrines of grace in soul feeling and personal experience, but held them in a hard heart, a reprobate mind, and a seared conscience.

But they carried about with them certain marks, which Jude's discerning eye saw, and his clear hand traced out.

1. They had "gone in the way of Cain." What Cain's sin, here called Cain's "way?" Was emnity against his brother. And why? Because the Lord had accepted Able's offering, and rejected his. Thus in the heart of dead professors there is a deep-rooted enmity, inward murder, against the real people of God; and the root of this enmity is, because God accepts the one and rejects the other.

2. They had "run greedily after the error of Balaam for reward." What was Balaam's error? Light without life, gifts without grace, slavish fear without spiritual fear, and willingness to curse, and compulsion to bless; a seeing but not now, a beholding but not nigh, a desiring the death of the righteous, and a being slaughtered with the Midianites.

3. "And perished in the gain-saying of Core;" that is, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram (Numb 16). And what was this

gain-saying? "An envying of Moses in the camp, and of Aaron the saints of the Lord" (Psalms 106:16). Thus these characters whom Jude condemns thrust themselves forward to partake of the privileges and blessings peculiar to the people of God, aspired to the ministry, formed a party in the church, and allowed no separation of the precious and the vile; but declared that "all the congregation was holy, every one of them, and that the Lord was among them;" and that therefore to be a member of the church was necessarily to be a child of God.

But they were towering professors, with all this enmity and ungodliness in their hearts; and Jude has used several figures, which point to great appearances, but all destitute of reality.

4. "Clouds they are without water, carried about with winds." What is a cloud? A harbinger of rain, a receptacle of fertilizing moisture, suspended in the air, ready to drop down fatness upon the earth. Sometimes we see the earth parched up and dry, chapped and brown. We look into the sky, like Elijah's servant, if we can see clouds arising to dissolve in fertilizing showers. O! there we see one in the horizon, pregnant with rain. It comes over our heads. But alas! it is "a cloud without water," an appearance without a reality, covering the sun, but wanting the only thing that makes the cloud desirable or valuable. No dew, no rain, no moisture. Such are these dry towering professors.

Lofty in their pretensions, but all their conversation devoid of dew or savour, soaring in the air, hiding the sun, darkening the sky, but dropping no rain, producing no fertility. But instead of quietly dropping down blessings, carried about with winds of error, gusts of passion, and the storms of their own lusts.

5. "Trees whose fruit withereth." The elect are trees, as the Spirit says, "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified." These too are trees, but "trees without fruit," internal or external, "having not the Spirit" (Verse 19), and therefore devoid of His gracious fruits. But fruit they have such as it is, "whose fruit withereth;" that is, even their natural fruit of zeal, consistency, liberality, and simplicity withered up, the juice gone, and the dried skin only remaining. "Twice dead," dead in sins, and dead in a profession; "plucked up by the roots," so that a discerning child of God sees that the root of their religion is in the flesh, and they themselves stand plucked up, and cast over the vineyard, in God's own time, before His eyes.

6. "Raging waves of the sea." The sea bears on its ample bosom the produce of all countries, and its waves bring the loaded ships into harbour. But these only rage and foam against God's tried people, and threaten to bury them, rather than bear them, though in swelling high against the teachings of the Spirit in the hearts of the elect, they only foam out to discerning eyes their own shame.

7. "Wandering stars." Not fixed stars to guide the mariner, not the polar star for him to direct his course by, but stars that wander over the sky, and therefore only deceive instead of instruct, betray him upon the shoals, instead of leading him into the desired haven.

8. But these persons have no doubt of their state, for "their mouth speaketh great swelling words" in self-commendation. They are not plagued as other men. Therefore "they feast and feed themselves without fear." They feed on the letter of truth, on the doctrines of grace in their brain, on the deepest mysteries of vital godliness held in a seared conscience. Therefore they "feed without fear." No godly fear, no trembling awe, no solemn reverence, no holy anxiety, no desire to be right, no dread to be wrong, no doubt if it be presumption to draw nigh, no groanings under inward hypocrisy and presumption, no midnight cries to a heart-searching God to see the ground of their heart, no fervent wrestlings to be upright and sincere before Him, no guilt no self-condemnation nor self-loathing at coming unworthily. O fatal mark! O black stamp, to be devoid of that which is "the beginning of wisdom," and which "God puts into the hearts of His people, that they should not depart from Him."

Now we have no reason to believe that these characters were living in what is termed open sin and profaneness. Had it been so, they would have been turned out of the church; but it is evident that when Jude wrote they were still in church membership. Their sins therefore were carried on in secret. But Jude's discerning eye, enlightened by the blessed Spirit, saw through all their hypocrisy, and penetrated into their real character, through all their "changeable suits of apparel, veils, wimples, and mantles." He saw then that the faith was in jeopardy, and observing this dark cloud towering over the churches, wrote this epistle to exhort those that were "sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and called," to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints." And are times less perilous now? Do not the churches amongst whom the bulk of God's people are swarmed with the very same characters that Jude here points out? The saints of God, then, are similarly called upon not to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints."

Thus much for introduction, long indeed, but perhaps not unnecessary, considering the light it may throw on the text.

And now we come to our text: and the first word which seems to demand our notice is the expression, "faith;" for on that word as on a pivot the whole text seems to turn.

I think we may understand two things by the expression, "the faith once delivered to the saints." First, the doctrines preached by the apostles, and secondly, that inward faith whereby these doctrines are believed in by the heart unto righteousness, and confession made of them by the mouth unto salvation. The doc-

trines of grace were delivered to the saints by the Lord and His apostles; they were entrusted to the saints as to a living repository, and by them they were to be handed down to those who followed them in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. This seems to be the prominent and primary meaning of the text. But on that I shall not this morning dwell, but shall confine myself to what I consider its secondary and no less important meaning - the faith that dwells in the heart of the manifested people of God.

Now in examining the faith thus spoken of, it may be as well to see what it is not, before we look at what it is. The faith, then, which is delivered into the heart of the saints from the mouth of the Lord is not, in the least respect or degree, the fruit or production of the creature. "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God? (1 Cor. 2:5). It is a faith not to be learnt of man, nor to be procured by the exertions of strivings of the flesh. It cannot be got from the Scriptures by hard study; nay, all the exertion of the creature cannot bring into the heart one grain or atom of it. Natural faith, believing traditionally in the Scriptures, receiving them as a Divine revelation upon the authority of others, and a bare intellectual knowledge of texts and passages, doctrines and mysteries, all fall infinitely short of the saving faith which God communicates to His elect.

The faith delivered unto the saints stands wholly and solely in the power of God. He is the author and finisher of it in the soul; nor have we one jot more, nor one jot less than He is pleased to communicate. This heavenly grace is breathed into the soul by God the Holy Ghost out of the fulness of the Son of God. "We are the clay, and He is the Potter;" and so far as we are vessels of mercy, "we are the work of His hand." This faith, then, can only be known by an inward experimental possession of it, and all description of it must fall short of what it really is in soul feeling. Now this faith is breathed into the soul when the Holy Ghost first quickens it into spiritual and eternal life; and the work and province of this faith is to lay hold of, embrace, and realize those truths which the Holy Spirit lodges in the conscience. For it is "the substance of things hoped for." That Almighty Teacher casts a divine light upon certain revealed truths, and brings them out of the Word into the heart, where they are fastened and riveted by an almighty power. And faith's business and employment is to act upon, and solemnly deal with these truths, which the Holy Spirit thus brings in and makes known. Faith, therefore, does not sail forth upon the letter of God's Word, that vast and fathomless ocean of truth. Faith stays at home, and does as Mary did, "ponder these things in her heart." All that comes with light, life, and power, all that is commended to the conscience, all that is experimentally brought into the heart, faith deals with. Whatever truth comes with power from God into the soul is faith's food, and true faith can feed on nothing else.

But here many of God's children are often staggered. They read in the Word what faith is, and what faith does: as for instance, that it removes mountains, works by love, overcomes the world, purifies the heart, and is accompanied with love, joy and peace. Such a faith as this many of God's people cannot find in their heart. Again, they see glorious truths set forth in the letter of the Word. They see Jesus there spoken of as a great and glorious Savior. The security of the Church in her covenant Head, the solemn truths of election and predestination, the certainty of salvation to the elect, the blessed teachings of the Spirit in the hearts of God's people, these and other Divine truths many of the quickened family of God see clearly written in the Scriptures. But they cannot get at them, so as to realise them as certainly and eternally theirs. They believe that they are true, but they cannot believe them for themselves, so as to rejoice in them as sealed with power in their own hearts. Now here they are baffled; and feeling that their faith does not relieve them from burdens, remove guilt, pacify conscience, and conquer death, they conclude because they have not this faith that they have no faith.

But is this the necessary, or scriptural conclusion? If faith can only realise, and feed upon the truths which the Holy Ghost brings in, faith in its beginning will deal with what is brought in at the beginning. Now what is a sound beginning? "The fear of the Lord," for that is declared to be "the beginning of wisdom" (Psalm 111:10). But the fear of God cannot exist without the knowledge of God, for we cannot fear Him whom we do not know. Therefore the Lord Jesus said: "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." Faith, then, in its early infantile state, acts upon, and is engaged with this inward knowledge of God, which springs from what the Holy Ghost has revealed of Him to the conscience. But this knowledge of God embraces the knowledge of what God is, of His holiness, purity, power, justice, hatred of sin, and eternal wrath and displeasure towards transgressors. And as we see light only in God's light, when He sets our secret sins in the light of His countenance, faith begins to act upon and deal with these eternal realities. Thus the soul is convinced of sin, made acquainted with the spirituality of God's law, and arraigned at His bar as a transgressor. Under this discover, sin and corruption work, temptations beset the soul, doubts and fears arise, and guilt and condemnation are powerfully felt. Well, but where is faith all this time? Out of sight indeed, but not out of the heart; nay, busy at work, and dealing with these solemn realities, as the Holy Spirit keeps bringing them in. But how is faith evidenced? By feeling. Were there no faith, there would be no feeling. But the presence of feeling shows the presence of faith. Thus the very guilt that the soul feels, the earnest anxiety which it manifests in fleeing from the wrath to come, its groans and sighs for mercy, its strug-

gling forward into light and liberty, as the babe from the prison of the womb, the very doubts and fears that retard its progress, and all the numerous and varied exercises that attend the quickened soul, all, all manifest the presence of faith. Eternal realities are believed in, and from this belief all these inward exercises spring.

Now after a time there shall be a change. The Holy Spirit holds up Jesus in the Word as a suitable and precious Saviour, and brings into the heart some savour of His Person, work, and precious blood. Faith, as before, sees, realizes, and feeds upon this heavenly food. What the Spirit reveals, faith embraces, deals with, and acts upon. Perfect love indeed has not yet come to cast out all "fear which hath torment." But a measure of peace is felt in believing, and faith has at times something more of a comforting nature to feed upon.

It is usually at this season that we are exposed to, and are often entangled by Satan, false professors, and the deceit of our own heart. On one side of the path of life is despair, and on the other side is presumption, two deep ditches, into one or the other of which we are very liable to fall. The soul, then, being somewhat lifted up with views of Christ, often runs eagerly forward, and thus is thrust beyond its real experience. Confident professors always on the Rock, preachers crying out against doubts and fears, and the heart's own deceitfulness, all push the unwary child of God forward into head knowledge beyond heart knowledge. One does not like to be snuffed at and snubbed by professors, looked down upon with suspicion, and treated as a babe, a weakling, a beginner, and all one's religion perhaps called in question by those who have no doubt of their own. The flesh is pained thereby, galled fretted, and mortified. So having some little ground to go upon, the inexperienced and perhaps unballasted vessel of mercy, unless well held in, starts forth into the letter of God's Word, to sail on that wide and boundless ocean, without either chart, compass, or rudder. But let a man once go beyond God's teaching, and where will he not get to, unless the Lord bring him back? Well, on the stripling goes, pretty boldly and pretty firmly. Light and life received, with rays of hope and consolation, give him some entrance into the doctrines of grace, into which therefore he boldly steps. Doubts and fears begin to remove, trials and temptation lose their sharp edge, and a temporary ease and consolation are felt. This emboldens him yet more to go farther and farther still with confidence and assurance, as he now finds some comfort and security more and more drawn from the letter of truth. Now, if the Holy Ghost did not keep him, he would rush forward into all the hardened confidence of a dead professor. But the Lord never has left, and never will leave him; nor was he really easy with all his false confidence. Some heavy trial, some powerful temptation, a bed of sickness, such as I believe was made useful in this way to me ten years ago, death near, and hell in

sight, begin to pull down this vain confidence. The soul loses all its fancied treasures and supposed acquirements, and sinks into poverty and beggary. False hopes begin to vanish, rotten props to be knocked away, and refuges of lies to be discovered. Towering confidence flies away, and the soul falls down into darkness, and well nigh into despair. But why all this? What is the Lord doing now? Why, teaching the soul what faith is, by teaching him what faith is not. He had been making bricks, and collecting slime to build up a Babel with, to escape the wrath to come; touching the ark with Uzzah, looking into it presumptuously with the men of Bethshemesh. Now faith comes back to her true old work, to stay at home, and ponder the things inwardly felt. Our religion is now weighed up, and much, perhaps all, to our feelings, found false. The greater part of it stood in the flesh in more of less of presumption. Now then the soul is driven to close dealings with God, forced up into a corner, whence there is no escape. Before, whilst the soul was in an easy, smooth, lukewarm path, there were few or no close dealings with God. There were indeed seasons of prayer, moments of compunction and contrition, but no close, solemn, personal dealings with a heart-searching Jehovah. Hezekiah was a good man, and had offered an acceptable passover, as well as received answers to prayer and a striking deliverance before ever "he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore." But he never had close dealings with God until he had the sentence of death in his soul. This pulled down all his religion, stripped away his fleshly hopes, and drove him up into a corner. But where is faith now? Why, busy with the perfection of God, His majesty, heart-searching eye, and unalterable purposes; and suing, sighing and groaning after manifestations of mercy. It is not falling on one's knees, nor uttering prayers merely, that is close dealing with God; nor do I believe there are any of these close quarters until the soul is stripped and laid low. Now it comes as a sinner ready to perish, as a poor outcast, who must have mercy inwardly revealed. Like the poor woman diseased with the issue of blood, it longs to touch the hem of Jesus' garment. In this conflict the soul learns what faith is. Hezekiah was brought to feel that "by these things men live, and in all these things was the life of his spirit."

Under these sharp exercises we learn what faith is, and what faith is not; what faith does, and what faith does not. The dross and tin are purged away in this furnace, and in it faith learns its real measure and stature, its true work and business. The soul is taught in the fires to seek and sue after personal manifestations of mercy, is brought off the bare letter of the Word, and breathes after the teachings of the blessed Spirit as applying the Scriptures with power. What it now therefore receives, it receives as a free gift, for which it must sigh, beg and groan. Its faith can only stand now in the power of God, and is utterly

helpless without Him. And when the Lord in mercy sends help and strength, power and feeling, and draws up the affections to Himself, the soul knows what faith is, by its presence as well as by its absence; by what it can do, as well as by what it cannot do. Thus according to the measure given, the heart is purified, the love of the world cast out, fleshly religion dethroned, and Christ made all in all. There is now a solid acquaintance with the truth, and the poor, needy, naked, and helpless soul rests and hangs upon Christ alone. This faith, according to its different measure in each, was once delivered unto the saints, delivered, not merely in the preaching of Christ and His apostles, but delivered into their hearts. For this faith, then, we are earnestly to contend, as an abiding reality, a separating path between presumption and despair. A faith which stands wholly and solely in the teachings, guidings, and leadings of the Holy Comforter, and received only in such measure, and at such seasons as He delivers it into the heart. But why earnestly contend for it? Why not have peace in churches, smuggle matters up, put goats and sheep into one pen, and so preach and talk as to have a good name among professors? Why not call all that profess, "brethren," and keep things quiet and comfortable? Because having more or less proved the nature of this faith in our own souls, and seen the deceits and dangers of all counterfeits, we must earnestly contend for it. And what then? Why, we must have divisions, troubles, and difficulties. Contend we must therefore for this faith, not bitterly nor angrily, but earnestly and affectionately; contend for it as a thing of infinite importance, as the only thing really worth contending for; contend for it through smiles and frowns, whether men will hear or forbear.

Jude does not say, Contend for church order, though a good thing in its place; nor for doctrines, though true and valuable; nor for your own reputation, though personally dear; but "for the faith once delivered unto the saints." Because it has made us, each according to our measure, new creatures, wrought an effect on our souls, and upon the possession of it hang our hopes of eternity; because it is the grand turning point between sinner and saint, between life and death. All the people of God quickened into spiritual life have faith, the weakest as well as the strongest; the babe of yesterday as well as the saint of a fifty years' profession. Their faith differs in measure, not in kind. To contend therefore for Divine faith, is to embrace all the living family, and reject all dead professors. If therefore we contend for it, we must give no place to its opposers, not for an hour. We must make no hollow truces, no false treaties, no rotten alliances; and give no quarter to any faith that stands not in the power of God the Holy Ghost. We must allow none to have a grain of real religion, who possess it not. My conscience would condemn me if I did not contend for it earnestly, but my conscience would equally condemn me if I were to contend for it

bitterly. I trust in this spirit I have come to Leicester. I feel that I have not come here to oppose any man, or disparage any man, to minister to any's pride, to set any man up, or pull any man down. So far as I know my own motives (and our hearts are so deceitful that it is hard always to know them), I have come here with a desire after God's glory. Films will come the eye, when we think and wish it to be most single; but I have felt that there being a door opened in this town for experimental truth, a chapel built, and a pulpit set up, I could comfortably and conscientiously enter it to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints." God will own and bless no other cause, and no other preaching but the which contends for the faith that He Himself once delivered. I desire to contend for it earnestly, simply, fully and affectionately; and may we ever contend for it at home and abroad, in our words and actions, as well as in our life, conduct, and conversation.

In this mixed multitude there must be persons assembled from various motives. Some to hear a new preacher, some to pick up something from the pulpit which they may carry away to make me an offender for a word, some to see the new chapel, and some, I trust, to hear what the Lord may speak to their soul. To the last I would by way of conclusion address myself.

If you have any measure of this spiritual faith, you have plenty of trials with it. The Lord says (Rev. 3:18), "I counsel thee to buy of Me gold." But what gold? - "tried in the fire," no other. Wherever, therefore, the Lord gives faith, He gives trials to prove it. "That the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire? (1 Peter 1:7). Thus we are tried with unbelief, infidelity, doubts, questionings, and fears; tried in providence; tried by bodily afflictions; tried by the enmity of the world, the opposition of carnal professors, the deceit of false friends, but most of all by our own dreadfully vile and wicked hearts. And yet, with all these trials, some more and some less, all who have any measure of this heavenly faith will and must earnestly contend for it, as the only thing that supports the soul under trials, and as feeling that this faith only "will be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." You therefore, into whose heart God has breathed this faith, will have a cross to carry. You that have it not, and contend only for doctrines, a name to live, rites, forms, and ceremonies of man's invention, and an outside religion, will be loved by the world, and meet with neither outward nor inward opposition. But may we who desire to fear God be willing to endure these things, "receiving the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls."

Elder J.C. Philpot

January 30.

"The king's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework." — PSALM XIV. 13, 14.

THIS is a beautiful description of the bridal garments of the Church as the queen. The gold was to be wrought into her clothing, the raiment to be of needlework, intimating that her robe of justifying righteousness was wrought, as it were, as in needlework, stitch by stitch; yet that every thread was embroidered with gold. Here we have the thread of the humanity in union with the gold of Deity, and yet each in such close union that the thread is but one. In gold thread the beauty, the value is in the gold; yet how close the union. Gold by itself could not be made into embroidery. So Deity cannot suffer, bleed, or die; but humanity can in union with it. Thus, as our blessed Lord went through the whole work which the Father gave him to do, his Deity, being in union with his obeying, suffering humanity, stamped each successive movement, as he went through *it*, with all the value and validity of Godhead. It is this union of Deity with humanity which made the work of redeeming love so unspeakably glorious, and so meritoriously efficacious. As Hart says:

"Almighty God sighed human breath."

It is indeed a mystery; but " great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh." O glorious mystery!

" The highest heavens are short of this;
'Tis deeper than the vast abyss;
'Tis more than thought can e'er conceive,
Or hope expect, or faith believe."

Elder J.C Philpot

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN: I am sending something on my subscription, and thought I would like to say a few things to the dear editors and readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. For these many years it has withstood all the fiery onslaughts of its Babylonish enemies, as well as those coming from the camps of Israel. We do not (as some who were once our brethren do) want to look at that as being the grace of God sustaining all old things or all numerous things, but, taking the holy Scriptures as our guide, when we find the "speckled bird" being hated, boycotted and all the venom of the spirit of darkness hurled at her, then we may rest assured that God is upholding her by his grace, reigning and controlling his subjects.

Brethren, the Baptists (there is but one body of genuine Baptists; the balance are impostors, yet God's visible kingdom is not known in history by name, but by her walk and doctrine) have always contended that God was a sovereign Ruler of not only his children by regeneration, but of all the posterity of Adam. Christ taught this glorious doctrine, and all the apostles

taught it after him. From the apostolic church we are able to find a few here and there, down through the ages, who rejoiced in the fact that the God they worshiped was omnipotent and omniscient. But should we lose sight of this visible kingdom we are not to despair, believing that God has failed in any of his glorious promises. He is faithful that promised (Heb. x. 23), and inasmuch as he promised to build the church and preserve her so that the gates of hell shall not prevail against her, we may rest assured that to-day he is keeping her as his chosen church. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." - Psalms cxxvii. 1. Here in language that fell from the lips or pen of the sweet Singer of Israel do we find that the Lord builds the house. All plants not planted or builded by him shall be rooted up. (Matt. xv. 13.) We find in a perusal of Old Testament characters that by an eye of faith they were looking forward to the day when the promised Messiah should come. The law they were under was, to all outward appearances, a conditional law. If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat of the good of the land. (Isaiah i.19.) But how did they come out in such a yoke being placed on them? Their nation was trampled under foot and the inhabitants scattered to the four winds of the earth. Now we understand that this law was literal to them, but it had something hidden in it that had a spiritual signification. We are told that the law was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. (Gal. iii. 24). Dear storm-tossed child, how has it been with you? That law that you thought to be unto life you found to be unto death. Indeed, that law was a gruff schoolmaster. Uncompromising and unmerciful. It demanded all and granted nothing. But, try as you could, you could not get life by it. So when your gods were all used up, it brought you to Christ. But now the Messiah comes! The "in the day" period of time has arrived! Righteousness has looked down from heaven and truth has sprung out of the ground. Fear not, Joseph, to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. (Matt. i. 20, 21.) Take courage and lift up your drooping faces, for Jesus paid the penalty that was justly due as yours. It was his people who were in debt and he came at the appointed time for their redemption. Ten thousand talents in debt and not a farthing to pay. But he canceled the debt and paid with his blood for all your sins. He took the law and it was nailed to the tree of the cross with him. Before going away he established, set up or founded his church as a visible organization. He had, by his own blood, purchased the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife. His salvation was secure, but being timely creatures they were to be left in the world. They were not of the world, as he was not of the world, so their worship, their conversation, was to be as becometh saints. Now, brethren, this church is a divine institution. Christ is

the Head of the church that he alone built. He needed not, nor sought the help of man in building this church. Man could not help when he was crucified. He could not help in any of the work he (Christ) did while here in the world, because all that he did was for the salvation of his people, and vain would be any part man would have in it. In this church he alone gave all the laws and ordinances that she would ever need. Before going away he left them a glorious promise, that when he was gone the Comforter would come. What was that for? When the Spirit of truth is come he will guide you into all truth, for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak, and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. (John xvi. 13, 14.) This kingdom is built by sovereign, reigning power, and in the same measure that human merits are used in the commencement of it, just so is it kept that way. Have you heard that the church is about gone? Have you been told that Old Baptists need to get out of the rut? Have you heard it said that those churches that preach predestination and one salvation are not progressive and are in a cold state? These things are but the working of the Sarah-minded children of the kingdom. "Look now (Abram) toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be." - Gen. xv. 5. This promise was from God, and he said it shall be. Yet we find that Sarah doubted at the promise and set up the first "ladies aid society." But let us remember that God was to set up a kingdom that should not be destroyed. It shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces all these Babylonish kingdoms and shall consume them (I suppose that is why all Arminians call the Old Baptists parasites, living on their converts), and it shall stand forever. (Dan. ii. 44.) By inspiration the curtains of time were raised and Isaiah was given to look down to that distant date and see Jesus. Hear him break forth in singing, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God. The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Isaiah ix. 6,7. O dust of the earth, where do you come in? O man, what a vain creature art thou, to think that by thy flesh you might perpetuate this kingdom. The Lord alone adds to his church daily such as should be saved (Acts ii. 47), and I cannot find a creature salvation in this, although it was in time. But to the Lord belongs only eternal things. Time is the allotted days of the world, but it is only part of the eternal things of God, so I am persuaded that the things the Lord saves his people from in time is only that everlasting salvation. We are ac-

cused of being the heretics in the new departure, but search history as you may you can find the saints contending that God designs all the afflictions, tribulations and darkness of his people, and that for the trial their faith, which is a time salvation, but wholly of the Lord.

Now let us look at the dear saints of this kingdom. Paul says, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." - Rom. viii. 28. That being true, let us rejoice in a sovereign God, because whom he foreknew them he also did predestinate, etc. Now who is going to distinguish between those things that are called evil as to what work good? Shall we be guided into all truth by the Spirit of truth, or will designing men make the discrimination? Poor, weak, puny man, by nature, cannot discern the things that are working good for His people. If we are led by the gentle influence of the Spirit it is not ours to say that any one of the many evils in the world works, in itself, good, but that all things work together for good. Does this make or cause God's people to be licentious? God forbid. It does not show the love of Christ for his little children to hide behind the face that the Bible teaches all events as working to the good of his people. Instead of that, there is much comfort in the thought that in the days of the apostolic church a people accused them of saying, Let us to do evil that good may come. The writer calls this a slanderous report, and those with the same spirit are to-day making the same charge. God's people are commanded to do right; nay, it is their duty to do right, and no one can say when he is tempted away that God tempted him. The Spirit alone teaches righteousness. However, let us make it plain that all the wrath of man shall praise him and the remainder he will restrain. This ruling his kingdom belongs to the Lord; if he does not rule it and keep it we are taught that the watchman waketh but in vain. Not only is it necessary that he rule his kingdom. If he did not do that, then we have no assurance that the church will stand any longer. And I firmly believe that could Satan or his hordes thwart God in the carrying on of the work of his kingdom here in the world, that the same power would be able to keep some of the trophies of his everlasting love out of heaven.

In a sweet hope,
Elder W.D. Griffin

MEETINGS

ORIGINAL SOUTH ARKANSAS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The One Hundred Fifty Fifth Annual Meeting of the Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Pilgrim Rest Church, Dallas County, Arkansas September 14 and 15, 1996.

The meeting convenes with Pilgrim Rest Church off Highway 167 north of Fordcyce, Arkansas. Take 273 about

1/2 mile. Service will begin on Saturday before the third Sunday in September (September 14-15, 1996).

A special invitation to all Brothers, Sisters and Preachers of same faith to come and be with us if the Lord is willing.

Frances Townley
Church Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Smith River Association will convene the Lord willing; with Union Church, Patrick County, Va. the meeting to begin on Friday before the first Sunday in September, (Aug. 30th, 31st and Sept. 1st.)

The church is located on state road #623. Those traveling 57 east or west turn on Fairystone Park Rd. travel a short distance and turn left on 623, follow to church on the right.

Those traveling north or south on highway 220 turn on State Road 605 north of Oak Level (at blinking light designating sharp curve) Stay on 605 (Henry Road) thru Henry, across railroad tracks for several miles. Turn left on 623 to the church on the left.

Those traveling highway 40 (Franklin St.) east or west turn on State Road 605 about 5 miles west of Ferrum Va. at Crossroad Market, Go through Ingramville over hill, turn right on 623 and follow to church on the left.

We invite all of our faith and order to come and be with us.

W.G. Parsons, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 1996

A.J. Griffin, Al	$2.00
Mrs. Florence D. Maxey, VA	2.00
Mrs. Muriel M. Strader, NC	2.00
Mrs. Erby Dalton, VA	2.00
Miss Reidy Pickral, VA	25.00
Mrs. Elma G. Wilson, NC	2.00
Mrs. Virginia Gladding, MD	7.00
Mrs. Pearl Pendleton, VA	2.00
W. William Edwards, NC	2.00
Mrs. S.L. Walker, VA	7.00
R. Vernan Furr, NC	2.00
Walter Griffith, NC	2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER JENNIE DENTON

Our Lord called home Sister Jennie Denton. She was called from this life in December 1995. She was the daughter of Drew Worley and Pattie Shelton Worley.

Sister Denton attended Springfield Primitive Baptist Church until she moved from this area. She was received by conference June 12, 1976.

Written in Love and Hope,
Carol Pickral

Elder Marvin Brumfield,
Moderator
Oscar Pickral, Clerk

BERNICE GLYNMORE GREER

It is indeed with a sad heart I attempt to write the Obituary of our dear friend, and brother in tribulation, Bernice Glynmore Greer, born May 20, 1904: Mother, Mary Fanny, Fralin Greer, and father, Blanche Greer. They were blessed with six children, Erby, Jesse, Bernice, William, Sadie, and Effie. They lived in the Paynes Creek, and County Line vicinity. Mary Fanny and Effie were members at County Line for many years, until death. All are deceased. Bernice entered into rest, December 17, 1995, after a comfortable active day. Was married to Ivy Mrytle Nolan April 14, 1928. He retired from N.&W. Railway. Survivors are his wife of near 68 years, and two sons and two daughters-in-law.

Robert H. Greer & wife Betsy. Glynn R. Greer & wife Patsy. Grand children Susan Byers & husband Randy, Andy Greer, Brad Greer & Wife Cindy, Sherwood Greer & Wife Madonna. Seven Great grand children.

Dear Bernice, a true friend of County Line helped in upkeep of cemetery, and in keeping grounds in summer and removing leaves in Autumn, alway present in all needed help. Never blessed to tell the dear ones how Great things the Good Lord had done for his soul. Was blessed to know the joyful sound of the gospel, and rejoice in it. Desired and lived a quiet, and peaceable life, and to set a good example for his family; Others care seem more important than his own. We feel a great loss but we believe his great gain far exceeds all earthly loss. May we be granted grace, to ever say, O! Lord thy WILL be done (he is gone from the evil to come.) ISA. 57:1. Services, Lotz Salem Chapel. Wednesday, December 20, 1995; 3 p.m.

Elder W.T. Conner
Elder Noel F. Conner
Interment Sherwood Memorial Park
By request of County Line Church.
(N.F.C.)

MALA VICKERS MASSEY

Mala Vickers Massey, a member of The Durham Primitive Baptist Church passed from this life on October 21, 1995, at the age of 91. She was born on November 17, 1903, to Joseph Hiram Vickers and Flora Whitfield Vickers and was the last survivor of their ten children.

When she was a teen-aged girl she was visited in a dream by an angel dressed in white who told her that the Lord's work with her had begun. This experience of grace was imprinted in her heart for the remainder of her journey in this world and she held on to his hope through many personal sorrows and tribulations. She said that through all her trials she doubted herself many times, but never doubted His promises. By faith she believed the doctrine of salvation by grace and predestination to eternal life for those for whom Christ died. In 1919, at the age of 16, she offered to The Durham Primitive Baptist Church and was

blessed to be an active member for 76 years.

Her funeral was held October 23, 1995, at The Durham Primitive Baptist Church. The service was conducted by Elder C.B. Davis, Jr., and Elder Cleo Robertson. Portions of two of her favorite hymns were read: "Sovereign Ruler of The Skies" and "How Firm a Foundation". Her body was interred at Woodlawn Memorial Park in Durham beside the body of her deceased husband, Brother Cecil R. Massey.

Surviving are three children, Catherine Humbarger, Annie Ruth Massey and Walter T. Massey. Three grandchildren: Ann Copley, Sharon Throup and Jay Massey: and four great grandchildren.

Her love for the church was constant and steadfast and when the time came for her to go Home, The Lord gentley loosed the silver cord and granted her spirit a sweet and peaceful dismission from this life into the marvelous light of His eternal presence.

Her faith might best be described by The Scripture which I found she had written on the back of an envelope shortly before she passed. "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." (I Cor., 29 and Isaiah 64.4). She lived - and died - with this promise in her heart.

Submitted in love,
Catherine M. Humbarger

QUENELL CLARK MOORE

In memory of my mother, Quenell Clark Moore, born to Marion Franklin Clark and Tivis Taylor Clark August 24th, 1908 in Stokes County. She passed away on Nov. 4th, 1995 at the age of 87. She is survived by her husband Gid U. Moore of Alamance Health Care Center, Burlington, N.C. One daughter, Arlene M. Hole, two sons: Marshall and Urvin, four grandchildren and seven great grandchildren. She was preceded in death by one son, John Marion, one sister and four brothers.

Mother joined with Snow Creek Primitive Baptist Church August 1952 and was baptized by Elder D.A. O'Bryant on the next fourth Sunday morning in September, 1952 church was her delight in life and when she became unable to attend it was her desire to go on as she would say. When she breathed her last breath, I could not weep for her as I felt her sufferings were over and her wish had been granted. She was a firm believer in election and predestination; a true mother in Israel who had been given a sweet hope of eternal life.

A very fitting service was said over her by Elders Jimmy Spencer and Thorton Manley. Her body was laid to rest in Snow Creek Church Cemetery to await the resurrection.

"Sorrowful, Yet Rejoicing"

Desiring that one copy of this be placed in the church records one copy sent to the Signs and one to the Landmark.

Arlene Moore Hole, daughter

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

A SUDDEN CRY

A sudden cry and a child is born, into
this world and all should mourn,
For many things upset his road,
And heavy laden hangs the load.

There are trials and troubles
everywhere,
His part of worries he will share,
But there will be some pleasures too,
In earthly treasures he'll pursue.

He'll build himself an earthly house,
To love and worship with his spouse,
He'll try his hand in every greed'
And gather all his worldly needs.

He'll think he's happy for a while,
And live in luxury in his style,
He'll brag about the things he's done,
And hide his errors from everyone,

Then he'll began to feel a need,
For something more than gold and
greed,
A sorrow comes for all his sin,
And he'll began to search within.

A sudden cry and a child is born,
Into the spirit of the Lord,
He's cried for mercy from his God,
He's seen the road that he has trod.

Soft thoughts appear before his eyes,
Of understanding to his life,
Old things will daily go away,
A new peace given him this day.

Katherine Mathews

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EDITORIAL

BORN AGAIN

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

Jesus said unto Nicodemus, ***"Ye must be born again."*** This doctrine is of tremendous importance and is set forth in very simple language, yet it is misunderstood and misused as much or more than any doctrine in the Scriptures of truth. There was a time in my early life when I believed that I could give my heart to Christ at any time, and ask to be born again and I would be born again. This was and still is the teaching of unregenerate men, yet it is not the doctrine taught by the Holy Spirit to the children who have been ***"born of the water and of the Spirit."*** All natural men are born of the flesh, are of the earth earthy, and have only a father and mother of flesh. ***"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."*** In 1 Cor 2:14 we read, ***"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned."*** One who has not been born of the Spirit has only a natural or carnal mind, and ***"the carnal mind is enmity (hatred) against God."*** Will or can any one whose mind is enmity against God ask to be born again? Surely not. All men are born dead in trespasses and sins, They come forth from the womb speaking lies. (Ps.58:3). Can the dead do any thing? Can they even choose? No, they cannot, for there must be life before there can be any action. Even the elect children cannot choose life, for, ***"it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."*** (Rom 9:16). Jesus said, ***"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you"***. And in John 1:13, ***"- which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."***

Let us now ask a few questions. Did you ask to be born? Did you choose your father and mother? Did you

choose the time and place of your birth? Did you have any part in receiving a natural life? Surely you must answer, No, to all these questions. Neither can you choose to be born again. Jesus said, ***"Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."***

A birth does not give life, for the life must be begotten of a father before there can be a birth, which only makes the life manifest. The seed of all mankind was in Adam in the creation, and Eve is the mother of all in the flesh. Because all men were in the first Adam when he fell in sin they fell in him. A corrupt tree (Adam) cannot bring forth good fruit (Matt 7:18), and we are only Adam multiplied. It is through many natural generations that we are born of our earthly parents. As we were in the first Adam in the creation, so were the chosen of God in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. According to the good pleasure of his will, God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, and chose us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, and made us accepted in the beloved. (See Eph 1:3-5). God is omniscient. He has always known all things, there is nothing new to him. God created all men in Adam and brings them into the world at his appointed time. From among all of them he made a choice and gave them unto Jesus before any of them were born into the world: their names were written in the book of life before the foundation of the world. ***"Behold, I and the children which God hath given me."*** (Heb 2:13, Isa 8:18). There are many people who say that God would be unjust if he chose some and did not give all men a chance to be saved. I am glad that my hope of salvation is not left to chance, but is in the finished work of Jesus Christ. Does not God have the right to do with his own as it pleases him? In Romans 9:12-16 we read, ***"For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith unto Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."*** Regardless of what unregenerate men may charge against God he is holy and just. ***"Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne."*** (Ps.97:2). This would be so even if he should cast all men into the pits of hell. But those he chose he hath loved with an everlasting love and with loving-kindness he

draws them. (Jer 31:3). Because of his love he gave his beloved Son to die for them, to redeem them from the curse of the law that said," ***The soul that sinneth, it must die."*** (Ezek 18:4). Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. (Heb 9:22). He was made a curse for us, for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree.(Gal.3:13). Jesus shed his holy and pure blood on the tree of the cross and by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.(Heb 10:14).

The life of God's elect children was in Christ before the foundation of the world for he is the way, and the truth, and the life, ***"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."*** (Col 3:3). Christ is the head of the church and the church is his body, and members in particular. (Eph 5:23 & 1 Cor 12:27) In Ps 139:15:16 we read, ***"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet unperfect: and in thy book all my members were written when as yet there were none of them."*** Being the body of Christ they have a unity with him that can never be severed. When he hung upon the cross and died we were baptized into his death. ***"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin."***(Rom 6:4-7).

In the flesh we are sinners and will continue to sin till our natural death, for when sin is finished it brings forth death. James tells us that ***"every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lusts and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death."*** (James 1:15). Paul said, ***"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."*** (Rom 8:9). We are in the Spirit only if we have been born again of the Holy Spirit, and ***"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."*** (1 John 3:9).

After we have been born again there are two men within us. Paul speaks of them as the "old man" and the "new man". The old man is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. This brings about a warfare in us, for the flesh (old man) lusteth against the Spirit (new man), and the Spirit against the flesh. We find then, as did Paul, that there is no good thing in our flesh.

When we would do good evil is ever present with us so that we cannot find how to do that which is good, and the evil which we would not, that we do. But Paul says, ***"If I do that which I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me."*** I would suggest that you read the 7th chapter of Romans to get the fulness of that which I have only paraphrased, for it is too long to quote here. But the last two verses we quote, ***"O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So with the mind I myself serve the law of God: but with the flesh the law of sin."***

Unregenerate men preach that men are made better by a new birth, but we know that the "old man" is not changed at all. Paul did not say,"O wretched man that I WAS, but that I AM." And he thanked God that he shall be delivered from this body of death. In the flesh he was the same as he was before being born again. Are we any different? If we are like Paul then we are crucified with Christ. (Gal 2:19-20). ***"For I thru the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."*** That life is eternal and can never die, but returns to the Father who gave it when death claims our natural life and our body is given to the grave. Our flesh will return to the dust from which it was made, to sleep unto the day our Lord and Saviour returns to receive it unto himself. ***"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."*** (1 Thes 4:16). And John 5:28-29, ***"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."*** Only those who have been born again of the Holy Spirit, in whom the Spirit of Christ dwells, can do good, for Jesus said, ***"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."*** (John 15:5). Paul said, ***"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."*** (Phil 4:13). All of our righteousness (self righteousness) is as filthy rags. (Isa 64:6). In Eph 2:10 we read, ***"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."*** Shall we fail to walk in them? Never.

All men are born dead in trespasses and in sin, and in John 5:21 we read, ***"For as the Father raiseth up the***

dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." And in verse 25, *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."* To me this is speaking of the new birth, the being born again. This is the making manifest that eternal life that was given us in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world. Paul said this is a mystery. *"Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but is now made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."* (Col 1:26).

What a wonderful hope this is! even though it seems to fade away so far that we sometimes doubt that we even have a hope. Yet if we have a true hope (Jesus) we will never be without, for he hath said, *"I will never leave nor forsake thee."* (Heb 13:5). Paul tells us, *"-even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."* (Rom 8:23-25). Only those who have been given eternal life can have this hope. Jesus called them his sheep, and said, *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish."* In order for one to have hope he must have life, for the dead know nothing and can do nothing. Jesus said, *"All that the Father hath given me shall come to me, and I will raise him up at the last day."* (John 6:37). But to some he said, *"Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."* (John 5:40). He also said, *"No man can come unto me except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him."*

Brethren, if I have a true hope in Christ it is that my body shall be changed and redeemed from the grave, and that I shall live forever in the presence of the Lord and Saviour. Praise his glorious name for this sweet hope. Can there be anything better for a poor, wretched, sinsick soul, who knows that God would be just in casting him into hell?

Brethren, I realize that I have only touched the surface of this enormous subject, but if the Lord be in the matter it is enough for the time. May he bless the truth and pardon all error. To those whose views are not in accord with what I have written, I desire no conflict. I have set forth only what I believe, and trust that they are in accord with the holy Scripture. May God give you grace to remember me in your prayers of faith.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES

Just so sure; as the sun rises in the east; and sets in the west; it is no less sure; that, if you are blessed to speak that pure and Holy truth, as it is in the Lord Jesus Christ; in the hearing, of the self - will worshipers, and self - work mongers; of this world; you, and what you are blessed to stand for; will, assuredly be hated. Now, why is that? To find the answer; just think back to your first experience; in becoming aware, of what you were, in your own fleshly sinful nature's ways; did you not feel completely condemned? of a certainty, you did. Now, is it not a true existing fact? that no one, in their fleshly nature's ways; would dare ask, for self condemnation? I believe not. I also feel, that one who has never felt that, self-condemnation; is clear evidence; that one; has not yet had, an experience of God's grace, or the revelation of the Holy Truth. I realize, that in my writing and talking; concerning these things; I often mention the weakness and wickedness; in and of man's carnal flesh; and some may feel, that it is unnecessary, to dwell upon it to such extent; and I have no desire, to argue the point, with anyone who feels that way; but, will attempt to give a reason, why I do so; - It is my feelings that, in order for one to fully and truly appreciate light; he must first have experienced darkness; and, in order to continue with that appreciation; he or she, must continue to compare; that stark difference; between light and darkness; and if fleshly nature of man; does not represent darkness; as has to do with our subject here; then, I surely am still, in total darkness. Darkness being, the total opposite of, Light; as is purity, the opposite of filth; as is black, from white; and, as is truth, from untruth or the lie; and, as is Holiness, the opposite from wickedness; then, is it not reasonable, to assume that, if we are not aware of both; we then cannot be fully aware of either one? I feel that we cannot. Therefore, so long as we live here in this body of sinful flesh; we must be kept mindful of its sinful nature; if we are to view its opposite; the Holy Spirit of "God," in His was any working; so as to somewhat, see and feel, their vast difference.

If one is not aware of his 'own' weakness; he cannot have an awareness of, that almighty unhindered power of God; and if such be the case; from where, does the Holy fear of "God" enter in? Otherwise, his fear of "God," would be only such fear, as a man might fear an attacking lion; which, is not that Holy fear; as the born again child of "God," feels toward his "God." Within our realization or awareness, of our own weakness; is, wherein comes our strength, to feel, and believe, in the greatness, of our "Lord and God." Read 2nd Corinthians 12:9-10.

It is not in man of himself; to either save, or help save, himself, or any other; for heaven and immortal glory. For his flesh and blood, cannot enter therein. And, as for his soul; he has no

control; he of himself, cannot see it, touch it; or change it; from black to white, or from white to black, or from lost to saved, nor from saved to lost; for all that; was confirmed and established, in God's choosing of His people; from before any people, were ever in this time existing world. For, whatsoever God confirms and establishes; remains established forever. For He is the unchanging God. He does neither want, desire, nor ask for, anything or anything. He created it all; and holds it all; and controls it all; and does with it all; just as be His own good pleasure, to do with it each and all. And so, He has absolutely no condition at all, in its entirety. His will, purpose and pleasure; just simply shall be done and accomplished, to its every jot and tittle; For He is God; and all He created and made, including the devil; are His tools, to use as He so pleases. And natural man; who thinks himself to be so great; cannot even direct his own footsteps. For they all are directed of God. All strength, what be an absolute necessity, for mankind to live, move, or have his being; is furnished by, almighty God; and that strength He furnishes to each one of us; is measured out, in just sufficient amount, no more and no less; than, shall enable him to perform those exact movements or things; he were placed here for and to perform; and whenever, his allotted days and hours and minutes, draws to a close, for his stay here; "God" just ceases to furnish him strength, and his mortal body dies. It all is just that simple with God. For He giveth life, and He taketh life away; just as it pleaseth Him. Yes Dear ones; whether or not, we like it, or believe it; every man, woman or child, ever born into this world; is wholly and completely, dependent upon our "Creator God," for our very being, and all whatever takes place with us each and all; either in this world, or that world to come; after this world is no more.

Now, what I have written here, concerning the wickedness, in and of fleshly mankind; was in nowise intended, to reflect upon, his Creator "God;" in His work in Creating man; for, as was all His creations it was good and very good; even also, the satan or the devil; with whom, mankind, has had, and still does have, very much dealings with; in heeding his advice, and following his instructions; just as Eve (the first woman to ever live here upon this earth) did, there in the garden of Eden.

May we be given to see and understand this; The almighty and merciful "God;" did it all, to fulfill His own good and Holy purpose; and therefore; it all, shall serve unto that very end; whereby, his good and holy purpose, shall be fulfilled; to its every jot and tittle; every i dotted, and every T crossed. And all that being so; simply, by reason, He is God. He holds it all in His grasp; and has absolute control over its entirety. Not one speck or grain of dust or sand, can rise or fall, without Him. He set all bounds, and established all goings. All whatever has been; and ever shall be; has already been; in both His mind and purpose; from before the foundation,

of the world. Some say, that what we say, concerning the Predestination of God; does charge Him, with making man sin. But, from my own experiences; all man's sinning; is voluntarily done; through and by, his own carnal satisfaction. Therefore, that sin he commits; is not necessarily, in the thing performed; but instead; in that weakened intent, within his mind and heart; as he does perform it. For the performance itself; is, directed of God. For remember: Man walketh; but, God directeth his footsteps. For man to travel, undirected of God; then, man could be somewhere outside the boundaries, of the knowledge of God; which is an entire impossibility; for, God is infinite; therefore, His knowledge is infinite; He is present in all places and spaces; His all seeing eyes, see all things at all times, even the secrets of man's heart; and though men are sometimes successful, in hiding from others, what is really in their heart; none-the-less; God is fully aware of them all. (Regarding temptation) James 1:13, Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man: Man is tempted of his own lust; then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and when sin is finished, it bringeth forth death. Death of a man; is, when his sinning ceases. If a man say, he sinneth not; he is a liar, and the truth is not in him. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Romans (3:23). To be Spiritually minded; is, to have no desire, for self praise; and, to desire to hear NO praise, of others of mankind; but instead, have a desire, that any and all praise, honor and glory; be directed unto His great and Holy name; the only name, given under heaven or among men, could ever be worthy. For otherwise; it must be and is, vain glory. And, the Lord God, is the only one; who can rightly, impute glory to another; if so be His pleasure to do it; and that being, with His own glorious Self. After all, who else beside Himself; could have any Self glory; to shed upon another? None, I believe. I am persuaded, that were it possible; for all the goodness and greatness, in and of, the True and living "God," be written into books; they would more than cover the whole earth; and reach the height of His throne, in heaven and immortal glory. While, on the other hand; were each of mankinds sins, he and she has committed, since Adam and Eve were driven from the garden of Eden; were the size of a mustard seed; they would amount to more, in number; than all the grains of sand, along the shores, of all the seas. And so, if able to somewhat, contemplate such immensity; do we not begin to see; that purpose, "God" had and has, in there being a hell; and also, His purpose in and for, having sent His only begotten Son down here, in this lowground of sin and sorrow; to pay that awful debt, owed, by His afore chosen people? I feel and hope I do. I feel so sure, that I have no doubt of

this one thing; if Christ, did not pay that awful sinful debt, for this poor sinner; then hell shall surely and justifiably be my stay; when He takes me out of this world. Christ the Lord, is my only hope of heaven. Praise "God," from whom all blessings flow; Of none other, do I wish to know.

Troy G. Shepard

VOICES OF THE PAST

From Elder Lambert's Book, "Tried In The Furnace."

GOD'S METHOD OF ADDING BELIEVERS INTO THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE CHURCH

April, 1955

ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

AN EDITOR forwarded a request to me from a reader in Alabama, to write a treatise on Romans 10:14 which reads, "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher ? " I attempt this fully aware of the fact that I must be especially inspired with divine qualifications for this special venture or this attempt will be vain.

We cannot lift a verse of Scripture out of its context and treat upon it independently of its setting and hope to derive a true conclusion. Neither can we come to a true conclusion without considering all the Scriptures lest there be a contradiction. The fact that this verse is written using all pronouns in third person we must consider who is writing, to whom it is addressed, of whom is he speaking and what is the subject under consideration?

Paul, who was a "servant of Jesus Christ," "Called to be an apostle," " Separated unto the gospel of Jesus Christ," did this writing. He had "received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations." Let us see how Paul was led into this condition. Read the ninth chapter of Acts relative to his conversion. Paul was one of the elect family, "A chosen vessel," beloved of God, and was chosen in Christ before he had this experience. He was full of zeal toward God, but not according to knowledge when the light shined about him. He had breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of Christ and had obtained authority from the high priests to bring men and women bound to Jerusalem who were disciples of the Lord. He was persecuting worshippers of the Christ when he was stopped by Him. We see, then, that Paul was ordained beforehand by God unto the position he was in when he wrote this letter but it took the direct operation of God's Holy Spirit upon both Paul and Ananias, a preacher, to perfect this ordination. He assented to believe in God but not that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. He possessed zeal toward God but not a zeal toward Jesus Christ. He

was a chosen vessel but had not been separated unto the gospel of Jesus Christ.

When you read this account of Paul's experience as recorded in the ninth and twenty-second chapters of Acts you will find that Paul ***heard the voice*** of the Son of God. This voice had its effect as always. This voice ordered him to go to a certain place "and there it shall be told thee of all things which are ***appointed*** for thee to do " (Acts 22 :10). At the same time God was working directly upon a preacher, Ananias. The Lord said unto Ananias, "Go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for, behold, he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. . . (Go thy way; for he is ***a chosen vessel unto me,*** to bear my name before Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: for I will show him how great things he ***must*** suffer for my name's sake " (Acts 9 :11,12,15,16). Read the record. You will see that both obeyed and met. The result was that Paul ***heard*** the preacher because God had prepared the heart of Paul and had sent the preacher.

Paul ***believed*** the preacher because God had and was directly working upon Paul and the preacher. Ananias laid his hand upon Paul, Paul received his sight, Ananias baptized Paul, ordained him as a preacher as ministers are ordained today. Paul abode there certain days and straightway preached Jesus in the synagogues as the Christ, the Son of God. He had now received grace and apostleship. We see that Paul knew by his experience what he was writing in Romans 10:14,15. He knew that God had sent and used a preacher in bringing him into the fellowship of the Church, and in ordaining him as a minister. God hath ordained that a few of the many for whom Jesus died will be added to the Church in this way.

Paul is particularly addressing those who have already been added to the Church in Romans 10:14. He is primarily addressing the Gentiles who have been endowed with the Holy Spirit, who have heard and believed gospel preaching. These have the faith in their hearts that Jesus is the Son of God. These have confessed with their mouths and have been baptized. They knew from experience that there had been a miraculous working. They had heard and believed God-sent preachers. God uses Paul in this letter to preach to them as well as unto us to their edification and comfort. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that ***believe***" (1 Cor. 1:21). God is saving them as well as us from erroneous theories and vain practices through Paul's preaching. We want you to understand that Paul is writing to ***believers in Christ Jesus.*** He is writing ***of a people of God who have not yet believed that Jesus is the Christ.***

Paul has under consideration the children of God among the Jews who have a zeal toward God but not according to knowledge. His heart's

desire and prayer to God is that they might be saved. He bears record of this zeal in trying to establish their own righteousness, not submitting themselves unto the righteousness of God. The zealous law worshippers of this day are in the same category, especially those who are not satisfied with their righteousness but go about trying to establish their own righteousness. I think it is evident that many who are born of God do not yet believe that Jesus is their Christ. They are yet under the law and worshippers of it. One truly born of God finds by sad experience that his efforts to establish his own righteousness are not successful, seeing he falls short of meeting its demands. Paul says in ***Romans 10:4, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."*** There is no difference between the Jew and the Gentile for the ***"same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him."*** Then he quotes, ***"Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:13).***

In response to the quotation, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," Paul asks a number of questions which verifies God's method of saving His people in the sense expressed in the quotation. May we think of this as a golden chain God uses in especially saving a remnant of His elect from the dominion of the law and sin experienced in time. It is His way of bringing some of His children into sweet fellowship with one another. Through this chain He makes them fit and proper subjects for baptism. Those of you who are "called to be saints," who are members of the Church, know that you heard the truth preached by, or rather, through a preacher. Because that your heart was prepared to hear the preached truth, you heard and believed the truth. You assented to this truth by confessing with your mouth using words of the tongue which was prepared by the Lord. You were received by the Church and were baptized by a preacher. All members of the militant church have heard and believed the preaching of God-sent ministers, and have been baptized in water by a God-sent and properly ordained preacher. These expressions are in strict accord with all cases cited in the Acts.

We want to call your attention to Paul's discourse on Mars Hill in Athens. The people Paul addressed there had an altar having this inscription, "To the unknown God." "As I passed by, and beheld your devotion, I found an altar with this inscription, *to the unknown God.* Whom therefore ye *ignorantly* worship, Him declare I unto you" (Acts 17 :23). These were ignorantly worshipping God. Therefore, they were proper subjects of gospel address. Paul preached that God was the Lord of the heavens and of the earth, and that in Him we moved and had our being. He also preached Christ unto them and some believed ! These people were subjects of gospel address because they ignorantly worshipped God. They had been born again but had not yet believed in Jesus Christ. God was directly working with

Paul and some of these people in order to bring them into the knowledge of the *truth*. The result was that " Certain men claved unto him and *Believed* " (Acts 17:34). You will notice that it was *certain* men. It was certain men who had godly preparations. Let us pass to Philip and the eunuch of Ethiopia as recorded in Acts 8:26-39, and see if we do have the same procedure as indicated in Romans 10:14,15.

Here we find that a preacher was sent. Philip was sent to the Ethiopian. The Ethiopian was a worshipper of God because he had gone up to the temple at Jerusalem to worship. The eunuch was interested in the Scriptures because he was reading the prophecy of Isaiah as he rode along in his chariot. He read but did not understand what he read. He wanted to know of Philip if Isaiah was speaking of himself or of some other man. The eunuch was reading the seventh and eighth verses of the 53rd chapter of Isaiah. Philip began at the same Scripture and preached unto him Jesus. When they had come to certain water, the eunuch asked, "See here is water. What doth hinder me to be baptized?" Philip answered, *"If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest."* The eunuch answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Philip baptized the eunuch. The eunuch was born of the Spirit and his heart especially prepared by God to hear and believe the preaching of Philip. Philip was especially sent to preach Jesus to the eunuch. When the eunuch assented to the belief that Jesus is the Son of God, the eunuch was a fit subject for baptism. The eunuch was born of God and in possession of godly zeal, he was ignorantly worshipping the symbol at Jerusalem and was interested in the Scriptures before Philip, preached to him. The eunuch was, being in that condition, a subject of gospel address. He was alive spiritually but needed guidance because he couldn't understand what he read. The Ethiopian did not know whether Isaiah spoke of himself or of some other man. God used Philip to preach Jesus unto him that he might understand that Isaiah was prophesying of Jesus and not of himself. What was the result? The eunuch believed that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and was given a desire to follow Him in baptism in water. The eunuch was added to the church in fellowship one with another. Now, read the second chapter of Acts.

You will find that Peter was especially sent and qualified to preach that sermon by the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. You will see that it especially pricked the hearts of those individuals whom God had prepared their hearts to receive it. They yet did not understand what to do. They realized they must do something but did not know what they must do, so they inquired, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" These were proper subjects to receive God's commands, exhortations, and testimonies through the mouth of Peter that they might be saved from "this untoward generation" and be added to the Church. They who gave evidence that they had

gladly received His word were baptized. The command to repent and be baptized was the command to outwardly make manifest the repentance that they already experienced in heart by the direct operation of God's Holy Spirit. This was a command to come out from among them and be separate.

Read Acts 10 for an account of Cornelius' conversion. Cornelius was already born of God before God gave him the special vision recorded because he was "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people and prayed to God alway." God dealt directly with him by commanding him specifically to go to a certain place and call for a certain man who would tell him what he ought to do. God, also, directly qualified Peter for this special occasion. Note that in all cases God directly prepares both the hearer and the preacher, and in all cases cited he used preachers in this special salvation under consideration! You will find that Cornelius told his experience. Peter preached Jesus unto the hearers who had been gathered by God's providence. After seeing the evidence that the gift of the Holy Ghost had been poured out on them Peter commanded them to be baptized.

You who read this may ask, "Does faith come by the preacher ? " Paul must have surmised such question in treating upon this text for he reasons that they have not all obeyed even though the sound of gospel preaching has been literally heard by them. Then he quotes a question from Isaiah 53:1, "Who hath believed our report?" He answers by saying, ***"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" - (Rom. 10:17).*** Spiritual hearing does not come by the preacher but by the Word of God. God must speak to each and every individual that hears spiritually. This faith is directly imparted to His people as a gift from Him. Some phases of this faith come to a few ***through*** a preacher but not by a preacher. I have heard it said by ordained brethren, "There will be no preaching unless the preacher comes." Jesus Christ is the Preacher that was annointed for this particular work. He was ordained to preach the gospel to the poor. Unless Christ preaches through an individual there will be no preaching. Unless He preaches to an individual there will be no comfort and spiritual strength experienced. Christ is the Word. Every time you are given to hear Christ preach through His ordained ministers your faith is strengthened and your hope renewed. You are not given to thank the preacher but to thank God for the preaching that you so joyfully received. You admire the minister and thank God for him.

"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things" (Romans 10:15). Have you been deeply impressed with the readiness of your pastor to come to you in times of distress when you call upon him? Have you noticed how persistently he goes among his scattered flock to administer words of

comfort? Have you ever experienced a peaceful calm as you watched a minister walking toward you? When your troubled heart has been calmed as you listened to gospel preaching you have thought, "His feet were guided and directed by the providence of God that he might bring glad tidings of good things to me." You have noticed that his walk is graced with humility and meekness. You observe that his steps and actions are carefully and prayerfully taken. His feet are not swift to run into trouble and confusion but he walks beside the still waters. "Surely," you say, "God is guiding his footsteps for he walks in paths of righteousness."

You listen to the words he speaks. They calm your troubled breast and soothe your aching heart. They are words of peace that settle your confused mind. He tells you of good things, that our God reigns in providence and grace, and that Jesus saves you from all your sins. He cries that God is merciful to your unrighteousness, and is a present help in time of trouble. He preaches that it is through the merits of Christ that we have hope of heaven and immortal glory. You desire to be in complete fellowship of the saints. You are made willing to some out from among this untoward generation, follow your Lord in baptism, and be numbered with this peculiar people who trust only in the Lord. May God enable those of you who are not numbered with those who have believed with their hearts and confessed with their mouth to do so. May He give you strength and courage to "Go home (to the Church) to your friends (those who feel little but trust in God) and tell them how great things the ***Lord hath done for you and had compassion upon you.***" Tell your experience. Those of you who are numbered with the church, may God bless you to thank Him for the fellowship of your brethren. May God sanctify these meditations to your comfort and edification is my prayer.

Elder E.J. Lambert

THE RISEN CHRIST

There is no room for quibbling about there being a resurrection of the dead. Opinions we have about when it is and how it is, but we have no right in the world to an opinion about there being a resurrection of the dead. Soon we are to go the way of all the earth. Erelong the enemy death shall come our way. The world of God's children are interested in the matter. It is not something to be dealt with in a light manner, and brushed aside. It is claiming our attention because it concerns us in a weightier way than ever before. Our loved ones are being killed in every manner known to modern warfare. We have seen them come into this material world as human beings, and grow into manhood and womanhood. They - themselves, human beings, flesh and blood folks - are near and dear to us. Our hope is that they are in that glorious number

chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began. In every person there is a hope of seeing again those that have tasted of the graciousness of God that hope is of more concern than to others. It is a hope made alive by the presence of a living being. On this, we desire to treat and to give our reason for the hope that is in us. (1 Peter 3:15) Some hopes are good ones, some not so good. Some hopes are based on creature effort, some on God's work. Some hope that they are not deceived in what God has done, others hope they will hold out to the end. Now what is our hope? Often-times we have talked it over with you, but let us go over the ground once again. Salvation is the theme of the people of God. The angel confirmed Joseph in his fear. Jesus shall save his people from their sins. I want to affirm and stand in the face of all opposition that his salvation is not for spirits, but that it is for people. I do not know of any people but the kind that roams this earth. If there is any inspired description of people that would lead us to think that the people in bible days are any different than they were in the morning of time or down to now I certainly am not aware of it. In the kindest way I want to affirm that the object of all the sufferings of Christ was the salvation of sinners. My hope of heaven and immortality bids me reject every doctrine that is not centered around that thought. There is not (and I believe that all my writing bears me out) a thing else to preach. There is not any middle ground to occupy. Spirits did not have any promise of salvation. People did. I hope that none believe any less than this, but believe what brethren may, here is where I desire to stand. Moreover, I have never expressed myself on the new birth. I know that two and probably more outstanding thoughts prevail among our people. I know that good, spiritual-minded brethren have been on each side. Generally speaking, our people have differed on it in a brotherly manner. I am glad of that and I do hope that I may express myself so clearly and emphatically that none will ever call in question where I stand. At the same time I do hope to express my views in such a manner, that even though they are rejected, that I will be looked over and watched after by the brethren. This theme of salvation was ever in purpose. (2 Tim. 1:9) It is manifested in time. We have a direct declaration of it from heaven. (Matt. 1:21) It concerns people, men and women. To come into that kingdom concerns people, men and women. There is not a vestige of proof that any thing but men and women was meant by the angel. If that is not what is meant, why did he say people? It was one of the same kind of people that came to the Savior. If Nicodemus was not a man what was he? Was it not a man that Jesus had under consideration? Was it not a man he was talking to? If there had been two hundred, could it not have been said a crowd of people came? And is it not people that are to be saved? To me, Jesus told him that people, men and women, such as you are, Nicodemus, are the object of my coming to earth. To get into my king-

dom ye must be born again. Had he been born once? To be sure he had. He had been born into this material world. That made one birth, that was one time. Now to get into my kingdom you must be born again. Up until now it (salvation) has to do with people, men and women. I am not given to brevity but here is where I desire to stay. The Savior said men, the angel said people, the Savior said sinners. This cannot be explained. Nothing needs explanation that is self-explanatory. It is men and women that are saved by the blood of Jesus. It is men and women that are born again. Now we come to the resurrection of the dead. These men and women that were saved by the blood of Jesus, and that were born into his kingdom, die. No way for them to escape death. Brethren, at this time I believe it was just such characters as you and me that were under consideration by the angel. I believe it was the same kind (as though there was any other kind) being addressed by the Savior when he was talking to Nicodemus. It is the same characters, the same kind, flesh and blood, that are dead. We speak of them as dead men or women, before this we have referred to them as saved men and women or as that man or woman is born of the Spirit. Will the dead arise? The best answer I know to that is that they have. This cannot be evaded, this cannot be compromised, an opinion cannot be had about this. If the plain, simple, inspired writing of the Bible does not mean that Christ arose, what does it mean? Inspiration said he did, but let us suppose that the account of his resurrection does not mean that he rose. Very well, now just to which of us uninspired fellows is to be entrusted the job of telling what it does mean? Personally I believe that Jesus rose from the tomb. I think it fair and brotherly to tell you while on this particular phase of the subject that it was a flesh, blood, bone body that rose. It had, while pulsating with life, gotten weary, (John 4:6) my body does the same. It had gotten hungry (Mark 11:12) mine does the same. He got thirsty on the cross, (John 19:28) I am sure I would have too. He died as we must die. We know that the children of God must all die, a natural, corporeal death. We did not partake of flesh and blood because he did, but he partook of both in order to become like unto us. Would it not be the most fantastic work palmed off on the children of God if Christ became like them, (that is, was a partaker of flesh and blood) his fleshly body rise and theirs be forever and forever consigned to the power of the grave? This may be true but if it is I have not so learned Christ, but I desire to wait patiently and if I am wrong may God teach me right, and in the meantime teach me forbearance towards those that differ. If this taking of flesh and blood does not mean anything perhaps it does not mean anything to be a partaker of divine nature. If I lose the one am I not in danger of losing the other, and thus becoming a nonentity? Upon what foundation can we rest? If we are partakers of both flesh and blood and of the divine nature, and we are to lose the one how do we know we would not

lose the other? What purpose was served in Jesus taking flesh and blood? Was it not in some grand and glorious way connected with the salvation of the children of God? In what way? In the salvation of the children of God. Primarily his coming in the flesh was for the destruction of death and the power of death and him that had that power (Heb. 2:14) while like them he overcame. No matter how low we get we shall overcome. Any place, thing, event or condition that ever comes against the children of God was met by Jesus Christ. Perhaps some would say if he met it and overcame it why must we follow? It is so good to follow when the way is open and clear, and our Leader has become the way, but we could never have gone forward alone. Going alone and meeting the things Christ endured and suffered for us would have been punishment for us, but following is not a punishment but a blessing. Do the dead rise? Christ rose, was he dead? Now the next question has the kernel of the whole thing in it. Do flesh and blood bodies die? They do. Then the dead rise. Progress in material things is to be desired, but brethren I cannot go beyond this. I may be wrong, yes, but if wrong about this, wrong about all. Sinners are the beneficiaries of salvation. He came, lived, died and arose for them. Then the dead do rise. What is wrong, brethren, with that? I must stand on this, it is my experience. This is what I hope I learned on the plains of southeast Missouri more than twenty years ago. I was alone and away from all big preachers. Up until this time I had not known the least thing and I did not care anything about Old Baptists. I was reared by them and among them but I had as well been anywhere else for the good it did me. By the grace of God I have been brought thus far in his kingdom if in it at all. By his providence I have been preserved thus far. I have no apology to make for contending for salvation by grace. In purpose chosen before the world, manifested in time as men and women, salvation saves them in body, soul and spirit. Soon, soon I shall be called away. Brethren, my hope is that my body; that sits here at my desk will rise. I have felt that some want to think I have changed, but I have not in the least. I believe that Christ rose from the dead, that he is now at the right hand of the Majesty on high. In connection with the dead rising I must say that I believe in the second coming of Christ. As with the resurrection I believe it too to be in the future. Let us listen to Paul, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." In the same manner and degree that we believe Jesus rose even so do we believe God will bring them that sleep with him. Somebody is going to be alive when he comes. Their being alive will not prevent those that sleep. In some way, beyond my power of description, they have gone on, else how could he bring them with him? In this the dead shall rise first. In some way the child of God does not die. Here is ample evidence that in some sense they go on to God

at death. The evidence is just as strong that he or she has been consigned to the grave. At the second coming they are to be brought from heaven and are to rise from the grave. How long between the rising of the dead and we that are alive being changed I do not know. I do know that it is to be. We that are alive will be changed. I must say it is us, the men and women, children of God that are to be changed. The two groups (those that have died and those still alive) shall be caught up together to meet the Lord. Those that died will then be complete, those still living shall be complete. All shall be together and with the Lord. This is what the apostle commands us to comfort one another with.

Elder W.D. Griffin

"Man's goings are of the Lord; how can a man then understand his own way?" - Proverbs xx. 24.

Does not your heart sometimes quake with fear lest you have nothing but a nominal profession, lest the god of this world be blinding you, and lest your conscience be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin? It is good to have such fears. He who feareth not, who has no solemn apprehensions, no anxious inquires, who is never exercised with some internal trepidation of soul, it is much to be feared has never known what it is to have "the candle of the Lord searching the inward parts of the belly." But if God has quickened your soul into spiritual life, and you have ears to hear, I would just put two questions to you: Have you obtained: righteousness by a manifestation of Christ's righteousness; pardon by the application of Christ's blood; love by a shedding abroad of love; deliverance by a discovery of God's outstretched hand? My other question is this--If you have not, and let conscience bear its honest testimony--if you have never experienced righteousness, pardon, love, and deliverance, is there a cry in your soul after them? Is there anything like fervent supplication that God would bestow them? Is there anything of a groan in the depth of your spirit that the Lord would reveal them? These are marks of life; and he that has these marks will have the blessing, because God has quickened him into spiritual life. It may be long delayed, but it will come at last; " it will surely come, it will not tarry." It may be withheld for wise purposes, and you may have to travel through many a dark season and many an anxious hour, but deliverance is sure; it is reserved for you in Christ, and you are reserved for it, kept by God himself unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

Elder J.C. Philpot

PSALM 92: 11-15.

Mine eye also shall see my desire on mine enemies, and mine ears shall hear my desire of the wicked that rise up against me.

The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God.

They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;

To shew that the LORD is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the next session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Hadnot Creek Church, Carteret County, N.C. On October 12-13, 1996. All who believe and love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited.

The Church is located off NC 58 on Pelletier Loop Road approximately 13 miles east of Maysville.

Gene Lupton

EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

The 1996 Eastern Kehukee Association will convene, the Lord willing, at Tarboro Church in Tarboro, North Carolina. Services will begin at 11:00 am on Saturday, October 5 and Sunday, October 6.

Tarboro Church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albermarle Avenue, right next to the railroad.

We welcome all lovers of the truth to come and be with us .

John Coker, Church Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 21 & 22, 1996.

The meeting will be held at New Hope Church, located at Spearsville, La. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron, Association Clerk
(318) 778-4217

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the Staunton River Union is to be held, the Lord willing with Malmaison Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in September. A cordial invitation is extended to our ministers, brethren, and friends.

Eld. Julian Williams, Moderator
Peggy Wells, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

West Country Line Union meeting will be held with Moon's Creek Primitive Baptist Church the 5th Sunday in September.

The Church is located off of Hwy. 86 between Danville, VA. and Yanceyville, N.C. From Danville turn left at the Parks Spring Crossing go one-half

mile and Church is on the left From Yanceyville turn right off of Hwy. 86 and go about one-half mile, Church is on the left.

All lovers of the truth are invited and especially ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Sister Sue Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 1996

Fred W. Murphy, VA	2.00
Mrs. Ruth Dalton, VA	12.00
Mr. & Mrs. Gayle Phillips, AL	10.00
Tony & Carla Horton, VA	12.00
Donald R. Arrington, NC	2.00
Mrs. H.C. Houchins, VA	2.00
Mrs. J.T. Flippens, VA	7.00
Mrs. Margaret Quesenberry, VA	2.00
Mrs. Ollie C. Gauldin, NC	2.00
Mrs. Connie Page, NC	2.00
Mrs. Frances Jarvis, CA	2.00
Eld. David Bailey, WV	2.00
Mrs. Bonnie R. Moyers, TN	2.00
Julian Ray, NC	2.00
Alvin E. Agee, Va	2.00
Harold T. Clayton, NC	2.00
Mrs. Aline C. Jacks, AL	3.00
Mrs. Cliff Weaver, WA	20.00
Mrs. Harold May, AL	7.00
Warren Brown, VA	2.00
Mrs. M.E. Womble, NC	2.00
Mrs. Hazel H. Bryant, Va	5.00
Ina Hendrix, TN	2.00
Mrs. Frances Townley, AR	2.00
James G. Hagler, Al	15.00
Oscar Pickral, VA	7.00
Ms. Mary Lou Crissman, NC	2.00
John T. Brooks, AZ	2.00

OBITUARIES

UZENIA BLACKWELL

Mrs. Uzenia Snider Blackwell; 86, of 135 Emily St. and 719 Lake June Road, Lake Placid, Fla., died May 16, 1996, at High Point Regional Hospital.

She was born Feb. 21, 1910, in Davidson County, a daughter of Hosey and Joyce Arey Snider. She had lived most of her life in High Point and had retired from Lillie Rubin Department Store in Fort Lauderdale, Fla She was a former employee of Adams-Millis Corp. of High Point and was a member of Mechanicsville Primitive Baptist Church. On July 9, 1932, she married Otis W. Blackwell, who survives, of the home.

Also surviving are one daughter, Mrs. Brenda Gayle Faris of Winder, Ga.; three sons, Otis W. (Bud) Blackwell of 1626 Seven Oaks Place, Jerry L. Blackwell of 506 N. Hamilton St., and Gene L. Blackwell of Durham; one sister, Mrs. Esther Brown of 132 Horneytown Road; nine grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

Funeral was held at Sechrest Chapel on E. Lexington Avenue by Elder Bill Ring. Burial was at Floral Garden Park Cemetery.

Memorials may be directed to the American Cancer Society, 1004 N. Main St., High Point, N.C. 27262 or to the donor's choice.

SISTER SALLIE JANE DALTON

Our Lord called home Sister Sallie Jane Dalton. Sister Dalton passed from this life January 8, 1996 She was the daughter of Sam David Dalton and Ida Pickral Dalton.

Sister Sallie was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by Experience and Baptism May 7, 1966. Sister Sallie was always a faithful member. She always enjoyed the preaching and fellowship of her Bretheren.

Survivors of Sister Dalton are two sisters Eunice D. Simpson and Maybelle Dalton, both of Gretna.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Marvin Brumfield and Elder Raymond Goad. Her body was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park.

Sister Sallie will be sadly missed by all who loved her.

Written in Love and Hope,
Carol R. Pickral

Elder Marvin Brumfield - moderator
Oscar Pickral - Clerk

ELDER ROBERT LEE HART

ELDER ROBERT LEE HART, son of the late Kindred and Louemma Bates Hart was born at Ermine, Kentucky, June 23, 1931. He entered eternal life Wednesday, June 26, 1996 at the Central Baptist Hospital in Lexington, Kentucky being 65 years, and 3 days of age at the time of his passing.

Robert was married to Erva Deane Hampton. He had been a coal miner, but was a brick mason by profession. Robert was a pastor at the Hurricane Creek Primitive Baptist Church in Pineville, Ky. for 30 years. He was a veteran of the Korean Conflict, having served in the United States Army.

Robert is survived by his wife, Erva Deane Hart of Cowan, Ky. One daughter, Jennifer Hart of Cowan, Ky. Three sons: Jerry Dean Hart of Newport, TN. Jeffery Boyd Hart of Kona, Ky. Johnathan Robert Hart of Cowan, Ky. One brother, Malcolm Hart of Ermine, Ky. Three sisters: Hazel Johnson of Barbourville, Ky. Hattie Fowler of Pennsylvania. Mable Schwarzmann of Maryland.

Also surviving are 5 grandchildren along with a host of other relatives and friends to mourn his passing.

By - Elder Alpha Sears

ELDER ROBERT LEE MILES

It is by request we endeavor to write of the passing from this life of Elder Robert Lee Miles on Saturday February 24, 1996 at Community Convalescent Center in Plant City, Florida. He was 81. Born in Homeland, Florida on October 22, 1914. He was a member of The Mt. Enon Primitive Baptist Church Which he served as Pastor until October 1995, poor health causing him to resign.

He lived in Shreveport Louisiana for many years and served churches in Texas, Louisiana and Arkansas before moving back to Plant City Florida in 1986. He was received as a member of the Mt. Enon Church by letter in good standing from Pleasant Hope Primitive Baptist Church, of the Sulphur Fork Association in East Texas. He was ordained of the Old Predestinarian Baptist by request of Mt. Enon Church, the second weekend of November 1993.

If any words of comfort could be written that might comfort those who loved him we refer to the words of his own pen which he desired to be read at the graveside where he was buried. "My errors and mistakes have been many, but by the grace of God I have endeavored to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, Farewell vain world I'm going home, my saviour bids me come, sweet angels beckon from on high, then O how sweet to die. "

May we all take comfort in the sweet doctrine that he preached and the kind spirit of which he spoke when preaching the gospel of grace to the afflicted and poor children of God. To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord where there is no more sorrow, pain, tears, death, crying or former things of this old sin cursed earth. Farewell my dear brother, rest in peace.

Brother Miles body was laid to rest in Mt. Enon Cemetery to await the resurrection day. He is survived by his wife Copal, three sons Robert Jr., Joel S. and Harold W., two daughters Mittie Amelia Scofield and Cristy Anna Walker, two sisters Anna Bell Miles Craig and Mildred M. Cothern, 18 grandchildren and 17 great grandchildren. Final services were conducted by Elder J. Y. McCormick and Elder Fred B. Neikirk at the meeting house of Mt. Enon Church.

Written by request of Mt. Enon Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder Fred B. Neikirk, Pastor
Elder J. Y. McCormick, Clerk

ELDER WILLIAM A. WINFREY

Elder William A. Winfrey was born October 16, 1908 at Kingman, Kansas to W.F. and Eliza (Combs) Winfrey.

He attended school in Kingman, Kansas, graduated from High School in 1927 and then went on to business college in Wichita, Kansas where he met Elsie Martin to whom he was married on March 30, 1930.

Elder Winfrey joined Pleasant Valley Primitive Baptist Church in Kingman, Kansas on the 5th Sunday in July, 1939. His father and mother and his maternal grandfather, A.E. Combs were charter members of this church which was organized in the 1890's. Elder Winfrey served as pastor after his ordination into the ministry on April 29, 1956 until the church was dissolved in 1991.

Elder Winfrey passed away in Liberal, Kansas on June 6, 1996. Funeral services were conducted by Elder Graydon Smith of Spearsville, Louisiana.

Elder Winfrey is survived by his widow, Elsie; a son, W.D. Winfrey; three daughters, Patricia Rothermel; Dee Baker; and Jan Stuker; twelve grandchildren and twenty three great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, one brother and three sisters and an infant daughter.

Written by his family and submitted in loving memory.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF LUCILLE M. YOUNG

A "Sweet Singer in Zion" received the call to eternal rest Tuesday March 10, 1996 after ninety years and six months of life. Her voice, though no longer heard, rings sweetly in the minds and hearts of those whose lives were enriched by her clear strong songs of praise and her examples of love and faithfulness in the kingdom of God.

To anyone who engaged her in conversation for more than a minute would be entertained with her awe-filled thoughts on the majesty, mystery, love and glory of the all wise God she saw with the eye of faith. She was quick to defend the doctrine yet humble in her assumption of her place in his kingdom.

She possessed both the love of God's truths and depth of understanding which exceeded that of many believers. Her writings, prolific in her earlier years, waned as time and age crept up but her love of Gospel Preaching and conversation remained fervently alive until just weeks before her deliverer came to speak eternal peace to her mind, heart, and soul.

Her experiences which she always loved to tell was a beautifully undeniable display of God's Amazing Grace. From that time in mid 1930's she never wavered in her belief in God's ability to keep her safe and in His way. She prayed instead that her belief was truly ground in Him and that he would renew her strength and restore unto her the first joy in His love first felt so many years ago.

Her thirst, never quenched for the Word of God, took her on countless trips to hear it proclaimed for at least fifty years. When poor health prevented her from going she eagerly awaited the return of her pastors who loved to share with her the "Feast of God's Word" they heard at the associations attended. Hearing of the goodness of God proclaimed gave joy and animation to her conversations with family and friends.

Few have been so blessed to attend church as long as she did: for over a year in a wheel chair - some sixty years total. During most of that time she led our songs with a strong, clear, perfectly pitched voice which left no doubt in hearer's ears that hers was a voice fit for heaven where she now adds that voice to the host singing endless praises to the most high.

Submitted by her Loving daughter this Sunday after her death; Sunday, March 17, 1996.

Carrie Jo Williams

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

METAPHORICAL VISIONS IN NATURE'S PARK

When in nature's grand parks I am posing
And viewing omniferous scenes,
I just wonder if people are dozing,
Or cut off from the outside by " screens. "

Singing birds often prompt me to linger
And to wonder why I have the "blues,"
When there's sueh a melodious singer
Who doth gather each day what he "chews."

Then I meditate upon the condition
Of the pessimistic people who live—
Hope that I can make it my mission,
"Lots of joy my fellowman to give."

As I stand by the brookside and ponder
O'er the beautiful glittering stream,
As it flows o'er the rock—not to wander
But to enter a more copious stream.

There's a thought that I grasp in the vision
That we choose the right goal in this life,
Dissuade trouble in making decision,
Persevere, not considering strife.

When we're nearing the goal we're pursuing
It is easier to progress than before,
Because, then, we are veritably viewing
That great copious stream we adore.

If we study surroundings daily,
And apply the morals we acquire
We will then be approaching life gaily
For my country I'll be a "live-wire."

Elder E.J. Lambert

—Published in Southern Standard, Arkadelphia, Clark County, Arkansas

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DEATH

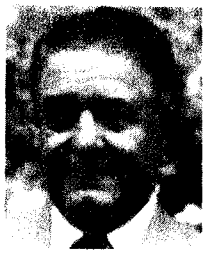
Elder C.C. Wilbanks

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." John 5:24.

Jesus spake these words, yet most of the world knows not the meaning of them. They understand the passing of life unto death, but not the passing of death unto life; for they know nothing of being dead in trespasses and sins. All men are born dead in trespasses and sin; not physically dead, but spiritually, for death means, to be cut off or separated from something. All men were separated from God when the first Adam sinned by eating the forbidden fruit, for God had said, ***"In the day thou eatest thereof, ye shall surely die."*** Adam is the federal head of all fleshly men: we are only Adam multiplied. In Rom 5:12 we read, ***"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."*** This leaves none that have not sinned, and this is the death Jesus spake of in John 5:25, saying, ***"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."*** Neither do unregenerate men understand the true meaning of everlasting life. To me everlasting life and eternal life are the same. If our life is everlasting or eternal it had no beginning and will never end: for it was in Christ before the foundation of the world, but is only now made manifest with the new birth. Jesus said unto Nicodemus, ***"Ye must be born again." He also said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish."*** Jesus gives them the life that was in him before the world was spoken into existence. He gives them ears to hear and hearts to

understand what the Spirit says unto the church, which is the bride of Christ. They are also given faith to believe in him.There are those to whom this faith is not given, and Jesus said unto them, ***"I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you."***

What evidence do we have that we have been born again of the Holy Spirit? We are made to see that we are sinners and we hunger and thirst after righteousness. If a man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away, and all things become new. ***"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Rom 8:16.*** We are no longer ***"in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Rom 8:9-11.*** Some of the meanings of the word quicken are, to arouse, to stimulate, to become enlivened or aware. These things the Holy Spirit does if he is in us.

"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Before we were quickened, we walked according to the course of this world, fulfilling the desires of our flesh and mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. As Paul said, ***"I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing."*** He also said, ***"For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died."*** Paul was not aware of his sins, ***"for without the law sin was dead."*** What was the commandment that came? Was it not the holy laws of God? The Lord said, ***"I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Heb 8:10.*** In Ezek 36:26-27 God said, ***"A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my commandments, and do them."*** What a gracious promise this is to poor hell-deserving sinners!

Paul said, ***"For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me."*** We must also be slain if we live with Christ, ***"For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him." Rom 6:7-8*** Christ took our sins upon himself and died unto sin once, but he arose from the tomb and now lives unto God. We are told to reckon ourselves also to be

dead unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. We have *"become dead to the law by the body of Christ, so that we should be married to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin, which were in the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."* The letter of the old law was the handwritten ordinances that was against us, and was contrary to us, but they were blotted out of the way, being nailed to the cross of Christ. Jesus forgave all our sins, *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ and walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Jesus Christ hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Rom 8:1-2.* Paul tells us that the law entered *"that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" Rom 5:20-21.* Paul then asks, *"Shall we sin that grace may abound?"* Then he answered, *"God forbid.. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"* Again he said, *"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"*

Brethren, we know that the commandment or law of God is spiritual, but we are carnal and sold under sin. Our old man is not changed with the new birth and he is constantly in warfare with the new man, so that we cannot find how to perform that which is good. But let us not yield to the temptations of our flesh, for, *"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."* If, however, we yield to temptation we have an advocate in heaven with God, Jesus Christ our High Priest. *"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."* Let us also give thanks unto him daily for all our many blessings.

There is one more death that I will mention before I close this short and imperfect treatise. It is the death that

the children of God who are in Christ shall never suffer. ***"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death shall have no power."*** Jesus Christ is the first resurrection, and my hope is that I have a part in him.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE HUMILITY OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Preached at Trowbridge on Tuesday evening, September 24th, 1850

"Even so, it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish." (Matthew 18:14).

Should it please the Lord, we will attempt, Firstly, to notice these "little ones;" Secondly, to notice that they have many times great fears whether they shall perish at last or not; and, Thirdly, we shall notice that these fears are all groundless.

I. Our text says, "It is not the will of your Father that one of these little ones should perish." It appears by the connection of the words that these "little ones" are the dear children of God, the great God. Jesus Christ calls them His "little ones." They believe in His name. But it is very striking here to see their weakness; they are as weak as little children. The disciples came to Jesus, and asked Him a question: ***"Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"*** There is that in our nature which wants to discover things that are hid from our view; and that nature the children have, even the children of the Lord Jesus Christ, and it is sometimes manifested; but it shows their weakness and ignorance. What a mercy it is we have such a compassionate Jesus, Shepherd, and Friend. ***"Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst"*** - what a humbling reproof to the question! - ***"and said, Verily, I say unto you, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 18: 1-3)*** It does not mean the conversion of their minds, merely to believe in God's word. A man may be converted a thousand times from one thing to another, and not have conversion of soul, and the new birth. It is plain here, that except you are brought to see your littleness and your nothingness, as a child, there is no hope of your entering into heaven.

It seems that Christ was speaking something like this when He was referring to His death and sufferings. Peter seemed willing to die and to suffer with Him. Peter professed great things for Christ; he said he was willing to follow Him to prison and to death. When, however, the blessed Lord came nearer to His journey's end, He says to Peter, ***"Simon, satan hath desired to have thee, that he may sift thee as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not."*** But Peter told Jesus he would

go with Him even unto death: ***"Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." (Matthew 26:33)*** Jesus answered him and said, ***"This night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice."*** And when Peter came to the judgment-seat with Him he could make use of nothing but falsehood. When one came and said, ***"Thou art one of his disciples,"*** he replied, ***"I know not the man."*** When another testified that he certainly was the man that was with Jesus, he said, ***"I know not what thou sayest,"*** and backed his lie with an oath.

I believe that Peter, when he told Christ he would die with him, really meant what he said. But what are we, when left to the Devil? What was David? What was Noah? What was Lot? What was Solomon? We do not know half of our weakness and the power of the Devil, but as God opens it up to us. Then Jesus says to Peter, When thou art converted" - when thou art converted. Now Peter had had regeneration, and had been converted by the Spirit of God; for Jesus says, ***"Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 16:17)*** But when Peter was converted he was changed in his mind, and restored by the love and power of God. He could then speak to the tempted with encouragement, and point them to a blessed Redeemer, that had ***"conquered death, and him that had the power of death, which is the Devil."*** He could ***"rejoice by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."*** God will bring His people into a child-like view of their littleness in their own eyes, to be "little" in their own hearts. How often does the Apostle John write to the "little children!" But, say you, there are "fathers" and "babes", and there are "yound men and fathers." But I find that "fathers" are as bad when God leaves them, and as glad of a little succour from the breasts, as even babes are. They are "fathers" in judgment, and "fathers" in the testimony of the faith that God gives them; but though they are "strong in the Lord and in the power of his might," God will bring them to feel little, very "little ones", in their own eyes.

This is very strikingly set forth in the account we have of the Apostle Paul. It is very evident from Paul's testimony, that he was engaged in a great work, and his labours were in a very great measure owned and blessed. It appears evident that Peter and the rest of the apostles had not that superior knowledge that God had given Paul nor such deep, mysterious views into the truth; for they all and everyone seemed to reverence him as being superior in attainments to them. Peter says, "There are many things" in brother Paul's declarations "hard to be understood" - that is, by the unlearned of God, he does not mean the literally unlearned, but the unlearned by the teaching of the Holy Ghost; he does not mean the literally unlearned, but the unlearned by the teachings of God's Spirit - they that never could understand the mysterious language.

Now if we come to look at the apostle's view that he had of himself, there is never a child of God in the world that would exactly agree with him; but they will agree not to differ with him, nor to be angry with him, nor to contend with him in a jealous way. The apostle says, ***"Unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." (Eph. 3:8)***

Here is the father and the child, here is a great one and a little one - great in the infinite grace of God, but in himself the least, the very least. This is the very top-stone of realities in religion. How strikingly the Apostle Peter sets it forth, when he speaks of the Church of God: ***"Feed the flock of God that is among you, taking the oversight among them, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind." (1 Peter 5:2)*** Then he speaks to the young to submit themselves unto the elders. Yea, he says, ***"All of you be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble"*** - the humble, the lowly, the "little ones," the fainting ones; those poor feeble ones that cannot do without the Lord, that can have nothing but what is from the Lord. So little and so feeble are they in their own eyes, and so unworthy of the least of the mercies of God, that they do know what it is at times in their very hearts and souls to say, Amen, to what the apostle said respecting God's Church. He says, ***"He has chosen the foolish things of the world, the weak things of the world, yea, and things that are not, to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence." (1 Cor. 1:27-29)*** But ***"he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." (verse 31).***

These "little ones" are the people who are humble, and who think themselves so unworthy of God's notice that, if they attempt to pray, they think it is presumption to attempt to take His name into their polluted lips. God loves these "little ones", God admires these little things; they are His delight, His pleasure, and they shall live to His honour and glory for ever and ever! What a sweet declaration is that where God says, ***"He that humbleth himself shall be exalted." (Luke 14:11)*** It does not mean that of his own nature, or of his own working, or of his own strength he can humble himself, nor can any one humble himself in his own judgment. You might as well talk of a man that can go and build up a ladder to reach the heavens, or take a telescope and count the stars and bring the number of them down, as talk of a man humbling himself, or humbling his fellow creatures in any way. The power can come from no one but from God. What a cutting question God puts to Job! He says, ***"Look on everyone that is proud and bring him low, and tread down the wicked in their place. Hide them in the dust together, and bind their faces in secret. Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee." (Job 40: 12-14)*** But till you can do that, there is no strength in you to humble yourself.

That has never been, nor ever will be.

You may talk to men, and by your continual taking you may seem to observe some signs of humility in them; yet, at the same time, there is pride in their hearts, as much as ever there was in any mortal man that ever existed. It is not a feigned humility that God requires; it is a felt one. There never was a poor soul that was brought "little" in his own eyes, "little" in his own strength, "little" in his own knowledge, "little" in everything respecting himself, but who was made to feel so by grace. Grace does it all. Nothing can humble but grace; nothing can soften but grace. Not all the terrors and wrath of God can soften the heart, in its nature, before the power of God reaches it. The law working upon the heart and the conscience does not do what grace does; and, if ever you are brought to experience His grace, you will be filled with humility and brought to lie humbly at His feet. To all eternity the ungodly, with the wrath of God poured in upon their never-dying souls, will continue in a state of hardness while they are in existence; and when this life shall end, they will look up and curse God and their King to a never-ending eternity.

It is nothing but grace that can melt the soul and bring it to feel its own worthlessness and its own nothingness; and therefore God says that He giveth grace to the humble. Grace to humble him, grace to carry him through his time-state, grace to encourage him, and grace to bring him up again. These "little ones" are all dependent upon grace. God says, *"Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings." (Psalms 8:2)* He hath ordained praise. They are all babes and sucklings in their own feelings; for they cannot move, cannot proceed, but as they are favoured by the Father of all mercies. They are just like a babe. They cannot speak a word but they have been taught - they must be taught to eat and instructed in everything; they are dependent for every thing all their life long. The Lord says, *"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth."* Here is the head, their true head. He says to Mary, *"Go to my brethren, and say into them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." (John 20:17)* He addresses them as His brethren, as the bone of our bone, the flesh of our flesh. He says, *"I thank thee that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes"* - unto babes - *"even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."*

II. There is a Brother of ours in the presence of God who knows what it is to go like a little child to be taught, to be instructed, to be led, to be fed, to be protected, to be delivered; and all our help is entirely upon Him; when these little ones hang upon Him, they will be safe for ever and ever. How at times my soul goes out to the Lord when the Holy Ghost sweetly whispers into the ear that He carries the *"lambs in his bosom, and gently leads those that are with young."* He leads these little ones, His weak ones, and His feeble, stammering ones; He will safely lead

them home to eternal glory. The centurion saw no one so unworthy as he was; but the Lord took him in hand. (Luke 7:7-9) If you have a child, or a servant, and come to see that there is that littleness, and a sight and sense of their own unworthiness, it leads you to have compassion for them more than you would for one this is not so. The Devil cannot bear the sight of a meek child of God. But it is a blessed mercy to be led to see one's own littleness and unworthiness.

It is evident that these little ones are favoured of God; for the Lord has set His love upon them. Yet at times they are in such confusion, and have such sinkings, and have such things to pass through, that there are fears raised in their hearts whether it will be well in the end - whether they shall perish at last. And when this comes into the soul of one of these little ones, why, it is like a hell in the heart. "What!" says the soul, ***"to pass through this world, where all is misery, and be lost at last - to perish and never see Jesus, and be sunk where there is nothing but sorrow and gnashing of teeth!"*** It shakes him from head to foot! It makes his very heart tremble to think of it! It sinks him into black feelings, that he is ready to give it all up for lost, and say with Zion of old, ***"The Lord hath forsaken me, God hath forgotten to be gracious."*** "Aye," says David, ***"He hath shut up his tender mercies; will he be favourable no more?"*** Yea, my friends, Abraham was shaken here when God left him to trial of himself and to the power of the Devil. But God came and lifted him up again; for he said, ***"Fear not, Abraham, for I am thy shield and thy exceeding great regard." (Gen. 15:1)***

When the Devil comes in the heart and raises up rebellion there, it shakes the strongest traveller and makes him sink; yes, and brings him to cry like a child for his Father to come to his help and his support. He begins to think how it will be in the end; and that crafty Devil of the bottomless pit terrifies him, and he is afraid there is nothing in his heart but the old man of sin. What a ransacking there is! The Devil will sometimes bring texts of Scripture. He will perhaps bring the parable of the ten virgins, and say that the soul may be like some of them, have merely an outward show. He never brings these when the poor soul has the oil of joy in the heart; he is quiet enough then about the five wise virgins, for his Master is there. But when He is gone, in comes carnal reasoning, and unbelief backs it by crediting what the Devil has said. "Well," says the Devil, "there were ten virgins, they were all met together, all walked together, and all ate at one table. They all went out together, and when they came to the bridegroom's house, five of them were wise and five were foolish. Now, says the Enemy and unbelief, "you see you are nothing but carnal, you have no life, nothing at all but an empty name."

This brings the soul almost to a stand. But there is one thing that stirs him up, and that is, that the "little one" can go and cry to his Father. One thing you see with little sucklings and babes is that they will talk to their parents.

The babe knows his parent, and therefore he can tell him what he feels, and make known that he has a want; it makes its wants known in "cries and tears." The mother and the father, when the child begins to cry, say, "What is the matter with the child?" Everything must be left for it, and there is watching and nursing of the child, and all possible care is taken of it; for it goes to the parents' hearts to hear the crying of the young child. It has taken this effect upon them, when they have heard their child in distress. This is just how it is with our Infinite Father, when the Devil comes in, and they begin to think that they shall perish at last. Their souls go out to God, anxiously inquiring, "Where am I? What am I? Am I nothing but an empty professor? Am I nothing but a hypocrite? Oh, search me! Oh, try me! Oh, reveal Thyself in my heart! Oh, lead me in the way everlasting!" This is the cry of a child to a Father, my friends; for these are children at the right hand, and they all go to the Lord as unto a kind Father. But when they are under the righteous law of God they cannot call him Father; they dare not call him Father when they are in the midst of their distress. They dare not do it, they are afraid it is presumption; they never can do that cheerfully and blessedly till He calls them children. Oh, how sweet when the soul can say, "Father," and He condescends to call them children! How they go to God with all their cares and troubles, just like little children, for Him to decide everything for them!

It is of no use going to the rest of the brethren to decide the matter. Some will run here and there with their trouble, to this minister and to that; and some of God's children are quite wearied out in this way, for they find there is nothing but a dry breast for them anywhere, let them go wherever they will. They go about where they think there is a godly man, and state their feelings, and ask him what he thinks about it. "Well," he says, "I really believe it is the work of God, and I think the Lord will appear for you; for there is evidently a hungering and thirsting, and they that hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled." (Matthew 5:6) He tells the soul to wait and to watch. Why, the man can do no more! He cannot bring the witnessing Spirit home to the sinner's heart: ***"It is the Spirit that beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God." (Romans 8:16)*** And therefore the soul goes away a little encouraged, and, perhaps, gets a little hope. Then by and by something come to his mind, and he says, "How can they tell whether I am one?" Here he comes to see his unworthiness, and he is obliged to go to God as a child. God is determined that He will have His children to find that they can derive no solid comfort but from Him.

III. Then these "little ones" perhaps think and fear how it will be with them at the last. But the Lord says, ***"Even so, it is not your Father's will that one of these little ones should perish."*** Not your Father's will - your Father's will. Bless His precious and dear name, when He reveals it to our

hearts that He is our Father. "It is not his will that one of these little ones should perish." Well, it is His will that they should go to glory. Not one of them, not the feeblest, not the weakest, the emptiest, nor the vilest of all His little flock shall perish. The Lord says, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32) The kingdom of God is for none else. The proud, lofty professor of religion, who boasts of his talents and of his judgment, God depises, for all this boasting is only a bandaging up for hell. No one will ever enter heaven who has not a broken heart. The poor soul that is little in his own eyes is blessed; for "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Theirs is the kingdom. Heaven is for all God's Church; and His justice, His mercy, and His love, His promises, His oath, His faithfulness, and every part of His glory surround these "little ones." God will take away every tear and every distress; and He says, "I will be round about them as a wall of fire, and the glory in the midst of them." (Zech. 2:5) It is not the will of His Father that "one of these little ones should perish," but they shall be for ever "saved with an everlasting salvation," and shall no more be confounded, world without end.

John Warburton

MEDITATIONS ON SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

BY ELDER T.F. ADAMS
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"She hath hewn out her seven pillars."

I do not claim to have superior knowledge over my precious brethren in writing on this or any other portion of God's sacred word. Some have said "the seven pillars" represent the seven churches of Asia. But as we view the natural building of Solomon, we see the building is supported by the pillars, and the pillars get their support from the rock bed underneath. Now the pillars are between the rock and the building, which seems to me to more fully represent the apostles and prophets who were peculiarly fitted and hewn out to withstand the cold, chilly winds, and give succor and support to the children of God by reason of the severe trials and afflictions which they were enabled by the grace of God to pass through. Would you not say that you have many times drawn comfort and peace from their sacred writings, when they were applied to your experience by the Holy Ghost? When the Apostle John was exiled upon the isle of Patmos, he said, ***"I am your brother and companion in tribulation."*** Remember that it is when you are in tribulation that He is your bosom friend.

The word "seven" is often used to denote fullness. The above views which I have penned seem to me to be in harmony with the inspired writings

of the Apostle Paul: ***"And are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself, being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." Eph. 2: 18-21.***

"She hath killed her beasts." The provisions for one day in Solomon's household was thirty measures of fine flour, and three score measures of meal. Ten fat oxen and twenty oxen out of the pastures and an hundred sheep, besides harts and roebucks and deer and fatted fowl. I Kgs. 4:22-23. Was all of this portion of God's sacred word penned just to make history and fill up space? Indeed no. For we are told that ***"whatsoever things that were written afore time were written for our learning that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."*** Before this meal and flour was reduced to its present state, the grain must go through the upper and nether mill stones, then kneaded together and baked in a hot oven. The blood must be drained out of the beast and fowls before they were prepared to feed the hungry of the household of Solomon.

What can these beasts and fowls represent? Do they not portray in types and shadows, the suffering and death of the meek and lowly Lamb of God who was delivered for our offenses and was raised for our justification; and they more particularly point to the Gospel day, when we are blessed to sit down in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and partake of the heavenly feast. But before ye are partakers of this heavenly feast, we too must be crucified with Christ (Paul said, I am crucified with Christ";) and die under God's just and holy law, and have part in His resurrection, before we can eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood.

"She hath mingled her wine." Wine is often spoken of to typify the Gospel of Christ. Song of Solomon 7:9. The mingling of wine beautifully portrays the various gifts, which God has placed in the Church for the edification of the saints. ***"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit, and there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord." I Cor. 12:45.*** And God has placed them in order, first the apostles, then prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, ***"for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Eph. 2:14.*** One precious saint will often say, ***"I had rather hear Elder _____ than any preacher I have ever heard."*** Another one says, ***"I had rather hear Elder _____."*** What makes this difference? It is because his preaching is more suited to your experience. How discouraging it would be to the poor servants of God if all the household of faith were to center upon one servant and not a word of encouragement for the rest of us. But our God has so arranged it in His divine providence that each one shall receive his portion in due season, and

get the flavor which is best suited to his or her taste.

"She hath also furnished her table." The table which Solomon set was furnished with a great variety of foods with all the necessary vitamins to supply the body with health and strength, but would you suppose that all the food was good to the taste? My answer is no. For my mother often, when I was a small boy, made me eat many things that I did not enjoy so well, but she knew it was good for my body. If I could have had my way I would have begun with the desserts and ended with desserts. I have often said that the children of God remind me of a family of little children seated around a table which was filled with coarser food and a dish of ice cream in the middle, and without the guiding hand of their mother they will almost invariably start on the ice cream and end on the ice cream. Why is this? The answer is because the cream is more delicious to the taste. But the good mother says you all must eat a reasonable supply of the coarser foods, then I will serve you dessert last. It may be that she has a supply of the better tasting food, but she knows that a well balanced diet makes a healthier child. So our God never questions you and me concerning the kind of food we shall have. If we could have our way, we would live on love, joy, peace and happiness all the time, but ah! when He sees fit He gives us sorrow, trouble and afflictions. Now you can see that all the food that is listed on the menu is not good to the taste, but is it not good for the body? David said, ***"Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word." Psa. 119:67.*** Now afflictions were not good to his taste but through this suffering he kept God's word. Can you not read your own experience here?

"She hath sent forth her maidens." When we are invited to a banquet or feast do we not see the maidens serving the guest? No doubt, but what this was a wonderful sight for the Queen of Sheba to behold in the Temple of Solomon. Everyone serving in the place and order in which this Great King has placed them. Do you know of a more beautiful sight than to see the guests seated around and each humble servant of God handing our to the household of faith such things as his Master has supplied him with? The Lord said to Peter, ***"Feed my lambs" and "Feed my sheep."*** The Lord did not tell him to convert a goat into a sheep. But the words are simply this, ***"Feed my lambs" and "Feed my sheep." Jno. 21: 15-16.***

Through the sufferings and death of Jesus under the law, all the preparation was made for the servants or maidens, to serve in the Gospel day. ***"For my flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed." Jno. 6:55.***

"She crieth upon the highest places of the city." It will be noticed in the ninth chapter of Proverbs verse 14, that the foolish woman, ***"Sitteth at the door of her house on a seat in the high places of the city."*** But the woman who possesses wisdom ***"she crieth upon the highest places***

of the city" which is in keeping with the inspired prophet Isaiah, *"and an highway shall be there and a way, and it shall be called the way of Holiness." "The unclean shall not pass over it; but is shall be for those the wayfaring men though fools, shall not err therein." Isa. 35:8.* What a comfort to a poor tempest-tossed child of God when the Holy Ghost applies the above words to your weary soul and you are lifted up and sometimes made to feel that you are in the way (Jesus). Abraham's servants said, *"I being in the way the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren."* Could he fail to reach the designated place since He was in the way? Jesus says "I am the way." He taketh His own sheep and goeth before them.

"Who is simple let him turn in hither." How wonderful is the teaching of the Holy Ghost, though you feel to be weak in intellect, yet by degrees this great mystery is gradually opened up to your poor souls, that Christ Jesus dies for the ungodly. Though you may feel to be a fool, you shall not err therein. We have often heard it quoted "Though fools, shall not enter therein", but the scripture reads *"Though fools shall not err therein." Isa. 35:9.* The reason that you can not err therein, is because you are in Christ Jesus. Now we are led from Law to Gospel, and our eyes are opened to view the heavenly scene and receive some knowledge of the fact that He (Jesus) is made to be sin for us, who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Then we can get a glimpse of the truth of the inspired Apostle, that Jesus is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

"As for Him that wanteth understanding she saith to him, come eat of my bread and drink of the wine which I have mingled. All of this was written for those who die under God's just and holy law, and their souls are raised up into newness of life. Then it is that the Holy Ghost reveals Jesus to them as their precious Savior, for the inspired Apostle Paul said that *"no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." I Cor. 12:3.* As the veil is gradually being lifted and we are enabled by the Holy Spirit to get a glimpse through the lattice work and view the heavenly scene beyond, we are drawn nearer to our precious Savior, and we can more fully understand that this same Jesus which Phillip preached to the Eunuch was first manifested to us in the person of the Father; second, He was manifested to us in the person of the Holy Ghost. John said, *"for there are three and bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, And these three are One."* Paul said, *"For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Col. 2:9.*

Now we can see that the Son is as old as the Father and the Father is as old as the Son. For John said, *"In the beginning was the word, the word was with God, and word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not*

anything made that was made. In Him was life and the life was the light of men." Jno. 1:1-4. This same Jesus which Philip preached to the Eunuch has many names, some of which are recorded by the prophet Isaiah, ***"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isa. 9:6.***

The reader may inquire, "How can this Jesus be both the Father and the Son? The term Father means oldest, so in the first administration of the Spirit in our experience, He is manifested to us in the Person of the Father, the Father gives life, then arrests, convicts and condemns us through the administration of the law. Second, He (Jesus) comes to us in the person of the Son. The work of the Son is to fulfill the Law and instruct His people and redeem them from under the curse of the Law. Now when Jesus finished His work in the person of the Son, the Son was crucified and was resurrected the third day, and after abiding here on earth forty days He ascended to the Father.

Now the teaching and instruction which was given to His disciples by this Son Jesus, was concealed in the Law and revealed by Him in the person of the Holy Ghost in the gospel. Before His crucifixion He said, ***"These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Jno. 14:25-26.*** Do we not see a manifestation of this Son Jesus exhibited in the person of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost? ***"and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the spirit gave them utterance." Acts 2:4.*** May I ask this question, has there been any change in the presenting the eternal truth of God from that day until this unless we are overshadowed by the Holy Ghost and the Spirit gives us utterance? The Holy Ghost is the revealer of God's word. You may ask, what does the Holy Ghost reveal? Answer: The Holy Ghost reveals to the children of God the things which were spoken to them by the Son when He was under the Law. When the Holy Ghost reveals these sacred truths to you, which is often done through and by his servants, you no doubt have said that I knew that but I did not know that I did know it. Why is this? Answer: Those things were taught to you in your experience by the Son as a convicted sinner under the law, and the truth of this teaching is now revealed to you in the Gospel day by the Holy Ghost. Therefore, Jesus said the Holy Ghost ***"will bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you."*** Many of John's disciples came to the church at Ephesus, and Paul asked them if they had received the Holy Ghost and they answered that we have not so much as

heard whether there be any Holy Ghost, as they had only been baptised by John with the Baptism of repentance. And when they heard the words of Paul ***"They were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus, and when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them: and they spake with tongues and prophesied." Act 19:5-6.***

In bringing my article to a close I will only mention a few thoughts in connection with the sixth verse of the ninth chapter of Proverbs: ***"Forsake the foolish and live, and go in the way to understanding."*** In looking back through our past experience, as a convicted sinner, when we fled to the law for refuge, we can now see how foolish it was to try to justify ourselves by any works of righteousness which we could do. But, being poor blind mortals we could not see the folly of this work system, nor could we comprehend the truths of the inspired word which was spoken by the prophet Isaiah, ***"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags: and we all do fade as a leaf: and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." Isa. 64:6.*** Ah! how true to our experience, we have to be dispossessed of all our legal good, under the Law, and come to the end of our wits and see the justice of our condemnation, under God's just and holy Law, before we can know the true meaning of this sacred prophecy. The Apostle Paul, in giving his testimony, which was dictated by the Holy Ghost written to Titus; which said, ***"For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lust and pleasure, living in malice, and envy, hateful, and hating one another. Titus 3:3.*** What a dark, rough and rugged route we had to travel before we could see the way of understanding. Our souls were enshrouded with darkness, and not one little ray of light could we see. We were like the children of Israel, when they were oppressed by the hand of Pharaoh in Egypt, enshrouded with a darkness which could be felt. Which also must have been the experience of the poor publican, who could not so much as lift up his head, but smote upon his breast, and stood afar off. He prayed and said, ***"God, [he could not then call Him Father. I know this was from my own experience] be merciful to me a sinner."*** The scriptures tell us that He went down justified, rather than the Pharisee, who fasted twice a week, and paid tithes of all He possessed, and could not see himself a sinner before God.

In as much as Christ was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification, we too, are crucified with Him. Our souls are lifted up and the Holy Ghost reveals Jesus to us, and for the first time we are given a hope that He is our precious Savior. May I say in my concluding remarks that this hope is so precious that if it were possible you would not exchange it for all the gold and silver that this world affords. Now we can exclaim with the inspired Apostle Paul, ***"I am crucified with Christ, neverthe-***

less, I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Gal. 2:20. Our eyes are now open, our deaf ears are now unstopped, and our heart is now prepared to receive the true instruction, that salvation is by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves, but a gift of God. Is this not the way of understanding?

Humbly submitted,
T.F. Adams
Willow Springs, N.C.
April 16, 1946.

WHAT ARE THE RELIABLE EVIDENCES THAT WE HAVE PASSED FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE?

Perhaps there is no subject in which the feeble, fearful, trembling, tempted and doubting children of God feel a greater interest than to know what are the scriptural evidences of being in a quickened and regenerated state; as there can be no subject in which they feel so much concerned. One brother writes that he would be in despair if it were not for one bright spot in his life, alluding to the time when Christ was first revealed to him as his Savior, but recalling to mind his happy frame on that occasion, his hope is frequently revived. In reflecting on this remark we have felt inclined to enquire, Can it be possible that the brother has never had but one reliable evidence in his long life, that he is a subject of saving grace? We know that it is very natural for us to revert to our first experience when doubts and fears assail our faith and hope in God. We do not object to this calling to mind God's former loving-kindness unto us, as evidences of his saving grace. Jeremiah remembered the time of the wormwood and the gall; from which God had graciously delivered him, and his hope was thereby revived. But is it right to overlook all other evidences and rely only on the first displays of God's love and mercy to us? To such exclusive reliance we object, because it underrates and overlooks the daily experience of the saints, which although in many instances they may not be as vivid and satisfactory to us as the first, are equally important and reliable, and should therefore be as fully appreciated, not only for the comfort of the saints, but also for the praise of the glory of God.

Because it tends to a repudiation of all subsequent evidences as being less conclusive and reliable, or worthless. How many have hung down their heads despairingly, because their first experiences were not so distinctly marked as those of others of whom they have heard or read; and although they can keep even pace with others in every subsequent step of their religious travel, are all their lifetime in bondage, through fear that they have started wrong, and therefore all subsequent experience has been but a delusion.

It may be that the general practice of our churches in the examination of

applicants for baptism and membership, has been faulty in making the first exercises of the candidate far more important than other exercises. While we love to hear related the more wonderful displays of God's power and grace in bringing sinners to a knowledge of the truth, we should also listen very attentively to "the still small voice," which has whispered peace and salvation to the trembling ones. According to our own observation for more than fifty years in the church of Christ, those who have been the most fearful and trembling, have proved the most watchful and prayerful among the followers of Christ. Some have made us doubt the genuineness of their evidences, by the extravagant marvelousness of what they have related, while others who could scarcely say they had a hope, have showed such evident marks of the spirit of humility, self-abasement, and fear of being a disparagement to the church, that they have taken every step with the greatest fear and trembling, have given us the more satisfactory evidence of the work of grace wrought in their hearts by the finger of God. But we need not advert of observation, nor to feelings of satisfaction, for we have a more sure word of prophecy or instruction, to which we do well to take heed.

The scriptures of truth do not leave us uninformed as the heaven-stamped and sealed evidences of a quickened state. Let us examine some of them. The case of Philip and Eunuch, (Acts viii. 26-39), is in point. Here is an application for the ordinance, and the great question, What doth hinder me to be baptized? is asked. The man of God who was full of the Holy Ghost, is amply qualified to decide this matter, which concerns all others as well as the Eunuch. How does Philip settle this question? Whatever impediment might be in the way to hinder the Eunuch, is still in the way of all others, and whatever qualifications entitled him to the privilege, are equally applicable to all others who possess them. Philip did not say, If you can distinctly call to mind your first religious exercises, if you saw the flaming gulf open to receive you; and all your sins were distinctly presented to your terror-stricken soul; if you were held in that distressing state a certain length of time; and can distinctly tell how you felt, and what you thought during this time of bitter anguish of your soul, and if you know just when, and where, and how you were delivered, and how you felt at that time; and if you do not now feel too unworthy, to be numbered with the saints. These were not the questions proposed, nor the prerequisites demanded. If they had been it would have debarred thousands of the precious children of God from that holy ordinance, and perhaps the Eunuch himself would have been rejected. But observe, the only question was as to the then present state of the Eunuch, and not a question was asked in regard to his former exercises of mind. "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." Shall any one now dare impose any other requisite than that which the Holy Ghost through Philip then required? That which ap-

plied to one, equally applies to every subject of grace.

But let it be remembered that the question implied more than a formal profession of belief. It is not enough that the natural judgment or understanding should assent to the truth, for it is with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. This belief must come from the heart, not the head; for the law of Christ is written in the hearts of the children of God. A new heart is given them, for the old heart is destitute of the faith of the Son of God; and a new spirit is put within them, for their faith is the fruit of the spirit; if, therefore, the candidate believes with all his heart, it is an infallible testimony that he has received this new heart, and new spirit is given him. Now, according to this example, we insist that the church and the administrator should be satisfied that the candidate has passed from death unto life - is born again, and has that full belief in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, which can only result from the faith of Jesus Christ dwelling in his heart.

There are many who without any change of heart, without any love to God, or knowledge of their own lost and helpless condition, with no saving knowledge of God, of Christ, of the way of salvation, may say I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and speaking after the manner of men, they do; that is, they have a traditional belief; knowing no reason why they should disbelieve what they have read or heard others say; but in the case of Eunuch, there were strong circumstantial evidences that God had wrought this faith in his heart. His mind was directed to the scriptures; he is found reading the book of the prophet Isaiah; he is buried in deep thought; he is earnest to understand the scriptures. He has a thirst for a knowledge of him of whom the prophet wrote, and although a man of high standing and in great authority, he had a childlike humility, and desired that some one of clearer understanding in divine things should guide him. The minister of Christ is gladly received into his chariot; he has a hearing ear, and an understanding heart, and as he hears of Jesus, as preached by Philip, in his heart receives the testimony, gladly receives the word, and most unwaveringly believes that this Jesus is the Son of God, of whom the prophet testified.

Another evidence of his heavenly birth is given in his desire to take on him the yoke of Jesus, to follow him in the ordinance of baptism. Absorbed in thought as he heard of Jesus, and transported with new light upon the subject and theme of prophecy, and attentively listening to the preaching of Jesus by Philip though he was at that time, he did not pass the baptismal waters unnoticed. "See here is water!" Never before had water presented such attraction to his eyes. Wonder, ye heavens! what heavenly beauty this faith discovers in that water; the footprints of his Savior; the bright example for all his children are seen. Did water ever before seem so lovely? The Savior's high command,

"If ye love me, keep my commandments," is applied with power. O what a joyful privilege it would be, he may have thought, if I were worthy to follow Jesus in that delightful ordinance! Nay, I cannot be denied, unworthy though I am. Thou man of God, "See here is water! what doth hinder me to be baptized?"

Indeed, we know of no authority in the scriptures for attaching more importance to past than to present evidences of our having passed from death unto life.

The apostle John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Not because our first evidences were so clear, or strongly marked. Not because we have acted so well our part; not because our natures have become better than they were before, nor because we feel that we are now worthy of a place in the house of God, and communion with his saints; but simply because we love them, and desire to be with them.

And Paul says, "For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God." The test is not laid on what is past; but what is present. If we are led by the spirit of God, it will lead us to Jesus; to his work; to his laws, his ordinances, and to his people. It will make us feel that we are very, very unworthy of his favor, and to admire and gaze and wonder at the manner of love which God hath bestowed on us that we should be called the sons of God.

Another present and reliable evidence that we are the children of God, is that "God dealeth with us as with sons." "If ye endure chastening," then have ye the evidence. "But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons."

How many present evidences are found in the scriptures of our sonship, and heirship, as sons of God and heirs of glory; and who shall tell us that any one, or all of these are less reliable than the first that we ever received?

We would by no means depreciate or undervalue the first evidences which were given us in our new birth; for without that birth we should be forever destitute of all the other evidences. But if we cannot find in our first experience the extraordinary exercises that some others can, we are fully warranted in relying on those which our God has seen proper to give us. If because we cannot tell when, where, or under what circumstances we were born into the natural world, would we be reasonable in concluding that we never were born? The very fact that we are now alive, is sufficient evidence that there was a time when we began to live. If, to-day, we love God, it is because he first loved us. And if we ever have loved him, the evidence is the same, for we could not possibly love him from any other cause.

There is one other evidence we will name, and that is, If we are involved in the Christian warfare, then have we the same evidence of a heavenly birth that Paul had. Until we were born of God the whole current of our nature

ran in one way; our element was sin; it was sweet to our taste, and we drank it as the ox drinketh water. There can be no war where there is one party. In the Shulamite we see as it were the company of two armies. So in every Christian is seen two opposite determined hostile parties. The one is born of the flesh and is flesh; and he held his palace in peace, without opposition, until another party came to occupy the same house, or person. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. These are opposite one to the other; for the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and so terribly does the battle sometimes rage, that we cannot do the things we would. All who are born of God, but no others, will, so long as they are here in the flesh, find a law in their fleshly members warring against the law of their mind, which will at times bring them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members. All the doubts and unbelief that ever assailed or troubled a Christian in regard to his interest in Christ arises from his fleshly nature. Doubts, fears and temptations, unbelief and desponding fears, are the artillery of the flesh and of Satan, planted against the law of their mind; but however the faith of God's people may be stormed, faith shall most assuredly triumph ultimately for God giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Dead fish will float down with the current; only the living fish will stem the tide. Those who never have any conflict, can never know the joys of victory. Those who have no temptations cannot appreciate deliverance. And those who have no clouds must live in a very dry pasture.

Elder Gilbert Beebe, June 15, 1866.

CALLED

Sometimes my mind is led in meditation to the calling of men to preach. With all my misgivings, doubts, fear, unfitness and leanness yet I think that I know that there is no calling to compare with being called of God to preach. There is a sense in which I would be sorry to hear my brethren voice an impression to preach, but in a wonderful way it is the grandest confession that we could hear from them. I have said that all men are called to preach, some by one thing, some by another, but those called of God are so differently called that it would be worthwhile to notice the difference. Preaching to all, may I say except Old Baptists, is a profession to be taken up and laid aside at will. The preaching of this world is like that. Anybody can learn how to preach their doctrine and can quit when the reason confronts them. That is what they say about it. If a young man came to me and wanted adovice on entering the ministry I would have no hesitancy in telling him to go ahead. What else could we tell them? If they have religion you cannot get it out of them. Let them have the whole thing! But that handful of miserable half-wit, Primitive Baptist preachers! What about them? Not one of them has ever de-

cided to be an Old Baptist preacher. If, and when, impressed by the Spirit to preach, they all decide that they cannot preach. Strange (to carnality) that learning does not change the viewpoint. The most learned man among us today will confess that I did not get it from man but from God. Those the Savior called around him were usually poor and unlearned. Fishermen, by the most people, are held in ill repute. Why? I do not think it is by just merely a whim of the mind. This is divine arrangement. Suppose fishermen had been in the cream of society, the elite of the day? Peter was given to boast of his ability. If he had had a high and noble natural calling he surely would have boasted, but the Savior called him from the net to the ministry. Sometimes a noble, mighty, wise man after the flesh is called. Paul did not say that none were called at all, but not many. The world and the fulness thereof belongs to God, and if it is in keeping with his will to call a well educated man, it does not take any more effort nor any different tactics than with the poorest of the flock. This world takes into consideration a man's personality, looks, learning and everything else that would insure success, but generally speaking God does not do that. Instead of calling that kind he calls a man from the net, plow or shop. God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise. I think we have this verified on the day of Pentecost and other occasions. It amazes college professors that an Old School Baptist preacher can speak an hour extemporaneously. Where does it come from? From above, where every gift comes from in the spiritual field. Not only has God chosen the foolish but the weak as well. He just will not fit into the modern ministry, but a man of that kind that has the wisdom of God given him can stand up and give the church a good gospel sermon. God has not only chosen the foolish and weak but base things and despised things, and that is not all he has chosen things that are not to bring to naught things that are. Ponder with us on that for a little while. God choosing that "are" can easily be understood, but choosing that which is "not" is something mysterious. I do not understand it, I am at a loss to explain it, but I desire to believe it and, if my experience is that of a gospel minister, I have felt it. This choosing of things that are not is still more of a mystery when we come to the purpose of it. It is to bring to naught things that are. "O the depth of the riches both of wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Rom. 11:33. None can tell why God does this, none can tell how. No need to be searching as to why a little foolish, weak, base, despised (and even one that is not minister can turn the world upside down (Acts 17:6), but look a little closer at your calling brethren! My mind keeps turning to that. Something that is not bringing to naught that which is! Explain it I cannot, experience it I hope I have. Many years ago I was impressed with preaching but I could not do it. I thought I had it hid and I was resolved to never

reproach the church by going behind the sacred desk, but a certain day came and I was at a place of meeting. A man was preaching who never had been looked upon by some as anything but a fool, but I left there completely overcome in tears. I was the something, he the not but it was I that was brought to naught. I love the old man today because I that God chose him to bring me to see how completely I was not. Let me notice again that God did not choose these men and make them foolish, weak, base, despised and not, but that he chose that kind. Everyone of them feels all this as their experience. They know what they are! They live with a man who is all this!

Elder W.D. Griffin

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 1996

Mrs. B.T. Hollandsworth, VA $2.00
Mrs. Annie C. Lawrence, VA 2.00
Mrs. E.H. Chandler, LA 7.00
Eld. Raymond Goad, VA 2.00
Donald Agee, VA 2.00
Mrs. Willie Mae Ratliff, VA 5.00
H.C. Brown, VA 5.00
Mrs. French C. Hogan, VA 10.00
Alpha Sears, OH 2.00
Charles Alders, TX 25.00
Clinton N. Barron, LA 2.00
S.R. Fanning, TN 2.00
Eld. Marvin Brumfield, VA 2.00
Mrs. Carrie McDaniel, VA 2.00
Mrs. F.K. Morgan, AR - In memory of husband F.K. Morgan 20.00

OBITUARIES

IN MEMORY OF SISTER ORA SHORT ADAMS

If the Lord will bless me, I will endeavor to write the obituary of our beloved Sister Ora Adams. She was born April 27, 1910, in Pittsylvania County and passed away February 2, 1996, in Lynchburg General Hospital at the age of 85.

She was the daughter of the late James Short and Martha Cox Short. She married our late Brother Delmas Smith Adams on January 2, 1926 and to this union five children were born.

Sister Ora is survived by two daughters, Martha Dalton and Hilda Worley of Hurt, twelve grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. She was preceded by three children, two sons, Percy Adams and Brother Wayne Adams and one daughter Carol Meador.

Sister Ora was a firm believer of salvation by grace, she was given hope and asked for a home with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on August 9, 1953 and was baptized on September 13, 1953. She was faithful to attend her meetings, to support her church and loved her brethren.

Sister Ora was blessed with hospitality and loved the visits from her family and church friends. The door of her home was always open with love.

Sister Ora became ill and was confined to the hospital for several weeks

before her death. Her family stood by her side and did all human hands could do for her to make her comfortable. The Lord saw fit to call her home on February 2, 1996. Her funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, 2:00 p.m., February 5, 1996 by her pastor Elder Raymond Goad and Elders Marvin Brumfield and Larry Hollandsworth. Her body was laid to rest, in Weatherford Church Cemetery, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the glorious resurrection morning.

She will be greatly missed by her family, church and friends. May we all that mourn her loss be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father who never makes a mistake, it is He who giveth and He who taketh away.

Written By: Pam Betterton

Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
Elder Marvin Brumfield - Asst. Mod.
Sister Phyllis Goad, Clerk

CURTIS CARL DODD

At the request of Old. Mt. Church I will try to write an obituary of Our Brother Curtis C. Dodd, Who passed away in Martinsville Memorial Hospital, Jan. 3, 1996 at the age of 85. Born March 25, 1910 in Pittsylvania county Va. He was A son of Claude Clevland Dodd Sr. and Suenette Bryant Dodd. He was married to Virginia Appling Dodd who died Dec.18, 1991. He first worked for Dan River Inc. and later worked as A loom fixer for Fieldcrest Mills in Eden NC. until his retirement. He joined Old Mt. Primitive Baptist Church, and was Baptized Aug. 18, 1968, by Elder Walace Smith. Was A loving faithful member until 1989, when circumstance beyond his control, he was put in A Nursing home, where he lived until A few days before his death in the hospital. He leaves to mourn two sons. Pete Dodd of Goose Creek Island, SC. and Roy Dodd of Brisbane, California. three sisters, Margaret McNichols of Blairs, Doris Barker of Ringold, and Agnes Vaughn of Danville; five brothers, Charlie Dodd of Elon College, N.C. Albert Dodd, Melvin Dodd and Bobby Dodd all of Danville,and C.C. Dodd Jr. of Blairs; seven grandchildren and several great-grandchildren. The funeral for Curtis Carl Dodd formerly 1106 Wyllie Ave.was conducted 11 a.m. Wednesday from the chapel of Barker Funeral Home by the Rev. Dr. Charles B. Scearce. Interment was in Highland Bural Park. He was layed to rest beneath A beautiful mound of flowers, A token of love from his family and many friends to await the second coming of Christ. Done by order of Old Mt. Church April 21, 1996.

Elder C.B.Davis, Moderator
Sarah Barker, Clerk

COLOSSIANS 3:3-4.

For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

JESUS, my love, my chief delight,
For thee I long, for thee I pray,
Amid the shadows of the night,
Amid the business of the day.

When shall I see thy smiling face—
That face which I have often seen?
Arise, thou Sun of Righteousness!
Scatter the clouds that intervene.

Thou art the glorious Gift of God
To sinners weary and distrest;
The first of all his gifts bestowed,
And certain pledge of all the rest.

Could I but say this Gift is mine,
I'd tread the world beneath my feet,
No more at poverty repine,
Nor envy the rich sinner's state.

The precious jewel I would keep,
And lodge it deep within my heart;
bt home, abroad, awake, asleep,
It never sbould from thence depart !

Beddome.

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EDITORIAL

ALL IN ALL

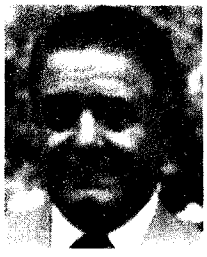

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

"Christ is all, and in all." (Col.3:11).

What a tremendous declaration of truth this embraces. This is the total sum of the gospel of Jesus Christ and his salvation of his people. His people are the ones chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. Their names were written in the Lamb`s book of life: not one name shall be added thereto, nor one name removed from that book. These people are called by many names: the sons of God, children, sheep, the elect, the church, the bride, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, etc.

Christ is our all. Everything that we are and every blessing we shall ever receive was given him of God, ***"Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his purpose and grace which was given us in Christ before the world began." "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him give us all things?"*** Christ is our life, wisdom, righteousness, redemption, sanctification, justification, prophet, priest, King, hope, faith, advocate, mediator, love, strength, bread, well of living water, etc... Volumes might be written upon each of these, with God`s blessings, but I would write only a few words upon some of them, and pray that God will give me his gracious guidance.

First and foremost is life. Without him we are nothing, we are as the dust from which we are made. We were given life in Christ when God chose us in him before the foundation of the world. ***"For in him we live, and move, and have our being; ... for we are also his offspring."*** The life that was given us is eternal and will never die. This natural, fleshly body in which we dwell will surely die, but it is only our dwelling place while here on

earth. If we be Christ's children, he also dwells in this body with us. Jesus said, *"If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."* Why do we love him? *"We love him, because he first loved us."* Not all men love him. Unto the Jews who sought to kill him Jesus said, *"I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you."* Unto them he also said, *"But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish."* The life that Jesus gives is the life given him before the world began. Of this life he said, *"He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."* All men are born dead in trespasses and sin. This is the death Paul speaks of: *"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." And, "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."*

Jesus is our redemption and sanctification, and the price holy justice demands is death: *"for without the shedding of blood there is no remission."* Jesus shed his blood on the cross of calvary. He is our redeemer, *"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works," "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers if flesh and blood, he also took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."* Jesus could lawfully redeem us, for we were his; and he could satisfy God's holy justice by shedding his blood in our room and stead; for we have a living unity with him. *"We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."* This man, Jesus, *"after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."* As our high priest he offered himself a sacrifice unto God, and he himself was the sacrifice. When Jesus died on the cross, his people, his church, his bride was in him: *"For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body." "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even we also should walk in newness of life."* If Christ had not been raised up from the dead there could be no resurrection for us. But

he *"was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came unto all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."* Therefore Jesus is our righteousness and justification.

Jesus now sits in the right hand of the throne of God as our high priest, our advocate with the Father, our judge, and our King. Let us approach unto our high priest in supplications and prayers, for, *"We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."* It seems to me that I fail dreadfully in approaching him, but when I am blessed to do so, it brings a season of rejoicing to my soul. Jesus said, *"No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." John wrote, "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."* As our advocate, Jesus pleads his righteousness in our behalf, for our sins were imputed unto him and his righteousness was imputed unto us by faith in him. Abraham was strong in faith, giving glory to God, believing what God had promised: (for all the promises of God are sure in Christ, *"For all the promises of God in him are yea, and Amen, unto the glory of God.")* therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. *"Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him; but, for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead." "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."* How do we attain faith and belief and hope, (for these can not be separated)? Jesus said, *"It is the work of God, that ye believe on him who he hath sent."* Paul said, *"Unto you it is given, in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe, but also to suffer for his sake."*

Now let us consider faith, believe and hope, for, *"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."* How, then, do we attain unto them? By *"Being born again; not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."* The `word of God' is Jesus Christ, for, "--and his name is called The Word of God." *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."* Grace, faith and hope are gifts from above, "-- from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." *"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him give us all things." "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."* To have a hope in anything we must have some evidence that it will come to pass. Our God given faith is that evidence, and we

must walk in that faith and not by sight. Faith causes us to believe the promises of God, and gives us hope that we are embraced in them. If we could walk by sight, what need would we have for hope? *"For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that which we see not then we with patience wait for it."* Jesus Christ is our hope, and he hath promised, *"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."* Our hope of salvation is in Christ, and God *"--hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began ."*

Let us pass on. Jesus is also our judge. *"For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." "Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles."* I believe we stand before the judgment seat of Christ every day, and we must bear his judgment, for the Father *"hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man."* Jesus said, *"I can of myself do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me."* This is not the judgment of that final day, for Christ has already suffered the penalty for our transgressions, and we shall never perish; but in the flesh we sin daily, and our judgment is instantly given: for he chastens us. *"My son. despise not the chastening of the Lord, not faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." "But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons."* His chastisement is not in anger, but in love. His chastisement is a portion of the manner in which he loves us. *"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God."* His chastisement shows us the errors of our ways and leads us into the path of righteousness.

Jesus is our Prince of Peace. "--and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Jesus said, *"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."* No matter how we are troubled, afflicted and persecuted; when our sins rise up as mountains before us or we sink beneath the raging billows, if Christ speaks "peace be still" to us, as he did to the winds and the sea, then we are instantly at peace, and we can sing praises unto his holy name.

Jesus is our Lord and King. *"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.*** the LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory."* A king must have a kingdom; people to rule over, and servants. In the book of Daniel we read, *"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."* This kingdom is the kingdom of God and his people. The kings of these other kingdoms shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: *"for he is the Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven."* Our King has ever gone before us and fought our battles, and he has always won the victory. The scripture says, *"He will swallow up death in victory." "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Jesus was our king when he was born. When Pilate asked if he were a king, he answered, *"Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth."* Though he is our King, he became a servant. *"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."*

Our Saviour has risen from the dead, and he shall give us the ultimate victory when he shall return again without sin unto salvation. *"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."*

Brethren, is this not our blessed hope? Surely we greatly desire to hear our King and Saviour say, *"Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."*

Eld. C.C.Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editors of The Signs:

It's been nearly 22 years since I last wrote to you dear people; and The Good Lord willing, I am writing today to say I would like very much to renew my subscription to the Primitive Baptist paper. It's been so long since I've subscribed I don't know if the address is correct or not, or if The Signs is still being published. I hope and pray it is. Back in 1974 the subscription cost was $4.00 per year, and Elders David Spangler & John D. Wood were the Editors ..... among others.

I have been blessed by God in many ways - and chiefly, from my way of thinking, is a belief in salvation by grace to sinners like me, as taught and preached in The Old School Baptist doctrine.

I have kept all the Signs I took during the 10 years or so I subscribed, and have most of the copies of my mother's from back in the forties. I'm also blessed to have *"Hassells Church History"*, Elder Durands *"Fragments"* and Elder Lambert's *"Tried in the Furnace."*

I've raised 4 children and am still married to my husband of 38 years. A lot of grief and sorrow as well as little bits of joy here and there have been my lot. I don't feel any different now than I did 20 years ago as regards to my belief. But in those day's I put my Lord aside and my husband (a non-believer) first in my life. The only Old-School Baptist's that remain in this part of the county besides myself are my 98 year old mother and a brother Ed Larson both living at Mead. My aunts who were firm believers are dead and gone (Mary Edkard - Haseltine Allen - Eve Floyd ..... I tried a few years ago to get in touch with some of the people in the church at Naces, Wash. but did not have any luck..... I've also tried going to a little non-denominational church that has been started near where I live, but find it as I knew I would; nothing there for me .... The people are nice enough, and sincere in what they believe but its just not the same.

I'm enclosing a check for what I hope and pray will be the beginning of a renewal of my subscription to the Signs, and God willing, if it should come to pass, I hope to never let it expire again.

If this $10.00 more than covers the cost for a year - please use the balance for the indigent fund.

From One whose hope has never been taken from her - Tho it grows mighty dim at times.

Love, Caroline Martin
Rt. 1, Box 690
Davenport, Wash. 99122

Dear Editors and Friends
In Christ Jesus,

Our belief and hope in Christ Jesus brighten up a dark world. The love and fellowship we have for one another is a gift of God. Truly he is the giver of every good and perfect gift and the Father of Lights as we are told in the scriptures.

The last issue of the Signs was a sweet comfort to me. Its words of praise and honor and glory are so good to read, and rest to the weary soul. What a blessing to receive a precious publication like that each month - and we are blessed with a few others. Our Saviour said He would not leave himself without a witness.

Our hope in Jesus makes it easier to press on in this old life.

As the wise one said, we hope we can continue to pray with and for one another and we hope we will continue to be blessed with sweet worship services in the Lord.

How will you, the quickened believers, know there is nothing better than the comforting presence of the Lord. He is charity in faith, hope and charity. We recall that faith and hope look for that which is to come but the charity of our Saviour comes into fulfillment in a better world and is never ending, and the anchor of the soul in His people. I do hope I am one of them.

Again we thank you all for your labor of love and your every effort in getting the Signs to us.

As you all know, the whole book of Hebrews is wonderful. I recently read a little in it and found the promise as written near the end of Chapter 8 about the new covenant especially comforting to quickened believers: Part of verse 10 .. ***"after those days sayeth the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:"***... 11 is valuable too. On to verse 12 ***"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."*** In chapter 9 the precious promise of Christ redemption continues stating that He is children's high priest in V. 12 or by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place having obtained eternal redemption for us. V.14. ***"How much more shall the blessed of Christ, who though the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God."*** If we are in that wonderful Scripture we are safe.

Sister Nancy Rose D. Ferguson

Dear Elders and Editors;

Time once more to renew my subscription for 2 yrs. I look forward each month for the Signs - they bring food and comfort, which is not supplied by mortal man, but entirely by our heavenly father.

I do not wish to complain, but I do miss not having a Primitive Baptist Church out here. I was directed to a church that called themselves primitive baptist but they do not seem to

believe in God's predestination of all things and as I talked to the preacher on various subjects - he would say "Well you see, we don't see it that way." They did not use any musical instruments in their services and said, as I think we all feel that God supplies the music and it originates in the heart. I attended their services for a month or two. They treated me well and I tried to do the same toward them, but I did not feel at home with them. I did not tell them why maybe I should; but I just quit going. I've read I believe in the Bible where it says *"come out from among them and be ye separate"* and have wondered if it might apply to me in this case. I do believe that our all wise God has a purpose in all of these churches or they would not be - but at the same time I want to go where God is given all praise honor and glory. God requires no help from mortal man. God is all powerful, and supplies all our needs, for which I hope I am grateful, but fear many times I am not.

In Christian Love,
Minnie Cunningham

PSALM 111:7-10.

The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure.

They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness.

He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever.

VOICES OF THE PAST

FROM ZION'S LANDMARK
(May - June 1996)

"Walking About Zion," appeared in Zion's Landmark during the year 1869, by Elder Isaac N. Van Meter (1816-1894) of Illinois. (Zion's Landmark was hardly two years old when it was published.)

This article was one of several chapters that was first published in pamphlet form in which Elder Van Meter left on record many things that he had beheld in a vision of the church to take place in these latter days and times in which we are now living.

While at the time the churches and associations at large were abounding in a wonderful state of peace, having just been separated from the worldly, missionary system that had been introduced only 40 years earlier (1832-1840), yet, he saw in this vision a great pall of gloom again enshroud her, which was yet to take place in a dilemma of unknown proportions. Elder Van Meter fully describes the church's perplexity and plight in this article, as he had beheld in his vision.

When I read it recently, my mind was immediately carried to very recent years, if not deceived, with his description of the trial and affliction of the true, militant church, as seen in his vision that accurately describes and coincides exactly with the same trial and affliction that we have just

experienced, and appears to be an ongoing thing at this time.

If it is possible, I would appreciate seeing this article republished as it appeared in Zion s Landmark 127 years ago. Elder Mewborn, I am enclosing a copy of this article for your use and review. If you should feel it best not to republish, just cast it aside. On the other hand, I believe many people would be glad to read it again at this time.

It is Inevitable that Elder Van Meter was greatly blessed of the Lord, and that we have now lived to see his prophecy come to pass after all these years. This dear elder, I believe, saw the church delivered from the great red dragon when the watchman in his vision said, I must leave Zion under thls cloud for the present, and seek a place where the light shineth. God had already prepared a place for His light to shine, even in the wilderness, where He would feed Hls church, here in the world a thousand two hundred and threescore years. See Revelation 12:6. He signed (or closed) his article, " A VISITOR."

From an unworthy one, I trust, grieved for the Cause of Christ

WALKING ABOUT ZION

In my tenth visit to Zion, the city of the great King, I saw, as was intimated In my last one, a great change take place in her peace and prosperity; a cloud arose and overcast the city with gloom, and its inhabitants were brought into trouble, mourning, and woe.

Although the task Is an unpleasant and painful one, I must, for the information of the reader, and as a warning to those who shall live hereafter, give a true and faithful history of what I saw and heard. As soon as I got within the city, I saw that a great change had taken place in many respects, and although the form and structure of the place, with its gates, streets, and courts were about the general aspect of underlying things was greatly changed, and the customs and habits of its citizens were very different from what they were when I last visited the place. In the first place I observed that darkness and gloom brooded over the city, and lowering clouds hung heavily upon it, so that nothing could be seen clearly, but everything the eye beheld was enveloped in gloom. I noticed also that the business of the city, and the well ordered labors of the King's servants,were well nigh suspended and their work deranged; I thought I could see, also, a want of that true friendship and love I had formerly observed among the inhabitants, and even a coldness and reserve among the watchmen.

Under my deep mortification and grief at this sad state of things, I groped about the city in quest of some one that could tell me the true cause or causes, which had so sadly worked to produce so great change; but I knew not whom to approach. There appeared to be two or more parties in the city, and each was ready to screen itself and cast the blame upon others. I fell in company, however, with an old experienced watchman, whose

care-worn and honest countenance inspired me with confidence, and from him I obtained the following detailed account of the causes and the nature of their troubles.

He told me that, in the first place, he would begin with the watchmen themselves, many of whom were as much to blame, if not more, than the other citizens of the place. As it was their sacred trust, by the order of the King, to watch over the city and its inhabitants, and both by precept and example to teach the laws and obligations pertaining to the kingdom, the King had commanded them most solemnly, saying: *"If the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, I will require the blood of the slain at his hand. (In substance.) " Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he heed it not, thou hast delivered thy soul." (Ezek. 33:1, 9). "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain." (Joel 2:1.) "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers." (Acts 20:28.) "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine."(II. Tim. 4: 1, 2.) "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works." (Titus 2:7.) "He that is the greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve." (Luke 22: 26.) " Let each esteem others better than himself."* This, and much more, had the King commanded His watchmen respecting their trust to the subjects of the King, and to one another and fellow laborers in the good cause. The station these men filled was so exalted and honorable, and the promise of the King to protect and support them so positive, that one could hardly conceive how they should ever become delinquent or unfaithful in the discharge of their trust. And yet it was even so with many of them. My old informant told me that by degrees many of these watchmen became careless about watching over the city, and some even slept while the enemy was about. Some wanted to change places with others and not labor where their King had placed them at the petition of the citizens. Some became envious and jealous of others whom the King had set in a conspicuous place, and whom the people esteemed higher for their work's sake and faithfulness.

When they convened, the people at their solemn assemblies, instead of each one feeling, as heretofore, to prefer others to take the lead and to give them the uppermost seats at their feasts, some were found to be jealous of others' good names and gifts, and sought to injure their good standing and influence, and to strive to get above them. Some went so far as to even make his brother an offender for

a word, and would hint to the citizens behind his brother's back, that he was not true to the King. Thus, matters worked among the watchmen, who should have been the last men in all the King's dominions to give offence; and soon it was manifest that confidence and unity were much impaired among them, and many began to absent themselves from their solemn convocations. While these examples were set by the watchmen, and they were thus delinquent in their trust, it is not surprising that the citizens should also become Indifferent, and even corrupt in practice. "Like priest, like people," was as true in this case as it was In the days of Hosea (chapter 4:9.) The citizens became slack in their trust to their King and to one another; they neglected their obligations; they forsook their meetings; they neglected to read the King's laws asking His advice, and because Iniquity abounded, the love of many waxed, became cold. Backbiting and fault finding took the place of charity to others no more guilty. Instead of bearing the burdens of others, and being ready to sympathize with them, too many were found ready to add to their affliction by siding with their accusers. Some became tired of the King's service, and would even speak slightly of His laws and ordinances. These were often found working for their own selfish aggrandizement when normalcy would have required them to have been engaged in the King's service. In this way and many others, I was told, did the watchmen and the citizens provoke the displeasure of the King of Zion; while, at the same time, my old informant, and some other faithful watchmen, were engaged day and night in reproving, rebuking and exhorting, with all long suffering and doctrine, saying in the name of the King: ***"Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove the candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." (Rev. 2:5.)***

Those unfaithful watchmen were, many of them at least, such as had crept into the city unawares, for the want of vigilance on the part of the porters and others, and had been employed as watchmen without the King's authority; many of whom were enemies to Zion and to her King. Their intrigues had, however, drawn away some of the King's servants, and their dissimulations had deceived many of the true friends of the King. The city had been much filled up of late by accessions from the surrounding nations, who had witnessed her prosperity, but unfortunately for her peace, many of the uncircumcised had been admitted through carelessness with a desire to augment or increase their numbers, on the part of the citizens. But alas for Zion the once happy and prosperous city the light and glory of the earth. After she had thus provoked the King, had gone astray from His commandments, had left her first love; and after she had been admonished and exhorted trom time to time by her faithful servants, to whom she turned a deaf ear, the light of His countenance was withdrawn and dark-

ness enveloped the city. A thick cloud also hung over the place, seeming to portend a storm, and intervened between the citizens and the throne of the King. Few people could be seen in her streets, and she looked desolate. One of the watchmen mourned her thus: *"How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people! She that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary. She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks." "The ways of Zion do mourn because none come to the solemn feasts." (Lam. 1: 1, 2, 4.) "How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in His anger." (Chap 2:1.) "How Is the gold become dim! How is the most fine gold changed! The stones of the sanctuary are poured out in the top of every street." (Chap. 4:1.) "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thy help." (Hos. 13:9.)* I must leave Zion under this cloud for the present, and seek a place where the light shineth.

A VISITOR

ROMANS V.18.

"Therefore, as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."

This, like all the inspired epistles, was addressed to the people of God expressly, and to them exclusively. Paul, after announcing himself as a servant of Jesus Christ, and his official character, an apostle separated unto the gospel of God, &c., thus defines the subject of his address: *"To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints."* Although this department of the church was in Rome, and probably the members were generally Gentiles by nature, still they, as well as the Jews, were strongly inclined in their natural judgment to the legal notion that has always prevailed among carnal men, that the salvation and justification of sinners, depends, at least to some extent, on works to be by them performed as the condition on which they are to be saved. No error has ever been more prevalent among the fallen sons of Adam, more opposite to truth, nor more pernicious in its nature and tendency. Hence, we find the apostle Paul, in all his epistles to the saints, laboring to enlighten his brethren on this subject, and to clearly demonstrate to them that, By grace they are saved, through faith, and that not of themselves, for it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast: for says he, *"Ye are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that ye should walk in them."*

The text presents only a detached part of the argument of the apostle in establishing the true ground of justification and salvation. The term "justification," in this connection, is used in reference to the justification of the ungodly, and is therefore spoken of as

being through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. By which redemption God's children are not only redeemed from punishment, but from all guilt. Being washed from sin and transgression in that blood which cleanseth us from all sin, and clothed in the perfect righteousness, of him who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. To justify such as have never been involved in sin, only requires an exhibition of their righteousness. Thus, in the exhibition of the holy law of God, God's righteousness appears, and he is justified, and every mouth is stopped, and all the world is guilty before him. Not that the exhibition of God's holiness is the cause of our pollution and guilt, but it

is that which makes our guilt apparent. We were found in opposition to God, enemies to him by wicked works. The law, therefore, which manifests God's purity, proves that we are guilty, carnal and sold under sin. But the justification which is unto life, in our text, applies to the gracious work and righteousness of Christ imputed to the saints, by which he has taken away their sins, washed and cleansed them in his own blood, and brought in for them everlasting righteousness. Hence, it is said, that are freely justified through the redemption that is in Chris Jesus.

Now, in order that we may know upon what principle God can be justified, and the justifier of them that believe, we must be made acquainted with the gospel. The law, as we have seen, shows how God is just in condemning sinners; but the gospel alone can show how "Mercy and truth have met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other." Merely the substitution of an innocent and sinless victim in our room and stead, to suffer all the penalty of the law due to our sins, could not effect this, unless that sinless victim stood in such relationship to us that he could legally represent us. Truth says, "The soul that sinneth it shall die" Mercy cannot meet this truth in any way that would detract from the nature of truth. Truth has said, God is a jealous God and that he will in no wise clear the guilty. How then can mercy reach the case of guilty sinners without doing violence to truth? Such a meeting of mercy and truth is impossible unless the guilty sinner can be made perfectly free from guilt. But, as we have said, to merely visit the penalty of the guilt of sinners on one who is spotless, innocent and pure, would not sufficiently secure the truth and justice of the law of God, for truth has said, ***"The soul that sinneth it shall die."*** Not another, that has not sinned. Hence, mercy cannot meet truth on any such ground. To condemn the righteous and to justify the guilty are alike incompatible with law, with truth, and with justice. Now to show how the law is honored, eternal justice perfectly satisfied, and truth maintained inviolate in the justification of the ungodly, is the very point which the apostle has clearly established in the text under consideration, and its connection. In the latter part of the fourth chapter, and immediately connected with our sub-

ject, Paul shows that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to the saints, and that Christ was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. And to show how, and upon what ground, his righteousness can be accounted, or imputed to us, he refers, in the parenthesis, from verse 13 to 17th, inclusive, to the figure divinely authorized, for the illustration of this most important point. In elucidation of the doctrine of atonement, he says, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law, sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift-for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men" &c.

Now, let us carefully examine this illustration. "Adam is the figure of him that was to come." And in applying this figure the parallel is run of the imputation of sin, judgment, condemnation and death by and through Adam, who is the figure, and of the imputation of righteousness, justification and life by and through him that was to come, as the antitype of Adam, or as the second Adam, the Lord from heaven.

As Adam is the figure specially provided and given by authority of God himself for the illustration of this mystery, it iS very important that we observe the scriptural testimony of this important figure. Who and what is Adam? We are Informed, Gen. v. 1, 2, "This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created." Adam, as the figure of him that was to come, is a plural being, in the day when God created him. Embodied in his person was his wife, and in his loins were all the families of the earth. And God called their name Adam, in the day when they were created. This one form, into the nostrils of which God breathed the breath of life, was all the human family condensed in one boldily form. This unit by the decree of the Creator was to be fruitful and multiply, until all that was in that unit should be developed. It was Adam in the unit, and it is still Adam in multiplication or development. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of Adam is Adam. Before any of the sons

and daughters of Adam were born, while the whole human race was a unit, by one offense or transgression of the authority of the Creator, sin entered the world. And death by sin, and death passed on all men, (that is, on all the unborn race,) because all had sinned. Not one of the posterity of man was yet born when all had sinned, and death has passed on all men. As further evidence of this, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned, after the similitude of Adam's transgression. Before the birth of Cain, the whole human family was driven out of Eden, and could not eat again of the tree of knowledge, and , as from the expulsion of Adam to the time of Moses, the preceptive law was not given, those over whom death reigned by, and as a consequence of their being sinners, it proved conclusively that they were all identified in Adam, and all sinned in him.

It is therefore plainly to be seen that in the declaration of our text, "Therefore, as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation." Adam was all men, and all men are Adam. All men, in this case, signifies all that Adam was, and all that Adam is, and all that Adam ever will be, sinned in Adam, judgment came upon them, then and there, while thus embodied in him, unto condemnation. All men, therefore, in this case, clearly means all that Adam represented as their natural earthly progenitor, and no more. On this principle, Paul argues that when Christ died for us, we were even then sinners. Some of us were not born into the natural world for nearly two thousand years after Christ died, yet when he died, more than eighteen hundred years ago, we were all sinners. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly"; we were then ungodly, and for that reason Christ died for us. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

Now for the application of the figure to the second Adam, Jesus Christ, who is the Lord from heaven. The first Adam was not spiritual, but natural; he therefore represented his posterity, not as spiritual, but natural beings, as earthly beings, as living souls, and not as quickened spirits. Still the natural, earthly Adam, was the figure of him that was to come, namely, of Christ. As the natural Adam clearly represented and embodied an earthly race of human beings, so Christ the second Adam, who is the Lord from heaven, the spiritual Adam, and the quickened Spirit, as clearly, fully and completely embodied in his mediatorial Headship of the church, all of the spiritual family, or all of that seed which was ordained to serve him, and to be counted to him for a generation, whom he should see when he made his soul an offering for sin, and in

seeing, be satisfied. As then all the members of the human family are partakers of, and involved in, the original transgression which brought sin and death upon all flesh, so all the members of Christ, whose spiritual and eternal life was given them in Christ, their spiritual Head, are as fully embodied in Christ, and as perfectly represented in him, as the great and glorious law-fulfiller; and as by relationship and identity with the first Adam, his transgression is reckoned to us, so by our spiritual relationship to, and identity with Christ, as the Head over all things to his church, all his members are represented in his righteousness, and on this ground of relationship, the free gift comes upon them all unto justification of life. In regard to the words "all" and "all men," which occur frequently in the apostle's argument on this subject, they imply just what they express. All men, in relation to the natural Adam, are all the human family as such, for they were all created in him, stood in him, and sinned and came under condemnation and wrath in him. The same term, "all men," when spiritual men are referred to, means all who are the members of Christ, or the seed of whom he is the spiritual progenitor. And farther, of the children or members of the natural Adam were made sinners, while they personally lay unconsciously in the loins of their earthly progenitor, almost six thousand years ago, so all the children of God were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, almost two thousand years ago, when he (in due time) died for them, and arose again for their justification, and while they were undeveloped by personal and experimental development or manifestation.

Again, as the decree of Jehovah went forth, saying, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, and did irrevocably secure the natural generation and perfect manifestation in time of the whole natural Adam, and all that was created in him, so the decree of God has gone forth equally firm,a irrevocable, that all of Christ's seed shall serve him, and be counted to the Lord for a generation; that they shall all be taught of the Lord; that they shall be a willing people in the day of his power; that they shall all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

As the fullness of the measure of the stature of the earthly Adam was perfectly open to the omniscient eye of the Creator from the creation, so the perfect proportion, symmetry and measurement of the mystical body of Christ was always with the Lord. Christ could and did, by the mouth of the psalm say, "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy

book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."--Psalm cxxxix. 15, 16. Therefore, as by the offense of one, (Adam the first,) judgment came upon all men, (who stood and fell in him,) unto condemna-

tion. Even so, (or exactly so, after this similitude in perfect harmony with this figure,) by the righteousness of one, (Christ, the second Adam,) the free gift came upon all men, (all the members of Christ) unto justification of life. This free gift has come, and it has effected its object, and they upon whom it has come, are fully, freely, effectually and forever justified and reconciled to God, in Christ, raised up together, and they sit together with him in the heavenly places.

"And not only so," says the apostle, "but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." We were reconciled to God by the death of his Son. This was when, in due time, Christ died. But now being called, quickened, born of God, we have personally and experimentally now, received the atonement, and in consequence of having received the reconciliation or at-one-ment, "we now joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Our carnal, fleshly, Adamie nature, is still under death; for, "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."--Rom. viii. 10, 11. The old Adamic man must be dissolved and fall, for dust it is, and unto dust it must return. It shall be sown in weakness, dishonor and mortality, but it shall be raised in power, honor and in immortality. Our flesh shall therefore rest in hope. It shall be changed and made like Christ's glorious body, and mortality shall be swallowed up of life.

"This flesh shall slumber in the ground,
'Till the last trumpet's joyful sound;
Then burst its bands with sweet surprise,
And in the Savior's image rise."

Lengthy as our article is, we have but glanced at the subject. Volumes might be written, and the subject still be unexhausted. May the Lord apply truth to our hearts by the Holy Spirit and pardon error, for the Redeemer's sake.

Middletown, N.Y., July 1, 1856.
Elder Gilbert Beebe

HEBREWS 6: 9-12.

But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Elder R.L. Dodson,
Dear Brother in Christ:

If it will not tax your patience too much I feel I would like to give expression to my thoughts in regard to the scriptures recorded in 2 Peter 2:4, also Rev. 12:9. That in 2 Peter reads, ***"For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; and spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness,"*** etc. That in Revelation reads, ***"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon: and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." Rev. 12:7-9.*** These two parts of Holy Writ, while they may bear no relationship to each other, are equally confusing to some of the Lord`s little ones. Sometimes we find it less difficult to tell what these things do not mean than what they really do mean. So if God will guide my mind and pen I would like to present my version of this for the consideration of our dear brethren who read the Signs: ***"The angels that sinned and were cast down to hell."*** It would be dreadful to anticipate even the possibility of any of the angels of the paradise of God sinning and thus forfeit their home in those regions of bliss. This thought really deserves to be dismissed without comment. Firstly, because they must be born of God or they cannot enter into the kingdom of God or they cannot enter the kingdom of heaven, and whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin because he is born of God. Secondly, sin is condemned in the flesh and those disembodied spirits are not encumbered with a body of sinful flesh as we who are yet thus encumbered. Thirdly, Jesus has said, ***"Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."*** I can see no advantage in a good hope through grace if, after we have attained to that glorious state we are still in jeopardy of being cast down to hell. The Catholic clergy claim their ability to pray a soul out of purgatory which claim is, to say the least,fantastic, but it is no less absurd and incredible than to suppose that God would cast one of his holy angels down to hell after having received him in glory. So we will dismiss this theory as being altogether unfounded. But the apostle`s words are not idle words, so we must look for a better solution than this. He is referring to the old world as will be seen by reading this chapter. God`s people, Israel, are the angels under consideration here, and the old world, of course. is that old or legal dispensation wherein the people were under the law of carnal commandments. His people did sin most flagrantly. They trampled under foot the holy law of God until they ***"have all sinned and come short of the glory of God,"*** and God did cast them

down to hell. Not an imaginary abyss burning with fire and brimstone but delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment. As a recompense for their sin he sent Nebuchadnezzar who razed and destroyed and carried the people into exile seventy years. Briefly stated, these are the angels that sinned and this is the hell into which they were cast. We notice that "Noah, the eighth person" is brought to our view in this connection. Noah, the only one whom God saw righteous in that generation. All the rest were counted as exceedingly wicked and this would necessarily include the family of Noah with the rest. As it applies to God's people now so it applied to them. They were by nature the children of wrath even as others. They did nothing to merit the favor so abundantly bestowed upon them. ***"But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace are ye saved.)"***

Perhaps no clearer demonstration of God's election can be found in the Bible than this. Noah, a preacher of righteousness, a type of Christ, was commanded to build an ark, a type of the church. This he did alone. He sought no help from any source only from God, and no help was provided him. Thus Christ said, ***"Upon this rock I will build my church."*** Likewise he went forth in the work alone. He asked for no human aid and any and all who pretend to be helping God must be accounted impostors. ***"Noah the eighth person,"*** Besides him, in his family there were seven souls which represent a full or whole number. God said, ***"Come thou and all thy house into the ark."*** Thus we see the whole family gathered into the ark with Noah, their head and husband. Looking now at the antitype we see the whole family of God gathered into the church with Christ, our exalted head and husband. As before stated, the family of Noah was among that wicked generation hence they did not enter the ark on account of their righteousness or good works but by the virtue of the righteousness of Christ, our exalted head. ***"This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us."***

In Revelation it is said, ***"And there was war in heaven."*** I hope no one will be presumptuous enough to suppose this chaos existed in those regions of eternal bliss. This cannot be, although there be some who refer to this scripture to prove the devil was once an angel in heaven but he sinned and thus became a devil. How absurd and incredible, I have not words to express. How could any one suppose that God Almighty is so lax in his government as to allow one of his holy angels to sin and sink so low in infamy as to become his adversary. Who would suppose there are temptations in heaven that are more alluring than the shining courts of glory? This war in heaven was the culmination of one

of the things of which John came to bear witness which it was said must shortly come to pass. *"The kingdom of heaven is at hand."* And this is the heaven in which this war was waged and not in heaven above where all is love. This war no doubt represents the early persecution which the saints of the Lord were called to endure when the Pope ruled high handed and supreme, having both secular and religious authority and many of the saints who had the courage to withstand his tyrannical rule suffered martyrdom at his pleasure. Blood flowed to the horse`s bridle. Let not our brethren be misled by this. This does not mean the blood was two feet deep or more which is must have been to reach the horse`s mouth; but the bridle is that by which the beast is controlled. He is held in check, he is turned hither and thither. Says the apostle James, *"Behold, we put bits in the horse's mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about the whole body."* Thus the blood of the saints flowed unto the time when this beast, the dragon, was checked in his unholy holocaust. *"Michael (Jesus) and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."* John *"saw an angel,(which no doubt represents the power of the Holy Spirit of God) come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. and he laid hold on the dragon that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nation no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled." "Thus Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels. and prevailed not."* This was a bitter conflict but Michael prevailed. The dragon was cast out into the earth and his angels were cast out with him. This perhaps, is the first element that split away from the true church and they remain separate and apart from the true church to this day. They were cast out into the earth. They went out from us because they were not of us. This dragon is called the Devil and Satan. As John stood upon the sands of the sea, he saw a beast rise up out of the sea having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns. The sea, no doubt is a symbol of the legal dispensation, his seven heads representing full or complete authority. His ten horns represent the ten commandments of the law by which he persecuted the saints who recognize the complete redemption from under the law by our Lord Jesus Christ. The ten crowns upon his ten horns representing his regal powers so it mattered not how or in what way the saints offended his satanic majesty they were tried and convicted accord-

ing to the law of carnal commandments. No doubt their greatest offense was their zeal and desire to worship the true and living God. The dragon, or devil, gave this beast his power and authority. And even he had no power other than that what was given unto him, so hence this war in heaven, power was given unto him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. Michael prevailed, Jesus died that through his death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. It was God`s people who were in constant fear of death: the death penalty hung heavily over their heads. But it is God`s people who rejoice in a complete deliverance from the bondage of corruption under the glorious liberty of the children of God. "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Satan is a vanquished foe. Jesus reigns. He reigns victorious over heaven and earth most glorious. Jesus reigns.

(Elder) L.L. Schenck
"SIGNS" - November 1950

PROVERBS 22: 1-4.

A Good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold.

The rich and poor meet together: the Lord is the maker of them all.

A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.

By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life.

MEETINGS

MT. OLIVE CHURCH

Mt. Olive Church's annual meeting, the first Sunday in November and the Saturday before in San Antonio, Texas. We invite all brethren who would like to come and meet with us.

Anyone who wishes more information can contact me at 12705 Tantara Dr., Austin, Texas 78729 at (512) 258-7094. They may also contact Elder Malcolm Burkhalter.

Yours in Christ,
David Harrell

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 1996

H.P. Conner, VA	$2.00
Clarence M. Kearns, NC	2.00
Mrs. Annie Reed, VA	10.00
L.W. Myers, VA	2.00
William Vick, TN	5.00
Mrs. Janie Fanning, AL	2.00
Mrs. Janie Fanning, AL	50.00
In memory Of Mrs. Lucille Young	
Mrs. Minne Cunningham, OR	7.00
A Friend	50.00
Mrs. Grace Berry, TX	47.00
C.W. Wood, VA	7.00
Larry H. Gibson, NC	2.00
Jerry P. Cockman, NC	15.00
Mrs. Hazel Branche, VA	5.00
James T. Howard, AL	14.00
Eld. Wallace Harvey, WV	5.00
Mrs. Bertie F. Brown, NC	4.00
Monral Hinkle, AL	2.00
Hassell A. Hale, VA	7.00
Eld. Carl Terry, VA	2.00
Eld. J.T. Prescott, NC	7.00

OBITUARIES

ELDER GERALD D. SHIPMAN

It is with great sadness, yet confident hope in the mercy of our Lord, that we report the death of our beloved pastor, Elder Gerald D. Shipman. Elder Shipman was 70 years old when he went to be with his Lord on July 10, 1996.

Elder Shipman was ordained to the ministry on August 16, 1959, at Mount Olive Primitive Baptist Church in Stockdale, Texas. He followed in the ministry his father, John W. Shipman who was ordained in May, 1915, at County Line Church, and his grandfather, A. D. Shipman of Perry County, Tennessee, who was ordained at Cedar Creek Church on September I I, 1882. Elder Shipman served Mount Olive Primitive Baptist Church until his death. He also served Mount Zion Church in Weslaco, Texas, Little Flock Church in Altus, Oklahoma, and Shepherd Fold Church in Houston, Texas.

Elder Shipman is survived by his wife, Darlene Shipman of San Antonio, four children: Gloria Merkel and her husband, Bud, of San Antonio; John William Shipman of San Antonio; Perry Shipman and his wife, Bobbi, of Boerne, Denise Alexander and her husband, Mike, of Divine. Elder Shipman is also survived by six grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Funeral services were held at Mission Park Funeral Chapel South in San Antonio with Elders C. M. Haygood, W. M. Burkhalter, and Jimmy Hamrick presiding. Graveside services were held at Oak Island Cemetary at Oak Island, Texas, Elders C. C. Morris, David W. Harrell, and Brother Bob Nixon presiding.

Elder Shipman loved being among the Old Baptist people. While he was fervent in preaching, he was also kindly and gentle among the brethren. His last trip was to the fifth Sunday meeting in Winnsboro, Texas, where the writer perceived him to be at peace and in good faith. He appeared to be having a wonderful time. At the last meeting of the Pleasant Valley Association in San Antonio, Elder Shipman begged that we would continue preaching all day, which we did. The writer made the comment from the stand that he understood Elder Shipman's desire because we never know when it will be our last opportunity to meet together in this life. Some of us preached twice that day to fulfill his wish that we continue a little while longer in the things he so loved. We will miss him greatly, but we rejoice that he is now with his Lord and sees most perfectly those glorious things he saw only dimly here.

For the last year or so the church has been meeting in the home that Elder Shipman and Darlene had rented in San Antonio. We continue to meet there. Anyone wishing to communicate with Sister Shipman or any of the church may do so at 13951 Cedar Canyon, San Antonio, Texas 78231 - 1984. We are small in number, but for the foreseeable future we will continue to meet, Lord willing, at Sister

Shipman's home and continue on in the hope of our calling for the glory of our precious Lord Jesus.

Written and submitted by
Elder David W. Harrell
at the request of Mt. Olive Church

HATTIE H. STEGALL

As Elder Wallis Smith read Proverbs 31:10 - 31 at her funeral, the family thought how well that scripture depicted the life of Sister Hattie Stegall. She worked long, hard hours for many years caring for her family. Even before she married, she had to help shoulder the load, growing up as the oldest girl in her family. She always set a bountiful table for family and friends.

She trained her children to care for others and they were devoted to her. It was her desire to always stay home, not to be a burden to anyone. After she became too disabled to stay alone, two of her daughters, Janie and Virginia, took turns staying with her, with others helping out. Then toward the end, they stayed together. With the help of Home Health Care, the family was brought closer together during this experience. When she could no longer serve others, it was her desire for the Lord to take her home. As her three daughters and a devoted daughter-in-law stayed with her, she quietly slipped away cn July 15, 1996, at 1:45 a.m.

Sister Stegall was born Hattie Wilmer Holley on December 22, 1899, to John and Jenny H. Holley. She married Clarence G. Stegall on September 23, 1917, who departed this life on March 20, 1983. They both were baptized by Bro. Wallis Smith the same Sunday morning in 1963 and were members of Old Mountain Church.

Sister Stegall leaves three daughters, Janie Wyatt of Danville, Virginia Turner of Axton, and Irene Oakes of Museville, and three sons, Charlie Stegall of Whitmell, Richard Stegall and William "Bill" Stegall of Danville. She was predeceased by one son, Percy Stegall, of Hurt. She is survived by 12 grandchildren, 20 great-grandchildren, and four great-great grandchildren. She was predeceased by five grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

The funeral was held at Wrenn-Yeatts Westover Funeral Chapel by Elder Wallis Smith and Elder C. B. Davis. The body was laid to rest beside her beloved husband in Highland Burial Park under beautiful flowers to await the great resurrection when her Lord and Savior returns.

She is greatly missed by her family, neighbors, and friends. Her life covered 96 years of great changes in economic and industrial developments but aren't we thankful that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He cares for us.

Written and submitted by
Irene Oakes, Her daughter

Signs of the Times

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1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

How great, how solemn is the work
Which we attend to-day !
Now for a holy, solemn frame,
O God, to thee we pray.

O may we feel as once we felt,
When pained and grieved at heart,
Thy kind, forgiving, welting look,
Relieved our every smart.

Let graces then in exercise
Be exercised again;
And, nurtured by celestial power,
In exercise remain.

Awake, our love, our fear, our hope,
Wake, fortitude and joy;
Vain world, begone; let things above
Our happy thoughts employ.

Whilst thee, our Saviour and our God,
To all around we own;
Drive each rebellious rival lust,
Each traitor, from the throne.

Instruct our minds, our wills subdue,
To heaven our passions raise,
That hence our lives, our all, may be
Devoted to thy praise

Beddome.

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EDITORIAL

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not or yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works lest any man should boast.

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Faith is the foundation upon which the children of God base their claim to the inheritance that is laid up for them that love God: those who are called according to his will and purpose, and it is the gift of God to them. It is the rock upon which the building is set that groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom all the saints are builded together for an habitation of God through the spirit.

The rock in scriptures, signifies permanence, endurance and solid unwavering support for that which is built upon it. The wise man builds his house upon the rock and though the rains, storms and floods come the house stands because it is founded upon the rock. Deut. 32 vs. 3,4 *"Because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgement: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."* God is the rock of Ages and is perfectly solid and sound, no weakness and cannot fail to support, sustain and endure until all that is built upon him and by him shall be fulfilled. God is the rock and in his infinite wisdom and mercy has designed the plan of salvation in such a way that he gives unto all of the heirs of grace a little of himself and that spirit that is given to them is called faith. It is God's gift to them and it insures that they will remain in the household of faith through eternity. It is as sure and steadfast as the rock from which it was hewn. This faith is the anchor of the soul, entering into heaven itself whither Jesus the Author and finisher of it has already gone for them. This anchor will always remain firm and strong, and though the individual may seem to maneuver

around and away from the anchor, there is always and indestructible connection between them so that they can never drift away and be lost.

Deut. 32 vs 31 *"For their rock is not as our rock, even our enemies themselves being judges."* This is referring to a very froward generation, children in whom there is no faith: they know and understand only the things of nature and since God gave man dominion over his creation here in this time world they presume to have power in and of themselves. They are as the nation who thought to build a tower unto heaven. Their faith is in their own natural abilities but the tower of Babel was never built and the house that is built on the sand (natural faith) shall surely fall. These are those who measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves among themselves and boast of the wonderful works they are doing in the name of their god, but their god is not as our God their own testimony bearing witness. They are working in vain to build the house to show to the world the glory of their god and his kingdom; which consists of the things of nature, while the saints of God are standing, in awe and viewing the beauty of the city built without hands as its glory and wonder is revealed to them.

Jesus once asked his disciples, *"whom say ye that I am."* And Peter replied, *"Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God."* Jesus then told Peter that he was a blessed character to know this and that flesh and blood had not revealed it to him but God who was in heaven had revealed it to him. Then Jesus said *"thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church: and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."* Certainly Jesus did not mean that the Church would be built upon the man Peter but rather the blessed character that had been blessed of God with this knowledge for that specific time. The man Peter, immediately after this occasion, rebuked Jesus when he told them that he must die and Peter told him that he would not let it happen: not the same testimony as the blessed character that knew that Jesus was the Son of God, just a short while before. That was a special blessing bestowed on Peter for that particular occasion because they did not possess faith at that time. The gift of faith comes with the gift of the Holy Ghost which was given them on the day of Pentecost after Jesus' death. The rock on which the church is built will withstand the assault of the gates of hell and only the blessed child of God fully protected by the whole armour of God and the gift of faith can endure the trials and afflictions that will confront them in this life.

1 Cor. 3 vs. 11-15 *"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble: every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire: and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward:*

If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire." These are some of the most comforting words to be found in all of the bible because they state that salvation does not stand or fall on the efforts or works of the creature. They stand or fall based on the foundation which they are built upon: if it is the ability of the creature it will not stand, but if it is founded upon God's gift to them in the person of Jesus Christ his only begotten Son, it will stand the test of time and eternity. The above scripture teaches that works cannot save, but neither can works cause them to be lost. The point is whether the works be good or bad whether they burn or abide; whether it be gold or stubble, it is the foundation upon which they are built that make the difference. It is Jesus the author and the finisher of that faith which is the gift of God unto them by his unmerited grace and mercy.

"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee: and shall say destroy them." This is the heritage of the saints of God: the plan of salvation was engineered before time began, the results were determined and the execution of it in time is as the designer, perfect in every little detail. The knowledge of these things is made known to the heirs of this salvation as they journey in this low ground of sin and sorrow, and they see and are made to realize their own frailties and shortcomings. They read the promises to a poor and afflicted people and know that this is the only plan that can reach them; and as the blind man they begin to beg for mercy and grace to be applied to them. They know that they cannot attain to these things of themselves and pray. Lord have mercy on me a sinner. The grace of God gives them faith, and mercy overlooks their weaknesses and loves them with an everlasting love, in spite of their sins and backslidings.

Down through the ages the patriarchs, prophets, apostles and men in all ages have obtained a good report; believed the worlds were framed by the word of God; subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, quenched the violence of fire, were stoned, sown asunder and slain because of the faith that they had. I have heard many say, oh if I could only have faith like that, well you do if you have any faith. There is only one faith and that is God given and it will survive any test that you are put to. Just be thankful that you have not faced any of those extreme tests that others have, yet; but if you do, you will endure them as they did, by the grace of God and the everlasting arms that will not let you fail to glorify him in all that you do.

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and finisher of our faith;" We have the witnesses of our brethren since the beginning of times as recorded in the scriptures, those who we commune with today and the

witness that has been placed in our hearts and soul. We can never fail if we keep our eye and heart on them; it is when we begin to look around us get our vision clouded by the things of nature that we get in trouble. As the old saying goes we can't see the forest for the trees. Faith sees the forest, the broader picture and enables the children of God to press on to the mark of the prince of the high calling, in spite of the sins that do beset them on all sides. Faith endures the present, looking to the future and the promises of things to come that are worth more than this world and the fullness thereof; these things that await the saints of God will stand forever. 1 Peter 1 vs. 4, "*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*"

Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgements and his ways past finding out! It is not necessary that we understand, just that we believe and have faith in the giver of ever good and perfect gift who has given this gift of faith as a seal that they are His.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

ARTICLES

This morning; as is often the case with me; I find this question upon my mind, and in my feelings; What do I feel and believe; where it has to do with the reality, of the true and living Three-in-One God; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit; these three being, the whole and complete ONENESS, of, THE God?' how, first of all; I feel, there is no more profound, and sacred subject; one's mind could ever dwell upon, or speak or write concerning. Therefore; it is my deep desire; that, as I endeaver, to write this down it could be His Holy will to lead, guide and direct my mind's thoughts, and this writing. For I feel that to be the one and only way;this could ever result in being to the praise, honor and glorifying of His great and Holy name; the only name ever named, in heaven and among men, could ever be worthy of any and all praise both now, and forever more. For I feel that if my natural fleshly self be let to exercise itself while writing this; then, it shall be no more than filthy rags, in His sight. And thereby be, to the dishonoring of His Holy and Righteous name. And I feel, there is at least one sure way could be to that dishonoring of His name; which would be the extending of any praise or honor, unto any one of humankind; for anything

he may do, or not do. For, if it be good; then it came from God and if it be bad; then it came from the flesh of mankind. For, if any good ever be performed, THROUGH (not by) any man; then, it had to have come about; only, because of the Holy Spirit of God having worked in him, both to will and to do, of that good. For, in the flesh of man, there dwelleth no good thing that is good, in His sight. John 4:24, God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. God is self existant. God is eternal; He is without beginning or ending. He is the unchanging God. He has forever known all things; therefore, He can never learn any new thing. There can never come anything; that has not already been, in both His mind and purpose; back in eternity, before the beginning of time; and so, He can in nowise ever be informed of anything, nor instructed in anything. He knoweth the deep secrets in the hearts of all mankind; and knoweth, even our dreams before we dream them. Heaven is His throne, and the earth, (from which we are made), is His footstool. He is everywhere present and nowhere absent. God is fully aware of all of that the earth and seas consist; and of all that is above, below, and around them; for He is the Creator and Maker of them all. He is ever fully aware of our every thought; and our every desire of both heart and mind; and our every step or movement, where we all are, and where we are going; and when we arrive; and when our end shall be. He brought us all into this world and will take us all out of this world, in and at, His afore appointed time, place and manner. Death and hell, nor the devil and all his angels, can never effect one iota of change in all its entirety. God is the beginning, the continuation, and ending, or all things. Of all that ever exists outside Himself; His almighty power, does control it all. Now some might ask; well, what about all that wickedness mankind does commit? His answer is this; even the wrath of man shall praise Him; and the remainder of wrath He will restrain.

I believe and feel, it is well and good with us when we are given to feel and see our own smallness and weakness and self helplessness; for it is only then; we are able to see and feel that very truth; of our complete and whole dependence upon our God and Lord for our every furnishings; both naturally and Spiritually; it is only whenever we realize, our own self weakness and nothingness; we are prepared for to look up at His greatness and goodness and cry unto Him for our help. It is only under just such circumstances we find ourselves to be in; we could ever utter or groom a true and pure prayer unto our God and Lord, or see and feel, the very Holy truth, for what it really is. It is only at

such time our thoughts could somewhat be compared with His thoughts; or come to realize of His ways to some degree.

Galatians 6:3. " For if a man think himself to be something, he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. Man in his own fleshly nature's ways; is the very hallmark of deception; and can glory only in his fleshly self; which is, false pride, and selfishness. God is NOT man; He is a Spirit a Holy Spirit. Isaiah 55:8-11; For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void but it shall accomplish that which I please and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Now, Dear little children; with hope in Him are not His shalls of certainty so beautiful and comforting to your very soul from time to time?; I feel they surely are.

In the hope, I could be your brother in Christ Jesus; I say; Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen: Galatians 6:18.

Troy G. Shepard

VOICES OF THE PAST

" A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident. — PROVERBS xiv. 16.

I BELIEVE no living soul can be satisfied with a notional religion: though a miserable backslider, and driven into the fields to feed swine, he cannot feed on their husks, but sighs after the bread of his Father's house. The eyes being enlightened to see the nature of sin, the justice and holiness of God, and the miserable filthiness of self, the quickened soul can find no rest in anything short of a precious discovery of the Lamb of God; and the more that the soul is exercised with trials, difficulties, temptations, doubts, and besetments of various kinds, the more does it feel its need of that blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel. What is a Christian worth without inward trials and exercises? How dead and lifeless are our prayers; how cold and formal when the soul is not kept alive by inward exercises! Where are the sighs, cries, groanings, wrestlings, and breathings of a soul that is at ease in Zion? The world is everything and Christ nothing, when we become settled on our lees, and are not emptied from vessel to vessel; but inward exercises, fears, straits, and temptations stir up the soul to cry, and pray, and beg for mercy. The certainty, the power, the reality of eternal things are then felt, when guilt, and wrath, and fear, and disquietude lay hold of the soul. Mere notions alone of Christ, false hope, a dead faith, a presumpuous confidence, a rotten assurance, are all swept away as so many refuges of lies, when the soul is made to

feel its nakedness and nothingness, its guilt and helplessness before God. And thus all these inward exercises pave the way for discoveries of Christ--those views of his blood and righteousness, that experimental acquaintance with his Person, love, grace, and work, which is life and peace.

Elder J.C. Philpot

THE REFINING POT.

"And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off, and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God." - Zech. xiii. 8,9.

"He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver." - Mal. iii. 3.

God's dealings with national, typical Israel are of very much interest to the church of Christ. Therein is discovered to us the attributes of the Lord, and in this nation we have a portraiture of the manifold vicissitudes that pertain to the children of Zion even to the present day. This people were exceptionally favored above all the nations of the earth. To them were committed the oracles of God; blessings peculiar and abundant were their heritage. At times they worshiped God in grateful praises for his sovereign graciousness unto them, but ah, how soon they forgot his works, they corrupted their ways, debased themselves in their forgetfulness and wandered treacherously from the Lord. They knew what it was to flourish beneath the smiles of the Lord, and to fade and die beneath his rebukes. How often the Lord wrought for his name's sake, (Ezek. xx. 9,) shewing them mercy and delivering them from their adversities. In reading the history of Israel we see that severe indeed were the fiery ordeals they were subjected to. Look at this: *"Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross: all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead; in the midst of the furnace; they are even the dross of silver. Therefore thus saith the Lord God. Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore, I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in mine anger, and in my fury, and will leave you there, and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the Lord have poured out my fury upon you." Ezek. xxii. 18-22.* Ah, though the furnace was so severe there were ever some silver, some that were precious in the eyes of the Lord, a remnant according to the election of grace. so in *Zech. xiii. 8,9, "Two parts therein [saith the Lord] shall be cut off, and die; but the third part shall be left therein."* This third part are his very people, and they confess the Lord to be their God. By fiery trials the Lord separated them from

their idolatries, uncleanness and witchcraft. He purified them by the spirit of judgment and of burning from all the foreign mixtures that had become mixed with the pure worship that God had ordained among his people when he redeemed them from the house of bondage. Moab was the Lord's washpot, (Psalms lx. 8,) and Babylon was also the refining pot for Israel. Seventy years they were in that fiery furnace to purify them from idolatry. Though the fires of exile and captivity were painful, their songs were hushed, and in sighing and weeping they spent this long night of affliction, yet all worked together for good. There they bemoaned themselves, and sighed and wept, but the morning came, and they came forth with singing (Isaiah xxxv. 10,) and laughter; yes, the bright shining silver sang, "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." Are "the third part" his people? Are they silver and gold? Then he will refine them as silver is refined, and try them as gold is tried. In graciousness and faithfulness, for his own glory and their good, the Lord will bring the third part through the fire.

It is not my intention to recite the narrative in particular, in which is told the fulfillment of this prophetic word in typical Israel, but, the Holy Spirit enabling me, I will present some glimpses of the subject as have ever been and are now experienced by those who are in truth the people of God. *"I [Jehovah of hosts] will bring the third part through the fire." "He [Christ, the Word made flesh, the messenger of the covenant,] shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver."* By these declarations of the Scriptures the Refiner is no other than God. This being so it is our comfort, as believers in God, to be assured that he is not trifling or experimenting with his people; he is not using them as playthings when he turns his hand upon them (Isaiah i. 25,) and puts them in the refining pot. The little that we know of God persuades us to believe that he is holy and wise, gracious and almighty. All his ways are judgment, just and right is he. When his saints come forth of this and that, and all the fiery furnaces that the Refiner puts them into, will they not be to his praise and honor and glory? In very truth they will; my soul is exultant in truth they will; my soul is exultant in the thought. It is so sustaining and uplifting to have right thoughts of God. The Refiner is the Lord of hosts, the silver is his own elect, his redeemed and regenerated people, whom he hath eternally loved and hath predestinated unto eternal glory. The silver is owned by the Refiner. Who then shall question his sovereign right to do with his own as seemeth good in his sight? The sorest chastenings of our heavenly Father are for our profit. (Heb. xii. 10.) Our Refiner knows that there is much dross mingled with the silver in his people; we think we know it, too, but he better knows it than we, and what is more, he knows just exactly what fire and what degrees of fiery trials will separate this and that alloy from the silver, bring it to the surface, and that only his own hand that put us in the cru-

cible and melted as can purge away the dross. Have you not prayed, dear child of God, that you might more brightly shine in the beauties of the Savior? Yes, you say,

"I asked the Lord that I might grow
In faith, and love, and every grace;
Might more of his salvation know,
And seek more earnestly his face.

'Twas he who taught me thus to pray,
And he, I trust, has answered prayer;
But it has been in such a way
As almost drove me to despair."

O, there is much chaff to be burned up, and tin and dross to be purged away all the days that we are in the earthly house of this tabernacle. Well, child of God, how many times have you been in the refining pot? What fires have you been brought through? and in what furnace of affliction are you now being melted? To tell all your answer would be a long account. The Lord has many fires, and fire after fire to bring his chosen through; some of his dear children are seldom out of the melting pot. The furnace of affliction in which the Lord has his chosen may be, in his providence, some outward earthly trial. It may be the blasting of our temporal prosperity; we are called upon perhaps to see nothing but shattered hopes and blighted expectations. Perhaps by God's dispensation we find our bodily health declining, and wearing and painful sickness is our lot. Then how sore to meet with bereavements, when strong ties are rent and torn. But there are living troubles which are as a living fire; some such afflictions are never breathed to any other, but are as a continuing furnace to the soul. Then, when it pleaseth the Lord, he can so kindle a fire to melt us that the common cares of life are a daily furnace to us. Or our Refiner's fire may be the fiery darts of the wicked, the buffetings of the messenger of Satan, the devil's cruel insinuations and accusations. What a harassed life some of God's dear children have; all their surroundings are such that we wonder they endure such fiery trials. O they are not utterly consumed, the Lord, the Refiner, loves them, and his invisible and gracious hand sustains them. A child of God cannot always say with Job, *"I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came." - Job. iii. 26.* Our circumstances may have been very different when trouble came. Trouble came; unsent? Never. Let us not believe such atheistical stuff. Trouble came, the fire burns, the child of God is in the crucible, and soon he is melted because of trouble. The affliction of the silver is not to destroy the silver, but to refine it. The bush that Moses saw burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed; and Moses said, *"I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt." - Exodus iii. 3.* And I am sure if we have eyes to see the elect of God in the refining pot, if we have a heart to enter somewhat into the intimacy be-

tween the Refiner and the silver, if we can view the scene taking place in the crucible, we shall say, This is a great sight, such a sight which if once seen can never be altogether obliterated from memory's vision.

To a right apprehension of what is to be witnessed as we contemplate the children of God in the fire it will be borne in mind that all is not silver in the pot, there is dross there also. The child of God has two natures, one pure silver, the other all alloy, veritable dross, though some of it may very much resemble silver. The silver is the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, and the dross is the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. (Eph. iv. 22-24.) Having this well understood I would that we together might look into the crucible and see the tribulation of the silver therein, and let us know that while we are obtaining some glimpses therein that there is One who sees far more and deeper than we, One who sees all; the Lord, the Refiner, sitteth near by, his heart and his eyes are there perpetually. (1 Kings ix. 3.) He has dominion over the fire, and in wisdom regulates its intensity; nothing is taking place in the refining pot without him. By the heat of the fiery trial the child of God begins to be moved, as silver he is troubled; the varied alloys of our carnal nature also are agitated in affliction's furnace. That one and the selfsame person should be agitated by such contradictory emotions is a mystery. In the refining pot the child of God becomes melted; yes, the new man is molten, and is moved like melted, boiling silver in the refining pot, and the dross also is put in motion by the fiery ordeal. What strugglings what warfare is experienced by the tried soul. As the silver and the alloy are boiling, at certain stages they are so mixed, there is such confusion of the substances, that the child of God cannot himself determine what is silver and what is of the flesh. O this he learns, that he is frail and sinful. So mixed sometimes are the silver and dross that the poor soul in the furnace cannot determine whether he is a child of God or a child of the devil. *"When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path."* - *Psalms cxlii. 3.* So our Refiner ever distinguishes, ever knows the sighs and yearnings of the silver. *"The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the Lord trieth the hearts."* - *Prov. xvii. 3.* While the child of God is in the crucible he is being tested indeed, for consider what darkness he is in much of the time. The providences of the Lord are often as an impenetrable cloud, and blind unbelief, that foul, God-dishonoring dross, comes the surface, and our tried souls are entombed in its dismalness. Ah, yes, there boils up out of, the depths of our sinful hearts murmuring and rebellions, and we pray, but all our prayers are not silver prayers, there are dross prayers, peevish cries; we pray, Take us out of the fire, but we are still kept in, the fire still burns, our Refiner blows upon it and it becomes the hotter. Yes, in affliction's furnace the

believer will find thoughts bubbling up, imaginations of the carnal mind, and in passing through these fiery trials the Lord purposes to separate the dross thoughts from the silver thoughts. Many have been and are our thoughts of God, of his providences and of things that we imagine to be the truth; we cherish them as silver, but they are base alloy. Ah, what misconceptions we are liable to; we sometimes think that God is altogether such an one as ourselves. Silver thoughts are ever according to the testimony of the holy Scriptures, and those that are not sustained by the word of God, no matter how pretentious, no matter how we have gained them, no matter how they appear to shine, no matter how much we hug them to our bosom, they are nothing but very dross and scum, and in the refining pot we shall find it to be so to our soul's discomfiture. God's fires are where the wood, hay and stubble, where heresies are consumed. The false, the counterfeit, that religiousness that originates in our flesh, the erroneous ideas which we thought were right, and were friendly to Christ, are now in the furnace discovered to us to be opposed to that true and vital knowledge of God, (2 Cor. x. 5,) and all such by sore tribulations are separated from the faith which is of the operation of God. Yes, the refining pot is the place for the destruction of inherent Arminianism. Self-righteousness is only wood, hay, stubble, and affliction's fire will burn it up. As the dross comes to the surface we look into the refining pot, and nothing but this offensive scum is seen. We say, Is this a child of God? Look at Jonah in the refining pot in Nineveh and its vicinity; he is exceedingly displeased, and very angry and even in the face of God he spits forth this: *"I do well to be angry, even unto death."* As we stand by and look upon this, depicted in the fourth chapter, do we not blush and feel ashamed that such behavior should be in any creature? Surely this is dross. Is there any silver in Jonah? Yes, look beneath this shameful scum, look at him in the belly of the whale, in the second chapter, and there the precious grace of God, the silver, is seen. The Lord of hosts sits as a refiner and purifier of silver, and as the dross comes to the surface it is his work, because of his great interest in the silver, to remove all the base scum away. Let us not overlook this one thing as we consider the elect of God in the furnace of affliction, that amidst all the severity of their trials they are given to prove the unfailing mercifulness of the Lord their God. Our Refiner loves his own, he ever has compassion for his silver. He, the Captain of our salvation, was made perfect through suffering when he was put to perfect grief for the atonement of our transgressions. He saw the travail of his own soul and was satisfied; yes, for the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. So he sitteth as a Refiner and witnesseth the travail of soul of his tried people, his beloved silver ones, in the refining pot. He sees the end, that they shall come forth to his praise,

they shall very gloriously reflect his own image.

"I feel at my heart all thy sighs and thy groans,
For thou art most near me, my flesh and my bones;
In all thy distresses thy Head feels the pain,
Yet all are most needful, not one is in vain.

Then trust me and fear not, thy life is secure;
My wisdom is perfect, supreme is my power;
In love I correct thee, thy soul to refine,
To make thee at length in my likeness to shine."

The Refiner takes away from time to time the upboiling dross; he has no pleasure in this scum, for it mars the divine excellence of his silver. Yes, tried one, thy Refiner will take away the dross from the silver, and thou shalt come forth from the fires a vessel well pleasing in his eyes. (Prov. xxv. 4.) Though in your trials you find so much that is not pure and gracious and Christlike, though your melted soul is feelingly buried in this all upboiling scum, and your heart aches to find there is so much of it, thy loving Refiner will purely purge away thy dross and take away all thy tin. (Isaiah i. 25.) By divine teaching errors are swept away, for God's word, his truth, is like fire. The gracious teachings of the Spirit of truth (John xvi. 13,) separates us from our mistaken ideas of doctrine, and we are made quite willing in our fiery temptations to have all heresies carted away to the dunghill. The people of God are glorified in the truth, but errors dim the lustre of the faith of God's elect. O the grievous scum of the depravity of our flesh, what shall cleanse this away? Only the hand of the once crucified One can purge it from thy aching conscience. Yes, the dear Refiner who sitteth near by will put forth his hand, and the voice of his pierced hand removing the scum will say to the heart of his silver underneath, This is my blood shed for the remission of sins. O blessed removal of the dross by the precious blood of the Lamb! At such a moment as this the silver, though still in affliction, can look up with smiles unto the face of the Refiner, saying, I have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. Scum, vain imaginations, delusions, heresies, murmurings, unbelief, atheisms, all such are not evidences of the grace of God; they are not to be exhibited, looked upon or mentioned as evidences presenting us as the children of God; such is in all mankind. Such things are vile, they are not precious, and to be as God's mouth we must in our testimony take forth the precious from the vile. (Jer. xv. 19.) Sin in its every aspect is to be loathed, to be refused, to be condemned; we are not to smack our lips over it as though it were enjoyable, good to eat. O Lord, "thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." - Hab. i. 13. And shall we feast our eyes

on sin? Surely if we are of God, born again, born of God, if we are silver, our heart-aching prayer will be, Take away all iniquity, and we shall be ashamed, and mourn, and loathe ourselves for all our iniquities. Can such an one whose conversation is not chaste be found mingling among the saints; who tells, with a grin on his face, an obscene anecdote? Shall I by word or look, or in any other way, be a partaker? God forbid. O God, have mercy upon me. How dare such a person profess the name of Christ? How dare they invade the society of believers in the Lamb of God? Child of God, let that one whose life is such be unto you as a leper; keep no company with such. O pray to God to keep thee from this walking pestilence. O flee, in thy heart, to the pavilion of thy God, in the secret of his tabernacle thou shalt find a refuge, and there pour out thy sighs in the hour of temptation. Thy merciful, succoring God "shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler." - Psalms xci. 4. It is so gratifying, moving our souls in thanksgiving to God, that his grace was so sufficient for the apostle Paul that he could write, "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe." - 1 Thess. ii. 10.

Many are the conflicting thoughts and the prayers of the elect of God while being brought through the fire, for in the Refiner's fire, of whatsoever nature it may be, we are melted and sink down in the crucible, and wonder why it is that we have fallen into such temptations. In gloom because of the uprising dross, and agitated by our trials, we know in truth that no chastening is joyous, but grievous, and it is not easy for us to understand that any God-glorifying fruits can come out of such distracting, heart-burdensome, burning dispensations. Look into the refining pot and see the children of God therein; you say, I do, and I see some of them have hard thoughts of men, of things and of God; they murmur, and some in rather loud tones express their peevishness. This surely is dross and scum. Yes, but if you have good hearing incline your ear over the refining pot, and from underneath all this scum you shall hear the sighs and prayers of the melted silver. "How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me? - Psalms xiii. 1. "Why standest thou afar off, O Lord? why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?" - Psalms x. 1. The very time when he is so much needed we fear he has withdrawn, and has taken away his mercies from us, and amazed and disconsolate we ask, "Will the Lord cast off forever? and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? - Psalms lxxvii. 7-9. Do not these complaints very clearly declare that the Lord is the One so needful, so desired? Look at Job when he was in the furnace, you may see the dross. Ah yes, he spake "words without knowledge." In the day of his grief

and desperate sorrow his speech was as the speech of one that was desperate. (Job vi. 26.) The dross came to the surface, but let the dross be taken away from the silver and how affectionately we look at the molten silver, at Job in his afflictions. His bereaved soul cries out, "O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!" "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." And then so nourished was his faith and hope in God that he says, "He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." What a comprehensive view he had of God's providence, and how gracious was his soul's acquiescence to the afflicting dispensations of God when he exclaimed, "What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" - Job ii. 10. All afflictions and chastenings endured by the chosen of God are for their good, and the fruit of it all is God-glorifying; so even while in the fire the silver is found to glorify the Lord God. For however inconceivable to the carnal mind, the child of God spiritually thrives in affliction. Melted in the fires we are separated from fleshly dependencies.

"Trials make the promise sweet,
Trials give new life to prayer,
Trials bring me to his feet,
Lay me low and keep me there."

"O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit." - Isaiah xxxviii. 16. "They shall call on my name, and I will hear them." That is, the melted silver shall call upon the Refiner, I, the Lord, will hear them. He is so near the refining pot.

"He knows how deep their groanings are,
And what their secret sighs declare,
And for their comfort has expressed
That all such mourning souls are blest."

In trouble they visit their God and pour out a prayer while his chastening is upon them. The word prayer here means "a secret speech, a whisper." Yes, the cry of the tried heart is only for the ear of the Lord. So very gracious is our God that when the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I, saith the Lord, will hear them, I the God of Jacob will not forsake them. Prayers, silver prayers, from that heart prepared by the Lord are the forerunners of his decreed mercies. Such prayers are not tin prayers; silver prayers are not asking amiss, but asking according to the will of the Lord our Refiner.

"They shall call on my name, and I will hear them." In our affliction we are moved by the Holy Spirit to seek the Lord. No other one can afford us help. Ah, it may be before we were brought into trials we were careless, wayward ones; but now in our tribulations where shall we go? to whom shall we look? "When he slew them, then they sought him; and they returned and inquired early after God: and they remembered that God was

their rock, and the high God their redeemer." Listen to the silver praying, *"Take away all iniquity."* - Hosea xiv. 2. Take away this hateful dross that darkens my life, mars my peace and shuts out from view the face of my Redeemer. In the chastening fires we are brought into implicit reliance in the atoning blood of Christ, more and more endeared to us becomes the hope of the gospel, and we look with all desire to the merits of our Savior, and when the Comforter applies the blood of Jesus to our sin-aching hearts, then the scum is gone, and the silver face looks up to the face that looks down, and that look of the Lord, the Refiner, says, Thou art mine, my delight, my Hephzibah, and the happy silver says, The Lord is my God. Many are the sighs and cries of the tried saints for resignation to the divine will, and that they might as dear children bear the indignation of the Lord, endure reproaches for the name of Christ, and that they might be kept ever worshiping the everlasting God. The furnace of affliction most surely brings the children of God into more intimate communion with the Lord; here their faith is purified, errors are purged, and they are brought into the necessity of a deeper and more extended knowledge of the characters that Christ sustains to his own. If passing through the fire is to burn up the dross, then let the Lord do with me as seemeth good in his sight. Unlike material silver from which all alloy has been purely purged away, and is then pure silver, the child of God becomes while in the world again and again mixed with dross. *"How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed!"* - Lam. iv. 1. Ah, it becomes tarnished, corroded with earth's defilements. The dross accumulates, it grows up from our depraved nature and mingles itself with the silver. Ah, some of the dear family of God are only out of the furnace for little moments. These little seasons are quietness and joy, and radiant in gratefulness, they reflect the smiling face of God. Then if needs be the Lord puts them in the refining pot again. Surely his purposes are wise and gracious. Though the silver be tried in a furnace of earth and purified seven times, (Psalms xii. 6,) will the silver in the end find fault? will there be a murmuring thought over any or all the seven fires? O there will be perfect acquiescence, there will not be a lisp of complaint, but this shall be the heart's sweet song: My Jesus hath done all things well. The Refiner in all graciousness clears away the dross, and looking into the furnace he sees the melted silver, sees in his tried ones his own image, and he says, It is my people, and the silver's heart responds, The Lord is my God. Would you see a child of God brought through the fire? then look at this picture. There stands Simon Peter in the palace of the high priest warming himself at the fire. Ah, Peter, the Lord has put you into the refining pot, and underneath satan kindles a fire, for he has desired to have thee that he may sift thee as wheat; he has insinuated that you are nothing but chaff, and you have thought you are the finest of wheat, all

wheat and no chaff, for you have said, Although all should be offended, yet will not I. The fire is kindled, and Peter in the crucible will soon begin to be dissolved by the vehement heat of temptation, and we shall see what silver and what dross he is composed of. The Refiner is near by. *"A damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee."* This was a hot fire, and Peter is melting hot within, the silver and the dross are all in commotion, and up to the surface comes the dross, and Peter *"denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest."* Another who saw him "said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man." What, do you think that an oath for confirmation will end the strife, silence your accusers and cause them to believe your lies? Ah, sinful Peter, this is very dross. The fire still burns, and Peter is boiling with emotions; yes, the silver is in motion and the dross is in motion. About the space of one hour another accuser came, and his accusations and questionings were as a vehement flame under the refining pot. This accuser confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him, for he is a Galileean, (the accuser was one of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman, whose ear Peter cut off,) and he saith, *"Did not I see thee in the garden with him?"* O Peter, where is thy vehement courage now? will you cut him down with your sword? Ah, the once brave Peter is now a very coward. *"Then began he to curse and swear, saying, I know not the man."* What, lying, swearing, cursing? Whom was he cursing, himself, his accusers? Was it that he was cursing Jesus? O execrable scum! This is the very scum of scum. Can there be any silver in the refining pot? Yes, for our Savior told him before he was put in the furnace, *"I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."* While he was lying, while he was swearing to confirm his lying denials, yes; even while he was cursing, Peter knew, the silver knew, Jesus; the silver ached, the silver sighed, the silver was ashamed. The silver, deep down in the crucible, hidden from all human view, blushed and dared not lift up its face to the Lord. (Ezra ix. 6.) Three horrible boilings up of vileness; once, twice, thrice, enough: *"Thou shalt deny me thrice."* Not four times. *"And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice."* Look into the furnace, and there to our view is Peter, and we say he is all dross, all depravity, he exhibits the very scum of the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. This is all that is outward of Peter in the crucible, and we say, O Peter, thou art so unlovely. *"The Lord turned and looked upon Peter."* It is the moment, the set time for the Refiner to skim away the odious scum. Christ looked, O that look! He looked upon Peter, he looked and looked and

looked all the dross, all Peter's dense, corrupt scum away, and Peter is transformed. Jesus looked upon him with eyes of injured love; that look said, I have prayed for thee. He looked in such compassionate forgiveness. O that look was the look of the suffering Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, and thus Jesus the Refiner took away the dross from the silver. The Refiner looked upon the silver, and Peter (not scum and dross Peter, but silver Peter,) looked upon the Refiner. Who can tell the story of what transpired in the soul of Peter when his eyes met the eyes of the suffering, compassionate Jesus? The lying, swearing, cursing Peter is transformed. The Lord with his eyes, which are as a flame of fire, so looked into the crucible that all the dross was cleansed away, and Peter went out and wept bitterly. O thou art silver Peter. Thy bitter weeping is sweet to us. O Peter, thou art lovely, thou art all fair, there is no spot in thee, nothing but silver now is seen. The broken-hearted, melted silver is all aglow with the likeness of the Lord, the Refiner, who himself is a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Jesus turned and looked upon Peter, and he went out and wept bitterly.

Frederick W. Keene

ISAIAH 25:1.

O Lord, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.

To the dear children of God that name means more than all earthly names combined. It is the one name that has in it all the qualities of every other name. Everything that a mother, father, brother or friend might be to you, Jesus is that and all other things needed. To the man that knows him not the name means nothing. It does not have any attraction that other names do not have. This is the King. He is the creator, keeper and disposer of all things, yet he is not acknowledged by all to be the Supreme Ruler. Many say he is King but their actions betray them. They even confer with him and *think* that he rewards them for coming to him. Really and truly many think, they are in touch with him because they think he is like themselves, a trader. He is measured as being just like us except we think he has what we want and that we have what he wants. Such, in a nutshell, is the foundation of all Arminian religion. It would be hard to explain which is the more important, what we have or what Jesus has. But after having, as I humbly hope, battled with that spirit in my own bosom up until now without having come off victor to the extent of getting rid of it, and seeing it manifested every day in my fellow-men, and hearing it from the work-monger's pulpit, over the radio and on the printed page, I have fully decided that what we have to offer him far outweighs what he has to offer! Just think about it! Any one of Adam's children has God and Christ and the Holy Ghost completely balked! They have done all

they can! God tried folks the law question, but *he* knew so little how hard-headed man would be that in desperation he *allowed* his Son to come down here to see what *He* could do. He came and did what he could and, according to what we believe In nature, he wanted us all to exert ourselves and help finish what was started. But after the plan was perfected (?) Christ and his Father were waiting to see what would take place. This work being an experiment they could only hope for the best! We *think* their plan included everybody, but it was planned for us to start something! Get up out of the mire and go to God! Dig out of the horrible pit and meet God with your achievement in your hands and praise for yourself on your lips! *Quit being lost* in the wilderness and start out and above a things do not wait for the Beloved to come down after you! Christ has eternal life for us and he *wants* to trade it to us for our works!

Under such an unscriptural doctrine I want to know who is Sovereign? I have purposely put a capital to the word. Which is helpless God or man? God will not and does not and *cannot* do anything until the man will let him do it. God has, if such be true, gotten himself into the most awful predicament that has ever been recorded! Search history, and no man has been as completely outdone and baffled as God. Man has had God on the Jump ever since the morning of creation, but God has been so completely out-classed in thought and action that He is inactive now until the man makes a move! There was a people that carried material to the smith and had them a God made (Isa. 46:6) and set him down. *He just waited. When they got ready they picked him* up *and moved him.* Every brand of conditionalism, in or out of the church of Jesus Christ, has that kind of a God. Is it a fact that every tongue must confess and every knee must bow ? If so, what fact is to be confessed? Why is the knee to be bowed? Which was it spoken of, the creature or the creator? If God has at any time, place, or in an condition in the church or out before or after any creature's regeneration, desired anything that he did not get at that time and for whatever length of time it was, he was compelled to confess to all the angelic hosts that the creature, man, was his superior, Furthermore, whatever length of time God has been wanting or desiring anything, just that long he has had his knee bowed in submission to that that kept him from doing his will. This matter of confessing him and acknowledging him is of primary importance. It was so important that it be done, that God swore to it. What power can cause the oath of God Almighty to be broken? If all power in heaven and earth (Matt. 28:18) is into the hands of Jesus over all flesh (John 17:2); all judgment is given into his care (John 5:22) and even evil men cannot do anything except they be given power from above: (John 19:11); how . can the oath of God respecting the confession of every tongue and the bowing of every knee be nullified: (Isa. 45 :23)? Every child of God has confessed that he is the Governor of

Israel (Matt. 2:6). We look at Israel as they came from Egypt and they all confessed to the authority of Joseph. Not only did the Israelites but also the Egyptians had to bow to the iron rule of God. Every Jacob has had to bow to the Great Finder of the sheep. Every preacher has been compelled to confess by tongue and bow in humble submission to Jesus. Not a single one has ever failed to acknowledge him in all the way they have been led. David's experience and Paul's experience corroborates in detail. Jacob and Peter each had to acknowledge that their salvation was of the Lord. Ananias and Sapphira tried to keep from confessing the whole truth but it just could not be done. The result to them was, after all, a complete bowing to the Lord. Peter's effort to keep from it ended in a dismal failure. Not only did he have to confess to the sovereignty of Jesus, but he had to confess it before men. That is not all. His pertness, lying, profanity and conditionalism is recorded so that *all* may see it, and those thus led and exercised by the Spirit may see and avoid his mistake. Look into the lives of every Bible character and this lesson stands out. They have all confessed that they are nothing and less than nothing, and have had to bow in (not arrogant,-boasting, truckling, but) sweet, humble, obedient submission to his will.

The kingdom that God set up (Daniel 2:44) was an eternal, unconditional, sovereign one. It stood forever. Every subject of it must confess to the eternalness and sovereignty of the King. It was not left to other people. Every subject must confess that it is not unto us but unto him belongs all honor and glory. This is a precious doctrine. The Son of God has come in the flesh and tasted death for every man that he might *bring* many sons to glory (Heb. 2 : 9-10). As far as him failing, the Scriptures are as silent as death about it, but as for bringing them in all accounts of his contact with; men in the Scriptures, he always brings them. They are willing to come. The religious world may hoot and scorn at God and Christ and the Spirit bringing them against their will, but that is not what they know but just what they think. Ah, yes their experience began in a time fo love (Ezek. 16:8), and the love of God and the Lamb was bestowed on them and gave them precious desires, and a chain was placed around their necks. Jesus began to lead them and teach them and they follow him whithersoever he leads. Their lips have been touched (Isa. 6:7) and they have been given the tongue of the learned (Isa. 50:4). In everything they acknowledge and confess him. They bow in humble submission at a throne of grace and beg him for strenth to keep them. The sweetest and most amazing doctrine that ever came to any poor sinful wretch is, that not a single one has ever been turned away empty. Precious Jesus!

Elder W.D. Griffin

ROMANS V. 3-5.

"Not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience, and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed."

I have felt for some few days that all the hope I have is centered in the above Scripture, and that only because of my tribulation I have evidence that I am what I hope I am: a child of the living God. I used to think before I had a hope that because of my troubles I was not one of the Lord's people, that his people never saw any trouble, that it was a season of rejoicing with them, and that it was only those who have trouble that were left out, therefore I could not glory or rejoice in my trouble. But I think I see things differently now; that it is only the Lord's people who have trouble, and each and all of them do have trouble. When I first saw this Scripture I could not see how any one could glory in tribulations, because naturally tribulation is trouble and doubt, worry and suffering, and how could it be that one could glory in these things? But it seems at present my hope is centered in my troubles, and because of these troubles I hope I have a hope. From reading I have found the Lord's people have been a people of trouble all along, and in doubt a great portion if not all the time; for they think, I would not see trouble if I knew these things; but what we see we do not hope for, and if these things were made sure to me I would have no tribulation, patience, experience or hope. But it is not this way, so I have these things, and one goes with the other and all are one. I have no doubt that if I be dead with Christ I also live with him. I know these things, for as sure as I am dead with him so sure I live with him; but I have only a hope that I am crucified with him, and by tribulation I have this hope. It seems small at times, but when it is the smallest it is most sweet and dear to me; all the hope I have is that when God's only begotten Son died on the cross he died for me, and that in his resurrection I was resurrected, born in new life, life without sin, pure, perfect, spotless and blameless in the sight of the Father. If I am not now clean I can never be, for this cleansing was done in his death, and the life was in his resurrection. Our Savior suffered and was troubled while in the flesh, and therefore we cannot expect anything else. It seems I am troubled for the sins I do now, and continue to do, not those I have done, and I grieve because of my weakness.

I went to meeting yesterday feeling fairly well, but when I saw those whom I love, and hope love me, I felt that I was entirely beneath their notice, and it would be better should they not condescend to notice me at all; but yet notwithstanding all this I desire their love and fellowship. When I tried to talk with them their words sounded sweet and full of meaning, while mine echoed back to my ears as hollow and nothing, and better unsaid. My talking is a continual annoyance to me anyhow, but it seems impossible for me to refrain from it, especially when with those who are His, and when at my work or by myself I think of their sorrows and tribulations, and my eyes scale the mountain's peak. I am made to glory in my tribulations because it works patience; I am patient because I cannot be any other way; I cannot hurry things nor hinder them. My troubles make me patient. I am waiting to be free from this downcast feeling. This patience is part of our experience. I used to think when people spoke of their experience it was up until they received this hope and ended then, but I now think and know that mine is not ended, that my experience goes on as I live, therefore I can tell my experience only in part, I can only

tell of things I have passed through, and if I am his I will continue to have experience; these experiences give me hope. I had an experience before I had a hope, but did not know it, for if I have a christian experience Christ was working in me when my troubles began, and things were being made plain to me, but I did not know what for. The first thing made plain to me was my lost and helpless condition, and this is still clear and plain to my mind as far as I am concerned, and if not saved by God's grace I am not saved at all. I am not ashamed of a hope in this Power, because it is pure, perfect and strengthening. Why should we be ashamed to hope in the Power that is superior to all others? Are we not proud of the strength of our national government, proud of the strength of it, and not ashamed to stand under her flag? We are proud of it because of its superiority; how much more should we be proud, and not ashamed, of a hope in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, because we know beside there is none other. His strength is all we have; his love and strength are what we depend on; we know of his strength and hope in his love. But we glory in tribulations, because tribulation worketh patience, and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed.

If you will pardon this intrusion I may never do so again. I enjoyed the association; the preaching was a calm sea to me.

If one at all, the least of all your brethren,

F. SELBY FISHER.

[The above letter was written to Elder B.F. Coulter, of Philadelphia, Pa., and by him forwarded to us for publication.- ED.]

NOTICE

FOREST GROVE
OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH
P. O. Box 4092
Salisbury, MD 218034092

The Forest Grove Church, an autonomous Church of Christ of the Old School or Primitive Baptist order, met at its yearly meeting in a session for the purpose of adopting the following resolution:

Be it resolved that

The Forest Grove Old School Baptist Church at Parsonsburg, Wicomico County, Maryland, this 15th day of September 1996, acknowledges as valid and inviolable the ordination of Donald Alexander McColl done in council of the Covenanted Baptist Church at Ekfrid, Ontario, Canada, on June 26, 1966, and published in the September 1966 Signs of the Times.

Be it further resolved that

A copy of these proceedings be permanently a part of the church records and that a copy be prepared and signed by the officers of this meeting and the several members of this church to be delivered to Elder McColl.

Victor H. Laws, Moderator
Elbert M. Robbins, Clerk
Ethel Holloway, Member
Olive Hastings, Member
Marietta Robbins, Member

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church Carroll County,Virginia. A Presbytery met Sat.Oct.19,1996 at 10 o'clock A.M. for the examination of Brother Hale Terry and if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgement ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Gospel Ministry.

The solemity was begun with prayer and preaching by Brother Alan Terry. All Elders of our faith and order Present constituted the presbytery. Those Present were:Elders Hale Terry, Carl Terry, Larry Hollandsworth, Clarence Stone, Junior Conner, Marvin Brumfield and Raymond Goad.

All Deacons were asked to sit together: 18 were present.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Hale Terry as Moderator and Deacon W.G.Parsons as Clerk. Elders Junior Conner and Clarence Stone were chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Deacon Tony Horton having been duly appointed by Bell Spur Church in conference Sept.14,1996 as Spokesman for the Church delivered Brother Alan Terry to the presbytery.

Examination was made by Elders Junior Conner and Clarence Stone using scriptural reference:1st Timothy, 3rd ch.1v-7v and Titus ch1. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate administered the laying on of hands with the ordination prayer being delivered by Elder Marvin Brumfield. The charge was delivered to the candidate by Elders Raymond Goad and Larry Hollandsworth using scriptural reference the written word of God. The Moderator asked Bell Spur Church if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of Ordination was Presented to Brother Alan Terry and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained Brother was delivered back to the Church an ordained Minister of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Bell Spur. The minutes consisting the work of the Presbytery were read and adopted. The Presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Carl Terry.

Wm. Hale Terry, Moderator
W.G.Parsons, Clerk

PSALM 33:1-5

Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright.

Praise the Lord with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings.

Sing unto him a new song: play skilfully with a loud noise.

For the word of the Lord is right; and all his works are done in truth.

He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 1996

Mr. & Mrs. J.M. Marshall, VA	5.00
Jewell & Hannah Archer, AR	2.00
E.R. Or Edna Graves, AL	5.00
William A. Ramsey, AL	5.00
Mrs. Beulah Nichols, VA	2.00
Eld. David Harrell, TX	7.00
John H. Coker, NC	2.00
Mrs. Hazel F. Jackson, NC	7.00
Jack T. Dossett, NC	2.00
R. Allen Carroll, NC	2.00
Mrs. A.R. Patterson, LA	7.00
Mrs. Caroline Martin, WA	5.00
Mrs. Donald Arne, S.D.	40.00

OBITUARIES

MAE IRENE MUSGROVE

Although we in the flesh mourn our loss, we humbly bow in submission to the will of God, who has called our beloved sister in Christ Jesus home to himself. We surely believe, as did she, that Jesus is her Saviour, and that he has called her home to himself. Her church home was Concord Primitive Baptist Church.

Sister Mae Irene Thompson Musgrove was born April 24,1924 in Monroe, La., and passed away October 12,1996 in the hospital at Bastrop, La.

Sister Mae is survived be her husband George K. Musgrove,Sr., 4 daughters and sons-in-law, Catherine & Lloyd Harrell -- Bastrop; Joyce & Shorty Dupre--Ville Platte, La.; Elizabeth & Larry Elkins--Bastrop; Roxanne & Keith Barton--Bastrop; 5 sons & daughters-in-law, George Musgrove, Jr.--Bastrop; Bobby Musgrove--Bastrop; Johnny & Fredia Musgrove--Bastrop; Jerry and Ginger Musgrove--Collinston, La.; Larry & Elva Musgrove--Bastrop; 1 sister, Jewel Musgrove--Bastrop. She is also survived by 27 Grandchildren and 29 Great Grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her mother and father Letha and Irvin Thompson and 2 brothers, Earl and Walter Thompson.

Funeral services were conducted Oct. 14,1996 by her co-pastors, Elders Theron Jones and Clifford Wilbanks, and she was laid to rest in the Concord Church Cemetery.

Elder C. C. Wilbanks

ST. JOHN

I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.

Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.

Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?

Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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SONG

Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God!
He, whose word cannot be broken,
Form'd thee for his own abode:
On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
Thou may'st smile at all thy foes.

See! the streams of living waters,
Springing from eternal love,
Well supply thy sons and daughters,
And all fear of want remove.
Who can faint, while such a river
Ever flows their thirst t' assuage?
Grace, which, like the Lord, the giver,
Never fails from age to age.

Round each habitation hovering,
See the cloud and fire appear,
For a glory and a covering,
Showing that the Lord is near.
Thus deriving from their banner,
Light by night, and shade by day,
Safe they feed upon the manna
Which he gives them by the way.

Blessed inhabitants of Zion,
Washed in the Redeemer's blood !
Jesus, whom their souls relv on,
Makes them kings and priests to God:
'Tis his love his people raises
Over self to reign as kings;
And as priests, his solemn praises
Each for a thank-offering brings.

Newton.

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EDITORIAL

DEATH

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

The Holy Scriptures tell us there is a time to be born and a time to die, that the day of death is better than the day of one's birth, and precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. (Eccl. 3:2-Eccl. 7:1 - Ps. 116:15).

Death is a subject that is principal in the scriptures, and should be greatly considered by all, for every thing that has life is subject unto it. Yet there are many who give no thought to its importance and do not understand what it is. Most people realize that when we die we are buried or cremated and our bodies return to the dust from whence we are made. To many that is the complete end, and they know not that there is life beyond the grave.

Now may God give us grace to search the scriptures and rightly divide the word of truth, that our efforts may be of comfort or edification to one or more of his little children.

What is the meaning of death? It is a separation from something. When man dies a corporal death he is separated from life in this world; and there is a death that separated man from God in the garden of Eden. When God made Adam and placed him in the garden of Eden he gave him a commandment, saying, ***"of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."*** Although God commanded him to eat not of this fruit, God did know that he would do so, for he did not say, "if ye eat," but, "in the day that thou eatest thereof." God had a just and holy purpose in this, as well as all things that come to pass, for, ***"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven." "Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."*** When God gave this commandment to Adam, Eve and all his posterity were in him and therefore received the commandment also. Eve had not yet been taken

from his side when the commandment was given, yet she said to the serpent who beguiled her, ***"God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die,"*** The serpent beguiled her, saying, ***"Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day thou eatest thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."*** We know that Eve partook of the forbidden fruit, and gave unto Adam and he did eat. In doing so, he transgressed the commandment of God, and God`s holy justice demands the death of the transgressor. John tells us that sin is the transgression of the law. Paul said, ***"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned: (for until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.) Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is a figure of him that was to come. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one (the first Adam) many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many." (Rom 5:12-15).*** Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Adam was not deceived for he was a figure (image) of him that was to come, Christ, and Christ certainly could not be deceived. Eve, being a figure of the church, was in Christ before the foundation of the world. Adam had no power to redeem his bride from death, but because of his love for her he went down into death with her. This death separated him from God, for he fell from his innocent, upright state into a state of sin and iniquity. Because of his love for his bride, Christ would also die for her, that he might redeem us , ***" Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."*** (Titus 2:14). Nothing can be redeemed by anyone other than the owner, and we were Christ`s in ancient eternity, for God chose us in him before the foundation of the world and predestinated us unto the adoption of children. (Eph ch.1). To this end Christ stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (Rev 13:8). There was a covenant made between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost: therefore, ***"When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."*** (Gal 4:4-5).

God is love. He has loved us with an everlasting love and bestowed upon his sinful children his great love and mercy, but all of his holy attributes are equal and just, so that one cannot annul another. His love and mercy did not save us, but is the reason for the salvation given us: but it was the shed

blood of Jesus Christ that satisfied God's holy justice and brought salvation to his lost people. His holy law demands that the soul that sinneth must die, and without the shedding of blood there is no remission. (Heb 9:22). *"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."(Heb 9:12). "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Heb 10:14).*

For the joy that was set before him, Christ endured agonizing death on the cross, despising the shame, and is set down on the right hand of the throne of God. How was it lawful and just that Christ could shed his blood for ruined, lost sinners who were justly condemned to death? There is not a just court in the world that would allow a substitute to be executed in the place of a man who was justly sentenced to die. But should this be permitted, would justice be served? Certainly not. A substitute can never satisfy justice, for the one justly condemned would surely continue to be as guilty as before. Jesus Christ, therefore, did not die a substitute for us as some believe. God forbid that I should ever think of his holy Son as being a substitute for me or anyone. If he died only as a substitute, then all of us are yet in our sins, having no redemption from them, and we shall never see nor enter the kingdom of heaven and immortal glory.

There is no denying that Jesus died for his people, but how was holy justice satisfied when the just died for the unjust? It is because they have a living unity with him. It is in him that we live and move and have our being. (Acts 17:28). *Col 3:3, "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with God in Christ." In Ps. 139:15-16, "My substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret, and wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there was none of them."* This substance was obviously the body of Christ. *"Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular." (1 Cor 12:27). "And he (Christ) is the head of the body, the church."*

The church is composed of the children chosen in him, and we read Heb 2:14, *"For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil: and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."* In his Godhead he could not die, therefore he must become incarnate: become flesh and blood and under the law. *Gal 4:4-5, "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."* Christ had to be under the law in order to fulfill it, which he did to a jot and to a tittle; and he is the end of the law for righteousness to

every one that believeth. We are no longer under the law, but under grace, for he blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. (Col 2:14).

In Heb 2:17 we read, *"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."* Let us consider this high priest. The priests under the old law were made without an oath, but Jesus with an oath: *"The Lord sware and will not repent. Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."* The sacrificial offerings made by the priests under the old law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did: by which we draw nigh unto God. (See 9th ch. of Heb.) Jesus is the better hope, for he is the high priest, and also the perfect offering: *"For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." (Heb 10:14). "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption."* (1 Cor 1:30). The word sanctify means, to be set apart as holy. The word Saints is also derived from it. Heb 2:11, *"For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren."* In his prayer to the Father in John 17, Jesus said, *"And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."* In Eph chapter 5 we read, *"Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word. That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing: but that it should be holy and without blemish."* This glorious church is the body of Christ. *"For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bone."* Eph 5:30, verse 18 tells us that Christ is the head of the church, therefore, we being his body,there is a living unity with him that can never be severed. In light of this unity, how can Jesus Christ be considered a substitute? No way!

Jesus had no sins of his own to die for, but our sins were imputed unto him. *"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."* (Isa 53:6) Our sins were imputed unto him, and his righteousness is imputed unto us. Abraham believed God, *"therefore it was imputed unto him for righteousness. Now it is not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed unto him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead."* (Rom 4:22-24). How do we believe? *Jesus said, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."* And Paul said, *"Unto you*

it is given in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."

When Jesus died on the cross, his bride,the church, was in him: *having been by the Spirit baptized into one body.* (1 Cor 12-13). *"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into his death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."* This life in this time world. Jesus said, *"The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live."* And in Eph 2:1, *"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."* This has reference to the new birth, being born again of the Holy Spirit. Volumes might be written about this particular death, but I must bring this to a close.

We now live in an earthly, fleshly body that must die and return to the dust, except we be here when Christ comes again. Jesus said of this body, *"Marvel not at this: for the time is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."* In Col 3:4, *"When Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."* In Heb 2:27-28, *"And as it is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."*

One more quotation and I must stop. 1 Thes 4:14-17. *"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."*

Beloved brethren, it is my hope that I am one who will be caught up and be forever with him. Is this your hope also? Surely it is.

I realize that I have barely touched the surface of this vast subject, but if the Lord be in the matter, it is enough for this time. I ask an interest in your prayers of faith.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

ST. MATTHEW 5: 44-45.

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;
That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder & Sister Key,

I have wanted to write and let you know how glad I am to be receiving the dear old Signs again but have put off doing so because words really can't express my thankfulness as I would like to be able to. I read and re-read the Sept. & Oct. issues which came in the same day's mail the first 24 hrs. after their arrival. The articles they contained truly did seem like manna from heaven. I especially liked Katherine Matthew's poem in the Sept. issue, as well as Elder Wilbanks article "Born Again." But they are all good. Often I am left in the Dark as to understanding as I'd like to, but I know that that is, and always has been, in God's hands.

Those who are blessed to write, whether in poem or written article, are blessed indeed. But so too, are those of us of like faith and experience to read such things, as they mirror so much of what we feel to be our own walk in this life. Thats what I find so wonderful about the Old Baptist Signs. It is full of meat and drink for such as I. And that brings to mind the Old Baptist Hymn:

I am a stranger here below
And what I am tis hard to know
I am so vile, so prone to sin
I fear that I'm not born again

When I experience call to mind
My understanding is so blind
All feeling sense seems to be gone
Which makes me fear that I am wrong.

I find myself out of the way;
My thoughts are often gone astray
Like one alone I seem to be
Oh! Is then anyone like me?

I thank God everyday for all of the old copies of the Signs I have kept and inherited from loved ones gone before ... I read and re-read them and find food nearly every time I pick them up.

I have an audio tape recording of a Church meeting which I believe was back in 1969 at Naches, Wash. Elder Spangler Spoke on "The wrath of Man shall praise Him, and The rest He will restrain" which is very good and I am so glad to have the copy. The meeting was copied on audio tape by an aunt of mine and I re-copied it here a few years ago. I believe it was a three-day meeting, but I'm not sure. There was a hymn sung then that I'd never heard before, nor heard since, that I would very much like to obtain the words of. (I have the tune and part of the words to listen to, but need all the words to learn it.) They are in part as follows - (For the words to this song - see the first page of this issue - Editors).

Round the (???) hovering
See the cloud & fire appear
For (?) glory -
Showing that the Lord is near

(?) Rising from this banner
Light by night and shade by day
Safe they feed upon the manna
Which He gives them on the way.

The last words I believe are "Solid joy's and lasting treasures, none but Zions children know."

It was rather a poor recording, and much of it was hard to hear. Never the less, as I said before, I'm so thankful to have the copy. If the Hymn book is in print and available I'd be very glad to purchase one. (I have the D.H. Goble hymn - book.)

Well dear people, I know I've taken up enough of your time. My heart is full of praise to the Lord for His mercy to me, and tho I do feel forsaken and rejected at times, amazingly enough He has let my Hope in Him stand fast. What a blessing it is to be made to "glory in the Lord".

An unworthy one of the least, In Christ's love I hope.

Caroline Martin

ARTICLES

1 Cor. 1:20 & 21 Where is the wise? Where is the scribe, where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world.; For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God.

The Bible speaks of many gods and many lords, but I want to write about only one, the one God who is God and there is no other God like him. The God who created heaven and earth. In the beginning God created heaven and earth which was a mighty thing to do, unequaled since time began, this world with all the planets, the stars which extend to a distance the wisdom of men can't measure. The continents and all the oceans, do you believe God created all these things?

The natural wisdom of man, or the wise man of the world don't, they can't see their own wisdom as doing something so great, so they don't believe God did it. They can see and therefore know the earth is here, it had to get here someway, since these wise men won't accept the idea of creation they have to figure for themselves how it came to be here. So they have it all figured out, see there was this great bang, all these marvelous things we see about us just fell into place. I myself don't know where all the material was supposed to come from to produce this big bang. But of course I am not wise like they are.

God created man and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, not so says these natural wise men, because first there was a monkey, and by his own self he kept changing for the better until Lo and behold we now have a man. Are you beginning to see the wisdom of this world? Strange with all the bones they have dug up, they have never found a half monkey and half man.

Come on down through time and we find there was a great flood which God sent upon the earth, such as covered everything, what do the wise men of the world say about this? In their digging and searching for their answers, they have found evidence to show there was a great flood, so they say, oh yes there was a warm spell and some

large icebergs drifted south, melted and caused the flood. They say why God couldn't have covered the earth with water, why that would take a lot of water, and if He had of got that much, what did he do with it all later?

We read further, and we read where the Son of God (Jesus) was born of a virgin, later was crucified and after three days raised from the dead. At these things the wise men say, impossible, ridiculous etc. In their wisdom there is no room for miracles such as these. In their wisdom they can't do these things, so they won't believe them. Neither can they figure how a cow, a sheep and a chicken eat the same grass, yet one makes milk, one grows wool, while the other grows feathers.

Can't we now see why it is written, God has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes, now we can also see why the wisdom of man knew not God. All of these wonderful miracles were, I believe, ordinary things with God, but the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God, for it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

I have been writing on fleshy or natural wisdom, and we know the bible in many places speaks of that relatively foolishness, such as the Apostle Paul said, I was determined to come not among you with enticing words of man's wisdom. Paul had been shown that man's wisdom was nothing of value in the spiritual sense, he had been shown the value of true wisdom from God. Like for instance the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. When a man comes face to face with God (I don't mean to see his face, for no man can see his face and live) he then is shown the awful sinful state of himself, he sees himself as he is, when he is shown the holiness, power and glory of God. This will surely bring a fear of God upon a man, not slavish fear, as you may think of a slave toward a cruel master, but a reverential fear, and this would be the beginning of wisdom, as you can see this wisdom is quite different from natural wisdom. This wisdom will show you the value of spiritual things over and above natural things. Like Solomon when he prayed, grant me wisdom to go in and out among the people, God had blessed him with wisdom to realize the value of this petition. When a man is blessed to see himself as a sinner in need of mercy from the God who blessed him here with life, as Job did when he said I abhor myself, this man has wisdom far exceeding the wisdom of this world.

The Queen of Sheba, when she came before Solomon, reports she had heard of his acts and his wisdom was true. How be it she didn't believe all those things until she came and saw them, she said, "happy are these men and happy are these thy servants, saying the half has not been told me. This is a true picture, and the results of the wisdom from God.

God said, "let there be light," and the sun appeared in the heaven, this is a natural light to give light to men all over the earth, everyone who lives on the face of the earth with normal eyesight has seen this light. Here again

the worldly wise men know it is there but can't believe God placed it there. Just like all the men of this world who have not been blessed with a spiritual birth cannot believe in these spiritual things, as it is with the worldly wise, it is foolishness unto them. God works in wonderful ways his miracles to perform.

We read and learn of the many wonders in the animal world, for instance, the migratory birds, how they migrate vast distances and arrive at some given point it seems without failure, many people say, why that is just the laws of nature. I guess you could call it that and you may be right. How does the small delicate butterfly manage to fly across the large body of water known as the Gulf of Mexico to winter in Old Mexico. I believe it is the power of almighty God directing all the movements of these animals and I believe he set them in motion at the creation. He saw and purposed every move they will make, their cause is set before them the same as it is with men. How can a man know his way, for it is God who directs his steps, and He says, walk with patience the course that is set before you. I believe the course has been laid out for each of his children, leading them in the way, and through the hard knocks which is needed to make and mold them in the exact way that is needed for their good and to his praise, much as it is with refining pure gold. I will be unto them a God and they shall be my people.

I don't believe any man knows exactly how long this earth has stood since creation, for with God one day is as a thousand years, and 1000 years as a day. Therefore the bible doesn't spell it out as in a number of years, for a reason. I believe, because we walk by faith and not by sight. The earth was without form and void for how long? I have written all this about creation for this reason.

The wise men of this world who have all the answers have come up with this system called carbon dating, which according to their wisdom determines how old a particular item is by the amount of carbon it contains. To all this I have one question, which of these worldly wise men was there to tell God how much carbon to have in any individual item at creation?

Think about these large trees, I have read where some of them may be as much as 2000 yrs. old, their ages are determined by cutting down the tree and counting the rings in the stump, one ring represents one years growth. The first year after creation, how many rings would one of these trees have? Did God create these trees with or without these rings, did he create other things with or without carbon?

To sum up the wisdom of this world is this, for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, for it is written. He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. Oh! the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out.

Frank Hunt

PSALM 62:7-8.

In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.

Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah.

VOICES OF THE PAST

" My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass. "— DEUTERONOMY xxxii. 2.

IN the falling of the natural dew there is something soft, still, and gentle. We therefore read, "We will light upon him as the dew falleth on the ground" (2 Sam. xvii. 12), that is, stealthily and unseen. It does not rush down like the pelting hail, but falls stilly and often imperceptibly; so that we scarcely know it has fallen, till we go out in the morning and see every blade of grass tipped with the sparkling dew-drops; by these bright gems we know that dew has fallen during the still hours of the night. So spiritually, the kingdom of God is not in noise, rant, or wild excitement. The Lord was not in the strong wind, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but in the still small voice (I Kings xix. 11, 12). And thus there may be a great deal of religious fire, but no presence of God felt; fleshly passions worked up into a storm, but no " still small voice" speaking to the conscience; a very earthquake of natural convictions, but no inward "demonstration of the spirit and of power." But when the spiritual dew falls, it drops gently, softly, and stilly into thc heart, and it is only known by the sweet and blessed effects it produces.

Dew also has *a softening effect,* especially in warm climates, where it falls very copiously. We therefore read, "Thou makest it soft with showers" (Psalm lxv. 10). It does not tear up the ground as with thunderbolts, but by moistening and softening penetrates into the soil. And thus the dew of God's grace moistens and softens the heart, humbles, dissolves, and fertilizes it; not by tearing it up with the thunderbolts of wrath and condemnation, but by dropping gently and stilly into it, so as to melt it into contrition, meekness, and godly sorrow before the throne of mercy and grace.

Elder J.C. Philpot

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2 TIMOTHY IV. 3, 4.

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

THE apostle Paul, and all the apostles, were inspired by the Holy Ghost, and thereby duly qualified to give such instructions to Timothy, and to all other gospel ministers and gospel saints, as they were then, or ever should be in need of. Without the immediate inspiration of God, they could not have predicted the things which should come to pass in subsequent ages, both in reference to the church of God, and the development of the man of sin. In reference to the manifestation of that wicked spirit which was to be developed, Paul had already informed Timothy in the first epistle, iv. 1-3, that the Spirit had spoken expressly on that subject, saying, "Expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils"; and the Spirit had with equal clearness expressly spoken of the lies they should tell, the hypocrisy they should practice, what should be the state of their consciences, what heresies they should

utter, and what restrictions they should lay upon the church. Now, in closing this second and last epistle, when he was ready to be offered, and the time of his departure was at hand, in his valedictory charge, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ who shall judge the quick and the dead, repeats to him the admonition to "preach the Word," and that constantly, and the admonition is enforced by reminding him of what the Spirit had expressly said, ***"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine."*** The time specified, is the time which God had appointed, until which time the man of sin could not be manifested. ***"And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way: and then, [at that time] shall that wicked spirit be revealed."*** The time is expressly declared by the Spirit, as the last time. All the powers of darkness could not anticipate the time which God had determined on for the fulfillment of these important events, nor could all the efforts, devices, good works or bad works, of saints or sinners, postpone that development one hour or one moment beyond the annointed time.

Some very conscientious and good brethren have seemed afraid to admit that God has set the bounds of wickedness of men and of devils, so that they have no power to change them; but we would ask such brethren whether the Spirit would speak to us of things which it would be wrong for us to believe? Would the Spirit tell us expressly, things which we ought not to know? Has not the Spirit told us expressly that that wicked spirit shall be revealed in his time, and that God withholdeth it until its time, and has pledged his word that it shall in its time be revealed? Read the Scriptures on this; subject, and then ask yourselves, Could the beast with seven heads and ten horns, have risen up out of the sea before the great red dragon had been manifested? Or could the second beast have preceded the first? Or could the image of the beast have anticipated any of its predecessors? If they could not, it was because God had ordered things as they came to pass.

Even so, likewise the apostacy predicted in our text, has its time fixed. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine." But who are they that will not endure sound doctrine? Some have supposed that this could not mean christians, and that it must mean the world or antichrist. But when, we ask, has the world or antichrist ever endured sound doctrine? Did the world, the Jews or pagans, endure the sound doctrine set forth by Christ and his apostles, in their days? Did the carnal Israelites endure the sound doctrine that was reported to them by the prophets? Which of them did they not slay? The truth has, in all times since sin entered the world, been opposed by the world, and by all unconverted men. We cannot, therefore, suppose that the Spirit spake thus expressly of a time when nothing unusual was to be revealed. These nonendurers of sound doctrine

are marked as apostates, thus, *"Some shall depart from the faith."* We do not understand that these apostates are the children of God, born of the Spirit, or that they ever possessed the vital principles of faith in their hearts. But we do contend that they are those who have professed the faith of the gospel, and have been held in the fellowship of the church of God, otherwise they could not depart from what they never professed to hold. Christ has said, "Every plant that my Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." And again, "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away." Thus signifying that all who enter not in by the door into the sheepfold, or church, are thieves and robbers, and all who come in without his grace, shall be cast out without his favor. These things began to develop in the apostolic age, and John speaks of some who went out from us, that it might be made manifest that they were not all of us. So in those events which are traced in the revelations made to John on Patmos, there were times signified in which the world rushed into the church nominally, but they could not endure the sound doctrine of the gospel, for they had neither ears to hear, nor hearts to understand or love it. Whatever direct allusion our text has to the times of the apocalyptic beasts, or false prophet, we feel justified by the words "last times" in the context, in applying the prophecy to the present time, including the last forty or fifty years. We do not feel sufficiently liberal to apply this subject to the various protestant or catholic denominations, *by which the church of God has been surrounded in ages past, for we do not believe they, or any of them, ever did, or ever could, depart from the faith of the gospel, for they never, any of them, strictly speaking, held it, and they could not depart from what they never professed to hold.

*We speak of them as denominations; Christ has but one church on the earth. *"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism."—Eph. iv. 4, 5.* We freely admit, and fully believe that as there have been many nominally connected with the church of Christ, who were not children of God, not born of God, not taught by his Spirit, so there have been many of God's children nominally connected with the various branches of antichrist, but so long as they remain there, they are living in disobedience to their Lord and Master; and, by that order of discipline which he has established in his church, we cannot extend our fellowship to them, as long as they continue to rank and file with the enemies. *"What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."—2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.*

Within the space of the last half century, the prophecy of our text has been manifestly realized in the Baptist Church, which, as a church, is the

only organization that has ever stood on the foundation of the apostles. Many in this last time have departed from the faith, and in their apostacy have demonstrated that they could not endure sound doctrine. Those who are now denominated New School, or Missionary Baptists, or at least those churches who took that ground at the time of the division, once professed to hold the faith which we now hold. The same articles substantially, which were held by us before the separation, are held by us now, but these prominent sentiments which have distinguished the church of Christ from the apostles' days, and which they professed to hold once in common with us, they have now departed from, and do now wantonly repudiate them. They are, therefore, very manifestly embraced in the prediction of the text, as having departed from the faith. We challenge the world to point us to a single church or congregation of them who can at this day endure the sound doctrine which in all former ages characterized the Baptists, from the time of John the Baptist, until the time of their apostacy.

Neither Old School Baptists nor New School Baptists, will deny either of the following propositions, namely: first, that we were once all included in one religious denomination, and all professed the same faith and order. Second, that we are now very widely apart, that we do not all hold the same faith and order, and therefore one party or the other, or both, have departed from the faith which we all once professed to hold.

Now, as it is not very likely that either party will admit that they have so departed, but as each charges the other with having departed from the faith, we have but one alternative for the settlement of our respective claims--to the word and to the testimony. What does the Spirit expressly say, by the mouth of the inspired Paul, shall be the distinguishing marks or characteristics of those who in the last times will not endure sound doctrine? And with which party are these marks and characteristics found? Will any sane man who has any knowledge of the Old School Baptists, say that we have, since the division, after our own lusts, heaped to ourselves teachers? Will the New School Baptists themselves so charge us? So far from it, they have continually thrown it in our teeth, that instead of having heaps of teachers, that we have but very few, and they have been predicting that in a few years we shall have none. Some of them have exultingly said they expected to live to see the last of the Old School preachers buried. If, then, we have no such heaps of teachers, it cannot be that we are the party who are advertised in the holy Scriptures as having heaped to ourselves teachers.

Again, who will charge that the Old School Baptists have itching ears, leading them to lust after heaps of teachers, and evincing such lusts and such itching, by running after all the new doctrines and institutions of the age? Is it not proverbial that the Old School Baptists are behind the age? That they are an antieffort, unprogressive people, and more than five hundred

years behind the improvements of the age in which we live?

Once more! Will any one say that what preachers we have, have been raised up by any effort of ours? That we have employed any kind of machinery to heap or to multiply the number of our ministers? Do our teachers or ministers, show so much of the wisdom and polish of this world, as to give any just grounds to suspect that they have been called, qualified or brought into the work by the agency of men? No rational man who has any knowledge of us believes any such thing. The marks, therefore, which are to identify and distinguish the class of apostates in our text, cannot apply to the Old School Baptists. Nor can it be said in truth, of Old School Baptists, that they are turned away from the truth, and turned unto fables. We have been constantly charged with obstinancy, for so pertinaciously adhering to the Scriptures, as our only standard and rule of faith and practice. Our refusal to depart from the Bible as our standard of morality and religion, and to unite in the various schemes of the age for reforming society, reclaiming drunkards, converting sinners, and evangelizing the world, has brought down on us such epithets as Hardshells, Iron Jackets, and a profusion of titles indicative of anything but a readiness to turn away from what we hold to be the truth, and of being allured by fables. Flatteries and frowns alike have failed to draw the Old School Baptists from the Bible as their standard. We could mention cases where flattering titles of presidents, vice- presidents and directorships in popular, humanly devised religious societies, and lucrative missionary appointments, have been tendered, as a bait to draw some of our number from their steadfastness in the faith, and other instances could be particularized where proscription, reproach and calumny, have also been employed for the same purpose, but all in vain. How then can any of the marks which divine revelation has fixed on the apostates, described in our text, apply to the Old School Baptists?

As these marks cannot be found on the Old School Baptists, they cannot be the people who have departed from the faith, or who cannot endure sound doctrine. We will now proceed to show that the New School or Missionary Baptists have them all as plainly stamped on them as was the mark which was set on Cain, and as indelibly written as were the words, "Mystery, Babylon The Great, The Mother of Harlots," &c., on the forehead of the woman that John saw sitting upon the scarlet - colored beast. (Rev. xvii. 5.)

The Mission Baptists who have gone out from us, have very clearly demonstrated that they cannot endure sound doctrine, not only by going out from us, on account of our holding sound doctrine, but also by heaping to themselves teachers. Their ears have itched for such doctrines as would make them popular in the eyes of the world, and give them a place and respectability with the worldly religionists of the age. This appears from their pleading the necessity of Theological schools, colleges and universities, for training young men for the ministry, because other religious denominations around them have such worldly institutions for that purpose, and lest they should thereby draw all the learned, wealthy, and influential, into

their societies. This itching for popularity has shown a lack of confidence in God to raise up suitable teachers for them, or a sufficient supply to compete successfully with other denominations. The instruction of the King of Zion to his disciples, is, to pray the Lord of the harvest to supply laborers for the gospel ministry, but their own lusts have dictated to them to heap teachers to themselves, in defiance of the command of Christ, and in contempt of his authority. They not only prepare for themselves a number corresponding to their congregations, but they heap them, so that they have quantities of them for transportation to foreign lands, and an abundant surplus to be employed as itinerant beggars, colporters, &c., at home. Thus they not only crowd out from their pulpits all such as would offend their delicate itching ears, with sound doctrine, but have troops of them to send forth, like the frogs of Egypt, into all the land, to come up into our houses, our kneading troughs, and our ovens. Is this picture overdrawn? Are there not hundreds of this heap now, and at all times, lounging about the cities and large towns, waiting for a call, and begging their way along, because they are too lazy to work for an honest living? Will any New School or Missionary Baptist deny that such is the case?

Who can deny that the New Order of Baptists raise up, call, educate and qualify their own teachers? For what other purpose do they organize their State Education Societies, build their colleges, and establish their Theological schools? Their white cravated mendicants are constantly abroad in every neighborhood, soliciting funds, and their petitions are spread out before every State legislature, asking for State patronage, to aid them in their work.

Another mark of their apostacy is found upon them: They have turned away their ears from the truth, and are turned unto fables. In no part of the religious world can any be found who are more deadly set against the truth, or who manifest a greater hostility to the very doctrine which they themselves once professed to hold, than do the New Order of Baptists, who are commonly call the New School, or Mission Baptists. Their ears are turned away, and instead of listening to sound doctrine, they are turned to fables.

Webster thus defines the term fable: "1. A feigned story or tale, intended to instruct or amuse; a fictitious narration intended to enforce some useful truth or precept. 2. Fiction in general. 3. An idle story; vicious or vulgar fictions. 4. The plot or connected series of events in an epic or dramatic poem. 5. Falsehood; a softer term for a lie."

Are the New School Baptists turned to fables, as thus defined? Read their publications and the tracts which they have turned to, which they approve, and which they circulate. Read their "Dairyman's Daughter." Their "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and a thousand more of their fabulous stories which have been manufactured to order, and then decide whether these fictitious stories are the sound doctrine of the Bible, or fables.

But, not only in the tracts which they publish and circulate, but in the general ministry of the teachers which they have heaped to themselves, a system of fiction, instead of reality prevails. The sovereignty of God, and the exclusive work of the Spirit, in the quickening and regeneration of men, is denounced, and the power, ability and will of the creature, is extolled. Salvation is by them ascribed to the will and works of men, and the heaven taught truth of God, that salvation is alone of God by grace, through faith, and that not of the creature, but the gift of God, is by them rejected, and the fictitious doctrine of men, that salvation is effected by the use of means, instrumentalities, and that the gospel, or something else, is the means, and their heaps of teachers are the instruments of saving souls from hell, and of advancing them to heaven, is preached instead thereof. They have turned away from the truth of the gospel, to the fiction and fables of the schools; from the eternal realities which are taught by the word and Spirit of the true and living God, to the vain, delusive, fabulous fictions of their own vain imaginations, and to a teaching for doctrine, the commandments of men.

In conclusion of this long article, in which we have, as we believe, fully proved that all the marks of apostacy given in our text, are legibly written on those who have gone out from the Old School Baptists, and that none of them can be found upon the old apostolic order of Baptists which remain on the old Bible grounds, we would urge upon our brethren the solemn truth, that we have nothing wherein to boast over those who are turned unto fables. God has, as we hope, made us to differ, and all that we have, we have received of him. Let us then rejoice, not that others have fallen, but rather that our names are written in heaven. And let him that standeth take heed lest he fall. May we trust alone in him who is able to keep us from falling, and to give us an inheritance among them that are sanctified.

Middletown, N. Y., October 1, 1856.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

Georgetown, Ky., March, 1862

Brother Beebe:--In perusing the fourth number, current volume of the Signs of the Times, my attention was called to the following request:

"Will Elder J.F. Johnson, of Kentucky, drop a few thoughts on 1 John 3: 14, 15, aild oblige a reader of the Signs of the Times?

T. Triplett."

I cannot conceive why it is that my brethren and friends so frequently solicit my views on different and sometimes (to me) mysterious passages of scripture. If they could see my insuffiency as their unworthy servant feels it, they probably would make their requests to abler brethren. And, were I convinced that the Lord had called and chosen only the wise men after the flesh, the mighty and noble, I should despair of accommodating them. But, as he has chosen the foolish, weak, base and despised things, to confound the wise, mighty, etc., I am encouraged

to do the best I can to serve them. Again were I concious that I could exercise any considerable degree of influence over those who read my poor communications on the subject proposed, I should approach them with timidity. But, as I hope and trust that none will endorse my views unless they are sustained by the scriptures, I am probably not at liberty, as a servant, to withhold such ideas as I may have when called on. It is much easier, however, for my friends to make requests than for me to comply. The subject proposed reads as follows:

"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that; no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. " I John 3:14,15.

Perhaps there are but few portions of the holy scriptures that is further beyond the power of arminians to reconcile to their theory than this, together with its connection. If it be a fact that our nature in the work of the new birth is so renovated as to change them from natural-carnal, to spiritual-heavenly ones, or if our natural passions are so changed as to lose their relish for natural objects, and desire only heavenly ones, in short, if all our natural enmity, malice, wrath, hatred, etc., are slain in that work, I cannot see why it is that the same individual is styled in the text a brother,and a murderer. Evidently the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit are clearly exemplified in this connection;and it is as evident that the Spirit can not perform the works of the flesh, as it is that the flesh cannot produce the fruit of the Spirit. I see no possibility of reconciling the different declarations in this connection without admitting the fact that the Christian is a complex character, possessing two distinct and radically different natures; one completely holy, sinless, and, therefore, incorruptible; the other entirley sinful, unholy and corrupt. As these two diflerent natures are found in the same person, it is perfectly rational to suppose that there will be an incessant conflict going on between them, and every well informed Christian knows that this is the case; the flesh and spirit lust against each other. Perhaps we cannot imagine a more thorough antagonism between any other two things. In the sixth verse of this chapter it is said whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not, seen him, neither known him. Now, all Christians do know they sin continually; and it is also clearly shown in the scriptures that they have an existsence in which they do not, cannot, sin. Erskine says of himself,

"To good and evil equal bent,
I'm both a devil and a saint."

Will any doubt the Christianity of Peter? He heartily acknowledged Christ to be the Son of the living God, and was told by him that flesh and blood had not revealed it to him, but: the Father which is in, heaven. Peter affirmed thrice that he loved him, and appealed to him the third time as knowing it; and yet Christ says to him. "Get thee behind me, satan; thou art an offense unto me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Although all the Lord's people possess this depraved nature, although Paul, the reputable apostle of Jesus Christ, possessed it in so great a degree that he acknowledged

himself the chief of sinners, and protested that; no good thing dwelt in his flesh, (all that is born of the flesh is flesh,) yet John declares in the text that we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." But we are so prone to seek for this life and love in our depraved nature, lives, persons and passions, that failing to find them there, we often doubt our having any participation in them. By nature we are all arminian, and when we give heed to our own arminian proclivities, and conclude that our natural lives; must be renovated, and our natural passions changed from the love of natural objects to that of spiritual or heavenly ones; and when we find them still glued to earthly things, or natural things, or natural objects, we often seem to forget that "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolish unto him neither can he know, being they are spiritually discerned that we still carry with us this. natual man, this sinful body of death, and cannot be delivered from it until we slumber in our last sleep. As often as we seek to find the life of God, or the love of God exercised toward him or his people by our natural passions,so often we shall find ourselves disappointed,and doubting our interest in that eternal life and undying love to God and to his people.

I will here mention some of my own meditations on this subject, not as proof of my position, but to illustrate my thoughts, (for it is thoughts my friend has called for) on the subject. While residing in 'Narwick, N.Y., having retired to bed at the residence of my esteemed brother, E.M. Bradner, of that place lamenting my barrenness and lack of love,or a feeling sense of the love to God, the question occurred to me, Have you the love of God in you at all? Immediately I commenced strictly and anxiously searching myself unti I ransacked seemingly every faculty and corner,and finally arrived at the conclusion that I had not. My feelings at that time perhaps can he better imagined by those who may have had similar exercises (if any have had such), then I can express them. While gloomily rejoicing on the matter, a portion only of a very familiar connection of scripture occurred to my mind immediately attracting my attention so entirety that I could not or did not recollect for a considerable time that, however, was sufficient for the time being. It was the closing part of the chapter of Romans "the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Directly it occurred to me that I was searching in myself for what could be found no where else but in Christ Jesus our Lord. I am not yet prepared to think this was a delusion. Although I often doubt my having an interest in those blessings which were given Christ's people in him before the world was, still I am assured that; they are there, and there only to be found and it is a signal blessing, my dear brethren,that they are there safely kept in reserve for his needy children kept ready to be dealt out to them in every time of need kept as our everlasting portion to which we have an indemnified title. They were given us in our Father's will confirmed to us by his immutable oath and promise, and ratified and sealed by the blood of our Redeemer. Behold what; manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that

we should be called the sons of God; the heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. How we should rejoice that they, as well as we, are all preserved in our dear Savior, and not committed to our keeping. Were they to be found in us, and committed to our keeping, as the poor arminians think we could soon lose ourselves, blessings and all. It is in HIM we have our life, peace and love for him or our brethren, and it is only by that faith which is his gift that we can know we have passed from death unto life. We are not informed that we can at all times know this fact; but I am persuaded that there are times when all the children of God know that they love the brethren, although we often fear we do not love them as we should. O! that we could all "Let brotherly love continue;" do nothing to mar or hinder it, for I am persuaded that the saints feel no more happy at any time than when their hearts are filled with love to their heavenly Father and his children. When that is the case, they have proof positive that they have passed from death unto life. Such is the cunning of the adversary that he exhibits a counterfeit for almost every privilege and blessing we enjoy,except love, and that he is a stranger to. He uses its counterplot, hatred.

"The devils know and tremble too, But Satan cannot love."

Love is an exotic production. Neither the world, the flesh,or the devil can produce love to God or the brethren. Its very name is melody. "Love is the sweetest bud that blows, Its beauty never dies; Below among the saints it blows, And ripens in the skies.

Pure glowing red and spotless white,
Its, perfect colors are;
In Jesus all its sweets, unite,
And look divinely fair. "

Our natural love, when properly directed to the earthly objects of our affections and duly mutualized, is, perhaps, the most pleasant sensation that we enjoy in this imperfect state. But the love of God shed abroad in his heart, and in full exercise to God and to our brethren, transcend that as the heavens; are higher than the earth. In the exercise of that heaven born principle, all fear is cast out, all doubts banished, and multitudes of sins hidden. Then, "How, happy are they who their Savior obey,

And whose treasures are laid up above:
Tongue can not express the sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

O that we could all feel more of that soulsoothing, heart-cheering principle. How happily the moments of the carewom pilgrim pass away when that wonderful love that the Father hath bestowed upon us predominates. Then it is that we "Know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

"He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." I suppose there is such a thing as death to Christians while they live; (see I Tim. 5:6, Rev. 3:1) and this I take to be the demise of their religious enjoyment or comfort. In the absence of love to the brethren we suffer this death. But, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." ther; that is the murder here spoken of: whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer. Here again we have the work of the old man exemplified. There is the him that eternal life does not abide in,

Does it seem strange that it is intimated here that one may be a brother in the church and at the same time a murderer? We are not to suppose, however, that the murder alluded to is taking away the natural life. No; it is hatred to a brother; that is the murder here spoken of: whosoever hatheth his brother is a murderer. Here again we have the work of the old man exemplified. There is the him that eternal life does not abide in, for he must die. It is impossible that the new man, which is created in righteousness and true holiness, should exercise hatred to his brother. It is in relation we bear to Cain, who was of that wicked one, that we exercise hatred to a brother. But this murder, the slaying of the religious comfort and enjoyment of ourselves and brethren, is to be viewed differently from the overt act of taking away the natural life of a fellow-being. Before we poor, short-sighted creatures can detect murder the outward act must be committed, It is not so with the Lord, who knoweth what is in man. He says in Matthew 5:21, 22, "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old times, Thou shalt not kill and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment; but I say unto you, whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment." The Lord looks at the thoughts and intents of the heart,and there detects the crime. We cannot; always judge correctly by our acts, for they may be performed from motives that would exonerate the performer from all crime, while the same acts instigated by different motives would be highly criminal. I, as a surgeon, may amputate my fellow's limb when necessary to his benefit, and all would be right. But if I do it when not necessary, with intent to maim and injure him, it is egregiously wrong. The intent, therefore, may constitute the crime, independent of the overt act. (See Matthew 5:25-23.) We Should remember we are at all times under the immediate inspection of the all-wise God, who scans every thought and scrutinizes every passion that lurks within us,and this should make us careful how we entertain hatred to a brother. In my humble opinion we are murderers, in the sense of the text, when we do so. "And ye know; that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." We should remember that each brother possesses those two natures or two men (the old and new), which are contrary to each other, and those aims and ends are very diverse. I can not imagine how those who so vehemently oppose what they stigmatize as the "two men doctrine" can reconcile their views to this text. Dare they advocate the idea that "that which is born of the Spirit," or "born of God," can be chargeable with murder in any sense? It is said in the preceding part of this chapter that "whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" But it not be forgotten that hatred is enumerated among the works of the flesh. (Gs. 5:20).

Then it must be the fleshly or old man of sin that has not this eternal life abiding in him. May the Lord enable us, my dear brethren, to put off the old man with his deeds, to put on the new man and realize his fruits. A murderer is a despicable ugly character; let us not deserve the name by exercising hatred to a brother. Wretched and miserable must

be the feeling when our bosom wrankles with hatred to a brother! In its presence the cup of joy is dashed with gall and vinegar, the noblest deeds of Christianity and virtue are paralyzed, and an impetus is given to the vile bickerings of infidelity! the fragrance of the " Rose of Sharon " ceases to regale us with its odorous perfumes, the " Lily of the Valley " droops its beautiful head, and the nauseous, piercing thistle and the pricing thorn thrive and do their work in the presence of hatred. It is calculated to drive from the abode of the saints the sweet angel of peace and inaugurate in its stead the cruel god of war.

How different the effects of love,a preminent fruit of the Spirit! It inspires the possessor with the noblest deeds and virtues and drives the vagrant hatred from the dwellings of the saints. The rose and the lily bloom afresh in its presence;the fragrance of the one and the beauty of the other charm and decorate the garden of God, and the thistle and the thorn wither at its touch
The black demon hatred quails at the approach of live hides its knavish head. They are complete counterplots and can not dwell together. They originate in different sources, dwell in different elements, and are doomed to different destinations. An uncompromising war is going on between them, but it is a war of no doubtful tendency.

Hatred fights in the dark, at a distance; it cannot; stand the onward charge of love in the light. But the conflict; will soon be over,the battle cease. Hatred shall be banished forever from the presence of the saints, for they shall dwell forever in the presence of their God,in a "city to come" "And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day, for there shall be no night there," no lurking place for the miscreant hatred to hide his detestable head, but where love shall live, and thrive, and bloom, and bless its subjects, nourished and cherished in the vitalizing beams of the Sun of Righteousness! "Thanks be unto God who giveth. us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

I know not whether "the reader of the Signs of the Times" will allow me to address him as a brother, (as he has not used the relation) but should he or others be benefited by the thoughts suggested I shall be amply paid for penning them; and remain still, as I humbly trust, a brother and servant to the household of faith.

Elder J. F. Johnson

MEETINGS

THE STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union will meet, the Lord willing, with Danville Church on the 5th Sunday in December and on Saturday before.

Bernice Marshall, Clerk

THE WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held at Pleasantville Church on the 5th Sunday in December. Song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

Elder H.W. Wray, Mod.
Sister Rachel Wray, Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church Carroll County,Virginia. A Presbytery met Sat. Oct.19,1996 at 10 o'clock A.M. for the examination of Brother Alan Terry and if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgement ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Gospel Ministry.

The solemity was begun with Prayer and Preaching by Brother Alan Terry. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were:Elders Hale Terry, Carl Terry, Larry Hollandsworth, Clarence Stone, Junior Conner, Marvin Brumfield and Raymond Goad.

All Deacons were asked to sit together: 18 were present.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Hale Terry as Moderator and Deacon W.G. Parsons as Clerk. Elders Junior Conner and Clarence Stone were chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Deacon Tony Horton having been duly appointed by Bell Spur Church in conference Sept.14,1996 as Spokesman for the Church delivered Brother Alan Terry to the Presbytery.

Examination was made by Elders Junior Conner and Clarence Stone using scriptural reference:1st Timothy, 3rd ch.1v-7v and Titus ch1. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate administered the laying on of hands with the ordination prayer being delivered by Elder Marvin Brumfield. The charge was delivered to the candidate by Elders Raymond Goad and Larry Hollandsworth using scriptural reference the written word of God. The Moderator asked Bell Spur Church if they were satisfied with the work of the presbytery which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of Ordination was presented to Brother Alan Terry and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained Brother was delivered back to the Church an ordained Minister of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Bell Spur. The minutes consisting the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Carl Terry.

Wm. Hale Terry, Moderator
W.G. Parsons, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 1996

Mrs. Nannie Trevathan, NC	$2.00
Charles Hatchett, OK	2.00
Mrs. Marcy Burgin, TX	2.00
Bill & Judy Poindexter, VA	5.00
Mrs. Anita Hash, VA	2.00
Mrs. Doris Rowland, VA	2.00
Mrs. Gertrude Cox, VA	2.00
Mrs. Opelene Cunningham, AL	10.00
Homer Pettis, LA	2.00
Milton Lupton, NC	2.00
Mrs. Lawrence Holloway, MD	2.00
A.J. Dowdy, NC	2.00
Mrs. Ada Campbell, VA	2.00
Mrs. Sallie Hodges, VA	2.00
Eld. C.B. Davis, NC	2.00
Mrs. Vera N. Potter, MS	2.00
Mr. & Mrs. Alonza Davis, VA	2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER MURIEL LEE LITTLETON MARSHBURN
1-8-21 to 8-14-96

In special memory: I'll try to write, asking God for guidance, strength and knowledge to do so. Help me to say the right words that I should.

Sister Muriel Lee was born in Onslow County Jan. 8, 1921. Her parents were George Robert and Racheal Brooks Littleton. She was the youngest of five children. Two brothers and sisters. Her sister Julia was a member of North East Church for many years.

Sister Muriel Lee and I grew up together. We were the "Best of Friends," and lived a short distance apart.

We started going to church; with her parents. Continued as we grew older. Her parents were also members of North East Church. Her Father was a deacon and very dedicated to the Church, brothers and sisters.

November 11, 1939 she married Willie Warren Marshburn. The Lord blessed them with one son. Tony was always been loving and kind to his parents.

Sister Muriel was a dedicated member. As long as her health permitted.

Her "Great Hope" was shown in her everyday life. A lovely member Sister Muriel Lee was shut in at home for many years. Six years in Rest Home.

August 14, 1996, The Lord called her home. No more "sickness or pain" and be with the Lord Forever".

She is survived by her husband and one son. Two grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Now:

To the Family I say:

You have suffered a great Loss. I feel your loss is "Heaven's Gain" be patient, press onward to the Mark of the High Calling which is in "our Lord Jesus Christ." My prayers are with you. Amen!

The funeral was conducted by Elder J.T. Prescott. Burial in Onslow Memorial Park.

Written by the order of North East Church: in conference, third Saturday in November 1996.

Written by Mary Lillie Hall
1597 Halltown Road
Jacksonville, N.C. 28546

CORRECTION:

Please change line number five on page 287 in the December 1996 issue to read Brother Alan Terry.

ST. MATTHEW 6:19-22.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:
But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:
For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.
The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

POEM

The tender mercies of God
Are such a pleasant thing.
They cause the faintest heart to shout
And make the angels sing.

And though I walk a slippery road,
And death stalks every side.
The Word of God will be my light.
His Spirit be my guide.

Jesus, the Shepherd of the flock,
Fulfilled His Father's plan.
He came, He suffered, and He died,
To save poor wretched man.

What words can this poor worthless tongue
Tell forth to show His grace?
Poured out in anger on His Son,
In Adam's sinful place.

What glory, joy and ecstacy
Await the child of grace.
In new Jerusalem he'll see
The Saviour's glorious face.

12705 Tantara Dr.
Austin, Tx. 78729
Written by: Elder David Harrell

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EDITORIAL

REST

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

In six days God created the heavens and the earth and everything therein, including man who was created in the image of God. ***"And God saw every thing that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And in the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his works which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."***

I have been exercised in mind for several days upon the subject I purpose to discuss, and I pray that God will direct my every thought, for I know there are varying views on it. I do not wish to controvert the views of anyone, especially those whom I greatly esteem as brothers in the Lord. My desire is only to set forth what I have been given to believe, and trust in God that I shall be given to rightly divide the word of truth.

"This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." This is the seventh or sabbath day, and it is to us, the children of God, an holy day, a sabbath of rest to the Lord. Ex. 35:2. The old scriptures are written so that they point to and exemplify the things that are set forth in the new Testament. The old covenant was a covenant of works which the Israelites were commanded to do. They were to do all the works given them in six days, but on the seventh day they were to rest. They were not to even go out of their tents, not to prepare food on the sabbath day under penalty of death. The Lord gave them bread (manna) on the sixth day that was to be enough for two days. For a time the Israelites rested as commanded, as did the Lord,

and the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it.

The Israelites were given the food of angels and a day of rest, yet they yielded to the lusts of their flesh and kept not the commandments of God. *"The fathers tempted him, proved him, and saw his works forty years, wherefore God was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest."*

Who shall not enter God's rest because of his wrath? Those who had hardened their hearts, provoked his wrath, and believed not. Not all that came out of Egypt did provoke him, but did believe because it was given to them to believe. *"Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Phil. 1:29. Surely this scripture was as true then as it is today.*

Brethren, we are admonished to take heed unto ourselves, lest there be in any of us an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. *"Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith (belief) in them that heard it. For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world."* God spake of the seventh day on this wise, "And God did rest on the seventh day from all his works. And he said, "If they shall enter into my rest." There is therefore a rest for the Lord's people today. *"Today, after so long a time; as it is said, Today if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest. he hath also ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."*

The unbelievers of this world know nothing of the rest that God gives to his believing children. They are not labouring nor heavy laden in the same manner as true believers. They know neither the Father nor the Son, for neither has been revealed unto them. Jesus said, *"All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; and neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."* All men are born dead in trespasses and sin, and we know that the dead can do nothing, but Jesus said, *"The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live."* And, *"For as the Father raiseth up*

the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." Only those who have been quickened into life can hear. These are called his sheep, and Jesus said of them, *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish."* Unto the unbelieving Jews he said, when they said unto him, If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly, *"I told you and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you."* And again he said unto them, *"And ye will not come to me that ye might have life."*

After Christ quickens one into life, that one is made to know that he is a sinner in the eyes of a just and holy God. He becomes burdened by a load of sin that is blacker than any thing he has ever seen. Immediately he begins to seek ways to extricate himself from this unbearable load. He turns to the law, thinking that he might keep the law and thereby justify himself. But he finds that the law only condemns, has no mercy, and gives nothing. He reads the scriptures and finds, *"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for the just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them."* He also may find, *"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all of our righteousnesses as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."* He may also read the words of Jesus, *"That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."* How can he obtain the righteousness that he seeks? He does not know. He is at his wits end. Now he turns to the Lord in prayer, and his prayer is as that of the publican, who smote upon his breast saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. At first he may not receive an answer. He reaches the end of his strength and is ready to give up in utter despair, saying, There is no hope for such a sinner as I. It is then that the Lord is made manifest unto him, sometimes it is in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, his sins are removed; sometimes it is a gradual awakening, but in each case he is blessed to see that Jesus Christ had already accomplished that for which he had been labouring. He knows not why nor where his sins are gone, but peace and rejoicing floods his ravished soul, and he sings praises unto his Saviour. He feels that he will never again feel the stigma of sin; but oh how little he knows! Doubts and fears soon begin to fill his mind when Satan appears and persuades him that he is deceived. He is greatly tempted to cast aside his hope that he is one for whom Christ has died. He asks himself, "How can a just and holy God be just in saving such a sinner like me?" He feels however that God would be just in casting him into hell. But God is merciful: his mercy endureth forever: and the poor sinner hears these

words from his glorious Saviour, ***"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."*** This is not an invitation, but a commandment, and it must be obeyed, for he is King of kings, and Lord of lords: and where the word of a king is there is power. and there is none as powerful as our holy King. He spake and it was done. and commanded and it stood fast. What his soul desireth, even that he doeth.

How do we come unto him? Jesus said, ***"No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."*** The Father draws us unto him with his cords of everlasting love and he teaches us all that we need to know. ***"It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh to me."*** When Jesus calls, we come. We come by faith in prayer, indited by the Holy Spirit that is given unto us, and dwells in us. These prayers are always answered, for the Spirit maketh intercession for us according to the will of God. And God hath said, ***"Before they call upon me, I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear."***

Brethren, from time to time we are blessed to rest in the love and peace of Jesus Christ, and we are blessed with all spiritual blessings, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Yet we are also given trials, afflictions, tribulations and persecutions. These things, however, though they may seem to be against us, are all working together for our good. "And we know that all things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Peter wrote, ***"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which shall try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings."*** Peter also wrote, ***"That the trial of your faith, being more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ,"*** Paul tells us that we should not be moved by our afflictions which are appointed unto us, and the persecutions and tribulations which we endure are a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that we may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which we suffer. Jesus has suffered as our High Priest the same things which we suffer. ***"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."*** Brethren, it is unto our faithful High

Priest that we approach in our prayers of faith in our time of need, and he is faithful to succor us. He gives us repentance and forgiveness of our sins, he gives us peace, and he gives us rest from our labours.

*"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me.***For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."* This we cannot do of ourselves. God does the teaching, as mentioned above, and he places the yoke upon us. As Job said, *"For he performeth the thing that is appointed unto me: and many such things are with him."* Jesus makes the burden light, for it is he who carries the load, and without him we can do nothing. Paul warns us not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers. *"Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?"* If we have been given light from above and a coat of righteousness, then our fellowship and communion should be with the saints and with God. John wrote, *"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin."*

Beloved brethren, Jesus Christ is coming again at that final day of time, and gather his saints, which is his beloved bride, unto himself, and carry them into that blissful region of glory where there will be eternal rest, for there will be nothing there to burden us, and we shall worship and praise him for ever in a perfect manner. Prayerfully consider what I have written, and if you find it not in accord with the holy scriptures, then cast it aside. I believe I have experienced many, if not all, of these things. Are our experiences in accord? I ask that you remember me when at the throne of grace.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES

PSALM 111:10, The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom:

PSALM 19:9, The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever.

PROV. 10:27, The fear of the Lord prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened.

With Man, there are different fears; one being, like that, of an attacking lion, or some other wild beast. Then, there is that fear of the Lord; that is with the born again children of God; they who are born of the Holy Spirit; or rather, the Holy Spirit is born in them; which give them a hope, in the glory of God and Lord; Wherefrom, comes that love into their heart for Him; now, that fear has become, a loving fear; which is unlike any other fear, to ever exist within a man. For all other fears; are, of a fleshly nature; that is, man's natural fear, of losing their worldly life. While that fear of the Lord; as spoken of, in the above quoted Scripture; has no connection whatsoever; with that fear, of the loss, of one's natural life. But this loving fear of the Lord; derives from, or as a result

of, having been given that knowledge, of the Lord's almighty power, over all things; and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

This fear, in one; at least in part; derives as a result, of his being limited within, the bounds of his hope; therefore, he is restricted, from saying, with absolute certainty; I know that I am a chosen and redeemed child of God. But, can only feel free to say - I hope I could be one among them. And so, this fear in one; serves, to keep him humble, and at the feet of his Lord; right exactly, where he belongs. For just so sure, as he rises any higher than the feet, of Jesus Christ, in his feelings; not only is he then, upon dangerous quick-sand but is then prepared, to be cut down; and again shown just what he is in his carnal fleshly self; not even fit, to speak His Holy and Righteous name, upon his filthy lips and tongue. It is then, dear child; one will feel to be, nothing and less than nothing; and altogether vanity; not fit to live nor die; he now, has arrived back to his rightful place, at the feet of his Lord; where he no longer is (in his feelings) at such height; but that he now can look up to the Lord; and beg for mercy.

One must of necessity; find himself low; like unto Jonah, in the belly of the fish; before he can in truth say; - I now vow that Salvation is, of the Lord. It is foreign to our fleshly nature; to desire of, or beg to be brought low; and yet still, even that, is a blessing, from our Lord and God. For it is only then we can be lifted up, to the height of His feet; and realize, He is our All in All things; both in this world, and that world to come; when this time world, is gone forever.

If this time world stands, throughout the remainder of 1996; soon, will arrive that day, man calls Christmas; a day of which, the worldly mis-guided fleshly man; claims, is set aside, for mankind, to worship God: But, just look at the activities, among humankind, on that day; and see for yourself; if you believe such could be, the true worshiping of, His great and Holy name. Now, I do hope, I would not dare claim; that some one or more, will not truly worship the Lord and God, on that day; but I do say this though; if one or more is blessed, to so worship Him; it did not come about through and by, the appointment of any one of mankind. But did come wholly and only, through and by, the appointment of our Lord and God; who is the one and only Appointer, of any and all things; both natural, and especially Spiritual. Man, in his fleshly nature, devises many things, and makes many, so called appointments; within, his weak and carnal mind, and hard and stony heart; and some of them, may be Let, come into being; but there is one thing sure and certain; whatsoever comes into being; came by His appointment. And NOT man's.

Now I expect there to be, some who read this; will gather; that I feel man's so called Christmas, to be; one more, of mans phony get-ups; for whatever fleshly reason he may have had: Well, I would say to each, who feel that way; you are one-hundred percent correct;

in your opinion. And that is my feelings, of every other hour or day or year; Man has ever, or does ever; attempt to set aside; as being special; or, of any more importance; than any other hour, or day, or year; within all time, God allotted for this world to stand.

For it is my feelings that, with the God; each second, or minute, or hour, or day, or year; are, of the exact same importance; as each and all the others. For it takes them each and all; for to complete the whole process, whereby, His pleasure and purpose, be fulfilled.

Just whensoever He be pleased, to send His Spirit unto us; it matters not, what time of day or night it may be; then and only then; is when we aught consider, as a special time with us; and ignore, as much as be in us; all other times; what fleshly man, may point out, as a special day; of greater importance, than others. May we remember; all times are His. And therefore; He alone; is the Provider, or Allotter; of every second we do have, for our very existence.

Each of us, arrived here in this world; in and at His afore appointed time; and we shall all, leave this world; in that exact like manner; and there shall be no delay, of either.

With, God; there is a space and a place, for all things; and all things, are in their proper and designated space and place, at all times. Therefore; it is an entire impossibility; for anything, to ever move about or stray from that exact place; for which, God did foresee, fore know, foreordain, fix, establish, provide for, purpose, and absolutely Predestinate, that it all shall unhinderedly be.

Well now; what about, all that existing confusion? ANSWER: It lieth entirely within, the weak mind of mankind; by reason of, his lack in understanding; of the Holy truth; as it is , in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; who verily is, the Word of God.

We first of all, must feel and believe that, He is; which belief; can be in one; only, if God and Lord, so be pleased, to give that belief unto, him or her. To in Holy truth, believe that He is; is, to believe, in all His attributes; of which, He does in truth consist and exist. Otherwise, that belief, must be and is; of one or more of the gods many; of which can be no more than; a conjured up imagination; in the weak carnal mind, of fleshly mankind.

To in truth, believe on God; is, to feel it within, the whole mind, heart and soul. And only at such time, and under such condition or circumstances, with one; can all doubts, of His reality; be absent, from one. Now, I would say this to the Elders and Editors, of The Signs of the Times; and to all who may read this; If what I have written here; be in accord with His Holy truths; then, may His great and Holy name be praised; in the name of Christ Jesus, and for His sake AMEN: While on the other hand; whatever misspelled words; whatever other mistakes, or untruths; that is contained therein; lay them all at my door. For just so sure, as I not be led, guided and directed, by His Holy Spirit; I am surely subject to making them all.

In hope, I could be numbered, among His children,

Troy G. Shepard

VOICES OF THE PAST

"AND HIS BANNER OVER ME WAS LOVE." - CANT. 11.4.

That portion of the Scriptures which is so appropriately called "The Song of Songs," abounds with a rich variety of the most clear and striking figures for the instruction, comfort and edification of all who hath an ear to hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. While from the carnal mind of man the spirituality of this inspired and inspiring sound is altogether concealed, to the saints of the Most High, when opened and appropriated by the heavenly Comforter, it discloses much of the marrow and fatness of the gospel of God our Savior. The manner of the love of God bestowed on the saints, whereby they are called his sons, and the vital and indissoluble union of Christ and his church, are presented in the strongest possible terms. In the conjugal relationship of the Beloved and the spouse, the fitness and force of the song is most pleasingly appropriate. The spouse, whose noblest theme has always been to declare what her Lord has done for her, in the immediate connection of our text, proclaims to all the daughters of Jerusalem, that as an apple tree, he had offered her a shadow from the burning heat of noon, and supplied her with the rich fruit which he bears for her comfort and support. "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." While he has stayed or supported her with flagons, he had comforted her with apples, for the words of his mouth, the consolations of his words had been to her as apples of gold in pictures of silver. But he had not only seated her under his shadow, and made her to partake of the delicious fruits of the Tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God, but he had made for her a glorious entertainment, a cheering banquet, and had brought her to it. He had not merely made the provision for a banquet and sent her an invitation to attend, of offered her a chance upon condition of her willing or doing something, but she declares, "He brought me to the banqueting-house," and thus she joyfully gives him all the praise. In connection with these testimonials of his sovereign goodness and distinguishing love to her, she adds, "And his banner over me was love."

Every regular army, every state and civilized nation, has its peculiar banner or standard, and distinguished from all others by some peculiar device or color, by which it may be readily known by those whose honor, interest or protection, it represents. As the church of Christ is a peculiar people, she requires a peculiar banner, distinct from every other banner; as a holy nation she requires a national standard, and as a marshaled host she must be identified by the unmis-

takable peculiarities of her flowing ensign. Hence the inspired psalmist says, "Thou hast given a banner to them that feared thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth." - Psalm xliv. 4, and in Psalm xx. 5, he says, "We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners." Thus shall the church of God appear in distinction from, and defiance of all her enemies, "Terrible as an army with banners." - Songs vi. 4. Four important considerations are presented for our instruction and comfort in the contemplation of the banner which our God has given us.

First. The distinct character and militant state of the church of God as she exists in the world.

Second. The identity and peculiarity of her banner.

Third. That it is to be displayed, and for what cause.

Fourth. That all her battles must be fought, and all her conquests achieved under it.

1. That the church of God is a distinct and separate people from all the rest of mankind, is abundantly testified throughout the Scriptures, and if this were not the case, she would not require a separate or distinct ensign or banner. To rally under any other than the legitimate banner of the government to which the citizens of any nation belongs, is treason, and subjects the offender not only to a forfeiture of the protection of such government, but to the dishonor and retribution in such cases provided for traitors. God had ordained that his church, or Israel, shall dwell safely alone, and that she shall not be reckoned with other nations; and the Captain of our salvation has declared, that his kingdom is not of this world, and by the mouth of his apostle hath told us that flesh and blood cannot inherit it. He said to a ruler of the Jews, Except a man be born again, he cannot see it, and except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into it. The Holy Ghost, by the prophet Daniel, declares this kingdom differs from all other kingdoms, and that it shall break them in pieces, and consume them, and it shall stand forever. And that this kingdom is in a militant state, that she is in a state of warfare, is equally certain from the record of truth. Her members are chosen in a furnace of affliction, and they are called to be soldiers of the cross, to fight the good fight, until her course shall be finished, all her conflicts over, the last of which to be subdued is death. The marshaled host of sin, and death, and hell, are in the field against her; the world, the flesh and the devil are to be encountered, and although ultimate triumph awaits her, and more than conquering laurels are already treasured up for her, in Christ her Lord, her conflicts, so far as relate to the personal experience of her members, which are here in the flesh, will not cease until the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout and the voice of the Archangel shall announce their triumph, and their ransomed bodies rise in the image of Christ's glorious and immortal body. Now she is, "As the lily among thorns." Like the bush in the devouring ele-

ment, and yet unconcerned, and like the Hebrew children in the fiery furnace. Until the war is ended, until the clash of arms, the smoke and carnage of the war shall cease, her banner must continue to wave, and all her valiant men to rally round it, having on the whole armor of God.

2. The identity and peculiarity of the banner is expressed in the word of our text. It is, "Love." This is his banner, and it differs from all other banners. No human force was ever marshaled for a deadly conflict under such an ensign as this. Hatred, which is the very opposite to this banner, is displayed in all the hostile movements of the sons of men. Hatred, instead of love, brought Cain into the field to slay his righteous brother; and hatred, instead of love, has characterized all scenes of slaughter which have drenched the earth with human gore, from the days of Cain to the present day. Hatred, instead of love, makes the feet of men swift to shed blood, because there is no fear of God before their eyes, and the way of peace they have not known. How striking then is the contrast between the banner of Christ, which waves in righteousness over the Lord's host, and that of the enemies of the Lord. All the opposition of men and devils against God and truth, and against his people, is instigated by hatred to God, to holiness, to truth and righteousness, and therefore the banner over the church is the more clearly identified, and the more readily known by those unto whom it is given, and over whom it is unfurled. His banner over them is love.

3. This banner must be displayed. It is not to be concealed, furled, or laid aside. None but pirates on the high seas, or lawless banditti upon the land, will fight without displaying the banner under which they fight. It must be displayed, because God has authorized and commanded it; therefore we cannot without disobeying him, conceal it. It must be displayed, because the armies of Israel can neither be identified by friends or foes, unless they display the love of God, which is over them, as well in the field of conflict, as in the banqueting festivities of the bride, the Lamb's wife. How is an individual to be recognized as a child of God, and an heir of glory, if he gives no evidence that the love of God dwells in him, being shed abroad in his heart, as influencing his walk and conversation? How, in the absence of the love of God, which centers in Christ, fixes upon his doctrine, ordinances and the order and provisions of his house, to be distinguished from the world? How shall it be said of them, Behold how they love one another, if they display not this banner? How can they love one another with a pure heart fervently, if love, which is the banner, be unseen among them? It must be displayed because of the truth. Only by this banner can we show our relish for, or attachment to, the truth as it is in Jesus. This being his banner, or his love, it differs from the carnal passions of the flesh, human affections are fickle, wavering and transient, God's love is immutable, eternal, and he rests in it. The creature's love has its element in this world, and if it predominates in us, the love of the Father dwells not in us. His banner, or

his love, has its origin in God, it is the banner he has given, the love which he has bestowed, the greater love wherewith he has loved us, and as it came from God, so it will center in him, and it will rest on the same objects on which it rested before it was communicated to us, it will, in us continue to "love the thing our Father loves, and hate the work he hates." We cannot possess it and hate God, his people, his doctrine, his authority or his government, for love is of God, and he that loveth is born of God.

4. Under the banner of his love we are to fight the good fight, finish our course, and keep the faith. Paul says, "And if a man also strives for masteries, yet he is not crowned, except he strive lawfully." - 2 Tim. ii. 5. Although the saints are not to strive for mastery over each other, or to be lords over God's heritage, yet they are to strive against sin, and for mastery over all the lusts of their flesh, and to keep their bodies under and to contend earnestly for the faith and order of the gospel. In all this strife they are required not only to strive, but to strive lawfully, or they fight as one that beateth air. - 1 Cor. ix. 26. The law of the kingdom to which we belong, as the disciples of our Redeemer, is written, not on tables of stone, but on the tables of the heart, and in the inward parts of his subjects, and this law directs that all our fightings shall be performed under his banner, which is love. We have already hinted that to fight in any case, without a display of the love of God in and over us, is piracy, consequently unlawful and ineffectual. If called to resist unto blood, striving against sin, let it be clearly seen that the love of God, of truth and righteousness, instead of vain ambition, or the gratification of our carnal lusts, is what stimulates us. They who hold the truth in unrighteousness, may feel a vain ambition to carry their points, when their own fame and selfish pride, rather that a zeal for the honor of God, and a regard for the banner of his love, predominates in them. The truth of God requires no unlawful defense; better by far, that the ark of the Lord jostle on the new cart, than that we attempt to steady it by unlawful interference. When the disciples proposed to call for the fire from heaven to consume their enemies, Jesus rebuked them. Their impatience and contemplated vengeance, made no display of the banner of God's love. And when Peter proposed to shield his Lord from the assaults of his enemies, by the use of carnal weapons, he savored of the things which be of men, and not the things which be of God; and he was sharply rebuked, and informed that he that shall resort to the force of arms, even in defense of Christ and his cause, shall perish by the sword. When we stand up to preach Christ, and him crucified, all our orthodoxy, eloquence and zeal, will be ineffectual, if the banner of the love of God be not displayed as that which moves us to action. A selfish ambition to carry our points, that we may exult over a vanquished opposer, that we may be regarded as the more expert or talented, is an unworthy and unlawful motive,

and offers an insult to our glorious banner. Love, which is the lawful standard, worketh no ill to our neighbors, hence we cannot, under the banner of love, call for fire to burn them, nor for fines, or imprisonments, to punish them for their assaults on us, or on the cause; for vengeance belongs to God, and not to us; he will administer it at the proper time and in a righteous manner. Proscription, persecution, the infliction of personal injuries, are the armor of the powers of darkness, but they cannot be under the banner of God's love. The love of God will constrain all the soldiers of the cross to fight manfully, and to die rather than sacrifice one principle of truth, or make any liege with the common enemy; but it will never lead us to fight for personal renown, or self-aggrandizement. It being then unlawful for us to fight the powers of earth and hell, from any other impulse than that inspired by the banner of love, how much more unbecoming for us to contend with our brethren, who are of the household of God. Can we love God supremely, and hate our brother? What if we have seen in our brother, defection, infirmity or departure from the gospel, should this enkindle our wrath, or be made a pretext for violence? Truly we are called on to protest against this sin, and to strive to reclaim him, but it must be in love, or it cannot display our banner. If we can know what spirit we are of, it will be easy to determine whether we are prompted by the love of God, or by some fleshly feeling, when we labor with an offending brother or sister. When they offend, or trespass against us, if we ourselves be under the banner of his love, we shall be grieved, and feel disposed to labor to restore the offender, in the spirit of meekness; but if not actuated by love, our carnal passions will be aroused, the old man offended, or made angry, and we shall feel inclined to deal in retribution, for the injury which we suppose we have received. In our pilgrimage of more than forty years, we have witnessed cases where brethren have labored most perseveringly to prove the guilt of an offending brother, and with a seeming diligence to fortify themselves with scriptural authority for every movement, and yet instead of displaying the banner of love, in a kind brotherly desire of all his brethren, and finally to have him excluded from the fellowship and society of the church, is far more prominently displayed, than in the banner of God's love. Can this be strivingly lawful? Can such as strive in this manner, be crowned? Brethren in the ministry have sometimes become disaffected towards each other, sometimes having a just cause, and sometimes from jealousy, or envy, and instead of displaying the banner of love, a disposition to bite and devour has been betrayed. Carnal nature has shown its teeth, and claws; hard speeches, sly hints, cruel and ungenerous insinuations, have been thrown out, the brother's character assailed, his reputation stained, much private and confidential whispering, but not to the accused, and with great seeming cautiousness, for the ostensible object of

having counsel and advice on the subject, but in reality to get brethren committed, while a settled determination is fixed, to make the suffering brother appear in the worst possible light. His word are scrutinized, perverted, and made to imply what we all know he never intended, and all this to gratify some carnal propensity, or passion of the old man. How dwells the love of God in such, while thus proceeding? Where is the banner of divine love under which they have enlisted? The banner under which the great Captain of salvation grappled with the powers of darkness, encountered sin, death and hell, for our redemption, was the banner of his love. Are we his followers? Does his love dwell in our hearts, and wave over our heads? Then let us display this banner in all our conflicts. The little personal injuries we sustain, are but for a short season, the storm will soon be over, and they shall only ripen us for that glory which God has laid up in heaven for us, and for that crown which the righteous Judge shall put upon us in that day. Unto us it is given, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. If then we be reviled, let us remember that we are not to revile again. If we would win the misguided brother, who has injured us in our persons, property, reputation or feelings, let us display to him the banner of love. If anything will reclaim him; if anything is calculated to subdue his heart, and lead him to reflect profitably on the error of his cause, it will be a sight of the banner; a conviction that his blows are leveled against one who sincerely and tenderly loves him. If under this banner we cannot reclaim him by a first, and second step, of faithful labor, we must tell the matter to the church, and submit quietly to it righteous decision.

Having considered the love of God, as the true banner under which the saints are to rally for the defense of the truth, under which all their battles must be fought, and by which they are destined to triumph over all the powers of the darkness of this world, the corruptions of the flesh, and the temptations of Satan, and the certainty of victory through him that had loved them, and spread this glorious banner over them, and also of the delightful privilege allowed them, while in their militant state, from time to time, of banqueting with their Lord under the protection of this banner of love, we will now offer a few remarks by way of admonition to the children of God, to beware of all other standards, especially of the counterfeits of this banner of our Redeemer.

It is important that soldiers should be well acquainted with their own banner, in order that they may easily distinguish it from all others; otherwise in the time of battle, they may haply be found fighting against their brethren, and weakening the hands of those whom they in reality love, and in whose defense they would cheerfully lay down their lives. One of the wily tricks of the adversary has often been to decoy the inexperienced soldier of the cross, by exhibiting a counterfeit banner of love; which, although easily detected by the practiced eye of the

veteran soldier, who is not ignorant of Satan's devices, is calculated to deceive some of the new recruits; for, although the false standard is composed of love, yet it is not the love of God. How often have even christians been temporarily deceived by a display of human, instead of divine love. The Captain of salvation has pointed out to his soldiers the difference; and to his admonitions we would do well to take heed, lest at any time we should let them slip. "He that loveth the world, the love of the Father is not in him." The affections, as well as all the other lusts of the old man, are to be crucified; for we cannot possibly retain them, and enjoy the love of God dwelling in us.

Men who profess to be ministers of Jesus, and soldiers of the cross, often tell how much they love souls; how ardently they desire the salvation of every body. They love all the various orders, sects and denominations of religionists, with perhaps the single exception of that sect which is everywhere spoken against. They love all kinds of doctrine that will gain proselytes, and produce excitement of the natural or fleshly passions of the multitude; they love all the humanly invented religious societies of the age, and consider them eminently calculated to save sinners; and they love the wages of unrighteousness, and, like Balaam, they run greedily after it. A banner of this kind of love has strong attractions, not only to the unregenerated of mankind, but the carnal sympathies of the flesh in christians are strongly attracted by it. They are too prone to forget that the love of the creature is only a stream from a corrupt fountain, which is poisoned with the corruption of the fountain from which it proceeds; while the love of God is pure and holy, and as far transcending all earthly love, as the heavens are higher than the earth. A standard, or banner, composed of human love, may be splendidly painted, with very many attractive devices; and such is truly the case with all the false ensigns, which the enemy has set up for signs; but through all their coloring, those who are taught of God, will be enabled to see that they savor of the things which be of men, and not the things which be of God. Not only in the general conflict with the consolidated powers of darkness, are the children of God called to guard against this universal charity, but also in their intercourse with those who are of the household of faith, and even in their communion with their own hearts. The fellowship of the saints, one with another, is not to be regulated by carnal feelings of personal attachment; but by the infallible rule laid down for their government in the New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ. If under the banner of our Savior, whatever may be our fleshly predilection in favor of brethren, we will not suffer sin to rest on them. The influence of that banner on us will inspire faithfulness in laboring according to the rule, to reclaim offenders, in the spirit of meekness; and if not successful, from every brother that walketh disorderly, it will dictate to us to turn away. But if we set about the work while we are our-

selves under the wrong banner, we shall make wretched work. We would be poorly qualified to pull the mote from a brother's eye, while a beam is in our own eye. If we are not governed by the love of God dwelling in, and waving over us, all our efforts at discipline will be worse than nothing. If in our labor to reclaim our offending brother, we are influenced by the banner of God's love, the honor of God, the peace and purity of the church, and good of the brother with whom we are called to labor, will predominate in our hearts. But if under a banner of fleshly feelings, we will be apt to lose sight of these incentives, and strive for the mastery, with vain ambition to secure some credit to ourselves, or at least to lay our plans so as to carry them out, and head off the brother at every point. Or, on the other hand, if swayed by an undue fleshly attachment to the offending party, we may flatter ourselves that we are exercising a christian virtue, by saying to our Lord's debtor, who owes an hundred measures of oil, take the bill and write fourscore. A fleshly feeling in us predominating, disqualifies us for the faithful discharge of our duty to our brethren; it will either lead us to exact more, or to be satisfied with less, than the word dictates. One brother is made an offender for a word; that is, for not using the same word or form of expression to express a similar idea, when there is no essential difference involved, and another is held in fellowship, who has departed from the faith and order of the gospel of Christ, because of some personal attachment.

In communion with our own hearts, let us not be deceived. We have within us, as it were the company of two armies. Each of these has its own banner; the one has the banner of God's love, the other the vile affections and lusts of the flesh, which war against the spirit. And these are contrary the one to the other. Hence we are admonished to deny ourselves, and take our cross and follow our Lord and Master. Human love is always on the alert to supplant the new man. The old man becomes wounded, and we think the new man is grieved. The old man meditates revenge, and we mistake it for christian diligence in contending against sin. Thus we sometimes think the new man is grieved, when only the old man is mad.

The minister of the gospel of the Lord Jesus, is in trouble, his mind is shrouded in darkness, he is called to preach; an assembly is before him; but he has no subject; he feels depressed and in bitterness. He worries, frets and murmurs. He says, "My Lord is requiring me to preach without affording his presence, gathers where he has not strewed, and reaps where he has not sown." He concludes like Jonah, that he does well to be angry even unto death. What is the matter now? Poor man, his carnal pride and vain ambition is on the rack, and must be crucified with its affections and lusts, and in the end he is astonished to find that his deep anxiety to preach well, was more for the gratification of

his own fleshly ambition, than from a desire to glorify God, and edify the saints. We essay to bow in prayer before the throne of God, and we have certain desires which we wish to present in prayer and supplication; but by what spirit are these desires inspired within us? If they are fleshly desires, we may detect something selfish in them, inclining us to ask for something to consume upon our carnal lusts. How gracious is our God in withholding these things from us. But when his banner over us is love, the preacher is as ready to stand in silence before his congregation, if God wills it, as to speak with the tongues of men or of angels; and the humble christian in his closet, inspired by the flowing banner of his Redeemer's love, is all submission to the will of God. His language is copied from his Savior's lips, "Not my will, but thy will be done."

Finally, may it be our happy privilege to fight all our battles under the triumphant banner of the love of God, and may it be spread over us when we are permitted to enjoy our banqueting seasons with the King. And may he preserve us by his grace, from dishonoring, deserting, or failing to display the banner of his love, in all our walk and conversation. Then shall we look forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.

Middletown, N.Y., March 1, 1855

Elder Gilbert Beebe

JOSEPH'S CUP.

If not asking too much, will Elder Chick give his views upon Joseph's cup? What is meant by its being put into the mouth of Benjamin's sack, and why was Benjamin's mess five times as much as the others? Joseph seemed to love Benjamin better than the others; why was this?

LAURA A. WILSON.
Potter, Ark., May 30, 1907.

According to the promise made in the SIGNS for August 1st we will try to comply with this request. At best, however, we can only give such thoughts as occur to us as being in harmony with the word of God. No direct explanation is given of this subject in the Scriptures in its application spiritually to the people of God under the gospel; but we believe that this, as well as all other Old Testament Scriptures, was written for our learning, because the apostle has so said. Some of the types recorded in the Old Testament are fully explained by the inspired writers in the New Testament, but not all. These first we know are as explained in the Scriptures, but the many, of which nothing is directly said by the New Testament writers, we have come to feel very careful in handling. At best we can but give our judgment concerning any of them, and feel like speaking very carefully. Of one thing we have come to feel very sure, viz., that types and shadows all ceased when the blessed Savior died, for he was the true answer to them all. When the substance

came there was no more need of shadows and types. There are emblems to be observed by the church now, such as baptism and the supper, but these are not to be regarded as types, because they relate to a Savior already come, and living now in and with his people. Also in the New Testament there are parables setting forth the various matters relating to that kingdom which has already come. Narratives are also given in the New Testament which set forth how God under the gospel deals with the children of men who are called by his grace, but these are not to be called types or shadows. These dealings of God are then spiritual realities, and show just what God's dealings with men will continue to be to the end of times. The kingdom of heaven was not on earth until Jesus came, therefore what was set forth concerning the kingdom of heaven could have no application to anything that was under the old covenant; but the things set forth in the Old Testament did point forward to the coming kingdom of heaven.

In all ages of the gospel church, so far as we have been able to read, Joseph has been regarded as a lively type of the blessed Lord in his incarnation. Many writers have delighted to trace out points of resemblance between Joseph and Him who is greater than Joseph, but we cannot here speak of all these things. We also believe that it is right to speak of Joseph as a type of the blessed Savior. This is true in a general way, we do not doubt, of all that he did and suffered.

Concerning the questions propounded by sister Wilson, it seems manifest that what is recorded of Joseph in that immediate connection would, as it related to the literal events of time, be only natural for him to do. Joseph's cup was that out of which he drank, and it was silver, and no doubt very costly and beautiful. It may represent to us the cup of salvation, which is in the hand of the blessed Lord and which he bestows upon his people. Out of it he bestows upon them that wine and milk which makes their heart glad, and which nourishes them in all heavenly graces. It is said that by it Joseph "divined" or, literally, "made trial." Such things were common among all the ancient heathen nations, and especially were such cups used in Egypt. It is not likely that Joseph, who worshiped the living God with prayer and praise, would be guilty of such heathenish practices. The steward said this concerning the cup, and not Joseph. The steward saw that he prized it highly, and no doubt concluded that it must be that Joseph did so because he found mysterious power in it. Joseph indeed did use it to divine what was in the hearts of his brethren toward each other, and especially toward Benjamin; by it he made trial of their state of mind, to see whether it remained the same as when they had sold him into bondage. By the cup of salvation our spiritual Joseph makes trial of his people; by it he discerns their very thoughts, not for his own information, but for theirs, that they may know how evil they are in thought, word and deed. This cup is

that word which discerns the thoughts and intents of the hearts, and divides asunder the soul and spirit, the joints and marrow. As the hearts of the brethren of Joseph were probed and revealed in their trial by the cup, so in the work of salvation all the children of God are made to know themselves, and stand revealed to themselves as guilty sinners before God and in the sight of their own consciences. As the cup was costly and beautiful, so salvation through Christ is most costly, and the robe of this salvation is most beautiful. It is beautiful within. The King's daughter is all beautiful within. The cup belonged to no one save Joseph; it was his own peculiar treasure. Likewise salvation is all of the blessed Lord.

What is meant by its being put in Benjamin's sack? Regarding the narrative simply as a narrative, as said before, there is no doubt in our mind that the reason which actuated Joseph was that the real feeling of his brethren toward their half-brother might be made to appear clearly. They had sacrificed all natural affection in their eagerness to get rid of this dreamer, their brother Joseph, and he would now test them to see whether there had been any change in their hardness of heart. The money was also placed in the sacks of them all, as had been the case before. Had the cup alone been put into the mouth of Benjamin's sack, and no money found in the sacks of them all, there might have been room for them to censure their brother as alone guilty; but now this could not be, seeing that all found that which did not belong to them in their sacks. This would be true, if we regard the natural event alone. We have no reason to think that Joseph had any knowledge of the fact that God, who was overruling all this series of events, intended to set these things forth as types of the true heavenly things to be revealed under the gospel dispensation. It was not in his mind that all this was a type of the dealings of the Lord with his people; but we know that what Joseph did not then know is the truth. That the cup was found in Benjamin's sack would be a type of that experience of soul which led Paul to count himself the chief of sinners, even as Benjamin would appear to be the chief sinner among them all, and yet the thoughts of Joseph were those of peculiar tenderness and love toward Benjamin. Thus Paul was made to count himself the chief of sinners, that the love and mercy and favor of God might be all the more gloriously made manifest in him. That the cup was found in the sack of Benjamin was to the brethren of Joseph an evidence of peculiar disfavor, so that they would fear the worst, but in reality it was the evidence of the especial love and tenderness of Joseph toward his brother. God's thoughts and ways are not our thoughts and ways. Men judge, when one wounds another, that it is a mark of enmity, but whom Jesus wounds is the subject of his own peculiar love above all others. Thus, that the cup was found, by Joseph's order, in the sack of Benjamin, was a mark of that love that was stronger than death.

Every soul toward whom the Lord will make known his grace and mercy finds the evidence of his own guilt and of the disfavor of the Lord brought home to himself personally. At that hour he cannot believe in the favor of the King, but rather that he must suffer for his sins. No doubt Benjamin expected nothing but wrath from Joseph, but how soon all this is changed and he stands forth as the object of Joseph's especial regard and favor.

Why was the mess of Benjamin five times as much as the others? First, Benjamin was Joseph's own brother, while the others were but half-brothers. Then the others had been concerned in his banishment from his father's home and in his captivity as a slave in Egypt. Benjamin had had no part in all this series of crimes against him. It was but natural for these reasons that he should be dearer to Joseph than the rest. We would not be understood as saying that Benjamin was a type of the disciple John, for he was not, if we consider John as an individual, but still of John, as was of Benjamin, it is said that he was that "disciple whom Jesus loved." It was not meant that Jesus did not love all the rest of the disciples, but it was true that toward John was made manifest peculiar love and regard from the Master. Joseph manifested love to all his brethren, but there was a dearer regard to Benjamin in his heart; he yearned over them, but longed that Benjamin should be in his arms the most. He forgave all his brethren all their sins against him, but, in the sense of which we are speaking, Benjamin had not sinned against him at all. There was special favor to the obedient now. The sins of the others had separated between them and Joseph. Their sorrows and repentance and confession brought them near to him and blotted out the past transgression from his mind. Upon them all he bestowed favor, but to Benjamin five times more than to the rest was given. They were all brethren, sons of the same father, but they did not all treat him alike. The children of God are all sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, and brethren to the Lord Jesus Christ, still the disobedient are beaten with many stripes, their sins come in between them and joy of salvation. It was so with David when he prayed, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit." David's sin had come in between him and the joy of the Lord, and he beheld the hidings of the face of the Lord, yet when repentance was given David this joy was restored unto him, and once more he could walk in the light of God's countenance. Something of this seems to us to be involved in this type. Joseph loved Benjamin more than the others; this sets forth, does it not, that which the blessed Master said in the parable of the vine and branches: "If ye keep my commandments, and abide in his love"? The disobedient are the children of God indeed as well as the others; but transgression results in the hidings of the Father's face. It was so in this lively type, as it appears to us. There is no difference in the love of God at any time, but the difference is

in our own selves. The clouds that hide the face of the sun are from this earth of ours; the sins that hide the face of the Father are from our own hearts and lives; and how often the earth itself gets in between us and the sun and we walk in midnight darkness. The sin of Joseph's brethren had come in between them and their brother; it was in their minds, and was as a barrier between them. It was true that their sins were more of a barrier against their coming to him than they were against the outflowings of his love to them; long after his heart had burned with love to them as though they had never sinned, their hearts would recall all their bitter hatred, and there would be mourning on account of it. Our God forgives us all our sins, but we can never forgive ourselves; if we could do so, then there would be small evidence that He had forgiven us. Those whom the Lord loves, cannot love themselves; those whom the Lord does not love are full of self-love. Joseph's brethren remembered in their distress and perplexity how their brother had pleaded with them in vain to spare him, and they felt that they had no right to ask for mercy, even at the hands of him whom they thought was a stranger; from this stranger they could expect no consideration. Had they known it was their brother before whom they stood they must have trembled still more, and this because it was against him that they had sinned. O what a mercy it was that their sin had been against a brother! They could not have thought it, but it was so after all. When he had revealed himself to them, they still greatly feared and were troubled, but the words of Joseph were gracious and merciful. They indeed intended evil, but the Lord intended good, and by their wickedness much people were saved alive. Their guilt was the same, but there were large purposes of mercy in it all. This did not make their sin any the less, nor did it decrease their repentance and sorrow; but Joseph could, out of this his faith, find room for forgiveness. If our brother sins against us how much it will help us to forgive if faith assures us that to us, and to all who love God, their transgression shall work out good. A view of the largeness of the mercy of God, and of the greatness of his wisdom, and of the unchangeableness of his purposes, will put down within us all hardness against puny man, and we shall feel, as did Joseph, that God meant it all for good. If a warfare between us and our fellow results to our great advantage even natural men will find it in their hearts to be forbearing and forgiving after the manner of men; and since we know that all things work together for good to them who love God, ought it not to be easy to forgive even very bitter wrongs against us?

Elder F.A. Chick

ST. MATTHEW 3:13-17.

Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

At the request of Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church, Edgecombe County, North Carolina, a presbytery met November 24, 1996 at the church for the examination of Brother Donnie Ray Arrington. If found, in their judgment, to be qualified in accordance with the written word of God the church requests the ordination of Brother Arrington to the full work of the office of a Deacon.

The conference was opened with hymn and prayer by Elder Henry Jones, after which Elder Jones was called to sit as moderator. At the request of Brother Arrington the church called Elders Henry Jones and Joseph Sawyer to compose the presbytery.

The candidate was presented to the presbytery by the clerk, who requested he be examined and upon their satisfaction, ordained to the office of a Deacon and returned to the church.

After feeling satisfied with the candidate the charge was delivered by Elder Joe Sawyer, after which the laying on of hands was administered by the presbytery.

After being returned to the church, the brethren came forward to extend the right hand of fellowship.

It was agreed that a copy of these minutes be kept for the church records and a copy sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Conference was adjourned with hymn and prayer by Elder Joe Sawyer.

Elder Henry Jones, Moderator
J. Carroll Williams, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 1996

Buford Thompson, VA $2.00
Mrs. G.B. McAdams, MS 7.00
Mrs. Ablene McBride, TX 2.00
Mrs. Leola Meador, NC 2.00
Jamie E. Cooper, VA 2.00
Kenneth I. Evans, AL 2.00
Mrs. Grace Locke, KY 5.00
Mrs. Allyne Page, TX 7.00
James W. Huber, MD 2.00
Mrs. Eva E. Harlow, TX 6.00
Mrs. Dadelene Shipman, TX 2.00
W.W. Stutts, TX 2.00
Mrs. Anna Savage, KY
In memory of Husband
Gleen Savage 10.00
Ms. Lula Holley, VA 2.00
J.J. Merrill, AL 7.00
Mrs. Meta Mills, AR 2.00
Vance Duncan, VA 2.00
B.K. Smith, CA 2.00

OBITUARIES

OBITUARY OF NOLIE GOAD

I was asked would I like to write the obituary of our Dear Sister and my Aunt, Nolie Goad, and I did want to, hoping that God would give me strength and the ability to do so.

Aunt Nolie was born November 29, 1900, in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, to Albert S. Goad and Ida Dalton Goad and passed away April 30, 1996, making her stay on this earth 95 years and 5 months. She was the last member of her immediate family. She leaves a number of nieces and nephews. Although she was never married, she was a mother to her family. Her mother died when they were all young.

She and my Granddaddy, Albert Goad, united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church the same day, August 22, 1943. I was at that meeting and I remember it very well. In the old Weatherford Church if it was there today, I could almost tell you where they were sitting when they stood up and started talking to the church. This is something that has never left me. She loved the church and was always faithful to attend and support the church until her health failed. She believed in Salvation by the Grace of God and would often time talk on the scripture.

She passed away in Gretna Health Care Center where she had lived for the last four years. She was never happy there, and I grieved much over her being there.

Her funeral was conducted by Elders Raymond Goad and Marvin Brumfield at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, and she was laid to rest in the church cemetery. May God grant her eternal peace.

Written by one who loved her and cared for her,

Mabel Hedrick

PSALM 116:15.

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

OBITUARY OF SISTER EDITH GODWIN NORMAN

We at Oakgrove Primitive Baptist church bow our heads in humble submission as our Heavenly Father has seen fit to remove from our midst our dearly beloved sister Edith Godwin Norman whom we love and miss so much. We believe the Lord knows best and even though our hearts are broken and it is loss for us,that it is gain for her and glory for the Lord.

Sister Edith united with Oakgrove Primitive Baptist church March 5,1949 and was baptised by Elder P.H. Jacobs and given the right hand of Christian fellowship March 6,1949.

Sister Edith was born to Dave and Delma Godwin March 4, 1915 and passed from this life September 30, 1996 making her stay here 81 years, 6 months and 26 days.

Sister Edith was faithful to her church and the doctrine of her belief as long as she lived. She believed in the absolute faith of the predestinarian order and stood for it as long as she lived. She loved to hear our ministers preach on the little eagle falling as each stick was removed from beneath him,but as the last stick was removed the little eagle was lifted up to the peace it seeked for so long.

Sister Edith suffered many troubles, trials and temptations both natural and spiritual but she felt to suffer with her Lord was hope that she would also reign with him. She was both my natural sister and I hope my spiritual sister. I do not feel worthy to be her spiritual sister but have hope that I am one.

Sister Edith was survived by two sons Ray Allen Norman and Arnold Dale Norman both of Shreveport, LA. One daughter Maxine Edwards of Bossier City LA. two sisters Kate Mathews of Shreveport, LA. and Hildridge Burch of Springhill, LA. one brother Elder David Godwin of Goldona LA. nine Grandchildren and nineteen Great Grandchildren.

Services for sister Edith were held at 10 a.m Wednesday October 2,1996 at Roseneath South Chapel Shreveport, LA. with Rev. Jeff Segner officiating who brought a sweet and comforting message to the family.

Sister Edith was laid to rest beside her husband Garlan Norman in the Oakgrove cemetery to await the coming of her Lord.

Elder David Godwin, Moderator
Kate Mathews, Clerk

JESSE HUBERT TOWLER

Jesse Hubert Towler departed this life on Wednesday, November 20, 1996, at the Franklin Healthcare Center in Rocky Mount, Virginia. He was born on October 22, 1914, in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, the son of the late Joab Washington Towler and the late Nannie Wade Pickrel Towler.

Jesse received his education in the public school system of Pittsylvania County. He was retired from the Pittsylvania County School System where he worked as the Audio-Visual Librarian for many years. He was a member of the Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church in Gretna, Virginia. He was united in Holy Matrimony to the former Ruby Shelton on December 23, I 939. He was preceded in death by one brother, Raymond E. Towler, and one sister, Lorene Towler Reynolds.

He is survived by: his wife, Ruby Shelton Towler of the residence in Gretna, Virginia; one son, John Richard Shelton Towler of the residence; two brothers, G. Wilson Towler of Blairs, Virginia, and William Russell Towler of Crozet, Virginia; two sisters, Emma Towler Hammack of Danville, Virginia, and Louise Towler Giles of Mechanicsville, Virginia; six sisters-in-law; and a host of nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

PROVERBS 4:18.

But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

Signs of the Times

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" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

POEM

BEAR ME UP ON EAGLES WINGS

Sorrows and afflictions abide me at every turn;
Despair is my closest companion;
The valley of the shadow of death surrounds me;
Bear me up on eagles wings.

I go forward, but He is not there;
Backward, but cannot perceive Him;
I look to the side but cannot behold Him;
Bear me up on eagles wings.

O for a glimpse of my heavenly friend
Who raised me from a fallen state;
He promised never to leave me;
Bear me up on eagles wings.

May I soar from this wilderness of woe
On the wings of Grace and Truth;
To leave behind all troubles and cares;
Bear me up on eagles wings.

In that eternal land of bliss,
O may I there be carried;
To see my Lord face to face;
Bear me up on eagles wings.

Nevermore to hope for that I see not,
But to worship my Lord, Priest and King
In the presence of the Great I am;
No more to be borne away on eagles wings.

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

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EDITORIAL

ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS

From time to time I'm asked to write something for publication in the Signs. Each time feeling unable to bring you anything worth while, yet hoping some thought may be edifying to some poor soul, searching as I hope I have at times, for an explanation of some scripture I hadn't seen before.

The following scripture I'll present as what I see in it, you may agree or disagree. Rev. 21 vs. 1-4 ***"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."***

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

"And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

The book of revelation has always seemed hidden to me and truly it must be revealed to any and all that see it in the right sight.

John was on the isle of Patmos and Jesus Christ sent his angel to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass. Notwithstanding a day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as a day with the Lord. Then John as he wrote to the seven churches did not necessarily have each chapter as he saw it or as it was revealed to him. It seems I can't see a new heaven and a new earth meaning as we read it and our minds being in a natural frame. Do you believe a new natural earth will shortly come, or a new atmosphere filled with heavenly bodies, moons or stars. I believe when this earth is finished that we live on, that will be the lost earth, as it will be with all of nature.

In my thoughts this was the coming of the Lord's Christ, a new earth, a new heaven, never before seen or

imagined any thing comparable, a day the world of believers had longed for, looked for and hoped to see. John saw a new earth and a new heaven, not another earth or another heaven, but new - for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea.

I believe this refers to that day when Christ came to earth. Surely never a day like it before, a new day. No more sea, no more dividing, nothing to separate His people no more Jew or Gentile all to know Him from the least to the greatest of them. No more laws to be kept that was impossible with man to keep, all fulfilled to a jot and a tittle. All sins that separated his people from God erased forever. Then there is no more sea, there is no more of the old things to ponder crossing, no more work to find the grace of God, all one in him forever.

John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven. A vision I believe of Christ the husband awaiting His bride, the church that he came to claim out of a world of woe. A new Jerusalem, a spiritual awakening, a gospel era, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Clearly cleansed from all sin forever, Christ the Savior was come. The bride in Christ and Christ in her, for Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men and he will dwell with them. There is no worship apart from him, all in the tabernacle together, if we worship Him, there can be no worship without.

"And he will dwell with them and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." Do we not see God coming down from heaven to dwell with his people, would he come down to dwell with them, if this is the day when he comes with the shout of the archangel to raise his people from the dust, will there be need to dwell with them.

This next verse may mean in that heavenly city beyond the realm of nature, or at the experience of God coming to his elect and teaching them there is now no more condemnation to those that live after the spirit. Then tears turn to joy, at such news, Christ has wiped away all tears from their eyes. Is there any more fear of death or can there be, if born of that incorruptible spirit that liveth and abideth forever. If this is speaking of a day before the second coming of the Lord. We can see it a beautiful picture of a travel here on earth that the angel of the Lord gave John to see and write about. Also gives us that hope that with an eye of faith we have seen him come to his people in a new earthly experience, new from anything we have seen or heard before. A new earth, a new heaven, former things have passed away.

I hope you will judge for yourself, for in my weakness I believe this could be speaking of the day Christ came, but surely there is nothing new with God. *"For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."*

If we see spiritual things
He is our eyes,
Elder J.R. Williams

QUERIES & ANSWERS

QUERY:
Do the Primitive Baptists believe in Missionaries?

First of all, let's define what we mean by missionaries. It is generally accepted by most people, whether a church member or not and regardless of denomination affiliation, that missionaries are prepared in schools of divinity or theology; chosen, financed and sent by a board, organization or some society; and given the objective of winning souls for Christ. To these missionaries, we do object.

If we do not believe in these missionaries, we must have a sound basis for not doing so. First, we do not believe these missionaries are scriptural. Those who support the idea of missionaries base their belief on Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-18 and Luke 24:47-49. But, let's examine these scriptures closely and may God grant us understanding.

First of all, who is speaking? None other than Christ in whom all fullness dwells. The fullness of the Godhead dwelt in Him bodily. He who said ***"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth"*** did not delegate this power to any board, organization or society. Christ had just risen from the grave and had not yet ascended to His father. In His death, burial and resurrection, He blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross. He tore down the middle wall of petition separating Jews and Gentiles. The way was now open to the Gentile and that is what He meant by "all the world." He has a people in every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. He spoke to his apostles whom He himself had chosen. He commanded them to "tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." In Acts 1:8 just before ascending into heaven, Christ told His apostles, ***"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."*** So we see the authority to call, qualify and send one is vested only in Christ. Next, we see that the commission to ***"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature"*** was exclusively to His chosen apostles. Why? Because He had previously commanded them, ***"Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not."*** Now, it was necessary to include the Gentiles and Samaritans. Hence, ***"Go ye into all the world."*** Was the command carried out? Yes. In Romans 10: 18, the Apostle Paul says, ***"But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth and their words unto the ends of the world."*** Do we believe that God has commissioned or called, qualified and sent forth men as missionaries into all the world since

the apostles? No. There were only twelve apostles and there will never be any more. Christ said, *"I have chosen you. You have not chosen me."*

Hebrews 8:10-11, ***"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother saying, know the Lord, for all shall know me from the least to the greatest."*** From this scripture, we see that it is not up to man to introduce others to the Lord. In fact, puny man does not have the power to impute the knowledge of Christ into another human being. Paul said in Galatians 1: 12, ***"But I certify you brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."*** In the scripture from Hebrews, God said that we shall not teach another person to know the Lord, for all of His people shall know Him.

Today, God calls ministers, qualifies them with certain gifts that will edify His people and sends them without scrip, bread, money or coats to His elect children. God has prepared His children to receive His ministers. The ministers are sent not to provide eternal salvation nor to lead anyone to Christ. But, they are sent to preach the gospel which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. So, we see that only believers hear the gospel. In the third chapter of Acts, Phillip was sent to the eunuch who was in the desert of Gaza reading the scriptures and desiring understanding of Christ. Phillip preached Jesus to this man and baptized him. No big congregation. Just one poor soul hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

In summary, Christ has not commanded or commissioned men to *"go ye into all the world...etc."* since the apostles. He has and does yet command men to *"feed my lambs. Feed my sheep."* He does yet send his ministers to His little flock scattered about in the local churches. Christ will make himself known to His people and He has already saved them when He said *"it is finished"* and died on the cross for their sins and rose the third day for their justification.

There were no names of Primitive or Missionary Baptists prior to 1800, only Baptist. Generally, all Baptists believed alike. Then, in the late 1700s and early 1800s, missions, tract societies, Sunday schools and other new inventions made their advent. In 1827, the Kehukee Association of eastern North Carolina took a stand against all of these new ideas and other associations soon followed. In 1832, several northern churches met at Black Rock Church near Baltimore, Maryland, and took a stand against these new things also. They published their position in what is known as the "Black Rock Address." After this time, those who

supported the old way were known as Old School Baptists, Hard Shell Baptists, Particular Baptists, Strict Baptists and Primitive Baptists. Those who supported the new ways were known as New School Baptists and Missionary Baptists.

Love in Christ,
Elder Cleo D. Robertson

ARTICLES

I would like to write the Lord willing, a little about the 13th Ch. of Rev.

13:1 And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

John saw this beast rise up out of the sea, when we think of this beast, let us not think of it as being the devil, I believe the dragon spoken of in v. 2 is the devil. This beast I believe looked or appeared to John just as it is pictured here, I believe John actually saw a beast of this description, but it is symbolic. We today don't think of it as a beast, we think of what it means or what it represents. The Roman monarchy is called a beast, I believe it is one of the beasts spoken of in Dan. 7: 2 & 4 Rome Pagan had as this beast has, seven heads and ten horns, and had power over all nations, sometimes called the whole world, and exercised great cruelty upon the Christians. This is signified by the red dragon itself in the preceeding chapter, and besides he had risen up before the times of John. This beast is one of the things shown to him which was to be hereafter, as this beast at this time was not, but was to come, I mean of course the thing represented by the vision of this beast. This beast was said to rise up out of the sea, which means out of the sea of this world, and the wicked in it, who are like a troubled sea and cannot rest, I believe waters in this book means or represents nations, peoples and tongues. So this beast rose up from among the people. Having seven heads, number 7 in the scripture is the number of perfection, so these seven heads may refer to these boastful treasures of wisdom and knowledge, which anti-christ boasts of having, as being the interpreter of the Scriptures, and the judge of different controversies, or else the seven heads may represent the seven mountains on which Rome was built.

And ten horns, the ten kingdoms into which the empire was divided, and the ten kings who reigned with the beast and gave him their kingdom, so these ten horns represent ten kingdoms. And upon his horns ten crowns, which distinguished Rome Papal from Rome Pagan, these crowns represent either the ten kings in Rome Pagan or the ten rulers in Rome Papacy, which would be the high men or important men in the church.

V 2. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard - I believe the

likeness of a leopard, is representing the speed this beast had when he arose and got power, it very quickly and in a short time extended it over all emperors, kings, princes, bishops, kingdoms and churches. And his feet were as the feet of a bear, this may picture the strength and stability of the kingdom of antichrist.

V2. And the dragon gave him his power, and his seat and great authority. The coming of antichrist is after the working of Satan, he gave him his cunning, and sublity as the old serpent, and taught him his arts and tricks to deceive mankind, and gave him power to do signs and lying wonders, and a army of his ministers II Cor. 11: 14 & 15 and great authority over the Roman Empire and kings and kingdoms in it, he gave him his authority as God of this world. What Christ refused at the hands or offer of Satan, this pretested vicar took, even the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them. Assumed to himself all this power in earth and hell, but instead of being a vicar of Christ, he is a vicar of Satan, and not the successor of Peter, but the successor of Satan. P.S. I got most of this material of the catholic church out of the encyclopedia - World Book.

The middle ages bought a struggle between the Roman Catholic church and various European rulers. At the height of Papal supremacy, Pope Boniface VIII issued a order or Papal decree, called Unam Santum. This controversial decree declared that the pope should have a voice in civil as well as religious affairs. This decree became known as the Doctrine of Two Swords. This decree angered the King of France, he forced the next pope to move the Papal court to France, this was known as the 70 yr. exile, this rule became known as the Doctrine of Two Swords, this exile helped cause the Great Schism in the church. This exile and this Doctrine of Two Swords is the wounded head spoken of in Rev. 13:3, later spoken of in V.14, wounded by the sword.

Then in the Reformation Period there was many changes which resulted in a better period and the wound was healed.

V4. And they worshiped the dragon which gave power unto the beast, and they worshiped the beast.

They worshiped this beast not only in a civil way, which they gave homage, obedience and tribute, but also in a religious way, for antichrist sits in the temple to be worshiped as God, showing himself that he is God, and receives praise from his creatures, cardinals priests and others. He had control and power over most everyone, and ruled with absolute power. His subjects believe that the pope is infallible in matters of faith and morals, which means that the pope cannot possibly commit a error when he speaks on matters of faith and morals. He claims divine assistance as the successor of St. Peter when he speaks on these subjects. (Any wonder God pictured him here as a beast).

V 7. It was given unto him to make war with the saints. This is a terrible thing to think about, just think of all the wars that have been fought known

or called the christian wars, for example look at the fighting between Britain and the IR Army. The remnant which God has set apart for himself, which Christ has cleansed from sin by his blood, and the Holy Spirit has sanctified by his grace, who by and under the influence of the Holy Spirit, live holy lives and conversations (1 Peter 1:14) against such Satan has always had a enmity (to sift as wheat). All this is permitted by God for the trial and faith of his people. This war of antichrist with the saints may be understood as not only spiritually but literally of his drawing the sword among them, fighting pitched battles. I could name many, murders, massacres and punishments of all kinds. Just one more here will be sufficient, the terrible slaying & suffering of the Jewish people at the holocaust. Still to come is the war with the two witnesses. Rev. 11:7

V8. All shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life.

The people of the world, the idolatrous part of it, they who came into the world and are of the earth, earthy, and who seek only after earthly pleasures and profits, these are they who admire and adore this beast, the ones whose names are not written in the book of life. By which book is meant God's predestination of men to eternal life, or his act of election. This is called the book of life and these names being written there from the foundation of the world, all this means is that God's election is eternal, it is not a act of time, nor is it depending on any act done in time, and it is of particular persons and not groups of men, of nations or churches. And still less of people who consider themselves wise and prudent among men. It is perfectly known of God, sure and certain in its effect, it is unchangeable and not liable to be revoked. For what is written in it, is written and will always stand. I feel I could just keep on writing on this subject, but not to be too lengthy I will say just one more thing. This is the Lamb's book, the election was made for him and given unto him from the very beginning. He gave His life to redeem all those from sin, the beast antichrist or anyone, or anything will never be victorious over one of these. The antichrist may take some of their natural lives but their souls salvation and eternal life is safe with the almighty God.

As we think of the things happening with the antichrist it seems terrible. But the sure promises of God is faith to the believers, both sure and steadfast.

VII. And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. This is really the same as the first, the same antichrist only in another form, the first beast is the Pope of Rome, at the head of the ten kingdoms, of which the Roman empire consisted, this other beast is the same Pope of Rome, with his clergy, cardinals, archbishop, bishops, priests etc. before he was pictured as a tempered monarch, now as a spiritual lord, as having the seat, power and authority of the dragon, of Rome Papacy, hav-

ing the attention and wonder of the whole world, putting fear into many, making war with the saints, ruling over all nations and tongues. Here in his saintly character, pretending great humility and holiness, showing signs and lying wonders, exercising tyranny and cruelty on all that will not profess his religion. That this is the same beast with the first in substance, though not in appearance, is seen from him exercising the same power, causing all to worship the first beast, or himself as a temporal lord, and by mention being made only of one beast at the close of this chapter, and his mark name and number being but one, nor is there any other but one hereafter spoken of in this book, either as ruling, or conquered as going into perdition or as cast into the lake of fire. This beast was seen as coming up out of the earth, out of a low place, a poor crawling earth worm. The history of the popes, cardinals and their religious orders have been very cruel, all led I believe by this man of sin who was rising up even at the apostles time, and has gradually rose on up to the power and authority he is here said to have.

These two horns extend the two parts of the empire, eastern and western, into which it was divided when this beast arose, and by which the Papacy was raised to its power, and the two supreme pontiffs, the bishop of Rome, and the bishop of Constantaple. And he spoke as the dragon, like the denial himself, affirming as he did that the power of disposing of the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them was given unto him, he spoke arrogantly as if he was above all that was called God, and as if he was God himself, he spake like the devil who was a murderer from the beginning, breathing out slaughter, and threatening against the saints, and he spoke lies in hypocrisy, blasphemies, and doctrines of devils. V.12 caused the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

Sitting in the same seat having the same power and authority from the dragon, making war with the saints by preaching and writings against them, by communications and rules, so overcome them or silenced them, or delivered them over to the secular body or government to be put to death, ruling over the conscience of men in a tyrannical way, in all nations, kindred and tongues in the empire, all this was done in the presence, and under the influence of the power of the Papacy, signified by the first beast and with his approval, credit and support, and causeth the earth and them that dwell therein, the Roman empire, and its inhabitants of it, especially the carnal minded to worship the first beast, to be subject to the power of the Papacy, or to submit to the pope as a temporal lord, give homage and tribute to him, to support his worldly power and grandeur, this was bought about by his emissaries, his legates, cardinals priests etc. by their persuasions and commands.

Whose deadly wound was healed, this wound was given the Roman empire, when it was divided by the

Schism started by the Doctrines of the Two Swords, and the Papal head (pope) was moved to France. This beast has given all these powers v.12 back to the Papacy head, therefore the wound is now healed. I would like to write more about the next few verses but this letter is too long now. I don't want to be worrisome. Just one thing about the mark in v.16, in their right hands or in their foreheads. I have no idea what these marks will be, but there are some marks spoken of which might be similar. There was a custom among the Romans of imprinting marks upon their servants and soldiers, by which they may be known to whom they belonged, servants had them in their foreheads, and soldiers in their hands, or the usage of the Jews in binding their phylacteries upon their arms and foreheads, to put them in mind of the law of God.

To sum up all I have written, this letter shows the wicked, sinful and awful mind and acts of the whole human race Jer. 17:9, the heart is deceitful above all things, who can know it?

Secondly - It shows the power and cruelty of the antichrist, and the many schemes and ways he uses to accomplish his plan or scheme.

Third - It shows above all else that God is still reigning in heaven and earth, He has declared the end from the beginning, and His counsel shall stand. Not one soul of the number he died to redeem will be lost to the scheming power and cruelty of the antichrist. Remember, faith is the anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. So may we be given to praise God, from whom all blessings flow.

Frank C. Hunt

VOICES OF THE PAST

GOD GLORIFIED

Sermon preached by John E. Hazelton (1853-1924).

Text: *"Now is the Son of Man Glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God be glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall straightway glorify Him" (John 13: 31, 32.)*

Our subject this morning is the triple glorification which comes through the sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. First of all, let us speak of the Son of Man glorified in and by His own sufferings; secondly, God glorified in the Son of-Man thus suffering;and thirdly, the Son of Man glorified by God on account of His sufferings.

Heaven is here, the whole gospel is here, amighty ocean is here,and at the best our tongues, as it were, are dumb before so great and glorious a subject. The Person of Christ is the living and divine centre round which the Holy Ghost carries on all His operations. Let slip *this truth,* and you will be like a vessel driven from its moorings, carried out into the watery waste without rudder or compass and, God in His mercy preventing not, destined to make shipwreck concerning the

faith. The Person of Christ is that on which we need to have light cast and power applied by God the Holy Ghost.

Let us speak just for a moment, in commencing, about the time or the hour when our blessed Lord uttered these words. They were spoken in the upper room at Jerusalem. The sun had gone down upon His public ministry for the last time; before the next day's sunset. His holy body would be resting in the new sepulchre of Joseph of Arimathea, which he had hewn in his own garden out of the rock. Less than twenty-four hours were to elapse, but how much was to be accomplished during the less than twenty-four hours- between these words and the solemn end! Gethsemane was to be entered into; Calvary was to be endured. Sin was to be put away, an end was to be made of transgression, everlasting righteousness was to be brought in, and a Triune God glorified through all eternity - less than twenty-four hours to suffice for the working out of these great and glorious- issues! O what a mighty Saviour we must have! How. glorious the dignity of His Person! May we get a glimpse of it this morning that we may each say, "He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely."

Judas had received the sop and had gone out into the night. His chill and polluting presence had been removed; a great and oppressive weight was taken from the hearts of that little company, and now our blessed Redeemer began to pour out His heart before His disciples. That upper room in Jerusalem, though the disciples so feebly apprehended it, was more glorious than the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle in the wilderness. There was the apartment, gold encased; there was the ark of the covenant and the mercy-seat; there was the Skekinah cloud raying forth its glory, and in the temple at least - taking possession of the whole building, so that the priests could not stand therein to minister. Here in this humble upper room, the perfection of beauty was shining. Here Jehovah the Son was raying forth His glory through the Manhood of our dear Redeemer.

And now, in the midst of His disciples, He begins to speak these great and wondrous words concerning His glorification. When Judas had departed, Jesus, said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified." This is a name which He alone applies unto Himself. No one else called Him the Son of Man. Ezekiel, during his ministry, was called by God "son of man," but our Lord speaks of Himself as the Son of Man, declaring thereby that He was not only the Man, not only the Son of Man, but that in a very special and peculiar way He stood apart from all other men, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and He declares here, "Now is the Son of Man glorified."

We should have thought these words would have been more appropriate at the time of His baptism, when the Father in heaven said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" But the assertion of glorification was not made then. We might have thought on the summit of the Mount of Transfiguration, when the

voice from heaven was heard, "This is My beloved Son, hear Him "that the utterance concerning glorification would have been made. But no, on the verge of Gethsemane, on the verge of Pilate's judgment hall, on the verge of the hearing before the high priest, on the verge of Calvary, the Lord declares the Son of Man is glorified.

What are we to understand by the glorification of the Son of Man? We will just touch upon our blessed Lord as the perfect Man glorified, as the representative Man glorified, as the God-Man glorified, as the predicted Man glorified. "Now as the Son glorified." I pray that here and now I may not preach to you about Christ, but that I may preach a precious Christ to you, and that everyone here, if it be the Lord's will, might be so occupied with the Person of Christ as to forget the wretched self which can only drag us down and keep us back.

The Lord calls Himself the Son of man because He is and was the perfect Man. Now you say, "Who is and what is the perfect man?" I should simply confuse your minds and darken counsel by words without knowledge if I spoke of successive qualifications or manifestations of character which prove our Lord to be the perfect Man. Here is the scriptural definition of the perfect man, and only the Son of Man answers unto it. The perfect man is the man who is in entire conformity to the mind and will of God. Everything is wrapped up here - entire conformity to the mind and the will of God. Where can you find the perfect man excepting the Son of Man, the Man Christ Jesus? The perfection of our blessed Lord's Manhood shone more resplendently as the portentous clouds of God's wrath and judgment rolled in upon Him. Yes, as those portentous clouds rolled in, the perfection of the Son of Man shone most resplendently. In the course of His previous ministry, He had said thy meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work." But now He is going down swiftly into the valley of the shadow of death; He is going down to Gethsemane, and to Calvary, and we see the most absolute conformity to the mind and to the will of God in the sufferings and death of our most blessed Lord.

The perfect Man! Here is the portrait of the perfect Man given by our blessed Lord Himself: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." The perfect Man is revealed to us here loving His Father with all His heart, mind and soul. The perfect-Man is revealed to us loving His neighbour as Himself fulfilling the first and second tables of the law. "Greater love," said our lord, hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." But our Lord laid down His life for His enemies. *"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."*

See Him prostrate in Gethsemane's garden! "Father!" is the cry. Hear Him in the thick darkness over Calvary's

cross: "My God! , "My God!" is the solemn cry. Hear Him,ere His blessed soul wings its way to Paradise; "Father, into Thy hands I commit My spirit." Here is and hereby is the Son of man as the perfect Man glorified. God demanded perfection, and the Christ of God, the Son of Man, made and satisified the perfection which God demanded.

The Son of Man! Not only is this title given to our Lord by Himself because of His perfection, but because He is and was the representative Man. The Son of Man! - now He is glorified. He came to be made liable to the penalty which was due to the guilt of His people. He came to be the Head of the church the Surety of those who were infinitely in debt unto God. He came to be the Substitute, the Perfect for the ruined; the Just for the unjust; God for the ungodly; O what a mighty, what a glorious salvation is this! "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." He came in accordance with the divine counsels. Be came in and by the "covenant ordered in all things and sure." He came as the representative of His church, charged with the salvation of the souls of men. The Son of Man as the representative Man is glorified. No stain upon His honour, no shadow upon his Person, no question with reguard to-the perfection of His work in its minutest details.

The God-Man is glorified. He is the Son of Man because He is the God-man. His human nature never existed apart from the divine. When His human nature was brought into being, at that very same instant it was united to the divine, never, never more to be sundered. The soul of our blessed Lord was the soul of the God-Man when He went to heaven. The body of our blessed Lord sleeping in the tomb was the body of the God-Man, waiting the season when He should rise triumphant from the dead.

The God-Man! O, was not His power manifested in the closing scenes of-His life? See that armed band meeting Him in Gethsemane! "Whom seek ye?" "Jesus of Nazareth." "I am He," and they went backward and fell to the ground. See Him looking at poor mistaken Peter when he, with his carnal zeal, cut of the ear of a servant of the high priest. The Lord touched the place and immediately Malchus, the high priest's servant, was healed.

The God-Man! When He gave up the ghost, the rocks rent, and the graves were opened. The Son of Man as the God-Man is glorified. Yet, if I may speak for myself, I think and conceive so inadequately concerning the glorious Person of the Christ of God.

The Son of Man is glorified as the predicted Man, predicted from Genesis to the last words of Malachi. Every prediction relating to the Son of Man in His ministry, in His birth,and in His sin-atoning death, He gloriously fulfilled. It is, to my mind, one of the most wonderful utterances of our blessed Lord upon the cross, when He said, "I thirst" Why did He not keep that feeling unexpressed? "That the Scripture might be fulfilled." The perdicted Man is glorified. Have you seen Him? Consider that dying thief

with his heaven-opened eye beholding in the central sufferer the Son of Man glorified. "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of (his) faith."

But I must not tarry. Next our Lord says,"God is glorified in Me." God glorified in the sufferings of the Christ of God. Now would not we naturally have said, God is glorified by the mighty angelic intelligences which He created in the day of their appearance; God is glorified in His calling into existence the visible universe? That is true;God is glorified in That. God is glorified In this sin-wasted world by the beauties of creation in the heavens and in the earth. Can we say, God is glorified in peopling the heavens with sinners who deserve hell, but who are raised to the very heights of bliss? Can we not say that God is glorified when here on earth little assemblies of His purchased people meet together; to praise and to pray? But our Lord speaks here entirely of His cross, of His sufferings, and of His death. Think of it! "God is glorified in Him" At the time, and at the place, when devils and men exerted all their power of inflicting suffering upon the Son of Man, God was glorified. At the very moment when the taunt of blasphemy was flung at Him, and the yell of infuriated malignity rose around the cross, God was glorified.

Why, we should say, apart from divine enlightenment, that at the cross there was the total eclipse of the glory of God. And yet the Lord says "God is glorified in Him."And the glorification exceeded the dishonour as the ocean exceeds a drop. The glorification of God in Christ at Calvary is immeasureable, infinite, and in accord with the dignity of the Person of Him who suffered bled, and died thereon.

Now let us ask how and why we come to this cardinal truth as the very foundation, that all the sufferings of the Son of Man, as glorifying to His Father, must have been expiatory; they must; have been vicarious and substitutionary. His sufferings were the sufferings of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; His sufferings in the human nature which He took by His own voluntary choice, as well as by the divine appointment of the Holy Trinity. On Calvary, in the glorification of His Father, there was the completion of His perfect obedience. But how did He glorify God? he glorified Him in His power, His wisdom, His righteousness, His faithfulness, and His benignity.

Think of the power of the divine anger against sin. When it streamed forth, Sodom and Gomorrah sank into the depths of the earth and are now covered by the Dead Sea! When God's anger against Sin streamed forth, the whole world was covered by a waste of waters, and all mankind - excepting those in the ark - perished from off the face of the earth. And here, focused upon the Person of the Christ of God, was all the guilt and all the sin of innumerable millons, and think you that He bore a weight to which in any degree could be compared the solemn judgments of God, even on Sodom and Gomorrah and the Flood? Behold in the Christ of God suffering in Gethsemane and at Calvary the

lighting down of God's own right arm upon our Surety and Substitute in the garden and upon the cross. Thus I see here the power of almighty God was glorified in what our Lord bore in Gethsemane and at Calvary by the Lord Jesus Christ, had He been merely a man, He could not have borne that which was laid upon Him from the manger to the cross. It is to me a wonderful truth that, that which pressed down the Lord in Gethsemane which caused Him to cry out at Calvary, "My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken me?" that, that weight would have destroyed the universe, because it was the weight of the whole of God's wrath and curse against the whole of the sin that was laid upon our blessed Redeemer. It would have shattered and destroyed the whole universe, just as God destroyed the face of the earth in the flood of waters in, Noah's day. But behold the power of God! Joseph Hart, with his usual insight and spiritual accuracy, says He

"Bore all incarnate God could bear,
With strength enough, and none to spare."

Look at Isaiah 50: "The Lord God will help Me"; the divine power was glorified in the sin-bearing of the Christ of God. His divine nature, His Father's divine power, upheld Him in that scene of solemn and transcendent suffering. He glorified the divine wisdom. Suffering adequate to the great need of salvation was secured and expressed by our great and blessed Lord. He honoured and glorified the righteousness and justice of God; hence Watts sings:

"Our thoughts are lost in reverent awe,
We love and we adore;
The first archangel never saw
So much of God before.

At the cross, whilst from one point of view darkness enveloped it, at the cross we dwell in the noontide of everlasting love where all the perfections of God were glorified - His power, His wisdom, His faithfulness, His benignity, His everlasting kindness. God is glorified in Him.

Lastly, the Son of Man glorified by God on account of His sufferings. Here is the third point. "If God be glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall straightway (immediately) glorify Him." Was not this the case when our blessed Lord said, "Father, into Thy hand I commit My spirit," and straightway the spirit of our Lord was in Paradise, taking with Him that of the dying? "Straightway shall He glorify Him," when early in the morning, on the first day of the week, our blessed Lord arose from the dead. Immediately, as the result and the reward of His sufferings.

We are not to take the word "if" as significant of any doubt. It stands for "since": "Since God be glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself." He hath passed into the heavens, He hath become the first fruits of them that sleep, He hath taken with

Him a sheaf of the first fruit in the bodies of those of His saints who were raised from the dead, and who came out of their graves - I believe - to accompany our Lord to heaven. All power is lodged in His hands, and the sovereignty and dominion of the whole universe shall yet be manifestly declared as that of the Christ of God. All fulness dwells in our precious Christ eternal life is in and from Him, and in the glory which the Lord has given to Him all His people shall share. There is a fulfillment of that blessed principle of divine covenant in perfection in our Lord's history, Him that honoureth Me I will honour, Jehovah-Jesus honoured Jehovah the Father and glorified every perfection, and now the Father saith, I'll have set My King upon My holy hill of Zion," and have committed all power and authority into His hands.

I close with this: the ground of a poor sinner's hope is alone the finished work of Christ. May God make this a comfort to some of you who are so hesitant and so full of doubt: He who sustained the weight of the divine glory may well sustain the weight of my poor soul. The Person and the finished work of Christ sustained and magnified the divine glory, and is there room for my poor soul on this foundation? There is room there for every willing soul. If you are a willing sinner, God has made you willing.

"Come and welcome, sinner, come!"

He who glorified God, He in whom God is glorified, He who has been lifted up on high can save me. That which satisfied God's justice can quiet all my fears.

"Love's redeeming work is done,
Come and welcome, sinner,
come!"

Is the desire of your heart that you may glorify our precious Christ in the fires of affliction? O it is well to have the desire that God may be glorified in the means of His grace, in my life by my death! Time is hastening onward; Jesus having overcome the sharpness of death, has "opened the Kingdom of heaven to all believers."

"O glorious hour, O blest abode.
We shall be near and like our God!
And flesh and sin no more control
The sacred pleasures of the. soul."

"O wretched man that I am !"— ROMANS vii. 24.

Now, these feelings which the Apostle groaned under are experienced by all the quickened family. Blessed then be the name of God most High, that he inspired him to trace out and leave upon record his experience, that we might derive comfort and relief from it. What should we otherwise have thought ? We should have reasoned thus: Here is an apostle perfectly holy, perpetually heavenly-minded, having nothing but the image of Christ in him, continually living to the Lord's glory, and unceasingly enjoying communion with him !

We should have viewed him as a perfect saint, if he had not told us what he was; and then, having viewed him as a perfect saint, we should have turned our desponding eyes into our own bosom, and seen such an awful contrast, that we should despair of ever being saved at all! But seeing the soul conflict which the Apostle passed through, and feeling a measure of the same in our own bosom, it encourages, supports, and leads the soul on to believe that this is the way in which the saints are called to travel, however rough, rugged, and perplexing it may be to them.

Be assured, then, if you have never cried out from the depths of your soul, " O wretched man that I am! " you are dead in sin, or dead in a profession. If internal guilt, misery, and condemnation never forced that cry from your bosom, depend upon it, the life and power of God is not in your soul. But if there has been, and still is, from time to time, this cry in your breast, forced out of it by the pressure of sin and guilt, you have a testimony that the same Lord who taught Paul is teaching you.

J.C. Philpot

"For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings. — JOB xxxiv. 21.

The Christian has to prove that nothing escapes the eye of a just and holy God; that he lays bare every secret thought, searches every hidden purpose, and scrutinizes every desire and every movement of the mind. He thus discovers and brings to light all the secret sins of the heart. Men in general take no notice of heart sins; if they can keep from sins in life, from open acts of immorality, they are satisfied. What passes in the chambers of imagery they neither see nor feel. Not so with the child of grace; he knows the experience described in Psalm cxxxix. He carries about with him the secret conviction that the eye of God reads every thought. Every inward movement of pride and self-righteousness, rebellion, discontent, peevishness, fretfulness, lust, and wantonness, he inwardly feels that the eye of God reads all, marks all, condemns by his righteous law all, and because he is so intrinsically pure, hates and abhors all. Thus he proves, amongst the " all things " which are weighed up and measured in the inward court of conscience by the unerring standard of the word of truth, the light of the Spirit's teaching, and the workings of godly fear, that he is a sinner before God, and that of a deeper dye and more crimson hue than any other transgressor, for he sees and knows his own heart, which nobody else can see or know. He is indeed aware that many may have sinned more deeply and grossly as regards outward acts; but he feels that no one can have sinned inwardly more foully and continually than he; and this makes him say with Job, " I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes" (Job xlii. 5, 6).

J.C. Philpot

VIRTUAL UNION VS. ACTUAL UNION

We have read some very labored articles which have been written against the doctrine of eternal, vital union of our Lord Jesus Christ and his mystical body, the church, in which the writers have attempted to draw a line between what they call a virtual eternal, and an actual eternal union, admitting the former, but denying the latter. Some of the less discerning of the saints have become perplexed, and we have been frequently called on to define the difference.

Before attempting to do so, we will remark, that every expression of Bible truth by which the church of the living God, which is the ground and pillar of the truth, is or ever has been distinguished from the world or anti-Christ has been assailed in the same sly and insidious manner. Predestination, election, special redemption, regeneration, final preservation of the saints in grace to glory, the resurrection of the dead, and ultimate glory of the heirs of salvation, have shared the same fate. Read to the Arminian, "Whom he (God) did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." &c. "Having predestinated us to the adoption of children," &c. "Him being delivered up, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Ah says he, I believe in predestination; but not in absolute predestination! Well, let us see: What kind of predestination can that be which is not absolute? Something like this. The Lord had a design, a purpose of a will to do certain things if men or devils would allow him to do so; but nothing in reality made certain by the counsel or predestination of God. This is in reality a flat denial of predestination into, yet is what predestination must be if it be not absolute.

We believe in election. O yes, says the self-conceited freewiller, certainly, I believe in election, but not eternal, sovereign, personal election. But that God chose to save all who would comply with certain terms, perform certain conditions, and make use of certain means. A man must be lamentably stupid who cannot perceive that this is a full denial of election altogether. Special redemption, yes, says Andrew Fuller, and all his motley echoes, we believe it is special in its design and in its effect, but general in its nature, so general that all sinners, if they are so disposed, can avail themselves of its full benefit. Thus professing to believe it to be special, deny its specialty, and rest its efficacy on the will of the creature, and thereby disallow the saving virtue of the blood of Christ. Regeneration. With one voice all the work-mongrel tribes of the earth agree, the sinner must be born again, but at the same time deny that the new birth brings forth anything that the sinner did not possess before the birth; no seminal preexistence of the life which the birth brings forth: no

begetting by the heavenly parent, but a mere change of purpose and pursuit, a new modeling of the carnal mind, and a new formation of the old man. Perhaps this may be a virtual, but not actual regeneration. All who are thus virtually born again, if such a thing could be, would present a race of fatherless children; bastards, and not sons. Perseverance is admitted, if they may be allowed to supply the conditions, if they hold out faithful, &c. Anything that will strip the crown from the head of Christ, and crown the sinner as his own savior, they seem very willing to admit. The resurrection is only admitted with such qualifications as either, it is past already, or that it does not mean what the Scriptures affirm, that "He that raised up Jesus from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwells in you.

We come now to our subject, and will inquire, What is meant by Eternal Vital Union?

2. Does such a Union Exist? And if so,

3. Is it Actual or Virtual?

By the term eternal, we mean that which was before all time. The word vital means life, and union is oneness identity as a unit.

What kind of life does God give to his people? Is it eternal, or is it only time-life? John says, "This is the record that God hath given us eternal life." 1 John v; and Jesus says, "I give to them eternal life," Many other express declarations of Scripture prove that the life given to the children of God is eternal, and consequently did as fully exist before they individually and experimentally received it, as afterwards. If it did not exist before it was implanted in us or communicated to us by the new birth, then why is it called eternal? The eternity of it is attested by the declaration that it was with the Father and was manifested. 1 John 1. This life is hid in God, those who receive it, receive by being begotten of his own will, and born of God. Not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. This vitality then is eternal vitality, or eternal life, which was with God, the Father, before it was manifested.

Having then settled by Scripture testimony the two points, namely, the life and its eternal character, we come to the word union in its connection with the term eternal, vital.

2. Did such an union exist. It seems almost like insulting the intelligence of the reader to ask, was this life a plurality, was it legions, or was it one life as it was with the Father before all worlds? Was it more than a unit, when given to us in Christ Jesus, according as we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world? If it was more than one life, perhaps some one can tell us how many lives it was, but if it was one and the self-same life as it originated in God the Father, and is hid in him, if it was but one and the same life as given to us in Christ Jesus before the world began, then the controversy on the subject or eternal vital union may cease for one of the two propositions must be admitted or the Bible rejected. To deny that a vital union, or a union of spiritual

vitality did so exist in eternity before all time, is rank infidelity, for God has so declared it. This life was and is and forever shall continue to be that which makes us one with Christ, as Christ is one with the Father, and that Christ and the church are identified in, is positively asserted by Christ himself. He is in them, they are in him. He also is in the Father, and the Father is in him, and so completely so that he that hath seen him, hath seen the Father also. And we ask, who has ever seen the Son, who hath not seen the church also? seeing that he is in the church, and the church is in him. He is the head, the church is his body; and does a head and its body make more than one man or person? "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ." 1 Cor. xii. 12. Then Christ the head, and his church with all her legitimate members, being many in membership, are but one unit in life or vitality. Christ says, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." If it be admitted that Christ is truly the life of the church, the true God and eternal life, then that same life which unites him the church as his body, unites his body, the church, to him as her head. If it be admitted that Christ is now today the head of the church, will they presume to say that he was not the head of his church yesterday? Dare any one deny the announcement of the Holy Ghost? "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and forever." Of course, when we speak of Christ in his oneness with and headship of the church as his body, we speak of him in his mediatorial character as the Son of God, and so revealed with power.

3. Is this union of oneness of life in Jesus Christ actual or only virtual? As neither of these words are used in the inspired writings in connection with the union of Christ and the church, we must depend upon our lexicons for their signification; Webster's Dictionary is the recognized standard of our language in the principal colleges of our country. His definition is: Actual 1. real or effective, or that exists in act; real; in opposition to speculative.

Virtually: In efficacy or effect only; by means of some other influence, or the instrumentality of something else.

According therefore to the established and acknowledged laws of our language, those who hold the doctrine of eternal, actual, vital union, believe that the life of the church of God is one life, and that it really, effectively, truly and absolutely did exist in eternity, before the world began, in a sense opposite to that of mere speculation.

While those who deny that it was actual, deny that it was real, or that it existed truly and absolutely, in a sense opposed to that which is only speculative. And those who deny that this union was actual before the world began, but admit that it was virtually existing in eternity, deny that it was really, truly or absolutely so, but in efficacy or effect only; and that efficacy or effect could only be developed or produced by the means or instrumentality of something else.

Now which of these positions, if either, do the Scriptures and the teaching of the Spirit in our experience establish? To us it is very clear that if this union of the life of the church in Jesus Christ existed in him before the world began, it was more than a speculation; than it was a reality. If it was not then a reality, a fact, what is there in the communication of that eternal life to us experimentally in the new birth, that can make the life what it was not before we were made to feel its power? But one will say, the word actual signifies an act or action. This Webster admits in a secondary sense, not in its primary signification. Well, be it so; are we not told that the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord? Does not the giving of a thing imply an act or an action? Certainly it does. Well, when was the act or action of giving us eternal life in Jesus Christ performed? We are told that God hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. Is eternal life a spiritual blessing? It certainly is not a mere temporal blessing, then it was actually given us in him before the foundation of the world. God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. The gift, not gifts of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord. It is given us in him, and through him it is in due time communicated to all the members of his body, when they pass from death unto life, are born again, and brought into the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God. If the work of the Spirit in the new birth is the action which makes this union actual, then we set aside the reality of grace given us in Christ before the world began, and instead of the gift of God is eternal life, we should read it, the gifts of God, there are as many distinct gifts as there are members in the body. And as the relationship of nearest of kin could not exist in reality before the life union existed, the consequence must be that when the Lord Jesus died for his members on the cross, we, who now live upon the earth, were not really, truly and absolutely so united with and related to him, as to allow us any part or lot in the atonement.

Much confusion prevails where brethren confound this vital union with our individual experience of it when brought into it. The union, spiritually, was as perfect before we were brought experimentally into the enjoyment of it, as it is now, or ever will be. But in our earthly, carnal, sinful nature, we had no union with Christ, but were children of wrath even as others; nay, we were dead in sins, and enmity against God, and enemies to him by wicked works. But although the holy law of God cursed us in the earthly Adam, yet for the great love wherewith he loved us in Christ Jesus, even when we were in ourselves, that is in our earthly nature, dead in sins, he hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in him, and thus by grace are we saved through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should

boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk therein.

We all know that our earthly nature is estranged from God, and in it we are strangers and foreigners, requiring to be redeemed from the earth, called by grace, quickened by the Spirit and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. This gift of God, which is eternal life, was not given us in the earthly Adam, neither was our earthly, carnal and corrupt nature given to us in Christ. The first Adam is of the earth, earthy and as is the earthy, such also are they that are earthy. But it was given us in the Son of God, which is the Lord from heaven: as is the heavenly, such also are they that are heavenly. Our natural birth develops us in the one life in which we were created in the earthly Adam, and a spiritual, new and heavenly birth, develops or makes manifest in us, experimentally that one life which was hid in God, and which is now made manifest by the appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.

In conclusion, we do not regard either the words actual or virtual as necessary, or they would have been supplied in the divine volume, but when men deny the reality of this eternal, vital union, or oneness of life, and say it is only virtual, or that it is not so in fact or in truth, we are compelled to resist them, and contend that it is an eternal reality.

Middletown, N.Y., March 1860.

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will meet at Dan River Church, the Lord willing, the 5th Sunday in March. Song service will begin at 10 a.m. and preaching at 10:30. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. We especially appreciate any ministers of our faith and order who have a mind to meet with us.

Elder Kenneth Key, Moderator
Brother Allen Carroll, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing the Staunton River Union will be held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in March. The song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

Directions: Turn off route 29 business onto Music Street (beside Amos Fine Foods in Gretna, VA) the church is approximately five miles at the intersection of Weatherford Road and Music Street.

We welcome all lovers of the truth to come and be with us .

Elder Raymond Goad - Moderator
Pam Betterton - Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 1996

Mrs. Mae Hudson, VA	$5.00
Mrs. Mammie Ferfuson, VA	2.00
Mrs. Elizabeth T. Helms, VA	7.00
Mrs. Ruby Hawley, VA	5.00
Mrs. Hazel A. Garland, MD	25.00
Lavene N. Pullig, LA	2.00
Walter Hill, NC	5.00
Mrs. Jane Carroll, AR	2.00
Mrs. Charles M. Lovell, VA	2.00
Tommy C. Wall, VA	7.00
Mrs. Walter Carr, Jr., AR	10.00
Mrs. Emmie L. Grayson, AL	2.00
Charles Alders, TX	12.00
Mrs. Garlon Vick, NC	7.00
Marvin Curnutt, TX	2.00
Mrs. Nellie M. Dalton, VA	2.00
Kenneth R. Adams, GA	12.00
Ms. Brenda Wright, NC	2.00
Cleo Underwood, VA	6.00

OBITUARIES

MRS. PAULINE KING HUTCHISON

It is with sorrow and a great feeling of loss as I write this obituary of Sister Pauline Hutchison, who was a faithful member of Durham Primitive Baptist Church. She loved the doctrine and enjoyed the fellowship of her brothers and sisters in the Church;often entertaining them in her home.

Sister Hutchison was born on November 19, 1920 in Franklin County of Virginia. She was the daughter of the late Thomas and Dorothy Jones King, and the widow of the late William (Tex) Hutchison Sr. She was preceded in death by a brother, Chester King.

She served in the Women's Army Corp in World War II and was later employed by Veteran Hospitals in Durham. North Carolina and in Florida.

The Lord called her home October 1, 1996. She is survived by one daughter, Phyllis Hutchison Andrews of Durham, North Carolina and one son Carl William Hutchison Jr. of Stockbridge, Georgia. Other survivors include six sisters Hattie Cannady of Bassett, Virginia; Ena Farrow of Callaway, Virginia; Edith De Hart of Rocky Mount, Virginia; Lula Holley of Floyd, Virginia; Mary Toler of Stewart, Virginia, Alpha Ramsey of Collinsville, Virginia and two brothers: Thomas Aaron King, of Climax, Virginia and Arthur Douglass King of Midlothian Virginia, four grandchildren and several nieces and nephews.

Memorial services were held at Hudson Funeral Home in Durham, North Carolina by Elders Cleo Robertson and Lane Carter. She was laid to rest in Oak Grove Memorial Gardens. We shall miss her but we feel she had a true hope in the Lord Jesus Christ and that our loss is her eternal gain.

An Unworthy Sister
Frances Brinkley

THE OBITUARY OF SISTER MARGARET MILLS PICKRAL

It is with a sad heart, but sweet memories that I attempt to write the obituary of Sister Margaret Mills Pickral. She was born August 3, 1905 - the daughter of James Mills and Martha Ragland Mills. She was married to Harry Edgar Pickral Sr. who predeceased her.

Sister Margaret was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by Experience and Baptism - September 14, 1952. She was a faithful member and attended services as long as her health permitted.

Sister Margaret passed from this life November 18, 1996. Those left to mourn her include; seven sons - H. Edgar Pickral Jr., Oscar Pickral, Judson Pickral and Charlie Pickral, all of Gretna, Va. Gerald Pickral, Bobby Pickral, and Reuben Pickral, all of Gretna, Va.; Three daughters Betty Rowles and Shirley Shelton of Gretna and Rebecca Shelton of Concord, Va.; thirty-three grandchildren, forty great-grandchildren; three step-great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild. She was predeceased by one child and two grandchildren.

Sister Margaret's funeral was conducted from Springfield Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder Marvin Brumfield. Her body was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park.

Sister Margaret will be sadly missed by all of us that loved her; but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. May God reconcile each and every heart to say, "Thy will be done."

Written in love and hope by
Carol R. Pickral

Moderator- Elder Marvin Brumfield
Clerk- Oscar D. Pickral

JOHN 6:28-35.

Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God; that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?

Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

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1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

A SONG OF PRAISE.

"Thou dear Redeemer, dying Lamb,
Thou great Jehovah, great I AM,
We love to hear of thee, dear Lord,
And listen to thy sacred word.

No music's like thy charming name—
It puts us in ecstatic frame;
Not half so sweet can aught else be;
O let us ever hear of thee.

O let us ever hear thy voice,
And in our hearts we will rejoice;
In mercy let us hear thee speak,
And thy dear face we then shall seek.

And in our Priest we will rejoice,
When we shall hear his glorious voice.
Thou great Melchisedec, to thee
Let all our adoration be.

Our Jesus shall be still our theme—
'Tis he that wrought salvation's scheme;
While in this sinful world we stay,
We'll praise our Jesus every day.

We'll sing our Jesus' lovely name,
By whom our great salvation came,
And when all other things decay,
Thy glorious name shall be our stay.

When we appear in yonder cloud,
And trumpet sounds both long and loud,
We'll join with all thy favored throng,
And sing the everlasting song.

There we shall sing both loud and sweet,
When we shall our Redeemer meet;
We'll join with all the blood-bought throng,
And Jesus Christ shall be our song."

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EDITORIAL

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

So God created man in his own image: in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, and all the hosts of them, he created man in his own image and gave him dominion over every living thing that moved upon the face of the earth. He told man to go forth and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it. This was done in the sixth day of Creation, after everything else was created. The days of creation were very special days, there have been none like them since, for they encompassed everything that would happen here in time. God created one man, Adam, in his own image and likeness, and that one man embodied every man and woman that will ever exist; there have been none created since and so it was with everything that was created. The things created in the beginning either still exist as they were created (sun, moon, stars, land, sea, heavens etc.) and still fulfill the commands given them at that time, in the world today; or the originals procreate according to God's command (plants, animals, fishes, creeping things, fowls of the air and man). All men came through and from Adam, even Eve, for she was formed from a rib taken from him. Since that time, in the days of formation according to the normal plan of God, each succeeding generation is born into the world to file their allotted place in the plan of God: the sun, moon, stars etc are still functioning per that plan today, but, nothing else has been created; all are but a continuation of the original creation.

Now the question arises, are all men in the image of God, and if so, in what way; what characteristics and qualities must they possess to be in the image of God. God is not flesh and bone as Adam was so, in what sense is he in the image of God. God is a spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth: so

if God is a spirit, then to be in his image they must be spiritual also. Were they created this way, and if so, when and how were they changed into man as he is in the world today.

With God, one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years are as one day, because with him it is one eternal now: the day of our birth and the day of our death are ever present before him. The things created in the days of Creation were not in the same chronological order as they were manifested in the days of formation. All things that were created in the six days of creation and God saw everything that he had made and behold it was very good: remember this encompassed everything: they were there in the things created but had not as of that time been made manifest. God rested the seventh day and there was none of his creation physically in existence: they were manifest in the world in the days of formation and this was not in the same order of their creation. The man was created on the sixth day of creation, after everything else, and yet in the days of formation man was created first: then was planted the garden with the trees herbs, grasses etc. And man was put in the garden to dress it and keep it. God then commanded the man saying of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but, of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. God then said it is not good that man should be alone; I will make an help meet for him; and then out of the ground God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air and brought them to Adam and he named them. Still there was not found an help meet for Adam. The Lord caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he took a rib from his side and made woman. And brought here to Adam as his help meet. In the days of creation it states Gen. 1 vs. 27, *"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him: male and female created he them."* As though it was one action and yet many things occurred between the formation of Adam and Eve physically. The point being made here is that all things were not formed in the same sequence as created, so, again we come to the question of: were all men created in the image of God, and if so, how and when did it happen in the days of formation.

In the fall of man in the garden of Eden judgement was passed upon Adam, Eve and the serpent for their involvement in the sin that occurred when man, Adam and Eve, partook of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God had told Adam that he should not eat of this tree, for in the day that he did that he would surely die, and die he did. God created man in his image and likeness and when he viewed all of his creation he pronounced that it was very good, so man was created in the image of God and knew nothing but good, peace and harmony: he walked and talked with God and had a world created for him to enjoy the fruits of; had no sin, sickness, sorrows or trials such as so common to the natural man in the

world today. When evil entered into the garden of Eden it brought death to Adam and Eve and the world as they had known. They died to the innocence they knew and dwelling in the presence of God. They were alienated from this world of peace and driven from the garden of Eden: no longer in the image and likeness of God, but rather given coats of skin, their earthly garb, more in the image of the serpent into whose kingdom they were consigned to dwell. They were marred as the vessel in the hands of the potter who wrought a work on the wheel.

The judgement that was pronounced on the serpent was that he was cursed above every beast of the field, upon his belly he would go and dust should he eat all the days of his life. His kingdom would be the earth, earthy and his dominion would be over the flesh and the natural world into which he was to dwell with the man, driven from the garden of Eden. Enmity was placed between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman, his seed would bruise the heel of the seed of the woman and her seed would bruise the head of the seed of the serpent: the seed of the woman being those promised by God in the sixth day of Creation, and the seed of the serpent being those who were brought into existence when the sorrows and conception of the woman were greatly multiplied because of her succumbing to the lies of satan and not obeying the command of God. They are of their father the devil and never had any portion in the heritage of the seed of the woman, who is the mother of all living. This establishes the bounds of habitation of men on the earth, separates the elect from the non elect, and although they share many characteristics, features and similarities they can no more change their classification than a leopard can change his spots. They were designed to fill a certain requirement in the plan of God, and they shall fulfil their calling, the same as all the rest of God's creation.

The Lord said, *"My spirit shall not always strive with man, for he also is flesh,"* that characteristic which was given man when driven from the garden of Eden to dwell on the earth; those qualities that he did not possess in the garden of Eden and dwelt in the presence of God and talked with him. God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually, and it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. Surely, man in this state is not in the image of God.

The Lord said he would destroy the man he had created, both beast, creeping thing and the fowl of the air, but, because of his promise to the seed of the woman, that they would bruise the head of the seed of the serpent, Noah, a representative of that seed found grace in the eyes of the Lord and a remnant was spared to continue the human race and bring to reality the fulfillment of the promise. Although God did not destroy all men, the wickedness that was characteristic of the man in the flesh continued and he was

still alienated from God, could not commune with God as in the garden of Eden and the cherubim and the flaming sword still kept the way of the tree of life. The man in this estate did not know God and was not aware of him except as he revealed himself to him or spoke to him through the prophets; chosen of God for this purpose. Man in nature is still in this same condition today and must wait on the Lord to extend grace and mercy to him before he can know him, and make manifest his goodly heritage.

God has always had, in every age of the world a few scattered people among the nations of the world that he chose before time began to be a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation and a peculiar people that they should show forth the praises of him who called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. Abraham Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses and many others down through time were representatives of this people and a manifestation that God was remembering his promises and preserving a remnant to show forth his praise in the earth. God gave them a law to govern and control their lives and to judge them regarding their obedience and their allegiance to him as their guide and their God; a standard to be used to measure and make manifest the hearts of the children of Israel regarding their faith and love for him. They have always been an afflicted and poor people in the eyes of the world, but, they are the reason for all things; the world was created for their sake, to manifest the omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, grace, love and mercy of God for them, that they should worship him in spirit and in truth for his indescribable gift of salvation in the sacrifice of his only begotten Son. The reason that God gives unto Israel is, Deut. 7 vs. 6,7,8. ***"For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he hath sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt."*** This applies to all of God's people in all ages of time, he formed them for himself and called them by name, not just an open invitation to whom it may concern, as the world teaches.

The prophets down through the corridor of time have been given to write and prophecy of a time in the latter days when a prophet liken unto them, God would raise up and to him would the people be gathered, and to him they should hearken. God said he would put his words in his mouth, and he would speak unto the people all that he had commanded him. He would bear their sins, be afflicted in all their afflictions and the Angel of his presence would save them; in his love and

in his pity he would redeem them and bare them and carry them all their days. This was cause for great hope, to look to a time in which a sacrifice would be made one time that would put away their sins forever, not just a remembrance again of their sinful and undone condition. They were told of a day in which God would make with them a new covenant, not like the one under which they were living; a covenant whereby God would put his law in their inward parts and write it in their heart. No longer would man teach man, but God would put in each one's heart to know him, from the least of them unto the greatest of them; getting back to the way it was in the beginning where they communed with God without an earthly priest and their sins and their iniquities would not separate them from God and they would partake of the tree of life freely.

Dan. 12 vs. 1 *"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book."* This refers to the prophet that is to come, the one to whom the people are to be gathered and to whom God said they were to hearken. This is the Lord Jesus Christ; man in the image of God. A man to whom God gave his spirit without measure: the Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into his hand. A man whose mother is a woman in the flesh but whose father is the Holy Ghost: in the image of God and equal with God, who gives eternal life unto all that the Father had given him.

The Apostle Paul writing of the Jews under the law II Cor. 3 vs. 14-18 *"But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament: which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart."* This is the condition of man in the flesh, and he is certainly not in the image of God: he cannot see and understand the law and cannot keep it because of the weakness of the flesh. This is, always has been and will continue to be the condition of the natural man, he is an alien from God and anything godly or spiritual: they are foolishness to him neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned. *"Nevertheless when they shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed unto the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord."*

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of

sinful flesh and for sin condemned sin in the flesh and gave to the heirs of promise a portion of that Spirit which is the image of God. In as much as they receive of the Spirit of God in the new birth that new, creature in Christ, is in the image of God. The way of the tree of life has not been violated because it is reserved for the godly and this vain fleshly creature does not have access to it; only the new man which is renewed, after the image of him that created him, can partake of the tree of life. The Cherub and flaming sword were placed there to keep the way of the tree of life for those for whom it was created, only those who are in the image of God: and not as the man who was driven from the garden in the image of the gods of this world whose heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. All of these things happened here in this time world and the world knew it not: Eyes they have but cannot see, ears but cannot hear and hearts but cannot understand the mysteries of the kingdom of God. For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. The world has the inspired word of God, but not the inspiration by which it must be translated: this is a gift from God, given only to those chosen few who were ordained to eternal life before the foundation of the world. They are the only ones who are able to understand the mystery of the kingdom and the only ones to whom the knowledge of the mystery is revealed.

When you greet a brother with a handshake or an embrace and your heart leaps for joy at the love and fellowship that you have for one another, you are beholding Christ in them the hope of glory: you are seeing in them the image of God. You behold that inner man which is your brother and you are raised up and blessed together in heavenly places. Have you ever looked at a brother who you love very dearly, the natural man, that is, and just thought that is not what I see when we meet and enjoy such sweet communion together in the Spirit; that's where and when man is in the image of God, in eyes and hearts of the believer.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

PROVERBS 7:1-3.

My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee.

Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye.

Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart.

QUERIES & ANSWERS

QUERY:

"Why are there no Sunday schools or activities for children?"

ANSWER:

Sunday schools were begun about 1781 by Robert Raikes in Glochester, England, for the purpose of teaching children of poor parents in manufacturing towns to read. Since that time, Sunday schools evolved into religious schools with the purpose of saving souls or teaching young people about Christ. We have no objection to education. In fact, we encourage it. However, we do object to the efforts to educate young people to know Christ. Hebrews 8:10-11, ***"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."***

There is no scriptural basis for schools to teach people, young or old, to know the Lord. There were children in the time of Christ and the apostles, but no where does the scripture set forth any schools. Christ said, ***"Suffer the little children to come unto me."***

Sunday schools make no allowance for the Holy Ghost. St. John 14:26, ***"But the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I said unto you."***

Paul was highly educated; and before his conversion on the road to Damascus, he was taught "religion" by Gamaliel. What did it profit him? He went about binding and casting into prison the saints of God thinking he was doing the service of God. Then, he was brought down and thoroughly taught by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit showed Paul that he was a sinner by nature and by practice. It showed him what he must be by the grace of God.

We provide no entertainment or activity to entice people to come to our church. We believe the Lord will give his people a desire to come to hear the gospel and to worship him. We welcome the very young as well as the very old. Some of my fondest memories are sitting upon my mother's lap in church. I never forgot the old elders who preached and a lot of the people. I did not understand the preaching, but it made a lasting impression. I appreciate the parents who bring their young children to church and hope they feel welcome to do so.

Love in Christ,
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ARTICLES

TO: Brethren of Hope in Christ:

Correspondence has been received in recent weeks at this address concerning controversies among Primitive Baptist brethren. Upon examining the content of the letters it appears that serious errors in doctrine and practice together with personal offences of the kind that have been observed elsewhere before have now arisen again. Let us acknowledge that TRUTH when stated with clarity does not sow discord among God's children. As I attempt this writing I pray that God will grant me the prayer recorded in Psalms 19, verses 13 and 14, which I commend for all.

The controversy has spilled beyond the case of a brother against brother offence to include errors among multiple churches of sister associations. Thus one is compelled to question whether compliance with the rule of Matthew 18 can possibly bring a satisfactory resolution, pleasing to God, with the required unity of the Spirit, with peace, and with heartfelt love continuing among all of God's children among the associations and full denomination.

The correspondence was needed for "whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it--". As secrets belong to God and not to men, all churches of our denomination whose believers we hope have a place in the mystical body of Christ should all have knowledge of the suffering. But woe to any who would deal treacherously or witness falsely.

Issues of doctrine, of decorum and of church government are seen in the controversy. Reference is seen in the letters to belief in "the Primitive Baptist Doctrine." We hope the writer means belief rather than doctrine. There is but one God, one gospel, and one doctrine - that of our Lord and Saviour, the Christ. For many years, even generations, members, pastors, and entire churches and associations have stood divided on certain doctrinal issues including those seen in this case. Tragically, ancient landmarks have been cast to the wayside through intent or neglect so that today the denomination does not publish or adhere to a universally accepted confession of faith. Primitive Baptists have no written form in detail of the governments required by God, (I Cor. 12:28). Contrary to the cries of the guilty opposing the rules of men, a body of such rules is essential not, God forbid, for doctrine but for decency and order in the administration of the churches and associations; indeed for the full denomination.

In our experience we have observed that when trouble erupts, some will say "It is your problem--I will not get involved" or they may say "We must not judge;" but some may still proclaim their love. Associations refuse, when in session, to reveal the controversy or seat the messengers sent by the afflicted church or corresponding association. Such a course is proper if the transgression is one of a

personal nature as the rule of Matthew 18 applies. However, if the error is one of fundamental doctrine or basic to the order and practice of the denomination such an attitude is hardly in keeping with the spirit of the Good Samaritan. Should brethren pass by to the other side to avoid the tribulations that we are promised? There is a solemn church covenant for members and churches. Candidates that reject or violate the solemn covenant should not be accepted or retained in church membership.

Saints shall judge the world and matters that pertain to this life (note: the word is shall, not may, or maybe, nor suit yourself I Cor. 6:2-5). Dear Reader, please read Chapter 59 of Isaiah and note in particular that in verse 15 that it displeased the Lord "that there was no judgment." Also it may be profitable to again re-read the Book of Lamentations. At Chapter 5, verse 14 one finds that the ruling *"elders have ceased from the gate"* where judgments were normally rendered.

So, how is judgment rendered? Simply stated, from the scriptures, judge righteous judgment, decently and in an orderly wav, without respect to Persons! For issues of doctrine and church practice where shall judgment take place and who shall judge? The entire denomination cannot assemble at one place therefore some fewer persons (but a sufficient number to be a "multitude for safety") must assemble at an appropriate location.

"If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church" I Cor. 6:4. Remembering from the scriptures that things lawful may not be expedient, let us consider who are the least esteemed? Are the least esteemed pastors, deacons, or some class of members? We submit for your consideration that in the minds of men the least esteemed was and is Jesus, who was spit upon and crucified, but he is at the right hand of the Father though residing in the hearts of every child of God. Thus judgment must be from the depths of the hearts of born again new men and not from the minds of the old carnal man. Avoid novices. Seek wise members knowledgeable of the gospel, firm and faithful.

How shall Primitive Baptists proceed toward a judgment? For a pastor, a deacon, or any member to *"do what seems right in his own eyes"* is unacceptable for it is written that *"the way of a fool is right in his own eyes," Prov. 12:15* and if we know anything *"we know only in part," I Cor. 13:9-13 and 8:2.* Many profitable expressions of wisdom are in the Book of Proverbs. Some examples for Primitive Baptists are:

- *" Where there is no vision, the people perish —."*
- *" Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established."*
- *" Every purpose is established by counsel —."*
- *" Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety," and*

- ***"For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in a multitude of counsellors there is safety."*** Can Old Baptists survive without continuing deliberations of wise counsellors?

In the Providence of God, no doubt, He will provide counsellors according to His purpose - not our purpose. The scripture provides examples for our instruction and guidance. The council of the great Sanhedrin was necessary to condemn Jesus that He be crucified and shed blood without which there can be no remission of sins or salvation. Another council, more appropriate for current consideration, is recorded in Acts 15. That council was necessary for rendering judgment of the dispute raging at Antioch, a dispute that was of a doctrinal nature. It was antagonistic to the gospel of our Lord Jesus. Brethren, the scripture does provide the needful procedure for judgment of the disputes that are not unique as they appear elsewhere and have caused tribulation and destruction to the Primitive churches and denomination in the past.

The procedure of Acts 15 requires some further understanding which we pray the Lord will supply. The church at Antioch sent Paul and Barnabas as messengers with the question to the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. The apostles and elders, assembled in one accord, after much disputing and consideration of the matter by counselling together obtained a judgment that was prepared in written form of "letters" addressed to brethren of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. Dear Reader - why Syria and Cilicia? The record does not show that the matter was disputed in Syria or in Cilicia. After the epistle (judgment) was delivered by return messengers to Antioch, the reading thereof was received with rejoicing. Later Paul went through Syria and Cilicia confirming the churches, to establish doctrine and unity of belief.

Of course, the council at Jerusalem cannot be precisely duplicated in this the last times. The unique authority and work of the apostles is over as is evident from The Revelation, Chapter 22, verses 18 and 19. St. John the Divine was the apostle set in God's Church who was the last to die. The task is left to "elders" of the denomination. But "elders" is not a precise designation for there are brethren who are elders by virtue of advanced age, there are elders who are pastors, there are elders who are ordained in the church, there are appointed elders; and evidently there are ruling elders as well as ministerial or teaching elders, for the scripture saith ***"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine,"*** so that all elders do not labour in the ministry but some have gifts for ruling which was practiced in the Old Testament. (Ruth 4, Num. 11:16-17, Deut. 16:18, Is. 1:26, Rom. 12:6-8, I Cor. 12:4-6.)

Why has God forsaken Old School and Primitive Baptist churches that there should be so many divisions, that the cords of brotherly love have

been and are so easily broken with so much apathy displayed when members and pastors behave irrationally or stupidly? Should anyone wonder that the flock should be scattered and not prosper (see Jer. Chap. 10) or that there should be destruction and desolation across the land, (Book of Lamentations)?

(Dear Readers, please do not attribute this commentary to sarcasm or malice for the writer is deeply concerned. You may examine the catalog of associations, churches, and membership as recorded in Church History by C.B. and S. Hassel with the state of our Baptist denomination today to see the dramatic departure and desolation. Here in the Northeast of our nation, in this century, final destruction has come to seven once prominent and prosperous associations. In our personal experience we have observed the final destruction of three associations where the very same errors and controversies of this case were contributing factors then.)

God's purpose is not for us to challenge or take issue with, for He is God and we are mere creatures of the dust lacking any merit for His consideration or notice. His specific purpose in this case is beyond our discovery; yet, if we are blessed with wisdom and understanding, we should find our every need supplied for our instruction in His written Word. The apostles have commanded us to search the scriptures, prove all things, quench not the Spirit, and pray without ceasing.

A portion of God's people that we believe to be the elect family will through Jesus glorify God's grace - the remainder will finally glorify His justice, wrath, and vengeance. Let us pray that our churches and denomination glorify His grace.

God sends the good - should He not also send evil? He has created the wicked for the day of evil and a waster to destroy. He grants mercy to whom He will and He will have vengeance on whom He will. The blessings and mercies that He has given to David do not entitle any person professing religion to sin likewise, for all are guilty and deserve God's wrath. God forbid that any Old Baptist would dare to cite David's sins as an excuse for their own, expecting forgiveness.

As Christ dwells by faith in the heart of each and every child of God and as all of God's children, collectively, dwell in the body of Christ there is a most intimate union, bond, and communion with God. God does hear the cries of His children. The Word of God reveals in many passages of scripture that there are specific things, persons, deeds and doctrines that the Lord hates and that they are an abomination to Him. We find that thou shall not bring an abomination into thy house lest thou shall be a cursed thing like it, but that thou shall utterly detest and abhor it. Dear Reader, how can this sacred union and communion with God exist if a member, a pastor, or a church assembly adopts, encourages, or continues that which God hates? Shall we declare evil

good? (Deut. 7:26; Jer. 7:30-35; Rev. 21:27.)

How, dear Reader, can it be that a congregation believed, in the minds of men, to be a true militant church of God fall into a state of error and apostasy? God does not manifest His Spirit continually in our hearts, indeed, according to His purpose and time, He leaves us to our own lust (even whole nations are left to their lust)--to the temptations of the flesh and Satan. "Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe unto that man by whom the offence cometh!"

(Luke 17:1-2.) "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." (I Cor. 11:18-19.)

If it please the Lord let us critically examine that which the Spirit revealed to the churches in The Revelation, chapters 2 and 3, concerning error:

1. To Ephesus:

- Men were taking the honour of the ministry unto themselves falsely claiming to be apostles when they had not been called or sent by God.

- The first love, i.e., the love of God with all of the heart, soul, and mind had declined.

- The church failed to do the first works which is to use the keys of the kingdom to establish an organized assembly and an orderly church in accord with Matt. 16:19, I Cor. 12:28 and Eph. 4:11-12.

- False practice has entered the church with "deeds" hated by God.

2. To Smyrna:

- Persons of the congregation falsely claiming to be Jews seek a return to the ceremonial sacrifices as performed by a high priest (today a pope for a denomination or little popes as "lords" over local churches). The practice of Judaism was abolished under the gospel as the veil of the temple was rent from top to bottom. The gifts of individual priesthood and ministry as witnesses of God's grace were bestowed upon every child of God to permit direct access to God by personal prayer. (Matt. 27:51, I Pet. 2:5,9, Rev. 1:6.

- Denial of the Trinity. The Messiah is yet to come.

3. To Pergamos:

- Here the congregation, still claiming the name of the Lord,
has been conformed to the world in the form of national religions sanctioned by civil authority, men and Satan being glorified in ceremonies of the heathen, great buildings and art.

- False doctrines hated by God now follow the "deeds" of false pastors also hated by God. The doctrine of Balaam and the (Arminian) doctrine of men's equity in works for salvation are false.

4. To Thyatira:

- Toleration is advocated by the denomination and its allied churches for acceptance of fornication, adultery, and the teaching of idolatry.

5. To Sardis:

- The full counsel of God that the ministry had received and heard is no longer taught to edify and strengthen the weak brethren although the church

claims the name of God. Ancient landmarks have fallen out of use.

6. To Philadelphia:

- Some persons of the congregation lie, claiming to be Jews. They would deny God's grace and love for His elect among the Gentiles and the lost tribes of Israel. All Israel is not of Israel.

7. To Laodicea:

- Religious zeal has departed from the congregation of the church - the lukewarm membership has become passive and apathetic; they are blind and cannot see that they are spiritually naked; they have rejected knowledge and have no knowledge of God. God has given them pastors that are like themselves, thus the assembly through self-righteousness is made at ease believing they are rich in grace and have no need of anything; therefore why pray or sacrifice praise and thanksgiving to God? (Hos., chap 4) The fear of the Lord is absent at Laodicea.

The counsel of the Lord to the seven churches was to buy of Him gold (which I believe to be the grace of faith tried in the furnace of affliction), white raiment for clothing to hide their spiritual nakedness (which I believe is the righteousness of Jesus), and eyesalve for opening the eyes to see (which I believe is the work of the Holy Spirit). The purchase price is paid from the depths of the heart given in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving - all to the glory of God. In the counsel of the Lord each of the seven churches were commanded to repent and overcome the errors among them. God knows the need of His adopted children. He will give strength and power to His children in churches that He has planted. He will supply enough to fit their allotted burdens and tribulaltions so that they shall overcome. But woe be to any that go down to Egypt (to the world) for help.

In the counsel of the Lord, (Rev. 3:19) "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.."

The Holy Spirit has revealed the "deeds" that the Lord hates in many verses and chapters of the Bible. Seven of the abominations that the Lord hates are recorded in Proverbs 6:16-19, in such clear language that no interpretation is needed. They should be firmly bound in every heart for they offer wise guidance for judgment of every aspect of human conduct.

Most often we think of marriage as the union of a man and a woman. But there are other marriages. There is the Marriage of the Church Triumphant to Jesus, the Son of God in glory, a marriage of eternal union before time "when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy! (Job 38:7) There are marriages of children of God to militant churches here in the low ground of sin and sorrow. There is a solemn covenant of sacred vows in all of these marriages. I fear we rarely see a display or a reading of the Church Covenant as adopted by the brethren. Do candidates for church membership accept the Covenant?

"Where thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for He hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou has vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow; than that thou shouldest vow and not pay." (Eccl. 5:4-5) Men and women who would contemplate violating their sacred vows would do well to heed Prov. 5, 15-23. Any who would deal treacherously with their covenant vows or their spouse would do well to heed Malachi, chapter 2, for the Lord, the God of Israel, hateth putting away.

Saints of God, you who worship under the names of Old School or Primitive Baptists, awake. Heed the words of Jesus recorded in Mark, chapter 3 (also see Matthew, chapter 12:25). If a kingdom (a denomination) be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house (a church of militant denomination) be divided against itself, that house cannot stand. Be aware, dear Saints, of the prophecy of Amos, chapter 8, that:

"—the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.

And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it."

Dear Reader, this commentary, like our prior writings on divisions, published in the Signs of Sept. 1994, is not the product of multiple counsellors. My desire to stir the pure minds of brethren (to seek, to judge, and to reach a unity of purpose for our churches and denomination) may be presumptive of me.

I would prefer to read the writings of unified brethren. As I may have despitefully used a brother by errors among these writings, pray for me. *"Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old."*

Cry unto the Lord for help in days of trouble. Praise God, Him alone, for every blessing!!

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ST. JOHN 6:51-58.

I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?

Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I wi11 raise him up at the last day.

For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

VOICES OF THE PAST

REMARKS ON REVELATION 13:8

"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

With much fear and trembling, we venture to write such views as we have on the subject proposed for our consideration; not however, because we must necessarily cross and controvert the expositions which have been given by the learned and the great who have been admired by the literary and religious world, nor yet because we are conscious that our views will subject us to the reproach and ridicule of ungodly men; but because the subject is deep and mysterious, as well as grand and sublime. We have never attempted to explain the dark imagery presented in the visions of John upon the Isle of Patmos without feeling an unusual sense of our littleness, while amazed at the awful grandeur therein embodied. No amount of study, no application of the intellectual powers of the human mind can ever approximate a solution of the things set forth in the vision, any farther than they are opened to our understanding by him who alone of all in heaven or on earth was able to take the book, and open the seals thereof.

Before entering upon the immediate subject of the text, we call the attention of our readers to the demonstration in this book of the Omniscient wisdom and irrevocable purposes of Almighty God, both of which we are compelled to admit, or failing to admit, we must reject the whole book of Revelation as a heaven-inspired record of the truth of God. Were it possible that any event in the future, however distant or complicated, was hidden from the Omniscience of Jehovah, this vision could not be relied on as setting forth things which should certainly come to pass in the precise and exact order indicated by the striking figures which John saw, and interpretations given him by the angel of the Lord. And were not the whole chain of events foreshadowed in this book, absolutely ordained by him who has declared the end from the beginning, saying, ***"My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure,"*** it could not have been with certainty declared hundreds of years in advance, what should, or what should not come to pass.

Let the reader then decide at once whether he will reject this book as a revelation from God -- as its name and title claims -- or admit that God has settled in his purpose and decrees, unalterably and forever, all the events which are here declared should be fulfilled both in the history of the church and people of God, and in the development of the man of sin, the son of perdition, that wicked one, whose coming is after the working of Satan -- with all signs and lying wonders, and all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish.

The exact limits set to every development of anti-christ, whether, as the great red dragon; the beast that rose out of the sea; the beast that rose out of the earth; the image of the beast; the scarlet colored beast; the mistress of abominations on whose forehead is indelibly written, Mystery, Babylon the great, the Mother of Harlots and abominations of the earth, assigning to each of these characters their exact rise, career, duration, and final overthrow. Showing with the minutest accuracy exactly when and to what extent they should annoy, worry, persecute, or slaughter the saints of God; and by what signal displays of Almighty power God would preserve his church in the face of all the combined powers of wicked men and devils, and curb, restrain, and finally destroy all the elements of opposition, and finally bring his bride elect in triumph to the skies. How exceedingly limited are the views of those who hold that God's purpose and decrees, his wisdom, government and ordination, embrace only the good actions of men; when it is expressly written, ***"There is none that doeth good; no, not one."*** How truly it is written, ***"The fool hath said, There is no God."*** We cannot admit his being and deny that he reigns in the armies of heaven and over all the inhabitants of earth. If his government and foreordination does not set bounds to the wicked actions of men and devils -- how shall we read our text? Almost two thousand years ago God gave this very revelation to Jesus Christ, as Head of the church, to show unto his servants, and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John; and commanded John to write it in a book for the use of his churches. The text does not read as though the things declared were unsettled, unfixed, or uncertain. The immutable God by his angel signifies to John, (see Chapter 1:1,2) ***"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."*** Is it possible to deny the foreordination of God and admit the truth of the text? Or is it possible to deny the truth of this text without making him a liar who sent and signified it to John?

First -- In offering some remarks on the text we propose to notice briefly the character or thing that shall be worshiped.

Second -- The people and their locality who shall worship him.

Third -- The clearly implied reservation of a remnant according to the election of grace, who shall not worship him.

Fourth -- The obvious reason why they shall not worship him; their names being written in the Book of Life, etc.

Fifth -- Some testimony of the Lamb-his Book of Life, and in what sense the Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world.

First -- The character or thing that shall be worshiped. To it the personal pronoun him is applied in our text. The antecedent to this pronoun is unmistakably given in the context, as the beast which John saw rise up

out of the sea, when he stood upon the sand of the sea, and which he describes as having seven heads, and ten horns. Thus far his description is similar to that of the great red dragon mentioned in the preceding chapter, and which gave to this sea-monster his seat and power and great authority. The dragon, however, had his seven crowns upon his heads, but the beast wears them upon his ten horns. And this beast which John saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were like as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion. What an ugly looking monster to be worshiped! Who would suppose his admirers would be so numerous that devotion to him would ever become so popular in the world? But so it was ordained. They should not only worship him but the same class of worshipers should also worship the dragon which gave power to the beast; and they worshiped the beast saying, ***"Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him? And there was given him mouth, speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindred, and tongues, and nations."*** Here the words of our text follow: ***"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him."*** Him who had seven heads and ten horns, who was like the leopard, the bear, and whose mouth was like that of a lion, him whose lion-like mouth blasphemed God, his Name, his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. Him who made war with and overcame the saints, him whose time was limited to forty and two months. This complicated monster, this amalgamation of all that is brutal, savage, ravenous, carnivorous, and terrible, is the deified idol at whose shrine nations should bow down, and all the tribes of the earth with the exception only of those mentioned in our text shall worship. This mystic beast was used to signify to John one of the multiform phases of the man of sin.

It is supposed that in the classification of the various organized forms of anti-christian power, the dragon is used to denote the Pagan, and this beast to represent the Papal form of organized and legal persecution brought to bear against the church and kingdom of our God and his Christ; and that numerous other striking figures are used in the apocalypse to denote the Mohammedan, the Protestant, and all other prominent forms of opposition to be encountered by the people of the saints of the Most High God. We shall not be able in this article, nor will we be expected to trace out the full analogy of these figures; but we shall adopt the application of the figure of the beast which is to be worshiped so very extensively -- as signifying the Papal anti-christ, which succeeded the Pagan dragon, and was inaugurated at Rome, in the

seat formerly occupied by the dragon under the Pagan government of that vast empire, and installed in the great power and imperial authority of the dragon, when the first Papal Pontif was elevated as Universal Bishop at or about the year A.D. 606, having forty and two months, according to our context, to continue. These forty and two months agree with the thousand, two hundred and three score days, in which God's two witnesses were to prophesy in sackcloth, according to Rev. 11:3. Allowing thirty days to a month, the forty and two months amount to one thousand two hundred and three score days. And this according to the computation of time signified by Daniel's seventy weeks, and other like figures, give each day to signify one year; and allowing this application of time, and the correctness of historical data that the Papal anti-christ was organized and its forty and two months began at A.D. 606, its termination, together with the slaying of the two witnesses, may be expected by A.D. 1866, as 1260 added to 606 will amount to that term. Truly the time seems to be at hand, and the general upheaving of the nations of the earth and more especially the recent stripping of the Pope of his secular power over many mighty nations, favors the conclusion that the Papal supremacy will expire by the end of the next four years. And if we do not greatly mistake current indications, the Civil War now raging in our own beloved country is preparing the way for the slaying of the two witnesses, simultaneously with the downfall of the Papacy in the old world. But Secondly -- Who are to worship this beast? All who dwell upon the earth, whose names are not written in the Book of Life, etc. From the Roman Empire Papal missionaries were sent forth into all the nations, tribes, and kindred of the earth and the world wondered after the beast. *"All that dwell upon the earth,"* not only expresses the general spread of Popery into all the nations and tribes of men; but according to the context, those of all classes of the children of men. In the sixteenth verse, we are told that the image of the beast, when it received life, causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, and in their foreheads. And in verse twelve, *"He causeth the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast whose deadly wound was healed."* The first beast is the one which is spoken of in our text, and is called the first in distinction from the beast which John beheld coming up out of the earth, with two horns like a lamb, which spake as a dragon. But there seems to be something peculiarly expressive in regard to their locality; they dwell upon the earth. The true church of God is throughout this vision represented as dwelling in heaven. Their life, or spiritual vitality is hid with Christ in God. Their conversation is in heaven; for they are risen with Christ. And in the verse immediately preceding our text, they are said to dwell in heaven. But all religionists, whose religion is earthly, sensual, and devil-

ish, are appropriately said to dwell, not in heaven, but on the earth. They are themselves of the earth, earthly, and all the religion originating from their resolutions, wills, and works, has its source or fountain in the earth; and as they live religiously on their earthly doctrines, rites, ceremonies, and performances, they dwell upon the earth. They are not built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles of the Lord, but upon the earth which is to be consumed. And their dwelling is defended by earthly power, force, and authority. Instead of trusting in the Lord they confide in armies and navies, emperors and kings. And instead of the armor of God and the salvation which God has appointed for walls and bulwarks for his Zion, the weapons of their warfare are carnal. Their munitions are oppression, disfranchisement, confiscation, prisons, dungeons, racks, tortures, gibbets, stakes, flames, and fagots. Their arguments are edicts and decrees, thundered from the thrones of monarchs or from the Sea of Rome. Their dwelling is in every sense upon the earth, and all such dwellers on the earth, whether they be small or great, rich or poor, bond or free, must worship the beast by acknowledging his assumed supremacy, looking to him for pardon of sin, by applying to him his blasphemous titles -- His Holiness -- Head of the Church -- Christ's Vicar, and by according to him the right to represent by his triple crown, that the power of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is vested in him, together with all power on earth, ecclesiastic and civil, and that he is divinely commissioned to reign over the kings of the earth, and to lord it over the heritage of the Lord. But it must not be understood that all who worship this beast are members of the Roman Catholic commission -- for this chapter shows conclusively that all who belong to the organization of the second beast, and all embraced in the image of the beast are included as dwelling upon the earth, as having the mark of this beast, and the number of his name. If the beast that rose up out of the sea was Popery, the beast coming up out of the earth must signify the Protestant anti-christ; and the image of the beast which rose out of the sea is set up by Protestantism and presents a facsimile of the original, which we have in striking exactness in the numerous unscriptural religious organizations set up by the various Protestant branches of modern anti-christ for the evangelization of the world, and which claim the right to supervise the constituted governments of the world, and in its insatiable thirst for human blood. Rev. 14:9-11 -- The third angel proclaimed the dreadful doom of all the worshipers of the beast, ***"Saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the***

Lamb; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name."

Thirdly -- We were to notice the reservation of those whose names are written in the book of life. In the next chapter we are told that these, instead of dwelling upon the earth, stood with the Lamb upon Mount Sion. That the number of them was an hundred and forty and four thousand, and beside these, as we are elsewhere told was an innumerable company which no man can number which were redeemed out of every kindred and tribe and nation. These have the seal of God the Father written in their foreheads. These all sang the new song, which no man could learn but those which were redeemed from the earth. That is, from where they once dwelt with others on the earth; but they are redeemed from the earth and then they learn to sing the new song before the throne. We have a copy of this song in Rev. 15:3. It is called the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, ***"Saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints,"*** etc. While all the worshipers of the beast sing great and marvelous are the works of men, the powers of men, the agency of men, and the efficiency of the institutions of men for the redemption of the world; while they worship the beast, the works of their own hands, and glory in their shame, they cry, ***"Who is like unto the beast: who is able to make war with the beast."*** But they can never learn to appreciate the great and marvelous works of the Lord God Almighty, nor to acknowledge the justice and truth of the ways of the King of saints. Those whom God has redeemed from the earth, who are taught of God thus to sing and ascribe all power and majesty to God, are further described by, ***"These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth: These were redeemed from among men,"*** etc. We cannot sustain this character, and yet worship the beast and carry his mark. If we follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, we shall not run ahead and ask him to follow with his approbation and blessing what we have devised, invented or done. These are they that follow him in the regeneration; he going before them in that work, and they following after him. When he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and they follow him; but a stranger they will not follow for they know not the voice of strangers. They follow him in the baptismal grave, into the wilderness, in sore temptations and deliverances; they follow him into the sheepfold, by the door, without trying to climb up some other way. They take his yoke on them and learn of him, for he is meek and lowly. They bear his image -- imitate his examples -- obey his precepts, and depend on him alone as their only Savior, their Prophet, Priest, and King. And as they

follow, he leadeth them into green pastures and unto living fountains of water. He leads them in a way they know not, and in paths they have not known; but they have the assurance that all the way he leads them is the right way; for they have learned to sing most sweetly -- ***"Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."*** They are preserved from worshiping the beast, as the Lord's hidden ones were from bowing to Baal in the days of Elijah. ***"I have reserved seven thousand who have not bowed the knee unto Baal."*** And Paul, after referring to this reservation, adds, ***"Even so then at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works,"*** etc. (Rom. 11:5,6) The sovereignty of God is vindicated while he is righteousness discriminates, choosing the delusions of the ungodly, and leaving them in their madness to believe a lie that they all may be damned who have pleasure in unrighteousness and believe not the truth. ***"But we are bound to give thanks unto God, for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because he hath from the beginning chosen you unto salvation, through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth." (II Thess. 2:11-12)*** This people the Lord says he has formed for himself, and they shall shew forth his praise. He will put his fear in their heart, that they shall not depart from him; and he will not turn away from them, to do them good. He will never leave them, nor forsake them.

Fourthly -- The obvious reason why they shall not worship the beast is that God has chosen them from the beginning unto salvation. He has chosen them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. ***"And the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."*** Jesus says, ***"I know my sheep, and am known of mine."*** And they are registered in the book of life. They are written among the living in Jerusalem. Their walls are continually before the Lord, for he has engraven their name upon the palm of his hands: and lest any hurt them he will keep them night and day. For the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the wicked unto the day of judgment to be punished. The reason why they do not worship the beast, nor wonder after him, nor look to him for salvation, or ascribe any saving power to him, is that God has taught them better. And every one that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto Christ, and him that cometh unto Christ he will in no wise cast out. He will raise them up at the last day. They are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. In thy Book all my members were written. And none can erase the names of Jesus' members from the book of life of the Lamb. God has predestinated them to be conformed to the

image of his Son; and in that image they shall be raised up at the last day. As for them, they shall behold his face in righteousness, and be satisfied when they awake with his likeness.

Lastly -- We proposed to offer some further remarks concerning the Lamb -- his book of life, and attempt to show in what sense he was slain from the foundation of the world. A most ample and precious cluster of names and titles have been chosen and employed by the Holy Ghost to set forth the person, offices, work, and relations which our Lord Jesus Christ bears towards his people. Perhaps of them all, none is more interesting to the saints than that of the Lamb, the Lamb of God, the Lamb that is in the midst of the Throne, the Lamb that stands upon Mount Sion, etc. As a figure, the lamb is the most harmless, innocent, and meek of all the animal creation. Hence they were frequently used under the Old Testament dispensation to prefigure our divine Redeemer who is holy, harmless, separate from sinners, and higher than the heavens. But in the types, the lambs to be so used must be the firstlings of the flock, for Jesus was in all things to have the preeminence. They must be without blemish, for they were used to point to him who knew no sin; to him who was spotless, innocent, pure, and immaculate. They were used in sacrifice to signify that the Lamb of God was to be offered for the sins of his people. Abraham said unto Isaac that God would provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering. So Jesus is called the Lamb of God, the Lamb which God has provided, and on whom he has laid the iniquity of all his people. His book of life is not a book composed of paper or parchment, which might be consumed by fire, or its records effaced by passing ages, but it is figurative language. As when we wish to make a matter certain, record it; so in the archives of eternity, in the volume of God's book it is written, or in other words, made certain by the irrevocable choice, purpose, promise and decree of the unchangeable God, all the members of Christ's body, his substance, which was not hidden from the eyes of God. The book of life of the Lamb, in the sense in which the words are used in our text, are probably to be understood the same as where they are used in Rev. 22, as a record of those who have been brought into the fellowship of his organized church, in its gospel form. As in the old Jerusalem, a registry was kept, of the names of the living inhabitants of that city, so in the New Jerusalem, or the gospel church, those who are received into fellowship on profession of faith are enrolled among the living in the antitypical Jerusalem.

As a Lamb, he is spoken of as having been slain from the foundation of the world; that his goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. And all his sufferings, and death, were summed up in the divine mind from everlasting. There is no room to doubt; but we understand the expression here used to mean more particularly that he was set forth in the types and figures used from the foundation of the world, by the figure of the slain

Lamb. At the early dawn of the creation Abel saw, by faith, the bleeding, dying Lamb of God, through the figure of the innocent firstling of his flock, which he offered, and which provoked the wrath of Cain. And from that period forth until the crucifixion of Christ, lambs were used by the patriarchs, and by the Levitical priesthood, to set forth the crucified Redeemer. A remarkable instance is given in the redemption of Israel from the house of bondage, when the Passover was instituted in Egypt; its blood sprinkled upon lintels and door posts of their dwellings, and its flesh roasted with fire and eaten with bitter herbs, only by the Hebrews, on the night of their deliverance. But we will not extend this already lengthy article by referring to all the lambs which were sacrificed from the foundation of the world; but barely remark that in them all the Savior, the Lamb of God, was evidently set forth crucified among them.

John was enabled to identify and bear record, or testimony, of Christ as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world; which all the blood of victims slain before could not do. By one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified. In this case there is remembrance of sin made against them no more; for his blood cleanseth us from all guilt, from all pollution and sin. And Peter admonishes the redeemed saints thus, ***"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God." (I Peter 1:18-21)***

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y.
February 15, 1862.

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FOR MY FRIENDS

Once I was a young spoiled girl
I didn't know much about the world
Mama read the Bible to me
She meant well, but I couldn't see

All this I thought, was for later years
It wasn't for my young ears
Yet when I reached the year twenty-one
I saw my sins, which I had done

I asked God, to forgive, which I hope I received
And Oh was my heart relieved
When I look back over many years
I remember my pillow wet with tears

Now I am old, wrinkled and gray
It is hard for me, to find my way
Struggling on, trying to hang on
Here today, tomorrow I may be gone

When I am gone my body resting on a stand
Place a little white Bible in my hand
Don't cry, when they close the lid
Look up to Jesus and smile instead.

Minnie Foley

(See obituary this issue)

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EDITORIAL

FAITH

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Eph 2:8. Not just a gift, but "the" gift of God, which is none other than His holy Son Jesus Christ. What a glorious gift to poor, helpless, condemned sinners who were dead in trespasses and sins! ***"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ,(by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ."*** In Christ; no where else. If we are in him it is because we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. ***"For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring." Acts 17:28.*** Our being is a spiritual, eternal life which the Holy Ghost makes manifest unto us in the new birth at the appointed time of God: as Jesus said, ***"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Jn 10:20.*** In the flesh we are of the earth, earthy; Adam being our progenitor. ***"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Jn 3:6.*** This is a mystery, ***"Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations, but is now made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." Col 1:26-26.*** This mystery is revealed unto babes (his saints) only, and is hidden from the wise and prudent. Matt 11:25. Jesus said to his disciples, ***"Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but unto them it is not given." Matt 13:11.*** All of the holy scriptures are a mystery to

any to whom God does not reveal them: ***"and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth the Father, save the Son,. and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Matt 11:27.*** When Peter had said to Jesus, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God, Jesus said, ***"Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father which is in heaven."*** In ***John 17:2: "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."***

The above scriptures should be sufficient proof, (if proof is needed,) that the only ones saved by grace through faith are the chosen sons of God. ***"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."*** How can one diligently seek him if they do not know him? The unregenerate world will tell us that all we have to do is believe; but how do we believe when we know him not. Jesus said, ***"It is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Jn 6:29.*** Paul said to the Philippians, ***"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."***

We have a great cloud of witnesses to the faith given them of God, but these all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. Heb 12:1 & 11:13. There are many witnesses named in chapter 11 of Hebrews who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouth of lions, etc.. These are too numerous to mention here, but I would like to observe the faith of Abraham, if God be willing, for God had said that he would multiply him exceedingly, that his covenant would be with him, and he should be the father of many nations. And God said unto him, ***"And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee." Gen 17:7.*** Is it not wonderful to hope that we are under that covenant? It is too much to copy here, but I suggest that you read the entire chapter.

Abraham was a man of strong, God given faith. All of the scriptures concerning the dealings and promises of God to Abraham are written for our learning and profit: ***"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim 3:16-17.*** Three times it is written, ***"Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righ-***

teousness." And James added this, "And he was called the Friend of God." Rom 4:3-Gal 3:6-James 2:23. In Romans 4:23-25: *"Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it (righteousness) was imputed unto him: but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead: who was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our Justification."*

Abraham was about an hundred years old, and Sarah about ninety, when *God promised him a son by Sarah. "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform." Rom 4:21-22.* Do not we also glorify God when we believe in him and his holy Son Jesus, whom he hath sent to redeem us from the curse of the law?

All of the promises of God are sure, and at the set time Sarah bare the promised son Isaac unto Abraham. This was the son, of whom God had said, "For in Isaac shall thy seed be called." Gen. 21:12. Sarah had previously given her maid Hagar unto Abraham to wife, and Hagar had bare a son called Ishmael. And when Hagar had conceived, she despised Sarah. On the day Isaac was weaned Sarah saw Ishmael mocking, and said unto Abraham, *"Cast out the bond woman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac."* This was grievous to Abraham, but God said unto him, *"Let it not be grievous, but harken unto Sarah: for in Isaac shall thy seed be called."* Abraham sent away Hagar and her son, and they wandered in the wilderness until the bottle of water which Abraham had given was spent, and then Hagar cast Ishmael under a bush to die. But God heard the voice of the lad, and the angel of God spake to her out of heaven saying, *"Fear not: for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine arms; for I will make him a great nation." Gen 21:17-18.* God made Ishmael a great nation, and the Ismaelites were the ones who sold Joseph, the son of Israel, into bondage and who today are mocking the children of God and attempting to deliver them also into bondage. In *Gal 4:23-26: "But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Hagar. For this Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."* And in verses 28-31 we read, *"Now we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born of the flesh persecuted him that was born after Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scrip-*

ture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free." There were Jews, however, who claimed to be the seed of Abraham and were never in bondage. They also claimed him as their father, and again that God was their Father: but Jesus refuted their claims, saying, *"I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you." And, "But ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham." And. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." Again, "If God were your Father, ye would love me."* To those Jews who believed in him he said, *"If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."* Having paraphrased the above scriptures from the 8th chapter of John, I trust that I have not done any violence to them. I leave it for you to judge.

Are we believers or non-believers? Do we know the truth? If we know the truth we know Jesus Christ, for he is the way, the truth and the life. To have life we must be born again; for until that birth by the Holy Spirit we were dead in trespasses and sins. *"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ."* Jesus said to those who have been quickened, *"If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Jn 14:15-17.*

Jesus fulfilled the law to a jot and to a tittle, and by his death and resurrection we are justified; we are no longer under the law of sin and death, but under the law of Jesus Christ through his righteousness for the remission of sins. This is through faith in his blood and righteousness. Through the blood and righteousness of Christ he is just and the justifier of him which believeth in him. We know that Abraham lived and died before the advent of Jesus Christ into the world, yet he believed, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness. By the eye of faith Abraham saw him which was to come. He had received the promises of God, but having not received them he saw them afar off and believed. Jesus said unto the unbelieving Jews, *"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad."* Those Jews did not believe this and said, *"Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" Jesus said unto them, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was I am."* Then they took up stones, and

would have killed him if it had been possible: but his time was not yet. They could not believe him, for they had received no faith: faith being the gift of God. In another place Jesus said, ***"This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Jn 6:29.***

Most of the world does not believe that Christ existed before he was born in the flesh, but in Proverbs 8:29-32 we read, ***"When he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was one by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men. Now therefore harken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways."*** Only his children are admonished to harken unto him and keep his ways; and he knew them before the world was spoken into existence. ***"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." Ps 139:15-16.*** These members are the members of the body of Christ, which is his church. Eph 5:30. In Heb 2:14 we read, ***"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil."*** In his Godhead he could not die, therefore he must become incarnate. ***"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Gal 4:4-6. "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham."*** God had promised Abraham, saying, ***"In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Gen 22:18. "He saith not, And to thy seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Gal 3:16. "Wherefore it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of his people."*** The word behoved means, of necessity; and a high priest must have something to offer for a sacrifice: therefore he offered himself: and by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Heb 10:14.

Now let us return to Abraham and Isaac. Isaac was the promised son given to Abraham, and God said, ***"I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him." Gen 17:19.*** And it came to pass that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto

him, ***"Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and offer him for a burnt offering."*** Abraham rose up early in the morning and went for to do that which God had said. He was strong in faith, believing all the promises of God. ***Isaac asked, "Where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Abraham said. "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering."*** He bound Isaac on the altar and would have slain him had not the angel forbade him, ***"for he accounted that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure." Gen 22:1-3 & Heb 11:19.*** And the ram that was caught in the thicket by his horns was a figure of Jesus Christ, who stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Now James said, ***"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lusts, and enticed." James 1:13-14.*** At a glance we have two scriptures that seem to conflict, but we know there are no holy scriptures that oppose each other. Therefore let us search for a right conclusion. According to Webster`s dictionary the word tempt has two meanings. Originally it was, to test or try. Secondly, it is to induce, entice, allure, or provoke to something that is immoral or evil. In Hebrews (Heb. 11:17), we read, ***"By faith Abraham, when he was "tried", offered up Isaac."*** Therefore should we not conclude rightly that when God did tempt Abraham he was trying his faith? for we know he was not tempting him to do evil. In James 1:12 we read, ***"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is "tried", he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."*** Would any be so bold as to say that Abraham did not love God, and shall not receive the crown of life?

Jesus was tempted by the devil forty days, but he rebuked the devil, and sinned not. ***"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Heb 4:15-16.*** It is only when we are made to see our need of grace and mercy that we approach unto the throne of God. Though we be greatly tempted by the lusts of the flesh, and enticed, we are told by Paul, ***"There hath no temptation taken you but such is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." 1 Cor 10:13.*** Therefore, brethren, let us approach the throne of grace in our time of need. We do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which

cannot be uttered, and this intercession for us is according to the will of God. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. Rom 8:26-28.

Jesus Christ himself, ***"Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplication with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." Heb 5:8.*** Jesus did not pray for his own will to be done, but the will of the Father. We should offer our prayers and supplications unto God in like manner; with filial, not slavish, fear. If we ask according to the lusts of our flesh, we ask amiss, and receive not, for we ask that we may consume it upon our lusts. If we do not ask in faith, not wavering, we need not think we shall receive any thing of the Lord. James 1:6-7.

If we live, and have faith, it is because Jesus lives within us. He has quickened us out of our dead alienated state: and Paul said, ***"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Gal 2;20.***

"For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Righteousness does not come by the law, for the law worketh wrath, therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end that the promise might be to all the seed. Rom 4th chapter. If the promise is to us by grace, then we are the children of God. ***"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Rom 8:16-17.***

Brethren, let us be exceeding happy when we are made to suffer with Christ. For as Paul said, ***"For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Rom 8:18.***

Brethren I realize that I have barely touched the surface of this vast text, but I have written in love, as I hope. May God bless it to his glory, and to your comfort and edification. May he pardon all my errors. I ask that you remember me when you approach unto the throne of grace and mercy in faith.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

SAMUEL 12:22-24.

For the Lord will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people.

Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way:

Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath cone for you.

CORRESPONDENCE

March 3, 1997

Dear Elder Williams,

Please find enclosed check for $25.00 dollars. A donation to "Signs of the Times" - would also like to thank all the precious ministers who write articles for the Signs - I feel they are richly blessed of God for articles are outstanding, and especially want to thank Elder Key for all his effort in obtaining for me a copy of the book written by the Late Elder Spangler, "Amazing Grace."

In bonds of love,
Anne Pearson

March 8, 1997

Dear Editors,

I am late as usual with my subscription. I do appreciate your patience so much. I look forward each month to receiving the Signs of the Times. There is so much good spiritual reading contained in each number. I love to read the articles from the past, as well as those written by the brethren today. The truth never changes with time. In like manner we can read the words in ***Malachi 3:6, "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."*** Not because of their righteousness, but because He changes not. Also in ***Hebrew 13:8, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."*** I seem to detect many changes in myself, indeed this "outward man" seems to perish day by day. Sickness and aging is an ongoing process. In fact, all these changes continue according to the fore-ordained purpose of God.

May it please our Lord to bless each and everyone that carries on the work of getting the Signs out each month. I pray. Please remember me in your prayers.

In hope,
Bill Slack

QUERIES

Are memberships in social or civic groups such as the Elks, Moose, Masons, etc., acceptable? Many of these social or civic groups are secret societies. That is, the meetings are not open to anyone but the members. Whatever takes place in these meetings is secret. No one but the members are to know. Some groups perform various rituals, even "religious" ceremonies. Christ said He did nothing in secret. Psalm 98:2, ***"The Lord hath made known his salvation: His righteousness hath He openly showed in the sight of the heathen." St. John 18:20, "Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue and in the temple, whither the jews always resort; and in secret have I said***

nothing." Paul said in Ephesians 5:11-12, *"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret."* Primitive Baptists have always stood firmly against membership in any secret society and would exclude from fellowship, after taking scriptural steps, anyone found belonging to such an organization.

What about community groups or clubs that are not secret societies and that make an effort to help others? Primitive Baptists feel that many of these organizations provide assistance to various members of a community and there is nothing wrong in that. In fact, these acts of kindness and assistance are commendable. The organizations involved receive full credit for these acts. However, we feel that members of the church should help others because of a heart of love and compassion given them by God. Their acts of kindness and assistance are as members and believers in Christ and His church rather than as members of a worldly organization. His people do not need a club or organization of the world to motivate them and direct them in these acts of assistance and helpfulness. *Ephesians 2:10, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."* We, as followers of Christ and members of the militant church are to care for one another as He does for His little ones and we are to help those round about us if there is a need.

Matthew 25:3146, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no

meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

His people are created unto good works and are ordained to do them. The Lord only is to receive the praise and honor for we are His workmanship.

What about clubs that are strictly social? Obviously, these are solely for the enjoyment of the flesh--our carnal nature. These organizations or groups provide a setting for temptations and a fulfilling of the lusts of the flesh. We are instructed in Thessalonians to ***"Abstain from all appearance of evil."*** Also, Paul counseled Timothy that ***"this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."*** Paul, in writing to the Corinthian brethren, brings to their attention the example of the Israelites after God delivered them from Egypt. ***"Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for examples; and they are writtenfor our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."***

Peculiar people, aren't we? But His people are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people. They indeed are very different from all other people upon the face of the earth. A difference that is because of Christ. Because of His love shed abroad in our hearts, we have no desire to be a part of any worldly club or society. Our desire is to Him as our husband, our lord, our priest, and our king. May we be found following Him though the way be narrow and beset with severe trials.

May the God of all Grace keep you,

Cleo D. Robertson
111 Livingstone Drive
Cary, North Carolina 27513

ARTICLES

The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds and casting down of imaginations and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience ot Christ.

We wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers and against the rulers of darkness of this world and against spiritual wickedness in high places.

The child of God in this world is in a life and death struggle. He is born of the Spirit and is also walking about in a body of flesh The Spirit and the flesh have never agreed and never will. The one is from heaven and immortal glory and the other is of the earth earthy. The Spirit is holy and without *sin* while the flesh is full of sin and utterly corrupt. The Spirit loves and desires heavenly things but the flesh minds the things of the world. The Spiritual man hungers and thirsts after righteousness while the flesh man lusts after the things of nature. The spiritual man sets his affections on things above while the natural man tries to store up treasure for himself upon the earth.

How is this possible? How can one person be so divided and still be a single person? According to the scriptures, we have this treasure (the Holy Spirit) in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same *in* hope that the creature might also be delivered from the bondage of corruption to the glorious liberty of the children of God. God has made it so. His people whom He loved with an everlasting love have been given to walk by faith and not by sight. Faith is the substance of things hoped for the evidence of things not seen. His people are pilgrims and strangers in this world and seek a City which has foundations whose builder and maker is God.

This warfare if fought without and within but I sometimes think it is mostly within. There is a battle raging inside. Satan has desired to have the children of God that he might sift them as wheat. They are taken captive by him at his will. But thanks be unto God, Christ has prayed for them that their faith fail not. Evil thoughts and imaginations appear within the child of God unbidden. Every thought and imagination of the heart of man is only evil continually. But God has not forsaken them. He is bringing them through the furnace of affliction that when they are tried they may come forth as gold. His grace is sufficient for them.

God is pulling down the stronghold of Satan and casting down those evil imaginations and is bringing every evil thought into captivity unto the obedience of Christ. He is binding that strong man Satan and spoiling his house. He is mortified of putting to death the old man that we might walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh

The weapons of our warfare are wrought of God. He is mighty to save.

According to God's word, no weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper. Why not? It is because our God is greater than all. He is the great I Am. He made the heavens and the earth and sustains all things by the word of His power and we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed at the last time. He found Jacob in the waste howling wilderness and led him about and instructed him and kept him as the apple of His eye. He made him to ride upon the high places of the earth. He loves His people with an everlasting love and He will not suffer them to be tempted above what they are able to bear but with the temptation will make a way of escape. It is he that is with them until the end of the world. It is He that upholds them and will make them to be faithful unto death that He might give unto them the crown of life.

Written in love I hope,
Elder J.B. Farmer
Rt. 3 Box 456
Grayson, Ky. 41143

PSALM 27: 1-2.

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

When the wicked, even mine enemies and me foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.

VOICES OF THE PAST

REVELATION 20:14

It would afford us much pleasure to be able to explain satisfactorily all the scriptures which are presented by our readers, who ask for our views on them. Frequently, however, the subjects on which we are requested to enlighten others prove to be the same on which we feel sensible that we are also in the dark. We, however, sometimes attempt to give some views on passages in the scriptures under an embarrassing consciousness of our utter inability to do justice to the subject; but hoping that what we write may be carefully and prayerfully compared with the standard of truth; and only received so far as it is clearly sustained by the word and spirit of our divine Lord and Master. We feel that a weighty responsibility rests on us. What we write is read by thousands--some of whom are very babes in the kingdom--some are weak, but confiding, and may, perhaps, be misguided, and led to form wrong conclusions from what we write; and a sense of our own liability to err in these important matters would deter us from writing at all, if it were not a settled truth that God has used the weak things of this world for the comfort and edification of his children; and that frequently a word spoken in fear and much trembling has been directed by the gracious Spirit of truth to the comfort of the little ones of the spiritual household.

There is much expressed in this chapter on which we would not dare at this time to offer any comments; and on the verses named by our sister we will not attempt to give a full explanation. What we may be enabled to write, we wish to have regarded only as general remarks, showing just what is asked for, namely, *Our views on the text.* Whether our views are right or wrong, the text can not be wrong. The scriptures are inspired by the Holy Ghost, and are the infallible truth of God. What we may think of them, though we greatly desire to entertain only correct views, is liable to be incorrect. Just so far, but no further, as we are taught their meaning by the Spirit that inspired them, we are right; and God will himself vindicate and sustain his own truth as taught by his Spirit.

The language of our text is awfully grand and sublime. ***"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat upon it from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away: and there was found no place for them."*** This throne is undoubtedly the one of which our Redeemer spake when he said, ***"When the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory,"*** he would put his sheep on his right hand, and say unto them, ***"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."*** It was mentioned in Old Testament prophecy as a glorious high throne from the beginning, and the place of the sanctuary of the saints of God. In the second Psalm God has said, ***"Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion."*** And again unto the Son he saith, ***"Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever."*** It is here presented to the vision of John as a *great throne,* signifying its boundless power in heaven and in earth; power over all flesh, and power over sin, death, hell and the grave; power to do all his pleasure in all the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of earth. A special allusion may here be intended to his having taken to him his great power and had reigned in the destruction of the beast and of the false prophet, and all the powers of darkness. This throne is not only great, but it is *white,* which is emblematic of immaculate purity. The King presiding upon it "reigns in righteousness." The sceptre of his kingdom is a right sceptre. He loves righteousness and he hates iniquity, and therefore, he is crowned with the oil of gladness above his fellows. Justice and judgment are the habitation of this throne, and, therefore, righteousness and truth goes before the face of its august occupant. Could all the records of time and eternity be searched with an omniscient scrutiny, not a spot of wrong, not a blemish of injustice could be fastened upon this great white throne. This throne, or power, is the almighty power of God, and it has always been a great white throne; but perhaps never before so fully manifested to men in the flesh as when John, on this occasion, saw it. He saw not a vacant throne, or a throne unoccupied; but he saw him that sat upon it: the King Eternal, Immortal, Invis-

ible, the Only wise God our Savior. He saw the only and blessed Potentate, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light; whom no man hath seen, nor can see; whom no man can approach unto, to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen. (I Tim. 6:16)

"From whose face the earth and the heaven fled away." How Supremely gloriously must he be, from whose presence earth and heaven recedes, and vanishes away! What must be the transcendent glory, which at once puts out the sun, the moon, the stars, and wipes out at once the glory of the earth and skies. When he appears, what little things these worlds become; they seem as less than nothing and vanity. The fleeing away of the earth and heaven may be considered in a three-fold application.

First--In relation to the figurative elements, or rather the terms as figuratively used throughout this vision of John in which the earth has been so generally used to signify all religious, and religious institutions which have not their origin in God; and the heaven is used to denote the militant church, where Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and from which the dragon was vanquished, drawing with his tail the third part of the stars of this heaven, which were with him cast into earth. The scene presented here to John shows the consummation of the militant, (or warfare state of the church). She comes up out of all her great tribulations, and appears now as a bride adorned and fully prepared for her husband. At his appearance all the jarring elements of the old man and the new man, flesh and spirit, church and world, truth and error, at once are driven away, like shades of night when the rising sun appears.

Second--Whenever and wherever a revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ is made, experimentally, on his great white throne, the earth and heaven recedes from our view, and there is no place found for them. When he was transfigured on the mount the disciples were so fully enraptured that they had no room in their full hearts for any thing more . They were unconscious of any thing more than what they saw. They were cut loose from the world and the elements thereof, and so totally eclipsed by the surpassing glory of his presence, they fled away. So Paul, when caught up to the paradise of God, and saw the splendor of the eternal throne, was released for the time being from a consciousness of the elements of this world. So Stephen, when to his faith the heavens were opened, seemed totally indifferent to the tortures inflicted upon his body, lost sight of personal injuries so madly heaped on him, and in an ecstasy cried, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." And so in the experience of all the saints, just in proportions as Jesus is clearly revealed to our faith, and we are enabled to gaze upon the great white throne, and him that sits thereon, we are absorbed in the vision, and dismiss the world with its vanities, having no place for them under such happy circumstances. But, *Lastly* -- This language is used in connection with the doctrine of the

resurrection of the dead, and shall be fully realized when our God shall come in the glory of his majesty to raise the dead and judge the world, at the last day. The awful grandeur of that scene, who shall describe? The heavens shall be rolled together like a scroll--the elements of nature shall melt with fervent heat, and like a vesture shall they be folded and laid aside--the earth and sea shall be consumed, and there shall no place be found for them. If it were possible for the saints to take this world to heaven with them, it would only be in their way; it is in their way now; but Glory to God, in the highest, there shall no place be found for it in that bright world to which we go.

Christ will be all in all, and not a saint in glory shall find in him a vacant place where he could store away the world, or room to set up a single idol.

"Had I a view of thee, my God!
Kingdoms and men would vanish soon;
Vanish as though I saw them not,
As a dim candle dies at noon."

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God." This seems to indicate a general resurrection of all mankind. The sea and death, and hell, or the grave, as the word *hell* in this place evidently means, delivered up the dead that were in them; so that without discrimination, the small and the great, alike are amenable to God, and all shall come forth at this call, obey his summons just as John saw them. In reality the dead and all the living always were before God, that is, they were always in his presence, or where he had a perfect knowledge of them; but this subject seems to manifest them as brought before his judgment throne, without distinction of grace or position, the small as well as the great; none so great as to claim exemption, none so small as to be overlooked.

"And the books were opened, and another book, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works." Finite beings require books and records to preserve a testimony of facts, because we are liable to forget; but God is infinite, and all things are naked and open to the view of him with whom we have to do; consequently we understand the books to be figuratively used in this subject. The purpose and fore-ordination of God is spoken of as a book in a figurative sense. *"Lo I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God."* The Book mentioned in the tenth chapter which was sealed, and none could unseal it or look upon it until the Lion of the tribe of Juda prevailed, was evidently metaphorical; and the unsealing of it signified the development of those things which are presented in this Book of Revelation. The books which are mentioned in our text seem to signify that God has an accurate and exact knowledge of all things. The secrets of all hearts are perfectly known to him, and when

he shall disclose them, it will be like the opening of volumes in which all secrets of all ages are recorded. As the poet sings--

"Chain'd to his throne a volume lies, With all the fates of men; With every angel's form and size Drawn by the eternal pen."

Again, the books may signify the books of the scriptures, the book of the law which we have transgressed, and the judgments and decisions which are recorded in all the scriptures, in which we are told that *"He that believeth not is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him ."* Paul says, *"God will judge the world according to my gospel;"* or as we understand him to mean, according to the testimony which Paul and other inspired men had before testified. So we may rest assured that however blind men may be as to the bearing of the divine testimony on this matter, in the final development which shall ultimately be made, the books shall be opened. The dead shall be judged out of those things, or according to those things, which are written in the books. We think no intelligent christians will dispute that the final and everlasting destiny of all men, both saints and sinners, will be in exact accordance with the testimony already written in the books of the inspired scriptures. No sinner will be doomed to hell but such as the scriptures already testify shall perish; nor will any be permitted to the blissful mansions of eternal day but those who are born again. Who all these are, none can tell, until the eternal Judge shall open the books, only so far as the saints have, by revelation of the spirit, been sealed, and have received the earnest of their incorruptible inheritance above. The judgment disclosed by the opening of the books of the Eternal Judge will be according to their works. The works of all unregenerate men are works of darkness, works of iniquity, works of the flesh, and by these works they now show that they are dead in sins, under the curse of the divine law, and unless the opening of the gospel book shall disclose some works which are wrought in Christ for them and in them, they must certainly perish. If the tree is made good the fruits thereof will be good, and so witness the quality of the tree. But if the tree be evil, as all of us are by nature, if not made good by the cleansing blood of Jesus, and the quickening power of the Holy Spirit, the fruits will show that they are nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned. And when the sea shall deliver up its dead, and death and the grave shall deliver up their dead, they shallbe judged, every man according to his works. Those who work for life, being dead, their works also are dead works, and they are called workers of iniquity. No man can bring a clean thing out of an unclean. It will not be denied that they have worked, but it shall assuredly be said to them, *"Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity."* And all the saints whose works are wrought in God, and in whose hearts God has worked, both to will

and to do of his own good pleasure, it shall as certainly be said, *"Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."*

"And death and hell (or the grave) were cast into the lake of fire." The last enemy to Christ and his people that shall be destroyed is death. Christ has destroyed death, and him that had the power of death; that is, the devil. O! death, I will be thy plague! O! grave (or hell), I will be thy destruction! Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes! He shall swallow up death in victory, and the resurrected saints shall put on immortality, and sing, *"O! death, where is thy sting? O! grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."* The lake of fire into which death and the grave shall be cast, signify by strong figurative words their utter destruction. As fire is the most destructive element in nature, it is used to signify this final destruction.

"This is the second death." According to what is written in this chapter, in the fourth, fifth, and sixth verses, there is a first *death,* in which the just as well as the unjust participate; the death of our mortal bodies is alike. But the saints are, by participation in the first resurrection, delivered from the effects of the first death; that is, they have secured to them a happy resurrection, in immortal and spiritual bodies on which the second death can have no power.

"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire." This book of life is the same which in the former part of our text is called *"Another book, which is the book of life."* It is also called the Lamb's book of life, written from the foundation of the world. And again it is called the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. It is an ancient record; and all who on the opening of the books shall be found written in the Lamb's Book of Life are secure from the power of the second death. But all whose names are not so written in the Lamb's Book of Life, whatever else they may have relied upon for acceptance before the great white throne and before him who sits thereon, from whose face the earth and heaven fled away, shall, with death and hell, be cast into the lake of fire; that is, they shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.

We do not assume that this text has no allusion in its figurative design, to things which shall transpire before the final consummation of all earthly things; but we have given such views as we have, and pray that God may give us all that bright and more perfect understanding that we need, in due time.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y.,
February 15, 1862

NOTICE

The Signs Of The Times:

Dear Eld. J. R. Williams;

I am writing in regard to a book that I have written, compiling both my Dad's (Eld. Harvey J. Bird, dec.) and my writings, titled "Thou Art Graced With Beauty So Fair". Dad was a member and the Pastor of the Providence Primitive Baptist Church, Putnam County, W.V., which was associated with the Pocatalico Association. I have a limited number of the books left. I have them for sale at $13.50 each, inc. postage. Dad had many friends all over the country, and some may not know about the book, and might enjoy reading it.

The sub. to be mailed to – Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Cottrell, 2560 U.S. Rt. 60, Hurricane, W.V. 25526.

Sincerely your;
Lois L. Cottrell.

NOTICE

WANTED

A book by Elder Silas Durand called MEDITATIONS. Anyone who will sell or lend this book, please contact Elder C.C. Wilbanks.

217 Bagstrop Drive
Monroe, La. 71203
Phone 1-318-343-5473

MEETINGS

Glenwood Church, Princeton, W. VA., announces a 5th Saturday meeting June 28, 1997 starting at 10:00. those coming by way of I-77 take exit 9. Turn left onto 460W.

Go 5 miles, turn right onto 19N. Then immediately left onto Glenwood Park Road, 1 1/2 miles to the church on left. Those coming by way of 460, follow the same directions from the I-77 / 460 intersection..

Elder Larry Hollandsworth, Mod.
Sister Marilyn Shaw, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 1997

Steve Lee, NC - In memory of
Mr. & Mrs. J.R. Somers $40.00
Lloyd C. Spikes, OR 10.00
Mrs. W.L. Adams, VA 2.00
Eld. Noel Conner, VA 2.00
Mrs. Bonnie Meyers, TN 2.00
Mrs. Alice Johnson, TX 7.00
Mrs. Inex Gearner, TX 2.00
Steve A. Everett, VA 7.00
Mrs. Rebecca S. Smith, FL 2.00
Mrs. Levenia Biggs, TN 7.00
Mrs. Dorothy M. Cassell, VA 2.00
Ms. Wyvenie H. Murphy, AR 5.00
Mrs. Beatrice Miller, NC 2.00
E.S. Gingerick, OH 7.00
Mrs. Cloma McLaughlin, TX 2.00
Mr. & Mrs. Tim Barron, TX 7.00
Joel S. Miles, FL
In memory Eld. Robert Miles 7.00
Mrs. Carole Cruise, VA 12.00

OBITUARIES

Born: Lula Eva Conner,third child of Lemuel D.Conner and V. Susie Thomas Conner in Salem Va. And family moved to Botetourt Co. October 1908, and most of her first 20 years at same location. Later she met and married Robert B. Anderson September 30 1930 in Fincastle, Va. And lived first in Roanoke Co. while in the C,C,C, Camp. Each was comforted to find each other was on the same Pilgrimage, and were blest to go before Basham to beg for a home September 9th 1934,and was received by Experience and was baptized by Elder John P. Helms, and it was blessed Way Marker in their uneven, journey. They later buy a farm in Montgomery Co South of Shawsville Va. They operate their sawmill and work the farm. Later in August 1963 while gathering and stacking hay in the field Brother BOB as he was often called passed away at the stack he was building. Sister Anderson continued to care for the farm, planting trees and Gardening making every effort to be self supporting,and to keep her children in school, with help of neighbors, put her garden produce on Roanoke, City Markets where she also helped to sell produce brought from the farm she was raised on.

Her family and friends help supply a way to meetings and associations and especially Basham Church, where Nancy Victoria made every effort to have her present as long as she was able. She loved to hear singing, it made Glad her heart from childhood and often the preaching of the gospel did too. Sister Anderson was given a good hope by the ressurection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and remembered Jesus said:because I live ye shall live also (John 14:19) Her dear children lost their Mother and best friend, and the family that remains must thank the good Lord He lent us a dear sister to share our uneven earthly Pilgrimage! Praise the lord O my soul.

The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away Blessed Be His Holy Name.

By N.F. Conner

IN MEMORY OF
LULA CONNER ANDERSON

Born
March 29, 1908

Died
February 20, 1996

Services
John M. Oakey & Son
Funeral Home Chapel
February 22, 1996

Officiating
Elders Junior Conner
Larry Hollingsworth

Interment
Cedar Lawn Cemetary

Family
Brothers
Noel Conner, Aaron Conner,,

Calvin Conner

Children
Nancy Victoria Dillon, Louaddie Lowder,
Robert B. Anderson, Sallie Rcbecca Sears, John M. Anderson

Grandchildren
Paula Ross, Cindy Ross, Sandra Smallwood, David Smallwood, Susan Snyder, Angie Anderson, Vicki Pris Sears, Allen Anderson, Edie Sears, Adam Anderson, Andee Sears, Brandy Anderson

Pallbearers
Edward Sears, Tommy Ross, Greg Maheu, Allen Anderson, Cory Ross, Adam Anderson

---

IN MEMORY OF

MINNIE LOU
HOLLANDSWORTH FOLEY

DATE OF BIRTH
AUGUST 17, 1907

DATE OF DEATH
NOVEMBER 18, 1995

SERVICES
TUESDAY, 2:00 P.M.
NOVEMBER 21, 1995
RIVERVIEW PRIMITIVE
BAPTIST CHURCH

OFFICIATING
ELDER CARL TERRY
ELDER LEONARD BRAMMER
ELDER CLARENCE STONE

OLD CENTER PRIMITIVE
BAPTIST CHURCH CEMETERY

SURVIVING

DAUGHTERS:
BARBARA HOPKINS
NANCY GRAHAM

SONS:
GENE FOLEY
THOMAS FOLEY
DAVID FOLEY
WALLACE FOLEY
WINFRED FOLEY

SISTERS:
IDA RUTH FOLEY
MATTIE LEE COLEMAN

GRANDCHILDREN: 19

GREAT- GRANDCHILDREN: 24

MRS. FOLEY WAS PRECEDED IN
DEATH BY HER HUSBAND,
AARON FOLEY

PSALM 33:6-9.

By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.
He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses.
Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.
For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.

DEACON RALPH A. HOCUTT SR.

Ralph A. Hocutt Sr., 91, of Albany, Ga. departed this earth on Feb. 23, 1997. He was the son of the late Elder William Jackson Hocutt and Mollie Kitchens Hocutt, born October 4, 1905, making his stay on this earth 91 years, 4 months, and 19 days.

On July 30, 1935, Ralph A. Hocutt Sr. was united in marriage to Agnes D. Utley. One son was born to this couple.

He is survived by his widow, Agnes U. Hocutt, his son, Ralph A. Hocutt Jr., daughter-in-law, Beverly J. Hocutt, three grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, six sisters in Tuscaloosa County, Alabama, one brother in Texas and numerous nephews and nieces.

This believer of Salvation By The Grace Of God attended Primitive Baptist churches throughout Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi, Kentucky, Louisiana, Florida and Texas, joining Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church in Tuscaloosa County, Alabama later in life. He served his church faithfully as a Deacon until he could no longer travel. This quiet, humble and kind man would rather listen to others talk of the Mercy and Blessings of God.

His funeral was conducted on February 27, 1997 at the Heritage Chapel in Tuscaloosa, Alabama by Elder J.Y. McCormick of Eagle Lake, Florida. The body was laid to rest in the Alberta City Cemetery to await the coming of the Lord. He will be missed but not forgotten.

Written by his son who loved him dearly.

Ralph A. Hocutt, Jr.

MARY LILLIAN AKERS LUCAS

With humbleness I am writing the obituary of Mary Lillian Akers Lucas. She was born on November 4, 1917 to Wade and Maude Akers. She married Raymond J. Lucas and her sister, Fannie Sue, married his brother, Ralph C. Lucas. Both families lived close to each other, grew together and are as one loving family.

Mary Lillian loved her family, her church and community. She willingly gave of herself every day. Her kindness and love of God was manifest throughout her life. She and her husband united with Valley View and were baptized May 18, 1975. Mary Lillian willingly and humbly served the church as clerk from November 19, 1983 to July 16, 1994. Her health was failing and she felt she could no longer serve as clerk. Mary Lillian and her husband were both at church as long as they were able to come.

Throughout her life she enjoyed attending church and visiting people and having people in their home. Whenever she would go see others who were ill, she brought a gift or food she prepared to cheer them. Her meekness and humbliness shined throughout her life. She cared for others, her family, her neighbors and her church.

As her visitors and family were there day after day lovingly by her side as so many times she had been there for them. She was made comfortable and loved during her final hours. She passed from life to her eternal home on August 13, 1996.

She was preceded in death by a grandson, Mike Eanes, and a great-granddaughter, Kathryn Lucas. Surviving are her husband of 61 years, Raymond J. Lucas; one sister, Fannie Sue Lucas, son and daughter-in-law, Sam and Thelma Lucas; daughter and son-in-law, Helen and Harold Eanes; granddaughter, Myran and Doug Moore, Ellensburg, WA; grandson; Capt. Nathan and Karen Lucas, West Point, NY.

Funeral was conducted by Elder Raymond Goad and Elder Willard Cox. She is missed by her family, friends and members of Valley View. Our loss is her eternal gain. Humbly submitted in request of Valley View Primitive Baptist Church.

Raymond Goad, Pastor
Sister Naomi Agee

SISTER GERTRUDE RIDDLE PAYNE

It is with a sad heart, yet I am made to reflect on many blessings in the passing of my dear mother and sister in Christ, I hope, Gertrude Riddle Payne. She was born to Cleveland and Berta Eanes Riddle, August, 24, 1910 and passed away October 4, 1996. She was married to Harry Madison Payne, December 27, 1930. They were blessed with 53 years together. Daddy was afflicted with rheumatoid arthritis for about 20 years and mama was faithful to care for him. After he passed away she lived alone, over 10 years, often expressing how hard it would have been to live alone had she not believed that all things work together for our good (if we are the children of God), and that whatever comes to pass is God's Holy will.

In 1993 she had a heart attack and came to live with us. Prior to her heart condition she had been blessed with reasonably good health. My sister came last January to help care for her and mama was able to stay at her home most of the time. Last August she was stricken with a stroke just 2 days before her 86th birthday. Many times she had said when she was unable to care for her personal needs she hoped it would be God's will to take her. I feel He granted her desire, she only lived about 6 weeks after the stroke.

She united with Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church June 1975. Her survivors include 2 daughters. Marie P. George and Peggy P. Wells, 1 son Harry Melvin Payne. 2 sisters and 2 brothers, 9 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Home North Main Chapel, by her pastor Elder Julian Williams and Elder Raymond Goad (this at her request). Interment was in Highland Burial Park, Danville, Va.

I have heard our ministers in their petitions to God, ask Him to give us a peaceful hour in which to die. The week before mama's death she struggled so hard to breathe, but when the end came she was given a peaceful hour and her life just easily ebbed away. I believe she is now resting in the paradise of God to await the glorious resurrection of the saints, there to

praise Him in eternity. This was her hope. If we have this hope, can we think of anything more wonderful. Again I say can we think of anything more wonderful. Again I say can we think of anything more wonderful.

In loving memory,
Peggy Wells

DORIS STEGALL RICHARDSON

Sister Doris was born October 13, 1910, daughter of Elder J.F. Stegall and Alberta Eanes Stegall.

She passed away Oct. 17, 1996 and was buried at Callands in the family cemetery, with her pastor Elder Julian Williams conducting graveside rites.

Sister Doris was a member of Malmaison Church. She attended regularly until she moved to Florida to be near her niece whom she raised as her own.

She is greatly missed. Doris was very dear to me being my sister-in-law as well as a sister in the church. She didn't have an easy life, but always wore a smile.

Submitted by,
Maria Richardson Adams

IN MEMORY OF ROSA HERSHMAN TROUTT

With sadness in my heart, I will attempt to write this obituary for my dear friend and Sister in Christ, Rosa Hershman Troutt who died October 27, 1996 at the Riverside Health Center in Danville, Virginia.

Sister Rosa was born on July 6, 1911 in Chase City, Virginia, one of eight children of Jessie Howard and Emma Wilson Smiley Hershman. She later moved to the Mayfield Community near Ruffin, N. C. and worked at Dan River Mills in Danville, Virginia until her retirement.

On September 1, 1944 she married Harry Garvine Troutt who predeceased her on February 24, 1989.

She was received into the membership of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on March 2, 1995. She loved the church and was a firm believer in the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace. She was a faithful member and attended the services regularly until the last year of her life when she fell and broke her hip and was confined to the hospital and nursing home.

Sister Rosa is survived by her stepson, Garvine Troutt and his wife Theodosia Carter Troutt and stepgranddaughter, Gwendolyn Troutt, all of Norfolk, Virginia, a brother James H Hershman of Ruffin, North Carolina and a number of nieces and nephews.

Her funeral was held on October 30, 1996 at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder Kenneth R. Key and Elder Julian R. Williams, and her body laid to rest beside her husband in the church cemetery. May all of us who mourn be comforted in knowing that our Heavenly Father never makes a mistake. She will be missed by all who knew her; Family, Friends and Church Members.

Connie M. Page

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

GOD is the refuge of his saints,
When storms of sharp distress invade;
Ere we can offer our complaints,
Behold him present with his aid.

Let mountains from theirs seats be hurled
Down to the deep, and buried there;
Convulsions shake the solid world,
Our faith shall never yield to fear.

Loud, may the troubled ocean roar.
In sacred peace our souls abide,
While every nation, every shore,
Trembles, and dreads the swelling tide.

There is a stream whose gentle flow
Supplies the city of our God;
Life, love and joy, still gliding through,
And watering our divine abode.

That sacred stream, thine holy word,
That all our raging fear controls;
Sweet peace thy promises afford,
And glve new strength to fainting souls.

Sion enjoys her monarch's love,
Secure against a threatening hour;
Nor can her firm foundations move,
Built on his truth and armed with power.

Watts.

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EDITORIAL

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

"Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called."

Many of the writers of the scriptures, in all ages of time, tell of the calling of man in nature into the kingdom of God. It is a very special event in the lives of each one and it changes them permanently and completely; their walk, their talk and their affections. It is always the sovereign work of God and it causes them to see and run after the things of the Spirit and not the vain things of the world; their desires are to learn more and more of the Spiritual realm of God into which they have been called. The change is in the heart and soul of man in nature, while preoccupied with the things of the world, and completely unaware of the spiritual realm of God. At a time appointed of the Father, he reveals himself unto them and his purpose in their lives; one time it was in a burning bush, another in a light brighter than the noonday sun shining around the person and instructing them in the way they should go and the things they were to do. They may go very agreeably or with great reservations, but, they do go and they do those things that are required of them to fulfill their calling in life. The Apostle Paul relates his experience many times in his writings and you hear the brethren rehearsing their experience many times; they never tire of telling it and the brethren never tire of hearing it.

The Apostle Paul was of the Jewish faith, serving God as the fathers had before him for many generations; was established in the traditions and served with exceeding zeal; yet he found that he was actually persecuting the one that they were looking for, the Messiah of whom Moses wrote that would come to them. The one to whom the gathering of the nations would be and who would show them the way of salvation. Paul was on his journey to Damascus, intent on destroying this new sect, which he believed was the enemy of the Jews. At this point in his life, the time appointed of the Father, he was made to see the

error of his ways and he immediately began to preach the gospel which he had sought to destroy. This is the testimony of all who are called by that holy calling; they begin immediately to follow in the footsteps of the flock and are not even aware of it; they are just following the leading of the heart that has been given them. As they begin to talk to others, they find that this experience is common to all.

Paul never gave any reason for his change, other than to say," But when it pleased God who separated me from my mothers womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them that were Apostles before me: but I went into Arabia and returned again unto Damascus." I don't know how much family the Apostle Paul had, because he never mentioned them except that his mother was a Jew and his father was a greek; his calling was in the spiritual realm, and there was no relation between the two, and his whole calling was in the spiritual realm from that time forward. His entire life was devoted to the church, preaching the gospel, serving the churches and standing for the truth at all times and to all with whom he came in contact. In his epistle to the church at Rome he wrote, "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise. So as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also: and again to the elders of the Church at Ephesus he said, "for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." ready to spend and be spent for the cause.

The calling of God, in the life of Paul was without reservation or conditions and so it is in the life of all the saints; they may go, lowing, as the kine pulling the cart with the ark when it was being returned to Israel by the Philistines, but they will go and do the Lord's bidding. The kine had calves in the stall but they went; and so it is many times with those that are called: they go leaving loved ones behind who do not understand the change, and the bonds that they have shared are strained sometimes to the breaking point. It breaks their heart and grieves them for the loss but they cannot return. This is very difficult; that something so precious can be a thorn of contention between them and their loved ones, but hard as it is, it is the strongest evidence that this is of God for they would not do this except that they are made to do it. This calling is stronger than the ties to nature, as John wrote 1 John 4:4 "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." God will not take second place in your life to anything or to anyone: either he is first in your life or he is not in your life, experimentally.

Rom. 11 vs. 29 "For the gifts and the calling of God are without repentance." There are many gifts and God sets them in the Church as pleases Him; for they are all special gifts to contribute to the welfare of the whole

body. The calling is singular because it is the same unto all, regardless of the position they are to fill, and it is that which separates them from the world of nature and translates them into the kingdom of the Son of God. They are thereby made a new Creature in Christ Jesus and this change is for time and eternity; there is no repenting or changing of the gifts or the calling because perfect wisdom is the architect of the plan of salvation and the author and finisher of the faith upon which it is built is the only begotten of the Father. By finishing the work that his Father gave him to do, he hath forever perfected them that are sanctified: ***"sanctified by God the Father and preserved in Christ Jesus and called."***

There is nothing that is more sure and certain in this world than the salvation of the children of God. The world and all it contains was created for their sake, and they were created for God's glory. Isa. 43:6. ***"Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him: Yea I have made him,"*** And again Isa. 43:1 ***"But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee O Israel, fear not: for I have redeemed thee. I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine."*** Now, with this inspired testimony of the prophet Isaiah; is there anything that can prevent those whom the Lord has formed for himself, called by his grace and set apart unto his glory, from receiving their inheritance? Peter did not think so when he wrote, ***"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an Holy Nation, a peculiar people: that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: which in time past were not a people, but now are the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."*** Oh the beauty and the certainty of the foundation upon which this plan of salvation is laid: it is upon the integrity of God himself as said Isa. 46 vs. 11 ***"Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: Yea I have spoken it. I will also bring it to pass: I have purposed, I will also do it."*** Not predicated on anything other than the sovereign will of God.

The entire scriptures of the bible are devoted to the subject of the salvation of the Lord's people and every writer sets forth the sovereignty of God in calling the elect, here in time, to manifest his love and mercy in giving unto them the earnest of the inheritance which they will receive, in its fulness, in the kingdom of heaven. The partakers of this heavenly calling were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and the writers were inspired to record the way and manner in which it will be manifested in their earthly pilgrimage. It may be through severe trial and suffering, or, it may be in a revelation of the glory and beauty of the spiritual realm, but in either instance it will be effective. There are no failures and the subject is made willing and able to fulfill that

which is required of them. The Apostle Paul persecuted the Church but was made a preacher of the gospel by the effectual working of God's power: Peter was a fisherman but was made a feeder of sheep: both responded to that heavenly calling for the remainder of their life, and in the end both were made willing to lay down their lives for their calling. Most would say, I couldn't do that, but they could, just as these did, by being made willing by their heavenly Father.

Many times you hear a brother or sister questioning their calling and wondering what their gift might be if indeed they have one, but, be assured they do have one. That is what the Apostle Paul is declaring in the above text, let every man abide in the same calling wherein they are called, be content and rejoice that you have been given to know him, not what you must do to fulfill your calling. The gift is for the Church that it may be perfect and entire wanting for nothing, and it takes all of the gifts to make it so. In one illustration of the Church, the body of Christ, Paul said, the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of thee; and so it is with every gift, they are an indispensable part of the body, and each will serve the purpose for which they were called. God hath set the members, every one of them, in the body as it has pleased him, dare anyone question that wisdom. Nay O man who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Man cannot comprehend the magnitude of the plan, so, as Paul says 1 Cor. 7, 24 ***"Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God."***

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

"The substance of a diligent man is precious." — PROVERBS xii. 27.

IF the Lord has done anything for our souls by his Spirit and grace, and given us anything to taste, handle, realise, and enjoy for ourselves, we know there is a substance and reality in the things that we believe. Religion is our chief employment; our daily meditation or exercise -- the main concern of our thoughts and what lies with the greatest weight upon our minds. And justly so; for it is our all. If we have religion, the religion of God's giving, it will be uppermost in our heart. It is true we are surrounded with and often hampered by a body of sin and dealh; we have many worldly cares and anxieties which will intrude upon our minds; and those engaged in business have many things especially to drag them down from heaven to earth. Still, religion will be for the most part uppermost in a man's soul, where God has begun and is carrying on a gracious work. Not but what he is often very cold and dead, lifeless in his prayers, and unfeeling in his affections; not but what he may be carried away by the things of time and sense and dragged down into darkness, carnality, and death; but with it all, there is something in his bosom that struggles upward -- there is that in his heart which goes after the precious things of Christ, and the solemn realities ot eternity.

VOICES OF THE PAST

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS.

A BROTHER has written us, asking some questions regarding the order that ought to be maintained in the churches of Christ, and desires that we reply through the SIGNS. Often when such questions are proposed the first thought with us is as to how little we know, and how little we are prepared to advise or counsel in such matters. It is so with us now, but we feel it is our duty to give to those who ask, such thoughts as we have regarding these matters. We surely do not need to say that our judgment is weak, and that we do not claim in anything that we may say or write more than to express what seems wise and scriptural to us. Moreover, in any such writing we do not seek to enter into the consideration of any local trouble which may have given rise to such questions when they are propounded. Such matters one at a distance cannot be prepared to judge, and were we to assume to do so it would but betray rashness on our part. But, speaking in a general way, it seems to us that there are some things presented in the word of God, and which have been commended to our judgment by our observation of affairs in the churches in past years, that it is right to speak of and urge upon the consideration of our brethren, The substance of the first question proposed by our correspondent is this: Has a part of any church of believers, when matters of variance have arisen among them, and the sentiment of the church is divided concerning those matters, a right to separate themselves from the church, appointing separate meetings, setting themselves up as the regular church, when the regular pastor is serving the church, as he has been for years, upon the time of their regular appointments? It is not possible to answer this question by a simple yes or no; it seems to us that all would depend upon what the matters of variance were. If the church and their pastor are walking in gospel order, and still holding the faith of the elect of God, no matter what other matters may cause uneasiness or friction among the members of that church, it seems sure to us that no portion of the members have any right to withdraw from the church, in the sense of nonfellowship. In the division between the Baptists, which came at the black Rock convention in 1832, there were matters of faith and gospel order involved, and there could be nothing done by those who still held to the old order, the scriptural order, and to the faith, but in the end to withdraw from the others. In so doing they were but obeying the commandment of the Lord to come out from among these scorners of the right way of the Lord, and be separate. There was separation in faith, in practice and in feeling already, and there was but one thing to do then, viz., to make that separation known by public withdrawal, refusing to any longer walk with those who had departed from the

old faith and practice. No doubt similar cases have occurred among some of the churches since then, and in each case it was duty to withdraw, and set up churches of those who had withdrawn. We do not need to add to this what all who fear God feel and know, viz., that even at such times as these there must be due effort to restore those who have departed before withdrawal can be justified. This the Scriptures abundantly enjoin upon all the churches of Christ. But when any church is still holding to the doctrine of the cross, and is still following the old ways, with regard to receiving members, or excluding if needful, and where their pastor is not a heretic, but preaches salvation by grace, with all that doctrine involves, though there may be some things which give dissatisfaction to some, it is their duty to bear with those things, holding the peace of the church and the communion of saints and the worship of God as being infinitely more important than any personal feelings of their own can be. That one who will sacrifice his privileges in the church, and who has so little regard for the peace of Zion as to allow some personal unpleasantness to cause him to withdraw from the church, shows very little regard for the honor of his Savior, and very little regard for the welfare of his brethren. While we are in the flesh there will constantly be things occurring that may jar upon our feelings and which make the flesh angry, and Satan is such a deceiver that we may mistake the anger of the flesh to be the grieving of the Spirit. But the anger of the flesh drives us away from the house of God, while the grieving of the Spirit brings us to come before God in humble prayer for ourselves, and for the blessing of God to rest upon all the church. In the anger of the flesh we think of our own hurt; in the grief of the Spirit we think not of our own hurt, but of the hurt of Zion, and of the loss which those who do wrong suffer, because they have forsaken their own mercies. If through these little words or little deeds of wrong we are led to withdraw from the church, ours is the loss, first of all, and then through our wrong the church will also suffer. We none of us live to ourselves, nor die to ourselves. In any event, or for any cause, there ought not to be any hasty action. It is a solemn thing to withdraw from those who are walking in the order of the gospel because we are displeased with some things which may be done. No church is perfect in her order; no church ever has been perfect. The churches addressed in the New Testament were none of them without fault, and some of them had great faults among them, yet so long as they were holding up the truth, and striving to maintain the order of the gospel, they were regarded by the apostles as still being gospel churches, and upon them, in spite of their faults, the blessings of God rested. In the case of these churches it is manifest that had any among them said, We cannot bear with these faults, and we must withdraw from the churches because of them, the church would have still remained the church, and they who withdrew would have

been as heathen men and publicans to it. The same is true to-day. This does not of course mean that evils ought to be winked at; no, all of evil ought to be protested against, because to tolerate it is to the harm of the church and to the reproach of the cause of God. But it is not for every evil that one is justified in withdrawing from the church, nor is it for every wrong step that one is to be excluded from the church; brethren ought to exhort one another, loving each other and loving the name of the Lord above all things. But perhaps we have already said more than was needful regarding this one question.

Has this withdrawing body a right to set themselves up as a church, or as the church in that place, and hold services as the church? Considered in connection with the things which we have already said, that is, unless they have withdrawn because of unsound doctrine or unscriptural practice, they would have no scriptural right to do so, and they could not be recognized as the church of Christ in that place by other orderly churches. This seems manifest. If they desire to be held in fellowship with those who are regarded as churches of Christ there is but one thing for them to do, viz., to return to the church from which they have departed. In the ordinary difficulties that day by day will arise in all churches there is but one thing that can be followed safely, and that is for the minority to yield their judgment to the mind of the majority, and, on the other hand, the majority must not be harsh in expressing their judgment when some differ in any matter. Let all be done in brotherly love and with brotherly kindness, is the one imperative rule. This we say, let it be again remembered, when there is no charge of unsound doctrine, or that there has been a departure from the established order of the church in her administration of the ordinances, or of the discipline.

The third question is, Has any minister of the gospel a right to serve these withdrawing members as their pastor? We would not dare to say that no minister should go among them and preach the gospel; this each called servant of God must settle in his own conscience before God, but it does seem clear to us that no minister would have a right to recognize them as a church, and administer the ordinances among them as though they were properly organized as a church. We think that those who might come among them ought to advise them to return to the church and to bear with the things which were unpleasant to them, until the Lord should show the church what is right in the matters involved. Certainly that spirit in us which makes us resentful if we cannot have our way in anything, is of the flesh. "Charity suffereth long, and is kind," and if such departing members do return, the church ought to be kind, and receive them lovingly. Any of us may do wrong hastily, but it is a mark of grace when the wrong is repented of, and it is a mark of grace when the one doing wrong is helped to come back, rather than held at arm's length.

We have been thinking while writing these things how much easier it is to break the bond of love than to reunite it when it is once broken, therefore we ought to be slow to act, and to weigh long and well all that would seem to lead to such a break. It is far better for any of us to keep our sore hidden within our breast, if it be possible to do so, than to plunge our brethren into trouble by telling it abroad. Above all things, we ought to be sure that we do not tell these things because we have some spite against another and are seeking to belittle him in the estimation of others. Let us be sure before we speak that our motive is to heal the sore of another, and not to irritate it. Generally sores heal much faster if kept hidden and bandaged than if the cover is being constantly removed. Will what we say be likely to cause anger to arise in the bosom of our brother? then let us not say that thing. It is an awful thing to cause another to offend. But "behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth," and often our words are the coals of fire that set on fire the very course of nature. How careful then should we be in all matters of difference that may arise in the churches. To withdraw from the church of God is the very last resort, and, on the other hand, to exclude a member from the church ought also to be always the very last resort. The apostles have spoken of many wrongs existing in the churches to which their epistles were addressed, but while they reproved, warned and rebuked the churches for those wrong things, in very few instances do we find any direction given to withdraw fellowship from the one in the wrong, and the apostles never said once to any of the churches, Unless you repent we shall drop you from our fellowship. The rebukes were plain and clear, and there was no concealing the fault, or seeking to make it out to be a small thing, but still the motive in all was to be put away from them. But in very few instances were they commanded to put away the wrongdoer. The exhortation of the apostle was that those who were spiritual were to restore those who had sinned, considering themselves lest they also be tempted, and we have understood this temptation to be not only temptation to do wrong also in some way as the other had already done, but temptation while endeavoring to restore the erring one, lest spiritual pride should creep in, saying in our hearts, I am better than this brother who has erred; and lest this spirit should make itself manifest in our words and our manner towards him. This would be to his hurt, and still more to our own hurt, and under such a spirit God could not be glorified in us.

Our brother asked some other questions, but we think that we have practically answered them in what we have already written. We hope that we have made our thoughts plain. No doubt we have omitted many pertinent things, and perhaps we have said needless things in what we have written, but it has long appeared to us that the things we have tried to present were right,

and such as the word of God commends and commands.

The late Elder F. A. Chick
(former Editor of The Signs).

THE CALL OF ABRAHAM.

Gen. XII. 1. Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land I will show thee.

"In Ur of the Chaldee, before he came and dwelt in Chevron, as seems from Acts VII. 2; and the Lord said unto Abram; after the death of Terah, and indeed it is highly probable there were two appearances of God to Abram, and that the same words, or very nearly the same, were spoken to him each time, first in Ur of the Chaldees, and then in Haran: Get thee out of thy country; the land of Chaldees and the city of Ur, which was in it, or out of Mesopotamia, which when taken in a large sense were both Ur and Haran; this country was now become idolatrous. Though it was first inhabited and peopled by the posterity of Shem in the time of Arphaxad, yet these in process of time, degenerated from the true religion and fell into idolatry. The same, Maimonides call Zabaeans, in whose faith and religion they say Abram was brought up; they asserted that there was no other God, but the sun, moon and stars; and these Zabaeans, as he relates, from their books and annals, say of Abram themselves, that he was educated in Cuthia and descended from the common people; and assented that, besides the Sun there was another Creator; to whom they objected, and disputes arose among them on this subject; now Abram, being convinced of idolatry, is called out from those people, and to have no fellowship with them; literally, in the Hebrew text, go thee out of thy country; quit all society with such an idolatrous and superstitious people: and from thy kindred; as Nahor his brother, and his family, who are not mentioned, and seems to be left behind when Terah, Abram, Lot and Sarai, came out of Ur, of the Chaldees, though it looks as if afterwards Nahor did follow them to Haran, or Padan-Aram, where he continued, and therefore is called his city; Gen. XXIV. 10; XXV. 20; XXVIII. 2, 5, 10; XXIX. 4, 5; so with great propriety Abram might be called the second time to leave his kindred as well his country; it is certain, Haran, or Padan-Aram, as well as Ur of the Chaldees, is called by himself his country and Nahor and his family and his kindred, Gen; XXIV. 4: and from thy father's house; or family, which better agrees with the second call at Haran, than the first at Ur, for upon the first call Terah and his family came along with Abram. Terah dying at Haran his family went no further, but continued there with Nahor; only Abram and Lot, upon the second call, went from thence as the following history makes it appear; Abram left as he was bid, his father's house and family, to go as follows: unto a land I will show you; meaning the land of Canaan, though not mentioned, and

seems to be omitted for the trial of Abram's faith; hence the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, XX. 8, observes that he obeyed, not knowing whither he went; and yet it is said, that he and Terah came out of Ur of the Chaldees; Gen. XI. 31; and when he and Lot, when first from Haran, the same is said of them, v, 5; it is probable the case was this: there was no mention made at first, what land he was to go to, and when he prepared for the journey, he knew not where he was to go, but afterwards it was revealed to him, that Canaan was the land, and therefore set out in order to go thither; and still though he might know the place by name where he was to go, he might not know the way to it, nor what sort of country it was; therefore God promised to show him the way, and give him a view of it, how large it was, that he might see what sort of country it was, and how large it was that he would give his posterity. This call of Abram is an emblem of the call of men by the grace of God, out of the world, and from among the men of it, and to renounce the things of it, and not to be conformed unto it, and to leave their own people and father's house and follow him whithersoever he directs them."

Gen. XII. 2. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name, great; and thou shalt be a blessing.

"And I will make of thee a great nation; in a literal sense, as the people of the Jews were that descended from him, and in a spiritual sense, believers in all ages and of all nations, that walk in the steps of the faith of Abram, who are his children, and are blessed with him: and I will bless thee; not only with temporal blessings, but principal with spiritual ones, since Abram in person had no share of the land of Canaan; even with the adoption of children, and friendship with God; with justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ, which blessedness came upon him when uncircumcised with a large measure of faith and every other grace; with sanctification of the Spirit, and with meekness for it: and make thy name great; as it was among the Jews his descendants, who boast of having Abram for their father; and among the several nations of the world; his name is famous in profane history; and is in high esteem with the Mahometans to this day; and especially his name is great and famous and his memory precious among all who have obtained like precious faith with him in every age and every nation: and thou shalt be a blessing; to all that knew him and conversed with him, they received spiritual light and knowledge by his instructions and all who read and heard of his faith and piety, should be encouraged by his example."

Gen. XI. 3. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thy seed shall all families of the earth be blessed.

"All men of all nations, and of all ages, that speak well of him, commend him for His faith and holiness, and tread in his steps; these are blessed with faithful Abraham, Gal. iii. 7, 9. And curse him that curseth thee;

here is a change of numbers, before the plural, here the singular, denoting, it may be, that many would bless him, and but few would curse him, and that every individual person that did curse him should be cursed; this regards future as well as present times, in every age and of every nation, and disapproves of, or rejects and reproaches Abram's God, his faith, his religion and his people. And in the shall all the families of the earth be blessed: That is, in his seed, as in Gen. xxii. 18, and which is interpreted of Christ, Act. iii. 25; Gal. iii 8, 16; meaning not every individual of all the families and nations of the earth; but that as many as believed in Christ of all nations are blessed in Him; and whoever are blessed are blessed in him only, and that they are blessed for his sake with all scriptural blessings. Eph. i. 3, such as redemption, justification, remission of sins, sanctification, adoption and eternal life."

Gen XII. 4. So Abram departed as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

Gen. XII. 5. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

Gen. XII. 6. And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land.

Gen. VII. 7. And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land; and there build me an altar unto the Lord; who appeared unto him.

And the Lord appeared unto Abram; perhaps in human form, so it was the Son of God; for whenever there was any visible appearance of a divine Person, under the former dispensation it seems to be always of the essential Word, that was to be incarnate; and who spake with an audible voice; and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land; the whole of it, inhabitated by Canaanites and others; and it was for this end chiefly that Abram was called out of Chaldea into Canaan, to be shown the land, and have the grant of it for his posterity: and there build he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him: by way of gratitude and thankfulness for his kind and gracious appearance, and for the gift of the land of Canaan of his offspring, for on this altar he no doubt sacrificed in a way of thanksgiving, and as Noah did when he came out of the ark."

Gen. XI. 8. And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west and Haron the east: and there he builded an altar unto the Lord and called upon the name of the Lord.

Gen. XI. 9. And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.

Gen. XI. 10. And there was a famine in the land; and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.

"The land of Canaan, which was a very fruitful country, abounding with all kind of provisions usually, but now there was a scarcity of all; which was for the sins of the inhabitants and for the trial of Abram's faith, who was brought out of his own country, where was bread enough and to spare, into one in which there was a famine; and this might be a temptation to Abram to return from whence he came, and to despise the country that was given him: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; not to dwell there, only till the famine was over, and rightly is he said to go down to Egypt, since that lay lower than the land of Canaan; and his going only to sojourn, with an intention to return again to Canaan, which shows the strength of his faith in the promise. For the famine was grievous in the land; in the land of Canaan, and perhaps no where else; God ordering it so in his wise providence, that there should be plenty of food in one land, when there was scarcity in another; that countries may be helpful to one another."

Gen. XII. 11. And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold, I now know that thou art a fair woman to look upon.

Gen. XII. 12. Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife; and they will kill me, but they will Save thee alive.

Gen. XII. 13. Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake, and my soul shall live because of thee.

" Which though it was not putting a direct lie into her mouth, she being his sister in some sense, as appears from Gen. xx. 12, yet; it was done to conceal truth, and deceive the Egyptians; and tended to endanger his wife's chastity, as well as showed great timourousness in him, and distrust of the divlne care and protection of them, and upon the whole it must be criminal in him, and shows that the best of men are liable to sin, and the strongest believer to fall, and, and that a saint may fail in the exercise of that grace for which he is most eminent as Abram was for his faith, and yet fell into unbelief, and through that into other sins."

Gen. XI. 1 15. The princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh: and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house.

Gen. XII. 17. And the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues, because of Sarai Abram's wife.

"Perhaps with the same sort of plagues, he plagued Abimelech and his servants with on a like account, Gen. XX. 17, 18. The Jews say they were smitten with ulcers; not only Pharaoh was plagued but they of his house also, his courtiers and servants, who were accessary to the bringing of Sarai into his house; all this was, because of Sarai Abram's wife; or upon the word of Sarai as it may be literally rendered."

Gen. XII. 18. And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, what is this that thou hast done unto me? Why didst thou net tell me she was thy wife?

Gen. XII. 19. Why saidst thou, She is my sister? so I might have taken her to me to wife: now therefore behold thy wife, take her and go thy way.

Gen. XIII. "This chapter gives an account of the return of Abram from Egypt to the land of Canaan, and to the same place in it he had been before, verses 1-4; and of a strife between the herdsmen of Abram and Lot, and the occasion of it, verses 5, 6, 7; which was composed by the prudent proposal of Abram, verses 8, 9; upon which they parted; Abram continued in Canaan, and Lot chose the plain of Jordan, and dwelt in Sodom, a place infamous for wickedness, verses 10-13; after which the Lord renewed to Abram the grant of the land of Canaan, to him and his seed. Verses 14-17; and then he removed to the plain of Mamre in Hebron, and there set up the worship of God. "

Gen. XIII. I4. And the Lord said unto Abram. after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:

Gen. XIII. 15. For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever.

"Not only so much of it as his eye could reach, but all of it, as far as it went, and which way soever he looked; and this he gave him to sojourn in now where he pleased. and for his posterity to dwell in hereafter; he gave him the title new, and to them the possession of it for future times: and to thy seed forever: the meaning is, that he gave it to his posterity, to be enjoyed by them until the Messiah came, when a new world would begin; and which Abram in person shall enjoy, with all his spiritual seed, after the resurrection, when that part of the earth will be renewed, as well as the rest; and when particularly Christ will make his appearance and residence, Matt. XXII. 32. This may be typical of the heavenly Canaan given to Abram and all his spiritual seed, and which shall be enjoyed by them forevermore."

Gen. XIII. 16 And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth; so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.

"An hyperbolical expression, denoting the great multitude of Abram's posterity, as they were in the days of Solomon, and as they will be in the latter day; especially as this may respect all the spiritual seed of Abram, Jews and Gentiles, as they will be in the spiritual reign of Christ, Hos. I. 10, 11; so if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy, seed be numbered. Numb. XXIII. 1O."

Gen. XIII. 17 Arise, walk through the land, in the length of it, and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.

Gen. XIII. 18. Then Abram removed his tent, and came, and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the Lord.

Gen XIV. " This chapter gives an account of a war that was waged, and a battle fought, between four kings on one side, and five on the other, and of the occassion and issue of it; who were the first kings, and this the first battle the Scriptures speak of, verses 1-11. Lot and his goods being taken

and carried off with those of Sodom, by the conqueror, Abram hearing of it armed his men and pursued after them, and overtook and overthrew them,and rescued lot and his goods with others and returned, verses 12-16; he was met by the king of Sodom, and Salem, who congratulated him on his victory, verses 17, 18,19."

"Abram had the land of Canaan by promise, and now conquest of it over the invaders of it; Melchizidek, sensible of his right unto it, brings forth the best fruits of it, aad tenders them to him. In this Melchizidek was a type of Chist, who comforts and refreshes his hungry and weary people with himself, the bread of life, and with the wine of his love, as well as his name and title agree with him, who is a righteous King, and Prince of Peace, Jer xx III. 5:Isa. Ix. 6: and he was the priest of the most high God; a priest as well as a king; and in this he was a type of Christ in his kingly and priestly offices, who is both King and Priest, Zeck. VI. 13. Melchizidek was a priest of the true and living God, who is above all gods, dwells in the highest heaven, and is the Most High over all the earth; by him he was called to this office, invested with it and ministered to him in it."

Gen. XV. 1. After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.

" The word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision; Christ the essential Word appeared unto Abram in a human form, visible to him, and with an articulate voice spake unto him: saying, fear not, Abram; calling him by his name, to encourage him and dissipate his fears: I am thy shield; to protect him against all enemies, as Christ is the shield of His people against all their enemies, sin, Satan, and the world, which being held up by the hand of faith, called therefore the shield of faith, is a security against them: and thy exceeding great reward; he himself would be his reward, which is a great one, an exceeding great one, as Christ is to his people, in person, offices of grace, all being theirs, and he in all to them; all the blessings of grace and glory come along with him, and he being their portion here and hereafter, to all eternity; for since he is all things, all are theirs, all things appertaining to life and godliness, and eternal life itself. "

J.K. Booton

THE SLAUGHTER OF THE TWO WITNESSES

The minds of many of our brethren have been led, of late, to discuss the subject of the Lord's two witnesses, and the prophecy concerning them, contained in the eleventh chapter of Revelation, compared with Zechariah 4:2-14. The attention of our readers was called to this subject about thirty years ago, by Brother Trott, who, at that time, expressed his convictions that the two witnesses were the gospel ministry; not that their number was literally reduced to only two, but from the legal provision in the ceremonial law, making two the smallest number admissible to establish

any testimony; thus showing that the ministers of the gospel during the forty and two months, or one thousand, threescore days of their prophesying in sackcloth, should be reduced to the very smallest number requisite for maintaining the truth, in the face of great popular opposition, and under the most discouraging circumstances, as indicated by their clothing. In those early papers Brother Trott arrived at the conclusion that the forty and two months most probably commenced at or about the year 606, and adding to that period twelve hundred and sixty days, taking these days of prophetic time to mean as many years, according to our common computation, would extend to about the year 1866, when these two witnesses should finish their testimony, and when the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and kill them, and their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be buried in graves, etc.

To us it seems quite remarkable that distinguished servant of God had at the very moment when the struggle was going on in the church of God, which resulted in a separation between the New School, or Mission Baptists, and the Old School, or strictly apostolic Baptists, in which the former took position with the whole sisterhood of the harlot daughters of Mystery, Babylon the Great, in support of all the novel and worldly religious inventions of the days and in discarding the Bible as the only infallible standard of truth and righteousness, and the latter withdrawing her fellowship from those who then went out from us and took her bold position on apostolic ground, repudiating all religious creeds and maxims, doctrines and ordinances, institutions and combinations, for which she could find no warrant in the New Testament; to us, we say, it is not a little remarkable that our enlightened Brother Trott was at so early a day enabled to sound the alarm in Zion, and so clearly point out what he understood to be predicted for the halfcentury which was then to ensue. The development of the Protestant beast which had risen out of the earth, commanding the making of an image of the papal monster which had risen out of the sea -- the rapid advance of the image to its completion, and its investment of power to speak and command all men to worship the beast, to proscribe, persecute and ultimately put to death all who should not worship the image of the beast. We have watched for the last thirty years the progress of this man of sin, this son of perdition, and now witness, at the very time indicated, the fearful reality of what was foreshadowed in the faithful admonitions of our beloved brother; but the end is not yet.

As the time draws near many of our most discerningbrethren, and among them brethren Stipp, Owen, Rittenhouse and others, are drawn out upon the same subject, and although at the

first view there seems much discrepancy in their expositions of the two witnesses, there is a remarkable unison in their understanding of the time signified for the slaughter of the witnesses and of the powers by whom the slaughter shall be accomplished. In closely comparing the views expressed by our brethren, there does not seem to us to be so much want of harmony as we at first supposed. The present views of Brother Trott, expressed in a late letter, are that the Scriptures, and the church through the ministry, are the two witnesses; the one as the olive tree, supplying the golden oil, through Christ, as the golden bowl, conveyed by the golden pipes, the gifts of the Spirit, to supply the lamps, which burning with holy fire make the light which is reflected by the candlestick (the church) send forth its radiance. (We do not give Brother Trott's words, as his letter is not at hand, but according to our recollection.) One brother thinks the Holy Ghost and our Lord Jesus Christ are the two witnesses intended, and others again are equally confident that the two covenants, the Old and New Testaments, are meant. There is not so much difference in these explanations as some may apprehend, after all. Suppose we take the views of Brother Stipp, that Christ and the Holy Ghost are the two witnesses. The Holy Ghost is the spirit and life of all the Scriptures, and if the Scriptures could be separated from that spirit, the mere body of tlle Scriptures, deprived of all its real vitality, would be to us only a dead body, a mere form of words, without power or life. The church is the body of Christ; he is her life and immortality. To strip the church, as a witness, of her identity with Christ as her spiritual vitality, she would be as dead, in regard to spiritual things, as our natural body would be if all the natural life were taken from it. A living body is a body having life in it; take that away and it is only a dead body. This is certainly true in regard to the Scriptures, and also the church. But can the life of the Scriptures or that of the church be thus separated? In one sense they cannot, in another we think they can. In the street of the city new Jerusalem, where the pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, flows from the throne of God and the Lamb, neither of these bodies can die, for there shall be no death there. But in the street of the great city, which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified, there is death. Solomon says, "Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death." (Proverbs 7:27) Remember these two witnesses are not to lie dead in Zion, but in Sodom and Egypt, and how? While the rulers of the darkness of this world altogether ignore the testimony of the Bible, and set up their own wisdom, works and wills as a higher law, they still pretend to venerate the book, and will not suffer it to be put in the grave. They are busily engaged in multiplying copies of it, and are flooding the land with Bibles. But mark, it is the Bible as a dead body, not as a book of inspired testimony, not as God's witness, that they venerate it; they rejoice over it as a dead body, while they oppose with all their might its testi-

mony. Having now succeeded in gaining a controlling influence over the popular mind, they rejoice and send gifts one to another, because this witness which has in former times tormented them is dead, as a witness in support of truth and righteousness, and against fanaticism and willworship. In regard to the doctrine of salvation by grace, the Bible is no longer regarded as a witness, either in Sodom or Egypt. As a witness it is dead, but the body is prostrate in the street; nor is its testimony admitted in regard to any of the ordinances or institutions that characterize the church of God in the apostolic age. The divine government of God, as testified in the Scriptures in regard to the relations of servants and masters, parents and children, citizens and magistrates, is superseded in the public streets by what is familiarly called a higher law. Those who profess to be the divinely authorized exponents of the sacred volume, instead of proclaiming "Peace on earth," are making the most violent appeals to the maddest passions of men to drench the earth with human gore, and their pulpits are made to ring with the loudest blasphemies that ever fell on human ears. Death is the separation of the vital spirit from the body which had been animated by it. Allowing then that the Spirit of God, or the Holy Ghost, is the spirit of inspiration, and that God spake to the patriarchs by the prophets, and holy men who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, the rejection of the testimony of the Bible, in its spirit, as the testimony of God, while the book itself is retained in its letter, is to separate the life from the body, and in its absence from that spirit it is dead.

But we see also the church of God slain as a witness. It is true the church of Christ can never be deprived of her vitality in Christ, for her life is hid with Christ in God; but in her testimony, as a witness, through her ministry she is disregarded. A few weeks since, a committee visited the president of the United States, purporting to be the representatives of the clergy of all denominations of Christians; as such they were received by the chief magistrate of our nation. Their business was to persuade him to annul the relationship which God had instituted between two classes of the human family. But was there in the committee, or in the convention which they represented, a single member of the church of the living God? Not one; yet they presented themselves and were accepted as the representatives of every Christian denomination. True, the church of God shall and does dwell alone, and is not reckoned with the nations, but the offficially recognized body of the church is a body without a particle of spiritual life--a dead body. But this loathsome carcass cannot be one of the witnesses intended, for it has not been prophesying forty and two months in sackcloth; it has not been slain, nor have we any hope that the spirit of life from God will ever animate it with vitality. The true church of God, the mystical body of our Lord Jesus Christ, has been prophesying in the time and manner signified, and her testimony

as one of God's witnesses has been, like the leaves of the tree of life, for the healing of the nations. To her peaceful doctrine, her Christ like example and the effect of her testimony to the world, may be attributed all the ameliorating influences tending to the great cause of "on earth peace, good will toward men," which have relieved the nations of the earth from heathen darkness and the most abject wretchedness. As a witness for God and truth, the church has encountered the most determined and bitter opposition of all other sects and denominations of religionists, from her organization at Pentecost to the present time. But as a witness for God and truth, her voice is no longer heard nor admitted, either in Sodom or Egypt. The place where our Lord was crucified is the place assigned in prophecy for her to be slain. The gross and unnatural wickedness of Sodom, the darkness and bondage of Egypt, were figurative of the influences brought to bear in effecting the crucifixion of our Lord. The scribes, Pharisees and priesthood, and the perverted civil authorities of Judea and Rome, were blended in the accomplishment of the tragedy of Calvary, and the same or similar influences must be developed in silencing the witnesses of the Lord. Our modern scribes, Pharisees, priests and clergy are now the rulers of the darkness of this world, and having gained a commanding ascendancy over Sodom and Egypt, have they not effectually slain the church of God as a witness, so far as Sodom and Egypt are concerned? Yet the church is not exterminated nor put in a grave; she is still visible to her enemies as a prostrate antagonist, while over her, and over the dead body of the Scriptures, they who dwell on the earth (not on the sea of glass) rejoice, make merry and send gifts one to another.

Our object in this article is not to offer any new light on the subject of the two witnesses, as we do not feel competent to do so, but rather to show that the views of our brethren, which have been published in our columns for thirty years past, are not as discordant as some have apprehended. If in reality the witnesses are now slain, according to the prophecy, the triumph of antichrist will be short. The three days and an half of the virtual suspension of their testimony will soon be numbered, and at their fulfillment a more glorious state will be ushered in than the church has experienced for twelve hundred and sixty-three years and six months at least, if not more brilliant than has been witnessed since her organization. But whether our views on this important subject, and those of our brethren, are correct or not, it is beyond all reasonable doubt that we are approaching a momentous period in the history of the church, in which the Savior's admonition should be solemnly regarded: Take heed that no man deceive you. As he commandeth his disciples to watch the signs which preceded the destruction of Jerusalem, so are the saints of the present time admonished to watch the signs which indicate the destruction of Babylon. The sovereign order from his awful

throne is now being heralded in thunder tones: ***"Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." (Rev. 18:4) "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." (Rev. 16:15)***

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y., November 15, 1862.

"Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling not accordning to our works but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." — 2 TIMOTHY i. 9.

HAVE YOU any testimony that God has called you by his grace, quickened your soul into divine life, brought you under the curse of a condemning law, given you repentance for your sins, raised up a sigh and a cry in your breast for a sense of his pardoning love, brought you to the footstool of mercy, given you faith to believe in his dear Son, with any sweet hope that he has begun a gracious work upon your heart? Can you look back upon any never-to-be-forgotten period when the Lord, by his special and omnipotent grace, quickened your soul into divine life? for I do believe we never can forget the first sensations of the Spirit of God in his quickening movements upon the soul; when he, to use the figure of Moses, fluttereth over it as an eagle which stirreth up her nest, infusing and communicating a new and heavenly life, as when in creation he moved upon the face of the waters communicating life and energy to dead chaos. Surely if we ever felt the mighty hand of the Lord upon us, we can never forget the memorable time when he was first pleased to communicate divine light and life to our dead souls, to pour out upon us the spirit of grace and of supplications, to separate us from the world, to bring us to his feet with confessions and supplications, opening up and revealing eternal realities with a weight and a power that they entered into our deepest and most inward thought and feelings. Can you look back to such a time? Then God is for you; and if God is for you then you can, as he is pleased to strengthen your faith, look right through that blessed chain, with all its heavenly links, and see how he foreknew you before the foundation of the world, and wrote your name in the Book of Life.

Elder J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

New Hope Primitive Baptist Church September 21, 1996 Union Parish Louisiana.

Pursuant to a call heretofore sent out by Rehobeth Church for a presbytery to meet on the above date for the purpose of the ordination of

Brother Grady Putman to the office of Deacon of Rehobeth Church, the following Elders and Deacons met and organized themselves into a presbytery: Elders Brumfield, Campbell, Chapell, Daniel, Goad, Haygood, Jones, Morris, Smith, Vaughn, and Wilbanks.Deacons Bird, Chandler, Fox, Newman, Pilgreen, Pittman, and Tucker.

The presbytery organized itself by electing Elder C. C. Morris moderator and Brother Ned Barron as clerk. Brother Charlie Fox was appointed as spokesman for the church, who then presented Brother Grady Putman to the presbytery.

Afier due examination of said Brother as to deportment, qualifications, and the state of God's gift to them as a Deacon to the satisfaction of the presbytery, the presbytery proceeded to ordain him to the office of Deacon as follows:

The presbytery selected Elder Raymond Goad to word the prayer and Elder Richard Campbell to deliver the charge. Whereupon the presbytery then proceeded with the ordination, by the laying on of hands of the presbytery and with prayer by Elder Raymond Goad, and then by charge delivered by Elder Richard Campbell.

We the members of the presbytery commend Deacon Grady Putman to all orderly, orthodox Primitive Baptists of our same Faith and Order as being sound in doctrine, careful in deportment, and humble in the display of God's gift of the office of Deacon.

The right hand of fellowship was given him by the members of the presbytery, Rehobeth Church and Brethren of sister churches, and delivered back to the church as a duly ordained Deacon by the presbytery and received by the church.

Minutes of the proceedings were read and approved, and the presbytery was adjourned in order with prayer by Elder Wayman Chapell.

Ned Barron, Clerk

Approved for submission to "The Signs of the Times" by Rehobeth Church in conference on February 8, 1997.

Elder Shannon Vaughn, Moderator
Deacon Grady Putman, Clerk

THE STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The Staunton River Union Meeting will be held at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing, the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in June. Song services will begin at 10:00 a.m.

The church is located at 706 South Main Street in Gretna, Virginia.

We welcome all lovers of the truth to come and be with us. Also, we would like to invite ministers of our faith and order who have a mind to meet with us.

Elder Marvin Brumfield, Moderator
Brother Oscar Pickral, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

MARCH 1997

Mrs. Susan Cutts, VA $2.00
Mrs. Anne M. Pearson, MI 25.00
Eld. T. J. McMurrain, GA 2.00
Mrs. Norma W. Smith, VA 7.00
Mrs. Lillian C. Wood, NC 2.00
Mrs. Edith Sewell, FL 8.00
Mrs. Grace Manly, AL 5.00
Mr. & Mrs. J. Neely, AR 2.00
Robert G. Thomas, AR 5.00
Marion N. Meeks, NC 2.00
Mrs. Rachel J. Green, WV 2.00
Mrs. A.U. Hocutt, GA 2.00
Ralph A. Hocutt, Jr., GA
In memory Ralph Hocutt, Sr. 25.00
Eld. C.M. Haygood, TX 2.00

OBITUARIES

CLEMMIE MURPHY BISHOP

It is with mixtures of joy and sorrow that we report the death of our dear sister, Clemmie Murphy Bishop. Sorrow, because we miss her, yet joy in our Lord Jesus, because we have confidence that she has entered into the joyful presence of her Lord. Sister Bishop was born on October 21, 1906 in Union County, Arkansas. She was the daughter of Thomas Edgar and Martha Ballard Murphy. She taught school in El Dorado, Arkansas from 1927 to 1966. She was baptized by Elder R. W. Rhodes in 1970 and joined Rehobeth Church. Sister Bishop loved the Lord, the doctrine of free and sovereign grace, the church, and she loved her neighbor as herself. She was a faithful servant, always giving, helping, and supporting those around her. She served as Clerk of the church for several years. She loved to travel with her friends, visiting the sister churches around the country. Sister Clemmie passed away on August 12, 1996, at the age of 89. Her funeral was conducted by Elders Graydon Smith and Shannon Vaughn. We miss her greatly and look forward to meeting again in that Kingdom where "congregation ne'er break up, and sabbaths never end."

Written and submitted by Elder Shannon Vaughn at the request of Rehobeth Church.

BROTHER BOWMAN F. JOHNSON

We bow in humble submission to the will of our merciful and all wise Heavenly Father who has seen fit to call from our midst our Beloved Brother and friend Bowman F. Johnson. Brother Bowman was born July 8 1913, and died March 22 1997, making his stay on this earth 83 years 8 months and 14 days. I feel our loss is his eternal gain. Our deepest sympathy

goes out to his family and may they be comforted by God's love, and words of comfort is our prayers. He had a hope in an all wise, all powerful, and an all merciful God who has done all things well. Not a hope in himself or what he could do or had done, but what God had already done for him. He was a firm believer in salvation by Grace and Grace alone, and not by man's works. He believed in the election of God by that Grace and mercy of God before the foundation of the world, and that when he awakes he will be liken unto Christ's Glorious body, shouting praises unto Almighty God. He became a member of the Primitive Baptist Church May 8, 1948, and on July 31, 1993, he became a member of Fairview Primitive Baptist Church. He was faithful to his God and also to his Church until his health failed him. He was married December 2, 1932 to Clarice Bird, who preceded him in death. To this marriage was born three daughters and two sons who he leaves to mourn his passing. Also five grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild, and three sisters.

Services were conducted at Chapman's Mortuary, Huntington W.V. by Elders Ronald K. Crouch, Harold R. Johnson, and Brother William A. Johnson. He was laid to rest beside his wife at Ridgelawn Memorial Park, Huntington, W.V..

Written by request of the Church: Resolved: One copy for Church records, one copy for his family and one copy to be sent to the Signs Of The Times.

Elder Ronald K. Crouch - Moderator
Elder Harold R. Johnson - Asst. Moderator
Brother William A. Johnson - Clerk

LONZIE W. NICHOLS

It has been our Heavenly Father's will to remove from our midst, another of our dear Brothers in Christ, Lonzie Nichols, on January 7, 1997.

He was born in Floyd County, Virginia, a son of Amos and Lula Ingram Nichols, May 25, 1909.

He was married to Sister Ora Turner Nichols, March 26, 1932, and to this union two son's preceded him in death. He has two daughters and Son's-in-Laws, Venda Gale and Bobby Booth, Audrey and Eugene Cahill. Three grandchildren, Blain and Vanessa Cahill, Vickey and Richard Smith, Tim and Kim Cahill. Five great grandchildren and two step great grandchildren.

Brother Lonzie along with five other candidates united with Paynes Creek Primitive Baptist Church August 22, 1954 and was baptized by Elder Odell Thompson.

He loved his church and was a faithful member and believed in Salvation by Grace. He was ordained as a deacon on November 5, 1977.

I remember so well a few months before my daddy, Leonard Nichols

died, he gave Brother Lonzie the books to pass, and he remarked, "This will be your job, soon you will be the deacon here." Brother Lonzie did everything he could here at Paynes Creek Church, also helped at Sister Churches, as long as his health permitted. For the last three years he wasn't able to attend.

His funeral was held at Woods Funeral Home, January 9, 1997 by his pastor, Elder Hale Terry. Brother Lonzie was laid to rest at Jacksonville Cemetery in Floyd, Virginia.

Uncle Lonzie, we all loved you and will miss your humble and tender heart and a beautiful handshake here at Paynes Creek Church.

We feel our loss is your eternal gain and a better home is waiting for you.

Written in Love and Fellowship,
A Sister and Niece
Agnes Nichols Sutphin

BROTHER JESSE HUBERT TOWLER

In sadness, I attempt to comply with the request of Weatherford Church, that I may write in memory of our dear Brother Jesse Towler. He was born on October 22, 1914, in Pittsylvania County, Virginia a son of the late Joab Washington Towler and the late Nannie Wade Pickrel Towler. He died November 20, 1996, in Franklin Health Care Center, Rocky Mount, VA. Survivors include his wife, Ruby Shelton Towler, one son John Richard Shelton Towler of the residence in Gretna, VA; two brothers, G. Wilson Towler of Blairs, VA, and William Russell Towler of Crozet, VA; two sisters, Emma Towler Hammack of Danville, VA, and Louise Towler Giles of Mechanicville, VA.

Brother Jesse was a strong believer in salvation by grace and visited sister associations for many years. He was faithful to his church, serving humbly, had a calm and gentle manner and walked softly among his Brethren in love. He also served in Pittsylvania County School System. Brother Towler asked for a home with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, August 23, 1987 and was baptized September 27, 1987, by his beloved pastor, Elder O. K. Tench.

I believe Brother Towler was made reconciled to his illness and to death because he bore his afflictions without murmuring.

His funeral was conducted in Hollywood Baptist Church Cemetery by Elder Raymond Goad and Mr. Cecil Rhodes and his body was laid to rest beneath a mound of flowers to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. I feel we have been highly favored of God to have had fellowship with such a wonderful brother. He is greatly missed by his dear wife, family, church and friends.

May we all that mourn our loss be reconciled to God's will.

Written by: Elder Marvin Brumfield
Moderator: Elder Raymond Goad
Assistant Moderator: Elder Marvin Brumfield
Clerk: Pam Betterton

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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SONG

EXCEEDING precious is my Lord, His love divinely free!
And sure his name doth health afford
To sickly souls like me.

It cheers a debtor's gloomy face, Unbolts his prison door;
It brings amazing stores of grace To feed the gospel poor.

And if with lively faith we view His dying toil and smart,
And hear him say, it was for you, This breaks the stony heart.

An heavenly joy his words convey, The bowels strangely move:
We blush, and melt, and faint away,
Quite overwhelmed with love.

In such sweet posture let me lie,
And wet thy feet with tears,
Till joined with saints above the sky,
I tune my harp with theirs.

Berridge

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EDITORIAL

THE HOLY SPIRIT

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." 1 John 5:7.

What a mystery this is! But we believe it, if we have been born again and taught by the Holy Ghost. Jesus said, ***"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Jn 14:26.*** This Comforter is, ***"Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth in you, and shall be in you." Jn 14:17.*** It is of this Spirit, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Holy Ghost, for these are one and the same, that I desire to write; praying that God will direct my every thought to his praise, honor and glory, and bless them to the comfort and edification of his beloved children.

Paul tells us, ***"the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor 2:14.*** Jesus said, ***"That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit." Jn 3:6.*** Can any deny that David, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and all the patriarchs of old, and well as the prophets of God, were born of the flesh as are all men? Did they not receive the Holy Ghost? Of the prophets Peter said, ***"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Pet 5:7.*** Peter also spake of David, saying, ***"Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ." Acts***

2:29. Surely David had received the Holy Spirit, and he said, *"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." Ps 17:15.* What fleshly man could have written, as did David in Ps 139:15-16, *"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them,"* if he had not been given this prophecy by the Holy Ghost? In this prophecy David was speaking of the members of Christ's body, which is his church. (Eph 5:30 - Col 1:18.). God's prophets of old searched diligently for what the Spirit of Christ in them did signify, but it was revealed unto them, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister these things, which has been and is now being reported by them that preach the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Even the angels desire to look into this. 1 Pet 1:11-12.

Abraham was strong in faith, giving glory unto God. This strong faith had to be in him by the indwelling of the Spirit, for the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God. 1 Cor 2:14. Abraham believed God, *"And being fully persuaded that what he had promised, he was also able to perform. Therefore it was imputed unto him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed unto him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead." Rom 4:21-24.* How do we believe? *"This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."* Imputed righteousness is not through works of the law, but through faith. *"Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." Rom 4:16.* Our own righteousness, which is of self, is as filthy rags in the eyes of God: but, *"God hath laid on him (Christ) the iniquity of us all." Isa 53:6. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor 5:21.*

Isaac begat two sons by his wife Rebekah, and they struggled together in her, and she inquired of the Lord why it was so. And the Lord said, *"Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels: and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger." Gn 25:23.* Does this not show us that God has a chosen people? If they are chosen, they had to be previously among a people who were not chosen. These were twins and were called Esau and Jacob. Although the world teaches that God loves all men and hates no one, and is not willing that any should perish, yet it is written, *"Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."* This was said before they were born, having done neither good nor evil, that the purpose

of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth. Rom 9:11-13. God is not willing that any of his elect people should perish, but there are those who shall perish. ***"For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and them that perish: to the one the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life." 2 Cor 2:15-16.*** If God is not willing that any should perish, then no man shall perish, for God does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand nor say unto him, What doest thou? If none shall perish, why is a lake of fire prepared for them? ***"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Rev 20:15.*** According to nature we would judge that Esau was more righteous than Jacob, for Jacob was a deceiver, as his name implies; and he deceived his father Isaac that he might receive the better blessings, which should have been for Esau according to birthrights: also Laban, his mother's brother, to whom he fled for refuge. But by faith Isaac blessed both Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. All of this however was fulfilling the predestinated purpose of God. Esau sold his birthright to Jacob for a mess of red pottage, and thus despised his birthright. The world follows after this example, but the children of God can neither sell nor lose their birthright, for it is eternal life. This life was given them in Christ before the world was made. Jesus said, ***"I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."*** Neither can they be plucked from the Father's hand. Jesus said, ***"All that the Father hath given me shall come to me: and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up at the last day."***

In fear for his life Jacob fled from Esau, and in a certain place he dreamed a most wonderous dream, and beheld a ladder that sat upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven, and the LORD stood above it. And the LORD promised that He would give him the land on which he lay, that He would make his seed to be as the dust of the earth, and in him and his seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. And He promised to be with him, and keep him in all places that he should go, and bring him again to that same land where he was. Jacob heard these promises of God, but, as it appears to me, there was some questioning or doubts in his mind, and he vowed a vow, saying, ***"If God will be with me, and keep me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace: then shall the LORD be my God."*** I understand from this, that he would then truly know that the LORD was his God. (See Genesis chapter 28.)

When I first began reading the promises of God in the holy scriptures, I

also was very doubtful that they were for me. Eventually, however, I was given to believe and hope. If not deceived, I believe all the promises, even if I am one to whom they were not made. I still sometimes have serious doubt, yet I would not trade my little hope for the world and many like it. What is your experience? Do you doubt, and yet hope?

There should be no doubt that Jacob was a chosen vessel of God, and that God was directing his every step. ***"O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps." Jer 10:23.*** I think it not necessary that I should write lengthily concerning the blessings of God bestowed upon Jacob while he dwelled with Laban, but will mention that God gave him four wives, eleven sons, two daughters, and great wealth. His son Benjamin would be born later. These sons were to become the patriarchs of the twelve tribes of Israel. During that period Jacob continued in his deceiving ways, by which he obtained much of his wealth. Then the LORD told him to return unto the land of his fathers and kindred, and that he would be with him. Even then he did not call God his own, but said, "the God of my father hath been with me." Gn 31:5. When he came near to the land to which he was returning he became very fearful that Esau would meet him with evil intent: yet he did not call unto God, but trusted in himself that he could appease his brother. Therefore he sent servants to meet Esau with a very great present. Then he sent his wives and sons over the brook Jabbok, with all that he had, and he was left alone. That he was left alone is significant, for we also must be alone when God reveals himself to us. We may be among many people, but yet alone in our thoughts and feelings. I believe that everyone has experienced this at some time. It was here that God made it manifest unto him that He was his God. There was none to help as he wrestled with a man until the breaking of day. Jacob had been living in the darkness of night, but now a new day was dawning. The man prevailed not against him, therefore he touched Jacob`s thigh and the hollow of his thigh was out of joint. The man said, "Let me go, for the day breaketh." But he said, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." Surely this was our plea also when he revealed himself to us. Jacob was made to know that this man could bless him. The man asked his name and he said, Jacob. And the man said, ***"Thy name shall be no more be called Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."*** This power had been given him from on high, for there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Rom 13:1. The man did not reveal his name when asked, but he blessed Jacob there. He now had a new name and a new way of life to live, and because he was crippled by the thigh being out of joint he must now lean upon a staff, this being a strong faith in God. {We are not told what the man was, nor how he arrived there, but there should not be

any doubt that he was there by the will and power of God.}

Brethren, have we not wrestled with the Spirit of God while we were yet in darkness? When there was something troubling us that we could not understand? In the set time of God however, the day begins to dawn and we begin to see the light. It may come suddenly or gradually, but it brings rejoicing to the soul and we now desire to praise God continually. ***"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Cor 4:6.*** If we have been born again, the Spirit of God now dwells within us, and we are no longer in the flesh. As Paul said, ***"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." Rom 8:9-10.*** If Christ dwells in us, he is our life and our righteousness, and, ***"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."***

Though we have been born again of the Holy Ghost, we still have this body of flesh in which we dwell. Our flesh has not been changed and is full of lusts; and our flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that we cannot do the things that we would. Gal 5:17. There is a warfare within us now, yet if we walk in the Spirit, we shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. Gal 5:16. But when we are tempted by the lusts of the flesh, which is common to man, God is faithful and will not suffer us to be tempted above that which we are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it. 1 Cor 10:13. Now the works of the flesh are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations,wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: and they that do these things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against which there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

We know that a natural man must have food and drink in order to live. This is true also of the spiritual man. The food that sustains the fleshly man cannot sustain the spiritual man, neither can spiritual food sustain the flesh. The spiritual man must be fed with spiritual food. The fleshly man can neither eat nor even desire this food. Jesus said, ***"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Matt 5:6.*** Jesus Christ is our

righteousness, and he hath said, *"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even so he shall live by me. This is the bread that came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth this bread shall live for ever." John 6:53-58.* We know that in a natural sense we cannot eat his flesh and drink his blood, therefore this must be in a spiritual sense. Jesus said unto Satan, *"It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Matt 4:4.* He also said, *"It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Jn 6:63,* Many of his disciples went back and walked with him no more, for they could not believe in him. But unto his twelve apostles he said, *"Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go. thou hast the words of eternal life."* Through the Holy Ghost these words are preached by God`s called ministers, who preach the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. They have been commanded to take no thought, neither to premeditate what they shall speak; for it shall be given them in that same hour what they shall speak; for it is not them that speak, but the Holy Ghost. Mark 13:11. The children feed upon these words and are filled.

The Holy Ghost has ever lived in the chosen sons of God, that they might live by faith and worship God in spirit and in truth: yet it was the blood and water that flowed from the body of Jesus Christ that washed away all our sins and satisfied the holy justice of God. *"For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."* Sanctified means, being set apart for a holy purpose; and we are sanctified by the Holy Ghost. (Rom 15;16). Regardless what unregenerate men may preach concerning the final destiny of those who lived before the death of Jesus, we read in Zech.14:8, *"And in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them to the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea."* These seas represent God`s people before and after the crucifixion of our beloved Saviour.

Beloved brethren, I am subject to many errors, therefore prove all things by the holy scriptures, and may the Comforter, who is the Spirit of truth, always be with you. May you remember this poor sinner in your prayers of faith.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

VOICES OF THE PAST

SERMON BY ELDER J. P. HELMS AT THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION 1965

Again the Pigg River Association has met according to appointment. By rotation I stand before you for the purpose of trying to introduce by what is known as the Introductory Sermon. No man ever stood before you less qualified for this task than I. I realize to some measure that this is the last time I shall ever have the privilege of addressing you in this capacity. During the association here in Rocky Mount seventeen or eighteen years ago, my mother passed away on Friday. I have been blessed to attend all the associations that have been held with this church.

My desire is, above everything else, I have your prayers that God might bless me to proclaim the riches of His grace as I feel it was proclaimed when this association was organized at Little Creek Church in the year 1825.

I have been trying to think of something that I might read to you this morning. Recently I heard a man read a portion of the 4th chapter of Paul's letter to the church at Rome, and who began speaking by saying that he wanted to tell us what God would do, and what he would not do. That amazed me, because I have been made to believe, and I desire to earnestly contend for what *God has done;* and to affirm that what He has done, is *done forever.*

Last Sunday afternoon our present moderator, Elder Turner, was blessed to preach, and he spoke of one thing that has rested somewhat on my mind; and I will turn to the 5th chapter of Romans, and read one verse: *"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."* If I could be blessed to affirm and to bear record of this eternal truth, I would be blessed of the Lord of heaven and earth, to proclaim the riches of what He has done for his people.

The world is crying what He will do, if we will let him. But I want to lift up my voice here at the opening session of the old Pigg River Association, concerning what He has done--not what He will do, but what he has done for poor, unworthy worms of the dust. Here stands a living witness of his amazing mercy, because if justice had been dealt out upon me, I would not be here on this occasion.

In my early days in the ministry I remember something in particular in reference to this scripture. I had found Where it reads, *"Being justified by his blood,"* and I thought the Lord blessed me in a little measure, to preach the atoning blood of Christ for his people. The following week something attracted my attention and I turned to this scripture I have read; and it didn't read to suit me. I wanted to punctuate it differently, for this wouldn't do; but I found out soon that I was the one that needed punctuating, and not the scripture.

I have read to you, *"Therefore being justified by faith."* We might

pause, and ask, How far reaching is that? Farther than ever the tongue of an individual will be able to tell; farther than the mind of an individual sinner will ever be blessed to fathom. Justification is a doctrine that belongs only to God's humble poor. You know that the head of the government in the State of Virginia, or our national government, can pardon a criminal, and the criminal will come home free from the law; but, let him be a rogue or a murderer, the stain of that thing is in him, for he comes home a pardoned rogue or murderer. But here is something that makes one as clean as though nothing had ever stained him. In other words, something that has cleansed us entirely, and brings us into a wonderful condition. I confess that I can only say I hope that He was born for me; I can only say that I hope He lived for me; I can only say that I hope he died for me -- and not only died for me, but arose for me. And from time to time over a long period, he has visited me, and assured me that he had finished the work he came to do; and that when he bowed his head upon the cross and said, "It is finished," salvation in its entirety for the here and hereafter, was wrought out for everyone of his children. This is so far reaching that it embraces all of his children whether infants or aged, whether in the Old School Baptist Church or some other denomination: all of his children are embraced in it.

What is under consideration when the word *Faith is* used? I know it is often spoken of as something we can cultivate, something we can add to, or lose, as though it were a commodity. But let me assure you that if you had all the wealth in the universe you couldn't buy enough faith to put out a chigger's eye: and you know how much that would be.

What is faith? The best definition I have ever found, is contained in this Scripture, ***"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen ;"*** and then tells the effect of faith when it is granted to an individual. I tell you that it will make him believe in God. By faith the first man that ever fell under the sentence of death at the hands of his brother, offered a more acceptable sacrifice than his brother. Why ? it says, by faith. How did Abraham believe God ? by faith. That faith that is once delivered to the saints, is not offered but given you: When the Babe was laid in the manger, there was the gift of God in its entirety. Paul said in the 4th chapter of Romans, ***"Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed."*** It is impossible to find hope where there is no no faith. If we have faith, the Lord has us; we haven't got him.

I want to talk to you about something we don't get ourselves. Long ago a colored man said, ***"If you can get something, you can also lose it."*** So I want to tell you that my hope is that the author and finisher of faith, the first and the last, the Alpha and Omega found me, (not that he did not know where I was), as he did one of old, in a waste howling wilderness, and brought me by his own hand;

brought me to the place I was made to cry unto him, because all of my own works had failed. And I was made to know that faith is the gift of God in its entirety. No wonder the Apostle Paul, in bearing testimony here and there, always adds it to grace: By grace through faith. It is impossible to have one if the other isn't there, for every gift, every good gift, every perfect gift comes down from above in the person of the Lord of glory; and he takes up his abode in your heart. He illuminates in such a way that he gives you eyes to see, and a heart to understand. Don't tell me you have to believe to have faith, for belief is the effect of faith; and not the cause of it, by any means. Faith is the gift of God, it is not of works lest any man should boast. This certainly ought to set and seal all the work mongers in the universe.

I might say here that in my first going to the association as a messenger from old Republican Church, there were between twelve and thirteen hundred members of this association; now there are not quite eight hundred. What took place ? Have the witnesses that God chose to stand and bear record failed? No! for there is no failure with Him. God's purpose is being carried out in this association, as it is evervwhere. Sometimes I have been made to think, and to point my finger at myself, and say, You have failed. Yes, I admit I am a failure, but I am so thankful that I can tell you of one that never has, and can never fail; and that one is the author and finisher of every bit of faith that has been or ever will be here upon the earth.

The God that created the universe, who was made manifest and laid in a manger, when it was said to those on the hill that night, ***"This shall be a sign unto you, you will find him wrapped in swaddling clothes, laid in a manger,"*** in him was all the gift that God had ever promised throughout all ages to his people. What more do we need today, than Him? He is the only one that ever said he would bring his children from the North, and say to the South keep not back; and that he would bring his sons and daughters from afar, even from the ends of the earth.

I know I have been among you for a long time. When I was ordained there were seventeen Elders above me on the list, and now I am at the head of the list--seventeen have gone on before; and soon according to nature I will be called to quit the walks of men. But the outstanding thing among our people has always been, and will always be contained in the language of Revelation, ***"The Lord omnipotent reigneth."*** Not only does he reign over this or that, he reigns and rules over all things that are. And sometimes I can bear record, because I am given an eye to behold it: that not a leaf has ever quivered, not one has ever fallen that isn't in keeping with and according to the eternal will of God. God has appointed the coming of every one of his children into the kingdom, for there is only one way to come, and that is by the new birth: not by being born naturally, for that which is of the flesh is flesh, and that which is of the Spirit is Spirit.

"Being justified." This man that stands before you has a hope that he is justified fully from everything that ever has, or ever can come against him. In the 8th chapter of Romans it is written, ***"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect; it is God that justifieth."*** Who, therefore, can bring any charge before the court of heaven against you. God doesn't look at you as men: my hope is that he looks at me through the Lord Jesus Christ. All of my righteousness: every bit that I can lay claim to as mine, is as filthy rags. Unless our righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the hypocrites and Pharisees, we are gone. How then are we to escape? By faith: ***"Therefore being justified by faith."*** Justified before whom? before God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Doesn't he hold everything in his own hands? Is there anything you can think of that is not under his control? Has he ever been surprised ? Has he ever come short one iota of his eternal will being done? I feel that if anything has been wrought in me, it is, That God has all the power there is in his own hands. Don't undertake to tell me to fear the Devil -- I have long since learned that he doesn't hold the keys to his own kingdom: he can't do anything without the God of heaven and earth. If it is according to God's will, it is going to be done; and if it is not according to his will, it won't be done.

So Jesus came, born of a woman according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. It was according to God's will that he was crucified: he was crucified between two thieves, and gave up the ghost. He was laid in the tomb three days and nights, all according to the counsel of a covenant keeping God. Don't say that man had anything to do with it. We see a movement in Rome, trying to free those from the charge of crucifying the Lord of Glory, as though man was the author of it. But I want to tell you that, regardless of what you may think or say, all of it was according to the eternal will of God. Without his crucifixion, without his death and resurrection, where would you and I be? By him we live, and by faith stand justified before God.

It is more than I can understand; and I go with my head bowed down most of the time: if I could only know, -- if I could have more evidence, has been my cry all these years. I realize that I soon must pass into the great beyond with a little hope which I received long ago in a cabin close to the Town of Rocky Mount. I am resting and abiding upon this one thing: that He came to me where I was. I had finished my work--all of it, for I had come to the place where there was no more praying, no more promises--I had failed in everything. I have tried again and again to tell about it; and I think of what my old grandfather, in his last hours, told me: "I must go into the great beyond with a little hope which sometime I have been ashamed to tell." Here stands another one who must go and face his Maker, with the hope that the Lord of Glory suffered for me-- fulfilled every law and all of its demands for me in such a wonderful way; that I stand today, (not will be

tomorrow; but now,) justified by faith; so that in the sight of God I stand as pure and holy (not in the flesh, but) in the Spirit as the God of heaven is, Can you receive that? Oh, I know your groans, I know your fears: I know all about them; but nevertheless when we can see Jesus, we see him making an offering for all of our sins, not part of them: putting them away by his own death upon the cross; and being raised for our justification, assures us that our hope is not in vain. God has appointed so many hills for us to climb, so many ravines for us to go into the depths, but in the end the glory land is awaiting for you -- already prepared.

So away with the idea of telling what God will do and what he won't do. I want to tell you that everything is made ready for you; and you with all of your vileness according to your own judgment, will find where Paul gloried in suffering persecutions: and doubts and fears were his portion. Yet in spite of all that, he was justified fully and freely: so he stands justified before God. So, Old School Baptists, in spite of all that you are surrounded with, in spite of all that you may think or do, if God is for vou, nothing can be against you.

Last Sunday Elder Turner was blessed to bring a message to me that lifted me clear up, and made me to realize in a measure, that in spite of all that I am, God loved me, and gave himself for me. He didn't send anybody else -- he came himself in the person of his Son: by whom we stand justified -- not tomorrow, not some day that is coming, but justified now freely from all sin and iniquity.

If we could only be given to realize this eternal truth, the nights wouldn't be so long sometimes: I wouldn't have to roll and tumble so much; nevertheless you many rest assured that your salvation and everything is prepared for you. Sometimes we can get a little comfort out of the scripture where He said, ***"Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."***

So God has made everything ready for you; and in all you are doing here, he is making you ready for it. I often try to tell Old School Baptists what is expected of them. This grace, this faith given you does not make you a boastful character of what you have done; never makes you boast of anything you have ever done or thought of in your life. But when we are given to think aright, we cry, ***"Glory to God in the highest."*** Yes, we glory in God, and we are glorified in him; for whom he did predestinate, all them he called; and whom he called he justified; and whom he justified he glorified. ***"What shall we then say to these things, if God be for us who can be against us."***

Let it be remembered by everyone of you, that I stand in your presence, the presence of deacons and elders, and plead my inability, but tell you that God is able, not to do something, but has done it: has finished it, and prepared heaven with all of its glory for you--and is preparing you for it day after day. Oh, if I could preach like I

thought I had learned almost fifty years ago, I would be something; but instead of getting bigger, I am shrinking up; instead of knowing more, I tell you ministers I know less than I knew long ago. The growth in grace and knowledge of the truth, brethren, never has exalted one to know more than the least of you, but it brings us all down on one level. I stand before you trying to preach to you the riches of God's grace, when I feel deeply that you know more about it than I do. I am going to give way here, but I would leave this thought with you: God is not going to do anything more for one of his children. When he yielded up the ghost upon the cross, and said, "It is finished," the atonement was made; and when he arose from the dead, he sealed it. Not only did he seal it, but he is attending to his own affairs today: There is not a home in the mountains of Franklin County that he is ashamed to come to, or ashamed to introduce himself to you and make you know what a vile wretch you are--and what a glorious Saviour he is. How well I know this! I could go now, though the cabin is gone, to the very spot--if I could only feel what I felt that day, and hear what I heard that day, there wouldn't be so much doubt with me: I heard a voice, and it affirmed that He created heaven and earth; and that He was my Saviour. There was life in that word--there was power in it; and for a little while there was no doubt in me.

But it wasn't long before something else came: doubts arose; and doubts have been my portion, it seems, all these years. But I affirm to you, children of the most high God, that the sacrifice was made long ago: you don't have to make it; you don't have to help. It is not by a little grace and a little works: it is either all grace, all grace by faith, or there is none.

Where is He now ? He is seated at the right hand of God. What is He doing now? He is making intercession for us. Oh, how often I feel the need of his intercession: He still stands between us and the judgment, the righteous judgment of God; He stands between Him and us, and nothing is ever charged against us.

(The above was the Introductory Sermon by Elder J. P. Helms at the Pigg River Association, held with the church at Rocky Mount Virginia, in August, 1965. It was reeorded, and is edited for publication.

"By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God," is what the brethren of the churches of this association have believed from the beginning; and it was good to hear the oldest Elder among them confirming that they still believed the same things now -- after one hundred and forty years. Elder Helms relates some of his experiences in being brought into the knowledge and love of the truth. -- J. D. W.)

(Since the above was prepared for publication, Elder Helms has been called home, at the age of eighty-five. An obituary will be prepared soon. -- J. D. W.)

GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM

Chapter V.

Gen. XV. 2 And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus.

Gen. XV. 3. And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed; and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.

"He had bestowed many temporal blessings upon him, as well as spiritual ones; having given himself in covenant, and all things in it, but had not given him a child: ***and one, lo, born in my house is mine heir;*** meaning either Eliezer or his son, whom he had made his heir or intended to make him, since he had no child."

Gen. XV. 4. And behold the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, this shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.

"This Eliezer shall not be thine heir, this servant of thine, shall not be thine heir, ***but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir;*** that is, the one that shall inherit all that thou has, that shall be begotten by thee."

Gen. XV. 5. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward the heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them. And he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

"The multitude of his seed is before signified by the dust of the earth, which cannot be numbered, Gen. xiii. 16; and here by the stars of the sky, innumerable as they are to man. Now Abram here is bid to try what he could do; ***and he said so shall thy seed be;*** as innumerable as the stars, as they were, even his natural seed shall be, Heb. XI. 12 and especially his spiritual seed, who have the same kind of faith he had, and as they will be in the last day particularly, Hos. I. 10, 11.

Gen. XV. 6. And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

"And he believed in the Lord; the essential Word of the Lord, in Christ the Lord his righteousness; he believed in the promise of God, that he should have a seed, a very numerous one; he believed that the Messiah would spring from his seed; he believed in him as his Savior and Redeemer; he believed in him for righteousness, and be believed in his righteousness as justifying him before God; ***and he counted it to him for righteousness;*** not the act of his faith, but the object of it, not the promise he believed, but what was promised, and his faith received, even Christ and his righteousness; this was imputed to him without works, and while he was uncircumcised, for the proof of which the apostle uses this passage, Rom. IV. 3, 10, 22, 23, 24. Wherefore this is not be understood of any act of his being esteemed and accounted a righteous one, and he pronounced and acknowledged a righteous person on account of it; for Abram was not justified before God by his own works, but by the righteousness of faith, as all that believe are, that is, by the righteousness of Christ revealed to faith,

and received by it; what is imputed is without a man, and the imputation of it depends upon the will of another; such is the righteousness of Christ without works imputed by God the Father. This is the first time we read of believing, and as early do we hear of imputed righteousness."

Gen. XV. 7. And he said unto him, I am the Lord that brought you out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give give thee this land to inherit it.

Gen. XV. 8. And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?

"Not as questioning or doubting whether he should or no; but this he asks for the further confirmation of his faith in the promise, and for the sake of his posterity, that they might more easily and strongly believe that they should inherit the land given and promised to them; nor is it culpable to ask a sign of God with such a view; good men have done it, as Gideon and Hezekiah, without being blamed for it; yea, Ahaz is blamed for not asking one."

Gen. XV. 9. And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle dove, and a young pigeon.

"This with what follows, is the sign by which Abram might know that he, that is his seed, should inherit the land of Canaan; for the whole of this is an emblem of the state and condition of his posterity, until they should inherit the land of Canaan; therefore he is ordered to take out of his herd and flock this and the following creatures, which were used in the sacrifices before the ceremonial law was given, as well as under it; and the distinction of creatures for sacrifice, though not for food, was known as early, as appears from Gen. VIII. 20. This difference is to be observed, the Levitical law required creatures of a year old only to be offered; whereas, these were three years old, because they are then grown and in their full strength and greatest perfection; it should be remarked that these creatures here made mention of were not taken merely for sacrifice nor is there any mention made of their being offered; though it is probable that they might be offered after they had answered the principal end, which was to be a sign, whereby Abram might know that his seed sould inherit the land; but the intention of God was, that as by them Abram's seed might be taught what sort of creatures they were to offer for their sins, so chiefly to show that they themselves would fall a sacrifice to the rage and fury of their enemies, in a land not theirs, and be used as these creatures were; and the number three may denote the three centuries in which they would be afflicted, and in the fourth come out safe and whole like the undivided birds, the turtle dove and pigeon to which they were comparable."

Gen. XV. 10. And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against the other; but the birds divided he not.

"It is generally thought, there was such a distance between the pieces, that there might be a passage between; it being usual in making cov-

enants for the covenantors to pass between the parts of a creature slain, signifying that, should they break the covenant made, they deserved to be cut asunder as that creature was - see Jer. XXXIV. 18. So a burning lamp, or lamp of fire, an emblem of the Divine Being, is said (Gen. XV. 17.) to pass between those pieces; all this was an expression of the affliction of the prosterity of Abram, of their being distressed in the land Egypt, cut as it were in twain there, and of their various dispersions in other countries; and yet, like the bones in Ezekiel's vision, were gathered together, and united again; and it may have respect to the division of the people of Israel into two kingdoms, in the times of Rohoboam, and their after reunion, and especially in the latter day, Eze. XXXVII. 16, 22: but the birds divided he not; but laid them one against another, as he laid the pieces; so the birds used in the sacrifice under the law were not divided, Lev. I. 17; which may signify, that when the people of the Jews, in the latter day, are converted, and brought together in their own land, they will better answer the character of turtles and dove than they ever did, and will be no more divided and separated from each other."

Gen. XV. II. And when the fowls came down on the carcases, Abram drove them away.

"Birds of prey, as eagles, vultures, kites, crows, &c., are an emblem of the Egyptians and other enemies of Israel, who came down upon them to devour them; Abram drove them away; this may respect the effectual fervent prayer of Abraham, his prayer of faith for them, in answer to which they were delivered out of the hands of the Egyptians and other enemies, Abram saw would distress them."

Gen. XV. 12. And when the sun was going down a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him.

"And a deep sleep fell upon Abram; through a more than ordinary influence of God upon him which bound up his senses, and cast him into a trance, when he had the following prophecy and vision, which more fully explained to him the emblem he had been conversant with; this was such a sleep as fell upon Adam, Gen. II. 21: and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him; so it was represented to his mind in vision, which signified the great affliction after expressed by darkness, that should come upon his children in Egypt and elsewhere."

Gen. XV. 13. And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety, that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years.

"Whilst he was in a deep sleep, this is said to him in a vision of prophecy; know of a surety, or, in knowing thou shalt or may know; and be assured of it, being told of it by the Lord himself, who foreknows all things that ever come to pass; many of which he acquits his people of beforehand, nor would he hide from Abram his friend, what should befall his posterity; that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs; this prophecy could

not take place at this time, since Abram had then no seed; but at the birth of Issac, in whom his seed was called, who sojourned, or was a strainger in Gerar, a part of the land of Canaan, as Jacob also in the same land, Gen. XXVI. 3; XXXVII. 1; as well as he and his posterity, lived as strangers in the land of Ham, in Egypt, Psa. CV. 23; and neither of these countries were theirs; for though there was a grant of Canaan to Abram and his seed, it was not in possession; though a land of promise, it was a strange land, a land of their pilgrimage, and where all the patriarchs lived in it as such, EXod. VI. 4; Heb. XI. 9: and shall serve them; the inhabitants of the land not theirs, that is, the Canaanites and the Egyptians, especially the latter; these they served after the death of Joseph, by whom their lives were made bitter with hard bondage: and they shall afflict them four hundred years; this term of four hundred years is not to be joined either with the word afflict or serve; for their hard servitude and affliction, did not last long, but a few years at most; but with the phrase, *a stranger in a land not theirs,* and the *rest,* is to be included in a parenthesis, thus, *and thy seed shall be a stranger in a land not theirs (and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them) four hundred years;* so long they shall be strangers and sojourners, as they were partly in the land of Canaan, and partly in the land of Egypt, neither of which was in their posssession, within which space of time they would be in a state of subjection and servitude, and be greatly afflicted and oppressed, as they were, particularly by the Egyptians before their deliverance from them, Exod. i. 22; Gen. vi. 14. These four hundred years, as before observed, are to be reckoned from the birth of Isaac, to the Israelites, going out of Egypt, these round numbers are only given, as is very usual; and though the sojourn of the Israelites is said to be four hundred and thirty years, Exod. xii. 40; this takes in the sojourn of Abram in the land, who entered into it 25 years before the birth of Isaac, which sdded to four hundred and five the sum total is 430; for Aram was seventy-five years old when he left Aaran and went to Canaan, and Isaac was born when he was one hundred years old, Gen. vii. 4; xxi, 5."

Gen. XV. And also that nation whom they shall serve will I judge; and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

"The Egyptians, to whom they were servants, and by whom they were severely used, the Lord threatens to enter into judgment with and take vengeance on, as he did, by his judgment upon them, by inflicting the ten plagues on them which made them willing to let Israel go: *and afterwards shall they come out with great substance,* as they did after the four hundred years were ended; with much gold, silver, jewels and raiment."

Gen. XV. 15. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be burried in a good old age.

Gen. XV. 16. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again; for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.

"The seed of Abram were in the land of canaan before their descent into Egypt; and it is here predicted and promised that they shall come thither again, as they did in the fourth generation of those who descended thither; for Moses and Aaron were the fourth from Levi, or Eliezer from Kohath, and Caleb from Judah; or rather this was the fourth age or century from the birth of Isaac, men living at that time about 400 *years: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full,* and therefore would not be turned out of the land, and the seed of Abram could not till then inherit it."

Gen. XV. 17. And it came to pass, that when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp, that passed between those pieces.

"The sun was goingdown when the deep sleep fell upon Abram, and now it was set: *and it was dark,* a dark night, a time of great affliction and distress to Abram's posterity as it was after Joseph's death: *behold a smoking furnace,* or the likness of one; for all this was a vision to Abram and was an emblem of the great trouble and afflictions of the children of Israel in Egypt, called the iron furnace, Deut. iv. 20: *and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces,* or a lamp of fire; an emblem of the *Shechinah,* or majesty of God, who afterward appeared in a pillar of fire before the Israelites after their deliverance out of Egypt and through the wilderness, when their salvation went before them as lamp that burneth, of which this was a token; this burning lamp passed between the pieces of the heifer, goat and ram, that, Abram had divided in tbe midst, as was usually done when covenants were made, Jer. xxxiv. 18. Here God made a covenant with Abram, as appears from the following verse; and as a confirmation of it passed between the pieces in a lamp of fire, showing that he was and would be the light and salvation of this people, Abram's seed, and an avenger of their enemies; only God passed between the pieces, not Abram, this covenant being as others God makes with men, only on one side; God in covenanting with men, promises and gives something to them, but men give nothing to God, but man receives from God as was the case between God and Abram."

J.K. Booton

ORDINATION MEETING

Have you ever been lifted up from this world, together with a host of your brethren and friends, and blessed to soar on the wings of God's wondrous Love into the heavenlies ? Have you ever witnessed the Power and Love of God permeating the atmosphere and filling each heart to overflowing with unspeakable joy and love? Have you ever been amazed with the sacredness and solemnity of each and every word spoken and act performed? Have you ever been in a meeting when it seemed that each and every one who spoke was blessed to fitly speak the right words at the proper stime throughout?

If not deceived, this was witnessed by the writer and those present at the Ordination Meeting held with Pleasant Hope Chureh near Atlanta, Texas, October 29th and 30th, 1955. This meeting was called for the purpose of ordaining Lic. Lloyd Wall, of Bivins, Texas to the officeship of elder.

This was truly an ordination meeting. It pleased the Lord to manifest His mercy and grace and make His power known tlkoughout this meeting. The central theme throughout was the duties, qualifications, responsibilities, and importance of a god-called minister. No one sitting through this series of sermons could lightly consider the high and grave vocation of preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ and pastoring churches. This so impressed me that my constant prayer since has been, "Lord, qualify me for this exalted position and enable me to walk worthy of the vocation!"

The appropriate climax was Sunday. Bro. Lloyd Wall was assigned to occupy the pulpit. He called upon Elder J. T. Everett to word the Introductory Prayer. Fitly spoken words stimulated by the powerful love of God flowed fluently from Elder Everett's mouth as he expressed thanksgiving to God for such manifestation of His loving kindness and earnestly beseeched the Lord for a continuation of His loving favors upon each and every one--especially to bless Bro. Lloyd Wall in his endeavor to speak in that trying hour. Bro. Lloyd Wall then arose and began giving an interesting account of his experience and call to the ministry. The Holy Spirit seemed to envelope him so that his countenance shined and his voice mellowed as he gave a detailed account of this wonderful experience. At the proper time he told how and when that his mother informed him that God had revealed to her before he was born that he would be a man-child and would preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.

When sufficient time had been devoted to his experience and call to the ministry God blessed him to gracefully express his conscientious convictions and belief in the power and wisdom of God relative to the complete salvation of His people. He proclaimed that the wisdom of God was complete in eternity before time began, ordaining all things to fall out in their proper time and place so as to work together for good to them who are the called according to His purpose. Bro. Wall was blessed to treat upon the fundamental principles of the doctrine beginning with predestination and closing with a full explanation of his belief and hope in the resurrection of these bodies into life immortal. When he finished speaking several minutes we re used in making manifest the love, fellowship, and endorsement by the elders, deacons, brethren and friends present in clasping hands with Brother Wall.

When Brother Wall had taken his seat, we sang a hymn, and opportunity for membership was announced. Whereupon his wife, Ruby Wall, came forward asking for a home with the church. Amidst great rejoicing she was received as a worthy candidate for baptism.

I deem it proper here to insert some instances to prove that God was reigning in this affair and making manifest His providence. It pleased the Lord to make it known to a young son of a deacon that Sister Ruby would become a member of the church that day, before He revealed it to her. I quote two different conversations in order to prove this.

A little boy startled his parents at the breakfast table Sunday morning by saying convincingly, "Miss Ruby is going to join the church today." His parents inquired, "How do you know?" The little boy answered, "I dreamed it last night." Another conversation took place during the lunch hour at church. The baptism being scheduled so early in the afternoon my wife felt that Sister Ruby possibly came prepared for the baptism. She asked, "Ruby, did you bring your clothes, or will you have to go home for them?" Ruby answered, "I will have to go get them as I did not know I was going to do this." How mysterious is the working of God to prove that He is at the helm!

The elders and deacons present organized themselves into a presbytery to ordain Lic. Lloyd Wall to the office of elder immediately after Sister Ruby had been given the right hand of Christian fellowship. The ordination proceeded in an orderly manner including laying on hands and prayer, thus ordaining him to the full work of a gospel minister. His father in the flesh as well as in the ministry, Elder T. A. Wall, calmly gave his son the grave charge including good advice and proper counsel relative to the walk and conversation becoming to a young minister, Elder T. A. Wall also warned his son of certain evils to be shunned and unpleasant experiences to be endured as a good soldier.

At two o'clock the same afternoon Elder Lloyd Wall performed his first official act as an ordained minister when he led his wife, Ruby, down into the water and baptized her in the liquid grave. This was performed in such calm and graceful manner that it is agreed by all who witnessed that he performed as though he had baptized many.

I have assisted in the ordination of eight elders but this was the most inspiring and solemn occasion I have ever witnessed. Other young men are being brought into the ministry in this section by our God. He will not leave Himself without a witness. We shall not die. God has ordained that the true Doctrine of salvation by grace through the merits of Christ will continue to be preached. Our enemies continue to say, It will not be long until there will be none left." They wish it could be true but we CANNOT believe it.

E. J. Lambert

ROMANS 14:10-12.

But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

For it is written, "As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

Matthew 12: 29; Luke 11: 21-23.

God's people are weak, they are also strong. Their weakness is in the Spirits they are strong in the flesh. They are a paradoxical complex. Nothing can be stronger than he that can change things, that is man's outlook but it belongs only to God. No creature has the scriptural prerogative to claim that. They are doing it. It is a strong individual that *thinks* he *can* change things. The Lord reckoned natural men and women as strong. We do not mean by this that the Lord thought of them as having power, but that they *thought* they did is that true? That is true of all the children of Adam in their natural state There has never been any more totalitarian power than a man that did not have to do anything that he did do; that could choose heaven or hell, Jesus Christ or the Devil.

This strong man has a palace, it is a gorgeous construction. Just why would anybody live in a hut when he had an inexhaustable source of material to select from? They tell me we can have what we want to have. The Arminian preachers in Job's day told him what to do to have peace with God and great good from him (Job 22:21). It did not do him any good. Don't you see that they lived in a royal palace they recognized nor knew no doctrine but conditionalism; their goods were in peace, they kept them in peace. Job's goods were all spoiled. Why the difference? Is there any explanation? To find a natural explanation is easy, but to find a scriptual or experimental explanation to one of the stripe of Job's comforters it cannot be done. This palace of the strong man had doors and windows wherever needed, he can go and come as he pleases. No need at all for him to ever be shut up and unable to come forth; no need for him to ever have any winding stairs (Ezek. 41:7) but for everything to be on a level and he able to mount above any obstacle, and to leap any hurdle that might come against his palace. The windows would the placed in the best position so as to have full benefit of all light to see out; inside he would have great artificial lights so there would never be any darkness; he would have command of them in such a perfect way that light would be so common to him that he would think his neighbors, brethren and friends could have such a dwelling if they had done as he. This strong man has a perpetual fountain in his palace; there is not any going out in desert lands and water giving out; there is no falling into pits, becoming a captive and thirsting for water; neither is there any panting for the water of life, because inside his palace water is to be had for the taking. Too, this palace is protected from storms, rains, tempests and cold, it is a complete shelter from every molesting thing, everything that ever comes against this man is under his control. To be sure God *would* destroy his palace if he disobeyed, but he is not going to do that. He *can do it,* but he will not because he can obey.

In this palace it follows that there are many priceless gems and works of art. The keeper is a rich man, he has

acquainted himself with God and great gain has been his reward. God needs him in his kingdom--in fact the perpetuation of the kingdom and the promulgation of the news of the kingdom is dependent upon him. He can do all this. Everything depends on; him. God has done all he can to save the race and he is equal to the task before him. Now God needing all this and the man having an inexhaustible supply, he has thus traded what he has to God for the many gorgeous goods that are in this palace. These goods are kept in peace. This strong man has the palace; he has the goods and he is armed. In perfect complacency and satisfaction he goes his way, He has everything and is in no danger of losing it because he *can* keep right on in favor with God! Dear reader this is a picture of us all in nature, but let us look at the other side. He has gone on his way not knowing that there was a stronger One, but this One reckoneth not with men as to the time of their acknowledging him as King, so he comes upon the strong, man. The first thing he does is to disarm him. How does Jesus Christ disarm a sinner? Does he use carnal 'weapons? No sir, never that! A sinner, overcome is a helpless sinner, but being overcome is not all the armor that he had placed so much confidence and trust in is taken away. What was the armor? Was it grace, mercy, love? The echo sounds into every wayfaring heart. No, a thousand times no. What did he trust in? His trust was in self and that alone. God was not active and he had not been since Christ rose from the dead. Salvation in time and eternity depended on his own action, but now the Creator has come upon the creature; the stronger upon the strong; the high and exalted Ruler of heaven and earth has moved upon the low and abased and undone of earth. Behold how he deals with him. Foolish people with dangerous weapons must be handled carefully. Just think! What if God had let us do as we thought in saving souls (Mat. 21:15)? What if he had let us go on thinking that our way was unto life (Rom. 8:6)? Conditiona-lism in the hands of sinners is dangerous to them, that is, dear reader, to live and die a strong man is evidence that we are not one that Jesus atoned for, so he overcomes this strong man that can do as he pleases (John 19:10); that can and has done many wonderful works (Mat. 7:22); that has lived in his palatial home of plenty, looking with disdain on the poor. God overcomes! That is absolute. Not a case has ever been chalked up as a failure. Heaven does not afford a record book of the failures of God, and the onlyone of any kind on earth is of the accomplishments of God and the failures of men (see Gen. to Rev.).

Dear child of God do you not take courage that God has, as you hope, disarmed you? It is repetition but let us ask again and again what arms has the taken from us? It is nothing more nor less than the idea that we have ability. Ability is strength and God takes that away from us. In the two steps so far God has been the actor Man has been passive or inactive. Each step has found man entirely or absolutely

helpless. Preaching that kind of absolutism will not drive people from the church that have any interest in it. But the stronger One proceeds step by step to the subjugation of this man. 3-- He binds him. We never read of the bonds being removed. God does not do things to undo them. I want to hasten to say that I do not understand that this man is bound so that he has no more movement. I do not mean any such. I do not want it said of me that I believe God's children are inactive. I do not do it. God has called servants to serve him and they do. Men are active, in the kingdom, but this step is an important one. This being bound works two was. I believe, or trust that I believe, in both of them. Bound in such a way that they never, never can again go back to the hog wallow of sin and live in the enjoyment; bound in such a way that he is no longer able to do as he pleases; he has lost the use of his strength; his palace is no longer fit to live in -- in short this binding keeps him from the service of the Devil and binds him over to the service of God. 4-- This stronger one has completely and absolutely brought the strong one into subjugation. God did not take sin out of him;he did not take his strength away from him; he did not take his goods away from him, but he spoiled, them. Somehow, dear reader, it seems to me impossible for a child of God to ever trust in his own works. All, all his goods are spoiled. Every good thing that he formerly trusted in is in a state of ruin. Brethren, spoiled things commonly have a strong odor, of carrion about them. I do not see how any one can ever have any more confidence in their own works. Those goods are spoiled. The putrefaction does not get less; the smell does not ever approach perfume; there in our own being we live with them and they stay right on, keeping us reminded that we are sinners of the deepest dye, and that the best days we have we carry the sentence of death in us. I believe Paul was touching this when he wrote, that vital message to the church at Rome. *"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."* I have never heard that quote in support, of conditionalism. Imagine that! Mortify the deeds of your own body! Cause a gangrenous condition to come about in your own loved fleshly works! Never! No sir, dear child of God, the strong, holy One has overcome, broken your trust in yourself, bound you and spoiled your goods. They stay that way. Spoiled goods cannot save a spoiled man, but Jesus saves.

Elder W. D. Griffin

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 1997

Homer E. Wade, VA	$2.00
Raymond Oxley, WV	2.00
Mrs. Rachel Smith, NC	2.00
Mrs. Arlene Hole, NC	2.00
Mrs. Henry McGinnis, KY	2.00
Eld. Shannon Vaughn, AR	2.00
Andrew C. Agee, VA	2.00
Richard Towler, VA	5.00
Mrs. Darrel Rhoades, TX	10.00

MEETINGS

OLD PINE CREEK CHURCH

An annual all day meeting will be held, the Lord willing, at Old Pine Creek Church on the fourth of July 1997. The Church is located off highway #221, five miles north of Floyd, Va. Those coming from Floyd turn left on to road #682. Those coming from Roanoke, turn right on to road #682. All lovers of the truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Hale Terry

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1997 Staunton River Association will convene the Lord willing, at Weatherford Church meeting house. The host church is Danville Primitive Baptist Church for this our one hundred fifty-six session. Services will begin at 10:00 a.m. Saturday July 13 and on Sunday July 14.

Weatherford Church is located about five miles from Gretna, VA. in Pittsylvania County at the intersection of highways 760 and 763.

We invite visitors and correspondents to attend this meeting with us.

Burnell B. Williams, Asso. Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be, the Lord willing, at the Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church the fifth Sunday in June 1996. We welcome all lovers of the truth to come & meet with us. The song service will begin at 10:00 a.m. The church is located on Tate St. near the UNCG which is just off highway #6 or West Lee St. as you come into Greensboro.

Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Wayne Edwards, Clerk

OBITUARIES

BROTHER SAMUEL LEWIS POFF

If God will bless me with the ability to do so, I will attempt to write an obituary for our dear Brother Samuel Lewis Poff who we called Brother "Gee."

Brother Gee loved his church and believed in "Salvation by the Grace of God." He had been a member of Salem Church since February 1956. While visiting him in the nursing home, he was so cheerful and wanted to talk about the church and his Savior who saved sinners.

Brother Gee was born August 13, 1913 and passed away April 6, 1997 making his stay here on earth 83 years.

His services were held at Salem Church (Head of the River) with his pastor Elder Hale Terry and Elder officiating. He was laid to rest in the Salem Church Cemetery, Copper Hill, Va.

Brother Gee was preceded in death by his wife, Berchie Bohon Poff. He is survived by four sisters: Velma Graham, Charlotte, N.C.; Almeta Bohon, Bent Mountain, Va.; Ada Holliday, Nashville, Tenn.; Perdine Manning, Bent Mountain, daughters, and several nieces and nephews.

Our loss is his eternal gain.

Hale Terry, Moderator
Mary Poff, Clerk

Signs of the Times

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1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

How great, how solemn is the work
Which we attend to-day!
Now for a holy, solemn frame,
O God, to thee we pray.

O may we feel as once we felt,
When pained and grieved at heart,
Thy kind, forgiving, melting look,
Relieved our every smart.

Let graces then in exercise
Be exercised again;
And, nurtured by celestial power,
In exercise remain.

Awake, our love, our fear, our hope,
Wake, fortitude and joy;
Vain world, begone; let things above
Our happy thoughts employ.

Whilst thee, our Saviour and our God,
To all around we own;
Drive each rebellious rival lust,
Each traitor, from the throne.

Instruct our minds, our wills subdue,
To heaven our passions raise,
That hence our lives, our all, may be
Devoted to thy praise

Beddome.

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EDITORIAL

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but in Isaac shall thy seed be called: that is they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of promise are counted for the seed.

These few lines of scripture, and the ten verses immediately following them, which all support and amplify on the above basic truths are probably the most universally hated and deposed by the modern day religionists. The doctrines of election, predestinarian and the sovereignty of God respecting the salvation of his children is rejected by more of the churches of today than all the rest of the inspired writings: And yet they are the meat and drink of the church established on the day of Pentecost Centuries ago. These scriptures state as simply and as candidly as only wisdom can the absolute fact that the natural man in the flesh, even though he be a seed of Abraham, is not the chosen vessel that shall worship God in spirit and in truth: but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. ***"The children of the flesh, these are not the children of God."*** And yet the world of today, as Jesus said they did in his day, Compass land and sea to make one proslyte and they make them twofold more the child of hell their they were, so, also in this day they cover the world to bring people into their church but that is not the church of God. Their message is to the man in nature in terms which he can understand and the natural man cannot receive the truth for it is foolishness to him: he thrives on what they present to him because it appeals to his flesh, his vanity and fleshly desires. They spend millions and limitless time in spreading the theory that it would be unjust for God not to receive all men, or to receive only an elect people because this would not be in harmony with the passive, loving, and benevo-

lent image that they project of the character of God; and yet, that is exactly what the above scriptures assert.

The devises of the present day and age must be educated by the colleges of the world to use psychology, philosophy and natural reasoning as though God was a man as they are, subject to the same laws naturally and try to rationalize in human terms the plan of salvation; a plan based on works and reward for things that the natural man does. They always have exceptions for babies, morons and idiots, never realizing that they are in the same category as these regarding the ability of man to enter the kingdom of God. The Gadarene came on the same basics and principles as the Apostle Paul and the intellectual level of neither had anything to do with their being chosen. Paul writes 1 Cor. 2 vs. *1 "And I brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God,"* and again, vs. 4-5. *"And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."* The testimony of the Gadarene, who was told by Jesus to go home to his friends and tell them how great things the Lord had done for him, was as effective and impressive on his friends as the learned Apostle's was to the Gentiles: and the Gadarene was in the category of morons or idiots when Jesus appeared to him, but he knew Jesus and Paul did not when Jesus first appeared to him. The difference the approach of these men of old and the Doctors of Divinity of today is that; one is the natural man in the flesh, dead in trespasses and sin promoting a doctrine that will include him, as he is in nature and the testimony of the other is from one who was born naturally as the first, has been where he is, but by the grace of God he has been raised up out of the miry clay of Sin and had his feet placed on the solid rock of truth; and has been sent by God to declare his conversion and hope in things eternal to others who are seeking the truth. The vessels afore prepared unto glory but to whom the way has not been revealed in its fullness, as yet, to guide and encourage them.

This message is good news indeed to this chosen people, as, it is the only plan that could reach them where they were and is the only explanation of their travels since they have been made to seek after the things of God. They were made to see their lost and undone condition: realize the desperate plight of their soul and could only fall down on their knees and pray as the publican, God be merciful to me a sinner. As the Apostle Paul, they did not realize they were sinners because the law had never been applied to them: they had been alive without the law, but when the commandment

called and they were made aware of the sin that dwelt in their members they could only pray for deliverance. They strove with all of their ability, strength and desire of heart, but as in quicksand they just seemed to get in deeper and deeper; they could not get relief from this burden of sin because they locked the wisdom and power to accomplish it of themselves. They were made to acknowledge that the flesh was too weak and the arms too short to meet the demands of this law of sin and death.

"They which are the children of the flesh are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Now the question is, who are the children of the flesh and they ponder, who are the children of promise, and what is the difference? They begin to search the scriptures more and more for anything that tells them of the children of promise and how they can find a way out of their present condition. They cannot find any scriptures to relate an experience where an individual, of his own power of ability became spiritual, but those who were children of promise ascribed all honor and glory to God for their deliverance from sin.

They read scriptures such as Rom. 8 vs. 3-4 *"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."*

They realize the weakness of the flesh, from experience, and know that they cannot fulfill the demands of the law upon them and this scripture states that God sent his Son into the world that the righteousness of the law might be applied to those who have a desire to walk in the Spirit, and not in the lusts of the flesh. Joy now fills the heart because they know their desire is to walk after the Spirit and the scriptures say God sent his Son into the world for such as they are, in the flesh, and to overcome sin in their behalf. This then is the promise of salvation to a special people and the hope begins to spring up in their heart.

The Apostle Paul said Rom. 7 vs. 22, 23, 24 *"For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"* And now this vessel of mercy realizes that these are the wrestlings that they have been enduring. It is a great comfort to learn that others in all ages of time have experienced these same trials, and have been blessed to leave them on record for following generations to see and to view them as signs of the times and travels in the life of the children of promise.

"For they are not all Israel which are of Israel: neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they

all children, but in Isaac shall thy seed be called." This scripture, if it means what it says, and it does, should once and for all time refute the popular theory of universal salvation and establish beyond any question, the doctrine of election of a certain people and that not because of lineage of birth or by the law. The promise was made to Abraham that God would bless all nations through his seed, although Sarah was barren and they were both passed the blessings of the father to his eldest son, yet Ishmael was the eldest son of Abraham, as Esau was the eldest son of Isaac; but although they were both the legitimate heirs under the law they did not receive the blessings of their father. They were not the children of promise: God had revealed, before either of them were born that the promise was not through them, but, through those chosen by him, and specified who they were.

When Abraham was ninety-nine years old God told him he would have an heir by Sarah, but Abraham said, ***"O that Ishmael might live before thee":*** Abraham could not believe that he could have a child by Sarah, but the unbelief did not change the promise as made. Isaac determined to bless Esau, his eldest son, but God had told Rebecca, before he was born that the elder would serve the younger and so it was; Jacob blessed the younger of the Joseph's sons over the objections of the father because they were all the children of promise. This was established in the mind and purpose of God before time began and could not be changed or altered by time or circumstance. The Apostle Paul said it as plainly and direct as words can express when he wrote, ***"For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth."*** There is no room for debate further, God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth, and he is no respector of persons. It is solely that the purposes of God from the beginning might stand to make manifest that He is God.

"But the children of promise are counted for the seed." This theme is repeated many times in the scriptures that there is a chosen people to whom the promises of God applies. They are from every nation kindred tongue and people but a specific seed from them was elected before time began to inherit the kingdom of heaven. As Peter told those who were pricked in the heart on the day of Pentecost, by the miracles they had seen and the preaching they had heard, ***"Repent and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you and your children and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."*** Remember those who said, men and brethren what shall we do, were those who were pricked in the heart; those who were convicted of their sins when brought face to face with their sin and they then gladly received the word

and were baptized. The same word spoken did not bring forth a response in those who were not given to see the truth; those who said these men are drunk. One was called and the other was not; one was chosen and the other was not. The calling is from God of his own choice and purpose and it is unto sanctification of the spirit, preservation in Christ Jesus until the day in which they will be glorified in the kingdom of heaven. All that is required, God provides, and therefore Paul said Rom. 8 vs. 31 ***"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"*** and again Gal. 4 vs. 28 ***"Now we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise."*** Comforting words to those who have been given a reason to hope that all these things are theirs in the spiritual realm in spite of all the things they see and experience in the flesh, and it is all because of a promise made by one who cannot lie or fail.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

PROVERBS 3:17-20.

Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her.

The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens.

By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.

ARTICLES

By request, this is an attempt to put to paper some of the comments made at the Memphis church on a recent meeting day. At best it is believed to be incomplete with some things left out and others undoubtedly added.

The attempt is to give an overview of God's plan of salvation in time and in eternity, as spelled out in the scriptures. The attempt will obviously be incomplete since words themselves cannot convey the fullness of spiritual meaning unless they are conveyed by the Holy Spirit. The problem can immediately be seen in the use of the word "plan". The word generally implies that some idea or concept is first conceived, but then carried out at a later time. This plan of salvation however, if we be permitted to call it a "plan", was not instituted in time since "...he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world...", which is before time began, or, to say it another way, in God's eternity. Eph. 1:4. God does <u>not</u> say, in Revelations, I <u>was</u> Alpha and <u>will</u> be Omega, the beginning and the ending. Rather He says, "I <u>am</u> Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending...." It is all an eternal "now" with God. The plan of salvation and the choosing were accomplished in eternity.

For God to choose his people in Christ, before the foundation of the world, it would seem necessary that some form of counsel and/or agree-

ment had to be made within and between the triune Godhead. Without such an agreement (the covenant of grace) there would seem to be no meaning to the choosing. It takes two elements to choose.

This covenant of grace, established in eternity, was before and superseded the work covenants established in time. In the providence of God Adam would break the covenant that God made with him in the garden. (Here we paint with a very broad brush) Man would also break the covenant that God made with his people through Moses, as well as other covenants between God and man. These covenants, in time, were "work" covenants where God, in effect, said "you do and I will bless". But man could not keep his part of the "work" covenants. See Gal. 2:21 and 3:21. But the covenant of grace, conceived before the world began, did and does what the "work" covenants could not do. The covenant of grace is not between God and man but within and between the triune God. Christ agreed to come in the likeness of sinful flesh and do what man could not do. Man cannot fulfill the law. The benefits of this eternal agreement between the heavenly father and Christ the son, go to the son's bride, the church.

In Rev. 13:8 we find, among other things, that the Lamb (Christ) is said to be slain from the foundation of the world. This seems to say that God's plan of salvation, though established in all eternity and sure, is worked out in the "time world" by Christ.Thus there is a distinction made between the wording "before the foundation of the world" (in eternity) and "from the foundation of the world", (in time). Thus much of the scriptures are devoted to the beautiful picture of salvation of the saints wrought by Christ in time.

The first that we see of God's dealing with man "in time" is in Gen: 1:26, 27, where God created man in his own image. I recognize there are different views on the nature of this "image", and it's meaning. But God is a Spirit, according to John 4:24, and we are encouraged to walk in the Spirit in Gal. 5:16, as I believe Adam walked also in Gen. 2:9-17. To eat of the tree of life (Christ typified), which was in the midst of the garden eastward in Eden, would seem to me to be walking after the spirit. In like manner are we not eating of that spiritual tree of life when we take of the emblems of bread and wine as well as when we feel blessed to feed on His bountiful spiritual blessings in this present wilderness?

If Adam and Eve were spiritual in the garden there seems to have been another attribute present also. ***"For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope..."*** Rom. 8:20. Eve was certainly subject to the beguilling nature of the serpent. She was deceived. Adam, however was not deceived, but knowingly did eat. I Tim. 2:14.

A key question, it seems to me arises here. Why did Adam knowingly eat? Is there a spiritual pattern anywhere that would indicate an answer? I believe

there is. Christ, the last Adam, was not deceived by the sin that plagued his people, but knowingly became sin for his people, (his bride, the church which was the servant of sin) Rom. 6:20. He took upon himself the guilt to save his bride from everlasting destruction.

In like manner Adam knowingly took upon himself the transgression of his bride. And to be consistant with the pattern of Christ and the Church, Adam took upon himself the transgression to save his bride, Eve, from something.

It is often easy to make too much of some words and how they are used, and sometimes not enough. Even so, it is interesting to note that in Gen. 3:23, 24 God sent him forth from the garden of Eden and also it says "So he drove out the man...." It does not say that the woman was driven out nor that she was sent forth. Of course, the masculine gender often represents the husband and wife or even the whole family. It should be noted however, that from this time there is a different characteristic in the woman than there is in the man. There is a difference that is not easily explained, but it is the woman's seed, and not the man's seed, that will bruise the serpent's head.

It should be understood that the difference here is spiritual, between the man and the woman, and not natural. Of course, they were together naturally, else they would have had no children. But Eve apparently had a viable spiritual seed which was not then possessed by Adam. This spiritual seed, which proceeds in a spiritual, but not natural, lineage from the garden is principally none other than our Lord Jesus Christ, who on the cross overcame satan (bruised his head). See Rom.16:20. This spiritual seed is preserved in the woman, from the garden of Eden, and not in Adam, who knowingly took her guilt.

The burden of sin was never removed from Adam or any of his posterity by any works of righteousness that they did. There is none righteous, no not one. It might be said that God's dealings with man became more intense as he became more self-righteous. By their works man attempted to build a city and tower (Babel) whose top might reach to heaven. In that day, even as now, such vain works are rewarded with a confounded language and spiritual babbling to an extent that they do not even understand one another.

God's dealing with his people, from the garden to the coming of Christ, was primarily through chosen men who were to do his bidding and speak his words. Heb.1:1. The overriding message, as previously pointed out, was to follow his word and be blessed. But, man could not and would not follow the commandments of God, nor keep his covenants. The zenith of the work covenants seems to be the covenant that God made with his people through Moses. This covenant, like those before it, had woven within it many types and shadows of the promises yet to come and be fulfilled in the Messiah. The recording of these dealings of God with his people in the

old testament are for our learning, see Rom. 15:4, and should be considered this way. While we were yet shut up unto faith, the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ. Gal. 3: 23,24. This would not only seem to be the role of the Mosaic covenant, but the other previous work covenants as well. These covenants had many literal examples that portrayed, in types and shadows, the spiritual realities that would be manifested in Christ. These were physical happenings, under the law, that pointed to and had their parallels in spiritual realities under grace.

But the law could not bring salvation. ***"For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did;" Heb.7:19. "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law...."Gal.4:4,5.*** The immediate question is, ***"How could such a great thing be accomplished?"*** It is truly a marvelous plan. ***"....God sending his own Son in the likness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh:..." Rom. 8:3.*** He was in "likeness" of sinful flesh and, ***"...was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Heb.4:15***

Consider again the seed of the woman (Eve) that would bruise the serpent's head. This seed, Christ the seed of the woman and not of the man. The affliction, commonly called "original sin", comes to the whole race of man through Adam. But the spiritual seed of the woman, which is Christ, is not contaminated. This is the result of Adam, being not deceived and knowingly taking upon himself the guilt of his bride. The fulfilling of this is when Mary, not having known a man ***"....was found with child of the Holy Ghost."Mat.1:18. "Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which is being interpeted, God with us."*** Mat. 1:23.. Man, through the natural seed of Adam, is not involved. If man had been involved in the conception then it would seem that our Lord would have had original sin. But he was not the son of Adam. He was the son of God and came in the likness of sinful (human) flesh (God Incarnate).

In the flesh our Lord and Savior did the Father's will. He fulfilled the law, he finished the work which the Father gave him to and he became the all-in-all to the church, his bride. He is her husband, her righteousness, her friend, her Sabbath, her justification, her santification, her tithe, her redemption and her salvation.

Having finished the work that the Father gave him to do in the convenant of grace, which he agreed to do, and which included dying on the cross, He arose from the dead and ascended up to heaven and is at the right hand of God making intercession for the saints Rom.8:34. But before he ascended he promised to send the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, which is the spirit of truth, which it would seem, was also in agreement and compliance with the covenant of Grace that was conceived

and entered into by the Godhead in eternity.

As spoken in John 16:7-14, this is the Spirit that will guide you into all truth, he will show you things to come, he shall glorify Christ, and he will take the things of Christ and show them unto you. Is there any other way that spiritual things can be understood? I think not.

This wonderful promise of Christ happened on the day of Pentecost. See Acts 2. ***"And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."*** Jews, gathered from different parts of the world, were amazed that every man heard them speak in his own language. As it would seem, this not only fulfills the prophesy of Joel, as pointed out by Peter, but also completes the circle from the tower of Babel. Those filled with the Spirit now speak a common spiritual language and have an understanding, one with another, that means nothing to those without. To those without, not shown the things of Christ by the Spirit, it is an unknown tongue. They are still at Babel.

Although the day of Pentecost was a specific day as recorded in the 2nd chapter of Acts, it would appear that every child of God has his own day that might be called "his day" of Pentecost. It is the day the Spirit quickens and first begins to teach the child of God the things of Christ. And when the Spirit, that Comforter, comes he is sent "....that he may abide with you for ever: Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, ..." John 14:16,17.

With the bride's transgressions paid for in Christ, even the "original sin" of Adam, the reason for God driving man out of the garden of Eden has been removed. ***"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus..." Rom. 8:1.***

It would further seem that the Cherubims, and the flaming sword, which turned in every way to keep the way of the tree of life, at the east of the garden of Eden, is now keeping the way "to" the tree of life in the garden, for the children of God and not keeping them "from" the tree of life. See Gen. 3:24. Do we not daily feed upon this green tree, the tree of life, our Lord and Savior? Is this not what Isaiah speaks of in chapter 35, verse 8; ***"And a highway shall be there, and a way , and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it:..."***? The way to the tree of life is surely a highway that is kept for the children of God.

In these latter days the church,it seems,will continue much as it is;except for the falling away spoken of in II Thes. 2:3, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition. It will continue that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentile be come in. See Rom. 11:25. The word "until" indicates that the blindness will be taken away from Israel in that notable day. Or, taken away from Israel that is Israel. "For they are not all Israel which are of Israel....but the children of the promise are counted for seed." Rom. 9:6-8.

It would appear that the blindness will be taken away from Israel all at

once, or at least in a very short time. In Isa. 66:8 the question it asks with a positive answer inferred, ***"Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children."***

"Is this not the time when the wicked shall be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming"? II Thes. 2:8. See also Rev. 19:11-21. and Isa. 63:1, 2. For the church the promise is this: That the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God. Both the dead in Christ, and the living, in their order shallt be raised to ever be with the Lord. I Thes. 4:15-17.

In looking back over the above lines it seems only a very meager sketch, with many blank spots, of the greatest story ever told. Even so, it may be that the Spirit will take a seed of an idea in the readers mind and make it to grow into that which will be praise to His Holy Name.

WGC

PSALM 90: 1-2.

LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

VOICES OF THE PAST

SOMETHING IS WRONG
By Elder W.D. Griffin

Dear Brethren--There has been much concern in my mind for a number of years as to where we are going as a people and as a church.

First, let me say that I believe in the second personal coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. I do not feel the freedom of applying some scriptures that some good brethren apply to the subject. Frankly, I think quite a few of them that are applied to His coming the second time have direct reference to our experimental lives as children of God. But I do believe that at a future coming day He is coming back to claim His Bride from the clutches of time. Relative to that, I want to point out this thought. When we look at the facts pertaining to the history of the world, first prior to the flood, do we find any consolation in our own history? Is our age not a counterpart of their age? How much attention is paid to a preacher of righteousness? Let us leave the world alone for a while, and let us examine ourselves.

I really and truly do not think an inventory would hurt any of us -- in fact the only reason we could object is in fear of what it would reveal. Do our people have time to listen to preaching? Is there any interest in Church? If the Lord does enable some man to build on a good foundation, does anyone pay attention? No doubt, breth-

ren, we are in that age. A few realize it and are bringing it to our minds. What do we do about it? Sigh, and perhaps get a little longer breath, and settle back in our lethargy. You cannot interest our people in being punctual at meeting time; you cannot arouse the professing people of God. It looks like to me, that we act very much like people acted in Noah's time.

Now let us pass on to the time of Christ. How were the Jews getting along in their worship? I do not have the time to hunt it up, but the Jewish historian, Josephus, describes the condition as being anything but pleasant. Wickedness was rampant in the non-professing world, it is true. But it is about the Jewish Church that I am primarily concerned. It is said that there was scarcely a synagogue that had not become polluted and degraded by some unclean thing. Does that suggest anything to our mind? How does such a condition compare with the Primitive Baptists? How about our churches? Do you know how many cease to function as a church each year?

I say again that I believe in the second coming of Christ. Is it close? Are these material things to be consumed and pass away? I do not know about that. One thing I am sure about -- that but for the grace that was given to Noah and the Jews that did believe on Him, we, as a church, are gone.

In my judgment, one of the most alarming conditions that exists today is the apparent indifference among us as to the things that make for peace. I have tried to study history some, and I think I have some conception of our travels as a church in America. I want to digress here to say that I believe (or hope I do) that the Primitive Baptist people are the Church of Jesus Christ. If we were to undertake writing articles of faith, I do not think any better could be had than those in the prospectus of the Signs of the Times. But I absolutely refuse to be bound by what so-called absoluters and so-called conditionlists interpret those articles to mean. I do not have any patience with anybody who tries in any sense to hide their immorality, their inebriation, their profanity behind the third article of that prospectus. Nor do I have any less patience with those that in any sense, deny the purpose of God respecting every event that has, is, or will transpire. Yet, although we have men among us who do those things; I want it thoroughly understood that these people are the Church of Jesus, its founder, builder, and keeper. Why do we say that it does not make any difference how we live? Did the apostles say that? Did the lawgiver? Why, when we get caught in our transgression, do we invariably say, I couldn't help it -- and in daily instances plead for mercy on that score? Did Peter do that? What does exhortation mean? Is it in the Book? Now be honest, do you know anyone who will let you exhort to good works, without them calling you an Armenian or conditionalist? Did you know that many of our ministers are afraid to use some portions of scripture in certain places? To do so means to be branded.

Since I am talking about good works I want to say that I think the most strenuous predestinarians among us believe in good works. The trouble is that the good works you must do to suit them is to not do the things Christ and the Princes in Israel said do, but do like they do. Every reader knows this is true.

As I say, we may be in the last days. God alone knows. But whether in the last days or in the middle of the gospel dispensation, the guilt lies at our door. It is us who are the sinners in this case. The condemnation is the more ours when we excuse ourselves and lay our sins at the door of God's mercy. You can say nothing is wrong if you want to; you can say the Old Baptists are the same as a hundred years ago, but it does not convince; something is wrong! In my lifetime among them they have dwindled in such a way that within not many more years the church in Alabama will be extinct. If the conditions prevail in America for another twenty-five years, that has prevailed for the past twenty-five, and those conditions are the same that has ever characterized and identified the church, then her sameness and nothing-wrong condition, is going to eventually and inevitably carry us into oblivion. If you doubt that, read our statistics.

May the Lord undertake for us. We are guilty, and I want to emphasize that I feel my guilt and know that sin lies at my door. I feel if I had labored one half as hard to save as I have to cut off, that I would have been better. If that laboring to save is conditionalism, then it would be more apostolic to be conditional; but it is not.

I have a premonition that it is not popular to write this way; but did you ever see a time when so much inquiry is being made? So many see where we are going and that we will soon be there. I am not advocating a get-together. It would only make another faction. Yet if we were all right, then the Old Baptists could get together. But I am talking about us, the so-called Absolute Predestinarian Baptists. The leaders of the church are responsible for the prevailing condition. It is ambitious preachers, some of whom are rotten in doctrine, and whose conduct is just as bad and low-down as the wildest, vilest unregenerate. In this state we have had too much of that, and because some have gotten by, I am afraid we in this country are seeing the fruit of shielding some like that.

Methinks it is a sad time. O Lord, have mercy on us and lead us to repentance. Bring us, O Lord, thy erring children, as we hope, to the Rock of our salvation; and enable us to stop and see in our own eyes. Give us humbling grace that our pride, arrogance, and hatefulness, may be brought into the ashes. O Lord, we acknowledge that it takes fire to produce ashes and we ask thee to bless us with reconciling grace that we rejoice in thy consuming fire of humiliation, to confess our wrongs and to reach forth in sight of all the congregation of the Lord; and first remove the beam from our eye. Happy indeed

the hour would be! It is worth hoping for. It is worth working to that end!

Old Faith Contender--March, 1947

GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAM

Gen. XV. 18. In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.

Gen. XVI. "This chapter gives an account of Abram marrying his maid, at the insistance of his wife Sarai, verses 1, 2, 3 who upon conceiving, despised her mistress; of which complaint is made to Abram who leaving his maid to his wife, to deal with as she pleased, dealt hardly with her, and therefore she fled from her, verses 4, 5, 6, when was met by an angel, who advised her to return and submit herself to her mistress, and told her, her seed would be multiplied, gave a name to the child she went with, and described his temper and disposition, verses 7, 12; and there we have the name of God that spoke to her, and of the placeswhere the discourse passed between them, verses 13, 14; and the chapter concludes with the birth of Ishmael and the age of Abram at his birth, verses 15, 16."

Gen. XVII. 1. And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared unto Abram and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me and be thou perfect.

"Which was 13 years after the birth of Ishmael; so many years more it was before he was expressly told he should have a son by Sarai; or had the promise of Isaac, which was for the trial of his faith; his age is here observed, that the power of God, might be now manifest in fulfilling his promise, and giving him a son by Sarai; the Lord appeared to Abram; in a visible form, the Logos, the son of God; the same as if the Lord had not appeared to him since the birth of Ishmael until the time, and if so, it may be thought to be a correction of him for hearkening to his wife, and marrying Hager without asking council of God: and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; as the word of God is, as appears by his creation of all things, his sustentation of them, his government of the church, his redemption of it, and preservation of his people safe to glory, Rev. I, 8, this prophet is very opposite here, when the Lord was about to give out a promise of a son to Abram and Sarai, so much stricken in years. Some render it, all sufficient, as Johovah is, sufficient in and of himself and for himself, and stands in no need of any other, or of anything from another, and has a sufficienty for others, both in a way of providence and grace: walked before me; not as though Abram had not walked, or had discontinued to walk before God, but that he would continue to walk by faith in a dependence on him for everything he wanted, both with respect to things temporal and spiritual; and to walk in all his commandments and ordinances, that he had given or should give him; and all this as in his presence, and under his watchful eye, that

sees and observes all things, and before whom all things are naked and open, as all are to essential word of God, Heb. IV. 12, 13: and be thou perfect; upright and sincere in acts of faith and in duties of religion and go on to perfection; which, though a sinless one is not attainable in this life, is a desirable, and is to be had in Christ, though not ourselves; here it chiefly denotes an holy and unblamable life and conversation, which though not free from sin, yet without notorious ones, which bring dishonor to God, and disgrace upon a man's character and profession, Gen VI. 6, 9."

Gen. XVII. 4. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

"And I will make my covenant between me and thee; the covenant of circumcision, so called from the token of it, which God is said to make or give, Acts VII. 8: and will multiply thee exceedingly; as he had before promised several times, and now renews it, lest he should think that Ishmael was the promised seed; for though Hagar's seed is promised to be multiplied, yet here Abram's seed by Sarai is intended, which should be exceedingly, or in great abundance multiplied; and especially as this may include both his natural seed by her, and his spirital seed among all nations, who are of the same faith with him. Gen. XII. 2; XIII. 16; XV. 5."

Gen.. XVII. 3-4. And Abram fell on his face; and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

"As for me behold my covenant is with thee; who was gracious to make it and faithful to keep it, and immutable in it, though Abram was but a man, and sinful: *and thou shalt be father of all nations;* as he was of many Arabian nations, and of the Turks in the line of Ishmael and of Midianites, and others, in the line of the sons by Keturah and of the Israelites in the line of Isaac, was well as of the Edomites in the line of Esau; and it a spiritual sense, the father of all that believe, in all the nations of the world. Rom. IV. 11, 12, 1Z, 17,;18."

Gen. XVII. 5. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram; but thy name shall be Abraham or father of many nations have I made thee.

"Which signifies *an high father,* which name he bore for many years before he was the father of anyone: *but thy name shall be Abraham,* the father of a numerous offspring: *for* a *father of many nations have I made thee;* not that he was so already in fact, but in the purpose of God, Rom. IV. 17. Abraham had not only been the father of many nations, in a literal sense, as before observed, but in a mystical sense of the whole-world; that is of all that believe, whether Jews or Gentiles."

Gen. XV 1.6. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee; and kings shall come out of thee.

In children, for he had not only a son by Sarai, from whom sprung a numerous offspring, but he had six sons by

Katurah, who became the head of large nations: *and I will make nations out of thee;* as the nations of Israel and Judah, of the Midianites and Eslomites, of the Arabs, Saracens and Turks: *and things shall come out of thee;* as the twelve princes of Ishmael, the kings of Edom and Alidian; of the Arabs Saracens, and Turks, and of Israel and Judah and especially the king Messiah, to which may be added, all Christian kings and princes of the same faith with him."

Gen. XVII. 7-14. These verses give the covenant of circumcision.

Gen. XVII. 15. God said unto Abraham, As for Saria thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be.

"After he had changed his name and given him the covenant of circumcision: as for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah her name shall be; her former name Sarai signifies my princess, or rather princesses, being to him in the room of many, and better than ten thousand; yet only a princess to him, and in his family, being sole mistress there, but since Sarah signifies princess absolutely, because she was princess over all princess and people that should come of her, as well as the mother and princess of all female believers, who are called her daughters. 1 Pet. III. 6."

Gen. XVII. 16. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her; yea I will bless her and she shall be a mother of nations; kings and people shall be of her.

"With fruitfulness, who before was barren, and in her soul with spiritual blessings, and in both with the blessing of eternal life: *and give thee a son also of her;* as he had given him one by Hagar; God had before promised Abraham a son that should be his heir, but he had not until now told him that he should be born of Sarah, his wife: *yea I will bless her;* which is repeated for the confirmation of it, and for the strengthening of Abraham's faith in it: *and she shall be a mother of nations; of* the twelve tribes, of Israel and Judah: *kings and people shall be of her; as* David, Solomon and others, especially the King Messiah."

Gen. XVII. 17. Then Abraham fell on his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?

"In reverence of the divine Being; amazed at what he told him: and laughed; not through distrust or doubt of the promise, as Sarah did, for he staggered not at that through unbelief, but for joy at such good news: *and he rejoiced;* with the joy of faith; it may be our Lord refers to this in John VIII. 56; he saw Christ in the promise of Isaac, and rejoiced that he should spring from his seed: *and he wondered;* was amazed at the power of God, that must be exerted in the fulfilment of it: and said in his heart; within himself, without expressing anything as to be heard and understood by any creature; but the omniscient God knew what he said, and the language of it, whether of belief or not: *shall a child be born unto him that is one hundred years old?* not

that he was now one hundred years old; he was ninety-nine, and going into his hundreth year; but then he would be one hundred years old when this child was born unto him, Gen. XXI. 5. It had been no unusual thing for a child to be born to a man when a hundred years old, but it was so in Abraham's day; though indeed after this we read that Abraham himself had six sons by Keturah; his natural strength was afresh invigorated, and his youth was revived, and besides Abraham said this, not so much with respect to himself as with respect to Sarah, and shall Sarah that is ninety years old bear? Some think Abraham said this as somewhat doubting, until he was more strongly assured by the Lord, but meeting with no reproof for what he said and did, as Sarah did."

Gen. XVII. 18. And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee.

Being told that he should have a son by Sarah, that should be his heir, he was concerned for Ishmael, what would become of him, who being grown up, had doubtless a large share in his affections and it is highly probable he began to think he was the promised seed, since he had lived to such an age, and had no other son, and Sarah was passed bearing children, but now perceiving it would be otherwise, he puts up a petition for Ishmael, whom he did not neglect upon the promise of another; and to show his love to him and regard for his welfare: O that Ishmael might live before thee; he prays that his life might be preserved and that it might be spent in the fear, worship and service of God; that he might live a holy, spiritual life here, acceptable and well pleasing to God, and possess eternal life hereafter; we must take this prayer in as large sense as we can suppose the heart of a father to be drawn forth in it, for the good of his child, though it may greatly respect his sharing with the promised blessing and particularly as regards the propagation of his offspring, or his posterity at least; this was what the Lord took notice of, and answered him in."

Gen. XVII. 19. And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac; and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.

"This is repeated for the confirmation of it, and thus expressed to remove all doubt about it, if any there were, that hung upon Abraham's mind; as well as to let him know that the promise of a son by Sarah was not to be suspended by his prayer for Ishmael, for whom he might have a greater flow of natural affection than for his unborn son, in whom his seed should be called: *and thou shall call his name Isaac;* which signifies laughter, and which was given from the laughter of Abraham at the promise of him; and not of the laughter of Sarah, which was not as yet. And I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant and with his seed after him; the covenant of circumcision just made with Abraham, the promise of the land of Canaan to his posterity, and of the Messiah that

should spring from him, until whose Coming the covenant would continue and therefore called everlasting."

Gen. XVII. 20. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee; Behold I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princess shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.

Gen. XVII. 21. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee, at this set time in the next year.

"The circumcision; though Ishmael was circumcised, and this posterity practiced that rite, yet it was not enjoyed upon them of God; nor was it to them, or served the same purpose as to the Israelites; and particularly the promise of the land of Canaan, made in the covenant, belonged only to the posterity of Isaac and of those only in the line of Jacob, and especially of the Messiah springing from him, which circumcision had respect unto: ***which Sarah shall bear unto thee, at this set time in the next year;*** that is, at the end of the nine months."

Gen. XIX. 4 "Another appearance of God to Abraham is here recorded. Three persons are seen by him in an human form, whom he kindly invited to stop with him, and generously entertains them, verses 1 3; they inquire concerning Sarah, his wife, and one of them renews the promise of her bearing a son to him, which occasioned laughter in her, for which she was reproved verses, 9-15. Upon their departure the Lord thought fit, for reasons given, to make known to Abraham his intention to destroy Sodom and Gomorah, etc."

Gen. XXI. "This chapter relates the removal of Abraham to Gerar, verse 1. The king of Gerar's taking Sarah, whom Abraham called his sister, verse 2; who is rebuked of God in a dream verse 3, for which he makes an apology that is admitted, and he is ordered to restore Abraham his wife, verses 4-7; and accordingly early in the morning he called his servants and acquainted them with what had happened, and sent them for Abraham, and expressed his resentment at his usage of him, verse 9; which Abraham defended as well as he could, verses 10-13; the issue of all was, great kindness was shown to Abraham, and his wife restored to him with a reproof from the king, verses, 14,1S, 16; upon which Abraham prayed for the healing of Abimeleck and his family,in which he was heard and answered, verses 17,18."

Gen. XXI. 4 This chapter gives an account of the conception, birth, circumcision and weaning of Isaac, verses 1-8; of the mocking of Ishmael, and of the casting out of him and his mother from Abraham's house, at the request of Sarah, which, though grievous to Abraham, he complied with,at the direction of God, verses 9-13; of the provision Abraham made for their departure, and the supply they met with in the wilderness from God, and where Ishmael was brought up and married, verses 14 21; and of a covenant between Abraham and Abimelech, king of Gerar, verses 22-32; and of Abraham's planting a grove and calling on the name of the Lord, verse 3.3; and the chapter ends with this

observation,that Abraham sojourned in the land,of the Philistines many years."

Gen. XXII. 1. *"And it come to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham, and he said, Behold here I am."*

"Recorded in the preceding chapter, the following affairs, after many promises of a son had been given him and those fulfilled; and after many blessings had been bestowed upon him; and when be seemed to be well settled in the land of the Philistines, having entered in to an alliance with the king of tbe country; his family in peace, and his son Isaac, the son of the promise grown up and a hopeful youth; the first appearance of which seemed to threaten the destruction of all his comforts, hopes, and expectations; and it was so *that God did tempt Abraham;* not to sin, as Satan does, for God tempts no man, nor can he be tempted in this sense; and had Abraham slain his son, it would have been no sin in him, it being ordered of God, who is the Lord of life, and the sovereign disposer of it; but he tempted, that is tried him, to prove him, and to show his faith in him, his fear of him, his love to him and cheerful obedience to his commands not in order to know these himself, for he was not ignorant of that, but to make them known to others, and that Abraham's faith might be strengthened yet more and more, as in the issue, it was. The Jewish writers say Abraham was tempted ten times, and this was the tenth and last temptation: *and said unto him, Abraham;* calling his name, the name he had given him, to signify that he should be the father of many nations; and yet was going to require him to slay his only son, and offer him a sacrifice to him: *and he said, behold, here I am,* signifying that he heard his voice, and was ready to obey his commands, be they what they would."

Gen. XXII. 2. And he said,Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains whlch I will tell thee of.

"Directly, immediately; not thine ox, nor thy ram, nor thy lamb, nor thy servant; but thy son: thine only son; for though Ishmael was his son, he was a son by his maid, his concubine, and not by his wife; Isaac was his only legitimate son, his only son by his lawful wife Sarah; the only son of the promise, his only son, in whom his seed was to be called: *whom thou lovest;* on whom his affections were set;being a lovely youth's dutiful son, and the child of promise;on whom all his hope and expectation of a numerous offspring promised him was built and in whose line the Messiah was to spring from; even Isaac which stands last in original text; so that, if what had been said was not sufficient to describe him, he is expressly named and the description is gradually given, and the name of his son reserved to the last, that he might be by degrees prepared to receive the shocking order; every word is emphatical, and striking, and enough to pierce any

heart, and especially when told what was to be done to him: ***and yet thee into the and of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering;*** this was dreadful work to be called upon to do, and must have been exceedingly trying to do as a man, and much more as a parent, and much more as a professor of the true religion, to commit such an action; for by this order he was to cut the throat of his son, then rip him up, and cut up his quarters, and then lay every piece upon the wood, and then burn all to ashes; and this he was to do as a religious act, with deliberation, seriousness and devotion: ***upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of;*** for there were several of them adjoining to or near each other, which afterwards went by different names, as Mount Zion the hill Acra, Mount Calvary, and Mount Moriah, supposed to be the mount intended. Isaac may well be thought in the whole of this to be a type of the Messiah, the true and proper Son of God his only begotten Son, the dear Son of his love, in whom all the promises are yea and amen; whom God out of his love to men gave to be an offering, and a sacrifice for their sins, and who suffered, near Jerusalem, on Mount Calvary, which very probably was part of Mount Moriah."

Gen. XXII. 3. And Abraham rose up early in the morning and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him. and his son Isaac, and clave the wood for the burnt-offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

"It seems to have been in a dream or a vision of the night that the above orders were given; and as soon as the morning came, he rose, and prepared for the journey, and to execute the orders he had received, without hesitation or delay: and ***saddled his ass;*** for his journey, not to carry the wood and provision on, which probably were carried by his servants; but to ride upon: and took two of his young men with him, two of his servants of whom he had many; and Isaac, his son; who was the principal person to be taken, since he was to be the sacrifice. Whether Abram acquainted Sarah with the affair, and she consented to it, cannot be said, with certainty; it is plain Isaac knew not what his father's design was;and though Sarah and the whole family might know by the preparation made, he was going to offer a sacrifice, yet they knew not where; nor what it was to be: ***and clave the wood for the burnt offering;*** not knowing whether he should find wood sufficient on the mountain where He was to go; and that he might not be unprovided when he got there, takes this method, which shows his intention to obey the divine command: ***and rose up and went unto the place which God had told him."***

Gen. XXII. 4. Then on the third day Abram lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.

Gen. XXII. 5. And Abram said unto his young men, abide you here with the *ass;* and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.

"At the place from whence he had his first sight of Mount Moriah; he chose not to take his two servants with him, lest when they saw him binding his son, and going about to sacrifice him, they should lay hold upon him, and restrain him from doing it; and to prevent this he takes this precaution, which shows how fully intent he was to obey the divine precept: *and I and the lad will go yonder and worship;* pointing to the place where the signal was, but whether they saw it or no, is not certain; Isaac is here called a lad: *and come again unto you;* both he and Isaac; this he said under a spirit of prophecy, as Jarchi thinks, or in the faith of Isaac's resurrection from the dead, Heb. XI. 19."

Gen. XXII. 6. And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac, his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.

"And he took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it upon Isaac, his son; who was a grown man and able to carry it; in thus also he was a type of Christ, on whom the wood of his cross was laid, and which he bore when he went to be crucified, Jno. XIX. 17; and this wood may be a figure of our sins laid up-upon him, by his Father, and which he bore in his body on the tree; and; which were like wood to fire, fuel for the wrath of God, which came down upon him for them: and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; a vessel in one hand, in which fire was, to kindle the wood with, and a knife in the other hand, to slay the sacrifice with; to carry these for such purpose must be very trying. This is the first time we read in the Scriptures of fire for use, or of a knife. *And they went both of them together,* from the place where they left the young men, to the place where the sacrifice was to be offered."

Gen. XXII. 7. And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father. and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and wood: but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?

"As they walked together he said; *My father;* a cutting word to Abraham, who knew what he was going to do with him; so contrary to the relation and affection of a parent: *and he said, Here am I, my son;* what hast: thou to say to me; owning the relationship he stood in unto him, a sense of which he had not put off, and curbs his affections, which must be inwardly moving toward him and showed his great strength of faith to grapple with such a trying exercise: *and he said, Behold the fire and the wood; the* fire in his father's hand; and the wood upon his own shoulders: *but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?* He preceived by the preparation - made, by the fire and the wood, that it - was to be a burnt offering which they were going to offer; but tbe creature provided for the sacrifice, he put in question, by which it appears that he was ignorant of the true design of this journey, and little thought he was. to be the sacrifice, it appears from what he said be had been used to sacrifices, had been trained up in them;

and knew the nature of them, and what was requisite unto them."

Gen. XXII. 8. And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering: so they went both of them together.

"In which answer Abraham may have respect to the Messiah, the Lamb of God, whom he had provided in council and covenant before the world was; and who in promise and type and figure, was slain from the foundation of the world; and who in due time God would send into the world and make him an offering for sin, and accept him in the room and stead of his people; and this was a provision that could only be made by the Lord, and was the product of his infinite wisdom, and the fruit of His grace, favor and good will, and of which Abraham had a clear sight and strong persuasion, John XIII. 56; though as the words may be considered as a more direct answer to Isaac's question, which related to the sacrifice now about to be offered, they may be regarded as a prophecy of Abraham's, and of his faith in it, that God would as in fact he did provide a lamb, in the room of that he was called to offer; or may mean Isaac himself, whom he was bid to take and offer and so was a lamb of God's providing; though he did not directly say so, but put him off with such an answer, suggesting it was best to leave it with God, who as he had called them to such service, would supply them with a proper sacrifice; and in speaking in this manner he might give room for Isaac to suspect what was intended, and so by degrees bring him to the knowledge of it: ***so they went both of them together,*** proceeded on their journey until they came to the place they were directed to go."

J.K. Booton

CORINTHIANS 2: 1-5.

And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

MEETINGS

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Pigg River Association will convene the Lord will; with Republican Church, the host church on the grounds of Republican Church in Franklin County, Virginia, to begin on Friday before the first Sunday in August (August 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, 1997).

Those coming from the south; go 220 North, from Bassett Forks go 8 miles. Turn left on state road 605 (a blinker light designating a sharp curve). Go 9 miles (as a marker go past Town Creek Church) stay on Henry road, turn right on 778- go 2 miles church on right.
From the North, go route 40 west to Ferrum, exit on Fieldcrest Road - go 100 yds. - cross railroad tracks, bear right - you will be on route 623 (Ingram Road) turn left on route 778 church will be on left.
We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

Elder Lane Carter, Moderator
Jamie E. Cooper, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 1997

Banks H. Conner, VA $7.00
Eld. John T. Jones, LA 2.00
Darrell Thoades, TX 2.00
Mrs. Lottie Minter, NC 5.00
Mrs. Ernestine Sharp, LA 2.00
W.D. Godwin, LA 2.00
Mrs. Jamie Fanning, AL 40.00
In memory of Ralph A. Hocutt & Viva Dean Poe
Ms. Reidy Pickral, VA 25.00
Conrad R. Key, NC 2.00
J.C. Carroll, NC 15.00
Eld. James C. Young, GA 2.00
Mrs. Connie Page, NC 5.00
Mrs. Louise Stanley, NC 2.00
Eld. Noel Conner, VA 10.00

OBITUARIES

MRS ODELL B. ANDERSON

We mourn the death of our beloved sister in Christ Odell Anderson, but bow in humble submission to the holy will of God. She was born at Spring Hill, La. Jan. 29, 1915 and was called home June 15, 1997 at age 82 at her home in Bastrop, LA. Sister Odell was a longtime member of Concord Primitive Baptist Church in Morehouse Parish, La. She loved to meet with her brethren to worship her Savour and always filled her seat unless providentially hindered.

Sister Anderson is survived by her husband Lester I. Anderson of Bastrop, La.; two daughters, Gloria A. Watson of Bastrop, and Shela Rosen of Crossett, AR.; two sons, Jerry W. and Terry Don Anderson of Bastrop; 15 Grandchildren, 21 Great Grandchildren and a large host of friends. She was preceded in death by one son, Millard E. Anderson; 2 sisters, and 3 brothers.

Services were conducted at the funeral home chapel June 17, 1997 by Elders Theron Jones and Clifford Wilbanks. She was laid to rest in Memorial Park Cemetery to await the coming again of her Lord and Savour.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

OCIE BRUMFIELD BLAIR

It is with sadness that I attempt to write in memory of one I dearly loved, Aunt Ocie Blair.

She was born September 20, 1918 in Pittsylvania County, where she lived until January 1985 when she went to her brother's, Vernard Brumfield, Danville, Va. to help care for his wife, Verla. Ocie passed away in his home, after two and one-half months of illness, April 17, 1997.

She was the daughter of the late William Christopher Brumfield and Lelia Giles Brumfield.

November 17, 1945 she was united in marriage to the late James Lipscomb Blair, who passed away March 10, 1971. He was baptized into the fellowship of Canaan Primitive Baptist Church July 5, 1964.

Survivors include; two brothers, Vernard G. Brumfield and Howard Brumfield of Danville and three stepdaughters, Nellie B. Coleman of Eden, N.C., Alease B. Carter and Ernestine B. Mize of Danville.

In addition to her husband she was predeceased by a brother, Beverly C. Brumfield, two sisters, Roxie B. Stowe and Sister Elsie B. Swann, a step daugther, Pattie Blair and a step son, Norman Blair.

Ocie was a life long believer in the Primitive Baptist Doctrine. She was active, supportive and faithful to Canaan Primitive Baptist Church. She and Brother Lipscomb enjoyed meeting many friends as they visited fellow churches far and near.

Their home was always open, with a warm welcome, to family and friends for Sunday's lunch or as a overnight guest. She was a quiet, dependable individual who was blessed to know when to speak and when to listen. And is remembered as the sweet little lady who wore the pretty hats. The church and the community havebeen blessed by her presence and services.

As a family we are most grateful for the fifty-two years we knew and loved her as an Aunt, neighbor and friend. She will long be remembered for her support and love in the sad and the happy times of our lives.

Knowing God never makes a mistake and cares for His own - may His grace and love comfort us in this time of sorrow.

Graveside services were conducted by Elder C.B. Davis, April 19, 1997. She was laid to rest by her husband, Brother Lipscomb Blair, in Highland Burial Park, Danville, Va.

May a copy of this be sent to the Signs of the Times, to her brothers and a copy be placed in the church records.

Written in love for my Aunt;
Vera Green Arnn
Elder J.R. Williams, Moderator

ECCLESIASTES 7:8.

Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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SONG

Thus far my God hath led me on,
And made his truth and mercy known;
My hopes and fears alternate rise,
And comforts mingle with my sighs.

Through this wide wilderness I roam,
Far distant from my blissful home;
Lord, let thy presence be my stay,
And guard me in this dangerous way.

Temptations everywhere annoy,
And sins and snares my peace destroy:
My earthly joys are from me torn,
And oft an absent God I mourn.

My soul, with various tempests tossed,
Her hopes o'erturned, her projects crossed,
Sees every day new straits attend,
And wonders where the scene will end.

Is this, dear Lord, that thorny road
Which leads us to the mount of God?
Are these the toils thy people know,
While in the wilderness below?

'Tis even so; thy faithful love
Doth all thy children's graces prove;
'Tis thus our pride and self must fall,
That Jesus may be All in all.

Fawcett.

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EDITORIAL

WATER OF LIFE

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

"He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." John 7:38. "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." Rev 22:1.

If deprived of water all living things would wither away and perish: as in natural life, so in spiritual life. There is natural water and there is spiritual water. No man can drink nor even desire spiritual water except he be born again of the Spirit, for, ***"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor 2:14.***

When the Israelites journeyed in the wilderness, and they thirsted for water, God commanded Moses, saying, ***"Thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that my people may drink." Ex 17:6.*** God has ever provided water for all men; but this water came forth from a rock and is a significant figure of spiritual water. In 1 Cor 10:3-4 we read, ***"And all did eat and drink of the same spiritual meat; and did drink of the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." 1 Cor 10:4.*** When Jesus hung upon the cross a soldier pierced his side, and forthwith came out blood and water. Jn 19:34. Zechariah prophesied of this, saying, ***"And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out of Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea."*** These seas represent people, and these living waters flowed unto his children who lived before his crucifixion as well as those afterwards. John said, ***"This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood." Jn 5:6.*** In his Godhead Christ could not die, therefore, ***"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers***

of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." Heb 2:14. As our merciful and faithful High Priest he offered himself a perfect sacrifice unto God, and with this offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Heb 10:14. Christ loved his church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. Eph 5:26-27. Therefore, brethren, *"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." Heb 10:22.*

All things were created by God, and for his pleasure they are and were created. Rev 4:11. In the garden of Eden, (the name signifies pleasure,) God planted every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food: there he also placed man. A river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from thence it was parted, and became four heads. Only one river, but divided into four heads: these being Pison, Gihon, Hiddekel and Euphrates. Euphrates is named nineteen times in the old scriptures and twice in the new. The name signifies fertilizing, fruitful. This river of water fertilized and made fruitful the trees of the garden of Eden which did feed the fleshly Adam. This river is a figure of the river of life as described in Rev. 22:1-2. *"And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."* Surely the tree of life is Christ. He was in the garden of Eden when Adam sinned and was driven forth from the garden. but, *"-lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever,"* God placed at the east if the Garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life. Gen 3:22-24. If it should be possible for a man to discover that garden, he could never enter it because of the Cherubims and the flaming sword. That garden of Eden is a figure of the true spiritual garden of God, the church, or Zion. No man shall ever be in this garden except he be born there. *"And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her. The LORD shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there." Ps 87:5-6.* Jesus said, *"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; ad that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." Jn*

35:7. Who will be born again? Are they not the ones chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; who are God`s workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works; and whose names are written in the Lamb`s Book of Life? (Eph 1:4 & 2:10; Rev 21:27.) Those who are born again have eternal life, which life was in Christ before the foundation of the world, but is only made manifest in time. In a synagogue Jesus said unto the Jews, ***"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life: and I will raise him up at the last day." Jn 6:53-54.***

Only those who have eternal life can thirst for living water, for the dead cannot thirst. Jesus said, ***"I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." Rev 21:6.*** That water proceeds from the throne of God and of the Lamb; the spiritual Rock Jesus Christ. He said to the woman at Jacob`s well, ***"Whoso drinketh of this water (natural water) shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Jn 4:13-14.*** This ia a well of living water that he SHALL give to those who believe on him. ***"He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which that they that believe on him should receive.")*** Jn 7:38-39. Now if we have not received the Spirit of Christ we are none of his; but if the Spirit is in us we have life because the Spirit is life because of righteousness. Rom 8:9-10.

"And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood." Rev 12:15. This flood of waters are surely lies, for he was a murderer from the beginning, and there is no truth in him. He is a liar, and the father of it. Jn 8:44. The woman that the devil seeks to carry away typifies the church, the bride of Jesus Christ; but she is given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times and half a time, from the face of the serpent. I have no special light on this scripture, but would suggest for your consideration that the two wings represent love and mercy, and the wilderness is the world, where her place is until her heavenly husband shall return for her; and she is now nourished in all the time that she must remain here. Satan persecutes her continually, and she has great tribulations, but Jesus said, ***"In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Jn 16:33.***

And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the com-

mandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. The seed which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Christ are the children of God. Those who open their mouths to swallow up the flood of lies are the children of the devil. When some of them claimed God as their Father Jesus rebuked them, saying, *"If God were your Father, ye would love me.*** Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." Jn 8:42 & 44.* These are the ones who worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in their foreheads, or in their hands. The same shall drink of the wine of wrath of God. Rev 14:9-10.

We read Rev 22:17. *"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."*

There are many false teachers today who plead for dead, alienated sinners to come and give their hearts to God, saying that if they will only let him come into their hearts he will save them, and they can take of the water of life freely. *"This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouths, and honor me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matt 15:9.* These false teachers, and the ones who believe them, shall perish, *"Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie."* 2 Thes 2:10-11. The truth is, *"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."* Jn 6:37. And, *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish."* Jn 10:27-28. There are those who shall perish, and Jesus said of them, *"And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life."* Jn 5:38-40.

Beloved brethren, I hope that we are his sheep, to whom he has given eternal life, and who drink freely of that living water. May God bless his truth herein and pardon all my errors.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

HEBREWS 13:5-8.

Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

ARTICLES

THE ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF 'ALL THINGS': April 23, 1994

Now it might be ask, - What does the above mean? or, is anything exempted?; Well, if the forming of words has any meaning; it would seem, that 'ALL THINGS'; does not exempt anything; therefore, in that my belief coinsides with the 'ALL THINGS'; I feel, there can be not thing exempted, from the whole, of every thing, whatsoever exist in all everlasting eternity; and that, to assuredly include, all that man may consider, either minute or large; minor or major; sickness or health; anger or pleased; good or evil; poor or rich, in either worldly goods, or Spiritual food; storm or calm; wet or dry; war or peace; cloudy or sunshine; rain or clear; flood or not; going or coming; walking or running, or riding; sleeping or awake; pain or at ease, in body, mind, heart or soul. It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps; so we see, even our steps and their direction, are already Predetermined and predestinated. I would say, most of the times, we surely feel, we are directing our own steps; but, from time to time, when God be pleased, to remind us of His Holy truth; we then know, that of our fleshly self, we are not capable of directing anything, not even ourselves; for without Him and His furnishings, we cannot even exist, much less, have strength to even live or breath, or exercise our brain in thoughts. It seems to me that, in this fact alone, that, "God" is our Creator, is sufficient evidence, that all we are or ever be, and all what has to do with our whole being and doing, from conception to death, and forever there after; must of necessity, be foreordained, appointed, and absolutely predestinated, to be in perfect order time and place, exactly as He did foresee that it shall be. According as I see and feel it to be; in order for a speaker; to follow within that straight and narrow path, that declares the whole council of God; his speech must, and shall be, within that true principal, of the absolute predestination of ALL things, by the Almighty God; now that is not to say, it is necessary, to actually use the word Predestination, while in his discourse; for after all, if God purposed it, and or ordained it to be, and or willed it to be; is that not the very exact same in meaning, as His having predestinated it? Yes, I believe so; and so much so, that I feel and believe, that to deny either, is, in essence, a denial of all. For to me, we either do, or we do not believe, in and on, the all in all true and living "God" who thought of it all, purposed it all, willed it all, and created it all, and did it all, for His own purpose and glory; and furthermore, by that very reason, "He is God," makes it an entire impossiblity, for even one iota, of its entirety, to ever vary from that exact path or course, as He did purpose, and see it all from its inception, to its finish or consumation or ending. I feel, if I were to deny that, then I have denied of His all seeing eye. But, thanks be unto "God," man's denial of Him and His Holy truths; has never, and shall never, effect even one iota of change, in His Holy truths re-

maining Holy truths, though mankind has tried to do just that, with all his strength, now, since Adam (the first man) were created from the dust of the earth or ground.

Man, in his weak mind and stony heart, would have "God," under that same law as is man of the flesh; not being aware, that the Self existant God, is under no law; for as He is above man; so is He far far above all outside Himself; He is infinite, while man is finite; He is the Holy Spirit, while man is sinful flesh; God is the Creator, man is the created. He is all powerful, man is selfhelpless; though, he of his fleshly self, be unaware of it. God is the Ruler, Let us be ever reminded of this truth. And so therefore, let us not be boastful, as if we ourselves, ever turned a hand, to aid that process that causes us to believe and feel as we do. Instead, may His name ever be praised, for it all.

I do believe it to be, an entire impossiblity, that there ever could, or ever will, exist, even the slightest or minutest occurance, in all time and eternity, that "God" has not always had full and complete knowledge of; And that each and every one of those occurances, that has or shall ever come, was and is and ever shall come, in exact order time and place, as God did foresee, foreordain, and did absolutely Predestinate, that they all shall come in that exact order. And therefore, as having to do with what "God" predetermined would be, within all His alloted time for this world to stand; there never has and never shall pass, even one second of time, when anything ever took place, what were out of order, or out of its designated place; and all that being, simply by reason that, He is almighty God. And just that, is sufficient proof of its truth, to His every, born again, little child. For he or she, is fully convinced, that whatsoever God has ever had any part in, it just has to be, no less than, ABSOLUTELY PERFECT. For within the operation of His government, it is simply and entirely impossible, for there to exist, a chance system; such as - probabilities; maybe so's; if so and so's; but if's; not quite; almost; part of the way's; just simply and wholly and Holy complete.

As God looked upon His work, in His creation of all things, He saw it as good and very good. Now, God willing; led us see, what was His meaning in those words - good and very good; was it not that, God had completed a perfect work, that was in perfect order, so as it was to exactness, as was His purpose in, will too, and pleasure in and for so doing His work in creating them all? I believe so. For I believe, all God doeth, is good and very good. And I further believe, that good and very good extends, not one step further than, what points directly to, whatsoever be God's workings, within its entirety, from start to finish. Surely, sinful mankind could never, rightly claim of himself, having ever instigated any portion of that good and very good; when even Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, who never committed a sin, said - Why call me good? etc. It just is simply impossible, to praise God and man, at one and the same time; for the praising of man, is the exact opposite to, the

praising of God. If I or any other man believe, we of ourself, have done any good, in the sight of God.; then, we have done nothing as we aught; but are deceived in our ownselves. For God is the author and finisher of any and all good, in His sight. The best sign or evidence, or good being performed 'thru' a man, is his confession, that in his fleshly self, there dwelleth no good thing, and that he is a sinner. For, in the Lord's teaching of a poor sinner, there is no circumstances, under which, any man could ever rightly boast of himself. For the lifting upward of the Lord's name, is always the lowering down of the fleshly man; and the lifting upward of flesh, is the lowering down, the name of the Lord. And so, once again; there is no room provided for self boasting; or boasting of any other man of himself; even though that man be President, or holding any other high office; for the Lord God placed him right where he is; for He arranged and brought into being, all circumstance, that brought it all as it is. Man deviseth; while "God" bringeth all to pass, in exact accord with His afore laid plan, purpose, will and pleasure. Since Adam and Eve, mankind has used his every available devisive means, to mock his Creator God,; not being aware of that fact of Holy truth, - "God" cannot be mocked.

Whenever one is blessed with a pure mind and heart of understanding the true principal of absolute predestination; that one then will clearly see, there exist no grounds upon which to charge any sinning on God's part, in the whole operation.

Troy G. Shepard

VOICES OF THE PAST

GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAM

Gen. XXII. 9. And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.

"It was a new altar; perhaps there never was an altar there before: ***and laid the wood in order;*** for the sacrifice to be put upon it: ***and bound Isaac his son,*** with his hand and feet behind him, as was the usual manner to bind sacrifices when offered; especially this was so ordered, that Isaac might be a type of the Messiah, who was bound by the Jews, John xviii.12; Matt. XXVII. 2, as was bound and fastened to the cross: ***and laid him on the altar upon the wood."***

Gen, XXII. 10. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

"All things being ready for execution, nothing remained but to cut the throat of the sacrifice; and in order to do that, the instrument for it laying by him, he put forth his hand; it is enough to make one tremble to think of it: ***and took the knife to slay his son;*** with full intention to do it, which was carrying his obedience to the divine will to the last extremity, and shows he was sincere in it, and really designed to complete it and this was taken by the Lord as if it was actually done. He had the knife in his hand, and just ready to give the fatal thrust,

but in the nick of time God appeared and prevented, it, as follows."

Gen. XXII. 11. And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he, said, here am I.

"The uncreated angel, the Son of God, who perhaps appeared in human form, and spoke with an articulate voice, as he frequently did; for that this was a Divine Person is clear from his swearing by himself, and renewing the promise unto Abraham, verses 16, 17,18: and said Abraham, Abraham; the repeating? his name denotes haste to prevent the slaughter of his son, which he was upon the point of doing; and in which Abraham was not dilatory, but ready to make quick dispatch, and therefore with great earnestness and vehemence the angel calls him by name, and doubles it, to raise his quick and immediate attention, which he did: ***and he said, Here am I;*** ready to hearken to what shall be said, and to obey what should be ordered."

Gen.XXII. 12. And he said, Lay not thy hand upon thy son, neither do thou anything to him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.

"Lay not thine hand upon the lad; which he was just going to stretch out, with his knife in it, to slay him; though the Lord had bid him to take his son, and offer him for a burnt offering; to try his faith, fear. love and obedence, yet he meant not that he should actually slay him, but would prevent it when it came to the crisis; for he approves not of, nor delights in, human sacrifices; that this might not be drawn into an example, it was prevented; though the Gentiles, under the influence of Satan, in imitation of this, have practiced it: ***neither do thou anything unto him;*** by lacerating or wounding him in any way: ***for now I know that thou fearest God;*** with truly childlike fear? with such reverence of him that was fervent love, and strong affection joined with it; with a fear that includes the whole of internal religious worship, awe of the Divine Being, submission to his will, faith in him and love to him, obedience springing from thence. 'And this is said, not as though he was ignorant before how things would end for he knew from all eternity, what Abraham would voice, as he frequently did; for that this was a Divine Person is clear from his swearing by himself, and renewing the promise unto Abraham, verses be and what he would do, having determined to bestow that grace upon him and work it in him, which would influence and enable him to to act the part he did; he knew full well beforehand what would be the consequence of such a trial of him; but this is said after the manner of men, who only know things after they come to pass; or this may be understood of a knowledge of approbation, that the Lord now knew, and approved of the faith, fear, love and obedience of Abraham, which was so conspicuous in this affair – see Psal. 1. 6. ***I have made known;*** that is, to others; God by trying Abraham's faith, made it manifest to others, to all the world, to

all that should hear or read this account of things, that he was a man that feared God, loved him, believed in him, and obeyed him, of which this instance is a full and convincing proof: ***seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me;*** but as soon as he had the order to offer him up, prepared for it, took a three day's journey, and all things along with him for the sacrifice; when he came to the the place. built an alter, laid the wood in order, bound his son, and laid him on it, took the knife, and was going to cut the throat of his son; the Lord looked down upon the act as really done; it is a plain case that he did not, and would not have withheld his son, but would have freely offered him a sacrifice unto God at his command; and that he loved the Lord more than he hid his son, and had a greater regard to the commandment of God than to the life of his son, and preferred the one to the other. And thus God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, Rom. VIII. 32. "

Gen. XXII. 13. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and; behold, behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.

"***And Abraham lifted his eyes*** They were before fixed upon his son lying upon the alter and intent upon that part he was going to thrust his knife into; but hearing *a* voice above him, he lifted up his eyes thitherward: ***and looked, and, behold, behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns;*** the ram making a noise in the bushes behind him he turned himself and looked and saw it. From whence this ram came is not known. It was God's gift to Abraham; there is no absurdity or improbability to suppose it was immediately created by the power of God, and in an extraordinary manner provided; and was a type of our Lord Jesus, who was foreordained of God before the foundation of the world, and came into the world, in an uncommon way, being born of a virgin, and that in the fulness of time and seasonably, and in due time died for the sins of men. The ram had its name from strength, in the Hebrew language, and was emblem of a great personage, Dan. VIII. 3; and may denote the strength and dignity of Christ as a Divine Person; being caught in the thicket, may be an emblem of the decrees of God in which he was appointed to be the Savior; the covenant in which he voluntarily involved himself, and by which he was held; or the sins of his people, which were laid upon him by imputation, were wreathed about him, and justice finding him implicated with them, required satisfaction and had it; or the hands of wicked man, comparable to thorns, by whom he was taken, or the sorrows of death and hell that encompassed him, and the curses of the righteous law which laid upon him; and perhaps he never more resembled the ram caught in a thicket, than when a platted crown of thorns was put upon his head, and he wore it. ***And Abraham went and took the ram; and offered him up for a burnt offering,***

in the stead of his son; in which he was a type of Christ, who was made an offering for sin, and a sacrifice to God of a sweet-smelling savor; and it being a burnt offering, denotes the sufferings of Christ and the severity of them; which were in the room and stead of his people, of God's Isaac, of the spiritual seed of Abraham, the children of the promise, all his beloved ones; who are therefore let go, justice being satisfied with what Christ has done and suffered, it being all one as if they had suffered themselves; as here in the type, the ram having its throat cut, its blood shed, its skin flayed, and the whole burnt to ashes, were as if Isaac himself had been thus dealt with."

Gen. XXII. 14. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh; as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.

"And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh; which may berendered, *either the Lord hath seen, or has provided;* the future being put for the past, and so it is called, in the answer to what Abraham had said, verse 8: *God will provide,* and as a memorial of it, gives the place this name: or *he will see or provide;* as he has for me, so he will for all those that trustin him; as he has provided a ram in the room of Isaac, so he has provided, and will send his only son, in the fulness of time, to be a sacrifice for the sins of his people: *as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen;* from that time to the times of Moses, and so on in after ages even until now, it has been used as a proverbial saying, that as God appeared to Abraham and for his son in the mount, just as he was going to sacrifice him, and delivered him, so the Lord will appear for his people in all ages, in a time of difficulty and distress, and when at the utmost extremity who call upon him. This may also refer to the presence of God in this mount, when the temple should be built on it, 2 Chron. III. 1, and to the appearance of Christ in it, who was often seen here, in his state of humiliation."

Gen. XXII. 15. And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time.

"The angel having restrained him from slaying his son, and having provided another sacrifice, which he offered, calls to him again; having something more to say to him, which was to renew the covenant he had made with him, and confirm it by an oath."

J.K. Booton

PSALM 29:1-4.

Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give unto the Lord glory and strength.

Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the Lord is upon many waters.

The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD NOVEMBER 1991

JEHOVAH-JIREH

Sermon preached at the Meetings of the Gospel Standard Societies at Rochdale Road Chapel, Manchester, on September 7th, 1991

TEXT: "And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen " (Genesis 22. 147.

Moriah was a mountain to Abraham, wasn't it? A dark, gloomy mountain, the place where God had commanded him to sacrifice his own beloved son. You think of it, beloved friends. This afternoon we know the end of it, we know what happened, we know the deliverence; Abraham did not. He had that solemn command to take his only son, and there to sacrifice him on an alter on one of the mountains of Moriah. There were very many things. There was not only his natural feeling this being his own dear son whom he had to slay, to sacrifice, but hadn't he been delivered from idolatry and all those awful practices;of human sacrifice? But more than that, more than anything else, what of the Lord's gracious promise, the promise made concerning Isaac, and not only concerning Isaac, but concerning the promised Messiah, concerning the promised Saviour? What of God's faithfulness? What of God's promises? What of God's eternal covenant purposes if Isaac were to die? Moriah was a dark black mountain to Abraham. Yet we are told in Hebrews 11, he was blessed with faith, even to see that his God was able to raise Isaac from the dead.

So we see that humble, loving obedience. O beloved friends, was there ever obedience like the obedience of Abraham, unless it be the obedience of Isaac? Never forget Isaac. How easy for him to flee from his aged father! But that willing sacrifice! If it be God's will, Isaac was willing to die. I wonder sometimes if this was the best day in both Abraham's life and in Isaac's life. It is not often we have days like that. But that day when Isaac was completely surrendered to the will of God, and that day when Abraham was so blessed in his soul. You remember how the Lord Jesus said, Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. "Wasn't it on Mount Moriah that that took place?

Now this was a dark mountain, a dark gloomy mountain, but in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." It almost seems from the way the context runs that this had become a kind of proverb in Israel, "As it is said to this day" - to this day - In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." Well, it was not only said to the day when Moses wrote this passage, but it is said to this day," In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen."

But you say, these dark, black, gloomy mountains -- you cannot call them the "mount of the Lord." Can you? Yes, beloved friends, we can. God Himself does. He says, "They are My mountains." And then He makes

that gracious promise, "I will make all My mountains a way." That has been a good word to me over the years:"I will make all My mountains a way." These awful, gloomy, black mountains which come in our lives: you cannot get over them, you cannot get round them, there is no way through them. and then the Lord says, "They are My mountains, all of them, and I will make them a way. They are My mountains because I appointed them. They did not come by chance or accident. They are My mountains because I am going to deal with them." "I will make a mountain a way." I believe at last we shall look back from the swellings of Jordan: we shall see God's faithfulness to that promises and we shall see every mountain made a way. O but these mountains. And yet, "As it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." It is in these mountains of difficulty trial, temptation and sorrow that we see things we never saw by nature, we never saw before. Well, Abraham did, didn't he? "As it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen. "Well then, what did Abraham see in the mount.? What were these things that he saw? Of course, there were many things but let me just mention three of them, three things that Abraham specially saw in the mount. "As it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen."

Now first of all, and most important of all, and above all, I believe he saw his dear Lord and Saviour, Jesus. O what a revelation there is in Genesis 22 of a substitutionary atonement! Substitution may be a big word for some of you. In simple language it is this, and there is heaven in it: He instead of of me.

That is substitution. "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." That is substitution. "Behold a scene of matchless grace,! Tis Jesus in the sinner's place." That is substitution.

How was it revealed to Abraham? Well, there was Isaac laying on the altar, and there he was, ready to die, appointed to death, and there was that sharp knife refused to be plunged into his heart. But then something takes place. Abraham's hand is stopped. There is a ram caught by his horns in the thicket. Now that ram must be taken. Isaac is set free. The ram is laid to the altar. That innocent ram that had never sinned, that ram is laid on the altar. The ram is slain. The knife does not smite Isaac, it smites the ram instead of Isaac, and Isaac; is set free. That is substitution.

O, I believe Abraham by faith saw the day of Christ on Mount Moriah, and he rejoiced to see it, and was glad. Why did he rejoice to see it? Because as a guilty sinner, feeling his ruin and guilt, he saw" a lamb as it had been slain," the; Lamb of God that was, slain from the foundation of the world." But by faith, Abraham went to Calvary, and there he saw an innocent Lamb, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. O, do you believe it? Do you believe in substitution? Do you love substitution? have you no hope, apart from substitution?

Is this the ground on which you are going to get to heaven? To see and painfully feel your sin and guilt, and the wrath of God that you deserve against your sin, and hell which is your just but dread desert; and then by faith to be led by the Holy Spirit to Calvary, to see that cruel cross and divine wrath poured out there that is the place where you should have hung, where you should have suffered, where you should have endured divine wrath against your sin personally. Yet there- O the wonder of it - you see divine wrath poured out, not upon the guilty sinner, but upon the innocent Lamb of God, He who is God's dear, eternal Son incarnate. You see the Innocent suffering in the place of the guilty, sin laid upon Him, His people's sin punished in the Saviour, and for ever taken away. Sin must be punished, either in the sinner or in one who takes his place. And there you see the amazing transaction. You see the sword of divine justice drawn out of its sheath, and you see what Ralph Erskine solemnly said, that the sword of divine justice, once drawn from its sheath could never be returned unless drenched in the blood of God's incarnate Son. Now do you believe it? 'Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the Man that is My Fellow, saith the Lord: smite the Shepherd.' So the Shepherd is smitten that the sheep might be free. The ram must die so that Isaac might not die. This is our only hope of heaven: a substitutionary atonement.

People sometimes speak rather carelessly about Christ dying for sinners. What does this little word for mean? Our godly forefathers used to put it clearly. (You remember some of them don't you?) They used to speak about Christ dying in the room, place and stead of His people." That was good divinity. That is substitution. If you go back further, the old divines used to speak about Christ dying in the law-place of His people. But no-one put it more clearly than our dear hymnwriter:

"He took the dying traitor's place.
And suffered in his stead:
For man (O miracle of grace!)
For man the Saviour bled."

Now that will endear the Lord Jesus to you. Then by faith you will behold the Lamb of God. Then this will make Him precious to your soul.

"In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." Well, that was the first, the most blessed thing that Abraham saw that day on Mount Moriah. Now the second thing he saw was this: the Lord's blessed ability to deliver. There did not appear to be any way of deliverence, did there? It was God's own commandment. The sentence had gone forth. Abraham and Isaac had traveled this journey, and now the mountain is pointed out, and the altar prepared. There is the knife and there is the wood. It all seemed too far gone God Himself had commanded it. There just didn't seem any way out, any way of deliverence. "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen" that the Lord is able to make a way where there is no way, that the Lord is able to deliver where there is no way of deliverence. "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." And He is an almighty Deliverer.

This is one of the great deliverances of the Word of God. But let us be clear, beloved friends, the whole of Scripture is a Book of trials and deliverences, and the whole experience of the people of God is an experience of trials and deliverance. So you will be brought into these mountains where there is no deliverance, where you cannot even see how the Lord can come. "O but the voice of my Beloved! behold, He cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills." It is an easy thing for Him to come over all these dark mountains to command deliverence for Jacob. There will be many times when you need deliverence and you have to seek for it and pray for it - spiritual things, providential things - and perhaps this afternoon some of you are in some concern and you want the Lord to deliver, but; you cannot see how He can. You cannot see any way out. "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen. "It shall be seen how the Lord touches the mountains and they smoke. It wilt be seen how the great mountain becomes a place before Zerubbabel. "Call upon Me in the day of trouble: deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me."

"In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." Well, some of you have seen it many times in the mount, haven't you, the Lord's blessed ability to deliver? Some of us have seen it over and over again in our darkest hour, haven't we?

"Then let our humble faith address
His mercy and His power;
We shall obtain delivering grace,
In the distressing hour."

Remember, child of God, you will not have one more trial than deliverance. However many trials you have, you will be delivered from them all. O that word! On one occasion the Apostle Paul gave a great catalogue of trials, and he said: "Out of them all the Lord delivered me." I remember once in my life there seemed to be so many trials and problems and difficulties. I sat down and I scribbled them one by one on a piece of paper, and just looked at them, almost in black despair. There were so many. But months afterwards, it may even have been years afterwards, I suddenly found that scrap of paper. At first, I hardly knew what it was, and then I remembered. I began to read through the black, dark catalogue of all these trials, and as I went through them one by one, I could see how the Lord had been with me and brought me out of them. As I came to the last one, that word dropped in sweetly: "Out of them all the Lord delivered me." The apostle says, "Who delivered us from so great. a death." Beloved, that is your past. "And doth deliver." That is the trouble you are in today. Now this is the whole of your unknown way: "In whom we trust that we will yet deliver us."

"In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." The third thing that. Abraham saw that day in the mount was the Lord's ability to provide, and so he called that place "Jehovah-jireh" - the Lord will provide. It was something he saw. Of course, really this third point

embraces the other two: "The Lord will provide." He saw that the Lord will provide a way of deliverance and he saw that the Lord will provide a Lamb to suffer in the sinner's place." He called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh." The Lord will provide, it means. As it is said to this day, In the mount; of the Lord It shall be seen."

Well, then, what a beautiful title this is, isn't it -- Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide"? Didn't our godly forefathers used to love this title of the Lord, especially in those terrible days of poverty? They had to live on it day by day: "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." No doubt many of you remember years ago in so many of the houses of our people there used to be a little poem hanging on the wall and the title of it at the top was, "Jehovah-jireh." This was the little poem:

"Say not, my soul, from whence can God relieve thy care,

Remember that Omnipotence hath servants everywhere

His method is sublime, His thoughts supremely kind;

God never is before His time, and never is behind." Jehovah-jireh. "Abraham called the name of that; place, Jehovah-jireh." There is such a beautiful suitability in it. It touches everything, doesn't it? It is suitable for a young person in whose heart the fear of God has been placed. It is suitable for a dying saint coming down to the swellings of Jordan. "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." Well some of you may at present be having difficulties in your lives and in your circumstances. There may be providential difficulties. You do not know how you are going to manage. You do not know how you are going to go on. Now this is the answer: "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide" "When, and where, and by what means, to His wisdom leaving." You may think it is going to be this way, but the Lord may work a completely different way.

Perhaps the best commentary on this point is 1 Kings - 17 - Elijah, the terrible dearth, the drought. "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide"-provide the brook Cherith when all the other brooks are dry; provide ravens: "But sooner all nature shall change, then one of God's promises fail"; supply all Elijah's needs, for, "When the Lord's people have need, His goodness will find out a way." You remember that question after Elijah had ascended to heaven: "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" That; is Jehovah-jireh, the One who supplies the ravens, the one who commands the brook Cherith. Where is He? He is still on the throne, still in heaven, He still cares, and He is still faithful to His promise. What about when your brook begins to run dry? Why, Jehovah-jireh is not dependent; on one little brook Cherith. He has a widow woman to sustain you, a barrel of meal that- will never be completely empty, a cruse of oil that will never be completely dry. "All creatures obey His command. Dear child of God, in grace and in providence you will always have a handful of meal in the bottom of your barrel and always some oil in your cruse.

"Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." There may be some of you and

you are having difficulties in the church. You may be having problems; it may even be trouble, or it may be needs you have. You cannot see how those needs are ever going to be supplied. Or it may be that you are seeking ministers to preach, or even a godly pastor. "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." You say, "How can it be?" "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." What about those godly women by the river at Philippi? They had not got a man to do anything. What did they do? They were not satisfied with some compromise or some worldly device or some second best. They met for prayer, and the Lord sent the Apostle Paul.

"Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." Now there are a few dear ministers here today. What about us? You know, the Lord's day morning comes very, very quickly after Saturday afternoon and evening, and there is no discharge in this warfare. Week by week and year by year, and sometimes you have said everything you have got to say, and sometimes you cannot; think of anything else, and sometimes you cannot find a text. "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide'! When you are at your wits end, perhaps you will be able to say, like I so often have to do,

"Thou hast helped in every need;
This emboldens me to plead;
After so much mercy past,
Canst Thou let me sink at last?"

"Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." Then you see, there are family things. Some of you may have problems and difficulties and trials in your families concerning those you love. You hardly know how to manage things. You hardly know what to do, "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." No doubt a few of you, if not many, this afternoon are in trouble, in difficulty of one sort or another. "The heart knoweth *his* own bitterness." If you are in trouble, you know it, and what is a trouble to one is not a trouble to another.

"Did ever trouble yet befall,
And He refuse to hear thy call?"

"Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." Then there is the unknown way stretching before you. What about tomorrow, and next week, and the coming days? What about those mountains that loom in your pathway? You cannot face them. You shrink from them. You are ready to flee, ready to turn back.

"Jesus Christ, your Father's Son,
Bids you undismayed go on."

"Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." Some of you may be saying, "You are getting a bit too much on providential things. I am plagued with the conflict, and temptation, and indwelling sin, and fresh-contracted guilt. Well this word covers every spiritual concern, every spiritual trial. "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." There is your pilgrimage you have to walk out; perhaps-you find the road is rough. There is the heavenly race that you seek to run. There is the conflict with sin and Satan and death and hell. "The Lord will provide." A young pilgrim sets out, and in our foolishness we think we are somehow going to manage it ourselves. An old soldier

once said that when a soldier is accepted into the army, there is only one thing to do obey. We have to walk it out. "Tis mine to obey, 'tis His to provide. But your supplies are sure for every step of your pilgrimage, like Israel's manna. You and I would like the Lord to provide for next weeks trials today, wouldn't we?

"No stock on nature's barren ground,

My all is in Thy storehouse found."

It is like the manna day by day: when you need it, it is there. He will not give you any stock in hand to make you independent. You have to go all the way leaning, hanging, depending.

"Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." So many things were said this morning about the state of the world and our church. If only the Holy Ghost drop this into our hearts, then this is the answer, that complete sufficiency that is in God, that fulness which dwells in His beloved Son. "What'er we need in Jesus dwells."' "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide" In Romans 8, Paul had such a beautiful view of it. He how the Father provide His dear Son as a saviour, provided all to open a fountain for sin and for uncleanness; and provided Him to suffer such ignominy and shame and sorrow, even to death. It is very beautiful reasoning of the apostle. He argues from the greater to the less. He said,"He that spared not His own Son." Go to Calvary, beloved friends, and see that, He spared not His own Son. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all." Now this is it: "How shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? "That is, if He sent His dear Son to calvary to die, then He will not fail to supply all your needs, whatever they are in your pilgrimage, all your way to heavens Jehovah-jireh, the Lord provide," So may we view the specialty in the Person of the Lord Jesus. William Gadsby used a delightful expression He used to sing of Him as "Jehovah - Jesus. "Jehovah-Jesus is the sinner's Friend" "Jehovah - Jesus, we will Thee adore." I have never come across any other writer or preacher who used that expression, but it is a scriptural one--Jehovah-Jesus. "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." "We can apply it to the dear Saviour of sinners, the wonderful fulness that; dwells in Him, "What'er I need in Jesus dwells." Jehovah-jireh, Jehovah-Jesus, 'the Lord will provide."

Now I am going to tell you somethings beloved friends. Faith adds various bits and pieces at the end. Faith looks at a Lord like this: "The Lord will provide," and here is this sinner in all his felt need and emptiness and ruin and guilt and shame and helplessness, and faith looks at a promise like this and puts bits on the end. Things like this. "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide" divine help. That is what I need. I am so helpless. But; is His name Jehovah-jireh? Then He will provide that help I need,"Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." Now faith says, I am so weak and helpless, but "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide" me with all the strength that I need, strength made perfect in weakness. "As thy days, so shall thy strength

be." Now does your faith ever work Like this? "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." You feel painfully your lack of wisdom; you need wisdom, but you lack it. But "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide" If He is going to provide all things for His people, He will provide them with wisdom. So you might go on. O but don't we need grace! "He giveth more grace." He has it to give. We need it. We are enriched by receiving it, but He is none the poorer for giving it. Grace to live, grace to die, grace to pardon, to forgive, to cleanse, grace to humble, to subdue sin, grace to bring us safely along, safely through, grace to be with our spirit, grace in all its fulness, grace abounding.

"His grace shall to the end,
Stronger and brighter shine."

And faith does not miss this out. Is His name Jehovah-jireh? And do I feel my need of grace? Do I sometimes feel destitute of it? When the Lord will provide me with all that grace that I need. For, "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen"- His faithfulness, His blessed ability to fulfill this promise through His beloved Son. Jehovah-jireh, to supply all that divine help and divine strength and divine wisdom and divine grace that you need.

"And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh." Now beloved friends, "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide," in New Testament language, in gospel vocabulary, it is this, the very same truth, the identical truth, but in different; words: "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by-Christ Jesus." You can live on a promise like that, die on a promise like that, if the Holy Ghost leads you into it. "My God will supply all your need." "Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." It is all your need; everything you want, not everything you think you need, but if you really need it; you shall have it. "My God shall supply all your need, providence and grace, great and small, in life, in death, for time and for eternity.

"Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide." "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

What a beautiful expression that is, "His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." That is what John Newton called "a never-failing treasury filled with boundless stores of grace."

"His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." They are inexhaustible, full, free, but it is according to. This is one of the beautiful Scriptures which is often misquoted. How often people say, God will supply all your needs out of His riches in glory! That is true, but it doesn't say" out of His riches in glory"; it; says,"according to. That is the difference? If a man is exceedingly wealthy, and you went to him in great need, he might give you a penny. That would be out of his riches; but it would not be according to his riches. If it were according to his riches; you would get a rich gift. William Gadsby seems to come right to the very heart of it. He says, he could not tempt him out of his standing in Christ, but; he came something like this. Satan said, "well you will get to heaven at last but the Lord will do it unwilling, and He

will only do it because He cannot break His promise." Do you know what the old man said, He said "satan, the Lord has said to me, It is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." That is the way grace works. That is the way the Lord Jesus deals. It is His good pleasure to give you the kingdom. It is His good pleasure to provide. It is His good pleasure to supply all your need. "According to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

"And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh,: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen."

"If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water."— JOHN iv. 10.

We cannot know the nature, though we may know the necessity, of the gift of God, till we experience its power as revealed and shed abroad in our soul. When we know some measure of the gift of God when we feel eternal life flowing through our spiritual veins. How do I know I live naturally? Is not my participation of natural life known to me by an internal consciousness that I possess it? I know I live, because I feel that I live. And so, if we have spiritual life, there will be, at times and seasons, an internal consciousness that we have it; we shall feel the spiritual heart beat, and the spiritual lungs breathe, and the spiritual eyes see, and the spiritual ears hear: in a word, we shall be internally conscious of those emotions and sensations which are peculiar to the life of God in the soul. Spiritual life will be seen in its own light, felt in its own power, and shine forth in its own testimony. The little that we do know (and it is indeed for the most part but a little) makes us long for more of it. If ever we have received "the gift of God" into our conscience; if ever we have felt the mysterious operation of divine life in our hearts; if ever we have known the sweet emotions and peculiar sensations by which it manifests itself, it has killed us to all other religions; and as a measure of divine life has flowed into the heart out of the fulness of the Son of God, we want no other religion but that which stands in the power of God; by that alone we can live, and by that alone we feel that we can die.

J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the next session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will be held with North East Primitive Baptist Church, Onslow County, N.C. On October 11-12, 1997. All who believe and

love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited.

To locate the Church, go north on US 17 from Jacksonville to Pumpkin Center and turn right on Piney Green Road (at Moore Buick Dealer) and go approximately 3 miles to the Church on the left.

Gene Lupton
Association Clerk

THE SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1997 session of the Smith River Association will convene the Lord willing at Salem Church meeting house. The host Church is County Line Primitive Baptist Church in Floyd County, Va. Preaching service will begin at 11 o'clock A.M. on Friday, Sept. 5, Sat. 6, and Sun. 7.

Salem Church is located in Floyd County, Virginia on Floyd Highway N. (State Route #221) between Check, Va. and Copper Hill, Va.

We invite visitors and correspondents of our faith and order attend this meeting with us.

W.G. Parsons
Association Clerk

THE SOUTH ARKANSAS ORIGINAL OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The South Arkansas Original Old School Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Pilgrim Rest Church off Highway 167 north of Fordcyce, Arkansas. Take 273 about 1/2 mile to the Church. Session begins on the third Sunday in September (September 20-21, 1997, Saturday before). We invite all Elders, Brothers and Sisters of same faith and order to come and be with us at this meeting if the Lord's will.

Asso. Clerk, Frances Townley

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 27 and 28, 1997.

The meeting will be held at Rehobeth Church located at ElDorado, Arkansas - Five miles North on Highway 7, and one-half mile West on Highway 335. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron, Association Clerk
(318) 778-4217

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the Staunton River Union is to be held. The Lord willing with Malmaison Church, the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in August. A cordial invitation is extended to our ministers, brethren, and friends.

Elder Julian Williams, Mod.
Peggy Wells, Clerk

THE WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene with Moons Creek Church the fifth Sunday in Au-

gust. The Church is located off highway #86, between Danville & Yanceyville. From Danville turn left on Park Springs Rd., church is located about 1/4 mile on left. From Yanceyville turn right on to Park Springs Rd. The meeting will begin at 10:00. All lovers of the truth are invited and a special invitation to all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Deacon Franklin Blalock, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 1997

Mrs. Julia Garne, NC 2.00
Mrs. Ethel Carter, NC 7.00
Eld. J.Y. McCormick, FL 7.00
Mrs. Jessie W. Ray, NC 2.00
G.R. Slate, VA 2.00
Mrs. Lina B. Willis, NC 2.00
E.B. Hodnett, VA 2.00
Mrs. Carrie Jo Williams, TN 7.00
Miles T. Bird, LA 2.00
Mrs. Mae Williamson, LA 2.00
Walter F. Griffith, NC 2.00
Mrs. Frances Townley, AR
In memory Eld. John Townley ... 5.00
Mrs. Mary W. Janney, VA 7.00

OBITUARIES

RUTH WALKER BLAIR

Sister Ruth was born on September 18, 1910 in Stuart, Virginia, daughter of the late Abram Linville Walker and Mary Williams Walker. She passed away on March 14, 1997 in Roman Eagle Memorial Home, Danville, Va. following five years of declining health.

She was first married to Joseph W. Inge and moved to Danville, Virginia. He passed away in 1971, on November 3, 1973 she married Ernest Linwood Blair and moved to Pittsylvania County and made her home there until after the death of Brother Ernest on June 9, 1988 when she returned to Lansbury Drive in Danville, Virginia. She had been a resident of the Nursing Home for eight months.

Sister Ruth joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on April 27, 1969. In September 1992 she had a desire to move her membership to Canaan Primitive Baptist Church since her husband, Brother Ernest was a member there and the location being near their home. She was received by letter on September 13, 1992 and came to meetings as long as she was able.

She and Brother Ernest had much love and interest in the welfare of the Church and very supportive in every way.

She is survived by one sister, Mrs. Jessie Gravely of Danville, Virginia and a number of nieces and nephews.

Graveside services were conducted in Highland Burial Park on March 16, 1997 by her pastor, Elder J.R. Williams.

She is greatly missed by family, church and friends. May we all be reconciled to God's will.

Elder J.R. Williams, Moderator
Geneva B. Scearce, Clerk

OBITUARY OF SISTER MARGARET LEWIS BRUMFIELD

With a sad and lonely heart, I will try to write the obituary of our Dear Sister in Christ, Margaret L. Brumfield.

She died on Saturday, May 3, 1997, at Elder Care Nursing Home, Rocky Mount, Virginia. She was a member of Strawberry Primitive Baptist Church for many years.

She was married to Clarence D. Brumfield, who passed away on June 27, 1985.

She was born February 21, 1915 to James Christopher Lewis and Pattie Dillard Lewis, Danville, VA. She leaves one sister, Mrs. Helen Shelton, Danville, VA. One Son, Wayne Brumfield, who lived with her and took care of her until he died October 12, 1995. After her son died, she went to live with friends in Moneta, VA and they took good care of her.

She was a faithful member at her church until she became disabled and has been missed greatly.

She has been blessed with good friends to take care of her, everything was done for her that kind hands could do. She was put in the Hospital and Nursing Home for treatment. The Good Lord knows best, He called her home on Saturday, May 3, 1997.

The funeral was held at 2 PM, Monday, May 5, 1997 at Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Home Chapel, Danville, VA, by her Pastor Elder Thomas Solomon and assisted by Elder Lane Carter and Elder Raymond Goad, and was buried in Highland Burial Park, Danville, VA beside her husband,beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the coming of her Blessed Saviour to gather his loved ones home.

May we bow in humble submission to His Holy Will. He never makes a mistake, he giveth and he taketh away, Blessed be his Holy Name.

Written by a Sister in Hope,
Sister Gertie Holley

SISTER FAUSTINE WILLIAMS

Sister Faustine Williams passed from this life on March 19, 1997, at the Pickens County Medical Center in Reform, AL. at the age of 91.

She was a native of Pickens County, Alabama and a faithful member of the Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church in Pickens County. She was preceded in death by her husband, Thomas E. Williams.

Sister Faustine is survived by her daughter Elsie Nell James, Fayette, AL; two sisters Elsie Ruth Spencer, and Dorothy B. Watson, both of Kennedy, AL; one grandson and three great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church on March 20, 1997, with Minister Ralph Smith officiating.

PSALM 29:3.

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the Lord is upon many waters.

GLENNA ALTIZER YEATTS

Born on February 21, 1898 to James Meritt and Caroline Cummings Altizer, Glenna was one of eleven children. Her parents were members of the primitive baptist church. Of the eleven children all seven sisters and one brother were at one time members of Valley View Primitive Baptist Church. Joining Valley View with three of her sisters in July, 1931, she was a faithful member who loved to hear the gospel and singing of hymns.

Throughout her life, sister Glenna thought of others in many caring ways. Her humbleness and love were two of her greatest virtures. Many lives were touched by her meekness and genuine love. Never complaining she was content and reconciled to make the best of every situation. For almost ten years she resided at Heritage Hall Nursing Home. While there she appreciated the care given her by all the workers from the custodial staff to the administrator. Each of them were important to her. People that knew her loved her and she was an inspiration to all.

Sister Glenna was thankful for the clear mind she was blessed to possess during her later years even though her body was frail. Many times she wondered why she was living such a long life while all her other brothers and sisters were deceased. She knew when it was time for her to go she would be blessed to do so.

During her last week frail and weak, Sister Glenna was surrounded by family and friends. So many times she asked to go to sleep to be with her Lord. On March 11, 1997 she went to sleep and was with us no more.

Surviving are two daughters and sons in law, Doris and Laddie Phillips, Christiansburg; Neoma and Alvis Altizer, Radford; three granddaughters, Sandra Phillips, England, Rhonda Wagonbrenner and Kimberly Altizer, Christiansburg; a granddaughter and her husband, Denise and Reid Lee; a grandson and his wife, Joseph and Mary Ellen Phillips; three great grandsons, Michael Lee Phillips, Matthew Lee, and Russell James Phillips; one great-granddaughter, Melissa Lee.

Funeral services was held at 1 p.m. at DeVilbiss Funeral Chapel in Radford with interment in Westview Cemetery. Sister Glenna will be missed by her pastor, Valley View members, family, and friends who knew and loved her.

Humbly submitted by request of Valley View Primitive Baptist Church With love of a dear sister in Christ and precious aunt,

Naomi W. Agee Assistant Clerk
Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
Valley View Primitive Baptist Church

ISAIAH 59:21.

As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SONG

APPROACH, my soul, the mercy seat,
Where Jesus answers prayer;
There humbly fall before his feet,
For none can perish there.

Thy promise is my only plea;
With this I venture nigh:
Thou callest burdened souls to thee,
And such, O Lord, am I.

Bowed down beneath a load of sin;
By Satan sorely pressed;
By wars without and fears within,
I come to thee for rest.

Be thou my shield and hiding place,
That, sheltered near thy side,
I may my fierce accuser face,
And tell him, Jesus died.

O wondrous love I to bleed and die,
To bear the cross and shame,
That guilty sinners, such as I,
Might plead thy gracious name.

"Poor, tempest-tossed soul, be still;
My promised grace receive;
'Tis Jesus speaks! I must, I will,
I can, I do believe.

Newton

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EDITORIAL

ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS

We trust our minds will be guided together in the truth as we ponder the depth of God's dealings with his people in the past as well as now.

I find no way to understand the written word of God by reading, re-reading, studying night and day or any effort of the creature.

Then we attempt this writing entirely dependant on thoughts coming to mind we don't have at present.

This brings us to better understand the inquiring of John the Baptist in the following; Luke Chap. 7 verses 20-28. About this time it is recorded that Christ was performing so many miracles, even raising the dead, his followers could not believe who He was, or how he did it. John sent his disciples to ask of Him whom he baptised and heard the voice from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," asking art thou he that should come? or look we for another. Are we not in somewhat this same state of awe as we see the effects of God's reigning grace on his people. Behold them sometimes spellbound, at the glorious gospel having been given some poor soul, that never was able to make a natural speech, proclaim the unsearchable riches of God's kingdom. John the baptist knew of the promise of one to come, taking the sins of his people on himself, to free themselves of its sentence of death. Yet when we are left to natural reasoning we cannot see Christ the beloved Son of God in His power and love to accomplish all things for His people. In Matthew we read "go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see." We think things which ye do hear and see." We think His people that have seen and heard by the effectual power of the holy spirit must be shown and must hear again and again that He is God and there is none other, that He alone holds the issues of life and death in His own hand, that He himself does kill and make alive. Yes go show John again those things. Yes go tell John again that I'm alive and alive for ever more and because I live ye shall live.

"Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached."

From natural understanding we will not be able to tell how God does any of the things contrary to nature he does, so we believe at that time John was asking he was left in a natural state of mind. He was surely shown at one time, for it reads show John again. Do we, if we could be included, always see the light or travel in the light. As for me it seems, more often in darkness, but to beg to be shown again He is the giver of every good and perfect gift, Himself being that only perfection needed for complete salvation to every heir of promise.

Then our mind is stopped at this little word how, really the key word for understanding as well as performing of the work of God, not works of God.

It is the work of God that ye believe in him, then there is but one conclusion to how, it is by, through, and for His purpose and pleasure that all things exit.

We believe John was again given an answer to his inquiry as his people have been given in every age if even for a minute. How the blind see, how the lame walk, how the lepers are cleansed, how the deaf hear, how the dead are raised, and to the poor the gospel is preached.

If all this isn't by His, effectual working power in His people and after his determined wisdom and power, I have no present knowledge of Him and need to ask as John did, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another.

Might His power be manifest to such a degree in each of us, we can at times declare, Thou art our God and besides thee there is no other.

In hope of Him
for my life,
Elder J.R. Williams

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elders; and Editors, of the Signs of the Times:

It is my desire, to express my heart felt thanks to you all, for your laboring so faithful, in your efforts to get our paper out to us all. While at the same time; I deeply desire of a thankful heart, unto my Lord and God; for making it so. For I feel to realize, all is in His hands, and at His disposal. And so it is; we have no thing or nothing; we did not receive. For without Him; we could neither be anthing nor do anything. I therefore feel it to be thus with us all; we are all completely self-helpless; and and wholly dependent upon Him; for our all in all of all things, both natural and Spiritual.

May His name be praised both now and forevermore AMEN:

Troy G. Shepard

ARTICLE

I just read an article written by Elder Gilbert Beebe; dated February 1, 1865. Which was his answer to a Brothers request; that has to do with Isaiah 45:7.

"I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things."

But the brother desired Elder Beebe, to dwell more particularly on the Creation of evil:

In reading what Elder Beebe gave, in answer to the Brother's request; I felt, and still feel; was an inspiration from above all earthly principalities or kingdoms in this world.

Now it is my mind to begin my quotation of that portion; where Elder Beebe dwellest particularly, upon the creation of evil:

Quote: We are aware of the difficulty arising in the minds of God's little ones upon this subject. That God is a being of infinite perfection, spotless purity, who cannot look on sin with approbation, is as he has revealed himself unto them; but how he at the same time can be the Creator of evil is hard for them to conceive. There is a mystery of Godliness and a mystery of iniquity in both of which God will be glorified. We all readily admit that God is the sole creator of all things that exist in heaven, earth and hell. And in his creation he has presented to our wondering eyes an endless variety. We can hardly conceive of any being or thing now existing that has not its opposite. The serpent and the dove, angels of light and angels of the bottomless pit, light and darkness, heat and cold, good and evil: and is there anything existing that God has not made? He has created all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil. In all the creation God has made nothing that can bear a comparison with himself. His creatures are not gods. None of them possess as creatures his peculiar attributes or perfections. Yet all things are and were created for his pleasure, and he is above them all, and will bend them all to his government. In the sublime language of Job, "He stretcheth out the north over empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end. The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproof. By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens, his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him? But the thunder of his power who can understand (Job 26: 7, 10, 11, 13, 14)."

But the term evil as used in our text we understand to mean judgments, calamities, afflictions and chastisements which are sent upon the children of men. They come not up out of the ground, nor do they fall upon us by chance. God's careful providence watches over us, and no evil can come nigh our dwelling except meted out in weight and measure, time, duration

and result, by the unerring wisdom and power of God himself. As it is written, "Is there evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" Job said, "Shall we receive good from the Lord, and not evil?" That is, shall we receive prosperity, and not adversity, pleasure and not pain, joy and not sorrow? Wars, famine, and pestilence are evils, which come and go at God's command. And persecution and oppression are under his control. Men are used by him as his sword and his hand, devils and wicked men are restrained or suffered to vent their malice, as God ordains. And under this conviction we are instructed to pray God to, "Lead us not into temptation, but to deliver us from evil," And to shield us in the day of evil. As in our text light is contrasted with darkness, so is evil contrasted with peace. "I make peace and create evil." By withholding peace and bringing evil upon them, that is. The Israelites received evil at the hand of the Lord for their rebellion and idolatry when he sent fiery serpents into their camps, and when he caused their enemies to triumph over them. And so in his dealings with his children, sometimes he sends on them fiery trials, deep afflictions, sore temptations which disturb their peace, and bring labor, sorrow and grief upon them for the trial of their faith, and as chastisement for their faults.

"I the Lord do all these things." This is consoling to the afflicted saints who have confidence in God. They know what he appoints for them is best, though it may call them to pass through flames or floods, for they know that all things work together for good to them, and they are led to say, "It is the Lord, let him do as seemeth him good;" for so said Eli, when the Lord brought evil on him and upon his sons. (End of quote):

His purpose in this, and all things; shall be fulfilled to its every jot and tittle; of that, I have no doubt.

Troy G. Shepard

VOICES OF THE PAST

ECCLESIASTES 9: 13-15

"This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it seemed great unto me; there was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it; now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor wise man."

As our minds are illuminated by the Holy Spirit we will see many wonderful mysteries about this city. The text teaches things that the wisdom of the earth is not able to understand, much less is it able to love them. Anywhere that we turn in the Bible we will find the truth of our brother Paul's writing to the church at Corinth. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of

God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The subject matter seemed great unto Solomon, and it will seem that way to all those that are led into the truth. Imparting this knowledge to the men and women that are natural, is something that we can not do. In the first place, what could we say about this city that would make it attractive to a man in nature? It is too small, its defense is too small, and its delieverer is too infinitesimal to draw the attention of strong men. If we were looking for a place of safety would we seek a little city? If we desired a place for assurance and calmness of thought, would we enter a city that had but few men in it? If we desired to have a future of security, would we be willing to inhabit a city that did not have any deliverer save a poor wise man? If we remember well, we know that at one time in our life that we would not have been caught in a city like unto this.

The strangest things take place with men. I did for a long time seek and inhabit a city that was large, whose defenses were strong and able to all those in it, to deliver the city from all comers, to keep her borders inviolate from all that would scale the wall of protection. How foolish it would have been for anyone to talk to me that God favored a city like unto this little city. It would have been foolish in anyone to talk to me about it, for they would have been talking to a fool. While I am often besieged by suggestions by the wily one that I do not have a good hope, yet I do not feel that talk had one thing to do with my being blessed to see the Old Baptist Church. It had been weeks since I had heard the name of our Creator used, except to swear by; it had been ever so long since anybody had said anything to me about religion of any kind. And yet the first week in this month (December) was forty years ago, I am sure that I saw something that I had never seen before. The city that had been so well fortified fell to the power of the poor wise man. None was any more active than I in trying to prevent this great fall. I daubed mortar; I carried huge timbers (that I had helped to get ready) and put them in strategic spots; I gave much advice; I summoned up all of the old tricks of trade in order to outwit this poor man that I did not intend to have rule over me. (Luke 19 :14) The city fell, and I fell with it.

What a glorious day it was when the children of God fled for refuge to the city of God. We had barely escaped in the falling of the walls of that old Jerusalem. To begin with our every hope died as those walls went down. We had been sheltered by them all of our life. This had been the only city that we had known, and as we fled it terrorized our soul to see the only home we had known fall down by the onslaughts of another. This left us homeless as well as helpless. I hope that my little message will reach you and you in retrospection; that you will be given to live once again that time when you had no place to turn to, when you were a homeless vagabond in the earth. How strange it all was, for we did not know who had destroyed

our once flourishing city. We realized His power, but not His mercy; we realized His destruction, but not His salvation.

Do you know what it is to be homeless? Do you know what it is to be run out of the only home and city that you have ever known? Another thing: Do you remember that there was a woe pronounced on those that were with young when that city fell? How did you make out? There has never been a calamity like unto her that is with young when the cry comes to leave the falling city. You had not long had a hope--in fact it was a young hope indeed, and yet you had to leave. Do you remember how it was with you? Did you wonder what would become of you ? Did you think about your little hope, and that perhaps you had been mistaken about having one? As yet you know, you had not much to go on. You had met the law giver, but you did not know the law keeper. You had life all right, because it had sent you to Jerusalem (old), and you had tried to comply with every rule of the city, but it was not enough.

What were your expectations? Let us look back down the road. Didn't we expect destruction? Our city had fallen. We could not deliver it. God, the law giver, had waged a war that had ended in triumph and glory unto himself, but it had scattered the whole of the inhabitants of the city. This fleeing for refuge intrigues me. A refugee does not have time to get his household goods; he does not have anything to convey them to another location. He barely escapes with his life, and he despairs of retaining it. How anxiously he casts his eyes at the conflagration that he has just left, as he sees his city and his home and his possessions go up in ashes. It would seem that the tongues of the flames are lapping at his heels, and there is more hurrying although this poor tried soul is so weary. Surely there is not any hope for such a one.

And there is not any hope for mercy from God the law giver. There is not any hope or expectation that this poor harassed sinner that could not stem the tide of God's vengeance against the city, could turn and recover his former standing and build again the vanquished city. What desolation is his or hers. But hark, my soul, did I hear a voice? Bend down little children that you might hear it as it floats over the way. This voice does not come from your rear. You heard a voice back there, and it sickened your soul as it thundered, "The soul that sinneth shall die." There is not any help at Sinai; there is not any likelihood of the law giver relenting. But that voice, how soothing it sounds ! Listen tired and weary sinner. Yes, even now I hear the words come so lowly, O and yet so clearly and so comforting. ***"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."***

But perhaps you think that I am his dealing with the work of the poor wise man. Perhaps you think that I am not writing along the line of election and predestination. That is what I am doing. God's everlasting covenant is a wonderful topic, and far be it from me

to minimize the work of the Father in choosing his family. The work of Jesus; Christ, as the poor wise man, is of paramount importance to the welfare of God's people. It is as important as thei choice of the Father. Much has been said (much of it unwisely from every; quarter) about time salvation. What would you know if it had not been revealed to you in time? If there is one person, from whatever corner of the globe they come, that will take the position that they have contributed anything to having a knowledge of God's choice and of the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, then I want it plainly understood that my text is not for them. The text that I am treating on has previously laid down certain characters that did not do anything towards contributing to their welfare. They did not win the race, nor the battle, nor get their bread, nor come into riches, nor get their favors,-- by what they could do. This certainly is treating of a class of people that are saved in time by the poor wi9e man. It is this saving, it is this experience that I desire to treat on. May I ask you again this important question, If the light had not shined around Saul and the voice from heaven had not spoken to him, do you have any evidence that he would have ever gone to Ananias? Please give chapter and verse.

If a like spiritual work had not been done for you and this sinner, what would our occupation be at this time? Would we be living in the old Jerusalem or in the new? Would we be in the city that the law giver would be bringing to destruction despite all our efforts, or would we be in the little city that the poor wise man would be delivering by his wisdom? Many are not too well acquainted with the doctrinal phase of this deliverance (including the writer), but many (including the writer) feel to have a good hope through grace that we have been in both cities; that we had to flee from the one in order to escape destruction; that we were found helpless and lost and hungry and thirsty by the Lord; that we were led forth by the right way to a city of habitation, even a city few in number (manifestly), and that he showed us His prevailing-arm of deliverance.

If I have ever known God, I found him as a strict God of justice. In his vindictive wrath against my law erected, law defended city, I found no mercy, no love, no hope. I stared death in the face without a voice of compassion, without a word of comfort, without a thought but that everlasting destruction was for the city and all of its inhabitants. I did not leave that falling city looking for Jesus, for I did not know Jesus. I left it with the full expectation of being apprehended by Him whose laws I had broken, and that at that apprehension death would be my lot. In this law city I fell among thieves, and they beat me and robbed me, and left me lying by the roadside helpless. Who found me? Draw near dear child of God, and let us reason together. Remember, if we can not reason together here, the time will shortly come when we shall come into the presence of God, with whom there is no slackening his justice in order to give mercy, with whom we can not reason. May our question resound into all the earth (that is, into all quickened earthen vessels), and may the reverberations thereof shake every idolatrous position we have taken to ourselves, may it cause us to take stock of what we are teaching as the doctrine of God our Saviour.

Now back to the question: Who found us? What did we do to call him to our side? On these questions hang the history of the church. The answer to these questions shows whether we are in the defended city or not. If we did anything to call him to us, then salvation is not of the Lord. If anyone helped him with the carrying of us to the inn (city), then salvation is not of the Lord. If any administrators or auxiliaries or other standby helps were involved in his care of us, then salvation is not altogether of the Lord, and the praise therefor is to be rendered according to the part played in salvation. If any of the brethren or friends paid any part of the two pence given for our keep, then the poor wise man did not pay the cost of redemption in full. If we must earn our keep while He is away, then salvation is not of the Lord; and since honest men do not collect the same debt twice, I feel sure that God will not do so either; and if we earned it while he was away and then he came back and paid everything there certainly would be dishonesty in the defense and deliverance of the city.

I believe in religious freedom, and if it suits men to preach any other name than Jesus as the deliverer of the city, I am satisfied for them to do it. If it seems evil to preach Jesus, then any set of gods many or lords many will do; but what seems evil to men will be the meat and drink of Joshua's house.

When the Lord Jesus Christ found us and carried us to the inn (the city, the church) we were as free in spirit as we will ever be here. Did you hate anybody? Would you have hurt the feelings of the least of your brethren? Would you have made anybody an offender because of a word or the interpretation of it? Dear reader, pause for one moment with me. Did you see anything wrong with the city? Did you see anything wrong with the inhabitants of it? What was your attitude about sin? Did you think that you would be free of sin and trouble and sorrow? Answer me, reader, isn't it true that you were sailing on the balmy clouds of keen anticipation of a life among the saints unalloyed by the base things of time and nature? Not a sign of a great king coming, not a sign of an enemy, not a thing to be defended from. This period might be compared to the beauty of the Mount of Transfiguration. The Lord Jesus had led you up; he made known to you the beauties of that sacred mountain, but at the end of his revelation he led you down. Words become useless fancies to describe the feelings of a child of God when it is made apparent to him that he is still in the world of sin and sorrow, and that it lurks in every member.

What had been so wonderfut to him now becomes a sorrowful hallucination. It looks like that this city is to fall; it looks like that their hope of a rest was being followed by the most harrowing experience at all. But the soul searching inquiries are followed by being told again that Jesus is now enthroned to defend the city, to give the inhabitants the victory in winning the race; to wage and win their battle against sin and the world and the devil; to give the simple bread, to give the riches of his grace to men whose understanding had been null and void; to give favors and benefits and blessings to those who did not have any skill in their hands. (Psalms 78:72)

Elder W.D. Griffin

HEARING PAUL DECLARE THE UNKNOWN GOD

Sometime ago, while in the pulpit with the Bible opened to the 17th chapter of Acts, I began to read at the 16th verse. When I had read through the 26th verse I was carried by the Spirit to Mars Hill in Athens, Greece; and became a live listener as Paul preached this mighty sermon on the text, THE UNKNOWN GOD. I was one who had helped erect the inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. I had to stop reading as I began to experience extraordinary visions and wonderful meditations relative to the actual setting and circumstance of this memorable occasion. I was so astonished at the sight of Athens, Mars Hill, and the many altars and inscriptions and gods made of stone and wood; and the people who worshiped them; that I have done research since then to see if it was a true picture. G. Frederick Owens says, "Athens, one of the greatest cultural centers of Paul's day, grew up around a 520-foot-high rocky plateau called "the Acropolis". Here, on this elevated area, stood the many-columned Parthenon, far famed architectural wonder, *and so many other sacred edifices that the place was called, "the many templed Acropolis"*. May God grant that you relive with me as I relate this.

I came to Athens because I had learned that the most wise of the earth were there. I had such a craving for wisdom because of my convictions that I was so ignorant and unlearned. I had itching ears to hear something that would satisfy my hunger for wisdom. I had a worshipful heart and a strange feeling that I must come to Athens in order to hear these great wise men talk of wisdom. I had a feeling that I would find unity there and that the wise men would all be agreed. I was disappointed upon my arrival when I found wise men in the Market Place disagreeing and quarreling. I learned that the wise men spoke constantly on Mars Hill. I attended the lectures and found that they disagreed. I began to venture out and behold the many altars and the constant flow of people. Some went to one altar; others went to another; while others formed in companies to go to the various images. I followed one company to an altar and while the people were bowing before this image I read a long inscription about this god. They knew so much about their god; yet the inscription meant nothing to me. It was empty and meaningless. I thought of how foolish it was to fall down and worship something that couldn't see, feel, or even stretch forth his hands. I exclaimed in anguish, "Do all of you worship in reality this graven image whom you have to move and carry about?" Some raved against me, but a few walked to my side and one of them inquired, "Tell us about your god ?" I answered, "I know nothing about a god, however, I feel there is but One--Who has more power than this god whom you worship." We

agreed to investigate all of the other shrines and altars. We read each and every inscription printed on the banners at the many edifices and a few from each company joined us as we proceeded from one place to another.

After investigating all these long inscriptions of the many gods we concluded that we had not found any that suited the feelings and convictions of any of us. What could we do? We were all anxious to worship together THE GOD whom we could not define. We talked freely one with another and found a relationship with each other that we could not explain. We reasoned that there were so many altars that surely we could erect one and worship together. We found that we could not match the long inscriptions found on the other altars. We all confessed to one another that we wanted to worship the God whom we knew nothing about. We thought we must put up an inscription as all of the others had. They wrote long inscriptions about their gods but we could write nothing because we all confessed our ignorance of Him. Finally we agreed on a short inscription of four little words: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. We did not know how to worship Him but we tried. How we wanted and wished that we could know more of Him.

One day a lone stranger passed our way and he paused long as he read the inscription. While he was standing there some men came hurriedly up and yanked him by the arm and said to him, "We are taking you before Areopagus that we may know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is." Something drew us to follow him as there was something magnetic in the expressions of his eyes and manner. It had such a drawing effect upon us that we began to wonder, IS HE A GOD? We kept as close to him as possible as arrangements were made for him to speak, and our company was clustered together as Paul stood in the midst of Mars Hill and began to speak. Other companies were there too in that throng of people. His words rang loud and clear in powerful tones as he began, "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with the inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." I thought of all the inscriptions that he read he called attention only to ours. It seemed he was speaking only to us. Is he ridiculing us for being wholly given to idolatry? was the question that came to my mind as he paused in this sermon. As I was thinking, Are we worse than they?, I really heard his words, "Whom ye ignorantly worship." As he spoke, "Him declare I unto you", I thought He is making known to us the God that we do not know. Our God sent him to us.

I reasoned further that this man is taking special notice of us who confess our ignorance. We know that we are ignorant of Him and that we do not know how to properly worship Him. This man is recognizing us as the ones who truly worship Him even though it is an ignorant worship. This

God Whom Paul preached had properly tuned our ears to hear and our hearts to understand and our minds to receive as Paul thundered, "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of Heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands". Again the speaker paused as my thoughts raced on. I thought, there is not a plurality of Gods each one having his own little dominion -- JUST ONE! He is THE GOD! What a Being! One Supreme God! He is sovereignly ruling *NOW* in both heaven and earth. All things are under His almighty supervision to such extent that He is Lord of all creatures. All things are held in the hollow of His hand instead of Him dwelling in temples made with men's hands. I heard Paul's voice become clearer as he continued, "Neither is worshipped with men's hands as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth to *ALL* life, and breath, and all things."

As Paul paused I experienced a multitude of comforting thoughts. Our God owns all things, controls all things, and works all things and does not need our power to assist Him. He does not need our wealth to make Him richer. He does not need our wisdom to inform Him, neither our political ability to advance His cause. I began to fear and tremble as I was swallowed up in thoughts of God's majesty and greatness. I felt His great hand swallow me and all the earth and fullness into its hollow with room to spare. I thought I had felt little but I had never felt so insignificant as this. Paul continued: ***"And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."*** No nation could boast of being better than other nations because God made them all of *ONE* blood. The same blood that coursed through the arteries, heart, veins, and capillaries of Adam and Eve had come in a continual flow through the generations to follow uninterrupted to the present time. Even though seas of blood have been shed, this blood has been made to grow in volume until now. No person can estimate its volume now.

No one could say so much in so few words unless he had been sent of God: a time to be born, die, plant, harvest, mourn, dance, laugh, cry;-- all times of persons, nations, days, nights, and events were before determined. Not only *when* but *where of* all events were before appointed and determined by THE GOD of the Heaven and of the earth. The time and the prescribed place of all beings from the smallest insect to the greatest creature that ever existed, or will exist, were all before appointed and determined by Him. If all the plants were pens; if all the seas were ink; if all outer space were paper; and every creature were a ready writer, I venture to say, that God's sovereignty could never be fully told in this short duration of thousands of years of time . . . The subject becomes so great in its magnitude that I am lost in amaze-

ment and awe; while a multitude of thoughts flood my mind.

The question of WHY takes hold upon me as I hear Paul continue, "That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, AND FIND HIM, though He be not far from EVERY one of US." *Seeking* the Lord, *feeling* after Him, and *finding* Him: all this is the constant labor and glorious victory of every one whom God has touched with His eternal Spirit. Every one who knows his own weakness and dependence seeks the Lord, for they have found through sad experience that the wisdom of the world, the might of men, and the riches of the earth can never progress us one inch toward God nor satisfy our fainting souls. I must seek His guidance in prayer without ceasing. I must *feel* after Him if I am so fortunate to be an object of His care and providence. *He* cares for me, is the sweetest feeling a poor worm of the dust ever felt. *He provides for me, is* a sublime feeling for poor beggars to feel. *He holds me in the hollow of His hand, is* the most protective feeling experienced when confronted with the powers that be, who would take us and kill us if they could. Finding that He helps us, undertakes for us, and fights our battles in our stead, all this gives ease of mind, comforts the heart, and restores the soul. A question enters my mind which startles me: Where can I go to find Him? Who can I send into the heavens or across the sea?

Paul continues, ***"For in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring."*** It is because of Him that we live. Any time He should withdraw Himself from us we would die naturally. Even the natural life within us is GOD. It is through Him that we move a finger, foot, tongue, or eye. We could not naturally see without Him. We can not write, think, nor speak without Him. We cannot retain things in our memory without Him. We owe Him our lives for creating us and numbering our days, as well as providing all things necessary for our natural existence. He owns us. We can never repay Him with praise for what He is to us as natural human beings. *If He be in us ALL,* as surely He is, then, to partially understand ourselves is a lesson toward understanding God. I cannot analyze my mind, neither can I understand my thoughts. Even the study of my own physical anatomy becomes so complex, or complicated, that I cannot understand the functionings of my natural body. What makes my heart beat? What induces the thoughts that enter my mind? How is the food digested that I put into my mouth? How are these digestive juices distributed to the various parts of the body? Surely I am a complicated mechanism that only God can run! Paul interrupts my thoughts again as he says: ***"Forasmuch then we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device."*** Such foolishness, I reasoned, that man who is so wonderfully made should want to worship something far less

than he himself is. What folly to try to help God when man can't, without God, help himself ?

thought, vain is the help of man. I vowed, Never again will I worship a creature but the ONE Who created all things.

Paul had stood so dignified and spoke with such power and authority until now that I was startled at the emotions that softened the tone of his voice as he made a step forward with a gesture of his hands and proclaimed; "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; BUT NOW COMMANDETH ALL MEN EVERYWHERE TO REPENT". I thought, Paul is not commanding us to repent; he is telling us that *GOD* commands it. The fullness of the time of this ignorance had really come to its end. The time of this ignorance God winked at. This time of ignorance was included in the time before appointed. Of course He winked at it because it needs be that we go through this time of ignorance in order to teach us that we cannot be wise of our own volition; but that *ALL* wisdom comes down as a free gift from Him who made us. His command to repent from this ignorant worship is certainly effectual and will cause the least to turn from their own ignorant ways of worship and to praise Him rightly. This command which is NOW being proclaimed exercises the minds, hearts, and souls of each and every one of His people in every nation, kindred, and tongue under Heaven. I heard Paul proclaim it. I felt the power of it in my soul. I prayed, ***"Turn me, Lord, and I shall be turned."*** He Paul gave the proper gesture that he had finished speaking and paused for a moment before leaving the rostrum. As he paused I thought, I want to know more about that *man whom God hath Ordained;* I want to know more about that *Appointed Day* in which He would judge the world in righteousness; and, I want to know more of this *Assurance given unto all men.* In short, I want to read over and over again this mighty heart-stirring sermon on the GREATNESS OF GOD.

By this time Paul was leaving the rostrum, and all of our company as well as some from other companies met together at the exit that we might be closer to the man, and say a word to him. I heard some say, "We will hear thee again on this matter." Some from out in the audience mocked him. I was one of those who clave to him. I said to Paul, I want a copy of this. He answered, "There is a man with me who wrote my sermon out word by word while I was speaking. I not only paused in order that the words have time to grow in your own minds, but another purpose was that the one who is preparing a treatise for Theophilus could have time to write every word of it. You shall have a copy to read over and over again." I thanked God for having led me to this place to hear this mighty sermon. I am awakening from my trance and have a few observations to make before closing this article. I have read all of the sermons and letters delivered and written by Paul as published in the New Testament; but none holds me more spellbound than the one delivered on

Mars Hill in Athens, Greece. If I ever become doubtful of God's sovereignty God's sovereignty and almighty ruling and working of all things I turn to that sermon again to remove the doubts. When I question His right and authority to take vengeance and render severe judgments; I read again this sermon.

Paul reached the climax of this sermon in his last words, "Whereof He hath given assurance unto all men that HE HATH RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD." Paul had disputed daily in the Market Place and had "Preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection". Dionysius, the Areopagite -- a very wise man of literature was one who clave to Paul after hearing this sermon.

It would be a good idea when confronted with those who affirm the might of man and deny the sovereignty of God in all things, to just quote to them the full text of Paul on Mars Hill. If this will not shut the mouth of those who argue that God needs our help--nothing can be said that will close their mouths from speaking blasphemy. Dear reader: will you please turn again to the 17th chapter of ACTS and begin reading the 22nd verse, slowly read through the 31st verse as the conclusion of this article. Thanks.

Elder E. J. Lambert

ROMANS 8:5.

"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit."

"Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old."—LAMENTATIONS v. 21.

ARE you not often destitute of the power to repent, and confess your sins before God ? Does not conscience often bring to view a melancholy retrospect of carnal thoughts, wicked desires, vain imaginations, foolish Lords, frivolous speeches, and all that catalogue of evils, that huge bill which godly fear sometimes files in the court within, as seen in all our departures from the life of God? But are you able to repent ? are you able to feel cut to the very heart ? are you able to mourn and sigh because conscience brings against you this long indictment? Can you always feel your soul melted down with sorrow on account of it ? Are you always able to feel contrition because you are proud, worldly, covetous, everything that is evil, everything that is hateful in God's sight? But, then, there are times and seasons when the Lord is pleased to work upon the conscience, to move and stir the soul, to touch the heart with his gracious finger-- then repentance and godly sorrow flow forth. It is with us as with the rock that Moses struck. There was water in the rock; but it required to be struck with the rod before the waters flowed out. So we may have the grace of repentance in our souls; but it requires the divine hand to strike the rock, to cause the waters of godly sorrow to gush forth.

J.C. Philpot

WITHIN WERE FEARS

Fragments of Two Sermons Preached on October 14th, 1888

"Within were fears." (2 corinthians 7:5)

I daresay some of you were able to sing the second hymn; and some of you were afraid to sing it, you had your fears about singing it, now had you not? "Within were fears." Before these words we read, "Without were fightings." In this particular case there were grest oppositions without, and they caused fears within; and afterwards when Paul was comforted by the coming of Titus, his fears were sweetly removed.

The same person who says these words also says, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." Then you may say, "If all things are working together for good, why did he fear?" Some people's faith begets fears. I would rather have some people's fears than some people's confidence. I know that when faith is perfect in me I shall have no fears, but then faith is not perfect in me, and I am the subject of fears. Some people are tried by the words in Revelation about the fearful; that among the characters mentioned as "without the city" are "the fearful"; but that means those who are ashamed to own Christ, not those who are the subjects of these fears

As the Spirit is plessed to enable me, I intend to speak of:

I. The ROOT of the fears of God's people.

II. SOME FEARS.

III. The ADVANTAGE of these fears.

IV. The REMEDY for these fears; for the sweetness of the Gospel is this, that there is a balm in this Gilead for every sickness.

I. What is the ROOT of these fears? Some will say, " The flesh." I do not say that is altogether wrong, but I do not think it is the correct answer, though there is something of the flesh about these fears. There are some people all flesh, there is plenty of flesh about them. Where are their fears? They have no fears; so the root of fears is not ultimately flesh. But what is the root? Some will say, "Unbelief." I do not deny this either, and, of course, if there was no unbelief, there would be no fears; still they do not come ultimately from unbelief. Many people have no faith, they are all unbelief. Where are their fears? The lamentable point about them is that they are so fearless. But what is the root of fears? I should say, "Faith." Though there is some flesh snd some unbelief about these fears, I think faith is the root of them. The mistletoe grows on the oak; we know it is not part of the oak, it is a parasite; but if the oak were not there we know that the mistletoe would not be there. So, if God's people had no faith, they would have no fears.

I have made an assertion and I want to prove it. Preachers ought to be careful what they assert. Some ministers get up in the pulpit and say, "You have it from me, just as it is;" and it is just as it is, it is not all full weight. Do you think when the Prime Minister makes a speech in Parliament that he

has not considered what he is going to say before? He would not be listened to much if had not; if he said, "Oh, you have it just as it is." I do not think he would be Prime Minister long. No, these statesmen think about their speeches more than we give them credit for. And a minister should have closet work before preaching; there should be prayer and some study.

II. But I want to prove what I have said by showing that FEARS spring from faith. God's people are called "believers" because they believe the Word of God, and if they are believers they cannot become unbelievers; they may feel atheism, but they cannot be overcome by it. God's people believe the Bible, they receive it as the inspired Word of God. It is not mere assent to it, but the Spirit gives Divine light in their understanding:

"The Spirit breathes upon the Word,
And brings the truth to sight;
Precepts and promises afford
A sanctifying light."

They are sometimes afraid to read it; I am. I go into my study and I do not read the Bible; why? Because I feel that by coming into contact with the Word of God I shall defile it. I do not say it is right to indulge these kinds of feelings. But if I do not read the Bible for a little while, I soon have to be at it again. I sometimes am even afraid to think about God; I feel so much defilement. And they believe in God, they believe in His infinite Majesty, His infinite holiness, His boundless love, His boundless power, and His boundless wisdom. They believe in the God of the Bible, and do not they have some fears about it?

And they believe in the law of God; they believe it to be "holy and just and good," and that if they commit one sin, they are under the curse of the law, and this causes fears. Those who are really under the curse have no fears, they do not think of the law; when they get up in the morning, or when they go to bed at night, or in the night, they are easy. And God's people believe in the Gospel, they see the blessedness of the Gospel, and they have fears as to whether they are interested in it.

They believe in the doctrine of Election, they read the words in Romans: "The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded'" i.e., hardened, left to the hardness of their own hearts. God is not the author of sin, but He may be the permitter of it. Do you not think God's people have fears as to whether they are the elect? If they did not believe in election they would not have fears. And they believe in God's having a peculiar people, and this tries them, particularly when they remember that those people are zealous of good works; they fear whether they are one of them.

God's people believe in the Everlasting Covenant; they believe God made a covenant before the world began, in which everything and every providence connected with His people is written, and all their names are in the Book of Life; and do you not think they have fears as to whether they are written in this living roll of living names?

God's people believe in Particular Redemption; they believe that Christ has redeemed His people, and not all the world; that He died for some and not others. I do not say people always believe all these things at once; they may kick against some, but they are brought to believe them in time.

I had not the advantages that you have. I was brought up in the Established Church, and was taught to believe in Universal Redemption. When God began to teach me I thought that redemption was universal, that Christ died for everyone, but that I must be regenerated and renewed before I could feel the effects of it. But it was a muddle; I had not the advantages of hearing the truth that you young people have, and I would just say, It is a very serious thing after you have heard what is good, to go to hear errors. I give you this friendly counsel, and I hope you will take it; you know I am your friend. With me, I was brought up in the Established Church to hear the bad, and afterwards brought to something better; and I must say I should be very sorry to go back to the bad again.

If God's people believe in Particular Redemption, do you not think they have some fears about whether Christ died for them? Do you think they always feel that they were on the heart of Christ when He died between two thieves on the cross of Calvary? It is a very great thing to be able to say, "Christ expired for me." They have many fears about it. Some people have no fears, they think Christ died for everyone; and so, of course, He died for them, and they can say quite flippantly, "Christ died for me." If God's people had not faith to believe in Particular Redemption, would they have any fears about it? Some are glad to be able to say:

"As Jesus died to save the lost,
Perhaps He died for me."

It was a help to me the other day; it is not full assurance, but there is some faith about this "perhaps." Sometimes they can go a little further and say, "I hope He died for me."

And these people who believe read in the Bible, in Revelation, that no unrighteous person can enter heaven, no wicked person can enter those gates of pearl into heaven, where God is the Light; there would be no room for a wicked person to hide himself there. They have fears as to whether they have a righteousness. Isaiah said he was clothed with this robe of righteousness from head to foot. They read, "Who shall ascend up into Thy holy hill?" But then they go on to read of a righteousness that is provided; and God's people know there must be fruit. When the fig-tree was cursed it had plenty of leaves -- plenty of untimely leaves, but no fruit; it would not have been so bad if it had been barren altogether, but having so many leaves one would naturally expect fruit. And these people have their fears about these things.

They believe also in the New Birth, that God's people are all born again from above; and they have fears as to whether they are born again; if they did not believe in the New Birth, would they have fears about it?

They believe God is the Hearer and Answerer of His people's prayers, and when He does not seem to answer theirs, are not they tried about it? Christ pronounces a blessing on these poor fearing people. He says, *"Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness."* Do you not think that when a poor hungry man knocks at a rich man's door, he has fears as to whether he will get anything? And do you not think when a thirsty man is traveling through a desert he has fears whether he will ever reach a spring of water? And so it is spiritually. Have I not proved what I said, that fears have their root in faith? It is not mere natural assent, but believing in "demonstration of the Spirit, and with power."

Other people have a sort of belief, and their affections may be moved. Esau wept on his brother's neck. Saul wept, though he had murderous thoughts in his heart, yet he wept; soft-hearted creature!

Further, the will may be affected. The Israelites said, "All Thy commandments will we do;" and they did nothing. So people may be under certain influences.

I hope I have proved to some of you poor fearing ones this morning that you have in your hearts some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel.

Evening Sermon

"Within were fears." (2 Corinthians 7:5)

We must remember these were the words of an apostle. Paul says, "Without were fightings, within were fears. Nevertheless God, that comfortheth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus;" and he was delivered from his fears.

We noticed this morning that the root of these fears is not in the flesh, nor in unbelief, but ultimately in faith, and we tried to prove it. When a minister makes a statement, he ought to be able to prove it. I do hope I proved my point; still, I do not want you to believe a thing because I say it, but I want you to listen to what I say, and then weigh it in the scales of the sanctuary, and to throw away what is not according to God's testimony; but if anything is full weight, beware how you reject it.

We noticed a few things that God's people believe and have fears about, among them: they believe in the Bible, the law of God, and in the doctrine of election.

But we will notice a few more things which God's people believe and have fears about. They believe that the real children of God have faith -- that they believe "in demonstration of the Spirit, and the power," and that "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." They see that all their church and chapel-going and reading the Scriptures (and God's people are great Scripture readers) are not acceptable to God without faith, and they fear that theirs is not the right kind of faith.

They believe God's people have a hope. The hope of the hypocrite shall perish, but we do not want a perishing hope. Bunyan tells us that one Ignorance passed the river with Vain Hope, and when he got to the other side Vain Hope left him, and he found there was a way to hell past the gates of heaven. And the children of God are sometimes afraid that theirs is not the right sort of hope.

Then they know that God's people have love. "Now abideth faith, hope, and love." They love God, and they love Jesus Christ, and they love their brother. If a man says he loves God and does not love his brother, the Scripture says he is quite a liar. And do you not think these poor people have their fears, when they feel anger and resentment and even malice against a brother? Now you will say, "Do not be hitting at us again." I am not hitting at you. If the poor minister makes a cap, as innocently as a hatmaker does, without knowing whom it will fit, someone perhaps puts it on, and then says, "The minister is so personal!" I recollect a case of it. I was once preaching at a place, and a woman who heard me afterwards wrote me a little note and asked if I would call and see her. I always like to go and see anyone if it is in the way, and I can, when I am asked, and so I went. When I got there, the woman said: "Minister, you ought to have called and told me of my fault privately, and not have spoken of it in the pulpit before everyone." And I did not know anything about her fault till she told me! Is not human nature a strange thing? I must say I like personal preaching. I heard a sermon a little while ago, and the only part that did me any good was the part that was personal; that came home to me.

They believe God's people have broken hearts, and fear if their hearts are really broken. Do you not when you feel so much unbrokenness even about your brokenness? They say with the poet:

"And if it is not broken, break;
And heal it if it be."

I daresay there are many of you here who are never troubled about whether you have a broken heart; you go on easily all day, and have no fears about it.

They believe God's people have a contrite spirit, and that is a near neighbour to a broken heart. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise;" and they fear if they really have a contrite heart.

"And tell me, gracious God, is mine
A contrite heart or no?"

Then these people believe that God's people are an obedient people; obedience is wrought in their heart, obedience to the Word of God. They read such a precept as this: "Be not conformed to this world." We are not to be conformed to the world in our business, and they have fears about it. And they believe God's people have the fear of the Lord, such as Hart describes in his hymn -- a fear "to warm as well as light"; and they have fears as to whether they possess this fear of the Lord.

They believe God's people are poor and needy, and fear as to whether they are really poor and needy. They believe in the powers of darkness; they firmly believe that there are principalities and powers with which to wrestle; and do not they fear they will be overcome by them?

Also they have fears of death, if they had not faith, they would not have such fears of death. Other people do not have such fears about death; they may be afraid of the pains of death, but what of that! we may be cut down suddenly. If people believe that they will die and be buried like a dog, and that will be the end of them, what need have they to fear death? But God's people look beyond, they look into a boundless eternity.

III. We have spoken of some of the fears of God's people, and we will notice thirdly some of THE ADVANTAGES arising from these fears. We may have fears about election, but God says, "Be diligent to make your calling and election sure;" so these fears may lead to diligence. God's people have fears about particular redemption, and this leads to waiting upon the Lord about it, and to prayerfulness.

Fears may act as ballast, mind, I do not say the ballast is the ship, but the ship would go over without the ballast. I know my ship would; it has gone over sometimes, and it would have quite foundered, if God in His mercy had not picked it up again, and then supplied me with a goodly number of fears as ballast. Some people say that if a person cannot say, "Christ expired for me," we ought not to admit him into the church; I do not see that in the Bible.

IV. We will notice a few of the BEST REMEDIES for fears. Faith is a good remedy. The disciples said, "Lord, increase our faith." If you have much faith, it will swallow up your fears. Although I have said that fears are the offspring of faith, yet if we have much faith it will swallow up our fears -- swallow up its own children, as it were.

Walking closer with God is a good remedy. The poet says,

" O for a closer walk with God!"

Why? Because it leads to

"A calm and heavenly frame."

Communion with God is a great remedy. If God shines into your soul you cannot fear. I tell you these things that you may be led to seek them in prayer.

G. Hazlerigg

Sent in by: W.R. Pullig
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COLOSSIANS 3:1-4.

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

MEETINGS

GOOSE CREEK ISLAND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

On Saturday, 28 June 1997, at the request of the Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church, Lowland, North Carolina, a Presbytery met for the examination of Brother Gene H. Lupton, and if in their judgment found qualified in accordance with the Holy Scriptures, to ordain him to the full work of the office of Gospel Ministry.

All Elders and Deacons who were present and of like precious Faith and Order formed the Presbytery. The Presbytery included Elders J. T. Prescott and Jesse A. Foreman, and Deacons Roy Houston, Clayton Brown, Charles Pratt, and Alton Goodwin.

Elder Prescott opened the meeting with prayer.

Motion was made, seconded, and agreed for Elder Foreman to sit as Moderator.

Motion was made, seconded, and agreed for Sister Patsy E. Irsik to sit as Clerk.

Sister Linda F. Lupton, wife of the candidate, was invited to come forward to be seated near her husband.

Motion was made, seconded, and agreed for Deacons Houston and Brown to present the candidate to the Presbytery.

Motion was made, seconded, and agreed for Elder Prescott to examine the candidate. Elder Prescott declined questioning, affirming the church members' concerted voice.

Motion was made, seconded, and agreed for Elder Prescott to word the Ordination Prayer and Elder Foreman to give the Charge.

With the "laying on of hands" by the Presbytery, Elder Prescott offered the Ordination Prayer. Elder Foreman offered prayer before reading the Charge to the candidate as recorded in the Holy Scriptures. Elder Prescott added that with all the trials and tribulations to come, "may the Lord be forever present."

The Moderator asked the church members if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery. The members replied "yes."

Deacons Houston and Brown delivered Brother Lupton back to the Church as an ordained Minister and was received by the Church.

While singing "Amazing Grace" the brethren came forward to extend the right hand of fellowship to Elder and Mrs. Gene H. Lupton.

Minutes were read and approved. It was agreed that a copy of the minutes be sent to the Clerk of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association and a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication. After preaching, the meeting was dismissed with prayer by Elder Foreman.

Elder Jesse A. Foreman, Moderator
Sister Patsy E. Irsik, Clerk

LAUREL RIDGE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift. They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed August 16, 1997 at 2:00 p.m. at Laurel Ridge Primitive Baptist Church, Roanoke County, Va. for the purpose of examination of this gift, brother Vaughn Ferris and if found qualified to be ordained to the full work and service as deacon.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together. The meeting was opened by prayer by Elder J.R. Williams. Elder Leonard Brammer was elected as moderator and Burnell Williams to serve as clerk.

Brother G.W. Conner, acting as spokesman for the church, delivered brother Vaughn Ferris to the presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon was read as set forth in scriptures Timothy 3rd Chapter by Elder J.R. Williams.

Examinations followed by Elders Larry Hollandsworth (reference to Acts chapter 6). The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of this candidate proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder W.T. Conner. The charge was delivered to brother Vaughn Ferris by Elder Raymond Goad.

He was then delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted, a copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication and a copy to be given to along with a certificate of ordination. Presbytery was dismissed by Elder Raymond Goad.

Elder Leonard Brammer, Mod.
Deacon Burnell B. Williams, Clerk

cc: Signs of the Times
Church records

LAUREL RIDGE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift. They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed August 16, 1997 at 2:00 p.m. at Laurel Ridge Primitive Baptist Church, for the purpose of examination of this gift, brother James Meadow and if found qualified to be ordained to the full work and service as deacon.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together. The meeting was opened, by prayer by Elder J.R. Williams to serve as clerk.

Brother G.W. Conner acting as spokesman for the church, delivered brother James Meadow to the presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon was read as set forth in scriptures Timothy, 3rd Chapter by Elder J.R. Williams.

Examinations followed by Elder Larry Hollandsworth (Reference Acts 6th Chapter). The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of this candidate proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder W.T. Conner. The charge was delivered to brother James Meadow by Elder Clarence Stone. He was then delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted, a copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication and a copy to be given to Brother James Meadow along with a certificate of ordination.

Presbytery was dismissed by Elder Raymond Goad.

Elder Leonard Brammer, Mod.
Deacon Burnell B. Williams, Clerk

cc: Signs of the Times
Church records

I PETER 1:14-16.

"As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."

HEBREWS 4:14-16.

Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

CONTRIBUTIONS

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Mrs. French Hogan, VA	2.00
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H.P. Conner, VA	2.00
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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

LAMB of God, we fall before thee,
Humbly trusting in thy cross;
That alone be all our glory;
All things else are dung and dross.
Thee we own a perfect Saviour,
Only source of all that's good;
Every grace, and every favor
Comes to us through Jesus' blood.

Jesus gives us true repentance:
By his spirit sent from heaven
Jesus whispers this sweet sentence:
" Son, thy sins are all forgiven :"
Faith he gives us to believe it;
Grateful hearts his love to prize:
Want we wisdom ? he must give it;
Hearing ears, and seeing eyes.

Jesus gives us pure affections;
Wills to do what he requires;
Makes us follow his directions,
And what he commands, inspires:
All our prayers, and all our praises,
Rightly offered in his name,
He that dictates them is Jesus;
He that answers is the same.

When we live on Jesus' merit,
Then we worship God aright;
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
Then we savingly unite.
Hear the whole conclusion of it:
Great or good, whate'er we call,
God, or King, or Priest, or Prophet,
Jesus Christ is All in all !

J. Hart.

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Ivey Johnson Prescott

EDITORIAL

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written the just shall live by faith.

These are the words of the Apostle Paul in his letter to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.The Apostle here is surely referring to his experience on the road to Damascus, because the power of God was manifested to him in no uncertain terms and he was changed from a persecutor of the Christian faith to a preacher of righteousness and he was not ashamed of that.

As he wrote to the church at Phillippi, ***"Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more. Circumsised, the eighth day of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, as touching the law, a pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I might win Christ".***

The Apostle was not ashamed of the Gospel because it was his only hope of salvation and he realized that only by the Grace of God was he a possessor of that hope. As all of God's children acknowledge, they were walking according to the course of the world, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and the natural mind and as Paul, were righteous in their own eyes. They felt that they were as good as any and better than most. They were then made to realize that they were as good as any man in the flesh but that all flesh is as grass and all are lacking in

righteousness. They, for the first time judged their walks and ways with righteous judgement, and acknowledged they had been weighed in the balance and found wanting. They desire to walk after the spirit, but found that they could not, of themselves. As the Apostle Paul said *"I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."*

This is a lesson that all must learn, they are given a desire to perform that which is good but how to do it they cannot find. Paul, moans *"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin"*. The natural man never realizes this and thinks that he is able to do whatever he desires and follows what he feels is the right way to go. One writer of old said, *"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death"*, and this saying is still just as true as it was in the day in which it was written.

The gospel is the power of God unto salvation, to the Jew first and also to the Greek, or to anyone else that has been given a taste that the Lord is gracious. God's ways are so much higher than the ways of man that man cannot see the depth of the wisdom in their own salvation, but God reveals these things unto them at his own time and in his own way, by his spirit. Jesus said unto his disciples, just before he was to be crucified, *"But the comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance. whatsoever I have said unto you"*. All of the plan of salvation of the saints of God was accomplished in the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ., as he also told his disciples, *"He that believeth on me the works that I do shall he do also: and greater works than these shall he do: because I go unto my Father."*

The apostle Paul knew better than anyone the power in the gospel, because he said in his epistle to Timothy, *"And I thank Christ Jesus the Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief."* All of the saints of God were in ignorance and unbelief, until the light of the gospel, the power of God was shined into their heart and soul. I have never heard one who gave evidence of a work of grace in their heart say that they were ashamed of their faith. I have never heard one say that they were sorry that they joined the church, only that they wished they could have joined sooner and lived a more profitable life in the chuch. They may be ashamed of themselves and their weak and uncertain walk, but never that they were ashamed of the gospel

whereby they were changed, and made to walk a new path. The gospel is the power of God, unto salvation, not a start or a beginning, but unto salvation. Their feet have been placed on that highway which is called the way of holiness and that road leads into the portals of glory, there are no exits, detours or accidents along the way that can cause a single soul to fail to arrive at the determined destination. No one who has been blessed to feel and experience that journey would ever turn back to the world and its ways because they have learned of a love that surpasses anything that the world has to offer.

May the love, mercy and grace of God be with each one who travels this uneven journey of life and ever be mindful of the fact the he that has begun a good work in you will, not maybe, perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. As the apostle said, ***"For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, The just shall live by faith."*** This is what keeps them pressing on to the mark of the high calling of God, here they have only a foretaste of what it will be, an earnest of the inheritance that is laid up for those who have been saved and called with that holy calling.

Elder Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editors:

Well its been a year since I subscribed to the dear old paper, and I see its time to renew again. Enclosed is a check for a 2-year renewal plus something for the collection fund.

I look forward to the magazine each month, and don't want to be with out it, Lord willing, as long as I live. I'm also receiving "The Gospel Standard" and have ordered & read / are reading - several good publications of theirs. Sermons by Gadsby & Kershaw, etc. They are all I get in the way of church and yet I find, as always, That Spiritual food is of The Lord, and so sometimes I'm comforted by what I read, and often feel that surely there can be no hope for such as I.

My health isn't as good as it once was, and a lot of it is mental stress and anxiety.

But I hope & pray God will be with me through whatever my lot in life is, and and that my faith in Him will not fail. I feel to have been such a disobedient child, if I am a child, and this causes me much concern. I am unworthy of His goodness & mercy, and yet in His goodness, He is still merciful to me.

My husband suffered a severe head injury in a bicycling accident about 3 weeks ago, and God spared his life, which was a miracle in itself.... But his vision is impaired at this time, and time will tell if it can be fully restored, or at least enough to be able to drive, read, etc.

Well - There is much in my heart I would like to be able to write about, but its not meant to be for now, anyway.

May God bless all of you editors to keep the paper coming to us each month.

A sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

Unworthily,
Caroline Martin

ARTICLES

ISRAEL

According to my understanding of the Old Testament scriptures, the ethnic origin of all races, living in the world today, is traced directly to one of the three sons of Noah: Shem, Ham and Japheth, the order of their respective ages. Gen. 6:10. Abraham's national lineage is traced directly to Shem, the son of Noah. See Gen. 11 verses 10 and 26. The ethnic origin of the Gentiles is traced directly to Japheth, one of the three sons of Noah. Read Gen. 8: verses 2 and 5. Thus, we have proven here by the scriptures that the Jews have their natural origin in Shem and the Gentiles have their natural origin in Japheth. I could enter further into the natural posterity of Ham, another son of Noah but do not feel that it is expedient to do so at this point.

The Jews were God's chosen people under the worship of the law in the prophetical or second dispensation of time. God made a covenant with Abraham saying, *"God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Gen. 28:4, 14.* Paul confirms the above in Hebrews 6:13, *"For when God made promise to Abraham. because He could swear by no greater, He sware by Himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee."*

The scriptures tell also of the origin and early history of the Jews. Abraham, the father of the Jewish people, not only believed in God but he also worshipped Him. *"And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God." James 2:23. "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." Gal. 3:6.* Abraham, his son, Isaac, and his grandson, Jacob, are known as the Hebrew patriarchs, or fathers. They lived, as best that I can tell from the scripture, about the year 1900 B.C. Jacob, who was also called Israel, had twelve sons. They were Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Zebulon, Issachar, Dan, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Joseph and Benjamin. All living Jews today are the descendants of one of these twelve sons. The twelve Tribes that later made up the Jewish people all descended from one of the above named Israel's (or Jacob's) sons who are the literal forerunners of the Jewish people. That is why the Jews are sometimes called the Children of Israel, or Israelites.

God's believing, elect or chosen people were made manifest in the first dispensation of time, as verified by His blessing of faith to these follow-

ing names patriarchs: *"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts." Hebs. 11:4. "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." Gen. 5:23. "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God has translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." Heb. 11:5.*

As far as I am able to tell from the scriptures, there was only one race or nationality of people who lived in the first dispensation of time. This race of people was wiped out or destroyed in the flood or deluge of water when Noah, his wife, their three sons and three wives were spared from the waters of destruction. Noah and his family (eight souls) were of this race and all mankind today, regardless of race or nationality, must be descended from them and ultimately from Adam and Eve, our first parents.

God has had His chosen, elect people in the world since the beginning of time. This fact exists because they are His Seed, the Lord Jesus Christ who was with His Father when He made His everlasting covenant with His Son in the Counsel hall that was held in the annal of eternity. The Apostle Paul pinpoints this seed as follows, *"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Gal. 3:16.* As we have just pointed out above, they were here in the first dispensation. Concerning them it is recorded, *"For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of Him that was to comes." Roms. 5:13, 14.* While the Oracle of God (His order of Divine Worship) was not made manifest until after the flood, we must remember that His Seed was here prior to that time since He has declared, *"Nevertheless He (God) left not Himself without a witness." Acts 14:17.* The people of God, His Seed in Christ, have ever been identified by one glorious hall mark. This is the one, true, original faith. Job had the same faith that identified Noah, as well as Abel, Seth, the Apostle Paul, even down to the last heir of promise. True faith is the gift of God's Spirit.

In order that the oracle of God (God's Order of Divine Worship, given under the law, that culminated in the establishing of the Church by Jesus Christ), could be delivered and set up, God appointed that the identification of His Seed must be designated, set apart, marked clearly and made manifest here in the time world. This identification and designation of this Spiritual Seed is first mentioned in *Roms. 9:7. "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall Thy Seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these*

are not the children of God: but the Children of the Promise are counted for The Seed." As we have already pointed out, Abraham was first.

Then Isaac was the child of promise, not Ishmael, Isaac's half brother. It was recorded in Sarah's language after she saw Ishmael mocking Isaac, when she said unto Abraham, *"Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac."* Gen. 21:10. The transposition of The Seed, therefore, was passed from Isaac to Jacob on that memorial night just before the break of day, as Jacob wrestled with the Angel of God at ford Jabbok. This Man or Angel (in the scriptures the counterpart is called "Man") told Jacob, *"Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and has prevailed." Gen. 32:28. "And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." Gen. 32 : 30.* From this point henceforth, Israel has ever halted upon his thigh. In all ages of time, wherever that name has been bestowed, that nation or people has been preserved and their life, although persecuted severely at times, has continued. No amount of persecution and trial could destroy them.

It is to be pointed out in a specific manner that the Seed of Promise (Christ), the Son of God, who was with His Father as the Word in the counsel hall of eternity, was not to Ishmael, Isaac's half brother, nor was it to Esau, Jacob's twin brother. All of the posterity or natural descent of Ishmael and Esau today persecute Israel and her friends. This involves a perfect hatred involving an irreconcilable enmity to the extent of killing and murder with violence. The best of my determination places the posterity of Ishmael and Esau in the Arab or Islamic World. The Arab or Islamic world (like the Jewish world is known as Semitic because Arabic is a Semitic language. Arabic is closely related to the languages of the ancient Assyrian, Babylonians, Hebrews, and Phoenicians. Of these peoples, the Arabs and the Jews, descendants of the Hebrews, are the only important Semitic groups who have kept their ancient language and some of their old customs. In today's knowledge a Semite (both Jew and Arab) is defined as one who is a descendant of Shem, son of Noah. He is a member of a Caucasian race now chiefly represented by the Jews and Arabs, but in ancxent times included the Babylonians, Assyrians, Phoenicians and others.

According to scripture, Abraham left his home in what is known now as northern Mesopotamia and traveled to Canaan, the area today that is known as Palestine. This area includes present day Lebanon, Israel and a portion of Syria and Turkey. He and his descendants lived there for many years. These descendants included Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, and their respective generations. Following this, as we are all aware, many Israelites journeyed to Egypt, a nation today that falls into the Arab world.

The Bible tells us that Jacob's sons sold their brother, Joseph, into slavery in Egypt for twenty pieces of silver. The Egyptian Pharaoh, or king, favored Joseph and made him ruler over his (Pharaoh 's) house and gave him second command in the Egyptian kingdom. Later, when a famine struck Canaan, Joseph forgave his brothers (who had sold him down into Egypt) and brought them and his father to Egypt.

For many years the Israelites prospered and lived well in Egypt. But later a king "who knew not Joseph" (See Ex. 1:8) made slaves of the Israelites and forced them to build large cities and palaces in Egypt. God spoke to Moses in the burning bush, saying, "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. (Note: Sic- He did not say the God of Abraham, Ishmael and Esau.) And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God. And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people (Israel) which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey." Ex. 3:6, 7, 8.

According to the predestinated purpose of God, Moses, the devout leader and teacher of the Israelites, led them out of Egypt in the 1200's B.C. This movement is called in the scripture, The Exodus. The Israelites wandered in the wilderness between Egypt and Canaan for forty years. It was here that they received the Ten Commandments (or the law) at Mount Sinai (through Moses, a type of Christ) during this period. The reception of the Ten Commandments of law verifies and identifies the Israelites as God's chosen people in the second dispensation of time. The Ten Commandments and the order of worship that God gave the Children of Israel to be used in the tabernacle contained the Oracle of God; this pattern and order of divine worship of His chosen people sufficed to Him with the sundry types of offerings in the tabernacle until the Gospel order was established at the beginning of the third dispensation of time by Christ Himself. (By Oracle, I mean to say the medium by which God reveals hidden knowledge or makes known His divine purpose; also, the place where the revelation is given.) All of these things (worship under the law) pointed to the first coming of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. As God has given us faith now to believe that Christ has already come, they were given the identical same faith then to believe that He would come. God has never granted but one faith and that to one people. Moses died alone on Mount Pisgah, and his tomb remains unknown until this day (God buried him, according to scriptures) so that no man could worship him or his tomb or final resting place in this time world.

From this point The Seed, the mark of the true church of God, was interposed upon Joshua. Before Moses died, he chose Joshua to succeed

him, saying, ***"Be strong and of good courage; for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swore unto their fathers to give them." Joshua 1:6.*** Joshua led the Twelve Tribes back into the same land of their fathers. This "land of their fathers" was the land that God had spoken to Abraham many years before and from where Joseph and his father, Jacob, had departed into the land of Egypt. The Israelites probably had become established back in Canaan by about 1200 B.C. Here the Canaanites, Philistines and others fought them for many years. Other attacks came from the neighboring kings of Edom, (the descendants of Esau, Moab and Am - mon). The Israelites fought repeated wars with these people, who worshipped idols. God interposed upon Israel during all of this time The Seed (Christ, by faith) as David told the Philistine Giant, ***"Thou comest to me with a sword and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the Name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou has defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee." 1st Sam. 17:45, 46.*** Such faith, as expressed here, can only be the kind that is the Gift from The Seed, the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We will say that they (the Patriarchs of old, even King David) believed in and also worshipped the Absolute God of Heaven, who only holds all power in His blessed Hand.

Following Joshua's day, God called such devout servants as Gideon, Samson, Deborah (known as Judges) through whom He led the Israelites. But to meet the many dangers that threatened them, the Twelve Tribes united to form a kingdom. They wanted a natural king to rule over them. The devout Prophet Samuel warned the people against forming a monarchy (a government which retains a natural king as its titular head), but finally gave in to their wishes and they chose Saul as king. The people honored Saul for his bravery, but found that he lacked wisdom and steadiness . In time, they tumed from Saul to young David, a shepherd boy, who had killed the giant Philistine warrior Goliath. As we are all well aware, when Saul died in battle, David became king, whose throne was later inherited by David's son Soloman.

After the Israelites returned from Egypt through the wilderness, into Canaan, the land that God said flowed with milk and honey, a city was begun there that later was to be named or called Jerusalem. King David well chose this city about the year 1000 B.C. as the capital and chief city because it did not lie on any major trade routes. It was also high and difficult to attack. This little city in that day lay on top of a region of broken hills in the Highlands of Judea. The city is actually 2,618 feet above sea level. Here in this little city, David chose the site for the Temple which Soloman, his son, later build. We will refer back to the subject of the Temple at intervals in this article.

When Soloman died, political and economic troubles arose among the Israelites and the kingdom became divided. According to scriptures, Soloman's son, Rehoboam, increased the heavy taxes upon them and ten of the tribes broke away and set independent nation in the north. They chose Jeroboam as king, and called themselves the kingdom of Israel. The two remaining tribes, Benjamin and Judah, formed the kingdom of Judah in the south. The citizens of this kingdom were called Judeans. Joseph, the espoused husband of the Virgin Mary, and the Virgin Mary were of this group. Bethlehem where Jesus was born, was in the kingdom of Judea. The word "Jew" comes from this name, "Judea."

Continuing on down the line, following the unbreakable chain, link for link, following the path of The Seed, the lineage of faith among the Israelites, God raised up such venerable prophets as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos, Hosea and others to stand upon the watchwall of Zion for the heirs of promise among them. With fearless honesty, they faithfully declared the Word of God, crying out and aloud, sparing not, reproaching the people and rulers for their wickedness. These prophets declared that the true and living God is the God of all creation, the God of all mankind, Ruler and Creator of all things, not just the God of the Jews only. It must be pointed out that true church of God in all generations has possessed this same faith and believed this identical doctrine or truth.

The Babylonians conquered Judah in 586 B.C. and destroyed the first Temple in Jerusalem that was built by Soloman. They took and carried away some Jews as captives, but left many in Judah. It was during this time of the Babylonian captivity that Daniel was cast into the Den of Lions and Shadrach, Meshack and Abednego were cast by the Babylonian King, Nebuchadnezzar, into the burning fiery furnace. Because Daniel would not bow to the edict of Darius, another King of Babylon, ***"he (Daniel) went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." Dan. 6:10.*** Here is another mark of The Seed. God's people (as in the case of Daniel) have never compromised this doctrine or truth and they have always been made to look to Jerusalem, the church and her glorious Head, the eternal God, when under the threat of their lives and heavy persecution. Immediately after this time, Daniel was cast into the Den of Lions, because of his belief in the law or oracle of God. See Daniel 6:5 .

The Jews spent many years as captives in Babylon. In reading the Book of Ezekiel, he prophesied that someday they would return to their homeland. From the best I can determine it was in the year 538 B.C. that Cyrus, the Persian Emperor, did allow the Jews to return to Jerusalem and to rebuild the Temple. This (second) Temple (with the remnant of the "Wailing Wall" in Jerusalem today) was completed

about the year 516 B.C. Following this time, God raised up the prophets, Ezra and Nehemiah, and others, as His true prophets among Israel.

This brings us down now to the time just before the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was at this time that two very rivalistic religious groups became active in Jewish life. The Pharisees (like all Armenians today) felt that religion must grow and be interpreted. Spiritual revelation was disavowed. They claimed to believe in the resurrection of the body, but believed it had already passed or transpired. They began to make new laws and rules for daily living, as they thought, based upon the Old Testament scripture. These laws (man - made) were to be just as binding as the written law in the scripture. Another group, the Sadducees, bitterly disagreed with the Pharisees, and accepted only the written law. The Sadducees openly denied the resurrection. They refused to recognize the so-called new laws of the Pharisees as binding upon them. Both groups were very self - righteous in their attitude, and were very hostile toward one another.

Now it was during this time that Jesus was born. Their own internal quarrels weakened the Jews. All of these things were in the predestinated purpose of God, and only fulfilled His divine and holy will before the world began. The Jews had now become into a very high -minded, natural proud, high, lifted up state of mind and vanity. Jesus said concerning them, *"Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of Heaven." Matt. 5:20.* He also said, *"Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." Matt. 16:11* Pompey, a Roman army general, had captured Jerusalem at this time, and the Jews had to accept Roman rule. Jesus told Pilate, the Roman governor, when asked if he was a king, replied by saying, *"Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth hearest my voice." John 1 8:37.*

They (the Jewish Pharisees and Sadducees) accused Jesus of sedition and other unlawful acts under their new system of laws and had Him brought before Pilate who ordered His crucifixion because he (Pilate) found no fault in Him. The Pharisees and Sadducees said, *"We have a law, and by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." John 19:7.* They used one of their newly made, man - made laws to indict Jesus. They were completely unaware of the meaning of two scriptures that Jesus had quoted them. One is found recorded in *Matt. 24:2. "See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down ."* He spoke of the forthcoming destruction of Jerusalem and the second Temple by the Roman army. In another place He spoke these words, *"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews,*

Forty and six years was this temple building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But He spake of the temple of His body." John 2:19, 20 20, 21. He referred to His own resurrection from the dead . They had no idea or thought as to what He was talking about .

Another scripture that He told them (these unbelieving Jews) is found recorded in ***11 Peter 2:22 . "For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, the dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."*** Peter had reference here to the Oracle of God, the worship that God had given them under the law that came by Moses. It was not the truth they departed from but from the "holy commandment" (the law) that Peter was referring to. They had never known the truth to have departed from it. After the resurrection and ascension of Christ to glory, the conflict between the Jews and the Romans increased to the point where the Jews finally revolted in the year A.D. 66, but the Romans defeated them. The Romans captured Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and destroyed the (2nd) Temple, as Jesus had told the Jews would take place in the above quoted scripture because they had come to the point (by the Oracle of God being removed) that they worshipped the building rather than the meaning and significance for which it had been established. In this awful destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the Romans, the Jews were scattered to the four corners of the earth into every nation of the globe. From that date A.D. 70 until May 15, 1948, almost 1900 years, they were called "the Scattered Nation." After World War II, many of them immediately returned back (according to God's predestinated purpose) to the same land where Abraham had first dwelt approximately 3,846 years earlier and had been one of the first there to believe God, the same land that the Lord told Moses that He would bring them, ***"unto a good land a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey." Exodus 3:8.*** God called this land Canaan for an everlasting possession. See Gen. 17:8.

It was on May 14, 1948, that Israel declared her independence when the state of Israel was established. The United States was the first country to recognize Israel. On that date, Arab armies from the Islamic countries of Syria, Egypt, Lebanon and Transiordan (now Jordan that then controlled that part of Jerusalem that has the "Wailing Wall" of the old Temple) invaded Israel, intent on crushing the new nation. Saudi Arabia and Iraq (both Arab countries) also took part in the fighting. Little Israel (as little David's case compared identically when he faced Goliath) was desperately short of arms. But the Israelis drove the Arabs out of Galilee, the Negev, and a strip of land connecting Israel to Jerusalem, as well as other areas of Palestine. There are many

now living today in this generation that witnessed this milstone in the history of the world, perhaps, unaware as to the great impact upon the history of time and the future posterity of mankind. Every battle in which they have since been engaged with the Arab nations they have won, as God blessed them anciently. They had now come back home to Canaan's land, the identical same one that God gave Abraham and the children of Israel nearly 5,000 years ago. Thus, we have fulfilled, the prophecy of Simeon when he held the Christ child in his arms, ***"This child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel." Luke 2:34.***

Tel Aviv was made capital, where the seat of government is now located instead of Jerusalem, the old capital. The old, original capital, Jerusalem, could not be made the capital at that time since the Arabs still controlled a portion of the city, including the main landmark, the vestige of the (2nd) Temple, the "Wailing Wall." Thousands of years of neglect had tumed much of Israel's soil into wasteland. The returning Jews drained the swamps, sank wells, and planted forests. Land once worthless became fertile again. Cities and towns were built through out the reclaimed province. The industries, built these cities and towns, are today some of the most advanced in western Asia. It is to be noted and pointed out that seldom, if ever before, in history has a people worked with such energy to build a modern industrial nation on the ruins of the past.

Before I proceed further with this article, I would like to point out a few facts about the current (to-day's) status of Jerusalem. In their taking back of their homeland it was in the Yom Kippur War in 1973 that the Israelis did not stop at the order of cease fire (as in 1967), but continued until they won the whole of Jerusalem, and even Hebron. The last portion of the area taken by Israel called the Golan Heights was another step in the fulfillment of prophecy.

With regard to Israel retaking the whole of Jerusalem in 1973, they retook land that had not been in their possession for nearly 2,000 years. After that defeat by the Romans in A.D. 70, the Roman Emperor who had succeeded Pontius Pilate ordered, as we have said, the destruction of the temple. Only a portion of one wall of the old Temple (the second Temple) remains standing today. It is called the "Wailing Wall," because many Jews have never ceased to mourn the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple that took place in A.D. 70. They (the Jews) had not been allowed to pray there since A.D. 70 until 1973, a period of almost 2,000 years. This temple reaches back to the days and time of King Soloman, son of David.

When the Jews were scattered to the four comers of the earth in A.D. 70, after the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, and before the crucifixion of Christ, the blindness of the Jews that the Apostle Paul spoke about in Romans 11:25 had already begun. ***"Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gen-***

tiles be come in." All of this was predestinated to take place in order for the scripture, as found recorded in Song of Solomon 8:8 to be fulfilled. - We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for? "To my understanding Solomon here had definite reference to the Gentile church. The Gentiles, who had prevously been looked upon as dogs (a people altogether of a filthy, unclean nature) for hundreds of years, were now the favored people of God and continued to occupy this status for the nearly nineteen hundred years that followed when the Jews were scatterd from nation to nation. The Oracles of God were given to them (the Gentiles, Japheth's descendants) (God's ordained worship), after the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple. *"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received him to them gave He power to become the Sons of God." John 1:11, 12.* The application of the following scripture follows: *"Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, WE TURN TO THE GENTILES."* The Gentile dispensation by way of divine recognition, began at this point and lasted until the beginning of World War II. It was at this point of time that the Gentile's fulness came in and ended, as I shall describe below.

In all of their sundry (many, many) persecutions and their wanderings from country to country, their many trials. throughout the ages of time and many generations the worst was yet to come. In this I have to believe (according to God's predestinated purpose), they paid their final debt for their participation in the crucifixion of their own King, the Lord of Glory, the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I am given to believe that the fulfillment of the prophecy as recorded in Malachi 4:1, was fulfilled from 1940 to 1945 during World War I I. This war marked one of the most vital turning points in the history of time. "For, behold the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven, etc." During the 1930's, Adolf Hitler and the Nazi party in Germany made anti-Semitism, or hatred of the Jews, an important part of their program. Hilter blamed the Jews for Germany's many problems in the years after World War I. He repeated his falsehoods so often that the German people believed them. Before World War II ended in 1945, the Germans had slaughtered more than 6,000,000 men, women and children of the10,000,000 Jews in Europe. He had huge furnaces built in Auschwitz, Poland, and other nearby places, where many of this number were gassed to death, in shower stalls where they (the Jews) thought they could take a clean shower after riding for days on cattle trains when being sent to various German concentrations camps during the war. When they cut on the shower valve instead of getting water, they got poison gas. Then their bodies were

burned to annihilation. He killed them so fast that he did not have time to bury them. Destroying them in this manner was his only alternative. 500,000 of them (or more) starved to death in concentration camps of eastern Europe. Thus ended their exilement of 1,900 years. Don 't tell me that enough persecution will not reunite any nation. The Jews commemorated this holocaust in Jerusalem during the summer of 1981. I watched it on World News T.V. in June, 1981, when they lit thousands of candles to commemorate the memory of those that had died at the hands of Hitler's slaughter.

I would like to point out that during this period of 1,900 years from A.D. 70 to A.D. 1940, during their exilement the nation was not without an occasional true believer or witness in the Lord Jesus Christ and the true church. A case at point was the incidence of Elder Benard Greenwood. He was a German-Jew, a native of Germany, born in Weener, East Friesland, Kingdom of Hanover, on September 23, 1827. (Some of you may have his book entitled, The Dealings of God With a Labourer, or The Experience of Elder Bernard Greenwood.) He came to this country (The United States) in the 1850's. He was shown the truth and united with the Old School or Primitive Baptist in the State of Ohio. He moved to North Carolina in the 1880's and for a short while, lived at LaGrange, N.C., where he preached for the church there and also nearby at our church, Mewborn's. My grandmother Turnage heard him preach on several occasions. His photograph today hangs in the pulpit of Sandy Grove Primitive Baptist Church (Black Creek Association of North Carolina lina) Nash County. His body rests in the Maplewood Cemetery, Wilson, N.C., where he lived or resided until his death. My grandmother Turnage told me that on one occasion he had an appointment to preach in the courthouse in Snow Hill, Greene County, N.C. at night. Some of the local Jews, who were merchants in that town (and who knew of his natural origin or identity) went out to hear him also. After the service was over, when the crowd had come downstairs from the courtroom where he had just preached, these Jews accosted him in a corner in the hall to one side where they loudly and angrily conversed together in the Hebrew Language. She said it got so hostile in sound that it appeared the matter would come to blows. However, it did not, the conversation soon died down, and the Jewish merchants moved on out. Elder Greenwood came over to where his brethren had been standing to one side in awe and with much concern as to his safety. Elder Greenwood exclaimed emphatically to them *"they did not like my Jesus, they did not like my Jesus,"* seeing the wonderment on their faces. We can see, therefore, that even during the period of time when the Gentiles were God's favored, while the Gospel Church was nucleated among them, there were true, occasional believers among the Jews. Likewise, there will be a scattering (only a small remnant) of true

believers now and in the future time left to this time world among the Gentiles. This small remnant of Gentile believers will be however, true followers of the Lamb. I do believe that we will never again see throngs or multitudes standing on the foundation of the true doctrine, as many of us saw 50, 75, 100 or 150 years ago, and as was seen in the early days of the Federal period of the History of the United States of America, 1776-1840. His return to the Jews accounts for the falling away or decline in membership, the breaking down of fellowship, and decline of interest today in our churches. May we be reminded that for those years prior to be Revolutionary War, the signing of our Declaration of Independence and those years that followed, at least 70 percent or more of the people in America, that professed religion, were pure predestination in their faith and belief. Now, ask yourself what is that percentage today? (Yet, today the Armenian doctrine has never been more prolific.) Bitter persecution in England by King Henry VII and Queen Mary, Mary t Queen of Scots, or better known as "Bloody Mary" had brought pure hearts to America.

Back in the days that followed the Revolutionary War and for all of those years that comprised the 19th century, and even up through the years that immediately preceded World War II, our country, the United States of America, had a government that was relatively free of corruption. Since 1950. the corruption in our government here, as well as England, and other Gentile nations, has reached proportions that would have been unbelievable to our grandparents and forebears. A crime record with no previous comparison, debts of nations, unrest and turmoil convince fully this unworthy writer that the fulness of the Gentiles has come in. Violence in or among society in general in our own nation here has reached the point that we (ourselves) can scarcely believe what we see and hear with our own eyes and ears. The corruption in government (even this year, 1986- 87) has been beyond all reasonable proportions in the latter. The Lord told Daniel, *"O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book even to the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."Dan. 12:4.* We are definitely living now in the time of which Daniel prophesied. Scientific knowledge has tripled in the past two decades with many nations of the world now possessing the Nuclear bomb or the potential and capability necessary of obtaining and making it. Yet, since the ending of World War II, the United States has won no clear cut military victory anywhere. A truce was signed to end the Korean conflict and a withdrawal settled the Vietnam War. (The invasion of Grenada by the U.S.A. in 1984 was a skirmish only and was not a battle as such .) On the other hand, ISRAEL has won every battle that it has fought or in which she has been engaged, since 1948.

Many of us are aware of the deadly conflict that exists today in the Middle East. There is not a nightly interna-

tional news program on television but what this grave conflict between Israel and her neighboring Arab (Islamic) countries is not mentioned. There are, no doubt, many, many people, that have wondered what this conflict is all about and the reason or reasons that have caused this conflict to erupt into violence, war and bloodshed from time to time in the past several years. This conflict is going on now at this very time.

In the year A.D. 70 when the Jews were scattered to the neighboring countries of the world, being displaced from their God - given homeland of Canaan (today known as Palestine and / or Lebanon), their land was vacated. The neighboring Arab Countries, descendants of Ishmael and Esau, moved into the area. For nearly 1900 years these Arabic nations occupied this area. They established their homesteads, villages, towns and cities. From a natural standpoint the Arabs had lived on these premises long enough (1900 years) to feel that the land belonged to them. They may have had a natural (silent) right of possession or ownership, but they had no eternal right because, according to scripture, God had promised this land to Abraham, as we have already said, about 5,000 years earlier. When the appointed or predestinated time came for them to reoccupy it, they did, as they had always done, two times previously. Both nationalities are of the seed of Abraham, but one is designated in ***Romans 9:7 as CHILDREN OF THE PROMISE while the other is designated as "the children of the flesh." Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Issac."Gen. 21:10.*** There is no way possible for these two nations (Israel on the one hand and the Islamic or Arab world on the other) to ever live or reside peacefully together since the scripture says, ***"Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Romans 9:13.*** This conflict is further widened today with the United States supporting Israel while. Russia is supporting Syria, an Arab country, with Russian made rockets on Israel's border, aimed at Israel. A compromise could soon take place but hostilities will not cease.

The Arab or Moslem world today often called the Arab bloc, stretches from the Atlantic Ocean of West Africa) to the Persian Gulf. It includes all Arabic-speaking people of Ifni, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Sudan, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oatar, Trucial Coast, Oman, Aden, Yeman, with cultures extending into Iran, India, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Indonesia. Islam is the religion taught by the Prophet Mohammed in the A.D. 600's. Mohammed was an Arab who was born in Mecca in A.D. 570. He believed that he had been sent to destroy the idols of the heathen Arabs and to teach them to worship his god. He preached that there was only one god. Allah, and that he, Mohammed, was Allah's messenger. Those who today believe in this god, and accept Mohammed as his messenger are called Moslems, from the Arabic,

meaning those who submit to him. Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran, a name familiar to many, falls into this category. Islam, today, is one of the world's largest religions, having more than 400,000,000 followers, located in the above named countries. To worship any God other than the true and living One would be Paganistic in principal, according to my humble judgment. Their places of assembling are not referred to as "church," but "mosque" or "minaret."

It was in 1978 or 1979, that President Carter held what was known as the "Camp David Summit" conference at the presidential retreat, Camp David, Maryland, in which he attempted to bring together Israel and the Arab world together through the means of Egypt's President Sadat, and Begin, Prime Minister of Israel (Sadat was later assassinated in 1980's as I recall in Cairo, Egypt.) This was an effort to halt the work of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (commonly called the PLO) whose objective today is to regain the land that was lost to Israel, as we have already pointed out. With all due respect to President Carter, had he known and understood the scripture, he would not have wasted the millions of dollars from this country that were promised to Egypt. Man cannot reconcile that enmity which God has said will never be reconciled. It has been said, *"What God has done is done forever."* I do not believe that any man can change the intent of those (just quoted) words. The compromises of men, when against the command of God, will end in failure. The "love of God" and the "hate of God" are permanent and Unchangeable. See Romans 9:13.

Today, at this very hours the two Arab (Islamic) countries known as Iran and Iraq are and have been interlocked in a fierce war since 1980 over the area known as the persian Gulf through which flows more than 50% of the world's oil and petroleum supply. In this conflict the United States through the Reagan administration has backed Iran through the secret supplying of arms and munitions to that nation while Russia has done the same for Iraq. Out of this country's (the United States of America's) participation in that conflict has recently arisen a government scandal of our nation's government's secretly selling arms to Iran and giving the proceeds of such sales to the contras. freedom fighting soldiers in Nicaragua, against the Russian backed Nicaraguan government called the" Sandanistas " with profits from such sales being yet unaccounted for. Here again, our country, the United States of America, is helplessly hooked into and involved with "Gog" and Magog "against its determined aim and goal of swallowing up and destroying Israel.

Even in today's world news, we hear and read where President Ronald Reagan on October 8, 1986, sent a Bible, during the time of this scandal of Hashemi Rafsanjani, second in command of Iran under Ayatollah Khomeni, with the following inscription: *"And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel*

unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." Galatians 3:8. This verse refers to Abraham who is the common ancestor of both Moslems and Jews. Moslems know Abraham as Ibrahim. Jews trace their ancestry through his son. Ishmael, as we have already pointed out. I mention this incident only to point out the fact that even our president, Ronald Reagan, is partially aware of what is now taking place in the world, as it relates to scriptural or Bible prophecy. In closing this article, I quote this scripture from Jesus' own language in Matthew 19:30. *"But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first."* The first and the last and the last and the first are synonymous in meaning. They are the same in every sense of the word. The first here has reference to Abraham. the lineal forbear of Christ, from whom He descended through Judah the son of Jacob. The last are those the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the twelve tribes, who have now reoccupied Jerusalem after a period of exilement for nearly two thousand years. All of this according to scriptural prophecy and the foreknowledge of God.

In all of their wanderings for the past 4,000 years from that promised land that God said unto Abraham, *"And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God,"* they have now returned for the last time. Three times during this period of time (the past 4,000 years), based upon information in this article, have they been displaced from this land, but they will go no more out until the second coming of their King. They could not receive Him the first time because of the predestinated decree of the establishment of the Gentile church. *"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not, but as many as received Him, to them gave He the power to become the Sons of God." John 1 : 11, 12.* Paul said concerning them. *"Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; HOW MUCH MORE THEIR FULNESS." Romans 11 : 11, 12.* Let us not forget this scripture, *"And so all Israel shall be saved." Romans 11:26.*

In their (the Jews') fulness was the coming back home to their ancient home, Jerusalem, of which they now control in its entirety. This brings us down to the final fulfillment of the prophecy that John saw in Revelation 21 : 1, 2, as follows: *"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I, John saw the holy city NEW JERUSALEM, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."* In the first resurrection of the just, her corruption will put on incorruption, her mortality will put on immortality. These are the number

that was the seal of the living God, *"an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel." Rev. 7:2, 4.* John then pointed out another number in addition to the *"one hundred and forty and four thousand,"* whom he said *"sang a new song,"* and their number is *"ten thousand, and thousand, and thousands of thousands."* This is that number that he said *"no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, who stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." Rev. 7:9.* In this manner was included the Gentile church.

When NEW JERUSALEM, the happy, eternal home for which His weary pilgrims now long for finally comes, there will be a new Temple within it . John tells us what is will be *"And I saw no temple therein: for the LORD GOD ALMIGHTY and THE LAMB are THE TEMPLE of it." Rev. 21:22.*

So with the fulfillment and final consummation of all things now at hand when Gog and Magog, Islam and Athestic Communism (or Russia), come up against little Israel, as has been prophesed in Ezekiel 38:18-22, with all of their vast technology, superior nuclear bombs, missiles, ultra modern naval combats, combat troops (because of Israel's God - given impediment or block to those Arab nations which control the Persian Gulf out of which flows 50 percent plus of the world 's oil supply), they will be no more than Napoleon, Hilter, William the Conqueror and Alexander the Great and others who eventually met their respective dooms. Since the beginning of time men have set out to conquer the world, but God has disallowed the fact since He has said of Himself, I am *"King of kings and Lord of lords."* No man or set of men, nation or group of nations, will He ever allow to take complete control of the earth and world. Time will end before such takes place.

Before the end of time, Gog (Islam) will give its power over to Magog (Communism) in a final endeavor as the means to accomplish this end when Communism (of Russia) would destroy Israel and take control of the world's greatest source of oil supply in the Persian Gulf area of the Middle East. This is verified by the scripture, *"And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority..." Revelation 13:2.*

The intervention of God (yet to be made known) will destroy Gog and Magog or Islamism and Communism God will impute His terrible fire, brimstone and hailstone in the final destruction of the world. I suggest again that you please read Ezekiel 38:18, 22. *"If God be for them (Israel), who can be against them?" Romans 8:31.* HIS SEED among both Jews, Gentiles, and all nations out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation will be raised in the first resurrection. Those who are alive and remain

at His coming shall not prevent those who are asleep. The dead in Christ shall rise first and those who remain shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at His second coming! Read 1st Thess. 4:13-18. Those whose names are not found written in the Lamb's Book of Life will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone that burneth forever and ever. Rev. 20:10. *"Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen." Rev. 1:7, "Lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28. "Surely I come quickly, Amen Even so, come Lord Jesus." Rev. 22:10.* To that last heir of promise who will witness this indescribable sight, what a glorious thing it will be! Faith then will become sight and hope a blessed reality, for ISRAEL, God's children who will go no more out for ever.

J.M. Mewborn
January 29, 1987

PROVERBS 16 : 1-3.

The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord.

All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the Lord weigheth the spirits.

Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established.

VOICES OF THE PAST

REGENERATION, NEW BIRTH, &C. REPLY TO AMOS FOX.

NEW VERNON, N.Y., AUGUST 2, 1841.

The first subject in order may be stated thus: What is the difference, if any, between regeneration, the new birth, and conversion? By regeneration, we understand that work of the spirit of God, by which the subjects of divine grace are quickened from a state of death in trespasses and sins into spiritual life. In this work that life which was given them in Jesus Christ before the world began, is communicated to them by the instantaneous operation of the Holy Ghost. This work is as independently and emphatically the sovereign work of God, as was the creation of the world, and consequently admits of no instrumentality or secondary causes of any kind, quantity or quality whatever. "When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, to reveal his Son in me, straightway I conferred not with flesh and blood." Regeneration brings its subjects into that state wherein the subject is alive to spiritual sensations; being quickened, he can realize something of the holiness of the law, of his sinful state, of the mountain of his guilt, the justice of his condemnation; of his utter inability to appease the wrath or cancel the demands of the law of God. Though ushered, by regeneration, into a new condition, so that he feels, sees, hears and under-

stands things very differently from what he ever did before, yet he cannot see how God can sustain his justice short of executing on him the sentence of the law. The opening to the understanding of the poor, distressed, quickened soul the joys of his salvation, to bring him to the experience of the forgiveness of sins, to remove the load of his guilt, to hush the thunders of Mount Sinai, and to open to him the blissful portals of light, life, joy and immortality is what we mean by the new birth.

In the new birth the laboring soul is set at liberty; is born into light, love and peace; into a new element, new joys, new desires and new exercises; "old things are passed away, and all things are become new;" the terrors have subsided, the thunders have ceased; joy succeeds the smart, and the whole soul is absorbed in the love of God--love to God, to his Lord, to his people, his ordinances, and to all things lovely in the divine estimation. This gracious work qualifies a man to see the kingdom of God; but this alone does not bring him into that kingdom; he was a member of the spiritual kingdom before, but of the visible he is not a member until he takes on him the yoke of Jesus in the ordinance of baptism.

Conversion is a term which may be applied to any change either in men or things. Regeneration and the new birth are certainly a conversion, because a change is effected; but many conversions may take place where there is no saving change wrought. Thus we have in a brief way expressed our views on the first items of the inquiry.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

"O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days." **— PSALM XC. 14.**

MANY of the dear children of God are tossed up and down on a sea of great uncertainty, doubt and fear, because they have not had sensible manifestations of Christ to their soul. He has not come into them in the power of his love; still they often say, " When wilt thou come unto me? O visit me with thy salvation; speak a word to my soul; it is thyself, and thyself alone, I want to hear, to see, and to know!" Now these are drawings of the gracious Lord, the secret beginnings of his coming, the heralds of his approach, the dawning of the day before the morning star arises and the sun follows upon his track. But when the Lord does come in any sweet manifestation of his presence or of his power, then he will abide where he has come, for he never leaves or forsakes a soul which he has once visited. He may seem to do so; he may withdraw himself; and then who can behold him? But he never really leaves the temple which he has once adorned and sanctified with his presence. Christ is formed in the hearts of his people the hope of glory; their body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and Christ dwells in them by faith. Though we often mourn over his absence and do not feel his gracious presence as we would, still he is there, if he has once come.

J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing the Staunton River Union will be held at Canaan Primitive Baptist Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in November. The song service will begin at 10:00 A.M.

We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

The Church is located in Pittsylvania County on the Mount Cross Road. (844)

Elder J.R. Williams, Pastor
Geneva B. Scearce, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 1997

Mrs. B.T. Hollandsworth, VA $2.00
Mrs. Annie C. Lawrence, VA 2.00
Mrs. E.H. Chandler, LA 7.00
Eld. Raymond Goad, VA 2.00
Donald Agee, VA 2.00
Mrs. Willie Mae Ratliff, VA 5.00
H.C. Brown, VA 5.00
Mrs. French C. Hogan, VA 10.00
Alpha Sears, OH 2.00
Charles Alders, TX 25.00
Clinton N. Barron, LA 2.00
Eld. Marvin Brumfield, VA 2.00
Mrs. Carrie McDaniel, VA 2.00
Mrs. F.K. Morgan, AR
Memory husband F. K. Morgan .. 20.00

OBITUARIES

BROTHER INGRUME V. LOCKEY

With a sad and lonely heart I will try to write the obituary of our dear Brother in the flesh and hopefully a brother in Christ. Ingrume was born on February 5, 1912 He built a full and reasonable farm life. All of his years was on the farm excluding 39 months in the U.S. Army. Most all his Army stay was in the European Theatre. He was married shortly after returning from the the Army years to Pearl C. Lockey. Born to them in the 47 years of life together were 4 children. Phyllis #1, Van #2, Lynette #3, and last Timothy.

His first wife preceded him in death just over 4 years. He was very lonely until his second wife Lila Ross. They were married on or about 1 1/2 years before he was called home by our heavenly father on July 1st 1997. He was laid to rest in Ameriah Gamer Cemetery in Newport just a short ways from where he was born. His funeral was conducted by Elder J.M. Horne who pastors our Newport River Primitive Baptist Church. We all bow in humble submission to his will the only one who knows what is not for us to await the coming of the one to return who will call his children home for us to live with him. This 26th day of September 1997.

God Bless,
Gordon M. Lockey

MILDRED SMITH LOFTIS

Sister Mildred Loftis of Reidsville, N.C. died August 15, 1996 at Moses Cone Memorial Hospital in Greensboro, N.C. She was 77 years old at the time of her death.

Funeral services were held Sunday, August 18, at Wilkerson Funeral Home in Reidsville, with burial following at Reidlawn Cemetery, conducted by Elder Kenneth Key.

Sister Mildred moved her membership from Pleasant Grove Church to Hadnot Primitive Baptist Church on June 1, 1991 where she remained a faithful member until her death. She lived at Emerald Isle, N.C. at this time. She moved back to her home in Reidsville in 1995, due to her failing health.

She is survived by her son Rick Loftis of Reidsville, two daughters, Grey Carter of High Point, N.C. and Joyce Heath of Pink Hill, N.C. and four brothers and five sisters.

Done by order of conference June, 1997.

Elder J.T. Prescott, Moderator
Leola Bright, Clerk

PSALM 51:1-2.

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

IVEY JOHNSON PRESCOTT

On April 26, 1997 our dear and precious brother was called home by our heavenly Father.

Johnson was born December 5, 1907 to Ivey and Beulah Prescott in Carteret County, N.C., where he lived until moving to Winston Salem, N.C. in 1926. For many years he was a radio installer at Reisenweaver Communications Co., retiring in 1989.

He was married to Elizabeth Hinsdale in 1928. They were married 68 years.

Johnson joined Hadnot Creek Primitive Baptist Church March 14, 1964 and was ordained a deacon in March 1965.

On a personal note, Johnson was my natural brother and I remember most his wonderful smile, even through his last years of pain and suffering. His life reflected his philosophy of always looking on the good side of things and for the best in his fellow man.

He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth of the home; four sons Kenneth Prescott and Terry Prescott both of Winston Salem, Joseph Larry Prescott of Myrtle Beach, S.C. and Ronnie Prescott of Raleigh, N.C.; one daughter Doris P. Walker of Winston Salem and Elder J.T. Prescott of Swansboro, N.C.; one sister, Leola P. Bright of Kinston, N.C.

Funeral services were held at Bunker Hill Primitive Baptist Church with Elders J.T. Prescott, John Wingfield and John Lee officiating.

Done by order of conference June 1997.

Elder J.T. Prescott, Moderator
Leola Bright, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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SONG

In union with the Lamb,
From condemnation free,
The saints from everlasting were,
And Shall forever be.

In covenant from of old,
The sons of God they were;
The feeblest lamb in Jesus' fold
Was blessed in Jesus there.

Its bonds shall never break,
Though earth's old columns bow;
The strong, the tempted, and the weak,
Are one in Jesus now.

With joy lift up your heads,
Ye highly favored few—
When thro' the earth destruction spreads,
For what shall injure you?

When storms or tempests rise,
Or sins your peace assail,
Your hope in Jesus never dies—
'Tis cast within the veil.

Here let the weary rest,
Who love the Saviour's name;
Though with no sweet enjoyment blest,
This covenant stands the same.

Kent.

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NOTICE

NOTICE TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS AND READERS

The article entitled, "ISRAEL," that was published in the November, 1997, issue of the Signs of the Times, Volume No. 165, issue No. 11, @ pages 245-261, was an editorial by J. M. Mewborn, that appeared in the "September-October, 1986" issue of Zion's Landmark.

Editors

PSALM 50:2.

Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.

EDITORIAL

HANDS

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

The subject of hands in the Scriptures is so vast that many volumes might be written on it, but I have in mind, if God be willing, to write only a few words on it, and pray that God will direct my every thought that I might write something to his praise, honour and glory, and to the comfort and edification of his beloved children.

In the natural realm man uses his hands to accomplish his works or the things he desires to do, but we find many times we do not have the knowledge, wisdom or power to do as we would. This applies to all men regardless of how wise and strong they may appear. When we would do good we find not how to do it; and there is no power but of God, for the powers that be are ordained of him. Rom. 7:18 & 13:1.

The true and living God as revealed to us in the Scriptures is not limited in any way, though many men declare it and desire it to be so, believing that they have power to save themselves and also others. God is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent, and ***"he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him,***

What doest thou." Dan. 4:35. God created the heavens and the earth and all things therein, and for his pleasure they are and were created. Rev.4:11. He made every thing exactly as it pleased him, including man, and we cannot say unto him, Why hast thou made me thus? Does not the potter have power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another to dishonour? Rom. 9:20-21. Surely God is our potter. God made the Garden of Eden, planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil therein and commanded the man, saying, *"Of every tree in the garden thou mayest eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen. 2:16-17.* God also made Satan, the devil, that crooked serpent. *"By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent." Job 26:13.* That serpent, the father of lies, was in the garden of Eden to accomplish the purpose of God, and Eve was deceived by him, for she was made subject to vanity. as was the man, for she was in him in the creation. Eve ate the forbidden fruit, gave unto Adam, and he did eat, and sin entered the world, and death by sin. *"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered the world. and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom.5:12.* Surely God had a holy purpose for sin entering the world or he would not have provided the way. To deny this is to deny God`s sovereignty, his power and wisdom; for his beloved Son Jesus Christ stood as a Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. This was accomplished when he entered the world in the likeness of sinful flesh, and laid down his life on the cross of Calvary to atone for the sins of his children and redeem them from the curse of the law which said, *"The soul that sinneth, it shall die."*

"Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand. Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face." Ps.89:13-14. God uses his mighty arm and hand to accomplish his every purpose under heaven. And, *"to every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." Eccl.3:1. "The LORD of host hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass: and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Isa. 14:24.* Again to deny this is to deny his sovereignty. All things are his: shall he not do with them as it pleases him? *"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." Rev. 4:11.* God did not make man wicked, but he became wicked when he transgressed God`s holy and righteous law. *"Lo, this have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." Eccl. 7:29.* Until Adam and Eve transgressed they knew neither good or evil, but when they fell from their upright estate into a state of sin and

death all mankind was involved, for Adam is the federal head, and Eve the mother of all living. They became corrupt, and Jesus said, *"A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."* We are as David; *"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." Ps. 51:5.* Is not Eve the mother of all? Gen. 3:20. There are numerous scriptures that might be quoted to prove that all men are sinners by their Adamic nature, but the above should suffice.

"Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread: they have not called upon God." Ps. 53:2. What is the difference between the workers of iniquity and those who are called of God, my people? His people call upon him, but the others do not. Why? Because they know him not, and therefore cannot believe in him: for *"it is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." John 6:29. Jesus said, "-and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Matt. 11:27.* Again Jesus said, *"Depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Matt.7:33.* Again he said, *"Depart from me, ye cursed, into the everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."* How different shall be his words unto his children! *"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matt.25:34.* Is it not a wonderful thing to be given a hope that we shall inherit that kingdom! These blessed ones are they who have been washed in the cleansing blood of the Lamb of God. *"Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried: but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand: but the wise shall understand." Dan.12:10.* Though they did not know that they were fulfilling the purpose of God, Jesus was crucified and slain by the wicked hands of men. This was the most heinous crime ever committed, yet it served the greatest purpose: the salvation of God`s elect people. The wicked always serve the purpose of God, for they are his sword and his hand. Ps. 17:13-14. Does not God have complete control of his sword and his hand? Surely he has complete control over all things: nothing can be left to chance nor to any other thing or man. If not, how then could his people know that all things work together for their good? which it does. Even the wrath of man shall praise him, and the rest he will restrain. Ps. 76:10.

Jesus told his disciples there would be wars and rumors of wars and that these things must be. Matt. 24:7. Who shall be the ones to start these wars? Are they not the kings of kingdoms, and the rulers of nations.? Yet God is in control. *Prov. 21:1; "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will." "For the LORD of hosts has purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?"* Pharaoh was a wicked king

when the Israelites were in Egypt, and the scripture saith unto him, *"Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout the earth." Rom. 9:7.* After Pharaoh had fulfilled God's purpose for him, he and all his host were destroyed in the Red sea, and the children of Israel were saved from his hand.

The Lord took the Israelites by the hand and led them out of Egypt and blessed them with every thing they needed. Yet they made idols and worshiped them, and they forsook the Lord and served Baal and Ashtaroth. The anger of the LORD was hot against them and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers and sold them into the hands of their enemies. Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for evil, as the LORD had said and sworn unto them, and they were greatly distressed. Nevertheless the LORD raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them. Judges 2:13-16. Time after time the Israelites broke his statutes and kept not his commandments and he visited their transgressions with the rod and their iniquities with stripes. Nevertheless his lovingkindness he never took from them, nor suffered his faithfulness to fail. (See Ps. 89:30-33.) And in the 23rd Psalms David said, *"He restoreth my soul, he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff the comfort me."* This applies to all his children from then until the end of time. In the 12th chapter of Hebrews we read, *"My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; – but if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."* In Ps.37:23-24 we read, *"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand."* Who is a good man? surely not the man of flesh, for in the flesh there is found no good thing; but if the Spirit of Christ dwelleth in us his righteousness is imputed unto us, and we walk in the ordered steps of the Lord: *"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10.*

If we have experienced a new birth, then we can walk in the Spirit and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. Our flesh is not changed with this new birth, and our fleshly lusts remain; *"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and*

the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Gal.5:17. When we yield to the lusts of our flesh then we are chastened by our Heavenly Father. He does not chasten us in wrath, but in love, for he dealeth with us as sons. This draws us near unto him with filial fear, and ***"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding." Prov. 9:10.*** Therefore, brethren, when we experience the chastening of God let us not despise it, nor faint, but rejoice, for this is clear evidence that we are the sons of our Heavenly Father.

Psalms 139:9-10, ***"If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."*** There is an highway, and a way, which is called The way of holiness. By the leading hand of God the redeemed shall walk there. Isa. 35:8-9. Our hope is that we are among those who have been redeemed by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

There is no end to this vast and marvelous subject, and I have written only a few of the many beautiful thought that have come to mind. May they be to his praise. honour and glory. May his hand be upon us to lead us in the path of righteousness, and his rod and his staff comfort us.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

VOICES OF THE PAST

REVELATION 22:14

Dear Brother Beebe:--Will you gratify me, your unworthy brother, by giving your views on Rev. 22:14? "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." More particularly on the *city.* What city? Where is it? And when do we enter it?

Yours, as ever,
Hiram Campbell.
Brunswick, Maine, Oct. 31, 1861.

REPLY: The names and description of the city as given in the connection, leave no room to doubt that the city mentioned in our text, is the holy city, New Jerusalem, which descended from God out of heaven, and is a presentation of the church of the living God, which is also called the bride, the Lamb's wife. It is also called the tabernacle of God, with men, in which God dwells, owning the citizens as his people and manifesting himself to them as their God; wiping away the tears from their eyes, and shielding them from sorrow, crying, pain and death. In this case we have a singular combination and blending of figures. A city, a bride, a wife, a tabernacle, etc., all of which are elsewhere in the Scriptures used to represent the church of God in her union with and subjection to our Lord Jesus Christ.

We should not forget that figures familiar to us are employed by the Spirit to set forth and illustrate to us things of a spiritual and heavenly character. The figure of a city presents the subjects of grace as a congregation of the Lord, in their congregational capacity, as fellow-citizens in the church or city of God, and of the household of faith, and all under the regulations of a well disciplined community, under the same government, protected by the same walls and bulwarks which fortify and defend all who have the privilege of citizenship. And in this city are the common provisions which are so amply provided, for meat and drink, for light and comfort, for protection and safety. In this city the laws of naturalization exclude dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie; admitting only those who are blessed of the Lord, and who as a manifest evidence that they are blessed, cheerfully take Christ's yoke on them, and show their allegiance to him by doing his commandments. As he said, Then are ye my disciples indeed, if ye do whatsoever I command you: and for a more manifest token to all, if they obey hisnew commandment: for, By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another. As citizens they all have certain rights of citizenship, such as the right to the tree of life, which is in the midst of the street of the city, and on either side of the river, which bears twelve manner of fruits, and yields her fruit every month; the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations. Instead of being forbidden and kept back from the tree of life by the cherubim and flaming sword, which turneth every way to keep the way of the tree of life, as under the legal dispensation, in the earthly paradise, or in the Jerusalem which is in bondage with her children, in this New Jerusalem all who are written among the living in Jerusalem, whose names are registered in the book of life, have a right to the tree of life, and to the pure river of water of life, which is clear as crystal, which proceedeth out of the throne of God and the Lamb. For unto all such the Spirit and the bride saith, Come, and they have the privilege of taking of the water of life freely. While as citizens they are a multitude which no man can number, as the bride, the Lamb's wife, they all make but one bride, one church, one body. For ye are all one in Jesus Christ. There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are all called in one hope of your calling. Here then is identity, Christ himself is the Head of the body, the church, and the church is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. As the bride of Christ, her creation was in him, as the creation of Eve, in the figure, was in Adam. She is one with him, They twain shall be one. Bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh; and she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. She is not merely the bride, but the married wife of the Lamb. For thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of hosts is his name, and thy Redeemer is the holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called. The testimony of John the Bap-

tist, when he identified and pointed out the Husband, saying, Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, was, He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom standeth and rejoiceth because of the bridegroom's voice; thus my joy is fulfilled. This city is the city of God, and Ezekiel says, The name of the city shall be, The Lord is There. And God has said, by Isaiah, And they shall call them the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord. And thou shalt be called sought out, a city not forsaken (Isaiah 62:12).

From this last mentioned passage we learn that the city is composed of the redeemed of the Lord, whom the Lord has not only redeemed, but whom he has sought out; he found this people as he did Jacob, in a waste-howling wilderness, and led him about and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of his eye. These are redeemed from among men, out of every kindred and tribe of mankind, and they are redeemed to God, and made priests and kings, and they shall reign with Christ on the earth. They shall all of them come with singing to Zion, the holy city, and they shall sit down in the kingdom of God with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and they shall sing this song, We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and for bulwarks. God himself is a wall of fire round about, and the glory in her midst. This is the city of which God has said, Here will I dwell forever; for I have desired it for an habitation. He will abundantly bless her provisions, and fill her poor with bread. The Lord God is her Sun and her Shield; he will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved. God will help her, and that right early. Truly, glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God: not one of her stakes shall ever be removed, not one of her cords shall ever be broken.

"Her ancient walls appear to be
The workmanship of Deity.
Founded in grace, they still appear,
Without a flaw or chasm there.

Oft has this city's strength been tried
By mighty foes on every side;
But all in vain it yet hath been,
She baffles Satan, hell and sin.

Count ye her towers, how high they rise,
Her golden spires, they reach the skies;
Her golden streets are fair to view,
Her palaces and bulwarks, too.

Then round her walk, her turrets tell,
Mark all her brazen bulwarks well;
Spread far and wide her deathless fame,
Her pearly gates, and walls of flame."

Much more might be written in answer to the first inquiry of brother Campbell, What city? But we trust enough has been said to show that we understand the city mentioned to be the holy city, New Jerusalem, which John saw in his vision, coming down from God out of heaven, and which he describes in and throughout the last two chapters of the New Testament, and which is designed to describe her in her glory organization and primi-

tive purity, as the spiritual kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Second. Where is it? We reply, it is where two or three are gathered together in Christ's name. It is in all places where God has revealed his name. It is in the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. Of her locality the psalmist has said, Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north. Her locality is marked by stakes that shall never be removed, and confined by cords that shall never be broken. The sacred records of eternity show that God has been her dwelling-place in all generations. She dwells in the secret place of the Most High, and abides under the shadow of the Almighty. Her life is hid with Christ in God. Her place of defence is the munitions of rocks. The eternal God is her refuge, and underneath her are the everlasting arms. We find her in the eternal, immutable love of God; she is found in his decrees, wrapped up in the bundle of eternal life, which is in his Son. She has her place in the eternal purpose of God, which he purposed in himself before the world began; which purpose shall unshaken remain when the world shall be no more. She is found in the election of grace, chosen of God in Christ before the foundation of the world. She has her standing in the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, and in his justifying righteousness she outshines the sun, is more fair than the moon, and terrible as an army with banners. She inhabits the Rock, is in the secret places of the stairs, and she sits in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

But in regard to the house of her pilgrimage, God has chosen her in the furnace of affliction. In this world she has tribulation, but in Christ she has peace. The place assigned her by the world is as the offscouring of all things, unto this day. Hated by the world, tried and tempted by the devil, opposed by the flesh, a jest and a by-word to all the children of the bondwoman. But her home is in Jesus Christ, and in the earth she has no abiding place or continuing city. As to her sorrows, trials, persecutions, and her triumphs and victories, she is sometimes encompassed about by the armies of God and Magog; but sometimes she is seen upon Mount Zion, with the seal of God indelibly marked in her forehead, or on the sea of glass, which is mingled with fire, singing a song which none but the redeemed can learn or sing. She has had a place prepared for her in the wilderness, to be nourished and protected from the serpent. Whatever of sorrow, affliction, persecution or tribulation may be appointed for her here below, she has the assurance that she shall ultimately triumph through the blood of the Lamb and the word of his testimony. For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Third. When do we enter the city? As we view the whole church of God, existing in Christ, and chosen in him before the foundation of the world, according to Eph. 1:4, we regard the

citizens as natives of the holy city. Sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called (Jude 1). Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began (2 Tim. 1:9). Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all (Gal. 4:26). And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her; and the Highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there (Psalms 87:5,6). Judicially the saints entered when they were quickened together with Christ, in his resurrection, when they were raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places. For they are risen with Christ and are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel (Heb. 12:24-26).

But in what we regard as the immediate sense of the text proposed (Rev. 22:14), the saints come when they do his commandments; and thereby manifest that they are the blessed of the Lord. This coming in through the gates is an experimental matter. Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God; and, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God (John 3:3-5). The city in which the tree of life yields her fruits is a spiritual city, and can only be entered by the gates which are called Praise (Isa. 60:18). The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob (Psa. 87:2). David says, *"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together: whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord."* (Psa. 122:1-4) As the tribes of Israel went up to the Old Jerusalem to worship, and entered the city by the gates of that city, so the tribes of the Lord go through the gates of the New Jerusalem, experimentally in their devotion, to worship the Lord in his holy temple in the spiritual Jerusalem. As the names of the tribes of Israel are written on the angels of the gates (Rev. 21:12), we learn that the ministry of praise, embracing gospel experience, gospel doctrine and ordinances, and all gospel privileges, belong to the tribes of the Lord, to the children of God, and to them exclusively. The gates of Zion which are called Praise, are used to signify wisdom, honor, power, counsel and peculiar privileges. And when the hearts of God's people are led by the Spirit in their heavenly exercises of worship and praise, they enter into the spiritual privileges of the kingdom, into

the counsels of wisdom, and contemplate the glory of their Redeemer's kingdom, and talk of his power. *"In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." (Isa. 26:1,2)* The gates of the holy city are only open to the righteous nation, for who else can enter by the gates of Praise? They are not accessible to those who love and make a lie, but to the righteous nation that keepeth the truth.

"Those holy gates forever bar
Pollution, sin and shame,
None shall obtain admittance there,
But followers of the Lamb."

"Blessed are they that do his commandments." The commandments of him who says in the preceding verse, *"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."* Who also says, in verse sixteen, *"I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star."* He is the King of Righteousness, the King eternal, and our only wise God and Savior. His commands are proclaimed from his throne in the holy city, and are applicable to all who are under law to Christ. Their faith and obedience are the evidences that they are his disciples, and that they have a right to the tree of life, and to enter into their peculiar privileges through the gates of the city; for the gates are open to the righteous continually, and his blessed people who know the joyful sound of his voice, shall go in and out and find pasture. They have right to the tree of life, and eat of its fruits freely, and live forever: for their right is a birthright, it is their inheritance, and it is their Father's good pleasure that they shall inherit the kingdom. There is a manifest entering into the holy city, by the gate of christian recognition and fellowship, not only when the new born babes in Christ declare in Zion what God has done for them, and when they publicly espouse his cause and take on them the profession of his name, and by the gate of baptism, declare their allegiance to Jesus as their King.

Finally, whenever the saints are enabled to worship God in the spirit, to rejoice in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh, in their social songs of praise, their prayers and supplications, in their love and fellowship, union and communion, in walking in the ordinances and order, the doctrine, discipline of the house of God, then we conclude they enter in through the gates, and enjoy their right to the tree of life.

We have been somewhat lengthy in our remarks, and perhaps have failed to meet the wishes of brother Campbell, but if any of our readers are edified or comforted in what we have written, our labor will not be in vain.

November 1, 1861
Elder Gilbert Beebe

CHARITY.

"And we believe," says the *Christian Watchman,* "the time is not far distant when a man's standing as a christian and a good citizen will be measured by the amount of his charities." The Cross *and Journal* enquires, "Is it correct?"

REMARKS.

NEW VERNON, N.Y., January 7, 1836.

We are mistaken if these learned editors, in their use of the word *charity,* do not wish to be understood in a popular and not scriptural sense. The bible connects charity with faith and hope, and ascribes to it the preeminence; and as the less important are the fruits of the Spirit of God, and utterly beyond the command or control of mortals, so of course the greatest can only be possessed and enjoyed by such as receive it as a sovereign favor from God, who is the giver of every perfect gift. By charity in a bible sense, we understand the love of God, and in this view of the subject it is easy for the christian to conceive the comparative superiority it holds over faith and hope, the former being the cause, and the latter being but effects And again, God's love in its nature possesses a superior excellency; it is eternal, immutable, almighty and sovereign; eternal, it had no beginning, and can never terminate; immutable, fixed from the ancients of eternity upon its objects. "Neither life nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."--Rom. vii. 38-39. It is invincible; nothing can withstand the power of the love of God, many waters cannot quench it, floods cannot drown it, sin, death and hell combined could not subdue it. It is omnipotent in its operations; the stoutest hearts in all Adam's wretched family have bowed in subjection to it; yea, we are told it is stronger than death. It is sovereign, who can command it? Who can produce it? Surely no one. Jehovah has set his mercy on whom he would, for he has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. He says, ***"Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."*** View the love of God in any other light than sovereign, and where would be the obligation of gratitude to God for it. If the possession of it in our hearts does not depend exclusively on the sovereign pleasure of God, then we must possess and enjoy it, if at all, independently of God, and who would not tremble at such an idea.

This charity or love of God is communicated by the Holy Ghost to the redeemed of the Lord in their new birth, and in its operation on their hearts produces love to God. "We love him because he first loved us." It produces love to his truth, love to his ordinances, his laws, and to his people and makes them kind and affectionate one towards another. This charity, or love of God, when shed abroad in the hearts of God's people, gives them bowels of compassion and mercy one towards another; it is not productive of ostentatious shows which are common among the Gentiles; it does not blazon the liberality of its

possessor through the press to earth's remotest bounds, but rather teaches and enforces the command of Jesus, not to let the left hand know what the right has performed. It leads its possessor to visit the widow and the fatherless, and to do good as much as in them lies unto all men, but especially to the household of faith. The love of God does this and more; hence in answer to Mr. Stevens, of the Cross, we answer: The christian is to be measured by the charity he possessed, but we see no connection between his christianity and his qualification for good citizenship in this world.

But we are led to conclude that the editor of the Watchman intends popular or modern charity. This is altogether another thing, very different in nature and in effect. It is any principle that will lead men to appropriate their money, wealth and influence to the service of the institutions of modern benevolence. If a man would in a popular sense be charitable, let him join all the fashionable religious societies ef the day; let him patronize every scheme which men have devised and still are devising to convert the world, and if he has funds he can become very charitable. This kind of charity is very splendid in the eyes of an adulterous generation; it is sounded far and wide; it rings from the pulpit; it is echoed through the press. This charity regards no other qualification on the part of its patrons than a well-filled purse and an open hand to deal it out at the call of the clergy. This charity will also visit the widow and the fatherless, not to relieve their pressing wants, but to extort for professedly pious purposes the " widow's mite," and the hard earned dollar of the orphan boy. If the widow or the fatherless are in distress, and pinched with hunger, or chilled for want of clothing, modern charity will perhaps send her agents to the sick haunts of wretchedness, commissioned to say unto them, "Be ye warm, and be ye clothed," and perhaps in the plenitude of their kindness they will give the despairing widow or the starving orphan-- what? A loaf of bread, a bushel of grain, a suit of comfortable apparel?

Oh no! They will give them a tract, from which they may learn that these pious agents are about evangelizing the -- world, and are in want of money to carry on the enterprise. Yes, verily, this popular charity will creep into widow's houses, and lead captive silly women, as saith the scriptures of truth.

If we understand him, this is the kind of charity the editor of the *Watchman* intends, and there is perhaps more truth in what he says than his brother editor is willing to admit; indeed the time has already arrived in which "the vile person is called liberal, and the church said to be bountiful," while every one who refuses to acknowledge or patrolize their schemes are denounced as illiberal and covetous. It is considered charitable in these days to be in fellowship with all denominations of professors of christianity, who will unite in the common cause of modern mendicancy, to persecute non-conformists, to brand with infamy, if possible, the latters and measure the christianity of the former by the amount of his charity measured in dollars and cents.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

"I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys." S. S. 2:1.

Many deep and fathomless mysteries are in the Book. Things that are hard to be understood (2 Peter 3:16) are found from the first to the last. I suppose that if it was not for the influence the flesh has in our judgments we would see clearly, but we have that to contend with from the days of our youth (Eccl. 12:1) even down to old age (Deut. 28:50). This being true we have much writing and preaching that must be given the scriptural test before it is fit: for nutriment to the church (1 John 4:1; Gal. 1:8). This is why things are a mystery to us and will continue to be as long as time lasts. A rose and a lily are not alike. One of them grows in one place and the other in a different kind of place. We must remember that this is one person talking. The marks of the rose and the marks of the lily belong to them. Some have ascribed this beautiful language to the church. With this thought I cannot concur. The church does not say such sublime things about herself. The Son of God has the right to speak thus of himself, and also to speak with such endearing terms to his bride, but for her to take such liberty--never! When she speaks concerning herself it is an acknowledgment of her many shortcomings. (S.S. 1:6; Mat. 3:14; Mat. 26:75; Rom. 7:15-25).

" I am the rose of Sharon." This is spoken by the Head of the church, and the only one in and of the church that has the prerogative to say, "I am." Not any such foolish expressions as "I want to be," Or even that "I will be," but this speaker has the power and right to speak of future things as already so, and of things and times of the past and present and future as taking place now. If this had been the church speaking she would not, and, moreover, could not have taken unto herself the authority belonging only to her Beloved. A rose is a flower of great beauty and is known over the country of Sharon. Not that He is a rose, but *the* rose. There is only one Savior. There is only one name that has power to save, (Isa. 43:11; 46:21; Acts 4:12) and be was, and is, and evermore shall be the only one that saves. Heb. 13:8). Sharon is a country of plains and the word means that. Jesus is the plain that his brethren must come to. Things are not in common when some are on the mountain and some in the valley, but it is here on this Plain (Sharon) that the Lord's people all find him as everything they need. (Act 2:44-47). Is here that people of every nationality in the world can meet together, and feel at home. What a lovely flower! What a calm, easy resting place! On this plain with the sweet fragrance of this Rose all wars cease; it is here that divisions never come; it is on this common level that fault-finding, backbiting, bickering and strife does not come; it is here and here alone, that the rich and poor, bond and free, young and old, high and low meet in peace and prosperity in a church capacity. It was on this plain (Isa. 40:4) surrounded by salvation (Isa. 26:1; 60:18) with the Rose of Sharon in her midst (Psalms 46:5), that the church came through

the Civil War in 1861-65. Although it may seem a digression, let me say here, that there is not a place on this globe that can have said about it what can be said, both from a scriptural and a profane historical standpoint, about the Old Baptists. The late Civil War did not divide them. The Missionary Baptists, Methodist and Presbyterians did divide. They were not an equal, North and South; they did not esteem each other better than self; they did not have all things in common. But look at the church. There was not a Northern and Southern Primitive Baptist body. When our brethren from down South were in the Northern prisons they were ministered to by our brethren up there, and it was the same with our Northern brethren in the South. You young readers remember this and you old ones take new courage.

On the plain of Sharon where fruit,: abounds, the rose has become the plant, of renown. Only on this plain does Christ have all pre-eminence; only on this plain are the inhabitants in complete unity, seeing each other as better than self. "I am the lily of the valleys." Only one lily and many valleys. This word "valleys" means a different place. People talk about conditional, salvation, but how absurd to speak of volunteering to enter a difficult place! Yet the children of God must go there. It is a blighting thought to think that the time must come when we must go into the valleys. We so much dread the going down because we have been over the route going up. Going up we have heard the rich, strong voice of the Shepherd as he led and called us onward und upward, but when we could no, longer see to follow him we soon were on the hazardous, circuitous route down and we felt that we did not have any guiding hand and voice. There is not any stopping going up or down. We must go all the way up in deliverance; our baptism in water and in tribulations is down into the water and completely submerged in the trials and afflictions of the Christian's life; our dying in Adam was all the way down into death but up by the resurrecting power of Jesus Christ. Dear readers, we, must go all the way down into these valleys. How dark and cheerless they seem; how our memory goes back to former days when our zeal was likely and we were so interested in talking of the blessed One; ah, how black and rolling the tempest-laden clouds, what despair and gloom seized our tortured souls; ah, dear pilgrim, how dark and foreboding the caverns of evil we found there. The questioning and the groaning of our soul was for another glimpse of light, but the dark, heavy clouds had darkened the sun so that we could scarcely hope for it again. We had sunk so low that we wondered how that we ever had hoped in the Lord. In such an extremity and in our anxiety and ordeal of soul we began to see again ourselves. Are we the person that has gone before the church of Jesus Christ and ask for a home? Are we the one that has set in the assembly of the saints? Ah, what a deceiver we have found ourselves to be. In this dismal, low and gloomy valley the waters of destruction come. How we

struggle to keep going but we cannot. Hope seems to be going. David along with all of God's children, knew all this. *"Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me." Psalms 69:1-2.* Paul experienced dying daily as does all the family of God. (1 Cor. 15: 31; 2 Cor. 4:10-12). "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Psalms 116:15. Many times we refer to the corporeal death when we speak of this scripture but I think it is applicable to this daily dying. If so, then this is a precious sight to him who is the lily of the valleys. Remember, dear reader, that salvation is of the Lord. It is here; in these valleys, shut in by mountains of sin and dark clouds overhead, that we get to the ends of the earth. It is here that Jesus, the lily of the valleys, comes up from out of the mire and flooding waters to rescue every perishing lamb. We were not looking for him in a place like this; we had been taught by men that he was God of the light places; they had taught us that he came to them, that sought him; some had told us that our condition was because of our conduct, but every idea and opinion and doctrine of men must be drowned in the surging waters; all powers of mortal man must be brought under subjection, and he must come to the end of the resources – to the end of all the earth. There, out of ground that he thought could not produce, the lily comes up; he finds that not only is God the God of the light, but that he is the ruler in the dark (Psalms 139:12); he finds that he cannot go to Christ, but that Christ comes to the poor, lost and ruined sinner; that the dark clouds were not dark at all, but only his vision was bad. (1 Cor. 13-12). What a precious sight to see the coming up of this lily. What a sight for the dear children of God to behold this beautiful lily in its purity, innocence and glory. The mind is unable to express the adoration and praise due this glorious One, but the time of singing has come because he has left the ninety and nine and gone into the mountains seeking the poor sinner that has become lost there. (Mat. 18:12). He takes him out of the horrible place of mire and places him on a rock, establishes his goings, giving him a new song.

Elder W.D. Griffin

SOLOMON'S SONG 2:1-4.

I AM the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.

As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.

As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.

He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.

THE FULFILLMENT OF THE SCRIPTURES

By Elder H.M. Curry

I suppose that every one who professes to believe the Bible at all, looks for the fulfillment of the prophecies. To what quarter then are we to look for this fulfillment? How can those who deny predestination, either in part or in whole, ever expect the exact, timely and certain fulfillment of any or all of the prophecies of the divine oracles?

God has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. Part at least of this declaration he has made known unto us by the mouths of his prophets as recorded in the holy Scriptures. The events thus foretold must certainly have been foreordained or predestinated, and therefore must befulfilled, each in its time and season. The Saviour said, *"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass, until all be fulfilled."*

When God says a thing shall come to pass, does he mean that he will bring it to pass? When he says a thing shall be done, does he not pledge his word for its performance? Were the prophecies of the Scriptures uttered upon any other authority than the authority of God's decree? Do they rest upon any vicissitude of time for their fulfillment that God's decrees do not embrace? Would mere foreknowledge, or bare permission warrant or even justify the expression, "It shall come to pass?" or the expression "Shall," in any sense of the word? In this part of the country people read and notice Hick's weatherforecasts. When such changes come as have been prophesied, they will say, "Hicks hit it this time;" when the forecasts fail, they say, "Hicks missed it this time." Are we to look upon God's prophesies in this way? Are we to say, when we see the Scriptures fulfilled in this thing, God hit it this time? or when we fail to see them fulfilled in that thing, God missed it this time.

Are we to treat his prophecies as mere prognostications? One would say, O no, God knew all these things would come to pass, and so he was kind enough and thoughtful enough to tell us of them beforehand. This is a very puerile makeshift, a very fallacious and deceptive subterfuge, and involves the one accepting it in a difficulty far more serious and ungodly than he supposes the one to be which he is trying to evade, to wit, God's decree of predestination; for if God knew that an event would transpire, that event is inevitable, that is, it cannot fail to come to pass exactly as foreknown; if inevitable, then it has been determined, and if determined who determined it? If God did not, who did? The difficulty that I meet here, is an absolutely determined future, and with no determining power outside of God, and independent of him. This is fatalism, and the one accepting such a theory is a fatalist in the fullest sense of that word. So here is plunged into the very thing which he flattered himself that he was avoid-

ing. In endeavoring to shun an imaginary Scylla, he has fallen into a real Charybdis.

How often do we come upon the expression in the New Testament, "This was done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled." When Herod sent forth and killed the little children in Bethlehem and all the coasts thereof, it was said then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "In Ramah there was a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted because they are not." Suppose Herod had not sent forth and killed the little children, then the words of Jeremiah would not have been fulfilled; if his word should fail in one thing, what confidence would his prophecies be entitled to in anything? But it is not Jeremiah's word which is at stake here, it is God's word that must be fulfilled. Herod's persecution also caused the flight into Egypt, and this was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled, *"Out of Egypt have I called my Son."* On the return from Egypt, notwithstanding Joseph had been warned of God to take the young child and his mother and go into the land of Israel, he through unbelief, fearing Archelaus, turned aside and dwelt in Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, *"He shall be called a Nazarene."* Here not only the wicked persecution by Herod, but also the unbelief of Joseph alike fulfilled the Scriptures.

When the time arrived that Jesus should be betrayed into the hands of wicked men, the betrayer was at hand, not as one who accidently turned up in time of the emergency, but one who had been foretold by prophecy. David had given a pen picture of him hundreds of years before. It had also been said by the Christ that one of the twelve should betray him. Not only as the man marked out by prophecy who should do this, but it had also been foretold how much the traitor should receive for his work; and also what should be finally done with the money. The son of man truly went as it was written of him. He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and when Herod and Pilate and the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together against him, they were gathered to do whatsoever God's hand and God's counsel determined before to be done. (Acts 4:27, 28).

When the Saviour was crucified, he was put to death between two thieves. Thiswas done that the Scripture might be fulfilled which said, He was numbered with the transgressors. Suppose there had been no thieves or transgressors, how then could the Scriptures have been fulfilled? It was the custom to break the legs of those who were put to death by crucifixion, but on this occasion they broke the legs of the thieves, but did not break the legs of Christ. This was done that the Scriptures might befulfilled which said, *"Not a bone of him shall be broken."* This prophecy was fulfilled in its reference to the literal body of Christ, but it still remains in force in its relation to his spiritual body, and must

be fulfilled to the utmost in this also. So this prophecy warrants the eternal security of all the redeemed family, for we are members of his body and of his flesh and of his bones; so not a bone of him shall indeed be broken. Instead of breaking his legs according to the custom and the request of the Jews, they pierced his side with a spear. This was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled. ***"They shall look upon him whom they pierced."*** When in his last agony he said, ***"I thirst,"*** they in their fiendish cruelty, gave him vinegar to drink. This was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled, ***"They gave me vinegar to drink."*** And after all, when they came to dispose of his raiment, they gambled for that, in order to fulfill the Scripture, ***"They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture did they cast lots."*** In the most exact way, the Scriptures were fulfilled in the life and death of Christ, so that it may well be said, He died for our sins according to the Scriptures.

Men are saved to fulfill the Scriptures. ***"Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion,"*** is a prophecy that must be fulfilled; but for it to be fulfilled, the redeemed of the Lord must return and come to Zion. This prophecy cannot be satisfied as long as one for whom Christ died, is away from Zion. ***"All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me,"*** saith the Son. The righteousness, wisdom, power and grace of God are all engaged to fulfill these words, therefore there is no power or contingency that can ever interfere with the timely and triumphant victory of all the election of grace over every enemy. On the day of Pentecost, when that great number of people cried out, ***"Men and brethren what shall we do?"*** was exemplified in the fulfillment of prophecy. A great number of these men were Jews, those who only a few days before had crucified the Son of God with wicked hands: they had spit upon him, had called him Beelzebub, the prince of devils; and to express their resolution never to repent, they said, ***"Let his blood be upon us and our children."*** But their obduracy could not hold out - God's prophecy must be fulfilled. The redeemed of the Lord must return and come to Zion. When Abel offered unto the Lord a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, this prophecy lay at the root of the matter. In the days of Seth, when men began to call upon the name of the Lord, the words of the prophet, ***"Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion,"*** was being fulfilled In them. One might say that this prophecy had not been written in the days of Seth. It had not been written upon parchment, but it had been written in the book of God's decrees, and experienced in the hearts and consciences of men. All the prophesies of Jehovah are from eternity, and are yea and amen in Christ. Every poor pilgrim, whose anxious heart and weary footsteps seek that city whose builder and maker is God, is upheld, forwarded and guided on his journey by the immutable decree that the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion; and through the

certain fulfillment of God's word, he shall reach the holy city and rest forever in her sacred palaces.

Men are lost to fulfill the Scriptures. Is this a hard saying? Can you not hear it? I am not responsible for the saying, however hard it may appear to be. The Saviour said to the Father in speaking of the twelve, *"All of them have I kept, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled."(John 16:12)* Had Judas not been lost, the Scriptures would have been broken. The thoughtless and presumptuous man would say, If Judas had to do what he did, he would have been exempt from crime; he would have had no sin. Upon what ground would he have been without sin? What law would exempt him? According to whose judgment would he be innocent? State the law and name the judge, and if it be the law of God and God himself be the judge, then I will agree that the conclusion is the correct one. Jesus, who is himself is the embodiment of all law, and the judge both of the living and dead, said with regard to this matter in reply to Pilate, *"Thou couldst have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin."* Instead of the judgment of Christ in this matter concurring with the judgment of men, that undersuch circumstances of a man would be without sin, he declared that for this very reason, he had the greater sin. Here is a question of responsibility for some of the champions of that cause to settle.

And here is another one: Christ said to the Jews, *"Behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city, that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of righteous Zacharias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar." (Matthew 23:34, 35)* The Saviour here declares that these men should fill up the measures of their fathers. He also designates the crimes that they should commit in order to do this, not only generic crime but specific crimes; and the end to be answered thereby was that upon them might come all the righteous blood that had been shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel to the blood of their most recent victim.

Now upon what principle of justice and judgment could four-thousand years of crime be required at the hand of one generation? Let some of the champions of free agency solve this problem from their favorite standpoint of accountability. I have been accused of denying human responsibility, but in this as in many other things, I have been willfully misrepresented. I have only denied that the atonement of Christ left any responsibility upon his people: and further, I have denied the foolish, imaginary, sentimental and ungrounded conclusion that predestination relieves men of accountability and acquits them of crime upon

principles of equity and justice, and that therefore in order to be accountable, a man must be what men are pleased to call a free agent. I have here referred to these things to show that in the fulfillment of God's decrees according to his word, a deeper principle of justice is involved, than human standards set forth, or human pleaders comprehended.

Again it is said of some in the divine record, that they were before of old ordained to this condemnation. Now if they were before of old ordained to condemnation, when the condemnation came, did it not come in fulfillment of a decree? Who made the decree? Some would say that God made it, but he made it upon conditions. This they think necessary in order that the character of God stand above reproach in the judgment of men . They admit that the decree of election unto life is unconditional, but that the ordination of condemnation is conditional, and that the subjects of this decree are endowed with a free agency whereby they are permitted to work out their condemnation. This notion involves a monstrous absurdity, and that absurdity is this, That God has denied to man the freedom and ability to righteousness whereby we must be saved, but that he has endowed man with that freedom and ability whereby he may and can work out a sure and foreknown condemnation. And this is resorted to in the vain imagination that the character of God is thus vindicated from the charge of unrighteousness, and be justified in his ways to man. Peter in speaking of certain ones, says they were appointed to disobedience and stumbling. (I Peter 2:8) Now if they were appointed to disobedience, must they not fulfill the appointment? This they must do, even though God sends them strong delusions to accomplish it. (2 Thess. 2:11)

Many are ready to exclaim now, If this be true, who is to be blamed? This is an old question, and I will give an old and authoritative answer. I will first state the question in its ancient form: ***"Thou wilt say unto me then, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?"*** Reader, do you recognize your question? If you have never seen it before, if you will read the ninth chapter of Romans, you will find it. I will now give the ancient, time honored answer: ***"Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?"*** Do you recognize the answer? If not, read the ninth chapter of Romans and you will find it. This is not your question; this is not a question of this age only. This question was asked two thousand years ago. Neither is this my answer. This is God's answer, and I am satisfied with it. This question comprehends everything that the cavilers of all ages have urged against the doctrine of God's sovereign decrees. Is not the answer of inspiration plain and decisive? If the solution of this problem is to be found in exceptions to God's decrees, and in making ex-

cuses for him, would he not have put a very different answer in the mouth of his inspired apostle? Is not this the place above all places for such an excuse to be given? Is not this question sprung here for the express purpose of giving a decisive and unequivocal answer? Is not such an answer given? Shall we receive it as final and decisive, as coming from God himself, or shall we seek another, which, although necessarily false, is more pleasing to our pride and presumption, and more acceptable to ignorance and unbelief?

The unbelief of the Jews fulfilled the Scriptures. It is recorded by John that, although he had done many miracles, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias, the prophet, might be fulfilled: ***"Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, that I might heal them." (John 12:37-40)*** Here it is expressly stated that the reason they could not believe, was that Esaias had foretold their blindness and hardness, and further that this blindness and hardness of heart was given from God. The object of this blindness and hardening was to prevent them from being converted that he might heal them. This language seems to imply that there might have been a possibility of their believing and being converted, had not God's decree intercepted and cut them off.

Heaven and earth shall pass away, said Christ, but my word shall not pass away until all be fulfilled. Whatever the divine record says shall be, must be. The same authority that says, The redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion, has also said, The wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand. The same book that says, ***"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me,"*** has also said, ***"Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse."*** The same God that opened Lydia's heart, that she attended to the things spoken by Paul, hardened Pharaoh's heart that he would not let the people go. The same God that works in his people both to will and to do of his good pleasure, has also put it in the hearts of wicked rulers to fulfill his will, and to agree and give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God be fulfilled. (Rev. 17:17)

When Paul was arraigned by the Jews for preaching what was to them an obnoxious and destructive doctrine, his defense was that he had preached nothing but what Moses and the prophets said should come. If I am censured for what I have herein written, I have but one defense to make, and that is, I have only written what Moses and the prophets and Christ and the apostles have said should be.

(The above is copied from the Signs of January 15, 1900. We feel that the subject is presented clearly and is worth the close attention of our readers. - Editors.

1 CORINTHIANS 2:7-11.

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained be-fore the world unto our glory:

Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

But God hath revealed them unto by his Spirit: for the Spirit searth-eth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will meet at Dan River Church, the Lord willing, the 5th Sunday in November. Song service will begin at 10 a.m. and preaching at 10:30. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. We especially appreciate any ministers of our faith and order who have a mind to meet with us. Pleasantville Church will be host.

Elder Haywood Wray, Moderator
Sister Rachel Wray, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 1997

Mrs. Alpha Ramsey, VA	$7.00
Mrs. Hazel Branche, VA	5.00
Mrs. Kenneth Evans, AL	2.00
Mr. & Mrs. Al Krewatch, DE	30.00
Mrs. James Meadow, VA	2.00
Mrs. Mae Hudson, VA	5.00
James O. Whaliag, OH	2.00
Mrs. Betty Southard, NC	2.00
Mrs. Sylvia Conner, VA	2.00
Mrs. Caroline Martin, WA	7.00
Mrs. Anita Hash, VA	2.00
Eld. W.H. Terry, VA	2.00
A Friend, WY	50.00
Mrs. Jean Moran, NC	7.00
W.C. Lake, FL	2.00
Mrs. Amy Heppler, AZ	12.00
Troy Shepard, NC	7.00
Floyd Oakley, AR	2.00
Mrs. James Burgin, TX	2.00
Jerry P. Cockman, NC	15.00

OBITUARIES

OBITUARY FOR SISTER VELIA STEWART

We at Oak Grove Church bow our heads in humble submission to our LORD as He has seen fit to take from our midst our dearly beloved sister Harvelia (Velia) Regions Stewart. She was in the nursing home in Winnfield, LA for a long time due to her health, but she came to church as often as she could. We believe she is happy now, even though it is loss for us it is gain for her.

Sister Velia was born September 23, 1901 and she passed from this life October 17,1997. She was married to Vardell Stewart November 15,1921 and lived with him happily until his death 1988. Of this union God gave them one son Loyd (Pete) Stewart, two daughters, Rebecca Stewart Ruller and Ardell Stewart Takewell.

Sister Velia united with Oak Grove church May 15,1946 and was received by her experience for baptism. She was certainly a mother to the church as through the years she was a great comfort to the new comers into the church. She well understood their trials troubles and tribulations as they walked through their journey here. She was church clerk for many years and looking through the age worn pages of church records one can well see that she was the best clerk that Oak Grove church ever had. She was faithful to the end.She fought a good fight. Sister Velia was survived by one son Loyd Stewart of Goldona, LA. two daughters, Mrs.Ardell Stewart Takewell of Bently LA, Mrs Rebecca Stewart Fuller of Tioga LA, 12 Grandchildren, 28 Great Grandchildren and 22 Great Great Grandchildren. Services for Sister Veila was conducted at Oak Grove church by Rlder David Godwin 2:PM Oct. 19, 1997. She was laid to rest beside her late husband in the Weaver cemetery, Chestnut LA to await the coming of her LORD.

Elder David Godwin, Mod.
Kate Mathews, Clerk

IN MEMORY OF SISTER VIRGINIA SPENCER ZIEGLAR

She was born July 24, 1914, and departed this life July 18, 1997. She was the daughter of the late Joe Ben and Minnie Ingram Spencer.

She was preceeded in death by her husband Henry Zieglar and also an infant daughter. Also a Sister Dorella Nester, half sisters Mae and Faye Snider, brothers Carl and Cecil Spencer, and half brothers Raymond and Akers Shough. She is survived by one brother Leo Spencer of Martinville, Va. two half sisters Rita Martin of High Point, N. C., Rada Durham of Bassett, Va., and a half brother James C. Shough of Patrick Springs, Va.

She was a member of Liberty Primitive Baptist Church for 36 years. She often spoke of how she loved her Church. Due to sickness and deaths she didn't attend Church regular for the past few years.

Her funeral was held at Howell's Funeral Home in Stuart, Va. On July 21, 1997, by Elder John Wingfield and Elder Bernice Joyce. Interment was at the Spencer Shough Cemetery, near her home.

Done by order of Liberty Church in conference on September 6, 1997. By Sister's in Hope, Clara Freeman and Iris Puckett.

Eld. John T. Wingfield, Mod.
Deacon Paul A. Puckett, Cle

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Signs of the Times

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1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

GOD moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
He rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

Cowper

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EDITORIAL

God's promise to the children of Israel in Jeremiah's day.

The heritage that was laid up for them for some future day.

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

Behold, I will gather them out of all the countries whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in my great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely: And they shall be my people, and I will be their God: And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good: but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they will not depart from me. "

These are the words of God by the mouth of Jeremiah the prophet concerning the salvation of the children of Israel, at some time in the future. They would be a dispersed and forsaken people who had been led astray by their pastors, deceived by them and made to wander in the deserts for many generations.They would be lost and scattered by the very ones who were supposed to be leading them, and who were feeding on the sheep instead of feeding the sheep. Sheep are the most defenseless animal that there is and must depend upon someone or something else to care for them. This is the reason, probably that the writers use this descriptive term for them.This is the feeling of all who have been given to experience the majesty and the grandeur of the kingdom of heaven. They are made to realize that they can do nothing, of themselves, to provide for their needs, seeing that they are weak and undone, in the flesh, and can only stand still and experience this great salvation. They are lost and do not know where to turn, all they see around them are the things of the world and these things have lost their appeal to them as they now see a much higher calling and desire to know more and more about it.

The news, that the God of heaven and earth had promised to provide for them and to return them to the safety of the fold and cause them to dwell in peace and feed on the provisions that have been supplied for them, was joyful news indeed. Every time previously that the Lord had delivered them from their enemies they had wandered off after the gods of this world and the traditions of the nations in which they dwelled and became separated from the Lord their God who had sustained them. This is why that, in this day the saints of God cannot join in with the rest of the world who walk in their own strength and provide their own food, they realize their weakness and the temptations which they are so subject to. There is no common ground on which they can come together and dwell in peace and harmony because their ways are so different and their faith is so weak. When God delivered the children of Israel into the hands of their enemies, or delivered their enemies into their hands, the first thing that he would tell them was that they were not to mix with the other people among whom they dwell, in their worship, or in marriages, because this would be a snare unto them and they would go into idolatry and forsake the ways of their fathers. This was the condition of Israel when Jeremiah wrote these words, and why these promises were such good news to them, because they had never been able to keep these commandments themselves and knew what their end would be if they were left to their own devices. Their cry would be as the *apostle Paul's, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death".*

God's promise to Israel was that he would cause them to dwell securely in their own land, that they would be His people and He would be their God. He would give them one heart, and one way, that they should fear Him forever. This is the heritage of the children of God and He has promised that it would never cease to be true. When one is made aware of this glorious truth they are made to know that it is theirs, they cannot explain why this is true, it just is, in the very depths of their heart and soul. They realize that they are not worthy of these blessings but they claim the promises as their own and rejoice as the children of Israel did when delivered from their enemies. The saints today realize that their enemy is their own fleshly nature and the vanity and pride that they were created subject to. They don't have to look elsewhere for the source of their sin, they are made aware of its presence in their life when the spirit comes into their heart, and they bemoan their sinful and undone condition. Surely this is the cross that the children of God must bear as Jesus told them in his day. The first change that they realize is that they were sinful creatures seeking only the things that were pleasing to the flesh and now for the first time are aware of what they should be before a just and holy God, and how far short of this their best efforts come. They are still sinful creatures but they are running from sin and the fleshly pleasures of the world, be-

cause they are vanity and foolishness to them.

They realize that, if not for the revelation of these things to them, they would have continued all of their days running after the things of the world and would have never known of the existance of this spiritual realm which is all around them. They stand in awe of the wonder and grandeur of the kingdom of God and thank him for the blessing of revealing these things to them. They pray that he will lead them in the paths of his righteousnes because they have none of their own nor are they able to attain to that state in and of themselves.

Although they cannot perform these things, in spite of the desire to do so, these promises that they claim causes them to walk joyfully with their brethren and they pray that it will ever be this way with them. They realize as they journey in this low ground of sin that they must still live in the flesh and that this is where their problems lie. They will go the rest of their life following in the footsteps of the flock, rejoicing in their blessings and knowing that if they are indeed in the fold that all of the forces on earth, principalities, powers or anything else cannot separate them from their glorious heritage or cause them to fall from the gracious estate into which they have been placed. They realize that the sovereignty and power of God is above anything that this world possesses and that it will stand forever, it began before time and will last after time ceases according to His word.

The Lord has promised to put his fear in their heart and they shall not depart from him. He will rejoice over them for good and will plant them in his land assuredly with his whole heart and with his whole soul. There is no place or position that is more safe and secure than this fold where the sheep are gathered. This is where the porter opens the door and the shepherd calls unto his sheep and they follow him. They know his voice and will follow no other. Is this not the way it is with the sheep today. There are pastors all around calling, Lo here and Lo there, follow us and learn the way of salvation but it does not deceive one that is in the safety of the fold. The false pastors cannot enter there, or deceive the sheep because greater is he that is within them, the sheep,than he that is in the world. The fear that is in their heart is from their own weakness and the thought that they might bring reproach upon the name of their God and the household of faith.

The prayer of all the saints of God is that this is their dwelling place. The work was all done before they were aware of it and they were indeed given a new heart and began to walk in a new direction and the desire of the heart now is that they shall receive more and more evidence that this truly is their heritage. If this is your experience, then you are the one of the ones that Jeremiah was writing about, thousands of years ago, and all of the promises are yours. David said, "*The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places, yea I have a goodly heritage.*" This has been the testimony, in

all ages, as one is brought to the knowledge of the truth, and made to feel that these things are theirs although, there is no apparent justification for such a claim.

As the newborn soul searches the scriptures and reads the scriptures where Jesus says, *"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven and again, That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit"*, they realize that this is what has happened to them. They had lived all of their lives in the flesh and running after the things of the world, and then just as they were born in nature in the flesh, they have now been born again into the spiritual kingdom. As their lives consisted of the things of the world before, they now run after the things of the spirit, as they had desired the natural food that they might live naturally, they now desire spiritual food that they may live the life of the children of God. As they have been nourished by the sincere milk of the word, they desire the strong meat of the doctrine, that they may grow thereby and have their senses excercised to discern both good and evil, that they may choose the good and avoid, by the grace of God, the evil in the world.

The heritage of the saints of God is the most precious possession that they have in this world and it is to make manifest that he who has promised is still here to fulfill that promise. The evidence is, to all of the household of faith, that it is a gift from God to those who were chosen in Christ from the foundation of the world. The evidence is placed in the heart of the individual and it will cause them to stand all trials that they shall face. The Apostle Paul was the only one who experienced the appearing of Jesus to him, on the road to Damascus, although there were many other present at the time. This is the answer to the question which was asked of Jesus, by Judas, (not Iscariot) *"Lord how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world"*. The answer is by revelation, and that is always the work of God by his grace. No works or effort on the part of the creature is involved in this matter, either before or after the change.

May God bless these words to your comfort, and may they bear witness with your experience, and if they do, you can rest assured ,that yours is the journey of the redeemed on that highway which is called the way of holiness where none but the cleansed can walk. This indeed is the heritage of the saints of God and all who experienced these things in their journey of life are assured of inheriting the heavenly home prepared for those who love God.

In bonds of love
Richard H. Campbell

ROMANS 14: 11-12.

For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

VOICES OF THE PAST

Raleigh, North Carolina.

BELOVED IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD: – You are all pursuing that path that leads to eternal glory. It is a path which none know but the ransomed of the Lord, and they only walk therein by faith, and not by sight. That faith which worketh by love, and which is of the operation of God, clings to, rests upon and walks in the new and living way which Jesus has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. The obedience and atoning blood of the Lamb is the glorious highway through this wilderness to the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. I, saith Jesus, am the way. As I contemplate the life of the righteous, and muse upon their blissful and eternal inheritance of glory with Christ, the Head of the church, I find longings flowing forth from my soul, and I join with one of old, saying, ***"Remember me, O Lord, with the favors that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation; that I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance."*** I gladly admit that our God grants me seasons when I sing with gladness of heart for Jacob. ***"For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he."*** But oh, at other times I am so beset with enemies, so tossed with internal conflicts, and my sins as a very plague seem to isolate me from the commonwealth of Israel. I am as one thrust forth from thy tents, O happy Israel! The fretting leprosy of mine iniquities causes me to wander as an outcast from the holy people. Ah! well I know my uncleanness unfits me to associate with the clean. I feel my presence would defile the tents of the beloved nation. Therefore when any of the family of God would draw nigh to recognize and to embrace me as a brother, I inwardly cry outward to forbid their drawing nigh. I am unclean, unclean; I am not fit to be taken into fellowship and companionship with the ransomed of the Lord. And when, notwithstanding my inward protestations, tokens of fellowship have been bestowed upon me by God's dear children, this so humbles me, I feel so contemptibly mean, so vile, so unworthy of their esteem, that I have gone before now in secret to sigh and to weep. I need thy precious blood, O Lamb of God, to cleanse my guilt away. ***"If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean."*** The blood of thine atonement apply to my diseased soul. Oh give me the evidences that thou did die for me, and then I shall be clean in thy sight. ***"Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."*** This shall raise me up from the dust to rejoice in thy salvation. ***"He sent his word and healed them."*** This is what I need; not the bare theory of the doctrine, with its proof texts set in array in my natural understanding, but the glorious truth sent by the Lord's gracious power, in the Holy Ghost,

and in much assurance. When the Lord sends the word it prospers in the thing whereunto he sends it. This I know, for then his speech distils as the dew upon my soul, and I am refreshed. His doctrine sent to my heart calms all the tumults that my sins and the devil create, and I have peace through the blood of Emmanuel's cross. Sometimes I am as one famishing, and I pine away for want of the fruits of the field. My soul craveth Jehovah's sweet mercy, I yearn again to taste his pardoning love, but the Bible cannot afford it, the letter of the Scriptures cannot bestow it. I have no power to suck honey out of them. Those who can go to the Scriptures and always get what they need, and can close the book well satisfied with what they have got, are altogether different from poor, sinful, helpless me.

I can no more help myself to food out of the Holy Scriptures than a very babe could feed itself at a well laden table spread with all manner of sweet tasting and nourishing food. I well know that the concentration of the natural study yields no sustenance to the quickened soul. By our natural powers we may acquire a natural knowledge that the Bible teaches the doctrine of predesination, election, salvation by grace, etc., and by the application of the natural mind to these subjects in the perusal of the Bible a person may be well versed, as the saying is, and be able to prove his points, to preach the doctrine in the letter. He may be quite competent to debate with the opponents of the doctrine, and secretly, if not openly, pride himself in this line. But what of it all? It may all be, and that man's soul be utterly destitute of the grace of God that bringeth salvation. I have been harrassed with thoughts that I was just such an one, that all I know is the result of natural study of the Scriptures, and fears have invaded my heart that after all I know nothing of the anointing of the Holy Spirit. I have been brought low and with great searchings of heart I have fallen at the feet of the Lord so troubled, so weakened, so dismayed at the thought that the secret of the Lord was not with me. Perhaps some one who is fully six feet tall according to his own measurement, may hold one like me in very contempt, and think one like me by this time should be a man, and no more a child. Well, perhaps there are times when I am a man, strong indeed in Christ Jesus. I grow up by faith, by the abundant ministrations of the Spirit of Truth into Jesus Christ in all things. I am strong then in our Redeemer, and the arms of my hands are made strong indeed in Christ by the mighty God of Jacob. Then I can vanquish the foe, and tread down my enemies as the mire of the streets, but my triumphing, and all the exploits are altogether by faith, which is the fruit of the Spirit, in the love, and mercy, and faithfulness of God, in the blood and righteousness of God, in the blood and righteousness of Jesus. These are rare times, when I can in truth experimentally triumph and glory in Christ Jesus. But, I am as a sickly babe sometimes, so weak, defenseless, I feel as it were to be dying for the need of some one

to care for me, feed me and clothe me, and that one, that only One that can do these things unto me is the glorious everlasting God. *"As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you."* Sickly and faint and ready to die in the filth of my own heart, the Lord in his tender pity has placed me in the arms of Zion, she has borne me upon her sides and carried me in her bosom. I have been dandled upon her knees, and she has drawn out the breasts of her consolations to me, there I have suckled, and have been satisfied with the abundance of her glory. They have breasts in some places that they call "conditional time salvation," but from the description that some of them give of them I am fully satisfied they are not the breasts of the free woman, but the breasts of Hagar the bond woman. However the children of the bond woman may thrive upon Hagar's breasts, Isaac will do well by being suckled at the breasts of the everlasting covenant of grace, even the sure mercies of David. Those who want to suck at the breasts of *"conditional happiness,"* of conditional time salvation, can do so, and they are welcome to all the happiness that they derive therefrom. There is a vast amount of fleshly religious happiness in the world that is of no kin to the joy of the Lord. People may perform their supposed duties, and render their supposed obedience unto God, and compass themselves about with their sparks, and walk in the light of their fire, and in the sparks that they have kindled, but I rather walk in the dark with God than walk in their light. (Isaiah 1. 10,11.) I am pained to think that such teachings are being taught among our people, teachings wherein the precepts of the law of liberty are mingled and confounded with the precepts of the covenant that gendereth to bondage. The obedience of faith, and commandments of Christ's gospel, are handled in such a way that the joyous, captivating sound of them cannot be heard as they come forth from the lips of conditionalists. Their sweetness, freshness and beauty are departed, and grace, the grace of God, cannot be discerned in the obedience required, and the gracious and almighty operations of the Holy Ghost exercising the hearts of the elect to the obedience of faith are altogether in the background, in the doctrines that are being promulgated in this distasteful phraseology, conditional time salvation. True gospel obedience flows from the constraining love of Christ. A part from the love of God in the soul there is no obedience in the gospel. *"If ye love me, keep my commandments."* The Lord delights in that which his Spirit inspires. In order to the true worship of God we need the ministrations of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, to revive our faith, and hope, and love, praises and supplications, then obedience to the Lord will be the fruit. *"I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart."* – Psalms cxix. 32. Oh, what are all the best services that we have ever rendered unto the God of our salvation? To this day I have to say to Jehovah's sovereign grace I owe above what the

fiends have in hell. I desire from my very soul to walk holily just and unblameably before the Lord and his people, but I have not attained unto this. I see very plainly that vanity is stamped upon all that I engage in, the vileness of my flesh is so manifest to me, it intrudes itself, mixes itself with and defiles all that I put my hands unto. That others may not be so beset with sinfulness so polluted I allow, for I see it is only by a miracle of grace that I can be saved, and grace is the only fountain that yields supplies to one like me. I can with all my heart join with Hart, who sings,

"Jesus gives us pure affections,
Wills to do what he requires,
Makes us follow his directions,
And what he requires, inspires.

All our prayers, and all our praises,
Rightly offered in his name,
He that dictates them is Jesus,
He that answers is the same."

"Love is the fulfilling of the law." Thus that dear child of God, that invalid, that deaf and dumb paralytic, when by the sweet communion of the Holy Ghost is instructed and comforted, and filled with love to the Redeemer, is as much obedient unto Christ as any of the ransomed family. That strength and grace by which the believer walks in the commandments of the Lord our Redeemer, is not an ability that we have inherent in us as subjects of the new birth, which it is in our power according to our will to put into exercise, and thus, apart from walk obediently, it is the obedience of faith, and this comprehends that God's grace is made to abound unto us, and this is our sufficiency. (2 Cor. ix. 8) I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Thus the apostle, knowing that believers have no stored up, inherent ability, in themselves, to do the will of their God, says, *"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."* – Heb. xiii. 20, 21. Though I am, I hope, a subject of Jehovah's grace, and born of the Spirit, and if so even such an one, yet with me there are many times when I have no strength, I am as it were dead, I have not the power to put forth a sigh, or groan; to cry, to pray to God seems impossible. I am so hardened, so frozen up, so stiffened and numbed by the deceitfulness of my sins, and an evil heart of unbelief, that I find it beyond my power to think a thought. Ah, I know by humbling experiences that apart from the unremitting ministry of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, I have no might to worship God. Those who can always sigh over their sins, and pray unto the Lord for his pardoning love, those who can praise God any hour of the day they appoint to do so, are not like me. But I have proved that our God is very pitiful, and his

longsuffering with such a miserable, unprofitable worm as I am is a wonder of wonders. *"He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength."* He visits my soul in his love, he chastens me with his rod, he shows me when I am smarting under his reproofs, that mine iniquities have exceeded all his chastenings. (Job xxxvi. 9.) He maketh my heart soft, he gives under this discipline a humble and contrite heart, he smiles with pardoning grace upon me, he speaks kind promises to my soul, he gives me glimpses of the riches of his grace, displayed in the works and merits of Jesus our covenant Head. Oh, then I sigh, then I weep, then I pray, then I praise, then I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

"I can do nothing without thee,
My strength is wholly thine;
Withered and barren should I be
If severed from the vine."

I find, dear children of God, that I have to be learning over and over again that *"Christ is all, and in all."* – Col. iii. 11. Oh, that name Jesus, Savior, is so sweet! In him are such transcendent excellencies, and so suitable to a needy sinner like me that at every view that is given me by the Spirit of truth I fall deeper and deeper in love with our altogether lovely Savior. And when his love is shed abroad in my heart I find myself saying within me, He loveth me still, he loveth even me, and what proof of his love I see in his fulfilling all the gracious relations that he sustains unto his people, as the loving Kinsman, our Brother, our tender, faithful Husband, our Almighty Friend and Redeemer. When the Holy Spirit, who takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto the elect, shows them unto me, how can I help loving him and praising and adoring the King in his beauty? Ah, then it is that I would not in word only, but in deed and in truth love him who hath loved me with an everlasting love.

"Love moved him to die, on this I rely;
My Savior hath loved me, I cannot tell why;
But this I can tell, he loved me so well,
As to lay down his life, to redeem me from hell."

Frederick W. Keene

ROMANS V. 3-5.

Agreeable to a desire of sister Peck, we offer a few remarks in regard to the working of tribulation, &c., in harmony with all other things, for the special good of God's people, and the glory own great name. The inquiry is made, *"How does tribulation work patience, and patience experience, and experience hope that maketh not ashamed?"* In reply, suffer us to ask, What could christians know about the grace or the action of patience, if we had not trials or tribulation? Suppose that we were placed in circumstances of perpetual

joy and ease, we should know something of gratification, but in that condition we could never become acquainted with patience. Nothing short of tribulation can call forth into exercise the principle and grace of patience, and it is on that account the apostle says, ***"Tribulation worketh patience,"*** and in the same connection, of one of the graces of the Spirit working in harmony with all the other graces, that ***"patience worketh experience."*** This was illustrated in the case of poor old Job. The apostle says, ***"You have heard of the patience of Job, and seen the end of the Lord."*** The end, or design of the Lord, in Job's tribulation, was that in the final issue, Job might have occasion to record his experience of the dealing of the Lord with him, throughout that dreadful conflict. ***"I have heard of thee, by the hearings of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee."*** This is the difference between theory and experience. He had heard before, but now he had actual experience. And it is so with us; our patience in tribulation stores our mind with rich experience of the divine goodness. Jeremiah also had tasted the wormwood and the gall, and had, like David, waited patiently for the Lord, and this had given him experience which strengthened his hope. My soul, said he, hath them still in remembrance, therefore, I have hope. Thus his tribulation worked patience, and patience experience, and experience hope. But what kind of a hope would we have if we were destitute of experience? We remember our experience, and all the way the Lord our God has led us, and our hope is revived, and we say with the poet,

"His love in times past, forbids me to think
He'll leave me at last, in trouble to sink;
Each sweet Ebenezer still rising to view,
Confirms his good pleasure to help me quite through."

This hope being well grounded, and supported by actual experience of the loving-kindness of our covenant God, will never fail, or make us ashamed. The makers of idols shall be ashamed, and they shall all go to confusion together. But they that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion. They shall not be ashamed nor confounded, world without end.

Middletown, N.Y.
September 1, 1856.
Elder Gilbert Beebe

PSALM 148: 1-5.

Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise him in the heights.

Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.

Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.

Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens.

Let them praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded, and they were created.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN A PRECIOUS HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE: – I will try in my weak way to relate what I humbly hope has been the Lord's dealings with me.

I was raised in a Missionary Baptist home, and united with them at the age of fifteen. I was a Sunday School teacher and leader of B.Y.P.U. Then I met and married a man whose folks were Primitive Baptists. I would go with my husband to his meetings and he would go with me to mine. I was very well satisfied with my life, as I had nothing to worry about. I visited my husband's parents home with him, and they would sing hymns, and my sister-in-law and I would go out behind the house to try and get out of hearing of them. We said they sounded like funeral songs to us. (Which they were, singing of the death and burial of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.) I often remarked to my sister-in-law that I would rather be dead than to believe such doctrine as they did. I was dead, and did not know it; dead in trespasses and sin. I went this way for a year and did not even care for my own meetings. Then I became worried. I was not satisfied with the Missionaries, and would go with my husband but could not believe what they preached, so I decided to stop going altogether, that there was nothing to any of it but just a form to go through. But I could not be satisfied at home when my husband was at meeting. I would walk and wonder why. I could not go back to the Missionaries and like the meetings, and not be worried all the time. Then one day my father-in-law and family and some of the brethren and sisters passed by our house on their way to meeting, and when I saw them the thought occurred to me that I would like to go with them. I remarked to my mother-in-law that if I had shoes fit to wear I would go with them. She said, Your shoes are good enough, go if you feel like it. So I went with them. That night there was a preacher from another county, brother John Everett. He came forward to preach, and it seemed that he was talking directly to me, condemning me with every word. Suddenly I felt as though something had hold of me, and was tearing my heart out of me, and if I did not get relief I would surely die. I could see hell waiting for me as soon as the breath left my body. I was shaking like a leaf in the wind. One of the sisters saw me and told my husband there was something wrong with me. He started to come toward me, and I thought, When I get in his arms I will die. When he reached me I fell in his arms, but do not remember much of what happened, only that I could not breathe. They put me to bed and called a doctor. I could not tell what was the matter, because I did not know. I was still trembling, and the doctor said I was nervous, and gave me some medicine to quiet me. But he could not quiet my heart. I felt so full of sin I thought all my friends could see it and would turn against me, and I tried to pray the good Lord that I might die, even if hell was my doom, rather than turn all the dear friends against my husband because of me.

Well, I went back home, and thought I was just sick and being punished for not going to my meetings, so I decided that I would go back to the Missionaries. I went to my mother's home and went with them to meeting, and as soon as the preacher began to preach it did not sound right to me, and I wished I had not come. I could not believe what he said, so I went back home more worried than ever. I went on in this way for five years, worried and burdened with a load of sin, trying not to let my husband, his folks or my parents know that I was troubled. I thought that if they knew it I would not have a friend. I went for days and nights trying to pray the good Lord to show me the right way. I tried to read the Bible and it seemed to condemn me and show me that I was lost, condemned to hell and no way of helping myself, and I am still in that condition today: no way of helping myself. If my name was not in that number that Christ died for I am lost, without hope in this world. If I am saved, it is by the grace of God.

But to get back to what I was telling about. In the fall of 1933 my husband's father and mother and their pastor, brother Henry Phillips, were going to a district meeting down in Ruston, Louisiana. The day before they left I felt that I wanted to go with them, so much so that I could hardly stand it for them to go without me, so I said to my husband, Go over and ask if we can go with them. He said, Do you really mean it? Do you want to go? I told him I did. He said, All right, he would go, too. He started over to ask them, and it seemed as though I could not wait for him to get back. I was so afraid they would have too large a load and we could not go. But he came back and said they would be glad to have us, so we all left early the next morning, which was Saturday, and got there in time for meeting that night. They were strangers in the flesh to all of us, but received us with a warm welcome into their homes. But I was worried, and felt that I was an intruder. I felt that I did not have any part with them. The dear people seemed to be enjoying themselves exchanging experiences with each other, drawn together by love. We went to meeting next morning and brother Baker, of that association came forward, followed by brother Phillips. I felt as though brother Phillips was talking directly to me, condemning me for coming down there and trying to have a part with God's children, but before he finished I was shown a little light, as it were through a darkened glass, and when he finished I gave him my hand and asked him to pray for me, if he could pray for such as I was. When we started for home I was riding in the cab of the truck, because I had a little baby. I was silent, troubled, trying to pray that I would be shown the right way, that that little glimpse of light might be opened up for me, and this Scripture was continually going through my mind, If God be for you, who can be against you? I thought, If I knew God was for me I would not worry. My father-in-law asked me what was the matter with me, if I did not enjoy myself. He said, Dear girl, God will bring

you out in his own good time. I wanted to tell him my trouble, but I could not, for I felt I would be troubling him. We stopped for water as the sun was going down, and I asked if I might ride in the back of the truck so my husband could hold the baby and let me rest awhile. As we got in the truck brother Phillips sat down by me and asked me why I went way down in Louisiana to tell him what I did. I asked him why he went way down there to preach what he did. I found myself talking to him, telling him my troubles. He said, I have known for a long time that you were troubled, and we have all suffered for you, because I believe we have every one of us gone through what you are now passing through. While we were talking it seemed as though a bright light, brighter than the sun, came down over me and I could see Jesus before me. Oh so lovely, and it seemed that everything was praising God, and I just had to tell the dear folks who were in our party exactly how I felt. I told them that a great change had come over me and I had to tell them about it. I felt that I wanted to shout the praise of God for every one to hear. They told me to talk all I wanted to, and the tears were streaming down the cheeks of all of them. As I talked some hymns came into my mind and I asked them to sing them, and how sweet those hymns did sound to me; I could not sing enough of them. I could see that light of love, which is Jesus, shining in the faces of those present, and felt that I could say with them, My Redeemer liveth. Brother Phillips said that if I wanted a home with those people they would stop the truck and baptize me at the next water deep enough, that there were plenty of witnesses present, but I did not answer, it did not please the God of mercy for me to come in at the time. I was very happy the rest of the way home, talking and singing with the dear brethren and sisters. I thought my troubles were over, that the dear God of mercy had smiled on such a wretched sinner as I felt myself to be. I went home with my mother-in-law that night, and went to bed feeling that Jesus ws still with me overwhelming me with that unspeakable love, but the next morning when I arose I was burdened with a load of sin and grief. I felt that what I had experienced the night before was only a delusion of the mind, that I had deceived those dear people, and it came to my mind that the wages of sin is death. I felt that death was my portion. Oh how could I face my dear mother-in-law after deceiving her so? I got up to help her with the breakfast, fearing and trembling, afraid she would bring up the day before, but, bless her dear soul, she saw as soon as I appeared that I was troubled and commenced talking about the day's work. I could hardly wait until breakfast was over, for I wanted to get away by myself and cry, for I felt that if I could cry I would get relief. When we called the others to breakfast I thought I would slip out, but my mother-in-law saw me and asked me if I was not going to eat breakfast. I told her I could not eat. They did not insist; I believe they all knew what was the trouble. I went in

the back room and fell across the bed and tried to cry, and pray that my great burden of sin be removed. I could see myself the blackest sinner on earth, not worthy to take God's holy name on my sin-polluted lips. I could not shed one tear, and could only moan, Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner. I stayed in there for a time and knew I had to go home. I thought I would go home and work and forget my sinful self. But when I was at home at work I was so burdened with grief that I felt that if I should die and go to hell it would be a just God that sent me there. How I longed at times for the peace I had when I was a girl, when I thought I was living right. But all the air castles that I was going to heaven on had been knocked from under me and I felt that I was a naked, wounded soul, that nothing but the mercy of God could reach me.

The last of that week the district meeting was at Antioch Church, over in Bradley County, and my husband asked me if I was going. The nearer the time came for the meeting the more I wanted to go, but not feeling fit to be with God's people. I had become perfectly satisfied that the Old School Baptist was the church of God, but I was not fit to be with them. My husband asked me the day before we left if I was going to the district meeting to join the church. I told him I might go, but I was not going to join the church, that I did not have any place with those dear people. We went and at the meeting I could look at the faces of those dear people and see the light of love, which is Jesus Christ, shining upon them. I was made to cry, O God, why did I come over here, a black sheep among God's people? I slipped off by myself every chance I got and tried to pray to God to have mercy on my poor soul, for I was a condemned sinner. I went to meeting Saturday morning desiring a home with those dear people, yet feeling too unworthy to be in their midst. I felt that if I should offer myself I would be rejected, and justly so. As I sat there listening to the preachers so ably setting forth what I believed to be the doctrine of Jesus Christ, this thought went through my mind, If I should join all my people would turn against me, because they were bitterly opposed to this doctrine. By this time they were offering an opportunity to any one desiring a home with them. This Scripture came to me, Forsake father, mother and friends and follow after me. I found myself giving my hand to the preacher, feeling that I was perfectly willing to forsake husband, father and mother if I could only follow after Jesus. I felt that I would be rejected when it was brought before the church, but I was determined to offer myself. When the preacher asked me to talk to the church, it came to my mind, Lord, I commit myself into thine hand. I tried in my weak way to tell what a burden I had been laboring under, and that I felt that when Jesus cried on the cross, It is finished, it was finished, a full and complete redemption for sinners. I do not remember all I did say, but was surprised when I was joyfully received and the dear brethren and sisters came forward, with tears streaming down

their cheeks, to clasp my hand. I felt that my joy knew no bounds. If it could only please the God of love to bring in my dear husband and me. But God has a time for all things, and he was not brought in until one year after I was. As I went down into the liquid grave I felt a great peace descend upon my soul. Oh the blessed peace and calm, not a worry, not a trouble, all love and peace, just as though a great storm had come and torn my soul asunder, and Jesus spake peace to my troubled soul and all was calm. I find today, after two years, that we need the Holy Spirit to calm the troubled waters. When the mighty hand of God is withdrawn and I am left to myself all is trouble, strife, fear and doubts.

Your unworthy sister,
saved by the grace of
God, if saved at all,
Mrs. Velma Lawson

October 25.

"For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings." JOB xxxiv. 21.

THE Christian has to prove that nothing escapes the eye of a just and holy God; that he lays bare every secret thought, searches every hidden purpose, and scrutinizes every desire and every movement of the mind. He thus discovers and brings to light all the secret sins of the heart. Men in general take no notice of heart sins; if they can keep from sins in life, from open acts of immorality, they are satisfied. What passes in the chambers of imagery they neither see nor feel. Not so with the child of grace; he knows the experience described in Psalm cxxxix. He carries about with him the secret conviction that the eye of God reads every thought. Every inward movement of pride and self-righteousness, rebellion, discontent, peevishness, fretfulness, lust, and wantonness, he inwardly feels that the eye of God reads all, marks all, condemns by his righteous law all, and because he is so intrinsically pure, hates and abhors all. Thus he proves, amongst the " all things " which are weighed up and measured in the inward court of conscience by the unerring standard of the word of truth, the light of the Spirit's teaching, and the workings of godly fear, that he is a sinner before God, and that of a deeper dye and more crimson hue than any other transgressor, for he sees and knows his own heart, which nobody else can see or know. He is indeed aware that many may have sinned more deeply and grossly as regards outward acts; but he feels that no one can have sinned inwardly more foully and continually than he; and this makes him say with Job, *" I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear ; but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes "(Job xlii. 5, 6,)*

Elder J.C. Philpot

SERMON BY ELDER D.V. SPANGLER AT THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION AT ROANOKE, VA.

1964

Elder Turner told me this morning that there was an afflicted brother here who has hoped someone would talk on the scripture which is found in the 30th verse of the fifth chapter of Ephesians: ***"We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."*** I am sure this is a wonderful text.

One of the things that stands out in the Scriptures, is that wherever God has brought his church to view, he has presented her as something complete. When he refers to the church of God, he speaks of that church being the bride, the Lamb's wife. And we find also that he tells us how, at some time in the future, he will present that church unto himself a glorious church, not having spot, wrinkle, blemish, or any such thing. When the Lord has brought Zion to view as the church, he presents her as a city set upon a hill, that cannot be hid. When he has spoken of the safety of this city, he has told us that salvation shall be her walls. Not the salvation that men talk about, but the kind that God Almighty appoints, for he said that salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.

When God brings Zion for his people to view, he brings her to view as absolutely complete in him; he brings her to view as being watered by the river of the water of life; and that stream, he tells us, makes glad the city of God. Now if your heart has ever been made glad as you heard the gospel of Christ preached, as you mingled with your brethren, it is evidence that some of the streams have reached you.

"Makes glad the city of God." I like to think about the effectiveness of this stream – that there has never been one too poor but that the stream win reach him. Last night, as we sat on the brother's porch, I talked about people going home to the church, for I feel in my ministry to encourage God's people: if they love His name, to stand up as God blesses them, and be counted with his people. And I saw a tear in a friend's eye; and I said, "My friend, there's room for you in the house." He said, "I'm unworthy." A very acceptable answer, wasn't it?

We want to talk about the text, but we must first get to it. We want to show, the Lord willing, that we are a part of the body of our Saviour. And we are going to show, the Lord willing, that Jesus Christ did not come into the world to make a decision as to a single person going to heaven. Somebody has brought forth such false doctrine that they advance the idea that men are helping other men to go to heaven – to make a decision for Christ. Christ taught that he himself never made the decision while in this world, as to a single person who would be in glory. We find, in her earthly understanding of Christ, that a woman approached Him, and said that she had a request, that she had two sons and she would like for one to sit on his right hand and the other on his left,

when he entered into his kingdom. And Jesus said, ***"Woman, you don't know what you ask; it is not mine to give."*** He didn't come into the world to decide who would go to heaven, but to make it sure to every one that was chosen in him before the world began. He said, ***"It shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father."*** If any man has advanced the idea that Christ went about upon the earth trying to save sinners, making decisions as to who would enter the kingdom, this scripture forever sets it at nought.

But he brings this matter to you and me, for it is said that we are members of his body, of his flesh, of his bones. There is a depth here that I doubt whether any minister has ever reached; there is a depth here wherein our Saviour, (I hope I can say, our), has taken our flesh and our bones. We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. As we look back at the wonderous work of grace, we find that when God created a man of the earth earthy, (and in a sense a type of our Lord Jesus Christ), the woman was in the man, and a part of the man, before she was ever taken from him; and that the law that God gave to Adam, was given him while Eve was yet a part of his body. That is why Adam said, "She is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh." That is why Paul, in his epistle to the Ephesians, said that a man has never hated his own flesh, but he nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the church. ***"This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church."*** In the preceding verses, how wonderfully he said, ***"Husbands love your wives, even as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it."***

There are a few things in my life that have been most humbling to me; one is, that God would love a sinner like I am; another is how brethren could love me. Another humbling thing to the minister is when God's people tell him, ***"You were blessed to preach the gospel to me."*** This never exalts one of God's ministers. Oh, no ! but the devil does sometimes. He will sometimes tell one that he preached a wonderful sermon; but a tear in a person's eye is more humbling than all the Devil has ever said to him.

He took the woman out of his side. The Bible doesn't say his side, but He took a rib, and that is where the side is; and He gave her to him to be a help meet. The side of Jesus Christ was torn when he hanged on Calvary's hill, when darkness covered the earth. The soldier pierced the side of Jesus. Why did he pierce his side? Two reasons: prophecy had said it would be; and the soldier didn't know what he was doing – he knew nothing about the purposes of God. Men today are living out the purposes of God blindly, but I assert that the purposes of God shall stand. If I didn't believe that, I would be afraid to start home this afternoon. Someway, I believe with all my heart that in our journey here, the angels of God have been our protection.

But, I want to talk about the text. ***"You are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."*** Eve received the law through Adam, and

the Ark was the only thing that could weather the storm of the wrath of God, when his wrath for sin was poured out upon the world. The door of the Ark, the Bible says, was in the side. It didn't have two doors; it had one door, — in the side.

When Abraham sent his servant to seek a bride for his son, he caused him to swear that he would not go among strangers, but that he would go among his own kindred. What does it show? that Jesus Christ came into the world to save a people that already belonged to him – that were united with him. And the servant wanted a sign; and he said, *"When I reach a certain well, have somebody there to draw water for the camels."* And we find a willing Rebekah there. She even ran to meet him; and said, *"Drink my Lord."* And when the question arose, when the servant had told his business, *"Will you go with this man?,"* her parents said leave her a little while, and then she can go. But they left the answer with Rebekah; and she said, *"I will go."* I like a doctrine that brings about in the heart a willingness to do the will of God; that not only brings about a willingness, but makes every particle of His service a delight.

"You are flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bones." We find in the wonderful works of grace that God Almighty has brought home to his people throughout the ages, two things clearly brought to view; One is, that he has saved them because he had an everlasting love for them; and the other is, that they are unworthy of everything that God has done for them.

I remember that when David went out to fight the battle for his brethren, he was just a lad; and his brethren rebuked him, saying that the naughtiness of his heart had brought him down to see the battle. Here is a giant! if we can't overthrow him, we know you can't: Goliath, the giant of the Philistines. David was of the bone and the flesh of his brethren, wasn't he? And David said, *"Is there not a cause?"* Yet they did not believe in him until he manifested to them his power to fight the battle. And that is when every sinner believes in Jesus Christ. David's brethren would scorn him, but he said that he would fight the battle; he would meet the giant; but he would not take the armor of Saul, for he had not proved it. David went forth saying unto Goliath, *"I come to thee in the name of the Lord."*

They were David's brethren, and nothing they could say would ever change his love for them; no rebuke from them would change him. Neither will anything, my friends, ever change the love of God for you; for Paul said, *"I am persuaded that neither death nor life, things present or things to come, principalities or powers, etc., nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

"Flesh of his flesh; bone of his bone." Let's find out more. Joseph was a beautiful type of Jesus Christ. We find him hated by his brethren– hated because he had a dream. Did the devil give him the dream? Oh, no!

But it caused his brethren to hate him. God gave him a dream in which he saw his brethren bowing down to him. One of the things that Elder Helms spoke so clearly in his Introductory was that all things worked together for good to them that love God. The hatred and malice of Joseph's brethren would have done away with their brother; but it couldn't be. They put him in a pit; and but for the grace of God they would have left him there to die. But he had a brother to speak for him. The Midianite merchantmen come by, and he was sold for twenty pieces of silver. God took care of the situation. Sometimes in my mind I have seen that boy being led off, with his brethren watching, no doubt glad to get rid of him, thinking it was the last time they would see him. But then we find that there came a time when it was God's time to bring them to him – through famine and hunger, which God alone could bring and control. Someway I believe that every drop of water that falls on the earth, God sends it; - every famine that comes, God sends it.

And, finally, I like to think of Joseph when he couldn't refrain any longer. He knew his brethren all the time: he knew them because they were flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone. They were a part of him. *"Come near me; I am your brother."*

Has the Lord ever drawn you near him? Have you ever felt the encircling arms of Christ? I remember what dear Elder Gilliam said, when he was at the point of death for days: *"I felt those arms under me."*

I'm your brother – you thought evil – God meant it for good.

Now to reach our case He came all the way to where we were. Our Saviour must take our flesh, since, as the Scriptures say, the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he himself likewise took part of the same, that he might destroy the works of the Devil. How must the Lord Jesus Christ come into the world? He must be found under the law. Paul tells us in Galatians so clearly, that when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law. He took our flesh and blood as the Son of man, taking it in union with him as the Son of God -- our very flesh and blood. *"God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law to redeem them that were under the law."*

I like to think also that it is said that he took not the nature of angels; for an angel could never reach our case. But he took on him the seed of Abraham – our flesh and our blood; and we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones; and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in their likeness, he humbled himself. Men did not humble our Saviour – he humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross. Why? because from all eternity his people had a standing in him: they were chosen in him, and their life was in him before Adam fell. They fell in Adam, but they were safe all the time. To reach his bride, Jesus could not come as an angel, but must come as the Son of man. We are glad that he spoke so many times of

himself as the Son of man – more than he spoke of himself as the Son of God.

I like to think of the expression of the Apostle that there is one Mediator between God and man. Talk about the Pope, talk about the Priests of the land being mediators between God and man, there has never been a greater lie preached under heaven than that. To believe that, you would have to burn your Bibles; to believe that doctrine, you would have to preach that Jesus Christ didn't come to save a people who were already his; and to take in union with himself the flesh and blood and bones of his people.

There is one Mediator! None of these preachers here are mediators between God and man; there's never been but one. Who is he? the man Christ Jesus. The one of whose body we are members. Think of it, my friends ! People of God members of the body of Christ ! the mystical body of Christ, of his flesh and of his bones. We never know the full force of salvation until we have known something of how low our Saviour came: If we only know of his humiliation, and not of his glory, it won't do us any good. I cannot speak of his glory, and know the wonderful love he had for us, unless I see his humiliation.

I went for years wondering what it means when it is said in the 8th chapter of Acts, ***"In his humiliation his judgment was taken away; and who shall declare his generation, for his life is taken from the earth."*** Then I saw it one day. I saw that God left his Son hanging in the body that He had prepared – the only body that would satisfy as a sacrifice. He left him hanging there, and turned his face away; and Jesus cried out and said, ***"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"*** If we are his people, every one of us was hanging there – represented in him. To be a complete sacrifice, he must be left to die.

Have you felt my friends, that He died for you? What a wonderful thing! ***"Gave himself,"*** Paul said, ***"for me."*** I like to think of Him who took our flesh and blood in union with himself, when he was held up before the people of old: I like to think that every time the high priest went with the names of the tribes of Israel on his heart – with their names on his shoulder, he showed that the people of God were represented in him. I think of the high priest going once a year into the most holy place, making atonement for himself and the people, that he couldn't put away sin; but I think of one who went into the most holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. The high priest couldn't feel the groans of his people: he hadn't experienced them. But, my brethren, today we have an high priest who can be touched. We have one who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was tempted in all points. I like to think that when Stephen was dying, he said, ***"I see Jesus standing on the right hand of God."*** Standing, waiting to pour out his wrath upon the people.

What a blessing to have a great high priest in heaven, who is brought near as our brother, our very brother. We read that he who sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified are all of one; for

which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. These are my brethren; Who? He that doeth the will of my Father, the same is my mother, my brother, my sister. He is not ashamed to call his people brethren, because they are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. The only way there can ever be a people prepared for heaven whom God will not be ashamed of, is for he himself to prepare them.

The doctrine I am preaching to you today, will be preached on and on, until the Lord of glory comes from heaven; and the people I am talking to and about today have the grace of God wrought so perfectly in them, that God in heaven will never be ashamed of one of them.

We are told that Abraham, when he was called out, went not knowing where he went; that he sought a city which hath foundation, whose builder and maker is God. He was looking for a place where God is not ashamed to be called our God.

"We are members of his body, of his flesh, and his bones." He didn't come part of the way under the law; he didn't come just to make an offering for sin, and leave the acceptance to men, but He came to redeem us from the curse of the law. The Scriptures say that he went to heaven, having obtained eternal redemption for us. Do you know why he is coming again; and who he is coming for? He is coming for his bride; he is coming for those who are members of his body, of his flesh, of his bones.

"As by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead." When Paul speaks in Corinthians of the resurrection of the dead, he said, ***"Now is Christ risen and become the first fruits of them that slept."*** When Christ rose from the dead, it was a promise that there was a crop coming: The people of God -- their bodies are going to be raised. Not like you are as I look at you now, but fashioned like His glorious body; and will be prepared to praise him.

When the priest under the law took the sheaf from the people and waved it before the Lord, it was saying, There is a crop like this. So is the resurrection of the body of Jesus Christ from the dead. He was the first fruits of his people; and they will be like the first fruits. The glorious day is coming– the day all the saints have looked for, the day of all days, when we will be taken home. I have been coming here almost forty years; most of the old ones who were here when I began coming, are sleeping somewhere. In a few years we will all be sleeping, laid away somewhere in the silent tomb; but, bless the Lord, He will not deny his own. When he comes the dead will be raised. It is the resurrection of the dead, not merely from the dead.

You that love his name – it will be you that day. It will be the redeemed sinner; it will be one whose vile body is changed, and fashioned like the glori-ous body of Jesus Christ. Lift up your heads, my brethren; praise the Lord! No wonder when David started in the 22nd Psalm he said, ***"My God,***

why hast thou forsaken me." and said in the 23rd, ***"The Lord is my shepherd."*** Then in the 24th, he said, ***"Lift up the everlasting doors that the King of Glory might come in. Who is the King of Glory The Lord of hosts is the King of Glory."***

J.D.W.

MEETINGS

The Lord willing, Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, Winnsboro, Texas will have an ordination of three brothers to the office of Deacon. Brothers Robert Rector, Joe L. Hamrick, Jr. and John Hamrick will be ordained the second Sunday in January, 1998.

All lovers of the truth are invited to attend.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 1997

Mrs. Clinton V. Ferris, VA 2.00
Mrs. Hazel Garland, MD 25.00
Mrs. E.J. Sutherland, VA 2.00
Mrs. Ethlene Watson, NC 2.00
Mr. & Mrs. J.M. Marshall, VA 5.00
Wilton L. Sutphin, VA 2.00
Mrs. Muriel M. Strader, NC 2.00
Mrs. Donald Arae, S.D. 32.00
Bruce Barron, LA 50.00
William Midkiff, VA 2.00
W.H. Norman, NC 7.00
Mrs. J.B. Blaylock, NC 7.00

OBITUARIES

RAMOUS GERALD HARRIS

In sadness I will endeavor to write a few words concerning our dear Brother in Christ, Brother Ramous Gerald Harris departed this life on 7 November 1997 just two days short of his 84th birthday. He was the only child of the late Pelege and Leatha Harris. His wife, Ruth Morris Harris, preceded him in death. One brother in law, Charles M. Morris of Lowland, N.C. survives him plus many cousins in Eastern North Carolina and Virginia.

Brother Harris was a Navy veteran, retired merchant seaman and commercial fisherman. In April 1981, Brother Harris asked for a home with the Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized the following month. He believed in predestination of all things by Almighty GOD and loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. He attended and supported the Church faithfully until his health failed. He spent the last few years of his life in a nursing home.

Elder Gene Lupton conducted a graveside service and he was laid to rest in the Lowland Community Cemetery. One copy to the "Signs of the Times" and one placed in the Church Record. Done by request of the Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church in conference on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in November 1997.

Elder Jesse Foreman, Pastor
Elder Gene Lupton, Clerk

FANNIE ESTELLE DODSON WILES

It is with sadness that I attempt to write the obituary of dear Sister Wiles. She was the daughter of Henry J. and Lucy Stutz Dodson born December 23, 1898. She was married to Felix E. Wiles who died in January 1966. Sister Wiles joined Cane Creek Primitive Baptist Church on June 23, 1918 and was baptized by Elder J. R. Wilson on the fourth Sunday in July at four p.m. She was elected Clerk of the Church in 1940 and served the office well until her health failed.

The life of this dear soul was ruled by the Church and the principles of the Primitive Baptist Cause. She believed it her duty to be present for her meetings and the meetings of sister churches. She was a member of Cane Creek Church for seventy-nine years and although she eventually became the only member at Cane Creek it did not diminish her love and dedication. When it became necessary for needed repairs to be made on the meeting house Sister Wiles used her own funds for flooring, siding, roofing, celotex ceiling and electric lights.

Sister Wiles was in Roman Eagle Nursing Home in her latter years and was given patience to wait for death to come. There were times when we visited her that she would relate her wishes to leave and go to that Heavenly Home that is promised God's people. Her longing for the peace of death came to an end on April 14, 1997 thus ending a lifetime of love, dedication and respect for her Savior. She is survived by one sister, Ethel M. Dodson, Stratford House, Danville, VA and a number of neices and nephews. Her neice, Mamie Marshall and her daughters cared for her in many ways and always saw to her having a way to the meetings.

Her funeral was conducted at Townes Funeral Home in Danville by Elder C. B. Davis, Jr. and she was laid to rest in Floral Hills Memory Gardens. We feel Sister Wiles was indeed a landmark to the realm of Grace and as a nail set in a sure place, see Isiah Chapter 22 verse 23. Her passing brings an end to the membership of Cane Creek Church as sad as it seems. The fact of no members means it is no longer a church and the Trustees voted to close the meeting house. It was the mind of all concerned in the Staunton River Association that this action was proper and the property reverts to the heirs of those that donated the land a long time ago.

There are many who can remember when the Gospel was proclaimed at the place and souls rejoiced. We thank the Lord that He blessed us to know and love Sister Wiles we feel for Christ's sake, and may His name yet be praised in memory.

In humble affection,
Elder C. B. Davis, Jr.

ISAIAH 43:7.

Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.

Signs of the Times

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" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

As when the weary traveler gains
The height of some o'erlooking hill,
His eye revives, if 'cross the plains
He sees his home, though distant still;

While he surveys the much-loved spot,
He sights the space that lies between;
His past fatigues are now forgot,
Because his journey's end is seen;

Thus when the Christian pilgrim views,
By faith, his mansion in the skies,
The sight his fainting strength renews,
And wings his speed to reach the prize.

The thought of home his spirit cheers;
No more he grieves for troubles past;
Nor any future trial fears,
So he may safe arrive at last.

'Tis there, he says, I am to dwell
With Jesus, in the realms of day;
Then I shall bid my cares farewell,
And he will wipe my tears away.

Jesus, on thee our hope depends
To lead us on to thine abode;
Assured our home will make amends
For all our toil while on the road.

Newton.

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EDITORIAL

HEIRS OF GOD

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

The words heirs, inherit, and inheritance are in the scriptures from Genesis through Revelations numerous times, and though many of them are 'repeats' I can mention only a few of them by the grace of God, and I pray that he will direct my every thought to his praise, honor and glory.

An heir is one who receives the inheritance of one who dies. Unless the one who died left a will leaving his substance to one or more who are not his kindred, then the inheritor must be the nearest of kin. The government under which the dead one had lived must judge if the will is lawfully valid and act accordingly. If no will has been left, then the judgment shall be in favor of the spouse or children or both. In Hebrews 9:27-28 we read, ***"As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."*** By this one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Only once, not two or more times, are men appointed to die, and this applies also to Jesus Christ. In his Godhead he could not die, therefore he must become incarnate, for he stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. ***"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Gal.4:4-5.*** To redeem his children, chosen in him before the world was, Christ must die; for they were under the curse of the law, being unable to keep God's just and holy law because of the weakness of the flesh: and without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. ***"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident:***

for the just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but the man that doeth them shall live by them." Gal.3:10-12. Jesus is the only one who ever kept the law, and he kept it to a jot and to a tittle. Therefore he had no sin of his own and was the perfect sacrificial Lamb. By his death, *"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Gal.3:13.*

Without the shed blood and death of Christ his people could never receive the promise of eternal inheritance. *"For this cause he is the mediator of the new testament (covenant), that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament (covenant) they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength while the testator liveth." Heb. 9:16-18.*

"For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect." Rom.4:13-14. Abraham believed the promises of God, *"And therefore it was imputed unto him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed unto him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead." Rom.4:22-24. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one. And to thy seed, which is Christ" Gal.3:16.* If we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, then are we his children, *"And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal.3:29. "And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Rom.8:17.*

Brethren, is it not marvelous to believe we have been given hope that we shall be joint-heirs with our Saviour? If we have received the promises of God through righteousness of faith, from whence did this faith come? Surely it is not a product of our flesh, as is advocated by unbelievers of the world, but it is the gift of God. *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works lest any man should boast." Eph.2:8.* Is not THE gift of God his Son Jesus Christ? *"For in him we move, and have our being - for we are also his offspring." Acts 17:28.* Paul said, *"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God." Gal.2:20.* If the Spirit

of Christ does not dwell within us we have no faith, for we are none of his. Rom. 8:9. *"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Heb.11:1.* Faith and hope are things of the Spirit of God, and they must dwell in us together, for if one be absent the other is of no value. *"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor.2:14.* How, then, can a man receive these things? To be spiritual he must be born again of the Holy Spirit, for, *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born again of the Spirit." John 3:6-8.* Peter said of faith and hope, *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively (living) hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Pet.1:3-5.* I would ask, Does not this inheritance perfectly describe that eternal life which Christ gives his children? In his prayer, recorded in the 17th. chapter of John, Jesus said, *"As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."* And of this life he said, *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."*

Brethren, we must walk by faith, and not by sight, and are saved by hope: *"But that which is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."* What are we patiently waiting for? For Christ to come again and receive us unto himself, that where he is we may be also; and to hear these gracious words from our King's lips, *"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."* Faith and hope: faith to believe in the promises of God and the perfect work of Jesus Christ the Saviour; and hope that we are included in both.

Brethren, I now say as did Paul, *"I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."*

Praise God for any comfort received from this, and charge all errors to me. I trust that I love all of you for Christ's sake.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES

Dear Elders and Editors of the Signs of the Times:

After reading Elder Gilbert Beebe's Editorial in the Signs; written April 1, 1867 at the request of an esteemed brother; on the subject of wisdom, in (Luke 7:35 ***"But wisdom is justified of all her children)."*** I have a mind to copy down Elder Beebe's answer; for you Editors consideration; whether or not to publish in the Signs.

While reading this writing of Elder Beebe; I was given to examine my own self's many short-comings, weaknesses and frailties; verses, the absolute purity of perfection; of all what has to do with the way and workings; of the one and only true and ever living never changing God.

Now, in it being my feelings; that, for one to see and feel, some of the greatness and goodness of THE God; he must, of necessity; also see and feel, his own self's lack, of that greatness and goodness. In otherwords; so long as we live here in this mortal body of flesh; we first, must be aware of our own fleshly weakness and nothingness; before we can even have any interest in, or any desire for; to look upward to He, who does all things well and good. For so long as we have any confidence in the flesh; we cannot have our trust in the Lord and God. Neither can we love Him and His way; except, we also hate, the sinful ways of our flesh. Quote: at the request of an esteemed brother, we propose to give some general views on the subject of wisdom; and the Apostle James informs us that there are two kinds which are essentially different from each other, emanated from opposite sources, and productive of very different fruits, each known by its peculiar qualities and general characteristics, that which is most popular in the world, and which is called the wisdom of this world, we are told, ***"descendeth not from above; but is earthly, sensual, devilish;"*** its tendency is to confusion and every evil work (see James 3:13-16). It was found in the serpent that beguiled Eve in the morning of the Creation and has its fountain in the depths of hell. By this kind of wisdom, the world knew not God. None of the princes, or ruling powers of this world, knew Christ; for if they had known him they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. This wisdom is so cheap that all may have it; it is so easily acquired that no divine or spiritual power is required for the attainment of it. Our mother Eve received it, unasked from the serpent in the garden, and it is now being insidiously instilled into the natural minds of children and adults from all the humanly devised religious institutions of the world, from the Infant School to the more imposing Theological Seminaries in the land, and almost every

school is more or less infested with it. It being of the world, the world approves and loves it. It qualifies the carnal mind of men to contest and resist the truth of God with more subtlety, and craft, and to control the natural mind with the greater plausibility.

It is set forth allegorically in the seventh chapter of Proverbs, as used by the strange woman, (anti-Christ) in her seductive and adulterous wiles, and missionary arts by which she makes proselytes of those who are void of true wisdom. Allured by her deceptive flattery and crafty words, her converts *"go after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool goeth to the correction of the stocks, till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life," "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy (James 3:17)."* This wisdom which is from above, is the wisdom of God, and it is therefore pure: free from all impurtity or deception, and possessed of eternal excellency in itself. It is peaceable in its fruits; inspiring good will to men, and glory to God in the highest; all who are richly endowed with it will beat their swords into plough shears, and their spears into pruning hooks; and the nation ruled by it will learn war no more. It is gentle in its nature and in all its effects; easy to be entreated. *"If any of you (of the scattered people of God to whom this epistle was addressed) lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him (James 1:5)."* How gentle, and how easily entreated by all who have faith in God! It is full of good fruits, leaving no room for partiality or hypocrisy. This wisdom, let it be remembered, can only come from above; God alone can make us wise unto salvation. This heavenly wisdom is personified in Proverbs 8; and indeed the whole book of Proverbs is addressed by wisdom to her children. This should be carefully observed that we may better understand their proper import. Some of the proverbs have been read and so constructed as to make the false impression that they are addressed by God himself to men; or that our Lord Jesus Christ is personified by wisdom, and in that character he speaks in the Proverbs to the sons of men generally; saying, for instance, *"I love them that love me, and they that seek me early shall find me."* Now God has no where in the scriptures made any such propositions to men. God does not love men in return for their love to him; nor does he propose to do so, for his people and all who ever have or ever shall love God, love him because he has first loved them. Our love is subsequent to his, and his first love is invariably the cause of our love to him. When he has shed abroad his love in us, but not before, then we love him as a consequence. But when wisdom doth cry, and understanding puts forth her voice, she crieth at the gates,

at the entrance, at the coming in, at the doors. That is, at the portals of the house which she has builded. None can enter her gates and be admitted to participate with her children in the banquet of wisdom until they are called by grace, quickened by the Holy Spirit and made partakers of that fear of the Lord which God has graciously promised to put in the hearts of his people. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom." This beginning of wisdom is the gate of her house, the entry of her city, and the coming in of her doors. Here at her portals wisdom is found; and here her voice is put forth to all who possessing the fear of the Lord approach her dwelling. Unto all such she calls, and her voice is to the sons of men; and thus she speaks to them. ***"O ye simple, understand wisdom: and ye fools, be of an understanding heart. All who approach her gates are of this character. The fear of the Lord has made them conscious of their simplicity, and aware of their folly. If any man would be wise let him first become a fool, that he may be wise."*** In the early experience of every saint, he is made to see, feel and confess that all his wisdom is foolishness, and all his righteousness but filthy rags. All his schemes and plans which he thought were so wisely laid for attaining life have failed, all his former calculations are laid low; and in the fear of the Lord he will acknowledge that he is the very character addressed by Wisdom. Blessed now of the Lord with a knowledge of his folly, and of his need of understanding, he watcheth daily at Wisdom's gates, and waits at the posts of her doors, for that wisdom which descendeth from above, which wisdom dwells with prudence, and finds out knowledge of witty inventions. Unwilling now to depart from the avenues of true wisdom, though he feels that he is very slow to learn, yet having no where else to look, he waits at the posts of her doors. ***"For whoso findeth wisdom findeth life and shall obtain favor of the Lord."*** As he listens to her voice, she speaks to him of excellent things; and the opening of her lips, in the disclosure of her treasures, points out to him the way of understanding; she discriminates understandingly between right and wrong, truth and error, good and evil; she directs only to right things. The mouth of true wisdom always speaks truth; as error is unwise; wisdom rejects it, and wickedness being unwise, is an admonition to the lips of wisdom. As she cries and lifts up her voice to the pupil who is entering the gates, he finds that all the words of her mouth are in righteousness, and that there is nothing froward or perverse in them. True wisdom which comes from above never misleads, deceives or fails to give unerring counsel. All her ways are pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. And they are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.

All the children of Zion are taught of God, and therefore they have understanding, and knowledge of the truth, and can understand the instructions of that wisdom which is an attribute of

God himself. But none can understand the words of wisdom until they are quickened and taught of God. The preaching of the gospel of Christ crucified is to the workmongrel jew or legalist a stumblingblock, and to the learned Greek, foolishness; but to them that are called it is the wisdom and the power of God.

To the disciple in the school of Christ, Wisdom says, receive my instruction and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold; for wisdom is better than rubies, and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared with it. Silver and gold are among the most precious treasures of this world; the carnal mind makes them an idol, and they constitute the mammon of this world. The love of this precious idol is the root of all evil. The rich fool whose golden treasures were increased, could take no part of them with him on the night in which his soul was required of him. But the revenue of Wisdom are durable riches of righteousness. The children of Wisdom should never diverge from the counsels of wisdom for all the glittering fates this world can present. Wisdom from on high proclaims her dwelling, association, and her business, saying, *"I, Wisdom, dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions."* Some have supposed these words were spoken by Christ, personified by Wisdom; but it will be seen in all this connection Wisdom assumes the feminine gender, which is no where in the scriptures applied to Christ.

It is to us a most glorious truth, Wisdom as an attribute of the eternal God, with every other perfection of the deity is embodied in Christ, and that Christ is of God made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption; and that in him are hidden all the treasures of Wisdom and knowledge. But no one perfection severed from its connection with all the other perfections of the Godhead is sufficient to express all the fullness of the Godhead that dwells in him bodily. Besides, we think the misapplication of this perfection as a personal identification of Christ has a tendency to mystify some of the words of wisdom, and make them seem to conflict with the general doctrine of the Bible. Some have supposed that the strong language used of Wisdom in this eighth chapter of Proverbs are required to prove the divinity, or eternity of Christ. To such a supposition we cannot consent; for John 1:1 is much more conclusive and to the point. The Word was with God, and the Word was God: this is irrefutable testimony of his Eternal Godhead. And there are many other passages, equally strong and conclusive.

When we attempt to prove a position by passages which are inapplicable to the subject we weaken rather than strengthen our argument. We feel certain that if the inspired writer had designed to personify Christ, in this chapter, he would not have used pronouns of the feminine gender; as where he says, *"Doth not Wisdom cry and Understanding put forth Her voice? She hath hewn out Her*

seven pillars. She hath killed her beasts, She hath mingled Her wine, She hath furnished Her table, She crieth upon the high places of the city," etc. Can any scripture be found wherein the feminine gender is applied personally to Christ, or to God?

Again some have thought that what is written in this chapter must apply to Christ; as proving what is called his pre-existence; that he was with the Father, from everlasting, etc. We do not need thus to construe the chapter for any such purpose, as we have abundant direct testimony to prove not only that he was with God before the worlds began, but also, that he was absolutely God.

Let us read the testimony as applicable to Wisdom, as a perfection or attribute of God, and it must also stand confessed that the wisdom as well as every other attribute of his Godhead was with him, or ever the earth was, and from everlasting. Can we conceive a period either in time or eternity when God was without Wisdom, or when Wisdom was not with him? In these inspired scriptures, the exalted character of divine Wisdom is very clearly and most beautifully demonstrated. Remember that it is Wisdom that makes the proclamations. ***"I Wisdom dwell with prudence." "Counsel is mine and sound wisdom, I am understanding, I have strength." "By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule and nobles, even all the judges of the earth."*** This last passage is relied upon by some to prove a divine right by which many of the most despotic kings and wicked and profligate governments are sustained. Compare this text with Psam 2: 10-12. ***"Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, Ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling, Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish by the way."*** How many foolish kings have been deposed in ancient and modern times for their folly in their mad rejection of the counsels of wisdom. How many human governments have perished for their folly. Wisdom directs that human rulers shall kiss, or be at peace with the Son of God who is invested with power above them as King of kings, and Lord or lords. ***"He shall rule the nations with a rod of iron, and break them in pieces like a potter's vessel."*** It is extreme folly and madness for kings and rulers of the earth to ignore his government, and dare to oppress his saints; to command them to do what Christ has forbidden, or fail to do what he has commanded. ***"Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm; for he that toucheth them toucheth the apple of his eye."*** It is not by Christ's Mediatorial power or command that the kings of this world reign; for he says, ***"My kingdom is not of this world,"*** But it is by wisdom they reign. A fool may be a king nominally for a time, but he does not really reign; his ministers do that for him; and soon his dominion ceases.

Wisdom further proclaims, ***"I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me."*** Is

this a proclamation from Christ to the children of men? How very differently it sounds from what he said in John 7:34, ***"Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me."*** But how harmonious with the whole of the divine testimony when understood as a proclamation of Wisdom to her children. Those who, as soon as they are born of the Spirit (for that is as early as any seek this wisdom which cometh from above) seek the counsel of wisdom; and stand waiting at the posts of Her door for a supply, shall assuredly find it: and such are the peculiar favorites of Wisdom. Can any dispute that riches and honor are with Wisdom, even durable riches and righteousness? Well may She declare, ***"My fruit (the fruit of wisdom) is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver."*** Those who are void of understanding are led by folly, like fools to the correction of the stocks. But Wisdom says, I lead in the way of righteousness: in the midst of the paths of judgment; that I may cause them that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures."

The highest possible commendation of the wisdom set forth in this chapter is found in the testimony that God possessed it in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. It is the wisdom which God displayed when his hand garnished the skies, and laid the foundation of the earth. This wisdom shines in all his works of creation, providence and grace. In the contemplation of this profound wisdom the inspired apostle exclaimed, ***"O the depth of the riches both of the*** wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again, (Romans 4:33-35), ***"Wisdom claims association and companionship with God from everlasting. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was."*** However justly and truly this language may be applicable to the Son of God, as set up in his Mediatorial relation to his church, we cannot, for reasons already given, understand it as in this connection spoken of him personally. The truth that God possessed this Wisdom before his works of old is abundantly apparent in the perfections of all his works; for in the absence of it, how could his wonderful works have been so perfectly wrought? He had not to experiment, and try a variety of experiments in order to gain a knowledge, or to perfect his wisdom; for if he were less wise before his works of old than now, how could we rely upon his immutability, or any of his eternal attributes? ***"He is of one mind and none can turn him."*** He is the Lord, he changes not; therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed.

Wisdom may well claim Her priority to all the works of God, and in the sublime language of this chapter declare, "When there were no depths, I was brought forth; (or as pre-existing in God himself called into requistion). When there were no fountains abound-

ing with water; before the mountains were settled; before the hills was I brought forth: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depths: when he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then was I by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men (Proverbs 8: 24-31).

Now all this is declared in commendation of the wisdom of God, and in all the particulars named, these declarations are sustained and demonstrated. And in conclusion, the children of Wisdom, by whom she is justified, are appealed to from these considerations; to listen to Her voice, to discard folly, and cordially embrace Her.

Now therefore (or in consideration of all this) hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. The plain import of this strong appeal of Wisdom to Her children is that they should attend at Her gates, wait at the posts of Her doors; hear Her instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not; for She saith, ***"Blessed is the man that heareth me; watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord. But he that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death."***

How peculiarly appropriate are all the illustrations of the wisdom which God has displayed in all his works and ways, and how important that all who would live godly in Christ Jesus should hearken to all Her admonitions, receive all Her instructions, conform to all Her rules, obey all Her precepts, and walk in all Her paths. How blessed are the children of wisdom, trained under Her tuition, and endowed with Her revenue. All who possess this wisdom are wise unto salvation, and find life; but all who hate Her and love folly, reject Her counsels and heed not Her admonitions love death. Allured, ensnareed and betrayed by that wisdom which is from beneath, and which is the opposite of that which is from above, those who despise Her makings shall be involved in the direful consequences of their folly, and then Wisdom shall laugh at their calamities and mock when their fear cometh. Alas! how true are the words:

"Broad is the road that leads to death,
And thousands walk to gather there;
But Wisdom shows a narrow path,
With here and there a traveler."

Troy G. Shepard

P.S. How can it be, that all things are, of an absolute unchangable certainty? Simply because; He is THE God: Of which is, a sufficient answer, to all who do in truth believe, that He

is: And to in truth have such belief; must and does believe, in His every attribute. For one, with one iota less; has to be, and is; one among the god's many,

T.G.S.

VOICES OF THE PAST

October 4.

"I will strengthen that which was sick." —EZEKIEL xxxiv. 16.

PECULIAR maladies require peculiar remedies; but here is a general remedy, a family medicine. The Lord not only has strong remedies for desperate diseases; but in the divine medicine chest he has his restoratives and cordials. ***"Stay me with flagons; comfort me with apples,"*** cries the Bride, ***"for I am sick of love."*** She was in a swoon, and needed a reviving cordial to restore her. So a poor fainting soul may come to hear the preached gospel, or may open his Bible, and say, ***"What is here for me ?"*** When I hear any deep experience described, that seems to cut me off as too deep; and when I hear great manifestations entered into, that cuts me off as too high. So I seem to be a strange being, a peculiar out-of-the-way creature, that can neither dive nor fly, sink nor rise." Well, you are sick; you are like one in a hospital, ill of a malady that puzzles all the doctors. At last, one more skilful than his brethren, says, ***"There is no peculiar disease. But the man, like many of our London patients, is suffering from want of nourishment, dying from sheer exhaustion. He wants better blood put into him. He must have some good meat and wine, and a nourishing diet to recruit his strength and put new life into his body."*** Thus acts the great Physician -- Jehovah-rophi. ***"I will strengthen that which was sick."*** The blood and righteousness of Jesus — that flesh which is meat indeed, and that blood which is drink indeed, is given to the hunger-bitten wretch to revive him as with a heavenly cordial. There is balm in Gilead; there is a Physician there; to that balm and to that physician sin-sick souls seek. If you have a real case, you may depend upon it, there is a remedy in the family chest. It is not found out yet, at least you may not have found it, but there is a drawer, and in that drawer there is a draught devised by infinite wisdom and compounded by everlasting love. It is indeed a remedy such as no learned physician of the school of the pharisees ever prescribed, or an apothecary wise in his own conceit ever compounded; but yet the very thing, the very thing. And when that drawer is opened and the draught brought out, and you take it, you will be able to say with David in the joy of your heart, ***"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name."***

J.C. Philpot

THE SCRIPTURE RULE FOR TRYING THE SPIRITS THAT ARE IN THE WORLD

Preached on Sunday Evening, May 31st, 1840 At Gower-Street Chapel

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God. And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God. And this is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof you have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. (1 John 4: 1 thru 4).

It has always been the case, ever since God sent prophets, that the devil has endeavoured to imitate him and sent prophets too: and the Lord told Moses to give the people this advice, that if a prophet rose up or a dreamer of dreams, and prophesied things that came true, yet they were not to believe him, except he brought forth in his prophecy the real truth of God. It seems good in the sight of God, that for wise purposes there should be false prophets and false teachers, for the trial of his people's faith and for putting them upon the important work of measuring and weighing up the spirits of men, and ***"trying the spirits whether they be of God."*** In one place, the Lord tells us, that heresies must abound ***"that they which are approved may be made manifest."*** This seems in some measure rather trying to flesh and blood; but it is God's method, and it becomes the saints of the Most High to be concerned to look to the Lord for wisdom to direct them in a matter of such moment and importance.

Some one perhaps is ready to say - 'Oh! I can ***"try the spirits"*** of men in a moment; I can measure them to a nicety.' Well, what rule do you go by? 'My own experience.' Indeed; and have you tried that, by the standard of God's Spirit and God's truth? If you have not, perhaps your experience is delusive; for God tells us, he will send some ***"strong delusions, that they may believe a lie."*** So that you should be concerned to bring your experience to the standard of God's unerring Book; and if it is not according to that, depend upon it you will deceive your soul, if you make a stand upon it or attempt to try the spirits of men by it.

'But,' say you, 'do you suppose that all christian experience is according to the word of God? do not you believe that the Holy Ghost sometimes works in the heart of a child of God without the word?' Yes, I do; but never contrary to it. He always brings about things exactly according to the word of God, and never contrary to it.

Perhaps there may be someone in this assembly, that may say - 'Oh! but I believe he never works except through the word and by the hearing of the word.' What a pretty sweep you make then! You send all infants to hell

at once. For they are all born in sin and shapen in iniquity; and unless they are renewed in the spirit of their minds and blessed with an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ, they cannot go to heaven any more than adults. They never could go on the ground of their innocency; they are not innocent, they are guilty. Therefore you sink all infants to hell. Now so far am I from believing that, that I believe rather, that infants dying in their infancy are amongst the number of God's elect, and that God works a divine change in them without the hearing of the word. And we might just glance at one sentence, that gives us a little encouragement on this ground. When Mary was pregnant with the Messiah, and Elizabeth her cousin pregnant with John the Baptist, (and God tells us he was sanctified *"from the womb,"*) Mary went to see her cousin; and as soon as she stepped into the house, Elizabeth said - *"Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb; for lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy."* How, in the name of a good conscience, did little John in his mother's womb know any thing about it, if God the Spirit had not revealed it to him? It could not be from any natural circumstance; and yet she says, *"The babe within me leaped for joy."* And I believe, millions of babes have *"leaped for joy in their mother's womb,"* and leaped out of their mother's womb into heaven, by the blessed power and energy of God the Holy Ghost, who can work without the word. But you see, it was not contrary to it; for it was the salutation of Mary pregnant with the Messiah, and John was led to leap for joy at the Messiah being there. And so, as the Lord the Spirit makes manifest the truth, whether in infants or in adults, it is according to the word of God. Therefore you must bring your experience to the standard of God's word; and when you have got a *"Thus saith the Lord"* for what you do, a *"Thus saith the Lord"* for what you feel, a *"Thus saith the Lord"* for what you experience, a *"Thus saith the Lord"* to comfort you, it is a nail that all hell shall never extract out of your conscience, It is *"a nail fastened in a sure place."* A *"Thus saith the Lord"* is worth a million of *"Thus saith this man, or the other man."* It is a blessed thing to the conscience when God the Spirit brings a *"Thus saith the Lord"* there. I hear of many people talking of being very heavenly and very blessed in practicing what they call religious acts, and I believe it has all been a delusion of the devil; their practice has been all the while exactly contrary to God's word, and therefore I am sure God the Spirit was never there. But when our experience and God's word agree - the testimony of God in the conscience and the testimony of God in his word - then we are fit to come forth to measure the spirits of men, to *"try the spirits whether they be of God."*

I shall pass on, then, to notice the rule which is laid down in our text, by which we are to *"try the spirits"* of men. *"Every spirit that confesseth*

that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God." And this ***"spirit of antichrist,"*** John tells us, was already in the world in his day. In our day there is a great stir about the progress of Popery, and some men seem tremblingly alive lest Popery should reign; but I believe thousands of those that are making the greatest stir about it, are feeding the soul of Popery from week to week with all the doctrines they preach, however they may fight against the shell, and against the body, for that ***"without the soul would be dead."*** The life and soul and blood and pulse and energy of Popery and antichrist is couched in what the Lord has in view here; ***"Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God"***- but of antichrist.

But, say you, everybody almost ***"confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh."*** Now this is the matter we have to look to a little. May God direct us!

Everybody almost in this nation talks about a ***"Christ that is come in the flesh,"*** but the Lord of the house assures us that there shall arise false Christs, and shall deceive many. (Matthew 5:24). And Paul said in his day there were some that ***"preached another Jesus;"*** so that there is a kind of Christ men may ***"confess is come in the flesh,"*** that is not God's Christ, and therefore it is antichrist. Our business, then, shall be, as God shall assist (and may God in very deed assist us), to point out God's Christ, that has ***"come in the flesh."***

Now what is the Crist of God? In what capacity did he stand, as having ***"come in the flesh?"***

1st. As the elect Head of an elect body.

'Oh! come,' say you, 'you begin high at once; you are beginning with election, and we do not believe that.' Why, then you have got the very spirit of antichrist. If you deny that, if God the Spirit has not convinced you that, no matter what you profess to be, the life and soul of your religion feeds Popery; yours is the spirit of antichrist.

If we come to examine the word of God upon this subject, we find the Lord says he ***"chose a people in Christ before the foundation of the world,"*** and that Christ as the head of this people was ***"set up from everlasting,"*** and "his delights were with the sons of men" when the heavens were prepared and the foundations of the earth appointed. And when his blessed Majesty ***"came in the flesh,"*** in what capacity did he come? God tells us, in the 40th of Isaiah, ***"His reward is with him, and his work before him."*** What is ***"his reward?"*** Why, his church, his elect, the people chosen in him. And he brought them ***"with him."*** Before he came in the flesh, all the elect were in union to him by the divine appointment of the Father; and when he came, he represented them, in his life and sufferings and death and resurrection. Hence it is said, they ***"are crucified with Christ,"*** that they "suffer with him," that they ***"are risen with him,"*** and (if that is not enough) that they ***"sit together in heavenly places with him."*** God's Christ never took a step

in the flesh, without the whole elect in his heart. This is the Christ, that *"is come in the flesh,"* for the accomplishment of salvation.

Now the greatest part of the professing world - (it does not matter what they call themselves, Independents or Baptists or Church people or Methodists or Moravians or Quakers)- fifty out of every fifty-one, deny this. And therefore theirs is antichrist; it is not God's Christ. However pleasing it may be to flesh and blood, they deny this foundation and fundamental truth, it they deny Christ and one mystical body in union with him, and his coming into the world to represent them, and to accomplish a work for their eternal salvation, they deny God's Christ and they set up a Christ of their own, which is antichrist. We therefore solemnly charge it upon the people of God, if you hear men denying this fundamental truth, whatever they may say about piety and holiness and charity and benevolence and mortifications and alms-deeds and prayers and tears and watchings, and all that they can heap up besides, in you heart weigh them up, and say, It is antichrist. For God's Christ and his people are one; one, never to be separated, and never to be made two. (1 Cor 12:12; Rom 12:5; Eph 5:29&30).

2. But then we observe, that another branch of this rule is, that the Christ of God, who is *"come in the flesh,"* is not only come to represent his people that are in union to him, but he is come to accomplish a complete salvation for them.

Not, come to make it possible for them to save themselves; not, come to open a way whereby through their exertions they may secure their own salvation. A Christ of that nature is one of the devil's inventing. It is antichrist. It is not the Christ of God.

No, no; the Christ of God is come *"to put away sin," "to finish transgression and to make an end of sin, and to bring in everlasting righteousness," to "redeem from all iniquity,"* and to *"redeem unto God."* So we find, when the Holy Ghost is speaking upon this subject, he says, *"Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it."* Do you not see, beloved, how it is? Has God made you feel it? If this little word it gets into your conscience, it is a blessed thing, if God the Spirit puts it there. He gave himself for it. Not *"gave himself"* indefinitely *"for all sin of all men"* (the doctrine of the day), to accomplish a general salvation, and make it possible for those who please to save themselves; that is antichrist; I do not care who preaches it, nor who believes it - it is not the Christ of God. No, no; God's Christ has finished transgression, and made a complete atonement for sin-such an atonement, that (as the Holy Ghost solemnly declares) *"the redeemed of the Lord shall come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."* Now the Christ that you believe in and have felt in your soul - is it a Christ of this nature; or is it a Christ, that you say gives all men a

chance of being saved, has done the best he can to save them, has made it possible for them to accomplish the conditions of salvation and so to save themselves? That is antichrist; as the living God is in heaven, that is not his Christ. God's Christ has so completed the work, that all the perfections of the eternal Jehovah harmonise in it, to the complete salvation of God's people. Hence it is said, that *"Israel shall be saved in the Lord;"* not, have a chance of being saved. A chance of being saved? Why, bless you, when I hear men talk about a chance of being saved, I am led to reflect - Then the declarative glory of the eternal Trinity hangs upon chance; the honour of God the Father hangs upon chance; the honour and effect of the work of God the Son hangs upon chance; the honour of God the Spirit, in his quickening, enlightening, sanctifying powers hangs upon chance! - and that chance too to be accomplished by man - a poor, dying, crawling reptile!- the eternal Trinity having to wait in heaven, to see if perchance we will let him work!' Talk of Christ! it is antichrist. It is an insulting of God's Christ; a despising of the Christ God has revealed in his word, and makes known in the hearts and consciences of his people.

If we believe that God's Christ *"is come in the flesh,"* then, we believe that he has come as the head and representative of his people, and that he has completed their salvation and entirely finished the work. Yea, bless his holy name, we are brought to believe and feel in our souls, that he has accomplished such a work, that it can neither be mended nor marred. The manifestation of it may go through a variety of changes, and we through a variety of changes under it; but the work is as firm as the throne of God, and it shall stand for ever. *"His work is perfect; a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he."* The Christ of God that has *"come in the flesh,"* is one that has accomplished this blessed, this God-glorifying work. Any other Christ is not the Christ of God, but it is antichrist - another Jesus, one of those *"false Christs"* that the Lord said should arise, and should deceive many; and so God knows, there are many, that are deceived.

3. But then we observe further, the Lord Christ that is "come in the flesh" is that blessed Christ, that has wrought out a complete righteousness for the justification of his people; not only atoned for their sins, but wrought out a righteousness, to present them just and perfect and righteous in his blessed and pure obedience.

I know, some people say - 'Oh! yes, we have a righteousness through Christ; he has accomplished such a work, that if we are faithful and add our faithfulness to his work, we shall obtain righteousness and holiness too; but not without.' Why, then, the Christ that has done that, is not God's Christ; it is antichrist. The Christ of God, that has *"come in the flesh,"* is emphatically called *"The Lord our righteousness;"* and God tells us plainly, that it is not through, but *"in the Lord,"* that *"all the seed of*

Israel shall be justified." And this is the reason why an inspired Paul was concerned *"to be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness." "Not having your own righteousness,"* Paul? why, you were a very zealous man, a pious man, a suffering man, a man led to undergo a great deal for Christ, in shipwrecks, and prisons, and stripes, and perils, and after all cannot you wear your own righteousness? No, says Paul, do not let me have that on! Well, but what righteousness could Paul wish to appear in then? *"Not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."* And here it is, that the poor child of God is brought, in solemn silence sometimes and in solemn awe, to bow before God, when *"clothed and in his right mind,"* and to see that he is *"complete in Christ;"* complete in Him, who is *"head over all principalities and powers," "God blessed for ever."*

I know, antichrist mocks at the idea of looking for imputed righteousness, or depending upon imputed righteousness. Imputed righteousness, they say, is imputed nonsense. Now, so charitable am I, that I believe that a man that lives and dies declaring the imputed righteousness of Christ to be nonsense, dies to be damned as sure as God is in heaven. I do not care who he is, nor what he is; the spirit by which he is guided is antichrist. It is not *"the Spirit of God;"* for God's Christ is Christ *"our righteousness"*- *"the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."* Of God's Christ it is said, that *"in him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins,"* and that we are *"justified freely through the redemption that is in him."* And when the Lord the Spirit brings this solemn mystery into the conscience of a poor, burdened, dejected, drooping sinner, oh what glory teems into his heart To be led in faith and feeling to see that he stands before God in the spotless, pure, perfect obedience of Christ; His righteousness justifying him so fully and completely, that God himself by the apostle challenges all creation to *"lay any thing to his charge!"* Hence says the apostle, *"There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus;"* not to them that talk about, nor to them that bring forth a false Christ, but to them that are really in God's Christ. Why, that poor soul is so wrapped up in God's Christ, that in the sight of God it is Christ that is seen, and the man is seen in Christ; and therefore he is just and righteous and complete. This is the Christ, that is *"come in the flesh"* - Christ *"our righteousness;"* and we in his righteousness are brought to stand *"complete in him."*

4. But then, say you, we must have holiness; talk what you will about being righteous in Christ, we must have personal holiness; except we have personal holiness, and are made pure and sanctified, what will the righteousness of Christ do for us? it will not save us.

Well, where will you look for personal holiness? In your Christ, which is a Christ that has done something for you, and leaves you to complete the work, by your penitence and mortification and alms-deeds and wonders that you are to manufacture? Is that what you mean by personal holiness? If it is, I hope you will keep it to yourself. I hope God will not suffer me to be plagued with it; I have plague enough without it. But if by personal holiness you mean being made a partaker of the divine nature, by the quickening, enlightening power and divine communications of God the Holy Ghost, having Christ formed in the soul the hope of glory, being saved by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, all centering in and proceeding from Christ, then you have a holiness that will stand the test of God's word; *"for Christ is made of God unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption."* And when his blessed Majesty is being spoken of under the old testament dispensation, this is his language; *"I am like a green fir-tree; from me is thy fruit found."* What is the holiness of a child of God, then - his real personal holiness? It is couched in this one blessed thing, in all the manifested bearings of it - Christ in you.

Here perhaps I stagger some, that are noted for their high views of election, predestination, and eternal union. 'Oh!' say they; 'I have nothing to do with a Christ in me, I want a Christ without me.' Why, then, you have not God's Christ; you are just on a level with the other, and your Christ is antichrist. The Lord's blessed Christ that has *"come in the flesh,"* is by the blessed Spirit of God as truly communicated to the hearts of his people, and spiritually conceived in their hearts, *"the hope of glory,"* as ever he was corporally conceived in the womb of Mary. If you have not a Christ that is formed in your hearts by the invincible energy of God the Holy Ghost, you are not fit to *"try the spirits"* of men; you have no sort of rule by which you are capable of trying them.

But some poor soul is led to say - Well, but what gives a proof that Christ is formed in my soul, the hope of Glory?

Why, Christ is life; *"I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live"* And Christ is light; *"I am the light of the world," that lighteth every (spiritual) man that cometh into the (spiritual) world."* Life and light go together; and when God the Spirit communicates this blessed Christ to the conscience, he communicates life, and the sinner begins to feel; and he communicates light, and the sinner begins to see. And what does he see and feel? His own emptiness, darkness, blindness, weakness; his own lost condition; and he is brought in real experience before God to be sick of himself, sick of his prayers and his tears and his repentance and his faith, if he professed to have any; he sickens at his vice, and sickens at his piety. A stranger is come into the tem-

ple; and he has overturned *"the tables of money changers"* in the heart, to make room for himself. This is God's Christ, that is *"come in the flesh."* All these principles, whether of open profaneness or professed piety, go to ruin. There must be room to receive God's Christ as a perfect salvation; and that will never be, till we are brought to self-loathing and self-detesting before a heart-searching God. There will be a hard struggle for it too; especially if we have got a little piety. If you are openly profane, when God the Spirit is pleased to reveal the communicable nature of Christ to you, it will not be such a hard struggle to part with open profaneness; but to part with piety and religious duties and church-going and chapel-going and sacrament-going and reading *"the whole duty of man,"* and all those pious things - oh! bless me, it is just like driving a man mad. He imagines he has been a little remiss in some of these things; but then he will not be so again, he will be more diligent and more cautious. But no; God's Christ cuts the man up, root and branch, and leave him no more help in himself than the damned in hell; and he feels himself as truly cut down as a wretch can be, before a heart-searching God.

Now have you came to this? If not, you do not know God's Christ, which is *"come in the flesh;"* you may talk a great deal about it, but you have not got into the mystery of it. And all your knowledge, till it begins here, is like the fine oil of antichrist; it is only deceiving you, and wrapping you up in a false odour. You have only got a Christ of your own; and it is antichrist. God's Christ roots up, and brings the poor sinner (not in judgment merely, but in feeling,) to say before God, There is no help in me; to feel that he can neither will nor do, and to justify that declaration, *"It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy."* He is brought in his very feelings before a heart-searching God to justify God in condemning him; and he gives God leave (as far as a creature can do) to enter into judgement with him, for he says, *"Lord, I deserve it, and there is no help in me."*

Well now, have you been brought there? 'No,' say you, 'and I hope I never shall be.' I believe you will be damned, if you never are. I do indeed; I solemnly believe, that all your religion is nothing but the religion of antichrist, if God has not brought you there; you have never known the Christ of God, the blessed Christ that the Lord has provided for the salvation of his people.

'But then,' say you, 'if this be the case, what do you make of such a text as - *"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God?"* where do you find any purity in such a statement as this?' The very life and soul of it. It is the pure life and communicable nature of Christ, that God the Spirit forms in thy soul, that is acting in thy soul, and letting thee see and feel what a dark and black devil thou art in thyself. You never felt it, and never believed it, till God granted you divine life and light; and just in proportion as

Christ is spread abroad in the rays of his life and glory in the hearts, do you discover your own wretchedness and darkness and blindness and weakness and deformity; nor can anything short of a perfect Saviour brought home to your conscience by the glorious power of God the Holy Ghost, ever satisfy you; but when he is received, felt, and enjoyed by vital faith, you feel that in him you are blessed indeed.

'Well really,' say you, 'if I could believe that, I think I should have a little hope: for I am there, but I have been thinking that I have nothing to do with Christ and Christ has nothing to do with me, because I should always be very humble and patient and meek and holy.' Why, if in self and of self you were very humble and patient and meek and holy, you would not need a *Christ, you know. "It has pleased the Father, that in Him should all fulness dwell." If we could bring it forth of ourselves, he might keep his fulness to himself, for we should never trouble him about it; no, and we never do, till he brings it to us, and makes us heartily glad to disgorge all our fancied religion. And oh! what a poor creature the soul looks, when God the Spirit brings him low; and there he lies, without any righteousness of his own, as dark and as wretched a creature as he well can be!*

'Why,' say you, 'you surely would not call that any part of holiness.' It is just the very beginning and soul of it. It is God the Spirit that is making a stir in thy foul nature, and beginning to purge it, and to make thee sicken under it, and under a feeling sense of it say, Lord! I abhor myself.

'Ah!' say some of you, 'that is preaching corruption.' 'I never preach corruption,' say one; 'I preach Christ.' Oh! but if you do not preach a Christ that is fitted to a sinner in all his vileness and corruption and pollution, your Christ is not worth my spectacles. It is not God's Christ, it is antichrist. The Christ that is *"come in the flesh,"* is a Christ just suited to such a poor lost and wretched sinner, in all his wretchedness and loathsomeness. Hence when we come to examine the book of God, and are led feelingly and spiritually to trace it, what does it say? *"He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength."* Now what do you do with all your *"might"* and all your power? And again- *"Not of works, lest any man should boast."* 'Oh! say you, that is what I believe; it is *"not of works,"* and therefore I believe in a Christ without me.' And you are capable of doing that, are you? 'Yes,' say you. Why, then you are capable of a great work, and you may make the best of it, for it is not God's Christ nor faith in God's Christ; you may rest assured it is presumption, and you will find it so when you come to be tried up in the grand court of God. But when the poor sinner comes to be cut up and brought down and in his feelings is worse than a dog, then God the Spirit leads him to see what he has to hope in; and that is- God's Christ. And therefore do not be

alarmed, sinner, at finding all your little stock go. I dare say, you are afraid of being insolvent, and so you have tried to set up a fresh stock, and charged your hands from handling, and your eyes from seeing, and your ears from hearing, and have been determined to bring something to God at last; and yet it is always going, and going , and going. Ah!' say you, 'now that is just it.' And God grant it may go, and you may never be able to pick it up again; for it is a spurning of God's Christ. But when God the Spirit is pleased to form this Christ in the heart, "the hope of glory' and the glory of hope, then you will cling to him, twine round him, hang upon him, and with a solemn consecrated conscience say, None but Jesus, none but Jesus, for such a sinner as me.

Now then, when this is the case, this blessed Christ that is *"come in the flesh"* lives in you and you in him. You breathe in his life; you walk in his light; you stretch forth you hands in his strength; you find a divine shining in your conscience. *"In His light you see light."* It comes with such divine penetration, that it appears to ransack the whole soul, and all things appear in very deed to be different from what they did before. Then you know something of what it is to be brought out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son; and that is a solemn translation.

Remember, then, poor child of God, that this blessed Christ that is *"come in the flesh,"* is come to be thy deliverance; he is come to be thy sanctification; he is come to be thy life and thy light; he is come to be thy strength and thy succour and thy support; he is come to be thy hiding-place from every storm and from every tempest; he is come to stand betwixt holy justice and thee, and to present thee to God complete in himself; to strip thee of all idols, and to bring thee, bare, naked, empty, vile, polluted, foolish, ignorant, and condemned, to the foot of the cross. Is God's Christ thus manifested in you? Have you had a little of this sweetness in your conscience? Oh! what solemn moments they have been, for you have been led then to say - *"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name; who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies!"* In this blessed Christ is all law can require, justice demand, God give, or a sinner need. He gives thee a title to heaven and a meetness for it, and will convey thee safely to it, and crown thee when thou art there. It is Christ *"all and in all."* You want no other. If ever God the Spirit reveals this, you will say, It is enough.

This is the Christ that is *"come in the flesh;"* and you are to "try the spirits" of men by this rule. If they preach anything, easy or hard, save the Lamb and his blood, lay any other foundation, proclaim any other deliverer, set forth (anything ever pious or good it may appear in itself) to present the sinner before God, but this Christ, and the Spirit of the Lord manifesting this Christ in the conscience, it is

antichrist. Reject it, abhor it; it is the soul of Popery. Creature merit, creature works, and creature worthiness in matters of salvation, - this is the life and soul and spirit of Popery. The life and soul and spirit of vital Christianity is - God in Christ, and Christ in us, and we in him; God and Christ and conscience brought together through the blood and obedience of Immanual, by the invincible power of God the Spirit. This is what promotes the declarative honor of Christ, and supports the poor soul that is led by the Spirit into the life of God.

Now I shall conclude with a hint or two upon what has been said.

I charge you, in the name of the living God, mind what you hear - mind who you hear. If a man comes and preaches a Christ without you, this is never formed in you and that you have never been brought from necessity to submit to, whose life and power you have never felt; and if the preacher endeavors to direct your attention from a feeling religion, and bolster you up with what he calls a Christ without you and never unctuously preaches Christ in you, the hope of glory, having him formed in you hearts as such, constraining you to cling to, hang upon, and live in him: whatever kind of tale he may tell you, reject him as you would reject the devil. It is not God's Christ; it is antichrist, and he would wrap you up in delusions, and cry *"Peace, peace,"* when God has not spoken peace. You may have your ears pleased and your judgment fed; but your conscience is starved, and your soul is deceived. There is a solemn vitality in Christ in the heart. Without it, all our religion will dry up; but if we are brought to feel the necessity of hanging entirely upon Christ, to cling to him, with nothing but Christ to rest upon before God, and there find rest to our souls, then storms, and tempests and hurricanes may come, but our anchorage is sure, and the cable shall never break, for it is a threefold cord - the love of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. Remember how God tells us, that there shall be false Christs and false teachers, *"bringing in damnable heresies;"* you must expect they will come to try you out and it becomes you to try them. Try them by their confession of *"the coming of Christ in the flesh."* Ask your conscience now what hope you had till God the Spirit gave you hope in Christ - Christ your living head- what hope and love you have that does not come from Christ as revealed and shed abroad by God the Holy Ghost; and if men want to take you to something that is not this, abhor it with your whole soul as the spirit of Popery and antichrist.

As I said before, I consider there is very little else in our day but the spirit of Popery. If I look among the Baptist (though I am a Baptist), they are going after it in shoals. There was a circular letter published last year, signed by the ministers of thirty-five Baptist churches in the midland counties of England; and what did they circulate? Why, that the atonement is universal, and that every man has it in his power (wherever the bible comes) to do that

that is required to save his soul. I solemnly believe, that not one man living, that can with his heart sign or sanction such a statement, has a particle of the life of God in his soul; that they are all dead to God as sure as the devil is. It is antichrist; and whether Baptist or Church people or Independents or Methodists, I solemnly believe, they are all going to hell, if God's grace does not save them; they are ***"in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity."*** It is creature merit. But we know that his blessed Majesty said, ***"It is finished."***

Holy Ghost! repeat that word - ***"It is finished"*** - in our hearts. Then we shall know something of God's Christ, that is ***"come in the flesh,"*** and that he has come into our hearts (as proof of it) and led us to know something of his preciousness. May the Lord the Spirit blessedly apply his own word, for Christ's sake.

W. Gadsby

(Sent in by Brother Roy Pullig)

"Love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. — I JOHN iv. 7, 8.

IF ever you have loved Jesus with a pure affection; if ever you have felt him near, dear, and precious to your soul, that love can never be lost out of your heart. It may lie dormant; it does lie dormant. It may not be sweetly felt in exercise; but there it is. ***"If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha" (I Cor. xvi. 22).*** You would be under this curse if the love of the Lord Jesus Christ were to die out of your heart. But this love is often sleeping. When the mother sometimes watches over the cradle and looks upon her sleeping babe with unutterable affection, the infant knows not that the mother is watching its slumbers; but when it awakes, it is able to feel and return its mother's caresses. It is so with the soul sometimes when love in the heart is like a babe slumbering in the cradle. But as the babe opens its eyes, and sees the mother smiling upon it, it returns the smiles, and stretches forth its arms to embrace the bending cheek; so when the eyes of the soul are opened to see the smiling face of Jesus stooping to imprint a kiss of love, or drop some sweet word into the heart, and there is a flowing forth toward him of love and affection -- this is the power of love.

J.C. Philpot

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Enriched by plants of heavenly birth,
The Church of Jesus is.

His gospel is the open sky,
His love the shining sun;
Rivers of peace, which never dry,
Through all his garden run.

His spirit is the heavenly wind,
That o'er his garden blows;
And opening each renewed mind,
The Saviour's image shows.

Faith, like an ivy, to the rock
(That stands forever,) cleaves;
And through the tempest's loudest shock,
Eternal calm perceives.

Assurance, like a cedar, rears
Its stately branches high,
Beyond the reach of doubts and fears,
And blossoms in the sky.

Parkinson's Col.

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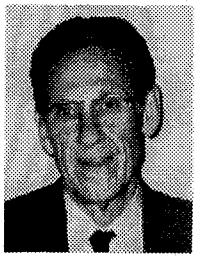
ELDER R. H. CAMPBELL

But I certify you brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

This is the testimony of the Apostle Paul regarding how he came into possession of the commission to preach the gospel, and was taught the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. The Apostle Paul would not fellowship the modern preachers of this day who preach with degrees from the various seminaries around the country, taught by Dr. So and So, who learned it from someone else. Their information is heresay evidence, to say the least, and you know how untrustworthy that type of information is, in the courts of the land, much less as regarding the doctrine of God our Savior. They claim that they have learned the truth by studying the scriptures, but if that is the way that it is learned how can there be so many different beliefs since they all read the same written word. Man does not believe what he reads in the bible, he reads into the bible what he believes in the heart, if otherwise, they would all believe alike. Man in nature, can study any other subject, mathematics, history, medicine or any other worldly subject, take a test and pass it, but give them a test on the scriptures and the answers will be as varied as the number of people who take the test. The truth cannot be discerned by the natural man because it is spiritually authored and must be spiritually revealed to all that understand it and by the same spirit that inspired it originally.

The Apostle Paul states, very distinctly, that he learned the Gospel by the revelation of Jesus Christ. He states, in another place, *"This is a faithful saying, and worth of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth*

all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting". If the Apostle Paul was a pattern to those who were to follow, should not they receive the gospel in the same manner that he did. All for whom he would have fellowship would, because they would all have the same teacher. When God said, "***my glory I will not give to another,***" I believe that this is what he was referring to, he would not leave the responsibility for the salvation of the saints to others than himself. His glory is in the saving of those whom he formed for himself, for his own good pleasure and for the love wherewith he had loved them from everlasting to everlasting.

Man in nature, speaks the languages of the world and understands the things of the world, but the child of God is a new creature and speaks a pure language, a language that the natural man does not understand. As Paul recorded in his letter to the church at Corinth,"***but as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit; for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God".*** This should nullify any claim that man could make regarding learning about God from another man. It does not, however, because, man reads the scriptures, not with an open mind to learn what it says but rather with the intent of proving what he believes. No man believes anything that does not include him, so if the truth does not fit his belief, he tries to change it to fit what he believes in his own mind. This applies to the man of God too, the difference being that God reveals the truth to him and he is made aware that this is the only doctrine that will reach him in his condition. He is made to know what he is in nature and to realize the depravity of the fleshly creature and the vanity that has controlled his life from the beginning down to the time in which Jesus appears to him. This causes him to he render praise unto his God who has come to him, where he was, raised him up out of the pit he was in, placed his feet on a rock and caused him to stand on a firm foundation, the rock of ages.

When Jesus appeared to Paul, on the road to Damascus, Paul did not know him, but he sensed the power and the effect that the words had on him, then when Jesus told him who he was he could not deny the power with which the words came into his heart and soul. Jesus did not ask, or appeal to Paul' to get him to follow him, but as in all cases he simply told him to follow him and the apostle followed him without question. This Jesus, who was revealed to him, told him the reason for the revelation and what things he must do. This is what Paul was referring to when he said he did not learn it from man. Jesus was the glorified Messiah who had all power

and who changed the heart of the apostle forever, with the one word, for where the word of the king is there is power, how much moreso when that word is the word of the King of kings.

The response was immediate, as the Apostle Paul said *"But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the gentiles; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus"*. Paul received all of the information that he needed to preach Jesus by this revelation which he received on the road to Damascus, and in like manner so do all of God's children receive it, by revelation from God, and at his appointed time and way. They do not need for man to confirm or strengthen their faith, the only way that they can know God is by His revealing himself to them. They may receive comfort in fellowship with others of like precious faith, but they cannot teach them to know God. They have all tried in the earlier days of their experience to show to their loved ones the glory and the joy of their salvation, but it only drove them away and many times caused enmity or resentment in them.

The Apostle Paul knew beyond a doubt where and how he received his faith, and it was not from man or any institution of men. In his letter to the church at Ephesus he said, *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."*. Made accepted by God not accepted by man or based on a decision made by man. This and many other scriptures plainly state that the salvation of the children of God is the sovreign work of God by his grace and not by any effort or actions of the creature. In his letter to the church at Rome he relates the experience of Elias and how he made intercessions to God for Israel, and then he told what was God's response to him. God said, *"I have reserved to myself seven thousand men that have not bowed the knee to the image of Ba-al and even so then at the present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace"*. And if by grace, then it is no more works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. It is by one or the other, it cannot be by both since they are directly contradicting terms and cannot be a mutual basis of their salvation. This leaves any claim of man of having any part in his salvation, completely contrary to the word of God as recorded by the

Apostle Paul or any of the other inspired writers or prophets.

When Jesus asked his disciples, *"Whom say ye that I am"*, Peter said *"Thou art the Christ, The Son of the living God"* and Jesus told him that flesh and blood had not revealed this unto him, but His Father which is in heaven. On another occasion Jesus told his disciples that no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. These and many other scriptures declare plainly that the knowledge of heavenly things is a gift from God by his bountiful grace and no man can take this unto themselves in and of their own ability. God's ways are as much higher than the ways of man as the heavens are higher than the earth and his thoughts higher than their thoughts, so how can man presume to lay claim to this ability. The only ones that can make such a claim are those who are ignorant of the power, mysteries and the glory of the heavenly kingdom. They are even as those were in olden times who made an idol of ashes and fell down and worshipped it. They are without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

Many times the Apostle Paul used the phrase, *"This is a faithful saying, worthy of all acceptation"*, or *"This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou afflrm constantly,"* to call the attention of his readers to a basic point of doctrine regarding the salvation of the children of God. In the above scripture, he says, *"But I certify you, brethren,"* meaning, this is an important point of doctrine, that man does not initiate the contact with God. It is always received by revelation from God and is a direct communication with him.

Those who have been blessed with an understanding of spiritual things know from whence it comes and how it comes to them. They stand in awe of the majesty and glory of the things that they heve been given to see, and that have been revealed to them in the wisdom and mercy of their God. They are as the children of Israel were when they came to the Red Sea. The enemy was behind them about to overtake and consume them, the mountains on either side and the raging waters in front of them, then Moses raised his rod over the water and they parted before them and they went forth on dry ground. There is no record of any claiming credit for their deliverance, at that time, and none who have been delivered from their sins and corruption into the marvelous light of the gospel will either. Their salvation is too precious to them and the deliverance too dramatic to be the results of human efforts.

This truth remains with them for the rest of their lives, because it is the work of God and all his works are perfect. If this has been your experience, then you are one to whom the apostle was writing. As all of his epistles, they are addressed to all of those of like precious faith, not just to the church or individual to whom the letter was directed. If this is not true, why are so interested in reading and re-reading all of the writings of the

apostles and prophets. May God bless these words to your comfort and to your understanding, for nothing else will enable you to receive them, if indeed they contain the truth of the scripture as quoted above, other than the revelation of God.

In bonds of love,

Elder R.H. Campbell

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE INSTRUMENTS OF THE FOOLISH SHEPHERD

Preached on Thursday Evening, April 29, 1841 At Trinity Chapel, Alfred Street, Leicester

"And the Lord said unto me, Take unto thee the instruments of a foolish shepherd. For, lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land, which shall not visit those that be cut off, neither shall seek the young one, nor heal that that is broken, nor feed that that standeth still; but he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in pieces" (Zechariah 11: 15&16).

We find the prophets of the Old Testament continually directed by the Holy Ghost to sustain typical characters and to perform typical acts. Thus the prophet Hosea was commanded ***"to take unto him a wife of whoredoms,"*** I:2, by which we are not, I think, to understand that he was to marry a woman living in that state, but a reformed character who had been living an abandoned life. So Jeremiah was directed to make bonds and yokes, and put them upon his neck, (Jeremiah 27:2). This was a typical representation that the nations to whom the yokes were sent were to submit themselves to the king of Babylon. In a similar manner the prophet Zechariah in the text is commanded to sustain a typical character and that of a kind the very contrary to what he really was. He was ***"to take unto him the instruments of a foolish shepherd,"*** as a typical representation of such a character as should be raised up in the land, that by these visible and significant emblems a more lively and effectual representation might be given than could be expressed in words. He was not to become a foolish shepherd, but to represent one, and stand forth publicly before the people as a visible emblem of such.

But we may remark that he seems already in this chapter to have before sustained two typical characters, one that of a good shepherd, and the other that of Christ. That he was typical of the latter is most evident from what we read, verses 127 13: ***"And I said unto them, if ye think good, give me my price, and if not, forebear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter; a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord."*** This prophecy

was fulfilled when Judas Iscariot betrayed his master for thirty pieces of silver, and on his agony of remorse and casting them down in the temple, the potter's field was bought therewith. And that we may understand the literal meaning of the prophet's being valued at that price, we may remark that it was the customary value of a slave, and thus shadows forth, not only that Jesus was sold at the price of a slave, but that the prophet in his character of a good shepherd, which he seems to have sustained as a representative of Christ, was estimated by the people at *"the goodly price"* of a slave - apt representation of the value usually put upon the services of one who labours in the word and doctrine.

But we find that the prophet, before he was commanded to take unto him the instruments of a foolish shepherd, had taken two staves, each of which he had broken. It would seem that this was also a typical representattion of a certain work which must be done, in order for a wise shepherd's being known as such by the flock His first staff was "Beauty," which seems to me to represent figuratively the beauty of creature holiness. This staff, on which hundreds of false shepherds lean, and by which they seek to rule their flocks, he was to break asunder, typical of the breaking up of all creature beauty and fleshly holiness. And this staff was to be visibly broken, to shew that a minister must stand up, not in creature holiness, with sanctified visage and demure tongue, as if he in the pulpit were a saint, and the people before him were sinners, but to stand before them a ruined wretch, without help or strength, wisdom or righteousness save in the blood and love of the Lamb. His staff *"Beauty"* must be broken before their eyes, that they may see in his heart a copy of their own, equally vile, equally base, equally deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and so shivered and shattered in his hands, that he can neither lean on it himself for support, nor rule them with it as a rod. Then the poor of the flock that waited upon him for profit and instruction, knew that it was the word of the Lord in his mouth. Man's total ruin and the Mediator's complete salvation, the thorough wreck of creature holiness, and the perfection of the Saviour's righteousness, filth, corruption, and pollution stamped upon every thought, word and action of the sinner, and atonement, pardon and reconciliation, stamped upon every thought, word, and work of the incarnate Son of God, was a ministry that well suited the flock of slaughter, whom the prophet was commissioned to feed. Having been slaughtered in their own consciences, the poor of the flock knew that it was the word of the Lord.

The other staff which he took, and which also he cut asunder, was named "Rands," or "Binders," (margin,) and signified spiritually the breaking up of false union. For we read, ***"Then I cut asunder mine other staff, even Bands, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel."*** Judah stood fast with the Lord, when Israel, under king Jeroboam, departed,

and worshipped the golden calves that were set up in Bethel and Dan, 1 Kings 12:28&29. Therefore we read, ***"Ephraim compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit; but Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the saints,"*** Hosea 11:12. And again, ***"Though thou, Israel, play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend,"*** Hosea 4:15. The staff then, "Bands" or "Binder," typically represents false union, unholy brotherhood, unscriptural confederacy, a mingling together of sheep and goats in one pen, a heaping up of wheat and chaff on the same floor, a joining together of faithful Judah and idolatrous Israel, on the footing of similarity of sentiments, doctrines and ordinances, without union of spirit from divine teaching. Here then is a staff which false shepherds rule their flocks by, on the sole ground of Calvinism, or baptism, or church membership, or ***"our faith and order,"*** or any other human cement to unite, if possible, living stones and dead stones in one building. But this cement must be broken, "for the" living "stone shall cry out of the wall," pressed down by the dead blocking-course above, and "the" living ***"beam out of the timber shall answer it,"*** Habakkuk 2:11, from its place amid the rotten rafters, and the cry of the one and the echo of the other shall be, ***"Come out from among them, and be ye separate."*** When then this staff of unholy brotherhood is broken, and no union is allowed or recognized, but that which is based upon the Spirit's work in the soul, then the poor of the flock feed together as the flock of slaughter, and know that it is the word of the Lord.

But I feel I have wandered somewhat from the text, and therefore I return to it without farther preface. The command addressed to the prophet was, "to take unto him yet the instruments of the foolish shepherd." There is I think, much meaning contained in the word "yet," that is, "again, "once more," and I gather from it, that the staves, "Beauty," and "Bands" were also instruments of a foolish shepherd; but he was "yet," once more, still further, to take other such instruments so as to manifest more visibly and strikingly what a foolish shepherd is. By "foolish," I understand "ungodly," "regenerate," as the word is used in other scriptures, that is, destitute of heavenly imparted wisdom, and therefore in God's account a fool. ***"The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God." "Fools die for want of wisdom." "For we ourselves also were sometimes"*** (that is, in times past) "foolish, disobedient, deceived, &c., Titus 3: 3. We are, therefore, forbidden to call a brother, "fool," that is, to pronounce him unregenerate, and cut him off as destitute of spiritual life. The ***"foolish shepherd"*** is therefore a natural man lifted up by education, pride, covetousness, or presumption into a pulpit, and devoid of spiritual illumination, and heavenly wisdom. He has certain instruments which the prophet was to take as emblems of his character. What they were the Holy Ghost has not here informed us, but as we may gather

them from other parts of Scripture, I shall take the liberty to put them into his hand.

The first instrument and badge of this foolish shepherd then, shall be a mask. The instrument itself, perhaps, might not be known to the Jews, though well known to the Greeks and Romans, but the thing which it represents, viz., deceit and imposture, was as old as the times of Jannes and Jambres, the Egyptian magicians, who withstood Moses, 2 Timothy 3:8., flourished mightily at the court of Ahab, in the days of honest Micaiah, 2 Chronicles 18:5., and sadly plagued poor Jeremiah, 28:10&11., 29:26&27. Paul speaks of this when he said, *"Such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ,"* 2 Corinthians 11:13. So we read, that the prophets shall no more *"wear a rough garment to deceive,"* Zechariah 13:4. To wear a mask is to play a false part, to assume a fictitious character, to be a stage-player, for in ancient times the actors never appeared but in masks, the features of which imitated the persons whom they represented. Thus this foolish shepherd makes the pulpit his stage, his holy countenance being his mask, and his false zeal loud speech and impassioned rant his wardrobe; and thus, by craft and cunning he entangles the simple in his net.

The next instrument which I shall put into his hand shall be a sceptre – the badge of authority and power, to show that he is *"a lord over God's heritage,"* 1 Peter 5:3., and *"rules the flock with force and cruelty,"* Ezekiel 34:4. The third instrument shall be a pair of sharp shears, for we read that *"they clothe themselves with the wool,"* Ezekiel 34:3., and of course he must have something to get the wool off with. Not that the minister is not to have an honourable and sufficient maintenance, for *"who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof, or who feedeth a flock and eateth not of the milk of the flock?"* 1 Corinthians 9:7. *"Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel."* But to receive what is voluntarily given is a different thing from clipping off as much wool as possible, or cutting so close as to fetch blood, and take off a bit of the skin. His fourth instrument shall be a long whip that shall reach to every corner of the pen, to flog all that stir up the enmity of his carnal mind, by what he calls a discontented spirit, and by having imbibed what he terms antinomian and dangerous principles. Woe to all that will not bow down to his authority, or submit themselves to his instruction. Thus to offend his dignity will bring the long whip upon the transgressor's shoulders. As the apostle says, *"ye suffer if a man (that is, a minister) bring you into bondage, if a man smite you on the face,"*? Corinthians 11:90. So *"Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah, smote Micaiah on the cheek,"* 1 Kings 22:24 ; and thus, though protected by law and moral decency from being now smitten *"with the fist of wickedness,"* the exercised children

of God still have to suffer from *"the scourge of the tongue."* His fifth and last instrument shall be a bow and a quiver full of arrows, to reach those at a distance who are beyond the lash of the whip. The arrow is for those at a distance, the whip for those that are near; the latter is plied within the chapel walls, the former is aimed at those who are without them. These arrows are bitter words, as the Scriptures speak, *"who whet their tongue like a sword and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words, that they may shoot in secret at the perfect; suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not, Psalm 64:3&4".* And again, *"they bend their tongues like their bows for lies;" "their tongue is an arrow shot out," Jeremiah 9:3, 8.* And against whom are these arrows chiefly aimed? At the tried, tempted and exercised; at those who are sighing and mourning over guilt and corruption, at those who are harassed with many doubts and fears; at those who tremble at God's word, and at times are almost consumed with terrors. All who contend for the power of vital godliness, who *"have changes," Psalm 55:19.*, who cannot do without a feeling religion, who cannot rest upon doctrines and the letter of truth without the experience of them, and who boldly show their colours as standing in the ranks of vital, spiritual, experimental truth, especially if they be standard bearers, must expect to be marks for these envenomed arrows.

Thus far for *"the instruments of the foolish shepherd,"* the badges and insignia of his office, the emblems and visible signs by which he is at once to be recognized. But we will now come to his character which the Holy Ghost has here drawn; and as we learn much by contraries, it will afford us an opportunity of seeing from the contrast what the wise shepherd is. The blessed Spirit has given four negative and two positive marks, that is, he has described four things which the foolish shepherd does not, and two things which he does. The wise shepherd, therefore, will be his exact contrary; and there will be four things which he does, and two things which he does not. These four things are, that the foolish shepherd *"does not visit those that be cut off, does not seek the young one, does not heal that that is broken, does not feed that that standeth still."* The two things that he does are, *"he eats the flesh of the fat" — "and tears their claws in pieces."*

The Lord says, *"I will raise up a shepherd,"* that is, He will in His providence, and as an act of His judicial displeasure, raise up such a one as shall be a model and pattern of what a foolish shepherd is. Thus we read, *"I will choose their delusions,"* Isaiah 66:4.; and *"God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie,"* 2 Thessalonians 2:11. As an act of judicial displeasure, in order to punish the people who turned their ears away from the true prophets, the Lord would send them one of a different stamp.

1. Now the first thing said of this foolish shepherd is, that *"he shall*

not visit those that be cut off." Who are these characters here said to be "cut off?" They are the same whose mournful complaint we hear, Ezekiel 37:11, ***"Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off from our parts."*** That is, they are such as by a work of the law in their consciences are cut off from all creature righteousness, all false refuges, all deceitful hopes and rotten props, from finding any good in self, or resting on the testimony of man. We read, Romans 11:24, of the branch being cut out of the wild olive tree, and being grafted into the good olive tree, which is a striking figure of the way in which a vessel of mercy is cut off from the original stock, and grafted into Christ by way of manifested union The law working wrath, guilt, condemnation, and fear, is the knife in the hands of the heavenly husbandman that cuts the scion clean out and clean off from the original stock; and before this bleeding branch can be inserted into the good olive tree, it must lie upon the ground with all it native sap oozing and draining away. So must a soul lie helpless and often well nigh hopeless, until the heavenly husbandman takes up this bleeding branch, and inserts it into Christ by way of manifested union. Then it ***"partakes of the root and fatness of the olive tree,"*** spiritual grafting differing from natural grafting in this, that in natural grafting the fruitful scion is inserted into the wild stock, but in spiritual grafting the wild scion is inserted into the fruitful stock. But in both this grand truth holds that there are two distinct and successive processes, the entire disunion from the old stock, and the entire union with the new. But the margin gives another rendering, ***"those that be hidden."*** The people of God are a hidden people. They are, therefore, called, Psalm 83:3, God's ***"hidden ones;"*** that is, not merely hidden in his hand from eternity, and hidden in the secret of his presence from the pride of man, Psalm 31:20, but hidden from general view and observation. They are not those who blaze forth in a false glare of sparkling profession, nor rush presumptuously forward to take the topmost room, but through a deep sense of spiritual poverty, need, guilt, and pollution, are fain to hide themselves from all but a heart-searching God. Thus they ***"hide the word of God in their heart,"*** Psalm 119:11; and the word of God is in them like the leaven in the three measures of meal, Matthew 13:33, hid from the general eye, but working powerfully in secret. These cut off, or hidden ones, then, the foolish shepherd ***"does not visit."*** I do not understand by this word ***"visit,"*** a going about from house to house. The old Geneva translation reads, ***"shall not look for."*** In these visits, so called, there is often much more gossip and slander than unction and power, more unprofitable conversation than speech seasoned with salt, and we often separate more burdened than benefited. The figure is clearly taken from a shepherd taking his rounds through the fold, and examining each sheep as they are there collected together. The sheep are not scattered one in one

field and one in another, but gathered into one fold, so as to be all in one place under his eye. He visits them then when he goes through the fold, and stops to examine with particular attention every one that needs his care. So spiritually the pastor best visits his flock when they are all assembled before him, and he takes a view of them from the pulpit, as looking up to him for food and instruction. He visits the cut off when he comes down to their exercises, trials, and temptations, when he does not pass them by, but drops such words of encouragement and consolation as are suitable to their case. But this the foolish shepherd does not. He may indeed be most diligent in what is called visiting from house to house, and may fly about on wings of false zeal, or run through a weekly round of religious tea drinkings, and after all, be only one of those who *"creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins–"* But he never visits from the pulpit those that are cut off in their feelings from eternal life. Nay, he only shoots at and wounds such. *"Away with your doubts and fears Don't stand poring over your corruptions. Look to Jesus, take God at his word, lay hold of the promises. Religion is not gloom and melancholy, but joy and peace."*

Thus the foolish shepherd wounds and lacerates tender consciences, instead of binding them up. But the wise shepherd finds out, and visits such by describing the feelings of a cut off soul, he himself having experimentally passed through it, and by tracing out his experience and removing his stumbling-stones, is often blessed to his deliverance, or at least to his consolation. My congregation lies so widely scattered, some at twelve and fourteen miles distance, that what with that, and what with my weak health, I could not possibly visit all my spiritual hearers personally, but the desire of my heart is to visit them from the pulpit, by going round to the cases of all and each.

"Neither shall seek the young one." This is the second black mark with which the Holy Ghost has stamped a foolish shepherd. This *"young one"* is, doubtless, one of the *"new - born babes"* spoken of, 1 Peter 2:2, who are said to desire the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby. *"The distinctive mark of these is, that they "have tasted that the Lord is gracious."* They are not such as are fully delivered into gospel liberty. They have tasted, not fully drunk; have had a crumb and a drop, but not been brought to the banquet and the fountain. The foolish shepherd then does not seek *"the young one."* With him it is all presumptuous confidence and unwavering assurance, and he that does not stand upon a high mountain, he believes to have no standing at all. The early bloom of faith, hope, and love, when the green buds push into leaf and flower, the spring time of the soul like the present smiling season, when all is bright and flourishing, the days of our spiritual youth, when the secret of God was upon our tabernacle, when there was a spirit of prayer, and an

appetite for the word, and a zeal for God's glory, and a pure affection to his family – of this sweet, though usually short, season the foolish shepherd knows nothing. He leaped into full assurance at once, and became a man without passing through the stages of infancy and youth. Thus this *"young one"* he never seeks. He knows nothing of his feelings, and, therefore, cannot describe his case. He has no milk for such babes, nor can he condescend to those of such low estate. But the wise shepherd seeks out such. He knows just where they are, both their hopes and their fears, their standing and their dangers. Thus as he goes his rounds through his flock he seeks to trace out the work of grace in such, neither damping their hopes, nor pushing them beyond their real standing, strengthening all their spiritual encouragements, and yet not thrusting them presumptuously forward, keeping them among the lambs, and not sorting them out among the sturdy rams and travailing ewes. He will seek to warn them against trifling with convictions, being lifted up with pride, giving heed to every plausible professor, being entangled in the snares of Satan, and the lusts of the flesh, running here and there with their comforts till they have all dribbled away; and, as a tender nursing father, he will counsel and instruct them to the utmost of his ability of all the dangers and difficulties that beset their path.

The third positive dark mark against this foolish shepherd is, that *"he does not heal that that is broken."* I think that we have in these different characters mentioned in the verse successive steps of experience. We have, first, the cut off, that is, those who are under a sentence of guilt and condemnation; then *"the young one;"* those that, by some sweet discovery of His love, have tasted that the Lord is gracious; and now we come to *"the broken;"* these seem to represent those that have lost their first love, that have inwardly backslidden from their God, that have become entangled in some snare spread for their feet, that have been drawn aside into worldliness, carnality and pride, and so have swerved from the simplicity of the gospel, from the fervour of their warm affections, from the sincerity of filial obedience, and from their submissive yielding themselves up to be moulded as clay by the hands of the heavenly potter. Thus, their affections, hopes, and desires, their simplicity and godly sincerity, their spiritual comeliness and uprightness, seem marred and defaced. Their vigorous health is broken; and they, instead of being sprightly lambs cropping the tenderest foliage and bounding up and down the fold, have become sickly and diseased. They are now where Job describes himself to be; *"My purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart; (17:11) Thus, their purposes of living to God's glory, of loving Him with pure affection, of walking with Him in communion, of serving Him with pure obedience, are all broken and defaced. Their "judgement, too, is broken,"* as is said of Ephraim, Hosea

5:11. Not that they doubt the truth and reality of the doctrines of grace, but their judgements respecting themselves, where they are in the divine life, their own state before God, the reality of their own experience, the certainty of their own salvation -- in these deep soul-matters they are broken in any judgement which they can form concerning themselves. In a word, all their religion seems broken up, and they themselves broken down. Now, this broken sheep the foolish shepherd never instrumentally heals. He knows neither the disease nor the suitable remedy. His judgement has never been broken, for, knowing the truth clearly in the letter, no confusion takes place in his head, the seat of all his religion. His arms are not broken, for he can always take God at his word; his legs are not broken, for he can run when and where he will, through God has never sent him; his back is not broken, for he still stands upright, and has never put his mouth in the dust; and his heart is not broken, for the hammer of God's word has never yet fallen upon that rock, Jeremiah 23:29 Thus, he can never instrumentally heal that that is broken. But the wise shepherd has been more or less taught these lessons by painful experience. He has been broken as a vessel in which God seemed to have no pleasure, and been in some measure bound up. Therefore he can bring suitable remedies for the broken of the flock. The atoning blood of the Saviour, the tender compassions of His bosom, His glorious justifying righteousness, the freeness of grace superabounding over the aboundings of sin, the unchangeableness of God's mercy and love – these, and similar remedies, the wise shepherd brings before the broken of the flock, and when divinely applied they heal his wounds.

But we come to the fourth thing which the foolish shepherd does not *"He feedeth not that that standeth still."* Some of the Lord's quickened family are reduced to such straits in soul experiences as to be able to move neither forward nor backward. They dare not go forward, lest they rush into presumption; they dare not fall backward, lest they tumble headlong into despair. Nor dare they turn to the right hand nor the left, lest they swerve from the king's highway. Thus they are forced to stand still, not from cowardice, not from sloth, not from unwillingness, but from sheer inability to move. They are cast, and cannot get upon their legs. Now to this sheep food is to be brought. He is not to be kicked up as lazy, nor struck with the crook as stubborn, nor thrown over the hurdles as dead, but he is to be *"fed."* Nor are docks, nettles, and thistles to be brought to him, but as Agur prayed, *"food convenient for him,"* that is, food suitable to his state and condition The tenderest herbage, and the softest and clearest water is to be brought him, not that trodden down and fouled with the feet of the fat and the strong, Ezekiel 34:18, but *"the latter growth,"* (that is, the spring crop, the Hebrews beginning the year in the autumn,) *"after the king's mowings,"* Amos 7:1. But

cannot get its own living, he will not bring food to what he calls standeth still. If the sheep cannot get its own living, he will not bring food to what he calls "a lazy antinomian," though he has no eyes to distinguish sickness from sloth, spiritual inability from carnal unwillingness, and the standing still through godly fear from death in sin.

Such are the four negative marks of a foolish shepherd, that is, the things which he;does not do. But there added by the Holy Ghost two positive marks, that is, there are two things which he does do. ***"He shall eat the flesh of the fat,"*** that is he shall not take that which comes, that which is offered him, but he must go through the flock, and select the fattest for his own eating. The priest's joints were the breast and the shoulder. Exodus 29:27&28, not the leg and the loin. He was to have good food and enough food, but not the fattest and the best joint of the whole. The word of God sanctions an honourable and competent maintenance for a minister, but it is to be freely and volutarily given. But the foolish shepherd manifests a grasping, covetous, infatiable spirit. He seeks not the flock but the fleeces and he will sacrifice truth, mangle the gospel, and preach to please professors with the sole end of filling his own pocket. To take thankfully what is given freely is one thing; to be dissatisfied with what is given, and be clamorous for more is another. To eat the flesh is allowable, to grasp after the flesh of the fat is dicreditable; to feed the flock as a shepherd, and eat of the milk thereof 1 Cor. 9:7 is honourable, to feed the flock as a grazier is disgraceful. ***"And shall tear their claws in pieces."*** This is the second positive mark of the foolish shepherd. Sheep, then, have claws! Aye, surely, and some of us have been sorely scratched by them. And these claws too they will sometimes exercise upon the shepherd. When then the foolish shepherd feels the scratch of these claws, he puts forth all his strength, and tears them in pieces. He does not rule with kindness and gentleness; he does not guide them with the sweet constraints of love and affections but first starves the living family, and then if they do but scratch him with their claws, he rends them in pieces. Their claws are the objects of his attack, that is he lays hold of any expressions of theirs which have been directed against him, and severe remarks made upon him, any complaints of his ministry, any doubts of his Christianity, any objections to his Arminianism, any censures of his conduct. These claws have scratched him, and wounded his pride and consequence. He must therefore retaliate, and these claws he will lay hold of, seizing every word that has been said against him or his ministry, and rend them in pieces as manifesting, he says, a bitter and unchristian spirit. A wise shepherd will not act thus. He will not return blow for blow, nor stripe for stripe. If scratched by the claws of some of his sheep, he will rather bear it in silence than make divisions and contentions, and rend the flock asunder. He will not take up every harsh thing said against himself or his min-

istry, nor be jealous of his own honour and dignity, bringing forward into the pulpit his own cause and glory instead of the cause of God and the glory of Christ; but will be more or less actuated by the spirit of Him who when He was reviled, reviled not again.

We see then, drawn by the pen of the Holy Ghost, the marks of the foolish and wise shepherd. Keep them in your eye. You are commanded to try the spirits whether they be of God. You are to be the judges of every minister who comes as an ambassador from the Lord. Examine him well, scan his features carefully, weigh him accurately. God has given you his portrait-compare the man and his likeness. Has he then the marks for or against? Does he visit the cut off, does he seek the young one, does he heal the broken, does he feed that that standeth still? If he does not agree with these four essentials, he is a foolish shepherd, be he what he may.

Again, does *"he eat the flesh of the fat, and rend their claws in pieces?"* Is he covetous and contentious: grasping and quarrelsome; a flatterer of the rich, and oppressor of the poor; a Demas and a Diotrephes? Then is he a foolish shepherd, he is in the church or in the chapel, in robes of priestly dignity or ungowned plainness. Never mind his holy countenance and solemn demeanour his grey hairs and silvery tongue; these are but, the rough garment to deceive. Watch his ministry and his actions. Look at him in the pulpit and out of it. Turn him about and look at both sides. the negative marks and the sensitive, what he is not and what he is.

My friends, I have spoken these things this evening as a disinterested person, not with a view to exalt myself, for I assure you, I am often tried as to my call to the ministry, though not without, at times, both inward and outward testimonies, nor to aim at any particular minister or ministers. You are placed in peculiar circumstances from the want of a stated minister, and being so much in the habit of hearing different supplies at this and other chapels. I have sought then to lay before you the features of a wise and foolish shepherd, as drawn by the blessed Spirit. Try by them all whom you hear. Let not pretensions suffice. Examine their credentials; put them into the scales; watch their words; and above all look narrowly at their spirit. And if they come not up to, or vary from the marks of a wise shepherd; still more, if they tally precisely with the character here given of a foolish shepherd, unceremoniously reject them. God has not sent them; and in rejecting them you act by His authority and walk in obedience to His word. May He give us eyes to see, hands to act, and feet to walk, in strict accordance with His own unerring testimony.

J.C. Philpot

Sent in by:
W.R. Pullig
10220 Ridgely Drive
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IF THEY SHALL FALL AWAY

"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." Hebrews vi. 4-6.

The leading thought of Paul's argument here is expressed by his words, for it is impossible ***"to renew them again unto repentance."*** The other portions of his argument are subsidiary to this leading thought. The renewal of these characters would, on such an hypothesis, "crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." This would be an impossible: ***"crucify the Son of God afresh,"*** as it is ***"to renew them again unto repentance."*** Many persons in reading this Scripture think that because the apostle uses the word "if," that it makes his argument conditional, and signifies that he meant it might be either way with those persons. The word "if" does not always mean a condition actually existing, but frequently it is used for the sake of illustrating by the hypothesis of a supposition. Paul uses it many times this way. In Romans, chapter eleven, the apostle, speaking about the way God saves his people, declares emphatically that they are saved by the election of grace, ***"And if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace; otherwise work is no more work."*** He says it is by grace, then adds, If it be of works. Can it be either way? Why does he use the word "if" as though it were contingent, conditional or doubtful? His argument is to show the wrong way, or that which is no way, as well as the way of holiness. Many other places he brings in suppositions by using the word "if." In the Scripture at the head of this letter where he says: ***"If they shall fall away,"*** does not prove that they shall fall away. I am surprised to find an Elder among the Primitive Baptists who takes the position that those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, are not the children of God, but that they are the non-elect. He says that if these are the children of God spoken of here by the apostle, then the Arminians are right in claiming that God's people can fall from grace. I have never found it prudent to dodge any point of Scripture teaching to thwart the argument of an Arminian.

Let us consider briefly the five very important things which Paul has used to delineate the special and effectual calling of his chosen people.

"Those who were once enlightened." Does this mean the enlightenment of the world? Has the wisdom of men entered into the minds of these

persons to give them light which they did not possess previous to that enlightenment? If this denotes the reception of worldly wisdom, it then must be acquired by study or labor of some kind, or infused by their fellow-creatures. Paul, in speaking of this enlightening, says: ***"I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."*** This enlightenment comes from the great Fountain of light, for he is the ***"true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."*** Expounders of Scripture may take the above word ***"world"*** to mean this natural or physical world, but inspiration has made a distinction: ***"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." - 1 Cor. ii. 12-14.*** The true Light is the fountain of wisdom only to them who are born in the spiritual world. This birth manifests them so that they see the true Light of spiritual day; the Daystar arises to them in all of his beauty. The Lord himself will enlighten his people, and at the proper time, the appointed time, he will command, ***"Let there be light,"*** and light shineth in darkness, but the darkness comprehendeth it not. How wonderful is the power of our God. David says, ***"The Lord my God will enlighten my darkness."*** There is a power displayed by Almighty God in the physical world which can be seen by mortal man, and though he tremble and fear at God's power over the elements of nature he soon forgets what he has seemed to learn. David was acquainted with the power of God's might in this respect when he said, ***"His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled." - Psalms xcvii.***

"And have tasted of the heavenly gift." This second time the apostle speaks on the same line, connects it with the word ***"and,"*** showing that it is similar to the preceding phrase. It seems plain that he is alluding to the same mighty work of the Lord, but uses different words to make it more impressive. They have tasted of something, what is it? The heavenly gift. Can a dead sinner taste of so high a gift and still remain dead? The heavenly gift is a gift that comes from heaven. Jesus says that he came down from heaven, and it was not to do his own will, but the will of his Father which sent him. Jesus is that heavenly gift. If a man taste of that gift he shall never die. A taste of that gift gives life, quite different from the natural taste. Jesus says, ***"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life."*** A taste of the heavenly gift is

sufficient for all time and eternity; it is so sweet and precious that the heavenly flavor never leaves the tongue, but springeth up in the soul as a fountain of living waters. They henceforth eat and drink in ***"my Father's kingdom,"*** and the all important food is the flesh of Jesus Christ's body, and the drink is the blood of Christ; one place it is called the blood of God. They taste, eat and drink wherever Christ is exalted a Prince and a Savior to give repentance and remission of sins unto poor sinners. It may be when conversing on the subject of God's mercy, or when they hear the glad tidings by the proclamation of the gospel, or in meditating upon his holiness and love for poor worms of the dust.

"And were made partakers of the Holy Ghost." I cannot for an instant think that such strong language has allusion to sinners dead, who remain dead in trespasses and in sins. Those who were made partakers of the Holy Ghost must be those whose names are written in heaven, those whose names are written in the palm of God's hand. The same names appear in the Lamb's book of life, written there before the world began. These persons are well secured by Jehovah long before they are needed to show forth his praises. When the time of manifestation comes God makes them partakers of the Holy Ghost. This is evidence of their primitive standing in the Ancient of Days. This third phrase of the apostle is in line with the two preceding, and cannot mean that any except but God's favored people are made partakers of the Holy Ghost. Jesus told his disciples to fear God and not to fear man, and that when arrested by men to take no thought what they should say, ***"For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say."*** The Holy Ghost is God. There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost; these three are one. It is inconsistent with all Scripture teaching to say that natural men have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost and still remain natural, dead.

The fourth phrase follows in the same line of argument; it refers to the elect, the objects of God's love, and for whom the Son left heaven to accomplish their redemption. ***"And have tasted the good word of God."*** If this was put in opposition to the second thought of the apostle in this connection, it would do no violence to the sentiment involved in the text. To taste of the heavenly gift is the same as to taste of the good word of God; certainly he that tastes of the heavenly gift must taste of the good word of God. Jesus is the Word of God, and no doubt will stand as the good Word of God. The written word or the testimony of the word might be meant here, but I would rather think the apostle meant Him who is recorded on high, though the printing does not signify that he is meant. God's people are born again by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. The word of the Lord endureth forever, and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you. In the

last two references I have always believed that the Word mentioned was nothing short of Jesus Christ.

"And the powers of the world to come." Those who taste the good word of God also taste the powers of the world to come. They who have been with Jesus on the holy mount have tasted the powers of the world to come. How could one be dead and taste the powers of a world not yet come to him? It is for the living in Jerusalem to taste of this unseen power; it is only through the channel of faith that they see the country which is far off, yet nigh, made so by revelation. Their eyes have not yet seen it, their ears have not yet heard the heavenly songs, neither has it entered the carnal heart what God has prepared for the world to come, but revelation has brought it nigh, the revelation of Jesus Christ, *"to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."* This is when the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings to the poor and helpless of the flock who are ready to famish. Then there is rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Can these who have experienced such wonders fall away? Did God ever love the characters spoken of in the text? He most certainly did love them, or he never would have wrought so powerfully in them. Our God is no try god, one that tries experiments on the family of men to find out what man will do for him. Where he begins a good work he *"will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." "He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law."* They are kept by the power of God unto salvation every step of the way. How shall they fall away? If they shall fall away it is impossible to renew them again. God loved his people with a great love; even when they were dead in sins he loved them with an everlasting love. Who shall separate them from that great love, that everlasting love? Let the same holy writer that wrote our text answer: *"Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."* This is great and strong evidence. Dear children, rest in the Lord, for in the Lord is everlasting strength.

In hope of immortality,
J. F. Beeman
Helena, Okla., Aug. 19, 1907.

"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil."— HEBREWS vi. 19.

ANCHORS, you know, are made of different sizes. You may walk in the Queen's Dockyard, and there you may see anchors for a boat, and anchors for a three-decker. Yet all anchors are made in the same

way, and are designed for the same purpose; and the little anchor that holds the boat is as useful and as much an anchor as that which holds the three-decker. So spiritually. There is hope in the heart of the babe. But the hope in the heart of a babe is but as the anchor of a boat; yet it holds that babe as firmly as the anchor holds the boat to which it is moored. But as the Lord increases hope, he increases the size of the anchor; and as the vessel and its anchor always bear a proportion to each other, so when he enlarges the size of the anchor he increases the size of the ship. Nay more, as he increases the size of the ship, he increases its burden, for these two are proportionate. Thus hope takes a more vigorous hold within the veil; it enters more deeply into the presence of God; it takes a firmer grasp of covenant engagements, electing love, the immutability of God's purposes, and the unchangeable nature of the great eternal I AM. Have you not felt at times your hope sweetly enlarged, so that it almost attained to the "full assurance of hope?" Scarcely a cloud remained between you and God; and you believed you should ride triumphantly into the haven of bliss and peace; and having these blessed sensations in your heart, you could part with life itself at that moment to fall into the embrace of your God.

J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to a call by Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church for a presbytery to meet on the above date for the purpose of the ordination of Brother Robert Rector, Brother Joe L. Hamrick, Jr., and Brother John Hamrick as deacons of Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, the following elders and deacons met and organized themselves into a presbytery:

Elders

Deacons

The presbytery elected Elder Jimmy Hamrick as moderator, and Raymond Haygood as clerk.

The moderator called for the candidates whereupon spokesman presented the candidates to the presbytery.

After due examination of the candidates as to their qualifications as deacons of Hopewell Church:

1. A motion was made and seconded to continue the ordination.

2. The presbytery selected Elder C.C. Morris to word the prayer and Elder Jimmy Hamrick to deliver the charge. The ordination was then conducted by the laying on of hands and with prayer by Elder C.C. Morris. The charge was delivered by Elder Jimmy Hamrick.

3. The right hand of fellowship was given to Brother Robert Rector, Brother Joe L. Hamrick, Jr. and Brother John Hamrick by the members of the presbytery, which then by motion and second delivered them back to the church.

4. Hopewell Church, by motion and second, received as duly ordained, Deacon Robert Rector, Deacon Joe L. Hamrick, Jr., and Deacon John Hamrick. The right hand of fellowship was given them by Hopewell Church members, visiting brethren and sisters, and friends.

5. A motion was made that the moderator and clerk prepare minutes of the presbytery, presenting each candidate a copy, sending a copy to The Signs of The Times, and preserving a copy for Hopewell Church.

6. Minutes of the presbytery were read and approved. The presbytery was dissolved in order by prayer by Elder David Harrell.

Jimmy Hamrick, Moderator
Raymond Haygood, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with Danville Church on fifth Saturday morning and Sunday following the 28th & 29th of March.

We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

Elder C.B. Davis, Moderator
Sister Bernice Mitchell, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held at Dan River Church the fifth Sunday in March 1998, hosted by Big Meadows Church. All who love the truth are invited to meet with us. Song service will begin at 10:00 a.m., preaching at 10:30.

Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Bro. Casey Johnson, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 1997

Mrs. Beulah Nichols, VA	$3.00
Mrs. Norma Smith, VA	2.00
Mrs. Mae Johnson, OK	7.00
Mrs. Willie G. Shelton, VA	2.00
Lovie A. Thompson, NC	2.00
Mrs. Lessie A. Cox, VA	2.00
Reed Harper, TX	2.00
Mrs. Charles Lovell, VA	2.00
Mrs. Erma C. Sowers, VA	2.00
Mrs. Dura Lavinder, VA	7.00
Mrs. Loyce Evans, MS	2.00

George W. Hyslip, TN 20.00
Victor H. Laws, MD 14.00
Tillman R. Pullig, TX 2.00
Mrs. Allyse M. Page, TX 15.00
Cleo L. Underwood, Va 10.00
Howard Peters, VA 7.00
Thomas C. Nichols, VA 2.00
Mrs. Cliff Weaver, WA 15.00
Mrs. Pearl McNelia, MD 2.00

NOTICE

Please give us your change of address. You not only miss your paper, we do not know new address to contact you.

Editors

OBITUARIES

ELDER OLIVER V. ALLEN

Elder Oliver V. Allen, pastor and beloved member of Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church died September 8, 1997. He was born October 31, 1910, in Onslow County, N.C.

Elder Allen was a firm believer of Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. He was an elder in the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association for more than forty years. At the time of his death he was pastor of Sand Hill and Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Churches.

He is survived by his wife of sixty-four years, Sister Alice Allen, two children, six grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, one brother and two sisters.

Brother Allen loved the brethren far and near. He was a man of peace, and strove for peace among the brethren. He was loved by all who knew him. He is greatly missed by all.

Written by request of Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church in conference - one copy recorded in the church book, one copy to the family, and one copy sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Elder J.T. Prescott, Moderator
Evelyn Pratt, Clerk

IRVIN BLANE CONNER

Brother Conner was a member of Salem Primitive Baptist Church for many years and always looked forward to meeting his "Brethren" there.

He was born February 28, 1906 and died October 6, 1997. He is survived by his wife Una Sowers Conner; one sister, Virgie Conner; and fifteen nieces and nephews.

The funeral was conducted at Salem Primitive Baptist Church by his pastor, Elder Hale Terry, with burial in Restvale Cemetery, nearby.

Brother Conner was a faithful member and attended church regularly as long as his health permitted.

The members of the church feel that their loss is his etemal gain!

Written at the request of Salem Church.

Julian H. Ruthough

BROTHER LESTER HAROLD FOSTER

Brother Harold Foster beloved member of Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church, died at his home September 17, 1997 after a long illness. He never complained about his suffering, but humbly continued to praise God for His mercies and blessings. His faith in Jesus and salvation by grace and grace alone remained firm.

Brother Foster was born January 17, 1936 in Duplin County, N.C. He is survived by his wife, Sister Sarah Jane Foster who lovingly cared for him through his illness. They both united with Stump Sound Church May 23, 1993. They were baptized in June 1993 by Elder Oliver Allen and Elder J.T. Prescott.

He is also survived by their three children, four grandchildren, and four brothers.

Brother Harold loved the brethren and his fellowman. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

Written by request of Stump Sound Church in conference - one copy placed in the church minutes, a copy to the family, and one copy sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Elder J.T. Prescott, Moderator
Evelyn Pratt, Clerk

PSALM 116:5.

Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.

HATTIE GRIFFITH WALKER

It grieves me to try to write an obituary of our beloved sister Hattie Griffith Walker of 1827 Maryland Avenue, Eden, N.C. She was born September 17, 1917 and died October 5, 1995 at her home. She was a member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. She was a faithful member at church as long as she was able. She and her husband Adolphus Walker joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church August 28, 1975, and was baptised by her deceased pastor Elder D.V. Spangler.

She worked for Fieldcrest Mill until her retirement. She was the daughter of James Marion Griffith and Ada Scott Griffith. She had three daughters, Ruby Walker Jones of Danville, Virginia, Doris Walker Salmon of Cascade, Virginia, Patricia Walker Dishmond of Eden, North Carolina. One son Elwood Walker of Charlotte, North Carolina. Three sisters Fannie G. Dix and Ruth G. Pope of Pelham, North Carolina, Lucille G. Woodall of Eden, North Carolina. One Brother Frank Griffith of Eden, North Carolina. Eight grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted at Fair's Chapel in Eden, North Carolina by her pastor Elder Kenneth R. Key. She was buried in Dan View Cemetery Eden, North Carolina.

Written by request of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church.

Lottie Minter

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

COME, blessed Spirit! source of light!
Whose power and grace are unconfined,
Dispel the gloomy shades of night,
The thicker darkness of the mind.

To mine illumined eyes display
The glorious truth thy words reveal;
Cause me to run the heavenly way,
Make me delight to do thy will.

Thine inward teaching make me know,
Thy wonders of redeeming love,
The vanity of things below,
And excellence of things above.

While through these dubious paths I stray,
Spread like the sun thy beams abroad;
O show the dangers of the way,
And guide my feeble steps to God.

Let thy kind Spirit in my heart
Forever dwell, O God of love;
And light and heavenly peace impart,
Sweet earnest of the joys above.

Beddome.

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EDITORIAL

WISDOM

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

There are two kinds of wisdom; worldly wisdom and the wisdom of God. I fear that I have very little, if any, of either. One must have some knowledge and understanding before he can show forth wisdom. He might show great worldly wisdom in right judgments, yet cannot judge in spiritual righteousness before he is born again; *"for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor.2:14. "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." 1 Cor.3:19.* Only a child of God will fear (filial fear) God; and, *"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction." Prov.1:7.* This filial fear is caused by "the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." To us is given wisdom: *"For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." Prov.2:6. And, "When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee: to deliver thee from the way of evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things." Prov. 2:10-12.*

Brethren is this wisdom not a wonderful gift of God? It is a portion of our inheritance; for we are (I hope I am included) the heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. Rom.8:17. The fulness of our inheritance shall not be ours while we sojourn here on earth, but in heaven when our Saviour shall come again to receive his redeemed bride and present her before the throne of God the Father without spot or blemish or any such thing.

Paul said to the Corinthians, *"For after that in the wisdom of God, it*

pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." 1 Cor.1:21. Who are they that believe? They are the called of God. ***"But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." 1 Cor.1:24.*** The disciples of Jesus asked him why he spake in parables unto the multitudes and he answered, ***"Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but unto them it is not given."*** Matt.13:11. In Luke 8:10, ***"that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand."*** Who does see and hear and believe? ***"This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." John 6:29. "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Phil.1:29.***

Jesus Christ is made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption. We are in him, he is in the Father, and the Father in him. No man can comprehend this, but we believe it, for it is the word of God. If we believe in him, then we are his children, and must walk in him and suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. Rom. 8:17. If we have not the Spirit dwelling in us, then we are none of his, (Rom.8:9.), and the preaching of the cross would be foolishness unto us, as it is unto them that perish, ***"For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." 1 Cor.1:18-19.*** I trust, however, that the preaching of the cross is not foolishness unto us, and that we rejoice in the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation, to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Rom.1:16. There are Jews who require a sign, and Greeks who seek after wisdom; ***"but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." 1 Cor.1:18-24.*** Paul said unto the Corinthians (and to us, if we are among the called), ***"And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought." 1 Cor.2:4-6.*** They would not have crucified the Lord of glory if they had received the wisdom of God.

Who are they that are perfect? Surely we know that no man is perfect in the flesh, for there is no good thing in our flesh. ***"So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be the Spirit of God dwell in you." Rom.8:9.*** This is a mystery, ***"Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations, but is now made mani-***

fest to his saints; to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." Col.1:27. If Christ dwells in us, then we are made perfect; not in the flesh but in the Spirit. In 1 Peter 1:15-16 we read, *"But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; for it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."* That which hath been made holy is perfect: we cannot make ourselves perfect. If we have been made perfect it is according to the grace of God in Christ, *"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence." Eph.1:7-8.* After being saved by the mercy of God, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, we are made to believe the word of truth, the gospel of our salvation: and we are sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. Eph.1:13-14. This purchased possession is our body, the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which you have of God and you are not your own, for you are bought with a price; the precious blood of the slain Lamb of God.

A prayer of Paul was, *"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe."*

Jesus said unto his disciples, *"If ye ask any thing in my name, I will do it. If ye love me, keep my commandment. And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." John 14:14-18.*

Beloved brethren, James tells us, *"If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given unto him. But let him ask in faith, not wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed."* I beg an interest in your prayers of faith.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

VOICES OF THE PAST

GALATIANS VI. 16.

"And as man as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."

Christians are not to be indolent or inactive. God has called them by his grace, quickened them by his Spirit, written his law in their hearts, and translated them from the power of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son; and all this is done for them, not only to secure their ultimate happiness in the world of glory to which they are destined, but also that they should shew forth the praises of him who has loved them and given himself for them. To this end God has blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. The apostolic benediction in our text is not pronounced on as many as stand still, but as many as walk according to a certain rule, to which we propose to call the attention of our readers presently.

The frequent admonitions addressed to the saints, in the New Testament, to be vigilant and active, plainly show that the saints of our God have a race set before them, which they are called upon to run, a warfare in which they are to fight, hardness which they are to endure as good soldiers, burdens to bear, and offices of love and kindness to perform in the house of God, all of which demand constant diligence and activity. It is certainly to be lamented that at this day many who seem to entertain a hope in Christ, who love God and who delight in the society of his people, relish the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, who mourn when Zion mourns, and rejoice in her prosperity, and yet seem to feel but little if any conviction of the importance of the Savior's command, to take up their cross and follow him. It is true they are ready, in theory, to admit that it is both the duty and privilege of all heaven-born children, to walk in all the ordinances of the house of God, blamelessly, and to follow the footsteps of their Lord and Master in all his ordinances, but still indulge the idea that it is proper for them to remain inactive, because they feel impressed with a sense of their unworthiness, and because they are sometimes oppressed with gloomy doubts and dismal fears, in relation to their hope. Should all of the redeemed family of our God, who are subject to the like doubts and fears in relation to their personal interest in the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, take the same position, there would be very few, if any, left to walk according to the rule of our apostle. Those timid, tried, tempted children of God, who are thus excusing themselves from taking an active part with the saints, because of their sense of

unworthiness, would not hesitate a moment to recognize all others who relate to them the same exercises, as the children of God. Indeed nothing short of these very exercises would be by them received in evidence. Should any, for instance, relate to them the very experience which they are so anxious to obtain for themselves, they could not fellowship it. Suppose one should come forward and say, *"I have no doubts, no fears, I have no sense of unworthiness, I feel perfectly satisfied that I am worthy, and that all is right on my part"*; the poor, self-abased, trembling lamb of the flock of Christ would reject such an experience as delusive and vain. And yet many of them will excuse themselves from bearing the yoke of their dear Lord, because they have not the same exercises. It is certainly the case that many if not all of God's children will recognize in others, evidences which they condemn in themselves, and ask for themselves such evidences as they would at once condemn in others.

But, to return to the consideration of our text, *"As many as walk."* Although many may seem to stand still, our text implies that there are some that walk, and on them the peace and mercy of God is pronounced. But it is not only necessary that God's living children should walk, but it is still more important that they should walk correctly, uprightly, or according to the apostolic rule. Many may have a zeal which is not according to godliness. And the saints are commanded to withdraw themselves or turn away from every brother that walks disorderly. Not because they do not walk at all, but because they do not walk orderly. The feet of the ungodly are swift to shed blood, and many walk in forbidden paths, in a way that seems right unto a man, but the end of which are the ways of death. Some, in walking as described in the Scriptures, walk as those who go to the correction of the stocks, or as the young man of whom we read in the seventh chapter of Proverbs, who walked after the strange woman, not knowing that her house is the way to hell, leading down to the chambers of death. Some walk in the light of their own eyes, and of the sparks which they have themselves kindled, but from the hand of the Lord they shall lie down in sorrow.

As the apostle speaks of a rule by which the saints are to walk, how important it is that we search diligently for that rule, Where shall we find it? Whatever may be said in favor or against the rules of morality or religion, which have been adopted by good men or bad men, we certainly have a right to consider all rules unsafe for us, which are not clearly laid down in the Scriptures of truth by divine authority. The Old School Baptists profess to take the New Testament as our only infallible rule of faith and practice in all matters relating to the kingdom of Christ. Of the correctness and infallibility of this rule there can be no doubt. *"To the word and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, [which is our rule] it is because there is no*

light in them." "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." And as the Scriptures thoroughly furnish the man of God with a rule for every good work, no other rule can be required, as he has no other than good works to be engaged in, and it follows also that all works performed by any other rule, or not by the Scriptures, must be evil, as they cannot be good works. Many works of a religious pretention are reputed good by men of the present degenerate age, for which the Scriptures furnish neither rule nor authority. But the Scriptures reject all such as the works of darkness, the hidden things of dishonesty. How important it is that we work, as well as walk, according to the divine rule, since every man's work shall be tried so as by fire, and our God is a consuming fire. Nothing unauthorized by him will be accepted as obedience, or regarded as works of righteousness.

A rule is an exact measure; just so much and no more, therefore if we take the New Testament as our rule in religious matters, that rule requires us to observe all things whatsoever our Lord Jesus Christ has commanded, and as we are not allowed to do less, so we are equally reprehensible if we attempt to do more. To suppose that we can please God by doing what he has not commanded, or by leaving undone what he has commanded, is to set up our own wisdom above his, and thereby insult his divine majesty. The Judaizing teachers pretended to aim at a higher standard of holiness than that which was held forth in the gospel, but they entangled the saints with the yoke of bondage, and sadly bewitched some of them. When Israel of old had no king, every man did that which was good in his own eyes; but the spiritual Israel has a King, and if we were capable of judging for ourselves, we would need no rule. Inasmuch, therefore, as God has given a rule, it becomes us to walk according to it.

But it was our design to call the attention of our readers more particularly to the rule for the christian walk, as stated in the chapter which contains our text, and its connection. The New Testament rule is introduced by Paul, in settling the disorders which disturbed the churches of Galatia; and having so applied the rule as to detect and expose the wickedness of the doctrines and commandments of men in religious matters, he proceeds to admonish the saints to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. That liberty he shows to be of a spiritual nature, and only to exist where the Spirit of the Lord is. He draws the contrast between the fruits of the Spirit and the lusts of the flesh, and presents the rule which requires the crucifixion of the flesh with the affections and lusts; *"For," says he, "if we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."* Walk after this rule and we shall not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another,

envying one another. This rule is to be faithfully adhered to in our relative duties one with another. It reads thus: *"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one."* Here is the command. It is not given to the carnal, or to those christians who have not, or do not, crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts, but it is given to them which are spiritual. The rule will not allow any but the spiritual to be engaged in the restoration of erring saints. But not even the spiritual are to act, only in strict accordance with the rule. How then shall they restore such an one? Suppose they could restore the delinquent in any other way than that commanded, would that answer? Certainly not. The rule requires that it shall be done in the spirit of meekness. Why should this be so essential, seeing the erring brother is restored? Because the spiritual brother or brethren are liable also to be tempted, and there is no other safe course but strict adherence to the rule. Again, *"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."* All this is to be done according to the rule; for he says, *"Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."* How fearful the admonition! By laboring with carnal or fleshly motive, even in our professed labor to restore an erring brother or sister, although our brethren may be mocked, and think we have done our duty to the rule, according to the letter and spirit of the gospel, God is not mocked. His piercing eye detects the lack of humility in us, and the fleshly, selfish motives in our hearts, secreted from our brethren, and will assuredly turn on us a harvest of corruption. Well might the apostle say, *"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."* This is the rule on which the holy apostle insists, that outward circumcision, which is in the flesh, availeth nothing. He is not a Jew now, who is one outwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart in the Spirit, whose praise is not of men but of God. We are the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Here we see the spiritual and antitypical circumcision is the manifestation of the new creature, or the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness, and hence it is said, *"If any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature."* While, then, the new creature and the old creature both exist in us, there is strife, and the rule for our christian walk must be brought to bear, and that rule demands that the old man be put off, and the new man be put on, and in this spiritual frame, with the flesh and its affections crucified, the world crucified to us, and we to the world, we are to walk in all the

ordinances, laws and institutions of the house of our God. This is our rule, and the only divinely authorized rule for us. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

But in Paul's day there were *"Many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: whose mouths must be stopped; who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." — Titus i. 10, 11.* They are all unruly who walk not according to this rule, and who depart from this rule, whatever they may substitute for it, are vain talkers and deceivers, and their influence has been sadly felt in the church at a much later date than that in which Paul wrote to Titus.

In conclusion, we will remark, "this rule," is in perfect harmony with the whole letter and spirit of the gospel of God our Savior. While the doctrine of the gospel teaches that salvation is wholly by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast, this rule is applied only to them who are already saved, quickened and born of the Spirit. It excludes all the fruits of the flesh, and until we are born again we can bear no other than fruits of the flesh. First make the tree good, and its fruits will be good. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that comprehends all that we are or can be, or can produce until born again; and after the new birth, this rule excludes all the lusts of the flesh, and approves only of the fruits of the Spirit. This rule, therefore, calls for none of the works referred to as a means of procuring a new birth, but directs their manifestation as the evidence that they who are capable of walking according to this rule are certainly born of God, and led by his Spirit.

The unregenerate, and more particularly among them, the Arminian workmongers and will-worshipers, can see no reason why, if our doctrine be true, christians should work at all. They tell us that if they believed our doctrine, they would live as they list; they would take their fill of sin, and live upon the theory, once in grace always in grace. We are not at all surprised to hear them belch forth such doctrines, for these sentiments are the natural productions of the flesh, and show plainly that those who hold them have never been born again, and consequently possess within them no fountain that can send forth any other streams than those selfish, muddy and polluted waters. The rule cannot apply to them, for if they should crucify their flesh with the affections and lusts thereof, there would be nothing of them left, it would use them up. But where God has implanted the spirit of immortality, the fruits of the Spirit will be produced in evidence thereof. Again, it is often slanderously reported that the doctrine of the gospel, as held by us, leads to inertness, if not to licentiousness. But those who are instructed in the school of Christ, know that the truth of the gospel and the practice of the gospel go harmoniously together; and the rule securing peace and blessedness to the Israel of

God, unites the doctrine and practice of the gospel together. The immortal and incorruptible seed implanted in them, is born of God and loves holiness, loves truth, loves righteousness and loves all that is approved and lovely in the sight of God.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

Middletown, N. Y., November 15, 1856.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN: I am sending something on my subscription, and thought I would like to say a few things to the dear editors and readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. For these many years it has withstood all the fiery onslaughts of its Babylonish enemies, as well as those coming from the camps of Israel. We do not (as some who were once our brethren do) want to look at that as being the grace of God sustaining all old things or all numerous things, but, taking the holy Scriptures as our guide, when we find the ***"speckled bird"*** being hated, boycotted and all the venom of the spirit of darkness hurled at her, then we may rest assured that God is upholding her by his grace, reigning and controlling his subjects.

Brethren, the Baptists (there is but one body of genuine Baptists; the balance are impostors, yet God's visible kingdom is not known in history by name, but by her walk and doctrine) have always contended that God was a sovereign Ruler of not only his children by regeneration, but of all the posterity of Adam. Christ taught this glorious doctrine, and all the apostles taught it after him. From the apostolic church we are able to find a few here and there, down through the ages, who rejoiced in the fact that the God they worshiped was omnipotent and omniscient. But should we lose sight of this visible kingdom we are not to despair, believing that God has failed in any of his glorious promises. He is faithful that promised (Heb. x. 23), and inasmuch as he promised to build the church and preserve her so that the gates of hell shall not prevail against her, we may rest assured that to-day he is keeping her as his chosen church. ***"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." - Psalms cxxvii. 1.*** Here in language that fell from the lips or pen of the sweet Singer of Israel do we find that the Lord builds the house. All plants not planted or builded by him shall be rooted up. (Matt. xv. 13.) We find in a perusal of Old Testament characters that by an eye of faith they were looking forward to the day when the promised Messiah should come. The law they were under was, to all outward appearances, a conditional law. If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat of the good of the land. (Isaiah i.19.) But how did they come out in such a yoke being placed on them? Their nation was trampled under foot and the inhabitants scattered to the four winds of the earth. Now we understand that this law was literal to them, but it had something hidden in it that had a spiritual signification. We are told that the law was a schoolmaster to bring us to

Christ. (Gal. iii. 24). Dear storm-tossed child, how has it been with you? That law that you thought to be unto life you found to be unto death. Indeed, that law was a gruff schoolmaster. Uncompromising and unmerciful. It demanded all and granted nothing. But, try as you could, you could not get life by it. So when your gods were all used up, it brought you to Christ. But now the Messiah comes! The *"in the day"* period of time has arrived! Righteousness has looked down from heaven and truth has sprung out of the ground. Fear not, Joseph, to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. (Matt. i. 20, 21.) Take courage and lift up your drooping faces, for Jesus paid the penalty that was justly due as yours. It was his people who were in debt and he came at the appointed time for their redemption. Ten thousand talents in debt and not a farthing to pay. But he canceled the debt and paid with his blood for all your sins. He took the law and it was nailed to the tree of the cross with him. Before going away he established, set up or founded his church as a visible organization. He had, by his own blood, purchased the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife. His salvation was secure, but being timely creatures they were to be in left in the world. They were not of the world, as he was not of the world, so their worship, their conversation, was to be as becometh saints. Now, brethren, this church is a divine institution. Christ is the Head of the church that he alone built. He needed not, nor sought the help of man in building this church. Man could not help when he was crucified. He could not help in any of the work he (Christ) did while here in the world, because all that he did was for the salvation of his people, and vain would be any part man would have in it. In this church he alone gave all the laws and ordinances that she would ever need. Before going away he left them a glorious promise, that when he was gone the Comforter would come. What was that for? When the Spirit of truth is come he will guide you into all truth, for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak, and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. (John xvi. 13, 14.) This kingdom is built by sovereign, reigning power, and in the same measure that human merits are used in the commencement of it, just so is it kept that way. Have you heard that the church is about gone? Have you been told that Old Baptists need to get out of the rut? Have you heard it said that those churches that preach predestination and one salvation are not progressive and are in a cold state? These things are but the working of the Sarah-minded children of the kingdom. *"Look now (Abram) toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be." - Gen. xv. 5.* This promise was from God, and he said it shall be. Yet

we find that Sarah doubted at the promise and set up the first "ladies aid society." But let us remember that God was to set up a kingdom that should not be destroyed. It shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces all these Babylonish kingdoms and shall consume them (I suppose that is why all Arminians call the Old Baptists parasites, living on their converts), and it shall stand forever. (Dan. ii. 44.) By inspiration the curtains of time were raised and Isaiah was given to look down to that distant date and see Jesus. Hear him break forth in singing, ***"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God. The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Isaiah ix. 6,7.*** O dust of the earth, where do you come in? O man, what a vain creature art thou, to think that by thy flesh you might perpetuate this kingdom. The Lord alone adds to his church daily such as should be saved (Acts ii. 47), and I cannot find a creature salvation in this, although it was in time. But to the Lord belong only eternal things. Time is the allotted days of the world, but it is only part of the eternal things of God, so I am persuaded that the things the Lord saves his people from in time is only that everlasting salvation. We are accused of being the heretics in the new departure, but search history as you may you can find the saints contending that God designs all the afflictions, tribulations and darkness of his people, and that for the trial their faith, which is a time salvation, but wholly of the Lord.

Now let us look at the dear saints of this kingdom. Paul says, ***"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." - Rom. viii. 28.*** That being true, let us rejoice in a sovereign God, because whom he foreknew them he also did predestinate, etc. Now who is going to distinguish between those things that are called evil as to what work good? Shall we be guided into all truth by the Spirit of truth, or will designing men make the discrimination? Poor, weak, puny man, by nature, cannot discern the things that are working good for His people. If we are led by the gentle influence of the Spirit it is not ours to say that any one of the many evils in the world works, in itself, good, but that all things work together for good. Does this make or cause God's people to be licentious? God forbid. It does not show the love of Christ for his little children to hide behind the face that the Bible teaches all events as working to the good of his people. Instead of that, there is much comfort in the thought that in the days of the apostolic church a people accused them of

saying, Let us do evil that good may come. The writer calls this a slanderous report, and those with the same spirit are to-day making the same charge. God's people are commanded to do right; nay, it is their duty to do right, and no one can say when he is tempted away that God tempted him. The Spirit alone teaches righteousness. However, let us make it plain that all the wrath of man shall praise him and the remainder he will restrain. This ruling his kingdom belongs to the Lord; if he does not rule it and keep it we are taught that the watchman waketh but in vain. Not only is it necessary that he rule his kingdom. If he did not do that, then we have no assurance that the church will stand any longer. And I firmly believe that could Satan or his hordes thwart God in the carrying on of the work of his kingdom here in the world, that the same power would be able to keep some of the trophies of his everlasting love out of heaven.

In a sweet hope,
Elder W.D. Griffin

JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH.

"Because thou hast said, These two nations, and these two countries, shall be mine, and we will possess it; whereas the Lord was there." - Ezekiel xxxv. 10.

Ah, the enemy rejoiced at the desolations of Zion, he saw that she was now weak and defenseless. All that passed by tbe way did pluck her. (Psalms lxxx. 12.) Yes, she looked to be an easy prey to the ravening foe, who thought all he had to do was to invade the land, enter her palaces, (Micah v. 5,) and hold everything in everlasting possession. There was one thing that did not enter into their counsel: *"The Lord was there."* Ah, poor, sin-stricken, tempted, afflicted, chastened child of God, though all the delightsome land to thee lieth waste, and thou art bereaved of all thy pleasant things, (Lam. i. 7,) though thou art weak, and Satan's messengers sorely buffet thee, (2 Cor. xii. 7,) though thy heart is sighing over thy wretchedness and spiritual destitution, and thy tears are upon thy cheeks, thus saith the Lord, *"Yet will I not forget thee."— Isaiah xlix: 15.* He will not utterly forsake thee; though he hath spoken against thee and chastened thee sore, he hath not given thee over unto death. (Psalms cxviii. 18.) He earnestly remembers thee still, he will surely have mercy upon thee. (Jer. xxxi. 20.) Ah, but you say, I am so foolish, the Lord knoweth my foolishness, and my sins are not hidden from him. (Psalms 12cv. 5.) My forgetfulness, ingratitude and perverse worldliness have procured all this desolation and famine that is upon me. (Jer. ii. 17.) Ah, yes, my chastened soul well knows that not without cause(Ezek. xiv. 23,) has the Lord suffered all these evils to befall me. O my soul is cast down within me, and the enemy mocketh my soul, *"saying, God hath forsaken him: persecute and take him; for there is none to deliver him." -- Psalms lxxi. 11.* O thou afflicted one, tossed with tempest and

not comforted, when the enemy shall come in like a flood,the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him. (Isaiah lix. 19.) O yes, the stricken, smitten, chastened child of God shall know that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin, and that Emmanuel's obedience is her justifying beauty in the eyes of her Lord, and that in his covenant faithfulness he will redeem his people from all adversities. He will in due time arise and have mercy upon Zion, and thoroughly plead her cause. (Jer. 1. 34.) He will, in the set time (Psalms cii. 13,) say to the invading, spoiling, devastating foe, Hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther. The invading powers of darkness shall be turned back; yes, poor, desolate, chastened child, thy God hath not left thee; though as an overflowing scourge, as a mighty flood thy foes, the world, the flesh and the devil, thine unbelief, sore trial and the powers of darkness have made havoc of thy life before God, the Lord will help thee, and that right early, and in his help and salvation thou shalt arise from the dust and put on thy beautiful garments, thou shalt again *"be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry."* -- *Jer. xxxi. 4.* And the name of the city from that day shall be, The Lord is there [Jehovah-Shammah]." -- Ezek. xlviii. 35.

Frederick W. Keene.
North Berwick, Maine.

"When thou passet through the waters, I will be with thee." – Isaiah xliii. 2.

How many of the dear saints of God, when they have been brought into tribulation and sorrow, have found the fulfilment of this most gracious promise! And is there not one of these waters through which all must go– that deep and rapid Jordan which every one must pass through? How dark and gloomy those waters have appeared to the eyes of many a child of God, in whom is continually fulfilled the experience of the words, ***"Who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."*** But how often have these waters only been terrible in prospect, in anticipation. How different has been the reality. When he comes down to the river's bank and his feet dip in these waters, and it appears as though they would rise higher and higher, the Lord suddenly appears in his power and presence, and then the water sinks. He speaks a word of peace to his soul upon a dying bed -- reveals Christ in his love and grace and blood– removes those doubts, fears, and disturbing thoughts which have perplexed him for years, and brings into his heart a holy calm, a sweet peace, assuring him that all is well with him, both for time and eternity. Has he not then the fulfilment of the promise, ***"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee?"***

Elder J.C. Philpot

SERMON ON AMOS 7:8
BY
ELDER LOYD WALL

A few weeks ago I read a verse of scripture and have had some meditations on it. This morning it is back again. There is no way to get it out of my mind because I stayed awake this morning until 20 minutes until 2 o'clock. I got up and turned the light on to see what time it was. I took a nap after that. I don't believe there is any way in the world to get away from the Lord. And I am going to tell you also that the devil can't get away from the Lord, either. And I will tell you the reason why I can't get away from Him. Because if I am not altogether deceived He gave me a thorn in the flesh. Since I was 11 years old, old Satan has really been a thorn to me. He goes everywhere I go. He gets ugly. And I have done more than Paul did, if I am not over-judging. Paul prayed twice for God to remove his thorn. And the answer was everytime ***"My grace is sufficient for thee".***

Brother John Bain, who we laid back to the dust a few days ago, said he didn't know if he had ever prayed in his life, but he had done a lot of begging. That is what I am saying. I've done a lot of begging God to remove this thorn out of my flesh; this messenger of Satan that buffets me. But I never have gotten God to trade with me. Never have. He never would. And right now I want to say that I am thankful that He doesn't trade any. Because if I could get Him to trade one time I know by experience, I would lose every bit of confidence that I have in Him. God's confidence is all we need. And the reason why that God the Lord didn't save the Apostle Paul from this thorn is because He is an unchanging God. The Bible says that. ***"I am the Lord and I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."***

I don't desire to hurt the feelings of any human being. But more especially here of late I hear so much about accepting the Lord, and God wanting people to be saved. I don't want to hurt those people's feelings that advocate that. They believe that because they can't help it. But I am going to tell you that according to the teachings of the scriptures that is not the way it is. God's people accept the Lord because they can't help it. One might ask the question, ***"Well, do they accept Him contrary to their will?"*** No, that is not so. They are always willing to accept Him and yet it is not of them voluntarily to do so. They are made accepted in the Beloved.

Now I want to give you something else. It is not left up to you to acquaint yourself with the Lord. And according to the text that is on my mind you don't have to get out and look Him up. we are going to prove that by the scriptures. I would like to call your attention to the last verse of the 46th chapter of Isaiah, and I want you to pay close attention to my reading if it be God's will. I am a very poor reader. Isaiah speaking out here, he said, ***"I bring near my righteousness".*** Now the book plainly teaches that ***"except your righteousness ex-***

ceed the righteousness of the scribes and the pharisees you have no part with God." And we know what the scribes and the pharisees were. They fasted twice a week and paid tithes of all that they possessed and they were not like other people. Now I didn't write that, and you didn't either, but that is the truth. Do you find anybody doing that? Do you? I want to ask you a question. Do you find people out paying a tenth of all that they earn, regardless of how much it is needed at home? My book says charity should begin at home. Do you find people that fast? Do you find people that say that they are not like other people? That they are better than so and so? Do you find them? I want to ask you. I am just asking you a simple question. I think you do.

Now he says, ***"I bring near my righteousness".*** Not yours, but his. And He didn't leave us to guess how near He brought it. ***"It shall not be far off and my salvation shall not tarry; and I will place salvation of the Living God."*** So I want to ask you a question, dear hearers. What did it leave for you to do when He places salvation in Zion? I want to ask you. What in the world has the poor creature of the dust to do? What in the world did it leave Him to do when He said that He placed salvation in Zion, and then I want to tell you that you don't need to guess where salvation is, because the Apostle Paul says, ***"In Him."*** In who? In Christ is salvation. Neither is there salvation in any other. Now I want to ask you one more question, and that is, doesn't that cut out all hardshell preaching, too? I mean preaching about bringing salvation to anybody. What is the reason why a hardshell preacher can't bring salvation to anybody? It is because they can't bring it to themselves. They don't need to bring it. They don't have to, because God places it there in Zion.

I would like to call your attention to a scripture that I read a few days ago, because it is in harmony with that one that I just read; it is found in the 7th chapter of Amos, verse 8. I believe again that it says what it means and it means just exactly what it says. The Lord here asked Amos something. We read, ***"And the Lord said unto me, Amos, what seeth thou?"*** Now we don't have to guess who asked Amos that, do we? The Lord asked Amos that. Not a preacher, not a deacon, not a lay member, not an organization, but the Lord asked Amos, ***"What are you seeing?"*** Amos saw something, or the Lord wouldn't have asked him. He would have told him what He wanted him to see. ***"What thou seeth, Amos?" "And I said, A plumbline".*** Amos told the Lord just what he saw, ***"A plumbline". "Then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumbline in the midst of my people Israel: I will not again pass by them any more."*** My dear hearers, we know that a natural plumbline is what carpenters use in building a building. And we know that a natural plumbline does not make a crooked wall. But I tell you what you can do. You can take a building after it has settled and after it has been built for some time and you can stretch that

plumbline to the plummet and it will show you every crook and every flat place that is in the building, and I want to tell you that a natural plumbline will do that. And I want to tell you dear children of the Heavenly King, until Israel has a plumbline placed in the midst of them, they won't know anything about their crooked ways. And I want to tell you, dear children, that the Lord has just one plumbline and that plumbline is His Darling Son, for in Him is salvation, neither is there salvation in any other. When He places that plumbline within your very being, that plumbline, which is Christ Jesus, shows you every crook and every turn that is in your very being. And it makes the individual to confess that sin is mixed with all that he does. Why does it make him confess that sin is mixed with all that he does? It is because there is no sin about this plumbline, as sure as you live.

And now too, I want to tell you one more thing. I am going to have to preach what I believe this morning, if I preach at all. Now children of God, if you stretch a plumbline down the side of this building and I want to tell you, it shows you where it is crooked, and where the crooked places are in this building. That plumbline will not make the building straight, by no means. And I want to tell you something, dear children of the Heavenly King. When Christ is born in you, the hope of glory, that doesn't make you to quit sinning. It just shows you what a sinner you are and it makes you to hate sin. It makes you to wish that you could never sin again, as sure as you live. Now as the plumbline does not straighten up the building, but only tells you there is a little crook here, and a crook there, there is no perfection in them. I'm talking about that place, now. I want to prove that. Even though after Christ is born in them the Hope of Glory, because the Apostle Paul said, *"In me is no good thing, that is in my flesh." And you know, he said, "I thank God that with my mind I serve the law of God, but with my flesh the law of sin."*

I want to ask you, my dear hearers, would you have known anything about your crooked ways until the plumbline was placed by you? You didn't reach up and get it and you didn't go to where it was. It came to you, as sure as you live, and you know the reason why it came to you? It came because in the beginning your mother, Eve, transgressed. She transgressed; in-that home back yonder in the garden, so she was separated from her head. There wasn't a way in the world that poor Eve could go to Adam. Why? Because she had fallen in sin. And what caused her to commit that sin? She transgressed the holy law God had given, and you know, where there is no law, there is no sin. So did Sister Eve. She violated the law. She fell under sin, and when she fell under sin her whole being ultimately became crooked. And I am going to have to preach this hard doctrine, as sure as you live.

Solomon said in Ecclesiastes, *"Consider the work of God; who can make that straight which God has made crooked."* I want to tell you, there is not enough preachers in

the United States or in the whole world, to make one perfect in this time world, as sure as you live. So Eve was separated from her husband and there wasn't a way in the world that poor old Mother Eve could go back to Adam. You know that Adam had to go to Eve, as sure as you live, and because of the love he had for that woman, he was willing to go down in sin, knowing what the results would be. And he took of that fruit, as sure as you live, because of the love he had for her. He was willing to die for her and that is exactly what he did. And when he did, that put every one of his posterity into sin; every last one of them.

Now, if you know any human beings who came from anyone except Adam, then you might get them out of the condition that they are in. But everyone that is his offspring, that is, everyone that came from Adam and Eve was born in this horrible condition. They were born in sin, and a destitute condition, and there is nothing they can do about it. They could not, and we cannot go to Christ, just as Eve could not go back to Adam after she fell. We are just as helpless to go to Christ as Eve was to go to Adam. I am going to prove that by the Bible, and don't make me out a horrible person if I fail to do that. Now, they both have transgressed the law, and God put a curse on the earth, and I want to tell you that He used different language when He cursed the earth, because curse means death with God. You know, we might use thesame language and call that cursing, but that is not. A curse means death, as sure as you live. And so God cursed the earth for man's sake and it brought forth thorns and thistles. And then God drove man out of the garden, and his wife with him.

And you know, the tree of life represented Christ Jesus, and it was also in the midst of that garden. The Godhead then said, ***"Man has become as one of us to know good and evil."*** And lest they reach forth and take of the tree of life and live forever, they were forbidden to stay. I want to prove that to you by the Bible. ***"And he placed a Cherubim and a flaming sword which turned every way"***, not to keep them away from the tree of life, no, because that tree of life didn't need such. But that which I want to get to is to keep the way of the tree of life; lest man reach forth and partake and live forever. And I want you to tell me where in the word of God it says that sword has ever been taken down from around that tree that keeps the way of the tree of life. As sure as you live, it never has been taken down. I want to prove that to you, because Jesus said in the 6th chapter of John that ***"No man can come to me except my father who sent me draw him".*** You know the reason they can't come? Because there is a flaming sword turning every way which keeps the way of the tree of life. The tree doesn't need keeping, itself, because it is the way of life, as sure as you live. And as long as eternity remains it will keep the way of the tree of life.

I want to tell you something, brethren, when I started on this subject, I said he would place salvation in Zion Forever more. He said, *"I will place a plumbline among Israel, and I will place it there."* And in the land of Eden He put His only begotten Son in the person of Jesus Christ, here upon this low ground of sin and sorrow. And the Bible says He was born on this wise. *"And when Joseph was espoused to Mary before he knew her he found her with child"*, and you know, he being a just man, he thought to put her away privately. But while he thought on these things, behold the angel of the Lord appeared to him in his sleep and said to him, *"Fear not Joseph, to take unto thee Mary, thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. For she shall bring forth a Son and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."* Isn't that what Isaiah has said, when he said, *"I place salvation in Israel,"* and isn't that what Amos saw when he saw that plumbline and God told him, *"I will place a plumbline in the midst of Israel. I will not pass them by any more."* And then when that plumbline came, it was Jesus, and he gives proof. And I want to tell you one thing. There is no crook in the person of Jesus. He is the plumbline, as sure as you live. And I want to tell you something else, He is not only straight, but He is strait. And He said for all His people, *"Strait is the way, and few be that go that way". "Strait is the gate, that leads to life everlasting, and few there be that find it."* I will tell you just how many are going to find it; yes, everyone that had that way placed in them, as sure as you live. In every one that believes has that plumbline been placed there. He says, *"I go before my sheep. I put them forth and they do follow me. And a stranger they will not follow because they know not the voice of a stranger."*

You know, children, I want to preach now what I believe. You never would have given your heart and life to Christ. No. No. But Christ was given to you in eternity. As sure as you live. I want to prove that by the Bible. *"No man is able to pluck them out of my hand, for my Father who gaveth them me is greater than all".* Oh yes, no man is able to pluck them out of My hand. The Lord told Amos, *"I will put a plumbline in the midst of Israel.. And I will not again pass by them any more".* And you know, Paul said, *"I am persuaded that things present, or things to come, or height or depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord."* Oh, that is a sweet promise to me, that He won't pass us by any more. And now Jesus, who was born in Bethlehem of Judah and was born of a virgin, and with all those miracles He did, it didn't cause people to move toward Him. Oh, no' But let me tell you, the only ones who did believe were His sheep, as sure as you live.

You can't find in all the pages of the Bible that everything doesn't happen just like He planned it. No where is

there any goats made into sheep. It didn't even make them want to be a sheep. They didn't have the want to. And I will tell you the reason why they didn't have the want to, because He said, ***"For this cause I will send them a strong delusion that they should believe a lie and be damned, who receive not the love of the truth, but have faith in their own righteousness."*** The next verse says, ***"We are bound to give thanks always for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, for God hath from the beginning chosen you into salvation through sanctification and belief of the truth."*** Are you not for all eternity, to give thanks for it? I will tell you also, dear brethren, if there was something we could do, we would do it but; Paul said, Brethren, we are bound to give thanks always to the preacher? Oh, no, no. Give thanks unto the church? Oh, no, no., but we are bound to give thanks always unto God for you brethren, beloved of the Lord, for God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. Now then, do you know Him, who for something like 33 years went about preaching, and then was crucified? Before they crucified Him, He said, ***"But it is needful that I go away. For if I go not away, the comforter shall not come."*** And brethren, I want to tell you something else. He didn't send it to the non-elect. But He said, ***"I will place a plumbline among Israel"***, and Israel is His people. And He said, ***"I will place salvation in Zion"***, and not in the world, but in Zion. As sure as you live.

Now I want to prove to you that when God sent out He didn't say, ***"Go among the goats"***. Oh, no, no. But to one people. And you know, when He sent the twelve, not to go to the general public, but to the lost sheep His twelve, they were sent He told them of the house of Israel. I want to tell you dear hearers, they never were sent among the non-elect. And they never will be sent unto the non-elect. God sends them, as sure as you live, not to do their own will, but the will of Him that sends them. And He told the twelve, ***"Go not in the way of the Gentiles, but rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."*** And while Christ was preaching to those lost sheep of the house of Israel to whom He was sent, He said, ***"other sheep have I which are not of this fold. But them must I also bring."*** I want to tell you one thing, if He hadn't brought the Gentiles to that fold, the plumbline would never have been among them. As sure as you live. Why? Because the Gentiles couldn't go to Him. That is why they know that no one can go to Him except the Father which sent Him draw them. And He said, ***"Other sheep have I which are not of this fold. Them I must also bring. And there shall be one shepherd and one fold."*** Oh, dear children, have you ever felt the plumbline? It doesn't vary. It doesn't turn, either to the right or to the left. It is straightway, as sure as you live. It doesn't wait for me and you to decide to have everlasting life.

But there is a way opened. And that is the way that Isaiah spoke of in the 35th chapter when he said, *"And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness: The unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools shall not err therein."* You know the reason why those that err are not there? You would have to turn aside to get in this way should you err, and that is why there is no erring in that way, because there are no errors in that way. That is a straight way. That is a plumbline. There is no error in the plumbline which is Christ Jesus, as sure as you live.

Now He said, *"I will place a plumbline among Israel, and my people, and I won't pass them by any more."* And also He said, *"I will bring near my righteousness and it shall not tarry. I will place salvation in Zion among my people for my glory, saith the Lord."* Now then for the Jews I will preach other sheep have I which are not of this fold, them also will I bring, and there shall be one shepherd and one fold." And you know, He said then, *"It need be that I go away, for if I go not away, the comforter will not come. But if I go away, I will pray the Father and he will send you the Spirit, which the world cannot see."* It has been there a long time, and that is another sermon, as sure as you live. He said, *"I will send to you another spirit, which the word cannot receive, and it shall take the things of mine and try to show them unto you? No, no. And it shall take the things of mine and show them unto you."* I want to tell you, my little children, that He will save you from sin unto Himself. That is the plumbline, because God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, these three are One, as sure as you live. And you know, He told them to qo to Jerusalem, and there came unto them a message from on high. And the number was about 120, and out of every nation, kindred, tonque, they were assembled at that place when the Holy Ghost came. I heard a man this morning over the radio, I won't call a name, but I heard the man say as he was preaching on Holy Ghost baptism, that you can go to the altar and say, "Lord, Lord" until the Holy Ghost comes. And that, I want to tell you, is making fun of the Holy Ghost. I believe that is blaspheming the Holy Ghost. I want to preach what I believe, now, if God will allow me to do so. They were told of God to go to Jerusalem and there tarry until visited from on high, and it came upon the group, like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the whole house. What was it He said for them to do? He said to go there and tarry. And the Bible says in another place, *"Be still and know that I am God."* Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. I want to tell you one thing. You don't have to go anywhere, or to any altar. Why? Because He said, *"I will place a plumbline among Israel, my people. And I will place salvation in Zion."* I will tell you, brethren, you don't have to go anywhere. And He told them at Jerusalem, *"And there*

tarry." Stand still. Stop your works. And there tarry until you are endowed from on high. And it came a rushing and mighty wind, and it filled the whole house. Everyone there spoke in his own tongue and everyone understood the words of God. You can take a man, I don't care how able he is and you can send him to preach all over the United States over the radio and over the TV and every church house, and I guarantee you, it won't profit anything unless that plumbline had already got there before the preacher gets there, as sure as you live. Why? Because they won't understand it, and I am going to prove that by the Scriptures. Paul didn't know who the children of God were; I know he didn't. Only the Lord knew who they were. Paul and Barnabas preached, and they didn't know who was and who wasn't. And they said, ***"Seeing that you put it from you, and count yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo we turn to the Gentiles. When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the name of the Lord."*** Did everyone of them do that? No. The book tells us just how many were glorifying the Lord, and how many weren't. ***"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the name of the Lord, and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."*** I want to tell you that ordained means set apart. Everyone that the plumbline had been placed in, that one is the one that salvation had been placed in. And I want to tell you, they can't help glorifying the name of the Lord.

Transcribed from a recorded sermon by Elder Loyd Wall, Bivins, Texas December 1980.

MEETINGS

NOTICE

Elder R.H. Campbell, an associate editor of the "Signs of the Times" from Memphis, Tenn. and Elder D.R. Cabbage from Maynardville, Tenn. will be with Danville Church, Danville, Va. the Lord willing on Saturday before the fifth Sunday in March.

On Sunday following they will be at Dan River Church for the West Country Line Union meeting. Following the union meeting a presbytery will be formed for the purpose of examination and if found to be qualified, the ordination of Brother John Collie to the office of Deacon.

All lovers of the truth are invited to these meetings.

Editors

GLENWOOD CHURCH

Glenwood Church, Princeton, W.Va. announces a Saturday meeting, May 30, 1998, starting at 10:00. Those coming by way of I-77 take exit 9. Turn left onto 460W. Go 5 miles, turn right on to 19N. Then immediately left onto Glenwood Park Road, 1 1/2 mi. to church on left. Those coming by way of 460, follow the same directions from the I-77- 460 intersection.

Elder Larry Hollandworth, Moderator
Sis. Marilyn Shaw, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 1998

Mrs. Martha P. Thornton, VA	2.00
Mrs. Elizabeth T. Helms, VA	2.00
Justine Alexander, AR	2.00
Gray Hall, AL	7.00
Bobbie B. Adcox, AR	2.00
E. Wade Watson, NC	7.00
Walter Hill, NC	5.00
Larue S. LeBlanc, LA	5.00
J.C. Chandler, NC	2.00
Claudis Q. Tucker, LA	7.00
Elder Jesse Foreman, NC	2.00
Elder Alan Terry, VA	2.00
Woodrow Bellingter, NY	2.00
Ms. Joyce Farley, TX	15.00
A.A. Malone, AL	7.00
W.L. Knight, NC	7.00
Lovie Hornsby, GA	2.00
Mrs. Nancey B. Allen, NC	10.00
Elder Walter B. Wilson, CA	7.00
Mrs. Virginia Apple, NC	2.00
Maxey Delp, VA	2.00
Lloyd C. Spikes, OR	20.00
Mrs. Margaret Carter, NC	2.00

OBITUARIES

OBITUARY OF DANIEL STAFFORD HOUSTON

As requested, the dear Lord willing, I will write a few words in memory of our dear Brother Deacon, Stafford Houston. He was very near and dear to me and I esteemed him very highly.

He was the son of the late George Henry and Jannie Parcell Houston. Brother Stafford married Edna Smith January 17, 1935. They were blessed to live together 62 years and 8 months.

He and Sister Edna received hope and asked for a home with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church March 25, 1979 and were baptized on April 22, 1979 by his pastor, Elder O.K. Tench along with his sister Edna Eames. He was a faithful member, always doing jobs that needed to be done and working on the church grounds. Although he lived a long distance from his church, he was the first to get to church on his meeting days, supporting the church in any way he could. Weatherford Church looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift in Brother Stafford. They therefore called for a Presbytery to look into his qualifications and found him qualified and he was ordained to the office of Deacon on June 26, 1983. Brother Stafford served that office well.

He was stricken with an incurable disease and suffered much, but he bore his afflictions with patience. I feel he witnessed with the Apostle Paul and felt the time of his departure at hand. I fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only but unto all them also that love his appearing. The Lord saw fit to call him home on September 3, 1997 at the age of 84 at Franklin County Hospital, Rocky Mount, VA. Left to mourn his death are his dearly beloved wife, Sister Edna S. Houston, his sister, Sister Edna Eames of Rocky Mount, sister-

in-law, Myrtle Houston, Rocky Mt., a special sister-in-law Maora Brown, Rocky Mt., special nieces Letha Holland, Debbie Montgomery, Donna Vaught and Linda Couch; special nephew, Glen Montgomery and numerous other nieces and nephews.

His funeral was held at 2:00 p.m. Friday, September 5, 1997 at Flora Funeral Home Chapel by Elder Raymond Goad and Elder Marvin Brumfield. His body was laid to rest in Franklin Memorial Park beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the glorious resurrection. He is greatly missed at Weatherford Church, but most of all by Sister Edna and his dear family. May all that mourn be reconciled to God's Holy Will and be blest to say ***"Thy will be done".***

Written By: Phyllis Goad
Elder Raymond Goad - Moderator
Pam Betterton - Clerk

EARNA JACKSON MARSLENDER
SEPTEMBER 11, 1914 - JANUARY 14, 1998

"In all thy ways acknowledge God, and He shall direct thy paths".

Brother Earna Marslender, a brother with a strong hope of eternal rest, departed this life of sin and sorrow after a long illness, on January 14th, 1998.

Brother Marslender asked and received a home with North Creek Church in Beaufort County from 1955 until March, 1995, serving as an ordained deacon for 40 years. From March of 1995 and as long as his health permitted, he visted other churches of like faith.

Brother Marslender dearly loved and upheld the doctrine and Articles of Faith of the Primitive Baptist Church. He was a man who always strived for harmony and understanding among the bretheren and believed that it could only be obtained by strong and steadfast adherence to the Word or God. He will be greatly missed by his family and many friends.

Brother Marslender was born in Beaufort County September 11, 1914, the son of the late Charles James and Mary Ellen Cayton Marslender Smith. on March 15, 1940, he married the former Eunice Marie Gibbs, who survives. In addition to his wife, survivors include one daughter, LaVerne Marslender Wheelbarger of Chesapeake, Virginia; two sons, Charles James Marslender of the home, and Marshall Warren Marslender of Belhaven; three sisters, Verena M. Paul and Cora S. Bond of Belhaven and Frances S. Carter of Virginia Beach, Virginia; two brothers, Cecil Smith of Belhaven and Forrest Smith of Biloxi, Mississippi; five grandchildren and three great grandchildren. He was preceded in death by two sisters, Madeline Smith and Rathleen Sawyer; two brothers Fred Smith, Jr. and Carlton Marslender; a granddaughter, Sharon Wheelbarger Carey.

Written by a Sister who dearly misses him.

Rachel A. Smith
Pinetown, North Carolina

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

DESCEND from heaven, immortal Dove!
Stoop down and take us on thy wings,
And mount and bear us far above
The reach of these inferior things:

Beyond, beyond this lower sky,
Up where eternal ages roll;
Where solid pleasures never die,
And fruits immortal feast the soul.

O for a sight, a pleasing sight
Of our Almighty Father's throne!
There sits our Saviour crowned with light,
Clothed in a body like our own.

Adoring saints around him stand,
And thrones and powers before him fall;
The God shines gracious through the man,
And sheds sweet glories on them all.

O what amazing joys they feel
While to their golden harps they sing,
And sit on every heavenly hill,
And spread the triumphs of their King.

When shall the day, dear Lord, appear,
That I shall mount to dwell above,
And stand and bow among them there,
And view thy face, and sing, and love!

Watts.

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REVELATION 1:7.

Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

EDITORIAL

THE SALVATION OF THE SAINTS OF GOD

"There is therefore no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." (Romans viii vs 1-2)

ELDER R. H. CAMPBELL

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth and all the hosts of them, the plants, animals and then he created man, in his own image, after his own likeness. He gave unto man dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air,and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; or in other words, the dominion over the world as it was created. Every thing that God made was for man and his happiness and peace and joy in this new world; and he made it for him, because he loved him.This was all done in the seven days of creation before there was actually any of the things created in existance: everything was in the mind and purpose of God, but there was none of the things created that actually had a physical being or form. When an architect begins to build a building, all of the building is drawn on the plans, but the building does not exist, as yet, everything is there that is to be included in the building but it is all in the mind of the architect. This is as the seven days of creation, it was the plan for the salvation of the Lord's people; everything that was necessary for their salvation was there, but it was only in the mind of God. This was the seven days of creation, after which God beheld all of his work, which was to be, but, as of that moment was only visible unto him, but it was complete including

every detail, and he pronounced it, very good.

The days of formation, are the days in which the things that God had created were actually given a physical form and they began to appear on the face of the world as recorded in the second chapter of Genesis: (Gen. Chap 2,vs 4-5) These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord made the earth and the heavens, and every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. As in the illustration above, the architect, after the plan is completed, in his mind or on the plans, begins to build the house according to the plans; the house begins to take shape and finally becomes complete, as planned, in the beginning. This is when the things created in the first seven days began to be made manifest in the world: God formed man of the dust of the earth and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed, to dress and keep the garden, and the Lord commanded the man saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. Then God formed every beast of the field, and fowl of the air and brought them to Adam for him to name them; but of all there was not found an help meet for Adam. God caused a deep sleep to come upon Adam and he took a rib from his side, and God made the rib woman, and brought her to Adam for an help meet, and Adam said, this is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. Woman was a part of the man that God created in his own image, and therefore she was also in the image of God. She was given unto man as an help meet, to make him a complete being; she was a companion, a confidant to share all of his experiences, and to help him bear the burdens of life and to counsel him in all matters; a wonderful gift, by the wisdom of God, for the comfort of man.

These were the beginning of the days of formation, and they are continuing today because everything that has happened, is happening now, or will happen in the future were things that were part of that plan of salvation of God in the beginning. (Eccle. Chap. 3,vs14-15) *"I know that , whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him. That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past, and again (Acts Chap 15,vs18) Known unto God are all his work from the beginning of the world."* The work of God, from the beginning, was the salvation of his beloved and all things involved in this

plan were provided for in the days of creation and worked out in the days of formation. Jesus said (Math Chap 15,vs 28) "*For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether ye have sufficient to finish it?.*"and if this be true of mortal man, how much more with God. He knew the end from the beginning and all things in between and made provisions for them, in his plan before time began and he certainly had the wherewith to finish that which he had started.

God had given only one restriction, or commandment unto Adam: that he should not partake of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and the first recorded act of man was that he partook of that tree and did eat. As per the judgement of God, when he gave the commandment, Adam did indeed die: he was separated from the kingdom into which he had been placed and made to dwell in the natural world in which he lives until this day. This is the death that was sent upon the man and the woman, and they would have forever been in this condition, paying for their sins , but by the mercy of God who loved them with an everlasting love; meaning from the time they were first formed of the dust of the ground; and had breathed into them the breath of life, there was a plan for the salvation of his portion, of his creation. (Deut Chap 32,vs9-8) "*When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.*"God created them for his own good pleasure and had already pronounced that they were very good, and they were, as created, before sin entered the scene.

The serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made and he beguiled the woman, that God had given unto Adam for an help meet, and she ate of the fruit of the forbidden tree and gave unto Adam and he did eat. Because of this transgression of the law that God had given unto man, judgement was passed upon the serpent, the man and the woman. The serpent was cursed above all cattle, and above every beast, upon his belly he would go and dust shalt he eat all the days of his life: his domain would be the earth and the natural kingdom and his power would be confined to the natural world and the creatures that God had created to inhabit the world of nature. God put enmity between the seed of the serpent, and the seed of the woman and there would be a continual warfare between them in the earth. Unto the woman God said that he would greatly multiply her sorrow and her conception; she would bring forth children, in sorrow, her desire would be unto her husband, and he would rule over her. Unto Adam, God said, because he had harkened unto his wife and had eaten of the tree,which he had commanded him not to eat, he would curse the ground for his sake: and in sorrow Adam would eat the herb of the field; It would no longer be a paradise that was made for him to dress and keep

and enjoy the fruits thereof. It would henceforth bring forth thorns and thistles unto him, and in the sweat of his brow he would eat of it until he returned to the ground, for dust thou art and to dust thou shall return.

When God spoke of the seed of the serpent bruising the heal of the seed of the woman and the seed of the woman bruising the heel of the seed of the serpent, this was referring to the seed of the woman (Christ) overcoming the seed of the serpent in his triumphing over the devil by his laying down his life for the seed of the woman(the elect family of God, in Christ) on the cross at calvary.(Gen. Chap 3,vs 15-16) *"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."* The seed of the woman were the promised seed, which were created in the image of God; and the seed of the serpent were those who were brought into existance because of the multiplying of the conception of the woman; the judgement pronounced upon Eve because of her succumbing to the temptation of the serpent and partaking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This seed of the serpent never had any portion, or lot, in the promises of God, or in the heritage of the saints of God; that was treasured in Christ before the foundation of the world; their portion was in the natural realm, of which the serpent was the head. His kingdom was, and still is, this world with all of the vanity and pride of the flesh, the sin and corruption that the world thrives on; and this is where man was condemned to dwell, because of his sin in disobeying the command of God. The devil's dominion is over the world of nature, and he has only that power that is allotted to him of God to rule over the natural man, in the clothes of skin; he is the thorn in the flesh of man to buffet him for his sinful nature and to cause him to see and to realize that he is not in control of anything.

Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skin to clothe them; they were imprisoned in these coats of skins for their life in the realm of nature, where they were unable to know God or anything about their former state, dead to God and the things of the spiritual kingdom and they would have remained in this condition eternally if God, in his mercy, had not determined, from the beginning to release them and return them to being in the image in which they were created. Their clothing is the natural fleshly nature in which they are condemned to live in this world, dead to the life that they were created for in the beginning. In this condition they could neither commune with God, talk to him and in fact were not even aware of his existance, This is the natural man as he is today; in his natural birth, he knows nothing of the kingdom of God, and never will, unless he is changed from this state.

When God came down and saw the wickedness of man in this state, and saw that the imagination of the thoughts of his heart were only evil continually, it repented God that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

In this condition, man is surely not in the image of God, as created in the beginning. Eve was the mother of all living, both the seed of the woman and the seed referred to as the seed of the serpent (Christ, and those who crucified him were human beings and were all the seed of Eve, some designated as the seed of the serpent, and others as the seed of the woman). The seed of the woman, are those who were promised, by God, in the day of creation, that they were to go forth and replenish the earth and subdue it; the seed of the serpent are those whose existance is because of the judgement on Eve, but whose father is the devil; as Jesus told some, on one occasion, Ye are of your father the devil and his deeds ye shall do. This is the difference between the non-elect, and the elect; one being the chosen generation, royal priesthood, holy nation peculiar people, those who were created for the pleasure of the Lord and who were created in his own image; and the other being vessels of wrath, fitted to everlasting destruction in the lake of fire with the serpent and all of his brood. They are each living out the life purposed, in the day of creation and there is no way in which one can change from one classification to the other; can the Ethiopian change his skin or can a leopard change his spots; they will always be that that they were created, in the mind and purpose of God before the foundation of the world and they shall act and live all the days of their existance accordingly. Man was separated from God, by death, and had no hope of redemption other than a miracle of grace, by the mercy of God, and he had no right or reason to expect that.

This would have continued to be true of all men in nature. "***But Noah found grace in the eyes of the lord,***" and this is always the results of the sovreign action of God; it is based upon his good pleasure, and not any action of the creature. Since man was driven out of the garden of Eden he was not able to talk to or communicate with God, or influence him in any way; for as Isaiah said, (Isa Chapt 55,vs8-9) "***For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.***" This was true under the law, and it is true today between the natural man and God. Noah, found grace in the eyes of the Lord, but this grace did not extend to all men in that day; just to those that are called of God as was Noah and others, down through the channels of time, at God's own time and way, and for his own particular purpose. As in the days of Noah, those to whom grace was not extended perished in the flood: in like manner, those who are not chosen, in

Christ will perish in the lake of fire and brimstone in the last time.

God revealed unto Noah and told him that, *"The end of all flesh is come before me; for the world is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth".* The wickedness of the man in his natural state with his vanity and pride was such that he should have been destroyed, but, because of those chosen, in Christ before the foundation of the earth, this grace was extended to Noah for a specific purpose; to save the seed to whom the promise was made. God established a covenant with Noah, to save him and his family alive through the flood; and this is the same grace that is extended to every one of the elect family of God, to preserve them for his own holy names sake. All down through history this grace has been extended to his children, and as the prophet said on one occasion, *"I do this not for your sake, O house of Israel, but for my own holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went." (Eze Chap 37, vs 22)* in other words, lest his name be blasphemed among the heathen because of the evil deeds of Israel and their utter disregard for the kindnesses shown to them by his bountiful hand. God's grace sustained Noah and his family through the flood according to God's promise unto Noah and they went forth from the ark, built an altar and offered sacrifices unto God of every clean beast and every clean fowl. God smelled a sweet savour and said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth, neither will I again smite any more every thing living , as I have done.

Man began to multiply and the whole earth was of one language and they said: let us, make brick and burn them throughly and they had slime for mortar: and they said, let us build a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven: and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth. Man, in his fleshly vanity, unaware of the God who created him, presumes to determine his own destiny and have things his own way: do you see that he has never changed, even unto this day, presuming to get unto heaven by his own efforts. God, then confused their language, and scattered them abroad upon the face of the earth, each with their own language and cultures, man, in this day thinks that he is wiser than God and says, all men are equal and should live together and have one government and be one people. Man, is the same now as he was then, when unaware of the God that controls all things by the word of his power: he stands and boasts long and loud of what progress he has made and how much wiser he is than his predecessors. He now wants one universal government and one universal church: back to the same old tricks: man desiring to prove himself wiser than God and with all of his modern technology, desiring to show that he can do any-

thing that he chooses, even to the bridging of that great gulf between the natural and the spiritual. God said, I will not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh, (including the seed of the woman; with the exception of Christ who was made in the likeness of sinful flesh yet without sin) and flesh is enmity with God because it (the flesh) is the offspring of Satan and will never have any portion in the kingdom of heaven; God chose one, Abram, by name, and sent him forth from his country, his family, his kindred in nature and told him to go to into a country that he would show him and there he would make of him a great nation, a great name, and he would be a blessing. Abram, went forth, per God's commandment and lived a stranger and a wanderer all the days of his life: looking for that city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. This is the experience of the children of God in all ages of time; they are all called from nature's darkness and spend the remaining days of their life looking for that city of light, that city that has no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of the Lord will lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. They are looking for a better country, that is , an heavenly country: where God is not ashamed to be called their God for he hath prepared for them this habitation. God hath formed them for himself, sustained them in their journey of life here in this time world and hath formed for them an everlasting habitation with him in glory: and all the while, knowing that they would walk according to the course of this world, according to prince of the power of the air, the same spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and the mind and would be by nature the children of wrath, even as others, but still loving them in spite of their vanity and pride. God's plan, from the beginning was to redeem them from this vain state and raise them up to walk in newness of life; in ways that would be pleasing unto him and render honor and praise unto his holy name. He would put a new heart in them, a heart of flesh and a new spirit will he put in them and cause them to walk in his statutes and they shall keep his judgements and do them.

God promised Abram that he would make of him a great nation, and that in him would all nations be blessed. He promised him a seed when he was ninety-nine years old, and Abram laughed, he didn't believe him, but as Paul said in (Romans 3,va 3) "***What if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the promise of God without effect? God forbid:***" God had declared the future and it did not depend upon the assent of Abram just as none of the counsel of God is dependent upon the approval of anyone or anything. Then Abram and Sarah conceived a plan to assist with the problem, but the seed produced by this effort was not suitable unto God; a child was born but God did not accept it , and he brought forth the promised heir at his own time, and in his own way, by a man one hundred

years old and a woman ninety years old; Oh! the miracle of the grace of God. Isaac was born, and to him the promise was given. Then, still of the seed of Abram, twins were born to, Isaac and Rebecca, the same conception, the same parents and everything in nature being identical in them, the younger was preferrd over the older, even though, according to the law, the elder should have received the blessing. The apostle Paul, referring to this, said (Rom 9,vs 11) *"For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth"* and again (Rom 15,vs4) *"for whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope"* Oh! the beauty and the glory of the words left on record for the comfort and the edification of those to whom these truths are sent. God has always had an elect people, according to his good pleasure, and they were all, in Christ, before the foundation of the world; they were those created in the image of God in the beginning because only Christ and his chosen generation were ever in the image of God. God has mercy on whom he will have mercy and blesses whom he will bless regardless of the statutes of the law; he has compassion on whom he will have compassion and, whom he will he loves, and the creature has no influence on this in either case. God changes not, so this is not something that was decided at the time, it occurred, in the days of creation, and was just another link in the series of events from the beginning that were included in the original plan.

In all ages of time, God has had a people that he has called and set apart unto his glory; and there have been prophets telling of the things to come, things that would fulfill the promises made unto this chosen generation. God told Moses of a prophet that would come, made like unto him, an to him would be the gathering of the people;-- the government would be upon his shoulders and his name should be called, Wonderful, Counseler, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace of the increase of his government and peace there should be no end. – Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel, which, being interpreted is, God with us:-- Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. These and many, many more scriptures written by the prophets in all ages tell of the coming of the

Messiah, who by God's grace and power will deliver them from the bondage of sin they have lived under since the beginning.

The law came by Moses and was given unto Israel to guide them in ways that were pleasing to God and to insure them the good of the land and the Lord's blessings in their, journey of life, here on earth, The law did not take away sin, by the sacrifices, but rather was just a remembrance year to year of their failures to keep the law, and to make them realize their need for the Savior and their dependence upon God for any righteousness; so they looked forward to, and rejoiced in, the promises made to them of a deliverer that was to come and to truly atone for their all of their sins, under the law.

Down through the history of Israel, God would deliver the children into bondage under their enemies, for their sin; they would repent and God would return them again unto their land and judge their enemies and grant them peace for a time; but they would rebel again against God, when their bellies were full and they had had rest for a short period of time. This is a classical picture of the man in nature, vain, self centered unable to see anything but what he wants to see. These deliverances were by servants called and sent forth for that purpose such as, Sampson, Gideon, Samuel and many more who were raised up and caused to stand for the nation of Israel in their dark and trying days. The prophets continued to tell of the day that would come, in which the deliverer would indeed come and make the one sacrifice that would forever put away their sin, so, that they would stand just and holy before their God; but as time passed and the Messiah did not appear: the shepherds of the flock began to wax fat and caring not for the sheep over which they were shepherds, began to feed on the flock, instead of feeding the flock and leading and teaching them the statutes and ordinances of the law that were given unto them for their good.

In Ezekiel's day the word of the Lord came unto the prophet, saying, prophesy against the shepherds and say unto them; Woe be the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flock? Ye have not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there was no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, where they were scattered and they wandered aimlessly in this wilderness of sin, with no leader to guide them or to teach them the law or the ways of God. These were the latter days under the law, when the glory of the nation of Israel was at its lowest ebb, but this too was for a purpose: it brought them to the position that they were forced to admit that they could not raise themselves up of their own efforts, and must trust in God who had

blessed them so many times in the past. Only extreme measures, such as the circumstances that they were under, would cause vain man to acknowledge his own weaknesses and depraved nature and turn again to God and pray for deliverance.

Then the Lord said, because ye have done these things unto the sheep: I am against the shepherd; and I will require my flock at their hand and cause them to cease from feeding the flock. Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock, in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered: so will I seek out my sheep, and deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. I will bring them out and cause them to feed upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers: I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be. Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey, and I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David a prince among them: I the Lord have spoken it, I will also do it: And I will make a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beast to cease out of the land: and my people shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. In that day, the Lord himself will, because the shepherds have failed them, come and set up the new covenant with his sheep and will fulfill the promise made unto them by the prophets.

After the prophets, there was a period of four hundred years when there was no open vision, and there was no record of any inspired leaders among the children of Israel. The law was forsaken and tradition and false leaders led the people astray. God said, in the beginning, I will not always strive with man for he is also flesh: the same way that he was when driven out of the garden of Eden, still imprisoned in those coats of skin (fleshly nature) whereby they could not commune with God or hear his voice. God's striving with man was in the fact that he gave them a law that they were to follow and to eat of the fat of the land, but man could not keep it with his natural disposition. There was no one to plead their cause; for man in nature is unable to receive the things of the spirit, they are foolishness unto him; so there must be a daysman to stand between them who can plead to God on their behalf and to speak unto man in their own language that they can hear: and this is where the Messiah was to come in, at the appointed time, and bridge this great gulf. As the priests did under the law, there must be one that could make intercession for them unto God, one that could know and understand their sins and temptations and make atonement for them with God.

God has always had an elect in all generations, nations, countries and people, whom he loved with an everlasting love, and upon whom he displayed his grace and mercy, although they too were but flesh: they were created for his pleasure and regardless of what they were, in the flesh, he led them about and blessed them with his loving kindness and led them in

ways that were pleasing to him. David, was one such person: God called him from tending his fathers sheep in the desert, and placed him on the throne of the kingdom of Israel and promised him that there would never fail to be a king of his lineage on the throne of Israel. David desired to build a house for God, but God refused him in that endeavor, because God said that he was a man of war who had shed blood, but, that his son Solomon, whom he would raise up of his seed would build the house: and he did. This has been true of many down through the channels of time, certain men were called: whom God raised up to perform his will and manifest their faith in him: Samuel, Sampson, Daniel, Moses, and the names go on and on, of those who were of the elect family of God. As Paul wrote Acts Chapt 9 vs 4-5 *"Who are Israelites: to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all God blessed forever, Amen."*

The law was given to the man, in the flesh, as commandments from God of how they were to live and conduct themselves to manifest their faith in him. They learned that this was impossible and that for them to ever be righteous in the sight of God there would have to be one with more power and resolve than the natural man possesses, and therefore the law was but a school master to lead them to Christ, the one who was declared, by the prophets, to be such a person. They looked for his coming not knowing just how it would be accomplished, in much the same manner as his people today view the resurrection and the end of the world; many theories but no one with certain knowledge on the subject; of just how and when it will be. There was no open vision, or revelation to enable them to know exactly what to expect, so they were indeed in a lost and undone condition wandering aimlessly in the world. The priests who were supposed to lead them by the law, turned more and more to tradition, formality and edicts that glorified themselves rather than God.

(Heb Chapt 2 vs 9) But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory an honour: that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, *"I will declare thy name unto my brethren, and in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."* The Messiah came, born of a woman, born under the law to redeem them that were, under the law, that those who, were under the law, might receive the adoption of sons. Christ, came to make the sacrifice for the sins, under the law, that they who lived, sinned and died, under the law, might be saved. Christ's

entire earthly ministry was lived, under the law, and the statutes of the law still applied; he was sent, but, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, those whom the shepherds had led astray and who, as Ezekiel said *"My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them."*

This is the condition that prevailed, when Christ came into the world and his mission was to seek and save that which was lost, that which because of the lack of leadership were forsaken and confused having no shepherd to lead and guide them in the way of truth: the way of all men when left to their own devices. He came filfilling all that the prophets had declared of him and fulfilled the law to a jot and a tittle in behalf of those who were unable to stand on their own merit..

Math Chapt 1,vs 18) *"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: when as his mother was espoused to Joseph, before they came together. she was found with child of the Holy Ghost."* An angel appeared to Joseph and told him that the conception was of the Holy Ghost and that he was not to fear to take Mary as his wife: for she shall bring forth a son and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins, all of the sins, under the law. This fulfilled that which was prophesied *"Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emanuel, which being interpreted, God with us"*. Jesus was born, and went forth in his earthly ministry ministering to the lost sheep of the house of Israel only, still under the law and fulfilling all those things that the prophets declared of him. As, many times before, the display of the sovreign grace of God is manifested in such a manner that no man could claim any credit for it; Isaac was born of a woman past child bearing age, Jacob and Esau were born of a woman that was barren and now Jesus is born of a woman that has never known a man; all occurrences beyond the power of man or science, but just routine for one who created the heavens and the earth and all the host of them by the power of his word. The sacrifice must be perect, not the sick or the lame, and no man in nature could meet that requirement so this is the fulfilling of the words of the Lord when he said *"Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall not be a prey, and I will set one shepherd over them to feed them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David a prince among them: I the Lord have spoken it, I will also do it."*

Jesus chose unto himself twelve of his disciples who he ordained as apostles and to whom he gave power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. His instruction to these twelve was, that they were to (Math Chap 10,vs1) *"Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom*

of heaven is at hand." When a woman of Canaan came to Jesus crying, have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil, his disciples said, send her away; for she crieth after us: Jesus answered them saying, *"I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."* All of the earthly ministry of Jesus was when the law was still in effect, and his work was to make the sacrifice that would forever perfect those who were lost because of their sins, under the law: The law was to the man in nature, of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came. Christ indeed came and performed this work stating in (John Chapt 17,vs 4) I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work thou gavest me to do: and declaring on the cross when he died, (John Chapt 17,vs4) *"It is finished"*, end of story, regarding the children of Israel under the mosaical law; the only sacrifice that could be accepted by God for their sins because the offering must be a perfect specimen and Christ was the only man that could fill that requirement. They now stand as secure and righteous, in God's eyes, as Christ is, because he has become their surety, they were chosen in him and his righteousness becomes theirs.

Jesus was talking to his disciples on one occasion, and told them that he was the shepherd of the sheep and *"I lay down my life for the sheep."* Then he said *"and other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them I also must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold. and one shepherd."* This refers to the bringing in of the Gentiles into the fold with the Jews, so that there is one fold and one shepherd. The same shepherd was the savior of all, but the saving was in a different fashion. One was in the death on the cross, which atoned for the sins under the law and the other was in the resurrection unto life for those who, by the death of Jesus taking the law of carnal commandments out of the way, nailing it to his cross, were never under the law of sin and death. (Col 2 vs 13-14) *"And you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses: Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."* Jesus died a natural death in the flesh, to pay for the sins of his children under the law, and told the apostles, and those to whom he was sent, that he must go away or the Holy Spirit could not come; but when the Spirit came it would take the things of his and show them unto them. He had finished his work for the children under the law and now must go away, that the new covenant could come into effect. It would guide them in all truth and they would understand the things that he had taught them. This is speaking of the era to come, the one in which the spirit would indwell man and he would live, not under the law of sin and death, but under the law of light and liberty of the gospel day. This is the day in which we

are living today; this is the day the lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it. (Roman Chap, 7,vs 1-4) *"Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth, but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called and adultress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adultress, though she be married to another man, Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."* The natural man cannot bring forth fruit unto God because, God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth, but Jesus, talking to the Samaritian woman at the well said *"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him."* The new covenant was based upon better promises and the way in which the children of God would worship him would be in a better and different way. There would no longer be a priest to stand between God and his people to make intercession with natural offerings for the sins of the people but now each for themselves would render praises unto God which is the calves of the lips, prayers unto God from the new heart which God has given unto them in the new birth. The inner man, again in the image of God, can talk and communicate with God directly; this is in their prayers in their yearning and desiring from the heart for a closer communion with him and their daily heart to heart talks with him when no one else is there to hear or to intervene in their worship of the heavenly Father. They are not married to the one who died for the sins of the children of Israel, under the law, but rather are betrothed to him who arose from the dead for their justification before God.

This is accomplished by God the Father, and Jesus the Son, coming and taking up their abode in their hearts. This is the new man, in Christ, a new creature that sins not, because, the new law is written in their heart and by the indwelling of the spirit of God. When God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, thus ending the law for righteousness; God made those, in the flesh under the law, righteous by the death of his Son, who took away the law for righteousness, and condemned sin in man's flesh, where it always abode. God now makes his elect, a new creature by the indwelling of the spirit in him; quickening him and raising him up to walk in newness of life.

These are the children of the heavenly king under the new covenant; those who cannot sin because they

are born of God. This is what Jesus was telling Nicodemus, ye must be born again; ye must become a new creature, in Christ, not subject to the weaknesses of the flesh, not inhibited by the body of flesh in which you dwell, to see the kingdom of heaven: that which is born of the flesh can never enter the kingdom of heaven, only that which is born of the Spirit can enter into the kingdom of heaven. (Heb. Chapt 8,vs 10-13) "*For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my law in their mind, and write them in their hearts and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest, For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins snd their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.*"This was accomplished in the death of Christ on the cross at calvary.

A new covenant requires a new priesthood; not like the Levitical priesthood which served under the law of Moses. The new priest will administer the new covenant, not after a law of carnal commandments, but, after the power of an endless life; liken unto the preisthood of Melchisedec a priest who was without beginning of days nor end of life and that would stand forever. The mosiacial law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, and Jesus was made the administrator of this better covenant: a covenant under which the resurrection was to establish the covenant rather than end it. In the same sense in which his death ended the old covenant; the resurrection of the savior, perfected the recipients of the grace,beforehand rather than correcting the weaknesses in the flesh by atoning for sin as under the old covenant. (Heb. Chap 10,vs 9) "*Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.*" Christ condemned sin in the flesh of the natural man, but, saves the inner man, the new creature, in Christ, who sinneth not. Sin has always been a characteristic of the man in nature, and always will be, it is not characteristic of the spiritual man; the one that is led by the spirit of God. God's kingdom, under the new covenant, is made up of those in his image, those of whom Paul wrote in his letter to Corinth,(2 Cor Chap 3,vs 17) Now the Lord is that spirit: and where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord.

When one is born of the spirit they are, in essence, given a spiritual conscience which motivates their every thought and action, in spiritual matters. It directs their heart and mind to seek and search for more evidence of

their new life and for the fellowship of others who give evidence that they too possess this unique and precious gift. It is not as the law, which was engraven on tables of stone for all of the house of Israel to read and to heed; this gift is to the individuals who were chosen in Christ in the beginning; a very personal and private experience which is known only to themselves, and to none others. The law was pertaining to the natural man and his actions and deeds in the flesh; it was a do and be blessed, or disobey and be punished or delivered into the hands of the enemy, and none was able to keep it. The new man, with the spiritual conscience, given him of God, acts from a position of love and a desire to please God, not from a fear of retribution: they serve from a desire to make manifest the presence of the spirit within and their love and compassion for the whole family of God of which they believe that they are now a member. The old mind and body of flesh in which they continue to dwell, gives them much cause of fear and aprehension in their hope of salvation, but it can never overcome or overthrow it, because the new conscience within is much stronger than the natural man. because it is of God. They live in hope (earnest expectation) that what he has promised, he will fulfill, and that the promise is theirs because of the evidence that they have received.

(Eph. Chapt, 2,vs11-12-13-14-15-16) *"Wherefore remember that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands:That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promuise, having no hope. and without God in the world: But now in Christ ye who sometimes were far off were made nigh by the blood of christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:"* The apostle Paul, a Jew, is telling the Gentiles that they were uncircumcised, strangers to the law, without hope and without God in the world, but Christ who by his death on the cross at Calvary has torn down the middle wall of partition which was between those chosen people of God, under the law and themselves, the Gentiles, and hath made them one fold. All is by the grace of God, and not by the efforts of man whether they are circumcised or not.

Jesus told Nicodemus, Verily,verily I say unto thee, *" Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"* and again *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit".* Paul said (Roman Chapt 7,vs 22-23-24-25) *" For I delight in the law of*

God after the inward man; But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with my mind I myself serve the law of God, but with my flesh the law of sin."This manifests the fact that there were dual personalities in the apostle Paul; there was the, Saul of Tarsus, which is the man in the flesh who persecuted the church, and still does those things that the apostle would not,but now, there is the apostle Paul who has been quickened, and who walks after the spirit and not after the flesh; these two man both still dwell in the body of flesh, but the new man is not imprisoned by it, in the sense that he was before; even though he must still contend with the old man with all of the vanity and lusts of the carnal man. That which is born of the flesh, is flesh, and always will be; and that which is born of the spirit, is spirit, and always will be, and the flesh lusts against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh and this is the warfare that all must endure; the cross, that Jesus said unless you take it up you cannot be his disciple, and you will take it up, because it is laid upon you and you cannot do otherwise, it is laid upon you when the spirit comes into your heart and leads you in ways that you would not have chosen to go before. Knowing what he did, and having the experience that he had, the apostle Paul could say, without hesitation after acknowledging all of these things that; what he would do he did not, and what he would not do, that he did, that in spite of all this seeming contradiction; There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit; the natural man walks after the flesh and always will, and the inner man walks after the spirit and always will because it is of God. He had experienced, living under the law in the flesh, and knew the weakness and unprofitableness of the natural man; he had experienced the new birth of the spirit and knowing from whence it came and how it happened to him and he is well qualified to make the above statement.

The new birth is the becoming a new creature in Christ, knowing Christ for the first time, and realizing that this is actually a reversal of the experience, in the garden of Eden. When sin entered the world; the man created in the image of God was given coats of skin, imprisoned in the world of nature; the world of sin and corruption bound by the laws of nature, alienated from God and in a state of utter depravity. In this new birth, the new creature in Christ is again in the image of God, released from the prison; the man who had dwelled in the world since the beginning, wearing the coats of skin, is given new garments which are garment of praise, the robe of righteousness of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, which he purchased on the cross at Calvary. (Isaiah Chap 61,vs 9) Speaking of Israel, Isaiah said,

"And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,my soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as the bride adorneth herself with her jewels." The man, created in the image of God had been given coats of skin for his habitation of the earth, which was their prison, this was the veil which separated them from God; but the seed of the serpent having the same coats of skin, were not imprisoned by them for they were at home in these garments, for the world of nature in their only heritage, they were born that way and will die that way, never having known the riches of the heritage of the seed of the woman.

Eve, the woman, was a part of the original creation of God, Adam, and represented the Lord's portion; Christ, taken out of woman, a portion of the woman was sent, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and in dying for the sins of all of the seed of the woman, paid the debt due by all of them. Just as the original sin passed upon all the seed of man, in nature, the sacrifice for sin, and the atoning power of that sacrifice passed upon all of the seed of the woman, making them holy and righteous before God, who accepted that atonement for their sins and was well pleased with it. The sacrifice for sin did nothing for the seed of the serpent because they were flesh only and their heritage was in the serpent and in his kingdom of nature. (Isaiah 61,vs1) *"The spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath annointed me to preach the good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclain liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound."* Having been set free and released from the prison of this natural mind, they are again able to talk and commune with God: if the Lord shall set you free, ye shall be free indeed. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus; baptized into his death, and like as Christ who was raised from the dead, by the glory of the Father, even so, these, the chosen of the Father, are raised up to walk in newness of life, without sin unto salvation.

The old man is still in sin, because he is of the world and was created for that purpose and never changed. (Romans 9, vs 21, 22,23) *"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to distruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he hath afore prepared unto glory."* Of the same lump of clay, vessels of

wrath and mercy created, that both the mercy of God and the wrath of God might be made manifest, and that it is the sovreign work of the all wise all powerful creator of heaven and earth, who answers to no authority above himself. The old man walks after the flesh with all the vanity and lusts that he seeks and desires, but the new man walks after the spirit and there is no condemnation to him, even though he is made, in nature, of the same lump; both dwelling in the same earthly body and yet just as different as day and night, summer and winter, or any other opposites that you might use to show the extreme differences.

The salvation of man, from the beginning of time until the end, is the plan wrought by God to bring forth honour, worship and praise unto his holy name from the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory. They fell because of the weakness and depravity of the man in nature and are saved eternally by the grace and mercy of a loving and caring heavenly Father; who formed them for his own good pleasure and as Moses said, in giving a reason this, (Deut 7,vs 6,7,8) "*For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye are the fewest of all people: But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the house of Pharoah king of Egypt.*" This has been true all down through time, the Lord had promised to Abram that all nations would be blessed in him and therefore; he would bring his people out of captivity whether it be in the hands of their enemies, or the vanity and lusts of the flesh for the things in nature that would cause them to forsake God and his lovingkindness for them. He hath indeed set them free, free from the shackles that have bound man from the beginning in the world of nature and,would have ever done so except or until the kingdom of God, in all its glory and majesty is revealed unto them by the new birth.

God's people are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that they should shew forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. His people are chosen for reasons known only unto God; and surely this is the greatest mystery of all: and it is all done in such a way that all of the praise, honour and glory is to his immaculate deity. Praise his holy name forever and forever, all ye saints of the most high God.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. *Isaiah 40:31*

VOICES OF THE PAST

"But the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord: he is their strength in the time of trouble."— PSALM xxxvii. 39.

TIMES of trouble try the saint of God, and they are meant to do so; that is the very purpose why they are sent, for " ***the Lord trieth the righteous.***" Still the promise holds good: ***"he is their strength in the time of trouble."*** When he breaks up the fountains of the great deep of sin and iniquity, he strengthens his people that they may not be carried away by the flood. When he hides his face, he strengthens them to say, ***"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."*** When temptation besets them sore, when they are put into the furnace, the Lord is with them there, as he was with the three men whom Nebuchadnezzar cast in. The Son of God is there with them, so that not a hair of their head is singed, nor does the smell of fire pass upon them (Dan. iii. 27). In all their afflictions he is afflicted, and by sharing it wilh them supports them under it. He is thus their strength; for he strengthens them with strength in their soul. He enables them to bear the weighty cross -- to sustain the heavy load of trial and affliction – to put their mouth in the dust as needing and deserving his chastising strokes, and submit to his righteous dispensations and dealings as plainly sent by a gracious and loving hand. And ever and anon he drops in a sustaining word, gives an encouraging look, bestows a soft and healing touch, and thus helps them to wait in faith and hope until in due time he sends full deliverance. Thus he helps and delivers, and will do so in every time of trouble down to their dying-bed, when he will give them their full and final deliverance from the body of sin and death and a world full of iniquity and sorrow.

Elder J.C. Philpot

VERY MUCH ALIVE

We published an experience of Sister Velma Lawson in the Voices of the Past in January 1998 issue.

Elder W.W. Hudson, Jr. informs us she is very much alive.

We apologize to Sister Velma and send our blessings.

Editors

MEETINGS

DAN RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God Dan River Church looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift. They therefore called for a prebytery to be formed Sunday, March 29, 1998 at 2:00 p.m. at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, Ruffin, N.C., for the purpose of examination of this gift, brother John Collie and if found qualified be ordained to the full work and service of deacon.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together. The meeting was opened by prayer by Elder Raymond Goad. Elder K.R. Key was elected as moderator and Elder R.H. Campbell to serve as clerk. Brother Allan Carrol acting as spokesman for the church delivered brother John Collie to the presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon was read as set forth in scriptures Paul's epistle to Timothy 1 - 3:8 by Elder H.W. Wray. Examinations followed by Elders C.B. Davis and Raymond Goad. The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of this candidate proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by C.B. Davis. The charge was delivered to brother John Collie by Elder J.R. Williams. He was then delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. A copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication and a copy to be given to John Collie along with a certificate of ordination.

Presbytery was dismissed by prayer by Elder T.J. Solomon.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Elder Richard H. Campbell, Clerk

PROVERBS 8:11.

For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Town Creek Primitive Baptist Church. A Presbytery met at Town Creek Church for the examination of brother Joseph Holley and if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The solemity was begun with Prayer by Elder Marvin Brumfield. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were: Elder Marvin Brumfield; Elder W. T. Conner; Elder Junior Conner; Elder Clarence Stone; Elder Allen Terry; Elder Raymond Goad; Elder Leonard Brammer, Elder Lane Carter; Elder Larry Hollandsworth.

All Deacons were asked to sit together.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Larry Hollandworth as Moderator, and Jamie Cooper as Clerk. Elders Leonard Brammer and Raymond Goad were chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Brother Jimmy Holley having been duly appointed by Town Creek Church in conference as spokesman for the Church delivered Brother Joseph Holley to the presbytery.

Examination was made by Elders Leonard Brammer and Raymond Goad using scriptural reference 1st Timothy Ch. 3 - verse 8.

The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate adminstered the lay-

ing on of hands with the ordination prayer being delivered by Elder Junior Conner. The charge was delivered to the candidate by Elders Lane Carter and Clarence Stone using scriptural reference 2nd Timothy; chapter 4.

The Moderator asked the church if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brother Joseph Holley and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained Brother was delivered back to the Church an ordained Deacon of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Town Creek. The minutes consisting the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Alan Terry.

Elder Larry Hollandsworth,
Moderator
Jamie Cooper, Clerk

CERTIFICATE OF ORDINATION

This is to certify that on Feb. 28, 1998 at Town Creek Primitive Baptist Church. A Presbytery composed of Ministers and Deacons of Old School Primitive Baptist examined Brother Joseph Holley and found him qualified to fill the office of Deacon. The Presbytery then proceeded by laying on of hands with prayer. Brother Joseph Holley was delivered back to the Church an ordained Deacon of the Primitive Baptist Church. Done by order of Presbytery this 28th day of February 1998.

Elder Larry Hollandsworth, Mod.
Jamie Cooper, Clerk

Ministers and Deacons present:

Clarence Stone
Leonard J. Bromer
Larry Hollandsworth
Junior L. Conner
Alan Terry
Raymond Toad
W.T. Conner
Marvin Brumfield
Sam Cathcart

Jamie Cooper Clerk

Deacons

Homer Lemons Edwin Dyer
Paul W. Jones Joseph Cubiss
Greg Holley James Holley
Greg Ingram Jamie Cooper
Lee B. Powell Jay Brown
Curtis Crondiff James E. Mendoza
Wilton Autenrith Jessie A. Tyree
Roger Pittman
Wade Pope Gene Patterson
Clinton V. Ferris
H.D. Ingram
Wilford D. Pearce
Gabriel Lawson
Harold Hale
Joe Rice
Donald Agee
H.W. Gobine
Mark Terry
Earl Mundy

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 1998

L. D. Goard, VA $7.00
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OBITUARIES

CORNELIA BRYANT KEEL

Being the only active member of Flat Swamp Church, it is my duty and privilege to write this obituary.

Sister Keel was born September 20, 1902, and died May 9, 1997, after a short illness. She was taken care of at her home and I feel no one ever received better care than she did by her family.

She was a member of Flat Swamp for 52 years. She was a very strong believer of Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. She attended church regularly and loved to get there early to greet everyone with her loving smile. Sister Keel was a strong supporter of her church and entertained many in her home.

I lost my parents in 1955 and 1956. I married Sister Keel's daughter in 1946. Sister Keel was, to me, a mother, a mother-in-law, and a sister in the church. We rode many miles together visiting churches far and near. The conversations we had not only encouraged me, but made my faith stronger.

My wife and I moved across the path from her in 1971. We did all we could to make her later years some of the happiest. My wife was so good to her and tried not to let her want for anything. They had a wonderful mother-daughter relationship. For the last several years of her life, I went to her door to tell her good night. She would always tell me she loved me. A day or two before her death, she looked up at me and said, ***"There is my precious son"***. She had always told me she loved me as a son.

Sister Keel is survived by two daughters, one son-in-law, five grandchildren, six great-grand-children, and two brothers.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Joe Sawyer, in Wilkerson Funeral Chapel.

We will miss her very much, but I feel she is resting in that home prepared for her by her Heavenly Father. On the morning of the resurrection, she will hear God say, ***"Come, your Father calls"***.

My wife, her daughter, assisted me in writing this obituary.

Done by order of conference.

Elder Joe Sawyer, Moderator
Hassel Allen, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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LIFE'S PATHWAY

At times, life's path
seems filled with things
that make the going rough,
And we wish there were
a smoother road,
for we feel we've had enough...
But, if we pause a moment
and remember Who's in charge,
The hills that loom ahead of us
no longer seem so large,
And every rock before us,
when we know we're not alone,
Becomes, not just a
stumbling block,
but one more stepping stone.

Emily Matthews

PSALM 113: 1-3.

Praise ye the Lord. Praise, O ye servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord.

Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth and forevermore.

From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the Lord's name is to be praised.

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EDITORIAL

ELDER R. H. CAMPBELL

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works. II Timothy 3 vs. 16-17

The above scripture is found in the apostle Paul's second letter to Timothy, a younger brother, who the apostle referred to as his son in the faith. He was dearly loved by Paul and evidently the families had been acquainted for some time, since Paul referred to his mother and grandmother as sisters in the faith. In his first epistle Paul related his calling to the ministry, from what he was called, and the sudden miraculous way in which the will of God was made known for his life. He said that he was a blasphemer, a persecuter and injurious, but that he obtained mercy because that he did it in ignorance and unbelief. This is where all of the faithful were, before they were quickened into spiritual life. All flesh is in ignorance and unbelief regarding the things of God and would remain in that condition for all of their life, except that the spirit reveals unto them the spiritual realm, and the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. This is why Jesus told, Nicodemus, ***" Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" John 3 vs 3. "Except a man be born of the water and the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God". John 3 vs. 5.*** That which of born of the flesh is flesh, and will remain flesh, in ignorance and unbelief, until it is born again of the spirit, into the kingdom of God.

All of the apostle's writings bear witness of the care and concern for those to whom he is writing, for their welfare, for their prosperity in the spiritual realm and it is made clear in the first few verses of each epistle. In his first epistle to Timothy verse two he writes ***"Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and***

peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord." And then in the second verse of the second epistle he wrote, ***"To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord."*** The apostle was not being repetitous, but rather, this was his constant prayer for young Timothy, as he said in the next verse, ***"I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day."*** Paul was constantly reminding Timothy of what it was that was keeping him in all of his ways. In most all of his writings, he includes a verse which says in some wording, ***"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all", Col:4,vs 23, or "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit". Phil. 1 vs 25.*** He also includes wording in the beginning of each epistle stating his reason and authority for writing them, such as, ***"Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our savior, and Lord Jesus Christ". 1 Timothy 1 vs 1, or "Paul a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect". Tit. 1 vs 1.*** In all of his writings he is careful to never presume to claim any credit himself or infer that it is of the natural wisdom of the flesh that these truths are known.

This is a characteristic that is manifested in the lives and conversation of all of God's children as they communicate with their brethren of their experiences; they are careful to never claim any part in the working out of their own salvation. They realize from whence it comes, and so their heart goes out to others who speak of their common salvation and they are closer to them than a brother in nature, or any kinsman in the flesh. I believe that this is true in the lives of all of the elect, they have remembrance of each other in their prayers night and day. It does not mean that they pray constantly for each other, but they do pray daily, whether in formal prayer when called on or just in the groanings of the heart, with words that cannot be uttered or expressed and these prayers are for themselves and the whole household of faith; because they cannot separate their brethren, from themselves in their prayers, and their hopes. There is s special love that all have for their brethren that they do not have for others, even their families in the flesh, for remember, the ties in nature are just for this time world, but the love that they have for the household of faith and spiritual things is for time and eternity. I realize that this would not make sense to the man in nature, but it is true, they don't have to try to love their brethren, it is just there, and it is as much a part of their faith and their hope in God as anything else. Their love for the household of faith is inseperable from their love for God, for they love them because they have shown evidence that God loves them also.

The apostle Paul, warned Timothy of the afflictions that would abide him in his ministry, that in the latter times some would depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of the devils; and speaking

lies and teaching things contrary to the scriptures and from such to beware. He told him to refuse profane and old wives fables and to not strive about words to no profit, but to follow after those things that he had been taught of God, and to continue in the things which he had learned and been assured of, knowing of whom he had learned them. Paul told him that there would come in the latter days, men who would be lovers of self, coveteous, boasters, having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof, and from such to turn away and have no fellowship for them. As John wrote 1st John Ch vs 1 ***"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out in the world" I John 4 vs 1,*** if this was true in the days of the apostles, how much moreso today; or as Jesus said, ***"For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry." Luke 23 vs 31***

I have heard of those whose experience differs from others and who question their experience to a point because that they had no sudden miraculous change in their lives. They said that they had always believed what they believe now. This seemed to be Timothy's travels, since Paul, speaking of Timothy said ***"And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." 2 Timothy 3 vs 5.*** It matters, not how the knowledge comes, but that it comes from God and is the truth. All of the Apostles experiences differed, and they expressed the occurrences in the life of Jesus differently, but they all fellowshipped one another because the lesson learned was from the same source and the difference in the way they recorded an experience did not change the truth. The power and effectiveness of the calling was not the results of anything that they had done personally, but rather, as Paul said." by the revelation of Jesus Christ". ***"One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully presuaded in his own mind" Romans 14 vs 5*** and let him act upon that persuasion, trusting that it is God's special gift to him. All men receive not the same gift, but receive gifts according to the measure of the gift of Christ and as Paul wrote to the Colossians, ***"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus, so walk ye in him." Col. 2 vs 6.***

When Paul told Timothy that he had known the scripture from a youth, he then stated the above scripture, All scripture (all truth) is give by the inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. The youngest receive the same instruction, in righteousness, as the oldest, and understands the same doctrine and faith as the older. It is not the qualifications of the receiver that make the revelation effective, but the power of the sender. When Paul besought the Lord to remove the thorn in the flesh, God said, my grace is sufficient for thee: for my

strength is made perfect in weakness. I don't understand that it was the weakness of Paul that enabled the power of the Lord to be effective, but rather, the weakness of Paul made him acknowledge and realize that it was all of God, and to see the perfection in the work of God and to know that power was not of himself. The thorn in the flesh was the doubts and fears in Paul that made him question his own experience and knowledge, because nothing would cause this but the messenger of satan going up and down in the earth to tempt man and create those doubts in the mind of the children of God. These things are but part of God's plan to prove and try his children, not to prove it to God, but to the individual, part of the all things that work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called by his grace.

All scripture is to the man of God, not to the world in general, that he may know the truth, be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works. How about that, furnished unto all good works, There is a duty laid upon man to perform good works, not as the world teaches, (works of the creature), but the truth inspires them to desire to emulate their Lord and master and make manifest unto their brethren that they have indeed been born into the family of God. The mark of the child of God is that they love one another;love always manifests itself in demonstrating that feeling in everything that they do. The reason that you will hear them say that they dont know if they have ever done any good works is, that anything that is done from the motivaion of love, is not work, as the old adage goes, get into a profession that you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life. The scriptures are to teach God's people to love one another with a love that would cause them to lay down their life for their brethren, if required. They will come back with the statement, ***"Oh I couldn't do that,"***, but brethren if it is required, the strength and determination will be given at the right time. God never gives a supply of courage or faith for you to use at will, but gives it when needed, that the praise and honor will be ascribed unto him, where it belongs, and the creature will never claim any credit for they were just as surprised an everyone else at what they did.

The apostle's charge to this young elder is something that Timothy could not have done of himself: it was that he was to preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. I am fairly sure that when Timothy read this letter he said, ***"O, I couldn't do that"*** and he would have been right, he could not have done that, but by the grace of God, he could, and he did according to the scriptures, because he went on in his ministry and was the first bishop of the church of the Ephesians. The apostle Paul went on to tell Timothy that the time would come when they would not endure sound doctrine, but he did not tell him to quit when they did not hear him. The world, in general has never accepted the doctrine of God

and they never will; because it is not to them, it is to those who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world and they will hear it. In this day and age this condition certainly exists and we fear for the welfare of the church but the church has never been any bigger, or smaller, than it is right now the church is the called out, from the beginning of time until the end of time. In this day the world has indeed turned their ears from the truth and are turned unto fables, they teach for doctrine the commandments of men, psychology, philosophy and fables designed to entertain the minds of men and lull them into a false sense of security, thinking, as Paul did before his conversion, that he was working the works of God. This is not a random progression of nature: it is by design and the designer is God, and he is declaring it back in Timothy's day that we, in this day, may know that it is of God.

The apostle Paul, after all of the instructions, admonishing and wise counsel that he gave Timothy, told him to ***"Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things."*** He knew that he could not cause Timothy to do all of the things he told him of, but left him with the admonition to look to God for help and guidance in all things, for that was where the wisdom originated for all the saints of God, whether minister, deacon lay member or whatever their calling might be. This is something that all of the sheep know, they may discuss the subjects pro and con but they all look to the shepherd for leadership, guidance and protection from the evils of this present world, for they could never overcome them of themselves. What a wonderful love Paul had for Timothy, it is beautiful to see, but it is even more beautiful to experience, and all that have been called and saved with a holy calling know this from their travels in this low ground of sin and sorrow, and have experienced this love and fellowship for those of like precious faith.

May the God of all grace, bless this to the comfort and peace of all of his children, and may they see evidences of these blessed truths in their journey of life. May he continue to lead them, as one elder often says in his prayer,in the fear of his holy name and the comfort of his holy spirit. May he indeed lead us all in the fear of his holy name and in the comfort of his holy spirit and with the inspiration that will make us perfect before him in love, in the name of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

PSALM 100.

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.

Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

CORRESPONDENCE

Tuesday, February 17, 1998

Dear Sister Clifton,

I felt to write a note to you since our talk the other night as it seemed I was not satisfied - I just desired so much that we could continue to talk about the goodness and mercy of our God, but words fail me. I am not worthy to take your time but often as I dash to and fro, I feel such love for you and wish we could meet together and talk of our Heavenly Father's mercy to poor sinners.

So much of my time I grope in darkness for days desiring to write a word of praise to God, but darkness covers my heart and soul. I wonder if I ever knew the mercy or kindness of the Lamb - and yet if He had never shown me His mercy, why would I be so miserable now?

Many are the times I feel I am a complete loss, entirely forsaken by God. But few are the times, and wonderful they are when I feel He did pass my way and smiled upon me and I rejoiced in the loving mercy of Jesus. His presence is all I need to make all things well. For a little while it causes me to forget the cast down feeling and makes me to rejoice once again over and over in the beauty of my earliest love - when I was first drawn to Him, if not deceived, I thought all could be told in beautiful colors, but how mistaken I was. Jesus said; *"No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me, draw him."* If I have willingly received the grace of God, it is because God in His love and mercy made me willing in the day of His power. If I am living a christian life (and I am so afraid I'm not) it is because it is God working in me both the will and do of His own good pleasure. If I have resisted temptation of this world it is because of God's grace. If I have loved Him it is because He first loved me. If the love of God is in my heart it is because He put it there. If I am ever permitted to sing the song of the redeemed with the glorified Saints above, it will be the effect of being chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.

I wonder if I truly know the language of Paul *"By the grace of God I am what I am."* I hope I do. I hope I have the true desire to walk in that way, the highway of life that leads back to the Father's house. I feel I have seen the strong arm of God who picked me up out of the waste-howling wilderness and put my feet in the way I should go and established my goings. Where oh where would I be found if God did not direct my steps and had not put me in the way! I shudder to think. The way is none other than his Son who is the way, the truth, and the life. He feeds the children with the Holy manna all the days of their journey here. He allows them to drink of the water, that in so doing they live forever. Oh that great river that flows from the great fountain. No wonder we feel to sing "Amazing Grace" when we are given

to look with beauty to that river of water where the Tree of Life stands.

I do hope I have not wearied you and that I've said nothing that would not be ***"thus sayeth the Lord."*** I do love the dear Saints of God and desire so much to hear them talk of The Mercy and Goodness of Him whom my soul loves. I'm unable to meet with them and my heart almost breaks sometimes as this is my meat and drink. My Lord, if not deceived, knows what is best for me.

My dear one is resting at the moment, so I've had a few minutes to "talk" to you.

I want to say again I did enjoy your story of your life so very much. It has been read and re-read many times as has the precious Book. May I share the story of your life with Garlin and Claudine (Brother and Sister Blankenship of Martinsville)? I did appreciate Brother Shelor sharing with me.

I must stop this - and know that for Christ's sake I love you. If we don't meet in this life, may we meet in that better world.

A poor little nobody,
Rlee B. Houchins

ISAIAH 41:10.

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

April 13, 1998

Elder Kenneth Key
721 Willard St.
Greensboro, NC 27405

Dear Elder Key:

Yesterday I visited The First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis on Arthur Rd. with my family. We were blessed to hear an inspiring sermon, a sermon that lifted up the church and the name of Christ.

Enclosed is a check for a subscription to the Signs of the Times. I look forward to receiving a copy soon.

In Christian Love,
Howard Case
2516 Mimosa Tree Dr.
Germantown, Tn. 38138

ARTICLES

April 18, 1998

To know just what the nature of fleshly main is like; It seems like, it is being too kind a remark of him; to just say; he is a sinner. When his very (hard and stony) heart, is deceitful above all things. When he has an hatred; for all That is Holy and true; and loves the lie; he is full of self pride, and is ready and willing to shed human blood, for both pleasure, and worldly riches; his hunger and thirst for more and more of worldly things, ceases not; from birth unto death; his

greed is so great, had he the whole world, he still would want another, and more. When given to see mankind, as he is; in his and her own fleshly nature; gives cause, for one to stop wondering why; there exists an eternal ever burning hell; and begin to see why, man of himself, is completely incapable; of performing even one thing, that is good, in the sight of God; in either thought, word or action, of which, does fully demonstrate that fact of pure truth; That man has never (on his own), loaned a hand, nor lifted one finger; in the aide of any soul, to reach heaven and immortal glory. But instead; have all sinned, and come short, of the glory of God.

And therefore; if all mankind's worthiness were weighed and measured; in accord with their own deeds: then, every one (save Jesus Christ) would be cast into the ever burning hell, or lake of fire; to remain and suffer forever:

And but for the FREE grace of God, being applied, on behalf of a Remnant; hell, would be the eternal stay; for us every one; When this time world shall be no more.

Dear Brethren; it is by reason of my feelings; that those above remarks, concerning mankind; to be their own fleshly selves nature or condition; is the reason I give; as to why I dwell, as much as I do; upon man, in and of his own fleshly self; being undeserving and unworthy; of any praise or honor; for any good thing; which were ever performed, THROUGH him; not BY him; of himself. For such is impossible.

Remember?; "God" who cannot lie; in looking down upon mankind (which includes us every one) said; I find none good, no not one. Therefore, I feel bound to accept that to include, not only this poor sinner; but also, every one to every be born of woman. (save Christ Jesus the Lord):

Yes, ten thousand times Yes; among all the names ever named, both in heaven or among the inhabitants of the earth, His, is the only name, could ever be deserving or worthy, of any and all praise, honor and glory; both now and forever more.

It is impossible; to render praise unto man, of himself; for the performing of good, as be good in the sight of "God"; without also, at the same time; not only honoring the flesh; but also, dishonoring the name of the "Lord God." For after all, He is the one and only Giver, of every good and perfect gift.

Just as it is impossible; to praise "God"; except also, dishonoring man, in his flesh; at the same time. For God is worthy of all honor. While the flesh, is worthy, of all dishonor. For the nature of their ways; are as opposite from each other; as is heaven above; from hell below. Or, as is truth; the opposite, of the lie. Up, from down; or Light, from darkness. To the chosen, born again, children of "God"; in His completeness; is, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Or the inseparable, three in One completeness; of the true and ever living "God" of all grace and mercy; power and dominion; over and above all else, to ever exist, in all everlasting eter-

nity. And it is 'only' through and by Him; all things do consist or exist. And I do desire, a thankful heart; that no member of human kind; ever had any hand, in it so being.

The mysteries of Providence
Lloyds, No. 305 C.M.

1. God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

2. Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will.

3. Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds you so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

4. Judge not the Lord by feeble sense
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning Providence
He hides a smiling face.

5. His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

6. Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his works in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

Troy G. Shepard

VOICES OF THE PAST

NATURAL LIFE AND SPIRITUAL LIFE.

SOME reflections have been in our mind of late concerning two or three matters of which we have heard much said in years past, and of these it may be profitable to say a few words. One question is this: What life did Adam forfeit when he trangressed the law of God in the garden? It appears to us that the apostle has settled this matter by saying, "***The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.***" And again, That which is first is natural, afterward that which is spiritual. "***The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.***" It seems clear from this testimony that the first Adam did not possess spiritual life, but only natural. In his created state he was not a partaker of the divine nature. It seems then incontrovertible that he had no other life to forfeit than natural life, and this life was all that could be demanded of him because of his transgression. This penalty has been enacted of all the human race save those two who were translated by faith that they did not see death. This life all must lay down, and that because of sin; and so we read, "***As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have***

sinned." This sentence was passed upon all men, the elect and the nonelect alike. The children of God *"were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."* These "others" are those who are not included in the covenant of grace. *"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."* Paul says there is no difference among men, either Jew or Gentile, so far as this sin and condemnation are concerned; therefore, infants and aged men of all conditions and classes of life die. We need no other proof that sin is everywhere than the fact that death is everywhere. When men die it is because they are dead, first of all, in sin. The expression, *"In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,"* in the original Hebrew is more forcibly expressed, as will be seen in the margin of most large Bibles, *"Dying thou shalt die,"* and this seems to us to involve the awful truth of that death in sin and death to God which brings about this other death which must come to all men some day. It does not seem correct to say that Christ, as our life, was involved in the transgression. This eternal life which is spiritual and holy, and which is said by the apostle to be *"Christ in you; the hope of glory,"* Adam did not possess in his creation, and consequently this life was not demanded of him, and he could not forfeit it. Whatever life belonged to Adam, our first parent, is that life of which all his descendents partake. Had Adam possessed spiritual life as a creature all men would also have been possessed of it as creatures. Adam did possess natural life, and all his descendents are also in possession of it. In this life all men, elect and nonelect, share, as said before. Some men and women dead in sin, even as others, were, before the world was, chosen in Christ unto salvation. This was because it so seemed good in the sight of God; there is no other reason than this to be given. For these men and women Christ died upon the cross of Calvary. In order to thus die, the Just for the unjust, he took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, and was found in fashion as a man. He was that Word made flesh, and dwelt among men. Thus only could he bear the sins of his people and die for them that they might live.

Jesus laid down his life; he had power to lay it down, and power to take it again; no other man ever had this power. The Lord did not lay down his divine life, and the divine nature was not crucified upon the tree of the cross, but, as the man, our fellow, he died, laying down that very life for us which the law demanded of us in our first parents in the garden. Thus he paid all the debt which his people owed, and forever delivered them from bondage and from the fear of death. Now the way is blessedly opened for him to ascend on high and receive gifts for men, even the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them. These gifts are all embraced in the one gift of eternal life. No man ever possesses this life until he receives it through the in-dwelling of the Spirit. What Adam did not possess by cre-

ation, the chosen of God now come into the possession of through the finished work of the dear Redeemer. *"The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."* The chosen vessels of mercy were given in the covenant of promise to Christ, and Christ was given to them in the same covenant, and as the promise given to Abraham could not be disannulled by the law of Moses, so this everlasting covenant given us in Christ could not be disannulled by the law given to Adam. Christ came to die for his own elect ones. All men had sinned and fallen in Adam, but Christ came to redeem the chosen, the elect, from death and sin. The same penalty rested upon all men, but Jesus bore the penalty for his own; the nonelect are left abiding in death forever. Here we behold, as said the apostle, " the goodness and servity of God." This is presented by the apostle in Romans ix: *" What if God, willing' to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."*

It has been sometimes incorrectly said that the life of the church was demanded, and that as Christ is declared to be that life, therefore the law demanded of the church that she should lay down this life; but this could not be correct, because Christ and his people can never be separated. If then, that life which is Christ Jesus himself, was demanded of the people of God, or the church, then they and that life must be separated, or, in other words, they must lay down that life and be without it. But we have before shown that eternal life was not forfeited in the transgression, because Adam did not by creation possess that life. Christ, was not by creation the life of our first father; he was not the life of man in 'man's creation in any sense of the word. That man in whom Christ dwells, and of whom he is the life, can never be called upon by any transgression to yield it up; it is eternal life and not temporal. Life itself does not die, but we who lose our life are said to die when that life is separated from us. Christ laid down no other life than that which was demanded of men on account of the transgression; and by his death the chosen vessels of mercy were redeemed from death and made the recipients of that eternal life which was not theirs until it was given them in the new and everlasting covenant of grace.

The word "quicken," or "quickened," is a common word in the Bible, both in the Old and New Testament Scriptures, and as it is an important word it has seemed to us most important that we understand its meaning. This is also true of all Bible words. The Holy Spirit has chosen right words to express his mind, and holy men who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost were not allowed to make any mistake in the use of words. We indeed may mistake their meaning by carelessly reading them, or by giving to them as we read them the meaning

which has become attached to them by common use among us, which however may not be the meaning they originally had. This is true of this word " quicken." It possesses a definite meaning in the Bible; in our common use of it in our every day life it has come to have a lesser meaning, very far short of its signification in the word. We are not finding fault with this, but only desiring to call attention to the strict and definite use of it in the scriptures. The original Hebrew word translated " quicken," in the Old Testament, and the original Greek word translated by the same word in the New Testament, possesses a primary and a secondary meaning. In both Testaments the word means " to give life " or " to maintain life that has been given." In the Old Testament the psalmist often speaks of having been quickened, and prays for quickening at the hand of the Lord. In these last named places he evidently uses the word in the sense of preserving alive his interest in spiritual things. In the New Testament the word " quicken," or " quickened," or "quickening," is used eleven times. In almost all these places the word signifies giving life, or causing to live. In all these places that which is quickened is presented as having been dead. In one or two places the secondary meaning of " keeping alive " that which has been made to live may also be included in the word, but even in these instances the meaning of giving life to the dead is included primarily. So we read, *"As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will;" "it is the spirit that quickeneth;" " who quickeneth the dead ;" " shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you;" "that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die ;" " the last Adam was made a quickening spirit ;" " who quickeneth all things;" "quickened by the Spirit;" " hath quickened us together with Christ ;" you " hath he quickened together with him."* It will be seen at once that in nearly all these scriptures the word must signify to give life to the dead, or the power of giving this life; and even when it may be understood in the secondary meaning the first meaning is necessarily involved.

In most places which we have quoted it will be seen that the word applies to the work of the new birth, or the making alive of those who were dead in sin and to God. In three instances, however, reference is made to the making alive of the dead who were dead literally. This is true of the language in John v. 21: *"As the Father raiseth up the dead." Also 1 Cor. xv. 36,* where the apostle declares that seed sown by men must die to be raised from the dead again in the new and glorious form of the plant or tree. Also in 1 Peter iii. 18, the Lord himself is spoken of as being made alive from the dead in his resurrection. Thus it will be seen that the word applies to what we call the new birth, and also to the raising up of the dead from their graves. In both cases it retains its full meaning of "causing to live." In Romans viii. 11, the apostle says that if

the Spirit of Christ dwells in us it shall also quicken our mortal bodies, or rather that God shall quicken them by his Spirit which dwells in us. Paul had just said, " *If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.*" The body has been dead all the time of our life, and even after the indwelling of Christ it is indeed still dead. This is as true of the aged saint as of the child in grace. All the warfare of all the years of this mortal life continues to prove that the body is still dead, and this will continue to be true to the end. The believer of fifty years experience must still unite with the babe in Christ and say, My body is dead because of sin. One can say, My body has been controlled, kept in subjection and made to walk in the way of uprightness in some measure through grace, sin has not had dominion over it, but it is still a dead body because of sin. The Spirit has compelled my feet to go to the house of God, and my hands to minister to the disciples of the Lord, and my tongue to sing the praises of God, but still my body is dead. This takes in all that may be included in the word body; but the apostle says it shall be quickened by the Spirit which dwells in it, for he has just said, " *The Spirit is life.*" It is not merely living, but it is life itself. This is the glorious hope based upon the promise of God given to all believers.

Elder F. A. Chick

JAMES 1: 16-18.

Do not err, my beloved brethren.

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

JOHN V. 40.

"And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."

Our Lord was in discussion with the Jews, who professed a sacred regard for the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and for all the requisitions of the law which was given to their fathers; but they rejected Christ as the true Messiah which was to come. They had charged him with a desecration of their Sabbath day. Christ asserted his power not only to heal the sick, but also to raise the dead, and judge the world, and claimed that his honor and glory was identical with that of his Father, so that he that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father, for he and the Father are one. He also referred them to the testimony that his Father bore of him, and to the testimony of John, and the works which he wrought, and finally to the Scriptures onwhich they professed to rely as the infallible truth of God, and in the preceding verse, he said to the Jews, *"Search the Scrip-*

tures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come unto me that ye might have life."

From this Scripture and its connection, as well as from all other parts of the Scriptures, we are clearly taught that no external evidence presented to the natural intellect of man, can possibly make men savingly acquainted with our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Son of God, and the only Savior of lost, helpless sinners. These Jews were exalted to heaven in regard to their opportunities, and, as he had frequently re-minded them, they had been more highly favored in regard to external evidence than any other nation or people under heaven. To them pertained the giving of the law; to them the Scriptures were given; to them all the prophets had been sent; to them John the Baptist had come in the Spirit and in the power of Elijah. To their shepherds the angelic messengers had brought down from heaven the news of his wonderful birth in Bethlehem; to them he had personally come in the flesh, in precise agreement with all the predictions of their prophets, and in harmony with all the types and shadows of their law. In their hearing he had spoken as never man spake, preached as never man preached; in their presence he had healed the sick, cast out devils, raised the dead, and performed many wonderful works; but with all this mighty array of testimony before their eyes, they could not regard him in his true character, as the fountain and source of life and immortality, or they would come to him for life, instead of seeking to be justified by their own works. If these Jews, with all the testimony which was presented to their natural understanding, were still destitute of saving faith in him, how preposterous that Gentile sinners, with more limited opportunities, should become more savingly acquainted with him, as the true God, and eternal Life, without a special revelation of him to them as such, by the Father. *"No man knoweth the Son but the Father, and he to whom the Father will reveal him."* These Jews, as we see, were as destitute of will as they were of power to come to Jesus for life, for they neither possessed the ability or disposition to look to him for life and salvation. As to their will, they thought they had eternal life secured to them in the Scriptures, inasmuch as they understood the Scriptures to signify that salvation was of the Jews, and like all Arminiams of every other age, their will was enlisted in the vain hope of being justified by the deeds of the law, and to inherit eternal life as a consideration for works of righteousness which they had done, or intended to do. Therefore they had no disposition, inclination, desire or will to look to him, or come to him, that they might have life. Another evidence that they had not the will was, they did not believe that he had power to give eternal life to any of the children of men; for they did not believe on him as the Son of God. Furthermore, they saw no necessity of coming to him for life, as he had just told them, they thought they had eternal life in the

Scriptures. They had mistaken that temporal life, which was promised to the children of Israel on condition of their obedience to the law, for eternal life, and claimed that they were Abraham's children, and never in bondage, and hence they spurned the idea of being made free. The reason why they had not the will to come to him for life, is very clearly stated in the thirty-seventh and thirty-eighth verses of this chapter. Speaking of the Father who had sent him, and who had borne witness of him, he said to them, *"Ye have not heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you, for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not."* They could have no will to come to Jesus, as the only Savior, unless God worked in them, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

We are aware that many are taught that sinners, in a state of unregeneracy, are only deficient in their inclination, and that if by moral suasion their natural minds could be convinced by argument, or otherwise, that it would be to their interest to come to Christ, their wills would yield, and there would be no other impediment in their way. Allowing this theory to be true, there would be no need of a Christ to save a sinner at all. Every intelligent being knows that the human will of man is accessible to the power of man; and if nothing more were required than a change of will, the selfishness of man may be successfully appealed to by the eloquence of revivalists, and their carnal will enlisted to be happy here and hereafter, and if this were all the difficulty, the work would then be done. But this idea conflicts not only with the Scriptures, but also with the experience of every quickened sinner. Every subject of grace will testify that when their blind eyes were opened to discover their sinful state, they were not only willing, but would have given worlds, if they possessed them, to see a way possible for them to be saved without a sacrifice of the justice and truth of God. This is what filled them with deep despair, not that they were unwilling to be saved; but that there were impediments in the way which none but God was able to remove. They knew that they could not be saved in their sins, and the knew not how they could be saved from their sins. Nor could this difficulty be removed from them, until Christ was revealed to them as their Savior. They then felt they knew, and they confessed that their salvation was wholly of the Lord, from first to last, that it was not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God who sheweth mercy. But to settle this point eternally, Christ has declared, *"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day."— John vi. 44.* The caviling of Arminians, that the Father draws every one of the human family, is silenced by the declaration that Christ will raise him up at the last day all that are drawn by the Father to him. And in the thirty-seventh verse of this same chapter he says, *"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me: and he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."* This

settles the matter effectually and forever. The emphatic testimony of Christ himself is an end of all controversy with all who fear God. We cannot honor the Father except we honor the Son, and certainly cannot honor the Son if we believe not his testimony on this, as well as on all other subjects.

That all unregenerate men are destitute of a will to come to Christ that they might have life, is certain from the testimony of the Scriptures, especially from the words of the Savior himself, and the reason why they are destitute of the will, is because his word abideth not in them; and the reason why his word abideth not in them is, because they are not *"Born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."—1 Peter i. 23.* And, *"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."—1 John iii. 9. "Of his own will begat he us, with the word of truth."—James i. 18.* The testimony is not, That of our own will begat he us, by the word of our power. But it is just as our blessed Redeemer has said, *"It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."—John vi. 63. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will."—John v. 21.* Here we have, in this last passage, an illustration of the manner in which the Son of God quickeneth whom he will. How does the Father raise the dead? Does he wait until the dead are willing to come to him for life? Does he promise to the slumbering tenants of the graves, that if they are willing he will raise them and quicken, or give them life? Certainly not. *"The Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, [not with a proposition, a proffer, or an invitation, but] with the voice of the arch-angel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first."—1 Thess. iv. 16. "We shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised."—1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.* "Even so," or exactly so, precisely so, *"the Son quickeneth whom he will."* Will-worshipers, free-agents, and all Arminians, in whom the word of life does not abide, may, with the Jews, rage and blaspheme, but helpless sinners saved by grace, will exclaim in the fullness of their enraptured spirit, *"Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are all thy ways, thou King of saints." "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty; which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned." - Rev. xv. 3, & xi. 17.*

Middletown, N.Y., June 1, 1855.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

January 1947

"In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Eph. 1:11.

To write on this particular passage of scripture is to cut out a part of one continuous sentence. To my mind that is where isms are born, that is why and from where we have so many wranglings. It is not intended as a rebuke to the inquirers, but only to show how impossible it is to take part of a sentence or scripture and tell the full meaning.

In this chapter the children of God are described as being blessed with all spiritual blessings. These are not hinged on conditions, but are as unconditional and according (even as, like) as he has chosen us in him. At the same time and in the same way we were predestinated unto the adoption of Jesus. That came by Jesus Christ, freely, and like unto the choice that made us heirs. It was and is to the praise of his grace. In that grace he has made us accepted in the beloved. In him we have redemption through his shed blood, according (by) to the riches of his grace. Not apart from nor at a later date, but at the same time and out of the same good pleasure of his will we had the mystery of his will made known to us. This was all done that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.

Now to the text. It is a great text for poor bankrupt sinners to contemplate. Just now let me ask you to get your Book and read what has gone before. Take note, as you read, what the Lord has done. Linger on in sweet meditation (Ps. 104:34) at who is the beneficiary of all this. Too, may the Spirit of God give you to see that you did not have any part in the whole thing. God does not withhold anything from that gloriously bedecked woman, who is the bride of his only begotten. (Ps. 84:11). What has gone before is alright. We, if indeed we know him, have so much from the goodness, grace and providence of God. It all flows out from the eternal purpose of an all-wise God. Thus the promise or the condition of God's children in the text. This is not something that they must earn. The subject matter is not changed. It is not a change from what God does to what the creature can do. It does not say, as we often hear from our neighbors, that God has done all he can do and that the balance is up to us. No, not that! Our gospel is consolation, comfort, food, rest, peace, good news. Works and grace cannot be mixed in order to harmonize a thing. There would not be harmony in preaching part of it by God, the Creator, who is holy and righteous in every conception of him, and part by the creature, who is unholy and sinful in every sense. But this is a part of the whole that God has done. This is the work of the Great High Priest, who is a minister of the sanctuary and of the true

tabernacle that God pitched and not man. (Heb. 8:2). This "pitching" of the tabernacle means that God joined it together systematically (Eph. 4:16; Col. 2:19); united them into a glorious body without spot, wrinkle or any such thing, (John 10:16; Isa. 33:20; Job 14:5) and fixed it in such a way that everything comes to pass for the carrying on to completion of the work of God. (Isaa. 46:10; Acts 17:26). It is my desire that every child of God notice that little word, also. It has a world of meaning in it. It is the blessed assurance that there are yet grander and better things in store for the elect family. Everything (and it is plenty, enough) has come from God. But this new delight "also" comes from him. It is in him "also" that we have obtained an inheritance. It is not by anything that we have done, or can do, or ought to have done. In that case the word "also" would be equivocal and ambiguous, and having the conception of God that I hope to have. I do not believe that he would use bad or doubtful language. But let us go on to perfection, (2 Cor. 13:9; Heb. 6:1) and there is not any outside of Christ. (1 Peter 5:10) This is obtained in him. Now some say we must do something to get into him and his kingdom, and then continue to stay there, but these do err in vision (Isa. 28:7), and in faith (1 Tim. 6:10), and in knowledge (Mat. 22:29). But we, if possessors and not professors, have the proper vision (Isa. 28:7), and in faith (1 Tim. 6:10), and in knowledge (Mat. 22:29). But we, if possessors and not professors, have the proper vision the faith that overcomes (Num. 13:30), and our knowledge of him is that a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. (Mat. 7:18). Thus we, as our hopes lead us to believe, are contending for the things that make for peace. This inheritance is not like one of this world. Nothing ungodly has had anything to do with it. It is a godly inheritance and brought about by godly works, which works are those of Jesus Christ, culminated in his resurrection. (1 Peter 1:3). This inheritance is a gift. (Acts 20:32). From that standpoint it cannot be lost, forsaken, given away, nor sold. If conditions had anything to do with it I am sure that the inheritance of every child of God would be jeopardized with danger and contaminated with sin. It is a blessed thing to have the witness within that this is so, that nothing can separate us from the love of God, (Rom. 8:39) and that this gift to us is as lasting as God himself. (Rom. 11:29). Those that think money or works, or any such thing, has a part in this inheritance have, to say the least of it, a corruptible inheritance waiting for them. Those that are dependent, ruined, undone, bankrupt (and the knowledge of all those things from Christ), have an inheritance that is incorruptible. That little prefix "in" has the God of heaven to make it sure. It cannot any more be corrupted than God can cease to be. It is also undefiled. It is for the same reason we cannot touch it by human hands, but our handling of the precious promises must be by the hands of Jesus Christ. In that way we have all of the good things of the inheitance now in

this low vale of sin without any liability of defiling it. It does not fade away. It would fade away if we have to accomplish certain deeds. It would fade away if we had to preserve it - in fact heaven was the place for its reservation and Jesus is the preservation.

"Happy souls approach the table,
Taste the soul reviving food;
Nothing half so sweet and pleasant,
As the Savior's flesh and blood.
It is finished,
Christ has borne the heavy load."

But all of this finished work of God in the inheritance, would have been useless and fruitless had we poor sin-burdened pilgrims not been kept by his power. In purpose before time and in manifestation in time, we received this inheritance, being (at the same time) predestinated according (in like manner) to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. I tell you this is a good doctrine. It does my poor soul good to contemplate such surety. God is not a fatalist. He has not inevitably and irrespectively decreed the fate of all things and left for some other estate or dwelling place to watch, as a cruel tyrant, what he, in his dictatorial powers has fixed. No, that is not our God. Some say it is and loudly berate us for such a doctrine, but our God. gave us an inheritance in Jesus Christ, predestinating us according to the purpose (not one of the purposes, but the purpose, signifying that God alone can purpose) of him that worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

Dear reader, may God favor you with an unction from on high to see the sublimity of the little words "also" and "after". It was necessary that the council be held. A denial of that is a denial of the Bible. (Prov. 15:22). When a council is held, purposes are not disappointed. None among us will say that God is disappointed. To say so is to say that God lied. In such a grand doctrine let us press onward and upward towards that mark for the prize of the high calling which is in Christ Jesus, having God in our midst, (Ps. 46:5) keeping us from being moved, keeping us with a hand that never fails, working those things alone that came into his council room when he was in council. Thus you will never have a stone for bread or a serpent for a fish; no bad thing shall ever come upon thee; no surprising or unarranged for event shall come your way. But you shall come into the world and from the cradle to the grave enjoy the loving watchcare of your God who works all things *"after the counsel of his own will."*

W.D. Griffin

"Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures." - Luke xxiv. 45.

BLESSED opening, when He that hath the key of David puts in his hand by the hole of the door, and opens our heart to receive his own word. Then when we go to the Word of Truth, after it has come to us, our

fingers drop with sweet-smelling myrrh upon the handles of the lock. It is said that ***"the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live."*** O, to hear the voice of the Son of God in our hearts! Surely it shall make our dead hearts, cold frames, withering hopes, drooping love, dying faith, languishing prayers, and fainting minds live; yea, revive as the corn and grow as the vine. What is all religion without a divine beginning, middle, and end, commencing, carried on, and accomplished with a heavenly power, supernatural life, and spiritual unction? Well may we be ashamed and sick of, and sorry for all our thoughts, words, and works, all our knowledge and profession that have not stood, or do not stand, in the power, teaching, and wisdom of God. All our talk has been but vain babbling, our prayers lip-service, our preaching wind and vanity, our profession hypocrisy, our knowledge the worst kind of ignorance, und all our religion carnality or delusion, if they have not been divinely communicated. Sir Isaac Newton, the wisest philosopher, is said to have remarked to one who congratulated him on his knowledge, ***"I have been like a little child on the sea-shore taking up a little water in a shell when the vast ocean of truth lay undiscovered before me."*** Much more may a spiritual man feel how little, how nothing he knows of the unsearchable riches of Christ, and the boundless stores of wisdom hid in them.

J.C. Philpot

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." — **I JOHN v. 4.**

IF we are to be saved our faith must gain the day; we must have a faith that shall triumph over death and hell and gain a glorious conquest over every internal and external and infernal foe. This is just the state, then, in which the matter stands: we must either conquer or be conquered; we must either gain the day and be crowned with an immortal crown of glory, or else sink in the strife, defeated by sin and Satan. But none of God's people will be defeated in the fight; and yet they often seem, as it were, to escape defeat by the very skin of their teeth; yet faith will sooner or later gain the day, for Jesus is its finisher as well as its author. He will crown the faith of his own gift with eternal glory. He will never suffer his dear family to be overcome in the good fight of faith, for he will give strength to every weak arm and power to every feeble knee, and has engaged to bring them off more than conquerors. Thus as the Lord the Spirit is pleased to work in the soul by his living energy, he strengthens faith more and more to believe in the name of the only begotten Son of God, to receive more continual supplies out of his fulness, to wrestle more earnestly with God for a spiritual blessing, to stand more firmly in the evil day against every assaulting foe, to fight more strenuously the good fight of faith, and never cry quarter until faith gains its glorious end, which is to see Jesus as he is in the realms of eternal day.

J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

OLD PINE CREEK CHURCH

An annual all day meeting will be held, the Lord willing, at Old Pine Creek Church on the 3rd of July 1998. The church is located off highway #221, five miles North of Floyd, Va. Those coming from Floyd turn left on to road #682. Those coming from Roanoke, turn right on to road #682. All lovers of the truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Hale Terry

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1998 Staunton River Association will convene, the Lord willing, at Weatherford Church meeting house. The host church is Malmaison for this our one hundred & fifty-seventh session. Services will begin at 10:00 A.M. on Saturday, July 11th & Sunday, July 12th.

Weatherford Church is located about 5 miles from Gretna, Va. in Pittsylvania County at the intersection of highways 760 & 763.

We invite visitors and correspondents to attend this meeting with us.

Burnell B. Williams, Assoc. Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union meeting will be, the Lord willing, at Union Primitive Baptist Church, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in May, 1998. The church is located on 605 off Rt. 40 and 799.

We welcome all lovers of the truth to come and meet with us.

Elder Raymond Goad, Pastor

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Rocky Mount Church, a Presbytery met at Rocky Mount Church on Saturday, April 25, 1998 for the examination of Brother Guy Taylor Lynch if found qualified in accordance with the written word of GOD, at the discretion of the judgement, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Willard Cox. All Elders of our same faith and order present constituted the Presbytery. Those present were: Willard Cox; Lane Carter; W.T. Conner; C.B. Davis; Leonard J. Brammer; Junior Conner; Clarence Stone; Larry Hollandsworth.

All Deacons were asked to sit together.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Clarence Stone as moderator. Jamie E. Cooper as clerk.

Elders L.J. Brammer & W.T. Conner was chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate. Brother Ira Powell having been duly appointed by Rocky Mount Church, delivered

Brother Guy Lynch to the Presbytery. Examination was made by Elders W.T. Conner & L.J. Brammer using scripture 1st Timothy - Ch. 3. All present Elders were invited to participate. The Presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the Candidate, administered the laying on of Hands. The Ordination Prayer was delivered by Elder C.B. Davis, Jr. The charge was delivered by Elder Junior Conner using Scriptural reference.

The Moderator asked the Presbytery if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brother Guy Lynch, and the right hand of fellowship was given, The ordained Brother was delivered back to the church as an Ordained Deacon of the Old School Primitive Church at Rocky Mount Church.

The minutes consisting of the work of the Presbytery were read and approved.

The presbytery was dismissed with Prayer by Elder Larry Hollandsworth.

Clarence Stone, Moderator
Jamie E. Cooper, Clerk

Larry H. Hollandsworth
Willard Fox
W.T. Conner
C.B. Davis Jr.
W. Tom Carter
Junior L. Conner
L.J. Brammer
Clarence Stone

H. Calvary Brown
Gene Potter
Joseph Cahill
Hassell Hale
Herbert Dodson
Robert Smith
C.V. Jones
Wilton Griffin
Curtis Cundiff
James E. Medal
H.D. Ingram
Paul W. Jones
Lonnie Myers
Guy J. Holland
Burtell Williams
Donald Ogle
Lewis C. Akers
C.J. Alshire
Jedon Rutsonghe
Wade Pope
T.W. Murphy
Tommy Cowell
H.J. Abshire
Ruben Taylor
Wilford Parsons
Jamie Cooper

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 1998

Mrs. Betty H. Lovitte, NC 2.00
Mrs. Dorothy M. Gould, LA 2.00
Billy Weatherford, VA 2.00
Mrs. Erby Dalton, VA 2.00
Mrs. Pearl Pendleton, VA 2.00
Mrs. Peggy Bullins, NC 2.00
Hassel Allen, NC 5.00
R. Vernon Furr, NC 2.00
Mrs. E.G. Wilson, NC 6.12
Mrs. Sarah Barker, VA 2.00
Mrs. Sheryl Jackson, TX 7.00
Mrs. Eva E. Harlow, TX 10.00
Mrs. Aline C. Jacks, AL 2.00
Richard Stegall, VA 2.00
Donald Ferguson, CAN 32.00
Tommy Middleton, NC 2.00
William R. Pullig, LA 2.00
Eld. Tom Solomon, VA 2.00

OBITUARIES

ELDER FRED B. NEIKIRK

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. Elder Fred B. Neikirk was born October 30, 1921. Died December 31, 1997. Parents were Louis Byron Neikirk and Nancy Elisabeth Neikirk.

Elder Neikirk preached his first sermon at age 18, since that time he has preached among the Primitive Baptist people in Arkansas, Maryland, N. Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Louisiana, Texas and Florida. His first pastorate among the Primitive Baptist was at Soldiers Creek in Western Ky. He was pastor at Mt. Enon Church near Plant City, Fl. at the time of his death.

He is survived by his dear devoted wife sister Mary Fay Neikirk. Son Elder Michael B. Neikirk. Daughters, Mary Rachel Duren and Rebecca Susan Heacock. Ten Grandchildren, four Great Grandchildren. Several Brothers and Relatives and many friends and loved ones.

He was a strong believer in the resurrection of the body that dies. His hope was that when this natural body dies and returns to the dust as it was and Jesus comes again to call the dead to come forth, His body that went to the grave A natural body will be raised A Spiritual body It returned to the grave A mortal body it will be raised An immortal body. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory. Thanks be unto God who gave us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord. His one request was that these words be placed on his Tombstone. "HE LOVED THE BRETHREN"

He was laid to rest in Mt. Enon Memorial Cemetery after funeral service by his Son Elder Michael Neikirk and his Pastor Elder J.Y. McCormick to Await the Lord's return.

Beside his family no one will miss him more than we in the Mt. Enon Association.

Sister Fay Neikirk
Elder J.Y. McCormick

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

Your harps, ye trembling saints,
Down from the willows take;
Loud to the praise of Christ, our Lord,
Bid every string awake.

Though in a foreign land,
We are not far from home;
And nearer to our house above
We every moment come.

His grace shall to the end
Stronger and brighter shine;
Nor present things, nor things to come,
Shall quench the spark divine.

The time of love will come,
When we shall clearly see,
Not only that he shed his blood,
But each shall say, "For me."

Tarry his leisure, then;
Wait the appointed hour;
Wait till the Bridegroom of your souls
Reveals his love with power.

Blest is the man, O God!
That stays himself on thee!
Who waits for thy salvation, Lord!
Shall thy salvation see.

Watts.

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EDITORIAL

JESUS CHRIST IS COME

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus is come in the flesh is not of God." 1 John 4:2,3.

There are many people who believe that Jesus came into the world as a child born of Mary, and that he will return. Many of them, especially among the Jews, saw Jesus in the flesh, but did not believe that he was the Christ, the anointed One of God, and most, if not all, are yet waiting for him to come.

The above quoted scripture does not say that Jesus Christ ***"did come"*** or ***"is coming"***, but ***"is come in the flesh."*** The spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God. If any man is of God he must be born again, ***"not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."*** He cannot confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh unless the Spirit of God dwells within him. ***"Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Rom. 8:9. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God."***

The first coming of Jesus into the world was in a body of flesh when ***"God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."*** The Holy Ghost overshadowed Mary, she conceived and brought forth a son, and his name was called Jesus. ***"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Gal.4:4,5. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."*** Christ finished

the work that God sent him to do and *"who is even now at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Rom.8:34.*

The first coming of Christ however, in the spiritual experiences of his saints, is when he speaks to them. They were born dead in trespasses and sin, but Jesus said, *"The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."* At that hour they are born again, *"For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will."* The dead know nothing, but when we are given life we are soon made to know our sinfulness and lost condition. We then try with all our power to justify ourselves in the eyes of God, but we find that we are hopelessly lost and feel that God would be just in condemning us to eternal damnation. It is then that Jesus comes to us the second time. God said, *"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." Isa.45:22.* He causes us to look unto him, and, *"unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb.9:28.* This he does as the Holy Ghost, for the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost are one. Jesus told his disciples that he would not leave them comfortless, that he would come to them. He said, *"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." Jn.14:16-18.* When the Spirit of truth *"is come"* to us, we then learn that Jesus hath already accomplished that which we had in our great weakness attempted and failed to do. Our great burden of sin is taken away, the total darkness in which we walked is gone, and God`s holy light shines in our heart. Have you ever known a greater comfort than this?

Again, Jesus said to his disciples, *"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and manifest myself to him." Jn. 14:21.* If we love God it is because he first loved us. 1 Jn. 4:19. If we have his commandments and keep them it is because he works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. Phil. 2: 12, 13. Jesus was asked how he would make himself manifest unto his disciples and not unto the world, and he answered, *"If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."* If the Spirit has opened our eyes to see, and our ears to hear and our hearts to understand what the Spirit sayeth unto us, then surely we can confess that Jesus Christ *"is come in the flesh."*

John 14: 2, 3 is in complete accord with the scripture at the head of this

treatise. ***"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."***

Let us first try to establish what the ***"Father's house"*** is. A house is a place where one abides. Surely we cannot say heaven, the eternal throne of God, for the realms of immortal glory have ever been perfect; therefore our Saviour was not to go there for the purpose of preparing mansions for his people to dwell in when time shall be no more. Neither is it a house made with hands as it was when Jesus spake the words recorded in John 14:2,3 the church was not in actual existence, but with God all things are present, and in his purpose "were finished from the foundation of the world," for he hath sworn, saying, ***"Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand," Isa.14:24.*** Jesus asked his disciples, ***"But whom do ye say that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jo-na: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."***

In my weak manner I have tried to establish the fact that "my Father's house is the church of God. Now let us consider the ***"mansions"*** of this house. Many people have mistaken ideas that these mansions are in heaven, and that they shall dwell in such mansions. If my view that "my Father's house" is the church of God is correct, then the mansions shall be found there. Jesus Christ is the head of the church, and, ***"ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."*** In Psalms 139:15,16 we read, ***"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there was none of them."*** Those members whose names were written in the book of God are the mystical body of Christ. They were unperfect (not imperfect), for none of them had yet been brought into actual existence. Each one of them is brought into existence at the appointed time of God, ***"And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Acts 2:47.***

If we have proved that the church is ***"my Father's house,"*** then the mansions must be found there. Jesus went to the cross on calvary to prepare a place for each and every member of his body in the church. This he did when he died there to atone for their sins, and delivered them from the law of sin and death. On the third day he

arose a conqueror, for death had lost its sting and the grave its victory. As Paul said, ***"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."*** The "place" is now "prepared": the church is now brought up from condemnation and death.

The actual existence of the church was established on the day of Pentecost when the disciples were gathered together in one place and were suddenly filled with the Holy Ghost. They immediately began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. (See Acts 2:1-4.) The mansions, or prepared places, in the church are the particular offices or places to be occupied by each member according to the gifts of God: ***"and he gave some, apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Eph.4:11,12.*** Other gifts are recorded in 1 Cor.12:28. Now there are diversities of administration, and diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. and the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. I would suggest that you read the entire 12th. chapter of 1 Corinthians, for it is much too long to be copied here: it may help you to understand what I have written.

Beloved brethren, Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. That is, in our flesh experimentally. He is our King and he is reigning in righteousness and holiness in his kingdom here on earth. He has received us unto himself, for we are in him and he in us. In him we live and move and have our being.

At the last day, when time shall be no more, he is coming again to receive his bride unto himself. ***"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thes.4:17. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." 1 John 3:2.***

Brethren, I have, in my feebleness, presented my views in brotherly love, and not to be contentious of those whose views are different, but for your prayerful consideration. May God be with you in your meditations. Remember me when at the throne of grace. May God bless the truth and pardon my errors.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

February 14, 1998

Dear Sister Wall:

I am very much ashamed that it has been seven months and I haven't answered you letter. In your July letter you asked for some information on Sylvia and I. I will do the best I can to answer if the Lord permits.

I was born to my earthly mother and father October 22, 1941. Sylvia was born on May 3, 1945. We were married October 20, 1962. God has blessed Sylvia and I with three sons and one grandson. Our sons are 33, 29 and 19 years old and our grandson is 5.

I asked for a home with the Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church in Nashvillle, Tennessee the fourth Saturday in October, 1986 and was baptized the first Sunday in November, 1986. I was ordained to the office of Deacon the fifth Sunday in May, 1988.

Little Hope Church in the Hopewell Association asked for me to be liberated to speak October 19, 1990. I was ordained to be an Elder November 6, 1993.

Sylvia asked for a home with the Bordeaux Church in Nashville the first Sunday in November, 1996 and was baptized Saturday, November 23, 1996.

This past Sunday we were at Salem. God blessed us with a good meeting, spiritual food and natural food.

Sister Wall you and Elder Wall also had a special place in my heart. God taught us to love one another I believe the first time we met. We are taught as Paul said in his first Epistle to Thessalonians, ***"But as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another".*** This is my thoughts as to why when we meet dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ in our travels and visits, we feel this love that flows from breast to breast. How sweet and pleasant it is for God's little ones to meet in peace and love (For God is Love).

I often think about and remember the one sweet time we were blessed to meet in your home. The blessed meeting we had that night. I also remember Elder Wall offering his bible and asking me to speak in our Savior's name. Much fear came upon me. Not fear of Elder Wall, Elder Cabbage, Elder Moon and all the dear ones there - but fear of our Almighty God.

I believe Elder Wall knew what was before me. (I hope these things I am writing and sharing with you dear Sister is the work of our God and I am not deceived in myself). After the work of God's grace on a poor sinner like me, as I heard some of the sermons, I would be overjoyed with tears and sometimes have fear of our God.

Sister Wall I have experienced many things after I started coming among the Old Baptist people for 16 plus years before I asked for a home. I remember Elder Wall preaching at Brother Dotson's home (Powell Valley Association) on the 32 Chapter of

Deuteronomy about the eagle's nest and her young. I felt like he was preaching to me. Oh how it stirred up my heart. I feel God was taking care of me as the eagle was to her young. I had so much pride I couldn't praise him for what I felt he had done for me. But I believe at his appointed time, he removed this from me and caused me to come forward to praise him.

He has taught me as Soloman wrote in Proverbs. ***"The preparation of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord". "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths".*** How sweet and pleasant it seems some time to think on these things that have been in my experience.

The promises of our Savior seem so dear to me. As the one he told his disciples to go and teach. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you and lo I am with you always even unto the end of the world. I believe this promise (if I am one of his little ones) that he will go with us to the end.

This hope I have seems little sometimes, but I think about what Peter said in his epistle ***"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead".*** Sister Wall it is a lively hope because our Savior lives. We believe he is coming back for the Church because he is the Head and the ones chosen in him are the Church. We will be like him and be satisfied. The Psalmist David wrote: ***"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness".***

We hope you are able to come to the Buttahatchie/Hopewell Union meeting the third weekend in March at the Mt. Zion meeting house.

Sylvia and I love you very much and have many wonderful memories of you and Elder Wall. Give the Brothers and Sisters in Texas our best regards.

Sorry it has taken so long to answer your letter. These are just a few things that came to mind as I tried to write you.

In Bonds of Love,
James T. Howard

PROVERBS 3: 11-17.

My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction:

For whom the LORD loveth be correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.

Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.

For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than be gold.

She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.

Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour.

Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

VOICES OF THE PAST

Fayette, Ala.

MRS. BALMA CALLAHAN STEENS, MISS.

Dear Sister Balma: We read in Matthew 11: 28-30 of a command of Jesus Christ. For some time I have been meditating on it and the exquisite beauty in those words of his to the characters under consideration. The Arminian world of all shades and variations claim that it is to the Adamic race. We do not have any desire to treat on that as we have better things to do than shoot arrows to the camps of Babylon. Some among us would say that it is addressed to all regenerated children of God, and that they can obey it or fail as they please. We have no time for that either. Our desire is to write to you some of the beauty, grandeur and sublimity contained in these words. First I wish to stay with the scripture in our examination of this passage. If we have a mind (the mind of Christ) to look and inquire into the Scriptures we will find that many wonderful things are revealed in them. It is impossible to treat these words lightly. They cannot be set aside and something of our own substituted. The reason for this is because with Him there is not a vestige of failure. He cannot at any time fail. Men fail and most of them try to alibi out of it. Not yet have I read of him speaking as men speak. In the Scriptures and in my experience I have found that where the word of a king is there in power. My precious boys are now nearly men in every sense of the word. At times I have called them and they either did not hear or heed. Many things have hindered and yet hinder. Lois sometimes calls Thurman in her sleep and he two thousand miles away. Dear sister is our Savior so weak as that? Has distance, stubborness or anything else ever kept him from exe- cuting his will? No, no dear little sight-less sister his will must be done in heaven and in earth. Now let us notice our text. *"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."* This command is not given to any but those that are tired. How tired the children of God become in their efforts to keep the law! Toiling all the day and far into the night. No let down for them no cooling shade that they might escape the scorching vengeance of the fiery sun (law); no fellow traveler to confide in and to speak often with – just work. Work that is never satisfactory, work that gets harder to perform with each task. Oh, how glad I am to write the comforting truth to you that he does not appear too soon to these wretched, footsore creatures. I just cannot help believing that in this experience God's children learn something unforgettable in the spirit of the case. This command to come to him does not gather in any tares, nor any who have not completely tried the law. We might get ambitious and enthusiastic and gather some into the church who had never

known a moments labor, and who had never been heavy laden, but into that glorious kingdom of his, that is invisible to men, not one has even come to him that was not elected to come. It is so sweet and precious to rely on him as protection on the inside and outside. Not only does he effectually bring each object to him; but it has pleased him to either hide it or darken the minds of men that not one has ever come to him that did not belong to him. You remember the ark was pitched within and without. Why? Not only to protect and safely keep those within, but to keep out all danger and filth, and the door was shut to keep out those that did not have any right. Dear sister Balma, you have so much time to meditate, tell me, is it not your experience and observation that every command of Jesus is so worded that every one addressed comes and none others want to? The world carps about us not preaching a doctrine that includes everybody, but Jesus on this occasion commanded only those that were laboring and heavy laden. Is that not restrictive? Did it include you when you were a satisfied Freewill Baptist? It did not include at any time until I was past twenty years of age. To this day I have never been able to say for sure that it has included me. I am sure of one thing, if it has ever included me, there have been long, dry, barren seasons; that it did not include me. Can you give water to a man who is not thirsty? Does a well man need the services of a physician? Does a man that is not tired need rest? Will it interest a man that does not know the weariness of being heavy laden to call him to rest? Oh, how little the world knows! These questions, if applied to natural things, would call for an emphatic nay from every university professor in the world, but when applied to spiritual things they know nothing and would say that a man can want what he does not want. To enjoy labor there must be fruit. If, for no other reason, we enjoy good, honest toil for the satisfaction we get out of laboring, but these people are those that have not been satisfied with their labors. They are people who realize that the work must be done, they are the people who know they stand in jeopardy because the whole job must be done. Not the least bit of failing, carelessness or negligence will be tolerated by the Taskmaster. Oh! the long hot seasons they have passed through, toiling, toiling, no sooner getting the fence mended in one place than many more broken gaps appear! Ah, methinks I see them hurrying when the storm clouds arise that they might harvest what they have worked for Not only are there extremes of heat and stormy weather but there is the cold!

Have you noticed how trying it is to gather kindling, provide food and shelter during the cold weather? I believe these characters have to work right on through the cold. The cold of the Lord cannot be withstood (Psalm 147 :17) any more than the heat of him. Dear sister Balma, have I given a word picture of this character to you? Can you not look back (and even presently) into the mirror of your experience and find yourself? Now at the

right time Jesus comes to these laboring and heavy laden people, "come" is his welcoming command. Hitherto the command has been to go do, but now it is come. How the situation changes! No second command is necessary. There are not any new tasks to be performed, there is no threat given if they do not come. None is necessary. Why? Because none will stay back, they will come because they are ready to come. Up until this voice spoke they did not know to come. There was no place to go. Every home and resting place must be made ready for the recipient, but how foolish to make the preparations and then have the guest unfitted for it. Have you ever noticed how trustful a babe is in its mothers arms? She is fitted to it and the babe to her. Have you noticed the trust and confidence and rest among the Lord's humble poor? I They can endure hardness as a good soldier. Why? They have been prepared for it. Have you noticed the difference now and when we were children? Were not the seats hard? How hungry we became! Now I seldom think of eating or of discomfort. I do hope it is the preparation of the Lord. Others get tired of our service and our preculiar ways. They get tired of our conversation and I further believe they get tired of our rest. Now, I may be wrong but I believe it is God's work that makes them tired and heavy laden. It was his law and it was to be a schoolmaster to Christ. The translators made it say to bring us to Christ, but I do not think the law (work) would have ever brought a single one of these people to Christ: I do not find any life promised in the law and they did not know of this life until he spoke to them. Let us pass on and notice some more of the text. I believe I might venture to say it is a good one, but I just cannot handle it. All texts are centered in Jesus and if I have handled him at all it is so slight that I cannot get to the center but must play along the edge of the water. He tells them to take his yoke on them and to learn of him. You know we had quite a number of oxen at work when I was a boy. Not the first time did one ever take the yoke without first being "broke." Men do things and would say that unless certain things were done they could not proceed, but they rebel at God doing the same thing. It is necessary to yell and be rough sometimes in handling an ox, but the meek and lowly (he seeks that kind) he commands them to "take" the yoke. Quietly and without disturbance they do so because they love him. His commands are not grievous. They enjoy wearing this yoke, it is easy to them. It is fitted to them and they are fitted to it. My dear sister. I must close now, but in your lonely hours would commend you to this precious rest in him and no other. Here I hope to rest as he qualifies me to come to him Naomi desired rest for Ruth. She had been sorely annoyed and tossed about, at the proper time she was enabled to lie down at his feet (Ruth 3:14) and to rest. May we lie here at his feet and rest. I hope to see you soon. Give my regards to all. Your poor unworthy brother in hope.

Elder W. D. GRIFFIN.

EXPERIENCE

Dora Ellen, my dear child,

As I can't get my mind on my work today, I will try to do what you asked me to do for you some time back. I feel just as unworthy now to attempt to write as I did years ago when I tried to write and would end up burning what I had written. I hope the God of all power will give me strength and guide my hand to write only what is the truth for your sake as well as mine.

Dora Ellen, I don't know hardly how to begin, but I do know nearly as far back as I can remember I felt that I knew there was a power stronger than man's power. I would have serious feeling about myself and would want to get by myself and cry. I would not even know why I was crying and I didn't seem to have fun playing with other children. These feelings stayed with me off and on after I was in my teens. Sometimes the feelings were worse than others. I went on in this way until a few years before I was married. My burden would get so heavy at times that I wondered what was going to happen. I felt to be one to myself and didn't care for the good times other young people seem to enjoy. I tried to think it was because I was left at home with no one except one brother and my father. My mother passed away when I was very young and then my brothers and sisters were all married and gone except one brother who was younger than me. Most of my time was spent at home alone and I thought this had something to do with my feelings. There would be times I could see my way brighter, but those dark and lonely days would come back.

A few months before your Daddy and I were married I seemed to feel better. I felt that I had found one person on earth who cared for me. I was hoping that my life would be more at ease and for a short time it was. Soon these feelings began to come back and I tried in every way I could to keep them hid. When I went to bed at night I would lie for hours shedding tears and trying to ask God to have mercy on me. This went on for years. Everytime these unworthy feelings came back they would be worse.

In the year 1936 my burden was so heavy at times that I thought my time to leave this world was close by. I could hardly sleep and had a desire to talk to someone, but felt that no one would want to listen to me. I could only beg God for mercy. One night it seemed I had stood about all I could without telling someone how I felt. I spoke to your Daddy about how I felt. He tried to tell me how wrong I was for feeling that my friends had forsaken me and that our friends were good to us. I told him they were his friends and that no one cared for me and in spite of all I could do, I began to shed tears. He asked me if the church was worrying me. I told him no, that I was not fit to even think of the church. We had been going to church when we could and I enjoyed going, but I never thought I would join. I lay awake for a long time that night after everyone was asleep. I was thinking about what

Leland said and I tried to pray to God if the church had anything to do with my feelings, if He would let me sleep I would go to church the following Sunday and ask for a home.

God knew I was telling a story, but I really thought I was telling the truth. He blessed me with a good nights sleep. I don't even remember hearing my baby cry during the night. Next morning I felt better and did for the rest of the week. It was the week before the fourth Sunday. I thought I would go to church at Upper Black Creek on Sunday and join if they would have me in the church and be baptized Sunday evening. That was my plan; not God's. I went to church Sunday feeling the best I had for a long time. I enjoyed the preaching and singing and got along fine until the doors of the church were open and they began to sing. The feelings that came over me, I can't tell you or anyone else. It just seemed to me if I stayed in the house I would die. I got up and went out and waited for Leland to come out after church was over. After that Sunday my burden was worse. I decided that anybody that could lie to God as I had was not fit to even go to church and I decided to stay away from the church and live the best I could at home. So I stopped saying anything about my feelings. This went on for a year or longer.

We moved from where we were living and I thought the change would help me. I did feel some better for a while, but soon my troubles were worse than ever. My health grew from bad to worse. Some of the children were sick nearly all of the time. I just felt that all of this was put on me because I was so full of sin. I felt that I was the biggest sinner on earth; not fit to live and less fit to die. Finally I had the greatest desire to go to church I had ever had, but then we didn't have any way to go nor any money to pay anyone to take us. No one lived close to us who I thought would want to go to a Primitive Baptist Church and that was the only church I wanted to go to. The burden I was carrying was getting heavier all the time, but the worst was still ahead. I got where I didn't care to live and begged God to take me out of my troubles.

Dora Ellen, please don't let what I'm about to write upset you for it's not because I didn't want you, it was a thing I couldn't help. I feel it was a very sinful thought for me to have. You ask me to write this for you and I want only to write the truth as far as I can remember and I can remember the things that happened during those years better than I can things that happen now. This was a few days before you were born. I tried to pray that God would take both of us. I didn't want to live and didn't want to leave a baby for someone else to bring up. I guess I thought the rest of the children and Leland would be better off without me. To tell the truth, I don't know what I was thinking, but I do know that it was not God's will for either one of us to die. As for me, I thought my prayers were being answered. Everyone around me thought I was dying. I thought I was too and I was not the least bit afraid. I could feel death com-

ing on and I couldn't talk or get a long breath. I was just weakening away. The doctor came back and with God's help I was soon better. God was showing me what a power He has. Then there I was seeing myself a bigger sinner than ever before.

Before you were a year old, you were taken sick. I was afraid this would be the way God would punish me for the many sins I had committed. This time my prayers were for you to live; not to die. You got well, but my troubles stayed with me. I was always afraid something would happen to you. This went on for over a year. I was taken sick again and thought I wanted to die. There seemed to be nothing ahead for me but troubles and they were getting worse all the time. I got seriously sick and the doctor had me sent to the hospital. I was so sick that I don't remember leaving home and don't remember getting to the hospital. I was unconscious for three or four days. When I regained consciousness, I was told that my baby was dead and had been buried. The thoughts of all that had happened were almost more than I could bear. What I went through lying on that hospital bed no one but God and me will ever know. I can't tell it all. While I was there I had a dream; I guess it was a dream. I don't know whether it was day or night, but I saw myself lying on a high bed. It was as white as snow. There seemed to be two of me. I could see myself on this bed and down below us were all you children running around trying to get to me. When I woke up I lay for a long time wondering what it meant and it came to me as plain as if someone spoke these words, "you children needed me". Before then I didn't much care if I lived or died, but from then on I wanted to live and go back home to Leland and you children. I couldn't get back fast enough. After I got home my burden was heavier than ever to think how I wanted to be taken away from my family and then to see how much it meant to them to have me back.

After I came home I found out that my brother died while I was in the hospital. They were afraid to tell me about it until after I got well. It just looked like trouble at home was piling up again. This was in September of 1939.

I went on with this burden till the spring of 1940. I felt if I couldn't get to church I would go crazy. By this time we had moved again and no one in that neighborhood went to church and we still had no way of our own to go. I would speak about going to church, but that was as far as I got. I would dream of starting to church but would never get there. Then one night I dreamed I went to church. It was night and I had a lantern for a light. I had to go a long way through the woods, but I wasn't afraid. I went until I found this church. It was in the woods. I walked up to the door steps and didn't see anybody. There was a light inside. I stood for awhile not knowing whether to go in or not. A voice said, "Pull off your shoes and go in." I pulled off my shoes and left them on the steps and went in. I saw only one person inside. It was a man sitting as if he was asleep. He didn't speak or notice me.

I sat down on a seat near the door and began looking around. The lights were very dim. A second voice said, "If you come to this church you will have to bring such as this if you don't have any money." Looking the way the voice came from, I didn't see anyone, but I saw a lot of canned food. This thought came to me - if I have got to pay to come to church I won't come. I got up and went out. Then I woke up and lay for a long time thinking and wondenng about the dream.

My burden got so heavy that I could neither eat or sleep. It just seemed like I was forsaking my God and friends. I felt to be one to myself and had the same feelings I had before going to the hospital. I felt that my family had forsaken me, oh, I was so alone. All I could do was beg God to have mercy on a lost sinner, for that was what I felt to be. One night I had another dream. This time I found myself in a big house by myself and I was the happiest I had ever been. There was a hall in the house and I looked and saw Leland standing in the door. I was overjoyed at seeing him. I met him at the door and he took me in his arms and said it won't be long now. He didn't say what he meant by those words, I believe I know what they meant. Then we both walked out into the hall and down at the end of this hall was the whitest bed I have ever seen. Dora Ellen, you were out there playing on that bed and you were the prettiest little angel. You were just as white as snow and you would rise and fly and fall on that bed and it was like down and would cover you when you fell on it. I stood there watching you for awhile and I felt so happy for you. Then I missed Leland and went outside to see if I could find him. I found him working on a new building and he seemed to be happy. He was whistling a hymn. I don't know the name of the hymn but I inow it was one. I thought that was the prettiest place I had ever seen. The ground was as white as snow and out a little way from the building that Leland was working on was a great place of water as blue as the sky. Out in the water were places that looked like white stone with the prettiest flowers around the edges of the water. I walked up to the edge of the water and was standing there thinking how pretty it was when I heard someone speak. I turned and looked. It was L.C. He asked me if he could get some of the flowers that were out in the water. I told him he might get wet and he said, "no, I won't." Then I heard someone crying and I looked and it was Celion coming to me. I went to meet him and put my arms around him and he stopped crying. Then I turned to look for L.C. He was way out in the water. The water was up over his knees and he had his arms full of flowers, he came where I was and said, "Mama, I told you I wouldn't get wet." I felt of his clothes and they were dry. Then I woke up and lay there a long time thinking how good it would be if I could be as happy always as I was in my dream. I couldn't believe anyone could be that happy here on this earth.

In another dream, I was going to a brick church When I went in there was a woman sitting holding a little child.

I wondered about that dream and where that church was. I couldn't remember going to a brick church except Lower Black Creek. I couldn't believe that was the church I dreamed about. It had been so long since I had gone to church, if I had heard that they had taken Pittman's School for a church I had forgotten it. However, I felt that the church I had seen in my dreams was somewhere and I would see it.

When Leland came in from work one evening, he said he had thought of a way I could go to church. I don't think he could have said anything that would have pleased me more. I asked him how I was to go and he said to catch the school bus to Mr. Leroy Jackson's and see if they would take me. I got ready the next morning, which was Friday before the second weekend. I got on the school bus and went to Mr. Jackson's. When I spoke to Sister Jackson about going to church, I thought my trip was for nothing. When the boys came in for dinner she asked them if they would take us. They promised to take us on Sunday.

On Sunday when I got to church there was the brick church I saw in my dream. I don't remember ever seeing Brother Turner before, but I thought he preached the sweetest sermon I had ever heard. When the doors of the church were opened I don't remember getting out of my seat. When I came to realize what I was doing, I was on my way to the stand. I was received into the church. I experienced part of the happiness I saw in my dream. I put off being baptized until the next second Sunday which I regretted for the next month was a miserable one for me. I had never wanted to do anything as badly as I wanted to be baptized. It seemed the time would never come and when Brother Turner brought me up out of the water I felt the same happiness I had felt in my dream. It seemed I had left all my troubles and fears in the water. I wanted to shake everyone's hand. When I got back to the church and went in, there sat the woman with the child in her lap as I saw in my dream. I have had more pleasure since my name has been on the church book than I had ever had in all my life before. It's a different kind of joy and pleasure than I had ever known before and that's why that dream stays with me. I feel like it showed me the joy there was ahead for me. I think the words Leland spoke to me had something to do with the joy I have found, but I can't explain how I feel about it all.

The dear brothers and sisters have been more than kind to me. They treat me better than I feel to deserve when they took me in among them. I wonder sometimes after going through all I have if I had any right to go before the church and ask for a home. Then I wonder what would have become of me if I had stayed away.

Dora Ellen, I don't know if this is a true experience of a child of grace or not. All I know is it's just a part of what I have felt and seen, but so much of the time I feel the way these hymns go:

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am tis hard to know.
I am so vile, so prone to Sin.
I fear that I'm not born again."
"O for a closer walk with God."

Experience of grace as felt and written by Mrs. Peircy D. Holland.

BAPTISM

I HAVE been urged to write for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES upon the above subject.

Some authorities have been disposed to define in a very liberal manner the literal meaning of the word, though it is not my purpose at this time to concern myself especially with the literal definition, or man's teaching, but rather to discover, if possible, in some measure, the real significance of its spiritual import. The Scriptures abound with proof that immersion is the correct mode of baptism, but if there were none other than the record of the baptism of Jesus, that alone should satisfy every true follower of our Lord. *"And it came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straitway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him: and there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."—Mark i. 9-11.* There seems no mistaking the meaning of this language, yet how few there are to-day who are followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, comparatively speaking. To be sure, it is a " little flock." Only a few days ago I read in a leading New York paper, of one so-called divine, giving, as it were, an accounting of his stewardship, in term of years second only to one in the great city, in which he stated that during his ministry he had baptized over five thousand babies. While it was not stated "how," we are certain only one guess need be made. This only shows how ignorant is the wisdom of this world as touching the true teachings of Christ. There is no mention made in the New Testament concerning the baptism of infants, but there is constant mention of faith as a prerequisite or condition of baptism, and John when he was baptizing " in Jordan," seeing many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming unto him, said, *"O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to comes? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones [Gentiles] to raise up children unto Abraham."* The point I wish to emphasize here is the bringing forth *"fruits meet for repentance."* Having established the mode of baptism, let us inquire as to whom it may be applied. Is it the adult, the infant, the Jew, the Gentile, or who? The standard by which they shall be measured and the scales in which they must be weighed is, *"By their fruits ye shall know them."* There is mention made of being buried with him (Christ) in baptism, and this suggests to our mind what I believe to be the true meaning of the word. Naturally, none are buried until it is certain they are is dead; then the law requires that they shall be buried. Baptism, therefore, denotes death, that its fit subject has been brought under the law and killed.

The leper has become altogether leprous, not a sound spot anywhere, but wholly and entirely unclean, unfit for the companionship of any living creature, isolated beyond any eye to pity or arm to save, having no hope and without God in the world, knowing the reality of all flesh being grass. John, speaking of the one of whom he was a forerunner, declared, ***"He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner, but he will burn up the chaff with un-quenchable fire."*** He shall try every man's work, whether it be good or whether it be bad, and when weighed in his balance, all are found to be wanting. There is none good, no, not one, but all have come short of the glory of God. All creature work must be burned up, for no flesh shall glory in his presence, and every one who is to enter through the door of baptism into the house of ordinances which he has set up must die to all confidence in the flesh, or trust in himself, and be made alive to the righteousness of Christ, pleading only the merit of the Lamb of God, which alone could take away the sin of the world. When the Lord's people have been taught of him they delight to walk in his commands, they behold Zion a city of quiet habitation, and that out of her, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Then, it seems necessary that one should be baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire before he is eligible for the baptism in water, which does not put away the filth of the flesh, but to the one who has received that baptism which is from above, it is the answer of a good conscience toward God. Personally, I am satisfied that there is an innumerable company of the Lord's people who, for some reason, do not follow their Lord and Master's example. There are those in my mind at this writing who I am persuaded know the truth as it is in Jesus; they love to sit under the sound of the gospel when it is preached in demonstration of the Spirit and with power from above; they feed upon the great and precious promises made to the poor and needy. There is no question in their minds that the doctrine of the Old School Baptists is the doctrine of God our Savior, that it is the only doctrine that will stand the test, the only doctrine that gives God all the power, honor and glory; they will contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints when it is assailed; they love the Lord's true witnesses and will give of their earthly goods to minister to the natural needs and comforts of God's afflicted poor, and yet, whether content or not, they remain what some have termed "Dry Land Baptists." I have often asked the question, Why? Many others have confessed to the same thing. I have about concluded that it is because they have not been wholly killed to all creature merit. They are looking for worthiness in themselves, when the only worthiness that a child of God ever had, or ever will have, is in Jesus. Until one is brought to realize this, until he is willing to place his case before the brethren, the saints,

who it is declared shall judge the world, he is not ready for burial, not yet being wholly dead. Water baptism does not purify the flesh; it will not save the infant, any more than it will the adult, but it is an answer of a good conscience toward God to all who have beheld the beauty of the bride, the Lamb's wife, to those who have been made to say, *"Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me."* The ordinance of baptism, set up by Jesus Christ, is the door through which one is admitted to the rights and privileges of the church militant, and I have yet to meet the person in whom the Spirit of God dwells that ever regretted having been baptized. While those who have been baptized often feel unworthy of the love and fellowship of the brethren, the privileges in God's house mean more to them than all the world besides. To be members of that family entitles one to the freedom of the house, and they can and do speak often one to another of the Lord's wonderful dealings with and thereby comforting one another with the same comfort wherewith they themselves are comforted of God. The natural home with all that it can possibly mean, is but a poor and imperfect figure of what church is to them that are weary and heavy laden; they do come together at times with Christ Jesus as the head of the family, and find peace that passeth all understanding, sweetly resting his love. I would that I might he able to employ words that would express in some small measure what that church means to me. I hope I know to some extent what Jesus had in mind when he said to one, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." Jesus commanded his disciples, saying, *"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."* There are three that bear record in heaven and three that bear record in earth. The subject must not only be a fit subject, but the one administering the ordinance must be called and qualified of God, and there must be the church, the body of Christ. Without these three I do not see how there can be a valid baptism. The Lord's people should not only confess him by word of mouth, but in deed and in truth, thus manifesting their love for him and letting their light so shine that men may see their proud works and glorify their Father which is in heaven. Truly, the church is a city that is set upon a hill. It is above earth, and the way that leads to that city is an highway, cast up in the wilderness, wherein the redeemed walk. The vulture's eye hath not seen it, neither

hath the lion's whelp trodden it. It is only through the death, burial and resurrection of him that loved us and gave himself for us that we shall be brought forth more than conquerors; this we see set forth in baptism.

I truly hope I have done no violence to the subject, and that the Lord will stir up the pure minds of those who are exercised upon it, both old and young, leading them into a plain path and giving them courage and strength to do that which is well-pleasing in his sight. I repeat that it is not essential to salvation to be baptized. Salvation is of the Lord from first to last, and there are no conditions or requirements to be complied with or met on the part of man, neither can a thousand baptisms of men bring even one infant into favor with God, but " the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his," and if there never was another baptism as long as the earth stands it would not diminish the number of his jewels one millionth part of a fraction, but is only an answer of a good conscience toward God to them with whom he deals.

May he ever lead and keep us in the strait and narrow way, causing us to revere and praise his great and adorable name.

R. LESTER DODSON.

Rutherford, N. J., Feb. 10,1923.

Minden, La. 71055
Dec. 5, 1978

Just a few lines on second Thess. chapter 2, verse 13, 14. If there was such a thing as the plan of salvation it would be contained in those two verses. It reads. ***"But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethern beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and belief of the truth."***

Without doubt there is more confusion and mystery in the experimental teaching of the Holy Spirit to each child of God than in any of the great works of salvation.

Salvation is made up of three parts. First, is God the author, His will and purpose in his choice of his elect people. The scriptures teach that we were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, without blame before Him in Love. The only way we are involved in this choice is as a blessed recipient. This was set and fixed in the mind and purpose of God before any of us were.

Second, is the advent of Christ into the world, the miracles He performed, His teaching as set forth in the scriptures, His promises to His little ones. Even His name means God with us. These promises are the ernest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased posession. His taking upon Himself the sins of all His chosen. His death on the cruel tree of the cross. His burial and resurrection from

the dead. He tells us that because I live, you may live also. He came that we might have life Spiritually, and that we might have it more abundantly. This work of Christ in redeeming His people, justifying and atoning for their sins, was all done without any help from the sinner.

The third work of salvation is the teaching of Christ. In the 16th chapter of John, Christ tells us that it is expedient that He go away, ***"For if I go not away the comforter will not come unto you; if I depart, I will send him unto you."*** He, the Holy Ghost, shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

My desire, if I know my desire, is to make a few comments on the work of the Spirit in sanctification. This Spirit, I think, is the quiet still voice that tells us to go this way or that way, that this way is right or this way is wrong. This is God's kingdom, set up and manifested in the heart of each child of God. Until this work is begun in him, the child of God is by nature a child of wrath, even as others. These others, this scripture speaks of, are the ones mentioned in the book of Proverbs. There is a way that seems right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. This is the way we all travel, until touched by the Holy Spirit.

There are many scriptures that describe the work of the Spirit in the heart of a child of God, the first such work bringing to the attention of the child of God, that he is a sinner, that within him dwells no good thing, that all or the best of his goodness is as filthy rags. When we are given the heart to examine ourselves and find that we have not one good thing to offer this just and Holy God, then do we cry with Paul, "Who can deliver me from the body of this death?" thus, we learn that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Then do we begin to search the scriptures.

In this search we find that the same Paul who considered himself the chief of sinners was the same one given as a pattern for those who come after him to believe unto life eternal. That David, a man after God's own heart, was an adulterer and murderer, causes one to hope that because God showed mercy on such as these, that we are not so far away that He could not reach even such as you find yourself to be, that he does not save someone because of what he is, but in spite of what he is.

When, by the Spirit, this hope is set up in a child of God, he finds things much different than before. He has been turned from the love of the world and worldly things to those things that do not perish with the using. He longs for closer fellowship with people who believe as he does, to know more of the ways of Christ, a love for the truth that at one time he knew not. He becomes a seeking person.

In the Song of Solomon there is such a seeking person. ***"Tell me oh thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedeth, where thou maketh thou flock to rest at noon."*** Dear brethern, if this longing is sincere, He always answers. ***"If thou know not,***

oh thou fairest among women, go thou way forth by the footsteps of the flock, feed thy kids beside the Shepherd's tent." Is not this your desire?

He does not put the desire for Him in your heart and then withhold the way. He tells us in the 45th chapter of Isaiah, 19th verse, ***"I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain."***

So in conclusion, brethern, I believe that when the Spirit - and God is that Spirit - has taken up abode within your heart, you are ever being taught those things that are good for you, the things which are conforming you to the image *of* His darling Son, those things that are well pleasing in His sight. May it ever be thus with you.

Yours in hope,
Elder Graydon Smith

"Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed."— 2 CORINTHIANS iv. 9.

You may be cast down by many doubts and fears, and lose the sense of the Lord's love to your soul, but you cannot lose the reality, nor is your faith destroyed by the hottest flame. It is like gold; the fire melts away and separates the dross and tin, but never touches the gold. In your hottest trials your faith will not have lost a particle. Neither will your hope be destroyed, however you may be cast down about your state or standing; for not a particle of hope, or of any one Christian grace can ever be lost. They may seem to suffer diminution as the apostle speaks, ***" If a man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss " (I Cor. iii. 15);*** but it is no real loss,--it is merely the dross taken away, that he may come forth a vessel for the finer. The work of the Holy Spirit is as indestructible as the work of Christ; and thus every grace which he implants in the soul remains there untouched, unharmed in all its divine integrity. Love, patience, submission, and humility all remain unhurt in the flame, though the dross which is mixed with them is taken from them that they may shine all the brighter. Thus though you may be plunged into the hottest fires, you will not be destroyed, any more that the three children were destroyed in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, or Jonah in the belly of the whale.

Elder J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the One Hundred Sixty Eighth session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will be held with North River Primitive Baptist Church, Otway, Carteret County, N.C. On October 10-11, 1998. All who believe and love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited.

The Church is located at Otway, Carteret County, North Carolina. Turn right off US 70E at Gillikin Road and the Church is 1/4 mile on the right.

Gene Lupton
Association Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Martinsville Primitive Baptist church, a Presbytery met at Martinsville Primitive Baptist Church on Sat. May 16, 1998 for the examination of Brother William Noel Lavinder if found qualified in accordance with the written word of GOD, at the discretion of the judgement, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Larry Hollandsworth. All Elders of our same faith and order present constituted the Presbytery. Those present were Elder Lane Carter, Elder Larry Hollandsworth, Elder Raymond Goad, Elder Clarence Stone and Elder W.T. Conner. All Deacons were asked to sit together.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Lane Carter as moderator. Jamie Cooper as clerk. Elders Clarence Stone and W.T. Conner were chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate. Brother Herbert Dodson having been duly appointed by Martinsville Church, delivered Brother Lavinder to the Presbytery. Examination was made by Elders Clarence Stone and W.T. Conner using scripture Act ch. 6 - ch. 4 - vs. 8. All present Elders were invited to participate. The Presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the Candidate, administered the laying on of Hands. The Ordination Prayer was delivered by Elder Clarence Stone. The charge was delivered by Elder Larry Hollandsworth using Scriptural reference.

The Moderator asked the Presbytery if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brother Lavinder, and the right hand of fellowship was given, The ordained Brother was delivered back to the church as an Ordained Deacon of the Old School Primitive Church at Martinsville.

The minutes consisting of the work of the Presbytery were read and approved. The Presbytery was dismissed with Prayer by Elder Julian Williams.

Lane Carter, Moderator
Jamie Cooper, Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Rocky Mount church, a Presbytery met at Rocky Mount Church on Sat. April 25, 1998 for the examination of Brother Calvin Lynwood Plybon if found qualified in accordance with the written word of GOD, at the discretion of the judgement, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Willard Cox. All Elders of our same faith and order present constituted the Presbytery. Those present were: Elders C.B. Davis, Jr.; Leonard Brammer; Willard Cox; Larry Hollandsworth; W.T. Conner; Junior Conner; Lane Carter and Clarence Stone.

All Deacons were asked to sit together.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Clarence D. Stone as moderator. Jamie Cooper as clerk. Elders L.J. Brammer and W.T. Conner were chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate. Brother Ira Powell having been duly appointed by Rocky Mount Church, delivered Brother Calvin Plybon to the Presbytery. Examination was made by Elders W.T. Conner and Leonard Brammer using scripture 1st Timothy; ch 3. All present Elders were invited to participate. The Presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the Candidate, administered the laying on of Hands. The Ordination Prayer was delivered by Elder C.B. Davis. The charge was delivered by Elder Lane Carter using Scriptural reference.

The Moderator asked the Presbytery if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brother Calvin Plybon, and the right hand of fellowship was given, The ordained Brother was delivered back to the church as an Ordained Deacon of the Old School Primitive Church at Rocky Mount, Va.

The minutes consisting of the work of the Presbytery were read and approved. The Presbytery was dismissed with Prayer by Elder Larry Hollandsworth.

Clarence Stone, Moderator
Jamie Cooper, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 1998

Mrs. Flora Vest, VA	2.00
E.H. Chandler, LA	7.00
Mrs. Lawrence Myers, VA	2.00
Mrs. Mary W. Janney, VA	2.00
Ms. Reidy Pickral, VA	25.00
Mrs. Opeline Cunningham, AL	7.00
Mrs. H.B. Rhoades, TX	5.00
Ms. Edna McAdams, MS	2.00
John W. Mitchell, TX	7.00
Eld. W.T. Conner, VA	4.00
E.R. Graves, AL	5.00
Mrs. Margaret Quesenberry, VA	2.00
Mrs. Foye Cole, NC	2.00

OBITUARIES

IN MEMORY OF BROTHER GEORGE CARTER

Brother George Wilson Carter was born August 29,1902 and was called home by his Lord on November 19, 1997. He was preceded in death by his wife, Lizzie Green Carter, his son, Wilson Carter, and daughter-in-law, Louise Carter. He leaves to mourn his loss one daughter, Orene C. Carter, 3 sons, Weldon, Norris, and Willard, 2 daughters-in-law, Polly and Sarah, 6 grandchildren, 1 step granddaughter, 4 great grandchildren, and one sister, Sarah Carter. His funeral was conducted on November 22, 1997 by Elder Kenneth Key and Elder Haywood Wray after which his body

was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

There is something special about each of the Lord's children. What I found to be very special about Brother Carter was that he always greeted his brethren with a warm handshake and a pleasant smile. He was a man of few words and an humble spirit. The Lord seemed to shine in his countenance. We are saddened by his absence and yet we feel confident that our loss is his eternal gain, and that he could witness with the apostle Paul, I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

May his family and all who loved him be blessed with the reconciling peace of knowing that he is free at last of all the trials and tribulations of this vain world and is at rest. And may the gentle Shepherd be with us all. In all things may the Lord be praised.

Humbly submitted,
Mary L. Hawkins

JAMES DOUGLASS WHALEY, SR.

It is with great sadness that I write this obituary of our beloved brother in the spirit and my brother-in-law in the flesh; James Douglass Whaley, Sr., whom God in his love and mercy called home on December 25, 1997 was 80 years old having been born November 22, 1917.

He married my sister, Jessie Mae Page on February 19, 1944 and to this union two sons were born.

Brother Whaley attended the Durham Primitive Church and other churches several years before he was blessed to be received into full fellowship with the Durham Church on January 21, 1979. He was ordained as deacon on November 18, 1979 and appointed trustee on May 19, 1984.

He believed the gospel doctrine of salvation by the grace of God. He loved, attended and supported his Church until declining health that kept him at home. He would then inquire about the meetings and express deep regret at not being able to go to church.

He was predeceased by his wife, Sister Jessie Mae on May 10, 1993. He leaves behind two sons, James Douglass Whaley, Jr. and Gerald Page Whaley, two grandchildren, Luke and Shannon Whaley, one brother, Thomas Whaley and sisters, Dorothy Wentz of Durham, North Carolina and Betty Stewart of Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

Funeral Services were held at Hudson Funeral Home by Elders Cleo Robertson, Thomas Soloman and W.T. Conners.

He was laid to rest in Woodlawn Cemetery beside his beloved wife to await the second coming of our Savior.

Written by one who loved him,
Frances P. Brinkley

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

THERE is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign,
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.

There everlasting spring abides,
And never-withering flowers:
Death, like a narrow sea, divides
This heavenly land from ours.

Sweet fields, beyond the swelling flood,
Stand dressed in living green;
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
While Jordan rolled between.

But timorous mortals start and shrink
To cross this narrow sea,
And linger, shivering, on the brink,
And fear to launch away.

O ! could we make our doubts remove,
Those gloomy doubts that rise,
And see the Canaan that we love,
With unbeclouded eyes:

Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er;
Not Jordan's stream nor death's cold flood
Should fright us from the shore.

Watt.

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Sister Lessie O'Dell Spencer
Nannie Mae W. Williams
Sister Addie Cox Wright

EDITORIAL

GIVING ALL DILIGENCE

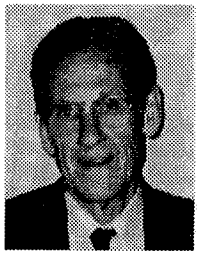
ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

Websters dictionary gives the definition of diligence as; persevering and careful in work, hard working, done with care, steady effort and painstaking. I believe that Webster must have taken his meaning from what the apostle Peter had in mind when he wrote his second epistle. He refers many times to the diligence that should be exerted by the child of God in his pursuit of the characteristics of what a child of God should desire with all of their heart. This was to be the whole thrust of their lives, after they have been given the earnest of the inheritance which they receive when they were quickened by the spirit. Their thoughts are to be of the goodness and mercy of God as he leads them in ways pleasing unto him. Now, read again the definition of the word diligence and see if that does not describe the desires of your mind as regarding your walk and conversation; the desires of your heart, not necessarily your actual ways, because you will never acheive your goal, in the flesh because of the weakness of the flesh, but that does not deter you in your pursuit. Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also and your treasure is in that city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God; and your life is but your journey to that city and your desire is for this to be manifested in your actions daily. Peter is saying, never take your eyes off of your goal, pursue with all diligence and you shall not fail; for. it is better to see one doing everything that he can, as an evidence of his faith, than to behold one doing nothing because he is afraid it is not God's will. This would be following the course of the servant who took his talent and buried it in the earth; he was afraid to use the talent that he had been given and this course of action was not pleasing to the king, for it had been given to be used to the best of their ability, which also was to render praise unto the king, Now, the ability and the desire are as much a gift of God as

anything else and does render honor and praise unto the giver.

David's desire was to build a house for God to dwell in, but God told him that he would not build it because he was a man of war; however he would raise up, of his seed, the one who would build the house, which was Solomon. This did not cause David to just drop the subject bcause he would not get to accomplish his desire, but rather, he spent the remaining years of his life collecting materials for Solomon to use in building the house; and making arrangements with kings of other nations to supply the materials necessary for the completion of the building, that David would never see. This is diligence, the desire which is from the heart and every effort will be toward the goal of accomplishing the desired end because it is from the love and the faith that he had for God. God told David that it was good that it was in his heart to build the building, but, that he had shed blood and would not be the one to build the house but his diligence was properly noted. You do not desire to do the things, that you do for reward, with the same diligence that you do the things that you do for love, but, rather because of the love that you have in your heart, you will follow the dictates of your mind in patient, earnest and continuous effort to make manifest the presence of your love and the spirit in your life. It is for evidence unto yourself of that love rather than to impress someone else. If it is to impress others, it is as the ones who prayed on the street corners to be seen of men, verily they have their reward in this life, but those who do it from a sense of love for the welfare of the household of faith shall receive their crown of life in the world to come, and their efforts shall not be in vain.

(II Peter Chap 1,vs 5-8) Peter admonishes those who, as he says, have obtained like precious faith with us: giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity. We know, from experience, and the scriptures teach us, that man cannot do these things in and of themselves, but, Peter had before said (vs 3) ***"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue"*** the ability and desire for these things and the diligence to persue these attributes come with the calling. Just as Jesus told the apostle Paul, when he saw him on the road to Damascus, that he had appeared to him for this purpose, to make him a minister and a witness both of the things thou hast seen,and of the things in which I will appear unto you; even so has the revelation of Jesus in the lives of all of the children of God been given for a purpose, and that is that they should give all diligence to fulfill their calling; and which is to follow after the perfecting of their faith, believing all the while,that it is Jesus working in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Jesus gives them the desire, the determination and the ability to follow in the footsteps of the flock

as they journey to that city, but remember, Peter is writing to those who have obtained like precious faith with us, not to the world: not to those who are at home in the world and have no knowledge that there is another realm other than the realm of nature in which they are now dwelling.

Much of the writings in the scriptures deal with the admonitions, charges and teachings by the authors of the letters; to those to whom the epistles were addressed, and to others of like precious faith who have been quickened by the spirit, to show forth this calling in their walk, talk and lifestyle among the peoples of the world. They were not that they might influence or persuade the natural man to follow their example, or to make them see and understand the truth, but rather that it might be made manifest that there is a difference in their values and committment to their faith; and that it was not just a rebellion against the world and its lifestyle: but a change of heart which influences their every thought action and deed and separates them from those around them. As Lot's righteous soul was vexed with the sins of Sodom, their soul is vexed with the ways of the world and their desire and prayer is that their life might be an example of the teachings of the apostles and prophets.

Peter's writings dwelt on these things more than some of the others. Possibly, because he had learned by bitter experience that the child of God must always be on guard against the thoughts and deeds of the natural mind; he was taught by his personal experiences that he could have the best of intentions but not be able to do those things that he declared that he would do; but he was not to just quit and give up because he did not succeed in his endeavors. He told Jesus, on one occasion, that he would not let the Jews take him and kill him, but, Jesus said, (Math Chap 16, vs 23) ***"Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou art an offense unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."*** Knowing these things and the weakness and depravity of the flesh he still admonishes his brethren to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure. Jean Dixon once said that she prayed as though everything depended on God but worked as though all things depended on her; there is a lot more truth to this statement than possibly even she realized, because that is exactly what Peter is advising here. Give all diligence to make you calling and election sure and yet, we know ,that Peter realized that the salvation of all, and their election, was the work of God and him alone; but he still felt it good to keep admonishing the brethren to work as though the outcome depended on their efforts; not in order to attain their goal but rather because of what had already been accomplished for them in the confines of their heart and soul. As God told David, it was good that it was in his heart to build the house of God although it did not get the house built; likewise it is good for these desires to be the motivating force in

the lives of those who feel to be the most blessed people in the world and cannot but want this to be manifest in their lives.

Peter's admonition here is in the same theme as the apostle Paul when he said (Rom Chap 12,vs 1-2) ***"I BESEECH you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."*** Paul did not believe that it depended on what the creature did, to accomplish their salvation, but it was what should be reasonably expected of them to commit their all to the love of God and to follow his teachings with their whole heart. They were to lay down their lives for him to prove their love for him and his word and no longer conform their lives to the ways of the world just because the majority of the world is lining up at the broad gate that leads unto destruction. The desire given unto all is that their lives should be spent for the welfare of the church but when they view it, it makes them realize, every day that they live, how far short they come of being worthy of his love and mercy, and yet, in spite of this they feel that they are recipients of them. (1John Chap 3,vs16) ***"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren",*** this is referring to the same diligence, in the lives of the recipients of this love and mercy, by John, that Peter is speaking of in his epistles.

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if you do these things, ye shall never fail: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. What a grand and glorious prospect this is to one who sees themselves to be the weakest of the weak and the vilest of the vile. Paul said that he was the chiefest of sinners and yet he still felt that it was the reasonable service of those who were so saved and called with a holy calling to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, not just on Sunday or in the formal worship services, but, each and every day of their lives here on earth. Their impression and desire to do these things is their calling from God and comes from the heart, so never shun them for fear of what man may say or because of mans judgement.

Then Peter goes on to say;(II Peter Chap 1,vs 12) ***"Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth."*** This was how Peter practiced what he preached; not being negligent, is being diligent and therefore he wanted to bring these things to their remembrance again although they already knew them. The children of God know how weak and insufficient they are, in

and of themselves and their need to have these things brought to their minds again, therefore their desire to do them is just as strong as Peter's desire is to not let them be negligent of the high and holy calling of their God.

This was his admonition to his fellows elders also;(1 Peter Chap 5,vs2) *"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."* They were to fulfill their calling, not as positions of authority over others but rather as servants to the sheep, not as Doctors of Divinity lording it over their flock but in demonstration of the power of God in giving them the manna from heaven, in like manner as Jesus did when the apostles fed the multitudes with a few loaves and fishes. Their gift was for the flock, and their calling was to distribute that which was given unto them, meekly humbly and reverently as unto God; and a God called minister does this with all of the diligence that they can muster, and all the while, feeling that they are unprofitable servants.

(II peter Chap 3,vs10-12) *"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be disolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,wherefore beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."* This is the reason for Peters admonitions; that they may be reminded of the harsh reality of the end of all things for which they look and believe to be their future; and therefore, these things being so, their whole life should be committed to God: and their exercise of faith should be their constant effort and desire. By this they would indeed grow in grace and in the knowledge of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; and thereby would add to their faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity, and as Peter says, if ye do these things ye shall not fail. You do these things, not because of any goodness in your flesh, but because you were created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that you should walk in them; these are the good works that Paul is talking about and the steadfastness is the diligence that Peter is talking about.

(Eph Chap 4,vs 1) *"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meeknes, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."* Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus is one of the most interesting of all his writings. He begins with

the sincere milk of the word, the solid foundation points of the doctrine, predestination, election quickening of the spirit and goes on into the application of these truths in the life of the saints. He declares the absolute security of the saints in that they were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world; being predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself according to the pleasure of his will: that he was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto him by the effectual working of God's mighty power, but he still besought the brethren to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called. He did not believe, for a minute that, this was to insure their salvation, but as he said on another occasion, it was only reasonable that they should do this because of the love and adoration that they had for God's unspeakable gift that he had bestowed upon them. This is why there are so many admonitions in the scriptures; the writers were so aware, from experience, of the weakness and slothful nature of man that they desired , that their love for the brethren and God, should be made manifest by their walk and in their diligence to show forth their abiding faith.

As he said in his letter to the Hebrews (Heb Chap 6,vs 1) ***"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and faith toward God, Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgement. And this we will do, if God permit."*** and then he goes on to say that once enlightened, if they fall away , it is impossible to renew them again, but he says we are persuaded better things of them, and things that accompany salvation. God is not unrighteous to forget their work and labor of love which they have shewed toward his name, and desired that everyone of them shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end. The basic fundamentals of the doctrine are crucial to the salvation of the saints, but also, he that hath established these same fundamentals, hath also created them in Christ Jesus unto good works, and ordained that they should walk in them. They are not changing doctrines when they move from predestination to good works and their diligence unto them, but rather, they are two sides of the same coin. Predestination and the absolutes are God's side of the equation and are the basis of all things; nothing occurs outside of these perameters, and it is their being fulfilled in the child of God whereby they have the diligence and determination to persevere in the race that is set before them. They glorify God, not man, and are but outward manifestations of the presence of the spirit in their heart; they are not, man made, but are spiritually inspired. The same spirit is working in Peter and Paul in their admonitions to the saints, to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure, as it is in the saints

who are endeavoring to do the same. If the works are not inspired of the spirit they are as filthy rags before God. The absolute power, grace, love and determinate counsel of God are the foundation upon which the building is laid: the diligence of the saints to make their calling and election sure, and the good works that are produced, are the blessings, here in time, that God bestows on the church from which the saints receive strength and courage to press on to the mark of the prize of the high calling of God (Psa 27, vs 13-14) ***"I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord."*** These diligent continuous strivings of the saints are beautiful manifestations of the goodness of God in the land of the living.

Brethren, these admonitions are as applicable in this day as they were in the apostles day: it is beautiful to see these characteristics being wrought out in the lives of the saints of God, in the cuurch. The good works that they perform do not add glory to the kingdom of God, it was complete as designed, but, they sure do cheer and encourage the hearts of the faithful as they behold the careful diligent walk, and the constant display of the love that prompts these actions as they run with patience the race that is set before them. They are looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith and unto God the architect of their salvation; they are surely worshipping them indeed and in spirit and truth by their actions.

(II Peter Chap 3, vs 14) ***"Wherefore, beloved seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."*** This is the soul's desire in all who have been saved and called with a holy calling, and they should steadfastly maintain their diligent search for these truths in their lives and present themselves as a living sacrifice unto God for the unspeakable gift of his love and mercy; This is the earnest of the inheritance laid up for them in that land where Jesus has gone to prepare a place for them that love him: all of them of like precious faith. None have ever acheived their desired goal , in this respect, but that should never cause you to waiver in you efforts, the desire is good and they are profitable because they give you joy in trying and others pleasure in beholding your faith, in action.

Never let anyone demean your efforts in giving all diligence to make your calling and election sure; if you have the desire to do these things; do them with all your might, for God knoweth the heart of man and he is the one to be the judge, and he rewardeth the cheerful giver whether it be in giving material things, the fruit of the lips in praise unto his holy name or the effort to manifest the love that you have for God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. Man cannot possibly be a righteous judge of your works: and certainly not the man in nature: if they are children of the heav-

enly King they should never discourage you in your labor of love, and if they are not, you should not be concerned about what they think, or their opinions, in determining your course of action. The most beautiful sight to those who have been born again is to see the spirit being made manifest in the lives of a brother by their actions; that fearful humble countenence that is the mark of the saints of God when they talk of the things of God, and especially, when they are striving to do those things that they are admonished to do by the apostles and prophets as an evidence of the love that they have for their heavenly Father.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

ARTICLES

BISHOP AND DEACON

This subject is one of much importance in the church of God, and we hope the remarks offered to the readers of the Signs of the Times will be in direct accord with the word of God as recorded in the NEW TESTAMENT. The apostle Paul, in the third chapter of first Timothy, says the one that desires the office of Bishop desireth a good work. He must be blameless. What could Paul have meant, knowing that man in his best estate is altogether vanity, and that in him, that is, in his flesh, dwells no good thing? He was referring to the qualifications: the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach, not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, but patient; not a brawler, not covetous, one who ruleth well in his own house, having, his children in subjection, with all gravity. (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. The qualifications are: (a) To be the husband of one wife he must be, in his marriage relations according to the flesh, as though there was no other women in the world. (b) To be vigilant he must be attentive to discover and avoid danger; alert, cautious. (c) To be sober he must be habitually temperate, especially in the use of intoxicating liquors, self-possessed, calm, steady, sedate. (d) Of good behavior, one must be of good conduct, deportment and manners (e) Given to hospitality, one must have the faculty of entertaining friends and strangers with kindness and liberality. (f) Apt to teach, To teach, one must be able to give the connection and meaning of the subject matter under consideration. (g) Not given to wine. Which in the relation of quality is embraced in the word sober. (h) No striker. This qualification does not apply to one who has natural strength to perform manual labor of any kind, but has reference to one making attacks on another to carry out a selfish end and take advantage secretly to the hurt of an individual. (i) Not greedy

of filthy lucre. This has many different relations in everyday life, but to be brief we would give as the qualification, as being not greedy for the treasures of this world, which have many sources. We do not here infer that these requirements would bar the individual from trying to provide an honest living in the eyes of all men, but it does denounce the one who would take advantage of another to deprive him of possession and then not compensate for the same, by which the individual would be loser. (j) But patient. To be patient is to bear hardships, affliction or insults, enduring with forbearance and waiting with calmness. (k) Not a brawler. A brawler is one who goes about gendering strife and creating greater confusion and trying to add to trouble, instead of being quiet and seeking things that would make for peace. (1) Not covetous. One who is not covetous does not look on the effects of others to deprive and dispossess them of the comforts they are enjoying, but rather rejoices to see their prosperity and in thanksgiving to God implores for the continuance of His blessings. These qualifications Paul emphasizes as being necessary in a moral way for one to be a bishop. Some creeds try to lay out and discern certain gifts to certain work in the church organization, but the Old School Baptist Church has only two offices in church organization: Elders and Deacons. The apostles when they had ordained them Elders in every church and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord on whom they believed. (Acts xiv. 23) Elders, as they are called, are regularly ordained men under the authority of the church by a presbytery of Elders and the laying on of hands and prayer, which bestows upon the one ordained the full functions of a gospel minister. He is then subject to be called to serve churches as pastor, of which he is to take the oversight thereof, not for filthy lucre's sake, but of a ready mind, which work is of the Lord, as He is not only the overseer, but the one to see for the Holy Ghost has made Him overseer.

Elders, in the language of Paul, ***"take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood."*** (Acts xx 38.) After all the qualifications Paul enumerated as to the natural man, they could not make one an overseer of the church of God, as the Holy Ghost must make him overseer. An overseer is one who superintends all matters relative to the peace and prosperity of the church of God. The Spirit, speaking to John on the isle of Patmos, called them angels, and for any pastor to neglect to faithfully warn the church or churches of his pastorate, the welfare of that church is to be required at his hand. Elders are undershepherds, and are sent out by the Shepherd (Jesus Christ) to feed His flock and to care for them, and all responsibility to him rests upon the undershepherd, or pastor, of the church. He is not permitted to turn away from reproving or

rebuking with all longsuffering and doctrine because it would not suit cerlain indivlduals. If he should do so he would be greedy of filthy lucre. Elders would and it is much easier to serve brethren as churches if all could feel the responsiveness of their pastor to God for his stewardship. There would be great changes in the attitude of many toward their pastor. We hear expressions that the minister, Elder or pastor, any of these terms we wish to know him by, should not consider the financial welfare of the church. We have no authority to take such a position or express such views of the overseer of the church of God, any more than we would if we had an overseer of our entire house for him not to consider the preservation or protection in every way. The apostles received offerings from the brethren in a financial way and looked after the application to see that the proper distribution was made. Yes, but we hear one say, we have deacons to do that. Deacons were set apart by the apostles to satisfy the demands of the widows in daily ministrations that were neglected. For the apostles to have to turn and serve in these daily ministrations would require too much of their time from the ministry, and we wish our readers to note the apostles did not give to the deacons any functions in the church relations only to serve the church in these matters relative to daily ministrations and all were supplied from one common store. The deacons could only mete out such as was delivered into their hands.

We now come to the qualifications of the deacons. Paul said that likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre, holding the mysteries of the faith in a pure conscience, and let them use the office of deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderous, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husband of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well, for they who use the office of deacon will purchase to themselves a good degree and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. Relative to the office of deacon in the church of God, we consider this office, when filled according to the gospel of great importance. We feel to give what belongs to the office of deacon. In his office he is set apart lo assist the minister in looking after the poor and afflicted. We have no record in the New Testament requiring them to report to the apostles or church, but because of the distribution of the funds of which all the church is the supporter it is necessary to give or render a perfect account of such as they were required to disburse, and if they have not sufficient funds to meet the demands they should report at once to the church, and call attention to what things are necessary to meet the demands, and when these requirements are filled the minister and the deacons are acquitted. The minister, in all his service, is the servant to the church and an example, and should have the esteem of every member for the work's

sake. The deacons should assist the minister in seeing that every order of the church is carried out. Where there is a working togelher of pastor and deacons and of the brethren we find a healthy church. When we find deacons who feel that they are over the church and pastor, and that no member has any right to question them about what they do, and who stand out against the church, trylng to avoid the execution of the orders of the church, and give no report of their handling of the church's financial matters, trouble is sure to come to them, as that is sowing to the flesh, and the harvest is always corruption. And for a pastor to go away and leave the church that has called him, without first having her consent, is a gross disorder, and he is sowing to his flesh, For a church to be in good order, pastor, deacons and every member are denying themselves, bearing with one another and laboring for things that make for peace, and, if possible, hiding the weakness we see in each other in the flesh, and watching for the good which is manifested by the Spirit. *"That by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virture; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Elder C.W. Vaugn

VOICES OF THE PAST

Dear Brethren and
Friends in the Lord:

I have had a mind for some time to write some for the Signs. My weakness and imperfections have given me much fear; however, I believe the Lord is able to give me strength to do so, if it be his will. I hope and pray He will direct my mind in the right way.

I was born in Patrick County, Virginia, August 11, 1920, in a little log cabin about five miles from Fairystone Park. My mother had been married before, and been left with some small children. When I was about eight months old my natural father died, leaving my mother again with more small children.

I do not remember much about my life until I was about eight years old.

We did not own a home and found ourselves moving from one place to another. At about the age of eight I had scarlet fever, and the doctor told the neighbors that he did not think I would live. I was out for some time, I do not know how many days, and did not know anything. My grandfather lived with us about this time, and he was taken sick and died.

My mother did not have the money to buy clothes for me to go to school, so I had to wear my grandfather's clothes. I went to school but very little, and what time I did go I was nicknamed Grandpa, because my clothes were too large for me. Sometime in early life I had serious thoughts about death and what would become of me after death; but as I thought on these things, I also thought I had plenty of time; and before I got old I would think more about it. But time went on, and sometimes it did not bear on my mind so heavy; but other times it would get so heavy that it seemed I could not bear it.

I felt to be so young, and such a vile sinner, but I thought I was too young to even think about joining the Church because most of them were up in age. I thought I was too young even to think of such things, and would try to put them out of mind. I would go with my mother to church, and would see them and my mother crying, and I could not understand why. Why would they cry if they were happy? I did not know that their tears were of joy. I have always felt to be a misfit with my schoolmates, and with the Church people today. I well remember that one time my teacher came to me on the school ground and said to me, "Leonard, why don't you play with the other children?" I don't remember what I told her, but I felt so unwanted by my schoolmates.

There was an Elder who was to preach at a church close to the schoolhouse, and the teacher told us children that we would all go down to hear him. Most of the children as well as myself were glad to get away from school awhile; and this was the church I had been going to with my mother. We all went in and sat down, and the Elder began to preach.

At the close of his sermon he turned to us children and began to admonish us how we should mind our parents, and how we should not worry them; for this was good in the sight of God. Before I knew what had taken place, I began to choke up in my throat. I have said, and still say, that I believe that was the first sermon I ever heard. Sometime after that my mother came back from church and told me that the church wanted me to be their housekeeper. I was twelve or more years old at this time, and I felt that to be a great honor: I would sweep the dust that came from the Saint's feet; and to be a doorkeeper in the House of the Lord was more than I felt worthy to be.

Time went on and I got worse instead of better, it seemed to me. I had heard people say that after you pass twelve years of age, that you would come to the age of accountability; and now I have passed that and have not felt the deliverance at the hand of the Lord. Time went on, and we moved to the little Town of Bassett, Va., and I went to work in the plant there. My burden of sin became so heavy it seemed I could not live. I became very ill and could not hold down my job. This gave me much concern, and I began to lose weight; and it seemed the doctors were doing me no good. What to do I could not find. I would try to pray but it seemed the Lord would

not hear. I would go to bed at night and lay there trying to beg the Lord for mercy; and when I arose in the morning, my very breathing was, ***"O Lord have mercy on me. O Lord deliver me according to thy grace. Bless me, O Lord, that this mountain of sin might be removed from me. I confess before thee, O Lord of heaven and earth, that I am vile, I am undone; but I believe thou art able to set me free, thou art able to give me life."***

I remember one night going to bed as usual; and sometime in the night I dreamed I saw a large body of clear water. As I looked at this water a voice seemed to say, In it dwelleth righteousness. As I thought on this it seemed that in it dwelled righteousness for me,

and I felt this was to show me I should be baptized. But I wanted more evidence. One of my half-brothers was boarding with us at this time. I thought him to be a good man and I asked him to pray for me -- it seemed the Lord would not hear me, and my prayers seemed to go no higher than my head. My half-brother went to his bedroom that night, and I could hear his voice but could not understand his words. That night I dreamed I saw a man standing in the pulpit of my home church; and this man was my Lord, and he beckoned for me to come. I awoke the next morning and told my brother the dream. He was and still is a member of another order, but he said to me, "That is the church for you."

I had been sick all of that winter, as I stated before. Sometime in March I had gone to bed as before, begging the Lord for mercy. The next morning I awoke, got up and walked to the window and looked out. My tongue will never be able to describe what I saw, and how I felt. I had never felt this way before: as I stood before that window I saw a new world. I believe I saw my Lord in the pardon of my sins; that His blood had made me clean, and I was as free from sin as if I had never sinned. O the peace and joy that flooded my soul! I wanted to talk about my Saviour to every one I met. I wanted to tell them what He had done for me -- how he had come and taken my feet out of the pit, and put a new song in my mouth, even praise to His name. My thought and desire was to tell the church my feelings; but I wanted more evidence. It came to me that if I didn't go with what I had, I would not receive any more. I felt that I would die if I did not go.

I was now only seventeen years of age. I went before the church at Riverview, Bassett, Virginia, the fourth Sunday in March, 1938, and was received. I was baptized the fourth Sunday morning in May, 1938. I felt I left something there that has not been with me since: the heavy load I carried was gone, and I felt I had been enabled of the Lord to do His will for the first time in my life.

I went on rejoicing I don't know how long; but soon Satan came along and began to tempt me, and these thoughts would arise in my mind: You have

gone to these good people and told them that you have a hope of heaven; and they believed you. You should be ashamed of yourself. Over this I began to beg the Lord again, O Lord, what must I do? I want to be submissive to thy will. It would be hard for me to go back and tell them I was mistaken in the whole thing; but, Lord, if I have done wrong, I will go back and ask them to take my name off of the Church Book.

About this time I laid down on the bed in mother's room, not knowing what to do. I cannot tell whether I was asleep or not, but a man's hand appeared before me. I could see the robe as it swung from his wrist; and as I beheld this strange sight, I saw his arm--and then I saw a body, but did not see his face. And, behold, it was the body of my Lord: I could see the blood and water flowing from His side. As I write this my eyes are dim with tears. As I beheld this glorious sight, the words seemed to say within me, This blood was shed for me.

I went on for some time,--a stranger to myself and to others, I thought. I became burdened again, and what was wrong I did not know. I did try again to beg the Lord to show me what he would have me do. I even asked the Lord if I was wrong about the whole thing, and if I should go back and repent again; or if I had left my first love. My cry was, O Lord, help me. O Lord, lead me in the right way. Keep me by the right hand of thy righteousness.

I well remember at church one time, a brother Deacon called me aside and said, Brother Brammer, I have been watching you, and I see your interest in the Church, and seemingly you are carrying a burden for a deacon; and I wanted to ask you about it. I did not deny it, and told him I felt to be burdened for something, but did not know what for. My home church called a presbytery to look into my qualifications as a deacon. This was in June, 1949, the fourth Saturday. After this I went for a short time thinking that this would ease my burden; but in a few months the burden came back worse than ever. Again I did not know what to do. My dear reader if you have not traveled this road you may not know what I am talking about; but if you have, then you know.

I began to feel that I would have to speak in public; but my thoughts were, I cannot do this for I am slow of speech and of a stammering tongue; and I would try to put it away from me. Time went on and I thought I could cast it aside; but it was greater than I. I would make many excuses, but none of them did any good. My burden grew worse.

About this time I had a small peach orchard, and I spent much of my time there. A great deal of my work was in a bowed position; and I worked and tried to pray and beg the Lord to show me what he would have me do. Sometimes the burden got so heavy I would leave my work and go to the woods and fall down on the ground, and cry to the Lord for mercy. Many scriptures would come to my mind. One time while in the field at work, I thought I had found a good excuse, because if I should be called to preach, I could

not serve churches as Pastor. Just at that time my mind turned to a church that had a pastor; and I was ashamed I had such thoughts. (I will try to explain this later.)

My burden was still heavy upon me, and I still did not know what to do, but would continue to beg the Lord over and over, O Lord, what would you have me to do. At one time it came to me, Why don't you put your case before the church and let them decide what to do. To this I could not answer, because I felt they would do what was right. About this time I felt I could not stay away any longer; and I still pleaded with the Lord. I heard a voice as if it spoke to me, "Wait, I say, upon the Lord," and this would go over and over in my mind: "Wait, I say, upon the Lord." And I was made willing to wait upon Him. Now I felt that if it were his will for me to preach, he would show me more; if not, I would become reconciled. I had tried to keep my feelings to myself as much as I could, but I would talk to my wife some about it. I well remember once when I was so burdened that it seemed I could not live, I was doing some work in the house, and I quit my work and told my wife that I could not live with the burden I had; that something would have to be done. Her reply was, "I would not mind you preaching, if I knew you could preach; but I would not want you to worry the people."

This was one of the things that worried me; so I did not get much comfort from this. My pastor and I went to Bush Arbor Church together; and I had come to the place I must talk to someone. I told him some of of the things I have written and asked him not to tell anyone; and he said he would not. Sometime after this I was going to my work one Monday morning, and a voice seemed to speak to me, "Now is the time, this is the day, this is the accepted year of the Lord." And I said, "Lord, if you will give me strength, I will go this coming meeting." The fourth Saturday soon came. I did not tell anyone my feelings until I got to the church that day. My prayer was, Lord you fix it the way you would have it to be. When I got on the church ground, my pastor, Elder J. R. Hollandsworth was already there. I went to his car where he was reading his Bible, and said, "Brother Hollandsworth, I cannot live in the condition I am in." It seemed death if I went, and death if I did not go. This was the fourth Saturday in February, 1955. We went on in the house and the pastor asked me, after he told the people what I had told him, to open service with song and prayer, and to speak as I felt to.

I opened to the fourth chapter of Ecclesiastes, the 8th to the 12th verses, and talked for fifteen or twenty minutes. In a short time the church I spoke of above heard that I had begun to speak in public, and their pastor had told them to start looking for another pastor, (which I did not know at the time I first thought of this church,) and when the deacon heard that I had begun speaking, he said, "There is our Pastor !" I am now trying to serve

those brethren, and three other churches.

I have had many ups and downs in life, but the Lord has been so good to me. I would like to tell another dream that I had: I dreamed that I saw a strange looking sight -- it seemed that I saw bubbles floating on the earth. As I looked at this, I saw a bright spot in the sky, I saw the face of a man in the sky; and this was my Lord. It was not like you and me: it was solid gold as if it burned in a furnace. My wife was with me and we were sitting at a table, she on one side and I on the other. We were talking about how glad we were that we had seen the Lord coming in the clouds of glory. As we talked it began to rain; and I thought it was the rain of fire and brimstone; but I was not afraid because we had seen the Lord. I awoke my wife and told her in tears about my dream. I was crying so loud that it awoke my children up stairs; and they began to cry: the whole family was happy. I have a hope that some day I will see my Lord for myself and not another.

Early in this article I stated that I had scarlet fever, the doctor gave me up to die. My mother told me after I started to speak in public, that while I was sick, she went to the kitchen and knelt down on the hearth rock, and asked the Lord to spare my life: if He would just spare my life she would be willing for the Lord to take me and use me anyway he saw fit. She said while she was praying, she saw a small light in the crevice of the hearth rock, and felt I would get better. That was about forty years ago.

I feel that the Lord has been so good to me, that he has been my strength, my shield, and the horn of my salvation. May His high and holy Name have the praise, the honor, and the glory, both now and forever. Amen.

Elder Leonard J. Brammer
Rt. 3, Box 269
Martinsville, Va. 24112

"O wretched man that I am ! "— ROMANS vii. 24.

Now, these feelings which the Apostle groaned under are experienced by all the quickened family. Blessed then be the name of God most High, that he inspired him to trace out and leave upon record his experience, that we might derive comfort and relief from it. What should we otherwise have thought ? We should have reasoned thus: Here is an apostle perfectly holy, perpetually heavenly-minded, having nothing but the image of Christ in him, continually living to the Lord's glory, and unceasingly enjoying communion with him we should have viewed him as a perfect saint, if he had not told us what he was; and then, having viewed him as a perfect saint, we should have turned our desponding eyes into our own bosom, and seen such an awful contrast, that we should despair of ever being saved at all! But seeing the soul conflict which the Apostle passed through, and feeling a measure of the same in

our own bosom, it encourages, supports, and leads the soul on to believe that this is the way in which the saints are called to travel, however rough, rugged, and perplexing it may be to them.

Be assured, then, if you have never cried out from the depths of your soul, " O wretched man that I am I " you are dead in sin, or dead in a profession. If internal guilt, misery, and condemnation never forced that cry from your bosom, depend upon it, the life and power of God is not in your soul. But if there has been, and still is, from time to time, this cry in your breast, forced out of it by the pressure of sin and guilt, you have a testimony that the same Lord who taught Paul is teaching you.

Elder J.C. Philpot

ROMANS 13: 10-14.

Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

And that, knowing the time, and now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

Let us walk honestly, as in the day not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

MEETINGS

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 26 & 27, 1998.

Union Church, located about five miles southeast of Marion, Louisiana, will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron, Assoc. Clerk
(318) 778-4217

1825-1998

The 1998 Pigg River Primitive Baptist Association will convene the Lord willing, for our one hundred seventy third session at Pigg River Church, in Franklin County, Va.

Services to begin on Friday, July 31, and two days following, Saturday, August 1, and Sunday August 2.

Those coming from north and south on 220 - go to Rocky Mount, Virginia, take route 40 west to Ferrum, turn right on route 602 - go by College campus app. 4 mi. from 602 - go straight on 752 turn right on 750 to church.

We invite our dear Brethern and all lovers of the truth to be with us.

Jamie E. Cooper

PROVERBS 23:26.

My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.

SMITH RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing the next session of the Smith River Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Laurel Creek Church, Floyd County, Virginia on September 4th, 5th and 6th. We invite all our faith and order come be with us at this meeting.

The church is located in Floyd County, Virginia. Traveling north from Floyd Town on highway 221 go 8.3 miles to Stonewall and turn left on highway 612 go 4.9 miles turn left on Cole Knob Road highway 673 for .8 miles to Laurel Church Road highway 608. Turn right for .4 miles to Church.

Wilford G. Parsons
Association Clerk

THE SOUTH ARKANSAS ORIGINAL OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The South Arkansas Original Old School Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Pilgrim Rest Church off Highway 167 north of Fordcyce, Arkansas. Take 273 about 1/2 mile to the Church. Session begins on Saturday before the third Sunday in September (September 19-20, 1998)

We invite all Elders, Brothers and Sisters of same faith and order to come and be with us at this meeting if the Lord's will.

Asso. Clerk, Frances Townley
301 Truitt St.
Benton, Arkansas 72015

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing the Staunton River Union will be held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in August. The song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

Directions: Turn off route 29 business onto Music Street (beside Amos Fine Foods in Gretna, VA) the church is approximately five miles at the intersection of Weatherford Road and Music Street.

We welcome all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

Elder Raymond Goad - Moderator
Pam Betterton - Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held at the Dan River Church on Sunday August 30th, with Greensboro Church being host. A presbytery will be formed in the afternoon for the purpose of examination and if found to be qualified, the ordination of Brother Herbert Edwards to the office of Deacon of Greensboro Church.

All lovers of the truth are invited to this meeting especially Elders of our faith and order.

The morning service will begin at 10:00 a.m. and afternoon service at 2:00 p.m.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Wayne Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 1998

Walter F. Griffith, NC	$2.00
Mrs. Florence D. Maxey, VA	2.00
Alelaide Gerry, NV	2.00
Ms. Tina Walker, MS	32.00
Mrs. Connie Page, NC	5.00
Mrs. Darlence Shipman, TX	2.00
Mrs. Rlee B. Houchins, VA	2.00
Eld. B.K. Smith, CA	2.00
Julian Ray, NC	2.00
Fred Murphy, VA	2.00
J.C. Carroll, NC	5.00
Mrs. H.R. Toney, MS	7.00
Mrs. Harold May, AL	12.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER NANCY SCHOOLFIELD RAY

Sister Nancy Schoolfield Ray was the daughter of the late Thomas and Rosella Schoolfield. Born November 17, 1914 and departed life on April 1, 1998 at the age of 83. She was married to Brother Sam Ray whom preceded her in death in 1971. She is survived by a daughter, Joan Owens of High Point, NC and sons, Glenn Ray of McLeansville, NC, William S. Ray, Jr. of Plattsville, AL and Jerry Ray of Summerfield, NC 10 grandchildren, 8 great-grandchildren and 2 great-great grandchildren. We pray our Heavenly Father will be with them in their time of sorrow.

Sister Ray joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church the 4th Sunday of November, 1972. She was faithful to attend her church and other churches of our faith and order until her declining health prevented her from doing so. Sister Ray was a precious Sister of humble walk. She always has a sweet smile for you. One of her favorite hymns was "Grace 'tis a Charming Sound."

Her funeral was April 4, 1998 at 11 a.m. in Lambeth Troxler Chapel by her Pastor, Elder Kenneth R. Key. She was laid to rest in the Lake View Cemetery in Greensboro, NC.

She will be greatly missed by her family and also by those who loved her in the Spirit of the Lord.

Written by: Amanda Saunders & Mabel Ray
Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Allen Carroll, Clerk

DEUTERONOMY 28: 1-3.

And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth:

And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God.

MEMORIAL FOR DEACON GLENN ROBERT SLATE

It is with much sadness that I attempt to write this obituary of another one of our Dan River Members. Brother Glenn was a kind and gentle person and had much compassion and love for his church family. This dearly beloved brother in Christ will be sorely missed.

He was born on June 9, 1914 in Coalwood, West Virginia, and died suddenly March 23, 1998 near his home in Danville, Virginia. He lived most of his life in North Carolina and Virginia, and had been a resident of Danville since 1950. During his early life he was a farmer and more recently, before his retirement was a painter with the Maintenance Department of the Danville School Board.

Brother Slate was one of eight children and is survived by his wife of 62 years, Elsie Gordon Slate of Danville, Virginia; a daughter, Barbara S. Taylor of Danville, Virginia; a sister, Margie Thompson of Winston-Salem, NC; grandchildren, Jennifer T Kimel and Robert Taylor; great-grand child, Micah Joseph Kimel.

Brother Slate joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on August 24, 1957. He loved his church dearly and was a strong believer in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. He had a special love for his brothers and sisters in Christ and on Sunday just a day before his death, he greeted everyone most cordially and seemed to really enjoy what was to be his last service. Until the end, he was a faithful, dedicated servant of his Lord.

Brother Slate was ordained a deacon at Dan River Church in 1984. In this capacity he served the church with honor and dignity. As we recall the years we can appreciate the fact that we had the privilege of knowing and being in the fellowship of this dear Brother.

His funeral was conducted on Wednesday, March 25, 1998 at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Kenneth R. Key and Elder Haywood Wray. The body was laid to rest in the Dan River Church Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord.

May God bless this lovely family and comfort and reconcile them as only he can do.

Written by request of Dan River Church in conference.

John Collie
Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Brother Allen Carroll, Clerk

PROVERBS 3: 1-4.

My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:

For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.

Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:

So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

SISTER LESSIE O'DELL SPENCER

With deep regret we record the death of our sister in the Lord, Lessie Alberta O'dell Spencer, at the age of 83. Sister Spencer was born near Stuart, in Patrick County, Virginia, on March 23, 1914, a daughter of the late Richard ("Dick") O'dell and Lillie Foster O'dell.

She was united in marriage to Joseph Carl Spencer, who preceded her in death. To their union were given five children: one son, Joseph Carl Spencer, who preceded her in death. To their union were given five children: one son, Joseph Carl Spencer, Jr:, and four daughters, Mrs. Margaret S. Albanese, Mrs. Shirley S. Dean, Mrs. Barbara S. Chappell and Mrs. Sandra S. Chavis. Their son also preceded her in death.

Sister Spencer requested a home with Liberty Church on the first Saturday in May 1985, was received and baptized the following day by Elders John Wingfield and Paul Hopkins. Poor health prevented her from attending meetings on a regular basis for very long. Following the death of her husband, she moved to northern Virginia to live with her daughters.

Sister Lessie died on September 13, 1997. Her funeral service was conducted at the Lee Chapel in Manassas, Virginia by Pastor Samuel Neal. In addition to her daughters, she was survived by two sisters, Mrs. Cline (Odlean) Conner and Mrs. Lawrence (Irene) Sledge.

We, the members of Liberty Church, desire to be submissive to the will of our Heavenly Father in removing Sister Spencer from our midst. May she rest in complete peace with Him until He returns to reunite her spirit, soul and body together, and carry her home to dwell forever.

Three copies of this obituary are to be made, and distributed as follows:one to be included in our church records, one to be given to her family, and one to be submitted to Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Liberty Church in conference, the 28th day of February,1998.

Eld. John T. Wingfield, Mod.
Paul Preckitt, Clerk

PSALM 7: 1-4.

O Lord my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me:

Lest he tear my soul like a lion, rending it in pieces, while there is none to deliver.

O Lord my God, if I have done this; if there be iniquity in my hands;

If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me; (yea, I have delivered him that without cause is mine enemy:)

NANNIE MAE W. WILLIAMS
My Mother.

My mother, Nannie Mae Williford Williams, born May 5, 1908, passed from this life at her home on Sunday morning April 26, 1998 at the age of 89. She was married on

April 27, 1927 to John Luther Williams who preceded her in death June 5, 1976.

My Mother.

My mother was a true believer of the Primitive Baptist Doctrine. She was never blessed to unite with the militant church while here on earth, but as I search around me and among the other true believers of the same doctrine, I find none that are more devoted to the church, the church's principles and all that she stands for, than my mother was.

My Mother.

My mother found her greatest pleasure in serving the church. She always looked forward to meeting time and getting ready to serve the brethren in her home. It was her heartfelt privilege to have the brethren in her home for meals and to spend the night there. Her meager means of living always made her feel she had nothing good enough to offer those she loved so much...but you know what? Those very ones did come and grace her with their presence, many of them over and over again, and she was always made so happy. She never tired of serving the brethren and friends of the church, and she never had too many to suit her desires.

My Mother.

My mother always felt so unworthy and felt to be so insignificant that oft times she could not express to the brethren her feelings. She oft times did not feel free to go among the brethren with the freedom she felt the members of the church had in going among each other. However, She was blessed to have brethren and friends in her home from up and down the east coast, Alabama, Mississippi, Texas, Arkansas, and other locations as well. It was her glory to have them come, and my glory to help make them feel comfortable in her home, and I believe the most did.

My Mother.

I was so devoted to my mother and thought at one point I could not give her up unless I die too. Her sufferings continued and I was made willing to see the last breath come. I even cheered on the last breath and felt she so much needed and deserved that rest in the arms of our heavenly savior and among the Angels that she told us she had been talking with shortly before her death. Thanks be unto God, I feel content that she is in a state of rest that she would not wish to give up.

My mother left a family who loved and cared for her in the best way we knew how. Her children: one son, J. Carroll Williams; two daughters, Jean W. Hiatt and Kay W. Williams; one sister, Roxie W. Cobb; two brothers, John T. Williford, and George E. Williford all of Rocky Mount, NC. Eight grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted on Tuesday April 28, 1998 at 4:00 PM in the Johnson Funeral Home Sunset Avenue Chapel with Elders Henry C. Jones and C. B. Davis officiating. Interment in Rocky Mount Memorial Park.

I wish to give thanks to God for my mother and all she did for me and for her family. She set examples and gave instructions that I wish not to forget. I loved her.

This obituary is written expressly for the *Signs Of The Times* according to the wishes of Pleasant Hill Church, expressed in our conference on May 23, 1998.

And please allow me to thank all of those who remembered our sad hours with cards, letters, phone calls, floral offerings, food, their helping hands and untiring energy, and so much more.

Submitted in brotherly love,
J. Carroll Williams

OBITUARY OF SISTER ADDIE COX WRIGHT

With deep regret we mark the passing from this life of Sister Addie Cox Wright, who died on March 23, 1998 at the age of 90.

Sister Wright was born in Patrick County, Virginia on March 18, 1908, one of the twelve children of the late Charlie P. Cox and Sis. Nannie Hall Cox. On September 14, 1924 she was united in marriage to Daniel J. Wright, who preceded her in death, on July 25, 1973. Their union was blessed with three children: one son, Clinton D. Wright of Ft. Worth, Texas; and two daughters, Mrs. Curtis (Christine) Moran of Bassett, Va., and Mrs. Akers (Pauline) Mize of Stuart. In addition to her children, she is survived by ten grandchildren, eleven great-grandchildren, two great-great-grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

Sister Wright joined Goblintown Church by experience in 1935 and was baptized by the late Elder Samuel D. Koger. She was a loyal, faithful and devoted member of the church, and was active in its affairs as long as her health permitted. At one time, she and her husband were the sole caretakers of the church building and grounds for a number of years. Whenever circumstances required it, she filled in as the church clerk. She was always very diligent in visiting the sick and the afflicted.

In the last years of her life, Sister Wright was confined by affliction to the Stanleytown Health Care Center, where she died. Her funeral service was conducted at the Howell Funeral Home Chapel near Stuart by her last pastor, Elder John Wingfield. Her mortal body was laid to rest in the Cox Family Cemetery, just up the hill from the church she loved so well. We believe she died the death of the righteous and sleeps the peaceful sleep of the redeemed, waiting for the second coming of the Lord from Heaven.

Goblintown Church agreed to prepare three copies of this obituary: one for inclusion in the church records, one to be given to her family and one to be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference, the 18th day of April, 1998.

Elder John T. Wingfield, Moderator
Sis. Judy Pendleton, Clerk pro tem

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

When God revealed his gracious name,
And changed my mournful state,
My rapture seemed a pleasing dream,
The grace appeared so great.

The world beheld the glorious change,
And did thy hand confess;
My tongue broke out in unknown strains,
And sung surprising grace.

"Great is the work," my neighbors cried,
And owned thy power divine;
"Great is the work," my heart replied,
"And be the glory thine."

The Lord can clear the darkest skies,
Can give us day for night,
Make drops of sacred sorrow rise
To rivers of delight.

Let those that sow in sadness wait
Till the fair harvest come;
They shall confess their sheaves are great,
And shout the blessings home.

Though seed lie buried long in dust,
It shan't deceive their hope;
The precious grain can ne'er be lost,
For grace endures the crop.

Watt.

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EDITORIAL

THOU SHALT NOT

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

Perhaps it would be better to first explain as well as I can, with the guiding hand of God, the difference that I see between the laws and commandments of God and his holy will. There are those who say that God has two wills, a "revealed will" and a "secret will." This I can in no wise believe, for I cannot find it in the Holy Scriptures; neither does it make sense to the natural understanding. There are secret things with God, for, ***"The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." Deut. 29:29. In Dan. 2:21-22; "he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to those that know understanding: he revealeth the deep and secret things."*** There is nothing that God`s chosen people need to know that is not revealed unto them, for, ***"It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God." Jn. 6:45. "If any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, not wavering." James 1:5-6.*** And faith is the gift of God.

Those who contend that God has two wills say that his laws and commandments are his "revealed will", but let us examine this closely. In the very beginning of time God gave Adam a commandment, saying, ***"Of every tree in the garden thou mayest eat: but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, THOU SHALT NOT EAT OF IT: for in the day that thou eatest of it thou shalt surely die."*** We know that Adam disobeyed this "shalt not" commandment, for if he had not done so he would not have died. God did not say "if ye eat of it", but in the day ye eat of it ye shall surely die." Surely we can see here that God`s commandment and his will are entirely separate, else they would have collided head-on. Adam must die, that

the purposes of God might be fulfilled, for ***"he doeth his will (not wills) in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand." Dan. 4:35. "For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Mal. 3:6.*** If God could have two wills then he would have to change from one to the other.

There is season and a time for every purpose under heaven (Eccl. 3:1), and God sware, saying, ***"Surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Isa. 14:24.*** Surely we must believe that God thought of and had a purpose in the disobedience of Adam, for Jesus stood as a Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. Could there have been any purpose in that if Adam had not disobeyed and died?

When God led the Israelites through the wilderness he gave them statutes and commandments, and promised them good things in this life, (but not everlasting life), if they would keep and obey them: yet they kept not his statutes and obeyed not his commandments. "A***nd the LORD said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?" Ex. 16:28.*** We can see here that they did refuse to obey. God wrote the ten commandments upon tables of stone with his finger. These commandments were "thou shalt not" commandments, but when Moses came down from the mountain and saw that the people had made a molten calf and turned away quickly from the way the LORD had commanded, he cast them out of his hands and brake them. Deut. 9:16-17. To me this indicates that every commandment of God has been broken by man. God called Moses upon the mountain again, and he wrote the same commandments a second time on tables of stone, showing that they were still his laws at that time.

The only man who ever walked upon this earth and kept God's laws and commandments was his holy Son Jesus, and he kept them to a jot and to a tittle. John tells us that sin is the transgression of the law, and Paul tells us that death is passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. But we find that God has given his chosen children a gracious promise, saying, ***"If his children forsake my laws, and walk not in my judgments, if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." Ps. 89:30-33. God chastises every son whom he receives, and if we receive no chastening then we are bastards and not sons. Heb.12:6-7.***

Jesus fulfilled the laws of the first or old covenant, which was with the Israelites only, and not with the Gentiles. The Gentiles were never under that old covenant, but now a new covenant is made, and the commandments of the old covenant are disannulled, Heb. 7:18-19, because of the weakness and unprofitableness

thereof. God has made a new covenant with the house of Israel (which includes both Jews and Gentiles), for he said *"I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Heb. 10:16-17.* In Heb. 8:10-13 it is written, *"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws in their minds, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest, for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."* This new covenant is not a covenant of laws, but of grace, *"For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all."* Rom. 4:13-16. Abraham was strong in faith, giving glory unto God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able to perform. Therefore it was imputed unto him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed unto him, but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification. Rom. 4:20-25.

It has been asked, Why did God give his laws and commandments to a people who would not obey them? For so it seemeth good in his sight, that his holy purposes in all things might come to pass. Let us accept this by faith and never question what or why God has done any thing, for he hath said, *"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Isa.55:9.* God has declared *"the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.*** I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."* Isa. 46:9 & 10. This is a very gracious promise to the children of God, for *"we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Rom.8:28.*

These are the same people of whom God said, ***"This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." Isa. 43:21. "The LORD hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Prov. 16:4.*** Are the first ones here mentioned any better than the others? Paul said, ***"No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;(this includes all men), as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Rom. 3:9-12.*** Yet there is a vast difference between these two peoples. That difference is because of the love and mercy of God toward his elect children. Before Rebecca conceived and brought forth twins, the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. Rom. 9:10-16. In verse 18: Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Man is the clay and God is the potter, and he has made one vessel unto honour and one unto dishonour. What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had before prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

God spake to Ezekiel of this people, saying, ***"And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you: and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their way upon their heads, saith the Lord God." Ezek.12:19-21.***

Brethren, we know that the law of God written in our hearts (if we be his) is spiritual, but we are carnal, sold under sin, as was Paul. When we would do good sin is with us and we find not how to do that which is good, and we often do that which we have been made to hate. The things that God said "Thou shalt not do" are the things we do, unless by grace we are restrained. If we do any thing that is good it is because he "worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Jesus

said, ***"He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."*** ***Jn.15:5.*** And Paul said, ***"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."*** If we be in Christ, and he in us, then it is he that doeth the works that are only manifested in us. Paul said, ***"By the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." 1 Cor.15:10.***

Brethren, the grace of God is still amazing to me who am so vile and wretched a sinner. Yet I feel greatly blessed to have a hope in his covenant of grace wherein I hope that I am walking, for, ***"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life In Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."***

May God bless any truth herein, and pardon all my errors.

Remember me when at the throne of grace.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

PSALM 100:3.

Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

VOICES OF THE PAST

(Substance of a sermon preaehed by Elder George Ruston Sunday, December 24, 1967, at Ekfrid, Ontario.)

"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." (Isaiah 7:14) And so, ***"Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." (Matthew 1:23)***

One who is now present wrote of the beauty she saw in the name Emmanuel, God with us. and I would like to talk about that word, "Emmanuel." It is one of those wonderful things that causes us to rise above the traditions of men, and see in that child that was born in Bethlehem, the Lord God Almighty. We are told by tradition that there were three wise men who came to worship Him, but we are not told how many by the Word of God; neither have we any evidence that they were kings or astrologers. We would rather believe that they were led by a Heavenly Light, for Jesus Christ is the bright and morning star spoken of in Revelation 22:16; and is the one who must illuminate each one of us. We must be guided from Heaven if we

ever get there at last; and thus the guiding of those men was wonderful.

How far they came, we do not know, but we do know that when they came near Jerusalem, they thought he'd surely be there, and be born in a palace. So they inquired, ***"Where is he that is born King of the Jews ?"*** Herod did not know, but the Word of God had already told. Herod demanded of the chief priests and scribes where Christ should be born, and they told him, ***"In Bethlehem, —for thus it is written by the prophet."*** Micah 5:2 says, ***"Out of thee shall come forth one that is to be ruler in Israel,"*** but they did not add, ***"Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."***

Thus we have, dear ones, the wonderful person who is from everlasting to everlasting, taking on a body like our own in the virgin's womb. It says, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall over-shadow thee: therefore also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." In the same way, we must be born again of the Holy Ghost. ***"The wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit."***

I do not need to go back into the Old Testament, but in Matthew 1:22, 23, it says, ***"Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpretated is, God with us."*** My dear friends, this blessed person who was born of the Virgin Mary, was God over all, blessed forevermore; and the wise men did well that they worshipped him. They did not worship the Virgin, nor Joseph, but they brought just the necessary things that Joseph needed. They brought gold; and the angel told Joseph to flee into Egypt with the young child and his mother. How could they have gone without gold for their expenses? Our God is the same today! He watches over us; He cares for us; He hears our cry. It is a wonderful thing to have a God to go to – a God that is Almighty; a God that declared the end from the beginning; a God whose very presence in your soul means a blissful eternity for you. Just think of it! Whether we are old or young, how wonderful it is if we have a desire for the things of God.

One of the first things I should mention in the beginning of a work of grace, is a convincing of sin. You may try to do better, but the remembrance of your past will still come up before you; and the more you try, the more you will feel to fail. If God has begun a good work in your heart, He will show the beauty there is in, ***"Emmanuel, God with us."*** Jesus had to come and know your troubles when he was a little babe. Some think that Jesus did not cry as a babe, but it says that "Jesus wept" when Lazarus died. I think he must have felt many things that his dear children would feel at some time in their lives. What a mercy, if while we are young we feel to have a God to call upon: to say, ***"Lord, help me."*** Sometimes it is only a looking up

to Him, a desire, a longing. Sometimes we are brought to see how little we are, and have *"nothing to merit esteem or give the Creator delight." "They shall call His name Emmanual."* They, not only one, but a number that no one can number. Yes, and in some way, this blessed person before ever he was born into this world, must have been a comfort to those who were looking for his day, for He said, *"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad."*

I think it a lovely account of Samuel. His mother was barren, and her husband had another wife who had a number of children; but he loved Hannah – and Hannah was barren, and it vexed her so because the other wife was unkind to her because her husband showed such kindness to the woman who was barren. When she went to Shiloh to worship, she was so upset, and in such a condition that Eli, the priest, thought she was drunk. He rebuked her; and she said, *"No my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord."* She was praying, and the Lord heard and answered her prayer; and she had a son whom she named Samuel, which means *"heard of God, or asked of God."* It was lovely that she felt she wanted to devote that child to the Lord. How many women have had that feeling when there has been a kind Providence? They just felt they wanted that child to manifest in some way that the Lord was with them both: *"Emmanuel, God with us."*

She took Samuel to Shiloh where she had gone in her trouble, and left him with Eli. One night the Lord called Samuel and told him to tell Eli that He would judge his house because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. It was strange that this child had to bring reproof to Eli for allowing his sons to be so unruly and ungodly in their ways. What a wonderful thing it is when parents have a love and care for their children – showing their religion by their actions day by day. That was my plague. I asked my pastor's wife in New York City how to bring up children. She said, *"Teach them to love and respect you,"* and I thought she just put it up to me: my behaviour. Eli must have slipped to allow his children to do as they did.

If we have a need shown to us, it seems almost in a negative sense that God is with us, when He shows us our weakness and shortcomings. How undone we are: without grace or any evidence of His saving mercy. How poor and needy we are when left to ourselves; yet here is the evidence of that Holy Spirit's work. Jesus declared, *"He shall receive of mine,"* also *"He will reprove the world of sin and of righteousness, and of judgment." "He shall,"* it is His work. I have been thinking much of a text from which I had spoken at a funeral. I had read Psalm 90, and had tried to speak on verse 17: *"Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us:*

and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it." After the service a man said, *"I would have liked you to dwell upon those works."* Moses said, "Let thy works appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children." Why did Jesus come into the world? He came to seek and to save,– not to offer salvation. It is really distressing to think how men have twisted the truth of God. They do not preach a "God with us." They preach that if you will do your part, if you will take a stand for Him, He will be your God. If he has given you to feel you are poor and needy, I can pray for such people: it does not matter whether I am in a pulpit or not, I pray that God will further His work in their hearts – that instead of the fathers shall be the children. It is His work, and his alone. The Scripture reads, *"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I am an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye visited me; I was in prision, and ye came unto me."* The King shall say, *"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."*

My dear friends, when the Lord takes hold of a person, that one is found to be in prison, held captive by the devil at his will. Sin, that enemy, came in the beginning, and if our first parent could not stand against Satan's temptation, can you or I? Therefore it is a wonderful work, if in our ministry we are blest to minister to those who are bound. It is the same Emmanuel who hung upon the cross to whom the dying thief cried, *"Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."* It is the same Emmanuel who came to George Ruston and changed his heart, renewed his will and turned his feet to Zion's Hill. I tell you it is the work of God that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent; and how wonderful it is that this is still going on.

Could God allow his Son to lay down his life for them, and not arrest them in due time, call them by his grace, and show them that He has loved them with an everlasting love, *"Therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."* One of the sweetest evidences of "God with us" is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. *"God is love."* If you have ever come into the fellowship of brethren, and have walked and talked with them, and heard them tell of the goodness and mercy of God, and your heart went out in love to them, and you feel that you always want to show them that you love them; and if they are taken home, you will think of them,– Where?

"Forever with the Lord, Amen, so let it be; Life from the dead is in that word, 'Tis immortality."

The work of God is a positive work– it does not rely upon an individual, or upon men. See what men have done. The Apostles were still alive when

they began to bring in false ideas, not only Corinthians, but Galatians; and later men mixed Paganism with popular Christianity. The Church of the living God worshipped at times in dens and caves of the earth. It is not of this world. For centuries the religious world tried to destroy it. Yet even in that, God was with his people in life and in death. In every age the children have shown that they have been with Jesus and learnt of him; and it is through much tribulation they follow their Lord.

Our Lord can take a beggar from the dunghill, to set him among princes of God's people. He embraces such in His love and mercy; and his promises are yea and amen, unto the glory of God. It is He who says, ***"Thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee: and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned: neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."*** Don't stop at anything else. Your want your Lord; you want Him in his fulness of grace and truth as positively as the dying thief on the cross. What changed him? Don't say that he did it himself. No! the Lord changed him; and Jesus our dying Lord said, ***"Today thou shalt be with me in paradise."*** See how men have changed that in what they call the Apostles Creed: ***"He descended into hell."*** No, He never descended into hell: He endured the hell for his people while he lived, while in Gethsemane, when ***"His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."*** He suffered, bled and died that they might enjoy Heaven.

If you have ever come to the place where the pains of hell have gotten hold of you and you've found trouble and sorrow, it's a blessed thing because the Lord is there, and He will bring you to the very place where he will kiss you with divine compassion, and enable you to feel as David did in Psalm 116, ***"I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications, because he hath inclined his ear unto me; therefore will I call upon him as long as I live." "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell got hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow, then called I upon the name of the Lord."***

Is this your heart's desire? is this your longing? ***"It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." "They shall call his name Emmanuel, God with us."*** I don't think Mary fully comprehended what it meant, but she pondered these things in her heart.

During his ministry ***"he made himself of no reputation, but took upon him the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." 'Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, — and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."***

(From a recording taken by our friend Duncan McColl.)

CHAPTER II

MY EARLY EXPERIENCE

I will insert here a letter that I wrote to Elder Gilbert Beebe just after my baptism, which tells the spiritual exercises which brought me to the church.

HERRICKS PA., June, 1864.

TO ELDER GILBERT BEEBE:

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND

DEAR BROTHER: In the sweet peace and joy that are mine now it seems as though I can hardly take the time to write. I am continually looking back to consider the wonderful way in which I have been led from darkness to light. It is a way which I cannot yet fully understand, but what I do see of the Lord's marvelous dealings with me would require volumes, if I could write them. In the last few days I have learned more, and more peace and happiness have been mine than in all my life before. I have dwelt in a place of broad rivers and streams. I have been kept in almost perfect peace, and have been made to drink of the river of God's pleasures. There seems to have been a kind of light thrown back from this present, which has shown me much in my past life as I never saw it before; and I must note down some of these memories while my mind is dwelling upon them.

I remember that in my childhood my mind was often engaged in thinking of the immensity of space, and of what was before time began. Once I particularly remember, after an absorbing effort to reach with my imagination the boundary of space and the beginning of duration, lasting I do not know how long, I started back with a gasp as for breath, from the awful verge which my thoughts had reached, with a clear sense of an infinity beyond the utmost reach and comprehension of my mind. I think that one baffled effort, and the awful sense of infinity I then had, has followed me to the present.

At the age of twelve years I had read the Bible through twice; but I could not think my reading of it was from a love of it as the Word of God, though much of it was very interesting to me. I think, with ambition, which seemed to me to be my principal motive, there was some feeling. Very early I began to study the distinguishing doctrines of grace, and especially the doctrine of election, not only in the Bible, but by reading whatever I could find on the subject. My principal object seemed to me to be able to argue with Arminians; and I never could comfort myself with the thought that I loved or understood the doctrine in any other way than intellectually, and because my parents believed it. Indeed I sometimes thought I was more an Arminian at heart than those I would argue with, and that I had far less ground for hope than they. Although I knew the doctrine was true, I had many troublesome thoughts about it, and sometimes my mind would rise up against it in spite of myself.

In childhood I was very fearful. Thunder and lightning were a terror to me. I was afraid to be alone in the dark. This fear left me, I cannot tell when or how. There was one period when I had a great apprehension of dying. How long it lasted I cannot remember. I have never before looked at those exercises of mind as I do now. I recall one instance, out of many similar, when I feared to go to bed, lest I should surely die before morning. I took the Testament and went out, wishing it were morning. I think I felt that the Lord was angry with me; what other particular reason I had for that fear I cannot recall. It was terrible, a feeling of great blankness in the future, an indefinable dread of something from which there was no help.

I cannot now remember any time after the age of about ten years when I suffered so acutely from a fear of dying. But there was often that great blankness in the future, and an indescribable melancholy without a recognized cause, when I would feel like one of those dark November days, a dull leaden cloud over all the sky, and a dreariness over all the earth. It was not the absence of any particular enjoyment that I could name, but the impossibility of anything I could enjoy or delight in. My mood was not always so dark. I have had much cheerfulness in my life, and some hours of peace and joy, but my cheerfulness seems to have been circumscribed by this leaden cloud. My social and intellectual enjoyments were often keen, but the ultimate of all was this gloom. Those joys were not satisfying; they did not reach far enough. When I was at home, happiness seemed waiting for me somewhere else, and when away I wanted to get home again. And so I have wandered much, always busy, trying to do what I thought my duty, but finding no true rest or abiding joy. Thanks be to the dear Saviour, this cloud of gloom has gone, and I have found rest in his blessed name. How and why is a wonder to me. This new enjoyment I contemplate with increasing delight. It is perfectly satisfying. There seems no end to it, and no possibility of satiety.

I now go back to my childhood. I cannot remember when I first saw myself a sinner, but it was very early. I had an inner consciousness that a more vain, selfish, deceitful boy never lived. Even in particular instances, when I knew that I appeared to be better than others, I felt that I was worse. I never used profane language, nor did any one at our home, and there was a solemnity about sacred things there which gave us all a kind of reverence for them. But I could not feel that I was any better on that account. The same words or actions which appeared good in others, in me appeared to spring from motives which made them bad. When my conscience prevented me from doing or saying any particular wrong to which I was tempted, I feft about as guilty at seeing the capability of doing it in my heart as though I had done it. How I envied others who, I thought, never could think such wickedness, but who were honest enough to act out whatever they thought, and whose worst

actions were good in comparison with my thoughts.

The oppression of this feeling of wickedness has at times been very great. The consciousness of the utter depravity of my nature has followed me all my life, but I think there was a peculiar and aching sense of guilt in my childhood which did not follow me, though when it left me I cannot tell. Heretofore I have regarded it as one of those things that pass away with childhood. I have always felt that I must get better in order to obtain the favor of God, no matter how much I was convinced that it was impossible for one to do so. I have made many resolutions to think and act according to the strictest rules of right, but have failed to keep them. My utter inability to change myself seems to have been forced upon me, item by item, slowly but surely. After the performance of an action in which it has seemed I might take most pride, and which others would approve, windows have been opened into the depths of my soul, and motives shown to me which have dissipated my pride in a moment. There have been times when my whole past life has risen up before me, a continuous train of evil, without one good thought or action to relieve the dreary monotony. I think that of late I have ceased to regard with any real complacency anything I might do, however laudable it might appear. I have always thought much of the fleeting nature of earthly things, and have realized very clearly the certainty of death, and the vanity of all pleasures that belong only to earth.

These thoughts have, I know, controlled my ambition and my desire for earthly fame, and have mitigated the bitterness of regret for the loss of earthly hopes. I have been conscious of a kind of satisfaction when suffering the keenest stings of humbled pride, as though it were well deserved and appropriate. It has seemed to me that earthly sorrow and misfortune were necessary in order to prepare me to receive and enjoy true happiness.

I have thought much about heaven, but could never feel that I could be happy with the holy beings who must inhabit that world of glory unless I was greatly changed myself. I think I have most earnestly desired and longed for that change, whatever it might be, and have had some hope that it might be given me, or that it might be mine at death. I have not thought much about hell, especially since my early youth, but the thought of banishment from the glory of his power has made me tremble. I cannot say that I have prayed, but I have tried to pray, that the Lord would forgive my sins.

Thank God, the change has come in this life, but how different from what I looked for. My nature is not changed, nor my natural propensities eradicated, but it seems that a new love, and new desires have been given me, which are separate and diverse from all others. I am still conscious of being unfit by nature for the society of holy beings, but I long for it. I am happy with the saints here, and I know I shall be happy with them in heaven, if such should be my happy lot. What a happi-

ness, to be blessed with the fulness of love, to be forever with the Lord, and to be free from everything unholy.

It is impossible to give more than a hint at the various exercises of mind and conflicts which I had as I went on thinking of these things day after day, trying to think of some way in which I could bring the doctrine of grace to apply to my own case and condition. I think that I have seen "men as trees walking," since I was about ten years of age.

When about the age of 20 I joined awhile in Methodist prayer meetings with the students at the seminary where I was attending. I was told that I ought to join the church, but this I could not do. They urged me to get religion, but I did not know how. The good works by which they told me I could get it I thought would be very evil works in me. About this time my sister Bessie joined the Old School Baptist Church at Vaughan Hill. I was very glad. I had always loved to hear the old Baptists preach, and did so whenever I could. For six years I have lived where there are none since I have been engaged in practicing law. In April, 1863, I united with the Presbyterian Church in Wilkes-Barre, where I live. I can hardly tell why I did so. I thought if I made a public profession of my desire to be a Christian it might help me. The preacher was one who had advocated sound doctrine, but he soon showed he could also advocate error and I became tired of that. I was called upon to speak in prayer in public. That I could not continue to do,– I, who had seldom lifted my voice above a whisper when alone, and that only in broken exclamations for help. It was too much. My sufferings in many ways cannot be told. There were times when I seemed to be on the border of despair. One severe trial was when I visited my father's home; he said to me, "*You have professed to be a follower of Jesus. Do you feel like speaking in prayer?*"

I sometimes felt that I had been left to my own evil heart in uniting with that church, both to break down my pride, and to show me more decidedly that I was helpless and worthless, and to have all shadow of doubt removed as to where the true church of God on earth was. It was not long before I saw clearly where it was not. I looked in vain for brotherly love, for union and fellowship among the members, and for all that should characterize those who are members of a gospel church, as I saw it in the New Testament. But I felt that they were all better than I, although my standing in the community, and in the church was good. They could talk of temporal things, but seemed to have no inclination to speak of spiritual things, which I was more interested in. The preaching, which I had thought sound in doctrine, seemed to grow less and less so, until I could not listen to it with any satisfaction.

At last I became very hungry to hear true preaching of the gospel. Last summer Elder Gilbert Beebe came to my father's house to preach the funeral sermon of my oldest brother, who had been killed in Missouri in the war. Many things he said tended to

comfort me some, and to strengthen my hope that I might sometime be a subject of grace. During the past winter there were heavy troubles at home on account of sickness. I was there much of the time and think I felt some trust in the Lord for myself and others, which he only can give. I talked some, especially with my sister Bessie, but could not feel as I wanted to. My brother Warren, who was not expected to live, experienced a bright hope, and I could rejoice with him. In March I was in Washington with my brother James, and while there I met Elder Wm. J. Purington, and talked very freely with him. I told him I had not taken communion with the Presbyterian Church in some time. He afterward, in a letter, advised me not to do so any more, but to take the first opportunity to talk with some gospel church, intimating that he hoped I had been exercised by the Spirit. I felt certain he was deceived in me, and it seemed that I ought not to talk any more with Christians in regard to my own case, for my troubled state of mind, and what I knew and felt of the truth led them to have a hope for me for which there was no foundation.

For months the Bible and old volumes of the "Signs of the Times" were my only reading, except what was necessary in my business. I could see things in each which seemed to express my feelings, but still my soul refused to be comforted. One evening, as I lay listening to a friend who was reading in the Psalms, I felt a peace and rest so unusual that I noticed it, but did not think of taking any hope on account of it. The next morning, as I walked to my office, thinking of these things, as I was most of my time, I thought of that peaceful state of mind that I had the last evening, and wondering what it meant. I asked myself: "Will I ever know anything?" Then the words were in my mind, "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness." They were very familiar to me; yet now they appeared new and full of life. I had always thought one must be good before he could hunger and thirst after righteousness. Now I saw that a man hungers after something he does not have. I have no righteousness; I want it; I long for it; I am the hungry man. Perhaps I am one for whom Christ died. All this was instantaneous, and the last sentence seemed to stop and be repeated with a certainty as though the word "perhaps" did not belong there. In an instant I was so glad I did not know what to do. I was truly glad, for the first time in all my life I said to myself perhaps I *am* one for whom Jesus died, though I had thought perhaps *I might* be. But now the word was *am.* And for the first time I was glad with that kind of gladness. Every gladness I had ever had from childhood had with it the suggestion of an end. It would end some time. But this I felt would never end. In two or three hours it was, or seemed to be, gone, in a way I shall soon tell; yet that same gladness reaches back to this time, and I have a remembrance and a taste of it now as I write.

I seem to have stopped walking, and to have been standing for some time,

looking away into infinite distance, but I do not know how long I was there. *"Thou hast put gladness in my heart."* I went into my office and began writing to sister Bessie, to tell her of my gladness.

When my pastor came in, as he and other preachers occasionally did, I said at once: "Why, Doctor Hodge, for the first time in all my life I have a hope," and I went on to tell him the wonderful gladness which had been given me. I had been a member of his church about a year, and we had been quite intimate. When I had told him how I felt, he said, "I am glad for you. That is a very happy state of mind; and now all you have to do is to go on in the line of your duty and all will be well."

Immediately I began to question: My duty; my duty ! I have never done my duty. I have never done one thing to merit this hope. It cannot be that I have a hope. This does not belong to me. I tried to keep it, but it began to slip away. In the course of two or three hours it seemed to be gone. My letter to my sister could not tell of the gladness that had come like sunshine into my heart, but into that, and into my own thoughts the questioning and heart searching went. I had always felt that before I could have a true hope, I must have a view of God, and of my condemnation under his holy law, and of Christ's sacrifice, in some way different from what I had ever had, and that I must come to him with a singleness of desire, and with a knowledge of what I wanted, and with a hungering and thirsting after righteousness. I could see nothing in my experience equal to what I thought this must be. If I had ever truly hungered, and had truly felt my condemnation, I certainly should be able to avoid all sin, and to pray with a single desire; whereas it sometimes appeared as though I saw more evil within me when trying to pray than at other times. I thought that perhaps my great desire for a hope and for the favor of God were the cause of my taking these things to myself, which did not belong to me.

I decided to go to the Warwick Association in Warwick, N. Y., and have a talk with Elder Trott, whose writings I had read in the "Signs," with great appreciation. Although certain that I had no true experience, I wanted to talk with some church. I knew that Christ was able to save even me, if I would go to him; but I could not tell how to go, or where to find him. Yet it seemed to me if I could hear the preaching I loved, and see the enjoyment of Christians, I would feel better, and if they would give me some corner in the church, that I would rest, and just trust myself to the Lord. Then again I thought it would be the worst thing I had ever done if I should say anything that would make them willing to admit me.

A friend at the Association expressed, as my sister had done before, a confidence in the reality of my experience. I could not feel that it was so, yet I felt somewhat enlivened. On the second day of the Association a lady came from a distance, who had never heard an Old Baptist preach. She was seeking the church of God, and felt that she

had found it in the people at Warwick. She was baptized on the last day, and I thought it the most beautiful scene I had ever witnessed, but felt more alone than ever. I listened eagerly to all the preaching, but none of it came to me as my own, or with power, except one text:

"Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." I had opportunity to talk with several, and among them Elder Trott, whom I regarded with almost reverence on account of what I had read of his writings. He advised me to tell the church my feelings and exercises, and let them judge of my experience. "You know," he said, "they are the judges." I saw that most of them had a hope for me, but I felt as though I had deceived them. Although I had decided to act upon the advice of Elders Trott and Beebe, and receive the ordinance of baptism if the church accepted me, I was really distressed at what I was going to do, and resolved to explain this feeling to the church, and charge them to judge with great care. And yet, I thought, suppose they should say this is an experience of grace; what would I do! So in this great trouble and conflict of mind, with many other perplexities and anxieties of soul weighing upon me, I sank into sleep.

On Saturday morning about three o'clock I was awake and thinking of these things as usual. One by one my doubts and perplexities came before my mind and were removed. Passages of scripture and points of doctrine with which I was familiar had new meanings for me. I seemed to be thinking with wonderful ease, and with a certainty as to the correctness of my thoughts which was new to me. What was explained to me in that hour it would take long to tell. Suddenly I was conscious that I had been lying in perfect peace and rest. I was thinking so easily, and saw things so clearly that I thought I would take up the things that had troubled me so much and think them over. I looked about me for them, but they were all gone beyond my reach. I seemed to see them in the distance around me, as Christian in "The Pilgrim's Progress," after he had passed through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, saw the evil things that had tormented him, but they were far off, and came not nigh. Not a trouble was in sight. I saw no reason for the peace and calm which possessed my mind, but there it was, and I knew it was the ***"Peace of God, which passeth all understanding."*** How good and sweet it was, after all these weary, restless years. How my glad heart went out in love and gratitude to the dear Lord. I thought of the words of scripture, ***"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is staid on thee, because he trusteth in thee."*** I had tried so long, so many weary years, to stay my heart on God, that I might have that perfect peace, but had never been able. Now, without an effort of my own, and in an unexpected moment, and in an unexpected way, the Lord had done it. I had done nothing to

merit it; I was no better than I was yesterday. It was so wonderful; I could see no reason in myself for it. It passed my understanding.

I thought, "Can I ever sin again, in heart or word or act?" It seemed impossible. Can I ever tell any one how to get this peace, or that he himself can obtain it, when it had come to me as the wind, blowing where it listeth? For I knew then that nothing I had ever done, nor any sermon I had ever heard, nor anything that anybody had ever said to me, had been the means by which that peace had come to me. All that day I was like them that dream. Peace flowed in my heart like a river. My mouth was filled with laughter, and my tongue with singing. I could not yet understand what reason I had for feeling so, and occasionally a momentary trouble would come over me because I did not have my doubts and afflictions any more. But even that could not hurt me. I was led and controlled by a blessed spirit of peace.

On Sunday morning I awoke.about the same hour, three o'clock, and found myself still with him, my restfulness and delight still greater. I never can express the trembling joy that overflowed my soul as the assurance grew stronger and stronger that I had found my Saviour, or had been found of him.

On that morning, Sunday morning, June 12, 1864, Elder Harding preached in Wallkill Meeting House, near Middletown, N. Y., from Isa. 55:13, telling much that was delightful for me to hear. I told the church a little of my feelings and was received. Instead of having to tell them of doubts I could tell them of a precious hope, but seemed able to tell them only a little. There was no hurry or excitement about me that day. In the afternoon I was baptized by Elder Gilbert Beebe in a little lake in the cemetery at Middletown. I had often thought that if such a thing should ever be, it would be a very exciting time for me, but I was never so calm before. The crowd that stood quietly by, and even the beautiful address to which we listened, claimed my attention less than the beautiful clouds, and a little sunfish playing in the water at my feet. The sermon of Elder St. John, from Luke 18:29, 30, and the address of Elder Beebe in giving me the right hand of fellowship, were listened to with more pleasure than can be expressed. My delight at getting into the church knew no bounds.

Preaching was a new thing to me. I found that after all my fancied knowledge of true doctrine, I was a perfect child in my ignorance of spiritual things. I first knew really what prayer was; it was breathing within me. I first knew what faith was; I stopped looking away somewhere for the Lord, and trying to form an adequate conception of him in my mind; and acknowledged his glorious presence, and saw by faith my precious and glorious Redeemer. I have only once seemed to see a vision, and that was hardly with my mind. On Monday morning the moment I woke a doubt seemed to arise within me. It had the appearance of a terrible black thing rising out of darkness. I shrank back and cried in

my soul, *"O Lord, I cannot contend with this."* Instantly I saw the appearance of a hand reach out over it and crush it back into darkness again. The black thing appears to me to be composed of all doubts and questionings that can ever rise up in the mind against the truth, and even against the experience of grace, and the existence of God. I was not left to try my strength with it; and I felt that moment that I would never have that peculiar temptation again. I feel so yet.

It was a privilege for which I was, and am, very thankful, to spend those few days with those who have been taught of God. On Monday I left them, but peace went with me. My joy and wonder continually increased, as new things were revealed, and glorious things were unfolded to my spiritual understanding, every revelation renewing and strengthening my assurance that I had found my Beloved. I could not bear to have my thoughts diverted from my new-found treasure, but kept it closely grasped by them, as though afraid it might suddenly vanish, as though, indeed, it could not be a reality, but only a dream.

And so I have gone on till now. Today I have felt as though I ought to write some of my former exercises, lest in this new life I might forget them. I have done so hastily and meagerly. But I cannot keep long from the contemplation of this new joy, and from the new beauties I see in the Bible, and from talking with my home folks here at my father's, who are now dear to me in a new sense. In a few days I must return to my place of business, where I shall be alone, but for the presence of him who I know will be with me, and who I trust will hide me in the secret of his presence from the pride of men. Though far from those with whom I have a name and an inheritance, still may I trust that the Lord will abundantly satisfy me with the provisions of his house. Let me always ascribe praise to him who sitteth on the throne of his holiness, and whose mercy endureth forever.

Elder Silas H. Durand

"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." — JOHN xv. 8.

THE bearing of much fruit not only brings glory to God, but proves such rich fruit-bearers to be genuine disciples of the Lord Jesus. Now, though there is no merit in their bearing fruit, they sometimes get comfort from it, as proving an abiding union with Christ. *"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Fathers commandments and abide in his love."* There is no maintaining of holy confidence in the soul but by walking in godly obedience; nor can there be any true spiritual communion with God whilst the guilt of disobedience lies hard and heavy on the conscience. To make straight paths for our feet; to walk in the fear of God; to live to his glory, are not only sweet tests of genuine discipleship, but faith, hope, and love cannot be maintained without them. And yet if we know

anything of what gospel fruit is, and what we are as poor, vile sinners, must we not too often put our mouth in the dust? Instead of rejoicing in our fruitfulness, must we not often rather lament our barrenness, and cry out, "*My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me!*" Still, if we see and feel a deficiency in these points in ourselves and others, and, comparing our hearts, lips, and lives with the word of truth, must plead guilty, shall this utterly discourage us? No. This very discouragement may prove of service to us. It is good, at times, to be discouraged; because it makes us learn that "*without Christ we can do nothing,*" and that it is only by his grace that we can produce fruit to his glory. It is, therefore, good to see and feel our barrenness and unfruitfulness; for it is this very sight and sense of our own want of fruit that leads us in earnest desires to the Lord Jesus Christ to work in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure.

Elder J.C. Philpot

ST. JOHN 15:12-15.

This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

"And I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." (Zech. 13:7)

I do not understand this to mean that when the Lord smites the Shepherd and scatters the sheep that He will protect the little ones from the stroke of justice. The phrase, "*turn my hand upon*", appears to me rather to imply antagonism, punishment, the execution of judgment. The little ones are a part of the flock; they are all to know the just anger of a holy God on account of sin, the little as well as the great. This is the day of judgment; the Shepherd receives the stroke, and in that stroke that fell upon Him all the flock, to the least of the little ones, is included. Justice and judgment are thus executed for and upon every one of them. When Jesus died the flock all died in Him, in a legal and mystical sense. The sheep are all scattered, and left helpless and defenseless, and the Lord's hand is turned, in judgment, upon the little ones, when the Shepherd is stricken down. The condition of the Shepherd shows the condition of the whole flock. This condition of condemnation and death must be experienced in measure by every one of the little ones. But lo, to their glad surprise the Shepherd appears again, risen from the dead, having paid the debt of justice, and now with all power in His hands He gathers the sheep that were scattered, and carries the little ones in His bosom. The hand of the Lord is not turned upon them in anger any more, but is laid upon them

in love and tenderness, to cover them in the day of judgment, and to uphold them in the time of trouble.

If this sentence, ***"And I will turn mine hand upon the little ones"***, had meant in protection from the judgment that fell upon the sheep, then it appears to me, it would have read, ***"But I will turn mine hand upon the little ones."*** The word "and", to my mind, includes them all in the judgment which turned the hand of the Lord upon the Shepherd and the sheep.

Fragments
Silas H. Durand

Minden, La. 71055
Dec. 5, 1978

Just a few lines on second Thess. chapter 2, verse 13, 14. If there was such a thing as the plan of salvation it would be contained in those two verses. It reads. ***"But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and belief of the truth."***

Without doubt there is more confusion and mystery in the experimental teaching of the Holy Spirit to each child of God than in any of the great works of salvation.

Salvation is made up of three parts. First, is God the author, His will and purpose in his choice of his elect people. The scriptures teach that we were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, without blame before Him in Love. The only way we are involved in this choice is as a blessed recipient. This was set and fixed in the mind and purpose of God before any of us were.

Second, is the advent of Christ into the world, the miracles He performed, His teaching as set forth in the scriptures, His promises to His little ones. Even His name means God with us. These promises are the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession. His taking upon Himself the sins of all His chosen. His death on the cruel tree of the cross. His burial and resurrection from the dead. He tells us that because I live, you may live also. He came that we might have life, Spiritually, and that we might have it more abundantly. This work of Christ in redeeming His people, justifying and atoning for their sins, was all done without any help from the sinner.

The third work of salvation is the teaching of Christ. In the 16th chapter of John, Christ tells us that it is expedient that He go away, ***"For if I go not away the comforter will not come unto you; if I depart, I will send him unto you."*** He the Holy Ghost, shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

My desire, if I know my desire, is to make a few comments on the work of the Spirit in sanctification. This Spirit, I think, is the quiet still voice that tells us to go this way or that way, that this way is right or this way is wrong. This

is God's kingdom, set up and manifested in the heart of each child of God. Until this work is begun in him, the child of God is by nature a child of wrath, even as others. These others, this scripture speaks of, are the ones mentioned in the book of Proverbs. There is a way that seems right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. This is the way we all travel, until touched by the Holy Spirit.

There are many scriptures that describe the work of the Spirit in the heart of a child of God. The first such work is bringing to the attention of the child of God, that he is a sinner, that within him dwells no good thing, that all or the best of his goodness is as filthy rags. When we are given the heart to examine ourselves and find that we have not one good thing to offer this just and Holy God, then do we cry with Paul, ***"Who can deliver me from the body of this death?"*** thus, we learn that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Then do we begin to search the scriptures.

In this search we find that the same Paul who considered himself the chief of sinners was the same one given as a pattern for those who come after him to believe unto life eternal. That David, a man after God's own heart, was an adulterer and murderer, causes one to hope that because God showed mercy on such as these, that we are not so far away that He could not reach even such as you find yourself to be, that he does not save someone because of what he is, but in spite of what he is.

When, by the Spirit, this hope is set up in a child of God, he finds things much different than before. He has been turned from the love of the world and worldly things to those things that do not perish with the using. He longs for closer fellowship with people who believe as he does, to know more of the ways of Christ, a love for the truth that at one time he knew not. He becomes a seeking person.

In the Song of Solomon there is such a seeking person. ***"Tell me oh thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedeth, where thou maketh thou flock to rest at noon."*** Dear brethren, if this longing is sincere, He always answers. ***"If thou know not, oh thou fairest among women, go thou way forth by the footsteps of the flock, feed thy kids beside the Shepherd's tent."*** Is not this your desire?

He does not put the desire for Him in your heart and then withhold the way. He tells us in the 45th chapter of Isaiah, 19th verse, ***"I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain."***

So in conclusion, brethren, I believe that when the Spirit and God is that Spirit has taken up abode within your heart, you are ever being taught those things that are good for you, the things which are conforming you to the image of His darling Son, those things that are well pleasing in His sight. May it ever be thus with you.

Yours in hope,
Elder Graydon Smith

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 1998

Mrs. A.R. Patterson, LA $12.00
Ollie C. Gauldin, NC 2.00
Mrs. Ina Hendrix, TN 5.00
In memory of Eld. John C. Townley
Mrs. Frances Townley, AR 10.00
Mrs. Frances T. Jarvis, MD 2.00
Melvin R. Hollandsworth, VA 2.00
Mrs. Helen Pittman, TX 7.00
Eld. L.J. Brammer, VA 2.00
Woodrow Abshire, VA 2.00
A Friend 52.00
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Douglas G. Hodges, VA 2.00
A.L. Shelton, VA 2.00
Eld. Raymond Goad, VA 2.00
Eld. C.B. Davis, NC 2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER ERMA PAYNE

It is a feeling of unworthiness and sadness that I attempt to write an obituary of my sister in Christ, also my mother-n-law.

In memory of our Dear Sister who passed away October 16, 1997. She was born in Pittsylvania County January 10, 1920, to Augusta Thomas Burnett and Hattie Nichols Burnett, she had a brother Thomas Burnett and a sister Ruth Burnett Bliss.

She was married to Silas Payne, Sr. They lived a happy marriage of 56 years. Survived by two sons Silas Payne, Jr. and Harry Payne and wives. Christine and Bonnie. Four grandchildren, 1 great grandson, one step grandson, and two step great grandchildren.

She united with Union Church in 1975, which she loved so dear.

She loved everyone, loved to sing and praise God. She invited friends into her home on Sundays with great feast of food and love.

She was sick for several months but no matter how sick she was, she never forgot her pastor. Just the sound of his voice, she would perk up and say Brother Goad let me hug you.

She fought a good fight, she finished her course and kept her faith.

May we all be reconciled to His Holy will and be comforted to know that our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was held at Scott's Funeral Home in Chatham, Va. Oct. 19, 1997. 2 p.m. by Elder Raymond Goad and Rev. Haywood Alcorn. She was buried in Hillcrest Burial Park.

Written by,
Sister Christine Payne

MARY ELIZABETH RICE

Sister Rice was born September 29, 1901 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. She was the daughter of Albert Edgar Rice, Sr. and Maniza Page Rice. There were two other girls and two boys in the family, all of whom preceded her in death. Sister Elizabeth started working early in life at McCroy's Department Store, later at McGuffin's, and finally at Dan River, Inc. for 24 years.

The family was very industrious and all worked to help out with the cost of living. Sister Rice along with her two sisters were excellent seamstresses and were always making something they could share with their friends. They made many beautiful quilts to be sold or given to loved ones and friends. My wife and I have one of these quilts with pieces the size of postage stamps. I was told when the three girls had to enter the nursing home there were 23 quilts in a closet of their home all completely finished.

My wife and I visited her many times and went to visit on Sunday afternoon May 18, 1997. We knew she would not know us, but still we had a desire to speak to her as we did each time we went. We saw a change in her while there and realized it was the beginning of her death. We would not leave her alone to die and about 8:30 p.m. the struggle of life was over. We feel that then her spirit ascended to a new home where her faith and hope are a reality.

She and Sister Ema and Nettle were members of Danville Primitive Baptist Church. They all were dedicated to the love of church and attended as long as health permitted. Sister Elizabeth was the last of her family and is survived only by several cousins. These are Virginia McKinney, and James A. Dix of Danville, Virginia and Martha Johnson and Louise Kepley of Greensboro, North Carolina and Zettie Holderby of Reidsville, North Carolina.

There was a graveside service for Sister Rice by Elder Julian Williams and Elder C.B. Davis, Jr. Her body was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park of Danville to await the voice of victory that will call her home. We all miss her but would not desire her back to suffer again.

We desire a copy of this to be printed in the Signs of the Times, a copy placed in the church book, and copies given to her cousins. Written by one who loved her so much, and enjoyed her talks about the church and what it meant to her.

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

PSALM 43: 3-5.

O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.

Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God.

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted with me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

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POEM

THOUGHTS

O God the Rock upon which I stand,
Would that Thou would hold me by my hand
Console, chide, correct and discipline me
So that by these things I may better know Thee

No greater love could be bestowed
Than that which in blood from your Son's side flowed
Lift me up that I may more clearly see
The vast difference between mere man and Thee

Enable my heart to burst forth in songs of praise
And teach my feet to follow in your ways
Then when all my days on earth be stilled
May my cares be erased and my hopes fulfilled.

Carrie Jo Williams

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EDITORIAL

JEWS VS GENTILES

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. (Romans Chap 11, Vs 28)

There is a salvation to the Jews, the chosen generation of God, under the law, which was given by Moses, and was purchased with the blood of Jesus for their sins under the law; and there is a salvation to the Gentiles which came by Grace and truth in the person of Jesus Christ the only begotten of the Father. They are all the children of God through different administrations or covenants and salvation to both came by the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; One came by the death of Christ on the cross for those under the law and the other by the resurrection of Jesus when he rose from death, having set aside the law, condemning it in the flesh and perfecting the gentiles by the indwelling of the holy spirit in their hearts, making them free from the law of sin and death. This child is in the image of God and cannot sin, although it dwells in a body of flesh that sins constantly; this is the cross that all bear, enduring the body of flesh and as Lot's righteous soul was vexed daily with the sins of the people of Sodom among whom he dwelled, they endure the flesh and the depravity of the fleshly mind, but walk after the spirit. This was Paul's complaint, in the seventh chapter of Romans, when he cried O wretched man that I am: who shall deliver me from the body of this death, endure it he must, but it was very distressing to his soul and he longed for the time when he would be free from it.

The above scripture is found in the eleventh chapter of Romans, which deals with the fall of the Jews, and that through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles; it goes on to say, *"Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?"* It speaks of the casting away of them being the reconciling of the world, and if so, what shall the

receiving of them be, but life from the dead. It does not say, anywhere in this writing, of their being cut off and lost, but rather, blindness in part is happened unto them, but it says that they may be grafted in again. The Jews, as a nation, did not receive or believe in Christ; they rejected him and his teachings, and continued under the law as they had since the time that the law was given them by God, through Moses. Although they had the scriptures, prophesying of the coming of the Messiah and that he would make the sacrifice that would put away their sin, they did not recognize Jesus as that prophet; but as Paul wrote, (Romans Chap 3, Vs 1-3) "*What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there in circumcision? Much every way:chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God, For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid:yea let God be true , but every man a liar; as it is writen, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged*". Now, the above text, as concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake: but as touching the election they are beloved for the fathers sake, seemingly fits in right here and states that all Israel, the elect of God, shall be saved. (Romans Chap 11, Vs 7) "*What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for ; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.*" The election hath obtained it by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God and not because of the keeping of the law, or the lack of it, but because of the faith that they have in their God.

(Romans Chap 14,Vs 25-26) "*For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceit; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, there shall come out of sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:*" indicating that the residue of the Jews (Jacob, the lot of his inheritance) in its entiriety shall be brought in, after the fullness of the Gentiles is come in; the first shall be last and the last shall be first. We may not understand how, or why, it is this way and, as the scripture says, it is a mystery, but the fullness of the Jews will be brought in after the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. The blood of Jesus flowed to the former sea and to the hinder sea for all who lived and sinned under the law; but his death brought salvation to the Gentiles by taking the law away, condemning sin, a characteristic of the flesh, in the flesh and bringing in the spiritual kingdom of those, (the inner man) who did not commit sin because he is born of God. Where there is no law, there is no sin, and in that one that is born of the spirit, that new creature in Christ, there is no sin.

(Gal Chap 5, Vs 18) "*But if ye be led of the Spirit , ye are not under the law.*" Those that are born of the spirit

are led of the spirit and there is no law to condemn them because the one who sent the comforter has taken the law away so that it has no more jurisdiction over them. Where there is no law, there is no sin, as Paul said, blessed is the man to whom the lord will not impute sin. This is the blessed state of the new creature in Christ, the old things, under the law, are passed away; behold all things are become new, and all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given unto the ministry of reconciliation; to wit. that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. This word that is committed unto them is the law that is printed in their heart and written in their mind, not on tables of stone, and they shall live by them; it is by this word that they try the spirits to recognize their brethren and fellowship the mystery that they have in common and worship God in spirit and in truth.

(John Chap 1, Vs 11-12-13) "*He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God,*" This scripture, stating that he came to his own, refers to the fact that the Jews; whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, did not receive his testimony and enter into the Gospel church, by being born of the spirit, and as Christ told Nicodemus ye must be born again to see the kingdom of heaven, and enter into it. This kingdom of Heaven, in this analogy, is the gospel church, which Christ established when he died, was buried and rose again; and sent forth the comforter as Christ promised his disciples, "*Nevertheless I tell you the truth:It is expedient for you that I go away:for if I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*" This was accomplished on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost came down as cloven tongues of fire and sat upon each of the Apostles; they were filled with the Holy Ghost and began to preach the gospel, for the first time, as the spirit gave them utterance , and that is still the way that it is preached today. This was when the church, or the kingdom of heaven, was established, on earth and the gospel era began, fulfilling all of the prophisies of the old testiment of what God would do, in that day, and the new covenant was established with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah and they became one fold, the common denominator being the immaculate Son of God; the mediator between God and his chosen generation whether they be Jews or Gentiles.

(Romans Chap 10 Vs, 4) "*For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.*" This is true, in the fact that the death of Christ was for the sins, under the law, and forever atoned for those sins and made those who lived under the

law of sin and death free from the penalty for their sins, which condemned them, and they stood justified before God by the shed blood of Christ. The law never made any righteous; for the scriptures say if righteousness came by the law, then Christ died in vain but the bringing in of a better covenant, under a new priesthood, did. Righteousness comes by faith and the law is not of faith, but the man that doeth the works of the law shall live in them, before or after Christ came into the world, and Christ died for all of the sins of his children under the law; whether before or after his death. This is why Paul wrote (Romans Chap 11,Vs 26) "***And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, there shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob***" and this after he had said that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and then the Israelites shall come in and receive that promised inheritance laid up for them from the foundation of the world because of their election.

Now, the text says, "***As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sake***": and this is not talking about the Jews under the law, in former times, because they did not know of the gospel in those days and being born of the spirit as the apostles and disciples of Christ did, The apostle Paul is talking of the Jews, in his day, the day in which he is writing this scripture, and that is after Christ has died, and he says, they are enemies to the gospel. He says; as concerning the gospel they are enemies, but as concerning the election, these same ones in the same time are, as touching the election, beloved for the fathers' sake; then he goes on to say "***For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.***" If they are, according to election, beloved for the father's sake, then it seems that they are of the family for whom Christ died, and are of the redeemed of the Lord, whether they believe the gospel, or not. This brings to mind , the parable of the ten virgins, five were wise and possessed oil in their lamps, and five were foolish and had no oil in their lamps. The oil represents the spirit , which those in the gospel day possess, and the lack of it represents those under the law without the spirit, but they were all virgins and they were all betrothed to the bridegroom; if this represents the kingdom of heaven, did the father betroth his son to five virgins and five harlots or to ten virgins under two different covenants. They were under differents covenants; as the scripture states; "***Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.***" Just because they are not just like those, in another administration or operation, it does not mean that they are not of the chosen generation determined from the foundation of the earth. This is, seemingly, what is being stated in the above scripture that, although the Jews are enemies as concerning the

gospel, they are beloved of the Father because they were elected of God the same as those under the new covenant. (Romans Chap 11, Vs 32) "*For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all", whether they are Israelites or Gentiles.* (Romans Chap 11,Vs 33) "*O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out".* Man cannot fathom the mysteries of God nor rationalize them with the human mind; The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God : for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned; he can only wait on the Lord for faith and understanding.

Gal. Chap, 3 Vs 10-13) "*For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for The just shall live by faith, And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the spirit through faith."* This is saying that as many are under the works of the law are under the curse, and this applies to the Jews until this day because they are still under that Mosiacal law and the curse that accomplishes it and will continue to be there until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. When this is accomplished, then Israel shall be brought in because of the election, and because of the death of Christ for the sins under the law and then shall be brought to pass the prophesy recorded in (Eze Chap 37 Vs 16-17) "*Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah and for the children of Israel his companions: And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand."* There shall be one shepherd and one fold.

There is no room for the Gentile to boast because he has faith, as though he accomplished this on his own; the sovereign work of God is true and sure, whether all understand it or not. The truth is the truth if no one believes it, and everyone believing a thing does not make it true. May God grant us the wisdom to accept what we believe as a gift from God and realize that there are many things that we will never understand. All believe according to the measure of the gift of Christ, and each one is given what is needful for them and must walk according to that knowledge. It is not needful for them to understand everything, or else they would, but, each is given a little here and a little there to keep them searching the scriptures for more evidence that these truths apply to them. (Romans 14,Vs 1-2-3) "*Him that is weak*

in the faith receive ye , but not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things: another who is weak, eatheth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him the eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him." Who is man to judge another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. As Paul said, in his letter to the church at Colosse, (Col Chap 2, Vs 6) ***"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him".*** Paul is saying here, you cannot live and believe according to my experience, you must walk and believe according to the revelation of the word of God in your own life. Each one's faith is a unique and precious gift, tailored to their own individual need; and all to the glory of God. When wisdom was required God called Solomon and gave him wisdom; when strength was required he called Sampson and gave him the strength of ten men; either one could not walk and perform as the other, but they were equally important, in God's plan. Each filled their place, in the house of God and contributed that which was needful according to the purposes of God, from the foundation of the world.

There are many different theories on the salvation of the children of God and this is another one, but be that as it may, (II Tim Chap 2, Vs 19) ***"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."*** This is one point of doctrine that all true believers will agree on and trust in with all of their heart mind and soul for their hope of salvation; they will agree that it is because that God first loved thm and gave his only begotten son for them if their hope is valid. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world and the salvation of the saints is the reason for all things and the reason for all his works. As Jesus told the Phrasees, on one occasion when they asked his what they must do to work the works of God, It is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent, meaning himself.

May God, in the riches of his grace, grant us the, wisdom, understanding, patience and love that accompanies the gift of salvation to all of the saints. These are characteristics of the chosen generation, the royal priesthood and the holy nation and is what makes the fellowship of the brethren so sweet and precious as they journey through this low ground of sin and sorrow. These are the fruits of the spirit that cause them to look over the faults of the fleshly man and concentrate on the beauty of the inner man, which is what they love, for Christs sake.

In bonds of Love
Richard H. Campbell

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1 TIMOTHY 3:5.

And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

The Lord willing I will attempt to write concerning the history, the present and what we desire and hope for the future of Little Hope Primitive Baptist Church. I will take the history from the church records and minutes, and write of the present as we have been blessed to see it in the days we are now living. As for the future, God only knows but we hope by an eye of faith, He has given us to believe, that with His blessing, this can continue to be a place where His people can meet to speak of His goodness and mercy and contend for the doctrine our forefathers believed so deeply. For He will not leave Himself without a witness.

In the early 1900's a small group of people met together in a grove of trees in Cove Hollow to worship and praise God. Cove Hollow is located in the counties of Montgomery and Roanoke. The place of this meeting was on the far westem edge of Roanoke county, then known as Lafayette, Virginia.

On the 31st day of July, 1911 a parcel of land was deeded by and between W.B. Lawrence and Sara Lawrence, party of the first part and F.J.V. Poff, J.W. Conner, A.B. Lawrence, J.W. McDaniel and J.B. Hilton, Trustees of the Primitive Baptist Church of Lafayette, Virginia, also known as Old School Baptist, Predes-

tinarian Baptist and their successors forever, holding and believing the doctrine of predestination, election, final preservation of the saints to glory and worshipping God in the old and simple time honored way, unmixed with the religious practices of modern times, such as Sunday schools, instrumental music in church, modern mission system of sending paid missionaries among unwilling people who will not support them and the minority, thus holding and practicing shall not be devested of their property rights, parties of the second part. This deed is recorded in the clerk's office of Roanoke County. I am glad and hope thankful this deed was worded and recorded the way it was, as long as one believes this doctrine, they can not be devested of their property rights.

The year this deed was made these people built a small church building on this land. They then called a presbytery of elders to meet with them at their new church house to examine and constitute them into a church, if found qualified.

On Saturday before the fourth Sunday in October 1911 the following Elders and Deacon met with them. Elders Peter Corn, H.V. Cole, B.V. Jessie and J.C. Hurst and Deacon Walker Claypton which members organized themselves into a presbytery with Elder Peter Corn, moderator and Elder J.C. Hurst, clerk. The presbytery called for all who wish to be examined to assemble themselves apart from the world. Wherefore, F.J.V. Poff, John W. Conner, Peter E. Hill, and J.B. Hylton, together with Mamie A. Hill, Mary Poff, Mary E. Conner, and S. Addie Lawrence, so assembled. The body chose F.J.V. Poff their spokesman and were examined by the moderator on the Primitive Baptist articles of faith, doctrine and practice which articles were substantially the same as the London confession of faith. After careful and thorough examination it was moved and seconded and carried by unanimous vote of the presbytery that they be hereby declared a duly constituted church of the Primitive Baptist faith and order, which are sometimes called and known as Old School or Predestinarian Baptist. The church then held her first meeting and called Elder B.V. Jessie by unanimous vote to serve as their pastor. Elder Jessie accepted. She then agreed that the name of the church should be "Little Hope". Brethern J.B. Hylton and J.W. Conner were chosen deacons and delivered to the presbytery for examination and ordination if found qualified. Elder Cole was chosen by the presbytery to lead in questions. He used the scripture qualifications recorded in Timothy as his basis of questions. The Deacons were found qualified and ordained to the full functions of deaconship by the laying on of hands of the presbytery and prayer by Elder J.C. Hurst and given charge by Elder Peter Corn. The church appointed F.J.V. Poff, church clerk and Elder J.C. Hurst and Brother C.M. Turner, required by the church to draw articles of faith to be submitted to the church for Her approval.

The following Elders have served as pastor, B.V. Jessie, John D. Wood, J. Otie Conner, Julius Bocock, Lane Carter, and the writer is now trying to serve them. I feel to be the least of all if one at all.

In our conference meeting May 1997, the church agreed to build a new meeting house. We knew this would be impossible without the blessing of the Lord, we are small in membership and had little in financial funds, but the interest of some of the members and friends was great and the Lord blessed us to see the building completed. We held our first meeting in the new building on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in February 1998. We also held a special meeting on March 28, 1998, to dedicate the building. My prayer is that this will be a house of prayer and worship, that our children and grandchildren may be blessed to worship and praise God here for many generations.

We invite all that love God to come and worship with us. The address is: 7424 Cove Hollow Rd, Elliston, VA, which is 1 1/2 miles off US 11, about eight miles west of Salem, VA, and four miles off Interstate 81 south of Salem.

Written by request of the church in conference July 25, 1998, to be submitted to the Signs of the Times for print if found worthy.

Written by Junior Conner
Junior Conner, Moderator
Lawrence Myers, Clerk

NOTICE

Can You Help?

The 2nd Roxbury Old School Baptist Church at Roxbury, N.Y. needs a new roof. This church was built in 1833. The church has no funds. Any contribution would be greatly appreciated. The church can obtain a matching grant, however, the church must have the money to match it before they can obtain it. Any contribution should be sent as follows:

2nd Roxbury
Old School Baptist Church

c/o Mr. George Tich Macher
R.R. #1, P.O. Box 7
Roxbury, N.Y. 12474

PSALM 23

A Psalm of David.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

VOICES OF THE PAST

FOOTSTEPS OF THE FLOCK

CHAPTER IX.

THE HISTORY OF JOSEPH.

Gen. XXXVII. "In this chapter begins the history of Joseph, with whom the remaining part of the book is chiefly concerned; and here are related the hatred of his brethren to him because his father loved him, and which was increased by the dream he dreamed, and told them of verses 1-11; a visit to his brethren, in the field, whom he found after a long search of them, verses 12-17; their conspiracy on sight of him to slay him, but by the advice of Reuben, it was agreed to cast him into a pit, which they did, verses 18-24, and after that, at the motion of Judah, sold him to the Ishmaelites, who were going to Egypt, verses 25-28; this being done, Reuben being absent and not finding Joseph in the pit, was in great distress, verses 29-30; their contrivance to deceive their father, and make him believe that Joseph was destroyed by a wild beast, which on sight of the coat he credited, and became inconsolable, verses 31-35; and concludes with the sale of Joseph in Egypt, to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, verse 36."

Gen. XXXIX. "In this chapter the history returns to Joseph again, who being brought down to Egypt was sold to Potiphar, with whom he found favor, and who set him over his house, the Lord prospering every thing in his hands, verses 1-6, and being a young man of comely aspect, his mistress lusted after him, and tempted him to lie with her, from time to time, but he has constantly refused it, as being both ingratitude to his mistress, and a sin against God, verses 7-10. At a certain time, they being alone in the house, she renewed her solicitations, and laid hold of his garment, which he left in her hands, and fled, verses 11-12; upon which she called her servants without and accused Joseph of ill designs upon her, and reported the same to her husband, when he came home, verses 13-19; upon which his master put him in prison, but he found favor with the keeper of it who committed the prisoners and all things relative to them into his hands, verses 20-23."

Gen. XL. "The history of this chapter is, the imprisonment of two of Pharaoh's officers, the chief butler and chief baker, who by the captain of the guard were made the charge of Joseph, verse 1-4; they both dreamed in prison, which made them sad; Joseph taking notice of their sadness, asked the reason of it, and encouraged them to tell him their dreams, verses 5-8. The chief told his dream of the vine and their branches, which Joseph interpreted of his restoration to his office in three days, and desired him to remember him unto Pharaoh when he stood before him, telling him his case, verses 9-15; then the chief baker told his dream of the three white baskets of food on his head, which the birds ate, verse 16-19, and the

events answered to the interpretations, but Joseph was forgotten by the chief butler, verses 20-23."

Gen. XLI. "In this chapter are related Pharaoh's dreams, which his magicians could not interpret, verses 1-9, upon which the chief butler now remembering Joseph, recommended him to Pharaoh as an interpreter, having had an happy experience of him as such himself, verses 10-15; Joseph was sent for out of the prison; and Pharaoh having related his dreams, he interpreted them seven years of plenty and seven years of famine, that should be in the land of Egypt, verses 14-32; and having done, he gave his advice to provide in the years of famine and proposed a scheme for doing it, which was approved by Pharaoh and his ministers, verses 33-37. Joseph himself was pitched upon as the most proper person to execute it, and was appointed chief over the kingdom, next to Pharaoh, who gives him a new name and a wife upon this occasion, verses 38-45. Accordingly in the years of plenty he took a tour throughout the whole land and gathered and laid up food in vast quantities in every city, verses 46-49. An account is given of two sons born to Joseph; and of their names, verses 50-52, and the seven years of famine, beginning to come on at the end of the seven years of plenty, which brought great distress on the land of Egypt, and the countries round about, who all came to Joseph to buy corn, verses 53-57."

Gen. XLII. "This chapter relates that Jacob heard there was corn in Egypt, sent all his sons, but Benjamin, thither to buy corn, verses 11-4, and coming before Joseph they bowed to him, he knowing them, though they knew him not, spoke roughly to them, and charged them with being spies, verses 6-9; they in their defense urged that they were sons of one man in Canaan, with whom their youngest brother was left, on which Joseph ordered them to send for him, to prove them true men, verses 10-16; and put them all in prison for three days, and then released them, and sent them away to fetch their brother, verses 17-20; this brought to their minds their treatment of Joseph, and they confessed their guilt to each other, which Joseph heard and which greatly affected him; they supposed he understood them not; before he dismissed them he bound Simeon before their eyes, whom he retained, till they returned, verses 21-24; then he ordered his servants to fill their sacks with corn, and put each man's money in his sack, which one of them on the road found, opening his sack for provisions, filled them all with surprise and fear, verses 25-28. Upon their return to Jacob, they related all that had befallen them, and particularly that the governor insisted on having Benjamin brought to them, verses 29-34; their sacks being opened, all their money was found in them, which greatly distressed them, and Jacob also, who was very unwilling to let Benjamin go, though Reutan offered his two sons as a pledge for him, and himself to be a surety, verses 35-38."

Gen. XLIII. "Informs us that the famine continued in the land of Canaan, and the corn that Jacob's sons and family had from Egypt being consumed, Jacob prepared his sons to go down for more, which they refused to do, unless Benjamin was sent with them, for whose safety Judah offered to become a surety, verses 1-10. Jacob with reluctance was prevailed upon to let him go, and dismissed them, with a present to the governor of Egypt, and with double money to buy corn with, and with his blessing upon them, verses 11-14. Upon which they set out for Egypt. When they came into the presence of Joseph, he seeing Benjamin with them, ordered his steward to take them to his house, and get dinner ready, it being his pleasure that they should dine with him that day, verses 15-17. This threw them into a fright, supposing that they were going to be called to an account for the money they found in their sacks; whereupon they related to the steward, every particular of the whole of that affair, who bid them not to be uneasy, for he had their money; and as a proof that things would go well with them, brought Simeon out to them and treated them very kindly and gently, verses 18-24. Having got their present ready against Joseph came home, they delivered it to him with great veneration and submission; who asked of the welfare of their father, and whether that was their younger brother they spoke of, the sight of whom so affected him, that he was obliged to haste to his chamber to weep, verses 25-30. Having washed his face and composed himself, he returned and ordered dinner to be brought, which were set on different tables, one for himself and the Egyptians and the other for his brethren, whom he placed according to their age, to their surprise; and sent messes from his table to each, and Benjamin five times more than the rest, and they were so liberally entertained that they became cheerful, verses 31-34."

Gen. XLIV. "This chapter relates the policy of Joseph, in making an experiment of his brother's regard and affection for Benjamin; he ordered his steward to put every man's money in his sack, his silver cup in Benjamin's, and when they were got out of the city, to follow them, and charge them with theft, as he did; and having searched their sacks as they desired he should, found the cup with Benjamin, which threw them into the utmost distress; and obliged them to return to Joseph, verses 1-14, who charged them with ill behaviour towards him; they acknowledged it, and proposed to be his servants' but he ordered them to depart to their father, retaining Benjamin in servitude, verses 15-17. Upon which Judah addressed him in a very polite and affectionate manner, and related the whole story, both between Joseph and them, concerning Benjamin, the first time they were in Egypt, and between their father and them upon the same subject, when he directed them to go a second time thither to buy corn, and how he became a surety to his father for him, and therefore proposed to be his bondsman now,

not being able to see his father's face without Benjamin, verses 18-24."

Gen. XLV. "In this chapter we have an account of Joseph's making himself known to his brethren, which was done when they were alone, verses 1-4, when he encouraged them not to distress themselves on account of selling him into Egypt, for God in his providence had sent him there for their good, verses 5-8, and he ordered them to go forthwith to Canaan, and acquaint his father with all the honor and glory they saw him in, and to desire him to come thither to him, where he should be provided for during the five years of famine yet to come, in the best part of the land of Egypt, verses 9-13, upon which he expressed the strongest affection to Benjamin, and to all him brethren, verses 14-15. The fame of this was spread in the house of Pharaoh, which gave the king great pleasure, who immediately expressed him desire that his father might come and settle in Egypt, and ordered provisions to be sent to him, verses 16-20, and carriages to bring him down, and all that belonged to him; and Joseph accordingly delivered to his brethren wagons and provisions for the way, and gave gifts to them and sent gifts to his father, and dismissed his brethren with an exhortation not to fall out by the way, verses 21-24, and they came to Canaan, and acquainted their father with all these things, who at first could not believe them; but when he saw the wagons, his spirit revived, and he determined to go to see his son, verses 25-28."

Gen. LVI. "Here we are told that Jacob with all his family and substance took a journey to Egypt, to see his son Joseph, in which he was encouraged to proceed, by a vision from God, verses 1-7, and we are given an account of all his sons, sons and daughters that went with him, verses 8-27. When he came near to Egypt, he sent Judah before him to Joseph, to acquaint him of his coming, who met him at Goshen, where there was a most affectionate interview between them, verses 28-30, and when he gave directions, what answers to give to Pharaoh's questions, when they should appear before him, to whom he proposed to go and inform him of their being in Egypt, verses 31-34."

Gen. XLVII. "This gives and account of the presentation of five of Joseph's brethren and his father to Pharaoh, and of what passed between them, verses 1-10; of Joseph's settlement of them, according to the directions of Pharaoh, in the land of Goshen, and of his provision he made for them there, verses 11-12; of his getting into his hands, for Pharaoh, the many cattle and lands of the Egyptians, except the lands belonging to the priests, for corn he had supplied them with, verses 15-22; of his giving them seed to sow with on conditions of Pharaoh's having a fifth part of the proceeds, verses 23-26; of the increase of Jacob's substance in Egypt, and that of his children; of the time of his being there, and his approaching death, when he called Joseph to him, and obliged him by an oath to bury him in the burying place of his fathers, verses 27-31."

Gen. XLVIII. "Joseph hearing his father was sick, paid him a visit, verses 1, 2; at which time Jacob gave him an account of the Lord's appearing to him at Luz, and of the promise he made unto him, verses 3, 4; then he adopted his two sons, Ephraim and Manassah, and blessed them, and Joseph also, verses 5-16; and whereas he crossed his hands when he blessed the sons of Joseph, putting his right hand upon the youngest, and his left hand on the eldest, which displeased Joseph, he gave him the reason for so doing, verses 17-20; and then assured him that God would bring him and the rest of his posterity into the land of Canaan, where he assigned them a particular portion above his brethren, verses 21, 22.

Gen. XLIX. "This chapter contains a prophecy of future things, relating to the twelve sons of Jacob, and to the twelve tribes, as descending from them and which he delivered to his sons on his death-bed, having called them together for that purpose, verses 1, 2. He begins with Reuben, his first born, whose incest he takes notice of, on which account he should not excel, verses 3, 4; next Simeon and Levi have a curse denounced on them for their cruelty at Shechem, verses 5, 6; but Judah is praised, and good things are prophesied of him; particularly that Shiloh poor, the Messiah, should spring from him, the time of whose coming is pointed at, verses 7-12; the predictions concerning Zebulun, Issachar and Dan follow, at the close of which Jacob expresses his longing expectation of God's salvation, verses 13-18; and foretelling what should befall Gad and Asher and Naphtali, verses 19-21; a large account is given of Joseph, his trials, and his blessings, verses 22-26; and Benjamin the youngest son taken notice of the last of all; all the tribes being blessed in their order according to the nature of their blessing, verses 27, 28, and the chapter is closed with a charge of Jacob's to his sons to bury him in Canaan, which having delivered, he died, verses 29, 33."

Gen. L. "This contains a short account of what happened from the death of Jacob to the death of Joseph, and is chiefly concerned with the funeral of Jacob; it gives an account of the embalming of Jacob's body and the mourning of the Egyptians for him, verses 1-3; of Pharaoh's permission to go and bury him in Canaan, verses 4-6; the grand funeral possession thither, the mourning made for Jacob, and his interment of Joseph and his brethren to Egypt, they fearing his resentment of their former usage of him, entreat him to forgive them, to which Joseph readily agreed and comforts them, and speaks kindly to them, and bids them not to fear any hurt from him, for whatever was their intention, God meant it; and had overruled it for good, verses 14-21; and the chapter ends with an account of Joseph's age and death, and of his posterity he saw before his death, and of the charge he gave to his brethren to carry his bones with them, when they should depart from Egypt, verses 22-26."

J.K. Booton

February, 1943

SOLOMON'S SONG 8:8

"We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for?"

I have not done very much writing on texts that the children of God bring to my notice, because I feel very deeply my deficiency in taking up deep and mysterious things of the Bible, but at this time the request to write to our family paper on the above text has been followed by an impression to do so. I trust by the grace of God that I make the attempt at this time, looking to him to guide my mind into the truth. If I write that which is not true I hope the brethren will set me aright, and that someone will be given a mind to give us an article on it. Many of the books of the Bible are unique. Solomon's Song is the most singular of all in the Bible and is, perhaps, the first instance of a dialogue. It is the sweet voice of Jesus speaking to his bride. His speaking to her brings forth from her the sublimest language. Each of them would be, and are, miserable when not in the company of each other, so we will find them setting forth their mutual love for the other. Now I must say here that in a certain sense this is the church for all time and under all dispensations, but in another restricted sense it is the Jewish church under the law. Please notice that as they speak it is to and about each other. They do not talk about other people or things. They are so absorbed in each other that there is not time to give it any notice, but now they come near the end of their wonderful conversation. In this text they have turned away from each other. Something precious undoubtedly has been brought to their notice. ***"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"*** Rom. 11:33. Nothing is nearer earthly perfection than the unity, love and companionship of husband and wife. Even that is not worthy to be compared to that holy union of Jesus and his bride. Their hearts beat as one heart; the welfare of the other is of primary importance; their aim is the same, but even with all that we find in our text that something in the future calls attention to them. They do not speak of each other now; they do not speak of their hopes and desires; the church did not say, I have a little sister; the Saviour did not say, you have a little sister, but at one time in perfect accord they speak and say, we have a little sister. Oh, the preciousness of their voices being blended together to include the heathen Gentiles. Just tonight as we study the text together it surely is enough to cause jubilation among the redeemed of the Lord to be known as the little sister. My poor heart responds with joy and adoration to such language. The Bible does not have much to say about God's big children, or fearless children, or learned children, but the precious promise, admonitions, and encouragement to the little children are all

through the book. In nature it is a beautiful thing to see an older brother taking care of and shielding a younger sister. Much more so is it true in regard to this little sister. She has the most wonderful Brother to shield and protect her, one who knows all about her as to how frail and little she is. Now may I suggest that the Jewish church had breasts. By that she was commanded to teach the law; look to the law; live by the law; die by the law and be judged by the law. The law afforded plenty if kept and obeyed. Furthermore, as we first came into a knowledge of the law, we still think that we may be fed by going to these breasts, but to these parties who are blended into one in looking forward toward the day of their little sister she does not have any breasts. May I be permitted to dwell rather intimately on the question of this little sister not having any breasts? Earlier I said that in our text it was the church under the law speaking. Now may I say that this little sister is the church under grace. To come under grace is for the helpless, poor, destitute, and barren to receive sustenance and strength. Now I see this little sister as the bride of Jesus Christ. Reader can you contemplate such a husband? Nothing lacking in him! Completeness and perfection in one! What about his bride? Ah, reader, look yonder at her as she comes up from the wilderness. She is a little one and she is leaning on the arm of her beloved, but she does not have any breasts, She cannot hope to feed any children. As in nature in some cases, so with her in every case, the nutrition must be supplied from some other source. Sometimes she is so ashamed that she does not have any ability, sometimes she is so glad that her husband furnishes all the food for the feeding of the household. Perhaps in nature if a man was fooled into wedlock with a woman with no breasts it would end in a separation, but not in this case. He knew all about this woman. He chose her in himself before the world was, and she is all fair to him, and I feel inclined to say that she is not deformed in any sense, but has perfection in him, and thus is supplied with breasts filled with the richest milk that supplies just exactly the right amount of love, and grace and faith for the satisfaction of the spiritual appetite, and for the development and growth of the child. Perhaps I am over zealous in regard to everything by grace. I do want my churches to be firmly established in the stable, unwavering doctrine of unconditional election and predestination. Let us look at this matter of this little sister not having any breasts. If she had no breasts, she has no nourishment for her children. If she has no breasts I would like to know just how long she would have to exercise in order to have some? If having no breasts does not constitute perfect helplessness in regard to food just what would it take to be helpless? And who preaches a doctrine that covers, consoles and includes this little sister? Will conditionalism before birth help any? Oh no, all Primitive Baptists agree that conditionalism this early will not do. But what about conditionalism

after birth? Is it any good? Will it produce milk for the babe? Will it put breasts on this little sister? And after putting them in place will it fill them? Fearless of all brands of Arminianism I would say that good (old fashioned to the many, but highly prized by the few) doctrine preached by the people sneered at and called Absoluters is the only one that will reach her case. *"Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child."* Isa. 66:7. Is not that devoid of works, conditions, merits or any other creature? *"Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. Shall I (who, God or the little sister?) bring to the birth, and not cause (Who cause, God or the little sister?) to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God."* Isa. 66:8, 9. No doubt this little sister is to have children (See Prov. 31:28), and to many how sad it is to see a woman with children and no breasts, but we are not left in despair. *"Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, (little sister) and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her."* Isa. 66:10. Then the rejoicing is with and for the little sister. Be glad that she has not any breasts! If you, dear reader, have been courted by the strange woman (Prov. 7:5) and led to mourn that the church (little sister) has not any breasts, may God turn your mourning into joy. Why all this? *"That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory."* Isa. 66:11. I want to preach and write Him as all of your salvation; as a whole and complete Saviour; (Col. 2:10) as your food and drink; as your life and light; as your strength and health. Is that too much grace? Is that extreme doctrine? Is that unprofitable to the dear little children of God? I think not! I see (and I hope to have felt) in the gospel just what is included in the verse above. O, how the dear little children of God desire to such at this place of nourishment. It satisfies, it delights. This is the gospel of the new covenant. *"For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her* (Jerusalem, church, little sister) *like a river,* (notice it is God that extends peace and that it is plentiful) *and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees."* Isa. 66:12. Ah, how highly favored of the Lord, her elder brother, is this little sister. A woman without breasts is pitied and sneered at and made fun of by other women. So it is in the religious world. This little sister does not have any, all the women around her do have. They wonder at her. They know their cause would be helpless without them. Not knowing the power of God they cannot see how she can survive, so they have been preaching her funeral for many years. But what shall we do for her when she is called for? This is

clearly shown is the action of the Jews. Peter did not think it proper to minister to the Gentiles. He did not know they were his little sister. He was not willing to admit them as children of God. Not only that but they refused to receive the elder brother of this little sister. They did not do anything for their little sister, and put to death the only One that did do anything, but that is to the glory of God after all that we might exalt him as our all and in all. Thus the little sister is well supplied with nutritious food. In love and fellowship.

Elder W.D. Griffin

TAKE MY YOKE UPON YOU

My dear Friend's letter should have had an earlier notice, but I have had many engagements, on which account I have been prevented writing.

"It is a good thing that a man bear the yoke in his youth". The bondage of the law, the curse of it felt in the conscience, the wrath that it works, the fear of death and of judgment to come, is what most in our day seem to escape. They know nothing of the guilt of sin, the depravity of our nature, nor feel their lost and perishing condition. But God comes near to judgment, (to his people while in this world,) and appears a swift witness against us. He arraigns us at his bar, and our secret sins are set in the light of his countenance, and he causes us to possess the iniquity of our youth. Shame and confusion of face cover us, and guilt makes us afraid. The caul of our heart is rent, and we meditate terror; the yoke of our transgressions is bound by his hand, and, like David, we sink into the horrible pit. The Lord makes inquisition for blood, and his arrows stick fast within us. Death is to us the king of terrors, and we look forward with dismay to the judgment to come. We feel nothing but wrath, hardness of heart, enmity, stubbornness, bondage, and fear.

"The law is holy", says Paul; *"but I am carnal, sold under sin."* This shows the great disparity there is betwixt God and us. By the law is the knowledge of sin. It reveals to us the concupiscence of our nature, shows the abounding of our transgression, and worketh wrath. This fills us with slavish and tormenting fear. We would fain flee out of his hand, but cannot. Turn which way we will, everything makes against us, and there appears no way of escape from this stormy wind and tempest; there is no rest for the sole of our feet; we are dissatisfied with ourselves and with everything about us. None appears so miserable as we feel ourselves, nor can we imagine that there are any like us - none so vile, so corrupt; none have that evil working within which we find, none feel so hard, so impenitent, stupid, and dead as we. We see our state, but cannot mourn on account of sin as we desire. Nothing seems to draw us, nor does anything drive us. We have no happiness in the world, and no comfort in God. We hear of Christ, and read of him in the Scriptures; but we have no power to come to him, and for want of faith we cannot lay hold upon

him. We know we have destroyed ourselves, and that in Him alone is our help; but whether he will show mercy, we cannot tell. We have no doubt of his power, but of his willingness. *"Lord, if thou wilt"*, said the leper, *"thou canst make me clean"*. We know that he died for sinners, but we dare not entertain a thought that he died for such as we. What we feel makes us conclude that we are too vile for the Saviour to show mercy. Though we call upon him, we cannot find that he hears our prayers; and instead of getting rid of our guilt and the load of sin we feel, every day we appear to get worse and worse, and often fear we shall be obliged to give it all up; and so we should, were it not for the power of God, which keeps us asking, seeking, knocking, though we seem to have no expectation, no hope, that we shall ever obtain what we are seeking for. We feel restless and dissatisfied on account of our state.

But there is a power we feel that causes us to separate from the world and from them that have the form of godliness only. It is the Spirit which giveth life; and this is its quickening influence. We obey its voice, and follow, as we are able, this power that we feel; but what it is we know not, nor do we know what to make of it. We have no light or judgment to know what it is, nor whose we are; but are full of confusion, always in a hurry and in haste. When we attempt to pray the mind is filled with a thousand things, nor can we confess our sin or ask for pardon as we would; and as soon as we have tried to do so we feel ashamed, and think, *"This is no prayer"*. Dreadful sensations seize us, and what to do we know not; but somehow or other, contrary to our expectation, we are kept calling and seeking. Abraham obeyed and went out, not knowing whither he went. This is the case with every sensible sinner. The blind are brought by a way which they know not. Ask such a one where he is going, he knows not; or what is the matter, he cannot tell. He is dissatisfied, and goes on according to his feelings, but cannot believe it is a work of grace. He is distressed and asks for pardon; but whether he shall end in heaven or hell he does not know, but fears the latter. Paul says that Abraham set out for the land of Canaan, and to the land of Canaan he came. So with every one who, from a feeling sense of his wants, seeks Christ Jesus, the only Friend of sinners.

My friend complains, but I am glad to find he bears his yoke. If he follows on to know the Lord, in due time it shall be destroyed because of the anointing. Though the vision tarry, wait for it; God will avenge his own elect, that cry day and night unto him. Seek the Lord, seek his face, and you will not seek in vain. Wait upon him, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say on the Lord.

1849 J. C.

MEETINGS

GREENSBORO PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift. They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed Sunday, August 30, 1998 at 2:00 p.m. at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, Mayfield, N.C., for the purpose of examination of this gift, brother Herbert Edwards and if found qualified be ordained to the full work and service of deacon.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together. The meeting was opened by prayer by Elder Julian Williams, Elder Kenneth Key was elected as moderator and Elder Cleo Robertson to serve as clerk. Brother Tommy Batts acting as spokesman for the church delivered brother Herbert Edwards to the presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon was read as set forth in scriptures 1 Timothy 3:8-13. by Elder Haywood Wray. Elders C.B. Davis and Haywood Wray asked no questions as it was felt Brother Edwards had been proved to the church. The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of this candidate proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder Haywood Wray. The charge was delivered to brother Edwards by Elder Julian Williams. He was then delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. A copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to be sent to the Signs of Times for publication and a copy to be given to Brother Herbert Edwards along with a certificate of ordination.

Presbytery was dismissed by prayer by Elder Haywood Wray.

Elder Kenneth Key, Moderator
Elder Cleo Robertson, Clerk

cc: Signs of the Times
Church Records

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 1998

Charlie Alston, NC	$2.00
Dan Anders, AL	2.00
Mrs. Carmen Abernathy, NC	7.00
Mrs. Edrie Clifton, VA	2.00
Mrs. Annie M. Pearson, MI	40.00
Walter G. Craft, WV	2.00
Mrs. Mary Phillips, AL	2.00
Mr. & Mrs. J.H. Meely, AR	2.00
Herbert Dodson, VA	2.00
James E. Fortner, TX	2.00
Ray L. Richardson, VA	2.00
Eld. & Mrs. Alpha Sears, OH	2.00
Mrs. Myrtle T. Daniel, FL	7.00
James M. Knight, NC	10.00
Mrs. Louise Stanley, NC	2.00
Mrs. Dan Anders, AL	2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER MARIA ADAMS

We are again made to bow in humble submission to God's will by removing a beloved sister, Maria Adams from our midst. Our church at Malmaison and sister churches will miss her and that lovely alto voice. She joined the church and was baptized along with her husband, Bro. Alpha Adams in Sept. 1983. She left the church a very generous gift showing her concern for its welfare.

We have traveled lots of pleasant miles together. I visited her on Friday before she passed away on Saturday. She told me it was hard for her to breathe and for me to do the talking. Her niece said a few minutes before her death she said she wanted to go home. Ann told her she wasn't able to. Sis. Maria replied, I'm not talking about my natural home.

Sis. Adams was born Sept. 23, 1917 in Pittsylvania County, Va., where most of her life was spent and where she taught school for about 30 years. A daughter of George Thomas Richardson and Ellen Williams Richardson. She passed away April 4, 1998.

Survivors include a brother John J. Richardson of Keeling, 4 nieces, and 2 nephews. Funeral services were held at Wrenn-Yeatts North Main Chapel by Elders Julian Williams, (her pastor) and C.B. Davis, Jr. and Raymond Goad. Interment was in Highland Burial Park in Danville, Va.

We believe she is resting in the paradise of God and will awake in His likeness to be forever satisfied.

I loved her for Christ's Sake, I hope

Peggy Wells

MAMIE ORA BARTON

My mother was born on February 11, 1909, the daughter of William Richard Turner and Emma Violet Houchins Wright Turner. She was the fourth child in a family of eight children.

She grew up in a kind and loving family. Her parents provided for the ministers and folks that would come for associations that lived a good distance away. Many stayed there nights after the meetings at County Line Church.

She married my Dad, Clarence Barton on December 25, 1931. They joined Riverview Primitive Baptist Church on September 24, 1966. They were baptized on Sept. 25, 1966.

She died on March 5, 1998. She was preceded in death by my Dad in 1990, and a grandson in 1994. Her funeral was conducted at Collins Funeral Home Chapel by Elders Larry Hollandsworth, Lane Carter and her Pastor Elder Carl Terry.

She was survived by one sister, Dovie Nolen, one daughter Peggy

Bullins, one grandson, Gary Bullins, and three Great Granddaughters, Kelly, Minda, and Michaela Bullins. Also nieces and nephews.

Interment was in County Line Church Cemetery.

One of her favorite songs was "Rejoice THE LORD IS KING", and I rejoice that my mother and dad loved the church and lived a simple but dedicated life to the Lord. I was most blessed to have parents like these.

Written by: Peggy Bullins
Submitted by: Elder Carl Terry

ST. MATTHEW 6:19-23.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

FLORENCE ALSTON GIBSON

Our beloved sister in the Lord, Florence Alston Gibson, of Lake Jackson, Georgia, passed peacefully from this world of tears and sorrow on September 6, 1996 in an Atlanta, Georgia hospital. Until the last year of her life she had been blessed with unusually good health and vigor.

Sister Gibson was born in Webster County, Georgia, near Preston, on April 17, 1902. She was the daughter of Nathaniel Charles and Kate Norris Alston. Her great-grandfather was Elder Benjamin Lloyd, compiler of the Lloyd's Hymnal, which is still in use among many of our Primitive and Old School Baptist churches.

When sister Gibson was 16 years old her parents moved to Newton County, Georgia to be near a Primitive Baptist church--Harris Spring Church which was a few miles South of Social Circle, Walton County, Georgia. The Lord led her to meet Ernest W. Gibson there in Newton County. They were united in marriage in 1924, and their union continued for 66 years until the death of her husband, Ernest, in 1990.

Sister Gibson is survived by two children: a son, Norman Douglas Gibson, and a daughter, Katie Gibson Kilby. Four grandsons and 7 great-grandchildren also survive.

In 1942 sister Gibson united with East Atlanta Primitive Baptist Church, served by Elder H. O. Nash. She was thereupon baptized by Elder Tom Huff.

Her mother, Kate Alston, and her brothers, Norris Dan Alston and A. Douglas Alston were also members of the Primitive Baptist Church until their deaths.

Sister Gibson was received by confession of faith at New Harmony Primitive Baptist Church near Hiram, Georgia, in January, 1958 along with about eleven others. In the late 1970's she united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church at Ruffin, North Carolina, served at the time by Elder David Spangler. With her daughter Katie, she remained a member there until the Lord called her home to rest.

The following Scriptures were found written out among Sister Gibson's notes: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand (Isaiah 14.24)." "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure (Isaiah 46.9,10)." "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God (Romans 13.1)." Below the verses she wrote: "O I do love these absolute scriptures -- the Bible is filled with them." The underscoring was hers.

Following is a note from her daughter, Katie, briefly commenting on "Mom" as most referred to sister Gibson:

"My mother had two loves in her life – her family and her faith. All families have weaknesses, but her compassion and devotion will be a lasting influence on all of us. The guiding force in her life was her reverence to God and her prayer that she be submissive to His sovereign, omnipotent will. Even as she lay dying and saw the tears in my eyes and my desolation, she said 'The Lord will provide'. These words she said to comfort me. I still seek comfort, for daily I grieve in the flesh for my mother – we know too late what we have lost."

Elder Kenneth R. Key, her pastor, officiated at the funeral service. Her body was laid to rest in the Gibson family cemetery beside her husband and parents, there to await the resurrection.

The earthly loss to family, friends and church brethren is a sore trial. Our hearts are yet heavy, but our hearts also cry out, Thy will be done dear Lord.

Submitted at the request of the family.

Elder James F. Poole

ST. MATTHEW 6:6.

But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

Signs of the Times

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God's Creation

Man cannot make a mountain
And cannot make a tree
Nor can he make a river
Flowing gracefully to the sea.

He cannot make a bird
That sings so sweet and gay,
And cannot change the difference
That turns the night to day.

He cannot save a sinful soul
Nor know God's mysteries
Still untold.

Man would take the credit
If only he could,
For all that God has done
Since this world had stood.

Jesus walked the hill to Calvary
With the burdens of man's sins
And paid the price for each of His
To him that did repent.

When he lays His hand on sinful man
And turns him around,
He'll bow his head and tears will flow
And knees bow to the ground.

The time is drawing near
When our Christ will come again.
To call his children born home with him
To forever with him reign.

By Sister Jean Gurkins

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EDITORIAL

LEPROSY

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

Leprosy, as a natural disease in man, is in its self not sin, but in the Scriptures it is used as a figure of sin. In Leviticus 13:44-46 we are told that this is a plague in the head of the leprous man, and under the law his clothes shall be rent, his head bare, he shall cover his lips and cry, Unclean, unclean. All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be defiled. This last statement indicates that the plague shall at sometime be cleansed. This was done by the priest ceremonially, and only ceremonially, and the leper was permitted to again live among the people from whom he had been separated for a time. Is this not accomplished by the shed blood of our High Priest Jesus, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost: which God shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour? A leper came to Jesus and worshipped him, saying, ***"Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy was cleansed."*** That leper called Jesus "Lord," and Paul tells us that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. Surely that leper was a child of grace.

I am leprous, as white as snow, as was Miriam when she became leprous. Numbers 12:10. I am as David said, ***Ps.51:5, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."*** I came forth from the womb speaking lies. I now desire to always speak the truth, yet I find that I do not. My tongue is as James said, ***James 3:5,6, "Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth. And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell."*** O how often have I spoken things I immediately or later

regretted. This has caused me to often pray for forgiveness. Jesus told his disciples, ***Mark 7:20-23, "That which cometh out of the mouth of man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these things come from within, and defile the man."*** I am greatly ashamed of it, but I am guilty of all, and I believe all people are. These are all against the law, and James said, ***"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." James 2:10.*** In Jer. 17:9 we read, ***"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"*** John said, ***"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." 1 Jn.1:9,10.*** In verses 5 thru 7 John declared that God is light, in whom is no darkness, and if we walk not in darkness, but in the light we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin. Jesus shed his blood upon Calvary for us. As our High Priest he offered himself a sacrifice for our sins, and by ***"this one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Heb.10:14.***

Leprosy, or sin, is a disease that works from the inside outward. It may spread slowly or fast, but it eventually permeates the whole body. It may not be seen by other people nor the one it is in until it rises to the surface. The leper is the first to discover its presence; and it is revealed to him by the Holy Spirit. This revelation is not to the natural man, for he receives not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. For one to be spiritual he must have life, for life must always precede any action. He must be born again, not of blood, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God: for in the flesh we are dead in trespasses and sins.

When it pleases God to discover our sins to us by his Spirit it may be suddenly or gradually, each in his own time, but it always produces the desired results of our Maker. In the beginning we may or may not be greatly impressed or alarmed, for we cannot truly see ourselves as totally lost, undone sinners: but eventually we will be made to see ourselves exactly as we are. If your experience is like unto mine, you began to search the Scriptures for something to justify yourself. You turn to the Bible and the law, but in this you found that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God. You found there is no mercy or forgiveness in the law; that it demands complete obedience, but gives nothing. You are given to see that nothing but the grace of God can save you from your sins. You may feel that it is

sinful to even take the name of the Lord upon your lips, yet you begin to pray, ***"Lord, save me or I perish."*** Your prayers may go forth many times, yet you receive no answer. You reach the end of your strength and hope, and are ready to give up in despair. You are made to feel that you are so sinful that God could not be just and holy in forgiving you, therefore you shall be justly condemned to hell. Then, only then, are your prayers answered. Your sins roll away as a black cloud, and the love of God fills your heart, for his abundant and free grace has been bestowed upon you. This may be suddenly, or gradually as it was with me, but you are given to see that Jesus Christ has already paid the penalty and redeemed you from the curse of the law. The love of God shines in your heart and a new song is put in your mouth, even praises unto His Holy Name. The load of sin that has burdened you to the breaking point is now gone and you feel that you will never have this burden again. But, alas, it is not so. Satan comes to you and tells you that you have been deceived, that you have only imagined these things. Doubts and fears beset you for a time, but they are subdued by faith in God, which is the gift of God: ***"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourself: it is the gift of God."*** I believe that we are saved by faith many times from errors and the wiles of the devil.

After that we feel that our sins have been washed away it is our desire to live holy and sin free before the Lord, but that is not to be, for we are still dwelling in the flesh which has not been changed in the least. There are now two men living in our one body. Paul describes them as the *"old man"* and the *"new man."* The old man is of the earth, earthy, and the new man is of the Lord from heaven. The old man is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and the new man is created in righteousness and true holiness. These two men, or principals, are continually at war, ***"for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."*** We know that the law is spiritual,(the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus which has made us free from the law of sin and death), but yet we are carnal, sold under sin. We delight in the law of God after the inward man, but in the members of our flesh there is another law that brings us into captivity to the law of sin; and we cry, as did Paul, ***"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"*** And he answers, ***"I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."*** Paul also said, ***"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in***

you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."

Beloved brethren, if Christ dwells in us, ***"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."*** Therefore let us not walk after the flesh, but after the Spirit, for ***"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."***

Submitted in love for your prayerful consideration.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES

TO THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH

"REJOICE EVERMORE"
1 Th. 5:16

The apostle's exhortation is addressed to the children of light, that is, to the elect family of Zion, who are advised to be watchful and sober for the day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night. Though the saints of God are promised trials and tribulations in their earthly journey there shall be times and seasons "evermore" for them to rejoice in the revealed ***"salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ", v 9.***

How shall the child of God rejoice? Oh, is it not by sincere praise unto God swelling up from the depths of the heart for the saints are as lively stones, 1 Pet. 2 5, built up as a spiritual house ***"to offer up spiritual sacrifices"***, praise and thanksgiving, v 17 and 18. ***"This is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you".*** Following spiritual baptism with fire and the Holy Ghost, Luke 3"16 & Acts 1:5, there are times and seasons "everlasting" for prayer with confession, for thankfulness, or judgement, for repentance, for worship with songs of praise to God, for searching the scriptures, for fellowship and witnessing with believers, etc. ***"To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heavens", Eccl. 3:1.*** The psalmist declares "This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it", Ps. 118:24. But on the other hand the ancient Preacher, Eccl 7:4, has written: ***"The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth".*** Dear reader, I believe we must distinguish spiritual rejoicing from mirth or gaiety with laughter, for repentant sinners often rejoice when tears are flowing.

What else does the scriptures reveal concerning this exhortation, "Rejoice evermore"? In what do the children of light rejoice? Surely, they rejoice in the promises of God and in the works of the Lord, Jesus, for only he is excellent, Ps. 148:13, and deserving of their everlasting praise. They rejoice in reading the Bible with revealed understanding and also in hearing and knowing the "Joyful sound" of truth rightly divided in the name of the Lord, ***"they rejoice all the day"***, Ps. 89:15-16. The

children of light rejoice in the manifestation of God's love and mercy. They rejoice in God's attributes and his gifts of faith, strength, knowledge and wisdom. They rejoice in each other and the testimony of witnesses of God's grace. They rejoice in observing the fulfillment of prophecy which supports their understanding and faith in the immutability of God and his promises. So you see dear beloved reader, I cannot comprehend all of the reasons or events that bring rejoicing for His blessings are in great abundance. His promises are certain! If all that the Lord has done should be written in books the earth could not contain them, John 21:25. ***"Praise ye the Lord".***

Oh, shall my soul rejoice that the eternal covenant of grace consumated by and between the Father, Son (or Word), and Holy Ghost before time began is now revealed in the last days to the children of light in and through the testimony and gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, "that your Joy may be full", 1 John1:1-4 and Ps. 90:1-2? The Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, ch. 38: 4-7, and asked: "where wast thou.....When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for Joy?" In The Revelation, ch 22:16, we find that "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." The salvation of the children of light to enjoy eternal life and joy is obtained by the grace of election which was ordained before time began in the covenanted works of the Divine Trinity, Rom 11: 7. Dear reader, we should note that all the sons of God shouted-not merely some uncertain number of sons! All the sons of God heard that marvelous song of the Divine Trinity and began to "Rejoice evermore". The children of light have assurance that "there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one,", 1 John 5: 6-8.

When it pleases God, children of light will be gathered out of great tribulation to stand and live eternally- before the throne of God, Rev. 7: 9, where they will then sing the glorious songs of Moses and of the Lamb in praise to his Holy Name and "Rejoice evermore", Rev 15: 3.

In loving kindness, pray for me.

Eugene F. Osborne, Sr.
Westminster, Md. 21153-3540
09/25/98

(To be continued, God willing)

PSALM 100:4-5.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

VOICES OF THE PAST

— Experience of —
Elder J.P. Helms

Written in answer to our second question, What Primitive Baptists ought to believe. — Ed.

Dear Brother Berry: I believe the things I do, not because I willed it so, not because I was brought up in a Primitive Baptist home, and was taken to their services from babyhood. As I grew up, I respected them for their simplicity and honesty, but I verily believed they were wrong. I believed in the free will of the creature, and was in full accord with the doctrine that a man carved out his own destiny, and that Primitive Baptists would soon disappear from the face of the earth. As I read the Bible, I was more established in this way. I marked out my life, and of all of the things I would not do, I would never belong to the Primitive Baptist Church; for this was the church of the poor, and was too far behind the times or me. I did not attend a Sunday School for two reasons. First of all, I was equal to any that did go, and much better than many of them. Second. I did not want to hurt my parents. I fully expected, and was determined to "get up" in the world, get all the education I could, and then acquire enough of this world's goods to be secure — and then get right with God. This, to me, was a simple enough matter. All that was necessary was to join any church, but the Old Baptists, and then it was up to God to accept me, or He would be unjust. Then, if I would be particular and not fall, I would in the end, get to heaven. Was I the biggest fool that ever lived on earth? I would not argue this question.

So I lived, so I believed until I was seventeen years old. I was not disturbed; God is my witness, but as I lay in sleep. I saw the day of judgment, and in the east was a light, and in it, a Being who spoke and the graves gave up their dead. I stood amazed, for some were sheep and some were goats, and I was a goat. There was a smile on the face of this Being for some were sheep, and some were goats and I was in tears, and in fear. I saw that I was lost, for all I ever did, said or thought came up before me, and I promised prayerfully, and felt I was able to live a better life, and could, by so doing, please God. In other words, I could change myself from a goat to a sheep. I was very particular for some time, and was well pleased with my efforts. I was making progress, but all at once, my promises were broken, my good intentions gone. I had done worse than ever, making prayerful promises, seemed to help some, but all I wanted was another chance, and I could be a better man. Needless to say, I failed again and again, and I know I grew worse and worse. Still in all the years of my early life I was sure of one thing, that I would not be an Old Baptist.

These promises continued until my thirty-third year. I came to the end of promises. It came as part of me that I could not keep one promise, and there

was only one thing that could reach my case. That was the mercy of Jesus. In all of this, I read my Bible, and finally every time I picked it up, I found something that condemned me. I finally saw clearly that I was lost. I had sinned away the day of grace, for I was not only a lost sinner; I was a blasphemer, and there was no forgiveness for me in this world or the world to come. I would plead my cause no more; no more prayer, no more promises. But in spite of all this determination, my cry by day and by night was for mercy. I decided that the end of life was near and that hell was my portion. Again, God is my witness, I confessed the justice of God in all things. I saw that God had determined the destiny of all men in eternity, and I knew that it was right and righteous, and that Jesus came a Savior and saved His people from their sins with an everlasting salvation. But I am lost, I am a goat, was my cry.

Now I come to the year of 1914, and a day well marked in my life. As I lay on the floor at my home to die, as I believed. I went in the cabin from the field late in the day as the sun set, perfectly reconciled to die and meet my doom. Everything was covered with gloom, and there, while prostrate, I heard a voice speak: "I created heaven and earth, and I am your Savior." I say there was power in those words, there was life in those words. I was lifted to my feet, and I went out of the house, and Lo, everything had put on a new appearance. I know that it is unusual for birds to sing at sunset, but there were some there that evening, and they were singing. Then I started to the kitchen to tell my wife what had come to me, and then I heard this: Better not do this - you may be deceived. So I did not go. Then I cried, Lord, if I am deceived, undeceive me. On the third day following I had come to the place to say that I was deceived, that I was losing my mind, but all the time, crying and begging. I was alone in the highway near my home when something seemed to say. Wait. Of course, I stopped. I heard singing. It was coming from the east, and as it came closer and closer, I could hear the words of the song. It was, "How Firm a Foundation." The singing came to me, and then in me. At the words, "Fear not, I am with thee" I joined in the song. I suppose men would have said I was crazy. But I was so convinced then that I said, I will never doubt any more. But I did, and still do. The Old Baptists seemed different to me. Their doctrine was not so bad after all. But being a member of them or any other church was not in my mind.

Soon a burden came on me, "You go tell My people." I said, no as determinedly as anything of my life. Then I began to question, Who Are Your People. Some I knew living, and some who were dead; many I did not know, but all were dressed in white, and I was given to know that they were all Old Baptists, and I loved them. The same voice said, "These are My people." To this day, I believe I know where the true church is. I know where His witnesses are. But at this time I decided I would never unite with the Church. I would not preach. I knew nothing; it would interfere with my life; I could not make

a living and preach and I would not. So I went for a few months. One Sunday afternoon. I went to my father's home. There were several Elders and members there on the porch. I remember placing my foot on a stone, and my mind was taken from me literally. How much time elapsed I cannot tell. What I said, I cannot tell. The thing I heard that brought me to my senses were the words of my grandfather: "I move we receive him in the Church." At that time I was glad and thankful that they could receive such as I, but before I reached home, I vowed I would not preach, and poor fool! I finally decided I would die before I would even let anyone know anything about this matter, and I emphatically denied to- the deacons and pastor that I was burdened to preach. But affliction came in my home, to my children, and I promised that if the Lord would spare the child I would go. This child was restored to health. Then I rebelled again. Then another of the children was touched, and again I was compelled to beg for mercy again, and to promise, and again the Lord heard me. Then it was different, I said, I will go, but Lord show me, lead me, instruct me. I don't know anything! I don't know anything about the doctrine. Soon afterward the deacons and pastor called me to the stand and there I was in the place I had declared I would never be! There I was a member of the Church I had declared I would never join, and there I am to this day, and I can say, "That I received it not of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." This is the cause of my belief, and I can assure you and all that I am set in this, if this is what Primitive Baptists believe, I am one of you. I know I tried to believe something else. I tried to be something else, and I tried to keep from preaching, and I failed in it all. What little I know of doctrine or order, I have experienced it. In no sense would I detract from the Bible, or the study of it; in no sense would I say that a church can live without gospel practice. But administer all you can unto me, in one dose, or in broken doses, of "You can if you will," and it will not affect me. Have I learned of Jesus? Have I Christ, then I have all. For He is the teacher of His children, and He does all things for them. Some of the things that I have written have never been written of me before, a poor hint at best, poorly expressed, but I am not ashamed to tell all what I believe. I may be mistaken in the whole matter, but I say not to all, this is what Primitive Baptists ought to believe, and stand for in practice. Yes, the revelation of Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and honor forever and ever. Amen.

Your brother,
Elder J.P. Helms

Vinton, Va

We appreciate the two articles by Elder Helms. We feel especially glad he was stirred to write parts of his experience he has never penned before. — Ed.

CIRCULAR LETTER

To the Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association, convened with the Church at Monticello, and the various associations and churches with whom we correspond, greetings in the Lord:

It is through the mercies of a covenant keeping God that we are blessed to meet, face to face, with each other again.

As we review the past year, we are reminded that the Scriptures are being fulfilled before our eyes. We read of wars, and hear rumors of war, distress of nations, confusion of men in every walk of life. The signs of the times indicate that the day looked forward to by the saints in all ages is rapidly approaching. God's word tells us to lift up our head, for our redemption is drawing nigh. Time and space prevent entering into this subject, but every indication is that the day is rapidly approaching when the Lord of glory will come to take His people home.

While looking at our Minute of our last assoiciation, (this is Friday before our meeting convened) I noticed that I was appointed last year to write this Circular Letter. Suddenly I felt very helpless, and the scripture recorded in Matthew 15:25 came to mind. "Lord, help me."

The help needed was not to write something that might interest the carnal mind, or dwell upon some historical subject, but help to write something to the glory of God, and the comfort and consolation of His dear people.

The scripture quoted refers to a poor woman approaching Jesus, with the problem of a daughter grievously vexed with a devil. This woman was a Gentile from Canaan, a place where the apostles had been forbidden to preach the gospel, as Jesus had forbidden them to go among the Gentiles, or any city of the Samaritans, but rather to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

This poor woman had no legal ground of approach to Jesus, as she was an outcast, as far as the covenant of promise was concerned. She was without God, and without hope in the world, and could not plead that she was a daughter of Abraham. Yet God provides a way for every one who approaches Him, and their coming unto Him is because a God-given faith has provided that she come. He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

Though Jesus did not immediately answer the woman, she continued to plead for help by approaching Jesus, through pleading her cause to the disciples, showing that a needy sinner continues to plead to God for help, though he sees no avenue of hope. Jacob wrestles with a man all night, and refuses to turn him loose until he receives a blessing, and though the sinner may be repulsed by the Lord, he continues to plead for help, knowing within himself, he has no ground to plead for help. It appears that the disciples were wearied with the

woman's pleading for help, but Jesus is never wearied by the cries for help from a needy sinner.

Jesus repulses the pleader by telling her it was not meet to take the children's bread, and give it to dogs, (having reference to the Gentiles who were not esteemed in any sense by the Jews), but she continues to cry. The withholding of an answer to her is only the trial of her faith, and the testing of her sincerity, but she continues to ask for help.

She now ceases to call Him the Son of David. Her faith brings Him clearer to view, not only as the Son of David, but as her Lord and Master. She now worships Him as her Lord, and, we hear the cry, "Lord help me." She does not resent being repulsed, and acknowledges she has no right to expect a blessing, but shows that even a crumb, falling from the Master's table, finds a place in her heart.

The crying to God for help has been the mark of grace given to sinners in every generation. It is the manifestation of life, but acknowledges that they are unable of themselves to accomplish that which they need, and even among the taught of God we hear the cry, "Lord, I believe, help Thou my unbelief."

Paul cries out, ***"O wretehed man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death, and again testifying that the will is present, but how to perform that which he would he found not. This cry for help signifies that one needs the strength that only God can give."***

Peter, as he begins to sink beneath the waves, cries, "Lord, save me." Here he learns how weak he is, but he also learns something of the love and power that would not let him sink. The dear children of God have learned many, many times while sinking down, who the Deliverer is, and when they are weak, then are they strong. After such evidences of His all abounding grace, they ean exclaim, My help cometh from the Lord, who made Heaven and earth."

While we sojourn here we will hear from the ministry the cry, Lord, help me, (give me a blessing) to feed the flock of God, over which the Holy Ghost has made me an overseer, to be an ensample to the flock, to walk humbly before God and my brethren, and also to be bold as a lion in defense of God's precious truth, to be wise as a serpent, and harmless as a dove, and no greater blessing can come to one than to join with Paul in saying, "Having obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come."

The deacon will say, Lord, help me to live as an honor to the office, and to fill the office of a deacon well, and to purchase a good degree and great boldness in the faith.

The clerk, and laity in general will cry for help, that they may be blest to adorn their profession with orderly walks and a godly conversation. Help me to live as becometh those who profess the name of Christ.

And all will join with the poet in saying, ***"Help of the helpless, O abide with me."***

—Written by Elder D. V. Spangler

EXPERIENCE

1741 Davis, R. D. Rt. 1,
Maineville, Ohio 45039

Dear Editors of the Signs:

For some reason I have a mind to write some of the things I have experienced; and these things are the reason for my hope in God. As far back as I can remember, I believed there was a God; but it was from a natural standpoint I believed it.

When I was a small boy I was sore afraid of stormy winds. We lived between two mountains in a little valley. When the cold March winds started blowing, and the mountains to roar, it seemed like the end of the world to me. The old log house would tremble, and I would lay on my face and try to beg God to stop the wind from blowing. I had a childish belief that He controlled the winds. Years later I believe He revealed to me that he not only controlled the winds, but that He controlled all things.

When I grew up, I was very wicked, and bad to curse and use bad language. My father would rebuke me, and say, Son, if you die in that condition you will go to hell." It would make me feel a little afraid, but soon I would forget what he said. I thought that because I was young, I would put off being saved until I got old. I thought that then I got ready I would just ask God to save one, and He would do it. I believe this is what all unregenerated people believe.

But one night I dreamed I was in a strange land, and one of my buddies and I were traveling together; and I heard a singing in the sky which had the tone of an organ. I looked up and there was a host of angels over me. The first thought I had was that the end of time was at hand; and the second thought I had was there has nothing been done for me, and I am in my sins. In my dream I fell on my knees and began to try to beg God to forgive me and save me. When I awoke my pleading continued. I began to feel my weakness and helplessness. I was a coal miner and had to walk about four miles to my work: and I would wait until all the miners were past my home before I would start, so I could beg God along the way to be merciful and save me from my sins. But it seemed my condition got worse, and this continued almost two years. My father said to my wife, what has come over Garrett, he has quit swearing." And one day in the mines, one of the men said to me. "Garrett, what church do you belong to?" I remember well how it made me feel, and the answer I gave: "Lord have mercy, I don't belong to any church, for I am not worthy." And he replied that he thought I did because I did not curse and carry on like I once did.

That day something happened to me, and I have wondered what it was ever since. I did not hear a voice, but I felt something in my inward parts: the feel-

ing was, You are regenerated and born again. If this was not an experience of God's saving grace, I will have to wait for one, or die and depart this life without one. In 1954 I found a people at Union Primitive Baptist Church who preached the doctrine I believed. I offered myself, and they received me. I have wondered many times, How could such a wonderful people at Sharps Chapel, Tenn., receive an unworthy sinner like me.

This is part of my experience. I hope it was the work of God. I feel that no man can tell all of his experience. The things I have experiences of are the reason of my hope; and this hope is the reason I am a Primitive Baptist. I wrote an article which was in the Signs of the Times, in which I said that no preacher was the cause of people being saved. I did not say this to offend anyone, and do not apologize for it; but I received a letter disagreeing with what I said about the preacher. If the experience I have written in this letter is of God, I want to affirm that it was not through the preached word of gospel, but it was the direct work of the Spirit of God in my heart, and not through a preacher. But my correspondent wrote that it is by the preached gospel that men are saved. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. I want to note that it did not say, To every one that will believe it. It is to the believer always. In John's writing it is said, ". . . He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." (John 5: 24)

Dear reader, I want you to note the above quotation: that the believer has already passed from death unto life—he did not believe in order to pass from death unto life. He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God: it does not say that he will be born of God after he believes. It says again that he that believeth that Jesus is the Christ has the witness in himself. I want to affirm again that the gospel is to the child of God who has been made alive in Christ. The gospel is to the believer—not to the unbeliever. If the gospel is used as a means to save people, I would like for someone to tell me how the deaf and dumb, or idiots are saved. The Bible tells us of but one way that God saves his people, and that is by his saving grace.

My brethren, in my experience I tried to save a poor helpless sinner, a worm of the dust; and I utterly failed. But God looked down in the time of need, when there was none else to help; and he said that his own arm, (notice he said it was his arm) brought salvation to me. Precious friends, the doctrine that the Old Baptists preach stands as firm as heaven itself, because it is from heaven. Their doctrine is hated and denied from modern pulpits. Many claim they are doing a job that my blessed Saviour did when he was dying and bleeding on the cross; and that job was to save his people. When he said "It is finished," they were saved, and all the ordained powers of this world cannot change it. God ordained

it before the world was for it is to be this way—and that is the way it stands.

In closing I will say that I was injured in July, 1967, and had two discs removed from my back, and I have been to my home church at Sharps Chapel, Tenn., only one time this year, for I am able to travel but little. Elder John Wilder is our pastor, and is an able man in the doctrine; we have also Elder Adra Davis, who is also able. I want to see all the brethren and the neighbors who come out to hear the preaching. I feel that there are many of God's people who have not joined the church, who come to hear the preaching. We know that God adds to the church daily such as shall be saved.

Since I have been housed in for more than a year, I would appreciate hearing from any who believe this doctrine. Dear Editors, if you feel this is suitable for publication, you may use it. If it is not of God, it is worth nothing. Remember me in your prayers. May God bless Zion, is my humble prayer.

Your brother in hope,
Garrett Wilson

THE SAVIOR AND THE SALVATION

A BROTHER and a sister have desired us to give our views on 1 Tim. ii. 4-6, ***"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself for all, to be testified in due time."***

At the call of our brethren at sundry times since we have been publishing our paper we have given such views as we have on this portion of the word; still, as we desire to be the servant of the saints, we will not withhold from others who may desire it a free expression of our understanding of the Scriptures. We will offer for their consideration some remarks on this text, and leave them to decide by the divine standard whether we be right or wrong.

In the connection the apostle exhorts that prayer and supplications and intercessions be made for all men; and having so exhorted that the saint should be so engaged in prayer and supplication and intercession, he proceeds to define the particular sense in which he had used the words "all men" in his exhortation, and then gives his reasons for so exhorting his brethren. The sense in which he used the words all men in the exhortation he explains thus, "For kings, and for all that are in authority." As Jews or Israelites under the former covenant they acknowledged no kings over them but such as were of the circumcision, and duly anointed according to the ceremonial law; nor did they allow that any others of the human family were subjects of salvation in the will of God, than those who were recognized in the covenant of works. But now the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles was broken down, the gospel was preached, and the gospel church was organized among the Gentiles; consequently the saints had to do with the governments of the different nations of the world; that is, so far as their

citizenship of the world was concerned. They were to obey those who had the rule over them. To render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things which are God's. That is, as citizens of the world they were to be subject to the laws of the land where their lot was cast; obeying the institutions of man, for the Lord's sake, in all matters which did not conflict with their obligations to their God. The principle was distinctly understood and settled by the apostles that in matters of conscience no human legislature had the right to dictate. Every man's religion was a matter between himself and his God, and he is held accountable for his actions to his God alone; and in the things of religion, as of the things which belong to God, they were to obey God rather than men, even though it might subject them to cruel persecution, reproach or death.

But on no account were they, as subjects of the Redeemer's kingdom, to lay down the rules for the government of the nations among whom they were sojourning as strangers and pilgrims; neither were they by their unrestricted liberty of conscience to worship their God according to their sense of duty, to infringe in the least upon the equal rights of their fellowmen, though they might be of very opposite faith and practice from themselves.

Thus circumstanced, they were to pray for the kings and such as were in authority over them; not particularly for their salvation, or for their continuance in power, but that we, the saints of God, we who pray, may lead a quiet and peaceable life in honesty and godliness. We are not to pray to our kings or rulers, as do the daughters of antichrist, but for them; that God, who is able to turn their hearts as the rivers of water are turned, may so overrule them and the administration of their government that their laws shall not conflict with our religious rights, and thus involve us in the necessity of disrespecting their enactments. The duty of the saints to be at peace with all men, as much as in them lies, is fully expressed; but it does not lie in the right of the saints to disobey Christ, even in obeying the monarchs or rulers of this world. But as christians, they will always have the least influence with kings and rulers of this world; they are not to attempt to control them by their own wisdom, but pray to him who raised up Cyrus, a heathen king, and directed him in bringing about a jubilee of release to Israel after their seventy years of captivity.

"For this is good in the sight of God." What is good? Both that we should thus pray and thus live. And this is a sufficient incentive to christians; it is in itself good; and being so, it is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior. The Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Savior of his people, is God, very God, equally with the Father; and he is Immanuel, or God with us. He is our King, and our privilege as well as our duty is to desire to do that which is good and acceptable in his sight. Many things are good and acceptable in the sight of men which are not good nor acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, "who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto

the knowledge of the truth." The will of God our Savior is, if we may so speak, the rule of his action, the standard to which he will cause all things in heaven, earth and hell to bow for he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." If the all men in the text means all the race of mankind, their universal salvation must follow; for he doeth his pleasure in heaven and in earth. "He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and he will have compassion on whom he will have compassion; and whom he will he hardeneth." But the terms all men, as we have already hinted, are to be understood in the same limited sense as that in which they are used in the first verse, and defined in the second. There the all men mean all of a particular description, such as kings, rulers, &c. So in regard to the all men embraced in the will of God our Savior, as the subjects of his salvation, the words are in application restricted to those who are embraced in the mediatorial provisions of the divine will. And hence the apostle gives the following explanation, "For there is one God, and one Mediator." &c.

Now, what possible connection could we perceive between this and the preceding verses of the chapter, if this fifth verse is not to show that the all men, or all manner of men, destinated to salvation, according to the will of God our Savior, are embraced in the mediatorial office and work of him who is God, Man and Mediator between God and men? Otherwise, why does the apostle use the conjunction, *for* there is one God, &c? This is a sufficient evidence that it is the will of God that they should all be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, as they otherwise would have no interest in the mediatorial provisions of grace and salvation. This one Mediator between God and men is the man Christ Jesus, the mediatorial Head of his church, and embodiment of all the election of grace. They are his body, and the fullness of him that, filleth all in all; and he as fully and completely embodied and represented them before the world began, as Adam embodied and represented the human family when he at first became a living soul. Hence the terms all men are as properly used in reference to all the body and members of Christ, as in reference to the body and members of Adam; for Adam is the figure of him that was to come; that is, of Christ. But that is not spritual which was first, but natural; or, as our friend would render it, soulual; and afterwards that which is spiritual. Hence Adam represented all who have a natural or soulual existence; all being his offspring, are but the expansion or development of what Adam was. So all men, as the terms are used in reference to Christ and his seed in him, embraced all who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, as possessing life eternal in this divine Mediator from the ancients of eternity. And throughout the New Testament this distinction is preserved in the applications of the terms "all men."

The man Christ Jesus, embodying in his person all that his names and titles mean or signify, as God, Man and Mediator, was manifest in the flesh, came

in the flesh, was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. He "was put to death in the flesh;" not simply his flesh put to death, but his flesh as it stood identified with his sonship; "was put to death in the flesh;" so that it was the Son of God, as well as the son of the virgin Mary, that bare our sins in his own body on the cross, and who, in the accomplishment of what the Father gave him to do, "gave himself a ransom." All that constituted him himself was required and given "a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." The testimony here spoken of is, according to our judgment, that which shall be given in the application of his blood and righteousness to all for whom he died and arose again from the dead. For, inasmuch as he was delivered up for their iniquities, and raised again for their justification, they must eventually be brought experimentally to the knowledge of the truth. And thus the apostle testifies that in the fullness of the dispensations of the times he shall gather together all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and in earth, even in him. All that are in him representatively, chosen, predestinated, saved, called, justified, redeemed, loved and secured, shall in the dispensations of times be brought experimentally into the unity of the faith, and shall manifestatively fill that place to which our God has destined them in his mystical body. Thus shall it be testified in due time who they are, and that it is the sovereign, immutable and eternal will of God our Savior that they shall all be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. God our Savior has from the beginning chosen them unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. This is testified in due time by the inspired testimony of the Scriptures and by the preaching of the gospel; but the manifestation of every one of the heirs of immortality shall be in "due time." By the term "due time," we are to understand that there is a specified time appointed, in the wisdom and decree of God, for the generation of all the saints. The time appointed for its fulfillment can neither be hastened nor deferred. When the time appointed of the Father arrives, the accomplishment of the purpose will be due. As "when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth his Son," and in due time Christ died. That is, at the time when the demands of the righteous law of God which stood against us could consistently with the eternal purpose of God be deferred no longer, then it was due time for Christ to suffer in the flesh, and for that hour came he into the world. And as the Redeemer was prompt in meeting all the demands of the law and justice on the behalf of his people, so shall all the redeemed be promptly released from their prison-houses, and brought experimentally into the liberty of the sons of God, in due time; and so shall they be ultimately introduced into their final glorified state above, in due time. Therefore the apostle exhorts that the saint should be patient in all their trials and

sufferings, for in due time they shall reap, if they faint not.

Middletown, N.Y., June 15, 1854.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

REBEKAH

This girl and her history affords the Lord's people with some highlights in their own experience. It covers every step in the travel of the church. It shows Jesus Christ came to save his people, his bride, from their sins. In our study of the matter we must not lose sight of the fact that types and shadows are not the thing itself. I have my opinion that this narrative was comforting to the spiritual-minded Jew under the law. I am just made to believe that as God opened up this girl's history to the writer that he looked forward to "that day" and rejoiced in Spirit. Faith is not bounded by time or circumstances. It overcomes all obstacles and sees the fulfillment of the thing promised. It is Abraham that sends the servant after a wife for Isaac. I know many have said this servant was the preacher. To this I cannot concur. It might have a double application and thus mean the preacher, but I do not feel that it has. I feel that the servant is the Holy Spirit. It is never sent out of the family, it is always to the kindred in Christ. Have you ever made a careful reading of his journey? What was it he prayed for? What was the outcome? What was it that motivated her to come at the precise time? Why did she begin doing just as the servant prayed for her to do? Not a single runner has been sent ahead.

No missionary had been there during the summer in revival and told her what was about to take place. It surely could not be by chance it must be that-it was by appointment. Did you notice how many camels the servant took for the journey? Did you notice that she went to serving them? He that had the camels and they, were watered from the same pitcher. Brethren, has there been a time when you felt some allegiance to God but were trying to gain notice by the keeping of the law? She recognized the servant in some way, but the secret of approach to him was not only by the shed blood of Jesus; but by performing the things found in the law. See that all ten camels are watered, see that all "these things" (Math. 19:16 , 22) are kept from thy youth up. After hearing the plea of the servant and his praise of God she ran to the house. I believe in being in a hurry sometimes. This was a time for quick action, as was the custom of the land. Rebekah had seen many men with camels before this, but none had ever come like this one. Have you seen such, dear reader? Perhaps you had heard of the law. Methinks. you had watered camels because everybody else said it was the thing to do, but somehow this is so different. Perhaps you thought you could keep the law at the proper time, but you was not in a hurry, there was plenty of time, but instead of you hunting up the law and setting a convenient time it has been brought to you and altogether a time; not expected. It has come with such force — ten whole laws in one and any one of them sufficient to produce death

if broken. A camel can make a long journey without water, but, once the destination is reached it must drink. the law will not bother until it reaches its destination, but ah how true it is that when it is brought to God's children it must be waited on. So Rebekah was in a hurry, she ran, she had been equipped for running. The servant had given her earrings, placing them in her ears. What a bride to be! Dear child of God is it not our hope that your ears have been thus blessed? How long, how long that we could not hear the gospel, but now the deaf ears have been unstopped. Ah, that touch of divine love. Love has come into her heart and she goes to tell some one. There is no keeping the love of God hid. It will show in many ways, by changing the mind, changing the walk and in the places we go. Sometimes in our zeal to escape false doctrine we may run too far the other way. Some have said that God does not woo his people. I believe he does. I do not think he woos at the church but completely and successfully woos her. This is the work of the Spirit. It opens ears and puts on jewelry; it tells of the riches of Isaac and the love of God placed in her heart and soul and mind causes her to respond; it produces a desire to know more about the source of such power, love and grace; it breaks down all fear of the unknown. I think I have seen the spirit of that manifested among Old Baptists. Ordinarily we find no strangers among our folks. We do not have any hesitancy in going among strangers in the flesh. They are our people and we know that we are welcome among them. This respondency in Rebekah is found in every heir of promise.

When it comes to going with the man the cost is not to be considered. The glorious beauty of Isaac that has been pictured to us is a drawing power that has covered all our earthly desires and made Him the one desire of all (Hag. 2:7). The hour of going to Him arrives. It is one thing to go to Him but another as how we go. She set out on the journey not yet knowing the camels are "Unto death" (Rom. 7:10). Her experience must have been in line with the apostle's. She thought that riding camels was the way to Isaac and set out on them. Going on this journey is the fulfillment of the language of Jesus, "They shall come to me.?" How providential the working to bring Rebekah to Isaac. Every obstacle is overcome. The will of the church is brought unto mutual agreement with the will of God. She agrees to go and I want to emphasize again and again that in the spirit of the case she is yet willing to follow and does follow Him. All the wars, floods, flames and devils combined have not hindered her when Isaac was leading, she has rendered that verdict that holds good; she will go because the love of that man causes her to go; she is not drawn to Isaac by any force other than love. I must say that the girl had to go. Such a breaking down of opposition as confronted the servant does not leave any room for us to say that she could have stayed in the land of her nativity. Now let us turn and look at Isaac. What is he about? What is his

frame of mind? We find him walking and meditating in the field. A bride has been promised him, a woman near and dear to him by relationship is to be his. His father has bestowed all his riches on him and he is about to share it with her. Husband and wife! How fitting that the Scriptures say, "The bride, the Lamb's wife." He is waiting her appearance and my soul contemplates what joy it must have been to thus wait. Waiting for her was compensation enough. So many cannot speak of doing the commandments without looking for rich rewards to follow, but I tell you it is a pleasure when you are waiting for Him. To encourage the poor, wayfaring children of God let me say that His waiting for the bride is just the same with Him as with her. He (Isaac) is in the field waiting, waiting for Rebekah, his wife. May I say his wait is in perfect confidence and complacency knowing the faithfulness of the servant sent on the journey to bring her to him. Did you notice the looking for each other? Ah, dear pilgrim have you felt this oneness that belongs to Christ and his people? Have you felt your soul fill up on his loveliness in such a way as to cause you to rejoice? Has your cup, that he has given you, run over in such a way as to cause you to fear no evil, not even the shadow of death? How uncomfortable the journey must have been? Did you not find it so? That journey brought Rebekah to the end of her riding camels. The law had her in its power and she had to look to it. I do not think the law brought her to Isaac (Christ), but I think it was her schoolmaster unto him (Gal. 3:24) . The grim journey is now over and that union of love, peace and joy has come. The riches of Isaac has been bestowed on his wife. She shares everything now with him and he with her.

Elder W.D. Griffin

ST. LUKE 6: 20-23.

And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.

Blessed are ye, that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh.

Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union will be held at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, Main Street in Gretna, VA. the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in December. The song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We welcome all lovers of the truth to come be with us.

Elder Marvin Brumfield - Moderator
Oscar Pickral - Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Martinsville Primitive Baptist Church, a Presbytery met at Martinsville Primitive Baptist church on Sat., May 16, 1998, for the examination of Brother Samuel Garlin Blankenship if found qualified in accordance with the written word of GOD, at the discretion of the judgement, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Larry Hollandsworth. All Elders of our same faith and order present constituted the Presbytery. Those present were: Lane Carter, Larry Hollandsworth, Raymond Goad, Clarence Stone, W.T. Conner and Julian Williams.

All Deacons were asked to sit together.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Lane Carter as moderator and Jamie Cooper as clerk. Elders Lane Carter, and W.T. Conner were chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate. Brother Herbert Dodson having been duly appointed by Martinsville Church, delivered Brother Blankenship to the Presbytery. Examination was made by Elders Clarence Stone and W.T. Conner using scripture Acts: ch. 6: 4-8. All present Elders were invited to participate. The Presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the Candidate, administered the laying on of Hands. The Ordination Prayer was delivered by Elder Clarence Stone. The charge was delivered by Elder Raymond Goad using Scriptural reference 1st Timothy 3:8.

The Moderator asked the Presbytery if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brother Blankenship and the right hand of fellowship was given, The ordained Brother was delivered back to the church as an Ordained Deacon of the Old School Primitive Church at Martinsville.

The minutes consisting of the work of the Presbytery were read and approved. The Presbytery was dismissed with Prayer by Elder Julian Williams.

Lane Carter, Moderator
Jamie Cooper, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 1998

Mrs. Doris Giles, VA	$2.00
Mrs. Carrie McDaniel, VA	2.00
Wallace E. Harvey, WV	1.00
William Vick, TN	10.00
C.W. Wood, VA	7.00
Mrs. Anna Ashworth, WV	2.00
Eld. J.T. Prescott, NC	7.00
Mrs. Sceney D. Boyd, VA	2.00
W. William Edwards, NC	2.00
James L. Shelor, VA	5.00
Marvin Curnutt, TX	2.00
William A. Ramey, AL	5.00
Burnell B. Williams, VA	2.00
Oscar Pickral, VA	7.00
Mrs. Annie C. Lawrence, VA	2.00
Ms. Iris Dove, VA	2.00

OBITUARIES

OBITUARY OF SISTER EVELYN JEAN MILLS GURKINS

Jean Mills Gurkins was born in Pitt County on March 18, 1928 and passed away November 10, 1997, at her home with her family by her bedside.

She was a native of Pitt County and lived most of her life in the Greenville community. She was a graduate of Grimesland High School, Class of 1945. She was a charter member of the Pitt County Al-Anon Group and a member of the Hancock's Primitive Baptist Church since January 25, 1970. She was a loving wife, mother, grandmother, and sister.

Sister Gurkins was baptized by Elder Joseph Sawyer and Elder A. P. Mewborn. Sister Gurkins was the daughter of the late Eva Edwards Mills and Tucker Zeno Mills who were both members of Red Banks Primitive Baptist Church in Pitt County. They were both believers in salvation by the grace of God as was Sister Gurkins.

Sister Gurkins was married to Jeston H. Gurkins on August 5, 1945. To this union they added four children, Alvin H. Gurkins, Eve Janelle Gurkins, Van A. Gurkins and Jeston Barry Gurkins all of Greenville, N.C.

She is survived by her children, six grandchildren, two great grandchildren, a sister, Eula Lee Fornes of Red Banks Church, two brothers, Norman Mills of New Bern, and Howard Mills of Red Banks Church and a mother-in-law, Bertha Shaw Gurkins of Greenville.

She suffered many trials and tribulations during her lifetime but never lost faith. She was a diabetic and eventually lost the use of her kidneys and had to go on dialysis for the last five years of her life. While she was on dialysis, she wrote to God in a journal every night. This made her feel safe from the world when she was on the dialysis machine.

The following is a poem that Sister Gurkins wrote that we would like to share with our brethren: (See Poem in this issue.)

Sister Gurkins' funeral was held at Wilkersons Funeral Home in Greenville and Elder Joseph Sawyer preached the service. She was laid to rest beside her husband in Pinewood Memorial Cemetery on November 14, 1997. There were a host of friends and relatives in attendance.

Therefore, be it resolved that a copy of this obituary be sent to the family, one recorded in the church book, and one sent to "Signs of the Times" for publication.

Written by request of the church by her daughter, Janelle Gurkins Vanhorne and her sister, Eula Lee Fornes who loved her dearly.

Elder Joseph L. Sawyer, Moderator
Sis. Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

1 CHRONICLES 16:7-9.

Then on that day David delivered first this psalm to thank the Lord into the hand of Asaph and his brethren.

Give thanks unto the Lord, call upon his name, make known his deed among the people.

Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye of all his wondrous works.

SISTER PHYLLIS ANN DAVIS
Resolution of Respect

We bow in humble submission to the will of our merciful and kind Heavenly Father, who works all things after the council of his own will. Who has seen fit to callfrom our midst Sister Phyllis Ann Davis. Sister Phyllis was born January 15, 1935 and died July 4, 1998. Though we have lost a Sister in Christ, we feel and believe that our loss is her eternal gain. Our deepest sympathy goes out to her family, and may God in his mercy and wisdom send to them that great comforter to comfort them that mourn and to bind up their broken hearts with his everlasting love. For she is only asleep, waiting that call of our great Shepherd who calls his sheep by name, I believe she is with the Lord in the paradise of God, where she rests until the morning of the Resurrection, when the trumpet of God shall sound and our Lord shall return the second time without sin unto salvation bringing with him all the spirits of the saints and the dead in Christ shall rise first, to meet him in the air, and so shall ever be with him. She was a firm believer of Salvation by Grace and not by man's works. She became a member of Fairview Primitive Baptist Church December 2, 1990 and was Baptized by Elders Ronald K. Crouch and Harold R. Johnson. She was a faithful wife and loving mother,and we know that the sorrow is great and hard to bear, but let us not sorrow as those that have no hope, but rejoice in the fact that the children of God have received a promise of eternal life by Christ Jesus whom cannot lie ***"I give unto them eternal life, and no man can pluck them out of my hand."*** She was married in 1957 to Jim Davis and to this marriage was born one daughter and one son who mourn at her passing, also four grandchildren, five sisters and a brother and a host of friends. Services were conducted at her church, by Elder Ronald Crouch and Harold Johnson. She was laid to rest at Tyler Mountain Memory Gardens, Cross Lanes W.V.
Written by Request of the Church Resolved: one copy for Church Records Resolved: one copy for her family Resolved: one copy to be sent to Signs of the Times Resolved: one copy to be sent to the clerk of the Rock Springs Association.

Elder Ronald K Crouch - Moderator
Elder Harold R. Johnson - Asst. Moderator
Brother William A. Johnson - Clerk

PSALM 19:1.

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

OBITUARY OF SISTER JULIA R. GARNER

With deep regret we the members of Newport River Primitive Baptist mark the passing of Sister Garner who died on September 3, 1998 at age 86 years. Sister Garner was born in Carteret County on August 26, 1912 one of the children of Elder Walter Roberts and Joseline P. Roberts. Sister Garner was married to Cornell Garner around 1937 or 38. They were blessed with one daughter Pauline G. Hocutt. Sister Garner and Cornell had six grandchildren, two or three great-grandchildren. Sister Garner was afflicted with poor health the last years of her life. All of us at the church will sorely miss her. We all know our loss will be her eternal gain. Her funeral was preached by Elder J.M. Harne. Sister Garner was dearly loved by all of us. Her daughter agreed for me to write about her passing and send to be published in the "Signs of the Times". Written by

Gordon M. Lockey
3008 Old Gate Rd.
Morehead City, N.C. 28557
A brother in Christ is my hope.

PSALM 13:3-6.

Consider and hear me, O Lord my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death;

Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him; and those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved.

But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.

I will sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.

IN MEMORY OF SISTER JESSIE MINTER

Sister Jessie Minter joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on September 25, 1960. I remember the lovely visits with her and Brother Orin, Brother Reuben Davis, and Sister Mary Davis in my grandparent's home. It was always such a joy to have them come. Sister Minter was a very warm, loving person, and one always felt at home in her presence whether she had known them for a long time or just made their acquaintance. The Lord just seemed to shine in her countenance.

When I think of her, two scriptures come to mind. The first is found in Matthew 6:28, 29. ***"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."*** The second is found in Proverbs 31:10. ***"Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies."***

She was truly a lovely mother in Israel, and I am deeply grateful that I was blessed to have known her. May all of us, who are saddened by the loss of our dear sister, be blessed to feel that our loss is her eternal gain, and to witness with the writer of the scripture, Psalm 116:15: ***"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."*** In all things may the Lord be praised.

Humbly submitted,
Mary Hawkins

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

KINDRED in Christ, for his dear sake,
A hearty welcome here receive;
May we together now partake
The joys which only he can give.

To you and us by grace 'tis given
To know the Saviour's precious name;
And shortly we shall meet in heaven,
Our hope, our way, our end the same.

May he, by whose kind care we meet,
Send his good Spirit from above;
Make our communications sweet,
And cause our hearts to burn with love.

Forgotten be each worldly theme,
When Christians see each other thus:
We only wish to speak of him,
Who lived, and died, and reigns for us.

We'll talk of all he did and said,
And suffered for us here below;
The path he marked for us to tread,
And what he's doing for us now.

Thus, as the moments pass away,
We'll love, and wonder, and adore;
And hasten on the glorious day,
When we shall meet to part no more.

Newton

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EDITORIAL

THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH.

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

(Eze. Chap. 37,vs. 1,2,3) The hand of the lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and caused me to pass by them round about: and behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? and I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest.

The valley of dry bones indicates death where there once was life and this is typical of the condition of Israel, under the law; they were once alive, in the garden, but because of sin they died; as a result of their eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God had told Adam that he should not partake of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for he said, in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die and according to the word of the Lord they did in fact die to the world into which they were created.. They were separated from God and condemned to dwell in this valley of death, forced to eat of the fruit of the ground, which God had cursed, all the days of their lives. They were consigned to this natural world, subject to the domination of the serpent, and were seperated from God and given those coats of skin, which is their natural worldly being, for the habitation of the world into which they were sentenced to spend their natural earthly lives. Their judgement for their sin was that they would eat bread by the sweat of their brow until they returned to the ground; for out of it they were taken and unto it they would return. The earth would no longer yield unto them her fruit, as in the beginning when they were placed in the garden to dress and keep it; but rather it would bring forth thorns and thistles and they would eat the herb of the field, the fruit of the cursed ground,

not the fruit of the trees which God had given them in the beginning to eat thereof and live.

The valley of the dry bones above depict the children of Israel, as they existed from the time they were driven from the garden until the coming of the promised Messiah; they were dead and did not know it, they were not even aware of the world into which they were originally created. They had the law, the oracles and the covenant that God had made with them but they did not have life; the law and the sacrifices never gave life, they were but types pointing to that which was to come, which would bring life and immortality to light. Israel was as lifeless to spiritual things as these bones were to the world of nature around them. They were very dry; in fact, they were as lifeless as the clay from which man was formed, before God breathed into it the breath of life, it was inanimate, as it were, and dead to the world around it. God asked Ezekiel the question, can these bones live? and the answer to this question was, no!, unless something was done for them because in that state of death they could do nothing to change their condition; however Ezekiel's response was, Lord thou knowest. These bones are men in nature, under the law, dead to the world as regarding spiritual matters, they cannot live, spiritually, unless something is done for them. Man as he was when driven from the garden,with his coats of skin is flesh, and will always be flesh and nothing else, unless something is done to change it; and regarding the question as to whether he will live or not, spiritually, only God knows. These bones were very dry and would forever remain so, unless an outside force works upon them and only God knew if they would ever be different from that dead and lifeless state in which they are in nature. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world and certainly that work is the bringing all of the heirs of promise from that state of death into possession of eternal life which is their inheritance which was promised unto them in the beginning: also, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his: regardless of the state that they may be in at any given point of time.

The Lord told Ezekiel to prophesy unto the bones, and say unto them, "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord." This was what the prophets of God had done all of their days; they were sent to prophesy unto the nation of Israel the word of the Lord, and command them heed it. They prophesied of the things that the Lord would bring upon Israel, in the future, as revealed unto them of the Lord and of things that were reserved for them in the generations to come. This is what Ezekiel is commanded to do here, prophesy unto the dry bones; he was to proclaim the word of the Lord unto the dry bones of the things that he would do for them, as he says in many places, in that day. He would clothe them with flesh and sinew, but not as the coats of skin which he had given them in the garden of Eden for the dwelling in the world of nature, but

rather new clothing for the lives that they were to live after they were given life; bodies that would be the temple of God indwelled by the Spirit of God.

When he prophesied unto them there was a great shaking and the bones come together and they were so clothed according to the word of the Lord; for where the word of the king is, there is power: also he hath spoken it, he shall also do it. Then he was told to prophesy to the winds to breathe on them and the breath came into them and they lived, stood upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

It was at this point that the Lord declared unto Ezekiel, (Eze. Chap. 37,vs11) ***"Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel;"*** this included Israel who lived under the law and also the Gentiles upon whom the grace of God is to be bestowed: for all are of the house of Israel, and all are saved by the same plan of salvation, (Eph chap 2,vs8) ***"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."*** All flesh is grass and the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field; the natural fleshly man is the dry bone and until clothed upon with the garments of salvation, dwells in the valley of the shadow of death. The Gentiles, in the flesh, and until breathed upon by the spirit are as dead regarding spiritual matters and values as Israel was under the law. When Jesus appeared unto his disciples after his death he said to them, (John Chap 20, vs 21-22) ***"peace be with you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed upon them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost".*** This said he unto them referring to the day of Pentecost when they would be alive to the things of the spirit.

(Eze. Chap. 37,vs. 13) ***"And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I will place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord."*** This prophesy is fulfilled when Jesus cried with a loud voice and gave up the ghost. (Matt. Chap. 28, vs. 51-2-3) ***"And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."*** This prophesy is of the coming of the Messiah, and his restoring the nation of Israel to its former state in so much, that they walked and talked with God, without the Levitical Priesthood to intercede; as Paul wrote (Heb. Chap. 10,vs19-20) ***"Having therefore brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say his flesh."*** Christ condemned sin in this body of flesh and consecrated the way whereby the spiritual man

might enter into communion with God, through this veil of flesh which man still inhabits; and even though this natural man is subserviant to the devil and still desires the pleasures of nature the pride of the eyes and lusts of the flesh: the inner man worships God in spirit and in truth from that new heart which was given him in the new birth.

(Rom. Chap. 7,vs. 22-23) ***"For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."*** This is the continual warfare that all of the saints of God endure when born of the spirit; the flesh lusting against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh and this will be their lot in life as long as they live in the flesh, but it is also a glorious evidence of the work of grace in their heart of which none but themselves are aware. Men behold them and see no problem, but Oh the warfare that rages within; the spirit judges the flesh and all of its carnal actions, and the thorn in the flesh, which is the messenger of Satan dwells in the natural man, buffets the inner man and causes him great distress of mind and fear that he may not be a child of God, after all. This is a vicious and ongoing warfare as long as both entities dwell in the same body; they cannot peaceably cohabit with such a great difference in their natures: they are the extremes in opposites and will not submit to the will of the other except that greater is the spirit of the inner man than the spirit of the man in nature.

Could this state of man be the valley of death that David spoke of in the 23rd Psalm? The dry bones were in the midst of the valley and God told Ezekiel that these bones are the whole house of Israel and they were dead, in so much that God asked Ezekiel, can these bones live? David did not say that he would walk through the valley of death, but, through the valley of the shadow of death, and he was in that condition regarding spiritual knowledge at the time he wrote these words? He was one of those dry bones and did not even know it, but prophecy was given by inspiration as all prophetical proclamations were, and if this be true, he was at that time walking in the valley of the shadow of death, and did all the days of his life. There was no spiritual life in the law, it made nothing perfect but was just a shadow of things to come; just types of those things that God would do for his people spiritualy at some time in the future; shadows of things fulfilled by the birth, death and resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesue Christ..

David said,***"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."*** David lived under the law, and since the above scripture says, this the whole house of Israel this also included David; all men were in the valley of the shadow of death because that was where man was sent when cast out of the garden. David did not fear because of the times God had been with him in his experiences and though he did not understand it fully,

he felt that he would preserve him. This is how he was able to face Goliath, being but a lad and untrained in the ways of war. David, and all of Israel were dead to the things of the spirit, but, God's law was given them as a rod of correction and was laid upon them for reproof, for correction and instruction to the man in nature to cause them to honor and praise God, and faith was the staff upon which they given for support when they had reached the end of their ability and could not depend upon their own strength. The rod and the staff combined, were comfort to David for he realized that although he did not understand the reasoning behind it, his faith in God that all things would work for good to them that love him would continue to be his refuge from his enemies. They were comfort to David because he realized that the giver of the law and the faith was the one who delivered him out of the paw of the lion and the bear and enabled him to stand before Goliath; he was the one of whom David declared (Psa. 139,vs. 5 thru-10) ***"Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from they spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I acsend unto heaven thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."*** All of these things were included in his experiences and in one place he referred to it as his heritage, when he said,(Psa. 16 vs. 6) ***"The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea I have a goodly heritage."*** the lines being the lines of truth that God let down to him, to lead and direct him in his journey through this vale of tears. The dry bones were secure in God's hands all the while, but between the being born in nature and the being born again of the spirit there is a valley of death that all of the household of Israel must experience; if there was no valley there would be no mountain and God's Children must experince both to worship him as they should for his grace and mercy extended to them; and to make them realize their need for them.

The Lord declares that he will bring his people out of their graves and put his spirit within them and they will live; he will place them in their own land. He will bring the two kingdoms, which were separated many generations ago together again and they will be one people with one king; they will no longer be two kingdoms. They will no longer defile themselves with their idols, their detestable things: for he will cleanse them so that they will be his people, and he will be their God. (Ezek Chap 37, vs 25) ***"Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them, and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore."***

Surely, this is the work of God and is the reason for his bringing his Son

into the world, that the children of Israel; who were in the state of death, might live again, in the knowledge of God as their creator and commune with him as they did in the garden. These dry bones were as void of ability or desire, in and of themselves, to change themselves from their dead state as the man in nature is to make a decision to worship God; they do not know him and have no rationale of spiritual matters upon which to base any such decision. Paul, after his conversion, realized and acknowledged this when he said, ***"but by the grace of God I am what I am"*** he knew where he would have been had not grace been extended to him in his sinful and unregenerated state, and this is where all have stood who hope to have and interest in that, earnest of the inheritance, which is laid up for the saints of God. They realize that if the grace of God had not been bestowed upon them, they would still be following the ways of the world with no interest or knowledge of the kingdom of God and the glorious gospel of their salvation.

(Matt. Chap. 4,vs. 15-16) ***"The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles "The people which sat in darkness saw a great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up".*** From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Surely this is the fulfilling of the above prophesy, the abode of all of Israel was in the region or shadow of death, until Jesus began his ministry, preaching the glad tidings of the new covenant that God had prophesied that he would make with Israel, in that day.. This was the beginning of the prophesy in the above scriptures and it culminates on the day of Pentecost when it is fulfilled that the wind breathed upon the bones (house of Israel) and they lived, stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. On the day of Pentecost, (Acts Chap. 2, vs. 2-3-4) ***"And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance."*** These scriptures, from the new testament seemingly affirm the old testament prophesy of the dry bones. Throughout Jesus's ministry, the law was still in effect, they were still in the valley of the shadow of death until the spirit blew upon the apostles, they then stood up and began to preach the gospel; and they gave evidence of the change that had been done within. There was no longer two nations, but one nation, with one king and one plan of salvation with one gospel and that was only to those who had been given the Holy Ghost. There were men out of every nation gathered there on that occasion and every man heard them in his own tongue, being brought together because of the pure language that

God's people speak and understand regardless of their speech, race or national origin. This was the opposite of the occasion when God confounded the language of the people so that they could not understand their neighbor, and they left off building the tower that would reach unto heaven which they intended to build that they might not be scattered upon the face of the earth. Here, on this occasion the people of different languages heard in their own tongue the wonderful words of God and they began to have all things common and became one nation in heart soul and spirit; for the death of Jesus had broken down the middle wall of parition and there was no more saparation between them.

Another prophesy of this transformation of the children of Israel is found in (Ezek. Chap. 36, vs. 24-25-26-27) ***"For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgements, and do them."*** In these and all other prophesies of the salvation of the children of God, Israel is passive in the hands of a holy and righteous God and all of the work involved in their change from the natural life to the spiritual life is of God. Each one will acknowledge that they were as the dry bones, regarding spiritual life, and they were changed into a living spiritual being as mysterously and in much the same way that they became a living breathing being in nature. They were not involved in bringing about their change, in either case; that which was wrought upon them, was without their prior knowledge or consent, for it was determined before time began and the only consultants were, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost and who can say unto that counsel, why is it thus? Those chosen certainly would not, and the others are in no position to pass judgement on it, one way or the other, for they are completely unaware of it.

(John Chap. 5,vs. 24-25) ***"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live."*** These are the words of Jesus when talking to the Jews on one occasion and he refers in both verses of the fact that they, the Jews, as well as all men are dead, while in the flesh, and only those that hear his word and believe on the Father hath everlasting life; and again when these dead hear the voice of the Son of God they shall live. Only those that are spiritually alive can hear and

believe, in God, and this life is that which they receive when they are born again as Jesus said unto Nicodemus. Only those who have received this gift of life will believe; but even then they cannot teach anyone else of these truths. If anyone has not experienced it, they cannot believe it, it is beyond the grasp of the human mind. This is the state of dry bones spoken of by Ezekiel, and as long as they are in that condition they have no knowledge of spiritual matters; the natural man will read the scriptures and try to rationalize them with the natural mind and will never come to the knowledge of the truth, as Paul said in his letter to Timothy, because the truth is discerned only by those who are of the spirit: and one of the gifts of the spirit is the discerning of the spirits.

Only the power of God can effect this change, and that work is perfect in every case, it is not something that is done on a trial and error basis. It may seem strange for a man to stand up and say that they believe God has chosen them and blessed them with this knowledge, from among all of the people on the earth, but yet, everyone that believes these things have been made to know by experience that this is the only way that it comes. They did not learn it by study, or effort exerted by them; one day it was just suddenly there and they could not deny it. Only those who have experienced the shadow of the valley of death, in their life in the flesh, can know the joy of being loosed from that bondage and being free from the law of sin and death. They did not realize their condition, in the world of nature, until they were made aware of the glory and beauty of the spiritual kingdom, and felt the love that defys description emanating from their heart and soul.

May God bless these thoughts to your comfort and understanding, if they be true. If they are not the truth, may he bless you to lay them aside and listen to that voice in your ear behind you saying, this is the way walk ye in it. The apostle advised Timothy, (II Tim. Chap. 2, vs. 7) *"Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things."*

In bonds of love,
Richard H Campbell

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held at the Dan River Church on Sunday Nov. 29th, with Moons Creek Church being host.

All lovers of the truth are invited to this meeting especially Elders of our faith and order.

The morning service will begin at 10:00 a.m. and afternoon service at 2:00 p.m.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Sue Blalock, Clerk

VOICES OF THE PAST

JOEL 11. 16.

"Let the Bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet."

The first part of the chapter in which this text is found, appears to be addressed more particularly to the Jews as a nation, yet it is evident that the text before us has a direct application to Christ and the church, and that the whole chapter has them in view, in its ultimate application. The closing up of the chapter is language which embraces in itself the glory and power of the kingdom of Christ. In the first verse of the chapter it is said, ***"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain, let all the inhabitants of the earth tremble, for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand."*** We understand the day of the Lord, which is here introduced, to be the same day which is mentioned in the thirty-first verse, and is there called the great and terrible day of the Lord. This subject is clearly explained by our Lord in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, and in the second chapter of the Acts of the apostles; Peter has removed all doubts and successful disputes upon the point. On the day of Pentecost, when the apostles were filled with the Holy Ghost, and spake with tongues so that every man heard them in their own language wherein they were born, some were amazed, and inquired what those things meant; others mockingly said, These men (the apostles) are full of new wine. But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice and said unto them, These men are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, and then quotes the very language which is found in the close of the chapter, in which our text is contained. It is not possible therefore to miss the application, unless Peter erred in applying it where he did, and this we know was not the case. The expression in the last clause of the sixteenth verse, is that which the Holy Ghost chose as a part of the language through which to describe the setting up of the gospel kingdom on the earth in union with Christ its King. With these invulnerable bulwarks around this idea, we hesitate not to apply the text directly to Christ and the church. The terms bridegroom and bride, when used in the Bible, very generally apply to this union. We learn from the Bible that the most solemn, binding and endearing of all human ties, those of the bridegroom and bride, are borrowed from and represent the union of Christ and the church, and if we inquire why Ishmael was not an heir with Isaac, we shall discover that one very important reason was, that he was not a son of the bride, and had no vital relationship with her. God is not the author of confusion and discord, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

All the amalgamation and means of men can never add anything to the body of Christ, for nothing can be added to it, which was not originally in it. If we refer to our first parents after the flesh, for a figurative illustration upon this point, we shall there discover that Eve was in Adam, until she was developed as his bride. We should particularly note the fact that the bridegroom was not made for the bride, but the bride was made for the bridegroom. In relation to Christ and the church in their vital relationship they are co-equal, although the development of the bride was subsequently to her vital existence in him. In relation to this union, and the manifestation of it, God was pleased to establish the titles Bridegroom and Bride, and apply them to the Head, and the body, which is the church, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. Our text has to do with this Head and body, in life and death, in doctrine, ordinances and gospel, or church organization. The time was appointed by the eternal Father for this manifested union, and his command in the text is, ***"Let the Bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet."*** Christ Jesus, the Lord and Mediator of the new covenant, had long been made manifest to the faithful, through representations, types and shadows, but all these types and shadows declared that their substance, that which is perfect, had not yet come. Jesus was represented by the spotless lamb offered by Abel. Abel is dead, yet in that offering he now speaks. The law was a school-master. At the time appointed of God, Jesus Christ came into the world to swallow up types and shadows in himself, and to remove the ceremonies which pointed to him, to fulfill all that had been written of him, and that had been represented in offerings and ceremonies. ***"But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law."*** Who was under the law? The bride, the Lamb's wife. Why then was not the law executed upon her, and she consigned to everlasting woe? She has a Mediator who appears as her husband, and Paul said, The law knoweth not a woman which hath an husband, and what the Scriptures before us point to, is the full manifestation that Christ is the Husband, or Bridegroom of the church, which is composed not of Jews only, but of Gentiles also; and God hath visited the Gentiles to take out from among them a people for his name. The church is not composed of all of either, but of a people out of both, and Jesus appears in the flesh between the two; in the end of the Jewish world or economy, and in the beginning of the christian, when the Gentiles are called and the church is gathered under the latter. ***"That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him."*** That consolidated lady is the election of grace, and figuratively speaking is the bone of Christ's bone, and the flesh of his flesh. We here find a bride which was

in Christ before the world began. Having thus found a bridegroom and bride, we will attempt to follow them in their nuptials and fellowship. David in presenting in the most clear and beautiful manner, the setting up of the gospel kingdom in the earth, and in presenting Christ, his doctrine and ordinances, as taught by the apostles, and his manifested union with the church as the Bridegroom, breaks *forth in strains almost seraphic, thus, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth thy handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them he has set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race."* Here the most stupendous, beautiful and amazing glory ever seen by the natural eye, is brought forward as a comparison of the glory of Christ in the church, in their union as bridegroom and bride. The heavens with their constellations, which declare the wisdom, power and glory of the creating God, are referred to, and they are but feeble figures, to portray the glory of God, in the church, through Christ Jesus our Lord. Age after age rolls on, and in all the multitude of planets, sun, moon and stars, no jargon nor failure occurs. Each one travels onward in its allotted path, and owns and proclaims the sovereign hand of God, which not only created them, but which also bears them up, in their onward march, and in the performance of the affairs for which they were severally created. The life and light of patriarchs, prophets, apostles and all christians, dwells in Christ the Sun of righteousness. What power in earth or hell, can retard the march of the sun, or frustrate the office work of his glory, or who, or what can resist the effectual and all-powerful action of his rays? He rises in the east to perform the office of the day, and no earthly power can stop him. Until man can do this, let him not think that he can master or resist Christ, the sun's maker; for Jesus is no less powerful in one thing than he is in all things. The sun is brought forward as the strongest figure in the creation of God, by which to represent the glory and power of Christ in the church, as her never-failing fountain of light and warmth to every branch and member thereof. As all the smaller lights and planets are dependent for their light on the sun, so is all the church dependent on Christ, who as a bridegroom cometh out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. *"Let the Bridegroom go forth of his chamber."* Here we must receive the word chamber in a figurative sense, and consider it in that sense in which the spirit of inspiration has used it. We are not satisfied from the Scriptures, that it is applied to any one act of Christ, or that he should here be separated from the entire race of his Mediatorial goings forth, but rather a place of rest from his goings forth of

old, and his work under the law, and that place of rest from whence he comes forth to preside manifestly as Head in the church; for we are not only told of the eternal purpose of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, but we are also informed as to the consummation of it. *"To the intent that now unto principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."* To what then does this manifold wisdom and purpose refer? To the salvation of the church, which is composed of both Jews and Gentiles, which was not known in other ages, that the Gentiles should be made fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his power in Christ, by the gospel; but when Christ came this truth was made manifest, and he took the church out from among both Jews and Gentiles and into a manifested union with himself. But when was the appointed time for this wedding, as our Lord in one of his parables calls it? The time came on the death of the law, the first husband, and then Christ *"the Bridegroom went forth of his chamber,"* and we are now introduced to the doctrine of Christ, and the ordinances of the christian, or gospel church. The Bridegroom not only came in accordance with the purpose and covenant of God, but in that purpose and covenant was embraced the appointed way in which he should come, and when and how this manifested union should be consummated. By referring to the Levitical priesthood, we may, perhaps, find some figurative opening to the chamber, and the Bridegroom in his coming forth of it. *"For these Levites, the four chief porters, were in their set office, and were over the chambers and treasuries of the house of God, and they lodged round about the house of God, because the charge was upon them, and the opening thereof every morning pertained to them."* We read also in the gospel, of a porter who opened to Christ. As the priesthood made is changed, there is also of necessity a change of the law, and as Christ is the High Priest over a different house, which has different laws, so are all things pertaining to it different. New laws and new ordinances are instituted, and Christ, or the Bridegroom, comes forth in these, and was preceded by the friend of the Bridegroom, even the porter who opened to him, and Jesus was baptized of John the Baptist, in the river of Jordan, and the Bridegroom established this as an ordinance through which believers pass into the visible church here below. We deem the conclusion tenable that this chamber has some reference to that doctrine, and those ordinances in which Christ and the church came together in union and fellowship, as Bridegroom and bride. We believe also that the parable of the ten virgins has an application here. *"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins which took their lamps and went forth to meet the Bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five of them were foolish. They that were*

foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out." In the first place then, what is this parable applied to, and upon what subject was the Savior instructing his disciples? We think he was instructing them in relation to that kingdom which he was about to set up in the world, and as it is a spiritual kingdom, he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh,and as forms and ceremonies of the Jews was all the foolish virgins possessed, they could not enter in with the bridegroom to the marriage. An open distinction is now made between law and grace, between Moses and Christ, and none need say now, We have Abraham for our father, for Moses is dead and the fathers are fallen asleep. The time also when the bridegroom came, favors this position also. The cry was at midnight. The legal dispensation is now at an end, and the gospel day is dawning. Midnight closes up the old day, and brings in a new one, and this midnight was the close of the Jewish economy, and the introduction of the christian. In what way then does the bride meet, or go, into the marriage with the bridegroom? Those who do go in with Christ are regenerated persons, born of God, born of the Spirit and water, and have Christ within (the light) the hope of glory. John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. He was the messenger who was sent before the Messenger of the covenant, to prepare the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight. Believers came to him and were baptized, and this ordinance was established as a standing one for all time to come in the church of God, which is the ground and pillar of truth. While it admits all into the visible church who submit to it upon a profession of their faith in Christ, it shuts out all who do not, and the Pharisees rejected the counsel of God against themselves, not being baptized of John. Hence it appears evident to us that the chamber of which the Bridegroom went forth has an important connection, and sustains a close relation, to the doctrine and ordinances of the gospel of Christ. There is a figure found in Nehemiah, which seems to have a bearing upon this point, said Nehemiah, ***"And I came to Jerusalem, and understood the evil that Eliashib did for Tobiah, in preparing him a chamber in the courts of the house of God. And it grieved me sore: therefore I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber. Then I commanded, and they cleansed the chambers; and thither brought I again the vessels of the house of God, with the meat offering and the frankincense."*** Now what is it which separates all the false religious combinations in the world, from the true church

in her worship? It is their household stuff, their false doctrine, false ordinances and organizations. If Tobiah is rejected, and not allowed to assist in building the wall, his next effort is to get the chamber of the house furnished with his stuff. But it is the duty of the servants of the Lord to cast it forth into the world from whence it came, and where it belongs. Perhaps David had his eye upon this subject when he said, "Their land brought forth frogs in abundance in the chambers of their kings." If these frogs, as in other places, represent those unclean spirits which have gone forth into all the earth, we cannot fail to discover the force of its application. They were not brought forth in the chamber of which the bridegroom went forth, but in the chambers of their kings. There never was a scarcity of them, and at this time there is such an abundance of them that they are leaping from swamp to swamp, and from one mud hole to another, and find all the markets already clogged. But to return to the guest-chamber. It is an upper room, furnished with the vessels and lights, and is where Jesus eats the passover with his disciples. In relation to the chamber of which Christ went forth, we do not wish to confine the expression exclusively to the ordinances and order of the house; but would embrace in a summary manner, his mediatorial work, life, death, resurrection and ascension, and appearing from the holy of holies, and dwelling in his church. But as the expression occurs in the text, there appears to be more particular reference to the manifested union of Christ and the church in gospel order, and the fellowship and enjoyment therein. He went forth and established the things referred to, and they must remain for all time to come, as the established laws and order of the church and her government. When the High Priest under the law had gone into the most holy place, and finished the atonement, he then came out and appeared to the people, and the blessings of that typical atonement were then enjoyed. Christ has not entered into the holy place made with hands, but into heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God for the church, for he entered there by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption for us, and from thence he appears to her. ***"Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." "Let the Bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet."*** They both went forth at the same time. The apostle has told us that the bride or church is the body of Christ. We have already referred to Adam and Eve, as a figure upon this point. When Adam was formed, Eve was in him, but she was not yet made manifest in her individual person. And it was not the form of a marriage ceremony which constituted their relationship. Their relationship was vital, and consisted in their one life, and it is not the outward act of the marriage of Christ and the church which constitutes their vital union;

but their marriage is an acknowledgment and declaration of relationship which existed before time began. This bride was made for the Bridegroom, and she is destined to dwell for a time upon the earth as a bride, to manifest and shew forth the praises of her Lord. She is commanded forth out of her closet, which appears to be a secret place. Yes, she is called out, ***"O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance."*** Here is not only a call or command to her which carries power with it, but the language describes the place where she is. She is in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs. Her life is hid with Christ in God, and in this marriage there is a manifestation of it. But how came she in the clefts of the rock, and in the secret places of the stairs? But even had there been a rock, and no clefts or secret places in it, there would have been no place of refuge and safety in it for the dove, the church. God laid the rock, and made the clefts and secret places of the stairs, and put the church therein, and covered her with his hand while his glory passed by; for he had declared that no man should see his face and live; and being thus secured in Christ, she can talk face to face with God and live. ***"And it shall come to pass while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in the cleft of a rock, and will cover thee with my hand, while I pass by."*** The bride is not commanded to come out of Christ, neither do we understand this rock to be the closet out of which she goes; but it is the place from whence her countenance is seen, and her voice is heard, and she is brought out of the secret places of the stairs, so far that it is made manifest that she is an inhabitant of the rock. The countenance is to be seen, and not covered with the veil. She is to be seen by her husband, not through the veiled drapery of the law, but with open face she beholds the glory of the Lord, and is changed from the image, or glory of the law, into the image and glory of Christ, which bursts from him in floods of ravishing glory. Her countenance is comely: it is like the countenance of the Bridegroom, for she is changed from image to image, into the same glory. And she is now told that the law holds no more dominion over her; that the law is dead, and she is now to look to Christ, the living Husband, for the law has no more dominion over her than the deceased husband, whose body has mouldered to dust, has over the widow who was once his bride. Her husband is dead, and has passed away, and she is therefore loosed from the law of her husband. ***"Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth."*** We are thus taught that Christ was made under the law, and remained under it until his death; but having laid down his life in obedience to its demands, and having taken it again, ***"He has become the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."*** He arose from the dead, beyond it, and is no more subject to it.

"For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now, if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him; knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." The church both died and rose in Christ, else what did the apostle mean when he said, ***"If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him?"*** Christ is emphatically declared to be the life of the church; and when he laid down his life, he laid down hers; and when he took up his life again, he took up hers also, and the church stands identifed with Christ in life, death and resurrection, and all believers are exhorted by the apostle to reckon themselves to be dead with Christ, and alive with him. Now, this being the case, the bride is commanded to go forth out of her closet, and to be joined to another husband (as the law is dead to her,) and live and walk with the Bridegroom, in the doctrine and ordinances of the gospel. ***"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."*** The Bridegroom has a house prepared where he dwells with his bride, and she with him. He is the builder of his house, which is the church; and he did not commence it without first counting the cost, and without knowing that he is able to finish it. None will ever be able to say in truth, this man began to build a house, but was not able to finish it. The advocates of the free-will system say that Christ made an atonement sufficient for all mankind, and he has done all he can to save them, but free-will and the devil together have proved too powerful for him, and the house is not as large as it otherwise would have been. They acknowledge that the Scriptures declare that he has all power in heaven and in earth, but somehow or other free agency has gained the ascendency, and the devil is rejoicing over the failure, and Christ is mourning in heaven, because sinners will not be saved. Perhaps it is sin for us to follow the advocates of this system in their consummate ignorance and high-handed blasphemy; we therefore turn from them. The atonement was effectual, and it was perfect in all its propositions for the church; the foundation was designed for the house, and the house for the foundation, and all power in heaven and earth is in the hands of Christ, and is exercised by him in triumph in building this house, which groweth up into an holy temple in the Lord, for an habitation of God through the Spirit. And here the Son presents his bride to the Father without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. And the Father is well pleased with the bride of his Son, for she is the one whom he hath chosen for his Son Jesus Christ. The Son is well pleased with her, for his love to

her was such that he laid down his life for her; and she loves him because he first loved her, and hath given himself for her, redeemed her from all iniquity, hath washed and purified her, and brought her into his banqueting-house, and spread his banner of love over her. He illumes her with his charms, and she sees a loveliness in him which she never saw in any other one, and here, in the house of God, Father, Son and bride dwell in heavenly fellowship and sweet delight. But what is this house for, and of what material is it composed? ***"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ."*** But some people think the church is a place to make christians, or regenerate sinners, and to create organizations and institutions; to devise ways and means for the salvation of the world, and thus help the Lord do his work. The work of salvation is already complete, and what remains is the personal manifestation of it, to the saved. And the church of God is for the offering up of spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Here the bride offers the praise and gratitude of her heart, and such is the glory and love revealed through Christ unto her, that if she were to hold her peace, the stones would cry out. The whole worship of the church is a continual offering of thanksgiving and praise to God and the Lamb. To them are all the ascriptions of praise. The Bridegroom and bride sometimes commune together, and speak face to face. And what do we hear? The voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the Bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall sing praise to the Lord of hosts, for the Lord is good, and his mercy endureth forever. Here the Bridegroom and bride dwell and sup together. God in Christ, and Christ in them, and there is a perfection in one, and out of this perfection of beauty hath God shined. The bride says, ***"I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels."*** Once she could not rejoice, for she was the down-crushed and disconsolate mourner, she was in the dust of the earth, a poor, filthy beggar; but the Lord has taken her from the dust of the earth, and from the dunghill, has clothed her with a change of raiment, seated her among princes, and given her the throne of glory; and now at the King's right hand sits the queen in the gold of Ophir, and she is to remember her poverty no more, for she is heir of all things. This fills her heart with gratitude to her Lord, and she delights in serving him, for he hath done great things for her, whereof she is glad. She hath neither disposition nor right to usurp authority over her husband, and if she will know anything, she learns of him. She respects his law, rules and government, and would tremble at the thought of instituting

laws for him. And while the daughters of Babylon are busily engaged in their ways, and are disregarding the authority and order of Christ, she is seen like the lily among the thorns, and she has no more fellowship for, nor affinity with them, than the lily has to do with producing the fruit of the thornbush; and men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles. The church is not dependent on the world and human means for her support, for she dwells with, and is supported by her husband; and it would be both unchaste and unlawful for her to despise his laws, and look to others for support, while she has a husband who abounds in wealth and love to her. He delights in her: ***"Let me hear thy voice, for it is sweet."*** The high praises of God are in her mouth; she speaks the doctrine of Christ; she tells of his wonderful love and works; she dwells on electing love and comforting grace, and like one of old who had been dumb, when loosed immediately praises God. But what is it to praise God? Is it to tell the world how much she has done for the Lord, and to tell the Lord how much she will do for him? Nothing of this character is found in the theme of the bride. But like the servant of the Lord to whom we have already referred, she praises God and says, ***"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began." "To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant."*** The voice of the bride is heard in the song of redemption, and in praise of covenant mercy received. The bride is also to let her countenance be seen by the Bridegroom. As has been observed, the veil of the law has been taken from her, and she stands before her Lord with open face. But why is her countenance comely? Because it is Christlike; God predestinated the church to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Christ is in every believer the hope of glory, and where he is in person, his image and Spirit will be made manifest. What is it to be a christian? It is to be like Christ. But Adam, or old nature, is quite unlike him. But the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, is the christian, or that person or image to which the term applies; and he is after the image of him that created him. We have found the ***"Bridegroom has gone forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet,"*** and the voice of the Bridegroom, and the voice of the bride have been heard, and the bride is still saying, O come, let us sing unto the Lord, let us make a joyful noise unto the Rock of our salvation. The Bridegroom and the bride have met and are joined in fellowship in the house of God, and the fellowship of the bride is with the Father, and with the Son, and they dwell together in the unity of the Spirit and bonds of peace, and she delights to walk in the doctrine and ordinances of the gospel, in

that pattern in ordinances and order which Christ established by his example, and in this she walks humbly with God, and his presence is her greatest joy. But we cannot enjoy his presence in any ordinances or order which he has not established. Although believers may enjoy the joys of salvation, who have not walked in the ordinances, but there is an additional and peculiar delight and enjoyment in keeping the ordinances as they were delivered to us, which is found in no other paths, hence it is said, in keeping the commands there is great reward. The reward is not for keeping the commands, but in the thing itself; and the delight or reward is in it, and not for it. The person who is hungry delights in eating a good meal, and it ie the meal itself which gives the delight, and not the act of his eating, for if the meal were poisonous and sickening it could afford him no delight. The bride is disgusted with all human doctrines and ordinances, for they are of earthly origin, and their glory can never rise above their fountain, and they are also, in reality, in opposition to, and at war with, those ordinances which were established, and that doctrine which embraces him whom her soul loves.

Dear brethren, may we ever be enabled to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, may we stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not again entangled with the yoke of bondage. May we ever be enabled to realize that our Maker is our Husband. May we ever abide in the doctrine of Christ; for he that hath the Father, hath the Son. But if any come unto us having not this doctrine, we are forbidden to receive them into our houses (churches), or to bid them Godspeed; for he that biddeth them Godspeed is partaker of their sins.

Middletown, N. Y., July 15, 1854.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

WILKES-BARRE, Pa., July 26, 1864.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE: As I look over this it appears to me as though but little has been told, and that in a very inadequate manner. I have not succeeded in telling what I want to, and sometimes I feel as though my experience amounts to but little anyway in comparison with that of others; except the last part, in which I think I cannot be mistaken.

I have been back at my business about a month, a solitary but a very happy Old School Baptist. My peace and comfort have been almost unbroken, except by the continual evidences of my sinful heart. Even these, however, have been made to strengthen, rather than weaken my trust. When my evil disposition, which I almost thought the word of peace had put down forever, first manifested itself after I had received my hope in Jesus, I was startled, shocked, and for a while I feared and grieved very much. I said to myself, "I am a sinner yet! My hope is not good, and I can never have another, for this is the only way." In an instant the words came to me, ***"He is the end of the law for righteous-***

ness." And I was comforted. But oh, how humble I was before the Lord.

Thus my dear Saviour was near me to keep me from falling, teaching me that in his righteousness I had hope. My hope seems to have grappled a very solid rock, and all the troubles that can surge around me, and even the greatest of all sorrows on account of sin, however much they may toss me, do not seem able to shake or disturb the deep gladness of my soul, any more than the winds can affect the depths of the ocean. My joy cannot be accounted for by any of the circumstances of my life. The earth did not give me that hope, and cannot take it away.

I have been led into the knowledge of the scriptures as much as is for my good. Sometimes when seeing so much in them which I cannot understand, I have prayed that they might be opened to me. But when light falls upon one passage of scripture, it almost dazzles me. What would I do if the whole scriptures were opened before me at once !

One evening, while reading in Hebrews, feeling lonely, and wishing for the companionship of some of the Lord's people, it was suddenly shown to me that I had come unto Mt. Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; and for a time I felt that I was in the general assembly and ehureh of the First Born, and could reaeh out my arms with equal love to all the redeemed, whether in heaven, or still on earth. It was a glorious joy. I cannot have much greater, I think, while in this world. It was the first time I had really felt what it is to be a fellow-eitizen with the saints, to be one with the household of God, part here and part above, but all having one delight, one blessed work, singing praises to our dear Redeemer.

It is a delightful thing when we have had new experiences and new thoughts in regard to divine things, so incomprehensible, so wonderful, to our minds that we almost hesitate, and but tremblingly accept the joy they bring, lest they may be only our own dreamings, so slow are we to believe that the Spirit would show the things of Jesus to such as we; how surprisingly delightful to see or hear the same experiences and thoughts expressed by others whom we never saw or heard before, far more clearly than we could have expressed them.

May grace be with all those who love the Lord in sincerity, and may peace and joy and love with faith abound unto all the saints.

Your brother affectionately,
SILAS H. DURAND.

November 12.

"He that spared not has own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? — ROMANS viii. 32.

HAVE thought sometimes of the sweet figure of Solomon, as a type of Christ, in his royal munificence to the queen of Sheba. We read of him that he ***"gave unto the queen***

of Sheba all her desire,- whatsoever she asked, beside that which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty." So our Royal Benefactor gives more to the sons of men than is in their heart to ask for. And what he gives, he gives freely, out of his royal bounty. As freely as the rain drops from the sky; as freely as the sun casts forth his glorious beams and ripens the fruits of the field; as freely as the wind courses over the earth; as freely as the dew drops upon the morning grass; so free are the gifts of God to his Church and people. Indeed, in giving Christ God gave everything. The Apostle declares, he ***"hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."*** We must never look upon spiritual blessings as broken fragments of the love of God, mere shreds and patches, scattered crumbs, waifs and strays, like floating pieces of some shipwrecked vessel; but we must look on the blessings of the gospel as all stored up in Christ our covenant Head. Whatever is given, is given out of Christ, in whom it hath pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell; and it is by virtue of union to him, and out of his fulness, that all these blessings are received. How can we lift up our thoughts—how raise up our hearts—adequately to conceive of the gift of God's only-begotten Son—his eternal Son—the Son of the Father in truth and love—given out of the bosom of God that he might become incarnate, suffer, bleed, and die; and by a suffering life and meritorious death offer a sacrifice acceptable to God, a sacrifice whereby the sins of God's people were for ever put away. The grand source of all the admiration and adoration and the eternal blessedness of the saints, will be the holy enjoyment of the mystery of an incarnate God. The incarnation of the second Person in the glorious Trinity—the eternal Son of the eternal Father—his taking human nature into union with his own divine Person—will be the mystery that will ravish the hearts and fill the lips of God's saints with an endless theme of admiration and joy through the countless ages of eternity.

Elder J.C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 1998

Gurdon M. Lockey, NC	$7.00
Mrs. Angie T. Cox, NC	5.00
Mrs. Nannie C. Trevathan, NC	2.00
Frank C. Hunt, VA	2.00
Jewell & Hannah Archer, AR	2.00
Jerry P. Cockman, NC	7.00
Eld. Ronald K. Crouch, WV	2.00
John H. Coker, NC	2.00
Mrs. Carole, VA	7.00
Mrs. Mary D. Stanfield, VA	5.00
Mrs. Mary Burgin, TX	2.00
Mrs. Sallie Hodges, VA	2.00
Mr. & Mrs. J.M. Marshall, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

GORDON A. EANES

Brother Gordon was born April 23,1928 and passed away on August 21, 1998. Services were held on Sunday at 2 PM, August 23, 1998 at Salem Church with his pastor Elder Hale Terry and Elder Larry Hollandsworth officiating with interment in the Wilson Cemetery.

He was survived by his wife Gladys Vest Eanes, four sons and daughters-in-law; Gerald and Rita Eanes, Bruce and Dreama Eanes, Earsel and Tammy Eanes, and Darrell and Lisa Eanes. Six grandchildren, one step grandchild and one sister, Edna Janney.

Brother Gordon was a faithful attender to his church He came out many times when he truly didn't feel like it, so we the church, feel he fought a good fight, finished his course and kept his faith. We all miss him very much but would not desire him back to suffer again. Blessed be the Lord that giveth life and blessed be Him that taketh for He does all things according to His will in His own good time.

Written in love by request:
Mary Poff, clerk

LOCIE VEST LAWRENCE

Sister Locie was bom May 21, 1894 and passed away July 30, 1998 making her stay here on earth 104 years. She was preceded in death by her husband, Brother Percy Lawrence. She leaves one brother, Harvey Vest and several nieces and nephews to mourn her loss. Services for Sister Locie were held at 11 A.M. Saturday August 1,1998 at Salem Church with her pastor, Elder Hale Terry officiating. She was laid to rest in the Restvale Cemetery. Sister Locie was very special to me. She looked forward to her church meetings when she was able to attend. After going into the nursing home her church was upper most on her mind. In visiting her, she would always ask about the church meetings and about how her brethren were getting along. She manifested a great love for her church. She believed the gospel doctrine of salvation by the grace of God. We are saddened by her passing but feel confident that our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by one who loved her,
Mary Poff

ELLA CONNER SIMPKINS

On September 9, 1998, at the age of 90, my dear sister Ella Conner passed away at her home in Roanoke, VA.

She was a quiet, soft spoken and loving person. The guiding force in her life was her reverence to God, and her prayers that she would be submissive to his will.

She was the widow of Brother Frank Simpkins. Once she told me that she tried to pray that there would be someone to share her life and her love for

the church. The next Sunday morning she waited for the train to Baltimore to go to church, and there sat Brother Frank waiting to go to the same church. She felt later to see the hand of the Lord in this matter, and they were blessed to have a wonderful marriage.

Ella taught school for one year, but decided to go to Washington to work for the Federal Bureau of Investigations under J. Edgar Hoover; she worked there until her retirement.

While in Manassas, VA, Sister Ella and Brother Frank entertained many Baptist from all over the country. Although they were not members of the Church at that time, they were faithful in their support to those churches near them. No one could have been more caring for these churches needs.

They moved back to Roanoke, VA in 1968. Again their home became a haven for the Brethren and friends, seeing to their comforts; but much more a place to talk on spiritual things and rejoice. Sister Ella and Brother Frank were well-versed in the Bible and one of their joys was talking about spiritual matters.

They were received into the fellowship of Dan River Primitive Baptist August 21, 1982. My father, Elder David Spangler, baptized them that afternoon. To all the Church members who knew them, they were lovely members.

Their support, loyalty, and love for the Church will not be forgotten.

She attended the Church meetings whenever and wherever she could, and her great joy was to hear the preaching, singing of the hymns, and especially the warm fellowship one with another. When she could not attend church, she sent word and wanted them to know she loved them.

Brother Frank was ill and confined to his home for many years - her love and devotion to him was such as no one could forget. He passed away June 7, 1992.

I visited her two days before her passing. She wanted to know all about the association at Laurel Creek. Then she said, there will be no more meetings here for me my time is near and I long to go home. The smile on her face was one I will never forget.

Funeral services were at Oakley's Chapel in Roanoke, September 11, 1998, by her pastor, Elder Kenneth Key and also, Elder Raymond Goad with interment at Restvale Cemetery, Floyd, VA.

Surviving her are fifteen nieces and nephews, who helped care for her in so many loving ways.

I miss her so much. We spent so many wondeful hours discussing the Church meetings, and each month the articles in the "Signs" and spiritual things. I loved her for Christ Sake, I hope ; but I know she would say as my father said, "Do not grieve for me; but do not forget me."

Written by request of Dan River Church.

Mildred S. Graham
October 1998

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SONG

THE cross of Christ inspires my heart,
To sing redeeming grace;
Awake, my soul, and bear a part
In my Redeemer's praise !

Oh ! who can be compared to him,
Who died upon the tree?
This is my dear delightful theme,
That Jesus died for me.

When at the table of the Lord
We humbly take our place,
The death of Jesus we record,
With love and thankfulness.

These emblems bring my Lord to view
Upon the bloody tree;
My soul believes and feels it true,
That Jesus died for me.

His body broken, nailed and torn,
And stained with streams of blood;
His spotless soul was left forlorn,
Forsaken of his God.

'Twas then his Father gave the stroke
That justice did decree;
All nature felt the dreadful shock,
When Jesus died for me.

My guilt was on my surety laid,
And therefore he must die;
His soul a sacrifice was made
For such a worm as I.

Was ever love so great as this ?
Was ever grace so free ?
This is my glory, joy and bliss,
That Jesus died for me.

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EDITORIAL

CHARITY

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." 1 Cor. 13:13.

Why is charity the greatest of these? Because when we depart this life we will no longer need faith nor hope, but charity will follow us across that river of death and remain in eternity. What is charity? Most of the world says it is gifts to help the poor and needy. This is true in a carnal, natural sense, yet Paul said, ***"Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."*** Some say that it is simply love. However, there are several kinds of love: the love of money which is the root of all evil: love of the world, which John says if any man have this love, the love of the Father is not in him,(1 Jn. 2:15); the natural love of family and friends: and the love of God which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. Rom.5:5. If we have not this love we are none of his; if we have this love it is because he first loved us. Jesus said unto certain Jews, ***"And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.--But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." Jn. 5:40 & 42.***

God is love. Because of his love he chose a people in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. If not deceived, I have a little hope that I am included. These are the mystical body of Christ who is the head of the body, the church, which is called his bride. Of this body we read in Ps. 139: 14-16, ***"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth, Thine eyes did see my sub-***

stance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." When God made the first man Adam and placed him in the garden of Eden, Eve and all the posterity of Adam was in him. God did know that Adam would transgress his holy law and die, therefore a covenant had been made between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; these three are one. This covenant was made that the Son might redeem his bride, and he stood as a Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. When Adam fell from his upright, innocent estate into sin and death all of his posterity fell in him. ***"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."*** All of us are sinners without any strength of our own, but, ***"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom.5:6 & 8.*** Jesus said. ***"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for a servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."*** John 15:12-15. Jesus was asked, Which is the great commandment in the law? And Jesus said, ***"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." "And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Matt.22:37-40.*** Paul said, ***"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Rom.13:10.*** Man in the flesh cannot fulfill the law. He must have charity within his heart, being led by the Holy Spirit working in him to will and to do of His good pleasure.

Charity. Godly love. Brethren, how can we show forth charity if we bite and devour one another? Paul said, ***"Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth."*** We are not doing this when we follow after the lusts of the flesh. Let us carefully examine every thought and action to see if we are in the Spirit or the flesh. Then let us seek the Lord in prayer. But let us ask in faith, not wavering, for we shall not receive anything of the Lord. There has been much following after the flesh in the past among the brethren, and there is evidence of such now, that has divided churches, and association of churches, throughout the land. This has caused much sorrow and heart aches among the brethren of the Old Primitive Baptist churches. Brethren, Paul beseeches us to walk together, ***"With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one***

another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." If we do this the God of love and peace shall be with us. ***"Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth." 1 Cor.13:4-8.*** Brethren, let us follow after charity.

Our God is love. Because of His love he gave us life in his beloved Son; and Jeremiah said, ***"The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Jer.31:3.*** The word lovingkindness is in the book of Psalms 21 times, many of which are in the prayers of David beseeching God for his loving kindness. In John 3:16 we read, ***"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."*** The word "so" in this scripture means,in a very particular manner, not "so much," as many advocate. What is this particular manner? In the 89th Psalm God speaks of his Son, saying, ***"My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail."*** His children have ever forsaken his laws, walked not in his judgments; ever brake his statutes, and kept not his commandments; therefore, because of his great love for them, he suffered the rod and the stripes that was theirs. ***"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." Isa.53:4-5. Verses 10-11, "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities."*** If Jesus had not suffered and died for our sins, and rose again for our justification we would still be by nature the children of wrath even as others. ***"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quick-***

ened us together with Christ." Eph.2:4-5.

If we have been quickened into life, then are we the children of God and he deals with us as sons. Surely David was a son of God, and he said, ***"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."*** In 1 John 3:1, ***"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God."*** In Heb.12 5-8, there is an exhortation as unto children saying, ***"My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth ever son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."*** And the 11th. verse says, ***"Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness."*** And the 14th verse says, ***"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."***

May we ever be blessed with hearts of charity, and to walk in the way of peace and holy righteousness. I desire to be remembered in your petitions before the throne of Grace.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES

GOD'S LOVE BESTOWED UPON US

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure." (John 3:1-3)

This is the season of the year when everyone is talking of brotherly love, and peace on earth and good will to all men. The world says that God's love is to all men everywhere; and that the only thing that is required of them, is that they accept it. This is not the love of God that is set forth in the above scripture; and is not the kind of love that says, ***"I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."***

I believe that one of the things that all of God's children have in common, is a heartfelt love for such scriptures as the one above, because their experiences teach them these truths. They may have many and varied experiences as they travel in this life: the Lord leads them in the way that pleases

him, in making himself known to them as their Saviour and King.

They may have been brought thru heavy trials, sorrows and heartaches; or He may have revealed himself to them in a sudden mysterious revelation of his love, mercy and grace, in a way they themselves can't explain. There is one thing sure, however, it will be in a way and manner that will cause them to realize that it was performed by the sovereign work of God; and not the result of any works performed by the creature. They will begin immediately to search the Scriptures; and they love to hear of the grace and mercy of an all wise, all powerful, omnipotent God, who works his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

They are made to acknowledge God in all their ways, and will no longer claim to be directing their own steps; or performing the works of God. They realize that they never would have chosen Christ as their Lord and Saviour since they did not even know that he existed until he made himself known to them. They now feel to know what the writers are speaking of in the scriptures, because the scriptures agree with their own experiences.

This love is bestowed upon God's children sovereignly, and independent of any conditions met by them; in the same manner as the rain and snow falls upon all the earth according to God's own pleasure. They realize that something wonderful has been done for them, and they sing, ***"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound."*** Or they read, ***"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us ;"*** and rejoice with joy unspeakable, because they now have a hope that they are included with this people. This also causes them to understand the scripture, ***"Except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."*** They feel to be, indeed, a new creature since this change occurred.

Their walk, their talk, and their whole life has been transformed within them. It is not visible to the world at large, but it is readily visible to those who have been along the same path. The individual may think that he is doing a pretty good job of hiding it, but this is the lamp that is not set under a bushel. It is seen by those who have been given an eye to see. The individual feels to be one alone at this time, for he desires to be accepted among the beloved; and yet he feels too unworthy to be counted among the children of God. These feel to be getting worse, in-stead of better. Their sincerest desire is to be kept from doing anything that would bring harm to the church, or to this precious truth, which is now their whole life. Oh, if they could only know the love and longing, reaching out to them from those who have seen the evidence manifested in their careful, fearful walk.

Their desire to be with the brethren, and hear them talk of these things, and sing the beautiful songs of praise;

and to hear the gospel of God our Saviour proclaimed to their comfort and understanding. They love to hear of the power, predestination, foreor-

dination, and purpose of God in saving his people from their sins, according to the good pleasure of His own will. How wonderful it is to believe a doctrine such as this, and then to have a hope that you see things in your travels that indicate God has so looked upon you!

As they continue to travel in this low ground of sin and sorrow, reading the experiences of others, hearing the gospel preached, reading the Scriptures, and, finally, after all attempts to be better (in their mind) as a child of God, they are made to acknowledge that it is not in man that walks, to direct his steps; and to acknowledge that it is only through the loving mercy of God that any will reach that heavenly home. All through this uneven journey they never lose sight of that hope that was set before them, when they were turned from their former ways. Though they will continue to have trials as long as they live in this world, in them all they will never lose that hope. ***"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither our forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."*** There is no foundation to which their hope could be anchored, to be more secure. It is as sure as God is God, and that Jesus Christ the Son was sent into the world to redeem that which was lost. This is the hope that purifieth the man in whom it dwells. (1 John 3:3)

This love that is bestowed upon the children of God, causes them to love one another with the same love wherewith they themselves are loved. It causes them to have all things in common, and each to prefer his brother above himself. It causes them to desire to be found at their brethren's feet in humble submission to that bond of love that unites their hearts and minds in prayer to God, for the manifold blessings which they have received from His bountiful hand, and his loving kindness towards them.

Yes, what wondrous love is this, O, my soul! May it ever fill the hearts of God's children while they travel this wilderness of sin. This love is what lifts them up above the things of this life, and makes them sit together in heavenly places in Christ, and feast on the tender riches of God's grace. As it is written, ***"And now abideth faith, hope, and charity; but the greatest of these is charity (love)."*** The greatest gift is love. This is a beautiful gift, for nothing except good comes from any actions prompted by this love dwelling in the hearts of His children.

God is the giver of every good and perfect gift. The scriptures teach that ***"God is love,"*** and, ***"We love him because he first loved us."*** Therefore, God in the riches of his mercy and grace, has given a little of himself to every one of his children; and this is sufficient for time and eternity, assuring all the heirs of promise an everlasting abode with him. ***"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God."***

"When love in one delightful stream
Through every bosom flows,
And union sweet and dear esteem
In every action glows.

Love is the golden chain that binds The happy souls above: And he's an heir of heaven that finds His bosom glow with love."

Herein lies their hope and prayer that this is the love that passeth all natural understanding, and that this is the seal wherewith their hope with Christ in God, is sealed.

May God bless the truth and seal it to his children to their joy and salvation for time and eternity.

Richard H. Campbell
2171 Allen Court
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November 24, 1998

Dear Elders and Editors: this is, for your consideration:

We believe there to be a true and Holy principal; embraced by the one true and ever living God and Creator, of all things; wherein, does declare of "God", having absolutely Predestinated all things; whatsoever does be or come to pass, in all time and eternity; and that all mankind, and devils, on earth or in hell; could never alter or change, one iota, of any part or portion, of all its entirety. Be it the thinking one thought; speaking one word; moving one muscle or taking one step in any direction that could be contrary to that which were in both His mind and purpose from before the foundation of this world.

We feel it to be a true and certain fact that in the life of mankind; much of the time; his weak and feeble mind is shifting from one thing to another and is often perplexed, confused, disappointed, surprised and ever wanting of something. In his carnal ways of thinking and reasoning there are accidental mishappenings, could have been, if so and so's; etc.

While, with the "God" none of those uncertainties could ever exist. For all that has to do with His operation of His government (which does include all things and doings) are, of an absolute unhindered certainty. For all whatsoever does; has already been, in both His mind and purpose. Which purpose being the fulfilling of His will; for so bringing all things and beings and time and times and places and spaces and beginnings and continuations and endings and consummations into existence. And every scintilla of all its entirety was and is appointed weighed, and measured. Confirmed and unalterably established, by Him. The very devil himself, and all his angels can do no more nor less; than to fulfill that exact purpose for which they were put here to do. For The Lord and God in whom I hope is my hope, my faith and my trust; could never make a mistake never be surprised; never be in want of anything nor in need of anything and most assuredly not from any poor, self-helpless, member of humankind

who's very fleshly nature is to deny, of His every attribute; transgress His every Holy and Righteous Law; and even to deny of His very being or existence. Now there we have some idea of that complete self untrustworthyness in and of all mankind in and of his or her own self. As much as be in accord with His will let it be imprinted in our heart and upon our mind and within our soul this very truth; It is "God", who doeth All the Good and it is mankind who doeth All the Sinning. So, let us give thought upon these things with a pure mind and find a true answer, to this question; Is it the God? or is it man? Who is deserving and worthy of All praise, honor and glory; both now, and forever more? My answer; God alone.

For, I feel to praise or honor man of himself or of herself is an attempt at the robbery of God and the dishonoring of His great and Holy name. For, as I feel it to be should any good, as be good in His sight, ever come forth through any of mankind such came about only through and by the God having worked in them both to will and to do of it.

For, within the very nature of mankind there is no thing or nothing that could cause them to even desire to please God by words or actions. The Lord God be willing; To furnish my every ability to that end; I shall relate here some of what I feel to be some of those points of truth which constitute or involve a true and pure belief in the Absolute Predestination of All things by The "God", and Creator of All things:

First of all; how does such belief come unto one? only through and by God the Holy Spirit coming into the heart of one removing its hard and stoney part and placing in its stead a softness, which does prepare that heart to receive those things of a Spiritual nature with an understanding of their true Spiritual meaning. Which is that process of being born again; Wherein the Holy Spirit is born in one, the hope of glory. Which hope, is the gift of God for them to live by throughout the remaining days of their life here upon this earth; which hope, is an anchor to their soul that they might avoid utter despair.

But it is through, and by, having received those blessed gifts or experiences one is given to see and feel his own self lowness, self helplessness and nothingness and sinfulness all the day long. That one is also given, as a free gift of God an eye of faith; whereby, he can, begin to look upward and see from whom all his blessings does come. And then at God's appointed time; that one, becomes fully persuaded that The "God" holds all things there in the palm of His hand to do with it all as be His own good pleasure and that none other can stay His hand or say what doeth Thou.

Whereby one becomes convinced that the absolute Predestination of "God" of All things does convey, that the exact same pure and Holy truth; as to say; God is absolutely sure and certain of all things. Or that He does all things well and good. Or that all He does is done for His own good pur-

pose. Or that He is of infinite wisdom, power and glory. Or that He did see the end from the beginning; and from ancient times the things not yet done; saying - My council shall stand and I will do all my pleasure; both in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. Or all whatsoever He does is done forever. And so it is to deny either one of the above is to deny them every one. Of which would be a denial of His very existence.

In order that we believe His truths; we first must believe that He is; And, in order that we in truth believe that He is, as He in truth be we must and shall, believe His Holy truths. For therein, exists no difference for He plainly is; Holy truth itself, Himself. God is not a man He is a Spirit; the very Holy Spirit of truth; of goodness; of mercy; of grace, of almighty power and glory. Heaven is His throne and the earth is His footstool. His almighty power, shall be known by all. If not before surely when He plants one foot upon the sea and one upon the land and declares, that time shall be no more. Then will come the end. When shall that be? None but He knoweth; no, not even the angels in heaven.

Yet, for some cause I feel that will come whenever His last chosen one is brought to the knowledge of His truths.

In hope, I could be one among them who are placed upon His right hand.

Troy G. Shepard

VOICES OF THE PAST

PLEASANT WORDS

"Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones." (Proverbs 16:24)

None but those who have experienced bitterness of soul can fully appreciate the sweetness of the doctrines of the Gospel. All of you who have been made to know your own weaknesses can truly rely upon the strength of God's love and power. If you have been sick unto death because of your many sins; then, words of grace and mercy are the only tonics to bring good health. If God has worked mightily in your soul in giving you eternal Life your taste has been so changed that words of worldly wisdom have lost their sweetness to you. Words gleaned from the Holy Scriptures which proclaim God's sovereignty, love, unchangeableness, promises, mercy, and grace; all have a peculiar sweetness which the unregenerated cannot taste. If you be so richly blessed that you possess a soul sweetened by the spirit of God's love; then, only pleasant words will flow from your mouth. Let us read the 23rd verse of the same chapter of Proverbs: ***"The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips."*** According to Proverbs 16:21— ***"The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the SWEETNESS OF THE LIPS increaseth learning."*** Both

bitter and sweet does not flow from the same fountain. If the heart has been sweetened, sweet words will flow through the lips. If a sinner has been shown the greatness of his sins, and has tasted the sweetness of God's grace; he will speak words of mercy to other sinners instead of words of condemnation. Whatever is in the heart usually comes forth from the mouth. If the heart be bitter, the words flowing from the mouth will also be bitter. Jesus said, ***"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things." (Matt. 12 :34-35.)*** Words are like arrows from a bow, they never return. Jesus said ***"That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."*** If you have this wisdom in your hearts, you will be very careful and cautious in speaking that you do not offend anyone. If you be angry, sin not. It is better to refrain from speaking when angry than to speak grievous words which will stir up anger. It is better to be silent when you cannot think of pleasant words to say. Bad words have wrought more evil than plagues, pestilences, battles, and diseases all put together. You may mend any possessions you keep near you; you may heal outer wounds of the body you may change your apparel; but, you cannot take away the sting that has disheartened some poor soul caused by a few careless words spoken by you.

There are words spoken which have done more separating than the wielding of swords. We ought to be very careful in our speaking, writing, and conversing.

When Christ sent forth the seventy into every city and place where He would come, He instructed them specifically and exactly the first words to be said upon entering a house: ***"PEACE be to this house."*** Even though these words might not be received by the occupants; yet, they were to be said by His ministers. You cannot think of a more pleasant blessing to be invoked than PEACE. No other word is more satisfying and pleasant than the word, PEACE. His ministers were not to wait until they obtained evidence thal everything was in order and that they would be wholly received before they said anything. They were instructed to say upon entering the house, ***"Peace be unto this house."*** Pleasant words were to be said which would be received into the souls of those who really desired peace. Yet there are those who do not seek after peace because they are satisfied with their own righteousness and their soul is full. This agrees with Proverbs 27:7, ***"The full soul loatheth a honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet."***

Pleasant words are as an HONEYCOMB. As my mind is dwelling upon the labors of a gospel minister in his constant search for the sweet nugget of precious truth so that he may be able to fitly speak words in season to the weary; my prayer now is—, Make me as one of Thy honeybees. As the

bee goes from flower to flower in gathering honey; may I be enabled to gather sweet gospel truths from the sacred Scriptures. As the bee deposits the honey into the honeycomb set in the hive, may I be able to feed wisdom words of knowledge and understanding into the empty souls which hunger for the truth in the church. As the bee especially gifted in gathering, processing and depositing honey; may I be endowed with special gifts to gather, properly speak, and store in the church special honey-drippings of God's spiritual sanctuary, the Word of Truth. The honey-drippings of the honeycomb is sweet to the taste of a natural man; so is the gospel truth sweet to the spiritual taste of believers. The sweetness of the gospel to the believer is the only thing we can think of that is said in the Scriptures to be sweeter than Honey. See Psalms 19:10. The tongue of the bee is peculiarly fitted to lap the nectar of the flowers, and the bee is considered to be the wisest of insects. The tongue of ministers is just as peculiarly gifted to speak the choicest of Scriptures and to lap from them fitting phrases to suit the need of hungry hearts in most-wisely dividing the word of truth. As bees abound in almost all parts of the natural world; even so ministering servants are found in almost all parts of God's spiritual kingdom. As bees cling to the queen-bee and make her dwelling place to be theirs; the fruitful children of God cling to the church, Christ's bride, and bring their treasures, spiritual gifts, into the church. When I speak of God's ministers I am including even those of least esteem of all laboring children of God.

God has ordained the growth and spread of the churches as He ordained the multiplication of the bees, and their habit of some leaving the home hive and establishing other dwelling places. Churches have flourished from a very small beginning and have so multiplied that new churches are continuing to be established. Some from one colony will leave their home place and establish a new colony. When members are constantly added to the church and new local churches are being constituted it shows a healthy state.

It is true of churches as is also true among bees. Sometimes poison is brought into the hive by bees, which will result in the death of that colony. Sometimes unscriptural doctrine and practice is initiated into a local church which will result in that local church dying. Sometimes ants or other insects will invade a colony of bees and kill them to such extent that they no longer exist. Sometimes enemies of the truth find their way into a local church and destroy it until it can no longer function. May God cause us to take inventory of our condition. God's work prospers. His Church grows. The Lord adds to His Church. Either the church of your membership is growing or becoming blighted or poisoned. Interest is either on the increase or decreasing. Faith of God's children is as a mustard seed. How is it like a mustard seed?? It grows!!! Movement is the sign of life. Good works are the evidence of faith. Is the honeycomb

dry? Is there no honey or sweetness when you come together? Sweet doctrines and practices, as well as sweet experiences are brought to the center, which is the church, where all feast together. Sweetness in fellowship, communion, and worship enriches God's storehouse where the saints gather. Is this true where you attend? I had rather be with a few where there is growth than to be with thousands where there is a decline. I prefer leaving a full house and begin in a new place where there is room for honey to be stored. When a family has been completed and children have become grown; one by one they leave their former places of dwelling and take on the responsibility of beginning new homes. There is progress in every realm of God's work. The same law of growth and multiplication works both in the natural and spiritual realm. When the Lord raises up leaders in His churches; when they become of age, they go out into new places to assume their ordained place and position to plant other churches. If it be of the Lord these new churches will prosper and grow. God's supply of Honey will never be exhausted. Hungry and thirsty souls shall ever increase so that there will always be room for it to be deposited. As long as we go forth in the right way the work of the Lord's chosen ones whom He hath ordained to glorify Him shall prosper.

His gospel shall be preached. There will ever be ears blessed to hear and hearts to understand. The sweetness of God's rich providence and amazing grace shall be measured and dropped into hearts that have been prepared to receive it.

I suppose that there is no other natural sweetness besides honey that comes to man already refined. Other sweets have to be condensed to make it sweeter and richer. The doctrines of the Scriptures are like honey. The Holy Sacred Scriptures are already condensed and refined. Try condensing honey further by burning and you get an unpleasant odor. Try condensing the Scriptures of Truth by leaving some out and overemphasizing others and it becomes unpleasant even to a soul desiring truth in its purity. God does not use ministers to lessen the importance of any scriptural teachings, but rather to rightly divide the word of truth. None is left out if the whole is rightly divided. There is a curse pronounced upon those who attempt to take away. Some might want to weaken the true teaching of the scriptures by adding the puny work of sinful man to make it coincide with opinions naturally believed. When this is attempted it is not pure doctrine. The doctrine relative to the sovereignty of God is sweet when positively affirmed and proved by the Scriptures, that God works all things after the counsel of His own will; yet, when the duty of man to fear God and keep His commandments is made less obligatory in stressing the point, it is over-emphasized, thus losing its sweetness and purity. On the other hand —: preaching the duty of man to fear God and keep His commandments cannot be over emphasized unless God's sovereignty is

limited to stress the point. It is not rightly dividing the word of truth when one undertakes to proclaim that man is in no way accountable, responsible, or obligated to keep God's law, in order to prove that God is sovereign. On the other hand — : it is not rightly dividing the word of truth when one proclaims that God does not work all things after the counsel of His own will, in order to emphasize the duty, obligation, and responsibility of man. May God's ministers continue to preach both: the sovereignty of God and the duty of man. I know full well that without HIM we can do NOTHING; yet, I know that we CAN DO all things through Him Who strengtheneth us. It is sweet to know that the prayers of His saints are not in vain. It is sweet to feel that He hears and answers prayers. It is sweet to believe not only that HE IS; but, He also is a REWARDER OF THEM THAT DILIGENTLY SEEK HIM.

Pleasant words are as an honeycomb; sweet to the soul, and HEALTH TO THE BONES. The wholesome words of our Lord are not only sweet to the soul in making it happy, but also heal the sick mind and bind up the broken heart; as well as, healing broken bones. These pleasant words give courage sufficient to go from faith to faith, and from strength to strength. They cause the inward man to be strengthened as honey causes the outward man to be built up. Written articles of faith and church covenants are made healthy by members who adhere to them and abide by them. The structure of church organization could not be healthy unless godly zealous gracious followers of Christ were the constituents. The structure may be well-founded but it will become unhealthy without the Spirit.

As God pours words of eternal life into our hearts and minds and makes us know the sweetness of His mercy and love, we should, also, pour words of comfort and encouragement into the ears of poor struggling sinners, making manifest mercy and grace to them. Jesus Christ died for sinners because He loved them; yet, He hated their sins. If we be Christ-like — and we are if He be born in us — we will even love those who persecute us; yet, hate their sins. If one goes into error we are to help save the erring brother; yet, help kill the error. We are to call no man unclean; yet, we are not to partake of his unclean deeds. We are commanded to speak softly, not angrily; pleasantly, not harshly; reasonably, not contentiously; and, we are commanded to love one another but not to hate.

If I had to choose one word in defining God and could use no other, I would choose the word LOVE. John said God is love. If I had to choose three words in summing up God's commandments, I would choose THOU SHALT LOVE. Jesus quoted two commandments upon which all the law and prophets hang. The second was like unto the first in that they both began with: Thou shalt love. Love is a pleasant word. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor. Where there is love there is peace. Where there is peace there is ease of conscience. Where

there is ease of conscience there is happiness. Where there is pure happiness there is Heaven. Where there is Heaven there God is. We taste it now and then. We experience such sweetness in these foretastes of Heaven that our desires are greatly encouraged with the hope that some sweet day after awhile, we shall be wafted into our eternal home above where we can feast forever upon those - sweets which are SWEETER THAN HONEY. May God add His blessings.

AMEN. E. J. L.

ROMANS 2:1

Elder Beebe: - Dear sir, as I have received much consolation in times past in reading the *Signs* and especially your expositions of portions of scripture, I would humbly request, although personally not acquainted with you, that you give your views through the *Signs* upon a portion of Scripture found in Romans 2 chapter, 1st verse, particularly what it is to judge another.

Yours, G. W. H.

Reply:—The text proposed for consideration reads thus, ***"Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest, for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself, for thou that judgest doest the same things."***

The apostle had been speaking of his calling as an apostle, and as such, of his indebtedness or obligation to preach to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews, to the barbarians as well as to the Greeks, and of the common level of guilt and condemnation to which mankind had fallen. Those who were of the circumcision had made manifest their depravity by sinning against law which had been given to them as such, while the barbarians unto whom the Sinai law had not been given were also convicted of the same depravity of their fallen nature in that the clear manifestation made of the eternal power and Godhead of Jehovah displayed in the visible things of the creation did not secure their veneration or worship of him as God. Had they not been depraved in their nature every manifestation of the power and Godhead would have filled them with reverence and love, but their aversion to the rational contemplation of the power and all pervading providence of God seen in every blade of grass, and in all the works of God, was indisputable evidence of their guilty state. They did not like to retain God in their thoughts, for when they know him, that is, as displayed in the things that are made, they worshipped him not as God, but grew vain in their imaginations and ran into gross idolatry, for which severe judgments were visited upon them. It is a thoroughly demonstrated truth that no amount of knowledge that a natural man has ever attained to, or ever can attain unto in their natural or unregenerated state, can ever lead them to love to retain God in their thoughts or tend or qualify them to worship him as God. And it will remain forever true that ***"Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."*** While such was evidently the deplorable condition of the Gentiles, the Jews were making their boast in the law, in that law which

had been given specially to them as the children of Israel, and trusted in the law. They inferred from the peculiar privileges which they enjoyed over the Gentiles that they were more holy in the sight of God, and that they, being of the circumcision and the descendants by immediate generation from Abraham, were fully justified before God; under this delusion they did not hesitate to judge the heathen, or the Gentiles. Hence their prejudice against the Gentiles was so great that they concluded that there was no salvation for them, and the prejudice so frequently manifested by the Jews, when our Lord condescended to associate with publicans or sinners, and against the apostles when they were charged with bringing Greeks into the temple, and thereby defiling the holy place. Now the apostle is showing the obligation resting on him to declare, even among the Gentiles, the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ, makes the declaration of our text, and confirms it by arguments and testimony throughout the chapter. *"Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man"*— Who? What man? Whosoever thou art that judgest another. The Jew in judging the Gentiles as being sinners, heathen, idolators, barbarians, and under the wrath of heaven, were condemning themselves for notwithstanding all their boasted advantage of the law dispensed to them, the apostle says they were also guilty of the same things. Did they judge the Gentile guilty because they worshipped idols? They, the Jews, also committed sacrilege. Therefore while they judged and condemned the Gentiles for idolatry, stealing, adultery, etc., they condemned themselves in the judgment they gave against their neighbors because they themselves were guilty of the very things which they judged others to be guilty of. Indeed this is expressly given in the text, as the reason why they were inexcusable, *"for thou that judgest doest the same thing."*

And it is also true if the Gentiles judge the Jews, in condemning them as sinners, if we are found guilty of the same things, we condemn ourselves. Hence the general application of the rule, *"O man, whosoever thou art,"* whether Jew or Gentile.

Rivers of blood are now flowing in defense of the various kinds of religion of the earth. The war between Russia and Turkey, involving France and England and nearly all of Europe, is a religious war. Each party has judged the other heterodox. The Mohammatan, the Papal, the Protestant and the Grecian religions are all involved and each party in defense of what they regard their holy religion. While both parties in the Celestial Empire are fighting for their religion, and in every instance, in judging each other, each party named condemns itself for all humanly invented religions are of a piece, and all are wrong. None but the religion of Jesus Christ, as revealed from heaven, is approved of God. To those who possess that religion which is from above, judgment is given. The saints shall judge the world; yea, he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

Middletown, N.Y., April 15, 1854
G.W.H / Elder Gilbert Beebe

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS

(The last article on the subject by Elder Gilbert Beebe, written not long before his passing -- published in the Signs October 1, 1880.)

The Old School or Primitive Baptists in former years have been very definitely identified and distinguished from all other religious or ecclesiastical organizations as PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, and as such have borne reproach and vituperation from those who hold more limited views of what we regard as the absolute and all-pervading government of God over all beings, all events, and all worlds. With deep solicitude and painful concern we have witnessed in the preachings and writings of some of our brethren a disposition to so yield or modify the doctrine as to limit its application to such things as the carnal mind of man can comprehend or the wisdom of this world can approve.

While some will concede that all things that they regard as pure and holy are ordained or predestinated of God, they deny that the absolute government of God does dictate by absolute decree the wicked works of wicked men and devils, for that, they say, would make God the *author of sin.* They therefore set up their judgment, and set bounds for Infinite Wisdom to be restricted to, and beyond which limitation he must not extend his government, without subjecting himself to their censure as an unjust God and the author of sin. But how lamentable is the infatuation of poor, blind mortals, when

"The vain race of flesh and blood
Contend with their Creator, God;
When mortal man presumes to be
More holy, wise or just than he."

There are undoubtedly many of the dear people of God who feel jealous for the glory of God, and who, without any aspiring ambition to be wise above what is written in the sacred scriptures, from inability to comprehend the two great parallel mysteries of *godliness* and of *iniquity,* have felt a commendable concern lest in our weakness we should impute to God aught that would reflect on his adorable perfections, or withhold from him that which he has ordained for the manifestation of his glory. It certainly becomes us, as finite beings, to speak of him and of his government with fear and trembling. He is the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, and his name is Holy. His attributes are veiled in that infinity which no finite being can by searching find out.

He keepeth back the face of his throne, the place and power of his government, and spreadeth his cloud upon it. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts higher than our thoughts. The standard of infinite purity and holiness is the will of God. There can be no higher law than the will of God, for only to the standard or counsel of his own will and pleasure does he himself conform. ***"He worketh all things after***

the counsel of his own will."—Eph. i. 11. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isa. xlvi. 10.

In this connection he says, ***"I am God and there is none like me." And in the revelation of the Lamb, in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells. "The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat upon the throne, and worship him that liveth forever and ever and cast their crowns before the throne saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." - Rev. iv. 10, 11. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind o the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? or who hath first given to him, an it shall be recompensed unto him again For of him, and through him, and by him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen."—Romans xi. 33-34.***

When God created the heavens and the earth no other power than his own was employed, no wisdom but his own was consulted, nor was there any other than his own will to dictate what honor for what purpose anything should be created. As a potter has power over the clay, it is his right to form his vessels as he pleases; and if he forms of the same lump vessels to honor and vessels to dishonor, who shall dispute his right to do so?

The prophet says God is the potter and we are the clay; then, ***"What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."—Rom. ix. 21-23.*** Dare any of us poor, finite worms of the dust dispute the sovereign right of God to do all his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth? ***"Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"***

How appropriate and forcible are the words of Job, ***"Hell is naked before him (God), and destruction hath no covering. He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them. He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it. He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end. The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof. He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud. By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts***

of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him ? but the thunder of his power who can understand?"— Job xxvi. 6-14.

Can we contemplate the awful majesty, profound wisdom, deep and unsearchable counsel, infinite goodness, unerring workmanship in all that he has condescended to let us know of his great and marvelous works, from the spreading abroad and garnishing of the wide heavens, down to the formation of the crooked serpent, and still stand in doubt of his predestinating power and unrestricted government over all beings, all worlds, and all events?

Are death and hell and all things naked before him, and destruction uncovered to his all-seeing eye, and yet unlimited by his power and wisdom ? Has he stretched out the north, and balanced the earth upon nothing, without any design, purpose or decree concerning their subsequent destiny? Has God bound up the waters in this thick cloud, and ***"given to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment," (Prov. viii. 29,)*** and yet left all to the vagary of chance? When he set his throne above the heavens, was it to be the place of no power in controlling the destiny of all things in heaven and earth and hell? For about six thousand years the sun, moon and stars have with exactness filled their respective orbits, and without the variation of a second of time from their creation made all their revolutions, in obedience to the decree of the Creator. Is it by chance that ***"The heavens (thus) declare the glory of God, and the firmament showing his handiwork?"***

But, say some to whose minds the doctrine of the universal government is obscure: We admit that God has predestinated some things, but do not admit that he has predestinated all things which come to pass. Let us see how this partial or limited government would accord with the divine record. Suppose that in what we have been contemplating of the heavens, we should find the sun and moon, and all the stars but one, held firmly to their orbits by the irresistible will and decree of God, and that one solitary star, without any fixed orbit, is allowed to range the infinity of space, wandering with more than lightning velocity, guided only by chance; where would be the safety of all the other stars? what would become of the predestination of those heavenly bodies intended to be preserved from hazard by the decree of God?

To us it has been a comforting thought that God has set the bounds of our habitation on the earth, and the number of our months is with him, and our days are appointed to us as the days of an hireling, who cannot pass his bounds; but what assurance of safety would that afford, if he has left murderers and blood-thirsty men or devils unrestricted by his predestinating decree? To our mind, either everything or nothing must be held in subjection to the will and providence of God. Even the wickedness of ungodly men is restricted by predestination, so that ***"the wrath of man***

shall praise God, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain."

> ***"Pains and deaths around us fly—***
> ***Till he bids us we cannot die;***
> ***Not a single shaft can hit***
> ***Unless the God of heaven sees fit."***

For death and hell can do no more than his hand and counsel have determined shall be done. Does this make God the author of sin? or, in other words, does this make him a sinner, or charge on him an imputation of impurity? By no means. Against whom is it possible for God to sin? Is he amenable to any law above himself? If so, by what law can he be indicted, in what court can he be tried or convicted? How preposterous! It is his eternal right to do all his pleasure, ***"Nor give to mortals an account, of his actions or decrees."***

It savors of atheism to deny that he is the self-existent, independent God who has created all things for his own sovereign will and pleasure. And if it be admitted that he had a right to create the world, and all worlds, it must then be also admitted that he had a right to create them according to his own will and pleasure. Worms cannot charge him with error because he did not assign them a more exalted place in the creation, or for creating them worms instead of men. Men cannot justly charge him for not creating them angels, nor angels because he did not make them Gods. The world, with its infinite variety of living creatures, from the minutest insect to the most huge monster, as well as man, were all made for the pleasure of their Maker, and all must subserve the exact purpose for which they were made.

Even the crooked serpent, as well as the harmless dove, all were pronounced good in their respective places; not good in the sense in which God is good, but because they were precisely what he intended or predestinated them to be. Had the serpent been straight, or the dove crooked, or if the things made has been different from what the Creator intended, there would have been a defect in the workmanship. We cannot, with such exalted views as we entertain, think that God has ever failed to secure the perfect accomplishment of his own design or purpose in anything he has ever done. The entrance of sin into the world, and death by sin, which by the offense of one man has passed upon all mankind, was no unprovided-for event with him, to whose eyes sin, death and hell have no covering. The eternal purpose which God had purposed in himself before the world began was sufficiently perfect and comprehensive to include all that could or can possibly transpire, or he would not have declared the end of all things from the beginning. ***"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." —Acts xv. 18.***

But there are many who admit the foreknowledge of God, and yet deny his determinate counsel, on which the certainty of all the events of time depends. Men may have a limited foreknowledge of things which God has

made certain by his determinate counsel and irrevocable decrees, as it is said, The living know that they must die; but God's foreknowledge depends on nothing outside of himself, for he has challenged the universe to tell with whom he has taken counsel, or who has instructed him. To us it seems perfectly clear that nothing could be foreknown that was undetermined, and that the foreknowledge and determinate counsel of God are insepable.

It is also generally admitted that in the salvation of his people, ***"Whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son," (Romans viii 29)***; but that the well beloved Son of God was delivered into the wicked hands of men to be crucified by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, is not so readily admitted. The wicked works of those who crucified the Lord of glory were not foreknown by his murderers; but it was foreknown and determined of God.

Peter said, to those whom he charged with the wickedness of killing the Prince of life, ***"I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled."—Acts iii. 17, 18. "For of a truth against thy holy child of Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."—Acts iv. 27, 28.***

The wickedness of men in betraying and crucifying our Lord had been positively predicted from the days of Abel, in what God spake to the fathers by the prophets, and by what was signified by all the offerings which were made under the former dispensation. The pieces of silver for which he was betrayed were counted and declared hundreds of years before Judas was born; and the dividing of his garments, and the lot cast for his seamless robe, was determined of God and declared by the prophets. The history of Joseph, and the wickedness of his brethren, was in fulfillment of his dreams, and in accordance with the purpose in which Joseph said, God meant it for good.

It has been said by some that these great events which God has overruled for good were ordered of the Lord, but that the smaller matters, and the wickedness of men, were not predestinated.

Our Savior has informed us that the determinate counsel of God in his all-pervading providence numbers the hairs of our head, so that not a hair can fall to the ground without him; even the little sparrows are protected, and the *ravens are provided with food by his* determinate counsel. And Paul assures us that ***"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."***

It seems to us unreasonable, as well as unscriptural, to say that the gov-

ernment of God directs and controls some things, and that other things are left to the control of men or devils. If God's government extends only to the good deeds of men, then is his absolute *government totally excluded; for "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one." —Rom. iii. 10-12.* We would not limit the government of our God, nor, because we cannot comprehend his designs, dare to say he has no designs.

"He in the thickest darkness dwells, Performs his works, the cause conceals;
But, though his methods are unknown,
Judgment and truth sustain his throne.

"In heaven, and earth, and air, and seas,
He executes his firm decrees;
And by his saints it stands confess'd That what he does is always best."

Men act voluntarily when they commit sin; they have no more knowledge of or respect for the purpose of God, than Joseph's brethren or Potiphar's wife had in his case, for there is no fear of God before their eyes. It is even so with the princes of this world; if they had known Jesus, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But it was needful that Joseph should be cast into prison, and it was expedient that Christ should suffer; therefore that knowledge was withheld from the persecutors of Joseph and of Jesus, until they should fill up the cup of their wickedness. And it is thus in the wisdom of God that the world by wisdom shall not know him. Yet such is the wisdom, power and righteous government of our God that he can and does set the exact bounds by which the wickedness of men and devils is limited, and beyond which they cannot go. Satan is bound a thousand years with a great chain, and after the thousand years he shall be loosed for a short time. With all his rage and malice he is restricted by the supreme power and decree of God, to do no more nor less than what God will overrule for the good of his people and for his own glory. And thus also, *"God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction,"* as in the case of Pharoah and the Egyptians, hardening the heart of Pharoah until all the plagues and judgments were accomplished, and his own almighty power and glory were then made known in delivering the Hebrews, and in overwhelming Pharoah and his host in the Red Sea. *"Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will be hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay, but O man, who art thou*

that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"— Romans ix. 17-22.

The apostle, fully aware of the disposition of the carnal mind to cavil and reply against the sovereignty of God in the execution of his pleasure, did not attempt to apologize for God, or so to modify the doctrine as to render it less objectionable to the carnal mind; but he called attention to the infinite disparity, between the infinitely wise, holy and omnipotent God, who holds our everlasting destiny, and by whose long-suffering we are permitted to live, and poor, finite, depraved, short - sighted man, and the daring presumption and extreme folly of questioning the justice or wisdom of God in working all thing after the counsel of his own will. We regard it as a very serious matter to charge that God cannot govern the world, by his own determinate counsel wisdom and power, according to that eternal and immutable design or purpose purposed in himself before the world began, without subjecting him self to the charge of being the author of sin. Sin is the transgressions of a law under which the transgressor was justly held amenable, and to the penalty to which he is subject. But we have endeavored to show that God is under no law but that of his own will and pleasure, and therefore he doeth his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. He could by no law be held under obligation to leave the affairs of this world or any part of them to be governed by chance, or be the will of men. As he is in one mind, and none can turn him, his purposes are eternal, like himself. His decrees being perfect from everlasting, admit of no improvement or change. If he had not the right to predestinate all things pertaining to the events of time before he created the world, we ask what right has he acquired subsequently to execute the orders of this throne? If it had been his pleasure to have prevented sin from entering into the world, can we doubt his power or wisdom or ability to have done so? If sin has entered this world in opposition to his will, or because he had not the wisdom and power to prevent its entrance, what assurance have we that it will not also enter the world to come? But it is to our mind far more consistent with what God has graciously made known to us of his being and attributes, to believe that God had a purpose worthy of himself, however in scrutable to us, in regard to the entrance of sin, as well as in regard to at things else. He bids us "***Be still, an know that he is God.***" To our feeble mind the conclusion is unavoidable, that the predestination of God either controls all things or nothing.

We look at a vast complicated machine, with its ten thousand wheels. We cannot comprehend or understand its workings, but we are told that the machinist has a perfect knowledge of all its parts save one; there is a definite use for every wheel and spring, but one is held in the machine which has no certain motion or definite use. How long could that machine run in safety, with the unruly part liable at

any moment to throw the whole into confusion? We eannot see how any part of the government of God can be absolute and secure, if God has not the undivided government of the whole in all its parts; and if he has today the full control, had he not the same control yesterday and forever? If he has not the full control today, is there any certainty that he will have tomorrow or at any future period? If we admit that God absolutely governs all things according to the counsel of his own will, and that he is immutable, then we must admit that he has determined what shall and what shall not transpire in time or in eternity. But to deny his universal control of all things, including all principalities and powers, thrones and dominions, things present or to come, whether they be visible or invisible, is to deny that he is the God of the whole earth, and virtually deny his eternal power and Godhead. If he has not the power and wisdom to determine events, how can he cause all things to work together for good to them that love him?

But while we hold that he is supreme in power, and that he works all things after the counsel of his own will, we are certain that he reigns in righteousness, and that there is no unrighteousness with him. To admit the universal government of God, is to admit the predestination of all things, from the falling of a sparrow to the dissolution of a world. In the absence of predestination, with what certainty could the Holy Ghost inspire the holy prophets and apostles to foretell all that should ever eome to pass? If it were undetermined in the purpose of God, how could the apostles tell us of perilous times that should come in the last days, of apostasy from the faith, and spiritual wickedness in high places?

But we will submit these remarks to the consideration of our readers, and desire that what we have written may be carefully tested by the infallible standard, the scriptures, and received only so far as they are sustained by the word and spirit of our God.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe -- October 1, 1880.)

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DRINKING FROM A SAUCER

I've never made a fortune
And it's probably too late now,
But I don't worry about that much,
I'm happy anyhow.
As I go along life's journey
I'm reaping better than I sowed. I'm
drinking from my saucer
Cause my cup has overflowed.

Ain't got a lot of riches,
Sometimes the goings rough,
But I got a kid that loves me,
That makes me rich enough.
I just thank God for his blessings,
And the mercy he has bestowed.
I'm drinking from my saucer
Cause my cup has overflowed.

And I remember times when things went wrong,
And my faith got a little thin,
But then all at once the dark clouds broke,
And the old sun broke through again.
So Lord, help me not to gripe,
About the tough rows I've hoed.
I'm drinking from my saucer
Cause my cup has overflowed.

And if God gives me the strength and courage
When the way gets steep and rough,
I won't ask for other blessings, I'm already blessed enough.
And may I never be too busy
To help another bear his load.
I'm drinking from my saucer
Cause my cup has overflowed.

Sent in by Sister B.G.

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EDITORIAL

THE LOVE OF GOD

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

According to the writings of the Apostle Paul, the most important ingredient in the life of the child of God is love, for he said (I Cor. chap. 13, vs. 1) "***Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling symbol. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could move mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all of my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.***" Paul has listed here the characteristics of those things which are the evidences of the spirit in a child of God's life in his journey through this low ground of sin and sorrow; and he says that they are all worthless unless they are accompanied by charity, yea prompted by charity in the heart of the individual. Love is the basis of all that is good and well pleasing in the sight of God. God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him and from there proceeds all of the good works that adorn the household of faith.

Love is the most beautiful and wonderful evidence of the grace of God in the heart of the children of the most high. Faith and hope are also evidences of that grace, but they vary in the different seasons and times in the experiences of the elect, but, love in the earlier days of their spiritual life is never forgotten, and will always be the most constant reminder of the change in their lives and the reason for the hope that dwells in their breast. They will ever remember and long for those happy days when love was new and fresh in their lives as they travel down the pathway of life, and as the faith and hope seem to dim from time to time; they will recall those seasons of pure joy and ecstacy as they viewed, for the first times, the glory of the kingdom of God and the experiencing of the love

and the fellowship with those of like precious faith. David's cry was at one time (Psa. chap. 51, vs. 12) "***Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me by thy free spirit.***" Though faith and hope may fade or wane in this life, the memory of those days when faith hope and love, all three, were so sweet and present in their life, the memory causes them to pray unto God that they will not be taken from them; as Paul went on to say and now abideth faith hope and charity, and the greatest of these is charity. Faith and hope are for our lives, in this world, but love continues with God's children on into that better world and life. Love is the single most important characteristic that holds it all together, take that away, and you have man with the word but without the spirit. God is a spirit and God is love and the spirit of love,(charity) is the difference between, the elect and the non elect, because even though men did all of the works required of them under the law, but had not love, he was nothing. You can just sense this love in the heart of another simply by beholding their countenance and observing their walk; charity suffereth long, is kind, envieth not, vaunteth not itself, rejoiceth in truth, beareth all things, endureth all things is patient and never fails. This demeanor sets them apart from the man of the world and causes them to seek their own kind, for love and fellowship in the things that are so precious unto them, and these are the things that matter most to those who have once tasted this love in the depths of their heart and soul.

All of the above experiences are the results of love in the hearts of God's children and it is beautiful to behold and experience; but how much greater is the love of God for his children. (I Jno. Chap. 3 vs. 1) "***Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.***" All of the above effects upon the heirs of promise is because of that love, of the Father, that was bestowed upon them, so how much greater is that love than the one that man experiences. Of course, God's love inspires the love that is in the heart of the believer but how much greater is love, at its source, than the results of it in the hearts of his children, who are also flesh. God's love is pure and undefiled and transcends the barrier between the holiness of the Father and the corruption of the flesh; it manifests that great gulf between those in the bosom of Abraham and those confined to the depths of hell. Its presence or lack of it in the heart of man is the thing that determines the place to which every man will spend eternity, and its presence is the gift of God.

The most beautiful, wonderful and magnificent attribute of God, in the hearts and minds of his children, is his love for them and the complete and eternal characteristics of that love. He loves them with an everlasting love, and time and circumstances do not alter or diminish that love for them at any time, they are ever the objects of that love, regardless of their standing insofar as righteousness in the sight of

God is concerned at any given point in time: as David said (Psa. 139 vs. 7-8) ***"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or wither shall I flee from thy presence? if I acsend up to heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there."*** David was acknowledging that he was ever present before God, wherever he was, and ever under the watchful care of his tender love and mercy, even in his most trying times. God did not cast him aside when he went in to Bethsheba and had Uriah killed and took her to him for his wife; David was punished for his sin and made to acknowledge his wickedness, but from this union came forth Solomon and Solomon was greatly blessed of God and was of the lineage to Christ. This is a demonstration of the depth and unchangeableness of God's love for all of his children; all are blessed to see that there is nothing that they can do that would cause God to cast them away, if they are indeed his; just as there was nothing that they did to cause him to love them originally. If they were ever in that chosen generation, they always will be, and they have been given a reason to believe that they are, and that what they have been given is the earnest of the inheritance that is laid up for the saints of God.

In the beginning when he formed man of the dust of the earth, after he had created all things, he beheld his work and said it was very good. He had a very special love for man, as he created him, and sin entering the world and contaminating the man did not change that love. Man changes regularly, daily, but God does not; he knew what man was and what he would do from the beginning and made provisions for the restoration of his chosen generation, and peculiar people unto their promised possession. When man fell and judgement was pronounced upon him, there was a distinction made between those whom God had chosen, those created in the days of the creation, and those that were of their father the devil. This chosen generation is the one to whom all scriptures are written and to whom all of the promises were made; they are the ones upon whom the love of God was bestowed, and as are all of his works, they are perfect and eternal. That love had no beginning and will have no end, for the scriptures record (Mal. Chap. 3,vs. 6) " ***For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."*** and this being true, his love for them is as old as he is and is as eternal as he is or else he would have had to have changed at some time and begin loving them or to change at some time and cease to love them and this is simply not in harmony with all of the other attributes of the Lord God. He is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient and therefore does not change, for to do so, he would have to become better or worse by the change and therefoe would not be perfect in all his ways.

One of the first testimonies, in so many words, of God's love for his children, is found in Deuteronomy when God declared to the children of Israel how they should conduct themselves

when he had delivered their enemies into their hands; they were to utterly destroy them, tear down their altars and enter into no covenants or marriages with them. Then in explaining the reasons for this he said, (Deut. Chap. 7, vs. 6-7-8) ***"For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God; the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all the people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye are more in number than any people; for ye are the fewest of all people: But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of Pharoah king of Egypt."*** Because they were a special people unto God, they were to keep themselves separate from the nations around them and not to be in any way contaminated by their cultures and idols; they were to keep themselves holy unto him, they were not to have any god before him and they were to refute the world and all of the fleshly pleasures that it offered and give themselves wholely unto him.

All down through time the Lord has manifested the love that he has for his people by leading them and directing them in all their ways. He would deliver them into the hands of their enemies for their sins, then when they would repent and return to him he delivered them out of bondage to their enemies and restored them into the land that he had given them for an inheritance; they would rebel again, and he would deliver them again into the hands of the nations around them for their iniquities but he always forgave them and returned them to the fold when they repented of their sins and turned to him again and prayed for deliverance. Solomon, when he dedicated the temple, prayed unto God that when the nation of Israel were in bondage and afflictions for their sins and turned toward the temple which he had built, and prayed unto God that he would hear their prayer in their distresses and deliver them from their enemies or their oppressions, this he promised to do, and this thing he did. He would chasten them and punish them for their transgressions, but, he was longsuffering and full of mercy and never forsook nor despised them.

He never utterly destroyed them because, they were his own peculiar treasure that he had formed for himself and because of the everlasting love that he had for them and in accordance with the promise that he made to Abraham, that in him all nations of the world would be blessed. He told them on one occasion that he did this not for their sake, but, for his own holy names sake; he had sworn unto Abraham and was bound by that promise to preserve them for his own names honor and glory.This is love eternal and it is without bounds; no matter what they did God loved them just as much as he did when he created them in his own image, and placed them in the garden to dress and keep it. God

knew what man was, and all about him, and loved him in spite of his faults.

You have seen this demonstrated in nature, when the parent would give everything they owned to deliver a wayward child from the deserved consequences of his actions and still love him in spite of his faults. Some might say that is foolish and spoiling the child and adding to his problems, but in nature, sometimes love blinds the eye to the error of their ways. The love that the parent has for the child will cause them to do things they would not do otherwise because of the love that they have for them. God's love is many times greater than the love of man in nature, for their own children, and much more sure and certain; the natural man will reach the end of his strength, or die, and be unable to continue to support and care for their children. God is eternal and will never leave nor forsake his children. he will never reach the end of his strength and certainly will never die; he will ever be there to care for and supply their every need, not necessarily their every want. (II Pet. Chap. 5,vs 6-7) "***Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.***" There is no place more secure and permanent than to be in the sheepfold where the shepherd, the Son of God, is watching over you, for good, because you are his sheep and because he loves you with a love that is beyond description; insomuch that he laid down his own life that you might have life eternal. (John Chap. 13, vs. 13) "***Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.***" This is the ultimate in love, that God gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life, and he did this for them when they were dead in tresspasses and sin.

(Rom. Chap. 5,vs. 10) "***For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.***" The Apostle Paul was called when he was in deadly pursuit of the children of God, with every intent of bringing them bound unto Jerusalem for trial and possibly death, and yet he was one for whom Christ had laid down his life; he was certainly an enemy of Christ, as he said, speaking of himself, that he was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious to the cause of Christ, but he obtained mercy. This is the only way that one comes to Christ, and that is by the mercy of God. The world says you must repent and turn to Christ; Paul didn't, he was changed in a moment of time from being a persecutor to being a preacher of righteousness, and not because he made the decision: the decision was made for him and that decision was made a long time before that day on the road to Damascus. His repentence was when he was made to see his actual condition before a holy and just God worthy of death and the confines of hell and not, as some have said, when he began to see the error of his ways at the stoning of Steven: his change was when he met Christ and

experienced the calling and the power of his calling, and saw himself a sinner before God whom he thought he was serving, til that moment in time.

The world quotes John Chapter 3 verse 16 as evidence that God loves everyone, and if they will just let him, he will save them. This 16th verse is just one sentence in a conversation between Nicodemus and Christ, and the first staement in that conversation, by Jesus was that, Ye must be born again and certainly verse 16 agrees with the statement made in verse 3. (I John Chap 5, vs 1) states "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him." This seems to link the two statements together irrefutably and is written by the same author that recorded the two verses in the book of St. John. To believe that Jesus is the Christ, Ye must be born again and this is the sovereign work of almighty God, not the irresponsible decision of man in the flesh. Paul says (I Cor. Chap. 12, vs. 3) "***Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.***"

(John Chap. 15, vs. 16) " ***Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: the whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.***" This statement declares beyond reproof that the salvation of the children of God is of God and not man. God declares, by the prophet Ezekiel, the plight of Israel when he first loved them as being this way (Eze. Chap. 16,vs. 6) "***And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live.***" This was illustrating the nation of Israel as a child that was just born, whose naval was not cut neither was it washed in water to supple it, not salted nor swaddled. Then he said, it was the time of love and, he washed thee with water, and he said, yea I throughly washed thee, and entered into covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine. Pray tell me how much did this infant contribute to that covenant or how did he accept or reject the terms of the agreement. That infant was no more instrumental in his being loved of God than any of the individuals of the nation of Israel were in being the chosen nation; he contributed nothing to it, but it was bestowed upon the infant representing the nation of Israel, in the same manner that it was upon the Apostle Paul, and he said, "***But by the grace of God I am what I am;***" It is all of grace and not of any merit due to the creature.

God is love, and all love emanates from him; man loves only after he is first loved of God. In the flesh, man loves the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life and these things are not of the Father. John said (John Chap. 2, vs. 15)

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." The love of the Father is that which separates the man in nature from the love of the things of nature and replaces it with the love that Jesus spoke of to his disciples after washing their feet; (John Chap. 13,vs. 34-35) ***"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."*** This love is that which shows forth in the countenance of every child of God as they come forth asking for a home with the church, it is the most precious possession that they have. It has caused their brethren in ages past to bear torture, cruel scourgings, being sown asunder, slain by the sword, afflicted, tormented, to wander in deserts, mountains, caves and be counted as the offscouring of the earth, but, yet it has enabled them to endure to the end. It was not that they were stronger than you, they were just blessed with a dispensation of that love that would not let them deny their faith and their calling. You would be too, if occasion required it.

(Heb. Chap. 12, vs. 1-2) ***"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."*** In this day and age, the children of the heavenly king have that same cloud of witnesses in their life, they walk by faith and not by sight, they trust in God to lead them and enable them to do those things that are required of them as their brethren did in ages past. We read and learn of the sore trial and afflictions that the prophets endured and feel that we could not stand the test, as they did, but they could if it was required of them because the scriptures state that he will not let them be tempted above that that they are able to stand. That promise that was made in those days is still as true today as it was in the day that it was originally written; God gives his children strength sufficient for the day, when much is required much is given. The love of God supplies the strength, courage and ability for that which is required of you; for it is God working in you both the will and the do of his good pleasure.

(Isaiah chap. 41, vs. 17-18) ***"When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys, I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water."*** The Lord God, the one who because of the great love that he has for his children is ever watching over them for good; when

they feel to be alone and there is no one to care for them, and they are in great distress, they are made aware from time to time in their experience that their God truly does not ever leave them or forsake them: but is always their keeper and their guide. He supplies their need when it seems impossible that there is a way out of the dilemna that they have gotten themselves into. This is why the love of God is so sweet and precious to the hearts of his chosen people and then to think that it is everlasting.

May the grace of God be with us all throughout our journey here on earth, and may it always be accompanied by a special dispensation of that love that first appeared to us in our experience and bring the same joy and sweetness that we experienced then. If that be true we could live out our days in peace and harmony with our brethren and depart this life without fear or aprehension. The love of God is the very essence of his being and the most cherished characteristic in the minds and hearts of the elect. It is the bond that binds them unto him closer and stronger than any of the ties to nature; it will not let them follow after other idols because they know there that is no God other than the one who created the heavens and the earth and all things for their sake. We love him because he first loved us and therefore that love has all of the power of the Godhead behind it and cannot fail because all things are upheld by the word of his power.

In bonds of love
Richard H. Campbell

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

LAUREL RIDGE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Laurel Ridge Primitive Baptist Church is located at 5601 Roselawn Road in the Cave Spring area of Roanoke County, Virginia. Our regular meeting times are each third Saturday afternoon at 2:00 (singing at 1:30) and third Sunday morning at 11:00 (singing at 10:30). Our communion service is the third Sunday in May. Our pastor, Elder Leonard J. Brammer, has served us continuously and faithfully for over forty-one years, and the Lord has blessed him to proclaim the doctrine of salvation by grace, the sovereignty of Almighty God and the total depravity of man.

Our church records date back to October, 1825; the records prior to that time were lost. The first meeting house was a small log structure with a balcony inside. The church stood in a grove of trees near the location of the present building.

A frame building was built around 1897 and the name of the church was changed from Laurel Ridge to Bellview at the request of the deacon, George M. Bell, who deeded the land to the church for the new building.

In 1975, the new brick building was built and the name was changed back to the original name of Laurel Ridge.

We are blessed with sweet meetings and we pray the Lord will see fit in his infinite mercy to continue to bless us and all those that are given a mind to come worship with us. We have twenty-two members at present and many friends who visit us from time to time for which we are very thankful.

Humbly, Mary Ann Conner

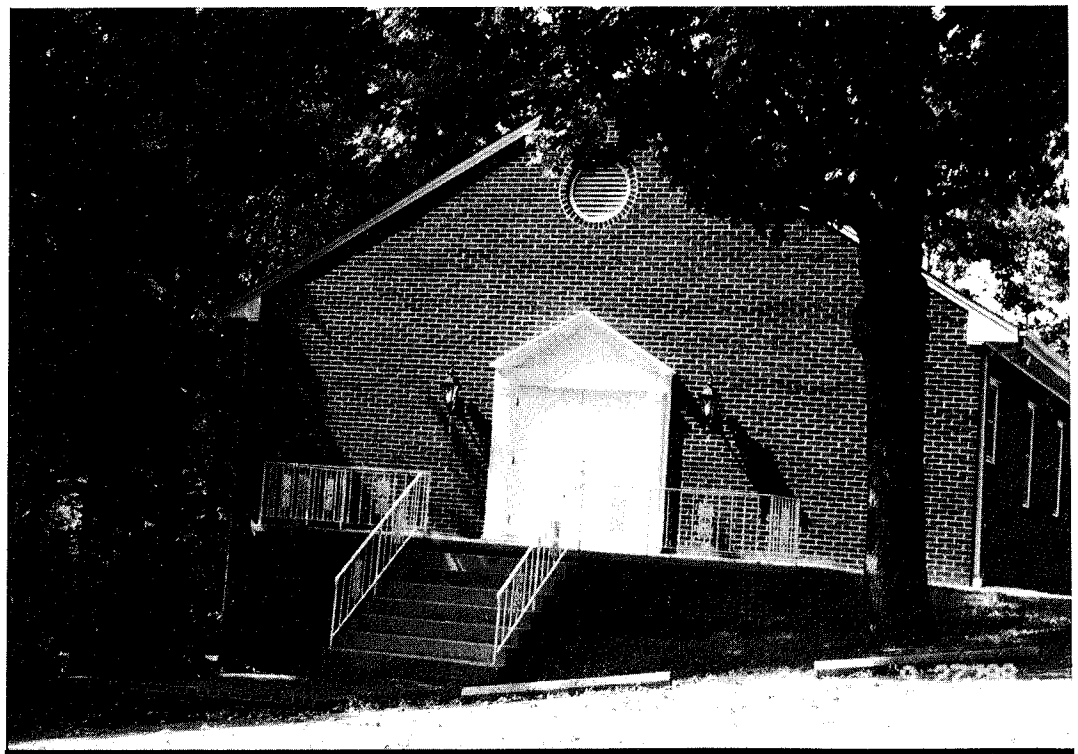

VOICES OF THE PAST

January 13.

" Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. —I PETER iv. 12.

THE " fiery trial, " then, is not a strange thing which happens only to a few of the Lord's family, but is more or less the appointed lot of all. Do we not hear the Lord saying to his Zion, " I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction ? " All then that are chosen must pass through the furnace of affliction, and all know experimentally the fiery trial, for by it they are made partakers of Christ's sufferings. But this is indispensable in order to be partakers of his glory. ***" If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."*** Thus they suffer with him, ***" that when his glory shall be revealed, they may be glad also with exceeding joy."*** And this suffering with and for Christ in the furnace of affliction salts the soul, preserves it from corruption, communicates health, gives it savour and flavour, is a token of interest in the everlasting covenant, and is a seal of friendship and peace with God.

Elder J.C. Philpot

SALVATION

"I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no saviour. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God." (Isa. 43:11, 12)

In the last forty-five years I have been writing to various publications. During the last thirty-five years I have been speaking from the pulpit to the children of God. My course during this time has been strange indeed.; Much of the time I labored in much fear of not been called, and yet had a sentence or woe upon me that I felt the terrors of death if I did not speak. (1 Cor. 9:16) I have had my share of fault finding with what I have written and preached. Too many times, I did not accept that criticism in the right spirit. Of late years, I have quit defending myself against those that objected to my opinions. I would much rather have the good will of one and all, but it would be my ruin if I did have (Luke 6:26), therefore I desire to leave everything in the hands of the Lord. I am sure that it will give a man itching ears when every class of people are acclaiming him as a great preacher.

I do not think that I have a desire to reach everybody, but I hope that I have a desire to reach all that my text applies to from time to time. I hope that I am not ashamed of the truth, of the

gospel; and I hope that I am ready to preach among those that have a hearing ear. I do not know, by looking into faces, or by looking over the list of subscribers to any periodical, who has ears to hear. I am sure that I cannot give them hearing ears, and I hope that there is not a desire about me to try.

My subject, and the text on which I hope to lay a good foundation, are pertinent matters for our consideration. However, the recipients of this gospel, are limited. None but the children of God can enjoy and witness to what God has said, and only they are witnesses to it. Not all of God's children are witnesses to this singular salvation.

"I am the Lord." If, from the moment of the creation until every trophy of God's grace is housed in heaven and immortal glory, things take such a turn that God can not say what He said to Israel in the present tense, then the "I AM" has not been in control. If there was ever any likelihood of salvation failing, then God knew it from all eternity, and He has not been our "I am" at any time. It is "I AM" that sent Moses; He is today the Lord our "I am that I am" and as He sends minister to hearers, it is as effective today as it was several thousand years ago when it looked so uncertain to Moses. The one of whom I write IS the Lord; I do not write (If I am called of God) about a dead or "has been" gospel; it is the power of God to believers, to witnesses of it. Unbelievers do not necessarily mean that hearers and readers are not children of God. The man that got the hands of Jesus applied to his eyes the first time saw men as trees, walking. Thomas was certainly a child of God, but he could not believe until he had evidence. I do not write about a "has been" Lord; nor do I write to people that think thus of the Lord. He is alive forevermore, and will always be "the I am that I am."

"And beside me there is no saviour." Not all of the Israelites were witnesses to this declaration, nor are all of God's children witnesses now to it. Whatever their name in the world might be, the ones that were witnesses of these things believed what the Lord said relative to salvation. Come, dear reader, and let us take a little journey down into the garden where the "I AM" is the only gardener. In this garden He is the only Saviour. In fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy, the Spirit of the Lord came upon the Saviour and He alone performed all of the work to make every plant a tree of righteousness. (Isa. 61:3).

Mary did not have twins. Only one Saviour was born; no other maiden, even though virgins romp the landscape ever, have given birth to another Saviour. Yet, even though an angel heralded the coming of the Saviour, the masses were not witnesses to it. I say that had Herod and Pilate seen in Jesus what the centurion did (Luke 23:47) they certainly would have witnessed as did he, but not having known Him nor His Father, they could not witness to what they had not witnessed. Following the same line of reasoning, one who has not been a witness to the Lord's testimony con-

cerning salvation, he or she will be found trying to lend a hand in salvation.

Those that have witnessed this "only salvation" will lie down in the green pastures of salvation; those that have not, will always find another salvation besides that one that Jesus saves always to deliverance home to glory. These witnesses have a right to sing,

"Amazing grace how sweet the sound,"

and as they have it declared to them, and they are saved, and they have salvation shown unto them, they continue to sing,

"Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

For centuries the saints have sung this high and lofty theme of salvation by grace with out another salvation standing in the offing, waiting for them to work out. This is what I endeavor to preach and write, to wit, Salvation, from God's eternal design to save, to the triumphant bringing home to glory every chosen vessel of mercy, and all of it being given to us, and we witnessed to it, if we have indeed been saved by this One and only Saviour.

Regardless of the cavelling of men, this salvation is known only in time. What heaven is, none of the witnesses to this salvation know at the time of it being presented to them. They know (as taught of the Lord) that He is the, only Saviour, that without His salvation, we do not have salvation. I hope that I am writing to many witnesses of this "only" salvation, but I do not believe that with the church in her time state a single witness will be found that has witnessed "***that salvation is further than a time state.***"

The Lord is the only Saviour. The attributes of God are all engaged in this salvation; the seven spirits are all surely and gloriously working in the children of God to save them. This is a present salvation. He was the Saviour before the Red Sea; He was the Saviour in the Red Sea; He was the Saviour in the wilderness road, and in our journeys on that road in our experience, He is our Saviour. At the time of the prophet, there was not any Saviour save the word. I call for an answer to this statement: Did Isaiah know the truth? Did he tell all the truth ? Did the Inspiration of God mislead the prophet ? Did He withhold something that is vital to the welfare of the chosen Israel of God? I hope that I desire to be right. I think.

I know the certainty of death, and if I am hanging precariously on a high cliff with impending doom below me, and Israel was mistaken — all these witnesses misunderstanding God, and there is a Saviour beside the Lord, I certainly need to know it.

I do not want to be extreme. I do not want to go beyond the scriptures in comparing truth with error. I do not want to say hurtful things toward those that bring some other saviour other than the Lord. But my brethren and sisters, my dear perishing readers, I am as I hope, being undressed of what I thought I had. I hope that I am being

made ready for a lovely and much desired transition. I do not want to be unfaithful to Him that has called me out of nature's darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son. If His brethren bring something among us that is not in keeping with His testimony, it behoves me to point out the fallacy of that thing. Someone is going to be wounded whenever error is preached among us. I had much rather wound my brethren than to wound my Saviour; I had much rather (since error demands that somebody be arraigned) rebuke my brethren sharply than to let my silence rebuke my Saviour. This does not mean that I am to declare non-fellowship for them; it does not mean that I am to step on their toes purposely, but it does mean that I must not step on the toes my only Saviour.

At the expense of being trite, I desire to point out that this Saviour was the only Saviour of Israel all the way through from Eden to the end of the legal dispensation; that this salvation was all timely; that it was saving at the flood; it was time saving at the Red sea; that it was time saving at the water of Garah, that it was time saving in giving manna, that it was time saving the whole wilderness through, that it was time saving in giving bread in Egypt, in causing fire to be reversed in its nature to burn away bonds but not to consume the bound. If this is not the picture of Israel and the Saviour, the only Saviour, then I freely confess that I do not know what I am writing.

This God, this Saviour, stands alone to His people Israel. Israel witnessed to this doctrine that I would, were it not for a dreadful fall that I got, declare to one and all. God declared this truth to them, but His care for them did not cease in a mere declaration. Oh, no, for men declare, and do not, and God is not likened unto men. God made manifest the singularity of this "only Saviour" by saving them. That is not all - Oh no, dear saint, there is always something more that is in reserve yet to be served to Israel; it always has been, it always will be. He showed this salvation to them. He showed it to them Oh yes, tried soul, He shows unto you the tenderness of His saving power. The Holy Ghost, the Comforter and teacher and keeper of God's people, is sent unto you (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7). He also shows His people the things of Christ, the only Saviour of sinners.

This showing to the children of God, Christ as their Saviour, is under peculiar and trying and singular circumstances. When this is done, there is not any strange god present. This strange god, whom men in ignorance would present, is not found in the experience of these witnesses. He is the work of our deluded minds; he is the god of whom our souls would dare rely until the show begins. The children of God made them one out of a calf, but the calf-god was vanquished from sight, from show; Peter would have made a man as another saviour, but God, the only Saviour, vanquished him from sight, and He showed them in the most dazzling show that has

ever been brought to sight of poor sinners that no name, no god, no man could ever share in the honor and glory of the Holy One of Israel. I love these scenes of divine saving; my soul is enraptured, my pace is quickened, my attention is called heavenward, as I am shown the care of God for His people. If I am not mistaken, the text has grown; its beauties have been enhanced, my spiritual faculities have been weaned from every false God, every false saviour, and I am standing at the giving up and turning the kingdom over to another Joshua. At this time, I know what those people knew, to wit, that God my Saviour has not failed to keep every promise that he has made, and that as the show was put on, there was not a strange god to assist in making the screen of my soul straight, nor to adjust my sight and vision that I night see better than I see by the work this only God, this only Saviour. (See Joshua 23)

I do not mean to separate Christ and grace. Paul's letter to the Corinthians was based on what Christ did for them, and he thanked God (through Christ) For the grace that He had given them by Christ. In substance, Paul did write Amazing Grace. It was his theme in the beginning of his experience; it was his theme in all of his preaching and in every letter that he sent to the churches. It was in time that all these gracious deliverances took place; it was the experience of Paul that the grace of God was sufficient. That which is sufficient, will not allow a strange god or a different saviour. When he wrote that heavenly experience to the Ephesians (Eph. 2:1,10), there was not a part works and part grace system lingering to be heard. It was not with doubt and reluctance that he told them how that they were saved; it was not that grace was present and a strange system, a strange god, in the offing ready to bolster the failure of the grace of God.

This grace is as much in the present tense, as God, the only Saviour was Israel. In the presense of two or three. witnesses shall every word be estabished; One of those witnesses is God, and He witnesses to His people Israel when no strange god was present, when no Egyptian was there. (Gen. 45:1) God witnessed to them, and He made them His witnesses. God witnessed to Saul, in that witnessing the law was not present; Gamaliel had lost all his ability and charm; all of the things that had kept him until that time were gone. God made him His witness to the Gentiles, and his witnessing was that salvation is by grace.

There are different aspects of this salvation, but there is only one salvation. To bring up any other way, is another way to say that there is a salvation other than the grace salvation, is, to say the least of it, a strange saying, a strange doctrine, instigated by a strange god. This grace salvation will not permit me to deny nor ignore scriptures that the strange gods would have us to believe set forth some other salvation, some other saviour. God has not witnessed to us, nor has He sent witnesses to us, extending to us one way to be saved and another

way to stay saved. I have enjoyed the testimony of God's people in their minutes (not that I can ! trace their history back to the setting up of the kingdom) showing forth that God had witnessed to them. I am sorry to have to report, that some of those that accepted the doctrine of the imputed righteousness to us; that have accepted the doctrine of God's preservation of the saints to glory, are, like the Galatians, finishing as they think, in the flesh what grace started in them at the out-set.

God's children are presently working out their own salvation. This is their salvation. The salvation is in the work, but by no means for the work. This salvation is in the work of God working in them. It is an effectual work of God.

It is a perfect work of God. Moses is not on hand to give a helping hand; Elijah is not on hand to reach a helping hand when the grace of God fails; no strange god, no strange saviour is present, but a perfect work, is being done (Heb. 13: 21), and this perfection enables us, the witnesses of God, to walk well pleasing in His sight, and let us remember, dear children of God, that He has a desire toward the work of His own hand. (Job 14 :15) And let us remember that God does not work at something; let us remember that He does not talk at His people to get them to be witnesses, but that He talks to them by the effectual, the mighty workings of His Spirit in them. (Eph. 1:19, 20; 3:7; 4: 16; I Th. 2:13)

This Saviour, Jesus Christ the Lord, through His grace, enables the witnesses to this saving grace to save themselves from every evil and false way, from every strange god and doctrine. This effectual saving grace enables Paul to write about taking heed to oneself and to the doctrine, and it (the same effectual grace) enables the recipient to take heed to both, to continue in them, to save themselves and those that have a hearing ear.

Where this grace is preached, where this Saviour is showing us how it is, here is health in the body. When it is not preached, it is a strange fire that has come into the camp of Israel, a strange god is present that the witnesses did not know in the time of which saiah was speaking; that was not present when Jacob had that singular exerience in the wilderness and in the desert (Deut. 32 :9,12); that was not present when Jesus was transfigured before His disciples; that was not present when Saul had no man (no strange god) to stand with him. (2 Tim. 4:16)

W. D. G.

CHARITY.

"AND we believe," says the *Christian Watchman,* "the time is not far distant when a man's standing as a christian and a good citizen will be measured by the amount of his charities." The aross and *Journal* enquires, " Is it correct ?"

REMARKS.

NEW VERNON, N. Y., January 7, 1836.

WE are mistaken if these learned editors, in their use of the word *charity,* do not wish to be understood

in a popular and not scriptural sense. The bible connects charity with faith and hope, and ascribes to it the pre-eminence; and as the less important are the fruits of the Spirit of God, and utterly beyond the command or control of mortals, so of course the greatest can only be possessed and enjoyed by such as receive it as a sovereign favor from God, who is the giver of every perfect gift. By charity, in a bible sense, we understand the love of God, and in this view of the subject it is easy for the christian to conceive the comparative superiority it holds over faith and hope, the former being the cause, and the latter being but effects. And again, God's love in its nature possesses a superior excellency; it is eternal, immutable, almighty and sovereign; eternal, it had no beginning, and can never terminate; immutable, fixed from the ancients of eternity upon its objects. " Neither life nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Rom. vii. 38 39. It is invincible; nothing can withstand the power of the love of God, many waters cannot quench it, floods cannot -drown it, sin, death and hell combined could not subdue it. It is omnipotent in its operations; the stoutest hearts in all Adam's wretched family have bowed in subjection to it; yea, we are told it is stronger than death. It is sovereign, who can command it? Who can produce it Surely no one. Jehovah has set his mercy on whom he would, for he has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. He says, " Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." View the love of God in any other light than sovereign, and where would be the obligation of gratitude to God for it. If the possession of it in our hearts does not depend exclusively on the sovereign pleasure of God, then we must possess and enjoy it, if at all, independently of God, and who would not tremble at such an idea.

This charity or love of God is communicated by the Holy Ghost to the redeemed of the Lord in their new birth, and in its operation on their hearts produces love to God. " We love him because he first loved us. " It produces love to his truth, love to his ordinances, his laws, and to his people, and makes them kind and affectionate one towards another. This charity, or love of God, when shed abroad in the hearts of God's people, gives them bowels of compassion and mercy one towards another; it is not productive of ostentatious shows which are common among the Gentiles; it does not blazon the liberality of its possessor through the press to earth's remotest bounds, but rather teaches and enforces the command of Jesus, not to let the left hand know that the right has performed. It leads its possessor to visit the widow and the fatherless, and to do good as much as in them lies unto all men, but especially to the household of faith. The love of God does this and more; hence in answer to Mr. Stevens, of the *Cross,* we an-

swer: The Christian is to be measured by the charity he possesses, but we see no connection between his christianity and his qualification for good citisenship in this world.

But we are led to conclude that the editor of the *Watchman* intends popular or modern charity. This is altogether another thing, very different in nature and in effects. It is any principle that will lead men to appropriate their money, wealth and influence to the service of the institutions of modern benevolence. If a man would in a popular sense be charitable, let him join all the fashionable religious societies of the day, let him patronize every scheme which men have devised and still are devising to convert the world, and if he has funds he can become very charitable. This kind of charity is very splendid in the eyes of an adulterous generation; it is sounded far and wide; it rings from the pulpit; it is echoed through the press. This charity regards no other qualiftcation on the part of its patrons than a well-filled purse, and an open hand to deal it out at the call of the clergy. This charity will also visit the widow and the fatherless, not to relieve their pressing wants, but to extort for proposedly pious purposes the " widow's mite, " and the hard-earned dollar of the orphan boy. If the widow or the fatherless are in distress, and pinched with hunger, or chilled for want of clothing, modern charity will perhaps send her agents to the sick haunts of wretchedness, commissioned to say unto them, " Be ye warm, and be ye clothed," and perhaps in the plenitude of their kindness they will give the despairing widow or the starving orphan—what A loaf of bread, a bushel of grain, a suit of comfortable apparel

Oh no ! They will give them a tract, from which they may learn that these pious agents are about evangelizing the world, and are in want of money to carry on the enterprise.

Yes, verily, this popular charity will creep into widow's houses, and lead captive silly women, as saith the scriptures of truth.

If we anderstand him, this is the kind of charity the editor of the *Watchman* intends, and there is perhaps more truth in what he says than his brother editor is willing to admit; indeed the time has already arrived in which " the vile person is called liberal, and the churl said to be bountiful," while every one who refuses to acknowledge or patronize their schemes are denounced as illiberal and covetous. It is considered charitable in these days to be in fellowship with all denominations of professors of christianity, who will unite in the common cause of modern mendicancy, to persecute non - conformists, to brand with infamy, if possible, the latter, and sure the christianity of the former by the amount of his charity measured indollars and cents.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

ROMANS 15:13.

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

FRAGMENTS

How clearly every thought and feeling and word and incident comes before me now, after so many years. How much I felt I knew, and how little I knew. On Sunday morning of the day I was baptized, Elder Harding said while preaching, "A minister of the gospel may not only be left to doubt his call to preach, but his call by grace." At the dinner table where he and other ministers were, I called attention to this, and said to Elder Harding and the others, "Do you think it right for one who has such hope as we have to talk that way? I feel that I am done with trouble. The only trouble of any account is because of sin, and I am done with sin." Elder Beebe quietly remarked, "You will know more some time than you do now," and they all smiled, but I knew that I was done with sin. Oh, if I could only have seen along the terribly dark and crooked path I was to walk in the years that were then before me, but now have gone by, how could I have lived! But they were right. I do know more now than I did then. It seems to me a wonder that I have been kept from outbreaking transgressions, and have retained the fellowship of the church.

During the few days at Middletown my mind was as one in a dream. I was talking or singing all the time. The scriptures were in my heart and in my mouth, but I do not know that I opened the Bible during the two or three days. On my way to my father's home I stayed all night at a friend's. When I lay down I saw a Bible on a stand and took it up, saying to myself, "Well, I will see what this says." I opened and began to read where it first opened: "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion we were like them that dream: then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing. Then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them. The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."

"Why," I said to myself, "this is just what I have been feeling for three days, and here it is in the Bible." Then I knew the Bible as I had never known it before. From that time I had it whenever I could, and in six weeks I had read everything that was in it, not in order, but as I felt, first the Psalms, then the Gospels, then Isaiah, and so on. Once during that time I called upon two sisters, members of the same church I had before been with. One of them asked, "What are you reading now?" I hesitated a moment, then said, "To tell you the truth I am not reading anything but the Bible." "Oh, you are trying to be very good, now you have got to be a Baptist." "No," I said, "I am reading it because I prefer it to any other book." "Oh," she said, "I do not believe anybody would rather read that than a novel. Of course I read the Bible night and morning because it is my duty, but I would rather read a novel." "Why," the elder one said, "I like to read the Bible sometimes"; and even then I was hungry to get to reading the dear book again.

The subject of salvation by grace, and my wonderful experience of it, were uppermost in my mind nearly all

the time, and I cared little to talk of anything else. It was all so new and so wonderful. And the scriptures were constantly showing me some new and wonderful thing. I had read a great deal in the Bible all my life, but now I was reading it with a new feeling, as being personally interested in what it contained. It was mine. The precious things it told about were for me. Sometimes it seemed as though some one was talking to me out of its pages. I kept on reading it as one would dig and work over the soil in his garden if he knew there were diamonds hidden all over it within six inches of the surface, or as a hungry man would watch for crumbs of bread that lay scattered about.

In the office, on the street or in the parlor, this was the one thing I cared to talk about. I remember saying to a company of friends once, "You undoubtedly think it strange that I should bring forward this subject of religion here. I know it is not customary, and is deemed out of place in a social company like this, but your preachers tell us it is the most important thing in the world, and now it is so to me. Compared with this subject of Jesus and his salvation, I cannot think of any other subject as of any special importance." How little I knew then of the possibility of such changes in my mind as I have since then experieneed. But I am thankful for that sweet childhood season of joy and confidence in the dear Saviour.

I could find few in my town that seemed to fully understand and respond to my experience. There was one, an Episcopalian woman, to whom I could talk freely of what I had felt. But all were very kind and friendly, and many seemed to feel that I had met with a great change in my mind. I tried to find any throughout the surrounding country who understood how I felt, and was very glad when I found some I enjoyed visiting.

I went on in my business as a lawyer, but seemed to have little interest in it. I tried to do well what I had to do, but my Bible was at hand all the time, and open before me a good deal of the time. I also read in old volumes of the "Signs of the Times," which my father had sewed together, and also in the hymn book. I was often surprised to read my own thoughts and feelings in letters published years before, and also in the Bible. One night, alone in my office reading in the scriptures, I all at once realized, as I read, that Abraham had felt as I did then, and that I had the experience of Abraham. Those old patriarchs and holy men, it had always appeared to me, were far above where I could even hope to reach, and now I felt that I was sitting down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in gospel experience and rest. That unspeakably holy feeling I can never forget.

I expected to continue all my life in the practice of the law, and am not conscious of any thought that I would ever leave it. I do not remember that it ever occurred to me during those two months that I should ever have to preach. Yet the subject of preaching was much in my mind. A few days after my baptism I rode a short distance

with Elder St. John, who was going to an appointment. I asked him if a preacher of the gospel now ever could feel as Paul did that he was sure he should come unto them in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. I do not remember that he answered. The Sunday night of the day I was received in the church, they had a conference meeting, and I remember with comfort now the joy I had in being there with the church, and the sweetness I felt in speaking to them of Isa. 26:1-4, and telling them that for years I had tried to trust in the Lord in order that I might feel that perfect peace, and I had never been able, and that now the Lord had given me that trust, and had staid my mind on him, and I was kept in perfect peace.

The next week was the meeting of the Chemung Association with the Asylum Church, to which my father and mother, two brothers and sister Bessie then belonged, and of which, a year after, eleven members of our familv were members. At the close of that session of the association I was called upon to speak in conference. I felt a comfort in speaking to the dear brothers and sisters of what the Lord had done for me. I learned long afterward that Elder Conklin, a name never to be forgotten by those who knew him, said to my father, "Brother Durand, your son will have to preach." How little I then thought that such a thing could be. But the subject of preaching was much in my thoughts. As I drove an elder from our house to the meeting, I said, "Elder _____, how does a man feel who is called to preach?" His reply startled me. "Now don't be thinking of that. There's too many preachers now." Less than two years after that he left the Old Baptists.

July 50th I went to Middletown, about 150 miles. I had questions to ask Elder Beebe about many passages of scripture as we rode on Sunday morning to meeting at New Vernon. His answers were very satisfying. The last question was concerning the rest that remaineth to the people of God. Before he could answer that we were at the meeting house. To my surprise he took that for a text. I wondered because I thought a preacher must have his subjeet well thought out and arranged in his mind before he could venture to preach. His sermon seemed to me very clear, and I was lost to present things as I listened to the glorious truth of salvation, and saw how contrary to that truth were all the religious societies and systems with which I had so lately been connected. When he concluded his sermon he asked me if I had anything to say. My mind was full and I was instantly on my feet, telling how clearly I saw that the modern missionary system was contrary to the Lord's word, and that the Lord would in his own way, by his own power and grace bring all his chosen ones to himself. In a short time I came to myself, and hurriedly and in a good deal of consternation and confusion of mind sat down. It seemed to me I had brought a reproach upon the sacred cause I so much loved. Riding home with Deacon Hiram Horton, who was one of the best and most spiritual of men, I tried to find out whether he thought it was wrong for

me to have spoken. His reply was to remind me of what I had said to him seven years before of Elder Beebe's preaching, that it was like apples of gold in pictures of silver. I concluded he thought I had disgraced the church by speaking. It was some days before I was relieved of that painful burden. In the afternoon Elder Beebe called on me again, but I had resolved not to speak any more.

My peace and comfort continued from the day before I was baptized unbroken for three or four weeks. The sins which had so long weighted me down were gone, and I looked for no more trouble of that kind. But one day in an instant I saw that I was a sinner yet. My nature all at once appeared to me most vile and hateful. My thought was in this form: ***"My hope is not good, for I am a sinner yet; and I can never have another hope, for there is no other way of salvation."*** My feeling was as though I was over a bottomless abyss, and about to fall.

Instantly the words were in my mind, ***"Jesus is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."*** Salvation was in that precious word. I was saved by it. But oh, how humble I was; how lowly, how self-loathing. What a wonderful change that short experience had worked in me. My self-confidence had received a terrible blow. I have since then had more terrible experiences of the awful power of sin, and longer continued before deliverance came, but none stands out in my memory more distinctly than that first conflict.

I called one evening on a former school friend, who was recovering from an illness. He was a most intellectual man, and a thorough scholar. He asked me to tell how I came out of the Presbyterian Church. In reply I told him much of my spiritual exercise of mind which had the effect of separating me from their doctrine and order and institutions, so that I had no difficulty in separating from them, still retaining their esteem. He listened with such interest, and made such responses that I thought he had the same experience I had. So I began to talk of the Bible, which was so dear to me. Soon he became listless, and finally said somewhat excitedly, "I believe in election as much as you do, but God elected those who he foresaw would be obedient." "But," I replied, "that would be according to their works foreseen. And Paul says: 'Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began." "It does not mean so," he replied. "If I thought it meant so I would not believe the Bible." I went away with my head down I felt such sadness and wonder that I could not make him see what was so plain to me. I had not yet learned that I could not tell the Lord's secret to any one who had not learned it from him already. When Jesus healed any he said, "See, thou tell no man," but the more he charged them the more a great deal they published it. Yet not one of them has ever disobeyed that command, for while those who are healed desire

to publish and tell abroad the good news, no one understands the blessed truth but those to whom the dear Saviour has himself told it. His sheep hear his voice and his alone.

At one time during the summer I had a great trial of mind concerning my right to be a member of the church of God. I felt so vile, so lacking in every grace, so unworthy of any favor from a holy God, I was tempted to believe I had deceived myself and the church. The next time I met Elder Beebe I took him aside and said, "Did you have fellowship for me when you baptized me?" "Why, my child," he said, "I should not have baptized you if I had not." I was greatly encouraged. I thought I was alone in that peculiar temptation. I did not then know that almost every one, if not all, who are called by grace have some such seasons of doubt concerning their experience.

Copied by S.H.D., March 2, 1915.

Silas H. Durand

Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts.—PROVERBS xxxi. 6.

THE wise mother of king Lemuel gave her son gracious directions when she spake these words. It is when we begin to feel the misery into which we have been cast by sin, and thus become ready to perish, and of heavy hearts, that the pure wine of gospel grace is suitable to our lost condition. As the holiness and justice of God are discovered to the conscience, and we are made to see and feel the depths of the Adam fall, we look out of ourselves for a salvation which we could not find in our fallen nature or in our deeply corrupt and unbelieving heart. When, then, we obtain by living faith a view of the Son of God as a Mediator between God and men, when we see by the eye of faith the blood of the cross, and the full and complete atonement which he, as the Lamb of God, made for sin, then we heartily embrace him as " of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption " (x Cor. i. 30). We see and feel that there is salvation in him and in no other (Acts iv. 12*);* and as this salvation is seen to be worthy of God and suitable to us, as it answers all the demands of God's holy law, and glorifies it by rendering it an obedience as far excelling ours as heaven excels earth, and God surpasses man, we embrace it as our justifying righteousness and covering robe, from the eyes of him who, out of Christ, is a consuming fire (Heb. xii 29*)*.

Elder J.C. Philpot

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FOR NOVEMBER 1998

Mr. & Mrs. James W. Huber, MD	2.00
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Mrs. Emmie Grayson, AL	2.00
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G.T. Newman, TN	2.00
Mrs. Dannie Strickland, AL	10.00

OBITUARIES

FRANK WATERS PILGREEN

On November 19, 1914, Brother Frank Pilgreen was born in Marion, Louisiana, where he resided for most of his life. After an extended illness, he passed on to that better world above on July 8, 1998, at the age of eighty-three years, seven months, and nineteen days.

Brother Pilgreen was added to the membership of Union Primitive Baptist Church in May, 1966. He was ordained as deacon of Union Church on August 31, 1969, with Elder David E. Turner moderating, Elder Eulie E. McCool wording the prayer, Elder R. W. Rhodes delivering the charge, and with many other Elders and Deacons participating.

Brother Pilgreen was loved and respected by all who knew him. He was known afar among the brethren for his depth of wisdom, his knowledge of the scriptures, and his unswerving loyalty to the principles of the doctrine of Christ. He loved the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things, saying that the harder the doctrine was preached, the better he liked it. His favorite scripture was Jeremiah *1.5: "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."*

His counsel was often sought after by his church brethren far and near, and they were never disappointed in his guidance.

He was well known for the humility he manifested before his God and his brethren. It was said of him that there was only one person who ever had anything bad to say about him, and that person was Brother Frank Pilgreen himself. He often freely confessed his unworthiness and dependency upon the grace and mercy of God, as provided by the Lord Jesus Christ, for needy sinners as he felt himself to be.

He loved and was loved by every member of his family. It is perhaps one of the greatest proofs of a man's good character and lovely reputation when those who know him best love him the most and mourn his passing most keenly. His love, goodness, and quiet sense of humor are perpetuated in and by those who survive him.

Brother Pilgreen is survived by his wife of fifty-nine years and seven months, Wreather Pilgreen; two daughters, Lizzie Belle Price of Broussard, Louisiana, and Louise Towns of Shreveport, Louisiana; one sister, Christine Beasley of Monroe, Louisiana; six grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

On July 10, 1998, Brother Pilgreen's funeral service was conducted by Elders C.C. Wilbanks and C.C. Morris at Kilpatrick Funeral Home in Farmerville, Louisiana. His mortal remains were laid to rest in Union Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery, just a few steps from Union's meeting-house, there to await the resurrection at the return of his Lord.

In loving memory submitted,
Elder C.C. Morris

Signs of the Times

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1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

THOU great incarnate God !
Behold thy children stand;
Warmed with the fire of love divine,
They bow to thy command.

When buried with the Lord,
May they his presence find,
Proving that pleasures from thy throne
Are with obedience joined.

When rising from the wave,
Lord, show thy lovely face;
May sacred joy from heaven descend,
And glory fill the place.

Then may these happy saints
In thy commandments run,
Till they shall reach the realms of bliss,
And mount Emmanuel's throne.

There may they sit and sing
The once baptized Lamb,
And make the courts of heaven resound
With his beloved name.

With what ecstatic joy
They'll tune the Saviour's praise!
While millions join the sacred theme,
And swell the heavenly lays.

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EDITORIAL

HEAR YE HIM

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

Jesus took three of his disciples up into a high mountain and was transfigured before them, and there appeared unto them Moses and Elias. Not knowing what he was saying, Peter desired to build three tabernacles; one for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elias. But, ***"While he yet spake, behold a bright cloud overshadowed them: and, behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."***

Hear ye him. Many people would have us believe this to be an invitation, that God is pleading for us to open our hearts and let Jesus come in and save us: just open your ears and hear and answer his call and everything will be great for your soul. I have no stones to throw at those people, for I was one among them in time past, and many of them are still my friends; but their doctrine is a false doctrine, and there is not a speck of truth in it. If God must plead with puny man in this way, and we have the power to accept or reject his call, then we have no need whatsoever for a Saviour; for we have the power within ourselves to save ourselves; for if we have the power to reject his calling and salvation then we also have the power to keep him from casting us into everlasting condemnation and hell. But, ***"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."*** If his people are not now willing, and if this is not the day of his power, please advise us as to when this will be. We will note the scripture says, "Thy people." These are the ones to whom and for whom the scriptures are written, and not to the world at large. These are the children chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Jesus prayed, ***"Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are one. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I***

have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scriptures might be fulfilled." When Jesus shed his precious blood on the cross of Calvary for the sins of his fallen people, the debt was fully paid, God`s justice was satisfied and their salvation was secured forever. ***"For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."***

Hear ye him. Before the coming of Christ, the Jewish people had only the law and the prophets. Moses represented the law, for by him it was given to the people; and Elias represented the holy prophets of God. The Jews were unable to keep God's holy laws: but under the law they were required to make sacrificial offerings for sins yearly; which made none of them perfect; for if the blood of sheep, bulls, goats, doves, etc. could have accomplished this there would have been no need for Jesus to have suffered. Those sacrifices were only emblems or types of the perfect sacrifice that was to come. The law could make nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better covenant did; Jesus Christ being that better covenant. He kept the law, and fulfilled it to a jot and a tittle, blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. By this he broke down the wall of partition between the Jews and the Gentiles: for until that time the Gentiles were without hope, and without God in the world. Not only did he fulfill the law, but all the prophecies of old that were written in the holy scriptures by God's holy prophets and in the Psalms. Now that Jesus was come, there was not further need of handwritten ordinances nor the prophets, therefore they were taken away. They did not just die and fade away. Remember that Moses, being the embodiment of the law, was buried of God that he was found no more; and Elias, representing the holy prophets, was taken away in a chariot of fire in a whirlwind. These were taken away of God for they were no longer in force or needed. Christ is the end of the law for every one that believeth, and he is our Prophet, Priest and King. It is he that we must now hear. ***"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by His Son."***

Hear ye him. He who hath an ear to hear let him hear. All men have natural ears, though some be naturally deaf. When Jesus was on earth he made the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk, and the poor had the gospel preached unto them. And even now is Christ performing these same miracles for his bride, his church, in a spiritual manner. Yet for those who are blind but say, "We see," their sins remaineth; the deaf hear not, for they are not his sheep; the lame walk not in the way of righteousness, for they hear not the voice behind them saying, "This is the way. Walk ye in it;" and they do not hear the gospel, for they are not poor in spirit, but rich in self-righteousness, and the gospel is foolishness unto them. Some of the Pharisees said unto Jesus, ***"Are we also blind? Jesus said unto them, If ye were***

blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sins remaineth." (Jn.9:40-41). Certain of the Jews said unto Jesus, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, ***"I told you, and you believed not, because ye are not my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (Jn.10:24-28). "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way which leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth to life, and few there be that find it." (Matt.7:13-14).*** Left to themselves, all men would enter at the wide gate and walk the broad road to destruction: but God`s children are blessed to hear that voice behind them saying, ***"This is the way. Walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." (Isa.30:21).*** There are also those poor deluded souls who believe their works will get them, as well as others who are enticed to follow them, to heaven. These are the ones who are rich in self-righteousness, and are not poor in spirit nor broken-hearted. ***"They profess to know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." (Titus 1:16). "Many shall say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? in thy name done many wonderful works?"*** But how did Jesus answer their boasts of self-righteousness? ***"And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity." (Matt.7:22-23).***

Natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. How then does one hear the beloved Son, for all we are natural men of flesh and blood, descendants of our progenitor Adam, who fell into a state of condemnation and death by his transgression of God's holy law, and all of his posterity fell with him? Therefore all of us were at some time dead in trespasses and sin and were the children of wrath even as others. Since natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God, there must be a new birth, a spiritual birth: ***"Ye must be born again."*** Every child of God has an everlasting life: this life being in Christ, but it is not made manifest until a man is born again. ***"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." (Jn.5:24).*** Everyone with a sound, natural mind understands that we must pass from life to death in this world, but there are few who understand the passing from death unto life; for they do not know they are spiritually dead. Jesus is the

Way, the Truth and the Life, and he gives life to as many as the Father hath given him. Though they be dead when their Lord speaks to them, they hear and live. ***"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." (Jn.5:24).*** The dead cannot go forth seeking Christ, neither can they reject a sovereign call; ***"for in him we live and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring." "Without me (Christ) ye can do nothing." But, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." (Phil.4:13.)***

Hear ye him. Jesus spake many parables to the people, but only unto his disciples did he expound them. His disciples asked him why, and he answered, ***"Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but unto them it is not given."*** We find here a division of the people: to his disciples an understanding was given, but unto all others it is not given. ***"Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand."*** We cannot understand these parables, other than the ones expounded in the scriptures, until they are revealed unto us by the Holy Spirit. Blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear: if you are the sons of God, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. You will always hear him, though you may feel much of the time that you do not: ***"For in a dream, in a vision of the night, when sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instructions, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man." (Job 33:15-17).*** Though a man may believe that he is working all things according to his own purpose, he is in truth fulfilling God`s will and purpose; for God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Did he not say, ***"I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it?"*** If we be the chosen children of God we will keep his commandments, ***"for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."*** Truly, if we love him and keep his commandments we are born of God: ***"for love is of God, and everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God."*** And Jesus promised, ***"If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (Jn.14:23).*** Jesus also said, ***"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my***

Father's hand. I and my Father are one." Oh, how comforting it is to feel his glorious presence from time to time, even if it is only for a few moments.

Submitted in love to all who have heard the voice of the blessed Son of God.

Eld. C. C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES

Rejoice evermore, I Th. 5:16 Part II
(continued from Part I, Signs Nov. 1998)

In the beginning of time all the sons of God shouted for joy when the morning stars sang together, Job 38:7, Prov. 8:22-30. I believe the sons of God are the children of light and the morning stars are the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Rev. 22:16. In the eternal day hereafter the Redeemed will have life about the throne of God and they will sing the songs of Moses and the Lamb and rejoice evermore, Rev. 15:3. While the children of light dwell in the flesh of the mortal body there is a journey required for their sanctification and perfection during which they shall also rejoice from time-to-time. If God permits and helps let us now consider the earthly journey.

Jesus, the light of the world, is the Great Shepherd of promise, Ez. 34:23; Is. 40:11; John 10:11. The children of light are his sheepfold. Being conceived in iniquity they are initially children of wrath traveling upon the broad way even as others. They are called out of nature's darkness in conviction under the laws of Moses, Ex. ch. 20, and are delivered to escape from the broad way that leads to the wide gate and destruction, Matt. 7:13-14. The saints (children of light) are taught and are led by the Holy Spirit to find the narrow way that leads to the strait gate, that leads to Jesus, to his imputed righteousness, to his redeeming blood, and to his resurrection which is the reason for their hope of eternal life at the throne of God, I Pet. 3:15; I Cor. 15:12-24. Born again of the Spirit, lambs of the sheepfold confess Jesus publicly with the mouth before men, Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:9. The Holy Spirit teaches them to follow their Great Shepherd and leads them to find the old paths of the narrow way.

The narrow way is for walking. The saints do not ride in chariots of ease as those do who travel he broad way to destruction. The narrow way is unique for each child of the sheepfold of Christ. It passes through conflicts, through trials and tribulations, through fiery afflictions and chastisements that try faith, I Pet. 1:5-9; James 1:2-4. It is a way that perfects the soul ***"as silver is refined and as gold is tried," Zech. 13:9, (See also Ps. 18:32; Rom. 12:2; I Th. 3:10-13; Heb. 13: 20-21; Pet. 5:6-10; etc.) "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be re-***

vealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy," I Pet. 4:12-16. The promise of the Lord given to Jacob, Gen. 28:15, is likewise a promise to every sheep of the fold; namely, ***"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Heb. 13:5.***

But I read that the sheep "shall go in and out, and find pasture," John 10:1-9. Dear reader, do the sheep go in and out of the fold as they walk the narrow way for trials of their faith? Though the Lord, Jesus, is never far away there are times and seasons for the trial of your faith and for your perfection. These, I believe, are the times when Jesus hides his face, Isa. 8:17 and 54:8, and does not manifest his presence. Children of the sheepfold are thus given up ***"unto their own heart's lust"*** and ***"they walk in their own counsels,"*** when they are out of the sheepfold in search of pasture Ps. 81:10-16 (v. 12) and Rom. 1:24. (Are your own counsels, and mine, acceptable before God?)

I am thankful that God, the creator of the earth and the fullness thereof, has provided a variety of pastures along the journey of life of each of his children of the sheepfold. Though they walk through dry places, there are "good" pastures, "fat" pastures, and "green" pastures. Let us rejoice and praise the Lord God with thanksgiving for his pastures. In Ezekiel, chapter 34, the promise is that the Lord God will search his sheep, and seek them out and bring them out of all the places where they have been scattered to a land of their own where he, God, will feed them in a "good" pasture shall they feed, verses 11-16. I believe the lambs are called to a good pasture where they are made to "lie down" and cry ***"have mercy on me, a sinner."*** I believe further that as the lambs journey onward in the narrow way - they are brought to the "green" pasture beside the still water where they are made to go down in the watery grave of baptism, following in good conscience the example of Jesus, the one and only Great Shepherd, verse 23. It is an occasion for great rejoicing. Further onward they are brought to "fat" pastures of the militant church where two or three or more are gathered in Jesus' name hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

Through the work of the Holy Spirit, which has opened their eyes to see and ears to hear, they shall be filled, Matt. 5:6, for they feast on spiritual food and drink of the gospel which renews faith, heals the sick, and binds up that which was broken with renewed strength. It is a joyous occasion when sheep of the flock, having a mind like unto the mind of Christ, witness together and edify one another in bonds of love and sweet fellowship. How sweet it is. Praise the Lord alone and give thanks to him for every blessing.

But in his infinite wisdom and purpose God also has pastures in a worldly wilderness out of the narrow way that are overgrown with thickets of briars and thorns. It is here that the great deceiver, that lying devil, Satan. goes ***"to and fro in the earth,"*** Job 1:7. The sons of God, who have, in

their own will and counsel, gone out of the sheepfold in search of pasture encounter Satan who speaks with enticing words to provoke warfare - the lust of the flesh against the Spirit, Gal. 5:16-25. Their faith in Jesus and the promises of God are tried, James 1:12-17. If it be possible Satan will deceive the very elect with divers temptations. It is to be noted from James, ch. 1, v.i.-2, that he advised the brethren to ***"Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience,"*** and in v. 12, ***"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."*** Paul declares, 2 Cor.7:4 ***"—I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulations"*** and in Rom. 5:3-5 ***"—we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience experience; and experience, hope; And hope maketh not ashamed."*** It is the anchor of the soul by which the saints persevere, Heb. 6:19. Thus, I believe that tribulations that try faith arise from the lust of the flesh and the temptations of Satan. We may lament and complain of our material disappointments, but oh, how much more painful are tribulations that impact the soul! Oh, may God deliver us from temptations and sin. We shall glory and rejoice in him and his grace!

Faith which is a gift of God is received in daily heavenly bread. As faith weakens under tribulations the lambs of the sheepfold who fail to persevere may forget the Lord. When Jesus has hidden his face, Hos. 13:8, they wander into pastures of temptation. Satan is there ever ready to guide sheep upon mountains of self-righteous pride, into horrible pits of despair, and into the wilderness of sin. Now, ***"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," I John 1:8.*** In our outer man we sin when outside the sheepfold when we fail to persevere and overcome. We are tempted to venture into the thickets of sin where we receive thorns to carry in our flesh - to carry in our soul and conscience. But the Lord has set boundries for the habitation of his children. He will not cast off his children forever, Ps. 94:14; Lam. 3:31; Rom. 11:1-2. Though his children transgress the Lord's perfect laws, the compassionate Lord does chastise his sons, Heb. 12:5-11, to renew their inward man day-by-day, 2 Cor. 4:16. He says, ***"I will heal their waywardness and love them freely, for my anger has turned away from them," Hos. 14:4.*** Chastisement yields a broken heart, meekness, and a contrite spirit. The penitent child, having nothing of merit to plead, looks to the Lord for help crying in its troubles and begs in prayer for mercy and forgiveness.

Eugene F. Osborne
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Westminister, Maryland 21158

VOICES OF THE PAST

CHAPTER III

EXERCISES ABOUT PREACHING

On the 14th of August I heard a man preach in the Presbyterian Church where my membership had been. The congregation was large. I wanted to get up and tell the people not to believe what he said, that if they knew the truth concerning that text it would comfort them. I thought if they felt as I had felt before my hope came he was distressing them greatly. I could hardly keep my seat. I went home with my head down. As I entered my room I spoke aloud, as though another had spoken in me, "I must preach." Then I was startled. I wanted to go to the ends of the earth to tell everybody that salvation was by grace, and that what that man preached was not true. But the word "preach" was too great a word for me.

Soon after that I wrote to Elder Beebe, telling him of that wonderful experience, and asking what it meant. In his reply he said the brethren had thought I had a work to do in the church, and were waiting till the Lord should let me know it, and that they had appointed a certain night, September 4th, for me to exercise my gift. Then I was afraid. It did not seem possible that I could preach; and I could not yet think it possible for me to leave my business. This caused me great anxiety and some distress of mind. I find in my diary of August 14th, the evening when I had first had the thought that I must preach, this sentence: "I am certain I must engage in another work than the law."

A few days after this, a large coal operator came to my office and asked me to take charge of the legal work connected with his business. I looked it over, and took time to think of it. All that day I worked hard and enjoyed the work. Much business was brought to me, and during the day I hardly thought of anything but the work. During the past winter I had done but little, having been much with my two brothers, one in Washington and one at my father's home, both very sick. Since my baptism I had not cared much for legal work, only to do my duty. And this was really the first day in many weeks that I had been devotedly engaged in work. All other things were put out of my mind, and the thought of preaching was gone, so far as I can remember. I had during all of my practice been preparing for the line of work which appeared now to be coming to me in such measure as to animate me much. I must, however, have remembered my thoughts about preaching, for I told the coal operator that possibly I might not stay there, and if I arranged to go away I would turn the business over to a friend, H. W. Palmer. He said that man would be his next choice.

That night I went into my room with very peculiar feelings. I had spent evening after evening there with the Bible, the hymn book and the "Signs,"

in unspeakable comfort. Now, as I entered the room, I realized that something was lacking. I looked around and the room seemed empty. I took the Bible, but there was nothing for me. I was not at rest. I sat down but instantly rose again. Unrest! It was terrible, distressing. It seemed almost as though I were going to die. All at once I thought of the day just closed, and the work I had done, and the enjoyment of it. Then I said to myself; "On Sunday night you felt that you must go to the ends of the earth and tell the glad tidings of salvation by grace, and what have you been doing today?" Then I said, whether aloud or only in thought I cannot tell; "If I were sure of making flfty thousand dollars by the end of this year I could not and I would not stay." Oh, what a sweet peace and rest and a feeling of holy solemnity came into my soul. From that day to this, nearly forty-four years, there has been no going back in my mind from that decision. I have still had times when it seemed impossible for me to preach; one so unworthy, so poor in spirit, so ignorant. Qualification has seemed utterly lacking, but the thought of business and money has never since been a hindrance to me. It seemed the words were sweetly given to me given to me by the dear Saviour: ***"Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things."*** From that day to this my needs have been all supplied, and I am sure they will be to the end, but not all my wants.

One night about this time these words were in my mind all night: ***"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."*** All night the meaning of them kept unfolding in my soul, and the inexpressible sweetness of them was tested in my spirit. Whether I slept I do not know. I did not need to sleep. I had a more satisfying rest than sleep could give. Not long after this I was at a conference meeting at Vaughan Hill, perhaps Sunday, August 28th. On that day my next older brother James was baptized bv Elder Schoonover. My next younger brother Warren had been baptized in July, when I was not present. Both had been extremely ill during the past year, and both had received a hope, each in a most wonderful manner. At the conference referred to I spoke concerning the words of the dear Saviour which had been so blessed to me during one whole night. After this they seemed to pass away from my mind in a manner, though not by any means forgotten.

Now I began to think with trembling to try to prepare myself for the trial of my gift at Middletown at the meeting appointed for the evening of Sunday, September 4th. I thought if I could preach at all I could preach from those words: ***"Come unto me, etc."*** So I carefully laid them up in my mind for that occasion, occasionally thinking them over, and arranging my thoughts concerning them. The Sunday came and I was present at the Wallkill Meeting House in the morning. It rained and few were out. Elder Beebe said I must preach. I was in consternation. I had but one text and that was for the

meeting in Middletown at night. Elder Beebe and all the rest insisted that I must go forward. Just then I remembered the peculiar language of Isa. 29:11, 12 and 18 about the book which the learned could not read because it was sealed, and the one that was not learned because he was not learned, but the deaf shall hear the words of the book, etc. I spoke a little about that, and one of the deacons, an old man, said he was edified by what I said. I looked at him sadly for I thought he had said what was not true in order to encourage and comfort me. I knew it could not be that what I had said could have been of any benefit. But perhaps at night I might preach. Elder Beebe was called from the morning meeting to attend a funeral and told me I must preach at the afternoon meeting in Middletown. I urged and begged to be let off from that; said I could not do it. The thought of trying to preach in the afternoon was frightful, and especially as I had only the one text, and that I must use at night. When I found it was inevitable, I looked around in my mind and finally thought of the text used by the Presbyterian preacher the night I felt such a strong desire to contradict him, and when afterward I, for the first time, thought I must preach: ***"As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."*** But to use that I must speak upon the subject of the resurrection, and I knew that one prominent person would be present who had told me she did not believe in the resurrection of the body in the same way that some of us did and I feared I would offend her. My mind was in a tumult. However, the time came and I tried to tell what I thought of the text, and declared the resurrection of the body. Though I will say here that I did not then, and do not now, believe that the body, which is sown a natural body, is raised a natural body and then changed into a spiritual body; but ***"it is raised a spiritual body."*** Well, I got through the afternoon, and was spoken to very kindly by the one referred to, as well as by the rest of the friends. I did not, however, in my own mind, call it preaching. But if I could preach at all (which I began to doubt very much) I thought I could do it at night. My text I had kept laid away, and neither in the morning nor afternoon had I interfered with it.

At night there came together a large congregation, and I took my text. But what work I made. I talked, it is true, for near forty minutes, but I felt as though I had my hands full of dead, dry leaves, rattling them. There was no life or light or feeling, except a feeling of self-abasement, helplessness and distress. One followed me, the one I have already referred to, who afterward left us, and said some surface things in a smooth, cold manner, with no help or interest to me. I had tried to get down into the depth and sweetness of the text. ***"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,"*** and I could not. I felt that I had absolutely said nothing, and worse than nothing. The church gave me license to preach, but I am convinced they could not have seen any gift in what I said that night. If it had not been for the morning and

afternoon meetings, and what they had heard before, they could not have thought I had a gift.

The night was a distressing one to me. I tossed sleeplessly till morning, writing bitter things against myself, feeling sure that I had made the church mourn on my account; that I had no gift, and that I ought never to have allowed them to have an appointment for me. How my soul cried unto the Lord for mercy, that he would direct me and uphold me in the right way. Toward morning I became somewhat quiet, and promised myself that if the Lord ever had anything for me to say I would try to say it if he would give me ability, but that I would never lay up a text again, nor try to arrange beforehand what I should say. I had been humiliated greatly and my pride had been broken down, and now I did feel humble. But I have not kept mv promise. Many a time I have tried to arrange a sermon for a future occasion, and have as often been shut up, and three or four times during the first year I had to stop and sit down.

The next week I went in company with several brethren to the Lexington Association, and enjoyed the meetings and the preaching very much. I was called upon to speak, and felt very much at liberty in my soul. It seemed to me then that preaching the gospel was an easy and most delightful work, but I soon found that it was so only when the Lord filled my soul with the comfort of his love and gave me to feel at the time the power of his word. But when left to myself to depend upon the power of my own mind, preaching is the hardest work I ever did.

When my sister Bessie received a hope ten years before I was brought into the church, she received in her own mind an assurance that I would have to preach. When I wrote her that I had united with the Presbyterian Church, she was so deeply affected that for a time she almost lost her power to breathe. Soon, however, the remembrance of the power with which that assurance had come to her that I must preach quieted her, and she rested. I knew nothing of this until the church had liberated me to preach.

I still have times of soul searching, and of crying unto God as a little child, that he will lead me and guide me in the path of duty, and uphold me by His spirit, and I must acknowledge with humble gratitude and thanksgiving that the dear Lord has not been unmindful of my petitions. And I would love, if enabled by his grace, to recount some of his blessings, and tell of his goodness to me. I can say with the Apostle, ***"Having obtained help of the Lord, I continue unto this present, trying to preach as with the ability that God giveth, the unsearchable riches of Christ."***

The terrible afflictions of soul I cannot describe. I cannot tell of the sorrows on account of sin in thought and word and deed, of the going down into the depths, when deep has called unto deep in my soul, when I have felt that ***"the bars of the earth were about***

me forever." But so far the Lord has showed me his delivering power and grace, and out of every one of these deep and heavy afflictions the Lord has brought me into some deeper and more glorious understanding of his goodness.

Elder Silas H. Durand

MARK X. 14; LUKE XVIII. 16

"Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God."

We are unable to discover anything in this passage inharmonious with the views expressed in the twenty-third number of our last volume, on the subject of the salvation of infants.

To our mind this text, when properly understood, will confirm the sentiments therein expressed. The occasion on which these words were spoken by our Lord, was not one in which he was setting forth the way of salvation. The people which gathered around our Lord, were bringing their little children or infants to Christ, not to have them baptized nor rantized,—but we are informed in the context that the object of those who brought their children to him was that he would touch them. Who they were who brought their children, or what benefit they hoped to secure for their little ones, from his touching them, we are not informed; but we presume that, like the diseased woman who sought to touch the hem of his garment that she might be healed of her infirmity, they believed that a virtue would be communicated by the touch which would secure to them some blessing either temporal or spiritual. But the disciples rebuked them. From this circumstance it would seem that those who brought their children were not disciples, but whether they were or not, they were rebuked by the disciples, who seemed to regard it as an annoyance, and rebuked them. Mark says, " When Jesus saw it," (that is, when he saw the conduct of the disciples,) *"he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer little children to come unto me."* It was somewhat presuming in the disciples, in the presence of the Master, without any authority from him, to rebuke those who brought their children to him.

This may serve as an admonition to us all as disciples of the Redeemer, to avoid the assumption of authority which he has not vested in us. It becomes us as his disciples to always remember that it is his to command, and ours to obey. In the text we have two express and positive commands laid down for the government of the disciples of Christ, for unto them as such the text is addressed. Both of these commands enjoin the duty on the disciples to be passive, in regard to children's coming to Christ; and the reason why they should be passive is given also, namely: *"For of such is the kingdom of God."* It would be exceedingly difficult to infer from these words a duty to interfere in the matter of bringing or preventing

them from coming, much less to infer an obligation to baptize or rantize them. Christ has informed us that no man can come unto him except the Father, which sent him, draw them; and all such as are drawn to him by the Father, he will raise up at the last day. Hence it is a matter over which his disciples have no power or control. They can neither facilitate nor hinder any from coming to Christ, either infants or adults, who are drawn to him by the Father, for the same power is displayed in drawing them to him that was displayed in sending the Savior into the world. As none but God the Father had the power and the right to send his Son into the world to save sinners, so none but God has the power or right to draw sinners, old or young, unto him. And as they have no power to draw them, they are equally destitute of power to oppose their coming to him, when drawn or brought to him. It is indeed a matter in which they are not allowed to interfere. There can be no danger that any of God's chosen people should fail to come to Christ, for he has positively assured us, that ***"All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."*** The work of salvation is so ordered and established in the counsel and decree of God, that neither men nor angels shall share with God in the work, nor divide with him the glory resulting from it. He will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one of them that is called by my name, for I have created him for my glory; I have formed him, yea, I have made him.

The reason assigned by our Lord for commanding them to be passive is, when duly understood, a very weighty one. ***"For of such is the kingdom of God."*** If he had said to them, For of such shall be the kingdom of God, they might have inferred that the kingdom of God was not yet established, that the subjects of it were not yet known, and that there was some blank in regard to its establishment, yet to be filled up. But the kingdom of God was prepared from the foundation of the world. God's King is set upon his holy hill of Zion. His throne is forever and ever. It is from everlasting to everlasting. All his subjects were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. ***"The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."*** And as he only, knoweth them that are his, or them that are of this spiritual kingdom, none others are qualified to decide who shall or who shall not come to the Redeemer. The disciples can only know who they are as he makes them manifest. They could not therefore be competent to supervise the matter by forbidding any, whether old or young, to come unto him. But as the words of our Lord are full of wisdom and instruction, we may learn that besides impressing the disciples with a sense of their incompetency to judge and decide who may or may not come to Christ, or who are

and who are not of the kingdom of God, we learn two other important truths:

First, that there are some such children in the kingdom of God, as those whom he had taken in his arms, laid his hands upon, and blessed. *"For of such is the kingdom of God."* Those whom he has blessed are blessed for evermore; and, on this occasion at least, he blessed some who were literally little children. As in the article in the twenty-third number of the last volume, we proved by the testimony of the Scriptures, that all the human family, young and old, are by nature children of wrath; that all have sinned, and are therefore mortal; that if they were not sinners they could not die, neither could they be saved by the mediation of Christ, if they were not sinners, for he came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. His name is called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins; it is therefore fully demonstrated that infants, in order to be saved, must be redeemed by Christ, and born again of an incorruptible seed, by the word of the Lord, which liveth and abideth forever. And we now reiterate the declaration we before made, and which cannot be successfully contradicted, that the doctrine held by the Old School Baptists is the only doctrine preached among men that can possibly embrace the salvation of infants, or of any others.

Second, *"Of such is the kingdom of God."* All who belong to the kingdom or God, are brought experimentally into it by being born again, in which birth they are converted and become as little children. *"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."* And in connection with our text Christ said, *"Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."—Mark x. 15. "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein."—John xiii. 17.* Let us seriously consider this important asseveration of our Lord Jesus Christ. What awful considerations hang upon these words. No man can enter the kingdom of God in any other way than as a little child. Then, instead of infants being debarred from salvation because they are infants, and unable to do anything to procure salvation, all adults, in order to be saved, must become as little children. What is there then peculiar to little children, which is so very important to qualify us for a reception of the kingdom, that none without it can in any wise enter without it? Is it free will, free agency, or human ability to comply with terms, conditions and overtures? We think there are none who will take that position. Little children are helpless, artless, dependent, without wisdom or ability to help themselves, and therefore entirely dependent on protectors for support and safety; let it be remembered that all who are born of God, taught by his Spirit, and brought by grace into the experimental enjoyment of the king-

dom of God, must be reduced to a sense of their entire inability and helplessness, with no more power or wisdom of their own to rely upon, than the little child has for its own protection or support. As we are all by nature under the infatuation that we have sufficient power to determine our own destiny, we must be converted from that delusion; be slain to all our confidence in the flesh, and taught of God to know that we are poor, guilty, condemned sinners, totally destitute of ability to will or to do anything towards our own deliverance. They are made to feel, to know, and to confess that if they are not saved by a strong, sovereign and almighty power, they are lost forever. When born of God, that meek, quiet, confiding, childlike spirit, which is peculiar to all the saints of God, is implanted in them, and under its benign influence they seek for a lowly place in the kingdom of God. They do not feel to enter the place of broad rivers and streams as a galley with oars, propelling themselves along by works, nor as the gallant ship in full trim, with canvas all spread out to the breeze; but stripped completely of its canvas, spars and rigging, of all its oars and self-propelling instruments, as the little, passive, helpless, dependent child enters into natural life, so enters the heaven-born child of God into the kingdom which is, and was, prepared for him from the foundation of the world. Now we ask, Is not this method of salvation alone by grace, perfectly adapted to all the redeemed family of God, whether infants or adults? The tall, the wise, the noble and the mighty men of this world, are quite as helpless and dependent for their salvation as the infant, the heathen, or the idiot. What other doctrine except that held by the old fashioned Baptists, and advocated in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, presents any hope for the helpless, the lost and the ruined of mankind? This childlike condition not only qualifies Zion's converts to enter, but also to dwell in the kingdom. *"Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."*

When the disciples of our Lord were at one time inflated with vain ambition, and inquired which of them was to be greatest in the kingdom of heaven, our Lord set a little child in their midst, *"And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."— Matt. xviii. 34.*

Middletown, N.Y., January 15, 1857.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

I CORINTIIIANS III. I6. I7.

"KNOW ye not that ye are of the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you ? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple is holy, which temple ye are."

A poor sinner seeking for the truth has asked us to write on this Scripture and we should love to be able to do this in such a way as to satisfy the longing soul, but the Lord himself is the only source of all wisdom and knowledge, and it shall never be said that any man has been able to teach his brother to know the Lord. This present inquirer has told us that in reading the Bible everything seems to condemn her, and even those passages which seem to hold forth some precious promise carry with them a qualification which seems to cut her off. If we have experimentally known anything of the truth ourselves, we have fellowship for her condition of mind. There was a time with us some years ago when to read the Bible meant for us to see our own condemnation in every line of it. It is a sore experience, and cuts the poor sinner down to the ground, but like all the things in the lives of the children of God, it is altogether needful in order that we thereby learn the way of salvation more perfectly, and realize that no flesh can glory in the presence of the Lord. It is said in the Psalms that blessed is the people that know the joyful sound, they shall walk, 0 Lord, in the light of thy countenance. Have you ever thought what it means to walk in the light of his countenance? The light reveals, or discloses, and among the things which light shows are the nakedness of self and the hidden evils of the human beart. We want to say, therefore, to our inquirer that the very exercise of mind she is now undergoing is proof that she is walking in the light of her blessed Lord's face. How otherwise could she be filled so with mourning over her weakness and sinfulness? How otherwise could she have so tender a conscience that the slightest vanity or se]fishness pains it so keenly? "***The tender herb*** " mentioned in the thirty-second chapter of Deuteronomy is undoubtedly this tender conscience made tender by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of truth shall come upon this tender herb as the small rain. Thus shall the tender conscience grow up into knowledge of the way; that is, by being fed with the doctrine. Therefore we shall now turn to the text, hoping to bring forth by the Lord some instruction in righteousness to this very tender conscience. It is true from the teaching of the Scriptures that the church as a body is one and indivisible and that, as a unit, it is the temple of God. The Almighty dwells not in temples made with hands, but in his church composed of lively stones, builded up through the Spirit for the habitation of his honor and glory. However, in the text at the head of this article it is not the church as a body which Paul is considering, but each individual member of the church. Each member is himself or herself the

temple of God, and lives and has his being in each believer. This cannot be otherwise than true, because each believer is born of God, else he could not be a believer, for belief comes by the operation within of the same power which raised Christ from the dead. It will be noticed in the text that it says "ye," and not "you," are the temple of God, and again in the seventeenth verse it says "ye" instead of "you." "Ye" is the singular number and "you" the plural number in the ancient form of the second person. The fact, therefore, that Paul uses the singular form proves to our mind that while it is true that the whole church as a body is the temple of God, the writer in this instance is maintaining that each single individual member of that church is a temple of the Lord. Truly the tabernacle of God is with men in this very day, and all who are subjects of the new or heavenly birth are partakers of the divine nature, and so have the very God of heaven dwelling within them. No wonder the Savior said to his followers that the kingdom of heaven was within them. In each true believer is the King ruling by his love and the power of his grace. Since it cannot be otherwise than true according to the Scriptures that the power of the Lord dwells in our mortal bodies, then it must follow that the mortal body itself is the temple of the living God, and that whenever the believer takes his mortal body and commits uncleanness with it, he is thereby defiling the temple of the Lord. This brings us to the matter in the seventeenth verse, that whoever defiles the temple of the Lord, him shall God destroy. This, too, is the part which worries our inquirer after truth. In this passage she reads her own condemnation, for she has a fear that she has defiled the temple, and is thereby headed for destruction. Dear child of God, you who fear the Lord so solemnly and so reverently, this does not mean you. The very fact that you are dwelling with fear and trembling is your preventative against defiling the temple; that is, your mortal body. Godly fear is the hatred of evil, and so long as this hatred of evil dwells actively within us, there can be no defiling of the temple. Defiling the temple results from a heart grown cold toward God, and from a conscience seared as with a hot iron so that it cannot feel the pain of sinfulness. When a believer uses his mortal body to satisfy the lusts of the flesh in committing fornication, or other baseness, he defiles the temple of God. In this same first Corinthians, sixth chapter, Paul establishes this as follows: "*Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid! What ! know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own ? For*

ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God is your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." Both the body and the spirit of the believer are God's by right of redemption, and it is proper that God should be glorified both in the spirit and in the body of the believer. Therefore, to use the mortal body to commit fornication with it would be to join that which is a member of Christ's body to the body of a harlot, which would be to defile the temple of the Lord. ***"Him shall God destroy."*** Such a one would be unfit for the company of the saints, and could not be admitted into the fellow ship of the kingdom of heaven here on earth, nor if he were already in the kingdom could be retained there, but would have to be excluded from the fellowship of the church here in the world. Not that the believer would be destroyed eternally from the presence of the Lord but he would be destroyed so far as the kingdom here on earth is concerned. ***"Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."*** By the ***"kingdom of God"*** here is not meant the eternal world of glory, but the visible organization of the church here in the world. Such believers as take their bodies to commit any of the above offenses do thereby defile their mortal bodies, which are the temple of the Holy Spirit, and such shall be destroyed from the love and fellowship of the church here on earth. Our inquirer, who has asked us to write on this, and whose conscience is so tender that the least vain thought and foolish imagination pains it, is not of those who defile the temple of the Lord, rather she is possessing her body in patience and without blame unto the coming of the Lord; but how subtly the tempter takes these very blessed things and twists them so as to torment God's little children, and so tries to wrest them from their faith. Thanks be to God, the adversary shall not succeed, but when the Lord shall appear to relieve the anxieties of our inquirer, Satan shall hold his peace and slink away defeated into everlasting destruction.

We hope what we have here written is unto the glory of God and to the comfort of his little ones.

Elder H.H. Lefferts

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1 CORINTHIANS 13:11-13.

When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

PSALMS XII. I; ISAIAH LVIII. I.

SISTER Mary A. Haines, of Kenilworth, N. J., has called our attention to two expressions, one found in Psalms xii. 1, and the other in Isaiah lviii. 1. The first reads, " Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth," and the other, " Cry aloud, spare not." Our sister does not say in her letter why these two Scriptures are at the same time in her mind.

In reply we will say, first, that there is no contradiction between the first, which is a prayer of the writer of the Psalm, and the second, which is a command from God to his servants. Both relate to a state of alienation from God, which to the psalmist caused grief and distress and fear, and to God gave offense and displeasure. It is good when that which is offensive to God is also offensive to ourselves; in this appears our union and fellowship with God. There are blessings pronounced in the word upon those to whom the reproach of Zion is a burden, and the reproach of Zion, or that which causes her to be a reproach, is always her transgression.

In this twelfth Psalm the writer deplores the vanity of the people, their deceitfulness, the pride which was apparent in their mouths, their disregard for the commandments of the Lord, speaking loftily against his authority, their oppression of the poor and the needy and the increase of the numbers of wicked men because the vilest of men are exalted. All this evil appeared in Israel, the chosen people of God. All such vile things might be expected among the nations that knew not God, but how vile, passing all conception, must they be who, having God's laws and his prophets and teachers among them, and claiming to the Lord's own heritage, could yet indulge in all the ungodly practices named in the Psalm and quoted above.

The writer of the Psalm sees all these things with grief, he deplores them with all his heart, he abhors them and laments his association with such ungodly men, and in his distress he is driven to prayer. We may not doubt that he had warned and reproved and rebuked faithfully those who were guilty of all these things, but, so far as he could see, to no avail. After all his faithful warning and rebuking of them they still went on in their ungodliness. In his trouble and indignation against all these things he is driven to turn to God as the only source of help; God alone could give true repentance, both of heart and life, to the people. He implied in his prayer a confession of his own inability to turn the people from this their folly by any exhortation or effort of any kind of his own; he had planted and watered, but must learn that God only could give the increase.

We learn from this Psalm, and from the words to which our sister has called special attention, that in times of declension the Spirit of God alone can revive the work of God. We also learn that all who are truly spiritual will mourn at the departures of those who have named the name of the Lord, and we learn that through bitter experience we come at last to see that in

God alone is our help, and so the cry is heard, "*Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth.*" How sorrowful to see those who did run well departing or dallying by the way. How sad to find such as these apparently deaf to all ell-treaties and exhortations by the faithfnl servants of God. How such things discourage the heart of a faithful pastor, and often cause him to feel that his ministry is in vain. Such a faithful servant at such times will be put upon great searchings of heart to see whether he has been faithful to set the right example as well as to preach. What great fears that servant will have lest as Paul also feared after having preached the gospel to others he himself should be a castaway. Know that faithful servant will be compelled to come again and again to God, laying the case before him and asking for personal grace to he faithful in his testimony, and then to walk in the way, as well as to point it out. How often he will fear that his preaching has not heen faithful, and then that his life has not measured up to that which he enjoins. It was not without reason that Paul said to Timothy, ; " Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine." " Thyself first, and then the doctrine. It is sure that a man cannot be a good minister of Jesus Christ unless first of all he himself be a good man. The grace of God lives in men before it lives in their preaching. All this view of self, and of the coldness and ungodliness of Israel, led the psalmist to the prayer of the text. Whatever might be the result with the people, it was a good place for the psalmist himself to be in.

The people of God are just as much exposed to being led away by the deceitfulness of sin to-day as they were then. Not only did literal Israel thus depart, but spiritual Israel also has often thus gone astray. We need not go to the ranks of false religionists to find all these evil things, we shall find them in the true Israel. All these things did indeed exist in all the heathen religions of that day, but it was to Israel only that the psalmist was looking with such earnest crying to God for them. Among Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Romanists, all these things of evil are found, and indeed they belong to them; but this does not concern the godly man so much, it is when these things appear among Old School Baptists that the truly spiritual will be troubled. Has godliness ceased in any degree among us ? Do the faithful fail among us ? Are any among ourselves speaking vanity, and using flattering words, and acting with a double heart ? Is there flattery or falsehood (for all flattery is falsehood) and pride in the speech of any of us ? Are any of us saying by our practice that we have the right to dictate to others, and that none have any right to call in question whatever we may say or do? Are any of us causing the poor to be oppressed and the needy to sight. These are the things which marked the ungodliness of that time, and against which the psalmist warned the people, and because of which he entreated the help

of God. It is a solemn question, Have we, any of us, life enough in our hearts to even deplore these evils when they are found, and to cry to God for help that they no longer may prevail ? The gracious answer of God in the Psalm is, "*For the oppression of the poor [or because of the oppression of the poor], for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.*" This word " puffeth " means literally to blow with the mouth, as one who would blow away some trifling thing, and the thought is that God will protect those who are, in the sight of these ungodly men of so little weight that a blow of the mouth would drive them away. God cares for these who are of no account to the ungodly, and from this gracious answer of the Lord the psalmist draws consolation, and faith springs into lively exercise, and his confession is, The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation forever. How earnest and pitiful the cry! How instant the gracious answer ! How confident the faith springing forth to receive the answer !

Now there is no contradiction between the prayer of the Psalm and the commandment in the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah. It is not probable that the same time is referred to in both places, but the connection shows that much the same condition of things existed when both the psalmist and the prophet wrote. In both cases iniquity abounded in the land. In the one case the psalmist turned to God in prayer (so we need not doubt that prayer also was in the heart of the prophet to God); in the one case the prayer is made prominent; in the other case the word of the Lord, and the commandment of the Lord to proclaim it, is made the more prominent. But we may be sure that he who prays to God will also warn and rebuke and reprove. On the other hand, he who warns and reproves according to God's command, will also be found often in prayer. Prayer and preaching go hand in hand; if there be no praying there can be no spiritual preaching. He who seeks to deliver God's word must and will find that he needs God's strength to deliver it in, and he who is benefited by the word of God is that man who so feels the need of it and realizes the blessedness of it that he will have a heart to pray for it. One of God's ways of answering the prayer for help against the inroads of all ungodliness will be to stir up the hearts of his servants to cry mightily against it. So the prophet was bidden to cry aloud and to spare not; it was his duty to shew the people of God their sins and transgressions. Is the heart of any servant of God exercised, as was that of the psalmist, to cry for help against the prevailing carelessness and ungodliness among the people of the Lord, then also the heart be that one will feel the power of the word which says, " Cry aloud, and spare not," declare to the people their sins. Exhortation and warning to the ungodly are the wreath of which prayer to God is

the life. Prayer against sin which does not lead to warning against that same sin is but a lifeless form indeed, and warning against sin which has not come out of a heart that cries to God for help against it is as the Dead Sea fruit, which is said to be fair in the eyes, but in the lips only dust and ashes. God has thus joined these two things together in his word, and these two texts to which sister Haines has called attention clearly set forth these solemn and gracious truths.

Elder F.A. Chick

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." —ROMANS v. 10.

WHAT a fearful spot it is to be in — to feel and fear oneself an enemy to God! I think it is one of the most painful feelings that ever passed through my breast, to fear I was an enemy to God. For what must be the consequence, if a man live and die having God for his enemy ? In that warfare he must perish. If God be his enemy, who can be his friend? Such sensations in the bosom are well-nigh akin to despair. Let a man fully feel that he is God's enemy, where can he hide his head? Hell itself seems to afford him no refuge. But he must be exercised with something of this before he can prize reconciliation. He must see himself to be an enemy of God by birth—that he was born in what our Reformers called "birth sin;" and that his carnal mind is enmity against God. O the painful sensations of the carnal mind being enmity against God ! It is bad enough to be God's enemy; but that every fibre of our nature should be steeped in enmity against God, that holy and blessed Being to whom we owe so much, and to whom we desire to owe everything; that our carnal heart in all its constitution, in its very blood, should be one unmitigated mass of enmity to God, O it is an awful thought ! If you are made to experience that enmity in your bosom, and to feel more or less of its upheavings and risings — that will cut to pieces all the sinews of creature righteousness; that will mar all your comeliness, and turn it into corruption.

Now, when a man is thus exercised, it will make him look out, if he has any root of spiritual feeling, for a remedy. God has provided such in the sacrifice of his dear Son, in the blood of the Lamb; in the sufferings, obedience, death, and resurrection of the blessed Jesus. Now when this is opened up in our soul by the Spirit of God; when faith is given to receive it; when the Holy Ghost applies it; when it is received into the heart (for the Apostle says, "We have received the atonement"), then a felt reconciliation takes place; we are then reconciled to God; love takes the place of enmity, praise of sighing, and blessing his name instead of writing bitter things against ourselves.

Elder J.C. Philpot

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Mrs. Dan Spencer, Va	5.00
Mrs. Charles Lovell, VA	2.00
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Mr. & Mrs. Roy Ingram, VA	7.00

ST. MATTHEW CH. 13 VS. 47-48.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:

Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

OBITUARIES

THE OBITUARY OF
BROTHER HOMIE CLYDE DALTON

It pleased our Lord to call home Brother Homie Clyde Dalton October 19, 1998.

Brother Homie was born February 9, 1913; a son of the late James L. Dalton and Mattie Schwitzerlett Dalton. He was married to the late Elma Lee Yeatts Dalton.

Brother Homie was received by experience and baptism April 10, 1966 into Springfield Primitive Baptist Church.

Funeral services were conducted at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Julian Williams and Dr. Lynn Marstin. His body was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park.

Those left to mourn Brother Homie are; two sons, Jimmy C. Dalton of Gretna, Va. and Wayne Dalton of Forest, Va. Two daughters Becky D. Bennett and Martha D. Smith of Gretna, Va. Two brothers, Oscar T. Dalton of Hurt, Va. and Ocie E. Dalton of Gretna, Va. Three sisters Alice Dove and Doris Creasy of Gretna, Va. and Beulah Hodnett of Rustberg, Va. Eleven grandchildren and fourteen great-grandchildren.

Brother Homie will be missed by all. He attended church as often as he could and always seemed to enjoy the fellowship. But most of his last years were devoted to the constant care of his invalid wife.

May God Bless and reconcile each one to their loss.

Written in Love and Hope,
Carol R. Pickral

Elder Marvin Brumfield, Pastor
Oscar Pickral, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

On Jordan's stormy banks I stand,
And cast a wishful eye,
To Canaan's fair and happy land,
Where my possessions lie,

Oh, the transporting, rapturous
scene, That rises to my sight !
Sweet fields arrayed in living
green,
And rivers of delight !

All o'er those wide-extended
plains Shines one eternal day;
There God the Sun for ever reigns,
And scatters night away.

No chilling winds, or poisonous
breath, Can reach that healthful
shore;
Sickness and sorrows, pain and
death, Are felt and feared no more.

When shall I reach that happy
place,
And be forever blest ?
When shall I see my Father's face
And in his bosom rest?

Filled with delight, my raptured
soul Can here no longer stay;
Though Jordan's waves around
me roll,
Fearless I'd launch away.

Stennett.

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Elder Gilbert Beebe

JOB 36:5.

Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any: he is mighty in strength and wisdom.

EDITORIAL

THE WISDOM OF GOD

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

There is a vast difference between the wisdom of God and the wisdom of man. The wisdom of God is infinite, there is nothing that is not known absolutely by God, and there is nothing that is known absolutely, by man in his finite wisdom. Man is of the earth earthy and knows only those things that he has experienced in the earth, that he can remember, and he has no control over them. He boasts of his wisdom and the things that he can do, but that is only in his imagination, he can do nothing in the sense that he can perform anything outside of the plan of God which was determined before time began. He can do only those things that God has decreed and put under his dominion and then only as they are according to the master plan which God has for all things. He is as the men of old who built an altar of the ashes of the tree that they had burned in the fire to cook their food, they fell down and worshipped it, declaring that it was the God that brought them out of the land of Egypt. The same intelligence was demonstrated back in that day that is exhibited by the natural man today; they determine what power God has and have decided that he needs assistance in accomplishing his stated intentions which were declared before time began. They say that they worship God that made the heaven and earth, when in fact they do not know him. Man, in the flesh does not know God and that is what the subject scripture is declaring; that it was the wisdom of God that determined this very fact.

The preaching of the cross is to the natural man foolishness, because it does not fit into any of the scientific laws of nature, with which he is familiar, nor does it agree with anything that he has experienced in the natural

realm. He has nothing that he can compare it with, and others telling him about it will not convince him of its authenticity because it does not harmonize with anything that he has been taught by the wisdom of this world. With the natural understanding man responds to spiritual matters in much the same manner that Nicodemus responded to Jesus's statement that ye must be born again; his reply was. how can a man be born again when he is old, can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born again? Regarding the subject of the cross, the natural wisdom of man would say, how can the death of one man pay for the sins of another? and why would God sacrifice his own Son to accomplish this. Each one is rationalizing spiritual things with the natural mind; and the things of the spiritul kingdom are not reasonable to the natural mind.

Man, in nature does not even realize what sin is, who it is against and the consequences of it; because of the fact that only one that is born of the spirit can understand, feel and experience the depravity of sin and realize the devastating consequences of it. Man in nature does not feel the need for a mediator to plead his cause before a just and holy God because he feels that he is as good as anyone else and does not feel the depravity of the condition that he is in. The only law that he is acquainted with is the laws of the land and his remorse for breaking them is, getting caught, and being embarrassed and punished for his actions. Their knowledge is limited to the things in the world around them, and the spiritual realm is something that they have never had any knowledge of whatsoever, and the apostle Paul is saying in the above scripture, that all of these facts were determined in the wisdom of God before time began.

The world believes that the man in nature must make a considered decision to abandon the ways of the world, determine to follow Jesus and enter into his plan of salvation to save the world; they must assist in spreading the gospel and employ ministers with degrees in theology, philosophy, psychology and the intelligence of the world's houses of higher learning to do a better job than has been done in the past. The scriptural response to this theory is (1 Cor. Chap. 1 vs. 20) ***"Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?"*** The worldly religions are based upon worldly wisdom and the the above text states plainly that God does not accept this wisdom; by their wisdon they know not God; or as horse racing terminology would state it, they are scratched at the gate.

(1 Cor. Chap. 1, vs. 25) ***"Because the foolishness of God is wiser that men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men."*** The foolishness of preaching is wiser than the natural man and, therefore, it takes an intelligence that the flesh does not possess to understand it; all of the degrees that the world can give, in theology, does not enable man to preach the

gospel,or, to believe it. God said by the mouth of Isaiah, (Isa Chap 35, vs. 8-9) ***"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."*** God's thoughts are based upon absolute knowledge of all things past, present and future, and man's thoughts are based on theory, supposition and hearsay evidence, and this includes the thoughts of the wisest of men.

This is true of all men, in nature, and will continue to be so, unless the truth is revealed to the inner man by the giver of every good and perfect gift. The sum total of the knowledge of man, in the flesh, is based upon his experience in the things of nature, whether first or second hand, unless or until revelation makes known unto him the glories of the kingdom of God. That knowledge raises him above the natural wisdom which he possessed in nature and makes him desire to set together in heavenly places with others of like precious faith. As the old adage goes, man's wisdom is the ability to recognize his mistakes, when he makes them again, but it does not enable him to delve into the spiritual realm, or to find out God, and certainly not to make a rational decision of whether to worship God or not. How can they worship that which they do not know or understand?

The apostle Paul's declaration was, (I Cor Chap 2, vs 1) ***"And I brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God."*** His desire was that he should not appeal to them with the wisdom of this world, the intelligence of the natural man, or the intellect of a leader of the Jews under the law because this wisdom has no part in the kingdom of God; but his desire was that they would see the power of his conversion and believe and fellowship that. Man's wisdom is as the money which Simon offered to Peter that he might receive the gift that upon whom he laid his hands, that they might receive the Holy Ghost, it is of no value in the things of the spirit. Peter's response was; ***"Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money."***

The only thing that is of any benefit to God's children is the conviction of the heart, that they are sinners before a just and holy God, and a hope that they have been delivered from the horrible pit and their feet have been placed on that rock. Their faith is that their eyes have been opened and they have been given wisdom whereby they might receive the gift of the Holy Ghost and be given the knowledge whereby they might understand the truth. Nothing but the truth is of any value here, and his desire is that he would not confuse them by using his eloquence of speech to influence them, because each one must be convicted in their own mind by the same one that taught him. Each one's calling is special and is the only thing that they can rely on for their hope of things eternal; it is

special in that it is always given in a way that is most impressive to each individual and in ways that they cannot deny.

Paul's preaching was as he stated in (1 Cor. Chap. 2, vs. 3-4-5) ***"And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."*** The apostles's desire was that they would not be persuaded by his words, but by the power of his conversion, how that a man who was the chiefest of sinners could be made a preacher of righteousness by the appearance of Jesus in his life. Only those who have had a similar experience can believe this report; as Paul told Timothy, (II Tim Chap 3,vs 14) ***"But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them."*** The aposlte did not teach anyone to know Christ, he could only testify to the things that he had seen and heard and trust that they would find a response in the heart of those to whom he was speaking. He said, on one occasion, that he was made all things unto all people if by any means he might save some. This conveys, to me, that he made no distinction between those to whom he spoke in his own mind, but trusted that the word would separate the wheat from the chaff, for wisdom is justified of all of her children, and wisdom's work is always perfect. He could not add them to the church, because he could only speak those things in which Christ had appeared unto him, and trusted that Christ would add to the church those that should be saved.

As Paul said in his letter to the church at Rome, (Rom Chap 8, vs 35 & 37.) ***"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."*** All of these things are also in the hands of God and work together for good to them that love God; and all are according to, and are a part of wisdom's plan; as the scriptures say of the man and woman; whatsoever God hath joined together, let not man put asunder: in like manner whatsoever God hath determined and decreed, from the beginning, will occur as planned and all of the powers or forces that exist can, in no way, separate one of those chosen in Christ from receiving their inheritance. The entire effort of Satan from the beginning has been to deceive the elect and lure them into his group, but, he has yet to add one; because he does not realize that they are of the chosen generation until it is manifested in their manners and then its too late, he has no power over them at all. This is not to infer that he could have gotten them if he had acted quicker, but he did not know that they were not his until the time came that they were quickened and then he attacks them with all the fury of hell trying to de-

stroy them by causing them to doubt their experience, but it will never happen.

In the acts of the apostles, on the day of pentecost, when the gospel was first preached by the apostles there were three thousand souls added to the church, and they continued with the apostles , sold their possessions and had all things common; they continued daily with one accord in the temple, as. (Acts Chap 2,vs 47) says ***"Praising God, and having favor with all the people, and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."*** They were added according to that wisdom, by whom they were chosen before the foundation of the world, and at the time appointed of the Father they were brought forth, from under the law of sin and death and their heritage was made known; they had been under the law and were, by nature the children of wrath even as others and their change was just a manifestation of what already was true.

That was how they were added to the church, in that day, and I believe that it is still that way today. They do not join the church, they are added to it by the grace of God; given an experience of grace, a love for the truth, faith in God and a desire to follow along in the footsteps of the flock, and upon relating their experience and travels, as evidence of God's blessings in their life they are baptized into the fellowship with their brethren of like precious faith and calling. There are many who have been added to the invisible church that have never joined the visible church. God adds to the church, and when he blesses them with the courage and conviction,of their heart, they request to be identified with the body of believers, here in time, to manifest that love that they have for the brethren and are baptized, with water unto repentence, from their former ways and wisdom leads them in the ways of peace. There is a set time for this and they cannot hinder or help it.

God's wisdom encompasses everything that there is, in the past present or future; his knowledge is perfect and there is nothing that has happened, is happening now, or will happen in the future that is not included in that knowledge; yea! and there is nothing whose being and occurrence is not determined by the counsel and foreknowledge of that wisdom. This is the wisdom by which the world was created, by which it still stands, and by whose wisdom the world knew not God. They know him not because in God's plan of salvation, it is by grace, through faith and that is not of man, it is a gift bestowed sovereignly upon each one. It is because that it was God's own good will and pleasure to give salvation to those chosen in Christ before the world began. Wisdom designed and executes the plan and the plan includes everything that is necessary to bring it to its planned conclusion. There is nothing in heaven, earth or in hell and all its fury that changes or alters that which God, in his infinite wisdom, has decreed should occur.

(Eze. Chap. 3,vs. 11) ***"He hath made everything beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end."*** When God created the world and all the host of it he declared that it was very good and this scripture says that God hath set the world in man's heart so that no man should find out the work of God. Man may claim that he has of his own free will accepted Jesus as his personal savior, but the scriptures teach that the world by wisdom does not know him; so, how can he accept by faith something that he does not know anything about. Man, by nature is so in love with the world and worldly pleasures that he does not, know of, or, desire anything else. He is at home in the world; and as one of the writers said, they have had no change, they are satisfied and proud of the world in which they live as it is and believe that they are the only ones that can change it should they so desire.

James Chap 3,vs17) ***"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, the peacable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hyprocisy."*** These are the beautiful characteristics of the wisdom that comes down from above; it is sovereignly bestowed upon the heirs of grace and they are made new creatures in Christ. The world, and all of the things of which it consists, loses its luster and appeal to this new man; for the first time, he beholds the beauty of the heavenly kingdom and realizes how Paul must have felt when he said (Phil Chap 1,vs 23) ***"For I am in a strait betwix two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ; which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you."*** Their desire is to search more and more into the depths of the wonders of the spiritual realm and find more evidence of the earnest of the inheritance which they hope to possess; They can see but dimly while in the flesh; but what they can see and feel is far away, above and beyond, the joys of this world with all of it fleshly pleasures. Their prayer is to experience the fullness of joy that they believe that they shall receive when they enter into the presence of God in heaven. When lifted up and made to sit together in heavenly places with those of like precious faith they sometimes, would, if they could, rise up and ascend unto the bosom of their heavenly Father and be at rest in pure joy and peace. As one of the writers of a song in Gobles hymn book says;

If thus to meet on earth below
So fills our hearts with love
What raptures shall his children feel
When they shall meet above

This will be joy beyond description, even to the vessels of mercy who have had a small foretaste in this life who were afore prepared unto glory; those who have seen it as through a glass darkly but even that is sufficient to cause them to continue to press on, the rest of their lives, to the mark of the prize of the high calling of God. At that time the beloved of the Father will

know as they are known, they will understand the mysteries that have plagued them in life, and they will behold the beauty of God in all of his glory. They will be like him and, for the first time, will understand the awesome beauty and magnificience of that city which wisdom has built: and that planned and executed this marvelous scheme of salvation. They will realize, to the fullest extent, the absolute surety and perfection that it provides for those for whom it was designed; those who were chosen in Christ before the beginning of the world, sustained by his grace here in time, and delivered unto possession of their heavenly inheritance without the loss of a single one.

In bonds of Love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

ARTICLES

PART III
"REJOICE EVERMORE, I TH. 5:16

Rejoice evermore" 1 Th. 5:16, for he Lord hears the cries of the righteous but his face is against them that do evil, Ps. 34:15; I Pet.3:12. Oh, woe am I for there are none righteous, no not one, certainly not I ! Dear reader, do not despair for It has pleased the Divine Trinity that each child of light shall he "***born of water and of the Spirit,***" John 3:5-7; and that the perfect One, the Christ, shall dwell within the inward man of each child of light. Thus His righteousness is imputed to them and their prayers are heard In heaven for Jesus, their Advocate and Mediator, sits at the right hand of God, the Father, making intercession for them, I John 2:1; Heb. 7:25, Rom. 8:34. "Rejoice evermore" with thankfulness for if God be for you who can be against you?

Well, the answer is: Satan's messengers will come against you to quench the Spirit of Christ within you, if it be possible, that your prayers waver so that "***ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts,***" James 4:3. Shall anyone weak in faith and subjected to the lust of the flesh question what can be achieved by prayer, knowing that God is immutable - that he has determined the end from the beginning and changeth not? Well, Satan will have gained an objective "***For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord,***" James 1:6-7.

Children of the light and of the day pray in faith for they love the Lord, who first loved them and called them, and they desire to obey his commandments and give thanks and all praise and glory to God. "— ***when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly," Matt. 6:6.*** Indeed, "***The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth***

much," James 5:16. The answer to an effectual fervent prayer is received from God at a time appointed by Him. The answer is always beneficial to the child. The child of God may rejoice in the revealed knowledge ***"that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Rom. 8:28.***

Though the praying child cannot change the immutable heavenly Father, the prayer does accomplish much for the penitent child:

1. The prayer does praise and glorify God. It is an act of obedience of the elect child to God's will and commandments I The. 5:17; I Cor. 10:31.
2. Through the mediation of Jesus the prayer brings the penitent child into submission to God's purpose and will, Col. 1:21-23.
3. Though "we know not what we should pray for as we ought," Rom. 8:26, the heavenly Father knows what we have need of, Matt. 6:32, Luke 12:30. Rejoice dear child for the promise is that "God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus," Phil. 4:19.
4 Through faith and humility the prayer invokes the blessings promised in the Beatitudes, Matt. 5:3-6, 8.
5. At times chosen by God, the penitent child who does hunger and thirst after righteousness is answered with renewal and a strengthened faith, wisdom and greater understanding of the sacred word, a measure of filial fear of the Father, and a strengthened will to resist, to persevere, and overcome the devil who will flee, James 4:7. The child grows in grace with refinement of the soul as it is led further in the narrow way, being perfected and preserved for arrival at the strait gate rejoicing and giving thanks that the Lord is its Savior and King eternal.

Therefore, pray in faith without ceasing for it is the elect children of light that prayer changes as they grow and are enabled to endure and overcome temptations. They are taught of the Holy Spirit to know that the ***"old serpent,"*** Satan, is a cunning deceiver who will, if it be possible, lead children of light into a wilderness of sin by his subtle strategies: a) Satan can tranform his colors, 2 Cor. 11:14, to appear as an angel of light misquoting precious scriptures with clever errors he introduces to mislead; b) Satan comes to the child of light displaying a warm pretence of friendship with claims of fellowship to deceive and tempt sin; c) Satan promotes sin as being good - a pretense of virtue in the Lord's service; d) Satan tempts sinful acts as acceptable solutions to the child's mere wishes and presumed necessities which have not been immediately supplied by God (who knows and will in time supply true needs of his children); e) Satan declares convincingly that a compassionate God will not condemn anyone

to hell and eternal damnation for they are told falsely that God loves everyone in the whole world, John 3:16; Rev. 20: 12-15; f) Satan excuses sin blaming God for the sinner's transgressions; g) Having failed to tempt sinful acts, Satan will whisper that you have not been humbled enough so as to drive the soul to despair. He tells you that you can never be saved. Dear children, pray without ceasing, rejoice and give thanks to the Lord for his counsel. Wait for his gifts of strength, will, and wisdom to recognize and overcome temptations of the wicked messengers of Satan for God will not forsake you.

Now, dear reader, has Satan whispered to establish doubts in your mind and soul that you are a child of light or that you will ever escape the broad way that leads to destruction? The new covenant of the Lord is: ***"I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more," Heb. 8:10-12.*** This promise is to the *"house of Israel."* I believe it is to the spiritual Israel, i.e. the children of light, rather than to the total humanity descending from Abraham and Jacob.

What are the *"laws"* that will be put and written in the mind and hearts of God's people? The minds of multitudes throughout much of the world have been exposed to the Ten Commandments, Ex. ch.20, but we know not what is in the hearts. Only God knows the secrets of the heart. I believe the cardinal laws given to the children of light are the two great commandments: first, ***"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind,"*** and second, ***"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," Matt. 22: 37-40. "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."*** I believe that when these two commandments of love are in both the mind and the heart the child does ***"know the Lord"*** as its merciful heavenly Father, for ***"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," 1 John 3:14.*** Loving the brethren cannot happen in the absence of love of God who did in eternity first love his children. But the scripture of the new covenant reads that *"all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."* I do believe that sometime before death of the mortal body, in some marvelous way, by the sole work of the Holy Spirit, all mankind will be made to know the Lord, perhaps on the deathbed if not before. The children of light will know the Lord as their merciful Saviour and Father - the children of the devil will know the Lord as an Almighty God of judgement and wrath for ***"the devils also believe, and tremble," James; 2:19. See also Matt. 8:28-33.*** While yet upon earth the Sons of God will receive an earnest of the inheritance to come.

I cannot close this very inadequate writing without acknowledgment and reference to that great effectual prayer of Jesus recorded in John ch.17. After praying for the apostles Jesus continues: "***Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: -- Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory — And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou has loved me may be in them, and I in them," read all verses 20-26.*** In our journey of earthly life, Jesus has declared that "***Ye shall know them by their fruits," Matt. 7:16.***

Dear beloved Children of light: "***There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," Rom. 8:1.*** Therefore, "***Make a joyful noise unto the Lord." "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." Th. 5:16-18.***

" Praise the Lord " " for his name alone is excellent. "

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VOICES OF THE PAST

TRANSCRIBED FROM A SERMON PREACHED BY ELDER D. V. SPANGLER

Snow Hill Church, October 23, 1975

May we turn to page 156. I would like for us to think about the sentiment of this hymn as we sing it. If you sing it without taking note of what it says, it is worthless:

Come, thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing thy grace!
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet,
Sung by flaming tongues above:
Praise the mount! O, fix me on it!
Mount of God's unchanging love.

Here I raise my Ebenezer;
Hither by thy help I'm come;
And I hope, by thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me, when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God;
He, to save my soul from danger,
Interposed his precious blood!

O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be:
Let thy grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it!
Prone to leave the God I love!
Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it;
Seal it for thy courts above!

I am thankful to be with you. We had two things happen since arriving that

has, you might say, made my trip worth-while; if there was nothing else. Some time ago I received an invitation to spend our time at this meeting in the home of one of the young members, Linda Adkins. Now I have a reputation, in this country, of writing short letters, when I write. So I wrote, she said, in maybe two lines, "The Lord willing, I'm coming". As I said to her yesterday morning, "I am going to write you a long letter now, and the letter will say this, that if I hadn't received your letter, I don't think I would have come." So you all might take that as you want to. The other thing is I visited an old friend in the nursing home yesterday morning, Mr. Clarence Robinson, who attended my services many years ago. He is blind now and he didn't recognize my voice. When I told him who I was, the reaction was worth my whole trip. Oh, the reaction of joy he showed for a poor sinner like I am. It surely meant something to me.

In the 17th chapter of the book of John, I shall begin reading with the first verse.

"These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast giuen him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I haue glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

These are the words of Jesus. And the occasion was the approach to the cross and the laying down of His life for His people. I think the message begins with His summing up in the 14th Chapter of John. You know, Matthew, Mark and Luke tell us about the birth of Christ, the virgin birth, the geneology and the events surrounding His natural birth. But the Apostle John soars away in his bringing Him to us. He loses sight, you might say, of His humble birth, His geneology, as he said, "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God and the word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." All the ministers here and elsewhere could never expound the expression, "The same was in the beginning with God." For the unity of the Godhead is there. The covenant relationship is there, in the description, "The same was in the beginning with God." And much of this chapter is bringing to us the relationship and the unity of God the Father and God the Son in the realm of salvation. Embraced in that unity is the people of God. Jesus in God and God in Jesus, and He in them, and them in Him, etc.

In the 14th Chapter of John, Jesus begins to tell His disciples that He is going away. They are puzzled often concerning His going away. In the 14th Chapter He tells them, "If ye believe in God, believe also in me. Let not your hearts be troubled. In my Father's house are many mansions. If

it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you". As the time would open and develop and be brought to pass they would see and know more about it. "I go and prepare a place for you, and I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there you may be also." He tells them they know the way. Yet there is an inquiry in the mind of Phillip, and he said to Jesus, "Show us the Father". Show us the Father. You have talked about Hlm. Jesus said, "Have I been so long with you and yet thou hast not known me, Phillip?" "Has all the work that I have unfolded as the eternal will of God in my life been unnoticed and unknown?" "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

The word of God says, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." How many? Everyone! Everyone under consideration. So the 14th Chapter is laying the foundation of His coming again. We are still holding that forth to the people. If it has not become the key to hold, it never will be. I am looking for the coming of our Lord. If I wasn't, I wouldn't be here this morning. I anticipate the event because He said, "I'm coming again." You can say it in the gospel, or however you please, but there is a second coming of the Lord.

Then Jesus brings the matter a little closer as He comes to the 15th Chapter of John regarding the unity of the Father and the Son. He said, "I am the true vine. My Father is the Husbandman." And He didn't forget to say in that chapter, "Ye are the branches". That is bringing into view in a lovely way, the unity of the Father and of the Son and with His people. "Branches". And in connection with that expression He said, "As I live, ye shall live." Just as certainly as I am alive, there is your life. "Ye shall live". There are about five occasions where the expression is used in these three chapters, "These words spake Jesus". It seems that there was a special significance in what He was saying at certain times. "These words spake Jesus" unto them.

I especially delight in the 15th Chapter in the words of Jesus when He said, "These words have I spoken unto you that my joy might remain in you; that your joy might be full." We will never know what salvation really is until we know the joy of our Saviour in saving us. Our cup will never be full. It will be half empty, until there is in our heart the knowledge that it was just as great a joy for Christ to save us as it is for us to be saved. Paul said, "For the joy set before him". It was always set before Him, and every movement of His life, He endured the cross despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God. God has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name that is above every name. Not only while Christ walked upon the earth, but in every phase of the salvation of His people did He have the preeminence in all things. But His place in heaven now, this morning, is as our Intercessor. He appears in the presence of God for us.

I remember the time I read that scripture in the 15th Chapter. It was at night

and I was setting in my room. Whatever He had been telling in the 14th Chapter, and coming on down to the 15th, "Ye are the branches," etc., it seems now, He said, "These words He spake". He says, "I spake these words unto you that my joy might remain in you; that your joy might be full." I don't think that we would detract anywhere from God's grace and His mercy and His everlasting love for His people to say that even the Father in bringing many sons to glory through the work of His son will take pleasure in it, also. And in connection with that; there is something about the doctrine of grace and the wonders of God's grace that presents these two thoughts. When this world has been brought to a conclusion, and is over, there will be a people in heaven that God won't be ashamed of. And the only reason there will be a people that He won't be ashamed of is because He will prepare them for it. And we also, my hearers, won't be ashamed. Christ was not ashamed to call His people, "Brethren". God was not ashamed to be called our God, He says that in the book of Hebrews. God was not ashamed to be called the God of the people pictured in the 11th chapter of Hebrews. It is the only way God could have a people in heaven that He wouldn't be ashamed of. He prepares them for it. And one of the great blessings of Grace is that God prepares us for what He has prepared for us. Have you learned that in your life? That same hand must prepare you for what God has prepared for you? Whether it is either joy or sorrow, it is the same thing. One is no different than the other. God must prepare us for joy as well as sorrow.

And now, Jesus in the 14th and 15th chapters has been preparing them for His going away. He has stressed to them that "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name it shall be given to you". That used to be a great puzzle to me. But when I found that the various names of Christ and the titles of Christ was found over 100 times in the Bible, I said, "His name must embrace every need of His people." Whether He is the Advocate, the Intercessor, or whoever He is, it must embrace it all. His Name! These Great Right Reverends, so and so's might think they have a right long handle when they have two or three words attached to their names. But think of the Lord Jesus Christ having over 100 names and titles in the word of God, and each one suited to each characteristic of Him. Oh, my friend, isn't it a wonderful thing? I would travel thousands of miles to see Him one moment. He is the Kings of Kings. He is the Lord of Lords. Everywhere!

I have been in the city of Washington a few times, and they say every avenue leads to the Capitol. You go down Pennsylvania Avenue or Massachusetts Avenue, or any other, and they lead to the Capitol. But think here, every name of salvation, every phase of salvation of the people of God embodied in the Name of Christ that leads to Him!

You can have a dozen avenues in the city of Washington, and they would be crowded thoroughfares, wouldn't

they? But there can be over a hundred names and titles of Christ pointing to Him and the virtue of Him and there is never any congestion in the way. There is always a way to see Him, and there is always a desire in the heart of those at the throne of God to say, "I would see Jesus."

Paul admonished Timothy to preach the word: to reprove, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine. I said not long ago that if the doctrine of exhortation wasn't in the New Testament I had been preaching a lie over 50 years. It is there and it is for the minister as God directs him. If it is preached in blind zeal it is just as terrible as he is, but if it is through the constraining grace of God, then it is, as recorded in the New Testament, "Exhort the church of God with all longsuffering, and doctrine." "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but they will heap to themselves teachers having itching ears". You know, I used to wonder what that was, "Teachers having itching ears". I said, "I have heard of the nose itching, but not the ears itching". Probably I shouldn't say this, but I say a lots of things I wish I hadn't said, and lots of things I don't say that I wish I had said. But not long ago I heard a minister speak, and when he got through he took out of the pulpit like he was in a race with somebody. And he looked like he was itching to hear what somebody was going to say about the sermon he had preached. He must have had itching ears, do you suppose? I don't know. I will leave that for you to decide.

But these words, now we are coming to the hour of Christ. We are coming to Him and the hour appointed in eternity that our Saviour must die for us. And now His prayer. His people come first. The awful hour is approaching that He must pay the debt that all mankind couldn't pay. All the blood of all Adam's race from Adam's day to today couldn't pay it. The blood of the Son of God only, could. And the hour, He recognizes very well. He says, "Father". "These words spake Jesus and lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour is come. Glorify thy son that thy son may also glorify thee." That is the unity of the Godhead. There is the husbandman and the true vine. "As thou has given him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." That's what we preach! Christ had power over all flesh for one end. To give eternal life to as many as thou has given Him. "And this is life eternal; that they might know him". That is what it is. God has a sure and certain and definite way of bringing that life to them. The only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. "And now, O Father". There was a time that our Saviour couldn't call God His Father. There was a time when in His humiliation His judgment was taken away. There was a time that the literal words that were in the 22nd Psalm must be brought out of the lips of Christ. "My God; My God, why hast thou forsaken me." Now what was He asking God for? He calls Him Father, and I like the expression. "And now, Oh Father." We only hint at what is

involved. We can't tell it. What is He asking for now? What is the special request of Christ? "***Glorify thou me with thine own self***". That is what He wanted. That is what He was asking for. And the kind of glory that He asked God to give Him was the kind that He had with Him before the world was. Could He have asked anything greater? That in the hour of departure, the wonders of the covenant might be brought truly into view; that He who He entered into covenant with before this world was, there would be a continuation and a fulfilling of it in bringing Him from the dead. Paul said in the last chapter of the book of Hebrews, "The God of Peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, through the blood of the everlasting covenant." Make you perfect, etc., and in every good work it was good. And now He asked God to glorify Him with His presence. That the fulness of the love of God in the moment when the covenant was entered into, and God's love for His Son and His Son for Him, and the love for His people and the love of the people of God for them. "***With thine own self***". That is the glory Christ is asking for. There is no question, is it? That is the glory He has asked God for. Glorify Him with Himself. "**With the same glory I had with you before the world was.**"

Some try to tell us now and try to bring us a saviour like one peddling something on the street. That isn't the God I worship. Our Lord Jesus Christ stresses in these chapters in John that though He was going away, He wasn't going to leave them comfortless. "***I will send the Comforter, the Holy Spirit in my name, and he shall take the things of mine and show them unto you.***" That work is still going on. You talk about experiences of grace. Every time the Holy Spirit brings to the heart of a sinner the assurances of Christ's work and their need of it, it is an experience of grace. It is of grace, however it may come, and that which doesn't come by grace isn't of the Holy Spirit. It is of the flesh, whatever it might be. The Holy Spirit doesn't wander around at random looking for something to bring to the people of God. He doesn't bring just any thing. He brings the things of Christ. He applies every promise that a sinner has ever received in his heart of heaven and immortal glory. The Holy Spirit brings it. And there is no substitute for it. You can have a lot of substitutes, but not the Holy Spirit because He is equal with Jesus Christ, Himself "***And now, Oh Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the same glory I had with you before the world.***" And an answer was given Jesus on one occasion from the Father, "I have already glorified thee". My beloved children, this morning, our Saviour is at the right hand of the Throne of God. He is as much alive today as He was when He was here, and He now in heaven appears in the presence of God for us. He is our Mediator; the only one between God and man that has the power of mediation. Every requirement of God

for His people, Christ has met in His death and His righteous life.

And as the hour approaches that He must depart, He said, "Oh Father". Have you ever felt you could call God your Father? Have you ever felt the sweetness of your Saviour's love that you could never tell anyone of? Oh, my friend, I wake up in the hours of night sometime, and it is like day. Some avenues pointing me to the virtues of Christ. Something I haven't seen will appear. I want to exalt His name. I sometimes think as the poet said:

"I want to praise Him while He gives me breath;
I hope to praise Him after death."

And in the 24th verse of the 17th chapter our Saviour prayed. Yes, my friend, He prayed, that those He died for would be with Him. And He didn't only pray for that, but that "They shall see my glory". I expect to see the glory of Christ. I expect to share in the glory of my Master. Will that be fulfilled? As sure as you are sitting there, this morning. And when the hour arrives, Jesus said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." But He tells us here, "I have finished the work". Before He died He said, "I finished the work". "All things that are written in the prophets and in Moses and the Law and the Psalms concerning me". As He approached the cross He said, "They have been fulfilled". Every one of them. There hasn't been a one left out. "And now, Oh Father, glorify thou me with thy own self, with the same glory I had with you before the world." Then in the next chapter when He leaves His disciples, He goes out to meet our great foe and His. As He approaches those that Judas was bringing He said, "Who are you looking for?" And then He said, "I am the one". "I am the very one you are looking for". His great love led Him to meet them. His great love for you, my friends, led Him to meet His enemy. The etemal relationship and the eternal love of God in Him led Him, and the enemy fell on the ground. I'm glad they didn't have to send after Him. I'm glad they didn't have to tie Him. I know that the lamb was tied for a time in the etemal covenant as a type of Jesus on the Jewish altar. He was bound with cords on it, bound to the altar, but here I see the Lamb loose, now. And He goes to meet them, and He opens not His mouth. "Dumb before His shearers". I said yesterday afternoon I had some thoughts the other day about Christ being dumb. I just touched it. I can't tell you about it. Dumb. Mute. Beyond speech! Carrying our sins to that cross. Oh, my friends, lift up your heads this morning. Many of us may never meet again here on the shores of time. Lift up your heads. Lift up your heads! Our redemption is drawing nigh! I thank you!

Elder D. V. Spangler

We can never be truly easy and happy until we are enabled to trust God for all things: and the more we are enabled to trust Him, the more gracious and faithful we shall find Him.

Toplady

CHAPTER IV
ABOUT MY MASTER'S WORK

I was now having appointments made for me — it was quite a number of weeks I think before I could venture to make one for myself, which I did only by invitation. I attended the London Tract yearly meeting, and the Salisbury Association, and visited the church at the delightful old Woolford home at Church Creek, Md., and found preaching a stern necessity by the direction of the old ministers, without reference to my feelings in the matter.

But it still seemed strange, wonderful, impossible that I could be a preacher of the gospel. I, who had settled down to what I had esteemed my life's work; that I could be taken away from my business so well established, and that had been so satisfying to me. I tried to know the will of the Lord concerning it, and to pray and beg that he would lead and guide me, and not let me run without being sent by him. And such wonder and such crying in my soul unto God concerning this important matter have continued at intervals to this day, nearly forty-four years, and made me to enter more fully into the blessed truth that salvation is of the Lord. I have learned that only through great tribulation can one enter into the kingdom of God. All spiritual knowledge is a revelation and never the result of study. We must be hungry for the word of the Lord before we find and eat it; we must feel our nakedness before we can know and value the garments of salvation; our weakness before the law makes us know Christ as our strength, and we must from day to day experience the dying of the Lord Jesus in our body in order that the life of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

The ministering and other brethren were very kind and tender toward me in those days and weeks, and indeed they have been kind and tender all the way through. Elder Samuel Trott was the oldest one among those I met at that time. I may say something more about him and some others before I close these pages.

My ordination was appointed for December 7th and 8th. As my father and mother were unable to take the journey to Middletown, N.Y., about 200 miles, the church arranged to come to our home and have the ordination services there. We occupied a neighborhood meeting house, owned by the Presbyterian Church, where I had preached November 27th. I think that was the first time that my parents had heard me. The congregation was large, on the Wednesday and Thursday, December 7th and 8th. As I related my experience and my exercises about preaching, the questions of Elder Beebe, the moderator, led me over the whole ground of my life with the Presbyterian Church, and my reasons for being dissatisfied with their doctrine and order, so that I was kept talking about two hours. The church at Vaughan Hill, seven miles from our home, and those who came from Middletown, with a number from other churches of the Chemung Association, formed the council; and the Presbytery was composed of Elders

Gilbert Beebe, Hollister, Schoonover, St. John, Cox, and Smith. On Thursday Elder Beebe preached and incorporated a most solemn and impressive charge in his sermon. Elder St. John spoke in prayer, Elder Cox delivered the charge, and Elder Smith gave the right hand of fellowship. There were present of my own family father and mother, four brothers, two sisters and two sisters-in-law.

I had finished and closed up my legal business during November, and was now fully engaged in the work of preaching. I stayed at home the rest of the month, preaching on Sunday at Vaughan Hill, and a few times in the neighborhood of home. On the 7th of January, 1865, I was at the church meeting at Waverly, N.Y., with Elder St. John, the pastor. I was expected to preach on Sunday the 8th. As we rode to the meeting house I felt cold and no scripture was on my mind, but that did not disturb me, for I remembered a text which I had preached from at Middletown not long before with liberty, and I knew I could use that, and had no doubt of my ability to interest the people and do myself credit with that text. So I felt very confident and comfortable as we rode along, although I had no spiritual exercise of mind. When the time came I took my text and began to speak, but I found nothing to say, and in less than ten minutes I sat down confused and chagrined and ashamed. It was a terrible blow to my pride and all my doubts and fears revived. So soon had I forgotten my experience with a "saved-up" text at the time I was called upon to exercise before the church four months before, and my solemn resolution and promise made to myself at that time never again to save a text, or arrange beforehand what I should say. But I have forgotten many a time since then, and indeed I never have been able to learn how to improve in preaching, nor to depend on my memory.

On Wednesday and Thursday, January 11th and 12th, I came with Elder Beebe, by invitation, to attend a council called by the church at Southampton. There had been some trouble which I did not fully understand then, and never have fully understood since. By the advice of the council, Elder Harding resigned his pastoral care of the church, and took a letter. The church numbered, I think, about ninety at that time, and seemed a very desirable place for a preacher to live. There was quite a strong feeling between the two parties. During the year I visited the church several times, and felt at liberty with the brethren. I was told by several of the leading members of both parties that they would agree on me if I could serve them. And the clerk, Brother Isaac Hellings, once wrote me that they desired me "to come, and go in and out before them." I considered the matter carefully, and I could not feel any leading of mind to do so. Father thought that I feared it would be only a natural desire that would influence me to come to a church so well fixed in a temporal point of view; and he said to me that he thought it right for a preacher to look out for a home. I said I knew it, but

I had no mind to come, or to settle down at present. I did not feel that the Lord had directed me to serve the Southampton Church except as a supply while they needed supplies. I could not see the reason of this then, but did afterward. Twenty years passed by; I had taken charge of my father's family, had served ten churches, six of them at one time, and then I was again called to the care of the Southampton Church, which was now less in numbers and in financial ability, and I felt that the Lord directed me here, where I have been serving the church twenty-four years. I was also called to be pastor of the church in Canada, but felt that my place was at Southampton.

I have written for the "Signs of the Times" since early in 1864, and some for several other periodicals which have been started since that time, and have told of my experiences and exercises of mind and of my work from time to time, but these things can never be fully told. It is my wish to recall and write down here a few of the many things of interest that I have met with and experienced during these forty-four busy years.

As I have intimated, when I closed my legal business I went to my father's home, which I had never ceased to call home, and took charge of the family which consisted of my brothers James and Warren, both invalids, with the wife and two children of the latter, three sisters, one of whom had been an invalid and hopelessly deranged mentally for many years, a sister of my mother near 90 years old, with my father and mother. Two older brothers, John and William, lived near, each having a wife and several children. I had never seen a death up to December, 1865. Within eleven years from that time twelve of those I have named died, eight of them in our house. In connection with the sicknesses and deaths of these there are some most wonderful things which were referred to in their obituary notices. The most wonderful experience and last hour of my brother James, with the five beautiful poems he wrote the last year of his life, I intend to present to the friends in some way hereafter.

From this home I traveled far and wide, going only where invited. For several years I traveled sixteen thousand miles a year, and attended to our farm. The first call I accepted was to the Salisbury Church, Maryland, to come there as often, and stay as long, as I felt able to. That was given me October 27, 1867, and the relation has continued to the present time. The next call I accepted was to the care of our home church at Vaughan Hill, June 11, 1871. The next to Otego, N. Y., July 15, 1871. This church was then few in number, but was a spiritual church, and their meetings were regular and Balas Bundy was regarded by the members as called to the work of the ministry. He had resisted his impressions for nine years. I served that church about two years and three months, baptizing thirty-five, including Brother Bundy, who felt that his former baptism had been irregular. After his ordination I resigned the care. During the same time I had baptized

the same number in all the other churches I was serving.

February 17, 1872, I accepted a call from the church at Grover, which was organized within eight months after my first sermon preached there, which I understood was the first Old Baptist sermon ever preached in that neighborhood. About August 24, 1872, I accepted a call from the church in Waverly, N. Y.; October 30, 1875, a call from the church at Burdett, N. Y.; January 5, 1878, a call from the church in Utica, to visit them once in two months, while Elder Balas Bundy visited them also once in two months. August 3, 1879, I accepted a call from the Ebenezer Church, New York City, to serve there monthly, and as much oftener as I could. Marvin Vail was baptized November, 1872. Very soon it was evident to the church that his mind was exercised about preaching, but it was three or four years before he consented to say anything about it to the church. He was ordained in October, 1878, I believe. He was immediately fully engaged in the work. I resigned the care of that church in April, 1881, and of the church in New York City in March, 1883. I accepted a call to the Southampton Church, where I now live, April 12, 1884. I resigned the care at Burdett April 28, 1883, and at Grover August 17, 1884. For some time I visited the church at Vaughan Hill once in two months, and Elder Charles Bogardus once in two months. Afterward he took the entire care. I visit the place once a year. Only three members are left. I have for about fifteen years visited a small church at South River, N.J., as frequently as possible, going often from Southampton after service, for a distance of about seventy miles to speak there at night. The Southampton Church has meetings every Sunday, and I am present most of the time. Also every alternate Saturday before the second Sunday, and every first Thursday. Every fifth Sunday and Saturday before, I am at Salisbury, Md. Have missed but seldom in twenty-four years.

Besides this I visit other churches in our vicinity occasionally and the associations we correspond with. I make at least one visit of nearly two weeks to the covenanted church in Canada, one or two visits a year of nearly two weeks to the churches of the Licking Association in Kentucky. I also still make some pleasant visits to churches in Georgia, in Florida, in North Carolina and Virginia. That is my work now at 75 years of age.

Elder Silas H. Durand

DEUTERONOMY 4:19-20.

And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the Lord thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven.

But the Lord hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, even out of Egypt, to be unto him a people of inheritance, as ye are this day.

LIGHT.

New Vernon, N .Y ., May 1, 1842 .

" If the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness ! "

THE MASTER.

We are informed by a prophet of the Lord, that men have put darkness for light, and light for darkness, and do we not see this fact abundantly exemplified in the present age ? The terms, *light* and *darkness,* are metaphorically used sometimes in the scriptures, and decidedly so in the passages above referred to . Intellectual acquirements in the sciences of this world are esteemed, by the general consent of mankind, as light, and justly so, when confined to their appropriate spheres; but when attempted to be applied to the things of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, they cease to be light, and are denounced by divine authority as darkness of the most sable shade. However profitable and desirable human erudition may be in qualifying men for eminence and usefulness in temporal things, it never can enable the mind to understand the things of the Spirit of God. God has made foolish the wisdom of this world, and it has pleased God in his wisdom, that man by wisdom shall not know him: he has hidden the things of his Spirit from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes, because it has seemed good in his sight so to do. And ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men, &c., are called; that God has chosen the weak and foolish things of this world to confound the wise. The admonition of our Lord, Take heed that the light that is in you be not darkness, implies that there are characters of that description among men, and that we are liable to be mistaken in regard to what we denominate light. While this is the deluded condition of every natural man that flatters himself that he knows anything about spiritual things, and peculiarly so in the case of all who confide in theories of scholastic divinity, religious education and religious training, is it not also measurably the case, in some instances, with the children of God? Peter speaks of a neglect, on the part of christians, which will produce blindness, so that they cannot see afar off, causing them to forget they were purged from their old sins .

It is true, God has translated his children from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son, and he has informed us that light is sown for the righteous; yet he has also said, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light; let him trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon his God." We frequently hear the saints complain of what they call darkness, when we are led to conclude that light is what they mean. As when the prophet cried, " Wo is me, for I am undone, "&c., it was the effect of extraordinary light, and not of darkness, for he had beheld a vision of the Lord. And we may rest assured that christians never see and feel and

mourn over the corruptions of their hearts, unless they are in the light . It requires the true light which emanates only from the Sun of Righteousness to convince us of sin, and to cause us to feel the infinity of distance intervening between us and that perfect standard of holiness that we desire, and that we shall be brought ultimately into the full, perfect and eternal enjoyment of when we awake with his likeness .

However distressing it may be to feel and realize the depravity of our natures, it is a certain evidence that we are in the light, and that that light that is in us is not darkness .

But when men, who know not God experimentally, are left to rely upon the light of human reason, of human wisdom, knowledge or science, and from the possession of these, connected with works corresponding with their conceptions of God and of the things of the Spirit of God, however pious they may appear unto men, they are but whited sepulchres, and the light that is in them, being only that of human acquirements, is darkness, and that darkness is great indeed.

Is it not, therefore, of vital importance, that we who hope for heaven and happiness beyond the grave, should examine carefully, prayerfully, and in the fear of the Lord, into the nature of that light on which we rely to make plain the pathway wherein we should walk, and to illuminate us through the dreary chambers of the valley of death ?

At that critical hour when all the glittering lights of human science and intellectual vivacity shall be put out by the cold damps of death and the chill vapors of the grave, then the scholar and the idiot, the monarch and the slave shall be disrobed of every shade of distinction, and lay down their mortal tenements in one common bed, to slumber together until the trump of God shall sound, and the Archangel's voice shall call them forth in the resurrection of the last day.

Elder B . L . Beebe

ADMONITION TO DO GOOD.

NEW VERNON, N. Y., April 16, 1834.

" But to do good, and to communicate, forget not. "— Heb. xiii. 16.

Thus wrote the inspired apostle, Paul, from Italy, to the saints at Jerusalem; and as the middle - wall of partition is effectually thrown down, which consisted in meats and drinks, and divers washings, carnal ordinances, and a worldly sanctuary, &c, there is henceforth no distinction to be observed in the church of God; all are made one, in Christ Jesus our Lord. Hence we infer that the above admonition applies to the saints among the Gentiles with the same force as to those among the Jews.

But as in relation to all other scriptures, so will this, it has its appropri-

ate meaning, and may not be wrested from that meaning with impunity.

We have been led to an examination of this text, by the frequent use to which it has been applied by the advocates of the *New Divinity* schemes of the day. In the absence of scriptural authority for the popular faith and practices of the great majority of professors, they have endeavored to cover their motives by a reference to this text; let the object to be effected, or the manner of accomplishing it, be what it may, this test is brought forward as a divine warrant. Thus, for instance: The Roman Catholic would say that saying mass, worshiping the Virgin, and advocating their doctrine, is in the meaning of this text *to do good;* and the paying tithes to the church, and money for the absolution of their sins to the Catholic priesthood, or for the deliverance of the departed spirits of their relatives from purgatory is to communicate, in the sense of this scripture.

Another tells us that it should be understood differently and so we find that men professing to be teachers in Israel do not agree. But, is there no rule given by which we are to know the mind of the Lord, as to what is in his estimation, and what is not, good ? Are we indeed left to grope about in the dark, and for the want of a better, to employ human wisdom and providence as our rule, and to conclude that the answering of our own feelings and judgment in our decision will be satisfactory to the sovereign Judge of quick and dead? Let the apostles answer. Peter says, " We have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto we do well to take heed, '(how long)' until the day dawns, and the day-star arises in our hearts."— 2 Peter i. 19. And Paul says, " All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."— 2 Tim. ii. 16 17. Here then we find a rule for our proceeding, as the children of the kingdom, and as the men of God, we are thoroughly furnished to all good works. This rule will answer all necessary purposes unto the men of God; they are amply provided for. And while the nominal professor will attempt to justify his conduct in joining with and contending for the unscriptural institutions of the day, upon the general principle of doing good, without considering that " There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof is the way of death," the man of God, who feareth the Lord and trembleth at his word, will in all his religious pursuits regard the word of God as his only rule of faith and practice, and disclaim all religious works as evil, however fair they may seem, that are without example or precept in the good book.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

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SONG

SONGS of praise the angels sang,
Heaven with hallelujahs rang,
When Jehovah's work begun,
When he spake, and it was done.

Songs of praise awoke the morn
When the Prince of peace was born;
Songs of praise arose when he
Captive led captivity.

Saints below, with heart and voice,
Still in songs of praise rejoice;
Learning here, by faith and love,
Songs of praise to sing above.

Borne upon their latest breath,
Songs of praise shall conquer death;
Then, amidst eternal joy, Songs of praise their powers employ.

James Montgomery. 1825.

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EDITORIAL

TEMPTATION

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

It has been some time since I read in an old Signs an article by an elder in whom I have much confidence, but found that I was not in complete accord with that particular article. He quoted Matt. 4:1, ***Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.*** Then he attempted to show how Jesus was tempted, but did not sin. Jesus is the holy Son of God and therefore could not sin. ***Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.*** 1 Jn.3:9. Jesus was tempted by men, but the temptations of the devil immediately after he had fasted for forty days and forty nights in the wilderness were surely the greatest temptations he had to endure. No other man has ever, nor will ever, suffer such strong temptations. Paul tells us, ***There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which ye are able; but with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*** 1 Cor, 10:13. Jesus suffered all the temptations common to man to accomplish the holy purpose of God. In his Godhead Christ could not die, therefore he must become incarnate. ***Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood he also likewise took part of the same that through death might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being***

tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. Heb. 2: 14-18. A priest must have something to offer for sins, his own and those of the people. The blood of many animals and birds was shed in sacrifice under the old covenant, but in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sin every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. In the 10th. chapter of Hebrews we are told that God had no pleasure in burnt offerings and sacrifices offered under the first covenant, ***Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he (Christ) saith, Sacrifice and offerings thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.*** This body was the body of Jesus, and he said, ***Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By which will, (God's will), we are sanctiffed through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.*** The second covenant was made in which the Lord said. ***I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.*** What a gracious covenant God has given us through the shed blood of his only begotten Son Jesus! ***He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also give us all things?*** Rom.8:32. Paul said, But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ. Phil. 4:19.

The word 'tempt' has two distinct definitions, and both are used in various scriptures. One meaning is, to be enticed or drawn away of our lusts to do that which is sinful or against the law. The other means, to be tried or tested. We should be aware of this lest it should lead us to believe there is contradiction of certain scriptures. James 1 :13, ***Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.*** In Gen. 22:1 we find that God did tempt Abraham to take Isaac upon a mountain and offer him for a burnt offering. If we should say that God enticed Abraham in this we would be in error. God was trying or testing the faith of Abraham; not to find how much faith he had, but to show the strong faith Abraham had; and this was for our learning. In Heb. 11:17, By faith Abraham, when he was tried (tempted), offered up Isaac. Abraham believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. Rom. 4:20-24.

Now we know that God raised up Moses to lead the children of Israel out of bondage in Egypt. God went before them by day in a pillow of a cloud, to lead them by the way; and by night in a pillow of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night. He divided the waters of the Red Sea before

them, and they crossed over dry shod, but the pursuing Egyptians were destroyed when God closed the waters over them. The Israelites witnessed these things, yet they tempted God when they thirsted for water, saying, Is the Lord among us, or not? Ex. 17:7. God gave them manna, angel's food, yet they provoked and tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lusts. Yea, they spake against God; they said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Ps.78;17-19. God Gave them flesh to eat, yet they were not estranged from their lusts. But while their meat was yet in their mouths, the wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and smote down the chosen men of Israel. For all this they sinned still, and believed not for his wonderous works. They continuously tempted him and provoked his anger, and only when he slew them did they seek him. They remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer. Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and lied unto him with their tongues. For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stead-fast in his covenant. But he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not, and turned away his anger, and did not stir up his wrath. Yet they oft provoked him in the wilderness, and grieved him in the desert. Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.

I have paraphrased some of the 78th. chapter of Psalm. It may be to your benefit to read the entire chapter. I found it to be very interesting indeed. It teaches us that we should never tempt God in our heart, but believe his holy word and trust in him. If we do not understand a scripture, let us go to God in prayer. ***If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given unto him. But let him ask in faith, not wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.*** James 1:5-6. All men are subjected to temptations, and that daily. I know that I am, and I must admit there are times when I submit to them to my shame. However, we have a high priest to whom we may go and confess our sins. ***If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*** 1 Jn. 1:9. And in chapter 2, verses 1 & 2: ***My little children, these things write unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is our propitiation for our sins.***

Beloved brethren, let us heed this gentle exhortation from the apostle John that we sin not, that all may be well with us. Our God is not mocked, and he knows the thoughts of our hearts from afar. Pray that he might lead us not into temptation, but de-

liver us from evil; and lead us in the path of righteousness for his name's sake, and receive us into his glorious presence when time shall be no more. Praise him forevermore.

May he forgive all errors herein, and bless the truth.

Eld. C C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES

TOGETHERNESS

There is a small number of people in this world of forgetfulness, who remember what true togetherness means. They were taught by a Teacher, who, though they forget him now and then, draws them back into a sweet remembrance.

These people sorrow and mourn when selfish, worldly wants and desires tear them apart. The fellowship, faith, hope and love, that drew them together, is a part of their very being When these marks of God's children are hidden in dissension and strife among themselves, they sorrow and long for the peace they once knew. Trouble and grief are their lot, until the sweet love and charity, which has been hidden for a season, brings them together again.

Ah, sweet mystery of life, to know that he who begins a good work in a vessel of mercy, continues it till all such vessels rightly fitted together form his building, "In whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth into an holy temple in the Lord." The cord that binds them together is Jesus Christ, for in him, and him alone, is the nation whose God is the Lord. Hate, as the world knows hate, is a foreign and strange word to their tongue since the Spirit of love entered their hearts. The only hate within them is that hate they feel for themselves: the old man of sin, that they carry about as a thorn in the flesh, till the day the deliverer comes. It wars with the Spirit or the new man, as long as we tabernacle in the world of sin and sorrow.

We hope to be led to write the feelings in our own heart about a people who are so weak they can do nothing of themselves, to reach the holy temple in the Lord. And yet are built to such specifications, they can do all things, through Christ who strengthens them; how each little piece of lifeless clay, inert and helpless, can be molded into an honorable vessel, so that when it is fitly framed together with like vessels, grows into an holy temple in the Lord.

It is our desire to tell how those little ones, who are scattered all over the world, are drawn together, hewn into a timber, and shaped to fit into its own place. No other spot in the building will be left for this particular vessel of mercy. We are promised that ***"I go to prepare a place for you."*** These wayward ones are turned from their selfish desires and. lusts. They long to turn their eyes inward and view their own sins, and cry for charity, when they look on a brother's. They cry unto the Lord, ***"Draw me, we will run after thee."*** The holy temple is incom-

plete until all the pieces are drawn together, and fitly framed into the building.

They are shaped and made ready for their special place through their trials and tribulations in this world. We are told in the Bible, if we escape these tribulations in the furnace of afflictions, then we are bastards and not sons. Even in our groanings and complaints, a still small voice makes us beg for enough trouble, beg for enough cares and sorrows, to temper us; to make us "wait upon the Lord" and to "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." Such is the experience of one, who through many doubts and many fears, still has that blessed hope within him.

How we long at times to escape the wasteland, the wilderness, the deserts and the valleys of despair. If we had our desires we would always sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; but without the darkness we could not know light, and without the doubts and fears, we would never know of his sweet mercy and see his sweet smile of deliverance. How wonderful that a God of purpose decreed it so.

"They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble." Is it not wonderul to know of the straight way, the rivers of waters, and how they figure in the shaping of each piece for the building ? His purposes and promises are our guide and shield as he fashions and draws us together in one.

Have you thought about the many strangers drawn together by this invisible force, as they fulfill the blueprint God made for his temple? Even though the world believes these to happen by chance, we know they all fit in the foreordained plan of God, for ***"All things work together for good to them that love God, to them; who are the called according to his purpose;"*** Are we not taught in the Scriptures of people, of times, of events and places, that shaped the pieces as the holy temple grew in the Lord ? ***"He will say to the North give up; and to the South keep not back: bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth."***

Let us meditate upon the drawing together of some of these children of God; of how he introduced strangers and led them about, as he fitted them in his purposed building. All these travels of the saints before us redound to his glory and praise, and comfort us who follow them, if indeed I can lay claim to such riches. I am so unworthy to even think on such things. They are too high, I cannot attain unto them but must beg that he reach down his mercies to this poor, helpless sinner. Pray for me.

Since Paul was given as a pattern for those who should follow him, let us see how he and a stranger were drawn together, and think on the results. We know how he was stopped on his sinful journey to Damascus,

and how totally depraved he was in all the events that happened there. He was utterly helpless in the matter, but in the mind and purpose of God, Paul's experience of grace and mercy was not complete till he and Ananias, a total stranger, were drawn together in a miraculous way.

Paul was kept blind till their togetherness made him whole. Ananias was as useful in God's purpose, as Paul, in setting before us the inability of man. He was reluctant and afraid of this one who was on the way to destroy him, but went forth in obedience and faith. His meeting Paul set the chain of events, that led Paul to the ***"Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold,"*** and, many other miracles, as the elect, both Jew and Greek were set apart, as the temple in the Lord grew.

The pitiful means and missions of man are all together vanity, in comparison to the drawing together of these disciples to go forth preaching Christ, the way, the truth and the life.

Consider Phillip and the eunuch, who lived in different countries: Phillip preaching Christ and the eunuch worshiping under the law of Moses. They were drawn together, not by chance, but by an angel of the Lord directing Phillip to the road travelled by the eunuch, who was on the way back to Egypt (meaning darkness or the law). However, Phillip preached unto him Christ, and he believed that Jesus was Christ the Son of God, and was baptized, — forming another timber in the building of God. These were fashioned and made ready at the direction and supervision of the Holy Spirit. The poet says, ***"He moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform."*** The more we study the written word and hope for a revelation of it, the more we agree with the poet. ***"How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."***

When Mary, the mother of Jesus, greeted Elizabeth, the mother of John, we are told in the Bible that John leaped in his mother's womb for joy. Neither of the children were born, but what wonderful blessings and comfort are experienced by the children of God through the ages as a result of their mothers being drawn together. No where is recorded in holy writ, a more beautiful song of praise and adoration of her Lord and Master, than was spoken by Mary, as she carried him in her own virgin body; miracle of miracles.

The little children of God are carried to the heights in John's relationship with their Saviour, as he prepares the way for Him in their own wilderness. They praise God as they are baptized with his Son, and behold the Holy Ghost descending from heaven. Although these are only experiences of grace and prayer now, they are a hope that is an anchor of the soul both sure and stedfast.

It makes us long to be given strength to press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

We pray to be molded, hewn, and shaped to fit in the holy temple, as we read the divine history of John, the messenger of the Lord. We also suffer and doubt with him in prison, when

our Lord hides his face from us in a Little wrath. We wonder is he clean gone forever; and cry out with John, "Is this the Christ?"

However, we know, if we have the witness within us, that we must be shown, over and over; that these things must need be, to fulfill the purpose of God in fitly framing his building, that is growing into the temple of the Lord.

How wonderful to meditate upon the fulfillment of prophecy and the purpose and promises of God. We, who are unfit to even dream of such claims, still hope to be numbered with those he loves and calls from afar, as he draws his own to their heavenly home.

We see his purpose to send Joseph into Egypt to save much people alive; and the long, long journey back from the land of darkness. The meeting again, of Joseph and his brethren, who knew him not, was brought about by providential necessity. Yet God's purpose in it still comforts and feeds his sheep today.

His making vessels of mercy out of inert, dead clay, to fit into their own place, included the weak and the poor, as well as the rich and the mighty. The scriptures teach that he has a people in everv kindred, nation and tongue under heaven. On that final day his loved ones will be gathered from all walks of life, and from the far reaches of the earth.

Ah ! precious ones, can you imagine a place, where you will be together with saints like Paul, Phillip, John, Joseph and those others spoken of in inspiration ? Can you even turn and look into your brother's sweet countenance here with you now, and imagine being permitted to live with him forever in that sweet beyond?

I know that within myself, these things are impossible, but am constrained to believe, that he who bestowed his love upon a poor and undeserving people, could have included me.

Someday, somewhere, when he has finished that holy temple in the Lord, when all the building is fitly framed together, there will be a love and a togetherness, this wicked world never knew or dreamed of, and can never know.

Mrs. Cisco Barren
Spearsville, La.

VOICES OF THE PAST

EDITORIAL

"OUGHT NOT CHRIST TO HAVE SUFFERED THESE THINGS?"

'Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."

How impossible for anyone to really understand and believe what the prophets spoke unless his

understanding is opened, though he may be well aquainted with their words. (see Luke 24:45)

When Jesus said unto the Jews, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me," he was showing them how wrong they were in their understanding of the scriptures; for, instead of their finding in them eternal life by external forms, ceremonies, and works, which they thought was the value of those writings, the prophets were in truth testifying of the coming and the work of Him who was then in their midst, and then speaking unto them. He sharply rebuked them, "Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words ?"

The two brethren, in the connection of our text, were not yet brought to know the purpose and magnitude of the mission of Christ in his coming into the world; and they were greatly saddened that the chief priests and the rulers had delivered him, (whom they thought would be the deliverer of Israel from their Roman bondage,) to be condemned to death, and had crucified him. Their great anticipation was blasted, and it was quite enough to make them of sad countenance as they walked and talked of the things which had just come to pass. Early that morning certain women of their company had gone to the sepulchre and reported that they did not find the body of Jesus, but saw a vision of angels who said that he is alive. And others had given the same report.

It was because of these things, they told the stranger who had joined them in the way, that they were sad. These two did not recognize the stranger, for "their eyes were holden ;" yet their hearts "burned within them" as he talked with them; and as he rebuked them, saying, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory ? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." It was a little later that day that their eyes were opened as he blessed and broke bread while they were eating, and they knew who it was that had spoken to them in the way.

"Ought not" indicates an obligation, or the necessity of Christ coming into the world, and suffering, and entering into his glory. "He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." Ought not presents the necessity not merely of his fulfilling all the prophesies concerning himself, but more specifically to fulfill his Father's will in preparing a body for his incarnation and sending him into the world, that, after accomplishing the suffering for the redemption of those chosen by the Father (the church), he should enter into the same glory he had with his Father before the world began. (And the amazing part is that he takes all the re-

deemed with him, having fully reconciled them unto his Father.)

"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour." (John 12:27) As we remember the sinner's lost condition, and know that he does not deserve even the notice of his offended God, we understand full well that the necessity of his coming "unto this hour," arose not from any obligation to the sinner, not because of the sinner's coaction, but rather alone from the love of God so freely shown in his mercy. Truly the subject matter of the whole Bible is the portrayal of what God has done for his chosen people; and is expressed by Jesus, "Ye have not chosen me but I have chosen you," and by John, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propituation for our sins."

In order for us to understand the "first-cause" of Christ's coming to suffer, faith makes us look at things before the world began, as related in the word of God. If one is blessed with faith, which is the fruit of the Spirit of which he is born again, he comprehends all the works of God from their decree in eternity to their completion. To him

"Faith is the brightest evidence
Of things beyond our sight;
Breaks through the clouds of flesh and sense,
And dwells in heavenly light.

It sets time past in present view,
Brings distant prospeets home,
Of things a thousand years ago,
Or thousand years to come.

By faith we know the worlds were made
By God's almighty hand:
Abra'm, to unknown countries led
By faith obeyed the Lord.

He sought a city fair and high,
Built by the eternal hands;
And faith assures us, though we die That heavenly building stands."

—Watts

From the pronouncement of God unto the serpent just after the fall, *"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel,"* to the coming of Christ, his ascension and promise of his second coming, we have a perfect unveiling of all things of which God is pleased to give an account concerning his Son and what he should accomplish in the world—sometimes in types and shadows, and sometimes plainly in him who was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," as he came to "this hour". These things all manifest the love of God and his mercy and grace from the beginning; and at the same time show that the redemption of God's people is not of themselves, but is certain because of the atonement made by his Son. The work of God and the work of his Son is in perfect accord in all things.

All who concede that the Scriptures are the revealed word of God, but are skeptical of the doctrine, should read His word; for this is where this truth is found. There can be no other interpretation than this when the plainly correlative Scriptures are brought together, presenting a complete narration of Jesus Christ and his work on earth. ***"Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."***

We must look, however, to the things preceding the actual accomplishment of what Christ did, in order to find the reason why he ought to have suffered. the conception of any action is always older than the action itself — there cannot be one without the other. Should we look only at the life and work of Christ after he came into the world, we would overlook so much that is inseparable from all that was necessary in the salvation of the Lord's people: for the coming of Christ for the salvation of his people was not just an after provision to meet unforseen conditions. His coming was in the decree of God, who had the entire matter incorporated in an eternal purpose.

Prerequisite to the sending of his Son into the world there was, first of all, the ***love of God towards his people,*** and the ***choice of them in his Son*** "when as yet there was none of them;" then the ***creation of the world and forming man of the dust*** of the earth; then the ***transgression*** of His command ***which brought condemnation and death*** to all men: thus manifesting the need of ***redemption of those previously chosen in his Son;*** then the giving of the law which made ***sin exeeedingly sinful;*** then the *preview of the coming mercy of God* in the institution of sacrificial worship; and the ***many promises of God*** unto his people made "at sundry times and in divers manners;" then the ***incarnation of his Son*** in a body prepared of the Father *for the suffering of death*—the only way ***God provided for the redemption*** of his chosen ones.

This is a brief outline of the foundation on which the coming of Christ and his work of redemption rested. It is easy to recognize then the importance of viewing the whole matter from the beginning to the ending, in order to understand why Christ ought to have suffered, and to enter into his glory. These things all evidence the love of God and his mercy and grace from the very beginning, and at the same time show that redemption is not of the people themselves, but is made sure and certain unto the beloved of God by the atonement of Christ; and that the work of God and the work of his Son is in perfect accord in all things.

It is right therefore for us to feel that Christ ought to have suffered and then to have entered into his glory; yet it involves the most solemn thoughts and feelings we may ever have—that God should give his only begotten Son to suffer for such sinners as we are.

The subject involves much more than Christ being just a substitute for sinners in his death; as is so often expressed. A substitute for a guilty person could never clear him of guilt. We

person could never clear him of guilt. We know of no time or circumstance in law in which a substitute could pay the supreme penalty for another; yet is it true that Christ died the just for the unjust: so we must understand the relationship of the Saviour and those he saved.

We are informed in the Scriptures that God's people were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world— they therefore had their spiritual existance in Him then, their life being hid with Christ in God. ***"This is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."*** Jesus said, ***"Thine they were and thou gavest them me."*** God's people (the church) being in Christ before the world began, had a close, vital relationship with him and with the Father: so close that God has been their dwelling place in all generations: from everlasting to everlasting; (Psalm 90:1,2) so close that the church had eternal life in Christ before the world was brought into existance. It was this close, vital and ***continual*** standing of the church in Christ that brought about his subsequent coming into the world for the purpose of redeeming his people who were fallen—it being his sole right to redeem them since they were his own.

This actual existance of the spiritual life of the church in Christ is not to be forgotten, while we are noticing that the earthly nature of the individual members had no existance until they were created in Adam with a natural life which was mortal: that is, subject to sin against God. Sin they did, and fell under the curse of the law which God gave them. Thus the children of God (chosen before in Christ) are born of the flesh and nature of Adam, and know nothing of their spiritual, eternal life which was hidden with Christ in God, until it is manifested in them when they are called of God, quickened and born of the Spirit: it is then that the whole matter of their choice (election) in Christ, their fall, and their redemption, is so wonderfully made known to them.

When we read, ***"For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression,"*** (I Timothy 2 :13, 14) and, ***"The rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh . . . ,"*** we have presented the oneness of Adam and his wife, Eve; and when we are informed by the Apostle in his epistle to the Ephesians that we, ***"Are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but speak concerning Christ and the church,"*** we have presented the oneness of Christ and his church. It is plainly stated that Adam was not deceived, but the woman was; yet Adam went into the transgression with her; and there was no separation there. Was it not because she was bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh ?

Again, since we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones; and since our life is hidden with Christ in God, it was for the same reason, in the purpose of God, that Christ was made sin for us who knew no sin, dying the just for the unjust; and so there is no separation there. In Adam the chosen in Christ fell with all others, but the Father sent his Son to partake of their flesh and blood, in order that he should suffer for them in their flesh, bearing their sins in his own body on the Cross. It was this vital oneness, not only in his partaking of their flesh and blood, but in their lives being hidden with Christ in God, that gives answer to his asking "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory ?"

All that Christ did when he came into the world was for the benefit of his people: to clearly manifest that there were a people of the genealogy of Adam who were nevertheless beloved of God before the world began—before they had their natural existance—and for whose redemption his Father sent him into the world, (they being alienated from God by reason of their transgressions against Him,) in order that, as a part of the whole continuing will of God, they in their persons should receive the spirit of their adoption as children of God, the hope and assurance of eternal life, being sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

The New Testament which Christ gave, which was but dimly seen before his coming to give the perfect light of the doctrine of God our Saviour, manifested that those before loved of the Father should be adopted from their earthly family, purified and made fit to be the sons of God: their death swallowed up in victory, their bodies redeemed from corruption to bear the image of the heavenly; and when their mortality shall have put on immortality, they shall be in actual possession of the eternal life given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. Then will be the fulfillment of the redemption of the purchased possession.

Yes, Christ ought to have suffered and entered into his glory, because He came to do his Father's will.

We have just hinted at some of the wonderful things contained in this subject, but we hope sufficiently to stir up the pure minds of those who read it.

J.D.W

PSALM 100

A Psalm of praise.

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.

Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. So God created man in his (own) image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them." - Gen. i. 26, 87.

In what does this image or likeness consist? Scott, in his commentaries, after discussing this question at length, says, "We determine, then, that the image of God in which Adam was created consists in an understanding prepared to imbibe true knowledge, a judgment free from corrupt bias, a will disposed to obedience, and affection regulated according to reason and truth; nor can we conceive that it could consist in anything else." By this last expression, as well as by others, it is evident that this view is adopted, not because of its own intrinsic force, but because there appears to the author no other way in which the subject can be understood. I think there are other interpretations of Scripture which have been accepted for the same reason.

I have never been able to see, the propriety of this view concerning the nature of the likeness to God in which Adam was created, and it is in my mind to express my reason for objecting to it, and also to tell briefly what I think the Scriptures do teach concerning it. Whatever the Scriptures declare we are bound to receive, even though we do not understand it; for we know the words are right, and that the only Interpreter will open our understanding to know their meaning as soon as we need that knowledge. But we are not thus bound by the form of uninspired words, nor the views of uninspired men. When they are seen and felt to be in accordance with the inspired Scriptures we cannot but receive them; they come to us with the sweet power of light. But it is not right to adopt the views of any one when they are not thus commended to our consciences, though we may regard them as probably true, if we see nothing in the Scriptures contrary to them. When, however, we think we have positive light through the Scriptures upon the subject, we should do wrong to withhold it for fear of the reproachful charge that we think ourselves wiser than others. I have hesitated to express my mind at times for this reason, but I have been condemned for it. We should present our views for the consideration of brethren, not with the thought of exercising dominion over the faith of any, but with the hope that we may "be helpers of their joy." It is pitiful that I should keep back some thought that has brought comfort to my soul because of the fear that some one will say I am bringing in new things. New things! Will not that blessed treasure-house, the Scriptures, present new things to the saints of God until the last of the redeemed has been taken home to glory? "Both new and old." New to every longing, hungry soul whose various wants they satisfy, and to whose various circumstances they apply with all needed help and comfort; old because they are the words and work of Jesus, who

all been fully unfolded yet, nor have all the books that have been written, nor all the sermons that have been preached by the servants of God, supplied all the expressions that will yet be needed to tell of the wonderful things which shall be unfolded to the wondering and admiring view of the saints to the end of the world. The Lord's hungry poor will still be turning from the words of men to the word of God, and what *is* shown to them there in their times of hunger, and weakness, and affliction, will constantly tend to draw them together, and hold them in the bond of union and perfection, as no authority or power of men could do. The opening of the word by the Spirit to suit their needs, the love of Christ felt in the heart, the work of the ministry by his gifts, and the wall of salvation, will effectually bring the children of God into manifest union, and hold them there.

To overcome opposition to our view by anything save scriptural testimony could not be gratifying to an honest, thoughtful mind. If the force of the testimony I present is not apparent to any one I can have no ground of complaint against him on that account. If I am right, the One who made me see the truth upon that point can show it to others. If I am wrong, he who shows me the error does me good. If I have attached myself personally to any theory as its discoverer or special champion, in the sense that I regard any argument against it as a personal attack upon myself, it is likely I will be of no more use upon that subject to the Lord's people. If the Scriptures presented in opposition to, or in support of, any view do not carry conviction to the mind of my brother, I shall not help my case, nor instruct him in the truth, by speaking harshly to or of him, and calling his view a heresy. The servant of God must remember that he is never to weary in well doing, never to be discouraged by opposition; but in meekness to instruct them that oppose themselves; not instruct by his own authoritative assertions that such and such things are true, but by the proof constantly repeated and presented. He must remember that the positions he defends can only be forced upon the mind by their own intrinsic value. It is a sweet and lovely work, full of precious comfort to the servant, to repeat again and again, and show in every possible way the evident meaning of the Scriptures in which he believes is taught the doctrine he sets forth.

And now I still attend to my subject. An image or likeness of any man, or of anything, is a representative figure of that man or thing In that respect in which it is an image it is exactly like the original; not *almost,* but *exactly,* like it. An image of a man may be of gold or wood, and of any size; but the form and features must have been exactly imitated so that it cannot be mistaken or it is not an image. Now in what sense can man be said to be like God? Not in his body, all acknowledge, for God is a Spirit. The view that I have quoted from Thomas Scott seems to have been regarded by many as the only other possible understanding; but how can a man's mind be considered as in the likeness of God's mind? The correct

ness of the description of the parts of God's mind, as given by Scott, may well be questioned. God's understanding is not prepared to imbibe knowledge, for he has eternally possessed all knowledge, a thousand years being with him as one day. He has not a will disposed to obedience, for there is nothing for him to obey but the counsel of his own will. In his understanding, his will, his judgment, his affections, and in every attribute, he is altogether unlike man; the nature of these attributes is different. The Bible so presents them. God is infinite in every perfection. His thoughts and ways are not like those of his creature man.—Isaiah lv. 8. The Scriptures do not indicate a likeness to God in this respect, but they do indicate the contrary.

An image of a face or form must be exactly like the face or form, but may be of different size, and must be of different material. But an image or likeness of an invisible thing, as of mental or spiritual capacities, must be simply the same thing. So Christ is said to be "the image of the invisible God;" and again, "the express image of his person."—2 Cor. iv. 4; Col. i. 15; Heb. i. 3. This means that he was "equal with God;" "in the form of God" (Phil. ii. 6); one with God. But Adam was not made in the image of God in the same sense in which it is declared that Jesus was the image of God.

Jesus was "made in the likeness of men," in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. viii. 3.), having all their infirmities and temptations, and bearing the guilt and shame and curse of all their sins; yet he was unlike them in that "he was holy, harmless, undefiled;" "he did no sin." So far as he was a likeness, the likeness was exact. So, while he was the image of God, and was God, he was distinct from the invisible God of which he was the image, in that he was the Son, the Head of the church, prepared to suffer for his people in their flesh, and to raise them with himself from sin and death to life and glory.

But to my mind the Scriptures do very clearly and distinctly set forth the nature and character of the similitude to God in which man was created. We notice some things which are important in the texts.

First. It is the first time during the record of creation that the Lord speaks in the first person plural: "Let us make man in our image."

Second. Each declaration that the Lord created man in his image and after his likeness, is followed by the expression, "Male and female created he them," as though this explained wherein the image or likeness lies. Gen. i. 27; v. 1, 2.

Third. The name Adam was given to both the male and female, evidently before the woman was made. Also, while the man was yet alone, the command was given to him not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Fourth when the woman was made and brought unto the man he said, ***"This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh;"*** and he said of a man and his wife, ***"And they shall be one flesh."*** And Adam called his wife's

name Eve, because she was the mother of all living; but she has been named in Adam with his own name before that separate manifestation.

Now, when the man had transgressed that command, the Lord said, ***"Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil."***— Gen. iii. 22. What can this mean but that the image or likeness is now manifested? The image was complete before, but is now made to appear by the act of Adam in taking the fruit at his wife's hands, and following her in the transgression. ***"The man is become as (like) one of us."*** Is not that one the Son of God? And is it not clearly shown by the apostle Paul wherein that likeness or image consists? The apostle says that Adam ***"is the figure of him that was to come;"*** and he says it when referring to Adam's transgression.—Rom. v. 14. It would appear from this, and the declaration in Gen. iii. 22, alone, if nothing more upon the subject were found in the Scriptures, that the likeness in which Adam was created is the likeness of Christ, the Son of God, in his mediatorial relation to the church as her head, and that the similitude (James iii. 9) or image consisted in his being created male and female, and in the one name Adam being given to both while the man was still alone; and that the manner of the transgression manifested this likeness to that One in the Godhead spoken of as "one of us." But the apostle leaves nothing to be inferred or guessed at by us, for he brings the subject clearly to light.

First. He speaks of Christ as the second Adam; showing that the first Adam, as embodying in himself his wife and all his posterity, who are all covered by his name, sets forth, as an image or figure, Christ in his relationship to the church: ***"As it is written, The first man, Adam, was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit." "The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."***—1 Cor. xv. 45, 47-49. This shows wherein the likeness of Adam to the Son of God consists, referring exclusively to his relationship to the church, and beautifully setting it forth in this figurative way. Here also we have another illustration of an image, as being an exact likeness, not a partial one; those born of Adam bear his image, and those born of God shall bear the image of Christ, or be like him.

Second. The manner of the transgression was peculiar, and is of most important significance in the figure. ***"For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived; but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."***—1 Tim. ii. 13, 14. Here is where the man became "as one of us," one of the Godhead. The image or likeness existed before the transgression, but by this act of transgression, the man following his wife,

the likeness was fully manifested. The image could extend no farther than this; for the first Adam could not restore his wife, nor could he return himself. But here the infinitely superior power and glory and love of the second Adam appears. And how clearly and beautifully the apostle opens up this figure of male and female, husband and wife. ***"Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, even as Christ is Head of the church: and he is the Savior of the body." "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it unto himself a glorious church." "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: for we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."***—Eph. v. 22-32. Who can fail to see in this most wonderful language the meaning of the image in which the first man, Adam, was created, a figure or image of the second man, who is the Lord from heaven. And how richly the figures of Head and body, and Husband and wife, are blended, and yet each seen in its own distinctive character; and all setting forth the glorious mystery of the love of Christ to the church.

The man fell by that transgression from his first state in which God created him. He was made good, upright, pure, as a man. He was not a spiritual man, but natural. He was of the earth, earthy, and so all of his posterity are, and would have been even if he had not transgressed. He had not immortality, for we are distinctly told that Christ only has that (1 Tim. vi. 16), and all who possess immortality must have obtained it by a spiritual quickening from Christ, not by a natural creation in Adam. But in no sense have we a right to think or speak of Adam as imperfect, or sinful, or evil, or as lacking in anything as a perfect man when he was created, because the Lord made man good, upright.—Prov. But he sinned. It was not sin in his heart by creation which caused him to do that sinful act, for that act was the first of sin in the world. Sin came into the world then; ***"for sin is the transgression of the law."*** Ever since then sin in the heart has caused every sinful act and word and thought; but that act of Adam caused sin, or rather was itself sin. How do I reason that out? I do not reason it out at all. I just simply take the scriptural record and judgment; and from that I learn that I have no right to go back of that one act of Adam to find the first of sin in the world. It is a mystery, but it is true. ***"By one man's disobedience many were made sinners."***—Rom. v. 19. From a state of innocence to a state of sin,

condemnation and death, I think ought properly to be called a fall.

Sin is a most terrible thing, as every convicted sinner knows. No one can know the offense and loathsomeness of sin but those who have been made alive by the power of the second Adam, who is a quickening Spirit. To such poor sinners the subject that presents to them the love of Christ to the church, and his salvation of sinners, so sweetly and clearly as this does, must be full of holy interest and comfort. As Adam and Eve were one before the transgression, so Christ and his people were one in some wonderful, mystical sense before the world began. As Adam was given the command before Eve was formed, so when Christ came into the world he said, ***"Thy law is within my heart."*** —Psalm xl. As Adam said of Eve, ***"This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh,"*** so of the bride of Christ it is said, ***"We are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones ;"*** and the language of Adam concerning the wife is repeated by the apostle, and concerning it the apostle says, ***"This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."*** Therefore, because they are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones, as Eve was of Adam, Christ, the heavenly Husband, followed his bride in the transgression. These members of his body were seen by the eternal God, and written in his book before the world began, ***"when as yet there were none of them."***— Psalm cxsxis. 16. So, as Adam took the forbidden fruit at his wife's hands, because they were one, and he loved her, and must be with her, likewise Christ came under the law where his bride, the church, was, and stood with her in her sin and defilement, and died for her, and by his death washed her clean from all sin, and made her pure and spotless in the sight of God. ***"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together."***— Eph. ii. 4-6. This love was an everlasting love. Jer. xxxi. 3.

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." This love is illustrated by the love of a mother for her child, by the love of a brother, by a father's love, and by that of earthly friends. But the most wonderful, the sweetest, the most mysterious, and the first love felt and manifested in the world, that of the husband for the wife, was especially designed to set forth in its fullness the love of Jesus for the church, and her love for him, which is caused and called forth by his love for her. And he who had this everlasting love for his bride, the church, was able not only to come under the law that condemned her, and lay down his life for her, but was able to take up that life again, and rise with her forever above the dominion of death, and a present it unto himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

And now while the members of his body are yet in the flesh, and feel the bondage of corruption, they are given faith to see Jesus in this eternal relationship at times, and to behold the manner of his love, and to rest from the burden of depravity and of care in that love. And they are given at times to feel the power and refreshment of his love in their hearts; to realize that Christ dwells in their hearts by faith, and that they being rooted and grounded in love, are able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, and that thus they are filled with all the fullness of God.—Eph. iii. 17-19. This love passes the knowledge of the wisest man, but is comprehended in its fullness in the loving, lowly heart of the littlest child of God, when Christ is present with him, dwelling in his heart by faith.

So the first Adam went with his wife into death, because of his love for her, but could not return, and therefore all his family are born in death. But from that great family of men, the Lord has chosen vessels of mercy without number, who are loved of the Father even as he loved his Son; and him he loved before the world began. John xvii. 23, 24. These were given unto Christ, and this figure of the male and female in creation, of the man and his wife, sets forth the mystery of that wonderful love that the Son eternally had for them. And the second Adam came to them because they were his, because they were bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh; and he had power to redeem them, and to save them, and to make them feel his love, the sweetest, richest experience which the heart is able to feel; and he will cause them to bear his image, to be like him, and appear with him in glory.

"O for such love let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break;
And all harmonious, human tongues,
Their Saviour's praises speak."

Elder Silas H. Durand

MEETINGS

ALTUS LITTLE FLOCK CHURCH

The Lord willing the Little Flock Church of Altus Oklahoma will have its annual May meeting the third Sunday and Saturday before. The song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

The church is located on 509 West Sutherland.

Elder C.C. Morris, Pastor
C.E. Hatchett, Clerk

GLENWOOD CHURCH

Glenwood Church, Princeton, WV announces a 5th Sat. meeting, May 29, 1999 starting at 10:00 a.m.

Those coming by way of I-77 take exit 9. Turn left onto 460 West. Go 5 miles, turn right onto 19 North. Then immedi-

ately turn left onto Glenwood Park Road, 1 1/2 miles, to church on left.

Those coming by way of 460, follow the same directions from the I-77/460 intersection.

Elder Larry Hollandsworth, Mod.
Marilyn Shaw, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing the Staunton River Union will be held at Canaan Primitive Baptist Church, located in Pittsylvania County, Va. on Mount Cross Road, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in May. The song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

Elder J.R. Williams, Moderator
Geneva B. Scearce, Clerk

MEETING
WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held at Dan River Church on fifth Sunday May 30th. Song service to begin at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 11:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us, and any ministers of our faith and order is especially invited.

We also meet at 6:00 p.m. on each second Sunday for a one hour song service.

All are invited.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Bro. Allen Carroll, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 1999

Cleo Underwood, VA	$5.00
Mrs. Grace Locke, KY	5.00
Mrs. Nellie M. Dalton, VA	2.00
E.F. Dyer, VA	2.00
Mrs. Garlon G. Vick, NC	7.00
Eld. Cleo Robertson, NC	2.00
Pete Phillips, VA	2.00
Mrs. Anna M. Savage, KY	5.00
Ms. Brenda Wright, NC	2.00
Guthrie Grogan, KY	2.00
George W. Hyslip, TN	15.00
Larue LeBlanc, LA	2.00
Mrs. Phyllis Snyder, VA	2.00
Mrs. Livie Thompson, VA	2.00
Gayle Phillips, AL	10.00
Lloyd Spikes, OR	7.00
Francis M. Knight, VA	4.00
Mrs. Rebecca S. Smith, FL	2.00
John S. Collie, NC	2.00

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 1999

Jim Mosley, WI	10.00
Mrs. Martha Thornton, VA	7.00
Mrs. Frank Sizemore, WV	7.00
Mrs. Beatrice Miller, NC	2.00
Mrs. A.U. Hocutt, GA	7.00
Tommy C. Wall, VA	2.00
Homer E. Wade, Va	2.00
Mrs. Udell H. Young, NC	2.00
Ms. Marjorie Cook, TN	2.00
Whitney Mobley, NC	10.00
Eld. Jerry Farmer, KY	2.00
Joseph M. Pegram, NC	2.00
Coley S. Strader, NC	10.00

OBITUARIES

SAMUEL ARNOLD CLARK

It is with A sad heart,that at the request of Old Mt.Church, will try to write in memory of our dear Brother Arnold Clark. Who passed away July 21, 1998 at Danville Regional Medical Center. He had been in declining health for 5 years. Born July 2, 1917 in Letcher county Kentucky. He was the son of Henry Elliott Clark, and Margaret Bowling Clark On Dec. 24, 1937 he was married to Naomi Marin Slaughter Clark. who survives. Bro. Arnold Clark joined Old Mt. Primitive Baptist church Feb. 24, 1951. Was baptised by the late Elder W.R. Dodd, the 4th Sunday in April 1951. Brother Clark was A firm believer in Salvation by Grace. He loved and enloyed his church. Was always willing to help and suport the church any way he could He attended regularly as long as his health permited. He served as treasurer and trustee of the church for 30 years. He lived in Pittsylvania county and Danville for over 60 years. And retired in 1973 from the city of Danville Gas department, where he worked as an engineer. After his retirement, he worked for Virginia Solite as fuel secretary until 1981. In addition to his wife of the residence, survivors include two daughters, Janice Clark Shelton of Gretna, and Trudy Clark Thompson of Gafney, S.C.; two sons, Samuel Arnold Clark Jr. of Gadsden, Ala and John Scott Clark of Mebane, N.C. one brother Hadley Warren Clark of Wise; one sister, Loretta Clark Moore of Norton. 11 grandchildren and 17 great grandchildren. He was predeceased by one daughter, Betty Clark Scarce, and one grandson. The funeral was held 4 P.M. Thursday at the Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Home Westover Chapel by Elder C.B.Davis Jr. Burial was in Danville Memorial Gardens.

May God bless his family, comfort and reconcile them, as only He can do. We the church loved him too.

By Sarah Barker,
Elder C.B.Davis Jr. Moderator

SISTER UNA CONNER

We are again made to bow in humble submission to God's will by removing another precious member of Salem Church. Sister Una Sowers Conner was born October 3, 1919 and passed away December 31, 1998. Funeral services were held at Salem Church on January 2, 1999 with her pastor, Elder Hale Terry officiating with interment in the Restvale cemetery.

Sister Una and her husband, Brother Irvin joined the church in April of 1968. They were very faithful to their church, attending services up until their health kept them from coming out. They left the church a very generous gift showing their concern for it's welfare.

Sister Una was preceded in death by her husband. She was survived by

one sister, Minnie Hinkhaus, and several nieces and nephews.

One of Sister Una's favorite songs was "There is a House Not Made With Hands" which was sung during her funeral. We believe she is resting in the paradise of God and will awake in His likeness to be forever satisfied. We will miss her but feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Written in love by the request of Salem Church.

Mary Poff

LILLIAN LOVELL NEAL

In memory of Lillian Lovell Neal she was the widow of william Lewis Neal, he departed this life March 8, 1993.

Preceded in death by her parents; J.F. and Lucy Turner Lovell, three brothers and two sisters.

Date of birth December 21, 1895. Sister Lillian Lovell Neal passed away Sunday May 17, 1998 at the age of 102 at the Roanoke Nursing Home.

Surviving are sons and their wives William and Lucy Neal of Roanoke Va., James and Jo Anne Neal of Boston, Mass., six grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, several beloved nieces and nephews.

Sister Neal and Brother Neal were received together into the fellowship of Moon's Creek Primitive Baptist Church in September 1977. She loved her church and was a faithful member. She was baptised by her pastor Elder Kenneth Key. She loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace.

Sister Neal and Brother Neal were a devoted couple.

Their home was always open with a warm welcome.

Her funeral was conducted at Moon's Creek Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Julian Williams and C.B. Davis, Jr.

She was laid to rest beside her husband Brother William Neal in the church cemetery.

Our loss is her eternal gain.

Sue Blalock, Clerk

SISTER VERNIE E. SHAW

It has become my sad task to write this resolution for my Sister in the Church and Mother-in-law, Sister Vernie E. Shaw. She was born February 28, 1907 in Roanoke, VA, the first child of the late Elder S.J. and Sister Maggie Priddy. She left this life February 8, 1999 at the Maples Nursing Home in Bluefield, WV. Preceding her in death were her husband, John William Shaw and & sister, Nawasa Crotty. Surviving her, a son Lee and wife Sister Marilyn Shaw, two grandsons and four great grandchildren, several nieces and nephews and other relatives.

Sister Vernie had been a member since 1925, first at Bluefield Primitive Baptist Church, then Glenwood Primitive Baptist Church, churches pastored by her father until his death February 9, 1952. During those sev-

enty-four years she saw many happy times along with times of trouble. Her home church remained a haven of comfort to her and she loved to hear the Sovereign Grace of God preached. During the last nine and one half years of her life she wasn't able to be with us many times, but each time we visited her after church she always wanted to know we had a good meeting, who was there, telling us she had followed us through the meeting in her mind. She enjoyed the visits from her pastor and church family. Her faith remained strong to the end. Not many days before her death she told us she was tired and wanted to go home.

Mom had a kindly, humble spirit, always looking to the Lord tor daily strength. She was loved by family, friends and those who cared for her at the nursing home, and will be missed dearly by those persons. She had a ready smile and a way of lifting someone's spirits, even when she was quite ill herself. I count it a privilege we were blessed to be with her and help with her care the last two weeks of her life.

Her services were held at Glenwood Primitive Baptist Church February 10, 1999 with Elder Larry Hollandsworth officiating. Burial was in Resthaven Memorial Park, Princeton, WV, beside her husband.

Submitted in love,

Done by order of the church during conference February 21, 1999.

Elder Larry Hollandsworth, Mod.
Sister Marilyn Shaw, Clerk

GEAMES GARNETT THOMPSON

Brother Geames Garnett Thompson was born Sept. 18, 1918 in Pittsylvania County. A son of the late Moses Thompson and Mary Inman Thompson. He was married to sister Myrtle Murphy Thompson, who survives him, on Feb. 1 1, 1960. Brother Thompson was received by experience on the first Sunday in October 1993, and baptism was performed on the first Sunday in November 1993, into Strawberry Primitive Baptist Church.

Funeral services were conducted at the graveside on Saturday Jan. 23, 1999 at 1 P.M. by Elder Thomas Solomon and the Reverend Daryl Joyce . Burial was in the Danville Memorial Gardens. Those left to mourn Brother Garnett Thompson are his wife sister Myrtle Thompson, and his son Garnett Neal Thompson of Mount Hermon, and his two daughters, Linda T. Reid of Burlington N.C. and Ann T. Knight of Danville VA. Seven sisters; Vergie T. Mize, Geneva T. Fowler, Mary T. Nance, Doris T. Bailey, Sara T. Horsley, Jean T. Cook, and Clara T. Swift all of Danville. Six grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

Brother Thompson will be sadly missed at Strawberry Church.

May God bless and reconcile each one to their loss.

Written in love and hope,
Elder Thomas Solomon

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

DARK and thorny is the desert
Through which pilgrims make their [way
But beyond this vale of sorrows
Lie the fields of endless day;
Fiends, loud howling through the desert,
Make them tremble as they go:
And the fiery darts of Satan
Often bring their courage low.

O young soldiers, are you weary
Of the troubles of the way ?
Does your strength begin to fail you,
And your vigor to decay ?
Jesus, Jesus will go with you;
He will lead you to his throne;
He who dyed his garments for you
And the wine-press trod alone.

He whose thunder shakes creation;
He who bids the planets roll;
He who rides upon the tempest,
And whose sceptre sways the whole;
Round him are ten thousand angels,
Ready to obey command; —
They are always hovering round you,
Till you reach the heavenly land.

There, on flowery hills of pleasure,
In the fields of endless rest
Love, and joy, and peace, shall ever
Reign in triumph in your breast.
Who can paint those scenes of glory,
Where the ransomed dwell on high?
Where the golden harps for ever
Sound redemption through the sky?

Millions there of flaming seraphs
Fly across the heavenly plain;
There they sing immortal praises—
Glory, glory is their strain !
But methinks a sweeter concert
Makes the heavenly arches ring;
And a song is heard in Zion,
Which the angels cannot sing.

See the heavenly host in rapture
Gaze upon the shining band;
Wondering at their costly garments
And the laurels in their hand !
There, upon the golden pavement,
See the ransomed march along;
While the splendid courts of glory
Sweetly echo to their song!

Oh ! their crowns, how bright they sparkle,
Such as monarchs never wear;
They are gone to heavenly pastures-
Jesus is their Shepherd there.
Hail, ye happy, happy spirits !
Welcome to the blissful plain !
Glory, honor, and salvation;
Reign, sweet Shepherd, ever reign.

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EDITORIAL

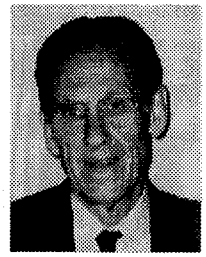

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except that it were given unto him of my Father. (John Chap 6,vs 65)

These are the words of Jesus, talking to those who followed him, not because of the power in the miracles that he did, but because they did eat of the loaves with which Jesus fed the five thousand men, plus the women and children. They did not believe in God, and the power that was manifested in the feeding of the multitudes; they were but following him because they desired the things by which they profited by following

him, the eating of the loaves and the fishes. This is true of many today, who in reality follow after the name of the Lord because they benefit naturally in the things that he provides for his followers and all those that are joined with them in a church capacity here in this time world. Jesus is telling them that they cannot come unto him, that is, believe on him in deed and in truth, except that it be given unto them of the Father. Those people to whom Jesus addressed the above words were interested only in the things of this world and the things that pleased them in nature and Jesus is telling them that these are not the things that were important; these were not what his kingdom was all about, his kingdom was not in the things of nature, but was eternal, spiritual and would last when the things of nature were folded up and put away into the annals of the history of this time world. If Jesus's kingdom was of the world and the physical kingdom, he would have spent his time correcting the problems of mankind and his work and word would have been seen and understood by all men. Instead his time was spent revealing the glories of the kingdom of God unto a special people, those who were given him of God, and the whole of scripture is directed to them and to them alone.

The men to whom Jesus was speaking can only see and understand that spiritual food which Jesus gives, his body, and which lasts forever. The natural food sustains your natural life here on earth, but that food which Jesus is speaking of here is that which sustains the spiritual man, and which endureth unto everlasting life in that world which is to come.

On one occasion when Jesus was brought before Pilate to be examined by him, just prior to his death; Jesus told him , (John Chap 18, vs 36) "***My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom was of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.***"

The men to whom Jesus was speaking can only see and understand the things of nature. They will never see or understand the things of the kingdom of God unless he reveals it unto them, in the new birth. They may study the bible, seek and search after the truth with all of the wisdom of man, but they will never receive it, in the flesh, because the truth is spiritually discerned and must be understood by the spiritual mind, and only God's children have the mind of Christ. As Paul wrote to Timothy, in the last days men would be lovers of their own-selves, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; ever learning, and never coming to the knowledge of the truth: these that Paul spoke of are in the same position as those to whom Jesus was speaking on this occasion. There has been more money and time spent in this one endeavor, to teach man to know God, than any other project in the history of mankind, and yet they have not taught one person to know him with all of their efforts.

There are many today to whom religion is but the social part of their

lives. They will join one church for a while and then because of some personal reason will leave them and join another church of another faith. They do not think it strange, and that is because the particular doctrine of either church had nothing to do with their joining the church; it could be for business reasons, the social program of the other church, the popularity of the church in the community or for some other reason other than the doctrines, which are based on the things that appeal to the flesh. Some may be members of a certain denomination simply because their forefathers were members and since they have no reason to change they continue with no thought of discerning the doctrines on which the church in question stands. The fact of the matter is that none of them can join the church of Christ; they must be added to it and that must be by God himself; even though they may join a group that calls themselves by that name. Rather, as Paul told Timothy, the days will come when they will no longer endure sound doctrine but their minds are turned unto fables and to teachers with itching ears, and we see this all around the world today. When this is true, one church is just as good as the other since the true church is not in the equation anyway; as Joshua told the children of Israel, if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve. If God is not the rock upon which the church is built and the truth has not revealed the truth to you, it matters not which group you are associated with here on earth; the truth shall make you free and those to whom it is revealed are free indeed, again regardless of which church you may be affilliated with in this time world. It is not the name of the group that is important, but rather the doctrine of the church that is the all important basis of their authority; Christ's church is made up of believers of the true doctrine of God, who have been saved and called with a holy calling, regardless of the name of the *"denomination"* that they may be meeting with here in this world. The church of Christ is not a recognizable group by the world; they were not in Jesus's time and they are not today. (1 John chap 3, vs 1) *"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."* The church is in the world but is not known by the world. It is an invisible kingdom made up of believers who have been set apart to the glory of God, but the separation is in the heart, and that is not in any way or manner that is discernable by the world around it. The separation, in the heart of the child of God, makes them a new creature in Christ; the ways of the world have lost their lustre in their eyes, the new things of the kingdom of God have taken their place and their desire is to be found walking in these ways all of the rest of their lives to manifest that they are the called out; those who have been separated from the world and all of its frivolous and vain traditions. Their desire is that their heart

has been separated from those things which they have received of their earthly fathers, and that they may now be led by the spirit and therefore not following the lusts of the flesh and the vanity of the natural mind.

Jesus had already told them, on this occasion (John Chap 6,vs 37) *"All that my Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out,"* and again in (vs 44), *"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day"*. These scriptures plainly state that it is not in the man that walketh to direct his steps: they must wait, as the man beside the pool must wait for a quickening of the waters, even so, must the man in nature wait for the quickening by the Spirit before they can be healed, or in this case saved and called with a Holy calling. Even as the man at the pool was healed, those who wait for the call Jesus said, I will raise him up at the last day. The scriptures state that when Jesus made this statement, many of his followers left him and followed him no more; and this is true today: when the truth is preached it separates the wheat from the chaff, the wheat being the Lord's people, because they canot feed on the doctrines of devils and the children of the devil cannot feed on the manna which comes down from heaven.

These scriptures are not, as a parable, in which there is a mystery which can be debated as to what the Savior was saying, as in the case of the parable of the sower; these scriptures are plainly spoken in words that cannot be misinterpreted as to their meaning. As the disciples told Jesus on one occasion, *"Lo, now thou speakest plainly, and speakest no proverb,"* when he was revealing himself to them very candidly just prior to his ascension; on this occasion Jesus was speaking to the people in the same plain language and meant exactly what he said, that is, that it was not in man to approach unto him, but it must be as the results of a drawing unto him of the Father. If this was the way in that day, it is that way today, or please show me where and when, by the scriptures, that the procedure was changed. The technical advancement of knowledge of the world, in the things of nature, does not change the ways of God, he is eternal and changes not, therefore what he said in the days of the apostles applies now. These things were established, in the beginning, and since they were pleasing unto him then, and since he is of one mind and changes not, we must assume that he is of that mind today.

God, was always telling the Jews, by the mouth of the prophets, of the things that he would do in that day, that day, being some future time when there would be changes in the manner of his dealing with his chosen people. Surely, if there was going to be a change in the way that his people would come to know Jesus in the future after these days, he would have left a record of that change and what that new way would be. He has promised that he would never leave them

nor forsake them, and if he was going to change his ways and then left no footsteps by which they would know the way, he would have indeed forsaken them and left them to their own carnal reasoning and theories, for their salvation, but all scriptures deny this possibility, and experience teaches his children today that the way has not been changed, because these truth agree with what their experience has been.

Jesus, told his disciples, on one occasion, (John Chap 15,vs 16) "***Ye have not chosen me but, I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of my Father in my name, he may give it you.***" Each one is chosen to fill their allotted place in the kingdom of God, they are chosen for a specific purpose, which is to bring forth fruit, which is praise and honor unto the Triune God, and that their fruit should not wither and fade, by the passage of time, but would remain.There is not one way of salvation for those in Jesus's day, and another way for others in another later period of time; they are all chosen and called by the grace of God and all that the Father calleth shall come unto Jesus and shall eat of his flesh and drink of his blood: no others will ever be partakers of that solemn and sacred sacrement.

Jesus called whomsoever he would, and there is no instance when he told one to follow him that they did not, although, in many instances, it required that they must leave their family, their occupation and all their former ways of life and follow him, which they did, many of them even unto death. This is not in the power of the called, but in the power of the calling, which is God; he calls whomsoever he will and they respond because of the power in the calling. Jesus told Paul, he would show him what things he must suffer for His Name's sake and suffer them he did, but he never failed to follow and do those things required of him even unto death; and he never indicated in any of his writings that he would have desired it any other way.

As the apostle Paul said,(Eph Chap 3, vs 7) "***Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.***" and again (Eph Chap 1, vs 19) "***And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power.***" This is the only way that one can come unto him, by the effectual calling of God and the revealing of himself unto them. The calling, the election of the heirs of grace and their being set apart unto his glory is always the sovereign work of God in Christ, who came into the world to do his Father's will; and before he died he said that he had finished the work that his Father gave him to do. The work to be done was everything that was needful to accomplish the salvation of all that the Father gave him.

Jude says it, this way, (Jude Chap 1,vs 1)*"Jude the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus and called:"* Do you know of anything else that is needful for them? He then said he gave all dilligence to write to them of the common salvation, only one salvation, and that is in Christ.

(John Chap 14,vs 6) Jesus said,*"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."* This should once and forever silence the claims of the gainsayers that they can come, or not come according to their own decision, but it does not. They are so absorbed in their own importance and ego that they cannot, and will not, believe anything that does not include themselves, as they are in nature, and to believe that the work was done before they were consulted, or given a chance to receive him, is repulsive unto them. To the world, truth is a relative term, it is not an absolute; they look at the salvation of the children of God as a democratic process, where each one has as much authority as the next and the majority must agree with, and accept a proposition, or to reject it, for it to be the truth. This has never been the truth where things eternal are concerned, men in nature imagine themselves as the source of all power and authority, but the scriptures teach that where the word of the king is there is power and nowhere else: he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. There is no debate, no caucus, no vote; the end was declared from the beginning and there is no force that can change or alter that which has gone forth out of the mouth of the king.

When one does not realize, and acknowledge their utter dapravity in the flesh, they will contend for the right to have a say in the matter, but, when they are made to realize and experience the weakness and depravity of the flesh, they will always, confess that they are unworhty of the least of the mercies of God, and render all praise and glory to the finished work of Jesus. When given evidence that the work, of Jesus on the cross, was for sinners such as they feel themselves to be, they will never question the wisdom of the plan; it is the only plan that will fit their case and grace is the only thing that can justify such as they see themselves to be in the eyes of a righteous, merciful and holy God.

(1 Timothy Chap 1,vs 15-16) *"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."* The children of God who have been quickened will always feel themselves to be the chiefest of sinners because the spirit that dwells within judges everything that they do, their deeds, their thoughts, and the motives for their every action, and they are made to stand in awe that such as they see themselves to be could be so

blessed of God. This statement was made by Paul, after his experience on the road to Damascus, and after he was made a minister of righteousness: if he had said, I was the chiefest of sinners, instead of I am the cheifest of sinners, then all would feel that they have not had an experience of grace because this certainly does not agree with their feelings. Paul, then went on to say that his experience was so that Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to all that should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. This causes great rejoicing in the heart of the little children of God because they can understand and fellowship this truth. Each one remembers the way and manner in which they were brought to this knowledge and feel that their path has also been according to the pattern of all who come to Jesus by the drawing power of God's love, grace, mercy and by his gift of faith which is not of their doing.

There was an occasion where one came to the church saying, I didn't want to come, meaning that she had been a long time member of another church and had been satisfied with her belief and could not understand the doctrine of predestination and some other points of doctrines of the church.. She has attended the Primitive Baptist Church for several years with her husband, but, always said that she would not join it, well, so much for the wisdom and the will of man. She had been gradually being changed in the steadfastness of her belief, and being drawn closer to the truth of the scriptures without realizing it. She still maintained her position, in her conversation, but with less conviction and was being drawn closer to the church and the fellowship of the brethren and felt the love that they had for one another. She was working in the kitchen, during the annual meeting of the Primitive Baptist Church, which she was attending, and was helping prepare lunch as the meeting was drawing to a close. She said she did not know why she left the kitchen and went into the church but decided to go into the sanctuary to hear the preaching for a few minutes. She sat down on a pew in the Amen corner of the church to listen to the closing of the meeting. They had the closing remarks and as they began to sing the closing hymn, with her apron still on, she found herself asking for a home with the church, was received and baptized the following day. She said that she did not know why she came into the sanctuary as she did, but acknowledges that it was not her intent when she came in that day to do what she did: just another evidence that the scripture that, to everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven is still the rule.

(John Chap 6,vs 37) *"All that my Father giveth me shall come to me: and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."* When the time appointed of the Father comes, there will be a moving of the spirit, and action will be the results, whether in the way and manner that we would expect it, or not. It is the Lord's work and it is beautiful to behold in the sight of those who have been brought

that way themselves. There is nothing more beautiful, in the heart of the children of God, than to see one come forward saying that they felt that they were made to come at that particular time; they heard the voice of the shepherd calling and he leads them forth to follow in the footsteps of the flock. None would have been more doubting of this basic truth than the Apostle Paul: had someone told him when he left Jerusalem, that he would be a preacher of the sovereignty, power and righteousness of Jesus Christ when he arrived in the city of Damascus, yet he was, and continued all the days of his life in response to that calling.

One may have been wanting for this to happen for a long time, wondering and fearing anxiously that it may not be their lot in life; or they may not have been expecting it at all, at that particular time, but it makes no difference in the results. The work is of the Lord and when the time appointed of the Father arrives the manifestation of his purpose will be made known. The world cannot receive this because they have not experienced it, they have never heard that call and that is because that it has not been spoken unto them of the Father. (John Chap 6,vs 63) "***It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.***"We have nothing that we have not received of God, unto whom be all power and glory now, and forever more, Amen.

In Bonds of Love,
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Williams:

Enclosed is a bank draft for 2 years subscription and the remainder as needed.

The Signs and tapes of sermons, are the only fellowship we have in this spiritual desert.

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In fellowship of Christian hope,
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PSALM 61

To the chief Musician upon Neginah, A Psalm of David.

HEAR my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer.

From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy.

I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah.

For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name.

Thou wilt prolong the king's life: and his years as many generations.

He shall abide before God for ever: O prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him.

So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows.

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS CLEAN
Psalm xix, 9.

And there is no other principle of action in the world which is absolutely clean. The motives that prevail among natural men are selfish and vain, having the hope of reward and fear of punishment as their principal characteristic. And this is the main principle which prevails in the teachings of worldly religion, as well as in the business of the world. In the doctrine of those whose minds seem most pure and exalted we find heaven presented as a reward for goodness, and the hope of which should be an incentive to good works, and hell as a place of punishment, the fear of which should be used to deter men from wickedness.

Although there is an effort, at times, in the teachings of some, to rise to the height of that true principle which teaches the doing of right for its own sake, and the avoidance of evil merely for its hatefulness, yet the natural mind is not capable of relying upon the efficacy of that principle alone to control and guide men in their conduct, but will constantly fall back upon the hope of reward or fear of punishment, as that which alone can be absolutely relied upon to affect the actions of men for good. And even among those who have evidently been taught of the Spirit, and have been called to the work of the ministry, we sometimes notice a hesitancy and backwardness in regard to this thing, a kind of question and doubt, injected by the unbelieving carnal mind, as to whether it will do to leave the system of rewards and punishments out of our religious teaching, and depend entirely upon the power of the Spirit of Christ which all his people have. (Rom. viii. 9.) It is the opposition of the fleshly mind that is manifested when any one begins to fear that if we teach the plain revelation of the truth as recorded in the Bible, and as experienced by every child of God, we will thereby encourage the Lord's people to indulge in sin; and that it is necessary to appeal to their selfish desires for rewards and their fears of punishment in order to keep them out of mischief, and hold them within proper bounds.

Whenever such worldly principles are sought to be maintained by those who profess to minister to the Lord's people, some false interpretations of Scripture will surely be the result, some holding back of the sweet fullness of the word of truth, and some consequent lack of true edification and comfort on the part of the spiritual readers or hearers. Whenever a child of God consents for even a little time to the thought that sinful things are to be avoided for fear of the punishment or suffering that will follow, even though he be kept from acting on that principle, he suffers loss. I would not be understood as denying the usefulness of these motives in worldly things. It is good for those concerned in the results when a right act is done or a

wrong deed refrained from, whatever the motive which prompted the right or restrained the evil. But the living soul who is moved in his conduct by the consideration of the results to himself, instead of the character of the thing to be done or avoided, will realize no spiritual commendation and comfort in his conscience as resulting from the correct course he has pursued, but will either be lifted up with pride and vanity in the flesh, or will find himself in a desert place, with terrible leanness in his soul.

The Lord does not work as man works. His ways are as high above ours as the heavens are higher than the earth. Man's wisdom in its highest work on earth is "earthly, sensual, devilish." The Lord's, "wisdom is first, pure." James iii. 17. The beginning of that wisdom of God is the fear of the Lord. (Psalm cxi. 10.) The Lord begins the good work in his people upon the principle of that wisdom which is from above, and upon the same principle he performs it until the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil. i. 8.) And this is the beginning of wisdom's work: *"I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me."* Her. xxxii. 40. Now this fear of the Lord is a pure and holy principle, very different from that slavish fear of punishment which hath torment. This holy principle causes one to hate evil as the Lord hates it, and raises up in the soul a reverential desire to "be holy as God is holy." Thus the very definition of this principle is given to this effect in the word of truth: *"The fear of the Lord is to hate evil."*—Prov. viii. 18. For this reason it is said to be clean: *"The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever."*—Psalm xix. 9. There is no other absolutely clean and pure motive in all the world, and therefore no other principle that can lead one in the paths of righteousness. However good the thing done, unless the fear of the Lord prompted it, the motive was not clean, and the act, therefore, was not pure in the Lord's sight. Whatever is not caused by this holy fear of the Lord, which is to hate evil, is selfish, unholy, sinful like the nature from which it proceeds.

This fear of the Lord causes those who have it to hunger and thirst after righteousness; it is, therefore, *"a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death."*—Prov. xiv. 28. It never ceases to spring up in the new heart in hungerings and longings after purity and holiness, and in sorrow, grief and self-loathings on account of the depravity felt in our nature, and the sins that appear in our life. It is not our flesh, not our carnal mind or heart, which feels this hatred of sin and desire after righteousness, but the new heart, the divine life, where this fear of the Lord is. This holy principle of pure desire will never entirely cease to exist within the soul where once it has been implanted, nor ever entirely cease to spring up, however much the flesh may gain the ascendancy for a time; nor will it ever be satisfied until this mortal shall have put on immortality, and death shall be swallowed up in victory.

This is the principle which is ever at work more or less vividly in the Lord's

people. Sin, however attractive to the flesh, is hateful to the quickened soul by reason of this fear of the Lord within. Fear of punishment or promise of reward would not avail against the love of sin in the natural man even in a worldly covenant. That was tried in the case of the children of Israel according to the flesh, to show that it would not avail. Neither fear of punishment nor promise of reward kept them from constant transgression, only when the Lord slew them did they seek him. (Psalm *lxxviii. 84.)*

Let it be remembered that fear of punishment or hope of reward never prevents heart sin nor produces true righteousness in the sight of God. Only this fear of the Lord, which is a fountain of life within, can do that.

Those who have been experimentally crucified with Christ, and now live with him, hate sin, and hate the flesh because of sin. Sin is a grief and a dread to them, and their prayer is that of Jabez, ***"O that thou wouldst * * * keep me from evil that it may not grieve me."***— 1 Chron. iv. 10. When a child of God refrains from doing what the flesh desires because of fear of punishment, he is glad to have avoided the evil, but his soul finds no sweet rest before God on account of it, for the secret selfishness of the motive is set in the light of God's countenance. It is the same when he does what he rightly ought to do. How often the poor soul is set to questioning his motives as they appear in the sight of a heart-searching and a rein-trying God. How thankful he is, and how humble and meek, when he has some precious evidence that faith is in exercise within him, and that the fear of the Lord has moved him. For only by faith can he ever see any righteousness for himself in Jesus Christ, or any deliverance from sin.

How glad one who is thus exercised is to know that all the way he has been led has been appointed of the Lord, and that his sins and infirmities, which cause him such self-abhorrence, are humbling him more and more before a holy God, and showing him the wonderful justice and judgments of the Lord, and are measuring to him his great and amazing mercy and grace. Does this make him love the sins he so hates, or cause him to desire to continue in sin? The question is abhorrent to the quickened soul.

How strange to such a man it sounds to hear one say that the belief in the predestination of God will have a tendency to make a child of God indulge in sin. How strange to hear one say that when Paul says, ***"All things work together for good to them that love God"*** he did not mean to include evil, sinful, wicked things, but only trials, afflictions, distresses, and the like; thus taking away the real comfort of this precious assurance. And most surprising strange to hear the reason of this conclusion to be that if we believe that the apostle meant to include sin among the all things which work together for good, it would encourage us to sin in order to receive good.

The Lord, by putting his fear in the hearts of his people, has made sin so hateful to them, and so obnoxious,

it becomes like a suffocating atmosphere to them. They can hardly breathe where it is. They are dead to sin, and cannot live any longer therein. To be in it is to be in a kind of death. Yet there is so much of sin in them that they are daily delivered unto death for Jesus's sake. They bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in their mortal body. In their flesh dwells no good thing. ***"The body,"*** indeed, ***"is dead because of sin,"*** in the experience of all those in whom is Christ. (Rom. viii. 10.) ***"But the Spirit is life because of righteousness."*** Here then is the condition of the Lord's people in the world; sinners, yet holy; defiled, yet pure; vile in themselves, but righteous in Christ; being dead, indeed, unto sin with Christ, yet alive with him unto holiness; having in themselves, as it were, two men, one corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts, and the other ***"after God created in righteousness and true holiness";*** two principles, the flesh and the Spirit, contrary the one to the other, so that the child of God can never do the things that he would, and lacks comfort on that account, except as, from time to time, he is shown the good works he longs to do all done by the dear Savior, and he enabled by faith to walk in them, as he was foreordained to do. (Eph. ii. 10.)

Here is the wise and gracious work of God in Christ, whereby his people in this world are separated and taken away from the control of worldly principles, and are led by the Spirit of God. The warfare within keeps sin a hateful thing to them, and thus by the experience of that continual conflict turns them away from it in longings and cries unto God for deliverance from its baneful power. They need no offer of a reward for doing well, nor any threat of punishment to keep them from sin. The Lord has provided a higher, holier, surer principle of action than that. As it was with the Savior, so it is with his dear children, who have his Spirit; the reward is in, not *for,* keeping the commandments of God, (Psalm xix. 11,) and the pain and grief are in the presence of sin itself, which is hateful to his Spirit, not in the fear of the punishment that may follow.

Let not our brethren fear any more that the plain teachings of the Bible will encourage the Lord's people to sin, as though they were thirsting for sin instead of righteousness. Let us not fear to contend for the truth concerning the absolute sovereignty of God, and to rejoice that he works all things after the counsel of his own will. Let no one try to take away one thing from the ALL things which the inspired apostle declares do "work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose;" for if it could be shown that one thing was intended to be omitted by the apostle because of its wickedness, then that declaration would have no meaning at all to the child of God, who is waiting and longing to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, as the apostle has just described him, and would be without one particle of comfort for him. Let

us not descend in our teachings from the high and holy principles of "the high and lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity," to the low, and selfish, and unsafe principles of worldly wisdom, nor any more distrust the Lord's power to keep his people from departing from him, as he says he will, by putting into their hearts his especial treasure, (Isaiah xxxii. 6,) the fear of the Lord, which is to hate evil, and which, therefore, is clean, enduring forever.

MARCH 8, 1899.

FRAGMENTS

THE: love of God in the heart is pure and true, and is ever fixed upon that which is pure and true, and never can rejoice in iniquity, "but rejoiceth in the truth." When it has once been drawn out to another in whom it sees the same love-of-God, it can never be withdrawn. We ourselves may be deceived, but that love never is deceived. If the fellowship which we thought we felt toward one has been utterly broken and destroyed, then it was not that fellowship which is founded on the love of God; for that charity is the bond of perfectness, (Col. iii. 14,) and the bond of perfectness cannot be severed. The one whom we love in the truth may have many faults, but that does not.destroy our love and fellowship, for they are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. In that sense charity covereth the multitude of sins. (1 Peter iv. 8.) But true charity does not excuse or justify sins or faults in one's self or in a brother, nor does it cause us to withhold any needed exhortation, admonition or reproof, but rather the contrary. The good and comfort of the one we love is our chief desire, for ***"love seeketh not her own;"*** and we cannot see one we love in a dangerous place without a desire to extend such help as we can. That love also seeks the honor of God's house, and so directs us to that which is according to his commands.

WHO showed to Abel the way of salvation? Who told him what to do to please the Lord, and comforted him when alone and in distress? Does not the same Teacher and Comforter have the charge over his people to-day?

Who gave Noah that faith by which he built the ark, and by which he preached righteousness ? There was no man to tell him how to build or how to preach, for he was the only righteous man in that generation. The preacher of the gospel to-day, and the gospel builders, must receive their faith and instruction only from the Teacher of Noah. He will teach them to profit, and lead them surely in the right way, and uphold them by his arm. All men who assume to tell them how and when and where to preach, are vain teachers.

LOVE caused Jesus to say to Peter, ***"Get thee behind me, Satan,"*** because he savoured not of the things that be of God, but those that be of men. (Matt. xvi. 28.) But it is not our province to call a brother Satan because he speaks erroneously. We ought, however, to sternly recognize in our own words and actions, and in those of another, that which is from the wisdom of the world, which is

earthly, sensual, devilish, and rigidly oppose it. But we need be careful that we oppose it with the spirit of that pure and peaceable wisdom which is from above.

Elder Silas H. Durand
JULY 19, 1899.

(The following is the sermon mentioned above. Thanks to Sister Spikes for sharing it with us and to Sister Reidy Pickral for transcription.)

Sermon preached 1965 in Riffle, Washington by Elder D.V. Spangler.

I feel inclined, the Lord will, to talk to you about a subject that probably was mentioned at Lloyd Spikes' while visiting here and for the last two hours, some way, I have had some thoughts concerning this, and as a foundation for whatever I might speak to you I'd like to read the first verse of the 7th Chapter of the Book of Genesis: ***"And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation."***

I'm sure that Bible readers are familiar with this scripture and I would like to speak briefly, the Lord will, on the subject of the three arks found in the Bible and I know that if I speak about all three that I can't talk long about each one. We know at this time that God had commanded Noah to build an ark and not only did He command him to build an ark, but the same God who commanded him to build an ark gave him faith to believe.

In Hebrew it is said, by faith Noah, warned of God, prepared an ark to the saving of his house. So we could not leave out that important thing, that whatever there was embraced in the ark, it was the mind of God, and that it was built because God gave Noah to believe He would send a flood upon the earth.

No doubt, while Noah was preparing this ark the people thought he was crazy, preparing an ark! And probably the sun was shining. I understand in the scripture that each of the three arks—there are only three arks found in the Bible were typical of our Lord Jesus Christ. And, as our salvation, these three arks are typical of our Lord Jesus Christ. They bring to our view a perfect salvation because in each of these three arks there was a type of Jesus Christ, the saving of His people in every sense in which they would need salvation. The first ark was to preserve life upon the earth and was to protect Noah and his family from the wrath of God, and if we know anything about salvation we need that protection from God's wrath.

The second ark was the one that Moses was placed in that I mentioned probably while I have been here and was to protect Moses from Pharaoh who was a type of Satan, the power of darkness.

The third ark was where the Ten Commandments was placed when Moses came down from the mount after God had given them to him and it shows that Jesus our Lord is the one who kept the Commandments for us in that ark. And that was called the ark of the covenant of the Lord our God.

When this ark had been completed, God said to Noah, "come." God must have been in the ark, He didn't say, go into the ark, He said, "Come." I like that word "come" in the Bible. It's been used so many times so wonderfully, "come." I am told there will be a time when every subject of God's grace will hear the word, "come." Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Jesus said, Come unto me, etc. The thought is: God was in the ark. And thee only have I seen righteous, though there were eight souls in the ark saved from the waters. God looks directly at Noah. Thee only, He said. And we know about the clean and the unclean beasts.

In the construction of the ark, it had three stories; lower, I believe that's the way it reads, second and upper stories; it didn't say first, second and third — lower, second and upper stories. One thing about the ark, it is a type of Christ, there was only one door, and another thing about the ark, the door was in the side. And as we think of salvation, it was the side of our Lord that was torn, that opened to us salvation and the door of heaven. And the door shall be in the side. I believe our dear brother mentioned it being pitched within and pitch ed without so that the water is kept out. It had one window, and in a cubic shalt thou finish the window above, and that speaks of the faith of the people of God. God had provided a way to them to see everything, that they always see them as they look up. That window was finished in a cubic above. I am sure that when the earth had gone down beneath the wrath of God, there was only one way for these people in the ark to look. Up, upward. Then after God had said to Noah and his family, Come thou and thy house into the ark, the Bible says and the Lord shut him in. Why, Noah couldn't even shut the door. After he'd been brought in the ark, the Lord shut him in, you notice how it reads: shut him in. For yet seven days and I will open the window of heaven and pour out a flood upon the earth. I used to wonder why the ark would be sitting seven days and no rain. Seven in the Bible, the number seven, is symbolic of a fullness and a completeness of anything. And the seven days represented that Noah and his family were safe before the flood began. It represented the safety of the people of God before they needed salvation. Seven days and he will open the window of heaven and pour out a flood. Oh, my friends, our soul has often asked, did I have a safety in that ark. The ark of grace, the poet calls it, the ark of grace:

In the ark the weary dove
Found a welcome resting-place;
Thus my spirit longs to prove
Rest in Christ, the ark of grace.

and the poet said,

Tempest-tossed I long have been,
And the flood increases fast; Open,
Lord, and take me in,
Til the storm be overpassed.

That poet could sing about this ark. And what happened when the win-

dows of heaven opened and the floods came upon the earth. That which caused every hill to disappear raised the ark. Raised the ark! The wrath of God poured out on that ark, the safety of Noah in it is a type of the safety of the people of God. There was a time, my friends, when every hill disappeared and when only that lonely ark floated on the water as a type of Jesus Christ. There was a time when the eyes of God—that all He saw as He looked was the type of His Son. There was a time, my friends, on calvary's hill when the Son of God hanged there for you and I. That God looked at him He sees as the redeemer of His people, as the stroke of justice for us. One said, He looked and, of all, there was none to help and therefore mine own arm brought salvation. And the ark rises above the waters. The reason Noah was safe was because God had prepared him a place. Another thought I want to briefly pass on about the ark. As the waters began to recede after the flood—you know why it was 40 days? I don't know why, but I'll tell you what I think. I have a reason for saying it. Our Lord was tried forty days in the wilderness wasn't He? Why, this journeying of Jesus after He came into the world, He was lead of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, and be ahungered, and for satan to try Him. So we all must be tried forty days. So the Israelites must be in the wilderness forty years. All of this is symbolic. The floods fell and finally the waters began to recede. And where did the ark rest?

You know, I read the Bible and you now suddenly I saw something I hadn't seen in all these years. You never reach the time you don't find something new in the Word of God. And as the waters receded the ark was right over Mt. Ararat. It wasn't by chance it was there, on the highest mountain. And I was filled with rejoicing when I saw it said the ark *rested* there. It didn't by chance just be over that mountain. It rested. Our Lord Jesus Christ rested. Yes when the wrath of God had passed, you could rest. It rested on Mt. Ararat and then the raven and the dove were sent out. And it still found life upon the earth, still there was life when the olive leaf was brought in. The raven goes to and fro in the earth, but the dove found no place for the sole of his foot. It couldn' t find a resting place and it returned the first time and we are told Noah reached for it and pulled it in. That's appropriate with that hymn isn't it? Ark, the weary dove. A type of God's church found a peaceful resting place.

My beloved hearers, have you found a resting place in Christ? Wonderful rest! Wonderful rest! There's no rest like rest in Christ. Your body may be weary, you may be tired but rest in Christ is different from anything else.

The second ark was when Moses' family had hid him three months. They couldn't hide him any longer. The decree of the King was that every male child of the Hebrews should be cast into the river. But in the face of that Moses' parents, the Bible says by faith they put him in an ark of bullrushes, another ark. An ark right down to the

water where they were supposed to be drowned. In this ark of bullrushes, I mentioned it before, Pharaoh's daughter came down. And sometimes in my mind I see her as the one who was, in the purpose of God, to come and she looked at the child. He's weeping. She takes it and calls his sister and says, find a home for it and she takes it and Moses was reared in the house of Pharaoh as we might say. Pharaoh is a type of Satan. We only need protection or salvation in three ways. From the wrath of God for sin, from the devil and for someone to honor the Lord God for us. That's the only thing a man needs in salvation. And that was the protection of that and then we come to the ark of the covenant. I want to talk a little while about that.

I love the expression in the Bible: the ark of the covenant of the Lord our God. And Moses was commanded to make this ark. It was a small piece of furniture as we think about it, I couldn't quote the dimensions at the present time but it was to be brought into the tabernacle. When Moses was called upon Mt. Sinai and God gave him the law the first time, Ten Commandments, when he came down he found, as our brother mentioned, the Israelites worshipping a golden calf. They couldn't keep themselves very well could they? Just as soon as Moses leaves them they go into idolatory. And you and I are just as prone today to forget the Lord as the Israelites were, when He leaves us. Moses threw down the tables of stone, to find his people in that condition, and God called him back again. And then He engraved them in stone and when he returned he put them in this ark. Moses couldn't keep them. The Israelites couldn't keep these Ten Commandments themselves. But there was a safe place for them. In the ark is a type of Jesus Christ. He's the One who has kept the law for us if it' s ever been kept. Honored it in his life. And over the ark there was what we call a mercy seat.

You know I used to read that and I thought that's the most beautiful peaceful expression I ever heard. A mercy seat. A mercy seat. You know, God appropriately named many things. He had over this ark a mercy seat. He said to Moses, and there will I meet with thee. God has a meeting place for sinners. But it's above the ark and it's above the mercy seat and there will I commune with thee from above the mercy seat. How thankful we've all been that there is a mercy seat, a place one can sit down in mercy. And over the mercy seat there were two cherubims. The best I can understand, they were like two eagles. One of them is over here and one of them is over there. The scripture says, "The wings of this one touches the wall. The wing of this one touches the wing of that one on that side, and the wing of that one touches the wall on the other side. To me it represents the old and the new testament because each one of these cherubims was facing the mercy seat.

And all the prophecies before the coming of Christ were a promise of His coming. There's no vacant space between the cherubims because the

wing of this one reaches all the way, reaches to this one and so in my judgment the word of God has covered the period of all time that we recognize. And they looked at the mercy seat. The most precious possession the Israelites had was the ark of the covenant.

Somebody asked me a question at Natchez in the night about the ministers. She said I didn't answer directly. Sometimes we answer indirectly—how much honor we should give the minister, etc. And I said, you know, as the Israelites journeyed in the wilderness they carried this ark with them. It was a precious possession. The type of Jesus their Lord. The Ten Commandments were in there. When they had reached Jordan, why, the land they had looked forward to so long to cross over, into the promised land, they carried the ark along. And God gave Joshua instruction as to how they should cross over Jordan, and He said to him, make the Priest take the ark on their shoulders. I believe the minister of the gospel today is bearing the ark in preaching Jesus Christ. He has nothing else to preach. He's satisfied with His name, the name of Christ. He said, when you see the ark removed, borne by the priest, go ye after it. He didn't say, when you see the priest start moving but, watch the ark. Watch the ark! How lovely to hear a minister bring the sweetness of Jesus' name to people. How lovely, as we listen to people exhort the name of Jesus Christ. They desire no glory, no honor in the flesh. And He said, when ye see the ark removed, borne by the priest, go ye after it. Don't you keep so far behind them and when they were about to cross over Jordan, the priest stood in the midst of it with the ark on his shoulders until all the people passed over. God opened it up like a wall and it stood up like a wall.

Concerning the wandering of the Israelites, the ark moved when they moved. I read on one occasion about the ark being carried into the camp of the Philistines, their enemies, there was a plague there.

They may take His name but only those that have truly needed Him embrace Him indeed. They had the ark and no doubt they felt rejoicing. We have the most precious possession, the ark of the covenant in our camp. And everything began to happen: plagues, and the same ones decided, why thou art a curse in our camp, and we'll see what happens. So they took a milk cow, highly spoken of and they shut up the calf at home, and they put the ark on a cart. They said now if that cow carries that ark to the camp of Israel, we'll know its a plague. And you know, that cow left the calf She went mooing but she had to go. There was no choice. Because the power of God overcomes every obstacle when it's His will for things to move. It sure does, even down to brute animals. We speak of it, we say it couldn't be, but it was! Shut up the calf at home and the cow leaves, goes mooing pulling the cart. Why? Because the power of God arranged it that way. You can never exault the power of God too much. You can never abase a sinner too much.

No doubt it was a great day when the camp of the Israelites saw the ark coming. Coming! And the hand of man wasn't bringing him back either. Wasn't bringing him back, the hand of God was bringing him back.

And so I want to leave you people thinking of it, with the thoughts I've scatterly presented about the ark. This was a complete salvation that God typified there and the anti-type can never be less than the type. So our hope, our consolation, our joy, everything we have, is because Cod has ordained it so. Our Saviour said: *"I thank thee Oh Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and the prudent and revealed them unto babes."* You know how God's way is in revealing things — to hide things is to leave them unrevealed. That's the only thing necessary for God to hide things, is to leave them unrevealed.

So these three arks were typical of our Saviour. The scripture abounds from the first chapter to the last with Christ. I said last night, if you take Him out of the Bible you'd just have two lids left. That' s all you'd have. Jesus Christ, who it is said is made unto us righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

A few personal remarks I'd like to make now: When I was a boy I was thrown with a people that believed that the work of regeneration was the work of grace and that sinners were passive in regeneration. But they held the doctrine that after regeneration we had the power and the ability to obtain the blessings of God if we'd obey Him. And you know that looked like a good doctrine to begin with. It looked so good, I said, I'll just obtain the blessings of God and I won't have any chastisement and I was foolish enough to believe that I could live without chastisement. Yet I found in the Bible that He said, " *If you be without chastisement of whom all are partakers, you are a bastard and not a son."* But time went on. Suddenly, in May 1919 I was sitting under a minister who was standing in the pulpit preaching and he was preaching from the first chapter of Hebrews, *"When he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high,"* and suddenly my friends, something hit my heart like a dart. That I must speak in His name. I've got to talk about it to His people. I went home that afternoon and put up the horse and walked the pastures, wondering about what I had felt: I said, Lord, take this burden off of me. Time went on and the burden wasn't removed. I wrestled day and night. If I am a minister of the gospel I am not a volunteer. But I love to preach it when God blesses me.

I remember one of our daughters,– expected to lose her on one occasion. And I said this is the wrath of God upon me. The judgments of God because I hadn't spoken. Have you ever felt those things? The judgments of God, and every time things would get worse as the burden became heavy, I'd say: Lord, take it off, I'll speak. And when it eased up I was just as hard again. I'm just as hard-hearted.

Finally, we had a brother-in-law who lived in my home. I loved him very much. I would say he was closer to me than any brother I had, we lived in the same house. He was critically ill. He had said to me many times as a boy, David, I think you are going to have to preach. The brother would say that, though he wasn't a member of the Old School Baptist, he united while he was down sick. I just want to tell you a few things of my life before I leave you, because the most of you I'll never see you again, not here.

A few days before he passed away he called me to the bed, he said: ***"I'm going to die, and I want to hear you talk before I die."*** And I tell you I was trapped. I knew if I refused to try to speak to him I would carry it to my grave. I remember, my friends, going to a barn on our farm and bowing down before the Lord and asking Him, Lord give me strength.

Some of our neighbors gathered at our home at 2:00 or near about that hour and my father opened the service and I tried to speak a few words. I didn't feel I was blessed but when it was through he said, I'm satisfied. Two days later I stood by his bed and heard him say, ***"I see the angels coming for me."***

My friends, they had come for him, I learned obedience, if I know anything about it, through sufferings. I had to have fellowship with my Saviour. I learned that this matter was not optional with men. I learned that if I had a blessing God gave it to me before the world and my Saviour. I learned the doctrine of predestination I'm preaching, if I know it at all, before God opened my mouth. I tried not to believe it.

I remember one of the first times I ever stood up. I took lhe text: ***"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. Are ye not much more valued than many sparrows? Yea, even the very hairs of your head are all numbered."*** Why? Because I believe that doctrine. I can't be fed with this doctrine of part works and part grace. Not a poor sinner like I am.

A man was in my congregation and what I said that day appealed to him in such a way that the next week he came to see me. I had small children, I was having a hard time in life, and he said I want you to go to work for me, I believe the doctrine you preached. I worked twelve years with that man from that sermon. Now. to me these are the providences of God. My hearers, God has been good to me. Good to me! Wonderful, so wonderful to me. I can't praise Him enough. I know I'm talking about personal things but I just want to tell you how it came. (A smaller voice on the tape said: "It's wonderful, wonderful, keep on!)

I believe that every minister who exalts the name of God goes into the depths to learn that doctrine. He cannot feed the flock of Cod until he's been there. And I can tell you the pathway he comes. I can tell you the mountain tops and the valleys. I can tell you of the sunshine and the rain. I can tell you of the winters and the summers. I can tell you of seed time

and havest. I'm talking about everything. And that God has provided in the wonders of His grace and His people are kept before him and He said even a sparrow doesn' t fall without me. I use to think He said, "his notice" but He said "without me." I feel like I'm among a people that believe that doctrine.

If I didn't believe it, I wouldn't be here tonight. The sovereignty of God over all worlds, all things, all events, "life, death hell and worlds unknown hang on His firm decree, He sits on no precarious throne, nor borrows leave to be." You love that hymn? Sometimes you can sing it from way down here, yes.

Keep silence, all created things,
And wait your Maker's nod!
My soul stands trembling while she sings
The honors of her God.

Not Gabriel asks the reason why,
Nor God the reason gives;
Nor dares the favorite angel pry
Beneath the folded leaves.

But the precious last verse of that hymn is:

In thy fair book of life and grace,
O, may I find my name
Recorded in some humble place,
Beneath my Lord the Lamb!

God will never give His glory to another. And the glory of His Son shall never be detracted from whatever happens in the world by men, Christ sits on the throne. And my beloved hearers, He's conscious of your needs. He's a great High Priest who's gone to heaven who can be touched. Touched! Touched with a feeling of our infirmities. I like to think of Steven when he was dying. I like to think Steven saw heaven and he said, I see heaven open and I see Jesus standing on the right hand of God. And his face was like an angel's. Good way to die wasn't it? Have you ever felt if death comes, all is well? Have you passed that state of fear that you had no more fear? When? When the Lord was there.

Elder D.V. Spangler

"Peace, peace to him that is far off." Isaiah lvii. 19.

Far off! What means that? It means that the soul passing through that experience is separated, in its feelings, and at an infinite distance from God. Now this inward sense of being "far off " is one of the most painful feelings that a quickened soul can experience. The ungodly, who are really afar off, know nothing experimentally of distance from God, for they have never been brought spiritually near. They have felt no *"cords of love, no bands of a man"* drawing them with sweet attraction to the throne of the most High; they have never signed after the sweet manifestations of God's mercy and love; but they live gladly, and wallow willfully in those things which separate the soul from its Maker. But those who are "afar off " in their feelings, are such as

have seen something of the beauty of the Lord, and felt the evil of sin, who spiritually know Jehovah's purity and the creature's impurity, and have experienced the inward curse, bondage, and condemnation of a holy law. A spiritual discovery of his purity and holiness, making manifest their own vileness, has thrust them down from their self-righteous or presumptuous standing, and made them far off from him; not daring to draw near, nor able to approach; not feeling any spiritual access, but sighing and mourning over their evil hearts in the wilderness, in desolate places; and unable to move a single step forward, because the Lord does not draw them by his smile. A man must know something experimentally of this before he is brought near. How can we know a feeling of nearness if we have not known a feeling of distance? How can we know what it is to be brought "from the end of the earth" (Psalm lxi. 2) by the manifestation of God's mercy and love, unless we have been driven there, in our feelings, by some manifestation of the wrath of God against sin? But to see the blessed Lord, and not be able to draw near to him; to view his atoning blood at an infinite distance from us, his glorious righteousness well-nigh out of sight, and his lovely Person out of the reach of our spiritual view, so as not to enjoy any access to these glorious realities - to know this experimentally and feelingly, is to be "far off" from God. And I believe that God's people know very much of this feeling. There is not much nearness in our day; not much dandling upon the knees, not much smiling upon the soul, not many love visits, nor love tokens communicated. There is, indeed, a great deal of talking about them; and there are abundance of people who profess to have them; but I fear they are, for the most part, cheats and counterfeits. The real people of God, the true-hearted family are, for the most part, "afar off upon the sea," for it is a dark and cloudy day in which we live.

Elder J.C. Philpot

ROMANS 15:5-6.

Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CONTRIBUTIONS

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Mrs. Ruth Wall, TX	$50.00
Mrs. Lillian Wood, NC	2.00
Jack T. Dossett, NC	7.00
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Ms. Mary Lou Crissman, NC	2.00
Warren Brown, VA	2.00
Mrs. Cloma McLaughlin, TX	2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER VIOLA DIXON CAIRNS

Sister Viola Dixon Cairns, 95, member of Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church, died February 5, 1999. Sister Cairns and her husband, Brother George Cairns, united with the Wilmington Primitive Baptist Church in June 1975. Brother Cairns died in 1980.

Sister Cairns membership was moved to Stump Sound February 28, 1993, when the church in Wilmington was discontinued. She has no surviving close relatives.

Written by request of Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church in conference - a copy to be placed in the church record book, and a copy to be submitted to the "Signs of the Times" for publication.

Elder Gene Lupton, Moderator
Sister Evelyn Pratt, Clerk

SISTER MARTHA EUNICE JUSTICE

Sister Eunice Justice, 95, beloved member of Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church, died February 12, 1999. She united with the Raleigh Primitive Baptist Church about 1940. She later lived at Topsail Beach, N.C., and moved her membership to Stump Sound May 26, 1985. She was faithful to attend meetings at her home church and others as long as she was able.

Sister Eunice loved the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone, and the predestination of all things by God. Although she was physically afflicted, she never complained. She manifested a great love for the church-just to know her was to love her. She was always cheerful, radiating love wherever she went. She lived alone and took care of herself until about 2 1/2 years prior to her death, when whe went to live with her son Ralph and his wife Rebecca in Myrtle Beach, S.C.

Her funeral services were held at Stump Sound Church by her pastor Elder Gene Lupton and Elder J.T. Prescott.

Her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery beside her late husband Dewey Justice - there to await the resurrection.

Written by request of Stump Sound Church in conference; a copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to her family, and a copy be submitted to the "Signs of the Times" for publication.

Humbly submitted,
Elder Gene Lupton, Moderator
Sister Evelyn Pratt, Clerk

PSALM 134.

A Song of degrees.

Behold, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord.

Lift up your hands in sanctuary, and bless the Lord.

The Lord that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion.

Signs of the Times

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SONG

On Jordan's stormy banks I stand,
And cast a wishful eye,
To Canaan's fair and happy land,
Where my possessions lie,

Oh, the transporting, rapturous scene,
That rises to my sight !
Sweet fields arrayed in living green,
And rivers of delight !

All o'er those wide-extended plains
Shines one eternal day;
There God the Sun for ever reigns,
And scatters night away.

No chilling winds, or poisonous breath,
Can reach that healthful shore;
Sickness and sorrows, pain and death,
Are felt and feared no more.

When shall I reach that happy place,
And be forever blest ?
When shall I see my Father's face
And in his bosom rest?

Filled with delight, my raptured soul
Can here no longer stay;
Though Jordan's waves around me roll,
Fearless I'd launch away.

Stennett.

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EDITORIAL

ST. JOHN 6: 37-39.

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing but raise it up again at the last day."

The entire covenant of grace which the three-in-one God of heaven and earth made before the world was is enclosed in these three verses. If we had no other scriptures, but were blessed to believe these, they are all that we would need. But all of the holy scriptures are profitable unto us while we remain here in the flesh, for we read, ***"All scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works."*** Regardless of what the wisdom of man teaches, the holy scriptures are not for the entire world: they are for the man of God. ***"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned."*** Until one has been born again of the Holy Spirit he cannot discern anything that is spiritual. He must be born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. In the flesh all men are born dead in trespasses and sin, and we know that anything that is dead can do nothing. Death is the state of being separated from something, and when our fleshly progenitor Adam partook of the forbidden fruit he died: for God had said, ***"In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."*** God cannot lie, therefore we know that Adam died; not a corporeal death, but he was separated from God. He fell from his upright and sinless state into a state of sin and condemnation, and because all his posterity was in him they also fell. And they

shall remain separated from God until the appointed time of their regeneration or new birth. No man has ever had anything to do with his fleshly birth, neither can he have anything to do concerning his spiritual birth. ***"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."*** Who are those who are born of the Spirit? Are they not the ones chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world? We read Eph. 1: 3-4, ***"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."*** It was according to the good pleasure of God's will that he chose us in Jesus Christ before the world was spoken into existence. The wisdom of the world will deny this, saying, How could God chose us before we existed? But known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world, and he hath said, ***"I am God and I change not."*** We read Psalms 139: 15-16, ***"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."*** Fleshly wisdom cannot truly understand this scripture, but the prophet was given to write this concerning the body of Christ. Paul tells us we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. Christ is the head of the church which is his body, and if we be what we hope to be then are we his body, and our names will be found written in the book of life. If our names are not found written there we shall be cast into the lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

As Jesus declared, he came to do the will of his Father. Can anyone dare say that he failed to do it? Jesus said in his prayer to the Father in the 17th chapter of St. John, ***"I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do,"*** and as he hung on the cross, ***"It is finished."***

In his Godhead Christ could not die, therefore he must become incarnate; for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. ***"Forasmuch then as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."*** He did not take on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham. And in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

The ultimate purpose of the work which Christ came into this low ground of sin and sorrow was to save his

people from their sins; but there was much more that he did to comfort, heal and teach them. Even as a boy of twelve years he was found of his mother in the temple teaching the doctors, and he said unto her, ***"How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"*** What an amazing question this must have been to all who heard it. Jesus went about the land healing the sick, causing the lame to walk, opening the eyes of the blind and preaching the gospel to the poor. And he abundantly shewed his mighty power by raising the dead. The people could find no fault in the miracles that he did, yet they desired to kill him because many of his miracles were done on the Sabbath day: and even moreso when he said, ***"My Father worketh hitherto and I work,"*** shewing that he was the Son of God and equal with God. Jesus also said, ***"For as the Father raiseth up, the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son of man quickeneth whom he will,"*** Not only did Jesus raise some who had died a corporeal death, but he also quickens into life his children who are dead in sins, even as many as the Father hath given him. He said, ***"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."*** Many have heard his voice, and there shall be more before his glorious return: not one of his children shall be left behind. Jesus said, ***"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life."*** The world knows what it is to pass from life unto death, but none know what it is to pass from death unto life. Neither do they know what it is to truly believe in the just and holy and living God: for if we believe it is given to us from above. ***"Unto you it is given in the behalf of Jesus Christ, not only to believe on him, but to also suffer for his sake."***

The children of God are called sheep, and Jesus said, ***"I am the good shepherd, and I know my sheep, and am known of mine."*** But when he was speaking to unbelievers he told them, ***"But ye believe not, because ye are not my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."*** The eternal life that Jesus gives his sheep has ever been theirs. It had no beginning and it shall never end: for that is the meaning of eternal. The life that Jesus gives was in him before the world was, but is now made manifest by the new birth. A birth never gives life, for the life must be present before a birth. Christ is that life. He is the way, the truth, and the life. In him we live and move and have our being. This is a great mystery, ***"Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of***

this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you the hope of glory." In his prayer to the Father he prayed for them that shall believe, ***"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them: that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."***

Oh, how sweet and joyous it is when we are given from time to time to feel that we have a blessed hope in Christ, and yet how dark and dreary when he turns away from us for a moment. But he has promised that he will never leave us nor forsake us, and all of his promises are sure. A short time before he was to return to his Father he gave this very precious promise: ***"I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will sent in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."*** What a gracious promise this is! How sweet it is to feel his presence from time to time! Praise his holy name! Without his promises how desolate and forsaken we would feel to be. But he has left us his peace, peace that the world can know nothing about. ***"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid,"*** This is a commandment that we cannot carry out of ourselves, but when he speaks it is with power; it is done. Without him we can do nothing, but through him which strengtheneth us we can do all things.

Jesus stood as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and when our Saviour hung on the tree of the cross he commended his spirit into the hands of his Father and gave up the ghost. Yet at that moment our salvation was not yet complete, for he had not yet risen from the grave. (However it was not possible that he should fail to rise.) Had he not risen we would still be dead in our sins. But Christ was the perfect sacrifice acceptable unto God, and by his sacrifice he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. When Christ died for his bride she died in him. He did the suffering, bleeding and the dying, (for it was not possible for any to help,) for her sins were charged unto him as her husband and he must pay the debt that God's holy justice demanded. But she was in him when he died, for she was chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that she should be holy and without blame before him in love. The chosen children of God are the bride of Christ, and in him they live, and move, and have their being. We read Isa. 63:9, ***"In all their affliction***

he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." When Christ was buried his bride was buried in him, and when he arose she arose in him. ***"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin."***

Brethren, if we have been baptized into the death of Christ, (not the baptism of water which cannot take away sin, but is the answer of a good conscience toward God,) we have been freed from the law of sin and death, for God's holy justice can never demand more than the death of the transgressor. And if we be dead with Christ, we believe we shall also live with him.

Christ was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification. Jesus the good shepherd lay down his life for his sheep, and he said, ***"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."*** He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and by wicked hands was crucified and slain; but he himself gave up the ghost when he commended his spirit into the hands of his Father. On the third day he broke the bands of death, for it was not possible that he should be holden of it. This was the first resurrection: blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. Those who have no part in the first resurrection and whose names are not found written in the book of life will be cast into the lake of fire with death and hell, which is the second death.

Beloved brethren, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is coming again as he hath promised with his holy angels in a cloud of glory to receive unto himself his redeemed children and present them before his Father holy and blameless. And he is now sitting at the right hand of the Father making intercession for his saints. Praise his holy name that he hath given us a sweet hope that we will be numbered among that blessed people who will hear these blessed words from his lips, ***"Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared***

for you from the foundation of the world." Praise God for all of his blessings toward undeserving sinners, especially the gift of his beloved son Jesus Christ.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES

FELLOWSHIP IN A SPIRITUAL KINGDOM

When Jesus was arraigned before Pilate he was asked, ***"Art thou the King of the Jews?"*** He did not deny being a King, yet he was no threat to Pilate or the sucular authority. He answered, ***"My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, ...but now is my kingdom not from hence."*** John 18:36.

A very strange answer it would seem, both to Pilate and to the desciples of Jesus. The Jews were looking for the coming of the Messiah and the desciples trusted that this was ***"...he which should have redeemed Israel."*** Luke 24:21. In fact his deciples would have made him a king had Jesus not withdrawn himself from them. John 6:15. But their expectation was for a temporal king. A king that would throw off the yoke of Rome and establish a temporal government. But this was not to be, for the statement is plain, ***"My kingdom is not of this world:"***

And yet we find in Daniel 4:34, that when the understanding of Nebuchadnezzar had returned to him that he blessed the most High whose ***"....kingdom is from generation to generation."*** So, it is not a contradiction that God has a people from generation to generation, and yet that kingdom, Jesus' kingdom, is not of this world. In every generation God has a people in the world, but they are not of the world. The citizenship of His children is in a spiritual kingdom and that is not of this world.

In contrasting the difference between a heavenly kingdom and that of this world consider Satan, ***"....the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not...."*** II Cor. 4:4, and also this Satan that is called the ***"....prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience;"*** Eph. 2:2.

This, of course, does not mean that Satan is sovereign here, nor that his actions are outside the power of God. ***"There is no power but of God: The powers that be are ordained of God."*** Rom. 13:1. As in the tirals of Jobe, he was put in the hands of Satan, but was restrained from taking his life. He could go no further. Even so, Satan is still called prince of the power of the air or, as we might say prince;of this earthly principality. And he is the god of this world.

What a glorious fact it is then, that Jesus has declared that His kingdom is not of this world.

Jesus is the King of a different kingdom; a spiritual kingdom. Those that are spiritual have a citzenship in a spiritual kingdom that is from genera-

tion to generation. These citizens of the spiritual kingdom are those that are born of the Spirit. They are new creatures, as illustrated in II Cor. 5:17. And, there is a great contrast made between the fleshly man and the new, spiritual man. ***"That whichis born of the flesh is flesh:and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."*** John 3:6. But while in this world the spiritual man inhabits an earthern vessel. He inhabits sinful flesh. But the man of the flesh is still in this body too. And, thus the warfare.

This warfare is expressed in another way in Mark 3:27, which is Christ in you. ***"No man can enter a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house."*** Those born of the Spirit have had their fleshly house spoiled and made worthless. Yet, it must be confessed that it seems this binding is not complete until this mortal life is finished. Even though His children continue to grow in grace and the knowledge of the Saviour, sin continues to break the "binding" and His children are made to know that their strength is not in themself, but of Him.

Lest it should be misunderstood, the needs of the flesh must be considered, but not the various lusts thereof. Paul tells Timothy, I Tim.5:8 ***"....if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith,and is worse than an infidel."*** And, II Thes. 3:10; ***"....we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat."*** The point being; that material things with substance are necessary to the flesh and may reflect spiritual love and grace, but they are still only natural things, and at best, are only shadows of the spiritual Kingdom.

In expressing the beauty of the spiritual Kingdom as compared to what is known in the flesh Paul emphasizes that those that are spiritual should not live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. II Cor. 5:15. And from a spiritual standpoint, ***"....henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more."*** , or no more "after the flesh". The words "after the flesh" are only implied.

Well, of course we know each other in the flesh. But Paul's statement is concerning the spiritual. Knowing each other spiritually is of eternal importance while knowing each other in the flesh is only temporal.The fellowship of those born of the Spirit is truly fellowship with the Father, and with his son Jesus Christ. See 1 John 1:3.

And eventhough the children of God may know of the wonderful truths of the Messiah who came in the flesh and died on the cross, they do <u>not</u> know Him now in the flesh. See II Cor.5:16. He is now manifest by the Spirit, to those born of an incorruptible seed, <u>as a risen Christ</u>, ***"....who is ever at the right hand of God, who also***

maketh intercession for us." Rom. 8:34.

What a wonderful way to know each other. And, what a wonderful way to know our Lord.

Elder W.G. Chapell

VOICES OF THE PAST

"So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do." - Luke xvii. 10.

The lesson taught in these words of our Savior to his disciples is that in nothing can we be of profit to the Almighty; and some reflections growing out of this are in my mind this morning to speak about. It seems exceeding hard to divest our minds of the idea of human merit in what we may do or say. We even turn the special gifts of God into occasions whereby to exalt ourselves, as though we had originated them, and out of our own storehouses had offered gifts to God whereby his infinite fullness had been added to. And so again and again we are reminded in the Scriptures of our dependence and unprofitableness, that our pride may be humbled and our vainglorying silenced.

Jesus had just before spoken to his disciples of faith which could work miracles; and faith always does work miracles, in the sense that it always does what sense or reason or human power can never accomplish. But though faith is itself the gift of God, the fruit of the Spirit, and being of divine origin works with divine power, so that human power is all excluded from any participation in the matter, yet we are all the time saying, "My hand hath wrought this great work, and my wisdom hath planned it;" and therefore Jesus proceeds to remind the disciples that after having done the mightest works which faith can produce, they were not to boast themselves, as though they were thankworthy, or were in any way profitable to their Maker. Yea, more than this; so far would they be even then from putting God under obligations to them, that he would have a right to demand still more service at their hands. After they have plowed the ground or fed the cattle, he still has a right to demand that they shall gird themselves and wait upon him at his table; and even then they deserve no thanks. If afterward they sit down and eat, it is of his bounty, for which they are bound to return him thanks.

It must not be forgotten that this parable was spoken to eastern people, the whole structure of whose society is different from ours. Their idea was and is that servants are bound to render all demanded service to their masters. In our day and land, where the relations of men to each other are different, any such service rendered from one to another would most frequently be met by the courteous phrase, "I thank you." But such an expression would be entirely foreign

to all the ideas of eastern nations. There, a master would never think of thus acknowledging a service rendered by a servant. The master does not consider himself under any obligations to the servant, but the servant owes all his life and powers to him; and it is of his bounty if the servant receives his daily bread. Now the Savior uses this condition of things as a parable, and by it presents our relation to God. So likewise ye, after that ye have done all that is commanded you, count yourselves unprofitable servants.

1st. We are the creation of God. He has made us, and not we ourselves. He is the only self-existent Being, the only Being of whom eternity can be predicated. We owe our existence to his will. We are, because he is, and because he willed that we should be. Surely the creature must receive all. He can by no means render anything to his Creator. Therefore, when we have done all his will, we have only answered the end for which he created us; we have only rendered back to him that which came out of his own hand. In the Scriptures man is often said to have robbed God, but never to have added anything to him. He said, "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine and the fullness thereof." - Psalm 1. 12 See also the connection. As God has made us, we ourselves are his; and as he has created every power within us, and all that we have, these things are also his; and so neither our persons nor our works can profit him anything, or deserve any thanks from him.

2nd. It is God that upholds us and preserves us. "In him we live, and move, and have our being." - Acts xvii. 28. He gives us our breath, and upholds us by the word of his power. - Acts xvii. 25; Hebrews i. 3. How little conscious of all this are we! Yet he is so close to us that we exist in him, act in him, and without his presence we should perish. He has made us in order to do his will in us and by us, and daily he renews our strength. Each daily breath is proof of his continued sustaining power. If he withdraw, we shall cease not only to live, but we shall cease to be. Therefore all our service of praise and obedience is only the expression of power from God, every instant imparted to us, that we may be kept in life. We have therefore put him under no obligation to us.

3rd. Not only has he created us, and daily preserved us in existence, but he gives us all things. Man in his vanity gathers the fruits of his husbandry into his barns; with the profits of his labor he builds houses, and purchases the comforts and luxuries of life. By his learning and wit he gains a great name among men, and he says, *"See what my power hath wrought!"* Vain thought! Who gave him mental and physical power? Who sent down the heat of the sun and the showers of the early and latter rain upon the seed which he has sown? Who gave life to the seed, and prepared the soil in which it grew? Who saved it from mildew and rust and blight? Who gave favoring gales and smooth seas to his ships? Who kept his houses from the storm or fire?

What has he that he has not received?- John iii. 27. Why boasts he as though he had not received it? How little we live in a realizing sense of the constant providence of God! He is the Giver of all. If any streams flow back to him, they are but seeking the place from whence they came out. If every river flows into the ocean, wherein is the ocean profited? Does it thank the rivers? Their cheerful and mighty and beneficent flow can continue no longer than old ocean wills. God in his immensity is the ocean, and all we do and say in his service are but the return of him of what he gives; therefore he owes us nothing. We cannot borrow from him to pay the debt which we already owe him. Therefore, from these three considerations it is manifest that we can yield him nothing. We are unprofitable servants if our whole lives are his.

4th But we have to do with sin and sinners. We have not rendered him his own. We have denied his power and goodness, and set at naught his authority. We are in debt to him. We have failed to obey his commandments. We have fallen from our uprightness, and are enemies to God. As such the Bible speaks of all men. In connection with this also, some reflections grow out of these words of our Savior of which I wish to speak. Could an unfallen man, who should perfectly do God's will, have any merit before God? Could such a man present any holiness to God that would place him under any obligation in return whatever? A man can render service to his fellow-man that can rightly demand reward, because he meets his fellow-man upon an equal plane; but can he render any such service to God? It is manifest that the first essential quality that must belong to any meritorious work is that it shall be "self-originated;" that is, that it shall be performed entirely out of a man's own self, without being originated from any source outside of himself. If it be originated from any source outside of himself, it is to the praise of that source, and not himself. A man may demand praise or reward from his fellow-man for service rendered, because with regard to him the act was self-originated - it was performed from an equal to an equal; but we are not in any sense equal with God. It has been before proved that we must receive all from the Creator. No good work is from self. All our good works, if we have any, must be from God. We cannot take one thing which God hath wrought in our hearts and make it the ground of a demand for more. If God originates our good works, they cannot constitute any merit in us. If God has originated them, they must be to his praise forever. Can we then originate any good works, such as faith, love, obedience, &c.? In answer, let us first consider that the Scriptures teach that man is wholly unclean, and his heart wholly evil. It must be manifest that evil cannot originate good. Evil only originates evil. To this the Scriptures and reason both agree. Let us look at the testimony of the Scriptures for a little. *"A good tree cannot bring forth corrupt fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."*- Matt.

vii. 18. *"O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."* - Matt. xii. 34. That all men by nature are sinful altogether, is declared again and again. See the first three chapters of Romans, in which Paul draws up an indictment against the whole world, and declares that none are exempt from the condemnation there pronounced. Sin and death are the condition and doom of all men. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one. God only can work good or originate it in us. If any man does work good works, it is because God has created him to good works, and foreordained that he should walk in them.- Eph. ii. 10. Every good and perfect thing is declared to be the gift of God, and to come down from him. - James i. 17. Repentance is his gift. - Acts v. 31. Faith is his gift. Eph. ii. 8. Love, hope, faith, and all the Christian graces, are declared to be the fruit of the Spirit. - Gal. v. 22, 23. Our good works he is declared to be the author of. - See again Eph. ii. 10; Isa. xxvi. 12. From all these scriptural testimonies we may surely conclude that in point of righteousness we deserve no thanks, and cannot be profitable to God.

5th. From all this is manifest that we cannot make an atonement for our sins. If any price can be rendered to justice, it must be a holy ransom, such as justice can approve. But we have before seen that holiness is not in man except God create it there; and it is manifest that we cannot render to God his own work as our merit. Because I have one good thing from God I cannot rightly say, *"Therefore I deserve another."* Our works, which God has wrought within us, cannot atone for past sins; and all in fallen man is sin, except the works which God works within him. Redemption therefore must be of God; it cannot be of ourselves. Of myself I can neither pay the debts I owe, nor lay up treasures of righteousness after my debts are paid. Human merit is excluded from redemption, both as regards the atonement for sin and the sanctification of the sinner. Salvation must be of divine grace and not of creature works. Even the works wrought within us, of faith, love humility, &c., are not capable of paying the debt which we owe to divine justice, because they are the fruit of the Spirit; and the Spirit is not given until after Jesus has paid all the debt we owe, neither could it be given until after the atonement was made. In salvation, atonement for the sins that are past must precede all else. To this agrees the type. The people could not come near the sanctuary, and no worship could be offered there, until it was sprinkled with the blood of atonement. To this agrees all Christian experience. No man has ever yet felt that he had one spiritual blessing from God, until he has felt himself sheltered by the blood of the atonement. If our works were perfect they could profit God nothing; they could not atone for sin. They must be created in us of God.

6th. But our works, even the best of them, are not perfect. Imperfection is

true of all Christians and of their best works. To this the Scriptures agree. Disciples are taught to pray, *"Forgive us our debts, as we forgive,"* &c. - Matthew vi. 12. Paul complains that he sins, and does what he would not. - Rom. vii. - John, in his first epistle, first chapter, says, "If we say that we have (present tense) no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." The record shows that they were imperfect, and they did not hesitate to confess their sins and failures, as did Noah and David. Christian experience and Christian testimony to-day are the same. Not only do we positively and willfully sometimes go astray, but even when we are striving to do the will of God with the most earnest desire, we have to confess that there is often a mixture of wrong motives. Selfish desires arise and spoil our best work. There are often flies in the most precious ointment of the apothecary.

"If I pray, or hear, or read,
Sin is mixed with all I do."

If this be true of the Christian, the renewed man, certainly the unregenerate man can do no better. If the best offering of him in whose heart Jesus abides needs the cleansing blood to make it acceptable to God, surely the work of the unrenewed man must be wholly hateful and horrible in the sight of God. If he that does all is unprofitable, where shall he stand who never has known what love to God and obedience to his law mean? Surely from all this the exceeding riches of the grace and kindness of God take on a new meaning, and must appear immeasurable. If a man is saved, how great is the exhibition of the love of God to him!

7th. From the text we may learn humility toward God. Humility is one of the graces of the Spirit. It is not a thing that can be created or called into exercise at our own will. As a principle, God himself creates it. It is not a subject of exhortation when we consider the principle in the heart; but it is scriptural and proper to exhort Christians to put it on in their life. As a principle in the heart, it springs out of right views of ourselves and just conceptions of God and of our relations to him; and what would be better calculated to increase a feeling of humility in our hearts than a consideration of the text at the head of this article? To feel that our God does not need us, that we can add nothing to him, but are unprofitable at the best, and must receive all from him, is a most soul-humbling consideration. And accompanying this grace, we shall also be humble in our deportment toward all our fellow-men. Since we ourselves are of no profit to the Almighty, none can be behind us. We are better than no one else; and the feeling of the heart will be, Surely I am most unprofitable of all. It will not be hard then to esteem others better than ourselves. This also will make us lenient and forgiving to the faults of others. Ashamed of our own shortcomings, we shall feel how little right we have to judge others. The humble man is slow to condemn. He judges himself by a

far sterner rule than he does any one else.

8th. From a consideration of the text we may also learn gratitude to God, the Giver of all. He does not exact from us even that which it is his right to demand; and, all undeserving as we are, he never wearies of supplying all our needs. We owe no thanks to him who pays a just debt; but how grateful should we be to him who, being under no obligation to us, yet does us a thousand favors, knowing that we can never by any means recompense him again.

9th. The text is also well suited to stir us up to obedience to God. Thus, and thus only, can we exhibit our gratitude and love. We know that we can be of no profit to God, but yet humbly and lovingly we desire to acknowledge his favors in the only way possible to us. Here speaks the spirit of the true Christian. The spirit of the flesh says, If I can put God under no obligation to me, so that I can secure some favor from him for what I do, what is the use of serving him? But the spirit of love and gratitude speaks another thing altogether. It says, "What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits toward me.?"

Thus I have suggested some things that seem to me pertinent to the text. Many precious truths I have not alluded to. I have found profit to my own soul in these reflections, and I hope they will profit some one else.

I remain, as ever, your brother in hope of life through Christ,

F.A. Chick.

(The above was written by Elder F. A. Chick, Feb. 11, 1885.)

SERMON BY THE LATE ELDER A. B. AYERS

Pigg River Association 1960

I will read to you the third verse of the fifteenth chapter of Romans: ***"For even Christ pleased not himself; but as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me."*** The word ***"me"*** here implies Christ himself, as we understand. The Psalmist uses almost the same language in the 69th Psalm, 9th verse: ***"The zeal of thine house has eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me."***

As we understand the word fallen and the word fell, both signify the past tense as to when the ***"reproaches fell on me."*** We read also in 1st Timothy where the Apostle said that Adam was not deceived, but Eve being deceived, was in the transgression, but she should be saved in childbearing.

Now the question is, When did the reproaches fall on ***"me?"*** My mind goes out to believe with all sacredness of heart and soul that in the garden of Eden, when there were but the two, there was the transgression. And in thinking about it, a thought is formed in my mind that there never was but one transgression, and that was in the garden of Eden; and that transgression has been multiplied as the human family has been multiplied. My thought is that in the transgression there was every conceived sin that has ever been practiced by mortal man. The Apostle tells us in the 4th chapter of Ephesians that there is one Lord, one faith, one

baptism. There is one salvation; and that salvation was prepared in the Son of God, upon whom the reproaches fell in the transgression. This woman, was in the transgression, yet she shall be saved in childbearing. Now to me, in the transgression the church was figuratively in Eve; and the seed of the woman concerning whom God spoke to the serpent, was the salvation of his people: ***"It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."***

The Apostle Peter tells us that He stood a Lamb without blemish from the foundation of the world. Christ has been without blemish from the foundation of the world; yet there was the promise that he should bruise the serpent's head; and there was the promise that she shall be saved in childbearing.

Well, what child is under consideration here? It didn't say, In children bearing; but in childbearing. The very child, to me, brethren, the very child, the seed of the woman that was promised there in Genesis, is the very one in which Abraham received the promise that in his seed this child should come forth, ***"For in Isaac shalt thy seed be called."*** And in Isaac Jesus did come forth, that is, in the genealogy of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Jesse, David, Solomon, etc.,—the genealogy right on down, did the seed of the woman come forth, on whom the reproaches of the transgression fell. That is, ***"All the reproaches have fallen on me."***

Therefore, he stood as a Lamb with out blemish and covered every transgression of the household of faith --of the church of the living God. The old prophet Zachariah tells that, ***"In that day"***, (a specific day, which to me is the very day in which the seed of the woman was crucified,) ***"In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleaness," "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem: half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea."*** That was the blood that had the atoning power in the day of the crucifixion of the blessed Lamb of God, upon whom all the reproaches had fallen. He came at the appointed time of the Father, as we are told in Galatians: ***"When the fulness of time was come God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law."***

What a blessed promise, brethren? The promises of God can't fail: never have, and never will. If the promises of God could fail, then none of us would have salvation, nor eternal life. What a blessed promise we have in him, that he should bruise the serpent's head. All the promises were based on him. In Hebrews the Apostle wrote, ***"What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visiteth him?"*** He did visit the Son of Man. The man that is under consideration is figurative of the church; and here we have the Son of Man whom God visited with the wrath that we deserved—that the church deserved in their transgression, because the whole church went down in that transgression and was never able to lift itself up. You can't lift

yourself up by your own boot-straps; you can't lift yourself up with nothing to cling to, but He has the power to lift us up. The Psalmist declares that He brought him up from the horrible pit and the miry clay, and placed his feet upon a rock.

Brethren, friends, and neighbors, do you have your feet upon a rock this morning? If so, what rock are you standing on? Not the common rocks that I see in the land and soil up here, but the Rock of Eternal Ages. That is the bedrock. That's God's salvation and eternal truth, who arose from the dead, and became the first fruits of them that slept.

So the reproaches of them that reproached thee have fallen on me. Now can you fathom the greatness of God: his mercy, his love, and his truth and salvation that he has in store for all his people that love him. All of us were in the transgression, yet He chose the church in Christ, for he tells us in 2nd Timothy, ***"Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace that was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."***

So, brethren it can't fail. There was your promise that all the reproaches of them that reproached thee have fallen on me. Yet he stood in that capacity from the foundation of the world; and before there was a people God made this covenant of redemption with the Son. Can you fathom the greatness of the mercy that God had on you, knowing what would take place? There is not a sin or shortcoming that you have ever come through in life's journey that was not known to God from all eternity.

He knows how vile and depraved we are today. But the question is, do we believe by faith? The Apostle John tells us, ***"He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God."*** Do we believe this morning that God the Father from all eternity did embrace that grace in him, and send him forth at the appointed time? Can you conceive that all the salvation of the whole church of the living God, coming in the very small package, in the oneness of that infant babe that was born in Bethlehem of Judah, and wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in the manger. Can you conceive that there was a sufficiency for every child of promise, every heir of promise, every child of grace in every age, from the creation to the final consummation, he standing as a Lamb without blemish from the foundation of the world, and the reproaches of them that reproached us are fallen upon him? Brethren, if you can conceive that, then you have something that is far beyond the capacity of the mind. I have thought about it; and the more I think of it, the more it becomes a sea without bottom, without brim, without shore: The greatness and mercy of God, and what we call eternity; and to live through eternity in the bliss and splendor of the Son of God, clothed with the garments of righteousness that will never fade, never decay.

It is said by a prophet of old, ***"Let the foundation be strongly laid with three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber; and let the***

expense be given out of the king's house." Oh, brethren, here comes your expense again: that one that the reproaches fell upon. He is the expense of the king's house; and here is the foundation strongly laid: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And there is life in every one of those layers of stone. Let the foundation be strongly laid of three rows of great stones — and they are great stones brethren. It is the very foundation upon which the church of the living God is built. Every house must have a foundation, a good foundation, otherwise the building will soon fall and decay.

But I assure you, brethren, if we have faith to believe that Jesus is the Christ, then we are born of God; and he that is born of God doth not commit sin, because his seed remaineth in him, as the Apostle tells us. Who is it that is born of God? It is not this corrupt man here; it is not this earthly body of ours, but it is the Spirit of God born in you. That is the new birth to me: When he sheds abroad that quickening power that brings us to the knowledge of how vile, how sinful and how lost we are, and how depraved we are; and with that, always gives the knowledge that there is power that is able to save the most vile sinner. If he was willing to reach my case, that was always my thought, for mine is an outstanding case; if he was just willing to reach down that mercy to me. I believe he has brethren, because I have a precious hope that is superior to me to all the hopes of this congregation. I wouldn't give you mine this morning for all of yours, because it wouldn't do me any good. But this blessed hope is that all the reproaches not only of the whole church of the living God but this poor servant, was embraced in that same promise of covenant grace there, and redeemed by that blood. And I want to give you, in my way of seeing and understanding, the full assurance that none of you will ever enter heaven and immortal glory, only through the merits of that blood that streamed from the side of him that said ***"The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen on me."*** Just the merits of that blood, and the sacrifice of that body.

When he came into the world, he didn't come as the other high priests did, offering the blood of bulls and goats as sacrifices. He, being the High Priest himself, did not have to offer for sin for himself, if the other priests did: for all the Levitical priesthood had to offer sacrifices for themselves and not for the people only; and that had to be every year. But once in the end of the world, the Apostle tells us, He made one sacrifice: and by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, because the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen on me, and the zeal of thine house has eaten me up.

Brethren, what a wonderful God this is, that made a promise that can't fail. Abraham his servant received faith to believe that the promise of God could not fail when the Lord said, ***"Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest . . . and offer him for a burnt offering."*** He had faith to believe that though I go and slay him,

he is coming back. He testified to that when he said to his servants, ***"Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again unto you."*** He is coming back, though I go and slay him. Brethren, here is your resurrection from the dead. He is coming back with me! That is a glorious thought with me — the resurrection from the dead.

This life here is such a short span, its just a few days. The servant of old said, ***"A few days, and full of trouble."*** If we live to be four score years, we soon pass on just the same. There is no time limit with God, but we must all go the way of the earth. But the blessed thought is that there was a day coming when this one that all the reproaches were laid upon should come forth, for the Lord said,

"Thou shalt bruise his heel, but he shall bruise thy head." That is to me, brethren, when the reproaches, the one sin that has been multiplied that was committed in Eden, like a tree that comes forth from the seed — just one seed brings forth the tree, fell upon him. Here is a figure, that one sin back there has been multiplied, and all of us have been bitten by that same poison, and that same poison will cause all of us to wither. If you chop around a tree and break the sap and bark, you will soon see it wither, and it will soon die. So sin has been multiplied, and caused us to wither in body, to wither in mind and thought, and this old body will go back to the dust. But the thought is now, that He has borne the reproaches — they have fallen on him. He was bruised for our offences, buried for our iniquities, and arose for our justification.

What a blessed thought, that death couldn't hold him! Neither will it hold you. Because just so sure as Jesus came forth from the dead, just so sure there will be a resurrection day. Abraham saw that when he was assured that, I will slay him, but he will come back with me. I have thought of that many times: ***"While we go yonder and worship".*** What was he going to worship? He was going to take the life of his son, but that unfaltering faith and the all abounding love of God was so strong in him that he saw the resurrection there. And when he went to perform the very thing that God commanded him, there God placed a ram— which is a figure of this one that bore the reproaches. There the ram was slain, and Isaac went free. Again here is a pertinent figure of the church: Isaac went free: the lamb was slain.

Here is that blessed Son who knew no sin, who bore the reproaches of sin of all his people, the whole church of the living God. He was bound upon the cross. God delivered him there, and withdrew himself from him, that he might die and pay the ransom price. Your purchase price is the blood of Christ. Your passport, if you enter heaven and immortal glory, has been written in the Lamb's book of life with that blood; because the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.

"For the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen on me."

(The above is from a recording, and is somewhat condensed for publication Editors.)

Elder A.B. Ayers

"IS THERE NO BALM IN GILEAD?" JEREMIAH VIII. 22.

From infancy we have been in the habit of hearing this passage referred to as implying a full provision in the gospel to meet the necessities of the Lord's people, and the Gileaditish physician has been supposed to mean the Lord Jesus Christ. That there are healing virtues in the gospel for all the complaints of God's people, there can be no doubt, and that Christ is a great, good and infallible Physician, is equally certain, but that the passage refers to the gospel as the balm of Gilead, and to Christ, as the Physician there, is to our mind by no means so clear.

The striking language of our text is used in a connection which seems rather to forbid that application of it. By the mouth of the prophet the Lord charged Israel with gross idolatry, and threatened to visit upon them the severest judgments, to break them up and scatter them as a nation, and surely to consume them. Under these circumstances the prophet Jeremiah takes up a lamentation over them, saying, *"For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me."* And then he demands, *"Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?"* Balm was one of the productions of Gilead, and an article of commerce, from the time that Jacob sent balm to Egypt in exchange for corn; it possesses a medicinal property for soothing and healing diseases which are common to the children of men, and skillful physicians were in the habit of prescribing it successfully to their patients, for physical diseases. But those medicines which human science can understand, prepare and apply successfully in natural diseases, fail entirely to effect a cure for the depravity of the human heart, and are equally abortive in averting the judgments of God. The children of Israel, in their wicked departure from the Lord, like all Arminians, had relied on their own resources for comfort and deliverance from afflictions, I and now in the time of their calamity, the prophet demands of them the reason why the hurt of the daughter of his people is not healed? Why they have not applied their balm, or why their physician had failed? How natural it is for us, when left to our own wisdom, to conclude that we have within our reach some power by which to secure the favor of God, some balm to cure us of the leprosy of our depraved nature, some medical skill to direct us in the application of our medicines, to make them effectual. But when taught by the Spirit to feel that we are condemned already, and the wrath of God abides upon us, we soon lose all confidence in our own balm, and in the skill of all human physicians. Miserable comforters are they all, and they are all physicians of no value. Then the text, Jer. xlvi. 11, seems more applicable to us: *"Go up to Gilead and take balm, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt, in vain shalt thou use many medi-*

cines; for thou shalt not be cured." Thus are we taught to discard all our own plans, and schemes, balms and physicians, and being completely cut off from all our own reliances, to fall down before the Lord, exclaiming, ***"Lord, save, or I perish."*** There certainly is no balm short of the Savior's precious blood, nor any physician that can apply the healing medicine effectually to us, but Jesus Christ.

"There is but one Physician
That can cure a sinsick soul."
Middletown, N. Y., Nov. 1, 1855.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ's our Lord."
—ROMANS v. 21.

THIS is the mercy for mourning saints who are sighing and groaning under a body of sin and death, that God has decreed that grace not only *may* reign, but that it *must* reign. Were it left to us, we could no more rescue ourselves from the dominion of sin than the children of Israel could deliver themselves from the house of Egyptian bondage. But they sighed and groaned by reason of the bondage, and their cry came up unto God. He had respect unto his covenant, and looked upon them and delivered them (Exodus ii. 23-25).

So God has determined on behalf of his people that sin shall not be their eternal ruin; that it shall not plunge them into crime after crime, until it casts them at last into the gulf of endless woe, but that grace ***"shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life."*** But it must reign here as well as hereafter, for by its reign here its eternal triumph is secured. It must then subdue our proud hearts, and never cease to sway its peaceful sceptre over them until it has secured in them absolute and unconditional victory. Now this is what every sincere child of God most earnestly longs to feel and realize. He longs to embrace Jesus and be embraced by him in the arms of love and affection. As the hymn says,

"But now subdued by sovereign grace, My spirit longs for thy embrace."

He hates sin, though it daily, hourly, momently works in him, and is ever seeking to regain its former mastery; he abhors that cruel tyrant who set him to do his vilest drudgery, deceived and deluded him by a thousand lying promises, dragged him again and again into captivity, and but for sovereign grace would have sealed his eternal destruction. Subdued by the sceptre of mercy, he longs for the dominion of grace over every faculty of his soul and every member of his body. "O," he says, ***"let grace reign and rule in my breast; let it not suffer any sin to have dominion over me; let it tame every unruly desire, and bring into captivity every thought to the***

obedience of Christ "Thus, he who truly fears God looks to grace, and to grace only, not merely to save, but to sanctify; not only to pardon sin, but to subdue it; not only to secure him an inheritance among the saints in light, but to make him meet for it.

Elder J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

1 June 1999

Elder Kenneth Key, Editor
Signs of the Times
721 Willard Street
Greensboro N C 27405

Dear Elder Key,

Request the following information concerning the next meeting of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association be published in the Signs of the Times.

The Lord willing, the One Hundred Sixty Ninth session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will be held with North Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Beaufort County, N. C. On October 9-10, 1999. All who believe and love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited.

The Church is located off Highway NC99 between Bath and Belhaven, North Carolina.

Elder Key, we look forward to having you with us during the Association.

OLD PINE CREEK CHURCH

An annual all day meeting will be held, the Lord willing, at Old Pine Creek Church on the 5th of July 1999. The church is located off highway #221, five miles North of Floyd, Va. Those coming from Floyd turn left on to road #682. Those coming from Roanoke, turn right on to road #682. All lovers of the truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Hale Terry

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The next session of The Pigg River Association will be held with Chestnut Church on the first Sunday in August and Friday & Saturday before.

Those going north on Highway 220 turn onto 724 and follow approximately 5 miles to church. Those going south on 220 turn left on 619 to 724 and go approximately 1 mile to church.

All lovers of the truth are invited and all ministers of our faith and order are especially invited.

Elder Lane Carter, Mod.
Brother Jamie Cooper, Clerk

PSALM 128:1.

Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in his ways.

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1999 Staunton River Association will convene, the Lord willing, at Weatherford Church meeting house. The host church is Union Church for this our one hundred & fifty-eighth session. Services will begin at 10:00 A.M. on Saturday, July 10th & Sunday, July 11th.

Weatherford Church is located about 5 miles from Gretna, Va. in Pittsylvania County at the intersection of highways 760 & 763.

We invite visitors and correspondents to attend this meeting with us.

Burnell B. Williams, Assoc. Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 1999

James B. Pugh, AL	$7.00
Ms. Jamie Eanning, AL	2.00
Joe L. Hamrick, Jr., TX	4.00
L.D. Conner, VA	7.00
Silas Payne, VA	2.00
Marian Meeks, NC	2.00
C.L. Fowler, TX	7.00
Mrs. Cliff Weaver, WA	5.00
Mrs. Mildred Hanks, VA	7.00
Mrs. Albret Spencer, Va	2.00
Mrs. Mary Adkins, NY	5.00
Mrs. Judy Poindexter, VA	5.00
Mrs. Louise Stanley, NC	2.00
Hoyt M. Sparks, NC	2.00
Miss Reidy Pickral, VA	25.00
Donald Ferguson, CAN.	12.00
Mrs. Dorothy Cassell, VA	2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER VERGIE CONNER

It is with sweet sorrow that I write the obituary of my dear aunt and sister in Christ, Vergie Gladys Conner. She was born on June 20, 1912 and passed away March 17, 1999. Services were held on Friday at 2:00 P.M., March 19, 1999 at Salem Church with her pastor, Elder Hale Terry officiating, with interment in the Salem Cemetery.

She was a member of Salem Church for 32 years. She was preceded in death by her husband, John Willard. The Good Lord blessed her with three children, Juanita Pugh, Wesley and Jack Conner. She is also survived by six grandchildren.

Sister Vergie believed and loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. She was faithful in attending her church and she enjoyed going to church every weekend. She rode to church with Julian and I until she went into the nursing home.

May our blessed Lord be given all the praise, honor, and gloty for giving us this dear, precious one. Written at the request of Salem Church.

Eveleen Ruttough

PSALM 141:8.

But mine eyes are unto thee, O God the Lord: in thee is my trust; leave not my soul destitute.

MYRTLE THAGARD DANIEL

Myrtle Thagard Daniel died in her sleep November 21, 1998 in Winter Haven, Florida. She was born in Crenshaw County Alabama September 10, 1908, to the parents of John Frank and Serrilla Thagard. She attended the Primitive Bapitst Church as a child and continued to grow strong in her faith and love for the church through all of her 90 years.

At the age of 17, Myrtle married Clifford S. Daniel. They were married for 56 years and together raised five daughters. Two of the daughters preceded her in death.

In 1940 tne couple moved from Alabama to Eagle Lake, Florida and later to Winter Haven, Florida where they lived until her husband's death in 1981. Myrtle continued to live there until about three years ago, when she moved to the west coast of Florida to live with a daughter.

For many years she was a member of the Shady Grove Primitive Baptist Church in Winter Haven Florida. Her pastor was Elder J.Y. McCormick who is also her nephew. Since she helped raise him, she always thought of him first as her pastor and then as her son. On the Saturday Myrtle died her daughter had driven her to Winter Haven so she could attend her church Sunday. She lay down for her afternoon nap and did not wake. Her daughter attended church for her the next morning. Myrtle's greatest joy was the fellowship and preaching she experienced at the Primitive Baptist Churches.

MEMORIAL FOR: BROTHER SILAS M. GAMMON

On February 22, 1999, at the age of 83, our dear brother in Christ, Silas M. Gammon passed away at Brian Nursing Center in Eden, North Carolina. It is with great sadness that I attempt to write this obituary of another one of our Dan River members. In recent months there has been a lot of sickness in our church family, and a number of our dear members and friends have gone to be with their Lord and Saviour.

Brother Gammon was a kind and gentle person and loved his church and church family dearly. He attended church meetings whenever he could. For sometime, due to his physical condition, he had to depend on others for transportation, and for the past several years his brother and sister-in-law, Drewey and Frances Gammon, often transported him to church for the Sunday Services.

Brother Gammon was born on August 31, 1915 in Rockingham County, N. C. He was one of ten children born to John M. Gammon and Dolly Cox Gammon. He was the oldest boy in the family and spent his early life on the family farm in the Happy Home Community. Brother Gammon liked to fish and was one who enjoyed the out-of-doors.

He was married to Hazel Huff Gammon for fifty-two years. She died in 1994. Also, there was a stepson, Teddy Jones who is now deceased.

After Brother Gammon left the farm, he went to work for the Eden Police

Department and retired there after approximately 25 years of service.

Brother Gammon joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, July 31, 1977 and as long as he was physically able attended regularly. He had great compassion and love for his brothers and sisters in Christ, and was a strong believer in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace.

Funeral services were at Fair Funeral Home Chapel in Eden, N. C. February 24, 1999, by his nephew, Rev. John Warriner. He was laid to rest in the Gammon family cemetery near his childhood home, N. C. Highway 700 in the Happy Home Community to await the second coming of our Lord.

Survivors are his brother and sister-in-law, Drewey and Frances Gammon of Ruffin; sister-in-law, Mae Hugh Gammon also of Ruffin; and several nieces and nephews.

May God bless this bereaved family and comfort and reconcile them as only He can do.

Written by request of Dan River Church.

John Collie
May, 1999

WILLIAM KENNETH SLACK

William Kenneth Slack, 56, of Morehead,KY was born in Charlestons (Kanawha Co.) WV at McMillan Hospital, July, 12,1942. He departed this life May, 5, 1999, making his stay on earth 56 years, 9 months, 23 days. He was the son of the late Howard Kenneth Slack and Ruby Evelyn Turley Slack. As a young man he was brought to believe the doctrine of salvation by the sovereign grace of God and to believe that the promise is sure to all the seed,and to trust in the God who hath declared the end from the beginning, and that worketh all things after the council of His own will. On Easter Sunday, 1962, he was baptised by the hands of Elder Allan C.Smith in the Elk River at Mink Shoals, Kanawha Co.,WV, assisted by Elder G.W.Justice. Since 1966 he has been a member of the Little Perry Church of Jesus Christ of Regular Primitive Baptist,Rowan Co.,KY. He is survived by one brother Robert Wayne Slack,his wife Molly,and their three sons Robert Wayne Slack II,Christopher Robin Slack and Nathan Howard Slack, all of Charleston,WV. Also surviving are two aunts and one uncle, Elsie Mae Leadman Slack of South Charleston, WV and Doris Jean Slack Farren and James Farren of Bridgewater,VA,and three special friends Wayne Sturgill, Pauline Sturgill and Ralph Sturgill,as well as a host of friends to mourn his passing. The funeral will be conducted May 8, 1999 at the Northcutt and Son Home for Funerals at Morehead, KY by Elder Deward Hall, Elder Arlie Reynolds and Elder Dorris Littleton. Graveside services will be conducted at the Teays Hill Cemetery in St. Albans,WV by Elder Ronald Crouch and Elder Harold Johnson.

Signs of the Times

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1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

WHEN storm and tempest loudly howl,
And clouds obscure the sky;
When lightnings flash and thunders roll,
Be not afraid — 'tis I.

If doubts about a future state
Extort the serious cry,
" What shall I do? my sins how great! "
Be not afraid — 'tis I.

While Satan aims a fiery dart,
Temptations make thee sigh;
Believe in me; I'll keep thy heart;
Be nor afraid — 'tis I.

Should health and wealth, and friends
And death itself draw nigh; [forsake,
Tho' heart should break, and nature shake,
Be not afraid — 'tis I.

'Tis I who lived — 'tis I who died,
That thou might'st reign on high;
Behold my hands, my feet, my side,
And be convinced 'tis I.

Parkinson's Col.

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EDITORIAL

THE SOUL OF MAN.

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. (Gen Chap 2, vs 7)

In response to a request, by a Sister in the faith, to write something on just what constitutes the soul of man. I began to think on the subject and it grew into the following. I pray that what is written is in keeping with the word of God, any errors are on the part of the writer, and we ask that you just consider the source but deal with them in a kind and brotherly fashion, and pray for me.

There has been much written and many discussions on just what is the soul of the man, which was created in the image of God, and what part does it play in the salvation of man. God is a triune God consisting of the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost and these three are one, according to the scriptures, and man being in his image is also a triune being. The trinity of man is the body, soul and spirit and these three are one being. The body was formed of the dust of the ground, but with no life, and when God breathed into its nostrils the breath of life, it is recorded that man became a living soul. The breath of life gave life to both the soul and the body, and they became a living, breathing human being; as the clay was lifeless, so was the soul before given life. According to the scriptures, the soul is a separate and distinct part of the man; not another term for the spirit, as some believe, and certainly not to be confused with the body in which it dwells. It is that part of man that identifies what he is as an individual human being, not physical or spiritual, but psychologically, emotionally and mentally.

In the natural man, there is his fleshly body, the soul and the natural spirit which all men possess; in the new creature, as he will dwell with God in heaven, there will be the glorified body, the soul and the Holy Spirit; the only

common characteristic of the two beings is the soul. The soul exists in both the natural man and the new creature and experiences the lives of both as the same entity.The soul is that part of the creature that will never cease to exist, either in this world or in the world to come; in this life, as it is born into the world, it dwells in this natural body of flesh under the influence of the natural spirit and knows only the things of nature and the joys and pleasures of this world; it is unaware of the kingdom of God, is at home in this world and unless it is, born again, by its motivating force being changed, it will live and die in that condition, never having known the presence of God nor the influence of the Holy Spirit.

The soul is that part of man which has the tendency, ability, desire and motivation to be a farmer, doctor, lawyer, scientist or any of the other occupations in which man may participate in this life, due to special talents or ambitions that it may have; these facts are not changed or influenced by the body that it occupies or the spirit by which it is influenced, a man does not change his work or hobbies when he is quickened unless those pursuits are dishonest, unethical or immoral. The soul is that which the man is in his innermost self: he may be an extrovert or a shy timid individual, generous or very frugal in his dealings with his fellow man, a republican or a democrat, male or female, and none of these things are determined or motivated by the body or the spirit with which it shares its being. The characteristics which the soul possesses are the things that makes man what he is, his personal likes and dislikes as an individual, and these things are not changed because of the natural or spiritual condition of the individual before God, either before of after regeneration, with the above exceptions. His values regarding good and evil, integrity and morality are influenced by the spirit motivating him at any given time but his personal chemistry and talents are not affected by either the body or the spirit. In other words the soul of man is his character; that personal charisma that makes him an individual, that part which makes him different as compared to every other man that is on the face of the earth. It is the part of the individual which causes his fellow man to love or to hate him, feel fellowship for him or to be estranged from him.

The apostle Paul writes, (1 Thes Chap 5, vs 23) *"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."* The soul is that part of the man which was animated or activated when God breathed into the body, that he had created, the breath of life. It is separate and distinct from the body, in which it dwells, and from the spirit which activates or animates it. The apostle Paul regarded the soul as a separate and distinct part of man in the above scripture quoted and in, (Heb Chap 4, vs 12) *"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and*

sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and the waves and signals which causes the body to function; the wisdom in man that differentiates him from the beasts of the earth, and enables him to execute judgment in living this natural life here on earth, and which enables him to adjust to his environment." It is that part of the man to whom God addressed his statement to go forth and replenish the earth and have dominion over it, because it was that part of man that could fulfil this command, for it includes the intellect. The soul is that unique part of man that makes him an individual, that part which makes him different as compared to every other man that is on the face of the earth. It is the part of the individual which causes his fellow man to love or to hate him, feel fellowship for him or to be estranged from him.

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An example of the position of the soul in relation to the body and spirit, as I understand it, is as the apostle Paul relates in, (1 Cor Chap 13,vs 13) ***"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity."*** I have always been of the opinion that charity was the greatest of these three because it was the common characteristic of both the natural man and the spiritual man, charity, or love, is experienced by man in this life and continues to be experienced, in a far greater measure, in the kingdom of heaven. Faith and hope are characteristics of man in this world that he loses when he dies, because having received the substance of the faith and hope that he he has had throughout this life, he has no further need for them, for he has received the reality of them in their fullness. Paul said, ***"For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for it."*** It is that which keeps the man pressing on to the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, and therefore when the

prize is realized, when the race is run, the faith and hope in their accomplishment ceases to exist in the individual.

In like manner, the soul is that part of the man which experiences a natural life here in this time world, and will also enjoy the blessings of the redeemed in that world that is to come. For man's soul to praise God for what he has done for him, he must of necessity, be aware of what that is, and therefore there must be a common characteristic that exists in both the natural man and the spiritual man for this praise and honor to be realized and expressed, in this life and in the life to come, and this common characteristic is that part of man which is called the soul. The soul, dwelling in the natural body, in this life experiences the natural life with all of the sin and lusts of the natural creature; then, in the children of God, it experiences the quickening of the Holy Spirit, whch makes it aware of the depravity of man in this fleshly body, and because of this, it worships and praises God for this deliverance. As the one leper (of the ten who were cleansed) returned to Jesus and praised Him for the cleansing from leprousy, because he knew from whence the healing came; the soul of man realizes from whence its deliverance comes and renders praise and honor unto God.

The natural man, in addition to the soul, possesses the natural body which was created by God; a natural spirit which was breathed into him in the garden of Eden and which serves him in this life, but as faith and hope in the above analogy, the body and the natural spirit serve their purpose here in this time world, but have no part in the spiritual kingdom of God. Unless a change is wrought in the individual, from the state in which they were after the fall, they will live out their life never knowing anything about God and godliness; they will die as they were, creatures of the flesh only, and knowing only the natural kingdom which is their natural domain and having experienced the influence of the natural spirit only. This is where they were sentenced because of partaking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; and they will never be aware of the spiritual world that surrounds them, in this condition.

The soul of man continues as it was; it indeed dies and is buried, but it is that which comes forth from the grave in the resurrection to be reunited with the Holy Spirit (having been separated from it, when it went back to God at the death of the body) and ascends into the realms of glory to ever be with the Father, praising him world without end. This natural body is of the earth, and will return to the earth when the breath of life is withdrawn, it has no part in the kingdom of God, it serves its purpose here in time. Man in nature, will give his all for the perseverance of the body in this life; society will go to any extreme to preserve the body and the breath of life and prevent a man from dying, but when the time appointed of the Father arrives, the race ends and the body and breath of the individual ceases to function as a human being and, man

as he is in nature, including the body and soul, is consigned to the grave. There the soul awaits the second coming of Christ; when it shall come forth in the uncorruptible, glorified, spiritual body, and be caught up together in the clouds to meet those who were alive and remain; and who at the time are changed to the same image, and rise up together to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall they ever be with the Lord. The souls will be the same entity they have ever been, and will ever be, praising God for their deliverance from this low ground of sin and sorrow and into the glorious light and liberty of that new Jerusalem. There they will appear as a bride adorned for her husband and will dwell forever in that place that Jesus said that he would go and prepare for them.

Some believe that the same identical body that lives here in time will inhabit heaven, others believe that there is no resurrection of the body, but, what does the scriptures say? (1 Cor Chap 15,vs 35-36-37) *"But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened , except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body."* Again (1Cor Chap 15,vs 44) *"It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body , and there is a spiritual body."* (1 Cor Chap 15,vs 49) *"As we have born the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."* There is a resurrection of the body of the individual, but it is not the same identical body that dwelled here in this time world.

If this same fleshly body that man inhabits here on earth enters heaven, then what is the meaning of the scripture above that says flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Why is it that that which is dead; which were buried corruptible, must be raised differently (incorruptible) and why must those that are alive and remain, at the time, be changed? Changed from what to what? If they are changed, they are not the same as they were before, and the above scripture, speaking on the subject of the resurrection, says that they shall be changed. They canot be changed and remain the same. As Paul said of the election, it is by grace, and not by works, or else grace is no more grace; in like manner if its changed, its not the same or else there is no change. The above scripture says that the dead

shall be raised incorruptible (changed) and we that are alive and remain (in the flesh at His second coming) shall be changed. (Phil Chap 3. vs 20-21) *"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorified body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."* What and how that change is we know not, but it will be likened unto the glorified image of Jesus, *"as Jesus prayed to his Father in, (John Chap17, vs 5)" "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."*

(1 Cor chap 6,vs 19-20) *"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."* These scriptures are used to advance the idea that this natural body is the one that will inhabit heaven and immortal glory, but this is speaking of the body that you have here in this time world and certainly the scriptures support the truth that the Holy Ghost inhabits this body in the new birth, but this does not prove necessarily that this natural body is the one that will dwell in the climes of glory. Scriptures quoted above prove that there is a natural body and there is a spiritual body and surely the natural body is the one we dwell in here on earth and the spiritual body will be the one we will inhabit in heaven, if we are indeed the children of God. As an individual I have many garments, of which when we refer to them, we say my garments and others refer to them as your garments. We have garments that we wear in the summer and others that we wear in the winter, but we say at any given time, my garment, because they are being worn at the present time, but different garments are worn at different times and seasons of our life. They were made for a different environment, summer, winter etc. but they were created for me; in nature they may not have been originally knowingly tailored for me personally, but in the plan of God, they were made for me and no one else. In like manner God's children have a natural body for living in this low ground of sin and sorrow, and a glorified heavenly body created for them for heavenly dwelling, in the presence of God. They will indeed be our bodies, but not the same physical body in which we dwell here on earth we, if we be his, will be in a different season, or realm, and the style of the day will be likened unto the glorified image of the Savior.

When man in nature is quickened by indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the soul of man experiences the change of being under the influence of both the natural spirit and the Holy Spirit; and this sets up that Dilemma that Jesus said all of his sheep must bear: the cross that they must experience by being his disciple. The soul which had been totally under the law of sin

and death and the influence of the natural spirit, is, with the quickening of the Holy Spirit, made aware of the spiritual realm; it is given a hope that it can, in spite of the depraved condition which it now realizes itself to have been in, under the law, be made righteous by the one and only sacrifice which God prepared for the sins of the flesh and condemning sin in the flesh. The body and soul under the influence of the natural spirit still serves the law of sin and death, but the soul, also being under the influence of the indwelling Spirit of God and with the revelation that it now has of spiritual matters, desires to serve the law of God after the inward man. It was the soul of Paul that was crying out,"***O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?***", it recognized the duality of its personality and desired to be free from the conflict that it now has, for the good that it would, it does not: but the evil which it would not, that it does.

Does not this remind you of your experience in this life after the quickening? the new creature delights in the law of God, but how to perform that which is good you find not, because you are also still influenced by the natural spirit with which you must continue to contend. You realize that there is new law in your members and it is warring against the law of sin and death which is also in your members; you desire to do that which is good, but evil is always present with you and you experience the wretchedness that was causing the apostle Paul to mourn his undone condition. He was, however blessed to conclude his statement regarding his distress in the comfort of the fact that, (Rom Chap 7, vs 25) "***I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with my mind I serve the Law of God: but with the flesh the law of sin.***" and also in the scripture that is recorded, (1 John Chap 4,vs 4) "***Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.***" This is referring to the spirit of the anti-christ which is the spirit of this world, with which Paul was struggling, and his faith was that the inner man, which was spiritual, would certainly overcome the man of flesh, because God was the sustaining force behind it.

(Psa 34,vs22) "***The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.***"The soul of man, being the, the essence of his innermost being, is that which is redeemed from this world of sin and sorrow. The body which was made of the dust of the earth, and which would return unto the ground, at death, is not that which is pleasing unto God; for he cursed the ground for man's sake, because of his partaking of the fruit of the tree of good and evil. God told Adam, for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return; this was to the natural man who had sinned and come under condemnation. Cain and Abel represent, as do Jacob and Esau, the elect and the non-elect, that the purpose of God according to election might stand. God did not receive

the offering from Cain because his offering was of the fruit of the ground, which God had cursed. God would not accept an offering from him, because Cain's substance was of the realm of his father the devil and therefore he could only offer that which was an abomination to God; his heritage was desolation, separation from the kingdom of God and his soul will be cast into the lake of fire with the devil and all of his angels. Esau found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears, because before the children were born it was told Rebecca, (the elder shall serve the younger),Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth. Abel's offering was of the firstling of his flock and the fat thereof, which was God's creation, and his offering was pleasing unto God and his heritage was in that world that is yet to come, and his soul shall dwell among the redeemed of God throughout the endless ages. The difference between the two manner of people that were separated from Rebecca's and Eves's womb was not based on seniority or superiority of either individual, because the determination was made before they were even born, but rather was because of the election of God. As is recorded in the book of Deuteronomy concering the children of Israel, (Deut Chap 7,vs 6) "***For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.***" and Jacob was declared to be the lot of his inheritance.

(Psa 49 vs, 15) "***But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave; for he shall receive me.***" This Psalmnist was writing concerning those who trusted in their wealth to redeem themselves, those who he says like sheep are laid in the grave; and death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling. They have their portion in this life, and the writer is declaring that though the grave will have dominion over the souls of all men in death; God will redeem his soul, and the souls of all of the elect from the power of the grave. The souls of all men are retrieved from the power of the grave, some to eternal glory and some to everlasting damnation. (Psa 33, vs 18-19) "***Behold the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, and upon them that hope in his mercy; To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive.***" Again the hope of the writer is in, what will be done for his soul, and that is, that it will be delivered from death which, is the power of the grave. (Psa 49 vs 15 "***But God will redeem my soul from the grave: for he will receive me.***"

Is not this the cry of all, Oh! Lord have mercy on my soul, we do not say have mercy on my body, or have mercy on my spirit, but Oh! God have mercy on my soul. This is because that the soul is what is indeed me, and psychologically speaking: "***the soul***

is what we pray that God will have mercy on and that it will dwell in that city which he hath prepared for them that love him, them that love him in deed and in truth, with all their heart, soul and mind." David's prayer was for the welfare of his soul, (Psa 35, vs 3-4) "***Draw out also the spear, and stop the way against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I am thy salvation. Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt."*** also (vs 9) "***And my soul shall be joyful in the Lord: it shall rejoice in his salvation."***

(Matt. Chap 16, vs 26) "***For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"*** These are the words of Jesus: he has just said whosoever shall save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it; then he says that if a man gain the whole world and lose his own soul he has truly lost everything that is of any value. The lost soul is that soul which is condemned to the lake of fire and brimstone with the devil and all of his angels in everlasting torment. To the question, what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Jesus told the young ruler to sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasures in heaven: and come, take up the cross and follow me. In this analogy the soul shall lose its life of pleasures and joy in the things of this world, but save his life or portion in that world to come, and will dwell in the courts of glory with God and all of his holy angels in perfect peace and everlasting joy. This is of more value than all of the earthly treasures that man may possess, as Jesus said, even if you possessed all of the treasures of the whole world. The earthly treasures would be possessed for a few years, at most, but the joys of the heavenly home are eternal.

(Heb Chap 6,vs 19) "***Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail: whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus made an high priest, forever after the order of Melchisedec."*** The apostle Paul is here declaring the immutability of God's counsel in that it is impossible for God to lie and that we might thereby have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us and which is an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast. The anchor on a ship was a strong chain attached to a large rock or other heavy object which when released into the water would serve to secure the ship that it not go astray. Jesus is the anchor of the soul so that it will never lose its position and go astray after the god's of this world, and be lost eternally, because that indistructible link between it and the portals of glory will never fail. The anchors in nature may fail, but this anchor is as sure and steadfast as God is; the rock is the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who declared that he had finished the work

that the Father gave him to do and his work was to be this anchor for the soul and assure its position in the fold.

(Rev Chap 6,vs 9) *"And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"* The soul inhabits the earth in this time world, according to the scriptures, and here it is revealed to John that the soul inhabits heaven also. There is never any indication that there is any change in the soul from the natural to the spiritual kingdom; it is quickened under the influence of the Holy Spirit, but it is not changed from one state or condition to another. It may be animated or activated by a different spirit but it is still the same entity, but functioning under control of a different spirit. Whether under the influence of the natural spirit or the Holy Spirit, the soul still exists, in the natural realm and the heavenly kingdom, as the same entity: and ever realizing the glorious wonder and mystery of their deliverance. This realization enables them to sing as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, those who had experienced the deliverance. Even as Moses and the children of Israel, who could not sing the song of deliverance until they were safely in the promised land. The souls which were redeemed from the earth, by the precious blood of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ shall sing this song, throughout the endless ages, around the throne of God for this glorious deliverance from this world of sin and sorrow.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

HEBREWS 4:12-16.

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

VOICES OF THE PAST

PRIDE HUMBLED

The following is republished by request and is told, as part of the unwritten or traditional history of Elder John Leland.

During the latter part of his life, Mr. Leland traveled much over the country on preaching tours on route. On one occasion he had been warmly solicited, in writing, by a widow lady, to visit the part of old Virginia in which she lived and preach, telling him to set his time and her house was at his service, both as a place of abode and also a place to hold his meetings. Mr. Leland replied by setting a day that he would preach at her residence, at 10 o'clock am. The lady was a wealthy planter, in Appamattox valley. She regarded herself one of the most pious and exemplary persons to be found anywhere.

She had been raised in the high circles of life, and knew nothing about poverty, nor had ever associated with laboring classes. She was at this time about thirty-five years of age, and had been a widow two years, but knew nothing of the privations commonly attending the life of a widowed mother. She took much pains to appear pious, and her chief object in inviting Mr. Leland to preach at her house was, that she might make a displaly of wealth, and thus have the applause of her associates; not only to show her wealth but her piety as well; so she went to a great trouble and expense in preparing for the meeting. The appointment had been spread far and near, pressing solicitations had been sent to numerous friends to attend the meeting; no expense or pains had been spared, not only to have the best and the finest of everything, but to have everything in the best style.

On the evening preceding the meeting several carriages had already arrived, to be in good time and enjoy the hospitality of the hostess. About sunset Mr. Leland came up to the mansion on foot. The day was quite warm and dusty when he made his appearance. The walk had caused a free prespiration, which ran down his cheeks, making roads in the dust which had settled on his face during his day's walk. He walked up to the door of the large stone mansion, and his rap was answered by a black servant, of whom he inquired for the landlady; the servant ran down the broad carpeted hall to a door, from which preceeded the talking and laughing. In a very short time a lady, very richly attired, made her appearance, walking briskly and lightly toward the door, where Mr. Leland was standing. He had a fair view of her person, and at once saw in her physiognomy and deportment something of her leading traits of character.

His intention had been to introduce himself, but before he had time to speak, or before she was near enough for him to address her, she spoke in rather a harsh tone; " Old man what do you want here? I have nothing for beggars."

Mr. Leland, in a very soft and unassuming tone, said, "Please excuse me, madam; I do not wish to beg for money, but I am very tired from a long walk, and called to know if you would do me the kindness to allow me to stay under your roof during the night."

Viewing him hastily from head to foot, she very positively answered: "No! I have company now, and tomorrow the Rev. Mr. Leland is to preach at my house; so I can't take in poor stragglers."

"Well," said Mr. Leland, "I am too much fatigued to travel further tonight, will you allow me to stay in one of those cabins?" pointing to a row of negro houses just outside the mansion yard.

After a moment or two of reflection she said, "Yes, you may stay there with the negroes if you want to."

He bowed a very polite thank you, and turned toward the row of huts. He proceeded to the fartherest one from the mansion before he found any one to whom he could speak, to ask permission to stay, but came at last to the smallest but neatest of all the huts, there he found seated at the door an old negress, who was fanning herself with the wing of a fowl.

He spoke to her very gently:

"Good evening, aunty."

His greeting was answered with "Good evin, mosta."

"Well, aunty," he said, "I have come to ask a very uncommon favor of you.

"Bless de Lord, mosta, what can that be, fo' please God I'se got nuffin to give you?"

" I am very tired from walking all day. I called at the house of your mistress, but she says she has no room for me in the great house. I am too much fatigued to go furher, and so have come to see if you can allow me to shelter in your house."

Bless de Lord, mosta, I got no 'commodation for any one; but 'fore a fello' mortal shall stay out doo's, I lets 'em stay in my cabin sho,' ef da can put up wid my plain hut. Uncle Ben be in dreckly, den he can keep you company while I fixes you sumpen to eat, for you looks as tho you had not a morsal for a long time, and at the same time, pointing to a three legged stool by the door, saying, "Set down dar and rest yourself, for you looks so worn out."

Mr. Leland took the seat as directed. saying, at the same time, "I am sorry that I am compelled to put you to so much trouble, as I have no money to pay you. "

" Please God, mosta, Aunt Dilsey never charges any one yit for sich commodations as I could give'em for God knos its poor enuff at best. You say, mosta, you call on missus at de ouse dar, and she can't take you in. Well, you must 'cuse her, for she's looking for a mighty heap o' company tomorrow; dar's a great man to be dar tomorrow, what's gwine to preach in her house, an' a good many folks done come a'ready an' heap mo' comin', tomorrow, so missus is mighty busy fixin' for 'em. But here's Uncle Ben," she continued, as an old greyheaded negro came around the corner of the cabin, muttering to himself

about the carelessness of some of the other negroes.

This old couple, Uncle Ben and Aunt Dilsey, as they were familiarly called by all who knew them, both black and white, were an old couple who, from age, had for a long time lived in a small, but snug cabin at the far end of the row of huts occupied by younger and more active slaves. Although Uncle Ben was not required to do any labor, yet he voluntarily took a kind of supervision over the farm, stock, etc. When he saw Mr. Leland he stopped and gave him a scrutinizing look when Aunt Dilsey spoke, saying "Uncle Ben, don't stare your eyes out at a stranger; dis old gentleman was out travelin', and come to stay in our cabin, kase missus can' t let him stay dar, as she's got a heap of company now."

"Well" said Uncle Ben, "We's commanded dat if a stranger comes along we's got to take him in an' give him sech as we have to set before him."

While Aunt Dilsey was preparing supper, Mr. Leland learned much about the lady of the mansion from Uncle Ben; he learned, with other things, they were a very religious family, but the hostess had been raised in the city of Richmond and had imbibed all the fashionable ideas of religion with but very little of its true principles, and none of its humility. Soon after Mr. Leland had finished a very good coarse supper, he told his host that he was very much fatigued from a long day's walk, and would wish to retire for the night and that he felt like he wished to return thanks to his Creator for the blessings of the day, and invoke his protection through the night; that if it would annoy them, he would retire to some place out of doors.

"Bless God!" said both old folks at the same time, "we allers like prayin' in our house, and nebber goes to bed 'thout one o us tries to pray."

Mr. Leland then took an old worn Bible out of his bundle, and read in a very solemn tone the one hundred and second Psalm. During the reading the two old blacks often said in a low voice, "Amen, bless de Lord." When the Psalm was ended Mr. Leland fell upon his knees, and poured out his feelings in such an outburst of revential eloquence as was seldom ever equaled, and never surpassed by mortal lips. His host and hostess were so affected by his reading and prayer that they could do nor say any more than to fix their eyes on their guest, as though they felt that he was something more than mortal man. He retired to a clean pallet in one corner of the cabin, where he soon fell asleep.

When morning came he was up early; Aunt Dilsey soon haf him a good, plain repast, after which he seated himself to read, telling his hostess that he felt too much fatigued to travel, and if she was willing, he would rest there until afternoon any way; and then, if he felt better, he would go on his way.

Aunt Dilsey said, mosta, stay jest as long as you want to; we be glad to have you stay with us a fortnight, if you can put up with our far."

Mr. Leland seated himself under a shady tree in the cabin yard, with Bible, waiting to see what the finality would be.

About nine o'clock everything was in a bustle at the stone mansion; all the servants were called in to dress in their very best. Carriages began to arrive by the dozen, until the hall and every part of the large and elegant building was crowded to overflowing, but to their dismay no preacher made his appearance, for the last carriage that came in sight had been scanned to get a glimpse of the minister. No one in the large congregation had ever seen him but all had heard of him. So every one was full of anxious expectation, supposing that when he come he would be drawn by two or four horses, driven by a servant in livery.

Ten o'clock passed, half-past ten, eleven o'clock was announced by the clock on the wall, and no minister.

The company by this time had become restless, and were about to disperse, when Aunt Dilsey went to her mistress and said: "Bless de Lord, missus, why don't you git dat ole man who stayed in our cabin last night to come here to de door and pray, 'fore de folks all go home; he prayed in our cabin last night and dis morning, 'a 'fore God, in all my born days I nebber heard sich prayin' afore. He's settin, dar now, under de tall pine tree; ain' as de preacher' s not come, if you'll let him pray, I'll go right now and fetch him down."

The lady consulted with some of the company, the matter was talked of among the congregation, when it was agreed to have the straggler, as they called him, to come and pray before the congregation broke up. Aunt Dilsey went where Mr. Leland was sitting and said, "Mosta, de folks all dispinted bout de preacher coming': he am not cum and da wants you to go down and pray for 'em, 'fore da all breaks up. Mosta, I wants you to pray jis like you did las' night."

Mr. Leland walked down to the front door and, standing on the steps, repeated a hymn from memory, sang, and then he engaged in prayer, and by the time his prayer was ended, all eyes were fixed upon him with amazement. He then remarked that as there seemed to be a disappointment, that if it would not be assuming too much, he would talk to them a few minutes; and as a foundation, or starting point he would read a short passage from the word of truth, which they would find by reference to the thirteenth chapter and second verse of Hebrews: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have enertained angels unawares." When he had spoken for twenty or thirty minutes, the hostess, who had refused him the hospitalities of her house the evening before, became so deeply affected that she ran and prostrated herself at the feet of Mr. Leland and would, had he allowed her to have done so, have washed his feet with her tears.

It was said that she was so overcome and affected from that time forward, she was a changed woman, so much so that she threw off all her jewelry and ornamental dressing, and became an humble and plain Christian. Though she was a professor before, her whole deportment underwent a complete change. Her house became a place of divine worship, where

she delighted in making all, no matter how plain or how poor, as happy as kind attention could make them, in fact it was said that, if preference had to be given to any, it was always in favor of the poor and needy.

NO GOOD THING IN THE FLESH

The esperience of a child of God is a wonderful mystery. To himself it appears full of contradictions, and therefore the expression of that experience appears as foolishness to the natural mind, and so do the Scriptures which teach that peculiar experience of the Lord's "peculiar people."

The first thing experienced by one who is taught of the Lord is that he is vile, and that he can do nothing good in the sight of God. He will strive and strive again to attain unto some goodness, and may be a long time in learning the truth that he can do no good thing; but the result of all his efforts will be that all his goodness, like the flower of the field, withers away. He may not for a long time know that it is because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon him that the flower of his goodness withers, but it is true. The blowing of this heavenly wind has made him feel the goodness of the flesh withering like the grass, but it also proves him to have been born of the Spirit. (Isa. xl. 6-8; 1 Peter i. 24, 25; John iii. 8.) When the blessed Interpreter comes to this poor soul as he thus draws near to the grave, in his sorrow and desolation, and his life to the destroyers, and shows unto him his uprightness, shows to him that Jesus is his righteousness and salvation, then he rejoices like a child, in the surprising favor of God, who has found for him a ransom, and has delivered him from going down into the pit. (Job xxxiii. 14-30.) In this joyous season of spiritual childhood there is little or no knowledge of doctrine. He is apt to regard himself as so changed by the wonderful grace that has brought this salvation to him that he is beyond sin and out of the reach of temptation. That was my feeling the day I was baptized, and for some time after. It seemed to me that I should not be troubled by sin any more. But the truth that my flesh was still corrupt came with terrible power. When the Lord's time comes to teach his people knowledge and make them to understand doctrine, he weans them from the millc, and draws them away from the breasts, where they were having the sweet joy and comfort that belongs to the babe (Isa. xxxviii. 9), and takes them into the wilderness, the wilderness of our old nature. There they learn that although this wilderness has "blossomed like the rose," and this desert has rejoiced for them, while the sunlight of God's love and joy filled their hearts, and faith and hope prevailed, yet it is a wilderness and a desert still, "where beasts of midnight howl" when the sun goeth down.

When the apostle says, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would,"-

Gal. v. 17, he expresses a truth which is at the foundation of all true knowledge of the way of salvation, and which he carefully dwells upon in various ways in all his epistles. The natural man can easily be satisfied and pleased with what he does, but not so the spiritual man. Even in his works of true obedience he sees enough of self and sin to make him low and humble before God, and to cause him the more to abhor himself. While he is thankful to the Lord for the spirit of obedience, and for the liberty to walk in obedience, yet so far as his own work is concerned he cannot see the goodness and purity of motive which he desires. Indeed, so much of the depravity of his nature appears in all he does that he is often in doubt whether it is true obedience or not. "The sins of one most righteous day would sink us in despair." "The best obedience of my hands dare not appear before thy face." So the apostle says, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." And again, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not, but the evil that I would not, that I do."—Romans vii. 18, 19. The apostle is not, of course, excusing wrong doing in saying this, nor does he intimate that he is pursuing a wrong course of conduct, as not being able to do right. He does not here contradict that he says elsewhere, "I keep under my body and bring it into subjection;" and again, "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblamably we behaved ourselves among you that believe." In this and all similar declarations the apostle is giving explanation and instruction concerning the feeling of self-abhorrence and self-distrust which all of the saints have when they are spiritually minded, on account of the felt depravity of their hearts, and the consciousness of sin within them. Speaking of his own esperience in this respect he tells that of all his brethren, who, when thus tried in their souls on account of their sinful flesh, cry out with him, "O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then he by inspiration speaks the words which tell the only deliverance which can be had, and which does come to every one thus tried: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Then the instruction concerning this mystery is given: "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." This mind is the mind or Spirit of Christ, which Paul says we have, and without which no man can be his. (1 Cor. ii. 16; Romans viii. 9.)

In the following connection the apostle explains this more fully, saying, "If Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness." This felt deadness of the body, including the natural mind and heart, to all that is spiritual and holy, is the cause of the great afflictions of the saints; of their doubts and questionings concerning their acceptance, and their

deep sorrows and self-reproaches on account of sin, and because they cannot do the things that they would. But it is also the cause of the purest of joys that can be felt in this mortal state, whenever they are made to feel that "the spirit is life because of righteousness." Then they can understand that this affliction because of "the sin that dwelleth in us," is the "bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."—2 Cor. iv.

It is hard to die in this sense, to be constantly reminded by experience that no good thing dwells in our flesh, and that therefore of ourselves we can do no good thing, "cannot do things that we would;" yet this is the daily experience of the saints. The more spiritual they are the more of this dying they feel, and the more humble and abased before God, but the more also do they rejoice in spirit because the spirit is life; because Jesus is their life, and is thus pleased to manifest that life in them. Then their trust and confidence are in him, snd not in themselves. The saints cannot, except when carnally minded, have gratification and comfort in any work, even a work of obedience, considered as their own world. They are not allowed to find their true comfort in a fleshly boasting; but when they are given faith to see and feel that they have been quickened by the Spirit in doing that work, that it is a work of obedience and righteousness because the Spirit was their life in doing it, then they are glad with a pure, spiritual gladness, and the flesh is out of sight. Instead of being exalted in their mind because this is a work which they have done, when the Lord gives them his blessed token of acceptance, and shows them that they are "greatly beloved," they will be like Daniel lying with their face in the dust, saying, "When thou spakest unto thy servant my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength.?'

There have been times when the words of Paul, "In me (that is, in my flesh) there dwelleth no good thing," have come to me in my extremity as though they were new, with a glad surprise that the inspired apostle had said just what I felt, and on account of which I was tempted to doubt whether I was a child of God.

"I hate vain thoughts," said David. Those thoughts which he hated were in his own mind. What a blessing that we can hate them. The two opposing principles must be in one who hates vain thoughts, the flesh from which the vain thoughts come, and the spirit by which alone we can hate them. "Am I as much to blame for my bad thoughts," asked a dear child of me the other day, "as I am for bad actions? I cannot help the evil thoughts." Such questions often arise in the minds of those who are older, and who have long been in the way. The bad thoughts we truly cannot help, but the Spirit can make us hate them, and can prevent them being acted out.

The blame is the blame that fell on Adam, and on all of his posterity. In the experience of the redemption of our body we shall experience deliverance

from this "bondage of corruption," and then we shall be satisfied. When one is led by the Spirit there will be a struggle within him to silence and put away bad thoughts as well as to avoid evil actions, but enough of sinfulness will still be felt in thought and word and deed to give the most exemplary christian daily errands to the throne of grace.

There is no work that a child of God can do in the sight of men which a hypocrite cannot do as well, so far as the observer can judge. The difference between the true and false work lies in the motive, which men cannot see. It is on this account that true christians are so constantly trying themselves, and watching their own works, and striving to know whether their motives are of the flesh or of the Spirit. They know that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin," and that no work is accepted of God except it is prompted by his own Spirit. There need be no fear of reiterating too often, or of dwelling too much upon the truth that no good thing dwells in our flesh, and that we cannot do the things that we would, for we cannot bring it oftener nor more fully before the children of God than they have it brought to them in their experience; and through the daily experience of this comes the experience of the glorious remedy, which fills the soul with true and unspeakable joy.

It is the saddest of all conditions for a child of God to become convinced that he *can* do the things that he would. So far as he feels this to be true, that far he is from Christ, and from a knowledge of his constant need of him, without whom he can do nothing that is good. It is a serious error in a teacher to teach that any one of the Lord's people *can* do the things that he would. It is also a serious error in any one to decide how often a gospel truth shall be repeated, and when a point of gospel doctrine shall no longer be preached or written about.

The child of God who knows his own inability, and who feels his entire dependence upon the dear Savior, will be enabled to walk in all the ordinances of the Lord's house blameless, and this gospel walk he will count as an inestimable blessing bestowed upon him, and will give God all the praise for the desire and ability so to walk, and for the peace and comfort that are found in that blessed way.

August 29, 1900.

Silas H. Durand

***"What man is he that feareth the Lord "hlm shall he teach in the way that he shall choose."* — PSALM XXV. 12.**

In all the multiplicity and variety of circumstances that have distressed the children of God, has the Lord ever taken a wrong step? Though he has baffled nature, though he has disconcerted reason, though he has turned our plans upside down, though perhaps he has done the thing

that we most feared, and thwarted every natural purpose and inclination of our heart — can we say that he has erred ? that he has made a mistake ? that he has acted unwisely ? that he has not done that which is for our spiritual good? Murmuring, rebellious, unbelieving heart, hold thy peace ! Shall man, foolish man, a worm of the earth, a creature of a day, lift up his puny voice and say, that God can mistake ? Your path is very dark, very intricate, very perplexed; you cannot see the hand of God in the trial that is now resting upon you; you cannot believe that it will work together for your good. I admit it. I have felt it. I have known it. But the time will come, when this dark path in which you are now walking, shall be seen full of radiancy and light, when you will prove the truth of these words, ***"He brought the blind by a way that they knew not."*** When we know God to be infinitely wise, that he cannot err, that all his dealings must be stamped with his own eternal wisdom, we are silenced, we hold our peace, we have nothing to say, we are where Aaron was. When Nadab and Abihus were smitten by the Lord, Aaron knew that God could not err; he held his peace (Lev. x. 3). This is our right spot. If we know anything of the folly of the creature — if we know anything of the wisdom of God — this is our spot. When our dear Nadabs and Abihus are smitten before our face, our spot is to hold our peace, to put our mouth in the dust; for God is still accomplishing his object, in the face, and in spite of nature, sense, and reason.

Elder J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing the 1999 Smith River Association will convene at Paynes Creek Church. Services will be held the first Sunday in September and Friday and Saturday before, dates Sept. 3rd, 4th and 5th.

Paynes Creek Church is located in Floyd County,Va. on the scenic Blue Ridge Parkway between mile post 150 and 151. We invite our correspondents and visitors of our faith and order to attend this meeting with us.

W.G. Parsons
Association Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 1999

Raymond Oxley, WV $2.00
Mrs. Vera M. Potter, MS 7.00
Mrs. Connie Page, NC 2.00
Mrs. Ernestine Sharp, LA 2.00
In memory of Mrs. Mytle Daniel
By daughters-Gladys, Evelyn & Jay
FL 50.00
Ora T. Nichols, VA 2.00
Mrs. Edd Hodmett, Va 2.00
R.E. Dale, NC 5.00
Mrs. Mary Poff, Va 2.00

OBITUARIES

SIS. EUNICE P. GILLEY

With sorrow for our loss but joy for her great gain, we record the death of our sister in Christ, Eunice P. Gilley. Sister Gilley was bom in Spray (now Eden), N. C. on March 5,1918, a daughter of the late Abel D. Purdy and Sister Cora L. Purdy. She was united in marriage, first to John Wesley Mounce, then in September, 1966 to Brother Foster Gilley of Eden, who preceded her in death some years ago. She had no children of her own.

For a number of years she was a member of another order. However, in His own good time and manner, the Lord placed her in the way-like Abraham's servant of old-and led her (we feel) to the house of her Master's brethren. She was received by experience as a member of Liberty Church on June 6, 1976 and was baptized by the late Elder B.N. Clifton. Thereafter she lived among us for some time an humble and peaceful member, devoted to the church and to the service of her pastor.

In her later years of life, following the death of Brother Gilley, Sister Eunice was afflicted with a sad disease of the mind and was confined to a nursing horne. She passed away on February 18, 1999, a few days short of her 81st birthday. A graveside service was conducted by her pastor at Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church in Rockingham County, N.C., after which her body was laid to rest beside the sleeping dust of Brother Gilley, to await the Second Coming of the Lord.

Sister Gilley was survived by one brother, Aubrey Purdy of Eden; his wife, Lois Purdy; two nieces, Mrs. Ann P. Mason and Mrs. Dale P. Fain; two step-sons, Jackie and Jimmy Gilley, and one step-daughter, Mrs. Janice G. VanStein.

The church agreed to prepare three copies of this obituary: one to enroll in the church records, one for her family and one to be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Liberty Church in conference the 1st day of May, 1999.

Elder John T. Wingfield, Mod.
Sis. Iris Puckett, Clerk protem

RUSSELL M. JENNINGS

On January 22, 1999, Brother Russell M. Jennings of Salisbury, Maryland passed from this life at the age of 83 years. He was born September 22, 1915, in Norwalk, Connecticut to William T. and Florence Barnes Jennings.

Brother Jennings was a quiet man, meek and humble. "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." He was baptized into the fellowship of Salisbury Old School Baptist Church on March 19, 1975, and was faithful to attend his church meetings; never missing except for sickness. He had a bad heart for several years prior to his death, even passing out in church on several occasions. One of his favorite

scriptures was Ephesians 2: 8-9, ***"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."*** and was the text used at his funeral. A grave-side service was conducted by his pastor, Elder Cleo Robertson, at Wicomico Memorial Park at 11:00 a.m. on January 25, 1999.

Brother Jennings leaves to mourn his wife, Sister Pauline Jennings, Salisbury, Maryland; two stepsons: Mr. Ronald Holloway, Salisbury, Maryland and Mr. Paul Holloway, Greenwood, South Carolina; two stepdaughters: Mrs. Nancy Robertson of California and Mrs. June Goddard, Denver, Colorado; several step grandchildren and step great grandchildren.

May the Lord comfort those who mourn and bless them to feel that their loss is his eternal gain.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Phyllis Farlow, Clerk

DARRELL RHOADES

Darrell Rhoades born April 9, 1926 to Jimmy Rhoades and Myrtle Rhoades in Franklin County in the little community called Good Hope. He was an only child. He formed a union with Julie Evelyn Wall November 5, 1948. This union was indeed until death us do part, spanning 50 years 3 months and 10 days. This union produced three children,

Danny Floyd Rhoades of Greenville, Texas, Susan Elaine Rhoades Anspon of Pittsburg, Texas, and Mark Anthony Rhoades of Waco, Texas.

He has nine grandchildren, six granddaughters and three grandsons.

However, this only scratches the surface of who Darrell Rhoades was.

Darrell Rhoades lived a life of example rather than substance. This is not to say that he did not have his share of material things but rather his wealth was more accurately defined by the way he respected and treated those people he came into contact with during his life. He never looked down on someone because of anything that they had done or bad decisions they may have made. Instead, he would say, "There I would go also without the grace of God to keep me from it". He was never too busy to stop and talk to anyone. This was one of the greatest pleasures he enjoyed, talking with his friends.

He was one of the few blessed people who never met a stranger.

Darrell Rhoades was a God-fearing man and I want to tell you about the God he believed in. Oh, what a God. He was heard to say many times, "There are many little g o d's but there is only one capital G O D." He believed in a God that was all wise, all powerful, all just, and all righteous. He believed in the absolute predestination of all things. He believed in the one and only I AM. He was called to fill the role of deacon to Providence Church. This was a role he never felt worthy to fill; but the love and devotion he displayed for this little congregation was more than proof that he was called of God.

I remember watching his body grow weaker and weaker to the point he required assistance for virtually everything, going from a man who loved to talk to everyone to someone who had very few words to say. One such occasion came as I was leaving his bedroom. I was going to attend the ordination of three brothers at Hopewell to be ordained as deacons. As I was leaving he called me over to his bed and asked me to be sure these brothers were instructed to do the following. To see after the elderly, the widows, and the orphans. To take care of their needs and to do this with discretion.

Although his body had been taken away from him, his thoughts and heart was still that of a deacon.

One of the last nights of dad's life while the family was sitting with dad waiting for the Lord to deliver him home, and while we were saying our good-byes, I told dad that he had given me three sets of shoes that were going to be mighty hard to fill. They were how to be a husband, how to be a father, and how to be a deacon. The first two I told him I felt that with God's help I would do okay. The third, I would attempt to fill with God's help as well. After about five minutes dad spoke to me and said, "Don't worry. I will always be there to help you." I ask the other family members if they had heard what dad said and they said they saw his mouth move but heard nothing. To the very end, the Lord blessed him to discharge his duty as a deacon.

My father taught me many hard lessons while I was growing up, as a child and in my early adulthood. He taught me by example and with his correction. His examples were by how he lived his life. His discipline was that of love, teaching me there were consequences that would follow me for the decisions I made. It was not until I had children of my own that I began to understand the wisdom of these lessons. When it came my time to leave home and start life on my own he gave me very little in material things, but the one thing he did give me was priceless then and is priceless now. He gave me his good name, a name that guaranteed me nothing but gave me the opportunity to do anything. I am proud to be Darrell Rhoades' son.

Submitted in love,
Mark A. Rhoades

NANNIE TURPIN SPANGLER

My Mother, Nannie Turpin Spangler, passed away March 29, 1999, at the age of 98.

The following verses from the Bible seem to describe her better than I can:

"Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies."

"She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her is the law of kindness."

"Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband, also, and he praiseth her."

She was the beloved wife of the late, Elder David Spangler for 65 years. When I think of Mother I always think of my Father as their lives were almost one.

Life was not always easy. During the Depression, Mother was in a sanitarium with TB. My Father often said he wondered where he would get a dollar to pay the hospital for another day. His burden was so great but by the Grace of God he was provided enough money to survive and my Mother recovered completely. My Mother and Sister Lottie Minter were united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church one night at the hospital while mother was still a patient. Many years later, the daughter of Brother and Sister Gold Minter, Juanita, and I were baptized together at Dan River.

My Mother was a devoted wife, and in my judgement truly a minister's wife and companion. She suffered when Father suffered and rejoiced when he rejoiced. I have heard him say, "Surely she is a gift from the Lord." She was always by his side at Church other than when the time she was ill. Once when she came home from the hospital after an operation, Father was getting ready to go to Church and he wept because she would not be with him. My Sister said, "Mom do you think you could go?" Her reply was, "Yes, but you have to help me get ready." (She always liked to look her best! To me, she was a beautiful woman.) She went with him, and they left rejoicing.

She was a caring, kind, strong Mother, with a keen sense of humor. She loved all of her children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren very much. Also, Frances Weatherford was so dear to her as she lived near and was like family — always there to support her.

She was an excellent cook, and loved to cook; to entertain the Brethren and friends from far and near. She loved to travel, to visit all the Churches over the country, even to the Far West and Canada. She loved the mountains and especially Floyd County, Virginia; but above all things she loved the doctrine "Saved by Grace" and the sovereignty of God in all things." We often talked about these things. How I will miss this!

She is survived by children: Elinor Hodnett, Rebecca Smith, Mildred Graham, David Spangler, eight grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted at Dan River Church by her beloved pastor, Elder Kenneth Key and also, Elder Julian Williams and Elder C. B. Davis, and she was buried there in the cemetery.

My Mother asked me to write her obituary, and I do so with a sad heart; but her family feel so blessed to have had a Mother like her.

Written by request of
Dan River Church
Mildred Graham

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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WHAT IS LOVE?

What is love?
No words can define it,
It's something so great
Only God could design it . . .
Wonder of Wonders,
Beyond man's conception,
And only in God
Can love find true perfection,
For love means much more
Than small words can express,
For what man calls love
Is so very much less
Than the beauty and depth
And the true richness of
God's gift to mankind-
His compassionate love . . .
For love has become
A word that's misused,
Perverted, distorted
And often abused,
But love is enduring
And patient and kind,
It judges all things
With the heart not the mind,
And love can transform
The most commonplace
Into beauty and splendor
And sweetness and grace...
For love is unselfish
Giving more than it takes;
And no matter what happens
Love never forsakes,
It's faithful and trusting
And always believing,
Guileless and honest
And never deceiving . . .
Yes, love is beyond
What man can define,
For love is Immortal
And God's Gift is Divine!

Helen Steiner Rice

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EDITORIAL

FAITH

ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

The subject of Faith in the Scriptures is so vast that volumes could be, and has been, written upon it, yet it has never been completely covered. If God will so bless me to do so, I would like to touch upon a few scriptures concerning it.

Most men have a natural, fleshly faith in the things concerning this world, such as faith in themselves, in their children, in their leaders, etc., but the scriptures speak of gospel faith; the faith of God, the faith of Christ, the faith of God's elect. This is a true and living faith and always triumphs. It cannot fail, for it is the gift of God to his elect children. They are saved by this faith. ***"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast " Eph. 2:8.*** We will notice that this is not "a" gift, but THE gift of God. Is not this gift the Son of God? ***"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isa. 9:6.*** Our Lord Jesus Christ is THE gift of God and all of our blessings are in him; we shall not fail to receive one of them. ***"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Eph 1:3. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Jas.1:17.*** The so-called christian world teaches that this is a created thing and we can have it and use it to obtain the things we desire, even eternal life, but we are expressly told in the holy record that Christ is the author and finisher of it, Heb.12:2. If man could by his own strength produce this faith then he could boast in his own righteousness which would be of works. Where is boasting? It is excluded. By what law? of works?

Nay; but by the law of faith. Rom 3:27. The righteousness of the elect is, ***"Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."*** Even the religious world teaches that we must believe to be saved, but how is this belief produced? By works? No. Jesus said, ***"This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Jn 6:29.*** Paul said, ***"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Phil.1:29.*** Paul also said, ***"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the Son of God."*** Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith. The living or lively faith which we may have is not a product of the flesh, but the faith of Christ which is in us, the hope of glory. This is a mystery to the world, ***"Even the mystery which hath been hidden from ages and from generations, but is now made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you the hope of glory." Col.1:26-27.*** If the Spirit of Christ dwells in us it is he that produces the faith which we have; and the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness temperance: against which there is no law. If these fruits be in us it is great evidence that we have been born again of the Spirit of God. That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit, and the faith of the saints is born of God, ***"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world even our faith." 1 Jn.5:4.*** The apostles asked Jesus to increase their faith, and the Lord said, ***"If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you."*** Jesus also said, ***"Without me ye can do nothing."*** Paul said, ***"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."*** From these two scriptures we must determine that we can do nothing without faith in God. We cannot exercise faith, but faith exercises us. Faith causes us to believe in God, and without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. It is through faith that we believe that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear; for he hast created all things, and for his pleasure they are and were created. Heb.11:4 & Rev. 4:11. Faith is a living principle in those who have been quickened into life, which empowers them to see and realize spiritual things that no human power can discern or comprehend, by which they ***"look not at things which are seen, but at things which are not seen: for the things which are***

seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." 2 Cor.4:18. We see natural things by our natural eyes, but spiritual things by the eye of faith. It is through faith that the Spirit reveals all spiritual things unto the elect; while here we live by faith, walk by faith, and are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. The operations of faith in us are confidence in God, reliance on his counsel. wisdom, goodness and grace, perceptions of his power and glory, confident trust in his most glorious promises, the revelation of Christ as our glorious Mediator, giving a clear understanding of his truth and things pertaining to his purpose and grace in our salvation. God given faith in operation also suppresses our fears, triumphs over our doubts and infidelity, strengthens our hope, overcomes our temptations of the flesh and the wiles of Satan, and gives us the strength to run the race which is set before us.

In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews the writer tells us of a great cloud of witnesses of this God given faith, and all lived before the advent of Christ Jesus in the world. Abel was the first, and he offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts. Could Abel have obtained faith and righteousness but by the gifts of God? By faith Enoch was translated and did not see death but was translated because he pleased God; and without faith it is impossible to please God. Abraham was strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able to perform. And therefore it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and he was called the Friend of God. This righteousness shall also be imputed unto us also if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Rom.4:20-25 & 5:1-2.

Oh, how great this man Abraham was! He was called the Friend of God, and we find in the 17th chapter of Genesis that God appeared unto him when he was ninety years old, and promised him a son, and with him made an everlasting covenant, saying ***"And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee."*** (Verse 7.) God also promised that he would make him the father of many nations and in him would all the families of the earth be blessed. He indeed became the father of many nations; but Isaac, his son by Sarah, was the only promised son, and God said unto Sarah, ***"-- and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him."*** The covenant and promises were unto Abraham and unto his seed. ***"He said not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to***

thy seed which is Christ." Gal.3:16. If we be of faith, then we are the children of Abraham, and are blessed with him, and are justified through faith as was he, and not by the law. ***"Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith." " So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."*** They are blessed with him, not in him. They are blessed in Christ who is "the" seed of Abraham. ***"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;***For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." Heb.14 & 16.*** It is only through and in him that we receive anything, for it is in him that we live and move and have our being. Paul said, ***"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."*** Surely we know that Paul speaks for all the saints of God, not just for himself. Until one is born again of the Holy Spirit he has no faith and is under the law, which is our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. ***"But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ." Gal.3:23-26.***

We read in Rom.4:13-17, ***"For the promise, that he would be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed."*** If that scripture ended there, what hope could we have that we should ever be heirs? Thank God it did not end there, but said, ***"through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be SURE TO ALL THE SEED; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all."*** If Abraham is our father through faith, then ***"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Rom.8:16-17.*** O how sweet and glorious it is to us when the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God and joint-heirs with Christ, even though it may be for only a moment. These moments are few and far between with me, yet my hope is strengthened and ***"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ."*** Regardless of how small my hope seems at times I would not trade it for

this world and many more like it, if that was possible. If we have been given faith and hope in Jesus Christ all will be fulfilled when he comes again to receive us unto himself. Then we shall see him as he is, be like unto him and dwell in the glorious presence of God the Father eternally. What a glorious hope this is for poor sinners saved by grace!

Let us bow in prayers of faith before God, and sing his praises forever.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

LETTER TO SISTER WALL

Sister Walls, this is Elder Cabbage. I wanna attempt to put you a note you wanted on tape and then your daughter-in-law can write it off on paper. And in the Bible it speaks of a book of rememberance and I feel that we each have a book of rememberance that we can look back, turn the pages, and look back through time. And especially as we get older. I was 66 the 25th of March, 1997 and sometimes I look back through the books of time and just turn the pages back and-and enjoy them again.

Elder Albert Brock came to our association, Pall Valley Association for many many years and he got to tell me, said, now listen, there's a man in Texas I wish you could meet, Elder Loyd Wall. That went on for several years and he had told Elder Wall the same thing about me that he wished we could meet. And so in 1989 I went to the Hopewell Association in Alabama which was at the Little Hope Church. When I walked up in the yard, standing over there under the tree, was a man I hadn't met before, but someway there was a connection.

You know its amazing how that God's love connects His people together. You can't explain how that works, but when I walked on up to where Elder Wall was standing, he just stood there and looked at me and tears come down his face. And he said, what a mystery, what a mystery. So God had blessed us to meet each other and we enjoyed each other. And that was in October of '89 and I believe the following year in September was when he came to the Pall Valley Association and we all enjoyed him, he and his wife both. Brother and Sister Bradshaw was with them and we think a lot of them too. But we enjoyed having them in our home and Brother Hockston was sick at that time in bed, and they wanted us to have a service. So Elder Wall went with me and he preached that night in the home and took his text from the 32nd chapter of Deuteronomy as the eagles stir up her nest and floated over her young, spread abroad her wings and taketh them and bear them up on her wings. And God blessed him with good liberty to comfort and to feed the little lambs of God that was gathered there that night. I guess the next year, I'm not really sure of the date on this, was when we - me and my wife, Rowena, was blessed to go to his association

there at Sulphur Fork Association and I never have forgot that association. That was the only time I was ever there, and I enjoyed it as good as any that I've ever been over the years and I've been trying to preach and go to association. I joined the church in '66 and ordained in '71 and I've traveled quite a bit since '71 and I enjoyed that one. And my wife did too, she enjoyed it a lot.

And I remember the mules he had and the horse, or mare, one there in the pasture and Rowena made pictures. And I believe his preaching at that association tested my wife. Elder Wall told me outside, I believe I saw something today in your wife. He said, you would be glad wouldn't you? And I said, Yes I would. And she's not able to travel with me, but she does go to church here with me at home which I'm thankful for and I thank God that he was blessed to preach to her that day. I believe she was comforted and received something from his preaching. We thought a lot of him and we miss him. We feel that after awhile when the Lord comes after His bride that we'll all meet in that wonderful place that God prepared for those that love Him and there'll be no more separations, no more suffering, no more affliction, but all peace, joy and happiness.

Sometimes we long for that city and by the grace of God we believe we'll meet Elder Wall in a new body, a spiritual body like unto the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

And that's about all I can put together at this time and I hope its plain enough to where your daughter-in-law can type it off to put it in your book. And we love you and we hope to see you, the Lord willing the 5th Sunday in this month. So Good-night.

Elder Cabbage

VOICES OF THE PAST

Hebrews 12: 27, 28, 29.

"And this word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For God is a consuming fire."

It seems to be very clear according to the scriptures as well as the experiences of the Lord's people, that stability is not to be found on this earth; yet it seems that carnal nature is forever attempting to build upon earth's quicksand as if it were a substantial rock. There is no abiding city here upon earth, and it is all in vain to attempt to build one for the ***"world passeth away and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." I John 2:17.*** It seems to be necessary at times for the God of Providence to give the world of His elect a warning shake in order to enforce this important truth upon them.

First, let us look at the Lord's voice in shaking the earth on Mount Sinai.

"And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the people that was in camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly." Exodus 19:16-18. The quaking of the earth here was to impress with greater emphasis upon the minds of the people the terrible force and authority of the law, and that the Law Giver was as a *"consuming fire."*

"The removing of those things that may be shaken." May we be blessed to look upon some of the natural things that may be shaken to better illustrate the spiritual significance of being shaken. Take an old building whose foundation is cracked, whose walls are leaning, would we want to build upon this type of structure? No, surely not, because this type of foundation and building would not be secure enough to build upon. But is this not what many of us were attempting to do at one time in our lives? Is this not what the Apostle Paul was attempting to do while on his way to Damascus before the removing of it took place by the power of God? Is this not what all worldly religious minded people are attempting to do today? Were not some of us involved in the same thing if we professed to be religious when we were going about, ***"In time past in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others." (Eph. 2:3.)*** Were we not building upon a foundation that could be shaken?

Beloved friends, this principal, which is true in a natural realm, is much more true in a spiritual realm. There is a set time in the mind and purpose of God toward his elect people to bring them out of whatever false refuge they may have been involved in. We must be given spiritual life and light in order to feel and see our undone and lost condition. Our sins must appear exceedingly sinful When Mount Sinai quaked by the power of God, it was typical of the shaking of the hearts and consciences of God's elect people under a fiery law. ***"The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezk. 18:4.)*** And ***"cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." (Gal. 3:10.)*** When the above killing *"sentence of death"* comes into our hearts and consciences, it slays us as to salvation by the works of the law. See how this shakes to pieces all of man's own righteousness? God's purpose is to remove everything which can be shaken. Take our own self-righteousness, were we not at one time attempting to gain the favor of God by our deeds of righteousness, but was this righteousness shaken to become but as filthy rags? Our crea-

ture wisdom was ' such we thought to gain eternal salvation through our own efforts. We thought we knew much, which was nothing more than boastful ignorance. We found this to be only a fool's dream when we were given by the grace of God to learn the real source of salvation. Our creature strength is demolished when we find by the same grace of God that we are without strength to serve the living God.

Some of you (as I was) may have been involved in a worldly or false religion, believing in the good efforts and works of man together with the grace of God (a mixture of work and grace) and we felt comfortable towards our assurance of salvation. But the shaking of Mount Sinai is typical of the law shaking to pieces our false religion; self-righteousness, wisdom, and creature strength. Why? because these do not constitute a sufficient foundation to build eternal salvation upon and they all must be removed for whatever things can be shaken are to be removed. Everything then that man feels, he can do to gain heaven by his own exertion must be shaken and removed. Everyone building upon the above, ***"Shall be likened unto a foolish man which built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the wind blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell and great was the fall of it." (Matt. 7:26, 27)***

Why did God shake your heart and conscience with the earthquake of his holy law? To remove the false heaven you had built up for yourself through your own righteousness, wisdom, strength and good works. He did this by discovering to you the evil of your own deeds and to remove the false heaven which you would have been pleased with until you sank into hell.

The whole of man's miserable abodes must be completely removed, for there can be no union between nature and saving grace. ***"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14).*** Salvation must be of grace from first to last. ***"And if by grace, then it is no more works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." (Rom. 11:6). "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph 2:8, 9)***

What has been the result of all the shaking and removing of things which we have experienced? Surely we have had much removed from us which we highly treasured at one time but which would have led us to fall into the ditch of eternal destruction. Can we now, by the grace of God, say with the Apostle Paul, ***"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffer the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ. And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law,***

but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith" (Phil. 3:8, 9) We were not all brought along the same way. While in our natural state, some of us were involved in a natural religion, and some of you may not have been, but surely we can all say we were involved in things that we can *"count as dung."* Blessed are the ones whose God has revealed these things to us. Beloved friends, you have this precious truth that whatever you may encounter along your pathway of life, that all things shall work for your good.

"That those things which cannot be shaken may remain."

We shall attempt to mention only a few of the things which cannot be shaken.

1. The divine wisdom and foreknowledge of God. ***"Known unto God are all his works from eternity." Acts 15:18.*** The foreknowledge of God cannot be uncertain or else he would cease to be an all wise God. ***"Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." (Heb. 4:13.)***

2. His will cannot be moved because ***"all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and we doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him,***

What doest thou?" (Dan. 4:35.)

3. The counsel of the Lord shall stand and cannot be removed. ***"My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." (Isa 46:10) "The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations." (Psalms 33:11)***

4. The unchangeableness of God and his decrees must remain. ***"I am the Lord, and I change not." (Mal. 3:6.) "With him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17.)***

5. His justice, his mercy, his absolute predestination of all things, his election of a certain people in Christ Jesus, the finished work of Christ in the complete salvation of his people cannot be removed. *"It is finished."* His was a perfect work, a finished salvation and complete redemption for his people.

We may now view from a more personal standpoint what cannot be removed: the inward, holy, divine, and effectual calling of his people at an exact appointed time from nature, darkness, and ignorance into his marvelous light. ***"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (II Tim. 1-9)*** This call can never be affected by what we have been, what we are now or might be, but according to his own purpose and grace. Neither can this call be rejected, refused, or resisted as to become void and of no effect. ***"Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called, whom he called, them he also justified." (Rom. 8:30).*** This call springs out of eternal predestination accom-

panied by justification and future glorification. ***"Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved."*** This kingdom in the scriptures is called the *"kingdom of God."* ***"The kingdom of God is within you." (Luke 17:21).*** It is a heavenly kingdom, a kingdom of grace, a kingdom of divine teaching and work of the Holy Spirit within. It is called the *"kingdom of God"* to distinguish it from all other dominions and kingdoms of the world. One aspect of this kingdom is the rule of Christ in and over the gospel state of the church which the apostle declares to be more excellent than that of the law. The very nature of this kingdom is indestructible. Man did not set it up nor did God establish it for any temporary purpose. He established it for an eternal purpose, and has guaranteed its perpetual existence by his solemn oath. This kingdom will remain unshaken and secure. Yes, ***"the Lord has sworn and will not repent."***

The kingdom is also a personal matter "We receiving a kingdom" having been put in possession of it, and what a blessed kingdom it is. What a glorious work it is indeed by the Holy Spirit in establishing the kingdom of grace in a poor unworthy sinner's heart. You may have wondered, as I so often have, (if we be the children of God) why, O, why, did it please God to shake and remove all my false refuges that I was involved in and set up his kingdom of grace in my unworthy heart? ***"In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and it shall not be left to others, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." (Dan. 2:44)***

When the work of grace is set up in the heart of a child of God, it brings about many changes ***"as unknown, and yet well known; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich, as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." (II Cor. 6:9, 10.)*** This pathway is unknown to the world, only the chosen of God experience the sorrows and joys of this path. ***"And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness: the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there; nor any ravenous beast shall go up theron, it shall not be found there: but the redeemed shall walk there. " (Isa 35: 8, 9).*** Those who travel it together know each other, they speak the same language, they have the same Father, the same Christ and the same Spirit. A precious love is made manifest among the sojourners of this narrow pathway, love that binds the people of God together for they are of one family, of the same household of God. ***"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." (Eph. 2:19, 20).*** Is it not

beautiful to see how God calls his chosen to be members of the same household? To sit at the Master's table feasting upon the bread of life; to nourish that inward life, that inward kingdom which God has set up with you. Jesus says, ***"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever." (John 6:51.)*** It is a glorious thing indeed to see members of the household of God sitting in a meeting together feeding upon the words of God through a God called minister preaching ***"Jesus Christ and him crucified."***

This new kingdom, which the Holy Spirit has used to shed abroad the fruits of his Spirit cannot be shaken or removed. Faith, hope, and love may be deeply tried. Faith by unbelief, but faith will abide, even though at times it may seem to be almost enveloped by unbelief; yet, this spark within cannot be quenched. It must abide because it is centered in Christ who is the giver of it. It abides in him and trusts in him; it cannot be moved. Hope by dependency or despair, but despair cannot remove hope that is wrought by the Holy Spirit, for it anchors into that within the veil.

"Hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness." It is therefore said to be sure and steadfast. Love must labor against emnity; but love will abound for ***"many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it." "We love him because he first loved us."*** True faith, hope, and love cannot be completely removed; if so, a person could be saved then lost which we know is not true. You may be shaken at times as to your possession of them; yet, these stand not in the power of man, but in the power of God. ***"He works and who can hinder."*** You may be ready to say, I am often shaken as to the reality of the work of grace in my soul. This may be true, but if the work is real, the shaking which you may feel does not shake the reality of the thing itself ***"Being confident of this very thing, that he which has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. 1: 6.)***

Those receiving this kingdom into their hearts, will experience many wonderful changes and at the same time, many fearful changes. ***"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things become new." (II Cor. 5:17).*** There is a new creation, and there is an old creation, and by our own experiences we can say there is a great distinction between the two states. The old creation is for the world, all its desires, happiness, etc. are derived from this world. The new and old are not to be joined together. ***"No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." (Luke 16: 13.)***

When you are born again into this new state or existence, many wonderful experiences may take place in your heart and conscience. You may have found yourself dropped into a com-

plete new existence. Old things began to pass away and new things began to appear before you. You began to realize how foolish you have been concerning your past and now begin to wonder, *"What must I do to be saved?"* Everything that you had been holding on to to gain heaven by merit you found to be only a false foundation, or a foundation that could be moved. The world began to pass away from you with all its connections, with all its glory so far as becoming the pursuits and delights of your new regenerate soul. The Holy Spirit reveals to you that you are indeed a sinner. He brings you to see and feel that you have no right to heaven at all; but as a sinner, you have a right to hell and you greatly fear. What a vast change takes place in your mind. As the Holy Spirit has led you on through many trying experiences, can you look back with some hope in your heart and say, What a mercy that the Lord has made all these things new to us putting us upon a foundation that cannot be removed?

This is a big subject. I feel it has been too big for me and must acknowledge I have only skimmed the surface.

May God bless you all is my prayer,

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

PSALM 145: 8-9.

The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.

The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.

IN THE CLEFTS OF THE ROCK

This is where the Lord's people are when the dear Saviour makes his love known to them. ***"O my dove that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely."*** This also is their safe hiding place while they remain in this mortal state. But how may we know that we are in the clefts of the rock? What kind of an experience is this? If the gracious and loving words of Jesus to his dove are sweet to our souls, then it is sure that we are of those to whom they are spoken; but it may be far from sure to us at the time, because of our feeling of great unworthiness, and because we cannot see that we are in that secret, safe and sacred place, where the dove is said to be. The clefts of the rock, being the sure dwelling place of the dove, the bride of Christ, must be, as we think, a place most sweet and pleasant, free from trouble, and especially free from trouble on account of sin; and when we feel ourselves full of unrest, hedged in, afflicted, cut off from our desires, unable to do what we would, finding evil present with us when we would do good, how can we think that we are in the clefts of the rock, and that the dear Savior can find any sweetness in our complaining, supplicating voice, or see any comeliness in our sorrowful countenance?

I have had some precious comfort in some experiences and thoughts upon

this subject of late, and have for some time felt a strong pressure upon my mind to express, as I may be enabled, some of these things for the comfort of those who have been tried as I have been.

Moses said unto the Lord, *"If I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight."* And again, *"I beseech thee, show me thy glory."—Exodus xxxiii. 13, 18.* Such desires to see the Lord's way, and to behold his glory, are not from presumptuous curiosity, as we sometimes fear, but are the solemn actings of faith in the soul, preparing us for such revelations of himself as he designs to favor us with. He will hear all such questions, all such longings and pantings of the poor soul after him, and will answer them, but it will be *"by terrible things in righteousness." —Psalms lxv. 5.*

"And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me and live. And the Lord said, There is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: and I will take away my hand, and thou shall see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen."—Exodus xxxiii. 19-23.

When all this took place (Exodus xxxiv. 1-7), Moses was alone with the Lord in that desolate mountain. *"And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin."* What goodness and blessedness are here in this name, as thus far proclaimed! What a garden of delights, filled with most lovely flowers and richest fruits. What more could be desired by a poor sinner who hates sin, and hungers and thirsts after righteousness? Well might we say, if permitted to enter into this wonderful name, and enjoy its rich blessings, *"O how great is thy goodness which thou hast wrought for them that fear thee; which thou hast laid up for them that trust in thee before the sons of men."—Psalm xxxi. 19.*

But there is another syllable in this mysterious and glorious name, which a sinful man cannot hear and live, unless hidden in the cleft of the Rock, and covered by the hand of the Lord. *"And that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation."* This part of the Lord's name is full of terror, and is fraught with death to every guilty soul. It as surely bars

every sinner from the safety and beauty of that holy name, as the flaming sword prevented the return of Adam and Eve to the garden of Eden, and kept from them the way of the tree of life.

Whether Moses was literally put into a cleft of a rock or not, we have in this cleft a figure of the absolute safety that was given to him while the awful name of the Lord was proclaimed. The Lord's hand that covered him while his glory passed by, is not a literal hand, to be discerned by our natural senses, but expresses to us his sure and absolute protection from a danger which is not to the body merely, but to the soul.

As this great experience came upon him, *"Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped." — Exodus xxxiv. 8.* In the proclamation of this terrible name Moses' prayer was answered. This name is the revelation of the Lord's way, of his goodness and his glory.

This rock represents Jesus. *"There is a place by me,"* the Lord said, *"and thou shalt stand upon a rock."* Here is the only foundation upon which a sinful man can stand before the Lord. That sacred Rock was smitten in order that the Lord's chosen people might be safely hidden while his name is proclaimed before them, and while his glory passes by. When Christ was crucified the guilt of his people was atoned for and removed, justice and judgment were executed for them, and the Lord's name was honored and glorified. That part of his name which declares that he will in no wise clear the guilty, still remains, but it does not exclude his people any longer, for they are free from guilt, being crucified with Christ. and thus hidden in the cleft of the Rock.

When *"the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with his anger"* against sin, and *"his lips are full of indignation"* against the workers of iniquity, *"and his tongue as a devouring fire" (Isaiah xxx. 27-30),* none of all the sinful race of man can stand before him. No man can see his face and live. *"Who may abide the day of his coming?"* None but those whom the Lord has put in a cleft of the Rock, and covered with his hand. These were safe in Jesus while the wrath of that holy and terrible name was visited upon him. He was able to endure the stroke of the sword of justice, to die and rise again, and thus to *"finish transgression, make an end of sin,"* and by satisfying the law to take the sting from death. and destroy that terrible enemy.

And as the Lord's people were saved when the glory of his name was proclaimed in the crucifixion of his dear Son, by being in him in that death in a wonderful and mystical sense, so that they are dead with him to the law and to sin (Romans vi. 7-11), so ever after, while in this mortal state, his sufferings and death are their only safe hiding place. In their flesh they cannot stand before the Lord, nor endure the glory of his name, for in their flesh *"there dwells no good thing."* Those who have been quickened by divine life, realize that they cannot of themselves do one spiritual thing, any more than a dead man can do a natural

thing; as the apostle says, ***"If Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." — Romans viii. 10.*** And, as he further says, it is only as the body is quickened, or moved, by the Spirit of him who raised up Christ from the dead, that any man can do anything that is acceptable to God.

The experience of being in a cleft of the Rock must therefore be always crossing to the flesh. It must be an experience full of sore trials and afflictions. We ask the Lord, as Moses did, to show us his way, we beseech him to show us his glory. We want to see and understand more of his goodness. It seems to us that if he should be pleased to grant our desire, we should be at the height of bliss. How little we know of his wonderful ways. He does answer us, but it is ***"in such a way as almost drives us to despair." "By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation."*** We ***"are shut up and cannot come forth."*** We find ourselves more and more unable to do the good that we would, and we are left to doubt at times even whether we have a desire to do good. We are hedged in by our sinfulness and utter weakness, and by the judgments of God which seem to go out against us. We cannot do what we would in providence. Poverty holds us in its dire embrace. We cannot succeed in our work. We hate and dread to be in debt, but debt comes upon us, or danger of starvation for those dependent upon us. Or we do prosper in worldly affairs, and find wealth, but with it there comes leanness into our souls. There is a famine even in the midst of plenty. What we have will not feed our souls. We cannot enjoy the temporal prosperity that comes to us. If we would help others we fear our motives are base and selfish, and that we are only hypocrites. There seems to be a searching power within and about us, and we fear we are found wanting. A tempest is going by, and we tremble; yet cannot see what destruction it is working. We are like those whom the Lord had shut in the ark. They could feel the terrible power of the winds and waves, but could not see what it was. They felt the beatings and tossings and shakings of the ark, and afterward the quiet and peace, but could not know the meaning of it all until the cover was taken off the ark. Then it was all made plain, and the beauty and glory of the rainbow showed to those who had passed through the storm, and who now stood on Ararat, holy ground, a blessed purpose of God in the flood.

In the cleft of the rock, covered and held down by the Lord's hand, how terrible must have been the experience of ***"Moses, the man of God."*** Not another soul in all that desolate mountain. The Lord was there, but not visible to his mortal sight. How long he was in that cleft is not material to know. The power of fear and pain is not measured by time. In a moment the soul maybe overwhelmed with terror. In what way the power of that name came by, we do not know, whether there was a literal quaking of the mountain, with fire and smoke and

thunder, as when the law was given, or whether the awful power of the Lord's name was felt only within his soul, we do not know. What we do know is that a cleft of a rock must be a most uncomfortable place to be in. We also know there must have been a terribly destructive power in the passing of the Lord before Moses, if he must not only be put into that cleft, but must also be covered by the Lord's hand in order to be saved from destruction.

But O, what a blessed time that is when the Lord's hand is taken away, and we are enabled to see his wonderful works which he has done, and to behold the glory of his name which has already been proclaimed. We could not see his way before he had passed by in it. We could not know what he would do before he had done it. We cannot see his face as he comes toward us in his work of salvation. To see him coming in those "*terrible works in righteousness,*" by which he saves his people, would kill us with terror. But after he has passed by in the fulfillment of all that terrible work, by which his glorious name is honored, the law magnified, and his people saved, then it is joy unspeakable to see his back parts, to see the glory that follows him. We cannot see him working, but we see the work when it is done. Even then, while in that experience of fear, of inability to see, like those in the ark, what caused the great commotion; in that experience of sinfulness and condemnation, and utter inability to do any good thing, even then the secret of the Lord was with us, though we did not know it. We were far from the thought that this was God's work in bringing us to himself. We could not then have believed that this affliction, this inability to move in any way of righteousness, was because we were in a cleft of the Rock, because we were being crucified with Christ in our experience. We could not have believed that this tribulation in our souls was because the Lord had put his fear in our hearts, which "*is to hate evil.*" But all this fearful exercise in our souls was the secret of the Lord, and when he removed his hand from over us, and showed us his covenant, then we understood that this was his wonderful work of salvation which he had begun in us, working in us "*to will and to do of his good pleasure.*" "*The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew unto them his covenant.*"— *Psalm xxv. 14.*

Job was in that cleft of the Rock when he said, "*O that I knew where I might find him.*" "*Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right that I cannot see him.*" The psalmist was there when he said, "*I am shut up, and I cannot come forth;*" and Jacob when he said, "*All these things are against me.*" Jeremiah was there when he said, "*He hath hedged me about that I cannot get out: he hath made my chain heavy. Also when I cry and shout,* he shutteth out my prayer."— Lam. iii. 7, 8. And Paul was there when he was blinded by the light from heaven, and

could see no man; and also when, long afterward, he said, *"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"*

Those who are in the clefts of a rock all of the time can do no work upon the earth. They cannot run to and fro in the sight of men; they cannot join in work or worship with those who are not with them in the clefts. They are helpless for themselves, and they cannot extend help to any who are abroad upon the earth. They will often feel their confined, shut-in, cramped position so keenly, that it seems to them that they cannot endure it. They want to get out into the midst of the world and do something, do some good to themselves or others, do something to show that they are not altogether nothing. But if they seem to be able to get such desires gratifed for a little, they are so utterly ashamed of their works that they want to shrink away out of sight. They find of themselves what the psalmist said of everyman in his best state, they "*are altogether vanity.*" Then, in the Lord's own time, they learn the blessed meaning of this sad experience. They have not really been allowed to go out of that safe dwelling place at all, though they seemed for a time as one in a dream, to be working with the proud and wise of this world. They have been all the time, and yet are, held firmly by the hand of the Lord, notwithstanding all the rebellious lustings of the flesh against the Spirit. Now and then the gracious hand which covers them, and holds them in that narrow, confined place, is taken away for a little time, and they see the Lord's way, and behold his glory, and gaze with rapture upon the rainbow beauty and brightness of the everlasting covenant. And how they thank the Lord, and praise his glorious name, for his preserving power and mercy. How glad they are that he has overturned their plans, and broken down their strength, and disappointed them in their earthly hopes, and shown them that their works are vain, and that their days are vanity and are as a hands breadth. Now they are rejoiced to see that the works of Jesus are perfect, and that they are all-sufficient, and cover all the ground of their needs for evermore. O, how beautiful and glorious the Lord's works are! How thankful they are for the sure protection they have had in that secret place of the Lord, from the windy storm and tempest which has been abroad in the earth, while they were so eagerly struggling to get away from the controlling and restraining power of God. Now they rejoice in their afflictions, for they see that salvation was in those afflictions. Now they rejoice in the tribulations that made them murmur and complain at the time, for through them they have been brought to "stand before the great white throne," from whence the river of the water of life proceeds, and have entered more and more into the experimental knowledge of the kingdom of God. And now they are called by the sweet voice of Jesus. O, these blessed seasons, when faith prevails, when the hand that held and covered them is removed, and they see the back parts of the Lord, and

realize the blessed effect of his passing by in this terrible works of righteousness, by which he has answered us. *"The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever."—Isaiah xxxii. 17.* And the soothing, comforting, joyful effect of that precious voice of Jesus, not heard by the natural ear, but felt in the heart; how sweet it is: *"O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock!"* His voice speaks not in vain. *"My sheep hear my voice,"* he says. When he speaks, then we know that we are his, and that we are dwelling in him, and he in us, and this by no work or wisdom of ours, but by his own power and grace. Those are the times when that voice of the Lord, which is powerful and full of majesty, is in our souls, that we can say, while our hearts throb and overflow with love. *"My beloved is mine and I am his."* The power of that voice removes our fears, and causes us to see that our afflictions have been light, and but for a moment, compared with the *"far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,"* which they have worked for us. We see now that these sufferings, which we sometimes felt sure were evidences ot the Lord's wrath, were really the fellowship of Jesus' sufferings, and that to feel them was to be in the clefts of the Rock.

It has been truly wonderful to me, when I have felt adversities of every kind pressing so heavily upon me, and have been sure that they were evidences that God had turned against me, and that I must certainly lose the fellowship of the saints, if ever I had really had it, and must be cast out; when I have seen not only spiritual comforts gone, but all worldly prospects failing, and have felt not only physical strength failing, but have feared that the little mental ability I had was going, and that I was of no account, either in the world or in the church; when blankness was upon my life, and darkness was settling heavily down upon my spirit; at such a time how wonderful it has been to find some words of the dear Lord in my soul with power, and light, like the morning rising upon me, and to be shown in a moment that all this was but an experience of being in the clefts of the Rock, and a sure evidence that I was one of the Lord' s hidden ones, crucified with Christ; that this was *"knowing him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and being made conformable unto his death."—Phil. iii. 10.* To be assured that this is the way the Lord separates his people from the world and self; that this was *"bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh;"* dying with him, that I might live with him, even here; suffering with him, that I may reign with him, even while yet in the flesh, through the power of faith.

Then a constraining power is felt, making us turn our faces toward Jesus in love and praise, and causing our voices to *"break out in unknown strains, and sing surpris-*

ing grace." It is the voice of the Lord, which breaks the cedars of Lebanon, which divides the flames of fire, which maketh the hinds of calve, and discovereth the forests, and causes every one in his temple to speak of his glory. (Psalm xxix.) It is the voice of Jesus, speaking with the holy, compelling power of his own unspeakable love, which removes the curtains of night, and lets in the morning upon our souls; which turns our thoughts and faces toward him in praise and holy expectancy, and causes us to make melody in our hearts unto him; for he says, "*Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.*"

Elder Silas H. Durand

FRAGMENTS

THE love of God in the heart is pure and true, and is ever fixed upon that which is pure and true, and never can rejoice in iniquity, "*but rejoiceth in the truth.*" When it has once been drawn out to another in whom it sees the same love of God, it can never be withdrawn. We ourselves may be deceived, but that love never is deceived. If the fellowship which we thought we felt toward one has been utterly broken and destroyed, then it was not that fellowship which is founded on the love of God; for that charity is the bond of perfectness, (Col. iii. 14,) and the bond of perfectness cannot be severed. The one whom we love in the truth may have many faults, but that does not destroy our love and fellowship, for they are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. In that sense charity covereth the multitude of sins. (I Peter iv. 8.) But true charity does not excuse or justify sins or faults in one's self or in a brother, nor does it cause us to withhold any needed exhortation, admonition or reproof, but rather the contrary. The good and comfort of the one we love is our chief desire, for "*love seeketh not her own;*" and we cannot see one we love in a dangerous place without a desire to extend such help as we can. That love also seeks the honor of God's house, and so directs us to that which is according to his commands.

Who showed to Abel the way of salvation? Who told him what to do to please the Lord, and comforted him when alone and in distress? Does not the same Teacher and Comforter have the charge over his people today ?

Who gave Noah that faith by which he built the ark, and by which he preached righteousness ? There was no man to tell him how to build or how to preach, for he was the only righteous man in that generation. The preacher of the gospel today, and the gospel builders, must receive their faith and instruction only from the Teacher of Noah. He will teach them to profit, and lead them surely in the right way, and uphold them by his arm. All men who assume to tell them how and when and where to preach, are vain teachers.

LOVE caused Jesus to say to Peter, "*Get thee behind me, Satan,*" be-

cause he savoured not of the things that be of God, but those that be of men. (Matt. xvi. 23.) But it is not our province to call a brother Satan because he speaks erroneously. We ought, however, to sternly recognize in our own words and actions, and in those of another, that which is from the wisdom of the world, which is earthty, sensual, devilish, and rigidly oppose it. But we need be careful that we oppose it with the spirit of that pure and peaceable wisdom which is from above.

Silas H. Durand
JULY 19, 1899.

HEBREWS II. 15.

We confess that we have no special light upon the text proposed. From the context, however, it will be seen that the text relates to the object of the incarnation and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. He did not visit our guilty world, and suffer on the cross, without having an object to accomplish, and that object was, to deliver those who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. In order to do this, he took on him the seed of Abraham. Not the children of the flesh, for Paul says, ***Romans ix. 7, 8, "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called: that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all. As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations."— Romans iv. 16, 17. "And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."***

The seed of Abraham therefore, thus defined, were taken on the Redeemer when he came in the flesh, and for them he suffered on the cross. They are spoken of in the connection of our text, as his *"many sons,"* which he was to bring to glory, and for whom, ***"by the grace of God he tasted death."*** And they are also in this connection called *"the children,"* and *"his brethren."* These were subject to bondage through fear of death. For the wages of sin is death, and they had all sinned, and had just cause to fear the execution of the sentence which was against them. The object of Christ's coming and suffering, was to save them from their sins, to bear their sins in his own body on the tree, and to put them away by the sacrifice of himself, by tasting death for every one of them. And thus was he, through death, to destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

In this work of redemption and deliverance, he hath triumphed gloriously; and upon this ground they receive the spirit, not of bondage, again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father.

And they are exhorted to *"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and be not again entangled with the yoke of bondage."—Gal. v. 1.* The perfect love of God commended in the gift of his dear Son, and communicated to the saints by regeneration, casteth out fear. Fear hath torment, but the perfect love of God shed abroad in his children, overcomes it, and casts it out. The object therefore of Christ's life in the flesh, and under the law, and of his death and suffering in the flesh, is attained. The great trumpet is blown; the jubilee proclaimed; the prison doors are opened, and the prisoners are brought out of their prison houses. And there is therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Rom. viii.)

"Jehovah has triumphed, his people are free!"

"Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." And we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the free woman. (Gal. v. 28.) "Loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion."—Isa. iii. 2.

Middletown, N. Y., Nov. 1, 1855

Elder Gilbert Beebe

HEBREWS 8:10.

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

"Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours." — ISAIAH liv. II.

BY these "stones," which the Lord has promised to *"lay with fair colours,"* I think we may understand the blessed truths of the gospel which are laid into the soul by the hand of God. The fair colours are deeply ingrained and embedded in the very substance of the stone, not artificially laid on. They are like beautiful marbles, in which every bright hue and vein penetrate into the deepest substance of the material. Such are the truths of God, beautiful throughout, penetrated with grace and giory into their inmost depths. But these colours are hidden from view till brought out and laid into the soul by the hand of God. However fair or beautiful any word of God be in itself, it only experimentally becomes so as inlaid by his own divine hand into the soul. This brings out the fair colours. How often we read the word of God without seeing the least beauty in it! But let the very same portion come home with sweetness and power to the soul, then beauty, inexpressible beauty, is seen in it immediately; it becomes *"a stone of fair colours."* Salvation full and free, the pardoning love of God, the precious blood of the Lamb, justification by Christ's imputed righteousness, *"wine and milk without money and without price,"* superabounding grace, eternal mercy, everlasting life — these are some of the precious stones with fair colours which God the Spirit with his own hand lays into the conscience.

Elder J. C. Philpot

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing the Staunton River Union will be held at Union Primitive Baptist Church. Located in Pittsylvania County, Va. on Rd. # 605, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in August. The song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
William Midkiff, Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 25 & 26, 1999.

New Hope Church, located at Spearsville, Louisiana, will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron,
Association Clerk
318-778-4217

THE SOUTH ARKANSAS ORIGINAL OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The South Arkansas Original Old School Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Pilgrim Rest Church off Highway 167 north of Fordcyce, Arkansas. Take 273 about 1/2 mile to the Church. Session begins on Saturday before the third Sunday in September (September 18-19, 1999).

We invite all Elders, Brothers and Sisters of same faith and order to come and be with us at this meeting if the Lord's will.

Asso. Clerk, Frances Townley

THE WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held at the Dan River Church on Sunday August 29th, with Greensboro Church being the host. Song service to begin at 10:00 a.m.

Dan River Church is located on Hwy. 700 in the Mayfield community between Eden, NC and Danville, Va.

We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us, and any ministers of our faith and order are especially invited.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Wayne Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 1999

W. F. Griffith, NC $2.00
Grady E. Putman, AR 7.00
Mrs. Novoline S. Stewart, NC 7.00
Andrew C. Agee, VA 2.00
Miles T. Bird, LA 2.00
Willie M. Ratliff, VA 2.00
E. R. Graves, AL 2.00
Mrs. Nellie G. Perry, NC 2.00
Julian Ray (In memory of wife Sister Nellie Ray), NC 200.00
Ms. Anita French, AR 30.00
Victor H. Laws, MD 20.00
Dear Friends, VA 12.00

OBITUARIES

DOROTHY BROOKS

Sister Dorothy Brooks, a member of Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church in Person County, North Carolina passed from this life on March 13, 1999 at the age of 90.

She was born in Person County, a daughter of the late Reuben Phillip Brooks and Alma Hall Brooks. She was educated in the schools of Person County and at Women's College in Greensboro, North Carolina. During World War II, she worked with the Treasury Department in Atlanta, Georgia. Later, she returned to Person County where she lived most of her life.

She joined Shiloh Church on June 19, 1960. Elder David Spangler baptized her and her uncle, Brother Huel Hall at the same baptismal service at Dan River Church near Danville, Virginia. She remained a faithful member until her death.

Earlier in her life she had received a Hope in Christ. Through the years we often talked about the Doctrine we love and she told me how the Lord had sustained her through painful personal disappointments and losses. She said she never felt worthy of His love and care, but she could never have lived without it. She loved to visit other Primitive Baptist Churches also and delighted in the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace, Election and Predestination to the glory of God's people.

It was amazing to observe her faith as she coped with the problems of sickness and age. She seemed to have little fear of death and looked forward to the time when she would be freed from the bonds of earth and taken Home to the Lord she worshipped.

She devoted many years of her life to taking care of the members of her family as they became sick and disabled, and they returned her love and affection. This was and is an unusual family in their love and respect for each other.

She had the gift of a loving, warm personality and she knew how to reach out to others in friendship always seeking to know the better qualities in those she met.

In the past few years she put much time and effort in the interest of Person County Museum of History to which she and her family made significant contributions of antique furnishings and other gifts.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder C.B. Davis at Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church on March 16, 1999. Her body was interred in the cemetery at Shiloh. She is survived by one sister, Margaret Brooks Reade; three nephews, Ben Reade, Jr., Rex Savery and Malcolm Todd. Dorothy's family and friends feel a deep gratitude to Mrs. Jackie Denny, for her faithful care of Dorothy in her last years.

In loving memory,
Catherine Massey Humbarger

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SWEET IS THE MEMORY OF THY GRACE.

Sweet is the memory of thy grace,
My God, my heavenly King;
Let age to age thy righteousness
In songs of glory sing.

God reigns on high, but ne'er confines
His goodness to the skies;
Through the whole earth his bounty shines
And every want supplies.

With longing eyes thy creatures wait
On thee for daily food,
Thy liberal hand provides their meat,
And fills their mouths with good.

How kind are thy compassions, Lord!
How slow thine anger moves!
But soon he sends his pardoning word
To cheer the souls he loves.

Creatures with all their endless race,
Thy power and praise proclaim;
But saints, that taste thy richer grace,
Delight to bless thy name.

Watts.

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EDITORIAL

THE GREAT MYSTERY OF GODLINESS

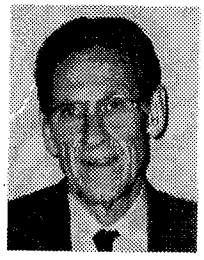
ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

A mystery, is something that is unknown; something that cannot be explained, or understood, with natural reasoning or rationale. It defies all of the laws of nature and the understanding of the natural mind and cannot be searched out or explained with the wisdom of this world. If it can be understood or detected by the natural intelligence, using the laws of nature or human reasoning, then it may be a puzzle, but not a mystery. Man, in nature can only use natural wisdom and understanding, because that is all of the faculties that he has at his disposal; and since godliness is a mystery, using these parameters, it will never be understood, in reality, by man in nature. The only way that this mystery can be perceived is by the revelation of God, the author of the mystery, for he said that he would not give his glory unto another, and if man could solve the mystery with his wisdom then he could share in the glory of it. The mystery of godliness is something that is beyond the comprehension of the finite mind of man, it cannot be explained to the man in nature because there is no common basis from which you can start to compare the natural with the spiritual. The natural laws do not apply, and that is all that man is familiar with in the natural, physical world in which he dwells. There must, of necessity be a mediator; one which is familiar with both the natural and the spiritual world for any sense of understanding to be communicated between the different realms; and there was only one man, born of a woman that has this ability, and that is Jesus who is thoroughly familiar with both realms and has the power to reveal the secrets of the mystery to those that are born of God.

The apostle Paul said. (Eph. Chap. 3, vs 7-8-9) "***Whereof I***

was made a minister, according to the gift of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles God, unto the household of faith. His commission was received from Christ, when he met him on the road to Damascus, as follows. and there was left no room for doubt as to what that commission was, (Acts Chap. 26, vs 16-17-18) "But rise and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I now send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of their sins, an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." I would say that this was ample authority for the apostle Paul to go forth declaring the gospel and making men see, and understand the fellowship of the mystery of godliness, and to make the saints of God understand what has happened to them in the new birth. The mystery of godliness is not governed by the laws of nature; it defies these laws and the oppositions of science falsely so called, only those who have been born of the Spirit can fellowship this mystery, and that is because they have been raised above the realms of this world; their feet have been placed upon that rock of ages and the Lord hath put a new song in their heart and established their goings. When this is true, the preaching of the apostle Paul, was a witness to their own experience and they have fellowship in the doctrine. These are those who have been blessed with eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand the mystery and they were not born with these attributes from their mother's womb; these are perceived by faith which is the gift of God.

(Isa. Chap 55 ,vs 8-9) God said by the mouth of the prophet, ***"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are my ways your ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."*** so until man can attain unto that high and lofty habitation of God in the new birth, he cannot understand the ways and thoughts of God; for man could never attain to this plateau of their own volition. The natural man can sit down here in his natural realm of understanding, comparing natural things with natural things, debating with equally ignorant and unlearned men as regarding godliness, and declare that he knows and understands the mystery of godliness, but he does not. The apostle Paul declared, (1 Cor Chap. 1 vs 9) ***"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."***

This is referring to the man in nature, with a heart of flesh, he has a vain and conceited imagination of himself and his accomplishments and his comprehension of spiritual matters; believing that he is in control of the world and his own destiny. Believing something doesn't make it so, however, and with all of this pride and loud boasting, he shall never solve the mystery of godliness, now or in the future, with his very limited knowledge of the natural realm and with no knowledge of the spiritual realm. It is, and always will remain, a mystery until revealed to them by the spirit of God, and the apostle Paul went on to say, (vs. 10) but God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit.

Man, in nature can speculate, theorize, and wonder, but he cannot know the secret of the mysteries of the heavenly kingdom, regardless of the amount of his wisdom and knowledge in earthly matters, (1Cor. Chap 2, vs 14) ***"For the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolshness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*** Man may obtain a, Doctorate of Divinity Degree, as they like to boast in spiritual matters, from man, but that does not give him any knowledge of godliness. Man can only teach the things of man and not the things of God; as Paul goes on to say in (vs, 10) ***"But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."*** The only school that can confer any degree in spiritual matters is the school of revelation and that is not available to man upon application. The ones upon whom this knowledge is bestowed, are those that were chosen in Christ, before the foundation of the world, to this end; and not because of any earnest searching or study, regardles of how sincere, determined or dedicated that their effort may be, to obtain this knowledge.

Esau, sought repentance with bitter tears but it did not obtain the birthright that he desired; for the lot was already cast into the lap and the whole disposing thereof was, and still is, of the Lord. This is true of all men in nature; as Jacob was the lot of the inheritance of the Lord, so Esau is the lot and the inheritance of the devil. (1 Peter Chap 2, vs 7-8) ***"Unto you therefore which believe he is precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: <u>whereunto also they were appointed.</u>"*** These things are decreed by the soveign and infallible will of God, who does all things well, they are permanent and everlasting: there is no way that man can improve upon or diminish their knowledge of godliness. He may forget or stray from the outward apparent manifestation of this knowledge, but it is there awaiting the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, if indeed they have ever had it, as Elihu said, (Job Chap 32, vs 8) ***" But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty***

giveth them understanding." and this, giving a spiritual understanding, applies to the original and to each subsequent revelation that man receives of the marvelous knowledge of the mysteries of God.

Age cannot attain to it, and youth cannot refuse it, as Jerimiah testifies, (Jer Chap 1 vs 4-5) ***"Then the word of the Lord came unto me saying, Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."*** This degree of understanding of spiritual matters was bestowed, on this occasion, even before the person was born into the realm of nature, and the acceptance of it was not optional. Jeremiah's response to this statement was, ***"Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am but a child."*** but the Lord said unto him, ***"say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak."*** This knowledge is not given to the Lord's people without a purpose, but always for a specific reason and that reason is known only by God. In the case of Jeremiah, the apostle Paul and others it was to preach the gospel, but all of God's children receive this heavenly calling or annointing sovreignly, as did Jeremiah and Paul. and it is not the results of anything that is required of them, to meet the qualifications of the calling, or to understand the mystery. All of the qualifications and understanding of spiritual things are given to them in the calling, from God, and they are always sufficient for the task that is required.

Jesus was God manifest in the flesh, not to the world as a whole, but to those whom he came to seek and to save. To one he was the man Jesus, and to the elect, he was the Messiah of God. God, by the mouth of the prophets, had declared the coming of the Messiah, since the days of Moses, and the Jews had been looking for him but, even then, they did not believe on him whom God sent unto them. (John 1 ,vs 11-12-13) ***"He came to his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."*** They must be born again, as Jesus told Nicodemus, before they can believe on him whom God hath sent. Although they, the Jews, had the word of prophecy, (Rom Chap 9,vs 5) ***"Whose are the fathers and of whom, as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen"*** they could not believe the actual manifestation of the promise, when it was fulfilled before their eyes. They could not perceive the truth because no man can say, or know, that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost and they, as a nation, had not been blessed with this knowledge. Jesus said, while here on earth, (John Chap 7 vs 38-39) ***"He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this***

spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified)". Jesus's coming into the world, being born of a virgin, fulfilling prophecy to a jot and a tittle, dying in the room and stead of the elect and coming forth conqueror over death, hell and the grave are all manifestations of God, in the flesh, as referred to in the above scripture and they are all indeed mysteries when viewed with the natural mind.

Jesus, God manifest in the flesh, was justified in the spirit. Only a perfect sacrifice was acceptable for the sins of the elect, and since man in his fallen state could not fill this requirement, it took the Holy Child Jesus, for whom the Father had prepared a body, without sin, and given the spirit, without measure, to fulfil this demand. Jesus, was verily God, and verily man, and came down to do his Father's will, and the Father's will was that all that he had given unto him in the annals of eternity would be sanctified in him without the loss of one. This required a perfection that man, in nature, does not possess; and it was done in a way that cannot be comprehended by the mind of the natural man and can only be understood when revealed by the spirit of God unto those for whom the sacrifice was made.

Just before Jesus went to the cross, in his prayer unto the Father, he said, (John Chap 17, vs 4-5) ***"I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, Oh Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."*** Therefore, Jesus, being verily God, and having the testimony that God was well pleased with his work, how is it that anyone can even pose the question as to whether all of the saints of God will be justified before God, in the final day. How can any suggest that the atonement was for all, and yet spend their vast resources of time and money, here in this time world, to insure the fact that the work of the infallible God is successful. Where is their, so called, faith? Surely, they are as the Israelites who reached forth to steady the ark when it was being returned to the nation of Israel, after being in the hands of the Philistines for years, evidently believing that God could not take of the situation at hand. God's consideration of like people in this day is as it was in that day. How can anyone believe there will be a judgement made of those, for whom Christ died, in the final day? Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost and as he stated in the above scripture, and as he said, (John Chap 17, vs 4) ***"I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work that thou gavest me to do.",*** now did he mean what he said, or not?

(Rev Chap 20, vs 12) ***"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."***

This scripture has been discussed by many, who believe that this is the great white throne judgement of all of the peoples of the earth when the determination of the destiny of all men will be made. As I understand it, there is no judgement, at that time, of the Lord's people because they have been judged righteous before God before time began, and manifestly so in Christ's coming into the world to die in their room and stead; if there is still a judgement to be made of them, then why all of the suffering and sacrifice that Christ did, was it not sufficient for their sins? Were they not already atoned for and sent into the land of forgetfulness, by his death? This scripture says, the dead, shall stand before God and be judged out of the books according to their works; well this does not include God's children because they are not dead, as Jesus told Martha, when she questioned him about the resurrection and the fact that Lazarus would rise in the resurrection, "***I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believeth thou this?***" Therefore the Lord's people are not among the dead that shall stand before God, on this occasion to be judged out of the books, because they are not dead, they are alive in Christ. The books, are the books of the law by which all who are judged are judged per the demands of the law, according to their works, and all shall be found wanting and be cast into the lake of fire. The law maketh none righteous, but rather is to measure their failure to keep those commandments which were placed upon them.

The book of life, the other book, is the record of all who were chosen, in Christ, before the world began, and judgement has already passed over them as it did the Israelites when the destroyer went through the land of Egypt, in the day of their deliverance. All who did not have the blood of the lamb on the lintel and the door post of their homes, the first born died, but when God saw the blood, the destroyer, or judgement, passed over that house; In like manner, all whose names are written in the book of life do not enter into that day of judgement, it has no power over them because they are not dead, they are alive in Christ, and the righteousness of Christ is their sanctification and their deliverance.

Their justification before God is, and has ever been, as sure as the fact that there will be a heaven for them to inhabit. Heaven is the place that Jesus went to prepare for those whom he loved, those who were given him in that covenant of promise before the foundation of the world, and his promise was that, (John Chap 14,vs 3) "***And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.***". This was a promise that was made unto his apostles and those disciples who were with him just before his crucifixion, and is applicable to all who are faithful

unto the end, but all men do not have faith.

This may not please men in the flesh, but neverless, it is the plan of salvation that is set forth in the scriptures, and it is the only one that will forever assure the elect of their inheritance; include them, as they are in nature; and a doctrine that is based on election by a just and holy God, before time began, and is but made manifest in time, independent of their participation in the process, is contrary to their natural reasoning. This has ever been true, in all ages of time, because man feels that he must share in the glory of the salvation of the saints, and this they readily admit; even as, Moses, in his final address to the children of Israel, said just before he died, he made this same distinction between Jacob, representing the Lord's portion, and Jeshurim and his followers who rebelled against God, when he said, (Deut Chap 32 vs 31) ***"For their rock is not as our Rock even our enemies themselves being judges."*** Those who have not been given to see the mystery, cannot accept the truth, they hate it because they do not understand it. It is really strange that there should be so much animosity towards the Lord's people, by so many, when there are so few. The Lord's people do not have any feeling of hatred toward the world, because they believe the way that they do, for the Lord's people believe that all are just where they were designed to be in the master plan of God and they have no desire to judge or cast stones. They realize and freely admit, that there but by the grace of God would they be. Evidently there is something that the man in nature sees and acknowledges instinctively, without realizing it, and does not understand. Man, in nature hates and fears that which he does not understand and over which he has no control, and is lashing out at that which he cannot understand.

Jesus, God manifest in the flesh, was seen of angels, and was ministered to by them on several occasions; they gave witness to his advent into the world when he was born of the virgin Mary, and when he was tempted of the devil; an angel strengthened him after the devil left him. The angels are available to him at all times, for he told the disciples when he was to be delivered to the mob, (Math Chap 26, vs 53-54) ***"Thinkest thou that I can not now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be."*** They were ever bearing witness to the fact that this work was truly of God, and are ever watching over the saints of God in their journey here in time. Jesus said, speaking of his sheep as little children, (Math Chap 10 vs 10) ***"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."*** Angels are very much involved in the salvation of the children of God and this is but another mystery which will be known only when time is no more and the saints are all

gathered together in that world toward which they press throughout this life.

Jesus, God manifest in the flesh, was, is, and will ever be, preached unto the Gentiles and believed on in the world, by those who have eyes to see and ears to hear. Jesus spoke in parables unto the multitudes, that seeing, the world might see and not perceive, and hearing they might hear and not understand, as he said; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and that he should heal them. The reason that he spoke to them in parables was to make manifest the sheep, who had been given eyes to see and ears to hear, from the goats who were not given the eyes and ears of faith, as he told his disciples, but blessed are your eyes for they see; and your ears for they hear. He was not manifested unto the world at large, but to those who were given him in that covenant arrangement, before the world was formed. When Jesus told them of the Spirit of truth that would come unto them, (John Chap 14,vs 22) "***Judas said unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us and not unto the world?*** " and this is how it is; his sheep are given eyes to see and ears to hear the comforter which Jesus said that he would send unto them, because he went unto his Father and the others were not. Jesus said, (John Chap 11, vs 27-28-29) "***My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life: and they shall never perish, neither shall anyone pluck them out of my Father's hand.***" To the others he said, "***Ye believe not because ye are not my sheep.***" Paul said , (Heb Chap 4, vs 2) "***For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.***" The man in nature will say that they can understand the scriptures as well as anyone else, but they cannot, according to those very same scriptures which they claim to understand, for as Paul said, (1 Cor. Chap. 1 vs. 14) "***But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.***" One of the gifts of the spirit, to the children of God, is the discerning of the Spirit and without this gift they will never come to know Jesus, or to understand the mystery of godliness, regardless of their sincerity, effort or determination.

Jesus, God manifest in the flesh, is received up into glory. (John Chap 17, vs 1) "***These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is now come; glorify thy Son. that thy Son may also glorify thee:***" The hour had indeed come to which all things were focused, the fulfilling of all prophecy and the consumation of all promises. (Amos Chap 9, vs 13) "***Behold the days come saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes***

him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt." Amos is referring to the time when the beginning and the end of all things shall be bought together in just a moment of time, as Jesus prayed, " ***the hour is now come."*** He is the salvation of all of the saints of God, and although no one understands fully the mystery surrounding all of these things now, they will when he comes to gather his jewels unto himself and there will be none of those names missing, which were written in the Lamb's Book of Life before the foundation of the world. Understanding the mystery is not required, in fact, the most brilliant mind of men could not understand the mysteries of God in their fullness; but the chosen generation receives a little here, and a little there along the journey of life that keeps them following along in the footsteps of the flock.

Jesus's prayer unto his Father, (John Chap 17, vs 5) ***"And now, O Father glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."*** The spotless Lamb of God who was with the Father in Zion, the perfection of beauty, before the world was formed, assumed the likeness of sinful flesh; came down into this world of sin and sorrow, took upon himself the sins of the Lord's portion, died the ignominious death on the cross, rose triumphant over death, hell and the grave and ascended back to the glory that he had with the Father before the heavens and earth were formed. The glory which Jesus will share with the Father then will be even more magnificient than before because it will be complete. On the prior occasion, the suffering lie ahead and the children were lost in sin, now they will be sanctified and glorified and all be together forever, a triumphant Savior, the redeemed of the Lord, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, never to part. No more tears, no more sorrow, all in one eternal land of rest, where praise, love, peace and harmony will reign throughout the endless ages.

The mystery here now is that man was even considered, by God, for these glorious blessings in the first place, as David questioned, (Psa 8, vs 5) ***"What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"*** There is no explanation of this marvelous mystery, other than that it was the Father's good pleasure to give unto the heirs of promise, the kingdom that he had prepared for them. The reasons cannot be fathomed by the natural mind; man can only rejoice with joy, beyond any description, when they feel to have been given a portion among those who are blessed with the earnest of the inheritance, here in time, and are made to look forward to receiving the fullness of that inheritance in the world to come. They are blessed to look forward, in hope, to that time when they will be brought, in the unity of faith, and of the perfect knowledge of the Son of God, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Then the mystery will be ended, they will know as they are known, will see and understand the reasons for their

trial of faith, which they experienced in this life, and praise God for bringing them into that safe haven, where there will be no more grief, no more sorrow and no more doubts and fears. All will be love, joy and peace and they will worship and praise him in a manner that they could never do while clothed with these bodies of flesh, which are their earthly garments. O' glorious, glorious, happy, happy day; This is the day the Lord hath made, for them that love his appearing, let us, if we be so blessed, rejoice and be glad as we live out our earthly days looking forward, in earnest expectation, to the experiencing and the understanding of the fullness of the grand and glorious mystery of godliness.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

ARTICLES

THE ORIGIN OF THE HYMN, " AMAZING GRACE "

John Newton, the celebrated English preacher and hymn writer, realized that he was a trophy of divine grace. A while before his death, a brother minister came to have breakfast with him. Family prayers followed the meal. Mr. Newton's sight had almost failed him, and he was unable to read. He sat and listened to his friend as he read the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians. When the tenth verse was read, "By the Grace of God I am what I am," Mr. Newton began to speak: "I am not what I ought to be. Ah! How imperfect and deficient! I am not what I wish to be. I abhor what is evil, and I would cleave to what is good. I am not what I hope to be soon. Soon I shall put off, with mortality, all sin and imperfection. Though I am not what I ought to be, nor what I wish to be, nor what I hope to be; I can truly say that I am not what I once was, a slave to sin and Satan, and I can heartily join with the apostle, and acknowledge, by the grace of God I am what I am."

John Newton could say that with conviction and joy. What had he once been? When he was seven years old, he lost his mother. A little later, he went to sea with his dad and learned all the evils of the seaman's life. Still later, he was forced into the Navy. He deserted, but was caught and stripped and beaten until the blood flowed from his wounds. He had now become a hardened infidel. He fell in with African slave traders. He went from bad to worse until he himself was sold as a slave. It was a Negro woman who bought him, and she gloried in her power over him. She made him depend for his food on the crusts she tossed under the table. He had fallen to the depths of human degradation. And yet the grace of God found him, and saved him, and made him one of the greatest ministers of Christ, and a writer of hymns that have stirred the hearts of men the world over. Truly, he could say, "***I am not what I once was.***" And truly he could say "***By the grace of God I am what I am.***"

Knowing this do you wonder at John Newton's message in the grand old hymn:

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound.
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found.
Was blind but now I see."

When we read this account of John Newton's life, we can understand why he wrote the nine verses (along with the regularly sung verses) which are so seldom used today. Read carefully the nine "missing" verses:

" AMAZING GRACE "

In evil long I took delight,
Unawed by shame or fear;
Till a new object met my sight
And stopped my wild career.

I saw One hanging on a tree,
In agonies and blood;
Who fixed His languid eyes on me
As near His cross I stood.

Sure, never till my latest breath,
Can I forget that look;
It seemed to charge me with His death,
Though not a word He spoke.

My conscience felt and owned the guilt,
And plunged me in despair;
I saw my sins His blood had shed,
And helped to nail Him there.

Alas, I knew not what I did,
But all my tears were vain;
Where could my trembling soul be hid,
For I the Lord had slain!

A second look He gave that said,
I freely all forgive!
This blood is for thy ransom paid,
I died that thou mayest live.

The Lord has promised good to me,
His Word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be,
As long as life endures.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease;
I shall possess within the vail,
A life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow
The sun forbear to shine,
But God who called me here below
Shall be forever mine.

(Selected from the "Baptist Examiner," June 29, 1974, page 5.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"And floods upon the dry ground." – Isaiah xliv. 3.

How often does the soul, born and taught of God, feel that it is this *" dry ground! "* It would fain be fruitful in every good word and work; it would be adorned with every grace of the Spirit within, and with every good and godly fruit without. Let no

one think that the child of God is careless or indifferent either as to inward or outward fruit. There is nothing too holy, too heavenly, too spiritual, or too gracious which the child of grace would not desire inwardly to experience and outwardly produce. But he feels that he cannot by any exertion of his own produce this fruitfulness after which he sighs. As well might a barren field convert itself into a fruitful garden without being tilled by human hand or without rain from the sky, as a soul that feels and knows its own barrenness produce by its own exertions a crop of the fruits of righteousness. But the Lord that knows the desire of the heart, and its inward mourning over its own barrenness, has given in the text a sweet and gracious promise, "*I will pour floods upon the dry ground.*" A partial shower would not be enough. The dry ground would soon absorb a few drops of summer rain. Floods must come, either from the skies or from the streams of that river which makes glad the city of God, to produce this mighty change. These "*floods*" are the promises poured into the soul, the love of God shed abroad in the heart, the manifestations of Christ and of his atoning blood, the inflowings of grace as superabounding over all the aboundings of sin, and the flowing of peace as a river into the contrite spirit.

Elder J.C. Philpot

PSALM 9:1-2.

I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvelous works.

I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing and praise to thy name, O thou most High.

JONATHAN AND DAVID

The history of Jonathan and David in their relation to each other has a very peculiar interest. Even to the natural mind it is a wonderful and touching story; but, as is the case with all the Scriptures, its far deeper, its real and true interest and value, lie in its spiritual meaning. All that was written aforetime was written for our learning in spiritual things in this gospel dispensation. (Romans xv. 4.) This history has a striking gospel significance, which I wish to speak of briefly.

It is undoubtedly true that David was an eminent type of Christ, and that in most if not all of the incldents of his life recorded in the Scriptures there is set forth in a figure some truth concerning Jesus in his work of salvation. Jonathan appears to represent the Lord's spiritual people as they appeared under the law, while Saul as the anointed king represents Israel after the flesh, with the authority of the worldly sanctuary and carnal ordinances, and all that pertained to the first covenant. Saul and Jonathan were related in the flesh, and were both under that legal covenant, as the carnal Israelites and those who had divine life were all together under that

law, and under its carnal service, and could not be distinguished from each other by anything peculiar to either in that legal work. But when David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Saul hated him from that time, while from that same time *"Jonathan's soul was knit to the soul of David, and he loved him as his own soul."* So when Jesus appeared, even in the prophecies of the Old Testament, as the conqueror of death, the enmity of the carnal mind was ever excited against him, and those who testified of him were persecuted.

I will dwell somewhat upon this battle of David. He was in the house of Saul after he had been anointed king, of which Saul was ignorant. Although anointed to be king, the kingdom was not to be given to David until Saul's death, then it was to be established to him and his seed forever. It was probably to signify the permanence of the kingdom to him and his seed that he was anointed out of a horn, while Saul was anointed out of a vial for the opposite reason. David always acknowledged Saul as king while he lived. Jesus was in the legal house, and subject to both to parental and legal authority, but was not known as the anointed King by the legal rulers and princes of this world. He was not under their displeasure as a man, but only when by act or word he declared his sovereign power, and the work of salvation which he came to do. When David was sent by his father to see his brethren, who were in the army of Saul fighting the Philistines, a champion of great size had come out of the camp of the Philistines forty days in succession, and each day had challenged Israel to choose a man to fight him. Upon his appearance all Israel were dismayed at the sight of him, and fled from him. Nevertheless Israel each morning, seeming to forget their fear of the previous day, went forth to the fight again, in the same armor, and again shouted for the battle, as though confident of the victory. But again they were afraid at the sight of Goliath, and fled from him.

The Philistines were gathered at Shochoh, (a thicket) which belonged to Judah, and pitched between that and Azekah (a cultivated ground). To my mind they, who were the great and constant enemies of Israel, represent our sins, and all the vileness of our fleshly nature, and it is in the wilderness of the flesh, between the flesh and the cultivated soil where grace reigns, the battle is waged. The great and fearful champion that comes forth from that camp of our enemies is death. Of him the Lord's quickened people must be afraid, for in the armor of the law they cannot overcome him, but must fall before him. Sin reigns unto death.

It was on the fortieth day of the champion's appearance that David appeared and accepted the challenge. So on the fortieth day Jesus overcame the evil in the wilderness. David could not go to fight Goliath without the authority of Saul, so Jesus must be recognized by the law as having the right to go into the conflict with death. He was authorized by the law, and put forward by the legal authori-

ties as the one man who *"ought to die for the people, that the whole nation perish not,"* though the high priest who uttered that prophecy by the Spirit did not himself know the power of the words he uttered. (John xi. 50-52.)

Saul armed David with his own armor, but David put it off. The law armed Jesus with the flesh. By being made flesh he came under the law. He could not meet and overcome death until he had taken upon himself and put off again that flesh in which sin had been committed, and thus had condemned sin in the flesh. It was only by first being overcome himself that he could overcome the great enemy. He must first die in order to abolish death. The law must first be satisfied by his death, which makes an end of sin, and then death has lost its power. *"He that is dead is freed from sin."* Then the Son of God, who took upon himself the likeness of sinful flesh, in order to die the death due for the transgressions of his people, can no longer be holden of death, but comes forth victorious over him. *"Death hath no more dominion over him."*

All this must be shown in a figure by the action of David, while David must remain alive. So having put off Saul's armor, he chose five smooth stones from the valley. These stones represent an accursed death inflicted upon an Israelite. When a man became accursed he must be stoned to death. David threw one of these stones and brought down the giant. Jesus by his own death under the curse of the law, represented in this figure by the smooth (perfect) stones with which David armed himself, brought death down at his feet, and "destroyed him that had the power of death." He must first die, and then meet death with his own death, and thus overcome him so thoroughly that he can never make any one, for whom Jesus died his captive any more. Jesus fought the battle so effectually in the valley of Elah, the bitter valley of death, that when he came forth out of that valley he even *"carried captivity captive."*

To make the figure more complete David took the champion's own sword to cut off his head. It was the sword of justice which death held over all who were under the curse of the law. But when Jesus through his own death *"finished transgression, made an end of sin,"* and so laid death low, deprived of all his power, then that sword of justice was taken from death and turned against himself to bring his existence to an end.

It was not simply absolute power, as abstractly considered, by which Jesus overcome death, but the power that justice and judgment give, for they are the habitation of God's throne, or the foundation of his power as against death. His people are not simply snatched from death, as a stronger man may take away a lawful captive from a weaker, but they are legally delivered. They are justified. No charge can ever be brought against them, for God has justified them. *"It was Christ that died, yea, rather, is risen again, and is now at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for*

them." His intercession is felt to be effectual, for with the sword of justice justly taken from his conquered enemy he has destroyed him forever.

"The Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side, and there was a valley between them." "And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead they fled. And the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines until thou come to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron." And when the Lord's people see the victory of Jesus over death they arise, and shout, and persue their enemies, and rejoice in the victory that is given unto them through Jesus Christ our Lord.

When David went forth to fight the Philistine Saul inquired who he was. No one seemed to know. Upon his return Saul sent for him and asked him, *"Whose son are thou, thou young man?"* David with modesty and meekness answered, *"I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Bethlehemite."* When he had thus spoken to Saul, *"the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David; and he loved him as his own soul." "Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle."*

What can this act of Jonathan signify unless it be the fact that all of the Lord's people in all dispensations do ever ascribe their robe of righteousness, and all their garments of salvation, and all their weapons of war and their strength, to Jesus? They recognize and testify that all they have belongs to him, and is his gift to them. This is as clearly declared by the holy men in the legal dispensation as by those now in the gospel day.

To the sight of men, Jonathan and Saul were alike as warriors. They fought with carnal weapons, and must both fall upon that same battlefield, overcome by the Philistines. That is the end of all who are under that dispensation. It is the end of all flesh. It is only by faith that a future is seen for Jonathan which is not seen for Saul, in which he and his seed shall be remembered in covenant love and salvation by David. Upon this earthly battlefield he and his fathers fight side by side with equal courage and zeal. David classes them as equals, and speaks of them with equal praise. *"From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty. Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions." "How are the mighty fallen."* That legal covenant could not furnish any weapon to those under it wherby they could overcome their enemies. *"How are the weapons of war perished!"*

For Johathan, David had some words of love and tenderness which he had not for Saul. *"I am distressed*

for thee, my brother Jonathan. Very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." The love of the Lord's people to Jesus is wonderfully described in those few words. In all ages, in all dispensations, in all lands and among all people, it is the same. It is indeed wonderful, a *"love that passeth knowledge."*

"Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father," and defended him at the risk of his own life, and saved him out of his father's hand, who sought to kill even Jonathan his son because of his defense of David. In this Jonathan may well represent the prophets and holy men of old, who testified of Jesus, and declared his coming and kingdom, and who were hated by the carnal Israelites and their rulers, and were persecuted and killed, because they spake good concerning the spiritual David who was to be the Ruler over Israel.

And Jonathan said to David, *"And thou shalt not only while yet I live shew me the kindness of the Lord, that I die not: but also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house forever no, not when the Lord hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth. So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, Let the Lord even require it at the hand of David's enemies. And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him; for he loved him as his own soul."*

This promise was not literally fulfilled to Jonathan, for he died with Saul in battle with the Philistines on Mount Gilboa. Nor were the promises which were given to the prophets to declare among the people literally fulfilled to them. They, with all the Lord's spiritual Israel under the old dispensation, *"having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."*—Heb. xi.39, 40. The *"everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure,"* which was made with them, and which was all their salvation and all their desire, (2 Sam. xxiii. 5,) was not made to grow or be fulfilled in their flesh, nor in the sight of men. Its fulfillment was experienced then in the manifestation of Christ to them through the Spirit, who has now appeared in the flesh, and has openly fulfilled all that they spoke of him, revealing himself to his people among all nations by faith, and showing unto us that his people both under the old and the new dispensations are made perfect only in him.

As we see the heart of Jonathan turned toward his children far in the future, with a longing desire that David would show the kindness of the Lord to them, so we see the hearts of the fathers (the prophets) turned unto their children in the gospel dispensation, and rejoicing when it was made known unto them that the things they declared were to be fulfilled unto us. (Luke i. 17; 1 Peter i. 12)

Silas H. Durand

PLEASANT WORDS

"Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones." (Proverbs 16:24)

None but those who have experienced bitterness of soul can fully appreciate the sweetness of the doctrines of the Gospel. All of you who have been made to know your own weaknesses can truly rely upon the strength of God's love and power. If you have been sick unto death because of your many sins; then, words of grace and mercy are the only tonics to bring good health. If God has worked mightily in your soul in giving you eternal Life your taste has been so changed that words of worldly wisdom have lost their sweetness to you. Words gleaned from the Holy Scriptures which proclaim God's sovereignty, love, unchangeableness, promises, mercy, and grace; all have a peculiar sweetness which the unregenerated cannot taste. If you be so richly blessed that you possess a soul sweetened by the spirit of God's love; then, only pleasant words will flow from your mouth. Let us read the 23rd verse of the same chapter of Proverbs: ***"The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips."***

According to Proverbs 16:21— ***"The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the SWEETNESS OF THE LIPS increaseth learning."*** Both bitter and sweet does not flow from the same fountain. If the heart has been sweetened, sweet words will flow through the lips. If a sinner has been shown the greatness of his sins, and has tasted the sweetness of God's grace; he will speak words of mercy to other sinners instead of words of condemnation. Whatever is in the heart usually comes forth from the mouth. If the heart be bitter, the words flowing from the mouth will also be bitter. Jesus said, ***"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."*** (Matt. 12 :34-35.) Words are like arrows from a bow, they never return. Jesus said ***"That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."*** If you have this wisdom in your hearts, you will be very careful and cautious in speaking that you do not offend anyone. If you be angry, sin not. It is better to refrain from speaking when angry than to speak grievous words which will stir up anger. It is better to be silent when you cannot think of pleasant words to say. Bad words have wrought more evil than plagues, pestilences, battles, and diseases all put together. You may mend any possessions you keep near you; you may heal outer wounds of the body: you may change your apparel; but, you cannot take away the sting that has dis-heartened some poor soul caused by a few careless words spoken by you.

There are words spoken which have done more separating than the wielding of swords. We ought to be very

careful in our speaking, writing, and conversing.

When Christ sent forth the seventy into every city and place where He would come, He instructed them specifically and exactly the first words to be said upon entering a house: ***"PEACE be to this house."*** Even though these words might not be received by the occupants; yet, they were to be said by His ministers. You cannot think of a more pleasant blessing to be invoked than PEACE. No other word is mores satisfying and pleasant than the word, PEACE. His ministers were not to wait until they obtained evidence that everything was in order and that they would be wholly received before they said anything. They were instructed to say upon entering the house, ***"Peace be unto this house."*** Pleasant words were to be said which would be received into the souls of those who really desired peace. Yet there are those who do not seek after peace because they are satisfied with their own righteousness and their soul is full. This agrees with Proverbs 27:7, ***"The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet."***

Pleasant words are as an HONEYCOMB. As my mind is dwelling upon the labors of a gospel minister in his constant search for the sweet nuggets of precious truth so that he may be able to fitly speak words in season to the weary; my prayer now is —, Make me as one of Thy honeybees. As the bee goes from flower to flower in gathering honey; may I be enabled to gather sweet gospel truths from the sacred Scriptures. As the bee deposits this honey into the honeycomb set in the hive. may I be able to feed wisdom, words of knowledge and understanding into the empty souls which hunger for the truth in the church. As the bee is especially gifted in gathering, processing and depositing honey; may I be endowed with special gifts to gather, properly speak, and store in the church special honeydrippings of God's spiritual sanctuary, the Word of Truth. The honeydrippings of the honeycomb is sweet to the taste of a natural man; so is the gospel truth sweet to the spiritual taste of believers. The sweetness of the gospel to the believer is the only thing we can think of that is said in the Scriptures to be sweeter than Honey. See Psalms 19:10. The tongue of the bee is peculiarly fitted to lap the nectar of the flowers, and the bee is considered to be the wisest of insects. The tongue of ministers is just as peculiarly gifted to speak the choicest of Scriptures and to lap from them fitting phrases to suit the need of hungry hearts in most-wisely dividing the word of truth. As bees abound in almost all parts of the natural world; even so ministering servants are found in almost all parts of God's spiritual kingdom. As bees cling to the queen-bee and make her dwelling place to be theirs; the fruitful children of God cling to the church, Christ's bride, and bring their treasures, spiritual gifts, into the church. When I speak of God's ministers I am including even those of least esteem of all laboring children of God.

God has ordained the growth and spread of the churches as He ordained the multiplication of the bees, and their habit of some leaving the home hive and establishing other dwelling places. Churches have flourished from a very small beginning and have so multiplied that new churches are continuing to be established. Some from one colony will leave their home place and establish a new colony. When members are constantly added to the church and new local churches are being constituted it shows a healthy state.

It is true of churches as is also true among bees. Sometimes poison is brought into the hive by bees, which will result in the death of that colony. Sometimes unscriptural doctrine and practice is initiated into a local church which will result in that local church dying. Sometimes ants or other insects will invade a colony of bees and kill them to such extent that they no longer exist. Sometimes enemies of the truth find their way into a local church and destroy it until it can no longer function. May God cause us to take inventory of our condition. God's work prospers. His Church grows. The Lord adds to His Church. Either the church of your membership is growing or becoming blighted or poisoned. Interest is either on the increase or decreasing. Faith of God's children is as a mustard seed. How is it like a mustard seed?? It grows ! ! ! Movement is the sign of life. Good works are the evidence of faith. Is the honeycomb dry? Is there no honey or sweetness when you come together? Sweet doctrines and practices, as well as sweet experiences are brought to the center, which is the church, where all feast together. Sweetness in fellowship, communion, and worship enriches God's storehouse where the saints gather. Is this true where you attend? I had rather be with a few where there is growth than to be with thousands where there is a decline. I prefer leaving a full house and begin in a new place where there is room for honey to be stored. When a family has been completed and children have become grown; one by one they leave their former places of dwelling and take on the responsibility of beginning new homes. There is progress in every realm of God's work. The same law of growth and multiplication works both in the natural and spiritual realm. When the Lord raises up leaders in His churches; when they become of age, they go out into new places to assume their ordained place and position to plant other churches. If it be of the Lord these new churches will prosper and grow. God's supply of Honey will never be exhausted. Hungry and thirsty souls shall ever increase so that there will always be room for it to be deposited. As long as we go forth in the right way the work of the Lord's chosen ones whom He hath ordained to glorify Him shall prosper.

His gospel shall be preached. There will ever be ears blessed to hear and hearts to understand. The sweetness of God rich providence and amazing grace shall be measured and dropped into hearts that have been prepared to receive it.

I suppose that there is no other natural sweetness besides honey that comes to man already refined. Other sweets have to be condensed to make it sweeter and richer. The doctrines of the Scriptures are like honey. The Holy Sacred Scriptures are already condensed and refined. Try condensing honey further by burning and you get an unpleasant odor. Try condensing the Scriptures of Truth by leaving some out and overemphasizing others and it becomes unpleasant even to a soul desiring truth in its purity. God does not use ministers to lessen the importance of any scriptural teachings, but rather to rightly divide the word of truth. None is left out if the whole is rightly divided. There is a curse pronounced upon those who attempt to take away. Some might want to weaken the true teaching of the scriptures by adding the puny work of sinful man to make it coincide with opinions naturally believed. When this is attempted it is not pure doctrine. The doctrine relative to the sovereignty of God is sweet when positively affirmed and proved by the Scriptures, that God works all things after the counsel of His own will; yet, when the duty of man to fear God and keep His commandments is made less obligatory in stressing the point, it is over emphasized, thus losing its sweetness and purity. On the other hand—: preaching the duty of man to fear God and keep His commandments cannot be over emphasized unless God's sovereignty is limited to stress the point. It is not rightly dividing the word of truth when one undertakes to proclaim that man is in no way accountable, responsible, or obligated to keep God's law, in order to prove that God is sovereign. On the other hand — : it is not rightly dividing the word of truth when one proclaims that God does not work all things after the counsel of His own will, in order to emphasize the duty, obligation, and responsibility of man. May God's ministers continue to preach both: the sovereignty of God and the duty of man. I know full well that without HIM we can do NOTHING; yet, I know that we CAN DO all things through Him Who strengtheneth us. It is sweet to know that the prayers of His saints are not in vain. It is sweet to feel that He hears and answers prayers. It is sweet to believe not only that HE IS; but, He also is a REWARDER OF THEM THAT DILIGENTLY SEEK HIM.

Pleasant words are as an honeycomb; sweet to the soul, and HEALTH TO THE BONES. The wholesome words of our Lord are not only sweet to the soul in making it happy, but also heal the sick mind and bind up the broken heart; as well as, healing broken bones. These pleasant words give courage sufficient to go from faith to faith, and from strength to strength. They cause the inward man to be strengthened as honey causes the outward man to be built up. Written articles of faith and church covenants are made healthy by members who adhere to them and abide by them. The structure of church organization could not be healthy unless godly zealous gracious followers of Christ were the constituents. The structure

may be well-founded but it will become unhealthy without the Spirit.

As God pours words of eternal life into our hearts and minds and makes us know the sweetness of His mercy and love, we should, also, pour words of comfort and encouragement into the ears of poor struggling sinners, making manifest mercy and grace to them. Jesus Christ died for sinners because He loved them; yet, He hated their sins. If we be Christ-like — and we are if He be born in us — we will even love those who persecute us; yet, hate their sins. If one goes into error we are to help save the erring brother; yet, help kill the error. We are to call no man unclean; yet, we are not to partake of his unclean deeds. We are commanded to speak softly, not angrily; pleasantly, not harshly; reasonably, not contentiously; and, we are commanded to love one another but not to hate.

If I had to choose one word in defining God and could use no other, I would choose the word LOVE. John said God is love. If I had to choose three words in summing up God's commandments, I would choose THOU SHALT LOVE. Jesus quoted two commandments upon which all the law and prophets hang. The second was like unto the first in that they both began with: Thou shalt love. Love is a pleasant word. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor. Where there is love there is peace. Where there is peace there is ease of conscience. Where there is ease of conscience there is happiness. Where there is pure happiness there is Heaven. Where there is Heaven there God is. We taste it now and then. We experience such sweetness in these foretastes of Heaven that our desires are greatly encouraged with the hope that some sweet day after awhile, we shall be wafted into our eternal home above where we can feast forever upon those sweets which are SWEETER THAN HONEY. May God add His blessings.

AMEN.

Elder E. J. Lambert

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 1999

Mrs. A.V. Krewatch, MD	$14.00
In memory Bro. & Sister Somers, NC	22.00
Mrs. Ruby Wall, TX	5.00
Mrs. Larrie Bowler, VA	2.00
J.C. Carroll, NC	7.00
Mr. & Mrs. John Swilley, Jr, AR	7.00
Robert E. Moore, AL	2.00
Banks H. Conner, VA	2.00
K.G. Thompson, VA	2.00
H.C. Brown, VA	2.00
Mrs. Vivian Underwood, VA	2.00
Ted A. McDaniel, VA	12.00

ST. MATTHEW 5:10.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

OBITUARIES

THE OBITUARY OF SISTER BERTHA SHORT

It is with sweet memories that I attempt to write of Sister Bertha Shelton Short. She was born January 21, 1911, a daughter of Charlie Shelton and Sallie Plymale Shelton The Lord called her home April 27, 1999. She was married to C.H. "Hub" Short, who predeceased her.

Sister Short was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by experience and Baptism August 9, 1943. Sister Short was a faithful member and attended church as long as her health permitted. I remember her as always having such a sweet and peaceful smile.

Sister Short's survivors include one son, Wayne Short of Hurt, VA., two daughters Peggy Preston of Hurt and Audrey McDowell of Burlington, N.C., one brother James Shelton Sr., three sisters Laura Parker, Lucille Goad and Hilda Hines all of Gretna, VA. – seven grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild.

Sister Short's funeral was held April 29, 1999 at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, by her Pastor Elder Marvin Brumfield and Elder Raymond Goad. Her body was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park.

We will all miss Sister Short and may each one be reconciled to God's will.

Written in love and hope
Carol R. Pickral

Elder Marvin Brumfield, Moderator
Oscar Pickral, Clerk

SISTER LESSIE WRAY TILLEY

Sister Tilley was bom August 2, 1901 in Patrick County, Virginia to Fannie and Jim Wray. She departed this life to be with her Lord on November 13, 1998 at the age of 97. She was married to the late Brother Warford N. Tilley for 57 years. Surviving her are two daughters, Elaine Walters of Riverside, California, Nadine Atkinson of Eden, North Carolina, one son, Lee Maynard Tilley of Newport News, Virginia, eight grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren.

When her youngest child was just a little girl, Sister Tilley was baptized by Elder Jacob F. Spangler into the membership of the church which he served in Spray, N.C. In later years when this church was being served by someone else, it was not in order. Because of this, Brother and Sister Tilley left that church and came to Dan River Church. Sister Tilley was received into the fellowship of Dan River upon a confession of faith November 26, 1944. Brother Tilley was made a deacon, as he had been a deacon in the Spray church.

They were a lovely couple and theirs was truly a marriage made in heaven. I have precious memories of their coming to my grandparents' home with the Spanglers and having lunch after church and memories of visiting in their home. He and Sister Tilley entertained in their home and went far and wide to be with the Lord's people.

Sister Mildred Graham shared some of her special memories of Sister Tilley. She told of how she used to drive Sister Tilley and her mom, Sister Spangler, around at the lake and how they had to stop at every antique shop. She remarked that Sister Tilley had wonderful taste and how very much like her mom Sister Tilley was - so much so that they seemed almost like sisters in nature. There was a special chemistry between them. She also shared that one time they asked her to stop and ask a lady if they could buy apples off a tree. The lady said okay if they would pick the apples, so Sister Mildred said to them, "Okay girls, get out of that car" and they enjoyed those apples that day.

Sister Tilley is best described in Sister Mildred's words: "She was a gracious and lovely lady and a wonderful deacon's wife if ever there was one." The scriptures tell us that a deacon's wife is to be *"faithful in all things"* (1 Timothy 3:11). She was truly a dear mother in Israel, firm in her faith, and devoted to her church. When I think of her, I think of the scriptures in Proverbs chapter 31, verses 10, 25-27, and 30: *"Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies." "Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. She openth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness." "Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."* To know Sister Tilley was to love her. I m so grateful for how she and Brother Tilley touched my life.

May the gentle Shepherd fill the aching void in the hearts of all of us who mourn her passing - both her spiritual and her natural families. And, may he reconcile us to know that our loss is her eternal gain.

Humbly Submitted,
Mary Hawkins

PROVERBS 15:1-6.

A SOFT answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.

The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit.

A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.

In the house of the righteous is much treasure: but in the revenues of the wicked is trouble.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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Tribute to Elder W. K. Smith

His old chair is vacant beside the fireplace
No smile greets us when we come in
Our hearts almost burst at the very thought
We have lost our most precious friend

His daily counsel kept our erring feet
From striking many a rough snag
The word of his God was his drink and his meat
He counted his righteousness as rags

Such a beautiful gift as ever was placed
On a poor mortal here below
Twas given to him by sovereign grace
Twas a blessing from heaven we know

At home and abroad, at church or with friends
He was blessed with wonderful power
To remove anger and restore sweet peace
He was a father to us at all hours

(continued)

He served several churches: one for forty years
When duty called, he obeyed
Tho' said he was snatched from blaspheme and shame
When the burden upon his was laid

He was given zeal and love for the cause
By his maker who ignited above
He was called to the labor of "carrying the word"
And his was a labor of love

This world held no beauties apart from his God
For he saw him in each event of time
In the beautiful flowers, the songs of the birds
Some trace of his God he would find

In his late years of life as his body declined
He had little desire here to roam
And ofter when retiring at night to his bed
He would say, "One day nearer home"

He is gone and alas, his absence we mourn
For his presence and comfort we sigh
Yet we know our loss is his eternal gain
He has gone to his Savior on high

Instead of murmuring at the will of our God
We must be reconciled that it be so
And thank the giver of all good gifts
That he was spared so long here below

May God thus use us to the praise of his name
Make us obedient as we journey along
And pray when our purpose in the world is served
We shall meet him in that long sought home

(Written by Sister Delma Smith, Spearsville, La. widow of the late Elder John Lee Smith, the son of Elder W. K. Smith)

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MATTHEW 5: 9-10.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

EDITORIAL

THE CARNAL NATURE OF MAN

"For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. Chap. 8, vs 6-7-8)

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

This carnality of man is that characteristic which God hates, it is the characteristic which separates man from God and which he received for his partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In the beginning when God saw everything that he had made he pronounced it very good, but when man partook of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he was marred from his original state of creation, in like manner as the vessel which was marred in the hands of the potter when he wrought a work on the wheel. When God beheld man in this condition, he said, the thoughts of the imaginations of his heart is only evil continually and that he would not always strive with man because he is also flesh. Carnality is the fleshly characteristic of man with all of the vanity, pride and fleshly lusts for the things of nature; all of the things that are an abomination in the sight of God. In this condition he is no longer in the image of God or in communion with God. This is the state of death that God pronounced upon man for partaking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he is separated from the life that he had experienced when he walked and talked with God. When evil entered into the man, he was no longer pleasing unto God or able to walk and talk with God as in the beginnng, in the garden of Eden. God is totally good and the evil that is man in his carnal nature, is that which alienates him from God and which is directly and totally foreign to this goodness; and is an abomination in his eyes.

The above scripture states that to be camally minded is death; and all men are in this state of death, as they are born into the world, regardless of what they may claim to be, as the "so called" state of innocence until 12 years of age, etc. The things of the spiritual realm are unknown to them and they can never, in nature, bridge that great gulf that will forever separate them from the spiritual realm, unless a change is wrought in them to reverse this state of sin and death. This can only be done by the omnipotence of God, with whom all things are possible. They are dead to spiritual things and are not even aware of the existence of the spiritual kingdom of God which is all around them. They are in the same position as the servant of the prophet Elisha, when a king sent an army to take the prophet and surrounded the city in which the prophet and his servant were. When they awoke the next moming the ser-

vant went out and saw the enemy around the city and cried aloud to his master and said, what shall we do, for his hope of deliverance was impossible, from where he stood, and what he saw. The prophet prayed that God would open the eyes of the servant that he might see the host of God, which was their defense. When God opened the eyes of the servant, he saw that the mountains were filled with the horses and the chariots of fire around Elijah. This lesson is taught over and over again in the scriptures, as when Jesus opened the eyes of the man that was blind from his mother's womb, the disciples asked Jesus, who did sin this man or his parents that he was born blind and Jesus answered that he was born blind that the power of God might be made manifest in him. These wonders were there before the servant of Elijah was enabled to see them, just as the kingdom of God is all around all men in nature before they are aware of them but they just cannot see them unless God opens their eyes and enables them to see. The things of the kindom of God are never known or realized by the natural man; they are only seen by the eye of faith, and this is God's special gift to the elect only. It is as a man is in a totally dark room, void of any light; there may be all manner of good or evil around them, but until the light is turned on they cannot see them and are never aware of their existence, but when their eyes are opened, they see what was there all along. The quickened sinner sees and realizes the utter hoplessness of his wicked and undone condition if the outcome depended on his own arm, and realizes his need for a daysman to stand for him, one that can do what he never could.

(Math Chap 7, vs 16-20) "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." The carnality of man is manifest by his works which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, hatred, witchcraft, emulations, wrath, strife seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings and such like. These are things which manifest the desires of the heart of the natural man, and as Jesus said, the desires and sinful pursuit for these things come forth from the heart: and they are they which defile the man. The carnal mind is enmity against God and godliness, and as long as man is in the flesh he cannot please God; he would never seek after God because he is perfectly satisfied and is at home in this world and knows nothing but the things of nature. The carnal desire of man is for all of those things which he has enjoyed and has lusted for since the fall, and his being driven out of the Garden of Eden into this world of sin and sorrow.

The condemnation of the carnal man is because he loves darkness better than light, because his deeds are evil. Everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved, but, he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God. The thoughts of the heart of the carnal man are ever after the sensual pleasures of this world, gratifying the lusts of the flesh, the pride of the natural eyes, and the vain conceited imagination of his own importance in the scheme of things. Every imagination of his heart is enmity toward God and all things godly, even as was Saul of Tarsus's when he left Jerusalem: it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, because it is of the flesh. This state of man is called death, because he is separated from God, from all that is good, all that is holy and all that is well pleasing unto God, because it is indeed void of any knowledge of the spiritual realm and the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. The apostle Paul, when he left Jerusalem thought he was serving God but he was actually fighting against the truth. He, however was a chosen vessel and was converted to make manifest the power of God, as he said, as a pattern to them that should thereafter believe on Jesus to life everlasting.

This valley of death in which the natural man dwells is void of any spiritual light, that light which Jesus brought into the world, that light by which the kingdom of heaven is made visible to the children of God; that light that John came bearing witness of; that light which shined around the apostle Paul on the road to Damascus. When Paul was blessed to see Jesus, he said that as he journeyed and came near to Damascus: suddenly there shone around about him a light from heaven, and in one recounting of this experience, he said a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun. The sun in the heavens illuminates the world of nature but it takes this light, brighter that the noonday sun, to reveal the things of the spiritual kingdom, and man cannot turn this light on or off. Jesus said, ***"As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."*** It was even as Moses' face that shone from being in the presence of this light, when he came down from the mountain with the tables of the law, so that the people could not look upon his face; even so this light that Jesus brought into the world, is not seen by the natural man.

This light is not as the lights that were created to rule the day and the night, in the days of creation, those were the lights by which all men see the things of nature around them. This light that Jesus brought into the world is to illuminate and reveal the things of the kingdom of God to his elect; the kingdom of which Jesus was speaking when he told Herod, ***"My kindgom is not of this world."*** This is the answer the question posed by Judas (not Iscariot) when he asked Jesus, ***(John Chap 14, vs 22) "Lord how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world."***

He will reveal these things unto his elect only, and those sitting right next to them will never even be aware of them; it is a man seated next to one with a headset on listening to the radio, one can hear the music, but the other cannot, because they are not tuned in to the station from which the transmission is being sent, even so is the communication between God and his children. The message is only available to those who have the connection, which is the Holy Spirit, and you cannot receive this of yourself; they are freely given to the heirs of promise by the grace of God.

(John Chap 13, vs 35-36) "Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light." All men live in this world in total darkness, as regarding spiritual matters, until Jesus turns the light on in their lives. Jesus told his disciples, ***(John Chap 9, vs 4-5) "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."*** Jesus was the only one that could work the works of the Father, and untimately that work is to save the household of faith from their sins. The works that Jesus performed while here on earth was to make manifest that God was ever living and fulfilling the promises that he had made to Abraham and all of the heirs of promise, by the mouth of the prophets who came under the law. This he did, testifying that ***"I have finished the work that thou gavest me to do"*** and this should forever still the cries of the gainsayers who are still trying to assist God in this noble task, but not being able to discern these truths, they continue to follow after the law for righteousness to which they can never attain.

The Cherubs, and the flaming sword which were placed at the east of the Garden of Eden, are figurative of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and they were placed there to keep the way of the Tree of Life; that the promise that God had made unto Adam when he commanded that man should go forth and replenish the earth might stand. Although separated from God and an alien to the life into which he was created, the promise of God that man should go forth and replenish the earth still stood firm and the promised seed still must come forth, per that promise. ***(Rom Chap 3, vs 3) "For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of none effect; God Forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar:"*** Even so the grace of God is not thwarted by the devices of men, or devils; what he has ordained shall come to pass, in the way and in the manner that he determined. This is the foundation on which the salvation of the saints of God is based, it does not stand in the ways of man or his devices, but in the determinate counsel and foreordination of the almighty God of heaven and earth. The unbelief, or the sins of man do not make the faith of God of none effect, or the promise null and

void, God forbid, rather as it is written the wicked are the sword of the lord, and are included for the purpose for which they were intended. His determinate counsel and perfect foreknowledge considered all events, in working out his plan of salvation; there is nothing that shall surprise God or cause him to alter his course in the salvation of every heir of grace. Thanks be unto God, man cannot hinder or help in the plan of their salvation, and aren't you glad that it is so.

This is the only hope that man has of salvation and it is sure and steadfast because it is anchored on that solid rock, that rock which God placed beneath the feet of David when he lifted him up out of the miry clay, and established his goings. As Moses said, (Deut. Chap 32, vs 4) ***"He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgement: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."*** When the Most High divided unto the nations their inheritance, he separated the sons of Adam, and set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel, which is his portion. All men are carnal, in the flesh, but carnality does not separate them from the purposes of God, Jacob is the lot of God's inheritance and in him all nations of the earth shall be blessed.

Jesus came to seek and to save them that were lost. Only God's people are lost in this state of carnality, the others are at home there and will forever dwell there, but the lost sheep shall be redeemed from the filthy garments of carnality and will be given, the best robe, the robe of righteousness which was wrought for them by their Lord and Savior in his death, burial and resurrection on their behalf.

Although the children of God live out their lives here in this time world in the state of carnality, seeing themselves as lost and undone sinners, they have been given a hope of a life beyond that river of death, a life that is above this world and they have been made to believe that this hope is the earnest of an inheritance in that city which all of the saints look forward to, that city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God, David said, ***(Psa 37 vs 13) "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."*** If the children of God did not have evidences of this hope, here in time, they would certainly be in a state of hopelessness and despair, but God does not let them dwell there too long. He gives them faith to carry them over the rough spots. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, evidence of things not seen, and this is God's sustaining gift to those who have been quickened, those who have been born again, not of the corruptible seed of the serpent, but of the incorruptible seed of the woman (Eve) who represents the whole household of faith, in the person of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who overcame death, hell and the grave for them.

Although the state of carnality is very distressing to the sheep, it is one of the greatest blessings also, for by it, they are made aware, constantly,

that they are not their own keeper and to realize their utter dependence on God to sustain them in life and to deliver them from this body of death, when he comes to take his jewels home. ***(Rom. Chap. 8 vs. 28) "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."*** Yes, even the carnality of man works for good to them who love the Lord; it condemns the lost but it also humbles the righteous and makes them realize that they can never claim any good, in and of themselves. They are made to know, from experience, that but by the grace of the Almighty God, they would be even as those who have no hope.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Sister Smith;

I received your letter of July 10, 1999 and enjoyed hearing from you very much. I appreciated your comments regarding my writings in, "The Signs of the Times," and I always hope that they will be of comfort to someone. I especially enjoyed your poem written in memory of, Elder W. K. Smith. It was a tribute to one that has gone on before, and who had a very special influence on our life. I have read it several times and seemed to get something new out of it each time. Those who have had an influence on our lives are very special to us. I have known several that I especially love and cherish in my memories, but have not been enabled to put it down on paper.

This is a poem that would be enjoyed by all who have had those, "special brethren" in the past who have been such a wonderful influence on their lives, especially in the earlier days of our experience, when our faith was so near and dear to our hearts. I would like to see it published, if you permit, but I would not submit it without your express permission. I feel that it would be enjoyed by many who have had such a person in their liife. We have all had brethren, in our younger years in the church, who have meant so much to us, and this poem brings to our own minds those precious memories, and we re-live those precious times again.

Yes, I knew your husband and remember the many times that I have spent in your home, in the earlier years of my going among the Baptists. You both will always have a very special place in my heart. I remember the several times that you both visited in the Memphis Church, and even some of the texts that, ElderJohn Lee Smith preached from. He, like his father, was a very special gift to the household of faith, and will always be remembered by those who were blessed to hear him, as long as they live.

I know that these memories are precious to you and trust that you will continue to be blessed with the knowledge of the affection and respect that

the churches have for you and for his memory. Time goes on, but these things will always remain in the hearts of those who have been blessed with Elder Smith's Gift in the stand and your special gift as an help meet to him. I will always remember you, as a devoted member of the church, and whose whole life was devoted to supporting your husband in his efforts, and in your own desire to be a servant to the church as his wife.

May God, in the riches of his grace, bless you the remaining days of your life, and enable you to attend your home church and churches in your area and enjoy the preaching and fellowship of the household of faith. This is something that we cannot do, of ourselves, but may God keep you and uphold you in your faith as long as you dwell among the Saints of God.

We look forward to seeing you at, The South Ouchita Association, this fall.

In Christian Love;
Richard H. Campbell

Dear Elder Key;

Please find enclosed an article for the Signs, if you think it worthy of space, also a letter to Sister Delma Smith, the widow of the late ElderJohn Lee Smith of Spearsville, Louisiana. She had sent me a poem that she had written in memory of Elder W. K. Smith, her father-in-law, and as you can see in the letter I requested permission to send it to the Signs of the Times for publications, which I subsequently received from her.

I enjoyed the poem because it reminded me of those in my memory who have meant so much to me in my younger days. I believe that it will be of interest to the brethren because it will remind them of such people in their earlier life in the church who were such an inspiration to them as they began to go among the brethren.

We had a good annual meeting this year, in Memphis, wish you could have been with us. I wish that you would try to put us on your schedule for another year, the Lord willing. We would love to have you and anyone else that you can bring with you. Elder Blumfield was at the Little Vine Ole Association this year and promised Elder Chapell that the he would attempt to come and be with us if at all possible.

I trust that you are doing well, health wise and having good meetings in your area. I had hoped to come up this year but it just did not work out that way. Maybe next year, I have always enjoyed my visits very much and love the brethren in that area.

I have not heard from Bro. Strader for a while, I understand that he is in a nursing home. Could you send me the name of the home, and if possible, the telephone number. Someone said he has a personal phone in the home. When you see, or talk to him, please give him my best regards and tell him that I think of him often, and tried to call him once but, not knowing the name of the home, could not get him.

Dear Elder Key, may God, in the riches of his grace, enable you to continue to be a blessing to the churches in your area. I know that you may

not feel to be so, but you are. I hear from the brethren and all speak highly of you and appreciate you as their mininster and also as the editor of the Signs; may you continue for many years in both callings.

Please come to see us, if you can, we would love to have you in the Memphis Church at any time.

In Christian Fellowship;
Richard H. Campbell

Memphis, Tennessee
September 23, 1999

Dear Brother Strader;

I called your son last week, to get your telephone number, and was advised that you were in the nursing center and might not be able to get to the telephone, so I got your address so that I could write you. I have thought of you many times, and started to call you but could not get your number. I hope that you are doing well, and are able to get around alright.

I am sure that you are keeping in touch with the brethren up there, by way of telephone and visits. If you can talk to them and have them visit with you, you are blessed. I just wish that I was where I could visit you and talk to you about the things that are so dear to our hearts and that bound us in the bonds of christian love for so many years, that love of which the world knows nothing. You have been well blessed to live in an area where there are many churches and brethren of like precious faith, and to be so much loved and respected by them has been of great comfort to you over the years. May God, in the riches of his grace, bless you to continue in this love and fellowship with them all of your days.

We are going to the South Ouchita Association this weekend the Lord willing. It is a very precious place to visit, there is such love and fellowship, peace and harmony reigns as they come together to worship God. Surely, these are the heavenly places, in Christ, that the apostle Paul speaks of in the scriptures. I hope that I will be blessed to continue to meet with the Lord's people as long as I live, because that is the most important part of my life.

I had hoped to get to North Carolina this year but did not make it. I am still trying to make it and hope to see you, this year or next year, the Lord willing. Tell everyone that I know up there, "Hello" for me and that I think of them often and hope to visit among them again some time in the future.

May God keep you and richly bless you with that love that you have known for so much of you life. Remember, he promised that he would never leave nor forsake you, and God does not lie.

In bonds of love,

Richard H. Campbell
2171 Allen Court Drive
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ARTICLES

THE BIG PICTURE
by G.B. Bird
Nov. 5, 1954

Before I attempt to even hint at this enormous picture, I would like to say that the picture to which I refer is so vast and we mortals are so small and weak that at best we could only hope to get a slight glimpse of the great picture, And the portion we do see with our human eyes, is only the shadow of REAL, The Apostle Paul speaks of, "While we look on things that are not seen, for the things that are seen are temporal."

So it forever remains an unchallenged fact, that what we do see of this great picture, that is with our natural eyes, is only the shadow of the *real,* and due to our pitiful limitations of vision, we can only see a very small part or portion of the shadow, our mortal or natural eyes can only see even dimly a very few miles, even on a clear day; then the earth offers so much interference in the way of clouds, smoke, dust and fog, that our view of nature and the things of nature, is very small compared to the greatness of even the natural picture, And were we to climb to the tallest mountain on a clear day, our eyes betrays our great limitations, as we begin to look off in the distance, we can see very well for a few hundred yards, but beyond this things become less clear and everything seems to blend into a hazy mass, and even then, we may see the outline of the hills in the distance and even may wonder what is over these hills, but until we move positions we will never know. Were a young man in his month to start out to see all things on earth, how far would he get in his lifetime, were he to live to 90, and how little of the 'all things' would he see, or understand, he could see but little and remember far less, were he to spend his entire lifetime in these United States, he would see even then a very small portion of the things of the earth, and by the time he minutely covered, even one state, and started to return over his journey he would find so many and varied changes, that he could not remember what was, Yet our God sees the entire picture all the time and all at once, because with God *It is* eternal now, hence he sees no change in the finished picture, for there is no change to Him. And there is no conditional element, or the element of chance, in the great picture, No room for any such foreign matter, *in* the unbounded fullness of God's sovereignty.

And we must remember that with all the great painters of the earth, even though they may rightly be reckoned as famous painters, these earthy painters must have the picture first stamped in their mind, before they could possibly put it on canvas, and the picture that existed in the painter's mind was just as real as it ever will be when put on the canvass, and I doubt if any man has ever been able at anytime, to put on canvas all that existed in his mind,

with his many brushes and the varied colors at his command, no, the great artists see enough and know enough, that they know it is physically impossible to fully express all the hidden beauties of God's nature.

If it be a beautiful landscape that is being painted on the canvas, all the painter can hope to do is to merely touch the highlights, of the beautiful scenic view that lies before his eyes, the myriads of insects that lie hidden in that forest, the delicate perfume of the beautiful flowers, the intrinsic aroma of the grape bloom, the odor of the wanton earth, the song of the bird whose nest is hidden beneath the foilage out of sight of the prowler who might seek to destroy the eggs in that nest, beneath the warm body of the old Mother bird, which with her constant turning of these fertile eggs is a very definite part in the natural process of incubation, yet the artist cannot put these things on his canvas.

If the painting be that of a Mother, holding her own precious baby to her loving breast, that look, that feeling both with the Mother and her baby of love and contentment of well being, No artist can paint these living emotions on canvas.

The same is true of another kind of artist, the man that would paint a word picture, of some of the great beauties of God (I am now aware of my weakness in this present undertaking) If his word picture consists of a description of some temporal thing, he is so very limited that he can only touch the highlights of any subject, no subject on earth has ever been completely and fully covered to the point of exhaustion, until nothing more could be said upon it, that is, no man has ever told it all about anything, no chemist has ever reached the top in Chemistry, No man has ever, nor can he ever reach perfection in any field of endeavor. The author, though he may spend tireless hours, days or even years in research and study on any given subject, he not only cannot learn all there is on any topic, but he cannot put on paper every thought that may be conceived in his own mind. Even our language is so limited that there are no words to adequately express certain emotions that mortals sometime feel with surprise and wonder, The feelings of a youth entering into womanhood or manhood, the frustration, the mystery, the uncertainty, the awakening of feelings that scare him, who could ever even vaguely put on paper in print, these feelings and emotions. All we can ever hope to do is to merely hint at these things, And that hint - no matter how ably expressed - carries no weight of meaning to anyone, save only those who have experienced for themselves these emotions.

The poet Watts says:
Thy ways Oh Lord with wise design,
are Framed upon thy throne above,
And every dark and bending line,
Meets in the center of thy Love.

With feeble light and much obscure
Poor mortals thy arraignments view,
Not knowing that the least are Sure,
And the mysterious just and true.

There is no wavering, no variableness, no moving at random, of the great brush that is in the hand of the only Master Painter. It is because of Him that all other painters exist. And because He is the Author and Finisher of our faith, And because of him all other authors exist; every dark and bending line, every particle of LIGHT and shadow, that go into the Picture are wrought with such accurate precision, and eternal fixedness and unchangeable certainty that there are just enough of the light, and no more than enough, and the shadow is just enough and no more than enough and is just as necessary as the light to complete the finished picture, each is essentially good in its place. and of, what men call good and evil there are in this God Painted Picture, just enough of each, and not too much or either not too little of the good and bad, of joy and sorrow of crying and laughter, of sighing and singing, of hoping and despairing of groanings that can not be uttered or songs of praise, All, all are there painted by the Master Painter, and all the hues of coloring are eternally indelible and cannot be dimmed by age, or erased by men or devils, twas from His own storehouse His own unbounded fullness, that all these colors came.

Nothing man can do, can detract a single Iota from this finished picture nor can he add thereto. this picture is Eternal, has no beginning nor no ending, it existed in the eternal mind of the Only Wise God, ere it ever had shape or form on earth or in heaven, and because of that unbounded fullness of the mind of God, All creation had its form, its time and its place. Love is the wonderful BRUSH that has spread the varying hues, and the same blessed HAND that wielded the brush to spread the light color, also spread the dark and the dismal, no other power, being or thing, had any thing to do with the spreading of either the light or the dark.

The dye is set, the unfading dye of God's eternal will and purpose in all things, The Picture is finished, in God's timeless NOW. Nothing can be added to it nor nothing taken away, It is perfect, No wonder we hear Jesus, our Blessed Saviour, saying "It is Finished" Amen and Amen, praise his blessed name forever more.

Fear not trembling saints, it is all forever settled in heaven, no harm can possibly come to you, even though your pathway be thorny and rough and your feet be bleeding with cuts and bruises, it was all by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, nothing else can ever take place, or come to pass, outside his will and outside his love. Even though your name be cast out as evil, by those you once trusted and who posed as your friends, and who have now become your enemies because you have told them the truth, men in whom you once trusted, and with whom you have taken sweet counsel together, with whom you once walked into the courts of heaven, to worship God in peace and love.

This too is a part of the picture, and it could never have been otherwise.

In this wonderful picture, we behold in the Spirit's power, The marvelous portraying of God's eternal love, for poor sinners, in the person of His only begotten Son, full of grace and truth, in this picture we behold in glowing colors, His lowly birth, Then His life of sorrow, a sin bearing victim under the heavy burden of a broken law, who himself knew no sin, being perfect man and perfect God, hence a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, yet in all his suffering, we see the wonders of love shining forth in its crowning glory, love for His Bride, poor sinners, like you and I, How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out, Job was inspired to say: ***"By His spirit He hath garnished the heavens; His hand hath formed the crooked Serpent." Job 26, 13.***

Job also says Chapter 12, 16. ***"With Him is strength and wisdom: The deceived and the deceiver are His."***

He is the first and only cause of all causes, we see him portrayed in all nature, even the firmaments declare His glory, Every movement of every star is declaring his eternal fixedness of all things, This is so very clearly depicted in the wonderous Picture.

While I cannot explain this great picture to another, nor can I show it to any save only those to whom it is revealed, and who are thus blessed to glimpse (as through a glass darkly) a little portion of its unbounded beauties, Yet I think I am thankful to my God, for the hope that He has revealed to me the awareness that this Picture does exist, perfected in the TIMELESS NOW of God, IT IS FINISHED.

Sometimes I feel that it is enough, that mine eyes have been blessed to behold the eternal fullness of my God, and though in my effort to tell the good news to my brethren, it has resulted in my being cast out from their midst, and hated by those I love, Yet I seem to know, that this all is a part of the picture, yet in my human weakness I would pray, Lord let this cup pass if it be possible, Yet not my will, but Thy will be done.

Sovereign Ruler of the Skies
Ever Gracious ever wise,
All my times are in thy Hand,
All events at thy command.

Plagues and death around me fly,
Till He bids I cannot die:
Not a single Shaft shall hit,
Till the God of Love sees fit.

Today in my musings, I am brought bach to the old home in Putnam County W.Va. where I spent my boyhood days, but Oh the heartaches, sorrows and suffering since those early days, while surrounded by parental care, how these precious memories stir my very soul, in remembering my father and mother and there large family of 14 children, of which I was the 7th in order of birth, And today I am the oldest living member of that family There are but 6 of us left, I am now nearing my 73rd birthday Feb. 7, 1955 many has been the unsolved myster-

ies of my life all down through the years of my pilgrimage, but the greatest of these, yea, the mysteries of all mysteries, the great wonder of all wonders, is, how could such an unclean mortal as I ever fit into that Perfect Picture, God only knows. Perhaps this may be my last article, very soon there must be, 'a last article' and my pen shall be lain aside, the struggle shall be over, But what will the end be?; Of my brethren every where, I ask your forbearance and tolerance, If you cannot believe with me, I hope there is no harm done to you who might oppose my views, I am imperfect, for which I ask your forgiveness, and tender my apologies to all, but I have no desire to make any apologies for my God, for BEING SOVEREIGN.

Yours in a good hope,
G.B. Bird

Sent to The "Signs" by
Mr. Buford R. Thornton
420 Highland Dr.
Hurricane, WV 25526

PSALM 29: 3-4.

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the Lord is upon many waters.

The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"WRATH"

The word wrath denotes several emotions including anger, grief, bitterness, indignation and fury. When used of God, wrath refers to His absolute opposition to sin. In no way is the anger of man compared with God's anger. Man's anger is destruction and cursed. ***Gen. 49:7 "Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel."*** Man has no mercy of himself and his wrath is cruel. Let us not fall into the hand of man. Let us fall now into the hand of the Lord: for His mercies are great. God is a merciful God and His anger is a constant aspect of His Holy Righteousness, and man's wrath is an unholy emotion to which we should not give vent. ***Luke 4:28 " and all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,"*** and rose up, and thrust him out of the city.

"O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" Vipers, beasts, serpents, dragon. ***"The great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the devil and satan."*** John the Baptist referred to the Pharisees and Sadducees as vipers. Christ said to the scribes and Pharisees, ***John 8:44 "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh***

a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar and the father of it." John asked the question to a generation of vipers of which there was no answer from. Their own cursed anger which was them to flee from their own destruction to come. Men are warned today and they seek to flee the wrath of man to come. Think and think again of the nuclear power build-up today; man's wrath to come. Cursed be their anger for it was fierce and their wrath, for it was cruel.

God being a merciful God and His anger a constant aspect of His Holy Righteousness, God's wrath warns not His people to flee from God, but by His tender love and mercy compels them to Him.

Hebrews 12:5 "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: 12:6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. 12:7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not 12:8 But if ye be without chastisement, where-of all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons.

To those, whom John the Baptist was addressing when he said, "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," were just and devout people waiting for the consolation of Israel and the Holy Ghost was upon them. It had already been revealed unto some by the Holy Ghost that they should not see death before they had seen the Lord's Christ. (Luke 2:25-32 Jesus presented in the Temple.) To those who were waiting by faith for the consolation of Israel and looking for redemption in Jerusalem heard the voice of one crying in the wilderness.

Words which they had long waited to hear. ***"Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Rom. 11:5 "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace."*** To the remnant, the elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ that was enough to say. When John saw the generation of vipers come about him, he found it necessary to say much for they gloried in it that they were the seed of Abraham; but John knew they were of their father the devil. John was not bashful nor did he fear the face of men for he was full of the Holy Ghost and of power. The Pharisees and Sadducees were a viperous gang, they were all alike, though enemies to one another. A wicked generation is a generation of vipers and they ought to be told so. Note; many come to ordinances, who come not under the power of them.

Now to the word of exhortation and direction. ***Matthew 3:8 "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.";*** we profess repentance and rely upon the doctrine and baptism of repentance. Repentance is sealed in the heart and it is there as a root, but in vain do we pretend to have it there, if there be no fruits of it. If repentance

is sealed in the heart as a root, it is there by the baptism of Christ who has baptized us with the Holy Ghost and with fire, and the fruits are sure. ***John 15:5 "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bring forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. The fruit of the Spirit are what the branches are to bring forth." Eph. 5:9 "For the fruit of the spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth." If we are of His kingdom, we will continue to pray to God to keep us faithful.***

Luke 16:10 "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much."

Col. 2:6 "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." Is this not our desire to walk in the same faith and or the order of the Orthodox churches, and to continue in the faith of the Apostles? Some will answer this question, ***"Yes, it is my desire."*** This Dear Brother in Christ will be praying to God to lead him and direct his path in the strait and narrow way and he will press forward holding fast to the faith with those comfortable words of Christ; ***"Lo, I am with you always even until the end of the world."*** Christ did not say, He would be with us in all our ways. He said, St. ***John 12:26 "If any man serve me let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be. If any man serve me, him will my father honor."***

God of Heaven and of earth gave the oracles of faith to the elect according to the foreknowledge of God preserved in Christ. The first and primary ordinance of the Church is the baptism of the Holy Ghost and with fire, by our Lord and Saviour; Jesus Christ. ***Matthew 3:11 "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."*** The baptism He performs with the Holy Ghost and with fire is in union with Him sharing in His death, burial and resurrection. The baptism of the Holy Ghost, in no way, can be separated from the born again child. The new birth and the baptism of the Holy Ghost and with fire are united in one in Christ.

The baptism of water unto repentance is a symbol of Christ's baptism into the militant church here on earth and is the first ordinance of the militant church along with the Lord's Supper. The word was made flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth, leaving us an example. ***1 Peter 2:21 "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps."*** an example pertaining to His kingdom in His words, things which shall be, things which must be and things which should be. Christ bore the sins of all His people expiated them by His death upon the cross and no man can depend safely upon Christ as having his sins and expiated his guilt, till he dies unto sin and lives unto righteousness. ***1 Peter 2:25 "For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your Souls."*** Not only is He supreme in examples, but supreme in all Holi-

ness and righteousness, having taught His disciples the eight characters of blessed people and plainly in His own words set forth the fact concerning adultery. Matthew 5:32 and 19:8-9 There would be great comfort to the militant churches and members to read these scriptures along with the third chapter of First Timothy and repent. The letter to the angel of the church in Thyatira said, ***Rev. 2:18 "And I gave her space to repent of her fornication."*** There are those whom do say, I have read these scriptures many times, but my consicience will not permit me to comply with them. Brethren, please, I beg you; the conscience is not the final appeal. The final appeal is God and not man's conscience. Due to the persistance of sin, a man's conscience can become seared or hardened; for this reason the conscience can not be our guide. By the Grace of God, we are given blessings which are rich and divine, inspired scriptures which are true. To hold fast to the scriptures is not an injustice to any person but love and kindness to the members. It is a divine biblical right, given by the Grace of God, to reprove, rebuke and exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. To do so, is not taking anything away from any person or depriving them of spiritual blessings. When we, church members, including deacons or ministers, step outside the inspired scriptures to our conscience, we can and must feel assured that five of the letters in Revelations chapters two and three are applied to us. Ephesus, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardus and the Loodiceans. He who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ said, ***Rev. 3:19 "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent. 3:20 "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him and he with me."*** Note: just to hear the voice is not good enough, but the door must also be opened. The five foolish virgins heard the voice but the door was not opened. All ten virgins had everything in common, including the grace, love or charity, of God, except oil, which represents faith.

There is a great difference between Heavenly spiritual blessings and blessings from Heaven. The children of Israel received blessings from Heaven while in the wilderness. The blessings they received were to sustain the natural body and to provide them with strength to continue on to the promise land which flows with milk and honey. Bread, milk, butter, honey and wine are the nourishments to the hungry soul, spiritual food from Heaven and Heavenly food to the eight characters of blessed people. The natural food we receive each day is no doubt food from Heaven and for this food and all other natural and spiritual blessings, we are to offer thanks and pray to God to give us hearts to be thankful unto Him. If we receive the Heavenly blessings, we must follow Him, not enticing words of man's wisdom or man's conscience with cruel wrath. ***Matthew 8:12-13 "There are many come and sit down with***

Abram, Issac and Jacob in the kingdom of Heaven and the children of the Kingdom are cast out into outer darkness; there is weeping and gnashing of teeth." The kingdom of Heaven, (the church), is first above all things on earth and we must seek first the kingdom. To those who seek first the kingdom in faith, will of no doubt be scourged, not only by some outside the church, but even of some false professors in the church, who will seek after their own conscience and believe. The church is first above our everyday work, friends, our children our husband or wife. Christ plainly set this forth in ***Luke 12:53 "The Father shall be divided against the Son and the Son against the Father, and the Mother against the daughter and the daughter against the mother; the Mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."*** Seek ye first the kingdom, and when people say, regardless of who they are, or how close they may be to you, "He loves the church of Christ, Primitive faith and order more than he loves me," that's a blessing to you.

To the true professor in faith, those who by the Grace of God, through faith, possess the eight characters of blessed people, are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Heavenly places and will not fall down to worship any other. A steadfast faith in Christ will produce a steadfast faithfulness to Chirst. Our own close kin will tell us we must give in a little here and there when even kings must own that when their commands are contrary to the commands of Christ, that it is Christ to be obeyed and not them. Daniel chapter 3, Matthew chapters 4 and 27, and Acts chapter 25.

We, the Church of Christ, Primitive faith and order, would not deny any person, any organization or group of people the right to worship as his or her conscience may dictate to them, nor would we deny them to worship any gods they may choose, nor would we deny them the right not to worship, or even to say, there is no God. It is a constitutional right of this United States of America. Let us pray, hope and try that this right will remain for it is the only way this nation can stand as a nation. However, there is a great difference between a constitutional right and a divine biblical right. The divine right and the right to worship as the conscience might dictate was made manifest in Cain and Abel. By the Grace of God, Abel was given the divine Grace of faith to worship God in Spirit and in Truth. By the power of God, the right of the conscience was given to both Cain and Abel. So by faith, Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. At the season and time to the purpose of God according to the election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth, began the most brutal war that has ever been or will be upon the earth, when Cain slew his brother Abel. Cain, who was of that wicked one, slew his brother because his own works were evil and Abel's Righteous. ***1 John 3:12 "Cain who was of that wicked one and slew his brother.***

And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil and his brother's righteous." Cursed be his anger for it was fierce, his wrath for it was cruel. For now the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. The voice, the blood and the cry was made manifest to man, of the first sons of Adam. The voice, the blood and the cry was in Egypt, in the wilderness and on the cross. Christ Himself, the only offering acceptable unto God for the sins of His people whom were chosen in Christ from before the foundation of the world. The Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon the flesh and the flesh withereth, but the word of our God shall stand forever. So above all, take the shield of faith wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the darts of the wicked. ***Hebrews 11:4 "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts and by it, he being dead yet speaketh."*** At the time Abel made the offering, we have no record of the word faith. Genesis 4:2 plainly sets forth the fact that by the Grace of God, Abel was given faith before the offering. ***"Abel was a keeper of Sheep."*** God gave Abel repentance and faith in the promised seed and instructed him in the mystery of sacrificing. Faith was made manifest in Abel, a saint, along with the first example of religion. By the Grace of God, through the sanctification of the Spirit, Abel was made acceptable unto God first and then by faith, the offering was more excellent unto God. Abel lived by faith and died for it. This is one of the first instances, that is upon record, of fallen man going in to worship God. God is a merciful God and communication between man and God was not void due to the fall of man. The strait gate and narrow way was opened to God's elect, according to the election of Grace, when Christ stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. ***Matthew 7:14 "Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."*** Thanks be to God, by the Grace of God, there are a few who do. The Grace of faith here mentioned is vastly different from the false and feigned faith of the hypocrite of fruitless faith of the false professor. It is the faith of God's elect, wrought by the spirit of God in effectual calling. Faith is a precious grace and not only, as it is very uncommon, very scarce. Even in the visible church a very small number of true believers, among a great multitude of visible professors, have the true grace of faith. To those who do, it is most precious. The just live by faith, a truly divine spiritual life. Faith procures all the necessary supports and comforts of this excellent life. ***Hebrews 11:1 "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."*** Here we are given a definition or description of the grace of faith in two parts. Faith and hope go together, and the same things that are the object of our hope are the objects of our faith. (1) It is firm that God will perform all that He has promised to us in Christ to the

elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through sanctification of the Spirit. The divine promise is firmly embedded in the soul and the things which are included in the promise are fruits of the spirit which produce the substance of things hoped for, by the first fruits and the foretastes of them. The true believers in the exercise of faith are filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. Christ dwells in the soul by grace through faith. (2) The evidence of things not seen. Faith demonstrates to the eye of the mind the reality of those things that cannot be discerned by the eye of the body. Faith is the firm assent of the soul to the divine revelation and every part of it and set to its seal that God is true. It is an approbation of all that God has revealed as holy, just and good. It keeps the soul suitable for affection and endeavors and serves the true believer instead of sight and to be to the soul all that the senses are to the body. Faith reflects honor upon all those who have lived by it.

Faith is not a new invention. The Grace of faith, by the Grace of God, has been planted in the soul of God's elect since the covenant of grace. The first best men that ever were in the world were believers in the true living God. They were an honour to the faith and the faith an honour to them. It put them upon doing the things that were of good report and God has taken care that a record shall be kept and report made of the great things they did in the strength of His grace.

Faith goes to Christ and buys the wine and milk, which are the proper nourishment of the new inward man. ***Isa. 55:1 "Ho, every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters and he that hath no money, and without price."*** Faith buys and brings home the tried gold, the heavenly treasure that enriches, faith takes and puts on the white raiment, the royal robe that clothe and adorn. ***Rev. 3:18 "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve that thou mayest see."*** Faith unites the weak believer to Christ as readly as it does the strong one and purifies the heart of one as truly as another. And every sincere believer is by faith justified in the sight of God. The righteousness and obedience of Christ gives faith all its values and preciousness and the righteousness of such a person cannot but be of infinite value to those who by faith receive faith. (Faith for faith) Jesus Christ is God, yea our God. He is truly God an infinite being, who has wrought out this righteousness and therefore it must be of infinite value.

Rev. 1:11 "What thou seest, write in a book and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia." Let us hold in view that the letters were to the visible churches made up of visible people and set up by the apostles shortly after the day of pentecost. There were two of these Churches that Christ did not say He found fault or He had something against. These two churches are Smyrna and

Phelodelphia. Christ said to the Smyrna church *"Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life."* Christ said unto the Church of Phelodelphia, *"Behold I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.*

I will therefore that men pray everywhere lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting. Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Abstain from all appearance of evil. Faithful is He that calleth you who also will do it."

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Elder Benard Moon

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 1999

Gray & Clovis Hall, AL	$7.00
Mrs. Lina Willis, Sr., NC	2.00
W.H. Norman, NC	7.00
James L. Shelor, VA	5.00
Loy P. Rodgers, AR	7.00
Mrs. Hazel Garland, MD	25.00
William Vick, TN	10.00
Richard Lawless, WV	2.00
Mrs. Alice Gibson, VA	2.00
A Friend	75.00
Wallace Harvey, WV	10.00

PSALM 100.

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.

Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

OBITUARIES

OBITUARY OF SIS. OCIE SPENCER BOOTHE

With a mixture of sadness and fondness we recently bid our earthly farewell to our dear sister and, we feel, a precious saint of God, Ocie Spencer Boothe.

Sis. Boothe was born in rural Patrick County, Virginia on Dec. 2, 1896. She was a daughter of the late James Peter Spencer and his wife, Sis. Sarah Ann "Fanny" Adams Spencer, and was also the granddaughter of a prominent

Patrick County minister, Elder Joshua Adams.

On Sep. 1, 1912 she was united in marriage to Thomas Green Boothe, who preceded her in death on July 13, 1970. To their union of nearly 58 years were born five children: two sons, Edgar and Thomas Boothe: and three daughters, whose married names are, Mrs. Gordon (Nora) Walker, Mrs. Frank (Ethel) Nolen and Mrs. Frank (Mary) Massey. It was Sis. Boothe's lot in life to suffer the loss of her husband, all of her brothers and sisters, both of her sons and her eldest daughter, while she lived.

Like her mother before her, Sis. Ocie spent the greater portion of her life going among and loving the Old Primitive Baptists. She united with Goblintown Church by the relation of her experience during the 3rd weekend in April, 1953 and was baptized the following 3rd Sunday. For the balance of her long earthly life she dwelled among us as a loyal, faithful and devoted member of the church she loved so well.

Since she was unable to drive, she always had to rely on others for conveyance. Following the death of Mr. Boothe, she was frequently unable to attend the meetings for this reason. In her last years it was the joy and pleasure of my wife and me to meet her at the Nursing Home at Stuart and take her to church at various times.

The ravages of time and advancing age took their toll on this dear sister's earthly house. Following a serious decline extending over several months, she died on June 1, 1999 at the age of 102. At her request, her funeral service was conducted at the Moody Funeral Home Chapel in Stuart by her last pastor, Elder John Wingfield after which her mortal body was laid to rest in the Boothe Family Cemetery, close by her long-time home place. In addition to her two remaining daughters, she was survived by 12 grand-children and 29 great-grandchildren.

We believe Sis. Boothe died the death of the righteous and sleeps the peaceful sleep of the redeemed, and her body lies waiting for the second coming of the Lord from Heaven. The church agreed to prepare three copies of this memorial record: one for inclusion in the church records, one to be given to her family and one to be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Goblintown Church in conference, the 19th day of June, 1999.

Elder John T. Wingfield, Mod.
Sis. Judy Pendleton, Clerk pro tem

SISTER JOSIE SIMPKINS HOLLANDSWORTH

In memory of our dear sister who passed away on April 28,1999. She was born March 30, 1915, making her stay on earth 84 years and one month.

Survivors are:husband, Martin Hollandsworth

Daughters and sons-in-law: Bonnie and Raymond Howell

Lucille and Tait McCarey

Judy Hylton
Sons and Daughters-in law:
Kenneth and Neligene Hollandsworth
Jerry and Romana Hollandsworth
26 Grandchildren
24 Great grandchildren

She has been a member of Old Union Primitive Baptist Church for 44 years. She loved her church and had the brethren visit in her home as long as she was able. We will miss her but have been reconciled to God's will.

Services were held at Mayberry's Chapel at 2:00 Sat. May 1st. by her Pastor Elder Hale Terry and Elder Larry Hollandsworth. Interment at Captain George Quesenberry Cemetery.

Written by request at our last business meeting by the church.

Elder Terry Moderator
Dorcie Semones—Clerk

SISTER NELLIE JOHNSON RAY

It is with much sorrow and sadness that I write this obituary of our dear sister in Christ, Nellie Johnson Ray, 1400 Fairview Street, Greensboro, North Carolina. She passed away on May 28, 1999 at Moses Cone Hospital in Greensboro, North Carolina at the age of 87.

Sister Nell was born on February 16, 1912 in Guilford County, North Carolina. She was one of five children born to Rodrick and Nora Johnson and was the last surviving member of her family.

She was married to Julian L. Ray on February 8, 1930 and they had a long life together totaling 69 years and 4 months. They didn't have any children of their own but Brother Ray told me that his brother's wife died and left three children. He and sister Nell took his brother's little girl, Janet Ray, into their home when she was 6 1/2 years old and raised her until she was 18 years old. Although she was their niece, they loved her as if she was their own.

Sister Nell joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on December 10, 1972. She loved her church and her church family and was a strong believer of Salvation by Grace. She was a kind and caring person and attended her church meetings regularly.

A graveside funeral was held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery on May 31, 1999 by her pastor Elder Kenneth R. Key. Her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

She is survived by her husband Brother Julian L. Ray and her niece Janet Ray Rumley. May God bless and reconcile both of them to their loss.

Written by request of Dan River Church.

Connie M. Page
September 1999

MATTHEW 5: 7-8.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

How pleasant, how divinely fair,
O Lord of Hosts, thy dwellings are !
With long desire my spirit faints
To meet th' assemblies of thy saints.

My flesh would rest in thine abode,
My panting heart cries out for God;
My God! my King! why should I be
So far from all my joys and thee!

The sparrow chooses where to rest,
And for her young provides her nest;
But will my God to sparrows grant
That pleasure which his children
want?

Blest are the souls that find a place
Within the temple of thy grace;
There they behold thy gentler rays,
And seek thy face, and learn thy
praise.

Cheerful they walk with growing
strength,
Till all shall meet in heaven at
length;
Till all before thy face appear,
And join in nobler worship there.

Watts.

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EDITORIAL

THE GREAT MYSTERY OF GODLINESS

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

A mystery, is something that is unknown; something that cannot be explained, or understood, with natural reasoning or rationale. It defies all of the laws of nature and the understanding of the natural mind and cannot be searched out or explained with the wisdom of this world. If it can be understood or detected by the natural intelligence, using the laws of nature or human reasoning, then it may be a puzzle, but not a mystery. Man, in nature can only use natural wisdom and understanding, because that is all of the faculties that he has at his disposal; and since godliness is a mystery, using these parameters, it will never be understood, in reality, by man in nature. The only way that this mystery can be perceived is by the revelation of God, the author of the mystery, for he said that he would not give his glory unto another, and if man could solve the mystery with his wisdom then he could share in the glory of it. The mystery of godliness is something beyond the comprehension of the finite mind of man, it cannot be explained to the man in nature because there is no common basis from which you can start to compare the natural with the spiritual. The natural laws do not apply, and that is all that man is familiar with in the natural, physical world in which he dwells. There must, of necessity be a mediator; one which is familiar with both the natural and the spiritual world for any sense of understanding to be communicated between the different realms; and there was only one man, born of a woman that has this ability, and that is Jesus who is thoroughly familiar with both realms and has the power to reveal the secrets of the mystery to those that are born of God.

The apostle Paul said. (Eph Chap 3, vs 7-8-9) "***Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles, the unsearchable riches of Christ: And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:***" The apostle Paul's commission was to go forth, from the day that Jesus appeared unto him, declaring the wisdom of God which was a mystery to the natural mind, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world was formed. He was to go forth preaching Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God, unto the household of faith. His commission was received from Christ, when he met him on the road to Damascus, as follows. and there was left no room for doubt as to what that commission was, ***(Acts Chap 26, vs 16-17-18) "But rise and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a min-ister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I now send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of their sins, an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.***" I would say that this was ample authority for the apostle Paul to go forth declaring the gospel and making men see, and understand the fellowship of the mystery of godliness, and to make the saints of God understand what has happened to them in the new birth. The mystery of godliness is not governed by the laws of nature; it defies these laws and the oppositions of science falsely so called, only those who have been born of the Spirit can fellowship this mystery, and that is because they have been raised above the realms of this world; their feet have been placed upon that rock of ages and the Lord hath put a new song in their heart and established their goings. When this is true, the preaching of the apostle Paul, was a witness to their own experience and they have fellowship in the doctrine. These are those who have been blessed with eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand the mystery and they were not born with these attributes from their mother's womb; these are perceived by faith which is the gift of God.

(Isa. Chap 55 ,vs 8-9) God said by the mouth of the prophet,"***For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are my ways your ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.***" so until man can attain unto that high and lofty habitation of God in the new birth, he cannot understand the ways and thoughts of God; for man could never attain to this plateau of their own

volition. The natural man can sit down here in his natural realm of understanding, comparing natural things with natural things, debating with equally ignorant and unlearned men as regarding godliness, and declare that he knows and understands the mystery of godliness, but he does not. The apostle Paul declared, ***(1 Cor Chap 1 vs 9) "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."*** This is referring to the man in nature, with a heart of flesh, he has a vain and conceited imagination of himself and his accomplishments and his comprehension of spiritual matters; believing that he is in control of the world and his own destiny. Believing something doesn't make it so, however, and with all of this pride and loud boasting, he shall never solve the mystery of godliness, now or in the future, with his very limited knowledge of the natural realm and with no knowledge of the spiritual realm. It is, and always will remain a mystery until revealed to them by the spirit of God, and the apostle Paul went on to say, (vs 10) but God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit.

Man, in nature can speculate, theorize, and wonder, but he cannot know the secret of the mysteries of the heavenly kingdom, regardless of the amount of his wisdom and knowledge in earthly matters, ***(1 Cor Chap 2, vs 14) "For the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolshness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*** Man may obtain a Doctorate of Divinity Degree, as they like to boast in spiritual matters, from man, but that does not give him any knowledge of godliness. Man can only teach the things of man and not the things of God; as Paul goes on to say in ***(vs, 10) "But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."*** The only school that can confer any degree in spiritual matters is the school of revelation and that is not available to man upon application. The ones upon whom this knowledge is bestowed, are those that were chosen in Christ, before the foundation of the world, to this end; and not because of any earnest searching or study, regardles of how sincere, determined or dedicated that their effort may be, to obtain this knowledge.

Esau, sought repentance with bitter tears but it did not obtain the birthright that he desired; for the lot was already cast into the lap and the whole disposing thereof was, and still is, of the Lord. This is true of all men in nature; as Jacob was the lot of the inheritance of the Lord, so Esau is the lot and the inheritance of the devil. ***(1 Peter Chap 2, vs 7-8) "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: where-unto also they were appointed."*** These things are decreed

by the soveign and infallible will of God, who does all things well, they are permanent and everlasting: there is no way that man can improve upon or diminish their knowledge of godliness. He may forget or stray from the outward apparent manifestation of this knowledge, but it is there awaiting the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, if indeed they have ever had it, as Elihu said, ***(Job Chap 32, vs 8) "But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding."*** and this, giving a spiritual understanding, applies to the original and to each subsequent revelation that man receives of the marvelous knowledge of the mysteries of God.

Age cannot attain to it, and youth cannot refuse it, as Jerimiah testifies, ***(Jer Chap 1 vs 4-5) "Then the word of the Lord came unto me saying, Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."*** This degree of understanding of spiritual matters was bestowed, on this occasion, even before the person was born into the realm of nature, and the acceptance of it was not optional. Jeremiah's response to this statement was, ***"Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am but a child."*** but the Lord said unto him, ***"say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak."*** This knowledge is not given to the Lord's people without a purpose, but always for a specific reason and that reason is known only by God. In the case of Jeremiah, the apostle Paul and others it was to preach the gospel, but all of God's children receive this heavenly calling or annointing sovereignly, as did Jeremiah and Paul. and it is not the results of anything that is required of them, to meet the qualifications of the calling, or to understand the mystery. All of the qualifications and understanding of spiritual things are given to them in the calling, from God, and they are always sufficient for the task that is required.

Jesus was God manifest in the flesh, not to the world as a whole, but to those whom he came to seek and to save. To one he was the man Jesus, and to the elect, he was the Messiah of God. God, by the mouth of the prophets, had declared the coming of the Messiah, since the days of Moses, and the Jews had been looking for him but, even then, they did not believe on him whom God sent unto them. ***(John 1, vs 11-12-13) "He came to his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."*** They must be born again, as Jesus told Nicodemus, before they can believe on him whom God hath sent. Although they, the Jews, had the word of prophecy, (Rom. ***Chap 9,vs 5) "Whose are the fathers and of whom, as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen"*** they could not believe the ac-

tual manifestation of the promise, when it was fulfilled before their eyes. They could not perceive the truth because no man can say, or know, that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost and they, as a nation, had not been blessed with this knowledge. Jesus said, while here on earth, ***(John Chap 7 vs 38-39) "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified)".*** Jesus's coming into the world, being born of a virgin, fulfilling prophecy to a jot and a tittle, dying in the room and stead of the elect and coming forth conqueror over death, hell and the grave are all manifestations of God, in the flesh, as referred to in the above scripture and they are all indeed mysteries when viewed with the natural mind.

Jesus, God manifest in the flesh, was justified in the spirit. Only a perfect sacrifice was acceptable for the sins of the of the elect, and since man in his fallen state could not fill this requirement, it took the Holy Child Jesus, for whom the Father had prepared a body, without sin, and given the spirit, without measure, to fulfil this demand. Jesus, was verily God, and verily man, and came down to do his Father's will, and the Father's will was that all that he had given unto him in the annals of eternity would be sanctified in him without the loss of one. This required a perfection that man, in nature, does not possess; and it was done in a way that cannot be comprehended by the mind of the natural man and can only be understood when revealed by the spirit of God unto those for whom the sacrifice was made.

Just before Jesus went to the cross, in his prayer unto the Father, he said, ***(John Chap 17, vs 4-5) "I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, Oh Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."*** Therefore, Jesus, being verily God, and having the testimony that God was well pleased with his work, how is it that anyone can even pose the question as to whether all of the saints of God will be justified before God, in the final day. How can any suggest that the atonement was for all, and yet spend their vast resources of time and money, here in this time world, to insure the fact that the work of the infallible God is successful. Where is their, so called, faith? surely, they are as the Israelites who reached forth to steady the ark when it was being returned to the nation of Israel, after being in the hands of the Philistines for years, evidently believing that God could not take of the situation at hand. God's consideration of like people in this day is as it was in that day. How can anyone believe there will be a judgement made of those, for whom Christ died, in the final day? Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost and as he stated in the above scripture, and as he said, ***(John Chap 17, vs 4) "I have glorified thee on earth: I have fininshed the work***

that thou gavest me to do.", now did he mean what he said, or not?

(Rev Chap 20, vs 12) "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." This scripture has been discussd by many, who believe that this is the great white throne judgement of all of the peoples of the earth when the determination of the destiny of all men will be made. As I understand it, there is no judgement, at that time, of the Lord's people because they have been judged righteous before God before time began, and manifestly so in Christ's coming into the world to die in their room and stead; if there is still a judgement to be made of them, then why all of the suffering and sacrifice that Christ did, was it not sufficient for their sins? Were they not already atoned for and sent into the land of forgetfulness, by his death? This scripture says, the dead, shall stand before God and be judged out of the books according to their works; well this does not include God's children because they are not dead, as Jesus told Martha, when she questioned him about the resurrection and the fact that Lazarus would rise in the resurrection, "***I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believeth thou this?***" Therefore the Lord's people are not among the dead that shall stand before God, on this occasion to be judged out of the books, because they are not dead, they are alive in Christ. The books, are the books of the law by which all who are judged are judged per the demands of the law, according to their works, and all shall be found wanting and be cast into the lake of fire. The law maketh none righteous, but rather is to measure their failure to keep those commandments which were placed upon them.

The book of life, the other book, is the record of all who were chosen, in Christ, before the world began, and judgement has already passed over them as it did the Israelites when the destroyer went through the land of Egypt, in the day of their deliverance. All who did not have the blood of the lamb on the lintel and the door post of their homes, the first born died, but when God saw the blood, the destroyer, or judgement, passed over that house; In like manner, all whose names are written in the book of life do not enter into that day of judgement, it has no power over them because they are not dead, they are alive in Christ, and the righteousness of Christ is their sanctification and their deliverance.

Their justification before God is, and has ever been as sure as the fact that there will be a heaven for them to inhabit. Heaven is the place that Jesus went to prepare for those whom he loved, those who were given him in that covenant of promise before the foundation of the world, and his promise was that, ***(John Chap 14,vs 3) "And if I go and prepare a place for***

you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." This was a promise that was made unto his apostles and those disciples who were with him just before his crucifixion, and is applicable to all who are faithful unto the end, but all men do not have faith.

This may not please men in the flesh, but nevertheless, it is the plan of salvation that is set forth in the scriptures, and it is the only one that will forever assure the elect of their inheritance; those who were sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called. They are called from following the ways of the world and made to seek that strait and narrow way that leads to life everlasting, that way described in, ***(Job Chap 28, vs 7) "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen."*** They have been given to know that this is the only way, a way that is not visible to the natural man; as Jesus said, ***"I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."*** There was an occasion, when Jesus was preaching to the multitudes and said, ***(John Chap 6 vs 65) "Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father."*** and from that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him, then Jesus asked the twelve, ***"will ye also go away"*** and the apostles answered unto whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. Those who went back were those who could not accept the truth, because to acknowledge the truth, would manifest that they were not of the flock that Jesus came to call unto himself. They were not following him because they believed the power of the miracles, but, because they did eat of the loaves and were filled, they were looking for what they benefited from the miracles, and not the mystery of the miracles.

This truth finds the same reception in the hearts and minds of the natural men today, they just cannot accept a doctrine that does not include them, as they are in nature; and a doctrine that is based on election by a just and holy God, before time began, and is but made manifest in time, independent of their participation in the process, is contrary to their natural reasoning. This has ever been true, in all ages of time, because man feels that he must share in the glory of the salvation of the saints, and this they readily admit; even as, Moses, in his final address to the children of Israel, said just before he died, he made this same distinction between Jacob, representing the Lord's portion, and Jeshurim and his followers who rebelled against God, when he said, ***(Deut Chap 32 vs 31) "For their rock is not as our Rock even our enemies themselves being judges."*** Those who have not been given to see the mystery, cannot accept the truth, they hate it because they do not understand it. It is really strange that there should be so much animosity towards the Lords people, by so many, when there are so few. The Lord's people do not have any feeling of hatred toward the world, because they believe the

way that they do, for the Lord's people believe that all are just where they were designed to be in the master plan of God and they have no desire to judge or cast stones. They realize and freely admit, that there but by the grace of God would they be. Evidently there is something that the man in nature sees and acknowledges instinctively, without realizing it, and does not understand. Man, in nature hates and fears that which he does not understand and over which he has no control, and is lashing out at that which he cannot understand.

Jesus, God manifest in the flesh, was seen of angels, and was ministered to by them on several occasions; they gave witness to his advent into the world when he was born of the virgin Mary, and when he was tempted of the devil; an angel strengthened him after the devil left him. The angels are available to him at all times, for he told the disciples when he was to be delivered to the mob, ***(Math Chap 26, vs 53-54) "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be."*** They were ever bearing witness to the fact that this work was truly of God, and are ever watching over the saints of God in their journey here in time. Jesus said, speaking of his sheep as little children, ***(Math Chap 10 vs 10) "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."*** Angels are very much involved in the salvation of the children of God and this is but another mystery which will be known only when time is no more and the saints are all gathered together in that world toward which they press throughout this life.

Jesus, God manifest in the flesh, was, is, and will ever be, preached unto the Gentiles and believed on in the world, by those who have eyes to see and ears to hear. Jesus spoke in parables unto the multitudes, that seeing, the world might see and not perceive, and hearing they might hear and not understand, as he said; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and that he should heal them. The reason that he spoke to them in parables was to make manifest the sheep, who had been given eyes to see and ears to hear, from the goats who were not given the eyes and ears of faith, as he told his disciples, but blessed are your eyes for they see; and your ears for they hear. He was not manifested unto the world at large, but to those who were given him in that covenant arrangement, before the world was formed. When Jesus told them of the Spirit of truth that would come unto them, (John ***Chap 14, vs 22) "Judas said unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us and not unto the world?"*** and this is how it is; his sheep are given eyes to see and ears to hear the comforter which Jesus said that he would send unto them, because he went unto his Father

and the others were not. Jesus said, ***(John Chap 11, vs 27-28-29) "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life: and they shall never perish, neither shall anyone pluck them out of my Fathers hand."*** To the others he said, ***"Ye believe not because ye are not my sheep."*** Paul said, ***(Heb Chap 4, vs 2) "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."*** The man in nature will say that they can understand the scriptures as well as anyone else, but they cannot, according to those very same scriptures which they claim to understand, for as Paul said, ***(1 Cor Chap 1, vs 14) "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*** One of the gifts of the spirit, to the children of God, is the discerning of the Spirit and without this gift they will never come to know Jesus, or to understand the mystery of godliness, regardless of their sincerity, effort or determination.

Jesus, God manifest in the flesh, is received up into glory. ***(John Chap 17, vs 1) "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is now come; glorify thy Son. that thy Son may also glorify thee:"*** The hour had indeed come to which all things were focused, the fulfilling of all prophecy and the consumation of all promises. ***(Amos Chap 9, vs 13) "Behold the days come saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt."*** Amos is referring to the time when the beginning and the end of all things shall be bought together in just a moment of time, as Jesus prayed, ***"the hour is now come."*** He is the salvation of all of the saints of God, and although no one understands fully the mystery surrounding all of these things now, they will when he comes to gather his jewels unto himself and there will be none of those names missing, which were written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world. Understanding the mystery is not required, in fact, the most briliant mind of men could not understand the mysteries of God in their fullness; but the chosen generation receives a little here, and a little there along the journey of life that keeps them following along in the footsteps of the flock.

Jesus's prayer unto his Father, ***(John Chap 17, vs 5) "And now, O Father glorify thou me me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."*** The spotless Lamb of God who was with the Father in Zion, the perfection of beauty, before the world was formed, assumed the likeness of sinful flesh; came down into this world of sin and sorrow, took upon himself the sins of the Lord's portion, died the ignomious death on the cross, rose triumphant over death, hell and the

grave and ascended back to the glory that he had with the Father before the heavens and earth were formed. The glory which Jesus will share with the Father then will be even more magnificient than before because it will be complete. On the prior occasion, the suffering lie ahead and the children were lost in sin, now they will be sanctified and glorified and all be together forever, a triumphant Savior, the redeemed of the Lord, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, never to part. No more tears, no more sorrow, all one eternal land of rest, where praise, love, peace and harmony will reign throughout the endless ages.

The mystery here now is that man was even considered, by God, for these glorious blessings in the first place, as David questioned, ***(Psa 8, vs 5) "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"*** There is no explanation of this marvelous mystery, other than that it was the Father's good pleasure to give unto the heirs of promise, the kingdom that he had prepared for them. The reasons cannot be fathomed by the natural mind; man can only rejoice with joy, beyond any description, when they feel to have been given a portion among those who are blessed with the earnest of the inheritance, here in time, and are made to look forward to receiving the fullness of that inheritance in the world to come. They are blessed to look forward, in hope, to that time when they will be brought, in the unity of faith, and of the perfect knowledge of the Son of God, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Then the mystery will be ended, they will know as they are known, will see and understand the reasons for their trial of faith, which they experienced in this life, and praise God for bringing them into that safe haven, where there will be no more grief, no more sorrow and no more doubts and fears. All will be love, joy and peace and they will worship and praise him in a manner that they could never do while clothed with these bodies of flesh, which are their earthly garments. O' glorious, glorious, happy, happy day; This is the day the Lord hath made, for them that love his appearing, let us, if we be so blessed, rejoice and be glad as we live out our earthly days looking forward, in earnest expectation, to the experiencing and the understanding of the fullness of the grand and glorious mystery of godliness.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

VOICES OF THE PAST

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

John 10: 27, 28.

Sheep are peculiar creatures, being very dependent and unable to provide for themselves.

Except for the shepherd's care the sheep would soon perish. Is this not our case? Our spiritual needs are nu-

merous and pressing, yet we cannot supply any of them. We are traveling through a wilderness that yields us neither spiritual food nor water. Unless our spiritual bread drops down from heaven and our water flows out of the rock, we would soon be consumed. If Christ were not our Shepherd, we would fall prey to Satan. We are sinful creatures and if we are his sheep, we shall feel it to be a great display of Christ's love and mercy toward us in coming down to this sin cursed world to bleed, suffer, and die for poor unworthy sinners.

"My sheep," says Christ. How come the sheep to be Christ's? They are his because the Father chose them in Christ out of the rest of mankind before the world was. They were given to Christ Jesus as his bride. He, according to the council of His own free will, and according to His own good pleasure, made choice individually of certain persons. For to Him belonged the sovereign prerogative that he might have mercy on whom he would have mercy. "My sheep." Their names were written in his book of life, so they became his portion and heritage. Christ often speaks of them in this way: "As many as thou hast given me" "Thou hast given them me." As a gift, the Father committed them into Christ's hands. Thus they became a token of the Father's love to his only begotten Son, separating them from among all mankind as a love gift to his Son.

"My sheep," says Christ. They are his for in addition to the gift, he has bought them with a price. They had sold themselves for nought; but he has redeemed them, not with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with his precious blood. There is not one sheep of all his flocks but what he can see the mark of his blood on him. In the face of every saint the Saviour sees, as in a glass, the memorial of his bloody sweet in Gethsemane, and his agonies on the cross. So you see, "You are not your own, for ye are bought with a price." Will Christ suffer those whom he has shed his precious blood for, to perish? If Christ has suffered for us, bought us with his blood, will he suffer our souls to be cast into the pit? If so, where has justice gone that the substitute should bear our guilt, and we should bear it too? And where is mercy that God should execute twice the punishment for one offense? No, my dear beloved ones, He will not suffer any, no not one to perish for whom he died. He will keep them "and they shall never perish." Oh, it is a great feeling when a poor hell deserving wretched sinner finds in his heart a hope that he is numbered with those given by God the Father into the hands of the Redeemer, the Mediator and King of grace; and once placed there, it is an unalterable act. No power can change or undo the purpose of the great God of heaven.

"I am the good shepherd." How good? Sufficiently good to draw a former sinful rebel into the enjoyment of His love and mercy, to supply our ever needs, to stoop down and gather up a weak lamb to His bosom, and to protect his from the hands of Satan. ***"Our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep." Heb. 13:20.*** So great as to present to His heavenly

Father every member of His flock in a spotless condition, having atoned for them, and having cleansed them from sins, in His own precious blood.

"And he said: Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." John 6:65. God's sheep are not only made conscious of their fallen state, but are made willing to return. ***"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Ps. 110:3.*** Are we so stubborn that we need grace to make us willing to return to the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls? Yes, dear ones, we are. We cannot of ourselves return. ***"For ye were as sheep going astray; but are no returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls." 1 Peter 2:25.***

What a mercy it is when the sheep are manifestly brought up out of the ruins of the Adam fall. What a great death that fall was: it was not as many seem to think, losing the sight of one eye, the hearing of one ear, the heart becoming a little hard, a little stumble or slip; but my friends, it was a complete fall, complete blindness, a complete hardness of the heart, it was a complete, total death in trespasses and sins, a complete separation from all spiritual life. ***"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned." Rom. 5:12.*** But what a mercy it is to have and feel the life giving operation of the Holy Spirit, to have our eyes opened, to have our ears circumcised, to be given a heart of flesh, so as to hear the voice of the Son of God in His sweet gospel. Yea, though we are "wandering sheep" wandering is the outcome of our fallen state; but to know it, to feel it, to grieve over it, and looking up to Jesus and crying with a loud voice, "Lord, have mercy upon me a sinner" is a great favor in disguise.

The Lord makes manifest what His power can do, when he brings forth His own sheep from an ungodly world, when they are called out of the spots and places in which they have been scattered in their unregeneracy. He will then display the power of His divine grace in separating them from an ungodly world. He separates his sheep for himself. The Lord leads His people in paths that they have not known. He leads them into His own fold; therefore they become a separate people. Separate in their desires, in their needs, in their pursuits. ***"Therefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean things; and I will receive you." II Cor. 6:27.*** It is indeed a great blessing when the sheep are drawn to follow Him. They will not be deceived in following a stranger very far, for they know not the voice of strangers.

"They hear my voice." The Lord makes a contrast between the elect and the unelect. The Lord's elect will hear the voice of the Son of God His sheep know His voice because a sovereign God imparts to them the capacity to hear, because ***"The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made both of them." Prov. 20:11.*** Oh, what peace and joy there is in our hearts when the Lord speaks to us in

His word. How sweet His voice sounds to a law convicted sinner as we know ourselves to be, when He speaks peace and forgiveness to our souls. How comforting when we are blessed with an inward feeling, divine testimony in our hearts, when we hear Him say, ***"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled" Matt. 5:6.*** To hear and feel the voice of Christ proclaiming mercy and pardon to our souls is a taste of heaven here upon earth. ***"Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isa. 1:18,*** Each of the sheep belonging to the great Shepherd will hear when the Irresistable call comes to them just as Lazarus heard while in the grave when Christ called to him to come forth.

"And they follow me." When many that were walking with Jesus turned back, Jesus asked the twelve "will ye also go away?" They said, "Lord, to whom shall we go?" Feeling our own inabilities and barrenness, where is there to go? The world cannot help us, man cannot help us. The Lord alone is our refuge. ***"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt 11:28.*** Let us go to Him in prayer. May He give us faith to lay hold of His precious promises, and feel them in our hearts and souls to be ours. May God bless us by His grace to follow Him, for He says, ***"My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." II Cor. 12:9. "Faith which worketh by love." Gal. 5:6.*** is the mark of Christ's sheep, and it is of true believers that He speaks when He says, "I give unto them eternal life."

"I give unto them eternal life." There is an implication, therefore that they had lost eternal life, not in the mind and purpose of God; but by their fall in Adam and also by actual sin. This eternal life comes to every elect as a matter of gift. He did not possess it when he first entered into the world. Being born of a corrupt tree, they were born to die. Eternal life is not a product of the soil of humanity: it is a gift. Nor is it bestowed as a reward of service done. The term "gift" shuts out all idea of debt or of reward. We were spiritually dead; therefore, Jesus imparted to us a life which we had not before enjoyed. The Apostle Paul says, "You were dead, dead in trespasses and sins." "Eternal life" cannot be earned as a wage for good works, it cannot be merited in any way, because it is a free gift. He does not sell but gives. "Ye must be born again." What He gives, He gives freely and it is forever. ***"You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." Eph. 2:1.*** When He bestowed eternal life upon His elect who has it, He knew quite well every imperfection and failing that would occur in that man. Therefore what He saw in man would be a cause for not giving, rather than for giving, so it would be inconsistent with the gift of God for the gift to be disannulled. ***"The gift and calling of God are without repentance." Rom. 12:29.*** May we always be reminded of what we were by nature. Do we see the hole of the pit from whence we were drawn? for ***"The***

wages of sin is death." Rom. 6:23. Man merits nothing but death, so life is the free gift of God. Now, to some this is a very humiliating doctrine, but to those who have been made alive to their terrible, fallen condition, it should be a precious doctrine. So may we remember the dunghill where we once grew.

Jesus says, "And they shall never perish." His sheep are said to be born again, so this new life within us is a divine life, so it can no more die than the life of God himself. We live because we are one with Christ. The elect sheep are referred to as the body of Christ. Shall Christ's body be dismembered? Shall He every now and then be losing one limb or another? No! It cannot be. The members of His body shall continue to live because He lives. The power that brought His sheep into this precious state is also the power that keeps them there: for ***"Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil. 1:6.*** The spiritual life in them shall never be starved out, beaten out, nor driven out. The elect himself shall never perish. You may feel at times you might; the devil may tell you that you shall. The Lord will seem to withdraw until we lose many joys and comforts; but "You shall never perish." My dear ones, "They shall never perish," takes in all the elect flesh of Christ. If we consider how this doctrine harmonizes with other doctrines of the precious words of God, we will find that these sheep were made "unto honor." ***"That He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory." Rom. 9:23.*** If the saints of God, just one, should perish will Christ have kept His promise? He is not a man that He should lie. Jesus Christ paid the debt charged to His sheep; therefore, they have no debt to pay. If He has borne their punishment, they have no penalty to suffer. If He has stood in their stead, even justice as well as grace will demand that they be saved. ***"It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?" Rom. 8:34.***

"Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." All His sheep are in Jesus' hands. Can you think of a safer place to be? An acquaintance once said to me, "They cannot be plucked out, but they can slip out and perish." Does not Jesus say, "they can never perish?" Therefore they cannot be plucked out, slip out, fall out, jump out or any other out, they are definitely secure. There are those who, with false doctrine, would deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. "Neither shall any." Not only any man, but the devil, fallen spirits, none will be able to pluck them out of His hands. Oh, what a blessed promise! ***"Because I live," says Christ, "Ye shall live also." John 14:19.*** May God bless you to live and rejoice In His precious doctrine and to feast upon His sweet promises is my prayer.

In hope of mercy,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

THE SEVENTH DAY

I am in Baton Rouge, and for some reason I felt impressed to write on the following subject. I have no doubt in my own mind, but what it is scripturally and experimentally true, but I find myself so very imperfect, sinful and defiled, I want someone else to pass on it.

It needs many corrections in language and punctuation, but before I would have time to do all this, I might destroy it as I have other writings; which might be better in this case. I don't know why I've stayed up till after midnight to write it, as I needed rest very badly.

We seemed wonderfully blessed at Rehobeth Sunday, if I'm not deceived, and we tried to use this subject. I feel we were blessed to go into it more extensively than this writing.

I hope the Lord will see fit to bless us with true righteous Sunshine and Spiritual exercise in this dark, cloudy and eyil day of deception and de-gradation; when the spirit of anti-Christ is ascending out of that dark, bottomless pit. We are entirely dependent on Him to give us light and to keep us in it. Oh, how I do hope we have been called out of darkness into his marvelous light and glorious lib-erties of the children of God. We know all things work together for good to them that love God (I hope I am one of them) through his goodness and mercy. If so, no weapon that is formed against me will prosper, and every tongue of accusation will be condemned; because that wonderful Counsellor, who bore my sins, represents me, having died in my stead I have had some desire in the last few hours, to write a few thoughts, that have been presented to my mind relative to the subject, as presented in Exodus 20:8,9,10, and 11. Please read these scriptures, before preceeding to read this writing.

The Sabbath Day, literally in this instance, no doubt, is the remaining day of rest, - after all the work was finished. It would readily stand to reason, that if the Lord had finished all his work, there was nothing else for Him to do but to rest or to cease from his labor, as is stated here and elsewhere in the scriptures.

Human minds, unless divinely enlightened, cannot begin to conceive of the greatness, glory and wonderfulness of all God's work in creation; of Heaven and earth and all the hosts thereof, to say nothing of the righteous, holy, divine and wise purpose for which they were created, and which they all fulfill to a jot and tittle, to his glory and praise, and to the good of his people.

God gave his people the seventh day, as a day of rest, but gave them six days, before the day of rest, and commanded them to do all their work in these six days and to do not work on the seventh, but to rest or keep it holy; even as He had finished all his work in six days and rested the seventh. They were commanded under strict penalty of death, if they were found doing any work on that day, even as much as gathering sticks to kindle a fire.

Now, dear reader, I am sure our finite minds are far too inferior, and our un-

derstanding is insufficient, to be able to express this wonderful, deep and solemn subject, but I desire to say, that I believe that every phase of each commandment and ordinance, was written aforetime, and was written for our learning, that we (even at the present) might have hope and consolation. Therefore, there is a sense in which all these scriptural laws and ordinances are applicable now, or at least, that is my humble opinion. For example, the Ten Commandments were spoken by the Lord, himself, In fact they are his word The scriptures say the word of the Lord endureth forever, from generation to generation.

In another place it says, whatsoever he doeth it shall be forever. Then his words, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," is as much in effect today, In an anti-typical sense, as it was in a typical sense, when commanded by the Lord to Israel.

I want to be understood. I don't feel that we are under the literal commandment to abstain from all literal physical labor on the Sabbath day, as the Jews then were. We are not faced with that punishment of death in the literal sense as they were. There is a sense through Christ, after the inward man, that the children of God are still under command to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. It is always when they have done fully six days work, after which they are always weary, faint or tired. In other words, it is after they have worked themselves out of tools and timber, and have fallen flat on the mercies of God, who through Jesus, has finished the work of redemption and salvation.

Now, it seems clear to me, that this great subject is amply verified in the old and new covenants as expressed In the 8th chapter of Hebrews (read it). In the old covenant it is implied that they were taken by the hand to be led out of literal Egypt. They transgressed and were subject to the most serious punishment as a consequence. The new covenant was not according to the old. The Lord gives them a new and soft heart, and He makes a new covenant with them. He writes his law in their hearts and puts it In their minds in such a way, that they are safe from violation. They are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

Also, in John's language it says. ***"He that is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."*** Then if it was sin for the children of Israel to work on the Sabbath day literally, so it also would be, for God's people to work in this Gospel Sabbath day. Wherein Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost (not lost now, but is saved), so Jesus finished the work which his Father gave him to do. It has been the Sabbath of rest, from that day till now and ever will be to his people, because the work is finished.

When the Light of God's blessed Spirit is revealed from Heaven, in our poor benighted souls, then we are brought to see our lost and ruined condition before him. After six days of hardwork, we are brought to our wits

end, or to the ends of the earth. Then the blessed Saviour says, ***"Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest,"*** Mark the word rest in this text. The six days are over, when the blessed Lord gives us this sweet rest, in foretaste.

The opposite doctrine to this is that Jesus gives poor sinners a job; but not so. He gives them rest. At his command, they take his yoke upon them, not voluntarily, as all legalists believe, but through the constraining love of Christ which is shed abroad in their hearts. And Oh, dear reader, how easy is that blessed yoke that Jesus gives his poor, humble and bewildered ones, who are weary from a full week's work!

This yoke Jesus gives them off from their own works and constrains them to cease from them and their burdens. They learn of Him, that He finished all the work of their salvation and their entire six days work is in vain, so far as saving them is concerned. How light is the burden of the precious Saviour to a poor, wayworn pilgrim. His thoughts and burden have been that he must do something. When he learns of Jesus that the work is finished, Oh, how light is this precious burden and how easy is this yoke. The customary way to fit an animal for work is to yoke him to it, but in this case they are yoked off from their works, and are given to rest. It is the Sabbath and they are yoked to keep it That yoke is quite different from any yoke formed by earthly wisdom and skill, for they are yoked to rest David described this when he said, ***"He leadeth me beside the still waters; he maketh me to lie down in green pastures."*** Many others also described this beautiful, easy yoke and light burden of Jesus, the blessed Saviour.

In the 4th Chapter of Hebrews it is said, ***"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God"*** Just the opposite to what blind nature believes and advocates. They all believe and advocate works as essential to salvation. It is positively declared that it is rest that remaineth to the people of God. When you see people working in order to save themselves, or some-one else, you may know they are not remembering the Sabbath day; and by this you may know, it is Monday, so to speak, with them. And to clearly show this same doctrine, it is almost universally believed that anyone can help in the salvation of sinners. It must be remembered in the anti-type, no man, nor his manservant, his son nor his daughter, nor his ox nor his ass, is to do any work on this holy day. That is why we advocate that the sinner cannot do any work for himself, neither can all his closest relatives, nor his ox, which all have their anti-typical place and meaning.

Now there is quite a difference in the old and new covenants. Under the old so far as Abraham and his seed were concerned, after the flesh, it was impossible for them to keep the law. The new covenant is exactly opposite. He that is born of God doth not commit sin. He remembers that Sabbath day to keep it holy, not through the carnal or Adamic efforts of nature, but after the inward man or the new man. ***"For if any man be in Christ Jesus he is a***

new creature." He has the new covenant of Grace. He has the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus and is made free from the law of sin and death.

He believes In his heart, although when delivered to the fleshly mind, he will at least to some extent, practice works just like anyone else. But as Paul said, ***"It is no longer I that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in me."*** So then, the being, soul or spirit that is in the child of God, or that he posesses, sins not, and he always remembers the Sabbath day and keeps it holy, through the light and influence and yoke of the blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, who works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. ***"They are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God before ordained that they should walk in them."*** So it is a good work that is worked in them to remember the Holy Sabbath of rest, of the finished work of redemption and salvation.

Christ said, ***"I have finished the work"*** Then the six days are over, and when the light of the Saviour reveals this to us, we cease from our works. We enter Into that rest the Saviour gives. How sweet it is to the poor, humble child of God, when this beautiful Sabbath begins to dawn from the darkness and toil to a full week's work, which has been all in vain. When the Sun is above all the timber, and shining above the bright ness of the noonday; when the blessed Saviour gives us that rest and trust in him as the Lamb that taketh away our sins, we are overcome with joy and gladness; and this is truly the Sabbath of the Lord.

The work is over, sweet rest is ours to enjoy. But as long as we are in the flesh, there will come other days of the week, and we will still find ourselves entangled, through our fleshy mind. The light of this beautiful Sabbath will often be obscured and we will, to some extent, become burdened in our experience. The blessed Saviour visits us again and again and restores the joys of our salvation, and gives us rest and peace and, blessed satisfaction In him. The eternal Sabbath is In existence, so to speak, even as all the host of Heaven and earth, are finished, but we are only given the earnest of our inheritance here below, which means the interest on the whole. So if the little seasons of rest that are manifested or given to us, are so sweet and glorious and precious here in time, what will the principal or the fullness of this inheritance be in that rest beyond the shades of death and the shores of time, when we shall have laid down this vile, corrupt and sinful body, wherein we groan and weep and mourn?

When we come forth formed and fashioned like our blessed Saviour, without sin and corruption, then we will always live, body and soul, in that eternal Sabbath. No more of the toil, groans and afflictions, as we are subject to in the flesh, but eternal, glorious and peaceful rest, as is expressed in Revelation 14:13, ***"And I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, sayeth the Spirit, they shall rest***

from their labors; and their works which follow them, are the works that God works in them, both to will and to do his own good pleasure."

Also in Revelation 7th chapter we find that John saw these same people (who are given to remember the Sabbath to keep it holy) stand before God in white raiment So they have kept the Sabbath in the Spirit of Christ, and all the other commandments, and they have cried salvation be unto our God and unto him that sitteth on the throne. Notice what they cried; and look around and see who they are. They also have washed their robes, not in literal water nor human cleansing, nor in their own works, because they have remembered the Sabbath day and kept it holy. Therefore, they have ceased from their own works as God did from his. (See Hebrews 4th chapter.)

The best of Revelation 7 is where He said, ***"For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."*** Oh, dear child of the heavenly kingdom, how I humbly hope at times, if not deceived, that I am one of those that have been made to feel the sweet yoke and burden and rest of Christ the Saviour. And that some day all tears of sorrow shall be wiped away and I may be given to praise and glorify the blessed Saviour forever and ever, with all those who have come out of tribulations.

Elder R.W. Rhodes

THE FUTURE

At this time I want to notice the following Scripture: ***"But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us (2 Cor. 1:9, 10)."*** This is a history of the apostle's salvation. Is it the history of yours?

Let us notice John 6:37. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. We have in this passage three of the fundamental points of doctrine. Election, effectual calling, and the preservation of the saints, is clearly and emphatically taught here. To deny one of these points is to deny the whole. If one is left out of God's choice; if one thus chosen is not brought; if one thus brought is not kept, then the doctrine is worthless. This is the history of the salvation of the people of God. Is it the history of your salvation?

What did this declaration of truth do for you? Not the first thing. The choice of God did not bring you to Him; the declaration of His effectual work in bringing men and women to him, and in keeping them from every enemy that would arise did not do a thing for you. God's truth must be made to live in us; there must be a manifestation in our lives of the doctrine. This manifestation was made to one, a pattern left on the sacred pages of the New Testament, to wit, the apostle Paul.

This work is shown in types and shadows, in figures and allegories all through the Bible, but brought to its full prominence in the history of Paul's life, and in a marked degree in every child of God.

As we look in on the Apostle in his second letter to these Corinthians, it is with delight that we read of his knowledge of the travel of a child of God. He had learned contentment in whatever state that he was in (Phil. 4:11), and his afflictions and his comfort were all tied in with the past and the present and the future. This sentence of death was not something acquired or apprehended or intercepted, but it was placed in him by the Spirit's mighty power. I have the Scriptures on my side about the past, both as to my experience and Paul's; likewise it is on our side about the present. If his testimony by inspiration, and mine (I hope) by revelation, does not convince, then it is not because of the weakness of what he and I have been delivered from, but because that the sentence of death is lacking in unbelievers. His trust for deliverance was justified just before his death, was made manifest in complete triumph. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Were the disciples ever commanded to have faith in themselves? Did the New Testament writers give us one example whereby we were to have faith in ourselves or in one another?

Trees always come before fruit. It is the tree that makes the fruit. The fruit does not bear the tree, but rather the tree bears the fruit. Any source of fruit receives credit for the fruit. Have we got a tree, either in reality or in a symbol, that is set in the nature of men, which will enable us to have faith in it for the future? Which of nature's gifts will we have faith in? It can not be the sword, for if we use that, we shall perish by it (Matt. 26:52); it can not be the natural mind for certainly our hope for the future must be in something more than foolishness (1 Cor. 2:14; it can not be, in the carnal mind for it is not, and can not be, subject to the law of God and is death (Rom. 8: 6,7); it can not be money for it had to perish with the user long ago (Acts 8:20); it can not be by the mighty and wise and noble, for but few of that kind are called and in that call they become the least; then in what shall we believe in for the future? Where is our faith coming from? It is all coming to us as a fruit of the Spirit. Faith is the gift of God, the product of the mighty working power of the in-wrought energy of God's Spirit (Eph. 1:19, 20; 2:8; Gal. 5:22). This faith is in God.

We sing:

" 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far
And grace will lead me home."

And we haven't had a hymnologist or chorister that would dare make two

kinds of grace out of the experience of John Newton or Paul, but we sometimes, in this enlightened day, find folks preaching two kinds of grace. One kind saves, the other would, if you would. My future, as well as the future of the church of Jesus Christ is dependent on saving grace.

There are two kinds of looking to the future. One is begging God to lead and show us the way; the other is a dead traditional belief in the past, resting (not in his love Zeph. 3:17), but in laurels of long ago, pointing with pride to this man or that man or the other. What are we looking to for deliverance? Is our hope in God that raises the dead? Or is it in the name of yesterday's leaders? I would feel indeed sorry for the man that is not worried about present conditions among the Old School Baptists, but as bad as his condition would be, it is not as bad as it would be if I got to the place that I believed that about face was all that was needed to remedy the situation. How full of unbelief I am when I say one that has wandered away is able to find the way back. If the future of the church has depended on that in the past we are singing the wrong song, and we are preaching the wrong doctrine, and it would be becoming in us to change accordingly. If I did not know the way any better than to deviate from it, and my works were not the kind that keeps me, I feel mighty poorly about me getting to a former position. Lack of wisdom will not improve one's perception of the right way as we travel along further away; then I do not see how to get back. Lack of power to stay in the right way will not improve as I remain without it; then I do not see how that I can return, seeing that I am weak in both wisdom and power.

But, dear brethren, there is something much better than all of this, for, if you have been on a prodigal road, you learned that all this is a mess of husks. This kind of doctrine (if you will, God will) was placed on our brethren many times in the past. It is a galling doctrine and the church has not come to where it is by trusting in it. Grace and the in-wrought righteousness of Jesus Christ is a balm for the poor and needy. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for their's is the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5:3). It was given to the poor, and the poor we always have them with us (Matt. 26:11), thus as long as we have them with us they will have the kingdom of heaven. It used to be the pleasure of our heavenly Father to give the kingdom to the little flock, which is as poor as it is little. If he gave this kingdom to the poor, since when has it become their's by their wisdom, ability, riches of the flesh?

The poor own this kingdom. It is a rich kingdom, and they are joint heirs with the King of it. The subjects of this kingdom are brought into its pleasant borders by the quickening power of God's Spirit. Being begotten again to an inheritance that is beyond this life, they are not left to shift for themselves, but are kept ready for that which is to come. Let me state here that if I am not deceived, my being kept ready is just as sure as the inheritance is safe in its laid up place (Psa.

31:19; Col. 1:5; 2 Tim. 4:8). I do not see any way for enemies, inwardly or outwardly, to get into that sacred abode and destroy that inheritance. He who called me, as I humbly hope, out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God, has promised to never cast out, never leave, not to leave comfortless.

In the days of Gideon a small remnant was saved. This salvation was of the Lord. In the days of Daniel a small remnant was saved. This salvation was of the Lord. In the days of Elijah a remnant according to election was saved. This salvation was of the Lord. In the apostle's day there was, at the precise time of which he spoke, a remnant according to the election of grace and they were saved by grace. If we are preaching what Paul preached, we, as boldly as he ever said it, are preaching salvation by grace for the fiery trials ahead, and, since I believe that when the Lord comes the second time without sin unto salvation that he will find faith in the earth, I feel just as sure as God is on his throne that those faithful people will be saying then, That there is a remnant today according to the election of grace.

This church was alright when I came to it. I am not condoning the evil among us; I will rebuke and reprove, exhort and admonish as long as I find it in my people. I will thank God for this church as long as breath is in this body, just like Paul did the Corinthians, even though I find in the body things that ought not to be there just like he did there. That little church is still alive down in Alabama that gave me my first taste of heaven below in a church capacity. As I have said, she was alright then, and as I have many times since then sat in her midst, sharing her joys and sorrows, I feel today that she is still faithfully keeping house for the Lord. Her membership has rose and fell over the years, but I am sure that when it was the least in numbers that God was taking care of her then; that every blessing belonged to those members as much as when the membership was larger. Now that I am a member in Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore, I feel that I can thank God for her, as I can thank him for past blessings down in Alabama. The two churches will survive as long as it is the will of our Father. They will be in a sad way when Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or some weakling like the writer, has to back track and get them on the right road. But how happy and contented is that church, at home, abroad, on the land, on the sea, in times of sorrow, in times of weal or woe, in times of thanksgiving, in times of brotherly love and affections is blessed to sing:

"The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures."

for ere long we shall sing the song of triumph in yonder's world and shall render all praise and honor and glory to the Captain of our salvation, past, present and for all time to come.

Elder W.D. Griffin

CONTRIBUTIONS

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OBITUARIES

MARY BELLE TOWNLEY NEAL

Mary Belle Townley Neal may God be with me.

It is with great sorrow and sadness that I try to write this obituary of our dear sister in Christ. Mary Belle Townley Neal of Benton, Arkansas passed away at her home Thursday June 3, 1999. She was 56 years old, She was born October 15, 1942. To Elder John Clovis Townley and Frances Rhodes Townley. She joined Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church at Fordyce, Arkansas September 15, 1996. She is survived by her husband of 30 years, George Franklin Neal. One stepson and wife Willie and Charlet Neal and Family of Benton, Arkansas. One stepdaughter Izeta Vallijos of Barstow, California. Her mother Frances Rhodes Townley of Benton, Arkansas. One sister Barbara Fish of Malvern, Arkansas. Nine grandchildren, one nephew and family, two nieces and family.

She was faithful to her church and went when she was not able. She loved the church, and all the assocations of our faith. She will be missed by all that knew her. The funeral was held at Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church on Saturday June 5, 1999. Elder Thron Jones her Pastor preached the funeral. Which the Family deeply appreciated. Burial followed at Chapel Hill Cemetery close to Sparkman, Arkansas.

This is written by her Mother on request of Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church. May God be with all of us for our loss is heaven's gain.

Her Loving Mother,
Frances Townley

PSALM 143: 5-7.

I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands.

I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land. Selah.

Hear me speedily, O Lord: my spirit faileth: hide not thy face from me, least I be like unto them that go down into the pit.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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ELECTION
by Joseph Hart

Mighty enemies without,
Much mightier within,
Thoughts we can not quell or rout,
Blasphemously obscene;
Coldness, unbelief & pride,
Hell and all its murderous train
Threaten death on every side,
And have their thousands slain.

Thus pursued, and thus distressed,
Ah! whither shall we fly?
To obtain the promised rest,
On what can he rely?
Shall the christian trust his heart
That! alas! of foes the worst
Always takes the tempter's part;
Nay, often tempts him first.

If today we be sincere.
And can both watch & pray;
Watchfulness, perhaps, and prayer

Tomorrow may decay;
If we now believe aright,
Faithfuless is God's alone;
We are feeble, fickle, light,
To changes ever prone.

But we build upon a base
That nothing can remove,
When we trust electing grace
And everlasting love.
Victory over all our foes
Christ has purchased with His blood
Perseverance He bestows
On every child of God.

Sent by:
Mrs. Caroline Martin
2140 Chinook Ct.
Seven Bays, WA 99122

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EDITORIAL

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."

ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS

At this time of year we often look back and remember the happenings of the past year, if they were happy or sad. We weigh what we have done, places we've been and wonder could it have been otherwise.

I am convinced that our travel from day one to day last, has already been fixed, and He who fixed it knew what each day would bring and the results it would determine.

This brings me to the Signs and the status thereof. First we would desire to thank each subscriber for their support in renewing, in sending in articles to publish, along with the many donations, but above all favorable comments. We are given encouragement when we receive letters telling how many of you look forward to its coming each month and feast on the doctrine contained in the Signs.

Now we go to that grace stated in the above heading, left on record in the Bible, but we feel left on a permanent record in our heart. But for the grace of God where would we or the Signs be this year or in the many years of the past.

I don't believe grace just pertains to our eternal destiny but this grace has given us today and believers in the past days, and years to trust for a reason known only to Him that this publication must and would continue.

As we start volume 168 next year as planned, we can see that grace has led us thus far and trust it will lead us on. There have been times since I've been co-editor with Elder Key, for these 20 years, which seemed the end was near, as we lost many subscribers but always new ones would come along. Years ago it seemed money to publish was a year or two away, but God's grace caused those to leave the Signs gifts that keep us still publishing this book.

We have about one third the number we had 20 years ago, but isn't the membership in the churches also that way.

Then we are made to believe His grace and our faith will be sufficient for us and the paper as long as it shall last. If the articles contained herein is food for His people or a portion there of, then we think it will last a while longer, for His promise is *"my people shall be fed."*

The promise wasn't how or at what time of day or night, though we know and read in His recorded word that my people shall be fed. I believe this has been one of the ways and trust it will continue to be as long as there is, this will be part of the feed for His sheep.

If I could pray, I would pray, may He continue to over shadow us with His grace. In hope,

Elder Julian R. Williams

VOICES OF THE PAST

"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." Hebrews v.8.

Our gracious Lord had to learn obedience to the will of God by a personal experience of suffering, and especially by an implicit submission to his heavenly Father's will. And what was this will? That he should take upon himself the huge debt which his bride had incurred by original and actual transgression; that he should offer himself as a ransom price to discharge and put it away; that he should bear our sins in his own body on the tree, with everything which was involved in being made a curse for us; that he should by death overcome Satan, who had the power of death, and deliver them who all their life, through fear of death, were subject to bondage; and that, whatever sorrows and sufferings should lie in his path, he should bear them all, and learn, in and by them, implicit submission to the will of God. This was the will of God, for he was determined that his law should be magnified, his justice glorified, his infinite purity and holiness revealed and established; and yet, amidst all and through all his displeasure against sin, that his infinite wisdom, tender pity, everlasting love, and sovereign grace might shine and reign in the happiness of millions through a glorious eternity. This, too, was the joy that was set before Christ, for which he endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down at the right of the throne of God.

Elder J.C. Philpot

CHAPTER XXII.

PREDESTINATION.

The Epistle to the Romans IX. "The apostle having discoursed of justification and sanctification, and of the privileges of justified and sanctified ones, proceeds to treat of predestination, the source and spring of all the blessings of grace; and to observe how this distinguishing act of God's sovereign will has taken place, both among Jews and Gentiles; in treating of which, he knew he should go contrary to the sense of his countrymen, Jews, who have a notion that all Israel shall have a part in, or inherit the world to come; and that the Gentiles will be forever miserable; and nothing was more disagreeable to them, than to talk of their rejection of God, and the calling of the Gentiles; wherefore, that it might be manifest that it was not out of pique and ill will to them - that the apostle said the things hereafter related, he expressed the most cordial affection to them imaginable, and which he introduces, in verse 1, by way of appealing to Christ, who knew the truth of what he was about to say, and who could, together with the Spirit of God and his own conscience, testify for him that it was no lie; the thing he appeals for the truth of is in verse 2; that the salvation of the Jews lay near his heart; that it was no pleasure to him to think or speak of their rejection, but was what gave him continual pain, and uneasiness; his great desire for their good is expressed in a very strong and uncommon manner, verse 3; the reason of it are partly the relation they stood in to him, being his brethren and kinsmen; and partly the many privileges they had been favoured with of God; enumeration of which is given, verses 4, 5; and foreseeing an objection, he prevents it, which might be made, that if the Jews were cast off, the promise of God to that people, that he would be their God, would become void, and the preaching of the Gospel of Christ to them of no effect; to which he answers by distinguishing between Israel and Israel,, or the elect of God among them, and those that were not; wherefore, though the latter are rejected according to the purpose of God, the promise and preaching of the word had their effect in the former, verse 6; and that there was such a distinction, he proves from the two sons of Abram, Isaac and Ishmael, who were both Abraham's seed, yet one was was a child of promise, and the other a child of the *flesh,* and were emblematical of the children of the promise, and the children of the flesh among that people, verses 7, 8, 9, 10; and further confirms this by the instance of Jacob and Esau, who were born of the same parents, were twins; and yet one was in the favour of God, and the other not; and that this was owing not to works, but to the saving will of God in election, he proves, by observing that this was before good or evil were done by either of them, verse 11, and that this was notified to Rebekah before, verse 12, as appears from a passage in Gen. xxv. 23, and by another passage in Mal. i.2, 3,

which is cited in verse 13; then an objection is stated, verse 14, that if God loves one, and hates another, both being in equal circumstances, as Jacob and Esau were, he must be unrighteous; which he answers and removes, first by a destestation of such a charge against God, and then produces testimony out of the book of Moses, proving election, as not being the work of men, but of the will of God, verse 15, from Exod. xxxiii. 19; by which it appears that the choice of men to salvation is not according to the will of man, but according to the grace and love of God, verses 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22; where he observes the end of God in it, which clears him from injustice, and points at the patience of God towards them, which frees him from the charge of cruelty, verse 22, and then proceeds to apply the metaphor before used, to the objects of election, styled vessels of mercy, and the end of the Lord, to manifest the riches of his glory in them, and the method he takes to bring them to eternal happiness, by preparing them for it by grace, verse 23, which is done in effectual vocation, the object of which are both Jews and Gentiles, verse 24; that it is the will of God that the Gentiles should be called, he proves, verses 25, 26, from some passages in Hosea II. 23; I. 10; and that God chose, and so would call some among the Jews, he clearly makes appear, v. 27, 28, 29; and from prophecies of Isaiah xx. 22, 23; 1.10, and then concludes the chapter by observing the free and distinguishing grace of God, in the calling of the Gentiles and the justification of them by the righteousness of Christ; that; such who were far from it, and sought not after it, should enjoy it, verse 30, when the Israelites, who were diligent and zealous in seeking after a righteousness to justify them before God, yet did not arrive to one, verse 31, the reason of which are given, verse 32, because it was not the righteousness of faith, or the righteousness of Christ received by faith, they sought, but a legal one, and by works which can never be attained by sinful men, they sought after a wrong righteousness, and a wrong way, because they stumble at Christ, and rejected him and his righteousness; this removes an objection which is suggested in the two preceding verses, that God is unrighteous in calling the Gentiles, who never sought after righteousness, and rejecting the Jews that followed after one; and that they did stumble at Christ and his righteousness is no other than what was foretold in Isa. VIII. 14; and that whosoever believeth in Christ whether Jew or Gentile, shall be saved, he suggests is a doctrine agreeable to Isa. xxviii. 16, which passages are refered to, verse 33."

The Epistle to tbe Romans X. "In this chapter is continued an account of the two righteousnesses of faith and works, a summary of the Gospel of Christ, a description of the grace of faith, in the nature, use, and means of it, and several testimonies concerning the calling of the Gentiles; and whereas the apostle knew that this,

as well as what he had said in the latter part of the preceding chapter, that the Jews had not attained to the law of righteousness, but stumbled at the stumbling-stone, would be offensive to his country-men the Jews, wherefore, that it might appear that he said this not out of dissatisfaction and ill will to them, he declares his sincere regard unto them, and the great respect he had for them, by calling them brethren, by expressing his good will to them, by praying for their salvation, verse 1, by bearing testimony of their zeal for God, verse 2, though he faithfully observes to them, that it was an ignorant zeal of which ignorance he gives an instance, verse 3, particularly in the attribute ef God's righteousness from which ignorance arose all their misconduct in religious things, especially in the article of justification, hence they sought to be justified by their own righteousness, and rejected the righteousness of Christ, and then points out to them the true end of the law for righteousness, which is Christ, verse 4, which if they had known would have set them right, and which is another instance of their ignorance and misguided zeal this leads him on to what he had in view, which was to give an account of the two righteousnesses he had suggested in the latter part of the former chapter, the righteousness of the law, which the Jews sought for and found not, and the righteousness of faith, which the Gentiles without seeking for enjoyed, and this account he gives in the words of Moses, for whom they had the greatest regard; the description of the former is given in his words, in verse 5, which suggests the impossibility of keeping the law; and obtaining life by it, and therefore it is vain to seek for righteousness by the works of it, the latter is described, verses 6, 7, by the certainty of it, being wrought out by Christ, who came down from heaven, fulfilled the law, died and rose again from the dead, and the plainness and evidence of it, as revealed in the Gospel verse 8, the sum of which gospel is, that whosoever believes in Christ and confesses him, shall he saved, verse 9, which faith and confession, when genuine are with the heart and mouth arguing together, the consequences of which are righteousness and salvation, comfortably apprehended and enjoyed, verse 10, and that the above is the sum of the Gospel, and that there is such a connection between faith and righteousness, and between confession and salvation is, confirmed, verse 11, by a testimony from the prophet Isaiah, XXVIII. 16, being expressed in such general manner, as to extend to every believer, whether Jew or Gentile, reasons are given, verse 12, in support of such an explanation of that passage taken from the equal condition of all there being no difference between them naturally, from the universal dominion of God over them, and in his liberal communication of grace and goodness to all that call upon him, which last reason is confirmed verse 13, by a passage of Scripture in Joel. 11.32, an occasion of which the apostle proceeds to treat of the calling of the Gentiles, and

of the meaning of it, the preaching of the Gospel, which was necessary to it; which is made out by a train of reasoning after this manner; that seeing salvation is only of such that I call upon the name of the Lord, and there could be no calling upon him without believing in him, no believing without hearing, and no hearing without preaching, and no preaching without mission, which is proved by a citation out of Isa. LII. 7, and no success in preaching, when sent without the exertions of efficacious grace, as appears in the case of the Jews, who had the ministration of the Gospel to them by Isaiah, and yet did not believe it, as is evident from Isa. LIII. 1, and seeing the conclusion of which is, that faith comes by preaching and preaching by the order and command of God, verses 14, 15, 16, 17, it follows, that it was proper ministers should be sent and the Gospel preached to the Gentiles, and that attended with power, in order that they should believe in the Lord, and call upon his name and be saved, which method God had taken, and which he had fore told he would take in the prophecies of the Old Testament and which were now fulfilling; that the Gospel was preached to them and they heard it, were matters of fact, and were no other than what should *be,* or might be concluded, from Psa. XIX, 4, cited verse 18, and that the Jews could not be ignorant of the calling of the Gentiles is clear, first from the words of Moses, Dent. XXXII. 21, which the apostle produces, verse 19, and from a passage in the prophecy of Isaiah, chap. XLV. 1. So this was no other than what Moses and the prophets said should be, verse 20 and the chapter is concluded , verse 21 with another passage out of the same prophet in the next verse showing the rejection of Christ and the Gospel by the Jews, which justifies their being cast off by him, of which the apostle treats largely in the next chapter."

The Epistle to the Romans XI. "The apostle having spoken of the calling of the Gentiles and giving a hint of the perverseness of the Jews, in rejecting the Gospel, proceeds in this chapter to treat of their rejection, in which he shows that it was not universal though of the *greater* part of them; which he confirms by some passages out of the old Testament and then points at the end and design of God in the casting them off; and resolves the whole dispensation of God, both with respect to Jews and Gentiles into the unsearchable, wisdom and sovereign will of God, and concludes this chapter, with the declaration: *For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all,* verse 32, bothJews and Gentiles, particularly God's elect among them. Both Jews and Gentiles are represented as prisoners in the prison of unbelief. First the Gentiles and now the Jews, and he does not yet deliver them out of it, or say to the prisoners go forth. Moreover to conclude in unbelief, is the same as to be concluded under sin, Gal . iii. 22, that is, to be thoroughly convicted of sin; to be held and bound down by such a sense of it in their conscience, as to see no *way* of escape from de-

served punishment, or to obtain salvation, but by fleeing to the mercy of God in Christ."

"That he might have mercy upon all; not upon all the individual Jews and Gentiles; for all are not concluded in, or convicted of their sins, but convicted sinners, and designs all of God's elect, whether Jews or Gentiles, verse 33. O the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."

The Epistle to the Romans XI. 34-36 *"For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him. and though him and to him are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen."*

The Epistle to the Romans XII. "The doctrines concerning predesination justification &c, being established, the duties of religion are built upon them, and believers enforced by them in this and the following chapters. The apostle first exhorts all the members of the church in common to a regard to the worship of God, in opposition to the things of the world; and then the officers of the church particularly, to the discharge of their duty, and next all of them, both officers and members, to the performance of various duties respecting God, themselves, one another and men of the world. The duty of attending public worship, is first mentioned, signified by a presentation of their bodies to the Lord, verse 1, to which they are moved, partly by the plenteousness, mercy and goodness of God to them, and partly by the acceptableness of it to God; as also the reasonableness of the thing, then follows a dehoration from comformity to the world, the men and manners of it in superstition and will-worship, &c."

J.K. Booton

SORROW UNTO DEATH

The loneliest thing that can be imagined in all the world was the ark as it went upon the face of the waters. Not another object to be seen on all that wide and dismal waste of water that covered the earth, not even a mountain top. *"The waters prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered."* Alone upon that dark and dreary expanse, tossed upon that heaving, shoreless flood, with the terrible rain still falling from the black and angry heavens, what scene of greater and more awful desolation can be pictured to the mind; what lonelier object can be imagined?

But there is a scene of greater desolation, of more utter and hopeless loneliness in sorrow and suffering, as the reality is greater than the type. It

is Jesus in the wilderness, in the garden, on the cross. when the great deep of God's judgments was broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened to pour out the just wrath of God against sin, only One felt the full power of that terrible flood. It fell upon Jesus the Son of God, and he was alone in hearing it. He was appointed unto this suffering and prepared for it. The infinite wisdom and power of God in this mystery are "unsearchable and past finding out."

All flesh upon the earth died while the rain was falling, but the ark was prepared to feel the full force and terror of the storm to the end. In that was the salvation of those within the ark. So while death has passed upon all men because of sin, Jesus was prepared to feel all the terrors and pains of that death, and to bear all the curse of that law which condemns all flesh to death, until every jot and tittle of it should be fulfilled, until the last drop of the rain of God's wrath had fallen. It must all fall upon him while in our flesh. His sorrow was unto death while he was yet in this mortal life. He must taste all the bitterness of death before he died. Unconsciousness could not come to relieve him of one pang.

And he was as absolutely alone in that suffering as the ark was alone in the flood. In a wonderful and mysterious sense the life of all his people was in him, and they were "preserved in" him, as all those who were to people the earth after the flood were preserved in the ark. But in his suffering and sorrow while under the curse of the law, he was alone. His disciples could go with him to the garden, but not to the place where extremity of sorrow brought him down to the ground. Three of them, who seemed more closely his companions on special occasions than the rest, could be with him a little farther, but could not yet follow him in his great sorrow. *"Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here and watch with me."* But they could not watch at that time. They slept for sorrow. The sorrow that prevents sleep was not yet upon them. That sorrow was his. He had looked forward to this hour, for he had come into the world for the suffering of this hour; yet now that it had come, "he began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy." No matter how certain our expectation of any affliction may be, yet we cannot feel it before the time, and then it will appear almost as though we had not foreseen it. This sorrow of Jesus was the greatest and most bitter sorrow and grief that ever was felt by man. It was by his Spirit, and concerning his suffering, that Jeremiah said, *"Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger."* And again, *"I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath." (Lam. i. 12; iii. 1.)* Now that the hour has come, his own will as a man, weak before the law because of others' sins, full of terror of soul on account of death under the curse of the law, caused

him to cry unto his Father to save him from that hour, and to cause the cup to pass from him if it were possible. So great was his suffering that "an angel appeared unto him from heaven, strengthening him." And even then, *"being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."* But the strength that the angel brought prevailed. He came down from heaven to do his Father's *will,* not his own, and his prayer was, *"Not as I will, but as thou wilt."* He must bear the suffering alone. His people cannot share the burden of sorrow, pain and death, with him. It is their salvation that he, the pure and holy Son of God, a spotless sacrifice, bears the awful suffering alone. If that death that fell on him had touched one of them, that one must have suffered an everlasting death. If any of the water of the flood could have broken through the ark to touch one of those within, then the ark, with all it held, must have sunk forever. But it "was pitched within and without," so that it alone should bear the beating of the storm from which the eight souls within are securely shielded.

So Jesus was prepared to suffer to the full alone, and to die alone, in this sense, as a sacrifice. The part his people have in that suffering and death is not *with* him, but *in* him.

In the ark the eight souls were saved by water. (1 Peter iii. 20.) The water that drowned all flesh upon the earth lifted the ark and those within it above its own destroying power. So the death that Jesus died raised him and all who were in him above the power of death forever. Death was all that was due for their sin. When he died the wages were fully paid, and when he arose by the power of God the dominion of death is at an end. Death is abolished, and life and immortality brought to light.

Those who *saw* the rainbow on Mount Ararat had all been in the ark, and had felt the terror and buffetings of the storm which fell upon the ark, though they had not at the time known what it all was. So those who are able to see the everlasting covenant of grace are manifest as having been saved in Christ.

This wonderful story of the sufferings of the Savior can never be told to the understanding of any one who had not been already made to feel it in his own experience. It is not by the application of our mental powers that we come to know what Jesus suffered, but by experience. It is a revelation. The disciples, who loved him, and were near him in the garden, could not then know what he was suffering. How much less is our ability to enter into that awful and solemn mystery by our own efforts. It is one thing to have our natural sympathies stirred by reading the inspired recital of his pains and sorrows, and meditating upon them, and quite another thing to feel a measure of those same pains and sorrows within our own souls. In the latter case the poor soul that is experiencing the fellowship of Jesus' sufferings never knows at the time that it is the fellowship of his

sufferings that is felt. Those who were in the ark must have been in great terror and perplexity much of the time while they felt the tossing and shaking of the ark, not knowing what was going to become of them. They could not look out around them, for there was only one window, and that was above. But after the covering was removed from the ark, and they came out on the new earth, then they under-stood what had been done, and knew the meaning of their strange experiences.

In coming into the knowledge of Jesus' sufferings each one is alone. It is so in the beginning of this necessary knowledge, and at every farther advance into this awful mystery the learner is alone. They are led by a solitary way. *"They shall mourn apart; every family apart, and their wives apart."* Each one says to himself, "No one can be as vile in heart as I." Each one feels his own to be an especial case of depravity. If he has been kept from outbreaking sins, and has not forfeited the respect of men, yet he sees that evil in his heart and in his thoughts which appears to him to set him apart as especially vile. He has to say with Job, *"Behold, I am vile. I abhor myself."* Yet he cannot feel that he stands where Job was when he said those words.

It is wonderful how this sense of being alone in all our troubles on account of our special sinfulness attends all of the Lord's people, and follows them in a measure all the way through. And yet how seldom it is that during the time of the especial tribulation they ever think that in this they are following the dear Savior. Just what his sufferings were they must know, though only in measure, for it was for them he suffered, and they suffer in him. As soon as the thought comes to them that the great tribulation on account of sin that is pressing them down into the depths is because Jesus suffered for that very sin, and that they are mourning *"for him whom they have pierced,"* then the trouble is lifted and they rejoice, though still mourning on account of sin, and being in bitterness because their sins caused him such awful sorrow and anguish.

What cries for mercy go up from the poor soul while being tossed as it were on the waves of that desolate, shoreless sea. The cries may be unspoken, silent to the ear of any but the Lord, but 0, how bitter, how full of anguish they are. Truly they are *"groanings that cannot be uttered."* What a tender, quieted feeling takes possession of our souls when we first feel a hope that peradventure the Lord hears us. And who can tell the deep joy when we first get a glimpse of the beautiful bow of promise in the cloud, the everlasting covenant of grace, and feel in our souls the blessed promise of the Lord that *"the waters shall no more go over the earth,"* and *"that the Lord will no more be wroth with us nor rebuke us."* How many a time since that blessed experience we have feared his wrath and felt the rebukes of the gospel; yet that promise has held good, and will be good unto the end, for it is *"Yea and amen in*

Christ Jesus to the glory of God by us."

"As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."-2 Cor. i. 5. So we learn that suffering is the experience of the Lord's people all through their pilgrimage. They have consolation, but it is only according to the suffering of Christ in them, and as the result of those sufferings. When they stand before the throne, beholding the power of God with praise, it is as having come out of great tribulation. When the life of Jesus is made manifest in their mortal flesh, it is because they bear about in their body the dying of the Lord Jesus. (2 Cor. iv. 10.) When they are favored to lean upon their Beloved, it is as they are *"coming up out of the wilderness."*

Now this suffering is not some exalted, holy feeling, such as you, my brother or sister, have imagined belongs only to those who are far above you in purity and goodness; but it is just what you feel of sorrow, shame and self-loathing while you see the evils of your corrupt nature, and the sins and sinfulness of your heart and life. This is sometimes proved to you while in humble contrition and self-abasement before God you are enabled humbly to confess them, and are given the soul-surprising assurance that these very evils and transgressions in thought and word and deed that have made you hate yourself, are the ones that were laid upon the dear Son of God, the very sins for which he died. While in the darkness, with only your sinful flesh in sight, how very much alone you felt, and how your soul was tossed about, and buffeted, and almost overwhelmed, like a ship on the stormy sea; but now as your soul gets a sweet view of Jesus, and rises to a blessed hope that you are feeling the fellowship of his sufferings, you feel like singing praises to Ms name, and telling to all that fear God what he has done for your soul.

At such times his service is very sweet and comforting. We count it a blessing to feel the Spirit of obedience, and to be enabled to act out that obedience. But how often we are tempted to doubt our motives in our religious works, and fear that we are prompted by the vanity of the flesh. From first to last the experience of the exercised soul leads him to doubt the movements of the flesh, and to earnestly seek unto the Lord to be led by his holy Spirit. *"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "When the Spirit of the Lord is searching and probing our hearts, what anxiety, what jealousy we feel lest it be the flesh instead of the Spirit which is leading us, even when we are doing what we know it is the privilege of the Lord's people to do. We question sharply our motives, fearing they are selfish, and that we are not doing all to the glory of God."* We are sometimes told that we ought to obey in order that we may feel better, but the word of God and his Spirit do not teach us that, but that *"whatsoever we do we should do all to the glory of God."* The Spirit alone can lead us in that holy way. Every fleshly motive

is selfish, and hence our fear and anxiety.

It does not help and encourage a poor soul who is tried in this way to say to him, *"You ought to obey in order that you may feel better."* The Savior's obedience did not make him feel better, but brought him into darkness and into the depths, and filled his soul with bitterness. But what he did was for the glory of God. We may say to one in whom we have seen an experience of grace, "You ought to be baptized; it is your duty. If you obey you will feel better." But his reply may be, *"I fear that such a holy privilege is not for such as I. I fear it would not be obedience, but presumption in me to receive that ordinance which belongs to the Lord's people."* Now it is for us not to urge such an one forward while his conscience, which is very tender in the fear of the Lord, is filled with such solemn questionings. We can show to him, as we may be enabled, the scriptural marks of those to whom that ordinance belongs, but we must all remember that the assurance in his soul that the sweet command rests upon him must come from the Lord.

Brethren in the ministry, if your obedience to the call which you have felt in your souls to preach the gospel was in order that you might feel better, how many of you would or could go on in that solemn work? Think over your experience in that business which you did not seek, but into which you were thrust. What shrinkings and sinkings of soul you have felt as you have approached the time when you must stand before the people of God, and have tried to begin to try to preach in the name of Jesus, the gospel of his grace. Sometimes your trembling sense of unworthiness, inability and unfitness for that great work have continued through the sermon, and sometimes you have been lifted above yourself, and have been filled with the sweetest, holiest joy a poor mortal can feel as you declared, in the power of the Spirit, the glad tidings of salvation. Sometimes it has been quiet work, and you have felt thankful that you were in any degree enabled to speak a word in season to him that is weary. But O, the trials the misgivings, the wretched, wearying doubts after your work for the time is done, and you are alone again. What heart-searchings, what questionings whether you have not been preaching yourself more than Christ, whether your glorying was not more in yourself than in the Lord. How many a time you have said to yourself, "Surely, I must never undertake to preach again." Well, the Lord knows how to deal with his servants. You have not quit the work yet, nor will you until you have fulfilled the work unto which he has called you. You are not preaching in order that you may feel better, but for the glory of God. You cannot stop, though you feel as though you could not go on. There is a blessedness in the work, even in the sufferings and sinkings down, for in it all Christ is exalted.

And you, poor soul, who look with love and longing upon the ordinances and privileges of the church, and wish

that they might be yours, in the Lord's own time the sweet persuasion will be yours that they belong to all who want them. In the Lord's good time the power of his word of sweet command as written in the Scriptures will be felt in your heart: *"Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her." - Isa. lxvi. 10.* We must all wait for the Lord, and, blessed be his name, he always comes "right early." All our times are in his hand, and they can neither be hastened nor delayed.

We all see in ourselves enough of disobedience, and enough of sin in the best obedience of our hands, to give us daily errands at the throne of grace, and to bring out of our souls the publican's cry for mercy.How many of the Lord's dear people go far in disobedience, living after the flesh on until they die away from spiritual things. How often we feel that in faithfulness we ought to exhort, reprove or rebuke them, but are held back for fear we are not spiritual, and therefore are not qualified to restore such ones, or thinking that we ourselves need the reproof as much as they, if not more. But we must try to do our duty; yet if it is only as a duty we do anything it is of but little account before God; and if it is only to relieve ourselves of responsibility, and "to feel better," that we do anything, the motive is only a fleshly one.

When the love of Christ constrains us, then love to the erring or needy one will prompt what we do or say, and while we do our work faithfully, and in the fear of the Lord, we shall remember that the Lord only can give repentance. Scolding never restored a wanderer, nor ever honored the Lord. The fire which the Lord kindles on the altar of the heart will never quite go out. The Lord will brighten it in his own time. He, and not man, gives the stripes which bring back the children who forsake his law. However far they wander, he knows where they are, and is visiting their transgressions with the rod, as he said he would, and they are often feeling that rod most when to us they appear most defiant and stubborn.

The salvation of God which grace brought to us in our first experience of a hope, is the same salvation which that grace bringeth through all our earthly pilgrimage in every time of need. That grace which bringeth this salvation teaches all the various subjects of it all things in their walk and life which become sound doctrine, and in which that salvation is manifested unto them from day to day, in all the various circumstances of their life, and that grace will keep them through faith unto the full and glorious revelation of that salvation in the last time. (1 Peter 1. 5.) It is that salvation which the psalmist prays may set him up on high. It is that salvation that appears in all the beautiful order of the church, and which the saints minister to each other while walking in the commands of Jesus. It is the salvation of God of which the apostle speaks when he says to Timothy, *"In so doing thou shalt both save thyself*

and them that hear thee," and which appears in the faithful ministration of him who converteth a sinning brother from the error of his ways, when he thus *"saves a soul from death and hides a multitude of sins."* The saints have no salvation of their own to handle, and deal in, and minister, separate from the salvation of God. Jesus is our salvation, and to him the poor soul cries in times of darkness and distress, *"Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation."* Without Jesus, our salvation, we can do nothing. He is our Sun, and his salvation, like the sunlight, reaches *"to the ends of the heaven, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof."*

That salvation will not fail any of the saints. Who speaks of another salvation which is not of grace, but of works? That salvation, and the grace that brings it, are sufficient for us in all our times of need. They appear in the obedient walk of the faithful people of God, who walking in his fear and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost are edified and multiplied (Acts ix. 3), and also in the rod and the stripes with which our faithful and loving Savior visits his erring children, and restores them to the joy of his salvation. All our times are in his hand, and provisions of grace and salvation are made for each of them. The child of God who has gone farthest in rebellion and sin, when, restored to his right mind, feeble and sore broken, humble and contrite, crying bitterly, he feels the sweet and compassionate and loving beams of salvation falling softly into his sorrowing soul, has to say, "Behold, what wondrous grace and mercy that could save such a sinner as I." And the most obedient child of God, as he looks over his life and contemplates his labors in the Lord, and the love and fellowship which the brethren have manifested to him, and then sees in his own heart and life such evidences of a depraved nature as sink him into the dust, wonders at the mercy which, like Paul, he has obtained of the Lord to be faithful, is astonished that he has been kept in the comfort of obedience while others have been suffered to wander far away, and suffer much for disobedience, and instead of feeling that any praise or reward is due to him, he says, *"What have I that I did not receive? If God had dealt with me according to my deserts, I should not have stood. To him be all the praise. It was not I that did these works of obedience, 'but the grace of God which was with me.'"* So the most faithful saint on earth, joins with the worst backslider when restored to the manifest favor of God, and says, *"By the grace of God I am what I am,"* and there is no one left out of that heavenly choir when they sing in perfect accord, *"Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake."*

Elder Silas H. Durand
FEBRUARY 2, 1902.

NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

As we stand upon the threshold of another year, and also the beginning of another volume of the SIGNS, it would be strange indeed did we not think of the past and of the future. It is often said that we know not what the future has in store for us, and this is true, and yet not altogether true we indeed know not what the daily incidents of our life may be, but we know that our life will be, as it has been in the past, in the hand of God, that all shall move as he has determined, that we shall not be at any moment beyond his care, that all his promises shall be fulfilled toward us, that our life shall be full of mixtures of joy and sorrow, of loss and gain, of trial and deliverance, and that the same abundant mixture of shade and light, of night and day, shall be ours, as has been the case in the past. These things we know shall be mingled in our cup each day of the journey, and we know that the end shall come just as our Father has appointed for us so it is true we do know what the future shall be, while yet our heavenly Father has hidden from us the details of each day's life, although all the steps we shall take and all the stations we shall fill are known unto God; yea, more, are appointed of him. Of the past we only know in part. We do know the events which can be chronicled, such as where we were such and such times, what we were doing, the friends with whom we mingled and conversed, the duties when we gladly entered into the house of God, the sermons which were delivered in our hearing, some of the things that were said in them, or in prayer, or in the singing, or in conversation, some of the burnings of heart we felt as we listened or joined in the worship of God, or the conversation concerning spiritual things, and we know the losses and crosses which were ours to bear, the sickness and the sorrow which we were called upon to endure, together with many tokens of GOD's goodness and mercy to us sinners. But still even these past things we know but in part, for we do not know what all these things involved, or what shall be the outcome of them, either in their effect upon ourselves or upon those around us. We do not know the fullness of God's great designs in the very least event of our lives; we do not know whether this or that is to be the result of our most common words, or of the every day events of our life, which occur so frequently as to pass by us without attracting our notice. It has long been our thought that we do not, after all, really know the past any better than we do the future. Who of us can tell just how the events of the past year shall result for us? Who can tell which of all the things we have done, or said, or enjoyed, or suffered, or which others have done, or said, or enjoyed, or suffered, will redound most to the praise of God, and the good of Zion? It has long been a solemn consolation to us that all events, however they may appear to us, are alike in the hand of God, and that all shall be to the praise of his glory at the end, and we

believe with all our heart that the words of the hymn are true,

"Great God with thee there's nothing great,
With thee there's nothing small."

Things on the earth look to us great or small, because we are down here among them. We have heard it said, and do not doubt it is true, that as men go up in balloons, hills and mountains grow less and less in size and height, and valleys rise, until at a sufficient height all the earth becomes a level plane; and we are sure that with the Most high God all the vain distinctions of earth are as nothing, and that when it is given us poor mortals to rise to some of the heights of Zion these worldly distinctions become as nothing to us also. When it is given us to realize what it is to be risen with Christ and some glimpses of the heavenlies in Christ are afforded us, then all that is below grows very small and mean in comparison; and while in such a state of spiritual communion with God we will not mind high things, and all the distinctions of earth will be as nothing to us. Then the height of Zion will be more to us than all other heights, and the King of glory will so come in and reign that all other princes will be dethroned. At such an hour what more to the soul is place, or power, or wealth, or fame, than obscurity, or poverty, or bondage! These distinctions may be counted for much among men of the world, but he who dwells in the heights of Zion is himself a child of the King, and the untold riches of heaven are all his.

As we think of the past we can but learn some things which are good to know, and of which it is profitable to think and speak. To the children of Israel it was said in the old time, *"Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no."* How many things they had to remember of all that journey in the great and terrible wilderness. First, they would be compelled to remember such things as would abase themselves, such as their pride, their rebellion, their unbelief, their relapses into idolatry, their murmuring against God and against Moses his servant, and all the folly of which they were guilty, many times over. They would by this be humble and abased in feeling, which is the only safe place for a believer; then they would remember the dealings of God with them in these times of their unbelief and sin; first, in judgment, to rebuke them and to show them his justice and holiness and indignation against sin, and then in his forgiveness of their sins, and the restoration of the tokens of his love and pity for them in saving them and delivering them from dangers and from all their enemies, and then they would be compelled to remember all the rugged road, with its stones in the pathway, with the burning sun by day and the cold darkness of the nights, and how toilsome was the journeying forward day by day. It must have been that they also remembered the resting-

places, the palm trees and the oases that now and then were given them. These things they must experience for their good, and these things they should remember for their good still. Even so the pilgrim of Zion must learn to know himself and to know God. The one great blessing of this knowledge in this gospel day is that all such pilgrims come to know God in Christ Jesus our Lord; it is to them the knowledge of that salvation which is of God and of his who gives salvation to the needy. As it is given us to remember the past there is found encouragement for the weary and heavy laden, because of the assurance that our God is the same. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever; in all the weary past he has not forsaken us, and so we are well assured that however long and weary the future travel of our souls may be he will continue to abide with us and we shall not fall by the way. There was nothing in that people whom God brought up out of Egypt that could merit his esteem or give him delight; it was not for anything that he saw in them which was of themselves that he so chose and favored them. Indeed, Jehovah told them that they were the most stiff-necked and rebellious of all people, but our God chose them that in them his sovereign mercy and grace might be shown as it could not have been shown forth otherwise. In all the journey to the promised land they proved forgetful and ungrateful again and again, still the Lord their God bore with them and manifested all long-suffering toward them, and all this was a pattern to his spiritual people in all ages. It is also true of all his elect, that they deserve no favor from him, but rather reproach and condemnation forever. Thank God it is also true of them that their God is full of all long-suffering toward them, and saves them from all their sins, and saves them forever. Because of all that this God has been to his people under the old covenant, and to all his spiritual people under the new covenant, and because of what he has been to us in all our past lives, we are also encouraged for the future, and continue to hope in his mercy. For ourself we desire to say that we have come to the end of another year, and to the beginning of this new year, as we hope, with a deeper sense of all the faithfulness of God, and with some remembrances of his manifold tokens of loving favor toward us, and we desire that we may be enabled to give praise to him to whom all praise is due. We feel that we have sinned day by day in deed, in thought, in service, rendered outwardly and in motive before God. This has been so all our life since we believed, and it is so still; for this we must be humbled before God daily and hourly. How shall we sufficiently exalt his name for all the providential mercies, and especially for all the spiritual blessings of the past year? Sometimes as we think over all these things the words come unbidden to our heart, "A sinner saved by grace" and sometimes the word "sinner" is emphasized in our mind, and sometimes the word "grace," but whatever word may

come uppermost to our mind, "a sininer," or "saved by grace," the other also follows right after, so that the whole sentence rests with us, and upon the truth in it do we find our comfort and joy.

As regards our connection with the SIGNS, we desire to confess that we have never felt more unfitted for the place we hold than we have this past year. It is so easy to make mistakes, and to say and do things that seem hurtful to others, and that hurt the little ones; indeed we are not "sufficient of ourselves to think anything, as of ourselves;" may we dare add to this those other words of the apostle, "but our sufficiency is of God"? We have realized that each and every day we need to be led along, and that we cannot look into the future. Often tomorrow looks dark, but still when it has come there has been light; what is dark to us is light before the Lord. Often we have felt that we could write no more. In this it has been the same as has often been the case in our ministry in the pulpit. Again and again during these past forty or more years we have felt that the end had come, so far as preaching was concerned, yet we do continue unto this present time, in the ministry and in writing. We trust that we do feel thankful to God for all these, his mercies. His mercy has been shown us in enabling us to bear, and endure, and to still hold fast the profession of our faith. How great has been the forbearance of the readers of the SIGNS. As we think of these things we are encouraged for the future; indeed it all seems wonderful to us. We feel also to say that the publishers of the SIGNS, and brother Ker, our associate editor, have been most kind, forbearing and helpful, often speaking encouraging words. How much all who love God need each other. How good it is that the Lord has given us to each other for mutual edification. Heartfelt religion will cause forbearance one to another, because each one will see something of his own weakness, and the Lord will show such ones their own errors. We know that our readers have greatly appreciated the labors of the publishers in making the mechanical work of the SIGNS so free from errors as it has been. No one, save those who have filled such positions, can realize how much care and labor is needed to avoid serious mistakes, and to do creditable mechanical work. Beside this, the editors have had their earnest co-operation, counsel and advice with regard to the matter that has been published. We cannot be too grateful for this, and our readers have reaped the benefit.

For the future we can promise only this: that we shall still strive to make the SIGNS a medium of correspondence between brethren who know and love the Lord. We hope that all that could gender strife among the children of God may be avoided, both in editorial matter and in correspondence. We say strife, not incidental differences of opinion and judgment; these will always be, so long as we are in the flesh, but let there be all forbearance if there be differences of judgment in anything; we know that

most of our readers do not want direct controversy in the SIGNS, but we feel sure all are glad to see the views of truth as they may be presented by different brethren. The SIGNS has been made a blessing to many in the past, and we hope that the blessing of the Lord may attend it in like manner for the coming year. We still hold dear the doctrine of God our Savior as it has been loved and preached these many years past.

In conclusion, may the Lord be with and guide us all for the year before us. Paul besought his brethren to pray for him, and said once that their prayers helped him. We know that it is the desire of all who are engaged in the conduct of the SIGNS that we may also be helped in that way, as was Paul, and we also desire the richest blessings of the covenant of grace to rest upon all our readers, and upon all correspondents of the SIGNS.

Elder F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N.J.

COLOSSIANS III .2-4.

"Set your affection [or mind] on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

The security of God's people furnishes consolation for the tiding over many rough and stormy scenes this side the blissful state of eternity. If we had to look to anything belonging to the natural man for hope in the beyond I am persuaded that grace-taught children would be carried down so low in despair that they would cease to hope of ever seeing their Elder Brother, Jesus, and of ever' being with him and like him. In this time, when even the camps of Israel are being turned from peace and joy, trusting and resting in wrought out righteousness of Jesus, a tossed to and fro crowd, hearing the lo here and lo there, do we find any interpretations placed on the word. Some are telling us that we have destiny of Zion and our own individual welfare in our own hands. We are commanded to place our minds on eternal things, instead of earthly things, because by so doing we may attain to large membership active churches and all temporal things. But the eminent apostle does not tell us that. He gives a reason for doing this, but it is not for reward.

Let us digress a little, to get before your mind what is necessary for us to understand before we can heed the many scriptural admonitions. No man can of himself obey what is commanded. The word, as it is written by divine inspiration, does not put life or spiritual desires in the reader. Some of my best friends are people who seemingly are as destitute of the Spirit of God as any dead sinner can be, yet they can quote much Scripture. We must conclude that the Spirit alone teaches us to obey, because we would only be as foolish Galatians doing anything without the Lord. "'This only would I learn of you, Received

ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are you so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain. He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"- Gal. iii.2-5. Here is ample evidence that the Spirit is ministered unto us by the same One that begat us to a lively hope. (1 Peter i. 3.) He that began a good work in us will not desert us in our carnal desires, which are all evil, but we may rest assured that the same God, who cannot lie (Titus i. 2), promised eternal life before the world began, and will, for the perfecting of his glory and the bringing together of many heirs, perform it all to the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil. i. 6.) "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. ii. 12, 13. How any man can construe this language to mean time salvation is beyond me. These were little children being addressed and admonished by their undershepherd along duty's ways. They were obeying characters, having always done so. The apostle is being led by the Spirit to admonish them to continue doing so, but, like all God-called ministers, he knows where the life is, so he is leaving the performing of that duty to God, and comfortingly tells them that all their salvation is of the Lord.

But let us desist just now on that, because it would seem that the things Jesus has in store for his elect are the result of his feeling all righteousness, and that their walking in him and his commands are the direct result of his having given them the will and working the do.

When the apostle wrote the Colossian brethren it was revelation from Jesus Christ. Set your mind on things above, and not on things of the earth. There must have been a reason other than a reward. Paul plainly tells that reason: "For ye are dead." How is the quickened child of God dead? Before the life-giving Spirit comes into their heart, teaching them what sinners they are, then they are dead in sin. Let us emphasize the fact that death has no degrees. Anything that is dead is destitute of any of the life under consideration. Any one who agrees with Paul that the natural man is dead in sin must agree that the child born again is also dead and both deaths being complete. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ are baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."- Rom. vi. 1-4. Here is good news indeed to the poor sin-burdened souls.

They no longer love sin but they hate it, and the hateful things in their flesh cause them much sorrow. "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inner man." Rom. vii. 21, 22. Oh, so many times have worldlings flung in our face, If I believed as you do I would do just anything I wanted to. Yes, and I am persuaded that only the fear of the law keeps them from it any way, because they still have the love of sin in their hearts. But with God's humble poor it is so different. They have their fill of sin and could they do the things that they would sin would be no more in their lives.

"Your life is hid with Christ in God." Lift up your drooping eyes, little way-worn pilgrims, for all is safe and secure. God, in Christ, paid it all, and nothing, can take the home away from his chosen people.

"Not all the pains that e'er I bore,
Shall poll my future peace;
For death and hell can do no more
Than what my Father please.

Our lives (if indeed he ransomed me) are hid in Christ, and for one of the elect to be left must first dethrone God himself. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; [How can some believe that Christ would fail to keep those he gave eternal life, when the gift meant the sacrifice of his own blood?] and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one."- John x. 27-30. "And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone - John 29. "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?" "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. - John xiv. 10, 20.

"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." What glad tidings of great joy! What wonderful love is this manifested to poor sinners! Nothing about them to merit the notice of the sinless child Jesus, but the fact that they are covenant children, and for that reason he takes them from out the wilderness, wherein there is no water, and makes them to drink of water everlasting. That was all wrought out by him alone, when we were as yet; enemies to him, but having loved his bride with an everlasting love, he goes about to pay their debt, and while paying it he is establishing a righteousness that is all complete, leaving them holy and without blame before him in love.

But our Savior is doing more for us than to die for us. By day and by night he keeps us, even when we are not mindful of ourselves. By the still waters he leads us and makes us to lie down in green pastures. The dear old walls and bulwarks of Zion are maintained by him and daily he adds to his church such as should be saved and that he would own at his second coming.

Let us not stop our meditation here, for his watchcare is not going to end at the grave. For countless ages our dust may moulder away, but his all-seeing eye never sleeps. When the Lord descends from heaven to gather his children home none will be left. They that are in the graves shall come forth; the sea shall give up its dead and those still living shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and all shall rise to meet him in the air. What more can we desire?

"God, my Redeemer lives,
And ever from the skies,
Looks down and watches all my dust
Till he shall bid it rise.

The years of my youth I thought much of the cold and silent tomb, and shuddered with much fear and anxiety at the thought that some time I must leave all the things of nature and lie down in death. But although still young in years, I trust that I have been shown the vain and frivolous ways of this time journey I am on, until I no longer fear to quit the walks of men as I once did. True, the natural man still dreads the sting of death, but the fiery darts that are hurled at poor way faring pilgrims together with the unceasing trials and afflictions, mingled with a stubborn nature and hateful disposition, at times leave me in such a state that it would be peace to depart and be with Jesus.

Just a little more and I am through. As much as is in you, dear reader, take courage and press on a few days longer. Just a little longer on the battle field and the war will be over. Then we that have a good hope in Christ shall die a natural death, trusting sweetly and assuredly in our Assurer that some glad to-morrow he "will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name." Then shall the sheep enter into the Father's house, where there are many mansions, there to be with Jesus, and like him, to know no more the aches and pains and the things of time, but to walk in his light that illumines the city of our God, and to sing redeeming love for ever and ever.

In a little hope,
Elder W. D. Griffin

TRUST IN THE LORD

New Vernon, N.Y., Sept. 15, 1841.

The present is pecularly a time in which the children of God are called on to "Watch and pray, lest they enter into temptation." The gathering clouds which darken our sky, portend the near approach of tribulation and distress. The spirit of persecution that would storm the citadel of Sion, and pour forth the blood of the saints, now stalks through our country, glides through the air, and sounds in deceptive, mellow and honied tones, from pulpit and from press; while all that is gaudy, popular and attracting to the carnal heart and the uncircumcised ear or the adulterous

eye, is brought into requistion, to facinate, bewilder and captivate the children of God, to draw them from their steadfastness in the faith and practice of the gospel, into the ranks of the enemy. All unsuccessful experiment of open hostility against the people of the living God, for almost six thousand years, has scarcely convinced the enemy that Sion's battlements are invincible. Preparations are evidently now making for one more desperate onset. The floodgates of error and delusion are now being unbarred, the impetous torrent seems impatient to leap forth and inundate the whole land; the ambitious clergy, and their ever restless laity, are bringing all their projects to one central point, and looking out the most advantageous position to be by the occupied during the sanguinary struggle that now makes haste to overtake us. It is all in vain for us to think of safety from our natural republican institutions, or the light and patriotism of the citizens of this great republic. The siren song is only calculated to hasten the preparation for the dreadful catastrophe. As well might we "go down to Egypt for help," as to look for it in anything short of that hand by which the Egyptian yoke was broken, and that almighty arm by which the chosen people of our God were made free.

"Dangers stand thick through all the ground." And becomes us, who have renounced the world, the flesh and the devil, to enter into the Rock - turn to our strong hold; and at the same time to fight manfully the good fight of faith, trusting alone for victory in the name of the Lord our God.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

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SONG
by Newton

What think ye of Christ? is the test
To try both your state and your scheme;
You cannot be right in the rest,
Unless you think rightly of him.

As Jesus appears in your view,
As he is beloved or not,
So God is disposed toward you,
And mercy or wrath is your lot.

Some take him a creature to be,
A man, or an angel at most;
Sure these have not feelings like me,
Nor know themselves wretched and lost:

So guilty, so helpless am I,
I durst not confide in his blood,
Nor on his protection rely,
Unless I were sure he is God.

If asked what of Jesus I think,
Though still my best thoughts are but poor,
I say, he's my meat and my drink,
My life, and my strength, and my store,

My Shepherd, my husband, my friend,
My Saviour from sin and from thrall,
My hope from beginning to end,
My portion, my Lord, and my all.

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EDITORIAL

"A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

The above words were spoken by, Simeon, a just and devout man, waiting for the consolation of Israel; the Holy Ghost was upon him and had told him that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. He came into the temple at the exact same time that Jesus was brought into the temple to be presented to the Lord, according to the customs of the law. The scripture says that Simeon came, by the Spirit, into the temple, took up the infant Jesus in his arms, blessed God and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all the people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

Jesus, the glory of Israel, the chosen people of God according to the flesh, was the same entity that should be a light unto the Gentiles, the Lord's people in the spiritual, or gospel dispensation; this is per the scriptures that says that there are two dispensations, two laws under which God will govern his people but only one Lord. The apostle Paul states this very clearly, as follows, *(1 Cor. Chap. 12, vs. 5) "And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord." and again (Heb. Chap. 10, vs. 9) "Then said he, Lo I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second,"* Christ came a sin bearer to atone for all of the sins of Israel, under the law, and was also the light unto the Gentiles, in the gospel day or dispensation, as it is written, *(Matt. Chap. 4, vs. 16) "The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up."* Salvation is unto both the Jews and the Gentiles in the birth, death and resurrection of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the glory of <u>all of Israel</u>, but under different administrations: Jesus, the glory of Israel, is first referred to in the book of Genesis as, the seed of

the woman, that would bruise the head of the serpent; the one that would conquer the most dreaded enemy of all of the chosen vessels of mercy; those who were driven from the garden of Eden and sentenced to a life, of death, in this world of nature, which is satan's domain. Both the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman were driven from the garden, but, to the seed of the woman, it was death, and to the seed of the serpent, it was life, it was their portion and they are completely at home here in time. In Christ, the reverse is true for Paul records, to the one he is the savour of death unto death; and to the other the the savour of life unto life. This infant, the glory of the nation of Israel, was the only one that would be able to overcome this sentence of death for all of the heirs of promise, and secure an enumerable host from under the sentence that was pronounced upon them because of their partaking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He did nothing for the seed of the serpent, he left them as they were in the care of their father the devil.

The remedy was present even before the malady was known, however the seed of the woman must endure all of the dreaded consequences of their sin, and realize the depraved nature of the flesh and their utter inability to recover themselves from this valley of death, to which they were condemned, to enable them to realize their dire need of salvation. They must experience the glorious deliverance from the law of sin and death, that they might know from whence their freedom comes, in order to render praise and honor unto the giver of this most precious gift of salvation.

Moses, looking forward by faith to this day of deliverance, told the children of Israel, *(Deut. Chap 18. vs 15-16) "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken according to all that thou desirest of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire anymore that I die not."* The glory of God is such that the children of Israel could not bear it, in the flesh, and desired that God would not speak to them directly but that God would speak to Moses, a type of Christ, and that Moses would speak unto them. Christ, the glory of Israel, took upon himself flesh, made like unto his brethren, that he might make intercession for them unto the Father of glory, that they not be destroyed by the exceeding power, immensity and majesty of God's presence; a mediator that could speak to both sides of the equation with equal authority, and reconcile them so that, *(Psa 85, vs 10) "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."* The law demanded righteousness and truth, requirements which man could not meet, so Christ came, the way, the

truth and the life for them and brought mercy and peace, in the gospel day, and these are all saved and brought into the fold; fulfilling the scripture as recorded in Ezekiel, *(Eze. Chap 37, vs. 22) "And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all."* As Jesus said, in his prayer unto the Father, *(John Chap. 17 vs, 1-2) "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast give him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."* Jesus, the glory of Israel, has spoken it, and so it shall be.The prophet Ezekiel was blessed to describe the salvation of the saints of God in a very graphic illustration that shows how it was with them, as born into this world of nature, and what it was that changed them to be as they are in Christ. It was not of their efforts, for they were as helpless babies and the mighty God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, had mercy on them in their sinful helplessness and undone condition and made them whole. They would have been lost worlds without end if left to the efforts of man, but, as Paul said, it is by the grace of God that I am what I am, and this same truth applies to all. Ezekiel describes their change like this: *(Ezekiel Chap. 16 vs, 1-13) "Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations, And say, Thus saith the Lord God unto Jerusalem; Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite. And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all. None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born. And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live. I have caused thee to multiply as the bud of the field, and thou hast increased and waxen great, and thou art come to excellent ornaments: thy breasts are fashioned, and thine hair is grown, whereas thou wast naked and bare. How when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine. Then washed I thee with water; yea, I throughly washed away thy blood from thee, and I anointed thee with oil. I clothed thee also with broidered work, and shod thee with badgers' skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I cov-*

ered thee with silk. I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck. And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head. Thus wast thou decked with gold and silver; and thy raiment was of fine linen, and silk, and broidered work; thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil: and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom."

(Rom. Chap. 11 vs, 33) "Oh the depths of the riches of both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are thy judgements, and his ways past finding out." It is wonderful how the scriptures in the New Testament support and prove the truth and the beauty of those in the Old Testament: although under different administrations, the same salvation, the same basic truths are revealed. This is the glory that Israel was looking forward to in the coming of the Messiah and is that which Simeon was referring to as, Jesus being the Glory of Israel. It was through the sacrifice of himself, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God that all of these blessings, described by Ezekiel were bestowed upon them. They were treasured in him, before the foundation of the world, and made manifest, in time, by the experiences of God's children as they are brought forth from nature's darkness into the glorious light and liberty of the gospel day. Simeon also said that this baby was to be, a light to lighten the Gentiles. This is referring to the establishing of the second covenant (mentioned above) with them which were to be heirs of the promise among the Gentiles, *(Heb. Chap. 8 vs. 9) "Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord."* Jesus was the Word, and John said, *(John Chap 1, vs. 4) "In him was life; and the life was the light of the men."* and he said *(vs 9) "That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."* This is the light unto the Gentiles, the new covenant, the second covenant established on better promises, the covenant of grace and not of works. When this light is shined into the heart of an individual it reveals unto the truth, the way of salvation and then the things of nature fade into the background, they have lost their lustre for them, as far as desiring them and running after them as they had done before their change. The objects in which this light shines, have nothing to do with what effect the light has; they are passive in the process and can but marvel that such beauty has been revealed unto them, seeing the sin and corruption that dwells in their natural hearts and bodies: and they render praise to God for this wonderful grace that has shown unto them the beauties of His kingdom. They are made aware that there is

not only a new covenant, but a new man with whom this covenant is made, the inner man, which does not sin although living in a fleshly body with all of the lusts and temptations that confront them; they do not sin because they are under no law, it has been taken out of the way being nailed to the cross at Calvary.

Jesus, the glory of Israel abolished the law of commandments for the Gentiles, in his death, so that there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit; the law has no dominion over them, as Paul wrote to the church at Colosse. *(Col Chap. 2, vs. 14) "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross."* Therefore there is no law to which the Gentiles are under, (that inner man, which is born of the spirit) for they are new creatures in Christ. *(II Cor Chap. 5, vs. 17-18-19) "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Christ Jesus, and hath given unto us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."* The children of God, in the gospel day, have been reconciled unto God, by being baptized into Christ in his death, and are therefore, as Christ, before God. Their sins are not imputed unto them, they are imputed unto Christ who became their sin bearer, his righteousness is imputed to them, therefore they are reconciled to God because they are in Christ and stand justified before God, in Him.

These are the only ones to which the scriptures, in the New Testament are directed, they may speak of the world and things of nature, but the sure promises, the Love of God, the admonitions, the instructions and the comforts are to them and them alone. As the prophet Isaiah said, *(Isaiah Chap. 40, vs. 2) "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."* The cry is, that her warfare is accomplished, her iniquity pardoned and they were, both the warfare and the pardon, accomplished in the atoning blood of Jesus Christ on the cross at Calvary. This is indeed good news and of great comfort to the Gentiles, the ones to whom the prophet is speaking, because he said, is accomplished and that was not completed under the law, it was completed in the death of Christ. Their salvation is sure and certain because it has alredy been accomplished, by the love that God had for his elect before the foundation of the world and has been spoken of by the prophets down through the ages.

In nature, for man to see the things of the world he must have natural eyes, and he must have the light of nature; even so is it in the spiritual world; for man to see the things of the kingdom of heaven, he must have spiritual light and spiritual eyes. Man as he is born into the world of nature does not have these characteristics, as Jesus told Nicodemus, that to see the kingdom of heaven he must be born again: born of the Spirit with spiritual eyes and a spiritual light to see the glory of the kingdom of heaven. This light is the first thing that the Apostle Paul experienced, on the road to Damascus, and the first thing that he saw, by this light, was Jesus. This is as the experience of Peter, James and John, on the mount of transfiguration, they saw the law (Moses) and the prophets (Elias) but the voice out of the cloud referred them to Jesus and said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him. And it says that when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only. This is the only name that the children of God look to for life and for their salvation, neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

(John Chap. 9 vs, 1-5) "And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." These are the words of Jesus, on one occasion when he healed the eyes of a man, who was blind from birth, and he proceeded to heal his sight so that he could see, for the first time in his life. This is a natural illustration of what Jesus does for all of the heirs of promise; they are all born blind, as regarding spiritual things, and nothing but the power of the great physician can heal their eyes. Jesus told his disciples, on this occaasion, that this man was born blind that the works of God should be made manifest in him. This is teaching that you and I, if we be heirs, can also be enabled to see and how we are made able to see and believe. Each of God's children have the witness within, which is their experience. And that makes them believe that indeed their hope is in Christ, the glory of Israel, and that the knowledge and understanding that they have been given are the fruits of that indwelling Spirit which was given them of God.

(John Chap. 9 vs, 30-33) "The man answered and said, Why herein is a marvelous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes. Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he

heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing." Although he did not know how it was done, he could testify absolutely to the fact that a miracle had been performed in him; that he had indeed been born blind and now he could see. A man that has experienced a deliverance, such as this, will never be persuaded, by man, to deny the power of the miracle that has occurred in his life, This is true of all who have been given eyes to see the kingdom of God, and although they may question their experience, most will say that this is one thing that they can always know, that whereas I was blind, now I see. I have heard many say, that there is one thing that they will always feel to know, and that is that they are a different being from what they once were. The light that was sent to lighten the way of the Gentiles has been turned on in their heart, and as Jesus said, they will not walk in darkness, as before, because there is always that hope of eternal life that is within and it will always be theirs to trust in, for life and for salvation both here in time and in eternity. The way may get dark and dreary as they experience the trials of faith that are sent their way, trials of faith that will work for them a more enduring substance than they had before. Faith is this substance of these things that are hoped for, the evidence of things not seen presently, but, which build line upon line, here a little and there a little, and will ultimately end in that city, New Jerusalem, whose builder and maker is God. Jesus, the glory of Israel, who died for the sins of Israel under the law, forever perfecting those who were his, because of the election, came forth triumphant over death, hell and the grave, a bright and shining light to lighten the way of the Gentiles that they too may enter into the fold by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for them through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. *(Romans Chap. 11 vs, 25-32) "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all."*

The salvation of Israel and of the Gentiles is by the mercy of God, and

even though the Jews were enemies as concerning the gospel; as concerning the election the same ones were beloved for the Father's sake. God has loved them all, both Jews and Gentiles with an everlasting love; he has created them all for his glory, he hath formed them all: yea he hath made them all for his glory. *(Isa Chap. 43 vs, 21) "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise."* They were all treasured in Christ, before the foundation of the world, and is it as sure to follow as the night follows the day, that they shall all be saved by the grace of God. They are, as all things are, absolutely predestinated of God from the beginning and, as we can all see that the day and night are occurring per the original plan even unto the present time, and one of God's decrees is just as sure and certain as the other.

Jesus, the glory of Israel, and the light unto the Gentiles, is that which we all, if we indeed be children of God, look to for light and for understanding as regarding the glorious truths that we believe to be the reason for the hope that is within us. The desire is constantly for more evidence that we are one for whom Jesus died on the cross at Calvary; one who was chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and to whom these precious truths have been revealed, here in time.

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

GIFTS

The Scriptures of the New Testament present the gospel church in her perfection, as the workmanship of God. Her doctrine and order are plainly shown there to all of her children, as they are also revealed to each in his experience, so that the word and the experience witness together to all that is of God. We are to look only to the inspired Scriptures of truth to decide concerning any point of doctrine, or any ordinance, or any gift to the church of God; and there alone shall we find the proper order of those things of God, as arranged and established by his authority.

Whatever assumes to belong to the church is to be tried by the pattern shown to us in the Scriptures of the New Testament, and if not found there it must be discarded by every lover of the truth. The gifts of Jesus to the church are named by the inspired apostle in his letter to the Ephesians: "And he gave some apostles, and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers. " The object of these gifts is also there stated: "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Any professed gift that is not included in this catalogue and description, must not be recognized as of God; and any one who claims to have work to do as a gift of God to the church in behalf of any but the saints, or in order that any may become saints through his work, is clearly not manifesting the character of a gospel gift, for all of these gifts are declared to be exclusively for the benefit of the body of Christ, to which they themselves belong as "joints and bands" which minister nourishment to the body. (Eph. iv. 11-16; Col. ii. 10.)

Elder Silas H. Durand

VOICES OF THE PAST

A DAY'S JOURNEY AND A NIGHT'S DREAM
(Genesis xxviii. 10-12.)

"And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran."

How far he went that first day we are not told. A man in the excited state of mind that he was in would walk rapidly, and starting early in the morning, as he undoubtedly did, by the time the sun went down he was a good distance from his father's house. It is with that first day's journey and the night that followed it that I have to do.

Jacob had obtained the blessing which his father intended for Esau. His father had also confirmed the blessing after he discovered the deceit which had been practiced upon him, and had sent Jacob away on his present journey to the former home of his mother to get a wife. So far we may regard the circumstances attending this journey as favorable, and such as would cause him to begin it with elation of mind. But other things tinge the circumstances with the blackness of night, and tend to make this journey notable through all time for fear, self-reproach, shame and misery. Fear of his brother Esau, who felt that Jacob had wronged him, and who had threatened to kill him, undoubtedly hastened his departure early in the morning, and caused him to make all possible speed. This threat of Esau caused fearful forebodings on the part of Jacob, both on this day, and on his journey home twenty years after.

But there was something for Jacob to think about much more fearful than this threat of Esau; his falsehoods to his old, blind father. How they must have come up before him in all their hideous monstrosity, and repeated themselves in his mind as he walked along until he was sick unto death with their loathsomeness. He had done Esau no wrong, for he had purchased the birthright and paid the full price which was asked for it. Esau of course wanted it back, and would have taken it notwithstanding the fair bargain he had made with his brother in disposing of it. But as between him and Jacob he had no right to that birthright.

But the cunning deceit Jacob had used toward his father, and the falsehoods he had told, in order to obtain the birthright blessing, how these must have stung him as they kept flying about like hornets in his mind, and made him cringe with shame and self-loathing as he walked along. Even if he did not yet feel the full sinfulness before the Lord of his deceitfulness, yet he must have felt that such things showed him to be a mean, contemptible man, utterly untrustworthy. How ashamed he must have felt as he kept thinking over that never-to-be-forgotten interview between him-

self and his father: " *Who art thou, my son?" "And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau thy first-born; I have done according as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me."* And then, when his father asked, "How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son?" With what shameful irreverence and hypocritical audacity he used the name of the Lord, saying, "Because the Lord thy God brought it to me." And the false covering of his hands and neck which met his suspicious father's hands when he felt of him to see whether he was his very son Esau or not. This must have come up to his mind as he continued on his journey, his guilty cowering attitude as his father said while again he took his hand, *"The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau."* What now if after all this deceitful work his father should be given sight to see who it was that stood thus before him? he still shrinks and trembles as he walks along, thinking of that scene, although he has seen his father, and felt his hands upon him since he came to know all that had been done to him by his wife and son. Then again the blind father asked with increased solemnity, *"Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am."* Then after having eaten of the savoring meat of his son, and drunk wine from his hand, and smelled his garments, which were Esau's, and kissed him, he said what he could not have said of Esau, for it was not true of him, *"See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed."*

The apostle says, *"By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come."* The faith of Isaac was not at fault, but his natural mind was. He thought he was blessing Esau, but his faith took hold of God's thoughts, and led him to use words that expressed God's purpose. And shall we say that in all of this transaction God's purpose was being fulfilled? Certainly. What else could we say?

And shall we say that Rebecca's deceit and Jacob's falsehoods were embraced in the predestination of God? Certainly. Were they not all links in the one chain of events? What part could have been left out of this chain? What part was predestinated, if all was not? Shall we say then that if God predestinated the sinful actions of men, then why should they be blamed and punished for them? Let Paul answer. After speaking of God's purpose concerning Jacob and Esau, and concerning Pharaoh, he says, *"Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?"- Romans ix. 11-21.* And again, *"But if our unrighteousness commend the righ-*

teousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who takes vengeance? (I speak as a man) God forbid. For then how shall God judge the world? For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner? And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil that good may come? whose damnation is just." - Romans iii. 5-8.

We know that no lie is to be excused, much less justified. A lie is always sinful. All sin is hateful to God. Yet we know also that nothing can ever have transpired which was contrary to God's purpose; otherwise he would not be God. We are told that he "DECLARED the end from the beginning." We are told in his word that the wicked are his sword, and men of the world his hand, and that the wrath of man shall praise him. " Not Gabriel asks the reason why, nor God the reason gives." He says to us, *" Your ways are not my ways, neither are my thoughts your thoughts."* We cannot limit the Lord, nor charge evil against him.

So we will go on with Jacob as he plods wearily along toward that " certain place " to which it was the Lord's purpose to bring him to spend such a night as he had never spent before. He has lost some of the strength and vigor of the morning, and the harrassed condition of his mind and the shame and self-abhorrence that were increasing upon him, no doubt contributed to that weariness which rendered him unfit to travel any further that night. He had sinned grievousy against his father, and against the Lord. He could not excuse himself by charging it against his mother. He was seventy-five years of age at the time, and must bear the blame of his own acts.

What was said between him and his father at their last interview concerning his deceit we are not told. Both must have been deeply humbled before each other and before the Lord; Jacob because his blind father was now aware of all his deceitful acts and words, and Isaac because it was now plain to him that his wishes and purposes had been contrary to the purposes of the Lord, and that what Jacob and his mother had done so wickedly had brought to light God's purpose, and contributed to its fulfillment. He had loved Esau because he did eat of his venison, but now he became aware that God had not loved him, but had loved Jacob. Rebecca had been told this before the children were born, and she loved Jacob. Isaac had learned this solemn truth when Esau stood before him with the savory meat after Jacob had received the blessing and gone out. "And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? Where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it to me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed." This was the time

when Isaac knew that the Lord's ways and thoughts were not his. It was so with Abraham; he said, *"O, that Ishmael might live before thee;"* but God had purposed that the free woman should have a son, and that in Isaac his seed should be called. Truly our ways are not God's ways. Esau's exceeding bitter cry availed nothing. His repeated and pitiful question and request, *"Hast thou but one blessing? Bless me, even me also, O my father,"* were touching, but they were the expression of only fleshly and selfish desires.

I remember when about fourteen years old wondering why Jacob, who was the one the Lord loved, was left to act so wickedly, and appeared to be more dishonest and sinful than Esau, and the answer that came to my mind then was, that it was to show that the elect of God were not any better by nature than the rest of mankind; that they were not chosen and loved because of any goodness or merit in themselves. I can see no other reason today.

So Isaac and Jacob are together the last time before Jacob's departure, and it must have been a most solemn interview, as each one saw himself a short-sighted, sinful man, and saw with wonder and self-abasement the manifestations of the wonderful purposes of the Lord. Isaac seems to have no word of reproach for Jacob. He sees him as the one the Lord has chosen to receive the blessing of Abraham, and to " inherit the land in which he was then a stranger, which God gave to Abraham," and he pronounces that blessing upon him, and sends him away to his mother's native land. He can well leave him to the teaching of the Lord concerning his depraved and sinful nature.

And Jacob has come into "a desert land," and into "a waste howling wilderness," where the Lord had appointed to find him. Deut. xxxii. 10.) He represents all that people whom the Lord hath redeemed, who their fleshly nature are called Jacob. *" For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. Therefore THEY shall come and sing in the height of Zion."-Jer. xxxi. ii, 12.* The Lord brings all these with weeping, and leads them with supplication. They see enough of sin and vileness in themselves to cause weeping and supplication. They start out, as Jacob did, strong and courageous, in the morning of the natural day, with a definite and desirable object in view. They go forward with zeal toward the land that holds for them all they want. They seem to be traveling at their own will, and in their own strength, and to be urged on and animated by the desirable objects which they plainly see before them. But the Lord is leading them, and this first day's journey of Jacob represents the day's journey of all that greater Jacob, all the elect of God, when the Lord brings them away from the world, away from any confidence in themselves, and causes them to see themselves as justly condemned

sinners in the sight of a holy God.

By the light of the natural sun Jacob traveled on until that sun was set; then he must tarry where he was. In that desert land he could find only stones for his pillows. *"And he took of the stones of that place for his pillows."* Now he is indeed alone and desolate. When his grandfather Abram sent his servant over this same road to get a wife for Isaac he sent him in such state, and with such show of wealth, as became a prince. But Jacob is alone and poor. He has left all his worldly wealth behind him. Twenty years after this, when he was returning with wealth and a large family and many servants, he said, *"With my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands."*

This day's journey of Jacob shows how the Lord brings all of his Jacobs to know that their sinful hearts are a desert and a wilderness, where no plant of righteousness grows, and "where beasts of midnight howl." He brings them to the place where all natural light and wisdom fail them, and they can go no farther. He brings them to see the law of God holy, and themselves condemned by it, and for good cause. He causes them to feel that the glory of God is manifested in "the ministration of death written and engraven in stones."

The stones of that place are hard and uncomfortable pillows, but these lonely Jacobs have nothing else to rest upon but their attempts to fulfill the law "written and engraven in stones." They are in a sad and doleful condition; all is dark, and hope seems to have gone down with the sun; no light appears to show how a sinful man can be just with God. The wisdom of the world fails here; it cannot open up a way for a sinner to find access unto a holy God. There is no promise they can see that any tomorrow will ever rise upon this fearful night.

Then comes sleep, a broken, restless sleep. *"And he lay down in that place to sleep, and he dreamed."* Here is the time, and this the place when and where the Lord found Jacob, and where he finds all his people; when they have given up hope in themselves. *"In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed, then God openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction."- Job xxxiii. 15.*

"And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it." In this dream the way of access unto the Father is presented in a glorious figure. It is in a vision, in a figure, in a dream, that Jesus and his salvation are made known to men. It is by revelation always, and not by searching, that he is found out. The revelation is first given to Jesus, the man of God's right hand.

"The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to

pass."-Rev. i. 1. "*Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty.*" I have exalted one chosen out of the people. (Psalms lxxxix. 9.)

Those to whom this revelation is to be made are first prepared to feel their need of it, to feel their need of that help which is laid upon Jesus, by experiencing their utter lack of power in themselves to deliver themselves from the condemnation of the law, and to come into the favor of God. Whatever the Lord has in store for any one he will cause that one to desire, to seek for in vain by any power of his own, and to inquire of the Lord for. Jacob asleep, with the stones of that desert land for his pillows, represents all the Lord's people at the time when they have come to the end of their earthly strength, have fully felt the depravity of their hearts, and the righteousness of God's holy law, and are trying in vain to find some rest in the works of that law which is "a ministration of death, written and engraven in stones." Here is the revelation of Jesus Christ in a figure to those who have been brought thus far by the law as a schoolmaster, and have been prepared by that legal teaching for this wonderful revelation.

This ladder is not for Jacob to climb on up to heaven. I have read that not only must we climb up to heaven on "that ladder, but that we must ourselves build the ladder for ourselves as we go up. But this ladder seems to be complete. Its top readied to heaven; not to the natural heavens, which show to our sight and imagination myriads of stars infinitely distant from each other, allowing us to think of no point where the top of the ladder could definitely rest, but from the earth to the heaven where God reigns in eternal glory and blessedness; to the high and holy place where the high and lofty One dwells, who dwells also with him that is of a humble and contrite spirit.

He to whom this ladder is shown is asleep at its foot, and sees it only in vision. It is not for him to climb upon, but for the angels or messengers of God. So our dear Savior said, "*Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.*"- *John i. 51.*

While Jacob lies asleep at the foot of the ladder and cannot use it himself, it is for his sake it is there, and its use is for his benefit. The angels of God are ascending upon it with his longings, self-loathings and supplications, and descending with sweet answers of peace and messages of love from the God of salvation to him. It is through Jesus, and through him alone, that any supplication can arise from a poor sinner's heart to the Lord. It is in his name only that any one can find access unto the Father. He is the " new and living way. " " No man can come unto the Father, " Jesus said, " but by me." And also all messages from the Father to his chosen people

are through Jesus. The angels or messengers of God descend upon that ladder to his people at its foot, with his messages to them. It is always through Jesus that the grace and truth and love and mercy of God come to them. It is through Jesus, and for his sake, that the Father says to them, *"Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee."*

"The Lord God stood above the ladder, "and gave the blessing of Abraham and of Isaac to Jacob while he was still asleep and dreaming. And he said, *" I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of. "*

What a wonderful, glorious scene is this, and what glorious and blessed doctrine. The Lord God, who fills heaven and earth, and who inhabits eternity, standing above the ladder, and Jacob, the supplanter, the sinful but sorrowing man asleep at its foot, with stones for his pillows. The ladder itself a wonder of wonders, set up on the earth, and its top reaching to heaven. Jesus upon the earth in the likeness of sinful flesh, with all the sins and afflictions and infirmities and temptations of his people upon him, and yet " holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." "Its top reached to heaven." "I and my Father are one, " he said.

This ladder could be seen by Jacob only when asleep, only in vision. When awake he could not see it. The way of salvation could only be seen in vision, in a dream, " in slumberings upon the bed," during all that legal dispensation. It did not openly appear until the gospel day, in the appearing of Jesus Christ in the flesh.

In the terms of the blessing which the Lord God gave to Jacob while thus in a dream, when deep sleep had fallen upon him, what absolute assurance and certainly are expressed. No contingency, no conditions, are suggested. *" I will keep thee in all places whither thou goest. "* Jacob, after he awoke, in the wonder and excitement of his mind, made a vow and some promises which appeared to be based upon conditions. There was truth expressed in his vow, but he had not yet come to fully know the Lord and his ways. That was to be fully taught him twenty years later, in another and more wonderful manifestation of God to him another night, during all the dark hours of which he was to wrestle with the angel of God, and at the morning's dawn was to prevail, and to receive the blessing of

the angel, and a new name, but with it the loss of his own strength. That was to be a time of rejoicing with Jacob, though he was never to walk again in his own strength, but always to halt upon his thigh. But this was to him a dreadful place, and he was afraid. He awoke that morning with all of his natural strength renewed, and was ready to go on his journey, but his heart was filled with the terror of the Lord. He now knew that he had seen in the vision of this wonderful night the house of God and the gate of heaven, but instead of giving him peace and comfort, it made him afraid. But somehow he seemed to see a great importance in the stone which he had taken for his pillows, and he set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon it, and said it should be God's house, and that the Lord should be his God, if he would do just what he had already declared to Jacob he would surely do.

And that Stone is the house of God; for all that was written upon it has been fulfilled by the dear Savior, and he is now in the gospel "*the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel.*" Here is Bethel, the house of God, the sure resting-place for all his people; Under the legal dispensation this house of the Lord was seen only in figures and visions. Now under the gospel dispensation that beautiful house is seen by faith wherever two or three are gathered together in Jesus' name, and by faith and love dwell together in him.

Elder Silas H. Durand
SEPTEMBER 5, 1903.

FALLEN ANGELS

ALEXANDRIA, D.C.,
January 15, 1840.

OUR attention has been called to the subject of the " angels which kept not their first estate," &c., by brother Gaines, of Kentucky, who desires our views on Jude 6, and 2 Peter ii. 4. It is rather a thankless undertaking to set forth our views upon a subject on which we must necessarily come in collision with the long established opinions and deep-rooted traditions of others, among whom are to be found some friends for whose opinions and feelings we entertain sentiments or the greatest regard. When called upon, as in the present case, however, we feel bound to set before our readers such views as we have.

The celebrity of Milton's views, as given in his "Paradise Lost," has become almost universal. As few men of our age are found able to compete with that distinguished poet in eloquence of style or language, few have ventured the risk of their own popularity by offering a different view of the subject from that which he has given, while at the same time a child may easily detect and expose the fallacy of his reasonings concerning the angels. We have not been able to see, with Milton and others, either beauty or scriptural authority for the notion that the angels here spoken of were ever residents of that heaven above, where the saints are ultimately to

rest, nor that they had an existence prior to that date in which God created the heavens and the earth, and all the hosts of them - to believe that they were once associated with those holy angels that sang the joyful anthems to the shepherds in Judea; nor to believe that in their creation they were created for or capacitated to enjoy the immediate presence of their Maker, or that he designed them for any other purpose than that which is and shall be fully accomplished in their case, to us seems to conflict seriously with divine revelation. Can we rationally suppose that the place originally provided for one description of beings shall ultimately be occupied by another so essentially different, without relinquishing the doctrine of the immutability of God. Or, if the saints are finally to occupy a place originally designed for the devil and his angels, how can it be said in truth that the heavenly kingdom was prepared for the saints *before the foundation of the world,* when, according to Milton, it was not known that the place would be vacated until the world was founded, and the decree of bringing his Only Begotten into the world, and that all the angels should worship him! Again, would not the saints feel sad in prospect of being placed where angels could not stay? If a higher order of beings, holy, happy, and in a place where temptation and sin could not enter, and such beings as could have no predisposition to sin, did fall from that estate, and were cast over the battlements of glory, would not the poor lambs of Jesus, who have all their lifetime been tormented with temptation and struggling against inbred corruptions, have great cause to fear that they also might fall from the height of glory and sink at last among the damned? But lest we be tedious, we will leave the negative part of our subject, and give our opinion of the angels. By the angels that kept not their first estate, we understand the children of the devil. Satan is called an angel, and sometimes transform's himself into an angel of light; and as far as we have been able to discover from revelation all the names by which he is known in the scriptures are applicable to his seed. Heece Satan is called " The old serpent, which is the devil and Satan," (Rev. xx. 2;) his children are also called "a generation of vipers,"- Matt. iii. 7; also xxiii:33. So also is Satan called an angel, and in Rev. xii. 7, his children are also thus denominated: " There was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought, and *his angels."*

The term angel also signifies messenger, and hence every emissary of Satan employed to disseminate heresy, to oppose the gospel of Christ, to afflict and persecute the children of God, are properly denominated his angels. It can be by no means difficult to perceive that the dragon and his angels, mentioned in Rev. &ii., are designed to show the powers of darkness in ar-

ray against the cause and church of Christ. Michael, the only archangel spoken of in the bible, is none other than Christ; his angels are those who are denominated "*The remnant of her (the church's) seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*" *Rev. xii. 17.* Admitting then, as we are compelled to do, that the disciples of Christ, in this case, are his angels, it is perfectly plain that the opposite angels are those unto whom Christ said, "*Ye are of your father, the devil.*"- *John viii. 44.* These two descriptions of angels, in our opinion, include the whole human family; the chosen generation, or that seed which Jesus saw when he poured out his soul into death ; a seed that should serve him, and that should be counted to him for a generation ; these constitute the one family, and are all in time born of a spiritual birth, by the Holy Ghost, and when discipled in the ranks of the followers of the Lamb, are known as his angels, keeping the commandments of God; and having the testimony of Jesus Christ. In the other division are found all who are without, such as dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. Rev. xiii. 15. These are called the seed of the serpent, (Gen. iii. 15,) a generation of vipers, &C.; and these are known as the dragon's angels. The angels spoken of by Peter and Jude, we understand to be such as were found in the family of national Israel, and were there known as false prophets, children of Belial, &c Their *first estate,* confining the idea to those angels, was intermixed with the people of God under the legal covenant; here they had an habitation in Abraham's house, claiming him to their father, as when they came to John's baptism, (Matt. iii.) and as they asserted and Christ admitted. John viii. 33-44 Both Peter and Jude, in the connection of our subject, are found exhorting their brethren to beware of false teachers, which admonition they enforce by the example of these angels; and then, going still further back, they mention the destruction of the old world, and the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, &c., the judgment of which our Lord had said was more tolerable than that which awaited Jerusalem and the other cities of Judea.

We shall be understood to believe that the first estate and *their own habitation* of these angels was in the worldly sanctuary under the ceremonial law. Here they had rights in common with the rest of Abraham's carnal seed, of which they were not dispossessed until the breaking up of that dispensation. The manner of their leaving their own habitation and losing their first estate is very clearly illustrated Rev. xii. It had long been foretold that the clay would dawn on Israel, when the children of God should, in a clearer light, discern between those who served God and those that served him not; at length the voice of one crying in the wilderness

is heard, the morning star sheds forth a glimmering light; the day spring from on high visits the benighted Jews. The people that sat in darkness discovered a light; and our Lord says, that which maketh manifest is light. To their great amazement, there appeared a great wonder in heaven - a woman clothed in the sun, elevated above the moon, &c. by which we understand the church of Christ, emerging from Judaism, and brought, by John's preaching and baptism, to view in her connection with Christ, into whose name John *baptized* them, and thus raised above that orb ordained to rule the night dispensation of the old covenant, whose borrowed rays were through prophecy, types and figures, pointed forward to the day of our Lord Jesus. Above this moon the church was discovered in her connection with Christ her Sun, and eventually the head of the church, or woman crowned with a crown of twelve stars. The church now looking forth as, the morning. Cant. vi. 10.

According to the similitude of the morning, from the appearing of John, who was the day star, or harbinger of the rising Sun, the light must increase ; and as the light became more clear, other objects were also discovered. The seed of the woman is born, Christ appears in the flesh as the promised Messiah, or as the archangel Michael; the Prince that standeth for the children of thy people. Dan. xii. 1. The same light that revealed the Redeemer coming out of Zion to turn away ungodliness from Jacob, made manifest the dragon, as first personated by Herod, standing before the woman, for to devour the child as soon as it should be born. *"And there was war in heaven."* Not in the world of glory above, nor in the gospel church, but in that heaven where these things appeared, viz: Israel. Christ is now born, has taken his place at the head of his little flock at Jordan, where he was recognized by John and his disciples, as their head and ruler, their leader and king, by the descent of the Spirit like a dove, and the voice of the Father, who from his awful throne and majesty proclaims, *"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."* Immediately after this revelation of the Son of God, Christ was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil; and on this occasion the war broke out. Michael the archangel, contended with the devil; the dispute was then, and has continued ever since to be, about the body of Moses, i. e., the law. Here the great Captain of salvation leads on to battle, followed by his angels; the dragon also marshals his troops. *"And the dragon fought, and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."* In view of this glorious triumph Jesus said to his disciples,

when they returned and said, "*Lord, even devils are subject to us through thy name :" "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Nevertheless, rejoice not that devils are made subject to YOU, (or are cast down,) but rather that your names are written in heaven; that you were not included in the number of the vanquished."* Here then is where the angels that sinned left their own habitation and their first estate. *"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony,"* &c. In anticipation of his glorious victory, the prophet cries, *"Awake, awake! put on thy strength, O Zion ! Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the daughters of the uncircumcised and the unclean." Isa. lii. 1. "Therefore, rejoice ye heaven, and ye that dwell therein (Item. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and Sea; for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." - Rev. xii. 12.* The vanquished legions of the old serpent are cast down, and are held under chains of darkness, unto the judgment of the great day. All the angels of Satan are thus bound in chains of darkness, and Jesus rejoiced in spirit that it was so, saying, " I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Nor can all the Infant Schools, Sabbath or Theological Schools, Mission, Tract or even Bible Societies, with all their machinery, brake asunder these everlasting fetters of ignorance of spiritual things, to which the devil and his angels are doomed; nor can all the preaching, praying or exhortations, anxious benches or protracted meetings, conducted by men or angels, ever make one of these fallen angels wise unto salvation; they are chained, and in fetters of darkness they must remain forever. Those angels particularly alluded to by Peter and Jude, were in a special manner chained in darkness concerning the true Messiah, the spirituality of his kingdom, and particularly in regard to the fulfillment of those predictions of the destruction of Jerusalem, of their consequent judgment at that time, and of all those signs which should indicate the near approach of the, judgment of that great and terrible day.

From all these considerations, let the saints throughout all subsequent time be admonished. The destruction of these false teachers and prophets among the Jews, as also the destruction of the old world, the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, were all presented by these *faithful* apostles as examples of what should be developed in the last days, when perilous times should

come; when false teachers should come among the saints, bringing in damnable heresies and doctrines of devils, when they should turn away from the truth, and be turned unto fables ; (tracts, ficticious stories, dairy-men's daughters, and the like,) and when they with feigned words, (professing great reverence for God, extravagant love for souls, &c.,) shall make merchandise of the saints but the apostle adds, *"Their judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."*

"But oh! their end, their dreadful end,
Thy sanctuary taught me so;
On slippery rocks I see them stand,
And fiery billows roll below."

Elder Gilbert Beebe

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 1999

Mrs. Phillis M. Farlow, MC..... $7.00
Noel Lavinder, VA 7.00
Mrs. Jean B. Moran, NC 7.00
Ms. Anita S. Creech, AR 30.00
Tommy Middleton, NC 2.00
Willie M. Ratliff, VA 7.00
Mrs. Aubrey Oakes, VA 2.00
Eld. Joe Sawyer, NC 2.00
Reed Harper, TX 7.00

OBITUARIES

ARA LOUISE ARRANT

Sister Ara Louise Arrant was born at Haile, La. in Union Parish on Jan. 19, 1910 and lived most of her life in that parish. Because of poor health she was in a nursing home at Atlanta, TX. when the Lord called her home Jan. 2, 2000 at the age of 89.

Sister Louise and her husband, brother Meredith Arrant, both joined Union Primitive Baptist Church in July 1984, expressing their faith and hope in Jesus Christ as their Saviour. Both were faithful to attend all worship services at Union until poor health caused them to move to Atlanta, Tx. Brother Arrant was called home in May 1992. They are survived by one son, Roy Arrant and wife Anita, one sister, Mrs. Mildred Patterson and husband Ray, two Grandchildren and two Greatgrandchildren, and many other relatives.

Services were conducted at Kilpatrick Funeral Home in Farmerville, La. by her pastor Elder Clifford Wilbanks, and she was laid to rest by her husband in Union Church Cemetery at Linville, La. to await the return of her Lord.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

JAMES LELAND WILLIAMS

My dear brother passed from this life on October 22, 1999 at the age of 80 years. He was the son of James Floyd Williams and Mattie Butcher Williams and was born December 28, 1918. He was a life long attendant of Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church but he never asked for a home with the church. I remember that when Julian joined Malmaison Church, the three of us were embracing and shedding tears, and I said to him that I wished he could join with us and he said "it is not the Lord's will ". That was his belief through the years that the will of God shall be done and that all things shall come to pass as he purposes it and none can stay His hand. Leland was as deep in the doctrine of predestination as anyone I have known. The Lord grounded him in revealed knowledge of His mighty hand and tender mercy. In our many conversations of religious experiences during the years, he would state how good the Lord had been to him.

The doctors found that he had cancer in advanced stage about two months before he died. His remarks were that he had been blessed with 80 years of life and that we should all accept his approaching death with calmness. His attitude of being reconciled to the Lord's will was proof to me that he felt His mighty presence.

Who can wish to stay in this world of troubles when they have gotten a glimpse of that glorious land of eternal bliss that awaits the believers in God. Our dear brother was very precious to his devoted wife of 50 years, Audrey Williams, and his two children, four grandchildren, four brothers and two sisters. We should not but say how blessed we were to have had him, but how much more blessed he was to be carried home to his God.

His funeral was conducted by Elders C.B. Davis, Kenneth Key and Julian Williams and he was buried at Highland Burial Park in Danville, Va.

Since his death, I have stood looking at his grave and I could feel that he was not there, only his body. His spirit has returned to God who gave it and the body, soul and spirit will be reunited when the voice of God shall call him by name and he will be resurrected to ever be with the Lord where there will be no end to eternal bliss.

May the grace of God reconcile us to our great loss and to realize that his battle with disease and trials are over and that we are left to endure we know not what, but we believe the promise of Jesus that He will be with His people until the end will be all that we will need at that time.

Written by his brother
who loved him greatly,
Burnell Williams

NOTICE

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Editors

ELDER NOEL F. CONNER

By request of his widow, I will attempt to write this obituary of Elder Noel F. Conner. Elder Conner was born November 30, 1911 and fell asleep September 24, 1999.

He was received into the fellowship of Pine Forest Primitive Baptist Church in 1929. During his stay here he was ordained deacon. In June 1963, Brother Conner was received by letter into County Line Church.

The Church at County Line felt a burden for Brother Noel to preach, and April 1965 he was asked to relieve his feelings. He began speaking April 17, 1965. He was licensed to preach in any and all of the churches with whom we correspond with in May 1969. The same day he was called by the church at County Line to serve as joint pastor with Elder R.A. May.

On July 15, 1972 a presbytery was organized to look into the qualifications of Gospel Minister, and ordained him into the full work of the Gospel Ministry.

Elder Conner visited many churches and associations; and was received with much love. He had a very deep understanding of the scriptures. He was a very humble man, which I feel is a great quality of a servant. I appreciated his visits with me in the meetings. We miss him so very much.

Brother Conner and Mrs. Conner were married November 1, 1939. Survivors are wife, Nellie H. Conner, two daughters, Sonora Jean Conner, Arlene and her husband, Russell Blevins, two grandsons, James Noel Blevins and Anthony Ray Blevins and wife Patricia, two great-grandsons, Christian Conner Blevins and Noah Nathanial Blevins. He has two brothers, Aaron Conner and Calvin Conner and wife Doris also a sister-in-law, Ida Conner.

He was preceded in death by a daughter Dianne C. Mitchell and two brothers Earl Conner and Shelton conner, and a sister Lula Anderson.

His funeral was conducted at Woods Funeral Home, Floyd Virginia., Sunday, Sept. 26, 1999 by Elders Lane Carter, Larry Hollandsworth, and Junior Conner. His body was laid to rest in County Line Cemetery to await the resurrection. May we be resigned to God's will in our loss and his eternal gain.

Humbly submitted,
Elder Carl E. Terry

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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Walking With Grandpa

I like to walk with Grandpa,
His steps are short like mine.
He doesn't say,
"Now hurry up!"
He always takes his time,
Most people have to hurry,
They do not stop and see.
I'm glad that
God made Grandpa,
"Unrushed" and young like me.

Author Unknown
Karen O. Tribett "95"

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EDITORIAL

LIGHT

ELDER C. C. WILBANKS

When God created the heaven and the earth the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep, And God said let there be light, and there was light. What amazing power! No man can comprehend this with his carnal mind, but by faith given unto his children they believe all of it. Ungodly men do not believe this and they are searching for how the world came into being, and how all living creatures came into being. They know not God nor the truth of the Scriptures. These things are hid from them (the wise and prudent) but are revealed unto babes by the Father. God divided the light from the darkness, and he called the light Day and the darkness Night. The darkness was first and then the light, and they formed the first day. God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. God created every thing upon the earth, including man, and *"God saw every thing that he had made, and behold, it was very good."* Yet there are many people of this world who believe in evolution. I believe these are among those to whom God shall send strong delusion, that they might believe a lie. 2 Thes.2:11. Also, *"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." 2 Cor.4:4.*

We know that the word light is used in various ways. Light dispels the darkness so that we may see with our natural eyes the things of nature, regardless of its source; it is a thing which may start something burning; it describes something of weight that is not heavy; it is the way we perceive things, our knowledge of natural things etc. These are things that can be seen and understood by the fleshly mind, but I desire to write of the light none but the children of God can see and perceive if God will bless me to do so.

What is this light? It is the light of knowledge. *"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. 4:6.* No man having this light of knowledge can teach it to another. Jesus said, *"No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Jn.6:44-45.* This light of knowledge is not given to the natural man, for, *"-the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."* In order for one to be spiritual he must be born again, for that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. If we have been born again, *"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him." Rom.8:16-17.* Yes, we must suffer with him, for he suffered all the trials, tribulations and persecutions that are appointed unto us. *"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."* We must also learn obedience by these things, for the way we learn any thing is through experiencing it. A child may be told that something is hot, but he will never know what that means until he touches it.

Jesus is our life and light. John said, *"In him was life; and the life was the light of men."* We had neither until we heard him call us, for we were dead in trespasses and sin; but he said, *"The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." Jn.5;25.* Have we truly heard his voice? There are times when I feel to say, Yes; but there are many times that I am filled with doubts. Satan is continually telling me that I am deceived and that my hope in Christ is false. Yet there are times when hope springs up in my breast and I am made to greatly rejoice. I do not believe I could believe and have hope in Christ as my redeemer if I had no spiritual life, for the dead can do nothing. There was a time when I did not believe, and I followed after the lusts of my flesh. But there came a time when I began to seek after something, yet did not know what I was seeking. I now believe that I had been given life, but little light. That light, however, was enough to show me that I was a sinner in the eyes of God that I thought I knew, but surely did not. I sought to justify myself but to no avail. I read the scriptures daily, but found that they only condemned me. I attended

several churches hoping to find some relief, but this made life even more miserable, for they all told me that I must do something that I knew that I could not do, because I had already tried with all my strength. I continued reading, and begged God for mercy. I cannot say when, but he heard my prayers, and I was given to read the scriptures in a new light. Line upon line, precept upon precept, a little here and a little there I was taught, and I greatly rejoiced with each revelation of the truth. I did not know it then, and I have only hope now, that the Holy Spirit was then in me. If he did not dwell in me then he never will, for, *"Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Rom.8:9.* If not completely deceived, I believe in Jesus Christ. If my belief is false and I do not have the true light, then I walk in darkness. *"If therefore the light that be in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness." Matt.6:23.* If my belief is not false it was given unto me, for, *"This is the work of God that ye believe in him whom he hath sent." Jn.6:29. "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for his sake." Phil.1:29.* These things I know apply to all the elect of God; and I trust that you are of the elect.

Jesus said, *"I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth in me should not abide in darkness." Jn.12:46.* Jesus does not give gospel light to any but those who believe in him. The gospel is hid from them in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which do not believe, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. 11 Cor.4:3-4. Jesus dwells in the heart of his saints, which is a mystery, *"To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."* If Christ dwells within us, *"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."* When a disciple asked Jesus how he would manifest himself unto them and not unto the world, Jesus said, *"If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Jn.14:23.* We are told by the apostle Paul that we are the holy temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in us; and if any man defile this temple, him shall God destroy. 1 Cor .16-17. Our earthly body is that which would be destroyed, for our eternal life in Christ shall never perish. Jn.10:28.

All men, while in the flesh, are evil. They follow after the lusts of the flesh and have no desire for righteousness. All they do is evil, for there is no good thing in the flesh. *"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the* light,

that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought of God." Jn.3:19-21. Paul tells us, *"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you."* If we be so blessed, we shall walk in the light and not in darkness. Jesus said, *"I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."* If we have been blessed with this light of life, we are commanded to *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."* What are these good works? They are the good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Eph.2:10. And they are the fruit of the Spirit which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against which there is no law. Gal.5:22-23. Before we received this holy light we walked in darkness and were yoked together with the unbelievers of the world. Paul beseeched the Corinthians to *"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters." 11 Cor.6:14-18.* What a wonderful and glorious promise this is to poor, helpless sinners! Peter tells us of the times past in our lives when we wrought the will of the Gentiles in living after the lusts of the flesh, *"Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you; who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead. For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit."* Peter also admonished us that we should live no longer in the lusts of men, but to the will of God; and above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. (See 1 Peter chapter 4)

Beloved brethren, may God bestow upon us grace to walk in the light of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to keep his holy commandments.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES

MAN'S CONDITION

Some time ago, when talking with the congregation, I was talking about the deprived condition of the natural man before God. Shortly after a sister asked if I didn't mean "depraved" condition. I answered, "No, I didn't mean depraved, but I should have meant that."

Though both conditions, I believe, are true, natural man's being deprived of any ability to truly seek or find God speaks only lightly of man's condition. Depravity speaks much more to the true depth of man's condition. Depravity speaks much more to the true depth of natural man's wretched condition.

Though it is contrary to man's vaulted opinion of "self", and his own ability to achieve, we are told in Eccl. 3; 11, that God *"....hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end."*

Also concerning the work of God Eccl. 8:17 says, *"....though a man labor to seek it out, yet he shall not find it; yea further, though a wise man think to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it."* And, of course, Ro. 11;33, speaking of Gods wisdom and judgments *"....how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."*

Both the inability of natural man to reach up and grasp the things of God and yet His gracious way of showing them to his saints is pointed out in 1 Cor. 2. Verse 14, states, *"....the natural man receiveth not the things of Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. 2;10, "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit:...."*

The above scriptures would seem to adequately describe the spiritual impotency of the natural man, but it does not describe the depth of depravity to which sin has dragged this carnality.

To get as unclouded picture as possible consider Gen. 2:8, when God put Adam in the garden of Eden. God talked with Adam and told him that he could eat of every tree of the garden, which included the tree of life (figuratively Christ), except one.

Of all the things that might be said about Adam's situation, sufficieth it to say Adam was in a very good place and in a very good condition. Even though it would seem that, to this point, Adam had only experienced the "good" that God had provided, Adam did not know, or discern it. In man's terms, he had nothing to compare it with. Consider this comparison: Silence cannot really be appreciated until one has been exposed to excessive noise. Or, there is no appreciation for the cool of the evening if one has not experienced the heat of the day. So Adam, it would seem, did not discern his blessed position. But this was soon changed.

In the garden of God there was, in addtion to the tree of life, there was

the tree of knowledge of good and evil (discernment). And Adam was told, *"...in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shall surely die."* Gen 2;17. Adam did eat and Adam did die.

However, when God sent forth Adam from the garden he did not die corporally - not then. But, Adam was separated from (died to) that "good" condition that he had when he was with God in the garden. He died to that state, or marvelous condition that he was in. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. Cor. 15;22.

If Adam, our federal head, died to that gracious condition in the garden, of knowing "good" and walking with God, then what was left for Adam to know? He knew both good and evil from eating of that tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If he then died to the good, the only thing left to natural Adam, and natural man, is evil.

So, this then, is the nature of man in his fallen state. *"There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seek God." "....there is none that doeth good, no not one." Rom. 3;10-12.*

But depravity speaks of wickedness and corruption. And, this more completely fits the description of man in nature. *"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Jer. 17;9.* Not only this, natural expresses his hatred for, and hostility against God and things godly; this is enmity. *"....the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Rom. 8;7,8. See also Eph. 2;2,3.*

With all the wickedness and corruption of sin upon him, man wallows in his own vanity and incorrectly calls his benevolent efforts "good". But, it cannot be because *"....whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Rom. 14;23. See also Rom. 16; 17, 18.*

Man, in his fallen condition, is the opposite, or mirror image of Adam in the garden when, at first, he experienced only "good", but seemingly could not see it, or discern it. In like manner fallen man cannot see his own depravity and justifies his own ways and actions. *"Every way of man is right in his own eyes." Prov. 21; 2.* In the scriptures this is sometimes called "darkness", and the unfruitful works of darkness. See Eph. 5; 11.

If it is then concluded that carnal man cannot see his own depraved condition and is helpless to correct it, even if he could see it, then any change must come totally from some other source. And it does come for His elect. *"....God commended his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. 5;8.*

"Grace", what a wonderful sound. When a child of God is brought out of darkness into His marvelous light he is quickly aware of what he is by nature - helpless, undone, depraved. Yet there is hope. *"For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender*

branch thereof will not cease." Job 14;7.

Now, this new creature, having been born from above and labouring under the burden of sin is soon given to hear the comforting and drawing words of the Lord, *"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest". Matt. 11;28.* What was impossible for natural man has been accomplished in the finished work of Christ, and his people are to rest in His work.

It would be agreed that the new condition of a man, who has been redeemed by Christ and quickened by the Spirit, is to be preferred over the former condition of darkness even though warfare rages between the old nature and the new creature. But, is this new man, who has been brought into Gods marvelous light, given a new birth and a new understanding, any more able to perform that which is "good" than he was in his previous depraved condition? The apostle Paul seems to answer in the negative in Rom 7; 18, 19. *"For I know that in me (that is in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do."*

Does it not follow that if there is none good but God, Matt. 19:17, then works that are good can only come from God? Goods works that might be attributed to man, in casual conversation, are they not the works of God that are simply manifested in or through man? If not, why does the apostle Paul, in Eph. 5;20, exhort the church to give thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ? If good works could originate in man and not just simply be the channel through which they are seen, then shouldn't some of the thanks go to man? Of course, this is foolishness to the spiritual mind. But I am persuaded that it is the very earnest desire of the natural mind; proud, boastful, vain. And a very real thorn in the flesh of the child of God; to yet bear the infestation of sin.

It must be concluded then, that in every capacity we, of ourselves, are impotent. And yet this, in no way, justifies the "stool of do nothing" attitude, for the apostle Paul says, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Phil. 4;13. Though these are the words of the apostle they are applicable to any and all saints. But, the essence is that it is all of Christ and not of man. And in the same light the many admonitions and exhortations must be approached in the strength of the Lord, as well as all other labours. The apostle Paul is again our example, *"....I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I but the grace of God which was with me." Rom. 15;10.*

In looking at both the natural and the spiritual man, this seems to sum it up and say it best; "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve

the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." Rom. 7; 24, 25.

Elder W.G. Chapell

FELLOWSHIP

Fellowship with and among the Lord's people has been on my mind very much for years. To me, the word fellowship means fellows on the same ship traveling to the same port or destination. They are as Noah and the people shut up in the Ark so far as their being in captivity to, and with, their God. I have never felt worthy of the fellowship shown to me these 42 years that I have been a member of Malmaison Church. It has been the most precious feeling about my journey in life with my Brethren, to feel the mutual bond of love with a handshake or a face to face talk of our experiences of grace. The most sorrow and hurt has been the ease with which it seems that Brethren are willing to part with this precious fellowship when disagreements confront us. Except for a departure from our doctrine, I have always felt that every avenue of reconciliation should be explored-even if it takes much effort and talks among the Brethren. I have heard it said "Oh we don't have fellowship with a certain association or church" but that is a natural human failing-it could not be of the Holy Spirit because there was no guile found in Jesus' mouth and He did forgive all of our sins.

Our Christian fellowship is not with natural man as we hate the acts of the flesh and have been taught that all of our righteousness is as filthy rags in the sight of God. A song in the Goble Hymn book reads "From all that's mortal, all that's vain, And from this earthly clod, Arise my soul, and strive to gain Sweet fellowship with God". If we are given to feel fellowship with our Brethren, it is surely that this is a gift from God as He states that He is in His people and they are in Him and He is in His Father.

How precious is this Christian fellowship when felt and how alone we would feel if our Brethren were to forsake us. If they saw myself as I do, I'm sure they would turn away but my deepest desire is to live in peace and love with my dear Brethren, never wanting to offend but to live at their feet as I journey, I hope, to a better world. This life is very short as we grow old and look back on our past life and there are so few days to be with our Brethren in a lifetime. Our sweet meetings are only for a few hours but the time spent together and our mutual worship of the Lord is what keeps us hoping we have not been deceived in our expectation of a never ending fellowship as we journey together on that ship to the promised land.

In hope of eternal life,
Burnell B. Williams

VOICES OF THE PAST

JOSEPH

I, in common with many others, have regarded Joseph as intended by the Holy Spirit to represent Jesus in many things, in a typical way, and have so presented the subject, both in speaking and writing.

My reasons for regarding Joseph as representing Christ are:

First. We are authorized to look for a presentation of Christ in some way in all the Scriptures, either typically, prophetically, or in parables.

The testimony of Christ is not only the spirit of prophecy but is the purpose for which all the inspired Scriptures were given. I do not understand that the Scriptures tell us directly who were intended as types of Christ. We know that some who appear very clearly as typical of his person and work in some part of their life and actions are not directly said to be types, as Joshua, Samson, Hezekiah and others. In the light of the New Testament Scriptures, the meaning of Old Testament things appears, and in having come unto Mount Zion we have "come unto the spirits of those just men of old made perfect;" into the spiritual meaning of what they did and said, as they were moved by the Spirit of Christ which was in them.

Second. The peculiar history of Joseph presents such a likeness to the things of Christ, and is of so unusual a character, that it appears to me as though the likeness and the recital must have been according to the purpose of God, to set forth in that typical manner "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." We cannot think that the Scriptures are occupied with the relation of personal incidents and histories because of the intrinsic interest of them, without reference to their relation to Christ. Let us notice some of these peculiar incidents and circumstances in the life of Joseph. The first-born of Jacob's first loved and best loved wife, though second in marriage, he also received the birthright of Reuben, the first-born of all the sons of Jacob (1 Chron. v. 1, 2), that he might in this respect also have the pre-eminence among his brethren; loved by his father more than all his brethren, and receiving as a token of this special love, a coat of many colors; dreaming and telling to his brethren prophetic dreams, in which his exaltation over them is foretold, and thus exciting their hatred against himself; sent by his father to see after them, and when one found him wandering in the field and said, "What seekest thou?" he said, "I seek my brethren;" taken by them with intent to kill him who had come for their good, but prevented by the intercession of one of them, who, although showing his tenderness, yet united with the others in concealing the crime from their father, and evidently shared in the price for which his brother was sold; suffering in the prison unjustly, until "the word of the

Lord tried him," and caused the king to release him; laying up corn during seven years of plenty for those who hated him, and thought him dead; occupying the most exalted place in the kingdom, next to the king, when his brethren are driven by famine to come before him, seeking to buy of his corn; his knowledge of them, while they knew not him; his rough manner of speaking to them, charging them with evil motives in coming down to Egypt, which, though not true, brought them under solemn conviction of conscience for a greater crime, known only among themselves, as they supposed, and confessed to each other with sorrow, without a thought that the man before whom they stood trembling understood what they said, much less that he was their brother against whom they had so terribly sinned; imprisoned three days, then brought out as an act of special mercy, given corn for their need, and sent back with supplies for their father and families at home, but with a command that must bring them back again with the youngest brother; the finding of their money in the mouth of their sacks, showing that whatever was received by them from him who was to represent Jesus in the gifts of his grace, must be received as a gift through love and mercy, and in not the least degree as paid for or merited; their second coming with a full surrender of all that was held dear by their father and themselves, and yet with no thought of any other way of getting the needed supply than by returning the former money, and also with money to pay for that one asked for; the manner of their coming before him the second time, the release of Simeon, the words of the steward, *"I had your money: God gave you treasure in your sacks;"* their astonishment that he should have them dine with him, and that he should have such knowledge of the age of each one; his deep emotion as they talk before him, causing him to enter into his closet to weep; his course with them in bringing them back as criminals, and Benjamin, who was innocent of their crime, as the worst of them appearing to have stolen the divining cup, and thus condemned by their own judgment to die; their entire humiliation before him the plea of Judah for Benjamin's deliverance, he having become surety for his return to his father; the final closing of this most terrible interview to them, by Joseph making himself known to them with that great outburst of tenderness, and love, and joy which had been so long restrained, and the wonder and joy and fear of the brethren as they hear the wonderful words, "I am Joseph, your brother," and see in the man before them, who had spoken to them so roughly, and before whom they had been so abased and humbled, and consciously guilty, the very brother against whom their crime had been committed, and as they find that, instead of feeling hatred, and determining upon revenge, he felt only love and tender pity, and a heart full to overflowing of joy, be-

cause he could see them again, and because he was able to deliver them from their suffering and keep them during all the years of famine yet to come.

Such a wonderful likeness as the poor sinner sees and feels in all this, to his own experience in being brought to a knowledge of Jesus as our Saviour, cannot, it seems to me, have been without purpose on the part of our God. When thousands and thousands of the dear children of God have felt their own relationship to Jesus shown to them through this wonderful story of Joseph and his brethren; their sins against him; their felt guilt before him; their efforts to obtain his favor by some merit of their own, and their disgraceful failure; their final giving up of all hope, and then the surprising and soul-enrapturing revelation of Jesus as their Brother and Savior, who has loved them with an everlasting love; how shall we say that it was not thus to set forth Jesus and his salvation, that this personal history was given by inspiration of God? And we notice the greater minuteness of the recital at those places where the experience of the Lord's people is especially presented in the most important particulars.

Third. Joseph is never spoken of as a tribe of Israel, as are the other sons. In Numbers xiii. 11, the expression is used, but followed with an explanation "Of the tribe of Joseph, namely, of the tribe of Manasseh." It is also used in Rev. vii. 8, but the tribe of Ephraim is there meant, for the tribe of Manasseh has already been mentioned which constituted part of the house of Joseph. This expression, "house of Joseph," evidently represents the church, in Amos and other places. Jacob claimed of Joseph his two sons to be his own, as Reuben and Simeon were his; and each of them became a tribe in Israel, and both constitute the house or children of Joseph. Thus Joseph had one portion above his brethren, Gen. xlviii. 22; Ezekiel xlvii. 13; his two sons were given the birthright of Reuben, who had transgressed. "For Judah prevailed above the brethren, and of him came the chief ruler; but the birthright was Joseph's." - 1 Chron. v. 1, 2.

Fourth. The manner in which the psalmist refers to this shows, to my mind, that his faith has Christ and his people in view as he recounts the incidents, for he speaks of them not in the order of their literal occurrence, but in the order of the experience of them in their spiritual significance. The famine and hunger are the beginning of the knowledge of spiritual things. Then the sending a man before them, even Joseph. The wicked acts of his brethren are not here referred to, Psalm cv. 16-22, but the declaration that the Lord sent him before them assumes all the circumstances of his getting into Egypt as part of the Lord's purposed way, and brings to view the sins of the Lord's people, in this type, which caused him to go before them, and become a servant, and suffer that they might live. The psalmist "foresaw the Lord

always before his face," and speaks of such things only as set forth Jesus and his salvation. - Acts ii. 25-31.

Fifth. The peculiarity of the blessings pronounced upon Joseph by both Jacob and Moses. Both use highly figurative expressions that would hardly apply to Joseph naturally, even with all his wonderful experience, but which suggest at once the One who was greater than Joseph. The fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall, suggest him who is the Branch, and the goodly Vine, and the Well of salvation, and the Wall of partition between Jew and Gentile. The speaking of archers that hurt him, and of the strength in which his bow abode, reminds us of similar expressions which refer to Jesus in the Psalms. The parenthetic reference to "the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel," is very significant; and also the words of Jacob, "The blessings of thy Father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors, unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills; they shall be upon the head of Joseph, and upon the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren," seem to me at once to direct our minds away from limited man to him who received the blessing, "upon the mountains of Zion," "even life for evermore," which prevails unto all his people throughout all generations. When Moses speaks of "the precious things of heaven, and the dew, and the deep that coucheth beneath, and the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and the precious things put forth by the moon, and the chief things of the ancient mountains, and the precious things of the lasting hills, and the precious things of the earth, and the fullness thereof, and the good will of him who dwelt in the bush," as abundant reasons for the blessings which he invokes upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him who was separate from his brethren, it seems to me that his faith must have been looking away to Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, who answers in his glorious person and work to all these sublime expressions.

Sixth. This reference by both Jacob and Moses to Joseph as the one who was separate from his brethren, I have regarded as one of the special marks of his typical character. The separation, as expressed, would not mean from any one or two of them, but from all. As Joseph's presence among ten of his brethren only made them want to kill him, it must have been more comfortable for him to be separate from them. But this expression does not appear to me to be intended so much to refer to Joseph's personal feelings in the matter, as to state an important fact in his life, which was a far more important truth in the life and death and work of him whom I understand Joseph to represent, who trod the winepress of God's wrath alone, and of the people there was none with him; Isaiah lxiii. 3, 5: who said, "I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and alien unto my mother's children." - Psalm lxix. 8; whose dis-

ciples, when he was taken by his enemies, all forsook him and fled.

Seventh. The last expression in the blessing of Moses has no apparent application to Joseph as a man, but does clearly apply to the great antitype Jesus: "His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth." By his own power, sometimes compared to the horn of the unicorn, Numbers xxiii. 22; xxiv. 8; Psalm xcii. 15, Jesus brings his people to the end of earthly wisdom, strength and righteousness, and there they see the salvation of God. - Isaiah lii. 10. "And these are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousand of Manasseh." That is, they are his own house that he thus pushes together to the ends of the earth, and to whom he says, *"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else."- Isaiah xlv. 22.*

Eighth. The prophet Amos vi. 6, speaking of the prominent and confident pretensions of those who are at ease in Zion, the carnal professor under the law, presents as one necessary mark of a child of God which they lack "But they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph." When Joseph's brethren stood before him and were roughly spoken to, and charged with evil intentions, they were for the first time grieved for the affliction of their brother, in that they saw the auguish of his soul, when he besought them, and they would not hear, and they knew this distress to have come justly upon them because of their iniquity, which God had found out. So whenever any one has been brought before Jesus he is made to feel grieved for the very sins that pierced him, and to "mourn as one mourneth for his only son," and to "be in bitterness, as one is in bitterness, as one is in bitterness for his first-born." This is true of all the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. - Zech. xii. 10. And to those who have felt that bitterness of grief on account of sin, it is a blessed thing to know that only those whose sins Jesus bore can feel that bitter sorrow. Only his brethren, but all of them, "are grieved for the affliction of Joseph." They alone know the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ.

I have not thought of Joseph as typical of the ministry, though it may be so in some sense. But preachers have no such control over the store of grace and spiritual comfort as Joseph had over the store of corn. Jesus alone controls and dispenses that, placing so much in the hand of each servant as he will have that one to give to the hungry at the time, and never giving to any servant a handful today for use tomorrow. No one has anything to do with his own preparation for the work of dispensing the good things of the gospel. If one has a larger amount and greater variety than another he is neither to be blamed nor praised for it, for he has only what Jesus gave; but if one should assume that he was prepared

with a better variety than other servants of the Lord, he would manifest that he was carnal, and would be reproved in his conscience when awakened by the voice of the Lord out of his carnal sleep. The variety which would interest the natural mind would not richly feed living souls. The same blessed words of truth furnish in themselves a rich variety for the hungry soul; and this heavenly food, as Jesus hands it to the servants at the time they need to hand it out, is ever new and fresh. The one who esteems himself least sufficient, and most unprofitable, and therefore most dependent, is most likely to come to the saints with this rich variety, while he who regards himself as having it in store to use at any time, is most often found empty handed by the waiting, hungry soul.

Ninth. Joseph's prophetic declaration that God would surely visit his brethren, and the oath he took of them that they should carry up his bones from thence, seems to me to greatly confirm the figurative meaning. It was not his body but his bones that he spoke of. These were carefully preserved through all the years of bondage, carried up out of Egypt, and through all the wilderness journey, taken through Jordan, kept during all the wars under Joshua, and finally buried according to his command. - Josh. xxiv. 32. There must be some spiritual significance in this, so carefully recited; and we cannot but think of the careful preservation through all the ages of the world, and through all the bondage and terrible wilderness of sin, of those who are manifest in the gospel as "members of Jesus' body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Jesus said of himself by the psalmist, "He keepeth all his bones; not one of them is broken." - Psalm xxxiv. 20. And again, "All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him?" - Psalm xxxv. 10.

Silas H. Durand
JANUARY 25, 1898.

THE MERCIES OF GOD.

It is but natural for us all at the close of one year and the beginning of a new year to look back and consider the past, and then to look forward with many thoughts as to the future. While brethren in the Lord will at all times wish well to each other, at such times as the beginning of a new year there will be special expressions of these good wishes expected and bestowed upon each other. At the close of one of his epistles to the church at Corinth Paul said, "Finally, brethren, farewell." It must have been true that Paul, all through his letter to them, had this same wish in mind, but the close of the epistle was by him thought to be an appropriate time to give expression to this desire. More than this, we must remember that this word was also the mind of the Holy Spirit, for Paul wrote as he was moved by the Holy Ghost. This word "farewell," then, is a word blessed and sancti-

fied by the Spirit, and the place in which it was given by the Spirit is also blessed and sanctified. There is a heavenly appropriateness in this word in the place where it occurs, as there is in all the Scriptures of truth. We have called attention to this in order to set forth and emphasize the truth that there is a proper time to all expressions of good will and fellowship and good wishes in our intercourse among ourselves as the children of God, and this, the beginning of another year, seems to us an appropriate time to speak of the things which believers must desire for the future, while also they remember with thanksgiving the mercies of the past.

All who are born of God will recognize and confess that the one supreme desire of their hearts ought to be to worship God, and the one thing which should cause our greatest sorrow is when there is in us a lack of the spirit of worship. Remembering the past seasons, when our affections toward God seemed to be at a low ebb, and also remembering how often such seasons have been ours, we can but be sorrowful, but there will be an earnestness of desire that the future may be better than the past. At this time we feel a great anxiety for us all, that during this new year, if it be the will of God, we might be found often enjoying the spirit of praise, mingled with humble confession of sin. There can be no disjoining these two things. Praise to God arises out of the knowledge of our own sins and our just condemnation, and then of the power that has saved us. No one can truly worship God unless he feels his own insufficiency and has come to know the all-sufficiency of God. Those who in the days of the Savior's flesh came bowing down and worshipping him confessed their need and his power. "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," was the burden of the cry of them all. Great faith in them went hand in hand with great humility. "I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed." This is the substance of all that any one who came to Christ ever said: "I am not worthy;" thou art able to save. Thus the hearts of all these were attuned to worship. Abased in self, exalted in Christ, was the burden of the testimony of all who worship God now.

"This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Thus the dear Savior testified concerning the work of salvation. Out of this salvation springs the fountain of worship. We cannot worship him whom we do not know. There can be no confession of sin in ourselves unless we know our sins. There can be no confession of the holiness of God unless we have come to know that holiness. This knowledge we have not attained to by searching. No man by searching can find out God; if any man knows God and the Lord Jesus Christ it is by revelation. Blessed are all they who confess the Lord, for flesh and

blood hath not revealed this unto them, but the Father in heaven, according to the testimony of the Lord to Peter. What then do the Scriptures declare of that God whom we are to worship? This we must know if we are to worship him acceptably. It is indeed true that this worship must be in spirit and in truth, but still there can be no worship acceptable to God unless there be such a knowledge of him as shall lead us to confess him to be just what he is. Every child of God will feel altogether anxious lest he withhold from him that which is his in their confession of him. What then do the Scriptures testify of him? First, they testify that he only is eternal; he only inhabits eternity. He is not eternity itself, but he is eternal in duration; he inhabits eternity. This means, of course, that with him there is neither beginning nor ending. All things else, from angels down to the smallest mote that floats in the sunbeam, began to be. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." In the beginning he chose his people unto salvation, when as yet there was none of them. Who shall measure back to the beginning, when he thus chose his people? There could be no being before him; if so, then he began to be, and so is not eternal in duration. That which has beginning is not of eternal duration. This needs no argument. We cannot grasp eternity; we cannot comprehend it. We may apprehend the thought, but that is all. Before the highest part of the dust of the earth was formed he reigned in supreme happiness alone. He needed nothing to add to his pleasure or joy. Angels began to be; men, all men, began to be; His church, composed of redeemed sinners, is spoken of in the word as a creation, it therefore cannot be said to be eternal in duration. Creation means beginning. The uncreated God had no beginning. Creation and eternity are not to be predicated of the same thing. Self-existence is also his. This must be so, because there could not be any power existing before eternity to give him being. Whatever is eternal must be self-existent; that is, owe its being to no prior cause. Eternity and self-existence cannot be disjoined. It is ascribing the attributes of Jehovah to any being to say of that being that it has self-existence. We are seeking to divide the glory of God with a creature when we ascribe either of the above named attributes to angels or men. Self-existence means that he who possesses it exists without any dependence upon another being, but finds every fountain of life and being in himself. To such a being nothing can be given. He can give all, but he can receive nothing. If we render him praise we are not adding anything to him, but are simply confessing before him what we have found him to be. It is seeking to place another being upon the throne of heaven, to sit there in rivalry with God, to ascribe eternity, and, by consequence, self-existence, to that being. These things are his

and his alone. This would forever dispose of the vain thought of men that there are eternal spirits, or eternal men, or eternal beings of any other kind. Poor sinners are said to seek for glory and immortality, and God gives to them eternal life, but Jehovah alone inhabits eternity.

He is also omnipotent, and this means that all power is his. The whole universe is filled with his power; there is no place or state where his power is not present. He upholds all things by the word of his power. In him we live, move and have our being. The stars are in his hand; the feeblest insect and the smallest are alike in his hand. All things, feeble or strong, hang upon him. In this omnipotence of Jehovah is our providential well-being, and in the same omnipotence is our safety as the people and church of God. Against his power all the powers of darkness cannot once prevail. The blessed Jesus said to his disciples, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." In power, therefore, as well as in righteousness, was God manifest in the person of the man Christ Jesus. Thus in divine power and in divine sympathy he comes near to his poor and needy ones, and in him we rest and are at peace, sure that none can set upon us to harm us.

He is also omniscient; that is, he sees all things. Every thought, every word in our hearts, every move of mind, heart or hand, every hair of our heads, every sorrow and every joy, every need and every supply of our need, and every bird, beast or fish, in earth, air or sea, every atom of the dust of the earth, and all things, more than we can name, though we continue to multiply the names of things to all the measure of time, are alike with him always. The comfort of it all is, that he thus knows our need and does not need that we shall tell him, and this omniscient God is our God, manifest in Jesus Christ our Savior and friend. If he sees our sins, and we tremble as we remember it, he also sees the finished work of Christ, and Jesus is our merciful High Priest, and so we are filled with rejoicing. Thus we are sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.

He is also omnipresent, and this means that there is no spot in all the universe where he is not. Whither can any of us go from his presence? As (by faith) we see this omnipresent God in Christ we do not call upon the rocks to fall upon us to hide us from his presence and his wrath, but are glad with exceeding gladness, for in the omnipresence of our God is the safety of all who love him, and in His presence is all fullness of joy. As he is everywhere present, so in all places is he equally near to his loved ones, and in all places he can and does hear when his children cry to him. This can be true of no other being. How vain it is then to teach that prayer can be offered to glorified saints, as, for instance, to Mary, the mother of the dear Savior. To say that she in glory can hear the cry of men upon earth, and from every part of the earth, is to ascribe to her om-

niscience and omnipresence; it is to deify her, and place her in the temple of God, sitting there as God. The same truth holds good with regard to any other glorified saint. Thus the name of blasphemy is written upon the Romish Church, in that they do teach that Mary hears and intercedes for those whom she hears among the children of men. She cannot hear unless she be omniscient and omnipresent, and to say this is to say that she is divine. To all eternity she is but a sinner saved by grace. She was favored indeed to be the mother of the Lord Jesus, but she was and is no more worthy of being so than any other believer, and now she bows with all the redeemed, as one of them, ascribing all praise and glory to the dear Redeemer. This she did while she lived on earth, and this she does in eternity; the attributes of Jehovah can never belong to any creature.

But we must hasten and strive to be more concise. To worship God, then, is to ascribe to him, in spirit and in truth, all these attributes, and beside these, to acknowledge that to him holiness, justice, mercy and love also belong, so that they originate in him and belong to him innately, and not by gift, as they do to sinners saved. From the fullness of his holiness, righteousness, truth, love and mercy, we receive, as the springs of earth receive out of the unending fullness of the great ocean, and in returning love, praise and adoration to him we but render to him that which we have already received from him. "Of his fulness have all we received." But this does not apply to his eternity, self-existence, omnipotence, omniscience or omnipresence, but only to the holiness of God. He says, Be ye holy, for I am holy; but he never says, Be ye omnipotent, for I am omnipotent. It never shall be ours to become omniscient or omnipresent, but it shall be ours who are redeemed to be holy as he is holy. Redemption unto God means redemption from sin to holiness. To all eternity we shall be but sinners saved by grace. This has been our faith for these fifty years, as we hope from the teaching of the Bible, and from being brought by the Spirit to receive these truths in love and hope. We see these things but dimly, but the truth is in them, and we have desired that they might be continually unfolded to us more and more. We believe that in some small measure they have been unfolded, so that we are more fully persuaded of them than we were at the first. How glorious is our God. We have felt, as did the psalmist, "My heart is indicting a good matter: I will speak of the things which I have made touching the King." The word in the text translated "indicting," literally would read, "bubbling up." His heart was full, so full that its fullness bubbled up to the surface by the power of the love that dwelt within him. O that for us all this might, during the coming year, be true at all times. There is no employ so sweet to a child of God, when led by the Spirit, as to engage in secret, or in the public assemblies of the saints,

in the praises of God. It is sure that if in spirit we worship him our feet will not be slow to go to the house of God. It is vain to say that we can present our spirits before God, when we do not present our bodies in his courts. All who love God and worship him in spirit will feel to say, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord," and it will be a real deprivation to such ones when ought occurs to hinder such assembling of themselves together. The spirit of worship is also the spirit of service, and all who do worship him will be found inquiring, What shall I do that I may honor him? We feel well convinced of these things from and experience of more than fifty years.

Now, at the beginning of another year's labor in the conduct of the Signs, all of us who have to do with its publication feel the need of continued grace, that we may continue to maintain the form of sound words which was maintained by Elder Gilbert Beebe, and afterwards by those who followed him in the conducting of the paper. For our ownself we can but say that we desire the prayers of all who love God, that we may not depart in any way from the truth. We daily feel the need of great grace that we may be kept humble and lowly, and yet steadfast to the truth. The things that have been dear to us for more than fifty years are still dear to us. We have no doubt of the truth of the doctrine (all of it) that began to be advocated in the Signs at the first, but we do often question our ownself. What is our motive? What is our hope? Are we contending for the truth because it has been made precious in our own soul, and has become our support and joy, or are we contending for it as one would contend for a mere theory? These are heart-searching questions indeed.

We wish in conclusion to express our sense of gratitude to all who read the Signs for their kind forbearance toward us. If they have seen many failures they have not been impatient toward them. We have these fifty years received nothing but good from our brethren, and what poor returns we have made. No one can feel this more than we do. May God's blessing rest upon all our readers, and upon all the Israel of God, is our desire and prayer.

Elder F.A. Chick

Dear Brethren in the Lord: - I feel thankful to the Lord that he has blessed me with the privilege of writing you again. This leaves us well, and I hope that you are enjoying the same blessing. Though sinful and unworthy, I am mindful to write a few thoughts that have come to me about the rich man and Lazarus. (See Luke xvi.) If it be the Lord who has put it into my mind to write, he will teach me what to write, for he has never yet led any one wrong; but we are not always led by the Spirit of Christ. Jesus called the attention of his disciples to the rich

man and Lazarus; one was rich and the other poor. These men lived in the days of Moses and the prophets, and they both died. Jesus knew what became of them after their death, he knew where they were and he knew what manner of men they were in this world. These two men set forth the children of darkness and the children of light. Moreover, they set forth those who are blessed, and those who are cursed. "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." This kingdom must have been prepared before Adam was, for we read that God formed man of the dust of the earth. The blessed Lord said in the parable, I was sick, and ye visited me; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; I was in prison, and ye came unto me; I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink. But the righteous shall answer, When saw we thee sick, or in prison, or a stranger, and ministered unto thee? Then the King shall say to them, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." But to them on the left hand he said, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not; I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat; thirsty, and ye gave me no drink. Then the wicked shall say unto him, When saw we thee sick, or in prison or hungry, or thirsty, and did not these things unto thee? Then the King shall answer, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." The stony heart in the rich man enabled him to pass by the poor beggar all scarred with sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. The dogs often passed by and licked his sores.

The blessed word teaches us that "who so hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" To one the blessed Lord said, go and sell all that thou hast, and distribute to the poor, and come and follow me, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven. But when the young man heard these things he was grieved, and these things grieve men today. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death." "Blessed is he that considereth the poor."

By and by "the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue: for I am tormented in this flame." The cry of the rich man was just as vain as was the offering of Cain, for they came

from the same source. Cain offered the fruits of the ground, which God had cursed, and the cry of the rich man came out of an earthly and stony heart. Blessed are they that hunger now, for they shall be full. Woe unto them that are full now, for the time will come when they shall hunger. Thus, dear brethren, we see Lazarus the figure of that poor and afflicted people, which the Lord said he would leave in the midst of men, who should trust in the name of the Lord. They shall continue to be poor and afflicted until it pleases God to carry them home, where sickness and suffering, pain and death, are felt and feared no more.

May God enable you to continue to send the Signs of the Times among the people of God. Find enclosed money order for renewal of subscription.

Your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life,

S.H. Burnett

"I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." - Isaiah xxvii. 3.

The Lord Jesus Christ, who lives at God's right hand, has to send down supplies of his grace continually to keep your soul alive unto himself. Without this life being kept up and maintained by these continual supplies of his grace, you cannot pray, or read, or hear the word, or meditate with any feeling or profit. You cannot love the Lord and his blessed ways; you cannot submit to his righteous dealings; or hear the rod and him who appointed it. You may approach his throne, but your hear is cold, clouded, and unfeeling; your spirit sinks under the weight and burden of the trials and difficulties that are spread in your path; nor are you able to do anything that satisfies yourself, or that you think can satisfy God. By these painful but profitable lessons, you are experimentally taught that you want the life of Christ as well as the death of Christ, the resurrection of Christ as much as the crucifixion of Christ; Christ as an ever-living, ever-gracious, ever-glorious Mediator, to send down supplies of his love and power into your soul, as much as you needed him to die upon the cross for your redemption.

Elder J. C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 1999

Elder Marvin Brumfield, VA	2.00
Charlie Fox, AR	2.00
Dan Spencer, VA	2.00
Mrs. Billy Weatherford, VA	2.00
Mrs. Charles Lovell, VA	2.00
Mrs. Norma Smith, VA	2.00
Mrs. Grace Locke, KY	5.00
Buford R. Thornton, WV	15.00
Mrs. Velma D. Terral, TX	2.00
Mrs. Betty Southard, NC	2.00
William R. Adcox, AR	2.00
Mrs. Audrey Hamrick, TX	2.00
C. Ben Miller, TN	7.00
Don B. Jackson, TX	7.00
Cleo Underwood, VA	5.00
Walton & Ruby Dyer, Va	2.00
Spencer & Margaret Carter, NC	5.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER MABEL P. BERRY

With sorrow for our great loss but joy for her great gain, we record the death of Sis. Mabel P. Berry on Nov. 27, 1999 at the age of 92. While we keenly feel the pain of her absence from among us, the conviction we hold that God has ushered her spirit into His very presence constrains us to say, *"Not our will, Lord, but thine be done."*

Born Mabel Macena Pennington on Nov. 23, 1907 at Winters, West Virginia, she was a daughter of the late Willard and Otha Wilson Pennington, both staunch Primitive Baptists. Shortly after her family moved to southern California in late 1927, Sis. Mabel was introduced by her mother to Winford J. Berry, to whom she was united in marriage in July 1928. From the earliest days of their acquaintance, she believed that Bro. Berry would eventually become a minister of Christ; just as, in due time, he did.

During the time of their sojourn together in California, the Berrys were blessed with four sons: Winford J., Jr., Randall W. (born deceased), J. Richard and P. Glen Berry. Also, Seclusia Church was organized in their home; both of them were convicted, converted and baptized (by Elder G. O. Walker); Bro. Berry began preaching and was ordained to the full work of the ministry; and he began the publication in 1932 of Sovereign Grace magazine, followed by the founding of the Old Faith Contender in 1936.

Sis. Berry was a very devoted wife, mother and homemaker. She gave her dear husband strong encouragement in his ministry and in his publishing endeavors. She was blessed with a fine talent for writing poetry and keeping a diary of her experimental travels, both of which Bro. Berry put to good use in the columns of Old Faith Contender. Her lovely writings later appeared in various other Old Baptist papers, including this one.

Although the Berrys were content living in California, the providence of God had selected a field of labor for them in a faraway place. At the request of a number of Old Baptists from the eastern United States, Bro. Berry agreed to move to Alamance County, N.C. in 1944. Within a few short years, he converted his extensive collection of sovereign grace books into the Primitive Baptist Library. Between their home, the Library, the Old Faith Contender and book publications, and Bro. Berry's pastoral care of several churches, the Berrys were thus prepared for many years of faithful and devoted service to the cause of God and His dear people.

Sis. Berry was providentially given a number of roles to fill, and by God's grace she filled each one honorably and well. In addition to being a true helpmate and mother,

she was loyal friend, a kind neighbor, and a precious sister in Christ. She willingly gave of her time, the hospitality of her home and the liberality of her substance to many wandering pilgrims of hope down through the years.

A simple memorial service was held in the masoleum at Alamance Memorial Park by Pastor Bland Leebrick and the undersigned, after which her mortal body was enclosed beside the remains of Bro. Berry. One day in the world to come, we believe she will have the joy and consolation of hearing her dear Lord say, *"Well done, thou good and faithful servant."*

Written by one who loved her for Christ's sake,
Elder John T. Wingfield

BROTHER MADISON MARSHALL

Brother Madison Marshall was born September 4, 1908 in Pittsylvania County of Virginia. He was the son of William Ira Marshall and Pearl Dawson Marshall and lived his entire life in the area where he was born near the Dry Fork and Blairs communities. He was a farmer and took pride in his growing of tobacco. Brother Madison was an humble soul and he was taught by his Lord to live desiring to have a place in Glory when the struggles of earth were over. He was a member of Danville Primitive Baptist Church and was a faithful member as long as he lived. He married April 9, 1977, Sister Bernice Williams Marshall who also is a member of Danville Primitive Baptist Church and survives.

Brother Madison was interested in the welfare of all the churches of the Staunton River Association and especially Cane Creek at Ringgold, Virginia until it was closed. The health of Brother Madison and his wife began to fail, and they had to go into a nursing home in Martinsville, Virginia. He died on June 7, 1999 in the hospital at Martinsville being nearly 91 years old.

Sister Bernice still survives as well as his sister, Sister Mae Williams who is the wife of Elder Julian Williams and a member of Malmaison Church. He has one brother, William Ira Marshall, Jr., of Durham, N.C. who survives.

The funeral for Brother Madison was held June 10, 1999, at Wrenns-Yeatts Funeral Chapel at 2:00 p.m. and was conducted by his brother-in-law, Elder Julian Williams, and his pastor, Elder C.B. Davis, Jr. He was buried in Highland Park to await the resurrection day.

Job 28: 26-28.

When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder.

Then did he see it, and declare it; he prepared it, yea and searched it out.

And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG
by Newton

From east to west let others roam,
And search in vain for bliss;
My soul is satisfied at home;
The Lord my portion is.
Jesus, who on his glorious throne
Rules heaven, and earth, and sea,
Is pleased to claim me for his own,
And give himself to me.

His person fixes all my love,
His blood removes my fear;
And while he fills his throne above,
His arm preserves me here.
His word of promise is my food,
The Spirit is my guide;
Thus daily is my strength renewed,
And all my wants supplied.

For him I count as gain each loss
Disgrace for him renown;
Well may I glory in his cross,
While he prepares my crown!
Let worldlings then indulge their boast,
How much they gain or spend;
Their joys must soon give up the ghost,
But mine shall know no end.

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EDITORIAL

Soul vs Spirit

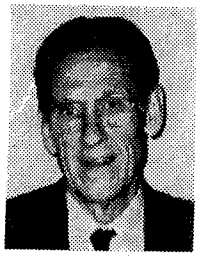
Elder R.H. Campbell

I have received several responses to the article which appeared in the August 1999 issue of, "The Signs of The Times", regarding the Soul of man; some agreeable to the position that I presented, and some that were not. I appreciated all of them, and I am not setting myself up as an authority on the subject, but rather just expressing what I believe the scriptures teach on this subject. In reviewing the article however, I felt that there were many more scriptures that, to me, prove the position for which I contended, and that should be set forth to support the position that I hold.

I was asked by one writer to give him my scriptural reference for my position regarding the Soul and the Spirit. I gave him some scriptures that I could remember immediately including some of the ones listed below, but the more I thought about it, the more I realized that there were many more, and made a diligent search to find out more about the soul and spirit, and this search resulted in the following scriptural references. This writer's questioning the scriptural references for my understanding made me realize that there may be others with the same question, and therefore the following is the results of my search. I had thought that my references in the previous article were sufficient.

I had not expected the response that I received, and I am not writing to be controversal on the subject, but feel that the following scriptures will clarify my reason for believing as I do. I am reasonably sure that there may be many more substantiating scriptures that would support my understanding ot the subject, but feel that the following will be an adequate basis to explain my understanding of what the scriptures teach on the subject; that the soul and Spirit are separate components of man and that the soul does indeed experience salvation and is a part of the natural man while he lives here in this world.

There has been much discussion, over the years, regarding the Spirit and the soul, and what part each plays in the salvation of the individual. There are those who believe that the Spirit and the soul are synonomous, that they are just two names for the same entity, but according to my understanding of the scriptures, it is as separate from the Spirit as it is the body, and the three make up the trinity of man who was made in the image of a triune God. It is to those, that I would like to pose the following question.

What do the following scriptures, which use both names, mean if they are the same entity ie:?

(1Th 5:23) And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (The trinity of man.)

(He 4:12) For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (Seemingly there must be two entities for them to be divided asunder by the Word.)

The above scriptures use both terms, in the same sentence, which should distinguish these two as being separate components of man, for it says, "and", not "and/or," which should indicate that they are two separate segments, not one. Those writers that I am familiar with, on this subject, begin with the asumption that they are both one and the same, and then proceed to state that the soul and spirit, being one and the same do not die, and is not buried, but is eternal. As one writer quoted the scripture, *"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the Spirit shall return unto God that gave it" (Eccl 12:7)* and then said that in this instance, that which returns to God is the Soul is it not? Well it said Spirit, not soul, so I would assume that it meant the Spirit. Another time he quoted the scripture, *"And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried into Abraham's bosom,—"(Luke 16:22)* and then said that this means that his, the beggars,soul was carried into heaven, well again it does not say the soul, it says, (the beggar), this would mean body, soul and Spirit, as I would interpret it, since it doesn't say the soul, the writer just assumed it meant the soul because that is what he believes. In this parable, Jesus is referring to the resurrection, in the sense that it is really illustrating the final destiny of the two individuals. in which the glorified body, the soul and the Spirit of the beggar will be carried to Abraham's bosom, typifying heaven, and Lazarus is in hell, but it does not give the specific details involved in that grand and glorious day, but definitely could not be

quoted as a scripture that proves that it was the soul only.

One, in writing on this subject, who believes the soul and Spirit are the same, stated, that when man is born of the Spirit, he becomes a trinity, body, soul and spirit, because the soul and the Spirit were so closely involved, but in the same sentence he contradicts his own argument, that they are one. He states that when man is quickened , both the soul and Spirit take up their abode within him, which according to his own statement, separates the soul and Spirit as to their being separate entities.

The following scriptures, referring to the sacrifice of Jesus, indicate that it is the soul which is made an offering for sin. These are scriptures which we are all familiar with and have heard preached or used many times and the term Spirit is not used once. Please read the surrounding scriptures to verify, who is talking, to whom and what about.

Is 53:7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

Is 53:8 He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

Is 53:9 And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

Is 53:10 Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

Is 53:11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

Is 53:12 Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

These are the words of the prophet Isaiah, with which we are all very familiar, and he is prophesying of the greatest event that has ever occurred, the sacrifice of Christ for the sins of his people,and surely it is recorded correctly. When he said soul, he meant soul, when he said grave he meant the grave and when he said death he meant death. Now lets consider it again, as to what the prophet actually said; Christ, the Immaculate Lamb of God, was cut off out of the land of the living, he made his grave with the wicked; he

made his soul an offering for sin: he saw the travail of his soul and was satisfied, and he did it all by pouring out his soul unto death.

In the above scriptures, the prophet, states that it is the soul of Jesus, of whom he is speaking, that it is the soul that is made an offering for sin, it is the soul that is cut off out of the land of the living, it is the soul that made his grave with the wicked and the rich in his death: then it says that he saw the travail of his soul and was satisfied and all because he poured out his soul unto death. If pouring out his soul unto death does not mean it died, then what does it mean. It was the soul, not the body nor the Spirit, that the prophet was speaking of in these scriptures, as I understand it, since that is all that he ever mentions; he never referred to the Spirit or the body. If we take the position that the soul and the Spirit are synonomous then the Spirit was poured out unto death, made his grave with the wicked and with the rich in its death, and few, if any, believe that the Spirit dies, so, we must admit that it is the soul to which the scripture is referring,, as in deference to the Spirit.

John Gill, in his commentary on verse 10 above, *"When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin."* said, *" not only his soul, but his body also, even his whole human nature, as in union with his divine person "* (In these statements he concedes that the soul is part of the humanity of man, and is made an offering for sin, which is my contention, but elsewhere he contradicts this) this separates the soul from the Spirit as an entity, and that it was sacrificed for sin, which would indicate that it died and entered into the tomb with the body, but the Spirit is never mentioned as a part of the sacrifice.

In Gill's writings in his, "Body of Divinity", he wrote seventeen pages on the soul, but he gave no scriptural reference that indicated that the spirit and the soul were one and the same. He always alluded to the fact that they were the same, but no proof text from the scriptures. I will agree with him in everthing that he said regarding the Spirit which returns to God that gave it, and its role after the death of the body, but nowhere in the scriptures, that I can find, attributes these actions to the soul of man. The only evidence that Gill and those who agree with him present on this subject is that they believe it to be that way and proceeds from that assumption. I know of no text that indicates that they are the same entity, and are two words used to describe the same characteristic of man.

Mt 26:37 And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

Mt 26:38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. (Jesus's own words, sorrowful even unto death)

Ac 2:27 Because thou wilt not (leave my soul in hell,) neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

Ac 2:28 Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.

Ac 2:29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.

Ac 2:30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

Ac 2:31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

Ac 2:32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

Ac 2:33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

The above scriptures from the, Acts of The Apostles, is referring to the scriptures quoted from Isaiah and is verified and confirmed by Peter in his discourse on the day of Pentecost. (Ac 2:31) states very plainly that he was (speaking of the resurrection of Jesus,) when he said, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption, and , that indicates that it was evidently dead and was in hell but was not left there, if the language means what it says. Some would say that David was speaking of himself here, but David's flesh saw corruption, and, in this instance the same one who's soul was not left in hell, neither did his flesh see corruption. Furthermore he said that he was speaking concerning Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither did his flesh see corruption. This does not mean that hell triumphed over Jesus, but since all of the promised seed would have been forever consigned to that fate because of their sin, he voluntarily entered, to redeem the chosen seed according to prophecy, and returned bringing them with him, triumphant over death, hell and the grave for them. David said, *Ps 139:8 "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there."* and since God promised to never leave nor forsake his children, then, as David said, if they make their bed in hell, as a consequence of their sin, so will Jesus be there, as a victorious conqueror over death and hell, as a redeemer and not as a victim.

The following scriptures from Genesis indicate that the soul is part of the humanity of man, has a passionate love for a woman, lusts for food and comes from the loins of Jacob by being born of a woman.

Can these things be said of the Spirit, that comes from God and returns to God at death.

Ge 34:3 And his soul clave unto Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the damsel, and spake kindly unto the damsel.

Ge 34:4 And Shechem spake unto his father Hamor, saying, Get me this damsel to wife.

Ge 34:5 And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter: now his sons were with his cattle in the field: and Jacob held his peace until they were come.

Ge 34:6 And Hamor the father of Shechem went out unto Jacob to commune with him.

Ge 34:7 And the sons of Jacob came out of the field when they heard it: and the men were grieved, and they were very wroth, because he had wrought folly in Israel in lying with Jacob's daughter; which thing ought not to be done.

Ge 34:8 And Hamor communed with them, saying, The soul of my son Shechem longeth for your daughter: I pray you give her him to wife. (Is this referring to the Spirit which is from God, and is of God ?)

De 12:20 When the Lord thy God shall enlarge thy border, as he hath promised thee, and thou shalt say, I will eat flesh, because thy soul longeth to eat flesh; thou mayest eat flesh, whatsoever thy soul lusteth after. (Is this of the Spirit)

De 12:21 If the place which the Lord thy God hath chosen to put his name there be too far from thee, then thou shalt kill of thy herd and of thy flock, which the Lord hath given thee, as I have commanded thee, and thou shalt eat in thy gates whatsoever thy soul lusteth after. (Does the Spirit lust after food?)

Ge 46:18 These are the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter, and these she bare unto Jacob, even sixteen souls.

Ge 46:26 All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons wives, all the souls were threescore and six;

Ge 46:27 And the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, were two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten.

The following scriptures quoted from Psalms and Proverbs indicate that the soul does die and must be delivered or redeemed from death or hell.

Ps 30:3 O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave; thou has kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit..

Ps 16:10 For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. (This is David, saying that his

soul was not left in hell, it must therefore have been there, for him to make this statement.)

Ps 49:14 Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling.

Ps 49:15 But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah.

Ps 56:13 For thou hast delivered my soul from death: wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living? (Again, for David's soul to have been dellivered from death, it must have been there.)

Ps 116:7 Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.

Ps 116:8 For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. (In this instance David's soul was dead, but was delivered from death.)

Pr 23:13 Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.

Pr 23:14 Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.

Eze 18:3 (Below) Says that the old rule, that the sins of the fathers shall be visited upon the children, no longer applies, but rather all souls are his and the soul that sins shall die for its own sins.

Eze 18:1 The word of the Lord came unto me again, saying,

Eze 18:2 What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?

Eze 18:3 As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel.

Eze 18:4 Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

Ps 7:2 Lest he tear my soul like a lion, rending it in pieces, while there is none to deliver. (Can the enemies of the Lord's people injure the Spirit.)

David said (Ps 35:3) "Draw out also the spear, and stop the way against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." and again, Ps 35:9 "And my soul shall be joyful in the Lord: it shall rejoice in his salvation."

Is 61:10 I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.

All of the above scriptures state that it is the soul, of man and/or Jesus that is poured out unto death, dies, is made an offering for sin, is delivered from death, is delivered from hell, is redeemed from the power of the grave, is not left in hell, came out of the loins of Jacob and experiences salvation, and these things cannot be said of the Spirit. These things cannot be said of the Spirit, because it needs no salvation, it has no sin, indeed the Spirit is the salvation of the soul. The Spirit experiences none of these things that are attributed to the soul, rather the Spirit is the Savior, the redeemer, the sanctifier, the justifier, the preserver of the saints, the one that quickens unto life and is not subject to any one or any thing, but the will of the Father, and the above scriptures indicate that this is not true of the soul. I am made to wonder that some can believe that these two, very different characteristics of man, are one and the same entity. Surely, the Spirit is the benefactor, and the soul is the beneficiary, in this relationship.

For some, these scriptures may not be proof enough, but it is for me. I have always believed that there was a part of man that was neither spirit nor body, it is that part which, as I have written before is his Psyche, intelligence, personality: what man is as a psychological, emotional and mental being. These characteristics are not changed when one is born of the Spirit and they certainly are not part of the natural body, which is only flesh, blood and bone, which all go back to dust. It is the part of man that has, here in time, experienced the realization of life in the flesh, has had a spiritual experience, and this characteristic of man does not change in the new birth. It is the part of man, in nature, that is given the grand and glorious experience of being given a hope in God. This is the only way that man can praise God, as he ought, by realizing from whence his salvation has come, by what means this change was wrought, by whom and why, and this cannot be said of the Spirit.

The Lord willing, I will write no more on this subject, because I do not desire to create controversy. My whole desire is to discern the truth, and if the above scriptures are not sufficient to convince anyone of the validity of my position, further discussion would be of no profit; and to cause confusion and discord among God's people is the last thing that I would desire to do. On one occasion Paul advised Timothy, *"Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things."* I would ask that the same of my brethren, just consider the above scriptures and let us pray that the Lord will lead us all in the path of truth.

My believing a thing does not make it true, and someone else's not believing it doesn't make it untrue, all must live according to what has

been given them, and, as Paul once said, bear with one another in their differences. He said, one may eat meat and give God thanks and another may refrain from eating, and give God thanks, (Ro 14:5) *"One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." (Rom 14:6)* He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. *(Ro 14:7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.)*

After all, we must all depend on the Lord for the revelation of all truth; and even then no individual is given the understanding of all scriptures. I am glad that is not required that they do understand all scripture, for who could stand. Each knows a little here and a little there, as it pleases God to reveal it unto him, and may we all just be thankful that we have been given to see some of the beauties of his truth, and may we all be made submissive and bear with our brethren as regarding their views and opinions. After all, we mortals must walk by faith, and not by sight and trust that what we believe is the truth. As a humorist once said, "There are two things that I have learned in life, (1) There is a God, and (2) I'm not him."

In bonds of love,

Richard H. Campbell

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE LORD TEACHES HIS CHILDREN

Williamston, N.C.
July 9, 1864

Dear Brother Temple:

I have thought that an account of the Christian experience and ministry of old brother James Hinton, an aged colored preacher of our faith and order yet living in this neighborhood, would not be uninteresting nor unprofitable to the readers of The Primitive Baptist. His truthfulness and sincerity are attested by the uprightness of his character, and by the excellence of his teachings. *"By their fruits ye shall know them." (Matt. 7:20)* With his thoughts, his conversation is continually directed towards heaven, where all his treasures lie.

Brother James does not know a "letter in the book": he has evidently derived his information from a divine source. I give it in very nearly his own simple and expressive language:

I am 83 years old. I was born and raised in Bertie County, N.C. My first

master was old man Billie Hinton. I have had five or six owners during my life. They have been kind to me. I have been married twice, having twelve children by my first wife, and two by my last and present wife. Most of them died in infancy. My son, Bosen, became a Baptist and a preacher, though unlearned, like myself. But with his master and others of my children, he moved many years ago to Mississippi. I do not know the number of my grandchildren nor great-grandchildren.

I was twelve years old when first struck under conviction; up to that time I had been required to do scarcely any work - my old master wanted me to grow and get strong, and be of some account.

One day I challenged several of my playmates to box with me, declaring I could outfist them all put together. We had been thus roughly engaged for some moments, when I heard a voice, loud enough I thought to be heard four miles, calling out most distinctly, "James". I looked all around and up, but saw nobody. My arms and wrists at once grew weak; and, at a second similar call, powerless; so I backed away in silence, and sat upon the ground. I wondered that the boys didn't hear the call, but they did not for they kept thumping me for some time, crying out that they had whipped me; but I did not care for it. After they had left me, something seemed to fall from the heavens and drop into my bosom. Ere long it spoke, and said, "Christ is the way for saving sinners." I trembled like a leaf and wept like a child. From that day forward it kept talking to me - gospel, scripture, justice and righteousness, continually pointing out the way for me to go. I never was more puzzled, and could form no idea what it was.

I tried my best to run away from it by moving from place to place, but all in vain - the talking went everywhere I did. It kept up with and annoyed me so that I thought it must be my tongue somehow was speaking; so I pulled it out and tried to hold it and stop it, but quickly it darted back, and the talking went on worse than ever. Well, I thought, what is it? What can it be? I was fond of frolics: the voice told me to stop going. I resolved not to obey it, and continued to go, but at last I was so much troubled that I promised that I would not dance, but would sit civil, and not be chargeable. I did it; but while walking along one day the voice reminded me of my promise, and added, *"James, I say unto you, if you will go into such places when not compelled, I threaten you with dreadful wrath!"*

I shook with terror - I wept as though my heart would break. I never went to any more frolics after that. I kept wondering what could be the matter with me. One time it spoke to me and said *"Come out from among them; be ye unspotted from the world, and I will receive you, saith the Lord."* Then I knew, and not 'till then, that it was the Lord who had been dealing with me. *"Come you, by prayer, to me,"* he

said. I told him I did not know how to pray. *"Cry out to me,"* He replied, *"through faith for God to have mercy on you a poor sinner, and I will have mercy."*

I tried to pray this prayer a long time, and thought I had been heard by the great Master; but one night I went off to pray in great distress. My tears struck the ground before my knees did. I prayed with a new and true fervency of the Spirit; and the Lord said to me, *"James, this is the first prayer of yours I have heard."*

My deliverance occurred in May, about corn weeding time. I had been abroad over the swamp, and came home at early sunset. I went to bed and slept until two or three hours of day, then woke up and found myself straight and flat on my back as though I was dead and laid-out — a position I never lay in to my knowledge. I was as wide awake as I am now. I felt a weight press down on the middle of my breast; and I could not imagine what it was. I looked and saw, hanging from three cords, a great body of darkness about two and a half feet from my breast. I could not tell what it was. A strange thing in my bosom then moved, and spoke, *"God be merciful to me, a sinner."* I knew what was the matter then. This cry was repeated. I thought I would get up and move away from the terrible object, but found myself unable to stir; and looking up, saw myself right on the middle of the jaws of hell. Oh, what a great ocean!

I gave up utterly, and confessed: *"Lord, this is my sins; would you be merciful, would you be so good, would you be so kind as to pardon and forgive me? O Lord! I am not able to stand them, they are greater than I can bear."* At once a straight line of light came as swiftly as a shot and cut down the great body of darkness, and slipped it by me. Then there broke a light in and about me, as old Brother Paul says, above the brightness of the sun. If brought into this world, it would make noonday look like darkness. I thought it was day, but found it was not. I felt as light as any down in your "head-pillar."

My old master was a mild, free and open-hearted man. He had hundreds of servants, whom he clothed and fed well. He used to sell a thousand barrels of corn a year, and send off hundreds of fattening hogs to Richmond, Petersburg, Suffolk, Smithfield, and Edenton. He would put them under my charge and allow me to bring home the bags of money received in payment. One Spring, when I was hauling rails, he thought I was staying too long in the woods, so he took to watching me. He did not tell me of it though until I asked for an order to relate to the church what I had faith to believe the Lord had done for my soul. "Jim," he said, "do you believe He has done anything for your soul?" "Yes sir," I said. "And I believe it too," he answered, "for I have been watching you for years, and often see you in

the woods, after you had loaded your car, kneel down and pray for yourself and for me; but I would not interrupt you."

He told me to take the rest of the day to talk with him, and that I might go to meeting whenever I pleased, for the time was not his but mine; but I only stayed awhile with him, and then slipped off to my work - it was such a good day for work.

The Lord promised me that when I went to give an account of my exercises to the church, He would be with me, and bless the day. It, indeed, proved to be a lovely day, and the Lord seemed to manifest his special presence. As I was telling of His dealings with my poor soul, I could see the gentlemen and ladies trembling, and wiping their eyes. The old Elder declared it was useless to examine the candidate any further; *"For," said her, "we cannot go anywhere he cannot go with us."* Many said they had not seen such a candidate in thirty years; and after I was through talking, they told me to talk on, for it was greater than the preaching they had heard. One great gentlemen was struck then and there under conviction. At the beginning of the service he sat away up high in one corner of the meeting-house, but before I finished speaking, he was standing by my side, half bent, and trembling. He did not rest until he experienced conversion, and was baptized a year later. He used to hail me, and talk with me everytime we met; and we loved each other.

On the day of my baptism, before I reached the water, the devil tried to persuade me that if I were baptized, I would be drowned; but I did not believe him, And, as always, he turned out to be a liar. Six years after I joined the church the Lord told me he was going to make me a minister of his Gospel; and that, too, before the year was out, no matter how much I might run and hide from it. But I thought surely not yet; and went one Sunday to Billy Thompson's quarter where two colored brethren were expected to preach that day. When I arrived they urged me to go forward and speak to the people, saying that I was better taught of the Spirit than they. I wanted to run away, but saw no chance. I felt that I had nothing to say, and trembled like a leaf; but when I arose this hymn came to me at once, and I gave it out:

"That awful day will surely come;
The appointed hour makes haste
When I must stand before the Judge
And pass the solemn test." etc.

I tried to pray; and when I had finished that duty, I was as much at a loss what to say as ever. But this text was given me, as well as every word I spoke from it: *"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in unto him, and sup with him and he with me." (Rev.*

3:20) The strength and warmth of feelings came over me, and I could not help from weeping while I spoke the Saviour's sweet, kind call and welcome to the poor, lost sinners unto him. The people said that they had never heard better preaching than on that day. They called me *"preacher"* after that. Another text given me once was, *"The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry." (Psalms 34:15)* Another was, *"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it that it bring forth more fruit." (John 15: 1, 2)*

By invitation, I would often preach, especially on funeral occasions, in porches of gentlemen's houses, to congregations of two or three hundred persons. After service the gentlemen would crowd around me, and push a book before my face, and see if I could not read. I assured them that I did not know a letter; and could not tell one if they were going to hang me unless I did. *"How can you preach, then? We would rather hear you preach than anyone else."* I told them the Lord was my teacher. Other books can be burned up, but mine is fixed with the seven seals of the Lord. Oh, if any person wants high learning, let him get the grammar of Christ!

I must not forget to tell you that He once said to me, *"Always be dutiful to your earthly master, and tell him the truth, and you can ever meet him gladly. And so, by always living in prayer and faith to me, you will at last invite, instead of dreading, death; and face it boldly."* This command was put over me, and I thought that I could not do enough for Him after that.

In the Lord's direction to me in pursuing his ministry, He has said, *"James, you know my terrors, and shall persuade men to strive for beauty that will never die, for crowns of righteousness that shall never perish. You shall warn sinners to repent; you shall preach my gospel by the tree of life."* I once prayed to the Lord to take away this talking and deal with me as other of his people; and for awhile He left me in silence, and did not visit me at all. But, as I was going across an old field one day, I heard a singing low down at a distance, which gradually ascended the heavens, and followed and overtook me, and struck down on my face. *"Ah, James"*, said my inward mentor, *"you disbelieved in the way in which I was bringing you, but I shall not deal with you otherwise. Talk with your brethren, and you will find that they and you witness the same truths; have all drunk of the same spring, and have been born of the same God. I shall talk with you thus, as man to man; you shall feel, hear, and see with your inward ears and eyes, and you shall believe. These are the great witnesses that shall stand death and face judgment. You shall pray and thank me every Christmas day and New Year's day*

that you life has been preserved. You shall glorify me. I will be with you, and support and supply you with gospel and scriptures. You shall drink of me and never run dry. I will keep you here a long time, working for me. You need not think that pain or chill will carry you off. You shall know when I call you. I will send six angels when you expire, who shall convey you home to heaven, and then one of your attendant spirits shall exclaim, 'Fly wide open, ye pearly gates of the New Jerusalem, and let the righteous nation in.' A crown of glory shall be put on your head, and you shall take your seat at my right hand, and your end shall be peace."

One day, while I was in the field, it seemed that He slipped around in front of me, and treated me with a drink far sweeter than all the sugar and coffee in the world; that, if the taste had remained, I should have never wanted water.

During the night of the shelling (6th of July, 1863), I sat in my door facing the river, assured by the Lord that I should not be harmed; and I was not, though I could see the shells bursting through my walling, and firing a neighbor's dwelling house. The Yankees asked me if I did not want to go with them and have my freedom. I told them I did not want to go from my old home, where I know my people, off with them where I knew nobody; and, besides, that I was already free - that I had a freedom that no man could take from me, even the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. They said that they wished they had that freedom, (I thought to myself, you won't get it by throwing bombshells), and they left me alone.

Oh, this something within me often sings its own praise, prays its own prayers, and preaches its own sermons. As I am working with my hoe in my little field, it often holds a meeting like an association! And as it talks to me of the greatness and goodness of God, I have to stop working and sit down; and my eyes become leaky as a spring, and my tears drop like the rain. I never stop thinking of Him; I can never thank him enough for his blessings. I have tried hard many a year to get a better love for Him, but I find I can only feel the same old love still. Sometimes I rise and sit up in my bed at night, rapturously listening to the marvelous, glorious language of my God. Oh, the teachings of this heavenly voice will never leave me! No thunder or bombshell can drown it. The world and the devil cannot stop it. Old Jim is going to die there! For almost 50 years he has been a mouth for God, laboring for Him, and laying off his parables. Poor old fellow, he is "most gone", but not afraid to die; for his life is hid with Christ in God, safe from all harm. (Col. 3:3) There's my dependence. I'm not living here for a peck of meal or pound of meat, that I may have something to eat hereafter, that I may not perish there. I long to die the death of the righteous, and have my last end like His. (Num. 23:10)

The Lord sustains me with his comforting word, *"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."*

Our last work is not done after God speaks peace to our souls. It is rather begun than ended. We must follow all the directions of the Spirit, try to serve the true and living God aright, to get all our help from Him—for without Him we can do nothing—endeavor to die in the triumphs of faith. Ours is a whispering God. He speaks so softly that even if another head be touching yours, it cannot hear Him. While he is speaking the tears run down your cheeks.

The Spirit is made overseer of the body, to mortify its lusts. We shall carry the warfare with us until death. When we offend, the good Lord whips us well from it, but will never take his loving kindness from us. (Psalms 89: - 30-34) We are careful to avoid that place in the future.

"When grace is given to the soul", He said to me, *"it keeps pushing away sin, and distilling in the soul until it drives out every unclean thing, and in death washes it as pure as gold, and fit for the kingdom of heaven."*

I could not tell the end of his instruction in a thousand years. We shall all meet at the great Day. All the judges in the world shall be there, and be silent and tremble, while the great Judge only will speak. There will be no rocks or mountains to hide the wicked from his vengeance. They will all be turned into Hell; while the righteous shall be welcomed to life eternal.

Sometimes I doubt, but deliverance comes and stamps the foundation sure. I feel that I know that God who thunders when he pleases, and calms the rolling seas; who directs the whirlwind and rides upon the storm. I have thought I loved my wife and children better than anything else in the world, but now I know that I love my God, his ways, and his people, better than these; and best of all.

Thus, dear Brother Temple, I have given you and account of some of the exercises of this truly wonderful man of God. His brethren know that his is the "path of the just, which is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

REMARKS

I was baptized by my father at Williamston, N.C., in Roanoke River, January 11, 1864, and in the same year wrote the above narrative. The testimony of the old brother was a blessing to me then, and is a blessing to me now. I cannot read it without tears. May the Lord bless it to thousands of the present readers.

The shelling of Williamston by the Federal gunboats on the river, July 6, 1863, was an account of a few Confederate soldiers passing through, who, however, did not shoot at the Federals. The bombardment continued part of the afternoon and all night. Nearly every resident,

except a few Old Baptists, left the town. Two houses were burned by the shells, but no person hurt. When the Marines marched up Main Street next morning they saw my father sitting on his front porch, and asked him what he had been doing all night. He replied, *"I have been praying for you."*

If all men had this spirit, there would be no more wars.

Silvester Hassell

(The above was re-published in the Gospel Messenger of August, 1917, and is re-published in the Signs by request. We found it very interesting, and feel that our readers will also — J.D.W.)

MICAH V. 7.

"And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people, as dew from the Lord; as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men."

The above quotation sets forth some of the purposes of God in scattering his people among the people of the world. Sometimes I have been made to wonder why it is that the Baptists, who are so much despised by all other religionists of the day, are not permitted to form a colony and have a government of their own, and be freed from the surroundings of those who hate them. But then again, when I get a view of the purpose of God in it all, I am made to some extent to understand why it is that the remnant of Jacob cannot be a colony by themselves. "The remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people; they are among many people as dew from the Lord. When the rain and the dew of heaven are withheld for any length of time from the earth we behold a drought, the earth is parched, vegetation is withered, and murmuring goes up from man. But a gentle dew has a refreshing influence, and revives the drooping vegetation, and the fruits of earth are strengthened by the dew. Even so are the people blessed who have God's people among them; they are to the people of the earth as dew from the Lord; it has a softening influence. The hardheartedness of the people is softened and melted by the influence of the people of God, when they return love for hatred, and do good for evil, and revile not again when they are reviled, and as the dew causes the vegetation to look up when it has fallen after a long drought, even so when men have fallen into low, selfish habits, and will only do good to those who do good to them, and will render evil for evil, and when reviled they will revile again, and loan to those only who can return it with interest, together with many other fleshly habits that harden the hearts of men to meet with those who are moved by love to love their neighbors as themselves, it does certainly

act as dew from the Lord. I understand the Lord here to speak of how the remnant of Jacob should not only be as the dew among many people, but also that they should be as showers upon the grass.

Let us remember what a show is like when it is sent to revive the grass, to change its appearance and to cause it to grow and blossom. In like manner we may understand why the Lord's people are called the salt of the earth. The earth is seasoned, or savored, by the salt which they are to it. Thus the remnant of Jacob shall be among all the people where they are found, as the text declares, as showers. The Lord said that his doctrine should drop as the rain, it should distill as the dew. When a poor soul is hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and desires to be fed with some crumbs from the Master's table, and some of the people of God come among such ones and begin to speak of the mercy of God, and of his love, and of his forgiveness of the sins of his people, this doctrine will drop as the rain upon all such ones who have tried to keep the commandments of God and have found that they could not. How such testimony distills as the dew and brings comfort and life to things that appeared dead, and such promises have an influence upon the hearts of men, as the dew upon the grass. *"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth."*

Not only is the remnant of Jacob to be as the dew and the showers, but He has also said that it tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men. This remnant does not abide the will of man, either in coming or in departing, but is as the dew from the Lord. Dew is found in the morning, so, after men have slumbered, or, as it were, have lain dead to the knowledge of the truth, this remnant is as the dew and the showers of heaven, shedding the rays of love upon the people, loving the neighbor as himself. How sweet is this influence thus shed abroad. I have noticed at times that when wicked men were in company of their own, and one came in whom God had called and instructed in the way of righteousness, and spoke in a loving way, and it was known that his deeds were of higher motives than those prompted by the flesh, that it seemed to have a lifting influence, even as the dew from heaven causes the drooping plants to rise and appear to glory in the dew. The people of God always ought to show that their life is above, and thus point to Him who doeth all things well. I understand that this remnant of Jacob is that remnant which is according to the election of grace, of which Paul spoke in his letter to his Roman brethren.

I remember some two or three years ago, when I was severely afflicted in body for several months, and also at the same time afflicted with barrenness of mind, so that I felt I never could again taste that the

Lord was gracious, it seemed there was nothing that could again bring to me the joyful feelings that I had felt among the brethren in days gone by; the ground of my heart seemed parched. While in that condition the brethren desired a two days meeting. I felt it would do me no good, but I was willing to gratify them, so I arranged for Elder McGlade to come and preach for us; I felt that I could not preach again. O the sinfulness of sin, when sin becomes exceeding sinful, when darkness covers the face of the deep; such was my feeling; and when the brethren had come together I still felt that it all could do me no good. When Elder McGlade began talking I still felt that there was nothing for me, but while he was speaking of the sure mercies of God, and the giving of his Son for sinners, and that he came to save sinners, his words began to have a softening influence, and my hard heart began to melt, and I had to say, Surely God is good, and has done wonderful things for his people. To me it was as dew from the Lord; it was a shower upon the grass. As soon as he was done preaching, I arose and began talking about a hymn, and of the mercies of God, who had so long been hidden from me. These rich and sure promises of God, when declared by Elder McGlade, dropped upon my heart as the rain, and distilled as the dew. To distill is to bring out the substance within. So the Lord's people, being scattered among many people as dew from the Lord, must be represented by the dew.

If we had our own way perhaps we would have the dew all the time, and all in one place; we would have the remnant of God all in one colony and leave out the rest of the world. This remnant of Jacob scattered among many people should also be as showers upon the grass, but if we had our own way, and the Lord's children should be gathered in one community, the showers would be all in one place. But we are few in number among many people, there is barely enough of us to become dew, or to be as showers upon the grass. God's people, being as the salt of the earth, could my desire be gratified that all should be together, then all the salt would be in one place, leaving the balance of the world unsalted. I trust that I begin to see some of the purposes of God in scattering his people among the nations of the earth, and they tarry not for men, nor wait for the sons of men. This means that they are not influenced by men, neither are they men-pleasers; they come and go as the dew and rain, which are sent at God's appointed time and way; they trust not in man, nor in the sons of men; they are so scattered that often but two or three are gathered together; in but few places are there large churches. All the Old School Baptists in the land could dwell in the smallest State in the Union, but there are a few scattered in every State and Territory, as dew from the Lord.

I have often wondered why there is so much disfellowship among our people in different places, and grieve that it is so. How often jealousy gets in its awful work, and brethren are scattered among many people. The people of God are not allowed to form a government in the world, for jealousy among leaders and rulers would make havoc with the church. For this reason, if for no other, God's people shall be as the dew among many people, and as showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men.

Your brother,

Newton Peters.

Portland, Ore., Sept., 1909.

"BE YE RECONCILED TO GOD."

Yesterday morning, at our meeting here in Warwick, I tried to use these words for a text, and was astonished at the wealth of divine wisdom they contain. They still persist in my thoughts and reflections, however, so I will try to put on paper some few scattered points for the readers of the Signs, whose attention I have not engaged in a long time. I do not suppose there is any passage of Scripture in the Bible that has been more abused by the Arminian religious world than the above. These words, or their equivalents: *"Get right with God," "Make your peace with God,"* &c., are shouted at their audiences by revivalists until some of their hearers become actually persuaded the men are preaching the gospel, though it is but a counterfeit, and a base one at that. You will find these words, *"Be ye reconciled to God,"* in the second letter written by the apostle Paul to the Corinthian brethren, fifth chapter, twentieth verse, and if Paul so much as had a single thought for the unregenerate world when he penned these words, then I fail to know how to read my Bible correctly. Nowhere in the entire Bible does the spirit of inspiration call upon men and women in a state of nature, dead in trespasses and in sins, to set about effecting their reconciliation with God. Reconciliation cannot be had that way, viz., as the result of human efforts, and God nowhere requires it that way, but this is the way lost and ruined sinners in Adam are reconciled to God, i. e., *"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."* Reconciliation then is the work of the God-man, not of the Adam-man. Paul used the words, *"Be ye reconciled to God,"* in addressing his brethren in Christ, the members of the church at Corinth, and if we endeavor to apply these words to any but believers living in a church capacity, we certainly do wrest the Scripture to our own destruction. Probably you

will remember in Paul's first letter to Corinth he had some fault to find with them because of certain disorder among them. For their observance of the Lord's supper some ate until their natural appetite was appeased, and drank until they were drunken, then they were not observing this most solemn supper in God's way, they were not *"reconciled to God"* in this, but were doing their own way, their god was their belly. Others waxed contentious over the subject of baptism, on boasting that Paul had baptized him, another that he had received it at the hands of Apollos, and so on. Here again they were not living after the Spirit, but after the flesh, hence were not *"reconciled to God"* in this. There was one member of this Corinth church who had committed fornication, having taken his father's wife, and was still retained in the fellowship of the church. Here again Paul condemns such practice as not being gospel order, not being reconciled to God's plan of the new heavens and new earth, and tells them to *"deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."* Evidently, also it appears from Paul's first letter to Corinth that some of them of that church had gone to law with their brethren; that is, instead of having stated their grievances to the church and abiding by her judgment, they had aired legal matters in the courts of the land with unbelievers sitting in judgment; this to their shame and to the hurt of the church. God's way for such matters to be settled is for the church to judge, so they were not *"reconciled to God"* in this, but had rather take their own head for it. If there was any one thing that rejoiced the apostles more than anything else, it was to see the brethren living in peace with one another, walking in gospel order, remaining steadfast in faith, established in doctrine, bearing one another's burdens, and in all things walking as becometh the children of God. When Paul in his second letter says, *"Be ye reconciled to God,"* he is beseeching them as an ambassador for Christ, praying in Christ's stead, to abide by the doctrine, order and faith of the gospel as he has delivered it to them of God, and to not seek to add to it or to take from it anything that the apostles have not commanded. Along this line he reminds them that Christ died and rose again all for their sakes, *"that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."* The flesh of even a saint may, and I believe it does, rebel against the doctrine of God our Savior and against the simplicity of his house, as well as against that operation of the Holy Spirit we call *"christian experience."* But what of that? Is it our flesh that is to be pleased in these things, or is it our

God? Since we are bought with a price, and that the precious blood of Christ, are we then debtors to the flesh to live after the flesh? Certainly not. Why then seek to mitigate the *"hard sayings"* of the doctrine to please the flesh? Why modify the simplicity of our church order to draw large congregations of worldlings? Why try to tone down the crucial things in our experience until even an unbeliever gets to thinking he is one of us? Why have an organ in the church? what good is it? The apostles needed it not, why do we? To be sure David used such things, but woe be unto us if we follow his example. Does not the prophet Amos say, *"Woe to them * * * that chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music, like David"?* Those things were for types and shadows until that which is perfect should come, and woe be to us if we seek to restore again the weak and beggarly elements of the law which, when we were under it, only condemned us. Or why shall we organize a Sunday School? The apostles had no such thing, nor needed it, why we? And if we could conduct one successfully, would it not be an evidence that we were under the law, and not under grace? Under the old covenant the priests in the temple were wont to teach the people out of the book of the law, but under the new covenant *"they shall no more teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest." "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children."* Under which of these covenants do we hope we are? Then what do we want with a Sunday School? O, says one, to teach our children the literal meaning of the Scriptures, if nothing else. No need of an institution to do this, parents so minded can do this at home around the family table, or at the fireside, no need to tack it on to the church. Brethren, let us *"be reconciled to God"* in these matters; let us not remove our neighbor's (Christ's) landmark, for cursed are we if we do. *"Remove not the ancient landmark which thy fathers have set." "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."* Let Mrs. Eddy have her Christian Science, Dr Eliot his new religion, Gipsy Smith his distracted meetings, but for us and our house, let us serve the Lord. The good old doctrine of election, predestination, yea, even absolute, of salvation by free and unmerited grace, and the good old church composed of sinners born again, is plenty good enough for us. Well, as for me, I must say I am satisfied with the doctrine and with the order of the house of God; I am not caring to improve either, being satisfied they are already perfect. But

it is in experimental things that I find it most difficult to be *"reconciled to God;"* not only difficult, but utterly impossible, unless I am ministered unto of the word of reconciliation. To feel a law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin and death, not to be able to do the good I would, but to be always doing the evil that I would not, to die daily, to be always delivered unto death, to be from day to day made conscious of my weak and sinful heart, I say it is hard to be reconciled to this way of living. To be cast into prison as John was, and there to doubt whether you ever really knew the real Jesus, is a heart-searching time. To take up the cross daily and follow Him, who is sufficient for this? Not one of us in our own strength. Well, it is in these things I am scarcely ever "reconciled to God." From the Scriptures it appears that this is the way God leads his people and manifests himself in their flesh, but I tell you it is hard. To be crucified to the world and have the world crucified unto you, is it not flesh and self-destroying? Indeed it is. To always have to walk by faith, when all the time we want to see so much; to always be saved by hope, when all the time we want to know for a certainty. Well, if God should grant us the things we selfish creatures crave, we would have the mark of Cain, and not of Abel. The very things God has given us as the marks of our sonship our flesh would erase if it could. The worldling has no such marks as we have; the cross, the dying, the faith, the hope, the searchings of heart, the doubts, the fears, these the nonelect do not have. Then let us prize death rather than life, these very conflicts rather than ease, for therein is the crown of life received. Yes, "be ye reconciled to God" even experimentally, as well as doctrinally.

Yours in hope of reconciliation,
Horace H. Lefferts

Warwick, N.Y., Dec. 13., 1909.

PSALM 135: 2-3.

Ye that stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God,

Praise the Lord; for the Lord is good: sing praises unto his name; for it is pleasant.

MEETINGS

GLENWOOD CHURCH

Glenwood Church, Princeton, W.V. announces a 5th Saturday meeting, April 29, 2000, starting at 10:00. Those coming by way of I-77 take exit 9. Turn onto 460 W. Go 5 miles, turn right onto 19 N., then immediately turn left onto Glenwood Park Road. Go 1 1/2 miles to the church on left. Those coming by way of 460, follow the same directions from the I-77 / 460 intersection.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 2000

Mrs. Ilene H. Clifton, VA 2.00
Buford E. Thompson, VA 2.00
L.C. Hornsby, GA 2.00
Mrs. Ollie Parks, LA 7.00
Mrs. Carmen Abernathy, NC 7.00
Eld. J.A. Foreman, NC 2.00
George W. Hyslip, TN 2.00
Mrs. Ilene D. Myers, VA 2.00
Mrs. Foye Cole, NC 2.00
In memory S.R. Fanning, AL .. 25.00
Mrs. Joel Alexander, AL 7.00
Mrs. Joyce Farley, TX 15.00
J.C. Chandler, NC 2.00
Burnell B. Williams, VA 4.00
Eld. J.T. Jones, LA 7.00
C.L. Biano, TX 7.00
Levie D. Goard, VA 7.00
Woodrow Bellinger, NY 2.00

OBITUARIES

SIS. PAULINE CONNER SHORTER RAKES

In memory of our dear sister, Pauline Conner Shorter Rakes. She was born October 24, 1905, passed away November 9, 1999. Making her stay on earth 94 years. Funeral services were held at Salem Church, November 13, 1999, with Elder Lane Carter and Rev. Olen Gardner officiating. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

Sister Pauline was preceded in death by her two husbands, Harry Shorter and George Tyler Rakes. She is survived by one son, Harry Shorter and wife Claudia; two granddaughters, Cynthia Blevins and Kimberly Shorter; one great granddaughter, Kaitlin Shorter; two stepsons, Marvin and Allan Rakes; seven sisters, Hazel Ferris, Georgianna Link and husband Leon, Bonnie Conner and husband Arthur, Velva Davis, Virginia Conner, Dexter Sowers and Iva Morgan; one brother, Woodrow Conner and wife Reba, and many nieces, nephews and friends.

Sister Pauline was a member of Salem Church since August 10, 1958 and was faithful to attend as long as she was able. Her last few years were spent in a nursing home. She suffered many trials and tribulations, but the doctrine she loved, Salvation by Grace, remained strong upon her mind. The last words she spoke were "saved by grace".

She will be missed by all that knew her. Our loss will be her eternal gain. May the Lord grant us grace to accept His will.

Written by request of Salem Church.

Mary Janney

MATTHEW 5:8-9.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

Jesus! and shall it ever be,
A mortal man ashamed of thee!
Ashamed of thee, whom angels praise;
Whose glories shine through endless days!

Ashamed of Jesus! sooner far
Let evening blush to own a star;
He sheds the beams of light divine
O'er this benighted soul of mine.

Ashamed of Jesus! just as soon
Let midnight be ashamed of noon:
'Tis midnight with my soul, till he,
Bright Morning Star! bids darkness flee.

Ashamed of Jesus! that dear friend
On whom my hopes of heaven depend!
No; when I blush -- be this my shame,
That I no more revere his name.

Ashamed of Jesus! who can say,
Who that has sins to wash away,
Or tears to wipe, or good to crave,
Or fears to quell, or soul to save?

O then, nor is my boasting vain,
O then, I boast a Saviour slain;
And O, may this my glory be,
That Christ is not ashamed of me.

Gregg.

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EDITORIAL

GOD'S OMNIPOTENCE

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

I sometimes tremble greatly when I am given thoughts upon the omnipotence, omnipresence and omniscience of God. What greater power and wisdom and knowledge can there be? He is everywhere present, for he inhabiteth eternity, and there is no beginning of days or end of time with him. He spake and it was done, commanded and it stood fast. In the beginning he created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them by the word of his power. This he did in six days, and on the seventh day he rested. *"And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day." Gn.1:31.* All that he created and made were for his own good pleasure. *"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." Rev.4:11. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him." Col. 1:16.* God has his holy purpose in all things for he hath said, *"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isa. 46:9-10.*

Sin is not a created thing, for sin is the transgression of God's holy law. 1 Jn.3:4. God hates sin with a holy hatred, yet he has a purpose for it being in the world. Surely he had the power to keep it out or his power would not be perfect. The preacher tells us, *"Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." Eccl. 7:29.* It was from this upright innocent state that Adam fell into a state of sin and death. These inventions allude to sinful and evil things. When God placed Adam in the gar-

den he was innocent and upright, knowing neither good nor evil: only after they transgressed were their eyes opened to know good and evil. Though Adam was made upright, he was also made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Rom.8:20. There are many who claim that God was unjust in making man subject to vanity. How unholy they be, and how just, holy and righteous is our God! Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him , Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another to dishonour? Rom.9:20-21. After God had created every thing else, he took dust of the earth and formed man, breathed into his nostrils the breath of life;and man became a living soul. And God created man in his own image. *"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."* He blessed them and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth. Therefore all men born of flesh and blood are only Adam multiplied. God took a rib from Adam's side and made it a woman, and gave her to him. And Adam said, *"This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." "And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living."*

We have heard it said by some that the first man Adam was at least partially spiritual, and that was the position from which he fell. But the Scriptures say otherwise. *"And so it was written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last man Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven." 1 Cor. 15:45-47.* Man must be born again to ever be spiritual, Jesus told Nicodemus, *"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." John 3: 5-7.* Surely no one will claim that the first Adam had been born again. God was not surprised that Adam partook of the forbidden fruit, for he had purposed it, and said, *"In the day thou eatest there of thou shalt surely die."* He did not say "If ye eat of it." God had a holy purpose in it. and he did four things that brought it to pass, and in no way did this make him the author of sin as some claim. Neither did God tempt Adam to sin. *"Let no man say. when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man." James 1:13.* As we said before, God made man subject to vanity ac-

cording to his own will and purpose, he placed the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden and gave to Adam a commandment not to eat of it, and the crooked serpent which God had formed with his hand was there to deceive Eve. Adam was not deceived, neither could he be, for he was a figure of him that was to come, Jesus Christ. If any one of these four things had not been done then sin would not have entered the world. *"Wherefore by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned." Rom. 5:12.* If sin had not entered the world by Adam and Eve they would have never died. They would still be in the flesh and could never enter heaven and immortal glory. The holy, righteous purpose of God would have been destroyed, and we know that this could never be. His beloved, only begotten Son stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and he would come into the world and destroy sin and save his people from their sins.

I have believed, and often said, that Adam ate the forbidden fruit which Eve gave him because of his love for her. This I believe is true, but I have been given to see that there is more to this than I had seen before. Why did he love her? Because she was one with him, as Adam said, *"This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man." Gn. 2:23.* This shows another part in which Adam was a figure of Jesus Christ, for the bride of Christ, the church, was ever in him, chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Let us read Ephesians 5:28-33. *"So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."* Adam willingly went into death for his bride, but had no power to bring her back. This Jesus did also, but he had power to raise her up again with himself. Jesus said, *"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."* When Jesus died on the cross of calvary his bride died in him, for he is the head and she is the body. The head cannot die without the body dying with it. She was buried with him, and she arose with him on that third day. *"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the*

*glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin." Rom.6:3-7.*What a wonderous doctrine this is to those who have been given grace to believe in God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. It is impossible for the natural mind of carnal man to comprehend the power, knowledge and wisdom in the marvelous works of our sovereign, eternal, omnipotent, omniscient God, *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Isa.55:8-9.* And, *"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." 1 Cor. 1:21* These things are hidden from the wise and prudent, but by the almighty grace of God they are revealed by faith unto babes. I have hope that I am included among the ones who have received this faith, for our blessed Saviour is coming again to receive his bride whom he hath redeemed. *"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." 1 Thes. 4:16-18.* I pray that all who may read these words will be comforted of God. I desire that you remember this poor sinner when at the throne of Grace.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

---

1 CORINTHIANS 13: 1-5.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

VOICES OF THE PAST

GREATER WORKS

At this point I will, following out the same subject, refer to the words of the dear Savior in *John xiv. 12: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father."* I have many times been asked for my understanding of this declaration, and have written briefly concerning it in private letters, and once or twice for publication. I think they are to be understood in the light of these examples of the character and work of faith referred to by Paul in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews.

Many have tried to discover and explain how believers in Jesus can do such works as he did, and especially how they can do greater works than he did. Those who esteem the power of men as prominent and paramount in the work of salvation will readily endorse the sentiment that Jesus so started the work of salvation, and so laid out his plan, and so instructed his disciples, that they should continually advance in power and effectiveness, and so attain unto results far beyond what Jesus attained unto while here. They will illustrate this view by referring to any great enterprise in worldly business, in which the one who begins and establishes the business is far outstripped by those who succeed him in prosecuting it, as each successive generation improves upon the implements, methods and power. So I heard a preacher say, years ago, *"The least christian now can save more souls than Jesus did when on earth, for he only began the work, and laid out the plans, which have been improving and growing ever since."*

This, of course, was consistent with the doctrine that Jesus began the work of salvation, and left it for his followers to carry on. Those who regard the subject in this way do not know anything of a salvation begun and finished by Jesus, and revealed unto his people by his holy Spirit in this gospel dispensation. But sometimes we see those who do know the gospel of God's grace, trying to explain how his people do the same kind of works that Jesus did while he was here in the flesh, and how also they do even greater works that he did.

But the dear Savior did not say that those who believed on him should do such works as he did while he was in the flesh; neither did he say that they should do greater works than he did. A comparison of men and their works with Jesus and his works, in this sense of being less or greater, is never made by him or his apostles. He speaks of himself being greater than Solomon and Jonah, but only as the reality is greater than the type. He does not compare his works with men's works, nor himself with men, as in

the sight and estimation of God, for no man but himself is ever regarded with favor by the Father, nor can appear commended before him; nor are the works of any man but Jesus ever accepted and approved by the Father. All that appear before God at any time must appear in the name of Jesus, and all that ever are accepted of the Father are accepted with Jesus, and in his perfect, finished work. All who come with any works but his to plead, are pronounced workers of iniquity.

Jesus said of him who believed on him that he should do the works that he did; not works like them, but the very same works. He gave his apostles power to do miracles, but those are not the works he is speaking of here. That was a special power which he gave personally to the apostles. Also there were signs that should follow them that believed upon the preaching of the apostles, which were fulfilled, and are still fulfilled in a spiritual sense. It is to be remembered that in the name of Jesus all those wonders were to be done, and in that name they are still done as signs. But that name must be, not upon the lips, but in the heart; and then the power of it will be manifest. It is not the will of the man that is wrought by the power of this name, for by that will he would, like Simon, desire the power for his own gratification; but it is the will of Jesus that is wrought by the power of his name.

The work that Jesus did, and the work that the believer did, were not two similar works, but the same work, as the work of God in closing the lions' mouths, and the work of Daniel, who *"by faith stopped the mouths of lions,"* was the same work. It was only upon the believer that Jesus did works of healing. In one place he could do no mighty works because of their unbelief. If some should think that in some sense the faith, and the belief which results from faith, are ours to exercise according to our will, then let him consider why only two since the world began have gone from this world without dying. Surely if faith can be exercised at the will of any man, many, very many, would have been translated like Enoch, that they should not see death. By faith the eyes of the blind were opened, the ears of the deaf were unstopped, the long sick were healed in a moment, the touch of the hem of Jesus' garment caused the issue of blood to be staunched in an instant, and all the wonderful works of Jesus were experienced by the poor and needy. It was his work in their behalf, and it was also their work by faith. He ascribes the power and salvation to their faith. *"Thy faith hath saved thee,"* yet he gave that same faith. *"He is the author and the finisher of our faith."*

In the case of the dead raised to life, the faith was not in the dead, but in those who mourned their death, and who received them raised to life again. Martha must acknowledge that she believed, before Lazarus could be raised. The poor souls who sought the

healing power of Jesus did not know of that great riches of faith in them until Jesus told them of it, and showed them its fruit; and it is the same today. The poor lepers who are, in their soul's experience, at Jesus' feet, acknowledging his power, and beseeching his mercy to heal them, do not know that the blessed faith of the Son of God is in them. If they had not that faith they would not, could not, mourn on account of their sins, nor pray for mercy and healing. They may seem to hear Jesus say, *"I am not sent to you,"* yet they will worship him, and say, "Lord, help me." They may seem to hear him say, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and give it to dogs," and they will say, That is just what I am, *"But the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from the master's table. I crave a crumb, and that is all I ask."* Faith was there all the time, urgent, persistent, never-failing faith, and the work is done. Jesus did the work, and the poor, believing soul has done it also by that faith which is the gift of God.

Jesus did not say, *"He that believeth on me shall do greater works than I can do,"* but greater works than these that I am doing now. He was still in the flesh, and under the law. The works that he did then were all works that could be seen by men. They were great and wonderful, but were only figurative of the greater spiritual works which he must do before he could go unto his Father. He must die because of the sins of his people, and thus fulfill the law and destroy death; he must rise from the dead and show his risen body to witnesses chosen before, and then ascend up on high, carrying captivity captive. Then when he went unto the Father he would send forth his light and his truth, and lead his people to his holy habitation, the church of the living God. When he went unto his Father then would all his work of salvation be made manifest in his people; and how much greater are these works in bringing his people to a knowledge of himself than the works he did while in the flesh for the healing and comfort of the bodies of his people, only they who have experienced them can know.

To raise one to life again, who had died, is a great work, but how much greater the work when death itself is destroyed, and they who were under its dominion are raised up to die no more. To command the winds and waters to be still, and cause a great calm on the sea that was in terrible commotion, was the work of an infinite God, but it is a greater work to cause peace and quiet in the soul that has been in trouble on account of the storms of wrath against sin. To open the eyes of one that was born blind, and to unstop the deaf ears, are great works, but to open the eyes of a poor sinner spiritually, and unstop his ears, so that he can see the glorious works of salvation for himself, and hear the voice of Jesus declare his sins forgiven, are infinitely greater works, greater as eternity is great-

er than this short life in time, and higher as the heavens are higher than the earth.

All these greater works of Jesus in his gospel, are works which his people do by faith. His works are their works. By faith in his name the lame walk and the lepers are cleansed. By faith they destroy death and overcome the world. By faith they resist the devil, and overcome the wicked one. By faith they quench his fiery darts, and gain the victory through the name of Jesus.

Those who are in the habit of thinking of the Lord's people as doing works in their own name or as distinct from Jesus must remember that in all that pertains to salvation they are one with him, as he became one with them in bearing their sins and suffering in the flesh. The mystery which was hid from the former ages and dispensations, but is now made manifest unto the saints in the gospel day, *"Is Christ in them the hope of glory."* It is his power within them by which they work. He works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. His Spirit works in them mightily when he will accomplish his will in them. Our works are not wrought by us and then submitted to him for judgment, but all our works that are acceptable are wrought in him. All other works are works of the flesh, dead works, works of iniquity; and in the judgment which is upon us when Jesus appears those works are condemned. We are condemned for fleshly works, and the fire of God's word burns them up; but we are not praised or rewarded for spiritual works, although there is a sweet reward felt in our souls in them, for to Jesus the praise is due for every good work. By his power and grace, and in his holy name alone, could we ever possibly do good works; therefore to him the thanks abound for them. But always our God is our exceeding great reward, sweetly felt when we are enabled to walk in the light of his countenance, but known and felt to be such also when we walk in darkness and have no light.

What a blessed thing it is to feel this holy oneness with Jesus; to feel that we are accepted with him and in him; to feel from time to time the victory given unto us over every enemy through his dear and blessed name; to feel that we are new creatures to him, not by any work or power of our own, but *"the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."*

How blessed and full of delight are these "greater works" of the gospel which are now made manifest to our faith, and become ours by faith, to be done by us as the need for them comes upon us, because Jesus went unto his Father. It is a risen and glorified Savior who dwells in the believer, working in him *"all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power."* Therefore *"the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, cast*

ing down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." The "greater works" of Jesus are not known by the natural man, who could see the works he did while here in the flesh, but they are only known as they are manifested in and through poor sinners redeemed by his precious blood, and given faith in his name, by which his power and salvation become experimentally theirs. They are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed to these babes. It is only by faith, and not by natural sight or wisdom, that these babes see and know these greater works, and that they know Jesus who wrought them, though he dwells in them and walks in them, and will make his strength perfect in their weakness. It is only as flesh and heart faileth them from time to time, that they are fully prepared to know and experience that the Lord is the strength of their heart, and their portion forever. (Psalm lxxiii. 26.)

June 16, 1900

Elder Silas H. Durand

PROVERB 3:3.

Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:

So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.

"QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT."

The above subject has been on my mind somewhat of late, and I thought, with the help of God, and by the permission of the editors, I would give to the many readers of the SIGNS some of my thoughts concerning it, and my understanding of it, as to whom it applies.

We know that all who preach salvation by works, or, in other words, a conditional salvation, and who tell sinners dead in trespasses and in sins that they must first act and become willing before God will save them, and that it is with them whether they will be saved or not, quote the above text, and apply it to sinners dead in trespasses and in sins, and tell them that the Spirit of God is striving with them, and that God wants them to come and be saved, and many other similar things; but I desire to tell you to whom I thing the text applies. The above quotation was written by the apostle Paul, and we learn that he always in his letters addressed the church of God, and the faithful in Christ Jesus. Then if he was addressing the church of God and the faithful in Christ Jesus, surely he was not writing to dead sinners, for we learn from the Scriptures of eternal truth that God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. We learn also from the holy Scriptures that if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his. Then how can sinners dead in sin quench that which

they do not possess? I do not see how they can. But now I will try to tell you who they are that, as I believe, do quench the Spirit: they are the living children of God, who have been born again, who have been killed to the love of sin, and who have been made alive unto holiness. It seems to me now that I will have to come right down to my own case in this matter, and I hope I will be able to tell you something that you know, and not what you do not know.

We know that everybody loves something. Sinners dead in trespasses and in sins love the things of this world; and why? Because they have been born into this world, and it is natural for them to love the things of the world. Did any of you who are fathers and mothers with children around you, born to you, ever command one of your children to do anything until after it was born to you? No, you did not. Then do you believe that God ever commands one of his children to obey his commandments before that child is born of God and made alive from the dead? Let me repeat that God is not the God the of dead, but of the living; then surely they who are commanded to obey him are his living children, and as soon as one is made alive to God he begins to want to do that which is pleasing to God, or tell some one about the things which he has come to love, and the one he most desires to talk to is some one whom he believes to be a child of God, some member of the church. He desires to tell about how he feels, and about what has happened to him. He feels that there has been a great change in some way or other, but he may be, to some extent, at a loss to know what all this means. He will begin to love some one also, and if he knows of Primitive Baptists it will be almost sure to be one of them that he loves. He feels perhaps, This is so strange that I love them so, when I know that I never had any use for them before; but I do love them, and I want to tell them so; now I desire to be among them. Such a one now feels his unworthiness, unfitness and leanness. These things all begin to loom up before him. But for all this, dear children of God, this love does not cease, but keeps drawing us closer and closer. With loving-kindness He draws us. But now the time has come when the children of God may, and do often, quench the Spirit. Whenever they feel drawn by the sweet cords of this love to go to the church and tell there what great things the Lord has done for them, and the opportunity is extended to them, and they fail or refuse to go and make their desire known to the church, they quench the Spirit. But this is not all the place in which they may quench the Spirit. No, I believe that after we have become members of the church we may, and do often, disobey this exhortation of the apostle. Often we want to speak a little to the brethren, and we fail to do

so, or fail to perform any other service in the church which comes before us as a duty laid upon us, and in so doing we quench the Spirit. One will say, I have but one talent, and I will not use it at all, but will lay it up in a napkin, or hide it in the earth. Certainly we ought not to be like the slothful servant who received one talent, for we find what was the result with him. If we have but one talent, we should use it with the ability that the Lord gives us. If we fail to do this, I believe we are quenching the Spirit.

But now I will talk a little more about love. We all have had fathers and mothers. Did we not love them better than we did any one who was of no relation to us? Why did we love and serve them? Because we were their offspring, and it is the law of nature that we should love them. We have brothers and sisters also, the offspring of our parents after the flesh, and we love them better than we do the children of any other parents. Why is this? Because their father is our father, and so we are closely related to them. This love, of which I have just been speaking, is brought about by the first birth. In this our natural birth, did we assist at all? No, we did not, but we know that some one loved us before we had any knowledge of our existence in this world, and after we began to have some knowledge in this world, about the first thing we learned was that we had a father and mother, and we loved them. It seems to me that this first birth, and the things connected with it, are figures, or types, of the second birth and the things connected with it. As we do not do anything in order to be born the first time, so we do not do anything to be born the second time. We read that God of his own will begat us with the word of truth. Surely if he has begotten us there will be a manifestation of that birth. It seems to me that all this is right in line with the truth of salvation by grace, and we read, If it be by grace, it is no more of works. As we do not have any part in bringing about our first birth, I cannot see what we could do in bringing about our second birth. All this is a great mystery to the world. It was so in the days of the apostle Paul, and it is so today. Remember how Paul was treated while he was being carried about as a prisoner, for preaching the gospel of the Son of God; he was brought before kings and rulers and governors. Notice that when Paul was permitted to speak for himself, nearly always the first thing he would say was to declare to them his experience. But did they believe him? No, they made light of him, and ridiculed him and what he said, and told him that he was mad, or insane, It is very plain proof that those rulers knew nothing about what Paul was talking concerning the work of the Lord, nor does the world of mankind believe it now. The grace of God makes a great change with any one where it dwells, and it requires this grace to make such a change, and grace

has never made a single failure, and never will make one. The apostle said, *"By the grace of God I am what I am."* Cannot every child of God bear witness to the truth of these words? They know of a surety that it is the truth, and feel glad that they know it.

Now, my dear brother, I will close these rambling thoughts for the present. I feel since I began this letter that my mind has been very much in the dark, and perhaps I have said things I ought not, but I hope you will excuse me, and if you deem it unfit for publication, throw it aside, and all will be right with me.

Your brother in hope,
A.P. Hicks

Piedmont, Ala., Oct. 5, 1909.

Dear Elder Ker: - I herewith hand you a letter brother Tawresey wrote at my request, and having read it with pleasure I send it for publication, thinking it will be beneficial to others. May the Lord be with you and bless you in the things needful, and cause you to remember poor, unworthy F. SELBY FISHER.

Wilmington, Del., Nov. 7, 1909.

F. SELBY FISHER — DEAR BROTHER:— As you have asked me to write some account of the way I have been led, and some of the reason for my hope, I feel a desire to do so. We are admonished to be always ready to give a reason for the hope that is in us. I have been asked to write before, but when I would think I would do so I was deterred by a fear of my unfitness and inability to write anything that would be of use to any of God's dear children; I saw myself so vile and sinful that I was made to fear I knew nothing of the grace of God, yet I must confess that I have a hope in the mercy of God, though so small at many times that I can only hope it is that hope which is like "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail." But the Lord has promised his people that he will never leave nor forsake them, and he has assured them that he can save to the uttermost, and now the great question with me is, Am I one of his, or am I not? When I see my inward corruption I am not, and when I would relinquish my hope I cannot let it go. We are told that *"we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren"* and I do think that I love the brethren for the truth's sake, and I love that kind of preaching that give all the glory to God and abases poor, sinful man, and declares that He is God, and there is none like him, who says, *"My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."* I love that kind of preaching, because it is the only kind that will reach my case, for if I had to depend upon my own merits or good deeds for salvation I would be without hope.

Now, having given the reason for the hope within me, I will try to give you a short account of my travel from darkness into that condition where I trust I am allowed to see a little of the light, though I often fear I am still blind. I was born of Old Baptist parents, who always endeavored, by both precept and example, to inculcate in me a love for the truth and morality. They would often take me, and their other children, to their meetings, which were usually held at the home of some of the brethren, and though but a child I was often much interested in their conversation, and listened attentively, though understanding but little, and I had great respect for the Old Baptists. I cannot remember a time when I had not a conviction that they were the church of the living God, and I have often since felt a fear that I have been influenced by their training and know nothing of the work of grace in the heart; but if a good work was ever begun in me, I must go back to my childhood to find the beginning. At an early age I was impressed with serious thoughts of death and eternity; I thought if I were to die in the state in which I was I would be lost, and I would try to do better and be better, but it was no use, for do the best I could I got no better. I continued in this way until I had grown up, still being sorely burdened with a sense of my sinful and lost condition. During all these years I attended meetings at London Tract, of which dear old Elder Barton was the pastor. I was also a reader of the Signs of the Times, being especially interested in the letters of experience; I wished to see if there were any like me. The years passed by and I felt little change, except that my burden which oppressed me at first seemed to gradually pass away; I cannot tell how or when I lost it. I have never ceased to feel that I am a sinner, in and of myself wholly undeserving of the least of God's mercies. But the sense of condemnation seemed to pass and give place to a hope that Christ had borne the sins of even one so vile as I, and yet I am often made to fear; O can it be possible? I am still so prone to sin, so cold and dead, so unthankful, so forgetful of his goodness and mercy which have followed me all the days of my life, I can only hope. I have said I cannot tell when I lost my burden, but I do remember well that morning when everything seemed so changed, when I thought that the sun had never shone so brightly, the grass and trees never looked so green, or the flowers so fair, nor had the birds ever sung so sweetly, when all nature seemed to be praising God, but I cannot say that was the time I lost my burden; I think it was gone before, and I had just come to realize that it was gone; I have never been oppressed since that time as I was before. I have often thought that if I could get that burden back I would watch and see when and how I lost it. I thought then I could go to the church and tell them

what I hoped the Lord had done for me, but soon the tempter came, doubts crept in and made me fear that it was all a delusion. I thought if this was the work of grace I would not still be so prone to wander into the old paths of sin; no, I was deceived, and if I went to the church I would deceive them, and so I still continued to live the same way for several years, all the time hoping and looking for a more satisfactory evidence, until in July, 1890, I was enabled to go to the church at Welsh Tract and tell them in great weakness what I hoped the Lord had done for me, and though I could say but little I was received, and the next day, in company with two others, was baptized by that dear brother, the late Elder Joseph L. Staton. The other two who were baptized that day were a dear old sister Watson, who was at that time over seventy-five years of age, and R.T. Tawresey, my brother in the flesh; they both have been called from earth, we believe to that better world. I was the youngest of the three, though I was then in my fifty-seventh year, and I know that I must soon be called to follow them, but God by his grace is able to sustain me in all that he shall call me to pass through, and I feel to thank him that I do not have to rely on my own faithfulness; if I did I surely would despair, but his faithfulness will never fail, and if I am his, all will be well, and, thanks to his holy name, I can sometimes adopt the language of the psalmist: *"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want."*

Brother Fisher, I have tried to tell you in my poor way something of the way I have traveled; I sometimes hope it is the way in which the Lord leads his people, but I often fear it is not; I leave it to the better judgment of those who I am sure have a good evidence of the work of grace in their heart. I know that I once loved the world and its vanities, but now I desire above all things the fellowship and communion of the saints, though I feel that I am not worthy of such a great favor.

Your unworthy brother, if indeed a brother at all,

WM. B. TAWRESEY.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:— I recently found the enclosed letter among some hidden treasures. As you will see, it was written several years ago, by our sister, Attie Curtis. I remember that it was a blessing to me then, and now since it has been buried so long, I find it has not lost its sweetness or its power to cheer and comfort. If you think it would interest others it is at your disposal.

Yours in christian fellowship,
ADA A. CHANDBOURNE.

Bath, Maine, Dec. 1, 1891.

MY DEAR SISTER: Your letter has just come with the money all safe, and I thank you very much for assisting me this much, in sending to me for the books. I wish I could make it all plain to you that I know where you are, and that you are just at safe there as when in the felt presence of Jesus we cannot get out of his sight. I can speak this now with much confidence, but, dear sister, while the fiery trial lasted I could not help feeling as if some strange thing had happened unto me. I tried every way to find out wherein it could work for my good. I could not find Him whom my soul loveth either on the right hand or left, and I did often have the question come, How do you know there is a God? and I could not answer it. I could not recall any of my experience, and not one passage of Scripture that had been so full and precious to me when the candle of the Lord shone around me. I have searched the Bible many times to find a promise, and wept because it was a sealed book to me. We cannot make another understand the sorrow of soul when darkness is upon the face of the deep, a darkness that is not like that which comes over the earth, bringing rest and peace, but a darkness that can be felt, a night when the wild beasts creep forth to terrify us. How weak and helpless we find ourselves as they rush upon us from all sides! I know what it is to be where there is no standing in the deep mire, and to feel that the waters have come in unto my soul, and although I did not know it then, I surely cried unto God to save me, and you, dear sister, never will cry for help only *"unto the Lord;"* he will surely appear and say, *"Peace, be still,"* and there will be a calm. It may last only a short time before another storm will overtake you, but the Lord is the one who will never leave nor forsake you nor any of his people. I do rejoice that the Lord led me into darkness, revealed to me the terrible beasts in my heart, made me know what it is to be brought into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members, so I could not sing the Lord's song in that strange land, where my harp was on the willows. I sat down there and truly thought I had to remain there as long as this life lasted; yea, I wept when I remembered Zion. If the Lord had never led me in this way I could not have know the joy that cometh in the morning, when the glorious Sun of Righteousness arises with healing in his wings. If I had not gone forth with weeping, bearing precious seed, I could not have returned with rejoicing, bringing my sheaves with me, and, dear sister, I believe my "sheaves" have been all that is embraced in the finished work of Jesus in saving his people from their sins. My rejoicing has been in the power, wisdom, love, mercy and goodness of God, not a particle of my works in it. I have rejoiced in Christ Jesus, and had no confidence in the flesh. I am sure that in me, that is, in my flesh, there will never be found any good thing. *"To will is present with me; but how*

to perform that which is good I find not." "When I would do good, evil is present with me." I can rejoice in this just now, because I can see, while the Sun shines, that the more I realize this in my own experience, the greater the growth in grace is, because confidence in the flesh is taken away. But when I am in darkness, and mine enemies attack me, I shall even forget I have seen the glorious Sun of Righteousness, and shall fear I have grasped the shadow and missed the substance. I have imagined many things, even that my brethren are mistaken. I feel now I love them with the love God has shed abroad in my heart, but then I shall doubt if I ever have felt the love of God at all. I am glad I know these things by experience, for I can sympathize with those I love very much, and can tell them of the comfort wherewith I have been comforted, even of God. Surely this season of refreshing from his presence has been "the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." It has not been my work, but simply because it has been the Lord's will; not because I have done something better than any of the rest of the brethren, O no, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. We all stand exactly alike in his sight, no great or small sinners there, and it is the same when we can see the church in Christ Jesus one with him. We can only see as through a glass darkly while we travel the journey of life, but the time will surely come when we shall be free from sin and shall see Jesus as he is and be like him. The faith which was once delivered unto the saints we do not have to go into the world and contend for there, but, dear sister, we see enough in our own carnal mind, which is enmity against God. We have to contend for it in our daily experience. It is by this faith that we overcome the world and all the enemies in our heart. There is not a single weapon in the flesh given to us to fight with, but we have to find that God *"giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."* I cannot express the song of praise that has been in my heart since the Lord made me rejoice in what great things he has done for me; I have felt much as I did in my first experience in being brought from nature's darkness into his marvelous light, when the love of God was shed abroad in my heart, only I know better what is in my heart, and how soon it will burst forth when it is the Lord's will to hide his face for a moment. Not one of mine enemies can disturb my peace now while they are kept in subjection by the power of God. O, dear sister, I did find it hard to walk by faith and not by sight, to feel that all His waves and billows had gone over me, to fear that my brethren could not have love and fellowship for one so sinful, so far out of the way. I thought I was one alone, and when I have wished to write to the saints I have had to lay aside my pen, and could not help

weeping, because all I could think of to write was about the darkness and sin of my heart. I could not reach out and bring to my mind the joy I had felt. I was tempted to lay aside my pen and never attempt to write to any one again, but a cheering word would come from one of the saints that I had expressed their feelings, and it would encourage me to hope that *"He knoweth the way that I take."* It has been more joyful than I can tell to be made to rejoice in salvation by grace.

Dear sister, I enjoyed your letter very much, and you will see how it stirred my heart by way of remembrance, but I must not weary you, for I shall want to write to you again. I think dear Mary's book is excellent. I tried to tell sister Bessie Durand some of my feelings as I read it, and it has been a long time since I wrote with such a feeling that I could not express what I wished to, but she seemed to think it was good, and Elder Durand has sent it to the SIGNS. If brethren Beebe publish it you may see it. I hope dear sister Abbie is not sick; she was not well the last time she wrote; I sent her my likeness awhile ago. Give my love to all the saints when you see them. My parents are members of the Bowdoinham Church, and have been many years. They enjoyed your letter, and send love and fellowship to you, and hope you will write again. I do not want to stop writing, but my work is waiting, and you may be thinking what a long letter and nothing said. May God make you realize that his eye is ever upon you, and he will give you grace to help in time of need.

Your sister in love and fellowship,

Attie A. Curtis.

Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." — John i. 17.

The way to learn truth is to be much in prayer to the Lord Jesus Christ; as you lie upon your bed, as engaged in your daily occupation, to be from time to time looking up to the Lord himself as he sits upon his throne of grace, and be begging of him to teach you himself, for he is the best teacher. The words which he speaks, they "are spirit and life." What he writes upon our hearts is written in characters which will "stand every storm and live at last." We forget what we learn from man, but we never forget what we learn from Jesus. Men may deceive Christ cannot. You can trust no minister really and fully. Though you may receive truth from his lips, it is always mixed with human infirmity. But what you get from the lips of Jesus, you get in all its purity and power. It comes warm from Him; it comes cold from us. It drops like the rain and distills like the dew from his mouth; it comes only second-hand from ours. If I preach to you the truth, I preach indeed as the Lord enables me to speak. But it is he who must speak with power to your souls to do you any real good. Look then from me; look beyond me, to him who alone can teach

us both. By looking to Jesus in the inmost feelings of your soul, you will draw living truth from out of his bosom into your own, from his heart into your heart, and thus will come feelingly and experimentally to know the blessedness of his own declaration: *"I am the truth."*

Elder J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

MEETINGS AT DAN RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Dan River Church, located on highway #700 between Eden and Danville, will host the union meeting of the West Country Line Union on fifth Sunday in April. Meeting will convene at 10:00 a.m.

Elder Hale Terry of Meadows of Dan, Va., the Lord willing, will be the guest speaker at our semi-annual communion service the fourth Sunday in May.

Every second Sunday night we will have a song service, beginning at 6:00 p.m.

All lovers of the truth are invited to be with us in all the above meetings, and also for our regular fourth Sunday meetings each month.

Brother Alan Carroll, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 2000

E.F. Osborne, MD	$2.00
Eld. Walter Wilson, CA	7.00
G.F. Blalock, NC	2.00
Mrs. Anna Savage, KY	2.00
Lawrence Myers, VA	2.00
Claudes Tucker, LA	2.00
Mrs. Patsy Mitchell, TX	2.00
Mrs. Nannie Trevathan, NC	2.00
Frank Sizemore, WV	4.00
Homer Wade, VA	2.00
Ms. L. Holley, VA	2.00
W.G. Parsons, VA	2.00
Mark Terry, VA	2.00
Mrs. Mozeile Lacy, VA	2.00
Gayle Phillips, AL	15.00
Eld. Gene Lupton, VA	7.00
T.R. Pullig, TX	2.00
James Meador, VA	8.00
Ora T. Nichols, VA	2.00
John & Faith Ballard, TX	2.00
Mrs. Grace Manly, AL	2.00
Ms. Jean Brown, TX	2.00
Earl W. Hall, TX	2.00
W. T. Weatherford, VA	2.00
W.L. Knight, NC	7.00
Mrs. Jesse Ray, NC	2.00
Phil & Joyce Pittman, TX	2.00
Mrs. Rlee Houchins, VA	2.00
James E. Fortner, TX	2.00
John Collie, NC	2.00
Lessie Q. Cox, VA	20.00

OBITUARIES

IN REMEMBRANCE OF ELDER JACK WILLARD COX

Brother Willard was born in Floyd County Virginia on May 18, 1926 and passed from this life on December 22, 1999.

The Lord blessed him with a loving companion, Sister Colleen Duncan Cox, who stood with him through many afflictions and trials.

Brother Willard was baptized by Elder Landon Harris; he was ordained a Minister to the Old School Primitive Baptist at his home church, Old Union in April 1978.

He was blessed to preach at many churches in the Pigg River, Smith River, and Staunton River associations and associated churches. He is already missed at the places he would attend frequently.

He is survived by his wife, Sister Colleen Duncan Cox and seven children; David Cox, Sam Cox, Mike Cox, Andy Cox, Brother Joe Cox, Brother Arthur Cox and one daughter; Faye Cox. One brother, Herbert Cox and five sister's. Sister Nettie Duncan, Sister Dorcie Semones, Sister Mable Carey, Sister French Hogan, Sister Mary Marshall and eleven grandchildren.

His funeral was held at Valley View Primitive Baptist Church; conducted by Elder Raymond Goad, he was laid to rest in Sunset Cemetery in Christiansburg, Virginia, to await the second coming of Christ.

Done in order of conference at Old Union Primitive Baptist Church on March 25, 2000.

Elder Hale Terry, Moderator
Sister Dorcie Semones, Clerk
Written by:
Elder Larry Hollandsworth

PSALM 145:1-2.

I will extol thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever.

Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever.

MARY ELIZABETH HURD DAVIS

With a great sense of unworthiness, we will attempt to write an obituary for Mary Davis. She passed away quietly in her home on December 5, 1999. Sister Davis was preceded in death by her husband Ruben R. Davis, six brothers and 1 sister. Sister Davis was born May 21, 1915 to the late Millard Filmore and Bessie Ramsey Hurd.

She joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on August 27, 1958 and was baptized by the late Elder D.V. Spangler. Brother and Sister

Davis had a lovely home where she entertained Elders and their families as well as Brothers and Sisters from other churches and many friends. After Brother Ruben passed and her health became so poorly, most of her friends would come to visit. She always loved to inquire of the welfare of her church and members whom she loved so dearly. She was a lovely lady and was always dressed for guests in her home. These two sisters always enjoyed being with her and enjoyed just sitting and talking to her. She always insisted on having refreshments around her kitchen table. On our last visit, a few days prior to her death, she called to us as we went out the door, "Come back soon, before Christmas if you can." Sister Davis is survived by three daughters, Shirley Burchell of Eden, NC, Polly Robertson of Axton, VA and Sister Cynthia Chovo Loni of Norwich, Conn., and 2 sons Clark Davis of Richmond, VA and Filmore Davis of Axton, VA. She loved all of them and spoke so lovingly of them. Whenever we visited, she told us that Filmore came to check on her every morning and always brought things she could use for refreshments.

Sister Davis's funeral was conducted by Elder Wallis Smith, on December 8, 1999 at Norris Funeral Services in Martinsville, VA. She was laid to rest beside her beloved husband Ruben, under a mound of beautiful flowers in the Ruben Davis family cemetery near their home in Axton, VA to await the coming of the Lord.

Written by request of Dan River Church

Amanda Saunders and Betty Southard

ED GLIDEWELL

Caleb Edward Glidewell was born May 11, 1916 to John C. and Ada C. Glidewell and died October 31, 1998. He was called Ed by his friends and he was just a plain and humble man. He owned and operated a large roofing business in Greensboro, North Carolina. He was of a large family. Three sisters and three brothers died through the years leaving him as a sole survivor.

Ed married Audrey Walker on February 19, 1938. They had a daughter, Carmen Abernathy and a son, Terry E. Glidewell, who survive along with six grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

Ed was a gifted singer and really enjoyed the many times with church members and friends gathered to sing hymns of praise to the most high God. He loved the Primitive Baptist people and was lots of help in many ways to the churches. This was evidence that he had been taught by Grace the truth concerning the church and the eternity of the life of Christ.

Ed was always ready and did help many who were having a hard time

facing the trials of life. There was no indication that he was envious of what anyone had or did. This caused us to believe that he had within the spirit of Christ which gives one these attributes through life. He will be missed and remembered for many years, but we would not desire him back to suffer as he did in this later days. His funeral was conducted by this writer, Elder C.B. Davis, Jr., and Elder Kenneth Key on November 3, 1998, and he was buried in Westminister Gardens.

These will be treasured memories of this man for a long time to come.

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

FANNIE SUE AKERS LUCAS

In humbleness and honor, I am sincerely writing the obituary of Fannie Sue Lucas. Love of Christ shined throughout the life of Fannie Sue Lucas. As a young child she was so happy to learn she had a new sister, Mary Lillian. They were very close and loved each other so much. They married brothers and lived next to each other. Even though Fannie Sue did not have any children, her sister's children and others in the area were loved as if they were her own. As a young child growing up knowing her was a blessing. She always had ice cream, candy and treats for the children and visitors. Much love and kindness was shown to everyone she knew. On their farm they loved and cared for many of God's creatures. Until her death, her dog and cat were given much care and devotion. She was also active in many farming and homemaking organizations within the community. Fannie Sue and Ralph loved beautiful flowers and grew many varieties of flowers and vegetables.

Fannie Sue's walk and her unselfish love of her brethren and the church was manifest through her years of faithful attendance. Also, she served as treasurer and trustee of Valley View. Before becoming a member, she and Ralph faithfully attended the church. During the month after I had joined and was baptized she joined and was also baptized in August, 1960. She had a special place and bond of love in my heart. Her husband, Ralph, joined in September, 1960. Fannie Sue faithfully filled her seat at church. Even when she did not feel well, she made an effort to come as long as she could. She was born on August 8, 1908 to Wade and Maude Akers. She married Ralph C. Lucas and they were blessed to live together over sixty years before his death. After his passing, a part of her was gone. They were so close and were an inspiration to us all. Many times she wondered why she was left.Fannie Sue passed away Thursday, October 28, 1999 at New River Valley Medical Center. She is survived by a brother-in-law, Raymond Lucas, Riner; sisters-in-law and their spou-

ses Irene Thompson, Imogene Teel, Jackie and Bob Shelton, all of Christiansburg, Ida Mae and Kyle Bishop, Virginia Altizer, all of Riner; numerous nieces and nephews. Funeral services were held Sunday, October 31, 1999 at the Horne Funeral Home Chapel, conducted by Elder Raymond Goad and Elder Willard Cox, with burial in Sunset Cemetery.

She is sadly missed by her family, friends, her pastor and his wife and her church. We know that our loss is her eternal gain. Written and submitted to Valley View Primitive Baptist Church by Naomi W. Agee.

Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
Lena Duncan, Clerk

AUBREY OAKES

Aubrey Alphonsia Oakes was born December 21, 1923, into a Primitive Baptist home. His earthly father was Wyatt Johnson Oakes and his mother was Cecil Evans Oakes. He grew up as a farm boy and learned a lot about life and was also being taught about the spiritual realm He was an excellent singer and had a wonderful bass voice. He attended churches far and wide and especially in the Staunton River Association. He married Clara Goad on June 17, 1944, who still survives. Aubrey and Clara and Jeanette and I spent many hours together and were blessed to talk of the church, and what it meant in our lives.

These times and the fellowship will fill our memories for a long time to come. There were times we would hear a new song or a new tune and would hum the tune until we had it right and then would sing it. Many hours were spent with a large group of church people from time to time and we would sing praises to the Glory of God. He died November 14, 1998.

Aubrey left as survivors one sister, Jaunita Dawson, of Blacksburg, Virginia, a son, Jerry L. Oakes, and a daughter, Deborah Browning of Danville, There were four grandchildren and two great grandchildren who survive.

Aubrey suffered for five weeks before the Lord called him out of his affliction. His voice is silent here, but we have reason to believe that the voice of his spirit shall sing around the Throne of God when time is no more.

His funeral was conducted by Elder C.B. Davis, Jr. and Elder Julian Williams in Wrenn-Yeatts Chapel in Danville, Virginia, and he was buried in Highland Burial Park.

Written by one who loved Him and felt a closeness that the world could not understand.

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

WILLIAM (BILLY) T. WEATHERFORD

Billy was born June 5, 1926, to Harry Thomas and Beulah Dix Weatherford in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. He spent most of his life in the area where he was born. His father and mother were both members of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church and his father was a deacon there. He had two brothers who were also members of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, Larry and Harold Weatherford of Danville, VA., Harold was also a deacon. All preceded him in death. Billy never felt that he was good enough to be a member, but his life was surely an expression of the importance of the church to him.

Billy was a contractor and built many homes in the Danville area. He was the builder of the Anniversary Building at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. Many, many things that needed fixing around the church, we would call on Billy. There was in his life the expression of caring for his fellowman and of being a good neighbor. We feel that his love, friendship and fellowship were God given and caused him respect and love for the truth. Billy had a special way about him and this caused him to be special to all who knew him.

On September 17, 1947 Billy married Gerline Worley and they were blessed with two children, Cynthia W. Kiger of Rocky Mount, North Carolina, and David T. Weatherford of the Danville area. Billy was a good provider and was indeed a blessing to the entire family which included his sister, Mildred Hanks and his sister-in-laws, Deloris Weatherford and Frances Weatherford.

Billy attended the funeral of a dear friend on November 17, 1998 and never did return home. He suffered a heart attack and was in the hospital until his death on December 6, 1998. His passing leaves a void in the lives of his family and the many friends who he loved. We all miss him, but feel that he is much better now that his suffering is over.

He is survived by his wife, Gerline, his daughter Cynthia, his son David, his sister Mildred Hanks, and the grandchildren and great-grandchildren also survive.

The funeral services were held at Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Chapel in Danville, VA. Service was conducted by the Elder Raymond Goad, Elder Kenneth Key and Elder C.B. Davis, Jr. His body was placed in the family plot at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery near Ruffin, NC.

With the passing of this dear man I feel a great loss, but treasure the memories of time spent with him.

Humbly submitted,
Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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POEM

Lord, I desire with Thee to live
To live and never to die
To praise Thy name with every strain
With Thee amid the skies

Lord, Thou are good and very good
And holy, just and true
So, let us watch and pray and sing
In all our life way through

Lord, we do hope, that we are dead
To sin and death made free
Now we do wait and walk by faith
Of our dear Lord to see

Lord, bless us now, this one more time
That we be strong and bold
And when the stormy clouds arise
Thou would onto us hold

Thanks be to thee, dear blessed Lord
That Thou had made us see
Our Jesus as the end of law
To set poor sinners free.

By Elder Leonard J. Brammer

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EDITORIAL

Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to them who are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. (Acts Chap 2, vs 38-39).

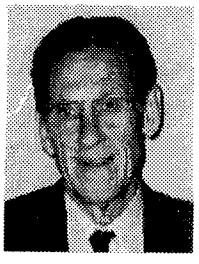
Elder R.H. Campbell

This scripture was recorded on that day of days, the first Day of Pentecost, after Christ was risen, the day in which the gospel church was established, as we know it, in the new, or gospel dispensation. The second covenant was in effect, the Spirit indwelled man for the first time, in accordance with the words of Jesus; he told them of this, when he first appeared unto his disciples after his resurrection. He appeared unto them and said, *"Peace be unto you,"* and showed unto them his hands and his side and they were glad when they saw and realized that it was the Lord, and then Jesus said unto them *again, (John Chap 20, vs 21-22-23) "Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."* and again, on another occasion when referring to this day he said, (John Chap 7, vs 38-39) *"He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified.) These were the words of Jesus, before his death, prophesying of these things that had happened on this day of days, as per the above statements made to his disciples, while he was still with them. This is the day, in the life of every believer, that they will always remember, and no matter what storms may rage in their lives at any given time, the doubts and fears and questioning the meaning of it in their experience,*

they will look back to this time when they were quickened by the Spirit and began to speak the new language, a universal language, and those out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people that have been so exercised will understand and will praise God that it is so with them.

Jesus's own words, speaking unto the Father, said (John Chap 17, vs 4) *"I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."* and this must of necessity precede the receiving of the Holy Ghost by the children of God, because he had said that the Holy Ghost would not be given until he was glorified. Jesus was the end of the law, for righteousness, and the bringing in of a better covenant based upon better promises, and as Simeon had prophecied and said, the glory of Israel and a light unto the Gentiles, and which had been foretold by the prophets down through the ages. As Paul recorded in (Heb Chap 10, vs 9) quoting the words of Jesus, *"Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God."* He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. *"and then Paul went on to say (vs 10) "By the which will we are sacntified through the offering of the body of Christ once for all."*

All things that had been written of Jesus, in the law and the prophets were fulfilled, the new covenant was in effect, the church was established upon the better promises and was sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called out of darkness into the glorious light and liberty of the gospel day. What a great difference between the law of sin and death, and the law of the liberty of life in Christ Jesus.

The law now, in this day, is written on the fleshly tables of the heart, not on the tables of stone, and the church, from henceforth boldly enters into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which Jesus hath consecrated for them, through the vail, that is to say his flesh. This they do because there is no other way that their prayers can be presented, because there is no longer a priest, as in the former days, to stand between them and God and to make intercession for them. In his death, the vail was rent from top to bottom, and now, the saints draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith based upon that evidence which has been revealed unto them when they were quickened by the Spirit, or born again, as Jesus told Nicodemus. They no longer must depend on the priest to take their offering and present it to the Lord, but each approaches in their own behalf to petition God for forgiveness of sin and for his dispensations of love and mercy to be bestowed upon them in their journey here in time. The mercy seat now is in the heart of the individual, where God will meet with them and commune with them, and they are free to make intercessions in their own behalf. If the Spirit shall make you free, ye are free indeed;

free from the Mosiacal law of sin and death, and the priest who offered sacrifices that could not put away sin, but are living under the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God, and this is the heritage of of all who are pricked in the heart at the sound of the gospel. What a grand and glorious heritage that is laid up for those who are blessed to see and experience these things, and it will be unto them an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, as are all of God's works.

All of the things which were written of Jesus, regarding his Fathers business were culminated on this, day of Pentecost, in the establishment of the church of Christ; that inumerable host for whom Christ died to redeem unto himself as his bride without spot nor blemish. These are the ones of whom the apostle Peter wrote, as being, (1 Pet Chap 2, vs 9) *"A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."* and this is what happened on this day. This is the kingdom that the prophet Daniel spoke of, a kingdom that the God of heaven would set up in that day, which should never be destroyed, but rather would break in pieces and destroy all other kingdoms, and would stand forever.

The Holy Ghost came down, on this notable day and the apostles were filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance, declaring the wonderful works of God. And Peter, speaking by the same unction of the Holy Ghost, began to take the scriptures of the old testament, that prophesied of these things, things with which the Jews were all familiar, and to show unto them that these things that were happening were a fulfillment of those things that had been left on record by the prophets of old. The prophecies of holy men of God speaking as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and this declaration caused some of the hearers, not all present, but some of them, to be pricked in their hearts. They were familiar with the law and the prophets and were moved by faith to see their condition, under the law in which they had been trusting, and cry out, men and brethren, what shall we do? not fully realizing the full import of this dramatic revelation on their lives, but realizing the weakness of the law for salvation.

There are some who read the above text and say, see there, this is a straightford invitation to anyone present, whosoever will, to repent and enter into the household of faith; all that you have to do is to repent and be baptized, and be saved, but, this truth goes much deeper than that. There was a reason why some responded as they did and others did not, some of those who did not believe even accused those who spoke in tongues

of being drunk because they did not understand that which had ocurred; they only had the wisdom of this world, and the wisdom of this world will never fathom the mystery of Godliness because it is foolishness to it; spiritual wisdom is always unreasonable to the natural mind, because it is not limited by the laws of nature and these are the only thing that the natural man understands. (1 Cor Chap 2, vs 14) *"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."* and again (1 Cor Chap 1, vs 21) *"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."* Man, in nature will never accept Jesus as their own personal savior as the world claims, because they do not know him, and cannot, unless he reveals himself to them, the action must always originate with God. I didn't say these things, the scriptures declare them, and these truths stand as sure and certain today as they did in the day they were written by the prophets of old the and apostles in the new testament.

Now, to whom was Peter speaking to on this occasion? he was speaking to the people who had just witnessed a great miracle, a great miracle in which the Holy Ghost had been poured out upon the sons of men, as per the prophecy of Joel with which they were familiar, and they had heard them speak in tongues of the wonderful works of God, as the Spirit gave them utterance, and they were convicted in their hearts because of their sins. They each heard them speak in their own tongue and yet all of the speakers were Galileans, this was not within the bounds of natural reasoning, but this did not deter the ones to whom Peter was speaking; because their concerns were the truth of the words that were spoken, and not what language they might be in or whether they were gramatically correct, but that they were truth and it moved them within the deep recesses of their heart.

When Peter preached unto them the truth of these things, there were some who were condemned by the words spoken, and it was to these people that Peter was speaking, the others were the ones who made light of these events which manifested that they did not understand, or believe them. Any time the truth is preached there will be those who respond, even as these did on this occasion, because the truth is never preached without there being someone to hear it for God said , by the mouth of the prophet, (Isa Chap 55, vs 11) *"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."* The grand and glorious events that were happening that day were evidence to those that believed, that these things were of

God, the same God that had inspired the prophets to declare them, many generations before: and now, because of the presence of the Spirit within their heart they cry out, men and brethren what must we do, not because of a rational intelligent decision reached by the natural mind to accept and believe them. Man cannot believe what he wants to, he must have evidence, and evidence of these things must be given by God.

The same power that had been working in the heart of the twelve Apostles and which caused them to speak in other tongues, had also pricked the hearts of these saints, and they also spake in another tongue, they spoke in that pure language of which Zephaniah wrote, (Zeph Chap 3 ,vs 9) *"For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."* and the natural man (those others)cannot speak this pure language.

This pure language is that which is used by the saints of God, in the gospel day, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, as the apostle Paul referred to in, (Heb Chap 13, vs 15) *"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name."* and all that speak this pure language do serve him of one consent, for their prayer is, *"Thy will be done, in earth, as it is in heaven."* Any time that one approaches unto God, in prayer, he is speaking in that pure language and all serve him with one consent, of one mind, unified in their love and praise for him. It is the power and magnitude of the miracle that they had seen performed before their own eyes that caused them to cry unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, for they suddenly realized their undone condition and knew that there was nothing that they could do, mentally or physically to meet the requirements of what they knew, by the indwelling of the Spirit within, that they should be. They were even as the woman who came to Jesus, with an issue of blood, she had spent all of her living but was no better, they had strove under the law all of their life and now saw the futility of the law for righteousness.

This pricking in the heart, experienced by these people on this occasion, is the same that is experienced by all of God's children when they are quickened by the indwelling of the Spirit within their heart. It always produces a change in the individual and they are made to mourn their condition and question, in their mind, what must I do? what can I do? until they are brought to the place that they realize that, all that is required, has already been done. This, is the same experience that the apostle Paul was referrring to when he told the church at Ephesus, and then expanded it to include the faithful in Christ Jesus, wherever they may be, (Eph Chap 2, vs 1)*"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and in*

sins:" The quickening was what had occurred to these certain people here, and it was those who were moved who were being addressed by the apostle Peter, it is never on a, whosoever will basis. In (John Chap 3, vs 16) the, whosoever, are the same ones that according to Jesus in, (vs 3,) must be born again, and this is what had happened here, on this occasion to those to whom Peter was addressing; *"even as many as the Lord our God shall call."*

This same qualifying is true of all scripture, they are always to a certain people and they must be considered from the stand point of, who is speaking, to whom they are speaking and what they are talking about. If you and I have a conversation regarding a certain thing that we have in common, the things that I might say to you do not apply to anyone that happens to hear them; they only apply to us, and then only in the context of what we are talking about at that particular time. They cannot be taken into another situation, with other individuals, with no commonality among them, and be applied to all, yet, this is exactly what man, in nature, tends to do with the scriptures. They maintain the position of the universal application of the scriptures regarding the salvation of the saints of God, even though it is denied, in no uncertain terms, by every writer of the scriptures, both in the old and the new testament. Man tends to only believe that which embraces them, and if the truth does not include them, then they will build and idol that does, and say, thou art the God of the bible, and when they do this, they determine the doctrine that he represents because it is all of their imagination. It is no wonder they go around all time trying to help their god do his work because he has no eyes, ears, mouth or any of the other attributes to do anything on his own, they are always saying that God wants this or that, they are not talking about God, they are talking about their own personal god who can do nothing on his own and must depend upon man for everything.

When one is brought, in their experience, to the place where these were at this time, the declaring of the truth will always bring forth the same results that it did then, they will gladly receive the testimony, and even though they are really hearing it for the first time they are made to rejoice, to cling together and to have all things common, spiritually, from henceforth. They become a new creature in Christ, their former life and values fade into the background, and all things become new; they have a different standard of values in their lives now. In the future, all things will be judged with righteous judgement, because of the presence of the Spirit within, and always with the new standard in mind and from a higher moral and spiritual dimension. They are given a heartfelt desire to be baptized into the fold, to put on the whole armour of God, but, even then they must

wait on the Lord for his own time and place. They are just as helpless to make this decision as they were to make the above decision, and are as the childen of Israel at the red sea, they must stand still and see the salvation of God in their lives; this absolutely eliminates the free moral agency of man, and all of God's ways are absolute, yesterday today and forever shall be.

As we said above, some will say on reading the above text, see, you must be baptized to be saved, well, that's true, and they are, but with who's baptism, John's or Jesus's? John, baptized with water, and he himself said, there stands one among you, whose shoes I'm am not worth to unloose, he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Now, which of these is the necessary baptism? Jesus, was baptized of water, but it did not make him the Christ, or elevate him to a higher level, it but made manifest that he was the Christ, for God had revealed unto John that this would be the sign, upon whom he saw the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost; and this, John experienced during his ministry. In like manner the water of baptism does not make a person a child of God holy or acceptable unto God, it is not essential to their salvation; it is but an outward manifestation of the hope of salvation that dwells in the heart. Jesus did tell John when he came to be baptized, it behooveth us to fulfill all righteousness, and he was referring to the baptism of water, and it behooveeth all of the saints of God to follow him in this ordinance, and it is considered by the church as a requirement for membership, based upon this statement by Jesus. Water cannot cleanse one from sin, but the Spirit can and does: baptism is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good concience toward God. Only Christ can baptize with the Holy Spirit, and that is the baptism that is essential unto salvation, without it, all men are still just as they were created, creatures of flesh, regardless of how many times they may be emersed in water.

The qualification as to whom Peter is speaking is found in the 39th verse above. *"For the promise is unto you, and unto your children, and to them who are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."* Nothing that happened, on that occasion was based on anythig that was decided or done at the time. It all occurred according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, before the foundation of the world and could not have happened ony other way. As Paul said, (2 Tim Chap 1, vs 9) *"Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but, according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began."* and this same purpose and grace is involved in the saving and the calling of every child of God, and it was done

once for all, although it is made manifest in the life of each as they journey here in time.

These truths are precious to those who have been saved and called with that holy calling, because they know, even as these did on this day, that their only hope of salvation, is in the finished work of Christ. There is nothing in themselves, before or after regeneration, that would merit eternal life; they are still in the flesh and still sin and deny their faith every day. The only hope that they have is in the absolute certainty of the predestination of all things. Their faith is based upon the promises of a sovreign creator who hath said that he would never leave nor forsake his own, and their experience has made them believe that they are among those chosen vessels of mercy, and that nothing can separate them from his love and care. When someone tells me that they do not believe in the absolute predestination of all things, I say, well, you had better believe in it, because, otherwise there is no certainty of heaven, immortal glory or any other, substance of things hoped for, that the children of God look forward to, by faith.

O, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out." If his ways are past finding out, then man must, of necessity, depend upon revelation for any understanding of them, and this will always cause a great rejoicing among the saints of God for, in spite of the boldness of their claim, they feel to have an understanding of the ways of the Lord, and are embraced in them. They read and understand the travels of the children of God in all ages and find a fellowship for them in their sufferings and their triumphs; these are the marks that Jesus said that his children would bear, when he told them, in this life ye shall have tribulations, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. He overcame the world and all of its affllictions, and he did it for the saints. If you have understood and experienced the above in your travels, as I have tried to convey the message, then this should certainly cause you to be of good cheer? It should cause you to sing the songs of Zion, the songs of deliverance that have been left on record down through time, even as the children of Israel sang their song of deliverance, when they were delivered out of the wilderness of sin, into the promised land, the land flowing with milk and honey. You have been delivered from the bondage of sin, and are looking forward to that land flowing with milk and honey, that New Jerusalem, which Jesus has promised to them that love him. This hope is based on the omniscience and omnipotence of the God that created all things for your sake, they are for your joy, peace, and love, in this life,

and for your eternal rest and glory in that world that is prepared for you.

In bonds of love;

Elder Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

"FOOD FOR THOUGHT"

My believing a thing does not make it true, and someone not believing it doesn't make it untrue, all must live according to what has been given them, and, as Paul once said, bear with one another in their differences. One may eat meat and give God thanks and another may refrain from eating, and give God thanks, (Rom. 14:5 One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. Rom. 14:6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. Rom. 14:7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.)

In bonds of love,

Elder Richard H. Campbell

ARTICLES

TITHING

Several brethren have ask that I write on tithing. I have been reluctant to do so as there are others more able; and yet, as the Apostle Peter said to the certain man lame from his mother's womb, *"Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee."*

To many it seems that tithing is the very foundation of salvation. They preach it often and try by every means possible to instill it in their followers. Tithing is in fact the means of monetary support for their ministers, church staff, various programs, and missions. Tithe means tenth. So these are expected to give a tenth of their income to support their church. Certainly then, it is important to these people. However, is tithing a commandment to the gospel church as many claim? If so, why do Primitive Baptists not believe in it?

When God brought Israel out of Egypt and formed them into a nation, he gave them laws and a priesthood with Aaron as high priest. The tribe of Levi was the priesthood and was not to receive any inheritance with the other tribes as far as any land in Canaan was concerned. The Levites were not to grow crops or raise livestock, but were to conduct the services of the Lord and minister to the other tribes. Therefore,

God commanded all the other tribes to give a tenth of their crops and livestock to the Levites. Numbers 18:20-21, *"And the Lord spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them: I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel. And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation."* God told Moses that the Levites were to take a tenth part of the tithe, the best part, and offer a heave offering for the Lord and they were to eat the remainder. Hebrews 7:5 says, *"And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham."*

Thus, God commanded Israel to tithe or give a tenth part to the levites or priesthood for the purpose of offerings to the Lord and to feed the priests. In addition, every third year there was to be tithe for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. This commandment was given to no other people or nation and was a necessary part of the Levitical Priesthood. This priesthood had a beginning and an end. It was under the first covenant or law covenant. The office of high priest of this covenant was filled by men who were sinners as you and I; by men who died and another would take their place; by men who could not atone for the sins of themselves or the people; by men who offered sacrifices and offerings that were only types and shadows of better things. If the first covenant had been faultless then should no place have been sought for the second. But, the first could not save anyone from his sins. Rather, it brought condemnation and the ministration of death. Therefore, the Lord said, I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. I will put my laws into their minds and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. Christ is the mediator of a better covenant established upon better promises.

The Levitical Priesthood made nothing perfect. It could not cleanse anyone. Therefore, it was necessary that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisdec and not after the order of Aaron. Christ is our high priest without beginning of days or end of life. He abideth a priest forever. Our high priest can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities and was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Christ, as our high priest, doesn't need to offer sacrifices daily as did the ones under the Levitical priesthood. He offered up himself once and it was sufficient. *"Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing*

he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Now, there being a change in the priesthood, there must also be a change in the law. Hence, the new covenant with God's laws being put into your minds and written in your hearts. Since there is a change in the priesthood and in the law, what need is there for tithing? What can you give Christ? Rather, it is he who gives to you. Would your money help spread the gospel? The scripture says that the word goeth forth out of his mouth and shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish that which he please, and shall prosper in the same whereto he sent it. Tithing can't take the gospel anywhere. There is no precious little lamb of God that will be too far away or in such great affliction that the word of God cannot come to where he is. It came to the one thief on the cross in his dying moments. It came to the man with an unclean spirit dwelling among the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones. This is the experience of a child of God under the conviction of sin condemned under the law who sees only death. The word came and the man fell at his feet and worshipped Christ. He was now clothed and in his right mind.

There is no commandment in the new testament by Christ or instruction by his apostles to the gospel church to tithe. The Apostle Paul speaks of it only in reference to the Levitical Priesthood and Christ mentions it twice and both times in relation to the scribes and Pharisees. The scribes and Pharisees believed that one much keep the law under the first covenant in order to obtain salvation. In Matthew 23:23, Christ said, *"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."* In other words, *"Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."* The scribes and Pharisees claimed to be so religious and boasted of keeping the law, yet they could not any more than we can. They did not know Christ who fulfilled the law to a jot and tittle for his little flock. The second occasion that Christ spoke of tithing was Luke 18:9-14, *"And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much* as his *eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying,; God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man*

went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalted himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." People like to boast of all that they do for the Lord. However, it is *"by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."* God's humbled poor would but cry, when did we do any of these things.

Certainly, we are not to neglect those brethren who are in need of some natural assistance in this life, or the expenses of our ministers, or the maintenance of our church properties. The Apostle Paul admonished the Church at Corinth, *"Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye."* This collection was for the poor in Jerusalem. In Romans Paul says that we are to distribute to the necessity of saints. In his epistle to the Corinthians, Paul also says, *"If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?"* Our brethren are very diligent in caring for the needs of their brethren in this world, the expenses of their ministers, and repair of the church properties.

To summarize, tithing was commanded only under the law covenant for the necessity of the Levitical Priesthood. No where is it set forth for the gospel church. When the Levitical Priesthood ended, there was a change in the law. A new covenant was given with Christ as high priest and therefore, a completely different priesthood. Our high priest doesn't need tithes and offerings. He has all power and authority. *"He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?"* The Lord said, *"For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof."* Whose image is on all the money? Man's. As Christ instructed his disciples, *"Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's."* If he needed our money or help in any way, he would not be the true and living God.

May the Lord keep us ever humble before him in love esteeming our brethren better than ourselves.

Elder Cleo Robertson

JOHN 6: 35.

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that come to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. Gen. 2:15-16.

What does the tree of the knowledge of good and evil symbolize and what kind of death did they suffer after partaking of it in disobedience to God's command?

In the natural mind we attempt to answer such questions using carnal reasonings and always arrive at erroneous conclusions because the natural mind cannot understand spiritual things. Spiritual things may only be understood by the spiritual mind as they are revealed of God. We must therefore wait upon God for the revelation of the truth since we are not able to obtain it by ourselves.

The apostle wrote "*When we were in the flesh the motions of sins, which were by the law did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit and not in the oldness of the letter. What shall I say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin but by the law: For I had not known lust except the law had said, thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence (desire for that which is forbidden). For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: But when the commandment came sin revived and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life I found to be unto death. For sin taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy and the commandment holy, just and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin working death in me by that which is good; That sin by the commandment might become exceedingly sinful. Rom. 7:5-13.*

Adam, before the commandment was given, knew no sin because nothing was forbidden until the commandment was given. He was alive. But when the commandment came, the desire for that which is forbidden sprang forth from the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. After the commandment came, Eve was drawn away of her own lust and enticed and when lust conceived it brought forth sin (the transgression of the law) and sin, when it was finished brought forth death.

Eve was deceived by the serpent (sin). He told her that they would not die if they disobeyed God by taking of the fruit but that their eyes would be opened and they would be as gods knowing good from evil. When she saw that the tree was good for food (the lust of the flesh) and that it was pleasant to the eyes (the lust of the eyes) and a tree to be de-

sired to make one wise (the pride of life) she took the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew they were naked. God said in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. Did they not die that day to their ignorance of the vanity of their flesh and see themselves as they were - naked - before God?

The apostle said that he was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came sin revived and he died. He said that sin taking occasion by the commandment, deceived him, and by it slew him. He said that the commandment which was ordained to life he found to be unto death. Are not the same principles at work with us as were at work with Adam and Eve and the apostle? Have we not had the same experience?

At one time in our lives were we not like these, going along in the bliss of ignorance not realizing the vanity of our flesh? When the law of God first appeared unto us did it not seem like a very good thing? Did we not desire to know good from evil? Did we not take the law into ourselves and try to keep it thinking that it might nourish us and make us wise? The more we were given to see of it, did it not make us see our sins become exceedingly sinful because of it? Did we not then understand that we were sinners deserving the wrath of God because of our state? Were we not driven out from our state of ignorant bliss and killed to it? From this point forward must we not abide in that death? Is this not why the inspired apostle wrote *"O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."*

This law, even in it severity, has been used for our good, as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. We have been taught that we are truly transgressors deserving the punishment of death. We are made to see that it is impossible for us to deliver ourselves from this just sentence. We are made to cry out *"God have mercy upon me a sinner."* God in His wondrous love and mercy, revealed Jesus Christ to us as the very Son of God who came to take away our sins by offering up Himself as the perfect sacrificial lamb of God. We are made to have no confidence in the vanity of the flesh. All our hope and trust has been safely placed in Him who has all power and in His finished work of redemption.

Is not the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the righteous, holy law of God? Is not the death that they suffered then and also that which we have suffered in our experience, the death to the ignorant and blissful confidence in the flesh?

Is not their being driven from the garden to eat bread by the sweat of their face like unto our being driven

away from the garden to eat bread like unto our being driven away from our old life in the flesh, groaning and waiting for our change to come?

Thanks be unto God that Christ has been revealed to be the Tree of Life that was given for the healing of the nations. May the God of all wisdom give us understanding and keep us in peace and love.

Written in love, I hope,
J.B. Farmer

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE CREATURE MADE SUBJECT TO VANITY
(Romans viii. 20.)

Who is this creature which *"was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope?"* It is the same creature spoken of in the preceding verse, whose *"earnest expectation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God,"* and which in the following verse it is said *"shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."* It belongs to the same spiritual creation referred to in verse 22, which in former dispensations groaned and travailed in pain together, and which now in the gospel day is manifest, as it ever was, by suffering, even in the apostles and early saints, who had the first fruits of the Spirit, *"who* groan within themselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their body."

This creature is the same spoken of in 2 Cor. v. 17: *"If any man be in Christ he is a new creature,"* and also in Eph. ii. 10: *"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."* This workmanship of God whereby we are created in Christ Jesus, is experienced by a man, a sinner of Adam's fallen race. Before that work of God was experienced, this man did not know himself as a sinner, and therefore did not have that kind of suffering which comes from such knowledge. In the first verse of this chapter the apostle speaks of those who are in Christ, and in the ninth verse we learn that to be in Christ, or in the Spirit, is to have the Spirit of God, or of Christ, in him. It is not until we have this experience of Christ in us that we can know that the body, which means the natural or earthy man, is dead because of sin. (Verse 10.) Let it be here noted and remembered that when the body or flesh is spoken of by the apostles in this sense, as dead because of sin, reference is not made merely to the physical body, for that cannot sin, but to the man, who is *"of the earth earthy,"* the man who sinned and was condemned. The sin, the sinfulness, the depravity, are felt by the christian to be in his mind, in his heart, and not in the literal flesh.

The life that is now ours is the Spirit of Christ, *"The Spirit is life because of righteousness." "Christ is our life,"* and that life is all the light we have by which to see the deadness of our body, or the living beauty and glory of Christ, and of the kingdom of God. (Verse 10.) *"In him [the Word] was life, and the life was the light of men." — John i. 4.* The giving of this divine and ever holy life to the sinner is the creative work of God. It is not that the divine life or Spirit of Christ was created, nor is it that the Adamic man is new created, or made over again, but the bringing of the man forth in this new life, the causing him to be thus born of the Spirit, the manifesting of *"the life of Jesus in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor. iv. 11),* this is the workmanship of God; this is creating the man in Christ Jesus, and causing him to be a new creature.

This man who has been born again (from above), who has been brought forth in the life of Jesus, was first born of the flesh, brought forth in the life of Adam. In neither birth was any change of nature effected. In the first birth the life and nature of Adam were manifested. In the second birth the life and nature of Jesus were manifested. In being given the life of Jesus the life of the flesh was not changed in its nature, but remained a sinful life. Therefore David says, *"My soul cleaveth to the dust;"* and Job says, *"My soul is weary of life;"* and Paul says, *"The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."* And throughout the Scriptures holy men have mourned on account of the felt sinfulness of their own life, and rejoiced in the evidences that the Lord was their life, and such is the experience of saints today. *"Except a man hate his own life,"* Jesus says, "he cannot be my disciple." The two natures, the two lives, the mortal and the immortal, are both in the one person, but the spiritual or immortal is the stronger, and shall control and prevail.

The creature spoken of in the text is not the spiritual life in itself considered, nor the man who has experienced the new birth in himself considered, but it is the spirit or life of Jesus as manifest in the flesh, and it is the man considered as having this divine life, the man as being thus *"in Christ."* The man himself, regarded in his Adamic nature, is a sinful man, and his heart is deceitful above all things, and there is not enough goodness in his nature to cause one throb of sorrow on account of sin, or to excite the least hunger after righteousness; and the Spirit of Christ, considered separately from the flesh, can have no sorrow or pain. It was in the flesh that Christ suffered. It was for the purpose of suffering that he came in the flesh, and those who have the Spirit of Christ suffer with him. It is this suffering of the people of God with Jesus that the apostle is considering in this connection. He ex-

plains to them the cause of their suffering, and enters into the depths and heights of doctrine as he traces the exercises and describes the feelings of the little children, and thus points out and designates the humble followers of Christ.

The apostle in various places speaks of the one person in his relation both to the flesh and the Spirit. While there is an essential distinction between the flesh and the Spirit, and this distinction is maintained in all the teachings of the apostles, yet they are both in one person, and there is an experimental sense in which they must be considered as together, though separate. *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh,"* and will remain so until the change shall come, *"and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit,"* and will ever remain in unyielding opposition to the flesh." But the christian is possessed of both of these opposing natures, the human and the divine, and the apostle uses the personal pronoun when speaking of both. *"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing."* He speaks of the flesh as "me." *"That which I do I allow not." "The good that I would I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do." "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."*

Thus it is the same I who realizes death in Adam, or in the flesh, and who realizes life in Christ. It is the same I who may at one time be experimentally in Christ, and, sowing to the Spirit, reap life everlasting, and at another time may be living after the flesh and die to spiritual things; may be sowing to the flesh, and of the flesh reap corruption.

But the apostle is considering here the unchanging, unvarying inclinations of the Spirit or life of Christ which is in all his people, and the consequent suffering of the child of God because of the vileness that is thus discovered in us by the light of the Spirit. And he is intent upon declaring and showing the certainty of the glory that shall succeed that suffering in every one who has been born of the Spirit, and who is therefore a partaker of the divine nature. *"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us."* How wonderfully connected the apostle's argument is. How one thing follows another, just in the order that keeps along with the exercises and travail of the christian. Observe how many of these verses begin with the word "for," connect-

ing it with what was said before.

"For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the Son of God." This earnest expectation is entirely of the Spirit. It is the view of faith, looking to things not seen by mortal powers. It is the expectation of things promised in Christ, and revealed to the faith of God's people. Faith makes no guesses, but sees eternal realities. Concerning these things it is said, *"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit."* Therefore, while there is deep suffering because of the corruptions of the flesh, there is at the same time, down in the depths of the soul, a calm and confident waiting for that which the quickened soul so earnestly desires, to see in ourselves the manifestation of that relationship as sons of God. We cannot see it in ourselves now, but we long for it, hunger for it, have been made to expect it, and quietly wait for it. We are saved by this sweet and sure hope. All this earnest expectation is in the Spirit; not in the Spirit of Christ considered in itself, but in that spirit as given unto us, and as living in our poor hearts, and as able to turn our thoughts toward heavenly things, and to set our affections on things above.

Now the apostle shows against what great and dire obstacle the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for such a wonderful and holy manifestation. That obstacle is the vanity of our fleshly nature, which he afterward calls the bondage of corruption. This is why we do not see in ourselves evidences of sonship, such as we desire. Though to our faith may come assurances at times that *"we are now the sons of God,"* yet *"it doth not yet appear what we shall be:"* and we are often left to doubt that we bear such a relationship, because of the vanity of the flesh.

But now the apostle shows us that in the wisdom of God in creating his people in Christ, in giving them the life of his Son, he made them subject to the vanity of this nature. He could have caused them to be at once freed from sin and depravity, and to enter into a holy and sinless state. But it was his will that the new, divine life, the Spirit of Christ in them, should have this opposition to contend with, that this new creature should be subject to this vanity. *"Every man in his best state is altogether vanity." "All the goodness and glory of man is as the flower of the field."* As soon as the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it, it fades away. (Isa. xl. 7.) And because of this the workmanship of God is the more clearly manifest, and the power of the Spirit more clearly displayed, as the enduring quality and value of gold are shown more clearly when it comes in contact with fire.

For our comfort we are told of one thing that we would not have

thought of without being told, and yet which we see at once to be true; *"Not willingly."* The Spirit of Christ is essentially and forever opposed to sin. That life of Christ which is within the poor sinner's heart is just as pure and as much opposed to vanity there as it is in himself; as the sunshine is just as pure when it falls into a polluted atmosphere as when it leaves the sun. We can at times see that there is a principle within us that is opposed to all the vanity and corruption of our natures, and which makes us long to be perfectly free from it. Thus with our minds we serve the law of God (we have the mind of Christ) while with our flesh we serve the law of sin. (Romans vii. 25.) The apostle had no reference here to evil deeds, against which he would admonish his brethren, but he referred to that corruption of the flesh to which we must always be subject, feeling it as a bondage while we remain in this mortal state.

Not willingly. This is why we suffer in the flesh. This is why we can find no permanent rest in this mortal state. This is why, when we are spiritual, we hate not only evil deeds, but the vanity of even the most exalted and the purest of earthly things. This is why our days on the earth are a shadow, and there is none abiding. This is why we hate our own lives at times, and count this world a wilderness of woe. And it is because the new creature is not willingly subject to vanity, that exhortations and admonitions have a place and power. For this creature is ever seeking the honor of God, and desiring to follow Jesus, and to show forth his praises, but ever feels the hindrances of the vanity of the flesh, and so can never do the good it would do, but is always dissatisfied with even its best works. And no matter how far one may have gone astray, it is always right to exhort, when we can do it in meekness, for though we cannot make the word of exhortation effectual, the Lord peradventure may give repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.

Then how sweet and comforting the assurance that this subjection of God's gracious work in us to vanity is in hope. We cannot see in ourselves now what we wish to see (verses 24, 25), but we are given good ground to hope for it. For the apostle by inspiration positively asserts that we, the new creature, shall be delivered from this vanity, from this *"bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God."* This we are given faith to believe shall be. We long for it, and in the Spirit we expect it, and thus we have that hope which saves us from being overcome and brought down to the gates of despair by this vanity. *"For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."* No child of God can see himself as he wants to be, therefore he can never be pleased or satisfied with himself while in the flesh. He

must see himself compassed with infirmities, held down by a bondage of corruption, therefore he cannot see himself as a son of God now, cannot see himself without sin, cannot see in himself, that is, in his flesh, any good thing. Therefore he is not only subject to vanity, but is subject to the temptation with which Satan tempted Jesus, *"If thou be the Son of God."*

But here comes into view the preciousness, and the saving power of that hope, which the Lord, who subjected the new creature to vanity, has given to light up the darkness, to cheer the heart, and to be *"as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast,"* holding the vessel of mercy securely against all the adverse tides and terrible storms that must be met with on the ocean of time. This good hope is through grace, and does not depend for sustenance upon goodness in ourselves, or in our works, which every child of God longs for but can never see, but upon the revelation of Jesus Christ as *"of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."* At every new revelation of the blessed Savior to our souls, our hope seems to be renewed and strengthened. So we continue to hope for that we see not, for goodness, sinlessness, perfection; for the manifestation of the sons of God; for deliverance from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God; for *"the redemption of our body,"* which shall be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus; and for all these blessed things so surely promised and assured unto us, we patiently wait, wait in the enduring and unfailing patience of a living faith in Christ.

Not willingly. Still more and more blessedly does this wonderful expression shine out from the sacred page of inspiration , with assurance of hope, and with heavenly comfort, to the afflicted and poor people of God, who are still ever struggling on against barriers which present impossibilities to them, who are daily tried and are daily dying, and yet *"who against hope believe in hope."* What a comfort it is to see this *"not willingly"* in their own poor hearts. When they have to acknowledge that they do the things they would not, and do not do the things they would, how glad they are at times, in the midst of their infirmities and under the bondage of corruption, to remember that they would not do an evil thing, and that they would do good things.

"But if indeed I would,
Though I can nothing do,
Yet the desire is something good,
For which my praise is due.

By nature prone to ill,
Till thine appointed hour,
I was as destitute of will,
As now I am of power."

How comforting to find that the apostles are with us in this experi-

ence of infirmities which the Spirit only can help. How glad we are that Paul, as well as we, had to confess, *"The things that I do I allow not."* Not referring to a course of wrong conduct, but to the fact that sin is mixed with all we do, so that we cannot do the things we would, but feel *"the sentence of death in ourselves,"* tainting all our works, only as we are given faith to do our works in Christ, to look to him for the goodness, and not to ourselves.

Not willingly. This is the holy Spirit of God from which this *"not willingly"* comes. There is no half way will here, no uncertainty about this will that is ever and eternally against all sin. This is the will of the Father that was done in and by the Son. There is no weakness in this will. It is not even the will of Jesus, as a suffering man, which caused him to cry, *"If it be possible let this cup pass from me,"* but it is the will of the Father which caused and enabled him to say, *"Not my will but thine be done."* His own will was the will of a pure and sinless man. This will he did not come to do. This will must be crossed, denied, crucified, for it would have turned from suffering. The Father's will was done in and by him, and by that will he was crucified; by that will he gave himself to the smiters, and became obedient unto death. By that will he was raised from the dead, and by that will we are saved. That is the will concerning which that Holy Spirit teaches us to pray, *"Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."* It will be done in the children of God, and through its power and exercise within them they will all eventually be brought into perfect conformity to the image of God's Son by the mighty power and working of his holy Spirit. He works in his people to will and to do of his good pleasure. In his own time, and in his own way, each of them will be made fully to know his own vanity, his own inability, *"his own sore and his own plague,"* and will then be brought forever away from sin and weakness into the liberty of the sons of God, and will be prepared to give God all the praise of his salvation for time and for eternity.

Those who the apostle says are groaning and travailing in pain together until now, are not the natural creation, for it is not true of either man or beast. He is showing the sufferings of the Lord's people from the beginning. They were distinct from the legal worshipers, though they were among them. They all had faith in every dispensation, and by that faith they saw Christ as their Savior, and we trace them through all the Old Testament Scriptures by their groanings, complaints, self-loathings and bitter self-reproaches, as an afflicted, suffering people, whose sufferings are on account of sin in the flesh. And the apostle joins himself and all the saints under the gospel with the holy men of old, who were as much the creative workmanship of God as we, showing that al-

though the gospel saints had received the first fruits of the Spirit, yet they groaned within themselves, looking for no comfort from the flesh, but looking for the promise of Jesus' coming, when the adoption would be fulfilled in the redemption of our body from corruption, and the inheritance into which we were adopted (using adoption as a legal figure) would be received, which is to become sons of God. This name, Son of God, Jesus received by inheritance in his resurrection. (Heb. i. 4, 5; Rom. i. 4; Acts xiii. 33.) We are heirs with him of this sonship, and when the manifestation of the sons of God shall be complete in the redemption of our body from corruption, and in the fashioning of it like unto the glorious body of Jesus, then we shall be manifest, not as adopted children, for the purpose of that legal figure is attained when we come into the inheritance, but as the real *"children of God, being the children of the resurrection."* — Luke xx. 36. This inheritance unto which we are begotten again by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, is not a corruptible, defiled and fading inheritance, as was the sonship we inherited from Adam, but it is incorruptible, and undefiled, and it fadeth not away, and it is reserved in heaven for all who have received the Spirit of adoption, for all who feel themselves to be poor, helpless sinners, who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and who long to be like Jesus; and all the heirs of this blessed inheritance are kept by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. (1 Peter i. 3-5.)

July 15, 1901.
Elder Silas H. Durand

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 2000

Mrs. Dorothy Gould, LA	2.00
J.H. O'Bryant, NC	2.00
Mrs. Mary Phillips, AL	2.00
Russell Erbough, IL	7.00
Enos Gingerich, MN	2.00
Mrs. Edrie Clifton, VA	2.00
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Mrs. Martha Lunsford, VA	10.00
Whitney Mobley, NC	10.00
Glen W. Akers, KY	5.00
James A. Lambert, GA	2.00

MATTHEW 6: 21-22.

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

OBITUARIES

INEZ HOLLEY HOLLIE

Our dear Sister was born in Pittsylvania County on May 19, 1912, the daughter of Susan B. and Lester Holley and passed from this life on December 16, 1999 at the age of 87 at Roman Eagle Memorial Home.

She was a member of Danville Primitive Baptist Church for 32 years. She was married to Allen J. Hollie August 19, 1933. They were blessed with four children, two sons and two daughters; Sandra Dodson of Ringgold, Va. Charlene Stone of Burlington, N.C., A.J. Hollie, Jr. of Danville, Va. and Carroll V. Hollie of Nampa, Idaho.

She left one Brother, Irvin Holley and two sisters, Viola Davis and Gladys Stegall, all of Danville, Va.

She was faithful to her church and went as long as her health allowed. She will be missed by all who knew and loved her.

Her funeral was held at Barker Funeral Home in Danville, Va. by her Pastor Elder C.B. Davis, Jr. and Elder Julian Williams. She was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park beside her husband to await the resurrection. May we be resigned to God's will in our loss and her eternal gain.

Written by her two sisters, who loved her dearly, by request of Danville Primitive Baptist Church.

Viola Davis and Gladys Stegall

SISTER GAY SMITH

I will attempt to write in memory of our dear Sister who passed away December 5, 1999. She was born on December 7, 1918 making her stay here on earth two days short of 81 years. She was the daughter of Elder Landon and Sister Lola Harris who preceded her in death, also one brother. Howard Smith, her husband of more than 50 years. She is survived by a son and daughter-in-law, Wayne and Shelby Smith. Daughters and son-in-law Lovelyn and Columbus McGrady, Brenda and Norman Poff and Wanda Smith Phillips. Twelve grandchildren, Ten Greatgrandchildren. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church April 26, 1953. She attended her meetings faithfully as long as she could. Elder Hale Terry had been her pastor for 28 years! Her funeral was held at Mayberry Chapel at 10 a.m. December 8, 1999. Ministers were: Pastor Brad Snyder and Elder Hale Terry. Intermintent was in Captain George Cemetary. Done by request of Church at our last business meeting by Dorcie Semones.

Elder Terry, Moderator

PSALM 27: 1-2.

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

Signs of the Times

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" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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POEM
ONE STARRY NIGHT

One starry night,
My world was complete.
Then a star fell.
The perfect night sky
Destroyed by the absence of that
Bright star.
The guiding light
A bitter-sweet memory
Never to dim and die.
The star, now buried beneath the earth,
Shines triumphantly in my heart-
Will one day twinkle
In the eyes of my children.
One starry night
I knew complete sadness
And endless love.

-For Grampa- Aubrey A. Oakes
Stephanie S. Spissu

EPHESIANS 2: 4-6.

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,
Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)
And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

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EDITORIAL

SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

It is impossible for the natural mind of man to conceive the power, knowledge and wisdom of Almighty Sovereign God, who is *"the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords." "I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord. which is. and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."* And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM; and he said, *"Thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you."* It was for the deliverance of the Israelites that Moses was sent, and these are a type or figure of the chosen children of God to whom God sent his only begotten Son. And God said unto king Pharaoh, *"For now will I stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth. And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout the earth." Ex.:9:16.* What great power and wisdom this does show, but there are many who do not believe it. Neither do they believe in the election, that God chose a particular people in Christ before he created the world, or even that Christ existed before the world. They cannot understand that the Word was Christ, that *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." Jn. 1:1-3.* God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, these three are one. Unbelievers are still searching how and when the world was made, for they do not believe the very first verse of the Holy Scriptures, *"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."* Many believe in the "big bang" that supposedly happened millions of years ago, and the evolution of all things, including man.

But David said by inspiration, *"Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast."* After God had created every thing else he took dust of the earth and made man, breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul. *"And God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness."* This word "our" is verily evidence that Christ was with God before man was created. *"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."* What an awesome thing it is when one is blessed to believe the power and wisdom of God in performing this miracle. He called their (not his) name Adam, and in the loins of the first Adam was the seed of generation from which would spring forth all who would ever be born in the flesh. All people are but Adam multiplied for God blessed them, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. He also gave them a commandment not to eat of the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil which was in the midst of the garden, and he said, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Though he was made in the image of God, he was also made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. The crooked serpent, which God formed with his own hand, was there to deceive Eve, and because she was subject to vanity she was deceived and did eat the forbidden fruit, and gave to her husband and he did eat. Thus they transgressed the commandment of God, sin entered the world and they died, and God`s purpose was accomplished in the way he had purposed. Take away any one fact that he made man subject to vanity, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, his commandment not to eat of it, and the presence of the crooked serpent, then would God`s holy purpose have been accomplished? No. Shall we not say that his purpose is that men should worship him with praise, honor and glory? Adam would not have any reason to do this if he had not sinned and condemned the world. *"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."* Paul said, *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."* He also said that we are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood. All men are born dead in trespasses and sin: *"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sin."* No man can know his dead state which he is in before being born again of the Holy Spirit. The false teachers of this world tell us that all we have to do to be born again is ask to be born again. How

can a person who is dead ask for any thing? Did you ask to be born of your earthly parents? Jesus said to Nicodemus, *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."* Who are they that shall be born again of the Spirit? Are they not the ones chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world? Surely they are. The greatest blessing ever bestowed upon man by the grace of God was God`s choice of a people in Christ, and writing their names in the Lamb`s book of life: the Lamb that stood as slain before the world was. Knowing that his children would sin and be condemned under God`s holy law, a covenant was made between the Three-in-One God that Christ should come into the world and redeem them, for he loved them with an everlasting love. *"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham, Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." Heb. 2:14-17.* How amazing, wonderous and beyond comprehension of man the love and grace of God, that he should give his beloved Son for sinful man, and the love of Christ that he should condescend to be made like unto sinful flesh, suffer, bleed and die for his children. *"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law. to redeem then that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."* This is an amazing miracle, impossible for us to comprehend, but by grace given we believe. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin, and it is not possible for the blood of bulls and of goats, etc. to take away sin. *"Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he said, Sacrifice and offerings thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me."* That body was the body of Jesus Christ the son of man and the Son of God. An angel of the Lord appeared unto Mary, a virgin, and told her that she would conceive and bring forth a son, and she would call his name JESUS, for he shall save his people. And the angel said, *"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called*

the Son of God." Mary did conceive and bring forth a son, therefore he was the son of man and the Son of God. The people then did not believe this, and many do not to this day. But there were men from a far country who saw his star in the heavens and came seeking him, asking, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? These wise men were surely believers who were led to Jesus, and fell down and worshipped him, but king Herod immediately desired to find and destroy him. However, we know that an angel warned Joseph to take Jesus and flee into Egypt. This he did, and did not return until an angel of the Lord appeared and told him to return to the land of Israel. When Herod saw that he was mocked, he sent forth and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, and the prophesy by Jeremy was fulfilled which said, *"In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they were not."* Herod did not know that he was fulfilling the will and purpose of God, and we do not know the purpose, but there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven. If there had been no purpose in it it would not have been done for he hath declared *"the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."*

As a son of man Jesus was flesh and blood, and he grew up subject to his parents. He grew and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him. Luke 2:40. As a flesh and blood being, he suffered all the things that we suffer in the flesh, as hunger, thirst, tiredness, temptations, persecutions, etc., and he learned obedience by the things he suffered. After he was baptized and led into the wilderness he suffered all the temptations of Satan, yet without sin. In Isaiah 50:6, *"I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting." "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." Heb. 2:18.*

What a great prophet, priest and king our Saviour Jesus Christ! While here in the flesh he was poor, having no place to lay his head. *"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that you through his poverty might be rich." II Cor.8:9.* He went about the country preaching the gospel, and performing miracles. He told the disciples of John, *"Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear*

and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raise up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me." The healing of the infirmities of the flesh then was marvelous but only temporal, while they pointed to what he would do for his elect people spiritually which would be everlasting. First of all they must be born again by the Holy Spirit, for they were born dead in trespasses and sin. Jesus said, *"The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live."* There is only One who can cause the dead to hear and live. Jesus said, *"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish."* This life is in Jesus Christ, for in him we live and move and have our being. As Paul said, *"Set your affections of things above, not on the earth, for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."* However, the price of redemption must first be paid to satisfy the holy justice of God, and without the shedding of blood there is no redemption. As I said before, the blood of bulls, goats, etc. will never accomplish this, only the pure and holy blood of Christ will suffice. *"For as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but by the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot."* Jesus said to his disciples, *"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."* What tremendous power this! Jesus fulfilled the law to a jot and to a tittle, and blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. As he hung upon the cross he prayed the Father, *"Forgive them for they know not what they do."* As our High Priest he offered himself a sacrifice for our sins and *"by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."* Half of his blood flowed to the hinder sea, and half to the former, covering all the sanctified from the beginning unto the end, washing them whiter than snow from all their sins. He had finished the work the Father had given him to do. Of this he had said, *"Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none."*

Beloved brethren, our Lord and Saviour is coming at the last day with great power, for he hath said, *"-for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and they shall come*

forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Paul tells us, *"Behold, I shew you a great mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed."* And again, *"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."*

Brethren, I realize that I have only touched this tremendous subject, but I also know that of all that has been said and written about it from the beginning the half has never been told. I hope that what I have written is to his praise, honor and glory, and if it please him, he will comfort one or more of his beloved children. When at the throne of Grace, please remember this poor sinner.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear brethren that are subscribers to the Signs of the Times,

When, what I hope is a message to you, just stays in my thoughts, I know of no way except to express these thoughts, whether profitable to you children of God you may judge.

In Malachi 3:16 are these words. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name".

Are the believers today less remembered in that book than in former years? I don't believe the Lord is ever forgetful of His children. If you read the past issues of the Signs—ten—twenty—thirty years ago, you will find many people were sending writings for publication. Is your experience less precious? His instructions are to speak often one to another. The Signs of the Times is a blessed means for us to speak to each other - though miles apart. When receiving our monthly issue, I look first to see if I am acquainted with any of the writers. It is such a blessing to read of the Lord's dealings with His people and I feel it so needful for the spiritual health of our churches and also for our magazine. The editors are very faithful to get

the publications out each month and it should cause us to support them with something that is food for the flock.

I can, it seems, hear you say that I couldn't tell anything a saint would get food from. Set down and tell what great things the Lord has done for you and let the publishers judge it's worth. All souls that have Christ revealed to them have a story to tell.

I trust I write this for the great love I feel for you and not for you to take offense.

Your unworthy brother,
Burnell Williams
A trustee of the Signs

ARTICLES

AMAZING GRACE

This present world is using our sacred song "Amazing Grace" in ways that are dishonoring to the writer , John Newton", and to our God. I will not say that there are not people that feel God's grace is amazing and that they are His children, but the general public does not seem to feel it is sacred.

I would desire to relate some of my experiences that have caused me to feel how utterly amazing is the grace of God unless I am deceived. Over fifty years ago, when I was a young man, I was driving my car to meet with friends for a worldly party and dancing. I was struck into my heart by what I hope was a message from Heaven. It seemed I felt so condemned for the enjoyment I received from what I was engaged in at that time. Before that message into my heart from what I hope was the voice of God, I had not felt anything but pleasure of the worldly events. I was so completely amazed that such a sinner as I would ever be noticed by so great a power.

Why would the Creator of all things and the savior of His people and the preserver of all creation notice a worm of the dust such as I ? AMAZING GRACE!

I never have forgotten that time until this day. I could go to almost the exact spot this happened to me. I pondered over this experience for following years and decided it was only my imagination that I felt this happening. Later years, I can't remember the time, but again this quickening dart caused me to feel that someday I would have to ask for a home in Malmaison church. In the year 1957, I was given a home in the church but I still doubt as to whether I am one of the true Church of God's members. If so, then what "Amazing Grace" that such an unworthy creature is so favored. What possibly could cause an act of the creature on earth that would cause God to favor any of us. AMAZING GRACE! Through these years of travel with the Lord's people, they have been so sweet and loving to this sinner. I

have had responsibilities that I was afraid to attempt but also afraid to say that I wouldn't try to obey the dictates of God's people. I believe they are the wisest people on earth but only because the "perfection of all things seen and unseen has been their teacher. AMAZING GRACE! In our journey through this life, how many times do we see the hand of God in our natural preservation. Once, when coming home from a date, I went to sleep and crossed into a field but was not harmed. Again I was in an auto wreck and was saved by His "Amazing Grace". My dear wife was in an automobile wreck and had severe injuries but she was blessed to have no permanent injuries. My daughters have seen many narrow escapes in their lives — we, in nature, would call such happenings escapes but the preserving hand of God is our escape from harm every day that we are in this natural life.

To Him do we owe all thanks for all blessings for all our days. We will surely go in that path that is set before us and this was determined by Him before we get to that path or know any of the future things that are before us. Such AMAZING GRACE to unworthy creatures of His creation.

Finally, when we can be blessed to see that all of our natural life, and much more so our spiritual life, was determined before time was and I hope that His love has included me when Christ comes again in the cloud to carry His children home. What AMAZING GRACE!

A sinner in hope,
Burnell Williams

VOICES OF THE PAST

LUKE XVI. 9.

"And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations."

And I say unto you." Jesus did not speak like other men. The officers that were sent to take him said truly, *"Never man spake like this man."* He taught not only in a different manner from other men, but upon a different principle. The words of his that are written by the pen of inspiration are not words by which his teaching is to be done, but the words which tell how his teaching has already been done. The written words tell to the enlightened understanding what the spirit and life of those words has already written in the new heart. *"The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." - John vi. 63.* When he said, *"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven,"* he said in words what his Spirit always says

within his people. These words do not express a proposition on his part which may or may not be employed with by those to whom they are addressed, but they tell what has been, and is being wrought in them by his creative power. They express the same invincible power by which God commanded the light to shine out of darkness, as he now shines in their hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. iv. 6.) When Jesus says, *"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you," he did not present a condition to those to whom he spake which they might or might not fulfill, but he declared what he speaks with living power in the hearts of those to whom he gives spiritual life, and which they can, in the Spirit, no more refuse to obey than Adam could refuse to breathe when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. This speaking of Jesus is not to the fleshly mind and heart, but to the new heart, and the flesh responds to these living words of Jesus as it is moved upon by the power of spiritual life. These spiritual powers are always inclined to perfect obedience, and when they are in exercise, by the grace of God, then they become effectual weapons of warfare, pulling down the strongholds of fleshly opposition, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. (2 Cor. ix i.)*

"And I say unto you." Not as one man says something to another which it will be profitable for him to hear and attend to, but as the Creator says to the creature in that creative work by which he is *"created in Christ Jesus unto good works."* When we come at the true meaning of the words of Jesus which are at the head of this article, we shall find in them not a recommendation of a course that will be for the benefit of his people to follow, but a command which has already been written in their hearts. Here is the difference between the legal character and the subject of gospel grace. Here is the difference in principle and action between the unjust steward, who is a Pharisee and is covetous, and who sees in legal things only a chance for self-exaltation and emolument, and the gospel character, who has been given an honest spirit, and who sees in legal things the just requirements of a holy God, whose name must be glorified. Here is the difference between the teaching of this world's wisdom to *"the children of this world,"* and the teaching of the wisdom which is from above to *"the children of light."*

The unjust steward made friends with his lord's goods, or riches, by requiring of his debtors less than they owed; and his lord (not our Lord) commended him, not for honesty, but for a wise forethought and care to provide for him-

self against the day of adversity. His wisdom was earthly, sensual, devilish, but it was wisdom in a worldly sense, and looked to his worldly advantage. It pertained only to worldly things, and was eminently selfish, and it was only commended in a worldly sense. It is only as using the wisdom that he thinks will best advance his interests that he is commended by our Savior to the attention of the children of light. They are not directed to do as he did except in one thing, and that is, to pay attention diligently to the dictates of the wisdom which belongs to them, as he diligently attended to the directions of the wisdom of this world. The Savior said, *"Be wise as serpents, but he did not say, "Be wise like serpents."*

The children of this world are compared with the children of light to the disadvantage of the latter in one thing only, and that is, that they are wise in their generation, looking after what will be best for themselves in this world, while the children of light are not wise in their generation, when left to themselves to look after their own interests, but are constantly liable to turn aside from the path of true wisdom, and cannot therefore trust in themselves to guide themselves for one moment, but must be led constantly by the dear Savior. That point in which they are liable to fail of true wisdom is their tendency to make use of the wisdom of this world, which constantly holds out allurements to them to follow its lead. And how often they follow the lead of that worldly wisdom, looking for the advantages it promises, until they are led by it into trouble, desolation, famine and death. The true wisdom of the child of God is always to distrust the dictates of earthly wisdom. Therefore from the beginning of his experience he is turned away from the wages of this world, and taught a different way, and a different wisdom. This is indicated here. *"And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness."* To make friends with those riches was to use them unjustly, as the Pharisees (the unjust steward) did; to make friends of them is to experience and acknowledge the justice of their claims against us; to honestly own our full indebtedness, and to ask no reduction, even though we have nothing to pay, but must give up our own selves to satisfy the claim. For the mammon of unrighteousness undoubtedly means the things of the law. The word mammon simply means riches, wealth personified. Unrighteousness here does not mean anything evil or wrong, but the lack of righteousness or value. There is no real value in a pattern or in a type, but only a representative of value; there are no riches in an account, but only the representation of riches. The things belonging to the legal dispensation had no real righteousness in themselves, but they were important as representing

the *"true riches"* of the gospel dispensation. And these true "riches of righteousness" brought forth in the gospel, which belong to the children of light, are only committed unto them after they have been found faithful in regard to the riches of unrighteousness, or the things of the law in which there is no righteousness, but only a typical representation of righteousness. One has made friends of those legal riches, the commands, ordinances, types, accounts of the legal dispensation, when he has acknowledged the justice of them. Under the law an Israelite had paid the debt when he had given up himself to be sold for it. Then the claim was settled, and in the year of jubilee he went free with no claim against him. No charge could be brought against him, for the law would stand his friend. So the law is the friend of the poor sinner who has acknowledged the justice of its claims against him. The moment he feels that he is justly sold under sin, that he is justly condemned, that moment for him the year of jubilee has come, and he is received by the very law which held such a claim against him, into the everlasting habitations of the gospel.

All of this chapter to the eighteenth verse confirms the view of the text which I have thus briefly suggested. The Pharisees were covetous, so is every one who justifies himself before men. These are those who depend upon the works of the law for salvation. Though they appear to men, and to themselves, to be true servants of the law, yet in their hearts they are covetous, and do not really care for the honor of God, nor seek to magnify his law, but are seeking their own honor and riches. They are not faithful in that unrighteous mammon, or riches, which belonged to another man, and under which they were known as servants, because they had not faith. As soon as one is born of God he has faith to see the true requirements of the law. He feels that its claims against him are just. He can say, *"The law is holy and the commandment is holy and just and good, but I am carnal, sold under sin."* Now he wants the law honored. He could not accept deliverance at the expense of the law; - it would be no deliverance for him. He is faithful in these riches of the law, though there is no righteousness in them, yet they represent righteousness. There is no real value in the page of the account book which shows the great debt he owes, but it represents the true value, which he knows ought to be paid. It represents true riches. He could not dishonor those riches, that holy law, by accepting any release upon the payment of half or four score. He feels in his soul the truth which he does not yet understand, that every jot and tittle of the law must be fulfilled, that the whole debt must be paid.

That when ye fail. There is a time when every living soul must fail, and that is when he sees the amount of his indebtedness under

the law of God, and the justice of it. When that is seen and acknowledged then the time of failure comes. Ten thousand talents in debt, and not a farthing to pay. Then all at once the law ceases to hold us, the soul is delivered, and we are astonished and amazed to find ourselves at liberty, freed from guilt, and rejoicing in a sense of righteousness. In his own time and way Jesus appears as having satisfied the law, and it is the riches of that legal dispensation, the accounts of that law now satisfied, which receive us into the gospel, the city of habitation. The righteousness which that law represented is now fulfilled, so that nothing can be laid to our charge, and thus the gates of the holy city are opened unto us, never to be shut any more.

November 15, 1901.
Elder Silas H. Durand

CHAPTER XVII.
CHRIST'S MINISTRY.
(Footsteps of the Flock)

Luke IV. And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee, and there went out a fame of him, throughout all the region around about.

"Of which spirit he was full, and by which he was led into the wilderness, and had combated with Satan, and got the victory over him; and by virture - of which he entered on his public ministry, wrought miracles and taught with authority. He returned unto Galilee where he had been brought up, and from whence he came to John at Jordan, by the wonderful influence of the Holy Spirit which was in him, to the place where he was to begin his ministry, and work his miracles, and so fulfil a prophecy of him, Isa. IX. 1.2; see Matt. IV. 12-16; *and there went out a fame of him, throughout all the region around about;* through all Galilee, Syria, Decapolis and Jordan, see Matt. IV. 23-25. The report of his doctrines and miracles was spread far and near, and on account of them, he became the subject of common talk of the people everywhere."

Luke IV. 15. And he taught in their syanogoges, being glorified of all.

"In the place of public worship used by the Galileans, where they met on the Sabbath days and week days to pray and hear the Scriptures expounded. Christ engaging here as public teacher was the reason of his fame being spread around the country: being glorified of all, that heard him; they were astonished at his doctrine; they wondered at his gracious words; they praised bim as a preacher, and glorified him and God for him, because of the mighty works which were done by him.

Luke IV. 16. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up *for* to read.

" After he had gone through all Galilee, and had acquired great credit and reputation by his ministry and miracles, he came to the place where he was brought up, and was known to the inhabitants; and therefore it was proper that he should first exercise his ministry, and obtain reputation in other places which would prepare him a reputation among his townsmen, who otherwise in all likelihood would have treated him with disrespect and contempt: *and as his custom was, he went into he synagogue on the Sabbath day.* This was either his custom from youth when he dwelt at Nazareth, while a private person, and before he engaged in public service, whither he used to repair as an "inhabitant of the city, and a member of the congregation, to attend and join in worship as he now did; or it refers to his custom since he became a public preacher, who at Capernaum, or any other place in Galilee when there was a synagogue, used to frequent it, whether on the Sabbath or any other day, as he did here: and stood up for to read; by rising and standing up signified his inclination to read a portion of Scripture, if a book were delivered to him, It may be observed, that common Israelites, as well as priests and Levites, were allowed to read the Scripture publicly; and every sabbath day seven persons read, a priest, a Levite and five Israelites; the order was this: the priest read first, and after him the Levite, and it is said to be a known custom to this day that even an unlearned priest may read before the wisest man in Israel. Now Christ, on account of his great fame for his wisdom and mighty works, was admitted to this public service, and though he was not a Levite, and known by the inhabitants of the place to have been brought up to a trade."

Luke IV. 17. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias; and when he had opened the book, he found the place where it is written,

"That part of the sacred volume, which was delivered unto Jesus at that time, *was the book of the prophet Esaias;* it is likely, that the lesson for that day was to be read out of the prophecy of Isaiah; and it is probable that this was the single book of Isaiah, or that prophecy, rolled up by itself in one volume, that was delivered to Christ; as the law was divided into five parts, each fifth part was sometimes in a book or volume by itself; hence, a fifth part of the law is by the Jews interpreted, a book of the law, in which there is but one fifth part, so might the prophets be in separate and distinct parts. And when he had opened the book: or unrolled it, for books formerly were written on rolls of paper or parchment; and in this form is the law with the Jews in their synagogues to this day. He unrolled it until he came to the place where he intends to read, *and found the place where it is written:* as expressed in the following verse, which is to be seen in Isa. LVI. 1,2;

which was either the lesson of the day, or what Christ particularly sought for, or was providentially directed to, pertinent to himself and proper to be read at that time; for it was not by chance that he lit upon this place and read it, but was according to his purpose and with design. Before the reading of the prophets, a blessing used to be said, which was in this form; 'Blessed art thou, O, Lord our God, the King of the whole world, who hath chosen the good prophets,and art well pleased with their words, which are said in truth; blessed art thou O, Lord, who hath chosen the law, Moses thy servant, and Israel his people and the prophets of truth and righteousness.' Whether this was said by Christ is not certain; however, he read the following passage."

Luke IV. 18. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath annointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and the recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.

"By whom is meant the third person in the Trinity; so called to distinguish him from the other spirits; and who gave to Christ as man, without measure, whereby he was qualified for his great work; and intends the Spirit of Jehovah with all his gifts and grace, who was and abode on Christ, as a Spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel, and of might, of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. He was upon him and in him, the first moment of his conception, which was by his power; and he visibly descended on him at his baptism. The phrase denotes permanency and continuance of him, and with him. Because he hath annointed me; for it was with the Holy Ghost he was anointed, to be a King and Priest, and so likewise to be a Prophet; hence he has the name Messiah, which signifies annointed. This untion he had, in order to preach the gospel to the poor; in Isaiah it is the meek, which designs the same persons and means such as are poor in spirit, and are sensible of their spiritual poverty, have low and humble thoughts of themselves, of their own righteousness and look to Christ for durable riches, and true righteousness, and frankly acknowledge all they have and are is owing to the grace of God; and generally speaking, they are the poor of this world, and have but a small amount of natural wisdom and knowledge; to them the gospel, or glad tidings of the love, grace and mercy of God, in Christ, of peace, pardon, righteousness, life and salvation by Christ, was preached by him; and that in so clear a manner and with such power and authority as it never was before or since; and for this purpose was he annointed with the oil of gladness, and above his fellows: He hath, sent me to heal the broken-hearted; whose hearts are broken, made contrite by the Holy Spirit, and humble under a deep sense of sin,

and mourn on account thereof and are ready to perish: for a wounded spirit who can bear. Now Christ was sent to heal such persons by his own stripes, by binding up their wounds, by the application of his own blood to them, which is a sovereign balm for every wound; by making manifest his pardoning grace to their souls and opening and applying comfortable promises of his gospel by his spirit to them; to preach deliverance to the captives; who are captive of sin, Satan and the law; from which there is no deliverance, only by him, who saves his people from their sins, and redeems them from the law, and leads captivity captive: *and the recovering of sight to the blind; which in the prophets is, and the opening of the prisons to them that are bruised;* now because persons in prisons are in darkness, and see no light, therefore they are represented as blind; both are the case of sinners, they are in the prison of sin and of the law, are blind, ignorant and insensible of their state, until Christ opens their eyes and sets them free; opens their eyes and gives them spiritual sight; when he says *to the prisoner." Go forth, and to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves, Isa. XLIX. 9."*

Luke IV. 19. To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

"The time which he willed and fixed for the redemption of his people, and in which he showed his good will and pleasure unto sinful men, in the gift of his son to them, and for them; which was a time *acceptable to the Lord.* The sufferings of Christ were according to his will; his sacrifice was a sweet smelling Savor to him; his righteousness was well pleasing to him, and the satisfaction and atonement for sin, he made, was a complete one; all Christ did and suffered was grateful to God, because his perfections were glorified, his people saved."

Luke IV. 20.And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue fastened on him.

Luke IV. 21. And he began to say unto them, This day is the Scripture fulfiled in your ears.

Luke IV. 22. And all bare him witness, wondering at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?

Luke IV. 23. And he said unto them. Ye will surely say unto me this proverb. Physician heal thy self. Whatsoever ye have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.

Luke IV. 24. And he said, verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.

Luke IV. 25. But I tell you of a truth, Many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land.

Luke IV. 26. But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city in Sidon, unto a

woman that was a widow.

Luke IV. 27. And many lepers were in Israel in the times of Eliseus the prophet, and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

Luke IV. 28. And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things were filled with wrath.

"The ruler and minister, and the whole multitude of common people that were met together for worship, and who before were amazed at his eloquence and gracefulness of his delivery, and could not account for it, also approved of his ministry, but could not tell how he come by it: *when they heard these things;* the two instances of Elijah and Elisha; the one supplying the wants of a Sidonian widow and the other healing a Syrian leper, when no notice was taken by them of poor widows and lepers in Israel: *Were filled with wrath;* for they saw by these instances, that they were compared to the Israelites of the times of Ahab and Jezebel, and that no miracles were to be wrought among them, or benefits conferred on them, though they were his townsmen; yea, that the Gentiles were preferred unto them; and indeed the calling of the Gentiles was here plainly intimated, which was always ungrateful and provoking to the Jews; and it was suggested that the favours of God and grace of the Messiah, are dispensed in a sovereign and discriminating way; than which nothing can be more offensive to the carnal mind."

Luke IV. 29. And rose up and thrust him out of the city and led him to the brow of the hill whereon the city was built, that they might cast him down head long.

"They rose up in great tumult before the service was over, and without being dismissed, and thrust him out of the city; first out of the synagogue and then out of the city, as unworthy to be in it, though an inhabitant of it; as if he had done something deserving death and therefore to be punished as a malefactor without trial; And led him to the brow of the hill; the edge of it, where it runs out and hung over the precipice; whereon the city was built; that they might cast him down headlong and break him to pieces, in the manner ten thousand Edomites were killed by the Jews, in the time of Amaziah, 2 Chron. xxv. 12. These men without regard to the place of worship they were concerned in, or the Sabbath, rose up in great confusion, wrath and fury, and without a show of justice,and in the most brutal and barbarious manner attempted to killed Christ."

Luke IV. 30. But he, passing through the midst of them, went his way. Another discourse preached by the Savior is recorded as follows:

Matt. XI. 27. All things are delivered unto me of my father; and no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

"This is to be understood of Christ, as the Mediator; for as God, nothing was delivered unto him, he had all things", all perfection, power and glory; all persons are given into his hands, angels and men; good angels are delivered to be confirmed in him as their head, and to be made use of by him; evil spirits which are subject to his disciples, are also at his command and disposal; and all powers in heaven and on earth are given unto him; all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid with him, and distributed to the sons of men, all the blessings of grace and the promises of the everlasting covenant, and all the glory and happiness of his people, are put into his hands: *and no man knoweth the Son but the Father* ... the transcendent glories and perfections of his nature, as the Son of God; nor the whole of his work and office as Mediator; or all that he was to do and suffer for his people; all that he had done for them, and should communicate to, and bestow upon them. *Neither know any man the father save the Son;* his essence of glory, his mind and will, his purpose and decrees, his counsel and covenant; the grace and love of his heart to his chosen people; what he had prepared and laid up for them and will make them partakers of to an eternity: *and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him;* both himself and his Father, and the grace and glory of each, which he does by his Spirit, who is the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; and which entirely depends on his own sovereign will and pleasure."

Matt. XI. 28. Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I win give you rest.

"Christ having signified that the knowledge of God and the mysteries of grace are only to be come at through him; and that he has and things relating to the peace, comfort, happiness and salvation of men in his hands, kindly invites and encourage souls to come unto him for the same; by which is meant, not local coming on account of hearing him preach; for so his hearers to whom he now directed his speech were already come; many of them as multitudes did and might do, come to Christ in this way, who never know, or receive any spiritual benefits from him; nor a bare coming to him under the ordinance of baptism or attendance at the Lord 's supper, the latter of which was not yet instituted; both may be performed by persons who are not yet come to Christ; but is to be understood of believers in Christ, the going of the soul to him in the exercise of grace from him, and desire after him, faith and hope in him; believing in Christ and coming to him are synonymous terms, John VI. 35, Those who come to Christ aright, come as sinners to a full, suitable and willing Savior, venture their souls upon him, and trust him for righteousness, life and salvation, who shows his willingness to save, and his readiness to give relief to distressed minds, The persons invited, are not all mankind,

but all ye that labor and are heavy laden; meaning not those who are laboring in the service of sin and Satan, are laden with iniquity and insensible of it; these are not weary of sin, nor burdened with it, nor do they want or desire any rest for their souls, but such who groan on account of the burden of sin on their conscience, and are pressed down with the yoke of the law and the load of human traditions, having labored until they are weary in order to find peace and rest for their souls." Matt. IV. 29. Take my yoke, upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and shall find rest for your souls.

"Christ exhorts persons to come to him for rest and happiness; to profess their faith in him, to embrace the doctrine of the gospel, to submit to his ordinances, live according to his laws, commandments and orders, which he as King of saints has made and requires obedience to; so those who come to him for life and believe in him as the Saviour of souls, must not set in idleness or lay aside the performance of good works, and live in licentiosness, but always doing the work and will of the Lord. This he calls his yoke, in distinction from the law of Moses and tradition of the elders: and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; reference seems to be made to Zach. IX. 9, when such characters are given to the Messiah. The meekness, humility and lowliness of Christ appears in his assuming human nature; in his subjection to his Father; in the whole of his conversation and deportment among men; in his submission to the ordinances of baptism; in the course of his obedience to God, and in his sufferings and death; and is to be imitated by all his followers, who may learn many excellent things from his examples, as well as from his doctrines, particularly that whereas he was such; a person yet condescended to perform every duty with readiness and cheerfulness, should not think it below them to conform to every ordinance of his, every branch of his will; for he has set them so many examples, and they should tread in his steps, and walk as he walked. There never was such an example of humility and lowliness of mind, nor is there any instance so worthy of imitation as his. Our Lord says: learn of me, not of men, and ye shall find rest for your souls; which shows the rest he speaks of to be a spiritual rest, which is to be enjoyed in obedience to Christ's commandments: whose ways are ways of pleasantness and his paths are paths of peace.

J.K. Booton

PSALMS 116: 1-2.

I LOVE the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications.

Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.

RENSSELAERVILLE, N. Y., Jan. 17, 1909.

MISS LAURA BAILEY :- May I say sister Laura T You will no doubt be surprised to receive a letter from a stranger, but although I would not know your face if I should meet you, yet here I am with pen in hand to write to you. I do not know what I shall write, but I have just, read your letter to Elder Vail, as published in the SIGNS of January 15th, and it seems almost every word brings to mind my own experience (if I have any), and as you ask the question," Is there anyone like me ", I can assure you there is one at least like you in that query, as well as many other things you write. You say others tell such beautiful experiences, and know just when they felt they were guilty before God, and lost, and then know just when they were delivered, and felt. such joy and praise to God. Now that very thing has troubled me these many years, yet still I have a hope that my sins are forgiven, and that I am one for whom Christ shed his precious blood, but not for any worth or worthiness of my own, for,

" Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

It is all of mercy, and all the reason I can give is, " Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." I have no great or beautiful experience to tell; I cannot tell when the burden of my sins came upon me, nor when it left me, and have ever wondered what I could have said to the church (Middleburg Church) that they received me thirty-one years ago, and have ever since been very kind and forbearing toward me. I, like you, was young in years, and I cannot remember when I was not interested in hearing people talk on religious subjects, and had many thoughts about it, and felt there must be a great change before I could be a christian. I think I was about seventeen years old when an aunt wanted me to go with her to visit her sister (and my aunt) in Otsego County, and then attend the yearly meeting at Otsego, which I did, and it was at that time the burden of my sins was upon me more than ever before. Everyone was good and kind to me, and I felt if they could see me as I saw myself they would turn from me. I thought they were all christians, and how I longed to be like them. On our way home my aunt wanted to stop and attend the meeting on Schoharie Hill, on Saturday and Sunday, and there I saw more of those lovely people, and I remember as they came in the house one by one I thought I could plainly see the mark in each face that they were the children of God, and O what would I have given to be like them, to feel my sins forgiven and have an evidence that I was a child of God. I came home, bringing my burden with me, but I was young and went with other young people to places of amusement, but could not enjoy myself I as they seemed to, and many times promised myself never to go again, but when invited

I seemed to have no excuse, and so would go. I had tried to keep my trouble to myself. I cannot tell how or when my burden left me, and thoughts of uniting with the church were in my mind. I did not think I had any experience to tell, or any reason for a hope, but hoped I might have some time, and so for some time I was hoping I might have a hope in the mercy of God. I knew if I was ever saved it would be by grace alone, and not by anything, I could do. But, as I trust, God in his own time and in his own way made me willing, to accept the evidence he had given me, and to own and trust him as my Savior, and gave me strength to go to the church for a home in November, 1877. I then knew I was young, weak and ignorant, but thought I would grow wise and strong as I grew older; but here I must confess, fifty-one years old today, and just as weak and helpless as then, and as dependent upon God for everything, both temporal and spiritual, as I ever have been. I can say with you:

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am tis hard to know."

I have never felt such great joy at any time as many can tell of, but, if I am not altogether deceived, I have felt some of the sweet peace that the world knows not of, and there is comfort in believing, and trusting in God, who has all power; he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast; he declared the end from the beginning; his arm is not shortened, he is able to do all his pleasure. Many things seem strange to us, and we feel it ought to be different, but I desire to leave all things in his hand, knowing he doeth all things well, and he knows his little ones wherever they are, and will never leave nor forsake them. Sometimes he hides his face, and the enemy is always around to make them afraid, and though we cannot see our Deliverer, yet his eye is ever upon his little ones, and no enemy is able to pluck them from him. Do not think it strange that you have doubts, fears and trials, for God has promised that in this world we shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, he has overcome the world, and when we have done. with earth and time things. and awake with the likeness of our blessed Redeemer, then, and not till then, will we be perfectly satisfied.

I have not written as I thought I would, and do not know why I have written it was a sudden impulse to write as I read your letter, and I have written just as the thoughts have come to me, and am surprised at the length of this, but hope if there is no comfort in it for you that there will be no harm done, and that you will excuse the writer. Now that I have written it seems like presumption in me, and many times after writing I feel that it is all from the head, and not from the heart, and that I know nothing of spiritual things. God knows me just as I am, I do not.

I have been to Schoharie Church many times. It is always a sacred

place to me, as it always brings back my first visit there, together with many remembrances.

I will close, hoping God may lead, guide, guard and protect you all your journey through, and I desire the same protecting care for myself. I am sure he will take care of his own. I would be very glad to hear from you if you ever feel like writing me.

Yours sincerely,
(MRS.) ADDIE COOK.

MEETINGS

OLD PINE CREEK CHURCH

An annual all day meeting will be held, the Lord willing at Old Pine Creek Church on the 4th of July 2000. The church is located off highway #221, five miles North of Floyd, Va. Those coming from Floyd turn left on to road #682. Those coming from Roanoke, turn right on to road #682. All lovers of the truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Hale Terry

ROMANS 8:11.

But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

PIGG RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The 2000 Pigg River Primitive Baptist Association will convene the Lord willing, for our one hundred seventy-fifth session at Pigg River Church, in Franklin County, Va.

Services to begin on Friday August 4, and two days following, Saturday, August 5, and Sunday, August 6.

Those coming from North and South on 220 go to Rocky Mount, Virginia, take route 602, go by college campus app. 4 miles from 602 - go straight on 752, turn right on 750 to church.

We invite our dear Brethren and all lovers of the truth to be with us.

Jamie E. Cooper, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Association will convene, the Lord willing, at Weatherford Church meeting house. This will be our 159th session. Services will begin at 10:00 a.m. Saturday, July 8th and Sunday July 9th.

Weatherford Church is located about five miles from Gretna, Va. in Pittsylvania County at the intersection of highways 760 and 763.

We invite all visitors of our faith and order to attend this meeting with us.

Burnell B. Williams,
Association Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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ONE DAY AT A TIME

by Kris Kristofferson & Marijohn Wilkin

I'm only human,
I'm just a woman.
Help me believe in what I could be and all that I am.
Show me the stairway
I have to climb.
Lord, for my sake, teach me to take one day at a time,

One day at a time, sweet Jesus, that's all I'm asking from you. Just give me the strength to do ev'ry day what I have to do. Yesterday's gone, sweet Jesus, and tomorrow may never be mine.
Lord, help me today, show me the way, one day at a time.

Do you remember when you walked among men
Well, Jesus, you know if you're looking below that it's worse now than then
Pushin' and shovin', crowding my mind
So for my sake, Lord, teach me to take ONE DAY AT A TIME.

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EDITORIAL

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. (2 Cor Chap 3, vs 17-19)

Elder R. H. Campbell

When man sinned, in the garden of Eden, he became alienated from God and all of his attributes, his wisdom, power, love, mercy and grace which he had bestowed upon them abundantly; providing all things necessary for their peace, joy, love and all of the needful provisions for life and contentment. Because of sin they were driven from the presence of God; estranged from the joys and happiness that was theirs to enjoy in that realm into which they were created. They were given coats of skin, their natural garments for dwelling in this low ground of sin and sorrow, and placed on earth, the kingdom of Satan, and in this condition, they knew not God, as they did in the garden, and could never know him unless they are brought back into that state of innocence which they had in the garden before the fall. They were no longer in the image of God and after his likeness, a foreign element, sin, had been added that marred man, even as the vessel was marred in the hands of the potter, so that it was no longer the vessel of honor as in the beginning, therefore man was driven from the garden and exiled into this low ground of sin and sorrow.

This is where man has dwelled from that day forward, and would forever dwell, unless or until, he is reconciled again unto God. Man can-

not do this of himself, as he is helpless to make himself anything other that what he is in nature, in and of his own strength. He was created subject to vanity and will always seek and desire the things that are pleasing to the flesh, the things of the world, the things that are delightful to the eye. If he had the power to change himself, or to control his own destiny, he would never have let it happen to him in the first place. This is why it is so ridiculous to hear the man in nature say that God can't save them against their will, or that they must let him do something, or that they can help him do something. Man is a creation of God, after his own good pleasure, and he is and always will be subject to the will and the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of the creator.

Man in nature will always lust after the pleasures of the flesh, sin, the riches of this world and desire to have the preeminence over his fellow man; he strives for mastery in all things in nature, and believes that his destiny is in his own hands and that he needs no help from anyone or anything. He does not realize the weaknesses and the severe limitations of his own arm; he can only compare himself with others of like abilities and ambitions; never realizing that his every move, thought and deed was determined before the world was formed and that he is but running the race that was set before him, or as one of the prophets said, living his life as a tale that is told, because it was all in the mind of God before time began.

Man, in this condition, will never turn to God because he does not know him, for as Paul wrote, *(1 Cor Chap 2, vs 1) "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."* and again, *(Heb Chap 11, vs 6) "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."* They must have faith in God and believe that he is before they will seek him, and this faith is given by the grace of God and is not a decision that is made by man, lest any should so boast; it is solely the mercy of God that is bestowed upon them. There was an occasion when some asked Jesus, *(John Chap 6, vs 28) "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God"* and Jesus replied, *(Vs 29) "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."* If man had any responsibility, regarding the work of God in the salvation of sinners, Jesus would have told him so right here.

Man is carnal, sold under sin, and can no more recover himself from the lost condition that he is in than he could have refused to die, when he partook of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, God had declared it, and so it shall be. Man cannot understand this, be-

cause he can only see one side of the equation, and therefore hates it because he does not understand it and does not have the primary roll in the decision making. *(Rom Chap 8, vs 7-8) "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."* There is a barrier that was placed between man and God, the coats of skin, or, the vail that is over their faces, and they could not see the end of the law that was given them in the flesh; this barrier cannot be removed, except by the one who placed it there originally because of sin, and this is only done, in Christ.

(Deut Chap 32, vs 8) "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." This is when the distinction was made, when the election was held, and the separation was to sanctify a portion unto himself, those whom God said was his portion, Jacob the lot of his inheritance. As Paul said, *(Rom Chap 9, vs 15-16) "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth. but of God that sheweth mercy."* Mercy sets them apart, not the efforts of the natural man because the best efforts of man are as filthy rags before God and have nothing to do with his spirituality; this separation of them from the world is the work of God, and is reserved for those whom God created for himself to show forth his power and absolute sovreign authority over all of his creation.

Man, in this carnal state, has no claim to the heritage that is reserved for the heirs of promise, the blessings that they enjoy here in this time world, and those which they will enjoy in the world to come. There is no fear of God, before their eyes, in fact, they are not even aware of his presence in their lives, and feel that they are complete, and have no need of any assistance from any other source, but rather are in a position to extend help to others. Oh the vanity of man, in nature, naked and destitute of anything good, and not even aware of it, even as Adam and Eve who were unaware of their nakedness in the garden until they partook of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The natural man will never see his sinful and undone condition unless the light and liberty of revelation makes them aware of it, then, and only then will they abhor themselves and repent in sackcloth and ashes, according to the testimony of the prophet.

The natural man comes forth talking of their making a decision for Christ, accepting Christ as their own personal savior, as though they were doing him a great service, or any of the other trite phrases that

they use to explain their reason for coming to God, but this just reveals their ignorance of spiritual matters, and their lack of understanding of where they actually are in their present condition. These are not of those for whom Christ died, and redeemed from this world of sin and woe; they give no evidence of having a broken spirit or a broken and a contrite heart, in fact, they are at home in this world and completely satisfied with the things of nature, the pleasures of the flesh and the pride of life. They bring them right along into their churches and continue reveling in the things that they enjoyed here in this time world, and are the ones of whom Paul was speaking when he said above, from such turn away. Jude speaks of these *(Jude 19) "These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the spirit."* or as Paul told Timothy, *(2 Tim Chap 3, vs 5) "Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof, from such turn away."* They believe that they are helping God accomplish what he has been trying to do without them, and certainly are not the new creature in Christ, spoken of above.

There must be a very drastic change in this individual, as great as the experience of the apostle Paul on the road to Damascus, for this wild man, this Gadarene, this man in his natural state to be made clothed and in a right mind. This change, Jesus told Nicodemus, is being born again, not of the flesh, but of the Spirit. This is how God's children are made reconciled unto God; they are given a measure of the gift of Christ, in the flesh, and this transforms them, by the renewing of the mind, so that they may prove, by their faith, what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God, so that they turn from the wicked ways of the earth and seek to be with Jesus, as the Gadarene mentioned above. Paul said, *(2 Cor Chap 5, vs 19-21) "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."*

God is the only one that can reconcile the natural man unto himself; he placed the curse upon him in the beginning, and at the same time that he placed the curse upon man and drove him out of the garden, he placed the cherub and the flaming sword, Christ, in the garden to keep the way of the tree of life. He did not place the security there to keep man away from the tree of life, but rather to keep the way of the tree of life, for those for whom it was created. Jesus has done this from the beginning, as he told his apostles, I am the way the truth and the life, no man

cometh unto the Father, but by me. This way is for the elect, as Jesus said, speaking unto the church at Philadelphia, *(Rev Chap 3, vs 8) "I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it:"* or *(John Chap 10, vs 9) "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."* This is the way of salvation, and the work was completed, in Christ, before time began.

The scriptures, at the heading of this article, are the words of the apostle Paul, setting forth the results of the experience of the child of God in their transition from, the man in the flesh, to the new man in Christ, that new man that takes up its abode in the same body with the old man, creating that cross that all must bear, the flesh lusting against the spirit and the Spirit against the flesh. They are the same individual, in the eyes of the world, that they have always been, but from the perspective of the soul of the inner man; they are as different as though they were another person. They are indeed a new creature, in Christ, old things that they have enjoyed in the past, have lost their attraction for them; their desires and their pursuits are now after the things of the spirit, this new life that has been opened up unto them, and they desire to learn more and more about it.

They desire evidence that they are, in reality, included among those for whom Christ died, those to whom the promises were made, one of them being that He would never leave them nor forsake them, and another being that he that began this work in them would perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Promises made, by God who cannot lie, and whose determinate counsel and foreknowledge established it before the foundations of the earth were established, and the highest hills were formed. They realize that this is the only plan of salvation that will reach them.

The new creature now, views the old man, in the flesh, as objectively and as critically as though they were another individual, without the normal bias, preference and allowance, for their actions, that the man in the flesh has always made for himself in nature. The desires of the flesh are no longer the driving force in their life; as the old slave in, Wilson Thompson's history, said, they now have a greater master that they must follow, regardless of what their peers may expect of them or what the customs of the world may dictate; or regardless of the consequences that it may bring about in their life. The old man, with all of its lusts and desires in nature, now takes a lower piority in the life of the new creature, in Christ, in fact, the struggle begins immediately as the new man desires to be free from the temptations that they encounter in the race that is set before them. They are made to pray daily to be delivered from these temptations, and granted the power to overcome them and to do all things, as unto the

Lord, in praise and honor unto his glorious name.

This change in their life is not something that they have sought nor caused by any action or decision that they have made conciously; it is something that, as far as they are concerned, just happened to them without any prior knowledge, desire or anticipation . They had no understanding of the spiritual realm into which they have been born, and had no knowledge upon which to made a decision regarding these things, because, as the scripture says, they are a new creature, and the new creation had no more knowledge of what spiritual life is , prior to this time, than they had of their natural life before they were born in the flesh; so how can man, in this condition make a rational decision regarding this matter..

(Rom Chap 5, vs 8-11) "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." Elder W. G. Brown, a former pastor of the church in Memphis, used to say, look at that word atonement. (at-one-ment) All of God's children were reconciled unto God by being brought into a oneness with Him in the death of his only begotten Son, being baptized into his death, and being given the Spirit in their heart. Jesus told his disciples, just before he was crucified, *(John Chap 14, vs 16-17) "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."* This is how that the natural man is reconciled unto his creator, he is made one with him, (at-one-ment), and this is a perfect work, as are all of God's works. As Paul wrote, *(Rom Chap 8, vs 38-39) "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."* That reconcilliation is something that is sure and steadfast and cannot be reversed by man, or anything this world has to offer.

Paul said, *(2 Cor Chap 5, vs 20) " Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God,"* An ambassador is one that represents one party or government to another, and

speaks in their behalf, reconciling their differences, with the authority of the party or country who has sent them. All of the apostles were sent for this purpose, to declare unto those of like precious faith, the common calling, hope and experiences that they all share, those things which binds their hearts and souls in a love of which the natural man has no knowledge. Their message is food indeed to the hungry soul that has been made to see their dire need of this comforting doctrine, as John said, the things we have heard, seen with our eyes and our hands have handled of the word of life declare we unto you that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. Luke said, it seemed good to me to write unto thee, in order, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed. Paul was sent unto the gentiles to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in Christ. These witnesses of these things bear witness with the spirit, or experience, that these are children of God, and if children of God, then joint heirs of Christ. this is the purpose of the calling of those who are sent, to feed the sheep, as Jesus told.

This is how the old man is made a new creature and reconciled to God, and it says in the above text, that all things are of God. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending, and all things in between. As Jesus told a group, on one occasion, *" It is the work of God, that you believe on him who he hath sent."*

This reconciliation unto God is something that occurs over a lifetime, not that God could not do it immediately, but they are brought to this point of reconciliation by the trials of their faith, to tempt them and to prove them, not unto God but unto themselves. They are made to realize that although they feel themselves to be the chiefest of sinners, they believe, in spite of this that God is their heavenly Father and is with them at all times, and will never leave nor forsake them. As Peter said, *(1 Pet. Chap. 1, vs 6-7-8-9) "Wherein ye greatly rejoice though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations; that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love: in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your salvation, even the salvation of your souls."* The new creature in Christ experi-

ences many trials and temptations because it still dwells in this old body of flesh, with the thorn, that Paul spoke of, that was given him lest he become exalted above measure, because of the abundance of revelation that was given him. He experienced seasons of deliverance and seasons of captivity, in this bondage of flesh, that kept him ever mindful of the fact that he is not walking in his own strength, but ever dependent on the Lord to direct his steps. The Lord did not remove the thorn but said, my grace is sufficient for thee, meaning that his support was sufficient to meet all obstacles and was placed there to make him humble before him, ever realizing from whence his strength came.

Man, reconciled unto God, has been made to see what he is in nature and what he must be by grace, and the vast gulf between these two extremes. He has been made to know that, but by the grace of God he would have continued as he was, never knowing anything spiritual and never having realized the depravity of man in the flesh and experiencing the love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness faith, meekness, and temperance, which are the fruits of the spirit that now dwells in them. They pray daily that the will of the Lord be done in all things, because, they know where they would be, if left to their own devices. *(2 Cor Chap 4, vs 7-10) "But we have this treasure in earthern vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken, cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our body."* afflicted but enabled to bear whatsoever things are placed in their path.

Jesus, said, in this world ye shall have tribulations: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. He overcame the world for the new creature in Christ, not the whole world as some claim, and therefore they can, by faith, lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so readily beset them, and run with patience the race that is set before them, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of their faith. *(1 John Chap 3, vs 3) "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."*

In bonds of love
Richard H. Campbell

PSALM 27: 1-2.

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

WE REMEMBER JUST A FEW SHORT YEARS AGO!

Elders from as far as Ontario, Canada, gather for Upper Country Line Association.

By BONNIE ROSS COOPER
Senior Staff Writer

MAYFIELD, N.C. -- Strains of "Rock of Ages" flowed from the grove behind Dan River Primitive Baptist Church this weekend as thousands gathered for the 72nd annual session of the Upper Country Line Association.

The three-day meeting ended at noon today. Generations of Primitive Baptists travelled from as far as the west coast to attend the association meeting.

Visiting elders came from Alabama to Ontario, Canada.

The meeting opened at 11 a.m. on Saturday. Elder D. V. Spangler of Danville, Va., delivered the introductory sermon.

It was Elder Spangler's fifth association meeting at his home church -- DanRiver. "I was here at one 62 years ago," he recalled. With 13 churches in the association, each hosts the annual session once in 13 years.

About 2,000 people attended the Saturday meeting. Despite the rain, the number nearly doubled on Sunday.

Elder Alex McColl travelled the farthest of the visiting ministers -- 800 miles.

Two retired schoolteachers attended from the west coast -- Ruby Gilbert of California and Mrs. Ruby

Elder D. V. Spangler talks with Primitive Baptists from Washington State.

Feldman of Washington State. Others came from Tennessee, Maryland, Alabama and Georgia.

Campers stayed in metal trailers, converted buses and tents for the three-day meeting but were not so numerous as in previous years.

"When my grandfather and great-grandfather went to association meetings, they used to camp in two-horse wagons," remarked Harry Perkins, a fourth-generation Primitive Baptist.

A native of Casville, he is a member of Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church in Caswell County. Although he moved to Burlington in 1935, he still travels to church in Caswell County.

Perkins, 62, comes from a long line of Primitive Baptists which began with his great-grandfather Nathan Perkins, who was born in 1809, continuing with his grandfather William Perkins, born in 1847, and his father Willis M. Perkins, born in 1882.

In addition to Pleasant Grove and Dan River, the Upper Country Line Association encompasses Big Meadow, Bush Arbor, Gilliams, Greensboro, Lick Fork, McCray, Monticello, Moon's Creek, Pleasantville, Prospect Hill and Reidsville. Seven ordained elders serve the association of churches which have a total membership of nearly 500.

An abundance of food lined the tables under the large shelters at the meeting. Country hams, fried chicken and homemade berry pies were popular fare.

The shelters provided refuge from the rain for those who attended Sunday morning. The sermon was delivered from inside the church, but loud-speakers broadcast the message to the thousands sitting under shelters and umbrellas outdoors.

By Sunday afternoon, the rain had ended, and the elders preached from the grove.

Glancing around at the thousands gathered this weekend, Elder Spangler remarked, ***"They're the salt of the earth."***

Reprint from
THE BEE, Danville, Va.

VOICES OF THE PAST

A BIOGRAPICAL SKETCH
by Elder Lee Hanks
The Gospel Messenger, 1889

I was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, June 13, 1861, and was the youngest of twelve children, of whom were nine boys and three girls. My parents, William and Frances Hanks, were not members of any denomination. (I baptized my mother last summer.) My parents were extremely poor. My father was badly afflicted and died of consumption when I was a very small boy, leaving a wife and eight children. When my father died we were very destitute; he did not have a hat or coat to wear and we were destitute of provisions. We made one little piece of meat do us from April until late in the fall, and of course had but little meat and but very little bread. I suffered greatly with hunger, and have gone to neighbor's houses and begged for a morsel of bread. I have suffered so greatly that I could eat lard or candles, or almost anything. The first hat I ever had I was going on fourteen. I have had to labor in the winter, and my feet cracked open and the blood would run out on the cold ground. I was turned out without a home at the age of eight years and six months, and have had to wander from place to place and receive the severe abuse of infidels and wicked persons. My clothes were so ragged I have often had to tie them on me with hickory bark. I knew nothing of the advantages of going to school or even associating with good society, but was looked down upon by those who had superior advantages. I cannot find language in so short a space to tell of the severe abuse and the sufferings of hunger and cold. My mother was feeble and went from place to place.

At the age of fifteen, while living in Bland County, Virginia, where I had taken my mother, and we had cleaned out an old stable and split slabs for a floor, and we were living in the stable and a portion of the time had to exist on Irish potatoes, I was

there enabled one night to see that I was forever lost and to view the justice of God in my condemnation, yet previous to this I had been very moral at times, and had had many serious impressions about my eternal welfare, yet I did not think it would take long for me to get religion (as it was called). But there I saw the elect of God in their glorified state all adorned in heavenly draping and I was cast off with the wicked where I soon had to forever make my abode in an endless perdition with demons. Oh! the deep agony of soul that I was in! My sins were as mountains before me day and night. My heart, I saw was a sink of sin, being deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. I would go away off to find a place to pray, but no place was secret enough for me. I would fall upon the earth and my tongue would cleave to the roof of my mouth. My heart was as hard as adamant.

I tried to cry but could not cry; I tried to pray but could not pray, yet that awful burden was pressing me down as a mighty weight that I could not get rid of. I could not wear it off in society; the more I tried to work the deeper in sin it seemed to sink me. I was brought to see that I was helpless, my strength gave way, and I looked around me and the earth was shrouded in darkness; there were no charms on earth for me. I felt that I should soon die and be forever lost, and I started to go to the woods to pray once more before I died, and my strength gave way and I was sinking down, it seemed. While there in that awful dilemma I cried as I thought for the last time: ***"God be merciful to me, a poor, lost sinner."*** My burden was taken away and my whole being seemed robe filled with love sweeter than ever before, and all things in creation seemed to be praising God. A rain soon came up and I went to an old house in the field and lay down upon a plank, and I looked at my ragged and dirty clothes and it came to me: ***"These clothes are too filthy for you to wear,"*** for I felt to be clean; I felt that Jesus had cleansed me and clothed me with his righteousness as with a garment. The church was then presented to me as a home for God's elect, and the doctrine of election, predestination, salvation by grace and final preservation and resurrection of the dead was presented to me. I never felt that it was simply an angel that took up its abode in me, and that it was the child of God, but I felt that I, Lee Hanks, was changed; not that I was changed from flesh to spirit, or that my natural appetite for natural food ceased, but I loved things I once hated and hated things I once loved; I had a desire to do right, but evil seemed to be in my flesh so that I could not do the things I desired. I never had stayed under the roof of a Primitive Baptist up to this time; I knew nothing of them.

But there was an irresistible impression for me to leave and go to West Virginia. I knew no one there, but I arose and went, though

very poorly clad, and had to beg my way and was looked upon as a tramp. When I got to a certain place I had to stop, and I hired to a Methodist, and soon got to hear Baptists preach for the first time, and it seemed to me that they were the loveliest people I ever saw, and I could say of a truth, these are my people if I were only fit to be with them. But the next Sunday I went eleven miles and told the dear Baptists what I hoped the Lord had done for me, yet I could not see how they could receive me, but to my surprise they did. I was baptized in New river by Elder William Dobbs, October 14, 1877. (I had to borrow clothes of a Methodist to be baptized in.) I there received the answer of good conscience; I trusted and felt that all was well. But soon an impression which seemed worse than I could bear was upon me, bidding me to go and tell of the works of the Lord, but O, how can I? I am too poor! I know nothing but Negro language, such as "gwine," "dis," "dar," etc. I cannot read anything correctly. I am not acquainted with the Primitive Baptist doctrines well enough, and if I was I cannot tell it; I have no education and have such a miserable bad stammer in my speech, hence I could not see a qualification I possessed, and I thought the Lord would not call me.

The Scripture was continually on my mind. ***"Upon me necessity is laid, and woe is me if I preach not the Gospel."*** The burden was so heavily upon me I prayed to die to get rid of it, and I went on until my mind was almost gone and I was stricken down in my field in September, 1879. While lying there I was made willing to go and do the best I could, and on the Sunday following I made my first effort, though it was a mighty cross, yet I received an ease of mind. I have been hobbling along trying to quit and trying to talk a little ever since. I was ordained in August, 1886, by Elders J. W. Parker, John Purvis and William Galloway. I am trying in weakness to serve four churches, and have baptized about eighty-three since I was ordained. I have many ups and downs to contend with, and realize more and more of my weaknesses, but I desire a home among God's people while I live, for whenever I travel among them I feel at home, and would to God that I could see His saints united, but while some may be separated here, ere long they will all be one.

Lee Hanks

PREDESTINATION

by Elder Lee Hanks
Advocate and Messenger, January, 1936

Predestination is loved and believed by all our dear people who are willing to take the plain Bible teaching and their experience as a guide. We should not fall out with our good brethren. But our expressions should conform to

Bible teaching. Predestination is an act of God, what He does, intends, designs, purposes, appoints and determines to be done or restrict or overrule to His glory.

A person cannot build a house without predestination, -- he purposes and designs the dimensions and the kind of material of which he shall build. The good woman practices predestination in making a dress, cooking or house-keeping. We see an orchard of beautiful fruit trees; there is a design in all the kinds of trees in the orchard, and back of that there was a designer. We practice predestination in our every-day life. The merchant, the mechanic, and in all avocations of life predestination is practiced by man. The trouble with men they may purpose, design, intend and determine; but for lack of means they are often thwarted in their expectations. A wise person will count up the cost before he begins to build. Will we suppose that God will perform His work on more of a haphazard system than man?

God spoke this earth into existence out of nothing. He purposed, designed, intended and determined to create the earth. The universal, vegetable, and animal kingdoms were all created by the mighty hand of God and was all according to His predestination. God determined to make man for a purpose of His own glory. Out of the great mass of Adamites He purposed, intended, determined and designed to save a portion of the human family. He gave them to His Son and gives them grace in Him, and a sufficiency of grace to meet all the demands of the law, which He knew man could violate and bring death and condemnation upon all of the human family, – all alike fell in Adam their head and representative. Adam, of his own will without compulsion, coercion, or God's approval, acting voluntarily, fell under the death sentence. He, in his entirety, fell and died a death in transgression and sins, and all his posterity being in him. This was a fruit of man's will. He and all his posterity are justly condemned. Since then he has been described as a corrupt tree which cannot bear good fruit. Notwithstanding God saw that man would fall, He chose them-a portion – in Christ, before he fell, and all of the sins of His chosen were imputed (charged) to His Son. The Father laid all the iniquity of the sheep or chosen upon the divine Shepherd. Their names were written in the Book of Life before the world began -- before there was any of them in existence. He knows His sheep and they were predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. This number He calls, justifies and glorifies – This is the number that are predestinated into the adoption of children. God has appointed them to obtain salvation through Jesus Christ. He ordained them that they should bear fruit and their fruit should remain. He ordained them to eternal life -- and belief is a fruit of it. It is according to predestination that Jesus came here and redeemed all

the chosen who had sold themselves for nought. He redeemed them by His blood,— redeemed them to God our of every nation, kindred, tongue and people, redeemed from all iniquity. Byone offering He perfects forever all the chosen. Bears their sins in His own body on the tree. Put away all their sins by the sacrifice of Himself. He, as the Surety, Head, Husband pays all the debt- nothing charged to His people. We are complete in Him. He saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His purpose and grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest. (2 Tim. 1:9).

When I saw myself a poor, justly condemned sinner, seemingly with mercy's door closed, sweet deliverance came into my soul, and I, by faith, could look to Calvary and see all my sins were atoned for in the blood of Jesus. Yes, sweet Jesus brought this salvation to my soul. He intended, determined or predestinated to save me before He saved me. He did not save me accidentally or unintentionally. Predestination is also taught in our experience. All blessings, for time and eternity , come to us from the blessed hand of God,— which blessings He intended to bestow before we received them. All promises of God are full of His sweet predestination- what He wills, purposes, intends to do for poor needy sinners. We need the Lord in providence and in grace. His left hand (providential blessings) is under my head. His right (covenant or spiritual blessing), hand doth embrace me. How good to feel that we are in the bosom of Jesus-near His heart-where we shall be kept until He calls us to our eternal home. Is not this predestination good enough? Let us be satisfied with Bible teaching and all live in peace.

THE SEVEN SAYINGS OF OUR SAVIOR WHILE ON THE CROSS.

Brethren, it is my desire to write a few lines, using Paul's language as recorded in 1 Corinthians ii, 2: For I determined not to know anything among you, "save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." I cannot find one thing in myself to boast of, therefore all the goodness I have any hope in is that which Jesus accomplished while here on this earth. I believe that he fulfilled the law to a jot and tittle, and suffered the penalty for the many sins of God's chosen, by shedding his precious blood on the Cross of Calvary.

Feasting upon the thoughts of the crucifixion of Jesus, brings to mind the seven statements that he made while hanging on the cross. Matthew and Mark record the fourth statement, Luke records the first, second and seventh, while John gives the third, fifth and sixth. Seven signifies fullness and completeness, and I verily believe the full and complete doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is given in these

grand utterances Jesus made while suffering the intense pain and agony being nailed to the cross.

Let us first notice the first statement Jesus made, which was a prayer to his Father. ***"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Luke xxiii. 34.*** I verily believe this was a true prayer, inspired by the God part of the character that was hanging on Calvary's cross. I further believe that all true prayers are answered, therefore conclude that all when Jesus was praying for were forgiven. He was praying for those who had nailed him to the cross. We find that those who crucified him consisted of both Jews and Gentiles. Those who naturally crucified him were typical of those whose sins were laid upon his shoulders. Figuratively God's chosen among both Jews and Gentiles nailed Jesus to the cross with their sins. "The wages of sin is death," and Jesus died in the stead of God's chosen. In fact, he died that God's people might live. In the death of Jesus justice was satisfied and the sins of God's people were forgiven. We, therefore, finally conclude that Jesus' prayer while hanging on the cross was answered.

His second utterance was, ***"Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise" - Luke xxiii 43.*** He was addressing these words to one of the malefactors crucified with him. This one realized (as do all of God's children, that his crucifixion was just. He was also blessed to realize that Jesus was the Christ. Therefore he beseeched Christ to ***"Remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."*** Each time the penitent child of God realizes his own hopeless condition unless he be "remembered" by that Christ who is the sufficiency of God's chosen. The other malefactor spoke as the ridiculing sarcastic world who have never been brought to repentance and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Jesus said to that penitent one who was crucified with him. "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." I believe it is a paradise for God's chosen who feel justly condemned to die to realize that Jesus has remembered them.

The third statement of Jesus was to his mother and the disciples he loved; ***"Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciples, Behold thy mother!" - John xix 26, 27.*** The natural mother of Jesus represented Mother Wisdom, or the Holy Spirit. John, whom Jesus loved, represented those for whom he died. God's wisdom had designed the way by which justice must be satisfied. You will notice that John took the mother of Jesus unto his own house. Jesus told his disciples (John xiv. 18) that he would not leave them comfortless, but would pray the Father and he would send another comforter (John xvi) which would guide them into the way of all truth. The mother of Jesus (Wisdom, the Spirit of truth) has abode in the city of God, the house of God's chosen, or in the

hearts of his elect, the people for whom Jesus died. This comforter is a grand comforter, crying to Jerusalem, the city of God, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

His fourth cry was *"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" - Matt. Xxvii, 46; Mark xv. 34.* You will notice that the Son of God did not realize his relationship by noting the difference in address. He formerly addressed God as "Father", but after being forsaken he addressed him as "My God". Jesus was forsaken that those he died for might be owned. He could not have died had he not been forsaken. Jesus was bearing the penalty for the sins of God's elect. Justice had to be satisfied, therefore Jesus was forsaken in the stead of God's elect, that mercy could be extended them and the grace doctrine be the truth. Jesus was as destitute of the wisdom as to why he was forsaken as any of God's children are when it pleases God to withdraw his Holy Spirit.

The fifth saying of Christ on the cross was, "I thirst" - John xix. 28. The result of being forsaken after enjoying the sweet relationship was this thirst. When Jesus thirsted he was given vinegar to drink. He was given something bitter to drink so that when God's children thirst they might be given something sweet. Jesus said in his sermon on the mountain, *"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."* Jesus drank the bitter cup that the people of God might be blessed to drink of that fountain of life. Yes, he wore a crown of thorns that God's elect might wear a crown of glory. He was forsaken that we might be owned.

The sixth saying that Jesus made while nailed to the cross was. *"It is finished" - John xix 30.* He had fulfilled his mission upon earth. He had completely fulfilled law and prophecy. He had kept the law in behalf of God's children. He had suffered the agonizing pains of death as the penalty for the sins of God's people. Therefore justice was satisfied and every one of God's elect was blameless and without blemish. "It is finished" Jesus said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

John vi. 38, 39 again in *John iv. 34, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." There on the cross he said "It is finished".*

We notice in the seventh saying that he was in possession of this wonderful relationship again as he addressed Jehovah as "Father". This alone shows that God was well pleased with his Son's accomplishment. In this seventh and last statement he said, *"Father, into thy*

hands I commend my spirit"- Luke xxiii 46. There he gave up the ghost. This was a crowning work, worthy of acceptation with the Father. The voice which spoke out of the clouds to those on the mount of transfiguration proclaimed concerning Jesus. This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. Jesus said I am the way, and the truth, and the life. I believe he is alpha and omega, the beginning and the end, the author and finisher of our faith, therefore my determination among God's people is not to know anything save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

I have only hinted at the beauties contained in these seven wonderful statements of Jesus on the Cross. I have read over this manuscript and find it very imperfect, like the writer, and very brief, but I do not believe I have stepped aside from this determination not to know anything save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

In conclusion, permit me to say the editors and contributors to the Signs have been blessed to stay closer to this determination than have the writers of any periodical I have been blessed to read. May God forbid that private opinions, personal differences and confessions ever be published in this good paper which would mar the harmony of its contents. God grant its continuance. This wonderful doctrine of grace and love is soothing and comforting to this poor, sinful, wretched mortal, who through sad tribulations and experience has lost all confidence in self and the arm of flesh. As Job, my earthly possessions and wealth have been taken away, to make me realize that even temporal and natural things are unmerited and blessings of God.

Dear readers, please write me when you can.

Sent in by Elder E. J. Lambert
Printed in Signs, April 1939
Sent in by Mae M. Williams

Cambridgeport, Mass., Feb. 20, 1858.

PARABLE OF THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS. (Luke 16 :19-31)

Our Savior, in the first eighteen verses of this chapter, has been pointing out the distinction between the two dispensations. At the 16th verse he declares that the legal or Mosaic dispensation ended, and the gospel commenced in the days of John. At the 19th verse he begins a parable to illustrate his previous instructions, and to point out the relative position of the Jew and Gentile under the gospel dispensation.

By many this portion is held to be historical, rather than a parable; hence they base upon it many assumptions respecting a future state. Such a view not only destroys the obvious connection with the context, but furnishes an anomaly in the scripture teachings, which are uniformly and designedly silent respecting the state of the dead.

The terms rich and poor are almost inviably used in scripture to denote character. Here the rich man seems evidently designed to bring to view the Jewish nation or those who are under the legal dispensation. These claimed all the blessmgs of the Abrahamic covenant, and excluded the Gentiles. Such, moreover, is the temper of all the legalists, who justify themselves and despise others. Of the Savior it had been said ***"this man receiveth sinners and eateth with them;"*** and he had declared, ***"Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*** The poor man seems to bring to view those who were not Jews by nature, and who consequently were excluded from the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant, and it may be also a gracious soul — one who is a beggar.

Such is the relative position of these characters - the legalist rejoicing in his abundance, and the beggar desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from his table, as in the case of the Samaritan woman. See also the experience of David recorded in the 73rd Psalm. But in the time of John, there came a change of circumstances. Let us consider it more particularly .

The beggar and the rich man both died. The one was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom; the other was *buried,* and in Hades, or in his grave, as the word signifies, he was in torment, and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. That this describes the end of the legal dispensation, seems most evident. The close of that dispensation was the grave of Judaism. It is said that when Moses died on the mount, the Lord buried him, and no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day. The Jew is in his political and national grave - the types, ceremonies and pompous rituals of his worship have ceased, never more to be revived.

This change of dispensation affects equally the Jew and the Gentile - the legalist and the gracious soul. The poor man is carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. By what singular straining of metaphor, this is made to represent Heaven as a paradise, it is difficult to understand. Our Savior had said they should come from the East and the West, and should sit down with Abraham in the kingdom of God, and he had further declared, ***"there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth when ye shall see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out." - Luke xiii. 28.*** That this has reference to the enjoyment of gospel blessings by the Gentiles, is clearly evident. The despised beggar becomes a sharer in the promise made to Abraham; the exclusive privilege of the Jew exists no longer. The very existence of both Jew and Gentile as such has terminated, for under the gospel dispensation there is neither Jew nor Greek, and circumcision or uncircumcision availeth nothing; all that are of faith are

blessed with faithful Abraham. The Gentile, therefore, as such, no longer exists, nor yet the Jew; while the one is, through grace, admitted to share in all rich new covenant blessings, and the other is buried without hope of relief or resurrection.

Perhaps it may not be out of place here to allude to the experience of Peter when he was sent for by Cornelius, and the manner in which he was taught that the Gentiles had been made partakers of the blessings of the gospel. The history of the attempt made to bring the Gentile converts under the Jewish yoke in the early period of the church, is too well known to need recital. The spirit of Judaism, though the system is in its grave, still remains, and more than one child of grace has had experience of its proselyting and ensnaring power. We now come to a most remarkable part of this parable - the conversation between Abraham and Dives - especially remarkable according to the hypothesis of those who hold that the narrative is designed to teach us anything respecting the future state. To imagine such proximity of place between the abode of the blessed and the damned as this hypothesis pre-supposes, and upon which is based the whole system of means and appeals to the ungodly to flee from the wrath to come, is monstrous indeed. Nor does the idea of an intermediate state, or spirit land, relieve the subject of its difficulties. Nor have we on such hypothesis, any means of determining the true nature of the instruction here conveyed. But by supposing that the spirit of Judaism, or legality, is here endeavoring to infuse itself into the gospel system or upon gospel characters, we have a key for unlocking the whole. The legalist, finding himself deprived of the exclusive benefits he had before claimed, now seeks aid from the gospel. All he wants is a little help. He is reminded of two things : first - he has had his good things. *"He that doeth these things even he shall live by them."* Second - there is a great gulf between him and the aid he seeks.

A question may arise whether a legalist ever comes to a state where he finds his resources fail him, and be reduced to that state of torment here expressed. It may be answered that the parable is designed to teach the fact that the legalist has no longer any hope from the law. Even Abraham, whom he was so proud to claim as his father, declares that his day has passed. Under the first covenant, natural blessings were promised and enjoyed; but whatever they might have been they have passed away, for that dispensation has come to an end.

But if it were not so - if there were still any hope from the provisions of the law - the gospel can do the legalist no good. There is a great gulf between law and grace, over which those on one side or the other cannot pass. You cannot take a sinner out from under the law, and place him under the gospel; nor can

you bring a gracious soul under legal requirements. The attempt to introduce conditions into the gospel, or to amalgamate the two systems, is equally destructive of both, and utterly futile for the relief of the soul. The idea that if the sinner does all he can, Christ will do what he cannot do, is annihilated by the teachings of this parable.

The believers in an indefinite atonement and conditions of salvation, are welcome to all the comfort they can draw from the parable. Dives was evidently a believer in "missionism," and true to the promptings of his legal nature, and the spirit of his system, he asks that Lazarus may be sent to his brethren at his father's house. Whether any particular meaning is to be attached to the number five as indicating ten tribes of Israel, since by the supposition one is made to represent two tribes, the house of Judah and Benjamin, is perhaps immaterial to our present examination. It may give some strength to the idea that these six brethren were designed to represent nominal Israel, or all who are under the covenant of works. The spirit of his request is that the gospel may be preached, and its blessings presented to those under the law. Abraham refers him to the law and the prophets. *"What things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law."* Besides, these pointed to and had their fulfilment in Christ. - John v. 46.

But the legalist questions the efficacy of these means and would have something more powerful used. Let but one go to them with the gospel they will repent. Whether some reference is not had in the words "from the dead," to the resurrection of Christ, or to the children of God who have part in his resurrection, would be, perhaps, an interesting enquiry. It is a favorite idea with the legalist that some extraordinary means resorted to, would be sufficient to arouse the sinner and lead him to repentance. At any rate, that the preaching of the gospel, the presentation of offers of mercy, and earnest appeals to the unregenerate, are the means of grace, and God's appointed instrumentalities for the conversion of sinners. The answer of Abraham teaches another lesson. *"If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."*

There are two or three lessons taught by this parable which are worthy of most attentive consideration. The difference between law and gospel is evidently pointed out, as well as the relative condition of those who are subjects of one or the other. Many contend that at the close of the legal dispensation, the entire race came under the gospel, as it was supposed to have been previously under the law; and that now, although salvation is not attainable by the deeds of the law, yet it is attainable by and possible to all by faith in Christ. Then would the parable have shown us that Dives as well as Lazarus, was received

into the bosom of Abraham. Instead of this the law still holds its subject, demands full satisfaction, and condemns the least violation. Therefore is he condemned already, and the wrath of God abides upon him. In this sense the legalist may be said to be in his grave. Dead in trespasses and sins, no offer or hope of life presented. Christ, however, has redeemed his chosen ones; they are delivered from the dominion and curse of the law; by virtue of the part they have in the resurrection of Christ, they are raised with him, an entrance is ministered to them abundantly into the everlasting kingdom, and their life is hid with Christ in God.

To cross the gulf thus formed between the two systems, is impossible. No power can divorce the sinner from the law; nor can a gracious soul be separated from Christ, his Head. That system which recognizes terms or conditions of salvation, to be performed by the sinner, is but an ineffectual attempt to cross the gulf. The mere enunciation of this gospel can never benefit one who is in his legal grave. Indeed, the gospel is a source of discouragement and torment to a legal soul, as it annihilates his hopes and destroys his life; as in like manner, legality is opposed to the hopes and comforts of a gracious one. 2 Cor. ii. 16. The one is the law of the spirit in Christ Jesus, the other is the law of sin and death.

But it would not be well to dismiss the parable without alluding to the idea that we are here taught something respecting a future state. Some suppose it brings to view an intermediate state between death and the resurrection; others, the final, fixed condition of the righteous and the wicked. But whatever are the views thus held, all who believe in the means system, insist that it teaches the conscious state of the dead, and thereupon base those earnest appeals which are supposed to be so effectual for the conversion of sinners. On the supposition that the parable refers to a future state, the rich man appears to have been a believer in spiritualism as well as conditions of salvation. The similarity of his language to that of many now, is singularly significant. *"Nay, father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead they would repent."* Little wonder is it that spiritualism secures so many converts, when what are denominated evangelical pulpits so continually resound with Tetzel-like appeals respecting the sufferings of the damned or the enjoyments of the blessed — appeals of which spiritualism is but the inevitable result.

Brother Beebe, thus imperfectly have I sketched some of my views touching the leading points of this much used, and as it appears to me, much abused parable. I send them to you with the sincere desire that, should you make use of them, they may be of some service to the members of our Father's family.

Yours for the truth,
Leonard Cox, Jr.

(The above is taken from the

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OBITUARIES

OBITUARY OF NANNIE CARTER

It is with a heavy and humble heart, and at the request of one of the deacons of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, that I endeavor to write the obituary of this dear sister in Christ. Even though I am weak, with God's blessing, I will be able to do so. All power comes from Him.

I have known Sister Nannie for over fifty years. We lived close together and our husbands died the same year, 1979.

We spent much time together and talked on the telephone almost every day before she became unable to live alone. We talked about our Lord and Savior and what he had done for us, so blessed to be counted, we hope. among God's chosen people.

Sister Nannie was unable to live alone for over eleven years. She spent this time in nursing homes in Graham, North Carolina. She didn't get to come back to church many times, but she loved her church and brethren. I never got a letter from her that she didn't ask about the dear ones that were sick and always wanted to know how they were.

Sister Nannie joined the church on May 24, 1959, and remained a faithful member as long as her health permitted, and she was a firm believer in the doctrine of grace. Surely, we can say with David in Psalms Chapter 34, verse 19: ***"Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."*** Sister Nannie surely had many afflictions along the way, but we believe she is now asleep in Jesus, awaiting His second corning.

Sister Nannie was born on September, 1908 and departed from this life on March 12, 2000. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery beside her beloved husband where she had longed to be to await the coming of our dear Lord that glorious day when Christ shall bring them forth to forever be with Him in all His glory. Sister Nannie is survived by one sister, Louise Allen, of Burlington, North Carolina. She was preceded in death by her husband, James P. Carter, and her father, William Allen, her mother, Martha Blackwell Allen, eleven brothers and sisters." The funeral service was conducted by Elder Kenneth R. Key.

Gradie H. Strader

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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HOW GREAT THOU ART

O Lord my God! When I in awesome wonder — Consider all the worlds Thy-hands have made, — I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder, — Thy pow'r through-out the universe displayed,

(REFRAIN)
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee; — How great Thou art, — how great Thou art! Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee; — How great Thou art, — how great Thou art!

When through the woods and forest glades I wander— And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees; — When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur — And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze; —

(REFRAIN)

And when I think that God, His Son not sparing; — Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in; — That on the cross my burden gladly bearing — He bled and died to take away my sin;

(REFRAIN)

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation— And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!
Then I shall bow in humble adoration— And there proclaim, my God, how great Thou art!

(REFRAIN)

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EDITORIAL

JOHN 10 CHAPTER 27TH VERSE

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."

ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS

As requested, I'll try to write a few lines on what the above means to me as Jesus taught his people while here on earth.

First we must believe he was God in the flesh when on earth, and that he did come to the earth at the appointed time of God. This for a special purpose; to do the will of the Father that sent him, and was given power over flesh to give eternal life to all that the Father had given him.

Then we wonder not that he could call them my sheep. They were His, are today and will forever be His. Given to him by God the Father, who couldn't give them to the Son if they were not His, could He?

They are sheep, not any other animal, the most humble of all animals we read in nature, and most likely to need a leader or shepherd, ***"And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice."*** This gives me to think of a natural shepherd, have you ever heard of one that didn't know sheep from goats or some other animal or did you ever hear of a shepherd that was blind or had to be helped with his flock.

If in nature he was hired to look after another man's sheep, they could not be ***"my sheep". "My sheep hear my voice,"*** care for any animal for a while and see if he knows your voice, see if it does pay attention when you speak. Then think of this great shepherd that speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. Can speak and it sounds like thunder or in a small still voice. Adam & Eve in their day "And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden. Don't tell me His sheep don't hear his voice. Not only hear his voice but follow him. His sheep are looking for guidance all through this life, that may be

compared to a pasture, some time the grass is so green and tender, then a change of season that makes it dry and lifeless.

Do not his sheep wait so often to hear the voice of the shepherd? He is too far away, it's not the right time to be called to a new pasture or location, but that doesn't keep them from crying out Lord help or I perish.

His sheep won't follow anyone or shepherd that comes along, they must recognize his voice and must be made ready to move from the barren land they are on. As long as a sheep is satisfied where he is, I don't believe they are looking for their shepherd or care to be moved.

From a spiritual standpoint I don't think they would be looking for Him until they have eaten all of self-works, pastures of dead works, no new pasture they know of, or try to find. Then they are looking for His appearing and listening for His voice. ***"I know them, and they follow me."*** They will never follow a stranger for they know not the voice of a stranger. We read to know God is life eternal, so as much as he knows his sheep, I believe they know the shepherd and will some day follow him to that eternal pasture where the grass will never turn brown or dry and the stream of living water cease to run, For ***"my sheep hear my voice,"*** Do we not trust we have heard His voice and will follow His to that rest that remains to His sheep.

In hope,
Elder J.R. Williams

CORRESPONDENCE

My dear Sister Mary Frances,

It's 11:15, first Sunday in May. I can see many of you sitting in Malmaison Church. It is your communion Sunday. May the dear Lord bless you, listeners and Elders who speak. You asked me sometime ago to write to you. I don't know how. There have been a few moments when I would think of you and very pleasant thoughts were with me. As I sit here now, where are the good words?

The dear Lord willing I would tell you that He has been, is and ever shall be King of this universe and I hope of my small world. I was born to a man and woman who loved each other and me. If indeed that hope I call the biggest part of my life is a good hope, then that King knew me in the annals of time and He predestinated me to be in this chair this hour. My sister and I grew up hearing no bad language or ugly stories in the house we lived in. Today that is a beautiful heritage and I hope I thank God for such.

So how did I become so contaminated with sin? I am not willing to tell anyone the depths of miry clay from which I hope the dear

Lord Himself has raised me. I don't know. I do hope and often beg that good Lord to forgive me.

To one who knows himself to be a sinner, the good news that God

sent His Son into the world to save such from sin is the most wonderful news ever to be heard. And we want to hear this news again and again. I love the words, *"Go and shew John again... ."* What beauty and love and patience! I realize very much that I may not understand these words correctly. But I love them.

My experience of being with a church is a little different from what I hear some little ones express. I never had a longing to be united with the church. I had known for a long time exactly what I was and, I fear, still am. The sinner. There were five Sisters in Springfield who were as Mothers in Israel to me. One yet lives. And Elder Tench encouraged me to come to the church. These are facts but not enough to *"join a church."* A certain day came when I wanted to tell these people that I loved them. I stood on Saturday night after service before second Sunday in April 1968 and told these people, *"I hope I love you."* To this day I want to tell the dear ones I love them.

I love to visit many brethren, hear the Gifts speak of the Giver of all gifts. May He who is Our Father be pleased to bring us together often.

With love I hope
Reidy

May 2000

ARTICLES

"But this he spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." John 7:39

Does this mean that the Holy Spirit was not yet given at all, in any measure, at any time or does it mean that the Holy Spirit was not fully given as it was manifested at Pentecost after the Lord ascended?

What was the condition of men prior to Christ's resurrection and Pentecost? Were any given a spiritual faith or did they possess only a natural faith? Were any given spiritual life or were they altogether in nature? Were any given any understanding of spiritual things or were they in total darkness? Was there an indwelling Holy Spirit in anyone prior to Pentecost or were they only acted upon externally? Were any of them of old given grace or were they altogether held under the strictness of the law? Were any of them made to look for the spiritual redeemer or was all their hope in the works of the law? Were any caused to grieve for sin or were they completely hardened in self righteousness? Were any of the children of Israel given to look beyond the natural service of the law to the reality or did they all

think that there was salvation by the sacrifice of beasts? Were any made to embrace the spiritual promises of God or did they altogether reject them? Were any of the prophets made to have any understanding of the prophesies they were given or were they blinded to their meanings? Were the disciples of Christ given to understand any of the things He explained to them or were they still in ignorance? Were they given to love Him with a spiritual love or was it altogether natural?

God only knows the answer to these questions. He alone is able to give satisfactory answers. We can only guess what the answers might be unless he reveals his truth unto us. We lack wisdom but God said ***"if any man lack wisdom let him ask God who giveth all men liberally and upbraideth not."*** May God be gracious unto us and show us of His truth that we be not children tossed about with every wind of doctrine.

Has God always had a people to show forth His praise? He said that he would not be left without a witness. Righteous Abel offered the sacrifice of faith and God had respect unto his offering. Noah by faith built an ark that preserved life. He found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness. He was the very friend of God. Lot vexed his righteous soul from day to day with the wicked deeds of those around him. By faith Isaac took a wife of his kindred as did Jacob. Joseph, by grace, was sent before his family into Egypt in order to preserve their lives. Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter but chose to suffer afflictions with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Was not the spiritual love of God in Ruth proved as she went with Naomi? She went against nature in forsaking her people and her gods. Were not David and the prophets given to understand some of the things they were inspired to utter concerning the coming of Christ, His sufferings and His glory? Was not John the baptist filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mothers womb? Did not John the Baptist truly recognize the Son of God whom he baptized? Was not Elizabeth filled with the Holy Ghost when she heard the salutation of Mary, and the babe leaped in her womb? Did not Peter understand, when the Father in heaven revealed to him the truth about Jesus? He declared ***"Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God."*** Jesus said, ***"blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven."***

Also, it is written ***"Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in***

them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." 1 Peter 1:10-11.

All those old saints of God, of whom this world was not worthy, many of whom, by the grace of God, laid down their lives for the truth's sake surely had some knowledge of the purpose of God in those things. Has there not always been a remnant according to the election of grace? Are they not the very seed of Christ with a measure of true spiritual faith, understanding and love of God abiding in them? Is it not evident from the scriptures that those of that remnant before the coming of Christ, believed and embraced the promises of God concerning the spiritual kingdom? According to the scriptures, these all lived in the true faith and died in it being sustained by the spiritual Hope which was in them. Did they not look forward in faith to His coming in the flesh and ultimately in glory? Did they not see Him afar off as the sinless Lamb of God who would take away their sins? Were they not steadfastly kept in this Hope by grace until the end?

After listing many of the faithful children of God such as Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Sarah along with their faithful deeds, God caused the following scripture to be recorded for our instruction and comfort, if we be His. ***"These all died in faith, not having received the promises (the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh did not come to pass in their lifetimes) but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." Hebrews 11: 13.*** Were not they, before Pentecost and we after, if we be his, kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed at the last time?

There was a great outpouring of the spirit of God at Pentecost such as was not known before and has not been known since as was indicated by the great miracles which were manifest in those times. Does this great outpouring of the spirit of God at Pentecost nullify the spiritual experiences of the saints before then? God forbid. Or rather was it a confirmation of their spiritual experiences and prophesies? God only knows the fullness of these things and we hope He will make the truth known to His own, who by grace are made to earnestly contend for the faith once given to the saints.

Written in love, I hope,
Elder J.B. Farmer

JOHN 14:25-26.

These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

VOICES OF THE PAST

ISAIAH 22 :22-25

"And the key of the house of David will lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open and; none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons. In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the Lord hath spoken it."

And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder." There can be no question as to whom the prophet has reference to. The prophecy of Isaiah is a wonderful book, for there is given to you and to me the beauty of Christ. This prophet was one among the many who presented, even before the birth of Christ, Christ in his humility and Christ in his glory. The gospel of Christ would be incomplete, wherever preached, if we did not present Christ both in his humiliation and in his glory. Those who fail to preach a fullness of the doctrine of salvation by sovereign grace, fail to present Christ in his glory - in his glory in the sense that when he entered heaven it was with a finished work. Among the last words the Saviour uttered before he died, as he bowed his head on the cross, were, "It is finished."

In the courts of the land it is customary to accept the testimony of dying people: much more would we accept the testimony of the Son of God when he was dying. Whatever he had under consideration when he bowed his head and said, "It is finished", was finished. In another place Jesus said, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do"; and the work the Father gave the Son to do, was to save his people from their sins.

I awoke this morning with this scripture: ***"He shall save his people from their sins"*** - a message brought to a fearful person when Joseph was questioning about taking the virgin Mary as his wife, knowing she was a virgin, and with child; for God sent an angel to Joseph, and said, ***"Fear not Joseph to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."*** So the work of Christ was to save his people from their sins; and, if there had been one sin against any for whom he died that was unatoned for in his redemptive

work, his work would not have been finished, and he would not have saved his people from their sins.

Here the prophet presents him as having the key (not keys, but key) of the house of David upon his shoulder. This was an important key, wasn't it? the key to the house of David. It was said, "In that day," speaking of the day of Christ when he should come, ***"In that day shall there be a fountain opened to the house of David"*** - the same house we are talking about here. A fountain shall be opened for sin and uncleanness. The fountain that is spoken of to be opened to the house of David for sin and uncleanness, was the blood of Christ that was to be shed on Calvary's cross: wherein the fountain would be opened, opened to the house of David, to the Church of God, to the ones for whom Jesus came into the world to redeem. It is the same fountain mentioned in the hymn: ***"There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emmanuel's veins; and sinners plunged beneath that flood, lose all their guilty stains."*** Isn't that the kind of salvation we long for, rejoice in, and glory in? It is the kind wherein Christ has been presented, and is presented, as the one who has the key to the house of David laid upon his shoulder.

In this same prophecy Isaiah views the work of Christ (before Christ was born) as if it had actually been accomplished. He said, ***"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given."*** The son was given before the child was born, for Christ existed from all eternity: ever one with the Father. ***"His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace."*** Isn't this a wonderful description of Christ ? Do you know anywhere in the Bible where there is any description that exceeds this discription which Isaiah gives of him even before he is born ? ***"Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace."***

I think that if we could just read that in the scripture sometimes, you and I, it would help us. Wouldn't it?- that the Son of God was all this. The prophet doesn't stop there, but says, ***"The government shall be upon his shoulder."*** The government of his people shall be upon his shoulder - and he has never divided that authority. ***"And of the increase of his government there shall be no end."*** This same prophet, in speaking of Christ with the key of the house of David on his shoulder, said he shall not fail or be discouraged 'till he sends forth judgement unto victory. No, Christ was to never fail or be discouraged until he sent forth judgement unto victory. These things are described of him before he even took a body of flesh.

In the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, the prophet brings to us Jesus in his suffering and in his glory. ***"Who hath believed our report? and to***

whom is the arm of the Lord revealed ?" Christ is the arm of God; for God has made bare his arm, and has said in his word, *"Mine own arm shall bring salvation."* Then he describes Christ in which he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, as a root out of dry ground to his own nation; that, when they should see him, there was nothing about him that they should desire him. He was despised and rejected of men, but he said again that it pleased the Lord to bruise him. *"He hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all"*. Laid on whom? on Jesus Christ. *"And with his stripes we are healed."* And that is the only thing I have ever known that would heal our great disease of sin — the stripes of Jesus Christ.

"All we", the prophet said, *"like sheep have gone astray; everyone turned to his own way; and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all."* He does not leave him there, but he shall see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied; and by his knowledge shall he justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities.

"And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open and none shall shut; and shall shut and none shall open." I wonder how often you and I, in our daily life here, pause to think about the greatness of the power of Jesus. I wonder how often we realize that Jesus Christ has the keys to death and hell; but on this as this prophet presents Christ, it is as God laying upon Christ the key - laying on his shoulder the key to the house of David. A key is something by which we obtain an entrance into a building. And the key to the house of David (there is only one key) , man has never had. It has never been laid upon the shoulder of a man; but this key was laid upon the shoulder of Jesus Christ. What do we mean by the expression, the key was laid upon his shoulder? we mean that all the power to open salvation to lost and ruined sinners, rested on the shoulder of Jesus Christ. He said in the word of God, that God looked, and of all the people there was none to help: Not that he needed any help, but there was none to help because God had plenty of help. Therefore, he said, *"Mine own arm has brought salvation; and my fury has upheld me."*

Should not each of us have in our heart this morning the deepest interest in one who has the key to salvation; who has the key to death; who has the key to hell? The prophet is speaking here of salvation, when he said *"I will lay upon his shoulder the key of the house of David."* No one has entrance into that house only as is provided by the one who has the key; and he shall open and none shall shut - he is the only one who shuts this door, and he is the only one who opens it. He is just as sovereign in one as he is in the other. If God has purposed salvation for a sinner, no power under heaven can prevent that sinner

from having that salvation; for he shall open and none can shut. *"I am the good shepherd of the sheep." "The good shepherd layeth down his life for his sheep."* He doesn't only have the key to the house of David upon his shoulder, to open and none can shut, and shut and none can open, but he himself is the door into the house of David.

"And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place." I have seen people drive nails into the wall of the home, and sometimes they don't find a piece of solid timber to place the nail. Put a little weight on the nail, and down comes whatever is hung upon it. For a nail to support a burden, the nail must be fastened in a sure place. And God said of Jesus Christ, *"I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place."* I will fasten him as a nail where I can hang all the glory of heaven upon him. What a wonderful thought! I will fasten him; I will fix it so that he will support all that I lay upon him: I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place. I will fasten him in such a way that not one whose salvation depends upon him will ever fall. I will fasten him in such a way that every sin of his people shall be completely put away in his atonement. Have you seen Christ as that, my friend? Has God given you a faith to see all you need in this world; to keep you; to guide you; to save you in heaven in Jesus Christ?

I like to preach Jesus Christ. I have been trying it a long time. I feel to those who are called, that time is too precious for us to talk about anything but the Lord Jesus Christ. I want to preach him; I want to sing to him; I want to pray to him. *"I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place."* I will fasten him in such a way that he will support all I lay upon him. God has determined that wherever salvation comes to a sinner, it comes from a sovereign God, and is given him graciously, gloriously through the merits of Jesus Christ. I would like to talk about a few of the things set forth in the scriptures wherein Christ is fastened as a nail in a sure place.

Do you remember when Jonah was commanded to go to Nineveh and to cry against the wickedness of that city? Jonah in his trip to Nineveh, was to be a type of Jesus Christ; for Jesus said in the 12th chapter of Matthew, *"Ye wicked and adulterous generation, ye seek after a sign, but no sign shall be given you but the sign of the prophet Jonah, and as Jonah was in the belly of the whale three days and three nights, so must the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights."* Jonah was a type of Christ: the type whereof Jesus referred to even before he died and went into the grave; but as he said Jonah was in the belly of the whale this number of days and this number of nights, so must the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth this number of days. You know that when Jonah started to Nineveh, he had decided he would go his own course. He had decided that he

wouldn't go to - Nineveh where the Lord had commanded him to go; and he entered a ship, and God sent a great storm upon that ship; and the waves tossed the boat to and fro. Why was the storm sent? because Jonah was there; and Jonah was to be the deliverer of all the people upon that ship, wasn't he ?

The first thought of these people when the storm overtook them, was that we will just toss out the heavy material on the boat, and we will be all right. There are a lot of people who feel in the first work of grace, that if they just had time things would be alright: they'll live a better life, they'll accept the Lord Jesus Christ, they'll turn over a new leaf; but if Jonah's people travelling with him could have taken the heavy things out of the ship and lightened it, and taken care of the situation, it wouldn't have been like it was. But they lightened the ship, and it did not take care of the situation, for God's eye was upon Jonah. Finally, when they couldn't take care of the situation, they cast lots to see what the trouble was; and, you know, the lot fell on Jonah - and it didn't fall by chance, either. Jonah is a type of Christ. The lot fell upon Christ to die for us: I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; I will lay the key of the house of David upon his shoulder - and there the lot falls upon Jonah. He's fastened as a nail in a sure place. They looked for Jonah, and he's asleep: he wasn't worried; and they awoke him. You know Christ was asleep on the boat when his disciples were on the sea of Galilee, and they awoke him, and said, Master, don't you care if we perish? And he just rebuked the waves, and there was a calm. They ask Jonah, *"Who are you ?" "And he said unto them, I am a Hebrew; and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land."* I'd like to say that truly in my heart this morning, (and you would more than anything you know), I fear the Lord; I fear God. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom; and people who have the fear of God, have some knowledge of God. He's a type of Christ; and he said if I'm causing all the trouble on the boat, just pitch me overboard: The storm couldn't cease until he went overboard.

"For I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place." Peace couldn't come to us until Christ goes down into the deep; until the grave received him. Until death receives him, no peace can come to you and me. I must go overboard before the winds will cease blowing, and the tempest is calmed. He said, Put me overboard, and it was calm. *"I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place."* He fastened Jonah there in the right place. He handled all the situations: everything was in the hand of God. It even tells us that he had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah; and as Jonah went down into the deep, so Christ our Lord went into the grave three days and three nights.

"And he shall be for a glorious throne in his father's house." It is not natural for us to think of a throne as being a person, is it? We think of a throne as a place where the king sits. But Christ is presented here as a nail fastened in a sure place: he shall be for a glorious throne to his Father's house; and I will hang upon him all the glory of his Father's house. Whatever the Father's house is, and wherever it is, God has said in his word that he would hang all the glory of that house upon Jesus Christ. If this could be divided between him and men, then he would not have all the glory of his Father's house. The gospel of Christ - wherever men preach it, he is preached as the one who has accomplished the work his father gave him to do; he is preached as the one who has accomplished a finished salvation, and entered heaven: been crowned with glory and honor, and been seated at the right hand of God. *"And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his Father's house."*

"In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in a sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the Lord hath spoken it." There was a day that that nail was to fall, and was to deliver all that hung upon it; and that day was when Christ died upon Calvary's cross. He was cut down, and all that hung upon that nail, all the depended upon it, are delivered from condemnation. No wonder, then, the prophet could say, *"I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place."*

If a man owned ten thousand dollars, and he paid every penny of that ten thousand dollars but one dollar, he would still be in debt. If Christ redeemed his people from every sin except one, that sin that is left unatoned for will sink us into hell. It's either eternal redemption accomplished through the blood of Christ, or there isn't any redemption. It's either a doctrine that Christ has saved somebody, or nobody is yet saved. Which doctrine do you believe? Do you believe that Christ has made an atonement and an offering for salvation, and nothing is sure about it yet? If you believe that doctrine, I want somebody to tell me what glory he has in heaven. Tell me what glory the Son of God has in heaven, if nobody has been completely saved yet: if his blood hasn't atoned for sin; if he hasn't put away sin. Suppose we started out to do a job of some kind, and it took fifty years to do it; and after forty-nine years the job was given up. The work is as incomplete, in one way, as it was when we started it. But, *"I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place."*

There are only three theories in the world that men accept: religiously: that Christ has completed a complete atonement for the sins of his people and put them away

with the sacrifice of himself, and is in heaven and has been crowned with the glory of a conquering king; or that sin has not yet been atoned for; or that if He saves sinners, they will be saved if they accept his work of atonement. If you believe a doctrine like that, there is a possibility that all the blood of Christ was shed in vain, and that not a single sinner would ever be saved in heaven. The gospel of Christ presents him in his glory. ***"And I will lay on him the key of the house of David, and he shall open and none shall shut, and he shall shut and none can open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place-"*** He shall be cut down; and when he is cut down those who hang upon his atoning work, are delivered from bondage.

I want to exalt his name, and you who have been taught of him, you want to feel the preciousness of his love in your heart. You want to feel that assurance that he died for you. You want to feel that renewal of your blessed hope that he has given you, day by day. You want to feel what the world cannot give you, and that's the peace that he sent.

When we shall come to quit the walks of men - we don't know when it will be. When we see each other here, we don't know we will see each other any more. How often it is when I go to church, and before I go again, someone is gone. But, my friend, let me say this to you: you will fall where it is the Lord's will to take you, and when it's his will; and if you have that blessed faith, that blessed hope in him, all is well. If your soul is resting alone in the merits of Him, nothing shall harm you.

(Sermon by Elder D.V. Spangler, Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, February 22, 1959.)

Sent in for reprint by
Burnell B. Williams

THE SOUL OF MAN

Brother Beebe:-Why is the soul or spirit of man immortal? Or, in other words, why did it not die when the body dies? Be assured, I remain yours with my best wishes.

Wesley Spitler

Reply -- The question proposed by our esteemed brother involves a mystery quite beyond our depth. We have never been able to define the soul of man, nor to tell the whys and wherefores of its interminable existence. Aside from divine revelation, very little.can be known of the soul or spirit that distinguishes the human family from the rest of the animal part of the creation of God. But the scriptures supply to us that instruction which human physiology is altogether incompetent to afford-***"God breathed in man the breath of life and man became a living soul."*** And Paul has testified that the first man Adam was made a living soul. Again we are instructed by the words of inspira-

tion in regard to the spirit of man that goeth upwards, in distinction from the spirit of the beast that goeth downward. However impossible it may be for us to comprehend the soul and spirit of man, we all feel a consciousness that we possess both, but why the soul shall survive the dissolution of the body and continue to be in happiness or misery forever and ever, to our limited mind admits of no satisfactory answer short of the light of divine revelation. God has condescended to inform us of the composition of man as a mere human being, of distinct elements of his composition. The material substance of the man was made of the dust of the earth, but it was not until God breathed in his nostrils the breath of life that man became a living soul. As the union of these elements constitute us living beings, or living souls, so the separation of these component parts is called death; but not, as we understand it, to signify the cessation of existence of vitality only in relation to the body which is composed of the dust of the earth. When the Redeemer died on the cross he committed to the hands of the Father his spirit, and as he said to the dying thief, *"This day shalt thou be with me in paradise,"* we conclude there could have been no suspension of vitality in the soul or spirit of either Christ or the penitent thief to whom this consoling assurance was so graciously given. The soul identifies the man, for man became a living soul, and in the common language of the scriptures, men are called souls. The assurance to the thief could not relate to the body of the thief, for his body was not laid with that of his Redeemer in the new tomb, nor was it preserved from seeing corruption. It was therefore something apart from his body that was with Christ in paradise. The body being of a material substance, we can trace it to its silent resting place in the bosom of its mother earth; we can watch the process of decomposition until the per*fect accomplishment of the decree, "To dust shalt thou return."* We see it so perfectly returned that it can no longer be distinguished from its kindred dust. Were it not for the light of revelation we should there bid it an eternal farewell, without any hope of its resurrection. But the departed soul and spirit we can, by nature's light, trace no farther than the time of its separation from the body, and were it not for inspired instruction, we might conclude that it dies with the body, ceases its vitality and discontinues to be. But, God be praised, the words of truth assures us that the spirits of the just are made perfect, that they are with the Redeemer in the paradise of God. Paul when speaking of his departure from the body spoke of departing to be with Christ. That there is really a separation of soul and body in death we are certain from many declarations of the scriptures — among others the words of our Lord concerning the rich man. To him it was said, *"Thou fool, this night thy soul*

shall be required of thee!" "Fear not him that can kill the body, but after that have no more power; but fear him who is able to cast both body and soul into hell." The material bodies of the guilty sons of Sodom were probably consumed with material fire which God in righteous judgment rained from heaven upon them, but these very inhabitants of Sodom are now suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. From all of these considerations with many others presented in the scriptures we conclude that in death there is not only a separation of soul and body, but that the soul immediately on its separation enters a state of paradise, or sinks to a state of interminable woe and misery. The spirits of just men are made perfect in glory, and the spirits or souls of the wicked are cast into hell.

Brother Spitler and our readers, permit us to remark that the scriptural word immortal with its derivatives, as used in our version of the Bible are not used in the scriptures simply to express the idea of interminable existence. The wicked must continue to exist in hell under the wrath of God, where the smoke of their torment shall ascend forever and ever, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched; but still this state of their existence is denoted by another word of very different and opposite meaning from that of immortality, which in scripture is synonymous with the words eternal life, and Christ only hath immortality, dwelling in the light, and it is only in him that the saints have immortality.

For this is the record that God hath given us of eternal life, and this life is in his Son. This is the true God and eternal life. This life is hid with Christ in God, and they unto whom it is given shall never perish, but because Jesus lives, they shall live also.

The order of the final resurrection of the bodies of the saints at the last day presents a strong conformation of the position we have taken. For when Christ shall descend from heaven at the last day to raise the dead and to judge the world, according to the scriptures, he shall be revealed personally, from heaven with ten thousand of his saints; that is, as we understand it, with all the spirits of his saints now made perfect. ***"For when he who is our Life shall appear,"*** says Paul, ***"then shall we appear with him in glory."*** The dead in Christ shall rise first, and those saints who shall then be living on the earth shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye, and these raised up bodies, raised with spiritual and immortal life shall meet them in the air and so shall they be ever with the Lord. These are the children of God which are born of incorruptible seed by the word of the Lord that liveth and abideth forever. ***"He that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and he that liveth and believeth on me shall never die. Believest thou this?"*** So spake Jesus to Martha.

On another occasion he said, *"He that eateth this bread that came down from heaven shall never die."* There is that then in Christians that cannot die, cannot cease its vitality, but that something is not the vile body, or the mortal body, or the Adamic nature born of the flesh, for all flesh must die, and return to the dust. But that which is born of God is incorruptible and secure from death. The earthly house of our tabernacle must be dissolved and fall; but the children of God have a house which is not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. The outward man decayeth; but the inward man is renewed day by day.

In regard to the bodies of the wicked, it is sufficient that our dear Lord has told us not only that the saints shall rise, that he will raise them up at the last day, but he has also said that the hour shall come in which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and they shall come forth, they that have done good to life eternal, and they that have done evil to a resurrection of damnation. And God will judge the world in righteousness at the last day, by that man whom he hath appointed, and that according to Paul's gospel.

We would not be understood as confounding the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, with the natural soul of man; for all men have natural souls, as we have attempted to show, but all men have not the new man described above. All who are born of God in the new birth receive an implantation of spiritual and incorruptible life. But the soul which is quickened by this implantation and the life implanted in the soul are distinct things in their nature and origin, but identified in the person of the regenerated, in whom Christ is formed, the hope of glory. So at least the subject appears to us. If we are right, may the Lord have all the glory; but if we err, may he forgive us, and may our brethren be blessed with patience to bear with our weakness; for if we know the desire of our own heart it is to utter only the truth as it is in Jesus Christ our Lord. Brother Spitler and brethren, in our experience we feel an internal consciousness that we have a soul that must survive this poor frail body, and that it must exist after the earth and seas shall have passed away. This soul, as well as this body, we found, to our sorrow, was defiled with sin. But the holy law of God spake in thunder when it said to us, *"The soul that sinneth it shall die."* And until Christ was revealed to and in us we were in bitterness of soul in view of our guilty, helpless and as it seemed to us, our hopeless condition. But—

"When God revealed his gracious name,
He changed our mournful state."

Then great joy and gladness sprang up in our heart, and our sorrowing and sighing, at least for a time, fled away. We have seen the

time that we would gladly have believed that we had no soul to live after the death of the body; but as well might we seek for repose and comfort on a bed of embers, as for a release from the strong conviction that we had a soul all stained with guilt, that must suffer the righteous judgments of God, when time shall be no more, unless God should reveal a way that his justice and truth could be maintained and salvation abound to the chief of sinners. But why it is so that the soul must so exist in wealth or woe forever, we can only solve upon the ground that it was even so because it so seemed good to our Creator to organize us. It is now enough to know that it is so, and to rest assured that God in making man a living soul had an object worthy of himself. And however dark and mysterious the footsteps of our God may seem to our very limited understanding; we desire to be still and know that he is God. May we be preserved from vain speculation on this and on all subjects; may we rejoice in all that has been revealed, and trust him for all that he hath seen fit to withhold from our understanding .

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y., June 1, 1854

LUKE 22:42.

Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

I CORINTHIANS XV. 58.

"THEREFORE, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

The power and force which scriptural words carry with them is due to the Spirit, which takes of the things of Jesus and revealeth them to him who readeth, and in whom grace aboundeth, and it is only by the exercise of the Spirit in us that we are enabled to eat and be comforted by the revealed word. Again, in order to attain unto that which is in the mind of the inspired writer, we dare not detach a sentence or a verse from that which goes before or which follows after, but search the written word, for we have the precious instruction which fell from the lips of Jesus: " He that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.

" *Therefore.*" This word is used by the writer, referring to the things of which he has been speaking, as a reason for the admonition which follows, and which brings to our faith's view the weighty and precious things which the gospel sets forth to our gladdened hearts, namely, ***"How that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."***

We must know the one, to follow the other. The word *"therefore"* is important, for if the things of the gospel *"be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."* Therefore to follow Jesus we must know Jesus.

" My beloved brethren." This expression of the blessed relationship of the saints of God is not a mere salutation, as men of the world use the word *" brother,"* carrying with it simply a meaningless expression, but these words came out of the apostle's heart, and not merely from his lips. The words, filled with their proper meaning, would say, Because you are in my heart to live and die with you, because with me you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope is the same hope, our hearts are joined together with the cords of that love which God the Father bestowed upon his Son, and upon all who fear his name and look for his appearing, therefore you are my brethren beloved. Now the things which are in my heart I say unto you: " Be ye steadfast," firmly fixed and established in the belief of the truth that Christ died for your redemption and arose again for your justification, and that he ever liveth and sitteth at the right hand of the Father, continually making intercession for you, He who is steadfast listeneth not to the voice of a stranger, to enticing words nor evil devices, but contendeth strenuously and firmly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. He looks well to the anchor which steadfastly holds his frail vessel which rideth the waves in safety because of the anchor (Christ Jesus). To be. steadfast the eye must be single to the glory of God, knowing none other gods, save the God of salvation, pressing forward, turning neither to the right nor to the left.

" Unmovable." This is a strong word and implies strength. The winds of false doctrine may blow with all their power and force against an unmovable child of grace, but cannot turn him from the way his mind and heart are set. He standeth upon the foundation of all truth (the rock Christ Jesus). He knoweth the security of the place of his feet. How refreshing to meet a brother or sister who is not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, under any circumstances, and who is proud to be numbered with the sect everywhere spoken against, and who is weaned from the milk, drawn from the breasts of mother Eve. When we remember that God is faithful in performing all his promises, that his faithfulness faileth not, that he remembereth us in mercy, that his love is an everlasting love, that he doeth his pleasure in heaven and in earth, that all his ways are goodness and his paths are paths of peace, that he is the Potter and we are the clay, that he maketh us vessels of his own pleasing" and what he does is right, that the righteousness which is in his Son he has imputed unto us, remembering

I say, all these things we become strong in the Lord, recognizing the power of his might. Thus are we " unmovable," firmly fixed and built up on our most holy faith. ***"How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter,"*** walking, in all the beauty and order of the house of God, walking no more by sight, but by the faith of God's elect in the secret of his love.

"Always abounding in the work of the Lord." To abound is in every case to manifest life, therefore in order to abound one must necessarily be alive; in the life of the children of the kingdom sin abounds, and also grace, the one in conflict with the other. Now you will ask, What is the work of the Lord, to which we are admonished of the apostle! Belief in the Lord Jesus Christ is the work of the Lord in us, and causes us to suffer because of the abounding of sin in our mortal bodies, and these are the sufferings of Christ, for it is the work of the Holy Ghost which causeth the conflict and bringeth about the suffering. So the apostle says, ***" For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."*** The belief in the Lord Jesus Christ that a man once lived who was called Jesus Christ, does not make a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, but your belief must be wrought out and made manifest in your mortal bodies, which work is by the Spirit of Christ in you. It is not sufficient to abound once in a while in the work; a Sunday christian and a weekday sinner is more of a hypocrite than a seven day sinner, for the one knoweth the way and walketh not in it, while the other knoweth not the way, so walketh in ignorance. If we suffer, we shall also reign with him," and our peaceful reign in his kingdom with him is the consolation which aboundeth by Christ. This is a continuous work in the life of faith.

Forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." The knowledge of the truth of God in you makes you that you are ***"steadfast,"*** that you are ***"unmovable,"*** and that you do abound in the work of the Lord. The apostle is attesting to that which already exists in you: love for the brethren, a desire for holiness, a conviction of sin, a fear and trembling in coming before the throne of grace, a knowledge of our poverty, wretchedness, blindness and weakness; all these build us up in the faith which is set before us, showing us that it is the work of the Lord in us, and that it is not in vain, because it leadeth us to his mercy-seat and to the house of our Master's brethren. We also know that our labor is not in vain, because the power and sweetness of the gospel lead us into an earnest desire for heavenly things, and turn us away from the things we once loved. It shows us, too, that it is truly the work of the Lord in us, for we know that we could not do this work of ourselves, it is in opposition to every desire of the carnal mind, for it

humbles our pride and makes us to be despised in the face of a vain world, for our garments are humility, and our ornaments *"a meek and quiet spirit."* These things fulfill the law of God, and not the law of the flesh. May the love of God and the knowledge of his truth so occupy our hearts that all our labor in the Lord may be to the glory of God, and to the lifting of Jesus on high.

B. F. COULTER.
PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." – *1* PETER iv. 12.

THE *"fiery trial,"* then, is not a strange thing which happens only to a few of the Lord's family, but is more or less the appointed lot of all. Do we not hear the Lord saying to his Zion, *"I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction?"* All then that are chosen must pass through the furnace of affiiction, and all know experimentally the fiery trial, for by it they are made partakers of Christ's sufferings. But this is indispensable in order to be partakers of his glory. *"If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."* Thus they suffer with him, *"that when his glory shall be revealed, they may be glad also with exceeding joy."* And this suffering with and for Christ in the furnace of affiiction salts the soul, preserves it from corruption, communicates health, gives it savour and flavour, is a token of interest in the everlasting covenant, and is a seal of friendship and peace with God.

Elder J.C. Philpot

ISAIAH 60:1.

ARISE, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the One Hundred Seventieth session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church, Holly Ridge, North Carolina on October 7-8, 2000. All who believe and love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited.

From Highway US-17 in Holly Ridge, turn on Sound Road and go approximately one mile, turn left on Stump Sound Road and the church is 1/2 mile.

Elder Gene Lupton
Association Clerk

EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the next session of the Eastern Kehukee Association will be held at Hancocks Church on September 30 and October 1, 2000. The church is located near Ayden, NC. Those coming from the Raleigh direction should follow Hwy. 264 East to Greenville, NC. Take Hwy. 11 South to Ayden. Turn left on Hwy. 102 East. Go about 3 or 4 miles outside of Ayden and at the first intersection, turn left on Country Club Road. The church will be about one and a half miles on the left. Services will begin each day at 10:30 am. We invite our brethern to visit with us.

Naomi Coker
Association Clerk
252-823-0786

LITTLE VINE OLDE PREDESTINARIAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Little Vine Olde Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association will meet with the Newfound Church located on Brier Creek, Wyoming County, West Virginia at 10:30 a.m. The Saturday before and the fourth Sunday in August, 2000. All those who love the truth are welcome.

Directions:

Travel west from Pineville, WV on Route 97 about 12 miles, turn south on Brier Creek Road across a concrete bridge. Then go about 2 miles to Fan Rock, hold right at road fork. Travel about 3 miles to the meeting house. Located on left just past natural gas pumping station.

Elder J.B. Farmer
606-474-4327

SMITH RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Smith River Primitive Baptist Association will convene the Lord willing with Old Union Church, Floyd County, Va. on Friday before the first Sunday in September. Dates Sept.1, Sept 2, and Sept. 3, 2000.

Directions to Old Union Church. Traveling North or South on State Rd. 221, turn onto State Rd. 787 (Indian Valley Rd.) about 12 miles South of Floyd,Va. Go 5.7 miles and turn left onto State Rd 622 (Indian Valley Post Office Rd.) Go .7 (tenths) mile and turn right onto State Rd. 754(Max Mountain Rd.) Go 2.1 miles to Old Union Church located on the right.

We invite all of our faith and order to meet with us at this meeting.

Association Clerk
Wilford G. Parsons

SOUTH OUCHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 23 & 24, 2000.

Rehobeth Church, located at El Dorado, Arkansas — five miles North on Highway 7, and one-half mile West on Highway 335, will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
(318) 778-4217

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 2000

Eld. Raymond Goad, VA	$2.00
Mrs. Helen Pittman, TX	2.00
Mrs. Florence Maxey, VA	5.00
Mrs. Frances Jarvis, MD	2.00
Clinton & Mary Barron, LA	2.00
Eld. Carl Terry, VA	2.00
Marvin E. Terry, VA	2.00
G.T. Newman, TN	7.00
Mrs. Doris Giles, VA	2.00
Eld. J.D. Hamrick, TX	4.00
Mrs. Leola Meador, NC	2.00
Mrs. Harold May, AL	12.00
Mrs. Carrie McDaniel, VA	2.00
Eld. C.B. Davis, Jr., NC	2.00
Steve Everett, VA	7.00
Mrs. RLee Houchins, VA	2.00

OBITUARIES

LEONARD FOSTER

God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to call from our midst another dear member, Brother Leonard Foster.

Brother Leonard was born on July 6, 1914 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. He was the son of the late Dave Foster and Queen Finney Foster. Later he moved to Eden, North Carolina. He worked in Fieldcrest Mills. On December 20, 1934 he married Elva Brown. They were blessed to have one daughter, Shirley Foster Grant. Brother Leonard was a kind and loving husband and father. He provided well for his family. He was a good neighbor and was always willing to lend a helping hand, whenever he was needed.

Brother Foster was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace. He received a precious hope and asked for a home at Dan River Church on September 26, 1982. He was baptized by his dear pastor, the late Elder David Spangler. Brother and Sister Foster loved and supported their church. They attended regularly and enjoyed the meetings and the sweet fellowship of the brethren.

After Sister Foster's death, Brother Foster attended his church until his health began to fail. In his declining years he continued to support and attend his church as long as he was physically able. Brother Leonard was loved and respected by

his brethren, family, friends and neighbors.

Brother Leonard departed this life on July 30, 1999. He is survived by one daughter, Shirley Foster Grant of Ringgold, Virginia. His loving and devoted wife, Sister Elva Brown Foster, predeceased him.

His funeral was held in Dan River Church by Elder H.W. Wray. His body was laid to rest beside his wife in Dan River Church Cemetery.

May all who mourn his death be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father who never makes a mistake. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away... bless his Holy name.

Written by
Sister Phyllis H. Stroud

OBITUARY OF BROTHER EDGAR SAMUEL HORSLEY

It is with a sad heart that at the request of Old Mt. Church, I will try to write in memory of our dear beloved brother in Christ,and deacon, Brother Edgar Horsley.

Brother Horsley passed away, April 23, 2000, at Roman Eagle Memorial Home, after several years of declining health. He was born, June 26,1916, in Franklin County Va.

He was the son of William F. Horsley and Mary McCrickard Horsley. On Dec. 9,1934. He was married to Virginia Holley Horsley, who predeceased him.

His entire life was spent in Pittsylvania County,and Danville, Va. His early life was spent as a farmer.

He was employed at Sunbeam Bakery for 32 years,until he retired in 1978.

Brother Horsley and his wife Sister Virginia, joined Old Mt. Primitive Baptist Church, May 19,1984, and was Baptized, July 5,1984, at Old Mt. Church, by Elder Julian Williams, assisted by Brother Burnell Williams.

In 1985 the Church looked in to the qualifications of Brother Horsley as deacon, He was ordained, Dec. 14,1985.

As A member and Deacon, He served well, the Church he loved so much. He was a firm believer of Salvation by Grace and the helplessness of man. He was also trustee of the Church. Survivors are two daughters, Margurate H. Mumford of Danville, and Jone H. Wyatt, of Wilmington, N.C. one brother, Ernest H. Horsley, of Glade Hill,Va.

Six grandchildren, eight great grandchildren.

His funeral was held at 11 A.M.Wednesday, at Old Mt. Primitive Baptist Church, by Elder C.B.Davis Jr. and Elder Julian Williams. He was layed to rest by his wife Virginia, in the Holley family Cemetery at Whitmel, Va. to wait the resurrection.

May God reconcile and comfort the the family, as only He can do.

By Sarah Barker
Elder C.B. Davis Jr. Moderator

BEULAH FRALIN NICHOLS

Sister Beulah was born Aug. 8, 1904. The daughter of Robert L. Fralin and Ollie Turner Fralin. She grew up with four sisters and two brothers. Sister Beulah was married to Argie Nichols and to this union was born one daughter, Lela, who is married to Raymond Peters.

She had three grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

Sister Beulah joined Paynes Creek Church Aug. 22, 1954 and was baptized Oct. 3, 1954 by Elder Odell Thompson who was her pastor at that time.

I knew Sister Beulah as a neighbor, a cousin and a good friend. She was a firm believer in the Primitive Baptist faith and attended church as long as she was physically able.

She died April 8, 2000. Her funeral was held April 10, 2000 at Gardner Funeral Home in Floyd by her pastor Elder Hale Terry and Rev. David Stetler. She was buried in Vista Cemetery in Floyd Co.

We will miss Sister Beulah, but believe our loss is her eternal gain.

Written as suggested by members of Paynes Creek Church.

Ora T. Nichols
Elder Hale Terry, Moderator

PROVERBS 27:1.

Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

DEACON HOWARD LESTER PETERS

It has been pleasing to the Lord to remove from our midst our friend, brother and deacon, Howard L. Peters, after several years of suffering.

Brother Peters was born Oct. 5, 1912. He passed from this life April 30, 2000.

Brother Peters joined Riverview Primitive Baptist Church Bassett, Va. on Sat. May 21, 1949 and was baptized the next day, May 22, 1949 along with his wife Sister Clara Peters. They were baptized by Elder Cecil Turner.

His survivors are his wife Sister Clara M. Woods Peters, daughter Lois Scott, son Wilson Peters, Six grandchildren and ten great grandchildren.

His funeral was held at Flora Funeral Service at Rocky Mount Va. by Elders Lane Carter, W. T. Conner and Carl Terry. His body was laid to rest in Roselawn Burial Park, Martinsville, Va. to await the resurrection morning when Christ will come in the clouds. He will, send his angels to the four winds to gather his elect to meet him in the air. So shall we ever be with the Lord.

May we be resigned to God's will and our loss. Our loss is his eternal gain.

Humbly Submitted
Elder Carl E. Terry

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

TO ELDER D.V. SPANGLER,

I've never seen God
But I know how I feel
It's people like you
Who make him so real

My God is no stranger
He's very strong and good
He doesn't ask me to weep when I pray
If I could

He's the stars in the heaven
A smile on some face
A leaf on a tree, or a rose in a vase
He is winter, autumn, summer and spring
In short God is every real and wonderful thing

I wish to feel his presence
More often than I do
I would if there were
More people like you

He's the roses of sharon
He rules the open sea
I have a hope in my breast
He saved a wretch like me.

Annie H. Hooker

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EDITORIAL

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

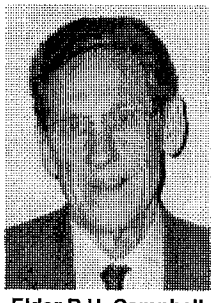
Elder R.H. Campbell

But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

In the beginning God said, let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after its kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth; and it was so. And the earth brought forth the grass, and herb yielding seed after its kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind; and God saw that it was good. Fruit is the product of a tree or plant, and is always the same, because it is from the seed which was created in the tree, or plant and was so designed by God. The fruit will always be the same from any given seed for it comes from the original which was so created and determined in beginning that it should bring forth after its kind; it cannot bring forth any other kind of fruit.

(Math. Chap 7, vs 16-20) "Ye shall know them by their fruits, do men gather grapes of figs, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit: but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bringeth forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the furnace. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." These are Jesus's words in his preaching, which is popularly entitled, *"The Sermon on the Mount,"* and is his first recorded sermon, as per the gospel according to Mathew which, according to the scholars, is said to be the most complete account of Jesus's doc-

trine. Jesus, in this sermon begins with the law, with which the Jews were familiar, and carries them on into their fuller and richer meaning in the gospel day. He takes the points of the law as given to natural Israel and goes on into the depths of the spiritual teachings that are hidden therein, the teachings that can only be understood by man when revealed unto him by God, who is the author of the law, by the indwelling of His Holy Spirit.

The fruit of the law was the manifestation of a very basic truth: that man as he is in nature cannot keep himself, he cannot attain unto righteousness by his own efforts because of the weakness of the flesh, and since he was created subject to vanity he desires and lusts after all that his eyes behold and he will get it by hook or by crook, unless providentially hindered. In other words, he will not be inhibited by the demands of the law, but rather chooses the natural inclinations of the flesh which are greed, lust, adultry, fornication, uncleanness and all things that appeal to the natural mind, things that are an abomination unto God and are contrary to everything that is good; they come from the self love that man has for himself and the desire to be as God and in control of all that he surveys. Since time began the sin of the world has come from man's lust for the things that he does not have; and which he will take, by force if necessary, to satisfy these desires. This characteristic was demonstrated in the life of the first two men, born of a woman, and it resulted in the death of one and the eternal condemnation of the other, the fruit of the man as he is in nature, the desire to be pre-eminent in all situations.

This has been true since that day, the flesh has always been at enmity toward God and anything that is Holy and good; as Paul wrote, the flesh lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, and this warfare will continue as long as these two entities exist in this natural man. Cain and Abel, as well as Jacob and Esau, in one sense of the word, represent the flesh and the Spirit of man. Cain and Esau are of the earth, earthy, and always will be; therefore, they represent the devil and his kind which is evil from birth, while Abel and Esau represent the new man, the chosen generation which is beloved of God, and whom God himself witnesses that he hath formed for himself before the foundation of the world. As in the case of Jacob and Esau, it is written that before they were born, before they had done any good or evil, God loved one and hated the other, so in their life here in time, this difference is but made manifest and the enmity between these two manner of people has been, and always will be, demonstrated by their antagonism, each toward the other in all ages of time.

Jesus, begins his sermon by stating that the children of God are blessed characters, and tells how this blessedness is manifested in

their lives, in their walk here on earth. He quotes the law, as recorded in the old testament, and expands upon it to interpret its true meaning in practice. The letter of the law did not incorporate the full extent of the wisdom behind the commandments because the natural man could not understand the reasoning for these laws being imposed upon them. Jesus said, ***"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, (or, in other words, the law says) Thou shalt not kill: and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of judgement: But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgement: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."*** Hatred, in the heart of man, for all that is good and the lust for power and prestige, is the cause of all of the problems of the natural man; the results of this hatred in man's heart is sin. Hatred is sin whether it results in murder or any of the other many outward manifestations of it in the heart, or not. Killing is but the evidence of, or the fruit, of that hatred which is in the heart, and Jesus said that this is that which defiles the man. Man, being as he is in nature will always bear this fruit, unless a stronger man than he is comes in and takes over his house and gives him a new heart with different desires.

The natural man, in his best estate is but flesh, and God said that his spirit would not always strive with man because he is also flesh. Isaiah said, ***(Isa Chap 64,vs 6) "But we are all as an unclean thing, and our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away."*** When God said that he would not always strive with man, I believe that he was referring to the law, which he gave unto man and with which man strove to keep, but could not, God never strove with man, in the normal sense of striving to gain the mastery, or attempted to do anything, because it is done as soon as it enters his mind, for he said, even as I have thought, so shall it come to pass. With God, all things are possible, but with man it is impossible for him to change his ways, ***(Jer. Chap. 14, vs 23) "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or a leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil."*** Man is as unable to change himself from evil, to that which is well pleasing unto God, as the Ethiopian and the leopard are to change their existance, from the way they were as created therefore, in the flesh, his fruit will always be evil because the seed is evil resulting from the vanity that he was created subject to.

The law was true and good, it contained the rules and requirements that natural Israel was to adhere to as a demonstration of their

faith and allegiance to God and their consideration and respect for the rights and mutual welfare of their brethren, the heirs with them of the promises made unto Abraham by God. In the keeping of them, God would bless them and protect them in their journey here on earth, cause them to prosper in their offspring, their cattle, the blessings of nature and he would deliver their enemies into their hands. Jesus is saying that although the law is good, as written, the Spirit of the commandments go much farther; the desire to keep it must proceed from the heart of the individual in praise and thankfulness unto God, for his mercy and not just in the performance of the ritualistic sacrifices and ordinances required of them under the law, as given unto them by Moses on mount Sinai. As, when Saul disobeyed God's commandment when he told him to completely destroy Agag the king of Amalek and all of the people, men women children and cattle; Saul saved Agag alive and kept the best of the cattle for a sacrifice unto the Lord, but, this was contrary to God's instructions and so he was removed from the throne of Israel, *(1 Sam Chap 15, vs 22) "And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."* Obedience is the fruit of the faith which Israel had in God, and this is that which is well pleasing unto Him, for it renders praise unto him for all of his mercy and loving kindnesses that he has shown them in life, and the promises of blessings to come in the future, as his chosen people.

The Apostle Paul said, speaking of those who lived and died in this natural faith, under the law, *(Heb. Chap. 11, vs 39-40) "And these all, having received a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."* The law was good, but, it was but a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, and therefore they could never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. In them, there was but a remembrance each year of the sin they were so subject to, not a sacrifice that put away that sin, but an acknowledement that they were still sinners.

There is but one salvation, and that is in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, whether under the old law or under the new covenant, as the Apostle Paul said, *(1 Cor Chap 12, vs 5) "There are differences of administrations , but the same Lord."* The law was natural, written on tables of stone, but salvation was still by faith in God, and his forgiveness for sin in the person of the Messiah that would come and take away their sins under the Mosiacal law. The new covenant was written in the fleshly tables of the heart and

God said, I will be to them a God and they shall be to me a people, they shall no longer teach every man his neighbor saying know the Lord for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest, for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more, but their salvation is by the same grace of god. That grace which was determined in the beginning and is wrought in time, under different administrations, but by the one Almighty God, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost, the triune diety.

In the thirteenth chapter of Romans the Apostle Paul said, in referring to the Jews and the Gentiles, in his illustration of the bringing in of the Gentiles into the kingdom, as the pruning of the branches of the tree, that they, the Jews, "as concerning the gospel, are enemies for your sake, but, as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes", and then in verse 32, he says, "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." This is saying, as I understand it, that the Jews who are enemies to the gospel, or, do not fellowship the gentiles, nor the gentiles them; yet they are all children of God but just in different administrations of the kingdom of heaven, here on earth. Each group, only has that which is given to them, and that was for a purpose and a reason that is known only to God, and who would question that wisdom? The gentiles cannot boast to the Jews, nor the Jews to the gentiles of any superiority in themselves, but each can only say, ***"O the depth of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out!"*** and be thankful that they have, each in their own time and way, been given a hope that keeps them following after the footsteps of the flock, in the way that has been revealed unto them. They are all as the apostle Paul admitted that he was, ***(1 Tim. Chap. 1,vs 13) "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious, but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief."*** they were all in this state of ignorance and unbelief, until the light shined into their heart.

(John chap 1, vs 17) "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Jesus came the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. His death paid for the transgression of Israel under the first testament, and in his triumph over death and the grave he hath abolished the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain (both Jews and Gentiles) one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God, in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby. ***(2 Cor. chap. 5, vs***

17-18-19) "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation: to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them: and hath comitted unto us the word of reconciliation." This is the only way that sinful man could be reconciled to a just and Holy God; by his being made a new creature, in Christ, by his having been born of the Spirit, which is the reconciling factor, even as Jesus told Nicodemus, *"Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of heaven."*

Once Jesus, while assembled with his disciples just after his resurrection, it is recorded that He breathed on them and said *"Receive ye the Holy Ghost, Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."* and this is referring to this new birth which ocurred on the day of Pentecost, originally, and in turn to all as they are brought into a knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. This outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the apostles, on the day of Pentecost, is that which makes them a new creature in Christ, and fulfills the prophesy of Jesus as recorded in, *(John Chap. 14, vs 12) "Verily, Verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father."*

This new creature goes forth, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and manifests the fruit of the spirit which is within. The fruit is the greater work that they shall do which render praise and honor unto their God, because of Jesus ascending unto the right hand of the Father, ever making intercessions for them. Jesus told the multitudes in his sermon on the mount, ye are the light of the world, let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven. The good works are the light that so shines, and gives light, strength and courage, unto all that are in the house, the household of faith that is, and they are made to rejoice in the light of this love that shows forth from a pure heart. Paul says in *(Eph. chap. 2, vs 10) "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them."* These fruits do not originate in the heart or mind of the natural man, they are not anything for which he can boast, they are gifts from God which are sent unto the church that causes them to rejoice as they are made to realize that greater is that which is within them than that which is in this natural world. They glorify God when they

are blessed to see these manifestations of his power; their faith is renewed in the riches and glory of the kingdom of heaven, their hope of being partakers of that inheritance which is laid up for the saints of God is strengthened, and they go on their way rejoicing and praising God for his bountiful blessing shown them in this low ground of sin and sorrow.

Oh, that they could only feel the manifestation these characteristics in their lives, every day, wouldn't it be a wonderful and glorious experience. This is the influence that the Holy Spirit has on their lives, but it is not always present with them and they have absolutely no control over it, one way or the other. Solomon said. *(Eccl. Chap. 8, vs 8) "There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death: and there is no discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it."* Even in nature, the trees do not bear fruit all the time, only at certain seasons, and so it is with the children of God; when the grace of God shines upon them they bear fruit and it is profitable unto the household of faith and all rejoice with them.

The fleshly nature of man, as he was created subject to vanity, sees everything only as it relates to his own personal desire and purely selfiish motives. His every thought is for self gratification, to possess everything that he sees and to control all things around him. The fruits of the Spirit are completely opposite from this, they are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance; everything that is good, holy and beautiful. They are the characteristics of the spiritual man that set him apart from the world around him and bears witness to others of like precious calling, that they are brethren. When Jesus told Ananias to go to Saul, he was afraid of him, but when Jesus told him that he was a chosen vessel unto him, Ananias, went gladly and called him Brother Saul; and when Ananias told Saul that Jesus who had appeared unto him in the way sent him, he knew that it was of the Lord and gladly followed Ananias' instructions. These evidences are the fruit of the Spirit and they bear witness with the spirit of the saints that they are indeed brethren in the Lord, even when sranger in the flesh.

The fruit of the Spirit is manifest every time that brethren come together, in the Spirit, sing the songs of Zion, dwell in peace and harmony, hear the preached word and rejoice in the love and fellowship that is their mutual heritage. They tell each of their own personal experiences and hear others tell how God has dealt with them in bringing them to the knowledge of the truth, share the fruit of the Spirit that they

have been blessed with, and pure unbounded love is shared by all. In nature, when we hear a persons tell of their experience in the things of the world, that's fine, but we don't care to hear it again, but we have heard some experiences many times, and they are just as thrilling the hundredth time, if the Spirit is present, as it was the first time. This is the season when the fruit is most precious and love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance abound. Surely, this is what Paul was referring to when he said, *(Eph. chap. 2, vs 4-5-6) "But, God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he hath loved us, even when we were dead in sins hath quickened us together with Christ,(by grace are ye saved:) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:"* There is no other place, on earth, where such love and fellowship abounds as in seasons like these, and certainly these seasons are the fruit of the Spirit that God blesses his children with in their journey here on earth to keep them following in the way that leads unto eternal life. This is the day the Lord hath made, and all of his children will rejoice and be glad in it, and they will remember and relive it many days hence.

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brother Wilbanks,

I received your letter and was very glad to hear from you. I thank God that I did not offend you. I am not very good at letter writing or putting into words what I believe the word of God teaches, so that is why I quoted Elder Thompson. He expressed it as I feel the Lord has taught me. Every time I have read it expressed differently that scripture would come into my mind so strong. I hope you know I am writing in love and a love of the truth. I don't say that you are wrong (please understand that), but I still believe the way Paul wrote it. *"Christ the first fruits, afterward they that are his at his coming."* So, as you say, we should search the scriptures and pray for light and understanding of them.

I am 73 yrs. old and my writing is not so good. But I have been a member of the Primitive Baptists since 1958, I, like John, have to be shown over and over again. I feel God has kept me all my life, even when I was born (I weighed 2-1/2 lbs.) and the doctor said I couldn't live. But God had a life for me to live and has kept until this day and will as long as I live. Time will not permit me to tell all he has done for me on my pilgrimage. Many times I have seen His hand snatch me from sure death if His hand had not been there.

One night I was in the bed and I just felt I was flying all to pieces. I cried out, Lord Jesus please do something for me. I lay on my back with my eyes closed and felt a presence over my head. I opened my eyes and looked into the most loving, compassionate eyes I have ever seen and said, Lord Jesus it is you. And the sweetest peace came over me and I lay there and listened to Amazing Grace being sung in me and went to sleep.

Dear Brother, none of us know for sure we are one of His, but we have a hope that we are. We know we have had a change in us that we did not do ourselves. We do not think like we used to. We know we are sinners lost except God chose us in Christ and he saved us by dying on the cross and his blood was shed for us. No, I did not ask you to write to me, but I hoped you would, and every day when I went to the mail box I hoped there would be a letter from you. So you know I was very glad to hear from you. I feel like David when he said, Is there not a cause. We are in the world but not of the world and have been killed to the love of the world and the things of the world. My own family thinks I am sorta strange not to want to go on trips and have things of the world. I don't have VCR and a computer, and I don't watch T.V. except to get the weather report. I live alone. I have one child (daughter) and God has blessed me that she loves me so much and is always there to help me in every way she can. Two sisters live close by and we love each other, but they are more after the things of the world. So if we don't agree on what I wrote to you we still have a brother and sister love in Christ Jesus.

I did not mean to write so much, but it seemed like it just flowed out. One day the Lord will make it all plain to us when we see Him as he is and be forever with Him. But I find the Old Man wants to have something here such as good health and more peace of mind. But I pray God to help me be content with such things as I have in my circumstances. Most of the time I am so sad and restless I can't sit still to write very long, but He has blessed me to be still to write to you. So all things do work together to them that love the Lord, who are the called according to His purpose, but even as I pen these words I am crying out, Do I love the Lord? Am I one of the called? Do you have these feelings? Hope you will write to me again. Receive this in love.

Please remember me in your prayers. I am so destitute in prayer, but the Lord said He would hear the prayer of the destitute. My prayer is that God will lead us into all truth, for truth is what binds us together. He has promised, Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free. Let us stand in the liberty wherein Christ has set us free. Paul wrote, Ye who are troubled rest with us.

Cast down but still
hoping in the Lord,
Your little sister in Virginia,

ARTICLES

A desire has been given to write down a little of the way which I have been brought concerning the call to the ministry, if indeed I have a call. To me, it has been more of a leading than an audible call. My earliest impressions were feelings of unworthiness, inadequacy and the fear of God. I was a quiet child, full of questions and doubts and fears. I remember a time when I was just barely able to read. My father would have me read from the bible when we sat upon the bed in the evenings. One time he said unto me, "Some day you will be a preacher." I said nothing but was terrified within and have been terrified ever since. I began to take notice of anyone called a preacher. In our part of the world there were no old baptists that we knew of. The only knowledge of any preacher I had was from the radio or the places my family would take me. When I was a very small boy, my father took me to a religious meeting that was held in a large auditorium. I think it was probably some kind of revival. The "preacher" spoke of the end of the world and the mark of the beast and many other scary things. He said that if one didn't receive the mark of the beast that he couldn't buy or sell anything and that he would starve to death. I felt sure after that I would never grow up. I thought that the world was coming to an end very soon and that I would have to die rather than receive that mark. (Much comfort has been given in recent years concerning these things)

My childhood, in many ways, was very unhappy. My parents moved often, had many disagreements and finally divorced when I was about nine years old. My brother and I were thrust upon my grandparents who were very gracious to take us and give us a home. My grandmother had been a country school teacher and was interested in seeing that we were kept clean and clothed and fed and that we got to school on time. We were sent to the missionary meetings for Sunday school and vacation bible school. I remember one outstanding incident there. One day during bible school, we were to bring a money offering. I told my grandfather and he gave me a quarter, which was a lot in those days. When we were asked to give our offerings, one of the pillars of that place stood and said, "If any of this money is coming from liquor, I don't want it. I can smell the whiskey on it." Well, my grandfather was a guard at a distillery and I knew that he earned the money there. I was crushed and could not give the money and returned home weeping and gave the money back to my grandfather. I think I never returned to any of those meetings. Also, when I was about ten years old, I blinded one of my eyes in a childhood accident. My teeth came in very crooked and I thought that I was the ugliest person in the world. I was very self-

conscious and could not participate in any plays, dances or other things the other children seemed to enjoy. I would become physically ill when it came time to do those things.

When I became a teenager, I had overwhelming feelings of sinfulness that I could not relate to anyone. I thought surely that hell was my home and deservedly so. I tried to read the bible because, somehow, I thought that in it were all the answers to every problem. I read it to try to get some relief. I did not understand much of what I read but what I did understand condemned me again and again. I took up smoking and cussing and telling off color stories trying to fit in with the crowd but never could. Every way I turned seemed to be misery.

In my late teens, I was shown my dearly beloved wife to be. She had experienced many of the same things that I did during her young life. She was also raised by her grandparents. After about two years of dating, we were married. We thought that we would try to live right and that we should attend religious meetings somewhere. Again, we did not know that there was such a thing as old baptists. We decided to join the missionary baptists where the man who performed our marriage ceremony officiated. Of course they put us to work teaching Sunday school and working with youth groups etc. We tried to go along with the things they taught us concerning tithing, good works, witnessing, scripture reading etc. but were miserable. It was about that time that God in his mercy and love began to reveal some of his deep truth to my dear wife and myself. I hope I am not greatly deceived about this. In the fear of God and feeling our wretched state, we were given a hope in the finished work of the resurrected Christ. As we earnestly searched the scriptures, it appeared to us that there were many things being taught there that were contradictory to the scriptures. We found no record of Sunday school, bible school, and missionary societies, Boards of directors, etc. We were shown, we hope, some things about election and predestination. When we raised any questions about the system or its contradictions in doctrine, the questions were either side stepped or ignored.

When one of the young ministers there saw that we were so full of questions, he suggested that we attend a college where bible history and the original languages of the scriptures were taught. He said that I might get some satisfactory answers if I were to study the bible for myself in the original language. I never went there to learn to become a preacher. Rather, I was desiring to be shown the truth, not by men, but hoping that God would reveal his truth to me in the scriptures. I had a great desire to go as directly to the original writings as possible. I must say that the original writings do not reveal the truth but rather confirm the truth.

After much anguish of soul, we sold our house, packed our belongings, gathered our small children and were set out on a journey. This was, I believe in the year 1967. We felt to be pilgrims and strangers on our way to a place we knew not. I hope we, by grace, were looking for a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God. After enrolling in a college which had a bible department, I found that the most learned bible teaching professors there were worlds away from what we believed that we had been shown. In our sincere discussions with them, even in private conversations, over a period of about three years, our views were thrust aside and discounted. We attended every kind of so called church we could find, thinking that surely there must be some people that believed like we did. All the places we went seemed to have pretty much the same views. They seemed to believe that if one did enough good and kept the ten commandments, one would finally reach heaven. Nowhere could we find any comfort or agreement. We were very fearful and full of doubting but were made to keep pressing on.

During this time, I was asked to fill in for the preacher at a small country assembly of missionary baptists. I had never spoken publicly and was of such a nature that I thought it would be a physical impossibility for me to do this. On the other hand, I thought that I must go where I was led even if it resulted in my utter humiliation. Looking back on it, sometimes I think I can witness with Job when he said, ***"Though he slay me, yet will I trust him."*** I begged God to show me if truly he had called me to preach or if it was just of the flesh. My greatest desire was that I not bring shame or reproach upon the cause of truth. I did then and have done many times since, when we have been brought into dire straits not knowing which way to go, ask God to show us the way with much assurance. I asked God to make it plain to me much in the same way that Gideon of old did. To my great astonishment, his answer was to preach. I think I will never forget the scripture that was brought on my mind the first time I stood. ***"What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?"*** I do not remember what was said but I do remember that it was my great desire to render all praise and honor and glory to the God of heaven and earth.

We were later called to serve a missionary baptist assembly, which we did for about three years. As the doctrine was revealed, I could not help but set it forth. To our great distress, but not amazement, the leading members rose up against us and expelled us from their midst. Our rocky road was not at an end. We were shown a group of people who also had been separated from the people they had been meeting with. It made me think of David when he fled the persecution of Saul to the cave Adullam. We were a pitiful band

of those who were in distress, in debt and discontented. We tried to meet together in our homes for mutual comfort for several years. The doctrine was preached but the order was not there. After a long season, we went our separate ways. By this time, I had been preaching this same truth, I hope, for many years and we still had no peaceful, loving church home.

We found ourselves all alone, seemingly in the wilderness, after many years of sore trials and tribulations. We were completely without strength and felt that we were ready to perish. My dear wife and I begged our God, we hope, to show us his people, where we might find comfort and fellowship for the rest of our journey. God in his great love and mercy soon showed us what we could not find by ourselves. He showed us a people, in the very same county where he had brought us to live, that loved the truth, who were walking in love and peace and order. In the Lord's time we were added to the church, we hope, and the church here called for my ordination to the gospel ministry and I was ordained in 1983. We have continued with these lovely brethren in love and peace to this day and hope to live and to die with them. We have been made to forsake all in nature, as all of his people are made to do (if we have been included in that number), but God in his wondrous mercy and divine power has given unto us all things which pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of him that has called us to glory and virtue.

It is our hope that this weak account might be to the praise and honor of his grace and that it might be to the comfort of one of his little ones. Written in love, I hope.

Elder J.B. Farmer
7-13-2000

PSALM 41 : 1-7.

Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.

The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.

The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.

I said, Lord, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee.

Mine enemies speak evil of me, When shall he die, and his name perish?

And if he come to see me, he speaketh vanity: his heart gathereth iniquity to itself; when he goeth abroad, he telleth it.

All that hate me whisper together against me: against me do they devise my hurt.

MUSING ON THINGS OF THE PAST

The elder of the elders: 57 years of ministering crown Spangler's life

Spangler at Westover home

The Bee: Danville, Virginia, Friday, February 10, 1978

By BONNIE ROSS COOPER
Staff Writer

He might be called the elder of the elders.

After 57 years, the title has become more than a part of this name. It's a summary of his life.

Elder D.V. Spangler introduces himself with certain humility and in fine, modulated tones as "David Spangler." The voice begins deep inside and carries with authority, making one wonder which came first, the years of preaching or his authoritative voice.

Spangler has been preaching in

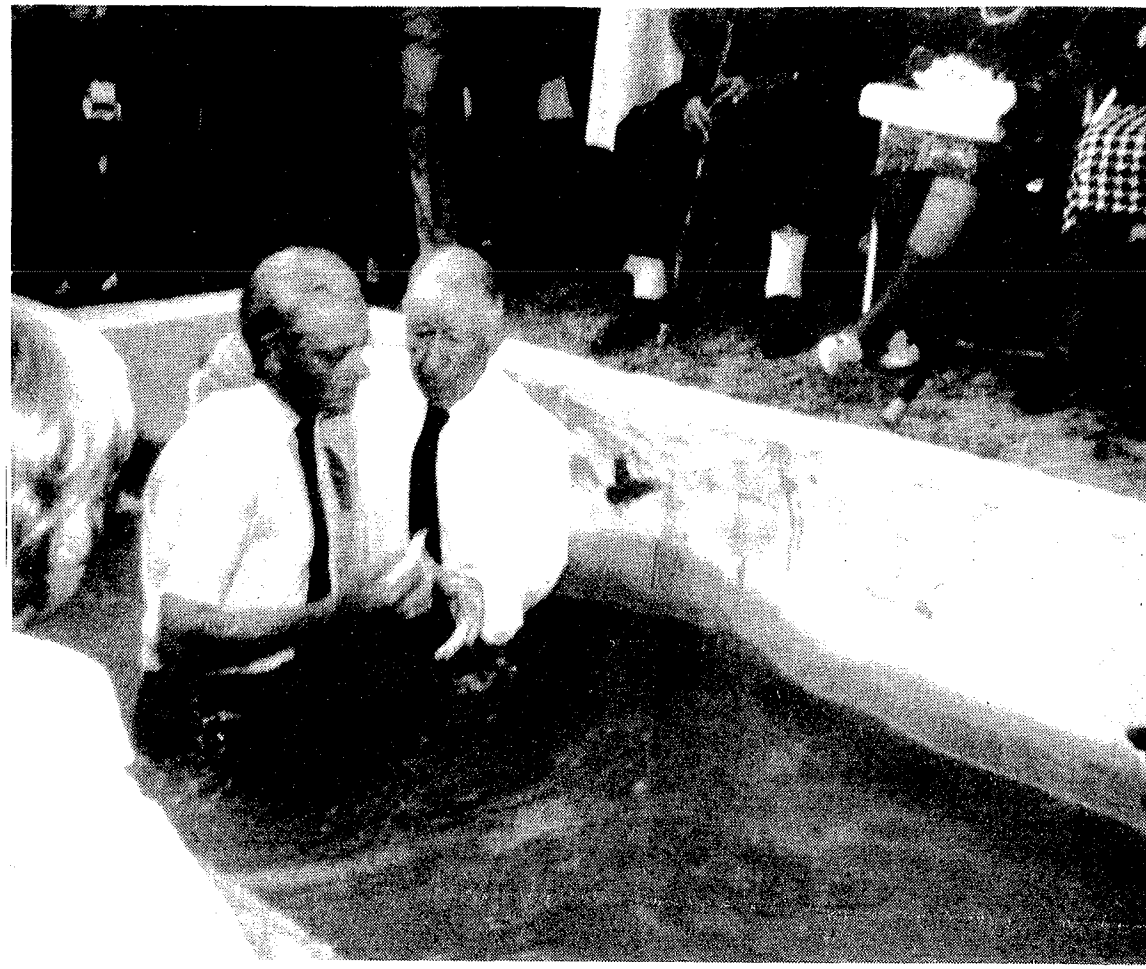

Elder Spangler baptizes new member at outdoor pool

Primitive Baptist churches longer than any other man in this country as far as he knows.

A native of Eden, N.C., he was born a son of Jacob Spangler, a Primitive Baptist preacher who served the Eden church for 40 years and the Danville church for 28 years.

At the age of 76, Elder D.V. Spangler serves four churches - Dan River Primitive Baptist where he has preached for 50 years, Reidsville, N.C., 25 years, Durham, N.C., 25 years, and Monticello, N.C., 20 years. He was ordained at Spray Primitive Baptist Church.

He and his wife, the former Nannie Turpin, live on Beechwood Lane in Westover Hills.

In a 25-mile radius of Danville, he estimates, there are some 20 churches of the faith with memberships ranging from a dozen to over 100 people. Spangler's home, church, Dan River, began with a membership of 19 and bas grown to 135 today.

On meeting day, we usually fill the house," he notes. The church seats 400. Since each church generally meets one Sunday per month, the members visit among churches

and, Spangler adds, some people attend meetings for years without joining the church.

Membership is open only to those "who satisfy the church that they have had a change of heart," explains Spangler, and baptism by immersion in water is administered only to those who join the church.

"We have no christening," he adds.

Spangler has baptized about 300 people ranging in age from 16 to 90.

Although lakes and streams are used when available, some churches, such as Reidsville and Durham, have baptistries inside. At Dan River, there is a cement pool outdoors.

"The division between the Missionary Baptists and Primitive Baptists occurred in 1832 about 20 miles outside of Baltimore, Md.," relates the elder. "It was over foreign missions, which we don't believe in; theological schools, which we don't have; Sunday schools, which we don't believe are scriptural; tract societies, musical instruments and choirs, which we have none of."

The Primitive Baptists do practice congregational singing, says Spangler, and a considerable bit of that.

Preaching is extemporaneous - no prepared sermons - and lasts for 40 to 45 minutes .

The typical meeting begins at 10 a.m. with a 30-minute song service of congregational singing. Then the worship is opened with a song and a prayer, followed by the sermon.

Does an elder ever preach himself hoarse?

"About 40 years ago, I was serving seven churches, preaching every day for a year," he recalls. "My voice gave out. In a Richmond hospital, doctors found a tumor in my throat.

"It was removed, and I did not speak for 30 days."

Afterwards, Spangler cut back to four churches.

In doctrine, "the articles of faith are similar to the Westminster Confession (Presbyterian) except in baptism by immersion and some practices of the church as to discipline and order," says Spangler. The Primitive Baptists believe in election, predestination, effectual calling of the elect, new birth, preservation, perseverance and resurrection.

"No member of our church is allowed to go to the law (file a lawsuit in court) against another member," the elder tells of one rule. "If the church is capable of deciding spiritual matters, it certainly is capable of deciding these matters, and anyone going to the law against another member is excluded from the church.

The church has no position on tobacco and alcohol, except that, if a member becomes drunk and disorderly, he can be voted out.

Women are allowed to vote but do not speak in church. They cannot be ministers.

The elders, or ministers, are chosen by individual churches. After a man preaches for a while, the church calls in two or three elders from other churches to sit in judgment. If they judge him qualified, he is ordained.

Although no salary is paid to the elders and no collection is taken in church, each member contributes what he will to the pastor and the church. In addition to preaching, Spangler has operated a country store and an appliance store in previous years.

Spangler's home church will host the annual association meeting this year on the third weekend in July. "Five thousand people will be there," he says. "We'll put a stand outdoors for three days of meetings for the 13 churches in the Upper Country Line Association.

Does Spangler have any plan to retire?

"Our ministers never retire," he says. "They serve until they are no longer able."

Elder Spangler died in 1985.

VOICES OF THE PAST

ETERNAL VITAL UNION

One of my correspondents says, "I would be pleased to read an article from your pen on the subject of 'eternal vital union.' " Some seem to think that this term carries the idea that the children of God actually existed in the annals of eternity before time was, but that the word "unity," in the place of "union," implies that the eternal life of the children was ever in Christ, while they themselves had not existence as such until manifested in the world by ordinary generation. I do not claim much as to the definition of terms and words, but I have understood all along that these brethren used the term, "eternal vital union," they have generally meant that the saints ever had their eternal life standing in Christ Jesus, while they have their earthly standing in their earthly head, Adam, which has its beginning in time. Now, I could not more clearly and comprehensively express what I have always understood to be the truth upon this subject, than my correspondent has done. Those who are born of God, receive a life that was theirs in Christ before the world began, as in the natural birth the life existed in the father before it was manifested in the son.

That the man who now receives eternal life in the spiritual birth was regarded by the Lord in that life before the world began all must admit, for he was then chosen in Christ, and grace was then given him, and all spiritual blessings are now received by him according to that choice. (Eph. i. 3, 4 ; 2 Tim. i. 9.) This was a personal choice of an Adamic man before Adam was created; it was the writing in the book of God of one of the members of Christ's

spiritual body, "while ; as yet there was none of them." (Psalm cxxxix.) Neither the eternal life alone, nor the Adamic man alone, the one distinctly from the other, is regarded in the Scriptures as the child of God. Though the eternal life eternally existed, and the Adamic creature did not exist until Adam was created, yet both are contemplated in the Scriptures when the children of God are spoken of, and the terms predestination, foreordination, foreknowledge and the like are used to express the purposes concerning them of that God "who inhabiteth eternity," to whom all things are ever present, and who "counteth things that are not as though they were." I have never used the term "eternal children," that I remember, for I have never thought that we are warranted in speaking of the life in the progenitor as a child. A will which gives an estate to children who are yet to be born, perhaps two or three generations in the future, does not regard them as children in existence when the will is made. So the will of God does not regard the children as in actual existence, as such, before the world began, but foreknows and predestinates concerning them. True, the foreknowledge of them on the part of God is absolutely certain, as it cannot be on the part of a man who makes a will concerning children not yet born, for he cannot know that there will ever be such a child to inherit under his will. Some do speak of "eternal children," and say that the children of God actually existed in a body of flesh and bones in eternity before Adam was created. I have talked with some called "Two-seed Baptists," who held that. Others speak of the "eternal spiritual children," meaning what I understand as the eternal spiritual life which is afterward manifest in the Adamic vessel of mercy. Those who insist that the life or spirit in its eternal existence is the child of God, will refer, as one proof, to Hebrews ii., and say that those children partake of flesh and blood, just as Christ did, and that as he was the Son of God before he partook of flesh and blood, so they were. But Peter speaks of the people of God as partaking of the divine nature. Then the same argument would prove that they were children before they partook of the divine nature. Our brethren have generally held, so far as I know, that each child who is manifest in time by a spiritual birth, had an eternal standing in Christ, by virtue of that life, as he had a time standing in Adam from his creation; that is, a oneness or unity of life in and with Christ eternally. Many precious points of truth and holy experiences of salvation are the outgrowth, I believe, of that great, central, discriminating truth. But it is not my purpose now to enter upon the subject more extensively. Those who oppose what they call "eternal vital unionism," sometimes deriding it as foolishness, often make up the doctrine they deride, asserting things as believed by its advocates which are new to us who hold it, insisting that

we hold that we were actually in Christ in the flesh. Sometimes I fear such are not truly sincere.

So, in regard to predestination, some who oppose that true and precious and solemn doctrine, will sometimes say, that if God purposed the wicked acts of men, then he himself does the wicked acts, and they will gravely profess to reply to us by saying that God does not work efficiently in the wicked to do evil, as he does in the righteous to do righteousness, as though we believed the contrary. Such arguments avoid the question, and create the issues to which they apply. And still they have to acknowledge that if God permitted a thing to be done, or even foreknew that it would be, and still created the world with that knowledge, then it was his purpose that it should take place. That truth a child can see, and the wisest man cannot evade it, and an angel cannot understand the full meaning of the glorious truth of God's absolute sovereignty in will and purpose and works. "He is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working." "His judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out."

Elder Silas H. Durand
July, 1898.

PSALM 48 : 14.

For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.

July 25.

"He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true."- JOHN iii. 33.

WE can only set to our seal that God is true in anyone point of doctrine, experience, or precept when we feel an inward witness that God indeed has declared it. Thus, upon every manifestation of God's goodness to the soul, every application of Christ's blood to the conscience, and every revelation of God's distinguishing grace, it is only as we receive Christ's testimony, experience the inward approbation of it, and feel its sweetness and blessedness that we can set to our seal that God is true. This, we may be well assured, is the only way to know the power and reality of true religion, to understand the Scriptures, and enjoy a convincing testimony that God is our God, Christ our Saviour, the Holy Ghost our Teacher, heaven our eternal home, and that our soul is saved in the Lord Jesus Christ with an everlasting salvation.

And with what divine certainty can such a soul sometimes speak. Sometimes, indeed, we cannot believe anything; it seems as if there were nothing in God's word that we could set our seal to. *All* seems a mass of confusion, and our igno-

rance appears so great that we cannot set our seal to any vital truth. But when the blessed Spirit is pleased to testify of the things of God, and we, receiving the testimony of Jesus Christ, walk in the light of that testimony, then there is a holy certainty of and heavenly acquiescence with God's truth. This divine faith will bring us through all our trials and sorrows, and though we may be dragged through a very hell of temptation, yet shall we know God is true.

Here, then, is the grand trial of faith; first to receive Christ's testimony, and then to hang upon that testimony, in spite of all opposition from within and without, from feeling its weight, power, and sweetness.

Elder J.C. Philpot

PSALM 131.

LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me.

Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child.

Let Israel hope in the Lord from henceforth and for ever.

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Long Branch Primitive Baptist Church Franklin County, Virginia. A presbytery met July 29, 2000 at 10 o'clock A.M. for the examination of Brother Mark Terry and if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, to the satisfaction and discretion of their judgement ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Minister.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder C.B.Davis and preaching by Lic. Mark Terry. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were: Elders C.B. Davis, J.L.Cassell, Cleo Robertson, Leonard Brammer, Lane Carter, Junior Conner, W.T.Conner, Thomas Solomon, Julian Williams, Raymond Goad, Hale Terry, Alan Terry, Clarence Stone, Carl Terry, and Larry Hollandsworth.

All Deacons were asked to sit together 28 present.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Carl Terry as Moderator and Dea. W.G.Parsons as clerk. Dea. Nelson Nester having been duly appointed by Long Branch Church in conference July 1, 2000, as spokesman for the church delivered Lic. Mark Terry to the presbytery.

Examination was made by Elders Julian Williams and Lane Carter using scriptural reference the written word of God. The presbytery being satisfied with the answers given by the candidate administered the laying on of hands with the ordination prayer being delivered by Elder Leonard Brammer. The charge was delivered to the candidate by Elders Raymond Goad and Larry Hollandsworth using scriptural reference 2nd Timothy Ch4 and Titus Ch1 1v.

The moderator asked the church if they were satisfied with the work of the presbytery which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brother Mark Terry and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained Brother was delivered back to the Church an ordained minister of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Long Branch. The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Cleo Robertson.

Deacons present:

Deacons Jamie Cooper, Nelson Nester, Wade Poff, Julian Rutrough, G.W. Conner, W.W. Abshire, James Meador, C.V. Ferris, Herbert Dodson, Gene Potter, Donald Agee, Harvey Wood, William Midkiff, H.D. Ingram, Guy J. Holley, Grover Semones, Edwin Dyer, Richard Stegall, Calvin Plybon, Noel Lavinder, Joseph A. Holley, Joe Cahill, James Holley, Wilton Sutphin, C.T. Abshire, Tony Horton, Jack Walker, and W.G. Parsons.

Carl E. Terry, Moderator
W.G. Parsons, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union, the Lord willing, will be held with Moons Creek Church on Sunday, October 29th, 2000.

The church is located between Danville and Yanceyville off Hwy. 86 at Camp Springs Rd. Turn left one fourth mile to church.

All lovers of the truth are invited especially Elders of our faith and order.

Song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

Sue Blalock, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union meeting will convene, the Lord willing, at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church on the fifth Sunday and Saturday before of October 28 & 29, 2000. Meeting starts at 10:00 a.m.

Springfield Church is located at South Main Street, on business 29 in Gretna, Va. (Pittsylvania County).

We invite all visitors of our faith and order to attend this meeting with us.

Oscar D. Pickral, Clerk
Springfield Church

1 CORINTHIANS 1:3-7.

Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ;

That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge;

Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you:

So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 2000

Mrs. Sylvia Conner, VA 2.00
G.M. Lockey, NC 7.00
Mrs. Hazel Garland, MD 25.00
Mrs. Minnie Cunningham, OR .. 7.00
Douglas Hodges, VA 7.00
H.P. Conner, VA 5.00
F. Philgreen, LA 2.00
Mr. & Mrs. Melvin Cruise, VA . 12.00
William Vick, TN 10.00
James O. Whaling, OH 2.00
Fred Murphy, VA 2.00
Mrs. Willie Mae Ratliff, VA 7.00
Mrs. Alice Johnson, TX 5.00
Eld. Wallace Harvey, WV 2.00
Donald L. Agee, VA 2.00

OBITUARIES

Written in
Loving Memory of GRANDMA
Written by her Grand-Daughter
Debra D. Davis

G Godly *GRANDMA* she always was

R Roses and rainbow colors of flowers *GRANDMA* had in her flower garden

A Abundance of love and kindness *GRANDMA* always had for everyone

N Nice and neat lady *GRANDMA* always was

D Delicious meals *GRANDMA* always prepared for her family and church family

M Mother for her children -Turner, Catherine, John Lee, James Ray and Justa; "great-grandmother and great-great-grandmother

A An angel that *GOD* has with him

NANNIE PENDER DRAKE
MARCH 25, 1907- AUGUST 6, 2000

SERVICES:
Bowling Funeral Home
Rocky Mount, North Carolina
Graveside Service at Pinetops Cemetary-11:00 AM August 8, 2000
Elder Henry Jones officiating

FAMILY:
John Lee Drake of Tarboro, NC
James Ray Drake & W.J. Drake of Rocky Mount, NC Elizabeth Drake Arp of Gaston, NC
Catherine Drake Crisp of Nashville, NC
Fifteen Grandchildren, Twenty Great-Grandchildren, Nine Great-Great Grandchildren

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WILLIE MAE CONNER RATLIFF

It is with sadness I attempt to write the obituary of our beloved sister in Christ. Although we mourn our loss, may we bow in humble submission to God's will. Sister Willie Mae was born September 9, 1925. The Lord called her home April 22, 2000. No more sickness, no more pain, ending a lifetime of love dedication and respect for her savior her church and her family.

She was a firm believer in the doctrine of grace. Her "Great Hope" was shown in her everyday life, which she lived with much love, pride and dignity.

She united with a Primitive Baptist Church in Norfolk, VA in 1961, and later moved her membership by letter to Salem "Head of the River" Church. She was a dedicated member, attending her meetings as well as those of our sister churches.

His health declined in the last few years he was present a lot of the time when she was not able. Sister Willie Mae had many afflictions along-the way. May we take comfort in ***Psalms 34;19, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all!"*** We believe she is now asleep in Jesus awaiting his Second Coming.

Her beautiful funeral service was held on April 25, 2000 at Salem Church, by her Pastor Elder Hale Terry. Her body was laid to rest in Restvale Cemetery .

She is survived by her husband BrotherAlfred Ratliff, two daughters and husbands, Alfreeda and Daniel Cadd. Patricia and Randy Umburger. Six grandchildren, Stephen McBride, Robert McBride, Christopher Cadd, Cory Cadd, Bonita and Wes Ingram and Mindy Ellis, and five great-grandchildren. One sister Dorothy Yates and one brother Banks Conner and his wife Opal. Many nieces and nephews and friends.

We feel blessed to have known and loved Sister Willie Mae the Lord be praised by her memory .

Written by request of Salem Church.

Mary Janney

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all.

Crown him, ye martyrs of our God,
Who from his altar call;
Extol the stem of Jesse's rod,
And crown him Lord of all.

Ye chosen seed of Israel's race,
A remnant weak and small!
Hail him who saves you by his grace,
And crown him Lord of all.

Ye Gentile sinners, ne'er forget
The wormwood and the gall;
Go — spread your trophies at his feet,
And crown him Lord of all.

Let every kindred, every tribe,
On this terrestrial ball,
To him all majesty ascribe,
And crown him Lord of all.

Oh that, with yonder sacred throng,
We at his feet may fall;
We'll join the everlasting song,
And crown him Lord of all.

Perronet.

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EDITORIAL

GRACE, LOVE & CHARITY

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

"*The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.*" The word charity does not appear in the Old Testament, but twenty eight times in the new. Grace is God`s love in manifestation, and charity is the love of man in action. The world considers charity as gifts to help the poor and needy, and is at times referred to as love. Love is a splendid, wonderful thing, but if we do not have love in our hearts then our hearts are as flinty stones and are filled with envy, hate and evil. There is a love that we should follow after, for John admonishes, "*Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.*" "*The love of money is the root of all evil.*" True love of our friends, families, brethren, etc. is good, if we manifest that love. But love that is not made manifest is a dormant love. If we do nothing to reveal our love to the ones we love, how can they know of it? Love is a reciprocal thing. If one does not know of our love, how can they return it? And if it is not returned, then it is of no profit to either. It does not take a big thing to show our love. Just a word of praise or comfort, a hug, a bright smile that lights up our eyes, a pat on the back, a warm handshake, etc. can make our love manifest, and it will be returned, often multiplied. Charity is love in action, showing proof that we have love in our hearts. If we have not charity we are nothing, and profit nothing, as said Paul in Cor. 13:2-3. If we feign love we shall be found to be deceivers, and shunned to our own hurt. If

what we do is prompted by a selfish nature it is sin, and not of faith, and whatsoever we do that is not of faith is sin. If the Holy Ghost does not prompt us to will and to do, then what we do is of the flesh, and not of faith, for Jesus said, *"Without me ye can do nothing." Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me."* If we love God, it is because he first loved us, and that love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."* If the love of God is not a perfect gift, then I know nothing that is, except Jesus Christ, (if I truly know him.)

In the scripture first quoted above, God's word to Jeremiah was, *"I have loved thee with an everlasting love."* That was certainly true, for God cannot lie. But how could we know that love if God did not make it manifest through grace? We could not, but that Scripture did not end there, for God said, *"Therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."* God did not draw Jeremiah only, but all of his beloved children whom he chose in Jesus Christ before the world was ever spoken into existence. He draws us with the cords of his Love, which can never be broken by anyone or any thing. for Paul said, *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? tribulations, or distress, or persecutions, or famine, or nakedness or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the daylong; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities nor powers nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 8: 38-39.* What comforting words these be when applied with power to the heart of a poor, helpless sinner who has been given a hope in Christ Jesus, even when that hope seems so small as to be almost nonexistent. Regardless of its strength, as we perceive it, it shall never be taken away completely, for God has promised, *"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."* Our hope is in our Lord Jesus Christ, who is our hope and our life, for our life is hid with God in him. This hope is for eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began It is only by the grace of God that one receives this hope, for he must be born again to be spiritual, for, *"the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned."* Those who never receive this hope

shall perish, for Satan works in them in all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness that they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. For this cause God shall send them a strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. But, beloved brethren in the Lord, God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. (II Thes. 2:9-13.) Jesus said, ***"This is the work of God, that ye believe in him whom he hath sent."*** This work is a manifestation of God's everlasting love, the free grace of God that cannot be obtained from any other source. ***"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."*** Any work of the flesh is for self-righteousness, which in the sight of God is as filthy rags. There is a work that we must walk in, ***"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."*** How do we walk in good works? for Paul said, ***"I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."*** We must be led by the Spirit of God, ***"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do his good pleasure."*** If we do not have the Spirit of Christ within we are none of his, but as many of us as are led by the Spirit of God, we are the sons of God. Rom. 8: 9 &14.

God's love is made manifest to us in many ways. The Spirit of God enters our heart and awakens us from our dead estate in which we were born. He reveals to us that we are sinners, and after we have tried desperately to save ourselves and then given up all hope of doing this, he reveals Jesus Christ our Saviour. He gives us hope, ***"And hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."*** That sweet hope and love gives us great joy, comfort and peace of soul. If I be not deceived, I have tasted that love and hope, and if it were possible to do so I would not trade my hope for many worlds, though my hope seems almost nonexistent at times, and Satan is almost constantly at my side, trying to convince me that my hope is false. Is it this way with you, beloved brethren? When I was first given to believe and hope that all of my sins had been washed away in the blood of the Lamb I felt that I would never sin nor suffer again, that I would improve until I would be perfect by the time I would be called out of this world. I did not know that my suffering had just begun and that I would never stop sinning while in the flesh. When sin is finished it brings forth death.

"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." I pray for forgiveness of my sins, for which I suffer, but *"I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us," said Paul, and "even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."* Yes, we must suffer if we follow in the steps of our Saviour, *"For he is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: *** he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was on him; and with his stripes we are healed." Isa. 53: 3-5.* All of our trials, persecutions and tribulations are appointed unto us, but Jesus said, *"but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."* Paul said, *"***but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."* Our afflictions and sufferings, which are appointed unto us, which are but for a moment, cannot be compared with the afflictions and sufferings of Jesus Christ who bled and died for us; and he did this because of his everlasting love. He said, *"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."* Jesus was that man, and he sweat great drops of blood in the Garden of Gethsemane even before he suffered in agony and poured out his holy blood on the cross of Calvary and gave up the ghost. While he hung upon the cross he prayed the Father, saying, *"Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."* What great love is bestowed upon sinners! And what great love the Father bestowed upon his elect children when he gave his only begotten Son to redeem them from the curse of the law which said. *"The soul that sinneth must die." "For God SO loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."* Who are they that believe? Not the ones with only a carnal mind, *"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."* The dead cannot believe anything. Only those who have been born again have life, eternal life, and they are given to believe, for Jesus said, as quoted above, *"This is the work of God, that ye believe in him whom he hath sent."* Paul said, *"Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to be-*

lieve on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Brethren, if we are his elect children we were baptized into his death when he died on the cross, we were buried with him, and arose with him. Paul said, *"It is a faithful saying: for if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he will also deny us: if we believe not, yet he is faithful: he cannot deny himself."* Jesus is the first resurrection, and, *"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."* What wondrous love is this! The finite mind of man cannot comprehend the love of God bestowed upon his children in his grace and mercy, yet they are given to feel and taste it and rejoice exceedingly from time to time. In his love he also chastens us. *"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent," Rev.3: 19.* Paul said, *"Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Heb 12: 11.* Paul also tells us that if we be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons. (vs.8). *"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now we are the sons of God, and it doth not appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." 1 John 3: 1-3.* Again I must say, What wondrous love, grace and mercy is bestowed upon such sinful creatures we be by nature.

There is no end to this *marvelous* subject, but I must bring this treatise to a close with a few admonitions from the Scriptures. *"Let all your things be done with charity." "And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness." "Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and faith unfeigned."*

Beloved brethren, as Paul said, let us by love (charity) serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith. *"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."* Brethren, I confess that I often fail because of the weakness of my

flesh. Therefore I greatly need and desire your prayers for me that I might be strengthened from on high. May the grace of Jesus Christ our Lord be with you.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

11-21-99

Today I was blessed to attend services at Martinsville Church. I heard Elder Lane Carter, and, if not deceived, was given to feast on a few crumbs. So much of my time I am in a cold state, my heart as hard as a stone. Such times I'm made to wonder if I know anything about a true hope in Christ the Lord or is it imagination of my mind. But when I am blessed to take a backward look at my life I have to feel surely His blessed presence has been with me all the days of my unprofitable life. I am made to hope He has a few times placed me in the cleft of that great rock and covered me with His hand while He passed by. If not, I have been greatly deceived, because I can look back and remember times when there was no one else to turn to, when I was given strength to go on. I'm still leaning on that unseen power to guide me and direct my feeble steps. There's no where else to turn.

Elder Carter, in his sermon today, mentioned the rose. It seemed my mind was caught up in a different direction. I could see how in the lives of God's children (if I can claim to know anything about His works). The rose first comes up from the mother earth just a green stalk with maybe a leaf or two. But on that stem is sharp briars which pierce the flesh and cause pain. The rose grows and forms limbs and new growth but always grows more thorns. That seems to me to portray the child of God. The rose keeps growing and bloom buds start to appear. Now and then we can get a tiny glimpse of the rose through the green sheaf of leaves that cover the bud. The thorns are ever present to pierce our flesh, and cause us to move quickly away from it. But the beauty of the rose blossom is just beginning to show a little. So we keep looking for the beauty.

We go about our lives not thinking of anything but our selfish desires. Suddenly the thorn of our conscience pricks us and we are made aware of how selfish and thoughtless we are. Our Saviour bore the thorns and bruises of our sins, so that we could be free. Now and then we are given a tiny glimpse of His great love and compassion for us. That is the glimpse of the rose we see among the thorns. He gives us a little more sight of the rose to keep us desiring to see more and more as the years roll on. We will never see the fullness of the rose bloom (Christ) while we live in this world of thorns and briars, but Oh, blessed thought, if we are blessed to enter the climes of immortal glory by His

grace, then we will see the rose in its glorious beauty without the thorns.

My feeble mind cannot understand what I hope I see in this, neither can I write it.

Written by Sister Edrie Clifton
Widow of Elder Bennie Clifton
Submitted by their daughter,
Judy Poindexter

FRAGMENTS

I NOTICE that every token of the Lord's favor is received by me with surprise. I find myself delightfully surprised when the Lord's people manifest love and fellowship for me, as though I had no right to expect it, and I wonder still more when, as is sometimes the case, I do feel the sweet assurance that this great blessing does truly belong to me. I am surprised every time that a portion of the Lord's written word comes to my mind with power and sweetness, and when there springs up in my soul a feeling of praise and thanksgiving to his holy name. It would almost appear as though I were expecting evidences of his displeasure on account of the evils and disobedience in my heart and life, rather than tokens of pity and love, it is such a wonder and delight to me when those tokens come, and when he sheds his love abroad in my heart. It is a wonder to me that I have a place in the church; that I am allowed, not to say constrained, to preach the gospel of his grace, and that some of his dear children give me evidence that he blesses that preaching to their profit and comfort. I find myself astonished and very thankful that I desire to give him praise and glory, and to devote myself wholly to his service, and more than astonished when I am assured that he will receive praise and devotion from one so unworthy as I.

Therefore the words of David are very sweet to me when he and the people rejoiced and thanked the Lord because they had offered willingly unto the Lord of all their precious things: *"Now therefore, our God, we thank thee and praise thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee. For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding."-1 Chron. xxix. 13-15.*

It would be a carnal spirit that would prompt one to offer of his work and gifts unto the Lord with the expectation of being rewarded for them. The Spirit by which David was led moved him to thank and praise the Lord because they were able to offer willingly unto him.

SEPTEMBER, 1902.
Elder Silas H. Durand

ARTICLES

ADOPTION

"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Romans 8:22-23.

We are taught that ***"all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect (complete), thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:16.17.*** Also, that ***"...no prophesy of scripture is of any private interpretation." 2 Pet. 1:20.*** And the inspired apostle Paul admonished Timothy to ***"Study (be diligent) to shew thyself approved of God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Tim. 2:15.***

These principles and admonitions come down to us today. By the wisdom of God and by His great mercy and the power of the Spirit, His little ones believe His words, and from a pure heart obey His commandments. We are also made to believe that those God has called to preach the gospel and to teach His doctrine will be given to rightly divide, or give the proper sense of, the word of truth. All have made mistakes from time to time because of the weakness of the flesh, but thanks be to God, He is well able to correct them so that His people are not blown about by every wind of doctrine. He causes them to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints and will keep them in it. May the God of heaven and earth give us wisdom that His truth might be set forth aright, to the praise of the glory of His grace and to the comfort and edification of His dear suffering saints.

We are taught that God's little ones are ***"born again not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." I Pet. 1:23.*** That they ***"were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:13.*** Now, if God's people were born of that incorruptible seed, and they were, in what sense shall they be adopted?

We know that there are several references in the scripture which relate to adoption. They are Romans 8:15, 8:23 and 9:4 and Galatians 4:5 and Ephesians 1:5. In each instance the word adoption was translated from the same root word and each case it means the same thing. The most literal meaning of the root word is son placement. To give the sense of the meaning requires some explanation.

It was the custom in the days of the apostles and before, for a natural son, after being taught and governed, and upon reaching a certain age and at the appointed time of his father, for him to receive the part of the inheritance which fell to him. This was the placement of the son, or the act of bringing him into the full possession of his inheritance. At this point he would acquire the full stature of an adult.

To view this spiritually, the word adoption, related to in the scriptures, means to bring a heaven born son into the full possession of his spiritual inheritance. This will be accomplished with no less than the redemption or quickening of the mortal body and the raising up of it as a spiritual, incorruptible, powerful, glorified body. Then will be brought to fulfillment the scripture, ***"and the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be presented blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thes. 5:23.***

Let's look at each scripture reference to adoption and pray that the God of all understanding and knowledge will make His things plain to us. The first one is found in ***Romans 8:15. "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba Father."*** God's people have not been brought back under the bondage and terrors of the law which is the ministration of death, but rather, have been brought into the hope of the resurrection and of eternal life. They have been brought to ***"...mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." Heb. 12:22-24.***

Romans 8:23,at the head of the article, specifically identifies the adoption as ***"the redemption of our body".*** Does this not clearly refer to the resurrection of life where all of God's children will be placed or established as adult sons and be brought into the full possession of their inheritance?

And in Romans 9:4, the apostle was inspired to say ***"Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the promises:"*** Does not this show beyond a doubt that spiritual Israel is the one to whom all the things of God are worked together for good, even the adoption or the redemption of his body?

In Galations 4:5, we read, ***"to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."*** This is speaking of Jesus who fulfilled the law to

the jot and tittle by giving Himself up to God as the perfect sacrifice for sin in order to redeem His people from the curse of the law. By this one offering He has perfected them forever who are sanctified. The purpose of the holy sacrifice was to bring many sons to glory, or in other words, that they might receive the adoption.

In Ephesians 1:5, is found, ***"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will".*** The same ones that God has chosen in Him (Christ) before the foundation of the world are the same ones that He has predestinated to place in glory, even to raise them up at the last day and conform them to the image of His Son. Yes, they will all be brought into the full possession of that incorruptible inheritance laid up in heaven for them. They will all receive the crown of life.

If we are His, at the appointed day we will hear the long hoped for words, ***"Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."*** Then the sons of God will be manifest before all. When the Lord shall appear with the shout of the archangel and the trump of God, His own will be raised and changed in a moment. in the twinkling of an eye. Their mortal bodies will be made immortal. They will see Him as He is and they will be made like Him and they will ever be with the Lord. Then will the adoption or the son placement be complete. Then will the little ones receive the promised inheritance with nothing lacking, to the eternal praise of Him who only is worthy.

Written in love, I hope.
Elder J.B. Farmer
9-6-2000

"Sovereign Ruler of the skies,
Ever gracious, ever wise.
All my times are in His hand,
All events at His command."

I was awakened around 2 a.m. this night with the above lines running through my mind. I believe it is the first verse of a song. I lay there in the darkness, thinking about it and my feeble mind could not begin to grasp the depth and meaning of those words. Oh, how much is expressed in those four little lines. Truly, He is the ruler not only of the skies, but He created them, as well as everything else - the earth, land and waters, the rocks and mountains - everything that is in existence. The gentle breezes and the loud howling winds with their destructive powers are part of His handiwork. Nothing exists that He did not create or fix. Last of all He created poor puny man both male and female out of the dust which the winds blow around. He gave the man love for the woman which was created from man's rib and made the woman to cleave to the man.

Lying there in the darkness I tried to imagine the greatness of this

God who fixed and ordained everything just as He would have it to be. If not, why not? He has all power over everything He created and each thing moves, acts, or turns at His will and purpose. He is so great He fills the world, the heavens and the seas, yet He is small enough to come into the heart of His chosen ones.

Truly, He is ever gracious, ever wise. The devil was in His mind and purpose through the serpent which was also His creation, put here for the purpose which he fulfilled.

This is too mysterious for my little mind to fathom. I can only get a glimpse sometimes of these things but when I try to express what I hope I see it leaves me.

I am so weak and helpless, depending on Him for everything, my every breath. He decreed who my natural parents were and the place of my birth. If I have a second birth it was also given by Him. All my trials, troubles and afflictions were appointed before the world was created, as well as my joys and my hope of Life Eternal. May I ever praise Him who doeth all things well.

That song still stays with me. {Hymn No.83 in Durand, Lester Hymn Book} I requested it be sung last Sunday at church, but no one could get the tune. I've read it over and over. It is what I believe. How true that:

"He that formed me in the womb,
He shall guide me to the tomb;
All my times shall ever be
Ordered by His wise decree."

My times of sickness and times of health, times when I wondered where would the next dollar come from, then to have the burden eased a little, times of trial so severe I could not have borne them without His everlasting arm to uphold and guide me -Trials of deepest grief when I had to see the one who was (and is) dearer to me than all, taken in death by His wise decree. Times when I feel I have tasted a Saviour's love, times when I'm made to wonder if I really have. My birth, my life, everything that has transpired the 84 1/2 years of my life, the rest of life and my death are and were all ordained and ordered by Him.

"Plagues and death around me fly;
Till he bids I cannot die.
Not a single shaft can hit
Till the God of love sees fit."

It is all fixed. Thank the Lord for His goodness to me.

Edrie Clifton
Submitted by her daughter,
Judy Poindexter

DEUTERONOMY 32:4.

He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

Dear Brethren: who live by hope, in your Lord Jesus Christ; of a better place, after death of your mortal body. First of all; a peaceful sleep, while waiting for that most precious call on the morning of the resurrection, of His saints from the grave. Arising in the likeness of your Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus, and be perfectly satisfied, as He places you on His right hand; and be able to look upon His face with love and admiration unspeakable.

Now that is my hope, Dear Children. Is it thus with you? I feel it surely is. I feel, one of the causes why this hope seems so sweet and precious to His little children is in the knowledge that the child never turned one hand nor lifted one finger, to give aid to that whole process. Whereby we (if I could be one among you) received our precious hope in the Lord; wherein it leaves us with all our hope and trust, in Him alone. And therefore, without any confidence in the flesh. For any confidence or trust in the flesh to lend any aid in the salvation of any soul, clearly manifests; a lack of that confidence and trust in the Lord God.

Once one has been shown, just what that nature of man, in his flesh, is like; so full of sinful weakness, against the very same "God", who created and formed him and her; breathed life into them; and furnished them with their every strength and ability; for to live, breath, or even exist. How could that one still find themselves, at times, trying to help "God" in the operation of His government, and especially where it concerns the sacred business of the operation of His Church, the Church of the living God? Well, the only answer that comes to my mind is this; his fleshly corrupt nature has, for some purpose, been let to exercise itself. For assuredly, one with a right and pure mind, could never, no never, have such God dishonoring thoughts enter his mind. But may the Child of His mercy be afterward reminded of that promise to His children. I will have mercy upon their unrighteousness. And ye, be not deceived in your heart, dear Child; a portion of that mercy will come as a stark awareness of that awful deed performed. Remember this also; His making us aware of our wrong doings; is an evidence of His loving care; His everlasting love and kindness toward His chosen people. Just so sure as we are His chosen ones, chosen in His Son, it is just that sure we shall suffer in the present time world. Not for our multitude of sins but because of that sin still in our flesh. For one to suffer for their sinful transgressions, against the Holy and Righteous Law of "God", must and shall continue, on and on forever after this time world is no more.

So we see, His corrections of His children, and all He does toward and for them, is always and always, His own perfect and good way of expressing His love and kindness

toward and for them. And for their good, and His glory. For He shall receive praise, honor and glorification forever after this time world is no more.

Just think about it, as much as in us be; The just and Holy "God", being willing to suffer; that His power be made known; and, that all things that transpire in this time world, shall (Through and by His own working of all things, combined together), Yes, even the activities of satan the devil) to the good of His chosen ones and to His own praise, honor and glory forever more. Oh Dear Children of the heavenly Father; I do so hope, I could be one among you; to everlasting sing praises unto His great and Holy name, forever after this time world is no more. For of one thing I feel absolutely sure of; He is worthy of all praise honor and glory.

While it is thus with us; If we do have any worthiness of our Lord and Saviour, imputed to and for us. For we, of our own selves, could never have done even one good (in His sight) thing to have gained any such worthiness.

In hope of eternal life,
Troy G. Shepard

ROMANS 8:28.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

VOICES OF THE PAST

GLORIFIED IN HIS SON
February 15, 1950

"These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, glorify thy Son that thy Son also may glorify thee." John 17:1.

The word, glory has been in my mind for several days and I hope that I sometimes feel it in my heart, yet a sinner depending upon God for mercy and grace to keep me unto the end of this journey, where I hope to enter into that glory world.

The word, glory Jesus mentioned several times, knowing that we would be glorified with the children His Father gave Him. I believe every child of grace feels this glory when delivered from the bondage of sin. This is what makes the rocks sing and the sons of God shout for joy.

The centurion saw what was done and he glorified God, saying, ***"certainly this was a righteous man." (Luke 24:26).*** Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter in to His glory?

Now I believe it is in the resurrection of the body when ye shall enter into the fullness of this glory, although we have a foretaste here in this life, not in the flesh, but in

the spirit. He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world, unto our glory which none of this world know, for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. *"For ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's"* When we confess Him, God is glorified; when we are blessed to preach the gospel, God glorified, because it is all of Him. It is of God that ye are in Christ Jesus who is of God made unto us righteousness, sanctification and redemption. So all of our work is because of what He has done for us, working in us both to will and to do according to His own good pleasure. So all of His works praise Him and His saints bless Him. God is glorified and has glorified His Son who bore our sins and did redeem us unto God by His blood, out of every kindred, tongue, nation and people.

(Elder) J. F. STEGALL
Sent in by Gladys Stegall

PSALM 28:7.

The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

THE RESURRECTION

"But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." - 1 Cor. xv. 38.

This is a great mystery, and I hesitate to write concerning it, and yet I am drawn in my mind to do so.

On the subject of the resurrection of the body, it seems at first thought as though I could be contented to simply say, I take just what the Bible says on the subject, and believe that; but I do not understand it. In considering this subject I am apt to think more of what is not true concerning it than of what is, for the natural mind is constantly trying to enter into this mystery, as also into all the other mysteries of the gospel, and to understand and explain all the details of them. But this cannot be. The natural man cannot understand these things. The ways and judgments of God are unsearchable and past finding out. (Rom. xi. 33.)

What I do believe, and sometimes rejoice in, is that *"There is a resurrection of the dead." "The dead are raised up."* The Lord Jesus Christ *"shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." — Phil. iii. 21.* How this work shall

be done I do not know, nor does any mortal, any more than any one knows how the world was made out of nothing. How the raised body will appear I do not know, nor does anybody else. It is by faith alone that we know that there is a celestial body. *"We know not what we shall be,"* said the apostle John, but we know that we shall be like Jesus, and we know that we shall be satisfied with his likeness (1 John iii. 2; Psalm xvii. 15), and we know that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall also appear with him in glory. (Col. iii. 4.)

The poor, tried soul is very apt to disclaim such wonderful knowledge, and to say that he does not know these wonderful things for himself, though he knows they are true of all the people of God. It is seldom that one can realize in himself *"the full assurance of faith"* to say, *"I know that I am a child of God," and that "I shall behold his face in righteousness."* This knowledge is an experience; it is an experience of the power of divine life; it is a belief which rests not upon the evidence of things which we can see and understand, but upon faith, which *"is the evidence of things not seen."* Sometimes the truth of our experience of this knowledge of faith is brought forth to our view under the ministration of the word, and by the teaching of the Spirit, so that we can say with holy assurance and with tremulous joy, *"We know that we have passed from death unto life."*

Again and again we are halted in our efforts to search deeper into the mystery of the resurrection, and attain unto a more perfect knowledge of it. It is not to be known in any degree by searching; it evades the scrutiny of the keenest intellectual powers. It is understood as fully by a child as by the most learned man. It is known only by revelation. It is believed only upon the evidence of a God-given faith. It can never be understood except in the experience of it. We are to *"hold fast the form of sound words,"* concerning this, as well as all other spiritual subjects, *"in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."* All that is written of it in the Bible is true, but is not for the comprehension of the natural mind, but for the comfort and instruction of the Lord's people.

We can say certain things both negatively and affirmatively concerning this deep but lovely mystery, which will never be understood in time, and so by the teaching of the word we may be kept from erroneous ideas on the subject, awaiting the times when the Lord may be graciously pleased to open *"the form of sound words"* more fully to the understanding of our faith.

1. The raising of the body of Jesus from the grave is not mentioned in the Scriptures as an *example,* showing how the bodies of his people are raised up. The bodies of the saints are not to be raised up as his body was raised up, for his body saw no corruption, while theirs shall all see corruption. His

body came out of the grave just as it was put into the grave, no change having yet come upon it, in order that witnesses, chosen before, might see that it was still unchanged. They saw the print of the nails and the place of the spear, and saw him eat and drink. Thus he was manifest as *"the Resurrection and the Life."* Afterward he was glorified.

2. From that day that he ascended out of the sight of his disciples he is never to be known any more after the flesh. Therefore there appears to be a direct contradiction in the Scriptures to the theory that Jesus now exists in a body of flesh and bones in heaven, and that his people after the resurrection shall so exist in a body like the one we have in this mortal state. The apostle says, *"Wherefore, henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more."- 2 Cor. v. 16.* Also, we read that *"It doth not yet appear what we shall be."-1 John iii. 2.* Also we are told that the body "is raised a spiritual body." Jesus' body could be seen after he came out of Joseph's new tomb. That was the evidence that he had abolished death, and had become the destruction of the grave, and had brought life and immortality to light. From the time he ascended up on high and was glorified he has not been seen by the mortal eyes of his disciples. He is not seen in any way by anybody but his disciples.

Now we are to remember that it is the same body which is sown in corruption that is raised in incorruption. It is the same body which was sown a natural body that is raised a spiritual body. The sowing is undoubtedly the instant of death. We are to notice that the resurrection is not a preliminary act to the change. We do not read that it is raised and then changed to a spiritual body, but it is raised a spiritual body. At its last appearance to the mortal sight of the saints on earth it is a corrupt, natural body. At its next appearance to the faith of God's people here, and to their spiritual sight in glory, it is a spiritual body that shall never know corruption. It is the same body which was a vile body here on earth that has been changed that it may be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus.

3. This is all I can say. How this work is done I do not have the faintest knowledge; I only know that it is according to the working of Jesus, *"whereby he is able to subdue even all things unto himself."* How we shall appear in that glorious body I do not know; I only know, and rejoice to know, that we shall be like Jesus, and that we shall appear with him in glory.

In replying to the question of the one whom he addresses as a fool, as to how the dead are raised up, and with what body they come, the apostle illustrates the subject by the

dying and quickening of grain after it has been sown in the earth. It must die in order that it shall be quickened. The body given the grain in its resurrection is its own body. The apostle does not mean by this that the grain which fell in the earth is lifted out again. It is not in this sense that the seed is given its own body, but that to the seed of wheat is not given a body of rye or of some other grain, but of wheat, the same as the seed which was sown. Why does the apostle bring this peculiar figure for our contemplation just here? Because the one he calls a fool evidently regards the resurrection as the lifting of a body out of the grave, and wants to know how it is done. He evidently is combatting and hushing the thought of the natural mind that in the resurrection the body will be raised in the sight of men, and the desire to know beforehand how that body will appear.

But the apostle has been presenting Christ as the fullness of the resurrection. The resurrection of the dead depends upon the resurrection of Christ. There is a vital and necessary connection between the two. If Christ be not raised then the dead will not rise; *"then they which have fallen asleep in Christ are perished."* For all the saints who, to human view, die, are fallen asleep in Christ. The apostle still, in the use of this figure of the sowing of grain, is directing our faith to the view of Christ, as the quickening Spirit, as the Resurrection and the Life, without whose resurrection there could be no resurrection of the dead. In the sowing of grain the apostle reminds us that we do not sow that body that shall be. That literal grain or body of wheat that is sown is seen no more, but from it there comes forth a resurrection which shows much more than was sown, yet to the seed is given its own body. This figure of the seed of grain is fulfilled in Christ. The resurrection of his body was a literal resurrection; that is, it came out of the grave just as it was put in. Death and the grave had not been able to make that body sees corruption. Thus the sting was taken from death, and the power from the grave, and Jesus became as the grain of wheat that was sown, and became the first fruits of them that slept. Thus the resurrection of the bodies (of all the saints was so secured that they are not spoken of as dying, but as, falling asleep. Their bodies see corruption, but Jesus is to them the resurrection. They have borne the image of the earthy Adam; now in the resurrection, on account of that seed that was sown, they come forth in the image of the second man, the heavenly. It is in his image that they are raised, not in their own image, not in the image of the body that is sown in corruption, but in the image of Jesus, and fashioned, not like unto his body as it was when nailed to the cross, and when it was raised from the tomb, but like unto his body when he was glorified, *"like unto*

his glorious body." This appears to me to be the apostle's teaching by the figure of the sowing of grain.

The resurrection of the body of every saint is in the resurrection of Christ. This is the great object of the apostle's regard in all of this chapter. As regards the time, answering the question, *"When are the dead raised?"* I have to believe that the resurrection is not a matter of time; it is beyond time. In calling the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, Moses at the bush showed that the dead are raised up: *"For God is not the God of the dead but of the living; for all live unto him."- Luke xx. 37.* They who have fallen asleep in Jesus are dead unto us, but they are living unto God in the resurrection. *How else is the resurrection of the dead taught by Moses at the bush?* To us who are yet in time the resurrection is yet to be; those who have gone out from time have come into the enjoyment of the eternal and glorious presence of him who said, *"I am the resurrection and the life."*

Elder Silas H. Durand
May 10, 1902.

REVELATIONS 21:23.

And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 58.

"THEREFORE, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

The power and force which scriptural words carry with them is due to the Spirit, which takes of the things of Jesus and revealeth them to him who readeth, and in whom grace aboundeth, and it is only by the exercise of the Spirit in us that we are enabled to eat and be comforted by the revealed word. Again, in order to attain unto that which is in the mind of the inspired writer, we dare not detach a sentence or a verse from that which goes before or which follows after, but search the written word, for we have the precious instruction which fell from the lips of Jesus: *"He that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."* God is not the author of confusion, but of peace. *"Therefore."* This word is used by the writer, referring to the things of which , he has been speaking, as a reason for the admonition which follows, and which brings to our faith's view the weighty and precious things which the gospel sets forth to our gladdened hearts, namely, *"How that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he, was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scrip-*

tures." We must know the one, to follow the other. The word *"therefore"* is important, for if the things of the gospel *"be in you, and abound, they* make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in, the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." Therefore to follow Jesus we must know Jesus. " My beloved brethren." This expression of the blessed relationship of the saints of God is not a mere salutation, as men of the world use the word *"brother,"* carrying with it simply a meaningless expression, but these words came out of the apostle's heart, and not merely from his lips. The words, filled with their proper meaning, would say, Because you are in my heart to live and die with you, because with me you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope is the same hope, our hearts are joined together with the cords of that love which God the Father bestowed upon his Son, and upon all who fear his name and look for his appearing, therefore you are my brethren beloved. Now the things which are in my heart I say unto you: *"Be ye steadfast,"* firmly fixed and established in the belief of the truth that Christ died for your redemption and arose again for your justification, and that he ever liveth and sitteth at the right hand of the Father, continually making intercession for you. He who is steadfast listeneth not to the voice of a stranger, to enticing words nor evil devices, but contendeth strenuously and firmly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. He looks well to the anchor which steadfastly holds his frail vessel which rideth the waves in safety because of the anchor (Christ Jesus). To be steadfast the eye must be single to the glory of God, knowing none other gods, save the God of salvation, pressing forward, turning neither to the right nor to the left.

"Unmovable." This is a strong word and implies strength. The winds of false doctrine may blow with all their power and force against an unmovable child of grace, but cannot turn him from the way his mind and heart are set. He standeth upon the foundation of all truth (the rock Christ Jesus). He knoweth the security of the place of his feet. How refreshing to meet a brother or sister who is not ashamed of the gospel of Christ under any circumstances, and who is proud to be numbered with the sect everywhere spoken against, and who is weaned from the milk, drawn from the breasts of mother Eve. When we remember that God is faithful in performing all his promises, that his faithfulness faileth not, that he remembereth us in mercy, that his love is an everlasting love, that he doeth his pleasure in heaven and in earth, that all his ways are goodness and his paths are paths of peace, that he is the Potter and we are the clay, that he maketh us vessels of his own pleasing, and what he does is right, that the righteousness which is in his Son he has imputed unto us, remembering, I say, all

these things we become strong in the Lord, recognizing the power of his might. Thus are we "*unmovable,*" firmly fixed and built up on our most holy faith. "*How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's. daughter,*" walking in all the beauty and order of the house of God, walking no more by sight, but by the faith of God's elect in the secret of his love.

" Always abounding in the work of the Lord." To abound is in every case to manifest life, therefore in order to abound one must necessarily be alive; in the life of the children of the kingdom sin abounds, and also grace, the one in conflict with the other. Now you will ask, What is the work of the Lord, to which we are admonished of the apostle? Belief in the Lord Jesus Christ is the work of the Lord in us, and causes us to suffer because of the abounding of sin in our mortal bodies, and these are the sufferings of Christ, for it is the work of the Holy Ghost which causeth the conflict and bringeth about the suffering. So the apostle says, "*For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation, also aboundeth by Christ.*" The belief in the Lord Jesus Christ that a man once lived who was called Jesus Christ, does not make a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, but your belief must be wrought out and made manifest in your mortal bodies, which work is by the Spirit of Christ in you. It is not sufficient to abound once in a while in the work; a Sunday christian and a weekday sinner is more of a hypocrite than a seven day sinner, for the one knoweth the way and walketh not in it, while the other knoweth not the way, so walketh in ignorance. "*If we suffer, we shall also reign with him,*" and our peaceful reign in his kingdom with him is the consolation which aboundeth by Christ. This is a continuous work in the life of faith.

"*Forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.*" The knowledge of the truth of God in you makes you that you are "*steadfast,*" that you are "*unmovable,*" and that you do abound in the work of the Lord. The Apostle is attesting to that which already exists in you: love for the brethren, a desire for holiness, a conviction of sin, a fear and trembling in coming before the throne of grace, a knowledge of our poverty, wretchedness, blindness and weakness; all these build us up in the faith which is set before us, showing us that it is the work of the Lord in us, and that it is not in vain, because it leadeth us to his mercy-seat and to the house of our Master's brethren. We also know that our labor is not in vain, because the power and sweetness of the gospel lead us into an earnest desire for heavenly things, and turn us away from the things we once loved. It shows us, too, that it is truly the work of the Lord in us, for we know that we could not do this work of ourselves, it is in opposition to every desire of the carnal mind, for it humbles our

pride and makes us to be despised in the face of a vain world, for our garments are humility, and our ornaments *"a meek and quiet spirit."* These things fulfill the law of God, and not the law of the flesh. May the love of God and the knowledge of his truth so occupy our hearts that all our labor in the Lord may be to the glory of God, and to the lifting Jesus on high.

B. F. COULTER

"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come." – John xvi. 13.

There are two grand lessons to be learned in the school of Christ, and all divine teaching is comprehended and summed up in them. One is, to learn, by the Spirit's teaching, what we are by nature; so as to see and feel the utter ruin and thorough wreck of self, and the complete beggary, weakness, and helplessness of the creature in the things of God. This is the first grand branch of divine teaching. And we have to learn this lesson day by day, *" line upon line, line upon line here a little, and there a little."* Through this branch of divine teaching we have almost daily to wade, depraved nature. And the other grand branch of divine teaching is, *" To know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent."* To know *who* Jesus is, and to know what he is; to know the efficacy of his atoning blood to purge the guilty conscience, the power of his justifying righteousness to acquit and absolve from all sin; the mystery of his dying love to break down the hardness of heart, and raise up a measure of love towards him; and to see, by the eye of faith, his holy walk and suffering image, so as to be in some measure conformed to him, and have, his likeness in some measure stamped upon our souls.

Elder J.C. Philpot

" And they that know thy name wilt put their trust in thee."- PSALM ix. 10.

THERE is a knowing of God's name. By the " name of God " are to be understood the revealed perfections of the Almighty-all that he has revealed concerning himself in the Scriptures of truth. Every attribute, every perfection, everything that God has said of himself, is summed up in the, name of God." But especially does the, name of God " signify the Son of his love, who is " the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his Person; " as he said to Moses, " Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.

Beware of him and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: *for my name is in him,"* that is, all my revealed perfections, all my glorious character, all my divine attributes are in him; for *"in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."* Now, there is a *knowing* this name of God; that is, there is such a thing as an experimental acquaintance in the soul with the perfections of God as revealed in the Scriptures. His name is therefore known when the perfections of God are revealed in the heart and conscience by the power of the Spirit. And this is by virtue of living faith in the soul. By faith we see God. By faith we know God. When we receive into our hearts the truth as it is in Jesus, and when we believe by living faith what God has said of himself in the word, then we know the name of God; and every manifestation of God's mercy, every token of God's favour, and every shining in of God's perfections, is a discovery in our hearts, a raising up in our souls of the knowledge of God's name.

Elder J.C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 2000

Smith Walton, VA $2.00
Buford R. Thornton, WV 7.00
William A. Ramsey, AL 5.00
R. Allen Carroll, NC 2.00
Oscar D. Pickral, VA 7.00
Eld. W.T. Conner, VA 2.00
Mrs. Pauline Jones, TX 2.00
Mrs. Marcy Burgin, TX 2.00
Gorman Perkins, AL 7.00
Mrs. Bertie Brown, NC 4.00
Ms. Faye G. Brown, NC 25.00
Mrs. Etta Newton, NC 2.00
Ronald K. Crouch, Sr. WV 2.00
C.W. Wood, VA 7.00
Mrs. Nannie Trevathan, NC 2.00

OBITUARIES

OBITUARY OF SISTER IRENE DALTON MYERS

If the Lord will bless me, I will endeavor to write the obituary of our beloved Sister Irene Myers. Sister Irene was born December 31, 1924, in Pittsylvania County and passed away May 21, 2000 in Duke University in Durham, NC at the age of 75.

She was the daughter of the late Charlie A. Dalton and Sister Molly Yeatts Dalton. She was married to the late Brother Ira Myers and to this union they were blessed with one daughter and a foster daughter.

She is survived by her daughter, Gracie Adams, of Gretna, foster daughter, Frances Johnson, of Bedford, three sisters, Sister Reba Myers and Annie Vivian Dalton, of Gretna and Pearl McCracken of

Lynchburg, one granddaughter, Ellen Brooks, of Gretna, foster grandson, David Johnson, of Bedford, great-grandchildren, Brandon and Danielle Brooks, of Gretna and a special friend, Paul Dalton of Gretna.

Sister Irene joined Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on August 23,1964 and was baptized the same day. Sister Irene was faithful to attend her meetings until her health would not permit.

Sister Irene loved to visit our sister churches. She would always come up front and join in during the singing service. She was a believer in salvation by grace.

Sister Irene departed this life on May 21,2000. Her funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church at 2:00 p.m., May 23, 2000, by her pastor, Elder Raymond Goad and Elders Marvin Brumfield and Leonard Brammer. Her body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in the church cemetery to await the glorious resurrection. She will be greatly missed by her family, church and friends. May all that mourn her loss be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father who never makes a mistake; it is He who giveth and He who taketh away.

Written By: Pam Betterton
Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
Elder Marvin Brumfield, Assistant Moderator
Pam Betterton, Clerk

SAINTS REST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH DALLAS, TEXAS
August 30, 2000

SISTER LOIS WILSON

Whereas it has pleased our Heavenly Father, in his wisdom and holiness, on August 25, 2000 to remove from this life our dear Sister Lois Wilson bringing sorrow to our hearts; and, Whereas we believe that our loss is her gain and that she has been removed from this life to realms of glory, and from a world of trouble to a land of delight; we sorrow not as though we have no hope, but because we shall see her face no more. Nevertheless, we believe what the Lord does is best.

Therefore be it resolved by Saints Rest Church that we bow in submission to His will, believing that when Christ shall appear, all those who are asleep in Christ shall be gathered up by Him in righteousness.

And be it resolved that we extend sympathy to her family and friends, in that we have lost a true friend. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Adopted by Saints Rest Church while in conference September 3, 2000.

Elder Carey C. Morris, Moderator
Deacon Dean G. Connell, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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SONG

ZION'S a city God hath blessed
With peace and everlasting rest;
A glorious city, strong and fair;
And Jesus dwells forever there.

Her ancient walls appear to be
The workmanship of Deity;
Founded in grace, they still appear
Without a flaw or chasm there.

Oft has this city's strength been tried,
By mighty foes on every side ;
But all in vain it yet has been,
She baffles Satan, hell, and sin.

Count ye her towers, how high they rise,
Her golden spires, they pierce the skies!
Her golden streets are fair to view;
Her palaces and bulwarks, too.

Then round her walk, her turrets ten;
Mark all her brazen bulwarks well;
Spread far and wide her deathless fame,
Her pearly gates and walls of flame.

Her founder's love has ever proved
Like Salem's mount, which ne'er was moved;
'Tis fixed on this eternal base,
The grace of God, and gift by grace.

Kent.

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EDITORIAL

FAITH AND HOPE

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

I have had an impression in mind for many days, and I hope this impression is from the Lord. I would like to express a few thoughts on it for the prayerful consideration of the beloved brethren who believe in salvation only by the grace of our sovereign God.

Faith and hope must go together in a child of God. Without faith to believe in the eternal salvation accomplished by our Lord Jesus Christ we can certainly have no hope; and without hope of heaven and immortal glory when this life is over faith would be of no value to us. ***"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."*** The Armenians tell us that all we have to do to be saved is to have faith. This is true, but whence cometh faith? Carnal man cannot produce this needed faith, for, ***"By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."*** This faith is applied to our time life, not our eternal salvation, as the non-regenerated believe. They tell us that if we will only ask God to give us faith he will do it. How can anyone call upon One whom they do not know? Paul tells us, ***"the carnal mind is enmity against God."*** Enmity is hatred. Would anyone call upon God if they hated him? Neither can they know him until born again of the Holy Spirit. 1 Cor. 2:14, ***"But the natural man receiveth not the things of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*** For one to become spiritual he must be born again: the Spirit must live in his heart. Rom. 8:9, ***"Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."*** If one is not his he cannot believe, for Paul tells us, ***"Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his***

sake." Jesus told some Jews, *"It is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."* Since it is the work of God that we believe, it is utterly impossible to believe without His work in us. It is by the grace of God that we receive faith, as quoted above, and he does not let this faith lie dormant. Faith without works is dead faith. Works cannot produce that faith that is the gift of God, but when God imparts his faith in the life of the believer he will not let it lie dormant: it must show or prove itself by works. When the Spirit of God is in operation, faith shows or proves itself outwardly by works: *"For it is God which worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure."* The Old School or Primitive Baptists are accused of not believing in works, but this is a false accusation, for we surely do believe in works: not works to bring about salvation, but salvation that brings about works. We believe the bible teaches that good works are the effect of grace; but we do not believe that works brings about grace, for grace is the free unmerited gift of God. *"And if of grace, then is it no more works: But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."* Rom. 11:6. It is the Spirit of Christ that works in the believer, and, *"the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, etc."* If our works do not display this fruit, then our faith is a dead faith. We may confess by mouth that we have faith, but works will always speak louder than words and can easily be discerned by a true believer. The apostle James says, *"Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works."* One may display his faith and yet never confess it before the church and ask for a home with them. The members of the church recognize this faith, but are powerless in persuading anyone to join the church. We should always extend the opportunity, but God is the One who adds to the church such as should be saved. Should we attempt to do this we may drive such a one away. I believe I have known some who had saving faith and hope in Christ Jesus who left this life without ever being members of the militant church, and I believe I know some now. Both have justified or proved their faith by works, not before God, but before the brethren. We are justified in the sight of God only by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ *"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."* In the 2nd chapter of James he gives us examples of how we are justified by works. In verses 21 through 24 we read, *"Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the alter? Seest thou how faith wrought*

with works, and by works was made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." He also gives Rahab the harlot for an example. *"He (Abraham) staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able to perform. And therefore it was imputed unto him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."* Rom. 4:20-25. In the 3rd chapter of Galatians we find Paul chastising them because they had fallen back to the works of the law and left their faith. He said unto them, *"This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? If it be yet in vain. He that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."* Brethren, if we be blessed with Abraham we are not under the law but under grace, for *"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all." Jesus Christ "was delivered for our of-*

fences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

Yes, dear brethren, as I said before, faith and hope must accompany each other; and by the grace of God we are given both. ***"And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."***

All of us are creatures of vanity: we are full of it. But Paul tells us, ***"For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope.."*** And he tells us, ***"For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for ? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."*** Those who attempt to procure their own salvation by the works of the law have no need of hope, for they say that they know they are saved, and to them this `being saved` they consider to be their eternal salvation. I am sure of this statement, for I lived with them for many years and believed the same things they believe. They can no more help believing the things that they do than we can help believing the way we do, for it is hid from them and revealed unto his babes. Jesus rejoiced in spirit and said, ***"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight."*** God is too wise to err and to good to be unkind; therefore why should any man complain? Who is puny man to say unto God, Why hast thou made me thus? Paul said of this, ***"Hath not the potter power (right) over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?"*** Surely God does have this power, ***"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren."***

For anyone to receive faith and hope from the Lord they must be born again, for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. In the flesh we are carnal, sold under sin, and have only a carnal mind. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. We must become spiritual, for the carnal mind is en-

mity against God. It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But we are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwells in us. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. If Christ is in us it is a mystery, ***"Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but is now made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."*** To receive hope and faith we must first be justified in the sight of God. Jesus Christ justified us, for it was he ***"who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification, therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."***

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Why is charity the greatest? Is it not that our faith and hope will be finalized, but charity will endure eternally? May God bless the truth and pardon my errors.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

Oct. 24, 2000

Dear Elder and Sister Brammer,

I really don't know how to start this letter this morning, I do not know words to express the love in my heart for all the dear ones every where. My life is so empty since I am unable to meet at Church with the dear Saints, to hear the wonderful news from the "Far Country", I need to hear the ministers pray, preach and sing. I need to hear of the goodness of God to poor sinners.

I didn't realize how much I needed to look in the faces and see shining there the love and hear words of encouragement spoke to this poor little nobody.

Every one has been so kind to me during these many Months and days. I have felt so alone at times and yet I feel the Lord has indeed been with me in mercy.

I desire so much to express to all the dear Ones the wonderful kindness and I feel the need to tell them about the days spent in trying to beg for mercy and for each breath.

I want to tell them the many Scriptures that came to me with such sweetness.

What would I ever do were it not for the love and kindness of the Blessed Father?

I am so afraid at times that all is

my foolish imagination and yet without the love and mercy of the Heavenly Physician where would I be? I shutter to think.

As I waited for strength to come while in the hospital, I felt I did touch the hem of His garment. I could not ask that He would remove the affliction but rather that I be given grace, and strength to accept what He may send, health or affliction.

Oh that I may be kept from complaining but rather praise Him for the past and beg for another day, if its His will.

Thinking of the lovely visits of the dear Ones in the many months, certainly has soothed the weary heart and smoothed out the wrinkles of this weary life.

I have such a great desire to describe His love in such a way that others may praise Him. Now as I take a backward look, the words will not come to "Thank" Him for all things.

As one of old expressed ***"for to do that which is good I find not and the evil which I would not do, that I do."***

It is Heaven on earth when we hear the sound of the Word of God spoken of. The heart thrills and leaps with joy, the cup is full and runs over, and the tears of joy flow.

Though I feel so unworthy to mingle with the dear Ones, this love is the reason of my hope, if not deceived. Oh He has blessed me in my greatest trial and I have found from time to time comfort in trials. Despite my recent trial I was comforted with words from our Father's House.

Some times I feel to say with one of old ***"O, Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy Name in all the earth."*** I pray that I am not deceived in all this.

I do hope that you understand what I am trying to say.

I want so much to be with all of you at Roanoke Church, Sunday, but must wait upon our Lord, (If indeed He is mine.) I need your continued prayers.

Mrs Rlee B. Houchins.

ARTICLES

6-21-1999

Yesterday, I was blessed to go to Martinsville Church. It was the day set aside for the communion service. I heard Elders Julian Williams, J. L. Cassell, W. T. Conner, and Elder Carter talk a short while, then prepared for the communion.

I wish I had words to express my feelings in the communion. To me, the communion is one of the most sacred ordinances of the church - a most solemn time. My mind was carried in a flash, back to my baptism. I felt like it was as sacred as the communion. I couldn't hold back my tears as I went into the water, but it was tears of joy and reverence. My heart was perfectly at ease - so full of thanksgiving - to the Lord above for His goodness and mercy to a poor sinful one as I felt to be. It was the fulfillment of the promise given

to me 14 years before. Oh, the joy and ecstasy in my poor soul. I've never been able to express it in words.

As the deacons began serving the bread yesterday that same feeling came over me. Oh, to think I was permitted to partake of that precious service with His dear children! Praise His holy name. Yet there was also such a feeling of unworthiness. I know of myself I can never be worthy to partake of that service nor even to sit with the blessed saints in worship. All our worthiness is in Jesus Christ who died for us, His church, His bride who is beautiful to behold. She is robed in spotless white with not a spot, wrinkle, or blemish to be seen. Our dear Lord and Saviour took all her sins on His own body and died that His children would reign with Him in yon blissful regions of Glory , never to suffer again but all will be joy and praise to the Father, Son and Spirit forever and forever. Oh Lord, may I be in that number, even though I be the least one of all. Just to be there to join in that glorious song that the angels cannot sing. That song of redemption and praise that will never end, but will continue through the ceaseless ages of eternity.

Written by Sister Edrie Clifton
Widow of Elder Bennie Clifton
Submitted by their daughter
Judy Poindexter

WHEN IS IT A SABBATH DAY, WITH ONE?

When is it a Sabbath day, with one? It is any time, of any minute, of any hour, of any day; the Lord God be pleased; to send His Holy Spirit down within one's heart; and reveal, some of His truths of Himself; unto him or her.

Now, will that one keep that day Holy? Yes, just so long as the Spirit be dwelling within the heart.

Now, Where is Holy ground? Wherever, the Holy Spirit be dwelling.

Now, does this working of the Holy Spirit within a man; effect any change, in that fleshly nature, of that man? No, not one iota. For just so soon, as the Spirit is withdrawn; that one's fleshly nature, is right back; the exact same as it were, before it was arrested, and kept still; during the presence of the Holy Spirit; for the flesh, in its nature, and the Spirit, in its nature; Cannot dwell, in the same one, at the same time; for, where either is present; the other must be absent. For they are each; entirely opposite, from the other. They differ from each other, the same as wickedness differs from Holiness or Righteousness. The ways of the working of the nature, in the flesh of man; always point downward toward hell. While the nature of the working of the Spirit; always point upward or heavenward.

Through what process does one brother in Christ's Church come to have a Pure love for his Brethren?

Answer: "God" First loved them, with an everlasting love; and henceforth, worked that same love in them; Which love is, a spiritual love; which is far, far above a natural love. We have for our natural parent, wife, or husband, relatives or friends, which love, can (at most), last only so long, as our mortal body of flesh liveth; and then, does completely vanish. Where Spiritual love, which is the gift of God; can never completely fade away; but will last, forevermore; throughout all time, for this world to stand, and all eternity thereafter, this time world is no more. For this is God's workings and what God does is done and finished forever. For the very truth is this; the filthy hands of mankind; has never taken any part whatsoever, in the bringing of these things about. And it is my desire, to be thankful unto the Lord and God; for it so being. And that so being my feelings, Dear Brethren; I feel, I dare not refer to the meeting house; which the hands of man, has taken part in its structuring; as the Church. For it can not be, an everlasting, eternal, heaven bound, thing or being; but is, a time limited thing or building. But not so; with the true Church, of the ever living "God"; Which is reserved and preserved; for an everlasting home in heaven and immortal glory; Where therein; will exist no wood, no nails, no brick, no stone or mortar; nor any other earthly thing of this time world.

The true Church is, a Spiritual building; its Builder and Maker and Sustainer and Transporter; is God. And so it is No member of human kind, did ever, or shall ever, lift one finger, turn one hand, or take one step; on his or her own; to in any way, shape or form; lend any aid to her welfare; The Church: For it is Not in man even to direct his own Footsteps. God willing! I shall herein illustrate some of just how deceived man is; in and of his own self. Man believes himself, to be self-endowed with strength, with mind and self-sufficiency; in other words an independent man, who can attain greatness for himself. But let us, with a pure mind, examine closely, carefully, and truthfully; How completely deceived he is in his own hard and stony heart.

He was conceived in sin, shaped in iniquity, and came forth into this world speaking lies; was completely naked; and completely self-helpless; to do anything for himself, or anyone else. And though, he still is completely unaware of it; his very life, his very being, and or doing; is wholly, entirely, and completely, dependent upon; whatsoever is the mind, purpose, will and pleasure of his Creator God; to furnish him with. For without God and His furnishings of all he has had, or ever shall have; he could never have been anything, nor done anything, nor had anything. Now that my friends; is just a touching upon; that total and com-

plete Lack of any self-greatness or goodness in and of mankind.

And so therefore; it is my desire; that I could be kept in such a way; as to render any and all praise, honor and glory; unto the true and living God, only. For I feel and believe; He is the only One who does all things, Well and Good.

In hope,
Troy G. Shepard

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE DAY'S WORK OF JESUS

"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."- John ix. 4, 5.

My request, I shall endeavor to explain, as the Lord may enable me, the meaning of these words of our dear Savior. As I regard them now, they seem to enlarge and expand, and to reach out over wide fields, comprehending not one subject only, but many subjects. The inquiry concerns particularly the day in which Jesus worked, and the night when no man can work. But there is also to be considered the works which Jesus worked, that they are the works of him who sent him; that he did no works of himself as a man, but that the Father who dwelt in him did the works. (John xiv. 10.) They are the works of ***"God manifest in the flesh."*** Also these works of God in the salvation of his people are manifest in this blind man whom Jesus saw as he hid himself from the pharisees, who would have stoned him, and ***"went out of the temple, passing through the midst of them, and so passed by."*** This blind man was there, not because of the sins of either himself or his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. He was born blind, and was there at that particular time, according to the eternal purpose of God.

The day in which Jesus must work the works of him that sent him, I understand to be the time during which he was in the world after he began his ministry, from the time of his baptism by John, till he was crucified. A man does his work in the field while it is day, from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same. When the night comes he cannot work. So Jesus used this fact as a figure to show not only when his work was to be done, but that it was a work that must be done by him alone, unaided by any man, and that when he had accomplished that work it would be done forever, and that so far as that work, or any work of that kind, is concerned, it would hence- forth be night to all the world, when no man can work. The time while he was in the world, engaged

in that work, was the day. That work which he was to do, and to fulfill in his suffering, death and resurrection, was manifest in all the miracles he did, and in all his teaching while he was in the world. All power was in his hands then, for the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily in him, and that power was manifest when he healed diseases, made the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak, opened the eyes of the blind, raised the dead, hushed the tempest, bade the raging sea be still, and multiplied a few loaves and fishes, till they satisfied the hunger of thousands of men. Thus he was manifest as the light of the world, all power and knowledge being in him.

During this day, while Jesus was in the world, and was the light of the world, the great work of salvation must be completed, and it must be completed by himself. The works of God in him were done when he died the accursed death of the cross for the sins of his people, and arose for their justification. It was then and in that work that *"he finished transgression, made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness."* It was then that he slew the enmity of the law, and secured its favor for his people. It was then that he abolished death, became the destruction of the grave, destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. But in all his works of healing while in the world, this greater work was manifested. In all his encounters with the devil, his power over him was shown in the victory he gained. In raising the dead he displayed the power that he was to gain over death through his own death. Indeed, in this sense his works were finished from the foundation of the world, so that Abel, Eve, Noah and all the Old Testament saints, by faith received the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. In this wonderful, mysterious sense he could say, *"Before Abraham was I AM,"* so that it was given to Abraham to see his day and be glad.

But all this work was his work alone. The patriarchs and prophets, to whose faith he was made known long before he came in the flesh, saw him as the only one who could do that work of salvation, and saw that he had no one of all the people with him to help or uphold, but that his own arm brought salvation unto him. (Isa. lxiii. 5.)

In this glorious work which he worked during the day of his life in the flesh, he saved all his people with an everlasting salvation. When he had finished that work in and by his death, it was and must be night, henceforth and forever upon the earth, as to that work. No work in the way of salvation from sin can henceforth be done, for he who was the light of the world has gone from the world, having finished that work, and it is now, in that sense, night in the world when no man can work. Those who are not embraced in the

work that was done during the working day of Jesus will never know salvation; nor, we can also say, will they ever desire it, or hunger and thirst for righteousness; for Jesus has declared all who thus desire and hunger to be blessed. It will be with those who are not redeemed according to the words of Jesus which John heard: ***"He that is unjust let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy let him be filthy still."*** Those represented by the wise virgins went in with Jesus, and were accepted with him, and those represented by the foolish virgins never went in. Their work day, the legal day, is ended, and to them the night is come, when no man can work, while upon the righteous, the Sun of Righteousness has arisen, never more to go down, making for them an everlasting day. But this day of the Lord is night unto his enemies.

However many there be of the redeemed, they are all embraced in the redeeming work which Jesus did while the day of his life in the world lasted. However few there be of those who are not redeemed, they were not embraced in the work of Jesus, and shall not come into his righteousness. Nor do they ever hunger for it, but are haters of that which is good, and lovers of that which is evil.

Now a few thoughts concerning the blind man, and how the works of God were made manifest in him.

Of this particular man it is said that he was blind from his birth. I think he represents one who has received divine life. Some who are blind have once been able to see, but by accident or disease have lost their sight. Such came to Jesus from time to time, asking that their sight might be restored. They knew what things they would see when this blessing should be granted them, for they had seen them before. In each case some spiritual truth was illustrated and taught. But in this case the man had never seen, and could not know the value of the blessing he had never possessed. He did not ask for sight. But he had life, and therefore he hungered and thirsted, and felt all the wants that this life causes. These wants he was powerless to supply, and therefore he sat and begged. So the poor soul who has been given spiritual life, by which he sees himself a sinner in the sight of God, feels the need of spiritual food and water and clothing to supply the wants of that divine life. But as to any way by which those wants can be supplied he is blind. He cannot see what it is he needs, nor how to obtain it. He can only feel the hunger and the thirst and the cold, like a little child, or a lamb, and cry. He begs of all that come by. He does not ask for sight, for of that he knows nothing. He just cries to all that come by, because of the pain of hunger and cold. He is by the wayside. Many that go by try to help him, and he gets enough to keep him alive, alive to still feel the anguish of sin and a longing to be righteous,

but nothing more until Jesus comes by, the persecuted, suffering sorrowing Jesus. He is sure to come that way at the appointed time. His way lies just there, wherever such a poor, hungry beggar sits, and there is the way that he will surely come. And he comes to every such poor, blind creature from the angry crowds of men who hate his doctrine and his work, and who would persecute him to death. They follow him as far as they can, to prevent any from believing on him, but they cannot keep him away from one poor, sorrowing soul. He hides himself from the raging multitude when he will, and comes softly to the side of the helpless, needy one just at the right time, and manifests the works of God in him.

That this blind man represents the conscious sinner is shown in the conversation of Jesus with the pharisees, recorded at the close of this chapter: *"And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. And some of the pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind ye should have no sin; but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."*

This shows that the ignorance of the natural man is not represented by the blindness of this man, but that he represents the sinner who has been quickened, and who has been made sensible of his condition before God, but is blind to any way of salvation for such a sinner, who is justly condemned. The pharisees were not blind in that sense, for they said, *"We see how we can be saved, it is by the works of the law."* Now they did not know that by the works of the law no one can be justified, and that was proof that they were yet dead in sin. Their sins remained upon them. Whereas those who are blind, in the sense that Jesus meant, are those who see the true majesty of the law, and the justice of its demands, but cannot see how a sinner can escape its just penalty of death. This blindness as to the way of salvation proves one to be alive, and therefore to be one of the redeemed, whose sins have been atoned for and removed by the death of Christ, and who is in the sight of the law forever free from sin, there being no condemnation to him. It only requires that his eyes shall be opened to see his deliverance from sin and death. What the poor sinner will see when his eyes are opened by the Savior, for the Savior alone can do that work, is just as true before as after his eyes are opened. If those pharisees had been blind in this sense it would have proven them to be alive spiritually, and therefore to have no sin. But they said, We see. Just as the same character today says, *"We see clearly how a sinner can be saved. It is only needed that he keep the law. Salvation is of-*

fered him upon conditions to be performed by him." This shows them to be still in nature's darkness, and that their sin remaineth upon them. I do not know that I understand the meaning of the method which Jesus took to open the eyes of this man, but I will present some thoughts upon it. To be born blind was regarded in Israel as a special curse. Therefore the disciples asked whose sin caused this affliction, and the pharisees referred to this common understanding among them that a blind man was held as abhorred and base, when they said, ***"Thou wast altogether born in sin,. and dost thou teach us ?"*** This blindness represented the curse of sin as felt by the sinner, causing self-abhorrence, with no hope of any deliverance. Now Jesus, to remove that curse of sin, was made sin for his people, and became a curse for them, and endured shame and reproach. It is this shameful death that delivered his people from the curse, and it is only when this is made known to them, and applied to the case of each, that they come to realize and see this wonderful deliverance. Jesus spat upon the ground and made clay of the spittle, and anointed the eyes of the blind man. Spitting expressed contempt, and was to the shame of the one who received it. We may think that the clay made of the dust and the spittle when applied to the eyes represents the application to the poor sinner of the shameful death of Jesus by which the curse of sin is removed. This is applied to the eyes in order that the blindness, which represents the felt curse and shame of sin, may be broken. Now one thing remains to be felt and known, and that is the power of Jesus' word. By that word spoken unto his disciples they are clean, as he said, ***"Now are ye clean through the words that I have spoken unto you."*** There is a ***"washing of water by the word."*** The power of Jesus' word, as risen from the dead, must be felt, working obedience in the heart, and bringing us into sweet conformity to his will. So he said to the blind man, ***"Go, wash in the pool of Siloam."*** Immediately the interpretation of the name of that pool is given, which to my understanding presents the key to the subject. ***"Which is by interpretation, Sent."*** Here is the felt power of Jesus' word. Here is the experience of obedience to his blessed will and word, and the acting out of that obedience thus wrought within by his holy power. Here are the works of God made manifest in this poor beggar, blind from his birth. ***"He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing."*** How far he had to go, I do not know; it is of no importance. We read of no one leading him; it was not necessary. The interpretation of the name of the pool shows how he went: he was SENT. The power of Jesus' word sent him. He could not fail to go, nor go amiss, for Jesus SENT him. Men TRY to send, but may fail. Jesus never fails;

he cannot fail; he sends, and obedience to his will is certain and absolute. And in that spirit of holy obedience to the sweet power and will of Jesus the cleansing of sight is felt, and the deliverance from sin is experienced.

He came seeing, but Jesus was no longer there. What solemn gladness is in that astonished soul! but he does not know who healed him, only that he was *"a man that was called Jesus."* He must wait awhile, and have some blessed but trying experiences to try the work of God in him before he shall know that Jesus is the Son of God. He must tell the truth concerning the opening of his eyes, before his neighbors and to the pharisees, and thus honor and exalt the name of Jesus whom they hate. He must be separated from his father and mother, and be cast out of the synagogue, and be left alone in the world, before he shall know by whom he has received this blessing, and what great things it means for him. But the blessing is his, and his soul cannot but rejoice as he comes into conflict with the religious world because of it. How his voice rings in our souls as he says, *"Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not; one thing I know, that, whereas I was once blind, now I see."* What wonderful words are these, and how they have been taken up by thousands and thousands since then to tell the wonders that have been done in them, and the glorious assurance that now they do see the wonderful works of God, whether they belong to them or not. *"Whereas I was once blind, now I see."* He did not know till now to what he was blind. Now the untold beauties and wonders of a new world burst upon his view. No need to argue with one whose eyes Jesus has opened, for he knows that he now sees, and he is wonderingly absorbed and delighted in what he sees. The truth that his salvation is of God is clear and unquestionable in his soul. He cannot divide the praise with any, nor does it occur to him to claim any part of the credit for himself. His going to the pool of Siloam and washing was just as much the work of God as the putting of clay upon his eyes.

But after all there is a sadness in being alone, separated from friends and acquaintances, even from father and mother, and cast out by those who represent all the religion he has ever known up to this time. He cannot cease to speak of Jesus as a good man, and the opening of his eyes as a work done by the will and power of God. But he feels his loneliness.

It is just then that Jesus finds him, and asks him that question that stirs up all his wondering soul with tender longing: *"Dost thou believe on the Son of God ?"* Remember he has never until now seen the face of Jesus, but he addresses him with the solemn reverence that is born of God, and shows a knowledge of Jesus in his soul deeper than he himself understands. He answers, *"Who is he, Lord, that I might*

believe on him?" O, what thousands of men and women and children there are in this world of sorrow who are feeling just that way; who have just that longing desire, that hungering to know of the Son or God, that they may believe on him.

Here they stand together, the man whose eyes are opened, and Jesus who opened them, but the man does not know him. Yet he has felt the touch of his soft hand, and has heard and obeyed his precious, powerful voice. And now he stands looking into that heavenly face, expecting, hoping, loving, and asking of him as no poor soul could ask of anybody else, *"Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?"* And then Jesus tells him, as he also tells you, my dear brother, sister, child, *"Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee."* Then he knew, then you know. Your past experience is brought to your mind. You remember it may be when you first saw, when you first knew the way of salvation by grace, perhaps years ago, though you did not know that you were one of the redeemed. But how differently you have felt ever since that wonderful experience, and how differently you have talked. A new world has been opened to your view, and it has been a comfort to look upon the things of the kingdom of God, even though you could not know that you had an interest in them. And now what a comfort it is to look into that dear face and ask, in deepest humility, *"Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?"* He does not describe him, does not tell you to go here or there to find him; does not tell you to do this or that to gain his favor, but just turns you to your own experience. *"Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee."*

Elder Silas H. Durand

NOVEMBER 6, 1902.

MATTHEW XXV. 35.

"I WAS a stranger, and ye took me in."

Early in the history of the world God talked about the stranger, and through the days of the years of time he keeps up talking about the stranger. Here he tells us that the stranger shall not be forgotten in the last day. He mentions him along with the widow, the fatherless and the poor. *"For the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty and a terrible, which rewardeth not persons, nor taketh reward: he doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment. Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt" In Deuteronomy xiv. 29,* occurs the language: The stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow," and again in chapter sixteen, verse eleven, the same words occur. Again, we read in Deuteronomy xxiv. 19-21: When

thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgotten a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. * * * When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean of it afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow , Also the stranger had a place in the cities of refuge. David, when preparing for the building of the Lord's house, commanded that the strangers in Israel should be gathered, and Solomon set ten thousand of them to be bearers, and eighty thousand of them to be hewers in the mountains, and thirty-six hundred overseers to set the people a work. In Psalms cxlvi. it is written, *" The Lord preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow."* And so on down to the advent of " the Stranger " this was spoken of by all the holy prophets. From whence they came and where they were going was no concern of theirs, it was enough to know that they were strangers to insure them lodging. The Jews were forbidden to allow a stranger to lodge in the street; accordingly we see Lot urging the two men, he knew not who they were, but they knew him; they came to take him out of the city to a place of safety. In doing this they were a lively type of "the *Stranger"* who took the church out. Job said that in the days of his prosperity the stranger did not lodge in the street. He said, *"I opened my doors to the traveler."* After Jesus arose from the dead, when he joined the two travelers he hid himself from them and made himself a stranger to them; they said, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem. But sad as they were in their hearts they did not forget to take him in because he was a stranger. The money paid for the body of Jesus was used to buy the potter's field in which to bury strangers. In first Timothy, fifth chapter, the apostle, as it would seem, makes one of the qualifications of widows, who were to be cared for by the church, to be, *"If she has lodged strangers."* Then we have that great text in Hebrews: *"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares;"* It is then, good to have friendship for strangers. They were forbidden to charge him for his lodging, and were to lend him money, and must not charge him interest, or distress him for the principal. They were to give to him. He was not allowed to hunt a place; all it was necessary for him to do was to advertise his presence in the city; they knew his needs and supplied them, and the beauty of it all was that this whole thing could only be seen and enjoyed by the traveler. A stranger is one who is away from home and needs the comforts of home, which some can and do bestow upon each other. In this also let good measure pressed down

be given, not hoping for gain. Abraham said, *" I am a stranger (and a) sojourner with YOU."* David said the same. The apostle in Hebrews said that all the fathers who died in faith, seeing the promises afar off, being persuaded of them, confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. The saints today are made strangers to the world by the grace of God, and are away from home in a strange country; they are travelers singing as they go: *" I am a stranger here below."* For this there is a cause. *"I was a stranger, and ye took me in." "When saw we thee a stranger and took thee in," "As ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."*

Your brother,

FRANK McGLADE.

HEBRON, Ohio, Jan. 27, 1910.

PSALMS LXXXIX. 15.

"BLESSED is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance."

The above language has been on my mind for several days, and I think I can look back to some bright spots in my past life where I could joyfully accept the above saying of David. He did not say to hear the joyful sound, but to know the joyful sound, still he does not mean that we shall not hear as well as know it. We hear many sounds throughout the whole earth, but they are not all joyful sounds. We hear many bells all around us that are called by some gospel bells, but they are not joyful sounds to the people of God, but to the contrary they are but sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. Paul said, *"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle,"* A good soldier must know the sound of the trumpet in time of war, for when he hears it sound for action in battle he knows it means for him to go forth to the fight. When I lived on a farm some years ago I had a horse that would stop still in the field when he heard my farm bell ring at noon for dinner. Sometimes we would be at the far side of the field when the bell rang, and we often had trouble to get him over to the near side of the field so we could unharness him for dinner; Our neighbors all around us would often ring their bells before mine, but the old horse would never take any notice of the sound of them, but just as soon as my bell rang he would stop and lift up his head and neigh. Instinct taught him to know the sound of his master's bell, and he knew full well what was laid up in store for him by his master. Thus it is with the people of God, they know the joyful sound, and they are blessed who hear it, for it gives them beauty for ashes and the oil of joy for mourning. *"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her,*

that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."-Isaiah xl. 1, 2. Salvation by grace, and grace only, is the joyful sound.

"Amazing grace (how sweet the sound),
That saved a wretch like me ;
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind; but now I see."

O how I do long for such sweet seasons as I had in my first love, in hearing the joyful sound, but instead I grope in darkness the most of my time, and I often wonder if those bright seasons were mine to enjoy in knowing the joyful sound as David sets forth in his beautiful Psalm. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound. I am often troubled with sin and Satan so much so that I think I will stop trying, to write on Spiritual things, for most every time I sit down to write I find him at my side ready to contradict everything I write, but always willing to dictate for me if I will just let him. O sometimes I fear that I am a captive of the devil at his will; I often I feel like those dear souls who were led away captives: ***"By the river of Babylon, there we sat down [yes, they felt too weak to stand]; yea" we wept, when we remembered Zion."*** They had to hang their harps upon the willows; they had no use for them then, but they that carried them away required of them mirth while in their distress of mind. Satan will always appear to us at the weakest point and ask us to do things just to grieve us. But all that those dear captives could say in reply was, ***"How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land,"*** O no, they could not sing, neither could they hear the singing of birds nor the voice of the turtle in that land, but they remembered Zion and it made them weep. Yes, they wept when they remembered Zion. Bright spots in their past lives, where they sat down under God's shadow with great delight and his fruit was sweet to their taste. O the joyful sound! I can remember it in the days of my youth. My memory carries me back to a very bright spot in my life more than twenty years ago, when I attended a May meeting at New Valley, Va. Dear Elder White was there, and to me his face did shine as the noonday sun. Brother Eubanks preached in the forenoon, followed by brother Wm. L. Beebe, and I will say right here if I have ever known the joyful sound as set forth by David in this eighty-ninth Psalm, I believe I knew it that day, for I was made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Brother Lester came in the afternoon; it was my first time of meeting him, and when he went up into the stand to preach I wondered in my mind if such a fine looking man as he could preach comfort to a poor, plain sinner like me, and before he got half through with his discourse I felt like clapping my hands, for joy filled my whole being, and I wept for joy. Dear

reader, did you ever weep for joy If so, then you know what I mean. *"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance."*

"Blow ye the trumpet, blow The gladly solemn sound ;
Let all the nations know, To earth's remotest bound, The year of jubilee is come;
Return, ye ransomed sinners, home."

But I am making this letter too long. I fear I have only seen the passing shadow and missed the substance altogether, and if I should write on and try to tell something of walking "in the light of thy countenance; I might fall by the wayside and not be able to mount up with wings as eagles, run and not be weary, walk and not faint. I thought the last letter I wrote and sent to the dear old SIGNS would be my last one, and I told one of my esteemed sisters so at Frying Pan, at our meeting in February, and she turned to me and said, *"I am sorry to hear you say that, for I know of an afflicted woman who said she had been comforted in reading your letters in the SIGNS."* I then said to her, *"O, I reckon I will have to take my vow back; if I have ever given anyone comfort in my poor way of expressing myself, I am willing to keep on trying to write for the dear old SIGNS, should the editors see fit to publish my efforts."*

Yours, with a desire of fellowship,
JOHN F. OLIVER.

HERNDON, Va., March 28, 1910.

DEAR BROTHER SAWIN: -- We received your welcome letter a few days ago, and were glad to hear from you. We are always glad to hear from the poor and afflicted, the chosen of the Father. There is a thrill of joy and encouragement imparted by the communications of those who feel themselves wholly dependent upon the divine Arm for every earthly as well as every heavenly blessing. As I know that you are wholly committed to that kind of faith which is of divine planting, it is a comfort to receive your letters, although they often speak of trials and tribulations hard to be borne, yet He who sends them in wisdom so metes them out that they prove a blessing to you spiritually, and also to those whom you are called to comfort. We are assured that all thing's work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Sometimes it is hard to see the good coming to us in many of our tribulations, but still we believe that some time it will be made manifest that there never was an uncalled for event in life, or one act, trial or tribulation that was not necessary for the full growth and development of the child of God. The children of God are such peculiar characters that they cannot know many of their own peculiarities themselves, but the Father who has begotten them unto this lively hope knows all things, and in his wisdom and providence provides just what is needful to fully

develop in the children obedience, thankfulness and faith, which will be to the praise and glory of his name.

I was sorry to hear of your sickness, but glad to learn that the divine presence was with you during your affliction. Doubtless the joy thus afforded you, thus confirming to that extent your relation to God and acceptance in the divine favor, was much more to you than the affliction which you felt. The presence of God at such times also assures us that our standing before him is not because of our own strength and tells us of a time which must sooner or later approach, when heart and flesh and all physical strength shall fail, and earthly surroundings avail us no more. To that critical period we look at times with much anxiety, and we wonder whether the presence of God will be with us then. If he has been with us in our lesser trials and afflictions, may we not be fully assured that he will be with us in the last and greatest of all, and make it to be the entrance into that blissful life, in the hope of which we are living during all the time of our bodily afflictions. Our God is not the god I once heard described by an Arminian preacher at the funeral of a young man. He said that he told the young man a few days before, to look, for Jesus when he should approach the dark river and that if he looked he would be sure to see the Lord. Our God is one who takes us when we cannot look; and when all things else fail he is there with the everlasting arms underneath us. What a blessed assurance! What a blessed hope! Our Jesus has his abode in our hearts, and as we approach the dark river he lights all the way, and it is in his strength that we pass over to that blissful eternity which he has prepared for all the redeemed, from the foundation of the world. With such a Father and such a Savior we cannot fail in our journey; we cannot fail to reach the desired haven of rest. This shall be so, although the way is full of snares and dangers, and trials beset us on every hand. He who has called us is faithful, and he will provide every blessing at the right time. His wisdom and predestination comprehend all things to the end. He declares that he will do all this, and that we shall conquer through him. But all these things are known to you better than I can tell you, for our God has taught and will teach them to all his children, and we can testify only of those things that we know and have learned of him, and our fellowship is in such testimony.

I am glad to hear of the good meetings during the Licking Association, and I would have much enjoyed being there myself, but my steps were directed otherwise and I must not complain. Now! write when you can. My family joins in love to all.

Yours in tribulation,
C. W. BOND.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

As of January 1st 2001, please address all letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances to:

Elder Hale Terry
Rt. 2 Box 189
Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120

All articles and letters for publications, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to:

Elder Kenneth R. Key
721 Willard Street
Greensboro, N.C. 27405

Elder J.R. Williams has asked to be relieved of his duties as of the above date. On behalf of all the board members and all the friends of this paper, we want to thank Elder Williams for a job well done. We expect Elder Williams to remain as a member of the board of Trustees. Elder Williams has served as a trustee and as Secretary and Treasurer since 1977. He became circulation manager in 1979 and has served as president and joint editor with Elder Key since 1983.

As we express our thanks again for the untiring efforts of Elder Williams, we want to thank Elder Terry for his acceptance to carry on and we look forward to working with him in the future.

Elder Kenneth R. Key

November 14.

***"And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God, but unto them that are without, all these thIngs are done In parables." -- MARK* iv. II.**

By "the kingdom of God" is meant the same thing as "the kingdom of heaven," that is, the internal kingdom set up in the heart by the power of the Spirit-that kingdom which shall stand for ever and ever, and last when time shall be no more. This the Lord calls a mystery. And if it is a mystery, it will have these three marks; it will be beyond nature, sense, and reason, will be hidden from the wise and prudent, and will be revealed unto babes. Let us see if we can find these marks belonging to the kingdom of heaven set up in the heart. It certainly is above nature, sense, and reason, that God should dwell in a man's heart, as the Apostle says, ***"Christ in you, the hope of glory;"*** and again, ***"Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them" (2 Cor. vi. 16).*** That God should take up his abode in a man's heart; that Christ should be in a man; and the Holy Ghost should make the body of his saints his temple; how can nature, sense, and reason understand such a mystery as this? When one of the ancient martyrs, I think it was Polycarp, was

brought before Trajan, when the Emperor asked him his name, he answered, ***"I am Polycarp, the God-bearer, for I carry God in me!"*** At this answer the Emperor laughed, and said, ***"Let him be thrown to the wild beasts."*** That was the only answer a persecuting tyrant could give. That a man frail and feeble, whom a lion could tear to pieces in a few moments, carried God in his bosom!-how could the wise and prudent Trajan believe a thing so unheard of? Yet it is a mystery revealed to babes; for they receive it in the love of it under divine teaching, as one of the mysteries that God the Spirit makes known in the heart.

Elder J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union will convene the Lord willing with Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in December. Song service begins at 10:00 A.M.

An invitation is extended to all our ministers, brethren and friends.

Peggy Wells, Clerk

PSALM 115:1.

Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene on the fifth Sunday in December at Dan River Church.

The church is located on highway #700 between Eden and Danville. Dan River Church will be host for this meeting and on behalf of all churches in the union we welcome all lovers of the truth to be with us. We especially invite all ministers of our faith and order. Song service begins at 10:00 a.m.

Alan Carroll, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 2000

Mrs. Viola Davis, VA	2.00
L.S. Sladky, NC	10.00
Mark A. Jordan, NC	2.00
Mrs. Shelby Stratton, MS	2.00
Mrs. Angie Cox, NC	2.00
Mrs. Erma Sowers, VA	2.00
Bill & Judy Poindexter, VA	5.00
Mr. & Mrs. Henry McGinnis, KY	7.00
Warren D. Brown, VA	2.00
Mrs. Betty Nutter, MD	2.00
Mrs. Vera N. Potter, MS	2.00
Jamie E. Cooper, VA	2.00
Mrs. Sallie Hodges, VA	2.00
Mrs. Ada Campbell, VA	2.00
Mrs. Meta Mills, AR	2.00
Whitney Mobley, NC	10.00

PSALM 23. A Psalm of David.

THE LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

OBITUARIES

WILLIE MAE CONNER RATLIFF

It is with sadness I attempt to write the obituary of our beloved sister in Christ. Although we mourn our loss, may we bow in humble submission to God's will. Sister Willie Mae was born September 9, 1925. The Lord called her home April 22, 2000. No more sickness, no more pain, ending a lifetime of love, dedication and respect for her savior, her church and her family.

She was a firm believer in the doctrine of grace. Her "Great Hope" was shown in her everyday life, which she lived with much love, pride and dignity. She united with a Primitive Baptist Church in Norfolk, VA in 1961, and later moved her membership by letter to Salem "Head of the River" Church. She was a dedicated member, attending her meetings as well as those of our sister churches.

Her health declined in the last few years and she was present a lot of the time when she was not able. Sister Willie Mae had many afflictions along-the way. May we take comfort in ***Psalms 34;19, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all!"*** We believe she is now asleep in Jesus awaiting his Second Coming.

Her beautiful funeral service was held on April 25, 2000 at Salem Church, by her Pastor Elder Hale Terry. Her body was laid to rest in Restvale Cemetery.

She is survived by her husband BrotherAlfred Ratliff, two daughters and husbands, Alfreeda and Daniel Cadd, Patricia and Randy Umburger. Six grandchildren, Stephen McBride, Robert McBride, Christopher Cadd, Cory Cadd, Bonita and Wes Ingram and Mindy Ellis, and five great-grandchildren. One sister Dorothy Yates and one brother Banks Conner and his wife Opal. Many nieces and nephews and friends.

We feel blessed to have known and loved Sister Willie Mae. May the Lord be praised by her memory.

Written by request of Salem Church.

Mary Janney

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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Elder Kenneth R. Key

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EDITORIAL

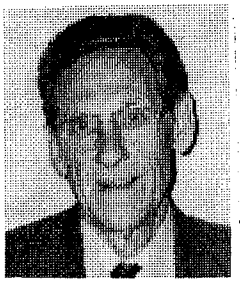
Elder R.H. Campbell

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, evidence of things not seen.

I have read the above scripture many times, and each time I have wondered just what it meant. I know what it says, but what is the real every day meaning of it. I read it the other day, as I had many times in the past and was thinking about what it could actually mean, and as I did this thought came to mind; faith is the manifestation of the Spirit of God in the lives of his children. The Spirit is manifested in their lives as they are led and directed to fulfill the purposes that he has for them here in this time world, and they are unaware of its presence because it comes sovereignly and takes up its abode within them and they walk in a different path. The spirit is what produces the faith that his children have and faith is what motivates them to believe, enables them to understand the things of the Spirit and to do all of the other things that they do in the name of Christ and for his sake, whether under the law dispensation, or in the gospel day.

The Spirit was manifested in the lives of the Israelites, under the law, and directed them all the days of their life, but not in the same manner that it does the saints, in the gospel day. Under the law they were given priests to be a go between, God and the people; now Christ is the high priest and just before his death he told the disciples that he would send the Spirit which indwells man and leads him in ways that are pleasing unto God, but, it is by faith in either case. Under the law God gave them the gift of faith which caused them to follow those whom he had sent to lead them, but their faith was in God, not in the law, because they feared God. As when he spoke to them from the mount and they saw the fire and smoke and exceedingly feared the fire and smoke and the loud sounds and asked God to speak to Moses and

let Moses speak to them as regarding the oracles of the law. They performed the miracles and manifested their faith even as the apostles did before the day of Pentecost; by God giving them a special dispensation of power as he did when he sent them out to preach, but the Spirit did not indwell them until the day of Pentecost when they responded and fulfilled the prophecy of Joel as he spoke concerning this day.

Faith is what leads the saints in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake, it is that which enables them to persevere in the times of adversity, that which strengthens them in times of weakness and causes them to stand against the distressing wiles of the devil: whether it be lions, fiery furnaces, pharaohs or any of the other natural fears and weaknesses of the flesh when it is faced with the temptations that confront them in this world of sin. This world is Satan's domain, in which he wields havoc with the saints, in his war against God and all that is holy and good, but he does not destroy one of these little ones, with all of his fury. Faith is the armour which God provides for the chosen generation in their war against principalities and powers of this earth, and against the spiritual wickedness in high places. This armour can withstand the strongest onslaught of Satan because even he is under the dominion of God, and in all of his raging is but fulfilling the will of God, as are all of the other forces in existence. Since faith is the manifestation of the Spirit in the saints, and they are the chosen generation, Satan is powerless to do anything but disturb, harass and afflict them. He can never destroy a single one of the saints because greater is the Spirit that is within them, than the spirit that is within Satan and all of his unholy angels; and this is because God, in mercy, has determined that it should be that way, to cause them to turn to him in faith.

Faith is bestowed upon the saints of God to make manifest that they are his very special beloved, the ones he had chosen before the foundation of the world as his own; he formed them for himself, named them, and promised that he would never leave nor forsake them. He has loved them with an everlasting love, and faith is the indestructible bond that assures them that they shall never fail nor finally fall away, regardless of the weakness and frailty of the natural man. By faith, David slew Goliath, when but a lad, by faith Abraham believed God and left his former life and country and went to seek the country that God had promised that he would possess; by faith Moses forsook Egypt not fearing the wrath of the king, looking to him that is invisible: kept the Passover and by faith led the children out of Egypt and to the borders of the land of Canaan. All of these examples of faith are demonstrated in the children of God, and are but the substance of the things hoped for, the great cloud of wit-

nesses that encompasses them, comforts and encourages them in their journey here in time, all are evidences of the working of the invisible spirit that was directing their way. They do not understand, nor can they explain this faith to anyone, other than to say that it is not of an earthly origin because the things that it causes them to believe defies all natural laws and reasoning and yet they cannot deny the existence of them.

Faith caused David to reply to his brother, when he reprimanded him for coming to the battlefield by saying, what I have now done, is there not a cause. I don't believe that even David understood the reason of this reply; even as the prophets who prophesied of the grace that was to come to us; they were searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify. God is the author of all scriptural truth, and is the instigator or motivator of all events, which come to pass, even though the prophets, or David, uttered the words or performed the deeds.

Israel had been given evidence of the Messiah that was to come for many generations, prophesies concerning the things that he would do in behalf of the chosen nation, and yet when all of the things that were foretold were fulfilled in their presence, they did not recognize him. This too, was in the plan of God from the beginning, even as sin and all of the other pitfalls that were placed in their path, they were ultimately for their good and were to teach them and cause them to turn to him in times of trouble, for he is the only source of help in their time of need, and this all because of this faith that Gods gives to the saints.

Through faith they understand the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. Now this precept is foolishness to the natural mind, as are all of the other miracles described in the scriptures; as Elder Ramar L. Biggs, a former pastor of the Bordeaux Church used to say, the truth is not reasonable, it defies all of the logic of man, yet, by faith, the saints of God believe that the miracles were actual events which occurred as described. After all, the greatest event that shall ever occur is the greatest of all miracles and all of the saints depend on the authenticity of that miracle for their hope of eternal life. Some people will say that they don't believe in predestination, and my reply has always been, ***"Well you had better believe in it, because only by absolute predestination of all things do you have any assurance whatsoever that there will be a heaven and immortal glory to hope for, in the end of the ages."*** The scriptures declare that there shall be, and the very foundation of the plan of salvation depends on the author of the scriptures being able to perform that which he has promised and to do all that he has promised that he would do, and faith in the individual, is

what enables him to believe that God is able, and shall do everything that he has promised to do, without the omission of a single event. If one event is omitted, it might be, "that heaven" that is prepared for them that worship God, and if that be the case, what is the point of it all? It must all be there for it to be the work of a sovereign, all powerful God who created the heavens and the earth and who said, my counsel shall stand and I will do all of my pleasure.

Paul said by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God, and this is from the beginning to the end, and it never fails; as is recorded in (Isa. Chap 46, vs. 11) "yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass: I have purposed it, I will also do it." It is not of the creature, but is the work of God in bringing every heir of promise into the fold, and it is in a way and manner that causes them all to acknowledge their unworthiness of this gift and to declare, with Paul, that though they feel to be the chiefest of sinners, the longsuffering of God was extended to them in their lost and sinful condition, raised them up and blesses them to sit together, with their brethren, in these heavenly places, where they can worship him in spirit and in truth, from a pure heart.

Able offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain because it was offered in faith; he was but returning unto God a small portion of that which God had given him, as an expression of his love, to show his appreciation for his many blessings, and to praise and honor his most holy name. God had respect unto Abel and his offering because it came forth from the heart that had been touched, and blessed to see the glory of the kingdom of heaven. By this faith he was impressed to shew forth his love in this manner. It was not of duty, but from an humble and contrite heart, as he was made to realize what he was in nature, as compared to what he should be before a Holy and Just creator. This knowledge comes by the revelation that is given with the faith when received; it is not engraved on tables of stone but on the fleshly tables of the heart, and cannot be erased.

By faith, the elders obtained a good report, and this is referring to all of the holy men of old who spake and responded as they were moved by the Holy Ghost to perform great deeds of valour as God worked in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. They were, but men, as are all of the saints of God, but faith makes the difference in what man can do in nature and what he can do by grace; as Paul said, (Phil Chap 4, vs. 13) "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." and faith is this strengthening power of Christ being made manifest in the lives of his children. Faith enabled David to face Goliath, Daniel to face the lions den, the three Hebrew children the fiery furnace, Moses to face Pharaoh, and

untold millions to suffer persecution at the hands of the world's, so called, religious leaders and the rulers of the nations but they have never been overcome yet. They may die, but, just as Christ who triumphed in his death, so do they, there is no recorded incident in the scriptures where the powers of Satan overcame the power of God in the salvation of one of the saints, and he never shall. In the world they shall suffer tribulations, but, even as Christ overcame the world, so shall they. They shall triumph and reign with him in glory in that place that he has gone to prepare for them, and as he told them to be of good cheer because he had overcome the world; well, he overcame it for them and their faith gave them the knowledge of that fact.

(Eph. Chap 2, vs. 8) ***"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."*** How then is this grace given, and how is it received by man, we have stated that it is by the grace of God, so the creature is not involved in the process, except as the receiver of a gracious gift, which is bestowed upon him by the sovereign and irresistible grace of God. The man is completely unaware of the circumstances surrounding the gift, and can only wonder in amazement that it has been bestowed upon him, after he has been made to realize what he actually is in nature. In the flesh he would have said, I am entitled to it as much as anyone else, I am as good as the next person, but by the grace that accompanies the gift he cries," Oh woe is me, I am undone, I am not worthy of this gift that has been given me, and his heart overflows with gratitude and thanksgiving unto the giver of the gracious and precious favor that has been shown him.

(Job Chap 33, vs. 14-17) ***"For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man."*** This scripture indicates that God alone is the author and the finisher of faith in man, he speaks to them and seals their instructions and they respond without even realizing when and where the faith which was imparted to them came from, until it is revealed unto them. They go to bed without it and wake up with it. This is, of course, over simplifying it but nevertheless all of the imparting of faith unto man is the work of God, they didn't have, now they do.

The apostle Paul started from Jerusalem professing the Jewish faith and arrived in Damascus a believer in Christ and all that Paul did was to be at the place of the appointment, of God, which was made before time began, and of which he was completely ignorant. Paul did not see it coming, and did nothing

to assist or deter the giving or the receiving of this faith, and so it is with all men. As Job said above, he does it this way, to withdraw man from his purpose and so that man has nothing to boast of in the work. Isn't this the same as the apostle Paul stated in Ephesians, by grace are ye saved through faith, not of works lest any should boast.

Yes, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of future things not seen, as yet. It is the most precious of the gifts of God to his children because, it in fact, encompasses all of their dreams and desires and causes them to ever be found pressing on to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, even though they cannot see nor prove it to someone else, that is unfamiliar with the process. It is however stamped indelibly in their minds and will influence them as long as they live in this world. It is a special gift of love to them from their heavenly Father, even as the coat of many colors which Jacob gave unto Joseph, and in like manner is a mark that they are of the most beloved of the Father.

By faith, they live, move and have their being in this world, and by faith they shall overcome and have their being in that world which is to come; that high abode of the angels where all mystery will be ended, they shall see God, face to face, know as they are known, and rejoice in a way and manner that they have never done before. Here they have the shadow, there they will have the actual substance. Faith will be but a memory of their earthly existence, for they will have the fulness of the things hoped for here in time, but til then, they will cling to this faith because it is the only real treasure that they have in these earthen vessels, which is where they must dwell, until the time appointed of the Father. Then will be the time when He comes to take his jewels home, to adorn that holy city the new Jerusalem, to the eternal honor and glory of his holy name. Faith, is the eye by which the saints of God see and understand the certainty and sure reality of these things that are to be theirs in that day, while they are still here in this time world.

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the spiritual knowledge that is given to every heir of grace, to see the things that are unseen by the natural eye, but which are more real and present in their spiritual eye and mind than the things that are visible to them here in nature. The things that they view here with the natural eye are temporal, but these things are eternal, and the possession of this knowledge is worth more, to them, than all of the wealth of the world combined. Faith is their key to that city; that new Jerusalem, which shall come down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, the most precious of all the blessings of time and eternity, unto the children of the heavenly king. All of these things were prepared for them before time began, were preserved in Christ

Jesus until the time of the end, at which time all mysteries shall be revealed and the fullness of the glory of God shall be known unto all of the saints. The grandeur and glory of these things cannot even be imagined with the natural mind, but they are the inheritance of the saints that is laid up for them when time shall be no more, and heaven shall ring with the songs of praise from the hearts of the saints who were redeemed by the precious blood of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, their elder brother.

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

NOTICE

Dear subcribers of the *Signs of the Times.* I was elected to the board of trustees in 1982. It has been a real pleasure to serve for this worth while cause. I consider it an honor to be asked to take the duties of the circulation manager. I look forward to working with Elder Key and the board in the future. I ask for your patience and forbearance as we carry on in the years to come.

Wm. Hale Terry

ARTICLES

"And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to prove him with hard questions." **1 Kings 10:1.**

Is it not a wonderful thing that the God of heaven and earth has been so kind and gracious to leave on record the details of His dealings with his people? We are taught that these things have been preserved and delivered to us for our learning and comfort. Also, that these things are veiled or hidden from the natural man (the wise and prudent) but revealed to His people (babes) as it has pleased Him to do. All of God's things are in a mystery. They are presented in a true historical format but indicate much more than what appears to the natural eye. Very particular things are stated in very particular words which have great meaning to all who are blessed to see and hear and understand. To the rest they are hidden.

This account of Solomon and the queen of Sheba speaks volumes about the Lord of glory and His blessed and beloved people. If the Lord be pleased, may He make plain unto us a little of His great truth. First of all we are told the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord. ***"But as it is written, eye hath***

not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man (natural man) the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: For the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." **1 Cor. 2:9-10.** Job said ***"I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee."*** **Job 42:5.** God's people are made to hear of Him and are even given to see him by the eye of faith as He makes Himself known unto them.

"She came to Jerusalem with a very great train..." "But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Able." **Heb. 12:22-24.** She did not come there of the will of the flesh but was drawn there by love and loving kindness. ***"The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."*** **Jer. 31:3.** Does not her great train indicate that she came with all her heart and mind and soul?

"She came to prove him with hard questions." "She communed with him of all that was in her heart." How full of questions are God's little ones. How did this universe and world come into being? And for what purpose? Why are we here? What kind of creature am I? Why did the God of all power and wisdom and goodness condescend to save sinful worms of the dust? There is no end of questions while we are in this sinful world and are enabled only to see through a glass darkly. God's children are in constant communication with Him as the Spirit leads them begging for wisdom and understanding, sometimes with groanings which cannot be uttered.

"And Solomon told her all her questions: there was not anything withheld from the king, which he told her not." We know that there are many things which are too wonderful for us to know now, but there is a day coming when we shall see face to face and will know even as we are known. However, God is merciful and answers all our questions according to our needs. ***" If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."*** **James 1:5.** Our God is not limited in any way. He made all things for His pleasure. He upholds all things by the word of His power. He works all things together for good to them that love Him to them that are the called according to His purpose. He

works all things after the counsel of His own will. His knowledge and wisdom is unsearchable.

"And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built, and the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the Lord; there was no more spirit in her."

"For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God , it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men. And the weakness of God is stronger than men."

The house that God has built is not of this earth. *"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:" 2 Cor. 5:1-2.*

The spiritual meat or food which the inward man desires is not of this earth but is from heaven. Jesus said *"I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which came down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." John 6:48-51.* God has prepared a table for His people in the presence of their enemies which the world has no desire or right to partake of.

God's servants are made to sit and to rest from all their labors trusting in the finished work of His salvation. Jesus said " *Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and you shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."* Matt. 11:28-29.

The attendance or standing of God's ministers is not in the strength of the flesh but in the power of God. The inspired apostle wrote, *"And I, brethren, when I*

came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified, And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." 1 Cor. 2:1-5

The apparel of the saints is not the righteousness of the flesh but rather is the imputed righteousness of Christ. Isaiah said "*All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.*" Here is the vision that John saw, "*And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said unto me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*"

The cupbearers are those which cause God's people to drink. The saints will not drink of the wine of the wrath of God but will rather drink of the wine of joy with the Lord in Glory. Jesus said at the last supper, "*But this I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until the day when I drink it new in my Father's kingdom.*" Matt. 26:29. The children of the kingdom drink His blood. They receive and believe that His blood has atoned for all their sins and has washed them and made them whiter than snow.

When the queen of Sheba saw the ascent of Solomon as he went up unto the house of the Lord there was no more spirit in her. As the child of God is given a view, in the Spirit, of the Lord being raised up from the dead and when that child is made to believe that He has all power even over death, hell and the grave he becomes breathless. He is killed to this world and all its charms. He is made to have no confidence in the flesh and no hope in the righteousness of the law. The apostle Peter was inspired to say, "*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*" 1 Peter 1:3.

"*And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not*

told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard." Thomas also could not believe the work of God until he was shown. The Lord was merciful unto him and came and revealed Himself to Thomas and said to him "***be not faithless but believing.***" The holy apostle was given to praise God in the highest for His wisdom and power. "***Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we are able to ask or to think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.***" **Eph. 3:20-21.**

And finally the queen of Sheba said these true and inspired words which even the little ones to this day understand from a true heart as they, in the spirit, view their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, "***Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the Lord thy God which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice.***"

Written in love, I hope.
J.B. Farmer
8-23-2000

VOICES OF THE PAST

DWELLING TOGETHER IN UNITY

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity !"- Psalms cxxxiii. 1.

How wonderfully precious this sentence is to read; how far more precious it is to feel. It goes down into the deep places of the heart, and makes its power and effect and sweetness to be felt there, and then it goes out to all the ends of the earth and recalls the varied experiences of sorrow, condemnation, affliction and loneliness there felt by those who are now dwelling together in unity. These brethren who have now been gathered together in the name of Jesus, were first scattered to the ends of the earth. They were made to feel their need of salvation, and sought for it by the works and ways of men until they came to the end of all their earthly strength and wisdom and righteousness. Then from the end of the earth they cried unto God, who heard their cry, and made bare his holy Arm in their sight, and caused them to see the salvation of God. (Psalms lxi. 1; Isaiah lii. 10.) What a blessed season it is for these subjects of God's wonderful grace when they first find others of like experience and learn the inexpressible sweetness of gospel love and fellow-

ship. When these "ends of the earth" are first brought together how easy it seems for them to love one another; how impossible it appears that anything could occur that would cause discord or separation. It seems to the child of grace, when first breathing the fresh and fragrant air of this spiritual morning in this new gospel world, as though there is, and must be always, absolute agreement between all these dear people of God in all things, How startled and grieved, then, must each one be when he finds a difference arising between any of them, and especially when he sees in his own mind opposition arising against something said or *done* by a dear brother, and perhaps a feeling of anger stirred in his heart. Then comes a sense of opposition and a conflict within himself, against himself, which causes a feeling of astonishment and of self-abhorrence in his own soul. How much each child of God has to learn through suffering before he is prepared to know in any great measure how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. In Adam this unity is not to be found. Although all nations of men that dwell on the face of the whole earth were made of one blood, yet there is not unity either of body or mind among them, but infinite diversity. Unity is only found in the family of God; in Christ, and not in Adam. All of them have been born of the Spirit of God, and are, therefore, *"of one heart and of one soul."-Acts iv. 32.*

But each one of those who have been born of God has still a fleshly, sinful nature, and soon must experience sadly that that which is born of the flesh is flesh still; that the fleshly nature has not been changed to a spiritual, sinless nature in the new birth, but a new, sinless nature, the divine nature, has been given and is made manifest by contending against the sinful inclinations of the carnal nature, which is *"enmity against God."* So the apostle says: *"The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."- Gal. v. 17.* Now when one has experienced some of these bitter conflicts within himself, and has had some sad conflicts with brethren, and has known the sweetness of forgiving and being forgiven, then he begins to be able to appreciate the goodness and pleasantness of brethren dwelling together in unity. How poorly off we are when alone; how sad and sorrowful we are when separated from those we love in the Lord, but how infinitely more so when at variance and angry with them. We cannot live to ourselves alone; we need our brethren all the time; we need their help in difficulties; we need their sympathy in our trials; we need their daily experience. We are one with them in the living things of the Spirit, and we must have them in our lives as we have them in our hearts. So the apostle says, *"I beseech you that*

ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."-Eph. iv. 1-3.

In the Spirit we are one. "Baptized by one Spirit into one body." Our spiritual desires are the same. But what a wonderful work this is, ***"endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."*** Because we differ from each other so greatly in the flesh, what long-suffering is necessary, what self-denial, what forbearance. Because we are one in Spirit we know that every difference must be in the flesh. But how difficult it is to allow that this difference may be in our flesh instead of in that of our brother. It is for us to decide this important thing ourselves, if the decision is that the blame is in our flesh. The grace of meekness and lowliness comes in to help us here. But if the fault is most surely with our brother, then what long- suffering is necessary, and what forbearance. We cannot insist upon the legal standard, ***"An eye for an eye."*** We cannot insist upon acknowledgment always, but must wait till the Spirit causes him to see and feel the wrong in himself. Forbearance! We cannot forbear where there is nothing to forbear. Sometimes one will not acknowledge the wrong that he sees in himself. Pride and a stubborn will prevent. But love tells us what to do; we must wait the Lord's time. Forbear one another in love. Love saves the fellowship. Love insists that we wait till the Lord works meekness and tenderness of conscience in him. The bond of love and union grows stronger as we have more of these bitter struggles with our own unruly natures, and more need for the exercise in our own souls of these fruits of the Spirit. Now "we are learning how good it is, how valuable, how mutually helpful and serviceable it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, as well as how pleasant, how sweet and full of heavenly comfort and peace.

The psalmist makes a wonderful comparison here in saying that this dwelling of brethren together in unity is like the precious ointment that was poured upon Aaron's head, and went down the skirts of his garments. But this brings to the view of faith the anointing of Jesus with the Spirit of the Lord, by which he was prepared to bring all the infinite blessings of the gospel to the poor. This anointing is as the dew that descends upon the mountains of Zion, for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forevermore. This is the unction from the Holy One by which the saints know all things concerning the spiritual life. It is the anointing which they have received of Jesus Christ, as the apostle John declares: "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need ***not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no***

lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."- John ii. 27. How greatly important it is that everyone of this family of God should carefully guard the unity of the Spirit, so far as it can be guarded by human effort. The apostle implies that it can be guarded in a sense, by exhorting the brethren to endeavor to keep it. It is over himself particularly that each one is to watch; it is his own words, and acts, and thoughts, and emotions, that each one is to guard; it is his own self that each one is to prove. Where each one is thus laboring with himself there will be found but little need for him to labor with any other member of the dear family. While all are in this state of mind this sacred unity is without conscious effort, kept in the bond of peace. This is dwelling together in unity.

Love is said by the apostle to be ***"the bond of perfectness,"*** and we are told to put it on, and to walk in it. How easy that is, at times. How easy it is to bear and forbear in the case of one we dearly love. How easy it is to forget or deny self when the welfare of a dear child is involved.

The word "good" means all that is valuable, substantial, beneficial and absolutely suitable to our need, while the word "pleasant" means all that is agreeable and gratifying to our purest, most exalted and most sacred desires. For those thus dwelling together nothing more can be wanted for this time state. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the goodness of the Lord's house. The longer we dwell upon the earth, and the more of trials and afflictions we endure, the more highly shall we value and prize this sweet fellowship and unity, and the more ardently shall we endeavor to keep it. The greater also will be our desire, and the more earnest our prayer, that we, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God. (Eph. iii. 17-19.) Whatever we do, and say, and comprehend, when thus dwelling together in unity, we do and say and comprehend ***"with all saints."*** No discord, no division here. In this is realized as fully as can be in this mortal state the fulfillment of the dear Savior's prayer: ***"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us."- John xvii. 21.*** And so, as this mortal life goes on, with the trials and deliverances, the sorrows and joys, which are appointed unto us here upon the earth, the sweeter and more precious to us will be these blessed words of the psalmist: ***"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"***

Silas H. Durand

OCTOBER 27, 1908.

1 THESSALONIANS IV. 14.

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:— I desire to present some thoughts for your consideration on the above Scripture, and also the connections. These words were written for the instruction and comfort of God's people, for those whose hope is in Christ. It is most sorrowful to behold the divided opinions that exist even among God's redeemed people who profess hope in Christ. I hope not to be the cause of making it worse than it is. One thing we should all labor to do, and that is, study to rightly divide the word of truth. Let us all be careful about making quotations to prove some idea we may entertain without first studying the connections carefully and prayerfully to see that the Scripture quoted by us is not being perverted to make it mean something entirely foreign to what the Scriptures teach. I have caught myself doing such things; I may do so in this article, but I hope not. It is a very solemn thing to handle the word of God at all, but to handle it in a careless manner is more sorrowful. O that we all could realize the need of wisdom from God in all our deliberations. The more I study the Scriptures the more conscious I am of needed grace every day of my life to rightly divide the word of truth. My mind of late has been, greatly exercised over existing conditions of the church, and also the world.

Now let us proceed with the subject of our text. ***"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."*** If this is a truth that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. If we believe this, we then have a well- founded reason for sorrowing not, even as others which have no hope. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, said, ***"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."*** Now do we believe this, We are duty bound to believe this first before we can justly claim a hope in Christ. It is surprising how many professed followers of Christ deny this; especially do they deny that Jesus rose again. If all we have to present to you today is a dead Christ, there could be no comfort in that. Paul predicated his arguments on the fact that Christ died and rose again. First, that the Scriptures taught this; second, that there were many living at that time who were eye-witnesses of that fact. ***"He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen***

of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all, he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time," said Paul. Read 1 Cor. xv. 3-8. In the twenty-seventh chapter of Matthew we read how the chief priests and Pharisees first went to Pilate, and said, *"Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day."* Their object for so doing was lest his disciples come by night and steal him away and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead. Pilate granted their request; they made everything secure, sealing the stone and setting a watch, but *"the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it."* O what a victory! Here *"his countenance was like lightning and his raiment white as snow: and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men."* Now listen to the proclamation of the angel: *"And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay."* These Scriptures are so clearly stated that it is most sorrowful to see anyone trying to pervert them so as to actually deny that Jesus rose from the tomb. *"Come, see the place where the Lord lay."* These chief priests and Pharisees admitted that this man died and was buried, but they, tried to conceal the fact that he rose again. *"Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept. And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day." - Matt. xxviii. 11-15.* Evidently there are only two positions for us to take: first, the angel of the Lord told the truth, or else the soldiers received large money for saying; *"His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept."* I ask again, Is it not strange that professed followers of Christ do deny that he rose again? Yet such was the case at that time, and it is yet true, at least of some. Again, there are some who tell us they do believe that Christ died and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, but that it was not the same body that was buried that did rise the third day according to the Scriptures. Now, my dear brethren, my firm belief is that it was the very same body that was buried that rose again. The words of our text

convey that idea: *"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again."* Paul does not say, For if we believe that Jesus died and another Jesus rose, neither did he say that Jesus died and there was given to him another body. Luke xxiv 39, reads thus: *"Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."* These words are Jesus' own words concerning himself after he had risen. The eleven saw and heard for themselves. The fortieth verse reads thus: *"And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet." "They gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them."*

Also read Acts x. 41. Here Peter refers to this time. These were *"witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead."* John xx, 27, reads thus: *"Then said he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing."* Eight days previous to this Thomas had declared that he would not believe unless he could see in his hands the print of the nails, and thrust his hand into his side. O how different he felt when Jesus spoke to him as he did; he then could say unto him, *"My Lord and my God." "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."* Now all these witnesses are not enough in this our day for some, who say they do not know what became of the body of Jesus, but they do not believe that he rose again. In Acts, first chapter, we read the account of the ascension of Christ. *"And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven' This same Jesus [not another Jesus] which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner, as ye have seen him go into heaven."* Many years after the ascension of Jesus, he appeared to John in the isle that is called Patmos. Revelation i. 17, 18, reads thus: *"And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen ; and have the keys of hell and of death."* This is the Jesus that was dead. Notice his words: *" I am he that liveth, and was dead." " His head and his hairs were) white like wool, as white as snow and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his : feet like unto fine brass."* Read the fourteenth and fifteenth verses, also second chapter, eighteenth verse: *"Write; These, things, saith the*

Son of God, who hath his eyes like a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass." It was this one who said, ***" I am he that liveth, and was dead."*** He was the same Jesus that died and rose again and ascended into heaven that was there talking to John. O what blessed words, ***"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore."*** Remember the words of our text: ***" For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."***

One is just as sure as the other. It was this same Jesus that taketh Peter, James and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart and was transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun, &c. This took place before the death of Christ. He was transfigured before them, yet it was the same Jesus all the time. Webster defines the word transfiguration, first, a change of form, especially the supernatural change in the personal appearance, of our Savior on the mount. Transfigure means, first, to change the outward form or appearance of, to transform, especially to change to something very elevated and glorious, to give an ideal form to. ***"And was transfigured before them."- Matt. xvii.*** 2. If we observe these definitions it may help us to reconcile some seeming difficulties; for instance, Mark xvi. 12, reads: ***"After that he appeared in another form unto two of them,"*** &c. This does not say that Jesus appeared in another body, but in another form. This was after his resurrection, so we see his form was changed at the transfiguration. It was changed after his resurrection, yet evidently it was the same body all the time. He never changed that body that was nailed to the cross for another body. It is a glorious fact that he is reigning, and will reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. Read 1 Cor. xv. 25. If this is our hope, we sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. We may sorrow for those who die in the Lord, but it will be a different sorrow from those who have no hope. ***"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."*** O, is that our hope' Well, it was Paul's hope. Paul said, ***"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."*** Paul has in this fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians predicated his whole arguments on this one essential thing, that Christ died and rose again. That was his foundation to build upon concerning those who were asleep in Christ, and also those who are alive and remain unto the coming; of the Lord. ***"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept."*** As sure as Jesus died and rose again, just that sure (even so) them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with

him. I still desire to notice more fully the above words and their connections. I have devoted most of my time trying to show by the Scriptures that Jesus actually died and rose again. Paul believed that Christ died and rose again. His argument here is that it is just as true that they also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. There evidently is no getting around this one fact, that is, if Jesus did actually die, and rose again, just that sure all who die in the Lord will rise again. I verily believe the Scriptures teach this glorious and comforting doctrine; while there is great mystery in godliness, God was manifest in the flesh. Read 1 Tim. iii. 16. Paul acknowledged this to be a great mystery, yet he believed it just the same as though he could explain it. Just so there are great mysteries concerning the resurrection of the dead, yet not more so than how God could see and love his people, and even choose them in Christ before the foundation of the world, while as yet there was none of them, yet we are bound to believe this, if we believe the Scriptures. With man all these things would be impossible, but not so with God. Paul said: ***"Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye."*** O what a mystery this is, yet we are bound to believe it or reject the Scriptures. Paul did not attempt to explain this wonderful mystery; he could not do that, he just accepted it as a glorious truth. Notice Paul's authority. Let us read the fifteenth verse of Thessalonians, fourth chapter, in connection with our text. It reads thus: ***"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord [the word of the Lord was Paul's authority for saying], to that which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep."*** The connections here evidently show that Paul refers to death when he says sleep. He also used these two words interchangeably in the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians. Jesus did the same regarding Lazarus. The martyr Stephen when being; stoned to death ***"kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he said this, he fell asleep."*** And Saul (Paul) was consenting to his death. Now if we keep these things in view it does seem that we would not attempt to so change their meaning as to pervert the idea of death entirely, and also the glorious doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. Stephen died; he said: ***"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."*** If the nonresurrectionists are right, Stephen that died will never be resurrected. Many of the nonresurrectionists claim to believe in the resurrection, but they claim that it takes place at death, therefore they leave the dead out entirely; and, as far as I know, they all claim the spirit does not die, hence when they are talking about the resurrection they are talking about that which never dies; being

resurrected. Paul was talking about the dead: ***"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first."*** Evidently the dead spoken of here are the same as those referred to in our text as being; asleep in Jesus. Notice these words," And the dead in Christ shall rise first." The Connections here show that Paul refers to some future event. He continues: ***"Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."*** O what comforting words they are. There is yet hope for all who sleep in Jesus.

"The dead in Christ shall rise first." It is because of this glorious fact Paul said, ***"I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope."*** Paul's arguments are founded upon the glorious truth that that is the reason we ***"sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."*** Notice Paul's reason for all this is, that as sure as Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring; "with him. If this is our hope and belief concerning all who sleep in Jesus, Paul would comfort all such believers by saying, ***"I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope."*** What a comfortless doctrine it would be if the dead rise not. ***"Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished; If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."*** Paul was showing the vanity of a hope that only reached to death and there left all who had fallen asleep in Christ to eternally perish. There could be no comfort in such a doctrine as that, yet this is bound to be true unless there is a resurrection of the dead. Paul here leaves the miserable side and again presenting the hopeful side, he says: ***"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept."*** Evidently it would not be a perversion to say Paul meant Christ was the first that arose from the dead, as he did say, (Acts xxvi. 23,) that Christ should suffer and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead. Notice these words: ***"But now is Christ risen from the dead [that is an established fact], and become the first-fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead."*** How sorrowful it is to see man trying to explain away these positive statements concerning the resurrection

of the dead, and in their stead present a doctrine that leaves the dead out entirely; no hope for the dead, if the dead rise not. In Hebrews xi. Paul dwells at length concerning a great multitude: *"So many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the seashore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promises."* If the nonresurrection doctrine is true they will never receive the promises; their dying in faith will not avail anything unless the dead rise again. Notice this great multitude died in faith; they did not die in hopeless despair, but in faith. *"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off."* These all died seeing something that they yet had not received; they saw them *"afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."* These evidently were embracing something not to be found on this earth. Shall we say that they will be disappointed. They evidently will be disappointed if there be no resurrection of the dead for these all died in faith, not having received the promises. If they saw, them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and yet never will receive them, they died in a vain faith; they saw and embraced something that never will be a reality. Paul had a brighter side to present: *"For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country."* My dear brethren, where is that country. Is it on earth, or is it in heaven. They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. That did not satisfy their longing desire, they were seeking a country. Paul continues: *"And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city."* Shall we say that they never will reach that city that God hath prepared for them. One of two things evidently must be true: they either will actually inherit the city prepared for them, or else they just saw these things afar off and embraced them, but will never realize the reality of inheriting the city that God hath prepared for them. Now let us reason together. If this great multitude fails finally in reaching that they were seeking, who would be to blamed. Certainly not those who died in faith; they could do nothing more. Nothing more is required of those who die in faith; if they fail to finally realize that sought and hoped for, the blame cannot be charged to them. How utterly helpless is their condition if anything is yet to be performed by those which died in faith, not having received the promises. Listen to our text: *"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring*

with him." No, dear brethren, no one will be to blame, God will do as he has promised. This was Paul's hope: this great multitude died in this faith. They will not be disappointed, for God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city. Abraham *"looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."- Verse 10.* Paul also evidently was seeking the same city that Abraham sought or looked for. Read Hebrews xiii. 14: *"For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."* That is, we seek a continuing city. That city we have not in this life, but we do seek one to come. Peter also had hope that reached beyond this life; his hope embraced *"an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God,"* &c. Read Philippians iii. 20, 21. This language is right to the point as to what yet shall be done. " From whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, Paul does not say this vile body shall be exchanged for some other body, but that it may be fashioned like unto his (Jesus) glorious body. John had the same hope. He said, *"Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be : but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."* John cuts off all occasion for controversy as to how we shall appear. He says, *"It doth not yet appear what we shall be."* It is enough to have a well-founded hope that when he (the Lord Jesus Christ) shall appear we shall be like him, and see him as he is. When this is done then our vile body will in truth be fashioned like unto his glorious body. David also had this hope, He said: *"As for me; I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."* This great cloud of witnesses all testify to the one grand conclusion, and that is, there is a better day yet in the future for all those who died in faith. *"Christ the first fruits, afterward they that are Christ's, at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."- 1 Cor. xv. 23-26.* I can conceive of only one way in which death shall be destroyed, and that is when we awake with his likeness. This evidently was the hope of all them which died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, were persuaded of them and embraced them. Their faith was in God. There is none else to hope in. O how dark would death and the grave be in the absence of a

mighty God. The fiftieth verse reads thus: ***"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."*** I do not believe that after this glorious change takes place with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord we will still have a fleshly body as before, but that it will be changed or made spiritual. The forty-fourth verse reads : ***"It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."*** Paul does not say, It is raised a spirit, but it is raised a spiritual body; it yet remains a body; it is our vile body changed and fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, and as for the blood that is declared to be the life of the flesh, read Leviticus xvii. 10-14. It evidently will not be the life of our glorious body; our glorious body will not need blood, neither will it need the things of nature to sustain it in that respect; it will be far above mortality. The living at that time will be made just like the dead that have been raised. All shall be changed, whether dead or alive at that time, ***"for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."*** - I Cor. xv. 53. O what a glorious change this will be! Think of it; our vile body changed and made immortal. Paul continues: ***"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory ?"*** What a victory the grave would have in the absence of our Lord Jesus Christ. On the other hand Paul said, ***"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."*** This is enough, dear brethren, it will do to live by, it will do to die by. Therefore Paul could say, ***"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."***

Yours in a blessed hope in Christ,
JOSEPH FORD.
SENECA, Kans., Jan. 14, 1910.

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The existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah -- the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistable, and in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers -- that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

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EDITORIAL

SACRIFICE VERSUS SUBSTITUTE

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

Some time ago I read a book of sermons by an old time gospel minister and I believed much of what he said, but he often referred to Jesus Christ as a substitute for his people when he was crucified on the cross. I have never believed that Jesus Christ was a substitute for anything. I do believe that he died in the behalf of the people chosen in him from the foundation of the world, not as a substitute, but as a sacrifice. There is a vast difference between a substitute and a sacrifice. Not long after I read the book referred to, I found a letter in the "SIGNS" by L.H. Hardy published in 1916 in Vol. 84 No. 9 with the same title as above. His letter expresses my beliefs on this subject much better than I can: therefore I copy it. He refers to a substitute in time of war, and I do not know which war, but the meaning is the same.

The letter:

As a substitute one acts for or in the place of another. As a sacrifice one does that which has become his by imputation, though the cause of the sacrifice was by another. In substitution no good comes to the principle, only for the time being. In a sacrificial offering the cause for which the sacrifice was made is forever removed. The substitute does no more than the principal might do. He cannot exist until he for whom he is a substitute is first chosen or appointed to do that which the substitute must do in his stead. If the substitute becomes responsible to act for himself he for whom he is a substitute again becomes responsible to act for himself, therefore he was not free, only while his substitute was under the law for him; for after the substitute becomes amenable to the law for himself he can no longer set free the one for whom he was a substitute. One drafted to go to war may employ a substitute, but as soon as he

becomes of proper age, or by any means becomes subject to the war, the one who was first drafted stands subject to be drafted again, and must go and serve for himself, or get another substitute to act for him. The doctrine of substitution does not strike me as being sufficient for the salvation of sinners. It is like a bridge which does not reach either shore, and therefore the travelers cannot get on it, and if one is on it he cannot get off it. If Christ did not exist as our Savior prior to our being sinners then substitution is true, but if he did so exist I cannot understand substitution to be any stronger or better than the Arminian expression that he has made a way passable and possible. According to the Scriptures, and according to our doctrine (which is not ours, but God's , who sent us), Christ Jesus was our Savior before the world began, and therefore before we ever existed as sinners. When we were chosen in him unto salvation he was chosen and appointed to save us. The Mosaic law never required the life of the transgressor as an atoning sacrifice, but on every occasion it prescribed just what the sacrifice should be. If one had sinned, and the priest had slain him for his sins, and burned him upon the altar it would have been murder and sacrilege in that priest, and he himself must die for his sins. The law pointed out just what the sacrifice should be, therefore the sacrifice was appointed before the sin was committed, and nothing could be substituted in its stead. The offering was ordained before the sin for which it was to atone was committed, therefore it was a sacrifice. Christ Jesus was appointed to die for sinners before there were any sinners. Those for whom he should die were chosen in him before they were formed in Adam. The election was in Christ, not in Adam. As children of Adam they are children of wrath even as others. As being chosen in Christ they are the beloved of the Father. For this cause he gave his Son a sacrifice for them. In this sacrifice an atonement was made, and they were reconciled to God. There is no priesthood in substitution, but there must be a priesthood in an acceptable sacrifice. An Israelite comes to offer for his sins according to the law; he does not approach the altar and offer that offering, he turns it over to the priest, and he offers it for the sinner. Though he brings it himself I cannot understand it to be a substitute for him, for the law never appointed him to do what that sacrifice is to do for him. A substitute does what we were chosen to do, a sacrifice does for us what we cannot do for ourselves. We did not bring the Lord Jesus, he came of himself, of his own accord. There never was any commandment given to slay the sheep of the Shepherd, and then he came in and took the fatal blow. He took the responsibility, and was the appointed sacrifice. Aaron could not do this. What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his

only Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. Christ the Lord is the Priest who offered this sacrifice. In him are combined both the priesthoods: that of blessing and that of offering. He blessed his people and gave himself for them a sacrifice of sweet-smelling savor. In his sacrificial death he paid all the redemption price, and set the sinners free. They cannot become subject to the law any more, because this Sacrifice, High Priest, and acceptable year of the Lord continues forever, therefore no charge can ever be brought against them, because by him they are justified before God. As a Sacrifice and High Priest he liveth forever. The atoning sacrifice which was offered once every year had to be offered by the high priest alone, no other one dared to go beyond the veil into the holy of holies. Jesus, the great High Priest of our profession, is the only one who could make this everlasting atonement; he, and he only, was appointed unto this end by the Father, and it was written in the will concerning him, and therefore it behooved him thus to die. No sinner living or dead could make an atonement for himself, therefore Christ did not come to do for us what we might have done or might now do for ourselves, as a substitute would do, but he came to do that which we could not do, and to make reconciliation that we could not make. O what a blessed Sacrifice and High Priest is our Lord! We were mystically and virtually in him, chosen in him before the world began and now he has died that that sacred and blessed unity should be revealed in us. Thus the blessed Holy Spirit reveals in our hearts that which the blessed Jesus did for us on the tree. This was the work which was appointed unto him, He has done it. As our Lord was appointed to redeem his elect, and save them from their sins, even so the Holy Spirit was appointed to take of these things of Jesus and show them unto us and to bring all things to our remembrance whatsoever our Lord has said unto us. As Jesus was faithful in all his work, even so the Holy Spirit is faithful in all his work, and what he is appointed to do he will do in his own good time and way, and none can hinder him any more than they could hinder the sacrifice offered by our blessed Jesus. As all opposition to him was appointed by the Father, to the sure accomplishment of that certain end unto which he was appointed, even so all opposition to the workings of the Holy Spirit in that which was appointed for him to do shall only work to the sure accomplishment of the word of God by him. We are commanded to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and in so doing no one can justly accuse us of wrong. Our God has done all for us. How glorious he is to provide salvation for us in the sure way that the powers of hell and earth shall not prevail against the children of God though they are ever so weak. They are ever before the

God of the humble and contrite. Through the intercession of our Lord and High Priest the living streams of mercy are poured forth in our hearts. Thus the mourning sigh is heard and the penitential tear is gathered up, and we praise the Lord. END.

What I may say now may not be necessary, and I hope it will not detract from the letter, but I will add a few remarks, if God will so bless me. In Eph. 5:30 Paul tells us, ***"For we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones" In Eph.1:22-23 Paul tells us that God gave him (Jesus) to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."*** Since we are members of his body and he is the head, and the head cannot be separated from the body, can we rightly say he was a substitute for himself? Certainly not. Christ is our High Priest and he is also the offering for our sins. ***"For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself." (Heb.7:26-27). "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." (Heb. 10:14).*** No substitute can ever do that which only Jesus Christ our Sacrifice did, and no substitute can ever return to help us. But our Lord and Saviour, the holy and righteous Son of God, shall return again and raise us up in his own likeness to be forever with him in heaven and immortal glory. Praise his holy name!

May God bless the truth and pardon all errors.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES

6-18-1999

"Afflictions, though they seem severe,
Are oft in mercy sent.
They stopped the prodigal's career. And caused him to repent."

I hear and read of many people being afflicted. Job was afflicted with sore boils. The Egyptians were afflicted with many plagues because they refused to let the children of Israel go worship the true and living God. Joseph was afflicted in many ways by his brethren and by the rulers in Egypt. Joseph told his brethren, ***"Ye thought evil against me but God meant it for good to save many people alive."*** That may not be the correct quotation but it shows God's purpose in Joseph's afflictions. Many are afflicted with different sickness, broken bones and sore diseases. I'm almost 85 years of age and have not been afflicted with so much natural

sickness. For some reason, it has pleased the Lord to afflict me with hearing loss to the extent that I can hear very little of the sermons at church. Going to hear the gospel preached is my greatest delight and pleasure and its getting harder for me to understand the preaching. Is that one of the ways I'm being weaned away from this life? Is bodily afflictions what it takes to cause us to repent or is it afflictions of the soul? Or is it both? I am so ignorant I do not understand the wisdom of the world, much less the things that be of God. I believe it takes more than these things to save a soul. It certainly is not good works in this life, for if it be that, I know I'm lost because I feel to be a corrupt tree that cannot bring forth good fruit. No, it's not good works that saves a soul. It's not the preacher, so what is it? The Lord created the earth without man's help. He made everything that is on earth and in the firmaments without man's help. Man was created last, and made out of the most useless thing I suppose God created. What good is dust? I've never heard of it being used for any good purpose. So man had his beginning from something useless and he's never improved. God works in man to the extent that if man does anything good, it comes from Him working in and through man. If we are ever blessed to enter heaven and immortal glory, it will all be of God and His son Jesus Christ. Jesus died for us, took our many sins upon His own body and died a shameful death on the cross so that His chosen ones who were elected in Him before the world was created should have eternal life. All glory and honor to the three-in-one God who doeth all things well. He suffered more than we can know and all for us. When He said, *"It is finished,"* His work of salvation was completed. Not one of that number for which He died will ever be lost, but all - a complete number - will be in that sweet blissful rest forever more to sing undying praises to whom all praise is due. Oh, to be in that number, the least, most unworthy one of all. If that wonderful, glorious blessing is mine, it will be because the Lord loved and pitied me before ever this world was, for there's no beginning and no ending with Him.

Written by: Sister Edrie Clifton
Widow of Elder Bennie Clifton
Submitted by their daughter
Judy Poindexter

PSALMS 27:12-14.

Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty.

I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

WHAT JESUS MEANS TO ME

He is eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, ears to the deaf, strength to the weak, and might to them that have no power. He is a Father to the fatherless, a husband to the widow; a prophet to teach the mysteries of His Kingdom, the faithful and true witness, the bright and morning Star; the counselor to plead His people's cause; the leader that leads them by the right hand of His righteousness, the substance and glory of all the types, and end of the law the messenger of peace; the Son who is faithful. Owns His own house. The minister of the Sanctuary who preaches good tidings to the meek, who binds up the broken hearted, and proclaims liberty to the captive. The opener of the prison to them that are bound, who comforts all that mourn in Zion and gives unto them beauty for ashes. He is the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of Praise for the spirit of heaviness. He is all that a helpless soul can need and all that a God of infinite grace can give. He is the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace, the brightness of His Father's Glory and the express image of The Heavenly Father. The obedience of His life, His condescending love and grace. His imputed righteousness, His glorious resurrection and exaltation. He is the victor through His sufferings for the sins of His people, in the displays of His wrath against His and their enemies. He is the chief among ten thousand. In His nature, dignity, character, and relationship, in his work, both of providence and grace. He is pleasing to the Father and delightful to the church. His head is as the most fine gold as the great Jehovah and as Husband, King and Captain, yes as the Head of His body the Church, the Head of influence. What gold so fine, valuable and desirable. He excels all the gold of Ophir, His locks are bushy and black as the raven. The purpose of His grace, The doctrine of His grace, the doctrine of His word, and the members of His body, though weak in themselves grow in Him as their Head, and are beautifully connected together. How wise, prudent and well connected are all His dealings with the object of His love. His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of water. He ever watched over His people for good. He sees all their enemies, nor is it possible they can be in any place, state or circumstance, but He beholds them all together. The fullness of Diety dwells in Him, and He will surely do them good. He beholds the place where, the time when and the means how. He will bless His Spouse. He sees the end from the beginning. Nor is there any place of darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity can hide themselves from Him. *"His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers."* How divinely animating the light of his countenance: how engaging and precious the displaying of His love, in His word and ordinances; how ravishing His beauty, and how

comely His looks. His lips like lilies, droping sweet smelling myrrh. How cheering His promises, how firm the doctrines of Grace, how encouraging His decorations of mercy, with what sympathy, tenderness, and love He speaks to the church. How prevalent His intercessions, how cheering His communication, how fragrant His truth. ***"His hands are as gold rings set with beryl".*** He is mighty to save, strong to deliver, and able to support. Nor shall earth, hell or sin pluck His people out of His hands. His own arm has brought salvation, and His fury has upheld Him. How great are the secret purposes of His love, which are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed only to His spouse. The bowels of His compassion, the tenderness of His heart. Proclaim Him precious indeed.

He is pure, holy, and innocent, in all His works and ways. ***"His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold."*** He upholds all things by the word of His power. He bore all the sins of His people, and the vengeance due unto them. He bears all their sorrows, carries all their burdens, and enables them to lean upon Him as their staff and stay. The government of the church rests upon Him, He tramples under His feet all that exalts themselves against Him and His Kingdom. He trod the winepress alone and of the people there was none to help. His countenance is of Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. ***"The smiles of His face, the visits of His grace, the glory of His name, offices and relationship. How dear, delightful, and precious.***

His mouth is mash sweet, yea, He is altogether lovely, this is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem." He speaks the sweet words of reconciliation, peace and pardon, life and salvation. The kisses of His lips are beyond comprehension. The words of His mouth are sweeter than honey, or the honeycomb. He has won my affection, my soul is taken up with Him, and His divine glory. There is none in heaven above or on earth beneath equal with Him.

When by faith I behold His divine excellence. I am overcome with bliss. Dear Lord let me live much in the enjoyment of Thee.

Amen.
Jamie E. Cooper

ISAIAH 40: 28-31.

Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.

He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.

Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:

But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

"And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." 1 Tim. 2:14.

Although the apostle Paul uses this statement in establishing, or setting forth, the order and authority in the church, like many scriptures it seems to also have a strong application concerning the relationship of Christ and His church. In many respects Adam is a type of Christ and Eve a type of the church. If the application of such a ***"type"*** is allowed, in the scripture quoted above, then we would seem to have a beautiful picture of what Christ did for the church, prefigured in the Garden of Eden. Consider that, in one sense, Christ was before the church, as Adam was first formed, then Eve. (See I Tim. 2:13). Yet, the church is the body of Christ and as individual saints ***"...we are members of his body,..."*** Eph. 5:30, and have ever been with Him. (Would anyone propose that the body of Christ has ever been incomplete?) In like manner Eve was created in Adam and was one with him. Gen. 1:27. ***"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."*** (In one body.)

In another aspect of this ***"type"*** comparison, consider that to bring forth Eve ***"...the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman ..." Gen. 2:21, 22.*** Is this not a prefigure of Calvary? To bring forth the church in this Kingdom age Christ took upon himself the sleep of death. His side was pierced with a spear, ***"...and forthwith came there out blood and water." 1 John 19:34. Notice that the order of flow was "blood and water".*** As a living Eve was taken from Adams side, so was a living church brought forth from the side of Christ with the blood of cleansing and the washing of regeneration. Of course, the life of Eve was natural life while the life of the church is spiritual.

In further relating the ***"types"*** illustrated in the Garden of Eden consider the deception of Eve as related to in the scripture at the beginning of this writing. The serpent beguiled her. She was cunningly fooled. Adams bride did not deliberately do something with the intent of ***"getting in trouble"***. Again, "She was deceived". Is this not also the picture of the church, the bride of Christ?

Sin is deceitful. The temptor knows what is most appealing to our vanity. In the flesh all is vanity and vexation of spirit. Our confession with the apostle Paul is our daily bread, in speaking of the flesh, ***"....how to perform that which is good I find not." "...when I would do good, evil is present with me."*** (See Rom. 7:13-24.) But, Christ, the husband is not deceived. He know-

ingly took on himself the burden of the law and became sin for his bride the Church.

As Adam was put out of the garden and separated from the communion that he enjoyed with God in the garden, so was Christ made to feel the separation from the Father when He hung on the cross and cried, ***"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Mat.27:46.*** There is also a pattern to be seen in the benefits that Eve received from Adam eating of the forbidden fruit, as it compares to the benefit that the church receives from the sacrifice of Christ. In both cases, in the garden, as at the cross, each knowingly and willingly took upon themselves the guilt of his bride.

The benefits that were wrought by Christ, for the church, is the putting away of sin and receiving the blessings of salvation. The benefits of the ***"type"*** that goes before in Adam are very similar and very closely related to that which was done at the cross. In both cases there was something saved alive in the bride.

After the Lord God questioned the woman concerning the eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil He cursed the serpent and put enmity (hate) between her seed and the seed of the serpent. Also, her (Eve's) seed shall bruise thy (serpents') head.

Notice that it is her (Eve's) seed that shall bruise Satan's head. It is not his (Adam's) seed that shall bruise the head of the serpent (Satan). The sacrifice of Adam, (he was not deceived) preserved this spiritual seed that would bruise Satan's head, but he had to die(be separated from the garden) to do it. And it is in this seed that the church finds it's wonderful hope, because this seed is Christ and the bruising of Satan's head was done by Christ at the cross. ***"...the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb..." Rev. 12:10-11.***

There is also a beautiful picture to be seen in following this seed, that was in Eve, until it rests in a virgin whose name was Mary. An angel told her that she would conceive. She would bring forth a son and shall call his name Jesus. She would not conceive by a man because in Adam (man) all die. But this conception would be different. ***"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the son of God." Luke 1:35 part.***

This is the fullness of the seed, or the bringing forth of the seed, spoken of in Eden, that would bruise the serpents' head.

The story of what God has done for his people in Christ is retold in many ways and in many types and figures throughout the scriptures. Yet the words of the apostle Paul in Rom. 11:33 still ring loud and true. ***"O the depth of the riches both***

of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgements and his ways past finding out."

W.G. Chappell

VOICES OF THE PAST

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE

HEBREWS XII. 22-24.

"BUT ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

The Hebrews, as such, were brought up under the ritual and ceremonies of the Levitical law, and seemed very strongly inclined to cling to the observance of legal traditions, works and customs, from which the inspired writer labored to convert them. The whole epistle is devoted to that end. The two covenants are compared and contrasted, the priesthood of Christ shown to be of a far superior order to that of Aaron and his sons; the one by the law of a carnal commandment, the other by the power of an endless life. But in the changing of the priesthood there was of necessity a changing of the law. ***"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."*** Thus ***"the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us [the saints] free from the law of sin and death."*** Being therefore redeemed from the dominion of the law and brought under law to Christ, the saints are required to obey the precepts of Christ from higher and nobler motives, and they are qualified for their new allegiance to Christ, not by fleshly or carnal ability, but by being made partakers of the same power of an endless life. Instead of being licensed to sin because grace abounds, and because abounding grace has made them free from the law, the apostle urges their obedience to Christ from that very consideration. ***"For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard, entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (for they could not endure that which was commanded, And***

if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: and so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake)."

"Not to the terrors of the Lord,
The tempest, fire and smoke;
Not to the thunder of that word
That God, on Sinai, spoke."

"But ye are come unto mount Sion" (or Zion), which place literally was the highest eminence in Jerusalem, and the place] of power, where stood the royal palace of the king, of Israel, enclosed by invincible towers and walls of strength, a place of safety, &c., in all respects the type of the church of our Lord Jesus Christ, in her highest elevation, the palace of the great King" the center and throne of the spiritual Israel of our God. Hither, by grace, the saints of the gospel dispensation have come to worship the Lord their God in his holy hill. Not to be terrified by blackness and darkness, which even I Moses could not endure without fear and quaking, but a peaceful habitation, a quiet dwelling-place, where those who come are seated with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to go out no more forever. Zion, the perfection of beauty, out of which I God hath shined, for God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early.

"And unto the city of the Living God." Jerusalem in the type was the consecrated city of God, and Mount Zion was embraced and enclosed within her sacred precincts, the very name of the city signifying the vision of peace. Beautifully illustrative of the church of God in her gospel splendor; beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, upon the sides of the north, the city of the great King. The glory of this city is more perfectly delineated in the vision of John, as he saw her descending, from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride prepared for her husband. (See Rev. twenty-first and twenty-second chapters.) The city of the Living God, not of some imaginary or idol god; the God of life, who lives independently, being self-existent and eternal; the source and fountain of life, especially so of all spiritual, eternal life; the true God and eternal life, in whom the life of all the saints with Christ is hid. All other gods are dead; without vitality themselves, they can impart no quickening power to their worshipers. The God of our salvation lives, and blessed be our Rock. The city which the living God himself hath built, and in which he has set his throne, in which he will dwell forever, because he hath desired it, is truly the city of the living God, and to this city the saints are come. This city of the living God is the heavenly Jerusalem. Contrasted with the earth. For typical Jerusalem, which like Hagar, the bondwoman, rendering to bondage, being herself a slave, she cannot be the mother of a free posterity; she is in bondage with her children; they shall not be

heirs with the children of the free woman. But Jerusalem, which is above, is free, and it is just as impossible for her to be the mother of a slave as for Hagar to be the mother of a free child. Those who are born of Jerusalem, which is above and is free, are as Isaac was, they have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the Spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, *"Abba Father."*

"And to an innumerable company of angels. "The term" angels " is variously applied in the Scriptures, sometimes, and perhaps generally, to an order of beings superior to men, as the angels of glory, such as announced the birth of our Savior; and frequently the name is applied to the messengers or ministers of the gospel, as in 1 Tim. v. 21, and. also the angels of the seven churches in Asia. But in this text we understand the term as applied to the spirits of just men made perfect, the disembodied spirits of the saints in glory. Although there is a definite number of these, perfectly known to God, yet the multitude of them cannot be counted by men, and therefore they are an innumerable company, and in the same kingdom or city into which the saints in the gospel church have come. They have come from the east and the west, the north and the south, and are seated with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of our God; not with the fleshly bodies of the patriarchs, for they have long ago returned to dust, and in their raves await the voice of the archangel and the trump of God to raise them up spiritual bodies in the last time of Christ being a spiritual kingdom, cannot be inherited by flesh and blood, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. (1 Cor. xv. 50.) Thus the apostle could speak of being absent in body, but present in spirit with the saints. This is blessed, spiritual society to those who are born of the Spirit, and whose angels do always behold the face of their Father in heaven. (Matt. xvlii. 10.)

"To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven." This general assembly is the church of the firstborn, the church of Christ, for he is the firstborn. He was not the firstborn in his flesh, for millions were born in the flesh before his incarnation, but he is the first begotten of the dead, (Rev. 1:5,) and he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, (Col. 1:18,) the firstborn of every creature. (Col. 1:15.) And God has predestinated whom he did foreknow to be conformed to his image, that he may be the firstborn among many brethren. (Romans viii. 29.) His church, called out from all the tribes of the earth, come in the unity of the faith and knowledge of God to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. All the members of his body, the church, shall come to him in general assembly, called out from the world and brought with singing to Zion, gathered with his arm and carried in his bosom. His church is the general assembly, for

all the saints are assembled within her sacred precincts, and their names are written in heaven. *"In thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."-Psalms cxxxix. 16.* They are written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (Rev. xiii. 8; see also Rev. xx. 12,15.) The record of the saints in heaven implies not only their personal election in Christ before the world began, but also their recognition in his gospel church, registered in and fellowshipped by the whole general assembly as the living in Jerusalem, as citizens with the saints and of the household of God. *"And to God the Judge of all."* All the saints were arraigned before God, in his judicial character, when they stood before the bar of justice, and before the mountain that burned with fire, and there they were stoned to death and thrust through with cruel arrows, but their Surety appeared on their behalf and paid for them the ransom price. He was delivered up to die for their iniquities, and he arose again for their justification. Now being freely justified through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, they are redeemed unto God, brought nigh to God, and find him, in Christ, not only their Judge, whose decisions are final and irrevocable, but also their Advocate. It is God that justifieth."-Romans viii. 33. Now they rejoice in him as their Judge, and appeal to him as such, for they know that it is *written, "The Lord shall judge his people."* He is the Judge of all, of all beings, of all events and of all worlds; he is the Judge of all their necessities, their supplies, their trials and their deliverance's, their conflicts and their victories, and as they have confidence in him, they can freely, unreservedly and cheerfully commit their cause to him, and rest assured that justice and judgment, are the habitation of his throne; righteousness and truth go before his face. Once they were in awful dread of appearing before him, but now his terror shall not make them afraid. Their longing spirits ardently cry out from time to time, As the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God."-Psalms xlii. v 1, 2. *"And to the spirits of just men made I perfect."* These we understand to be the same as are called the innumerable company of angels. They are the spirits of just men, men who are justified freely, fully and everlastingly, through the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ; made perfect by that one offering by which Christ has perfected them that are sanctified; clothed with the garments of salvation and covered with the robe of righteousness. They were made perfect, they did not make themselves so, for *"Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."-Isa. liv. 17.* These are just men, for God hath justified them;

they are made perfect, for Christ has forever perfected them. Their bodies may be moldering in their graves, but we are in communion with their spirits, for all being born of the one Spirit, there is one body and one Spirit, even as we are all called in one hope of our calling; one Lord, one faith and one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. It is in the Spirit we commune with them, the flesh profiteth nothing. *"And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant."* In coming to this heavenly Jerusalem, or city of the living God, we come to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant or testament. As Moses was the mediator of the Sinai covenant to the carnal Israelites, for they could not endure the words spoken to them, and prayed that God would speak to Moses, and through him unto them, thus making him a mediator between God and them in the dispensation of the fiery law, so in the new covenant with the spiritual Israel Christ is the Mediator, and all the saints come to him. A mediator is one who mediates between two parties, and is qualified to equally represent both; equally allied, related and interested. So Christ as the Son of God on the one part, and as Head over all things to the church, which is his body, on the other, is the only divinely recognized Mediator or Daysman between God and man. No man can come unto the Father but by him. As there is but one God, so there is but one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time.

We have not time or space here to treat at large upon the mediatorial glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we will briefly speak of him as the Mediator of the new covenant, as it is through his mediation this covenant of life and peace exists, is made, ratified and ordered in all things and sure. By his mediation for his people the provisions and requisitions of the old covenant are met and canceled, and taken out of the way, for *"He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second."-Heb. x. 9.* His canceling of the old covenant annulled our marriage with Moses, that by the new covenant we might be lawfully married to Christ our risen Savior, who as the head and husband of his church is fully qualified to fulfill all the provisions of the new covenant to the honor of his Father, and perfect safety and salvation of his church. This covenant is in him, through him and by him; he is the Surety of it, and as mediator of it stands responsible for the fulfillment or all its promises. *"I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more."* Indeed, all the promises of God are in Christ Jesus, yea, and in him amen, to the glory of God by us. It is in him, through him and by him, as our Mediator, that Jehovah is our

God, and certainly it is only through him that we are redeemed unto God and recognized as being merciful to our unrighteousness; there was no mercy in the law. *"He that despised Moses' law died without mercy,"* and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; but in the provisions of the new covenant under the mediation of the Son of God, *"mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." -Psalms lxxxv. 10.* His mediatorial fullness covers and embraces all his official relations to his people, as Prophet, Priest and King, Shepherd, Bishop, Elder Brother, Husband, Head, Father, Way, Truth and Life, Leader, Ruler, Savior and Judge. We are not come to Moses to mediate for us, nor to Aaron, nor are we left to the mediation of men, or to attempt the work for ourselves; from all these we are come away, and are come to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant.

"And to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." Answering to the figures of the ceremonial law. *"For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament [or covenant, which means the same] which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without the shedding of blood is no remission."-Heb. ix. 19-22. "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God. And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament,"* &c. - Heb. ix. 11-15. Thus in coming to Christ as the Mediator of the new covenant we come to the blood of sprinkling, which being the blood of atonement, by which we are purified from dead works and purified from all defilement, it speaketh better things than that of Abel. The voice of Abel's blood, which had been shed by the fratricidal hands of Cain, called from the ground for righteous retribution upon the murderer. But the blood of Christ speaketh better

things; it speaks of atonement, of pardon, peace, reconciliation, redemption, cleansing, purification and justification; yea and of victory through the blood of the Lamb. Thus speaketh the blood of sprinkling to which the saints have come. *"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; Grace unto you, and peace: be multiplied."- 1 Peter v. 2. "Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."- Heb. x. 22.* The sprinkling of the blood of victims sacrificed under the law, upon the books and the people, was to consecrate them ceremonially to the Lord, and the sprinkling the blood of the paschal lamb upon the lintels and door-posts of the dwellings of the Hebrews was to them a peaceful assurance of their redemption and deliverance from wrath; the destroying angel had no power to smite them. Even so the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all guilt and saves from all wrath. From all these considerations the apostle urges his solemn admonition: *"See that ye refuse not him that speaketh."* If indeed we are come to Mount Sion, to the city of the living God, to all these gospel privileges, we should endeavor to walk worthy of, the high vocation wherewith we are called.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
MIDDLETOWN, N.Y.,
August 15, 1864.

PROPHECY

Prophecy tells of future events coming to pass before they come to pass, This is called prophesying. This is the work of prophets, chosen for this work. In the Old Testament there were sixteen of these prophets, beginning with Isaiah and ending with Malachi. These men all spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit within them.

In the days of Isaiah, Israel was in a deplorable condition. There are a few verses in Chapter One I want to briefly notice. In verses 2 and 3, we find these words: *"Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his master, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider."*

These are strong words against human beings. They are brought down equal with or below the animals. The animals knew their masters and they knew their masters fed them. But Israel did not know, they did not consider.

There is something in man that is a mystery. It is called *"latent na-*

ture," or something hidden, or something that lies dormant until it is acted upon. So there was latent nature in Aaron and the other Israelites when Aaron made a molten calf out of the earrings of the people, and they said, *"These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."* It is hard to believe a human being can stoop so low. So they worshipped idols in those days.

In verse 6 of Chapter One of Isaiah, we find these words: *"From the sole of the foot even to the head there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sore. They have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment."* But we must notice the Lord still called Israel His people. *"My people doth not consider."*

Now to verse 18: *"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."* A question: How is this change to be accomplished? According to my understanding, this change was accomplished by the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ at Calvary. The blood of animals or birds could not take away sin.

In verses 19 and 20, we read as follows: *"If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land. But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."* The fact that the Lord spoke these words, we may rest assured they will come to pass as spoken.

These words are conditional. I believe there are some among the Primitive Baptists who base their authority for using the term *"Conditional Time Salvation"* on these words. They believe, if I understand correctly, that these words apply to those who have been born again or regenerated. But I think it is well for us to remember that the words in Isaiah 1:19 were spoken during the time of the old covenant which was done away with at the coming of Christ. *"Behold the days come, Saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and the house of Judah." (Jeremiah 31:31)*

Now verse 33: *"But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord. I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people."*

We now turn to Hebrews, Chapter 8, for a continuance of the subject of the two covenants. "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also, he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. (Hebrews 8:6-7) Now verse 13: *"In that he saith a new covenant,*

he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away ."

In the Scriptures previously quoted, we have learned that the old covenant has become obsolete. He taketh away the first that ***"he may establish the second."*** (From memory)

We have been dwelling upon the prophecy of the Old Testament, and the old covenant, now we turn to the New Testament prophecy. But someone may say, ***"I thought all prophecy was fulfilled at the coming of Christ."*** All prophecy relating to the birth, the ministry and the death, burial and the resurrection of Christ, and His ascension to heaven were fulfilled. But there are New Testament prophecies also.

Your attention is invited to Second Timothy, Chapter 3: ***"This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come."*** Remember, these words were written very near two thousand years ago. Are we living in the last days? The events that are coming to pass, and have been for several years convince me we are.

Continuing on in this third chapter, the apostle gives a sordid account of what would come to pass during the last days. Men would be lovers of their ownselves; covetous, high-minded, loving pleasures more than lovers of God. Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof. Timothy is told to turn away from all such.

The apostle has something to say about women. He calls them silly, laden with divers lusts. There would be some no doubt among both men and women to whom these words apply. Both men and women are carried away with a desire to have a good time in the world. What these people call a good time is hateful to Him whose eyes are too pure to look upon evil. These worldly minded people do as is written of them: ***"Choose darkness rather than light; because their deeds are evil."*** But these evil acts of men and women come under the head of prophecy because, as before mentioned, Paul wrote the words, ***"In the last days perilous times shall come,"*** nearly two thousand years ago; therefore these things must come to pass that the Scripture (prophecy) might be fulfilled.

Referring again to men and women choosing darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil, brings to mind what Christ said to Matthew, Chapter 24, and verses 37 to 39: ***"But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away; So shall also the coming of the Son of man be."***

The words ***"They were eating and drinking"*** in verse 38, to me are very significant. I have never

been in what is called a night club, and I am glad and thankful I have not. But from what I have heard about them, it is a place of eating and drinking; and these places are kept open till late hours at night, to give these pleasure lovers more time to continue on in their sinful ways; not knowing that the pure eyes of the Lord see all this evil, and some time, we know not how soon, these evil people will be taken away as were the people in the days of Noah and the flood.

We now come to what seems to me to be the end of all prophecy. I will quote from Isaiah, Chapter 2, verses three and four: ***"And many people shall go and say, come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways; and we will walk in His paths; For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people, and they shall beat their swords into plow shares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."***

Now let us pause for a moment to meditate. We can hardly picture in our minds what a time like this would be like. Yet we know a state of tranquility will exist. Compare this with the conditions under which we are living today and note the difference. Today we are in peril or danger. It looks as though wicked men have invented their last destructive weapon. A weapon which, if used, would destroy all life upon the earth. And it would be used were it not for the fact the Lord is going to cut short the work of these wicked and depraved creatures.

In Matthew 24, verses 21 and 22, we find these words: ***"For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to that time, no, nor ever shall be."*** These words verify what is written in Daniel 12. Read it;

Now verse 22: ***"And except those days be shortened, no flesh should be saved, but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."***

In Revelation, Chapter 21 and verses 5 and 6, we find these words: ***"And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, write: For these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, it is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end."*** (First clause of verse 6. Notice the words ***"Behold I make all things new ."***

So there will be a new heaven and a new earth. What this will look like, I don't know, but it will be new. Who is going to make all things new? The answer is Christ. At His second coming the separation between the righteous and the wicked will take place, each being sent to the place prepared for them.

In Revelation, Chapter 22 and verse 16 we find these words: ***"I,***

Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." I understand it was the apostle John who was sent to testify of these things in the churches. He was the angel. The book of Revelation completes the Bible. Nothing is to be added to the words written therein, nor nothing taken from them.

A. T. Benson
Delmar, Del.

DOVER, N. J., Dec.1, 1909

ELDER S. H. DURAND-DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER: - I have been a long time thinking of writing you, but have been waiting, hoping for a better frame of mind, and feeling so incompetent to express myself, but I know that is all of the flesh. O the pride of my poor, sinful heart, how much I loathe it and desire to be freed from it, but I find myself no better as I grow older, as fondly hoped I should in my early pilgrimage; I have come so far short of what I hoped and desired, and what a true follower should be, yet there is always a longing desire and trembling hope that I have experienced these things which to know is eternal life. I had been for some time past feeling a comfortable hope, calmly trusting and feeling underneath were the everlasting arms, and felt my feet were on the rock; my meditations were sweet in the silent watches of the night, and I felt the dear Lord" was leading and teaching me; Scripture after Scripture would be brought to my mind, and I felt the Lord was near, all earthly fears and sorrows were hid from my sight, and I felt to rejoice in spirit and have no confidence in the flesh, and the love that passes all understanding filled my soul. Happy moments! ***"If such the sweetness of the streams, What must the Fountain be?"*** My heart goes out in love to all the dear ones everywhere, and I long to sit down at their feet. I feel to be the poorest and smallest, and if a member of the body, one of the unsightly ones. I have thought much of the sheet that will let down from heaven, showing what vile creatures we are by nature, yet the Lord said they were cleansed. How true there is nothing impossible with God, the author and finisher of our faith, and hope, which is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and enters into that within the veil, whither the Forerunner has entered. But I am so often cast down and filled with unbelief and questioning whether I truly love the Lord or no, am I his, or am I not. Sometimes with a little comfort it has come to me: lay hold of the hope set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. I feel to be in a desert land, often hungering and crying for bread or a crumb from my Master's table, and, like the prodigal, I know there is bread enough and to spare in my

Father's house, but I must wait, for I am weak and lame, and cannot walk until strength is given me, and then I shall receive all and more than I can ask. The dear Savior says he knows our sorrows and pities us as a father pities his children. He has said he would send the Comforter and would not leave us comfortless; then we can sing,

"One day within the place where my dear Lord hath been,
Is better than ten thousand days of pleasurable sin."

"How many great and precious promises he left in his will to his chosen bride, even of an inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." When it is given us to lay hold of them as ours, then we feel our spiritual strength renewed, and for a little time go on our way rejoicing. But I am mostly down in the depths, and cannot see my way, and fear I was never in the way that was cast up for the redeemed of the Lord to walk in, which no vulture's eye hath seen. The poet says, Wisdom shows a narrow way, with here and there a traveler. Happy art thou, O people saved by the Lord. Is this my portion, or am I deceived. But why this love for those who have the mark in their foreheads, showing they have been with Jesus and learned of him They count this world dross and vanity, and are looking and waiting for a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. If I know my own heart I love that poor, despised company, and feel to say with Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee," &c., and like one of old, follow at a distance. I am quite isolated here from the people I love for the truth's sake, and seldom hear one who speaks the language of Canaan or hear any preaching. My hearing is quite impaired, and I cannot hear everyone. I would be glad for all in the providence of God to call on me when convenient. The SIGNS is a welcome visitor. I have many blessings I wish to be thankful for. The Lord knows all about me, all my wanderings, faithlessness and sinfulness, but the angel said his name should be called Jesus, for he should save his people from their sins.

Please pardon this poor, disconnected and imperfect letter, and believe me your unworthy sister in hope,

LUCINDA B. BREWSTER.

Dear Subscribers of the Signs,

I desire to thank each of you, along with the board members, for patience with my mistakes in bookkeeping and updating of your renewal etc.

It will be some what a relief from years of updating of subscriptions etc., but already a void in not having almost a daily thought of what do I need to do today in the Signs. The contact I've had with many of

you through letters of appreciation and phone calls not ever having met you, has often melted my heart. Your sickness or failing eye sight has often been on my mind for some time. I believe to put it as I feel, you have become in many cases my business family and spiritual family all in one, but the latter the most important. Please support Elder Terry as you have me and we hope the Lord that has kept the paper going for so many years will bless each of you in the days to come to receive food for thought from it's contents. Thanks!

In hope,
J.R. Williams

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 2000

Delores C. Weatherford, VA	$2.00
Elizabeth Webb, IL	2.00
Eld. B.K. Smith, CA	2.00
B.G. Pryor, NC	7.00
Willie Shelton, VA	2.00
Vance Duncan, VA	7.00
Elizabeth Hedrick, VA	2.00
Gertrude Cox, VA	2.00
Nellie M. Dalton, VA	7.00
Charles Lovel, VA	2.00
Roy L. Locke, KY	5.00
Grace Locke, KY	5.00
Cleo Underwood, VA	5.00
Gayle Phillips, AL	10.00

OBITUARIES

IN MEMORY OF SISTER LESSIE QUESENBERRY COX

Sister Cox was born December 11, 1919, passed away, June 29, 2000. Making her stay on earth 80 years 6 months and 13 days. She was the daughter of Asa and Alma Quesenberry. She was the widow of Deacon Ham Cox who died August 26, 1973.

She united with the church in 1941. She loved her Church and stood for the doctrine that was preached among the brethren. She attended church far and near as long as she was able. We miss her but we feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Survivors are: Sons and Daughters in law Harold and Wava Cox, Indian Valley, Va.

Danny and Shelia Cox, Chesterfield, Va.

Daughters and Sons in law Louise and Bill Hylton, Midlothian, Va.

Geneva Arnold, Columbia, South Carolina,

Wanita and Bud Wright, Christiansburg, Va.

Sharon and Arless Cruise, Woodlawn, Va.

Brothers Stanley Quesenberry, Melvin Quesenberry, Russel and Sister in law Vivian Quesenberry.

Sisters Verna Long and Areeta Peters, 17 grandchildren, and 7 great grandchildren.

Services were held at Maberry Chapel on Saturday July 1, 2000 by her Pastor Elder Hale Terry and Elder Larry Hollandsworth. She was laid to rest in the Cox Cemetery beside her husband to await the second coming of Christ.

Written by request of Church by
Sister Dorcie Semones, Clerk
Elder Hale Terry, Moderator

OBITUARY OF CATHERINE AMANDA HOUCHINS

It has pleased our Lord to remove Sister Catherine Houchins from our midst. She had been in declining health for a few years. She had been a resident of Friendship Manor Nursing Home, Roanoke, Virginia for several months.

She was born Oct. 21, 1910 and died Sept. 22, 2000.

Her parents were Wakter G. and Sonora M. Shortt Houchins. She was a grandaughter of the late Elder Asa Short.

She is survived by one brother, Jabe M. and wife Arlene Houchins, two sisters, Nellie H. Conner, and Virginia H. and husband: Frank Fisher, one sister-in-law RLee Houchins. Also 17 nieces & nephews.

She joined County Line Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized in April 1933. She was the last member of County Line Church.

She visited many churches and associations with her sister Nellie and Elder Noel Conner.

The funeral service was conducted at County Line Primitive Baptist Church on Sunday Sept. 24, 2000, by Elders Lane Carter and Carl Terry, with burial in the Church Cemetery. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God and the resurrection of the dead, when Christ shall come in the clouds.

May we be resigned to God's will in our loss and her eternal gain.

Humbly submitted,
Elder Carl Terry

PSALM 23
A Psalm of David.

THE LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over . Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever .

Signs of the Times

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A Child Loaned

"I'll lend you for a little time
A child of Mine," He said.
"For you to love him while he lives,
And mourn for when he's dead.
It may be six or seven years
Or twenty-two or three,
But will you, till I call him back
Take care of him for Me?
He'll bring his charms to gladden you,
And should his stay be brief,
You'll have his lovely memories
As solace for your grief.

I cannot promise he will stay,
Since all from earth return,
But there are lessons taught down there
I want this child to learn.
I've looked this wide world over
In My search for teachers true,
And from the throngs that crowd life's lanes,
I have selected you.
Now will you give him all your love,
Nor think the labor vain,
Nor hate me when I come to call
And take him back again?"

I fancied that I heard them say,
"Dear Lord, Thy will be done.
For all the joy Thy child shall bring,
For the risk of grief we'll run.
We'll shelter him with tenderness,
We'll love him while we may;
And for the happiness we've known,
Forever grateful stay.
But though the angels call for him
Much sooner than we planned,
We'll brave the bitter grief that comes
And try to understand."

author unknown

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PSALMS 26:7-9.

The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

The LORD is their strength, and he is the saving strength of his anointed.

Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever.

EDITORIAL

Response to a question asked by a young lady,
"IF EVERYTHING WAS PREDESTINED OF GOD, WHY DID CHRIST HAVE TO DIE?

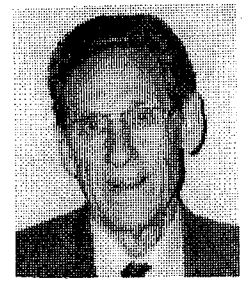
Elder R.H. Campbell

In the beginning God created man upright and innocent before him, for when viewing all of his creation, on the sixth day, he pronounced that it was very good and man was included in this statement. Everything needful for man's happiness and peace was there, and he was given dominion over all things that were created, and God told him to go forth and replenish the earth and subdue it. God then placed man in the garden to dress it and keep it, and told him that he might eat of the fruit of all of the trees of the garden, except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for he told him that in the day that he ate thereof he would surely die. The first recorded deed of the man was to partake of this one particular tree, and he did in fact die to the state of innocence in which he was created, and his life of direct communion with God. Judgement for his disobedience plunged man into the realm of nature in which all succeeding generations have been made to dwell since that time, because of

sin: this is the realm of Satan, the domain to which he was sentenced because of his disobedience; it is contrary to the state in which man dwelt in the Garden of Eden, where all things were created for his comfort, and were for his pleasure and peaceful enjoyment.

This disobedience to the command of God brought sin into the world, with the knowledge of evil, for good had always been there, as per the declaration of God when he viewed his creation, *(Gen. Chap. 1, vs. 31) "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good."* This deed brought upon man the judgement of God, and this was separation from him by the death of the man; he was driven from the garden to dwell in the earth, subject to the laws of nature and under the dominion of the devil. This original sin passed upon all of the posterity of the man, just as did all of his other attributes and natural characteristics, and in this state of condemnation he was, and would forever have remained in the same depraved condition into which he fell because, if he could recover himself from this condition, he would have prevented it in the first state.

There was only one man created, and the succeeding generations are but a continuation and multiplying of this one creation, and all of these succeeding generations are subject to the same characteristics as the original, the vanity which man was created subject to, the knowledge of good and evil, and the death that God had said he would experience when he partook of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. All of these things were passed onto the succeeding generations, and the cause of this state of total depravity and condemnation is because of this judgement, naturally speaking, and the natural man abides in this condition until this day, if nothing is done to correct this condition.

Man who was created in the image of God, but being subject to vanity, chose evil rather than good because it was more gratifying to the flesh; and this is true of all men in nature because they are as their federal head Adam. They cannot change from this carnal inclination, in and of themselves, because it is their natural disposition to desire those things that are pleasing to the carnal mind. In this condition all men are separated from God, unaware of the existence which they had before the fall, and are without any hope or desire for a restoration to his favor, as recorded, *(Gen. Chap. 6, vs. 5) "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."* This is just as true of man today, in nature, as can be witnessed every day in the things that occur all around us. Therefore there is no desire for good in man, in his natural state, no fear of God in his heart because he is unaware of the spiritual realm,

and without help from some other source, all man's eternal destiny would have been in the life in the world of nature, even as the brute beast of the field, because of his disobedience to the commandment of God.

This was not, however to be the destiny of a certain portion of God's creation because there is a difference in some, for as is recorded in, *(Deut. Chap. 32, vs. 8-9) "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."* In the beginning God separated a portion of his creation as his own peculiar portion upon which he bestowed his love and mercy, in the person of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and because of his death, in their room and stead, they were redeemed from their state of just condemnation. This separation of the Lord's people from the others was prophesied before he was driven from the Garden of Eden, as is recorded in the scriptures, when God pronounced judgement upon the serpent he said, *(Gen. Chap. 4,vs. 15) "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shall bruise his heel."* This enmity which God placed between the two different manner of people, to whom he referred to as the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman has been manifested down through time by their being natural enemies with each other; showing that there is a difference between these two peoples. This enmity has been continually manifested with the passing of each new generation, and is still true today; but it was determined and declared from the beginning, fulfilling the purposes of God in his bringing many souls home to glory by the death of his only begotten Son, a ransom for them, in the end of the days.

This difference was first manifested between the first two sons of Adam, Cain and Abel; Abel was the one whose sacrifice was acceptable unto God, and Cain's offering was rejected. Cain's offering was of the fruit of the ground, which God had cursed, and even though that was all that he had to offer, for that was his portion in life, it was not pleasing unto God. Abel's offering was of the fattling of his flock, which was God's creation and his gift to Abel, and he was but offering a small portion of, his plenty, unto him in honor and praise and this offering was pleasing and acceptable unto God, because it was offered in faith. Faith is the gift from God unto his special people only, those whom he had formed for his own glory. All men have not this faith and are not of the chosen generation, as is recorded of Israel, *(Deut. Chap. 7, vs. 6) "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord hath*

chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth." Though there be many who run to and fro in the earth declaring their allegiance to God, only those that God has set his love upon have any portion in the salvation that he has afore prepared for his beloved unto eternal glory.

This is further supported by the text found in the book of Romans referring to twin sons born to Isaac and Rebecca. Everything in their lineage was identical, same mother, same father, same conception and yet Paul records in, ***(Rom. Chap. 9, vs. 11) "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth,"*** and again in 13th & 14th vs. of the same chapter it states, ***"As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."*** The natural man will say, that this would not be fair, but who said it is supposed to be fair, in man's opinion, this is not a democratic process, God is the sovereign ruler of heaven and earth and all the hosts of them and his word is the final solution in all things. These are the inspired words of the apostle Paul, the same one who wrote more of the new testament than any other writer, and if we deny this, what other portions will we deny? We cannot take only those scriptures that support that which we believe, for Paul also says, ***(2 Tim Chap 3, vs 16) "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."*** All of the scriptures are from the same source, although recorded by different writers, they are not of any private interpretation, but were written by holy men of old as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, so they all agree in one, as to the truth. Man can only rightly divide the scriptures by the inspiration of the same spirit that inspired the original writer to record them, and whether man approves or not, they stand as recorded, the infallible word of God.

Now, we have a people that God loves, Jacob (Israel) and a people that God hates, Esau (Edom) and they all stand guilty before God, under the cloud of sin and just condemnation for their partaking of the forbidden fruit. God being a just God, demands satisfaction from all who have broken his holy law, and his beloved were just as guilty and alienated from him, in their natural state, as the children of the serpent.

Sin demands death for sin, or the offering of a perfect sacrifice to make an atonement for sin, and since man, as he is in nature depraved and corrupt, can never fulfill this requirement of being a perfect sacrifice without spot nor blemish; therefore according to the law he would be forever consigned to this lost and undone condition, with no reason to hope for anything else. He has but that judgement which was pronounced upon him for the partaking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and can only expect the justice as required by the law. Satan is not going to release him, he cannot release himself, so, he has no hope of anything other than the life that he has here in this time world and the condemnation of the law of sin and death.

Therefore, because God having a chosen people whom he has loved with an everlasting love, Israel, his portion and since they are under the same sentence of death as the children of the wicked one, he sent forth his only begotten Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, and redeemed those that he loves, from under the law of sin and death. He did this by imputing the perfection and righteousness of Christ unto them, and their sin and iniquities unto that fleshly body of Christ, which was prepared for this same purpose, who died in their room and stead, making an atonement for their sin; releasing them from the bonds of death that was their just reward. This atonement did not apply to the others because they were of their father the devil, and had no portion in these things that God had prepared for those that loved him, those who were of the chosen generation, and as prophesied in (Gen. Chap 3, vs. 15) that enmity that God placed between them, in his judgement, forever bars them from entering into the joys of the righteous and it continues until this day and there is no provisions made for their relief from this just judgement.

When Rebecca was found with child, she went to inquire of the Lord, and the Lord said unto her, *(Gen. Chap. 26, vs. 23) "Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger."* Now remember, this was before they were even born into the world, and their destiny was already declared; it was not because of their actions or their character here in nature, but because of the election of God of a people that he had formed for himself. He loved them with an everlasting love and with loving-kindness he draws them unto himself and they will come to him; and they will love him because he first loved them, and redeemed them from the just consequences of their carnal nature and depraved condition in the flesh, made them new creatures in Christ, and reconciled them unto himself,

and all because it was his own good pleasure to do so.

Christ did nothing, for or against, the children of the serpent, but left them as they were in the kingdom of their father the devil; they are and shall ever be an abomination unto God, and their very existence in the world is because of the sin of the serpent by his beguiling Eve in the garden. The great multiplication of the conception of Eve because of her transgression brought in an innumeral number of these designated as the seed of the serpent, and those, the original spiritual creation being those that God created in the beginning and loved with an everlasting love, those whom he told to go forth and multiply and replenish the earth, in the sixth day of creation. This great multiplication of the conception of the woman brought in the offspring of the serpent those whose existence is because of sin, and their portion is, and always will be the heritage of their father the devil, and his works they will always do. and his just reward shall also be theirs.

Christ came to seek and to save those that were lost, those who were separated from God, because of sin. The children of the devil were never separated from God, because they were never with him in the sense of being of the chosen generation, they have ever been of their father the devil because their existence is because of his beguiling of Eve, and they have never known the love of God or the glories of his kingdom. Their heritage has always been of the earth, earthy, they were never in the garden of Eden, before sin entered the world, because they were born after man sinned and was cast out of the Garden and therefore they have no portion in those blessings that God has prepared for those whom he loves, those who love him because he first loved them.

It was very necessary that Jesus come into the world and do his Father's will, as Jesus said, *(John Chap 6 ,vs 38-39) "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day."(vs 44) "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."* All of this Jesus fulfilled during his earthly ministry, saving every heir of heaven that was treasured in him before the foundation of the world, as he stated in, *(John Chap 17 vs 4) "I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."* The will of the Father was that Jesus should come into the world, assume flesh liken unto his brethren, yet without sin, pay the ransom for their sins and redeem them out from under the just condemnation of the law, by his suffering the ignomious death on the cross.

This he did, without the loss of one, and this fact is made known unto each one, as they are born of the Spirit and blessed to see the glorious salvation that was wrought for them by their Lord and their God. Without this knowledge of deliverance, why would they worship and adore their Lord and Savior? If they could have accomplished this of themselves they would have never let it happen to them in the first place, but they have no knowledge of their condition and their desperate need; but being made aware of this need and being made to realize what is required to fulfill the requirements of the law and their inability to meet those requirements, they worship and praise him from whom all these blessing flow. They praise him for his longsuffering, patience and mercy that he has shown them, even while they were dead in trespasses and sin, it was not something that was decided in time, but because it was determined before they were even born and demonstrates and makes manifest the everlasting love that he has had for them.

Jesus, told Nicodemus, *(John Chap 3, vs. 3) " Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."* Man, in his natural state cannot see, or understand, that there is another kingdom, other than the kingdom of this world, and therefore he must be changed from this condition. Man can but see the kingdom of God with the eyes of faith, and these he receives in the new birth when he is made a new creature in Christ; then the love and desire for the old things of nature pass away, all things are become new, and they realize that all things are of God. This has ever been true, but the new creature is but now made aware of it in the new birth, and they worship God in Spirit and in truth from a pure heart; purified by the indwelling of the Spirit of God within their heart.

Without this grand and glorious deliverance, those whom the Lord loved before the world was created, would have suffered the same judgement as the rest of world. The only difference, between the elect and the non-elect, is in what has been done for them, and not by them. Jesus, the way, the truth and the life, who of God, is made unto them wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; all that is needful to assure that they will receive that inheritance which was laid for them in heaven. This is the heritage of the children of God, and it is reserved for them and they shall be delivered, at the time before appointed of the Father, in its fullness. They will hear that grand and glorious address, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, and it will all be due to the absolute predestination and foreordination of the sovereign God of heaven and earth, the sovereign of the universe, praise his Holy name.

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Jan 18, 2001

Dear Elder Key,

Hoping that you and your family are doing well, I would like you to consider an article for publication. I am enclosing a copy of the experience and call to the ministry of Elder J.G.L. Hash. It was copied from the book "Calendar Record of Events 1909-1959 of James Goode Lane Hash," which was a book of calendar entries of which Elder Hash had made, and was transcribed and compiled into a book by his son John and daughter in law Mory Hash. Although Elder Hash died almost 10 years before I was born, by reading this book I felt acquainted with him. I think of all those old soldiers that have gone on before, that are at rest in Christ Jesus, of the many joys as well as the trials that they had to undergo. I am left feeling deep admiration for all those that earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. I did know Brother Hash's son Elder Amos I. Hash as well as four of his daughters, Ruth, Ora, Virginia, and Gustavia. I used to hear Bro. Amos Hash preach at Bell Spur, Long Branch, Knob and other churches quite often as a child, but I regret that I didn't receive his preaching gift because I didn't have a hearing ear to understand the Gospel he and others preached. Knowing and realizing that is the work of God to give a child a hearing ear and a heart to understand. I do remember him saying ***"If God be for us, it doesn't matter who is against us!"***, which is precious to me. I hope that I have been made to believe and trust in the same Lord and Saviour that these dear brethren did, and all those that love His appearing, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Yours in hope of the resurrection,
Elder Mark Terry

VOICES OF THE PAST

Experience and Call to the Ministry
by
Elder J. G. L. Hash, Ferrum, Va

Edited by his son, John H. Hash

It is my desire, the Lord willing, to leave for the people of God and my family, my reasons for being a member of the Primitive Baptist Church and a Minister for their faith. This is the Church I believe Jesus Christ set up when he said: ***"That thou art Peter, and upon this rock" (revelation) "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. 16:18)*** I believe there is some of the Chosen-elect people among all the different organizations set up by man. There is only one Church, and Jesus Christ

set it up with Himself as the Chief Corner Stone, and the Primitive Baptists of our day are the only believers and teachers of the truth as revealed from heaven and believe the scriptures to be the word of God.

I was born in Franklin Co., Va. on Dec.6, 1881, the seventh child out of a family of nine children. The oldest child was a girl followed by six boys of whom I was the youngest. There were two girls younger than I. My father, James Henry Hash, was a soldier in the Southern Army for four years (1861 to 1865). He was wounded ten days before General R. E. Lee surrendered to General U. S. Grant on April 9, 1865. Father was taken as a prisoner and was well cared for by the Union Soldiers. His wound was in bad shape as a ball had gone through his left thigh and gangrene had set in. The physicians in charge soon had father able to be up and out of danger. In a few months he was home. On Jan. 10, 1866 Father married my mother, Miss Sallie F. Thompson.

As I have already said there were nine of us children. We were all raised on a farm. I was taught to tell the truth, be sober, moral and live respectably. I was very mischievous, wild and reckless-in fact mean and selfish. My nature was so prone to sin. I loved the pleasures of this world. At times serious thoughts would come into my mind. I would try to offer some excuse for my conduct or justify myself with the thought that I am not so bad as others. At an early age I believed there was a God in heaven. I knew nothing of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, or saving grace as treasured up in Christ before the world began. Mother was a sweet singer and often sang good old songs for us children. I soon learned to love the words of: ***"Amazing grace; Am I a soldier of the Cross; Show pity Lord O forgive"*** and others. I could sing these tunes from the time I was six or seven years old. The first real serious thought I had of death, hell and everlasting punishment came to me one morning when I was some seven or eight years old. Mother sent me to the corn field to gather something for dinner. I was full of self and began singing, ***"While in this vale of sorrow, I travel on in pain. My heart is fixed on Jesus, I hope the prize to gain."*** These words came to me like this: What is this Vale of Sorrow? My answer was this world. Do you travel on in pain? My answer was no. Is your heart fixed on Jesus, And hope the prize to gain? I had no answer for this and in tears upon the ground and in my feeble way prayed to God to be merciful to me and forgive me, a sinful child. I kept this to myself, and thought I would soon forget all about such and enjoy the pleasures of this world. For some years in my vain way I got a good share of head religion. I was careful to say my prayers as I thought every day, and at times more often than once a day. I was so self righteous had the opportunity presented, I would have like Saul of Tarsus joined in with the

Pharisees and called this religion: I lost this religion when I would get mad, do or say something I should not. Then I would go back to build more worthless huts of nothingness in the sand. In my early teens, while here alone in the same room I am now writing, (I own the old home where I was born) all at once flames of fire in every direction came to destroy me and these words were spoken: ***"Resist the devil and he will flee from thee."*** At once I left the room and as I put my feet on the ground my strength was taken and I fell helpless upon the ground crying ***"God be merciful to me a sinner."*** I do not know how long I lay there or how long I prayed. I will never forget these words: ***"God be merciful to me a sinner."*** I made vows to be a better boy and promised in my feeble efforts in prayer to do good all my life. I was not mindful of this fact: "In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. 7:18).

One of my teachers in learning me to write, wrote this: "Do good, be good and then you will be happy" for me to copy. I tried all the works of the flesh but to no avail. I grew worse in my vain way. I often cried out, ***"God have mercy upon me."*** My pillow at night often was wet with tears on account of my sins. About this time I was walking up a grade and as I reached the top this thought came into my mind: What will you be in life? When this vision was presented I was caught up in the air with book in hand preaching to the people of God. This was proof to me that I would soon be banished with the wicked to everlasting destruction, for I knew it was impossible for such a sinner to preach the gospel; one who was without the love of God and who had no hope of heaven.

I often read the scriptures which was a sealed book. Instead of finding relief, I was cut off as a brand from the burning (Amos 4: 11), without God and without mercy or hope. In my groans I often felt it was a sin to call upon a just, holy and righteous eternal God to have mercy upon me, a wicked sinner. When I went to meeting I felt to be one alone. The preaching was for the people of God. I was made to cry out as the poet, ***"Like one alone I seem to be, O is there anyone like me."*** I continued to grow worse in my feelings until I came to the end crying, ***"If it be thy Holy will O God, save or I perish,"*** on the last evening that I felt I would spend on earth. After dark when all my people had retired, I thought for the last time to pray. I lay flat upon the ground with my face in the dust. There I tried to pray, when something seemed to say, "No mercy for such a wretch. As I went through the room where Father and Mother were resting, I felt I must go to Mother's side and tell her I was bound to die for my sins and be banished with the wicked to everlasting woe. I then felt best not to disturb them.

After retiring it seemed every sin and evil thought I ever had came up before me with sins enough to

sink a world to hell. I continued praying, *"thy will be done."* Something began taking my breath. I could not move or speak. I fully believed death was my doom and God was just in my condemnation. All of a sudden, a light above the brightness of the sun came from above and entered my whole being from head to foot. The burden was gone and I fell asleep with the sweetest rest in many months. Next morning when I awoke the sun was shining. After breakfast I was out as usual about the chores which was my lot to do. When it seemed this question was asked: Where is your burden? The next thing I knew I heard a little bird singing so sweetly its Maker's praise. I was singing too, *"Amazing grace how sweet the sound, That saved a wretch like me, I once was lost but now am found, Was blind but now I see."* I was in a new world. My whole being went forth in praises to God for His mercies to me a sinner, for saving *"my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling." (David, Psa. 116:8).* I felt the love of God so sweetly. I thought I would never see any more trouble. In this love I felt light as a feather. To be born again is to be born of God. For God is love. In this I felt He was mine and I was His to praise His Holy Name forever. *"Heaven came down my soul to greet and glory crowned the Mercy Seat."*

I was vain enough to feel there would never be any trouble or worry here for me, as I often sang, *"And not a wave of trouble rolled across my peaceful breast."* His sweet hope Christ formed in me was so wonderful I felt all would be well with me here in this life, and in the world to come everlasting peace and happiness. I remained in this peaceful frame of mind for several weeks. When all of a sudden the light went out and I was in such darkness I could feel it as Israel of old did. I cried out with Job, *"Oh that I knew where I might find him!" (Job 23:3).*

I began to cry and beg for mercy. My prayer was to God: *"If I am deceived O Lord send this burden upon me heavier than before, but if I am thine, send better evidence of thy mercy in delivering me of all my sins."* I was soon happy as ever singing, *"What wondrous love is this, O My soul."* At times the impressions came before me to tell to sinners round, *"What a dear Saviour I had found".* This I kept to myself as I felt this could never be, by one so weak and sinful as I. The impressions to become a member and the duty enjoined upon me to *"arise and be baptized"* became a heavy burden.

In September 1899, I was received into the fellowship of the Church at Long Branch upon a confession of the reason of my hope of heaven as here set forth in this article. I was baptized by the late Elder W. A. Via, a worthy member and Minister of the Primitive Baptist Church as set up by Christ to Peter

"upon this rock" (Revelation) *"I"* (I the Lord not Peter nor any other man) *"will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," (Matt. 16: 18)* As we came out of the water singing *"O how happy are they, who their Saviour obey"*, this was a sweet foretaste of heaven for me with all doubts removed at that time with proof that *"Sinners"* are saved by grace. I attended our meetings regularly and felt it was our duty to be present at every meeting both days (Saturday and Sunday) unless providentially hindered. I was soon chosen Clerk of the Church and with some help I have cared for the record for more than fifty-five years.

In June 1908, I was married to Miss Nannie Snead who has proved to be a gift from the Lord. She has been a member for more than forty years. We have seven children all grown and married with families except our youngest daughter Virginia who is with us to look after and care for us in our declining days, as a blessing from the Lord. I was appointed Rural Letter Carrier at Endicott P. 0. In 1908. The duties were over dirt roads here at the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mts., on horseback and with buggy at times or a two-wheeled cart. I often suffered from exposure. Shortly after we were married I became seriously ill and had high fever with severe suffering. I became so sick I did not know whether I would live through the night. My wife was seated beside my bed to see how I got along. It was near Midnight and neither of us had had any rest. I turned to the wall when I heard a noise, like a dove makes in flying. I looked up and an angel stood over me and said: *"You go preach the everlasting gospel and glorify His great and good Name."* In tears of assurance, with the burden of the work of the Ministry upon me, I turned to my wife and said: *"I know I will get well, for God has sent His angel and called me to preach His everlasting gospel."* From that moment I began to mend and the next day I could sit up. I was soon in doubts as to whether I should go or not to speak in His dear name, when these words of Paul came to me with much force: *"For necessity is laid upon me: yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" (1 Cor. 9:16).* I rebelled and felt this holy calling could not be for such as I. Any male member was better suited for this sacred duty than I. I prayed for deliverance from my distress, I dreamed of being before a congregation preaching from this text: *"I thank thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." (Matt. 11:25, Luke 10:21).* I was so ignorant of the scriptures, I did not know how to find this subject. Later I dreamed I found the answer in *Acts 5:20: "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people an the words of this life."* My burden became so heavy I was made willing

to tell my faithful old pastor, the late Elder Asa D. Shortt, of my impressions. As a father in Israel he asked me to join him in the stand. I used this hymn, "O for a closer walk with God.", offered a few words in prayer, and spoke for some ten minutes. This was such a sweet relief for a short season. I felt the burden was gone never to bother me again. In this I had no fears as to what the public would say for I was no preacher, I only spoke for relief of my mind. Soon after this, in walking along, these words were spoken to me: ***"I will make you fishers of men." (Matt. 4: 19)*** This was not audible but at first I looked around to see if any one was near. The burden to "go preach" has followed me near all these many years. While I feel unworthy and unprofitable, I am encouraged at times to feel the Lord has blessed me to preach the gospel so as to comfort the believer, in setting forth salvation by grace.

In a few years I was ordained by a Presbytery of Elders to the full functions of the gospel ministry. In a short while I was called to come to the bedside of an invalid, to preach for him. After services he related a sweet experience and was received as a member with the request that I baptize him. This dear brother was helpless from paralysis from his hips down. I carried him down into the water in my arms while he was seated in his chair, and baptized him in the clear mountain stream with as much ease as if I had practiced for years. A dear Sister, after the baptism, said to me, "Brother Hash, if you live to baptize for forty years you will never do a nicer job or have a prettier baptism." We left this dear brother happy and rejoicing in a Saviour's love. He was poor as to the goods of this world and never got to our meetings but once at Long Branch after his baptism, as his mode of travel was a ground sled drawn by a yoke of oxen. He was happy to be with us in our meeting. He was soon relieved of his suffering by death, and we were fully persuaded his spirit returned to God who gave it, and his body to the dust there to await the final resurrection of the Just and the Unjust. I was soon called to serve several Churches: "County Line" and "Thomas Grove" in Floyd County; my home Church," Long Branch", in Franklin County; and "Charity" in Patrick County. I have never felt competent or worthy to serve churches or baptize the saints of God. At present, I serve my home Church and ***"Charity"*** and ***"Mayo"*** in Patrick County. In this service I have often been brought to my knees in prayer with tears to God for mercy and to direct my feeble efforts to His Name with praise, honor and glory. My desire is to spend my last days in this service for Jesus' sake as a servant in the house of God, and to lord nothing ***"over God's heritage"(1 Peter 5:3).***

In 1920, I was chosen Assistant Clerk of the Smith River Association. In 1932, by unanimous vote I was elected Clerk of this associa-

tion. So far I am their servant yet. I do not admire members who seek promotions, whether it be for the ministry, deaconship, pastor or any office in the Church. The Church should see the gift and fill it and be burdened especially with the gifts of the ministry and the choosing of a Pastor. In my time many things have taken place among our people. I have seen Elders seeking the pastoral care of Churches. No good ever came of this. I also have seen men seek to be ordained to the ministry. This proved to be a curse. In some instances there was exclusion for their unreasonable demands when the Church did not feast upon their preaching or feel such would make a Pastor sent from the Lord. I have known some to move their membership for a selfish motive.

This should never be. Paul said, ***"In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." (Rom. 7: 18).*** Every time anyone comes in the flesh, beware of such. Remember the flesh dust is the dwelling place of Satan. After being, as I hope and believe by the power of God and the riches of His sustaining grace, a servant for Jesus' sake, I now, though feeble in body and mind, serve my home Church, Long Branch, and Charity and Mayo. Were it in me, ***"I would praise God, from whom all blessings flow."*** and preach the gospel at all times if I could. I know it is as easy for Man to make a world like this as it is to praise God in spirit and in truth without sustaining grace with faith, which is a gift from God. One main reason all mankind fails to worship God is they come in the flesh, not sensible of the fact that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing. For God is a spirit, and seeketh such to worship Him as do worship Him in spirit and in truth. This comes about by being born again. Jesus said to Nicodemus, ***"Ye must be born again" (John 3:7).*** To be born again is in the re-generation. The first birth is of the earth earthy. The second birth is from above, with Jerusalem above which is free as the Mother of us all. In this we are born with the love of God in our hearts. This is why we love each other for Jesus' sake. It is the love of God manifest in the hearts of His children. ***"Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Matt. 7:16).*** If we are taught of the Lord, we love the Church and the worship of God. In the many years I have been serving Churches, I always prayed for divine guidance in taking the oversight of the flock. I have seen men claiming to be Ministers, who would seek this sacred work. In near every case such proved to be volunteers and proved to be a curse. The servants of God are drafted by His Holy Spirit, and prepared in the school of grace, with faith, which is the gift of God to serve the Church for Jesus' sake as servants to lord nothing ***"over God's heritage" (I Peter 5:3).*** Jesus said to his disciples: ***"Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind***

leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." (Matt. 15:13-14).

I have seen this in men seeking to be ordained to the ministry as volunteer leaders in serving churches and such fell by the way, rooted up and lost their standing. Some proved they were deceivers by trying to destroy what they once tried to set up as the Church, after being excluded and dying in shame and disgrace. I knew one man who in a boasting way said: *"Hear and understand: Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man." (Matt. 15:10-11).* Later his conduct was so disorderly he was excluded, and died without ever being restored. Is it possible that Jude, *"The servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James" (Jude 1:1),* had under consideration such men when he said: *"These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever." (Jude 1:12-13)?*

My hope is that I know the truth, and I know Jeremiah (Jer.17:9-10) told the truth, *"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings."* and Peter *(1 Peter 1:3-5) "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."* In my pilgrimage, I found out many years ago what Peter meant in addressing his epistle to the strangers scattered throughout Pontius, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. *"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied." (I Peter 1:2)* could say for our comfort, and *"Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Peter 1:5).* It seems there is no end to this wonderful work in the redemption of the children of God. *"Yea, I have loved thee with a everlasting love. "(Jer. 31:3).* Some teach and believe the children of God can and do

fall away from their first love, so as to be lost. This is not true if Jeremiah was right when he said "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love." In the beginning was God. This love is as old as God is, for Israel's God is a God of love. Grace was treasured up in Christ before the world began. This grace is love, this love is God: the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. It is all treasured up in the triune God.

Many people I have known fell by their conduct, so as to be excluded from the Church, and lost their standing as members. If they were goats they were at his left hand, to depart from His presence. While if they were sheep of His pasture, all will be found at His right hand to hear His welcome voice, ***"Child your Father calls, come home."***

I have left out many things of interest to me, that I would be glad to include for my children and those interested in what I have written to see after I am gone. We raised seven children to be grown: four girls and three sons. All are married but Virginia our youngest daughter. Amos Hash, our oldest son, has been a member with us near two years. It was my privilege (thought unworthy I felt) to baptize him and a dear young Sister Turner at the same time. Before this took place I felt I would love my child the best. When we were in the water, all fear was gone. The love of God was so sweetly manifested I loved this dear Sister just as much as I did my own son. She is a worthy Sister and both have proved a blessing to the Church.

Since then I baptized a dear Sister and her husband. She had this hope with love for the Church for 15 years. Thirteen years ago she dreamed I baptized her. This she kept hid and evaded me all these years. When the time came for her to be gathered into the fold, she with her dear husband, a previous lovely Brother, came in as little children in tears of joy. This baptism was sweet to me. While I was feeble and afflicted I was given strength without fear to baptize both in a clear stream of water this dear Sister had been shown thirteen years before. The Brother weighed 228 lbs. but I had no trouble at the baptism, as I had prayed it would be in decency and order. This was at "Long Branch". At "Charity" I baptized one precious young Brother. At "Mayo" I baptized two worthy brothers. My hope and prayer is I may be kept at the feet of my brethren by the power of God as a servant for Jesus' sake. To serve them in love and not for filthy lucre's sake. Your little Brother I hope in love from God and for His sake.

J. G. L. Hash

Editorial comments: My father wrote this article to leave a record for his children after his death. Unfortunately, after his death in 1959 the article was not made known to all of the surviving children and it lay unnoticed and forgotten in a trunk until it was recovered in the Spring of 1995.

TOUCHET, Wash., Sept. 28, 1909.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:- It has been a custom of mine for several years to send greetings to the household of faith, the saints scattered over the land wherever the SIGNS OF THE TIMES Circulates. Many far distant from me are yet near and dear to my heart; some have lived with me in the old Hillsborough Church, in Oregon, but we are now scattered many miles apart, and our heads are blossoming for the grave. O what a blessed thought to me, for since September 10th, 1909, I have breathed the air of my eighty-first year. Many sorrows have pierced my heart during my long life, and it sometimes seems as though I must doubt the evidence of being born again. We read the Lord taketh the righteous from the evil to come. O who that has lived to see my age can say other than did Jacob to Pharaoh? Although to us the days seem many, yet with the "Alpha and Omega" one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. Dear saints, think of this, will it indeed be so that we shall be numbered among those who sing the song that no man can sing on earth? Then shall this vile body be changed, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality, then will all that pertains to death be swallowed up in victory. What a glorious victory! Mortal mind cannot comprehend, nor mortal heart conceive of, that which awaits the saints. The apostle said, *"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God."* Surely here we do realize that the creature is made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope. Glorious hope! It is as *"an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast."* Of all men surely would we be the most miserable without that hope. The Arminians of the world are daily energetic; they are stimulated to do the best they can, peradventure they may attain unto salvation. If perchance they step aside one day, they strive to make amends by repenting and laboring in prayer, in almsgiving and in missionary efforts, by giving money to societies to save the heathen, and so by their works they strive to make their calling and election sure. Is this the case with the saints of God? God forbid. To them the Lord has said, *"If ye love me, keep my commandments."* He has also said, *"My yoke is easy, and my burden is light."* The Arminian world will say, Why be sorrowful and in the dark? The answer of the believer is, Because I see a *"law in my members, warring against the law of my mind."* Yea, the tempter is continually going about seeking whom

he may devour. He tempted our dear Lord and Savior, will he not also tempt the children? Nevertheless, when Jesus turns and looks upon us, we, like Peter, go out and weep bitterly that we have so grievously denied our Lord. The flesh is weak, we are not able to watch one hour without His divine presence. We are as clay in the hand of the potter, who hath power to make one vessel to honor, and another to dishonor, and if he send my soul to hell, his righteous law approves it well. But, dear household of faith, what more can he say than to you he hath said?

If you see fit to publish this, please correct all mistakes, and oblige a little one.

As ever yours,
(MRS.) S. J. CUMMINS.

TIOGA, Pa., Dec. 1, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN :-We are saved by grace, and not by works, lest any man should boast. What have we to boast of we brought nothing with us into this world, and can take nothing out; all we have here God has given us, therefore we have nothing to boast of in our natural life. God gave us that life, and by that life we come into possession of the things of life. We are taught natural things because we have natural life and we desire the things of the earth. By that life we become exalted, or puffed up, thinking we are something when really we are nothing. When God in his own time gives us spiritual life, then we are made to love the things we once hated, and hate the things we once loved; we are humiliated and brought down; we cannot even look up to the throne of God, but smite our breast and say, Father, be merciful to me, a sinner. Of what then can we boast' Boasting is excluded. We cannot claim any merit on our part. We then know that God has all power in heaven and in earth; there is no power but what is ordained of God. No man or school can teach that dividing line between the natural and the spiritual life; God's word only can divide. His word is sharper than any two-edged sword, when he speaks it stands fast. When he said, " Let there be light," light was. There is no power that can resist God; we are as clay in the potter's hand; He can make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor. We cannot add one cubit to our stature, or make one hair black or white. There are only two classes of people in this world: the believer and the unbeliever. The believer, by the revelation of God, knows that he is a sinner, and knows his heart is deceitful and desperately wicked, and that of himself he can do nothing; his works are as filthy rags. There is no boasting in him now, he knows that God must direct his steps and must guide him, and that He does lead him in ways he knew not of, and in that path which the vulture's eye has never seen, nor the lion's whelp trodden. The unbeliever thinks he must work

out his own salvation, and that it depends upon him, and is trying to climb up some other way, and is trying to steal the inheritance by his false testimony. God, by his Son Jesus, has willed to his children that which they will receive at the appointed time of the Father. Thanks be unto God, these things are kept safe and sure for his people.

If you desire to throw this in the wastebasket, all will be well with me.

Your unworthy brother,
C. S. BOND.

ISAIAH XXVI. 19.

"Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."

We have understood this passage to express a glorious promise given in prophecy, to the church of God, assuring her that her dead men should be quickened simultaneously with the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some of our brethren however, have taken a different view of the subject. We do not claim to be wiser, or more infallible than they, but whether this text be applicable to the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and the life of his church in him or not, the apostles by inspiration have established the certainty that the church are risen with Christ, and that God who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he hath loved us, hath quickened us together with Christ, and has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus. We do not, however, understand that this, or any other passage, implies that the resurrection of the bodies of the saints should be simultaneous with the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, for the inspired apostles have, since the resurrection of Christ from the dead, assured us of a resurrection at the last day, when these mortals shall put on immortality, and these corruptibles, incorruption, and the saying shall be brought to pass, That death is swallowed up in victory. Then shall the last enemy be destroyed, which is death, and the kingdom of Christ, in all its fullness and glory, shall be delivered to God, even the Father. But in the subject which we understand to be contemplated in our text, and in parallel exists, the Mediatorial union of Christ and his church is strongly implied. As Christ has carried and borne his members all the days of old, so he carried and bore them when he poured out his soul unto death, when his body slumbered in the grave, and when he burst the bars of death and triumphed over the grave. It was our death which he died, as it is his life which we live. Zion's dead men were quickened together with Christ, and they were raised up together, and sit together in heavenly places.

Omitting the italicized words used in this text, by the translators, it will read, *"Thy dead men shall live, my dead body shall they arise," &c.* If this be the correct rendering of the text, the promise which it contains would seem to us to imply either to the regeneration and ingathering of the saints is the members of his mystical body, and the bringing them into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man; to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, or to the final resurrection of the bodies of His redeemed people. Which of the three applications is correct, if any, we leave to our readers generally to judge, as in any or all of them the doctrine is established by the plain Scriptures. Therefore, *"Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust."* God's people while here in the flesh, dwell in the dust, for their mortal bodies are of the earth, earthy, even as the Lord said to Adam, "For dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." And Paul said, *"I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh [or the dust], I live by the faith of the Son of God," &c.* In this sense God's quickened children, while in the house of their pilgrimage, dwell in the dust, and are called on to awake and sing. But there is another sense in which the words are sometimes, and perhaps more generally used in the Scriptures, as signifying a low condition, captivity and worldly afflictions, and this seems to harmonize with the state of the church as set forth in the chapter of which our text is a part. All their own efforts for deliverance had proved abortive, and they are represented as discouraged, but the word of the Lord comes to them in their lowly condition with consolation, turning their mourning into joy, saying, Awake and sing, thou that dwellest in the dust. As in Isaiah lii. 1, 2, *"Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion: put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: * * * shake thyself from the dust; arise and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion."* As her day of joy and gladness dawns upon her, she is called upon to arise and sing. Let her tears be dried, and let the bands of her captivity be removed from her neck, let her put on her beautiful apparel, and be clothed with her strength. *"For thy dew is as the dew of herbs."* The doctrine of God our Savior is compared to dew. Deut. xxxii. 2, *"My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew ."* The doctrine expressed in the speech of our Lord, has the reviving effect on the disconsolate saints, that rain has upon grass, and dew upon the tender herb. It revives, quickens, invigorates the saints, as the rain and dew causes the earth to develop its vegetation. When the precious seed is buried in the earth, it remains

there concealed, until the earth is moistened by the showers of rain, or refreshed by the genial dew. Under the influence of the heaven inspired doctrine of Christ, the saints arise from the dust, they awake and sing, they arise and shine, the lame man leaps like the hart, the tongue of the stammerer speaks plainly, and the dumb shout for joy. *"And the earth shall cast out the dead."* As the parched ground which contains the precious seed, when cheered by the dew, casts out the tender blade; and finally the full corn in the ear, so shall the earth cast out, make manifest and fully develop the sons of Zion, when the seasons of refreshing came from the presence of our God. And so the fruits of the Spirit are made to appear in the saints who dwell in the dust, when the doctrine of our God descends on them, and their fruit is unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y., Dec. 1, 1855.

January 13.

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you."-1 PETER iv. 12.

THE *"fiery trial,"* then, is not a strange thing which happens only to a few of the Lord's family, but is more or less the appointed lot of all. Do we not hear the Lord saying to his Zion, *"I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction?"* All then that are chosen must pass through the furnace of affliction, and all know experimentally the fiery trial, for by it they are made partakers of Christ's sufferings. But this is indispensable in order to be partakers of his glory. *"If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."* Thus they suffer with him, *"that when his glory shall be revealed, they may be glad also with exceeding joy."* And this suffering with and for Christ in the furnace of affliction salts the soul, preserves it from corruption, communicates health, gives it savour and flavour, is a token of interest in the everlasting covenant, and is a seal of friendship and peace with God.

J. C. Philpot

REVELATION 22:1-4.

AND he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

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Banks Conner, VA	7.00
Tiny Flippin, VA	2.00
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Edwin F. Dyer, VA	2.00
Rebecca Smith, FL	2.00

PSALM 136 : 23 & 26.

Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy endureth for ever:

O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy endureth for ever.

OBITUARIES

MARGARET HOLLANDSWORTH QUESENBERRY

In memory of our Dear Sister Margaret, she was born June 14, 1933 passed away November 21, 2000 at age 67.

She is survived by her devoted husband Theron D. Quesenberry, Willis, Va. Two daughters & son-in-laws, Debbie & Raymond Weeks, Salem, Va.; Donna & Mike Hodges, Roanoke, Va.; one son & daughter-in-law Joe & Pam Quesenberry, Madison, N.C.;one sister: Fay Quesenberry, Willis, Va. Six grandchildren: Kari Quesenberry, Scott Quesenberry, Derek Weeks, Megan Weeks, Amy Hodges, and Andrew Hodges; special friends Jim, Andrea and John Garland.

Sister Margaret joined the church in year 1977 and was baptized by her Pastor.

She had been afflicted for many years, was in a wheel chair much of the time.

She attended her church regularly. Her faithful husband took care of her and attended church with her.

We miss her so much knowing our loss is her eternal gain.

Her services were held at Mayberry Chapel at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 2000 by Elder Larry Hollandsworth. She was laid to rest

to await the second coming of Christ in the Turman Cemetery.

By request of church, written by
Sister Dorcie Semones, Clerk
Elder Hale Terry, Moderator

ARTHUR WILSON KING

Brother Wilson King passed away April 18, 2000 at Alamance Regional Medical Center in Burlington N.C. after six months of declining health. He was 84 years old and a precious brother. He is sorely missed by his church, his family, and many friends. But we feel, as the Apostle Paul expressed it, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better. Wilson was a member of the Greensboro Church and served as a deacon for many years. He was always faithful to attend and serve his brethren. He joined Bush Arbor Church in 1952 and was baptized by Elder W. Curry King.

Brother King's funeral was held Friday April 21, 2000 in McClure's Funeral Chapel in Burlington, N.C. His funeral service was conducted by Elder Kenneth Key and Elder C.B. Davis. His interment was in the Blalock Cemetery. Brother Wilson was laid to rest, in this most serene place, beneath a mound of flowers and accompanied by many friends and family.

Brother King was born March 15, 1916 to Mr. Will King and Mrs. Minnie Oakley King. On December 25, 1938 he married Sara Frances Blalock who was his wife for 52 years until her death December 24, 1990. They were a very devoted and loving couple. And to this union was born two daughters, Nancy and Linda, and one son, Gary.

Wilson has a very supportive and loving family. They made sure he had a way to church after his health began to fail. And they attended church and met with Wilson for lunch many times, which he looked forward to and appreciated very much. They also took care of his other needs after his health started to decline. Wilson was very blessed to have a family like this.

Wilson was preceded in death by a brother, Mr. Leonard King. Survivors include two daughters, Mrs. John (Nancy) Ghantt and Mrs. Kirk (Linda) Loy, both of Burlington; a son, Mr. Gary Wilson King of Prospect Hill; three sisters, Mrs Dolly Mae Garrison of Yanceyville, Mrs Wilbert (Sue) Harris of Mebane and Mrs. Ed (Kathleen) Powell of Burlington; five brothers, Mr. Alvis F. King, Mr. Banks B. King, Mr. Joe D. King and Mr. Billy King, all of Burlington, and Mr. W. Jones King of Graham; seven grand-children; and seven great-grandchildren.

Submitted by request,
Wayne Edwards, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 27120-4403

SONG

JESUS, the very thought of thee,
With sweetness fills my breast:
But sweeter far thy face to see,
And in thy presence rest.

No voice can sing, no heart can frame,
Nor can the memory find
A sweeter sound than Jesus' name,
To those of heavenly mind.

O Hope of every contrite heart!
O Joy of all the meek!
To those who ask, how kind thou art!
How good, to those who seek!

But what to those who find? Ah! this,
No tongue nor pen can show;
The love of Jesus, what it is,
None but his loved ones know.

Bernard of Clairvaux. 1153
Tr. By E. Caswall. 1849

POSTMASTER

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EDITORIAL

ELDER JERRY FARMER

The Signs of the Times' board of trustees unanimously agreed to add Elder Jerry Farmer as an associate editor to the Signs. I have been requested to write an introduction to you readers of Elder Farmer and to welcome him as a contributor to the Signs.

Some years ago, he was a member of another denomination and he was ordained as a minister among them. I am told that he informed them of his interpretation of the scriptures, which was the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists although he had never heard them preach or talked with anyone from our denomination. They went ahead with his doctrine for a time but eventually turned against him in a very angry way and would have no agreement with his preaching.

After separating from this people, he searched for someone that believed as he did. I'm told that a fellow employee told him to go to the Primitive Baptist meeting as his daddy was a member and he believed that it was what Elder Farmer believed.

Elder and Sister Farmer have been sweetly received among us as we have seen the evidence of their being the sheep of His pasture. Truly, God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform.

Elder Farmer's deep understanding of the scriptures and his feeding of the sheep and lambs through his preaching, is being performed and none of it will be wasted or fail to accomplish that where-in the Lord sends him to preach the gospel.

As our members decrease (church membership, I refer to) the evidence that the Holy Comforter is active as Jesus Himself, promised to His people when He ascended into Heaven. May His name forever be praised and all Honor and Glory be His.

An unworthy sinner,
Burnell Williams

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation ...." Heb. 2:3

In the world, almost all we hear is bad news. But, thanks be unto God, what we hear in the church is good news. The good news of the gospel of grace has sounded to all generations. That good news has been proclaimed and is now being proclaimed of that great salvation which God has wrought on behalf of His people. I would love to be enabled, by the grace and mercy of God, to ascribe greatness to our God and to write a little concerning His great salvation.

First of all we understand that our God is greater than all. ***"He is the Rock, His work is perfect: all His ways are judgement: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He."*** Deut. 32:4 He is the great I Am. He was before all things, without beginning and having no end of days. By Him all things consist. He made all things by the Word of His power. He made all things for Himself and for His pleasure. He has done all things well. This world and the universe and even the things not seen or known by us were made by Him. He is the Word, He is love, He is a Spirit and He is even a consuming fire to all that know Him not and obey not the gospel. He has all Power in heaven and earth. He has worked all things together for the good of His people. He has seen the end from the beginning and declared it so that all things must come to pass according to His will and purpose. He is all in all to us that believe. In Him we live and move and have our being.

This great God, in His wisdom and love and mercy, purposed in Himself to create a people in Christ Jesus for Himself. They would be a people generated by Himself for Himself to love and to show His great kindnesses and mercies unto. These people, the vessels of honor, He would form of the dust of the ground naturally and make them to be earthen vessels into which He would place a great treasure, even His Holy Spirit by which they would be kept and show forth His praise.

Of the same lump of clay from which He would make His people, He also would make another people which He called the vessels of wrath. They, not having His Spirit, would be left to themselves to follow out the lusts of the flesh. They would know not God and would neither see nor know the things of the holy kingdom and would not obey the gospel of Jesus Christ. They, like wicked Cain who hated and killed Abel his brother in the flesh for no good reason, would persecute the people of God. But they would be held in check and could only go as far as it suited the wise purpose of God. God said that the wrath of man would praise Him and the remainder of wrath He would restrain.

This warfare has been going on from the time of Cain and Abel and continues to this day. God's holy prophets and saints of old, Jesus Christ, the disciples and apostles in Christ's day and even His people today have been misunderstood and hated for the truth's sake. But, thanks be unto God, because our God is greater than all, He has delivered His people, He is delivering them and we trust He shall yet deliver. We are made to say with the apostle I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day. No weapon formed against them shall prosper.

This great God whom we hope to serve, prepared a great salvation for His people before He made them. God, with all wisdom and knowledge, foresaw the fall of all creation into sin and ruin and prepared a remedy for His people that He had created in Christ Jesus. This remedy for sin was necessary for them since the righteous God of heaven and earth is also a just God. In His great wisdom and justice, God declared, that according to His law, the soul that sins must surely die. The penalty for sin is death. God saw that there would be no help for them by the arm of flesh. According to nature, they would be without God and without hope in this world. In order to deliver the chosen vessels of mercy from that awful condition, God in His great love, mercy, wisdom and justice, purposed to send His only begotten, sinless, spotless, holy and undefiled Son into the world to redeem His beloved people to Himself by His own blood. All this was done before the world was made according to the scriptures.

God in His perfect wisdom also determined to keep His people that He had given to His Son by His power and through His faith. He would keep those that He brought into the world so that sin could not have dominion over them. Although the whole world lies in wickedness, God determined that he would cause His people to overcome the world in Christ and that they should show forth His praise. He, as with Peter, prayed for them that their faith fail not therefore it cannot fail. He has placed His Holy Spirit in them to keep them and to preserve them through their many trials and afflictions unto His coming. He promised to be with them even to the end of the world and is fulfilling His promise.

God also determined that He would raise up in the last day all that He had given to His Son. He predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son that He might be the firstborn of many brethren. Jesus said *"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."* He said *"because I live, ye shall live also."* He said by His apostle *that "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall*

also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth within you." After Jesus as our great high priest offered up His body as a perfect sacrifice for our sins - after He gave His life a ransom for many - after He died the cruel death of the cross - after He lay in the tomb for three days and three nights - He came forth victorious over death, hell and the grave. And He, by resurrecting His earthly body changed to a spiritual body, gave us the victory and assured us of the promise that we also will be raised up in that same power at His coming.

God's great salvation is manifest to His people in many ways of which I would like to mention a few. God saved His people in eternity by choosing and electing them to salvation by His grace. He saved His people before the world was by preparing a remedy for their hopeless condition. He saved them from the curse of the law by sending His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, but without sin, to fullfill it in every aspect. He saved them by offering up His Son for their sins - the just for the unjust, that their sins would be remembered against them no more forever. He saved them by His resurrection from the dead in giving them a lively hope. He saves them by the gospel and by the truth in delivering them from error and false doctrine. He saves them from the power of sin by putting them under grace. He saves them from death by His life. He saves them from their enemies by holding their enemies back so they cannot do the things that they would. He saves them by the gift of faith and the Spirit that they no longer are controlled by the flesh. There are many other ways He has saved and is saving us, I am fully assured, which you may be given to reflect upon as He gives light. His riches are unsearcheable. I would like to conclude with this one other facet of His great salvation. When He comes again, He will save us from hell and the grave by raising up our mortal bodies and fashioning them like unto His own glorious body. ***"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. Every man that hath this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure."*** **1 John 3:2-3.**

These things are written in love and in hope of eternal life. Your little brother (I hope).

Elder J.B. Farmer

ST. MATTHEW 5:10.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

CORRESPONDENCE

February 7, 2001

Dear Elder Key,

I have been impressed for some time to try to write this but could not seem to do so. I do not consider myself a writer and am a simple man but hope that I can say with Paul ***"that by the grace of God that I am what I am."***

I was called to serve my first church, Old Union Church, Indian Valley, Va. In May of 1972, which meets the 4th weekend of each month. A regular stop was at my wife's Grandpa and Grandma Bond either on Saturday or Sunday on 4th weekends or sometimes more often the Lord permitting.

Grandpa asked for a home at Old Union Church in November, 1924 placing his membership with Old Indian Creek Church, Indian Valley, Va. Grandma joined Old Indian Creek Church in May of 1925 and both were baptized by Elder John Sumner in May of 1925. Grandma passed away September 24,1984 her membership being 59 years.
Grandpa passed away April 27, 1995 his membership being 71 years.

The Lord blessed us to visit with Grandpa on the 4th weekend in March 1995. As always Grandpa began to talk on the scriptures. He had a clear mind and could quote scriptures and talk about how good the Lord had been to him. Grandpa could not read or write. It was such a blessing to hear him tell of the goodness and mercy of God. I always looked forward to these visits and enjoyed them so much. Grandpa said, ***"I want to tell you something that I saw this week. I was setting in my chair in the living room and I heard children playing. I looked into the kitchen and I saw two of most beautiful little girls playing that I have ever seen. They were laughing and were so happy. I went to the window and looked outside to see who was with them. There was no car in the driveway and no one was there. I went into the kitchen and looked all around but they had disappeared and I could not find them." Then he said, "I do not know if I will live to know what this means but I believe that someday you will know."***

In January of 1997 my youngest daughter became pregnant with her first child. The wife of my nephew also became pregnant. Both girls were due to deliver in September 1997. My nephew, brother Duane Gray, is a member of New Bell Spur primitive baptist church. In a few months the doctors told my daughter that her baby would not live outside of her body. Oh what a sad pitiful time. At first I begged the Lord if it could be possible to let this baby live, but as the time passed all I could do was beg for His Will to be done. Gina went into labor in July and our first granddaughter little Hannah Marie was born. She drew

three breaths and fell asleep in Jesus' arms. Gina had asked the Lord to please let little Hannah Marie open her eyes to look at her and to know that she was her Mother. This she felt that the Lord did grant to her and had answered her prayer. Gina and her husband asked me to preach the little one's funeral. I told them that I did not think I could. Then she said Daddy if you cannot then call a minister that you have confidence in to conduct the service.

The day before the time set for the funeral I was so burdened I felt that I could not do this and should call another minister. I went outside walking around the yard begging the Lord to show me what to do. Suddenly I saw a pair of arms and in the arms was little Hannah Marie and the voice said "SUFFER THE LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO ME, AND FORBID THEM NOT: FOR OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD" Oh I cannot express my feelings at that moment. I went into the house and told my companion that the Lord has shown me that I will preach the funeral tomorrow. So many that attended the funeral said no one else could have said those beautiful things. I answered I did not - but the Lord did. Oh praise His Holy name.

The week before the first weekend in September of 1997 I received a phone call from my nephew, brother Duane Gray. He said please come to Lewis Gayle Hospital our baby is dead and they are going to put my wife in labor and we need you to come. I told him I will be there as soon as I can. They had chose not to know the sex of the baby as technology now permits, but on the way to the Hospital I remembered Grandpa's vision and I knew that the baby would be a beautiful little girl. We arrived at the hospital and there was so many sad faces and so many tears. It was another sad pitiful time. My heart went out to this precious family as we asked for the Lord's will to be done. One of the family said I wonder if it will be a boy or a girl. I said it will be a beautiful little girl. Everyone looked at me and asked how do you know? I said wait until she is born and I will tell you. After she was born, yes a beautiful little girl, I related to them Grandpa's vision. The tears of sadness turned into tears of joy. Oh what a wonderful God and Savior we have.

Elder Key, I hope that this article will encourage others to write the experiences and visions that the Lord has revealed from Heaven. Oh how we love him that has taken our sins away by his death on the cruel cross and given unto us that lively hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

Love to All the Little Children In Christ,

Elder Wm. Hale Terry

Feb. 10, 2001

Elder Wm. Hale Terry:

Dear Brother Terry, I have not had the pleasure of meeting you. But I enjoy reading the Signs of the Times. So I am sending for renewal, enclosed you will find a check for $20.00 for 1 year subscription to the Signs and $10.00 for a gift to the Signs. I will ask to be forgiven for this sorry writing for I did not go to school but just a few days. So I am doing the best I can. Me and my great wife of many years, last December 22nd, 67 years. God has blessed both of us all our lives. And if I could I would thank God every day. We live in Autumn Village Rest Home and getting old she 85 and me 89.

I enjoy reading the Signs of the Times and may God bless the Signs of the Times and all of you good brethren for the good writing. May God bless all of you.

Saved by hope if saved at all,
Whitley Mobley

Feb. 7, 2001

Dear Editors:

I see I'm late sending renewal for "Signs of the Times" I do enjoy the many good writers of the Signs. I am 92 and live so far from Church I just don't get to go.

I am glad you Editors can get the "Signs" out.

A sinner saved by grace if saved,
Sister Jane Carroll

Dear Elder Williams,

Please find enclosed check for $20.00 for two years subscription and $2.00 for the fund. I have been subscribing to the Signs since 1952 and don't want to be without it. I find a lot of comfort in the articles and sermons. I'm not able to attend meetings anymore so the Signs is extra special to me. I've had some wonderful experiences that causes me to hope that I might be one of His children, and I do love the Signs.

Yours in Hope,
Doris Rivard

Jan. 22, 2001

Dear Elder Terry,

Please renew our subscription to the Signs. Sickness & worry caused us to be late - how many months I'm not sure.

Some years ago Brother and I came to Texas and Elder and Sister Hamrick, with Elders Campbell and Chapel, met you.

How glad we would be to welcome you at Memphis Church any Sunday God leads you here.

Love and hope in Christ,
Brother and Carrie Jo Williams

ISAIAH 40:1.

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.

Jan. 28, 2001

Brother Terry:

I hope the dear Lord will bless you and others to write and get this paper out. The Signs have meant much to me, and I would pray God blesses me to read and enjoy them as long as I'm on this earth.

I hope you and your family are well. We would love to see you at any of our meetings.

With love I hope
Reidy Pickral

"And seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not." – Jeremiah xlv. 5.

Whatever schemes and projects the Lord's people may devise that they may prosper and get on in the world, he rarely suffers their plans to thrive. He knows well to what consequences it would lead; - that this ivy creeping round the stem would, as it were, suffocate and strangle the tree. The more that worldly goods increase, the more the heart is fixed upon them; and the more the affections are set upon idols, the more is the heart drawn away from the Lord. He will not suffer his people to have their portion here below. He, therefore, says to them in his providence, as well as in his word, ***"Seek them not."*** But you will perhaps say, ***"What are we then to seek?"*** I will tell you in one word,-*Realities.* What are these great things that you are seeking after? say in religion. Could you see them in their right light, you would see that they are but shadows. You feel, for instance, your deficiency in gift in public when you are called upon to pray, or in private when you converse with those who possess readier speech, and you want what are commonly called *gifts,* such as a greater fluency of utterance, more ability to quote Scripture, and a more abundant variety of expressions, so as to make a deeper impression on the hearers-the real want being that you might stand higher in their estimation. But what would these gifts, if you had them to the fullest extent, so that men might almost worship you for them, do for you when you shall be called upon to lie upon a death-bed-when eternity is in view, and your soul has to deal with God only? You will want no gifts then. Grace will be the only thing which can do you any good.

J.C. Philpot

PSALM 31:23-24.

O love the Lord, all ye his saints: for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.

Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.

VOICES OF THE PAST

EXCERPTS FROM A SERMON

Excerpts from a sermon preached by Elder W. C. King at Bush Arbor Church, N.C., on December 13, 1959.)

Elder W. C. King

Recorded in the gospel according to St. Luke, 1st chapter, 37th verse, are these words: ***"For with God nothing shall be impossible."***

We find in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. There was no man to help or to hinder: there was no man upon the Earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep and God said, ***"Let there be light, and there was light."*** God divided the light from the darkness, and called the light day, and the darkness He called night. The things that would be impossible with man are possible with God.

The Lord said unto Abram, ***"Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee."*** God told him that He would make of him a great nation, and that his seed should be as the sand of the sea. Abram was one hundred years old and his wife Sarah was ninety years old, when the Lord appeared unto him saying, ***"Sarah thy wife shall have a son."*** Sarah laughed, realizing she was old and stricken in age. But, according to God's promise, Isaac was born. The things that are impossible with men are possible with God. If I could, I would like this morning to point out to you some of the things that seem impossible with men but are possible with God: Knowing that He has all power in heaven and in earth, does all things after the counsel of His own will, having seen the end from the beginning.

Men by wisdom cannot understand how that Daniel could be cast into a den of lions and not be destroyed. Yet God had sent his angels and shut the lions' mouths that no harm should be done to Daniel. He having all power even over the beasts of the forest, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea. He could cause the raven to feed Elijah to find him in his desolation and sadness, and feed him meat and bread twice a day. We know by nature the raven

would prefer to feed upon his body, but God commanded the raven to feed Elijah. How impossible these things seem to man. God makes a way where there is no way.

When the Hebrew children refused to worship the false gods, King Nebuchadnezzar ordered that the furnace be heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated. He commanded the most mighty men of his army to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. The king arose early, and in haste said to his counsellors, ***"Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? Lo, I see four men walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt. The form of the fourth is like unto the Son of God."***

We cannot understand with the carnal mind how these things can be: without even the smell of smoke upon their garments. No condition or circumstance is suchthat our God doesn't have complete power to save from every destruction. Many of the trials and experiences of God's little ones here in this world seem a miracle, yet in God's holy, providence all provisions are made for their security and protection.

The angel from heaven appeared unto Zachariah when he was in the temple of the Lord about the duties and customs of the priest's office. When Zachariah saw the angel, fear fell upon him, but the angel said unto him, ***"Fear not, Zachariah: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord and Shall neither drink wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. ...And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just: to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."*** How impossible this must have seemed to Zachariah, knowing that his wife Elizabeth was old, and barren. He asked the angel, ***"Whereby shall I know this?"*** The angel answering said, ***"I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings. And, behold, thou shall be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed."*** When Elizabeth's full time came that she should be delivered, she brought *forth* a son. When the cousins and neighbors heard how the Lord had showed great mercy upon her, they began to talk about a name for the child. Some, of course, wanted to name him after his father, but his mother said, ***"Not so; but he shall be called John."*** They reasoned that none of their kindred was called by that name; and they made signs to his father how he would have him called, and he

asked for a writing table, and he wrote, *"His name is John."* Immediately his mouth was opened, and his tongue loosed, and he spake and praised God.

Do you not sometimes challenge God, dear believer, by asking him to give you some greater evidence of his love and mercy to you, that you might have a greater assurance of his promises.

Sometimes in our meditations and prayers we ask God to grant us certain things. I remember so well in my early experience, where I asked God just to spare my life until a certain time, and if He would do that, I would be submissive to what I felt to be my duty. But I found that I was not able to keep my promise even to God when He had spared my life to see the time requested. My heart was as cold, as ice. I was made to weep and cry unto Him for mercy, learning that I was not my own keeper: That without Him I could do nothing.

God sent an angel unto a city of Galilee to a virgin espoused to a man named Joseph. This virgin was Mary. The angel said, *"Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him she was troubled and the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus...He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." "Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." "For with God nothing shall be impossible."*

"Then Joseph her husband being a just man and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privately. But while he thought on these things, behold the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream saying, *"Joseph thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost and she shall bring forth a son and they shall call his name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." "Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the 'Lord had bidden him and took unto him, his wife. Knowing her not until she had brought forth her first-born son and he called His name Jesus."* How impossible this seems to men; how preposterous for human reasoning to believe that a virgin should conceive of the Holy Ghost and bring forth a son; even Mary pondered these things in her

own heart. ***"For with God nothing shall be impossible."***

Joseph and Mary went up from Galilee to Bethlehem to be taxed. While they were there the days were accomplished that she should be delivered, and she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

The angels of God made the announcement of the birth of the blessed Savior of sinners, to those humble shepherds who were abiding in the field keeping watch over their flock by night; saying, ***"Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior, which is Christ Jesus the Lord."*** I feel this morning that when the Gospel is preached it is good tidings of great joy, coming from a far country; so far that mortal arms can't reach it, yet so near that it can be felt in every heart that God has touched by the finger of his love.

There was no room in the city of Philippi, although God showed Paul by vision to ***"Come over to Macedonia to help us."*** As great as this Roman city might have been there was no place for the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. We find Paul on the Sabbath going out of the city by the river bank, a place where prayer was wont to be made, The Lord opened the heart of Lydia, not only did she hear but she attended to the things she heard, and was baptized; and said to Paul, ***"If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there."*** I want to say to you beloved that there is a love, a power that binds the hearts of believers together that the world by wisdom can never know. They are hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. Just as these shepherds were made willing to 1eave their flocks and every possession; they had to go to where their Savior was. No man will desire to, go where their Lord and Master is until they have had his love in their heart. These wise men had the Star of Bethlehem to guide them. I believe that star is still shining. Every poor sin benighted soul has their eyes set on that star and the Lord Jesus Christ to lead and guide them to that City of habitation.

We don't know how many days it took them to travel the distance they covered. I don't know how many valleys they had to cross and how many mountains they had to climb. I don't think they turned either to the right or left. They had their eyes set on the Star of Bethlehem. It is Jesus Christ your Lord and Master that you have your eyes focused on. Every poor helpless sinner has learned there is no where else to go. You can witness with Paul when he said it was better for him to depart. I am so glad he told us why it was better, to be with

my Lord Jesus Christ.

So these wise men were so divinely sent; nothing could prevent them from reaching where this child Jesus lay. They found Him in a manger wrapped in swaddling clothes, They presented to Him these treasures, gold, myrrh and frankincense, Herod had told them, ***"When you have found Him, come and tell me that I might go and worship Him."*** Herod no doubt thought that he would dethrone Him as king. Oh, how wonderful and past finding out is the great work of our God. He had the wise men to go back another way. You or I can never go over this road but once. How much you would like to have some of your experiences of God's precious presence with you over again! The things that are impossible with men are possible with God. It was never the desire of Jesus to be honored and praised by men for what He did. When men sought to praise Him and to make Him king, we find Him absenting Himself from the crowd, going to the mountains in prayer. The poor, needy souls He never turned away empty. The poor leper that came to Him (who knew he was doomed to be cast into isolation, and there to spend his last and expiring days) had faith to believe: that Jesus could heal him. We hear him saying to Jesus, ***"If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean."*** Jesus had the power to cleanse the leprous. This morning do you not believe that He still has the same power to cleanse you from all sin that your soul can be set free, that the Christ Child would be destroyed? How impossible that decree was, just as God had warned the wise men that they shouldn't return back to Herod, but go back another way. The Lord appeared to Joseph and told him to take the child and its mother and flee into Egypt. The Scripture tells us that they departed in the night. Oh, how much of our traveling seems so dark as in the night! The Lord appeared again to Joseph when Herod was dead saying, ***"Arise, take the young child and His mother and go into the land of Israel."*** The unseen power of the everlasting God was controlling every move to take care of this blessed child.

Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem at the Feast of the Passover every year, and they carried this child Jesus with them, who was twelve years old at that time. When they had fulfilled the days and started on their journey back, Jesus tarried in Jerusalem. After a day's travel they sought Him among some kinsfolk and acquaintances, but they found Him not. So they went back to Jerusalem seeking Him some three days. Later they found Him in the temple sitting in the midst of Doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. When they saw Him they were amazed. His mother said unto him, ***"Why hast thou dealt with us? Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And He said unto them"***

"How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" How strong and amazing it must have been to see this lad of a boy, the son of a poor carpenter, there in the Temple among the most learned and intelligent people of the land, asking and answering questions. Yes, He must be about his Father's business. God's business is a business so important that He can call men from the various occupations of life and cause them to leave all and follow Him.

The Scriptures have but little to say about Jesus from about the age of twelve until about thirty. ***"He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them, and Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."*** John says, ***"And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."*** We know the half will never be told. No power that could be formed could take His life until the appointed time of the Father. Every demand of the law must be fulfilled. The church of the living God must be cleansed from all sin! by the one offering of our Heavenly Father, His only Son Jesus Christ.

How impossible it seemed to His own disciples when He began to tell them that He must go away, must leave them that the Holy Comforter may come. When He had eaten the last supper with them, He tells them that I am now betrayed and shall be crucified and put to death, and I shall rise again. In the third day.

I want to say to you that every single soul that has ever come into this blessed fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ is brought there by His own glorious power and love. It is an impossibility that men in nature, or natural minds, can know this glorious truth as it is in Christ our Lord. No greater miracle can be performed than to see a poor sinful lost man or woman that seemingly have had no love for heaven or immortal glory, be touched by the finger of God's love and turned about by his Holy Spirit made to come down in sackcloth and in ashes to beg God for mercy on their poor, sinful souls. What is more impossible than that to human reasoning? Confessing that by the grace of God I am what I am, having no confidence in the flesh. No man can resist successfully this blessed power. It subdues and brings you under subjection and makes you willing in the day of His power; ascribing all power to His Holy name. You and I can't understand the great mystery of godliness unless they are revealed to us. How impossible it must have been for those who would comfort Mary and Martha, to believe that Jesus could raise Lazarus from the grave after he had been dead four days. Mary and Martha didn't believe that he

would be raised until the resurrection of the last day. Jesus said unto them, ***"I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth on me though he were dead, yet shall he live."*** Jesus asked, ***"Where have ye laid him? They said, come and see."*** Jesus had only to say, ***"Lazarus, come forth,"*** and he that was dead came forth.

Oh! What grief and sorrow it brings to us when our loved ones are taken from us. It is impossible for us to call them back. Their spirits return to God, while their bodies rest in the grave to return to dust from whence they come, awaiting our blessed Savior to come again and call them to come forth. I can't tell you, my beloved, this morning how these things shall be, but I can assure you they will come at His command, without blemish, spot, or wrinkle or any such thing, to be made like unto His own glorious body.

His promise to His dear ones cannot fail. I believe with all my soul that He will come again. He told His disciples before He was crucified: ***"I go to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am you may be there also,"***

If I never address you any more on this side of eternity, I want to tell you that Jesus reigns. This child Jesus which was born in Judea in the City of Bethlehem is still alive. He is seated at the right hand of God making intercession for His saints upon the earth and that He will at His own time call the jewels of His mercy unto himself. There will not be one of the objects of His mercy that shall not hear His blessed voice to arise and come forth to be like unto His own glorious body.

As we approach this Christmas season we would if we could share our natural resources with those less fortunate, but we know there is a limit. We know we can do but so much, yet I can point you to the one whose eternal power and Love is without limitation nor bounds, He is able to reach the most remote parts of the earth and give a gift that far surpasses all the gifts that man can give. So I say to you this morning that the greatest gift that you have ever received or that you will receive as these days come, is, the gift of His Holy Spirit in your heart as your Savior; who is the anchor to your soul both sure and steadfast. Anchored *to* that within the veil that shall never be severed. This gift will never be obsolete or out of date. I am persuaded that as the years go by and we grow older, these precious promises become brighter. We know our shoulders become stooped, our heads silver for the tomb, the time for our departure is near. His promise becomes more precious, that He will not leave nor forsake us, but will be with us always even to the end.

I want to assure you that all

things are possible with God. Not one single blessing that God sees you stand in need of will be withheld from you; though He has left you here in a land of trials and afflictions, the eternal God is at the helm. He will do all His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and His church shall be brought out from the world by His mighty hand and at last be presented to the Father a glorious Church perfect as Himself.

John saw the Holy City New Jerusalem coming down from God out of Heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ***"And I heard a voice out of heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them and shall be their God. God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor, crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."***

What a glorious hope we have. What a blessed promise that some day we are gong to move into this new house made not by hands, from this old house of clay. One day we are going to leave the cares and burdens of this sinful world to go home to God to appear in His likeness, to see Him as He is, to be like Him; where we can ascribe all honor and praise to His Holy Name forever. Momentarily here in this life we feel that our souls are lifted to the mountain-top soon to find we are again in the valley of despair. We are told that in this glory land there will be no shedding of tears. No sorrow can come, no death to separate us from loved ones. What a glorious Savior we have, One who has power to call us from the ways of this world, into the blessed fellowship of our God and with His saints upon the earth kept by the power of God ready to be revealed at the last day.

In conclusion let me say, May God bless you, keep and guide you in wisdom's ways, and at last deliver you securely and safely into the fold of God, where sickness, sorrow, and death and separation shall be, no more.

"For with God nothing shall be impossible."

Elder W.C. King

(Signs of the Times, July, 2000)

REVELATION 7:15-17.

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Elder W. D. Griffin)

Once more the wheels of time have rolled around to the time of our annual meeting of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association; and as it has been our custom through the years to write what is called the Circular Letter, we attempt it with fear and trembling; we hope realizing that we cannot write in any way comforting to the household of faith except the God of all grace and mercy sees fit to guide our minds and trembling hand.

Therefore, as we attempt to write, we humbly pray that our eternal God, who has been pleased to lead his people, though in a mysterious way, will be pleased to guide us that this letter may be to the comfort and edification of the saints of our God; of which we hope to be a part. As we have been led to believe by the mighty hand of God in the words of Moses when he said to Israel, ***"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms," (Deuteronomy 33:27)*** we feel that it is a wonderful blessing to be given a mind to realize that there is a power that is above all other powers, that is watching over his little children here in the vain world, keeping them under his watchful eye and his ever shielding arm.

We believe that God's chosen people, his heirs of salvation according to promise, are led in ways they know not, through many storms of life, to teach them that they cannot direct their steps, and to show them their need of our Heavenly Father to keep and sustain them in that pathway that Job spoke of when he said, ***"There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen." (Job 28:7)*** Thus we feel that the natural mind of man cannot understand the things of God, neither has, or ever will, walk that heavenward journey by his natural mind, for we are told by the Apostle Paul, ***"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14)*** We believe that man is born in this world with a natural mind, and he keeps it as long as he stays here on these mortal shores; but we also believe that our eternal God gives his chosen people another mind, a spiritual mind to see things that the natural mind cannot see, for the natural mind never sees the vanity of its being.

We feel that God has and still does throughout the world, in his own time and place, bring his chosen ones out of the darkness in which they were born, into the light and knowledge of the truth which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Darkness has always preceded light, for in the beginning the evening and the morning was the first day, and so on. Therefore, if we are what we hope to be, we are traveling in newness of life, viewing things that we did not

view at one time; viewing from day to day our weakness in the flesh, and thus hoping in the mercies of our eternal God and not in our own works; for Solomon said, ***"There is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good and sinneth not." (Eccl. 7 :20)*** We believe that God knew his people before the beginning of time, and loved them with an everlasting love; that he chose them in his Son - for as Eve was in Adam, so was the church in Christ : he being the foundation of that building not made with hands, for we are told in God's holy word, ***"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 3 :12)***

As we journey here, though, we are made to wonder, and to say with the poet,

"Tis a point I long to know;
Oft it gives me anxious thought;
Do I love the Lord or no Am I his, or am I not."

We do not believe that anyone knows that he or she is one of God's chosen people, but we do believe that God works in the hearts of his people in such a way as to show them the vileness of their nature, and to cause them to hope in his mercies, and to realize that it is not by our own strength, but by the grace of God we are what we are. Rannah said, ***"For by strength shall no man prevail." (I Samuel 2:9)***

We do feel that God has a people in every nation, kindred and tongue, and that they are all taught of the Lord. It may be that some have never heard the audible voice of man speak the wonderful truth which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, but we feel they are all taught of the Lord, though in a mysterious way; for, as the poet has said:

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea, And rides upon the storm."

We are also told in God's holy word, ***"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:9)***

Dear Brethren, as we have been gathered here in this association, we feel a desire in our hearts that the Lord may be pleased to bless us with love for one another; that our hearts may be joined together as one; and that we may have all things in common. May it please the Lord, if it be his holy will, that we may be blessed to sit and feast on the gospel truths, and be made to rejoice together in the Lord; for the Apostle Paul said, ***"Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say rejoice." (Phil. 4:4) Amen .***

PSALM 119:109.

My soul is continually in my hand: yet do I not forget thy law.

IN the midst of such a dark time of distress in a church, from which our gracious and long-forbearing Lord has not yet removed the candlestick, a dear child tells a sweet experience of grace. All hearts are at once brought under the controlling power of love, and experience a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. One of the songs of Zion is sung, and at once each one of the company is singing and making melody in his heart unto the Lord. Brethren begin speaking with each other and are surprised to find no difference among them. The disputed points are approached, and no one sees any thing to dispute; all belong to the one rich and all-comprehensive theme of salvation by grace. There is nothing worthy to disturb the holy quiet that rests upon them, and the fellowship which binds them strongly together. As they talk, and sing, and worship, Jesus is in the midst of them, saying, *"Peace be unto you."* This peace of God which passeth all understanding is the only officer needed among them now. It is this peace which keeps their hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Each one has a feeling of repentance, a feeling to turn away, not from his brother, but from his own former selfish and mankind ways. Each one feels that blame was his, and he is ready to confess his faults to his brethren. Their former troubles make them much more careful and tender toward each other than before, and more fearful of hurting one another and of disturbing the holy quiet of the church of God. Their mutual love seems stronger than ever they feel it to be " the bond of perfectness," and are glad to be putting it on, as the apostle enjoins them. They are now forbearing one another in love, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven them. They are, as at the first, of one heart and one soul; neither say any of them that taught of the things which he possesses are his own, but they have all things common. There is nothing on earth so beautiful and lovely as this. This is that Zion, "the perfection of beauty," out of which God hath shined. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., No. 23,1909.

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union will be held, the Lord willing, with Canaan Primitive Baptist Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in April.

Song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all our ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

Elder J.R. Williams, Pastor
Geneva B. Scearce, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene at the Greensboro Church on the fifth Sunday in April. The church is located on the corner of Tate and Carr Streets in Greensboro, NC.

From Highway 29 go West on Lee St. (#6) for 2.1 miles, until you reach Tate Street turn right and go north .5 mile until you reach Carr Street.

We welcome all lovers of the truth to be with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Brother Wayne Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FEBRUARY 2001

Dale Haygood, TX 5.00
Charlotte Richardson, VA..... 3.00
Brenda Wright, NC.....2.00
Reidy Pickral, VA.....3.00
David Bailey, WV.....4.00
Jerry Fanner, KY.....2.00
Lavenia Biggs, TN.....18.00
Beatrice Miller, NC.....2.00
A. R. Patterson, LA.....7.00
R. T. Jacks, AL.....7.00
Bobbie Adcox, AR.....2.00
Inez Gearner, TX.....2.00
Doris Rivard, TX.....2.00
H. W. Brinkley, NC.....7.00
Eva Cruise, NC.....2.00
Martha Lunsford, VA.....10.00
Whitney Mobley, NC.....10.00
Dessie Goodman, AL.....10.00
Anita Creech, AR.....2.00

ISAIAH 53:4-6.

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

OBITUARIES

ELDER J.J. ADERHOLD

ADERHOLD Elder Judson "Judy" Aderhold, age 96 of Winston, GA, died January 2, 2001. He was born in Turner County, GA, August 23, 1904, the son of the late Dr. and Mrs. John Jackson Aderhold. He was a member of Cold Springs Primitive Baptist Church. He was pastor *of* New Hope Primitive Baptist Church in Villa Rica, GA. for over sixty years, a life-long resident *of* Bill Arp in Douglas County. He was a dairy farmer and served

the Grove Park Area in Atlanta for more than twenty years with dairy products. He was preceded in death by his loving wife, Laura Beaird Adernold. Survivors include several nieces and nephews and a host of other relatives and friends. Services were held Friday, January 5, 2001 at 11:00 a.m. in the Rosehaven Chapel with Elder Frank Andrews and Elder Larry Keaton officiating. Interment followed at Cool Springs Cemetery on Post Road in Winston, GA.

ST. MATTHEW 5:7-9.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

BLANCHE MORTON COLLINS

In Special Memory; I'll try to write: Asking God for Strength, Knowledge, and Guidance to do so.

Sister Blanche was born in Onslow County May 13, 1913. Her parents were Edward Ward and Alice Gertrude Morton. She was raised in a large Family Circle. Thirteen children in all.

Sister Blanche married in the year 1929 to Charlie Collins. They were blessed with 2 sons and 3 daughters.

She asked a Home with this Church in the early 1950's. A faithful member until her health confined her at home.

Great love was shown in her every day of life.

Sister Blanche passed away October 11, 2000.

Her survivors are: A daughter Vivian and a son Bennie Collins. Five Grandchildren and five great grandchildren. Two sisters: Eula Lovitt and Ada Newman. Two Brothers: Edward Morton and Joe Morton. They were members here for many years.

Sister Blanche suffered a lot here on earth. But God called and gave her a new birth.

To her dear family I say! You have suffered a great loss, press onward to the Mark of the High Calling! Which is in our "Lord Jesus Christ".

Burial - Collins Family Cemetery and service conducted by "Elder Milton Lupton.

Written by "Order of North East Church"

In conference Second Saturday in February 2001

Mary Lillie Hall (Sister I hope)

ELDER WALLACE HARVEY

Elder Wallace Edgar Harvey, 89, passed away from this life into the hands of the Lord on Tuesday, Feb. 20, 2001, following heart failure.

Born June 7, 1911, in Streeter, he was the son of the late Virgil B. and Matilda Adkins Harvey.

Elder Harvey was a minister and Elder of Newfound Primitive Baptist Church, Pineville, W.V. having served the Lord under the old school Baptist faith. He had labored as a coal miner and carpenter. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Ethel Effie Crawford Harvey; three sons, James Clowney Harvey, Lonnie Lee Harvey and Wallace Edgar Harvey Jr.; four grandsons; two brothers, Fred and Cecil Harvey; and two sisters, Florence Waddell and Glenna Perry.

Survivors include his wife, Barbara E. Childs Harvey; three sons, Frank Harvey and his wife, Gayle, of Walkertown, N.C., Michael Harvey and his wife, Cindy, of Jumping Branch and Dale Harvey and his wife, Eunice, of Shady Spring; six daughters, Ona Wickline and her husband, Frank, of Shady Spring, Norma LaRocque and her husband, Earl, of Saginaw, Mich., Betty Moore and her husband, Frank, of Lilburn, Ga., Drema Mishaw of Newberry, S.C., Sharon Cox and her husband, Robert, of Rockwell, N.C., and Judy Whittaker and her husband, Dennie, of Pax; a brother, John Wesley Harvey of Cool Ridge; four stepchildren, Shara Barnet and her husband, Johnny, of Fayetteville, Tenn., Kenny Foley and his wife, Diane, of Midway, Teressa Williams and her husband, Lenny, of Kelso, Tenn.,and Gary Foley of Farifax, Va.; 25 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; and four step-grandchildren.

Service was at Rose and Quesenberry Funeral Home Shady Spring Chapel with Elder D.R. Cabbage and Elder J.B. Farmer officiating. Burial was in Crawford Cemetery, Blue Jay Six.

Sent in by J.B. Farmer

PEIRCY DAVIS HOLLAND

One year ago today)
God called our Mama away.
We miss her so) but she must go.
We knew she could not stay.

On January 14, 2000 we believe our Mama heard His sweet voice say ***"Child your Father calls, come Home".***

Peircy Davis Holland was born Oct. 4, 1904 to Stephen and Lugenia Ballance Davis.

On Nov. 27, 1921 she married Gurney Leland Holland. To this union nine children were born.

She united with Pittman Grove Primitive Baptist Church on Sunday) March 10, 1940 and was baptized second Sunday in April, 1940 by her pastor, Elder W. E. Turner. She was a faithful and lovely sister-in-Christ and attended church as long as her health permitted.

She was preceded in death by an infant, her dear companion of 54 years, and three daughters.

Her funeral was conducted on January 16, 2000 at Coley Funeral Home in Kenly, North Carolina. The service was conducted by Elders Harvey Holland and Harold Pittman. She was interred in Pittman Grove Church Cemetery .

She left behind five siblings who love and miss her very much. They are two sons. L.C. and Celion Holland and three daughters - Udell H. Young, Edith H. Beasley and Dora H. Vick; also 23 grandchildren, 45 great grandchildren, 15 great,great grandchildren. ***"The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away blessed be the name of the Lord." Job. 1:21***

In Christian Love,
Dora Vick

SISTER MAE HUDSON

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven. A time to be born and a time to die."

That time came for our precious, sister Mae Hudson, Nov. 30, 2000. Sister Mae united with Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church Oct. 5, 1975. She loved her family and her church family. I think she was the most zealous person I ever saw to entertain her home church family. When we were together she always desired the conversation be on spiritual subjects. She once told me she felt cheated if the discussion was on natural things. We have surely lost a lovely sister. She had not been able to attend church meetings for over a year due to her illness. In her condition, I feel the Lord was so gracious to take her.

Survivors include 1 daughter, Lois H. Haywood, 1 son Charles W. Hudson, 1 sister, 1 brother and 3 grandchildren. She was predeceased by her husband Bro. Bill Hudson, her father and mother Bro. Ed & Sis. Sallie Butcher, and 1 sister.

Her funeral was held at Wrenn-Yeatts North Main Chapel. Conducted by her pastor Elder Julian Williams and Elder C.B. Davis. Shirley Grubbs gave some reflections on her long friendship with Sis. Mae thru the years.

Interment was in Highland Burial Park, Danville, Va.

May we be given reconciliation to say not our will but Thine be done.

Written by one who loved her for Christ sake I trust.

Peggy Wells

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

Raise your triumphant songs
To an immortal tune,
Let the wide earth resound the deeds
Celestial grace has done.

Sing how eternal love
Its chief beloved chose,
And bade him raise poor sinners up
From their abyss of woes.

His hand no thunder bears,
No terror clothes his brow,
No bolts to drive our guilty souls
To fiercer flames below.

'Twas mercy filled the throne,
And wrath stood silent by,
When Christ was sent with mercy down
To rebels doomed to die.

Watts.

POSTMASTER

Please send address changes to:

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(*CORRECTION of April Issue*)

MY CHURCH - A DEAR PLACE.

Oh our Church is so precious to me
One of the least I feel to be,
Let me meet there and sing of grace,
And see the dear Saints humble face.

Let me meet them to sing and pray
When all foolish things are put away,
Just let me eat the heavenly food
And praise the Lord who is so good.

When I enter the Church and walk down the isle,
To greet the dear ones with a hand shake
and a smile.
Oh it is so peaceful, such a sweet retreat,
How wonderfully blessed we are to meet.

Oh I do desire to be just a tiny part,
of this dear Church so close to my heart.
I know I'm not worthy to be therein,
Because I am so wretched and full of sin

There the dear pastor proclaims the glorious truth,
The gospel I've loved since my early youth,
Still at times I doubt and wonder if I have a part,
Is mine head religion or is it from the heart.

It is there we seek the Lord to find relief,
And forget at times our sorrows and grief
The humble tears roll down the face,
As we are told of the wonders of grace.

May I be kept and found faithful Day by Day,
Knowing the Lord is listening to all I have to say.
Oh may he cleanse my heart and give me peace,
That I may be one of his faithful witness.

The blessed hope that Jesus is mine,
Is so sweet at times so divine.
But then I become so full of unrest,
I desire to go "home" and be with the blest.

I pray that when the trials of this life is O"er,
That we may meet on the golden shore.
There by His mercy, we'll sing of grace,
And see our Saviour face to face

By Rlee B. Houchins
Roanoke, Va.

EDITORIAL

For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one.

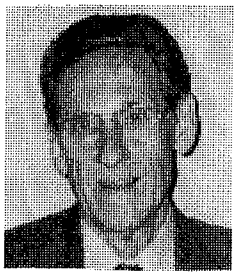
Elder R.H. Campbell

The above scripture defies the wisdom of man in nature, stating that these three separate entities are one; man says that this is impossible, they are three, or it is one, but the three cannot be one. In the laws of the realm of nature this is true, they are one way or the other, but they cannot be singular when they are three different and distinctly separate beings; each omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent and equal in every respect within themselves; yet one entity, and this is exactly what the above scripture is saying. The laws governing the spiritual kingdom are completely different from the laws of the world of nature, which can easily be understood by man; these laws are foolishness to him because they are based on a spiritual foundation. Only those who have been born of the Spirit can understand this difference and that is because, as Jesus told his disciples, ***(Mark Chap. 4. Vs. 11) "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but to them that are without all these things are done in parables: that seeing they may see, and not perceive: and hearing they may hear, and not understand: lest at any time they should be converted and their sins should be forgiven them."*** This was designed in this manner to insure that the outsider cannot have access to the tree of life, or obtain salvation by his own wisdom. This too, is in the wisdom of God, that his election of a certain people unto himself might stand certain and sure. This knowledge of the mystery is given unto the elect in the new birth, when they receive and are blessed with the comforter that Jesus told them would come when he went away.

There is one God, the fullness of whom is manifested as the Father,

the Word and the Holy Ghost in the salvation of his children here in this time world, working all things according to the good pleasure of his (singular) will. He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast, yea, even as he has thought, so shall it come to pass. Oh! the mighty power of this God that has given such precious and comforting promises to those whom he has chosen for his own.

God is love, and all of his works are because of this love and are to make this love known and experienced by the heirs of promise: for whom all things were created. This is the record that shines forth out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, and bears witness in the earth as the spirit, the water and the blood, in the salvation of the saints as they are brought forth from nature's darkness into the glorious light and liberty of that heavenly kingdom toward which their desires have been directed. They love him because he first loved them, and demonstrated this love in sending his only begotten Son into the world to redeem them unto himself as his own peculiar treasure.

When this occurs, in the lives of these individuals, the things of this earthly kingdom have nothing to offer them when compared to the things of the heavenly kingdom, nothing to attract the affections of those that have been given a hope in things eternal; those who have been shown the glory of the heavenly kingdom and who have been quickened by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This enables them to see and believe in the trinity of the Godhead, as they experience the presence of each entity in their lives, and they recognize and understand this mystery of their God as he is being manifested in their lives in these various ways. This is not learned by human reasoning, but by revelation from on high, the light that shines into their heart, as it did unto the apostle Paul, on the road to Damascus, for thereafter he went forth declaring, *(Gal Chap 1, vs 11-12) "But I certify you , brethren that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it. but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Gal Chap 4,vs 4-5-6) "God, who when the fulness of time was come sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons, and hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts crying, Abba, Father."* Oh, the praise honor and adoration that goes forth from the heart that has been blessed with such a grand and glorious plan of salvation, one that was established and executed by God alone and is just as sure and certain to

come to pass as planned, as the fact that there is a God.

The Father is the omnipotent, the omniscient, and omnipresent Jehovah which created and is in control of all things that exist in the world. He created them for his own good pleasure, and he disposes of them in the manner that is according to his own determinate counsel and foreknowledge, which was ordained before the beginning of time, as we know it. He answers to no authority above himself and works his own will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. It is to Him that the Son prays, and whose will the Son came into the world to do, for Jesus said, *(John Chap 6, vs 38) "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that hath sent me, and this is the Father's will which hath sent me, of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."* He is the designer, controller, and director of the entire plan of salvation of the saints. but it is always in complete agreement and accord with the will of the Word and the Holy Ghost, for it was determined in that counsel, consisting of these three, which was held before man was even created.

He elected them before the foundation of the world, sanctified them unto himself, and in time, makes manifest that election under the two covenants, law and grace: and he leads and directs their ways in such a manner as to enable them to believe that they are of that number chosen in Christ, those whom the Lord hath blessed. That people unto whom God said, *(Deut. Chap 7, vs. 6) "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth."* and in spite of what they feel to be, in and of themselves, they have been made to claim these promises as their own, by the grace that has been bestowed upon them.

Man is totally passive in this whole process, whether under the legal dispensation or under the law of the liberty of life in Christ Jesus because, it stood complete in the mind and purpose of God before he formed man of the dust of the earth, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and he became a living soul. Man only knows and worships God after he has been blessed to see him and to understand the condition that he was in, by nature, *and realize that, even as Paul said, "It is by the grace of God that I am what I am".* The change in man is solely by the sovereign and irresistible grace and mercy of God which has been bestowed upon him; when he was dead in trespasses and sin, when he was by nature a child of wrath even as others, yea, he was going the way of all flesh until the light shined round about him enabling him to see the glory of the kingdom of heaven. This

same procedure occurs whether it is a man of considerable intelligence, as was the apostle Paul, or a wild man, as was the Gaderene, it takes the same display of the grace of God, to convert all.

The Word was made flesh and dwelled among the saints of God, here on earth, that he might be partaker of the characteristics of the flesh, experience the things of the flesh, be tempted with the temptations of the flesh, yet without sin of which man is guilty, and therefore be the perfect sacrifice for the sin of the chosen generation under the law, those which were under the sentence of death because of sin. By the Word taking their sins upon himself, imputing his righteousness unto them, dying the ignominious death on the cross, taking the law out of the way, nailing it to his cross so that it has no more demands over those under the law, and being the end of the law for righteousness for those under grace, he secures salvation for every child of grace, by the one sacrifice.

By Christ taking the law out of the way, nailing it to his cross, it has no more dominion over those under the new covenant, those who were never under the Mosaical law of sin and death, as Paul said, *(Rom. Chap 8, vs. 1-2) "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."* Christ came in the likeness of sinful flesh, for sin, and by so doing, condemned sin in the flesh, and therefore sin only has power over the flesh but never over that new creature in Christ, that one who is in the image of God which sinneth not.

The Word has the same holy characteristics as the Father and the Holy Ghost, but it has a specific mission, a specific role in the plan of salvation, and is to be loved and worshipped with all of the fervor, adoration and respect that is due the other entities in the godhead. In the covenant, before the foundation of the world, they were all in total and full agreement to the proposed plan which required the participation of each to bring it to its determined conclusion. The role of the Word was to fulfill the law to a jot and a tittle; live a life in the flesh without spot or blemish, demonstrate the power of God over his creation by the miracles that he performed, die the death on the cross, raise himself from the tomb, prophesy of the coming of the day of pentecost and the establishing of the Gospel dispensation and then to return unto his Father, triumphant over death hell and the grave. This was all performed in the presence of his own witnesses who were before chosen, the apostles, who went forth testifying to this truth that those in ages to come might have hope in the finished work of Christ. This he proclaimed to be fully accomplished in his prayer unto his

Father when he said, *(John Chap. 17, vs. 4) "I have glorified thee on earth; I have finished the work thou gavest me to do."* and then he ascended into heaven and he is now seated at the right hand of the Father proclaiming this intercession, for the sins of those that the Father gave him, when he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel, those who are the Lord's portion.

The Holy Ghost is equal in every respect to the Father and the Word, but, as we said above, its mission also is for a specific purpose. Man is flesh, sold under sin and in this condition can never receive or understand the mysteries of godliness. *(Isaiah Chap. 55, vs. 8-9) "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thought than your thoughts."* Since the spiritual realm is so much higher than the earthly realm in which the natural man dwells, he could never know or understand anything of the spiritual kingdom, or its mysteries, and yet there is a people among them, whom God loves, who are also included in this dilemma. God promised that he would never leave nor forsake his own, therefore, the power of God, in the person of the Holy Spirit, transforms them by the renewing of their minds to see and understand the spiritual things by imparting a little of himself unto them, by way of the new birth. This is one of the gifts of the Spirit, the discerning of spiritual matters.

As father Abraham told the rich king, who fared sumptuously while Lazarus desired the crumbs that fell from his table, who in torment requested that Lazarus be sent and dip his finger in water and cool his tongue: *(Luke Chap 17 vs., 25-26) "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from hence."* Even so, there is a great separation between the natural and the spiritual kingdom and man in nature cannot, of his own will or efforts, transcend this great gulf. That which is flesh will always be flesh, and that which is spiritual will always be spiritual; the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit and never shall, unless they first be transformed by the renewing of their mind, which is the mission of the Holy Ghost. It is the comforter that Jesus said that he would send unto his children after his death, for he said except I go away, the comforter will not come, but if I go away, I will send him unto you. Even as the Father sent the Son into the world, the Son sent the Holy Ghost into the world that he would take the things of Christ, which is his finished work,

and shew them unto the saints via revelation. This procedure alone transcends that great barrier that exists between the fleshly man and the spiritual man. This barrier however was placed there for a specific purpose, and that purpose was that the natural man could never partake of the tree of life, of his own will. This would be contrary purpose in God's driving man from the Garden of Eden, lest he put forth his hand and partake of the tree of life and live forever. The Cherub and the flaming sword were placed eastward in the garden to keep the way of the tree of life, and they have always kept it for those for whom it was reserved, and this purpose has never changed for whatsoever the Lord does it is forever, nothing can be taken from it and nothing can be added to it.

The Holy Ghost reconciles the chosen generation unto God and all of his ways. The apostle Paul said in, *(II Cor. Chap 5, vs. 18-19) "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself, by Jesus Christ and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."* This reconciling of the flesh and the Spirit is the function of the Holy Spirit, as he is sent by the Son, and is that which is accomplished when the natural man is born of the Spirit of God. The Spirit takes up it abode in the heart of the saints of God and henceforth they walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh, the new creature in Christ that sinneth not, perfectly reconciled to the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus their Lord.

Within this world in which man dwells there is a natural realm and a spiritual realm and there are laws within each, and they are not the same. All men, in nature, live in the natural physical realm as they were sentenced by God when man was driven from the garden of Eden. They live under the laws of nature and everything that they think or do is subject to that law, they know nothing else. That which is born of flesh is the natural man which is enmity toward God and all of his ways; he is not subject to the laws of God, neither indeed can be because they are foreign to the laws of nature under which he has lived and moved and has a being here in this time world; and therefore he has no standard by which to measure or judge the things of the Spirit. Man tends to hate that which he does not understand, and he is too proud to admit his ignorance and therefore declares that these mysteries do not exist, or else they are not as they are interpreted to be by the children of God, but they interpret them to suit their own sense of values and vain desires trying to compare natural things with spiritual things using natural standards, and this cannot be done. That is like trying to mix water with oil, no matter how thoroughly you may blend them, they are

still two separate substances, so it is with the natural and spiritual values, they are just not compatable.

There is a spiritual realm, and within this realm, citizenship carries with it the revelation and understanding of the mysteries of Godliness. Faith, which is the gift of God, is the means whereby the new man believes in the validity of the truth which is contained in all scriptures. This is the realm in which the saints dwell, and all who live therein believe these things to be true: they may not understand them completely, but what they do see and understand is because of the power and the conviction that comes with the revelation, and they receive them as the absolute truth in their heart and mind. They have been born of the Spirit of God, and one of the gifts of the Spirit is the discerning of these mysteries; the understanding which is freely given them of God and which is the substance of their faith. They search the scriptures continually to learn more of these truths that have become so precious to them in the new birth, and are ever seeking for more evidence that they actually do apply unto them, because of the fear which they experience, as they are made to see and to realize the depths of the wickedness and sinfulness of the flesh in which they must continue to dwell.

Much of the scriptures are written on the vast separation between the natural and the spiritual as God by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah declared, unto Israel under the law, (Isa. Chap 55, vs. 8-9) quoted above, declaring the extremely high and lofty elevation of the spiritual kingdom above man and his ways and the following scripture which declares the depraved condition of man in nature, without the Spirit, *(John Chap. 8, vs. 44) "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it".* So there you are, the same truths from the opposite extremes in both, the old testament doctrine, and in the new testament order. Two positions as far apart as it is possible to be, but both agreeing as one regarding the truth; different times and covenants, but the same doctrine. One, God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, whose ways are beyond the reach of man, in nature, and the other describing the depths of the depravity and corruption of the natural kingdom as compared to the kingdom of Jesus, which as he said is not of this world. He was in the world of nature, when he said this but his kingdom is not of this world. He was testifying of his Father's kingdom, which is the sincere desire and prayer of all of the saints of God who have experienced a little foretaste of it, in this life, as they are given an earnest of their inheritance, to keep them pressing on to the mark of the

prize of the high calling of God.

(Rom. Chap 11, vs. 33) "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out!" Though men may seek and search all the days of their life, regarding the mysteries of godliness they will never be able to rightly divide the scriptures unless they have been born again and given an understanding of the mysteries of the Spirit of the Godhead. They can only speculate and surmise, using the wisdom of this world, but Paul said, they would never achieve success in this manner because that was not the plan of God as is recorded, *(1 Cor. Chap 1, vs. 21) "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."* Man with the highest degree in human learning cannot understand them, and yet a baby can, even when in its mother's womb, or a small child, as Paul declared of Timothy, *"And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."* This unquestionable truth is found in the writings of Solomon as he sets forth the doctrine of the frailty of man and his inability to discern these mysteries and and the fact that this the plan of God from the beginning. *(Eccl. Chap 3, vs 19-11) "I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it. He hath made everything beauiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end."* Times have changed, men have become more and more sophisticated, in their opinion, and make loud boasts of their attainment of a better knowledge of godliness, but the heart of man has not changed, and that is where the change must occur first.

Paul says, *(II Cor Chap 6, vs 17-18) "Wherefore come ye out from among them,, and touch no unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Almighty."* And yet all of man's efforts are directed to bringing more and more of the worldly pursuits and pleasures into the church, rather than being separated on the basis of doctrine and practices, and they do it to please the natural man and to attract more of like kind. The scriptures say of such, these are those who have had no change, or as Jude says, these are those who are sensual having not the Spirit. Paul also says above that these things too are in the wisdom of God, it is the foolishness that man uses to cloak the evil heart that is within, and to think, he does it under the guise of religion. One can understand their believing as they do, since the truth is hidden from them, but the mystery

is, that they use the holy word, as the basis for their spurious doctrines.

Surely, this is the flood that issues out of the mouth of the dragon to consume the woman, but, it says the earth swallows up the flood to save the woman (church) from destruction. Even this too is in the plan of God, the world is satisfied with their traditions and practices and take little notice of the seed of the woman here in the world, because they are so few in number. They are so wrapped up in themselves and the great work that they are doing for God, that this in itself is a great blessing unto the household of faith.

Yes, there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost and they are all equally manifested in the salvation of the chosen generation, without the loss of one. That record in heaven, is unchanged by any of the events which occur in time and is witnessed by the water the spirit and the blood as they appear in the affairs of men. The record stands firm, as decreed before the foundation of the world, and will continue throughout time and on into the very portals of eternal glory where God the Father, Word and Holy Ghost reign, in all their splendor, surrounded by the objects of their everlasting love and mercy, who are singing the new song of their deliverance from this low ground of sin and sorrow.

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

ARTICLES

OBEDIENCE

(1 Peter Chap. 1-V-2) "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."

Peter called them strangers, But in the next Verse, he said Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

V. 4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, V. 5 - Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

I hear much about the election, and that it took place before the foundation, and I believe that, But I do not hear much about, what we were elected to, and for, I suppose that they mean that we were elected, to be the children of God, and if they are, they were elected to obedience. And to sanctification, of the Spirit, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; now I do not believe that these things come by the work of the flesh, or the works of man, But I do believe that they are the works

of God and Christ and the Holy Ghost, or the Holy Spirit, because the Lord said I will send another comforter that will take the things of mine and show them unto you. When we are given to see the things of God, in the bible or wherever we look, it is the Holy comforter, the Holy Spirit that shows them unto us, because with the natural eye we cannot see spiritual things.

If you have ever been able to see a Vision, you can see it just as plain with your natural eyes closed, as you can with them open, and sometimes much better, because sometimes when I have felt that I saw a Vision with my eyes closed and when I opened my eyes it would disappear. I do not believe we can see spiritual things with our natural eyes. So then I believe that obedience must come from the holy spirit and through the blood of Jesus Christ, and his obedience was for his bride the lamb's wife. He died to give us life, He died that we may live, It was His obedience that bought our salvation and it was paid by his blood in full.

Now then what is the definition of obedience, Webster's says state or fact of being obedient; doing what is ordered; submission in Church's jurisdiction. But I think that the command of the Father and Son and Holy Ghost is far more than the orders of any man.

When we baptize we do not baptize in the name of any man, but in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. Now I do not doubt but what there are many that are baptized in the name of some man, even though they may use the name of the Lord, But the Lord's hand is not seen in it. When the Lord's hand is in it, He will baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire, who' s fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor.

I believe that every heaven born child, has a desire in his heart to be obedient unto the Lord, and or his spirit. You may see a natural child who is obedient to his or her parents, and they do not get into as much trouble as the child who will not obey, as I have said before, I have seen children who would take the switch out of their parent's hand and break it while the parent looks on, that child is headed for trouble and plenty of it and the parents are making a big mistake. But the Lord has a way that he chastised his children and it is said that all of his children are chastised and if they are not chastised, they are bastards and not sons. Now no chastisement is pleasant at present but afterward it yieldeth the peaceful fruits of righteousness unto them that are excised thereby. Has there not been times with you that you felt that the Lord was not smiling at you? And it caused you to go back to the throne of mercy and ask him to forgive you for your wrong doing, well until you feel his smile again, you feel like you are having a whipping, and sure enough you had rather be beat with a stick, than for the Lord to not smile upon you.

I remember some time back, and I have wrote about this before, but it is on my mind again. I had gone to bed but had not gone to sleep, and I was asking the Lord for mercy and grace as I do much of my time, and much of the time when I lay down at night, I try to pray and ask him to lead me and guide me in the right way.

On this time it seemed so clear that the Lord was not hearing me, and I desired so much that he would, and it seemed like that I wanted to be just a little closer to him, but I felt like I could not reach him, and I said Lord I want to be closer to thee, but it seems like I was at my creature distance as much as I ever was in my life, well I wanted to pray but did not know what to pray for. Do you, my dear reader, ever get in this shape, if you do then I believe we are close kin; well it came on my mind and I felt the need of the Lord, but my thoughts that I was doing something wrong, was the reason why I could not feel the presence of the Lord. I tried to think of something bad that I had done, but at that time it seemed like all that I did was bad. And I thought about asking the Lord to search me and see what he could find; but to ask the King of all Kings to search me, what in the world am I thinking about? It seem like I was afraid to ask such a thing, the fear, I do not know how to express it, but ask I must. And I said Lord search me and see what you can find, I know that thou, Oh Lord, can see everything, but if I am doing something that is not pleasing in thy sight, I beg of thee that thou would find it and, whatever it is, I ask thee to bless me to refrain from it, that thou dear Lord would correct it for me, or bless me to overcome it if it is thy will.

And while I was asking him, These words came to my mind, as if someone had spoke them to me, (THERE IS NOTHING THERE) and it was so plain and so clear that it was no doubt in my mind but that the Lord was talking to me, but I said Lord do you mean to tell me that I do not even have thy spirit, I thought that he meant that there was nothing there that was worth his notice, But while thinking on this these words followed, (THE BLOOD OF MY SON HAS COVERED YOUR SINS, SO THAT I DO NOT SEE THEM).

Well I guess I lay there about an hour and a half, so happy That I did not need to sleep, I was trying to praise his Holy Name, to think a poor sinner like me, and that Jesus Christ would shed his blood for a wretch like me, the tears were flowing freely, and I was so happy I did not know what to do, but for a while all was well.

Now as I write this the tears are flowing still, this to me has been a bethel spot in my life, I go back to it often and it still is a great comfort to me, PRAISE HIS HOLY NAME.

Now I do believe that it takes the blood of Christ to wash our sins, they cannot be put away any other way, I believe that his blood was shed for the whole Church, the

whole family of God. And that he, Christ, paid the whole debt, for all of his children, no more no less. Thanks be unto Him; Now let me go back just a little bit, before I heard the above words, while trying to ask the Lord for mercy. In my mind I thought I was up at Goblin Town Church, on the left side of the Church, looking from the road, But when I heard the Voice I was on the right side of the Church, Close to where they would take the bread and wine years ago. And where I stood on the outside of the ring and wished that I was fit to take the bread and the wine.

As I have stated before, when I was a child I went to that Church, And the memory of it still lingers in my mind, and I think it will as long as I live, As I wrote in my book; I had a dream; before I began speaking in public, and in this dream I was standing on the Church grounds at Goblin Town, and this was my text ***"For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death." ROM. Chap. 8-2).***

Now I have only hinted at the subject, of ***"Obedience"*** but if you will trace it out I think you will find it, many times in the old Testament, also in the new Testament,

You will find in the book of Samuel (15-22) to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

(Rom. 5-19) For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

Now this did not say that the whole world would be made righteous, but many and I believe that the many is all that the Father gave to the Son, because it is said that as many as the Father has given me shall come to me. And he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out, but will raise him up at the last day.

I have a strong hope that He will raise me up at the last day, and that I will see Him face to face, There is nothing in this world that I can think of that is better than that.

If this be the case? Then it is all by the (OBEDIENCE OF CHRIST OUR LORD) BLESSED BE HIS HOLY NAME, FOR EVER AND EVER;

Elder Leonard J. Brammer
March 8th, 2001

PSALM 119:9-12.

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.

With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Blessed art thou, O Lord: teach me thy statues.

VOICES OF THE PAST

L. L. TRENT, JR.

This is a dream that came to me several years ago, soon after being given to feel to be under bonds and unable to free myself, if indeed that be true.

I did not understand the dream but could not keep it off my mind. Over the years it seems to be becoming clearer, therefore will tell what I can for, if not badly deceived, it seems part of "that Way the Eye of the Vulture hath not seen," "The Straight and Narrow Way that few find." I did not find it because I was not looking for it. It is certainly not of me.

It seems I saw myself at work, working in a field of tobacco just off the yard of my home, when three Negro men came to me in the field. They told me they had come to ask me to go with them to another place and preach for them. I said I was no preacher and could not preach. They followed me as I worked in the direction of my home - insisting - and me denying the ability or desire. They followed and insisted, and I denied. When I finished the row I carried, it put me right at my home. As I stepped from the field I seemed to have been made willing, as I could see nothing else to do. They would not be denied.

The thought came to mind: "What will I preach on if I must preach?". "If you preach, why not start at The Beginning" seemed as if spoken to me.

That is all of the dream and it seemed foolishness, but the text I heard or dreamed would not leave me. What follows seems to have been shown me over a period of years.

The field seems to be the World, and I was under the Law of Work. The rows I were in were the longest ones in the field. They were narrow and very crooked and led downhill on a determined grade to drain the water from the field. While being narrow and crooked, they led straight to my home - or can I say straight to God. The three Negro men seem to be Children of God who had been shown their sins and the black vileness of them. Being made willing to go with them as I finished the row seems to show that I was brought to the end of my row and made helpless and willing.

The text spoken to me is not too clear except as a sign. Since then I have had many wonderful thoughts on it which I hope to be of Him.

While writing this, I have been given to feel and wonder if going to another place" means church.

Another thought comes to mind. The crooked rows on a determined grade to lead water from the field - would this represent His Word not returning to Him void but would ac-

complish that whereto it is sent? Wonderful thought! The Waters of Life are FROM Him and TO Him.

"And the fragments thereof they picked up twelve baskets full." A text in itself. Can these things that we hear spoken of be for such a one as I?

Brother Trent was a long time member of Reidsville Church, and was highly esteemed by those who knew him.

(Editors)

MEDITATIONS

ON

PORTIONS OF THE WORD

BY

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND

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MICAH 5:5

"And this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land: and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise up against him seven shepherds, and eight principal men."

We have been requested to write our views upon the above Scripture, which we have often read as we have turned to read Micah 5:2, which was the verse that the chief priests and scribes found for wicked king Herod when he enquired of them where Christ should be born. Matthew 2 :6. In answering him, they gave only part of the verse, but we would like to declare faithfully who this Christ was. He is and was the Wisdom of God and the Power of God. I Corinthians 2:4-5. *"Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."* Read Proverbs 8. Verse 23 says, speaking of him, *"I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."* Isaiah, divinely inspired, could say over seven hundred years before Jesus was born, *"Unto us a child is born, (born of the Virgin Mary) unto us a Son is given," for "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son."* The eternal Son of God came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and such was the goodness

of divine mercy that those chosen of God saw his day and were glad. Abel saw him in the innocent lamb offered in his room and stead, Abraham saw him as the ram caught in the thicket of God's eternal purpose, and through faith could receive his son Isaac as from the dead in a figure. The Old Testament is the record of his goings forth, not only to the individual, but as Captain of the Host of the Lord to lead Israel into the Promised Land. Joshua 5:13-15. If we read the four gospels, we see Jesus made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, finishing the work of redemption, and true to his word, linking up Jonah, who was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, with the Son of man who was in the bosom of the earth three days and three nights. He lived a holy life to produce a righteousness that would cover all for whom he came to save. He submitted to a shameful death on the cross, the penalty for the sins of those for whom he died. He arose at the appointed time, was seen of many of those who were his, and he, Jesus, ascended into heaven, crowned with glory and honour . Read I Timothy 6:11-16, in which Paul, as a faithful shepherd, charges Timothy. This Jesus, blessed Jesus, said in his last sentence in *Matthew 28:20, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."*

This man, Micah said, shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land, and when he shall tread in our palaces. Who were the Assyrians? They represent the people of the world who think that they can build a way to heaven; you can read of their origin in Genesis 10:22. We see that Asshur was the son of Shem, during whose lifetime the tower of Babel was built, and it is said that his offspring became a nation whose capital was Ninevah, until it was utterly destroyed. Much could be written about this people, but with our limited space we prefer to direct our readers to the written word in Kings and Chronicles. Micah was living at a time when due to the wickedness of both Israel and Judah, God's judgments were about to be meted out. In 2 Chronicles 28 when one of the most wicked kings, Ahaz, came to the throne and war was on every side, Israel and Syria slew thousands upon thousands of the inhabitants of Judah, forcing wicked Ahaz, king of Judah, to ask the Assyrians to come and help him. This wicked king took the gold and silver from the house of the Lord to give to the Assyrians. He shut up the doors of the house of the Lord and made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem. He made images for Baalim and caused his children to be burnt in the fire after the abominations of the heathen whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel. In 2 Kings we read of wicked king Hoshea making peace with Assyria by giving them presents, then, proving unfaithful to their word, the Assyrians carried them away into captivity. In this dark and dreadful day, God saw fit that

the son of wicked Ahaz, named Hezekiah, should come to the throne of Judah with a God-given desire to do ***"that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father did."*** And the prophet Micah saw one in that dark day who ***"removed the high places and brake down the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made, for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan"*** (a piece of brass). The Assyrians in our subject are a people who have not a true regard for a ***"Thus saith the Lord,"*** and would bring into Israel today, if possible, that which is contrary to what Christ and his apostles established. These men were led as those of old, by the Holy Ghost, and wrote of those things which they had heard, seen and handled of the Word of life. The apostle John wrote, ***"The world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."***

Micah speaks of seven shepherds, this number seven comes often in the Scripture and sets forth God's perfection in dealing with mankind. For the sin of ignorance, blood was sprinkled seven times before the Lord. (Leviticus 4:6) Seven golden candlesticks are seen in Revelation 1:10-20, while John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. The seven golden candlesticks were the seven churches and One like the Son of man in the midst. He had seven stars in his right hand, which were the angels or messengers of the seven churches. In Malachi 3:1, John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus, is spoken of as a messenger, and our Lord also, who is called the messenger of the covenant. The good shepherd, who gave his life for the sheep, in his covenant, saw fit that there should be a perfect ministry. The stars are heavenly. The Rock of Ages is spoken of by Peter as ***"A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them who stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed."*** (I Peter 2:8) Zechariah 3:9 tells us that this stone had seven eyes. Our Lord established a perfect testimony, and when one preaches the word by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven it is evident that he is in the right hand of him whom John saw in the Midst of the Churches. We view the churches set forth by the golden candlesticks as representing the various phases of the church during the gospel dispensation, and there are many signs that we are in the Laodicean period, when, as James 5:9 says, ***"The Judge standeth before the door."***

We could use most of our space in showing that the Assyrians under various conquerors were finally established in Babylon, which was a type of Babylon the Great, which is still flourishing, so that all the world wonders after the Beast. We feel its likeness, history and fall are fully set forth in the word of God, so will get on with our subject. The eight prin-

cipal men are the eight writers of the New Testament, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter, James, Paul and Jude. The Old Testament has much of the New Testament concealed therein. Solomon, the wise man in Ecclesiastes 11:2, says, ***"Give a portion to seven and also to eight."*** We know the eight writers were so guided so that they recorded so much of the Old to confirm the New. The worldly-wise deny that Jonah was in the whale's belly; in doing so, they deny that Jesus was in the bosom of the earth, for one confirms the other. The seven messengers, who have been in the right hand of our Lord, also have their portion in the Old Testament as in the New. We have spoken of the Assyrians as setting forth the world walking after the flesh, but there is much of the world in us, for we are still in the flesh, and in the flesh we cannot please God. Paul says, ***"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you."*** Are we today any different from the Corinthians or from the brethren of James scattered abroad? Read that faithful shepherd's testimony and you will see how much they needed a faithful ministry. In Micah's day there were only a few who feared God and looked to him for help, and there are but a few today. He said, ***"When the Assyrian shall come into our land: and when he shall tread in our palaces."*** What is our land? The place where we live and walk, the palaces are heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Our Lord said, ***"They are not of the world."*** In the church we have a home, it is where Jesus is in the midst. Are we fit for such a dwelling? This dwelling might look like a cave to the world. Cave Adullam was where David found an escape from the world around him and where HIS BRETHREN and all HIS FATHER'S HOUSE went down to be with HIM. ***"And everyone that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and everyone that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them." (I Samuel 22:1-2)***

We sing ***"Prisons would palaces prove, if Jesus would dwell with me there."*** Often God's afflicted children have found a sick room a palace, and they have been blest to find themselves in sweet fellowship with all who have ever tasted that the Lord is gracious, and the Man Jesus by his reconciling love was their Peace. We have mentioned James, one of the eight, and we would like to speak of the scattered brethren to whom he wrote. One can see that the flesh or Assyrian got in there, yet how faithful James was; he did not have any variance with Paul, another of the eight, who wrote about being justified by faith, not of works lest any man should boast. James believed the same as Paul, but it is evident that already there were those who talked, but did not live, their religion, as there are today, and it is good

when the Church of God raises up against such, the testimony of the seven shepherds and the eight principal men. There is much in the epistle of James applicable to the Church in the present day, and when prayerfully read, we hope will be to the instruction and building up of the brethren in practical godliness. There is also in Paul's, Peter's and John's, and it is becoming, when we in godly fear, study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

We remember an old brother in New York State who had seen the Church in its loveliness in his younger days, and to his sorrow and the grief of many, they witnessed the flesh get the better of good men and divide them. It grieved him the more when good brethren said such unkind things about those they had once fellowshipped. Both sides professed the same truth, sang out of the same hymnbooks and read from the same bibles. That afflicted brother one day in pouring out his troubles said, *"Brother, is it possible for those whom you know love the same truth that you love, and you loved them for years, for you to cease loving them?"* The writer said, *"No, it is not possible, if it were the Love of God, that is like God himself, unchangeable."* Brothers and sisters of natural families fall out, and parents, if they are wise, will want them to acknowledge their faults one to another. How much more it becomes God's dear children to confess their faults one to another and to wash one another's feet. What stops them if they are what they have professed to be? Our answer unequivocally is the flesh, the Assyrian, and the seven shepherds and the eight principal men will ever prove it to be so, for they testify of the man, the only MAN who is our PEACE. They preach him still in the midst of the throne, the LAMB as it had been slain, slain for sinners, of whom Paul said, *"I am chief."* Surely the faithful testimony presented by a servant of God, upheld by the right hand of our glorious Lord, would break a heart of stone.

Do we see this MAN who is our PEACE just in pictures on the wall, or have we pictured him in our minds? That is no better, but do we still see him as we have, I hope, seen him in our brethren as he was in the Ark of old? so that *"the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child (the holy child Jesus) shall lead them." (Isaiah 11:6)* The writer is glad to be able to state that the old brother lived to see his cries and prayers answered, and estranged brethren falling on one another's necks in a loving embrace, proving that Micah's testimony was true, that this man born in Bethlehem with our names engraved upon his hands, is our PEACE.

Elder George Ruston

ROMANS VIII. 26.

"We know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

The subject of prayer is of vast importance to the poor, miserable sinner. What shall he pray for? How often shall he pray? Shall he pray at all? What is prayer? As I have been exercised from time to time as to the subject of prayer, I feel to write somewhat upon it. I am persuaded that prayer is not in a form of words only, but in groanings which cannot be uttered, and Paul says in the following verse, ***"And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."*** Sometimes we are ready to fall into the error of believing that if we have any need of praying it will be given us according to the will of God, and it need not concern us whether we pray or do not pray; we will not be concerned. I lived along in this frame of mind for some time, until Elder Durand, in conversation, said that *Jesus* believed he was the Son of God, but nevertheless he prayed upon one occasion all night unto God, and his prayer in Gethsemane, when he sweat as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground, tells in a measure to us the great agony of soul the Son of man was passing through, and also the prayer unto the Father, recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, is the Redeemer's petition unto God, not only for the saints, but for himself as well. So we see how easy to fall into error and be taken captive of the devil.

But, ***"We know not what we should pray for as we ought."*** Prayer I understand to be the desires, longings and petitions unto God for something we do not possess, or feel we are yet lacking in, in the measure we would desire. But the great trouble is to know if it is ***"according to the will of God."*** God's will is known only to himself, and Jesus was not praying for his own will when praying, to God in Gethsemane, for he said, ***"Father; if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."*** So we see that we are upon sacred and holy ground when we are praying to God, and cannot bring our own will, but the will of God, in our petitions. Along this line I wish to say that everyone who is brought unto the presence of God by the Spirit is washed by the ***"washing of water by the word,"*** and is cleansed and sanctified, as was Aaron the high priest under the legal dispensation, and who was ceremonially washed with water, and cleansed in order that he might offer acceptable sacrifices and prayers unto God, whereas in the gospel dispensation the children of God are made kings and priests unto God, washed and

cleansed by the Spirit, and do offer prayers as indited by the Spirit. Every one who enters into the presence of God must be cleansed, for nothing unclean shall enter into the city.

There are several things we may consider along this line, and it would be well to mention some of them. None but living subjects pray, none but hungry, poor, weak, lame and halt subjects feel the burden of prayer, so there is a comfort and consolation to our mind if we can see in our earthly pilgrimage, our Bethel, as did Jacob, when he took the stones and put them for his pillow and God appeared unto him.

I know of one who saw his little boy kneel at the bedside to pray God to bless papa, mamma and sisters, and he felt he wished he were a child again that he might pray unto God in childlike simplicity; but no, the heavens were brass and no petition from him could ever reach the place where God dwells; but in time that same person was as that little child, and brought into the church, so there was an evidence that the groaning Which could not be uttered was heard and answered of God. James says, If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, but let him ask in faith. So it is living subjects that pray, being made alive from the dead, quickened by the Spirit, and their affections set upon things above not on things of the earth, for where the treasure is there the heart will be also.

Subjects of grace are given to believe by faith, and faith is the fruit of the Spirit. *" He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." - Heb. xi. 6.* So it is impossible for nonbelievers to pray, for they have nothing to pray for; they are not troubled like other men, they have all that heart can wish; David was envious of them, until he went into the house of God (the church). God's people are hungry, poor, weak, lame and halt, not naturally, but spiritually, hungry for righteousness; poor, and all their righteousness is as filthy rags; so weak they have exhausted all their strength to attain the favor of God; lame and halt, that their walk is imperfect, cannot do as they would. These are the subjects God has prepared for a habitation with himself, and Jesus named them as *"blessed"* in the fifth chapter of Matthew.

As these various infirmities are presented to us by the Spirit, then, and then only, do our prayers go up unto God as a sweet-smelling savor, and being asked according to the will of God, they shall be answered. John says, *"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." - John vs. 14-15.* What child of God can but say that

his petitions have been heard, and also answered; not in the way he supposed, but by terrible things in righteousness. We are not heard for our much speaking, but for that which is in accordance with His will, the Spirit of God would give us petitions individually for what we need, and also give us prayer for the welfare of Zion.

The Lord has given gifts to the church, and they are not all the same gifts; to some the gift of healing, to some exhortation, discerning of spirits, the word of wisdom, teaching and that of prophecy, and each one is to profit withal in whatever gift or gifts the Lord has bestowed.

As we are directed and shown wherein Zion is languishing and becoming desolate, therein are we led to pray and petition the throne of grace. When Jesus was in the flesh and dwelt among men he said, So Zion is to pray to the Lord of the harvest for laborers. If one is exercised to labor in the harvest and the church recognizes a gift, she is to pray to the Lord to develop that gift and to hold up his hands. When Moses held up his hands Israel prevailed, and when he was not able to longer hold up his hands Aaron and Bur held them up. We are given the privilege and blessing to pray for each other, and thereby hold up each other's hands. I believe that the true laborers are brought forth in this manner. As Zion is the habitation of God, we feel that every branch shall prosper in the graces of our God, and be partakers of his benefits and be fruitful unto good works. Each branch, as well as each member, shall dwell in the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace, not railing for railing or evil for evil, but return good for evil.

"We know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us." How glorious are all the ways of God! While we lack the wisdom, the Spirit gives us wisdom, the wisdom which, is from above, the wisdom of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, for he is made unto us wisdom. I have in mind one who felt the prayer, *"Angels to beckon me,"* and shortly afterward the Lord took her only son; also another who felt the words, Lord, guide me, and she was bereft of her son; so the Spirit had made intercession before the subjects knew the meaning, of their prayer. Peter went upon the housetop to pray, and I have no doubt his prayer was in accord with his further work. The subject is endless, so I leave it.

J. M. FENTON.
PHILADELPHIA, Pa.
Jan. 19, 1910.

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no Sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God In him."- 2 CORINTHIANS V. 21.

OUR blessed Lord offered himself for sin; that is, that he might put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. ***"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (I Pet. ii. 24).*** It was absolutely necessary either that the sinner should suffer in his own person, or in that of a substitute. Jesus became this substitute; he stood virtually in the sinner's place, and endured in his holy body and soul the punishment due to him; for he ***"was numbered with the transgressors."*** He thus, by the shedding of his most precious blood, opened in his sacred body a fountain for all sin and all uncleanness (Zech. xiii 1). The cross was the place on which this sacrifice was offered; for as the blood of the slain lamb was poured out at the foot the altar, sprinkled upon its horns, and burned in its ever-enduring fire, so our blessed Lord shed his blood upon the cross. He there endured the wrath of God to the uttermost; he there put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; he there offered his holy soul and body, the whole of his pure and sacred humanity, in union with his eternal Deity, as an expiation for the sins of his people. Thus all their sin was atoned for, expiated, put away, blotted out, and will never more be imputed to them. This is the grand mystery of redeeming love and atoning blood. Here the cross shines forth in all its splendour; here God and man meet at the sacrifice of the God-man; and here, amidst the sufferings and sorrows, the groans and tears, the blood and obedience of God's dear Son in our nature, grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life.

Elder J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

(Correction of April Issue)

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene at Dan River Church on the fifth Sunday in April.

The church is located on highway #700 between Eden and Danville. Greensboro Church will be host for this meeting.

We welcome all lovers of the truth to be with us. We especially invite all ministers of our faith and order. Song service begins at 10:00 a.m.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Brother Wayne Edwards, Clerk

PROVERBS 8:10-11.

Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.

For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

Faith is the brightest evidence
Of things beyond our sight;
Breaks thro' the clouds of flesh and sense ,
And dwells in heavenly light.

It sets time past in present view,
Brings distant prospects home,
Of things a thousand years ago,
Or thousand years to come.

By faith we know the worlds were made
By God's almighty word:
Abra'm, to unknown countries led,
By faith obeyed the Lord.

He sought a city fair and high,
Built by th' eternal hands;
And faith assures us, though we die,
That heavenly building stands.

Watts.

POSTMASTER

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EDITORIAL

CONVERSATION

Elder C. C. Wilbanks

Every literate person understands that conversation is an exchange of thoughts or ideas between two or more individuals in a common spoken language. But the use of the word in this manner is very limited when compared with its use in ancient times, and when used in the Bible. I do not understand a word of the Hebrew language, but according to Strong's concordance the word "conversation" is derived from the word DEREK, that basically means a trodden road, a course of life, manner and behavior of individuals. The word is used twice in the Psalms and eighteen times in the New Testament. Biblically the word does not mean social intercourse by means of language, but it refers to the whole behavior, conduct or character of the individual. This is the primary meaning of the word wherever it is used in the scriptures. Only Paul's use of it in his letter to the Philippians is there an exception, and he used it to mean "citizenship," or to behave as citizens. We do violence to this expression, and greatly limit its meaning if we mean only that our conversing or talking together is in heaven, which is the church of Jesus Christ. To be a citizen of this heaven one must be born there. ***"And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her. The LORD shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there." Ps. 87:5-6.*** This heaven is not that glorious heaven above, but our heaven on earth. To be born there we must be born again, ***"—not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."*** As Jesus said to Nicodemus, ***"—Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven."*** And, ***"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."*** All men, the sons of Adam, are born

dead in sins and trespasses; we were separated from God when the first Adam transgressed God's holy commandment. We have a natural life, but we live in nature's total darkness concerning anything spiritual and are slaves and servants to sin until being translated into the light and liberty of the kingdom of Christ. Enoch was translated that he should not see death, and every subject of God's grace shall never eternally die, for Jesus gives unto them eternal life, and he is that life. By his death and resurrection he triumphed over death and the grave and brought life and immortality to light through his glorious gospel which is revealed unto us by his Holy Spirit. Our natural bodies may sleep in the dust, but they will be changed and raised from the grave in the likeness of Christ when our Saviour shall return to receive his beloved bride unto himself. Those who are alive and remain shall also be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and shall rise with those who sleep. *"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch angel, and with the trump of God: and the dead (asleep) in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thes. 16-17.*

Whosoever is born in the kingdom of heaven is born of God and cannot sin. *"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and He cannot sin, because he is born of God." 1 Jn. 3:9.* As long as we remain here on earth in the flesh we will sin, for this new birth does not change our Adamic sinful nature in any way. John said, *"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."* We are tempted and drawn away by our own lusts and enticed. *"Then when lust hath conceived, it brings forth sin: and when sin is finished it brings forth death." James 1:15.* Paul told the Corinthians, *"There hath no temptation but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, flee from idolatry." 1 Cor. 10:13-14.* Without the power of the Holy Spirit working within us we will not accomplish this. I have tried for many years to accomplish this without success; that is, if I have ever done the thing I ought to have done it was never the result of my trying to do so, but the result of a higher power. Brethren, is it this way with you? Paul said, *"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ."* This does not mean only our talking together about the gospel, but if we give the word conversation its full force it signifies, Let

your behavior, or life, as citizens of heaven be as becometh the Gospel of Christ. We may talk one way but act another. But if we be the children of God we are not simply to talk the gospel, but live it. The power to do this must come from on high. In Paul`s letter to Titus he said, ***"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world."*** The same grace that teaches us these things never leaves us but abides in us to cause us to deny the flesh and its lusts, to the end that we may by grace live and behave as citizens of heaven even while we remain in this ungodly world. Only Christ within us can do the teaching, and if we have not Christ in our hearts then we are none of his.

Brethren, I must confess that I do not always live as I should, if I ever do. There are many times when I say things that should not be said, and do not say what should be said. And I do things that I should not do. Many times I instantly regret what I have said or done and at times it is revealed to me later. In either case it causes me pain in heart and I must beg for mercy to the Most High. I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. It is too long to copy here, but I would like for you to read Romans 8:14-25. This does not apply to Paul only, but to every child of grace.

In the first book of Peter we find these two scriptures: ***"Be ye holy in all manner of conversation," and, "For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed ******from your vain conversation."*** Again, it is not talking together, but our behavior or conduct is meant. In these scriptures we find holy conversation and evil conversation. A man may say things that sound holy, yet his behavior or conduct betrays him as evil. That man is not being led by the Holy Spirit but is following after the lusts of the flesh. If this conduct continues unabated it will cause much trouble in the church. Paul called these men grievous wolves, and Jude said they were certain men who crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation. Paul also tells us that of our own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

Brethren, I have seen both the holy conversation and the evil conversation in our churches. I do not wish to point to any individual or church, but to bring it to your attention. I have seen this evil conversation, and I feel sure that at least some of you have also, and we do know that it has split associations and destroyed churches. If it should continue we will see even more. Because this evil is against the

church of God, we should bring it to the attention of the church in an orderly manner. The church should never act hastily, but with the help of the Holy Ghost seek to convert the offending brother from the error of his way. This should be done in a kind and brotherly way. But if the brother will not hear the church he should be put out, to be delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. If the brother should return later, and show by his behavior that the Spirit of Christ has changed him, he may be returned to church fellowship. This brings to mind that Peter had been taught of the Father to know that Jesus was the Son Of God, and yet he cursed and swore that he knew him not when Jesus stood before Pilate. But when Jesus looked upon him O how he went out and wept bitterly. I feel at times that I am much like Peter at that time. Is your experience like mine? If so, we can have sweet fellowship.

God is love, and if we love God it is because he first loved us. How can we love God whom we have not seen if we do not love the brethren whom we have seen? It is impossible. Without charity we are nothing. If love is in our hearts we can easily show it in many ways. Charity is love in action. A warm handshake, a hug, a kind word, a simple pat on the back, etc. will suffice. Just telling someone that we love them has little value if we do not prove it by our actions. Paul said, ***"Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law."*** He also said, ***"But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh."***

Beloved brethren, let us always strive to fulfil the law, praying for the Holy Spirit to lead us. Let our conversation be as becometh the citizens of Zion. I need your prayers when at the throne of Grace.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Terry,

Hope you and your family are well. I have been receiving the Signs of the Times for about 2 years and I'm glad to be getting it. I don't know who had it sent to me. I enjoy reading the articles. Hope I can witness with The Writer. I believe the doctrine of Salvation by Grace, Election and Predestination, and nothing can separate God's people from his Love.

I just hope I am one of his. Enclosed is a check for $15.00.

Love in Christ I hope,
Winfred Young

ARTICLES

To the household of faith.
"Praise ye the Lord"

These words are recorded in the Psalms at least twenty-two times giving emphasis to a very important commandment. To praise the Lord is to glorify his holy name above all other names. If the Lord permits and helps me I shall endeavor to examine these precious words in that pure minds may be stirred.

Praise is rendered in loving exaltation with sincere reverence for it is good to actively worship the Lord in truth, to love him, to obey his commandments, to rejoice in him, to pray without ceasing, and to give thanks unto him for every gift and blessing (1 Thes., ch. 5).

The psalmist exhorted all of God's creation, the celestial, the terrestrial, and all creatures that breathe to praise him (Ps., ch. 148). The psalmist has declared that the children of Zion are permitted to ***"be joyful in their King,"*** and that they ***"Let the high praises of God be in their mouth" (Ps., ch. 149).***

The apostle Paul advised the saints that ***"whatsoever - ye do. all to the glory of God" (1Cor. 10:31).*** A question may arise in the reader's mind concerning where — at what place — praise is to be rendered. The psalmist answers ***"Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power" (Ps. 150:1).***

Are there any limits, dear children of Zion, embodied in the actions or deeds of praise? Perhaps it may be useful to review the precise distinctions between the word "praise" and other words found in the scriptures, such as "regard," "respect," "honour," "esteem," etc. Does the scriptures mean praise when referring to "them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord," "to esteem them very highly in love for their works' sake" (1 Thes.5: 12-13)? Or is it praise when it is recorded to ***"Honour all men, love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the King" (1 Pet. 2:17)?*** Do the children of Zion glorify the works of men or praise any individual person sitting within or standing before the congregation of saints? God forbid! ***"Let them praise the name of the Lord: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and, heaven"*** (Ps. 148:13; also Ps. 8:1 and Is. ch. 12). From the prophet, ***"I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images" (Is. 42:8 and 48: 9-11).***

When, in the day by day journey of life, a child of Zion is alone, or when cast into a multitude of humanity, or when walking a wilderness path, that child remains within the firmament of God's power. Wherever that child of Zion is, I believe,

God is in his sanctuary for that child's body is the temple of God (1 Cor. 3:16-17; 6: 19-20; and 2 Cor. 6:16). Also, when the children of Zion assemble as a militant church they are in the firmament of God's power be they gathered upon a hillside or within the sanctuary (as we traditionally understand the word) of a meetinghouse.

"Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power."

To the Church at Corinth, the apostle wrote *"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy" (I Cor. 3:17).*

From the prophet *"Wherefore, as I live, saith the Lord God: Surely, because thou hast defiled my sanctuary with all thy detestable things, and with all thine abominations, therefore will I also diminish thee; neither shall mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity" (Ez. 5:.11: also see Deut. 7:26).*

There are numerous verses throughout the sacred scripture that forbid defilement, profaneness, and pollution of the Lord's house and its sanctuary. The consequences of such deeds are to be seen in the New Testament letters to the seven churches in Asia. (Rev. chs. 2 and 3). So dear reader, by what deeds or actions is God's sanctuary of the heart or of the meetinghouse defiled, profaned, or polluted?

The following is submitted for your loving consideration in the interest of the militant gospel church of the living God to whom all praise should flow. Is the sanctuary of the heart or the meeting house defiled, profaned, or polluted:

1) by our demeanor through which we bring in pride, despair or apathy; or

2) by our failure to condemn behavior and deeds that the scripture teaches us that GOD hates. Behavior of men or

Satan that promotes disorder, brings dishonor, breaks the bonds of brotherly love, or promotes cultism, preacher worship and divisions in the congregation. (Read Jer. 7:8-16; Prov. 6: 16-19; Mal. 2; Gal. 5; 19-21; etc.) or

3) by accepting the preaching of error and false doctrine that either adds to or takes away from the gospel of our LORD. (Rev. 22:18-19); or

4) by the introduction and display of material objects within the meetinghouse sanctuary, especially in the areas in view of the congregation during worship services - objects that praise and glorify men, living or dead, in violation of the 1st and 2nd commandments as given to Moses? Please note that *"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water beneath the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy GOD am a jealous GOD,"(Ex. 20:4-5);*

I'm confident that we would not place a statue of any apostle or any sculpture of the crucifixion in our sanctuaries as do some denominations. I believe that any item glorifying men are a distraction to the congregation and I fail to see how they can possibly glorify a jealous GOD.

Beloved children of Zion, as we gather in remembrance of Jesus for observance of the Lord's Supper, let us remember that all of our sins were cast upon his shoulders, let us praise the Lord, him alone, for only he is excellent. He has given us the breath of life, he has been our Keeper, our Protector, our Redeemer, and our Salvation all the days of our lives. In our prayers, let us praise and give thanks unto him. Indeed we have an abundance of gifts and blessings to be thankful for. Jesus is the straight gate and morning star. He is the eternal life in whom the children of Zion rejoice.

Turn us (and me) unto thee, O Lord, is my prayer for Christ's sake. Amen.

Eugene F. Osborne, Sr.

PSALM 33: 5-6.

He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.

By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

VOICES OF THE PAST

WHERE THE DOVE DWELLS

(Song of Solomon ii. 14)

"O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock."

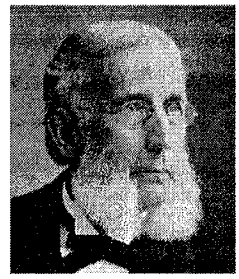

Elder Silas H. Durand

The Savior thus addresses his church in her present state of existence, and thus presents her condition of safety. The dove, pursued by birds of prey, would seek and enter into one of the clefts or fissures in the rocks, where she was safe from her enemy. This figure is used by the heavenly Lover to show in what consists the safety of his bride. He himself is the Rock, and the clefts of the rock represent the sufferings and death which he endured by the stroke of the law for the salvation of his people. When Moses struck the rock waters gushed out; so when the law struck Jesus waters of salvation came forth for all his people. At the second time that Moses struck a rock, in the desert of Zin, which was nearly forty years after he struck the first rock, he spake unadvisedly with his lips, and the Lord told him that he could not go over into the promised land. (Num. xx. 12.) So when the law struck Jesus, the Rock of salvation, its work was done, and it must die. The law could not take the Lord's people into the gospel land;

its work ends with the crucifixion of Christ. When the Lord would show Moses his glory, and cause all his goodness to pass before him, he put Moses in a cleft of the rock on which he stood, and covered him with his hand while his glory passed by. A cleft in a rock is not a pleasant place to be forced into, but it is safe. *"I am crucified with Christ,"* Paul says. He says, *"We which live [a spiritual life] are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."* - 2 Cor. iv. He says, *"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made, comformable unto his death."* Here are the clefts of the rock where the dove is, where the Lord's people find their salvation. It is not in peace and quiet of mind, not while lying on beds of ivory and stretching themselves on their couches, that they find safety, but in affliction and trouble; in suffering with Christ; in *"bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus."* Here is Moses, held in a close, rough, unpleasant cleft of the flinty rock, trying to get out into liberty and see what is passing by; but for his salvation he is held down in a place he does not like, and covered with the Lord's hand. This is his salvation. If he had been outside of that rock he would have been destroyed. The power of the Lord's name which he pronounced would have been his destruction. No man could endure the last syllable of that name; it would destroy any of Adam's race: *"And that will by no means clear the guilty."* The Rock only could endure it. No man can see God's face and live, but hidden in Christ, in the cleft of the Rock, we can see his back parts; can see the glory after the Lord has passed by; can see the goodness and blessedness of what he has done.

How we fret, and worry, and complain at this constant trouble; this cutting off and hedging in; this daily crossing of our worldly desires, or the greater sorrow and shame when our fleshly desires are fulfilled; this constant dissatisfaction with ourselves and our works; this self-abhorrence and self-loathing; this "great tribulation;" this withering of the glory and goodness of man like the grass; this lack of joy and comfort in worldly things, and often such questioning as to our interest in heavenly things. But in this is our safety. Through great tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of heaven. All of those who stand before the great white throne have come out of great tribulation.

The dear Savior recognizes his people in this condition, and calls to them, as his dove, seeing them in the clefts of the Rock. Also he speaks of them as *"in the secret places of the stairs."* The stairs were in the right side of the temple, and it was by winding stairs that .the people went up out of the first into the second story, and out of the second into the third story, winding

about, hardly knowing whether they are going up or down, often in a dark, secret place of the winding way. But he tells them where they are, they are in the stairs all the time. Every change, every turn, every new trouble and affliction, however it appears to oppress them and sink them down, is really lifting them higher. They are rising, they are in a secret place, hidden from the world, who cannot see them as the Lord's people, and who cannot understand the Lord's way of taking his people up from the world, up from self, up from legal works; but they are still going up by winding stairs out of the legal into the gospel dispensation, and out of the things that are seen from day to day into *"the things which are not seen," into the "building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."*

So Jesus, the heavenly Lover, speaks to his dear people as an afflicted and poor people, and tells them where they are. He recognizes them as suffering with him, as crucified with him, and lets them know while in the furnace of affliction that *"as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."- 2 Cor. i. 5.* In their feeling of self-abhorrence and humiliation their faces are in the dust; they would not dare to speak to him except in a cry for mercy, nor even lift up their eyes to him; but in infinitely tender and prevailing love he calls to them by this endearing name, and says, *"Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely."* That voice is expressive of mourning on account of a sinful heart, but how sweetly it comes up into his ears on that account; that face is full of sorrow, and their eyes are pouring out tears unto God; but the sadness and the tears make the countenance comely in the sight of the dear Savior, for there are expressed a hunger and thirst after righteousness, and a hatred of all sin. That is what makes the face of a poor sinner lovely in the Lord's sight. And when they hear the loving accents of his voice speaking unto them, and with tender power acknowledging them as his dove, his bride, whom he has redeemed from all iniquity, and when they see, by faith, his face looking upon them in love, with "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God" shining in it, how it makes their own sad faces lose the look of sadness and shine with holy and solemn joy because of his love to them. Then are they thankful that they have a dwelling-place in the clefts of the Rock, and in the secret places of the stairs, and glad that it is their blessed privilege to suffer with Christ, that they may by that fellowship of his sufferings be more effectually separated from the world, and glorified together with him.

Elder Silas H. Durand
OCTOBER 26, 1905.

ASSOCIATIONS OF CHURCHES

Two hundred years ago seven churches formed themselves into what is known as the KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION at a meeting house called "Kehukee" near Kehukee Creek, in Halifax County, North Carolina. This was in the year 1765 according to Hassell's Church History. Since this year, 1965, is the bicentennial year of this ASSOCIATION; we are impressed to write a short editorial upon the subject of ASSOCIATIONS OF CHURCHES. We shall endeavor to treat upon the aims of our forefathers in forming these churches into associations and to point out the necessity of conducting such associational meetings in such manner that the churches will retain their scriptural position as the highest ecclesiastical organizations. We shall consider associations as creatures of the churches and shall warn against these creatures attempting to discipline and to set themselves above their creators. Seven Churches of Asia were written to by John. Seven churches originally adopted what is now known as the London Confession of Faith in abridged form in 1643. (Hassell Church History, see Page 663) There were seven elders in the twelve churches constituting the Sulphur Fork Association of Texas in 1845 at Providence Church, Mount Vernon, Texas. Let us now leave the historical phase and immediately examine the purposes of these associations.

One of the aims in forming associations of churches is that personal acquaintance and contact might be enlarged to include a larger circle of brethren than would be probable with a single church in a neighborhood. It is as a good result of associations that thousands often meet together from different states to worship God in unison, and to become acquainted with many new brethren embracing sovereign grace principles. Our aim is to embrace more in our fellowship instead of trying to reduce the number. Our aim is to further unite rather than to divide; add to instead of cutting off; and to be for one another rather than being against.

Paul said, *"Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits." (Romans 12:16) "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Cor. 1 :-10) "Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same LOVE, being of one accord, of one mind." (Phil. 2 :2)* David said, *"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." (Psalms 133:1)* The number TWO has been considered by some as being accursed as it is the first departure

from unity. Only God who makes men's heart's can unite them. Whoever God joins together in this divine love can never be separated by the cunning craftiness of men without causing unhappiness and misery because of such separation. United we stand, divided we fall. All who possess the spirit of God's love are as harmless as doves. Doves live, feed, and fly by companies. Doves desire unity; and it was the dove that would not leave Noah's ark. (Gen. 8:9) We must warn against these wolves who have come in among us, as well as the foxes who have crept into our numbers, who care not for the flock. They connive with their plots, schemes, tricks, and "Legal justifyings" to handle churches as if they were the judges, lawgivers, and kings. They will band themselves together to annihilate churches and ministers. A whole psalm was written against this sin. Read the entire 83rd Psalm. The 12th verse is the expression of their central desire.

"Who said, Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession." Those who plot together to cut off churches from the union of churches I take crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. They have said, COME, AND LET US CUT THEM OFF FROM BEING A NATION."

It is comforting to know that the Lord is the one to take vengeance on them. The Psalmist asked the Lord to "Fill their faces with shame." The Lord created the wicked for the day of evil, and created the waster to destroy. He will fight our battles for us against our enemies in His way with that which He hath designed for the work of vengeance. True brethren do not need to waste time in warring with false brethren for if God be for us none can successfully come against us. He will deliver us from their clutches. We do not need to defend ourselves but use the time and talents in pressing on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Jesus Christ. We shall press for the unity of TRUE brethren. We realize that when these false brethren have done their dirty work they will separate themselves from us and go out from us, as the CHIEF Shepherd does His mighty work in protecting the sheep from the wolves and foxes.

Another aim is to encourage inter-communion of churches. Churches formed in such associations write letters to the other churches giving such information as each church may think prudent for the good and welfare of the union. This inter-communication so links the churches together that brethren composing one church feel free to commune with the churches so linked together. We know that all members of the church universal are all the saved, and that Christ is the only Head, and the Church is His Body. (See Eph. 1:22-23 & Colossians 1:18-24) The church militant is composed of all the saints now on

earth. The invisible church is all the Elect not yet called. A particular church is a society of believers called out of the world who have bonded themselves together, to be guided and governed by discipline agreeable to the laws of Christ as given in the New Testament.

Another purpose of associational meetings is to bring together the different gifts in the ministry in order that they may preach together and hear one another feeding the children of God with a variety of spiritual food. Many say they enjoy associational meetings because they are privileged to hear different ministers from the different sections of the country in different manners proclaiming the same gospel truth. It is indeed a blessing to be convinced that all these ministers have been brought up in the same School and have had as their teacher; God, the Father; God, the Son; and, God, the Holy Ghost.

Associational meetings are heavenly when so many voices can be blended together in singing the songs of Zion in the spirit and God-given understanding, having their voices mellowed by the Love of God bringing them into the joys of Zion. It is wonderful to make new acquaintances and to visit so many who embrace the same sovereign grace principles which is our food and drink. It is wonderful to talk on the Scriptures together in smaller companies in the homes of the neighborhood in which the associational meeting is held. It is enjoyable to feel the warm welcome extended to us in these homes and to partake of the kind hospitalities so lovingly given us by the occupants of these homes.

When we see so many people together to worship God it inspires and encourages those who have been made to feel that there are only a very few of us, and that it will not be long until there will be none of us left. I have heard people say at such meetings: "Old Baptists are not all dead as some would have us believe." It is encouraging when you are made to know that the Lord has reserved unto himself many more than you thought existed.

Interlinking of God's people by the method of associational correspondence is a blessing when we are blessed to extend the chain rather than break any of these links. I will here quote the body of a corresponding letter which I wrote several years ago - which is yet my conscientious convictions and yearning desires relative to associational correspondence:"Dearly Beloved Brethren:We are bound to give thanks unto God for you, brethren, because our drooping spirits have been revived by the presence of so many of you who compose the membership of the several associations with whom we correspond. We have been greatly refreshed by the coming of your lovely and friendly correspondence. We appreciate your elders whom God hath endowed

with His Holy Spirit to preach unto us salvation by grace through faith in the complete work of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in saving His Elect Family. Our aching hearts have been renewed while we are blessed to drink together from the fountain that springs up into everlasting life."

"We are bound to thank God for this medium of fellowship granted us through associational correspondence. This chain of correspondence has united in one body many of our people from different states covering hundreds of miles. May God enable us to appreciate this grand blessing to the extent that we be given to watch and pray and so conduct ourselves that this chain will not be broken-but rather extended may keep us together and at one-another's feet. May this letter bear to you love and fellowship. We covet a continuation of your correspondence and visitations."

All of these objectives heretofore mentioned, together with the practice of the apostles and apostolic churches writing to the churches and brethren, would certainly commend general meetings when we consider their visitations among the churches. Brethren and churches then desired to learn of the welfare of others as well as to inform others of their own welfare. Letters were written then and sent by messengers to each other. This would not be a departure from apostolic practice to have associational meetings regularly scheduled provided that messengers would not attempt any disciplinary action in dealing with any church or member. Associations have no Bible authority to deal in any manner disciplining churches or members. Since the church is the only organized body sanctioned by the Bible, and any other society or combination of men would be without Scriptural authority; then associations constituted to be continuous existing bodies must be unscriptural. Since we are all forgetful creatures, Old Baptists should be often reminded that there is no Bible authority for any formally organized association of God's people other than the church itself; and because of this, no organized association of churches can be properly considered as a standing organization which is to be held sacred. Churches are continuous bodies; associations are not. When we refer to "Our Moderator" between sessions of associations when speaking of the one who presided over the last associational meeting, we are sanctioning the idea that we do believe there is some other permanent Christian organization other than the church. When the associational meeting ends the duty of the moderator ends. When the churches meet again in an associated capacity, they are obligated to re-organize for that session. We enjoy visiting these associations, not for the sake of these humanly organized bodies, but for the wonderful heavenly privi-

lege they provide, for the general assembling of the Saints of God, for the sole purpose of worshipping God, and associating with one another.

Have we departed from the steps of our forefathers in the use of associations ? This is a vital question. We should ascertain the answer by examination. The church cannot confer authority to anyone or ones to act in its behalf. Christ is its only representative. Question 1, Do you have a copy of the Articles of Faith, Constitution, Rules of Decorum, Church Covenant, and copies of minutes of preceedings of the church of your membership ? Question 2, Do you have copies of the Constitution, Articles of Faith, Rules of Decorum, and proceedings of the Association in which your church is catalogued as a member? If your answer be NO to question 1 and YES to question 2 it will show that a greater regard is shown toward the association than to the church of your membership. Question 3, Has the church of your membership by an act of the church barred any church or minister from your affiliation in the past several years? Question 4, Has the association barred any church or minister within the past several years which has affected the affiliation of the church of your membership? If your answer be NO to question 3 and YES to question 4 it will show that your messengers have acted beyond their authority and that you respect your association more than the church of your membership. Question 5, Has the church of your membership desired to invite certain ministers to preach to you but because of some action of the association unauthorized by the church of your membership, you are afraid to invite? If your answer to this question be YES; then, you are allowing the association to infringe on your internal rights and to bring you into its bondage. Question 6, Have you ever had a church to seek affiliation with your church and a host of your membership would say to them, "We all have fellowship for you but you must present the matter to the association when it convenes"; and, you do not take any action upon the matter and make no recommendation to the association in your letter in order that messengers from other churches may present this matter to their churches? If this be the way you handle the matters, you are supporting the idea that messengers making up the association are to be the executive board to govern, discipline, and regulate church affiliation and fellowship. I cannot believe that our forefathers who first organized such meetings meant that they should be used in this manner. They were aware of the fact that it could easily lead to this. Therefore, safeguards were well written in their first organizations of associations with the hopes of preventing such unscriptural use. We have before us the Constitution of the Sulphur Fork

Primitive Baptist Association of churches. We shall quote these safeguards as written by our forefathers in forming this association: - "CONSTITUTION ... 3. The members thus chosen and convened shall not have power to lord it over God's heritage, nor shall have any ecclesiastical power over any of the churches, nor shall they infringe on any of the internal rights of any of the churches of the union ... 11. We believe that all societies or combinations of men, professing for their object the promotion of God's kingdom, for the spiritual good of men, except the Church of Christ are unauthorized by the Word of God, and are a fruitful source of contention and strife. Such as Foreign and Domestic Societies, Bible Tracts, Sabbath Schools, and State Conventions, all of which we believe are unscriptural and un-Christian in the origin, operation, and tendency; and as such we will not fellowship."

It is worse to esteem associations higher than the church than to approve of auxiliaries within the church. Question 7, When you travel abroad and you are questioned by Old School or Primitive Baptists relative to your religious affiliation, What is your answer??? If your answer be that you are a member of a certain association, you either esteem your association higher than your church, or, there has been more effort and expense used to make the actions of your association prominent rather than your church. When you give such answer you are aiding the idea that there is some other Christian organization that is perpetual and continuous in its operations other than the church. Question 8, Do you think it necessary that your church belong to an association? If your answer be YES you aid the idea that the church of your membership is somewhat dependent upon someone other than Jesus Christ as its Head.

I am convinced that associational meetings are a blessing to God as long as churches are blessed to use them as tools for the promotion of bringing more and more of the Lord's little ones into affiliation of one-another. I am convinced that associations become a curse when they begin investigating, dropping, disciplining, not receiving, and barring from fellowship, churches who have had membership with them. I am convinced that as wealth is a blessing as long as it serves you and becomes a curse when you become its servant : so is an association a blessing as long as churches use it, but becomes a curse when it uses the churches as its servants.

Associations are without scriptural authority to settle difficulties. If difficulties arise in a particular church let us look to the Scriptures which contains the "ONLY RULE OF FAITH AND PRACTICE." If after much fasting, prayer, meditation, and study of the Scriptures; a satisfactory solution cannot be reached,

let us, then, call upon a sister church or churches to come and sit with us to aid us in counsel and advice. If the solution is not reached after all this, WHERE ELSE CAN WE GO BUT TO THE LORD? We must patiently wait for His deliverance. Do not disturb the peace of an associational meeting with problems which you together with the combined efforts of sister churches cannot settle. Do not turn your back upon a sister church who is in trouble. True churches of Christ mourn when they are in trouble. Do not tell them that they are in "disorder," and because of this, you cannot affiliate with them. This is the proper time for you to mourn with those who mourn. Do not leave them to themselves because of this disturbance. They need your helping hand. They need the caresses of your love and the manifestation of your fellowship more then than before. When the peace of a particular church is disturbed, it is sick. It is in need of your loving care. If a member of that body is afflicted do not tell the body that we will have nothing more to do with you until you cut this member off. This would be like telling a loved one who has an afflicted arm that you will not come to visit him until he has his arm removed. Associations sometimes quickly cut off affiliation and correspondence even without a due course of labor in order to save in fellowship, just over rumors and misunderstandings. These things ought not to be and are unauthorized in the testimony of the Word of God.

Dear Readers: I make this personal appeal to you: My soul has been on its knees for a long time. I go groaning, moaning, and sighing, as a lone pilgrim in a weary land. I am waiting, praying, and watching. I crave to get a letter from each and everyone of you whose hearts have been melted and softened in the furnace of afflictions. I deeply desire the sweet comradeship of true friends. I want to dwell with friends who do not render harsh judgment against each other. I want the comradeship of a people who will not hold my sins against me. I confess that my sins are many and that my mistakes are great. I admit that I am weak and do not know how to walk perfectly and have erred many times. I am seeking the friendship of the citizens of Zion who really forgive. I want to walk with a people who - *"Serve in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." (Romans 7:6)* I want the correspondence of those whose theme is: The Sovereign Power of God's Everlasting Love Through Jesus Christ Our Lord and Redeemer. I have prayed for deeper convictions, richer experience, stronger faith, brighter hope, and more fervent charity; but I was perplexed when I found I must go through greater tribulations and persecutions in answer to my prayer. May we rejoice together in many more associational meetings here and finally climax it in that Eter-

nal Session of Heaven's ASSOCIATION. Cast a mantle of charity to cover my many mistakes I may have made in this Article.

Elder E. J. Lambert

PERSONAL REMINISCENCE.

NEW VERNON, N.Y., April 30, 1834.

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."

PAUL.

We are acquainted with an individual whose history we will give in the following words:

He was, like all the race of which he is a member, conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity. He was born in the eastern part of the State of Connecticut. He was a *religionist* from his birth, yet an enemy to God, and a stranger to grace during the first seven years of his natural life for he was alive before the commandment came. He had at this period been taught to say his prayers, but had never been taught to pray; he had made some progress in the Westminster Catechism, and in short, as touching the religion of the Pharisees, he excelled many of his equals. It would have terrified him exceedingly to have gone to sleep at night without counterbalancing all the sins of the day by a repetition of his forms of worship; but on all occasions when he had *"paid his vows, he had peace offerings at home."* Up to about this period of life he was led to suppose that as touching the righteousness of the law he was blameless. We cannot describe to our readers the mortification and disappointment of this young lad, when being suddenly arrested by an arrow from the quiver of the Lord, he was summoned to stand at the dreadful bar of divine justice and give the reason, if any he had, why the tremendous sentence of the law of God should not be executed upon his guilty soul. Great was his consternation when he cast his eager glance around in search of those fancied treasures of personal holiness which he had believed himself to be in possession of. Alas! His stronghold failed him in this very critical moment he felt that he was ruined. But like Edom he said, *"I am impoverished, but I will return and build again my waste places."* Great were his efforts, his labors, toils and pains to mend again that holy law which he had broken. He would have prayed, but he could no longer view the great, the dreadful God as a being that might be thrilled with, or pacified by what he could do. He struggled, but the harder he struggled the deeper he seemed to be involved in a horrible pit and in miry clay. These exercises continued for many days and weeks. Sometimes he meditated a retreat

from this awfully wretched state, but whither could he flee, If on the wings of the morning he should fly to the uttermost sea, God was there, everywhere present, beholding the evil and the good; there could be no retreating from God, before whose flaming eyes all things are naked and open. At length the day seemed to arrive when the dreadful sentence of the inexorable law of God must be put in execution. Now blackness and darkness and tempests gathered round his frightened soul. Hell yawned before him; justice stood with uplifted arm and the flaming sword of vengeance was drawn from its scabbard, and brandished over his guilty head. The books were brought. The arch accuser was also there, and what was to him more dreadful still than all, the piercing eye of God brought the black crimes of years to light, and what had been transacted in midnight darkness was now exposed upon the housetop. Chilled thus with horror, and pressed down to death with intense despair, remorse, guilt and keen anguish throbbing in his breast: tell us, dear reader, did he need an anxious bench, or knives, or lancets, to secure his conviction or would it have comforted him to have been informed by some Universalist that there was no hell, when the very pains of hell had got hold of him. As well might he be told, when writhing on a bed of embers, that there was no heat in the fire. The spell of such delusion was now broken. The Spirit had moved upon the face of the great deep of his inmost soul, and although all had been without form and void, yet God had said, Let there be light, and light broke in upon him; and in this light, that heart which he had thought was a temple meet for the Holy Ghost to dwell in, was now manifestly the habitation of dragons, and the hold of every unclean and hateful bird. It was thus, when in or about his seventh year, he went to a distant barn, under an impression like that expressed by the poet:

"I can but perish if I go,
I am resolved to try;
For if I stay away,
I know I must forever die."

He fell upon his bended knees, but he could not pray; a rustling leaf, a turning straw, frightened his guilty soul, and chained his speechless tongue; awful apprehensions and fearful forebodings pursued him back to his chamber, when despairing of mercy he threw himself upon a bed to die and meet his fiery doom. Worn out with labor and want of rest, nature sank beneath the load, and he fell into a sleep. Unconscious of what passed while sleeping, he awoke himself singing these words:

"How glorious is our heavenly King,
Who reigns above the sky;
How shall a child presume to sing,
His dreadful majesty?"

He seemed indeed in a new world, his load of guilt and *sin* were gone, the love of God shed abroad in his heart.

"His tongue broke out in unknown strains,
And sang surprising grace."

At the age of eleven years and four weeks, on the second Sunday in December 1811 he was permitted to be buried with his precious Lord in baptism, in the river Thames, in the city of Norwich, Connecticut, by Eld. John Sterry, who has since fallen asleep.

After remaining eight years a member of the Baptist church in Norwich, he removed his relation to the church in the city of New York, then under the pastoral care of that champion for the truth, Eld. Jonathan Van Velsen, who also, has fallen asleep. While a member of the Ebenezer Church in New York, the subject of our narrative, when in his twentieth year, was licensed to preach the gospel. The peculiar circumstances of his call to the work of the ministry our present limits will not admit. Let it suffice to say, that being experimentally, he could not help being doctrinally, Predestinarian. For more than fourteen years he has been lisping the name of Jesus with such abilities as the Lord has been pleased to bestow, without any of the polish of Gamaliel's school; and although it has been his privilege to suffer some persecution, yet he has not resisted unto blood, striving against sin. He finds by every day's experience that he is a sinner yet, his nature is still as evil as ever it was. *"To will is present with him, but how to perform that which is good, he finds not."* He is still the chief of sinners, and if a saint, the least of all.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

MEETINGS

OLD PINE CREEK CHURCH

An annual all day meeting will be held, the Lord willing, at Old Pine Creek Church on the fourth of July 2001. The Church is located off #221, five miles north of Floyd, Va. Those coming from Floyd turn left on to road #682. Those coming from Roanoke, turn right on to road #682. All lovers of the truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Hale Terry

Job 37: 23-24.

Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict.

Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any that are wise of heart.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 2001

Hetty Sutherland, Va. 18.00
Hazel Jackson, NC 7.00
Winfred Young, NC 5.00
In Memory of Bro. Jesse
and Sister Emma Somers 25.00
Francis Knight, VA 5.00
Edna Shipman. TX 2.00
Peggy Phillips, VA 2.00
Alice Johnson, TX 2.00
J. D. Neely, AR 2.00
Eld. J. Y. McCormick, GA 7.00
Ruth Jones, VA 2.00
Colleen Cox, Va 2.00
Lillian Wood, NC 2.00
Anonymous 90.00
Sam Lilly, VA 2.00
Tim Barron, TX 7.00
Everett Goodman, AL 7.00
Inda Wingate, NC 2.00
Duane Gray, VA 2.00
Eli Smith, NC 2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER ALICE FOY ALLEN

Sister Alice Foy Allen, beloved member of Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church. died January 7, 2001 after a long illness. She was born July 14, 1915, in Onslow County, N.C.

Sister Alice was preceded in death by her husband, Elder Oliver Allen. On December 6, 1986, they both moved their Membership to Stump Sound Church. Funeral services were held by her pastor, Elder Gene Lupton, and Elder Milton Lupton. She is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Bonnie Rang of Jacksonville, N.C., a son, Phillip Allen of Charleston, S.C., a Sister, Mrs. Louise Baugus of Morehead, N.C., a brother, Louie Foy of Veron, N.C., several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Sister Alice loved the doctrine of predestination of all things by God, and that salvation is by grace and grace alone. She was truly a helpmate to her husband as he served the churches Wherever he was called to go many, many years. She was Faithful to attend church meetings as long as she was able.

Written by request of Stump Sound Church.

Elder Gene Lupton, Moderator
Sister Evelyn Pratt, Clerk

SISTER VIOLET E. BIRD

We bow in humble submission to the Father who saw fit to call from our midst our beloved sister and friend Violet E. Bird. Sister Violet was born February 12, 1916 and was taken from this low ground of sin and sorrow March 11, 2001 making her 85 years and 1 month. We feel our loss is her eternal gain. She went to sleep in Christ in her sleep. She was afflicted for many years in her natural body. She now sleeps, waiting for that great day when Christ shall come and unite her Spirit and her body that it will be changed to a Spiritual body,

liken unto Christ's glorious body. Our deepest sympathy goes out to her family and may they be comforted by God's love and mercy, and words of comfort is our prayer. She had a hope in an all wise, all powerful, and an all merciful God who has done all things well. For there is nothing that can be added or taken away from God's finished work. For what God has done, it was done forever. She had a hope not in herself but in Christ. She believed in the Election of God, Grace and mercy before the foundation of the world. She was a member of Indian Fork Primitive Baptist Church for many years. She was married to Norman N. Bird January 22,1939 who preceded her in death. To this union was born one son, who she leaves to mourn her passing, also a daughter-in-law, two grandchildren, and a great granddaughter, one brother Elder Willard Bird and a host of family and friends. Services were conducted at Allen Funeral Home at Hurricane, W. Va., by Elder Veldon Lynn. She was laid to rest at Mt. Moriah Cemetery Hurricane, W. Va. to wait that call *"Awake all ye sleeping dust"* for dust we were and to dust we shall return. For this writer, in hope, believes in three callings of God. Sister Violet answered the first call, when she asked for a home in the church. She answered the second call, when God called her out of this world, and she will answer the third when that loud voice calls come forth. For Job stated *"when thy call I will answer." AMEN*

Written by request of Indian Fork Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder Ronald Crouch

ANDREW CRISLEY COX

Andrew Crisley Cox, 41, of Radford, died Friday, January 26, 2001 at his home. Andy was born August 6, 1959. He graduated from Floyd County High School in 1978 and was a member of the Floyd County Volunteer Fire Department Station #4 for twelve years. An avid auction follower, he spent much time collecting, restoring and trading antiques. He was especially interested in pieces from Floyd County. Dedicated to his friends and family, Andy always had time to help out a neighbor or visit a friend. He devotedly cared for his grandmother, Evie Duncan Shelton, until her death. He was preceded in death by his father, Elder Jack Willard Cox. Survivors include his mother, Colleen Duncan Cox of Radford; brothers and sisters-in-law, David and Brenda Cox of Rocky Mount, Joe and Judy Cox of Radford, Sam and Dana Cox of Christiansburg, Arthur and Carol Cox of Radford, Mike Cox of Galax; sister, Faye Cox of Roanoke; nieces and nephews, Todd Cox, Dean Shatley, Brian Cox, Jason Cox, Thomas Cox, Crisley

Cox, Mandy Atkinson, Matthew Cox, Alice Cox, Marsha Cox, and Michelle Cox, who were like the daughters he never had of his own; aunts and uncles, Martin Hollandsworth of Floyd. Nettie and Alvis Duncan of Norfolk, Dorcie and Grover Semones of Salem, Mabel and Bill Curry of Danville, French Hogan of Vinton, Mary Marshall of Christiansburg, Herbert and Ava Cox of Christiansburg, Arnold and Treva Poff of Christiansburg; special cousins, Mary and Keeko Allman of Roanoke; and special friend, Evelyn Rutrough of Floyd. Funeral services were at the Valley View Primitive Baptist Church of Riner with Elder Raymond Goad and Elder C. B. Davis, Jr. officiating. Burial followed in Sunset Cemetery, Christiansburg.

JAMES DANIEL CUNNINGHAM

My husband James Daniel Cunningham was born April 30, 1918 and passed away May 18, 2000. He was very fond of the Signs of the Times. It held great sentimental value as well as being a blessing to read each month. J.D.'s grandfather received the paper and then his father (Dan Cunningham) also received the paper until his death in 1973. It was then that J.D. started to receive and did so until his death and now I receive it each month. So, you see, "The Signs of the Times" has been passed through 3 generations in our family and we look forward to future issues.

May God richly bless each of you.

In his love,
Opelene Cunningham

PROVERBS 8:10-11.

Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.

For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

SISTER THELMA FOY

Sister Thelma Allen Foy, beloved member of Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church passed away August 25, 2000.

Sister Foy moved her membership to Stump Sound March 27, 1987 She was a firm believer of the doctrine of predestination of all things by a Sovereign God, and that salvation is by grace, and grace alone.

She was the mother of Sister Sarah Jane Foster, and she was the sister of the late Elder Oliver Allen.

Written by request of Stump Sound Church in conference September 23, 2000.

Elder Gene Lupton, Moderator
Sister Evelyn Pratt, Clerk

FLORENCE DUDLEY MAXEY

Another one of our dearly beloved Sisters in Christ at Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church was called from our midst on March 9, 2001 to forever rest in love and peace with her Heavenly Father. She was born August 23, 1911 and was the last surviver of 13 children of the late Brother Davis and Sister Milia Dudley. She was pre-deceased by her husband, Brother Roy P. Maxey of Roanoke, Va. They were married October 20, 1927, and he passed away March 25, 1972.

She is survived by one daughter and son-in-law, Elnora M. and Marion P. Paitsel, Vinton, Va.; one granddaughter and husband, Melissa P. and Thomas Vaughan, Richmond, Va.; two great grandsons, Bobby and David Vaughan, Richmond, Va.; one sister-in-law, Mrs. Rachel Dudley, Rocky Mount, Va. and many nieces and nephews whom she loved dearly.

The funeral service was conducted at Lotz Roanoke Chapel 10:00 a.m. on Monday March 12, 2001 by her pastor, Elder Leonard J. Brammer with interment in Mountain View Cemetery, Vinton, Va. with so many beautiful flowers as a blanket. She joined Roanoke Church April 1947 and was baptized by the late Elder Cecil E. Turner.

She was such a special member who walked softly before the Lord and her brethren and sisters these many years. Although she will be missed so much by her family and her church, we feel she is resting now in the arms of her Heavenly Father, waiting for that great day when she and brother Roy will be brought forth where ***"Congregations never break up and Sabbaths never end."***

She will always be remembered and loved for her humble walk and care of all that knew her - I personally have lost such a great friend, one that over 50 years was there through many joys and sorrows. Her family was so attentive through her afflictions and did all for her that human hands could do.

I've never known anyone more devoted to her church than Sister Florence in caring for the welfare and comfort of her brethren, sisters and friends. Her home was always open to entertain them and her greatest desire was to hear the scriptures discussed. She traveled many miles to visit other churches of her faith and associations for as long as she was able.

Many years ago she requested that this unworthy one would write this memorial and send to The Signs of the Times for publication.

By the Grace of God I have done the best that I could.

Written by an unworthy Sister, who loved her dearly,

Rlee B. Houchins

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

In Memory of
My Mother,
Annie B. Cobb

One night, while I lay dreaming,
I was dreaming of a little log cabin.
While in there I heard someone call my name,
And I looked and saw a sweet old lady,
And it seemed I was a child again.
She put her loving arms around me.
Like she did so many times before.
And then I heard her sing "Rock of Ages"
And "Silver Threads Among the Gold".
And then she opened up the family Bible,
And told me once again of Jesus.
And I knew it was the same sweet mother,
That had kissed me so many time before.
And I thank God for letting me see my ancient mother once again.

Her Son, Curtis L. Cobb

POSTMASTER

Please send address changes to:

Signs of the Times
202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

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EDITORIAL

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman who needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Timothy 2:15.

Elder J. B. Farmer

Here is the commandment of God given to the inspired apostle and then to the true minister of the gospel, Timothy. It was also left on record for His people from that day even down to this day. It is a great mystery how the God of heaven and earth revealed His truth to the apostle and caused it to be received, believed and obeyed by himself and by Timothy and, we hope, ourselves. It is also a great mystery how any of us know anything of the kingdom of God. ***"The things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God." "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*** Therefore, if anyone knows anything of this mystery, it must be revealed to him by the Spirit.

Now, the Spirit says, ***"study"***, meaning not to be lax or presumptuous in nature, but to be diligent by the grace of God, ***"to shew thyself approved unto God"***, not to show yourself approved unto men, but to show yourself, by His mercy, approved unto God, ***"a workman who needeth not to be ashamed"***, not as one who works shamefully as a hireling for a wage, but one who labors honorably in the truth, by grace, desiring all to be to the glory of God and to the comfort of His people, ***"rightly dividing"***, not twisting for some kind of cover for wickedness or advantage, but rather by revelation, giving the correct spiritual sense of, ***"the word of truth"***, the holy inspired scriptures of truth given by God to His little ones for their instruction and comfort.

How can we know if, when preaching, we are rightly dividing the word of truth? Or, how can any-

one, when reading the scriptures with a desire for understanding be sure he is rightly dividing them? Or how can one, when hearing or reading the word being divided by another, be sure that it is being rightly divided? This is another great mystery and only God is able to make it plain. He has hidden these things from the wise and prudent and has revealed them unto babes. He has given us assurance that He has a people in this world who have been given life in Him by the Spirit and who have had His spiritual law written in their hearts and have had it put in their minds. His Spirit and His holy law is in them. They have been given the mind of Christ by which they judge all things. It is no wonder He said, ***"examine yourselves whether you be in the faith"***, and ***"try the spirits whether they be of God."*** The children of God are made to examine everything they think, say, hear, read, and do. They are constantly standing before the judgment seat of Christ, receiving the things done in the body, whether they be good or evil.

So, in a sense, the little ones are constantly looking to God as little children, asking Him to render judgment about every matter which comes before or in them. They seek not the praise of this world but rather the approval of almighty God. They desire to know the truth even if it is against them. Job said, ***"though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." They hear the words, "lean not to thine own understanding, but in all thy ways acknowledge Him and He will direct thy paths".*** When they come to a fork in the road of life and know not which way to take, they stop and ask for guidance of the One who knows all and cannot make a mistake. Then, at His direction, they step out in faith with the assurance that God has spoken and that He will go with them and keep them in the way, even when it is contrary to nature. So is it true when the children of God divide the word of truth or hear or read it as it is being divided.

When the true ministers of God are called to rightly divide the word of truth, they are not left to the strength of the flesh to perform this. The holy apostle said, ***"how to perform that which is good, I find not,"*** and also, ***"He that has begun a good work in you shall perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ."*** So then, the ministers of God and all the children of God find themselves to be inadequate for the task. They know not how to give the correct sense of it. But God is merciful and gives them to hear a small voice saying, ***"if any man lack wisdom, let him ask God who giveth all men liberally and upbraideth not."*** In the very hour or moment of need, the God of all power and of compassion appears and supplies all our needs. Therefore, the rightly dividing of the word of truth is the work of God, not the work of men. If we were left to ourselves, we would immediately err and follow nature. And we do err

from time to time as our God teaches us what we are by nature. But if we be the people of God, we are not allowed to altogether follow nature but rather, we are corrected and kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. When the word of truth is rightly divided, it perfectly fits the spiritual mind and heart and renders all praise, honor and glory unto Him unto whom it is due. When it is this way, we have no doubt that it is the true doctrine of God and the true gospel of the grace of God which is given in power of the Holy Spirit.

This is written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer
12-4-2000

CORRESPONDENCE

April 7, 2001

Dear Elder Terry,

I notice that my renewal to the "Signs" is due.

Enclosed find check for twenty ($20.00) dollars to cover renewal of my subscription for one year, the remaining ten ($10.00) dollars to use to send the paper to someone else.

Elder Terry I was touched by your letter to Elder Key. Your grandfather was greatly blessed. How wonderful it is to know that the Lord's spirit visits His people yet.

With a love for the truth.

Martha C. Lunsford

1217 Dinwiddie Avenue
Richmond, Va 23229-5829
April 11, 2001

My dear Elder Terry,

I have read your article in April Signs again and enjoyed it very much, as I did other writings. Please renew Signs another year for me. I think of many dear ones and do believe the dear Lord continues to cover my sins from those who take my hand or speak kindly to me. As I said to the little ones gathered together at Springfield Church 33 years ago, "I know what I am." Those little ones and other little ones have been kind to me all these years.

May the God be pleased to continue His blessings upon us.

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickral

April 15, 2001

Dear Elder Terry,

Please find enclosed my check in the amount of eighteen dollars for which I wish to renew my subscription for two years. I realize I'm late and the subscription will date retroactive. I apologize for my

tardiness, but do thank you for continuing to send the Signs to me. I would love you equally as well if you had stopped it, but again Thanks!

J. Carroll Williams
1229 McDuffers Road
Rocky Mount, NC 27804

3-26-01

Elder Wm. Hale Terry,

I have enclosed a check for $25.00 for a contribution and subscription, however it can be most used. Our family has received "The Signs of the Times" for many years. My husband's grandfather received it many years ago and then his father until his death last May and now I receive it each month. It has been a blessing to us in more ways than one.

May God continue to bless each of you.

In his love,
Opelene Cunningham

ST. JOHN 15:12-13.

This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

4-10-01

Dear Elder Terry,

I see I'm about to let my subscription run out. I have enclosed a check for $20.00. Please renew my subscription for 2 years and keep the $2.00 as a gift to the "Signs". I always look forward to the "Signs", although some of the writings seems to be beyond my understanding.

The article you wrote last month was so beautiful. I have heard you speak about that experience, and I'm sure its precious to you. How sweet it is when we are blessed to know where these things come from! I have had a few experiences in my life, which has given me a precious "hope" I would not trade for anything. But if I am one of His, the least of all.

With Love I hope,
Mary Janney

CORRECTION

"Permission of the copyright owners to publish the article, ***Experience and Call to the Ministry,*** (March 2001, p. 57) was inadvertently omitted. We regret this error and are pleased to make this correction."

The Editors

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

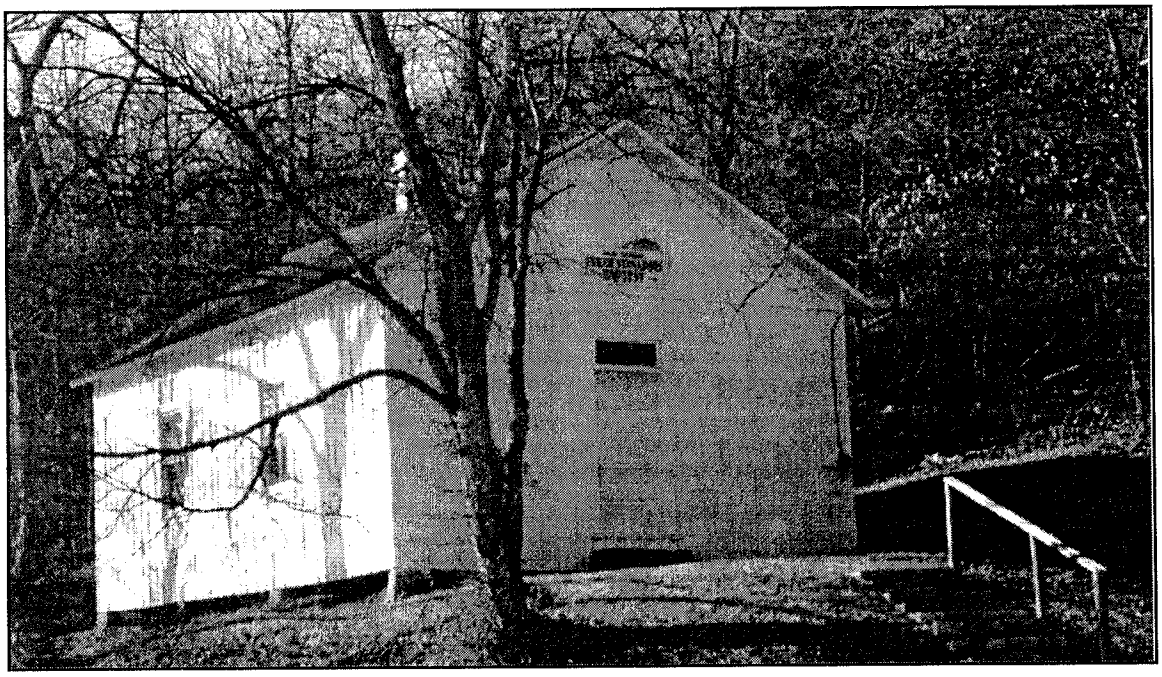

Above church is home of Elder Farmer and Sister Sherry

THE OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH

The Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church is located 2 miles east of Denton, Carter County, Kentucky on Ky. Route 773. The structure was built in 1940 by then pastor Elder Hiram Rogers. The membership moved from its original location on Lost Creek near Willard, Carter County, Kentucky. The history of the Lost Creek church is unknown. Until the new church was built, the services were held on top of the hill overlooking the present site of this church. Services are held the first Sunday of each month at 10:30 a.m. The Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church belongs to the Little Ole Vine Association of Primitive Baptist Churches.

The beliefs of these Baptists are significant to Kentucky history .The primitive baptist faith has remained virtually unchanged for centuries. The Anabaptist and Waldren of Europe are a few other names of the same faith.

The United Baptists and Regular Baptists are two Baptist groups that broke away from the Primitive Baptist faith in the early 1800's. Some noted Kentucky members of Primitive Baptist churches were Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks, parents of President Abraham Lincoln.

ARTICLES

THAT IN ALL THINGS HE (CHRIST) MIGHT HAVE THE PREEMINENCE

Only in the New Testament do the inspired writers begin in clarity, to show that Christ is the fulfillment of the manifold prophecies laid down in the legal (Mosaic) covenant. Christ is the embodiment, or fulfillment of a new covenant (testament).

Unlike the Old Testament, with it's use of types and shadows and figurative language, whereby they spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, and though they desired to know of what they spoke or, when it would come to pass yet knew it not, see Mat. 13:17, Luk. 10:24, 1 Pet. 1:10-12; yet in the new testament it is spelled out plainly. Here they spoke of the generation of Jesus Christ; they spoke of the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ) the Son of God: they spoke of the order of the events of the life and death of Jesus Christ and the resurrection; they spoke of how in the beginning was the Word (Christ), and the Word was with God and the Word was God, and all things were made by him; they spoke of all that Jesus began to do and teach; the apostles spoke of themselves as servants and apostles of Jesus Christ. These will all be recognized as the salutations generally set forth in nearly all of the books of the New Testament. Each setting forth Christ as the central theme and subject of the letters.

In Hebrews 1, the apostle clearly designates his principal, and points out the singularity of Christ, the Son, through whom God speaks to his people. He hath also appointed Christ heir of all things (primarily concerning the church), and in Mat. 28:18, it is seen that, ***"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."***

It would seem to be beyond the capacity of words to express the greatness and the importance of this person who was the son of man, and is and was God, and was and is the Saviour. Neither can the natural mind comprehend that in the fullness of time God sent forth his Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, to redeem his people. Rom. 8:3, and Gal. 4:4,5.

The scriptures do not leave us to doubt about the purpose of the Son of God coming into this time world in the likeness of sinful flesh and being made under the law. In the words of Christ) John 6:38-40 ***"...I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise***

him up at the last day."

Christ also came into the world to fulfill the law) and He did, to every jot and tittle. He is also the end of the law for righteousness. Mat. 5:17)18 & Rom. 10:4. The law prefigured Christ in it's many forms and ceremonies. When these prefigures were fulfilled in the finished work of Christ they went no further. This was the end of the law, when it was fulfilled.

Prophesy was also to be fulfilled by Christ while he was here in this world, and he did. *"...those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all the prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." Acts 3:18.* Of His death, *"He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgressions of my people was he stricken." Isa. 53:8.* Also, *Isa. 53:10, "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shall make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands."* Is not this the work of Christ in fulfilling the salvation of his people that Isaiah saw?

This, then, is the purpose of God, in Christ, in the fullness of time. The Son of man is come to save that which was lost, Mat. 18:11. And He made the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering. Heb. 2:10.

In the finished work of Christ is seen the manyfold aspects of bringing many sons to glory. They are redeemed; their sins are forgiven; they are justified; they are made alive unto Christ and partakers of the divine nature, baptized with the Holy Ghost; and, in fullness, receive the things that accompany salvation.

Although the fullness of the work of Christ, as sketchily here described, is wrought in time, yet they have ever stood complete in the realm of God's eternity. God that inhabits eternity is an unchanging God, see Mal.3:6. *"I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Rev.1:8.* Thus the apostle, speaking of the everlasting priesthood of Christ, in Heb. 5:6-9, and his sonship, being made perfect through suffering, he became the author of eternal salvation.

While yet in the flesh we see as through a glass darkly, and the finished work of Christ wrought in the fullness of time. Yet, all the work of salvation, by Christ in the flesh, flows from the eternal purpose of the three-in-one God in election; an election that was in eternity (before the foundation of the world); a choosing, by God, based only on His good pleasure. See II Tim. 1:9, 1 *Pet.* 1:2, Rom. 9:11, Eph. 1:4, Rev. 4:11, ect.

How can mere words express, or compare the meaning of "time", that has a beginning and ending, with eternity that has neither beginning or ending; or, the Son of God, who wrought his work in time, is also God, who in Rev. 1:8, says, ***"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending..."***; the One with whom all time and eternity is an ever present "now" . Such , comparison is impossible to the natural mind. Yet, by inspiration, the apostle Paul brings the two together in II Tim. 1:9,10. What God has given his people, in Christ Jesus, before the world began (vs. 9) he has now plainly shown (manifest) by the appearing and work (abolishing death) of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

Also, in Eph. 1:4-10 it is pointed out that the purposes of God, before the foundation of the world, are wrought in Christ in time. Specifically, beginning at vs. 9, (God) ***"Having made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him."***

Considering the greatness of this person, the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and what is accomplished in him, is it any wonder that the "apostle points out in Eph. 1:22,23, concerning Christ, that God ***"...hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all".*** Yes, he is all to the church, his bride. She looks to none other for it is in him, her husband, her head, that she lives and moves and has her being.

Preceeding the words of Col. 1:18 ***"...that in all things he might have the preeminence."***, which are used at the beginning of this writing, the apostle again expresses the greatness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Starting at vs. 16, ***"...by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; ..."***

It might be said that Christ is to have preeminence concerning my law and the prophets. But these were fulfilled by the finished work of Christ and thus have no eminence at all. Once fulfilled they are laid aside and have no use at all except that we through reading what is written, through patience and the comfort of the scriptures might have hope. See Rom. 15:4. There is no comfort or hope in the law or prophets.

Does not the preeminence of Christ relate to the position he has to?

The church, and his work wrought in time, when compared to the position of the Father and the Holy Spirit? Of course, it in no way takes away from the majesty and glory of the Father, nor the power and divinity of the Holy Spirit. But it is the relationship that should be understood as the relationship of a father and son where the father gives the son the preeminence. No violence is done to the full divine essence of each in the single body of the Trinity; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

There are numerous scriptures that focus on this relationship of Christ to the church, and how the church should view him, as compared to the Father and the Holy Spirit. Some of them are mentioned here:

Heb. 1:2,3, God, in these last days has spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the expressed image of his persons and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high: The Son is given the preeminence.

Phil. 2:9. Therefore God also hath highly exalted him (Christ), and given him a name which is above every name. Christ is given preeminence.

Mat. 28:17. Jesus words are that *"All power is given unto me in heaven and earth."* In this Christ has the preeminence.

John 14:8. To the answer of Philip when ask to *"show us the Father and it sufficeth us."* Jesus replied, in part, *"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father"*. He has seen the Father in him who has the preeminence. This is a relationship that they did not understand at that time, but O which the church should, in this day, hold precious.

Col. 1:8,9. The apostle warns the church to beware of false doctrine, which he points to in the world, and which is not after Christ. *"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."* Although the Godhead is present in it's fulness, it is present in the person of Christ, demonstrating that it is he who has the preeminence.

John 16:13,14. *"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will shew you all things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."* In the words of Christ the Spirit shall not speak of himself. Because Christ has the preeminence the Spirit will show the bride (church) the things of the bridegroom and shall glorify him.

1 Cor. 2:2. *"For I determined not to know anything among*

you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." This should not be understood to be to the exclusion of the Father or the Holy Spirit. But the theme of the church should be centered on the finished work of Christ, her husband. Though the prayers of the saints are to the Father, from whom flows every good and perfect gift, they are raised in the name of Christ and for his sake, who has the preeminence.

"For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;" Col. 1:19.

W. G. Chapell
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Memphis, TN.

MY CALLING TO PREACH GOD'S WORD

When I was a young child, Mom would take me to the Primitive Baptist Church at Ridgeway, Va. My Granny was a member there. She would tell me some of her experiences in the Lord from time to time. As a young child I was very interested in the Lord. So, I would listen to my Granny tell of the love she had in the Lord. One day she told me when I was between 9 and 10 years old, that Son you will have to stand before God's people and preach to them about Jesus. I loved my Granny so very much. For many years I kept this in my Heart never telling anyone.

As I became a young Man and got my first car when I was Sixteen years old. Each Sunday I would take my Mother, Sister Meeks, and Sister Thacker to Church each Sunday, because, they had no way to *get* there. From Sixteen to the time I turned Seventeen years old, I dated several Girls never finding one that would go to Church with me on Sunday. So, I quit going with each one of them, because, they would not go to Church with me. Then the Lord blessed me to meet Mary Louise Manuel at Fuzzy's Barbecue in Madison, N.C. After going to her home and talking to her Dad and Mom we started dating in 1956. The first week we dated I told her that on Sunday I wanted her to go with me to meet my Mother. And, also to go with me and my mother to Church, also, I told her there would be two more going with us. After I told Louise this she said that was what she always wanted to do. She said she hoped that she would meet a guy that would take her to Church each Sunday.

So, after dating Louise from January 1956 to September 1957 we were married on Sept. 7th. We kept going to Church together each Sunday. I thought I would join the Church first, but Louise joined the Church first. In 1960 Louise joined the Primitive Baptist Church in Eden *N.C.* In 1962 I joined the same Church, Very soon after I joined the Church they ordained me as a Deacon in 1967. Next they appointed me as Church Clerk over the Associa-

tion. Next they appointed me as Trustee over the Church. Each time the different things were asked of me to do for the Church I felt so unworthy in all of these things. Still in the back of my mind I thought many times about what my Granny had told me as a young boy, about, standing before the Church. So, I served the Church at each calling as the Lord led Me. Thinking surely this is the Lord's Will, for my life, so, I went leaning on the Everlasting Arms of Jesus, Praying that his will be done in my life.

After going to church with my wife and mother for many years a sickness came over me, that no Doctors could explain or heal me of. I felt that the Lord was calling me to Preach his word. So, I went on in this condition many years. As the years went by, I had many dreams and visions about my Lord. From time to time he would show me my life from a young age till that present time in my life. I was having the dreams and visions, one night I was shown in a dream or vision the devil. The devil as I saw him in the dream or vision picked me up and carried me into a large and dark hole in a Mountain and as he carried me in his arms holding me very tight to the bottom of the hole in the Mountain. He carried me up to a very large pit of fire and as he came up to the pit to cast me in the fire his arms fell down causing him to drop me just before casting me into Hell's Lake of Fire. As my feet hit the ground I started *to* run, using the light from the fire, and as I ran from him I could feel him almost touching my back, as if he had hold of me to take me back to the fire to cast me in. Then the most beautiful door opened up in the mountain with a very bright light shining in my path for me to run in. As I was going to the light running, a double barrel Shotgun was all at once in my hand. I turned and pointed it in his face and pulled both Triggers at the same time, the shots never made a mark on him. This was showing me that we can do nothing of our self. After shooting I kept running into the light, and as I got to the top of the path in the Mountain I came to the door that had opened to me. As I went through the door, the door closed behind me shutting old Satan away from me. After this I went many months in Peace.

Then this sickness I told you about, that had come on me, began to get worse. One day at work as we were making a line change at the Bassett Walker Sewing factory .Me being the Boss over the factory, I was not suppose to help with the moving of the sewing machines, but, to oversee the move. As I was watching the men work a *voice* spoke *to* me and said go help the men. The first machine I plugged into the 240 volts was wired wrong. The ground was wired to the hot 240 volt side. As I plugged the wire into the transporter with my hand on the Sewing machine and the plug wire in the transporter with my hand on it, 240 volts started running through my body. As the charge of the 240 volts

was running through my body. The Lord began to show me my life from a lad until that day. As he showed me my life I tried to go back and fix everything right, but as I tried to make everything ok I only made things worse. The Lord was showing me that I could do nothing of my own but sin. As the volts were flowing through my body, the pain was very bad and I could hardly stand it. Next my eyes rolled back in my head and my heart stopped. Then I saw myself in a casket in the Funeral Home. Next I saw the people as they come by the casket to view me and I saw all of the Flowers. The next day as my funeral was being preached I saw the people crying and after church service at the grave side as the casket was in the steel vault Louise asked if they would open the casket one more time before lowering it in the ground. She asked the people to sing my favorite song Amazing Grace, and, as they started to sing the Lord showed me a Pulpit in a Church with me standing in it Preaching Jesus. The Lord moved me from out of the casket through the air and in a moment I was standing in front of a Pulpit Preaching Jesus to the Brothers and Sisters in the Lord. A voice spoke to me and said you can not die yet, because, I am not through with you yet. He said feed my Sheep and my Lambs. The next thing I Knew I was in the Hospital at Martinsville Va., where I stayed many days. Later I was told that a Brother who is now a Elder in a Primitive Baptist Church placed a kick in my chest which knocked me free from the 240 volts on to the floor. The Doctor said he believed the kick that the Brother gave me, started my heart back to beating. From this shock I had burned hands and holes burned below my knee, my feet were split open. My arms and chest were blue and black with bruises. The doctor told me Son you will not have your memory any more because of the shock. The Doctor was wrong, because I have a better memory than before the shock. When the Lord is on your side nothing can go wrong. He had the Brother there to loose me from the 240 volts. He was showing me what he had fixed in my life to do to be Ordained as a Preacher in the Primitive Baptist Church. After getting out of the Hospital it was 3 months before I could walk across the factory at work. After returning to work with pain after the Lord showed me these things. I never told anyone about these things not even my wife. After this I went on trying to live with this being kept in my heart. I had said in my heart many times to myself I cannot do this, so I thought in my heart if I never tell anyone, in time it will go away. As time went on, the words of my Granny would come to my mind. Son, you will have to stand for the Lord and preach his word. After a long period of time, the thing began to burn in my heart each and every day.

Until one morning, on a Saturday, that Elder Goad and I were going Deer Hunting on his farm. As we

left his home going down to the old farmhouse to go hunting for Deer. A voice spoke to me and said, It is time to tell some one and Elder Goad is the one to tell all things that has happened to me in the Lord. After talking for a few hours to Elder Goad telling all. I told him, tell no one of these things. As I left his home I felt much better. Finally relieved some what. To my surprise he called Elder Tench and told him of my experience in the Lord. The next meeting Elder Tench asked me to speak before the Church and being afraid before the Lord, I did. They gave me liberty to speak at the Churches we were in correspondence with. After many months passed by the Church called for me to be ordained as an Elder in the Primitive Baptists in 1985. After being ordained as an Elder, I visited many of our Churches. As I visited these Churches one by one, meeting the Brethren, one of these Churches stood out, because, it was the very same Church with the Pulpit I had seen in my vision. I now Pastor this Church which I saw in my vision. Reedcreek Primitive Baptist Church at Collinsville, VA.

This that my Granny saw when I was between 9 and 10 years old was to be in the Lord. I have been serving Reedcreek and Strawberry Primitive Baptist Church for 16 years. From this that my Granny saw all those years ago, I was blessed to baptize her daughter, which is my Mother. This being the 2001-year, this was written on 3-7-01. This is my experience in the Lord. I have so much to be thankful for, because, the Lord gave me a wonderful Wife and Son.

The things I saw in the death experience while I was going through the 240 volt shock. I have never been able to tell anyone yet of all things I saw in the Lord.

My Experience in the Lord
Elder Thomas Solomon
Wrote in Torreon Mexico 3-7-01

PSALM 24: 1-7.

The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?

He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE LABORING AND HEAVY LADEN

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." - Matt. xi. 28.

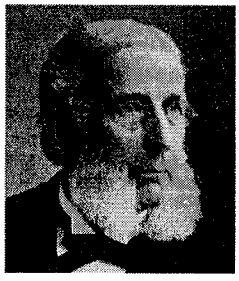

Elder Silas H. Durand

The work on hand must be done; much depends upon its accomplishment. I fully realize the importance of it, but I also am sure of my ability to do and complete the work by the given time, therefore I am not troubled or burdened by it, but am rather animated and pleased as I enter upon the labor enjoying the work itself, and the confident assurance of its fulfillment when required. I am laboring, but am not heavy laden. To those who are well, and strong, and energetic, work is pleasant. It is good to have both the mind and body actively engaged, and a man of this character will of choice work hard, and to the limit of his strength, even though it is not required that he should do so. And though he may find it necessary to urge himself forward, he is not heavy laden. He is able to use his utmost strength, and to do all that is required each day, and so to keep even with the work as it is called for, and is still not heavy laden.

But should this man lose the use of some member of his body, leaving him able to do only half a day's work in a day, while a full day's work is still absolutely necessary and required, he will soon find himself crushed down under a burden of unfinished work. Struggle as he will, and as he must, the burden still increases, until he is rendered utterly helpless.

In the religious world all men seem to be engaged in the service of some God, with the feeling that they must do something to please him in order that they may be happy after death. It seems to be the common sentiment of natural men that they must do some work in order to obtain salvation. If grace is thought necessary to that work, the thought of the natural mind is that grace is to show us what to do and how to do it. But something must be done by the man in order to his salvation; that is the universal belief of all men. It seems also to be unquestioned that the man is able to do that something, whatever it may be. And when one has done that work, and has thus obtained that salvation in his own estimation, he is very likely to be so well assured of his ability that he believes he can be the means of saving others. In the Lord's own good time he will teach his people the truth concerning their salvation, and it will be in such a way that they can say of the dear Savior, He teacheth as never man taught. It is written in the Psalms, ***"Blessed is the man whom thou choosest,***

and causest to approach unto thee."-Psalms lxv. 4. This is where the Lord begins in the salvation of his people. He chooses them, but this choice was before the foundation of the world, and all spiritual blessings were given them in Christ according to that eternal choice. Now he calls them, and causes them to approach unto him. (Eph. i. 4.)

It is this choice, and the manner of it, and the experience of it, and all the incidents attending it, that I love to dwell upon. It is so wonderful, so deep, so great, and yet so simple, and so like the crying and the laughing and the prattle of a little babe. Until there is a new, spiritual birth there are no such experiences and exercises of mind, for there is no life until then. Until there is divine life there is no hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Until then there is no preparation in their hearts for the sweet call of the dear Savior, who says, *"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."* These chosen ones are the babes unto whom the Lord reveals these things of the gospel, and unto whom the Son reveals the Father. When one is quickened by divine life then he begins to work in earnest, in order to gain salvation. Soon he finds himself failing here and there in his work. He cannot find anything perfect in whatever he does. His best works do not satisfy his conscience, they get poorer and more faulty every day. His prayers do not suit him; they seem only a chattering noise. This poor soul seems to himself to be getting farther away from the Lord every day. Instead of that, however, he is getting farther away from himself, farther from any hope in himself, and nearer to the Lord. This is the way that the Lord causes his chosen to approach unto him. They work until they are at the end of the earth before they see the salvation of God. (Isaiah lii. 10.) Now they labor and are heavy laden. Not one thing have they been able to do to lighten the burden of their sins, or to discover any way in which they can be saved from them. And now Jesus calls them, and in that call describes them: "laboring and heavy laden." They cannot stop working any more than a man in the waves can stop struggling. They hear no voice with the natural ear, they see no man, but in the Savior's own good time they are at rest. They may see their sins yet, but the power has gone from them. They are at peace, yet cannot tell why. They cannot understand it, for the peace of God *"passeth all understanding."* The light of the sun gets to us before we can see the sun. *"God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."* It may be some time before we know that Jesus has given us that sweet command, that holy call; long before we know that he has called us to himself. We do not know it because some man or angel

has told us. We know it because we have felt the power of that rest, the power of that sweet, spiritual voice. He himself has told us the holy secret, and we have felt the power of that wonderful voice in our souls, saying, *"It is I."* And when another in preaching or speaking proclaims the name and power of Jesus, we understand and know that this is Jesus because we have felt his power. The preacher tells us our own experience; he is our witness. Jesus did not say, *"If you will come unto me I will give you rest."* He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness does not use that form of speech; he does not invite; he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. We were very tired, worn out with labor, when he called us. We did not, perhaps, at the time think it was Jesus, but the communication was with power. There was no resisting power in our hearts to stand against the power of Jesus' words, *"Come unto me."* Before we knew he had called, we were there, at his feet, in the bosom of his love, in the palace of the great King. All the infinite blessings of the Father were ours, though we knew it not, when the Son thus revealed the Father unto us, and the Holy Spirit took of the things of Jesus and showed them unto us. Oh, how much was shown to us in that wonderful time! How could a babe understand such great and marvelous things? Some of us have been hearing most wonderful things out of that first revelation of Jesus ever since that time. It is the power of that life, which is in the babe as well as in the greatest prophet.

No, not an invitation, that would not be consistent with the infinite character and holy prerogatives of Jesus, our Savior and King. In our experience we do not find anything which the dear Savior says to us that we feel we are to take into our minds, and look over, as an invitation, and decide whether we will accept it or not. These wonderful things are taught us in our souls; through them we grow up into Jesus. The mystery is, *"Christ in you, the hope of glory."* That mystery was hid from past ages, as it is now revealed unto his people. They grow from within, like the palm tree.

And still our thoughts go on, over and over again, and always finding something new. Jesus has told of the revelation of these precious things to babes, while they are hid from worldly wisdom and no reason for it except that it seemed good in the sight of the Father, and of the revelation of the Father by the Son to whomsoever he will. And now we have been considering the most wonderful way in which this revelation is made. For this is that sweet and holy revelation of the Father, when the dear Savior said, *"Come unto me,"* to all that were laboring and heavy laden. We took no journey, we did not start out east or west, we did not reach upward toward heaven or go searching into the depths, as we had done many times before, but right by us, in our

hearts, there was the dear Savior, and the Father was there. We felt his presence, yet not in the natural way of thinking. His love was in our souls. The power of the Father was there, and yet we were not afraid, but could throw ourselves at his feet and leave our all with him. How little we knew then, and yet as we look over the sacred ground after more than fifty years, how much we knew. How soon the Bible began to talk to us.

We can understand in a measure the spiritual meaning and power of the things we felt at that time, and how it was that we came to Jesus from the ends of the earth. The words, though familiar to me, appeared wonderfully new: *"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness."* The thought in my mind was, *"Perhaps I am one of those for whom Jesus died."* It had the force of certainty, and was as though the sun rose at midnight, and for the first time in my life I could feel and know true gladness. More than fifty years have passed since then, but I feel something of that power and gladness in those wonderful words today, though greatly tempered by the sorrows and tribulations I have come through.

Now as I look back I can at times see evidences that Jesus at that time said to my soul, *"Come unto me," "and I will give you rest,"* so that I felt the power of them, though they were not in my mind just at that time. I had labored up to the last moment, trying to find out what I could do to obtain salvation, and had given up the hope that I could do anything. Then, unexpectedly, I was at rest and full of gladness, with the words I have mentioned on my mind, and their power in my heart. It was some days before the words of my text, *"Come unto me,"* &c., were given to me, but when they were brought to my mind, and were with me nearly all of one night, I felt that I knew them. The sunshine must be upon us before we can know there is a sun. In his light only can we see light. So by the words of the dear Savior, the Sun of Righteousness, alone can we know him, and be assured that he has risen upon us. Who would take a candle, or any earthly light, by which to see the sun and show it to others? We delight in the sweet words of the psalmist: *"For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light."-Psalms xxxvi. 9.*

What different kinds of burdens we have borne in our journey so far; what various kinds of trouble and affliction we have been brought through. How many times we have said, *"This sorrow is too heavy to be borne, I must certainly fail."* But whenever any of the Lord's dear children have come to the end of the earth, laboring and heavy laden, they shall each and all of them find the Lord's promise equal to the occasion and it will never fail them. He said, *"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden."* He said it once

for all, and it will not fail to reach everyone of them just at the right time. He did not say you that are *"weary."* Better than that, a weary man may lie down and rest. But these are all laboring, hard at work; no time to rest even for a moment; always laboring, and still heavy laden; burdened in body and mind and heart, and borne down with grief and sorrow and tribulation. To these afflicted ones, to all of them, without one exception, the dear Savior says, *"Come."* He who said, *"Let there be light,"* says, *"Come."* He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness has shined in the heart of every laboring and heavy laden one, saying, *"Come."* He in whose hand is the king's heart, to turn whithersoever he will, as the rivers of water, has said, and still always says: ***"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."***

Elder Silas H. Durand
MARCH, 1915.

ECCLESIASTES X. 19

"A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry : but money answereth all things."

It has been requested that we write upon the above Scripture, particularly the latter part, which we will do with whatever light the Lord may grant unto us. We shall not dwell upon worldly feasting, nor the laughter of fools, which is compared to the crackling of thorns under a pot. Neither is it our intention to dwell upon natural wine, nor money, the love of which is the root of all evil. Rather we shall try to present what is our understanding of the above text. Wherever God, the Holy Ghost, begins a work of grace in the heart of man there will be trouble and distress, a state very different from what today is called getting religion, which when one has, he feels happy, and often openly declares that he is all right with God. Such religion at best is a lie and is not of God. The work of the Spirit is to convince of sin, therefore there is sure to be a burden of sin, more or less, and a mourning over sin. Wherever there is a religion that began without a burden of sin, distress and sorrow, it is not the work of the Spirit, but proceeds from the flesh. To the one who is in soul-trouble it will seem as though God has found him out and has set a mark upon him. So full and complete will the teaching of the Spirit be, that the soul will confess through dire necessity that, *"Salvation is of the Lord."* Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, is the only one who can do them good, and the Spirit takes of the Word and they hear it. ***"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."*** Thus such an one is encouraged through the Holy Spirit taking the word of his grace, and they are made to look to the Lord and hope in him. This world will be a wilderness of woe from which the redeemed of the Lord would flee. By the Spirit's guid-

ance they seek a city that hath foundations, which is Zion, the city of God, the mountain of his holiness.

It will be the discontented, the distressed and those who are in debt that the Spirit will lead, for he has said, ***"They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them."*** There the glorious Lord will turn their mourning into joy and will comfort them and make them rejoice. This comfort comes by the Spirit directing their hearts into love of God the Father, who, while they were yet sinners sent his beloved Son into the world to save sinners. He also shows them that though they fear hell and damnation God in his love has freely given them heaven and salvation. Therefore it is written- ***"And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people [Jew and Gentile] a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined."*** Then their mouth is filled with laughter and their tongue with singing. Thus the ransomed of the Lord are set in safety from him that puffeth at them. While feasting on God's love and mercy they can laugh the enemy of their souls to scorn and despise him, and in the confidence of faith they can laugh also at the folly of their doubts and fears. ***"A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry."*** This is a feast of fat things, a feast of wine. The word of God which holy men of old wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost was like water clear as crystal, very pure, but by the presence and power of Jesus this water is made wine to his people. Their doubts and fears subside and they are completely blessed. When the brethren of old feasted with Joseph they were merry with him, and how can saints today help but make merry when they taste of the love of their heavenly Joseph, which, like the blood of the ripened grape, is sweet to their taste. It maketh glad the heart of man. Thus those who hunger and thirst after righteousness are filled and they forget their poverty; but it has pleased the Lord in his divine plan that it will not be always a feast, laughter, wine and making merry. It would not do always to be feasting on heavenly bounties and enjoying the felt presence of the Savior, there must be a walking by faith and not by sight.

"Money answereth all things." After feasting if there is no money one would lapse back into the condition of poverty in which he was prior to the feast; in fact, money is necessary for feasting. Worldly men and women could do but little feasting and drinking of wine without money, it answereth all things. Just as there is a currency in all lands, so in the kingdom of heaven faith can truly be called the money of the kingdom; with that in hand the thing desired is obtained. There could have been no feasting on heavenly bounties or drinking of

wine from the true Vine without faith; this precious money is absolutely necessary, and without it, it is imposible to please God. Every man who went into the vineyard received his penny a day. By this currency the Elders obtained a good report. It enabled them to embrace the promises, walk in the fiery furnace, stop the mouths of lions, open prison gates, subdue kingdoms and receive their dead again to life. It *"answereth all things."* Now, just as in all lands there is the true coin and counterfeit, so there is true faith and faith (so-called) that is counterfeit. True faith must come from the heavenly mint, and is the gift of God. Each of the redeemed family receives from their heavenly Father just as much (and no more) as he has willed they shall have. Each in the vineyard received at the end of the day a penny, and whatever the day may have been they each will receive the amount the Master determines. If it be a day of sorrow, or of darkness, or sin-sickness and self-loathing, yet at the end faith is increased by the Master's good will. For unto him that hath shall be given. Just as money is needed for necessities of life, so where faith is, the trial will not harden the one under it, but soften and humble him, causing him to look to the Hand from whence it comes, and in all prayer, praise, sorrow (godly sorrow), repentance, believing, receiving, glorying and resting, faith, the currency of heaven, must be in constant use. It is the possession of this money that keeps every heir of heaven from legal bondage and death. Of Abraham it is written that being not weak in the faith he considered not his body now dead, neither the deadness of Sarah's womb; he staggered not at the promise through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, being persuaded that what he had promised he was able to perform. Thus faith answers all things. It is the only currency that will *"buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, instruction, and understanding."* Sin-sick, laboring souls need food and healing. Jesus said, "Believe ye that I am able to do this ?" The answer was, *"Yea, Lord."* He replied, " According to your faith be it unto you." They need the bread of life ; faith procures it. When the brethren go to our spiritual Joseph for bread because the famine is sore in the land, they go with money in their hands, which is returned in their sacks' mouths, from which we see that faith is increased in the using thereof. Now the money of any country is known by the image and superscription it bears. Just as the Roman coin handed to Jesus bore the image and superscription of Caesar, so this heavenly money bears the image of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the embodiment of love. Its superscription is *"The faith of God's elect."* It will not pass in the devil's domains. It will meet with persecution and rough usage there, but in the

kingdom of God it will answer all things.

G.R.

(The above was an editorial by Elder Ruston published August I, 1924. We republish it because we enjoyed reading it again, and because he was not disposed to write at this time. - J. D. W.)

Romans 8:14-20.

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God :

And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,

MEETINGS

GLENWOOD CHURCH

Glenwood Church, Princeton, WV, announces a Saturday meeting, July 28, 2001, starting at 10:00. Those coming by way of I-77 take exit 9. Turn left onto 460W. Go 5 miles, turn right onto 19N, then immediately left on Glenwood Park Road (Old Bluefield Road), 1 1/2 miles to the church on the left. Those coming by way of 460, follow the same directions from the I- 77/ 460 intersection.

Sister Marilyn Shaw, Clerk

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

Directions to the Pigg River Association to be held; the Lord willing; the first Sunday in August, Friday and Saturday before. August 3, 4, and 5. The meeting will be held on the grounds of Chestnut Church in Franklin County Virginia.

Those coming from North 220, turn left on 724 (Goose Dam Road) go 2 1/2 miles to church. From the south on 220- you go appro. 13 miles past Bassett Forks - turn right on No. 724 (Goose Dam Road) 2 1/2 miles to church.

We welcome and invite all ministers of our faith and order; our brethren and friends to be with us.

Jamie E. Cooper, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 2001 Staunton River Association will convene the Lord willing, at Weatherford Church meeting house. The host church is Canaan Primitive Baptist Church for this our one hundred sixtieth session. Services will begin at 10:00 a.m. Saturday July 7th and on Sunday July 8th.

Weatherford Church is located about five miles from Gretna, VA. in Pittsylvania County at the intersection of highways 760 and 763.

We invite visitors and correspondents to attend this meeting with us.

Burnell B. Williams, Asso. Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 2001

Grace E. Manly, AL	2.00
Ocie Hollandsworth, VA	7.00
Priddy Shaw, VA	2.00
Opelene Cunningham, AL	7.00
J. J. Merrill, AL	7.00
Ora Nichols, VA	2.00
Ted McDaniel, VA	32.00
A.U. Hocutt, GA	2.00
John Swilley, AR	7.00
Otis Freeman, AL.	5.00
H. B. Rhoades, TX	2.00
G. R Slate, VA	2.00
Mary Poff, VA	2.00
Eld. Clarence Stone, VA	2.00
Minnie Ledlow, AL	4.00
Martha Lunsford, VA	10.00
Billie Dunn, LA	7.00
Mary Janney, Va.	2.00
Reidy Pickral, VA	25.00
Victor Laws, MD	7.00

OBITUARIES

FANNIE MAE WILLIAMS CALHOUN

Fannie Mae Williams Calhoun, born August 17, 1911 and died January 15, 2001 at the age of 89, was a loving member of Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church, Edgecombe County, North Carolina.

She was gentle, kind, of a loving nature and a faithful member to her church as long as she was able to attend. Her health deteriorated and she spent her last six years in a nursing home.

Having not married at an early age, she later in life married Brother Walter Calhoun who was a respected deacon of her church. She enjoyed a short marriage to him, but during that time she enjoyed the fulfillment of entertaining the brethren in their home. It was always a joy to be there.

Extending a helping hand seemed to be her life. Living her early life a single individual, and becoming a widow not many years after her marriage, she was always in demand to care for someone who was aged or ill. She gained many acquaintances and made many friends through her caring disposition as she attended the infirmed.

She was reared in a foster home by her Aunt and Uncle, Sister Nora Lancaster and Mr. Thad Lancaster, and knew nothing but kindness as she grew up.

All of her biological brothers and sisters preceded her in death but she is survived by one with whom she was reared and knew her only as a sister, Sister Lessie Lancaster. In addition to that sister she had extended family and friends who faithfully and kindly took care of her needs as she spent her last days afflicted.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Michael Neikirk (nephew in-law) who was blessed to paint a beautiful picture of her life while here on earth. She was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery, Rocky Mount, N.C.

The church at Pleasant Hill mourns her departure with selfishness, feeling a good hope that she has been called home by the Master where no more pain or frustrations are known.

Written at the request of Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church in conference on February 24, 2001 by one who loved and respected her as a true "Old Baptist"

J. Carroll Williams

ROMANS 8:21-22.

Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

SISTER ERBY DALTON

We're traveling home one by one across death's river our friends are gone. Our friend and dear sister, Erby Dalton has crossed over death's river. She was called home March 5, 2001. She had been afflicted with arthritis for a long time and was bedridden over a year. We feel to be thankful that God released her from these earthly sorrows, toils and pain. Our pastor said at her funeral and we certainly agree, that she was meek and as humble as a child. Jesus said ***"Except you become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."*** Sister Dalton joined Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church Nov. 1960, and was a faithful member. Attending her meetings as long as her health permitted. Survivors include 1 daughter, Joyce Compton, 2 sisters, 2 grandchildren, 4 great-grandchildren and 1 great-great-grandchild.

Her pastor, Elder Julian Williams conducted the funeral at the Dalton Family Cemetery, in Keeling, Va. Where she was laid to rest to await the glorious resurrection of the saints of God. May we be given to say ***"Thou will be done."***

Humbly submitted,
Peggy Wells

PSALMS 26:7-9.

Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

Wait, O my soul, thy Maker's will;
Tumultuous passions, all be still!
Nor let a murmuring thought arise;
His ways are just, his counsels wise.

He in the thickest darkness dwells,
Performs his work, the cause conceals;
But, though his methods are unknown,
Judgment and truth support his throne.

In heaven, and earth, and air, and seas
He executes his firm decrees;
And by his saints it stands confest,
That what he does is ever best.

Wait then, my soul, submissive wait,
Prostrate before his awful seat'
And, midst the terrors of his rod,
Trust in a wise and gracious God.

POSTMASTER

Please send address changes to:

Signs of the Times
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Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

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ROMANS 8:6.

For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

EDITORIAL

TEMPTATION

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

Elder R.H. Campbell

The above scriptures seems to be very candid about the position of God, in relation to sin. It states that God does not tempt man with evil which leads man to sin, or in other words he is not involved in being the author or the instigator of sin. Man is a sinner from his mothers womb, and will be all the days of his life, unless God restrains him from his normal sinful pursuits, and channels the results of the evil actions of man in accordance with his own will and purpose, and this he does when these devices of men would not conform with his own determinate counsel and foreknowledge,if they were allowed to proceed to their evil intended conclusion.

(Psa. 76, vs. 10) says, ***"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."*** This is not from a daily determination or decision that is made; all of these acts were in the original plan, but the responsibility or origin of sin rests in the weakness of man, because that is his very nature, to act according to the vain fantasies of his own self serving agenda. It does not say that the wrath of man is of God, but what the prophet is saying is that even the wrath, evil devices or rebellion of man, praises him. The scriptures declare that the devices of man are

many and evil, however the counsel of the Lord shall stand.

Man sins because he is tempted by his own vain and lustful desires, and he is enticed because of his desire to possess all that he surveys. The fact that he, the man, through the weakness of the flesh, succumbs to these desires is when and where the sin originates. He is tempted when he is drawn away by lust, and the above scripture says that God did not tempt the man with evil; but man is tempted when he is drawn away by lust, which is a fleshly characteristic and then when lust conceives, he is enticed, and therefore the results is sin on the part of man. Now, how can anyone charge that God is the author of sin, when James, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, says so plainly that he is not. God is not involved in the temptation of man, for he says he is not, and since it is temptation that precedes the lust; lust's conceiving precedes the enticement, and then the enticement precedes the commission of sin and all of these steps are the fruits of the evil mind of man, and the above scripture declares that God did not start this ball rolling. It is as a row of dominoes when placed in a row, on end, tip one and they all fall, each one falls because the one preceding it falls knocking it down, and in the illustration above, God says that he did not cause the temptation which was the cause of that which follows, resulting in sin.

(Gen. Chap 6, vs. 5) "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Sin is the end result of this wickedness that God beheld in man, and is the normal culmination of the above chain of actions and reactions which have been the nature of man since the beginning. when he was originally tempted by the serpent and tasted of the forbidden fruit, in the garden of Eden.

The original sin was because of the temptation presented by the serpent, when he beguiled Eve, and caused her to partake of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; and this would therefore make the serpent or the devil the tempter in at least this incident, why not in all cases? His enmity with the seed of the woman has been manifested since man was driven from the garden and his temptation of man has been an unending endeavor to beguile the Lord's children and lead them in the paths of sin. So why do some men believe, and others say that we believe, that God is the author of sin, and not the serpent? Man commits all sin for the same reason that he did in this case; because it is pleasing to him, as was the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, it was good for food, pleasant to the sight and a tree to be desired to make one wise; so, he was tempted from his desire for

anything which he does not possess, and he will do anything to get it.

(II Pet Chap 1, vs. 20-21) "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." and again, *(2 Tim Chap 3,vs 14) "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."* These same truths apply to all of those who were inspired to write the scriptures of both the old and the new testaments, and surely the above scripture is covered by this same authenticity. They are inspired by the Holy Ghost, are profitable for doctrine, correction and instruction in righteousness, and they are true; they are not open to private interpretation by individuals to make them suit their own particular beliefs. As, Elder Griffin, used to say, the scriptures say what they mean, and mean what they say, and the above scripture plainly says that God does not tempt man with evil, or cause him to sin. Sin is a characteristic of man, in the flesh, and he needs no outside assistance or urging in the matter: he is as prone to sin, as the sparks are to fly upward.

If God does not tempt the man with evil, and temptation is the beginning of the above chain of events; then all of the other steps follow, each one because of the preceding action, and its effect upon man, so where is God to be charged with the end results. Where did he step in and become the author of that which followed when each action was a reaction of that which preceded it, and the first action was not of God. Some men will say, you mean that there is something that God is not the cause or author of, well, he is not the author of confusion, and this is as abominable as sin to Him, and he is not the tempter of the sinner, so how and where does he become involved with it. God's ways are as much higher than man's ways as the heavens are higher than the earth and his thought higher than man's thoughts, and since all in that originates or exists in that higher kingdom are God's ways and are good, and since sin is characteristic of that lower kingdom in which the devil rules and reigns, and where man lives in this world of sin and sorrow, subject to a great many temptations every day of his life, why would anyone need to charge any outside force of causing him to sin.

God made man, and made him subject to vanity, put him in the garden to dress and keep it and told him, *(Gen. Chap 2 vs. 16-17) "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree*

of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." and the first recorded independent act of man, was to do that which God told him not to do. This was indeed sin on the part of Adam, but from the standpoint of God it was for good, because its final result was to bring about the salvation of that portion of his creation that were his chosen possession: now, where does the sin lie and where does that which was good originate? It is as in the case of Joseph and his brethren, that which was done by his brethren was evil (sin) on their part, but it (the same act) was for good, in the plan of God, to bring about many people alive, the nation of Israel, so how is God in any way responsible for the evil; when the same act, that was sin as far as Joseph's older brothers were concerned, was good in the sight of God. Who is to judge actions good or evil, sinful or righteous, God or man? If that which occurs is good in the eyes of God, but proceeds from evil in the heart of man who does it to fulfill the lustful desires of the creature, how does that make God the author of the evil contained therein.

It is even as the pillar that stood between the Israelites and the Egyptians, it was life unto one, but the same cloud was death to the other; the same cloud that was a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night to separate and protect Israel from the Egyptians, prevented the Egyptians from ovetaking and bringing Israel back into captivity; the same phenomenon but viewed completely different from the perspective of the two peoples involved. There is a saying that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, could we not say that good or evil is as it is viewed by the individuals, from God's perspective all things work together for good to them that love God, but from man's side all things are from a motive of greed, lust and selfish desire which makes them sin? We must ask, if the deed is for good in the mind of God, but in nature proceeds from the evil motive in the mind of man, where does the fault lie. From God's perspective it is very good, but man's intentions are not, they are from an evil heart of vanity and lust, and sin is always the results of man's being enticed by the desire for self gratification, and this will be his response in every situation. He will always strive for that which the flesh desires, regardless of the law or the commandments of God, if left to his own devices and not restrained.

As in the case of Saul, when Samuel told him, by inspiration, to go and destroy all of the Amalekites, kill Agag the king and all of the men, women, children and all of the cattle that were theirs, and save nothing alive. The instructions were simple, easy to understand and must be obeyed completely, or, it would be as God told Cain, ***(Gen. Chap 4,vs 7) "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou***

doest not well sin lieth at the door." Normally, it is sin to commit murder, but here Saul's sin was that he did not murder all of them as God commanded, but rather saved the king Agag alive, and the best of the cattle to offer as a sacrifice unto God. The judgement declared on this occasion was, ***(1 Sam Chap 15, vs. 22) "And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burned offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."*** Any sacrifice or a burnt offering made by man in any other way or manner than in obedience to the will of God is not acceptable. Aaron's sons offered strange fire on the alter and they were slain, even though one of their duties as priests was to make offerings by fire unto God on the alter, but it only applied to those offerings made in the prescribed manner and according to the commandment of God. Any offering made by man in the flesh, that is not in the prescribed manner as commanded, is an abomination unto God and sin on the part of the man.

Sin is always in the motive behind the action, not the action itself, and the motive behind that which is good must be charity (love) as Paul wrote to the church at Corinth and anything else is sin. For he says, even though man spoke with the tongue of men and of angels, though he had the gift of prophecy, understood all the mystery, an had all knowledge, had all faith, bestowed all his goods to feed the poor, or even gave his body to be burned, and had not charity as his motive, it was nothing, and profitable for nothing. Anything that is not motivated by faith, or is not in obedience to the commands or revelations of God is sin, and the responsibility for those decisions made rest squarely in the man, for they have been instructed in the law of that which is good.

(Eccl. Chap 3, vs. 1) States that, "To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven:" and then lists 26 events following this declaration, some good and some bad, in the opinion of man, and yet the scripture says they were all beautiful in his (God's) time, or in his eyes, because, good or evil is as it relates to God and not to man. Obedience is always good, in his eyes, and disobedience or rebellion is always evil, because it is even as Cain's offering, it is of the flesh or of the earth which God had cursed and therefore not acceptable unto him.

(Eccl. Chap 3, vs. 11) "He hath made everything beautiful in his time, also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end." That which we would call good and that which we would call evil, are both alike good before him with whom we have to do, because they all fulfill the purpose which he had for them. God knows

the reasons for all events, has a purpose in them, and restrains or prevents those actions or desires in the heart of man, which do not conform to His own will and pleasure, and allows those things which do, to occur, even though they may to be performed according to the devices of wicked men.

Sin is in the mind and the actions of all men, in the flesh, when they are not being directed or motivated by the Holy Spirit; as Paul said, *(Rom Chap 7, vs 22-23) "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."* The new creature, in Christ, is never tempted, never lusts, is never enticed nor sins, and delights in the law of God, but the old man in the flesh walks after the flesh and is tempted by his lust for all things that he does not control or possess.

For man to see and know the author of sin, he need not look elsewhere and point the finger of blame, but rather, only go home and look in his own mirror and make an honest sincere and realistic evaluation of himself, his motives and the reasoning for his actions, here in nature. Are they of God, of the flesh or better still, are they the results of the temptations of the devil, the prince of power of darkness, the one who goes up and down in the earth seeking whom he may devour, or cause to sin. He even tried to tempt Christ, as the head of the body, promising him the glory of all of the kingdoms of the earth, if he would but fall down and worship him, oh, the brazenness of the creature. When the word tempter is used in the scriptures, it usually is referring to the devil, the one who tempted Eve in the garden because of the enmity that exist between himself and the woman and his seed and her seed.

This is his purpose in this world, to wage war against God, and he does it by his tempting of the chosen generation with those things that are pleasing to the flesh, trying to entice them and persuade them to serve him rather than their creator. He can never win in this war, but he will never cease trying until he is finally and totally overcome by the blood of the lamb and cast into the lake of fire.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

PSALM 33:18-22.

Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy;

To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine.

Our soul waiteth for the Lord: he is our help and our shield.

For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.

Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.

CORRESPONDENCE

May 14, 2001

Dear Elder Terry,

Do pray this finds you dear ones well.

We heard you conducted Sis. Annie McCods funeral. We were shocked and sorry of the tragedy. But we also know and believe God knows best in all things.

Eld. Terry I'm sending our belated subscription in for 2 years. Also a new subscription for Bro. Jerald 2 years:

Hatchett; 5329S. Land;
Oklahoma City, OK 73119

Also our 2 year renewal. I'm sending you a check for $40.00 to cover both.

Give our love to your dear wife. And come to see us again.

In Christian Love
Eld. C.M. & Bernice Haygood
200 Hollie Cir.
Sulphur Springs, TX 75482

P.S. May the good Lord bless you and keep you.

May 31, 2001

Dear Elder Wm. Hale Terry,

Due to my age and the condition of my health I have problem of keeping my bills paid up as I have always tried to do in my younger years. I am sorry to be late, anyhow due to my over all condition including my eyesight and brain sight. I will send what I owe you which is according to my figures is one year of May 1, 00 so I will send for 2 years which would end May 1, 02, which I want you to stop sending anymore after that date unless I get better and will let you know ahead of time which I don't expect.

To do as I am 87 years June 10th of this year. I have had my day here in this old world of troubles, trials and tribulations. So thank you all for the Signs of the Times. I read them when I was growing up, when my paw took them in the old days of long ago. Thank the Lord for his mercies he has had on a wretch like me its not been easy going, yet it could have been worse.

Thanking you all there,
Hugh Harwell
7946 State Rt. 30
Dittmer, MO, 63023

VOICES OF THE PAST

GOD NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS (Acts x. 34.)

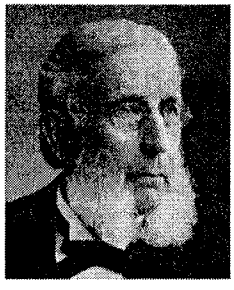
Elder Silas H. Durand

All men naturally think that God is a respecter of persons. No man can think otherwise except by special revelation. It is impossible for our natural minds to conceive of any reason why the Lord should regard any man with favor except as seeing something in his person that causes him to merit that favor. All natural religion is based upon the belief that God is a respecter of persons. If a man would recommend himself to any king or potentate, he must show something in his person, relationship or work deserving his regard. So it is supposed that by some merit of his own, either as the son of a good man, or as having intrinsic or acquired merit in himself, a man must be recommended to the Lord.

Peter thought that God was a respecter of persons even when he preached on the day of Pentecost. Although those who gladly received his word represented all nations, yet they were all Jews or proselytes, and it was his thought that the Lord regarded the person of a Jew or a proselyte above the person of a Gentile, and he was not taught the truth on this point until he was at the house of Cornelius. When he heard the experience of that Gentile, to whom Jesus was yet unknown, and saw that God had visited him and his house with his salvation, then he could say, *"Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him."*

At this time he understood the meaning of the vision that came to him on the housetop a few days before. While in a trance *"he saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth : wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. And Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven."*

What a wonderful vision! Out of heaven came beasts and birds and creeping things of all kinds; wolves and lambs; doves and ravens; the lion as well as the ox; the cow and the bear, and even the loathsome worm; but they were all in the great sheet, which was so knit at the four

corners that none of them could get out; and all this strange and various crowd of living creatures was received up into heaven again. What could it mean? It must have been the subject of wondering thought in Peter's mind all the way down to Caesarea. But all at once, while hearing Cornelius relate his vision, the deep, glorious meaning of "this vision came to Peter; he now understood that all that was in the sheet represented people; for ***"he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation: but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean."***

Here, then, is that which represents the everlasting covenant of grace. The sheet was let down three times, to show that salvation is the same in each of the three dispensations. All the animals in the sheet were clean, the wolf as well as the Lamb, the worm as well as the dove. The voice declared to Peter that they were all clean, for God had cleansed them. To Peter the wolf and the raven appeared as unclean as they ever had been, but God's voice declared that God had cleansed them. This was true only of those in the sheet. Out of the sheet they were unclean, but seen in the sheet they were declared by the Lord to have been cleansed.

In their own persons, in the flesh, the Lord's people are sinful and depraved, and they feel it when the life of Jesus is their light. So Job said, ***"I am vile; I abhor myself."*** Isaiah said, ***"I am a man of unclean lips."*** Daniel said, ***"When thou spakest unto thy servant my comeliness was turned in me into corruption."*** Paul said, ***"In me (that is, in my flesh,) there dwelleth no good thing."*** What a blessed thing, that God is no respecter of persons, for if he were, no man could stand before him. But it is in the sheet that the creatures of all kinds are regarded as clean. It is in the everlasting covenant, it is in the person of Christ, that poor sinners are respected. He ***"is given for a covenant of the people,"*** and in him we stand holy and unblamable before God in love. He respects his people not in their own persons, but in the person of Christ.

One has been looking over the whole field of his nature, and it is all a desert. He sees in himself no good, but all evil. When he would do good, evil is present with him. He cries out, ***"I am a worm and no man."*** Then the Lord gives him a glimpse of the everlasting covenant; lets him look for a moment into the sheet that was let down from heaven in the sight of Peter, and behold, there is a crawling worm, and he hears a voice from heaven saying, ***"Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the holy One of Israel."*** What a glad surprise to the poor soul when this revelation of Jesus as his righteousness and salvation breaks in upon

his soul, and he is made to rejoice in believing that he is accepted with him.

Truly the coming of Jesus in his power, as the one who ruleth over men in justice and in the fear of God, ***"is as the light of the morning when the sun ariseth; even a morning without clouds: as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain."*** How glad Peter was to proclaim that in every nation the fear of the Lord *in* the heart, which is to hate evil, and the working of righteousness, are sure evidences that such are accepted with God; accepted with Jesus. The fear of the Lord is put into the heart by our God, who says, ***"I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me."*** The working of righteousness is the effect of the work of grace in the heart. He who lies helpless on the bed is as capable of working righteousness as one who is well and strong. It is in the heart; it is heart-work. ***"As a man thinketh so is he."*** It is the tree of righteousness planted by the Lord which bears the fruit of righteousness. ***"The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever."*** Only by faith in Jesus can any righteous work be done. So Peter was glad to know and to proclaim that wherever there was one in any nation who had the fear of God in his heart, and that faith by which one is enabled to walk in the good works of Jesus, that one is thus manifested as accepted with Jesus, the only wise God and our Savior.

We do not read, ***"shall be accepted by him,"*** but ***"is accepted with him."*** All of the Lord's people were in Jesus in a legal and mystical sense when he died, and they were "raised up together with him," and they were accepted with him in the acceptable day of the Lord, when the gates lifted up their heads that the King of glory might come in. The beasts and birds and creeping things were in the sheet when it came down from the open heaven, to show that the righteousness and salvation of all the Lord's people are from heaven. The sinner does not come down from heaven, but his righteousness does. As a saved sinner he is God's ***"workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that he should walk in them."*** He did not put himself into the great sheet, into the covenant of grace, nor can he get out of it. He did not cleanse himself from sin. The word is, ***"What God hath cleansed that call not thou common."*** Poor, troubled soul. You look to yourself like a sinner, black as the raven, wicked as the wolf, vile as the worm, but God hath cleansed you, and now you are waiting for the full manifestation of the blessed work, ***"The earnest expectation of the creature [the new creature in Christ] waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God."*** And this creature ***"shall be deliv-***

ered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

And during this time of waiting and earnest expectation there are seasons of comfort and rejoicing. The dying of the Lord Jesus is borne about in our body, but the life also of Jesus is manifested in our body. The tribulation continues on account of felt depravity in the flesh, but we rejoice in the tribulation because it worketh patience, and experience, and hope which maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts. ***"As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."*** We cannot rejoice in ourselves, but we do at times rejoice in the Lord, for he is rich unto us in mercy, and goodness, and grace, and lovingkindness, and his blessed name has been unto us a strong tower, in which we have found safety. We cannot but be glad and rejoice in the precious hope that we are represented in that great sheet that was let down from heaven to the earth, and that the Lord remembers us in the ***"everlasting covenant which is ordered in all things and sure."***

November, 1903
Elder Silas H. Durand

PSALM 34:7.

The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Elder W. D. Griffin)

Once more the wheels of time have rolled around to the time of our annual meeting of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association; and as it has been our custom through the years to write what is called the Circular Letter, we attempt it with fear and trembling; we hope realizing that we cannot write in any way comforting to the household of faith except the God of all grace and mercy sees fit to guide our minds and trembling hand.

Therefore, as we attempt to write, we humbly pray that our eternal God, who has been pleased to lead his people, though in a mysterious way, will be pleased to guide us that this letter may be to the comfort and edification of the saints of our God; of which we hope to be a part. As we have been led to believe by the mighty hand of God in the words of Moses when he said to Israel, ***"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms," (Deuteronomy 33:27)*** we feel that it is a wonderful blessing to be given a mind to realize that there is a power that is above all other powers, that is watching over his little children here in the vain world, keeping them under his watchful eye and his ever shielding arm.

We believe that God's chosen people, his heirs of salvation according to promise, are led in ways they know not, through many storms

of life, to teach them that they cannot direct their steps, and to show them their need of our Heavenly Father to keep and sustain them in that pathway that Job spoke of when he said, ***"There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen." (Job 28:7)*** Thus we feel that the natural mind of man cannot understand the things of God, neither has, or ever will, walk that heavenward journey by his natural mind, for we are told by the Apostle Paul, ***"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14)*** We believe that man is born in this world with a natural mind, and he keeps it as long as he stays here on these mortal shores; but we also believe that our eternal God gives his chosen people another mind, a spiritual mind to see things that the natural mind cannot see, for the natural mind never sees the vanity of its being.

We feel that God has and still does throughout the world, in his own time and place, bring his chosen ones out of the darkness in which they were born, into the light and knowledge of the truth which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Darkness has always preceded light, for in the beginning the evening and the morning was the first day, and so on. Therefore, if we are what we hope to be, we are traveling in newness of life, viewing things that we did not view at one time; viewing from day to day our weakness in the flesh, and thus hoping in the mercies of our eternal God and not in our own works; for Solomon said, ***"There is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good and sinneth not." (Eccl. 7:20)***

We believe that God knew his people before the beginning of time, and loved them with an everlasting love; that he chose them in his Son-for as Eve was in Adam, so was the church in Christ : he being the foundation of that building not made with hands, for we are told in God's holy word, ***"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 3:12)***

As we journey here, though, we are made to wonder, and to say with the poet,

" 'Tis a point I long to know;
Oft it gives me anxious thoughts;
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not."

We do not believe that anyone knows that he or she is one of God's chosen people, but we do believe that God works in the hearts of his people in such a way as to show them the vileness of their nature, and to cause them to hope in his mercies, and to realize that it is not by our own strength, but by the grace of God we are what we are. Hannah said, ***"For by strength shall no man prevail." (I Samuel 2:9)***

We do feel that God has a people in every nation, kindred and tongue, and that they are all taught of the Lord. It may be that some have never heard the audible voice of man speak the wonderful truth which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, but we feel they are all taught of the Lord, though in a mysterious way; for, as the poet has said:

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea, And rides upon the storm."

We are also told in God's holy word, *"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:9)*

Dear Brethren, as we have been gathered here in this association, we feel a desire in our hearts that the Lord may be pleased to bless us with love for one another; that our hearts may be joined together as one; and that we may have all things in common. May it please the Lord, if it be his holy will, that we may be blessed to sit and feast on the gospel truths, and be made to rejoice together in the Lord; for the Apostle Paul said, *"Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say rejoice." (Phil. 4:4) Amen*

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Maude T. Laws, Hon. Clerk
William Adkins, Clerk
W. A. Davis, Asst. Clerk

THE JUDGMENT

The Scriptures assure us that God will judge the world in righteousness at the last day, by that Man whom he hath appointed. Paul testifies that that judgment shall be according to his gospel.

By the term judgment, in a scriptural sense, and when used in reference to God's judgment, we are not to understand a court of investigation, for the purpose of ascertaining the guilt or innocence of those who are to be judged. A trial, according to law, examination of witnesses, and an investigation of circumstances, is indispensable before a finite court, in order to convict the guilty or justify the innocent. But God, the Judge of all, is infinite. All things are naked and open to his omnipotent eye, so that he needs not to be informed of the state and condition, prospect or destiny of any of his creatures. The ungodly are condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on them. Judgment has already come upon them to condemnation, and under that condemnation they are even now held, under chains of darkness, reserved unto the day of judgment, (not to be tried,) but to be punished for the guilt of which they are already convicted. This guilt has been found upon all the posterity of Adam; all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; and, as evidence of this, death has passed upon all men. Even the subjects of grace and salvation were by nature children of

wrath, even as others. There is nothing in their nature or practice, as the children of the earthly Adam, to distinguish them from the rest of the fallen family of mankind. The judgment of the last day, as we have said, shall be according to Paul's gospel; and as we read the gospel preached by Paul, we understand that God, from the beginning, has chosen his people unto salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth. This choice, Paul says, was anterior to the foundation of the world. ***"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."-Eph. i. 3, 4.*** The salvation to which God has chosen his people is from sin and wrath, and the accomplishment of it is by their full, free, perfect and eternal redemption, which is in Christ Jesus, in whom they are chosen. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. (Eph. i. 5- 7). By virtue of this election, wherein God hath chosen his people to salvation, a ransom was provided, and they are redeemed from sin and wrath, and made acceptable unto God in the Beloved, in whom they have redemption, and they are freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. ***"There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."-Rom. viii. 1.*** This is as the waters of Noah unto the Lord: for as he has sworn that the waters of Noah shall no more go over the earth, so has he sworn that he will no more be wroth with his people, nor rebuke them; for the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but his kindness shall not depart from them, neither shall the covenant of his peace be removed, saith the Lord that has mercy on them. (Isaiah liv. 9, 10.)

The sins of God's people were open, going beforehand to judgment. They were carefully reckoned up, and in all their magnitude of number and turpitude, they were all laid upon him who was made sin for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. In laying upon him the iniquities of us all, (that is of all whose sins he bore in his own body on the cross,) their sins necessarily went beforehand to judgment. Also, in an experimental sense, when the sinner is quickened and made sensible of his lost and helpless condition, his sins are set in order before him, and he sees, feels and acknowledges his guilt, and the dreadful sentence of the law of God in his condemnation; not

until the precious Savior is revealed to him, and an evidence that he has canceled the law's demands on his behalf, can he see how God's justice can be sustained in his damnation. But in the revelation of Christ, he is enabled to say, *"Surely he hath borne our grieves and carried our sorrows; he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed."* The saints of God are already judged, condemned and executed in their Head and legal representative. They are crucified with Christ. (Gal. ii. 2.) Baptized unto Jesus Christ, baptized into his death, buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. (Rom. vi. 3, 4.) They are redeemed, justified and cleansed by the washing of regeneration, and shall never again come into condemnation for they are passed from death unto life. Their sins can never be brought in judgment against them again, neither in time nor in eternity, for God has promised to remember them no more. As a thick cloud he has blotted them out. They have therefore nothing to fear in regard to a judgment to come. This matter is forever settled from the following considerations:

First. Their judgment has already past, as we have shown by the foregoing arguments and testimony.

Second. Sin is a transgression of the law, and where there is no law there is no transgression; and the saints are no more under the law but under grace. The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Third. The church is the mystical body of him who is the Judge, by whom the world is to be judged in righteousness at the last day; and in that body, the church, Christ will preside in the final judgment, and all his members will perfectly acquiesce.

Fourth. Their sins are covered by the expiatory sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, and God has made a solemn and everlasting covenant with them, that he will remember their sins and iniquities no more.

Fifth. Because as soon as Christ the Judge shall appear, they shall see him as he is, and shall be like him. He is himself their Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption. No examination will be required to demonstrate the perfection of their righteousness, for Christ as their righteousness cannot be impeached. Their maker is their Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name, and their Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall he be called. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.

The judgment of the last day, therefore, so far as the saints are concerned, is but the execution of what we are assured in Paul's gospel shall be accomplished. The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and the saints shall be caught up, shall meet their Savior in the air, and so shall they be forever with the Lord. The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, for the Lord knoweth them that are his. Here, then, let your faith rest upon the promise which God, that cannot lie, made before the world began. The judgment of the ungodly, so far as we understand testimony, will not rest upon disclosures then and there made, but it will embrace the execution of the decision already made; for, as we have proved, they are already tried, found guilty, and they are condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on them.

We might greatly extend our remarks upon this subject, and shall, probably, at some future time, if spared, show how many portions of Scripture, which relate to the present organization and government of the church of God, have been misapplied, and used as though they had been spoken in reference to the final judgment of the last day. The Lord shall judge his people. He does now judge them. His judgment-seat is in Zion, and all his disciples are amenable to that judgment-seat for every idle word, and for every vain and foolish thought. But they are judged under the law of the kingdom of Christ, and not by that law which is the administration of death. If they forsake the law of Christ, under which they are brought, and keep not his commandments, he will visit their sins with a rod, and their transgressions with stripes; but his loving-kindness he will not take utterly away, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. The saints are dead to the law, by the body of Christ, and are quickened together with Christ, raised up together, and made to set together in heavenly places; and they are married unto him that is risen from the dead, that they may bring forth fruit unto God.

One great, though somewhat common mistake, which has tended to involve the subject, much to the depression of the children of God, has been in supposing that Christ will not occupy his judgment-seat until he shall come in the last day to raise the dead and judge the world. But divine revelation assures us that *"The Lord is our Judge; the Lord is our Lawgiver; the Lord is our King; he will save us."- Isaiah xxxiii.* 22. As Judge, his decisions are as final now as they shall be when he shall present his spotless bride before the throne of his Father, and turn the wicked into hell, with all the nations that forget God.

Carnal professors, and graceless legalists, may require the terrors and thunder of Mt. Sinai, and

the fearful apprehension of a judgment to come, to whip them into an unwilling subjection to what they call holiness, piety and religion; their highest motives being selfish, the hope of heaven and the fear of hell; but those whom the Son has made free, have received not the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The mind and Spirit of Christ is in them, holiness is their element; they love God, love holiness, and hate sin.

"Immortal principles forbid
The sons of God to sin."

They are born of God, and his seed abides within them, and they cannot sin, because they are born of God; and the sin which is in their flesh, they loathe and hate; for it is at war with the Spirit of life which is within them, and it makes them groan, being burdened, and long and sigh for the day when mortality shall be swallowed up of life, and they delivered from the body of this death.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y, June 15, 1856.

JAMES 4:14.

Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

"WHAT IS YOUR LIFE"
James 4:14 APRIL, 1954

YOUR NATURAL life is ***"a vapour that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away."*** You cannot say with assurance that you will be living tomorrow. As vapour only appears within certain circumstances and conditions upon which the vapour has no control, so is your life. When these circumstances and conditions are changed your life vanishes as the vapour. The flowing of the blood, the functioning of the mind, and the movement of the muscles are evidences of natural life. This life is given upon the volition of the will of God and it is taken at His appointed time. When the mind ceases to function, the muscles to move, and the blood to flow; a person is pronounced naturally dead. This natural life is timely. It has its beginning and it has its ending.

It is a true Biblical saying that ***"Life is in the blood."*** The expression in Leviticus 17:11 says, ***"the life of the flesh is in the blood."*** The flow of the blood stimulates the muscles and mind. When there is a change in the flow of the blood there is a change in the functioning of the mind and movement of the muscles. Heart stimulants affect mind and muscle. When one is under the influence of alcohol, which stimulates the flow of blood, it is often truly said, He is not himself." His actions and conversation are changed.

The Lord willing, we desire to meditate upon the functioning of the natural mind before comparing and contrasting natural and spiritual life. We want to say to the reader who is wondering what our object is in this treatise that we desire to prove a true and experienced state of life that exists in the regenerated child of God; why that regeneration is necessary; how that Jesus is our life; and, define eternal life.

The nature of the natural mind is to function within a natural realm. This nature would have to be changed before it could act within the spiritual realm. We reason according to our understanding. When we have only natural understanding our reasoning is according to natural wisdom. Our affections by nature are carnal, earthly, and sensual-bent on gratifying self. The approval or disapproval of the natural mind is based on a natural conscience which is forever changing with the changes of social customs and ideas. The will of the natural mind chooses that which is evil, indulges in the lusts of the flesh, and chooses to please self. This is the mind of natural life.

What is your life? Have you been elevated above that which is natural to such an extent that you are never bothered with this old nature, conscience, will, understanding, or affections? Have you been wrought upon in such a way that you are living a pure, holy, spiritual life, void of fleshly inclinations? Is your life so holy that you never have a doubt concerning your future abode? I must answer, " no" , to all these questions. My experience proves that I possess a darkened understanding, an unregenerated will, and earthly affections. That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. There is a natural life and there is a spiritual life. I maintain that God's children who have been born again and are yet living in this natural world are characters who possess dual lives. This conforms to the expression of the prophet Isaiah, 38;20, All the days of *our life.* "Our life" is an expression that is inconsistent with the proper usage of language unless it could mean two characters in one person. There is the Spirit of God and there is the spirit of man. As long as we live in this natural tabernacle we will be beset at times with this old depraved nature, hardened conscience, darkened understanding, *unregenerated will,* and earthly affections.

God infuses eternal life into one of His children by His Spirit in enacting the new birth. When this is done the one being born again is given a new nature, an enlightened understanding, a new conscience, a renewed will, and heavenly affections. This act of God does not do away with his natural birth nor his natural life. To the regenerated, born again, child of God may I ask, ***"What is your life?"***

May I answer as God will direct? God has *added* His life to your life. You are not only born of the flesh

but of the Spirit. Yes, you are given a new nature by which you are enabled to see the depravity of your old nature. Your understanding is enlightened that you may realize the darkness of your natural understanding. You are given a will toward God and godliness that proves to you that your natural will is to choose evil rather than good. These heavenly affections that God has implanted in you shows how selfish and earthly are your natural affections. Has your life been changed? Yes, as a person. You do not esteem yourself as highly as you once did. This experience has humbled you and caused you to realize your dependence. You find that whereas you were in peace with yourself there is now a warfare. The flesh is lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh. These are contrary one to the other so that you cannot do the things you would. Neither time nor space would permit treating upon the extent of the change. May I ask another question?

Has your flesh been purified, renovated, refined, or made better? No. Your experience is as Paul wrote to the Romans concerning himself, even though he had been graced by this new life being added to him. He expresses in Romans 7:19, ***"For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do."*** If you read his experience you will find that when he would do good evil was present with him. You will find that sin was mixed with all he did. He realized that he served the law of sin with his flesh. He considered himself as chief of sinners, less than the least of saints, and a wretched man who needed and prayed for deliverance. He possessed the thorn of the flesh which was a messenger of Satan to buffet him about lest he be exalted above measure. He rejoiced in physical pains and personal persecutions but the indwelling workings of sin in his carnal mind, the opposition of his depraved nature to the grace of God, caused him to cry out concerning his wretched condition. You will find that Peter possessed his old nature after being so wonderfully blessed with such special divine gifts. His regenerated will was to follow Jesus to the extent of death but there was another characteristic abiding with him that resulted in his denying any knowledge of Christ, not just once but three times, confirming with an oath, cursing and swearing. Job abhorred himself. An old prophet considered himself as being a man of unclean lips. Many wonderfully gifted characters, whose experience is recorded in the Book of books, were affected with the same evil tendencies as you are. May I ask again, ***"What is your life?"***

Your life is a mixture of joys and sorrows. Sometimes you are on the mountain top rejoicing in the grace and love of God but so much of the time you are in the valley of woe. Sometimes your hope of eternal abode in heaven is so little that you

wonder, *"Do I have a hope?"* And sometimes it is an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast that entereth within the veil. Sometimes you doubt you have grace; at other times you are convinced of His gracious care for you. Probably much of the time the Bible is a sealed book to you; but, sometimes it is as God speaking to you. Sometimes you want to talk of God's love for His people; but, much of the time you are shut up and have no desire to meet one who believes in God. Sometimes the minister preaches directly to you with comfort and edification; but much of the time, though you try to listen, you are cold and lifeless. Why am I thus tossed and have this cross?

You would depend upon the goodness of your own life were it not for this tossing to and fro that you experience. You must be given to know the vileness of your life, the weakness of your understanding, the deceit of your heart, the evil of your will, and the carnality of your affections before you can obey the command of Jesus to *deny yourself.* You must possess this cross of flesh against the Spirit before you can obey the command of Jesus, *"Take up your cross."* You must realize the vileness of your own life before you can be made submissive to Jesus' command, "Follow me." You must realize these infirmities through the remaining part of your life, else you would not pray for salvation from sin, look to God for grace, depend upon Jesus for your merits, or hope to be finally delivered from evil into the glorious liberty of the children of God. What is your life?

Your natural life is in evidence when the flow of the blood stimulates the activity of the natural mind and the movement of the muscles. Your spiritual life is in evidence when the flow of the Spirit of God stimulates the spiritual mind (or heart) resulting in a godly walk and conversation. When the blood flows and the mind functions there is action of the muscles. When the Spirit flows, and the godly mind functions, there is action consisting of good works. These good works are done only by the stimulation of the Spirit of God. Thus it is by the grace of God that we are what we are.

What is your life? *"For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God; when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col. 3 :3,4)*. We have a foretaste of Christ appearing here in time which is glorious. These experiences last only for fleeting moments; but, the glory of them encourages us to press on with renewed hope and a strengthened faith. Christ is our life because we have been made to depend upon His righteousness. Christ is our life because He suffered the penalty of death, blotting out our sins by dying, that we might live. He is the Author of our spiritual life; the Fountain from whence flows the water of life; the Root of our godly life; and,

He is our Head which stimulates a godly walk and conversation. *"Your life is hid with Christ in God."*

Yes, your life is hid from the world. You cannot make known to the world the precious things of this life. You cannot cause the wise and the prudent to see it. It is *hid* from them. Jesus thanked God that He had hid these things from the wise and the prudent and revealed them unto babes. Your life is hid from the law in Christ. The law can have no dominion over you. Your sins are hid from God by the blood of Christ for it is impossible for Him to see your sins through the blood of His Son. Those who would destroy your hope and faith cannot because your life is hid with Christ. Is it not true that your eternal life is hid from you much of the time? Two of the three things that abides *now,* according to Paul's letter to the Church at Corinth, proves that your eternal life is hid from you. *"Now abideth faith, hope, and charity" (1 Cor. 13:13) . "Faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen."* If a thing is not seen it is hid. Paul said, *"We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Rom. 8:24,25).* If we see not that which is hoped for it is hid. If then, we are saved by hope, surely our life is hid with Christ. Take courage, brethren, and may God comfort you with the thought that now we see, through a glass, *darkly;* but then face to face." (1 Cor. 13:12). Sometimes His smiles are hidden from us. We grope about in darkness. Our minds are taken up with the vain things of this world so that we are made to realize,

I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know,
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again.
What is your life?

You are a stranger to yourself. Your life is so hid that you are fearful that you are not born again. When He *"shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory."* These foretastes of His appearing here in time renews our hopes and strengthens our faith. We wonder so much of the time, is He coming again? Our faith and hope is that when He appears we shall appear with Him in glory. We look forward to that grand appearing when He shall take us into that glorious home where we shall live and abide with Him eternally. What is *eternal life?*

The word *eternal* indicates that this life under consideration is endless. It shall never cease but persevere without a break into an endless eternity. Those who possess this life shall never perish. They shall live forever without any danger of dying. No power is able to destroy it for this life is in Christ. *"He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 John 5:12).* This eternal life is

interlinked in the golden chain of eternal life and includes therein all of God's chosen people for we read, ***"I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one" (John 17:23).*** The Father is in His Son, His Son is in His chosen. His chosen is in the Son and His Son is in the Father. This interlinking is why Jesus could say, ***"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my father's hand" (St. John 10: 28,29).*** The children of God are so interlinked in the Father and Son that it would be just as possible for God to be dethroned as for one of them to perish or lose that life! It would be denying the power of God and blaspheming His Son to proclaim that any who have this eternal life shall ever be severed from it so that the second or eternal death shall have power over them! What is eternal life? ***"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3).***

If you know God and know His Son, you have eternal life. If He has seen fit to reveal Himself to you, then you know Him. Peter had eternal life as was manifested in his answer to Jesus, recorded in ***Matt. 16:16, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."*** This answer of Peter was given, not because he had learned it from flesh and blood, but because he had been divinely favored by a direct revelation from God as you shall see in reading the statement of Jesus following this answer. It takes the life of God imputed to an individual by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit to enable one to know God or Jesus Christ. ***"He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemption; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).*** The revelation of God unto His people causes them to cease to believe in themselves, placing their trust in Him. This life of God imputed to you makes you lose confidence in yourself. This eternal life has saved the soul in regeneration and we are confident that the same spirit will save the body in the resurrection. The work of salvation that has been begun in us experimentally will surely be performed and perfected unto the deliverance of our bodies from sin and death. As this life immortalized the soul in regeneration, this life will immortalize the body in the resurrection. As we now have the first-fruits, being a foretaste, we shall come into full fruition in heaven. We shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberties of the children of God. What will be your life then?

Your life will then be free from imperfections, warfares, tribulations, doubts, fears, persecutions, thirst, hunger and confusions. You

shall have uninterrupted joy, peace and happiness forevermore. There will be no dying as experienced daily in this life, but you shall live, live! LIVE! What a wonderful and glorious life is *eternal life*!

Elder E.J. Lambert

MEETINGS

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 2001 Smith River Association will convene the Lord willing at Knob Primitive Baptist Church in Franklin County, a short distance from Henry,Va. Services will begin on Fri. Aug. 31, and continue Sat. Sept. 1 and Sun. Sept. 2, 2001.

Knob Church is located about 5 miles west of Henry, Va. Those traveling north on #220 turn left on #605 (Henry Rd.) and those traveling south on #220 turn right on #605 (Henry Rd.

Go over the R.R. tracks in Henry and proceed 2 miles to # 798 (Knob Church Rd.) turn left and follow this road to the Church about 3 miles on the left at top of hill. Those traveling west on #40 (Franklin St.) go about 5 miles west of Ferrum College and turn left on #605 (Henry Rd.) and those traveling east on #40 turn right on #605 (Henry Rd.) Go about 6 1/4 miles to #798 (Knob Church Rd.) turn right and follow to church as stated above.

We invite all ministers of our faith and order, our correspondents, Visitors and friends to meet with us at this meeting.

Wilford G. Parsons - Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene with Moon's Creek Church the fifth Sunday in July. The church is located about 1/2 mile east of highway 86 between Danville and Yanceyville on Park Springs Road.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Sue Blalock, Clerk

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FOR MAY 2001

Alvis Shelton, VA	3.00
E.R. Graves, AL	2.00
Allene Gallimore, NC	2.00
Ralph Dale, NC	2.00
Wilma Cox, MS	7.00
Connie Fowler, TX	2.00
M.L. Richardson, FL	2.00
Anita Hash, VA	2.00
Joel Alexander, AL	7.00
Connie Page, NC	5.00
James Pugh, AL	7.00
Louise Stanley, NC	2.00
Eld. G.R. Smith, LA	1.00
Betty Turner, LA	2.00
Eld. C.M. Haygood, TX	4.00

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

"The Lord has been so good to me
I want to praise His name
His mercy long has been my plea
His grace I would proclaim.

Yea though of sinner I'm the worst
Still I desire to praise
The gracious God who loved me first
To Him my voice I'll raise.

I pray the Lord that I might see
Myself released from sin.
It's burden long has harassed me,
How sore a plague is sin!

I long to leave this world of woe
And with my Savior reign
Where self no longer is my foe
And I am free from pain."

Composed by Joyce Pittman
Sent in by her mother,
Sister Mae Williams

POSTMASTER

Please send address changes to:

Signs of the Times
202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

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MEDIATOR

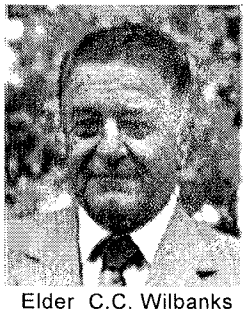
Elder C.C. Wilbanks

This is a subject that has been upon my mind for quite some time and I desire to write a few lines upon it, hoping that God will direct my thoughts to his praise and glory and to the comfort and edification of his blessed children.

Jesus Christ the man is our mediator, the mediator of the new and better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For had the first covenant been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. *Heb. 8:6-7. "It was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one."* Jesus Christ is in many scriptures called the Word of God. The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, these three are one. 1 Jn. 5:7. *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made." John 1:1-3.* Jesus Christ has been the mediator from the beginning. His own words were, *"The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." Prov. 8:22-23. In verses 30-31, "I was one by him, as one brought up with him: I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him: rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men."* These are the words of Christ himself, and they were obviously spoken thousands of years before his conception and birth by the virgin Mary. These scriptures (and there are many others) should prove without any doubt that Christ the Son of God existed before the earth was ever spoken into existence. If he then had no existence, how could we have been chosen in

him before the foundation of the world? "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Eph. 1:3-4.

Before I proceed, I will give my views on the word "man." When God made man he made him from the dust of the earth, and he was only flesh, blood and bones until God breathed the breath of life into him and he became a living soul. Without a soul man is nothing and can do absolutely nothing, and when the soul leaves a man his flesh soon returns to the dust. The soul activates the brain, causing it to make decisions, rational or otherwise. Then the brain sends signals to all members of the body moving them into actions.

Finite man can never comprehend the existence of an infinite, invisible God, nor his being *"three in one."* There are many, very many, who believe there are three individual persons of the Godhead, all with equal divine power. But the Scriptures quoted above should definitely prove to anyone with an unbiased mind that this is false. There are many more scriptures to prove this to be a false belief, but I must forbear because of time and space. However, the Son of God did exist in eternity, but not in a flesh and blood body. As the Son of God he had a divine nature and a human nature. The divinity of the Son of God is the MIGHTY GOD, who never was begotten, but was the EVERLASTING FATHER; and his human nature was the begotten Son of God. Christ said, ***"I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." Ps. 2:7.*** Both of these whole and distinct natures, being in one person, he is both God and man, both Father and Son. As man, he was the visible form of the invisible God. Man can see God only in the face of Jesus Christ. When Philip asked Jesus to shew us the Father, Jesus said, ***"—he that hath seen me hath seen the Father." And, "I am in the Father, and the Father is in me." In another place he said, "I and my Father are one." John 14: 9&11.*** And John 10: 30. We know that Jesus was a flesh and blood man at that time, yet he did appear as man on earth thousands of years before he was born of the virgin Mary. There are many, very many, who will deny this vigorously, but there are many scriptures to prove the truth of this. To be brief I will mention only a few. ***Gen. 18:1, "And the LORD appeared unto him (Abraham) in the plains of Mamre. —and he lifted up his eyes and looked, and , lo three men stood by him: and when he saw them he ran to meet them."*** He saw them with his

eyes, and bowed to the ground, and said *"My Lord"* without being rebuked for it. It was at this place that the Lord promised Abraham a son by his wife Sarah, and said, *"I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son."* Sarah did bear the promised son Isaac, and in Abraham and Isaac were all the promises of the new covenant given by God, the mediator of it. *"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to thy seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ. Now this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect."* Since the covenant of promise was confirmed before of God in Christ four hundred and thirty years before the law was given, does this not prove that Christ the Son of God then existed?

In the book of Daniel, Chap. 3, we find that the Son of God appeared again. Nebuchadnezzar had caused three Hebrew children to be thrown into a fiery furnace, but when he looked into the furnace he saw four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they had no hurt, and he said, *"and the form of the fourth is like unto the Son of God."*

Jesus Christ, who is rightly called both the Son of God and the Son of man, appeared unto John in the Isle of Patmos and a vivid description of him was given in the 1st. chapter of Revelations, Vs. 13-16. And John said, *"And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not, I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forever more, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Vs. 17-18.* I would suggest that you read the whole chapter for more descriptions of Jesus Christ when he appeared to John. If Christ had not appeared in human form John could not have seen him with his natural eyes for a Spirit cannot be seen.

If the Scriptures quoted above, and my poor comments on them, do not prove to you that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the mediator of the new covenant, appeared on earth in human form before his birth by the virgin Mary I would suggest that you study the scriptures with an open mind, and pray that God will reveal his truth to you by his Holy Spirit. All that I have done is present my views, and I hope and trust they have been given to me from above.

Any one who has been born again, and taught by the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of truth, knows that in his flesh he is a sinner. *"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that*

we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." 1 Jn. 1: 7-10. As sons of the first Adam we are sinners, and will continue to sin as long as we live in this world. The new birth did not change our carnal mind, which is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. (Rom. 8:7). John tells us, ***"And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for all our sins."*** Forgiveness of our sins is for this time world only and has nothing to do with our justification before God: only the death, blood and resurrection of Jesus Christ our saviour has accomplished that. Because we were in Christ, he being the head and we being his body, our sins were never imputed unto us, but unto him; and God the Father has ever viewed us as holy and just in him. Those who were not in him shall never be justified. When Jesus was crucified he prayed for the soldiers who crucified him and cast lots for his raiment, saying, ***"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."*** There was a time when I believed that this prayer justified them: and I feel sure there are those who believe as I did. Yet forgiveness, as I stated above, does not absolve any one from guilt. Yet if we, his little children, sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins. (See 1 John 2:1-2). The words advocate and mediator means the same thing, and serves the same purpose. Counsellor is one of the names belonging unto him, and as such he stands between us and the Father as our advocate or mediator, and it is through him that we approach the Father in prayer, asking, yea begging, for forgiveness for our sins.

There is no end to this treatise, but I must close. May God bless the truth and pardon all errors. I have written with no thought of provoking controversy, but only to present my views in my feeble way.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brother Terry,

I enjoy the Times so much. I'm in bad health. I don't get to the church often but I enjoy the Signs. I took them long years ago, and have the most of them. I'm going over and reading them again. It is such good news for me now.

Hope to see you some time,
Hallie Griswald

June 21, 2001

Elder Terry;

Hope I am not too late with my subscription; I know it is out in July. You will find a check enclosed for two more years for the Signs. We always look forward to receiving each issue. We enjoy the articles and experiences of the writers. They are treasured by us.

C.H. Elledge
Rt. 1, Box 317
Scroggins, TX 75480

209-3105 S. Main St.
Pentecton, B.C.
Canada, USA 7HI

Dear Elder Terry;

Thank you for the reminder that it was time to renew the Signs.

In this dry and thirsty land (spiritually) it is a blessing to receive the Signs every month. A sister in the church at Yakima Wash., gave me some papers of years gone by after the church ceased on the death of Elder Ben Preston, which I am thankful for.

The only fellowship my wife and I have, are the Signs and Remnant and tapes of Elder Preston and from the eastern states.

We remain thankful for our blessed hope in Christ Jesus knowing He has kept us onto this day and will on to the end and in glory.

Thank you,
Donald S. Ferguson

Dear Brother Key;

To start with let me say I am a firm believer of Salvation by Grace and Predestination of all things. I am sending two articles for publication however you can use them as you need.

These two articles tell a truth that actually happened to me recently and since the happening, I have been made to utter Praise to his holy name a number of times ***"How Firm A Foundation"*** just wanted to share this happening with others of like faith.

In a precious hope,
Buford R. Thornton

July 9, 2001

Dear Elder Terry,

I had hoped to be at the association on Saturday to pay you for my Signs, it runs out in August. Enclosed you will find a $20.00 check for 2 yrs. If its any left keep it.

Elder King's sermon was so good. Keep the paper going for us old people setting at home to read.

May God continue to Bless each and every one of you.

Your Sister In Hope,
Lera Vasser

ARTICLES

About a year ago, my doctor told me that I needed a chest X-ray. I was given the X-ray and there were no problems found. Then one morning about two weeks later, I found myself unable to get out of bed. After dialing 911, I was taken by ambulance to a local hospital. I was given a number of X -rays.

On my second day in the hospital, a nurse told me that I was in need of more x-rays, as well as, a needle biopsy. When this procedure was explained to me I was laying face down on a cot. I was to receive a sharp needle stick in my back.

I was set for the procedure when suddenly everything came to a halt and everyone got quiet. Then, felt the doctor's hand on my shoulder. He said, "Mr. Thornton, something has happened that I can not explain. I have pictures that show you have lung cancer, but in the more recent pictures there is not a sign of it. I don't know what to say, but you are cured". Our wonderful, omnipotent God had once again worked his sovereign will.

In 1985, I was sent by my doctor to have a kidney X-ray. There was a concern that I might have prostatitis.

When I finally learned that I needed the X-ray, some of my friends began to tell me about the difficult experience I was about to go through. A dye was to be injected into my body that would pass through my kidneys. I was told that this would produce great discomfort.

As I was seated and waiting to be called for the X-ray, I was extremely nervous and could hardly sit still. Thoughts of what I believed concerning our God came to my mind. If I really believed what I said I believed, then what did I have to fear? These thoughts were followed by a great calm. I became completely relaxed and was blessed with the sweet peace.

I was called to the table by two technicians.

They explained the test too, and what I could expect. I was told that I would indeed experience discomfort with the procedure.

The test began with one of the technicians administering the dye and the other monitoring the test. As the test progressed, I was continuously asked how I felt. I experienced no discomfort throughout the test

The technicians felt that they were doing the procedure wrong, since I should have been experiencing discomfort and yet was not.

The monitor indicated that the X-ray was correctly done, even though I felt fine throughout the procedure.

Praise be to our wonderful Lord for making an unpleasant situation more than bearable.

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THE RAINBOW

We all, at some time, have seen a rainbow in the sky. We have marvelled at the brilliance of its colors and joked about a pot of gold at the end of it. But, have we seriously considered what is manifested both naturally and spiritually by the rainbow?

On our journey home from the church in Salisbury, Maryland, several years ago, my wife and I passed through Virginia Beach immediately after a storm. There appeared the most beautiful rainbow I had ever seen. The colors were so radiant and they all seemed to be so gloriously displayed. I felt to be close enough to just reach out and touch it. My thoughts were upon it for a number of days and weeks and, finally, I was given to speak concerning it.

Genesis 9:8-17, "And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; And with every living creature that is with you, of the foul, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations; I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud; And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth."

Because of the exceeding sinfulness of man, God destroyed the earth and all flesh upon it, except for the eight souls of Noah and his family, by the great flood. God had commanded Noah to build an ark into which he had commanded them to come and God shut them in that they would not be destroyed. The ark was a type of Christ and bore the wrath of God that was poured out. Though tossed to and fro, Noah and his family were safe and secure. When the storm was over and the waters receded, they came forth from the ark and worshipped God through their burnt offerings on the altar. Then, God made a covenant between him-

self and all the earth that the earth would never again be destroyed by the waters of a flood. As a token of his covenant, God set the rainbow in the cloud.

The rainbow has seven colors. Seven is a perfect, complete number. There are many scriptures in both the Old and New Testaments concerning the number seven. Joshua had seven priests blow seven trumpets as the Israelites marched around Jericho for seven days. On the seventh day, the people marched around the city seven times, the priests blew with the trumpets, the people shouted, and the walls of the city fell down. The Apostle John wrote to the seven churches in Asia and he saw seven candlesticks and seven stars. Christ is the fulfillment of the number seven. He is perfect and complete and the church in him is perfect and complete.

The colors of the rainbow are violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, and red which are the same colors that are in the sun. The primary colors are red, blue and green from which are produced the other four colors. The three primary colors set forth the three persons of the one God. As the Apostle John writes, ***"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."*** When the three primary colors are combined, they produce one color, white. Then we see the righteousness, holiness and perfection of God manifested. Also, the three primary colors set forth Christ as the way, the truth and the life.

Red manifests the blood of Christ and sets him forth as the way. Our precious redeemer shed his blood to cleanse his people from their sins; to pay the price demanded by God's divine justice; to redeem them from the curse of the law. He is the way and not just a way. There is no other way for a lost sinner to be saved and to hear that blessed proclamation, ***"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."*** O, dear child of God, have you tried all the ways of the world and found that they only lead to despair and death? Then, to hear a small, still voice speak with such authority and peace, ***"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."***

Blue sets forth Christ as the truth. The color blue was in the curtains of the tabernacle, in the vail, in the hanging for the door of the tent, and in the garment that Aaron wore. As we look up, we see the blue sky and are reminded that truth came down from the climes of glory. The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. The world knows not the truth because it knows not Christ. You know the truth because Christ dwells in you, the Hope of Glory. The Father has revealed his son to you and you can proclaim with Peter, ***"Thou art the Christ, the Son of***

the living God." The truth sets you free from the ignorance of unbelief.

Green signifies life. When the grass and leaves turn brown, we say they are dead. But, when we see them turn green, we know there is life. Winter is over and spring has come. David wrote that *"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures."* Not just any pastures, but green pastures. There would have been no comfort, no rest, no nourishment except in green pastures. God provides the green pastures of his gospel for his sheep. He maketh you to lie down (rest) in the green pastures and there, he feeds you. There can be no works of the flesh because it is of grace. There is life, not death, in his green pastures.

Violet is purple and signifies royalty. Kings wore purple to show that they were royalty. Mark wrote that when Christ was brought before Pilate, they clothed him with purple and put a crown of thorns on him and said, *"Hail, King of the Jews."* They mocked him. They did not understand that this man was truly the King of kings and Lord of lords. Indeed, royalty such as they never knew stood before them. This king has subjects who love and worship him. They follow him, and another they will not follow. His kingdom is not of this world. No man or army can overthrow him or take his kingdom. He has all power and none can stand before him. Even King Nebuchadnezzar confessed, *"And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?"* Not even Solomon in all his splendor can be compared to our king.

Indigo is deep, dark blue and sets forth his sorrows and sufferings. He was despised and rejected of men. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, being beaten and mocked, but never opening his mouth. In the garden, Christ was withdrawn from his disciples about a stone's cast signifying his death. Under the law, those who committed certain transgressions were stoned to death. Though Christ had committed no transgressions, he was to bear the transgressions of his people on the cross. He went a stone's cast farther than his disciples or anyone else could go. There, in the garden, he prayed *"Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."* There was never any doubt that he would drink of that cup, for it is written, *"Then said I, Lo, I come, (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God."* And again he said, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. In the garden, an angel from heaven appeared unto him, strengthening him. Christ was in an agony because he knew exactly what he was about to suffer. No man has ever suffered to the extent our Lord suf-

fered as he bore your sins and I hope mine. He endured all that suffering as well as the crucifixion on the cross because of his great love for his people. As he was verily the Son of God and therefore, royalty; so also, was he the Son of man who must suffer and die.

Yellow, as gold, signifies the richness of his love for his people whereby he laid down his own life to pay the debt of their sins and to redeem them from the curse of the law. ***"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."*** His love is pure and unconditional. As John wrote, "Behold, what manner of love the father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." We love God because he first loved us. The Apostle Paul said ***"And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles."*** By nature, we all were children of wrath. However, the Apostle recorded for our comfort and edification, ***"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ." "Faith worketh by love"*** wrote Paul to the Galatians.

Orange is a symbol of power. Jesus said, ***"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."*** He also said that he had power to lay down his life and he had power to take it again. No man takes his life from him. ***"Where the word of a king is, there is power."*** By the effectual working of his power in you, he quickened or made alive you who were following after the course of this sinful world, taking pleasure in all the ways of the world, and were dead in trespasses and sins. A change occurred within you that no man could bring about. You saw everything differently. The eyes of your understanding were enlightened. You saw yourself as wretched and lost without any hope of eternal life. By his power and grace, he lifted you up out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay and set your feet upon a rock (which is Christ), and established your goings. And he put a new song in your mouth, even praise unto our God.

The natural rainbow is for the natural man. Man in the flesh can see it with his natural eyes and know with the natural mind that the storm has passed and the earth has not been destroyed. He knows that it takes drops of moisture and rays of the sun to produce the rainbow. But, man in the flesh cannot see and understand any more than that.

To a little child of God, the rainbow is more than just a natural phe-

nomena. When the storms come that try you so severely, you cannot behold the rainbow. As Job said, ***"Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him."*** There seems only darkness and the fearful thunderings and lightnings. You feel so helpless and alone. Yet, dear child of the Heavenly King, you have been given faith to believe that in the end, all will be well. For you believe in a God who rules and reigns and has promised that none can pluck his little ones from his hand. As with Job, ***"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."*** As surely as he has given you faith, it is being tried. But, when he hath tried you, you shall come forth as gold. When the storm passes, you see the beautiful rainbow and know that all is well. When the trial or sorrow passes, you see that Christ was with you the whole time, but you just couldn't see him. Now, you behold his beauty that far surpasses that of the natural rainbow. A beauty of holiness that includes his love, grace and mercy. You then understand that you were put into the cliff of the rock with his hand over you so that you could not see his face. But, you now see his hinderparts.

What is the face of God? God is a spirit which no man can see as the scripture says that Christ was the image of the invisible God. God doesn't have a form as we do. He knows all things and has seen the end from the beginning. There is nothing new to him and there is no past or future with God, but only the present. As Christ said, ***"Before Abraham was, I am."*** To me, the face of God sets forth all that he sees and knows. He knows and has seen that which is to come because he has purposed it. That includes all the wrath that will be poured out and the evil that is to come; all the severe trials as well as death that we will endure; the ones who are elected to eternal life and will hear that blessed summons, ***"Come, ye blessed of my father and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"***; and those whose names are not written in the lamb's Book of Life who hear those dreadful words, ***"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."*** Is it any wonder, then, that he said no man can see my face and live? We could not withstand such knowledge. It would indeed destroy us in the flesh. We see his hinderparts-where he has been and what he has brought to pass.

His covenant of grace is not with all flesh, but with those that he chose before the foundation of the world and predestinated to be conformed to the image of his son. This covenant says that he will put his laws into their minds and write them

in their hearts. Their sins and iniquities he will remember no more. He will be to them a God and they shall be to him a people. They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for all shall know him, from the least to the greatest. He will be merciful to their unrighteousness. When we behold Christ, we can say, regardless of the outcome of the storm, all is well.

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VOICES OF THE PAST

HOW THEY GROW

"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow."

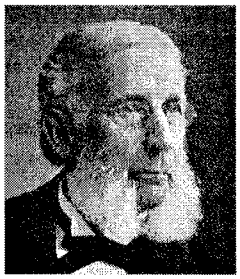
Elder Silas H. Durand

To his disciples the Savior thus taught precious things concerning his people, how they are manifested, how they are provided for, how they are clothed in beauty and purity by no power of their own, and how their confidence and trust must be alone in the Lord.

The church is called a lily by her heavenly Husband, and is distinguished from all other religious organizations ***"as the lily among thorns."***

The Lord says of Israel that he shall grow as the lily. Therefore we are sure that when we consider how the lilies of the field grow we shall be considering in this beautiful and striking figure that peculiar experience and doctrine of the Lord's people which distinguish them as ***"a peculiar people."***

Growth in vegetable or animal is a great mystery. We cannot fully understand why things grow, for it is a part of the unsearchable mystery of life; but we can consider, and in some measure understand, how they grow. Growth cannot be regarded as an act, for that would imply that it depended upon an exercise of will. It is not an act of the thing growing, but it is a movement which is a necessary consequent of life. The will of the person or thing growing has nothing to do with the growth. It is an experience. The plant grows because of the life that is in it, not because it wills to grow. If that growth is to be increased it must be by the work of the one attending it in enriching and stirring the soil and giving it water and light and warmth. A man may affect his own natural growth, under certain circumstances, by attention to food and drink, while the principle of life that causes growth remains beyond the possible power of his will or his understanding.

In the figure of the lily in the text, and in similar figures throughout the Scriptures, the subject of God's spiritual work is regarded as a plant or tree, moved and controlled and

exercised by the power of the life within, but not exercising in the least degree any power over that life.

When a poor sinner, *"who knows the plague of his own heart,"* considers the lilies of the field, so white, so pure, so beautiful, and then looks into his own heart, so sinful, so full of evil, how can he think of himself as one of those whom the dear Savior would represent by the lily? With what grief and consternation he sees the absolute contrast between the lily in its unspeakable loveliness, and himself. Where can he see in himself any principle or feature which can answer to the purity of the lily? In every respect they seem to him to be "contrary the one to the other." The poor soul cannot realize at such a time that only by the power of the Spirit can he see and feel the evil of the flesh. The natural man does not receive the truth that he is sinful and depraved; that is one of those things which can only be known by the revelation of the Spirit of God. That sad knowledge is an evidence of life, but the Spirit alone can make the poor soul see that evidence. *"In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."- John i. 4, 5. "All things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light."-Eph. v. 13.*

But let us consider how the lilies grow. The first work in order to the growth of a plant is the preparation of the soil. This is the work of the gardener. The first movement made by the seed after it has been put into the soil prepared for it is to send roots downward. The roots will be working and extending into the ground for several days before the plant appears. This order in the work of growing, both in natural plants and in the Lord's plants which grow in the garden of grace, is recognized in the words of the Lord by Isaiah: *"And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward."*

The soil for plants generally must be broken up and rendered soft and fine, so that the roots can easily work into it. The soil for lilies of some kinds needs much softening by water, and in some kinds to be covered by it. There are a great many things of a most obnoxious kind that need to be gotten together to make a good rich soil for the lily. We speak of the soil as "good," and "rich," but put some of it out of place, on the face or on a white garment, and we pronounce it vile and loathsome.

What a sad, dark, fearful time that is for the poor soul when his thoughts are engaged day and night in searching his own vile heart and finding nothing but evil there. He cannot tell how he first came to see himself so sinful, cannot tell how his thoughts first began to be engaged in such a doleful search, in which he finds no good, but deeper and darker depths of evil.

This broken heart, this depraved and sinful nature, this mass of corruption felt in the soul, is the soil which the Lord has prepared. It is he, the heavenly Husbandman, who has broken up the heart, who has made its corruption appear to our startled view, who has made us sick of sin, and sick of self because of sin.

Into this vile soil our thoughts are working downward, like roots from a good seed which the Lord has planted. This vile nature, this corrupt heart, is the "good ground" into which the good seed has fallen. It is "good ground" because it is well broken up and pulverized and made soft and tender. It is not the corruption, the sinfulness, which makes it good ground, but the knowledge of that corruption and sin, and the hatred of it. All men are corrupt and sinful, but until the law of God enters into the heart no one can know and feel it, and until that knowledge of one's just condemnation comes to him by the quickening power of God his heart is hard like the rock, the wayside or the thorny ground.

When the thoughts are working down in the darkness of our heart, and observing the sinfulness of all our life, trying if they can find some good thing there, what terrible anxiety and distress we feel. We cannot give up the search for something to give us hope, some good thing to relieve our anguish, some way of escape from the sin and evil that everywhere so afflict us. But we can find no relief, no way of escape from evil, for we seem to be all evil. Think of the roots that are working downward and abroad in the depth of the earth; what hopelessness we may imagine is theirs as they work in the darkness, the mass of fine, minute rootlets struggling, pushing themselves down into the soil, which grows more and more mellow, creeping and forcing themselves outward, to find they know not what. But they are doing the work appointed for them, and it is through the work done by them that the tender blade finally appears in sight.

It is through the work done by the thoughts down in the broken soil of the heart that finally the tender hope appears. The thoughts have been working downward, but the hope is reaching upward. In proportion to the thoroughness of that search downward is the strength and beauty of that blade looking upward. The search must be exhaustive and in vain. Again and again we must learn the sad truth: no light, no hope, no good thing down there in the earth; in the flesh no good thing. That must be learned deeply again and again.

But the tender roots with their mysterious, delicate life-power are taking up something from that dark, obnoxious soil which will be conveyed by the miraculous processes of nature upward and cause the appearance of the blade, the flower and the fruit. So the thoughts have gathered the sad assurance that there is nothing but evil in us, and because there is left no question of that truth,

and because we are cut off from all hope in ourselves, we are prepared to wonder and adore when a blessed hope is given unto us reaching upward instead of downward. What a glorious surprise when the hope in Jesus appears to us! What thanksgiving and praise fill our poor hearts!

So the lilies grow, and the corn and the vine. ***"They shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine." "I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon."- Hosea xiv. 5, 7.***

When at any time the roots cease to be sent forth downward and outward in the soil, then the plant or the tree will cease to grow. When the thoughts cease to work in the soil of a sinful, broken heart, then the growth in grace ceases. When we lose sight of our sinfulness in any degree, and begin to feel some contentment and satisfaction with our own condition, then we may think that we have attained to some excellent growth. But we have truly not grown at all in a spiritual sense; we have really diminished. ***"Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord."***

So from time to time the Lord sends a winter time upon us, when we can only send roots downward; when we can only think of our vileness; when our life looks to us utterly unworthy; when we can hardly see anything in our heart and life in which to take any comfort. The things that we have been enabled to do in obedience to the Lord we are thankful to him for, but we have still to think of our own unprofitableness as servants. All that was of ourselves in every work seems to display our own weakness and sinfulness. We feel a tender thankfulness to the Lord for his goodness in leading us in the paths of righteousness, but we feel also that ***"the sins of one most righteous day might sink us in despair."***

How many a time I have seemed to be at the point of giving up, assured that my hope was not good, because for days I could seem to think of nothing but my own sinfulness and depravity. It was not long ago that while in this dark state of mind, my thoughts active, but active in a downward direction, all at once I saw them as the roots of a plant working downward that the plant might grow upward. What a sweet comfort that was.

Think of the pure, white flower of the lily looking downward at the black mud out of which it has grown! Think of the Spirit contrasted with the flesh. In the same person the flesh is felt lusting ***"against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."*** No wonder that the Lord's people feel conflicts within themselves. There must be a warfare where there are two contrary principles. None but quickened souls can feel that warfare.

The lilies, how wonderfully beautiful they are. Do they know of their beauty? Do they not feel ashamed as they look down at that black, uncomely soil where they live? Could they grow otherwise or elsewhere than they do? Could they transfer themselves to some whiter, cleaner ground? Can they by exerting some power of their own grow more rapidly, or by neglect can they cease to grow? Can they cause themselves to be more or less pure and fair and lovely? Consider them, how they grow, and then you will see how the Lord's children grow in grace. It is by no effort or power of their own, and yet they are constantly, when exercised by the Spirit, anxious to grow, and feeling that something depends upon them, and are chiding and condemning themselves for their lack of growth. But all their efforts are vain, and only show them how helpless they are, how unable to make themselves any more worthy in the sight of God. Then they come again to the knowledge that all their goodness and power are in Jesus; that he is their righteousness. Then they truly grow, not in themselves, but in Jesus. Then they grow, not in their own works, but in grace. Then it can be said of them:

Blessed are you when you strive in vain,
And all your works no comfort yield;
For when you cease to toil and spin,
You are as lilies of the field.

And he who richly clothes the flower,
Which passes almost as a breath,
Will show his richer grace and power
In you, O ye of little faith.

The plants in nature grow in the night. I have measured the growth of corn. Once from six at night to six in the morning it grew thirteen inches, and only an inch during the following day. It is authoritatively said that corn will sometimes, under most favorable circumstances, grow sixteen inches in one night. It is in the night time of sorrow and affliction that the Lord's plants grow in the knowledge and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is while under a distressing sense of their own weakness that they grow in the knowledge of Jesus as their Strength. It is through an especially dark and oppressive experience of their own sinfulness and depravity that they grow in the knowledge of Jesus as their Righteousness. When their thoughts have long been working and groping, like the roots of plants, in the dark depths of their earthly nature, and have found no good thing dwelling there, but only evil, then with what glad surprise they see the same thoughts reaching upward and coming beautifully into flower, and rejoicing in the pure light of the Sun of Righteousness. Then they learn that all their sad and weary night work has not been in vain. Those creeping, searching roots, those struggling, groping

thoughts, have brought up into the soul something that was necessary to the real growth of the true plant of grace. Their work down there in the darkness has caused the growth to be away from the earth, away from self-confidence, and has caused the blade to reach upward, and the flower to bloom in the sunlit atmosphere of grace. The poor souls can now see that by the faith and hope and love that are at last blooming in their hearts, and filling them with the beauty and perfume of Jesus' blessed name, they are even more gloriously clothed than are the lilies of the field.

Silas H. Durand
December 10, 1904.

Touchet, Wash., June 12, 1910.

Dear Brother Chick: -- After sometime silence with my pen, but not in mind, I find myself once more trying to express to you the course or travel of my mind during this long silence. After many week's work for the necessaries of this life I was permitted to meet a few of the saints at this place, and to spend a few moments in trying to praise God, from whom all blessings flow. I am now at home, and all quiet, and I picked up the SIGNS for June 15th, and read your editorial, and I felt to thank our Father for such food, and then came the desire to tell you some of the wonders of grace, so you might know that while you live in the eastern part of these United States, and I live in the extreme west, and while we natural creatures are limited, as the bounds of our habitations are set so that we cannot go beyond them, still the word of God is not bound, and neither can it be. This is the Word which by the gospel is preached unto you, as said the apostle. I have felt to be one with the apostle when he said, O the depth of the wisdom of God; how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out.

It so seemed, dear brother, as you so beautifully applied those types of the potter and the clay, that the antitype answered as face to face. How sweet and comforting it is to the poor, broken heart of one who realizes that be can do nothing of himself, and who has had to do with self, as did Peter when he denied his Lord, for faith to make manifest to him the dear Father above, who pities his children, the clay of his own molding.

This faith shows a fullness in Jesus; it shows that grace was treasured up in him for all our necessities, for all our denials and all our disappointments, and many of these things have been in my life.

For thirty years my life has been one of disappointments. The first of note was that I had my mind set for heaven from the first of my recollections but there came a time when a knowledge of my sins blighted all these prospects and

hopes, and then my mind was thoroughly set to believe banishment forever from God was my lot, though much against my desire, and then at an unexpected time and in an unexpected way my mind was made to feel that I would no more be beset with disappointments. But how soon again was I made to drink the cup with Peter and John when in prison. Then I felt, Woe is me, and then the Lord looked with mercy upon the clay in his own hands, and I was made to weep with sorrow that I had denied my Lord, and to weep for joy that he was faithful and had not denied me. Then my mind was fixed to always be ready to give a reason of the hope that was given me, but in this, too, I have been disappointed.

But my mind has led me away from my intent I merely wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed this editorial, and in fact all the Signs. I do so love to hear or read after one who can take the prophecies and apply them experimentally, and show the faithfulness of God to his rebellious people, but when they are taken up under the law, and it is declared that the blessings depend upon the obedience of the creature, then I am left out, for I surely am the clay and God the Potter, and all blessings must come from him for time and eternity. And I long to see the day when he will loose me from the things of this life and allow me to spend the few days of my allotted time with his dear saints. May he grant this for Jesus' sake. May God bless you, with all his saints, is my prayer.

Yours in love,
J.T. Barnes

"My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word." — Psalm cxix. 81.

How difficult, for the most part, it is, and we may add, how rare to be able to realise for ourselves, with any degree of abiding permanency, a sweet experimental sense of, and an assured interest in those spiritual blessings with which, so far as we are believers in the Son of God, we are blessed in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Glimpses, glances, transient views, sips and tastes, drops and crumbs sweet beyond expression whilst they last, but rarely given and soon gone, are, generally speaking, all we seem to get after much hard labour, many cries, earnest entreaties, and vehement longings before the Lord, as he presents himself to our faith, seated on the throne of his grace. How many there are who are daily and sometimes almost hourly crying out, if not in the exact words, yet in the substance of them:

"O come, thou much-expected guest
Lord Jesus, quickly come!"

And yet how long he seems to delay his coming! How continually are they looking upward till eyes and heart seem alike to fail, waiting for his appearing more than they that watch for the morning; how willing

to make any sacrifice, to do anything, be anything, or bear anything, if he would but manifest himself to their souls. How often are they searching and examining their hearts, lips, and lives, to see if there be any evil way in them which makes him hide his lovely face, and not drop one word into their longing breasts, whereby they might had sweet communion with him! How they desire to be blessed with real contrition of heart, and godly sorrow for their sins, and be melted and dissolved at his feet under a sight and sense of his bleeding, dying love!

But whence spring all these longing looks and waiting expectations? Do not all those earnest desires and vehement longings shew that those in when they so continually are found are begotten again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead? It is divine life in their souls which is the spring and source of these inward breathings, lookings, and longings; and this divine life arises out of a new and spiritual birth, which is itself the fruit of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. It is not the still-born child that cries; it is the cry of the living child which so goes to the heart of the mother. Thus the cries of which we have spoken shew that there is life. But with life there is hope; for why should a man be ever crying after, waiting for, and anxiously expecting a blessing which he has no hope ever to obtain? If, then, these had no living hope, would they cry? There are no cries in a dead hope. It is because the grace of hope in their breasts is, like every other grace of the Spirit, alive unto God, that it acts in union with faith and love, to bring them and keep them earnest, sincere, and unwearied before the throne, expecting and anticipating what God has promised to bestow on those who wait upon him.

Elder J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the one hundred seventy first session of the Contentnea Association will be held with the Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church, Lowland, N.C. on Saturday and Sunday, October 13-14, 2001. Service to begin at 10:30 on Saturday. Traveling from the west, take NC-33 to Hobucken, cross the high rise bridge, go one half mile, turn left on Lowland Road, go three miles and turn right on Middle Prong Road and the Church is a short distance on the right. From the south, take NC-55 from New Bern to Bayboro and NC-304 to Hobucken, then follow the above directions.

We invite all believers of the truth to come and be with us during this meeting.

Gene Lupton, Association Clerk

EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

The 2001 Eastern Kehukee Association will convene the Lord willing, with Flat Swamp Church. Services will begin at 10:30 am on Saturday, October 6 and Sunday, October 7.

Directions to the church are as follows: from Raleigh, NC take US 64 East approximately 75 miles. Turn off at Exit 496. At the stop sign, turn right and go to Bethel. Continue straight through the stoplight and go three blocks. Turn left on Package Craft Road. Travel about 6 miles and the church sits on the left.

We invite visitors and correspondents to attend this meeting.

Naomi Coker
Association Clerk

NEW DAN RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

New Dan River Primitive Baptist Church at Vesta, Virginia, Patrick County, plans to hold a fifth Saturday (Only) meeting on September 29, 2001. Singing will begin at 9:30 a.m.

The church is located 1/4 mile off U.S. Route 58, on state shed road (Route 636). We welcome all believers of Sovereign Grace to this all day meeting.

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 22 & 23, 2001.

Union Church, Located about five miles Southeast of Manion, Louisiana, will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
(318) 778-4217

SULPHUR FORK ASSOCIATION

The One Hundred Fifty-Six session of the Sulphur Fork Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Prospect Church on Saturday and Sunday, October 6 & 7, 2001.

Prospect Church is located on the North side of Highway 67, about three (3) miles east of Simms, Tx. (Look for sign). All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Miles Bird
Association Clerk
(318) 687-6775

Thank you very much.

Miles Bird
2209 Cynthia Ln.
Shreveport, LA 71118

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 2001

Walter Griffith, NC	2.00
Rachel Smith, NC	2.00
Mrs. N. H. Conner, VA	10.00
Rlee Houchins, VA	5.00
Cleo Underwood, VA	5.00
C.H. Jones, TN	2.00
Eld. Barnabas Brammer, MD	2.00
Edward Hodnett, VA	2.00
Grady Putman, AR	12.00
Jim Mosley, MI	4.95
Jesse Ray, NC	2.00
James Shelor, VA	5.00
Donald Ferguson, BC	32.00

OBITUARIES

PATTIE B. KREWATCH

Sister Pattie B. Krewatch was born June 20, 1905, and departed this life on March 28, 2001, making her mortal journey 95 years. She was the daughter of Robert and Nora Bailey of Sussex Co., Delaware. She was preceeded in death by her parents, sisters Elah Hearne, Leticia Russell, Grace Yohans, Susie Brumbley and Hilda Bradley; and brothers Homer and Robert Bailey; and her son Kenneth K. Krewatch.

Sister Pattie is survived by her husband of 72 years (married August 18, 1928) Albert V. Krewatch, daughter Joann B. Fletcher, a daughter in law, four grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, a sister in law, and several nieces and nephews, and many Old School Baptist members and friends.

Sister Pattie and her husband traveled in many countries in connection with Al's work with the University of Maryland. Her friends extended across the boundaries of several countries and through many whom she served as a registered nurse for many years.

Pattie was a devoted member of the Little Creek Primitive Baptist Church of Sussex Co., Delaware. She remembered clearly her father's hitching up the horse to a wagon and driving his family to Little Creek for meetings. It had been a home to Sister Pattie since childhood. She was baptised by Elder H.C. Ker and Elder Harold Bennett in July, 1942. Her service to her church and to the many visiting ministers and their wives and families and other brethren will long be remembered. In her declining months, Sister Pattie was brought to church by her loving husband and daughter in a wheel chair. She sat attentively to hear the joyful sound of the gospel and to sing from heart many hymns which had been a part of her life since childhood.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder C.B. Davis on

March 31, 2001, and she was laid to rest in the Little Creek Church Cemetery among her parents, her son, and other relatives and a host of brethren who had preceeded her in death. Her life was a testimony of devotion to her Heavenly Father. Her conversation was of His loving kindness and faithfulness to His people.

She bore with patience her afflictions and longed to be released from this world of sorrow; yet she still maintained concern for her church and the congregation of believers. We who remain behind feel assured that Sister Pattie walks in a new life, in a new land, singing praises to her Savior for all eternity.

Respectfully submitted,
Joann Fletcher
Elbert Robbins

OPIE JANE PHILLIPS

Valley View Church has lost a lovely Sister Opie Jane Phillips. She was born on May 16, 1916, the daughter of Perry and Arizona Phillips. Her mother was also a member of Valley View Church. Her Grandfather was a Primitive Baptist Minister John M. Phillips. She was married to Ertie Fleming Phillips on March 24, 1937. Sister Opie was preceded in death by her husband, a son Rollie Clarence Phillips, and a granddaughter.

She is survived by two daughters and son in law Sylvia and Alva Mcpeak, Woolwine, Va., Margaret P. Hamilton, Salem, Va.; one brother and wife Oden and Diane Phillips, Hampton, Va.; three sisters, Lillie P. Lester, Vinton, Va., Carrie P. Lester, Roanoke, Va., Goldie L. Phillips, Louisville, Ky.; Daugher-in- law Jo Ann Phillips, Riner, Va.; 7 Grandchildren; 10 great grandchildren.

Sister Opie joined Valley View March 16, 1997, baptized by Elder Raymond Goad, June 15, 1997. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace and attended church as long as she was able.

The funeral service was held at Mabery Chapel April 10, 2001 by her Pastor Elder Raymond Goad and she was laid to rest at Jacksonville Cemetery, Floyd, Va. beside her husband. Asleep in Jesus awaiting the second coming. May the Lord reconcile us to his Will and realize our loss is her eternal gain.

Written at the request of Valley View Church by Lena Duncan, clerk.
Raymond Goad, Moderator

PSALM 33:5-9.

He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the LORD.

By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses.

Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.

For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.

ELDER J. T. PRESCOTT, SR.

Elder J. T. Prescott departed this vale of sin and sorrow on March 13, 2001. He now awaits the triumphant coming of his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, having run the course and after fighting the good fight which had been ordained for him from before the foundation of the world. In his last years, marked with many trials and tribulations, he never once wavered in his faith, not did he ever complain. He stood and preached Jesus as long as he was able. Then he sat and preached Jesus. In the latter days, he preached Jesus from his bed of affliction. Regardless of his condition. he always preached Jesus, the author and finisher of his faith.

He was 82 years of age. and was married for 62 years to Mary Rogers Prescott, who survives him in grief but also in hope. Two sons, Josiah Thomas Prescott, Jr. and wife Carol of Emerald Isle, and Donald Ray Prescott and wife Melva survive. Also, two daughters, Sylvia Prescott Adams and husband Gray, of Cape Carteret and Diana Prescott Carroll and husband Peter of Raleigh survive their father as well. A brother, Irvin of Winston Salem and a sister, Leola Prescott Bright of Kinston are also left to mourn. Elder Prescott had sixteen grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Elder Prescott served Primitive Baptist churches in both the Kehukee and Contentnea Associations for many decades. He was Pastor of the Hadnot Creek Church and Cedar Island Church until his death. His travels took him to churches and associations from Texas to Canada. He was also on the board of the Signs of the Times for many years. Elder Prescott and his dear companion were not forgetful to entertain strangers, knowing that many have entertained angels unawares. It would be difficult indeed to count the visitors that have tasted the hospitality of the Prescott household.

Regardless of the very high esteem in which many held him. Elder Prescott would not accept praise. for he knew that any gifts he had were given him from the Father of lights. and not of his own works. His funeral was conducted by Elders Milton Lupton. Jesse Foreman. Gene Lupton, Marvin Brumfield. and Tom Thompson. He will be missed by those of us who remain. Sleep in peace. dear brother. Praise God. Submitted by the Church at Hadnot Creek

Elder Tom Thompson, Pastor

NOTICE

A couple of errors were made in your August, 2001 issue of the Signs. On page 176 in the first column the name (Sister Annie McCods) should have been Sister Annie McCool. Also in the 17th and 18th lines down in the 2 column the period should have been omitted after (expect.) It should read "expect to do" with no new paragraph.

The Editors

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

A HEARTBEAT FROM HEAVEN

We are living on the border
Of Eternity each day;
We are just as close to Heaven
As the stars so far away.
And the only thing between us,
Whether we are big or small,
Is a tender, little heartbeat.
Just a heartbeat, that is all.

Just a heartbeat from the Glory,
Just a heartbeat, nothing more;
Just a tender, little heartbeat,
Till we walk the Golden shore;
Keep our lamp all
Trimmed and burning,
Let it shine you'll never fall;
Just a heartbeat from the Glory,
Just a heartbeat, that is all.

There's a place beyond the river
Where we'll lay our burdens down,
Where we'll meet
Our friends and loved ones,
Where we'll wear a starry crown.
All our troubles will be over,
And no tears shall ever fall;
Just a heartbeat for the Glory,
Just a heartbeat, that is all.

by Walt Huntley
submitted by B.G. Pryor

POSTMASTER

Please send address changes to:

Signs of the Times
202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

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EDITORIAL

"And the Lord caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Genesis 2:21-23.

Elder J. B. Farmer

Here is the account of God making, or creating, Eve, the mother of all living, whom He gave to be the bride and wife of Adam. This account, no doubt, was given by inspiration to the writer and written and preserved for the benefit of those who are given a heart of understanding. As with all scripture, it is of no private interpretation or is not to be understood with the carnal mind. We believe that no one has the ability in himself to rightly divide this or any other mystery which belongs to God. Rather, we must wait upon God, Who only dwells in the light, hoping that He may be gracious to reveal some of His things unto us.

We are made to believe that this is the true record of the natural formation of the second person ever to breathe the breath of life. Also, that this is a true figure, showing the way which God brought the church, the bride of Christ, into being. From the holy record, it seems apparent that He accomplished this before He made the world. We are taught that the church, or body of Christ, with all her members, was foreknown of God and predestinated unto the adoption of children. Also, that each member's name was written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world. She was chosen in Him and given grace in Him before the world was, according to

the scriptures. Also, that she was loved with an everlasting love and was created in Christ Jesus unto good works. It seems plain that all this was done before the church ever was manifest in the world.

It appears that Eve's life was the life of Adam, and that his life was her life, since she was made of his very substance. She was bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh naturally. Her life was totally dependent upon his life, even as the life of the church is totally dependent on the life of Christ. Before Eve was made, her dwelling place was in Adam, just as the church dwelt in Christ before she was created. It appears that the church stood in the same relation to Christ spiritually as Eve did unto Adam naturally. ***"We are of His body, of His flesh and of His bones"***, spiritually, if we are His, according to the inspired apostle. This being the case, it is no wonder that we are told that, ***"In Him we live and move and have our being."*** In another place we are assured with these words, ***"Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations." Psalm 90:1.***

The inspired psalmist said, ***"Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." Psalm 139:16.*** I believe that God saw and knew Eve before He brought her forth from Adam, as He saw and knew His people before He ever created them in Christ Jesus. God knew and loved His people before He ever made them. ***"Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world." Acts 15:18.*** Is this not what it means to be foreknown of God? He saw them, knew them, loved them and determined to keep them as the apple of His eye and purposed finally to redeem them by Christ and bring them to glory. All this was done before they were generated of Him and before He made the world.

"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting, thou art God." Our God is eternal. He had no beginning of days or end of life. But the church had a beginning. Was not her beginning when she was created in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world? Some have spoken of God's people being eternal children, and this may be true, in one sense, if properly understood. But we are taught that only God is eternal. However, if the church is spiritual, which I believe she is, she must have an eternal aspect, for there is no beginning or ending of life in that Eternal Spirit. Then what is it that is eternal about the church? It appears to me, that the church, being formed of the body of Christ, has an eternal aspect by virtue of her eternal union with Him. In other words, the church

dwelt in the Eternal Son prior to her being created. She is one with Him and will ever be one with Him by virtue of His life being her life. The church was formed of His living spiritual body and she is His living spiritual bride. Christ and the church are one flesh spiritually as Adam and Eve were one flesh naturally.

Another thing in the heading scripture seems precious. It shows from which part of Adam's body the rib was taken to form his helpmeet. It was located in his chest, near his heart, the seat of love. Does not this indicate the relationship of the true Bridegroom and His bride? Was not His every thought and action toward His bride in true love and affection and concern for her welfare? And because He first loved her, does not her love return to him in kind? Because of His great love for her, He was willing to lay down His life that she might live and not die. He, who had no sin, was willing to become sin that His bride might be made the righteousness of God in Him. He cleansed her with His own blood that she not have any spot or blemish or wrinkle or any such thing. She is made to be altogether pure and lovely in His sight. He has won the victory over all her foes, even sin, Satan, death, hell and the grave. At the appointed time of the Father, He will come and receive her to Himself for that great wedding feast. Then all will be love, peace and joy unspeakable, even forever.

How wonderful is the picture of the unity of Christ, the mighty Savior and His beloved bride. How safe for her to be continually in Him and under the protection of Him, to whom was given all power in heaven and earth. What boundless love is manifest between the two through all eternity. What a glorious and sure promise of eternal life has been given to His beloved. And what a great and earnest expectation does His pure and holy bride experience as she awaits and anticipates His coming in the fullness of His majesty and power. He is her life, her joy and her strength. He is her love, her hope and her salvation. He is her all in all. ***"But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." 1 Corinthians 1:30-31.***

Written in love, I hope.
J.B. Farmer
2-5-2001

PROVERBS 8:10-11.

Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.

For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

CORRESPONDENCE

August 23, 2001

Dear Elder Key,

The enclosed clipping is the setting of the Smith River Association in the year 1943.

With Love For The Truth,
Wm. Hale Terry

PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS HOLD ANNUAL ASSOCIATION AT PAYNE'S CREEK CHURCH

On September the 3rd, 4th, and 5th, 1943, the old-time Primitive Baptists met at Payne's Creek Church in Floyd county Virginia and held their annual "Association." Many delegates from churches thru out Virginia and surrounding states were present. The association occurs at the same church only once in about nineteen years and is a big event for the Primitive Baptists in each district each year.

Elder Sam Moran, Moderator, Elder Goode Hash, clerk and Elder Sam Koger, assistant clerk presided. An unexpected large crowd attended despite war operations and gas shortage. Friday, seventy-five automobiles brought three hundred seventy-five people; Saturday one hundred seventy-five automobiles brought nine hundred people; and Sunday, four hundred forty-five automobiles brought two thousand fifty people. Lawrence W. Wilmer, Ranger On the Parkway directed traffic in a most efficient manner - not a single accident occurred.

The people brought a basket lunch and there were many spreads at various places over the grounds and tables filled with delicious meats, pies and cakes and other delicacies. Dinner was served in an orderly hospitable manner and was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone.

Thirty sermons, truly messages of grace, were delivered during the three days meeting by local and visiting preachers. The wisdom and understanding revealed by the old Primitive Baptist ministers of the gospel, were most touching and one felt the mighty truth and the power of God descending upon him and an inflow of his wonderful spirits. One felt his worthiness in this world. It brings before us the truth - what helpless creatures we really are. How really helpless we are without the help of God. Words cannot describe the sermons of those ministers of the gospel. One must hear them to know and feel it.

The Primitive Baptists believe in-predestination -that God only can save people and forgive their sins. They live in faith and hope. ***Heb. 10-28. "Now the just shall live in faith." 11-1. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."*** The Primitive Baptist church began

so long ago that we have no date of its beginning. They follow the teachings of John the Baptist in the wilderness. The preachers do not accept or demand a salary for preaching the gospel. The Glory of preaching, of being gospel messengers to their congregation is all the pay they get or seek. The association at Payne's Creek is the old original Primitive Baptist church - not a new order. They worship without instrumental music, but it is indeed a touching scene when they sing the hymns at their departure and shake hands in genuine fellowship. Their faces seem to stand out in a halo of great joy.

August 15, 2001

Greetings to My Brethren and Friends in Christ,

Although I have been absent from you in the flesh over the past months and have missed you, I feel the Lord has blessed me to be with you spiritually, if I am not deceived. As I have felt on some days to have been *"cast into the burning fiery flirnace that was heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated,"* I declare with Job that *"though he slay me, yet will I trust him."*

Today, if it be the Lord's will, I desire to share some treasures from heaven with you. When the Lord first appeared to me nearly thirty-nine years ago sitting on the side of my bed clothed in white, never did I know the path I would have to travel in this life. Some months after he first made himself known to me, I was given to see myself as a sinner. All my sins everything I had ever said or done-were contained in a scroll that unrolled daily. what was going on with me? I thought I had always tried to be a good moral person but was shown of the Lord that there dwelleth no good thing in the flesh. It is as filthy rags. I pondered these things in my heart. I had never heard of an experience of grace. Finally, after this scroll had unrolled and unrolled for sometime, I was brought so low and begged God for forgiveness of my sins. He put up a fence and threw my sins on the other side of the fence and I felt the burden lifted and my sins forgiven. *"As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."* If I am not deceived, the Lord has blessed me with many precious experiences over the years, as unworthy as I feel to be; but I must confess that these experiences come through many trials and much affliction-the greater the trial or affliction, the greater the spiritual experience. In 1 Thessalonians 3:3, we read, *"That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto."* Paul wrote to the Philippian brethren, *"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Philippians 1:29.*

I have been much afflicted since the eleventh day of April. I prayed, ***"Lord, I know thou can heal my body, if it be thou will; but not my will, but thine be done."*** If I am not deceived, I heard a still small voice speak these words, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole." I believe, if not deceived, my Lord gave me faith to tell my family that although I did not know what the outcome of the great trial before me would be, yet in the end, all would be well. I felt a calm and peace going into surgery in spite of how serious the outcome could be. I was given to reflect upon a dream that was given to me many years ago. In the dream, I was in a high, lifted up place, carried to and fro. Beneath me was much water and I could not understand how that I would not fall into that water, but I never did. This has been my experience since April. The outcome of my surgery was serious-Ovarian Cancer which had spread-but the bad news did not move me. The doctors and nurses were overcome with my optimistic and positive attitude. I was trusting in the Great Physician who has all power in heaven and in earth. I believe He has carried me on his wings keeping me from falling and not being consumed. I feel to have been kept by the power of Almighty God.

I must confess that as in the dream, I have been carried to and fro. I felt to be on the mountain top when I was given faith to believe all would be well in the end and felt to witness in some small measure with Abraham when he said, ***"I and the lad will go yonder and worship and come again to you."*** Only with faith given from our Lord can we believe in such miracles. It is a higher power of which the world knows nothing.

These many months of enduring chemo since surgery have been very trying. Each treatment becomes more difficult on the body and the chemicals are some of the most powerful to treat advanced aggressive cancer. Each time I face the administering of this five-hour chemo treatment, I think of going into battle. In the scriptures, the Lord's people had to fight many battles. But they did not go into battle unprepared. I too look to the Lord for my help as I go into each battle. The following scriptures have been of great comfort to me: ***Ephesians 6:10-11; 14-18: "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit."*** When

I am clothed with the whole armour of God, I am blessed to endure the battle. Precious to me are the words recorded in ***Phillipians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."***

Two weeks after my first treatment, every hair on my head became so painful that I could not lay my head on my pillow for several nights. The chemo had killed the hair follicles. What a relief to lose all my hair and be relieved of the pain and discomfort. It didn't even bother me to lose my hair; the Lord makes you willing in the day of his power. All I could think of was the great pain that Christ must have suffered when they put the crown of thorns on his head. Every bone in my body has been affected with the chemo treatments. The past treatment has been the severest of the severe. My feet have been especially affected and conditions relating to the previous blood clot have been disturbed. The chemo damages the covering of the nerves so I am told at Duke. Never have I endured so many body parts in pain at one time. All I can think about is Christ hanging on the cross, feeling pain in his whole body. Oh, the great pain he suffered in our stead that we might have eternal life.

One night was particularly hard and sleep didn't seem to come but in short intervals. Each time I would wake, these words would be with me: ***"Rejoice, the Lord is King."*** The next morning after awaking, I mentioned these words to my loving husband and he said they were contained in Hymn 137 in the Hymn and Tune Book. The hymn was precious to me:

Rejoice, the Lord is King; Your God and King adore;
Mortals, give thanks and sing, And triumph ever more!
Lift up the heart, lift up the voice, Rejoice aloud, ye saints, rejoice.

His kingdom cannot fail; He rules o'er earth and heaven;
The keys of death and hell are to our Jesus given:
Lift up the heart, lift up the voice, Rejoice aloud, ye saints, rejoice.

He all his foes shall quell; Shall all our sins destroy;
And every bosom swell with pure seraphic joy:
Lift up the heart, lift up the voice, Rejoice aloud, ye saints, rejoice.

Rejoice in glorious hope, Jesus the Judge shall come, And take his servants up to their eternal home:
We soon shall hear the Archangel's voice; The trump of God shall sound, Rejoice.

Thanks be unto God that we have only one need-and that is Christ. He is sufficient for each battle we must go through in this life. I wish never to complain but hope that I may be counted worthy

to suffer for Christ sake. I praise God for his grace and mercy to me and thank him for his daily bread which has sustained me.

My last chemo treatment is scheduled for September 4th. I pray if it be the Lord's will, he will make the burden light and give me grace and strength for each day. All things are in God's hands and I give him all the glory and praise. If it were not for the grace of God, I would have fallen into that water; but thanks be unto God, he has kept me thus far. As Job said, "He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

The scripture says, *"The Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning."* It reads in *1 Corinthians 15:46, "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual."* The fleshly man is first and is concerned only with those things that satisfy the flesh. But, there comes an appointed time with a child of God that his blind eyes and deaf ears are opened and he is shown what he is by nature and what he must be by the grace of God. When Christ asked his disciples, *"Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am?" They responded with various answers. Then, Christ asked Simon Peter, "But whom say ye that I am. And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou. Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."* How blessed are the children of God who have tasted of this love and mercy. The bethel spots where we have felt the presence of the Lord have made the latter part of our life so rich spiritually. Our affections have been set on things above, not on things on the earth and we can witness with Job that the Lord has blessed the latter end (the spiritual) more than the beginning (the flesh).

I desire to tell you, my brethren, that I feel I love you for Christ sake and appreciate your prayers, visits, calls, cards and love manifested to me. *"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another."* The psalmist wrote: *"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"*

I look forward to seeing all of you soon, if it be the Lord's will.

Love in Christ,
Jeanette Robertson

MATTHEW 6: 21-22.

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"HOW SHOULD MAN BE JUST WITH GOD?" Job ix. 2.

NEW VERNON, N.Y., February 4, 1835.

Of all the considerations in which fallen man is interested, there are none of greater magnitude than that presented in the above text. Man, as a fallen sinner, cursed by the holy law, and doomed to a perpetual and eternal death by the inflexible justice of the immutable Jehovah, is deeply concerned in the investigation of this momentous subject. With rapid strides the sons of men are hurrying through this mortal state of existence, at the termination of which we are to launch into the everlasting reality of our final destiny. With earnest solicitude for the knowledge of the truth, and with ardent prayer for light from the sun or Righteousness, whose refulgent beams alone are sufficient to illuminate our depraved, bewildered and perverted understandings, let us seriously enquire into the scriptural ground of a sinner's justification before God.

It would be a reflection on the character of the thrice holy God, to suppose that lie would save a sinner in his sins, or without a complete justification, based upon a righteousness cornmensurate with the utmost demand of law and justice; and as we are by nature destitute of saving faith, and *"he that believeth not is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him,"* the question returns, How should man be just with God? That there is indeed a way the scriptures; abundantly demonstrate, and the fact is perhaps universally admitted; but the how presents a mystery into which the angels desire to look, and it can hardly be a matter of surprise that men should entertain various opinions on this sublime subject. Had we access to all the knowledge on this subject of the learned and wise men of this world, it could by no means lead us into the mystery; for the sovereign God has hidden these things from the wise and prudent of our race, because so it has seemed good in his sight. But blessed forever be his name, he has revealed it to babes. Therefore, while human wisdom and knowledge utterly fail, divine revelation unlocks the cabinet of the eternal world. The Lion or the tribe of Judah prevails to look upon the book, to open the seals thereof, and by his Holy Spirit to disclose the sacred contents, in which a full development of the way of a sinner's justification before God is made. Leaving all human speculations on the subject, then, to the book of revelation let us apply, and look alone to the holy oracle to settle the point which ever has, and still does, involve the professing world in conflict and disputation, viz: How should man be just with God? Here from the mouth of God may we be informed whether justification or salvation be of God

or of men; whether of grace or of works; or jointly of men and of God, or by grace connected with works. Whether this mongrel system can be sustained by the bible or not, nothing can be more certain than that it is a very popular doctrine in this our day. That God is the grand or efficient cause of justification, that works are the grand or efficient means, that men are the efficient agents who employ the necessary works or means, and that grace has no more to do in the justification of a sinner than to help man perform his part. Under the impression that this is the plan of life and salvation, we see men setting themselves about the work in great earnest, inventing and trying many projects to move upon God to save sinners, and to induce sinners to consent to be saved, to induce God to lay aside his own, and adopt their plan; we see a number of men engage by agreement to occupy different rooms, but simultaneously to pray for some unregenerated individual on whom they have engaged to bestow their united efforts. Monthly concerts of prayer for specific objects are horns of the same beast; contrivances to prevail on God to do the will of man. Let us not be understood to speak against prayer, or even social prayer meetings, whether monthly, weekly or otherwise; the abomination we wish to detect and expose is that of previously agreeing upon-may we say, an assault upon the throne of God-by covenanting that they will not give the matter up, until the Lord complies with their requests. Now christians are aware from revelation that they know not how to pray as they ought, but the Spirit helpeth their infirmities, and maketh intercession for them with groanings which they cannot utter. Hence as they know not, they cannot agree beforehand how they will pray, or for whom in particular they will supplicate the throne of grace. When God is graciously pleased to pour out upon them the spirit of grace and of supplication, then they open their mouths wide in prayer, and the Spirit indites their petitions, for the Spirit knoweth what is the mind of God, and maketh supplication for such things as God designs to bestow; even as our Lord has informed us that they who worship the Father, must worship him in spirit and in truth.

To move upon the unconverted or dead sinner, protracted meetings, anxious benches, and a great variety of other machinery have been brought into requisition, but with as little success as their attempts to induce the Holy One to vary from his fixed purpose of grace and salvation. The entire brood that pass among men for benevolent institutions are birds of the same feather, and all respond to the popular creed before mentioned, viz: God is the cause, works are the means, men are the agents, and grace a name for nothing.

But we digress. We proposed to leave the speculations of men, and come directly to the fountain of

truth, the bible, and there ask, How should man be just with God?

And first, we enquire, is justification of God or of men? Let the bible answer *"Who shall lay any thing to the charge or God's elect? It is God that justifieth."-Rom. viii. 33. "That he (God) might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."-Rom. iii. 26. "Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called them he also justified."-Rom. viii. 30.* Here then our first question is settled forever; it is God that justifieth. *"Neither is there salvation in any other."-Acts iv. 12.*

We next enquire, Does God justify the sinner by his grace freely, or for and in consideration of their works? To the bible again. *"Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ."-Rom. iii. 24.* See also Titus iii.7. Can it be possible for any one to be justifled freely by the grace of God, and yet in some sense by works after all? What saith the scripture? *"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."-Gal. ii. 16. "For if Abraham was justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God. Now to him that worketh (read this, ye workmon gers) is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."-Rom. iv. 2, 5. "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."-2 Tim. i. 9.* And again, if we could possibly make it appear consistent with scripture that a sinner could be justified by works, his salvation must in that case depend on his evil, not on his good works; for the apostle expressly *declares, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."-Titus lii. 5.*

But once more we enquire, May not a sinner's justification depend jointly on works and on grace. I Let the bible answer *"And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work."-Romans xi. 6.*

Seeing, then, that justification is of God and not of men, that it is of grace and not of works, the conclusion is inevitable that all the mod-

ern schemes, plans, efforts, labors, &c., of pious or impious men, are abortive and vain, and that the by ground on which we are at liberty to hope for justification with God, is that which wholly excludes works, and is from the foundation to the top-stone exclusively of grace, which is through the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the stupendous plan of grace which provides for the justification of God's elect, Christ and his people are identified in an indissoluble union. He, as their head, representative and surety, has voluntarily pledged himself in the covenant of life and peace, to present them holy and without blame before his throne at the last day. silence all their responsibility to law and justice devolved on him; all their sins were charged to his account, and are being summed up, were laid on him. Isa. liii. 6. *"And he bare them in his own body on the tree. He was delivered up (to law and justice) for their offences, and raised again for their justification."- Rom. iv. 25. "By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified," (or set apart to him.)-Heb. x. 14.* Thus, as the representative of his people, and their surety to the law, he was numbered with the transgressors, (Isa. liii. 12.) that is, law and justice viewed him in this relation as the debtor, delinquent or transgressor; for on another ground could justice smite the Shepherd. Zech. xiii. 7. But standing here in the law room and place of his people, his soul was poured out unto death. Isa. liii. And so having fulfilled the divine law in his life, he bore its tremendous penalty of his death, and having paid the utmost farthing, and completely and eternally cancelled all that stood against him, on his people's account, he burst the confines of the tomb, in glorious conquest over sin, death and hell, arose to live forever, and hold the keys of hell and death, and in his resurrection brought life and immortality to light, and by his knowledge justified many, having borne their iniquities. Isa. liii. 11. Thus in his resurrection from the dead, our Lord revealed himself as the way, (John xiv. 6.) and the only way in which it was and is possible for man to be just with God, for he himself is *"God with us."- Matt. i. 23.* God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit. 1 Tim. iii. 16. And inasmuch as he who had become sin for us, or who bore our sin, had cancelled the demands of justice, had risen, and was justified in the spirit, by virtue of his obedience, by his blood and righteousness as his people's representative, his people were justified with him, and in him, and by him, and through him. The relation which he bore to his people rendered it impossible that he should be justified alone; his people were justified with him. Hence, as he is God with them, they are just with him; they were crucified with him; (Gal. ii. 20.) dead with him. (Rom. vi. 8.) And as he promised the church, by the mouth of the

prophet, *"Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise," (isa. xxv. 19,)* they are risen with him, and in every nation they that fear God and work righteousness are accepted with him. Acts x. 35. And it is his will that all that the Father has given him shall be with him where he is, (John xvii. 24,) and he shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied.

The great question then is answered, and the *only* way that can be just with God is brought to light in the gospel; vain is the help of man.

"No blood of birds, nor blood of beasts,
Nor hysop branch, nor sprinkling priest,
Nor running brook, nor flood, nor sea,
Could wash our dismal stain away.

Jesus, my God, thy blood alone hath power sufficient to atone;
Thy blood can make me white as snow-
No legal works could cleanse me so."

Elder Gilbert Beebe

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Romans viii. 18.

WHAT is to be compared with the salvation of the soul? What are riches, honours, health, long life? What are the pleasures which the world can offer, sin promise, or the flesh enjoy? What is all that men call good or great? What is everything which the outward eye hath seen, or natural ear heard, or hath entered into the carnal heart of man, put side by side with being saved in the Lord Jesus Christ with an everlasting salvation? For consider what we are saved *from,* as well as what we are saved *unto.* From a burning hell to a blissful heaven; from endless wrath to eternal glory; from the dreadful company of devils and damned spirits, mutually tormenting and tormented, to the blessed companionship of the saints, all perfectly conformed in body and soul to the image of Christ, with thousands and tens of thousands of holy angels, and, above all, to seeing the glorious Son of God as he is, in all the perfection of his beauty, and all the ravishments of his presence and love. To have done for ever with all the sorrows, troubles, and afflictions of this life; all the pains and aches of the present clay tabernacle; all the darkness, bondage, and misery of the body of sin and death; to be perfectly holy in body and soul, being in both without spot, or blemish, or any such thing, and ever to enjoy uninterrupted union and communion with the Father, Son, and blessed Spirit — O what a heaven lies before the believing saints of God as the end of their faith in the salvation of their souls!

Elder J.C. Philpot

THE CREATURE MADE SUBJECT TO VANITY
(Romans viii. 20.)

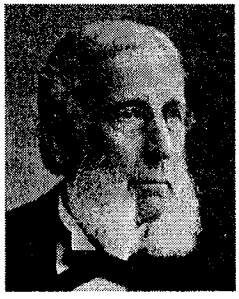
Elder Silas H. Durand

Who is this creature which *"was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope?"* It is the same creature spoken of in the preceding verse, whose *"earnest expectation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God,"* and which in the following verse it is said *"shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."* It belongs to the same spiritual creation referred to in verse 22, which in former dispensations groaned and travailed in pain together, and which now in the gospel day is manifest, as it ever was, by suffering, even in the apostles and early saints, who had the first fruits of the Spirit, *"who groan within themselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their body."*

This creature is the same spoken of in 2 Cor. v. 17: *"If any man be in Christ he is a new creature,"* and also in Eph. ii. 10: *"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."* This workmanship of God whereby we are created in Christ Jesus, is experienced by a man, a sinner of Adam's fallen race. Before that work of God was experienced, this man did not know himself as a sinner, and therefore did not have that kind of suffering which comes from such knowledge. In the first verse of this chapter the apostle speaks of those who are in Christ, and in the ninth verse we learn that to be in Christ, or in the Spirit, is to have the Spirit of God, or of Christ, in him. It is not until we have this experience of Christ in us that we can know that the body, which means the natural or earthy man, is dead because of sin. (Verse 10.) Let it be here noted and remembered that when the body or flesh is spoken of by the apostles in this sense, as dead because of sin, reference is not made merely to the physical body, for that cannot sin, but to the man, who is *"of the earth earthy,"* the man who sinned and was condemned. The sin, the sinfulness, the depravity, are felt by the christian to be in his mind, in his heart, and not in the literal flesh.

The life that is now ours is the Spirit of Christ, *"The Spirit is life because of righteousness."* *"Christ is our life,"* and that life is all the light we have by which to see the deadness of our body, or the living beauty and glory of Christ, and of the kingdom of God. (Verse 10.) *"In him [the Word] was life, and the life was the light of men."* — *John i. 4.* The giving of this divine and ever holy life to the sinner is the creative work of God. It is not that

the divine life or Spirit of Christ was created, nor is it that the Adamic man is new created, or made over again, but the bringing of the man forth in this new life, the causing him to be thus born of the Spirit, the manifesting of *"the life of Jesus in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor. iv. 11),* this is the workmanship of God; this is creating the man in Christ Jesus, and causing him to be a new creature.

This man who has been born again (from above), who has been brought forth in the life of Jesus, was first born of the flesh, brought forth in the life of Adam. In neither birth was any change of nature effected. In the first birth the life and nature of Adam were manifested. In the second birth the life and nature of Jesus were manifested. In being given the life of Jesus the life of the flesh was not changed in its nature, but remained a sinful life. Therefore David says, *"My soul cleaveth to the dust;"* and Job says, *"My soul is weary of life;"* and Paul says, *"The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."* And throughout the Scriptures holy men have mourned on account of the felt sinfulness of their own life, and rejoiced in the evidences that the Lord was their life, and such is the experience of saints today. *"Except a man hate his own life,"* Jesus says, *"he cannot be my disciple."* The two natures, the two lives, the mortal and the immortal, are both in the one person, but the spiritual or immortal is the stronger, and shall control and prevail.

The creature spoken of in the text is not the spiritual life in itself considered, nor the man who has experienced the new birth in himself considered, but it is the spirit or life of Jesus as manifest in the flesh, and it is the man considered as having this divine life, the man as being thus *"in Christ."* The man himself, regarded in his Adamic nature, is a sinful man, and his heart is deceitful above all things, and there is not enough goodness in his nature to cause one throb of sorrow on account *of sin, or to excite the least hunger after righteousness; and the Spirit of Christ, considered separately from the flesh, can have no sorrow or pain. It was in the flesh that Christ suffered. It was for the purpose of suffering that he came in the flesh, and those who have the Spirit of Christ suffer with him. It is this suffering of the people of God with Jesus that the apostle is considering in this connection. He explains to them the cause of their suffering, and enters into the depths and heights of doctrine as he traces the exercises and describes the feelings of the little children, and thus points out and designates the humble followers of Christ.*

The apostle in various places speaks of the one person in his relation both to the flesh and the Spirit.

While there is an essential distinction between the flesh and the Spirit, and this distinction is maintained in all the teachings of the apostles, yet they are both in one person, and there is an experimental sense in which they must be considered as together, though separate. *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh,"* and will remain so until the change shall come, *"and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit,"* and *"will ever remain in unyielding opposition to the flesh."* But the christian is possessed of both of these opposing natures, the human and the divine, and the apostle uses the personal pronoun when speaking of both. *"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing."* He speaks of the flesh as "me." *"That which I do I allow not." "The good that I would I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do." "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."*

Thus it is the same I who realizes death in Adam, or in the flesh, and who realizes life in Christ. It is the same I who may at one time be experimentally in Christ, and, sowing to the Spirit, reap life everlasting, and at another time may be living after the flesh and die to spiritual things; may be sowing to the flesh, and of the flesh reap corruption.

But the apostle is considering here the unchanging, unvarying inclinations of the Spirit or life of Christ which is in all his people, and the consequent suffering of the child of God because of the vileness that is thus discovered in us by the light of the Spirit. And he is intent upon declaring and showing the certainty of the glory that shall succeed that suffering in every one who has been born of the Spirit, and who is therefore a partaker of the divine nature. *"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us."* How wonderfully connected the apostle's argument is. How one thing follows another, just in the order that keeps along with the exercises and travail of the christian. Observe how many of these verses begin with the word "for," connecting it with what was said before.

"For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the Son of God." This earnest expectation is entirely of the Spirit. It is the view of faith, looking to things not seen by mortal powers. It is the expectation of things promised in Christ, and revealed to the faith of God's people. Faith makes no guesses, but sees eternal realities. Concerning these things

it is said, *"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit."* Therefore, while there is deep suffering because of the corruptions of the flesh, there is at the same time, down in the depths of the soul, a calm and confident waiting for that which the quickened soul so earnestly desires, to see in ourselves the manifestation of that relationship as sons of God. We cannot see it in ourselves now, but we long for it, hunger for it, have been made to expect it, and quietly wait for it. We are saved by this sweet and sure hope. All this earnest expectation is in the Spirit; not in the Spirit of Christ considered in itself, but in that spirit as given unto us, and as living in our poor-hearts, and as able to turn our thoughts toward heavenly things, and to set our affections on things above.

Now the apostle shows against what great and dire obstacle the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for such a wonderful and holy manifestation. That obstacle is the vanity of our fleshly nature, which he afterward calls the bondage of corruption. This is why we do not see in ourselves evidences of sonship, such as we desire. Though to our faith may come assurances at times that *"we are now the sons of God,"* yet *"it doth not yet appear what we shall be:"* and we are often left to doubt that we bear such a relationship, because of the vanity of the flesh.

But now the apostle shows us that in the wisdom of God in creating his people in Christ, in giving them the life of his Son, he made them subject to the vanity of this nature. He could have caused them to be at once freed from sin and depravity, and to enter into a holy and sinless state. But it was his will that the new, divine life, the Spirit of Christ in them, should have this opposition to contend with, that this new creature should be subject to this vanity. *"Every man in his best state is altogether vanity." "All the goodness and glory of man is as the flower of the field."* As soon as the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it, it fades away. (Isa. xl. 7.) And because of this the workmanship of God is the more clearly manifest, and the power of the Spirit more clearly displayed, as the enduring quality and value of gold are shown more clearly when it comes in contact with fire.

For our comfort we are told of one thing that we would not have thought of without being told, and yet which we see at once to be true; *"Not willingly."* The Spirit of Christ is essentially and forever opposed to sin. That life of Christ which is within the poor sinner's heart is just as pure and as much opposed to vanity there as it is in himself; as the sunshine is just as pure when it falls into a polluted atmosphere as when it leaves the sun. We can at times see that there is a principle within

us that is opposed to all the vanity and corruption of our natures, and which makes us long to be perfectly free from it. Thus with our minds we serve the law of God (we have the mind of Christ) while with our flesh we serve the law of sin. (Romans vii. 25.) The apostle had no reference here to evil deeds, against which he would admonish his brethren, but he referred to that corruption of the flesh to which we must always be subject, feeling it as a bondage while we remain in this mortal state.

Not willingly. This is why we suffer in the flesh. This is why we can find no permanent rest in this mortal state. This is why, when we are spiritual, we hate not only evil deeds, but the vanity of even the most exalted and the purest of earthly things. This is why our days on the earth are a shadow, and there is none abiding. This is why we hate our own lives at times, and count this world a wilderness of woe. And it is because the new creature is not willingly subject to vanity, that exhortations and admonitions have a place and power. For this creature is ever seeking the honor of God, and desiring to follow Jesus, and to show forth his praises, but ever feels the hindrances of the vanity of the flesh, and so can never do the good it would do, but is always dissatisfied with even its best works. And no matter how far one may have gone astray, it is always right to exhort, when we can do it in meekness, for though we cannot make the word of exhortation effectual, the Lord peradventure may give repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.

Then how sweet and comforting the assurance that this subjection of God's gracious work in us to vanity is in hope. We cannot see in ourselves now what we wish to see (verses 24, 25), but we are given good ground to hope for it. For the apostle by inspiration positively asserts that we, the new creature, shall be delivered from this vanity, from this *"bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God."* This we are given faith to believe shall be. We long for it, and in the Spirit we expect it, and thus we have that hope which saves us from being overcome and brought down to the gates of despair by this vanity. *"For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."* No child of God can see himself as he wants to be, therefore he can never be pleased or satisfied with himself while in the flesh. He must see himself compassed with infirmities, held down by a bondage of corruption, therefore he cannot see himself as a son of God now, cannot see himself without sin, cannot see in himself, that is, in his flesh, any good thing. Therefore he is not only subject to vanity, but is subject to the temptation with which Satan tempted Jesus, *"If thou be the Son of God."*

But here comes into view the preciousness, and the saving power of that hope, which the Lord, who subjected the new creature to vanity, has given to light up the darkness, to cheer the heart, and to be *"as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast,"* holding the vessel of mercy securely against all the adverse tides and terrible storms that must be met with on the ocean of time. This good hope is through grace, and does not depend for sustenance upon goodness in ourselves, or in our works, which every child of God longs for but can never see, but upon the revelation of Jesus Christ as *"of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."* At every new revelation of the blessed Savior to our souls, our hope seems to be renewed and strengthened. So we continue to hope for that we see not, for goodness, sinlessness, perfection; for the manifestation of the sons of God; for deliverance from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God; for *"the redemption of our body,"* which shall be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus; and for all these blessed things so surely promised and assured unto us, we patiently wait, wait in the enduring and unfailing patience of a living faith in Christ.

Not willingly. Still more and more blessedly does this wonderful expression shine out from the sacred page of inspiration , with assurance of hope, and with heavenly comfort, to the afflicted and poor people of God, who are still ever struggling on against barriers which present impossibilities to them, who are daily tried and are daily dying, and yet "who against hope believe in hope." What a comfort it is to see this *"not willingly"* in their own poor hearts. When they have to acknowledge that they do the things they would not, and do not do the things they would, how glad they are at times, in the midst of their infirmities and under the bondage of corruption, to remember that they would not do an evil thing, and that they would do good things.

"But if indeed I would,
Though I can nothing do,
Yet the desire is something good,
For which my praise is due.

By nature prone to ill,
Till thine appointed hour,
I was destitute of will,
As now I am of power."

How comforting to find that the apostles are with us in this experience of infirmities which the Spirit only can help. How glad we are that Paul, as well as we, had to confess, *"The things that I do I allow not."* Not referring to a course of wrong conduct, but to the fact that sin is mixed with all we do, so that we cannot do the things we would, but feel *"the sentence of death in ourselves,"* tainting all our works,

only as we are given faith to do our works in Christ, to look to him for the goodness, and not to ourselves.

Not willingly. This is the holy Spirit of God from which this *"not willingly"* comes. There is no half way will here, no uncertainty about this will that is ever and eternally against all sin. This is the will of the Father that was done in and by the Son. There is no weakness in this will. It is not even the will of Jesus, as a suffering man, which caused him to cry, *"If it be possible let this cup pass from me,"* but it is the will of the Father which caused and enabled him to say, *"Not my will but thine be done."* His own will was the will of a pure and sinless man. This will he did not come to do. This will must be crossed, denied, crucified, for it would have turned from suffering. The Father's will was done in and by him, and by that will he was crucified; by that will he gave himself to the smiters, and became obedient unto death. By that will he was raised from the dead, and by that will we are saved. That is the will concerning which that Holy Spirit teaches us to pray, *"Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."* It will be done in the children of God, and through its power and exercise within them they will all eventually be brought into perfect conformity to the image of God's Son by the mighty power and working of his holy Spirit. He works in his people to will and to do of his good pleasure. In his own time, and in his own way, each of them will be made fully to know his own vanity, his own inability, *"his own sore and his own plague,"* and will then be brought forever away from sin and weakness into the liberty of the sons of God, and will be prepared to give God all the praise of his salvation for time and for eternity.

Those who the apostle says are groaning and travailing in pain together until now, are not the natural creation, for it is not true of either man or beast. He is showing the sufferings of the Lord's people from the beginning. They were distinct from the legal worshipers, though they were among them. They all had faith in every dispensation, and by that faith they saw Christ as their Savior, and we trace them through all the Old Testament Scriptures by their groanings, complaints, self-loathings and bitter self-reproaches, as an afflicted, suffering people, whose sufferings are on account of sin in the flesh. And the apostle joins himself and all the saints under the gospel with the holy men of old, who were as much the creative workmanship of God as we, showing that although the gospel saints had received the first fruits of the Spirit, yet they groaned within themselves, looking for no comfort from the flesh, but looking for the promise of Jesus' coming, when the adoption would be fulfilled in the redemption of our body from corruption, and the inheritance into which we were adopted (using adoption as a legal figure) would be received, which is

to become sons of God. This name, Son of God, Jesus received by inheritance in his resurrection. (Heb. i. 4, 5; Rom. i. 4; Acts xiii. 33.) We are heirs with him of this sonship, and when the manifestation of the sons of God shall be complete in the redemption of our body from corruption, and in the fashioning of it like unto the glorious body of Jesus, then we shall be manifest, not as adopted children, for the purpose of that legal figure is attained when we come into the inheritance, but as the real *"children of God, being the children of the resurrection."* — *Luke xx. 36.* This inheritance unto which we are begotten again by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, is not a corruptible, defiled and fading inheritance, as was the sonship we inherited from Adam, but it is incorruptible, and undefiled, and it fadeth not away, and it is reserved in heaven for all who have received the Spirit of adoption, for all who feel themselves to be poor, helpless sinners, who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and who long to be like Jesus; and all the heirs of this blessed inheritance are kept by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. (1 Peter i. 3-5.)

Elder Silas H. Durand
July 15, 1901.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 2001

Charlie Fox, AR 2.00
Robert Gilbert, VA 5.00
Richard Lawless, WVA 2.00
Eld. Larry Hollandsworth, VA .. 2.00
In Memory of
Mamie Biggs Cook, TN 15.00
Miles Bird, LA 5.00
Vivian Underwood, VA 2.00
Andrew Agee, VA 2.00
Albert Krewatch, DE 20.00
Eld. James Howard, AL 7.00
Byron Queen, KY 5.00
E. S. Gingerich, NM 2.00
Alice Gibson, VA 2.00
Larrie Bowler, VA 2.00
Eld. C.B. Davis, VA 2.00
Eld. Joe Sawyers, NC 2.00
J.C. Carroll, NC 7.00
Lera Vasser, VA 2.00
Larry Evans, MS 2.00
Sceney Boyd, VA 2.00
Grover Plybon, VA 2.00
Janie Fanning, AL 2.00

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held at Dan River Church on fifth Sunday Sept. 30th. Song service to begin at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 11:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us, and any ministers of our faith and order is especially invited.

We also meet at 6:00 p.m. on each second Sunday for a one hour song service.

All are invited.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Bro. Allen Carroll, Clerk

OBITUARIES

JAMES W. BROWN

James W. Brown, was born Sept 9, 1901 in Middleton, Tennessee, to Albert and Ellie Brown, and died June 3, 2001, making his earthly pilgrimage ninety-one years and nine months.

He was married to Geneva, McKinney August 19, 1928, and to this union was born three daughters Maxine, Shirley and Donna. He was preceeded in death by his wife, and Shirley who died as a young lady in her twenties: Maxine Cardwell and Donna Peeler, survive him.

He was added to the, First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis, April 28, 1962 and ordained a Deacon August 12, 1962, which calling he served faithfully until his death. He attended his home church until a few months before his death, when he became unable to see well enough to drive to Memphis.

To show the esteem that the Memphis Church, had for Brother Brown, they held their regular services one Sunday in a nursing home where he was confined for a short time, and also one of our Monday night meetings in his home shortly before he passed away. His daughter said he would brighten up considerably when he knew the brethren were coming, and he thoroughly enjoyed the singing and our discussion of the scriptures.

He recovered enough to return to his home, from the nursing home, and with the loving care of his daughters Maxine and Donna, was able to live in his own home until his death.

Brother Brown will be lovingly missed by the Memphis Church, he was a meek and humble brother, but firm in his conviction of the truth as contained in God's word. He was one who could always be depended on to perform the duties of his office of deacon for the church, and was always willing to do anything else that he was asked.

His funeral was conducted by the writer and Elders Wayman Chapell, and Harold Toney. His body was laid to rest in the Porters Creek Cemetery, near his home, Wednesday June 6, 2001, there to await the call of his heavenly Father to rise up and come away and dwell in the climes of glory eternally.

Written at the request of The First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis, with instructions to send copies to the family and The Signs of The Times, for publication.

In loving memory,
Richard H. Campbell

JOHN 6:35.

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that come to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

OBITUARY OF CLARA FREEMAN

With deep regret for out loss we wish to write the obituary of our Sister in Christ, Clara Harbour Freeman. She was preceded in death by her husband of 58 yrs, Harvey L. Freeman and an infant son. Also her parents George T. and Joan Adams Harbour. Her brothers Grady and Sam Harbour. A sister Mattie Stone all of Patrick Springs, Va. She is survived by a daughter Iris F. Puckett of Stuart, Va.

She joined Liberty Primitive Baptist Church on May 3, 1940. She was baptized by her Pastor, at that time, Elder Sam Koger the first Sunday in June 1940. She was Church Clerk for 32 years. She was very faithful to attend her Church as long as her health permitted. The last two years or more of her life she was not able to always attend. She often said, "that on meeting days - she could all but hear the singing."

She departed this life on November 28, 2000 and was laid to rest on November 30, 2000, At Patrick Memorial Gardens to await the resurrection of her body.

Her funeral was preached by Elders John Wingfield and Bernice Joyce.

Liberty Primitive Baptist Church
By her daughter
Iris Freeman Puckett

GENTRY DEAN WILLIAMS

Sister Gentry Williams was born November 1,1906 and departed this life July 5, 2001. She was baptized and received into fellowship with the Goose Creek island Primitive Baptist Church in July 1957. Sister Gentry suffered much in this life and unable to attend church the last seven years of her earthly life but we trust she is now at rest with her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Two sons, D. E. "Bob" Ross and Harold Warren Williams survive Sister Gentry plus numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great grandchildren. A son, Gray Williams predeceased her. Blaney Rowe conducted a graveside service on Saturday July 7, 2001 and she was laid to rest in the Lowland Community Cemetery.

Written by request of the Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church in conference on August 25, 2001.

Elder Jesse Foreman, Moderator
Elder Gene Lupton, Clerk

ST. MATTHEW 5:7-9.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

As the sun's enlivening eye
Shines on ev'ry place the same,
So the Lord is always nigh
To the souls that love his name.

When they move at duty's call,
He is with them by the way:
He is ever with them all,
Those who go, and those who stay.

For a season called to part,
Let us then ourselves commend
To the gracious eye and heart
Of our ever-present Friend.

Jesus, hear our humble prayer!
Tender Shepherd of thy sheep!
Let thy mercy and thy care
All our souls in safety keep.

In thy strength may we be strong,
Sweeten every cross and pain;
Give us, if we live, ere long
Here to meet in peace again.

Then, if thou thy help afford,
Ebenezers shall be reared,
And our souls shall praise the Lord,
Who our poor petitions heard.

Newton.

POSTMASTER

Please send address changes to:

Signs of the Times
202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

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EDITORIAL

ABSOLUTE SECURITY

Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus, and called: Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.

Elder R. H. Campbell

There is no place on earth, or in heaven, that is safer and more secure than the place that Jude is describing here, and there is no more specific directions as to the ones to whom Jude is communicating his epistle, than in the above verse. The world says that the bible is an open book, available to anyone that picks it up and reads the invitations contained therein. Well, there are no invitations contained in the scriptures, as claimed by the world, for this would indicate a possibility of their not accepting, and Jesus said, ***(John Chap 6, Vs 37) "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out"*** and in ***(Vs 44) "No man can come to me, except the Father which that sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."*** These are statements of fact, not probabilities or possibilities, they are not based on conditions which are subject to change based on what might occur in the future. The above scriptures, as well as all others, are directed to those who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world and to no other, and they all shall come, at the appointed time and in the predetermined manner.

The Bible is not an open message written to the world in general, "whosoever will," as is universally proclaimed by the natural man. Jude is writing to a very particular people, a people that God set his love upon, according unto his own oath, sworn unto Abraham and it cannot be annulled because it was pledged by Him who cannot lie and who is of one mind and never changes. The number of these people have been

determined and announced in, *(Deut. Chap 32, Vs 8-9) "When the most high divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."*

Before time began they were ordained to this lot, and all of these scriptures are affirming these eternal truths to the current generation, The truth remains the truth in all ages. it is not changed by time nor circumstances, as is recorded in, *(Eccl. Chap 3, vs 15) "That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past."* or as Solomon said, *(Eccl. Chap 1, vs 9) "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun."*

Jude, then begins by saying that they are Sanctified by God the Father: which means set apart unto a specific purpose, or calling, even as Jeremiah, who was set apart to be a prophet unto the nations, before he was formed in his mother's womb, sent forth to declare unto Israel the words of the Lord. Jeremiah said, I cannot speak for I am but a child, but that did not deter the purpose of God in his life. God told him to not be afraid of their faces for I am with you, and it is recorded that God put forth his hand and touched his mouth and said, *(Jer. Chap 1, Vs 9-10) "Behold I have put my words in thy mouth. See I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant."* things which this child could not do, in his own strength, and the same is true of all to whom Jude is writing. They too, have been set apart from the world in their heart and mind, by the indwelling of the Spirit, they no longer feel at home in nature as they once did; there has been a wall of separation placed between them and their fellowman in this time world. They can no longer join in with the pleasures in the flesh, as in former days, and feel this constantly in their association with their peers in this world of nature.

Those whom God sanctifies, he qualifies to fulfill his calling, and this applies to all of the chosen vessels: they are given everything that is needful for them to run the race that he has set before them, and they may not even be aware of what that calling is, as they confess constantly wondering if they indeed have a calling; therefore they must walk by faith and not by sight. When God was telling Moses, how the temple was to be built and the furnishings that were be used in his service, he said that he had given talents unto certain ones to do the delicate work of making the garments, drippings etc.: the artistic

talent required to make the furnishings of the building that he required. The talent was given even before the calling was sent forth, and the same sanctification is involved in the calling of each and every one of his children. They are not chosen because they have any special talent, but rather are given the special talent because they are his chosen, for a specific purpose and one which requires this talent. It is God working in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure, in their utilization of this talent.

Preserved in Christ Jesus. The ones to whom Jude is addressing this epistle are those who love him because he first loved them and were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, being predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. Jesus said, *(John Chap 6, Vs 37-39) "All that my Father giveth me shall come to me: and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day."* I don't know of any plainer sentence that could be uttered to support the statement, preserved in Christ Jesus, for they were given him of the Father before the foundation of the world, redeemed by his precious blood, in time, and then the promise is, that he would raise them up again at the last day. This preservation covers eternity, all time; past, present and future and it cannot fail.

Called; At the time appointed of the Father, each one's calling from nature's darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of the gospel, is made manifest unto them, and they had no previous knowledge of its existence, and no reason to anticipate it beforehand. Possibly the most dramatic demonstration of this calling occurred on the road from Jerusalem to Damascus. A man who was a blasphemer, injurious to the church, a persecutor with authority received, from man, to destroy the cause of Christ, but who was interrupted in his journey and the call was made known unto him, it was not in the form of an invitation, or request, it was a command. Paul was not even aware of the truth of the gospel, but was just fighting against that which he did not, and could not, understand in nature's darkness. Paul, in relating his experience told it this way, *(Gal. Chap 1, Vs 15-20) "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood; neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went*

into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus, Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. Now the things which I write unto you , behold before God, I lie not." This is a first hand testimony, with God as his witness, of being called, sanctified and sent upon a mission that was not of his design or desire at the time of his calling. This is a demonstration of the same power that called Moses, Jeremiah, David and all of the redeemed family of God into His service. Not all experiences and callings are the same, but the power demonstrated in them is the same.

Paul, later in remembering this experience, and relating it unto Timothy, as their common calling, said, ***(1 Tim. Chap 1, Vs 9) "Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."*** He departed Jerusalem in his own strength, he thought, but when the time appointed for his calling arrived, this leader of the Jews was struck down, made blind and had to be led of them that were with him to complete his journey to Damascus. Now, that kind of power and action gets your attention, and you will go all of your days, even as Paul did, ascribing all glory and honor unto him who hath called and quickened you, and made known to you the glory of His kingdom, it becomes the main thrust of your life.

He arrived in Damascus, a preacher of the doctrine and truth that he had sworn to eleminate. This calling was not an invitation, it was not a subject that was debatable; it was a command and carried with it the full power of the godhead. No one can refuse this calling because it is printed on the fleshly tables of the heart and no man can deny, or refute that. Paul said that he obtained mercy because he did it in ignorance and unbelief, so do all, because none if given to see the glory of the kingdom of God would refuse it. All men are in ignorance of the existence of this kingdom of glory until it is shown to them, and this occurs in the calling; they are then made new creatures in Christ and, for the first time, are made aware of their citizenship in this kingdom.

The most beautiful and complete statement of Paul's, calling and it's purpose is recorded as follows, ***(Acts Chap 26, vs 16-18) "But rise and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of the these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and the Gentiles, unto whom I now send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them***

from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." These directions the apostle Paul heeded all of the remaining days of his life, yea, and even in his death.

The ones to whom Jude is writing are the same people that were referred to by Peter when he said, ***(1st Peter Chap 2, vs 9) "For ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light; Which in times past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."*** Mercy is something that is always given by the greater to the lesser one, and is always a free gift, not a reward for service rendered, nor for success achieved. They were all in a lost and undone condition, even as the babe described in the sixteenth chapter of Ezekiel. They were born in the same helpless and depraved condition, without strength, unaware of their wretchedness, but, it being the time of love of God the Father toward them, they are washed, suppled, salted, swaddled and told to live, and they became beautiful in his sight. They are made accepted in the beloved, and it is all the results of the sovereign grace and mercy of their heavenly Father being bestowed upon them, by grace.

Jude, involves the entire godhead as the surety of the facts that he is stating; sanctified by God the Father, (before time began), preserved in Christ Jesus (throughout time and eternity), and called by the Holy Spirit (in time). There is no other salvation, and there are no more certain assurances that could be set forth regarding the preserving of the entire household of faith than these set forth here by Jude, no this epistle is not to ***"Whosoever will"***. Peter takes the same position regarding those of whom he is speaking; it is stating something that already is fact and is not subject to change or alteration, and it is because God is the originator of these labels, and whatsoever God doeth is forever. As Paul wrote, ***(Romans Chap 8, vs. 38-39) "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things to come, Nor height, not depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*** and there is nothing that is not included in this list of things, or any other list, which could separate the household of faith, from the love of God.

Jude, is writing to those of like precious faith, and in love, is warning them to beware of certain men who are crept in unawares, wolves in sheeps clothing, who would wreak havoc in the church; men who are spots in your feast of char-

ity, feeding themselves without fear. clouds without water. These other men are the natural man in the flesh, who were before ordained unto this condemnation, but he is advising them to be forewarned and to deal carefully and cautiously with them. Jude goes on to say in (vs. 19) speaking of these, "*These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the spirit.*" This we hear repeated in pulpits all over the world today, just come down, right now, make a decision for Christ and be saved, no fear, no feeling of any unworthiness, just make up your minds, accept him as your savior and follow us.

The scriptures quoted above are food indeed to all of those to whom the above writers are addressing their messages, and are of comfort to none other. They are of very special comfort to those whose hope (earnest expectation) of eternal salvation is in the finished work of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? Those who fearfully and prayerfully hope to be included in the number of whom Jude is speaking, sanctified by God the father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called.

In bonds of love;
Elder Richard H. Campbell

PROVERBS 8:11.

For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared with it.

CORRESPONDENCE

9-9-01

Signs of the Times:

Just a note to tell you how I love your Signs of the Times.

I am so glad you have added Brother J.B. Farmer, he is our neighbor.

I am enclosing fifteen dollars, five is for contribution. I want you to know this is the only paper I read beside my bible.

I love you in the Lord,
Anna Savage

Elder Terry,

I would like like to extend my subscription to *"Signs of the Times"* for one year. Enclosed is a check for ten dollars.

My grandparents took *"Signs of the Times"* way back during my childhood. I would read it. Now, that my grandmother has gone home to be with the Lord; I would like to continue in this reading.

Peacefully,
Debra Davis

---

2 CORINTHIANS 4:15.

For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE NEW TESTAMENT
(Hebrews ix. 16, 27, 28.)

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die."

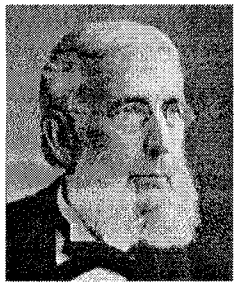
Elder Silas H. Durand

The inspired writer is not here merely stating the fact that all men must die; he is not impressing upon the mind the truth that it is appointed unto men to die. The whole force of this sentence is that it is appointed unto men to die once, not twice, not many times, but only once. The apostle has been speaking of the work of Moses and Aaron in the worldly sanctuary in accomplishing the service of God. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins; that is, the death of the sinner is necessary to satisfy the claims of justice. The high priest, in this ceremonial service, represented death when he entered into the second tabernacle alone once every year, not without blood. This "was a figure for the time then present." Of course the high priest could not offer his own blood, for then he could not make another offering the next year. But Christ entered once into the holy place, even into heaven itself, by his own blood. He could not offer himself often, as the high priest did, ***"for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world [the Jewish world] hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."*** He could not die often, for it is appointed unto men to die only once.

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Here is the first part of a comparison introduced by the word "as," and intended to illustrate and open up some important thing concerning the sacrifice of Christ and the manifestation of those for whom he died. The second part of this comparison is introduced by the word "so": - ***"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."*** The apostle has in this chapter introduced the figure of a man's will or testament, to illustrate the mediatorial work of Christ, and to show how by means of death he brought the New Testament into force, and secured to them that are called, the promise of eternal inheritance. He says: ***"And for this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."*** The next expression proves that the apostle has in view as a figure the will or

testament which a man makes, by which he bequeathes an inheritance. *"For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."*

Now it seems to me that the apostle still has this figure in view in the comparison presented in my text. It is important to consider that a man's testament is of no force while yet he lives. He may say to me, I have made my will, and have given to you ten thousand acres of land, and I have given that will into the custody of a bank, and it is safely locked up, and so you are sure of the property. But I do not own a rod of that land. He may make another will the next day and devise the land to another. Also it is necessary to consider that as soon as a man is dead all that was his now belongs to others. But how shall it be decided who are the heirs? It must be by the judgment of the government under which the man lived and held the title to his possessions. It is in this sense that I understand the apostle to use the expression, *"but after this the judgment."*

We are to keep in mind that the apostle is not merely stating the fact that it is appointed unto men to die once, only once; but he is using this as a comparison. "As"—"so." *"As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered,"* &c.

Earthly inheritances are greatly sought after by many, and the judgment of the government must be carefully rendered before any one can claim them, but this heavenly inheritance is not desired by any but the true heirs; they do desire it, and earnestly long for it, and seek for evidences that it is theirs.

Now all the blood that was used in the works of the law, *"sprinkling the unclean,"* could not wash away one sin, nor could all that legal work cleanse the conscience of one sinner. But when Christ shed his precious blood he thereby obtained eternal redemption for all his people, and secured unto them the eternal inheritance promised in the New Testament, which is the new and *"everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure."*

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." who are they whose sins he bore? What is the judgment which has been rendered upon this subject? This same Jesus who died to bear the sins of many is now risen again, and is at the right hand of God, and is our Judge, our Lawgiver and our King. He has rendered the judgment: *"Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."* The heirs of this spiritual inheritance, then, are those that look for him. This is the judgment concerning the heirs of God by this new testament.

But to know that we are looking for Jesus Christ! O, if we can only be sure of that. But so often we find

our minds and our expectations fixed, apparently, upon worldly things. So often we feel ourselves too depraved, too sinful, too vile, too full of transgressions, to dare to think that we are among those who are looking for him. What right have such as we to look for him to come to us? How dare we say to him, "Come"? yet he has said with divine and loving authority, *"Let him that heareth say, Come."* And we are sometimes assured that we have heard his voice saying, *"Come unto me."* We have heard his words of love to the poor and needy, his words of sweet command to those who labor and are heavy laden. We have from time to time received evidences that he has given us rest. We have at times felt *"the peace of God, which passeth all understanding,"* keeping our hearts and minds. His words have at times dropped into our hearts with holy power, and our hearts have been drawn out to him in love and praise. The doctrine that declares the name of the Lord as our only Savior has sometimes dropped upon us like the rain, and has distilled as the dew; *"as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass."* Yes, at times we do feel assured that we are looking for him. We can do nothing of ourselves. When we look at ourselves we have to cry, Unclean. We are vile, we abhor ourselves; we have *"the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead."* But we do trust in him, Jesus is our only trust, our only hope, he is our righteousness our life; yes, we look for him. And what is the inheritance we are heirs of? Himself. "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." His appearing so far, and always while we are in the body, has been and shall yet be with sin, as our Sin-bearer, as having borne our sins. In our most exalted moments, while rejoicing in him, we remember him as having borne our griefs, as having suffered for our sins, and we thus know him in measure as having the fellowship of his sufferings, "being made conformable unto his death." We must always while in this mortal state bear *"about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our body."* As the Savior while in the flesh was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, so must his followers be. It is in sorrow, in temptation, in affliction, that we know him while here; it is as having been tempted in all points like unto us that we know him as thus able to succor us who are tempted. But when he appears the second time it will be without sin unto salvation. That salvation, Peter says, is *"ready to be revealed in the last time."* That second appearing will be with no remembrance of sin; it will be to deliver us *"from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God."* It will be the end of mortality

with us. When he appears the second time *"we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."* He will be admired in all them that love him. Our vile body shall be changed then that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. We do not know what we shall be, nor do we in the spirit want to know. It is enough to know that we shall be conformed to his image, and shall appear with him in glory.

Elder Silas H. Durand
NOVEMBER 7, 1905.

HOPE

SEPTEMBER, 1946

FOR SOME REASON I am impressed to write a short article on the subject of *hope.* I desire to use Romans 8:24, 25 as a scriptural basis of reasoning. *"For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."*

Before treating directly on this subject, permit me to state that I believe the Holy Scriptures are to the children of God who have been born of the Spirit of God. Restating in other words— the Bible can be received only by those of God's children who have been born of the Spirit of God. When Paul speaks using the present tense of a verb it is experienced in time by those who have experienced this call to be saints. When he speaks using future tense it is yet to be experienced. When Jesus said, *"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted,"* I think he meant that God's children are mourners in this present world after they have received this pure heart, but shall be completely comforted after their sojourn here in time.

According to Webster, hope is a "desired expectation." According to Paul, the things you have experienced is not a hope but a reality. Hope looks to the future. We do not hope for that we are experiencing, but these experiences enliven within us a hope for something that is yet future. Paul reasons that we have the first fruits of the Spirit in this present life. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. All these proceed from the new heart that God has given his children. We yet bear about the body of this death. This pure heart enables us to see the vileness of our sin-polluted bodies. This pure heart reveals to us our awful condition and makes us to cry unto the God of heaven for deliverance from this sinful state. Although we are in possession of the first fruits of the Spirit, the creature itself is yet in the bondage of corruption. It is yet natural and thus subject to sin and death. We expect deliverance from the bondage of corruption solely upon the merits of Jesus in accor-

dance to God 's amazing grace. We desire this deliverance because the new God-given heart has made us to hate sin and love holiness.

Paul said, ***"The body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."*** This is our state of being if Christ dwells in us. The creature that sins is the body of death that the child of God bears about in this present world. These sins cause the child of God to groan within himself waiting the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. This will be realized when ***"the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."*** The word "also" in the above scripture means in addition to that which has ready been experienced by us, to wit, the change of heart. Those who are in possession of God's Spirit are new creatures in Christ but have not realized the redemption of the bodies. He comforts us with this grand hope, ***"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."*** A quickened mortal body would be *immortalized*, thus would never die. I do not think God's children experience this immortalization of the body in this present time. This promise inspires us to patiently await this grand change. Paul did not expect it in this life as he said, ***"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men must miserable."*** So this hope goes beyond this life. He anticipates this change when he says, ***"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory!"***

Death and the grave are things that we cannot converse with triumphantly until the grave has given up its victim, to wit, this body of death. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shalt be like him." This is the reasoning of John and should suffice for us. ***"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness" (Psalms 17:15).*** I am not concerned over the question of whether we will know each other there, or any speculation concerning things yet to be experienced beyond that which is written. My only concern is, will I be among the number to enjoy eternal life wherever and whatever it is?

May God grant that we who have this hope implanted in us be enabled, by His grace, to dwell together here in time, in sweet communion and fellowship with and for each other. May He grant us the spirit of forbearance and humility.

May He enable us to strive for peace and edification instead of strife and destruction.

Elder E. J. Lambert

HEBREWS 13:20, 21

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in your that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Why is it that we always have a benediction at the end of our services? This is not a word that the translators gave us in our version of the Bible, but at the end of each letter (except James) there is a prayer or short benediction. At the end of all Bible prayers there is an amen. This word has meaning that is not easily set aside. In fact, the theologian that would belittle the word, or berate those that use the word, does not have the religion of Jesus Christ. It is a word that He used to verify his veracity, and it is a word that was handed down from the ancient people of God to express a wish. This is why that the end of prayer has the "amen" at the end of it; it is for the purpose expressing a wish, to wit, So be it. The promises of God are all yea, and all Amen, unto the glory of God by us. (2 Cor. 1:20) There is not a single promise that is nay. They are all yea and amen through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Since all scripture is given by inspiration of God (2 Tim. 3:16), it would be sacrilegious and blasphemous to say that the use of this word is not of the highest importance in our preaching and writing on sacred topics.

"Now the God of peace." O, dear child of God, what comfort is found in these words. To read that, to hear that he is the God of our peace is indeed rich. It abounds with much promise to him that has known the ravages of war. As far as God the lawgiver, there could never be any peace coming from him to us. If we could have kept all of God's laws, we would have made peace with him. If this had been true, then this text would not have appeared in the Bible. God has always disproved of sin. I may end up in the housetop alone for saying it, but I'd much rather end up there than live in a house with a brawling woman who would hide behind the purpose of God for their sins. (Prov. 21: 9; Rom. 6:1,2) As long as the sins of God's people remained unatoned for there could never be any peace. If this does not teach the warlike characteristic of God against sin I do not know what it would take. I have said this: If God is pleased with our sins, he perpetrated the greatest fraud in sending His Son into the world to die for sinners, and yet that He was

pleased with their sins. For me, I know that this is not the truth. God, as our Lawgiver, was at war against all of his people. This war went unabated until it was atoned for. At no time, from the moment of our disobedience in the morning of time, until atoned for, did the wrath of God abate in the least degree. In our efforts to expound the beauty in the text, it is my desire to not leave a stone unturned in bringing out that *"God is our peace."* He had been at war from all eternity against sin. I get lost when I get to exploring in the grandeur of the God-head, but it is lost in holy ecstacy, not in gloomy and dismal swamps.

As long as God has been, he has been the God of wrath, the God of war, the God against sin. If this had not been true, how could God have counselled to send His own Son to die to satisfy the wrath of God and the justice of God and to become the God of peace? Too, we must be just as emphatic that he is the God of peace as that he is the God of wrath or war.

For him to cease being a God of wrath, there had to be somebody to atone for the sins of those with whom God was wroth. This Atonement could not be found among the sons of Adam. If it could have been found there, our text would have said, *"Now the peace which is by Adam, etc."* When the law was given it was given to be kept, not to be defied, not to be despised, not to be nullified by man, not to have any mercy in it. Manifestly, from the time of its being broken, God has been at war against sin. There could not be any peace without a reconciliation. When man fell, he was depraved from the sole of the feet to the crown of the head. He could not keep from sinning; he could not bring reconciliation, seeing that he could not turn and do good. (Jer. 13:23) This rule has never been abrogated by him that made it. Many people, the majority of the human race, have changed it (so they think) to suit their fancy, but God has not changed it, therefore all of the religion in the world that has come by efforts that the sinner conceived and carried out is not the truth; all the peace that man has brought, whether in the natural realm of existence, in the so-called religious world, even in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is all vain, all useless, all perishable, if it came about by the action of this dead sinning creature.

God moved to bring peace, therefore it is a wonderful text that embraces Him as being the God of peace. What a blessing it is to be given this all prevailing peace in our experience; what a high and exalted calling it is to be called of God, to preach and to write about the peace that passes all understanding, which peace keeps our hearts and minds through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Phil. 4:7) It is not any small wonder that Paul was determined to know nothing among the Corin-

thians save Jesus Christ and him crucified. (1 Cor. 2:2) God raised Him up and sent Him forth from His bosom to bring peace out of chaos. That was the beginning of the peace of God - the peace which God brought. It is presently the work of God's Holy Spirit to keep our hearts and our minds in this peace. If you understand this peace you will attribute it to men; if it passes all understanding, you will attribute it to God.

"That brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ." It is not a question of not bringing Him from the dead, but how could He fail to bring Him from the dead, seeing that He sent Him forth to redeem them that were under the law. Poor frail human beings will never be able to more than grasp the surface of the love of God in this bringing Him forth from the dead. But we must not get the last things first. Order is heaven's first law, and in no place is it out of place as much as it is expounding the gospel. God sent Him forth to do His will. This will is that all given Christ must be brought into peace with God. God could not be at peace with his own Son had that Son failed in bringing many sons to glory. (Heb. 2:10) I have said, I repeat it here, that if the common idea about the work of Christ was true (that is, that he failed in saving those given him) that he would not have been received into heaven - yea, he would not have been raised from the dead. Here is that delightful order of heaven:

God sent His Son to redeem the chosen people of God, to reconcile them to God and Him to them; to come as the One and only peace-offering, being named the Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. (Isa. 9:6) While here, He brought peace to His people; and when He died, He brought peace to God and to all the heirs of promise. He did the work that His Father gave Him to do. How peaceful it was with Satan writhing in death, with all the enemies of God as dead men, with the holy and righteous and good law filled to a jot and a tittle. God can not deny himself (Num. 23:19; 2 Tim. 2:13), and, seeing that Christ was the mighty God and the Everlasting Father, *all* of God's power and glory and honor was pledged to raise and bring from the dead His Son and our Saviour.

"That great shepherd of the sheep." How lovely the scriptures set Him forth in this capacity. This shepherd, this Saviour, was set up from everlasting. (Prov. 8:23) The eyes of wisdom saw His substance from everlasting, and in his book all His members were written, yet they were unperfected, and not manifest, even as Jesus was not yet manifest. But he did not come to become a Savior, not at all; He was born the Saviour. His delights were with the sheep before they were manifest sheep; he rejoiced among the sheepfold and its occupants before

the world had an existence. (Prov. 8:31) Since it is the work of a shepherd to look after his flock, this Shepherd went about doing the work of his Father while it was day, while a Man could work. He did do His Father's work while here and at his departure, sent another Comforter who is continuing on the same line of work, taking the things of Christ and presenting them to the sheep. As the Shepherd, he found them all dead in sin. He gave unto them eternal life according as his Father had given him all power to redeem and to reveal unto them the redemption. (Matt. 11:27; John 10:28; 17:2)

This great Shepherd is often pictured in the saddest of terms. He is often set forth as a hand-wringing shepherd. He is shown (?) unto us as a shepherd that would like to lead the sheep by still waters; that would like to have them lie down in green pastures; that would like to lead the sheep in paths of righteousness; that would like to comfort his people with the rod and the staff; that would like to prepare a table for them; that would like to anoint our head with oil; that would like for our cup to run over, but the sheep just will not let him do this. I do not know which is the most unreasonable and unscriptural doctrine, to not be able to make sheep manifestly, or to be able to make them without their help and then lose control over them after that He makes them sheep. It seems good to me to discard both.

"Through the blood of the everlasting covenant." The translators were not agreed about this word "covenant" some of them thinking that this was the better word, while others thought that the better word was testament. I do not know a word of Greek, but I am inclined to agree with the minority report in this case. The covenant is one thing, but the Testator of that covenant is another. It is true, however, that Moses referred to blood as being the covenant blood; but it would seem, from a careful reading, that this covenant was not the one that is in our text. Too, the writer of Hebrews tells us that sore punishment awaits him that treads under foot the son of God, and counts the blood of the covenant as an unholy thing. (Heb. 10:29) As it was with Moses, and as it seems certain to the writer of Hebrews, they had in mind a figurative sense; so it would seem that way here, to wit, that it is through the blood of Jesus Christ.

We do remember that Jesus is the Testator of a better covenant. Even the first covenant was dedicated with blood. It was the blood of calves and goats used in type for the blood of Jesus. Moses said, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. (Heb. 9:18, 20) As the types had to die in order for the comers thereto to have blood, just so did Jesus, the Lamb of God, have to die that the comers thereto be made perfect. (Heb. 10:1) A man's testament (will) is not in force as long as he lives. Only after

his death does his will come into force. Thus it behoved Christ to die that his testament benefit his people. When he administered the supper to the disciples he called the wine the blood of the new testament.

"Make you perfect in every good work to do his will." Whatever the true meaning of the blood of the everlasting covenant, whether understood in a figurative sense, or that Jesus in sum and substance is the covenant himself, it does net lessen the force of the doctrine that is being taught in the text. The perfection prayed for is not of the creature. Whoever heard of praying for that which the creature can do? You haven't heard that? That is the common ignorance of mankind. Every religion except the Absolute Predestinarian Baptists believe that God is dependent on the creature for the success of his venture and church and kingdom building, and yet they pray like hercules to God for help in them doing it. This prayer is from the heart of a poor dependent creature. He knows that he must have grace to perform all the requirements of God; that his present salvation is based on God's saving grace. This prayer of the apostle comes to this: May the God of peace, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will. I do not intend to sell out my pen to anybody, and I will say to my brethren that it is not in evil works that God is to enable us to do his will. We are not doing the will of God when we do evil works. The writer did not pray for God to enable us to do his will in wickedness. He did not do that. Reason how we may, call our loved ones in the Lord what we may, the Lord does not forbid things in his written word and then influence us by his Spirit to disobey that command. God does his will in heaven and in earth, whether it is by the power of His Spirit in our hearts and minds, or by the wielding of His sword. Of one he is the direct and immediate cause, by the other he is simply taking that which is already wicked and using it as it seems good unto Him. Of one thing I am sure. We will never perfectly do his will until the perfect gift (James 1:17) is given to us. And I am sure that this perfect gift is given his people that they may perfectly do his will in every good work.

"Working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight." Let us go to another notable letter of Paul. "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Phil. 2:12, 13) How often have we heard it said that *"God works the will and the do in you, but you must work it out."* Only an ignorant one (letter ignorant as well as grace) would make an application like that of the work of God in his people. They either have forgotten

or they never did know, that God works effectually in his subjects. (Eph. 3:7:1 Thes. 2:13) The prayer is seeking for God to make us perfect in every good work. How many good works? I did not say, dear critic. But the prayer of Paul begs for grace from the God of all peace that the children of God be perfected in every good work to do his will; not *just* begging for grace that will work it in the children of God, not that at all, but begging for grace that they be made perfect in every good work to do his will. That is the prayer. That is the prayer of every dependent sinner; but, regardless of the niceties of speech-making to God in prayer, the prayer of others do not mean that they are helpless and dependent. Now link up this prayer with Paul's charge to the Philippians. His charge to them is to work out that which God has wrought in, and this prayer is to the God of peace that he would make them perfect in every good work to do his will, working in them that which is well pleasing in his sight.

The text heretofore has set forth God as doing great wonders through the Lord Jesus Christ. However, have you noticed that it is God the Father that has done all this first for the Son? He sent forth his Son, He sent angels to administer to him; He raised Him from the tomb. This was as the manifest Son of God. This is in keeping with the expression: Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. (Psalm 2:7) Earlier in this article it has been noted that the Son was ever with the Father. This being true, He could not have been begotten, but in His relationship with His people it truly can be said that He was begotten of God. Then the writer prays that the wonderful blessings of obedience be given unto the Hebrew brethren. He prays for that which is wellpleasing in the sight of God. He does not ask God to make them perfect in every evil or sinful work, for this could never be wellpleasing in his sight; and that would apply to him working it in them as well as after it is wrought in and by them.

I sometimes hope that I have a calling from God to preach the gospel; to preach Jesus Christ and him crucified. I feel in my heart and mind that I have told you the whole truth in what hope that it was the God of peace that visited me more than forty years ago, breaking down my opposition to His rule over me, and reconciling God to me through my blessed Lord. The answer to this prayer was predicated upon the will of God being executed through the Saviour Jesus Christ. My will was not consulted in the outset, and thus I am not a sharer in glory with him there. Since that day, if this was the day of the Lord with me, I have been willing to follow him, to count it a joy in tribulations, to submit to all the indignities that are heaped upon me; to know that our God is still the God of all vengeance as well as the God of peace, and that whatever it

is, He will carry all of his pleasure out; and that now, and forever and forever, all glory belongs to Him.

As the shadows lengthen out and the end of day approaches, I would to God that I die with a hearty Amen upon my dying lips to all that his providence and grace has brought to me; that he has ruled over (not overruled) all his creation to where not a shaft has hit me to ruin, but rather for good; that He has supplied my needs, both natural and spiritual, that He has enabled me to say, ***"Though he slay me, yet will I trust him,"*** and that, As I have received good at his hand, I expect to receive the same kind of evil that Job did, and that whatever comes, whether good or evil, whether in giving or in taking, that His name is blessed forever more.

Elder W. D. Griffin

GENESIS VI. 6; NUMBERS XXIII. 19.

Dear Brother: — If not asking too much, will you please give your views upon Genesis vi. 6, which reads, ***"And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart."*** I also find in Numbers xxiii. 19, this language, ***"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent; hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"*** In hope of knowledge I ask your views upon these Scriptures.

From the least of all saints, if one at all,

N.C. Pennington.

Lanham, W. Va., Dec. 21, 1909.

Upon the former subject we have written more than before, and the last time was not, as we remember, very long ago, but still there can be nothing out of place in saying a few things again about it. We do not for a moment suppose that brother Pennington thinks that the holy Scriptures in any way contradict themselves. This would not be so, and leave us any confidence in the word of God as being infallibly true. For many years it has been our mind that if we found portions of the word which to us seemed contradictory, we must at once believe that the fault was in our finite understanding, and not in the statements of the Bible. It is the part of any humble-minded believer to rather choose to deny his own reasoning than the Scriptures. The testimony of our own ears, eyes or hearts may be a lie, but not the testimony of the word of God. In the Bible we have a sure word of prophecy, whereunto we do well that we take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place. This word of God is more sure than any experiences or thoughts that we may have. Let us remember the power of the words, ***"Let God be true, but every man a liar."*** Christians themselves can be sure their travel is a christian travel only as they find it in agreement with what they read in the Bible. We are fal-

lible in all things, the church is fallible also, but the word of God, who cannot lie, must be true. It is well if we start out upon the investigation of the Scriptures with the conviction in our heart, first, that it is all true, and that if anything in it seems to us to contradict even our senses, then our senses lie, and not the word of God. We doubt not that our brother believes this, and that he feels sure there is no real contradiction in the two Scriptures which he has quoted. How can, then, the statement, *"It repented the Lord that he had made man,"* be reconciled with the Bible doctrine of the unchangeable purpose of God? To us repentance is always accompanied with sorrow, and so also we read in the text that the Lord was grieved, as well as that he repented. But it will not do for us to think for a moment that our God feels human passions, such as grief, hate, sorrow, regret, &c. It is declared too often that he is unchangeable. His hatred of sin is an unchangeable thing; his love of holiness is also equally unchangeable. His love to his people, whom he has chosen, cannot be lessened or quenched at any time or because of any circumstances. When he pronounces judgment upon the disobedient, these judgments shall surely befall them; they have no way to escape them. It is concerning this especially that the text in Numbers referred to by our brother, treats; that is, we mean that the text in Numbers expressly declares that the favor of God to his people shall never change. Even Balaam had come to see this, and so he could not curse Israel. God had blessed them, and they should be blessed. He will not turn away from his people and cease to do them good. On the other hand his judgments against that which is evil will surely fall. He can never love that which is evil; he can never hate that which is good. More that this, he is one mind, and none can turn him; his will is one, forever and ever. His knowledge can never increase, and it can never decrease; there can be no change here. He is perfect, and perfect at all times, and to all eternity. He is at all times perfect in holiness, in wisdom, in knowledge and in purpose. Change in anything implies imperfection in that thing; imperfection either before or after the change. If perfect before, then change must bring imperfection. But God was and is perfect, and therefore not the subject of change in anything. This one truth compels us to believe that all things, all events, must be fixed. Predestination no more fixes all things beyond the possibility of a failure to come to pass than does this unchangeable knowledge of God. There is then no change in our God, and it follows, therefore, that all the changes must be in creatures, and change is written upon all animate and inanimate things that we know anything about. There was change in our first parents when they listened to the

tempter and fell. Man was made upright, but man sought out many inventions, and they were all evil. Man became the enemy of God. In the work of redemption through Christ it is not God that is reconciled to man, but man to God; the change is in man, wrought there by the Holy Spirit. So, on the other hand, transgression changed the attitude of man before God; he was no longer upright. God was upright and holy still, but men became alienated by their wicked works. Our God always loved Jacob and hated Esau. He always loved his people chosen in eternity, and all others were like Esau. God has not changed in his love or hate, but remember that his hatred is not a human passion, and neither is his love after the manner of men's love. But as man became a fallen and sinful being he was by his very state of sin shut out from the Holy One, his own sins forever hinder his access to God, without a sacrifice and a mediator. To man who has come to know his sin the very heavens frown instead of smile upon him. The trees never clap their hands when a sinner feels his condemnation, rather all looks gloomy to him. But when peace and pardon through Christ are spoken to his heart, then indeed even the trees rejoice in his view, and the very hills run and leap for joy; to him the face of God is full of smiles. Our God, then, does not repent in the sense that there has been change wrought in his mind or will, but in the sense that our sins cause us to see a frown upon him, while in the obedience of Christ we see a smiling face. To us it looks as though the natural sun revolves around the earth, but yet, after all, we know that this is not so, the sun does not change in the heavens, but only seems to do so; it is the earth that changes, not the sun. So our God does not change, but we change, yet as we say the sun rises and sets, so the word of the text under consideration says, *"It repented the Lord that he had made man."* This has long seemed to us to be what we must understand by the repentance and grief of the Lord in the text in Genesis, and in other places where repentance is attributed to our God.

We trust that this may prove of some satisfaction to our brother, and to others.

Elder Chick

"Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long. For surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off." — Proverbs xxiii. 17, 18.

The Lord is here addressing himself to a soul labouring under temptation, and passing through peculiar exercises; and this is the exhortation that he gives it: *"Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long;"* watching his hand, submitting to his will, committing everything into his care and keeping; not hardening your heart against him, but looking up to him,

and worshipping him with godly fear; *"for surely there is an end;"* and, when the end comes, it will make all plain and clear. This quiet submission, this watching and waiting, a man can never be brought to unless he has seen an end to all perfection; an end of his own strength, wisdom, and righteousness. To sit still is the hardest thing a man can do. To lie passive at God's footstool when all things seem to be against us; to have a rough path to walk in, to be surrounded with difficulties, and yet to be in the fear of the Lord all the day long, watching his hand, desiring to submit to his will, seeking only that wisdom which cometh from above, and trusting that he will make the way straight; not putting our hand to the work, but leaving it all to the Lord — how strange, how mysterious a path! And yet it is the only one that brings solid peace to a Christian; *"for surely there is an end."* Whatever sorrows and troubles a man may have to wade through, there will surely be an end of them. If we try to get ourselves out of perplexities, we are like a person trying to unravel a tangled skein of silk by pulling it forcibly; the more it is pulled, the more entangled it gets, and the faster the knots become. So if we are plunged into any trial, providential or spiritual, and we attempt to extricate ourselves by main force, by kicking and rebelling, we only get more entangled. The Lord, then, to encourage us to wait patiently upon him till he shall appear, says, *"Surely there is an end."* This is the universal testimony of the Scripture, that the Lord appears and delivers, when there is none shut up or left; and the experience of the saints agrees with the testimony of the written word: ***"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end."***

Elder J.C. Philpot

PSALM 31:23-24.

O love the Lord, all ye his saints: for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.

Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union will convene the Lord willing with Danville Primitive Baptist Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in December. Song service begins at 10:00 A.M.

An invitation is extended to all our ministers, brethren and friends.

Irvin Holley, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene on the fifth Sunday in December at Greensboro Church.

Take Highway #29 to Highway #6 West (Lee Street) to Tate St. Turn right and go North approximately one mile, the church is on the right at Carr Street.

We especially invite all ministers of our faith and order. Song service begins at 10:00 a.m.

Wayne Edwards, Clerk

PSALM 4:8.

I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.

NOTICE OF CORRECTION

In the September Issue of The Signs on page 195 in the right column a word was left out by error. The sentence was written, ***"We know that Jesus was a flesh and blood man at that time."*** It should have said. ***"We know that Jesus was NOT a flesh and blood man at that time."*** My apology to the readers for this error.

Elder C. C. Wilbanks

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 2001

Hassell Hale, VA	7.00
Levie Goad, VA	7.00
Mary Lou Crissman, NC	2.00
H. B. Rhoades, TX	2.00
Hazel Garland, MD	25.00
James Geisendorfer, WI	2.00
Ala Mae Noviello, TX	3.00
Charlie Wood, VA	7.00
O.C. Parks, LA	2.00
Calvin Vipperman, VA	7.00
William Vick, TN	10.00
Frank Pilgreen, LA	2.00
Loy Rodgers, AR	2.00
Frances Harper,	5.00
William Midkiff, VA	2.00
Samuel Broach, Jr., NC	7.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER IVA LEE SOUTER

God, in His infinite wisdom, called Sister Iva Lee Calk Kohier Souter home to heavenly portals on August 7, 2001. She truly loved the doctrines of election and sovereign grace, and she was received into the fellowship of the church at Hoard's Creek near Coleman, Texas, pastored by Elder C. D. Varnell. Sister Iva Lee later moved her membership to Mt. Olive Church, Stockdale, Texas, pastored by Elder Gerald D. Shipman, now

deceased, and Elder W. M. Burkhalter, where she served as church clerk for many years, and up until the day of her death remained a devoted member with the very same Mt. Olive Church, Boerne, Texas, pastored by Elder David Harrell. A precious memory for me of dear Sister Souter is that she was present the first time I went into the stand; however, one of her last requests of me was to come to Mt. Olive to preach along with her dear pastor, Elder David Harrell, where she might attend and observe communion. How encouraging this was to me to see this dear sister once again! Sister Souter loved her church and was faithfhl to attend, both at home and away, as long as she was able. When it became a chore for her to get to church, services were held several times in her home. This was just another way she showed her desire to hear the gospel and to fellowship with the brethren.

Born in Farmersville, Louisiana to Thomas and Maud Ila Calk on December 26, 1907, this dear sister in Christ taught school for 27 years beginning in a one room schoolhouse with 40 children, ages 6 to 14. She married her first husband, Alfred A. Kohler, and became a military wife of a major in the U.S. Air Force. Preceding her in death March 18, 1968, his remains lie in Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery. On January 1, 1979 she wed her second husband, Lester A. Souter. They welcomed many of the sisters and brethren into their home prior to his death on April 10, 1999. Sister Souter is survived by two daughters and sons-in-law, Kathryn and Ernest Locker, Patricia and John Tindall, all of San Antonio; three granddaughters, Anne Warmoth, Puyallup, Washington, Gay Lynne Zein and Carly Raasch, both of Austin, Texas; six great grandchildren; two brothers and one sister-in-law, Norris and wife, Dora Calk, Coleman, Texas, Roy Lee Calk, Tuscon, Arizona; three sisters-in-law, Tony Calk, Palo Alto, California, Mildred Calk, Coleman, Texas, Clemmie Calk, Boerne, Texas; numerous nieces and nephews; and many friends.

The funeral service for Sister Souter was conducted 11:30 a.m. August 10, 2001 at Porter Loring Chapel in San Antonio, Texas with Tommy Lyons officiating. She was laid to rest in Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery.

May we be given to say *"Thy will be done"* for Sister Iva Lee Souter is surely cradled in the arms of her dear Savior and Lord today.

Written at the request
of her pastor,
Elder David Harrell, and
written in much love by,
Elder C. M. Haygood

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

VOL. 169 MEADOWS OF DAN, VA., DECEMBER 2001 NO. 12

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

Give me the wings of faith to rise
Within the veil, and see
The saints above, how great their joys,
How bright their glories be.

Once they were mourning here below,
And wet their couch with tears;
They wrestled hard, as we do now,
With sins, and doubts, and fears.

I ask them whence their victory came?
They, with united breath,
Ascribe their conquest to the Lamb,
Their triumph to his death.

Our glorious Leader claims our praise
For his own pattern given,
While the long cloud of witnesses
Shows the same path to heaven.

Watts.

POSTMASTER

Please send address changes to:

Signs of the Times
202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

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RESURRECTION

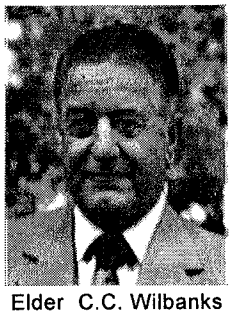
Elder C.C. Wilbanks

There has been many articles written on the subject of the resurrection, and I feel sure there will be many more, for there can be nothing of more importance to a child of God than the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and his hope that he will also be resurrected; for unless Christ did not overcome death and the grave and arise victorious from the tomb we can have no hope. But through his death and resurrection he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. Heb. 2:14. He was the first to be resurrected, for he must have the preeminence in all things. Jesus said to Martha, the sister of Lazarus, ***"I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."***

I do not believe that any child of grace would deny that the body of Jesus Christ in which he died was raised again to life, which is the first resurrection, but there are many different opinions and beliefs, even among the Old Baptist ministers, concerning the resurrection of God's people. Some of them say that the resurrection occurs at the time of death of each individual, and that the body which returns to the dust from which it was made will never be raised. I will leave that for them to prove by the Scriptures, if they can. There are many who believe, as do I, that we (the elect) will be resurrected at the end of the world when our Saviour shall return to receive his bride. There are many Scriptures to prove this and I will use some of them to show what I believe to be the gospel truth. There are also those who are looking forward to finding their children, kinfolks and good friends in heaven. What did Jesus say to the Sadducees when they asked him who would be the husband of the woman

who had seven husbands? *"Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven."* If they be as angels, who would recognize them? Paul said, *"And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."* If it were possible to recognize them and yet they were not found, would this not cause grievous pain? No such thing shall ever be in heaven. David said in Ps.17:15, *"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake in thy likeness."* This cannot be in his likeness as he appeared on the earth as the Son of Man, but in his glorified body. *"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is."*

There are those who say that our bodies, which shall return to the dust, are not resurrected, for some are deposited in the sea, other cremated and their ashes scattered in the wind, others buried in the earth, etc. But what do the Scriptures say? *"But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised." 1 Cor. 15: 13-16.* Does it seem impossible to anyone for God to resurrect our bodies regardless of the circumstances? Jesus himself said. *"With God all things are possible." Matt. 19:26.* I doubt that anyone familiar with the Scriptures would deny that David was a prophet of God, and that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne. (Acts 2:30) Peter spake of him, saying, *"he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day."* And as quoted above David said, *"I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness."* David is sleeping in the dust, and so will all men unto the day of the resurrection. I have never heard it preached, but have read in the writings of some of the elders of the past that they believed the resurrection is when the sinner is awakened from his dead alienated state in which he was born. This is not the resurrection, but being born again; not of the flesh but of the spirit. Jesus said, *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."* John 3:6-7. This is a mystery which was hid from ages and generations, but is now made manifest to us by God, *"Which is Christ*

in you, the hope of glory." Col.1: 27. Christ is the way, the truth and the life. He said. *"I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." John 10:28.* Our flesh is not changed in the least when we are born again, and in the flesh we will continue to sin, for John said, *"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." 1 John 1:8-10.* And James tells us, *"Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and when it is finished, bringeth forth death."*

That the resurrection is in the future, and not at the time of each individual death, I will show by these Scriptures. *" For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matt 24:27.* I cannot believe any one has ever seen this come to pass. When he ascended from his disciples and was received in a cloud out of their sight they were told by two men in white apparel, *"Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."* Acts 1:11. This scripture says he will so come in like manner, not in the body which ascended, *"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thes.4:16-17.* This agrees perfectly with what Jesus said in John 5:28-29. *"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."* The hour is coming: it is a very specific time, it is in the future, and it is sure. Jesus said, *"But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."*

Paul tells us, *"Behold, I shew you a great mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed."* There are those who say, If it was a mystery to Paul, it must be a mystery to us also. The mystery is not that we will be changed, but in the time it will take for it to be accomplished; *"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be*

raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." 1 Cor.15: 51-52. Surely this is a mystery to us, yet we know that Jesus said, ***"but with God all things are possible."*** In this same chapter Paul tells us how our bodies are sown. ***"It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."***

Beloved brethren, if we be the elect of God, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, then we shall all be changed, whether in the grave or alive, and we shall rise up to meet our Lord and Saviour in the air and forever be with him. There are those who claim this to be his *"Second Coming"*. I cannot find this scripture in my bible, but I do not desire to argue with any who use it. However I do find several scriptures that show he has appeared on earth more than once, The LORD appeared unto Abraham in the plains of Mamre. (Gen 18:1), he appeared when he was born in Bethlehem, and he appeared unto John in the isle of Patmos. Surely these scriptures show that he has come more than once. And he will surely come again at that last day and we shall rise up to meet him in the air. That is the hope of all of God`s elect.

Brethren, I realize that I have only touched the surface of this tremendous subject, for I know that volumns have been written before, yet the half has never been told.

However, if the Lord is in this it is enough for this time. May he bless the truth and pardon all errors. Remember this poor sinner when at the throne of Grace.

Eld. Clifford Wilbanks

Romans 8:23-27.

And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope : for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

CORRESPONDENCE

Oct. 4, 2001

Elder William Hale Terry
Circulation Mgr. & Treasurer
Signs of the Times

Dear Elder Terry,

As I read the last copy of my current subscription (Vol. 169, #10). I was deeply moved by the story of the annual association meeting held at Payne's Creek Church, Floyd Co. Virginia in Sept. of 1943, during W.W.II. It made me pause in hope, that God would bless our friends and relatives today, to finally hear the truth as he did then, when their uncertainty was great, and, as it is in today's world.

It is my undying wish, if it be God's will, that he would send a great revival among his children, to reverse the general falling away and, in light of the recent past, to know that we all are in need of his love and mercy. It is my firm conviction that, contrary to the world's popular beliefs, the only truth spoken (preached) today is solely within the confines of Old Baptist tenets.

Thank you and all of your blessed associates for the work God led you to do. I treasure each issue of "The Signs" I receive.

Yours in Hope of Christ's
Merciful Blessings,

Don & Sheryl Jackson
Members, Saints Rest Primitive
Baptist Church, in Dallas, TX.

VOICES OF THE PAST

LUKE XVI. 9.

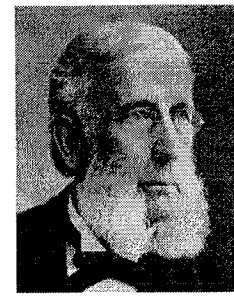
Elder Silas H. Durand

"*And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.*"

"*And I say unto you.*" Jesus did not speak like other men. The officers that were sent to take him said truly, "*Never man spake like this man.*" He taught not only in a different manner from other men, but upon a different principle. The words of his that are written by the pen of inspiration are not words by which his teaching is to be done, but the words which tell how his teaching has already been done. The written words tell to the enlightened understanding what the spirit and life of those words has already written in the new heart. "*The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.*" John vi. 65. when he said, "*Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father*

which is in heaven," he said in words what his Spirit always says within his people. These words do not express a proposition on his part which may or may not be complied with by those to whom they are addressed, but they tell what has been, and is being wrought in them by his creative power. They express the same invincible power by which God commanded the light to shine out of darkness, as he now shines in their hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. iv. 6.) When Jesus says, *"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you,"* he did not present a condition to those to whom he spake which they might or might not fulfill, but he declared what he speaks with living power in the hearts of those to whom he gives spiritual life, and which they can, in the Spirit, no more refuse to obey than Adam could refuse to breathe when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. This speaking of Jesus is not to the fleshly mind and heart, but to the new heart, and the flesh responds to these living words of Jesus as it is moved upon by the power of spiritual life. These spiritual powers are always inclined to perfect obedience, and when they are in exercise, by the grace of God, then they become effectual weapons of warfare, pulling down the strongholds of fleshly opposition, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. (2 Cor ix. 4.)

"And I say unto you." Not as one man says something to another which it will *be* profitable for him to hear and attend to, but as the Creator says to the creature in that creative work by which he is *"created in Christ Jesus unto good works."* When we come at the true meaning of the words of Jesus which are at the head of this article, we shall find in them not a recommendation of a course that will be for the benefit of his people to follow, but a command which has already been written in their hearts. Here is the difference between the legal character and the subject of gospel grace. Here is the difference in principle and action between the unjust steward, who is a pharisee and is covetous, and who sees in legal things only a chance for self-exaltation and emolument, and the gospel character, who has been given an honest spirit, and who sees in legal things the just requirements of a holy God, whose name must be glorified. Here is the difference between the teaching of this world's wisdom to *"the children of this world,"* and the teaching of the wisdom which is from above to *"the children of light."*

The unjust steward made friends with his lord's goods, or riches, by requiring of his debtors less than they owed; and his lord (not our Lord) commended him, not

for honesty, but for a wise forethought and care to provide for himself against the day of adversity. His wisdom was earthly, sensual, devilish, but it was wisdom in a worldly sense, and looked to his worldly advantage. It pertained only to worldly things, and was eminently selfish, and it was only commended in a worldly sense. It is only as using the wisdom that he thinks will best advance his interests that he is commended by our Savior to the attention of the children of light. They are not directed to do as he did except in one thing, and that is, to pay attention diligently to the dictates of the wisdom which belongs to them, as he diligently attended to the directions of the wisdom of this world. The Savior said, ***"Be wise as serpents, but he did not say, "Be wise like serpents."*** The children of this world are compared with the children of light to the disadvantage of the latter in one thing only, and that is, that they are wise in their generation, looking after what will be best for themselves in this world, while the children of light are not wise in their generation, when left to themselves to look after their own interests, but are constantly liable to turn aside from the path of true wisdom, and cannot therefore trust in themselves to guide themselves for one moment, but must be led constantly by the dear Savior.

That point in which they are liable to fail of true wisdom is their tendency to make use of the wisdom of this world, which constantly holds out allurements to them to follow its lead. And how often they follow the lead of that worldly wisdom, looking for the advantages it promises, until they are led by it into trouble, desolation, famine and death. The true wisdom of the child of God is always to distrust the dictates of earthly wisdom. Therefore from the beginning of his experience he is turned away from the ways of this world, and taught a different way, and a different wisdom. This is indicated here.

"And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness." To make friends *with* those riches was to use them unjustly, as the pharisees (the unjust steward) did; to make friends *of* them is to experience and acknowledge the justice of their claims against us; to honestly own our full indebtedness, and to ask no reduction, even though we have nothing to pay, but must give up our own selves to satisfy the claim. For the mammon of unrighteousness undoubtedly means the things of the law. The word mammon simply means riches, wealth personified. Unrighteousness here does not mean anything evil or wrong, but the lack of righteousness or value. There is no real value in a pattern or in a type, but only a representative of value; there are no riches in an account, but only the representation of riches. The things belonging to the legal dispensation

had no real righteousness in themselves, hut they were important as representing the "true riches" of the gospel dispensation. And these true "riches of righteousness" brought forth in the gospel, which belong to the children of light, are only committed unto them after they have been found faithful in regard to the riches of unrighteousness, or the things of the law in which there is no righteousness, but only a typical representation of righteousness. One has made friends of those legal riches, the commands, ordinances, types, accounts of the legal dispensation, when he has acknowledged the justice of them. Under the law an Israelite had paid the debt when he had given up himself to be sold for it. Then the claim was settled, and in the year of jubilee he went free with no claim against him. No charge could be brought against him, for the law would stand his friend. So the law is the friend of the poor sinner who has acknowledged the justice of its claims against him. The moment he feels that he is justly sold under sin, that he is justly condemned, that moment for him the year of jubilee has come, and he is received by the very law which held such a claim against him, into the everlasting habitations of the gospel.

All of this chapter to the eighteenth verse confirms the view of the text which I have thus briefly suggested. The pharisees were covetous, so is every one who justifies himself before men. These are those who depend upon the works of the law for salvation. Though they appear to men, and to themselves, to be true servants of the law, yet in their hearts they are covetous, and do not really care for the honor of God, nor seek to magnify his law, but are seeking their own honor and riches. They are not faithful in that unrighteous mammon, or riches, which belonged to another man, and under which they were known as servants, because they had not faith. As soon as one is born of God he has faith to see the true requirements of the law. He feels that its claims against him are just. He can say, ***"The law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good, but I am carnal, sold under sin."*** Now he wants the law honored. He could not accept deliverance at the expense of the law; it would be no deliverance for him. He is faithful in these riches of the law, though there is no righteousness in them, yet they represent righteousness. There is no real value in the page of the account book which shows the great debt he owes, but it represents the true value, which he knows ought to be paid. It represents true riches. He could not dishonor those riches, that holy law, by accepting any release upon the payment of half or four score. He feels in his soul the truth which he does not yet understand, that every jot and tittle of the law must be fulfilled, that the whole debt must be paid.

That when ye fail. There is a time when every living soul must fail, and that is when he sees the amount of his indebtedness under the law of God, and the justice of it. When that is seen and acknowledged then the time of failure comes. Ten thousand talents in debt, and not a farthing to pay. Then all at once the law ceases to hold us, the soul is delivered, and we are astonished and amazed to find ourselves at liberty, freed from guilt, and rejoicing in a sense of righteousness. In his own time and way Jesus appears as having satisfied the law, and it is the riches of that legal dispensation, the accounts of that law now satisfied, which receive us into the gospel, is now fulfilled, so that nothing can be laid to our charge, and thus the gates of the holy city are opened unto us, never to be shut any more.

November 15, 1901
Elder Silas H. Durand

PSALM 33:1-3.

REJOICE in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright.

Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings.

Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise.

For the word of the LORD is right; and all his works are done in truth.

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ATTACHMENT TO THE ONE BODY

Sometimes in my thoughts I contemplated the whole body of Christ, and feeling some emotions of love for the church whom the beloved Lord Jesus has redeemed from all inquity by His precious blood, I find fervent longings springing up in my heart for the true prosperity and peace of Zion. At other times my thoughts are engaged concerning this or that member of the body of Christ in particular; and though... absent from them, and perhaps unknown by face; unto them, yet that secret precious bond, that unites all the family of God, binds me, I hope, to them, and produces in my heart a godly solicitude for their welfare in the Kingdom of God.

My heart, also, has felt the preciousness of the truth that the body unto the edifying of itself in love. The members are placed in the body as it pleaseth God, and are all necessary whether it be the eye, the hand or foot. And the members of the body of Christ have gifts differing; all, therefore, have not the same office, but Jehovah gave some apostles and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers for the edifying of the body of Christ.

The following verse comes into mind expressing what I am persuaded of:

"Since Christ is my head, this with joy I remember, His body to which with affection I glow,

Although I'm the most insignificant member,

Can't be full without one, Ah, never! O, No!"

God's oath, His covenant, and blood forbid that any of the loved and chosen flock of God should perish. The epistle to the Hebrews, speaks of those who have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before them, having a "strong consolation." This I hope I have many times proved, when in sore need and sunk in disconsolation of soul.

The Holy Spirit, the Comforter, makes very sweet to the souls of the called of God the doctrine of Christ. This doctrine so dispised and hated by vast multitudes of people who call themselves and wish to be accounted Christians, they manifest no love to the truth as it is in Jesus and by them *"the way of truth is evil spoken of."-2 Peter, 32:2.*

Well, shall we make our boast? Yes, but only in the Lord; and then no poor humble sinner will be made sad by us.

If we love and have immutable inheritance in "the truth as it is in Jesus," it is all of the eternal counsel, and the unfrusterable will and good pleasure of Jehovah the Father, the word and the Holy Ghost, that we are thus made to differ from others. It is the Lord who puts a difference between the Egyptians and Israel. - Cor. 4:7; Exod. 11:7.

The consideration of the sovereign love of God, as I hope, to me a poor sinner has been with much weight upon my mind for some time past. Who am I, and what am I, that He should love and take delight in me? I often feel it seems unreasonable for me to think so; and truly this is beyond the reach of the uppermost thought of the creature to fathom why the Lord has loved us poor vile transgressors.

When we contemplate the millions of the posterity of Adam that have peopled, and that now inhabit the earth, sunken where they fell, in alienation from God, by wicked works and then among those nations who are styled Christian, how many, it is to be feared, know nothing spiritually of Jesus, the dear lamb of God? Then I question myself and say, *"Is it really true that I am one of the very elect?"* Am I one of the redeemed of the Lord? Does Jehovah love me? What evidences have I?

Thus I find inquiries arising. It is so very wonderful, so infinitely glorious, so eternally momentuous to such a poor sinner like me! I want no decision but that which proceeds from the throne of God and the Lamb. Like our precious Jesus, I have cried, *"Let my sentence come forth from thy presence."-Psalm 17:2.*

As I have been writing this an incident in my pilgrimage has been recalled in my thoughts, very much as though it were but yesterday; but is was nearly forty years ago. I was in tribulations, both temporal and spiritual. And in the midst of my trials I fell into a barren state, so destitute of the things pertaining to the divine life. For some weeks I was wandermg. indeed in a solitary way, so destitute of all meditation upon the things of Christ. I spent the days and weeks very miserably, and many a time in my spirit I cried out, *"O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"*

Accusations from the old serpent, called the devil, and satan assailed me and aggravated my sad condition.

While in this state, one Saturday morning, I started to ride some 30 miles with horse and carriage to an appointment to preach on the following day. While on my way called at my postoffice and among the letters was one from a very dear brother in Christ, an able minister of the new testament, living many miles from me in the state of Georgia. While yet in the postoffice I read what he had written and I felt my heart stirred up within me as I read. I found he was deeply in distress, in poverty and much oppressed. Here are some of his words, *"I have been passing through a severe trial lately, in debt, and nothing to pay it off with. It has cast me down very low, but I try to remember Him, who had no where to lay His head; it has given me no relief. Dear tried brother remember me."*

I knew that such language from this precious brother had a depth of meaning, my heart flowed out in sympathy for him and all the time, while riding the rest of my journey, my thoughts were swallowed up in thinking of the trouble and distress that I felt persuaded he and his family were in. When I had arrived at my journey's end and had retired to rest, I could find no sleep; but the hours of the night were spent in thinking about this beloved servant of Christ. Oh, how I wish I were able to relieve him! I felt and mourned my helplessness, but I was drawn to look unto the Lord, for these words, as if spoken in me, were raised up in my mind, *"Jesus loves him far better than you do, and is able, if it be his pleasure, to bring him out of his troubles and supply all his needs."*

Though for some weeks past I had felt no spirit of supplication to pray in my own behalf, I felt my heart drawn to pour forth supplications in behalf of this dear brother and faithful minister of Jesus Christ. I felt so satisfied the Lord did indeed love him, but while thinking this the question arose, *"Does the Lord love*

you?" This cast me into a sea of emotions and made my eyes overflow with tears, and I exclaimed, *"How can the Lord love me?"* My past illness arose to my view and I felt to loathe myself in my own sight and I felt if I am so hateful, so loathsome to myself, how can the Holy One of Israel love me? I thought upon the immensity, the infinite majesty and glory of the Holy One that inhabiteth eternity and the more I thought and reasoned the more incredible and unreasonable it appeared that the blessed God could love such a vile, hateful worm like me. Modern, popular religionists may take all the satisfaction they can from what they call *"the reasonableness of the religion of Jesus Christ,"* but the things of Jesus Christ are beyond the grasp of my natural reason, and infinitely exceed my uttermost thought.

There have been times in the past when, with natural powers, I have attempted to solve (as one would a mathematical problem) the mystery of the cross of Christ, the enemy has assailed me with fearful suggestions, and vile insinuations, that as all things belonging to the gospel of Christ are impenetrable, therefore all was a myth and a delusion and there was no God.

This temptation, I have found no trifling thing, but it has caused me much pain, and deliverance I have found only in the power and goodness of God to my poor soul. On the night of which I am writing, though I could not see how the Lord could love me, yet O, how I longed and besought the Lord to be merciful and gracious to a poor worm again, to banish the dark clouds from my sky, to keep in subjection my vile nature, to give me again some token of His love to my soul! It was a time of the pouring out of my heart before the Lord and it was not a wonder of wonders that the Lord did not spurn me from His presence, that He did not in His anger cast me away. But I do hope that once more I tasted the blessedness of the man to whom the Lord inputeth not iniquity, whose sins are covered, and who is accepted in the Beloved. And I was comforted in believing that the Lord had thoughts of love to me in Christ Jesus, and His love was shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost. *"He that loveth is born of God and knoweth God,"* and such are passed from death unto life who love the brethren.

I felt to bless and praise the Lord, that He, in His sovereign mercy and grace had made me truly to have fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ, and to love the brethren, the household of God. Oh it is wonderful!

"They wonder Jehovah should single them out, And

cause them to hear His sweet voice;

They wonder sometimes that their hearts are so hard; They wonder, they cannot rejoice.

And sometimes they wonder, they cannot believe And wonder what can be the matter;

And thus they go wondering, day after day, And wonder sometimes they're no better.

But sometimes they wonder that things are no worse, And bless God things are as they are;

"Tis then they can thank Him for wonderful grace, That has brought their poor souls so far.

And then what an endless wonder will be In glory eternal to dwell,
And our wonderful Saviour's face we shall see, And will be eternally well."

Raleigh, N.C.
Frederick W. Keene.

JOHN 6:35.

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that come to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

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Tarboro, N. C., Mar. 5, 1911.
Corn Neck Farm.

My Dear Brother Gold:

For the last few days I have been strongly impressed to try to write you a little continuing from where I left off writing to Bro. Monsees. If the dear Lord will guide my pen I will be able to write, otherwise all my efforts are in vain.

Oh ! that night ! that glorious night when my burden was lifted and my poor fainting soul was made to cry out in praise to the most high God! Who can describe my feelings that night, my poor heart that had been crushed and bleeding under its intolerable weight of sin and guilt, was not only relieved of its weight but seemed filled to over-flow with love and *"Praise God, Praise God"* were the words which came into my mind so forcibly that I could not refrain from uttering them.

My poor heart was so full I felt that it must burst with that joy which is unspeakable, surely tis better felt than told; but it did not burst, no, the new wine was not put in bottles but I feel that all things were made new.

I went before the church at Tarboro Saturday before the first Sunday in November, 1910, as you know, and asked for a home, they received me, notwithstanding all my

unworthiness, and I was baptized next day by Elder M. T. Lawrence.

Only those who have experienced the same can know my feelings that day. Never was I so happy as when I came up out of the water. Oh that feeling is *"inexpressible and full of joy."*

I went on my way rejoicing, surely mortal was never happier than I.

I have been so blessed since then in getting to hear preaching, almost every Sunday the Lord has enabled me to mingle with his dear people and with them to feed and feast upon the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Oh! when my thoughts are on Him how my soul rejoices in His glory; He is all in all to me; my way, my life, my end. It is so sweet to hope and have a reason to believe that He is those three things to us. He is our Way from earth to Heaven. He is our Life, our spiritual Life of light and joy, and glory to God! He is our End — our end is in Him. That is when we will need Him the most, when the end of this old mortal life comes, if we have Him then surely death will be swallowed up in victory.

Brother Gold, right after I was relieved of my burden I was sick in bed for a day or two and I felt like my time had come to die. I had a very queer feeling come over *me. I*t seemed I was going down, down, down into a very narrow, cold place, and I must go alone. Oh I shuddered at the thought, it was so cold and dark and worst of all lonely. Yes I must go right by myself and I knew God was on the other side, but I felt to be at peace with Him; what I had such a horror of was passing through this ordeal alone. All at once these words were forced upon me. *"Jesus will go with you-Jesus has been there."* Ah! how great a differ-
ence that made. All was calm and restful then. Not only did I have no more horror of death (for such I felt this to be) but I could say with all my heart, *"Oh! death, where is thy sting; Oh grave, where is thy victory?"* And also, *"Come welcome death, I'll gladly go with thee."* I only hope when I have shuffled off this mortal coil and my tune comes to part with all that is earthly that I may have that sweet assurance of His presence that I had then. Then I can die rejoicing.

But, since that sweet time I've been down in the valley some, a lot it seems - no it's worse than in the valley, I feel like I've been down in the angry deep with the raging billows overhead.

I think sometimes I must sink this time, I feel like the Lord is clean gone forever or else I have never known Him.

"How tedious and tasteless the hours,
Which Jesus no longer I see;
Sweet prospects, sweet birds and sweet flowers
Have all lost their sweetness to me."

But thanks be unto him though He leaves me for a season He never fails to return. Each time with greater force and sweetness, it seems, if that is possible and are not all things possible with God ?

Brother Gold, I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed your sermon this morning, how gracious God is to give us the hearing ear and the understanding heart.

Brother Stone too, spoke so beautifully that my poor heart which I felt like had been melted down, just run over and I found relief in tears.

There are many of the hymns we sing that I love dearly but I believe my favorite is number 339 *"How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds."*

I was baptized exactly one month from the day I first felt myself a lost and ruined sinner.

Now, Brother Gold, if I have had a Christian experience I thank God for it, and if it is not I thank Him still for giving me such love for Him and such sweet meditations, such love for the brethren and showing Himself to me as the *"chiefiest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely."*

That Heaven's rich blessings may rest upon you and yours now and henceforth is my prayer.

Your unworthy little sister,
Mary Johnson Thigpen.

JESUS THE END OF PROPHECY

When the cry, *"It is finished!"* was uttered by the dying Lord of life and glory, that declaration included all that was written in the law and in the inspired testimony of the prophets, and proclaimed the fulfillment of the eternal counsel of God in which he was chosen to be the Savior of his people from their sins. There was no further need that he should be manifest in the flesh as the perfect Servant whom God upheld by his own omnipotence. He had honored every demand of the holy law, and infinite justice could ask no more.

It is important that the saints should ever remember that there is no revelation given in the Scriptures for any other purpose but to testify of Jesus. While there is incidental reference to the affairs of time, as the setting up of empires and their overthrow, it is only as such incidents are used in showing the glory of our Lord in his control of all events for the manifestation of his eternal purpose in the preservation of his elect, spiritual people unto that great salvation to which they were ordained in Christ before the worlds were made. To those carnal Jews who disputed his doctrine he said, *"Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and THEY ARE THEY WHICH TESTIFY OF ME." - John v.39.*

So, when John would have worshiped the angel by whom he was

shown the things of Jesus, the angel said unto him, "See thou do it not; I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus; worship God; for THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS IS THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY." - Rev. xi 10. While believers are settled in this truth there is little occasion for them to be troubled by the devices of the adversary, who is ever ready to rob them of their rest in the assurance of faith by ingeniously wresting the words of inspiration. The natural mind esteems the strife of nations as of far more importance than the mourning of a conscious sinner; but in the judgment of God there is not an unuttered groan but that is gathered in the golden vials wherein are preserved before his throne the prayers of all saints. - Rev. v. 8; vi ii. 3. He sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers. He brings princes to nothing, and makes the judges of the earth as vanity. He turns man to destruction, and says, Return, ye children of men. Thus, those things which are highly esteemed among men are accounted nought by our God; and those whom men consider the offscouring of all things are precious in the sight of the Lord, even as his peculiar treasure, and as the jewels of a crown unto him. As he gave the wealth, honor and power of Egypt for the ransom of national Israel, so he has accounted all that is valued among men as vanity in comparison with that grace which he has bestowed upon his spiritual Israel.

Not even the natural reason of the saints can comprehend this divine mystery of electing love. Constantly they seek in themselves some attraction by which this choice of God was drawn to embrace them; and their wily adversary finds an easy way to annoy them by referring to their conscious destitution of merit as evidence of their delusion in hoping in the grace of God for deliverance from the bondage of corruption. They can never overcome this temptation by reason. In this contest, as in all their experience, they must always confess that it is alone by grace that they are saved. Boasting is excluded by the grace of God which is revealed only through that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit freely given to them by the same eternal love which chose them in Christ before the foundation of the world. By that divine choice it was determined that they should be holy and without blame before God in love. If they were in themselves blameless before the holy law of God there would be nothing more than simple justice in this appointment. They could ascribe no praise to the riches of grace for that which would thus be their just judgment. But the glorious mystery of this divine appointment consists in the fact that it pleased the Lord to choose guilty and condemned sinners in whom was no merit, that they by the blood of Jesus should be

cleansed from all sin, and that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. It must not be forgotten that this complete justification of the justly condemned sinners thus chosen, is infinitely more than the pardon of their sins. By this inconceivable grace the demand of justice is not less fully satisfied than the mercy and love of God. Not only are the subjects of this election freed from the penalty of their sins, they are also fully delivered from the sins by which they were polluted. Now, no more guilt can be found in them than in their sinless Redeemer. In view of this great grace which is revealed in Christ Jesus it is not difficult to understand that he is the first cause and embodiment of all the revelation which God has given in the Scriptures, as well as the Beginning of the creation of God, and the center and object for which all things are and were created.

From the consideration of the infinite character of this salvation which is in Christ, it is not strange that in all the law and the prophets Jesus is the sum of what is recorded. Because it pleased God to hide these things from the wise and prudent, the efforts of men to find out God by searching have always proved vain. Many very learned and elaborate theories have been devised, in which human wisdom has sought to find the fulfillment of prophecy in events which men consider important among the nations of this world; but it is not for the instruction ot men in natural things that God has given the guidance of his Spirit to prophets and apostles. Not only the written words of prophecy but all the history of the dealing of God with his people under the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, must be seen as the testimony of Jesus, or their essential significance is not understood. Hence, all those labored dissertations in which men have claimed to find by study the interpretation of Scripture prophecy, however consistent they may seem to reason, have only served to expose the folly of those who have devised them. It is a common result of these scientific devices to find the whole significance of the prophecies which they study fulfilled in the natural history of the children of Abraham. It is almost universally taught by them that there is yet to be a restoration of the Jews to the land of Palestine, and they are to be established there in the observance of those privileges and ordinances which were given them by Moses. Without attempting to discuss this conclusion, it is sufficient for those who look to Jesus for salvation to consider that this exposition directly controverts the declarations of the Lord himself and his inspired apostle. Jesus says, *"For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John." - Matt. xi. 13.* Peter says, *"To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive*

remission of sins." - *Acts x. 43.* Hence, if all that was witnessed by the legal and prophetic dispensations was in Jesus fulfilled, it is evident that the establishing of those prophetic observances again would signify that another Messiah must come in their fulfillment. This is certainly a denial that Jesus is the end of the law, and that the salvation which he wrought is perfected in his obedience and offering of himself once for all.

Certainly none who trust in the grace which was revealed in Jesus can look for another Mediator to come from God. Unless that righteousness of God which dwelt in Jesus is sufficient for the justification of those for whom he laid down his life, there can be no hope for any sinner. But the same failure by which his people were forbidden to hope, would also hold the Captain of our salvation under the condemnation of divine justice. Surely this blasphemous suggestion cannot for a moment deceive the tempted believer.

Since man became a transgressor of the holy commandment of his Creator, the enemy of righteousness has ever sought to pervert the truth which God declared in the law as given to man in his primitive innocence. To this end proud reason is directed to search the heights and depths of human wisdom for some understanding of the things which are made, which is different from that given by divine inspiration. Carnal enmity against God is ever ready to bow down to any idol in which it finds the sinner exalted as holding his destiny in his own power, and in which there is nothing of the humiliating doctrine of salvation exclusively by the grace of God. Man does not object to rendering adoration to such gods as are found in his own imagination; but he has never devised an idol superior to himself. The pride of his heart is flattered by the imagination that his god is altogether such a being as himself, and in worshiping that god he is only ascribing honor and glory to himself. Thus self is the ultimate object of all natural worship, whether it be called, Heathenism, or Catholic, or Protestant Christianity. Man is prone to worship some object, and his pride forbids that he should yield his own conception of that object so long as he is guided by his natural mind. Hence, every thought of God even in the imagination of an enlightened sinner, is entirely out of the way. None can know him but as he is revealed in the heart by his own holy Spirit. Certainly those from whom it has pleased God to hide this knowledge can never attain to it by their own researches.

Since rational men commonly accept the truth that they are practically sinners, and confess that they must be changed in order to be made holy, they are not disposed to reject any doctrine which represents them as having power to avail themselves of the chance to secure

that change at their own will. Thus, in the recent gathering of teachers of all the religions of the world at Chicago, when they compared their doctrines, they found that there was no essential difference between Pagan idolatry and the popular christianity of America. All agreed that the good works of the creature were the essential price to be rendered in securing the favor of God. The professed teachers of christianity were as far as the avowed heathen from understanding that sinners are saved by the blood of Jesus from all sin. Yet they could not perceive the folly of seeking to convert those from whose heathen religion they confessed their inability to discover that their own doctrines materially differed. Even sound natural reason should suffice to detect such absurdity.

In the light of the testimony of inspiration, all the teachings which are consistent with the perverted notions of the depraved mind of man are thereby manifested as utterly false. There could be no occasion for the gift of inspiration to teach that which is within the power of the mind of creatures to attain by study. Not even by the most diligent examination of the inspired Scriptures can man acquire the ability to know that there is salvation in the name of Jesus. Paul says, *"Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led; wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." - 1 Cor. xii. 2, 3.* In calling upon him for deliverance from sin every believer does say that Jesus is the Lord. In this confession the witness is given that the Spirit of truth dwells in the helpless suppliant. *"For he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."* Thus, it is conclusive assurance that a sinner is led by the Spirit of God when he knows that there is salvation nowhere else but in the gracious name of Jesus. His very prayer ascribes omnipotent sovereignty to Jesus as the one Lord of life and glory.

When the pride of man prompts him to seek for knowledge of future events in the record which is given in the Scriptures, there is likely to be more anxiety for selfish honors and the praise of men than desire to see Jesus exalted its the glorious One to whom all the prophets give witness. There have doubtless been cases since John was on the isle that is called Patmos, when the saints have manifested a disposition to worship the messengers by whom they have received the testimony of Jesus. And when walking according to their natural minds the ministers of Christ are not offended by receiving such worship. Certainly their transgression will in every such case bring upon them the rod of sore

chastening; yet the fleshly ambition of men constantly aspires to have the highest place in the estimation of their fellows. When the saints are governed by this carnal mind they cannot see that Jesus is the Sun in the gospel heaven, from whom the whole light of revelation shines in the illumination of prophets and apostles, and he is the great embodiment of all revealed truth, as he is *"Alpha and Omega, the first and the last."* There is no liability of the saints looking for any other fulfillment of any prophecy when they see Jesus. All earthly considerations are forgotten in his heavenly glory, as the light of a dim candle is lost in the full blaze of the noonday sunshine. Jesus is then revealed in his own divine radiance, and from his face the created earth and heaven are fled away; and there is found no place for them. As *"He is before all things, and by him all things consist,"* so he is the one source of all assurance and cornfort to his ransomed people. The saints can never be deprived of the spiritual blessings which are treasured in him so long as they can see Jesus in whom all fullness dwells.

(The above was an editorial by Elder Wm. L. Beebe July 18, 1894.)

"It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." — Psalm cxix. 71.

We may have everything naturally that the carnal heart desires, and only be hardened thereby into worldliness and ungodliness. But to be brought down in body and soul, to be weaned and separated from an ungodly world by affliction sanctified and made spiritually profitable, to be brought to feel our need of Christ, and that without an interest in his precious blood our soul must be for ever lost how much better it is really and truly, to be laid on a bed of affliction, with a hope in God's mercy, than to be left to our own carnality and thoughtlessness. Affliction of any kind is very hard to bear, and especially so when we begin to murmur and fret under the weight of the cross; but when the Lord afflicts it is in good earnest; he means to make us feel. Strong measures are required to bring us down; and affliction would not be affliction, unless it were full of grief and sorrow. But when affliction makes us seek the Lord with a deep feeling in the soul that none but himself can save or bless, and we are enabled to look up unto him, with sincerity and earnestness, that he would manifest his love and mercy to our heart, he will appear sooner or later. The Lord, who

searcheth the heart, knoweth all the real desire of the soul, and can and does listen to a sigh, a desire, a breath of supplication within. He knows our state, both of body and soul, and is not a hard taskmaster to require what we cannot give, or lay upon us more than we can bear, but can and does give all that he desires from us. But very often he delays to appear, that he may teach us thereby we have no claim upon him, and that anything granted is of his pure compassion and grace.

Elder J.C. Philpot

REVELATION 7:15-17.

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF PRESBYTERY MINISTER

In response to a request by, Mt. Zion church, a presbytery was called for the purpose of examining and if found qualified, the ordination of Brother James Pugh for the full work of the gospel ministry, on this date, Oct. 20, 2001.

Call presbytery together consisting of all ministers and deacons, of our faith and order in good standing.

The presbytery was organized with the election of Elder Richard Campbell as moderator.

Moderator appointed Elder Wayman Chapell Clerk to record the minutes of the presbytery.

Moderator asked the sponsoring church if they were still of a mind to proceed with the ordination of, Brother James Pugh . The church spokesman, R.E. Moore answered in the affirmative and presented the candidiate to the presbytery for ordination.

Elder C.M. Haygood requested to open the presbytery with prayer.

Moderator requested Elder Larry Hollandsworth to question

the spokesman regarding the candidates qualifications for the office of a minister of the gospel.

Moderator appointed Elder James Howard to question the candidate, regarding the articles of faith of the church, and his calling. Upon satisfactorily responding and answering any questions of the presbytery, all were satisfied, and agreed to proceed with the ordination.

The laying on of hands was performed by the presbytery during the ordination prayer worded by, Elder Hale Terry .

Elder *C.C. Morris* appointed to give the charge to the candidate, regarding the duties and responsibilities of the office, and the trials and problems that he would be called on to moderate in the position as a minister of the gospel.

The members of the presbytery were asked if they were satisfied with the work of the presbytery.

The spokesman for the sponsoring church was asked if he was satisfied with the work of the presbytery.

The right hand of fellowship was given to Elder James Pugh by all members of the presbytery.

Being advised that all were agreeable, Elder James Pugh was turned back to the church as a fully ordained minister of the gospel, and recommended him to all churches of our faith and order in good standing. All members of the churches were invited to give the right hand of fellowship to the newly ordained minister;

(INVITE THE SPOUSE OF THE NEWLY ORDAINED MINISTER TO COME AND STAND WITH HER HUSBAND, AS HE RECEIVES THE RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP OF THE CHURCHES - Children also attended.

Ask the clerk to read the minutes of the presbytery. Ask members for any changes or corrections to the minutes, as read.

Instructed clerk to re-write the minutes, if needed, and have all members to sign the minutes before they leave the assembly.

Instruct the clerk to write the certificate of credentials and get all members of the presbytery to sign the credentials before they leave.

Copy of certificate and credentials to be given to the newly ordained Elder.

Instruct clerk to prepare three copies of the minutes of the presbytery for the Elder, the church and send copy to, The Signs of The Times, for publication.

Ministers present for the ordination.

Wm. Hale Terry
Larry N. Hollandsworth
D. R. Smith
G. M. Joyce
H. W. Cook
J. R. Toney
C. C. Morris
James T. Howard

Deacons present for the ordination.

Zley Medows
John Anders
Denzil Aldridge
Richard Lawler
Wayne Bain
Roy L. Howard
Gladston Newman

Robert E. Moore
Herman K. Perkins
George W. Hyslip
James L. Pitts
A. A. McAlane
Kenneth Evans

Richard H. Campbell, Moderator
Wyman Clapp, Clerk

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FOR SEPTEMBER 2001

Walter G. Craft, W.V.	2.00
Georgia E. Edwards, NC	20.00
Lowell Hopkins, VA	2.00
Eld. Alan Terry, VA	2.00
Nannie Trevathan, NC	2.00
Donald Arne, SD	82.00
John Heppler, AZ	12.00
Phyllis Stroud, VA	7.00
W. H. Norman, NC	7.00
Sallie Hodges, VA	2.00
Marcy Burgin, TX	2.00
Jean Moran, NC	7.00
Anna Savage, KY	5.00
Buford Thornton, W.V	25.00
Lessie Sladky, NC	10.00

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

Let worldly minds the world pursue,
It has no charms for me;
Once I admired its trifles, too,
But grace has set me free.

Its pleasures now no longer please,
No more content afford;
Far from my heart be joys like these,
Since I have known the Lord.

As by the light of opening day
The stars are all concealed,
So earthly objects fade away
When Jesus is revealed.

Creatures no more divide my choice,
I bid them all depart;
His name, and love, and gracious voice,
Have fixed my roving heart.

Now, Lord, I would be thine alone,
And wholly live to thee;
But may I hope that thou wilt own
A worthless worm like me?

Yes, though of sinners I'm the worst,
I cannot doubt thy will;
For if thou had'st not chose me first,
I had refused thee still.

Newton

POSTMASTER

Please send address changes to:

Signs of the Times
202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

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EDITORIAL

OPPOSITIONS OF SCIENCE FALSELY SO CALLED

"O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen." 1 Timothy 6:20-21.

Elder J.B. Farmer

Again, I begin to write feeling to be inadequate for the task. I know that there are many who are much more capable to set forth their views with clarity than myself. I hope that if any of my brethren are given to see this with more light that they would make it known for the comfort and edification of the people of God.

We see that the inspired apostle has sounded the alarm and has called our attention to things which creep in among His people which are designed to overthrow the faith of His little ones. But thanks be unto God, Jesus said to Peter ***"Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."*** He also said to Peter and to us, I believe for our comfort and edification, ***"upon this rock*** **(Christ Himself)** ***I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."*** God is well able to keep His church and has done it, and is doing it, and shall continue to do it.

We are made to believe that there have always been those that have opposed the truth from all walks of life. Sometimes the ones who bring the most insidious attacks are those from the very highest ranks of education; who are the most persuasive according to nature. I believe a true natural education may be a good thing but a false one is an abomination. But God is all wise and has pointed out that there are those who are ***"ever learning and never able to come to the***

knowledge of the truth." Of course, the reason that one is not able to come to the knowledge of the truth, is because the truth is hidden from the wise and the prudent but is revealed to babes. He also said, ***"fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."*** It has pleased God to confound the wisdom of the wise. He has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty.

God's people are admonished to avoid certain things that are advanced by the world. He called them ***"profane and vain babblings and oppositions of science falsely so called."*** Now, what is it that the scientific world of knowledge puts forth that fits that description? The main things we are confronted with continually are, the denial of the scriptures as true and, therefore, the denial of God as the Creator of the world and the denial that He is the One who sustains all things. The way they approach this is to first try to discredit the scriptures by saying that they are based on myths and are full of contradictions. (This is not only done in the secular schools but is also common place in the so called religious seminaries.) Then, thinking they have accomplished that goal, they go on to try to eliminate God as the creator using so called scientific data and theories which maintain that things somehow just happened and that there is no wisdom in creation. Next, they try to discount the Son of God, the Savior Jesus Christ who came into the world as God in the flesh by denying the virgin birth. And then they begin to rail on the children of faith, who believe that God is all in all, as ignorant and naïve and unlearned. Those who walk in the old ways and the old doctrine are the most maligned of all.

It seems that no one believes that the scriptures are the inspired written word of God, without error or contradiction, except the reviled few. These, by the grace of God, are made to be willing to suffer the reproaches of Christ rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season as did faithful Moses. They are made to believe that the scriptures are a faithful witness to the work of God as He has related to and shall relate to His people from eternity before time, through time and in eternity after time.

They are made to see and believe, according to the scriptures, that God spoke the world into existence from nothing. They are made to believe that He made the world and the universe for Himself and that He upholds it and controls it according to the good pleasure of His own will and for the good of His people. And finally, when He is finished with it He will destroy it by fire.

They are made to believe, by faith, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God by the revelation of the God the Father who is in heaven. They are made to believe

that He was truly born of a virgin and was indeed without sin and was God in the flesh and that He, by the eternal Spirit offered Himself up without spot unto God to redeem all of His people from all their sins and make satisfaction unto God. They are given to believe that He was raised from the grave and now sits at the right hand of the throne of God where he ever liveth to make intercession for the children of God. Also, they believe that He will come again to raise His people in His likeness to ever be with Him.

Many have been laughed to scorn and hated because of their deeply held beliefs and their understanding by faith. We do not have to look far in the scriptures or in experience to see examples of this. Look at Abel, Noah, Lot, Daniel, the prophets and the apostles and Christ Himself to list only a few. It is no wonder that the Lord Jesus Christ said, ***"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you."*** And ***"Blessed are you when all men shall revile you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely for My name sake."*** He also said, ***"It must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh."*** We must wait and groan until He comes to manifest His own. ***"If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him..."***

Written in love, I hope.

Elder J.B. Farmer
11-15-2000

CORRESPONDENCE

Editors:

Mrs. Harlow looked forward each month for the *"Signs of the Times"*. She kept as many as five issues at her side and would read from them daily. She read only from the Bible and the *"Signs of the Times"* until last month when whe began to fail.

Enclosed is a print of the obituary and you can use it or edit it for your publication. The pictures was made on her birthday 9-8-01.

Thank you for providing so much pleasure for such a small expense.

A donation in her wonderful memory is included.

In memory
R.W. Forsythe
See obituary in this issue.

Editors

ARTICLES

REPUBLICATION FROM ZION'S LANDMARK

The following timely article on TERRORISM is a recent editorial by Elder J. M. Mewborn that was published in the "September-October, 2001" issue of ZION'S LANDMARK. Feeling that it would be of interest to many of our subscribers and readers, we asked for and gladly received his permission for

republication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We are grateful to Elder Mewborn, and appreciate his willingness for republication for the benefit of our readers.

Elder Mewborn asked that we give address and telephone number as follows, to-wit:

Elder J. M. Mewborn
P. O. Box 1358
Coats, North Carolina 27521
Telephone: 1-910-897-8770

Editors

TERRORISM

WHAT IS TERRORISM, WHERE WAS ITS ORIGIN, AND WHEN DID IT BEGIN?

ANSWER: IT BEGAN ABOUT THE YEAR B.C. 1918, IN THE SECOND DISPENSATION OF TIME IN THE HOUSE OF ABRAHAM AND HIS WIFE, SARAH, IN THE LAND OF CANAAN IN WHAT IS KNOWN IN THE WORLD TODAY AS ISRAEL IN THE MIDDLE EAST A.D. 2001.

ISHMAEL, THE ELDEST SON OF ABRAHAM, IS BORN WITH HAGAR, THE HANDMAID OF SARAH, WIFE OF ABRAHAM.

"AND THE ANGEL OF THE LORD SAID UNTO HAGAR, BEHOLD THOU ART WITH CHILD, AND SHALT BEAR A SON, AND SHALT CALL HIS NAME ISHMAEL." "AND HE WILL BE A WILD MAN; HIS HAND WILL BE AGAINST EVERY MAN, AND EVERY MAN'S HAND AGAINST HIM; AND HE SHALL DWELL IN THE PRESENCE OF ALL HIS BRETHREN." Genesis 16:11-12.

ISAAC (SON OF ABRAHAM AND SARAH), ISHMAEL'S HALF BROTHER AND ABRAHAM'S SECOND SON, IS BORN. HAGAR AND ISHMAEL ARE CAST OUT OF ABRAHAM'S HOUSE AT SARAH'S DEMANDS BECAUSE HE (ISHMAEL) MOCKED THEM.

"AND THE LORD VISITED SARAH AS HE HAD SAID, AND THE LORD DID UNTO SARAH AS HE HAD SPOKEN. FOR SARAH CONCEIVED, AND BARE ABRAHAM A SON IN HIS OLD AGE, AT THE SET TIME OF WHICH GOD HAD SPOKEN TO HIM. AND ABRAHAM CALLED THE NAME OF HIS SON THAT WAS BORN UNTO HIM, WHOM SARAH BARE TO HIM, ISAAC." "AND SARAH SAID, GOD HATH MADE ME TO LAUGH, SO THAT ALL THAT HEAR WILL LAUGH WITH ME. AND SHE SAID, WHO WOULD HAVE SAID UNTO ABRAHAM, THAT SARAH SHOULD HAVE GIVEN CHILDREN SUCK? FOR I HAVE BORN HIM A SON IN HIS OLD AGE AND THE CHILD GREW, AND WAS WEANED: AND ABRAHAM MADE A GREAT FEAST THE SAME DAY THAT ISAAC WAS WEANED." Genesis 21:1-8.

- THE CASTING OUT INTO THE COLD - HAGAR AND ISHMAEL BECOME OUTCASTS FROM THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL

SARAH SEES ISHMAEL MOCKING THE THREE OF THEM, ABRAHAM, ISAAC AND SARAH, AND SHE HAD THEM THROWN OUT.

"AND SARAH SAW (ISHMAEL), THE SON OF HAGAR, THE EGYPTIAN, WHICH SHE HAD BORN UNTO ABRAHAM, MOCKING. WHEREFORE SHE SAID UNTO ABRAHAM, CAST OUT THIS BONDWOMAN AND HER SON; FOR THE SON OF THIS BONDWOMAN SHALL NOT BE HEIR WITH MY SON, EVEN WITH ISAAC. AND THE THING WAS VERY GRIEVOUS IN ABRAHAM'S SIGHT, BECAUSE OF HIS SON. AND GOD SAID UNTO ABRAHAM, LET IT NOT BE GRIEVOUS IN THY SIGHT BECAUSE OF THE LAD, AND BECAUSE OF THY BONDWOMAN; IN ALL THAT SARAH HATH SAID UNTO THEE, HEARKEN UNTO HER VOICE FOR IN ISAAC SHALL THY SEED BE CALLED. AND ALSO OF THE SON OF THE BONDWOMAN WILL I MAKE A NATION, BECAUSE HE IS THY SEED. AND ABRAHAM ROSE UP EARLY IN THE MORNING, AND TOOK BREAD, AND A BOTTLE OF WATER, AND GAVE IT UNTO HAGAR, PUTTING IT ON HER SHOULDER, AND THE CHILD, AND SENT HER AWAY; AND SHE DEPARTED, AND WANDERED IN THE WILDERNESS OF BEERSHEBA." Genesis 21:9-14.

THE MERGING OF GOG (THE REUBENITES) WITH THE HAGARITES AND ISHMAELITES, DESCENDANTS OF HAGAR AND HER SON, ISHMAEL, THE FORERUNNERS OF ISLAM

THE ORIGIN OF "GOG"

According to 1st Chronicles Ch. 5 Gog was the grandson of Reuben, the oldest son of Jacob (or Israel). Reuben, the oldest son of Jacob (or Israel) was the eldest of the twelve tribes. Gog's grandfather, Reuben, the oldest son of Jacob (or Israel), according to Genesis 36:22, "went and laid with Bilhab, his father's concubine: and Israel (Jacob) heard it." 1st Chronicles tells us what became of Reuben. "Forasmuch as he defiled his father's (Jacob's) bed, his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph, the son of Israel." "Dwelling eastward upon entering the wilderness from the River Euphrates, because their cattle were multiplied in the land of Gilead, in the days of Saul," Gog and his family, who were the descendants of Reuben, "made war with the Hagarites," the family of Ishmael. Here, they dwelt throughout all the east land of Gilead, territory today that is western Iraq. "They were valiant men, able to bear buckler and sword, and to shoot the bow, and skillful in war, were four and forty thousand seven hundreds and threescore, that went out to war." 1st Chronicles 5:18. "And they (Gog) were helped against them (the

Hagarites), who were delivered into their hand, and all that were with them: for they cried to God in the battle, and He was intreated of them; because they put their trust in Him." At that point, according to scripture, God was with Gog, "because the war was of God." 1st Chronicles Ch. 5. "Many fell down, slain, and they took away cattle; of their camels fifty thousand, and of sheep two hundred and fifty thousand, and of asses two thousand, and of men an hundred thousand." 1st Chronicles 5:21, 22. The Hagarites fell into Gog's hands.

But, listen now, what took place with Gog, the grandson of Reuben, who had defiled his father's (Jacob's) bed. "And they transgressed against the God of their fathers, and went a whoring after the gods of the people of the land whom God destroyed before them." "And they were carried away, etc." 1st Chronicles 5:25-26. Here, they (Gog) were visibly separated from the other tribes, to continue with "the gods of the people of the land." Here, he would marry into the camps of the Hagarites (Ishmaelites) where their children, like the Ashdods, "spake half in the speech of the Hagarites, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people." Going a whoring after the gods of the people of the land, Gog became involved and assimilated with the Hagarites. It was God's purpose not to keep them (Gog), with the other twelve tribes at that point, but in Revelation 20:9, it tells us what Gog will do to Israel and His saints at the last day in which we are now living. Gog fell and lost his identity with the twelve tribes of Israel in this manner. Gog was of the world, the Anti-Christ. "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, GOG and MAGOG, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth! and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: (Jerusalem); AND FIRE CAME DOWN FROM GOD OUT OF HEAVEN AND DEVOURED THEM." (Revelation 20:7-9.)

GOG'S RELIGION, ISLAM COMES INTO PLACE, AND CONTINUES TO THE PRESENT TIME WITH ENMITY AGAINST ISRAEL.

It is according to authentic history, in the year (approximately) of 610 A.D. when God gave the descendants of Ishmael (Gog) a religion. In nature of characteristic, it was monotheistic (the doctrine of belief that there is only one God), the same as God had given Abraham only a few years earlier. Being counterfeit in make up, it compares so favorably in many ways to the same faith, truth and doctrine that God gave Abraham to believe. ISLAM (pronounced IHS luhm or Ihs LAHM) is the name given to the religion preached by the Prophet Muham-

mad in the A.D. 600's. Muhammad was an Arab, a family descendent of Abraham, Ishmael and Gog, who was born in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, about 570 A.D. He believed he had been sent to warn and guide his people and to call them to worship who he called God (ALLAH). All of the Ayatollahs (his priests) in his so-called spiritual sense have descended from him ever since. Muhammad preached there is only one God and that he, Muhammad, was God's messenger. Those who believe in the one God and accept Muhammad as His messenger are called MUSLIMS. Muslim is an Arabic word that means one who submits (to God). Islam is Arabic for submission. Westerners often call Islam Muhammadanism and its followers Muhammadans. Muslims feel these terms give the incorrect impression that Muslims worship Muhammad. Islam is one of the world's largest religions.

Mecca is the holiest city of Islam, the religion of all the Muslims. It lies today in western Saudi Arabia in a dry, barren valley surrounded by desolate hills and mountains.

This city is the birthplace of the Muslim Prophet, Muhammad, the founder of Islam. It also is the site of the Kaaba, the shrine all Muslims face when they pray.

Only Muslims may enter Mecca, which Islam considers to be a sacred city. Islam requires every Muslim everywhere to make the hajj (a pilgrimage to Mecca) at least once in a lifetime if he or she is able to do so. Muhammad (pronounced moo HAM uhd) was the founder, as stated above, of the Islamic religion. He is called the Prophet of Islam, and his followers are called Muslims. The name Muhammad means Praised One. He was born A.D. 570(?) and died in A.D. 632. All Muslims believe he completed the sacred teachings of such earlier prophets as their forefather, Abraham, including Moses and Jesus. Muslims respect Muhammad, but they do not worship him.

Kaaba, the site of The Great Mosque in Mecca and center of worship for all Muslims, contains the Black Stone, which Muslims believe was sent from Heaven by Allah (God), whom they steadfastly worship.

Today, the largest Muslim communities exist in the Middle East, the birthplace and nativity of Ishmael (and his half brother, Isaac), North Africa, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, and Soviet Union. All Muslims are united by the faith of Islam, which forms a common bond of culture among them. From the very start of this religion (which is called "Gog" in the New Testament), they start and carry out to this very moment what is called JIHAD (holy war), which is what we know now as "TERRORISM". Shooting down of airliners, blowing them out of the sky, crashing them into tall, world-high skyscrapers, hijacking airlines and ships at sea, taking over embassies with hostages in foreign lands and

countries are just a few examples of JIHAD (holy war) that fights for and defends the principles of Islamism. This work against Israel today by Saddam Hussein and his cohorts has just begun, and will terminate in the fulfillment of the Prophecy contained in Ezekiel chapters 38, 39 and 40. Let us keep clearly in mind that TERRORISM —JIHAD (holy war) had its origin about 4,000 years ago when the scripture defined the nature and characteristics of a man called ISHMAEL, "AND HE WILL BE A WILDMAN: HIS HAND WILL BE AGAINST EVERY MAN, AND EVERY MAN'S HAND AGAINST HIM: AND HE SHALL DWELL IN THE PRESENCE OF ALL HIS BRETHREN." Genesis 16:11-12. "AND HE DWELT IN THE WILDERNESS AND BECAME AN ARCHER." Genesis 21:20. From that day until this day with their JIHAD (holy war), they are sharpshooters in the strictest sense of the word against anything and everything which they feel is in their way, and, as prophecy is now bringing it to pass, ISRAEL fills that capacity and is their obstacle at this time.

They kidnap, hijack, kill, murder, bludgeon and stone to death anyone in their way, means to accomplish their ends. This hatred involves the United States where Israel is involved with them, and because of the USA's support in Israel's behalf as a people and as a nation.

Let us say just a little more about Allah. It is the Arabic name for the Supreme Being of the religion of (Gog) Islam, the religion of the Ishmaelites, the Hagarites, and all those Middle East countries where the conflict and persecution is now going on against the country called Israel, reestablished there again on May 14, 1948, after a period of 2,000 years in exile, so to speak. The word Allah is a compound of al (the) and Ilah (god). It denotes the Supreme Being in the Koran, which is to Muslims what the scriptures of the Bible are to those who believe in Christ and the Jews. Muslims regularly repeat in their worship of Allah the creed: "There is no god but Allah; and Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah." This is always said as a part of their worship during their meeting periods when called from the mineret, (high, pointed tower) situated in the cities and towns where they live, and are called to worship in the Mosque, the same thing known among us as church buildings, meeting houses, etc.

Both Israel on the one hand, and the Arab Nations (Syria, Iraq, Jordan and Iran), on the other hand, are today claiming land rights or ownership in what was known as the Land of Canaan, 4,000 years ago (and today known as Lebanon or Palestine) from their forefather (or forebear) Abraham, for this same number of years. Confusion over these land rights and privileges between these two nations, Israel and Islam (or Gog), brings on this "enmity" with their respective religions being diametrically opposed to each other. Their passions and feelings become greatly violent, living together in the

Gaza Strip and West Bank areas, at times resulting on an average of about each month when open warfare, killings, kidnappings, murder and bloodshed, and all manner of violence, is made manifest constantly.

It is important to note that the nations which support and embrace the religion of Muhammad, called ISLAM, MUSLIM, MUHAMMADANISM, have always remained in one area, stationary, intact, per se, through the 4,000 years since its beginning (pointing to the older son in the narrative of the Prodigal Son), while the nation called ISRAEL from the time of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (or Israel) has changed its locales six different times, (pointing to the younger son's experience in the narrative of the Prodigal Son). The Muslims, descendants of Ishmael, have remained on the same land site for the past 4,000 years. This land area is today known as Iraq, Iran, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Jordan and many more. But this has not been the experience of the descendants of Abraham through Isaac, Jacob (or Israel) and Israel's twelve sons and their tribes respectively.

First Abraham went from the Ur of the Chaldees to Canaan. Then, his grandson, Jacob (or Israel) with his twelve sons traveled by reason of the famine in the land of Canaan to Egypt when Joseph was sold by his brothers into slavery, where they remained for four hundred years. God had told Abraham many years before, "Know of a surety that thy seed, shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them (the Egyptians); and they shall afflict them four hundred years." Genesis 15:13. Please notice in this promise, God did not include Ishmael and Esau as His seed. He makes no mention of them. He was, however, referring to Israel (or Jacob) and his seed, the twelve sons (or tribes). Then followed the Exodus, their deliverance from the Egyptian bondage when they returned with Moses and Aaron back into Canaan again, through the wilderness, their old homestead, given to Abraham by God several hundred of years previously. Afterwards came the time when the 10 northern tribes split away from the two tribes of Benjamin and Judah in the south. Then came the time in 587 or 586 B.C., when the Babylonians conquered the southern kingdom of Judah (Canaan), destroyed the temple in Jerusalem, and carried many of them back to Babylonia as prisoners, during the exile. Then in 539 B.C., King Cyrus of Persia (now Iran) conquered Babylonia, and he allowed them (the Jews) to return again to Judah the following year, again back to their old home in Canaan. Then came the appointed time of the first coming of Christ, 2,000 years ago, when "He came unto His own, and His own received him not, etc." John 1:11.

After the crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection of Christ in Jerusalem, after His own (the Jews)

had crucified Him, came the Romans in 10 A.D., who captured many of them, and they were carried, as prisoners, to Rome. At this point began their dissolution, temporarily as a nation, 2,000 years ago, scattered to the four corners of the earth until the German holocaust during World War II when Hitler murdered or killed six million of them in concentration camps, where they were gassed to death with poison gas, starved to death, and many were killed out right by firing squads with guns and rifles. Immediately after the end of World War II in August, 1945, they (the Jews) at once returned to their homeland, the same identical soil that God gave Abraham, about 4,000 years ago, and on May 14, 1948, established ISRAEL again on Canaan's land, when the surrounding Arab nations (Gog or Islam) immediately attacked the new state in the first of several Israeli-Arab wars in 1967 and 1973 with bloodshed continuing in violent manners or ways, including merciless deaths (killings and murders) in countless instances to this very hour and moment of time. So, we have seen the prophecy of God concerning ISRAEL fulfilled in the closing out of this, the third dispensation of time, as we approach the year 2,000 A.D., shortly. (Of the eight million Jews in the world at the beginning of World War II, Hitler killed six million, as indicated, leaving only two million in the world's population at the end of the war. Of the six million Jews who died, it has been said that at least one million were children.)

These tensions reach back to the enmity that originated in the split-up of the household of Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, Ishmael and Isaac from the very beginning of the second dispensation of time about 4,000 years ago, and is now coming to an end at the close of the third dispensation of time. There is nothing promised in the scriptures beyond the end of the third dispensation of time. Search the scriptures, and you will see. It does not seem that so many people do not sense, nor are they aware of what is impending in this unavoidable crisis of Biblical prophecy. I have been burdened to write and attempt to explain what I see and feel is now coming to pass, for all of it, every bit of it, is Biblically (or scripturally) related in the fulfillment of prophecy and the coming, final day. It all began in the morning of time in the Garden of Eden, in present day Iraq, and it is all ending up there.

ARE THE PROPHECIES CONTAINED IN EZEKIEL 39:11-16 AND REVELATION 11:7-10 ABOUT TO BE FULFILLED? IF NOT, WHEN?

EZEKIEL 39:11-16.

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto GOG a place there of graves IN ISRAEL, the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea: and it shall stop the noses of the passengers: and there shall they bury GOG and all his mul-

titude: and they shall call it The Valley of Hamongog.

"And seven months shall the HOUSE of ISRAEL be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land.

"Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them; and it shall be to them a renown the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord GOD.

"And they shall sever out men of continual employment, passing through the land to bury with the passengers those that remain upon the face of the earth, to cleanse it: after the end of the seven months shall they search.

"And the passengers that pass through the land, when any seeth a man's bone, then shall he set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamongog. And also the name of the city shall be Hamonah. Thus shall they cleanse the land."

REVELATION 11:6-10.

"These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with plagues, as often as they will."

"And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them and kill them.

"And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city (Jerusalem), which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

"And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

"And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

"And after three and an half days the Spirit of life from God entered into them, (Israel), and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them."

These prophecies, given to the prophet, Ezekiel, about 2,500 years ago, and to the apostle, John, in the Isle of Patmos about 2,000 years ago, portray and describe the horrific, awful scene that shall take place in the land of Israel at the culmination of the present conflict now transpiring there. (What the world saw on September 11, 2001, in the destruction of the World Trade Center towers in lower Manhattan, New York (City) will be a drop in the bucket by comparison.) Knowing that the prevailing, current encounter between the Arab (Muslim-Islamic) world with the nation of Israel has been continuously ongoing without any cessation or let up since the year 1948, when the State of Israel was redeclared after a dormant 2,000 year period, has constantly worsened with the perpetual failure, over and over again, of countless peace initiatives between

these two peoples who descended from (1st) Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and (2nd) Abraham, Ishmael and his descendants (Ishmael married an Egyptian by whom he had 12 sons and one daughter) who now make up the Arab-Muslim-Islamic world lends positive credence to the determined efforts by these enemies of Israel to completely destroy and annihilate them as a people and nation.

There can be no mistake that the scriptural reference from Ezekiel 39:11, "The East of the Sea", has unmistaken reference to that land area known today as Israel, east of the Mediterranean Sea. Herein is located those places commonly heard throughout all worldwide news broadcasts on a daily basis, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Bethlehem, Hebron and northern Israel, where these areas will be turned into a massive cemetery (or graveyard) with the stench of dead, rotting bodies so great that it will stop the noses of everyone. So many people will die from the administration of these weapons of mass destruction, to-wit: germ, (or bacteriological), chemical and nuclear warfare, that seven months (only a figurative time description) will be required in burying them.

Employees of secular companies and business corporations, doing business in the area, scripturally described as "men of continual employment" (Ezekiel 39:14) will have to be severed (stopped) from their work to bury the dead corpses and rotting human bodies and animals with the passengers visiting there at that time "to cleanse the land." The specified Biblical time required, "at the end of seven months", is a figurative, time description only required to bury this huge number of dead bodies. The residue of those corpses, unable to be buried at the time of death due to the excessive number, will consummate into bones and skeletons. Then, the buriers will place a sign (flag or marker) by them to return for "the buriers to bury it," at a later time.

The old city of Jerusalem will not escape. "These (the enemies of Israel) shall have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy; and have power over waters to turn them to blood (poisoning our pure water supplies), and to smite the earth with PLAGUES bacteriological, germ and chemical warfare), as often as they will." (Revelation 11:6). In Jerusalem "their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city" "where our Lord was crucified." (Revelation 11:8.) As in the cases of the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Hebron, Bethlehem and northern Israel, the dead bodies shall lie in the streets due to the excessive number dying there at the time, and Gog (Islam) today shall rejoice and make merry over them.

The good news is that Israel will survive this terrible, awful onslaught as recorded in Ezekiel 39:29, "for I have poured out my Spirit upon the

House of Israel," and from Revelation 11:11, "and after three days and an half the Spirit of Life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them."(See Revelation 11:11.)

SADDAM HUSSEIN PROPOSES THE COMPLETE DESTRUCTION AND ANNIHILATION OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL

Still in power a decade after a U.S.-led war destroyed much of his country's military and U.S.-backed sanctions crippled its economy, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein called on Wednesday, January 17, 2001, for Iraq to regain its place of prominence in the Arab world, and linked his country's travails and troubles with the Palestinian conflict with Israel.

In a taped, televised speech, Saddam appealed for Arabs to unite against foreign influence in the Middle East —including the liberation of all Palestinian lands from "the river to the sea" — an allusion to Israel's destruction and complete annihilation.

"After the immortal Mother of All Battles, and after the children, youth and the aged of Palestine, men and women, have faced the weapons of the United States and Zionism (the Jews) with stones... can fear find its way into the heart of any Arab?", the Iraqi president said. His address mingled religious imagery about the United States and other "followers of Satan" with prideful language about Iran's and his regime's — durability.

"The missiles and bombs of aggression hit everything material and suitable as targets for their weapons," Saddam said of the massive allied air bombardment that began 10 years ago, (in 1991), on Wednesday and it continued until land forces pushed Iraqi invaders out of Kuwait.

Despite this punishment, and the economic sanctions, which followed, "Iraq has remained, the people have remained, the army has remained," the Iraqi leader said. (End of quote).

Likewise, will still be found today in the charter of the Palestine Liberation Organization headed by Yassir Arafat and its Fatah organization, that "Israel has no right to exist, and there is cause for complete vanquishment of this nation from the face of the earth." (End of quote).

I am listing and describing below the names of biological weapons that now exist that pose possible administration upon the people of Israel, as well as the United States of America and Great Britain, when properly dispensed, will create a scenario equivalent to those given and described in Ezekiel 39:11 and Revelation 11. The first is:

(THE FIRST PLAGUE - Rev.11:6) ANTHRAX (A CURRENTLY USED BIOLOGICAL WEAPON)

Anthrax is a severe infectious

disease of human beings and of many animals. It is caused by a bacterium, the Bacillus anthracis. In people the disease starts as a carbuncle in the skin. But the germs also may be inhaled and infect the lungs. First symptoms are chills, fever, dysentery and convulsions, all flu-like symptoms, and hardly distinguishable at first from it. Death is early on when it reaches the lungs. Many historians today believe that anthrax was the fifth Plague of Egypt mentioned in the Bible in Exodus 9:3 as Murrain. God commanded Moses to tell Pharaoh "it thou refuse to let my people go that they may serve Me" "there shall be a very grievous Murrain." "And all the cattle of Egypt died." If this be true, anthrax has been here over 3,500 years, and is now killing people October 31, 2001, in New York, Florida and New Jersey by the hands of Gog and his terrorism.

OTHER POTENTIAL BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS (OR PLAGUES - Rev. 11:6) NOW CAUSING CONCERN BY OUR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF THE U.S.A., KNOWN TO BEING PURSUED BY THE CURRENT IRAQI REGIME AND SADDAM HUSSEIN.

SMALLPOX

There is no proven treatment, and the virus could race through a population before anybody realized it had been released. A recent simulation suggested that if terrorists infected 3,000 people in the Oklahoma bombing, it would grow into hundreds of thousands nationwide within 12 days. Smallpox is highly contagious.

After an incubation period of about 12 days — a time lag that would delay recognition of an attack — an infected person would notice high fever, fatigue and aches in the head and back. A rash would follow, eventually forming pus-filled, crusty lesions. Scabs would fall off after about three or four weeks. The USA's Department of Health and Human Services said on Tuesday, November 6, 2001, that a contract was in the making to purchase enough Smallpox vaccine to inoculate every American citizen. This would cost 1.9 billion dollars, the amount of the bioterrorism budget.

Most people would recover; maybe 30 percent would die.

PLAGUE

The very word inspires fear. There's no vaccine to prevent pneumonic plague, but several antibiotics are effective if given within a day of symptoms appearing.

The most common natural plague is bubonic, from the bite of infected fleas. Experts say terrorists most likely would put the bacteria into an aerosol (spray apparatus) to be inhaled, causing the pneumonic variety.

The first signs would show up one to six days after inhaling the bacteria. Victims would suffer fever, headache, weakness and coughing up blood. Pneumonia would progress over two to four days and

could kill; the fatality rate in untreated people would be very high.

HEMORRHAGIC FEVER

The Ebola virus is the best-known germ that causes this, killing 50 percent to 90 percent of people who fall ill. There is no proven treatment and no vaccine.

Symptoms vary. Two days to three weeks after exposure, victims can get sudden fevers, headaches and muscle aches. They may also have nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, chest pain, cough and internal and external bleeding.

The virus can spread through contact with blood or secretions.

A similar disease is caused by Marburg virus, which also has no known cure or vaccine. Another is Lassa fever! which can be treated early on with an antiviral drug.

BOTULISM

The botulinum toxin is the most poisonous substance known. Even the survivors would need prolonged intensive care. Doctors can counter a poisoning with antitoxin, but it has to be given quickly.

The toxin attacks the nervous system. It's produced by a bacterium, the same substance that causes about 200 cases of natural botulism every year in the United States, such as in food poisoning.

Exposed people would typically begin to feel symptoms within 12 to 72 hours. They would notice blurred vision, difficulty in speaking, droopy eyelids and muscle weakness that progresses from the shoulders down. Paralysis could make them stop breathing.

TULAREMIA

The tularemia bacterium is one of the most infectious known. It is treatable with antibiotics. Untreated, it could progress to respiratory failure, shock and death.

Many victims would get a fever within three days to two weeks. Chills, headache and general weakness also would appear. At first, it might look like an outbreak of flu.

Tularemia doesn't spread from person to person.

THE EMERGENCE OF OSAMA BIN LADEN IN THE WORLD OF TERRORISM; WHO IS HE?

Osama Bin Laden is now reported to be the most notorious advocate of a very potent, powerful strain of militant Islam that has been gaining popularity in the Muslim world for 30 years. He and his followers, extremists, want to reestablish the golden age of Muslim domination. "They regard their Taliban as a model for Islamic rule." Al Qaeda, the international organization for all terrorists world-wide, that is operated by Bin Laden's Taliban in Afghanistan, are committed to the destruction of Israel, America, and all allies who support the former.

Bin Laden is personally enraged by the American military present in Saudi Arabia. When the United States went to Saudi Arabia's de-

fense, after Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, he considered this the "greatest possible desecration" to the Islamic homeland. He is accused of being the sponsor of the bombing of our military facilities in Saudi Arabia, as well as the Embassies in Kenya, Tanzania, the destruction of the two World Trade Center Towers in New York City on September 11, 2001, as well as the current germ (biological warfare) of Anthrax in the USA at this time.

He hates the Jews, and he hates America for its support of Israel, the same as Saddam Hussein of Iraq and Yasser Arafat of Palestine (Israel). Bin Laden has no army bases to attack, and no air force or navy to engage in battle. They communicate over the Internet, so destroying their communications will be difficult. They operate in small cells or groups. They blend in well, going about their daily activities, while planning havoc. In a traditional war, the enemy wears uniforms, stands behind a flag, and operates units and instruments of war. They have none of these. They operate in small bands or individuals, strike quickly, then run and hide, sacrificing their own lives for their cause. They are fanatics. 4,000 years have not changed their disposition, manners, habits, occupation, government, or dress.

We close this article as we began with the Angel's, (Gabriel's) description to Abraham of his son Ishmael in Genesis 16:11-12,

"And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren." (How true this is today!)

There can be no better words to be found anywhere today that better describe the activities of Saddam Hussein, Yasser Arafat and Osama bin Laden, the direct, lineal descendants of Ishmael's mother, Hagar, the Egyptian handmaid of Sarah, wife of Abraham, as well as from Ishmael's wife, who also was an Egyptian. (See Genesis 21:21.) Absolute predestination is the fulfillment of Divine prophecy, and these things of which I have endeavored to write about in this article were foretold by the prophets and apostles thousands of years ago. There will never be any reconciliation between these two families, Israel and Islam, according to scripture. Will this crisis terminate in "The Valley of Hamongog," (Ezekiel 39:11, 15, 16) and "Armageddon," (Revelation 16:16.)?

The God of one is real, and the god of the other is false.

J. M. Mewborn

ECCLESIATES 8:6-7.

Because to every purpose there is time and judgment, therefore the misery of man is great upon him.

For he knoweth not that which shall be: for who can tell him when it shall be?

VOICES OF THE PAST

PRIDE IS HUMBLED

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The following incident is told as part of the unwritten traditional history of Elder John Leland:

During the latter part of his life Elder Leland traveled much over the country on preaching tours, on foot. On one occasion he had been warmly solicited in writing, by a widow lady, to visit the part of old Virginia in which she lived and preach, telling him to set his time and her house was at his service, both as a place of abode and also a place to hold his meeting. Mr. Leland replied to her by setting a day that he would preach at her residence at ten o'clock a.m. The lady was a wealthy planter, in Appomattox valley. She regarded herself as *one* of the most pious and exempliary persons to be found anywhere. She had been raised in the high circles of life and knew nothing about poverty, nor had ever associated with laboring classes. She was about thirty-five years of age and had been a widow two years, but knew nothing of the privations commonly attending the life of the widowed mother. She took much pains to appear pious, and her chief object in inviting Mr. Leland to preach at her house was, that she might make a display of wealth, and thus have the applause of her associates; not only to show her wealth, but her piety as well; so she went to great trouble and expense in preparing for the meeting. The appointment had been spread far and near, pressing solicitations had been sent to numerous friends to attend the meeting no expense or pains had been spared, not only to have the best and finest of everything, but to have everything in the very best of style.

On the evening preceeding the meeting several carriages had already arrived, to be in good time, and enjoy the hospitality of the hostess. About sunset Mr. Leland came up to the mansion on foot. The day was quite warm and dusty when he made his appearance. The walk had caused a free perspiration, which ran down his cheeks making roads in dust which had settled on his face during his day's work. He walked up to the door of the large stone mansion, and his rap was answered by a black servant, of whom he inquired for the landlady, the servant ran down the broad carpeted hall to a door, from which proceeded the sound of talking and laughing. In a very short time a lady, richly attired, made her appearance, walking briskly and lightly toward the door where Mr. Leland was standing. He had a fair view of her person, and at once read in her physiognomy and deportment something of her leading traits for character.

His intention had been to introduce himself, but before he had time

to speak, or before she was near enough for him to address her, she spoke in rather a harsh tone:

"Old man, what do you want here? I have *nothing* for beggars.

Mr. Leland, in a very soft and unassuming tone, said, "Please excuse me madam; I do not wish to beg for money, I am very tired from a long walk, and called to know if you would do me the kindness to allow me to stay under your roof during the night."

Viewing him hastily from head to foot, She very postively answered "No: I have company now, and tomorrow the Rev. Mr. Leland is to preach at my house; so I cannot take in poor stragglers."

Well, said Mr. Leland, I am too much fatigued to travel further tonight, will you allow me to stay in one of those cabins? Pointing to a row of negro houses, iust outside of the mansion yard.

After a moment or two of reflection she said, "Yes you may stay there with the negroes if you want to."

He bowed a very polite thank you, and turned toward the row of huts.

He proceeded to the furtherest one from the mansion before he found anyone to whom he could speak, to ask permission to stay, but came at last to the smallest, but neatest of all the huts, where he found seated at the door an old negress, who was fanning herself with the wing of a fowl. He spoke to her very gentle. "Good evening aunty."

His greeting was answered with, "Good evenin' mosta."

"Well aunty, said he, I have came to ask a very uncommon favor of you,"

"Bless de Lord, mosta, what can dat be, fo' please God, I'se got nuffin to give anyone?"

"I am very tired from walking all day, I called at the house of your mistress. But she says she has no room for me in this great house. I am too fatigued to go further, and so I have come to see if you can allow me a shelter in your house.

"Bless de Lord, mosta I got no commodation for anyone; but 'fore a fellow mortal shall stay out doo's I lets 'em stay in my cabin so, ef da can put up wid my plain hut. Uncle Ben be in drectly, den he keep ye company while I fixes you sumpen to eat, for you looks as do you had not eat a morsel for a long time," at the same time pointing to a three-legged stool by the side of the door, saying, "set down dar and rest yourself, for you looks so wore out."

Mr. Leland took the seat as directed, saying at the same time, "I am sorry that I am compelled to put you to so much trouble as I have no money to pay you."

"Please God, mosta, Aunt Dilsey never charges anyone yit for sich 'commodations as I could give 'em; for God knows its poor enuff at best.

You say, mosta, you call on missus at de house dar, and she

can't take you in? Well you must cuse her, for she's looking for a mighty heap o' company tomorrow; dar's a great man to be dar tomorrow, what's gwin preach in her house, an a good manv folks done come a'ready an' heap mo' comin' tomorrow; so missus is mighty busy fixin ' for 'em. But here's Uncle Ben she continued, as an old gray headed negro came around the corner of the cabin, muttering to himself about the carelessness of some other negroes.

This old couple. Uncle Ben and Aunt Dilsey, as they were familiarly called by all who knew them, both black and white, were an old couple who, from age, had for a long time lived in a small but snug cabin at the far end of the row of huts occupied by the younger and more active slaves.

Although Uncle Ben was not required to do any labor, yet he voluntarly took a kind of supervision over the farm, stock, etc. When he saw Mr. Leland he stopped short and gave him a scrutinizing look, when Aunt Dilsey spoke, saying:

Uncle Ben, don't stare your eyes out at a stranger; dis ole gentleman was out traveling', and come to stay in our cabin, kase missus she can't let him stay dar, as she's got a heap o' company now."

"Well, said Uncle Ben, we's commanded dat if a stranger comes along we's got to take him in an give him sich as we got to set before him.

While Aunt Dilsey was preparing supper Mr. Leland learned much about the lady of the mansion from Uncle Ben; he learned, among other things, that they were a very religious family, but the hostess had been raised in the city of Richmond, and had imbibed all the fashionable ideas of religion, with but little of its true principles, and none of its humility. Soon after Mr. Leland had finished a very good, coarse supper, he told his host that he was very much fatigued from a very long day's walk, and would like to retire for the night and that he felt like he wished to return thanks to his Creator for the blessings of the day, and invoke his protection through the night; that if he would annoy them he would retire to some place out of doors,

"Bless God, said the old folks at the same time, we allers like prayin in our house, and neber goes to bed "thout one of us tries to pray."

Mr. Leland then took an old, wellworn Bible out of his little bundle, and read in a very solemn tone the one hundred and second Psalm. During the reading two blacks often said in a low voice, "Amen, bress de Lord." When the Psalm was ended Mr. Leland fell upon his knees, and poured out his feelings in such an outburst of reverential eloquence as was ever equaled, and never surpassed by mortal lips. His host and hostess were so affected by his reading and

prayer that they could do no more or say no more than to fix their eyes on their guest, as though they felt that he was something more than a mortal man. He retired to a clean little pallet in one corner of the cabin, where he soon fell asleep. When morning came he was up early. Aunt Dilsey soon had him a good repast, after which he seated himself to read telling hostess that he felt too much fatigued to travel, and if she was willing he would rest there until afternoon anyway, and then if he felt better he would go on his way.

Aunt Dilsey said. "Yes, mosta., stay jist as long as you want to; we be glade to have you be with us a fort-night, if you can put up with our fare."

Mr. Leland seated himself under a shady tree in the cabin yard, and with his Bible, waiting to see what the finality would be.

About nine o'clock everything was in hustle at the stone mansion; the servants were called in to dress in their very best. Carriages began to arrive by the dozens until the hall and every part of the large and elegant building was crowded to overflowing, but to their dismay no preacher had made his appearance, for the last carriage that came in sight had been scanned to get a glimpse of the minister. No one in the large congregation had ever seen him, but all had heard of him. So everyone was full of anxious expectation, supposing that when he came he would be drawn by two or four fine horses, driven by a servant in livery.

Ten o'clock passed, half past ten, eleven o'clock was announced by the clock on the wall, and no minister.

The company had by this time became restless, and were about to disperse, when Aunt Dilsey went to her mistress and said.

"Bress de Lord, missus, why don't you git dat ole man who stayed in our cabin last night to come to de door and pray 'fore de folks all go home; he prayed in our cabin las' night and dis mornin', 'fore God, in all my born days I nebber heard sich prayin' afore. He's sittin' right dar now, under de tall pine tree; and as de preacher's not cum, if you'll let him pray, I'll go right now and fetch him down."

The lady consulted with some of the company, the matter was talked of among the congregation when it was agreed to have the old straggler as they called him, come and pray before the congregation broke up.

So Aunt Dilsey went to where Mr. Leland was sitting, and said, 'Mosta,de folks all dispinted 'bout de preacher comin'; he am not cum, and da wants you to go down an' pray for 'em fore da all brakes up. Mosta I wants you to pray jis' like you did las' night."

Mr. Leland walked down to the front door and standing on the steps, repeated a short hymn by memory, sang and then engaged in

prayer: by the time his prayer was ended all eyes were fixed upon him with amazement.

He then remarked that as there seemed to be a disappointment, that if it would not be assuming too much, he would talk to them a few minutes, and as a foundation or starting-point, he would read a short passage from the word of truth, which they would find by reference to the thirteenth chapter and second verse of Hebrews: *"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for there by some have entertained angels unawares."* When he had spoke for twenty or thirty minutes the hostess, who had refused him the hospitality of her house the evening before, became so deeply affected that she ran and fell prostrate at the feet of Mr. Leland, and would, if he allowed her to do so, have washed his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. It was said that she was so overcome and affected that from that time forward she was a changed and different woman so much so that she threw off all her finery and ornamental dressing, and became an humble and plain Christian. Though she was a professor before, her whole deportment underwent a complete change. Her house became a place of divine worship where she delighted in making all, no matter how plain or how poor, as happy as kind attention could make them; in fact, it was said that if preference had to be given to any, it was always in favor of the poor and needy.

PSALM 33:1-5.

REJOICE in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright.

Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings.

Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise.

For the word of the LORD is right; and all his works are done in truth.

He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.

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Don & Sheryl Jackson, TX	7.00
Gray Hall, AL	7.00
Bill Poindexter, VA	5.00
George Blalock, NC	2.00

OBITUARIES

MEMORIAL FOR LILLIE CORDELLE COBB

On August 16, 2000, at the age of 93, God in his infinite wisdom called our dear sister in Christ to her heavenly home. She passed away at Maplewood Nursing Home in Reidsville, NC where she had been a resident for several years.

In recent months there has been a lot of sickness in our Church family, and a number of our dear Dan River church members have gone to be with their Lord and Savior. It is with much sadness that I attempt to write this obituary of yet another member.

Sister Cobb was a kind and gentle person and loved her church and church family dearly. When she was able, she attended church regularly, but for a long while due to her physical condition was unable to do so.

Sister Cobb was born on July 16, 1907 in Rockingham. County, NC. She was one of twelve children born to Irvin Cobb and Annie McKinney Cobb. Her early life was spent on the family farm.

Sister Cobb lived in Rockingham County her entire life. She was never married but was really devoted to her natural family. She wanted to be sure above everything else that family members were cared for adequately.

For years Sister Cobb was employed by Leinwand's Department Store in Reidsville and retired from this firm.

Sister Cobb joined Dan River Primitive Bapist Church November 26, 1944 and was active and at each meeting until her health became a factor. She had great compassion and love for her brothers and sisters in Christ, and was a devout believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace.

The funeral service for Sister Cobb was conducted at 2:00 PM August 18 2000 in the City Funeral home Chapel, Reidsville, NC with Elder Kenneth Key her pastor officiating. She was laid to rest in the Dan River church cemetery to await the coming of our Lord.

Survivors are brothers: Eugene R. Cobb, Robert Edward Cobb. Leonard Curtis Cobb, J. Brooks Cobb, and a sister, Ethel C. Shreve.

May God bless and be with this lovely family.

Written by request of
Dan River Church
John Collie Nov. 200l

ST. MATTHEW 5:10.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

EVA ELIZABETH HARLOW

Graveside services for Eva Elizabeth Harlow, 105, Kilgore, are scheduled for Tuesday, 2:00 P.M. at Rose Hill Cemetery with the Rev. James F. Craver officiating. Mrs. Harlow died Sunday night at her home. She was devoutly religious in the Baptist faith and read her bible daily for as long as she was able.

She is preceded in death by her husband Hela Andon, Mar. 6, 1949 and her daughter Martha Louise, July 16, 1995.

She was born Sept. 8, 1896, in Hopkins County, Texas near Como to Isaac and Martha Jane (Kennemer) Humphrey. She married Hela Andan Harlow of Pickton, Tx. July 7, 1912 and gave birth to a daughter, Martha Louise, Feb. 26, 1915. In 1945 the Harlows moved from Athens. Tx. to Kilgore, Tx. to be near their daughter.

Her survivors include nieces Martha Lou Jones and Jean Weeks.

Nephews C.L. Wilson, Dan Wilson, Charles F. Humphrey, Billy G. Humphrey and their progeny who span four generations.

She is also survived by her daughter's friend Bob Forsythe who has tended to and nursed her with assistance from LifeCare Home Nursing and LifeCare Hospice, since 1995.

If desired, donations may be made to:

Friends of LifeCare
Hospice Foundation
2020 Bill Owens Parkway,
Suite 100
Longview, Tx 75604

ST. JOHN, 15:1-4.

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

To Christ, the Lord, let every tongue
Its noblest tribute bring:
When he's the subject of the song,
Who can refuse to sing?

Survey the beauties of his face,
And on his glories dwell;
Think of the wonders of his grace,
And all his triumphs tell.

Majestic sweetness sits enthroned
Upon his awful brow;
His head with radient glories crowned,
His lips with grace o'erflow.

No mortal can with him compare
Among the sons of men:
Fairer he is than all the fair
That fill the heavenly train.

To him I owe life, and breath,
And all the joys I have:
He makes me triumph over death,
And saves me from the grave.

To heaven, the place of his abode,
He brings my weary feet;
Shows me the glories of my God,
And makes my joys complete.

Stennett.

POSTMASTER

Please send address changes to:

Signs of the Times
202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

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EDITORIAL

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God, speak ye comfortably unto Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. (Isa. Chap 40, vs. 1)

Elder R. H. Campbell

The above scripture was written by Isaiah the prophet when Israel was under the mosiacal law, everything was legal, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. There was no room for mercy nor tolerance, the law was written on the tables of stone and any infraction of the law brought the prescribed penalty, required by the law, for the offender. They lived in the constant fear of breaking the law and suffering the wrath of God because of these offenses, so the above scripture would not be referring to that particular period of time. Israel realized, from experience, their inability to keep the terms of the law, and therefore they lived under the constant pressure to keep all of the ordinances, and when you consider the vanity which man was created subject to, the weaknesses of the flesh and the perfection that was required of them, you could understand why there was no comfort under the law. The law, when present, does nothing for an individual as long as the terms of it are met, but just transgress any of the specific commandments and the full penalty is assessed without mercy, or compassion.

There was no comfort or peace in living under these terms and conditions, and yet, the prophet who lived in that time is writing of a time, somewhere in the future, when this law of sin and death would not be a threat unto them anymore, the warfare that they were waging would be accomplished for them and their iniquity would be atoned for in a way that the sacrifice of bullocks and goats could never do. He is writing

of a time when the law of the liberty of life in the Messiah would come and all of the pressures of the law of sin and death, that they are so familiar with, would have no more dominion over them. Then they could live without the fear of the consequences of breaking the law, and it would indeed be a time of comfort unto them.

The natural man is made to wonder how that the prophet, who only knew life in times such as these, could make such a prophecy. He had no prior knowledge, or experience from which he could draw to write of the time of which he is prophesying; but he is speaking as did all of the prophets, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and his words are sure and certain. The apostle Peter explains it this way, (2 Peter Chap 1, vs. 21) ***"For the prophesy came not in old times by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."*** It takes the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, in the day and age of which the prophet was speaking, for his children in that day, to understand these prophesies and they understand and believe them, because they have experienced them. It is as a "gospel song" that I heard the other day which said, "Amazing Grace was just a song, until applied to me." Now just think about that for a moment. I wonder if the author of that song fully realized the truth of the sentiment contained in that song. It is only when one is given knowledge of these things being applied to them, that they take on a new and very special meaning to them, and they praise Him from whom all blessings flow for this unspeakable, and unexpected gift.

The apostle Peter also wrote, concerning the prophets who prophesied of the glories that were to be revealed in that day, that day being the day of Jesus Christ, (1 Peter Chap 1, vs. 10-11) ***"Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto us: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified before hand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."*** This indicates that the communication is between the children of God in different ages, but the line of communication is via the Holy Ghost. It is not the natural wisdom of man in one age, to the natural wisdom of man in another age; but rather from an inspired writer, under the law, to the inspired reader in the gospel generation. The nation of Israel, as a people, did not recognize the Messiah when he came although the prophets had given them enumerable evidences of what he would do when he came. They were looking with their natural eyes, for a natural restoration of the glory of Israel as it had been in former days, not by the eyes of faith, and therefore they could not see the truth, even when it was right there before them. They were still wresting the

scriptures, engraved on the tables of stone which was directed to the natural man, and they missed completely the inspired spiritual truth contained in the prophesies because to understand them required a discerning Spirit, and this is something which the man in the flesh does not possess. These truths do not conform to the laws of nature, which are the only laws and the only reasoning powers that the natural man has.

Jesus came, under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, making the only sacrifice that could atone for their sins, under the law, and then took the law out of the way so that it had no more dominion over those who were born of the Spirit, in the days following. When the apostle Paul wrote. (Rom. Chap 8, vs. 3) ***"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."*** He is saying, that Jesus condemned sin, as a characteristic of the fleshly man, and thereafter it had no more dominion over the new creature in Christ who was born again, and who could see and understand the things of the spiritual kingdom because of the faith received, as a gift of God. Sin is still very much a characteristic of the fleshly creature, but this is not the ones to whom the scriptures are addressed under the new covenant.

The new covenant is addressed to those to whom the apostle Paul is writing in (Heb. Chap. 8, vs 10) ***"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least to the greatest."*** This new covenant is with the ones into whose hearts and minds the Lord has placed the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, and to no one else. There are only two manner of people in this world since the beginning of time: those who were chosen in Christ Jesus, before the foundation of the world, and those who were not. Man in nature may be in any of the churches or denominations that exist in the world, but salvation is strictly by the election of grace; and these and these alone are members of the Church of Christ, that mystical body which was predestinated unto the adoption of children in Christ according to the good pleasure of his will.

These blessed individuals are the ones who have been given the gift of faith, the ones to whom the

comfort, of which Isaiah is referring to in the above scripture is given, when he says, cry unto Jerusalem that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. There will be no more striving under the law, in order to receive the blessings promised by the law, to avoid the wrath of a just and holy God; they instead are blessed to rest from their labors and are given an earnest expectation that their warfare has indeed been accomplished and their iniquity has been pardoned.

O' the joy and peace that floods the heart and soul of these little ones when they first begin to realize this truth and the enormous implications of what has been done for them. They search the scriptures daily for more evidence in the travels of those who have been so blessed, in times past, and compare them with their experiences and weep for joy many times, when the scriptures, or a brother or sister relates their experience and tell them things that they have told no one, but which agree perfectly with their own travels. There is indeed a rest when as they are given to believe that everything that is required for their salvation has already been done, and cannot be altered or in any way changed.

Jesus begins to tell the apostles of these things, as he reveals unto them the things of the spiritual kingdom of heaven, which is at hand, and begins to reveal the days of which Isaiah is prophesying, (John Chap 14 vs. 16-17) *"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you and shall be in you."* This was after they had observed the communion service, and the washing of the disciples feet, which was Jesus's last official act prior to his death; and when he was on the cross, just before he died he said, it is finished. He is referring to his own sacrifice, the official seal of the terms of both the old and the new covenants. Under the old covenant, his death atoned for the sins of his elect, and under the new covenant he took the law out of the way so that they do not live, under a law of sin and death, but rather, the law of the liberty of life which has made them free from the law of sin and death.

He begins to stress the spirituality of this new covenant, which is not as the old covenant, to the natural man, but rather to the new Creature in Christ, and as Paul later wrote when he spake of the new covenant, he said God would put the law into their minds and write them in their heart, and they would no longer need a priest or anyone else to teach them the things of this new covenant, they would be reconciled unto God by the indwelling of the Spirit in their hearts.

Jesus went on to say, (John Chap 14, vs. 26-27) ***"But the comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have shown you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."*** Surely this is the message of comfort that Isaiah was referring to in the subject scripture, when he says speak ye comfortably unto Jerusalem, cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, Jesus is telling them to not be troubled or afraid, but rather trust in him by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

This was all said and done immediately after the apostles had observed the Passover with Jesus and he had washed their feet, (signifying a cleansing of their way, their feet representing the path that they were to follow in the future). He ceased to talk of the past, the time under the law and the strife contained in the keeping of the law and concentrated his remarks on the future, the day of grace, when they would be free from the mosiacial law of bondage. He no longer directed his teaching to the past, but rather began to tell them of the new covenant and all that it would mean to them.

Jesus, told the apostles, (Matt. Chap 14, vs. 6) ***"I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."*** And then again, God, confirmed this same truth in (Matt. Chap 17, vs 4-5) ***"Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him."*** In other words, Jesus then and God now, is telling them to forget about the past and begin looking to the future, because the prophecies of the old testament are being fulfilled in your lifetime, and as it is written in (vs 8,) it says that after this vision, on the mount of transfiguration, when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only. The time of the law and prophets had passed and they were commanded to look unto Jesus for salvation, in time and in eternity.

Jesus said, (John Chap 14, vs. 16-17) ***"And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."*** This is the beginning of the new cov-

enant era, the time in which the Holy Ghost came on the scene as the reigning entity of the Godhead, the time in which it would indwell man and would lead them, in a manner that it had not done previously. Of course; God the Father sent Jesus Christ into the world, and then Jesus sent the Holy Ghost but the presence of them all are experienced, under the new covenant, in the lives of the saints of God via the Holy Ghost; as is recorded in Jesus's own words, (John Chap 8, vs. 37-38-39) (vs,37) ***"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. (vs,38) He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (vs,39) But this spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet crucified."*** or, (Joel Chap. 2, vs 28) ***"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions and the Apostle Peter said, speaking of this being fulfilled on the day of Pentecost,"*** (Acts Chap 2, vs 16), ***"But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel:"*** and again, Paul said, (Rom. chap 8, vs. 14) ***"For as many as are lead by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."***

You will notice that in the old testament when the Jews were lead or directed by the spirit, the word spirit is always lower case letters, but in the New Testament, the word Spirit begins with a capital letter whenever it is referring to the, Holy Spirit, as an entity, not as a spirit from God. A spirit from God dealt with the Jews under the law, gave Samson Strength, Solomon wisdom and Daniel the ability to interpret dreams etc, but it did not indwell them as it is to do now, and beginning on the day of Pentecost. The, Holy Spirit, is that which quickens the children of God and makes them a new creature in Christ; it becomes part of them and is never taken from them in this life and is reunited with them again in the resurrection.

This is why Paul wrote in (John Chap 8, vs. 1) ***"There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."*** Sin still has dominion over the old man, as Paul testified , (Rom. Chap 7, vs. 16 and 22-23) (16)***"For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that I do not, but what I hate, that I do. (22-23), I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."*** The old man is

still with him and is still subject to the law of sin and death, but the new man delights in the law of God which is written in his heart. With this cross to bear, Paul cries, ***"O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from this body of death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with my mind (the new man) I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh (the old man) the law of sin."*** He realizes the two entities within his being and his faith is that the law of God will prevail and deliver him, from the law of sin and death, at the appointed time.

There is certainly comfort and peace when one is made to realize that he is in this condition as described by the apostle Paul: it does not mean that he will have no troubles in this life, in the flesh, but in the Spirit he could say, even with all of the tribulation that Jesus told his disciples they would have, (Rom Chap 8, vs 28) ***"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose."*** They may struggle with the affairs of this life, but there is an inner peace that causes them to be reconciled to these afflictions, lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset them, and run with patience the race that is set before them, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of their faith. Looking unto Jesus in hope (earnest expectation) as Paul says (Rom. Chap 8, vs. 19) waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God. This inner peace and strength overshadows the natural frustrations and afflictions that they experience in life; and so much so that they are not worthy to even be compared to the joys that are experienced in the heart in the knowledge of the inheritance that is theirs to anticipate.

We believe that God is indeed blessing all of his children, in this day and age with this comfort and peace, those who are of that chosen generation, that royal priesthood, that holy people and that peculiar people, that they are made to marvel and wonder at the glory of it all render honor and praise to him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. As John said, (1 John Chap. 3, vs 3) ***"And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."***

The Holy Ghost, which indwells them and which reveals these things unto them, cannot fail for it carries with it all of the authority and integrity of the Godhead. In this knowledge the saints have a comfort and peace, and a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope that has been set before them and is an anchor to their soul, both sure and steadfast and enters into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is entered for them, even Jesus their high priest. The man in nature does not have this hope, in the flesh everything is fear-

ful and uncertain, and you can certainly see why, just by looking around you, there is no safety in the world according to nature. But to those who do know Him who is in control of all things, and whose faith makes them to believe that he is working all things together for their good, know and love him, whom they have not seen, naturally, but have seen by the eye of faith which is the substance of their hope for life and for salvation.

There is comfort indeed and peace indeed, to those who have experienced the realization that their warfare has been accomplished, and their iniquities have been pardoned, and she has received double for all their sins.

In bonds of love;
Elder Richard H. Campbell

NOTICE

For the first time in seventeen years we find it necessary to increase the subscription rates for the "Signs of the Times". Beginning March 1, 2002 the rates will be $15.00 for one year and $25.00 for two years, please respond accordingly.

Editors

CORRESPONDENCE

Jan. 15, 2002

Dear Elder Key,

I am a subscriber to the Signs of the Times. Many of my friends and brethren also subscribe to it. I enjoy reading it very much.

I am enclosing a copy of my wife's obituary, who passed away Nov. 19, 2001. If you think it is worthy to be published in The Signs, I will greatly appreciate it.

May God richly bless you and the other editors of the Signs.

In bonds of love I hope,
Elder W.M. Freeman

ST. JOHN 15:24-27

If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

VOICES OF THE PAST

CORRESPONDENCE.

TOUCHET, Wash., Nov., 1911.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:- My mind has been exercised of late upon the loving-kindness of our covenant-keeping God, and upon the wonders of his grace as manifested in the vessels of mercy.

Tonight my mind seems to have been carried, as was the mind of John upon the isle of Patmos, when he was blessed to behold the wonders of divine grace,and to hear and understand the glories of the Alpha and the Omega. Some of these wonders which come to my mind I would like to tell to the tempest-tossed souls, not because they do not know them, but because they do know them.

First, I want to say that we must know the truth before we can tell the truth, and if we have not the discernment between truth and error, one is as good to us as the other. If we have no vision to discern, the night is to us as bright as the day. Jesus in all his teaching ever said, *"Watch," "Take heed,"* and the apostles ever admonished the saints to watchfulness, and to take heed to the doctrine, and to continue in the things which they had been taught. Now my mind has been called to the doctrine of our God and Savior. There are as many doctrines in the world as there are lords and gods, and the apostle tells us that there are many. Moses said that His doctrine should drop as the rain, and his speech distill as the dew upon the tender grass.

We look for the fulfillment of all such declarations and promises, and when we see them demonstrated the effect in us is as the rain and dew upon the tender herb.

The people of God are described in the word as an afflicted and poor people. The doctrine of God has distilled as the dew in their hearts and minds; this they know and because of this they are made to cry for mercy and to say, *"By the grace of God I am what I am."* Now, being helpless people, they are the characters in whom God displays his strength. I could tonight, if time and space would permit, bring an innumerable cloud of witnesses in whom God has shown and is showing his power, but in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established. To Abraham and Sarah the promise was made, and so far as nature was concerned there could be no hope of its fulfillment, but the doctrine of God to them was, It shall be, and so, barren though Sarah was, when the fullness of time had come the doctrine began to drop as the rain, and the barren became fruitful, and in the extremity of that seed in Egypt we see the doctrine of God led them safely from under the yoke.

In the affliction of Job, so that he became a reproach to his wife to

the extent that she bade him curse God and die, the doctrine of God was displayed, and Job could say, "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" And Job also said, ***"When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."*** These expressions were the fruit of the doctrine of God. Jesus said, By their fruit ye shall know them. But let us notice a little further in Job's case. I feel tonight how applicable is this lesson to ourselves. It seems to me that in order to know Job and his afflictions, we must be partakers of the sufferings of Christ.

While his friends professed to know more of the suffering of Job and of its cause than did Job himself, their own speech betrayed them. Let us notice what they told Job of the cause of his affliction.

Even now when souls are afflicted and clothed with sackcloth, similar things are said to them. O dear brethren, do you know what the plague of that dread disease is? How true the words of Job, My complaint is bitter; my stroke is heavier than my groaning. Today, when it seemed that I could not bear my stroke any longer, my mind was called back to this wonderful display of the doctrine of God. Job's friends told him to change his course of life and become acquainted with God, and thereby good should come to him. It seems to me that if our brethren who advocate ***"conditional time salvation"*** had felt the stroke as Job did, they could not say any longer that God has given us eternal salvation and then left us to accept or reject here the joys of that salvation. Job said of his friends that they were miserable comforters, and the Lord said that they had not spoken the thing that was right concerning him as his servant Job had.

Notice what they promised Job if he would only turn his course. It was silver and gold and prosperity in this life, and many such things. I do not think, more, I know that these things did not distress Job at that time. His soul, his heart, was afflicted. What is all the gold of Ophir, and the cattle upon a thousand hills, to the soul that is afflicted it is all vanity and vexation of spirit. We are not purchased with such corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ. So Job could say, ***"O that I knew where I might find him!"*** and, like Job, how we long for him, and we go forward, and he is not there, and backward, and we fail to find him, and on the left and the right, where he doth work, and we cannot find him.

"Like one alone I seem to be;
O is there any one like me?"

Yes, dear soul, Job was like you. Daniel in the den of lions is your brother. The poor man that fell among thieves is a near kinsman, and upon such the doctrine of God doth drop as the rain and distill as

the dew, to the extent that it publishes the name of the Lord; it declares that he is of one mind, and none can turn him. What his soul desires, that he does; he rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. He it is who has created us in Christ Jesus unto good works, which he before ordained that we should walk in them. Bless his holy name for all his promises. While in this life we shall have tribulation, but in him we shall have peace. He said, ***"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you."*** How sweet to rest in the glorious doctrine of God our Savior. He Is a very present help in every time of need. I feel that his doctrine is distilling in my soul tonight while I am bound here, as it were, in prison, and cannot meet with his dear saints. I know and feel that the day is close at hand when I will be released and be permitted to meet and dwell with the dear saints, and see Jesus as he is and be like him. This hope is predicated upon the grace of a merciful God. It seems most strange to me to hear one who claims to be an Old School Baptist say, O do not preach so much doctrine, but teach and exhort to practical godliness. But what is practical godliness. It is the fruit of the Spirit.

Jesus said, The Spirit shall take of the things of mine, and show them unto you. He shall guide you in the way of all truth. They are led by the Spirit of God. Practical christianity is the result of this leading of the Spirit. This is what Moses called the doctrine which should drop as the rain and distill as the dew, and out of the dropping of the doctrine grows up every virtue of practical godliness. And without me," said Jesus, ***"ye can do nothing."*** So he is the Rock, and his work is perfect. Let us now notice the publican. Let us see his contrite and helpless spirit, and hear the fervent prayer that fell from his lips. He could not so much as lift his eyes to heaven. Is this your condition? Then you can fellowship him.

You can sup with him and he with you, and if so, you can testify to the doctrine of God; for his doctrine is that they who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled, and they that seek shall find.

Therefore a word to the character in the way of exhortation is profitable. Such exhortation is fraught with the doctrine of God. To such ones I would say, ***"Be of good cheer."*** As the servant of Abraham began to bedeck Rebecca with the jewels of his master, so we, when we find the Rebeccas, draw from the storehouse of doctrine the precious promises of God, and apply them experimentally, and such an one will answer as did Rebecca, I will go. Hence the ability of the will and the strength to go are of the Spirit manifest in the experience of the souls of his chosen ones. Praise him, O my soul. Praise him with all thy powers. This is practical godliness.

Next I will notice the man who

went from Jerusalem to Jericho, who fell among thieves, and they stripped him, and wounded him and left him half dead. Where is there an exhortation aside from the doctrine that would help this poor man is no exception to the rest of the children of God; he was only a representative character The priest and Levite both saw him and passed by. They were as powerless to help or comfort him as were Job's friends to do him good. All they had to offer for relief was obedience to the law. The law could indeed show him how foolish he was for transgressing, but there was no aid in it for his wounds. So the priest and Levite passed by. Hence all our hope for relief through the deeds of the law perished from us in time of need.

But when the doctrine of God began to fall as the gentle rain there was refreshing indeed. The good Samaritan in the parable was provided with grace and truth, and he had compassion; he poured in the doctrine (oil) and dressed the wounds in his tender mercy, and placed the poor man upon his own beast, representing the sovereignty of God, and took him to the inn, which I think represents the church, and bade them care for him, and promised that he would pay all the cost. We all often wonder how the church can bear with us. There is but one cause, and that is, Jesus pays for all the trouble of his people. *"If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the Word of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin,"* It is a sad thing to see church members become negligent about attending stated meetings, and we feel sad, yet there is nothing that we can do to help them. I do not condemn my brethren as some do, but my sympathy goes out to such, for I know that they are in a cold and lifeless state, and I know that the doctrine of God is the only thing that can reach such a case.

Nothing but a shower of divine grace can revive the withered plants. When I can feel and realize that all things work together for good to them that are called, and who are taught of God, whether at home or abroad, whether on the land or on the sea, or even in the flames, then I know that nothing can harm them. The doctrine is the shield. *"I, I am thy God, and will still give thee aid."* Even down to old age all his people shall prove his sovereign love. It is not all who are good and obedient, but all his people. They are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which is before ordained that they should walk in them. I believe that all these characters whom I have named were working in these good works, while clothed in sackcloth and sitting in dust and ashes; while in the den of lions or in the fiery furnace; while so humiliated that they could not look up to heaven, and while falling among thieves. Some of our breth-

ren say that our God predestinated all the good things, but that with the evil things he has had nothing to do. They say that all the good things work together for good to the saints but that evil things do not, and they claim to be wise enough to tell what is good and what is evil. Paul said, *"No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."* I believe that our God never has failed to exercise one of his when he has chosen so to do.I must close. This is the first I have tried to write for a long time, and this letter must show to you the unsettled condition that my mind has been in for a long time. May peace, mercy and truth rest upon the household of faith for Christ's sake. Pray for me. If a saint and the least of all.

Your brother,
J. T. BARNES.

PROVERBS 23:24-26.

The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice: and he that begetteth a wise child shall have joy of him.

Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoice.

My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.

CHURCHES AND ASSOCIATIONS

Brother J. P. Baker, of Moody, Ark., some little time ago wrote us, asking us some questions which he desired answered through the SIGNS concerning the relations between churches and associations. His letter was dated Nov. 18th, 1911. Our brother does not speak of any trouble over this matter in his section, but asks for information, and because be desires our views upon the questions which he proposes. We are aware that in some sections of the country there have been differences with regard to the questions which our brother has propounded, and in what we may write now we do not desire to attempt taking part in controversy in any particular section of the country which may exist between churches or brethren. We ought in any such case not to attempt resolving their difficulties, but still it seems right to speak in a general way, and to strive to present some general principles with regard to this matter.

First, we will say that churches, as we know from the Scriptures, were commanded to be organized, for the glory of God and the advantage of the children of God, in the localities where they may live. The apostles of the Lamb who went forth at his command and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, everywhere that they found believers, established churches, and, in the order established among those churches,

we find pastors and deacons and elders named, each of them having certain duties assigned to them, and we read in all the epistles, except those addressed to individuals, that they were written to the church in such and such a place, or to the churches in a certain portion of the country. The epistles were not addressed to individuals, but to the church, as, for instance, at Rome, or Corinth, or Ephesus, or the churches in Galatia, Asia, etc. But we do not need to argue for the establishment of churches from the Scriptures, no one among our people will dispute this truth.

Second, it seems manifest that there could not have been such bodies of the people of God as associations until after the organization of churches. It is further true that in all the New Testament we do not find any example of or any command for churches to organize themselves into associations, or in any other general body. Associations are not commanded of the Lord, as churches are commanded of him, in the Scriptures. This certainly must be admitted by all, yet this is not saying that general assemblies of the brethren from different parts of the country, whether they are called associations or by some other name, are wrong or displeasing to God. There are many things which are not specially commanded which yet are not contrary to the spirit or the letter of the word. There is nothing said, for instance, whether the Lord's supper shall be observed once a year or every day in the year, this is left to the convenience of the churches. Whether the churches shall meet for worship from day to day, or once a week, or once a month, must be left to the judgment of each church. No rule is laid down in the Bible concerning this, save the exhortation of the apostle: *"Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is."* It is manifest that there must be some places appointed for meeting for the worship of God, or for attending to the affairs of the churches, but that also is left to the wisdom and convenience of the different churches.

Third, there are many references in the New Testament to correspondence among brethren and churches. The epistles themselves, all of them, show that letters were written by the ministers of the Lord to the different churches, and in those letters messages were sent from different families, individuals and churches to other individuals and churches. Letters of commendation were given to some as they went among other churches, and there were conferences among brethren over disputed questions, which are named at least once in the New Testament. It would seem to be only that which ought to be expected, that brethren in one section of the country should desire to hear of the welfare of those in other places. The time was one of sore trials, persecutions and distresses. Those who loved God and their breth-

ren in Christ would greatly long after all others of like precious faith. It would be only reasonable to suppose that means would be taken by which they should hear from each other as often as possible, for the edification, comfort and encouragement of all. This would not only not be wrong, but it would command the blessing of God; his own Spirit in their hearts would lead them to this desire for mutual helpfulness among all who love God. This correspondence was both by letter and by messengers. Sometimes messengers carried letters from one place to another.

The subject matter of these letters is named at least once by the apostle. It was that there might he a general contribution among all the churches to the poor saints which were at Jerusalem, and in all such communications mutual love would come forth expressions of good will and of desire for the mercies of God to be upon those to whom they wrote.

There would also be a stirring up of the pure mind of the writer to speak of the glorious salvation of the Lord, with all the principles of doctrine involved in that salvation. That this was so, a careful reading of the New Testament will at once show.

Fourth, it is easy to see how, after a time, it would seem good to all those who had been profited and edified by this correspondence that they should establish means of keeping up this correspondence statedly or regularly, and first churches in some one section of country would make this arrangement among themselves, and then these clusters of churches would desire and establish a similar correspondence with other clusters of churches, and to the name "association there can he no objection. The word simply means that there is an associating together of those of like precious faith. The brethren in any one church who walk in love are associated together it is conceivable that this associating of brethren in churches might be perverted to wrong ends, so the association of churches may be perverted from its proper design to evil, but this is to be guarded against, whether in churches or in associations. We are not to throw church organizations aside because evil may spring up among them. So it is not needful that associations be rejected because acme one makes them a medium of wrong. It is only needful to be watchful unto prayer lest evil should creep into either churches or associations.

Fifth, the example of the apostles and early churches justifies correspondence among brethren and churches distant from each other, but this is what is justified by the example of the early churches, or by any teaching of the apostles Churches are not subordinate to associations, but associations are the creatures of the churches. Associations are not made up of gatherings of the churches, as churches,

even though all members of the churches be present in their gatherings, but the churches send messages and messengers to meet other messages and messengers from other churches at an appointed time and place, and all that these messengers have any right to is to report what they have been bidden to report by the church that sent them, and to receive the reports from other churches, sent also by their messengers. They cannot transact any business outside of this that can be binding upon their churches. Some question may arise while these brethren are together for discussion, and some messenger may have a decided view concerning it, and may so express himself, but it may be that not one among the church where he belongs thinks about this matter as he does, and so his words and actions cannot bind his church at home. His home church may have expressed their mind, and may have required him to lay their judgment before the rest, but this is as far as he can go. The only reason why messengers of the churches when met together have any right to appoint another such meeting next year, or next month, or at any future time, is that they have the mind of their churches, that this is advisable to be done. The agreement to meet next year is not the agreement of the special messengers met together, but the expression by them of the mind of the churches of which they are messengers. So justly fearful have our brethren been of seeming to bestow any authority upon associational gatherings to act for the churches, or in a sly way to bind the churches, that one of such meetings here in the east refused to call her annual meeting an association, but gave it the name of "The Corresponding Meeting of Virginia."

Sixth, with these somewhat lengthy general reflections, we will proceed to notice the special questions of our brother.

His first question is, "Can a church exist separate from associations, unions, conferences, advisory councils, &c." We reply that churches must have been in existence before they could appoint any such meetings, and there is no law in Zion to compel the appointment of such bodies as named by our brother.

Churches are not under any rightful compulsion to enter an association in the first place, neither are they under compulsion to remain members of such bodies if they deem it unadvisable to continue there. Of course we need not say that if any church anywhere desires to withdraw from any association she should be very careful lest her withdrawal be misunderstood to imply a want of fellowship for the rest of the churches.

His second question is, "If so, is there anywhere in the United States any churches who are thus made free by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ, and who by his order

keep house for him, each church being free and independent!" There are churches of which we have knowledge that are not members of any association, or which are not In correspondence with such meetings. We will name one instance within our personal knowledge. The body of churches formerly known as the Chemung Association, located mainly in the State of New York, by mutual consent many years ago dis solved their associational union. These churches are in full fellowship with each other and with the churches making up other associations, to the present day. We are informed that in the south there are quite a number of churches in different places who are not united with any association, anti who yet are in full union and fellowship with churches which do belong to such bodies.

His third question is, "Can a church be organized free from all others on apostolic truth alone or must it be the work of men!" It seems that the churches spoken of in the New Testament were set in order by the apostles, each one in its own locality. We do not read that members of the first church, that at Jerusalem, were called upon to help organize other churches. It seems clear to us that if in some part of the world, hundreds of miles away from any organized church, a body of men and women become believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, they have a right to unite together in one body, to appoint their pastor and deacons, and to set up their keeping of the house of the Lord in that place without any consultation with any church. As we have understood the custom of calling for messengers from other churches to sit with them in council, when such a body desires to be found walking in the order of the gospel as a church, did not arise out of the idea that it was essential to their right standing as a church, but rather that they might show to other churches that they were in fellowship with the truth, and so have the loving countenance of the churches. But no messengers may be called from other churches, and still this body of people would be a church of Jesus Christ. But if the right feeling exists among them they will want the confidence and regard of their fellow churches. Our brother next asks, "Is the church at Jerusalem to be regarded as the pattern of all gospel churches!" This is the substance of his question There is not the slightest doubt in our mind that the first gospel church ever organized on earth is the exact pattern by which all the churches of Christ are to be measured. Surely our heavenly Father would not have left this first church unguided by his Spirit when they were organized as a church, and we can follow no safer guide. No other church helped to establish this first church evidently, and it is nowhere said that this church claimed a right to superintend the formation of other churches.

In conclusion, the suggestion with which our brother closes his letter is most certainly true, viz., that there is no warrant for presbyteries, associations, synods, advisory councils, or organic unions of any kind among churches, to claim authority over the churches, either in insisting that they cannot be organized as gospel churches without their help, or that afterwards such bodies have any dominion over them. These have long been our views with regard to these questions, and we will leave them for the consideration of all who may read them.

Elder Chick

PSALM 19:1-5.

The heavens declare the glory of God; and firmament sheweth his handywork.

Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.

Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,

Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.

WHEN God worketh in us to will, and has not yet worked in us to do, we are in a sad, desolate, self-loathing condition. Our desires then are to do that which is good and absolutely free from selfishness and sin, but "how to perform that which is good we find not." It may give us a little rest from trouble to know that the apostle Paul expressed the same condition concerning himself, but it will not drive the trouble away. The things that we would do, that we have a desire for, we do not think we have any right to do. "We would but cannot pray;" "we would but cannot repent." We feel not merely that we cannot say the words of prayer, but the words, in our mouth, would not he prayers. It seems that it is not our right to pray; it is not our right and privilege to repent; it does not belong to us to be baptized. We have no right to the promises and commands and blessings of the gospel. These things belong to the Lord's people. But when the Lord ***"works in us to do,"*** then we realize a sacred mystery. We have done these things, and yet have not done them. They have been done in and for us. We take the works of Jesus as ours; we walk in them; they are wrought in us, and it now becomes a blessed privilege to work them out, to manifest them openly in our walk and conversation.

How wonderfully the apostle here comes along the road we have trodden, reminds us of our "conso-

lation in Christ" in past days, of our comfort of love and of the mercies of God, and before we are aware we seem to be telling ourselves how we ought to be of one mind, seek the things of others, and not our own, and so manifest in what we say and do the mind that was in Christ Jesus, which the same apostle says we have. (1 Cor. ii. 16.) The humility of the mind of Christ is spoken of as it is manifest in his coming under the law, making himself of no reputation, and becoming obedient to all its demands against his people, even to the shameful death of the cross. Then his exaltation above every name, so that everything in heaven and in earth and under the earth bows the knee in acknowledging allegiance to his name and obedience to his will.

What power the sun has in the heavens, and what power the heavens have over the earth. Oh, that this great, broad, high atmosphere of the truth of God might come down to me and enfold me, and enlighten and enrich my soul with its holy power. Oh, that my thoughts and desires might continually reach up into the infinite depths of those gospel heavens, even to the Sun of Righteousness, whose circuit is from one end of the heavens to the other, and whose heat and light reach throughout its whole extent. My desire is that those heavenly powers and blessings might so control this earthly nature of mine that holy things may grow out of it, and be manifest in my life; that the corn and the wine and the oil might come forth from the depths of my soul, where God, I hope, has sowed them, and so the life and blessings of Jesus be manifest in my mortal flesh; that I might have the assurance that God is working in me to will and to do, and so feel it my blessed privilege to work out in my daily life and walk my own salvation so graciously wrought in me, and so render obedience to his holy will.

What wonderful control the heavens have over the earth, which lies so helplessly, so quietly, so passively and obediently under their power. What precious fruits are brought forth out of the earth's bosom by the Sun, which has his tabernacle in them. As the earth lies under that glorious heavenly control, and is responsive to it, so the Lord's people, the new earth, lie under the power of Jesus, "whose glory covers the heavens." "He comes down upon them like rain, and as showers that water the earth." Then his sunshine warms them into sweet obedience, and the plants of his grace are put forth, and the flowers appear on the earth, and the precious fruits of the Spirit are perfected.

And they are ready to "do all things without murmurings and disputings," working out their salvation with fear and trembling. There certainly are times when this vile, rebellious nature of ours is held under control by the Spirit, and we

have a little rest from its troublesome disputings and murmurings. Much of our time we are mourning and worrying because we are so vile, or else because we cannot have our own way. With some this sad, rebellious winter state of the soul seems to continue much of their time. But there are times when they can feel that this command is upon this unruly nature: ***"The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him."***

MAY, 1905.
Elder Silas H. Durand

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 2001

Grover Plybon, VA	2.00
Deveta Wade, WV	2.00
Tommy Middleton, NC	2.00
Grace Locke, KY	5.00
Kenneth Thompson, VA	2.00
Beulah Stuart, PA	5.00
Buford Thompson, VA	2.00
Elder W.M. Freeman, NC	2.00
Charles Pratt, NC	2.00
Marvin Curnutt, TX	7.00
James Geisendorfer, WI	2.00
Angie Cox, NC	2.00
Jennye Osborne, MD	7.00
Velma Terral, TX	2.00
Elder Marvin Brumfield, VA	2.00
Noel Lavinder, VA	7.00

OBITUARIES

EDITH SMITH BROWN

Sister Edith Smith Brown was born April 23, 1910, departed this life May 4, 2001.

She was preceded in death by her husband Brother Willie Lester Brown, one daughter Bernice, three sons Forrest, Burton, and Tommy Brown, three sisters Izona, Hilda, and Esterline, four brothers Alfred, Woodrow, Kiel and Leonard Smith.

She is survived by two sisters Mary Smith Brown, Maurine Smith Manning, eighteen grandchildren, thirty great grandchildren, seventeen great great grandchildren, ten step grandchildren, five step great great grandchildren.

Sister Edith joined Bethel Primitive Baptist Church June 1, 1940 was faithful to attend, her health did not permit her to attend in her last years.

She was always smiling and firm in her faith, not failing to let it be known. Her trust was in the Lord a precious Mother to all.

Her funeral was conducted at Lynch Funeral Home, Rocky Mount, VA by her Pastor Elder Junior Conner, with burial in Franklin Memorial Park Cemetery, Franklin County, VA.

Written by request
Elsie Poindexter, Clerk

SARA GREEN FREEMAN

Our dear sister, Sara Green Freeman, was called to her eternal rest on November 19, 2001. After services conducted by Elder Paul Clark, Elder Bobby Daughtry and Elder Virgil Davis, she was laid to rest on November 23, 2001 at Floral Garden Park Cemetery in High Point, North Carolina. She is survived by her loving husband and our precious pastor, Elder W. M. Freeman, along with two sisters and several nieces and nephews.

Sister Sara was 88 years old at her death. She was born October 16, 1913, the oldest daughter of Henry M. and Pearl Benten Green. She loved to share the many happy memories of her childhood in Union County. Sister Sara married William Mack Freeman on November 26, 1938. They were blessed to share a long and happy union together for nearly 63 years.

Given a hope in Christ, she and Brother Mack united with the church at Pine Meeting House in Davidson County in June 1948 and were baptized together on that second Sunday. She and Brother Mack were charter members of Mt. Shepherd Primitive Baptist Church which was organized in Randolph County on November 30, 1958. Sister Sara was a faithful member of Mt. Shepherd for over 42 years. She was blessed to stand firm in her belief in the doctrine of salvation by grace for all that time. In her later years, failing eyesight and other health problems did not hinder her from attending the meetings. She enjoyed the preaching and fellowship and singing those songs that she knew by heart. She always greeted you with an embrace and her quick wit left you with a smile.

Sister Sara was a faithful supporter of Brother Mack as he has served as a deacon and Elder in the church. As it says in Proverbs 31: 10-12, ***"Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life."*** And in Proverbs 12:4, "A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband." These verses describe Sister Sara in her walk as a loving and constant companion to Brother Mack. She was blessed to travel with him many miles as he filled his Appointments at churches in corresponding associations and visited in the homes of the brothers and sisters.

Our hearts are saddened by the loss of our precious sister and we will miss her so much in our little meetings at Mt. Shepherd, but we rejoice to know that she is now, as she ever has been, in the hands of a loving, eternal, unchangeable God.

Submitted by Sister Beth Edmondson at request of Mt. Shepherd Primitive Baptist Church in conference, Dec. 8, 2001,

Elder W.M. Freeman, Moderator
Deacon W. I. Atkinson, Clerk

ELDER CLARENCE MOSES HAYGOOD

On the Lord's Day, October 21st, 2001, Elder Clarence Moses Haygood was called to come home. He and his wife, Bernice, were attending the Buttiehatchie/Hopewell Association in Alabama and he had preached the previous day in church and had spoken some that night in the house of Brother and Sister Kenneth Evans. He looked forward to attending the meeting Sunday morning, but was instead called up to a meeting that will never break up and to an assembly that will never witness a tearful goodbye.

Elder Haygood was born September 6th, 1921 in Mountain Air, New Mexico and from an early age showed signs of a saving work of grace upon his heart. Even while just a boy, it grieved him that he didn't have a Bible he could call his own, so at the age of nine he entered into an agreement with his father that if his father would grant him four acres to use to raise a crop of pinto beans, the proceeds from the sale of these beans could go towards the purchase of a Bible. This nine-year-old boy then planted the four-acre crop, got down of his knees, and begged the Lord to bless it. The good Lord poured forth His blessings and a bumper crop was later harvested which more than provided for the purchase of a Bible he could lay his hands on, and call his very own. This may help explain how that when later called to preach, he liked to enter the stand carrying his own Bible.

At the age of nineteen, Elder Haygood was ordained to the full work of the ministry and over the years traveled countless miles to serve the various churches under his charge. Anyone having the pleasure of traveling with Elder Haygood soon discovered that he didn't wait until they got to the meeting to start preaching. He would preach all the way down to and back from the meeting and time and mileage seemed to fly by. Elder Haygood's gift of what is termed "fireside preaching" was appreciated as much if not more so than his preaching from the stand. In both cases he delighted to proclaim the merits of his beloved Saviour and the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. He shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God and faithfully exhorted and admonished as directed by God's Word. A faithful representation of God's Word was far more important to him than being popular or making a name for himself.

Elder Haygood was called upon to suffer many hardships and crosses in life. In all this he felt God's grace to help in time of need. Part of God's grace he recognized in the form of a loving and sympathetic wife and also in the form of four devoted children all of whom it was his pleasure to baptize.

Being a follower of the One who declared, *"Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not."* Elder Haygood was very attentive towards children and young people. He was full of encourage-

ment and obviously concerned about their welfare. He was also blessed with a heart for the aged and infirm and was very faithful in his visits to hospitals and nursing homes. On one occasion upon leaving a nursing home he was particularly tired and somewhat depressed until the words came to him ***"Inasmuch as you have done it unto the least of these my little ones you have done it unto me."*** Sudden strength came with these words and he was enabled to go on his way, rejoicing.

Elders David Harrell and Jimmy Hamrick jointly conducted his funeral and we trust God was glorified as the Lord who both gave and took away one whom we loved and one who gave so many proofs of having loved us.

Elder Haygood is survived by his loving wife of 60 years, Bernice Haygood of Sulphur Springs, TX; sons and daughters-in-law, Raymond and Charlotte Haygood of Sulphur Springs, TX and Dale and Debbie Haygood of Saltillo, TX; daughters and sons-in-law Janis and Mike Willis of Mt. Vernon, TX and Ann and Robert Rector of Mt. Pleasant, TX; 11 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren.

It was Elder Haygood's wish to have his body buried near the body of his yoke-brother of many years, Elder Joe Hamrick, at Hopewell Cemetery. Elder Haygood often concluded his prayers with a reference to the resurrection beseeching the Lord as follows, "And in the glorious resurrection, raise us, own us, and crown us in that upper and better kingdom where there will be no more tears, no more pain, or sorrow and where the praise will be more perfectly thine."

Written by one who loved him,
Jimmy Hamrick

GRACIE THURMAN JOHNSON

Sister Gracie Thurmon Johnson was born August 6, 1912 - departed this life October 12, 2000. Her children at her bedside.

She was preceded in death by her husband Deacon Claude Albert Johnson a son Melvin Claude, 3 brothers and 6 sisters, her parents Bruce and Missy Perdue Thurman.

She is survived by a daughter Shelby Brooks, two sons Kenneth and Albert Johnson, five grandchildren, eight great grandchildren.

Sister Gracie joined Bethel Primitive Baptist Church October 2, 1943. We at Bethel Church miss her but feel our loss is her eternal gain.

She enjoyed her church and faithful to attend as long as her health permitted. There are never words to express the loss of our loved ones.

Her funeral was conducted at Lynch Funeral Home, Rocky Mount, VA by her Pastor Elder Junior Conner and Elder Lane Carter, with burial in Franklin Memorial Park, Franklin County, Va.

May (He) who doeth all things well make us reconciled in our loss.

Written by request,
Elsie Poindexter, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

"THERE WILL ALWAYS BE GOD"

They cannot shell His temple,
nor dynamite His throne;
They cannot bomb His city,
nor rob Him of His own.

They cannot take Him captive,
nor strike Him deaf nor blind,
Nor starve Him to surrender,
nor make Him change His mind.

They cannot cause Him panic,
nor cut off His supplies,
They cannot take His kingdom,
nor hurt him with their lies.

Though all the world be shattered,
His truth remains the same,
His righteous laws still potent,
And "Father" still His name.

Though we face war and struggle,
And feel their guard and rod.
We know above confusion there
Always will be God!

Anonymous

Sent in by Darline Shipman

POSTMASTER

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Signs of the Times
202 Carousel Lane
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EDITORIAL

St. John 6: 37-39

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the will of him that sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing but raise it up again at the last day."

Elder C. C. Wilbanks

The entire covenant of grace which the three-in-one God, (God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost), of heaven and earth made before the world was, is enclosed in these three verses. If we had no other scriptures, but were blessed to believe these, they are all that we would need. But all of the holy scriptures are profitable unto us while we remain here in the flesh, for we read. ***"All scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be throughly furnished unto all good works."*** Regardless of what the wisdom of man teaches, the holy scriptures are not for the entire world: they are for ***"the man of God." "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned."*** Until one has been born again of the Holy Spirit he cannot discern the things that are spiritual. He must be born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. In the flesh all men are born dead in trespasses and sin, and we know that any thing that is dead can do nothing. Death is the state of being separated from something, and

when our fleshly progenitor Adam partook of the forbidden fruit he died: for God had said, *"In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."* God cannot lie, therefore we know that Adam died; not a corporeal death, but he was separated from his standing with God. He fell from his upright and sinless state into a state of sin and condemnation, and because all of his posterity was in him they also fell, and they shall remain separated from God until the appointed time of their regeneration or new birth. No man has ever had anything to do with his fleshly birth; neither can he have any thing to do concerning his spiritual birth. *"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."* Who are those who are born of the Spirit? Are they not the ones chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world? We read *Eph. 1:3-4: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."* It was not according to the choosing of man but according to the good pleasure of God`s will that he chose us in Christ before the world was spoken into existence. The wisdom of the world will deny this, saying, How could God choose us before we existed? But known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world, and he hath said, *"I am God and I change not."* We read *Psalms 139:15-16, "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."* Fleshly wisdom cannot truly understand this scripture, but the prophet was given to write this concerning body of Christ. Paul tells us that we are members of his body. of his flesh, and of his bones. Christ is the head of the church which is his body, and if we be what we hope to be then are we his body, and our names will be found written in the book of life. If our names are not found written there we shall be cast into the lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

As Jesus declared, he came to do the will of the Father. Can anyone dare say that he failed to do it? Jesus said in his prayer to his Father in the 17th chapter of St. John, *"I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do," and as he hung on the cross, "It is finished."*

In his Godhead Christ could not die, therefore he must become incarnate; for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. *"Forasmuch then as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil"* He did not take on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham. And in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of his people.

The ultimate purpose of the work which Christ came into this low ground of sin and sorrow was to save his people from their sins; but there was much more that he did to comfort, heal, and teach them. Even when a boy of twelve years he was found of his mother in the temple teaching the doctors and he said unto her, *"How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"* What an amazing question this must have been to all who heard it. Jesus went about the land healing the sick, causing the lame to walk, opening the eyes of the blind and preaching the gospel to the poor. And he abundantly showed his mighty power by raising the dead. The people could find no fault in the miracles that he did, yet they desired to kill him because many of the miracles that he performed were done on the Sabbath days: and even more so when he said, *"My Father worketh hitherto and I work,"* showing that he was the Son of God and equal with God. Jesus also said, *"For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son of man quickeneth whom he will."* Not only did Jesus raise up some who had died a corporal death, but he also quickens into life his children who are dead in sins; even as many as the Father hath given him. He said, *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."* Many have heard his voice, and there shall be many more before his glorious return: not one of his children shall be left behind. Jesus said, *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life."* The world knows what it is to pass from life unto death, but none know what is to pass from death unto life. Neither do they know what it is to truly believe on the just and holy and living God: for if we believe, it is given to us from above to do so. *"Unto you it is given in the behalf of Jesus Christ, not only to believe on him, but to also suffer for his sake."*

The children of God are called sheep, and Jesus said of them, *"I am the good shepherd, and I know my sheep, and am known of mine."* But when he was speaking to unbelievers he told them, *"But ye believe not, because ye are not my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."* The eternal life that Jesus gives his sheep has ever been theirs. It had no beginning and it shall never end: for this is the meaning of eternal. The life that Jesus gives was in him before the world was, but is now made manifest by a new birth. A birth never gives life, for the life must be present before the birth, Christ is that life. He is the way, the truth, and the life. In him we live and move and have our being. This is a great mystery, *"Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations, but is now made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you the hope of glory."* In his prayer to the Father he prayed for them that shall believe, *"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them: that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."*

Oh, how sweet and joyous it is when we are given from time to time to feel that we have a blessed hope in Christ, and yet how dark and dreary when he turns away from us for a moment. But he has promised that he will never leave us nor forsake us, and all of his promises are sure. A short time before he was to return to the Father he gave this very precious promise: *"I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" "But the comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."* What a gracious promise this is! How sweet it is to feel his presence from time to time! Praise his holy name! Without his promises how desolate and forsaken we would feel to be. But he has left us his peace, peace that the world can know nothing about. *"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world*

giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." This is a commandment that we cannot carry out of ourselves, but when he speaks it is with power; it is done. Without him we can do nothing, but through him which strenghteneth us we can do all things. Jesus stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and when our Saviour hung on the tree of the cross he commended his spirit into the hands of his Father and gave up the ghost. Yet at that moment our salvation was not yet complete, for he was not risen from the grave, and he must rise for our justification. But Jesus Christ did rise: *"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."* Had he not risen we would still be dead in our sins; but Christ Jesus was the perfect sacrifice acceptable unto God, and by his sacrifice he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. When Jesus Christ died for his bride she died in him. He did the suffering, bleeding and dying, for her sins were charged unto him as her husband and he must pay the debt that God`s holy justice demanded. She was in him when he died, for she was chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that she should be holy and without blame before him in love. She can never be separated from him. The chosen children of God are the bride of Christ, and in him they live, and move and have their being. We read Isa. 63:9, *"In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old."* When Christ Jesus was buried, his bride was buried in him, and when he arose she arose in him. *"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into his death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin."*

Jesus said to Martha, *"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."* Jesus is the first resurrection and he was the first resurrected from the dead. *"On the third day he broke the bands of death, for it was not possible that he should be holden of it. This was the first*

resurrection: blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign a thousand years." Those who have no part in the first resurrection and whose names are not found in the book of life will be cast into the lake of fire with death and hell, which is the second death.

Beloved brethren, our Lord and Saviour is coming again to receive his bride and present her before his Father holy and blameless. Blessed are the ones who will hear him say, ***"Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."*** This is my hope, and I trust that it is yours. I need and desire your prayers of faith.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

ST. JOHN, 15:20-23.

Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin.

He that hateth me hateth my Father also.

ARTICLES

PROPHET, PRIEST, AND KING

Since Christ is Prophet, Priest, and King to His people, the Lord willing, I will try to write a little of what I believe about all three. Christ as our Redeemer fulfilled the offices of Prophet, Priest and King in His humanity as well as being the Son of God. He was just as much so while He sojourned here as He still is while seated on the right hand of His father.

PROPHET

The word prophet, taken literally, means a spokesman for God. He is not only God's spokesman but the prophet is also the interpreter of God's will. Christ Himself as God's Prophet stated, ***"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day (John 6.38)."*** Those that were given Him were the ones chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.

The prophets in the Old Testament were to speak the actual words of God. The Lord told Moses in prophecy of Christ, ***"I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his***

mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him (Deuteronomy 18:18). "As the priests represented the people before God, so do the prophets represent God to the people.

"And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend (Exodus 33.11)." The prophecies of Moses and the prophets pointed to the more sure word of prophecy, Jesus Christ. They were not witness to themselves but of things to be. The fulfillment of their prophecies was in Christ.

PRIEST

The word priest in the Greek language means sacred or holy. In the New Testament, it indicates one consecrated to holy matters. His Priesthood, which was set up and fixed in His covenant of grace and the eternal decrees of God, was and is effective throughout all ages toward God's elect.

The atonement of Christ was just as effective before His death on the cross as it is after. With one offering, Himself, He hath perfected forever those given Him in covenant love before the world began. ***"For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified (Hebrews 10:14)."***

"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest for ever after the order of Meichisedec (Hebrews 6:19)," "who is even at the right hand of God, who also He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God (Romans 8.27)."

KING

As Christ is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, He is the sovereign ruler over God's kingdom. The Scriptures teach, ***"For He spake, and it was done: He commanded, and it stood fast (Psalm 33:9)."*** He works and none can hinder; ***"He is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth (Job 23:13)."***

The book of Daniel states, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever (Daniel 2:44). ***"The Scriptures teach that "the kingdom of God is within you," and it is "Christ in you, the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27). "righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment."***

His purpose in coming into this world was to save the people of His kingdom from their sins, to defeat their enemies, to do away with Satan and his powers, and to deliver His people from bondage. 1 Corinthians 15:24-26 tells us, ***"Then***

cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be desfroyed is death." "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory (verse 55)?"

Isaiah the Prophet tells us that ***"unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor. The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this Isaiah 9:6)."***

The Scriptures speak of Christ as our Elder Brother. The prosperity of the children of His kingdom is brought about by this God of old who hath sworn, saying, ***"Surely as I have thought so shall it stand (Isaiah 14:24)."***

To me, this blessed truth is a self-imposed obligation of God upon Himself to save those He has chosen for Himself.

Regards,
Elder G. R. Smith

VOICES OF THE PAST

DELMAR, Del., Dec. 2

DEAR BRETHREN - I enclose thoughts for publication in the Signs, if you deem them worthy, upon the following Scripture: ***"And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of Lord shone round about them: an were sore afraid." Luke ii. 9.*** I feel my weakness and inability to write upon such a wonderful subject, and hesitate to make the attempt, but I am impressed to write a few lines once more for the consideration of the readers of the SIGNS. I have had some very pleasant thoughts upon this subject, and will present such views as I trust the Lord has given me. There are so many things connected with this subject that time and space would fail me to take them all up, even were my mind led to do so. In the first place, we have the record of the way in which what should come to pass was shown to the virgin Mary. But did she understand what was meant by the mysterious things said unto her by the angel? She no more understood that mysteries of the wonderful things than the child of God now does when the angel of the Lord appears unto him and shows to him for the first time that there is a Savior born into the world. Does the carnal mind today understand how it was possible for the virgin Mary to conceive and

bring forth a son ? Carnal men did not then, and neither do they now, nor can they ever understand these things. We must be brought from nature's darkness into God's marvelous light before we can see that star which guided the wise men of the east, or the shepherds, which I have under consideration, to the place where the young child lay. We are told that Elizabeth conceived when she was past age, and bare a son, and his name was John. Ye are also told that he should go before the Savior to prepare the way. He was the voice of one crying in the wilderness. These are, all of them, things which we should notice particularly. It is said that John was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb, and that when Mary, the mother of Jesus, came unto her cousin Elizabeth, the child, John leaped in his mother's womb for joy. Do we not here have the evidence that one can be made to feel the power of that salvation which none save God's elect can know anything about, even thoughts before they are born into this world? And is not this evidence that there was given Christ, or in the Spirit of Christ, even before he was born into the world, in the form of sinful flesh, to cause one to rejoice? We are told that the angel of the Lord appeared unto Mary, and said unto her that she should call his name Jesus, because he should save his people from their sins. Let us notice here, it was not all men, but *"his people."* Let us bear in mind at all times that the Lord, through patriarchs, prophets and apostles, was speaking to his people, let them be many or few, great or small, old or young, Jew or Gentile. Let us also bear in mind that they were all sinners, for we are told that they are conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity. He who says that he has no sin is a liar, and the truth in not in him. If we say that we are born into this world without sin, we would surely need no Savior, therefore Christ could have done nothing for us at all, hence could have no claim upon us. But it is said that he came to save his people from their sins. If, then, we have no sin, we have no Savior; but Jesus said, *"I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentence."* It would be impossible for one to repent of that of which he was not guilty. There is no such thing as one being born and living in this world without sin.

We are told in the verse preceding the *text* that there were in the same country (that is, the country of Joseph and Mary and of Bethlehem in Judea,) shepherds keeping watch over their flock by night. Just here we say a few words in connection with the word "night." If we notice carefully, the word is used many times in the Scriptures, and while in those types and shadows it no doubt was often night literally, yet it is used often, at least, with a typical meaning, applying to our experience, and is figurative of

those dark seasons that we, as well as the people of God in all ages, have been called to pass through. When Christ withdrew his presence from his disciples it was always night to them indeed. So is it with you and with me, and with all whom God has called by his grace. If it has ever pleased the Lord to shine forth upon them, when he withdraws his presence it is like the sun setting in the west. Very many times there is a starless sky, and with the poet we are made to cry, ***"It is midnight in my soul."***

"While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down,
And glory shone around."

"And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them."

What a wonderful revelation, dear readers. Do you remember when you were in the dark watches of the night, feeling that you were without hope and without God in the world, having no Savior, and when the angel appeared to you and the glory of the Lord shone round about you, and the star in the east was seen to guide you where the Savior was born, was it not wonderful? Is not this star typical of the faith which is given to the Lord's people, which points or leads them to Christ? ***"And they were sore afraid."*** Dear, trembling child of God, do you not well remember how sore afraid you were when you were made to cry, with Saul of Tarsus, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? The angel said, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy. * * * For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Then to you was given that faith which leads to the place where the young child lay, and you were made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Then we are told, ***"Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men."*** What a wonderful throng! It is a multitude that no man can number; they are chosen out of all nations, kindreds and tongues under heaven. We are accused of being narrow-minded, but we do not limit God's power. We believe that he will save to the uttermost all that come unto him by Christ. We believe that we believe that he is able, as said before to make a child leap for joy even before it is born into the world. We believe that he saved the thief on the cross, even in his last moments. It matters not at what age, or in what part of the earth his people are, they are sure of that glory which was shown to the shepherds at the very moment he appointed before the foundation of the world. We believe

in no chance work, but that God works all things after the counsel of his own will; he does all his pleasure. If we ask the question why God does thus and so, the answer must be, *"Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."*

I am making this too lengthy, yet I have barely sketched a few thoughts in connection with the subject, and now will leave them for your consideration. I hope they may stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance, and that you may be able to look more deeply into the subject than I have been able to do.

May the blessing of God rest upon all who love his appearing, is the prayer of your brother in hope of a blessed eternity,

John L. Hastings.

WHY OUGHT CHRIST TO HAVE SUFFERED?

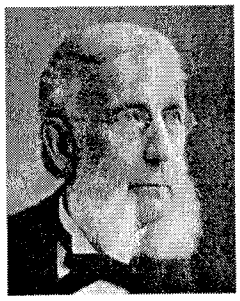
Elder Silas H. Durand

To the two apostles who were on the way to Emmaus Jesus said, *"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"* And the same night, in his interview with his apostles, he said, *"Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day."- Luke xxiv. 46.* But why ought he to have suffered? It is enough to set at rest every question to know that it is according to the eternal counsel and purpose of God, and that *"thus it is written."* This is a sufficient reason why the Just should suffer for the unjust. In his person and character as a man he was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. Earthly wisdom cannot see why such a man can be justly devoted to death for any one, and especially for sinful and unjust men; but neither can the wisdom of the natural man understand or receive any of the things of God; they are only discerned by the Spirit of God. (I Cor. ii.) But the Lord has been pleased to show to the faith of his people how the claims of eternal justice are regarded and satisfied by the coming of Christ in the likeness of sinful flesh, and in his suffering and death. To this end Christ is presented in three relationships to his people:

Shepherd, Husband, Head, in each of which there are claims and responsibilities which figuratively represent the claims of his people upon him, as established and laid upon him by the eternal justice of God, according to his eternal purpose, which he purposed in himself before the world began.

To this mystery of God's will the dear Savior refers when he asks, *"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?"* The contemplation of each of these relationships will show us why it behooved

Christ to suffer. The name, Christ, which he uses here, intimates the reason. it signifies "anointed," and presents him in connection with his people. It applies more particularly to the relationship of Head and body. ***"As the body is one, and hath many members, and these members are one body, so also is Christ."*** Christ is ***"Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."*** The apostle Peter also used this name, Christ, when he said he hath once suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. He is just not only in his essential character as the mighty God, the everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace, but also as well in his humiliation as the servant, with all the sins of his people upon him, making himself of no reputation in the sight of the holy law of God, and becoming obedient even unto death. Justice required all this, and in this it was the suffering of the just for the unjust.

Take the first of these relationships, the Shepherd and the sheep. This takes us back into the eternity before the world began. ***"All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."-Isa. liii.***

When did the people of God go astray? When Adam fell. ***"By one man's disobedience many were made sinners."*** Upon what principle of justice could the iniquity of these sheep be laid upon Christ? Only because they were his before they went astray in Adam. A flock of sheep have trespassed and are held for the damage. One looks at them and asks, How much is the damage? The reply is, One hundred dollars. I will pay it and take the sheep. Were they yours before they went astray? No. Then the law will not allow you to take them, not if you offered a thousand times the damage. Another says, I will pay the damage and take them. Were they yours before they went astray? Yes, they were mine. Then not only you can, but you must. The law holds you responsible for them. Therefore, ***"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?"*** They were his before the foundation of the world, and under this figure he presents himself as responsible for their trespass. There can be no right of redemption in any one except the one who owned the person or thing to be redeemed before it needed redemption. Upon the principle of eternal election alone can there be one sinner of Adam's fallen race redeemed. One who denies the doctrine of election denies the only ground of hope for a poor sinner. If they were not chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, then they can never be holy and without blame before him in love. (Eph. i. 4.)

When Jesus appeared under the law he appeared as the Shepherd of his sheep. He said, ***"I lay down my life for the sheep."*** The sword of

justice awoke against the Shepherd, and when he was smitten the stroke of justice satisfied the just judgments of God against every one of the sheep, even to the last of the little ones. (Zech. xiii. 7.) And Jesus says that he will seek them all out, and gather them from all the places whither they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.

The relation of husband and wife is another figure used to show why Christ ought to have suffered these things. Adam was made in the image or likeness of Christ; he is the figure or image of him that was to come. *"In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam in the day when they were created."* When the Lord had taken a rib from Adam's side, and had made that rib a woman, and had brought her unto the man, Adam said, *"This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh."* When the tempter came to Eve she was deceived, and transgressed. The man was not deceived, but for the love he had for her he followed her and was with her in the transgression. He must go to her and be with her, for they were one. Then the Lord said, *"The man is become as one of us, to know good and evil."*

Now the image or figure is fully manifested, and Adam is shown to be the figure of Christ. The church is regarded here and elsewhere in the Scriptures as the bride of Christ, in a mystical and legal sense, before the world began. She fell in Adam; Christ followed her and was made of a woman, made under the law, that he might take her debt upon him and pay it by his death. Adam could not bring his wife back from under the law, but Christ, the heavenly Husband, could. He had power to lay down his life, and power to take it again. This was the washing of regeneration, when he went down into the ocean of death to wash away her sins, she being buried with him by baptism into death, and then coming up from that washing, he is *"declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."* And when it is declared concerning Christ, *"Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee,"* it is also true of all his people who inherit in him the resurrection of the dead, that they are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. (Luke xx. 35, 36.)

The apostle says, *"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."-Eph. v.25-27.* Thus the relation of Husband and wife shows why Christ ought to

have suffered these things and to enter into his glory. He entered into his glory when he ascended up on high, and when his people are brought one by one to see and feel the truth of salvation by grace, they behold his glory. (John xvii. 24.)

This unity of Christ and the church is more perfectly illustrated in one particular, by the figure of Head and body. The apostle says to the Ephesian church that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, gave Christ *"to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."-Eph. i. 22, 23.* And to the Colossians he says, *"And he is the head of the body, the church."*

This wonderful figure seems intended to show how, according to the principles of eternal justice, the iniquities of his people could be and were laid upon him. It is necessary, in order to show this particular kind of responsibility of Christ for the sins of the church which brought them under condemnation and death, to consider that he must have been regarded in this relationship to them as Head and body before the world began. Therefore the Spirit of Christ in the psalmist says, *"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there were none of them."-Psalms cxxxix. 15, 16.*

This shows that he and his body must be one in death. Therefore the apostle says: *"We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead."-2 Cor. v.14.* That is, if he died for them in such a way as to atone for their sins, he must have died in such a relationship to them in a legal and mystical sense, that when he died the law regarded them as having died in him. So the apostle says again, *"If we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him."-Rom. vi. 8.* And again, *"We are buried with him by baptism into death."* Then it follows that we are raised up together with him. In many ways the apostles dwell upon this figure of the Head and body, as showing how the death of Christ satisfies the law for all of his people, who were chosen and as showing how they are quickened together with him and raised up together. Because of this oneness of Head and body, this eternal, vital unity, he is to all his people the resurrection and the life. They all inherit in him the resurrection of the dead, and *"are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."* The apostle says, *"We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."* This wonderfully close relationship, or oneness, shows why Christ ought to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory; why it behooved

him to suffer thus, and that repentance and remission of sins should he preached in his name.

When the fullness of this glorious and precious truth is experienced by us, then we are one with him, as he is one with the Father. He is our life, and when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then we shall appear with him in glory.

Elder Silas H. Durand
April 12, 1907.

SOUTH HAMPTON, PA., Oct. 24, 1911.

Dear Cousin: - I was glad to hear from you, and will try to do as you requested : tell you a few things the Lord has done for me. I should have answered your letter sooner, but did not seem able to write, and I now hope you will excuse all of my mistakes, for, as you know, I never had much of an education, and may not be able to make plain my feelings, as I do not know just how to express them. In writing to your mother I feel that she never sees mistakes in my writing, for I feel that she loves me, she has always been so good and kind to me. You spoke of my writing you of my experience; I hardly know how, as for day and date I cannot give them. To begin, the first I ever thought of the dear Savior was at the deathbed of my father; while he seemed unconscious of earthly surroundings, he seemed to see and talk of heavenly things, things that were beautiful, and the sight I then witnessed as the breath left his body is something that I can scarcely describe, for I do not know how to make you see it as I saw it. It was as a great light so brilliant, like no other light I ever saw; it was only for an instant, like the opening and shutting of a door, as going from darkness into a great light; it was so beautiful, the sight I have never forgotten, and often a feeling of longing for something better in this life would come over me, a feeling of homesickness that I could not describe, a longing for something, I knew not what. I once wrote to my sister of my feelings, and she wrote me, telling where to find rest for the weary soul, but the feeling would pass away, and I would go on the same, only worse if anything; then again I would think, I will try going to meeting, but could not find what I sought; then I would think, I will just have a good time and forget it all, but all the time a feeling of unrest was there. At one time your mother was staying with me, and I kept her up talking to me half of the night. I often wondered what were a christian's feelings; they must be of great happiness and of love, which I knew I did not then have, but which I now hope I feel. One morning as I was driving along the road (a road I had often traveled before) I looked over the hills, and a feeling came over me, How wonderful, how beautiful; I thought I never saw it so before. A feeling of gladness came

over me, and I wanted to call out for everyone to see all the beautiful things that God had given us, that I must sing aloud; I, who could not sing a note, must sing, *"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow."* I cannot tell how happy I felt. Then time passed on, and I seemed to forget. One day a minister called to see me; he talked to me, and I told him I was not happy nor satisfied with the way I was living. He then prayed for me, but I was not satified, I was still wanting something, and my cry was for the Lord to have mercy and direct my steps and give me the rest I desired. Soon after, the great trial came, the dear child whom I so loved was taken away, and I thought I could not bear it, but the dear Savior gave me strength and comforted me. I prayed to the dear Lord that I might know and understand and feel his love within my heart, and I longed to know that the dear child was happy, and prayed that God in his mercy, and if it were his will, might let me know it were so. I felt that God answered my prayer. One day there came to me a feeling as if she was hovering near me, as if I only had to turn, put out my band and touch her, she was so near. O, she seemed so happy that I could hardly believe she was not there; and again, soon after, she appeared to me in a dream; she came to my bedside, and I cried out to her O Bessie, how could you leave me! and her words to me were, Mother, God made it easy for me to go. Then I said to her, how could you leave Frank! Again she spoke and said, Poor Frank, I am so happy, I could not come back. Then she vanished, and I awoke with the feeling that the Lord had answered my prayer I could not grieve for her any more, but I then saw myself a great sinner as I never saw it before. I sought the Bible and tried to read, but I could only cry, Lord, have mercy. One night these words came to me as if spoken: *"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden."* I felt that I was indeed weary and heavy laden, and O how I longed for rest. I wrote to your mother, and she told me to read the third chapter of John, eighth verse. I read, and thought, Can it be? After those words, *"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,"* I thought I would like to hear Elder Durand speak from them some day, and to my surprise he read them for a text. I thought your mother must have told him of my desire. Some time afterward these words came to me: *"Do I love the Lord or no! Am I his, or : am I not?"* I did not know where these were to be found, so I went to mother and asked her. She gave me the hymn, and for days I kept asking myself: *"Do I love the Lord or no? Am I his, or am I not!"* Then a feeling of happiness came to me with these words: *"The Lord is my shepherd ; I shall not want."* It seemed as if I were singing them in my heart night and day; my first thoughts in the morning

were those words. One night, while trying to pray, and could not, I heard these words: *"In my Father's house there are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."* I went to meeting on the following Sunday, and Elder Durand spoke to me and told me he wanted to come down and see me. All that week I watched and waited for him, but he did not come. I then wrote to your mother, telling her of some of my feelings, and she advised me to go before the church and tell them my story. I thought I could not, but prayed for the Lord to direct me and give me strength, for there was a great weight bearing me down. I went to the Thursday meeting, in August, and Elder Durand asked me if I had anything to tell. I said, No, and the weight seemed heavier than before. On Friday I saw Elder Durand coming, and I said to mother, He need not come, for I will not say anything; but almost before I knew it I was telling him of my hope, and the things the Lord had done for me, and after that I felt much happier than I had for a long time. I went to the church meeting and told my story, and was received by the church. I came home feeling as if a great burden had been lifted from me, still I had doubts and fears that I might be deceived and was deceiving others, but on Sunday morning it seemed as if doubts and fears had left me, and that I truly had found peace and rest after the storm. It was as if a great storm had been raging for days, and after the storm light had broken in and all was peace and sunshine. Sunday morning Elder Durand asked me how I was feeling, but I could not tell him it was as if I had no more doubts, no more fears; all was peace and rest, rest in the Savior's love; I cannot describe it. Some time after I was again asked how I was feeling, if I have any doubts. I went home thinking to myself was the peace I felt not right? And I was worried for days about it. At last I thought, I will search the Bible and see if I can find anything to comfort me. I opened it at random not knowing of any particular place to look, and the first words I saw were: *"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."* O what comfort I found what more proof did I need of the Savior's love than that?

Dear cousin, I fear you will find many faults in this, for I do not quite understand how to express myself; if you find it too tiresome throw it in the fire and it will be all right. Remember me to cousin Ella. My love to all. Your unworthy sister, if I dare call myself a sister,

Viola T. Kulp.

Romans 8:24

For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

Laurel, Md., Oct. 10, 1911.

Dear Brother McClanahan:- Your kind and thoughtful letter to one who is unworthy of the love and esteem of saints was received a few days after my return home, having filled appointments at Philippi, Indian Creek Meadow Run and Maple Creek after leaving Pocatalico Association. I was kept away from home just one month from the time I started, and I want to say that I feel though unmeriting the least of God's blessings, I was sustained by him who has promised to be with his poor, trembling servants always, even unto the end of the world, and as is said in Job, I will be with thee in six troubles, yea, and in the seventh I will not forsake thee.

When faith is in lively exercise I feel that I can appropriate this exceedingly great and precious promise to myself, and exclaim in the language of the psalmist, *"Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name,"* that in the end he will give me that degree of grace we call dying grace, which he withholds until we are surrounded by the seventh trouble which is death, the end and completion of all the tribulation through which we are called to pass in this world, furnace of affliction, by which all the works of the flesh are finally consumed, that we may come out at last as gold tried in the fire. And now my dear brother, as we are passing through the storms of mortality, if we could not by faith divine appropriate the sweet and blessed words of the apostle Paul, *"All things work together for the good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose"* we would be as a ship upon the mighty deep without anchor, being tossed upon the surging billows with nothing to hold the vessel. Thank God this is not a world of chance; God is the Sovereign of the whole universe, working all things after the counsel of his own will, and for the good of them that love him, who are the called according to his purpose, and for his own glory. Hence the Scriptures declare God doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can hinder. Pontius Pilate, in his pride and ignorance of God's predestination, said to Jesus, Know you not that I have power to release you or to crucify you? But our blessed Lord's reply was, *"Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above,"* nor could the Roman soldiers have any power at all to arrest Jesus until it was given them, for when they first attempted to make the arrest they fell upon their faces as dead men, thus demonstrating creature weakness and absolute impotency without the purpose and consent of Jehovah.

Now let us examine the words of the apostle Peter in reference to God's unbounded and sovereign predestination in the control and government of the universe, of all

creatures, both in heaven and earth *"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."* Hence we conclude that our dear Lord could not have been crucified and slain had not the power been given Pilate to pronounce the sentence of death, and also the *power* from above been given the Jews and Gentiles to crucify him. Jesus, the eternal Son of God, is the center and soul of the universe. He is that wisdom by which the natural house (the universe), including all creatures, was made, and he is also that wisdom of which Solomon speaks in the ninth chapter, first verse, of Proverbs, where he declares, *"Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars."* Hence we conclude the house of which Solomon speaks is the spiritual temple, the church of God, and as He is the author of the house, he is also the author of the seven pillars, or essential supports of the house, the seven cardinal priniciples of the doctrine of God our Savior. Now we find that wisdom is concerned in all matters pertaining both to the natural house and also to the spiritual house, that predestination, the first pillar or support of the church, is founded on the attributes of Deity, infinite wisdom, omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, immutability, love and eternality, and each of these seven attributes is God essentially and efficiently. God is love, he is also wisdom, then may we not say,

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word:
What more can he say, than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

My dear brother, see the great and good results in the. predestination of God concerning Joseph and his brethren. See also the great and good results in the prestination of God in the destruction of Pharaoh and his hosts. The creatures meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. Creatures are under law but God is above all law. Hence creatures as men and angels could violate law, but he Creator, being above all and the efficient cause of all law for the government of the universe and of all creatures, cannot therefore, violate any law. When man kills he violates law and must suffer the penalty, but when God kills or slays he violates no law, and since he is infinite in all his attributes he cannot do wrong, nor is he answerable to any of his creatures, and as all rational creature are predestinarians in all that they do, shall we not then ascribe this right and privilege to our Creator?

"Chained to his throne a volume lies,
With all the fates of men,
With every angel's form and size,
Drawn by the eternal pen."

And more, my precious brother, I do believe and feel that predestination is one exceedingly strong and glorious pillar that is supporting you, and will support you to the end of your earthly pilgrimage. I feel by faith that you can adopt the language of the poet and say,

"Death and dangers round me fly,
Till he bids I cannot die;
Not a single shaft shall hit,
Till the God of love sees fit."

Dear brother, God only knows how much I have missed you and your dear family since my return home. I often think of the sweet and pleasant moments spent at your house in company with you and your family and dear Elder Jones of Indiana, and other brethren of the household of faith. I became greatly attached to your yoke-fellow and soldier of the cross, Elder J. T. Jones. I consider him an able and fearless defender of the doctrine of God our Savior, and hope to meet him again at Pocatalico Association. And you , my precious brother, God will restore, I hope and believe, to your common health, and bring back to sight your blind and afflicted eye, that it may gaze upon the beautiful hills of West Virginia, the loved faces of wife and daughter, and upon the dear faces and form of saints whom you love so well. Enclosed find five dollars as a little contribution which wife and I send you to help to defray your expenses at the hospital. I have written to some of our brethren and sisters stating your financial condition, also the greatly afflicted state of your eyes, and requested them to send such contributions as they may feel able to make to Elder J. W. McClanahan, Lanham, West Virginia, and I hope that our people and friends will respond to this call, for I do know that you have labored faithfully in your Master's vineyard and worn yourself out in the cause of the Baptists. Wife and I send love and greetings to you and family. And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Samuel L. Thompson.

REVELATION 7:15.

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union will convene the Lord willing the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in March 2002. Song service begins at 10:00 a.m.

An invitation is extended to all our ministers, brethren and friends.

Peggy Wells - Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 2002

Dale Richards, TX	$50.00
Guy Holley, VA	2.00
Cline Chandler, NC	2.00
Everett Goodman, AL	7.00
W. L. Knight, NC	7.00
Clara Oakes, VA	2.00
T.E. Hall, NC	2.00
Marjorie Cook, TN	2.00
Anne Pearson, MI	12.00
Claudis Tucker, LA	2.00
John Ballard, TX	12.00
Walter Wilson, CA	7.00
Gradie Strader, NC	2.00
Sarah Barker, VA	7.00
Milton Houston, NC	2.00
Bruce Barron, LA	5.00
Whitney Mobley, NC	20.00
Eld. J.A. Foreman, NC	2.00
M.L. Richardson, FL	7.00

OBITUARIES

EDITH SMITH BROWN

Sister Edith Smith Brown born April 23, 1910 - departed this life May 4, 2001 at the home of her daughter. Her children & grandchildren gave her loving care.

She was preceded in death by her husband Brother Willie Lester Brown - one daughter Bernice - three sons Forest, Brenton and Tommy Brown - three sisters Izona Hildo and Esterline - four brothers Alfred, Woodrow, Kiel and Leonard Smith. She is survived by two daughters Marie and Shirley and Alvie Mitchell four sons Alfred, Perry, Edwin and J.C. Brown, two sisters Mary Smith Brown, Maxine Smith Manning, - eighteen grandchildren, thirty great grandchildren - seventeen great great grandchildren - ten step grandchildren, five step great great grandchildren.

Sister Edith joined Bethel Primitive Baptist Church June 1, 1940 - was faithful to attend - her health did not permit her to attend in her last years.

She was always smiling and firm in her faith - not failing to let it be known her trust was in the Lord - a precious mother to all.

Her funeral was conducted at Lynch Funeral Home Rocky Mt., Va. by her Pastor Elder Junior Conner with burial in Franklin County, Va.

Written by request
Elsie Poindexter, Clerk

SISTER LINDA JOYCE HATCHETT

Our dear Sister Linda Joyce Hatchett went to be with her Lord and Savior on Saturday, December 16, 2000. She was born July 22, 1942 in Frederick, Oklahoma. She married Jerald Hatchett in Oklahoma City on July 21, 1963. To this

union God blessed them with two daughters, Kern Owen and Janet Hernandez, and one son, Keith Hatchett, and eight grandchildren. She is also survived by her mother and two sisters.

She was a devoted wife, mother and grandmother. She dearly loved her family, her natural family and her spiritual family. She loved having church meetings in her home and despite severe health problems attended meetings elsewhere when she was able. When her pain was almost unbearable, she would say, ***"but God's Grace is sufficient for us and we must wait upon the Lord."***

Her funeral was conducted December 20, 2000 at Vondel Smith Funeral Home in Oklahoma City by her pastor Elder C.C. Morris preceded by a eulogy from her cousin Jerry Dale Couch. Her granddaughter, Courtney Camacho, sang Amazing Grace.

Interment was at Resthaven Memory Gardens, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. She was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the Second Coming of her Lord and final resurrection.

The Church requests that three copies of this resolution be made: One for the family, one for the Church records, and one to be published in the Signs of the Times.

This done by order of conference at our July meeting.

Elder C.C. Morris, Moderator
Charles Hatchett, Church Clerk

NINA BELLE MCLAWHORN

God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to call home my aunt Nina Belle McLawhorn. She passed from this life February *25,* 2001

She was born August 21, 1906 to the late Alexander and Ida Susan McLawhorn.

Beside her parents, she was preceded in death by a brother Robert Lee McLawhorn, and two sisters, Maidline Dorman and Lowenia Tripp.

She is survived by one sister Mabel McLawhorn one brother William E. McLawhorn and several nieces and nephews.

She united with Hancocks Primitive Baptist Church in February 1928, and served as clerk protem for many years. Later she served as clerk, a position she held until her death.

She was gentle, kind, of a loving nature and faithful member to her church as long as she was able to attend. Her health deteriorated and she spent her last year in a nursing home.

She not only attended her own church faithfully, she also visited many others of the same faith and order. She enjoyed being with the brothers and sisters of her own church as well as with the other churches she visited.

She was a firm believer of the doctrine of predestination of all

things by a Sovereign God and that salvation is by grace and grace alone.

She will be truly missed by her family and all that knew and loved her, however our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted at Farmer's Funeral Home by her pastor Elder Joe Sawyer. Her body was laid to rest in Evergreen Memorial Gardens at Grifton to await the second coming of Christ.

Written by request of Han-cocks Church.

Written by her Niece
Frances Tripp

IRENE LILLARD SCOTT MINTER
February 18, 1902 -
June 27, 2001

It is with much humbleness that I attempt to write the obituary of a beloved sister in Christ, neighbor and friend, Irene Lillard Scott Minter.

I lived within 2 miles of Sister Irene for fifty years. She was highly esteemed by her neighbors and friends. We all loved and respected her and she was good and kind to everyone, always ready to lend a helping hand in time of need. We all miss her but our loss is her eternal gain.

Sister Irene joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on March 10, 1963, and was baptized by her pastor, Elder David Spangler. She was a dedicated member, attending her meeting and meetings at other churches as long as she was able. Surely we can say with David in Psalms Chapter 34, verse 19, ***"Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."*** Sister Irene surely had many afflictions, but we believe she is now asleep in Jesus awaiting His second coming.

Sister Irene was born on February 18, 1902 and died on June 27, 2001 making her stay on this earth 99 years. She was preceded in death by her husbands, James O. Scott and Boyd Minter, and a daughter, Millie Shumate. She is survived by two daughters, Brownie Toler and Inez Baynes, as well as 10 grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren and 3 great-great grandchildren, Also surviving are two sisters, Julia James of Reidsville, North Carolina and Sadie Caner of Ruffin, North Carolina.

Her funeral was held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church at 11:00 a.m. on June 30, 2001, and was attended by many friends and loved ones. The funeral service was conducted by Elder Kenneth R. Key. Interment was in the church cemetery there to await the second coming of our Lord, to awaken in His likeness where there will be no more heartache, pain or sorrow, to ever be with the Lord.

Written by one who loved her,
Gradie Strader

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

"MY CROSS"

By Amos R. Wells

God laid upon my back a grievous load
A heavy cross to bear along the road.
I staggered on, till lo, one weary day
An angry lion leaped across my way.
I prayed to God, and swift, at His command
The cross became a weapon in my hand.
It slew my raging enemy, and then
It leaped upon my back, a cross again.

I faltered many a league, until at length
Groaning, I fell and found no further strength.
I cried "O God I am so weak and lame"
And swift the cross a winged staff became.
It swept me on until I retrieved my loss
Then leaped upon my back again, a cross.
I reached a desert, on its burning track
I still preserved the cross upon my back.

No shade was there, and in the burning sun
I sank me down and thought my day was done.
But God's grace works many a sweet surprise
The cross became a tree before my eyes.
I slept, awoke and had the strength of ten,
Then felt the cross upon my back again.

And thus through all my days, from that to this,
The cross, my burden, has become my bliss;
Nor shall I ever lay my burden down,
For God shall one day make my cross my crown.

POSTMASTER

Please send address changes to:

Signs of the Times
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Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

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EDITORIAL

"Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." Luke 24: 39.

Elder J.B. Farmer

I must again acknowledge the weakness of all flesh and express my desire that the God of heaven and earth will keep me in the faith as this is being written. We are taught that all see through a glass darkly and only know in part, which makes us to depend upon Him for light and understanding and causes us to fear and tremble. We are commanded to rightly divide the word of truth, which means, to me, to not handle the word deceitfully but to explain it with as much light as we are given. I also believe that this fear causes us to remain silent about those things which are unclear or doubtful in our own minds. Also, I must say that all men are fallible and none should be heeded except as they are kept in the doctrine of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In the end our God will be praised and His people will be comforted and edified.

Jesus had lain down His life for His friends, was buried and was raised after three days according to His word and the word of prophesy. When Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James came to the sepulcher, they were told by the two men in shining garments that Jesus was risen. They came and told these things to the apostles ***"and their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not."*** After Jesus had appeared to some in the way, they came to Jerusalem and told the eleven and others these things. ***"And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? And why do these thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and***

my feet, that it is myself: handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet. An while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it and, did eat before them."

Now, we see that none believed, neither could believe that He was actually raised from the dead until he revealed Himself unto them. This is the way it has ever been. ***"No man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the son will reveal Him."*** When Jesus unexpectedly and at once stood in their midst, they were terrified and thought they had seen a ghost. This is the best the flesh can do since it is faithless. However, Jesus did not leave them in that faithless condition with doubts and fears and misunderstandings. But He appeared to them, at that time, to show them that He, Himself was risen from the dead and was not a ghost. They had to know that it was Jesus, Himself who was raised in a recognizable body which could be seen and handled. Jesus showed Himself in the ways which He did after His resurrection, not to confound us, but rather that all His own would be comforted and would be given to understand enough about the resurrection to sustain our hope here in this evil world. He showed that He was not raised a spirit or a ghost but that He had a substantial body of flesh and bones. Now, we know from the scriptures, ***"that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."*** Flesh and blood here, I believe, refers to the natural body while ***"flesh and bones"*** spoken of by the risen Lord refers to His spiritual body.

I believe that some of us, myself included, in times past, may have stumbled at this point, thinking that Jesus somehow came forth in a natural body and that He was changed later when He ascended into heaven. He, according to the scriptures, was the firstborn of all that sleep. He was the example for all who would follow Him in the regeneration. His resurrection must have been, in essence, what ours also will be. It seems to me that it was impossible that He could come forth from the grave in a natural body because a natural body is subject to death and He had just gotten the victory over death. If it was not a natural body that He arose with, it must have been a spiritual body. Then, how is it possible for a spiritual body to have flesh and bones? The inspired apostle, speaking of the relation of the spiritual church with its spiritual head, even Christ, said, ***"For we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his***

bones." Ephesians 5:30. This is a great mystery which can only be received by faith. Jesus, in a resurrected spiritual body, manifested Himself in a way that He would be known by His little ones; that is, in a body with spiritual flesh and spiritual bones. It was not possible for Him to appear in the fullness of His glory at that time because the fullness of His glory would have consumed them and all flesh together. We know that no man, in his natural flesh, has ever seen God and lived. Only when the saints are changed and given spiritual bodies will they be enabled to stand in the presence of Him in all His glory.

Many have speculated about what kind of body the saints will come forth with in the resurrection of life. The apostle called all who do such, fools, since all speculation about spiritual things is foolishness. What we are given to know about the resurrection is contained in the scriptures and may only be known by revelation. So then, what does the inspired apostle tell us about the resurrected body? First, we are told that it is a quickened or living body. It is a celestial or heavenly body. It is raised in incorruption and therefore can never perish. It is raised in glory or honor. It is raised in power, therefore, is not subject to any of the forces of this world of vanity. It is a spiritual body, yet not a ghost which Jesus abundantly showed to His disciples in the above account. It is an immortal body and so is not subject to death.

I cannot escape the conclusion that Jesus was raised a living, heavenly, incorruptible, glorified, powerful, spiritual and immortal body. He had power to appear in any form which pleased Him and even to appear and to disappear at will. He could appear in a substantial body as he did with His disciples at Jerusalem or in flaming fire as He will at His glorious coming. In that substantial body, he manifested Himself in times past to His apostles and disciples as a spiritual man with spiritual flesh and spiritual bones showing that it was He, Himself who was raised from the grave. In our time, we are given to see by the eye of faith, the risen Christ as a spiritual man, as they did, and are also given to see, as they were, a faint view of His glory which is to come. But when He comes, every eye shall behold Him in all His glory and in the fullness of His power and majesty. Both those who have died and have been buried and those who are alive and remain at His coming shall see Him; both the righteous and the wicked.

Jesus said, *"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."* John 5:29. The inspired apostle Paul said, *"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be*

revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day." **2 Thessalonians 1:7-10.** And finally, the holy apostle John said, ***"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."*** **1 John 3:3-4.**

This was written in love, I hope.

Elder J. B. Farmer

11-21-2000

ST. MATTHEW 5:10.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

CORRESPONDENCE

Nov. 30, 2001

Elder Wm. Hale Terry,

Dear Brother in Christ Jesus I hope,

Enclosed is check for two years subscription for Signs which I'm thankful to the Lord that I receive each month and if not deceived is a blessing to read, I'm still able to read the Bible, Signs and The Remnant. But my hearing is bad, but feel this is supposed to be, all for a purpose. I'm still able to live by myself and do cooking, keep my apt. etc. Had my 93rd birthday yesterday, 11-29-01. So thankful to the Lord for his goodness and mercy to me.

One in hope,
Ellen M. Sellars
3050 N. Gold Star Dr.
Long Beach, CA 90810

August 18,1997

Dear Brother Blair:

If our Beloved Lord, who first loved me and blessed me with a multitude of mercies beginning when I had no thought or regard for Him, will help, I shall attempt finally a reply to your letter of June 9th. I often find myself weak and tardy in doing things as I ought.

We live in a desolate and wilderness area lacking that number of "counsellors" that assures us of "safety" in any advice or opinion that might be offered, therefore I must urge you to search your own heart and mind where God has written his laws, search the written Word for revelation, and read sound articles and sermons of writers and witnesses known to have been faithful.

In addition to the Signs of the Times, which I support in the capacity of a lay trustee, other publications may edify and give much comfort. One that I subscribe to is the Gospel Standard, published by the Strict Baptists in England. They observe closed communion (hence the name Strict) and confess the doctrine that I believe which is substantially that of the Baptist (London) Confession of 1689. In contrast to our Primitive or Old School Baptists the Gospel Standard Strict Baptists attempt to conform in deeds and practice to verse 28, Chapter 12 of 1st Corinthians notably in areas of helps, governments, and teachers. A copy of the August issue is enclosed, (Three Gospel Standard Churches are in the USA; at Grand Rapids, Mich., Sheboygan, Wisc., and at Choteau, Mont.)

Continuing with thoughts about secret orders I note that Boaz (a type of Christ) said to Ruth (a type of the Church) "Go not to glean in another field...", Ruth 2:8. After rebirth the sons of God shall not and will not rend themselves apart from the gospel field of our Lord Jesus to go gleaning in the carnal fields of nature.

R.H. Pittman, a publisher and conditionalist minister, included in his book the two brief articles on secret orders. I've enclosed a copy. Dear Brother you write that the Lord has not called you to preach or even be a deacon. According to Peter you are to be a "lively stone" begotten unto a "lively hope" which persuades me that church members are not to be passive. Can it be that the Lord has called you to be a watchman unto spiritual Israel - see Ezekiel 3:17-21 and again at 33:7-19. If so, and the warning has been given, is it not proper for the watchman to cease warning so as to redeem his time for more profitable spiritual exercises, Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5? These scriptures, among others including Ez. Ch. 34 and Jer. 7:8-16, have been in my thoughts. Can you explain them to me?

The low state of religion in these evil days prompts my concern for our nation as well as for the church. Will I see the prophesy of Amos, Chapter 8, unfold, especially verses 11-13. In our own situation we travel great distances to assemble with brethren of like mind. Our membership is with the Dan River Church in North Carolina just south of Danville,Virginia a six hour drive one-way. In Maryland, its three hours or more depending on beach traffic to visit in and near Salisbury

on the Eastern Shore. Throughout the Northeast and the Mid-Atlantic states the Lord according to His purpose has been closing our churches for well over 75 years.

We have no record of your brother preaching at either Black Rock or at Ebenezer in Baltimore. There is a conditionalist congregation at Mt. Carmel about 30 miles northeast of Baltimore where he might have visited.

Black Rock had members from 1828 to 1972; Ebenezer from 1821 to 1981. Desolation has spread across our land (also in some other denominations as well). The clever foxes prophesied in the scriptures occupy some of our pleasant places, some have been given to historical societies, some stand abandoned and a few have been sold. So when we have an opportunity we visit the Staunton, Pigg, and Smith River Associations and some of the churches in the Roanoke, Greensboro, and Durham region. So, subtract 300 miles from the trip to the church I attend.

Should we despair over the state of religion? There are ample warnings in the New Testament Epistles and the Revelation. But Jesus has said that we should have no thought for tomorrow and Paul has written "Rejoice evermore, Pray without ceasing, In every thing give thanks:for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. "Quench not the Spirit"! I fear that I miss the mark in all respects. I pray that God give me a true spirit of prayer and thanksgiving for indeed I have so much to be thankful for, for hither-to the Lord hath helped me. Things that I know - I do know that the Lord has been my Keeper, my Protector, and my Salvation (Saviour) all the days of my life.

He gives me the breath of life; He feeds me with the fruits of His creation; He feeds me occasionally with spiritual food and drink that brings a measure of understanding that calms and soothes my soul. To save my body of clay from physical injury or death He has intervened on many occasions when Death has cast his shadow upon me. He has intervened to give me an escape from congregations of unbelievers, false professors and preachers. Sometimes He intervenes to dispose of the wicked schemes of my evil heart. With all of these blessings and mercies He does leave a thorn in my side, indeed at times it seems there are thorns in my feet as well.

Should I pray and give thanks to the Lord? Oh yes, for that would be to His glory. Should I rejoice evermore? Only if it is in Him, His grace, and His righteousness. Let us pray that He guide us in paths that glorify His graces of love and mercy and that spare us of conduct that glorifies His justice, His wrath, and His vengeance.

Dear Brother, may the Lord keep you in remembrance of His righteousness, may He guide you in every endeavor, may He comfort you

and give you great joy in being submissive to His will.

With hope and Love,
An unworthy one
Eugene F. Osborne

ARTICLES

From the Gospel Standard
Sent in by
Brother Eugene Osborne

THE NEEDS OF OUR CHURCHES

An address given by. J.K. Popham in 1907 to "a meeting of Strict Baptists." If these things needed to be said then, how much more so 95 years later!

We are not told the nature of the meeting or where it was held, but in Mr. Popharn's biography we are told that in 1907 he spoke in London and Nottingham for a movement seeking closer communion between the northern and southern churches.

Men, brethren and fathers, we are met in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; or, if we are not, our meeting must be in vain. We are met as representing, more or less, a small body of professed believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the great doctrines which He has left us in the Scriptures, which are of everlasting importance.

Let me ask you ... to unite with me in attempting at least to give God thanks that we are not met today to dig, and where we dig to lay a foundation. The Being of God - a Personal God; the doctrine of the Trinity; the eternal Sonship of Christ; the personality of the Holy Ghost; the truth of that marvellously sad and yet universally influential fact, as revealed in Genesis of our fall in Adam; the utter depravity of our nature - its blindness, and deadness and ignorance; the election of a family in Christ whom God would have, and will have; the coming of the Son of God in our nature, to be for them a substitute; His death - vicarious death; His resurrection and glorious ascension into heaven; His presence and intercession at the right hand of the Father; the descent of the Holy Ghost to each redeemed person in God's appointed time, to give each one what is promised - a new heart and a right spirit; to call each with an effectual calling, and to bring each one to some particular, personal acquaintance with the Person of Christ; the final perseverance of every one; the entrance of every one ultimately into heaven; - these. I take it, are truths which we all believe. And believing them, as we trust, by the Spirit's teaching, we are anxious to conserve them.

We are met in the interests of the churches with which we stand connected, and which in some decree and manner we represent. We are now, notwithstanding our possession of the truths which I have named to you in brief, a body of

people with many decaying causes amongst us - this is, I think without dispute with a ministry which has but very little evidence in it of being under the particular anointing of the Holy Ghost - and no ministerial friend present. I think, will attribute anything personal to this observation; it is a general observation - with hearers of a gadding spirit, little unction on them, much indistinctness in experience.

These are things which, I say again, are before us; at least, some of us. And I can but think, were we more deeply impressed with a sense of our condition as a body of professors. we should be much more disposed to turn each one aside, like Hezekiah to the wall, feeling our own running sores and sore boil, and pour us out, as helped, a prayer to God. Our state, I think, calls for this. I would not say anything about my own personal case, to obtrude it on your attention at all, beyond what I have said to you about our state generally, which has been out of a heavy feeling that is not new to me today. And while I speak to you, I am not a little conscious of the very great responsibility, and I think I may say equally of the very great honour, that you have put upon me in asking me to speak.

I would make a few remarks from a word you will find in the 85th Psalm: *"Wilt Thou not revive us again: that Thy people may rejoice in Thee?"*

First, with respect to the ministry, because that is usually the first to be revived in reviving the life of the church in this world. The ministry of the gospel is a divine ordinance. It derives its life from the Lord, who calls men to exercise it. Its efficacy is from His presence (Matt. 28. 1 9.20); its light from Him, to show men that the way to God is by the blood of Christ (Rev. 1.20; Eph. 2.1 3). Many ministers are present: with their personal experiences I am unacquainted. But I probably speak the inmost feeling of most, if not all of them, and join myself with them, when I say it will be our mercy if we are helped to prefer this petition with respect to our ministry: *"Wilt Thou not revive us again?"* That it is low, the churches give only too much evidence; for the pew will always more or less accurately reflect the pulpit. Hearers will reflect the ministry they sit under. Whether any of you, my ministerial brethren, take it as a mark of divine displeasure with us, as a body of people that the ministry is so lacking the divine blessing, I do not know. Personally I do so take it. The Lord has for some time past taken from us the ancient and the honorable, the counsellor and the eloquent orator. And we who are left have not their spirit, knowledge and power. If you take our unacquaintedness with the Scriptures. Our lack of entering in to the spirit and walking in the power of them, our lack of communion with God, and therefore our not receiving distinct communi-

cations from Him with which to go to our various congregations, I think you will arrive at an accurate conception of what state the ministry is in.

And again, if you take the state of our congregations, the few apparently who are called by grace; the painful indistinctness of those cases where there is some hope that God is at work; the lack of a knowledge of God and His law, of their particular transgressions of His law; the lack of deliverances wrought by manifestations of Christ, of distinct dealings between God and souls; and, further, if you regard the decaying state of most, perhaps, of our congregations, I think, again, you will have some evidence, clear, painful and indisputable, of the feeble condition of the ministry.

"Wilt Thou not revive us again?" - revive the ministry. And how seriously we need to be revived in regard to pastors. I would speak no disparaging word of any man who is called by the Holy Ghost and separated unto the gospel to go here and there, and speak in the name of God. But I do think you cannot have taken particular notice of the New Testament constitution of a church, and not have observed that its constitution is wrapt up with the settlement of a pastor. Pastors are promised (Jer. 3.15); they are one of the gifts of Christ as ascended, for the "perfecting of the saints" (Eph. 4. 8-16). If you regard the seven churches that once were in Asia as typical churches of Christ in the world, you must take their entire constitution - each church had its "angel."

This is a very solemn consideration for us as a body of people why it is that the Lord has withdrawn pastors, taking them away by death, and has not given us others to succeed them for the most part. Why it is that we are thus destitute of what is so emphatically a gospel institution is a very solemn matter, and may well form a very serious inquiry on our part. And were we blessed with grace to go before the Lord as a people, as congregations, as individuals, and seek to know from Him why it is, I think myself if He answered us, we should hear from Him this: *"Hast thou not procured this unto thyself?"* Many churches now destitute of this great gift of a pastor would find themselves, as thus answered, in the dust, and the places would become Bochims (Judges 2.4, *margin),* and fervent petitions would ascend to God that He would supply this lack which is so serious. This would be the beginning of a revival. Therefore, my brethren, let me in the first place seek to impress you with this - the revival we stand in need of as a body of people. the renewal of the gift of pastors.

Again, *"Wilt Thou not revive"* the ministry with respect to unction? Unction has been defined as authority, and I think it a good definition: it is the authority of the Holy Spirit. Where unction is, effects follow.

Two effects: the quickening of the dead and the edification of the saints, building them up on their most holy faith. If these two things are evidences of unction on any ministry, who will be able I would speak it tenderly as having such sorrowful cause to complain of myself - to lift up his head, and say he had much unction? No minister need want, need ever seek for more authority in a church, a greater place in the consciences and affections of his people, than that which unction will get for him. And if he does not get authority by unction, he gets, if he gets anything, what is not worth having. Where unction is in the ministry, the people receive the Word. It enters. Therefore may the Lord give us who speak in His name a great revival in this, a mighty increase where it is, and bestow it where it apparently is not, that the Word may multiply (2 Chron. 20.20; Ezra 6.14; Acts 6.7; 12.24; 19.20).

"Wilt Thou not revive us" in the ministry, in the next place, in regard to acquaintedness with the Scriptures? I do not mean, of course, the mere reading, but rather the knowledge of them, a reception of them by faith, and a close prayerful study of them. We ought to have, if we have not, critical congregations. At times I have said to my people, *"I do wish you to be very critical:"* By that I do not mean as to the form of sentences and sermons, but as to the doctrine, the spirit of the ministry - whether the minister has had any intercourse with God about, and over, his sermon; whether there is that in it which commends it to the hearers as having been obtained by prayer and study, and supplication for them - whether it answers to Paul's ministry (1 Thes. 1. 5.9, 10). My brethren, I do not know how some of you may be feeling about this but I, at this later day of my life, find exceedingly heavy thoughts as to my own personal case. I am convinced in my conscience of not having paid that attention to it, and the spirit of it, and the mind of the Spirit in it, which would have become me as one professing to be called to deal with men's souls, and to represent to them what the will of God is.

"Wilt Thou not revive us in that particular? Let me exhort you who speak in God's name: do get as close to the Scriptures as you can, and seek the mind of the Holy Ghost therein; that, receiving communications of that kind in answer to prayer from God, you may go to the various congregations to which you in God's providence are sent with a "Thus saith the Lord:" "Wilt Thou not revive the ministry" in another regard; that of a tender, affectionate, solicitous spirit in the ministers respecting their churches and congregations? Paul could say that he was as a tender nurse among the Thessalonians (2.7); that he was jealous over the Corinthians (1 Cor 11. 2) And I can but believe that one

who is rightly influenced by God separated unto the gospel of Jesus Christ, and set over a church and congregation, will in some degree have this spirit. He will have a solicitous care, a tender regard, an affection for his people. If he sees them gadding in their spirits, he will be wounded. If he sees them hard, if he sees inconsistencies in them, that will he his affliction. *"Who is offended,"* and a good minister does not burn? The apostle's complaint in his day was a serious one: All seek their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's." God knows how nearly it may be applied to us; and how truly, how generally. It is not for me to make the application. There was but one case of the right kind - that disinterested, warm-hearted kind, that he could then speak of (Phil. 2.20). May such a word (as verse 21) not apply to us, for Christ's sake!

"Wilt Thou not revive" the ministry in regard to fruits and effects, the mighty workings of God by it? Churches must decay if they are not replenished. Zion is to be replenished with converts. Weak churches are a source of trouble. If God were to work mightily by ministers, people would have more distinct dealings with Him, and then their ideas of truth, their experiences, would be more distinct, and that would mean their requirements as to the pulpits would he greater and more distinct. It would not then be enough that a minister should be summed up as a "good man" and that he should be regarded, with that presumption in his favour, as one who speaks the truth. No; they would want something more! A weak experience calls for a weak ministry, and a weak ministry in its turn begets weakness in the church. Hence there is weakness all round. But if God should come and revive us mightily by causing to be more effectual in our ministries, that would quickly more or less be seen in the experiences of our hearers.

I do not know that my ministerial brethren would at all wish me to apologize for speaking to them thus plainly. I think you will agree with me that these things are found upon all our skirts, and not by diligent search (Jer. 2.34). There they are. Can you go about our poor churches, can you see their decay, can you look at the people whose bones are sticking out where once they were covered with flesh, can you see the desolation. can you behold little churches that are like houses divided and not able to stand steadily, and not think there is a very grievous declension, and that for some cause God has a controversy with us as a body of people? I say not these things censoriously. If there is one man to whom I preach these things, he stands here. May the Lord look upon us in His infinite kindness, and revive the ministry among us.

But to speak a little to the Lord's people generally. *"Wilt*

Thou not revive us" as a people in regard to prayer? *"Restraining prayer, one says, "we cease to fight."* And I cannot but believe that one of the first symptoms - not seen perhaps, hardly discovered - of a declension in any persons or churches is in this particular Prayer declines. Dealings with God, distinct and close and constant, decline. Probably every person here who fears God will have to make confession that, at least in some regard, he is guilty in this. But prayer is God's gift. It is promised: and if there is a breach of the promise in any measure, it is for chastening or judgment. There is a great and solemn reason for it. It will be unspeakably solemn if it is in judgment, according to Isaiah 6.9, 10. Yet even in that sad event there is a remnant preserved and to be revived. Thus we may plead the promise by Christ himself: *"I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplications."* Following that and connected with it is this; *"And they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced:"*

Brethren, prayer restrained, we are lean; are as a city without walls, whose gates are broken down; are exposed to attacks from all quarters; we flee before the pursuer as men that have no strength; there are no exploits done by us according to that Scripture: *"The people who do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits:"* We obtain no promise; get no distinct light from heaven; are as people walking in the dark, not knowing at what we stumble. We greatly need then this prayer for revival. Of all things that the churches need, there seems to be none greater at this particular time than this the pouring out upon us of the Spirit of grace and supplications." Following we would go to God, we should make confession of our sad case, we should gain His ear. As a child who has had its parents' ear, but having given some offence gets the father's ear closed, feels pain until he recovers his regard, so he who has had prayer and has lost it. must realize himself miserable until he finds it again poured upon him.

"Wilt Thou not revive us again" in regard to our hearing? I speak now of people who are in the habit of hearing. You go to hear, but how? How do you go to hear? Ministers may he blameable. I have blamed them; I have blamed myself. Now I come to the hearers. How do you go? What do you go with? Probably full vessels perhaps full of conceit of yourselves. Perhaps full of some vanity, of business, or of other things. There may be covetousness, a big idol set up in your mind. A covetous man, you know, is an idolater; whatever he may think himself to be God says he is an idolater. Now you get this condition with these various things in your minds, the minister preaches and

you say it is all death to you. You have got the death; you take it with you. You perhaps hurt, too, somebody by whose side you sit, by a word you drop, or in some way you communicate your deathliness to your neighbour.

"Wilt thou not revive" the hearers in the spirit or hearing? How? By pouring fresh life into their souls from Thy fullness, whereby their want of Thee would be revived. Go then, tell the Lord your sad case in secret, and then look for an open answer in the ministry, if God has given you a minister, one whom He has sent to you. If you have no case probably you will get one by a hard blow, by a piercing sword from the ministry. Or if you have a case, you are warranted to go and look for some communication from God through the ministry. *"Wilt Thou not revive us again"* in regard to the spirit of hearing?

Once more. *"Wilt Thou not revive us again"* in regard to our congregations? How many of them are decaying! I speak not now immediately of any cause that may be assigned; the decay is seen in us as a body of people. But now, who can turn the thing? Who is able to cause the people to come flying as doves to their windows (Isa. 60.8)? *"In the multitude of people is the king's honour,"* and an increase of usefulness and strength to a church and congregation will be here. I do not mean that strength lies merely in the number, but what are you to do if you have no people? Where is the cause likely to go, if the numbers are continually decaying? Then we need the Lord in this particular. We cannot trim the truth, at least, I trust we never shall. May 2 Cor.13. 8 be true of us as a body. We do not want to make the services attractive to the senses, so as thereby to draw people in. God forbid we should do that'. But we do need that in His great mercy He should remove the causes of decay, and kindly revive us. Men may mockingly say, *"What do these feeble Jews? Will they fortify themselves? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned?"* Notwithstanding:, may we go on asking the Lord to revive our causes as to numbers. It is pleasant to ministers to prophesy upon the thick boughs, or to many hearers.

"Wilt Thou not revive" a spirit of union in the churches, according to Christ's prayer (John 17. 2 1)? that there may not be the distance there often is between those who hold the same truths, and hope one day to be in the same heaven, and cast their crowns, their individual crowns, at the feet of the same Lord. There ought not to be the distance and the shyness of which we have, alas, to complain. When you have allowed for all the differences that must necessarily exist in different localities, and when men are widely separated, there ought to be closer union than there is, among those

who profess the grand, the distinguishing, the imperishable doctrines of sovereign grace, as we profess them, as we believe they have once for all been delivered to us. May we then in our spirits turn to Almighty God, confessing our sinfulness. and that we have justly incurred His displeasure, and call upon Him mightily as one man that He would most mercifully return to the thousands of Israel, that He would arise with the ark of His strength and enter into His rest. Zion is His resting-place. He says, ***"Here will I dwell, for I have desired it."*** Alas, we may fear lest our sins have provoked Him to break the bands of brotherhood (Zach. 11. 14).

May we then be truly, deeply, properly affected by our state as a body of people: so affected by it as to get into the dust, lying as low as we can, and crying mightily, as in the language of the text:

"Wilt thou not revive us again?" even by returning to us according to Zach. 1. 16.

Let me just mention the sequel, the most pleasant and precious effect: ***"That Thy people may rejoice in Thee."*** We believe in a personal God. May we thank Him that we do. The vague, the foolish, the altogether erroneous view of the immanence of God as permeating the whole of creation so as to make God creation and creation God, we reprobate and abhor with all our souls. We believe in a personal God. We believe that this God is knowable: that man may know Him. He came, the second Person in the Trinity, Jesus Christ, that He might make God known; as He said, "I speak to the world those things which I have heard of Him. I do nothing of Myself but as My Father hath taught Me, I speak these things" (John 8.26, 28). And moreover, Jesus Christ, very God and very man, is to be known, is made known by the Spirit (John 16.14). How else can you rejoice in Him? If you know Him not, can you rejoice in Him? If He comes down to you, if by the Spirit He commands the heavens and skies to pour down righteousness upon us, and we perceive Him in those mighty acts of His grace and love. We shall know Him. And so knowing Him, rejoice in Him as our All in all.

"That Thy people may rejoice in" - not ideas; not, I will venture to say, in correct notions: not in a visible worship, however true and simple; not in numbers, however great; not in a ministry, however beautiful (Isa. 52.7), taken alone. No, but in God Himself discovering Himself as a quickening Spirit to us, speaking, teaching, communicating to our souls of His own goodness. fullness, mercy, precious blood and justifying righteousness.

I will add: ***"Wilt Thou not revive us"*** as a people in our brotherly love and union and communion, that we may in our corporate capacity rejoice in Thee, and in Thy return to us and Thy abiding presence and glory in and among us? Amen.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." – Hebrews viii. 25.

If the gracious Lord did not live to make intercession for us, he could hardly be said to save us to the uttermost. But as he ever lives at God's right hand and is ever interceding, ever presenting the perfume of his acceptable mediation, this gives us a certain pledge of his love, his pity, and his power. Is not this very encouraging to all who come unto God by him? and may we not say, "Such are we O Lord; we do come, we daily come to thee by Jesus Christ? And do we not need all the encouragement that God may give us out of it? for we often sink very low through temptation and trial and the manifold afflictions of the way. How blessed, then, it is if you can only trace this mark of grace in your soul when others seem almost lost out of sight. If you know anything of internal work, you know this whether you have come, whether you are coming to God by Jesus Christ. It is very simple, yet very expressive. Have you come as an outcast? have you come as ready to perish? for these are expressly spoken of as coming in that day when the great trumpet is blown, the great and glorious trumpet of the gospel, for its jubilee notes are sounded specially for them, Have you come in faith? have you come in hope? have you come in love? and have you fuund any measure of acceptance and approbation in your own bosom? "Yes," say some, "with all my doubts, fears, and questioning, I can answer your question with an honest heart and a firm front, that I have come to God by Jesus Christ, and have felt the blessedness of so doing." When you have known something or will know something about the uttermost; and the more you know about the uttermost, the more you will prize salvation by grace, the more you will cleave to the Son of God, the more you will hang upon his finished work, and the more you will look unto him who has so kindly said, ***"Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else."***

Elder J. C. Philpot

"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." - Romans V.21.

This is the mercy for mourning saints who are sighing and groaning under a body of sin and death, that God has decreed that grace not only may reign, but that it

must reign. Were it left to us, we could no more rescue ourselves from the dominion of sin than the children of Israel could deliver themselves from the house of Egyptian bondage. But they sighed and groaned by reason of the bondage, and their cry came up unto God. He had respect unto his covenant, and looked upon them and delivered them (Exodus ii. 23-25). So God has determined on behalf of his people that sin shall not be their eternal ruin; that it shall not plunge them into me after crime, until it casts them at last into the grief of endless woe, but that grace ***"shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life."*** But it must reign here as well as hereafter, for by its reign here its eternal triumph is secured. It must then subdue our proud hearts, and never cease to sway its peaceful sceptre over them until it has secured in them absolute and unconditional victory. Now this is what every Sincere child of God most earnestly longs to feel and realise. He longs to embrace Jesus and be embraced by him in the arms of love and affection. As the hymn says,

"But now subdued by sovereign grace,
My spirit longs for thy embrace."

He hates sin, though it daily, hourly, momently works in him, and is ever seeking to regain its former mastery; he abhors that cruel tyrant who set him to do his vilest drudgery, deceived and deluded him by a thousand lying promises, dragged him again and again into captivity, and but for Sovereign grace would have sealed his eternal destruction. Subdued by the sceptre of mercy, he longs for the dominion of grace over every faculty of his soul and every member of his body. "O," he says, ***"let grace reign and rule in my breast; let it not suffer any sin to have dominion over me; let it tame every unruly desire, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ !"*** Thus, he who truly fears God looks to grace, and to grace only, not merely to save, but to sanctify; not only to pardon sin, but to subdue it; not only to secure him an inheritance among the saints in light, but to make him meet for it.

Elder J.C. Philpot

SECRET SOCIETIES

Primitive or Old School Baptists oppose secret institutions of the world; so did Jesus. He said: ***"I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing."— Jno. 18:20.***

They believe good works should shine out before men and not be shut up within a lodge, that God, and not the institutions of men, be glorified.

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union will convene the Lord willing the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in March 2002. Song service begins at 10:00 a.m. at Malmaison Church.

An invitation is extended to all our ministers, brethren and friends.

Peggy Wells - Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene with Moon's Creek Church the fifth Sunday in March. The church is located about 1/2 mile east of highway 86 between Danville and Yanceyville on Park Springs Road.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Sue Blalock, Clerk

Romans 8:23-24

And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope : for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 2001

Annie Small, NC 20.00
Reed Harper, TX 7.00
In memory of Linda Joyce Hatchett
Jerald Hatchett, OK 50.00
Norma Smith, Va 2.00
Elder John T. Jones, LA 12.00
Henry McGinnis, KY 2.00
Charity Dowdy, NC 2.00
Kenneth Evans, AL 2.00
Tillman Pullig, TX 2.00
In memory of Eva Elizabeth Harlow
R. W. Forsyth, TX 50.00
Daniel Doss, TN 2.00
Gayle Phillips, AL 10.00
Roy Locke, KY 2.00
George Hyslip, TN 10.00

OBITUARIES

ESSIE PEARL BANE

Sister Bane, 97, passed from this life on Thursday, February 14, 2002 at the Wyoming Continuous Care Center in New Richmond, West Virginia after a long illness.

She was born on December 17, 1904 in Maben, West Virginia. She was the daughter of the late Henry Burton and Judy Canada Polk. She was a homemaker and a beloved.

faithful member of the Newfound Primitive Baptist Church in Wyoming County. West Virginia.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Fred Bane; a son, Glen Bane; a daughter. Margie Bane; three brothers, Raymond, Estil, and Ernest Polk; and a sister. Laura King.

Survivors include five sons, Zane Bane and his wife. Garnett, of Cowen, Frank Bane ot Lynco, Bill Bane and his wife of Chicago, Gene Bane of Lynco, and Kenneth D. Batie and his wife, Nadine, of Oceana; two daughters, Jessie Thompson of Chicago and Edna Bane of Lynco; a sister, Ina Tonoff of Bolt; 15 grandchildren; 24 great-grandchildren: and six great-great-grandchildren.

Services were held Sunday, February 17, 2002 at 1:00 p.m. at the Calfee Funeral Service Chapel at Pineville, West Virginia with Elder J.B. Farmer officiating. Burial was in the McDonald Cemetery, Crouch's Farm near Oceana, West Virginia. Sons and grandsons served as pallbearers.

Sister Bane was dearly beloved by all who knew her. She bore the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. We are taught that a tree is known by its fruit and therefore have much assurance that, bearing that good fruit, she must have been highly blessed of God. She loved to receive the company of the brethren into her home. She was diligent and faithful to attend her meetings and was present many times when she was in a weakened physical condition. She was given a strong desire to meet together with her brethren and sister's of the church, even after she took up residence in the nursing home. Many times she would say. "If only I could go to church one more time." I hope that as long as I am in this world, I will never forget her beautiful, sweet smile that greeted her loved ones.

She fell asleep peacefully, we trust, in Jesus. She, we are assured, is now in company with that great cloud of witnesses that encompasses the people of God. waiting for the appearance of the Lord, Himself, to raise those who have died in Christ and to change those who are alive and remain at His coming, to be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air. According to the holy scriptures, ***"it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see him as he is."*** May we be comforted by these words. She will be greatly missed but I believe that she is far better off now. Because, as the inspired apostle said. ***"To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord."***

This was written by one who loved her, I hope in truth.

Elder J.B. Farmer

OBITUARY OF SIS. LENA ADAMS CLARK

In sorrow yet in humble submission to the will of God, we mark the death of our dear sister in Christ, Lena Adams Clark. Sis. Clark was born in rural Patrick County, Virginia on September 11, 1918, a daughter of the late Bro. George Adams and Sis. Anna Foley Adams.

On December 26, 1936 she was united in marriage to Claude Swanson Clark by Pastor A. E. Estall at Stuart, Va. To their union was born one son, Curtis L. Clark who, together with his own family, was a neighbor and a precious help to his parents. Sis. Clark and her dear husband were both employed by a local furniture company for many years.

Like a number of her friends and neighbors, as a child Sis. Clark was taken by her parents to Goblintown Church, and little by little, the Lord in His mercy instilled in her heart a love for Him, for the church and for His sweet doctrine of salvation by grace. On the 3rd Saturday night in May, 1975 she related to the church a portion of her experience of grace and was gladly received into fellowship. She was baptized the following 1st Sunday in June by the late Elder Bennie Clifton. Not long afterward, she was chosen clerk of the church and served faithfully and well until bodily afflictions rendered her incapable of serving longer, a period of over twenty years.

Sis. Clark and her husband Claude were always very diligent in the care and upkeep of the Goblintown meeting house and grounds. They withheld nothing of heart or hand in their labor of love for the benefit of the church. We will all cherish their memories as long as we survive them.

After suffering a severe stroke and a fall in her home, Sis. Clark was an invalid for the balance of her life. For about the last 24 years, following the death of her husband in 1998, she lived at the Blue Ridge Nursing Home in Stuart. There, she passed from this life on July 14, 2001. Her funeral service was held three days later at Moody Funeral Home in Stuart by her Pastor. Her mortal body was laid to rest in the Ross-Harbour Methodist Church Cemetery, beside the remains of her husband.

In addition to her son Curtis and his wife Anita T. Clark, she was survived by three grandchildren, C. Lee Clark, Jeff L. Clark and Mrs. Lisa C. Luther; six great-grandchildren; three brothers, Noel, Buren and Barney Adams; and two sisters, Mrs. Cecil (Clara) Adams and Mrs. Nolen (Lucille) Koger.

We feel assured that Sis. Clark is now enjoying sweet peace and rest in the Lord, as she waits for the appearing of her Dear Redeemer. May all who loved her, both in na-

ture and in the spirit, be united together in a common desire, "Lord, thy will be done."

It was agreed in our last meeting to prepare three copies of this obituary; One for the church records, one for her family and one to be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Goblintown Church in conference, the 20th day of October, 2001.

Elder John T. Wingfield, Mod.
Sis. Judy Pendleton, Clerk

EUNA R. FLEET

Sister Edna Fleet passed away on Thursday, January 31, 2002.

Services were held on February 2, 2002, With Larry W. Osborne officiating. She was buried in Union Grove Cemetery.

She was born October 13, 1904, in Upshur County, Texas.

She is survived by her daughter, Carolyn Fleet of Irving, Texas, eight grandchildren seventeen great grandchildren, no great great grandchildren and a sister, Maye Mathis of Longview, Texas.

Sister Fleet was the widow of Elder W. W. Fleet, who preceded her in death.

At the time of her death, she was a member of Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church in East Mountain, Texas.

Written at the request of Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church by Marvin Curnutt, Church Clerk.

IN MEMORY OF OUR BELOVED BROTHER CLYDE ODELL JOHNSON

Once again our hearts are deeply saddened by the removal of a precious brother in Christ from our presence. We feel our loss is his eternal gain. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

Brother Clyde was born a son of Walter Irving and Cora Powell Johnson on July 22. 1922 and fell asleep in the Lord, October 29, 2001.

He is survived by his dear wife of 54 years, Lucy Melinda Boone Johnson; daughter and son-in-law Melinda Gail and Howard Eugene Huff sons and daughters-in law Carl O. and Anita Johnson: Buren C. and Janet Johnson: grandchildren Chris and wife Georginea Johnson, Bryan Johnson and fiancee Amy, Patrick Johnson, Sarah and Allison Huff: great-granddaughter, Courtney Johnson. He is also survived by two sisters, two brothers, numerous nieces, nephews and many friends.

He served four years in the U.S. Army, 15 months in the heat of the battles of World War II. He was with

one of his comrades, when he stepped on a land mine that blew his right leg off. He fell on Clyde and he helped carry him out to the medics. He was later wounded by shrapnel from an enemy shell, but didn't lose any time from battle and was awarded the Purple Heart. He realized the danger and experienced many trying times, but his faith never wavered.

He joined Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, May 11, 1968, the church later saw a gift in Brother Clyde and he was ordained to the office of deacon, November 5, 1983. He manifested a great love for the church and served faithfully in that gift, as long as he was physically able.

The funeral was conducted at Lynch Funeral Home Chapel in Rocky Mount. Virginia. The writer and Elder W.T. Conner were called upon for the memorial service. His body was laid to rest in Franklin Memorial Park to await the summons from on high.

Elder Junior Conner

RAYMOND LUCAS

This is a hard undertaking for me. Needless to say I am weak and deeply saddened by the passing of my brother Raymond. I feel so helpless, unqualified and unworthy for sure. God willing by request, I will try to pen down a brief obituary for Valley View Church, the church he so much loved. Raymond and I were two of a family of eight children. We were born and grew up on a farm in Montgomery County, Riner, Va. where Raymond lived all of his life. Farming was his Occupation and he enjoyed farming. He and his loving wife of 60 plus years were blessed with a family of two precious children that he adored. He and his wife joined Valley View Primitive Baptist Church the third Sunday in May, 1975 and was baptized on the third Sunday in June, 1975 in Little River by Elder Roy Agee.

In the last few years of his life so much illness, sorrow and grief was added to his pain. God saw fit to remove by death his wife, his only son, a brother, a sister-in-law and he was left alone. Through it all by grace he was made able to endure the pain and to say ***"God's will shall be done"***. He believed in the "will's" and "shall's" of God. He was truly an inspiration to all who knew him. Raymond Jacob Lucas born March 15,1910, passed away October 20, 2001, making his stay on earth 91 years 7 months and four days. He leaves to mourn his passing a precious daughter and son-in-law Helen and Harold Eanes, a daughter-in-law, Thelma Lucas, two grand children, seven great grand children, five sisters and a host of friends and relatives. Oh how we miss him!

His funeral was conducted by our Pastor Elder Raymond Goad at Home Funeral Chapel, Christians-

burg, Va. Amazing Grace, his favorite hymn was sung. Major Nathen Lucas, his grandson had penned down and read to the congregation a list of fond and loving memories of his grand-dad. After funeral service his body was taken to Sunset Cemetery in the Lucas plot there to rest till Jesus comes to gather his jewels home. We at Valley View do and will miss his presence with us. May we be given by grace to say and believe our loss is his eternal gain. May love and fellowship dwell with us, now and forever.

Irene (Lucas) Thompson.

IN MEMORY OF BROTHER POSEY LEE POINDEXTER

It is with great sadness, yet with a sense of reconciliation, we bow in humble submission to the Lord's will.

By request of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, I will attempt to write an obituary of our beloved brother, Posey Lee Poindexter. Brother Posey was born the son of John Calvin and Missour Holland Poindexter on July 2, 1920 and was called home on June 19, 2001. He was a U.S. Army veteran of World War II, serving from 1942 to *1945,* honored to have defended his country in the D-Day Invasion and the Battle of the Bulge: also serving in England, France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Poland and Czechoslovakia. He was a member of American Legion Post #6 for 40 years and retired from Lane Company with 25 years of service. He was received as a member of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church in 1961 and ordained a deacon in 1966. I feel he was called and devoted to the Lord by serving the church that he loved. He was faithful and I believe he died in the triumphs of that faith, which is of the Lord.

Brother Posey and Sister Elsie visited many churches far and near and was known for their gift to sing the songs of Zion.

He is survived by his loving and faithful wife of 53 years, Elsie J. Poindexter, who cared for him in a very special way, that only a loving wife could do and was by his side at their home, when he was called away. May the Lord comfort her as only he can do. He is also survived by a host of nieces, nephews, sisters-in-law, brothers-in-law and many special friends.

Funeral services were held at Lynch Funeral Home Chapel on June 22, 2001 by his pastor, Elder Junior Conner (if by grace so called) and Elder W.T. Conner. He was laid to rest at Franklin Memorial Park to await the resurrection.

Humbly submitted,
Elder Junior Conner, Moderator
Elsie J. Poindexter, Clerk

BROTHER IRA C. "PETE" STRADER

On October 6, 2001 the Lord called home our precious Brother Pete at the age of 82. His funeral was conducted at 3 P.M. on October 9, 2001 by his pastor Elder Kenneth Key. His body was laid to rest in the Danview Cemetery in Eden.

Having been born to the late Arthur and Mary T. Elizabeth Barber Strader, he was a native of Rockingham County. Brother Pete was a retired truck driver of Norman Minter Pure Oil Company as well as an avid farmer. He served his country in World War II as a member of the U.S. Army.

On November 29, 1947 he and Sister Roxie Billings Strader were, joined together in a union truly made in heaven. They were blessed with 54 years of marriage. In addition to Sister Roxie, Brother Pete is survived by a sister, Lorene Strader Tate of Danville, Virginia; a brother, Numa Strader of Ruffin; and a number of nieces and nephews.

Brother Pete was led to ask for a home in Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on September 25, 1982 and was baptized on October 10, 1982 by his *former* pastor Elder David Spangler. From that time on, he was blessed to walk humbly and softly among his brethren. One of the most special things about Brother Pete was how he greeted his brethren with such love and warmth. He always had a wonderfully warm smile which he shared freely and which will be greatly missed by those who loved him. Although we truly miss him, we know that the Scriptures say. ***"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints" (Psalms 116:15.)*** I'm sure Brother Pete could witness with the words of the hymn writers:

"No sorrow be vented that day.
When Jesus has called me home
But singing and shouting, let each brother say,
"He's gone from the evil to come."

May we all be blessed as, Paul wrote in I Thessalonians 4:13, to "sorrow not even as others which have no hope." Our prayer is that the gracious heavenly Master will fill the void in the life of our dear Sister Roxie with his healing presence and bless her to feel that the eternal God is her refuge and underneath her are the everlasting arms.

Humbly submitted,
Mary Hawkins

ST. JOHN 15:11-13.

These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

"ANOTHER GREAT TREE HAS FALLEN"

It is our sad duty to report the death of Elder Julian Williams, who has served on the staff of "The Signs of the Times" since 1977, and as circulation manager and President since 1979.

He was also an able minister and served Malmaison, his home church along with Canaan and Leatherwood Churches, all located near Danville, Va. He also visited other churches in Virginia, North Carolina and Maryland and sister associations throughout the South and Eastern United States.

Elder Williams was joyfully received where ever he went. He was known for his plain and bold speaking of the truth as most surely believed among the Lord's people.

We hereby bow in humble submission to God's holy will with a precious hope of meeting again where death will never come and all tears will be wiped from our face.

Love and best wishes to Sister Mae and her loving family. May God give you all the sufficient grace he has promised.

Elder Kenneth R. Key

POSTMASTER

Please send address changes to:

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202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

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EDITORIAL

Elder R. H. Campbell

So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

In the beginning, the day of formation that is, God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and in this garden God planted many trees which were pleasant to the sight and good for food, and in the midst of the garden he planted the tree of life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and he placed the man there to dress and keep the garden.. The garden was the perfect environment which God had created for man to dwell; with all of the necessities for a perfect life in the presence of God, He walked, talked and communed with God in perfect peace and harmony with his surroundings.

This was the beginning of the world, as we know it; the days prior to this, were the days of creation and they were only in the mind of God because the things created did not exist, during that period, for God said in the second chapter of Genesis, *(Gen. Chap 2, vs. 4-5) "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord made the earth and the heavens, and every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew; for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground."* Meaning the things created in the first chapter of Genesis had no form or physical substance when God saw everything that he had made and pronounced it very good, he was seeing it in his mind's eye as we would say. Then began the days of formation in which the things that were created, In the beginning, began to physically take shape, and have an existence in this time world, fulfilling the purposes for which they were created.

The days of creation are referred to in the following scriptures as, before the foundation of the world, because the foundation of the world was when it actually came into existence; it is during this period when God's elect were chosen in Christ, and all things that were predestinated of God were, in fact determined, although they were just as sure and certain to follow as though they already were in existence. These things, which were determined, were as the things created which had no existence in the days of creation, but, in time were made manifest, even so, all of the things predestinated or determined before the foundation of the world will, with the same certainty and surety be manifested in time, precisely as planned, as are all of the other works and attributes of God.

As stated above there was planted in the garden, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and this tree was seemingly a very special and unique plant with its own peculiar characteristics, because it was not included with the trees that were pleasant to the sight and good for food, and was not included with the tree of life which was in the midst of the garden, but it was added after the tree of life and, in a manner of speaking, seemingly of less honor in that it was the last one planted. It was, however, a very significant part of God's creation, but it was not included with the naming of the others because its purpose was not for the good of the man whom God had created, in the same manner as were the other trees and creations.

Man was created upright and innocent, a being in the image of God, with no guile nor deceit in his mouth, because God had pronounced all of his creation good, when he viewed it on the sixth day of creation, and this included the man as he was created, so as formed he was perfect and well pleasing unto God. This tree of the knowledge of good and evil was, in a sense, foreign to the rest of God's creation, which was all for the good and the welfare of man, because this tree was for his downfall. This was all in the plan from the beginning, its purpose for being planted, if you please, and it served its purpose as did all of the other creation that God made, and is also among those, ***"all things that work together for good to them that love God"*** in the final analysis, because it ultimately makes manifest a definite and eternal distinction between the elect and the non-elect.

This tree was in God's plan in like manner as Judas, the one who betrayed Jesus. Judas was numbered with the twelve, but his being was not for the same purpose as the other apostles; his work was evil, in fact, you might say that Judas's deeds were a typical example of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, in Christ's day; for his presence manifested the results of the eating of the fruit of this tree which man partook in violation of God's command, causing all sin

which occurs to enter the realm of nature. God told the man that he may freely eat of every tree of the garden, but he added, thou shalt not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. The command is worded in such a way that it precluded the possibility that they would not partake of it, for it says, for in the day that thou eatest thereof, not if thou eatest thereof, but in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

All of these things, which resulted from man's partaking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil were just as necessary in the plan of God as all the rest of his creation; but for a different purpose. The purpose in the whole plan of salvation was that God's love, for his chosen generation might be made manifest in his bestowing mercy and grace upon them, and saving them from this state of sin and death that was placed upon them because of their partaking of the forbidden tree; this was shown in the fact that the remedy was prepared before the disease occurred. This he did by first creating the tree of life, an antidote for the malady that came upon all men who were created in his image, but subject to vanity. This procedure separates the elect from the non elect, by revealing his love for the chosen vessels and makes manifest his just and utter condemnation of the wickedness of the serpent and his seed, and his hatred for all evil, This was all determined before time began, but is made manifest in time, and therefore cannot be changed by anything that occurs in time; as one writer said, *(Psa. 90, vs, 9) "We spend our years as a tale that is told."* already told.

Man did indeed eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and did indeed die to that state of innocent purity into which he was created. By his partaking of the tree he was separated from God, no longer in his image, given coats of skin, the natural characteristic that he assumed when he died to the life that he had preciously lived. He was now carnal, at enmity with God and all things spiritual and would forever have remained in that undone and depraved condition unless or until, he is regenerated and brought back to that image in which he was created, which was in the image of God.

Because of sin, judgement was pronounced upon this man, the ground was cursed for his sake and would not yield food unto him, as in the beginning, for God told him that because he had done this, (Gen. Chap 4, vs. 18-19) *"Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee and thou shalt eat the herb of the field: In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, til thou return unto the ground: for out of it thou wast taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return,"* and he did not say for a short time. God had originally placed man in the garden to dress it and to keep it, but regard-

less of being given the above command, regarding the eating of the fruit of the trees, the only tree of which it is recorded that man ate, was the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the only one that he was commanded not to eat. Because of this act of flagrant disobedience, judgement was placed upon the serpent, Eve and Adam, and man were driven from the garden, and placed in the earth under the dominion of the serpent, which was the world of nature, in which the man lives unto this day, an alien from God and the paradise in which he was originally created.

Carnality is the state of death to which God refers when he said, ***"For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die"***, death being the separation from God and the world into which he was created. Paul said, to be carnally minded is death, and is enmity with God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. This is all men in nature because this was the judgement that was placed upon them.

Man, as he was now, in nature clothed in those coats of skin, could not partake of the tree of life and therefore God drove him from the garden and placed a Cherubim and a flaming sword at the east in Eden to keep the way of the tree of life, lest he should put forth his hand and partake of the tree of life and live forever. The tree of life is still in existence today, in Christ, but it is not available to all men, it is reserved for those who were created in the image of God, in the beginning, before the serpent beguiled the woman and before sin entered into the world. It's existence has been demonstrated down through the ages, time and time again, as God raised up servants to lead his children in times of adversity, delivering them from the power and devices of Satan, and through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, delivered them from the fiery furnace, stopped the mouth of lions and overcome odds that the man could never overcome. This he did to demonstrate the eternal presence of the tree of life, under the watch care of the Cheruba and the Flaming Sword, and make manifest his everlasting love and sovereignty among his people.

The tree of life was formed for the good of those who were created in the image of God, in the days of creation; those who were commanded to go forth and replenish the earth, have dominion over it and subdue it. In the transgression, judgement was pronounced upon the man and he was driven out of the garden into the natural world and the curse changed the chain of command insofar as man is concerned. He is now, in the flesh, under the dominion of the serpent, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that works in the children of disobedience, which includes all men in the flesh and are without God and without hope in the world. Although they transgressed, this did not annul the

first commandment of God, that they should go forth and multiply and replenish the earth, because, this all was in the plan, from the beginning. It is in the same manner as the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after the promise to Abram, did not make the promise of none effect, so it is now. God's decrees and commandments stand fast, and must be obeyed, regardless of what may occur in the process of their being executed. To man, it may seem, that the plans are changed by what happens, but this is not so. God speaks and it is done, he commands, and it stands fast regardless of the devices or efforts of main principalities, powers or any other creature, and he is of the same mind yesterday, today and forever. The tree of life was the assurance that all of the elect would be kept by the power of God although they were under the dominion of the serpent in the flesh.

Isaiah spoke of the way of the tree of life, in this manner, *(Isa. Chap 35, vs 8-10) "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring man, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."* This highway, even as the way of the tree of life, is not something that is visible to the eye of the man in nature, yet it is as present with the elect as the things that are visible to him. It is a highway that has no places to enter or exit, the redeemed are placed there and the only destination is the gate of heaven. It is even as is recorded in (Job Chap 28, vs. 7-8) *"There is a path which no foul knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen: The lion's whelp hath not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it."* The creatures of this world, including man, have no right or claim to the way of the tree of life, nor the way of holiness, nor this path which is unknown to the vultures eye and the beasts of the earth; but by the mercy and grace of God the ransomed of the Lord shall walk there and shall finally come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. This is in spite of the pitfalls and afflictions that may abide them in their journey here in time. The way of the tree of life, or way of holiness, are but different descriptions of the way in which God displays his sovereignty over all of his creation, by his caring for Israel, under the law and in the gospel day in spite of their carnal nature, and the enmity that the natural man has toward him and all of his ways.

God chose a man, Abram, of all the men who were upon the face of the earth, at that time, told him to leave his home, his kindred: and go into a country that he would show him, and he would be a great nation and that all nations of the earth would be blessed in him, and he would be with him in all that he did, Thus began the nation of Israel, God's chosen people, the Lord's portion, those spoken of by Moses in the song that he taught the children of Israel to sing just before his death, ***Deut. Chap 32, vs. 8-90. "When the Most High divided unto the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."*** A people, chosen of God and reserved unto himself, those whom he formed for himself, whom he loved with an everlasting love and whom he draws unto him with loving-kindness. These are the ones for whom, the way of the tree of life and the highway of holiness are reserved and it is just as sure and certain to be their heritage as the fact that there is a God; for the integrity of the Godhead is behind the promise.

God was making manifest the way of the tree of life, in the salvation of Israel, when he called Moses to lead the children out of Egyptian bondage, representative of the bond of flesh which he must dwell in this world, into the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey, an earthly type of the garden of Eden, a paradise on earth where God would dwell with them and would be their God and they would be his people. Just as in the garden, the people rebelled and would turn back from following in his ways, but he never left them nor forsook them completely, he would punish them, for their sins, and bring them back into their land again. You would think that they would learn to obey, but man is a stiff necked and rebellious creature, in nature, and will insist on going his own way as long as he can. It is only because of the longsuffering of God that they were not destroyed in the garden, and only because of his abounding love, grace and mercy that they are continuing unto this day. The way of the tree of life is their assurance, that God's plan of salvation from the beginning, will be sure and certain to every child of grace, chosen in Christ before the world began, This is all according to the promise made to Abraham that his spiritual lineage all down through time would be blessed in him. Peter referred to them as the chosen generation, the royal priesthood, the holy nation, and peculiar people: that they should show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of nature's darkness into his marvelous light, which is the way of the tree of life.

Saul of Tarsus was a living example of God's bringing of the man in nature into the spiritual realm, and

he said that his experience was a pattern to them that should thereafter believe on Jesus unto eternal life. They do not direct their own steps, cannot explain the reasons for their being called, other than as Paul said, *"it is by the grace of God that I am what I am"*. Saul would have bound the disciples in Damascus, instead of preaching the gospel to them, but by the power of God, utilizing the way of the tree of life, the apostle Paul arrived in Damascus a preacher of righteousness, no longer a persecuter and injurious to the cause. None will ever fail to be brought into the fold, and none so brought in, shall ever fail away and lose that goodly heritage of which David spoke, because it has been reserved for them in heaven from before the foundation of the world.

Jesus Christ the immaculate son of God is the tree of life incarnate, he came the way, the truth and the life and said that *"no man cometh unto the Father but by me."* The is the way that the tree of life is manifested in this day; for man to see the kingdom of heaven, he must be born again, and for man to be born again Jesus must have died and taken away the law of sin and death, which was imposed upon man because of sin, that they may have boldness to enter into the holiest by his blood, Jesus told his disciples, when he was with them, after the Passover feast and just before he was delivered unto the mob, *(John Chap 14, vs. 16-18) "And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the word of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."* This promise was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost when the Spirit came down and sat upon them and they were filled with the Holy Ghost; they began to speak with other tongues as the spirit gave them utterance. This was when the tree of life again became available to the household of faith directly, fulfilling the promise of Jesus which he made unto his disciples when he said, *(Math. Chap 17, vs. 19) "I give unto you the keys of the kingdom of heaven and whatsoever thou shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."* This was not a gift to the apostles, but rather a gift to the church by the power of the Holy Ghost, which was given unto them on the day of Pentecost and they went forth declaring these wonderful works of God, binding those who were given ears to hear, Oh, the beauty and the glory of these wonderful promises that have been left on record for those who have been given eyes to see, ears to hear and hearts to understand and believe these beautiful truths. These are the ones to whom the entire word of God is addressed,

and they stand in awe that such a wretch, as they feel themselves to be, could be heirs to such a grand and glorious legacy. May the riches of God's grace be with all of the heirs of promise constantly reminding them of the earnest of the inheritance which is laid up in heaven for them awaiting the completion of God's work in their lives.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brother Key.

The Church at Laurel Ridge voted to call a Presbytery to look into the qualification of Brother Samuel Lilly as a gospel minister, and to lay hands on him if found qualified.

The Lord willing this meeting is to be on Saturday before the fifth Sunday in June which will be June 29 - 2002 Service starting at I0-A.M

We also want to have services the next day which will be fifth Sunday in June , that will be the Lord willing, on June 30TH.

Hope you can come and we would like for you to announce this at your meetings if you will. Thank you and hope to see you there.

Done by order of the Church, while in conference Mar. 16, 2002.

Elder Leonard J.Brammer Pastor.
G.W. Conner, Clerk.

Bryan, Texas
2-9-2002

Dear Elder Terry:

It is time to renew my subscription, I would hate to miss a copy.

Through the goodness of Sister Audrey Hamrick I get sermons on tape, otherwise I rely on The Signs for my preaching, there is no church here.

May there always be a Signs of the Times for all who love the truth.

Unworthy,
Inez Gearner

March 13, 2002

Elder Wm. Hale Terry

I was baptized in Aug. 1973 by Elders David Spangler and Ben Preston in Lake Mayfield, Mossyrock, WA. during the last days that the Primitive Baptist Church existed there. My mother was Josie Shearer Mitchell, a lifelong member of the Yakima, WA (Naches branch) of the church.

Since my residence is 70 miles from Mossyrock, I have had to establish myself with a good Bible believing church here in Olympia, Wa.

My Sister, Minnie Cunningham, of Portland is the only remaining and living member that I know in this area; and she sent me a years subscription to the Signs last year. I had

been so hungry to read those good sermons you publish.

Please establish my renewal for 1 year with the enclosed check. I am 93 years old, but active.

Sincerely,
Alma Coate-Wilson

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511 Tennessee St.
Salem, Va. 24153
March 8, 2002

Elder Kenneth Key
721 Willard Street
Greensboro, N.C. 27405

Dear Brother Key,

I am sending this letter to you for your consideration and if seen fit, for publication in the Signs. Several Brothers and Sisters have asked me about my religious experience. I replied that if I had any experience it was contained in hymn 4 18 of the Goble Hymn Book. Some have said they would like to see me write my experience for others to read. I felt at that time I didn't have the ability to collect my thoughts and feelings if a way that would be of benefit to anyone else. Recently I have asked God to direct my mind, heart, and hands, that I might fulfill their request.

First I would like to say that the beliefs that I now treasure and the hope within my breast of eternal life, is not the result of the works or persuasion of any man or woman, but is by the Grace and Mercy of Almighty God. I hope I am thankful that God placed me in a family of God-fearing fathers and mothers, that had been given a love of Salvation by Grace through Election and Predestination.

Both sets of grandparents were members of Old Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church in Patrick County, Virginia. In the early 1930's there was a division among the members. My father's parents stayed with Old Bell Spur and my mother's parents went with what is now known as New Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church in Carroll County. My parents attended regularly throughout their 97 years as long as health permitted. They never felt worthy to ask for a home with the church, although they had been given many dreams to prove their worthiness was in Jesus Christ.

I attended along with them in the early years but somewhere in my teens my rebellious behavior began to show and fully manifested its self in my twenties. I enjoyed the company of my peers and was easily persuaded in ways that I was not taught at home.

I felt to be just as good as anyone and better than most. But little did I know the depth of the fall that I would endure.

There is a period known to God
When all his sheep redeemed by blood
Shalt leave the hateful ways of sin,
Turn to the fold and enter in.

I knew the things I was doing and saying, the places I frequented and the company I kept, was not the right way for someone of my upbringing to be conducting their life. I thought I would get my fill of the world then change my ways and live a decent life. But I a could not change my thoughts or steps any more than a leopard could its spots or an Ethiopian could change the color of his skin.

At peace with hell, with God at war,
In sins dark maze they wander far,
Indulge their lust and still go on
As far from God as sheep can run.

There was no interest in the church or the things that be of God. All my interest, time, and wages was wasted on the follies of my youth. Although I had attained legal adult age, my actions did not prove to be that of a mature person. I delighted in drinking, dancing, and partying with persons of questionable character, trying to impress them with my foolishness.

But see how heav'n's indulgent care
Attends their wand'rings here and there,
Still near at hand, where'er they stray,
With piercing thorns to hedge their way.

The protecting hand of God was ever with me. Not that I noticed or cared. There was many times in my life that I put my self and others at great risk of injury or even death, never thinking what the outcome or consequences might be. After being arrested and placed in jail for driving drunk, I had to call my parents to go my bail. I realized that I had disappointed and disgraced them with my self-centered, worldly desires. The shame cause me to change for a while but gradually I went back to my old ways.

When wisdom calls they stop their ear,
And headlong urge the mad career; Judgements nor mercies ne'er can sway Their roving feet to wisdom's way.

My sainted parents tried to reason with me and get me to see the errors of my ways. I would not hear them. I thought they had never enjoyed life and was living a hundred years behind the times. My reasoning said it was ok for me to enjoy my life style, everyone was doing it. But that proved to be untrue. It was that everyone I chose to run with was doing it.

The responsibilities of marriage and children didn't completely change my behavior. In my early thirties a change began to occur within me that I didn't understand. The desire for drinking and dancing was taken from me. I was made to feel very uncomfortable to be round those places and the people who took part therein.

Glory to God-they ne'er shall rove
Beyond the limits of his love;
Fenced with Jehovah's "shalls"
and "wills",
Firm as the everlasting hills.

I was trying to hold on to a way that I had enjoyed for many years, but my feet were being directed to a different path that I had not known before. I had attended most of the different denominations but never found anything of substance that appealed to me.

The Primitive Baptist Church and its members began to have a different meaning, one of importance. I remembered scenes from my childhood of the dear old Saint shedding tears, showing love one for the other, while enjoying the preached word of God. I didn't understand as a child what the congregation was experiencing, but I was beginning to have a desire for the same.

Having attended Primitive Baptist churches in Virginia and North Carolina with my parents, I visited many of them again to see where I would find the love of God being preached and manifested by the Church. There were several where I saw evidence of this, but I was drawn more to New Dan River Church at Vesta, Va., where my uncle Ben Clifton was pastor and his wife aunt Edrie were members. It seemed there was a degree of love that flowed among the members and to the congregation that I didn't find everywhere. I was blessed to hear many sermons preached that touched my heart and conscience, reminds me to realize the magnitude of my sinful past. I knew that others could see through me I tried not to show my feelings but the tears came to my eyes when singing and shaking hands. I felt condemned. Why would God be merciful to such a wretch as I? Having lived such a ungodly life, I deserved to be cast into outer darkness. But I longed for the sweet fellowship that I saw there.

I didn't have anything to offer the Church except my sinful self; I could not go forward or tell my feelings. I am not sure how long I was in this condition, but when Brother Donald atid Sister Thelma Scott was baptized in August of 1974, my wife remarked that she wished she could be as happy as they were. She asked me if I would go forward with her and ask for a home with the church. I could not set there, I felt I had to go. We asked for a home, was received, and baptized by Elder Clifton in September. What a wonderful day that was. I felt truly blest to be a member in what I believed was a planting of God's hand. In July of 1975 the Church elected me as clerk of New Dan River Church. I have attempted to serve in that capacity to this day with the abilities that God has given me.

My life was not to remain this joyous for long. In less than two years problems arose that I didn't know how to deal with, much less solve. My wife's younger brother was found dead in an acclident, after being missing for a week. She

felt that she had contributed to his death by going over her mother's wishes and permitting him to buy a motorcycle. I could not console her in her grief She began to lose interest in the church and in me as a husband. I was not as exciting to her as I was in my wild days. The more I tried to reason with her about our problems the more determined she was for them not to be worked out. For the next four years we lived in a marriage where the only thing we had in common was our children and the bed we slept in. We could not have a kind word for the other. She filed for divorce when she was unable to run me from our home.

I felt to be such a failure, as a husband as a father, as a member of the Church. After the divorce I was in a state of unbelief. I knew not where to turn. I tried to beg God for guidance and comfort. I was made to suffer alone through the next two years. Just going through the motions of living. It seemed the spirit had gone out of my life. I went to work, came home, went to Church, and visited my family. Peace would not come to my troubled soul. I saw myself as a deceiver. I never dreamed when I joined the Church that I would be facing such difficulties in life. Later I would realize that we have to walk the path that has been set before us.

I was surprised when it happened. My life was going to suddenly change. Previously, I had resolved myself to not get involved with anyone since I viewed myself such a failure. I now know God was working both ends toward the middle and I knew nothing about what was taking place. One day I received a letter that was signed "a secret admirer". I had no idea who had sent it. About a month later I discovered it was a clerk where I bought groceries and gas. We were strangely drawn to each other. I had never had a relationship like this. I had a desire to be needed and appreciated for who and what I was. She had come from an abusive, loveless marriage, with three children who needed a loving, dependable father. After a year we were married and had moved to Salem, Va., where we have lived since 1982. A year later I adopted her son who was five years old. Her two daughters didn't want to be adopted. The children grew to love and respect me, and I them, as if I were their natural father. Although my wife hasn't been given the same religious beliefs that I have, we love and respect each others God given qualities. She has never kept me from attending Church or visiting the brethren. I have never insisted that she go with me. I cannot give anyone the desire to attend the same Church as I or believe the same things that I do.

I have been led to believe the problems of my past, my moving to this area, meeting the many Brothers and Sisters of like precious faith, have been directed by God's will.

There was a strong Christian love that developed for them that remains to this day. I have had the pleasure of many wonderful visits in their homes. At least I have attempted to offer prayer. I hope God gave me words of comfort to utter in their behalf I know not how to pray or what to pray for unless it be given of God. For I believe True Prayer originates in Heaven and comes down to his children, who are begging for grace and mercy, and returns to heaven from where it came.

The appointed time rolls on apace
Not to propose, but call by grace,
To change the heart, renew the will,
And turn their feet to Zion's hill.

I have been given a love for the fellowship of Brothers and Sisters Like Precious Faith in and out of our correspondence. I hope this love will remain with me the remaining days of my life True love, given of God, cannot be hid. It will shine to the Glory of God who gave it, for God is Love.

An unworthy brother,
James L. Shelor

RECIPE FOR MAKING COMMUNION BREAD

About one-half cup of Plain (not self rising) flour. Sift into a small bowl, and add only just enough cold water to barely moisten the flour. The dough needs to be STIFF. At first it will hardly cling together but, after kneading, the dough gets smoother, and almost "Shiny".

Knead until perfectly smooth, sometimes until you hear the dough begin to "crack", (too much kneading will cause the dough to "blister').

Make out in four small biscuits and roll about as thin as ordinary pie crust, turning round and round to keep it shapely.

Check off with wheel pastry cutter or a dull knife into 3/4 inch squares, which makes it easier for breaking; prick rather closely with fork and bake in NOT too quick an oven. Sit right by oven to watch. The bread is nicest when baked to a deep cream shade.

The cakes may be cut square or in banquet cracker shape, if you prefer, or little round cakes as our mother used to do.

If it should be necessary to make the bread a day or so ahead, by putting it in oven a moment till hope, it will be as fresh and crisp as if freshly baked.

ARTICLES

EXPERIENCE

Dear readers, Having been asked several times about writing, I'll attempt at this time to write some of what I believe to be the dealings of the Lord with me.

May we quote, as a base to meditate upon, ***"who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,..." (2 Timothy 1:9)*** what precious language to the child that seeks something, he knows not what it is, but surely feels deep in his heart, that if he does not find some evidence or assurance of God's mercy to one like himself he is lost forever.

Let me start by stating, that while in the army during World War II, being in a foreign country nearly a year and now in combat with the enemy, I was made to realize that only some power unseen of natural man was able to bring me home to my dear family again.

This was, I believe, God's way to bring me to see my final destruction naturally speaking, without His interceding. Thus, thinking my first true prayer to God to be, ***"O Lord save me or I perish."*** Many times thereafter, this silent prayer came in my heart, and each time I came through safely from the battle we were in but was never able to thank Him enough. Seemingly I was given the assurance some way, that my life would be spared to return home. In all this why, when so many of my buddies were falling daily, and they better than I, was this mercy bestowed on me. Now, I can say, not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace.

The war ended and He brought me home, yet for many years thereafter the thought of religion was least in my mind as I enjoyed the ways of the world. I attended church, but only from habit or felt duty to my parents.

About this time, or shortly before, my brother in the flesh was brought to join the church, something seemed to stir me inwardly, and at his baptism it was hard for me to control my emotions. For the next seven months the Bible seemed to be my best companion and though most of it was a sealed book to me, I read most of my spare time, even many times hoping to read rather than have friends visit. This was much comfort, as I was searching for some assurance that there was any hope for one as wicked and sinful as I. Surely I felt to be one that was different from anybody else and a misfit in the world. Lost and rightly so, doomed to destruction as was the world in which I had had all my pleasure and put my trust. As I read farther and

farther trying to find a character such as I, the book was completed without me recognizing one.

During these months I was anxious to go hear preaching and even though my loneliness still existed, many sermons fitted my case as I was made to rejoice that there was hope for sinners through the merits of Christ.

When I offered to the church at Malmaison, which I believed was about the dearest place on earth, my plan to relate my hope to them left my mind, only to say "I love you people and want a home with you, if you will have me." This is all I could say now, though many years later, I am still a sinner and my planned expressions fail to come forth.

Through all the above condemnations, trials, and burdens, my dear companion sensed my sorrow as many times, though an adult, I cried for deliverance. She would suggest I talk with others in the church, but I just could not, still she was much comfort to me at all times.

After uniting with the church and being so relieved, happy and made to rejoice so often, I thought never would I be so burdened again and to that extent, I have not, but soon there seemed some what a vacuum still, that I cannot explain.

About two years later our church erected a new building and while several of us worked with the carpenters to complete it, I had strange thoughts I will never forget as we came to the pulpit, something would impress me as we stood and worked there, to think and fear I should stand here some day. Hard as I tried to dismiss the thought, it never would completely go away, even as I would say to myself, I could and would not.

In the meanwhile, a group was asked to go from our church to sing for a dear minister unable to attend regular service. Before arriving I was as sure as we are of anything in the future that I would be called upon to offer prayer, which I was by someone. For some reason I was given utterance to my amazement and satisfaction and seemingly to all there, though my first attempt in a public way. This also stayed with me as have many dreams on different occasions.

Eleven years after joining the church and not having told even my wife of my thoughts and many dreams of standing before the Lord's people, this one stood out vividly. Dreaming of being with Brother Spangler at church and having him announce I would speak after him. These things I tried so hard to forget and at times thought I had, only to have them return, but I dared not tell anyone of them.

I believe I fought hardest to keep from speaking my feelings publicly praising God for His wonderful work when my daughter of 14 years asked for a home in our church and was received.

A few weeks later, Burnell, who I spoke of earlier, asked if I ever thought of speaking in public. This was as great a shock as ever oc-

curred in my life, not having mentioned my experiences to anyone. We embraced a few minutes, to cry and I believe rejoice as I told him this was on my mind almost daily, but to just wait before telling anyone.

He, being impressed to ask and tell our pastor, did so, as I was asked the next meeting by Elder Tench to take part in the service, if so impressed. My first speaking was of very few words nervously expressed as I thought my burden and expectation was to just speak my experiences of His mercy to me just this one time. After this once, I supposed I would be rid of this desire but am still attempting to speak.

While I yet wish and long for greater assurance and evidences of this salvation and holy calling of God, I feel His grace has and will be sufficient.

We go wandering, many times with cast down feelings, pondering if our speaking is feeding the "flock" but we also experience times of uplifting as I had this joy recently. This was to be called to serve as pastor of Canaan Church and falling on the exact day seven years from the time I was ordained to the ministry,

These things dear ones make us go His way rejoicing when touched within by that power from above, yet feeling so unworthy of the love shown us by you, His people.

Yet our testimony will be, *"not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,"* so all events have, do, and will work together to accomplish that which He pleases.

Hesitantly written,
(Elder) Julian Williams

ELDER JULIAN P. WILLIAMS

My dear brother in the flesh, and I trust in the spirit of Christ, died March 14, 2002 at the age of 81 years. He had expectation of his death several months beforehand and was, I believe, reconciled to leave this world of sickness and pain to be carried to eternal bliss with his God.

Jule, as we family members called him, was the most timid of our family of seven children. He would have never spoken in public but he was made to proclaim the Gospel of Christ for 32 years. I could feel that I witnessed a miracle each time he spoke as my brother was too weak and humble to present himself in a public speaking way. My Mother saw in a vision years before he was called to preach that one of her sons was to be a minister. She never told of it until after he began speaking.

While in battle during World War II, he was spared when a shell exploded while he and another were down in a fox hole. His buddy was killed instantly by shell fragments and Julian was not injured. Their bodies were touching and he was

sure that he was to die as he was covered with blood. He knew not if his blood or his buddy's until later. I relate this to tell of his being preserved by the grace of God to fulfill his call to the ministry over thirty years later.

I do not praise my brother for speaking to the saints as he was enabled to do so boldly and sweetly. I praise our Lord for his gift and was told by many brethren that he was blessed to preach so beautifully in a short time of speaking. He was blessed to preach a doctrine of a God that made all things-spoke it into existance-saw the end from the beginning and that the weak sinful flesh cannot resist or help an all powerful, merciful God accomplish his purpose in all things, past, present and future.

I believe that our brother is in the paradise of God and that his spirit has returned to God who gave it awaiting that Glorious return of Christ when his body will be raised a spiritual body and that soul and body will forever praise his God in a continual way not possible while speaking as God's mouthpiece here on earth. Before he died, he remarked that *"it's time to see Jesus"*. His last sermon was on March 3, 2002. His text was Matthew 18:1-4.

May we ever praise God and not the subjects of His grace regardless of their station while in this life. I loved him greatly-much more than I can express to the reader. We were blessed to be natural children together, fellow members of Malmaison Church, fellow deacons and journey together as brethren for our entire life. Praise God for what we had together and I try to pray for submission to God that he has been taken from us.

From one that loved him,
Burnell Williams

SPIRITUAL UNITY

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

These words of our blessed Lord are found seven times in the book of Revelation. Surely this emphasizes that each of God's little ones (the only one with a hearing ear) has much to gain spiritually from what the Spirit says unto each of the churches. This is true even though each message dealt with specific circumstances prevailing in that particular church. Only two of the seven churches, Smyrna and Philadelphia, were spared words of censure. This is a sobering statistic. It is refreshing however to note that before saying anything negative about three of the other five churches, our Lord began with what was positive about them. He first encourages and confirms, then brings up what is amiss. Only to the churches of Sardis and Laodicea, does our Lord have basically nothing good to say. Evidently, what these two churches needed was a

sudden jolt of bad news to wake them from their slumbers. They had declined so far.

What a stark contrast we find when we compare the churches of Smyrna and Philadelphia with those of Sardis and Laodicea. Yet these four churches are included together among the seven churches of Asia. The churches of Smyrna and Philadelphia were not instructed by our Lord to exclude the churches of Sardis and Laodicea. Isn't that strange?

Anytime a plain passage of Scripture presents special difficulty, a red warning flag should wave in the mind of a believing reader. For those of us who delight in the beautiful truth that Jesus Christ is the head of the church and supplies her every need, such a difficulty presents itself in the second and third chapters of Revelation. The difficulty can be expressed in the form of the following questions:

How is it that five of the seven churches are worthy of censure from our Lord and Saviour when He Himself is their chief shepherd?

If He is their true head, how could He allow them to get into this deplorable condition to begin with?

Do not His censures cast a bad reflection upon His own care for them? To the last question, we would answer with an emphatic God forbid! On the contrary, His censures are indeed a reflection of His care and love for them. *"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten", Revelation 3:19.* The love and care of a shepherd is much more vividly portrayed by his willingness to hazard his own safety in seeking the erring sheep, whose wandering nature led it astray, and in returning it safely to the fold, rather than by perpetually penning the sheep up. God's dear children need to be taught again and again how dependent they are upon Christ. As soon as they think they can focus on something other than Him and still prosper, they sink as rapidly as Peter did in the waves. Any present confusion and disorder among God's churches are to be aifributed directly to God's erring children, *"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace as in all the churches of the saints", 1Corinthians 14:33.* The truth of God's sovereignty and His absolute control over all things ensures that He does have a purpose worthy of Himself for the present confusion and that He will overrule it for good in His own time and way. Therefore, since there is no real difficulty in fervently believing that and are in harmony with our Lord's loving care for His churches, any difficulty remaining may be due to our reluctance to assume the responsibility so obviously implied in those chapters. The censures prove we are responsible and to a degree held accountable. This is how that red warning flag should be interpreted. There is nothing wrong with Scripture, there is nothing wrong with our

Lord's love and care, but there is something very wrong with us. God Himself graciously provides what is the responsible and proper response to His love and care. ***"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Be zealous, therefore, and repent", Revelation 3:19.*** Oh, that the Holy Spirit would burn these words into our hearts and drive us to Him for the spirit of repentance and reconciliation. We would then confess whatever role we may have even unconsciously had in the present confusion and be more ready to forgive and forget any offences against us. We would become more aware of the fact that we need each other and have much to gain from even the least esteemed of God's little ones.

One of the amazing things about Revelation 2 and 3 is that it shows how much error a church can contain and yet still retain the golden candlestick, denominating it as a true church. However, persisting in flagrant error after repeated warnings from our Lord obviously can result in the removal of the candlestick. For example, the church at Ephesus was charged with having left their first love. Christ said, ***"Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly and remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."*** Only when the candlesticks are removed do the declarations of nonfellowship appear to be in good order. The big question is: What churches still have their candlesticks and what churches do not?

Our forefathers in the faith felt led to adopt articles of faith, which reflected fundamental doctrines embraced by a true church. Obvious liberty was attached to the article on foot washing which some churches chose to include. It is heartbreaking to realize how many churches love these articles and are yet divided from other churches loving the same articles. To put it in more personal terms, it is heart wrenching to see churches which truly love our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and rejoice at the very mention of His name unable to enjoy sweet fellowship with churches that do likewise.

What makes our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ so precious to His people? Surely, it is nothing less than the work of the Holy Spirit. Any melting of the heart while meditating on His love displayed on the cross is directly due to the Spirit's sweet and mysterious influence. It is my prayer that the same Spirit, who has made Christ so precious to His true churches, will make these same churches more precious to each other. May the Spirit reveal that they have too much in common to be satisfied with anything less than a sincere effort to get together. I am

far from the first to express such feelings. Many in Texas are expressing them. Many across this country are expressing them.

I believe I have conducted more funerals in the last six months than in the previous six years. Though not mourning as those that have no hope, nevertheless many tears have flowed. Losing such precious brothers and sisters in Christ often feels overwhelming. Many of God's people have also recently had the same experience. Your heart hurts. Oh that the Lord would undertake for us and introduce us to brothers and sisters in Christ we never knew we had simply because they were on what had been deemed the wrong side of the tracks. Oh, what joy would then follow!

We acknowledge once again total dependence upon the Spirit of Almighty God. ***"All is vain unless the Spirit of the Holy One comes down."*** Without His blessings, any effort towards unity will only end in even more division. He must be our Guide. He must receive all credit for whatever progress is made. I cannot help but believe that He is already at work and that His sweet influence is even now being felt as more and more of God's dear children yearn to be enabled to say, Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Psalm 133:1

My prayer is that those who disagree with me will find that it constitutes a loving difference. May God grant the spiritual showers we all long for.

In dependence upon Him,
Elder Jimmy Hamrick

ST. JOHN, 15: 26-27

But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

MEETINGS

GLENWOOD CHURCH

Glenwood Church, Princeton, WV, announces a Saturday meeting, June 29, 2002, starting at 10:00. Those coming by way of I-77 take exit 9. Turn left onto 460W. Go 5 miles, turn right onto 19N, then immediately left on Glenwood Park Road, 1112 miles to the church on the left.

Those coming by way of 460, follow the same directions from the I-77 / 460 intersection.

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene at Dan River Church on the fifth Sunday in June.

The church is located on highway #700 between Eden and Danville.

We welcome all lovers of the truth to be with us. We especially invite all ministers of our faith and order. Song service begins at 10:00 a.m.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Brother Allen Carroll, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 2002

Bettie Adams, VA 2.00
Beatrice Miller, NC 2.00
Ilene Clifton, VA 2.00
Burnell Williams, VA 7.00
Patsy Mitchell, TX 2.00
Carmen Abernathy, NC 12.00
Walter Hill, NC 5.00
Roxie Strader, NC 5.00
Eld. Mark Terry, VA 7.00
James Geisendorfer, WI 2.00
Eld. Carl Terry, VA 2.00
John Collie, NC 2.00
Robert Thomas, AR 15.00
Floyd Oakley, AR 2.00
Inez Gearner, TX 5.00
Mrs. Bennie Clifton, VA 2.00
Carole Cruise, VA 7.00
Herbert Dodson, Va 2.00
Bruce Smith, VA 7.00
L. C. Hornsby, GA 2.00
Phil Pittman, TX 7.00
Steve Everett. VA 7.00
Evelyn Ferguson, FL 32.00
Elsie Poindexter, VA 2.00
Donald Arrington, NC 2.00

ST. JOHN, 15: 8-9.

Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

OBITUARIES

SISTER VELMA DALTON

With profound sadness we the children of Velma Brumfield Dalton wish to submit the obituary of our mother, who passed away November 3, 2001, at Gretna Health Care Center, Gretna, VA.

She was born August 6, 1913, daughter of John and Eliza Brumfield, was married to Ira Lee Dalton August 31, 1929. They were married for 69 years and from that union came four children Atha, Glenwood, Judy and Brenda, 6 grandchildren, 8 great grandchildren and 1 great great grandchild.

She was predeceased in death by her parents, 8 brothers, 2 sisters, daughter Brenda and her husband.

Mama united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church May 25, 1958 and was baptized June22, 1958.

She was a devoted member for 43 years. She often spoke to us of times when she was a small child and went to Weatherford with her Mama and Papa riding in a wagon or buggy when the weather permitted.

We remember when we were children going with Mama and Daddy to the association and the 5th Sunday services and gathering with our kin to eat lunch on the grounds. What wonderful memories.

Her services were held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on November 6, 2001 at 2 o'clock with burial in the Church Cemetery. Elder Raymond Goad and Elder Marvin Brumfield (her nephew) conducted the services.

With a heavy heart we her children and grandchildren bid our mother and grandmother a sad farewell and with joy we hope to be with her and daddy again in their heavenly home.

In loving memory!
By Her Family

Elder Raymond Goad - Moderator
Elder Marvin Brumfield Assistant Moderator
Pam Betterton - Clerk

DEACON WILFORD G. PARSONS

As it has been pleasing to our merciful Heavenly Father to remove from our midst and carry him to rest in Jesus, our dear Brother in Christ, Deacon Wilford G. Parsons, we will attempt by the grace and mercy of God to write an obituary of this faithful servant.

Brother Parsons was born April 19, 1928, and was the youngest of 16 children to Brother Cager Grant and Sister Bessie Lee Scarce Parsons. Both of whom were members of Old Mountain Primitive Baptist Church. Brother Wilford's father was a deacon at Old Mountain. Brother Wilford departed this life February 9, 2002, peacefully at his home in Danville. He is survived by his devoted wife of 52 years, Sister Cindy Underwood Parsons; one sister Mrs. Ruth Parsons Motley: and a number of nieces and nephews. Brother and Sister Parsons were united in marriage, June 10, 1949, Elder Raymond Payne officiating.

Brother Parsons was a veteran having served in the Marine Corps during the Korean War. He then became employed by Dan River Mills in the sheet metal shop where he later became supervisor. He retired after 45 years service.

Brother Wilford and Sister Cindy were given a sweet hope in Christ Jesus and a desire to be baptized. They were received into the fellowship of Long Branch Primitive Baptist Church. October 6, 1956, and

were baptized the following day by Elder J. G. L. Hash. On May 2, 1959, Brother Parsons and Brother Amos Hash were ordained deacons at Long Branch by a presbytery of nine elders and nineteen deacons. Brother Parsons was elected clerk of Long Branch. November 4, 1961, which office he served faithfully until his death. He was elected clerk for the Smith River Association in the 1992 session, and each year thereafter, and was very efficient in that office also. He served on the preaching committee in the association for many years as well

Brother Parsons demonstrated to us all, his love for the Lord and His dear people. His humbleness, kindness, and generosity were displayed in many ways. He was firm in the faith and loved the doctrine of God our Saviour, that salvation is by grace alone. Brother and Sister Parsons loved to entertain the many brethren, friends, and relatives in the schoolhouse which they purchased and remodeled. They took company from the association and the church for many years. showing their love for God's children. He loved to sing the old hymns of Zion being blessed with an able singing voice. We cherish those precious times that the Lord blessed us with.

He spoke often of the goodness and mercy of his Lord and Saviour that had been so gracious to him all the days of his life. We certainly believe that we can say about Brother Parsons in his service as a deacon, For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. (1 Tim. 3:13;.

Brother Parsons loved his dear wife and was as devoted in his care for her as much as any one we have ever known. May it be the will of God to reconcile her, the church, the family, and friends that the great loss we all feel is his eternal gain. This much esteemed brother has ceased from all his labors and trials and is entered into that sweet rest in Christ Jesus.

Funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Elder Carl Terry, and by Elder Mark Terry at Swicegood Funeral Home Chapel. His body was laid to rest in the mausoleum in the Danville Memorial Gardens, Danville, Va., to await the Resurrection when Christ shall appear in power and great glory with healing in his wings. Then all the ransomed church shall hear Him say, ***"Come Ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."***

In hope of eternal life
Mark I. Terry

Done by order of Long Branch
Church in conference,
April 6, 2002

Carl E. Terry, Moderator.
Mark Terry, Clerk.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

With joy let each afflicted saint
This cheering truth behold,
That when he's tried he shall not faint,
But shall come forth as gold.

This privilege, dear Lord, I plead,
Nor am I here too bold,
That from the fire as thou hast said,
I may come forth as gold.

What though the furnace burns on high,
Still to this truth I'll hold;
'Tis but designed my soul to try –
I shall come forth as gold.

Herein his wisdom and his love
Will God to me unfold;
And from the furnace I shall prove,
He'll bring me forth as gold.

Thus will I sing his praises here,
Whose mercies are of old;
And when in glory I appear,
I shall appear as gold.

Parkinson's Col.

POSTMASTER

Please send address changes to:

Signs of the Times
202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

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EDITORIAL

HEAR YE HIM

Elder C. C. Wilbanks

Jesus took three of his disciples up into a high mountain and was transfigured before them, and there appeared unto them Moses and Elias. Not knowing what he was saying, Peter desired to build three tabernacles; one for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elias. But, ***"While he yet spake, behold a bright cloud overshadowed them: and, behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."***

Hear ye him. Many people would have us believe this to be an invitation, that God is pleading for us to open our hearts and let Jesus come in and save us: just open your ears and hear and answer his call and everything will be great for your soul. I have no stones to throw at those people, for I was one among them in time past, and many of them are still my friends; but their doctrine is a false doctrine, and there is not a speck of truth in it. If God must plead with puny man in this way, and we have the power to accept or reject his call, then we have no need whatsoever for a Saviour; for we have the power within ourselves to save ourselves; for if we have the power to reject his calling and salvation then we also have the power to keep him from casting us into everlasting condemnation and hell. But, ***"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."*** If his people are not now willing, and if this is not the day of his power, please advise us as to when this will be. We will note the scripture says, ***"Thy people."*** These are the ones to whom and for whom the scriptures are written, and not to the world at large. These are the children chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Jesus prayed, ***"Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that***

they may be one, as we are one. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scriptures might be fulfilled." When Jesus shed his precious blood on the cross of Calvary for the sins of his fallen people, the debt was fully paid, God`s justice was satisfied and their salvation was secured forever. ***"For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."***

Hear ye him. Before the coming of Christ, the Jewish people had only the law and the prophets. Moses represented the law, for by him it was given to the people; and Elias represented the holy prophets of God. The Jews were unable to keep God's holy laws: but under the law they were required to make sacrificial offerings for sins yearly; which made none of them perfect; for if the blood of sheep, bulls, goats, doves, etc. could have accomplished this there would have been no need for Jesus to have suffered. Those sacrifices were only emblems or types of the perfect sacrifice that was to come. The law could make nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better covenant did; Jesus Christ being that better covenant. He kept the law, and fulfilled it to a jot and a tittle, blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. By this he broke down the wall of partition between the Jews and the Gentiles: for until that time the Gentiles were without hope, and without God in the world. Not only did he fulfill the law, but all the prophecies of old that were written in the holy scriptures by God's holy prophets and in the Psalms. Now that Jesus was come, there was not further need of handwritten ordinances nor the prophets, therefore they were taken away. They did not just die and fade away. Remember that Moses, being the embodiment of the law, was buried of God that he was found no more; and Elias, representing the holy prophets, was taken away in a chariot of fire in a whirlwind. These were taken away of God for they were no longer in force or needed. Christ is the end of the law for every one that believeth, and he is our Prophet, Priest and King. It is he that we must now hear. ***"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by His Son."***

Hear ye him. He who hath an ear to hear let him hear. All men have natural ears, though some be naturally deaf. When Jesus was on earth he made the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk, and the poor had the gospel preached unto them. And even now is Christ performing these same miracles for his bride, his church, in a spiritual man-

ner. Yet for those who are blind but say, *"We see," their sins remaineth; the deaf hear not, for they are not his sheep; the lame walk not in the way of righteousness, for they hear not the voice behind them saying, "This is the way. Walk ye in it;"* and they do not hear the gospel, for they are not poor in spirit, but rich in self-righteousness, and the gospel is foolishness unto them. Some of the Pharisees said unto Jesus, *"Are we also blind? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sins remaineth." (Jn.9:40-41).* Certain of the Jews said unto Jesus, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, *"I told you, and you believed not, because ye are not my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (Jn.10:24-28). "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way which leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth to life, and few there be that find it." (Matt.7:13-14).* Left to themselves, all men would enter at the wide gate and walk the broad road to destruction: but God`s children are blessed to hear that voice behind them saying, *"This is the way. Walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." (Isa.30:21).* There are also those poor deluded souls who believe their works will get them, as well as others who are enticed to follow them, to heaven. These are the ones who are rich in self-righteousness, and are not poor in spirit nor broken-hearted. *"They profess to know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." (Titus 1:16). "Many shall say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? in thy name done many wonderful works?"* But how did Jesus answer their boasts of self-righteousness? *"And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity." (Matt.7:22-23).*

Natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. How then does one hear the beloved Son, for all we are natural men of flesh and blood, descendants of our progenitor Adam, who fell into a state of condemnation and death by his transgression of God's holy law, and all of his posterity fell with him? Therefore all of us were at some time dead

in trespasses and sin and were the children of wrath even as others. Since natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God, there must be a new birth, a spiritual birth: ***"Ye must be born again."*** Every child of God has an everlasting life: this life being in Christ, but it is not made manifest until a man is born again. ***"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." (Jn.5:24).*** Everyone with a sound, natural mind understands that we must pass from life to death in this world, but there are few who understand the passing from death unto life; for they do not know they are spiritually dead. Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and he gives life to as many as the Father hath given him. Though they be dead when their Lord speaks to them, they hear and live. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." (Jn.5:24).The dead cannot go forth seeking Christ, neither can they reject a sovereign call; ***"for in him we live and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring." "Without me (Christ) ye can do nothing." But, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." (Phil.4:13.)***

Hear ye him. Jesus spake many parables to the people, but only unto his disciples did he expound them. His disciples asked him why, and he answered, ***"Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but unto them it is not given."*** We find here a division of the people: to his disciples an understanding was given, but unto all others it is not given. ***"Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand."*** We cannot understand these parables, other than the ones expounded in the scriptures, until they are revealed unto us by the Holy Spirit. Blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear: if you are the sons of God, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. You will always hear him, though you may feel much of the time that you do not: ***"For in a dream, in a vision of the night, when sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instructions, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man." (Job 33:15-17).*** Though a man may believe that he is working all things according to his own purpose, he is in truth fulfilling God`s will and purpose; for God worketh all things after the counsel of his

own will. Did he not say, ***"I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it?"*** If we be the chosen children of God we will keep his commandments, ***"for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."*** Truly, if we love him and keep his commandments we are born of God: ***"for love is of God, and everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God."*** And Jesus promised, ***"If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (Jn. 14:23).*** Jesus also said, ***"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father`s hand. I and my Father are one."*** Oh, how comforting it is to feel his glorious presence from time to time, even if it is only for a few moments.

Submitted in love to all who have heard the voice of the blessed Son of God.

Eld. C. C. Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

1217 Dinwiddie Ave.
Richmond, VA 23229
April 5, 2002

My dear Elder Terry,

Please renew Signs another year for me. I'm an old keeper. I have many old Signs and at Times will pull out a "year" and read cover to cover for two or more months. I read the obituaries too, although I never knew some. Last year I saw Sister Peggy Osborne and told her I had recently read her Mother's obituary. I hope the dear Lord shall be pleased to continue the blessing of Signs to many little ones.

We in Staunton River love to have you, and others, visit us.

I fear we will miss Elder Julian Williams for some time. We are cast down but not destroyed.

We lift our eyes to God who sent His only begotten Son into the world to save sinners. May we be reminded that ***"God shall supply all our need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."***

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickral

ST. JOHN, 15:5-7.

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

ARTICLES

Elder Key,

Mrs. Rodger Dodson interviewed 9 D-Day Veterans from our area and Elder Julian Williams was one of them. This is what he had to say about that experience. I thought it might be interesting to the readers.

JULIAN R. WILLIAMS

From his home near Keeling, Julian was drafted into the army 14 September 1942. placed in the 2nd Division, 123rd Infantry, Company L, he sailed for Europe in late 1943.

Near the time of the invasion he & his fellow soldiers were addressed by General George S. Patton and also by General Omar Bradley. Leaving Swansea Wales, he was transferred to an LST. He landed on Omaha Beach on D-Day+2 and the signs of a fierce battle were everywhere. He says the bodies, both German and Allied were piled like cordwood." Making their way inland from the beachhead, they fought to near St. Lo where he was hit by shrapnel, fracturing his jaw and earning him a Purple Heart. He spent a month in an English hospital before being sent back to the front lines - He recalls that he spent 15 days without washing his hands. Julian says that the soldiers could be called "forced heroes." None of them would have volunteered to fight; but, once there, they did the very best job that they could. He had a buddy in the foxhole with him killed while he was untouched.

Back in the States, he married the former Mae Marshal in 1953, raised a family and eventually took over his father's farm. He lives there now, at age 80, living on the homeplace where he was born. His life can be seen as a serene circle.

D-Day June 6, 1944
The Climactic Battle of W.W.II

I have been asked to write of my experience and my coming to the Primitive Baptists. I do so, not to draw attention to myself but to give all the glory to the ONE and only GOD for His goodness, mercy, and grace towards an unworthy creature as I.

My name is Samuel Alan Lilly and my only wife for over 23 years is Patricia Grace Feazell Lilly. We have two daughters, Amanda Clare 20 years old, and Tara Elizabeth 18 years old. We have lived in Vinton for over 17 years. My membership is at Laurel Ridge Primitive Baptist Church.

I am the Service Director at Royal Chevrolet Oldsmobile Cadillac in Lynchburg, Virginia. I have been employed there for more than 10 years and I oversee the business operations of the Service, Body and Collision, and Parts Centers.

My father is Elder David H. Lilly and my mother is Amma Jean Frazier Lilly of Nimitz, West Virginia. Dad has been a Primitive Baptist Elder for more than 43 years. Our only sister is Madonna Kay Lilly Gwinn of Pulaski, Virginia.

Growing up we all travelled with Dad and Mom to Primitive Baptist meetings there in West Virginia and as far away as Virginia and Kentucky. Sometimes when Mom had to stay home with one of the sick children, then I would go to church with dad anyway. When Dad and Mom would go to visit church members and other Elders and their families, I would tag along. There's many of these people and experiences that I won't forget.

Mom and Dad named me Samuel. In 1 Samuel 1:20, Hannah,"... bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, because I have asked him of the Lord." Strong's Concordance gives the definition of the name Samuel as, "heard of GOD". They told me when I was young that they named me Samuel because they hoped that the LORD would use me. As I was growing up I didn't care much for my name or for their hope I would be used of the LORD.

The spring that I turned thirteen and on Easter Sunday I decided that I wouldn't go to church anymore and most of all I wouldn't darken the door of another Primitive Baptist Church. That was me, planning and scheming about what I was going to do and what I wanted to be.

Six years later on a cold January night, I found out that my plans didn't amount to anything. For weeks I had felt the conviction of the Holy Spirit. I was restless and not knowing what to do. I was driving home on this particularly night and noticed how unusual it was that I had met only one or two other vehicles on the road and how that the night looked as bright as day with the moon's light reflecting on the snow that blanketed the mountains, the countryside, and the road. I could see into the distance as far that night as I could if it were daylight.

There was a fear that came over me on that trip home, none like I ever had before I could see myself as the sinner that I was, without any hope, and I could see my condition as a dark contrast to the brightness of that night. I cried out to GOD for deliverance, not knowing what to plead but my own sinful condition, in need of a SAVIOR.

I felt a warmth in that car. The heater hadn't been working for months, but I distinctly felt a warmth. I reached down and felt the cold air still blowing from the vents. I was aware of another presence with me, so I turned on the interior light, but saw nobody else. Then it was revealed to me that the warmth and presence wasn't in the car, but in me, *"... and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.", John 14:23, and 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new."*

Within a few days I bought my first Bible and began reading. I could not bring myself to believe the doctrine and the truths that the Primitive Baptists held to. I didn't think that it could possibly be right because it wasn't popular. I felt that if the majority of all the churches taught that man could accept or deny Christ as their Savior, then they must be right, the majority just had to be right, but that was according to my own reasoning and not the truth. I didn't believe that I accepted Christ, I knew that something happened and my sinful burden had been lifted and now there was a joy that I couldn't express. I noticed that my experience wasn't the same as others described theirs and it made we wonder often if I was a child of God. I did understand one thing for sure, GOD's *"... holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace ..."* wasn't according to my own planning and scheming or of my purpose, but according to HIS, *"... which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.", 2 Timothy 1:9.*

Patricia and I moved with our two young daughters to Vinton in October 1984. We went looking for a church and found a nice friendly Independent Baptist Church (as they like to be called) nearby. We quickly made friends with another family attending there. Patricia and I asked for church membership and I was baptized there in the spring of 1987. I was hungry for the truth and was continually asking the Pastor questions. He wasn't much help and may have known it, but for whatever reason he asked me to teach the adult Sunday School Class. It was during the next three years that I taught and studied the Bible that the doctrines of grace and election were revealed to me. I couldn't believe that this could be the truth, there must be some mistake, for if it were then suredly the majority and the popu-

lar crowd would endorse it, so I thought it must be wrong and I was mistaken to believe it.

It was during these same three years that the Pastor and one of the Deacons had asked me on different occasions if I thought the LORD had called me to preach. I told them no, that I wasn't a preacher, but I did fear that HE may indeed be calling me.

In 1990 Patricia and I could see that we weren't growing with the church and we needed to be fed, we were starving. I also figured that I needed to be somewhere else with the popular crowd and just sit down and listen to somebody else preach the Bible and all the grace, election and predestination would go away or they would shed a better light on it. We started attending a very large Independent Baptist Church (as they liked to be called too) in Roanoke that seemed to have everything. For five years we attended there, lost among the hundreds of faces, but still in need. We figured that it was probably best if we ask for a home there and then we would feel more a part of them.

As a family we asked for a home among this large congregation of people and saw both of our daughters baptized. Surely we thought, this is the place and the people and we will grow here. The next thing I knew they asked me to take over one of their many adult Sunday School Classes. I did so willingly, hoping that this would be good for them and us. The class I taught enjoyed the indepth verse by verse studies that we had. But, why was I so miserable? I would sit through the preaching services and listen to all their programs and go home feeling cheated, frustrated, and spiritually thirsty and hungry.

Finally, after weeks of studying and trying to avoid the doctrine of election, I was confronted with it when I knew that I had to tell the truth about the verse in Matthew 20:16 and the 15 verses before it,"... for many be called, but few chosen." The Pastor heard that I was going to talk about this scripture and election and hurriedly arranged a meeting with me, him, and another of the Pastors. He wanted to know what I believed and I how I planned on handling this scripture. I told him I believed in GOD's elective grace and HIS sovereign will over man and not man's will over GOD's. He told me that what I believed was wrong and I mustn't present this scripture in the light of GOD's predestination of the salvation of an elect people. He said this doctrine was against what the church believed and held to and that salvation was for any and everybody. They asked me what I was going to do, I told them that I would skip over this scripture and I wouldn't discuss this doctrine any further as long as I could find a way around it, (after all this wasn't the popular thing).

Soon, there were others who made it known to the Pastor and me, that they believed the same doctrine

that I did and they told the Pastor that they wanted to hear more about. He set up a series of special classes to talk about this doctrine and did his best to tear down the foundations of these truths and by publicly calling those who believed such things to be "stupid".

In April 1998 our Sunday School Class was asked if we could meet for two consecutive Sundays at Friendship Manor. There was a special event (program) going on and the people who normally met with those people couldn't be there. We told them that we would. The First Sunday morning we attended, only half of our class showed up. As the time grew nearer for the meeting to start I became very uneasy, because I wasn't sure what kind of meeting that this would be. We met in the center of where two hallways converged and people came from different directions. Some of them walked, some with canes and walkers, some in wheel chairs, and some on cots were wheeled in until the area of those crossroads were filled. We sang and sang. Some couldn't sing, others may have only moved their lips, others may have strained with weak voices, some in tune and some not, and some with voices that were happy and others with voices hoarse with age. The room filled with the joyous sound of their voices in praise to the Almighty. I tried to keep up, but my eyes were filling with tears so that I couldn't see the pages, and my voice was straining as I was overcome with emotion. It had been a long time since I had seen such true worship and praise in voice and song to our Lord.

When they stopped singing I realized that those dear people were there to have church. It wasn't a program but a real meeting that they were expecting. I'll never forget their looks of hope. I wasn't prepared, the only thing that had been on my mind and reading was Luke 24:13-32, about the two on the road to Emmaus. I don't remember everything that I said, but I do remember the spiritual hunger that was upon their faces and my burden to go back. We went back the second week and I couldn't wait to get there. The blessing was the same as before, hearing their voices singing and their desire to worship our Lord. After returning the second time I knew that I wouldn't be the same again, not only by this experience, but now I had a heavy burden pressed upon me.

I asked the Lord about this burden, I asked Him if He was calling me to preach. He gave me His answer before I was finished asking, "Why do you wait." I was afraid to wait. I told my family that I believed that God had called me to preach and I must go. They asked where to? I said where there are those who believe and love the same truths and doctrines as He has given me to believe.

We had told the church we were leaving, The Pastor and different ones asked if we were going to the Primitive Baptists. My wife and I were both angered at the very thought that we would go among the Primitive Baptists. Where did that question come from, why would they say something like that? I wasn't fond of the Primitive Baptists, I told my wife and children of my promise to never return to their meetings. I had repeatedly over the years spoke ill of them. Now I feel as though I have disappointed my family and broken my promise.

We found another church. A church that called themselves Reformed Baptists. They said that they believed the same doctrines of grace, election and predestination. They said that they believed in a Sovereign GOD and of HIS foreknowledge of all things. But we found that it wasn't what they talked about or preached. It was easier for them to talk about the writings of a man than the Bible. It was also surprising that men's writings were quoted as often as scripture and seemed to have a greater importance.

I had told the Pastor when we first met about the LORD calling me to preach. He didn't seem interested then or two more times later when I reminded him of the burden I believed that I had to preach. The third and last time he told me that if indeed the LORD had called me, then others would see it too. I thought that I understood what he said , but how would anyone ever know of this calling besides me?

His response troubled me, I asked the LORD if HE really called me or was I deceived. This matter weighed heavy upon my mind and heart. The next Sunday, Patricia and I somehow arrived early for the evening meeting. There may have been one or two other vehicles in the parking lot but we didn't see anybody around. I went to the restroom first and was washing my hands, when out of the corner of my eye I saw the top of the head of a little boy walk past me. The top of his little head was about even or a little lower than the counter top. He spoke from behind me, ***"Are you preaching tonight?"***, he asked. I said, "No.". Then he said, ***"Well, then are you a preacher?"***. I said, "No.". Then there was a short pause and he said, ***"You sure look like one."***. I was finished, I dried my hands and looked in the mirror, I looked the same. I started out the door and took a quick look behind me and I saw nobody. Shortly thereafter, it occurred to me, GOD had heard me, HE sent somebody, whether natural or supernatural, HE sent one in the form of a little boy to tell me what he saw. He saw a preacher.

Since my first speaking among the Primitive Baptists my oldest brother, Gary, told me that he always knew that I would be a preacher and several of my close friends that have stuck with me over

the years have said that they knew it too. They all said that they had seen it in me long before I acknowledged the LORD's call.

Once again we had to tell a church that we must leave. We didn't know where we would go this time either. We were asked again, "Are you going to the Primitve Baptists?". I first said no, then I realized it wasn't for me to say, it never has been for me to say, so then I replied, ***"If that's where HE sends us we will go."*** A month went by and I told Patricia that we have to find a church. I went looking and somehow found a church that I had forgotten about.

For some unusual reason we stopped in a snow storm in front of this church just about five years prior. We were taking a man home that I knew, because he couldn't get home during the storm, and after dropping him off I turned up this street and there was a big church building. I stopped in front of it and my wife asked me why were we stopping. I said, ***"Look it's a Primitive Baptist Church"***, then she said. "But why did we stop, you've seen churches before?", "Yes I know", I said, ***"I don't know why I stopped."***. That was Roanoke Church and over the course of a year we had similiar situations where our attention was drawn to Rocky Mount Church and Little Creek Church and we couldn't understand why.

I had come across Roanoke Church again, and there were people there. I cannot describe the joy that I felt. I stopped this time to talk and ask them to have the Pastor call me. Elder Brammer and I talked for awhile and I told him some of my journey. He asked me to come to the next meeting, which I believe was the first Sunday in November. After visiting Laurel Ridge, Rocky Mount, Basham, and Knob Churches I knew that the Lord had brought me among the right people. They had been made to love the same Jesus, Prince of Peace, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, and the Almighty God. They had ben given understanding of the same truths, and doctrines by His Holy Spirit, and they believed that they were given faith to believe that they had been redeemed by His ditinguishing, unconditional, and irresistable Grace through the Blood of His only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ. He has given me a love for them, the same love they have shown towards me, the same love He has given us to love all of His people no matter where they are.

The Saturday before the third Sunday meeting at Laurel Ridge was my 43rd birthday, in April of 2000. It was a restless day and night. That night I had a dream of a Church and a congregation. The congregation was asking me over and over to come to them. They asked me to please come in and for whatever reason I was hesitant. They turned and looked at an older white haired man and asked, ***"Is he coming, why***

won't he come?". He looked at me, his face was gentle and full of love, and said, *"Come son, they're asking for you, they want you to come on in. Won't you please come and be with us, I've been waiting for you?"*. I remember that I stepped just inside the door opening and there was a peace and satisfaction that I never had known.

The next morning I asked for a home at Laurel Ridge Church and immediately I felt that peace and satisfaction that I had never known before. The next third Sunday on May 21St, 2000 I was baptized at Laurel Ridge. This was also my first time to speak publicly among the Primitive Baptists. That spring I turned 43 years old, it had been 30 years ago in the spring that I said what I would and wouldn't do. It wasn't for me to say what I wasn't going to do, and where I was going, and what I was to be. Moses tried to help the children of Israel but found that he couldn't unless the LORD was in it. The LORD put him 40 years on the back side of the desert and then he used him, in GOD's way to lead those children out of bondage. GOD always went before them and HE promised Moses, *"My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."* And Moses said, *"If thy presence go not with me, carry us up not hence." Exodus 33:14,15.* I don't want to go if HE doesn't go before me too.

I am not a Moses but after 30 years I understand that the LORD foreknew me, HE predestinated me, HE formed me, and HE called me. All of my hope and joy is in HIM. I have been speaking among our churches of correspondence for over a year now. There hasn't been a time that I haven't stood before HIS people and been reminded that HE and HE alone is to receive all the glory and praise, and this man as well as all men, are to take none to themselves.

In Praise to our Lord
and Bonds of Love to
His people,
Samuel Lilly

VOICES OF THE PAST

"I KNOW YOU NOT"
(Matthew xxv. 12.)

These words were spoken by the Bridegroom to the five foolish virgins in the parable. He and the five wise virgins had gone in together to the marriage, and the door was shut. Afterward the foolish virgins, who had been away buying oil, came to the door, "saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us. But He answered and said, Verily, I say unto you, I know you not."

Different opinions concerning the true application of this parable have been expressed by brethren who do not differ in any degree concerning the truth of salvation, and who in discussing this or any other spiritual subject do not depart from the doctrine of grace. Yet I believe

there is a power and comfort in every parable which comes to us only through a right understanding of it.

The view has been entertained by brethren whom I most highly esteem for their clear mindedness in the truth, that the five foolish virgins represent Christians who have been neglectful of gospel duties, and who are punished by being denied admittance for a time into the joys of their Lord. While I believe that every child of God who sows to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, and that those Christians who neglect this great salvation shall not escape the just recompense of reward (Heb. ii. 1-3,) yet there are questions in my mind as to whether this parable is intended to show this distinction between the obedient and disobedient Christian.

The principal thought now in my mind is the language at the head of this article. Is this ever the language of the Bridegroom to any of those who have been manifested as true members of the gospel church, which is His bride? Does Jesus speak thus to his people after He has given them the sweet assurance that He has loved them with an everlasting love? No matter how far astray they may have gone, no matter how disobedient they may have been, when he has given them grace to return in sorrow and true repentance, humbly begging to be received again into his favor, does he ever say to them, *"Verily, I say unto you, I know you not?"* Does he not always receive all of his returning prodigals graciously, mercifully, lovingly?

I have thought that the door which was opened to the Bridegroom and the wise virgins, and was closed to the foolish virgins, was the same as that spoken of in Luke xiii. 25, which evidently represents the separation between the legal and the gospel character: *"Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity."* Abraham and Isaac and Jacob are in this kingdom of God, and so are all the prophets; these to whom he says, *"I know you not,"* were also in that same kingdom, in its legal state, but now they are thrust out; there is no place for them in the kingdom of God in its gospel state. (Luke xiii. 28.)

By the legal character I mean the one, now as well as in the former dispensation, who depends upon some work done by himself, or upon

some reason existing in himself, for entrance into the favor of God; and by the gospel character I mean the one whose only hope is that Jesus died for him, and that he passed with the Bridegroom from under the condemnation of the law into the kingdom of his grace and glory.

Those who shall seek to enter in and shall not be able, are those who seek righteousness, not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law. (Romans ix. 32.)

All of those who are referred to in parables, and other forms of teaching in the New Testament, as legal, worldly, carnal professors, are presented for the admonition of the Lord's people, and also for their assurance and comfort, to show them the real difference between a fleshly and a spiritual hope. Thus the people of God are often tried by questionings in their own souls as to whether they are not stony ground, thorny ground, or wayside hearers; or dissatisfied laborers, wanting more wages than was given to those who have worked less ; or laborers in the legal field, contented with that work, like the elder son, and jealous of those who confess to having no good works, and yet claim that Jesus loves them; or like those who are knocking for entrance into the Lord's favor because of some merit they possess. The legal professor is not troubled with such doubts and questionings, but the Christian is, and in all the dear Savior's teaching the living soul is made to feel the powerful but tender and loving admonition: *"Take heed therefore how ye hear;" "Strive to enter in at the strait gate;" "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure."*

This parable seems to present a proper sleeping time. No reproof is suggested because the virgins all slumbered and slept. It was night, the right time to sleep. But I do not understand how this could he applied to the gospel church; no time is allowed there for sleeping. The exhortation is, *"Let us not sleep, as do others."* Some may sleep, but it is disapproved of. Those who sleep are reproved. But here they all slept, and there is no word against it. The Bridegroom tarried; he had not yet come, therefore, it seems to me, the legal dispensation must be intended here. The virgins had gone forth to meet the Bridegroom. This would answer to the whole nation of Israel. They were promised the coming of the Savior, and they, as a nation, were all waiting for him, though not all waiting in faith. They were all recognized as heirs of that promise. *"To them belonged the promises,"* and in this sense, as concerning the flesh, of which Christ was to come, the whole of Israel were as virgins waiting for the Bridegroom. It was a night dispensation, and they all slumbered and slept. They were all, apparently, alike. There was no way to tell which of them had oil in their vessels till the time should come to light their lamps. There was no way to distinguish between the righteous

and the wicked while they were all under that fleshly covenant; all asleep. But when the Bridegroom was announced, when the gospel dispensation was ushered in, then they could discern. (Mal. iii. 18.)

The midnight is the turning point between two days. The announcement that the Bridegroom is coming is an assurance that the legal dispensation is at an end, and that the gospel morning has come. *"Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."* Now all are awake, and in the opening of gospel light all Israel is seen.

But now also the difference is seen between the wise and the foolish, between the legal and the gospel character, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. The wise have the required oil for light, and they go in with the Bridegroom. He goes in but once to the marriage. There is no other going into the marriage. When Jesus arose from the dead and entered into his glory, he shut the door between the legal and the gospel dispensation, and it is never to be opened again.

The Jews who are only Jews outwardly are now made manifest by not being ready to go in with the Bridegroom to the marriage, but seeking entrance on their own account. The wise virgins had oil with them because tliev were wise. The taking of oil did not make them wise, but was an evidence of true wisdom. Whatever the oil may represent, it was the gift of God. Grace had been given them. They had received that life which "is the gift of God," and "is the light of men." Theirs was that circumcision which is "of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men. but of God."

They represent, according to my understanding, those through all time who are Jews inwardly, not because of any merit in them or their works, but because of electing love and saving grace. These all go in with Jesus. To the end of time, as they are called by grace, they will all see that their entrance was in that one entrance of Jesus.

The other five took no oil, because they were foolish. They had no oil. The lamps they had would not give gospel light. They did not see the Bridegroom at all. When they did come and ask for admission it was upon the legal plea of merit in themselves. They represent the Jews after the flesh. The Lord says to them: I have no pleasure in you, neither will I accept an offering at your hands. (Mal. i. 10.) Those whom I understand the foolish virgins to represent seek to enter in by the works of the law today as well as when Jesus was in the flesh. To them he says: *"I know you not, whence ye are: depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity."* Would he say that to those whom he has called by his grace, and whom he loves?

How often I have feared that to me the dear Savior would say had already said, "I know you not." What searching of heart this fear has caused me much searching of the word to see if there I could find any support for my hope that he was my Savior; what prayers and cries unto God for evidences of his love and favor. It has seemed sometimes that I had to cry, with Jonah, "I am cast out of thy sight," but I have still felt to look again toward his holy temple. If he should say to me, *"I know you not;" "Depart from me,"* I could not feel to argue the case with him, could not show him any reason why he should open the door to such as I felt myself to be; not worthy of the least favorable notice from him. But O how this questioning, and this longing for his love and presence, have caused me to take heed how I heard, and to plead with him to "show me a token for good," to manifest himself as mine, and to guide me with his eye. Such deep soul-troubles are still mine at times, and many a dark night my soul is crying unto God, and thirsting for him. And so far the sweet answer has come, though it has at times appeared long delayed. The answer has never been to open the door, but to show it to me already open; to show me that I had been privileged to go in WITH the Bridegroom; to show me that I was accepted, not because of any kind of merit in me, but "accepted IN the Beloved."

MAY 5, 1905.

Elder Silas H. Durand

"FIRST TRUSTED TN CHRIST"

"THAT we should be to the praise of His glory who first trusted in Christ."-Ephesians i. 12.

NEW YERNON, N.Y., April 15,1840.

BROTHER BUTTS has called on us to give our views upon the the above passage; and particularly as to who first trusted in Christ. We are aware that it is the opinion of some brethren that Paul designed to be understood that we should be to the praise of the glory of God, and that God the Father was the first that trusted in Christ. That the whole responsibility of redemption was rested upon and sustained by Christ as the head of the church, and that too before any of His elect were brought experimentally to trust in Him, is a most glorious and heart cheering truth, and that the whole economy of grace shall eventually redound to the praise of the glory of God is equally certain and cheering to saints who cease not to cry, ***"Not unto us Not unto us, O God; but unto thy name give all the glory."*** Nevertheless the meaning of the text at the head of these remarks is in our opulion obviously to show that *we,* viz : the primitive saints, who were the first that trusted in Christ after His revelation in the flesh, and that their experience was ordained to the praise of God's glory. In this chapter the inspired apostle shows that the whole church

was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, predestinated to the adoption of children and all to the praise of the glory of God's grace, wherein he hath made us acceptable in the beloved. The purpose of that grace is also considered-viz:

"That in the fullness of the dispensation of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ. That all who were thus chosen in Him had a spiritual life given and secured to them in Him before all time, should in time, be brought experimentally into union with the mystical body of Christ, and enjoyment of that divine inheritance of life and glory mentioned in the preceding verse. "In whom we have received an inheritance, being predestinated," &c. But who had at that time received their inheritance experimentally upon the principle of this divine purpose and grace given them in Christ Jesus before the world was? Certainly the apostles and primitive church. The manifest reception of their inheritance brought them to trust in Christ, as a kind of first fruits unto God. These were therefore the first who, in the sense of the subject, had trusted in Christ. The above views are evidenfly sustained by the subjoined remark of the apostle: In whom ye also trusted after that ye heard, &c. While Hebrew disciples were the first brought in to the gospel kingdom, these Ephesian Gentiles were afterwards brought into the enjoyment of the same inheritance. Even as this gospel was to be preached into all the world, beginning at Jerusalem, "To the Jews first, then also to the Gentiles " and all, that the reedeemed family may be to the praise of God's glory, by being made holy and without blame before Him in love.

Indeed the whole connection is in harmony with the view we have taken of the text. After having shown that the trust and confidence of the first disciples were to them an inheritance based upon and proceeding from their being chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and predestinated to the adoption of children ; upon their revelation as children, is made manifest their heirship to the inheritance by which they were brought to trust in Christ. Also the experience of these Ephesians, after they had heard the word of life, the gospel of their salvation, and were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, was an earnest of their inheritance; not the procuring cause of it, but the earnest or evidence of it, until the redemption of all the purchased possession unto the praise of His glory. Wherefore, says the apostle, I also, after I heard of your faith (or trust) in the Lord Jesus Christ, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks, making mention of you in my prayers.

The doctrine of the gospel, although in the opinion of arminians tending to licentiousness, to all who are brought to trust in Christ, exerts an influence on their life and con-

versation, bringing them into conformity to the divine image. Who that has thus received their inheritance as set forth in this chapter, that does not find his heart and soul drawn out with Paul, after holiness, with ardent desire to bear the image of that blessed Savior through whom they are made acceptable.

"Such beauties in my Savior shine,
I would transcribe and make them mine."

Elder Gilbert Beebe

MEETINGS

PAYNES CREEK CHURCH

The annual July 4th meeting will be held the Lord willing this year at Paynes Creek Church which is located near Mile post 150 on the Blue Ridge Parkway. This meeting has been held in the past at Pine Creek Church. We invite our Brothers, Sisters, and Elders to be with us.

Elder William Hale Terry

ST. JOHN, 15:8.

Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 2002

Elder Richard Campbell - TN .25.00
Bernice Haygood - TX - In memory of Elder C. M. Haygood.....50.00
Maxey Deip - VA 5.00
Mavis Beacham - NC 5.00
Carl Little - AR 2.00
James Geisendorfer - WI.....2.00
Dan Anders - AL 5.00
Mary Phillips - AL 5.00
J.A. Lamben-Ga. 5.00
Betty Lovitte- NC 2.00
Leola Meador - NC.....5.00
Ora Nichols - VA 2.00

OBITUARIES

BROTHER S. GREY INGRAM

Our dear, beloved brother in Christ, S. Grey Ingram passed away, Thursday, February 14,2002. He was born September 7,1911, the son of the late Lehi Ingram and the late Dora Young Ingram. He was also preceded in death by his wife, Clyde Jones Ingram and two brothers, Gale and Elbyme Ingram.

Surviving are his daughter, Betty Jane Ingram of Henry and her special friend, John Army; one brother and two sisters-in-law, Archie and Vera Ingram, and Louise Ingram all of Ferrum; One niece and three nephews, Jeanette and Garland Hall, John and Dorothy Ingram, Lloyd and Beulah Ingram, and Leon and Susan Ingram; Special cousins and friends, Lelia France, Estelle Jones, Jerry and Trudy Cooper, Charlie and Virginia Lewis and many dear friends and neighbors.

Brother Grey was a faithful member of Republican Primitive Baptist church where he served as deacon and clerk for many years. On October 22, 1995, he asked to be relieved of his duties as clerk because of his difficulty in hearing. He served the church well.

He dearly loved the church and many times would drive there and eat his lunch while sitting on the steps. He told me lots of times that it made him feel so good just to be on the church grounds. Although, Brother Grey lived 90 years, the time seemed short.

His funeral was conducted at 2:00 pm, Sunday, February 17th, in Flora Funeral Chapel with Elder Junior Conner, Elder W.T. Conner, and Elder Lane Carter officiating.

Brother Grey was laid to rest beside his wife, Clyde, In Franklin Memorial Park.

May God Bless and comfort his loving daughter.

Written by request of Republican Primitive Baptist Church.

by: SisterAda V. Beeghly
Elder Junior Conner, Moderator
Brother Guy Holley, Clerk

BROTHER PAUL W. JONES

In memory of our beloved brother in Christ, Paul W. Jones, who passed away, Monday, September 10,2001, at the age of 85. He was born April 8,1918, the son of the late Henry Jones and the late Florence Ingram Jones. He was also preceded in death by a sister, Mabel Ramsey.

He is survived by his loving wife of 85 years, Estelle Ingram Jones, a loving daughter and son-in-law, Trudy and Jerry Cooper all of Henry; two sisters, Irene Ramsey and Iva Via both of Rocky Mount; two brothers-in-law and three sisters-in-law, Buford and Grace Ingram, H.D. and Rena Lou Ingram, and Marcella Ingram, all of Ferrum; also three step-grandchildren and five step-great grandchildren.

Brother Paul was a farmer and a retired school bus driver in

Franklin County. He loved the children and was loved and respected by them and their parents. He was a wonderful neighbor and is greatly missed.

He served well as deacon of Republican Primitive Baptist Church and was always willing to help and support the church in any way he could.

The funeral services were conducted from Flora Funeral Chapel at 2:00 pm Thursday, September 13th, by Elder Junior Conner, Elder W.T. Conner, and Elder Lane Carter. He was laid to rest at Roselawn Burial Park.

May God Bless his dear family.

Written by request of Republican Primitive Baptist Church

by: SisterAda V. Beeghly
Elder Junior Conner, Moderator
Brother Guy Halley, Clerk

Opha Robinson Parks

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." (Psalms 116:15)

On March 8, 2002 the Lord called home (Miss O.C.) Opha Robinson Parks at the age of 88 years. She was born on May 25, 1913 at Haile, La.

She is survived by her daughter: Patsy Lankford and husband Bodie of Haile, La.

Grandchildren: Sam and Mary Lankford of Sinton, Tx., Ron and Mary Lankford of Groveton, Tx; Don and Brenda Lankford of Carlsbad, New Mexico; and Catherline and Dan Gainey of Colorado City, Tx; 10 Great-Grandchildren: Cody Lankford, Kelly Lankford, Crystal Lankford Antley, Quenton Bo Lankford, Jonathan Lankford, Nikki Lankford, Zac Lankford, Ryan Gainey, Derek Gainey and Dillon Gainey.

Mrs. Parks was a believer of the Primitive Baptists and attended Union Church near Linville, La. and in her early years heard Elder Woody Smith (who died June 1933) and the late Elder R. W. Rhodes.

After Mrs. Parks married Ollie Parks, they lived in Spencer, La. and later in Delhi, La. Later they moved to Sinton, Tx (South Tx.) and traveled about 200 miles once a month to a church in Stockdale, Tx (near San Antonia, Tx) to hear the late Elder Gerald Shipman Preach.

Mr. and Mrs. Parks traveled many places to be with others of our belief. They visited churches in Texas,Ark., La., Alabama, North Carolina and Va. and had many visitors in their home over the years. They always look forward to the meetings, and to having and preparing for company in their home.

The funeral services was conducted by the writer and written at the request of Patsy, her only daughter.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.

MURIEL MCKINNEY STRADER

It is with much sorrow and sadness that I write the obituary of our dear sister in Christ, Muriel McKinney Strader, who passed away at Annie Penn Hospital in Reidsville, North Carolina on December 23, 2001. She was 92 years old.

Sister Muriel was born August 1, 1909 in Pittslvania County, Virginia. She was not only my sister in Christ, but my natural sister also, as she was one of seven children born to our parents, the late Elder Sam and Lena Dix McKinney. She was married to Arthur Weldon Strader who predeceased her.

On September 12, 1982, she joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. She loved her church and church family, and was a firm believer in the doctrine of grace. We believe she is now asleep in Jesus awaiting his Second Corning.

Funeral services were conducted at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on December 27,2001 by her pastor, Elder Kenneth R. Key. Her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

She is survived to two sons, Harry D. Strader of Miami, Florida, Wallace W. Strader of Knightdale, North Carolina, daughters Mary Strader, Travis and Frances Strader Willis of Danville, Virginia, Florine Strader Lillard of Greensboro, North Carolina, eleven grandchildren, fourteen great grandchildren and three great- great grandchildren. Other survivors are sisters Connie Page and Kathleen Powell of Ruffin, North Carolina. She is also survived by a niece, Viola Johnson Hill, whose mother died when she was two weeks old, and was raised by her grandparents, Elder and Mrs. Sam M. McKinney

Written by her sister,
Connie M. Page

ECCLESIATES 8:6-7.

Because to every purpose there is time and judgment, therefore the misery of man is great upon him.

For he knoweth not that which shall be: for who can tell him when it shall be?

ELDER JULIAN R. WILLIAMS

God in His infinite wisdom has called home another father in Israel, Elder Julian Williams. May God give us grace to say "Thy will not ours be done".

Words seem to fail me when I try to describe how I felt about our dearly beloved pastor. He touched our lives in a very special way. Elder Key said at his funeral "a great tree has fallen" and that is so true.

"The righteous are as Bold as a lion" He was blessed to be bold in

setting fourth the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Believing in the absolute sovereignty of God our Savior, not swaying to the left nor right.

He was blessed to be Meek, ***"The meek will he teach his way; and the meek will he guide in judgment."*** These are some of the attributes of a man lead by the Spirit of God, as we feel he surely was.

Elder Williams was born March 4, 1921 in Pittsylvania County, Va. and passed from this life March 14, 2002, after a brief illness and 5 days in Danville Regional Medical Center. He was the son of Deacon Floyd Williams and Sister Martha "Mattie" Butcher Williams. He united with Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church March 1958, was ordained Deacon July 1960, and ordained to the ministry Nov. 1970. Served as co-pastor with Elder O.K. Tench since Dec. 1970 and as our pastor since Elder Tench's death in June 1991. He also served Canaan and Leatherwood Primitive Baptist Churches and Forest Grove in Maryland. He was appointed each year from 1983-2001 as Moderator of the Staunton River Association. He was editor of the "Signs of the Times".

He was drafted into the United States Army in World War II, where he was wounded and awarded the Purple Heart.

Survivors include his wife, Sister Mae Williams, a daughter, Sister Joyce Pittman, and her husband Brother Phil Pittman of Longview, Texas, 2 sons Michael Williams of Raleigh, N.C., Larry Williams and his wife Bessie of Roanoke, Va., 4 grandchildren David, Karen, and Brian Pittman and Emily Williams, 2 sisters, Sister Naomi W. Houser of Keeling, Thelma W. Hunt of Danville, 3 brothers, Brother Burnell Williams of Blairs, Garland Williams of South Boston and Wendell Williams of Athens, Ga. One brother, Leland Williams predeceased him.

The funeral was held at Wrenn-Yeatts Westover Chapel with Elders Raymond Goad, Kenneth Key, C.B. Davis and Marvin Brumfield officiating. There were also 12 other ministers in attendance. Interment was in Williams Family Cemetery at Keeling, Va.

Elder Williams was a modest man and would not wish for us to praise him, but we praise God for what He gave him to impart to us. We feel our precious brother is now resting in the paradise of God, awaiting the glorious resurrection of the saints, then to awake in His likeness to be forever satisfied in a world that has no end.

Humbly submitted by
one who truly loved him
I trust for Christ Sake
Peggy Wells

P.S.

I was asked by Sister Geneva Scearce of Canaan Church to say that their sentiments for Elder Williams were the same as those of Malmaison membership.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

Permit me, Lord, to seek thy face,
Obedient to thy call;
To seek the presence of thy grace,
My strength, my life, my all.

All I can wish is thine to give;
My God, I ask thy love;
That greatest boon I can receive;
That bliss of heaven above.

To heaven my restless heart aspires;
Oh! for a quickening ray,
To animate my faint desires,
And cheer the tiresome way.

While sin and Satan join their art
To keep me from my Lord,
Dear Saviour, guard my trembling heart,
And guide me by thy word.

My Guardian, my almighty Friend,
On thee my soul would rest;
On thee alone my hopes depend;
In thee I'm ever blest.

Mrs. Steele.

POSTMASTER

Please send address changes to:

Signs of the Times
202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

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EDITORIAL

February 20, 2002

Dear Elder Key:

The following is an excerpt from a letter I wrote to Elder Chapell last September. He requested that I send the portion of it which relates to my understanding of the law, in to the "Signs." This I am doing, I hope in love and in response to his request. You may do with it whatever you please.

Elder J.B. Farmer

September 18, 2001

Dear Elder Chapell:

Elder J. B. Farmer

It was good to receive your kind letter today. I also believe, as you indicated, that we were blessed of God in our association last month. How precious it is to see the brethren being made to dwell together in unity and peace. To me, it is a little foretaste of heaven which is to come.

I am gladly submitting to your request for me to set forth the understanding I have been given of the law of God as it relates to the children of God both before and after their being given an understanding of the truth of the gospel. As you know, this is a great and deep mystery, as are all the things of God, and will remain so to us, unless it has pleased Him to reveal any of His things to us. It is my hope that I will be kept in the truth by the Spirit, which is life, and not be left to the carnal mind, which is death.

First, to me, the law is good and righteous and holy according to the scriptures and according to the teaching of the Spirit. Second it appears to me to be unchangeable and eternal because it is spiritual and it was given by the unchangeable, eternal God. If then, there seems to be a difference between

the law before enlightenment and after enlightenment, to me, the difference is in the understanding of the ones who have it in view. This seeming difference is, to me, caused by the change in the one looking at it. If he is a child of God, he sees it, at first, according to the letter of it and then later, by grace, he is given to see the spirit of it.

When we were first acquainted with the law, did we not approve it well by the letter? Was it not as the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil? Did it not appear as good for food and pleasant to the eyes and to be that which would make one wise? Did we not at one time agree that murder, adultery, lying, stealing and such things were wrong and that they who did such things were the proper subjects of the wrath of God? When we saw only the letter of it, we saw clearly that others who were transgressing the commandments of God were evil people and should suffer for it. When viewing it by the letter, we saw that we were not outwardly transgressing this law and were proud of the fact, much like the Pharisees of old. We were alive to our own supposed righteousness.

But then, when the spirit of the law was revealed in us, we were killed to our own righteousness and made to see that it was we, ourselves, that were the transgressors. God promised that ***"in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."*** Is not this what the inspired apostle meant when he said, ***"I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died"*** ? Is not this what he meant when he said, ***"the commandment which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death."***? You may have noted that ***"was ordained"*** was inserted by the translators. I believe that the true sense of this passage is this; the commandment which Paul thought, by the carnal mind, to be unto life, he found, by the spiritual mind, to be unto death.

Do we not know by sad experience how dreadful this righteous and holy law appeared to us when we were made to examine ourselves by it? According to the scriptures, ***by the law is the knowledge of sin and, the law is the ministration of death.*** His law was written in the hearts of His people and placed in their minds. If we are His, He has shined His light in our minds and hearts to show us the true meaning and purpose of His law. We were made to see that we have hated others which is the essence of murder. We have lusted, we have been untrue and unfaithful in many ways, which in many cases, no one knew but ourselves. In horror of horrors, we were made to see that it is we, ourselves, that are guilty and worthy of the penalty of our transgressions, which is death.

The law is also the schoolmaster which brings us to Christ. Apart

from the knowledge of the spiritual law and the understanding of its curse, one would never view himself as a sinner. He would perceive no need of salvation or for a Savior. He would continue on as the Pharisee and be glad that he was not a sinner as others. But when the true law is revealed, the child of grace is taught that he, himself, is condemned and is gone forever according to the flesh, and he sees no remedy for himself. He is brought to the place and experience of the publican. After he is brought to the end of his efforts and is made to see his hopelessness in the flesh, in mercy and love, Christ is revealed. *"Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."* Then, the certain dread of deserved destruction is replaced in us by God, with a hope in the merciful, finished work of Christ. *"Before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed."* Thanks be unto God.

Here is my response to your first questions. I believe that God's law is spiritual, eternal and unchangeable. It seems, to me, that the law which God gave, remains in the heart and mind of the child of God, but when the light shines upon it, he views it in truth. By the law, he is made to see himself as the chief of sinners. He is made to see that the law is righteous and holy, and that no flesh is justified by the keeping of the law since all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. He is made to see the purpose of the law in bringing God's little ones to see the exceeding sinfulness of sin and is made to have no confidence in the flesh. He is made to see that Christ satisfied the justice of God in paying the penalty of the law by becoming the perfect sacrifice. He is made to see that he is no longer under the curse of the law since Christ fulfilled it by taking the curse to Himself. He is made to understand that he is dead to the law by the body of Christ, that the law no longer has dominion over him. He is made to understand, with the apostle, that all things are lawful unto him but that all things are not expedient. He is made to see that he is no longer under the law but rather under grace.

To me, the remaining purpose of the law of God, to the enlightened child of God, is to keep him aware of the sinfulness of the flesh. He is made to see, by the spiritual law, that the sin that abides in his flesh is a messenger of Satan, to buffet him, that he should not be exalted above measure. As already mentioned, it is the law which gives the knowledge of sin. Because that law is in his heart and mind, he is enabled to examine himself whether he is in the faith. He is, by this spiritual law, made to see the flesh for what it is, corrupt. The blessed apostle was given to say, *"O wretched man that I am, who*

shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

I think I must also relate briefly to the ceremonial law. The ceremonial law, to me, is that which governed the ancient priestly service and the tabernacle and temple along with the many sacrifices and offerings and holy days and such things as practiced in the old testament days, and to some extent even to this day. The ceremonial law, I believe, was given as a figure or symbol of the true tabernacle which God pitched and not man. It seems, to me, to have pointed to and prefigured Christ and the church, which is the spiritual kingdom of God. It has served God's purpose and therefore has been set aside by Him. There is no need of the figure, after the true has come. Of course there are some who still try to observe certain elements of the ceremonial law. They prove by doing so that they have not been given to see the spiritual kingdom. It appears to me that the ceremonial law is of no force or use, since the prophesy of it has been fulfilled.

You pose the question, ***"What benefit does the natural man of the flesh gain by the forgiveness of sin?"*** To me, flesh is always flesh and is always corrupt. It appears to me, that the only benefit that the natural man receives from the Spirit while he is on this earth, is that he is bound and mortified by the Spirit, and not able to do the things he would do if not subdued. The benefit would seem to be that the natural man is restrained from many of the corruptions of the flesh. His body is made to be the temple of the Holy Spirit. We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. The eternal benefit, as you mentioned, and as I also believe, is the resurrection of the corrupt, weak, natural, mortal, dishonorable body to an incorrupt, powerful, spiritual, immortal, glorious body at the coming of Christ. According to the scriptures, this is unto both them that have died in Christ and the ones in Him that shall be alive and remain at His coming.

We are looking forward to seeing you and the other faithful brethren next month at the Soldier Creek yearly meeting, the Lord willing. Until then, please greet all the brethren for us in Kentucky and Tennessee and other parts. We are hoping to see you and the others then.

This was written in love and in hope of eternal life. Please forgive all mistakes.

Elder J. B. Farmer

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2 CORINTHIANS 6:16.

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

VOICES OF THE PAST

TRANSCRIBED AND EDITED SERMON OF ELDER JOE HAMRICK PREACHED AT SMYRNA CHURCH (LA)

II CORINTHIANS CHAPTER 3

As the brother was speaking of the well being too deep for sinners to draw that water of eternal life it brought my attention to the third chapter of II Corinthians. I believe where God sends a minister forth to preach the gospel and He sends them forth, because we certainly find in the tenth chapter of Romans where it says, And how shall they preach except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

Now if a person that has not had the experiences of a child of God I would like to ask you how he can go to a university or seminary and learn from man how to preach to people who have experienced the dealings of the Holy Spirit in their hearts and souls? It is impossible to do that unless that man has been through the fire . You don 't go through the fire unless you go to the university that God creates for His ministers.

My dear ones, the apostle Paul experienced both of these. He experienced high learning from men and he was preaching that which he learned of men. But how dissatisfying to God's people and how he hated God's people for loving this wonderful doctrine. He hated them to the extent that he cast both men and women into prison. Ah, but later on when he was schooled by that heavenly Father he took an about face. Did he not? That which he thought was right he found to be nothing but trash, nothing that God's people could feast upon. So then later on he made it very plain as to where the doctrine he preached came from. He said, ***"I certify unto you, brethren that the gospel which was preached of me was not after man. For I neither received it of man neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."*** So now he had been schooled by that heavenly Father and now he was sent forth.

So then I ask you again, how can they preach except they be sent by almighty God? But remember this one thing, that where God qualifies and sends forth one minister the devil follows behind with about a hundred. Yes, I believe God's ministers are out numbered by about a hundred to one and maybe more. It may even go up unto the thousands. Yesterday the brother was so wonderfully gifted to bring out these false prophets concerning the devil also. He has three loaves too, just the same as the three loaves that represent the true God and the true Saviour and the true Holy Spirit. The devil is going to have three loaves and he is going to make them look

just as much like the loaves of the living God as he possibly can. Ah, but there is a difference in those loaves, look at the first loaf concerning God the Father. False prophets make him a weak creature, they make him to have power in this regard to look in the future to see if man will do good or not. Then if he does he includes him and he writes his name in the Lamb's Book of Life. But that name can fall out of the Lamb's Book of Life. You have to do certain duties in order for it to stay there, so you see then that this god that the devil is bringing forth is a weak creature. He doesn't know the way of salvation actually.

This Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ that he brings forth in this second loaf, oh how weak he is. He is not a saviour that came down here and said he shall save his people from their sins; but he is a saviour that comes down here and gives everybody an opportunity. He wants you to come forth in this second loaf, he wants you to give your heart to him but unless you are willing he can 't do anything about it. That is the loaf that the devil puts forth, but God's people don't eat of that loaf because it is not satisfying to them.

And that third loaf my dear ones, which is of the Holy Spirit, the people themselves take this loaf as themselves because they tell you they don 't need the Holy Spirit that they are not dead and they believe exactly what the devil said back in the garden of Eden when the devil told Eve that God knoweth that in the day thou eatest thereof thou shall not surely die, but thou shall become as God knowing good and evil. So the people then that put themselves here in this third loaf, they think they are not dead, that they can accept Christ and come to Christ anytime they so desire, and that they are not dead in trespasses and in sin as the scripture teaches and our own experiences tells us at one time.

Now I want you to notice the third chapter of II Corinthians. In this chapter you notice at the beginning there were certain false prophets that needed a recommendation , a written letter, to take with them to the different churches to recommend them to the people . The apostle Paul is bringing this out, ***"Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men"*** and he says in the third verse, ***"For as much as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, ..."***. If God sends forth His ministers and qualifies them to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ with power, not in word only, but in power and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance they don't need a letter of recommendation because their gift is going to make way for them among God's people and that is what the apostle Paul here is speaking of. ***"Written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of***

stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart." And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward; Not that we are sufficient of ourselves ...". Oh no, he knew that and I believe that if we be God called ministers we realize it too. " Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; and I believe we are taught that. If a person thinks otherwise it does not take God very long to dress him down and let him know where the power comes from.

"Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious." And I want you to pay attention here now. ***"If the ministration of death,"*** This is referring to the mortal law. ***"But if the ministration of death written and engraven in stones,"*** You know when Moses was with the Lord upon mount Sinai that the Lord wrote these laws with His finger upon stone known as the ten commandments ***"But if the ministration of death written and engraven in stones was glorious."*** Now look at that word glorious and keep that in mind. ***"So that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away."*** How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory.

Now if the law and if the condemnation of that law be glorious, ***"much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory."***

Now we come down to the eleventh verse and here is what I want us to begin to think about. " For if that which is done away was glorious", which was the law," much more that which remaineth is glorious... And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished." Now if you read back in the 34th Ch. of Exodus you will find where Moses went upon the mountain of Sinai and there met God and you know of all that took place there, the thundering and lightning and the mountain quaked . Moses said that he exeedingly feared and quaked. That was showing the wrath of the law. Notice that when Moses came down off the mount his face shown with such brightness they could see his face shine from afar off . Moses came near unto them and what did they do, what did Moses do? He put a veil over his face because of the shining feature that was upon his face. Now this veil which was put upon his face seems to me was a type and figure of the law.

Now the Israelites could not look and see the glory of Jesus Christ because of the law. They trusted in the law and they went about to try to fulfill the law. In other

words there was blindness that came over their hearts. In the temple there you know the curtain that separated the Holy from the Most Holy place was hung. It was four pieces of cloth because it speaks of it as being blue and purple and scarlet and fine linen. So we have four here pulling together and making something that it would be impossible for the natural eye to penetrate. But when the Lord and Saviour came forth from the grave this curtain did what? It rent from top to bottom and it made a way then to Almighty God.

There are many coverings over faces and hearts of the people when they are in the unregenerate state before being born again of the Spirit of God. We have these coverings one on top of the other so that we cannot see the beauty, we cannot see the glory of Jesus Christ. We cannot see it because of the veil upon our hearts. We can't penetrate those veils when we are dead in trespasses and sins Let's look at the veils that are over our hearts The first veil then that I might say is over our heart is that of ignorance, yes, ignorance. What does ignorance mean? It means darkness. We are ignorant to the things of Almighty God my dear ones. We are in complete darkness. With this cover we can't see our ignorance, we can't see the way of salvation. No, no, we can't see that. We are ignorant to the truths of Almighty God. We are ignorant to the inward dealings of the Holy Spirit in turning us around and then pouring us from vessel to vessel. We know nothing of those experiences because we are ignorant of them. Because of our ignorance there are coverings over our eyes and hearts and our hearts can -not be a partaker of the things of the Spirit of God. So don't you see then that it is impossible.

And you know the Scripture says that darkness covered the whole earth and gross darkness the people. This gross darkness then is because of these veils being over our hearts and our minds that we cannot see the glory of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We can't see that my dear ones, so we have a covering over our hearts and over our souls and this is not the only covering that we have. We also have the covering of unbelief. Yes, that is there too we can't believe in the things of God. You know the people saw Jesus when He brought forth so many wonderful miracles. He called Lazarus to come forth from the tomb. There were people there that saw this and He gave sight to the blind and many people saw and they knew he was blind from his youth and yet they saw that Jesus brought sight to this man and how He cured the lame that he could walk again and how He gave hearing to the deaf and yet my dear ones because of unbelief they couldn't accept Him as the Messiah. You might say, well if I had been there I would have accepted Him as the great Messiah. But you wouldn't have my dear ones

because it takes something more than flesh and blood to accept these things. Peter brought out what it takes to accept this when Jesus asked him whom do ye say that I am. He said thou art the Christ the Son of the living God. He said it from his heart, he said it because he believed it. There was given him faith to believe that Jesus was the Son of the living God and he brought it out in boldness. What did Jesus say to him? He said blessed art thou Simon Barjona for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee but my Father which is in heaven. So when divine revelation comes my dear ones and when that old belief is carried away, it is carried away by the power of God for as long as it is there we can't believe upon Jesus Christ. We might think we do but we believe on that kind of Christ that is in that second loaf that the devil puts there. Christ that wants to do things, that's an antichrist not the real Christ. We might be given to believe in an antichrist if we are given any belief at all. If we are not given to believe in the real Christ then it has to be an antichrist that we are given to believe in.

There are coverings then of ignorance and of unbelief and of self-righteousness. Oh, that covering of self-righteousness is something is it not? Oh how we cling to our own self-righteousness , how we cling to it as long as we possibly can. That is a part of this old flesh and we don't want to give it up because the flesh produces self righteousness and we are going to cling on to it as long as we possibly can. People will fight for it because that is all they have. This self-righteousness enables them to do things that would assure them of their eternal salvation. So they are not going to get rid of it. This old self-righteousness has to be torn away. When it is there it acts as a covering , it acts as covering that we cannot see the glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

There also is pride. Pride is a covering that covers us up. You might not be able to point to pride as a covering. I believe we have pride toward many things that we do not want to cut loose from. So it takes the power of Almighty God. And there is enmity against God and there is the enmity against the truth of God. It is such strong enmity in our hearts and this is a covering over our eyes and over our hearts that we cannot penetrate the glorious doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We can't do it and we can't believe on it. I don't care how hard we might try we can't believe from the heart the true doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ not when the scripture says, ***"the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."***

So don't you see how these people are; yet everybody is in this state including God's people my

dear ones. They are in this state and they have all these coverings over them and how in this world can you penetrate those coverings. You can't do it, it is absolutely impossible. Don't you see you can no more do it than you can go down and get water out of this deep well without anything to get it with. You just simply can not do it because my dear ones it is hidden from you. Gross darkness has covered His people so they are in this ignorance and they are in this darkness. But you know when it comes time and for each of God's children there is going to be a time the Holy Spirit begins to blow upon a little of this. He blows a little corner off here. He blows a little corner of this covering off.

You know the Holy Spirit is likened unto the wind. For it says ***"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell from whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is everyone that is born of the Spirit."*** So that when that wind begins to blow on all these old coverings over our hearts and over our minds and it blows off a little bit of corner here do you know what's going to happen then? Oh, you begin to see a little bit through this hole. You don't see the fullness of it. No, you don't see that at all but you see just enough to bring a little fear into your heart, a little fear into your soul. This covering had everything hid and you believed in this self-righteousness and you had confidence in the flesh but now you have just enough light here to shine in that you began to doubt; you began to wonder am I mistaken. You had plenty confidence at one time in yourself but now you began to wonder my dear ones. Your confidence began to fade because the fear starts coming into your heart and into your soul, a fear that you might not be right, a fear that you might be on the wrong track my dear ones. You hate to give it up and you are going to stay with it just as long as you can. But I'll tell you the bigger that hole becomes and the more you are given to see the more you are going to have this fear.

You know this fear is a wonderful thing. Yes it's a wonderful thing to have fear because scripture speaks of it as the beginning of knowledge. So this fear then gives you doubts about all these other things you had so much confidence in at one time. So this fear is the beginning of knowledge that these things aren't perfect. Now you begin to see them come down just a little bit. Has this been your experience along this line that this fear began to creep into your heart and soul and cause you some concern? Oh you had a great desire to read more and find out more because you weren't safe any longer with your refuge that you felt you were riding to highest of heavens on. It was beginning to crumble underneath you just a little bit. You didn't feel safe upon it any more so my dear ones

you began to look and began to read and you began to search and you began to want to hear more and more concerning the things of Almighty God.

Now I want to bring in the glory of these two ministrations here. Concerning the first one it says," Moses for the glory of his countenance which glory was to be done away:... For even that which was made glorious..." So we see one glory here being done away with to pave the way for another which is far more glorious. So we see the law here, we see the law coming in and why was the law pronounced to be glorious? Because my dear ones it did something that was absolutely necessary to take place in your heart and soul. That's the reason it is glorious and it is glorious because it came from Almighty God and it is holy. It was a divine law but my dear ones when it began to come into your heart and soul it did something to you. Oh it wasn't glorious to you but it was a glorious thing for you because it did something for you that was absolutely necessary in the experiences of a child of God. And what is that my dear ones? It brought you down. The apostle Paul said I was alive once without the law. Oh yes, he went about, he did not have any worries but he said when the commandment came sin revived and I died and I tell you my dear ones right here when the Holy Spirit begins to blow here upon your heart then the fear comes in. You see God's just and holy law. You see God's holy law, ***"thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul , and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength... and Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."*** You realize that you can't do this. No, you can't do it because you can't love God with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind because if your heart is like mine it is ninety-five percent of the time upon the things of this world away from the things of God. How in this world can you fulfill that law? You can't do it; it's impossible. What did James say concerning this? He says, ***"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."*** What does the law say to you? It curses you, does it not? It is the ministration of death and condemnation.

It is a fiery law and the glory part of it is that it brings you down to see yourself as you actually are. It brings you down to nothing; it strips you of everything you had confidence in toward your own salvation and it leaves you naked and empty handed at the foot of Jesus Christ. You say if it is not by grace then I am lost and I am justly lost because I know my sins. When Jesus puts the sheep on His right hand and the goats on His left hand and says go ye cursed into everlasting punishment prepared for the devil and his angels I can see myself there on His left hand because

I am guilty of everything that anybody could be guilty of. I am as the apostle Paul said, the chief of sinners. So that's the way you feel and you feel like if God's justice would rain down upon your head it would send you to the very depths of hell. But there is something else that is pointed out here. Now that the veil is going to be taken off your face and you are going to see the glory that's in Jesus Christ. Yes that's where the glory is for God's people It is in Jesus Christ. We must be brought down to nothing in ourselves first before we can see the glory in Jesus Christ. When the veil is taken off our face, it will not be all taken off, it will be taken enough off that we will see as through a glass darkened. We can see the glory of Jesus Christ to the extent that we realize if we have any salvation that it is going to be in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Then isn't that a wonderful thing that the Holy Spirit has come along and He has paved the way for it says you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sin. Yes, from whom He has blown these coverings away who were completely covered in unbelief, ignorance, darkness, in pride, in self-righteousness and all these coverings that were over your hearts.

Bless be unto God that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ came down here upon earth to pay the price for His people. We find in Matthew where it says when the angel was speaking to Joseph... in a dream, saying, *"Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."* And you know He did not come to call the righteous but He came to call sinners and those are the ones that feel to be sinners and the others feel to be righteous. If we did not have these coverings blown away from us by the power of the Holy Spirit we would feel to be righteous. We would have confidence in our own self-righteousness. We would have confidence in everything; but when the Holy Spirit blows them away we are those sinners and felt to be sinners and those are the ones that Jesus Christ came down here to save. He came not to call the righteous but came to call sinners unto His glorious kingdom. He does everything for poor unworthy sinners who are made to feel themselves as sinners and not just to speak as being sinners but to feel themselves as being sinners. That's what counts my dear ones and I trust that each and everyone of us here have been made to feel ourselves as poor unworthy sinners, sick of ourselves sick of our sins, sick of ourselves from the crown of our heads to the soles of our feet as Job was sick with sores.

All those sores represented sins and we feel our sins from the crown of our heads to the very soles or our

feet but we have a great physician. Yes, He came not to minister unto the whole but to the sick. Those that are sick of themselves, those that are sick of their sins, those that are sick of themselves because they cannot do the things they would but seem to get around to doing those things that they hate. They are sick of these things but remember Jesus came down to minister unto the sick and not to the whole. He didn't come to minister to the self-righteous. He didn't come to those still buried in unbelief He didn't come to minister unto those. He came to minister unto the sick and those that are heavy laden, those that feel the burden of their own sins because did not He say, come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Yes, you have rest in Christ Jesus. There is no rest in this world for you. No, there is no rest for one of His little ones passing through this world because this world is nothing but a wilderness for God's people. It is a desert land. For that which is born of the Spirit of God there is nothing pleasing to it As far as the old flesh is concerned yes, it is still pleasing to the old flesh. But, thanks be unto God we are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be the Spirit of God dwelleth in us.

I would like to turn for just a moment to the seventh chapter of Romans and read just a verse or two. It is wonderful not to be under this law. Ye are no longer under the law. Why, because Jesus Christ fulfilled the law for His people. Now I want you to notice the first verse of chapter seven of Romans. The apostle Paul is speaking here *"Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,)"*. Who is it that knows the law? The ones that the law comes to them and acts as a schoolmaster to teach them of their evil condition; to act as a schoolmaster to bring them unto Christ Yes, that's the glory of the law, but if the law has any glory in it , it is to bring us down to nothing and the greatest glory of all is having a way unto salvation where Jesus says *"I am the way' the truth' and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me."* He is that way don't you see, that's why this glory here outshines the glory of the other. The letter killeth but the spirit giveth life. The law puts you in prison but the gospel opens the doors of the prison and frees you. Yes it frees you from being in bondage to that law. That is why there is so much more glory pronounced in the gospel by the apostle Paul than in the glory of the law. *" Know ye not brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,)"*. Those that have had some experience of being brought down dead inwardly speaking ." .. I speak to them that know the law, how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?" As long as we have these curtains of unbelief, self-righteousness, and ignorance, and all those things before us we know nothing

about the law. But when the Holy Spirit begins to blow there and fear comes into our hearts and knowledge of the law begins to come into our hearts and souls that we can't fulfill it ,then we know something about the law in that respect. "For the woman which hath an husband is bound," now this is spiritually speaking and not naturally speaking,

For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband . So then if , while her husband liveth ," now what do we mean here by husband , in a figurative sense we are married to the law The law is our first husband. We come under the law. We are married to that law and as long as we remain married to that law it is going to curse us and we are going to everlasting hell. How is the way to become separated from that law? It is this death I have just been speaking of. We must die under this law , just as Jesus died under the law. We find scripture saying when the fullness of time had come God sent forth His son made of a woman, made under the law,to redeem them that were under the law. Jesus was made under the law made under the law then, He experienced the killing letter and we must experience it if we be in Christ Jesus, we must experience that death to some degree too. It is not a natural death I am speaking of but it is a death to those things that we once believed in and once cherished. We must die to those things. We must be brought down inwardly to nothing, unable to do anything. We must be brought down as the apostle Paul said, Oh wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death. This is the death I am speaking of. But let me tell you, we cannot go below God's everlasting hands. We can't go below His everlasting arms. We think that we go low, low but His arms are always there to lift us up, if we be cast down we are lifted up again by Almighty God.

"So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress:" You know these people that claim they belong to Jesus Christ and have never been killed by the law What is that? That is adultery. You have two husbands; you have adultery. Let me tell you that is spiritual adultery. Such a one will never enter into heaven. *"But if her husband be dead then she is free from that law so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ that ye should be married to another."* We have become dead to the law by the body of Christ that we should be married to another even to Him who is raised from the dead, Jesus Christ, that we should bring forth fruits unto God.

Let's look now at the glory as it is in Christ Jesus. Oh what a won-

derful glory that is. We have been under this law and been under sin and have seen glory in it, yes there was glory in it to bring us to our senses you might say. But the glory now that shined on Moses' face and the veil has been taken away by the Holy Spirit to the extent now that we can see the glory of Christ and then we say Jesus Christ, it is all Jesus Christ. All my hope is in Jesus Christ, a risen Saviour. That's what shines to us, that risen Saviour He's the one that shines. He's the one we look to and not to any thing else. Our hope is in a risen Saviour. If Jesus had remained dead in the tomb, how cut off our hope would be, as the apostle Paul said, *" If in this life only we have hope in Christ we would be of all men most miserable."* But our hope is in a risen Saviour and our hope goes on with Him into glory. This second glory here as the apostle Paul is speaking about in this third chapter oh how it does outshine the first glory. They are both important, they are both necessary, but oh how it excels that of the first glory. May God bless the truth and pardon any error.

Elder Joe Hamrick

JOHN 14:18.

I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

STEPHEN - HIS TESTIMONY AND DEATH.

God has chosen his people in a furnace of affliction, and it is his pleasure that the faith which he has given to his saints shall be tried. In the world he has ordained that they shall have tribulation, but in him they shall have peace. In the case of Stephen, as recorded in Acts vii., we have a clear and striking illustration of the depravity of poor, fallen man, and the violent opposition of the human heart in its unsubdued state to the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, and a pleasing exemplification of the power of that faith of which Jesus Christ is the author and finisher, in its triumph over persecution, pain and death. It may be profitable for us who are so prone to brood over our real or imaginary troubles, to carefully review the faithful record of the sufferings of the primitive disciples of our Lord, and among the long catalogue given in the Scriptures we may pause a moment and consider the case of Stephen.

This man of God was, in himself considered, compassed with the same infirmities which are common to all men, he was equally as dependent on God for that grace which made him to differ from those who madly sought to take his life. But in proportion to the amount of grace manifested to the children of God, and the development of the faith of Jesus Christ in them, they have al-

ways, from the days of Cain to the present time, had to encounter the rage and fury of their enemies. This opposition and persecution has in all ages been chiefly from those who have stood high in religious profession, and those who were so much enraged against Stephen were exceedingly zealous in the defense of their religion against what they regarded as heresy in the preaching of Stephen. Even Saul, who was soon to become an apostle of Jesus, was at this time engaged with the multitude in their murderous designs; for he had not yet breathed out all the slaughter that rankled in his heart against the followers of the Lamb. But Stephen, being filled with the Holy Ghost, was well qualified for the emergency, both to testify with boldness, and patiently to suffer all the violence they could heap upon him. He evinced no disposition to yield to the popular clamor of the Jews, nor was he intimidated by their cruelty.

To all those who are in this day reproached and persecuted for the testimony of the truth, there is much instruction and comfort in the subject under consideration. When the exasperated multitude and the counsel were cut to the heart, and gnashed upon Stephen with their teeth, for having faithfully declared to them the truth, he looked steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. This heavenly vision of God and the Lamb was enough to fill his heart with rapture, while a shower of stones were pelting his poor, dying body. In the ecstacy of that vision he exclaimed, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. The coast was clear, the heavenly portals wide displayed, the glory of that heavenly world drew forth his ardent spirit for its immortal flight. *"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"* he cried, and kneeled down and prayed that the sin of his murderers might not be laid to their charge, and then he fell asleep. Though it may not be our privilege in our afflictions, trials and persecutions, to see the heavens opened, and the glory of God and the Lamb, as Stephen saw it at that time, yet the faith of Jesus Christ in us looks within the veil; and by it we are enabled to look upon the things which are not seen, and, in our measure, we are permitted to realize the same consolation. Not with our mortal eyes, but by the light of the knowledge of the glory of God which shines in the face of Jesus Christ, do we behold the blissful regions of unclouded day, and with the happy martyr, expand our pinions for the immortal flight.

May we who are called by grace, to be engaged in the same cause, to experience in measure the same conflicts, to suffer the same opposition from the world, the flesh and the devil and at times to experience the same victories, may we bear in mind the case of the devoted ser-

vant of our Lord and Master. It will be profitable for us to remember that in the hour of his severest sufferings he looked steadfastly into heaven. The eye of his faith rested on the glory of God, and he saw Jesus standing on the right hand of God. Where else can we when all earthly comforts fail, when nature sinks, and the earthly house of our tabernacle is dissolving? Earth has no comforts for such an hour. How blessed then to be like Stephen, so filled with the Holy Spirit that we may look on the things which are not seen, the things which are eternal; and not only to look, but like him, to look steadfastly. Not even the violence of the infuriated mob, nor the cruel beating of a shower of stones, could divert his eyes from the mark of the prize of his high calling. The glory of God appears through the dim vista of intervening sufferings, his overruling providence, his all-sustaining grace and the trial of the faith, patience and hope of his children shall result in the declarative glory of God and the Lamb.

When the man of God saw Jesus, as the Son of man, standing on the right hand of God, he saw him in his mediatorial character, as having once endured the cross, once suffered in the flesh, once endured the contradiction of sinners against himself; and as having in the time of his incarnation, endured even the hiding of his Father's presence, for a season, but now he is seen as the risen and the glorified Redeemer, on the right hand of God, the representative of all his children. As the first fruits of them that slept, he has risen and gone up with a shout, and his position at the right hand of God as the representative and embodiment of all his spiritual members, is the certain pledge that where he is, there they shall also be.

This view of the complete triumph of the dear Redeemer, and his exaltation far above all heavens, not only inspires the suffering saints with the assurance that they shall shortly reign with him in glory, but seeing him as he is, has a transforming power on them; they are made more fully to display his image, and display that humility, meekness, patience and long-suffering, as well as that firmness and unshaken confidence in God, which was so gloriously exemplified in him in the days of his flesh. Thus Stephen, instead of fretting, murmuring or despairing exulted in the glory that was to follow his sufferings; but like his divine Lord and Master, his last prayer was that the sin of his enemies in stoning him to death, might not be laid to their charge. O that we, who at the present age profess to be the disciples of the crucified, risen and exalted Jesus, may be so filled with the Spirit of our God, and so sustained by his abounding grace, that we may give the same evidence that we have learned of him who was meek and lowly; that we may endure hardness as good soldiers of the cross; looking unto Jesus, (as Stephen did), the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him,

endured the cross, despised the shame, and is now on the right hand of God. May we consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself lest we be wearied and faint in our minds. May patience have its perfect work, and when we have suffered awhile, according to the will of God, may we lay off our armor and fall asleep as Stephen did, with heaven, and God, and Christ in full view.

Middletown, N.Y., July 1, 1854.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

February, 1944

"Put shoes on his feet." Luke 15:22.

Shoes are an important part of the travelers equipment. Not many would undertake a long journey without them. Whatever our destination may be , it inevitably follows that our feet will be used extensively to get us there . Not many would be willing to undertake a hazardous journey barefooted. Yet it is true that at certain periods and under certain circumstances we would be willing to undertake things knowing that it would be hard to accomplish, but the thing to be attained is of so much more joy peace and pleasure that it covers up and hides from view the trials that have to be endured. It is not to tell just what the prodigal son represents that this text is before us. I am sure that the vast majority of people who have an experience of grace know the many and varied things that come their way are peculiarly fitting to their own travel. To pass lightly over the journey that the prodigal took, we find him getting back home. I am a firm believer in the tact that every biblical type, illustration, symbol, parable and miracle if rightly examined under the natural reasoning of man would tend to show that salvation is unconditional. I do not mean that the natural man could understand it, because the natural man cannot understand natural things when they pertain , or are used,to teach spiritual things. This can easily be ascertained by noticing the difference in the construction of the language used in the Bible and the newspaper. So it is in this case. All men (the spiritually unlearned) put a condition in it. They often lament over the matter that the youngest did not stay at home, not knowing that he could not. They, as often, lament because more of their hearers do not come home as he did, not knowing that each prodigal does come home when starvation drives him. Starvation will not let a man do as he pleases. It was not optional at all with him, it was necessary. That necessity became so great that it made him willing to have changes wrought. Subsistence reached the stage that the conditions under which it came did not matter. Is not this your experience, brethren? Is there not such a hungering for the food of your Father that you are willing for him to have complete charge

of your life? Do you not feel that anything he orders will be too good for you? This prodigal no doubt had known splendor, he had known what fancy dress had been, he knew the state of the servant , he had looked with disdain on them, but this matter of something to eat occupies his whole thought. Such a change has been wrought upon him that he sees himself a vile , condemned sinner. He knows that he is not fit to fill a son 's place. He went away in riotous living , and that carries with it plenty of clothes , but as he comes back they have lost their significance. He is so anxious to get home that he is willing to be as one of the servants. Let us notice that he did not ask to lose his sonship. He acknowledges his unworthiness to be called a son, but so willing has he become that he is willing to be "as a servant." How changed he is now being called a son to being as a servant! He knew the custom of this country in which he lived, he knew a servant went barefooted. Although he knew the privations and hard - ships that such a procedure would bring , he was willing to go without shoes. My precious brythren and sisters, have you felt this? Does not the grace of God seem wonderful to you ? If you have really felt this condemnation and have heard your Father say" put shoes on him" you have indeed been blessed. It was the custom in that land to put off the shoes on entering the house. It is true now, little children. No shoes are needed in the house of the Lord. They are given for the journey How precious the sight to see the beloved of the Lord in his house without shoes. No need of them in his house, they are for the journey. Did you notice that they are shoes "put on?" Shoes are given to each of the Lord's humble poor. They are "put on" them Solomon sang about the beauty of the shod feet of the beloved (Sol. 7:1), and may I ask what condition there is in being shod? They did not send any searching party after the prodigal, yet he was brought to the place of shoes. Could he help coming? Did he get shoes by good works? Were they placed nearby and he told to place them on his feet? Brethren I love the doctrine of God's putting on shoes. Do you?

Elder W.D. Griffin

---

1 THESSALONIANS 5: 21.

Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.

MEETINGS

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

Directions to the Pigg River Association to be held; The Lord willing; the first Sunday in August, Friday and Saturday before - August 2nd, 3rd, and 4th. The meeting will be held on the grounds of Chestnut Church in Franklin County, Virginia.

Those coming from the North on 220 after passing Rocky Mount, at first stop light, turn left on 619; go 3.7 miles, turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Rd). go 1 mile to church.

Those coming from the south on 220, go app. 13 miles from Bassett Forks, turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Rd.) app. 2 1/2 miles to church.

We welcome and invite the ministers of our Faith and Order, our Brethren and Friends to be with us.

Jamie E. Cooper, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 2002 Staunton River Association will convene the Lord willing, at Weatherford Church meeting house, the host church is Springfield Primitive Baptist Church for this our one hundred sixty-first session. Services will begin at 10:00 a.m. Saturday July 6th and on Sunday July 7th.

Weatherford Church is located about five miles from Gretna, VA. in Pittsylvania County at the intersection of highways 760 and 763.

Our union meeting will also convene at Weatherford Church fifth Sunday this month & Saturday before.

We invite visitors and correspondents to attend these meetings with us.

Burnell B. Williams, Asso. Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 2002

Nettie Duncan, VA	5.00
Nancy Pullig, LA	5.00
Banks Conner, Va	5.00
Homer Wade, VA	2.00
Reidy Pickral, VA	25.00
Audrey Hamrick, TX	5.00
Georgia Edwards, NC	5.00
Eld. W. L. Gardner, GA	5.00
E. H. Chandler, LA	5.00
James Geisendorfer, WI	2.00

OBITUARIES

ESSIE PEARL BANE

Sister Bane, 97, passed from this life on Thursday, February 14, 2002 at the Wyoming Continuous Care Center in New Richmond, West Virginia after a long illness.

She was born on December 17, 1904 in Maben, West Virginia. She was the daughter of the late Henry Burton and Judy Canada Polk. She was a homemaker and a beloved, faithful member of the Newfound Primitive Baptist Church in Wyoming County, West Virginia.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Fred Bane; a son, Glen Bane; a daughter, Margie Bane;

three brothers, Raymond, Estil, and Ernest Polk; and a sister, Laura King.

Survivors include five sons, Zane Bane and his wife, Garnett, of Cowen, Frank Bane of Lynco, Bill Bane and his wife of Chicago, Gene Bane of Lynco, and Kenneth D. Bane and his wife, Nadine, of Oceana; two daughters, Jessie Thompson of Chicago and Edna Bane of Lynco; a sister, Ina Tonoff of Bolt; 15 grandchildren; 24 great-grandchildren; and six great-great-grandchildren.

Services were held Sunday, February 17, 2002 at 1:00 p.m. at the Calfee Funeral Service Chapel at Pineville, West Virginia with Elder J.B. Farmer officiating. Burial was in the McDonald Cemetery, Crouch's Farm near Oceana, West Virginia. Sons and grandsons served as pallbearers.

Sister Bane was dearly beloved by all who knew her. She bore the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. We are taught that a tree is known by its fruit and therefore have much assurance that, bearing that good fruit, she must have been highly blessed of God. She loved to receive the company of the brethren into her home. She was diligent and faithful to attend her meetings and was present many times when she was in a weakened physical condition. She was given a strong desire to meet together with her brethren and sisters of the church, even after she took up residence in the nursing home. Many times she would say, ***"If only I could go to church one more time."*** I hope that as long as I am in this world, I will never forget her beautiful, sweet smile that greeted her loved ones.

She fell asleep peacefully, we trust, in Jesus. She, we are assured, is now in company with that great cloud of witnesses that encompasses the people of God, waiting for the appearance of the Lord, Himself, to raise those who have died in Christ and to change those who are alive and remain at His coming, to be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air. According to the holy scriptures, ***"it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."*** May we be comforted by these words. She will be greatly missed but I believe that she is far better off now, because, as the inspired apostle said, ***"To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord."***

This was written by one who loved her, I hope in truth.

J.B. Farmer

EFFIE LAWERENCE CONNER

It has pleased our Lord to remove another member from our midst. Sister Effie Conner Lawrence passed from this life January 18, 2002. She was born in Floyd County, VA June 3, 1908, a daughter of the late Elbert Leland

(Lee) Conner and Lula Aldridge Conner.

Sister Effie was received in Salem (Head of the River) Church October 11, 1925. She married Clarence Lawerence October 16, 1926. His membership was with Pine Creek Primitive Baptist Church.

Sister Effie and her husband moved to New York, where they remained until their death. They raised five children.

Sister Effie was laid to rest in Ridgeway Cememtary, Venice, New York, beside her husband who preceded her in death.

May the Lord comfort those who mourn, and bless them to feel their loss is his eternal gain.

Written by request of
Salem Church
Mary Janney

BROTHER CHARLES TIRAS CONNER

It is with love and I hope, God's eternal grace, that I attempt to write the obituary of my earthly father and precious Brother in Christ. We will miss him greatly but feel our loss is his eternal gain. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

Brother Tiras was born January 21, 1908 in Copper Hill, Virginia to James Preston and Flora Holt Conner, and left this old world behind on March 24, 2002 to forever rest in love and peace with his heavenly father. This made his stay here 94 years, outliving all of his family of eleven children. He was preceded in death by his wife and two sons. He was married to Irene Janney on November 6, 1929 who passed away December of 1971:

He is survived by three daughters and husbands: Mary and Wade Poff, Mae and Alvin Vest all of Copper Hill, June and Dean Conner of Roanoke, Virginia. One daughter-in-law, Sylvia and husband David Whitlow, fifteen grandchildren, twenty great-grandchildren, four step grandchildren and six step great-grandchildren, one foster brother, four sister-in-laws, one brother-in-law and many nieces and nephews.

Bro. Tiras was a very humble father and Brother in Christ. He accepted his afflictions with patience, mumbling words of ***"God knows best"*** from time to time when he felt so bad. Those words will always mean so much to me as I feel they were meant for me too as I endeavored to help him through his afflictions.

Bro. Tiras was received into the church January 12, 1947 and was baptized June 8. 1947. He was ordained a deacon June 7, 1952. He loved his Church dearly and attended regularly as long as he was able. He also served on the finance committee in the Smith River Association for many years. He believed the sweet doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone. All praise

going unto the God of heaven and earth. The funeral was conducted at Salem Primitive Baptist Church in Copper Hill, Virginia by his pastor Elder Hale Terry and Elder Lane Carter. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord, to awaken in His likeness where there will be no more heartache, pain or sorrow, to ever be with the Lord.

Written at the request of
Salem Church by
Mary Poff, Clerk
Hale Terry, Moderator

OBITUARY FOR GEORGIA, OLA, KIRKMAN, GODWIN

Sister Georgia, Ola, Kirkman, Godwin was born May 22, 1908 at the parish of Bienville in LA and God called her to her resting place February 28, 2002 She was in north Monroe Medical Center when she passed away She had lived on this earth A little over 93 years.

We at Oakgrove church have missed her as she was in nursing home many years but knowing that we cannot see her on this earth any more makes us miss her so much more. We bow our heads in humble submission to the will of God and believe that she is happy now in the arms of Jesus Our loss but God's gain.

Sister Ola joined Oakgrove Primitive Baptist church October 11, 1975. After closing, we were called back as this little sister who had been troubled For A long time came forth with an experience of Grace, asking for a home with us which we gladly excepted her For we were waiting for her. While we sang A hymm we gave her the right hand of christain fellowship, Baptism was set for November 8, 1975. After baptism we gave her the right hand of church fellowship.

Sister Ola is survived by One son Lee Melton Godwin Jr., Five Daughters Betty White, Monroe LA, Delma Nunn and husband Othel of Jonesboro, LA, Gloria Dixon and husband George, Homer LA., Kay Dixon and husband Bill, Shreveport, LA. and Evelyne Jane Adams and husband Bill, Cashatta, LA. 23 grandchildren and a host of great and great great grandchildren.

Sister Ola was preceeded in death by her husband Lee Melton Sr. Two sons Joe David Godwin and Arnold Lee Godwin and her daughter in law Dorothy Burch Godwin.

Funeral service was held at Edmond's funeral chapel, Jonesboro, LA. March 4, 2002 with Rev. Joey Bignor officiating. Arrangements by Edmond's Funeral Home in Jonesboro, LA.

Sister Ola was laid to rest beside her husband, Lee Melton Sr. in the Strange Methodist cemetery at Readhimer LA. to await the coming of her Lord.

SUBMITTED BY
Elder David Godwin. Mod.
Katherine Mathews, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

Amazing grace (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved:
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils, and snares.
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the vale,
A life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow;
The sun forbear to shine;
But God, who called me here below,
Will be forever mine.

Newton.

POSTMASTER

Please send address changes to:

Signs of the Times
202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

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EDITORIAL

FELLOWSHIP

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

Elder R. H. Campbell

The above are the words of the apostle John, setting forth the reason for his writing the things that he did to all of those, of like precious faith, those who in the following generations would believe, but would have doubts and fears that they were mistaken in their hope of things eternal, by their fearful interpretation of the scriptures. He was an eyewitness to the ministry of Jesus, his life and works, and knowing the weakness and frailty of the flesh, his desire was to leave on record, evidence which would be of comfort to those who did not have his first hand information; and who, because of their feeling of unworthiness within themselves would have doubts of their calling, and therefore suffer needlessly. He was of the same mind as Peter when he referred to his writing, on one occasion, that it was from an earnest desire to bring these truths to their memory again, and again, although they already knew them; to comfort them, and to bring them to their minds afresh, the beauty, joy and gladness that they experienced when these things were first revealed unto them.

This same testimony could be assigned to all of the writers of the scriptures who were blessed to leave on record their experiences for their brethren in the following generations. This was indeed the purpose in their calling, as I have said many times, these gifts were not for them alone, but for them to leave on record as the footsteps of the flock: that others may read and compare them to their own travels. Much of the time the saints feel that they are alone, being so few among the multitudes on the earth, and then

to find that there are others who traveled with Jesus, who had the same experiences, travels of mind, and who were given a desire to communicate with their brethren, and to have fellowship with them in their common trials and afflictions. These writings encourage them to press on in the faith, knowing that they are not alone, and that these things are not just a figment of their own imagination, and especially when they are witnessed to by the personal concern and fellowship of one such as John, and his sentiments as expressed in the above verses.

John had set forth in the first verse, (1 John 1: 1) ***"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life:"*** a first hand account of that upon which their whole hope of eternal life was based, unto the apostles, and he says then, (vs, 4) ***"And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full."*** John's desire was that his testimony might be of comfort to the generations following, with the same comfort wherewith he himself had been comforted in his experiences. He realized that only those who had experienced a quickening by the Spirit, would understand what he was talking about, and these are the only ones to whom he is writing. Any child of God's experience, is of a very special interest to anyone else who has been quickened, and how much moreso when the experience is of one who was with Jesus, during his ministry, his fulfilling of the law, making the sacrifice for the sins of Israel under the law, and the setting up of the new testament church. This causes a very marked uplifting of the faith and hopes of the saints, and especially at times when their faith might be the weakest. John is saying unto them that he is writing unto them that they might have fellowship with him, the Father, and Jesus Christ his Son; What a wonderful declaration to make, and yet we believe that this is the way that it happens, and we do feel a kinship for John, and the other writers, through their messages.

He knew what comfort and fellowship these truths are to the children of God, and his telling them was also a comfort to himself, even as it would be to others, because everyone enjoys the repeating of their experiences to others because it brings them to their minds anew. I have heard some brothers tell their experience several times, and rejoice each time as their experience is told, even as they do. These things never grow old to those who have experienced them. We spend so much of our time occupied with the things of nature, that anytime that anything can bring these spiritual matters and experiences to mind again are a comfort, a delight and are welcome Bethel spots in our day.

What does the word fellowship mean. Well, Webster defines fellow-

ship as, (1) Companionship, friendly association. (2) A mutual sharing as of experience, activity, interest, etc. (3) A group of people with the same interests: company: brotherhood.

All of these definitions are good, but, I think that what John meant, in the above scripture, went much farther than this. These are all things that men can enter into, or separate themselves from voluntarily, as far as nature is concerned, but, I believe that included in John's meaning are things that are also clearly defined in the word kinship. Kinship is a relationship that is entered into by birth, and is something over which the individual has no control, it includes all of the above definitions, but it goes much further than that. The kinship is, of course spiritual, rather than natural, and it incorporates a much closer and stronger bond between the parties involved, and cannot be broken except by death. The natural blood relationship exists, as long as the parties live, it cannot be broken by anything that occurs in nature except death, and since the spiritual relationship, under discussion above, is not subject to death, then we are talking about something beyond what Webster is considering in his definition. If the bond is the one that John is writing about, then it is of God and is eternal, it cannot be terminated by the parties concerned, just as they could not originate it, of themselves in the beginning. Remember, the fellowship is with one another, and John says it is with himself and with God, so it is permanent as are all of God's ways.

When we think of our fellowship with our brethren, we are including in that definition, our beliefs, faith, love, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption, conversion to the knowledge of the truth, and the afflictions that abide with the children of God, and all of our experiences with all of our brethren from the beginning of our experience, and these are all gifts of God in Christ Jesus, and Webster's definition does not go that far. This is more in line with what, I believe, the apostle John was including in his definition of the word fellowship. He said that he was writing these things unto us, that we might have fellowship with himself and as he said, truly his fellowship was with the Father. What a glorious statement this is, considering who is making the statement, and the evidence that we have of his qualifications to make such a claim. I believe that he is saying that he knew what his brethren, in future generations would experience and wanted them to know that even those who were with Jesus himself, who saw the miracles and experienced his love, first hand, would, in time, question their calling. Even as we do in our day. He was wanting them to know, that all understanding is given by inspiration from God, whether in the first century in the very presence of Jesus, or the twenty-first century, far from the scenes of that day. He is saying that we are just as close to God as they

were then, because he is ever present with his children in all ages of time.

All of these evidences that the children of God share, in this life, are the basis of the fellowship that they have for one another, and it is one of the most precious gifts that we have, in this time world. When we come together, we would probably say that fellowship is that bond that binds our hearts together, the love of God that has been planted in the heart of each one, for himself and one another, which we received when we trust that we were called out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of the gospel, in his Son Jesus Christ. This is not untrue, but neither is it the whole truth, because fellowship includes so much more than that; it includes all of the things experienced by them since trusting that they have been saved and called with a holy calling. Fellowship is a chain of many links, each separate and distinct in the experience, but yet, each is just a small part of the whole trial of faith wrought in our lives, if indeed, we be one of his: and above all, they bear witness that they are from the same source. Paul wrote, (Heb 12: 1) ***"Wherefore seeing we are also compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."*** We are compassed about by a great cloud of witnesses, when we are blessed to stop and behold them. We have the scriptures, the testimonies of our brethren, in this day and the personal revelations that are given to us, in times of need, and which are so precious and comforting unto us. An insurmountable obstacle can be suddenly eliminated, or a way opened up for us, when it seemed that there was no way around our problems, no solution within the realm of nature, and these all bear witness to the promise that he would never leave, nor forsake, his children.

Sometimes we can spend hours in the company of a brother, or sister, talking of what we understand to have been our conversion from following after the things of the flesh, and being blessed with a desire to follow our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ: and the way and manner that it came into our life. This is a very basic ingredient in that fellowship, the part of our experience that is most precious to us. It surely is that well of water that springs up within us, because we can always go back to that time, in our mind, and draw strength and courage from it, continuing to press on in the faith that we are being led in ways that we know not. In the flesh, we sometimes come to the place that we fear that we are mistaken in it all, and that it is just the imagination of the mind, but, when we are blessed to go back to that day in which the miracle was performed, we can say, in a most solemn declaration, we

know that we were changed. We are not the same as we were before, and all of the change was for the better, old things are passed away, behold all things became new, and this beauty never fades, when blessed to view it in the same Spirit in which it was received originally.

We cannot say that we know that it is of God, but, we can say without doubt that there was a change in our heart and soul, over which we had no control; we did not desire it, we were not seeking it because we were completely unaware of its existence, and therefore, when we read the scriptures and find our experiences described, so clearly, by those who have gone on before, those who lived in another time, another generation and cultural age, we are made to believe that we are as they were, because there is nothing else, in nature, that can explain this rare occurrence. It is not just the feeling, but rather the power that comes with it, that causes us to continue in hope, by faith. We believe that we are as they were, and that the whole of scriptures is but a testimony of the way and manner in which God has dealt with his children, in all ages of time: and therefore we are made to believe that we, even as they, are of those for whom Christ died. As the scriptures declare, (Romans 15: 4) ***"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."*** Isn't this what John is saying, in essence? that he is desiring that those, to whom he is writing, may be comforted and strengthened by his testimony, a witness from one of those who walked and talked with Jesus, and observed his ministry from the beginning; those who experienced the original baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire; the evidence that Jesus told the apostles that they would receive, in his last words to them, before he ascended unto the Father. If these words are of comfort unto you, we can say unto John, you were successful in your mission, and praise God for you.

Fellowship is stronger than any of the other emotions of the children of God, because it involves the whole of their hope of spirituality, the hope that dwells in the hearts of those who have been quickened. Every link, mentioned above is a gift from God, and the combined strength of these are stronger than any of the ties of nature. It is the evidence, which in the lives of the apostles caused all of them, except John, to lay down their very lives for Christ's sake, and as John said in this same epistle, (Chap 3, vs 16) ***"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he hath laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."*** They all hazarded their lives for the cause of Christ, and this bond of fellowship is strong enough to cause any others to do so, by the same grace of God.

Each of God's children, in a

manner of speaking, lay down their life for the church, because their priorities are so rearranged that the church and the fellowship of their brethren becomes the primary focus of their lives. They are more at peace with themselves and their lives, when they are at home with their brethren in the church, than any other time: their minds and hearts are turned away from the hectic pace of the things of nature, and they are blessed for a season to center them on the things that are their primary concern. This, of course, is when they are blessed with the presence of the Spirit in their heart, which enables them to put things in their proper perspective. These are the heavenly places in Christ, spoken of in the second chapter of Timothy.

(Acts 2: 1) ***"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place."*** Surely this is the description of the relationship that exists when brethren are enjoying this fellowship, they are all together, in one place and are all of one accord, which is, their desire to worship God in spirit and in truth. This was true of the occasion when the Holy Ghost came down and sat upon each of the apostles, and they began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Is this not what occurs when the church comes together, on the Lord's day? They have all come together, in one place and of one mind, and the Spirit being among them, they indeed worship God in Spirit and in truth. Jesus, said, (Mathew 18: 20) ***"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."*** and when he is in their midst, they experience the fellowship that John is speaking of in the above text. The Spirit must be present for his children to worship God, for as Jesus said, on another occasion, (John 4:24) ***"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in truth."*** This is not an option available to them, it is a blessing bestowed upon them, by the grace and mercy of God, at his appointed times and places.

This fellowship, under consideration, is something that the world, in general, knows nothing about. They cannot understand why God's children will go so far to be with their brethren, when there are many churches around them that would welcome them with open arms. They do not realize that they serve a different type of menu, and only those that love this particular diet will go to where it is served, whether it be a block, or five hundred miles away, the diet next door just does not satisfy their appetite.

These same ones can visit in our churches where this fellowship abounds and go away in amazement at our services and order, there is none of the pomp and ceremony that is so prevalent in their meetings and, of course, they did not understand the preaching, and this is according to scriptures, for the scrip-

ture declares, (1 Cor 1: 21) ***"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."*** This is all included in the wisdom of God, and contrary to the popular opinion that God wants everyone to be saved: he has given an appetite for this doctrine to only a chosen few, and all who do believe it will know from whence their understanding comes, and believe that they are saved.

They cannot understand these mysteries unless they have been quickened by the Spirit and made to see the truth in the same manner that all others have, if and when they are, those who were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel too, will no longer be satisfied with the modern churches and their, so called, plans of salvation, which are all based upon the aid and efforts of man. They will, then see, the hypocrisy and fallacy in what the world calls religion; and they will know, from experience, that the spiritual realm is God's very special domain, and is reserved for those for whom it was prepared, those to whom it is revealed by the Holy Ghost, as is plainly taught in the scriptures.

This is probably the most universal testimony of all of the saints of God; one that they will all say, with the apostle Paul, (1 Cor 15: 10) ***"But by the grace of God I am what I am: and this grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain: but I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."*** Only when one is brought in this manner will they acknowledge that it is all by the sovereign grace of God and not an option available to the creature.

Fellowship, that most blessed state of the children of God, when they are raised up and made to sit together in heavenly places, in perfect peace, harmony, and their mutual love for one another, and having all things common. This is when they will, (Psa 47: 12-13) ***"Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following."*** These towers, bulwarks and palaces are those, very special experiences, that they have received at God's hand, and which they share with each other, as they are blessed with these seasons of communion, seasons of remembrance of all the ways that the Lord their God has brought them. There is no place more beautiful, more secure, and more complete, than these little Bethel spots that they find along the pathway of life; they are even as the handfuls of purpose that Boaz told his reapers to leave for Ruth, his beloved. They are unexpected, but looked forward to also, because they have previously experienced these seasons of love and mercy. As David said, ***(Psa 28: 13-14) "I had fainted,***

unless I had believed to see the goodness of the lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord."

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elders,

My name is Tom Adams and I live in Vancouver, WA. We have "NO" Old School Baptist churches in our area that we can fellowship in. We have been feeding and surviving off of tapes from a few Old School Baptist Elders. One being Elder David (Skip) Mattingly of Indiana. Another being Elder Poole and Elder Stanley Phillips. They all have been a tremendous blessing to me and my family. Elder Skip has been very generous with sending tapes. Elder Phillips has also been very generous with books that he has written. We have just recently met 2 brothers in Christ in our area. One is Mr. Lloyd Spikes of Elgin, OR. And the other one is Mr. John Peters of Centralia, WA. Brother Spikes was the first that we came into contact with and he was nice enough to send me a copy of a Signs of the Times. I have 5 volumes of Elder Beebe's writings but I didn't realize that the Signs was still being published. I devoured the copy that Brother Spikes gave to me. Then by God's grace we came into contact with Brother Peters. Brother Spikes lives a little over six hours away so we haven't been able to visit with him in person yet. But Brother Peters only lives one and a half hours away. We have been able to visit with him once so far. It was a very pleasant visit and we can't wait to go back, soon, Lord Willing! He tremendously blessed us with a handful of old Signs. Some of them dating back to the 1940's. Needless to say, I have been thoroughly enjoying myself with some of the best reading that is out there. There could be some changes in our near future so we are waiting to see what the Lord shall do in our lives. But, when we get pretty much settled, we want to start a subscription to the Signs. I have a couple of questions if I may. In Vol. 121, No.7 of July, 1953 there is a little article entitled "Fragments" by Elder Silas Durand. It was wonderful. I was wondering if anyone has put his "Fragments" into book form, (I am assuming that there are more.)? Also, I have included a little study that I have done. If you wish not to publish it, that is ok with me, but if you do choose to publish then may all the glory go to God! I have it on a web site that is dedicated to the Old School Baptists.

But by the glorious grace of God
Tom Adams
http:www.geocities.com/docsofgrace
"A Sweet Savour"

NOTICE

It has been a long time since we have asked help from our subscribers. So many of our older subscribers have now passed on. Our subscription list has shrunk as has the membership in many of our churches. I firmly believe that there are many believers out there that would really enjoy reading the "Signs", but have never heard of it. Just last week a believer from Washington state wrote he has just been introduced to the Signs of the Times. A brother Spikes had given him some old copies, which he enjoyed a lot. (See the above letter)

If each subscriber could introduce one new subscriber it would help a lot.

We enjoy publishing the dear paper each month and just wish it could be shared by more people.

Instruct them to send full name and address with remittance of $15.00 per year or $25.00 for two years to our distribution manager:

Elder Wm. Hale Terry
202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403
Editor

PSALMS 26:7-9.

The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

ARTICLE

Reprint from October Signs 1900. Middletown, N.Y. October 15, 1900.

DO WE NEED A CONVENTION?

We have noticed in a number of our exchanges a call for a general meeting in Fulton, Ky., November, 1900, of all claiming to be Old School or Primitive Baptists. The object of this meeting is said to be to endeavor to heal the breaches that are being made in the Old School or Primitive Baptist ranks, by the mooted questions of the day, such as limited predestination, conditional, or merited time salvation, &c. What would some of the fathers who have been called home twenty or more years ago thought to have read such a notice? Nearly seventy years ago there was a convention called at Black Rock, Md., by a few faithful brethren to protest against the inventions of men that were then being brought into the church, and at that meeting was drafted and published certain articles as the faith of those assuming the name of Old School or Primitive Baptists, and among them were the very principles of truth now challenged by those calling for this meeting.

For nearly fifty years the doctrine upon which the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church was founded, was advocated and published in the Signs of the Times with

practically no opposition by any claiming our name, but within the last few years there have arose a number of men and publications pronouncing as heresy some of these principles of truth

in which the brethren for so many years have taken sweet comfort and consolation in times of trouble. Can it be that these children are so much wiser in their day and generation, and our fathers but enjoyed a "fool's paradise"? We anticipate the answer to the above, which is, "A hoary-headed error does not become a truth." We fully admit this, but aside from the question of the truth or error of these principles, we do insist that those who maintain the principles adopted at Black Rock, Md., in 1832, where "the saints were first called" "Old School or Primitive Baptists," are the only ones that have any right to the name, and those refuting these principles should designate themselves by another name, and thereby avoid confusion. Is there confusion and are there dissensions? If so, who has caused them? Can the cause of the trouble be laid at the door of those who have all along contended for that faith which for nearly fifty years worked such sweet communion among the saints! Are not the dissensions caused by the dissenters?

While those who have brought in the new questions of the day have fallen into confusion, those who are still contending for the old doctrine are enjoying the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," and have no need of a convention "to heal the breaches." Therefore we feel that for us to join in this meeting would not be advisable, for we are if anything more firmly established in the truth of the old principles, as we read the futile efforts to refute them, and not being a dissenter" we have nothing to adjust in the truth as it has ever been advocated in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Elder Gilbert Beebe.

This was a good admonition over 100 years ago and we think it is still good today.

Editors

ST. JOHN, 15: 14-17.

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

These things I command you, that ye love one another.

VOICES OF THE PAST

CHAPTER 1
MY EARLY LIFE

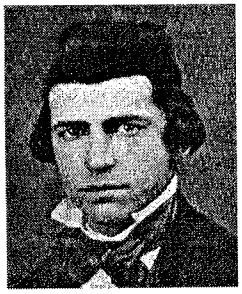
Elder Silas H. Durand

I think one of he hardest things I ever had to do was (or is) to get the consent of my own mind to write and publish this book. There is a constant desire to stay back out of sight. That I cannot now do, for I have written of my daily life and experience concerning spiritual things and published it among the brethren for more than forty years. Yet how little of my outward history and of my inner life I have told. How little can be told. Considering that, and also considering my inatural backwardness from early childhood, the most diffident child I ever saw, I just now felt like giving up the task of writing any more, when the thought of the wonderful goodness and mercy of the Lord to me filled my soul with a desire to tell it to all that fear the Lord. I cannot recite it all; I cannot tell it. To give even a glimpse of it I must tell of all my vileness, my wickedness, my transgression in heart and lip and life, and that I cannot do. I can tell of times when the revelation of his grace and goodness to me, in an experience of his delivering power, has caused my soul to cry out and shout because of the greatness of the Holy One of Israel in the midst of Zion, and to say, ***"O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me."*** But I cannot tell *of* the awful depths of sin and the terrible waters of affliction out of which he has saved me. I can only say that my praise is continually due to the Lord for this great mercy that has kept me a place in the fellowship of his church and people.

I was born January 5, 1833, the eleventh of fourteen children, My father, Daniel Durand, was born November 7, 1793, in Middletown, Orange County, New York, when there were only two houses there. The ancestor of the Durand family in America was Dr. John Durand, who came from Rochell, France, during the time of the Huguenot persecution in 1685, and settled in Milford, Conn. My father saw the house where he lived.

My mother was born in Beilvale, Orange County, New York. She was a granddaughter of Elder James Benedict, who was said to he the first Baptist preacher who was ever west of the Hudson River. He organized the church at Warwick, and built the meeting house which is still standing in the center of the beautiful village of Warwick, and in which the church meets every Sunday.

My father and mother were married in April, 1815, in Bellvale, and

lived there perhaps two years. They moved to Minnisirik, where he worked at his trade, making wagons, for a few years. They both were baptized by Lider Ball in the fellowship of the church at Brookfield, of which there was a branch at Minnisink. At one time there was a membership of over 300.

In 1824 my father and mother, with four children, moved to Bradford. One child had died. Whatever worldly goods they possessed were carried in a two-horse wagon. They lived two years at Camptown, where he attended a "grist mill." He went to the different churches within reach, but could find none to suit him. After some time he heard of a meeting nine miles distant by direct line through the woods, where a peculiar man preached in a *school* house. He went on a Sunday morning by "marked trees" through the woods to that place, which was called South Hill, and found the people whom he was seeking. Elder Hezekiah West was preaching for them. His name occurs often in the early volumes of the "Signs," and reference to his articles published there will show what a profitable and reliable gift he was to the church. At the next meeting day father and mother drove to the meeting, having to go a distance of twenty miles. They put in their letters there, where they remained until that church became extinct, about 1845, when they united with the Asylum Church at Vaughan Hill.

In December, 1828, they moved four miles into the woods, in the direction of South Hill, and went into a very substantial loghouse which father had built. It was yet without doors or windows, but not long before they were supplied. A heavy forest of hemlock, beech and maple was all around them, but the winter was mild, the cow and pigs could get their living in the woods, and a comfortable winter was passed. There seven children were born, making fourteen, ten of whom grew to manhood and womanhood. There the usual trials of frontier life were experienced, and there many comforts, both spiritual and natural, were enjoyed. There hard and faithful work was done, and such hardships endured as can only be known by those who have begun in the woods with nothing but good health, strong arms and invincible determination. There an irreproachable character was maintained by parents and children. Father worked at his trade, and cleared up the farm, and his reputation for absolute honesty was so noted as to be peculiar. As far as he was known that absolute honesty was known, and the only word of disparagement ever uttered concerning him was on account of his peculiar religion. Even this, however, we noticed with wonder, rather added to the respect and confidence which even those who opposed his religious views had for him, for they, in time of great personal straits and danger, would call

upon him for advice and prayer. One of the members of a distant branch of our family, who has traced the genealogy back to Dr. John Durand, the Huguenot emigrant, says, *"As far as I can learn, the name has never fallen into disrepute; always like the forefather (the Huguenot), reputable people and worthy of preserving the name and lineage for coming generations."*

And it is right to prize that inheritance of a good character and reputation, and to be thankful for a father and mother whose lives were an example and an inspiration. And yet, when one is brought to the bar of divine justice, how little all the best reputations among men avail. Then the best of men sinks into the depths and shrinks to nothing in the light of God, and is forced to cry out unto him, *"Behold, I am vile; I abhor myself."* Surely every man in his best state is altogether vanity.

The first religious meeting in the township of Herrick was held in that loghouse, our home, and I have heard that all the people in the township were present except an old man and a child, twenty-nine in number. Elder Hezekiah West was the preacher. He is the first preacher I remember. He was quite often at our house, living only five miles away, and always, when he came, preached a fireside sermon, on which occasions all the chfldren were present and seated orderly, and sometimes neighbors would be present. Once, when I was probably six years old, he said, *"Now I will preach a sermon for the children, and will preach just an hour."* He repeated the text, *"And the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass."* The old loud-sounding clock had struck just before he began. And as he closed it he began to strike again. I do not remember anything he said, but I well remember the text, and that I liked to hear him talk. How glad I would be to have the privilege of hearing that dear old elder preach from that text now, and tell of Jesus as the one street in all that great city, the one glorious way of salvation for all that great company which no man can number, and of that faith which is more precious than the finest gold, by which alone Jesus is seen.

I worked on the farm in the summer and attended school in the winter. My father hired the first teachers, and built a schoolhouse. At the age of 16 I attended an academy seven miles from home one fall term, and the following fall taught a school two and a half months. When he went to the Whitestown Seminary one term and taught a school four months near there. The next fall I went to the Wyoming Seminary one term in the fall and taught during the winter, and attended the spring term. In October, 1855, I went to New Orleans, where my brother James then was, and where he and others

of my brothers had been for many years. I taught as principal of an academy there for seven months. Returning home the following July, I taught school in Wayne County, Pennsylyania, for about a year, and in the fall of 1856 went again to New Orleans, where my brothers James and Warren then were, and where I engaged in bookkeeping. I returned again in the summer of 1857 to our home, and taught school about ten miles from home. In the spring of 1858 I visited New York City for the first time, trying to find a situation that would suit me. While there I heard Elder Goble preach several times, little thinking then that I would ever be a member of that church, much less a preacher. After a few weeks, I went to Middletown, N.Y., and stopped with a cousin, Judson Horton, who was merchant, postmaster and railroad agent at Howells, where I helped him for a few weeks, and frequently heard Elder Gilbert Beebe preach. I returned home, and in October went to Wilkes-Barre, Pa., and entered the office of Hon. Hendrick B. Wright, as a student of law, and taught a school in that town during that winter. In 1860 I was admitted to the practice of the law.

During the last part of the time I was studying law I taught an academy four months with my youngest sister Rosina. That ended my teaching, I felt that now I had found the occupation which suited me and which I would follow all my life. I entered upon the work with a determination to reach the highest place in my profession. I worked four years with fair success, seeking during those first years to prepare myself for the best work rather than to engage in what would bring me money the soonest.

Elder Silas H. Durand

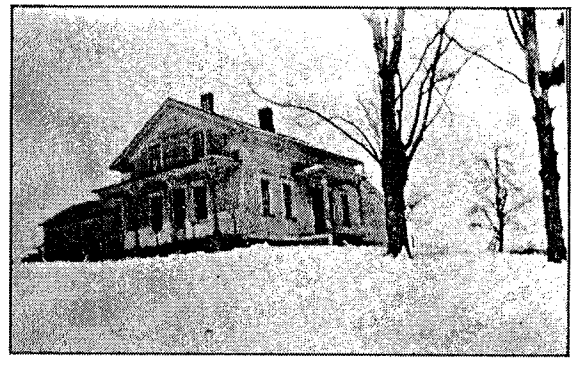

BIRTHPLACE OF SILAS H. DURAND, HERRICK, PA.

PREDESTINATION.

NEW VERNON, N.Y., February 6, 1433.

The absolute Predestination of all things.

On this important part of the doctrine of Christ, we wish to be well understood, as we consided it a fundamental part of the faith of the Gospel. In the absence of this doctrine we can have no confidence in the predictions of the word of God. If the prophets spake and wrote of undetermined events, events concerning which the Holy One himself had not made up his mind, they must have spoken and written with the utmost uncertainty.

If it were possible to banish the doctrine of Predestination from the Holy Scriptures, we should not only lose thereby our interest in the ancient predictions of the Old Testament, but we should find it impossible to believe the testimony of the new. What consolation would the exceedingly great and precious promises of the Gospel afford us, if we had reason to believe that God had not yet determined whether they should ever be verified? Again, what confidence could we have in the veracity of God, if it were certain that his promises were made without any determination on his part to perform them? Indeed there could be no certainty of a future state without the predestination of such a state. No heaven, no hell, no resurrection, nor final judgement. Thus we see to what an awful dilemma we should be driven without this doctrine. Predestination is the predetermination of all events that can possibly come to pass, it involves the doctrine of Divine Sovereignty, and exhibits the wisdom and the power of God; the one presents the plan, the other carries into execution the things decreed. Predestination is the result of the counsel of God's own will, originating with himself alone. *"With whom took he counsel, and who instructed &c."* In the doctrine of Predestination all the Attributes of Deity shine forth, with dreadful majesty. The entire history of mankind is by Predestination established in the view of God, and the final destiny of all things are held in his almighty hand.

"There's not a sparrow nor a worm, But's found in his decree;
He sits on no precarious thone, Nor borrows leave to be."

We may consider this doctrine first in the economy of salvation, and then in its more general bearings. First God has chosen, or predestined, his people unto salvation, through sanctification of the spirit and a belief of the truth.-2 Thes. ii. 13. Agreeable to his own Sovereign pleasure as expressed in the above text, he has predestined them to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself according to the good pleasure of his will.-Eph. i. 5. He has predestined them unto eternal life. *"As thou hast given him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."*-John xvii. 2. "And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."-Acts xiii. 48. He has predestined their calling, conformity to the image of Jesus Christ, their justification and glorification. *"For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover*

whom he did predestinate them he also called, and whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified, Them he also glorified."-Rom. viii .29, 30. In short, every thing in relation to his people here and hereafter is so firmly established in the decree of God, that no power can prevail against them. ***"He rideth upon the heavens in their help and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is their refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."***-Deut. xxxiii. 20, 7. ***"Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel; according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought?"***-Num. xxiii. 23. ***"Even the very hairs of your heads are all numbered."*** Math. x. 30, Luke xii. 7.

Predestination is not confined to the adorable purpose of Salvation by Grace, but it has a direct bearing on all things. Not a sparrow can be brought to the ground, nor can the troubled ocean dash her foaming waves one inch beyond the limits of God's decrees.

If any thing was left upon uncertainties, every thing must have been equally uncertain. If the smallest atom in creation were suffered to fly at random in the full sense of the word, God himself not knowing where, or when it would alight, it would prove what cannot be proved, viz: that God is deficient in knowledge. The Omniscience, and the predestination of God, must stand or fall together; they cannot be separated. We are confident that both exist in glorious harmony in the mind of him who has declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall *stand* and I will do all my pleasure. See Isaiah xlvi. 10. The doctrine of Absolute Predestination, when rightly understood, does not involve the idea of man's acting involuntarily in sin; nor does it exonerate him from accountability; this may be discovered by noticing the following examples. The crucifiction of Christ, the abduction of Joseph, together with many other circumstances recorded in holy writ. ***"For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."***-Acts iv. 27. ***"Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and forekuowledge of God, we have taken and by wicked hands crucified and slain."*** -Acts ii. 23.

The brethren of Joseph had no knowledge of the purpose of God when they sold him to go down to Egypt, they meant it for evil, but God

ordained it for good. When the Jews persecuted the disciples of our Lord Jesus into strange cities they knew not that God had ordained this very method of sending his missionaries everywhere preaching the word. And amidst the abounding abominations of the present day, it is our consolation to know that God has ordained *"The wrath of man shall praise him, the remainder of that wrath he will restrain."* - Psalms lxxvi. 10. We need only to understand this precious doctrine, and we shall most assuredly love it. The christian *exults* in the thought that death and hell can do no more than what our Father please.

We might notice the objections commonly brought against this doctrine, but we shall wait until such objections are presented; and in the mean time earnestly request our brethren to examine the word of God on this important subject. And that the God of all grace may give us light and wisdom from above, that in his light we may see light, is our prayer in Jesus' name, to whom be glory, power and dominion, now and forever, Amen.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

PSALM 136 : 23 & 26.

Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy endureth for ever:

O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy endureth for ever.

July 26.

"And I will being the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried; they shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God." Zechariah xiii. 9.

It is a mercy to be in the furnace, and it is a mercy to be brought through it. The Lord's promise to the third part is, that he will bring them through the fire. They must therefore, according to his own word, be put into it, and yet not left in it. It is *"through the fire"*- right through it from beginning to end, whether it be a long and slow one or short and fierce one. The Lord knows exactly what we can bear, and it is not always the hottest fire which produces the most softening effects. Some metals indeed are so stubborn, and the dross is so deeply engrained into them, that they seem to require a hotter fire than others. But after the law has done its work, and the dross and tin have been purged away, the Lord does not usually bring again so hot a furnace. It is rather one of trial, temptation, sickness, family affliction, straits in providence, persecution, deep and daily discoveries of the body of sin and death, the hidings of the Lord's favor, and denials of his presence which seem to

make up that trial which tries every man's faith of what sort it is. By these trials and exercises there is a gradual weaning from the world, a humility, meekness, and brokenness of spirit before the Lord, a greater simplicity and godly sincerity, more willing obedience to the precepts of the gospel, and a greater desire to know the will of God and do it. O that these fruits of the Spirit might abound in us and all the saints and servants of God!

Elder J.C. Philpot

July 27.

"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." ROMANS V. 21.

Thus is the mercy for mourning saints who are sitting and groaning under a body of sin and death, that God has decreed that grace not only to reign, but that it must reign. Were it left to us, we could no more rescue ourselves from the dominion of sin than the children of Israel could deliver themselves from the house of Egyptian bondage. But they sighed and groaned by reason of the bondage, and their cry came up unto God. He had respect unto his covenant, and looked upon them and delivered them (Exodus ii. 23-25). So God has determined on behalf of his people that sin shall not be their eternal ruin; that it shall not plunge them into crime after crime until it casts them at last into the endless woe but that grace shall reign through rightousness unto eternal life." But it must reign here as well as hereafter, for by its reign here its eternal triumph is secured. It must then subdue our proud hearts, and never cease to sway its peaceful sceptre over them until it has secured in them absolute and unconditional victory. Now this is what every sincere child of God most earnestly longs to feel and realise. He longs to embrace Jesus and be embraced by him in the arms of love and affliction. As the hymn says,

"But now subdued by sovereign grace,
My spirit longs for thy embrace."

He hates sin, though it daily, hourly, momently works in him, and is ever seeking to regain its former mastery; he abhors that cruel tyrant who set him to do his vilest drudgery, deceived and deluded him by a thousand lying promises, dragged him again and again into captivity, and but for sovereign grace would have sealed his eternal destruction. Subdued by the sceptre of mercy, he

longs for the dominion of grace over every faculty of his soul and every member of the body "O," he says, "let grace reign and rule in my breast; let it not suffer any sin to have dominion over me; let it tame every unruly desire, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ!" Thus, he who truly fears God looks to grace, and to grace only, not merely to save, but to sanctify; not only to pardon sin, but to subdue it; not only to secure him an inheritance among the saints in light, but to make him meet for it.

Elder J.C. Philpot

ST. JOHN, 15:5-7

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

If a man abide not in me, be is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the one hundred seventy second session of the Contentnea Association will be held with the Hadnot Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Carteret County, N. C. on Saturday and Sunday, October 12-13, 2002. Service to begin at 10:30 on Saturday. Traveling from Jacksonville, take NC-24 to NC-58 at Cape Carteret turn left and go approximately 3 miles and turn left on Peletier Loop Road and the Church is 1/2 mile on the right. From New Bern take US-17 South to Maysville and turn left on NC-58 and go approximately 15 miles to Peletier Loop Road and turn right, the Church is 1/2 mile on the left.

We invite all believers of the truth to come and be with us during this meeting.

Gene Lupton, Association Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION-2002

The Smith River Association will convene the Lord willing, at New Bell Spur church the first Sunday in September, Friday and Saturday before- August 30, 31, and September 1st, 2002.

Those traveling the Blue Ridge Parkway exit the Parkway at Mile post 184 take Terrys Mill Rd. Rt. 610 to the Church. Those Traveling US *58* turn on Terrys Mill Rd Rt. 610 near

the Carroll County Line go approximately Three miles to Church on the left.

We invite the Ministers of our Faith and Order. our Brethren and friends to be with us.

Wm. Hale Terry

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 21 & 22, 2002.

New Hope Church, located at Spearsville, Louisiana, will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron
Assocation Clerk
318-778-4217

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 2002

J. D. Neely, AR 5.00
Dan Delp, VA 10.00
Lucile Akers, VA 5.00
Vernon Furr, NC 5.00
Ralph Dale, NC 5.00
Burnell Williams, VA 3.00
Ollie Gauldin, NC 5.00
In memory of friends
Katherine Mathews, LA 10.00

OBITUARIES

JOHN "SPENCER" CARTER

He was born December *25,* 1908 in Mount Carroll, Illinois. He died February 18, 2002. He was a son of the late John Coleman Carter and Nellie Kate Williams Carter, both born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia.

Brother Carter served in the navy in World War II.

On June 14.1941, John "Spencer" Carter and Margaret Stultz were married. They were both devoted to one another to the end.

Brother Carter joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church July 25, 1981. He was always faithful to be at Church meetings. Brother Spencer and Sister Margaret would travel from Lynchburg, Virginia on fourth weekends to our meetings as time passed on, they both were blessed to retire. They moved to Eden, NC to care for Sister Margaret's mother.

Brother Carter professed a hope in the Lord Jesus. First Peter. Chapter 1, verse 3 "it says this hope is a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Hebrews, Chapter 6, verse 19 ***"Which hope we have as an an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into***

that within the veil." So this hope reached beyond this world. I believe that Brother Carter was looking for that day when Christ will come again, and that he will hear his voice saying come. That I believe was his hope. We will surely miss him, but we feel our loss will be his eternal gain.

He is survived by his wife, Margaret Stultz Carter and one son, Spencer Carter, Jr. and his wife Patricia of Norfolk, Virginia. Two grandsons, Michael Brent Carter and Jonathan Brian Carter. Four brothers, Carlton Carter and Charles Carter of Danville, Virginia, Harry Carter of Dallas, Texas, Woodrow Carter of South Boston, Virginia. Two sisters, Gertrude Blair and Alice Austin both of Danville, Virginia.

Written by:
R. Allen Carroll

IN MEMORY OF
BROTHER LAWRENCE A. MYERS

By request of Little Hope Primitive Baptist Church, I will attempt to write an obituary of our beloved Brother Lawrence W. Myers.

Brother Lawrence was born the son of John W. and Ida Mills Myers in the year 1913 and passed from this mortal life September 21, 2001. Surviving are his loving wife of 65 years, Ethel Abshire Myers; daughter, Denise M. LaFave of Moneta; sons, Lawrence Wesley Myers of Ocala, Florida, Billie E. Myers of Moneta, Arthur Barry Myers of Jacksonville, Florida, Douglas T. Myers of Moneta: sister Nellie M. Atkins; brother Emmitt B. Myers, both of Roanoke; ten grandchildren and ten great grandchildren.

May the Lord comfort his dear wife and family as only He can for He is the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort.

A good name is better than precious ointment and the day of death than the day of one's birth.

I was blessed to know Brother Lawrence for many years as we worked in the trucking industry but my most precious memories of him is when he came asking a home with the church. He was received into Little Hope Primitive Baptist Church the fourth Sunday in August 1963 and was baptized the fourth Sunday in September by Elder Lane Carter.

Brother Lawrence dreamed he was walking with a group of people on a smooth road, laughing and talking. when he came to a narrow path covered with thorns and broken glass. A white, bright light was in front of him and a voice spoke to him and said follow me, as he followed the light through the thorns and broken glass his feet were hurting because he was barefooted. He asked the light when can we get back on the smooth road and a voice said never as long as you follow me.

Brother Lawrence served our church faithfully as deacon and clerk as long as he was physically able and we miss him.

Funeral services were held at Oakey's Vinton Chapel September 23, 2001, by the writer along with Elders W. Lane Carter, Leonard J. Brammer and W.T. Conner. His body was laid to rest at Blue Ridge Memorial Gardens to await that voice that will awake the dead and carry them home to be with Him, to be like Him and be satisfied.

Elder Junior Conner, Moderator
Ortha Gay Hundley, Clerk

GRADY E. PUTMAN

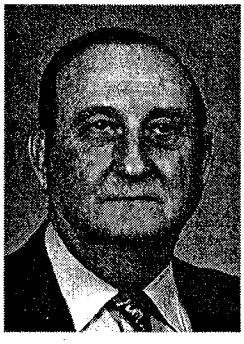
GRADY E. PUTMAN

Grady E. Putman of El Dorado, Arkansas, passed away at Medical Center of South Arkansas, Wednesday August 22, 2001. Following a lengthy illness. He was a member of Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church, where he served as deacon and Church clerk. A retired Asphalt materials & test engineer, with the Arkansas Highway Transportation Department. A member of AHTD Retiree's, United Commercial Traveler's, Union County Genealogy Society, Polk County Genealogy Society.

Mr. Putman was survived by his wife Sarah June Putman, Two sons Leslie Gene & Donald Lynn Putman all of El Dorado, Arkansas.

Funeral services were held Saturday August 25, 2001, at Young's Chapel, with Elder Shannon Vaughn, Rev. Phil Pinckard & David Laverty Officiating. Interment was at Rest Haven Memorial Gardens Cemetery, Under the Direction of Young's Funeral Director's. Memorials were made to Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church.

John 14: 25-27.

These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

EUNICE DALTON SIMPSON

"...the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away;..." These words, I think when I think of Sister Eunice Dalton Simpson, who died April 25, 2002. She was born September 7, 1910 to Sam David Dalton and Ida Pickral Dalton. She was the widow of Elder Denver Lee Simpson.

She is survived by two sons; Carl W. Simpson, his wife Anna Laura; Cory W. Simpson; one daughter; Carolyn Simpson Gay, her husband Robert D. Gay; one daughter-in-law Delores M. Simpson, widow of Grady Ray Simpson; eight grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

Sister Simpson was recieved into Springfield Primitive Baptist Church by experience and baptism on May 7th 1966. She was always ready to travel with Elder Simpson to meetings and visit the bretheren. Sometime ago I was thinking of her and realized I had never heard her speak ot desiring any product of this world. Her pleasure was her family and her church. when visiting her shortly before her death, she spoke of a desire to hear her grandson, Elder Troy M. Simpson preach again. There was no complaint in her words. And she always asked who I had seen at church.

Her funeral was conducted April 28, 2002 at Springfield Church by Elder C. B. Davis, Jr. and Troy M. Simpson and her body was laid to rest among many flowers in Gretna Burial Park. "Blessed be the name of the Lord."

Written by request with love and much hesitation.

Reidy Pickral

Elder Marvin Brumfield, Moderator
Oscar D. Pickral, Clerk

LUCILLE CAIN WILBANKS

Sister Lucille Wilbanks was called from this low ground of sin and sorrow on April 14, 2002 to be eternally with the one she trusted to be her Lord and Saviour. In 1977 she was baptized into Union Primitive Baptist Church and faithfully filled her seat unless providentially hindered. Following a lengthy illness she passed away in her sleep on a Sunday morning in a local hospital. Lucille was wed to Clifford Wilbanks in 1948 and was a very faithful and loving wife to him for nearly 54 years.

Lucille was the daughter of Brother Frank and Sally Irene Cain. Her parents and two brothers preceded her in death. She is survived by one niece, one nephew, several cousins, many church brethren and many friends.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder C.C. Morris in Mulhearn Funeral Home in Monroe, La. before a good congregation, and was laid to rest in Union Church Cemetery to await the return of Christ. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her, but we bow in humble submission to the will of our Holy God.

Elder Clifford Wilbanks

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

Plunged in a gulf of dark despair,
We wretched sinners lay,
Without one cheerful beam of hope,
Or spark of glimmering day.

With pitying eyes, the Prince of Grace
Beheld our helpless grief,
He saw, and (O amazing love!)
He ran to our relief.

Down from the shining seats above
With joyful haste he fled,
Entered the grave in mortal flesh,
And dwelt among the dead.

He spoiled the powers of darkness thus,
And brake our iron chains;
Jesus has freed our captive souls
From everlasting pains.

O for such love, let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break,
And all harmonious human tongues
The Saviour's praises speak.

Watts.

POSTMASTER

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EDITORIAL

GRACE

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

God, Jesus Christ and grace are the sweetest, most comforting words of the holy scriptures to the children of God, who have been born again, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. The subject of grace is vast and deep, and can only be comprehended by revelation from above through the Holy Spirit, which is given unto us. I say "us" only in hope that I am one of his, and I pray that he will give me something to write that will praise and glorify his Holy Name, and that he will cause it to edify and comfort at least one of his beloved children.

God chose his children in his beloved Son Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, and he said, ***"Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."(Eph 1:4, Jer. 31:3).*** Because of his great love, he bestowed his grace on them. Grace is the divine, free gift of God. It cannot be obtained by money or any work of man, though there are many so-called churches and religious organizations begging for money that they might work for God. There were those who asked Jesus what they might do to work the works of God. Jesus said, ***"This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."*** The Lord said to the house of Israel (his children), ***"I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities***

will I remember no more." (Heb. 8:11). What a gracious and soul cheering promise this is to those who are given to believe!

In Ps. 139:15-16 we read, *"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."* These members are the elect children of God whose life is in Christ and who were also given a life of flesh and blood. *"Forasmuch then as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Heb. 2:14)*

These children are the seed of Adam, and when he transgressed the commandment of God and died, they died in him. This was, of course, not a corporal death, but a separation from God. Therefore, when they were born in the flesh they were born sinners. David said, *"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."* That is the condition of every one born in the flesh, and this is our condition as long as we remain in the world. The evil propensities of our flesh were not changed with the new birth. In time past we walked according to the course of this world, in the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. We walked with them in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. When we no longer walk with them they think it strange that we no longer run with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you: who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead. (1 Pet.4: 4) *"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2:4-9).* What great grace is bestowed upon sinners!

As I said above, we are born sinners. All we have in the flesh is a carnal mind, and to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. The

carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Enmity is hatred, and because of this hatred we have no desire to be subjected to the law of God. All we seek, when in the flesh, are the lusts of the flesh and the things of the world; and we do not know these things are sin. To be spiritually minded we must have the Holy Spirit within our heart. *"So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." (Rom 8:5-10)* It is by the grace of God if we have the Spirit of Christ within, for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. If we know God, it is because he has been revealed unto us; and to know him is life eternal. Jesus said, *"All things are delivered unto me of my Father. and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." (Matt. 11:27).* Paul is an excellent example unto us. He did not know Jesus and was persecuting him before he was knocked down on the road to Damascus. It was then that Jesus was revealed to him. Until then all he knew was the law, for he was just as dead in sins as all the children of Adam before the new birth. There are many who profess to know God, but have only head knowledge, and they go about the world trying to teach others to know God. Jesus said of these, *"Woe, unto you, scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves." (Matt. 23:15).* Jesus said to his apostles, *"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."* He did not tell them to do anything other than to preach the gospel. Jesus said, *"Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: which sayeth, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people`s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. But*

blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear." (Matt. 13:13-16.) Those who do not have eyes to see and ears to hear are not the chosen children of God; but those who have been born again will hear what the Spirit sayeth to the churches. God sends his ministers to preach the gospel where and when he will, and they are told to "take no thought how or what things ye shall answer or what ye shall say: for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say." What amazing love and grace! God hath loved us with an everlasting love, and with loving-kindness he calls us with a holy calling. Who can separate us from this love? Paul said, ***"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, not principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, not depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our head." (Rom 8:38-39).*** This should prove conclusively that the children of God can never fall to lose their eternal salvation which is in Jesus Christ our Lord. Yet the world teaches that we can fall from grace for Paul told the Galatians they had fallen from grace. Some of God`s children say they cannot fall from grace, yet they are the only ones who can fall from grace, (not out of), for they are the only ones who have ever possessed it. Paul, however, said, ***"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law, ye are fallen from grace." (Gal 5:4).*** Paul was writing to the Galatians, asking who had bewitched them that they should not believe the truth, for they had fallen from believing in the grace of God back to the works of the law that they might be justified by works, even though he had told them before, ***"For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." (Gal 2:16).***

Beloved brethren, though Satan is ever with us to tempt us, let us ever trust in the wonderful grace of God. ***"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (1 Cor. 10:13).*** When we are tempted let us go to the throne of grace to seek this way of escape. God is faithful to answer all prayers of faith.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

PSALM 136 : 23 & 26.

Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy endureth for ever:

O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy endureth for ever.

ARTICLES

GOD'S CHARACTER IN SALVATION

1 Timothy 2:3b-4

3...God our Saviour;

4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

The main emphasis on verse four is the character of God. Who is God? Is He waiting blindly to see who will "accept" His Son? Does He will for more people to be saved than actually will be saved? Are His hands tied because He wouldn't dare violate man's free will? Will God save every single person that has ever been born on the earth?

Or does God have a people, and all of His elect will be saved? All of these questions reflect on the character of God!

Let's look at the verse in question. Verse four says, "Who will have all to he saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." This is a very misunderstood verse. And because of misunderstanding, it is often misused and twisted to fit one's viewpoint. This verse is a bold proclamation of what our God and Savior's purpose is in the salvation of His people. Let's look first at what this verse cannot mean:

1)It cannot mean that "all" men without exception will be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. (We know from history that this is not the case. There are thousands every day dying in their sins outside of God.) If this were the case then there would be no need to proclaim the gospel (good news). If this were the case then it would include the goats that are separated from the sheep. It would include all the people in the OT that God told Israel to slaughter. It would include all the people that didn't get on the ark with Noah and his family. It would include all the Israelites that died in the dessert because of unbelief. It would make God a liar. Jesus very clearly says: ***"John 10:11 "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."*** There is no mention of goats in this verse. Jesus laid down His life not for a random sporadic people, but for a specific people.

2)It cannot mean that God has willed to save more than He will save. How this goes is something like this: God has desired, in His compassion.. that every single person be saved even though He knows that not every single person will be saved. I don't know about you but that kind of makes God double minded. The God that I serve is NOT double minded and He accomplishes ALL His will.

Daniel 4:35 And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and (among the inhabitants of the earth:

and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

At the very base of this is that God cannot fulfill His desires. which again is a contradiction to the revealed word of God. Isaiah 46:10-11

10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

11 Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.

3) Some people would have you believe that God is so impersonal and so out of contol that He is waiting on pins and needles and biting His fingernails in anticipation on whom will accept him. You may ask where I get that? I have heard many-many people quote this verse and then add to it by saying "but you must accept Him first." What is wrong with this statement though is that it puts man on the throne and God bowing to the will of man. I have an excellent theological word for that "HOGWASH!" God is on the throne and in control of ALL things, especially our salvation. look with me at Ephesians chapter 1.

3 ¶ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ

4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will,

6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

These verses all point to what God is doing and has done to bring His people to Himself. The main emphasis of these verses is that God has a perfect time to bring to salvation those for whom He chose and sent His son to die for. Notice in verse six it very plainly says that it is God who "hath made us accepted", it is not us who accept him.

Now that I have shown what this verse cannot mean. Let's take the time to honestly look at this verse and find out what it does mean. The Greek word that Paul uses for "will" in his statement, "will have all men to be saved," is *thelo* (2309) and it means literally 'to will, to wish' and implies volition and purpose and frequently a determination from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words. And Kittel's Theological Dictionary of the New Testament has this to say about *thelo* - In secular

Greek and the LXX the word *thelo* has such varied meanings as "to purpose," "to be ready" "to resolve," "to desire," "to wish," "to prefer," and negatively "to refuse." It may be used for the divine will or the royal will. It is common in the OT in the negative. So here we have a fairly common word. But as the saying goes "CONTEXT IS EVERYTHING" When this word is used in reference to God, this word "always" means reality!

Here are a few examples:

Matthew 8:2-3 (also see; Mark 1:40-41& Luke 5:12-13)

2 And, behold. there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord. if thou wilt <2309> thou canst make me clean.

3 And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying. I will <2309>; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

(The Leper asked Jesus if He was *"thelo"* "willing" and Jesus. *"thelo."* "I will..." What happened next? Take a look again at the verse. The leper was cleansed on the spot -immediatelv. No "ifs" "ands" or "buts" about it! There was no "I wish that I could." or "Yes, I desire to but let's see if anything happens." When God *"thelo"* "wills" (for something to happen it is a reality.)

And also this verse in Philippians: 2:3 For it is God which worketh in you both to will <2309> and to do of [his] good pleasure.

There are 201 times that *"thelo"* is used in the New Testament (to see a complete listing of them, if you have the Online bible program, click on search and put in "2309" in the box, if you don't have a program you can always email me and I will send you a complete list in your email). Here is a sample of the times when it is used in reference to God-Matt. 9:13 12:7, 20:15; Mark 3:13; John 5:21, 17:24-and of course the verses above. If you get time, really focus on Philippians 2:13. That verse is so rich and so much there.

Now let me give you an example of when *"thelo"* is used in reference to man.

Romans 7:15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would <2309>, that do I not: but what I hate, that do I.

16 If then I do that which I would <2309> not, I consent unto the law that it is good.

18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will <2309> is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

19 For the good that I would <2309> I do not: but the evil which I would <2309> not. that I do.

20 Now if I do that I would <2309> not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

21 I find then a law, that, when I would <2309> do good, evil is present with me.

Paul says in essence here that he has all the desire in the world to do the right thing, but he is not able. He knows that it is right and he tries

with all his might, but he finds himself doing the complete opposite. And so again, I reiterate that when *"thelo"* is used in reference to God, it is a sure thing and when it is used in reference to man, it is just a want or desire that might come to be or happen.

Looking back at our verse again, the first thing that you should notice is that God is the subject with reference to this word "will". Since God is the subject, and with what I have just shown you that when the word for "will" is used with reference to God as the subject. how can we view this verse? When you understand that God will accomplish all his good pleasure, there are only two ways of viewing this verse. One is that God will save every single person that has ever lived. Or that God will save all of His people that Christ died for. In order to come to the right conclusion to which of these two are correct, we need to look at the word "all."

The word "all" comes from the Greek word *"pas."* Here is what the Online Bible notes have to say about it: "1) individually, 1a) each, every, any, all, the whole, everyone. all things, everything; 2) collectively, 2a) some of all types." What this means is that the word "all" is used two different ways in scripture" Again, going back to the saying "CONTEXT IS EVERYTHING!" It can mean all without exception or it can mean all without distinction. You must look at the context of the verse in order to understand how it is used. Let's look at a few verses where both ways are used.

Matthew 2:3 When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all <3956> Jerusalem with him. (Was "all" Jerusalem troubled? No! In fact there was celebrating going on at the birth of Christ!)

Matthew 10:22 And ye shall be hated of all <3956> men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. (Were they hated by every single person? No! for that would mean that there would be none that would join them. "all without distinction")

Luke 2:1 And it came to pass in those days. that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all <3956> the world should be taxed. (Was the "whole" world taxed'? No! but all in the Roman world were.)

Matthew 5:18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass. one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all *<3956>* be fulfilled. (Here is a good example of all without exception - we can take these words as they stand)

When we view a verse that has the word "all" in it, we need to really focus on the context of the verse in order to understand it correctly. If we misapply the word, we end up with a twisted interpretation of the verse. Let me ask you a simple little question. Looking at history and even your own history, has every

single person that you have known, come to the knowledge of the truth? I can emphatically say NO! There are thousands daily that die in unbelief. There are no second chances once a person dies. {Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:}

But our verse says that it is God's will that all are to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. This verse MUST be in reference to "all without distinction" or " all of mankind" or even further than that, "all of God's elect (family)." Notice how the transgression of the verse goes. Ones salvation is first, but once we are saved God will bring us to the knowledge of the truth. If there *is* no truth, there is no salvation. If you will give me a few more minutes of your time, I would like to look at a few more words in this verse.

The words "to be saved" are very fascinating. Those three words come from a single Greek word and it is *"sozo".* It means just like it is used in this verse - to save, to rescue, etc. But what is fascinating to me is the tense and voice that go along with it in this verse. It is in the Aorist tense and Passive voice and Infinitive mood. Now, you ask what does that mean? Well, I am not a Greek person, but with the helps that I have I will try and explain it the best that I can. The Aorist tense is used for simple undefined action. The infinitive mood is where the translators get the word "to" in front of "be saved". The Passive voice represents the subject as receiving the action of the verb. In this section of the verse who is the subject? Look again at the verse - "Who will have all men to be saved..." "Will" is the verb" and "all men" is the subject and the recipient of salvation. Man has NOTHING to do with his own salvation. It is a complete work of God from start to finish. Man's salvation was completed on the cross when Jesus cried out "It is finished!!"

Now we come to the words "to come." It means just what it says also. Again though. what is fascinating is the tense and voice of the word. It is different in the voice than our last word. It is in the Aorist tense, the infinitive mood but this time in the active voice. The aorist and infinitive are the same as before but the active voice represents the subject as the doer or performer of the action. What does this mean? Is it a contradiction to the tenses and meaning of "to be saved"? Absolutely not! What we have here are two different pictures. Again, as I said before, notice the word order. We are first saved and then come to the knowledge of the truth. Our salvation is WHOLLY OF GOD! but our conversion is something that we are a part of. What this means is that at the appointed time God opens our eyes and we "will" come to the knowledge of the truth. Can you be saved and only have a little bit of the truth? Can you reject any of the truth

and still be saved? Jesus very clearly says in John 16; 13;

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, [that] shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

And also Paul through the Holy Ghost says in 2 Thessalonians 2:13:

But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:

There are no contradictions in scripture. These two verses solidly confirm that those who are saved will "come to the knowledge of the truth."

A lot of the arminians think that this verse is a blockage concerning God's sovereignty. I hope and trust that the Lord was pleased to use this little study to show that this verse very boldly proclaims God's sovereignty. To quickly summarize: this verse stresses God's character in that He will accomplish all His good pleasure and what He sets out to do. He WILL bring ALL of His elect to him! He will lose none that He sent His Son Jesus Christ to die for. Jesus did not say "It is possible" on the cross, He said "It is finished!" What a wonderful promise to His children. May the Lord bless ALL HIS ELECT in the study of His glorious word!

2 Corinthians 2:15-16b

15 For we are unto a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:

16 To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life.

Tom Adams 11-2001

Romans 8:23-27.

And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope : for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

VOICES OF THE PAST

VITAL RELIGION MANIFESTED BY PATIENCE

As in this and all other graces of the Spirit, it has a vital part in the lives and experiences of every child of grace. We feel very exercised at times whether we have the vital connection with that which is called true patience or not seeing the contrary workings of impatience in ourselves.

Let us, being the Lord's will, consider a little of the effectual workings of the Spirit of God in the exercised child of grace. First, let us be careful to bring forth and separate the precious from the vile. There is a vile experience of professors of religion. There are those who make much noise about religion, can give much instruction about patience, etc., but when the time for it to be exercised we find them to be "stony ground hearers."

One may have a great knowledge of the Scriptures and converse very freely on patience or other subjects of the teaching of the Holy Writ; yet when the trials come, manifestation will show whether it is true or false. The false patience is in word and tongue; godly patience is in deed and in truth. The false profession comes from those who, when trials come, are like Demas, forsake us because they love the present world. John 2:15 says: ***"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world; if any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."*** Bless God, if this Scripture tries you sometimes, and causes you to wonder if you do love Him, feeling that the heirs of this world take much of your time away from eternal things. But dead professors can hold to the world and enjoy it, while at the same time they hold to the church. Jesus said. ***"Ye cannot serve God and mammon."***

It is a terrible thing to have a false religion. If this is all we have we shall have our portion in the unspeakable torment of hell forever. Professors who are not possessors, must have all their good things in this world, having no true patience for that which is to come. And surely they will not suffer for Christ's sake, but all the things of this world shall suddenly fade away and be no more.

But bless God, there are those who have patience in deed and in truth. The efficient cause is God from whom every good and perfect gift comes. Hence we are exhorted to "be patient in tribulations." Afflictions are the lot of God's children in this world. They are called a poor and afflicted people. Through this narrow and difficult way all pilgrims and travelers pass. Our old nature does not want them, and it seems more than we can bear. Esau seems to carry the birthright for a season. Oh then we doubt and complain and fear. How impatient we are! We say with David, ***"How long wilt thou***

hide thy face from me!" Psa.10:1 This great monster, unbelief, suggests that God has cast us off forever. Bless God, if in due time you can have patience and say with the prophet ***"And I shall wait upon the Lord that hideth His face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for Him." Isa. 8:17***

Does prayer try your patience sometimes? I have found in my experience that it seems God has shut His ear to my cries, and turned a deaf ear to them. I once called on him for a long time for a revelation of my call to the ministry. It seemed to me that it went unanswered, and He did not regard it. Sometime later I attended an association in Alabama and believe that God blessed me to speak of His goodness and mercy, and was given such great encouragement. He then appeared to me with this question: ***"What greater evidence do you want?"*** Oh how I felt condemned for my impatience. And at the same time rejoiced that He had heard my cries! I was looking for a vision or the answer to come some other way. The answer was there, and I did not know till He revealed it to me. Surely He hears and answers the prayers and cries of His people, although patience may be tried much. It is a mercy for us to patiently wait for the Lord to be kept and to find with David, the seeker gets, the knocker has it opened unto him. (Psa. 41:1).

When grace is active, then surely we do in patience possess our souls. We have that peace the world can neither give nor take away.

Paul describes the doctrine of justification as it comes along and is received by faith in experience. He goes on to say (Rom. 5:3): "Not only so," not only being justified by faith, have peace with God, access unto this grace wherein we stand, rejoice in hope by the grace of God, but we glory in tribulations, also, knowing that tribulations. worketh patience. Thus there is a vital connection between tribulations and patience. Tribulations are used by Him to bring in action patience. By divine grace they are the occasion of exercising and increasing patience. ***"Blessed is the man that endureth temptations."*** (Afflictions with patience). He shall receive the crown of life, obtain the promise as Abraham did and through faith and patience inherit it. (James 1:12, Heb. (6:12,15). A wonderful description is given of the sufferings by faith of the saints in former ages, In the Hebrews 11, at the beginning of the 12 chapter: ***"Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight. And the sin that doth so easily beset us; and let us run with patience the race set before us."*** He race here means our course of life here in this world. The great prize is heavenly glory. The great mark to direct us is Christ. Many are the runners, but only the overcomer sets the prize, which is held by Christ, and is given those blessed

to run with patience this race that is set before us.

The way is marked out in which we are to run in His Word. All the troubles we are to meet with in the way are set and appointed for us in His counsel and purpose. All is set, the length is fixed for us, how far and how long we shall run. The prize is determined for all with this patience. Patience is very necessary because of the many hardships along the way.

By way of encouragement James exhorts the brethren, "Be patient, therefore, brethren, (addressing himself to the poor and afflicted, whom he calls brethren of whom he was not ashamed) "unto the coming of the Lord." Here is the vital thing that concerns all the saints. It is the thing we so much hope for, our great and final deliverance from this old world of sin and sorrow. He encourages them not to murmur against Him who has set all these things for an appointed time.

Dear tried child of grace, the near coming of Christ is here used to encourage us in this grace of the Spirit, patience. Our redemption draws near. Suffering times shall soon be over. Here, we bear the cross, there we shall wear the crown; here we are tossed at sea; there we shall have eternal rest; here we drink of the bitter cup, and are made partakers of the sufferings of our blessed Master, there we shall drink of the rivers of joy and pleasure forever. Oh we feel it to be a serious thing to live and to die! If we live without bearing in some measure, the marks of patience, which is a gift of God we shall find our portion in hell. But if blessed as His dear regenerated children, to bear the marks of patience, to run the race with patience, looking unto Him who is the author and finisher of our faith, we shall one day hear His wonderful voice saying, Come, ye blessed of My Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

In conclusion, may we all seriously search ourselves to see if we bear the marks of patience, and all other graces of the Spirit, and follow on to know Him, whom to know is life eternal. Amen.

By Elder C.M. Haygood

REVELATION 7:15-17.

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

THE SOUL OF MAN

Brother Beebe: - Why is the soul or spirit of man immortal? Or, in other words, why did it not die when the body dies? Be assured, I remain yours with my best wishes.

Wesley Spitler

Reply - The question proposed by our esteemed brother involves a mystery quite beyond our depth. We have never been able to define the soul of man, nor to tell the whys and wherefores of its interminable existence. Aside from divine revelation, very little can be known of the soul or spirit that distinguishes the human family from the rest of the animal part of the creation of God. But the scriptures supply to us that instruction which human physiology is altogether incompetent to afford - ***"God breathed in man the breath of life and man became a living soul."*** And Paul has testified that the first man Adam was made a living soul. Again we are instructed by the words of inspiration in regard to the spirit of man that goeth upwards, in distinction from the spirit of the beast that goeth downward. However impossible it may be for us to comprehend the soul and spirit of man, we all feel a consciousness that we possess both, but why the soul shall survive the dissolution of the body and continue to be in happiness of misery forever and ever, to our limited mind admits of no satisfactory answer short of the light of divine revelation. God has condescended to inform us of the composition of man as a mere human being, of distinct elements of his composition. The material substance of the man was made of the dust of the earth, but it was not until God breathed in his nostrils the breath of life that man became a living soul. As the union of these elements constitute us living beings, or living souls, so the separation of these component parts is called death; but not, as we understand it, to signify the cessation of existence of vitality only in relation to the body which is composed of the earth. When the Redeemer died on the cross he committed to the hands of the Father his spirit, and as he said to the dying thief, ***"This day shalt thou be with me in paradise,"*** we conclude there could have been no suspension of vitality in the soul or spirit of either Christ or the penitent thief to whom the consoling assurance was so graciously given. The soul identifies the man, for man became a living soul, and in the common language of the scriptures, men are called souls. The assurance to the thief could not relate to the body of the thief, for his body was not laid with that of his Redeemer in the new tomb, nor was it preserved from seeing corruption. It was therefore something apart from his body that was with Christ in paradise. The body being of a material substance, we can trace it to its silent resting place in the bosom of its mother

earth; we can watch the process of decomposition until the perfect accomplishment of the decree, *"To dust shalt thou return."* We see it so perfectly returned that it can no longer be distinguished from its kindred dust. Were it not for the light of revelation we should there bid it an eternal farewell, without any hope of its resurrection. But the departed soul and spirit we can, by nature's light, trace no farther than the time of its separation from the body, and were it not for inspired instruction, we might conclude that it dies with the body, ceases its vitality and discontinues to be. But, God be praised, the words of truth assures us that the spirits of the just are made perfect, that they are with the Redeemer in the paradise of God. Paul when speaking of his departure from the body spoke of departing to be with Christ. That there is really a separation of soul and body in death we are certain from many declarations of the scriptures - among others the words of our Lord concerning the rich man. To him it was said, *"Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee!" "Fear not him that can kill the body, but fear him who is able to cast both body and soul into hell."* The material bodies of the guilty sons of Sodom were probably consumed with material fire which God in righteous judgment rained from heaven upon them, but these very inhabitants of Sodom are not suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. From all of these considerations with many others presented in the scriptures we conclude that in death there is not only a separation of soul and body, but that the soul immediately on its separation enters a state of paradise, or sinks to a state of interminable woe and misery. The spirits of just men are made perfect in glory, and the spirits or souls of the wicked are cast into hell.

Brother Spitler and our readers, permit us to remark that the scriptural word immortal with its derivatives, as used in our version of the Bible are not used in the scriptures simply to express the idea of interminable existence. The wicked must continue to exist in hell under the wrath of God, where the smoke of their torment shall ascend forever and ever, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched; but still this state of their existence is denoted by another word of very different and opposite meaning from that of immortality, which in scripture is synonymous with the words eternal life, and Christ only hath immortality, dwelling in the light, and it is only in him that the saints have immortality.

For this is the record that God hath given us of eternal life, and this life is in his Son. This is the true God and eternal life. This life is his with Christ in God, and they unto whom it is given shall never perish, but because Jesus lives, they shall live also.

The order of the final resurrection of the bodies of the saints at the last day presents a strong confor-

mation of the position we have taken. For when Christ shall descend from heaven at the last day to raise the dead and to judge the world, according to the scriptures, he shall be revealed personally, from heaven with ten thousand of his saints; that is, as we understand it, with all the spirits of his saints now made perfect. *"For when he who is our Life shall appear,"* says Paul, *"then shall we appear with him in glory."* The dead in Christ shall rise first, and those saints who shall then be living on the earth shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye, and these raised with spiritual and immortal life shall meet them in the air and so shall they be ever with the Lord. These are the children of God which are born of incorruptible seed by the word of the Lord that liveth and abideth forever. *"He that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and he that liveth and believeth on me shall never die. Believest thou this?"* So spake Jesus to Martha. On another occasion he said, *"He that eateth this bread that came down from heaven shall never die."* There is that then in Christians that cannot die, cannot cease its vitality, but that something is not the vile body, or the mortal body, or the Adamic nature born of the flesh, for all flesh must die, and return to the dust. But that which is born of God is incorruptible and secure from death. The earthly house of our tabernacle must be dissolved and fall; but the children of God have a house which is not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. The outward man decayeth; but the inward man is renewed day by day.

In regard to the bodies of the wicked, it is sufficient that our dear Lord has us not only that the saints shall rise, that he will raise them up at the last day, but he has also said that the hour shall come in which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and they shall come forth, they that have done good to life eternal, and they that have done evil to a resurrection of damnation. And God will judge the world in righteousness at the last day, by that man whom he hath appointed, and that according to Paul's gospel.

We would not be understood as confounding the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, with the natural soul of man; for all men have natural souls, as we have attempted to show, but all men have not the new man described above. All who are born of God in the new birth receive an implantation of spiritual and incorruptible life. But the soul which is quickened by this implantation and the life implanted in the soul are distinct things in their nature and origin, but identified in the person of the regenerated, in whom Christ is formed, the hope of glory. So at least the subject appears to us. If we are right, may the Lord have all the glory; but if we err, may he forgive us, and may our breth-

ren be blessed with patience to bear with our weakness; for if we know the desire of our own heart it is to utter only the truth as it is in Jesus Christ our Lord. Brother Spitler and brethren, in our experience we feel an internal consciousness that we have a soul that must survive this poor frail body, and that it must exist after the earth and seas shall have passed away. This soul, as well as this body, we found, to our sorrow, was defiled with sin. But the holy law of God spake in thunder when it said to us, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." And until Christ was revealed to and in us we were in bitterness of soul in view of our guilty, helpless and as it seemed to us, our hopeless condition. But -

"When God revealed his gracious name,
He changed our mournful state."

Then great joy and gladness sprang up in our heart, and our sorrowing and sighing, at least for a time, fled away. We have seen the time that we would gladly have believed that we had no soul to life after the death of the body; but as well might we seek for repose and comfort on a bed of embers, as for a release from the strong conviction that we had a soul all stained with guilt, that must suffer the righteous judgments of God, when time shall be no more, unless God should reveal a way that his justice and truth could be maintained and salvation abound to the chief sinners. But why it is so that the soul must so exist in wealth or woe forever, we can only solve upon the ground that it was even so because it so seemed good to our Creator to organize us. It is now enough to know that it is so, and to rest assured that God in making man a living soul had an object worthy of himself. And however dark and mysterious the footsteps of our God may seem to our very limited understanding; we desire to be still and know that he is God. May we be preserved from vain speculation on this and on all subjects; may we rejoice in all that has been revealed, and trust him for all that he hath seen fit to withhold from our understanding.

Middletown, N.Y., June 1, 1854
Elder Gilbert Beebe

"I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing." John xv.5.

The great secret in religion - that secret which is only with those who fear the Lord and to whom he shews his covenant - is first to get sensible union with the Lord, and then to maintain it. But this union cannot be got except by some manifestation of his Person and work to our heart, joining us to

him as by one Spirit. This is the espousal of the soul, whereby it is espoused to one husband as a chaste virgin to Christ. From this espousal comes fellowship, or communion with Christ; and from this communion flows all fruitfulness, for it is not a barren marriage. But this union and communion cannot be maintained except by abiding in Christ; and this can only be by his abiding in us. *"Abide in me, and I in you."* But how do we abide in him? Mainly by faith, hope, and love, for these are the three chief graces of the Spirit which are exercised upon the Person and work of the Son of God. But as a matter of faith and experience, we have also to learn that to abide in Christ needs prayer and watchfulness, patience and self-denial, separation from the world and things worldly, study of the Scriptures and secret meditation, attendance on the means of grace, and though last, not least, much inward exercise of soul. The Lord is, so to speak, very chary of his presence. Any indulged sin; any forbidden gratification; any bosom idol; any lightness or carnality; any abuse of the comforts of house and home, wife and children, food and raiment, any snare of business and occupation; any negligence in prayer, reading, watching the heart and mouth; any conformity to the world and worldly professors; in a word, anything contrary to his mind and will, offensive to the eyes of his holiness and purity, inconsistent with godly fear in a tender conscience, or unbecoming our holy profession, it matters not whether little or much, whether seen or unseen by human eye - all provoke the Lord to deny the soul the enjoyment of his presence. And yet with all his purity and holiness and severity against sin, he is full of pity and compassion to those who fear and love his great and glorious name. When these sins are felt, and these backslidings confessed, he will turn again and not retain his anger for ever. When repenting Israel returns unto the Lord his God, with the words in his heart and mouth: *"Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously;"* then the Lord answers: *"I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon."* Then, under the influence of his love, Israel cries aloud: *"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea."*

Elder J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

The 2002 Eastern Kehukee Association will convene the Lord willing, with the Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church, located in Tarboro, North Carolina. The association will be held Saturday, October 5 and Sunday, October 6. Services will begin each day at 10:30am.

Tarboro Church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albermarle Avenue. Out of Raleigh, take US 64 East. Stay on the bypass until you get to Exit 485. Take this exit and turn left at the stop sign. Go over the overhead bridge and turn right at the first stoplight. This will be St. James Street. Go about one mile and the church will be on the right next to the railroad.

We invite visitors and correspondents to attend.

Naomi Coker
Association Clerk

THE STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The Staunton River Union Meeting will convene, the Lord willing, at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, September 28th and 29th, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before. Springtieid Primitive Baptist Church Is located on business route 29, South Main Street, Gretna, VA.

We welcome and invite the ministers of our Faith and Order, our Brethren and Friends to be with us.

Elder Marvin Brumfield, Moderator
Oscar Pickral, Clerk

SULPHUR FORK ASSOCIATION

The One Hundred Fifty-Seven session of the Sulphur Fork Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Pleasant Hope Church on Saturday and Sunday, October 5 & 6, 2002.

Pleasant Hope Church is located on the East side of Highway 251, South of Atlanta, Texas. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Miles Bird
Assocation Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held at Greensboro Church on the 5th Sunday in September.

We welcome all brethren and friends.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Wayne Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 2002

Eld. Leonard Brammer, VA 5.00
Arlene Hole, NC 5.00
Melvin Hollandsworth, VA 5.00
J. V. Geisendorfer, WI 2.00
Carrie Jo Williams, TX 5.00
Ollie May, AL 10.00
G. T. Newman, TN 5.00
Daniel A. Doss, MS 20.00
In memory of Eunice D. Simpson
Carolyn S. Gay, VA 50.00

ST. JOHN, 15:17.

These things I command you, that ye love one another.

OBITUARIES

VERNA MARIE GODWIN GARNER

We at Oakgrove Primitive Baptist Church bow our heads again in humble submission to the Lord who saw fit to remove from our midst our sweet little Verna Marie Godwin Garner. She was the daughter of Elder David Godwin and Verna Norman, Godwin. She was born in the state of Texas August 22, 1944 and she passed from this life March 11, 2002 making her stay here a little over fifty seven years.

Sister Verna Marie was burdened with brain tumors, she had several surgeries to remove them but they kept coming back, the last one left her with a stroke from which she never recovered. She joined Oakgrove Primitive Baptist Church August 12, 2001 and was baptized by her Dad September 9, 2001. She was always in church when she was able to come.

Sister Verna Marie lost her husband early in life and was faced with the burden off rearing seven children alone, she had many troubles but she just laughed her troubles away and loved her children, they are A very close family, filled with love For one another.

Sister Verna Marie died in Winn Parish Medical Center in Winnfield, LA. Funeral service was held March 13, 2002 in Southern Funeral Chapel, Winnfield LA. with Rev. George Procell officiating.

Sister Verna Marie is survived by Five sons Tim Garner, David Garner, Norvel Garner, Vernon Garner, and Shannon Garner, two daughters: Angela Smiley and Debra Garner, two brothers; Norvel Godwin, David M. Godwin, her Dad Elder David Godwin and eight grand children all of Goldonna, LA. She was laid to rest beside her late husband in Goldonna cemetery under A mound of beautiful flowers to await the coming of her Lord.

Submitted by;
Elder David Godwin, Moderator
Katherine Mathews, Clerk

BROTHER JULIAN LABAN RAY

Brother Julian was born on December 4, 1909 to Naomi Spangler Ray and William Lewis Ray. On April 9, 2002 at the age of 92, he was called home by his Lord. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by seven brothers, three sisters, and his precious wife of 69 years, Sister Nellie Johnson Ray. Left to mourn his passing are his daughter, Janet Rumley of Greensboro; sister, Helen Shane of Greensboro; granddaughter, Marsha Rum Icy of Greensboro; and several nieces and nephews. A graveside service was held April 11, 2002 at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church cemetery by Elder Haywood Wray and his pastor, Elder Kenneth Key.

Brother Julian asked for a home in the church and was received into the fellowship of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on November 10, 1968. He was baptized by his pastor and uncle, Elder David Spangler. Having put his hand to the plough, he was blessed to never look back.

Brother Julian was a lovely brother. It was a blessing to be privileged to sit and talk with him. He often shared dreams that the Lord had given him. One in particular stands out in my memory. He dreamed that he and Sister Nell were walking together on a path through the forest, and the forest was ablaze with fire. Yet, he and Sister Nell walked through on a little path and were unharmed. In Isaiah 43:2 it is written when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. They were truly a blessed couple, and along with Brother Jesse and Sister Mabel delighted in their church meetings and in visiting their brethren. I have been blessed with many fond memories of their visits to my grandparents home for which if I know my heart, I'm very grateful.

There was always such an expression of love and warmth on Brother Julian's face when he greeted his brethren and when he sat under the sound of the gospel. In Psalm 50:2 it is written, *"Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty God hath shined."* And in Psalm 89:15-16 it is recorded, *"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day; and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted."* The words of the hymn writer sums up what was so evident in Brother Julian's countenance:

I love thy kingdom, Lord
The house of thine abode;
The church our blest Redeemer saved
With his own precious blood

I love thy church, O God,
Her walls before thee stand,
Dear as the apple of thine eye,
And graven on thy hand.

Beyond my highest joy
I prize her heavenly ways;
Her sweet communion, solemn vows
Her hymns of love and praise.

Though we miss him greatly. We know that he looked forward to his departure with joy, and that our loss is his eternal gain. May the Gracious, Heavenly Master be with us all, who miss him so much, and most especially with his family, and bless us with that healing love of the Gentle Shepherd that soothes all sorrows.

Humbly submitted,
Mary Hawkins

OBITUARY FOR LUCILLE PASCHAL SMALL

In the early morning hours of August 16, 2001, the angels came for Sister Lucille Paschal Small and freed her from her long physical suffering. Sister Lucille was born on August 31, 1912 to John Lee and Annie Mae Wall Paschal and she spent most of her life growing up and making her home in Rockingham County, N.C. She is survived by her two children, John Fred Small and Peggy Small Rich, and her loving sister, Lelia P. Carter. She is preceded in death by her husband of 54 years, Fred Otho Small and her brother John H. Paschal.

Sister Lucille was a devoted believer of the old time doctrine and was a faithful member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. The last two years of her life she was unable to attend church services due to her failing health, but she clung to her belief in an Almighty God and she cherished the visits to her home by her many friends and fellow believers.

The funeral service was conducted by Elder Kenneth Key and Elder Billy Knight. Her body was laid to rest beside her husband in the Sharon Baptist Church cemetery.

I would say a few words about Lucille P. Small who passed away on August 16, 2001. Lucille was a dear friend and sister in church. We rode together often, along with several other sisters in the church. After they were gone and it was just Lucille and myself we traveled a lot of miles together and to other churches in our faith and order. We enjoyed going to church together. Most of the time I drove, sometimes she would drive if she felt like it. Lucille was a kind and gentle person and a faithful member of her church, as long as she was able to attend. She loved her family, Peggy, Fred, and special sister and friend Lelia Carter. She stayed at home af-

ter her health deteriorated. Then she loved to have her friends and church members visit her home. She loved to talk about the Lord with people she loved. She always told me to call her after church and tell her about the meeting and the people who attended. Lucille's funeral was held at City Funeral Home, and she was buried beside her late husband at Sharon Baptist Church to await the coming of our Lord.

Written in request of Dan River Church,

Peggy Rich
Betty Southard

ELDER JULIAN R. WILLIAMS

As remembered by his daughter

As a child, I thought my father was almost perfect. I idolized him to an extent. As I grew older, I realized he was a man with failings and imperfections like all men. What made him special was the grace of God. In nature, my father had the self-confidence that if anyone else could do something, so could he. In the spirit, he knew but that for the grace of God, he could do nothing. God kept him humble and blessed him to walk humbly before his brethren. He did not seek attention. He was a quiet man who would rather listen that speak (a shy person by nature). Yet, he was bold in the defense of the gospel. He boldly preached the gospel and did not hold back to please men. He set an example of honesty and integrity. He believed a man's word was his bond.

He was drafted into World War II. He had no desire to leave home or to fight. Yet, when duty called, he went forth and did what he was required to do. He was wounded. Many times he told us that the injury was a memory that prevented his death. He cried out to his God on the battlefields of a foreign land. His God heard his cry and preserved his life. All of his experiences helped to mold him into the man he became. He said he would be afraid to change anything. He knew that all things work together for good to God's elect people. He had a hope that he was among that chosen number. He loved his brethren and enjoyed the time he spent in their company.

He was also blessed to be part of a close, loving natural family. He brought that love and closeness to his own wife and children. He manifested his love to all of us. Yet, at the end, he said it was time to see Jesus. We would not call him back from his rest. Yet, we mourn for our loss of his preaching, his singing, his prayers, his encouragement, and his wit. His race is run. We feel sure he has gone home. May we be blessed to live our lives in love, peace, and fellowship with our brethren as he did.

Uncle Burnell, I wrote this out of love because you asked me to. I hope God will use it to comfort you.

In bonds of love,
Joyce Williams Pittman

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

Courage, my soul, behold the prize
The Saviour's love provides:
Eternal life beyond the skies
For all whom here he guides.

The wicked cease from troubling there,
The weary are at rest;
Sorrow, and sin, and pain, and care,
No more approach the blest.

A wicked world, and wicked heart,
With Satan now are joined;
Each acts a too successful part
In harassing my mind.

But fighting in my Saviour's strength,
Though mighty are my foes,
I shall a conqueror be at length
O'er all that can oppose.

Then why, my soul, complain or fear?
The crown of glory see!
The more I toil and suffer here,
The sweeter rest will be.

Newton.

POSTMASTER

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Signs of the Times
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EDITORIAL

"Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed..." Rom.4:6.

Elder J.B. Farmer

Does not the little word "it" refer to that great salvation of God's people? I believe that it does. That great salvation encompasses all of the elect *from* before the foundation of the world into eternity. This salvation was revealed unto the children of God and was known understood believed upon, trusted in and enbraced by them by faith. This faith is not of themselves but is the faith of Jesus Christ which was given unto them that they might believe the truth. The chosen of God are made to walk by faith, to live in faith, and to die in faith. God,Who was pleased to make it so, is glorified in His people and they are pleased to praise and honor him. God has commanded them to be faithful unto death and that He would give them the crown of life. God, Who commands His people, also performs His good works in them. He that has begun a good work in you shall perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ. Abraham believed God (by this same gift of faith) and it was counted to him for righteousness. His unfeigned faith in God was evidence that he was of the body of Christ for which His blood took away all sin. Since the sin of His people has been removed and the Righteousness of Christ has been imputed unto them, they are made to be the Righteousness of God in Him. God ordained the creature be made subject to vanity that He might be continually delivered from the forces of evil within and without to the praise of the glory of His grace. God made it of faith that it might be by grace. God did for His people what they were not able to do for themselves. He has carried them all their days in His bosom like lambs even to old age. He has kept them hedged in so they cannot get out of the way. They are a garden walled

around. All provision has been made for them for all times and events. He has made it so. They will not be tempted above that they are able to bear but He will, with the temptation, make a way of escape. When they are tried they shall come forth as gold. Since God has performed their good works for them they cannot fail. If God be for us who can be against us. Our God is greater than all and is our all in all. His promise is sure to all His people for He said I am God and I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father who is making intercession for us according to the will of God. God cannot fail. And because He holds His people in the palm of His hand, they cannot fail. He will cause them to be faithful into death that they shall receive the crown of life. We know the promise is sure to all His seed because it is God that promised and He cannot lie or fail in a promise. He is God and there is none else.

Written in love, I hope,
Elder J.B. Farmer

ST. JOHN 15:16.

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

CORRESPONDENCE

459 Lakeshore Terrace
Hardy, VA 24101
August 4, 2002

Dear Brother and Sister Terry,

I am enclosing a check to renew "The Signs" for another year.

It was wonderful to see you two at Pigg River Association. The association was a good place to be and I felt that my spirit was made to rejoice in hearing the sermons praising God, His goodness and His power. Thinking back over the years when I attended with my father and mother for many years; the ministers still are preaching, when blessed, the same doctrine today. Friday at the close of the service my cry seemed to run over with the sweetness of the love that seemed to flow from the brethren and sisters for each other. I felt the Lord was in our midst - this was a Bethel spot.

Brother and Sister Osborne spent the night with me, and we talked about spiritual things - this was a special time.

I pray the Lord will enable our people to stand up for His doctrine and not be afraid to speak out when need be.

I feel to be the least among you; but I love the brethren and sisters, if I know my heart.

I hope to see you at Smith River Association. You both are special to me.

In bonds of love,
Mildred Spangler Graham

July 29, 2002

Dear Elder Terry,

Enclosed is a check for $15.00 for the renewal due for the Signs of the Times for one year. The Signs are much comfort during life's trials and troubles. It means so much to read about Jesus Christ our Savior and Comforter who remembers us in our low estate. We give Thanks unto Him. All Blessings unto His Name.

Gloria B. Reese
(Violet's daughter)
for Violet M. Barton
455 Hunting Blvd. N.E.
Roanoke, VA 24012-3533

PROVERBS 8:19-21.

My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.

I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment:

That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Romans 8:28

Yesterday we tried to speak from this Scripture, and as our mind is on the matter yet, we will try and pen a few thoughts in connection with it.

The apostle, in addressing the church of God at Rome, uses the expression, "And we know," showing that the knowledge he speaks of is not known by him alone, but also by those he was addressing, as he says in another place, We do not tell you these things because YOU do not know them, but because we know them. Amidst a world of confusion and strife, where nations are falling right and left, where men's hearts are failing them, where fear is in the hearts of man, it is a comforting thought that God Lord of heaven and earth, and all things are in his hand, from the falling of a sparrow to the heart of kings, and are in his hands as rivers of water and he turns them whithersoever he will. God works all things after the counsel of his will, and none can stay his hand. If we could feel as sure that we are the ones who love

God and are the called according to his purpose, as we do that he works all things for the good of such ones, it would suit our feelings better, but God has so arranged that our walk should be a walk of faith, and not by sight. No doubt the apostle Paul, as he reviewed his journey from Jerusalem to Rome, could certainly realize that all things had worked together for his good. God appeared unto him before he started from Jerusalem to go to Rome, and told him that he should bear witness of him at Rome. When we examine the journey to Rome we find Paul traveling in the hands of his enemies. They were carrying him to Rome to preach the gospel, yet they did not know what purpose the Lord had in the matter. Today wicked men, and the wars that are raging, are fulfilling some wise design, and all these things shall work together for good to the chosen of God, yet the wicked know not anything about his wise purpose, and their wickedness shall fall upon their own heads. God punishes not only his people for sin, but also nations, and often the wicked are used as a sword to punish them. His people often need purging and humbling. We are often brought in these times to repeat the hymn:

"When thou, my righteous Judge, shalt come
To fetch thy ransomed people home,
Shall I among them stand?
Shall such a worthless worm as I,
Who sometimes am afraid to die,
Be found at thy right hand?

I love to meet among them now,
Before thy gracious feet to bow,
Though vilest of them all;
But can I bear the piercing thought,
What if my name should be left out?
When thou for them shalt call."

No doubt the reason men reject the idea that all things are being worked together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to his purpose, is because they only see the act, and cannot behold the purpose.

"Blind unbelief is SURE to err,
And scan his works in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

His providence unfolds the book,
And makes his counsel shine;
Each opening leaf, and every stroke,
fulfills some deep design."

Even the apostles of our Lord

when he was being crucified did not understand the purpose of God in it. They did not know it was necessary that Christ must suffer and enter into his glory. They had earthly hopes of the restoration of an earthly kingdom. It would appear to human reasoning that with the prophecy concerning the suffering of Christ, the prophets declaring before his birth the place of it, the foretelling the manner of his death, that a bone of him should not be broken, that they should look on him whom they had pierced, that for his garments they should cast lots, etc., that they would have understood these things. But the Holy Ghost must reveal these things. The reasoning of the carnal mind is always contrary to truth. Peter was a stronger predestinarian on the day of Pentecost than he was in the judgement hall, and so are we all. As he stood in the judgement hall and bitterly denied that he knew not the Lord, he knew not the purpose of God in the matter. The Savior had told him that before the cock crow this night thou shalt deny me thrice, yet it took the completion of the denials for him to remember the word of the Lord. All this was working together for his good. He had declared that he would not forsake the Lord, even though others did. Now he had learned how weak he was, and had been converted, and sifted as wheat, so that he could strengthen the brethren with the doctrine that, You are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation. None know their weakness as those God has left to try themselves, and have found they are not their own keepers. Through such experiences we learn that our only hope is that underneath are the everlasting arms.

From the creating of the garden of Eden, placing man there, giving him a law, unto the crucifixion of Christ, or in other words, all things in time, from the beginning to the end, work for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose, and God so worketh all things that his word declares. Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shall thou restrain.

As we close this article, we would say unto the beloved of God, you unto whom his word is precious, that in every dispensation the darkest times are always before the dawning of a new day. We know not how much trouble is in store for us, how many heartaches and sorrows the world of strife may bring to us, yet if it does we need them. Lift up your heads, for your redemption is drawing nigh. May we as a people, separate from all the people of the earth, seek the welfare of one another; the things that edify one another; with pure hearts fervently.

Elder D. V. Spangler

JONATHAN AND DAVID

The history of Jonathan and David in their relation to each other was a very peculiar interest. Even to the spiritual mind it is a wonderful and touching story; but, as is the case with all the Scriptures, its far deeper, its real and true interest and value, lie in its spiritual meaning. All that was written aforetime was written for our learning in spiritual things in this gospel dispensation. (Romans xv. 4.) This history has a striking gospel significance which I wish to speak of briefly.

It is undoubtedly true that David was an eminent type of Christ, and that in most if not all of the incidents of his life recorded in the scriptures there is set forth in a figure some truth concerning Jesus in his work of salvation. Jonathan appears to represent the Lord's spiritual people as they appeared under the law, while Saul as the anointed king represents Israel after the flesh, with the authority of the worldly sanctuary and carnal ordinances, and all that pertained to the first covenant. Saul and Jonathan were related in the flesh, and were both under that legal covenant, as the carnal Israelites and those who had divine life were all together under that law, and under its carnal service, and could not be distinguished from each other by anything peculiar to either in that legal work. But when David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Saul hated him from that time, while from that same time *"Jonathan's soul was knit to the soul of David, and he loved him as his own soul."* So when Jesus appeared, even in the prophecies of the Old Testament, as the conqueror of death, the enmity of the carnal mind was ever excited against him, and those who testified of him were persecuted.

I will dwell somewhat upon this battle of David. He was in the house of Saul after he had been anointed king, of which Saul was ignorant. Although anointed to he king, the kingdom was not to be given to David until Saul's death, then it was to he established to him and his seed forever. It was probably to signify the permanence of the kingdom to him and his seed that he was anointed out of a horn, while Saul was anointed out of a vial for the opposite reason. David always acknowledged Saul as king while he lived. Jesus was in the legal house, and subject to both parental and legal authority, but was not known as the anointed King by the legal rulers and princes of this world. He was not under their displeasure as a man, but only when by act or word he declared his sovereign power and the work of salvation which he came to do.

When David was sent by his father to see his brethren, who were in the army of Saul fighting the Philistines, a champion of great size had come out of the camp of the Phi-

listines forty days in succession, and each day had challenged Israel to choose a man to fight him. Upon his appearance all Israel were dismayed at the sight of him, and fled from him. Nevertheless Israel each morning, seeming to forget their fear of the previous day, went forth to the fight again, in the same armor, and again shouted for the battle, as though confident of the victory. But again they were afraid at the sight of Goliath, and fled from him.

The Philistines were gathered at Shochoh, (a thicket) which belonged to Judah, and pitched between that and Azekah (a cultivated ground). To my mind they, who were the great and constant enemies of Israel, represent our sins, and all the vileness of our fleshly nature, and it is in the wilderness of the flesh, between the flesh and the cultivated soil where grace reigns, the battle is waged. The great and fearful champion that comes forth from that camp of our enemies is death. Of him the Lord's quickened people must be afraid, for in the armor of the law they cannot overcome him, but must fall before him. Sin reigns unto death.

It was on the fortieth day of the champion's appearance that David appeared and accepted the challenge. So on the fortieth day Jesus overcame the evil in the wilderness. David could not go to fight Goliath without the authority of Saul, so Jesus must be recognized by the law as having the right to go into the conflict with death. He was authorized by the law, and put forward by the legal authorities as the one man who "ought to die for the people, that the whole nation perish not," though the high priest who uttered that prophecy by the Spirit did not himself know the power of the words he uttered. (John xi. 50-52.)

Saul armed David with his own armor but David put it off. The law armed Jesus with the flesh. By being made flesh he came under the law. He could not meet and overcome death until he had taken upon himself and put off again that flesh in which sin had been committed, and thus had condemned sin in the flesh. It was only by first being overcome himself that he could overcome the great enemy. He must first die in order to abolish death. The law must first be satisfied by his death, which makes an end of sin, and then death has lost its power. ***"He that is dead is freed from sin."*** Then the Son of God, who took upon himself the likeness of sinful flesh, in order to die the death due for the transgressions of his people, can no longer be holden of death, but comes forth victorious over him. ***"Death hath no more dominion over him."***

All this must be shown in a figure by the action of David, while David must remain alive. So having put off Saul's armor, he chose five smooth stones from the valley. These stones represent an accursed death inflicted upon an Israelite. When a man became accursed he

must be stoned to death. David threw of these stones and brought down the giant. Jesus by his own death under the curse of the law, represented in this figure by the smooth (perfect) stones with which David armed himself, brought death down at his feet, and "destroyed him that had the power of death." He must first die, and then meet death with his own death, and thus overcome him so thoroughly that be can never make any one for whom Jesus died his captive any more. Jesus fought the battle so effectually in the valley of Elah, the bitter valley of death, that when he came forth out of that valley he even "carried captivity captive."

To make the figure more complete David took the champion's own sword to cut off his head. It was the sword of justice which death held over all who were under the curse of the law. But when Jesus through his own death *"finished transgression, made an end of sin,"* and so laid death low, deprived of all his power; then that sword of justice was taken from death and turned against himself to bring his existence to an end.

It was not simply absolute power as abstractly considered, by which Jesus overcome death, but the power that justice and judgment give, for they are the habitation of God's throne, or the foundation of his power as against death. His people are not simply snatched from death, as a stronger man may take away a lawful captive from a weaker, but they are legally delivered. They are justified. No charge can ever be brought against them, for God has justified them. *"It was Christ that died, yea, rather, is risen again, and is now at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for them."* His intercession is felt to be effectual, for with the sword of justice justly taken from his conquered enemy he has destroyed him forever.

"The Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side, and there was a valley between them." "And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead they fled. And the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines until thou come to the valley, and to the gates of Akron." And when the Lord's people see the victory of Jesus over death they arise, and shout, and persue their enemies, and rejoice in the victory that is given unto them through Jesus Christ our Lord.

When David went forth to fight the Philistine Saul inquired who he was. No one seemed to know. Upon his return Saul sent for him and asked him, *"Whose son are thou, thou young man?"* David with modesty and meekness answered, *"I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Bethlehemite."* When he had thus spoken to Saul, *"the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David; and he loved him as his own soul." "Then*

Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle."

What can this act of Jonathan signify unless it be the fact that all of the Lord's people in all dispensations do ever ascribe their robe of righteousness, and all their garments of salvation, and all their weapons of war and their strength, to Jesus? They recognize and testify that all they have belongs to him, and is his gift to them. This is as clearly declared by the holy men in the legal dispensation as by those now in the gospel day.

To the sight of men, Jonathan and Saul were alike as warriors. They fought with carnal weapons, and must both fall upon that same battlefield, overcome by the Philistines. That is the end of all who are under that dispensation. It is the end of all flesh. It is only by faith that a future is seen for Jonathan which is not seen for Saul, in which he and his seed shall be remembered in covenant love and salvation by David. Upon this earthly battlefield he and his fathers fight side by side with equal courage and zeal. David classes them as equals, and speaks of them with equal praise. ***"From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty. Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions." "How are the mighty fallen."*** That legal covenant could not furnish any weapon to those under it whereby they could overcome their enemies. ***"How are the weapons of war perished!"***

For Jonathan, David had some words of love and tenderness which he had not for Saul. ***"I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan. Very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women."*** The love of the Lord's people to Jesus is wonderfully described in those few words. In all ages, in all dispensations, in all lands and among all people, it is the same. It is indeed wonderful, a ***"love that passeth knowledge."***

Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father," and defended him at the risk of his own life, and saved him out of his father's hand, who sought to kill even Jonathan his son because of his defense of David. In this Jonathan may well represent the prophets and holy men of old, who testified of Jesus, and declared his coming and kingdom, and who were hated by the carnal Israelites and their rulers, and were persecuted and killed, because they spake good concerning the spiritual David who was to be the Ruler over Israel.

And Jonathan said to David, ***"And thou shalt not only while***

yet I live shew me the kindness of the Lord, that I die not: but also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house forever; no not when the Lord hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth. So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, let the Lord even require it at the hand of David's enemies. And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him; for he loved him as his own soul."

This promise was not literally fulfilled to Jonathan, for he died with Saul in battle with the Philistines on Mount Gilboa. Nor were the promises which were given to the prophets to declare among the people literally fulfilled to them. They, with all the Lord's spiritual Israel under the old dispensation, ***"having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."- Heb. xi. 39, 40.*** The "everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, which was made with them, and which was all their salvation and all *their* desire, (2 Sam. xxiii. 5,) was not made to grow or be fulfilled in their flesh, *nor* in the sight of men. Its fulfillment was experienced then in the manifestation of Christ to them through the Spirit, who has now appeared in the flesh, and has openly fulfilled all that they spoke of him, revealing himself to his people among all nations by faith, and showing unto us that his people both under the old and the new dispensations are made perfect only in him.

As we see the heart of Jonathan turned toward his children far in the future, with a longing desire that David would show the kindness of the Lord to them, so we see the hearts of the fathers (the prophets) turned unto their children in the gospel dispensation, and rejoicing when it was made known unto them that the things they declared were to be fulfilled unto us. (Luke i. 17; 1 Peter i. 12)

Elder Silas H. Durand

Topeka, Kansas

Dear Sister:

I was so overwhelmed by distracting sorrow and distress I seemed to have forgotten the omnipresent God, and had no thought to call upon him as an ever-present help in time of trouble. But while so forgetful of him, he showed me, as I humbly hope, that he had not forgotten me, by speaking these words in my ear: As the days of a tree so shall the days of my people be. Then, in the midnight darkness and loneliness, in the midst of an ever-changing throng of a speeding train, I lay back in my seat, and with closed eyes, oblivious to all about me, a picture was spread before me such as I have never been able to portray with tongue or pen. The winter just

passed has been another continuous siege of distracting grief and tribulation and my mind reverts to the view I then had, and I have wished I might express to those of "like precious faith," and also of like trials and conflicts, some of the thoughts those words have brought to my mind. Being spoken to me as they were, I thought they were Scripture, but the only text I can find is in Isaiah lxv. 22: ***"They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands."*** No doubt the connecting sentences have a deep significance, and I would love to read after the pen of someone who is given understanding of them. As for me, if I attempt to search and find out God, I am apt to find that his judgments are unsearchable and his ways past finding out, and can only speak of the things which are given and revealed to me. As I humbly hope, by his Spirit, and leave them to his elect, precious, to judge whether they are of him, or only the emanations of fleshly imagination. If it was not a token of remembrance from a compassionate, unchanging God, then I fear I have never received a seal of his love, as he sometimes allows me to dare hope he has given me. I was often made to reflect on the words, ***"If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness."*** It seemed that in this the Lord quickened again my slothful, forgetful heart, and for a little while my troubles were put in the background and I was given a little surcease from the tempest raging in my mind, and instead thereof a season of refreshing from his very presence, which he made me feel was going with me.

I have thought that the "tree" here spoken of represents Christ, who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and as his days so shall the days of his people be. As I lay back, with closed eyes, I seemed to see a little tree in all its verdant, springtime beauty, clothed with leaves and blossoms. In the warm sunshine and gentle breeze it waved and beckoned with its spreading branches, and how sweet to rest beneath its shade, enjoy its fragrant bloom, and reflect on the prospect of fruit to follow. So shall the days of my people be. Where is the similitude of the days of a tree and the days of the Lord's people? Let us go back to the early experience of a child of God,

"When converts first begin to sing,
Their happy souls are on the wing;
Their theme is all redeeming love,
Fain would they be with Christ above."

Oh what lovely blossoms, and what a sweet savor of Christ they send forth as they call and beckon to us to ***"come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul."***

"Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein." The trees of the field do clap their hands, the cedars of Lebanon (the older brethren) bow at his feet, and praise him in fullness of joy, resting in the blessed promise that the Lord will not leave himself without witnesses. Perhaps the little tree had stood unnoticed, apparently dead, until the little leaves began to grow and the signs of life involuntarily began to appear. What rejoicing now that we see it is not dead, as it appeared, and now we hope to see the sweet fruits of the Spirit evidenced later on, for they shall take root downward and bear fruit upward. But, as the days of a tree, by and by the sun does not shine so brightly, clouds appear, and oh how dark it becomes. A storm arises, and in the raging the poor little tree sways and bends, the lovely bloom is beaten off and swept away, or covered with earth. The storm passes, and the little tree is left standing, not so proudly, perhaps, but of a more sore dignity, as, the promising bloom gone, the fruit buds begin to appear, and as the fruit increases in the upward branches the root is taking deeper hold in the earth. So are the days of my people.

"It is not long before they feel
Their feeble souls begin to reel;
They think their former hopes are vain, They're filled with sorrow, grief and pain."

Cannot every child of God go back in memory to the time they thought they would always go on their way rejoicing in the bloom of their earliest love, believing the enemies of their carnal nature were all slain, and would never vex or annoy them any more? But alas, the little clouds begin to arise, vexations come, and the lovely bloom is beaten off as the sorrows of the world worketh death to the sweet spiritual enjoyment, perhaps leading them as far as Peter, to even deny the Lord, saying in doubt and unbelief, that after all it is only a delusion, and they were deceived and had deceived others. Where now is the blessedness ye spake of! The beautiful promising bloom which looked so pleasant is gone from their view, swept away and buried in the storm of earthly cares and sorrows that has so unexpectedly fallen upon them. *"But the root of the righteous shall not be moved."* The storm passes, and they find themselves still standing in the faith of God's elect, cast down, but not destroyed. Oh then the fruit buds begin to appear, as in humbleness they are brought to see that it is not in their own strength they stand. *"I am the root and the offspring of David."*

This is the Root that extends downward in the earthen vessel of mercy. Each can say, O Lord, *"my goodness extendeth not to thee,"* but his goodness does reach down to every vessel of mercy. The strong

downward Root holds firm, and will not let them be overwhelmed. They are made to realize that "the root of righteous yieldeth fruit," which is borne upward in praise and thanksgiving to God for deliverance from the storm. The many storms of affliction and sorrow, trials and tribulations, perils and persecutions break and beat upon the "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, " until they bow and bend, so shaken in mind they fear they cannot stand; no, not another day,

"I fear at last that I shall fall,
For if a saint, the least of all."

yet when the storm passes, and the Sun of righteousness once more beams forth, then in this light, and not their own feeble sight, they see it is not in their own strength they still stand, but the Strength of Israel has held them. Not by works of righteousness which they have done, not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord. Much more of the cherished fruit is gone. But when blooming youth is gone, and old age comes on, we are made to realize that it is the bitter, gnarly fruit of self-confidence and fleshly ambition that is being beaten off. It came from earth, and must fall back from whence it came, for ***"Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up,"*** but the ***"tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord,"*** its fruit shall remain. One by one we see every earthly hope and joy beaten off and swept away, but the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace and fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, oh nothing shall ever be able to separate us from that. How gladly we should have the gnarly, poisonous fruits of the flesh pruned away, so that we might shine forth as the morning, with not a cloud to intervene between us and our Rock, who shelters us in this weary land of storms and trouble. As the tree grows older, as the growth in grace and in the knowledge of truth increases, the poor tempest-tossed child of God seems to gain strength in the storms, often stands more firm, and is not so easily tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine; does not so lightly bow and bend to the lo heres and lo theres, but the sweet fruits of the Spirit are borne upward to him, the Strength of Israel, the Root of David, in the earthen vessel, has kept him from falling, and enables him to say, I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me. If it is his will that I shall weather another storm he will give the old trunk, stripped of all the foliage of youthful hopes and ambitions, every branch of earthly aspirations and joys broken off, strength to endure. But oh the weakness of the flesh. How we do shrink and dread when we see the storm coming, though there is a "needs be" for it all, and we know that

"Not a single shaft can hit,
Until the God of love sees fit."

How we do feel the need of the prayers of all saints, for it does seem

at times that this flesh and heart will surely fail. Oh may he, by the power of his might, when the adverse winds do blow, give me strength to still stand in the way, ready for whatever is in the counsel of his will to come next.

"As the days of a tree." How often have we seen the tall cedars, the sturdy oaks, beaten by the storms of many seasons almost to the ground, nothing left but their bare old trunks, and to all appearance have lived their time and served their purpose, yet they do not quite fall; not yet, their downward roots have not yet parted from the earth, they must wait the appointed time to fall. So shall the days of my people be. Old age is come, the bare old trunk is stripped of every alluring earthly joy, until there is nothing left to live for, and "I long to lay my armor by, and dwell with Christ at home," for

"Surely like a withered tree,
No fruit to me is found,
Why do I live, O Lord, I cry,
A cumberer of the ground?"
"When a few more days I've wasted,
When a few more scenes are O' er,
When a few more griefs I've tasted, I shall fall, to bloom no more."

But not yet. The downward Root has not yet parted from the earthen vessel, and though I often feel, especially in the heart-rending trials I have endured of late, that there is no fruit borne upward from such a withered and weather-beaten old trunk, yet all the days of my appointed time I must wait until my change come.

One night as I lay thinking of the trials and conflicts of the Lord's peculiar people these words came to my mind with force, *"I see men as trees walking,"* and I thought how like a tree is the walk of the Lord's people. None can see men, nor the people of God, walking as trees, untilled out of the town, or world, as was the blind man, by God's own hand, and how short the time until made to see that as the days of a tree, so are the days of the Lord's people. He sometimes lays his hand heavily upon us, showing us what great things we must suffer for his sake, until we cry, *"Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me."* Whom he loves he rebukes and chastens, and it is his chastening hand that makes us look up, until we see clearly every man, every child of God, walking the same path, everyone enduring the same storms and afflictions, for if ye be without chastisement, then are ye bastards and not sons. There is no place of rest for us in the town, or world; we cannot go back there, or tell to any in the town of the things we see clearly. They know nothing of the reproach of the cross, and have no sympathy for the mourning

people of God. But to our own house, there we may freely go, sure to find there the sympathy and fellowship we crave. There all speak the same language, weeping with those who weep and rejoicing with those who do rejoice. Here we see men as trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, walking the same road, buffeted on every hand by storms without and within. The same storms that beat and bend one old tree beat upon all, and though one may feel that the storm has brought him a little lower than the rest ever get, yet all the rest feel the same way: less than the least of all saints. But in this is our fellowship and our love made perfect, and we often find the lowest tree bears the sweetest fruit, as the apple tree among the trees of the wood. What a comparison. The low apple tree is the one that bears the fruit. The ones that stand the highest are not always the most fruitful. But *"as the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons." "Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly."* His loved ones among the sons of earth are lowly. A proud look he hates and abominates. The proud he knoweth afar off. But the fruit of his love on the lowly trees is sweet to our taste; yes, sweet, because when we are made to look up we see that his banner over us is love, and know that, *"Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me." "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."*

As the days of a tree, so are my people. As the tree falls, there shall it lie. It falls to earth, and returns to the dust as it was, and so shall it be until the bright morning of the resurrection, when the Lord shall bring again in power that which fell in weakness, and will clothe it again in the beauty of holiness, then shall we be satisfied. Every idol that now intervenes between us and our love will be swept away, and we shall see his face, and never, never sin. No more storms of darkness and sorrow falling upon us, no more crying of pain and anguish, no more griefs and heartaches, no more trouble and mourning, no more losses and crosses, no more wars and fightings, the conflict will be over, our warfare ended, and God himself shall wipe the tears from off all faces, for, *"as one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you."* Then shall we see him as he is, and be like him. *"As the days of a tree (He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief) are the days of my people."*

Submitted to the discretion of the editors, and through them to the people of God, walking as trees, toiling, sorrowing, rejoicing, the half of which can never be told.

One of the least,
Mary Ellison

NOTE OF INTEREST

T he following is an excerpt from the Signs of The Times dated 1835. You will notice among the list of contributors was one A. Lincoln. We assume this was Abraham Lincoln as we understand his parents were members of the Little Pigeon Primitive Baptist Church in Indiana and that Abe as a young man was interested and very active in their church.

RECEIPTS.

Burrel Lyman,	Pa.	$1 00
David Bowen,	do	1 00
Joseph Tapscott,	Ohio.	13 00
Eld. Stephen Gard,	do	3 00
Wm. D. Ferris,	N. Y.	1 00
Eld. Gabriel Conklin,	do	20 00
David Jackson,	do	3 00
Xavir Abbott,	do	1 00
Benj. Corwin,	do	1 00
Eld. E. Halcomb,	In.	5 00
J. B. Goode,	Va.	5 00
John Hardy,	do	1 00
M. A. Staley,	do	1 50
Mr. Windsor,	do	1 00
Eld. P. T. Outten,	do	5 00
Eld. Samuel Trott,	do	6 50
A. Lincoln,	Il.	3 00
Eld. T. H. Owen,	do	10 00
Eld. E. Chost,	Md.	2 00
Eld. T. Poteet,	do	2 00
Mrs. Mary Ott,	do	1 00
E. Grice,	do	1 00
Wm. Selman,	do	3 00
Eld. R. Reese,	Ga.	15 00
Eld. J. Henderson,	do	10 00
do do	do	10 00
Jonath'n. Cossington,	Ms.	1 00
C. C. Palmer,	Ct.	2 00
Robert Tripple,	N. C.	1 00
Total.		$130 00

Elder F. A Chick:
Dear Brother in Christ:

Feeling in the mood for writing, and my mind reverting continually to you, once more I address you as above, for what purpose I know not, only that I desire to hear from you, and take this means of getting a thought or two from your pen. Were you to meet me on the highway and greet me with the usual salutation, "How are you?" I scarcely know how I would answer you. No very deep trials, spiritually or otherwise, have stirred my mind since coming within the portals of the Zion of our God. My chief uneasiness is felt when I am brought in contact with the world around me.This hurts me. Imagine how sensitive the body would be were the outer or scarf skin removed, and you will have a very clear idea of my state of mind when in the course of my daily walk I am brought in contact with unbelievers, or what is worse, the adherents of popular religion. I think it would be more in conformity with the experience of the saints, were I to realize more intensely that my worst enemies are "those of my own household." The children of God seem to talk more of their peculiar trials of mind while I have none. Surely there is a lost chord somewhere. ***"If ye be without chastisements, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons."*** Do such scriptures as these apply to me?

Evidence seems to point that way, yet something within me thrusts them from me, and will not accept them.

Both of my parents were Old School Baptists before I was born. As soon as I knew anything at all, I was taken by them to Old Baptist meetings. Every Sunday found them in their place, and of course, I with them, for none of us children were permitted to stay away unless in the event of its being dire necessity. Now, under such training as this, how could I turn out to be anything

but an Old School Baptist? I sometimes fear my knowledge of their doctrine is all in the head and not in the heart, where it ought to be. In a very weak and unsatisfactory manner I will endeavor to lay before you what I hope has been an experience of grace in me, but will leave you to decide whether such is the case, or if it be but a wild fancy of the imagination.

Born in the month of April, 1879, near the village of Southampton, Pa., and almost under the shadow of the Old Baptist meeting-house at that place, such were the circumstances that no excuse could be found permitting me to stay away every Sunday meeting, even in infancy. What tiresome, tedious, sonorous sermons those were to my boyish mind. When during the sermon I should lose myself in slumber, how rejoiced I would be upon awaking, to find them singing the last hymn. The pleasantest part of the meeting for me then was when the minister closed the Bible. To the best of my recollection, I never heard any other than Old Baptist preaching until about fifteen years old. Naturally, having never heard any other, I thought the Old Baptist were all right, but I could not comprehend them. While I thought their religion was a mighty good thing for them, it was not for me. They seemed above me, exalted to heights that I could never reach nor did I care to reach them at that time. I was satisfied with myself as I was. My parents being blest with the gift of hospitality, our home was always open to brethren far and near, so that from hearing their conversation I became intellectually familiar with the points of their belief.

Children around me attended Sunday School, yet I never asked permission to go, knowing full well I would be met a point blank refusal if I did, and knowing this, I never had any desire to go.

Just when I began to think of eternity the life hereafter, I cannot say. I sometimes feared that I would die in the night. At such times I would not go to lying face upward, thinking this more than any other favored and might tempt the "Black Angel" to visit me. Such superstitions would haunt me at times, but would all vanish with day-dawn, and not for some time after would I have such thoughts again.

Desiring from early years to become in the fall of 1895 I began attending a normal school in my native State, to prepare myself for the work. Here the rules were such that every student must of necessity attend service in one of the many churches of that vicinity, every Sunday morning. No Old Baptist church existing in that place, I was forced to attend other denominations, and here for the first time I heard other preaching. I recognized a difference in the preaching almost as soon as I heard it, not that I thought it was contrary to Bible teaching, but that it was more interesting to listen to, and more calculated to keep one from sleeping, than what I had for-

merly been accustomed to.

The week just preceding Thanksgiving was always set aside at the school as a "week of Prayer." During this week the Y.M.C.A. held daily meetings for the purpose of winning converts to their cause if possible. Speakers of some reputation in the religious world were procured to address these meetings, and to play upon the emotional side of every student's temperament. The "week of prayer" in 1895 slipped by without my paying any heed to it whatever. In fact, while the Y.M.C.A. held weekly meetings throughout the year, yet I very rarely attended any of them. At least it was noticeable to me that the very students who were the ringleaders in all the mischief going on, usually made the longest prayers and the longest speeches, but failed to act it out in their daily walk and conversation. This disgusting me, I was very seldom found at their meetings.

Uneventfully my student days passed on until the "week of Prayer" in the fall of 1896. The card issued as invitations to the meetings and scattered promiscuously among the students, bore this inscription at the top: ***"Come thou with us, and we will do thee good."- Numbers x. 29.*** Suddenly a determination to attend these meetings seized me. The motive that prompted me was possibly one of curiosity, as I wanted to see what effect such meetings would have upon me. Not because I realized the need of salvation did I attend these meetings, but as I have said, simply to see how such meetings were conducted, and whether I would be in any way affected by such proceedings. Thus I began attending the sessions held in the fall of 1896, of the so-called "week of prayer." At the close of the first meeting all who desired to be saved were asked to stand up. Immediately I asked myself, Shall I stand or not? Do I want to be saved or not? Why certainly, what sensible man would not want to be saved? Therefore I stood with the others. At the second meeting all who stood at the first meeting were requested to remain at the close and consult with the professor who had the matter in charge. Feeling that I now had gone too far to draw back, I remained in my place at the close of the meeting. When all who were not interested had left the room, the professor made a prayer and talked to us about what we should do to be saved. Belief, he said, was the only necessary qualification for salvation, and it was for us to say whether or not we would be saved. I was willing, I thought, to be saved, but how to make myself believe in something that I knew nothing about, I could not understand. However we were requested to sing a hymn. The one selected had for its theme the giving of one's self to Christ, inviting him to enter and make our heart his home, &C. " I believe," "I trust," "I own," "I want," and other expressions were scattered throughout the hymn. How can I ever express my feelings while singing this selection? Here my pen

fails when it attempts to portray in black and white the revelation manifested in my soul at this time. Something said to me, *"You are lying, yes, lying, and that in the face of a just and mighty God. You say you trust in his name. You do not. You say you believe that Christ died for you. You do not. You are standing up boldly in the sight of God and telling a bare faced lie."* Such agony as filled my soul I can never express. Hitherto my dealings had been between man and man. Now, in the twinkling of an eye, the scene was shifted, and my dealings were between God and man. He was just and mighty, true and good, holy and undefiled. But I, what was I? Alas, a poor, wretched worm of the dust, crawling on the earth, striving in vain to seek a hole to creep into away from the fierce outbust of God's righteous indignation that had suddenly engulfed me, and was sweeping me to everlasting destruction. Yet I said it was righteous and just. I was the one that was altogether out of the way.

"And though my soul were sent to hell, His righteous law approves it well."

Just how long I was in this state of anguish I have never been able to remember. How I managed to get out of that meeting and to my room, I do not know, but when I did get there I threw myself upon my bed and wept long and bitterly, much to the surprise of my roommate, who became much alarmed, thinking that the meetings had worked me up to such a pitch that I was going crazy over religion. He advised me not to attend any more of the meetings, and I did not; not because I feared insanity, but because I could get no comfort there. Gradually time wore on. Instead of getting better, I got worse, and my burden was fast becoming more than I could bear. The professor before mentioned, seeing I was under conviction, kept telling me that if I would but give myself up and believe on the name of Jesus, I would be saved. He asked me what I was waiting for? I said, *"A revelation. When I see Christ and know that he died for me, then I can believe, not before."* He then accused me of stubbornness, and so we parted, and never again came together in any other relation save that of teacher and pupil. At last I thought, what would I not do to be rid of this burden? O, if only Christ was my Savior. O, if he only had died for me. *"Lord, thou canst if thou wilt make me clean."* Now, to my mind, if relief were to come, it seemed to me it must come by a revelation, and that so vivid and so startling that I never could doubt my being saved. I had come to the place where I ceased to work, or to try to rise from the depths to which I had fallen. All my efforts had availed me nothing, so I ceased to do anything and was waiting; waiting for what? For that revelation so startling and so sure that it would dispel all my gloom and save my soul from hell.

While watching for this vision, I opened the Bible, and my eye fell upon these words, ***"Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision: and it shall be dark unto you that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets and the day shall be dark over them."***

Alas, I was waiting for something that was not to come. I wanted a vision; I would have none, because the word of God coming to me with power told me I would not. Thrown down from this hope, vain as it had proved to be, I suffered more than ever.

One night, laying upon my bed, I could not sleep. My troubles were fast getting too severe, and I verily thought they would be the death of me. They were gripping me by the throat, and I could feel my breath fast leaving me; I was dying. My mental anguish had brought on bodily suffering, and I had a raging fever. Now, surely, unless relief came, and that quickly, I should perish, and with that it seemed to me I or something within me cried, "Peace!" In the twinkling of an eye I was at rest. All my burden had gone. Hardly realizing my state, I tried to bring back my troubles, but could not. They were gone, thank God, for ever. Happy and as free as a bird, I fell asleep and slept till morning. And now again I cannot express my joy upon awaking. The sun never shone so brightly: all nature was at her best and rejoicing with me; I felt the power of the resurrection within and around me, and that the gift of eternal life was mine through the blessed sacrifice of God's only begotten Son, who was offered up for me. Shout, ye heavens, and listen, O earth, Christ died for *me.* Such were my feelings at that time. Now I was not aware that there was another being on earth that had passed through what I had. Upon going home to spend a few days at Thanksgiving, I talked all the time to my parents of my feelings, and they rejoiced to see me rejoice. I soon saw that they had experienced the same things that I had. When I returned to school, I took with me a book written by our beloved pastor, Elder S. H. Durand, entitled, ***"Meditations on Portions of the Word."*** For weeks this was all the preaching I had. I soon saw from his writings that he knew all about my feelings from having experienced the same, and I loved him. It was in this way, through hearing them preach, and reading their writings, with the understanding that it now had given me, that I came to see the Old School Baptists as the only and true church of the living God, because it all corresponded with holy writ. Knowing this I loved them because I could not help it. No other people that I have ever met could understand my feelings. Loving them, I knew I had experienced the new birth, for ***"We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren."*** I did not go before the church at this time. Had I been near

them when in the first flush of love, I know not what might have been the consequence, but, as I have said, I was not near any of them, and when I did get back to where they were, doubts and fears had so assailed me that I verily thought I had been deceived, and as for being baptized, I had not thought of it. The very idea was absurd. Nevertheless I have always attended Old Baptist meetings whenever an opportunity presented itself, never having attended regular service in any other denomination since leaving school, but my unworthiness was the barrier that separated me from them. However, in the fall of 1900, while attending a yearly meeting, with the Welsh Tract Church, in Delaware, I lost sight of my unworthiness, and longed all at once to be baptized. This desire kept increasing in spite of the temptations Satan put in my way until the second Saturday in December, 1900, when at the regular church meeting at Southampton, Pa., I related my state of mind to the church. To my surprise they received me, and on the third Sunday I was baptized Thus far the Lord hath led me on, as to the next step, I know not what it will be. I look to him to be my Guide. *"It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."*

This letter is far too lenthy, and I know will sadly try your patience, so will close without more ado.

Yours in the hope of eternal life,

HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 2002

Oscar Pickral, VA	5.00
Doris Giles, VA	5.00
Hazel Garland, MD	25.00
Cleo Underwood, VA	5.00
Douglas Hodges, VA	5.00
Helen Pittman, TX	5.00
Tina Walker, MS	25.00
Mrs. Walter Harrell, TX	5.00
Lula Holley, VA	5.00
Alan McDaniel, VA	5.00
Wanda Brown, NC	5.00

OBITUARIES

LILLIE MABE ORANDER

It is with a sad and heavy heart that I attempt to tell you about my friend and stepmother Lillie Mae Mabe Robertson, Arnold, Newnam, Orander. Miss Lillie, as she was called, begged the Lord to take her on June 23, 2002 because her pain was so great.

She was born the daughter of Jesse and Altha Mabe in Rockingham County, NC. on January 17, 1911. She was married to Harry T. Robertson with whom she had nine children, Billy H. Robertson, Frank D. Robertson, Donald G. Robertson,

Myrtle R. Saunders, Robette R. Evans, Betty Lou R. Toler, two predeceased sons, Harry T. Robertson Jr. and W.J. Robertson and one predeceased daughter Mary Frances Robertson.

After her first husband died she married Leslie B. Arnold. Within four years Mr. Arnold had cancer and died. I met Miss Lillie about this time. I was impressed with the care she gave to her husband during his illness.

My father, John Edgar Newnam became a widow from his second wife during this time. I wasted no time in introducing my Dad to Miss Lillie. I felt if she would be half as good to my Dad as she was to Mr. Arnold, then we would get along just fine. Six weeks after meeting, Dad and Miss Lillie were married by Elder David Spangler.

Miss Lillie started attending Primitive Baptist churches with my Dad after their marriage. She joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on June 13, 1976, and was a faithful member the rest of her life.

My Dad was eighty years old when he married Miss Lillie. They were married for eighteen wonderful years.

They lived half of the year in Florida and the other half in North Carolina. While they were in Florida they entertained many friends. The high lights of their visitors visits was to fish on the surf Miss Lillie told me how she would cast thirteen foot fishing rods all day for Elder David Spangler, Brother Coley Strader and my Dad. There were many fishing days enjoyed by all.

Ten years after my Dad's death Miss Lillie met and married her deceased cousin's husband Coy Orander. Mr. Coy, who was a kind and generous man, and Miss Lillie were married about four years.

Miss Lillie didn't believe in wasting time. She always had a garden, which she shared with her children and friends. In the winter she would make quilts, which were given to her children as Christmas presents. Her last big project was to use her apple peeler and dry apples in her dehydrator. She gave the dried fruit away and always had fried pies to give to people who dropped by for a visit.

Her bible was always open on the table by her chair. She read it daily, but in the last days she was bothered with cataracts. She suffered her first heart attack in 1999. She refused to have surgery and chose to live her time out, as God would see fit. She lived alone with a daughter near by.

Miss Lillie was truly a wonderful person. I miss her very much and especially the phone calls everyday.

Funeral services were held at Wrenn Yeatts Chapel, Danville, Virginia June *25,* 2002 by her pastor Elder Kenneth R. Key and Reverend Jimmy Reeves. Rock of Ages, Cleft

for Me and Amazing Grace, her favorite songs were sung. She was laid to rest beside her first husband, at Bethel United Methodist Church, Pelham, North Carolina, to rest till Jesus comes to gather his jewels home.

We will miss her presence with us. May we be given by grace to say and believe our loss is His eternal gain. May love and fellowship dwell with us now and forever.

Friend, daughter-in-law and
Church Sister,
Sister B.G. Pryor

DEACON GROVER K. SEMONES

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write an obituary for our dearly beloved Deacon and Brother in the church, Grover K. Semones. We at Old Union Church, mourn his passing along with his wife and family. He fell asleep in Jesus on June 29, 2002, making his stay on this earth 81 years. Although we feel such an emptiness in our lives, we know that our loss is his eternal gain. He is survived by his loving wife of 61 years, Sister Dorcie Cox Semones, and their four children, Darrell, Howard, Larry and Sue. Two brothers also survive, Fred Semones and Hassell Semones, and their spouses. Eleven Grandchildren, Seven Great-grandchildren and one Step Great-granddaughter also survive.

Brother Grover united with the church in October 1980 and was baptized into the Primitive Baptist faith. He was also ordained a Deacon April 25, 1981 and served us well for many years. Brother Grover attended the meetings faithfully and always gave God the praise, honor and glory for the preaching of the Gospel. He knew where all his help and strength came from. Even though at times when he was in such a weakened condition he came to meeting and rejoiced in the preached word. He believed the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace and Grace alone.

His Funeral service was conducted at Mayberry Chapel in Floyd County by Elder Hale Terry his Pastor, and Elder Larry Hollandsworth. He was laid to rest in the Big Sand Cemetery in Floyd County, Virginia to await the Second Coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. May the Lord comfort those who mourn and to say ***"Thy Will Be Done on Earth as it is in Heaven."***

In Hope of Eternal Life,
Sandra Hollandsworth, Clerk

Done by order of Old Union Church in conference, July 27, 2002. One copy for our Church record, one for the family and one copy to be sent to The Signs of The Times for Publication.

Elder Hale Terry, Moderator
Sandra Hollandsworth, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

POEM

Memories In The Night

How precious the memory that God has given
That brightened my life for awhile
Their love and prayers sustained me
Through times of affliction and trial

The dear faces often come in the night
Many dark and lonely hour they cheer
How sweet and tender memories
Steal O'er the lonely hear, lingering here

How wonderful is His love and mercy
Expressed by His saints here below
Such love through this lonesome journey
Causing light through the darkness glow

Some dear ones who are in heaven
Are kept in memories sacred place
I must look with sweet anticipation
To see them there face to face,

I would offer to our Lord praise and honor
For the memory of their comfort and cheer
He sends me love by his sweet angels
As I walk the lonely road down here,

Through the gloomy days of life they linger
They warm the heart with their love
In memory they are in the chest of treasures.
With joy I hope to meet them above

Together there I hope to behold dear Jesus
Who loved me so much that he died
To give me a bright home in Heaven
There forever to rest by his preious side

8-21-02 *R.B.H.*

POSTMASTER

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Signs of the Times
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EDITORIAL

THE ELECTION OF GRACE.

Elder R. H. Campbell

"I say then, hath God cast away his people? God forbid, For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scriptures saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel saying, Lord they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved unto my self seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." (Rom 11:1-5)

It is solely by the electing grace of God that there will be any to occupy the courts of eternal glory when this life is over, and Paul says, ***(Rom 11:6) "And if by grace then it is no more works: otherwise, grace is no more grace. But if be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."*** Grace always originates with God, and is only extended to the chosen generation in a glorious manifestation of that love which he had for them before the world began, before man even existed, except in the mind and eternal purposes of God. God does nothing, by the grace or permission of man, or because of anything that man might, or can do, or not do. Man's arm is too short, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually, from the beginning, as witnessed by god when man was driven from the garden of Eden, and the sovereign grace of God is the only power that can recover the natural man from this lost and undone condition.

His corrupt nature, vain imaginations and conceited opinions of

himself have no room for grace, he has no compassion for his fellow man, because of his self serving attitude in all things. Specifically he has no allegiance toward God, or for anything that is good, because when he partook of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he chose evil for it is more pleasing to the flesh, and suffered the penalty for his own disobedience. Man by nature is in a state of perpetual enmity toward God, and all of his ways, and receiveth not the things of the Spirit.

(Rom 5: 20) ***"Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."*** Sin entered the world and ran rampant after the fall of Adam, and the law was given to make manifest the extent of the exceeding sinful nature of all men, but grace intervened and did much more abound toward the elect heirs of promise, not imputing their sin unto them, but rather imputing unto them the righteousness of Christ. to save them from the penalty of death, or eternal state of separation from God, which was the sentence required by the law, for the original sin. Free and sovereign grace redeems man from his fallen state, without his even being aware of its presence, until it is graciously bestowed upon him, in fact, he is unaware of his lost and sinful condition until grace makes him aware of it.

Paul speaking of man in his natural state said, (Eph 3:12) ***"That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God, in the world."*** He was speaking to the saints of God, at the time, but describing their condition when they were dead in trespasses and sin, before they were born again. This is where all men were after the judgment was passed upon them, because of partaking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and it would have been their eternal abode without the marvelous grace, which is the unmerited favor of God.

Being born again is not something that is available to man, at his option, nor can he do anything to effect it in his life. This fact has been made manifest since man was first driven from the garden of Eden, and sons were born of a woman. The first two, Cain and Abel, were both the sons of the same parentage and yet one found grace in the eyes of the Lord and his sacrifice was acceptable unto God. Why? because he was of that elect generation that was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, foreknown of God, and Cain was not. It is just that simple, in spite of the vain attempts of man to circumvent the truth of the matter. Paul made the statement, in his day, (II Cor 11: 3) ***"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted***

from the simplicity that is in Christ." This same illustration, of this electing grace, is given in the birth of, Jacob and Esau, and Paul again states as simply and directly as can be done, the reason for the difference, (Rom 9:11) ***"For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth."*** and yet the natural man will quote this and many other scriptures that declare the sovereignty of God, in the salvation of his children, and still preach that man must make the decision to serve God, and that God cannot save man against his will, or without his cooperation by accepting him into their life. The truth is so simple that a child can understand it and yet the religionists of all ages, with all of their education and natural wisdom cannot, because of the vanity of the natural man in his desperate drive for power. As Paul said of the Jews, (Rom 10:3) ***"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God"*** Cannot this be said of the modern day religionists? they are ever striving to prove their own ability and to be in control of their destiny, Oh! the vanity and foolish nature of the man in the flesh.

We are made to wonder at this lack of ability to understand the scriptures, and yet Paul says, in writing to the church at Corinth, (I Cor 1:21) ***"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."*** How about that? They are told, that by the wisdom of the world they know not God, and yet more time, effort, money and study has been spent trying to disprove this one simple statement, than in any other type of endeavor since the beginning of time. It seems that anyone seriously studying the scriptures could see the foolishness of the doctrine that they believe, but, the scriptures declare that only those who are born of the Spirit can discern the truth contained therein. Paul says, (I Cor 2:14) ***"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*** The natural man only has the letter of the law, and that killeth, it is the Spirit that maketh alive, and if not born of the Spirit they are as ignorant of the things of the Spirit, as they were of the things of the world of nature before they were born in the flesh. Having therefore only the wisdom of the world, their efforts are doomed to failure from the beginning.

This truth, (Eph 2:8) ***"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."*** is declared so

many times, in the scriptures, in so many ways, and yet the natural man will not have it. This is because that no man will believe anything that does not include him, and if he has not had an experience of grace, they will deny the theory that their salvation is a result of the unmerited favor of an all wise, all sufficient creator God. They hate it because they cannot understand it, their pride will not let him accept that which is contrary to all of the reasoning power that he has, and that there is nothing that they can do to affect the outcome; the fact that their eternal salvation is complete and absolutely sure from before the foundation of the world.

(Isaiah 55:8-9) ***"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."*** Only the grace of God can enable man to understand, and enter into that spiritual realm where all of these truths are hidden, natural intelligence cannot help him, earnest seeking for the truth cannot reveal them to him, because spiritual matters are not reasonable when viewed with the natural mind, they are foolishness to it.

(Psa 25:14) ***"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant."*** and this is the only way that man will ever receive any personal knowledge of these things. Jesus, told his disciples, (John 5:39) ***"Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."*** The natural man believes that anyone can read and learn the scriptures and receive eternal life, but, man can live his entire lifetime surrounded by the glorious beauty and grandeur of the heavenly kingdom, the visible manifestations of God's creation, but, unless his eyes are opened, as Jesus opened the eyes of the blind man, they will never be aware of them being anything but random acts of nature. Yes, the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, because, even when one is given to see and believe the truth themselves, they still cannot reveal it to another, only the Holy Ghost, the comforter promised by Jesus, can reveal these things to man.

We will make the statement, I believe it because I read it in the bible. This is not a true statement, for if this were true, that the reading of the scriptures would impart knowledge, then all men would believe alike. The scriptures are true, because as Jesus said above, speaking of the scriptures that they testify of him, but, they are profitable only if they confirm and bear witness with our spirit, to the things that have been revealed unto us by the Holy Spirit. They confirm the faith, and understanding that was given us by the grace of God, when

we were born again, and this is where the belief came from. I have spent many hours reading the scriptures, trying to learn more about certain spiritual matters, and seemingly find myself further from any understanding whatsoever about the subject for which I was searching, and then another time find beauty and comfort everywhere that I read, and the answer to all of my questions. The difference is the presence of the Spirit in the endeavor, with it we can understand all mystery, and without it we cannot understand anything spiritually, even after a spiritual birth.

This was the way that it was with me, if indeed I have had a spiritual experience. I had no interest in religion, was not concerned about the truth, or anything of a spiritual nature, I was satisfied with my life and my accomplishments in nature, until one day, when I believe that the truth was revealed to me from above. For the first time I saw the truth clearly and my faith was stronger than I think that it is now. There was no extended learning period, it was instantaneous, and I could not read enough, and meditate enough on spiritual things to be satisfied. I wanted to ever learn more of this new life that I had found, and experience more of the sheer joy, peace and love that I received as I found another of those handfuls of purpose that had been strewn along the way. That is what I mean when I say that we don't learn by reading the scriptures, we are comforted and strengthened by them because they are the truth and are all more evidence that this electing grace has begun a work in our life, but the learning is by revelation. Paul confirmed this fact by saying, (Eph 1:1) ***"But I certify you brethren that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Christ."*** This is the only way that the truth is discerned, it cannot be taught by another, and reading the letter of the scriptures and learning them so that you could quote them all, from memory does not enable one to know God and his ways.

When one is in the state of darkness that Esias was in the above text, they feel forsaken of their God, feel alone, and in jeopardy of perishing because of their lack of faith and turn to God in prayer for deliverance, and Paul is saying, that as it was then, so it was in his day; there was still a remnant of the seven thousand because of the election of grace. We can say the same thing today, there is a remnant of the Lord's people because of the election of grace. There has only been one election, and in speaking of that election, Moses said, (Deut 32: 8-9) ***"When the Most High divided unto the nations their inheritance,***

when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." As are all of the decrees of God, this is an unalterable declaration that is not subject to change or revision, so, rest assured all that are in that number are just as sure to inherit heaven and immortal glory, as the fact that there will be one.

I'm sure that we have all felt as Elias must have felt, when he thought that he was all alone in the world, and they were seeking his life. There is no more forsaken place experienced than that, but God assured him that there seven thousand whom he had reserved unto himself, and this is not the quantity of the children of god, it is a round number representing the whole household of faith, and that is a fixed number, determined before time began.

May God bless all of our hearts to rest, by faith, in the assurance that the work that has been begun in our hearts, is of God, and is the results of that election of grace, of which there is a remnant present even in this day.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

August 31, 2002
Elder Wm. Hale Terry
202 Carousel Lane
Danville, Virginia 24120-4403

Dear Elder Terry,

I am so sorry my subscription ran out on me. Have enclosed check in the amount of $25.00 to cover next two years. Elder Terry none of us know how long our stay is on this earth.

But when we get up close to ninety we do know the time is running out on us.

My wife and I are in out 66 year of life together. Only way everyone can know how wonderful it is to be beloved with a good companion this long is to express what it is like. So many folks do not, so the only thing I know to do is to say, Thank you Father. Not only our life together, our 4 children, twelve grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren and one Great-Great Granddaughter.

Thank you to all the writers in the Times. Both of us cherish the writings of all the dear brothers.

Thanks,
G.M. Lockey
3008 Old Gate Rod
Morehead City, N.C. 28557

Sept. 19, 2002

Dear Elder Terry:

Enclosed is my check for a two year renewal to the "Signs" plus a little extra.

It was in the fall of 1996 that I was led to "find" The Old School Baptists after losing track of them for so many years. (See letter in the Nov. issue of 1996.) Many blessings have come my way since then, and all through the goodness and mercy of God. A dear friend in N. Carolina who wrote me in answer to my letter in The Signs, invited me into her home last year for a 10 day visit and took me to a couple of church meetings in her area. It was so wonderful to be with those of like faith and belief after so long a time. She also sends me video tapes of different assoc. meetings she attends; The last one being that of the "Staunton River" Assoc. meeting in July of this year. My how I did enjoy hearing all of you preach! What a wonderful gift and blessing from The Lord. I also have a number of audio tapes from Elder Jim Poole, which have been blessed to my heart and soul.

I was beginning to feel that God had cast me off forever, and yet through prayer that I hope and believe was through Him & from Him, He has brought me back into a sense of fellowship with those who believe and contend for The absolute Predestination of all things. I wish I could express how much of a miracle this has been, to my way of thinking!

May God continue to bless all of you who write for The "Signs" and enable you to rightly divide the word of truth, is my prayer always.

In a precious and God given hope, and in the ties that bind,

Love, Caroline Martin
2140 Chinook Ct.
Seven Bay's, Wa. 29122

VOICES OF THE PAST

Gibson Co., Ind.,
Aug. 18, 1859.

Dear Brother Beebe:-The universal practice of the Old School Baptists in this part of the country has been, and is now, to reject the baptism of all other denominations of professed christians, on the ground of the illegality of the administration of the ordinance; and therefore we require them to be baptized. Now we will suppose a case, about which I desire counsel from my brethren, for I feel somewhat difficulted on the subject, and do not know how to act. The case is this: A man comes to your church and asks for membership, telling you that he loves your church, and your doctrine, that he is willing to obey her rules, but that he has been a member of the Missionary Baptists, and was baptized in the fellowship of said church by

a man that he believed was a christian, (and you believed the same) and was called of God to preach, and that if he ever knew anything about regeneration, and sanctifying grace, it was before he was baptized, and that in his baptism he verily believed that he received the answer of a good conscience toward God, and was fully and entirely satisfied with his baptism, but notwithstanding all this, he was willing to be baptized by you, in order to obtain fellowship in your church. (I use the term *your church,* meaning the Old School Baptist, or Church of Christ.) In this case what would you do; and your reasons?

There is still another question about receiving members, and that is this: It is a well known fact that there are a great many factions among the Old School Baptists that are not numbered among the Missionary or Arminian Baptists. These factions have split off from us on some doctrinal questions, and it has become us to withdraw our correspondence and our fellowship from them. Now, inasmuch as we have withdrawn our fellowship from them, is it order to receive their baptism? Have we done so? What say you? We are aware that many who call themselves Old School Baptists have embraced errors that we cannot fellowship, having as much fellowship for the Missionary Baptists as what we have for them. Therefore, if we receive the baptism of any so-called Baptists, with whom we do not correspond, and have fellowship, should we not receive the baptism of all that call themselves Baptists?

The next matter of inquiry is, Is not the church of Christ the highest ecclesiastical authority known on earth, and has she not a right to determine all matters in relation to membership in her body, as she in her wisdom may think just and right? Can she concede or give away this right in her compact with other churches in forming an association?

There are still other questions of grave importance that I may at some future day propound, provided the above questions are met and answered in as kind a spirit as I hope I feel in asking them. I am young in the ministry, and have not that knowledge in the management of churches, as these matters without the counsel of my brethren that have both age and experience, as well as the good of the cause at heart. Therefore, all that feel an interest in the peace of Zion, are to give information. Dear brother, God has been pleased to visit us, and revive his work in our midst. There has been fifty-five added to the church that I belong to, and still the work is going on. Many of the churches of our association have been much refreshed.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
JAMES STRICKLAND.

Reply. - The first inquiry we have answered in our reply to Loveless. We do not regard it as our duty to search the hearts nor try the reins of the children of men, that is what none but God can do. But we are to be regulated in extending or withholding our church fellowship by the rule which God has given us. The reality of the regenerated state of the candidate or of the administrator is not what we are capable of judging. But whether the administrator stands connected with and sustained by the fellowship of an orderly church of Christ, we are competent to judge, and we are required to judge. Hence, in replying to the first interrogative of brother Strickland, we say, with due deference to the judgment of the church, whose servant we are, We should decline to baptize them on our faith, and prefer that they should remain unbaptized until they, for themselves, should see and feel the necessity of walking in the order which we believe to be the order of the gospel and kingdom of Christ. And our reason for this decision is the want of Bible authority for baptizing any but believers.

In reply to the second inquiry of brother Strickland, we say, If the factions which have split off from us are so far departed from the faith and order of the gospel as to be rejected from the fellowship of what we regard to be the church of Christ, then they are to us as heathen men, and as publicans, equally with the New School or Missionary Baptists, so called, which have been excluded from our fellowship, and all their religious administrations to us are equally null and void.

The third inquiry. The church of Christ is undoubtedly the highest ecclesiastical authority on earth, but she has not a particle of authority to determine any matter in relation to her own or any other members, or anything else, only as the matter is already determined in the rule given in the New Testament. When the church, or any individual, departs from the laws of Christ, she or they act without divine authority, and their decisions are illegal and invalid. The church has no power to concede or delegate any right, or authority vested in her to any other ecclesiastical body, counsel, or association whatever.

We have candidly expressed our convictions on the questions involved in the two foregoing letters, and in doing so believe we have expressed the order and practice of church of God generally, which order and practice appear to us to be clearly laid down for our guide in the New Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and we submit what we have written to the consideration of our brethren and to the household of faith generally.

Middletown, N. Y.,
February 1, 1860.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

THOUGHTS ON THE WILL OF GOD

The all encompassing will of God is proven by the following Scriptures Ps. 115:3; Isa. 46:10; Dan. 4:17, 32; Rom. 9:18, 19; 11:33-36. God's decree and purpose, called His will, has ever been carried out, without change of which it is utterly impossible for any people, devils, or angels to change or frustrate. "_____ For who hath resisted His will?" Rom. 9:19 "_____ His ways past finding out!" Rom. 11:33 "For who hath known the mind of the Lord _____" Rom. 11:34.

Are we obligated to use this as a guide or rule in practice as taught in the scripture? No, it is not for us to know. And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which Father hath put in his own power," Acts 1:7 for it is secret and "secret things belong unto God" Duet. 29:29 and unknown as the above Scriptures prove. Therefore His secret will and purpose being unknown, there can be no duty or obligation to endeavor to use it as a guide for our actions. There has been no event of time that has escaped the secret will and purpose of God. This is complete and perfect, no such thing as change or chance or uncertainty, " _____ neither shadow of turning," James 1:17. Thus proving it utterly impossible to change or transgress His secret will. Again is this a rule for us to endeavor to be governed by? No, if so it would be like a ship on the sea trying to steer it's course by an unseen star or compass or something to charter it's course by, it will very likely come to shipwreck, however, if it's course is chartered by a compass or star clearly seen it would surely bring it on its way.

When we try to adjust our conduct to God's purpose and decree as the rule of our life, thus error follows; which places special emphasis on one portion of Scriptures and neglecting of others. As time goes on we become crystallized in expressions and when we endeavor to use His secret will, purpose and decree as our guide we develop a seeming dislike and shuning of treating upon the many precepts, responsibilities and commandments laid down in the Scriptures as a doctrine to be avoided.

Now let us further consider as taught the Scriptures the other BRANCH called the Lord or God's will, His commandments and our obligations. Out of fifteen passages of Scripture in the New Testament that I have noted, I have chosen four for reference called the Father or God's will, "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven," Matt. 2:12. ***"For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother,"*** Matt. 12:50. ***"That he no longer should live the rest of his***

time in the flesh to the lust of men, but to the will of God" 1 Pet. 4:2. *"And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."* 1 John 2:17.

From the beginning of time God commanded Adam *"Thou shalt not eat of it."* Gen. 2:16, 17, 3:11. The various commandments making transgression a sin. Man was put under law and obligation, (See November 1984 issue of The Signs of The Times, pages 248-251) not to sin. In every sin we set up our own will, forsaking His commandments, *"Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight"* 2 Sam. 12:9. Are we not under law and obligation to observe his (Christ or God's) commandments? Surely, Paul charged Timothy how we OUGHT to behave and conduct ourselves. *"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou OUGHTEST to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth,* "1 Tim. 3:15. Also *"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man."* Ecc. 12: 13. *"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and 10, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."* Matt. 28:20. After Christ came and fulfilled the law to a jot and tittle the justice and wrath of God was completely satisfied for his People. *"For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."* Heb. 10:14. Are we now under no law or obligation? Surely we are. *"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."* Matt. 5:48. *"But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."* 1 Pet. 1: 15, 16. *"That ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God."* Col. 4:12. Though such obligation and standard is not reached in this life; *"The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak."* Mark 14:38. As Paul says *"Not as though I had already attained either were already PERFECT! but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus,"* Phil. 3:12 *"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus,"* verse 14. The spirit doesn't enable us to live a perfect life in keeping all His Commandments but it is our desire.

The arminians teach that it is absurd to suppose that God required that which they are unable to do, but not so. This branch of God's will called the will of the Lord, which is revealed in the Scriptures for our guide is a perfect rule, Matt. 5:48, 1 Pet. 1:15, 16. But we are continually sinners (it is not given us to be perfect in keeping all his commandments) and transgressors if we ignore God's will or precept; called

his will, *"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven, " Matt. 7:21. "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother," 12:15.* In denying this branch called God's will we run into contradiction of thought in the Scriptues. *"Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye OUGHT to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus."* 1 Thes. 4:1, 2.

Let us, the Lord willing, harmonize God's purpose and decree and the other branch of his will, our responsibility to Him. This is not engaging in a dangerous curiosity, but is in harmony and constant with both. The revealed will of God is our duty and responsibility and is not speaking of his secret purpose and decree, but our guide and responsibility.

God's children are not a lawless people, *"To them that are without law, as without law (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ) that I might gain them that are without law"* 1 Cor. 9:21. And *"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be,"* Rom. 8:7. *"For I delight in the law of God after the inward man,"* Rom. 7:22. Here we quote from a writer of old. *"But to suppose that whatever God requireth of us that we have power of ourselves to do, is to make the effectual working of the spirit of non-effect, our duty is our duty constituted unalterable by the law of God whether we have power to perform it or not."* Let us carefully note here our ability and our duty and obligation are not synonymous and does not have the same meaning in all cases.

It was God's command by Moses to Pharoah to send the Children of Israel out of Egypt (Exod. 5:5, 7:2) but he did not have the ability and it was his sin and destruction. It was Christ's command, *"Jesus said unto him, if thou will be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me,"* Matt. 19:21, but this was not in his ability, (V. 22) *"But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions,"* and this was his sin. A certain lawyer stood up *"Tempting him (Christ) saying, what shall I do to inherit eternal life,"* Luke 10:25. Christ's command to him *"thou hast answered right; this do and thou shalt live."* Luke 10:28. Also Christ commanded him again, *"Go and do thou likewise."* Luke 10:37. But this was not in his ability and was his sin. Also Christ

commanded his disciples in Gethsemane, ***"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation,"*** Matt. 26:41. And this was not in their ability and was their sin.

All our ability to obey is from the Holy Spirit, He must work both to will and to do, (Phil. 2. 13). There is a great difference between do such a thing as a command and obligation and you shall do it by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit. One is our duty and responsibility and the other by His effectual spirit. ***"If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin."*** John 15:22.

Look at some of the exhortation given us as our duty, for example, of the four chapters of Colossians, two of them are preceptive and exhortation; of the six chapters in Ephesians the last three are preceptive and exhortation; of the five chapters in First Thessalonians, the last two are preceptive and exhortation, and all through the New Testament we find these precepts and commandments. Has Paul' s charge to Titus become obsolete? ***"This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men."*** Titus 3:8. My brethren do we not all fall very short in these things? But if love is in our heart we will not use such exhortation as a rod in a legal way; as to use the precepts for others and not as a rule for ourselves also, provoking a spirit of bitterness and division, almost if not denying the power of God; as though we by ourselves could lift ourselves up by our own boot straps.

So as we are blessed to preach in love, ***"I can of mine own self do nothing,"*** John 5:30. And that ***"Without me ye can do nothing,"*** John 15:5. As it has been said, ***"We have no power from the Holy Spirit unless we live in a persuasion that we have none of our own."***

On the other hand, let us also preach and be just as insistent. ***"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me,"*** Phil 4:13. Dear ones, anytime we loose this balance of truth and begin to maximize the work of the flesh, I can't (John 5:30, 15:15); and minimize the work of the spirit, I can (Phil 4:13); we are in trouble; or vice-versa. To continually make judgement about our disability and placing it against our ability and responsibility and God's commands; this my brethren is not exalting the grace of God, but our disability and weakness. Did Peter's weakness and disability of denying Christ release him from the sin of doing it, ***"Thou shalt not bear false witness."*** God charges sinners for their sins, not their weakness, not their disability. It is not right to try to justify ourselves, pleading our weakness and disability as an excuse for not obey-

ing His Commandments. Dear brethren, how easy it is to enlarge on the purpose and decree of God to the extent, without realizing it, of developing a seeming dislike and shun the many precepts and responsibilities; taking refuge behind the effectual working of the Holy Spirit as a release from such obligations. Oh, how dependant on the Spirit to keep us from extremes both ways, (Isa. 31:21).

God's children know where all their obedience comes from and how helpless they are. This gives great occasion for prayer and supplication to Him, to make His strength perfect in our weakness.

It has ever been Satan's cunning craftiness to tempt us one way or the other. Do we not all feel we have experienced these temptations? May it please the Lord to keep us from both extremes; departure in doctrine or in practice, the things that accompany salvation, ***"But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak,"*** Heb. 6:9. But give each their proper place preaching all the counsel of God, ***"For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God,"*** Acts 20:27.

To SHUN is to disguise any important truth, at least to decline the open publication of it for fear of displeasing those to whom it ought to be declared If we go either way; one side arminianism legalism. On the other, losing sight of the many obligations and exhortions laid down in the Scriptures, which begeteth a spirit of indifference. Even going so far as denying responsibility or duty, much less exhorting the brethren daily. "But exhort one another daily, while it is called today; lest any of you be hard- ened through the deceitfulness of sin," Heb. 3: 13.

God's children do not go through this world to heaven ANYHOW, but ONE HOW, by the GRACE OF GOD. This grace in their heart does produce a real change in their life bearing fruits of love, joy, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, crucifying the flesh and its affections. (Gal. 5:22) ***"Teaching us that we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world."*** Titus 2:12.

Teaching us that there is a necessity of striving to enter in at the strait (low, small and pressed) gate. (Matt. 7:13) It is not just professing "Lord, Lord," but in doing this revealed will and here in this sense we are justified by works. (Matt. 7:21. ***"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead being alone,"*** James 2: 17. ***"But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD?"*** (Verse 20). ***"Was not Abraham our father justified BY WORKS, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the alter?"*** (verse 21) ***"Ye see then how that BY WORKS A MAN IS "JUSTIFIED, and not by faith only."*** (verse 24) "_____ so faith

without works is dead also," (verse 26) surely it is not as easy as we might think to be a follower of our Lord The Scriptures teach a vital experience of truth in the heart and fruit of the Spirit manifested by a godly walk and conduct.

When as enabled by the Spirit to exhort in love to such things, there is a tendency of some to hurl back the arrow of exhortation, rather than let it stick in their conscience by such false charges; "unsound, unsound," quickly change the subject by comparing NATURAL things with SPIRITUAL instead of matching or comparing Spiritual things with Spiritual. "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth; but which the Holy Ghost teaches; comparing spiritual things with spiritual, " 1 Cor. 2: 13. Now he is preaching you can do something without the grace of God; all we want to hear is comfort, there is no room for reproof, rebuke or exhortation ***"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine."*** 2 Tim. 4:2 (See also Dec. 1984 Signs, Pg. 271, 172 Article on secret and Revealed Will of God, which I feel is sound.)

As we are blessed of the Lord our obligation to His revealed will, when we are blessed to read it in the Scriptures and hear it preached we should simply endeavor to obey it, not tarrying to inquire into His hidden purpose and decree or whether we shall be able to perform it or not. But my dear brethren, let us be very careful not to break the commandments of God, for the sake of what has been handed down to us, by tradition, ***"Why do ye also transgress the commandments of God by your tradition,"*** Matt. 15:3. And try and repeal and empty the commandments of our master of all their meaning and force to us, as a guide and duty, just to suit our own tradition. ***"Thus have ye made the commandments of God of none effect by your tradition,"*** verse 6. ***"Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus."*** 1 Thes. 4:1, 2.

This makes me fear and tremble. Oh, how far short I have come and failed my brethren, so many times, but some how, by the mercy and Grace of God, I continue to this day and I want to live and die with you.

Now I feel a timely exhortation is in order ***"Finally my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his might."*** Eph. 6:10. And again ***"Be of good courage, and let us play the man for our People,"*** and thus leaving it in his secret will and purpose, " _____ and the Lord do that which seemeth

him good." 2 Sam. 10:12. ***"The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord,"*** Prov. 16:33. (See also Acts 2: 23-26.) If we be his children, it is all working for our good. "_____ we are already more than conquerors through Him that loved us, " Rom. 8:37. ***"Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord _____;"*** Phil. 3: 1. ***"Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say rejoice."*** Phil. 4:4.

Elder Haygood

FRAGMENTS

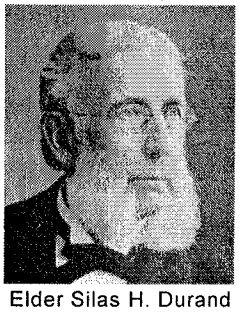
Elder Silas H. Durand

AM I afraid to "speak my mind" concerning any point of scriptural doctrine? Yes, certainly, I have often been afraid to assert as truth all that has passed through my mind, but not, I think, for fear of the opposition of men. I do not think I would be afraid to express in the presence of people anything which I was sure of as the truth of the Scriptures. But I have felt afraid that I might express something which the Scriptures would not sustain. I know how liable I am to be mistaken in my thoughts concerning the profound mysteries of the things of God, and therefore I often hesitate to present thoughts that have occurred to me, and conclusions I have arrived at in my meditations upon the Scriptures of truth, lest I might darken counsel by words without knowledge, and so confuse instead of helping the dear children of God. It is my desire and aim to have all my conclusions tried and proven, so that they shall be absolutely sustained by the Scriptures, and shall be commended to every spiritual man's conscience in the sight of God. (2 Cor. iv. 2.)

It is sometimes asked, Do you stand by and sustain such and such a brother in his position? I do not quite like that way of thinking of our speaking, as though for another were of importance in this respect as having some theory or position in our charge. I do not think my call is to sustain this or that man, or myself even, in any position. What portion of truth is given me today I wish to faithfully present in speaking or writing, as opportunity is offered, in the fear of the Lord. If any brother sees me in any error, and can show it to me, or if the Spirit shows me tomorrow that I have expressed an erroneous thought, I want to be ready always to acknowledge it, and withdraw from it, and I hope I have been glad to do so. For here we see and know only in part.

In the work of the ministry we are not to seek to conform to and sustain this or that one, as though he were a leader; nor, on the other hand, to be disregardful of those

who are as fathers in the church, but each preach the word as given to him. In doing this the one Spirit will be manifest as teaching all, and there will be an agreement, or rather, a oneness, in all the preaching, while there will be a sweet and rich variety in matter and manner.

There is no man, since the apostles, who has been given charge over others in this matter, in the church of God; no one has been appointed a leader whom others are to follow, and to whose position and doctrine they are to be conformed. Each must look alone unto him who has been appointed the Leader and Commander of the people, and look to him for word and doctrine, and also for direction as to the work he is to do. One branch of the Vine cannot direct or control another branch, nor can one be held in higher esteem than another because of a greater amount of fruit that it may bear, or as though its fruit were of a superior quality. The Vine says to each branch, "From me is thy fruit found." When each servant of God has given his own testimony, telling what he himself has seen and heard and felt, then true comfort and instruction will be ministered to the saints, and true fellowship will be experienced with each other by witnesses and "brethren, and it will be manifest that one Spirit has directed all the servants, and that all the heavenly testimony has come from the one Witness, who is faithful and true. ***"GOD shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."*** In the heavens of eternal glory, where the saints shall be after they leave this mortal state, there will be no tears to wipe away. The time of tears is now, in this time state, in the flesh, in this world of sin and temptation and sorrow; and it is now, in this gospel dispensation, that they are wiped away by the Savior, who is in the midst of the throne, and who feeds those who have come out of great tribulation, and who are before his throne, and leads them to living fountains of water. (Rev. vii.) Weeping endures for the night. During the night of the legal dispensation those who feel the condemnation of the law have no release from sorrow; there is no wiping away of their tears. All their days are passed away in God's wrath. (Psalms xc. 9.) However great their strength may be, it is "labor and sorrow," never labor and joy, because their works are vain, and cannot satisfy the law. "But joy cometh in the morning" of the gospel dispensation, when the Lord's work appears to his servants; then are the tears wiped away. Sorrow comes again when we feel our sinfulness, and the tears flow, but again and again they are wiped away. While we are in this mortal state of existence there will always be cause enough in ourselves for tears on account of our transgressions, and of our corrupt nature. Only in the continual revelation of Christ to our souls as our sin-bearer and our righteousness can we find abiding joy and comfort. Whenever in our affliction and grief we are enabled by faith to

realize his pres- ence, to experience the power of his word of grace and to feel his love in our poor hearts, then sorrow is gone as we appear before the throne, and thus he ministers consolation and wipes away our tears.

FRAGMENTS

How is it that one who has led a good and innocent life in the sight of men should, when made alive spiritually, feel as much trouble and sorrow on account of a sinful heart as one who has been guilty of outbreaking sins? We know that naturally there is a great difference of feeling between one of a delicate taste and a refined disposition, and one who is of a coarse and depraved habit of mind, so that what the one would shrink from with disgust and abhorrence, the other would not dislike at all. But we know that only divine life in the soul can cause one to see sinfulness within himself, and to hate and loathe it. It is the sinfulness more than the sin which fills him with self-abhorrence. By the Holy Spirit of God the capability of wickedness in our fallen nature is made known to us, and under this experience the one who has led a moral life abhors himself, and sees no one more vile than he. So Benjamin, with whom Joseph's divining cup was found, was made in that wonderful transaction to appear as having stolen the cup, and therefore the greatest sinner among them. Yet all of them were viler than he, having committed a terrible crime in which he had no part. When the divining cup of our spiritual Joseph is found with anyone, then he feels in his own heart all the sin of the one man by whose "disobedience many were made sinners."

IT WAS not in the hope of getting out of the lion's den, nor after he had been taken out, that Daniel had his greatest joy and comfort, but in the presence of the Lord while he was there, and in the knowledge that the angel of the Lord had shut the lions' mouths. It was not in the prospect of getting out of the fiery furnace, nor after they had come out, that the three Hebrew children experienced the chief blessing of their lives, but it was in the presence of the Son of God with them in the furnace, and that faith in him which was given them in such measure that by it they quenched the violence of the fire, so that the flames could not kindle upon them.

It is in the tribulation that we are enabled most sensibly to rejoice, for there is our dear Savior most clearly manifest to our souls. It is while bearing about his dying in our body that his life is manifest in our mortal flesh. It is in the fellowship of his sufferings that we know the fellowship of his joy. (1 Cor. iv.)

WHEN those brethren who say that time salvation is conditional, and is left dependent upon the will of the creature, are speaking of their own daily exercises they talk as the rest of us do. They acknowledge their inability to live as they want to

live, confess that their life is full of faults, mourn their hardness of heart, acknowledge that they transgress daily in thought and word and deed, and complain of their darkness of mind and coldness in regard to spiritual things. No child of God would think of saying to one whose soul is cast down within him, If you would live better and be more obedient you would not be so cast down and so full of doubts and fears. We have heard from the world that "one can have all the religion he will live for," and that they can win God's favor and be blest by being obedient whenever they wish to, or they can lose that favor by being disobedient. But we do not look for that kind of talk from exercised souls who are sick of sin, and sick of themselves on account of sin, and who have to acknowledge, "When I would do good, evil is present with me," and to cry, "O wretched man that I am."

When one is truly exhorted to turn from error in walk or doctrine it is not merely that he may "feel better," but that he may honor God. A hunger after righteousness and a hatred of sin are the most powerful motives that can be thought of to influence the actions; infinitely more powerful than hope of reward or fear of punishment. The apostle when exhorting his brethren presented to them as a good motive their remembrance of the consolation in Christ, the comfort of love, the fellowship of the Spirit and the bowels and mercies, which they had experienced. (Phil. ii. 1.) What could there be more likely to move them? Yet we urge others, and ourselves, to do what we think is right, whether it will make us "feel better" or not. Obedience to the Lord's will worked in our hearts by him, and worked out in our lives, may be followed not only by persecution and worldly loss, but by darkness of mind. That ought to make no difference. The obedience of the dear Savior brought agony and death upon him, and we are followers of him even in this. But though we have affliction in the world, in him we shall have peace. We shall, in the exercise of true faith, be enabled to say with Job, ***"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."***

Did you, in the innermost recesses of your soul, ever come to the Lord with the plea for his favor that you had done some obedient work for which you expected that reward? What Jesus has done is our only plea, and never what we have done. But how thankful we are when we have been enabled to walk in obedience to the Lord. In the keeping of his judgments is great reward. ***"If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die."*** Daily we learn that we must have grace in order to serve God with reverence and godly fear, and whenever we have done any gospel work we thankfully say, ***"Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." "THOU hast magnified thy word above all thy name."***- Psalms cxxxviii. 2. The name of the Lord includes all his essential

power, wisdom, might, majesty and glory. His word expresses, puts forth, brings into manifestation, all of those glorious attributes and perfections that belong to him, and which are enfolded in his unspeakable name. Jesus is the Word of God; he is declared to be "the power of God, and the wisdom of God."-1 Cor. i. 24. In the name of the Lord was eternally all the power and wisdom necessary to create the heavens and the earth, and to command "the light to shine out of darkness." The Word of the Lord manifested and made known that power and wisdom, causing that incomprehensible work to be done. Thus his Word was magnified above all his name in the natural creation. So also in salvation. The Word which was in the beginning with God, and was God, "was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

Here we have that eternal life which was in the Word, and which was the light of men. We cannot look to any other source for light. This Word is the Fountain of light, as it is the Fountain of life. The inspired Scriptures of truth are put forth by the Word. They are the record of the Word. We find in them, and only there, "the form of sound words"; we cannot reason upon spiritual things outside of that written word, nor against it. Upon every point of doctrine and order we are told to "Hold fast the form of sound words" which we have heard of the apostle Paul and other inspired writers. If the Scriptures tell us that "The worlds were framed by the word of God : so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear," we are not at liberty to say that such could not be the case, because something cannot be made out of nothing. We are to take the inspired words and hold them fast against all the opposition of the wisdom of this world, and faith does so take and hold them.

Concerning the work of creation, the work of salvation, the final state of the wicked, the resurrection of the dead, and all the other mighty mysteries presented in the Scriptures, which declare the works of the Lord, how insistently we keep trying to explain how the Lord does his wonderful works, and to fill up what the Scriptures seem to lack in explaining the "how," and the "wherefore." But our efforts are always vain, and our minds are baffled and turned back at every point, failing to understand the wonderful works of God, even when we feel their blessed power; for, "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out !

How pleasant and restful it is for us, poor and ignorant as we are, to be given an implicit and confiding trust in the Lord, as we read the written word, that we may receive it, not as the word of man, but as it is indeed, the word of God, (1 Thess. ii. 13,) and to trust that the Lord will in his own time and way open its precious meaning to our understand-

ings, and apply it with power to our souls. How good it is when we contemplate the glorious but inscrutable mystery of the resurrection, which will ever remain a mystery until it is experienced ; to feel the solemn assurance of faith that this same poor sinner who sorrows and suffers and hopes and dies here, will in the resurrection be pure and incorruptible in heaven, satisfied with the likeness of Jesus, and eternally filled with joy.

JANUARY 9, 1906.
Elder Silas H. Durand

CONTRIBUTIONS

SEPTEMBER 2002

William Vick, Tenn 5.00
Ocie Hollandsworth, Va 5.00
Carlton Sumner, Sr, Va 5.00
Mrs Albert Davidson, La 25.00
Marcy Burgin, Tx 5.00
Eld. Ronald Crouch, Sr., WV 5.00

OBITUARIES

MR. FLOYD, WINSTON R. "BUD" JONES

Mr. Floyd Winston R. "Bud" Jones, 92, formerly of Sargent, Ga., died September 11, 2002 at Starcrest Nursing Home in Newnan, Ga.

He was born January 18, 1910, in Carroll County. He was a retired textile worker with the Bibb Company. He was head loom fixer and supervisor. He was a member of Antioch Primitive Baptist Church where he was an Elder Minister. He was a wonderful father, grandfather and great-grandfather.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Ruby Marzell Herrin Jones; and a brother, H. C. Jones.

Surviving are children, Marvin and Sue Jones of Bradenton, Florida, Horace and Ferrell Jones of Whitesburg, Carl and Gloria Jones of Carrollton, Jerry and Betty Jones of Whitesburg, James and Becky Jones of Roopville, Betty Stanford of Newnan, Peggy and Dan McElwaney of Newnan, Lynda and Jett Smith of Newnan, Marzell and Jimmy Shadix of Newnan; sisters, Hazel Hopson of Newnan and Flora Bailey of Bowden; 22 grandchildren, 49 great-grandchildren, 11 great-great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

The family was receiving *friends* Thursday from 6-9 p.m. at Higgins Hillcrest Chapel Funeral Home.

A funeral was at Higgins Hillcrest Chapel. Elder Homer Benefield officiated.

MAT. 7:12

"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this the law and the prophets."

MARGARET STULTZ CARTER

God in his inflnite wisdom has seen fit to call from our midst another dear member, Sister Margaret Stultz Carter. Sister Margaret was born February 19, 1919 in Draper, N.C. She was the daughter of the late Henry Stultz and Rosa Stultz Cox a precious member of our church. From her early childhood Sister Margaret lived in the Draper area. She received her education from the local public schools and her nursing degree from Danville Memorial Hospital in Danville, Virginia. On June 14, 1941, Margaret Stultz and John Spencer Carter were united in marriage. They were blessed with one son, John Spencer Carter, Jr. They made their home in Lynchburg, Virginia where Sister Margaret was a registered nurse at Lynchburg General Hospital until her retirement. Sister Margaret was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace. She received a precious hope in Christ and asked for a home at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on July 25, 1953 and was baptized August 23, 1953, by her pastor, the late Elder David Spangler. Sister Carter loved her church and brethren and she supported them both physically and financially as long as she lived. She traveled from Lynchburg regularly to attend the meetings and enjoy the sweet fellowship of the brethren. After her retirement, Sister Margaret and Brother Spencer moved to Eden, N.C. to live with Sister Rosa Cox, Sister Margaret's mother, to be her caregiver and to be close to their meetings. She was faithful to attend church as long as her health permitted but her love and interest in the services never wavered she always wanted to hear from the meetings. Sister Margaret died May 10,2002, in Suffolk, Virginia. She is survived by one son, Spencer Carter, Jr. and his wife, Patricia, of Norfolk, Virginia and grandsons Michael Carter and Jonathan Carter. She was preceded in death by her husband, Spencer Carter, Sr. A graveside service was held Wednesday , May 15, 2002, at 11:00 A.M. in Dan View Cemetery in Eden, N.C. by her pastor Elder Kenneth Key. Her body was laid to rest beside her husband to await the second coming of Christ. May all of us who mourn the passing of Sister Margaret be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father who never makes a mistake. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away.....blessed be the name of the Lord!

Written in Love,
Sister Phyllis H. Stroud

John 15:14-15.

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

DEACON RICHARD STEGALL

At the request of sister Gladys, _____ I will attempt to write this memorial of Brother Richard.

I realize that I will not be able to do justice to his memory unless the Lord guides my thoughts.

In my travels among the brethren for over 40 years, I have not known of any that showed the marks of humbleness and kindness more than Brother Richard. He was a great friend to me personally and a *joy* to serve with as a fellow deacon at Malmaison Church for 32 years. He joined Malmaison Church in August, 1962 was ordained a deacon January 31, 1970. He loved his church and was a faithful and steady servant to the church all of his years of service and was always ready to see to the needs of the building and grounds as well as to the needs of his pastor and the church membership until his death on July 16, 2002.

He was the son of Brother Clarence and Sister Hattie Stegall and the nephew of Elder Jim Stegall. Brother Richard and sister Gladys were blessed with 58 years of marriage and the Lord brought them to join the church at the same time in August 1962.

What a blessing to have the fellowship and Christian union of the brethren as a husband and wife and to enjoy mutual worship services for so many years. My wife and I were able to travel to many Primitive Baptist meetings and to the brethren's homes together with the Stegalls. It is a very fond memory for both of us.

His survivors besides Sister Gladys are a daughter and son-in-law Rachael and Mike Wimmer, granddaughters, Michelle Dison and Amy Wimmer, and great granddaughter Kiera Dison. Also surviving are two brothers and two sisters.

Our church at Malmaison feels a great loss at the death of Brother Richard and we know that his empty seat cannot be filled but we also realize that our Great God is able and has promised to fill the needs of His people. Our church will continue according to His will and we hope to pray for God's continued blessings upon us.

We believe Brother Richard's spirit is in the paradise of God and that he has crossed over that river of suffering and pain to ever be with his Savior and to be reunited with a spiritual body at the coming of Christ. May the Lord reconcile the family and us in this time of great loss.

I loved him greatly as a brother in Christ.

Burnell B. Williams
Aug. 27, 2002

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

WHEN I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my Lord ;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.

See from his head, his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e' er such love and sorrow meet?
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

His dying crimson like a robe
Spreads o'er his body on the tree,
Then I am dead to all the globe,
And all the globe is dead to me.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

Watts.

POSTMASTER

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202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

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CONVERSATION

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

Every literate person understands that conversation is an exchange of thoughts or ideas between two or more individuals in a common spoken language. But the use of the word in this manner is very limited when compared with its use in ancient times, and when used in the Bible. I do not understand a word of the Hebrew language, but according to Strong's concordance the word "conversation" is derived from the word DEREK, that basically means a trodden road, a course of life, manner and behavior of individuals. The word is used twice in the Psalms and eighteen times in the New Testament. Biblically the word does not mean social intercourse by means of language, but it refers to the whole behavior, conduct or character of the individual. This is the primary meaning of the word wherever it is used in the scriptures. Only Paul's use of it in his letter to the Philippians is there an exception, and he used it to mean "citizenship," or to behave as citizens. We do violence to this expression, and greatly limit its meaning if we mean only that our conversing or talking together is in heaven, which is the church of Jesus Christ. To be a citizen of this heaven one must be born there. ***"And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her. The LORD shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there." Ps. 87:5-6.*** This heaven is not that glorious heaven above, but our heaven on earth. To be born there we must be born again, ***"—not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."*** As Jesus said to Nicodemus, ***"—Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven."*** And, ***"Except a man be born of water***

and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." All men, the sons of Adam, are born dead in sins and trespasses; we were separated from God when the first Adam transgressed God's holy commandment. We have a natural life, but we live in nature's total darkness concerning anything spiritual and are slaves and servants to sin until being translated into the light and liberty of the kingdom of Christ. Enoch was translated that he should not see death, and every subject of God's grace shall never eternally die, for Jesus gives unto them eternal life, and he is that life. By his death and resurrection he triumphed over death and the grave and brought life and immortality to light through his glorious gospel which is revealed unto us by his Holy Spirit. Our natural bodies may sleep in the dust, but they will be changed and raised from the grave in the likeness of Christ when our Saviour shall return to receive his beloved bride unto himself. Those who are alive and remain shall also be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and shall rise with those who sleep. *"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch angel, and with the trump of God: and the dead (asleep) in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thes. 16-17.*

Whosoever is born in the kingdom of heaven is born of God and cannot sin. *"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and*

He cannot sin, because he is born of God." 1 Jn. 3:9. As long as we remain here on earth in the flesh we will sin, for this new birth does not change our Adamic sinful nature in any way. John said, *"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."* We are tempted and drawn away by our own lusts and enticed. *"Then when lust hath conceived, it brings forth sin: and when sin is finished it brings forth death." James 1:15.* Paul told the Corinthians, *"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry." 1 Cor. 10:13-14.* Without the power of the Holy Spirit working within us we will not accomplish this. I have tried for many years to accomplish this without success; that is, if I have ever done the thing I ought to have done it was never the result of my trying to do so, but the result of a higher power. Brethren, is it this way with you? Paul said, *"Only let*

your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ." This does not mean only our talking together about the gospel, but if we give the word conversation its full force it signifies, Let your behavior, or life, as citizens of heaven be as becometh the Gospel of Christ. We may talk one way but act another. But if we be the children of God we are not simply to talk the gospel, but live it. The power to do this must come from on high. In Paul's letter to Titus he said, ***"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world."*** The same grace that teaches us these things never leaves us but abides in us to cause us to deny the flesh and its lusts, to the end that we may by grace live and behave as citizens of heaven even while we remain in this ungodly world. Only Christ within us can do the teaching, and if we have not Christ in our hearts then we are none of his.

Brethren, I must confess that I do not always live as I should, if I ever do. There are many times when I say things that should not be said, and do not say what should be said. And I do things that I should not do. Many times I instantly regret what I have said or done and at times it is revealed to me later. In either case it causes me pain in heart and I must beg for mercy to the Most High. I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. It is too long to copy here, but I would like for you to read Romans 8:14-25. This does not apply to Paul only, but to every child of grace.

In the first book of Peter we find these two scriptures: ***"Be ye holy in all manner of conversation," and, "For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed from your vain conversation."*** Again, it is not talking together, but our behavior or conduct is meant. In these scriptures we find holy conversation and evil conversation. A man may say things that sound holy, yet his behavior or conduct betrays him as evil. That man is not being led by the Holy Spirit but is following after the lusts of the flesh. If this conduct continues unabated it will cause much trouble in the church. Paul called these men grievous wolves, and Jude said they were certain men who crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation. Paul also tells us that of our own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

Brethren, I have seen both the holy conversation and the evil conversation in our churches. I do

not wish to point to any individual or church, but to bring it to your attention. I have seen this evil conversation, and I feel sure that at least some of you have also, and we do know that it has split associations and destroyed churches. If it should continue we will see even more. Because this evil is against the church of God, we should bring it to the attention of the church in an orderly manner. The church should never act hastily, but with the help of the Holy Ghost seek to convert the offending brother from the error of his way. This should be done in a kind and brotherly way. But if the brother will not hear the church he should be put out, to be delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. If the brother should return later, and show by his behavior that the Spirit of Christ has changed him, he may be returned to church fellowship. This brings to mind that Peter had been taught of the Father to know that Jesus was the Son Of God, and yet he cursed and swore that he knew him not when Jesus stood before Pilate. But when Jesus looked upon him O how he went out and wept bitterly. I feel at times that I am much like Peter at that time. Is your experience like mine? If so, we can have sweet fellowship.

God is love, and if we love God it is because he first loved us. How can we love God whom we have not seen if we do not love the brethren whom we have seen? It is impossible. Without charity we are nothing. If love is in our hearts we can easily show it in many ways. Charity is love in action. A warm handshake, a hug, a kind word, a simple pat on the back, etc. will suffice. Just telling someone that we love them has little value if we do not prove it by our actions. Paul said, ***"Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law."*** He also said, ***"But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh."***

Beloved brethren, let us always strive to fulfil the law, praying for the Holy Spirit to lead us. Let our conversation be as becometh the citizens of Zion. I need your prayers when at the throne of Grace.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

Romans 8:6 & 10.

For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

VOICES OF THE PAST

ELDER TIMOTHY W. STALLINGS
(1863) Signs of the Times

Dear Brother Beebe,- Enclosed I send you the christian experience of Elder T. W. Stallings, which was written to Elder W.M. Mitchell of Alabama.

Sarah E. Davis.

Elder W.M. Mitchell-Dear Brother in Christ;- After a long time, I undertake to comply with my promise in trying to write you a few things. I have thought, ever since we were together, that I would at some time let you know more fully the reason of the hope that I have in Jesus; and since it is your request, I cannot feel satisfied without telling you more than I have already, although I feel unworthy to address one I so highly esteem; for this reason I have been putting it off. But with the desire that God may direct me, I will commence, and try to let you know I was, as I hope, brought into manifestation. I first felt interested about my soul's welfare in January, 1863, while in the army in the state of Virginia. I never had, up to that time, felt any uneasiness about the salvation of my soul. My thoughts had been, prior to this, that when I got older I would turn from my ways and serve the Lord. I had no doubt but what I could get into favor with God at any time. I used to go to the Methodist meetings in our neighborhood, to see and be seen as many young folks do, and heard them tell the people that they could turn to the Lord if they would; and I fully believed their doctrine.

One morning, while in the army, I was detailed and sent off with seven other men to work, (I do not now remember what day) and while at work that day I became uneasy. I cannot remember any thing that I had done, heard or thought of, that caused the uneasiness to rise in my mind, but it now seems to me that in less than a half hour I had a clear view of everything that I ever did. I had been a fiddler, horse-racer, and gambler, and many other vile practices, from a boy up to that time, and I delighted in those things even up to that day. Now they all came up before me as plain as though it were yesterday that I had passed through those things. I have, since then, thought of the man that told me all things that ever I did, and if I am not deceived, that Man was the Christ. At the same time, I think I had a view of the holy God, Who cannot look upon sin with any degree of allowance. I was compelled to leave the men I was with and hunt some secret place where I could bow down before God, for the first time in my life, and try to implore His mercy; but it seemed like my efforts were all useless. I returned to my companions, as I thought I dared not stay from them and my duty; and when I did return, I felt so bad that I could

not work. It appeared to me that I was such a wicked sinner, I could not be allowed to live long upon the earth. I know not how to describe my feelings better than to compare myself to a man lost in a desert. I could not find the way home. I then and there felt that I was lost. But the trouble of my soul would not allow me to stop. I could not read for myself a single word of the Bible, though it was now my great desire to hear it read. Yet I was afraid to ask anyone to read it for me, knowing as I did that my companions knew so much about my past life. I did not want them to know that I ever had a serious thought. But finally I met with the opportunity of hearing Mr. McMurry (one of my regiment) read in the book of Ezekiel. He read but a short time before he came to these words, ***"The soul that sinneth, it shall die."*** If he had been reading a letter from my home, and had read that my home was burned, and that my wife and Children were all dead, I could not have felt any worse. I immediately left the camp, went where no one could see me, and laid down upon the ground, and felt like I knew that the sentence of death was passed against me. I felt that I would surely be the next man that would die or get killed in General Lee's army; but I had to confess that it would be just in God if He should take me from time to eternity, even where the fire is not quenched. There were some Primitive Baptists in our company, and I heard them talk of their hopes and fears. Their talk, as well as the Bible, seemed to condemn me. I have since thought, my Brother, that I was arraigned at the bar of God, to be judged according to the law,and my whole life in a waste howling wilderness was brought to judgement. And if I could have seen you then, Brother Mitchell, and you had been enabled to preach to me all the comforts of the gospel, I do not think it would have done me any good;for I could not see a Mediator between me and the offended God. As such, I viewed my case a hopeless one. I can say to you that I was like a man sick unto death.I grew worse and weaker every day. I was then moved in my feelings to try some of the ***"Doctors of Divinity."*** They told me that all I had to do was to pray, and exercise faith, and God would certainly smile upon me.I have since thought, my Brother, that I could have as easily made the sun rise at the hour of midnight,and make darkness flee away, as I could have done either. Time and space will not allow me to make mention of everything that I witnessed in this great struggle; I must only hint at them and pass on.

I will now come to that memorable day when our army had been engaged in battle several days, and I was hourly looking for the summons of death. On Sunday evening (said to be the 4th of May,1863) I saw our men in front of me forming a line of battle, and as they formed they

commenced firing. It now came forcibly to my mind that this would be my last day upon earth. I then thought of brethren Ansel Parish and E. J.Williams, two dear old Primitive Baptist preachers of our country, who are, in the providence of God, yet spared and permitted to stand upon the walls of Zion, and cry aloud, and whom I now, unworthy as I feel to be can claim as my yokefellows, who preached for our regiment while stationed at Savannah, Georgia, at the commencement of the war. O how I now lamented my carelessness and hardness of heart; for at that time I cared not for them, nor for their preaching, but could look upon them as being good men. My mind was directed back to Georgia, with a view of all the good men that I had ever known. I would have given all the wealth of this globe, had it been mine, to have been with and like one of those men that I once took such delight in persecuting, and looked upon as being such fools. O, language *is* too weak; I never can employ language sufficient to express my feelings at that time. I fully believed that I should be the first man that would fall. I felt now that I was forbidden to ask God for His mercies.I engaged in that bloody conflict about two and a half hours, with twenty-seven other men of my own company. At dark the battle ended with us. Only myself and four other men came out unhurt, out of twenty-seven. When I came out, I went down to a ravine and drank some water, when it was suggested to my mind, Why is it that I have escaped unhurt, while so many of my dear comrades, many of them far better men, in my estimation, than I, are gone, some lying cold and lifeless on the battle-field, and some wounded and weltering in their own blood? And the answer came to my mind that God had heard my prayers. Instantly the heavy chains of trouble fell off me and I was permitted to look up and see Jesus, who had suffered the just for the unjust, and I do believe, my Brother, that my joys at that moment would be as hard to describe, as would my troubles that I had felt only a few hours previously. And my joy was unspeakable and full of glory. But this undisturbed peace did not last long. In a little while I became fearful that I was not delivered, though the heavy weight of my trouble was gone; yet it seemed that my evidence of being pardoned was not sufficient. At the time of my great joy I would have been willing to tell every man in the army my feelings; but at this time I did not think that I should ever attempt to tell them to anyone, though in the course of eight or nine days I was moved in my feelings to tell the Chaplain of our regiment some things I hoped I had witnessed. He asked me if I desired to be baptized. I told him I did, and he baptized me. I did not then know the difference, as I hope I now do, between the different denominations. I never had read a word in the

Bible up to that time. In the evening after I was formally baptized, I began to desire to read the Bible more than ever, for I greatly desired to know what the Lord would have me to do, though I knew I could not read, neither did I ever expect to; for confinement to study was one thing I never could bear. I will here state that I never had advanced in a spelling book as far as words of two syllables. But in justice to my parents I will here state that it was not their fault, for they tried to educate their children, and succeeded in giving them all a liberal education, except me, but as before stated, the confinement to study of books was my greatest punishment I ever had to endure; in fact, it seemed like more than I could bear; and when my parents would send me to school with my brothers and sisters, I would run away from them and lie in the swamp all day, until they returned, when I would rejoin their company and go home. Sometimes my parents would punish me, and continue to send me off to school, but I persisted in my wicked course, and thereby failed to get my share of that great temporal blessing, an education, though numbers have said, since that time, that I had a good Education; but what I here state I know to be true, and I know that God knows it. I would not, my Brother, make this statement,for this world, were it not true.

Seven days after the man baptized me, I dreamed that I could read, and well recollect the words that I read in my dream, which I have since found in the scriptures - the fourth chapter of Isaiah. I dreamed three nights in succession that I could read the scriptures, and in the morning after the third night I asked one of my fellow-soldiers (who is yet living, and not more than thirty miles from my house) for his testament. I opened it and the first that my eyes fastened upon was the eighth chapter of Romans. I read it as easily as I ever had since, and I have never found any difficulty since then in reading,though I had read but few words before I became fearful that I was asleep, and that it was a dream, and I went out to see whether or not I could see the sun. When I saw the sun shining, and knew that I was awake, and could read, the joy of my soul was more than I could express; and I have since thought that if I had never read any scripture besides the eighth chapter of Romans, I had found enough to give me a clear description of the character of God and His people,embodied in Christ; and inasmuch as the law holds nothing against Him, it holds nothing against His people. So I consider that witness, to wit, the apostle Paul,one of the princes that rule in judgment, rightly deciding in my case what I hope I was prepared in my heart to believe, enough of the scriptures to make me wise unto salvation, if a living child of God. I think, Brother Mitchell, I received great instruction from the chapter above mentioned. I continued to read the scriptures

almost every hour that I was awake,and had the time to do so; but as I was in the army, I was nearly always watching, or on some other duty, and as such I had but little time to read.

On the 19th of October, 1864, I was wounded, being shot through the elbow, and the joint slivered. This was in the valley of Virginia, seventy-four miles above Staunton. I was captured, and carried four miles and made my escape. I then walked two days and one night and reached Staunton. I had no assistance till I got there, neither had any thing been done for my wound, which was by this time in an awful condition, and my sufferings great. The doctor made an effort to amputate my arm, but I was so weak from fasting and loss of blood that I could not bear the operation, therefore my arm was spared, and to all human appearance it was impossible for me to recover" my sufferings were so great. Notwithstanding my sufferings were so great, my soul rejoiced. Though my body was racked with distressing pain, and I had but little to eat, yet I felt that my Saviour was with me. After a long time of intense suffering, both of body and mind, I started for home, and by the kind providence of God I was permitted to reach there. Right here could be written a volume, but I must pass on. I only make mention of these things to try to give you some idea of the trouble I had to pass through. Up to this time I had not heard an Old School Baptist preach, since I hope, I had an ear to hear. All that I had heard were the preachers we had in the army, and they preached altogether about what men could do, and what they ought to do; for I am certain I never heard them declare the Lord's doings. I did my best to eat and live on what they furnished, but it was no food for me, and I did not know at that time but what that was the best I ever would get. But at length it was pleasing to my heavenly Master for me to reach my home, in Brooks County, Georgia. I was yet suffering intense pain with my arm. I was then moved to the house of my wife's mother, who was an Old School Baptist. Now I greatly desired to hear preaching. The meeting time came, but I was not able to go. I asked my mother-in-law to invite the preacher home with her. So he appointed preaching at her house that night, which was Saturday. The preacher was Elder H.C. Tucker, an old consistent minister of the primitive Baptist order, one that I had in youth, and even up to the time of my going into the army, looked upon as the most awkward and ignorant man of all God's creation. I had spared no pains in persecuting, mocking and ridiculing him. I thought that he preached the most foolishness of anybody I ever heard. But when he began preaching that night, it seemed to me that there was the most music in his voice of anything I ever heard, and every word was to my soul as apples of gold in pictures

of silver. He did not preach Jesus as a co-worker with man, but as he is described in the 17th chapter of John, as having power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as His Father has given Him. O what a feast it was to my poor soul! He told me what I had felt. *"O, the joy of my soul at that time was more than I shall ever be able to describe"*, My Brother, I do believe tonight that every child of God who is in a strange land, or in other words, who may be in Babylon, could they hear what I did, upon that occasion, must come to the same conclusion that I did; for before Brother Tucker got through his sermon, I could adopt the language of Ruth, *"thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."* Nearly all the church (Bethel) was assembled at my mother-in-law's house, on that occasion. When Brother Tucker got through, and had sat down, he said he thought I had something to tell the church, if I would. I was so moved in my feelings that I could not refrain. I commenced talking, and directly forgot myself. I tried to tell them how I was found in a desert, and a waste howling wilderness, and at the same time expressed my desire to be with, and live with the Old Baptists. Brother Tucker arose and I said that he wanted to give me his hand; and as the church was nearly all present, he said to the brethren that if they felt like he did they would manifest their fellowship for me by giving me their hand; they came forward, everyone of them, and joyfully received me into the fellowship of the church; and as a sister had also been received, I was to be baptized with her the next morning. I went with them to the water, where we met the balance of the church, and they all seemed to rejoice at my reception, and gave me the right hand of fellowship. I was baptized by Brother Tucker, and went up to the meeting house and took my seat among the brethren. I felt like I had come through great tribulation and much distress, but felt like I had got home to my friends. The words of David were continually on my mind,- *"Bless the Lord, O my soul."* I believed then. and do yet, that if I was a proper gospel subject, I was then, and not until then, admitted into Christ's kingdom. No minister can be a lawful administrator, except his qualifications are of God. After it was my privilege to hear an Old Baptist preach, - it was an easy matter for me to decide that I had been in the wrong place. If the baptism of the Missionary Baptists is valid, so is their doctrine; and if God does not direct their preaching, He does not direct their baptism. *"Whatsoever is not of faith is sin."* The declaration of non-fellowship declared years ago by the Primitive Baptists cannot be in the way of any who are as hungry as I was. For I must believe that those who come through the fire are refined as silver is refined, and tried as gold is tried, and

they are driven in their distress to call upon the Lord; and after they are refined, He evidences to them that He has heard them. The children of our heavenly Father must all come through one process; they are then every way prepared to understand the difference between the trumpet that is blown in Zion, and the many uncertain sounds that are blown to imitate the true gospel trumpet.

Dear Brother Mitchell, I have been fully reconciled, ever since the year 1865, to believe that I am among the children of the most high God, and my trouble is my fear of not being a fit subject to have a name among that peculiar people. At times the trouble of my mind is so great that it seems like I cannot march on any further; still I have a desire to say, *"Let thy mercies come unto me, even thy salvation."*

Dear Brother Mitchell, I shall have to close, for fear that I have written enough to weary your patience; yet the half is not told. I would like to say something to you about why it is that I have to preach; but as I cannot write myself, it would be taxing my wife heavier than I am willing to do; therefore I desist.

My dear Brother, I am sorry to hear that you are suffering so much, yet I hope that you may be spared a long time to comfort the children of our God. I would be glad if you could visit our country again. I desire to see you more than ever. I think, if I live long, and you do also we'll visit your state and spend some time. With you and the brethren, of your churches. May the Lord bless you in your afflictions.

I remain your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life.

Timothy W. Stallings
January 1, 1876

Preached at Mayfield
on Tuesday evening,
January 8th, 1952

"Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord" (Psalm 107:43).

The Psalmist had been speaking in this blessed psalm of certain things that relate more or less to the experience of God's people. Mr. Philpot speaks of this psalm as being an epitome of Christian experience.

The Psalmist opens with a note of *"thanks unto the Lord... because His mercy endureth for ever"*; and that will be the note of everyone who is brought to read his title clear to mansions in the skies. Then the Psalmist treats upon the great work of redemption. The Lord Jesus redeemed His people by price and also by power, and where the Lord had redeemed His people by that one offering that He once offered for the sins of many, you may depend upon it that He will redeem by power; that is, in putting forth the

hand of His omnipotent grace to snatch them as brands from the burning. Then there is a redemption in God's providence. We have it in the history of the children of Israel. What a wonderful work of redemption that was in bringing that mighty host out of Egyptian bondage and captivity, and bringing them through the Red Sea as on dry ground! O, the Lord put forth His power to redeem them from the hand of the enemy. Not once or twice, but many times did the children of Israel prove the redemption power of God exercised upon them as a nation. They were sustained in their wanderings. They did not wander in that great and terrible wilderness uneyed; uncared for, but the Lord's eye was upon them; and though they hungered and thirsted and their souls sometimes fainted within them, when they cried unto the Lord in their trouble He delivered them out of their distress (v. 1-6) .

Also *"He led them forth by the right way" unto "a city of habitation".* How true this will be in a truly spiritual sense!

Every single vessel of mercy will ultimately be found landed safely on Canaan's peaceful shore. They will be led, not in a way of their choosing, but in this "right way"; and if we speak of this right way from a gospel standpoint, it is as Mr. Hart puts it in one of his beautiful hymns:

"And lest we should mistake the way He lines it out with blood."

Then we must consider the way in which the Lord deals with His people when they are brought to "sit in darkness and the shadow of death, being bound with affliction and iron; because they rebelled against the words of God, and condemned the counsel of the Most High; Therefore He brought down their heart with labour; they fell down, and there was none to help. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He saved them out of their distresses" (v. 10-13). If we are brought into such circumstances, if we are made to possess the sins of our youth, or if we are brought to know that *"the backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways"* (Prov. 14:14); and if we are found as the poor Gadarene maniac was found—when the Lord cast out the devils (and there was a legion of them!) he was sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind.

Then the inspired penman speaks of a period when the Lord would manifest His delivering mercies, bringing them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and breaking their bands in sunder (v. 14). This called for praise and thanksgiving: *"O that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!"*

Now the Psalmist speaks of the gates of brass being broken and the bars of iron being cut in sunder (v. 16); and me thinks that there are very few of the Lord's people but

what know something of those gates of brass and bars of iron. It does not say that they could cut them in sunder themselves, or that they could break these gates of brass. "For He hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder." O, these things are worthy of our consideration! They are worthy of our observation, and if we are brought into these experiences and prove the power of God relative to them, then we shall "understand the lovingkindness of the Lord."

But we read this, "He sent His word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions". And "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God". So the Lord causes His truth, His precious word (not just the letter of truth, but the substance of it) , to meet the cases and conditions of His people. Sometimes it is a word of promise, and sometimes it is a revelation of the things of Christ; but the Lord sends His word, and sends it with power and application, and the effect of it is to heal that which is wounded and that which is out of the way. *"And delivered them from their destructions."*

Presently the Psalmist speaks of mariners, those that are upon the sea, that do business in deep waters. We know this may have a literal application, but we are persuaded it has a spiritual meaning, too. The Lord's people are sometimes brought into the depths, where the waves mount up very high, and where they are ready to conclude, like the disciples of old,

"Master, we perish; Master, save! They cried; the Master heard."

If you are brought into such circumstances, remember that there is One Who can stay the raging of the deep, that can cause peace to be where, perhaps, there is nothing but storm and turmoil. Well, if the Lord puts forth His power, He can make the storm a calm, whatever the nature of it.

Then, *"He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the water-springs into dry ground; a fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein. He turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into water-springs".* There is nothing too hard for the Lord. It does not matter what the nature of the case, or what the condition is, the Lord is able to turn our wildernesses into a fruitful field, to make a desert like Eden. I remember the late Mr. Popham speaking of someone that he knew that had fallen away, but he said that they had not sinned beyond the mercy of God. And so it is. Whatever your state and condition, there is hope in the gospel relative to every poor, ready-to-perish sinner who seeks salvation in His name.

Now we come to the words of our text, though we have been treating upon the matter of them. "Whoso is wise." This wisdom is from above.

It is not natural wisdom, that is "earthly, sensual, devilish", according to James in his epistle. "but the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality." Paul in writing to Timothy, reminds him that he had known from his youth the scriptures, that, were able to make him wise unto salvation. And, when "the world by wisdom", that is natural wisdom, "knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe". The Lord Jesus Christ, in the course of His ministry, looked up to heaven and thanked God the Father that these things were hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes. So this wisdom is of celestial birth. Solomon, when he came to the throne and the Lord appeared to him in a vision and asked him what he desired, asked for this wisdom to be granted to him, and it was granted to him in a very great measure; and though he fell into sin, he did not fall out of the covenant, and we have reason to believe that Solomon was recovered out of that state before he passed away. We have it on the testimony of Holy writ that he was loved of his God. There is wisdom that is given.

"He takes the fool and makes him wise, And shows him where his victory lies."

But very often He brings one to feel his own foolishness and his own need of divine teaching and leading. But if we are wise, that is, made wise unto salvation, we shall be brought first of all to know something of our sinnership; otherwise we can know nothing savingly of the Person and work of Christ. So the Lord brings the soul to know his own sickness and sore, and to seek that remedy which is to be found in the precious atonement of Christ. You will never seek it until you learn the truth as expressed by Isaiah the prophet, ***"We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags":*** and as Isaiah speaks in another place, ***"Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts".*** O, it is a great thing to have a right sense of our sinnership, to be brought in at that strait gate and that narrow way to seek salvation in the Lamb of God!

Then again, if we are made wise unto salvation, we shall find our dependence upon God for a continuance in that way of salvation.

O, you must not think that if the work is begun you can carry it on yourself. You are to learn Mr. Berridge's hymn in experience:

"No help in self I find, And yet have sought it well. The native treasure of my mind Is sin, and death, and hell."

But then, what was the consequence of this teaching? Well, Berridge fled to the Lord Jesus Christ to receive from Him help in his time of need. So if you are made wise in this respect, you will lean upon the Lord Jesus Christ fully in the matter of your justification with God. His blood-shedding and His justifying righteousness will be your justification with God. But you will lean upon Him in the matter of sanctification, too, because you will learn that truth, *"In my flesh dwelleth no good thing"*.

Again, you will need the Lord Jesus Christ to put forth His sanctifying power by the Holy Ghost in keeping you from evil that it may not grieve you, and preserving you unto the day of Jesus Christ. And if you are wise, you will observe God's dealings with you both in providence and in grace, because providence really is the handmaid of grace. We would not put providential things before spiritual, we believe that they are inseparable, if you were to take away Jacob's providential troubles, where are you going to get His spiritual things from? So it is with a child of God. He is brought into straits, into difficulties, into distresses, and all to make him sick of self and fond of the Lord Jesus; to make him know in experience, "Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come". So the dealings of the Lord with us may be very contrary to our natural inclinations.

Well, if we look back upon the past, cannot we see how the Lord has led us in intricate ways for the furtherance of a gospel experience in our hearts? We should never have known some of the precious truths of the gospel, we should never have known the preciousness of some of those exceeding precious promises, had we not been brought into varied trials and circumstances where those promises were made power and life in our spirit? O, it is a great thing if the Lord brings you into circumstances where He makes Himself known and where He makes Himself precious, and the word of God becomes, not "a tale that is told", but spirit and life in your experience.

Well, if you are wise, and if you observe the way that the Lord has led you, it may be forty years, more or less, in the wilderness, to humble you and to prove you, and to know what is in your heart, and then if the Lord has appeared at times on your behalf, in providence and in grace, is it not worthy of your observation? Cannot you sometimes say, with Toplady,

"Sweet to look back, and see my name
In life's fair book set down;
Sweet to look forward, and behold Eternal joys my own"?

And cannot you sometimes look back upon periods in your experience, perhaps when you were tried beyond measure, as the apostle speaks; in a certain place he speaks of being "tried beyond measure", so

that he despaired even of life; but he said, *"The Lord, Who hath delivered, Who doth deliver, in Whom we trust that He will yet deliver"*. There have been trials, then, that you have encountered in your pathway, where you have despaired of all hope and help in self, and yet the Lord hath power, and He has done great things for you, whereof you are glad. That was a wonderful deliverance vouchsafed to the children of Israel. They had been steeped in idolatry, but the time came, and the Lord raised up Samuel, and probably Samuel had been used of the Lord relative to the people of Israel, for when he spoke to them of Ashtaroth they were willing to put away their false gods, and they were brought to real repentance; and as Samuel offered up the offering, the Lord appeared on their behalf, and with that tremendous hail beat down the adversaries, the Philistines, and discomfited them. Then Samuel set up a pillar between Mizpeh and Shen, and he called the name of it Ebenezer: *"Hitherto hath the Lord helped up" (1 Samuel 7)* .

So as we review the Lord's past dealings with us, and especially if there are any marked deliverances, and if He has appeared graciously on our behalf, making Himself known to us in our afflictive circumstances, surely we can raise our Ebenezer and say,

"Hither by Thy help I'm come;
And I hope, by Thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home."

Well, if we are brought there, to observe these things, not to let them lie buried in forgetfulness and without praises die, but to consider what great things the Lord had done for us, we shall probably sing this,

"His love in time past forbids me think
He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink. Each sweet Ebenezer I have in review
Confirms His good pleasure to help me quite through."

We need to observe these things, not in a formal way; and yet sometimes if we were to do away with form we might do away with the reality, too. But the Psalmist did not mean a mere formal observance of these things, but rather that these things might be continually in our minds; as he speaks in another place, *"My meditation of Him shall be sweet; I will be glad in the Lord"*.

In observing these things you understand the lovingkindness of the Lord. You do not look upon the Lord's dealings as the worldling would; you do not measure the Lord's dealings with you by the measurement of sense and reason. But there is an understanding. The Lord gives a spiritual understanding concerning His dealings with us. Paul was there when he said, "We

know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose". You could never understand some of the Lord's dealings in the light of sense and reason. It is too deep for reason's line to fathom, why some should pass through bloody seas, as it were, and pass through such seas of trouble, whereas others seem to go more easily and smoothly through life. You can never put a right interpretation upon this, only, as a good minister once said to me (and I have never forgotten it) , "Mr. Sawyer, the sovereignty of God, what a deep abyss!" So you can understand some of the Lord's dealings with His dear people only in the light of divine sovereignty. But there are times when the Lord puts the seal of His love upon the trial or affliction, and we can say it is

"Not in anger,
But from His dear covenant love."

O, if the love of God is shed abroad in your heart, you will submit to the will of God; even as the Lord Jesus, in the hour of His agony in Gethsemane's garden, said, ***"Father, not My will, but Thine be done".*** So when you are brought to a right understanding concerning the things that come upon you, and upon others, I believe that you will resolve it in the sovereign will of God; and not only in His sovereign will, but the love of God that orders all things concerning His people for their good. But if you attempt to reason things out you will never do it. O, it is beyond reason; and reason, after all, is no friend of a gracious experience. I am not going to say that the Lord is unreasonable in His dealings, but you will find that His dealings are too deep for your poor finite reason to fathom, and yet if you can trace all His dealings to His covenant faithfulness and love, and believe that He knows what is best for you and me, and for the church in general, and if we are enabled to leave it there, we shall know, sooner or later,

"The way I walk cannot be wrong,
If Jesus be but there."

"They shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord." Not merely God's kindness as extended to His creatures, but they shall know His loving kindness. One would not think that all the things enumerated in this psalm represent the lovingkindness of God to these people, and yet, according to the word before us, His lovingkindness is stamped upon these things that appear so contrary to flesh, sense and reason. ***"They shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord."*** To be thinking, then, upon these things in the light of the teaching of the spirit of God, will bring us to a right consideration, and in being brought to a right consideration, we shall "understand the lovingkind-

ness of the Lord."

May the Lord follow with His blessings, for His Name's sake.

Caleb Sawyer

FALLING DOCTRINE

Give ear O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass; because I will publish the name of the Lord; ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment; a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He. (Deut. 32: 1,4)

This doctrine belongs exclusively to our heavenly Father. Our precious saviour disclaimed it as being His and taught us so by His own statements far as Bible testimony goes, there is no source of saving doctrine save that which comes from God to poor sinful men and women save this source. His, and He is the only source of it, He initiated the only method brought to us. I do not have any compromise to make about this doctrine getting to us. Furthermore, it not only is His doctrine, but he alone drops it down to poor sinners. It is dropped on purpose to us. He alone can drop that which is His, only saving doctrine that there is, I certainly think that I would turn it loose to fall on only those that I purposed to drop it on. You would do that wouldn't you? There is not a source of rain save that which belongs to God. If anyone knows of another source of it I hereby yield to the one that has rain cached up somewhere, and that has a method of getting it to where it is needed by the owner. Unless I hear of such a source, I will know that I am on the right text. However, I am not expecting this fact, that is, that God is the only source of this doctrine, and that He has the only absolute method of getting this doctrine to the desired point in the world to silence the objectors to His sovereignty.

Just a few years ago the powers that be (I beg your pardon, they just thought that they were that powerful) thought that they could end droughts. They carried the rain making tools and ingredients unto the vast universe above us and found some dry clouds and they sprayed those clouds and made it rain. But complications arose. They were threatened with lawsuits from neighboring communities because that they had been deprived of rain that they should have gotten. Other complications arose, for tampering with God's sole prerogative of looking after the weather.

If you are a God fearing reader, I kindly ask you to consider that God's doctrine drops as the rain. This is also inclusive of the snow and sleet and hail—all of it comes from the same source. It only comes as God drops it, and sometimes it is

in sweeping power that all men working together cannot form a successful barrier against it. There is not a sane person on the globe that does not know this. Another thing that they do not know, and that is that it comes so small and so smooth and so easy that we are not aware of it. This dropping of this moisture is so beyond the power and wisdom of men that it comes as a vapour and is distilled as dew while men of great power are sleeping and unaware of the falling from above.

How helpless is this great land of ours about rain? We are as helpless as new born babes for this falling rain. Every single man and woman in the United States, yea, for that matter in the world, are dependent upon God for the doctrine of God to fall on us. If for just one year this necessary rain did not drop, what would be your picture of this world in which we live? It has done quite a bit of dropping down rain in the last twelve months, and yet look at the starvation that is rampant over the world. Just suppose that it not rain in the next twelve months? What would any of us do in that twelve months?

Likewise suppose that the doctrine of God does not drop down again in the next twelve months? He does His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. What would be the consequences if the doctrine of God our Saviour did not drop any more doctrine of God? This is not any laughing matter. God would be just if He withheld rain from every human being. You ask me, why? And I am telling you why! Simply because that we are all guilty before God. However, God loves His children and His doctrine of saving grace falls on those that belong to Him. He has made them an unconditional promise that He would come and that He would save them that belongs to Him. God never ceases to love His chosen people. In fact, God does not change His mind about coming and saving those that the Father gave Him. That promise was made by an unchanging God, therefore, that promise was made by the God that never changes. The doctrine of God is established upon the unchanging love of God. The doctrine of God's unchanging love is based on His continued faithfulness.

The salvation of God is as sure as the rain. Neither the rain nor the snow, in themselves considered, bring salvation, but God's way of handling them is figurative of salvation. As the rain comes down, even so does salvation come down from God. As there is not any salvation save in rain coming down, even so there is not any salvation ulnless it likewise comes from God. We certainly realize that there is salvation in what comes from God. Let us take a tour through the work shop of God. My thoughts are not your thoughts neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. Let us pause here. Thus we have found out one, if not the greatest things about we frail

creatures and our Creator. He does not think as we frail mortals think, and He does not do as we frail mortals do. He has His ways, and He does his ways. What would it be if we had our way? Let us ask ourselves once again that astounding question, What would it be if we had our way. In the sense in which it was created for, it is a good, yea, perfect world. Had we, as the human race, had our way, who knows the destiny of it now? Now let us continue, to wit, For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Let us pause again. Not only are His ways and thoughts above ours, but they have been that way all of the time. His first and ultimate ways and thoughts have been above ours. As our creator as the Architect of the universe, He is, and has been, the Potter and Creator, the builder and upholder and disposer of all things. This creature, man, has been a created destroyer (Isa. 54: 16), but God's way has been higher and thus a Builder (Heb. 11:10).

This Builder is God. Man is a destroyer. Every blade of grass, every drop of rain that falls upon the earth, every smile of a little child together with its hand clasped in the hand of its mother, together with her love for it, every blooming flower, every sunbeam that has lighted up our pathway, every star that has shined out of the universe above us, together with every eye blinking, every breath you have had, combined with every beat of your heart has been a gift from God.

God's ways are not our ways. God's ways are higher than our ways. They have not recently got that way. All things were made that way and they have remained that way. The nations bluster and destroy and persecute the poor of the earth, but all of them reckoned together have a mighty poor standing with God (Isa. 40:15).

God is rated in His Book as being love. This love, like the source of it, did not have a beginning. Immediately a clamor arises among men and nations, both of them, like all things else, being creatures of God, He being above them, higher than all of them, did not have their origin in themselves; their being subject to His, the divine Creator of all, chose His subjects, His children in One like unto Himself, has fixed or arranged or appointed or predestinated their station here and hereafter, arranged all things and all subjects of this grace, together with those who are not subjects of that grace, should be ruled by Him.

Those subjects of His in nature have never gained the mind of Him. He appointed the laws of nature in such a sublime way that everything that His wisdom dictated as being necessary for the benefit, for the lifting of His people on high was provided in His declaring of the end from the beginning. Everything for the preservation of His people both in a natural as well as a spiritual way was set in motion. This setting in

motion these many wonders of nature embraced the falling of the rain as He dropped it from His hand.

For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing where to I sent it (Isa. 55:8, 11).

Now I have dealt extensively with the fact that the weather comes from God. In every sense in which earthly creatures know to summarize the weather, it is all out of men's hands. Let me say to one and all what Napoleon said to a group of his generals. While on one of his noted campaigns, a group of his generals were in an argument about the question as to the extent of God's creation. He listened for a while in silence. In impatience he walked out of his office into the midst of his subordinate commanders, and sweeping his hand to the heavens he challenged them with, Gentlemen, who made all of this? He stalked back into the seclusion of his private quarters.

Dear brethren and sisters, who made this world and the fulness of it? Secondly, who did He make it for?

I have in my declining days dealt with the rain, and the wonderful way in which it fits into our lives. There isn't a human being on the face of the globe that acknowledges the Bible as the MAN of his counsel that can disannul the fact that God sends the rain when and where He pleases. Furthermore, that same sacred volume teaches us that the doctrine of God's saving grace is sent from God out of heaven when and where He pleases and that the result is just as efficaciously distributed, spread out as the doctrine of God is dropped, God in His effective way of doing everything He pleases.

In the meantime, study God's holy distribution of the rain that it always gives seed to the sower and bread to the eater, and beseech the Lord in my behalf that He will give me an exercise of mind to explore the beauties of that grand and glorious doctrine.

Elder W. D. Griffin

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union will convene the Lord willing the 5th Sunday 29th and Saturday 28th before in December, at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church. Song service begins at 10:00.

An invitation is extended to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Peggy Wells, Clerk

THE WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held at Moon's Creek Church on the 5th Sunday in December.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Sister Sue Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

OCTOBER 2002

Caroline Martin, WA	5.00
Mae Williamson, LA	5.00
Flay Mordecai, MS	5.00
Bertie Brown, NC	5.00
Lessie Sladky, NC	5.00
A Friend, OR	225.00
Chlonetia Thompson, VA	2.00
Tiny Flippen, VA	5.00
Judy Dalton, VA	10.00
Faye Brown, NC	25.00
Bobby Burnett, VA	3.00
Meta Mills, AR	5.00

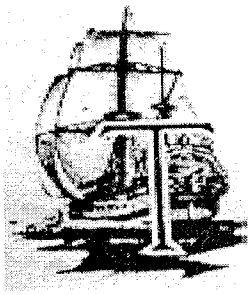

En Voyage

There's a ship sailing on to a harbor,
To a haven of comfort and rest;
It's a ship of God's fashion and making,
And its voyage by Him will be blest.
It departed with silence and beauty,
With the Master, Himself, in command;
As with dignity truly majestic
It sailed out of sight of all land.

There will always be clear skies above it;
There will always be calmness below;
There will never be storms to harass it,
For the Master is on it, you know.
And His wisdom will carry it safely
To the port of His infinite peace.
Where the light of His love will protect it
With a blessing that never will cease.

You have watched it sail onward and outward,
With a tear of regret in your eye.
For a loved one was sailing upon it.
And there's grief when you're saying goodbye.
But your tears would be tears of rejoicing.
And your heart would be happy and free,
If you could look for only a moment
On that ship that is sailing to sea.

For the one you have loved is at leisure,
With no worry or trouble or care;
There's contentment beyond understanding,

In the way God's passengers fare.
And you'd know from your own observation
That the sailing was joyful-not grim,
For it means a new life and new living,
And a sweet, closer contact with Him.

Oh, the solace there is in the knowledge.
Life is life and it always will be,
And it's simply a change of direction
When we sail on His ship out to sea.
And the tears that we shed for our loved ones
Are in truth shed for us left behind.
For it hurts to give up to the Master.
Tho we know He is gentle and kind.

So believe in His great and good wisdom,
Trust in Him, as you patiently wait;
On His ship God is ever the pilot,
And the one you have loved is the mate.

Unknown Author

Sent in by Phil Pittman

OBITUARIES

ROY LEE LOCKE

Roy Lee Locke, age 71, was born in Detroit Michigan on Oct. 31, 1930. First born son of Warnard C. & Grace (Creason) Locke. He departed this life on Sept. 13, 2002 at Western Baptist Hospital in Paducah, Ky.

He attended Murray State Teacher College now (Murray State University) and taught school at an early age.

An Air Force Veteran, having served during the Korean conflict was an air craft instrument instructor.

He retired from General Tire and Rubber in Mayfield, Ky. in 1991.

Having grown up around the Primitive Baptist, he joined Soldier Creek Primitive Baptist Church in May of 1968. He became assistant clerk to the church in 1969 and became clerk in November of 1978 and served in that position until his death.

Survivors include his wife of 44 years & 11 months Norma Dan (Henderson) Locke. Two daughters Sheila Jean Finch and Leslie Karen Evans both of Benton, Ky. One son Warren Edward "Ed" Locke of Lawrenceburg, Ky. His mother, Grace Locke and one brother Charles Ronald Locke both of Benton, Ky. Two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Services were held 1:00 p.m. Sept., 16, 2002 at Collier Funeral Home in Benton, Ky., with Elders Wayman Chappell and Kenneth R. Adams officiating. Interment in the Lyles Cemetery in Benton, Ky.

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Signs of the Times

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PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS"

The existence, sovereignty, immutablity, omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah -- the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistable, and in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers -- that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

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Charles A. Yeatts

EDITORIAL

Elder J. B. Farmer

And Elisha came again to Gilgal: and there was a dearth in the land; and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him: and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets. And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full, and came and shred them into the pot of pottage: for they knew them not. So they poured out for the men to eat. And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, O thou man of God, there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof. But he said, Then bring meal. And he cast it into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was no harm in the pot. II Kings 4:38-41.

As with all scripture, for there to be any understanding by any of His little ones, first, revelation must be given. If none is given, they can only see the natural side of things. Spiritual things are only spiritually understood. ***"...The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God."*** May we be given that revelation to comfort our poor souls.

According to the inspired apostle, Paul, we are taught, ***"Be not carried about with diverse and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein."*** God's people are taught as they are enabled to receive it. ***"The word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little and there a little...."*** It appears

that the first thing they are taught is the fear of God. *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."* The next thing they seem to be made to see and acknowledge is the sovereignty of God. Being made to see that He made all things for Himself, the heavens and the earth and all things in them, and that He sustains and controls all things, they are made to believe and to confess that salvation is altogether of the Lord by grace. They are made to confess their weaknesses and His power. They can claim no credit for anything good. The blessed apostle said that the will to do good was with him, but how to perform that which is good, he found not. He said, *"By the grace of God I am what I am."* And he said that, *"...it is by faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed..."*

Being taught these things, and having their hearts established with grace, they are delivered from all sorts of false doctrines and teachings of men. The things which sweep away the world, have no power to move one of God's little ones from the foundation rock upon which they are built. When any teachings are presented, they are made to judge them by the Spirit which is given to them. They are made to hold to that which is good and to reject that which is evil. If they hear a false doctrine, it does not harm them, but passes harmlessly away from them. The Lord said, *"...if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them..."* The false teachings are death to them that are not taught of God. *"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."* They cannot even question whether they have a lie in their right hand.

I am made to believe that the account of the wild gourds, given in II Kings, is given by God for the learning and for the edification of His little ones. First we are told that there was a dearth in the land. Do we not see, even in this present day, a dearth in the land for knowledge of the truth? It seems that there are many who profess to speak the truth on the radio and television and on many corners of the streets of the world. But if one is inclined to listen to them, it does not take long to see that they are false professors. They speak evil of the very first things the little children of God are taught, such as the power and sovereignty of God. There are only a few places where God's people are comforted in this world. I am made to believe that these are those little cities of refuge which God has placed in this world for His people to run unto in time of trouble.

Next we are told that when it came time for the sons of the prophets to eat, one went out and found a wild vine and gathered wild gourds and came and shred them into the pot of pottage. We are not told whether this one purposely brought

wild gourds or whether he did it without knowledge. Either way, the result was the same: there was death in the pot. We are made to believe that some purposely try to destroy God's people with lies and false teachings. *"And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood."* They are never successful, *"because greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world."* And Jesus, speaking of the Father said, *"...of all which He hath given Me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."* I am also made to believe that from time to time something unsound is brought in among God's people, without malice, by one not yet established in some point of doctrine. *"Apollos spoke boldly in the synagogue, whom when Aquila and Pricilla had heard, they took him unto them and expounded to him the way of God more perfectly."*

Here, I am made to believe, is where the death was recognized and where the meal was cast into the pot, and there was no harm in the pot. When the false doctrine is set forth among God's people, they taste it and reject it as of no worth and deadly. When the true doctrine of grace, which is the meal or the Bread of Life, is set forth, it destroys the poisonous effects of anything false that previously has been set forth. Error cannot stand before truth. The gates of Hell shall not prevail against the church of the living God. The truth shall prevail in every contest. Is this not why the apostle charged Timothy to *"hold fast the form of sound words"*? Is that not why the beloved apostle said to *"rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith"*? He also said that, *"the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth."* Is this not why the apostle said to, *"try the spirits, whether they are of God"*?

Sometimes the works of man are brought forth among the brethren, as though man could do something on his own. But if the heart is established with grace, the little ones will reject that teaching, because they are taught that grace always precedes all good works. Therefore, they are assured that every good work is the work of God and not the work of man. They are given to know that, *"it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."* And that, *"He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus, Christ."* Even though we may think so in our natural minds, there are no missed opportunities, or failures to

do any good work which God has before ordained for His own to walk in. If He has before ordained a thing, the sovereign God of heaven and earth shall surely bring it to pass. Otherwise, He would fail in a promise and He would not be God. But He is God, and there is none else. It is impossible for Him to lie or to fail in a promise. It is God, ***"who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."*** His children are given to look unto Him for all things, and they are made to wait upon Him to provide their needs.

God's people are given to eat the Bread of Life, and they are nourished and strengthened and preserved by it. By that Bread, they are given strength to be faithful unto death. By it, they are given wisdom to discern the truth, faith to believe, patience and grace to endure any trial, and they are given praise in their mouths unto the God of all creation. They are given to believe that no weapon formed against them shall prosper. They are taught that there is nothing in heaven or earth that is able to separate them from the love of God which is in Christ, Jesus. They have been fully persuaded that they have the victory in Him. And they are given the hope that they shall not die, but shall live. They are given a hope of eternal life, which shall not be disappointed.

Even though men may cast death into the pot, God's people shall not come to harm. Because the meal, or the Bread of Life, Jesus, has been given to soak up the poison, to take unto Himself the curse, and to take away that curse. And by doing so, He has forever preserved them that He loved with an everlasting love.

In hope of eternal life,
J.B. Farmer 11-15-02

CORRESPONDENCE

Elder Key,

Enclosed a letter from Sister Edrie Clifton that she wrote me on her 88th birthday.

I enjoyed it so much and with her permission, I am sending to you. She requested only if you think it worthy to be used in the Signs of the Times. She is such a comfort to me in shut-in-days.

I missed not seeing you dear ones at Thompson Grove Church. I have not been able to meet with the precious Saints very often but was blessed to be at Roanoke Church, (my home church) 1st Sunday in November. The Lord sent Elder J.L. Cassell and Elder W.T. Conner there to comfort our weary hearts.

May our Heavenly Father keep us all in Praise to Him whom our soul loves, if not deceived.

I'm such an unworthy Sister but
One who loves all the dear Saints,

Rlee B. Houchins
Roanoke, Va.

Dear Sister in hope of eternal joys,

On a cold November night, eighty-eight years ago, lacking two days, my mother gave birth to her nineth child-a little girl. It seems to me I was born alone as one out of due deason, with only my father in attendance. The rest of the family were all asleep, also two boarders, none of them aware of what was taking place in a dimly lit bedroom with an oil lamp, and a log in the fireplace flickering dimly. It seems to me that my coming into this troublesome world was not even worthy of the notice of a neighbor. But of one thing I am sure; it was no surprise to the Most High God who rules all things according to the purpose of His will. I grew up, feeling to be the black sheep of the family-the ugliest, most unloved one of my father's children. But I was kept and guarded by that unseen Hand as I grew up. Then I met the man whom God purposed to be my husband. I feel I can look back through these eighty-eight years and see so many of His purposes and blessings along the road of life as I traveled.I was blessed to be born to Old Baptists who raised their children to be truthful, obedient and respectful, as well as moral. We went to the Old Primitive Baptist Church with them and had great respect for the ministers, deacons and members who often visited in our home. After the nightly chores were done, it was my privelege to sit back in one corner and listen to the experiences they told and the many travels and ordeals they had along the way, yet I felt to be one alone sitting there listening to them tell of the joys which I felt could never be mine, I was an outside case-one born out of due season. These scenes of joy and blessings of which they talked seemed far beyond my reach-not for me. Thus life went on until I was married and left the fold, to a mixture of joys, hardships and pleasures which make up life for two travelers, whom God had purposed to be as one, to share in life's troubles, joys, hardships and trials, to know the heights of joys for a brief moment and the depths of sorrows, all in the purpose of this great God, who rules all things, times, events and worlds according as He purposed before ever the world was created.

But I must go on, on down this road of memory alone, just taking a brief look at times past-some happy, some sad, some filled with (I hope) praises to Him for His goodness to poor wayworn sinners, sometimes feeling that He is clean gone forever, yet feeling a little assurance that His hand is leading and directing each event as it pleases Him, for our good and to His glory.

Memory takes me back to the times when I watched him (my dear one) suffer under the burden of the ministry, to the troubles in the churches, seeing sad divisions which was like tearing the flesh from the bones, but feeling there was a purpose in it also.

Oh, truly, His ways are as high as the heavens above our ways and His purposes past finding out.

Now I am on this road of life, alone still, and I hope I am trusting in the Dear Lord to be with me-to be my strength and stay,what time is left me. I still feel that He has a purpose in it being this way, or it would not be. I hope He will make me submissive to whatever He purposes for me and give me grace to look to Him and oh, if I can only be found in that blessed number that will hear Him say "Come"! This is my hope.

Edrie Clifton

Greenville, Al.
Oct. 12, 2002

Dear Elder Terry,

Enclosed is a check for $15.00. Please renew the "Signs" another year, for one. Its always a joy to receive the "Signs" each month. May the King of glory bless all who help send out this paper.

Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory. Psalm 24: 8-10.

In Bonds of Love & Hope,
Emmie Lou Grayson

Oct. 11, 2002

Dear Elder Terry:

I received the "Signs" the 11th a few days later than usual I was glad to get it, I read so many good writers.

So I see my sub. ran out Sept. but seems this 93 year old almost 94 just don't do things I should. I sure enjoy the Signs as I can't go to Church meetings.

I sent $30.00 for mine and my friend a sister of the church for another year.

It seems our churches are smaller than a few years ago.

May the Lord bless the Editors to keep the Signs coming.

A sinner saved by grace if saved. Enclosed my Sisters add. I can still stay by myself, which I thank the Lord everyday - He's my all and all.

Jane Carroll
Rt. 2, Box 619A1
Danville, AR.

P. S. Sister Murphy was good to take me in her home when I'd go to meetings.

Oct. 17, 2002

Dear Elder Terry:

Enclosed you will find a check for $25.00 for a two year subscription of the Signs of the Times.

Elder Kenneth R. Key attended association of the Little Vine Old Predestinarian Primitive Baptist association held with new found church at Brier Creek in Wyoming, Co. tho the Grace of God was highly manifested during the two day event. Seemingly when one took the stand and exercised his gift, the one who followed had equal liberty. Many times while meditating on the contexts of the words in these discussions. I have wished that everyone could be there and rejoice in this good news from that distant place. This is impossible because the Fleshly or carnal mind has not been enlightened with that celestial light which is controlled by this most high Sovereign God.

For some reason best known to Israel's God. I have not been blessed with a mind to ask of a Home with who I feel are God's people. Many times if not deceived in this fleshly body I have been elevated from pits of darkness and made to feast from this wonderful Gospel Sound. Many times I ponder the thought, Who am I, What am I, come to the conclusion that my existence here on earth at God's mercy and he is the Sovereign ruler. I am a powerless vessel fleshly to partake of this Heavenly Manna.

Riley Justice

VOICES OF THE PAST

FIFTY SIX YEARS A BAPTIST

Today, September 30th, 1889 I wish to write a little for the Signs, if you will allow me space, and take a brief retrospective view of my poor, imperfect life as a Baptist. Yesterday, the fifth Sunday in September, was the fifty-sixth anniversary of my baptism. Concord Church, Grayson Co., held her meetings on the fourth Saturday of each month; and September 1833 came in on Sunday, so that the fourth Saturday and fifth Sunday came together. On Sunday, after a sermon by the venerable Martin Utterback, I tried, to tell the church the reason of my hope; and although I was illiterate and very bashful, and could *cry* better than I could talk, yet I was received without a question being asked. We went directly to the little creek nearby, and the old father in Israel baptized me, after which we returned to the old meeting house and partook of the Lords Supper, followed by a mutual feet-washing, A practice of that church in those days about once each year, but communion oftener.

Two days of my life are especially memorable to me, viz., August 31st of that year, and September 29th. On the 31st of August, about 7 o'clock a.m., I date the revelation of the pardon of my sins, and neither my pen nor tongue can ever express

the exstatic joy of that hour and day; and the 29th of September, when I was allowed to meet with the saints, and was enabled to tell them; in weakness the great things the Lord had done for me, and to be baptized, and to eat and drink at the Lord's table, and to join with the brethren in washing each others feet—altogether, made this one of the most memorable days of my life. The day was clear and calm, my mind was at perfect rest, and sweet peace seemed to pervade my whole being, and I felt to say with the poet,

"What a mercy is this,
What a heaven of bliss,
How unspeakably favored am I
Gathered into the fold,
With believers enrolled,
With believers to live and to die,"

Perhaps I shall never be more happy this side of heaven than I was that calm, bright afternoon. All nature seemed to speak forth the wisdom, goodness and mercy of God, and my heart responded in praise to his holy name. I honestly felt that evening that

" I could not believe ,
That I ever should grieve
What I ever should suffer again."

But how little does the new born babe know of human life, and how little did I then know of the pilgrimage through this world of sin and sorrow, If I have been led at all, it has been leading the blind in a way he know not. I shall not attempt to describe, in this brief review of my life as a Baptist, my many and diversified ups and downs, but shall give a brief account of my ministry only, with a few other items.

Soon after I was baptized, being then but turned into my nineteenth year, quite illiterate and bashful, I began to feel impressions to speak among the brethren, my main concern at that time being for the peace, order and prosperity of Zion, as new things were beginning to be propagated by men from the east. I spoke a little only occasionally among the people of God, having no idea of ever trying to preach as that seemed to be out of the question for one so short—sighted and so illiterate as I was. I soon began to teach school in a kind of back-woods way, and followed it up for several years during the winter, working on the farm in the summer. January 22, 1839, I was married to Lucinda Lawson, who was a Baptist, and I now had new cares to burden my mind, as we had little to begin living with.

My impressions to speak increased and troubled me much; and though I occasionally took some part in public worship, yet it was with much fear and trembling that I attempted it. A few months after I married the church where I was then connected I seriously considered

the propriety of withdrawing entirely from the United Baptists, on account of the religious schemes of the inventions springing up among them; and the vote of the church was called for, I unhesitatingly voted to withdraw from that disorderly body, and we prefixed the word "Regular" to our name as Baptists. Families, churches and associations were divided, and many hearts were made to ache and grieve on account of these modern religious societies that caused the division; and the awful responsibility for these offenses rests not upon us who were forced to withdraw. I have not only never repented my withdrawal from the schemes of men in my early religious life, but. I feel to thank the Lord that he led me to do so, and has kept me until now from being enticed and entangled by their traps. The war between the two classes of Baptists was kept up hotly for years, and I, feeling to be too little and weak to enter publicly into the conflict, tried to hide in some corner, so that I was not liberated by the church to exercise until February, 1844 I did not make any appointment for myself for two or three years after that, but would follow others around, and take some part frequently, much of my time feeling almost deranged in mind with trouble; and, in fact, if I could have been easy and quit, there were times I would have, given all my little worldly property to have been rid of these impressions. I began finally to appoint meetings of my own, but was not ordained until May 1853.

In 1855 I came to McDonough County, Ill, where I remain, seven miles northeast of Macomb. Since I became acquainted with the churches in central Illinois I have generally attended four churches monthly; one of them about thirty-two years, another thirty-one, another twenty-five, and another twenty-one, etc. After being a professor of religion for fifty-six years, I am, of choice and of necessity, a Baptist of the Regular or Primitive order; not because they are popular, numerous or wealthy, but because I believe them to be the people of God and the church of Christ, in contradistinction from all other organizations. Their doctrine and practice can be abundantly established by the standard of divine truth. I hope to live and die with them. If I am not awfully deceived, it has been for her sake and the glory of God that I have given the best part of my days and have sacrificed nearly all my worldly interests; yet I have nothing to boast of but the goodness of God. I am surprised at many things I have witnessed, and among them is the upholding and sustaining power of God in my behalf; and another is the remarkable forbearance with my weakness and imperfections which I have witnessed among my brethren and sisters in Christ. I have seen some things among our people that have caused me to mourn. I have seen, and yet see, both in the pulpit

and through the press, that there is in some of our able brethren a spirit of restlessness and disposition to lead, and to establish a test of fellowship which the bible does not authorize; a want, it seems to me, of Christian forbearance toward them that are weak in the faith, who cannot comprehend the deep things of God. The little lambs are often alarmed, and made to wonder what the old strong sheep are contending about.

The longer I live the more thoroughly I am convinced of some things. One is that I know but little of the mysteries of God. Another is that salvation is of the Lord; and if I am not saved by grace I am lost forever. another is that my time is short.

Elder I. N. Vanmeter
Signs of the Times,
September 30, 1889.

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER ISAAC N. VANMETER

(One of his earliest poems, written shortly after his conversion, Hymn #339 Pocket Hymns, L.M.)

In eighteen hundred thirty-three,
It pleased the Lord to let me see
The dangerous state that I was in,
All covered with a cloak of sin.

He taught me first that I was blind, And always was to sin inclined,
Also that I had always stood,
Opposed to God and what was good.

I then was filled with many fears,
For I had spent full eighteen years
In sin and folly, and could see
No way for my recovery.

I viewed the terror of the Lord
And thought that He my soul abhorred;
He seemed to frown me from his face
And say, "with me you have no place."

I thought while in this state of mind, I was the worst of all mankind,
I would have changed my doleful case With anyone of Adam's race.

I viewed the christian's happy state, With a desire to be his mate;
Yet felt ashamed to show my face,
And rather sought some secret place.

I felt like I was one alone
That like me surely there was none;
No friend on earth nor yet in heaven,
Nor hope that I should be forgiven.

But wonderous and almighty grace!
The Lord unveiled his smiling face And bade me come and live,
And said,"I freely all forgive."

It was in August, the last day,
That he removed my guilt away,
And spoke with such a charming voice, That all within me did rejoice.

WHERE IS THE CHURCH?

New Vernon, N.Y., June 15, 1845.

An inspired writer has said, *"As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters."* None who are born of God and taught by his Spirit can doubt that this figure is intended to describe the condition as well as the superior excellence of the church above the daughters. She is called the "Love, Dove, and Undefiled" of her Beloved. The figure of a *lily* not only describes the modest beauty of the church, but shows, according to the instructions of our Lord, that her exceeding glory, although surpassing that of the regal splendor of Solomon, is not the result of her own labor. She toils not to procure it, she spins nothing that would answer for warp or for woof; her life is derived from an invisible Root, and her head is bowed under the genial rays of the sun. But she is not only like the lily as that flower stands gracefully in the field, or among other beautiful flowers, but she is like the lily among thorns. How truly does the church of Christ answer to the figure in all its fullness of illustration! God has chosen her in a furnace of affliction, and she has ever, in her militant state, been among the rude briars and thorns. The earth, groaning under the curse of the righteous Creator, is destined to produce thorns and thistles, and while this world remains the temporary abode of the church she must encounter them. One of her most prominent sons prayed no less than three times that the thorn might be removed, but was referred to the sufficiency of the grace of God to sustain him and bear him through all the buffeting of Satan. To those who have discernment in spiritual things how admirably does the church contrast with that by which she is surrounded. All that the lily is of itself is merely grass of the field which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, but God has so clothed her as to challenge comparison with the most exalted glory of the earth. All flesh is as grass, and all goodliness thereof (that is produced by human power, or the flesh, for all that is born of the flesh, whether physical or mental, is flesh) is as the flower of the grass; the grass withereth, the flower thereof fadeth away, but the Word of the Lord abideth forever. While the flower thereof, that is, the goodliness of the flesh, or grass, may adorn the meadow, but, in com-

mon with the grass with which it is connected, it cannot survive the dissolution of the flesh, or grass; but God so clothes it (the church) in the garments of salvation as to secure the glory as an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and cannot fade away.

"Defiled and loathsome as we are,

He makes us white and calls us fair,

Adorns us with that heavenly dress,

His graces, and hls righteousness."

Consequently the church is enabled if through grace to sing, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God, for he hath clothed me with the robe of righteousness; as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. (Isa. xli. 10.) She *"is all glorious within, her clothing is of wrought gold, she shall be brought unto the King in garments of fine needlework." (Psalms xlv. 13.)* All human beauty and creature excellency, compared with the church of the living God, which is the ground and pillar of the truth, is but as thorns. Zion is pronounced in the language of inspiration *the perfection of beauty;* it cannot, therefore, be improved. Earth has no colors, nor has creation charms to lend which would not obscure her beauty. And although her peculiar excellency appears not to the eyes of an adulterous generation, for except a man be born again he cannot see her, because the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned ; still all her attractions are clearly apprehended by those unto whom the Spirit of God reveals her. To them she appears as the New Jerusalem, descending from God out of heaven adorned as a bride for her husband. She looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.

Understanding these to be some of the general characteristics of the church of God, may we not inquire, Where may she be found at this day? We cannot consistently believe that Christ has no church on earth at the present day; and if he has a church now upon earth she must bear the lineaments which are drawn in the New Testament. We shall not find her at the corners of the streets, in harlots' attire, seeking for lovers ; from her lips will not be heard the silly boast, *"I have peace offerings with me, this day have I paid my vows." (Prov. vii. 14.)* She cannot be recognized in any other dress than the garments of salvation which her Lord has given her. The daughters spoken of Isa. 3:16-26, with their haughty carriage, stretched forth necks, wanton eyes, and mincing walk, making a tinkling with their feet, with their

cauls, and their round tires like the moon, their chains, and bracelets, and the mufflers, the bonnets, and the ornaments, and the head bands, and the tablets, and the earrings, and the rings, and nose jewels, changeable suits of apparel, mantles, and wimples, and crisping pins, glasses, fine linen, hoods, and veils, are only the thorns by which the lily of the valley is surrounded. ***"There are threescore queens and fourscore concubines and virgins without number; my dove, my undefiled is but one, she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice of her that bear her." - (Cant. vi. 8 & 9.)***

In order to demonstrate the existence of the church of Christ on earth at the present day, we must find a community of saints corresponding to the primitive pattern, of eighteen hundred years ago a people whose only beauty consists in the comeliness which Christ has put upon them a people saved by the Lord who is the shield of their help and the sword of their excellency, and whose enemies are found liars unto them-(Deut. 33:29) - A people dwelling alone and not reckoning among the nations, with no governmental patronage from the powers of the world, a kingdom that is not of this world, nor visible to the world, because they are the sons of God; the world knoweth them not because it knew him not, a poor and afflicted people trusting in the name of the Lord, a persecuted people; for if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus he shall suffer persecution. Their names shall be cast out of men, and they shall be hated of all men for Christ's name sake. They are regarded as the off scouring of all things, accused and slandered in like manner as their divine Lord and Master was; for if these things were done in the green tree they shall be repeated in the dry; if they called the Master of the house Beelzebub they will also call them of his household so.

These are only some of the outlines of the church of Christ. She is also characterized by her ***"one Lord, one faith, and one baptism."*** Her faith is as radically different from that of every other professing people on earth as are her Lord and her baptism. Of her faith Jesus is the Author and Finisher; but that of all other religious bodies either originates with themselves or is derived from the doctrines, traditions, and instructions of men. But blessed is she, for flesh and blood hath not revealed these things to her, but her heavenly, Father has taught her by his Holy Spirit. She is the opposite of all other sects in regard to her food, her appetite, and the source from which all her supplies are received. Others can and do eat their own bread and wear their own apparel ; but she must eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus. Nothing short of the true Bread which came down from heaven, that kind which Moses never gave, can satisfy her;

but her neighbors, or the thorns among which she is situated, do not see why the bread that Moses gave is not good enough.

Christ's church is a peculiar people, in all respects essentially different from the religionists of this world. She comprises a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation, and shows forth the praises of him who hath called her out of darkness and translated her into the kingdom of his dear Son. The doctrine which her faith takes hold of is that which cannot possibly suit any body else under heaven, And if there be any who have not passed from death unto life, who fancy that they can understand and love the doctrine by which the church of God is distinguished, they are deluded. As none knoweth the things of a man but the spirit of a man that is in him, (for the spirit of man being taken from any man but a dead and unconscious corpse remains,) neither knoweth any man the things of the Spirit but the Spirit. And unless we be born of the Spirit, and that Spirit abide ip us, we are as dead to all spiritual things, as the human body is to natural life after the animal spirit has departed. It is, therefore, quite as practicable to teach the tenants of the tombs the English grammar, or any science, as to teach the things of the Spirit of God to unregenerate men.

The church of God will be found in possession of doctrine which cannot be taught by every or any man to his neighbor, saying, Know the Lord; it cannot be taught nor learned in Sabbath schools, or what are called theological schools; nor can it be derived from reading the Bible, or hearing it expounded, even if Paul himself were the expounder, for the natural man cannot receive it; it is spiritually discerned. Every organized body of professors of religion who hold a doctrine which they can teach their unregenerate fellow-men is a branch of anti-christ; and the nature and attainableness of their faith proves that they have not the faith of God's elect, and that their faith stands in the wisdom of men, and not in the power of God. See 1 Cor. 2:5. The primitive church acknowledged Christ as the only spiritual King, the true and only Potentate, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light which no man can attain unto. That church can- not now be identified where Christ is not so regarded; nor is he so regarded by any church, sect, or people who hold that there is spiritual life anywhere else, or that the light in which he dwelleth can be approached. To approach is to make some advance towards the object; but this no man can do, as the members of the church of Christ know right well. The true chuch now, as in her primitive days, depends on God to raise up, qualify, send forth, and sustain the ministers of the gospel. Those who heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, are not the church of Christ. To him who ascended up

on high, who led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, they look for all the gifts which the church can need, to him who reigns, being exalted a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins, and to him alone they look to bring sinners to repentance and to cause the redeemed of the Lord to return with singing to Zion with everlasting joy upon their heads. To him who opened the doors of death, and rose triumphantly from the grave, who conquered sin and hell, they look for support, comfort, deliverance and victory.

Finally, the church of our Redeemer is *the circumcision who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.*

(Editorial by
Elder Gilbert Beebe
June 15, 1845)

EDITORIAL

"I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me. Come my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages. Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth; there will I give thee my loves. The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved. (S.S. 7:10-13)

Methinks that I shall never tire in speaking and writing about the divine relationship that exists between Christ and His chosen people. With all of the ties known in this time state there is not anything known among the children of men as lovely as that of the nuptial relationship between a man and a woman. Modernism has lost sight of the sanctity of matrimony, but it is a sign of its decay, not a sign of the decay of holiness before the Lord. That holy state of matrimony was given and approved by Him with whom we all will have to do, either as His children, or His enemies. How blessed is that people that knew the beauty of this happy state in time, and have been so highly favored of God that they also knew Christ as their spiritual Husband.

In the state of matrimony which God appointed, the wife owns as much of the common property as does the husband. Before the nuptials are said the husband to be will call his farm or field as *his,* but after the ceremony is said she has every right to say *our* fields. She may have been reared in abject poverty, but, marrying a millionaire, she will be a joint sharer in that million. Such reasoning does not do justice to the holy ecstasy of, a poor fallen woman that is brought into divine relationship as the bride of the Prince of Peace.

As this bride breaks forth in ascribing glory and honor to her state, she is talking the doctrine of God's

saving grace. Her statement has all the doctrine that the church of Christ is preaching. He loves her. His manner of love is everlasting. It is not based on futurity of the sinner's action. God has not said, If you will love me, I will love you. He has said that we (His people) love Him because He first loved us. The unbeliever says that if we will love God He will love us. God says, I have loved thee with an everlasting love (Jer. 31:3) , and I am sure that this reaches back into all the time of God. If one can tell me how old God is, I will tell you how long that God has loved His chosen people. God is writing to them in time, and His use of the word "therefore" is a death knell to all brands of a conditional love. He loves us in time to the same degree that He loved us in eternity, and proves it to us by drawing us with loving kindness. Thus, in a time unexpected, He draws us to Him in holy allurement and betrothal and marriage and pledges us a joint relationship with Him for time and eternity. Thus, dear humble child of God, we are blessed to look into the eyes of our Redeemer God and say, ***"I am my beloved's, and His desire is toward me."*** Job tells us thousands of years ago that God has a desire towards the work of His hands. To you I write: If a child of God, for your comfort; if a gainsayer , to stop your cavelling. This was the way it was fifteen hundred years before Christ came into the world; this was the doctrine on which the relationship between Christ (in type) and His church or bride existed about a thousand years before He came in the flesh; in the last book in the Bible (about four hundred years before Christ came) , God reiterates His statements to Job and to Jacob (Israel) , and while He was with that bride while in His flesh, His desire was always to His people, and I am not ashamed, but, rather delighted, to tell you that any doctrine promulgated in this time state by any creature that would talk to you about a conditional love for dead alienated sinners to use and exercise in order to get God to love them, is not the truth.

What a miracle has been performed. At the first she said unto Him, ***"Look not upon me, because I am black,"*** now she says, ***"I am my beloved's and His desire is towards me."*** How precious. How my heart is made to leap for joy that although she sold herself into bondage by transgression and was thrust into a wilderness of sin, yet, that He went after her. He went after Jacob; He crossed the sea to reach the lunatic; He went to the blind boy; He went to the well to meet the woman; He visited Saul; He went down into the wilderness to bring this chosen bride out; He went to the cross for her; He went to the grave for her, but why go on? The doctrine of grace gets more beautiful and more precious. He starts all of the activities that saves a sinner; He make's all of the moves to bring her

into holy relationship with Himself. In good society (it seems that not much of that kind remains) the man always goes to the girl. In religion (that is in the pure and undefiled kind) the Man always approaches the maid, not the maid the Man. It is not that it is too wonderful the way of a woman with a man, but it is too wonderful the way of a Man with a maid. (Pro. 30:19) Christ loved us while we were dead in sin. If He had waited on us to approach Him He would have waited for a bride a long time. I leave it to unbelievers to say how long. But He did not thus wait. I leave it for believers to praise His high and lofty name for that. He loved her and quickened her into life, cleansing her (experimentally), dressing her and presenting her unto Himself a chaste virgin and they were living in holy wedlock at the time of our text, and it being a part of the Bible written aforetime for our benefit, I am sure that they are now engaged in lovely union. Now the Husband talks. Has He talked with you ? Has He gently whispered in the midst of your doubts and fears that I love you, and will fight your battles, heal your foul backslidings, and bring you off more than conquerors through my love? Yes, yes, dear reader, He has thus addressed you. In the morning, when the dew of youth is on His lips, He walks in His garden saying, *"My people shall be willing in the day of my power ,"* and thus you leave what you are doing and go with Him into the field. You may have sat with Luke with a scalpel in your hand; you may have sat with Matthew in the custom house; you may have been at sea in fishing clothes and a net in your hand; you may have been on the road to persecute the saints of God, but when He called you, there was a laying down of the physician's robe, the pen of the scribe of the tax gatherer, the fisherman's rig, the role of persecutor, and an humble following of the Lord. Let us go into the field. Note, dear brethren, that He had the field. They did not buy the field together, He paying half and her half. She did not pay a farthing; He paid it all. Ruth did not contribute anything to the field of Boaz, nor to the bountiful harvest in it. He bought it at a great price, and bought it for Ruth, and had it ready for her in her hour of need. This is the nucleus of the doctrine of Old Baptists. It doesn't matter who they are, there is not a people that can claim the doctrine of grace save, our people. Everybody else tells you that you will have in the kingdom of God's dear Son according to what you do about it. But that is not God's way. Even before we sinned, yea, before the world Jesus Christ was set up (Pro. 8 :23). Everything a sinner was going to need in time was in Him; and every blessing set in Him, and was pledged to sinners. These blessings would reach each and every case. No trial unprovided for, no work unprovided for, no need unprovided

for, no sickness but that what would be needed to cure it, was provided in Christ.

This field, this garden, this city, this country belongs to the Lord and to His people. It is His by work, by purchase, by death, by gift from His Father; it is ours by gift, by grace, by love, by mercy. Everything in it belongs to us in this way. It is worth exploration; it is enticing; it is exhilarating to him or her that has travelled much in the dark, that has known much of hot searing desert travel, that has often felt to be on a wilderness road. To go into a well kept field, a field that another has kept, calls for awe inspiring adoration, and especially is this true when the companion of the keeper of the field is one that has not kept their fields. (S.S. 1:6)

As the children of Israel had drinking and eating places set for them by Him that sent them on that route, as the timber was placed together in floats (rafts) and floated upwards to the building place, as the table of the Lord is spread where hungry children are, even so in this lovely field of the Lord, there are villages for lodging. As this bride travels she has need of refreshing seasons wherein water and bread are found for sustenance. T h e husband plants these villages (churches) for resting, for watering, for feeding of the old and footsore, for the application of ointment (gospel) to the wounded and wearied, for the tender care of the little ones. (S.S. 1:8)

How glad we are that One with a learned tongue was given to us, and that He is ever able to give a word, a fitly spoken word, to him or her that is weary. (Isa. 50:4) It is morning by morning, day in and day out, night in and night out. The night watches are so long and weary. At the first watch, soon after having been delivered from the reigning power of sin, watching is not so tedious, but as His appearance is delayed, as the monsters prowl and shadowy and delusive spectres make their appearances, the watching gets more tiresome, and, after being filled with sorrow (Luke 22 :45), and have a multitude of watchings (2 Cor. 11:27), they get so burdensome. What joy as dawn begins to come, and weeping begins to cease (Psa. 30:5). The long night of sorrow is over, the watchings through the lattice work of the soul (8.8. 3:9) have come to an end, the rising of the Son of righteousness is at hand (Mal. 4:2, the day dawns. As the Husband, the Day Star of her soul, kisses her and comforts her from the agony of the long night watches, she is ready to go early out into the garden of the Lord. They now watch together; gone are the long watches, gone are the nightmares of the soul when trembling on the ledge not knowing whether they are to live or die. His interest is her interest. His vineyards are her concern. Her love has been stirred by the appearing of her Beloved. Thanksgiving floods her heart and mind and soul as she contem-

plates the vineyards, knowing that she has not had any hand in planting them. She watches with Him the coming up of the little vines, the small plantings which He has planted for the furnishing of wine on the lees for those that needed a spiritual cordial. Ah, poor sinner, what is it that causes you to follow Him early in the morning? It may seem strange, but I say unto you that it is because you are worn out. If it seem's strange, look back to your long, watches, look back to your tossings to and fro, look back as you watched in vain for the dawning, look back dear child when you were laboring in the long law night. The morning has come at last, and with it the Voice of your beloved, Let us go forth into the field, or, come unto me you that have labored through the law night, and I will give you rest in my shaded and watered field of grace. You may be called to preach; you may be a deacon in the house of God; you may be a little one that mercy has given you a place at the feet of saints; you may still be getting crumbs beside the Shepherd's tent, but how ever much that He sends forth as a maiden in the harvest field (Ruth 2 :8: Pro. 9:3) to do, it will be the most restful days of your life. There are not any burdens under laboring in this field. All of it is a labor of love; all of it is restful to the soul.

The law night was fraught with slinking creatures spying out your liberty; leeks and onions filled the night with their stink to your tender nostrils, but the Saviour says, Let us get up early to see the vineyards that I have planted for you; let us see if the plantings of my hand, t h e trees of righteousness which is of me (Isa. 61:3) are flourishing; let us see if the tender grape appears; let us see if Caleb and Joshua had a delusive dream about the rich clusters that they said were in Canaan (Num. 13:23) ; let us see if the pomegranates of that goodly land are now transplanted in spiritual Canaan and are 'Settled and grounded and growing in this field of ours; let us see if the pomegranate is budding that we might have its sweet smelling fragrance to perfume our bed (S.S. 3:5,7). His promise, after all of these sovereign "lets" are brought forth, is that He will give her His loves. All of His plantings shall perfume the church of God, the bride of the Lord Jesus Christ. The lily and the rose, the plant of renown, the pomegranate, the aromatic scent of tall and stately cedars, together with the budding and flowering of every planting of His right hand, yea all of His love shall be displayed in that field and she shall sing,

"Tis grace has brought me safe thus far, And grace will lead me home,"

and in this hidden and enclosed field and garden and pasture she will be led by the word going forth out of His mouth to her in a beckoning directive that shall enable her to go in and out and find the sweet smell of

the mandrakes (love apples) for her enjoyment, and how wonderfully gifted is this people, this church of the living God. The building which Solomon erected unto the Lord had entrances on each side and they were not closed day or night. There is not anything at all that is as inviting as the doors or gates into the church of the living God. Even as a poor sinner enters he or she is faced with the most lovely declaration of welcome that they have ever heard, to wit, ***"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."*** Ah, my soul, look up, for your redemption draweth nigh and our salvation is nearer than when we first believed (Luke 21:38; Rom. 13:11). You will find inside this gate all that your poor soul has ever desired. All, all is ready and waiting for your Adored Lover to speak the word calling you home. This field, this garden, this pasture, this church home was prepared for you before you get there. In the midst of this city in the middle of the street of it you will find a river of pure crystal clear water flowing out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, and the Tree of Life will be there with fruits being yielded at all times. It is true that offences will come, but placed before you will be the gospel declaration that not anything shall ever be able to separate you from the love of God which is in your Lover and Husband, the Lord Jesus Christ, and from His divine hand you shall evermore be fed on that which was laid up for you before the world begin, and wrought out for you in time (Psa. 31:19), and you shall be preserved from all apprehension of destruction by being hid in the pavillion of love.

Elder W.D. Griffin

"Whom having not seen, ye love." - 1 Peter i. 8.

How this speaks to our hearts; and cannot some, if not many of us say too, "Whom having not seen, we love?" Do we not love him, dear readers? Is not his name precious to us as the ointment poured forth? But we have not seen him. No, not by the eye of sense and nature; but we have seen him by the eye of faith; for he has manifested himself to us, or to some of us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. It is, then, by faith that we see Jesus. We read of Moses that, "by faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible." So by faith we see Jesus who is invisible; for as faith is "the substance of things hoped for," so is it "the evidence of things not seen." Thus we see that it is by Jesus coming to the soul and manifesting himself unto it that we see

him. And as he always comes with his love, and in manifesting himself manifest himself in his love, that manifested love kindles, raises, and draws up a corresponding love in the believer's heart. It is the express, the special work of the Holy Ghost to testify of Christ, to glorify him, to receive of the things which are Christ's and to shew them unto the soul; and thus in the light of Christ's own manifestations of himself and the blessed Spirit's work and witness of him, what faith believes of the Person and work of Christ love embraces and enjoys.

Elder J. C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER - 2002

Eld. W. G. Chapell
In Memory Of Roy Locke 25.00
Elizabeth Hedrick -VA 25.00
Ethel Holloway - MD 25.00
Bill Poindexter -VA 5.00
Grace Locke - Ky 5.00
Allen Carroll- NC 3.00
Ray Richardson -VA 5.00
Mae Williams -VA 5.00
W. W. Stutts- TX 5.00
Lavina Biggs -TN 15.00
John Smith - FL 5.00

OBITUARIES

BESSIE DAVIS BARBER

At the request of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, I write this obituary of our dear sister, Bessie Davis Barber.

Sister Bessie was born November 7,1907 in Rockingham County, North Carolina to Richard Barnett Davis and Betty Florence Page Davis.

On February 11, 1933 she married Thomas Maben Barber who predeceased her. She was also predeceased by a sister, Thelma Davis Dickerson and brother Edward Earl Davis.

She had attended Dan River Primitive Baptist Church since she was seven years old, when living close enough to attend, and joined the church July 24,1990. She was a kind and caring person and attended her church meetings regularly.

Funeral services here held on Friday, September 14, 2001 at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder Kenneth R. Key.

Burial was in the church cemetery.

She is survived by three children, Olivia Barber Ashworth of Danville, Virginia, Percy Edwin Barber of Eden, North Carolina and Troy Martin Barber of Garner, North Carolina. Also surviving are eight grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Connie M. Page

MILDRED WEATHERFORD HANKS

It is with a sad and heavy heart that we sisters-in-law attempt to write the obituary of our sister-in-law.

Sister Mildred W. Hanks was born September 30, 1918 to Beulah Dix Weatherford and Harry Thomas Weatherford, making her stay on earth 83 years. She lived most of her life in Danville, Virginia, and in Pittsylvania County .

On June 29,1938, she married Harry Curtis Hanks. She was predeceased by both her husband and an infant daughter. She was also predeceased by three loving brothers: Billy, Larry, and Harold Weatherford.

To this union was born one son, Brantley Reid Hanks of Danvlle, Virginia, and three daughters: Martha H. Cooper of Charlottesville, LaVerne H. Campbell and Nicole H. Garrison, both of Danville, five grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, and two step-grandchildren.

Sister Mildred asked for a home at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on March 25, 1990 and was a faithful member to the end. She was a wonderful sister-in-law, so good to us and standing by us when our husbands were ill. She was willing to do whatever she could.

God was ready for Sister Mildred on April 13, 2002, and took her to be with Him. She was a devoted believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace.

One of her favorite songs that she often asked to be sung is as follows:

Father what-er of earthly bliss Thy sovereign will denies
Accepted at thy throne of Grace Let this petition rise.
Give me a calm and thankful heart From every murmur free
The blessing of thy grace impart And make me live in thee.
Let the sweet hope that thou art mine
My life and death attend
Thy presence through my Journey shine
And crown my journey's end.

She would always say, "That says it all." And would have tears in her eyes. This song meant a lot to her.

Her funeral service was conducted at Dan River Church by Elder Kenneth Key, Elder C. B. Davis, and Elder Raymond Goad. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery to rest until Jesus comes to gather His jewels home.

We sisters-in-law always went to church together and miss her very much. She always said that though we are not sisters by blood, we are sisters by heart.

Written by request of
Dan River Church
Sisters Dolores, Gerline, and
Frances Weatherford

CHARLES A. YEATTS

Obituary of brother Charles A. Yeatts, with sadness, and the Lord willing, I write the obituary of a dear Brother in Christ. Brother Charles was a faithful member always at the church getting things done before anyone could mention it. The church has already missed Brother Yeatts and we feel that his family has missed him greater than we have. Brother Yeatts was with few words and a sincere heart.

Brother Yeatts was received at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by experience June 26, 1988 and baptized on the same day by Elder Raymond Goad. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of grace.

Born September 9, 1928 in Pittsylvania County, VA, he was a son of the late William G. Yeatts and Lou Ella Dalton Yeatts. Brother Yeatts was predeceased by four brothers and four sisters. Harry, Hampton, William, Burton, Ruby Farmer, Gerttie Matherly, Pearl Yeatts, and Hettie George.

He is survived by his wife, Ada Betterton Yeatts; one son, Maurice Yeatts of Altavista, two daughters, Carolyn Towler of Gretna and Linda Gromley of Colorado Springs, Colorado; one stepson, John Payne of Hurt, two step daughters, Mattie Brumitt of Roanoke and Debra Davis of Danville; a brother. Obie Yeatts of Hurt, and one sister, Lena Meeker of Hendersonville, NC; Five grandchildren, six step grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren. and six step great grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted at 3:00p.m. on Sunday, July 21, 2002 at Colbert Moran Chapel by his pastor Elder Raymond Goad and Elder Marvin Brumfield and laid to rest in AltaVista Memorial Park to await the coming of the Lord. It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is.

Written in Love, I hope,
Marvin Brumfield

John 15: 18-20.

If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

POEM

(This poem was composed about two o'clock one morning, after being pressed in spirit to arise and pen these thoughts. I have had several requests to re-publish it.)

When the moon in all it's glory,
Cast it's brilliance o'er the earth,
Then I thought of Jesus, Saviour,
And about his humble birth.

Soon I saw him in a manger,
Glory shining all around;
By a heavenly host surrounded,
Shouting, glory to his name.

Then I saw him meek and lowly,
Walk the earth in grief and shame,
All to save poor, wretched sinners,
Who will ever praise his name.

Next he bows inside a garden:
Sweat like drops of blood flow down;
All the earth about him silent,
As he kneels upon the ground.

As he prays in solemn anguish,
For the cup to pass away;
Yet he knows that he must drink it,
To prepare the glorious way.

Then upon the scene most softly,
Came an angel dressed in white,
Touched him gently, said, look upward,
Soon the darkness will be light.

Soon the scene of darkness changes;
Darkness breaks, the light appears-
Heaven opens to receive him,
Never more to bow in tears.

He appears in heaven for sinners,
Who were purchased with his blood:
All his intercession for them
Is because his life is love.

Then dear God, may all his suffering,
Guide me on this heavenly road;
May I never, never murmur,
As I think about my God.

Though my soul is oft in sorrow,
Soon these things will pass away.
Sickness, sin and all my trials,
Will be over in that great day.

Then our garments will be spotless
As we gaze upon his face.
We will need the Moon, no never,
For the Sun will take it's place.

When his children all shall meet him,
On that bright and shining shore,
Where our sorrows, pains and trials,
Will be over, ever o'er.

Soon, my brethren, we shall meet him,
May his love be all our guide,
And his grace and tender mercy,
Land us safe on Heaven's side.

Elder D. V. Spangler

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ST. JOHN 15: 21-24.

But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin.

He that hateth me hateth my Father also.

If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

POSTMASTER

Please send address changes to:

Signs of the Times
202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

EDITORIAL

Elder R. H. Campbell

For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

The Lord God, from the beginning of time has declared that there are two manner of people on the face of the earth. First there was, Cain and Abel, of the same parentage, different heritage. Cain's offering was not acceptable unto the lord, and Abel, whose offering was accepted, and neither of them were given any credit or charge for it being thus with them. This resulted in Abel being slain by Cain, because of the jealousy and hatred of Cain, over his offering not being acceptable unto God. Then there are those who, in one place, were designated as being the seed of the serpent, and the other as being the seed of the woman, and God placed enmity between these two seeds, which enmity remains until this day. On another occasion there were two brothers who were born of the same woman, the same conception, twins; whose names were Jacob and Esau, and before they were even born into the world of nature, God loved Jacob, and hated Esau, and it was declared that the elder should serve the younger. This was contrary to the traditions in effect at that time, which was that the elder normally inherited the blessings of the father, but, the apostle Paul, in the ninth chapter of Romans declares that this was according to the purposes of God, and that it might make manifest that it is by election and not by the works of the creature, but by reason of him that calleth.

The above scripture is the absolute assurance to Jacob, that the inheritance and blessings promised to the Lord's portion, are sure and certain, as well, as the heritage that is reserved unto the others. In other places in the scriptures, they were designated as sheep and goats, or, those who were of their father the devil, versus, those who were a chosen generation; each of these groupings reflect the distinction between the elect and the non elect according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. This doctrine appears many times in the scriptures, in no uncertain terms, and it is a precious doctrine to those who have been given evidence that they are of the Lord's portion, for it means that the same surety applies to them.

(Deut 32:8-9) "When the most high divided unto the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." This is the when,

where, how and why there are two manner of people in the world; they were separated by God, to show forth his love for those that he had formed for himself. It was in such a way and manner that they will forever be a separate and distinct people, diverse one from the other, and the enmity that was placed between them will never let them be reconciled with one another. *(Jer 13:23) "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustom to do evil."* It would be just as possible for either of these two events to occur as it would for one of either of these peoples to become of the other grouping.

There are the same two manner of people on the face of the earth today, they are denoted as the elect and the non elect, and this also is according to the grace of God, and not as a results of any action, or merit on the part of the people involved. There is one group that acknowledges that, they are but a remnant (very small part) of the whole, and that their salvation is by the grace and mercy of God, if indeed they are saved. They have no confidence in the flesh, depend solely on the truth of scriptures such as the one at the heading of this article, for their hope of eternal life. They know, better than anyone else, that if they were to be judged according to the law, there would be none saved, but, they have learned from their experience that although they are indeed sinners, that where the grace of God abounds it is sufficient to cover all of the sins of the Lord's people. Their solemn faith is that they, have received this grace in the person of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and, that this is sufficient to insure their eternal salvation. It covers the sins of all of the Lord's portion, and will preserve them until the day in which he comes to take up his bride, the Lamb's wife, and present her unto the Father, without the loss of one, and without spot or blemish of any kind.

The other group, if they even claim allegiance unto God, maintain that they work out their own salvation by their making a decision, utilizing their natural mind, to accept their god as their own personal savior, and then by their joining his church, they may help him build his kingdom here on earth. No mention of a spiritual birth, or quickening by the Spirit, but just by making a conscious decision, which anyone can do at any time; they believe that they enroll their names in the Lamb's book of life, take up their cross and follow him. All of these are natural activities performed by the man in the flesh, and since the scriptures declare that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned, we must come to the conclusion that these are definitely of the manner of people as represented by Cain, the

seed of the serpent, the goats and Esau. These are those of whom Jude wrote, *(Jude 1:19) "These be those who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit."* and they are definitely not of the Lord's portion, by any stretch of the imagination. Theirs is a proud, boastful walk, confident of their ability to maintain their standing before God, and believe that they can add to his church daily such as should be saved, by their ability to persuade their fellow man to follow in their footsteps. They spend untold millions in money, and limitless time and effort, working on this project, and they have yet to add one to the kingdom of God, because the church was complete, in the mind and purpose of God, before time began, and, the Lord is the only one who adds to the church such as should be saved.

This is all according to the arrangements of the one that declared unto Moses, *(Ex 3:14) "I AM THAT I AM"* and told him to say unto the children of Israel, *"I AM hath sent me unto you."* when God called Moses and told him to go before Pharaoh and tell him to let his people go. This is the same one that is saying above *"I AM the Lord. I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."* or who, by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah said, *(Isa 46:9-11) "Remember the former things of old: for I AM God, and there is none else, I AM God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoke it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."* In all cases whatsoever God declares comes to pass as ordered, without any exceptions. There is absolutely no indecision, variableness, nor shadow of turning with this God, no dependence upon man to help him do his work, but rather as per the above scripture, he says exactly what he means, and means exactly what he says, and that is the way that it shall be. Nothing can be added to it, and aren't you thankful that nothing can be taken from it, although it is assailed by thrones, principalities and powers, the rulers of darkness of this world, spiritual wickedness in high places; yet, nothing can separate one from this bond of love which Jesus has for those which his Father has given him.

The power behind the above statement will stand the test, in all ages of time, regardless of what man may do or say. David realized this when he wrote, *(Psa 2:1-4) "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against his*

anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision." This has ever been the reaction of the man in the flesh to God and his dominion over them; they just cannot accept the fact that they are passive in the whole scheme of things. their pride and vanity, causes them to seek out all manner of devices to disprove this truth. This is just as true today, as it was in David's day, they are still raging against the church, the truth and the anointed of the Lord, making false accusations which have no basis in fact, pointing the finger of suspicion at the true believers, by saying, just look at them and then look at our numbers, our immense success in evangelizing the world; behold our churches, our educated ministry, our massive communication systems by which we can reach so many to teach them to know the Lord. The world does not show forth any improvement in their moral character, righteousness, or godly pursuits as a results of this massive effort, over many generations. God declared by the mouth of many of the prophets, that this is the way that it shall be, and therefore it is, regardless of the efforts of men.

They can boast of their successes, as though it was something new that they have developed, but, it is actually only the fulfillment of the prophesy by John, ***(Rev 12:15-16) "And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth."*** The serpent is the devil, making war against the true church, and the flood which issues out of his mouth is that which the world considers the doctrine as taught in the scriptures, but it is not even similar. The world thrives on the doctrine of devils, because it contains that which is appealing to the natural man, and fits right in with their vain thoughts and imaginations. In reality, it manifests a complete lack of any real understanding of God and godliness, completely void of any spiritual knowledge, but this also is according to the purposes of God. ***(II Thes 2:11) "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie."*** and because of this they have their own form of religion and they do not attack the true church as vicious as they would without their own idols to worship. They hate the true church, but they would be gathered against it even more, without this false religion to occupy their minds.

Solomon said, ***(Pro 19:21) "There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand."*** We see these devices of

men in action all around us today, in the attitudes of the world toward those who contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and their frantic efforts to convert the world to their own particular form of doctrine. Matthew speaks of such, *(Math 23:15) "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass land and sea to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves."* When they depart from the truth, if they follow a straight course, they will get farther and farther from the truth with each succeeding generation, and this is a perfect example of what has been happening to the religions of the world in this day and age. Paul wrote of these, *(Tim 4:3-4) "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears; and they shall turn from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."* Doesn't this sound familiar?

There are many scriptures in the bible setting forth the absolute decrees of God respecting all events, his predestination of all things, his omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent characteristics, and the unerring immutability of his counsel, but the one at the heading of this article is one of the most inclusive of them all, and yet the world ignores them all in their man centered beliefs. God is declaring, by the mouth of the prophet Malachi, that he is the Lord, and that he changes not, he is of one mind and purpose in all of his ways, and because of this, none of the sons of Jacob shall be consumed, or separated from the love of God that has chosen them for his own peculiar treasure. The reason given for this choosing is that he has created them for himself and loved them with an everlasting love, and nothing can separate them from that love.

For there to be a change from this plan of salvation, or anything else that he has determined and declared, there would have to be a basic change in himself, and therefore he would cease to be the God of the scriptures, the one who declared the end from the beginning, etc. and that would nullify the very foundation on which the hope of all the saints rests. Their complete faith is in the fact that as he has declared it, and so it shall be. If he were subject to change, who could possibly say, with any degree of certainty, what shall be at any point in time, much less, what will be the final results, in the end time. If this were possible, we would be in the same dilemma as is stated by Paul, when speaking of the resurrection, *(I Cor. 15:14) "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain."* If these prophesies and promises are not absolutely true and certain, then our hope is vain and our faith has no

foundation of support, it would be as a house built on the shifting sand.

The apostle Paul said, *(Gal 1:11-12) "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."* and again, *(I Tim 1:16) "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."* All of these, and many other scriptures are all very positive and deliberate statements that it is the work of God that any believe on him, and then the apostle Paul is saying here, that his personal experience and calling, is by the revelation of Jesus Christ to him, and that this is the pattern by which all that are saved and called with a holy calling shall be brought. There is only one plan of salvation, and the above scripture says that it shall be thus, because God changes not.

I have always heard it said, that with God it is one eternal presence; no past, present or future, and according to the scriptures, this seems to be true, *(Heb 4:13) "Neither is there anything that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."* It is God who has determined and purposed all things, and he did it, in the six (dispensations) days of creation. *(Gen 2:2) "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made."*

All things were complete at that time, and God viewed all of his creation and pronounced it very good. It is just with man that there is time, and time is but the making manifest the works of God, which he had created and made before time began, as a results of that counsel that was held between God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. All of these created things occur in an orderly sequence, with man, but they are according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and they are all ever present before him. Their coming to pass in an orderly sequence, one following after another brings in "time"(which is a relative term) into the equation to which man is subject, but God is not: for they are all ever present before him. Time enables man to relate to these occurrences in a way that they can understand and identify them, as does the regularity in the rising of the sun and moon each day, and certainty of the seasons on the earth.

(Gen 2:4-5) "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens. And every plant of the field before it was in the earth,

and every herb of the field before it grew: for the Lord has not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground." All things were created, in the six days of creation, but they had no physical existence, until the days of formation began. These days of formation being the days in which the things created in the first chapter of Genesis begin to have a physical existence, as well as all of the events which God, in his infinite wisdom, had determined that they should occur, began to be come to pass. When he says, I am the Lord I change not; he is but confirming the fact that all things were, set in stone, as it were, before time began and therefore could not be changed. The infallable God that established all of them in his mind and purpose, before time began, could not make a mistake which needed improving or correcting because of unforeseen occurrences, or circumstances. All things were ever open and present before him who inhabiteth eternity.

(Isa 55:9-10) ***"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are my ways your ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."*** God works in a completely different realm from man, and is not subject to the same laws and limitations which man is subject to. God is everywhere present, and this includes all of time and space. *(John 3:13)* ***"And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven."*** This is saying that the Son of man, which is Christ, is in heaven even while he is standing there talking to Nicodemus, how great is the mystery of godliness.

Just as God rested on the seventh day from all of his works which he had made, so do his children enter into his rest, as Paul records in *(Heb 4:3)* ***"For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world."*** and again, *(vs 9-10)* ***"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."*** God did not have to go back to work, again, after he had once completed his work, and pronounced it very good? When man is born of the Spirit he is made to realize that there is no work that he could possibly do, to inherit eternal salvation, it has been accomplished already, but, he still must endure the race that is set before him so that he realizes what God has done for him.

When Jesus said, *(John 14:27)* ***"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the***

world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." I believe that he was speaking of this rest that his children enter into when they are given to experience the security of their salvation, and especially when they are blessed with those seasons of refreshing which shall come from the presence of the Lord from time to time. When they are blessed to remember how they were called and separated from following after the things of nature, by the sovereign work of God, they cease to strive to improve upon that which God has done for them, and rest in that blessed hope, and look forward to the time when they shall receive the inheritance promised them. They only have the earnest here in this time world, but this is enough to strengthen them as they run the race that has been assigned unto them. *(Acts 3: 19-21) "Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which was before preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the time of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."*

May the Lord richly bless us all, and enable us to enter into that rest; in the comfort of the knowledge that the salvation of each and every child of God is already completed. That our experience here in time is but an evidence of the earnest of our own inheritance which is laid up for us and which we will receive, if we indeed be one of his, when he comes back to receive his bride, his purchased possession unto himself. We will enter into the courts of glory to dwell forever in the presence of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. O' what a glorious and blessed thought to have, as we journey through this low ground of sin and sorrow. The above truths are the real essence of the declaration by Malachi, *"For I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."*

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

Job 37: 20-24.

Shall it be told him that I speak? if a man speak, surely he shall be swallowed up.

And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds: but the wind passeth, and cleanseth them.

Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict.

Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any that are wise of heart.

CORRESPONDENCE

El Dorado Arkansas
December 7, 2002

Signs of the Times
202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va., 24120-4403

Enclosed find a check for $50.00 which I am sending in Remembrance of Elder E.J. Lambert; Pastor of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church near El Dorado, Arkansas. It was in the mid forties and fifties that I first heard him preach, I did not like any part of it at first. Later I began to love what was preached, and I still do. Bro. Lambert has been gone a long time but I never shall forget what I heard and believed from the scriptures he so aptly taught.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Mary (Amason) Russell
115 Neel Street
El Dorado, Arkansas 71730

Elder William Hale Terry
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
Signs of the Times

12/24/2002

Dear Elder Terry:

It is time for me to renew my subscription for the Signs for another year. I am enclosing a check for $25.00 - $15.00 for the subscription and $10.00 for a contribution.

I have been receiving the Signs for several years now and I always enjoy reading the entire contents. I hope that God will continue to bless it to be published for as long as there is a desire by brothers, sisters, and friends, not only of the Old *Baptist* Faith, but of the many individuals of other faiths and denominations that read the Signs and tell us how much they enjoyed it The Truth will stand when all else fails.

A brother in hope,
George W. Hyslip

Dear Elder Key;

I want to thank you for an excellent issue of the "Signs" for January. Each article was encouraging and enlightening, including the letter from Sister Edrie Clifton. Elder Beebe was, as usual, very insightful. But the article that seemed to speak to my condition was the reprint of Elder Griffin's editorial on the blessed relationship of the beautiful bride with her Beloved. While reading this testament, I rccalled John's declaration in Revelation 19:7- 8, where he reported the vision of this bride who is now a wife having made herself ready for the coming of her husband She was able to make herself ready because it was GRANTED to her to be arrayed in the fine linen of righteousness.

The world just simply cannot appreciate the love God has manifested to the elect through his Anointed One. Our common wedding ritual is based on idolatry where the bridegroom is waiting for the appearing of the bride. In this figure, the bride is in control and the center of attention, which is exactly the attitude of the world church. The scriptural picture should be one with the bride and her party at the altar, waiting expectantly for the appearance of the glorious bridegroom. Elder Griffin writes: *"Her love has been stirred by the appearing of her Beloved."*

Again, thanks for your faithful labor as Editor of the paper.

Yours in hope,
Wade Johnson
P.O. Box 872
Athens, Tx. 75752-0872

PSALMS 26:7-9.

The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

The LORD is their strength, and he is the saving strength of his anointed.

Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever.

VOICES OF THE PAST

BORN OF WATER AND OF THE SPIRIT (John 3:5-8.)

"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Marvel not that. I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whether it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit."

The scriptures under consideration are a key that unlocks the door of salvation by free and unmerited grace in the revelation of God to every heir of grace and glory. Man born under the condemnation of a just and holy law, which he transgressed in Adam, is dead in trespasses and sins, having the nature of his father Adam, a sinful nature, from which he is, as unable by any effort of self to free himself, as a corpse in the grave is dead to all things of nature; and unable to think a thought or move a muscle, or manifest any natural life

whatever. Every person born in this world partakes of the sinful nature of his parents, and having the nature of sin, will act out that which is within. The carnal mind is enmity to the law of God and can not be subject to it, for the natural mind receiveth not the things of the Spirit and can not know them. Man may justly reason that there is a creator back of creation, as there must be a designer back of that which is designed, and may call that power God, and rightly so, but that is not knowing God as the Father of Jesus Christ and the author of eternal salvation; That which is natural is one thing and that which is spiritual is entirely something else; therefore the carnal mind can not perceive the things of the spirit of God nor rejoice in the felt presence of Jesus Christ.

The case of Nicodemus illustrates the total depravity of man by nature. He was an educated man of blameless character and a ruler of the Jews and a member of the Sanhedrin and a teacher of the law. Therefore he was acquainted with the teaching of the prophets of old and familiar with many of the precious promises of the Old Testament Scriptures, as far as the letter of the word was concerned. He was a man of honor and held in high esteem and had heard of miracles performed by Jesus, mighty works which had greatly impressed him. Yet he was in total ignorance of the requirements necessary for eternal salvation, and desired wisdom from God. In this very desire was manifested a spark of spiritual life, and he came to Jesus by night. It is when one realizes the darkness that surrounds one's life that there is given a desire to know the light and to be delivered from the darkness of one's natural birth. Pride and the nature of his high office probably prevented Nicodemus from coming to Jesus by day, which would have marred the typical significance of his nightly visit. Nicodemus was a Pharisee, which means separatist, and it may denote by antithesis the children of God who are separated from this world in their calling and profession. The name of Nicodemus is suggestively important as it signifies "victor of the people," as it is through Jesus that victory is obtained by the people of God through the atonement of Jesus Christ. One begins to seek salvation as he realizes his need of it, and realizes the darkness that is by nature round about him. One does not approach Jesus in the capacity of teacher, so it was necessary that Nicodemus be taught the necessity of the new birth and its supreme importance. One must be spiritually alive to receive teaching and this is typically true of Nicodemus, who realized that it was night and was able to go to Jesus. The weary and heavy laden are bidden to come to Christ for rest as they labor under the law whose demands they can not fulfil. Nicodemus was to learn not so much at first how men are to live who profess Christ,

but how men are made alive spiritually and the means employed to give them that life which is hid in God by Christ. Jesus at once informed Nicodemus that unless a man be born again he could not see the kingdom of God, and answered a further inquiry by saying, ***"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."*** This leads us to consider what it is to be born of water and of the Spirit. While these two are associated in the birth of every child there is a wide distinction. Water often signifies the word of God, as we read of the washing of water by the word; and also the statement by the apostle Paul, ***"Husbands love your wives as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it that he might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing by the word."*** In nature water cleanses and the word of God coming into the heart of a sinner quickens and purifies as it is applied by the Holy Spirit. Water is necessary for life in nature, and so the word of God is absolutely necessary in the birth of a child of God, for, "The word is nigh thee, even in thy heart and in thy mouth, the word of faith which we preach," as declared by the apostle Paul. Water causes growth in nature and the word of God causes a growth in the experience of a child of God. Water refreshes in nature, and the word of God refreshes and enlightens the child of God. Water in nature comes from the heaven above and the word of God comes from the heaven of eternal glory. The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity and is just as much a person as God the Father, or God the Son; and this Holy Spirit takes the word of God And applies it to the subject of God's redeeming grace in showing him the need of salvation: his lost condition, his just condemnation, and his utter helplessness to save himself. It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing, and each one who has eternal life is born not of the will of man nor of the will of the flesh nor of blood, but of God. The Holy Spirit imparts life through the word of God, which is Christ who is the Eternal Word, and who was made flesh to assume the condemnation of his people, and take away their sins by his obedience and death and resurrection.

The word of God shows the quickened sinner his heavenly inheritance and gives him an earnest of it and guides and instructs him in the things of righteousness as the Holy Spirit takes these things and applies them in his experience. The Holy Spirit is the person and the water is the instrument, and must work together. In the seventh chapter of John we read that Jesus said of the believer, that out of his inward parts should flow rivers of living water. ***"This he spake of the Spirit which they that believe on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified."***

This living water of the word is given and applied by the Holy Spirit: therefore a saved sinner is born of water (the word) and the Holy Spirit and is kept by that power through faith unto salvation. The word and the Spirit are alike the gift of God and can not be obtained by human effort.

Another figure used in Scripture in reference to the operation of the Holy Spirit is wind. The wind is unseen by man and the Holy Spirit is invisible in all its work of salvation. The Spirit is an indispensable necessity in the life of a child of God, just as wind is necessary in natural life to bear the clouds that drop rain upon the earth. Where there are no clouds there is no rain, and a desert results. One can not control the wind naturally, and so the Holy Spirit is not governed by man in any sense (nor responsible to man), but flows where it listeth (where it pleases) , and comforts with its invigorating effect the child of God who needs consolation.

Water in the scripture quoted above has no reference to baptism by immersion, as many are saved who never were immersed. The woman at Sychar's well was told that the water given her by Christ would be in her a well of water springing up into eternal life. Belief, or faith, is as necessary to salvation as the operation of the Holy Spirit, and the water of the word imparts that faith which is accounted for righteousness, in all of its effective and invisible work.

No man can enter into the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and of the Spirit, and his state there after his new birth depends upon the application of the cleansing water of the word. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from sin judicially, so that the saved sinner is released from the penalty of sin, as his standing before God depends upon the blood and righteousness of Christ; but he needs to be cleansed from the daily defilement of sin that he may be presented holy and without blame before the Father in love. Therefore the cleansing water of the word must be applied daily by the Spirit to insure his state in the sight of God. The feet or walk of the Lord's people need to be washed, as emphasized by the fact that Jesus took a basin of water and a towel and washed his disciples' feet. The shed blood of Jesus testifies to the efficacy of his atoning death in the justification of his people; while the operation of the Holy Spirit denotes the state of the saved sinner in his experience and life after he has been born of an incorruptible seed by the word of God, and his soul cleansed when he is defiled by daily sin. Even the thought of foolishness is sin, therefore the water of the word is necessary to a new birth and for the maintainace of the redeemed sinner's state before God.

(Elder) Arnold H. Bellows

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: we have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer." (Hebrews 8:1, 2, 3.)

In the first verse Paul says, *"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: we have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,"* meaning the greatest and most important, not only of what he had spoken, but all that he or anyone else would speak in the future. He is the sum and substance of all the ceremonial offerings and sacrifices made under the law, above all the high priests that were before Him, and has sat down at the right hand of God as the greatest Priest of all, whose offering has been accepted by His Father. Well could the apostle say, *"For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."* He is, *"Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."* This high Priest hath been *"appointed heir of all things, by whom he also made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."* To this name every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess to God. God hath anointed Him with the oil of gladness above all others.

A sum is the result of putting two or more things together. We read that Jesus, *"Who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption,"* and when we add all these together, we have a complete Saviour as the result. He is our high Priest; He is our elder brother and the captain of our salvation. "We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens," that is, at the right hand of His Father to make intercessions for the household of faith. The word "such" means the exact kind of priest described or implied in the preceding portion of this epistle. In the preceding chap-

ter Paul says of this priest, ***"Who is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power*** of an endless life." Then Paul quotes from the 110th Psalm and says, ***"For He (the Lord) hath sworn, and will not repent, thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."***

This Melchizedek, who was without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, was a type of the Son of God, who as God, is without mother, and as man without father; the high Priest over the house of God, and whose Priesthood will never end, nor His law ever change. He is not like the Levitical priests who continued their offerings year after year for the people; but His one offering which He has made, and is accepted by His Father, is not only adequate for the past and present, but for all succeeding generations. He has therefore, sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens permanently. He is a Priest in another sense. Paul tells us ***"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."*** If He had not suffered and been tempted as His people are, He would not be able to succour them that are tempted. If He were not a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, He would not be touched by the feeling of the infirmities of His people. It is good to know when doubts and fears arise within us, adversity and disease befall us, sins arise before us like mountains, when persecution arises because of the word, and we feel to say with the apostle Paul, ***"In me that is in my flesh dwelleth no good thing,"*** that we have one unto whom we can go, who hath a hearing ear and an understanding heart.

We are not inclined to call upon a physician until we feel the presence of some disease or infirmity in the body. We may have some malignant disease that is eating and sapping our vitality and not be aware of it, until it has weakened us beyond that of anything more than a temporary relief. So, sin may reign in our mortal bodies and we not be aware of it, until it begins to prey upon our consciences and manifest a disease that we were not before aware of. Just as sure as this disease is manifested, we will call upon the Great Physician for the disease of the soul, as we call for the family physician for the infirmities of the body. This Great High Priest - this Great Physician is touched when His children cry unto Him by reason of the feeling of their infirmities. When the men of. Gennesaret had knowledge of Him, ***"They besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole." (Matthew 4:36.)***

"A minister of the sanctuary" is a minister of heavenly and spiritual things from where He sits at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. Where He has immunity from the ceremonial law, and is under no obligations to administer daily and yearly offerings as did the Levitical priest. A minister is one who waits on, or serves another. *"The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."* While on earth He healed the sick, unstopped the deaf ear, opened the eyes of the blind, caused the lame to walk, and raised the dead, prayed for Peter that his faith fail not, and that His people be kept while in the world. Jesus is a minister to all those who are sanctified by God the Father, and unto whom He is made "Wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." To these He ministered when on earth, and now He is in heaven as their minister and intercessor. *"Wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets ; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;"* and then Paul tells us what these gifts were for, *"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."* Each of these gifts and the effectual exercise of them in the position for which He has qualified them, are according to His ministration. He is minister of good things, and these gifts are good gifts, because they come from above.

"And of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Some believe that heaven where Jesus is at the right hand of God is the tabernacle meant in the expression, "true". A tabernacle is a place where people meet for public worship, and in this sense, the church is a tabernacle of which the Jewish tabernacle was a type. The tabernacle of Moses was a type of the gospel church, the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched (built) and not man. *"The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foun-*

dation of this house ; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of host hath sent me unto you." (Zechariah 4:9.) Jesus asked His disciples saying, *"Whom do men say that I the Son of man am ? And Simon Peter answered and said, thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock (the same principle that Peter knew Him) I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."*

*I think it better how*ever, to consider that the human body in which the Son of God walked on earth and still occupies is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; the true tabernacle, the conception of which, man had nothing to do with; and according to the two men in white apparel; *"Which also said, ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."* We assume therefore, that as He left this earth in this tabernacle, and is coming again in like manner, that is, in the same form in which He left, He still occupies it as the Great High Priest over the church of God and minister of the sanctuary. And the fullness of the Godhead dwelleth in Him bodily, He has in His possession all the gifts and qualifications that His people stand in need of and, as the ministrator thereof, He will supply the*m in due season.*

"For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer." The sacrifices under the Levitical priesthood would not suffice, because they could not take away sin. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin, and as the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin, it was necessary to look to another source. The Son of God was God, and as God in the abstract, that is apart from any other object, did not possess that which the law required for an offering. God is a Spirit and blood. After Jesus arose from the dead Reappeared to His disciples, *"But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, why are ye troubled ? And why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."*

Many doubt the eternal Sonship and argue that there was no Son of god until Mary conceived and

brought forth a Son. But the person, or body that Mary brought forth, was the child that was to be born, in whom the Son of God was to be manifested. The child Jesus was born, but the Son was given. Paul says, ***"For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham."***

Elder H. O. Nash

Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Houk
Altus, Oklahoma
Dear Brother and Sister in Christ :

Your precious letter, heavily laden with the drippings of the good things of our heavenly kingdom, came a few days past. We have shared, as we hope, the joys that you have experienced in this wilderness road; we have drunk with you the cup of sorrow which has been so brimming full to you. We have, dear tried ones, a fond hope that our hearts beat in perfect unison with yours.

Dear sister Fay we know something of your bodily ailments, for we too have felt the afflicting hand of our heavenly Father. To our dear brother Henry we know what it is to be kept from making anything for the daily needs in a natural way, and we know something of how sad it is to have to stand helplessly by and see our dear ones sick and unable to lift our hand towards healing them.

These things all happen to all the race of Adam. We cannot take courage, nor can we have faith, when we are sick just because it is common with the sons of men. Nor can we be comforted when in the throes of pain and suffering, just because the Bible speaks of the suffering with him having a reign going on. For the intensity of our daily warfare gets so trying and exacting that we just do not see how we can be a child of God.

All the outward marks and rites and ceremonies of men are not enough to convice us of our acceptance with him. All the comfort that is lasting and worthwhile is that work in the heart – that still work that comes unsought and unlooked for.

It gives us great regret that it will be impossible for us to visit you all this year. The calendar just does not have enough days, and the days just do not have enough hours for us to get around to seeing all the dear saints, and doing all the many things that are demanded at our hands. Work keeps mounting up, and while the work and demands on my body mounts up, my physical powers are on the wane. Not too much time is left I am sure, speaking from a human standpoint; but plenty left for ev-

ery step from the standpoint of divine and eternal things, for did not David say that all his times were in His hands; and did he not also say that all his springs were in the Lord. If all of our times are in his hands, then we are safe and heaven will be ours when we have waged the last conflict with the ravages of sin. If this is so (and it is), then when we are well it is in the Lord, and when we are sick it is in the Lord. When times are good it is from the Lord, and when we fall into evil days it is from the Lord. To the little gods of this world who the times may look bad now, and if there is such a thing as the independent creature to any extent whatsoever, then to that much, no more, no less, a time comes when God is not in our times. But this is not so, for he has declared the end from the beginning. This being so, you do know that your trials are now, and always have been, included in his eternal will.

If all of the springs of the child of grace are in the hands of God, that is plenty to bring us to silence before the throne of his grace. Now springs rise in the valley, do they not? And a valley is a low place between two hills, is it not? Now who can make a hill? The ones that He had made when the oldest country in the world was first discovered are still there. The valleys are still in their place. Out of the, valleys comes the spring, and that to water the low spots. Do you often feel to be excluded from communication with him? Is your view often cut off that you cannot behold the glorious countenance of his face? This is the valley that you are in, but in the valleys shall arise a stream out of what you thought was an affliction. It comes from under the throne of grace, and it is a stream that breaks down every barrier and comes in to water the little plants of the kingdom of our God.

We feel to know that the Lord displayed his sovereign power to you both. Oh, dear ones, w h a t a comforting thought it is that we have, as we hope, a great high Priest who can be touched with the feelings of our infirmities, if your body becomes broken and feeble, may God give you to stop just a moment and think upon the body of another dear one. No suffering of ours is ever worthy to be compared to that that he did in his body. And here is another precious thought: if we are his, we never suffer alone, but in his suffering he went up the hill to Calvary's rugged tree alone. Not a friend to lend a helping hand; not a cherishing word spoken to him; even deserted by his own Father. Oh, little ones, if I could just feel the accompanying power and assurance that my bodily pains were given me as a token of reigning with him, I feel that I would be happy indeed. And, sometimes I feel this, and there steals across my mind the most solemn and serene peace that this world has never been able to copy.

Dark clouds often hover close o'er me. The hand of Saul often seeks my poor life, and if it were not for Jonathan, who knows all about me, and knows my enemies as well, I would have fallen long ago. But David and Jonathan alone knew the matter, and as they are the Christ and the Spirit in type, just so does he know all about Saul's maneuverings, and a city of refuge is always near at hand. So far he has led me on, as I hope, and my song today is the song that I learned in the school of grace long, long ago. When these scenes arise, fellowship for the sufferings of my Redeemer God are sweet, and I am given, as I hope, to believe that his feet were broken that I might walk; his hands were broken that I might handle the Word of life; His brow was caressed by a crown of thorns that I might wear a crown of righteousness; his side was opened that my running sore might be healed and closed (Psalms 77:2); he drank the bitter cup of the wrath of God, that I might drink the water of life; he dies that sinners like us poor ones might live; he was buried that just such poor and afflicted ones as we feel to be might be justified.

What is the connection? What does it teach us concerning these things? Just this, dear ones; That through the fiery trials of life the gold may be tried and made fit for the Master's use. Cheer up in the Lord, and rest assured that not one sorrow will be given you but what there will be an equal joy. Why? Because the day of prosperity is set against the day of adversity. Write when you can. May the Lord lead and guide you in the way of all truth.

Yours unworthily,
(Elder) W. D. Griffin

NATURE AND FAITH

We wept - 'twas Nature wept - but Faith
Can pierce beyond the gloom of death,
And in yon world so faith and bright
Behold thee in refulgent light!
We miss thee here, yet Faith would rather
Know thou art with thy Heavenly Father.

Nature sees the body dead,
Faith beholds the spirit fled;
Nature stops at Jordan's tide,
Faith beholds the other side;
That but hears farewell and sighs,
This, thy welcome in the skies.
Nature mourns a cruel blow;
Faith assures it is not so.
Nature never sees thee more;
Faith but sees thee gone before.
Nature tells a dismal story;
Faith has visions full of glory.
Nature views the change with sadness;
Faith contemplates it with gladness.
Nature sorrows, Faith gives meekness-
"Strength is perfected in weakness."
Nature weeps, and dreads the rod;
Faith looks up and blesses God.
Sense looks downwards; Faith, above;
That sees harshness, this sees love.
Oh! let Faith victorious be,
Let it reign triumphantly!
But thou art gone! - not lost, but flown;

Shall I then ask thee back, my own?
Back, and leave thy spirit's brightness?
Back, and leave the robes of whiteness?
Back, and leave the Lamb who feeds thee?
Back, from founts to which He leads thee?
Back, and leave thy Heavenly Father?
Back to earth and sin? Nay, rather
Would I live in solitude!
I would not ask thee, if I could;
But patient wait the high decree
That calls my spirit home with thee!

Elizabeth Webb

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DECEMBER 2002

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Willie Shelton, VA 5.00
Tommy Wall,VA 5.00
Elder H. O. Ballard, OK 3.00
Edna D. Shipman, TX 5.00
George W. Hyslip, TN 10.00

OBITUARIES

ELSIE RUTH MCGEE HUSTON

The members and friends of the Old School Baptist Churches in Maryland and Delaware bow in humble submission to God's having removed from their midst our dear sister in Christ, Elsie Ruth McGee Huston. Sister Elsie was the last member of the Little Creek Primitive Baptist Church in Sussex County, Delaware. Sister Elsie was born January 1913 in Laurel, Delaware, to parents Jacob Benjamin McGee and Emma Galena McGee, a part of a long line of Old School Baptists. Preceding her in death were her brothers and sisters, Mary Ellen McGee, Emma Teresa Roberts, Estella Hastings Martha Frances Morris, Sally Mae White, Sarah Elizabeth West, Alfred Burton William Benjamin McGee, and an infant sister.

She was married on September 22, 1934, to Clarence Alfred Huston who predeceased her on December 15, 1992 at age 82. They were blessed with a loving and caring son, Richard Edwin Huston and wife Lillian, and a loving and caring daughter, Norma Ruth Dukes and husband Bill. They had one son Raymond who died at age 8 on March 6, 1952. Survivors include, in addition to Richard and Norma Ruth,

grandchildren Chrystal Lynn Huston Willey, Angela Lee Huston Howard, and Donna Sue Dukes, and great-grandchildren Megan Nicole Howard, Daniel Huston Howard, Aaron Christopher Howard, Joshua Lee Willey, an Jared Lane Willey.

Sister Elsie was in every respect a lady, a devoted mother, and grandmother. And greatest of all, she was a devoted lover of the truth. She and brother Clarence loved the Old Baptists with all their hearts, entertaining in their home as long as they were able. They had visited Churches in other areas on numerous occasions and enjoyed the fellowship of all who knew them.

Brother Clarence and Sister Elsie joined and were baptized into the fellowship of LittleCreek Primitive Baptist Church in the spring of 1975. Brother Clarence served the church faithfully as deacon until his death in 1992.

Sisters Elsie's earthly journey ended on August 14, 2002, at the age of 89. She had suffered several physical setbacks in her latter years, but was completely given to trust in her God to supply all spiritual comforts. She bore her physical discomforts with the full knowledge that when her release from mortality came, her soul rested in the hands of a loving God who had called her into His earthly family and she fully believed into his Spiritual family. Those who knew her as an humble woman who did for others in a quiet way, not seeking for earthly praise, but doing what she knew was right. *She* knew that her salvation lay in God, not in any work which she could do. She did her deeds because of what God had done for her.

Her funeral was conducted at the Watson-Yates Funeral Home in Seaford, Delaware, on August 18, 2002, by Deacons Victor Laws and Elbert Robbins. Sister Elsie had requested that the deacons have the service so that her dear and faithful Pastor Elder C. B. Davis would not have to drive so far in the heat or bad weather (as she said) just for her funeral. Elder and Sister Davis had faithfully visited her on each trip to Maryland when she was unable to be at the meetinghouse. Her burial was in the Odd Fellows Cemetery in Seaford beside her companion where their bodies await that great resurrection when that which was sown a natural body will rise a spiritual body to be reunited with that immortal part which has gone on to Paradise. Our loss is her eternal gain.

Submitted respectfully by
one who loved her as a sister,
Elbert Robbins
(with information supplied
by her daughter Norma
Ruth Dukes)

Signs of the Times

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PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS"

The existence, sovereignty, immutablity, omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah -- the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistable, and in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers -- that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

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Robert Newton Duke

EDITORIAL

DEATH

Elder C. C. Wilbanks

The holy scriptures tell us there is a time to be born and a time to die, that the day of death is better than the day of one's birth, and precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints (Eccl. 3:2 — 7:1, Ps. 116:15). This can mean corporal death when he calls us home to glory, or when we are crucified with Christ and planted together in the likeness of his death. Paul describes this as the death of the "old man", and this is the man that dies that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Christ died once unto sin, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. (See Rom. 6:6-11)

Death is a subject that is principal in the scriptures and should be greatly considered, for every thing that has life is subject to it. Yet there are many who give no thought to its importance and do not understand what it is. Most people realize that when we die we are buried or cremated and our bodies return to the dust from which we are made. To many that is the complete end, and they know not that there is a life beyond the grave.

Now may God give us grace to search the scriptures and rightly divide the word of truth, that our efforts may not be vain but of comfort and edification to one or more of his little children.

What is the meaning of death? It is a separation from something. When man dies a corporal death he is separated from life in this world; and there is a death that separated man from God in the Garden of Eden. When God made man and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils and placed him in the garden of Eden he gave him a commandment, saying, *"of every tree*

of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Although God commanded him to eat not of this fruit God did know that he would do so, for he did not say. *"if ye eat,"* but, *"in the day that thou eatest thereof."* God had a just and holy purpose in this, as well as all things that come to pass, for, *"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven." "Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."* When God gave this commandment to Adam, Eve and all his posterity were in him and therefore received the commandment also. Eve had not yet been taken from his side when the commandment was given, yet she said to the serpent who beguiled her, *"God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die,"* The serpent beguiled her, saying, *"Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day thou eatest thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."* We know that Eve partook of the forbidden fruit, and gave unto Adam and he did eat. In doing so he transgressed the commandment of God, and God`s holy justice demands the death of the transgressor, for sin is the transgression of the law. Paul said, *"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered the world, and death by it; and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned: (for until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.) Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam`s transgression, who is a figure of him that was to come. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one (the first Adam) many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift of grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many."*

(Rom. 5:12-15). Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Adam was not deceived for he was a figure (image) of him that was to come, Christ, and Christ certainly could not be deceived. Eve, being a figure of the church, was in Christ before the foundation of the world. Adam had no power to redeem his bride from death, but because of his love for her, and legally being responsible for her debt, he went down into death with her. Christ would also die for his bride, that he might redeem her, *"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus 2:14)* Nothing can be redeemed by anyone other than the owner, and we were Christ`s in ancient eternity, for

God chose us in him before the foundation of the world and predestinated us unto the adoption of children. (Eph.ch.1). To this end Christ stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (Rev.13: 8) There was a covenant made, and, ***"When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoptions of sons." (Gal 4:4-5)***

God is love. He has loved us with an everlasting love and bestowed upon his sinful children his great love and mercy, but all of his holy attributes are equal and just, so that one cannot annul another. His love and mercy did not save us, but is the reason for the salvation given us. It was the shed blood of Jesus Christ that satisfied God's holy justice and brought salvation to his lost people. His holy law demands that the soul that sinneth must die, and without the shedding of blood there is no remission. (Heb. 9:22). ***"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." (Heb. 9:12) "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." (Heb.10: 14).***

For the joy set before him, Christ endured agonizing death on the cross, despising the shame, and is set down on the right hand of the throne of God. How was it lawful and just that Christ could shed his blood for ruined, lost sinners who were justly condemned to death? There is not a just court in the world that would allow a substitute to be executed in the place of a man who was justly sentenced to death. But should this be permitted, would justice be satisfied? Certainly not. A substitute can never satisfy justice, for the one justly condemned would surely continue to be as guilty as before. Jesus Christ, therefore did not die a substitute for us as many believe. God forbid that I should ever think of his Holy Son as being a substitute for me or anyone. If he died only as a substitute, then all of us are yet in our sins, having no redemption from them, and we shall never see nor enter the kingdom of heaven and immortal glory. A substitute can only do what the guilty one can do for himself, but a sacrifice does for us what we cannot do for ourselves. If we could offer ourselves to be sacrificed it would accomplish nothing, for the thing sacrificed must be perfect and without blemish according to the commandment of God. See Ex.12:5 & 29:1. Also Lev.1:3 &10. Our sins make us unfit; but our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was the perfect sacrifice, and with one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. (Heb.10:14).

There is no denying that Jesus died for his people, but how was holy justice satisfied when the just

died for the unjust? It is because they have a living unity with him. It is in him that we live and move and have our being. (Acts 17:28.) Col.3:3, *"For ye are dead, and your life is hid with God in Christ." Ps.139: 15-16, "My substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret, and wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there was none of them."* This substance was obviously none other than the body of Christ. *"Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular." (1 Cor. 12:27). "And he (Christ) is the head of the body, the church."*

The church is composed of the children chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and we read *Heb. 1:14. "For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil: and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."* In his Godhead he could not die, therefore he must become incarnate; he must be made flesh and blood and born under the law. *Gal. 4:4-5, "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a* woman, made under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Christ had to be under the law in order to fulfill it, which he did to a jot and to a tittle; and he is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. If we are given to believe, by his grace, we are no more under the law, but under grace, for he blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. (Col. 2:14).

In Heb 2:17 we read, *"Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of his people."* Let us consider this high priest. The priests under the old law were made without an oath, but Jesus with an oath: *"The Lord sware and will not repent. Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec."* The sacrificial offerings made by the priests under the old law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did: by which we draw nigh unto God. (See 9th. ch. of Heb.). Jesus is the better hope, for he is the High Priest, and also the perfect offering: *"For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." (Heb. 10:14). "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto*

*us wisdom, and right*eousness, *and sanctification and redemption." (1 Cor. 1:30).* The word sanctify means to be set apart as holy, and the word Saints is derived from it. *"For both he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." (Heb. 2:11).* In his prayer to the Father in John 17, Jesus said, *"And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be made perfect in one." In Eph. chapter 5 we read, "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word. That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing: but that it should be holy and without blemish."* This glorious church is the body of our living Saviour Jesus Christ. *"For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and bone." Eph. 5:3* tells us that Christ is the head of the church, therefore, we being his body there is a living unity with him that can never be severed. In the light of this unity how can Jesus Christ be considered a substitute? NO WAY.. When Christ laid down his life on the cross, as a sacrifice for our sins, his church was in him, we were baptized into his death. *"—wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him up from the dead."* Christ also blotted out the handwriting of ordinances (of the old law) that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. Therefore we are no longer under the law, but under grace.(See Col. 2:12-14)

Read Romans, chapter 6 & 7 for I for brevity must paraphrase some of it. For as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death. We were buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life. If by the glory and grace of the Father we are given to walk in newness of life, shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? There was a time when we lived under the law of sin and death, but we have become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that we should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. But when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.. Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lusts, except the law

had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. And the commandment which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just and good.

Brethren, as long as we live in this world we are going to sin, for we are carnal and sold under sin. But that beloved apostle John admonishes us to confess our sins to God. Let us seek to do this, for, *"If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* Let us also pray that he lead us in the holy path of righteousness for his namesake.

May God bless all truth herein and forgive any mistakes.

Clifford Wilbanks
8/17/2002

NOTICE FROM EDITOR:

As we are well into this another year, we want to thank God for his blessings. The editors have been blessed with wisdom and liberty to supply editorials that has proved to be comforting and edifying to our subscribers and readers.

On behalf of all the staff of the "Signs" we again pledge to hold fast to the prospectus the paper was built upon. I believe all are pledged to hold fast to the basics and principals of the prospectus. However we realize that there are subjects that different ones have different views. Sometimes their views are not the views of all. Paul says let them be persuaded in their own minds and we respect that. I believe we are in unity of those things upon which our hope rests, with one eye single toward God. The Lord has placed the same laws in each of our hearts and minds and so indelibly written they will never be changed, and by the grace of God we will hold fast to the end.

This past year has been a fruitful year, blessed with love and fellowship with so many lovely travelers. There has also been much sadness as we have had to say good by to so many of our friends. We sorrow only that we will see their face no more, knowing the Lord has given and has taken away. He never makes a mistake.

Now may we be blessed to press on, running the race that is set before us and looking unto him the author and finisher of our faith.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Editor

QUERRIES

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November 1, 2002

To: Editors of the Signs of the Times

Dear Brethren In Christ:

I am writing to submit a request and to present a viewpoint concerning items published in the Signs.

First, kindly publish at a future date a treatise by one or more of the Editors or a contributing pastor, should there be any inspired of the Lord with spiritual understanding on what thoughts or actions constitute "presumptuous sins" so as to edify me and other readers.

PRESUMPTUOUS SINS

David, praying for grace, wrote ***"Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Let the word of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer", Ps. 19: 13-14.***

As a presumptuous sin is stated to be a "great transgression" is it the unforgiveable sin; or can it be something other than blasphemy against the work of the Holy Spirit? Do presumptuous sins always rise to the level of sins unto death, I John 5:16; James 1:15. Are popular works made by self-righteous persons to seek eternal salvation presumptuous sins? Are good works in the absence of regeneration and the reception of the Divine gift of faith presumptuous sins, James Ch. 2? Is it presumptuous sin to make a profession of religion for the purpose of seeking baptism, membership, or ordination to the ministry before one has received a Divine calling, Matt. 25: 1-13? (See also the gainsaying of Korah, Num. 16 and Jude 11) Are willful disobediences of the Lord's commandments presumptuous sins? Is it a presumptuous sin to alter or modify the Bible, Rev. 22: 18-19? Is it a presumptuous to boast of its richness and lack of need of anything when in God's sight it was wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked, Rev. 3:14-18? With the rich doctrines of election and predestination, and with a shortage of fear of the Lord, is it not easy to become at ease and comfortable and be a modern Laodicean Church?

Oh, dear Brethren, how many of our thoughts and actions are presumptuous? Is it presumptuous of me to pray for edification?

ANSWER:

December 8, 2002

Dear Brother Osborne,

IT was good to hear fom you by way of the letter you sent to the other editors of the "Signs of the Times" and to me last month. I have read and reread it with much interest. I am inclined to write to you briefly about some of the questions you posed and some of the things you stated in your letter. Having much assurance that no person is able to understand the deep things of God, or to relate them to anyone, apart from the revelation of God, I enter into this with much fear. The Lord willing, this will be very brief, and hopefully be written in love and kindness.

Dear brother, you pose the question, ***"what thoughts or actions compose 'presumptuous sins'?"*** You quote part of the 19th Psalm where David prays, ***"Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins; let not them have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression."*** To me, the starting place for the understanding of the scriptures is to have a correct natural understanding of the word or words under consideration. The Hebrew word translated "presumptuous" by the King James translators, according to the very trustworthy "Strong's Concise Dictionary of the words in the Hebrew Bible", literally means "arrogant" or "proud".

The wicked are characterized in the book of Job, as the children of pride. They are presumptuous and self willed, according to the scriptures. The wicked always do wickedly. They are the unpersuaded ones. They are like unto their father the Devil, that old serpent, which has no ears with which to hear. God made the serpents with no capacity for hearing. They have no ears. The wicked cannot and do not hearken to the voice of God as far as obedience is concerned. Therefore, the wicked go on in self assurance, arrogance and pride, thinking that they are as good or maybe a little better than the next fellow. They have neither a real knowledge of what is good, nor do they know that their ways are evil. They do not see themselves as sinners in need of a Savior. I am made to believe that all the works of the wicked are presumptuous continually before God. They sin willfully and voluntarily. May God keep us from sinning this way.

"For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." This fiery destruction is for the wicked, not for the righteous ones in Christ. I am made to believe that children of God sin, not willfully as the wicked do, but in ignorance and unbelief, as the apostle confessed about his own sin. I am

made to believe that David, as well as all of God's little ones, were and are made to beg for mercy, that they not be found walking among the congregation of the wicked and not doing their deeds. They are given to desire to walk in the light and not in darkness. They are given ears to hear and hearts to understand. A tree is known by its fruit. The children of God bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit and not that of the Devil.

So, to my understanding, the presumptuous sins are willful, and are performed by the wicked only. And they shall never be forgiven. The children of God are kept back from willful and presumptuous sins by the mercies of God. All their sins have already been atoned for in Christ. They are altogether under grace.

Dear brother, you give many examples of sins, and ask whether each one is a presumptuous sin. I am made to believe that any and all sins committed by the wicked are necessarily presumptuous, because they are not kept. If one is in Christ, his sins are necessarily unintentional and not willful, because he is kept. Jesus said that, ***"All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men."*** To me, the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is this - wicked ones not recognizing God and His work, and thus, speaking evil of Him and His work. David prayed that God would cause him to be innocent of the great transgression. Is not the great transgression, blasphemy against the Holy Spirit? I am made to believe that David's prayer was given of God and answered by God, as are all the true prayers of God's children. According to their true, effectual, fervent prayers, they shall be kept from the great transgression. The children of God are ***"kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." Jesus said, "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again the last day."***

It is my assured belief that the children of God are kept back from presumptuous sins by the Spirit of God, Which is in them, and Which is keeping them. ***"Greater is He that is in you than He that is in the world."*** The precious promise of God to His people is that, ***"sin shall not have dominion over you."***

Dear brother, you pose the question, ***"Was the Laodicean Church presumptuous to boast of its richness and lack of need of anything, when in God's sight it was wretched and miserable, poor, blind and naked?"*** The church being of God, and presumptuousness being of the wicked, I do not see how the church could have been presumptuous in the way of blaspheming against the Holy Spirit.

I believe this scripture, along with the accompanying ones in Revelation concerning the seven churches of Asia, have been taken many times at face value. And some have tried to explain them, I believe, without revelation. Taken naturally from a works point of view, they have been set forth to mean that some of the churches fell into disorder. And that Jesus rebuked some of the churches and commanded them to repent. And that Jesus threatened certain things, even to take away the candlestick of one, if the church decided not to repent. This view puts the emphasis on man and his supposed responsibility to do right. Grace is not in sight.

The blessed apostle said that, *"...it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace."* The explanation from the grace point of view, and we believe by revelation, says that God is sovereign. He rules and reigns. It is His church and He alone is keeping it. If a church gets puffed up in nature about its wealth or any other thing, God shall reprove it. And He will cause it to suffer Godly sorrow which works repentance. His word is power. When He commands His people to repent, this, they shall do. And He gives grace for repentance, so that His people shall not suffer His wrath along with the wicked. Repentance is part of that great salvation, as also is obedience. *"He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ."*

Jesus also said unto the church of Ephesus, *"Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."* There was a church in connection with us many years ago which had a majority of members who were constantly complaining that the meetings lasted too long, that they were being kept from doing things with their children, etc. They also thought the Old Baptists were too strict in their code of personal conduct. A preacher came in among us, who also shortly went out from us, who just suited them, and they followed him. When the two sound and faithful members of that church were made to see the direction of the majority toward disorder, they asked for letters, which they placed in another church, which was walking in love and peace and order. After they were led out, it was only a short time before the disorderly ones fell into complete confusion and quit meeting. The church ceased to exist there. I believe we have been made to see this scripture fulfilled. When disorder will not, neither indeed cannot, be repented of by the disorderly ones, and when the faithful ones are taken out, the candlestick is removed. The church is gone from that place.

Dear brother, you pose the question, *"With the rich doctrines of election and predestination, and with a shortage of fear of*

the Lord, is it not easy to become at ease and comfortable and be a modern Laodicean Church?" Apart from the grace of God, I believe that it is not only easy to fall into pride, arrogance, and presumption, but that it is a sure thing. But thanks be unto God, He gives grace for grace unto these He loved with an everlasting love. He is keeping His church perfectly. ***"He is the Rock, His work is perfect."*** The beloved and inspired apostle wrote, ***"He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"*** God knows just what the church is in need of and is well able to supply all her needs. I am made to believe that all things needful for her are stored up in Him, and have always come and are yet coming to her in great supplies, and in His perfect time. God is all sufficient. We are but worms of the dust.

Dear brother, this has been more lengthy than I intended, and I have replied just to the first page of your letter. There are many other things which bear on this, but I think I must forebear for brevity's sake. I hope that this is received in love, and in compassion for my weakness in the flesh. Please forgive all mistakes. May God be praised in all things.

I am sending this to you. And I am also sending a copy to the "Signs" according to your request.

Your little brother, I hope, in Christ.

Elder J.B. Farmer

VOICES OF THE PAST

SPIRITUAL SONGS ACCORD WITH GOD'S STRINGED INSTRUMENTS

My late visit with the editors and many readers of the Signs in Virginia, Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania and other places has stimulated me with a greater desire to write to the Household of Faith through this medium. The visit with the Welch Tract, Hopewell, and other historical meeting places of God's children through the centuries past has peculiarly affected me. It is inspirational to learn that the same principles of Truth has been loved, cherished and contended for by His people these hundreds of years in the same. meeting place.

While attending Salisbury Association held at Delmar, Delaware, the text of this article began to arrest my attention. God willing, I shall use Isaiah 38:20, as basis for my remarks: ***"The Lord was ready to save me; therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord."*** We shall *attempt* to prove that the songs of God's people are their spiritual experiences and the stringed instruments are the harp of God, the hearts of His people, the Bible, etc. We want to show that a psalm or an hymn is not necessarily a spiritual song to one of God's peo-

ple at all times. We expect to show that the stringed instruments under consideration are not pianos, organs, or any like instrument made and tuned by man - which will get out of tune but, that which God has tuned, strung, and prepared - which never gets out of tune.

Re-read the paragraph above and may it become fixed in your mind before we meditate further upon the text. Read Isaiah 38, and then prayerfully consider the following meditations.

The expression found in 20th verse was made by Hezekiah, King of Judah, after undergoing critical experiences brought about by the Lord dealing with him. Even though he be king he was brought low by the Lord. He was sick unto death, and word came to him from the Lord, ***"Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die and not live". (Is. 38:1)*** We read a similar command in Amos 4 :12 to Israel: ***"Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel".*** I am persuaded a similar command comes to every spiritual Israelite in the beginning of an experience of grace. When we try to cope with the situation in trying to set our house in order in preparation to meet God, we find ourselves as miserable failures in the attempt. This forces us to pray to God for mercy. Surely Hezekiah's attempts were in vain to set his house in order and he was made to depend upon God for this. We would all sink into death were it not for what the Lord adds unto our life. Our life is sinful, He adds holiness; our life is unstable; He adds stability; our life is earthly, He adds heaven; our life is ungodly, He adds godliness. We come to the end of our path, He leads us into a new path. We die, He adds life. Dear trembling child, has the Lord added unto your life? Our life is unstrung and untuned. He tunes and strings our hearts to sing His praise! This must have been Hezekiah's experience as he said, ***"The Lord was ready to save me."***

We learn that we cannot save ourselves. It is not the question: am I ready for the Lord to save me? But, is the Lord ready to save? All things are so ordered and arranged, tuned and strung by the Lord that events so fall in perfect order and rhythm that a fixed time, place, and circumstance comes for the Lord's salvation to be made manifest to each and every one of the trophies of His amazing grace.

Because the Lord was ready to save me- ***"we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments".*** We read in Ephesians 5:19, of ***"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."*** What were the songs Hezekiah had under consideration? Psalms and Hymns would include all compositions written with natural verse to be used in religious worship. When any hymn or psalm is in perfect harmony with our experience and feelings, it becomes

our spiritual song. Paul says in *1st Cor. 14 :15, "I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing w i t h the understanding also."* There is a natural song and there is a spiritual song. There are experiences that are natural and there are experiences that are spiritual. The song that is natural is the old song and the song that is spiritual is that the Lord adds by putting into your mouth the new song. We would like to contrast the old song and the new.

The old song is sung in the key of man-man being the central keynote. The new is sung in the key of Jesus Christ, - He being the foundation key. If you want to hear a discord try singing the old and the new together. They will not harmonize, for the old song praises man and the new song praises God. The old sings of the ability of man and the new song proclaims man's inability. The old song utters salvation is hinged upon the volition and works of the creature, while the new bases the creatures' salvation upon the volition and work of the three-one God. The new song being opposed to the old prevents the harmonization of the two.

You will note that Hezekiah says, "my songs". This means his own personal spiritual experiences. Unless the Lord has added to your individual life you cannot sing these songs. There are more spiritual experiences than one; therefore more songs than one. Sometimes you sing, *"All things work together for good"*. Sometimes you feel, *"All things are against me."* Sometimes you are asking, *"Is God gone forever?"* Sometimes you say, *"I know that my redeemer liveth"*. Sometimes you sing, *"Jesus, Lover of my soul"*: and at other times, "I am a stranger here below". Sometimes you ask, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Sometimes you sing, *"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want"*.

The stringed instruments these new songs perfectly accord with are the instruments God has prepared, strung, and tuned. The word "instrument" is translated from a word meaning "prepared". Our songs are sung to that that God has prepared. We find recorded in Proverbs 16:1, "The PREPARATIONS of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord". When the Lord strings and tunes the hearts of His people there is perfect harmony in their experiences. When your experience harmonizes with the experience of Hezekiah, Jacob, Paul, and others whose lives are recorded in the Bible, it is singing your songs to the stringed instruments. When your experience harmonizes with the fundamental principles expressed in the Scriptures, and held sacred by your brethren, it ACCORDS with the stringed instruments.

Pianos and organs are made, strung, and tuned by man. These may be damaged, get out of tune, and the strings broken. Natural mu-

sical instruments only give forth natural mechanical tones. The instruments under consideration give forth spiritual Godly melody. The command to the Church is to *"speak to yourselves, singing,"* - not, to play a mechanical instrument. The question should be, "Is our singing to accord with the mechanical instruments or spiritual instruments? Is our singing to be in accord with the piano, organ, or heart? I am persuaded the singing should be in harmony with our hearts that God has prepared, tuned and strung; thus, ***"making melody in the HEART"***. When brethren are blessed to come together and sing with the Spirit and understanding in sweet fellowship and harmony it is much greater and sweeter melody than the best of singing without the Spirit accompanied by the best mechanical musical instruments. The accompaniment of mechanical musical instruments is pleasing to the natural ear. The accompaniment of the Spirit and understanding is pleasing to the spiritual ear.

We read in the Psalms of the harps of God, and also in Revelations. According to Josephus and what we can find in the scriptures, these harps had ten strings. We can call your attention to Psalms 33:2-3 ***"Praise the Lord with harp; sing unto Him with psaltery and an instrument of ten strings. Sing unto Him a new song."*** We want to quote the following stanzas from the hymn:

THERE IS A FOUNTAIN :

Lord, I believe thou hast prepared
(Unworthy though I be)
For me a blood-bought free reward-
A golden harp for me.

'Tis strung and tuned for endless years
And formed by power divine,
To sound in God the father's ears
No other name but thine.

Hezekiah stated in the same chapter from which the text of this article was taken - ***"He hath BOTH SPOKEN unto me and HIMSELF hath DONE it" (Is. 38:15)*** Here is a double. He commanded "Set thine house in order," and He performed the command Himself by setting it in order. He works both the will and the do. Children of God receive "of the Lord's hand DOUBLE" (Isaiah 40:2) Scores of doubles come to our mind that neither time nor space will permit us to mention. Suffice it to suggest that the harp of God consists of a number of double strings. If the harps used back at that time under the ceremonial worship had ten strings, the spiritual harp must have five doubles which results in ten. Let us turn to the 8th chapter of Romans to find these five principles of the doctrine briefly stated. As we

read them let us keep in mind that He has both spoken and Himself hath done it. Now, ***"For whom He did (1) FOREKNOW, He also did (2) PREDESTINATE to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also (3) CALLED and whom He called, them He also (4) JUSTIFIED: and whom He justified, them He also (5) GLORIFIED. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom.8:29-31)***

This foreknowledge is an intimate relationship with His people even before the manifestation of His decrees in time. He chose them in His Son. ***"Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect and in Thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there was none of them." (Psalms 139:16).*** He knew them in eternity; they shall know Him in time. He predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son. He has ordered, arranged, and fixed all things to fall out at appointed times and seasons so that all things work together for the fulfillment of this grand purpose. See Romans 8:28. He calls and they shall answer. He performs the double as the word that goes forth out of His mouth returns not to Him void, but accomplishes that which He pleases and prospers in the thing whereto He sends it. He decreed the justification of His people and He justifieth them by sending His Son into the world to pay the penalty for their sins, thus satisfying justice. The just bore the sins of the unjust that justice divine might be perfectly satisfied. He not only justified them but also glorified them through the divine righteousness of His own Son. ***"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled (justified) to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved (glorified) by His life." (Rom. 5:10)*** We are glorified by the imputed righteousness of His Son. These five wonderful things are both spoken and performed by God the Father, Son, and Spirit. These ten strings ring clear the melodious song of praise to Him. This ten stringed harp becomes ours when it pleases God to give it to us that we receive it with praise and thanksgiving. Then we are HARPERS HARPING WITH THEIR HARPS. See Revelation 14:2. We have the harps of God. Rev. 15:2). We sing to the accompaniment of these harps in the "house of the Lord," Zion, the new Jerusalem, the Church, or with the children of God. We sing ***"all the DAYS of OUR life."*** Sometimes the day is gloomy because of the clouds of trouble and despondency which hides the view of the brightness of the Son of Glory. Sometimes the day is cold because of the felt sense of our unworthiness. We experience cloudy and bright days;

cold and hot days; jovial and sorrowful days; but, they are all days because it takes the light to manifest the darkness that is in our heart and the coldness in our thoughts. Nevertheless the expression of days in the plural shows that there are night times in our experience.

We hang our harps upon the willows by the river, Babylon, during the nights of our experience. (Psalms 137) We have no use or regard for the Lord, nor Zion nor His people during the night. We are then resting in our own carnality and we are at ease. We do not think upon Zion nor his people. We forget Zion as is intimated in the expression, "We wept when we remembered Zion." (Ps. 137:1) When the dwellers in Babylon require of us in mirth to sing one of the songs of Zion, we are made to realize we cannot sing the Lord's song in a strange land. We must be brought again out of Babylon into Zion before we have any more use for the harp. It is not in the night that we feel unworthy, unfit, and so wretched but on dark and cloudy days. In the night we have no feeling, no sense of guilt, no deep concern over our spiritual welfare, neither any regard for His house. It is when we are awakened in the morning that we are made to weep because of our forgetfulness and unconsciousness of His providential care over us. It is when we are awakened by His Spirit before the rising of the Son of Glory. Thanks be to God, when the Son rises and we see the brightness of His face whose rays warms and calms our troubled breasts, fear is driven from our souls and love springs forth. Songs of praise again are sung to His matchless and glorious Name for His amazing Grace toward us.

You notice that Hezekiah says "OUR LIFE" in the text. It seems to the natural mind that he should have said, "my life" or "our lives" to have been consistent with the proper usage of language. Let us see. The Lord added unto his life. My life had its end as my life when the Lord added His life to my life. My natural life ended as only a natural life when the Lord added that that is spiritual to my life. The life of a child of God prior to regeneration (or the addition of the graces of His Holy Spirit) is only a lustful fleshly life. After God adds that that is spiritual it becomes our life. When the Lord adds his Spirit there is set up a dual character in one. This results in a warfare. The flesh lusts against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh so that you cannot do the things that you would, these being contrary one to the other. See Gal. 5:17. What the Lord adds is contrary to that naturally possessed.

One more thought and I shall close. The last night will be when death shall come at the end of our sojourn here. Then will be the dawning of the final day when we awaken in His likness and shall be satisfied. There will be no night there but one eternal Day of perfect joy and peace.

No cloudy and cold times to mar our peace. There will be no night nor river of Babylon. There will be no hanging of harps in the willows. We will all sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb harmoniously to the harps of God forever and forever.

Elder E. J. Lambert

MARK X. 18.

"AND Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good, but one, that is, God."

Thus the Lord of grace and glory by one breath of his mouth sweeps away forever every vestige of creature goodness from the realm of his holiness and his perfection. But through what depths of sorrow, trouble and self-loathing must we pass to learn the wonderful truth set forth by the Master in this text. Although the great religious world will utterly ignore *it* in its teaching, and we may think but little about it, the declartion is an eternal truth: *"There is none good, but one, that is, God."* This language of the Master is a reply to an interrogation by one who wanted to know what good thing he should do to inherit eternal life. Let us notice first the question of our blessed Lord. How pertinent it is. It is as if he said, What do you see in me What think ye of me? Yes, what think ye of Christ? Do you regard him as some great, moral teacher that shall give you lessons whereby you shall obtain merit and be exalted above your fellows? Do you think his purpose is, to give you a chance to obtain this wonderful gift and thus get glory to yourself? Such seems to be the very highest conception of Jesus by the great religious world of today. The thought is expressed by the query of Jesus to his disciples: *"Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am! And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them; But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."* O may we know, this, and may our answer ever be the same in all the vicissitudes of our mortal pilgrimage. Yes, may it be written in tablets of the heart; aye, *"with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever."* Thus taught it by the revelation of Jesus Christ we can say, The Lord is my rock, my fortress, my high tower; yes, the Lord is become my salvation, for he hath saved us and called us with an holy calling. He doth yet save us, and will save us with an everlasting salvation. May this wonderful revelation be ours, may we rest here, for Christ said, *"Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."* The great

question is, What do we see in Christ? *"Why callest thou* me good?" What we think of Christ, and what we see in him, is the criterion of our standing in him.

"What think ye of Christ? is the test
To try both your state and your scheme;
You cannot be right in the rest,
Unless you think rightly of him."

"There is none good, but one, that is, God." What a solemn and awful truth, yet how little regarded, and through what solemn, sorrowful, troublous scenes we must pass to really know it, and we can only know it as we know every other gospel truth, by heartfelt experience. Only by a proper knowledge of it do we come to Jesus. It is written in the prophets, *"They shall all be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh to me."* Blessed teacher, and blessed results. This knowledge is not a theory, not an abstract truth to be learned in the schools of science, philosophy and human thought, for who by searching can find out God? But if we have the Spirit of Christ we may know it as we are led by the Spirit, *"for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."* By this teaching and searching the apostle Paul said, *"In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing."* By it he cried, *"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"* By it also he was enabled to exultingly say, *"Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our, Lord Jesus Christ."* But *"there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"* As we follow up the narrative we will learn, as we have already learned by experience, that *"it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy;"* that no act of the creature can move him, for he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy. But there is a way that seems right unto a man, and he will pursue that way until lost, when Jesus comes to seek and to save, and He always finds, though in a waste howling wilderness and a desert land. Not only so, but he leads us about and instructs us and keeps us, too; yes, *"kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."* What exceeding great and precious promises are found in Christ, which are in him yea and amen to the glory of God.

"There is none good, but one, that is, God." As we know this we will draw nigh to God, yes, and he will draw nigh to us. As we feel and realize this in the soul we will deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Jesus. As we hunger and thirst after righteousness we are filled, and all by the blessing of God. As we grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth, there will be

a going out of self into the stature of a man in Christ, for we all, as in a glass beholding the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. In the world we shall have tribulation, because we are not of the world. But O the blessed gospel of the Son of God, and that faith which enables us to glory in tribulation, and even prefer to suffer affliction with the people of God; this teaching which is found only in the school of Christ will often lead us to say with David, *"My soul longeth, yea, even, fainteth, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God."* Yes, I had fainted unless I had believed, to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Truly when we are weak then we are strong, for he giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength, and the wonderful perfection of his strength is manifested in our weakness. *"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."* But as we proceed with the narrative it expands, showing the glorious plan of God's salvation.

About all that I really know of these precious things is how it was and is with me. I was indifferent and careless about these heavenly things until I had reached the meridian of life, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, much more concerned about the honors of this world than the honor and glory of God. At about the age of thirty-five years I began to be seriously concerned about my standing before God. Of course I had thought about it before, but only in a casual way, thinking I would attend to that when my other desires were gratified. About this time I anxiously set about it with, as I thought, some prospect of success; I fled to the law for refuge. Like the young man I inquired, *"What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"* I made an earnest effort to reform my life and to keep the commandments as written. As I traveled on, the way seemed to become more difficult; doing the best I could, I found that I had foolish and vain thoughts at times, and realized that the thought of foolishness is sin. I felt that while man looked on the outward appearance God looked on the heart. I began to feel that by the deeds of the law I could not be justified. As I felt to need justification, I struggled on with many anxious forebodings, thinking to find some way of escape. But I met One who seemed to say, *"Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."* Surely this was the way I had been trying to enter; what a sad failure! But I stumbled on, the way getting more dark and gloomy, every step more difficult;

then I seemed to meet a Man, the faithful and true witness; his testimony was: Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. I did not for one moment doubt the evidence, and the conclusion forced itself on my mind that I was altogether unholy. O the blackness, the blindness and weakness, but, blessed be his holy name, he has said: *"I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known."* My strength was all gone, but in due time, when we were without strength, Christ died for the ungodly, and as the blessed testimony came home to me it seemed to suit my case, and I trust I found Christ as the end of the law for righteousness, and surely I was a believer. I seemed to see how that God for Christ's sake could pardon such a poor sinner as I. O the joy of that moment; I clasped him in my arms, the antidote for all my infirmities, I seemed to be in his blessed presence, where is fullness of joy, and at his right hand, where are pleasures forevermore.

But where have I come now? Paul says, and I seem to realize it, *"For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,"* &c.- Ah no, *" But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and Jesus the mediator of the new covenant,"* &,e. What a blessed thing that we have been enabled to come to Jesus, the mediator of this covenant, and it a covenant of mercy. While justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne, mercy and truth go before his face. But how did we get there ? Listen to the sweet voice of the Master: *"I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."*

But about my holiness, how is it? *"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."* We were seeking salvation, it came to us, brought by the blessed Jesus. We were without strength, but in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength; and now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; power on earth to forgive sin, power over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as the Father gave him. So *"of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."*

May this blessed truth sink deep in our every heart, that we may rise up as a people praising God, ac-

cepted in the Beloved, complete in him, having neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing.

C. C. MELTON
Nebo, Illinois.

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing the Staunton River Union will be held at Canaan Primitive Baptist Church located on (State Road 844) Mount Cross Road, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in March.

The song service will begin at 10:00 A.M.

All ministers, brethren and friends of our faith and order are invited.

Elder Mark Terry, Acting Mod.
Elizabeth Wood, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held at Dan River Church the fifth Sunday in March 2003.

All who love the truth are invited to meet with us. Song service will begin at 10:00 a.m., preaching at 10:30.

Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Alan Carroll, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 2003

Nellie Dalton, VA 10.00
Hoyt Sparks, NC 2.00
Lloyd Spikes, OR 10.00
Wilma Jacks, AL 5.00
Joyce Farley, TX 5.00
Eld. Jerry Farmer, KY 5.00

PSALMS 96:4.

For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods.

OBITUARIES

JULIA H. ADA

Being full of days, Sister Julia Ada passed from this life August 12, 2002, at the age of 93 years. She was born in Delmar, Delaware, to the late Isaac and Cornelia Hearne and was preceded in death by her husband of 41 years, Robert J. Ada, in 1986. She leaves to mourn her passing two daughters, Nancy King of Seaford, Delaware; and Bette Russell of Bridgeville, Delaware; two sisters, Pearl McNelia of Salisbury, Maryland; and Ida Taylor of Delmar, Delaware; seven grandchildren; eight great grandchildren; one niece; and two nephews Sister Julia

asked for a home with Salisbury Old School Baptist Church the first Sunday in February 1973 and was baptized into its fellowship on February 18, 1973, by Elder James F. Poole. She attended faithfully as long as her health permitted.

She enjoyed those of like-precious faith staying in her home and many Saturday night meetings were held there. Sister Julia loved to kid with those she loved and make them laugh. When her health failed, it became necessary for her to be in a nursing home. She would express to visitors a strong desire to depart this life and be with the Lord. But, as with Job, ***"All the days of my appointed time will I wait til my change come."***

Her funeral service was conducted at Bounds Funeral Home in Salisbury , Maryland, by her pastor, Elder Cleo Robertson. Our loss is but her gain.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Phyllis Farlow, Church Clerk

MR. HUGHES WOODROW "WOODS" BRINKLEY

Our brother in Christ, Hughes Woodrow "Woods" Brinkley, passed from this life on September 5, 2002, at the age of 86 years. He was the 7th child of 13 born to Willie W. and Viola Carpenter Brinkley in Wake County, North Carolina. He is survived by his wife, Sister Frances Page Brinkley of Gainesville, Georgia; daughter Linda Daly and husband Jerry of Gainesville, Georgia; brothers, Burke Brinkley and wife Dorothy of Fortville, Indiana; Harvey Brinkley of Little Rock, Arkansas; Ted Brinkley of Texas; and Max Brinkley of Burkburnette, Texas; sister Laura Hall and husband Homer of Gastonia, North Carolina; three grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

Brother Woods served in the Armored Division of the U.S. Army during World War II and received a Purple Heart and two Bronze Service Stars. On one occasion, his tank was blown up by a 35-millimeter shell with shrapnel piercing his throat and neck. He was considered "missing in action" until he found his comrades. Still bleeding, he underwent field surgery. He thought much about how the Lord preserved him and brought him home again. All praise was ascribed unto the Lord who watched over him and kept him as the apple of His eye.

Brother Woods was the manager of an apartment building in Indianapolis, Indiana, for seven years. As he and one other person were moving a refrigerator up some stairs, he was on the bottom side of the refrigerator when it became loose and pushed Brother Woods down the stairs and between two studs in the wall below. Again, the Lord was with him and preserved his life for his appointed time to depart this world had not yet come.

Brother Woods asked for a home with Durham Primitive Baptist Church on August 20, 1961, and was baptized by Elder David Spangler on September 17, 1961. The church ordained him to the office of deacon on December 14, 1964. He stood firmly for what he believed and we miss him as a brother in Christ, deacon and friend. May he rest in peace until he hears that summons, ***"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."***

The funeral service was conducted by his pastor, Elder Cleo Robertson, in the Woodlawn Memorial Park Mausoleum Chapel.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Catherine Humbarger,
Church Clerk

ROBERT NEWTON DUKE

I will attempt to write an obituary of Brother Robert N. Duke, 83.

He was born in Harper's Ferry, West Virginia. His parents were Leslie Daniels Duke and Mabel Hendricks Duke. He was a graduate of Harper's Ferry High School and attended Shepherd College.

He was employed by Fairchild Aircraft Division and retired in 1976 with 32 years of service. He was gifted with many talents.

His survivors are his wife of 51 years, Mildred Ingram Duke; two sisters, Margaret Duke Ochi of Gainesville, Florida and Mary Catherine Duke Enright of Silver Springs, Maryland and several nieces and nephews.

He and Sister Duke lived In a motorhome and would spend the Winter time in southern Texas for many years. They would come back to South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia in the Spring, Summer, and Fall. They loved to attend the different Old Baptist meetings when they could.

Brother Duke came before the Church and asked for a home at the Smith River Association on Sunday, September 3, 2000.

Wanting his membership to be with the Long Branch Primitive, Baptist Church, he was baptized on September 9, 2000 by Elder Mark Terry assisted by his pastor, Elder Carl Terry. At this time Sister Mildred was recieved by relation having been a member of New Valley Church in the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, which had disbanded.

He died at his home in Pauline, South Carolina, Oct. 24, 2002. His funeral was held Saturday, Oct. 26, 2002, at Lanford - Pollard Chapel, conducted by Elders Carl Terry and Mark Terry. His body was laid to rest in the Glenn Springs Presbyterian Church Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord in the Resurrection.

Written by request of
Sister Duke by,
Elder Carl Terry

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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SONG

Whilst thee I seek, protecting Power!
Be my vain wishes stilled;
And may this consecrated hour
With better hopes be filled.

Thy love the power of tho't bestowed;
To thee my thoughts would soar;
Thy mercy o'er my life has flowed:
That mercy I adore.

In each event of life, how clear
Thy ruling hand I see!
Each blessing to my soul most dear,
Because conferred by thee.

In every joy that crowns my days,
In every pain I bear,
My heart shall find delight in praise,
Or seek relief in prayer.

When gladness wings my favored hour,
Thy love my thoughts shall fill;
Resigned, when storms of sorrow lower,
My soul shall meet thy will.

My lifted eye, without a tear,
The gathering storm shall see;
My steadfast heart shall know no fear;
That heart will rest on thee.

Helen M. Williams

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EDITORIAL

Elder J.B. Farmer

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. That in ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness to us through Jesus Christ." Eph. 2:4-7.

What does it mean to be dead in sins? What does it mean to be raised up together and to be made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus? What are the exceeding riches of His grace? These are great mysteries. We cannot know the answers unless the God of all wisdom makes them evident. May God be merciful and show us of His truth.

To be dead is to be lifeless and to have no activity, feelings or thoughts. To be dead to anything is to be without any strength concerning that thing. A blind man is dead to vision. A deaf man is dead to sound. Likewise, the natural man has no activity, feelings or thoughts and is dead concerning the spiritual realm. He is lifeless, blind, deaf and powerless to the things of the Spirit. Is not this the same death indicated when the inspired apostle said ***"O wretched man that I am. Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"*** Sin abides in the flesh and has made the flesh dead unto God. ***"The sting of death is sin."*** He is dead in sins. Anyone walking in the flesh and living for pleasure is dead while he lives.

The next principle is concerning quickening. According to the scriptures, if we be the children of God, ***"he hath quickened us together with Christ."*** What does it mean to be quickened, what or who is quickened and when did the quickening occur? To be quickened is to be

made alive. Does not the doctrine of Christ maintain that the quickening of God took place in the past? It is not true that all the children of God were made alive in Christ before this world was? They were foreknown, predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son (raised in his likeness), chosen, called, given grace, justified and glorified in Him before the world was. He stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world and all His own were in Him. They are His seed and were made alive in Him. They are bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh spiritually. He is the Rock from which they were hewn. Christ is our Life. He has been our dwelling place in all generations. This is a great mystery and who but the children of God can receive it? ***"That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past." Eccl. 3:15.***

The children of God, being quickened in Him before the world was, are given a lively or living hope in this life. They are given eyes to see, ears to hear and hearts of understanding for spiritual things while in this present world. They are made to know the true and living God and His Son which He has sent. They are given eternal life. They are alive unto God spiritually although they are dead (in the flesh) and their life is hid with Christ in God. Has He not raised us up above this world and made us to rest (sit) in His finished work of redemption?

The quickening which is to come is that of our mortal bodies. It is written ***"But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." Rom. 8:11.*** The children of God must be conformed to the image of his Son. They will receive the adoption (the redemption of our body) of children by Jesus Christ to Himself according as they have been predestinated of God. They will be made like Him and be given a glorious body like His own and will be satisfied. Will this not be the ultimate manifestation of the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Jesus Christ?

Written in love, I hope,
Elder J.B. Farmer

---

1 John 5: 7-8.

For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.

If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.

ADMONITION FROM NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH ORDER OF STRICT BAPTIST CHURCHES

What of the church members' loving responsibilities to each other? In a brief word it is to use a beautiful New Testament word which today has been spoiled-FELLOWSHIP. It is a beautiful word, but it has been perverted. It is laid upon church members, in all their actions, to promote *the fellowship* of the church (in a New Testament sense).

In other words, the members are:

To love one another, to dwell together in the love of Christ.

To keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, sacrificing everything but the truth for unity; to seek peace, and pursue it.

To sympathize with other members of the church and the congregation in their various burdens and sorrows.

To communicate to each other in spiritual things, and where needful, if there are poor members, in providential things.

To watch over one another in love.

To bear with one another's faults.

To pray for one another continually, bearing one another's burdens.

To be separate from an ungodly world.

To assemble consistently for worship, "not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is."

To have no respect of persons, showing no particular preference for one member (a friend or relative), and prejudice against another, but seeking grace to treat all as brethren in the Lord.

To contend, earnestly for the truth.

To be examples, walking worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing.

What a standard — for pastors, deacons, and members! This is the beautiful order laid down by Christ as King in Zion, and the more we approach to this beautiful order, the more Christ is glorified in the church.

PSALM 123.

Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens.

Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our god, until that he have mercy upon us.

Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us: for we are exceedingly filled with contempt.

Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud.

VOICES OF THE PAST

TRANSCRIBED AND EDITED SERMON OF ELDER JOE HAMRICK PREACHED AT SMYRNA CHURCH (LA)

II CORINTHIANS CHAPTER 3

As the brother was speaking of the well being too deep for sinners to draw that water of eternal life it brought my attention to the third chapter of II Corinthians. I believe where God sends a minister forth to preach the gospel, and He sends them forth, because we certainly find in the tenth chapter of Romans where it says, ***"And how shall they preach except they be sent? As it is written How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"***

Now if a person that has not had experiences of a child of God I like to ask you how he can go to a university or seminary and learn from man how to preach to people who have experienced the dealings of the Holy Spirit in their hearts and soul? It is impossible to do that that man has been through the fire. You don't go through the fire unless you go to the university that God creates for His ministers.

My dear ones, the apostle Paul experienced both of these. He experienced high learning from men and he was preaching that which he learned of men. But how dissatisfying to God's people and how he hated God's people for loving this wonderful doctrine. He hated them to the extent that he cast both men and women into prison. Ah, but later on when he was schooled by that heavenly Father he took an about face. Did he not? That which he thought was right he found to be nothing but trash, nothing that God's people could feast upon. So then later on he made it very plain as to where the doctrine he preached came from. He said, ***"I certify unto you, brethren that the gospel which was preached of me was not after man. For I neither received it of man neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."*** So now he had been schooled by that heavenly Father and now he was sent forth.

So then I ask you again, how can they preach except they be sent by almighty God? But remember this one thing, that where God qualifies and sends forth one minister the devil follows behind with about a hundred. Yes, I believe God's ministers are outnumbered by about a hundred to one and maybe more. It may even go up unto the thousands. Yesterday the brother was so wonderfully gifted to bring out these false prophets concerning the devil also. He has three loaves too, just the same as the three loaves that represent the true God and the true Saviour and the true Holy Spirit. The

devil is going to have three loaves and he is going to make them look just as much like the loaves of the living God as he possibly can. Ah, but there is a difference in those loaves, look at the first loaf concerning God the Father. False prophets make him a weak creature, they make him to have power in this regard to look in the future to see if man will do good or not. Then if he does he includes him and he writes his name in the Lamb' s Book of Life. But that name can fall out of the Lamb' s Book of Life. You have to do certain duties in order for it to stay there, so you see then that this god that the devil is bringing forth is a weak creature. He doesn't know the way of salvation actually.

This lord and saviour Jesus Christ that he brings forth in this second loaf, oh how weak he is. He is not a saviour that came down here and said he shall save his people from their sins; but he is a saviour that comes down here and gives everybody an opportunity. He wants you to come forth in this second loaf he wants you to give your heart to him but unless you are willing he can't do anything about it. That is the loaf that the devil puts forth, but God's people don't eat of that loaf because it is not satisfying to them.

And that third loaf, my dear ones, which is of the Holy Spirit, the people themselves take this loaf as themselves because they tell you they don't need the Holy Spirit that they are not dead and they believe exactly what the devil said back in the garden of Eden when the devil told Eve that God knoweth that in the day thou eatest thereof thou shall not surely die, but thou shall become as God knowing good and evil. So the people then that put themselves here in this third loaf, they think they are not dead, that they can accept Christ and come to Christ anytime they so desire, and that they are not dead in trespasses and in sin as the scripture teaches and our own experiences tells us at one time.

Now I want you to notice the third chapter of II Corinthians. In this chapter you notice at the beginning there were certain false prophets that needed a recommendation, a written letter, to take with them to the different churches to recom - mend them to the people. The apostle Paul is bringing this out, ***"Ye are our epistle written in our hearts , known and read of all men"*** and he says in the third verse, ***"Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, ..."***. If God sends forth His ministers and qualifies them to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ with power, not in word only, but in power and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance they don' t need a letter of recommendation because their gift is going to make way for them among God's people and that is what the apostle Paul here is speaking of. ***"Written not***

with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart. And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward; Not that we are sufficient of ourselves ...". Oh no, he knew that and I believe that if we be God called ministers we realize it too. *"Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;"* and I believe we are taught that. If a person thinks otherwise it does not take God very long to dress him down and let him know where the power comes from.

"Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death , written and engraven in stones, was glorious, ...". And I want you to pay attention here now. *"If the ministration of death ,"* This is referring to the mortal law. *"But if the ministration of death written and engraven in stones ,"* You know when Moses was with the Lord upon mount Sinai that the Lord wrote these laws with His finger upon stone known as the ten commandments. *"But if the ministration of death written and engraven in stones was glorious."*

Now look at that word glorious and keep that in mind. *"... so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away. How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, ...".* Now if the law and if the condemnation of that law be glorious, *"much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory."*

Now we come down to the eleventh verse and here is what I want us to begin to think about. *"For if that which is done away was glorious", which was the law, "much more that which remaineth is glorious ... And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished."* Now if you read back in the 34th ch. of Exodus you will find where Moses went upon the mountain of Sinai and there met God and you know of all that took place there, the thundering and lightning and the mountain quaked. Moses said that he exceedingly feared and quaked. That was showing the wrath of the law. Notice that when Moses came down off the mount his face shown with such brightness they could see his face shine from afar off. Moses came near unto them and what did they do, what did Moses do? He put a veil over his face because of the shining feature that was upon his face. Now this veil which was put upon his face seems to me was a type and

figure of the law.

Now the Israelites could not look and see the glory of Jesus Christ because of the law. They trusted in the law and they went about to try to fulfill the law. In other words there was blindness that came over their hearts. In the temple there you know the curtain that separated the Holy from the Most Holy place was hung. It was four pieces of cloth because it speaks of it as being blue and purple and scarlet and fine linen. So we have four here pulling together and making something that it would be impossible for the natural eye to penetrate. But when the Lord and Saviour came forth from the grave this curtain did what? It rent from top to bottom and it made a way then unto Almighty God.

There are many coverings over the faces and hearts of the people when they are in the unregenerate state before being born again of the Spirit of God. We have these coverings one on top of the other so that we cannot see the beauty, we cannot see the glory of Jesus Christ. We cannot see it because of the veil upon our hearts. We can't penetrate those veils when we are dead in trespasses and sins. Let's look at the veils that are over our hearts. The first veil then that I might say is over our heart is that of ignorance, yes, ignorance. What does ignorance mean? It means darkness. We are ignorant to the things of Almighty God my dear ones. We are in complete darkness. With this cover we can't see our ignorance, we can't see the way of salvation. No, no, we can't see that. We are ignorant to the truths of Almighty God. We are ignorant to the inward dealings of the Holy Spirit in turning us around and then pouring us from vessel to vessel. We know nothing of those experiences because we are ignorant of them. Because of our ignorance there are coverings over our eyes and hearts and our hearts cannot be a partaker of the things of the Spirit of God. So don't you see then that it is impossible.

And you know the Scripture says that darkness covered the whole earth and gross darkness the people. This gross darkness then is because of these veils being over our hearts and our minds that we cannot see the glory of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We can't see that my dear ones. So we have a covering over our hearts and over our souls and this is not the only covering that we have. We also have the covering of unbelief. Yes, that is there too, we can't believe in the things of God. You know the people saw Jesus when He brought forth so many wonderful miracles. He called Lazarus to come forth from the tomb. There were people there that saw this and He gave sight to the blind and many people saw and they knew he was blind from his youth and yet they saw that Jesus brought sight to this man and how He cured the lame that he could walk again

and how He gave hearing to the deaf and yet my dear ones because of unbelief they couldn't accept Him as the Messiah. You might say, well if I had been there I would have accepted Him as the great Messiah. But you wouldn't have my dear ones because it takes something more than flesh and blood to accept these things. Peter brought out what it takes to accept this when Jesus asked him whom do ye say that I am. He said thou art the Christ the Son of the living God. He said it from his heart, he said it because he believed it. There was given him faith to believe that Jesus was the Son of the living God and he brought it out in boldness. What did Jesus say to him? He said blessed art thou Simon Barjona for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee but my Father which is in heaven. So when divine revelation comes my dear ones and when that old belief is carried away, it is carried away by the power of God for as long as it is there we can't believe upon Jesus Christ. We might think we do but we believe on that kind of Christ that is in that second loaf that the devil puts there. Christ that wants to do things, that's an antichrist not the real Christ. We might be given to believe in an antichrist if we are given any belief at all. If we are not given to believe in the real Christ then it has to be an antichrist that we are given to believe in. There are coverings then of ignorance and of unbelief and of self-righteousness. Oh, that covering of self-righteousness is something is it not? Oh how we cling to our own self-righteousness, how we cling to it as long as we possibly can. That is a part of this old flesh and we don't want to give it up because the flesh produces self-righteousness and we are going to cling on to it as long as we possibly can. People will fight for it because that is all they have. This self-righteousness enables them to do things that would assure them of their eternal salvation. So they are not going to get rid of it. This old self-righteousness has to be torn away. When it is there it acts as a covering, it acts as covering that we cannot see the glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

There also is pride. Pride is a covering that covers us up. You might not be able to point to pride as a covering. I believe we have pride toward many things that we do not want to cut loose from. So it takes the power of Almighty God. And there is enmity against God and there is the enmity against the truth of God. It is such strong enmity in our hearts and this is a covering over our eyes and over our hearts that we cannot penetrate the glorious doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We can't do it and we can't believe on it. I don't care how hard we might try, we can't believe from the heart the true doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ not when the scripture says, ***"the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the***

law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."

So don't you see how these people are; yet everybody is in this state including God's people my dear ones. They are in this state and they have all these coverings over them and how in this world can you penetrate those coverings. You can't do it, it is absolutely impossible. Don't you see you can no more do it than you can go down and get water out of this deep well without anything to get it with. You just simply can not do it because my dear ones it is hidden from you. Gross darkness has covered His people so they are in this ignorance and they are in this darkness. But you know when it comes time and for each of God's children there is going to be a time the Holy Spirit begins to blow upon a little of this. He blows a little corner off here. He blows a little corner of this covering off.

You know the Holy Spirit is likened unto the wind. For it says, *"The wind bloweth where it listeth , and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell from whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is everyone that is born of the Spirit."*

So that when that wind begins to blow on all these old coverings over our hearts and over our minds and it blows off a little bit of corner here do you know what' s going to happen then? Oh, you begin to see a little bit through this hole. You don't see the fullness of it. No, you don' t see that at all but you see just enough to bring a little fear into your heart, a little fear into your soul. This covering had everything hid and you believed in this self-righteousness and you had confidence in the flesh but now you have just enough light here to shine in that you began to doubt; you began to wonder am I mistaken. You had plenty confidence at one time in yourself but now you began to wonder my dear ones. Your confidence began to fade because the fear starts coming into your heart and into your soul, a fear that you might not be right, a fear that you might be on the wrong track, my dear ones. You hate to give it up and you are going to stay with it just as long as you can. But I'll tell you the bigger that hole becomes and the more you are given to see the more you are going to have this fear.

You know this fear is a wonderful thing. Yes, it's a wonderful thing to have fear because scripture speaks of it as the beginning of knowledge. So this fear then gives you doubts about all these other things you had so much confidence in at one time. So this fear is the beginning of knowledge that these things aren't perfect. Now you begin to see them come down just a little bit. Has this been your experience along this line that this fear began to creep into your heart and soul and cause you some concern? Oh you had a great desire to read

more and find out more because you weren't safe any longer with your refuge that you felt you were riding to highest of heavens on. It was beginning to crumble underneath you just a little bit. You didn't feel safe upon it any more so my dear ones you began to look and began to read and you began to search and you began to want to hear more and more concerning the things of Almighty God.

Now I want to bring in the glory of these two ministrations here. Concerning the first one it says, ***"Moses for the glory of his countenance ; which glory was to be done away:... For even that which was made glorious ..."*** So we see one glory here being done away with to pave the way for another which is far more glorious. So we see the law here, we see the law coming in and why was the law pronounced to be glorious? Because my dear ones it did something that was absolutely necessary to take place in your heart and soul. That's the reason it is glorious and it is glorious because it came from Almighty God and it is holy. It was a divine law but my dear ones when it began to come into your heart and soul it did something to you. Oh it wasn't glorious to you but it was a glorious thing for you because it did something for you that was absolutely necessary in the experiences of a child of God. And what is that my dear ones? It brought you down. The apostle Paul said I was alive once without the law. Oh yes, he went about, he did not have any worries but he said when the commandment came sin revived and I died and I tell you my dear ones right here when the Holy Spirit begins to blow here upon your heart then the fear comes in. You see God's just and holy law. You see God' s holy law, ***"thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength ...and Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself ."*** You realize that you can't do this. No, you can't do it because you can't love God with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind because if your heart is like mine it is ninety-five percent of the time upon the things of this world away from the things of God. How in this world can you fulfill that law? You can't do it ; it's impossible. What did James say concerning this? He says, ***"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all,"*** What does the law say to you? It curses you, does it not? It is the ministration of death and condemnation.

It is a fiery law and the glory part of it is that it brings you down to see yourself as you actually are. It brings you down to nothing; it strips you of everything you had confidence in toward your own salvation and it leaves you naked and empty handed at the foot of Jesus Christ. You say if it is not by grace then I

am lost and I am justly lost because I know my sins. When Jesus puts the sheep on His right hand and the goats on His left hand and says go ye cursed into everlasting punishment prepared for the devil and his angels, I can see myself there on His left hand because I am guilty of everything that anybody could be guilty of. I am as the apostle Paul said, the chief of sinners. So that' s the way you feel and you feel like if God' s justice would rain down upon your head it would send you to the very depths of hell. But there is something else that is pointed out here, Now that the veil is going to be taken off your face and you are going to see the glory that's in Jesus Christ. Yes, that's where the glory is for God's people. It is in Jesus Christ. We must be brought down to nothing in ourselves first before we can see the glory in Jesus Christ, When the veil is taken off our face, it will not be all taken off, it will be taken enough off that we will see as through a glass darkened. We can see the glory of Jesus Christ to the extent that we realize if we have any salvation that it is going to be in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Then isn't that a wonderful thing that the Holy Spirit has come along and He has paved the way for it says you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sin. Yes, from whom He has blown these coverings away who were completely covered in unbelief, ignorance, darkness, in pride, in self-righteousness and all these coverings that were over your hearts.

Bless be unto God that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ came down here upon earth to pay the price for His people. We find in Matthew where it says when the angel was speaking to Joseph *"...in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."* And you know He did not come to call the righteous but He came to call sinners and those are the ones that feel to be sinners and the others feel to be righteous. If we did not have these coverings blown away from us by the power of the Holy Spirit we would feel to be righteous. We would have confidence in our own self-righteousness. We would have confidence in everything; but when the Holy Spirit blows them away we are those sinners and felt to be sinners and those are the ones that Jesus Christ came down here to save. He came not to call the righteous but came to call sinners unto His glorious kingdom. He does everything for poor unworthy sinners who are made to feel themselves as sinners and not just to speak as being sinners but to feel themselves as being sinners. That's what counts my dear ones and I trust that each and everyone of us here have

been made to feel ourselves as poor unworthy sinners, Sick of ourselves, sick of our sins, sick of ourselves from the crown of our heads to the soles of our feet as Job was sick with sores.

All those sores represented sins and we feel our sins from the crown of our heads to the very soles of our feet but we have a great physician. Yes, He came not to minister unto the whole but to the sick. Those that are sick of themselves, those that are sick of their sins, those that are sick of themselves because they cannot do the things they would but seem to get around to doing those things that they hate. They are sick of these things but remember, Jesus came down to minister unto the sick and not to the whole. He didn't come to minister to the self-righteous. He didn't come to those still buried in unbelief He didn't come to minister unto those. He came to minister unto the sick and those that are heavy laden, those that feel the burden of their own sins because did not He say, come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Yes, you have rest in Christ Jesus. There is no rest in this world for you. No, there is no rest for one of His little ones passing through this world because this world is nothing but a wilderness for God's people. It is a desert land. For that which is born of the Spirit of God there is nothing pleasing to it. As far as the old flesh is concerned yes, it is still pleasing to the old flesh. But, thanks be unto God we are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be the Spirit of God dwelleth in us.

I would like to turn for just a moment to the seventh chapter of Romans and read just a verse or two. It is wonderful not to be under this law. Ye are no longer under the law. Why, because Jesus Christ fulfilled the law for His people. Now I want you to notice the first verse of chapter seven of Romans. The apostle Paul is speaking here, ***"Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,)"***. Who is it that knows the law? The ones that the law comes to them and acts as a schoolmaster to teach them of their evil condition; to act as a schoolmaster to bring them unto Christ. Yes, that's the glory of the law, but if the law has any glory in it, it is to bring us down to nothing and the greatest glory of all is having a way unto salvation where Jesus says ***"... I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me."*** He is that way, don't you see, that' s why this glory here outshines the glory of the other. The letter killeth but the spirit giveth life. The law puts you in prison but the gospel opens the doors of the prison and frees you. Yes, it frees you from being in bondage to that law. That is why there is so much more glory pronounced in the gospel by the apostle Paul than in the glory of the law. ***"Know ye not brethren, (for I speak to them that know the***

law,)". Those that have had some experience of being brought down dead inwardly speaking. *"... I speak to them that know the law, how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?"* As long as we have these curtains of unbelief, self-righteousness, and ignorance, and all those things before us we know nothing about the law. But when the Holy Spirit begins to blow there and fear comes into our hearts and knowledge of the law begins to come into our hearts and souls that we can't fulfill it, then we know something about the law in that respect. *"For the woman which hath an husband is bound,"* now this is spiritually speaking and not naturally speaking,

"For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth," now what do we mean here by husband, in a figurative sense we are married to the law. The law is our first husband. We come under the law. We are married to that law and as long as we remain married to that law it is going to curse us and we are going to everlasting hell. How is the way to become separated from that law? It is this death I have just been speaking of. We must die under this law, just as Jesus died under the law. We find scripture saying when the fullness of time had come God sent forth His son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. Jesus was made under the law then, He experienced the killing letter and we must experience it if we be in Christ Jesus, we must experience that death to some degree too. It is not a natural death I am speaking of but it is a death to those things that we once believed in and once cherished. We must die to those things. We must be brought down inwardly to nothing, unable to do anything. We must be brought down as the apostle Paul said, Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death. This is the death I am speaking of. But let me tell you, we cannot go below God's everlasting hands. We can't go below His everlasting arms. We think that we go low, low but His arms are always there to lift us up, if we be cast down we are lifted up again by Almighty God.

"So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress:" You know these people that claim they belong to Jesus Christ and have never been killed by the law. What is that? That is adultery. You have two husbands; you have adultery. Let me tell you that is spiritual adultery. Such a one will never enter into heaven. *"But if her husband be dead then she is free from that law so that she is no adulteress, though she be*

married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another." We have become dead to the law by the body of Christ that we should be married to another even to Him who is raised from the dead, Jesus Christ, that we should bring forth fruits unto God.

Let's look now at the glory as it is in Christ Jesus. Oh what a wonderful glory that is. We have been under this law and been under sin and have seen glory in it, yes there was glory in it to bring us to our senses you might say. But the glory now that shined on Moses' face and the veil has been taken away by the Holy Spirit to the extent now that we can see the glory of Christ and then we say Jesus Christ, it is all Jesus Christ. All my hope is in Jesus Christ, a risen Saviour. That's what shines to us, that risen Saviour. He's the one that shines. He's the one we look to and not to any thing else. Our hope is in a risen Saviour. If Jesus had remained dead in the tomb, how cut off our hope would be, as the apostle Paul said, ***"If in this life only we have hope in Christ we would be of all men most miserable."*** But our hope is in a risen Saviour and our hope goes on with Him into glory. This second glory here as the apostle Paul is speaking about in this third chapter oh how it does outshine the first glory. They are both important, they are both necessary, but oh how it excels that of the first glory. May God bless the truth and pardon any error.

Elder Joe Hamrick

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2 CORINTHIANS 6: 16.

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

THE WIND

"The wind bloweth where it listesth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, whither it goeth: so is every one born of the Spirit." (John 3:8)

These two things are produced by the Lord. Not the first created thing had the least part of these two productions being carried or developed to full fruition. Furthermore each and everyone from the first one in the pristine morning of time, have, if they have, come into the kingdom of heaven under just such trying cirumstances as are described here by our Saviour. That is not the construction that I put on what He said, but it is the experience that I hoped to have passed through at the time.

That early experience was something terrible to endure, and it

is still that way. I know that what the Bible says does not mean anything to anyone unless they have (and are) experiencing the things described. Therefore, I do not appeal (I do not preach nor write to those that have a vain philosophy) to those that have not, nor do not experience the power set forth by the Saviour's description of the New Birth.

Although the learned Saul had never bowed the knee to anyone, nor to anybody, yet, I have never, in all of my reading, come across a man as helpless and ignorant as he had shown himself to be on the Damascus road. While we are at this particular place in the travel of one who has come under the experience and power of this wind, let me go a step further and say that anyone that leaves the spot where this wind has blown, that comes away knowing where it came from and what it is about, and what they are to do, one and all of them are mistaken about the Lord having demonstrated His power in their life.

Now I did not say that there wasn't a voice or a thunder or some other demonstration of great affairs. Many such occurrences happen which get a lot of attention, but when the dust has settled the Lord was not in any of them . Moreover, some of the time there is not a voice from outside the hearer. Only his or her imagination is using them. In what I desire to call your attention to, each and everyone is brought into the presence of this devastating storm, and each one is brought into the scene when everything is yielding to this gigantic wind they feel the tremors that involuntarily pass through them; they bow down to great buildings that they have built to house their goods, and these are all laid waste about them; they feel the surge of the mighty power within and around them, Yes, they are aware that their house has been wrecked for all time to come. But they fail to learn one thing that multiplied tens of thousands are learning every time that a breeze rises, to wit, they know where it comes from, and, as they arise, and pick up the fragments, they soon have still greater blueprints for better barns and storehouses in which to store their goods.

Not so with the true Israelite, the true child of God. He or she leaves that stormy ground in a lot worse state than when the wind arose. They know something happened to them that had never occurred before, but they spend the balance of their days in amazement and in wonder. What did happen to me? Where did it come from? Where did it go? Did it come from God or did it come from my depraved mind?

This was indeed the greatest wind to ever blow. It does not leave you with a lot of goods intact. It spoils all of that which you laid up. It does not take this great spoil away. You have to live with the spoiling goods (they get worse as time goes on), and you need not think

you are going to find out where the wind came from, neither are you going to find out where it goes. There is not a shred of conditionalism that you can perform and get some relief. You will never get any while you live. For you see a Stronger Man than you has come on the scene and has from the start routed you. He spoils your goods and then binds you. People talk about that they are free to perform this and that and get blessings, or to leave off this and that and miss them. That is not true. When this wind arises and blows itself out it leaves everyone a poor helpless sinner not knowing anything as he or she ought. They do not know where the storm comes from much less do they know whether it is of God or not.

Once again I would urge that where this wind (Spirit) has blown there is not one that knows whether it is God that has dealt with them or not. Instead of all of those born of the Spirit being godly, they do not any of them know whether they are godly or not. Thus, as I leave this phase of the subject, I would kindly ask, have you overcome this wind, or has it overcome you?

Now let us follow the wind and the storm. Let us see if we ever do get to where we can master this Spirit. In order for us to have power to save ourselves, we must have power over the Spirit. Do we have this? Have we the ability to retain the Spirit? If so , we must also have the will to do so. Have we got that power? The question is: Are we able to stay in the Spirit or to retain that Spirit? If there Is a passage of Scripture that declares that wonderful fact, certainly, I desire to find it. I find to the contrary. There cannot be any mistake about two things. Even though there is right much in writing and more still of loud talking that any child of God can walk in the Spirit at will, yet the wise man declared that no man could retain the Spirit anymore than he could retain life in the day of death. It is passing strange that those professing to be saved by the grace of God, yet boldly and blindly declared that if we just would do it that we can walk in the Spirit at all times. Or have I misunderstood you — do you mean to suggest that you can save yourself whether in or out of the Spirit?

All of the great blessings in nature are also spiritual gifts. Ever so many times, in divers manners, the written word is teaming with references about the wind in the travels and experiences of those who are of the members of the kingdom of heaven. As far as the references to the wind it always finds the poor sinner at its mercy. At this period in our dealing with the subject, let us remember that God is the direct and immediate cause of there being any natural wind. Of course, if you have some kind of a book that gives a source of wind in a nature other than our wise and gracious Creator, you get all out of it that you can, but

for those who learned in the outset of their experience that it blows where it listeth, and that is in keeping with what our heavenly Father does, we that hope in Him will continue to believe that He holds it in His fists, and thus that every cooling breeze from the south, as well as every frigid blast out of icy lands, together with every tornadic wind that ever hit Kansas came as a result of Him opening His fists. If those that can master the winds will be so kind as to tell us where they find that fact in the Bible, we will appreciate it so much. But I think that they have an insurmountable problem to begin with for we are all reminded that the wind blows where it listeth, which is to say that it blows where it pleases and in relation to it blowing where it pleases, we are likewise reminded that God holds it in His fists, and that not only does that wind blow where God pleases for it to blow, both the wind of the Spirit and that in nature, but likewise that bound the waters in a garment that He has established all the ends of the earth, therefore, not only is every item of nature bounded, but that each time any of these natural gifts are spiritualized that in each case the Spirit is settled, fixed, arranged so definitely that happen so or maybe so or conditionality just cannot be found in the Bible concerning them by the children of God.

The people of God went down to sea to do business in great waters and on good ships. The wind arose, a storm was sent. The wind became quite rough. They could not master their vessels. They were tossed to and fro. About the time that they thought the storm was abating, lo and behold, the wind tossed them to and fro. Every last one of them lost their wits.

A man and a woman that has lost their wits is not able to rescue themselves, to save themselves. It is useless for you to write me that you are able to maintain your wits at all times. If you have ever been to sea, you have, and you didn't know what to do, and like these that I am describing, you would have been lost had not He that sent the storm caused it to abate. Salvation is of the Lord.

Jonah determined not to go to Nineveh. God determined that he go.

He used what he had to keep from going, but he did not have the power to keep from going when the storm broke in its fury on him. At that time he said, even declared, that salvation was of the Lord. Both the wind of the Spirit, and the natural wind were effective in making Jonah renounce all subterfuges and all dodgeings of the flesh and to say without reservation that salvation comes from the Lord.

In the 148th Psalm we have a long list of things that fulfil the word of the Lord. If the Lord spares my unprofitable life, I may at a future date touch upon all of these things, but right now I am delighted to call your attention to stormy winds ful-

filling His word. and His word in every way that it is used in the Bible is used for the mutual benefit of His children these stormy winds are kept harnessed in the strong hands of the Lord and will never blow in a way to destroy their hope, their heritage, their home beyond this travail.

If I am not mistaken, I have seen and felt the tossing of the wind of the Spirit. I have felt, as I hope, the bending down of every plant that I have planted. I have known that a power greater than I was laying waste what I had thought to have done. I did not know then, as I would have liked to have known where the wind was from. I have sought time after time that He in whom I sometimes am given a faint hope that it was He at the helm, but that this has been nearly sixty years ago. and my testimony today is the same that it was that day of yore. I do not know as I would like to know that it was the Spirit of the Lord. If I got brave and said that I did know I would then be subjected to the same rebuke that is due all these that have withstood the Spirit and the wind in salvation.

But I write in hope. I do hope that I have been to sea, and that the storm has been furious, and that I, together with all of those whose hope of salvation now and hereafter is in the hands of the Mariner that rests in His own love (Zeph. 3:17), but is ever kind and merciful to the cry of His sea and wind tossed trophies of His covenant, and that he rebukes the wind and the waves and out of His fulness gives them to rest also in His redeeming love.

Elder W.D. Griffin

WASHING OF REGENERATION.

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved US, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost."-Titus iii. 5.

NEW VERNON, N.Y., August 2, 1841.

The salvation of Paul and Titus is the same salvation that embraces the whole election of grace; for there is but one method of salvation brought to light in the gospel. ***"Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Acts iv. 12.*** We therefore understand the salvation spoken of in this text in its application to all the redeemed of the Lord. The declarations of this scripture are as follows: first, God hath saved us—his people; second, that salvation is not according to or in consequence of any works of righteousness by us performed; but thirdly, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, and all in accordance with the sovereign mercy of God.

Could we, with old Jonah, take a voyage to the secret channels of

the mighty deep, and like him feel ourselves pursued by the sovereign hand of the omniscient God, on account of our rebellion against him, and, with that disobedient, peevish prophet be locked up in the *belly of hell* for three days and three nights, until we were perfectly convinced, as he was, of our helplessness, our total inability to deliver ourselves from our deplorable condition, we incline to the opinion that we would say, as he said, "Salvation is of the Lord;" and with Peter, as above cited, "Neither is there salvation in any other."By this sweeping declaration, however, the fallacy of all the popular institutions of the day, and of all other days, as having in view the salvation of the world, is laid bare. All such pretensions are therefore deceptive, hypocritical and vain; as

"None but Jesus, none but Jesus,
Can do helpless sinners good."

"He saved us." In the past tense. The work is done ; the salvation of God's people is complete. ***"He hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."-2 Tim. i. 9.*** Many there are in these days of delusion and anti-christian rant, who say, ***"Truly the Lord saves us; there is salvation nowhere else; but"***–but what? ***"God works by the use of means. We are not machines; we must use the means of grace; we must give up our hearts to God; we must sit on an anxious bench; or we must do something else, and then we must say that God has done it."*** That must be, at best, but a lying system which requires that we should tell lies even in what is called *getting religion,* and it must certainly be a lie, if we have done anything in the work of salvation, to say that God has done it all.

But while we are upon this point, let us inquire a moment into New School consistency. They tell us there is something for the sinner to do; if we wait for God to work we shall die in our sins; they ridicule the doctrine of man's entire impotency and helpless condition, and command him to be up and doing; they tell him that the provisions of the gospel are such that if any sinner chooses he can secure an interest in the salvation of the Lord. With this theory for their platform, they hold protracted meetings, erect anxious benches, and perform many wonderful feats, and declare to the unregenerate that God is now offering them salvation, is knocking at the door of their hearts, wooing and beseeching them to comply with the terms of the gospel. They tell sinners, in so many words, if they will do these things they shall be saved; but if they refuse, they shall be damned. Suppose the sinner should be kind enough to consent to be

saved, and to perform the prerequisites as instructed by these teachers, if by these means they obtain salvation, they are saved according to their works. These works are either works of righteousness or works of unrighteousness; if of righteousness, they cannot contribute towards the salvation of those by whom they are performed; and if of unrighteousness, they are sinful, and can only expose their performers to the curses of the law. Not by works of righteousness which we have done; and as in the parallel, ***"Not according to our works,"*** and again, ***"Not of works, lest any man should boast; not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."- Eph. ii. 8, 9.*** If by grace, it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace. The man who, in opposition to this array of scriptural testimony, would dare proclaim salvation as depending in part or entirely on works, whether good or bad, is an enemy to God and a base deceiver. Of all such men it is written, ***"Their judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."***

Having shown, negatively, that salvation is not according to our works, and consequently that the doctrine of all Arminian work-mongers is false, we pause to notice how this salvation is brought home experimentally to the heirs of promise. ***"By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost; and according to his mercy."*** By the *washing of regeneration* we understand the cleansing operation of the Holy Spirit in the work of regeneration. We have attempted to show, when dwelling on the subject of regeneration, that as the effect of being quickened into life we are brought to realize ourselves vile and polluted, and; as no unclean thing can enter the kingdom of God, we require to be washed; and as no blood of goats, or other Jewish sacrifices, can cleanse from sin, we require a washing of far superior efficacy. Connected with regeneration there is a fountain opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and uncleanness; and when the sinner is brought, by the Spirit, to the fountain of that blood, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel, he finds that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin; his heart is sprinkled from an evil conscience, and his body is prepared to be washed in pure water. The *renewing of the Holy Ghost* is that work by which a new principle is implanted, an incorruptible seed by which old things are passed away, and all things become new. And this work of the Spirit is wrought in the saints in accordance with a fixed and immutable standard. ***"According to his mercy, not according to our works:"*** But brother Fox may inquire concerning the character of this standard. His mercy it is sovereign. ***"For he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and***

whom he will he hardeneth." Such is the mercy of God, sovereign, discriminating, immutable, and his own. It is according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

"Wherefore gird up the loins of you mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." – 1 Peter i. 13.

Hope chiefly regards "the end"; for that is "better than the beginning," the crowning consummation of all that faith believes, hope expects, and love enjoys. But through what dark and gloomy seasons has hope often to look before this end comes, being sometimes sunk so low as almost to despair even of life! How it has in these low spots to muster all its evidences, look back to this and that Ebenezer, this and that hill Mizar, this and that deliverance, manifestation, and blessing; how it has to hang upon the word of promise, cry out for help, and that mightily, as if at its last breath, and hope against hope in the very face of unbelief, infidelity, and despair. An end must come to all our struggles, trials, exercises, afflictions, and conflicts. We shall not be always struggling and fighting with a body of sin and death. We shall not be always exposed to snares and temptations spread in our path by sin and Satan, so as hardly to escape falling by them as if by the very skin of our teeth. Every day reminds us with warning voice that an end must come. But now comes the question, and often a very anxious question it is, What will that end be? Here hope comes in to sustain and support the soul, enabling it to look forward, that it may prove to be a hope that maketh not ashamed, a good hope through grace, and a hope of such a complete and enduring nature that the end may prove it was a grace of the Holy Spirit, and, as such, stamped with his own perfecting power.

Elder J. C. Philpot

MEETINGS

NOTICE

Pleasant Hope Church, near Bevins, TX., will no longer meet on the fourth Saturday of each month. We will, the Lord willing, continue to meet at 10:30 AM on the fourth Sunday of each month. Please come and meet with us.

Elder Truman Bradshaw
Church Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 2003

Mrs. Ira Bell, VA	5.00
Gayle Phillips, AL	5.00
Malcolm Nichols, TN	5.00
Cora Cantrell, TN	5.00
Inez Gearner, TX	2.00
P. T. Phillips, VA	5.00
Millard Sizemore, WV	5.00
Phillis Stroud, VA	5.00

PSALMS 26:7-8.

The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

The LORD is their strength, and he is the saving strength of his anointed.

OBITUARIES

JOHN HENRY COKER

It is with a feeling of selfish sadness that I attempt to write the obituary of our dear brother in Christ, John H. Coker. Brother Coker had been a soldier in the church from the time I first knew him, approximately fifty years. Unworthy and insufficiently capable to write the things I would like, I'll make a feeble attempt to fulfill that which has been requested of me.

Brother Coker united with the Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church in Tarboro, NC on April 30,1949, ordained as a deacon on June 3,1950 and served the church well until his death. After the demise of the last male member of Old Sparta Church, Brother Coker was called to serve that church in the capacity of acting deacon. He gave them the same dedication that he extended to his home church. He was faithful to his duties and was blessed with a dedicated family who fully supported him in his duties as one who was called to serve. As one called to serve, so was his family who was always at his side. More than once, commenting to him how blessed he was to have a family so compatible to his calling, he always said, "They have sure been good to me, but I'm so unworthy."

Brother Coker enjoyed the church wherever he went, but having the brethren in his own home was a constant longing. When departing the company he was in, he would always say, "Don't forget Tarboro first weekend." Many of the brethren and friends will miss him when they continue to visit in his home. In his last few years his health had failed him to the extent that he sat quietly while his guests enjoyed conversation and fellowship. You might think he was asleep in his chair until someone mentioned the fact, but he was very much awake and would let you know he was enjoying all that was going on.

He and his family have, for fifty years, cared for the association in such a special way. Taking care of company overnight/s was always done in such a caring way. I'm sure we have many readers who will vouch for that and have experienced the good times in his home.

He was a man of few words, always softly spoken, but never speaking unkindly about anyone. Even through his last illness he did not complain about his afflictions, but his family said he always told them he just wanted to go home. We have reasons to believe Brother John Coker has gone home and I feel we should be rejoicing for him.

He was married to the former Margaret Blow on June 24, 1945, and to this union were born five attentive children: John H. Coker, Jr. (Ann) of Greenville, NC; Rebecca Coker, Sister Naomi Coker, Sallie C. Denny (Ricky); and Frances C. Liverman (Stanley) all of Tarboro. Other survivors included sisters, Nancy Trevathan and Ella Gallop; and grandchildren, Tracy, Julie, Kristy, Chad, Stan, and Ashley. He was preceeded in death by several sibilings, one who was known throughout the Primitive Baptist ranks, Elder Leslie Coker.

Brother Coker's funeral was conducted at Carlisle Funeral Home by Elders Joe Sawyer and Harold Pittman who spoke befitting words in his behalf. Interment was at Greenwood Cemetery, Tarboro, NC. A throng of brethren and friends filled the space under two tents and were yet surrounded by those who could not gather under shelter, but stood in the quietness of the cloudy sky that seemed to be weeping for those of us left behind.

J. Carroll Williams

SISTER EVELYN R. PRATT

Sister Evelyn R. Pratt was in every respect a lady and a devoted wife, mother, and grandmother. One of the greatest things about her was that she was a devoted lover of the truth. Evelyn loved the Old Baptist with all her heart. She also enjoyed entertaining in her home for as long as she was able. On numerous occasions, Evelyn would visit churches in other areas, and she enjoyed the fellowship of all those that knew her.

On September 3, 1950, sister Evelyn was baptized into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church, where she remained devoted for 53 years. Evelyn was called to rest on December 29, 2002. She was married to Charles Pratt for 58 years. Her pastor was Elder Gene Lupton.

Our loss is her eternal gain.

Submitted respectfully, by
one who loved her as a
sister and a wife,
Bro. Charles Pratt

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

Breathe from the gentle south, O Lord,
And cheer me from the North;
Blow on the treasures of thy word,
And call the spices forth!

I wish, thou knowest, to be resigned,
And wait with patient hope;
But hope delayed fatigues the mind,
And drinks the spirits up.

Help me to reach the distant goal;
Confirm my feeble knee,
Pity the sickness of a soul
That faints for love of thee.

Cold as I feel this heart of mine,
Yet since I feel it so,
It yields some hope of life divine,
Within, however low.

I seem forsaken and alone,
I hear the lion roar,
And every door is shut but one,
And that is mercy's door.

There, till the dear Deliverer come,
I'll wait with humble prayer;
And when he calls his exile home,
The Lord shall find me there.

Newton

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EDITORIAL

Elder R. H. Campbell

But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, That according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. (1 Cor 1:30-31)

The above scripture is the all inclusive formula that the man, as he is in the flesh, needs to make manifest that he is one of the elect of the heavenly king, and it is all of the sovereign work of God, for it's accomplishment. It is all treasured in Christ, and sovereignly bestowed upon the chosen vessels that were prepared unto glory; before the foundation of the world, that they should shew forth the praises of him who hath called them out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of the kingdom of God. This is the only way that the natural man can become a new creature in Christ: Christ must have been made all of these things unto him and then they become, as Christ, unto the Father. Then it says, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord; not by the efforts of man, nor wisdom, nor the might of man, but in the Lord. These are the words of the apostle Paul, in the gospel day, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, proclaiming that salvation is all of the Lord, and that all of the glory pertaining thereto belongs unto Him. Who is better qualified to declare this than this servant of the Lord? the apostle Paul. who said, *(1 Tim 1:16) "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."* He is but declaring the way in which man is justified before a just and holy God, not of himself, but of Christ first, last and always.

Jeremiah declared the same truth this way, *(Jer 9:23-24) "Thus*

saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." These truths are applicable, under the law, and under grace, although the administration of them may be different, under the two covenants, as Jesus described in the sermon on the mount. Jesus said, the law says, ***"Thou shalt not commit adultery, but I say unto you any man that looks on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."*** and Jesus said, on another occasion, ***(1 Cor 12:5) "And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord."*** The law was a type, or shadow of things to come, and the events occurring in the gospel day is the substance of those things which were prophesied under the law, and are but being made manifest, under the grace covenant, in the birth, life, death and resurrection of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ.

The Mosaical law was written on tables of stone and were to the natural man, in his own worldly language, which can be understood by the all men. The gospel is to the spiritual man, the new creature in Christ, and it is in that pure language, on the fleshly tables of his heart, that language of which Zephaniah spoke in, ***(Jer 3:9) "For then will I turn to the people a pure language that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."*** This is the language in which the gospel is preached, not in words of the wisdom of this world, but, rather in this pure language, which can only be discerned by those who have been born again. This is that, which is foolishness to the world, but to them that are saved, it is the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ***(1Cor 1:21) "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."***

The natural man's normal response to this message, in the wisdom of the world, is usually in this manner, ***"Have you ever heard such foolishness in your life? just imagine anyone preaching and believing in the absolute predestination of all things from before the foundation of the world. That would not be fair, it would not be right for everything to be already determined before we were even born, and had any input into the equation, no choice in the matter whatsoever; God loves every body alike and his***

mercy is available to all that will accept him as their personal savior, and obey him, for he wants everyone to believe in him; that spurious doctrine would not give everyone an equal opportunity." Now wait a minute, I don't find anywhere in the scriptures where the plan of salvation is described as a democratic process, with equal rights unto all, yet it is written that by the preaching of this very foolishness (to the man in nature) that God chose to save them that believe. He will save the ones to whom the scriptures are sent, without the loss of one; and they are the only ones who have been given eyes to see, ears to hear and a heart to really understand the preaching of these truths.

On one occasion, one asked Jesus this question, ***(John 14:22) "Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?"*** and Jesus's response was, (John 14:26) "But the comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." This is how the distinction is made, the Holy Ghost teaches, those who are his sheep, the doctrine that Jesus taught his disciples, while he was here on earth. Jesus, speaking of this comforter, which is the Holy Ghost said, ***(John 16:15) "All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you."*** Now, the world hears the words, but they do not understand the doctrine, as we said above, the truth can only be understood by those that have been quickened, by the Spirit, and made a new creature in Christ. Only those that have been born again, have the ability of discerning these truths.

There is no contradiction between the various scriptures, each agrees with and supports all others, but the natural man sometimes uses phrases and parts of sentences to support what he believes in the heart. For instance, take, (John 3:16) this is only one verse in a dialogue of many verses, between Jesus and Nicodemus, and from the world's understanding of the truth of this verse, it does not agree with (vs, 3) which says, ***"ye must be born again".*** For these two statements to be reconciled, the "whosoever" in (vs 16) must apply to the same ones that are born again, (vs 3) and the world does not believe this. Furthermore, John, the same author of both of these verses, proves this connection by his tying both together in one statement, ***(1 John 5:1) "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him."***

Many times, someone will read a verse of scripture and use it to support their belief, evidently, never

realizing that one verse is not the whole sentence, or statement that was made on the subject. Example; *(John 1:11-13) "He came to his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:"* I have heard this scripture quoted many times to support the theory that all you have to do is receive him, or accept him, and you become one of the sons of God. This is only part of the statement made by John; the qualifying portion of the text is (vs 13) which says, *"Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."* Not only this, but each verse of scripture must be read in context with all that is said on the subject, and also there must be consideration given to who's talking, who they are talking to, and what they are talking about. All scriptures agree, whether written by the prophets under the law, or the apostles in the gospel dispensation. They all must of necessity, agree, because they are all inspired by the same source, which is the wisdom of god.

Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom: This is not the wisdom that man is born with, in nature; because that wisdom is the one by which they know not God. The preaching of the cross, and all of the other basic points of doctrine is to the natural man, foolishness. The apostle Paul said, regarding his preaching, *(I Cor 2:1-4) "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of Power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."* The world contends that if you get a proper education, apply yourself, are sincere in your efforts and utilize the wisdom which all men possess, you can understand the scriptures, make your decision, and come to know God. This is directly contrary to the word of god, which states that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, and this means, any man, regardless of how much education and worldly wisdom he may possess.

(I Cor 2:9-10) "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God." The apostle Paul was of above the average intelligence, was

a man of authority in the Jewish religion of that day, but, he did not claim this as a reason for his conversion. He related his experience in the Jewish religion on one occasion, and then he said simply, *(Gal 1-15-17) "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me: but I went into Arabia, and returned unto Damascus."* He did not need to confer with those who were apostles before him, because, he preached his experience, that which had been given him, and this will be true of all God called ministers, they will rely on what has been revealed unto them rather than on hearsay evidence from someone else. He said that he did not learn it of man, neither was he taught it of man, but by revelation of Jesus Christ to him personally, and therefore this is what he preached.

Now, this having been established, how can anyone, using the scriptures, claim that they can worship him whom they have never seen, nor heard spiritually, and that they can do it anytime they choose at their own volition. Surely they have read the scripture that says they must be born again, to be active in the spiritual realm, and this means that something must be done for them, and not by them. To say otherwise but proves their ignorance of God, and his ways, as Jesus told some on one occasion, *"ye do err, not knowing the scriptures."* It is very evident, by their talk, that Jesus has not been made unto them the wisdom that is necessary for them to see, or to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Jesus told Nicodemus, that unless they are born again they could not see the kingdom of heaven, and unless they were born of the water, and of the Spirit they could not enter into the kingdom of heaven, and these are actions outside the possibilities of man.

(John 4:23-24) "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in truth." This was a part of a conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well, and this truth applies to all men since that time, and for man to say that the natural man can worship God in Spirit and in truth otherwise only demonstrates his lack of knowledge of the ways of the Spirit. As a story goes, two were discussing the Spirit, and one said there was no Holy Spirit in this day and age: and the other said, *"Oh! brother, don't say there ain't one, just say, that there*

ain't one that you knows of." The whole truth of the scriptures, and foundation of the truth is based upon this fact, because it is all spiritual, not natural, and is not reasonable to the natural mind.

(I Cor 2:16) "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." There it is, the wisdom by which man comes to know God, and are therefore enabled to worship him in Spirit and in truth. It is that they have received it by the revelation of Jesus Christ, as the above scripture states, we have the mind of Christ. Having the mind of Christ, is the way whereby he is made, unto all of the saints, the wisdom that is from above.

Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us righteousness: *(Rom 3:10:10-12) "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."* This includes all men, regardless of their natural intellect, their lineage, or any other thing that sets them apart from their fellowman; and it is stating as candidly as it can be said, that all men are sinners, on an equal level before God, and none will seek him of their own desire or from a realization of their need. Their feeling is that they are just as good as anyone else, and this is true, the only thing is, they are all lost and undone in nature. Isaiah says, *(Isa 64:6) "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."* These scriptures apply to Jews and Gentiles alike: and it is proof that the natural man, is in a state of ignorance and unbelief in regards God and to spiritual matters, as Paul said that he was in before he met Jesus, on the road to Damascus. This is the same lost and undone condition that all men have been in since man was driven from the Garden of Eden in the beginning, and it is the way that they would depart from this world, if left to their own abilities, or desires in nature.

This is the state of death that God declared would happen to Adam because of his eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and this death was passed on to all of his posterity. They, being in Adam, were separated from God, and the original environment into which they were created, and driven from the Garden of Eden, to dwell in this low ground of sin and sorrow, which has been their home since that time. They were given, coats of skin, the clothing of the inhabitants of this world, they are under the dominion of the old serpent, the devil, and are clothed with the filthy rags referred to in Isaiah above. They have no righ-

teousness, of their own, to plead before a just and holy God, nothing to commend themselves unto him, that should cause him to show them any mercy. Mercy is an act of grace, not a reward, and this grace is the only manner by which faith is sovereignly bestowed upon the creature, *(Eph 2:8-9) "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any should boast."* Now, try to reconcile that with the statement above as some claim, that man is saved as a results of his decision and efforts.

(Gen 6:5) "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repented me that I have made them." This shows the hatred that God has for sin, and for the wickedness in the natural man. All men are sinners, but all are not classified as wicked, as is declared by Solomon, (Eccl. 8:12-13) "Though a sinner do evil a hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him: but it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he feareth not before God." Man cannot cause himself to fear God, he must know him first, so those that do not fear him is because that they do not know him. If it depended upon man to retrieve himself from this dilemma; there would be none to inhabit the portals of glory; that place, that Jesus said that he was going to prepare for them that he loved. This love was the reason for the mercy being bestowed upon the elect, not because of any merit to be found in man, but because he had formed them for himself, and had called them, by name, from the beginning. All men were under the same judgment that was justly pronounced upon Adam, because of his partaking of the forbidden fruit, and the condemnation was the same, for them, as for the ones who were not of the elect. Because he loved them with an everlasting love, grace and mercy was shown to them, in the form of his only begotten Son who took their sins upon himself, laid down his life to ransom them, and rose again for their justification. Where sin did abound, grace did much more abound, and therefore overcame that just condemnation because of their sin.

This was not a change in the original plan, or an adjustment for something unforeseen that had gone wrong, for God planted the tree of life, the antidote for the disease,

before he planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the, Garden of Eden, and this was the source of all of man's trouble. The remedy for the sin of those that he loved was prepared before sin entered the world. God's command was, to Adam and all of his posterity, that they should not eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for in the day that they ate thereof they should surely die. They did partake of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and they did die, but God's grace intervened, and he said, now lest they (all men) put forth their hand and take of the tree of life and live forever, the tree of life was placed in a very restricted area, eastward in the garden of Eden, guarded by Cherubims, and a flaming sword to keep the way of the tree of life for those for whom it was created.

Jesus said, ***"I am the way, the truth and the life, no man can come unto the Father but by me"*** Partaking of the tree of life in the Garden, would have caused man to live forever, and Jesus said unto his Father, speaking of himself, ***(John 17:2) "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou has given him."*** the same results as partaking of the tree of life, and then he said ***"I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."*** and this forever assures that all whom the Father gave him, shall come unto the Father by him.

Speaking of the children of God, Isaiah said, ***(Isa54:17) "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."*** Jesus Christ, who of God is made unto his elect, righteousness, or, perfection in the eyes of God, and this scriptures says that, nothing shall be able to separate them from his love, or from his promise of eternal life.

Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us sanctification: Sanctification is the act of being separated from one position unto another, specifically as in regards to holiness. One's, being set apart as being holy, is their being made free from sin, their being declared a vessel of mercy which has been afore prepared unto glory, when used in the above text. The word, sanctify, or sanctification appears numerous time, in the scriptures, and it is always the sovereign work of God applied to the lives of his chosen vessels. A perfect example of the definition of the word is found in, ***(Jer 1:5) "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth from the womb I sanctified thee and ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."*** Jeremiah did not, and could not, sanctify himself, in fact he declared

that he could not be a prophet, because he was but a child and could not speak, but, did that deter that which God had declared? No, it did not, and nothing will ever undo the work that God has determined, in the lives of his children. God does not consult man, or any other level of authority regarding his determinate counsel and foreknowledge, regarding all things. He speaks, and it is done, he commands and it stands fast, and it always accomplishes that which is well pleasing unto Him, with the ultimate goal, being the salvation of every heir of the promise, and this begins to be made manifest with their sanctification.

(II Thes 2:13) But, we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." The sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit, because there are none, who are born again, that have not been set apart and made fit subjects for the Master's use, whatever that change may require. He calls them, for a specific purpose, and qualifies them to fulfill that calling. The apostle Paul declared this when he said that before he was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious to the cause of Christ, but that he obtained mercy because he did all of these things, in ignorance and unbelief. This can be said of all men, until they are changed, born again, or sanctified and set apart unto the work of the Father, they are all in ignorance and unbelief, and are by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Paul, in his calling, was told by Jesus, that he had appeared unto him to make him a minister and a witness, of the things that he had seen, and of the things in the which he would appear unto him, and this he did for the rest of his life, even unto death. Sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called.

Christ Jesus who of God is made unto us redemption: The apostle Paul told the church at Ephesus, speaking of their condition before they were quickened, *(Eph 2:12-13) "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus ye who some times were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."* The law required that a perfect sacrifice be made for sin, and under the law an animal, without spot or blemish, was sacrificed to make an atonement for the sins of the children of Israel, but, even this did not make the comers thereunto perfect, for in those sacrifices there was, but made, a remembrance again of sin every year of sin. Each year another sacrifice must be made, which was but an acknowledgment that they were still sinners.

That made them realize their need of a cleansing from sin, that would be eternal. *(Gal 3:24) "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith."* They could see this, but could do nothing about it, so they looked for the Messiah that was to come, as declared by the prophets..

(Heb 10-14-18) "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that he may establish the second, By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifice, which can never take away sin: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sin forever, sat down on the right hand of God. From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath forever perfected them that are sanctified." This is the complete story of redemption: as is typified under the law; the sacrifice of an animal was but a type of the true sacrifice that would be made when, Jesus Christ, the only begotten of the Father, came into the world and offered himself, without sin, a perfect offering for the sins under the law, to redeem those who were under the law. Those who would have been forever lost because of sin, and thereby he redeemed them unto himself, even as they were in the garden, without sin and well pleasing unto God, as he pronounced them to be, very good, in the days of creation. In the Garden when he beheld his creation, which included man, he declared that it was very good, man walked and communed with God in perfect peace and harmony, but, when sin entered the world they were separated from him, and Christ's sacrifice was necessary to redeem them from their lost and undone state, into fellowship with Him again. Redemption, means being restored, or brought back to a position which they had previously occupied. In his death, he made atonement for their sin, and in his resurrection, since they were one with him in the resurrection, he insured their eternal home in glory with the Father, Son and Holy ghost. *(Col. 2:13-14) "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."* Christ, the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. It is probably best stated in, *(Heb 9:11-12) "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by*

the blood of bulls, and of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord: With all of the foregone testimony, of the salvation of the children of God, there is no way in which man can have any reason to glory in regards to his salvation. When anyone comes forth claiming any part in obtaining their salvation, I say unto myself, you're not talking about the God, that I hope to worship. The one that I hope to worship says, *(Isa 46:9-11) "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."* He leaves absolutely no room for man to glory in anything; the man who has had an experience of the grace of God will acknowledge, that but because of this amazing grace, they would have continued on in the ways of the world, and died, with no knowledge of the kingdom of heaven. Jeremiah, the one whom God declared that he had ordained a prophet, before he was born said, *(Jer 13:23) "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustom to do evil."* He is saying, if you can do either of these utterly impossible things, then you could change yourself regarding these things, otherwise forget it, for it cannot be done. This is the God that I hope to believe in, and to whom I try to pray daily, that I do know and understand him, and have experienced his lovingkindness and judgment, and do trust in his righteousness to suffice for my complete lack of it, in and of myself, here in this time world.

When Jesus said unto his Father, in his prayer, in the seventeenth chapter of John, *"I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."* he was referring to the above things, in which the apostle Paul said that he, Jesus, was made unto all of the elect, their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. They stood before God, in the perfection of Christ, joint heirs with him, that as they must suffer with him here, they also would be glorified with him in heaven, with the glory that he had with the Father before the world was. Joint heirs do not receive a portion of the inheritance, they all receive the entire inheritance, and therefore they all share the glory

that he had with the Father, before the world was.

Believing these things, we are sometimes made to wonder, why is it that we ever have any doubts and fears of the future? Surely the doubts and fears that all experience are the thorn in the flesh, which Paul was given, due to the abundance of revelation, lest he become puffed up above measure. They are to make his children humble, ever realizing that it is not in man that walks to direct his steps, and that he will be forever dependent upon God to sustain him in all of his ways, and render praise unto Him that it is that way.

May God bless the truth, and pardon any errors that we may have made in the above. May he enable us to see, by faith, that the above is the only way that we can ever have any real hope (or, earnest expectation as Paul says in one place) of heaven and immortal glory. We realize what we are by nature, and yet we are made to hope that we have experienced the change that is being described above, and if we have, then all of the glory of heaven is ours, in spite of what we see ourselves to be here in this time world. As the above text says, ***"He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord,"*** And if we have any glorying, it is indeed, in him, and, in what he has done for us.

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

March 4, 2004

Dear Elder Terry,

This morning I received my copy of the March 2003 issue of the Signs of the Times, and I noticed that my subscription is due this month. Therefore, please find enclosed my check for fifteen dollars to renew for another year.

As soon as I received this month's issue I looked inside at the list of contents on page 50 and then the Editorial. The subject Death by Elder Clifford Wilbanks caught my eye, and I began reading it right away. This article is good. Also, read the Notice from Editor by Elder Kenneth R. Key. It is also good. I look forward to reading the article on Presumptuous Sins, too.

I hope all is well with you and your family. My wife, Ruby, and I have much to be thankful for and are in pretty good health.

Yours in a sweet hope,
Bill Clinton

PSALM 136 : 26.

O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy endureth for ever.

March 5, 2003

Dear Elder Wm. Hale Terry:

I'm sending a small contribution to the Signs of the Times. I truly enjoy my magazine, and to read about my Brethren's experiences.

I love to read about the truth, the world knows nothing about. Only God has to visit their hearts for them to ever know who takes care of them in their low ground of sorrow. Please keep sending it.

Been a member for 55 years of the Primitive Baptist Church. I am a widow I hope in Christ of 84 years.

Lovie R. Thompson
Rt. 1, Box 146D
Warrenton, N.C. 27589

ARTICLES

GOD HEARD PRAYER

Dear Brother and Sister Adams,

It was a great pleasure to meet both of you at Raleigh Church at Raleigh, North Carolina, last Sunday. About three weeks ago I had a mind to call Elder Charlie Thomas, whom I had not talked with in about eighteen years. While we were talking, he spoke of the meeting that would be held at the Raleigh Church, the second Sunday in August and it impressed me in such a way that I decided to go if my husband agreed and he did, so we took the trip and I enjoyed it very much. It seems that here and there the Good Lord sees fit to lift us up when we feel so low and cast down, for He is the only One who knows our hearts and what we are in need of.

One of my uncles sent me some copies of Zion's Landmark several weeks ago. In some mysterious way, the effort to write seemed to give me some comfort and relief. For over three years I believe I have actually walked through the valley of the shadow of death in tribulation, but I can say for the past few weeks there seems to have been a great calm. Through it all we can say as did Job, *"But He knoweth the way I take and (I hope) when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."* I was reared in the Primitive Baptist Church and it seems some of the sweetest memories, although I could not understand the preaching until later years. After I married I very seldom had an opportunity to go to any of the churches and practically drifted away from them. It was after World War II when a great change began to take place in my life. My husband had been drafted and sent overseas for two years, leaving me with one small child. While he was away, I tried to live the very best that I knew, particularly for the sake of our child and my husband who meant more to me than anything else on earth, but after he returned and, as time went on, I began to realize that my righteousness was nothing but filthy rags in

the sight of the sin- avenging Lord.

I believe my experience was a lot like that of the Apostle Paul, for I was struck down and brought to the end of my strength; my whole life came before me as filth and corruption and I knew there was no hiding place for such a wretched sinner as I felt to be. I could not live and I could not die, but I knew without God's mercy that hell would be my doom.

I could now see my mother and father as saints of God, and wherever I went, whether walking on the streets or sitting in the Doctor's office, I could almost point out by a mark seen in the forehead of those who claimed a hope in Christ and those who did not. Yet, I felt myself the worst of all.

During the time I was going through this awful conviction, I attended Lick Fork Primitive Baptist Church with some of the family and I will never forget the Heavenly view that I had one morning as I sat in the church meeting. I could see those dear old people there as the true Saints of God and with tears streaming down my face, I wondered how a sinner like I was could ever be enabled to love those Saints.

I did not know who the Elder was that was standing in the pulpit preaching but I knew the power of God was coming down from Heaven through this man. That day my greatest desire was to unite with the church and be carried to the river and be baptized and follow the Old Baptists as long as I lived, but I did not feel that I would ever feel fit to ask for a home among them and realizing too that my husband could not understand their doctrine as he manifested very little concern for any church. So it seemed there was no way for me until God's own appointed time, but at that time of my great tribulation and during the two years my husband had been in the war, it seemed the greatest desire of my heart and the only ray of hope was that God bless me with a little son just like my husband whom I esteemed so highly. So in all of my suffering I continued to beg God for mercy and for a little son that it might prove a token of God's love for me.

My son was born about a year after my husband's return from overseas. I believe he was actually born with a smile on his face. About a month before he was born, I dreamed I was sitting in a one room log cabin with my younger brother, Hicks (Meeks), who was about ten years old at that time. I thought the floor of the cabin had been cleaned with white dirt and my brother and I were sitting in the middle of the floor capping big red strawberries when suddenly a great ray of light came down from above, through the front door and was shining down at mine and my little brother's feet. I was thinking to myself that I should tell my brother to turn that light out because it was too powerful to shine on earth, but I could not speak.

When I came home from the hospital with my son, it was on the most beautiful Easter Sunday that I had ever seen and I remember my husband bringing in to me some of the first strawberries out of my Father's strawberry patch.

My son is now twenty-three years old. he has completed four years in college and is now married. He was blessed to win a scholarship for his first year in college and many other honors through his schooling due to his God-given talent in art.

When we went to his graduation in Richmond, Va., last spring a year ago tears of joy streamed down my face as my mind wandered back on how this great miracle has brought me out of my suffering in which I felt it had no end. Through it all I was shown the true church of the true and living God and had it not been for the goodness and mercy of God I would not have been spared to sit here tonight trying to tell just a small part of this great miracle that actually took place in my life many years ago.

I have learned through the years the things I have suffered over the most have always proven to be my greatest blessings. My prayer is that God will continue to grant me grace and strength that I may continue on until the end of my journey here on earth and that I may be able to say with the Apostle Paul. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge. shall give me at that day: and not to me only. but unto all them also that love His appearing."

I hope you both will have a mind to pray for our home and family.

With spiritual love,
Mrs. Annie Barber
133 Burwood Place,
Danville, Va. 24541

GOD'S REVEALED TRUTH IS HID FROM THE WORLD

"Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin." 1st Peter 4:1. "But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings: that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." 1st Peter 4:13.

In the above scripture we are told to rejoice, but the sum total of mankind, all of them, including us who acknowledge the possession of a precious hope in Christ, as well as those who make no such acknowledgement, are prone to complain of our uneven journey

through this life. Our carnal, sinful mind does this for us. But, we are made to realize, even though the road of our life has been difficult, by reading the scripture, that we have had it easy in comparison with that of our Lord Jesus Christ.

First, we read in Luke 2: 7, ***"And she (His mother Mary) brought forth her first born and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger (why?) because there was no room for Him in the Inn."*** The Lord said of Himself, ***"Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath no where to lay His head."*** Luke 9:58. Even the most lowly one of mankind has not been denied a place to lay his head at birth. So we see the humble beginning of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. ***"No where to lay His head."***

During His stay on earth He had an humble vocation just an average one like you and me. But He had wisdom which the carnal mind of earthly man has never known, much less will it ever know anything about. ***"And when the sabbath day came, He began to teach in the synagogue, and many hearing Him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto Him, that even such mighty works are wrought by His hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon?"***

Experience of Elder Carl Terry

(Recorded as told to Elder Mark Terry, Nellie Terry, Edrie Clifton, Naomi Coker, Inda Wingate, Billy Wingate, Eva Cruise, Carole Cruise, and Bill and Judy Poindexter

On the Evening of August 3, 2001)

I feel like the Lord began working with me at an early age and many of you have heard me relate hearing that voice, ***"Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people sayeth your God,"*** when I was only four or five years old, before I was old enough to read anything, and that has stayed with me all these years.

Another experience that most of my kin know about but they don't know the preciousness of it -when I was fourteen and riding on the back of Dad's truck and sitting in a chair on the flat bed lumber truck and he went around a curve and I was thrown off that truck. I went down beside the rear wheels of that truck thinking that the wheels would get me. When I hit the road I was still holding onto the chair and the top post of the back of the chair was what hit the road first, which showed the indent of the gravel that hit that chair. Then I rolled a number of rolls there on the ground or the road, probably 40 or 50 times and when I stopped rolling I got up and I heard a voice say, "Walk, and I started walking back in the direction I came from. "No, go the other way." So I picked the chair up and I had cut the tip end of one of my fin-

gers off and it was throbbing real hard.

In the meantime, while all this was going on, knowing how children like to pick and tease each other - my sister, Rosalie, was in the front with Dad and Mom and there were some girls on the side of the road just out of sight of where I landed in the road - Rosalie picking on me, or thought she was, turned around to ask me if I wanted to get off there with those girls. When she turned around she saw that I was gone. In the meantime, the Lord gave me to pray and I believe that was the first time that I really prayed to the Lord, and I have to say that I believe I did pray. But I was not praying that He would save my life or save my soul from hell, I was praying that He would show them that I was not on that truck and actually that was about the time I was praying. They turned the truck around and headed back and they saw me walking. I had my hand up over my head because that finger was throbbing so bad, and I was carrying the chair in my other hand. Mama told me she felt like I had broken my arm because I was holding it up like that.

Anyway getting on with the better part, not long after that (probably a couple of weeks) we were gathered in at Grandpa' s and Grandma' s and all the grandchildren gathered in then, there were probably 40 or 50 of us. All the grandkids were out in the yard playing and the older folks were inside talking about good things. Well, I didn't feel like playing. I wanted to hear what was being said - Uncle Sam, Uncle Joe, Uncle Ben and different ones were talking spiritual things and I remember just as good as if it were yesterday, Grandma turned to Daddy and said, "Herbert, we would love to hear from you." Daddy just hung his head and couldn't say a word. She turned to you and said, "Edrie, we would like to hear from you and you couldn't say a thing. There I sat over in the corner and I wanted to tell it so bad that I felt like the Lord had given me to pray but I couldn't tell it. I wasn't asked. Children were taught to be quiet.

So I've been made fun of for being thrown off that truck many times by my cousins but it wasn't anything to make fun of I was skinned from head to toe and I will have to say this, "The Lord saved my life in that. He gave me to hold onto that chair. If it had not been for that chair and me going off that truck like that, showing that the top part of the back of the chair hit the road first, that would have been my head and would undoubtedly have crushed my skull, but that wasn't God's will." So that is one incident that had taken place. Many others and I don't have a thing in the world to boast of either. It is just the Lord's mercy.

On after I got out of the Navy, I was given feelings I didn't know which way to turn. Our families had split and part of them went one way and part another. In my young mind

it upset me greatly. I got out of the Navy in 1952. In the year of '53, I was working with my Father- in-Law saw milling and I could carry you to the very place where this happened. I was doing the logging and I was on a crawler tractor and I could hear the, not the wheels, but the track, and I had a load of tree-length logs swung up on the logging cart behind the tractor and I was going out down a hillside. And naturally when a load is pushing an engine, the engine will make a different sound from when it is doing the pulling, but that day the engine made a different sound from that. It was singing, "Amazing Grace," going out down that hillside. That is another time that was made precious to me.

In 1954 I had tonsillitis in July. I used to have tonsillitis real bad and I was laying on the bed and I can't tell you whether I was in a trance, delirious or whether I was dreaming or what, but anyway my sins rolled up before me as a mighty wave on the ocean, and I have seen many large waves. Many of you have heard me speak of this in the pulpit. But those waves were coming in and just mounting up like big mountains and coming down to crush me. But my sins was that wave. It was my sins that were about to crush me and it had already gotten to the climax of it and was starting to break and fall down on me and I cried out to the Lord, *"Save, or I perish."* And I heard a voice that said, *"Thy sins, though they are many, are forgiven thee."* And certainly I rejoiced in that, but yet I continued to sin. But what I saw was all my sins, I believe my future sins were included and it was a mighty mountain like a wave and if it had not been for the love of God and His mercies, surely they would have crushed me and cast me into hell.

So while I was in the Navy I developed a very bad habit. You have all heard the term, curse like a sailor. Well I was a typical sailor and even after that experience, I was unable to keep from it, using God's name in vain and all that. In the spring of 55, in March, while working at Stanley Furniture, I dreamed, or whatever it was. It was at night on my bed and I was being pulled into that lake of fire by a power that I could not get out of or get control of. I have explained it that it was as a piece of magnet that you would take and stick to a piece of metal and it would draw that metal to the magnet. That was the feeling that I had of the power that was leading me into that lake of fire. I was fighting it with all my strength but I could not resist it. And I got close enough I could feel the heat of it and I could see the bodies already in that lake all crisscrossed up and I could hear them groaning and it was a horrible place and I cried out to the Lord again, "Save, or I perish." And I got deliverance from that. There was a mighty hand that came down, about that much of a hand (from just below the elbow) and it caught under

me and carried me away. I woke up. The cursing and taking God's name in vain was taken away from me from then on, but that is not saying that I am a good person or able to control my temper. That is some of the things I have gone through.

Another - A little later than that in the same year, Grandpa Terry died and I was real concerned and upset and all the feelings I'd had and I begged the Lord to show me the right way to go. I had a dream right after Grandpa died. He died the 5th day of July and just a week or so after that, I dreamed that I was at a church and saw this big communion ring like they used to have, except it was a ring and I know I haven't told it in the pulpit. But there was Uncle Sam, (Elder Sam Terry), and Elder Cecil Turner was in the dream and my Mama and my Mother-in-Law was in the dream. And in this dream Uncle Sam and Elder Turner were on their knees begging my Mama and Mama-in-Law to forgive them and somehow or other I was made to feel like Dan River Church (they used to set seats out there above the church and it was so lovely) and to me I felt that was the evidence to me to know which way to go since the others were begging them to forgive them, so at the water at the baptizing at Dan River, when they announced the doors open to receive members, I couldn't stay back. I asked for a home and they received me. I went on into the water the same day. It was a joyous time. That was communion day at Dan River. It gave me much comfort. I have never forgotten those precious times. The night before I was received, I dreamed of going into the water with the other three, so when we got ready to go to the church that morning I packed my clothes, not that I could make it happen, but in case it did. I wanted to have clothes to change and I did. There have been many joyous times.

(Inserted by Edrie Clifton) The night before my husband had a dream and in his dream he looked down at his arm and there were four gashes cut in it. He went to that water to do the baptizing fully convinced that there would be another one. He didn't know who, but just as he was getting ready to go into the water, when he opened the doors of the church and I heard somebody say, "Wait" and I looked up and it was Brother Carl with his hand up making his way through the crowd.

(Inserted by Nellie Terry) I carried my clothes to be baptized that day, too, but I didn't go. It wouldn't have been four if I had went. It wasn't my time to go. The others baptized were Charlie and Mattie Sue Moore and Gladys Craddock. And Frank Pegram was supposed to have been but he was sick. So Carl was the fourth one instead of him. It was about two years before I joined.

The following year, (that was the 4th Sunday in September 1955) and the following year about a year later our third child was born. It was born

on the 25th of September and there was something wrong, it wasn't right. It was a blue baby and after the baby was three days old they sent Nell home but the baby stayed in the incubator. We would check on the baby each day and it gradually grew worse. When it was six days old they said something would have to be done and they couldn't do anything more for it at Martinsville so they recommended that we carry it to the University Hospital in Charlottesville. We had to carry it up there in an ambulance and we had to stop several different places on the way to get oxygen for the baby to breathe on the route. I had never gotten to hold the baby until the morning that they sent him to Charlottesville and I let the doctor know that I wanted to hold my baby. He let me hold it for just a few moments and I cherished those times. Anyway, we got to Charlottesville and checked him in and signed all the necessary papers for them to do whatever they thought necessary to take care of him. We didn't have a telephone at that time and I gave them my Mother-in-Law's phone number so they could reach us. We lived a few hundred yards from her house. I got back to the house that night and a little after I got home one of Nellie's baby brothers came out there and said I had a phone call from Charlottesville and they were going to call back in 10 minutes. So I went out there to get the phone call and the doctor from up there was calling to make sure that I still wanted them to go ahead and do whatever was necessary. He said he had gotten progressively worse since we checked him in, so I gave them oral permission again to do whatever they thought was necessary and I went back to the house and laid down, and laying there crying and talking about it and all this. I was given the feeling of needing to pray.

In the meantime the burden to stand before God's children had been working on me and I guess a lot of people would call me crazy or stupid or whatever, but in my prayer to God that night, I bargained with God for my child's life. I told Him that if He would give me my baby back normal and healthy and not being afflicted and all these things, that I would not refuse him to go and stand before His people. God kept His end of it, but I fought with hands lifted high not to keep mine.

Anyway the doctor was to call back the next morning. So along about 11:00 o'clock that night, I had never been in an operating room or anything like that and didn't know a thing about what they were like, but I was given a vision of an operating room and the big light overhead and the operating table. And I saw the baby laying on that operating table and I saw them take back almost to his backbone and start cutting him open following between two ribs and

they come on up about one-third of the way in to, was about what the incision was. I saw that laying there on my bed that night. I could see the doctors and the nurses in the room 165 miles away from home. I saw them take something - the only way I can describe it is something like they use in a tire shop where they spread tires open with to look on the inside of a tire on a miniature scale- and they opened up that baby's ribs so they could get between the ribs and get in there to work on it. What they found in there was that the baby had a hole in the diaphragm and his liver was sticking up through that hole pressing against his lungs and heart and that was what was making him blue. He was not getting enough oxygen.

Well, let me tell Nellie's part on that. I told her what I had seen and we lay there and cried and finally dropped back off to sleep. Then along about 3:00 a voice spoke to her and told her the operation was over with. She told me that and we looked at the time. When the doctor called the next morning we already knew that everything was all right. He said the operation was successful and the baby was doing fine. The time we saw what we saw was the time the operation started and the time it was over with coincided with our time. So that was when the baby was six days old was when that took place. We would check on him each day and when the baby was twelve days old they told me I could come and get him. We brought him back in the car. What I saw in the vision was exactly the way he had been cut. And all that incision in six days time was healed except where they had a drain hole for the fluid to drain out from the incision and they had a Band-Aid over that.

Well, there is more to it than that. We were to carry him back in three months for a check up to see that everything was going okay. In the meantime we hadn't received a bill or anything for the operation. I had paid for the ambulance trip and all that, but when we carried him back, they x-rayed him and checked him over real good and made a $6 charge for that, and we paid that. I told them we wanted to start making arrangements to pay the bill. We did not have any insurance and just a very modest job not making big wages. They informed me the bill had been paid for and we didn't owe anything. You cannot tell me God doesn't take care of you. That is just little of what has transpired with me.

Like I said, God kept His end of it, but I fought from keeping mine. He is now 45 years old and that part has not given him any trouble. He has had other problems, but he was pretty healthy growing up.

These are just some of the things I have experienced.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you." 1 Peter v. 7.

But how can that be done? I have tried, oh, so many times, but never have accomplished the task. The care the apostle refers to is evidently of a very special kind. He seems to be talking to ministers of the gospel, and in that case he not only has in mind the care which each individual has in regard to his personal affairs, and in his worldly relationships, but also the care of the churches. It is evident that this care is something that presses heavily upon the mind, causing much anxiety. It claims absorbing attention; it engrosses the mind; it swallows up the thoughts. Now to cast that care upon the Lord is, or appears to be, beyond my power. Many a time I have tried to cast some particular care upon the Lord, but found it impossible. The anxiety, the care, the painful worry, would remain unmoved. It would seem to me that it was presumption in me to think of such a thing as trying to burden the Lord with my affairs, so unimportant, and I so unworthy of his notice.

But the Lord can do it. These words of the apostle came to my mind not long since with some degree of power, and there was felt in my heart a sweet sense of relief; the weight of care was lessened, and a feeling of thankfulness was in my soul. The words had a new effect upon my mind; the care was in a measure gone; I hope it was cast upon the Lord, but it was his work, not mine. The coming of the words of the inspired apostle has done the work, or had caused me to do it; and it is one of the wonders of the gospel that the Lord's work is manifested in his people, and becomes their work by faith. He works in them "that which is wellpleasing in his sight." He will fulfill in them "the work of faith with power."

It is a sweet and comprehensive exhortation, or command, of the apostle to the saints to cast all their care upon the Lord. The apostles have the authority and power to issue such a command from their King, as his princes ruling in judgment. (Isaiah xxxii, 1.) He commands those to whom he thus writes to humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt them in due time; then follow the words of the text as a part of the sentence, and as a part of the same work. Casting all their care upon the Lord is a part of the gracious work of the Lord in them, causing them to humble themselves under his mighty hand. Casting all our care upon the Lord does not leave the dear children of God without care, without work to do; does not leave them under the power of indolence, but rather makes them more heartily engaged and abounding in the work of the Lord, more careful to "maintain good works," more atten-

tive to the needs of others, and more trustful in the Lord, and more abiding in the doctrine and order of his house. It is very wonderful that whenever the Lord's people realize in their hearts and in their lives a gospel work, a walk with God in any measure, they at once give thanks to God for it. They do not seem in their own minds to take to themselve the credit of it, but ascribe it all to the great goodness and tender mercies of the Lord, and this is according to the gospel. We do not read in the Bible of any one receiving honor and praise but Jesus. Faithful servants of God are named, whose praise is in the churches, but one of them, who labored more than others, is very careful to remind his brethren than no one is to be regarded in his person as more to be noted or praised than another; that all are God's laborers together (laborers together with or under God); that all the praise for work done is fully and freely rendered unto God. When the heart and eyes of the Lord's people are lifted up, after beholding the saints, the greatest of them, with Jesus in glory, they see no man, but Jesus only.

"For he careth for you." This is a most wonderfully precious assurance give by the apostle to all of like precious faith with the apostles. "He careth for you." We had not thought of this as being possible, for the psalmist's thought had been ours, when we considered all his power and greatness and glory: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" and especially that are we, poor worms of the dust, that we should dare to think he could care for us? But, says the inspired apostle, "He careth for you." As the shepherd cares for the sheep, as the mother cares for the child, as the father cares for the son; and when that holy persuasion comes fully and sweetly into the soul, how freely and fully the cares that have been burdening us go out to the dear Savior, leaving us free and unburdened in the felt presence of our Redeemer, and then how sober and vigilant we become in opposition to the works of the devil, as the apostle commands us to, and how delightedly we abound in the works of the Lord. How full of tender love and compassionate interest are these words: "For he careth for you."

Elder Silas H. Durand

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ALONG LIFE'S WAY

I feel the need to beg my Lord
To carry me through the days
I feel the need to be kept in His sight
To worship Him in all His Ways

I must not worry about the future
All is in His great hands
Yesterday is gone forever
Today I feel the peace in this weary land

Through all my trials and troubles
He has always held my hand
Please, Dear Father do continue
Through the journey in this weary land

When this journey is finished
And I walk here no more
Dear Father, hold my hand and walk with me
That I may praise thee on the golden shore

R.B.L.
1-12-03
Elder W.T. Conner

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EDITORIAL

GOD'S WORDS

"For as the rain cometh down from heaven, and returneth not hither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isaiah 55:10-11.

Elder C. C. Wilbanks

God speaks to his people every day and in many ways. We do not hear an audible sound with our natural ears but with our hearts, for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. The carnal mind of man in the flesh is enmity against God and would reject his word if it should come. ***"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."*** It is to the Spirit within our heart that the word of God is spoken and the Spirit reveals it to us. (I hope I am one of the "us".) In Job 33:15-17, ***"In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man."*** We may not realize that we are fulfilling the will of God at the time we do anything, yet we are, for ***"it is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps,"*** We must be awakened from our dead alienated state before we can receive anything spiritual, but Jesus tells us, ***"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour***

is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." Jn. 5:25. *"God awakens his chosen people from their dead the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."* This will be on the day of the final resurrection. Only those who are his *"—workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them,"* will ever do any good works, for Jesus said, *"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."* There are many times we plan to do something but must change for, *"And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left."* We make our plans but they fail when they are not according to the will of God: but this is for our good. He protects us from many unseen errors and dangers. *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."* There are times when we pray for things that would not be for our good, but God answers us in ways that are exactly opposite to our wishes. We are admonished to pray, and Jesus himself prayed while here in the flesh, but it was with *"Not my will, but thine be done,"* In Isaiah 65:23-24 God speaks of his people, saying. *"They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble: for they are the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear."* Paul tells us, *"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercessing for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."* Thank God that we have his Holy Spirit to intercede for us poor sinners.

When some of the Jews asked Jesus to tell them plainly if he be the Christ he answered them, *"I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father`s name, they bear witness of me. But ye believed not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never*

perish." Most of the world teaches that all we have to do is believe in Christ. This is truth, but from whence does this belief come? Some of the Jews asked Jesus what they might do to do the works of God. Jesus replied, *"It is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Paul said, "Unto you it is given, in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."* Therefore does this not teach that only the sheep that have been given eternal life can hear and believe the words of God? Jesus told some of the Jews, *"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."* In this scripture Jesus was speaking of the Gentiles that would be brought into the fold. At that time the Gentiles were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, without God in the world: but now in Christ Jesus ye who were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. (Eph. 2:12-13).

Yes, dear brethren, if we have been washed in the precious, holy blood of the Saviour Jesus Christ, then we are in him and he is in us. *"For in him we live, and move and have our being—for we are also his offspring." "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness and justification and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."*

Brethren, let us worship our Saviour, for *"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."* May God bless us to always hear and obey his commands.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

4-28-03

Dear Elder Terry;

Well, at last, I am doing what I've been thinking about for quite a while I don't want to miss getting the Signs. I remember seeing my papa & mama reading them by the old kerosene lamp when I was probably no more than five years old. They didn't mean anything to me then, but I did realize they were something very important to them, none were destroyed. Papa would put a nail hole thru the left hand corner of each volume, then put a

strong string thru it and hang it on a nail on the wall. Papa built our homestead house of rough lumber; crude for today's style, but it was a home where love and happiness prevailed till the time of his death in 1917. However in all the following years our Heavenly Father has greatly blessed us all. I am the last one left in that family of papa and mama and we six children.

I have been here with my daughter, Shirley and her husband "Bud" ever since I broke my hip, well over a year ago. They are all so very good to me, for which, I give God all the thanks and praise. I feel so unworthy of it all. We are all helpless and can do nothing anyway I feel that to be my condition. Each and every breath is given me. All is thru and by the power of God. I believe that God is Supreme and has all power. The limits on how far satan can go is controled by God Almighty, and he makes no mistakes.

With all thanks and praise to our Heavenly Father.

Minnie Cunningham

1-31-03

Dear Elder Terry,

Please renew my subscription with the Signs of the Times for another year. I'm sending a check for twenty dollars, fifteen for subscription and five for a contribution. I hope to be thankful to our Lord for the truth that is in the Signs of the Times of experiences of others.

Sincerely,
Gayle Phillips

Elder W.M. Hale Terry:

I would like to renew my subscription for two more years Feb. 03 to Feb. 05.

I cannot put into words what they mean to me. I read them over and over. Thank the good Lord for them.

Mrs. Rebecca Fuller
1754 Birkland Drive
Pineville, La 71360

Bryan, Tx
2-4-2003

Elder Wm, Hale Terry:
Dear Sir:

Please renew my subscription for another year.

I appreciate the efforts of the faithful that keeps the Signs going, for many it is their source for good preaching.

Thank you,
Sincerely
Inez Gearner

ARTICLES

My dear ones,

I feel loss of a blessing that has been with me for thirty five years. Yes, I believe the Lord gave it to me and He hath taken away. And it is good. Because it is He who hath all praise and all glory is His. Don't you love the prayer that the Saviour cited to us in St. Matthew 6:9-13. Some years ago I heard an Elder speak of death and tell us that death is the way prepared by God to take us from a world of pain and trouble and strife.

The blessing I have on my mind is the gift of those who were as mothers to me; mothers in Israel. There were five Sisters in Springfield Church who were as mothers to me. The Lord took the last one a few weeks ago. She was 99 years old. I had visited her the previous Saturday. She was glad to see me, spoke of the church and going to meeting. Sister Susie M. Willis, I feel, is being carried to that meeting we hope to attend when we are taken from this world.

The other four who were as mothers to me were Sisters Leona D. Dalton, Maude H. Doss, Annie M. Tosh and Eugie W. Tuck.

What a wonderful gift, to be given five dear ones who were as mothers to me. I told one of them not long after I was baptized that maybe I went to the church too soon because I thought I understood the preaching a little more than earlier. She said to me, "we grow in grace." Now isn't that a beautiful reply.

I remember going to the home of one of them on a Thursday evening prior to our Association. She and another Sister were preparing dinner and talking about association the next day. I told them I has learned a visiting Elder from Alabama had an appointment that night at Dan River and I'd rather go there than eat. They immediately began getting things in a "hold" position and we left for Dan River very shortly. We enjoyed the meeting very much. These dear ones talked and laughed about how they had "dropped" things and gone to meeting.

One of these dear ones had many publications by Old Baptists. She gave me quite a number of these books. I had not been interested in reading very much until those early years (after being baptized). I began to almost devour these books together with Signs I had.

I remember one of the mothers to me once told me she kept all letters I had written to her. Writing became a peculiar thing to me, it seemed I had little control or ability to write. I well remember writing her about my doubts and fears and wondered if I should mail it. I did, and she told me later she enjoyed it so much. I thought that a little peculiar. I remember writing a certain letter,

sent it to her asking if she thought it all right for me to send it to the one addressed. She said "yes, please do."

These five dear ones, Sister Dalton, Doss, Tosh, Tuck and Willis, were as mothers to me. They were kind, gracious, honest and thoughtful. I loved to travel with them to meetings. I loved them, they loved me. They were a gift to me. I believe and hope the dear Lord gave them to me. He gave and He hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Written by one who is the sinner, yet even unto this day hopes God has looked upon me with pity and compassion.

Reidy Pickral
April 2003

VOICES OF THE PAST

TRANSLATED AND EDITED SERMON OF ELDER E. J. LAMBERT

Preached on December 20, 1969 at Bethel Church (Arkansas)

During the hymn service my mind was taken to expressions found in the 9th chapter of Isaiah. I would like to read starting at verse six and read through the seventh verse: ***"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."***

We would like to begin in our treating upon this subject with the last expression in the seventh verse. The last part of that seventh verse, he said, ***"The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."*** The reason why we met this statement first and talk on this verse is to let you know those things which this text includes are not left to the chance and volition of men as to whether they be done or not done. To let you know that these things which we read in your hearing was to be performed by the zeal of God. To have a zeal is to be mighty in exercise, mighty in working, mighty in enduring. God does not sit on the stool of do nothing and wait and see what man will do. But this which we have under consideration, the prophet made the emphatic statement that the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this. It didn't say that the zeal of the Lord of Host will perform part of it and leave some of it for us to perform. But this which is under consideration, the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this. Now let's take under consideration what it is that the

zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform. This that we shall take under consideration will be certain; it will be sure; it will be perfect; it will not be lacking in any sense of the word. Why? Because it is based on the exercise not of the beneficiaries but upon the exercise of the giver - of the Lord of Hosts.

Beginning with the first part of the sixth verse of the ninth chapter of Isaiah, ***"For unto us a child is born."*** Notice the last statement that I read, ***"The zeal of the Lord of Host will perfonn this."*** That speaks as to the future, but in the first it says *"For unto us* a *child is born, unto us* a *son is given."* That's speaking in present tense. Even though this scripture of Isaiah was written hundreds of years before Jesus Christ made His appearance in the earth I firmly believe Isaiah experienced the real truth of the matter when he wrote: ***"Unto us a child is born."***

Somebody might say those that came before the birth of Christ would be dealt with differently than those who came after the birth of Christ. I do not think so because God is the same God yesterday, today and forevermore. When we speak of God we can not speak of Him as in the past tense or the future tense when we speak of God rightly. But we speak of Him presently because the Scriptures say that the Lord is not slack concerning His promise as some men count slackness, but is long suffering to usward not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. And just before this expression is made He said this, ***"Be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day."*** You know it seems to me that the apostle as he wrote this epistle he emphatically states you may be ignorant of many things and remain in that ignorance, but there is one necessary thing, one thing that you shall not be ignorant of, one thing that should be impressed upon your mind is that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day. What does that mean? That means this, that as it was two thousand years ago as far as man is concerned, that God is. That was present and is present in His mind now as though it was happening at this time, coming to pass at this time, the things that came to pass two thousand years ago. The things that are occurring now is just as present in His mind and the things that shall occur one thousand years hence, should time go on that long, is just as present in His mind as though it's occurring right now. You know that the mind of the Lord is so great that it can comprehend all things at the same time and all time at once and therefore there is no time reckoned with God, but He is one eternal NOW. So when we speak of God properly, we speak of God as being is.

Jesus made a statement that the English perfectionist would say, reasonably and logically, was stated wrong. When Jesus said, ***"Before Abraham was I am"*** the English critics would say that it was a wrong statement. If it had said, ***"Before Abraham was I was,"*** then that would be in accordance with good English. But the idea ***"Before Abraham was I am,"*** that would be contrary with the right usage of the English language say some teachers.

But to those who are not ignorant of this one thing - that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day -it doesn't sound out of place to them. Why? Because ***"Before Abraham was I am."*** In other words even in the time of Isaiah, hundreds of years before Jesus was born in the city of Bethlehem in the country of Judaea, Isaiah could experimentally say, ***"For unto us a child is born. unto us a son is given."*** the present tense.

This question was asked at Antioch church last Sunday afternoon. Do we have any scriptural proof that Jesus Christ was born on December 25th? I said no, as far as I know there is no scriptural proof of that. Commentators have agreed, judging all things that surely it was along about the month of October as far as the season is concerned that Jesus was born. It was in the city of Bethlehem in the country of Judaea almost two thousand years ago. But I said I would like to answer that question and tell you that it doesn't make any difference when He was born here upon this earth. It doesn't make any difference what day or what month He was born on this earth. But I will tell you what does make a difference. It is when Jesus is born in you the hope of glory. That's the difference and that's exactly when you celebrated the birth of Christ. It was when Jesus was born in you the hope of glory.

There is a great deal to this statement, ***"Unto us a child is born."*** I had some thoughts upon it a few days ago that couldn't be bought. There is a difference in ***"Unto us a child is born" and "Unto us a son is given."*** If you read a scripture and you don't find Jesus in the scripture you haven't found the core of the text. If you read a scripture and you don't find you own experience there then you haven't tasted the text. Here's what was sought for at the time when Jesus was born. What would be the sign? What was the sign that was given to them.

Would they find a giant? Was that the sign? No, this was the sign: ***"Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger." This was the sign. "Unto us a child is born."***

Those who have been born of the Spirit of Almighty God have been made sensible to their many sins and brought to serve the law. What a terrible thing this law demanded and the law gave nothing but it de-

manded everything. You did your very best to serve this law. But the law entered that the offense might abound and when this law came into your hearts and minds it showed you the very best of your righteousness was as filthy rags in God's sight. You found yourself feeling to be nothing, less than nothing, vanity, that sin was mixed with all you did and when you would do good evil was present with you. You felt so low down that should a king have come to you or should one in great authority or one mighty have come to you it would have so sunk you that you wouldn't have had any use for it. It would have been too shocking to you. But this is the sign, you shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger. When you were in this condition you said, ***"Lord save or I perish."*** You were certain that you were doomed to hell in your own feelings. Did you want to come before a king then? No, you would say I'm unworthy. You said, I am unfit. Oh no, not that!

Let us take the words of Jesus. Jesus said, ***"Come unto me, all you that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me."*** What do we first learn about Jesus? What think ye of Christ in your first experience? What did Jesus say?

Did He say to those who were heavy laden and to those who were labouring, come unto Me? Did He say to them that I am the mighty God? No, He didn't say that. Why? You weren't ready for that. What did He say to you? He said just like He said to those that were heavy laden and labouring. You are heavy laden with your sins and you are labouring very diligently to try to get yourself out from under that terrible weight of sin that has you pressed down so much. Oh how terrible it is. But Jesus said learn of Me. What did He say? He said, ***"For I am meek, and lowly in heart."*** He didn't say He was high in heart. He didn't say, I am King and nobody had better cross Me. He didn't say that, did He? No, He said I am meek and lowly.

I have thought about families who are given children; when a child is born the mother says this is mine. She can lift it up. It is little, she can lift it up and caress it. She says this is mine. When Jesus appears to you He doesn't appear as the mighty giant at first but the sign is that you shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger. Learn of me, I am meek and lowly in heart and you shall find rest in your souls. Here you are down; here you are without hope for the future; here you are facing the fiery judgment and indignation of a righteous God. You know if He should do you justice you would be cut off and that without remedy. Then all at once you come into possession of something meek and lowly; something you can caress and handle. Yes, one wrote about what he had tasted, what he had handled, the Bread of Life, to handle Jesus as a babe is handled. What did you want to do with that

child? Did you want to destroy Him? Oh, no, how precious is that One that is born in you the hope of glory. He came as a babe. You know if it had been God's will for Him to come as grown He would have. But it wasn't His will that He come as grown, but He came as a little babe. The Scriptures say that He grew in stature and that He grew in wisdom and He grew in favour with God and man. That's what the Scriptures say. Haven't you felt in your heart and in you experience the growing of the Lord Jesus? Yes, when He first came to you He said I am meek and lowly. You know Jesus said of my own self I can do nothing. He said the Father works and hitherto I work. So He comes to you as meek and lowly and says I can do nothing of myself. What did He say when one said I will follow thee? He said the foxes hove holes, the birds of the air have nests but the Son of Man has not where to lay His head. You know there was no room in the inn for Joseph and Mary, no room in the inn for Jesus to be born. But He was born and laid in a manger. He was wrapped in swaddling clothes. Not a very enticing garment was it? No, but it was the clothes that they habitually rubbed the animals down with that the Lord Jesus was wrapped in. It wasn't a beautiful garment. But that should be the Son when He came to you in your experience. When you first tasted of Him you found Him as a babe and oh how you caressed Him. You said He's mine. He's mine. You celebrated His birth. He was born in you as a child. He came to you as meek and lowly. You think you are low. You think you have been forsaken, but He came to you as the Psalmist David expressed, ***"My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"*** And as Jesus Christ expressed on the cross, ***"My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"*** He came meek and lowly. Jesus said that He became poor that we might become rich. Yes, He was born in you as poor.

"Unto us a Son is given." That's a different statement. The Son is given and we thank God for the gift of His Son. We didn't say that we merited His birth, no. But we thank God for the gift of the Son. ***"Unto us a Son is given."*** Aren't you glad it didn't say offered. Because in the offering you rejected Him many times in your experience. Yes, in your experience you rejected Him. But I want to tell you when the proper time comes the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this. He will make you ready. He will make your heart ready to receive Him. To receive Him first as a babe, to receive Him first as a child that you can caress and that you can love.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder." Jehovah created the heavens and the earth. He created and formed all mankind. He created everything and put man as head of that creation to have dominion over the fish of the sea and the birds of

the air and beast of the forest and to have dominion over the things that God created. God gave man dominion over them. He even gave man the power to name the things. He is the creator of Adam and the earth and all things that is. You know that our God, Jehovah, the Father, knows how and does delegate power. In the Scriptures it says to be ye subject to the higher powers for all powers that be are ordained of God. That's a delegation of power, isn't it? He said be ye subject to the higher powers for there is no power but of God for the powers that be are ordained of God. So God delegates power and what did He delegate to his Son? He delegated the government of Israel to the Son. In delegating the government, I want to tell you the government shall be upon His shoulder. Sometimes elders in the church gets to fussing about who shall be the greatest and who will be the boss. Sometimes deacons and elders have it as to who will have control over this, that and the other. But it is all of the flesh. Why? Because God has decreed and God has ordained that the government of His church shall be upon the shoulder of Jesus Christ the blessed Son of God. So He is the governor. There is no pastor that can take that honor unto himself that he is the governor of the church. There are no deacons that can take that honor unto themselves that they are the governor of the church. There are no clubs of pastors and deacons together that can take that honor to themselves, that they are governors of the church and that the church must look upon them and respect them as such because any time that happens it just proves that it is not the church that is spoken of here. Because the government shall be upon His shoulder and in the New Testament it says that Jesus Christ is the head of the church and it speaks of the church as being His body. So the government shall be upon His shoulder.

I was talking to the pastor of the First Baptist Church in the community several years ago. He came to my home; he had recently moved to this community. He had heard that I was serving as pastor of some Primitive Baptist Churches in the community. He wanted to have a long talk with me. I invited him in and we sat down and began to talk. I have never been blessed in all my life with scriptures coming into my mind just as though I could see them in the Bible and I would quote them to him to every question that he asked. I'd quote the scriptural answer. He became astonished. He became so astonished that he began to talk to me as though he were a little boy and I was his father. He said, Brother Lambert, I have such a terrible burden. The church here has twelve hundred members and oh what a great responsibility that's upon me, twelve hundred members resting upon my shoulder." I said, "I can sympathize with you. I used to feel the same way. I know what a burden it is, but that was too much of a burden for me and the Lord

lifted it from me." I said that He gave me to understand that He assumed that burden. His face lit up and he said, "I never thought of it in that way, maybe you are right." I said, "I think I can tell you that I know that I am right."

"The government shall be upon His shoulder." He has the burden; He has the responsibility. Some of us quarrel and some of us complain about how He runs things but I want to tell you that it is the flesh and pride complaining every time. Sometimes its little folks that gets big recognition and people with a lot of pride say now that's just out of this world. How foolish it is that we come complaining about it. I have seen people illiterate, as far as natural education is concerned, that the Lord has raised up and gave them the call to the ministry and qualified them. They were illiterate as far as worldly education was concerned, but when they went behind the sacred desk and the Lord blessed them to preach, they would make the wise and the noble hang their heads down in shame because they could preach so much better than they and so much more effectively. The pride of the flesh will come up and come against such things.

God's tool chest, do you know what God's tool chest contains? God's tool chest contains His instruments. His instruments are those He's chosen and Paul tells us that not many wise were chosen, not many nobel were chosen, not many mighty were chosen, but God chose the foolish things of this world to confound the wise. He chose the weak things to bring to naught the things that are mighty. He chose base things. What are base things? Base things are lowly things. He chose base things, yea even things that are not to bring to naught things that are. Sometimes we have to take off our high pinnacle and have to be squashed down. I want to tell you we can't pat ourselves on the shoulder and say we humbled ourselves either because a man that is taken down by circumstances over which he has no control must say that the zeal of the Lord has performed this, I didn't get down humbly.

The government shall be upon His shoulder. I want to impress upon you that the governor of the church is the Lord Jesus Christ and He gives in this book the proper procedure for the church to follow.

He said and His name shall be called, first, Wonderful. Was there any thing more wonderful to you than the first child born to you? Here you are without hope in the world and here is one you can caress and love, who says I am meek and lowly. He became poor that we might become rich. How much would you take for a child born to you, a son that is given? Would a million dollars buy it? Would you sell a baby of yours for a million dollars? Would you? Money won't buy it.

Wonderful! We are at the last scheduled meeting at this place of this year, of this decade. What is the

wonderful and the great spectacular of the decade?

Most would agree that it was man's ascension to the moon and walking upon it. That is the wonder of wonders as far as the earthly wisdom, earthly technology, earthly science, earthly astrology is concerned. But you know what I consider to be the wonder of wonders. I read about the moon in Revelation. I read about the woman in Revelation. I read this woman was clothed with the sun and this woman had the moon under her feet. You know it takes a terrible power to draw you from the gravitation of the earth. It takes a terrible power because the earth draws. So it is with the lust of your flesh. It has such a drawing power that it takes a mightier power than you can ever manufacture to get yourself out from the bondage of the lust of the flesh. The gravity of that lust is so great. I tell you what kind of thrust engine it will take -the Holy Spirit - to ever lift you up from the gravitation of the lust of the flesh.

You know that man's first soar into space is the moon. The first spiritual soar after you have been taken from the gravitation of the flesh, the first spiritual lighting place is the law. While you are under the magnetic drawing power and gravity of the flesh you are the servant of the lust of the flesh. After the Holy Spirit comes into your heart and mind and you are regenerated and born again it is a thrust engine that is fueled by the love of Almighty God that draws you up to the first stage in your space. That stage is the moon which is representative of the law and then you become as a servant of the law.

If you recall on the first trip as the astronauts went around the moon they let down a man to walk on the moon. The last time before the lift off from the moon to the earth they read the true story of creation. As they read in Genesis the purpose of the moon they read it in such a way that I knew that they knew that the moon itself was a dead mass of substance that wasn't worth anything other than what God has ordained it to be worth, to rule the seasons and to be a light by night. So it is in the night time when we cannot see the Son of righteousness that the moon is the only light, the law, that we have. That is when duty religion comes in. That is all we have when the Son is eclipsed from us and it has become the night time where the moon is the only thing that gives any light and that's the duty. That still is a stimulus and that's fine. But I want to ask you as far as the gravitation of the law is concerned what is the next flight? It is to be brought over the law and to be brought out from under its domination. You know the moon is over us. But I tell you we are servants of the flesh until we are drawn by the Holy Spirit into the gravity of the moon or the gravity of the law; then we are servants of the law. The scripture says the law is the schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ and

Christ is the end of the law under the magnetic drawing power and gravity of the flesh you are the servant of the lust of the flesh. After the Holy Spirit comes into your heart and mind and you are regenerated and born again it is a thrust engine that is fueled by the love of Almighty God that draws you up to the first stage in your space. That stage is the moon which is representative of the law and then you become as a servant of the law.

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The next step is when Jesus brings us up out from under the dominion of the law. Then we are as that woman as the church, that's clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet. The law has no more dominion over us but we have been freed from the bondage of the law. We have become free indeed when we are no more servant of the law but servant of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. His name shall be called Wonderful. It's wonderful that He would take the responsibility of the law and fulfill it to a jot and and tittle in our behalf.

He is Counsellor. How is He a counsellor? He's a counsellor in the counselling: do unto others as you would have them do unto you, in saying love your enemies, pray for your enemies, do good to them that despitefully use you. If you have been favored with Him being born in you the hope of glory, as a child grown up, He has become you Counsellor and your advisor. You say Lord Jesus I want you to direct my way. Not only that but He is you Counsellor in pleading your case before God. He comes before the great throne of God and says to the

Father, ***"Father I have taken this person's sins upon my own self. Father, I have taken the responsibility of the law and paid all that is required. I have done that for him."*** Therefore justice is satisfied because the law of God will not require anything less than the fulfillment of the law in every sense of the word and that all sins must be punished to its extremity. But Jesus Christ took that punishment. He's our Counsellor that pleads our case. He is at the right hand of the throne of God making intercessions for the saints of God according to the will of God. He's our Counsellor. Not only that but He is Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God.

He doesn't come to you first as The Mighty God. He comes to you as a child. He doesn't come to you first as The Mighty God but He comes to you as a babe. He doesn't come to you as from a palace and arrayed in fine linen but He comes to you as wrapped in swaddling clothes first, then as Counsellor. He grows in your heart and mind and you grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and then you can count Him as The Mighty God.

The Mighty God what does it mean? Whatsoever His desire is, that He doeth. He worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. He runs your life. He controls your actions. He watches over you. He providentially cares for you. You may forget Him but He does not forget you. He's The Mighty God. He speaks and it is done. He commands and it stands fast. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.

Not only is He The Mighty God but The everlasting Father. Oh, as children we pray to Him as Father. We say, ***"Father give us this day our daily bread."*** In that relationship we look to Jesus as the Father of our faith. We look to Jesus as the Father of our salvation. We look to Jesus as the Father to whom we can go to and depend upon for giving us the things best for us. What a great relationship it is that He is Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

You know scripture says God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. Any church anywhere that you find real peace Jesus is the author of it. Any church anywhere you find confusion Jesus is not the author of it. Somebody said that the devil is. You know we have a habit of wanting to put off on some strange unseen something that which really belongs to us. When I want to see the devil I look in the mirror. I don't charge God with my sins neither do I charge the devil with them. ***"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) there dwelleth no good thing..."*** How they make me to cry and how they make me to weep. How afterward when I meditate upon these things I beg God to forgive me. I beg God for His mercy.

"Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end." You talk about the church of the Lord Jesus Christ decreasing. Do you believe it will decrease? If this scripture is true it will not. We get fearful just like the old prophet did. He said, *"Lord they have killed thy prophets. and digged down thine altars: and I am left alone. and they seek my life."* What did the Lord tell him? He said, *"I have reserved to myself seven thousand men. who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal."* Sometimes we get to thinking that the church of Christ is decreasing; that it is not increasing. According to this I have to say the church of Christ is on the increase. Why? Because it says here, *"Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end."* So it shall increase. As the world is becoming more populated every day the number of children of God is becoming more numerous every day. Don't you believe that? I certainly do in the face of this scripture, *"Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David. and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it."* God orders it and He establishes it.

"The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Are you worrying about it? In our pride we worry about it. It is prideful humility. It's hypocritical religion, that's what it is, but we are guilty of it. If we could only realize that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, that all things, in some mysterious way in which we are not now able to understand, work together for good to them who love God, to them that are called according to His purpose. May God bless the truth and pardon error is our prayer for Christ sake.

Elder E.J. Lambert

January 27.

" And you hath he quickened, who were dead In trespasses and sins." - *Ephesians* ii. I.

DEATH in sin is of course a figure, and must be interpreted as such; for moral death is its meaning, and by moral death we understand the utter absence of everything holy, heavenly, spiritual, and divine; the entire want of participation in, and conformity to the life which God lives as essentially and eternally holy, pure, wise, and good, and for ever dwelling in the glorious light of his own infinite perfections. To be dead, then, is to have no present part or lot with God; no knowledge of him, no faith, no trust, no hope in him; no sense of his presence, no reverence of his terrible Majesty; no desire after him or inclination toward him; no trembling at his word, no reliance on his promise, no longing for his grace, no care or concern for his glory. It is to be

as a beast before him, intent like a brute on satisfying the cravings of lust, or the movements of mere animal passion, without any thought or concern what shall be the issue, and to be bent upon carrying out into action every natural purpose, as if we were self-creators, and were our own judge, our own Lord, and our own God. O what a terrible state is it to be thus dead in sin, and not to know it, not to feel it, to be in no way sensible of its present danger and certain end, unless delivered from it by a mighty act of sovereign power It is this want of all sense and feeling which makes the death of the soul to be but a representation of, as it is the prelude to, that second death which stretches through a boundless eternity.

J.C. Philpot

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." John 10: 27,28.

Sheep are peculiar creatures, being very dependent and unable to provide for themselves. Except for the shepherd's care the sheep would soon perish. Is this not our case? Our spiritual needs are numerous and pressing, yet we cannot supply any of them. We are traveling through a wilderness that yields us neither spiritual food nor water. Unless our spiritual bread drops down from heaven and our water flows out of the rock, we would soon be consumed. If Christ were not our Shepherd, we would fall prey to Satan. We are sinful creatures and if we are his sheep, we shall feel it to be a great display of Christ's love and mercy toward us in coming down to this sin cursed world to bleed, suffer, and die for poor unworthy sinners.

"My sheep," says Christ. How come the sheep to be Christ's? They are his because the Father chose them in Christ out of the rest of mankind before the world was. They were given to Christ Jesus as his bride. He, according to the council of His own free will, and according to His own good pleasure, made choice individually of certain persons. For to Him belonged the sovereign prerogative that he might have mercy on whom he would have mercy. "My sheep." Their names were written in his book of life, so they became his portion and heritage. Christ often speaks of them in this way: " As many as thou hast given me" "Thou hast given them me." As a gift, the Father committed them into Christ's hands. Thus they became a token of the Father's love to his only begotten Son, separating them from among all mankind as a love gift to his Son.

"My sheep," says Christ. They are his for in addition to the gift, he has bought them with a price. They had sold themselves for nought; but

he has redeemed them, not with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with his precious blood. There is not one sheep of all his flocks but what he can see the mark of his blood on him. In the face of every saint the Saviour sees, as in a glass, the memorial of his bloody sweat in Gethsemane, and his agonies on the cross. So you see, "You are not your own, for ye are bought with a price." Will Christ suffer those whom he has shed his precious blood for, to perish? If Christ has suffered for us, bought us with his blood, will he suffer our souls to be cast into the pit? If so, where has justice gone that the substitute should bear our guilt, and we should bear it too? And where is mercy that God should execute twice the punishment for one offense? No, my dear beloved ones, He will not suffer any, no not one to perish for whom he died. He will keep them "and they shall never perish." Oh, it is a great feeling when a poor hell deserving wretched sinner finds in his heart a hope that he is numbered with those given by God the Father into the hands of the Redeemer, the Mediator and King of grace; and once placed there, it is an unalterable act. No power can change or undo the purpose of the great God of heaven.

"I am the good shepherd." How good? Sufficiently good to draw a former sinful rebel into the enjoyment of His love and mercy, to supply our every need, to stoop down and gather up a weak lamb to His bosom, and to protect his from the hands of Satan. "Our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep." Heb. 13:20. So great as to present to His heavenly Father every member of His flock in a spotless condition, having atoned for them, and having cleansed them from sins, in His own precious blood.

"And he said: Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." John 6:65. God's sheep are not only made conscious of their fallen state, but are made willing to return. *"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."* Ps 110:3. Are we so stubborn that we need grace to make us willing to return to the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls? Yes, dear ones, we are. We cannot of ourselves return. *"For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls."* I Peter 2:25.

What a mercy it is when the sheep are manifestly brought up out of the ruins of the Adam fall. What a great death that fall was: it was not as many seem to think, losing the sight of one eye, the hearing of one ear, the heart becoming a little hard, a little stumble or slip; but my friends, it was a complete fall, complete blindness, a complete hardness of the heart, it was a complete, total death in trespasses and sins, a complete separation from all spiritual life. *"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned." Rom.*

5:12. But what a mercy it is to have and feel the life giving operation of the Holy Spirit, to have our eyes opened, to have our ears circumcised, to be given a heart of flesh, so as to hear the voice of the Son of God in His sweet gospel. Yea, though we are "wandering sheep" wandering is the outcome of our fallen state; but to know it, to feel it, to grieve over it, and looking up to Jesus and crying with a loud voice, " Lord, have mercy upon me a sinner" is a great favor in disguise.

The Lord makes manifest what His power can do, when he brings forth His own sheep from an ungodly world, when they are called out of the spots and places in which they have been scattered in their unregeneracy. He will then display the power of His divine grace in separating them from an ungodly world. He separates his sheep for himself. The Lord leads His people in paths that they have not known. He leads them into His own fold; therefore they become a separate people. Separate in their desires, in their needs, in their pursuits. "Therefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean things; and I will receive you." II Cor. 6:27. It is indeed a great blessing when the sheep are drawn to follow Him. They will not be deceived in following a stranger very far, for they know not the voice of strangers.

"They hear my voice." The Lord makes a contrast between the elect and the unelect. The Lord's elect will hear the voice of the Son of God. His sheep know His voice because a sovereign God imparts to them the capacity to hear, because "The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made both of them." Prov. 20:11. Oh, what peace and joy there is in our hearts when the Lord speaks to us in His word. How sweet His voice sounds to a law convicted sinner as we know ourselves to be, when He speaks peace and forgiveness to our souls. How comforting when we are blessed with an inward feeling, a divine testimony in our hearts, when we hear Him say, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." Matt. 5:6. To hear and feel the voice of Christ proclaiming mercy and pardon to our souls is a taste of heaven here upon earth. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they be as wool." Isa. 1:18, Each of the sheep belonging to the great Shepherd will hear when the irresistable call comes to them just as Lazarus heard while in the grave when Christ called to him to come forth.

"And they follow me." When many that were walking with Jesus turned back, Jesus asked the twelve "will ye also go away?" They said, "Lord, to whom shall we go?" Feeling our own inabilities and barrenness, where is there to go? The world cannot help us, man cannot help us. The Lord alone is our ref-

uge. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. 11 :28. Let us go to Him in prayer. May He give us faith to lay hold of His precious promises, and feel them in our hearts and souls to be ours. May God bless us by His grace to follow Him, for He says, " My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." II Cor. 12:9. "Faith which worketh by love." Gal. 5:6. is the mark of Christ's sheep, and it is of true believers that He speaks when He says, "I give unto them eternal life."

"I give unto them eternal life." There is an implication, therefore that they had lost eternal life, not in the mind and purpose of God; but by their fall in Adam and also by actual sin. This eternal life comes to every elect as a matter of gift. He did not possess it when he first entered into the world. Being born of a corrupt tree, they were born to die. Eternal life is not a product of the soil of humanity: it is a gift. Nor is it bestowed as a reward of service done. The term "gift" shuts out all idea of debt or of reward. We were spiritually dead; therefore, Jesus imparted to us a life which we had not before enjoyed. The Apostle Paul says, "You were dead, dead in trespasses and sins." "Eternal life" cannot be earned as a wage for good works, it cannot be merited in anyway, because it is a free gift. He does not sell but gives. "Ye must be born again." What He gives, He gives freely and it is forever. "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." Eph. 2:1. When He bestowed eternal life upon His elect who has it, He knew quite well every imperfection and failing that would occur in that man. Therefore what He saw in man would be a cause for not giving, rather than for giving, so it would be inconsistent with the gift of God for the gift to be disannulled. "The gift and calling of God are without repentance. " Rom. 12:29. May we always be reminded of what we were by nature. Do we see the hole of the pit from whence we were drawn? for "The wages of sin is death." Rom. 6:23. Man merits nothing but death, so life is the free gift of God. Now, to some this is a very humiliating doctrine, but to those who have been made alive to their terrible, fallen condition, it should be a precious doctrine. So may we remember the dunghill where we once grew.

Jesus says, "And they shall never perish." His sheep are said to be born again, so this new life within us is a divine life, so it can no more die than the life of God himself. We live because we are one with Christ. The elect sheep are referred to as the body of Christ. Shall Christ's body be dismembered? Shall He every now and then be losing one limb or another? No! It cannot be. The members of His body shall continue to live because He lives. The power that brought His sheep into this precious state is also the power that keeps them there: for " Being confident of this very thing, that He

which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil. 1 :6. The spiritual life in them shall never be starved out, beaten out, nor driven out. The elect himself shall never perish. You may feel at times you might; the devil may tell you that you shall. The Lord will seem to withdraw until we lose many joys and comforts; but "You shall never perish." My dear ones, "They shall never perish," takes in all the elect flesh of Christ. If we consider how this doctrine harmonizes with other doctrines of the precious words of God, we will find that these sheep were made "unto honor." "That He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory." Rom. 9:23.

If the saints of God, just one, should perish will Christ have kept His promise? He is not a man that He should lie. Jesus Christ paid the debt charged to His sheep; therefore, they have no debt to pay. If He has borne their punishment, they have no penalty to suffer. If He has stood in their stead, even justice as well as grace will demand that they be saved. " It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?" Rom. 8:34.

"Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." All His sheep are in Jesus' hands. Can you think of a safer place to be? An acquaintance once said to me, "they cannot be plucked out, but they can slip out and perish."

Does not Jesus say, "they can never perish?" Therefore they cannot be plucked out, slip out, fallout, jump out or any other out, they are definitely secure. There are those who, with false doctrine, would deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. " Neither shall any." Not only any man, but the devil, fallen spirits, none will be able to pluck them out of His hands. Oh, what a blessed promise! "Because I live," says Christ, "Ye shall live also." John 14:19. May God bless you to live and rejoice in His precious doctrine and to feast upon His sweet promises is my prayer .

In hope of mercy,
Elder Joe L Hamrick

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will be held at the Greensboro Church on the fifth Sunday in June.

The Church is located on the corner of Tate and Carr Streets in Greensboro.

We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us. We especially invite all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Wayne Edwards, Clerk

Dear Elder Key:

Please publish the attached obituary of our dear Sister in the Signs Of The Times and a notice of our Union Meeting.

We hope you can come and be with us at this time.

The Lord willing the Staunton River Union will be held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in June. The song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

Directions: Turn off route 29 business onto Music Street (beside Amos Fine Foods in Gretna, VA) the church is approximately five miles at the intersection of Weatherford Road and Music Street.

We welcome all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

Elder Raymond Goad - Moderator
Pam Betterton - Clerk

GLENWOOD MEETING

Glenwood Church, Princeton, WV, announces a Saturday meeting, June 28, starting at 10:00.

Those coming by way of I- 77 take exit 9. Turn left onto 460W. Go 5 miles, turn right onto 19N, then immediately left on Glenwood Park Road, 1 1/2 miles to the church on the left. Those coming by way of 460, follow the same directions from the 1-77/460 intersection.

Elder Larry Hollandsworth, Mod.
Marilyn Shaw, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 2003

In Memory Of Lawrence and Ethel Myers - VA 50.00
Edna Graves - AL 5.00
Anita Hash - VA 5.00
Reidy Pickral -VA 25.00
Elder James Pugh -AL 5.00
Mary Russell - AR 25.00
Alma Wilson, WA 5.00
Cleo Underwood, Va 5.00
Norvell Godwin, LA 5.00
J. D. Neely, AR 2.00

OBITUARIES

VERNELLE CLIFTON BOYD

Another of our Sisters in Christ has been called from us at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. Sister Vernelle Clifton Boyd died December 19, 2002, making her stay on earth 82 years. She was born in Patrick County, Virginia, to Alga and Rose Rakes Clifton. She was preceded in death by her husband, Oscar Boyd, son, William Curtis Boyd, brothers Raymond and Arzie Clifton, and sister, Dorothy Cassell.

Sister Vernelle joined Dan River Church on June 28, 1981, and was baptized by her Pastor, Elder D.V. Spangler. She was a believer in salvation by grace, loved her church,

and came as long as she was able. Whenever I visited, she would ask about the church and would tell me how she would like to be with the brethren and sisters again.

Sister Boyd fell several years ago and broke her hip. She was never able to come back to Church: She did a lot of suffering, but the Bible says that those who suffer with Him shall reign with Him.

She is survived by her sons, Arlie E. Boyd and wife Patsy of Pelham, and Melvin Ray Boyd of Reidsville. Brother, Bill Clifton of Chicago, Illinois and sisters Lillian Wood and Reva Reaves, both of Pelham, and Essie Cassell of Meadows of Dan, Virginia, 9 grandchildren, 14 great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at Wilkerson Funeral Home Chapel on December 22, 2002 at 2:00 p.m., with Elder Kenneth Key officiating. Interment followed in Lively Stones Baptist Church cemetery in Pelham, there to await the coming of our Lord and Savior.

Written at the Request of
Dan River Church
by Gradie Strader

OBITUARY OF SISTER EDNA EAMES

If the Lord will bless me, I will endeavor to write the obituary of our beloved Sister Edna Houston Eames. Sister Eames was born August 31, 1909 in Franklin County and passed away on January 29, 2003 at her resident at the age of 93.

She was the daughter of the late George Henry and Jannie Parcell Houston. Sister Eames was married to the late Carroll Thomas Eames. They were not blessed with any children but was blessed with a special nephew, Donnie Houston and his wife Judy and their daughter Judith and her husband Robert Blankenship who cared for her.

Sister Eames is also survived by sisters-in-laws Edna Smith Houston, Myrtle Perdue Houston, Hazel Bousman, Louise Cundiff and Imogene Bowles, brother-in-law Howard Eames, great great nephew Robert Hunter Blankenship and a number of nieces and nephews.

Sister Eames asked for a home with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on March 25, 1979 and was baptized on April 22, 1979 by her pastor, Elder O.K. Tench, along with her brother and sister-in-law Stafford and Edna Houston.

Sister Eames attended her meetings as long as she was able and had transportation. Brother Stafford always brought her to church as long as he was able. She was a believer in salvation by grace.

Written by: Pam Betterton
Elder Raymond Goad - Moderator,
Elder Marvin Brumfield - Assistant Moderator
Pam Betterton - Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

GREAT WAS MY FEAR

("When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child.")

Taught by a loved one whose word to me
Was accepted as the only way to be -
A Christian.
Hell-fire and brimstone each night, each morn;

Don't-do this, don't do that — Hell will be your home.
No chance, not one.
I couldn't fight, I couldn't quell

This mounting fear of self-righteous shell -

No victory won.

My desire to be a perfect son

Completely left this erring one -

Tempest tossed. -

I tried with all my wits to be a top-scoring one in deviltry -

Completely boss.

Nothing too daring, nothing too bold;
Impudent rascal - my strength, behold
No one dare cross.

Vile oaths did speak and God to dare
My body with a witness ware -
A mighty hand,
Did grasp my throat. I must say
My life was ebbing fast away -
A tragic man.

"Have mercy, Lord, I did not know.
That you would my spirit draw,
A wandering one."

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me;
The Master's voice, my faith and guide-

A work begun:
And how to perform or What to do
My stammering tongue will be
At His command, His word to speak -
Thy will be done.

(" But when I became a man. I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." - 1 Cor. 18:11-12)

A loved one's experience - told by Margaret Baggett Lassiter, Fayetteville, N.C.

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EDITORIAL

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, when ye be come over Jordan into the land of Canaan; then ye shall appoint you cities of refuge for you; that the slayer may flee thither, which killeth any person at unawares. And they shall be unto you cities for refuge from the avenger; that the manslayer die not, until he stand before the congregation in judgement Then the congregation shall judge between the slayer and the revenger of blood according to these judgements: And the congregation shall deliver the slayer out of the hand of the revenger of blood, and the congregation shall restore him to the city of his refuge, whither he was fled: and he shall abide in it unto the death of the high priest, which was anointed with the holy oil but after the death of the high priest the slayer shall return into the land of his possession. So these things shall be for a statute of judgement unto you throughout your generations in all your dwellings." (Numbers 35: 9-12, 24, 25, 28, 29)

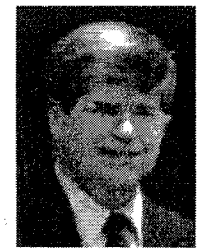
Elder J.B. Farmer

God in His mercy appointed cities of refuge for His people to use for the protection and care of those who should not die because of their

deeds. In some cases the children of Israel would find that they had done something that the revenger of blood would consider worthy of death. The offending one may have unawares and without malice caused the death of another. The revenger of blood then would seek satisfaction and require a life for a life. God made provision that the unintentional slayer might flee for his life and stay in the city of refuge. This pursued one would find comfort and nourishment and defence until he would be cleared by the death of the high priest. Then he could without fear return unto the land of his possession.

This principal has been with the spiritual children of Israel from that day until this and will be throughout all generations. God has provided cities of refuge for His people the world over. They are places of peace, love, comfort and joy for the guilty sinner who God has loved with an everlasting love. The accuser of the brethren cannot enter here. He can no longer condemn us for our high priest the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ has died, yea rather is risen where He now sits at the right hand of God where He ever liveth to make intersession for the saints according to the will of God. There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. The children of God are in a safe place. They have fled to the city of God.

The children of God have no certain dwelling place on this earth. They know that this world is passing away with the lusts thereof. They are pilgrims and strangers here. They are sojourners and are seeking a city that hath foundations whose builder and maker is God. God in love and mercy has brought them to the church. Ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, The heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

At the coming of Jesus and the restoration of all things, the saints will be returned to the land of their possession and inheritance and will hear these words *"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."*

"And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." They will be raised up in His likeness that they may be complete in Him.

Written in love, I hope,
J. B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Terry:

Enclosed find a check for two years subscription for The Signs of the Times and $5.00 for the Signs fund. It is always a pleasure to receive the Signs and read the gifted writing of others who are able to put their thoughts to words that confirm the truth to the comfort and consolation of the people who are able to say it is truth.

I trust this finds you and family in good health and prosperity.

Elder J. Y. McCormick

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE STORY OF RUTH

Not long since, I attended services of the Baptists in the city and heard the preacher tell "the story of Ruth," and also showed on the screen what were purported to be the leading events of her life, and as there have always been two ways of telling a story, it made me want to tell it in my own little way; hence the attempt.

Back in the depths of antiquity God called Abraham out from among the Chaldeans , and told him to get out of the country, and from among the people, and from his father's house, to a land that he would show him, and it is said that he went out not knowing whither he went. Therefore we conclude that Abraham in all his journey toward the promised land walked by faith and not by sight. So Abraham came to the land of Canaan, and Lot, his nephew, came with him. Abraham was rich in cattle, gold and silver, and Lot also had great flocks and herds. Abraham, Lot and their servants were strangers in the land of Canaan, and in that "their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together," and their herdsmen got to fighting and they had to separate. Evidently this was a sore trial for faithful Abraham, but he bore it patiently, giving Lot his choice: You go to the right and I will go to the left, or vice versa, so Lot "pitched his tent toward Sodom." Later we find him living in Sodom, we find also the men of Sodom were sinners exceedingly before the Lord, so much so that the Lord sent his angels to Sodom to inspect the city, and overthrow it if the report were true, but they stopped with Abraham and told him about their errand, and faithful Abraham sued for the city, for the sake of Lot. He probably did not have faith to pray for Lot's family individually, but he put him in with a number, first fifty, then forty and on down to ten, and the angel granted his every request. But lo and behold, there were not ten righteous people there, but the Lord is ever

mindful of his own, and he led Lot and his two daughters out of the city, hastening them, for, said he, I cannot do anything until you get out. "But his wife looked back from behind him. and became a pillar of salt. " This all looks sad, but remember they were the dark hours before day. Lot and his two daughters went and dwelt in a cave and saw the smoke ascend as of a furnace when the four cities were destroyed, and they naturally concluded they were the only ones of the human race that were left, so these daughters formed a plan to propagate the human race. and both of the daughters became with child by their father. The firstborn brought forth a son and called his name Moab; the same is the father of the Moabites. The younger brought forth a son, and she called his name Benammi. He is the father of the Ammonites. Now let us recapitulate a little and see if it is not a fact that all the good things and all the bad things are absolutely necessary to the carrying out of God's great, grand and noble purposes. If the servants of Abraham and Lot had not "strove together" they probably could have lived together and Lot would not have moved to Sodom. If the men of Sodom had not been "sinners exceedingly before the Lord" the Lord would not have destroyed Sodom. If Lot's wife had not looked behind she would not have become a pillar of salt. Could she have gone on with her husband and dwelt in the cave with him she would no doubt have protected him from his daughters' incestuous crime, and if his two daughters had not lain with him there would have been no Moabites or Ammonites, consequently no Ruth, for she was a Moabitish damsel. Had there been no Ruth there could have been no Obed, for no other woman in the world could have been his mother. Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David, and Christ came of the seed of David. Look over this line of events as we may, and there is not a single one that could have been taken out or changed without breaking the chain of events that led down to the coming of the Savior. God could, I doubt not, have brought him through some other line, but in as much as he did not do it, but chose that line and method, why not just believe that in his omniscience and omnipotence he has ruled and managed all these things according to the good pleasure of his will and the salvation of his chosen? Then why not say as one of old: "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for

us. who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Notice he does not say, How shall he give us all things? but how can he fail to do it, having given such an enormous price as his only begotten Son? One more point, in Psalms lx. 8, and in Psalms cviii. 9, we find this Scripture: *"Moab is my washpot."* Every family needs a washpot, and had any one of the foregoing events failed to take place God's family would have been minus a washpot, and his dear little children could not have been purified, and made white, and tried. (Dan. xii. 10.) When the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and through forty years in the wilderness, their last camping-place was in the border of Maob (near the washpot), and Balak, king of Moab, was frightened nearly to death at an army of 603,550 and he sent for Balaam to come and curse Israel, and the Lord suffered him to come, with orders that he was to speak nothing but such words as God was to put in his mouth. So he came and sought enchantment, but God put a blessing in his mouth every time. One of the blessings God put in his mouth was this: *"Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and Israel, What hath God wrought!"* As much as to say, Look at Israel (the church) and see the work of the great God. But Balaam gave Balak this instruction: Send out the daughters of Moab to dance before Israel, and get them to sacrifice to your gods, and so transgress God's law and you will be able to overcome them. He followed the instruction and all the unworthy and unfit of the land of Canaan yielded to the temptation and were destroyed as filth from the washpot. Israel now being washed in the pot (Moab), they were ready to cross over Jordan into the promised land (church).

Just a few more words. As I have shown before, Christ came through the genealogy of Ruth, the Moabitish damsel. In the spirit of the case. Jesus Christ is the great spiritual washpot, whose blood cleanses all his little children from all their filthiness and uncleanness and prepares them for that heavenly Canaan, that rest at God's right hand. So the story of Ruth, the little Moabitish damsel, is a much more interesting story than the one I saw at the picture show.

G. W. Berry

PROVERBS 8:21.

That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.

Dear Brother Burnell:

Tonight as I sit here in my home, this 25th day of July, 1988, I am thinking of you and your family, Sister Mary Frances and the girls. I have told you in times past , about my desire to write to you concerning some of my experiences. I don't know whether God will bless me to do this or not, but if it would be His will, I shall try.

I would desire to write to you concerning my experience in the Lord Jesus Christ. This experience I am talking about has been given by the Lord. I believe this from the depths of my heart and soul. Because of the many conversations we have had in days and nights past, I believe you can witness with me in what I am saying. Do you remember the night I was so burdened and weighted down with a weight I felt I could not remove? This weight I could not take away, because I had not placed it there. We had been to services at Creeches Meeting House that night, and when the meeting was over, you and myself were standing in front of the building talking. I began to talk to you about my feelings and the way I felt concerning the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I knew I did not know how and could not do it of myself. I knew you, nor any other man, could not help me do it. For it must come from Jesus Christ or it's not preaching. I have not learned this out of any book or learned it from any man. If I know anything about this, it has been by the revelations of Jesus Christ . Every since I was about eight years old, I have had many down settings, disappointments and heart- aches. I remember being in the yard one day doing some work for my Mother. I felt something come over me, but I did not know where it came from. I have never forgotten it. I now feel it was the Lord Jesus Christ dealing with me, but at that time He did not show me where it was coming from or who was giving it. I was not brought up in the church nor told about the Lord by my parents. It was the Lord Jesus Christ who dealt with me in the past. I have had many experiences since the night you and I talked in front of Creeches Meeting House. I dreamed one night I stood before the people and preached the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ as it was given to me.

Not me or any other man, but the Lord Jesus Christ was the one over all of it. He was the one that gave me the words to say to feed the flock. Yes, I believe from the depths of my heart and soul that time after time I would have these experiences even before I offered and was received into the church. Long before I was ordained to preach the gospel, I dreamed I was standing in the pulpit behind the book board. The meeting was over and I came down out of the pulpit. The people came and hugged me and embraced me and told me how much they enjoyed what the Lord had blessed me to

say. Well, it cut me down very much, but it also lifted me up in one way, to feel the Lord had used me as His mouthpiece. Today, as well as times past He uses men (and I hope myself) as His mouthpiece to stand before the flock of God and preach to them. I don't believe one can preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to an unbeliever. One must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and the only way they can believe in Jesus Christ is to be born of the spirit of God. They must be born and brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Him. They must be given grace, and grace alone, because it takes grace to have the love and it takes the love to have the grace.

I believe both of us have experienced that love and that grace and not only us, but all of the children of God wherever they are met at. How much I love you and Sister Mary Frances, as well as, both of the girls, through and by the grace of God. We have seen the girls grow up from little girls to grown women, and I hope I love them for Christ sake. I love God's people wherever they are. It matters not where we meet, but if we can only be blessed to talk about the Lord Jesus Christ and what he has done for us. If we can tell the experiences of grace that He has blessed us with from on high. The many times our souls have been fed with the bread that flows from the throne of grace. Not anything have we ever done to inherit any of it, for it is a free unmerited favor that is given by Christ Jesus, the Saviour of sinners. He came to save the sinners, not the righteous. I know I am a sinner. I have been all of my life and will be the balance of my life that I live here in this world. But thanks to my God, He has given me a promise of a better place than on this earth. I don't know that I will be carried there, I only have a hope that I will wake up in that final home where the whole family will be there all together lovely and be singing the hymns of praise forever. A place that never ceases to be and where there is no darkness, only light. It will be lit up with the glory of Almighty God, so we can see and feel the joy of Thy salvation that we have a hope in now.

I believe both you and I, as well as our companions, all have a hope. I believe the Lord has taught us something that is beyond the teachings of man. People go off to seminaries to learn to preach the gospel, but the one I went to I trust I was carried by the Lord Jesus Christ and did not go on my own. If I know anything He is the one that has taught me. I did not learn it from any man nor did I learn it from any book. If I know anything about it, it is through and by the revelations of Jesus Christ. I have had many down settings in my life, but how wonderful it is to be down in the valley and then lifted up on the mountain top that we can rejoice in a Saviour's love and in the Holy Spirit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. One that has

looked down upon us and has called us with a holy calling. One who has brought us out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God. Oh, what a light this is. It is so bright, yet it will not blind you. The brightness of the natural sun will bring tears to your eyes. The light of Jesus Christ shining in you will make you cry , but it will be tears of joy and not for sorrow. Oh , how many times have I ever cried for the joy of the Lord Jesus Christ has given me. Dealt with me in that way, in that manner, that I could praise Him. The only true and living God that I have to look to tonight for living grace, that grace that will never die. That grace that will live now and forevermore and that great and holy love that is given us by Him, the only one that shall stand. This natural love that we have for one another here is going to cease to be someday, but that love that God has loved us with, and the love that we are bidded to love one another with, shall never die. It will live in this world with us and in that yonder world if we are only blessed to be carried there.

This is a true and lively hope that I believe God has given me. A hope that no one can take away. A hope that no man had anything to do with me receiving it. In due time, God showed me what I am by nature and what I must be by the grace of God. It didn't come none too early and none too late, because there is a time and season to all things. It comes times that He gives to me these things that I believe, these things I'm telling you tonight. I believe each one of us has heard preaching from time to time on the mountain tops, on the sea shores, and in the valleys. Oh, how beautiful it is to be lifted up and to be carried to a place that looks and is beautiful. We want more of it, but we can't have anymore than what God would give us to have. What we will have in this life and in the world to come is all stored up in His storehouse of mercy. How we would desire to praise our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ for the many blessings that He has bestowed upon us all the days of our lives, even when we knew it not.

My mind is carried back from time to time to my Mother. She had no girls, only boys. When I was about eight years old, I was doing some work for her. I did not know then, but I trust I know now, where the mind came from to help my Mother. The Lord Jesus Christ gave me that mind to do the things that I did for her. I would sweep the yard and do things like that and rejoice in it. The reason I rejoiced in it was because the Lord was in the matter. The Lord was showing me, but yet it did not please Him to show me where it was coming from. It did not please Him to show me where all of the goodness and mercy that was in my soul as a little lad was coming from. Years later it pleased Him to reveal to me where these things

come from. He came into my heart and soul and condemned me of this world and the worldly things that I was dwelling in. He turned me from one place into another that was far better than the place I was going into. Oh, yes I'm still in this world, but I'm not of the world. I can truthfully say that I'm not of this world. This world has no charms for me anymore. The only charm I have, the only joy I get in this world, is when I can feel the presence of my God into my heart and soul. He lifts me up from the vain and perishable things of this world where I can feel the joy of His salvation right into my heart and soul making me to praise Him from whom all my blessings have come from.

I need the blessings of my God to bless me to keep pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. I don't know of any other way that I desire to go but in the way that leads to life everlasting. Straight is the way and narrow the gate and but a few will enter therein. I hope with all my heart and soul that I'm one of those that has been called in that way, that has been called to go in that straight and narrow way that leads to life everlasting. In other words, that highway of holiness that leads to heaven and immortal glory where there is only one way you can get on that highway. That is straight in and through Jesus Christ. He is the only way one will ever walk on that highway of holiness. It is through and by the leading power of the Almighty God that we believe in. The Almighty God has kept us out of that broad way and that broad gate. He has narrowed the way down so narrow that we are not able to walk by ourselves, but He is able to lead us in it and enable us to walk in that way through and by the power of Him. It is not by the power of our doing not the power of any man.

It must come from the love and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Oh , what a wonderful grace that is. It is sufficient for every child of God that is on the face of this earth. That grace will sustain them through every trial and every trouble and every affliction they ever meet up with in this world. It will be right there with them and it will bring them through all of these things.

I know He has been with me through all my trials and troubles. Just like the experience I had in a dream. I dreamed I was driven up to the Red Sea, just as the Israelites were. The enemy was behind them . They couldn't turn back, nor turn to the right or left and they didn't see anyway straight ahead because the Red Sea was in front of them. I want you to know in my experiences I've been carried to that same place. Brother Burnell, I want to tell you the waters were rolled back for me and I was carried across on dry ground just like the Israelites were. And that water, I can see it now, how the Lord Jesus Christ rolled it back for me to go across. I didn't go on my own,

He is the one that carried me. He is the one that rolled the waters back. He is the one that made the straight and narrow way for me to go. He can do the very same thing now as He did then. He does these things day by day and night by night and no one has ever told me anything to make me believe these things. It is through and by the Lord Jesus Christ that has made me to believe it. It is a true and living God that has watched over me every moment of my life, not just a part of it, but every day I live, every breath I breathe in this world here.

I want to tell you about your association of 1988. How much I really enjoyed that meeting. I had been away for three years. I had been sick and in the hospital part of the time it was going on, but my mind was with you all. What a feast you were having there and what a feast I was having in the hospital also. The same God that was with me was with you at the association. This year, 1988, I was blessed to go after missing three associations in a row. Oh, how much those brethren who were called on were blessed to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. One that was crucified , one that laid His life down, one who took His life and came from the tomb and ascended into the heavens to be with His Father making intercessions for His children while they live here in this world. I believe every one of them will feel the joy of His salvation while they live here in this world, while they are walking or riding up and down on the face of this earth. They will be ready to give a reason of their hope.

We are told to be ready to give a reason of our hope, and Brother Burnell, I don't know whether you've ever been asked that question or not, but I have. One day I was asked to give a reason for why I was among the Old Baptists to start with. I told the man if he had a few minutes to listen I would tell him why I am among the Old Baptists. I talked to the man, who was my employer, for about fifteen minutes. He then told me anytime I wanted to go to my meetings to go ahead. He didn't want me to work when I actually wanted to be at my meetings. The Lord blessed me in that way to never be hindered from being able to go to Church when I was well, but I have been sick and couldn't go. I couldn't go this past meeting, the fourth weekend in July. I had to stay in bed, both Saturday and Sunday, because I was sick. My heart was beating too slow and I could not go , but thanks to my God, He has blessed me to have a mind to look to Him and write these things down on paper. To put them down and send them to you for you to read for yourself. May God bless you, your companion, and the girls. May the Lord be praised for this writing. May God be praised for everything. I would desire to be a little brother in hope, if one at all.

Elder Henry C. Jones

THE WEDDING GARMENT.

WHEN Jesus came into Jerusalem and performed the miracles, and the blind and the lame came to him in the temple and he healed them, and the chief priests and the elders saw the wonderful things that he did, and saw the children crying in the temple and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they were sore displeased and asked him by what authority he did these things, and Jesus spake to them in parables, and among other things said, ***"The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding."*** You will recollect the servants at first were not very successful in procuring the guests, and again the king sent forth other servants, with the instructions to tell them which were bidden. ***"Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage."*** So these servants went as they were commanded, and gathered together as many as they found, both bad and good, and the wedding was furnished with guests, and when the king came in to see the guests, there was one which had not on the wedding garment, and he said unto him, Friend, how camest thou In hither, not having on a wedding garment and he was speechless, and the king ordered his servants to bind him hand and foot and take him away and cast him into outer darkness. You will note there were three requirements necessary in order to attend this feast. First, these guests must be bidden, or chosen, by the king himself. Second, they must be in the highway, or in the way. Third, every guest must have on the wedding garment. You will note that these guests could not be found until the servants were sent into the highways. It is written in Isaiah xxxv. 8, ***"And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called, The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein."*** Then it is evident that these guests were already in this highway, which is called the way of holiness, which is the path which no fowl knoweth and which the vulture's eye hath not seen, neither hath the lion's whelps trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it. But these guests were already journeying, they were in the way, and like the certain man who fell among thieves, who beat him and robbed him and left him half dead and the good Samaritan came where he was, bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and put him on his beast and brought him to the inn, and like Saul when he was journing toward Damascus and he heard the voice calling to him and he fell to the ground and had to be led into Damascus.

These guests did not come of themselves, they had to be gathered or brought in. Neither had they done anything to merit being bidden to the feast, for both the bad and the good were there, and they were furnished with a garment (for the occasion) which was not of their own weaving.

What is this wedding garment? How may it be acquired, and how may we be able to discern it from some other garment? We are never clothed with this garment until we are stripped of all the Babylonish, garments of self-righteousness and washed pure and white in the blood of the Lamb, and then we are robed in this beautiful garment, which is the righteousness of Christ. For though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. This robe is woven throughout without seam in the mill of tribulation. The ground work is humility, and it is closely woven, or knit together, by the cords of love, and it is embroidered with the older threads of faith, hope and charity, and the most beautiful, as well as the greatest, of these is charity. Not charity in an earthly sense, as the giving of gold to hide a multitude of Sins, although gold is good in its place, yet all of this precious metal which is in the ore, together with all that has ever been taken out and refined, can never buy one of these wedding garments, for it cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof. The gold and tbe crystal cannot equal it, and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold. The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold. When once clothed with this beautiful garment, which is incorruptible, it endureth forever, and its beauty never fades, and it will ever admit us to the feast. This was the feast which Solomon called to our attention in his Son, when he said, He brought me to the banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love. But Solomon did not come there of himself, for be says, He brought me to the banqueting-house, and when at tbe feast where the banner over us is love it is a feast indeed. As the queen of Sheba said of Solomon's house and his table, his servants and his wisdom, which were a type of this kingdom, and this table, and of these servants, the half has not been told, and there was no spirit left in her, she had become as a little child.

She was then one of the halt and the lame and the blind, for it is they who are gathered here and made whole, and when seated at this table their lame feet are hidden underneath the table and their imperfections are not seen. The blind are given eyes of faith to see such beauties as natural eyes never beheld. The tired ones who have journeyed find rest; the hungry are fed on the manna and feast upon the Pascal Lamb. It matters not where the table is spread, it is the table of the Lord,

and every guest who has this garment on is bidden to the feast by him, and although Paul may call it his table, or Apollos may call it his table, Paul may plant and Apollos water, but God giveth the increase. Thanks to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, the giving and dispensing, of this beautiful garment are not intrusted into the hands of erring mortals such as we, for if it were there is no doubt that many for whom it was intended, and who wear it most graciously, would be stripped of its every vestige. Therefore, before attempting *to* bind or cast out one of these guests let us first make sure that they have not on the wedding garment. For Jesus said, ***"Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him if a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."*** Woe unto the world because of offences, for offences must needs be, but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh.

This garment is also mentioned in Isaiah lii. 1: Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. But every wearer of this, garment has a certain sense of both fear and hope. Of fear as did Paul when he said in *1 Cor. ix. 24-27,* ***"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we are incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself become a castaway."*** The poet has brought this to our attention in the following lines:

"Did I meet no trials here,
No temptation by the way.
Might I not with reason fear
I should be a castaway?"

Then a sense of hope, as mentioned by Paul in Col. i. 5, 6, "For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven whereof ye heard before in the word of truth of the gospel; which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth." Then we understand that it is by these fruits we shall know them, therefore it is by these fruits we may discern those who have this garment on. What then are these fruits? This question is answered in Gal. v. 22, 23: The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law. If we

live in the Spirit let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us be not desirous of vainglory, provoking one another, envying one another. Paul has given us further evidence by which we may discern the wearer of this garment, as this garment is not worn by the dead, but is worn by the living, as we were all dead in trespasses and in sins, and in order to wear this garment we must first pass from death unto life, and Paul says, We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren; and, as Paul says, it is through the hope which is laid up for us that these fruits are brought forth, and as Jesus is the christian's hope, these fruits come to us not of ourselves, but through him, as it is he who hath clothed us with his garment.

"For Jesus is the christian's hope,
Wrought in us by God's power;
It holds the weak believer up
In the distressing hour."

It is this fear and this hope which are given us of the Lord, which saves us from the fall. May it be appointed unto them who are anointed of the Lord, to preach good tidings unto the meek, that he may send them to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim the acceptable day of the Lord and the day of vengenance of our God, to comfort all that mourn, to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. Therefore awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, that the King who hath chosen these guests, and this Bridegroom, the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely, for whom this feast was prepared, may be glorified in thee, and thou in him.

Alfred E. Titus
Trenton, N.J.

ADMONITION TO DO GOOD

New Vernon, N.Y., April 16, 1834.

"But to do good, and to communicate, forget not." - Heb. xiii. 16.

Thus wrote the inspired apostle Paul, from Italy, to the saints at Jerusalem; and as the middle wall of partition is effectually thrown down, which consisted in meats and drinks, and divers washings, carnal ordinances, and a worldly sanctuary, &c, there is henceforth no distinction to be observed in the church of God; all are made one, in Christ Jesus our Lord. Hence we infer that the above admonition applies to the saints among

the Gentiles with the same force as to those among the Jews.

But as in relation to all other scriptures, so with this, it has its appropriate meaning, and may not be wrested from that meaning with impunity.

We have been led to an examination of this text, by the frequent use to which it has been applied by the advocates of the New Divinity schemes of the day. In the absence of scriptural authority for the popular faith and practices of the great majority of professors, they have endeavored to cover their motives by a reference to this text; let the object to be effected, or the manner of accomplishing it, be what it may, this text is brought forward as a divine warrant. Thus, for instance: The Roman Catholic would say that saying mass, worshiping the Virgin, and advocating their doctrine, is in the meaning of this text to do good; and the paying tithes to the church, and money for the absolution of their sins to the Catholic priesthood, or for the deliverance of the departed spirits of their relatives from purgatory, is to communicate, in the sense of this scripture.

Another tells us that it should be understood differently; and so we find that men professing to be teachers in Israel do not agree. But, is there no rule given by which we are to know the mind of the Lord, as to what is in his estimation, and what is not, good? Are we indeed left to grope about in the dark, and for the want of a better, to employ human wisdom and providence as our rule, and to conclude that the answering of our own feelings and judgment in our decision will be satisfactory to the sovereign Judge of quick and dead? Let the apostles answer. Peter says, *"We have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto we do well to take heed,"* (how long?) *"until the day dawns, and the day-star arise in our hearts."*-2 Peter i.19.And Paul says, *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."- 2 Tim. ii.16, 17.* Here then we find a rule for our proceeding, as the children of the kingdom, and as the men of God, we are thoroughly furnished to all good works. This rule will answer all necessary purposes unto the men of God; they are amply provided for. And while the nominal professor will attempt to justify his conduct in joining with and contending for the unscriptural institutions of the day, upon the general principle of doing good, without considering that "There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof are the way of death, " the man of God, who feareth the Lord and trembleth at his word, will in all his religious pursuits regard the word of God as his only rule of faith and practice, and disclaim all religious works as evil,

however fair they may seem, that are without example or precept in the good book.

Elder G. Beebe

ELD. GRIFFIN TO ELD. McGOUGH

Covin, Alabama

Elder and Mrs. W. G. McGough,
Nauvoo, Alabama

Dearly Beloved Brother and Sister: I am mailing you the minutes of the church conference and the work of the presbytery on the day of your ordination. I will, as I am blessed of the Lord, get your credentials to you as soon as I can get them signed by all members of the presbytery.

I am still rejoicing that the dear Lord has called you into the work of the ministry. I feel to know that many trials and affliction await you. But be of good cheer, my brother, for they awaited your Saviour, as well as the eminent apostle Paul (Mat; 16:21; 20:18, 19; Acts 20:22, 23). There is no calling of earth that is worthy of comparison to this calling of God. Every calling and vocation of the earth has to do with the handling of perishing objects, things which are seen, things which do not have anything at all to do with the kingdom of heaven. But your new work is taking from the hand of Christ the things of his, and giving it to the sheep. May the Lord bless you to remember that your preaching must all come from him before it will prove comforting and profitable to the household of faith.

While I am glad that God has verified his promise to his people of sending them servants, I have a tender feeling for you as you go into the work. Many times you will come in home with a heart broken by unthinking people - the very people that you are striving to serve with the ability God has given you. The word of thoughtless brethren and sisters will often pierce your heart to the quick. I feel to exhort you carefully to bear hardness as a good soldier (2 Tim. 2 :3). I do not mean to tell you that it will not hurt; I do not mean to hint that it will not make any difference. It will hurt; and sometimes you will feel that your misery is more than you can bear. But if the Lord gives you this grace to think, always remember that it is the greatest of blessings to be counted worthy in the Lord Jesus Christ to bear persecutions and to suffer for his sake.

The minister finds himself in a quandary many times. The flesh will rise up for sympathy and for the mastery. It is deceiving slipping up unawares and making sly suggestions to you. Watch this, dear brother, and should you get up on Sunday mornirig and something suggest to you that but few will come today, and perhaps it will be alright for you to go to this singing or to that picnic, may God give you grace to say, Get behind, Satan. Be

alert for these thoughts,for I assure you that they will arise, but never give them place.

Just here is another deadly suggestion that will come your way: often somebody is going to praise some elder in your presence. Sometimes it wlll be done a seductive intention, but whether thoughtlessly or intentional, never let it upset you. Always remember that if your brethren think more of themselves if the Old Baptists are knowing some men after the flesh, that God will take care of the matter and sift out the all ungodliness and fleshly works; and remember, if the Lord has been pleased to grace your yoke fellows to preach to the satisfaction of the flock more acceptably than yourself, that they as well as you, are in his hands to do with as seemeth good to him.

I do not hesitate to tell you to avoid arguments. They have never settled anything. But here is another place that calls for extreme carefulness and watching. Always be ready to give a reason of your hope, but let it be in the right place. You do not want to be found in a saloon or like places defending the doctrine of God our Saviour; you do not want to be heard crying on the street corners; you do not want to try to mix your religion and your call to the ministry with your daily business life. No, none of that at all. But if you are accosted at your work; if you are run down by men; if any inquirer comes asking of you; if, in any way, as long as you have a right to be where you are, always step right up and give a reason for your hope. I do not believe in debates that Old Baptists seek out, and where they accost other people and hurl challenges in their face, but neither do I believe that the Apostles would have run from any assailant of the doctrine of God our Saviour. I would admonish you to be careful about this.

You have a fine trio of children. It is wonderful that the Lord has given them to you. Carry them to church with you, but do not be despotic about it. Remember that you are still in the world, and that an Old Baptist should be a good citizen. Your children must go to school, and they need to be a part of that school to get all the benefit. Do not try to force Old Baptist doctrine on your children, but do teach them obedience and good morals. Never, dear kindred, advocate in the presence of your children, nor of anyone else, that indifference to right standards of living as a part of Old Baptist doctrine. It is not the truth. And by all means, cultivate the friendship *of* the young, teaching them good behavior always, and admonishing them carefully in clean habits and moral and upright thinking. Urge Old Baptist parents to carry their children to church and admonish the children to honor their father and mother by going. My brother and sister, remember that you will have false brethren to contend with. The church of Jesus Christ has always

had some deadweight or deadwood it it. This is an inert load that must be carried along, and I warn you, that it always has a tendency to pull down the balance of the church. Watch this, and be aware *of* its slippery attention to you. Oftimes it will pay you little notice until it sees an opportunity to curse you. Do not be a tool of anybody; do not carry a torch for another; do not take up with a brother's hobby and support it for him. Be as careful as you can; but when you are mistaken; take steps to correct your behaviour, but do not go around trying to prop yourself up before brethren. If you are guilty of a wrong, quit it at once; if you are not guilty, live in a way that the Old Baptists will know that, you are not guilty. Never go around with a pocket full of letters trying to bolster up your position or to establish your faithfulness.

I feel again like telling you to not be sorry for yourself before your congregations. Do not run yourself down before them, telling them that you are a wild desperado. An humble confession of your sins is commendable anywhere, but belittling yourself is not preaching the gospel of peace. And above everything else, do not boast of your ignorance, nor slyly hint at the learning of an educated brother, I have always felt that I would like to know more about the grace of God, and about good language and good manners. I would admonish you, sister McGough, to watch your husband's manners in the pulpit, and if he develops a bad way of expression or an ungraceful gesture to tell him so.

If you go to church anywhere, other than to one of your own appointments, you must wait the pleasure often about going into the house to start the song sevice. Then wait their pleasure about when preaching service starts, but when you are asked into the pulpit, get up and go forward in an orderly manner. Do not use too much of the pastor's time, especially while you are young in the work of the ministry. I do not mean by this that you must be forward, but I mean to tell you that it is not becoming in a minister to be slothful about his Master's call to this work.

In conclusion, I do not tell you these things because I know how to preach. I am just as helpless as you are in the matter. I tell you these things because I love you. I know by bitter experience what you will face time and again. When I began to exercise in public. I got very little notice from the older brethren. I have noticed this all along that the older ones seemed to resent the presence of a boy in the ministry. I have felt to encourage, rather than to discourage. I do not feel that God will ever call a man to preach, and then call me to help qualify him by ignoring him, or by indifferent treatment. Rather, I feel like that you are my. Yokefellow, and the load will be heavy to both of us, and that it is easier pulling together than it is

working at cross-purposes.

May the God of all grace be your daysman, working in you that which is Well pleasing in his sight.

Lois joins me in love to you both.

Yours in a precious hope,
William D. Griffin

Sent to the Signs by SisterEdrie R. Clifton

"My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word." - Psalm cxix. 81.

How difficult, for the most part, it is, and we may add, how rare to be able to realise for ourselves, with any degree of abiding permanency, a sweet experimental sense of, and an assured interest in those spiritual blessings with which, so far as we are believers in the Son of God, we are blessed in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Glimpses, glances, transient views, sips and tastes, drops and crumbs sweet beyond expression whilst they last, but rarely given and soon gone, are, generallly speaking, all we seem to get after much hard labour, many cries, earnest entreaties, and vehement longings before the Lord, as he presents himself to our faith, seated on the throne of his grace. How many there are who are daily and sometimes almost hourly crying out, if not in the exact words, yet in the substance of them:

"O come, thou much-expected guest;
Lord Jesus, quickly come!"

And yet how long he seems to delay his coming! How continually are they looking upward till eyes and heart seem alike to fail, waiting for his appearing more than they that watch for the morning; how willing to make any sacrifice, to do anything, be anything, or bear anything, if he would but manifest himself to their souls. How often are they searching and examining their hearts, lips, and lives, to see if there be any evil way in them which makes him hide his lovely face, and not drop one word into their longing breasts, whereby they might hold sweet communion with him! How they desire to be blessed with real contrition of heart, and godly sorrow for their sins, and be melted and dissolved at his feet, under a sight and sense of his bleeding, dying love!

But whence spring all these longing looks waiting expectations? Do not all those earnest desires and

vehement longings shew that those in whom they so continually are found are begotten again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead? It is divine life in their souls which is the spring and source of these inward breathings, lookings, and longings; and this divine life arises out of a new and spiritual birth, which is itself the fruit of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. It is not the still-born child that cries; it is the cry of the living child which so goes to the heart of the mother. Thus the cries of which we have spoken shew that there is life. But with life there is hope; for why should a man be ever crying after waiting for, and anxiously expecting a blessing which he has no hope ever to obtain? If, then, these had no living hope, would they cry? There are no cries in a dead hope. It is because the grace of hope in their breasts is, like every other grace of the Spirit, alive unto God, that it acts in union with faith and love, to bring them and keep them earnest, sincere, and unwearied before the throne, expecting and anticipating what God has promised to bestow on those who wait upon him.

J.C. Philpot

PSALM 23

A Psalm of David.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

MEETINGS

NOTICE

JULY 4TH ANNUAL MEETING

The July 4th meeting, which was previously held at Payne's Creek Church, will be held at the Head of the River Church on July 4th, 2003.

Elder Hale Terry, Moderator

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 2003

Albert Krewatch, DE 25.00
Grover Plybon, VA 10.00
Andrew Agee, VA 5.00
Rlee Houchins, VA 5.00
Robert Thomas, AR 5.00
A Friend, IL 10.00
Rachel Smith, NC 5.00
C. H. Jones, TN 5.00
Eld. J.Y. McCormick, GA 5.00
In memory of
Bro. Rufus Jacks, AL. 25.00
Pauline Jones, TX 100.00
Timothy Barron, TX 5.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER BROOKIE J. STEWART

On January 4, 2003 Sister Brookie Stewart came to the end of her earthly journey, having lived 96 years. She was the daughter of Gustave M. and Cora Turlington Stewart. She received her education in the Harnett, County schools and Duke University. After teaching school for several years she was employed for 29 1/2 years with Durham-Southern Railroads as Clerk and Station Agent serving Durham, Erwin, Angier and Fuquay-Varina, North Carolina.

On September 3, 1927 she was received into the fellowship of Angier Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized the following day by Elder C. B. Hall. In April 1954 Sister Brookie was received into the fellowship of Durham Primitive Baptist Church on Confession of Faith and she remained a lovely and faithful member until her death.

Sister Brookie had received a hope in Jesus Christ when she was very young and this became the prime focus of her life. She was a lover of the Doctrine of Election, Predestination and Salvation by Grace. For most of her life, her weekends were spent visiting, among our churches, or helping *her parents* extend hospitality to ministers and other members visiting in Eastern North Carolina. Their home was for many years a delightful gathering place for the Old Baptists.

Brookie was a soft-spoken woman who could, if necessary, disagree with others while being careful to treat them with love and respect due believers in the Lord. She lived among her family and brethren with a gentle spirit and quiet dignity-

preferring their company and fellowship in her personal life while at the same time she was deeply respected in her community.

During the last two years of her life she was confined to her room but the Lord granted her an amazing measure of patience as she waited to be taken Home. ***"All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come." Job 14:14.***

While blessed with a keen intellect, sharp memory and a delightful dry wit she said that the most treasured of her blessings was the hope that she felt she received from the Lord, that He had died for her sins and given her a sweet hope of Heaven.

Brookie is survived by her sister-in-law, Mary Stewart of Dunn, North Carolina, two nieces, Carol Sizemore of Erwin, North Carolina and Marcia Norris of Raleigh, North Carolina and several grand nieces and nephews.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder C.B. Davis and Elder Cleo Robertson at Skinner's Funeral Home in Dunn, North Carolina. Burial was in her family plot in Coats City Cemetery.

Written by request,
Catherine M. Humbarger, Clerk

BRO. COLEY SPANGLER STRADER

Brother Coley Strader was born on July 28, 1914 to Lewis Benton and Betty Elizabeth Strader. On March 6, 2003 his Lord called him home. In addition to his parents, his precious wife of over 50 years, Sister Mildred Carroll Strader, his oldest daughter, Janice Strader Nueun, seven brothers, and three sisters preceded him in death. Left to mourn his passing is his son, Jerry and wife Brenda, his daughter, Colleen Shumaker, eight grandchildren, and five great grandchildren. His funeral was conducted by Elder Haywood Wray, Elder Raymond Goad, and by his pastor, Elder Kenneth Key at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church followed by his body being laid to rest in the church cemetery to await that call from on high, ***"Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matthew 25:34)***

Brother Coley asked for a home in the church and was received into fellowship on May 24,1959. His former pastor, Elder David Spangler, baptized him. As it was related to me, Brother Lloyd French came running to embrace him and said, "I knew it, I knew it", and Brother Spangler said, "Well, Brother Coley, we had just about given up on you" as Sister Mildred had joined the

church several years prior to that. In 1965 he was ordained as a deacon and blessed to serve the church faithfully until he was no longer physically able to do so.

There aren't enough words to relate what a blessing he was, not just to our church but to all of our sister churches and associations. As Sister Mildred Graham said, "he was a good deacon. He did so much and he did it so quietly." He was, as Brother Wray described, "a brother who was always there." For me what made Brother Coley so very special is best described in the words of Elder Richard Campbell, "...he had the knack of making each person that he met feel as though meeting them was the most important event in his life that day, a rare gift." His favorite hymn was "I know that my Redeemer lives; What comfort this sweet sentence gives." He would always say, "The Lord has been good to me. I've had a good life."

Brother Coley always had a warm smile and a warm embrace for his brethren. His countenance, at those times, portrayed the words of the hymn writer on page 240:

"...How sweet to my soul is communion with saints!
To find at the banquet of mercy there's room,
And feel in the presence of Jesus at home!"

It is written in John 13:34, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." I've known Brother Coley most my life, and I don't know anyone who has been more blessed to live this scripture. He didn't seek recognition - he simply did what the Lord blessed him to do, with joy.

He wouldn't want us to praise him because he believed as is written in *2 Corinthians 4:7, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Philippians 2:13)*

May his family, most especially Brother Allen Carroll, who was so faithful to be there for him, and all of us, who miss him so greatly, be blessed to feel that the eternal God is our refuge, *"and underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deuteronomy 33:27).* And, may we all be blessed with that brotherly love that the Lord so magnified in Brother Coley's earthen vessel. In all things, may the Lord be praised.

Submitted by one who had the utmost respect and love for him,

Mary Hawkins

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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POEM

IT IS THEN I SHALL DIE.

When springtime appears in her beautiful robe,
And the scene is a feast to the eye,
When woodlands are singing with melody sweet,
Is it then, is it then, I shall die,
When summer has come with her bright golden days,
And the hours seem swiftly to fly,
When softly the breezes are floating along,
Is it then, is it then, I shall die,
When autumn-dear autumn-his entrance has made,
And the hand of decay we decry,
When flowers are fading and passing away,
Is it then, is it then, I shall die,
When winter is here, in his desolate form,
And the rough winds mournfully sigh
Like a requiem sad, through the leafless boughs,
Is it then, is it then, I shall die,
The Giver of life-the Creator of all,
Enthroned in His kingdom on high,
Whenever He calls, it is then I shall go,
It is then, it is then I shall die.

THE foregoing poem was composed by the late Nannie B. Edwards.

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EDITORIAL

And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and in sin:" (Eph 3:1)

Elder R. H. Campbell

This scripture is found in Paul's epistle to the church at Ephesus, and it is one of the most pertinent verses to be found in all of the written word, to those who have been thus exercised. Paul addressed this epistle, to the church at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, which makes it equally relevant to every heir of grace in all ages of time. It is just as applicable to the churches, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, in this day as it was to the faithful and those in the church at Ephesus; and this being true, it sets at naught many of the claims which are advocated by many so called "Christians" today. They believe that they were "saved from sin" because they accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior, and then went to work helping him build his kingdom, by witnessing unto others and converting them to God. This is quite a difference from the above text, wouldn't you say? One group's faith is in God, his Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost for their salvation, and the others faith is in themselves, and what they can do if they will just make the first move.

The text says, you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sin, and this means to me, that they were in this condition at the time of their quickening. They were not quickened because they had made a decision to serve him, because that determination was made before the foundation of the world, as Paul stated, ***(Eph 1:3-5) "According as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of his grace, wherein he hath made***

us accepted in the beloved." Now, who is really the accepted in this determination, and who is the elector?

I believe that when the apostle Paul wrote this text he is referring to his own conversion, for he was just as antagonistic toward the church as he had ever been, when suddenly the light, which was brighter than the noon day sun, shined round about him and he fell to the ground. He was a quickened individual from that instant forward, and for the rest of his life he was a different person, and there is no evidence he was even thinking of God at the time of this change, at least, if he was, he did not mention it. His intent, at that particular moment in this mission, was to destroy the Church of Christ; and exterminate this sect of people, who were so adamant in their beliefs, and who taught a doctrine foreign to the Jewish faith.

In fact, in relating his experience, he said, *(Gal 1:13-17) "For ye have heard of my conversion in time past in the Jews religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: And profited in the Jews religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus."* He is saying, when it pleased God to quicken me, I began immediately to preach the gospel to the Christians, and also to the Gentiles to whom I was sent. Now, this would have been the perfect time for him to have related anything that he had contributed to this change, or any qualification that he had, but he simply said, when it pleased God; no other contingency or condition involved as a reason for his change. He certainly did not claim that his service unto God, under the law, was in any way beneficial to him, in fact, he said that he did all of those things which had done previously under the law, in ignorance and unbelief. This is where all men are, in the flesh; in ignorance and unbelief, as far as spirituality is concerned. He did not even go to those who were apostles before him to inquire about the doctrine, he had received his commission and the message that he was to take to the people, and he had received it directly from its author.

Every heir of grace is dead in trespasses and in sin, until they are born again, which is the quickening referred to in the above text, and just as they contributed nothing to their natural birth into the world of nature, they contribute nothing to their being born into the Spiritual kingdom. When one is dead, there is nothing

that they can do about anything, and with their being dead in trespasses and in sin, they certainly cannot bring about a change within themselves and get, from the natural to the spiritual realm, and into fellowship with God. The natural man; will not admit that he is dead in trespasses and sin, because he is not aware that he is. He has no spiritual experience or knowledge upon which to make this determination, but the scriptures declare that he is a dead alien sinner, as respecting godliness.

He can only compare himself to others, in nature, who are in the same depraved state and destitute condition as he himself is; he says that he is just as good as they are, and none of them realize the deplorable condition that they are all in. Paul said, speaking of these, and all men before they are quickened, *(Eph 2:12-13) "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel; and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."* This quickening, by the Holy Spirit, is the first indication that they have of the kingdom of heaven, and then, for the first time, they know just how foreign the natural realm is to the spiritual realm, and are aware of the great gulf that lies between these two extremes. It is easily understood therefore why these, who have been quickened, will not accept the theory that is advanced by others that they can transcend this great gulf by their own abilities or wisdom.

Being dead in trespasses and in sin, is where Adam was after he partook of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and judgment was passed upon him, the death that God had told him that he would experience when, he partook of the fruit of the only tree forbidden to him. This judgment was also passed upon all of his posterity as well, for they were all in him when the judgment was pronounced, and there is nothing that he, or they, can do to recover themselves from this wretched condition. If he could do that, he could just as easily have refused to accept the condemnation originally, but man cannot contend with God, or even question why he does things as he does, or why things are with them as they are.

Adam was separated from God and the environment into which he was originally created, and placed in the hostile world of nature, which is Satan's domain, told that the ground was cursed for his sake, and that in sorrow he would eat of it all the days of his life. God told him that thorns and thistles would it bring forth and that he should eat the herbs of the field by the sweat of his brow, until he returned to the ground from which he was taken. When Cain offered unto God a sacrifice, of the fruit of the ground, it was not acceptable unto him, because it came from

the ground, which had been cursed for Adam's sake. This is the condemnation under which the natural man has lived since that time, and will all of his life; unless he is one of those referred to in the text above.

This quickening, or new birth, is the manner in which it is made manifest that he is one of a very elect people, *(II Cor 5:17-18) "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given us the ministry of reconciliation, To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."* Having said this, and it being supported by the scriptures, how can the man, who is dead in trespasses and in sin, hope to perform this miracle when he cannot even receive the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. They cannot, and for anyone to say that they can just proves that they know not whereof they speak.

That should settle it once and for all, if people could actually believe what they read in the bible, but there are always those who, as Jesus told some on one occasion, *(John 6:36) "But I say unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not."* Seeing, reading or being told these things does not necessarily enable one to believe, because, unless they are given eyes to see, ears to hear and hearts to understand, spiritually, they will not believe it even though it be told and shown to them. The reason being that these things are contrary to everything that they have ever known, been taught or experienced in the flesh. They can only understand things in nature by way of cause and effect, and since they cannot see the cause with their natural eyes, they cannot understand the effect. As one elder once said, these things are not reasonable to the natural man; he cannot, and will never, understand the mystery of godliness, with the wisdom of this world.

Paul said, *(Eph 3:8-10) "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God."* This was the purpose of Paul's calling, and all others who have been called and sent forth, that the mystery, of godliness might be made known unto the church. It all begins with the quickening, first in hearts of

those who have been made ambassadors for Christ, to reconcile unto God, those who have also been quickened, and made alive in Christ. Their reconciliation unto God, is in their being made aware, by faith and their experience that Christ has been made sin for them, he who knew no sin; and his righteousness has been imputed unto them, and therefore they stand spotless before God.

This quickening by the Holy Ghost, is the foundation upon which the whole hope of things eternal is based; without it, they would have no spiritual life, no understanding of the mystery of godliness, no love for God or his Son Jesus Christ, nor the joys that are experienced in the love and fellowship of the brethren. There would be no hope of the resurrection and eternal life and the things that are so dear and precious to the saints, but, because of the quickening, all of these things are, unto the saints, the earnest of their inheritance which is laid up for those that have been so exercised.

Paul said, *(I Cor 3:11) "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus."* All of these things are but their evidence that this foundation is of the world that they should be holy and without blame before him in love: and are but being made manifest, in time, by their being quickened unto eternal life by the Holy Ghost.

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

VOICES OF THE PAST

GENESIS XLIV. 12.

"And the cup was found in Benjamin's sack."

The sons of Jacob had already been down to Egypt for corn, and had left Simeon there bound and in prison. When the corn was gone their father said unto them, ***"Go again, and buy us a little food."*** Judah assured his father they could not possibly go unless Benjamin accompanied them. Jacob hesitated for he had lost Joseph, and Benjamin, the only remaining child of his beloved wife Rachel, was very dear to him, but at last he bade them take of the fruit and carry it down to the man as a present, also said he, Take double money in your hand, and the money that ye brought again in the mouth of your sacks carry it again in your hand, and take Benjamin, and Jacob concluded, ***"If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."*** They returned to Egypt with Benjamin, and when Joseph saw them he commanded the ruler of his house to slay and make ready, for these men shall dine with me at noon. The brethren were filled with fear be-

cause they were brought into Joseph's house, thinking that Joseph sought occasion against them. They communed with the steward of Joseph's house regarding the money that was returned in their sacks, but he said, "Peace be to you! fear not." When Joseph came home they bowed themselves to him to the earth, and he lifted up his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his own mother's son, and said, ***"Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son."*** Joseph made haste, for his bowels did yearn upon his brother, he sought where to weep, and entered Into his chamber and wept there. After he had washed his face and refreshed himself, he commanded his servants to set on bread. His brethren were then seated before him, the first-born according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth, and the men marvelled one at another, and Joseph sent messes unto them from before him, but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of theirs. Then Joseph commanded his steward to fill their sacks with food, as much as they could carry, to put every man's money in his sack's mouth, and to put his silver cup in the sack's mouth of the youngest, as well as his corn money. When they were gone out of the city, and not yet far off, Joseph commanded the steward," Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good? ***"He overtook them and spake unto them these same words. Then took they down every man his sack to the ground and opened every man his sack. The search began at the eldest and left at the youngest, and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack."***

We shall here cease to follow the narrative, as our intention is to write of the cup in its spiritual significance, also of the characters with whom this cup is found. Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, bare his two sons: Joseph first, and then Benjamin. Jacob loved Joseph more than all his sons, and Benjamin, being the youngest, was also greatly beloved, for it is written, Jacob's life was bound up in the lad's life. Joseph was therefore Benjamin's elder brother, and Joseph being a lively type of Christ. Benjamin to our understanding is a wonderful type of the church in the gospel dispensation. The steward is the servant of Joseph, and represents the gospel ministers, who are stewards of the manifold, grace of God. It was the steward who ministered to the brethren when in distress over their returned money. He said, ***"Peace be to you! fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks."*** He it was also who searched the sacks, he stood in Joseph's stead and spoke the words

given him by Joseph. He also declared that they had the divining cup, and they denied it, for the thing was impossible with them; so wherever there are those whose iniquities encompass them around, they stand before their Judge self-condemned, depending entirely upon the mercy of him with whom they have to do. Such in their confession deny that they have the cup. The cup represents the sorrows, travail and separation which Joseph experienced while passing through the afflictions that were his lot according to God's purpose. The cup therefore was a type of the cup of our Lord Jesus Christ. He came down to the Egypt of this world where he was crucified, was sold by his brethren, and at Gethsemane he said, *"My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death."* He fell on his face and prayed, saying, Oh my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! *"nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."*

"How bitter that cup, no heart can conceive,
Which he drank quite up that sinner's might live."

As Joseph partook of his cup he divined the very things transpiring in his life to be according to the purpose of God revealed to him in the two dreams given him long before. It was in a Sense of loneliness he partook of that cup. It could not be shared with the Egyptians, he was alone. As our Lord partook of his cup, he divined and could say, *"This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."* He had a full cup. *"He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth."* This blessed Person is none other than our Elder Brother, though we knew it not. We have seen him pierced, and we mourn for him; when brought into judgment, we expect chains and death, and say, What shall we speak? We know not what to say nor now to clear ourselves. The brethren on their second visit for corn dined with Joseph, and it is written, *"Joseph made haste; for his bowels, did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep ; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there."* Whilst here on earth our dear Redeemer ate with publicans and sinners, and his bowels of love yearned over them. Often in the secret chamber of his solitary life he offered supplication with strong cries and tears for them, and for all his brethren. It is said that Joseph took and sent messes unto all of them from before him, but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of their's. The least notice or favor of our Lord to a poor sinner is not according to good works, but according to his love, and love is the fulfilling of the law. While the brethren representing the Jews received the law, yet Benjamin (the men of old wrote as moved by the

Holy gospel church) received five times as much, which signifies a fulfilled law. With those who are born of the same mother (Jerusalem above) the cup is found. They say it is not in their sack or life, yet they are grieved for the afflictions of Joseph; they are vile, sinful. When they would do good, evil is present with them. This is the cup. Yet when it is shown to them they tremble, for they fear it is stolen, that they are taking that which belongs to another. They feel God-forsaken, are fearful of death, offer supplications with strong cries and tears, they hate sin, but find it in their members, and are made to cry out, Not my will, but thine be done. As the steward, or preacher, by the Holy Spirit's guidance searches, the cup is found, and it is in Benjamin's sack; that is, in his who is the smallest and least in the family. There is little Benjamin with their Ruler partaking of the same cup. "And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders." The rest of the brethren could return to their father, but Benjamin shall dwell in safety by him. Only in a realizing sense of our own weakness is there safety, and then we know we have no righteousness, nevertheless our near kinsman Jesus the Lord shall cover us with his righteousness all the day long, and we shall dwell between his shoulders. What a safe place for poor weak sinners: between his shoulders. He carries the lambs in his bosom. It is also written, "The government shall be upon his shoulder." As partakers of his cup, though babes, they yet divine and see things that are hid from the wise and prudent. They clearly discern what men of old wrote as moved by the Holy Ghost. To the Jews under the legal covenant it was not revealed, but it is revealed unto us. In these things we have fellowship with God and are partakers of his cup. Not one shall come short of his glory, for if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him. The father's life was bound up in the life of the child. Jesus, our Elder Brother is Godman, therefore in him God's life is bound up in our life. As Joseph made himself known unto his brethren, so does our Lord Jesus make himself known with the glory of a risen Lord, who like as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. He showed to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus that his going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it. His blessed presence gives joy and gladness, and the five changes of raiment given Benjamin are but a faint type of the blessed raiment with which, from time to time, his bride, the gospel church, is adorned.

G. R.

AMARILLO, Texas, Sept. 12, 1922.

DEAR BRETHREN: – We are told to *"be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."* We are sure the time has come that was spoken of where the apostle says, In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils. The havoc he has made is enough to make the blood run cold in our veins and the heart to stand still. Spreading out, gathering to himself, until one of the head men at the thirtieth annual meeting of a religious convention said, "There is something wrong with the world; decay has set in ; the so-called social gospel is turning the churches into mere social clubs." Another man said, " God is not love. God is not everywhere." I have warned them ever since the SIGNS was first published, and told them, *"You are going into the quicksand."* They said, *"He is fighting."* Darkness? We all see the natural darkness every night, but how many of us ever think of the wonder of it? The power of its origin? How came it to be? Who is the author of it? Why does it have to exist? What is the use of it? I asked a man about this, and he said the dark is the shadow of the earth. I will ask another question: If the sun and all the stars ceased shining what would cause the darkness? The Bible says, *"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."* This is the first type portraying the more wonderful things of the spiritual kingdom: The deep depravity of our hearts enshrouded in darkness is set forth, and our emptiness also, "void." *"There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God."* All people are in nature's night and do not know it until they are called out of darkness into his marvelous light. (1 Peter ii. 9.) *"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."* Paul says, *"When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood,"* &c. Then he knew the people he wanted to kill were the children of God, and the way he thought to be unto life he found to be unto death. No one can see the light who has no eyes.

"I form the light, and create darkness." -Isaiah xlv. 7. *"Thou*

makest darkness, and it is night, wherein all the beasts of the field do creep forth. The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God. The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens."-Psalms civ. 20-22. These can be in the dark; they like the dark the best. So do the antitypical beasts. Therefore it is written, ***"Men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."- John iii. 19. " For, behold the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people." - Isaiah lx. 2.*** This prophecy is being fulfilled, but we have a promise in the last of this second verse, for it says, ***"But the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee."*** (Jesus.) Third verse : ***"And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."*** Not natural kings, but, ***"Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father,"*** &c. When God is pleased to withdraw from his people all the anti- typical beasts of our flesh begin to creep forth. David said, ***"My sore ran in the night."*** When it was dark to David the awful crime he had committed when he had Uriah killed caused him to tremble, and fear, and hang his head, and the stench of that awful sin, a continual running sore, was offensive to him. Then when it is night we, too, realize our miserable sinfulness and our wretchedness. We are terrified spiritually, as a little child in the midst of a dense forest, with the wild beasts roaring, screaming, howling near. No wonder the children of God are filled with fear and trembling when the antitypical beasts appear in all of their horrid forms, so loathsome and degraded. This is set forth by Paul in English language where he says, ***"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, ...murders,"*** &c.- Gal. v. 19-21. What horrors, what awful faults we have, what terrible power these have; nothing but the Spirit of God can deliver us from them. It is only God in You that delivers you; nothing else can. ***"Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."- 1 John iv; 4.*** How thankful we ought to be when God raises us above these and keeps us above them by his power. Peter says, ***"Kept by the power of God,"*** &c. Surely if this is true God deserves our praise and adoration. It makes his little ones willing to go through cold and heat, mud and snow, wind and storms, afflictions and persecutions, be put in stocks, and burned at the stake. Count all things but dung, that you might win Christ, and be found in him, not hav-

ing mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." The darkness is necessary. We must have the night, and cloudy, gloomy weather, or we could not appreciate the bright, clear day. The spiritual gloom and darkness must come first, or we could not appreciate the glorious arising of the Son of righteousness. *"Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings."* Had we never been wounded we would not need healing. All through the long, dark, dismal night you have waited and watched for his appearing. *"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."* All through the long legal night the prophets were telling of a glorious day that would surely come. David said, *" Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."*-Psalms xxiii. 4. *"The valley of the shadow of death."* The legal dispensation was called the ministration of death. Under the law or shadowy dispensation it was very dark. Paul says, *"For the law, having a shadow of good things to come,"* &c.-Heb. x. 1. This law dispensation no doubt is what David had reference to when he said, *"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod [Jesus] and thy staff they comfort me."* David, by the light he received from the indwelling of the Spirit in him, was enabled to foretell the coming of the dear Savior, notwithstanding he lived during and under the law dispensation for he said, They made long their rows, they plowed upon my back, referring to the very time they scourged your precious Savior. Again, he said, *Psalms xxii. 16, 17: "They pierced my hands and my feet [referring to the crucifixion] I may tell all my bones,"* referring to the elect of God having the truth made known to them. Solomon says, *"My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away."* That is, until the law is fulfilled and the gospel dispensation, a dispensation of light, is brought in. Isaiah says in ix. 2: *"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death [law dispensation], upon them hath the light shined."* When a little ray of light would come to the prophet Isaiah he would exclaim, ix. 6:1 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given," &c. Fifty-third chapter : *"Who hath believed our report and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant,"* &c. Again, in sixty-third chapter: *"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? ...I have trodden*

the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me." Foretelling exactly what did occur when they took your dear Savior and brought him before the king. Peter, who said, Although all men forsake thee, yet will I not. But he did. The prophecy must be fulfilled.

"While all exposed to wrath divine The glorious sufferer stood."

" Was it for crimes that I had done

He groaned upon the tree ,

Amazing pity, grace unknown,

And love beyond degree."

The suffering and coming of the dear Savior was set forth in type, shadow and plain language in all the Old Testament. *"As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein there is no water."* Shut up under the law. *"Sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money."* You never would have seen a star had it not been for darkness, but when the sun is set the beautiful stars appear and twinkle delightfully. So when the dear Savior withdraws his presence, then you are enshrouded in darkness, and how you delight to meet those who shine as stars forever and ever. Daniel xii. 3: *"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."* As you stand in the natural dark and look up at the millions of stars, and 'the moon comes out, shedding forth her wondrous silvery light, you behold in these the glory of your heavenly Father. You pass through a long dark season, and by this experience you learn the truth that you could learn in no other way: *"Tribulation worketh patience,"* &c. You learn by being helplessly in the dark that you are not free to do, think and see as you choose. Had you never been in darkness you could never have been made to rejoice because of deliverance. Paul says. Col. i. 13, *"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son."* No nation on earth but the children of God have heard in all ages the voice of the stars proclaiming the glory of God to them. Therefore David says Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world; there is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. God loved his people too much to leave them without manifesting his glory and power to them in the stars and planets. Do you wonder it is dark, when we are told that we were not simply in the dark, but as it is written, For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord, walk as children of light it is true *"we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as I am*

known." That will surely be a glorious day to all the tempest-tossed, sin-bedarkened children of God, who have passed through wary dark, lowering, threatening clouds while waves of sorrow have rolled over them, and darker and darker has it grown around them, while they, like Peter, have cried out, Lord, save me. But when the darkness is impenetrable, and the awful waves are dashing your frail bark on the sea of this life, all the Savior has to do is to say, *"Peace, be still,"* and there is a great calm. A few more days of groping in the dark, with just now and then a little ray of light, and then with rapture and surprise you poor little trembling one will be where,

"All o'er those wide extended plains,
Shines one eternal day;
There God the Son forever reigns,
And scatters night away."

ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

ST. JOHN, 15: 15-16.

Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

THE COMMON SALVATION

This expression is used by Jude, and does not occur elsewhere in the Scriptures. This inspired writer addresses his epistle *"to them that are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called."* To them he says, *"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you; and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."* There is but one salvation that can be called common, that is, common to all the sanctified, or elect, of God, and that is the salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ, that salvation from sin and death unto eternal life, which is the theme of all the inspired writers. That this is that salvation which the apostle designates as "the common salvation," is clearly evident by the reason which he gives for the necessity of writing to them about it.

"The faith which was once delivered unto the saints," is not that grace of faith which "is the fruit of the Spirit," but that doctrine and order of the gospel in which the salvation of God is made known to the saints in the world. This is that "mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations, but now is made manifest unto his saints," and this mystery *"is Christ in them the hope of glory."* (Eph. iii. 5; Col. i.

26, 27.) This doctrine of salvation by grace, and the order of the gospel, was delivered unto the saints on the day of Pentecost, when the gospel church was established. The apostles were charged with the authority to teach it to the saints, and to set all the commands of Jesus concerning the church in order, as judges sitting upon thrones, to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. All this gospel system is made known to the faith of God's people. It is not understood by the natural mind, but by an understanding especially given for this purpose. (1 John v. 20; Eph. i. 17-23.) This doctrine of God is spoken of as *"the faith of the gospel."* Paul uses the word faith in this sense, as a system of faith, in Romans i. 5; xvi. 26; Gal. i. 23, and in other places. This faith, or doctrine, in which the eternal salvation of the saints is declared and made manifest in the world, is of the utmost importance and value to the saints. It is more than all the world to them. It sets forth and declares *"the wisdom of God is a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory."* — 1 Cor. ii. 7. It declares the ways and wisdom of God in salvation, as contrasted with the ways and wisdom of men. It was once delivered unto the saints in the morning of the gospel dispensation, and it is needful that they earnestly contend for it, for the whole world, and all the influences of the world, are opposed to it.

I have said that there is no other salvation which is common, either to all men naturally or to the saints. Natural salvation, as salvation from wounds or death in battle, from shipwreck, from loss or destruction by earthquake, fire, flood or disease, from misfortune or affliction of any kind, cannot be called a common salvation, for all are not saved from these things. Nor can that salvation of the Lord's people from error, from a fleshly walk and the loss or death that results from it, from stripes on account of transgression, which may be called a time salvation, be called common, for all are not saved in this sense. Some do walk after the flesh and die; some do transgress, and are visited with the rod. This liability to wander from the right way, and yield to temptation in some of its many forms, and so suffer, is referred to by all the apostles, and is made the subject of faithful, earnest and tender admonition and exhortation. But some do yield to the temptation for a time, and suffer the sad consequences. There is an experience of the weakness of the flesh on the part of all of the saints in some measure, so that every one who is received is scourged and chastised. (Heb. xii. 6.) All must learn that they are dependent entirely upon the care and grace of God for the orderly walk which shall secure to them this time salvation, so that they shall not depend upon themselves, as Peter did, but upon the Lord. They must learn that *"we have the sentence*

of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raiseth the dead." Some, through the faithful labors of brethren, are saved from death. (James v. 19, 20.) Ministers, by faithful labor in the gospel, save themselves and them that hear them, from false doctrine and practice. (1 Tim. iv. 16.) All this is the work of grace. But some are left to see more fully, and experience more deeply, the corruption, depravity and untrustworthiness of the flesh, even going so far in an ungodly walk that they are *"delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."*

All for whom Jesus died are saved with an everlasting salvation, and shall finally be restored from all their wanderings, healed from all their backslidings, and brought home to glory, to the praise of the riches of God's grace. This everlasting salvation is common to all those who are sanctified, set apart, chosen, by God the Father. These who are the elect are preserved or saved in Jesus Christ, as the eight souls were saved in the ark. In him they were buried by baptism into death, and so satisfied the law. In him they were raised up from death, and so death has no more dominion over them. In God's own appointed time each one of them is called by grace to a knowledge of this salvation, which is wrought in them.

A common inheritance, or an inheritance in common, is one in which each heir has an undivided part of the whole. It cannot be divided; it all belongs to each one. It may be illustrated by the light in a room full of people; the whole light belongs to each one in the room. No one can have a right to more than another, though one may be in a condition to enjoy more than another. So with this salvation, each one of those who are called has a right to all of it. It is the common salvation, common to the whole family of God. They are joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ to this inheritance, and shall finally, all of them, be conformed to his image, and enter upon the full realization of this common inheritance in glory.

But the enjoyment of this common light, this common salvation, while here in the flesh, is more in some than in others. To enjoy an inheritance which cannot be divided the heirs must be as one, must be of one mind and one soul. And so it is with the Lord's people when they are in the Spirit. Then they dwell together in unity, the unity of the Spirit, and find how good and how pleasant it is. (Psalm cxxxiii.) But when the flesh prevails in the case of any, and they strive to walk by sight instead of faith, then their right to that salvation is not fully enjoyed. Sometimes their birthright is sold for some fleshly good, and they are deprived for a season of the light and comfort. But they cannot dispose of their inheritance, though they suffer loss in their daily experience. It was needful for them,

therefore, that the apostle should exhort them to contend earnestly in their daily life, in their walk and conversation, for that faith, that doctrine and order of the gospel church, unto the obedience of which they have been called, and that they attend with care to all that pertains to the church of the living God, seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, above all worldly things. The grace which brought them salvation taught them all this proper gospel walk. (Titus ii. 11, 12.)

The salvation which is eternal, and the salvation's of various kinds which are experienced by the saints in time, bear the same relation to each other which the sun in the heavens and his beams upon the earth bear to each other. We know nothing of the Sun till his light falls upon us; we know nothing of Jesus, who is our salvation, and the Sun of Righteousness to us, till his healing beams are felt in our souls. "In thy light shall we see light." It is by and in our daily experience that we learn all that we can know here in time of our eternal salvation. In every experience of suffering, of tribulation, of stripes, and of salvation from these evils, we learn more of this salvation, and only in tribulation do we learn anything concerning it. Whatever Jesus tells us is told us in the darkness, but we speak it in the light. Jesus is our salvation here in time, and to eternal days.

March, 1900.
Elder Silas H. Durand

1 CORINTHIANS III. 16. 17.

"KNOW ye not that ye are of the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy. for the temple is holy, which temple ye are."

A poor sinner seeking for the truth has asked us to write you this Scripture. and we should love to be able to do this in such a way as to satisfy the longing soul, but the Lord himself is the only source of all wisdom and knowledge, and it shall never be said that any man has been able to teach his brother to know the Lord. This present inquirer has told us that in reading the Bible everything seems to condemn her, and even those passages which seem to hold forth some precious promise carry with them a qualification which seems to cut her off. If we have experimentally known anything of the truth ourselves, we have fellowship for her condition of mind. There was a time with us some years ago when to read the Bible meant for us to see our own condemnation in every line of it. It is a sore experience, and cuts the poor sinner down to the ground, but like all the things in the lives of the children ot God, it is altogether needful in order that we thereby learn the way of salvation more perfectly, and realize that no flesh can glory in the presence of the Lord. It

is said in the Psalms that blessed is the people that know the joyful sound they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. Have you ever thought what it means to walk in the light of his countenance' The light reveals, or discloses, and among the things which light shows are the nakedness of self and the hidden evils of the human heart. We want to say, therefore, to our inquirer that the very exercise of mind she is now undergoing is proof that she is walking in the light of her blessed Lord's face. How otherwise could she be filled so with mourning over her weakness and sinfulness? How otherwise could she have so tender a conscience that the slightest vanity or selfishness pains is so keenly felt? "The tender herb" mentioned in the thirty-second chapter of Deuteronomy is undoubtedly this tender conscience made tender by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of truth shall come upon this tender herb as the small rain. Thus shall the tender conscience grow up into knowledge of the way; that is, by being fed with the doctrine. Therefore we shall now turn to the text, hoping to bring forth by the Lord some instruction in righteousness to this very tender conscience. It is true from the teaching of the Scriptures that the church as a body is one and indivisible and that, as a unit, it is the temple of God. The Almighty dwells not in temples made with hands, but in his church composed of lively stones, builded up through the Spirit for the habitation of his honor and glory. However, in the text at the head of this article it is not the church as a body which Paul is considering, but each individual member of the church. Each member is himself or herself the temple of God, and He lives and has his belief in each believer. This cannot be otherwise than true, because each believer is born of God, else he could not be a believer, for belief comes by the operation within of the same power which raised Christ from the dead. It will be noticed in the text that it says "ye," and not "you," are the temple of God and again in the seventeenth verse it says ye "instead of you." Ye is the singular number and you " the plural number in the ancient form of the second person. The fact, therefore, that Paul uses the singular form proves to our mind that while it is true that the whole church as a body is the temple of God, the writer in this instance is maintaining that each single individual member ot that church is a temple of the Lord. Truly the tabernacle of God is with men in this very day, and all who are subjects of the new or heavenly birth. are partakers of the divine nature, and so have the very God of heaven dwelling within them. No wonder the Savior said to his followers that the kingdom of heaven was within them. In each true believer is the King ruling by his love and the power of his grace. Since it cannot be otherwise than true according to

the Scriptures that the power of the Lord dwells in our mortal bodies, then it must follow that the mortal body itself is the temple of the living God, and that whenever the believer takes his mortal body and commits uncleanness with it, he is thereby defiling the temple of the Lord. This brings us to the matter in the seventeenth verse, that whoever defiles the temple of the Lord, him shall God destroy. This, too, is the part which worries our inquirer after truth. In this passage she reads her own condemnation, for she has a fear that she has defiled the temple, and is thereby headed for destruction. Dear child of God, you who fear the Lord so solemnly and so reverently, this does not mean you. The very fact that you are dwelling with fear and trembling is your preventative against defiling the temple that is, your mortal body. Godly fear is the hatred of evil, and so long as this hatred of evil dwells actively within us, there can be no defiling of the temple. Defiling the temple results from a heart grown cold toward God, and from a conscience seared as with a hot iron so that it cannot feel the pain of sinfulness. When a believer uses his mortal body to satisfy the lusts of the flesh in committing fornication, or other baseness, he defiles the temple of God. In this same first Corinthians, sixth chapter, Paul establishes this as follows : *"Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot, God forbid, know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body. For two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."* Both the body and the spirit of the believer are God's by right of redemption, and it is proper that God should be glorified both in the spirit and in the body of the believer. Therefore, to use the mortal body to commit fornication with it would be to join that which is a member of Christ's body to the body of a harlot, which would be to defile the, temple of the Lord. "Him shall God destroy, Such an one would be unfit for the company of the saints, and could not be admitted into the fellowship of the kingdom of heaven here on earth, nor if he were already in the kingdom could be retained there, but would have to be excluded from the fellowship of the church here in the world. Not that the believer would be destroyed eternally from the presence of the Lord, but he would be destroyed so far as the

kingdom here on earth is concerned. *"Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."* By the "kingdom of God" here is not meant the eternal world of glory, but the visible organization of the church here in the world. Such believers as take their bodies to commit any of the above offenses do thereby defile their mortal bodies, which are the temple of the Holy Spirit, and such shall be destroyed from the love and fellowship of the church here on earth. Our inquirer, who has asked us to write on this, and whose conscience is so tender that the least vain thought and foolish imagination pains it, is not of those who defile the temple of the Lord, rather. she is possessing her body in patience and without blame unto the coming of the Lord; but how subtly the tempter takes these very blessed things and twists them so as to torment God's little children, and so tries to wrest them from their faith. Thanks be to God, the adversary shall not succeed, but when the Lord shall appear to relieve the anxieties of our inquirer, Satan shall hold his peace and slink away defeated into everlasting destruction.

We hope what we have here written is unto the glory of God and to the comfort of his little ones.

L.

"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." -- *Revelation i. 18.*

What a mercy that he who was dead lives at God's right hand! that he lives as a risen head; that he is not a dead Saviour; but a Saviour that lives for evermore; that can and does bless; that can and does comfort; that can and does bring the soul safely through all. He is not a Saviour that stands as it were upon the brink of a river, and pulls us out when we have swum half way out ourselves; he is not a Saviour that will take us half way to heaven, and then, as Rutherford says, let us *"fend"* or shift for ourselves. He must take us to heaven throughout. We are nothing, we have nothing without him. He must be, as he is, our *"all in all."* We value him in his death, nothing but his death could reconcile us to God; we value him in his life, nothing but his life can save. We want salvation now; salvation in the heart; a Spiritual salvation revealed in and unto the soul; a salvation worthy of the name, wholly, fully, completely, finally, and everlastingly to the praise of super-abounding grace; a salvation indefeasible, never to be lost; worthy of God, worthy of the God-man; adapted to every want of the soul, coming into every trial of the heart, and able to save the vilest and the worst, *"without money and without price."*

Elder J. C. Philpot

MEETINGS

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 2003 Smith River Association will Convene the Lord willing, with Long Branch Church the first Sunday in September, Friday and Saturday before. (September 5,6,7)

Long Branch Church is located 19 miles west of Rocky Mount Virginia on route 40 in Franklin County.

We invite all lovers of the truth to be with us.

Tony R Horton , Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 27 & 28, 2003.

Rehobeth Church, located at El Dorado, AR., five miles north on Highway 7 and one half mile west on Highway 335, will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
318-778-4217

PSALM 119:9-12.

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 2003

Loy Rodgers, AR 5.00
Amanda Saunders, NC 3.00
Carrie Jo Williams, TN 5.00
W. H. Norman, NC 15.00
Amanda Ashworth, VA 5.00

OBITUARIES

JEANIE SHORT MURPHY

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write an obituary for my mother-in-law and a dear sister at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church. She was a faithful member for 51 years. Her life was to cook for church members and friends as long as her health permitted. Sister Jeanie was received by experience and baptized September 9, 1951 at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church and dismissed by letter May 13, 1967. She was then received by let-

ter May 28, 1967 in Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church. In the early morning hours of November 28, God called Sister Jeanie from her long physical suffering at Autumn Care Center of Altavista, Virginia.

Born April 17, 1906 in Pittsylvania County, Jeanie was a daughter of the late James Short and Martha Cox Short. Sister Murphy was predeceased by her husband, Willie Brown Murphy and great-grandson Christopher Dale Smith. She is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, Rebecca and Marvin Brumfield of Hurt, Virginia, three grandchildren, Joan Smith of Gretna, Virginia, Lyn Brumfield of Medora, Indiana, and Troy Brumfield also of Gretna, Virginia, and four great-grandchildren, Heather Smith, Kelly Smith, Todd Brumfield, and Dustin Brumfield.

Funeral services were conducted at 2:00 p.m. Saturday, November 30,2002 at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor Elder Raymond Goad. Sister Murphy was laid to rest in the church cemetery, to await the coming of the Lord. It does not appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is.

She will be greatly missed by all who knew her. We bow in humble submission to the will of our Holy God.

Written in love I hope,
Marvin Brumfield

SISTER CORINNA (CONNIE) PAGE

Born February 26, 1922, in Danville, Virginia. She was the daughter of the late Elder Samuel Morgan McKinney and Lena Dix McKinney. The Lord called her home May 7, 2003. In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by four sisters, Gracie Johnson, Muriel Strader, Irene Setliff, and Mossie Walsh; one brother, Grover McKinney. Left to mourn her passing is her husband of 50 years of the residence, George Bethel Page, Sr. In addition to her husband are two sons, George Bethel Page, Jr., of Eden, N. C., and Samuel Morgan Page of Ruffin, N. C.; two grandchildren, Jared and Caroline Page; two sisters, Kathleen M. Powell of Ruffin, N. C., and Viola M. Hill of Danville, Virginia. She is also survived by several nieces and nephews.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Haywood Wray and her pastor, Elder Kenneth R. Key, at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, followed by her body being laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the call from on high.

Sister Connie asked for a home with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church September 12, 1982. She was baptized October 10, 1982, by her pastor, Elder David Spangler.

She was a firm believer in Christ and in salvation by grace. In St. John chapter 17, verse 4, Christ says, *"I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."* Also in 1st.

John chapter 19, verse 30, Christ said, "It is finished." Sister Connie believed in a finished work.

Sister Connie was secretary and treasurer of the cemetery fund. We worked together for several years. She was a good person to work with. She kept her books in good order. She was blessed to hold fast to that faith "which was once delivered to the saints" to the very end. I believe she could say with the apostle Paul in 2nd Timothy 4:7 & 8, ***"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith! Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of rightousness, Whlch the Lord, the rightous judge, shall give me at that day. And not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."***

We are saddened by her passing, but we feel our loss is her eternal gain. May we all be blessed to look to him, the author and the finisher of our faith. This obituary is written by one who esteemed her highly and appreciated her love and fellowship in the church.

R. Allen Carroll
Church Clerk

ST. MATTHEW 5:10.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

CINDY UNDERWOOD PARSONS

Sister Cindy Underwood Parsons born March 16, 1928 and passed away from this life March 12, 2003 at the age of 74. She was born in the Endicott section of Franklin County to Isaac J. and Dillie T.Underwood, who preceded her in death. She was also preceded in death by her loving and devoted husband of 52 years, Wilford Grant (W.G.) Parsons, one sister Clynda U.Trail and one brother Henry Underwood. She is survived by two sisters, " Sister Eula Ina Quinn and Gloria U. Trail and many loving nieces and nephews. Brother and Sister Parsons were united in marriage June 10, 1949 by Elder Raymond Payne officiating.

They made their home in Danville, Va. where she worked for 35 years at Dan River Mills, until her retirement Dec.15, 1982. Sister Cindy and Brother Wilford were given a sweet hope in Christ Jesus and a desire to be baptized - they were recieved into the fellowship of Long Branch Primitive Baptist Church, Oct. 6,1956 and was baptized the following day by Elder J.G.L. Hash.

Sister Cindy and Brother Wilford felt a strong calling to serve God's Little Children in opening up their home to feed and entertain company from the Church and Smith River Association.

Many afternoons there was sweet fellowship and singing at the schoolhouse where they purchased

and remodeled wlth God's little children in mind, as they converted a 4 room schoolhouse into a sweet place of fellowship for those of like faith and hope in Christ Jesus. Sister Cindy and Brother Wilford were blessed to have many wonderful years together and shared together in their firm faith and love of the doctrine of God our Savior that Salvation is by grace alone.

The Lord called Sister Cindy home as she slept peacefully at her home in Danville as her family was with her and doing what Sister Cindy always loved to do, preparing dinner and sharing in sweet fellowship. In her last days she stated "I hope it won't be long now" She told Sister Brenda Walker to find comfort in the scripture and quoted II Timothy 4: 7.. I have fought a good fight I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: reading back the prior verse II Timothy 4: 6 reads "for I am now ready to be offered and the time of my departure is at hand.

Services were conducted March 15, 2003 at Flora Funeral Home Chapel in Rocky Mount, Virglnia by her Pastor Elder Carl Terry and Elder Mark Terry. She was laid to rest beside of Brother Wilford in Danville Memorial Gardens.

Summitted with love by;
Sister Betty Walker

Sister Susie Mayhew Willis

It is time once again to say goodbye to one of our dearly beloved sisters in Christ Sister Willis was born December 6, 1903 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. She was a daughter of the late George Thomas Mayhew and Pencie Keesee Mayhew.

Sister Willis was predeceased by her husband Deacon Louis Robert Willis, two sons, Clay Willis, and Don Willis, a grandson, Bobby Willis, a sister Brownie Rosengarth, four brothers, Frank Mayhew, Elwood Mayhew, Robert Mayhew, and Morris "Moss" Mayhew.

Sister Willis asked for a home with Springfield Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized August 8, 1965. She attended church as long as she could. She always wanted to know how things were at church whenever I visited her.

Sister Willis is survived by daughter and son-in-law Marion and Oliver Dalton of Smithfield, Virginia. a brother, Ike Mayhew of Capitol Heights, Maryland, two daughters-in-law Emma Willis of Lynchburg, Virginia and Jean Willis of Emporia, Virginia, five grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

Funeral Services were held at 2 p.m. Monday March 17, at Colbert, Moran Chapel by Elder Marvin Brumfield and Elder Raymond Goad. Interment followed in the Mayhew Family Cemetery, there to await the second coming of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Elder Marvin Brumfield Moderator
Oscar Pickral Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

VOL. 171 MEADOWS OF DAN, VA., SEPTEMBER 2003 NO. 9

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

POEM

(This poem was composed about two o'clock one morning, after being pressed in spirit to arise and pen these thoughts. I have had several requests to re-publish it.)

When the moon in all it's glory,
Cast it's brilliance o'er the earth,
Then I thought of Jesus, Saviour,
And about his humble birth.

Soon I saw him in a manager,
Glory shining all around;
By a heavenly host surrounded,
Shouting, glory to his name.

Then I saw him meek and lowly,
Walk the earth in grief and shame,
All to save poor, wretched sinners,
Who will ever praise his name.

Next he bows inside a garden:
Sweat like drops of blood flow down; All the earth about him silent,
As he kneels upon the ground.

As he prays in solemn anguish,
For the cup to pass away;
Yet he knows that he must drink it,
To prepare the glorious way.

Then upon the scene most softly,
Came an angel dressed in white,
Touched him gently, said, look upward, Soon the darkness will be light.

Soon the scene of darkness changes; Darkness breaks, the light appears - Heaven opens to receive him,
Never more to bow in tears.

He appears in heaven for sinners,
Who were purchased with his blood:
All his intercession for them
Is because his life is love.

Then dear God, may all his Buffering, Guide me on this heavenly road;
May I never, never murmur,
As I think about my God.

Though my soul is oft in sorrow,
Soon these things will pass away.
Sickness, sin and all my trials,
Will be over in that great day.

Then our garments will be spotless
As we gaze upon his face.
We will need the Moon, no never,
For the Sun will take it's place.

When his children all shall meet him
On that bright and shining shore,
Where our sorrows, pains and trials,
Will be over, ever o'er.

Soon, my brethren, we shall meet him,
May his love be all our guide,
And his grace and tender mercy,
Land us safe on Heaven's side.

Sept. 1954 *D. V. Spangler*

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EDITORIAL

REDEMPTION

Elder C. C. Wilbanks

This is a vast gospel subject all the way from Genesis through Revelations and would require volumes to do justice to it, but if the Lord will bless me to do so I will write a short treatise and trust Him to apply it to His children as seemeth good in His sight.

According to Webster's dictionary "redeem" means to set free,

rescue, to deliver from sin and its penalties, to make amends for, to atone for. And a redeemer is one who redeems; Jesus Christ. Man may redeem something that belongs to him by paying a penalty, but he cannot redeem anything he does not own. Christ came into this world of sin and sorrow to redeem his children who were chosen and given to him by the Father before the world was ever spoken into existence and there was none of them. In Ps. 139:15-16 we read, *"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."* And in Jn.17: 6 Jesus said, *"I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me: and they have kept thy word."* In this scripture I believe we were given to Christ and Christ was given to us. These same children are partakers of flesh and blood, for they are the children of the first Adam, being in him when he was made from the dust of the earth. When he sinned by eating the forbidden fruit they also became sinners, for a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit; neither can a good tree bring forth evil fruit. We came forth from a corrupt tree therefore we are sinners. God's just and holy law says that the soul that sinneth must die, therefore when Adam died in trespasses and sin we died in him. David said, *"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."* God hath loved us with an everlasting love and his Holy Son stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. He could not die in his Godhead therefore he must become flesh and blood, for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. Therefore, *"For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."* He had to become incarnate to die, therefore he was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, for one must be under a law before one can be subjected to it. *"And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."* (Phil. 2:8). *"And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul*

an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities." Isa.54: 9-11.

By the grace of God our sins and iniquities were imputed unto Christ and his righteousness was imputed unto us. We were under the law of sin and death, but, ***"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." And we know that we "—were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold—but by the precious blood of Christ as a lamb without blemish and without spot."*** If we are the redeemed, our names were written in the book of life and we shall not be cast into the lake of fire which is the second death. (Rev. 20:15). Jesus is the only one worthy to look upon that book of life: ***"For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."*** Jesus is our life: in whom we live, move and have our being. We are the sheep of his pasture. He said, ***"My sheep hear my voice, —and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish."*** We were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Is there any way for any one to get into him now? No! There are many however who believe they are his and are compassing land and sea to make proselytes, not knowing that they are making them twofold more the children of hell than themselves. ***"They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him."*** Most of the so-called churches today are begging for riches so that they may send others to do this, saying that many are not being saved for the lack of money. But they ignore or do not know that God`s children are taught that ***"they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."*** No one who has been born again and made to see his own sinful condition would even consider such a thing and would be continually praising and thanking God for his redeeming grace and mercy through Jesus Christ his Lord.

When Jesus shed his holy blood and died on the cross we were in him. ***"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into his death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even we should***

walk in newness of life." "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin." (Rom. 6:4 & 6-7).

"Wherefore, my brethren, ye are become dead to the law by the body of Christ." Brethren, if we be dead to the law then we are under grace, for God sent forth his Son "To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

Brethren, how wonderful it is to feel by faith given unto us we believe that we are the sons of God, and if sons we are heirs of God through Jesus Christ our blessed redeemer. We will not know the fullness of this redemption until the Lord returns again at that last day and receives us unto himself. *"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: so shall we ever be with the Lord."*

Beloved brethren, let us ever praise and worship our redeemer the Lord Jesus Christ. I have not written as I thought I might when I started, but I hope that I have written as directed of his Spirit. May God bless it to his children as it seemeth good in his sight. And may he forgive any error herein.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks
2/25/2003

VOICES OF THE PAST

You will find recorded in the 19th verse of the 7th Chapter of Hebrews this reading: *"For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God."* The 25th verse reads: *"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."*

I believe I attended the last Association which was held here in 1924. A man who had been a member of this church signed my credentials. He was the clerk of the church at Spray, North Carolina, A.T. Robertson.

The Lord willing, I would like to speak to you a short while on the subject of the laws of the Bible. Though I have been speaking many years, I do not remember ever speaking on the Ten Commandments until last Sunday. Seems like I would have

gotten around to that in all those years, doesn't it? And the various laws I would like to present to you and the purpose of God in these laws. Whatever law is under consideration that I have read, Paul said, it made nothing perfect. This is in accordance with the scripture in the Bible where it is said that if there had been a law given that could have given life, righteousness would have been by the law. Paul has reference in this scripture to the ceremonial and sacrificial law, the law that the priest and the high priest administered in the House of God. Yet, in all the hundreds of years of legal service, all the lambs that were offered on Jewish alters or ceremonial services rendered by Israelites, nothing was made perfect by them. But Paul said, ***"The bringing in of a better hope did."***

What was the better hope? Christ was the better hope, something better than all legal services has ever been able to accomplish. And the effect of this bringing in of a better hope was that we might have an approach to God in the name of our Lord ***"by the which we draw nigh to God."*** This law was effectual in two ways. One of them was, it was renewal every time the high priest went into the most holy place that they were still sinners, the other purpose was, the promise that a saviour was coming and God compelled and required this of the Israelites to continue year after year, and the comers thereof were not made perfect.

And we take the first law that God gave man, in the Garden, when He placed him in the Garden and gave him right to every tree of the Garden except one, the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and Adam violated that law. The violation of that law made every person that's ever been born in the world a sinner.

People don't talk much about original sin any more. They are rather hesitant, I think we should talk about it because it removes man out of the picture.

By the disobedience of one man, sin entered into the world and death by sin for they all have sinned. Every human being who has been and ever will live sinned in the first man and fell, and man has never been able to redeem himself from that condemnation. Somebody said, did that include everybody? Some of you tell me one that was left out of it. All have sinned, not all will sin. All have sinned. YOU sinned in Adam, and YOU sinned in Adam, and YOU sinned in Adam. And YOU FELL.

And Paul in the 8th chapter of Romans said, what the law could not do in that it was weak, God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to redeem his people. From Adam to Moses death reigned, the Bible says, over all who have not sinned after similitude of Adam's

transgression. All of them from Adam to Moses were dead sinners, falling in Adam, lost and ruined, not able to extricate themselves from a lost and ruined state.

The Ten Commandments portrays two things: Mt. Sinai portrays, what does it speak to you of, it speaks of God's justice and His holiness. When God called Moses upon Mt. Sinai to deliver unto the people - God prepared the stone and He also prepared the writing on it and delivered it to Moses. It was a terrible place to stand, at Mt. Sinai, smoke covered the mountain. A man could not touch, or a beast couldn't touch the mountain unless it had to die. God's justice and His holiness were being brought to view. These laws were given and written by the finger of God. Moses returned from the mountain and he found the people he had left worshiping a gold calf. Somebody said: Was that God's people? If I had an opinion I'd tell you all of them weren't. Some of these brethren might disagree with me but I read in the Bible where all are not Israel that are of Israel. So to tell you that all of those people were God's chosen people in the realm of grace, I can't do it. It was a mixed multitude. That's what it was.

But for the grace of God we wouldn't have a God to worship today. None of us. None of us! Moses took the first tables of stone and he threw them down, THREW THEM DOWN. What does it represent?

The first covenant. A broken covenant. He was full of righteous indignation, I might call it. And God called him back upon Mt. Sinai, a terrible place, and then told Moses to take the tables of stone and I'll do the writing on them; and then you take these two tables of stone, the law which is called in the Book of Corinthians the administration of condemnation and the administration of death, that's what it's called, the law of Moses, written on tables of stone. And God had a place for them when Moses returned, there was an ark they were to be placed in and that ark is a type of Jesus Moses didn't break the last one, did he? And God put them in a safe place for keeping too, didn't he! The side of Jesus was opened for our sins.

Noah entered, the door of the ark was in the side, and God had Noah to prepare the ark for his own protection from God's own wrath, that's what it was. There were seven days from the time that Noah and others were brought into the ark until it started to rain. Somebody said, that looked foolish didn't it. He had said, Noah, come thou and thy house into the ark. Our God's word, and hope I received it when he said to me "come", and if He never says "come" to us we'll never come. And if He says "come" we will come. Come thou and thy house into the ark. And the Lord SHUT HIM IN. Seven days! Why would the ark stand there seven days and it not raining? It shows the safety of God's people in Christ before they need it. That's what it shows. They were just

as safe when God closed the door and sat there seven days - and then it begins to rain. It didn't just rain down from heaven, the depths were broken up, water was everywhere. Talk about stopping it, we can't start it and we can't stop it. But God opened the windows of heaven and He opened the fountains of the deep. And the earth was swallowed up. And there did come a time when upon all that vast water nothing could be seen but a lone ark floating there.

There was a time my friends in the judgment of God when He judged our sins in His own Son, when none could be seen except Him before the Father, who died in our room and stead. I'm sure that as the Israelites journeyed the most precious possession they had was their ark, the type of Jesus. I remember when Eli died-when Eli the priest died, he had two sons in battle and they brought Eli the word that your sons are dead and what happened. It grieved Eli that his sons had been killed in the battle but when they told him the ark had been taken he falls over dead. The ark was more important to him than his sons. If Jesus isn't more important to all of us today, where will we land when we leave this world? My Prophet, Priest, my Lord, my King.

I remember one night waking up singing the hymn-

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds In a believer's ear!

It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds, And drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole, And calms the troubled breast;

'Tis manna to the hungry soul,

And to the weary, rest.

When I came to that verse where it said-

'Till then I would thy love proclaim With every fleeting breath;

And may the music of thy name Refresh my soul in death.

I woke up weeping loud, I couldn't stop.

What is it that takes care of the law of sin and death? Has man ever taken care of it? Has he redeemed himself? Is there any law that man can perform of works that will save his soul from hell? Any? Then if righteousness came by the law, Christ is dead in vain. The law of the spirit of life in Christ. What was that spirit that did such a wonderful work? The law of the spirit of life in Christ, the Bible said, has made me free from the law of sin and death. If Christ left one sin of yours unatoned for, hell will be your home when you die. If you transgress in one point, you are guilty of the whole. He stood in the judgement of God for us. To me there will be no judgement for You, and You, and You, after death if Christ stood in the judgement for

you. How many sins will it take to land us in an eternal woe? Only one! Only one! But, He has redeemed His people by His precious blood.

He fulfilled the law while He lived. He obeyed every precept and the one blessed thing in it all: His obedience was a delightful work of His. I like to think, a poor sinner like I am, that it is as much pleasure for Christ to save me and joy as it will be for me to be in heaven, for I've sinned. Do you believe that? That's the way it is, my brethren.

And another thing I want to tell you, I don't think I'll ever stand in this association again. If we have been taught and reared by the spirit of Almighty God, God will be glad to receive us in heaven because it is the work of His Son, who lived in our room and He died in our stead. It took both of them. And He could say, I delight to do thy will, Oh God. The law of the spirit of life - life in it was what it was - made us free from the law of sin and death. Law is a rule or judgement and God said in His Word when he was to administer His justice, He said, Judgment will I lay to the line. What did He mean? He meant what He said. He meant that every sin must be at toned for for one will land us in hell. That's what He meant. He lays His judgment to the line in His own Son.

The laws of God. Paul had a law that he had learned and he didn't learn it from men. I delight in the law of God after the inward man. You couldn't delight in it unless there is an inward man.

The laws of God. The law made nothing perfect but the bringing in of a better hope whereby we draw nigh unto God.

Jesus is the better hope - maybe I just as well quit. I want to leave you with this thought. I shall soon close my eyes in death. Whatever I have preached stands for itself. I have no apologies. I have preached a sovereign God as best I could, who brings the administration of the law to the life of His people to show them their just condenmation and in His own way He rolls away the burden of sin by giving us a view by faith of Christ's blood and that faith that He alone can give us.

Transcribed from tape of sermon preached by Elder David V. Spangler at Smith River Association, Sept. 3, 1983.

Made available to the "Signs" by Naomi W. Houser

PSALM 19: 1-5.

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.

Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,

THE NINETIETH PSALM

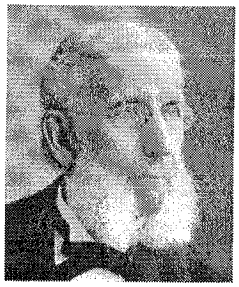
Elder Silas H. Durand

Not distinctly a Psalm, but a prayer, and that not the prayer of an ordinary man, but *"a prayer of Moses, the man of God."* This must be carefully observed, in order that many peculiar expressions in the Psalm may be understood. In this prayer Moses tells the trials, the experiences, the afflictions, the desires, of the Lord's people while under the law. Some of these peculiar expressions would not be true of those who have been given a good hope of life and salvation through Jesus Christ. The gospel character could not truthfully say, All of our days are passed away in God's wrath, but Moses could say it for all who are feeling the just condemnation of his holy law.

This wonderful prayer begins with the declaration of a glorious truth which underlies and comprehends all the reasons for true, spiritual prayer: *"Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations."* Not only in all generations in time, but *"before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou [art] God."* No language could more fully and clearly declare the blessed truth that the Lord has ever been, is now, and will ever be, in time and in eternity, the dwelling place of his people. It seems to be the especial intention of the inspired writer to establish this glorious truth, upon which so much depends, for all spiritual blessings which the church receives in *time* are given according as God hath chosen his people in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world. (Eph. i. 3, 4.)

Those who have been given divine life have a desire for that spiritual dwelling place, and for all the things that belong to it, even while their flesh is still sinful, and while they feel the condemnation of the law. In the Lord's manifested people the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, causing those who have eternal life to desire the things of God. So at the beginning of this all-comprehensive prayer this truth is expressed in unmistakable terms.

All true prayer is prophetic, and will surely be answered. The Lord does not pour the spirit of grace and supplication upon his people in vain. Notwithstanding the opposition of the flesh, the Lord's will and purpose will be accomplished. Now a wonderful thing is declared concerning the Lord's work, which our natural mind will be ready to dispute: *"Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men."* The power and province of God are here referred to by Moses as that which inspires true prayer. There must be a knowledge

by faith of those things which are the subjects of our desires and petitions before we can pray for them. No one can truly ask for anything he does not want. There must be a revelation in the soul of the things of the Spirit before one can pray for them. Elijah must have been given knowledge of God's purpose to bring upon the nation of Israel the terrible judgment of drought, and he must have been made to earnestly desire it before he could have earnestly prayed for it. "Everyone that asketh receiveth." But the prayer must be according to the will of God. The Lord desires holiness, purity, the destruction of evil works, the fulfillment of all righteousness. His Spirit in his people causes them to desire the same. The fear of the Lord is to hate evil. That holy principle in the hearts of his people causes them to hate evil, and to desire its destruction. The works of the flesh are all evil, and shall be destroyed. They shall perish like the grass. They are all as filthy rags. They all do fade as a leaf. The Lord alone can make any man see and know this. He only can turn his people to destruction, by causing them to see and know in their own hearts the sure destruction of all hope of righteousness by the works of the law. The natural man is satisfied with his own righteousness until he is turned thus to its destruction. He is turned from all his vain hopes and all worldly ambitions and desires for worldly exaltation, and sees sure destruction awaiting him, until the Lord reveals to him Jesus as the way of salvation, and says to him with power, "Return, ye children of men."

"For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night." How wonderful to think of the Lord as having all these thousand years before him, while generations have been coming and going, and men have lived and suffered and died, and nations have arisen and have been destroyed, and histories have been made and forgotten; with the Lord all this thousand of busy, throbbing years have been but as yesterday, when it is past, and are now but *"as a watch in the night."* Only one watch in all this thousand years, while men and nations have been watching and waiting, and that one watch not yet begun, for it is still yesterday. It is too great a subject for me to think about, much less expound.

"Thou carriest them away as with a flood." As though an overwhelming flood had carried away the years, with all that pertains to them. Only destruction and desolation left. But the Lord's will has been done with the thousand years that are gone. "They are as a sleep ;" a sleep filled with dreams so varied, so full of things, so great, so widespread, so full of activity, full of people moving to and fro; but in an instant the sleep is ended, and we reach out to grasp some of the broken dreams that filled the half hour's sleep, but

they are gone; not one thing left. So all the thousand years in God's sight are as a sleep. Also they are like the grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth and groweth up, in the evening it is cut down and withereth. ***"For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled."***

It is the flood of years we are considering, but also, and particularly, the people of God, whom these years concern. We think of the passing of time, and of the changes of seasons, and of the failure of all earthly things to endure, and of how quickly they pass away; and then how good it is to reflect that all the things of time and eternity are ever before the Lord, "our dwelling place," as one eternal now, for he inhabiteth eternity. And so this prayer of Moses comes to the time when the people of God are brought sensibly under the law of sin and death, and are made to feel the wrath of God against sin, and to know his anger which consumes them. Moses tells them in this wonderful prayer to the Lord the cause of all their trouble: ***"Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance."*** When the light of God's countenance is turned upon one, and the heart is laid open before him, nothing can be hidden from his sight. It is then that all our days are passed away in God's wrath, and we spend our years as a tale that is told. This is true only of the Lord's people who have been brought to see themselves as justly condemned, and who have not yet known the way of salvation through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. At that time the poor soul sees nothing to live for but to await the execution of God's just anger against sin; for the story of his life seems ended, the tale is told.

"The days of our years are threescore years and ten: and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow: for it is soon cut off, and we flyaway." Why this particular number of years is named as the measure of man's life I do not know. I have thought it may have been given to express the extreme limit of time when a man could hope to do effective work no more; when he could expect to carry out no ambitious purposes for himself or others. This appears more likely to have been the mind of the Spirit by the possible years to fourscore by reason of strength. The result of all the years given to man under the law, whether more or less, is "labor and sorrow." Man's work in natural things is labor and success, labor and joy. One man begins to build, and reasonably expects to succeed. If he fails, another follows and finishes the work.

But in the work of salvation a man always fails. No man can possibly make himself righteous by any work of his own, nor can he possibly procure salvation for another.

With the sinner this work is always a failure ; with him the years, even if fourscore, are always "labor and sorrow." The years are soon gone, the labor is soon cut off, and we flya-way. Again and again during the years in which this fruitless labor goes on, our minds are returning to our sad condition, and going over the ground to see if there can possibly be found any way in which our sins can be put away, any wav in which justice can be done and we become righteous and pure and holy. And Moses still in his prayer for us repeats in wonderful language the grounds of our condemnation: ***"Who knoweth the power of thine anger ? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath."***

We are told that "the fear of the Lord is to hate evil," and the Lord says of his people, ***"I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."*** In proportion as that holy and divine principle of reverential fear of the Lord is in the heart, in such proportion we know the power of God's anger against sin. But while we feel the power and justice of God's anger against sin, there is an exalted comfort in the very feeling of hatred against sin, and of love for holiness in our hearts. It is an unspeakable blessing to have that holy spirit of the fear of God in our hearts, which characterizes all of this sweet and beautiful prayer, even though it causes us to write bitter things against ourselves.

"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." This is the beginning of the form of supplication in this wonderful "prayer of Moses, the man of God." Hitherto he has made statements of truth concerning the Lord and his work, and the effect of his law upon the hearts of his people when applied to them by the Holy Spirit, causing them to see and feel their sinfulness and their just condemnation. Now the for of prayer and supplication begins. Those who have known the power of God's anger against sin have felt the love and fear of God in their hearts. They hate evil and love holiness, and hunger and thirst after righteousness. They desire to be pure and holy, but sin has already taken possession of them, so that they cannot do the things that they would. The fault seems always to be in their works, which are not good enough, and they try to do better, and so to turn the wrath of God away from them; and now they call upon the Lord to help them in this work, to help them to become righteous. They feel that if they made better use of their time they could do better, and they ask the Lord to teach them so to number their days, so to realize the value of them, and how short they are, even in the longest life, that they may apply their hearts unto wisdom, and so may accomplish more in their efforts to become holy; and this desire and prayer of their hearts will be answered, but it will

be in a way not known to them at present, nor by their own works, but by the work of Jesus, and to his glory.

"Return, o Lord, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants." Moses is still speaking in prayer, but is talking to the faith of the Lord's people, and pleading with him for them that he would be pleased to return from his anger against sin, and whether he could not repent, or change from his purpose to punish sin in his servants. This supplication in their behalf is most earnest, for faith has given Moses an assurance that opens up to him the dawning of the gospel day, when Jesus should be exalted that he might have mercy upon the Lord's servants, and that mercy might rejoice against judgment. (James ii. 13.) Every provision of the law, and every gospel declaration and promise found in the law and in the prophets and the Psalms, has precious reference to the unspeakable blessings of the gospel dispensation. So to the sorrowful soul who has been suffering from the wrath of God, in which his days are passed away because he sees no way in which the just demands of the law can be satisfied and the sinner saved, there is a sweet feeling of submission and comfort in the inspired words of this prayer: "Oh, satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days." It is to that faith which is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," that the man of God speaks, and by that faith the Lord's people hear and feel the goodness of spiritual things, and know the spiritual satisfaction that is in them.

This gladness which the Lord puts into the hearts of his people is more than the time when their corn and their wine increased. Nothing in this world can be like it. It is most solemn and pure, and fully satisfies our inmost desires, whatever of deepest affliction we may have ; whatever of pain and sorrow, it will not interfere with this work of the Lord. He makes us glad, and who can make trouble? This gladness is set over against our sorrows, so that in both we rejoice. *"Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil."* Now we are seeing that every twinge of pain was necessary, and will work for our good. Every experience of tribulation has worked some patience, some endurance. We now can pray that sorrow may be turned into joy. Darkness is made light before us, and crooked things straight. What wonderful assurance is here, what boldness of faith, that we should be able to pray that all our weary days of affliction and our long years of bitter pain and sorrow shall be turned into joy and gladness.

"Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children." The works of the sinner cannot remove the sin. He

can do no more toward that work in a thousand years than in one day. The more he sees and feels the nature of sin, and the just condemnation of the sinner, the more clearly he sees that by the works of the law no flesh can be justified in God's sight. All the preceding part of this prayer, so solemnly expressed, enlarges upon the sad condition of the sinner, and tells the desires of the redeemed soul for the mercy of the Lord, which will cause him to rejoice and be glad all his days.

It is only by the Lord's work that this wonderful change can be brought about. All the holy men of old desired to see this work, but it was hid from those ages and generations. ***"The prophets desired and searched diligently to know what, and what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow."*** Now there is a special desire that the Lord's work may appear, since the work of man has utterly failed. ***"As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." - Romans v. 19.*** Jesus obeyed the law for all of his people, being delivered for their offences and raised up for their justification. The law can bring no charge against them, for their debt is fully paid, and herein appears the Lord's glory unto the children of the prophets. The bold challenge can now be sent forth to all the enemies of the dear redeemed of the Lord: ***"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?"*** The Lord's work is not seen by the natural eye, nor understood by the natural mind. It is known only by revelation, and that revelation is only to babes, to those who have been born of God. This glorious work of Jesus appears unto the Lord's servants. It is made known to their faith. It appears in their experience, silencing all the charges that may be brought against them, and causing them to rejoice and be glad an their days, even according to the days wherein the Lord has afflicted them, and made them to see evil under the law.

"And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." Throughout all of this sweet and glorious prayer of Moses there is something so unspeakably sublime that my soul has trembled at the thought of venturing to write about it. But here I find something that now appears more transcendent, more heavenly, than any preceding expression, causing me to question seriously whether I ought to have undertaken to write upon a subject so glorious, so far beyond my feeble powers of comprehension, as this expression, ***"The beauty of the Lord."*** How often I have had those wonderful words in my mind, and tasted their sweetness, and tried to think of their meaning, and wondered if I had ever had any of that

precious meaning in my soul. To those who under the law were enabled to look upon Zion, the Lord said by the prophet, ***"Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off."-Isaiah xxxiii. 17-20.*** This Zion is called "the perfection of beauty," for out of her God hath shined. (Psalms I. 2.) She is also spoken of as "beautiful for situation," and "the joy of the whole earth." This, then, presents the beauty of the Lord. His work in the church is perfect, and the beauty of all that work is unspeakable. When the Lord builds up Zion he appears in his glory. (Psalms cii. 10.) All of the order and ordinances and doctrine of the church are perfect, and just such as are most lovely and pleasing to the most exalted intelligence and spiritual desire of the divine nature. All of the work required to be done by those who were under the legal covenant was required to be perfect. Every offering must be without blemish; also the priest who made the offering; and all the ordinances of divine service, and everything that pertained to that worldly sanctuary, must be without fault. These ***"patterns of things in the heavens"*** must show the absolute perfection that would appear in the glorious realities when the spiritual substance should appear. When the work in the first covenant was done, as required by the Lord's servants, it was all natural, but these natural things pointed to the spiritual things belonging to the church in her spiritual perfection and beauty. Then, when that church appeared in her gospel meaning, the work of those servants was established upon them. That was what Moses prayed for. And now, under the glorious gospel dispensation, it is the desire of the Lord's servants that their work may be established upon them; that all the work of our hands in attending to the order of the church may be so truly and faithfully done that our souls may experience the spiritual power and precious reality of the things which are not seen, which are eternal. (2 Cor. iv. 18.) When the members of a church are dwelling together in unity, walking in the order and ordinances of the Lord, and holding fast the form of sound words which they have heard from the apostles, then the beauty of the Lord is upon them. Out of Zion, out of that church, God shines. He appears only in Zion. Those who are united in such a church are as happily situated and as signally favored and blessed as a people can be in this world of sin and sorrow.

"The church of God is fair." All that presents her as the perfection of beauty is the Lord's work. Every ordinance, every gift, every grace, and all the experience of grace and salvation seen and known in this glorious church, are God's work. He shines out of all, and so presents his own perfect beauty in her. One thing every saint desires of the Lord, and that they seek after, to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of

their life, that they may behold the beauty of the Lord and inquire in his temple; that they may be always inquiring of him, always communing with him, always looking upon Zion, always beholding the beauty of the Lord, as it appears in his wonderful works, which he has established upon his people in the gospel of his Son.

Elder Silas H. Durand
OCTOBER 1, 1914.

MATT. 8:1-4; LEV. 14:1-7.

"When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if you wilt, thou canst make me clean and Jesus put forth his hand. and touched him, Saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them."

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing: he shall be brought unto the priest: and the priest shall go forth out of the camp; and the priest shall look, and, behold, if the plague of leprosy be healed in the leper; then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds alive and clean, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop : and the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water: as for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water: and he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose in the open field."

Even to the carnal mind there is a great fascination in the beauty of the prophetical kingdom of heaven. Of times we are enraptured by the allegories, similes, comparisons, that the divine inspiration has used to clothe His language in, and to tell us of what is to come. But this carnal mind can not know Him that has done this gracious work for the benefit of those that love the name of The Lord Our Righteousness. The coordination and the correlation, while fields in which carnal professors excel, will never be seen by them until their mind is illuminated by the light of the Holy Spirit.

Leprosy is more to be dreaded than cancer. Like cancer, if unchecked, it will eat away the human body. It will never be cured from

within; in fact, it is doubtful that it has ever been cured from without, as it is doubtful if cancer has ever been completely cured. When once it gains a foot hold in the body it will get worse until death is the result. The ability to attack and rout it from the body from within is not known in medical science. How fitting is the disease to compare it with sin. As it is with sin, one may have it a long time without any realization of its presence in the body. It is as sneaky as sin, but not as deadly as sin, for, while leprosy may, and, without outside medicine, will, destroy the body, sin will, without outside cure, destroy both soul and body.

It is a good thing when it is discovered in the body. As soon as it is discovered, there is immediately a seeking for outside help. This help is not sought by those that do not have the symptoms of the disease. Just as sure as a sinner finds out that he has leprosy there will be a seeking set in, and it will continue as long as he has the disease, which is as long as he is in the body. The disease may show in a sinner before he becomes aware of its presence, that is, its presence and deadly work may be apparent to those that have already known the disease. As long as they do not know it, there will never be a seeking for cure; as long as they do not know its presence there will never be any anxiety about its devastating work. *"There will not be any seeking and anxiety as long as one does not have a knowledge of the presence of sin." (Rom. 3 :11, 16; John 5:40), but when it is revealed unto sinners* that they do have sin, there will never be a cessation of seeking, there will never be a time when free from anxiety.

At the time of the opening of the text a leper came to him. How my wretched and sinful heart is made to leap for joy at this news. One who has no communion with Israel because of his uncleanness; one who is an outcast, and that is ready to perish (Isaiah 27:13), by the coming of Jesus, now has access to the dispensary of grace, there to receive all of that which cleanses. This disease was looked upon as God's displeasure, none had the right to heal it except God (2 Kings 5 :7) . They had been shut out from all religious and even civil communion from the house of Israel. As only the priest in type could come in contact with leprosy, cure it, and he be immune to its contagion, just so, in the same manner, could Jesus cure sin, and yet be immune to its deadliness fastening itself to him. This world "behold" is not put in the Book to make it larger, but it is put therein to call attention to the precious doctrine that the priest without beginning of days, nor end of life, is at hand to cure his people of all their sicknesses and diseases.

This poor sinner is the fit representative of every sinner that has ever come begging for mercy. He that taught him that he had the dis-

ease has also taught him where to go. He has faith to believe in the power of Jesus as the One that cleanses his people. He is one that believes that whatsoever his soul desires that Jesus will do. There is not any doubt in the mind of this sinner about Jesus doing his will, but he also knows that he is not an object to be thus loved. The disease has come to light: it has brought with it the terrible odor of putrifying flesh; it shows the outcast condition of the leper; it brings out the terrible and grotesque features of one who has become a victim of the workings of this deadly disease. *"If thou wilt, thou canst."* Not any question in the mind of this sinner (as well as those that have been taught at the same source), that whatever His will is concerning him, that He is able to carry it out. Sinner reader, have you found out as much ?

I am carried away in sweet meditation as I write to think that the Lord has given sinners the Lord Jesus Christ; that he has opened to them access to this grace, which access is operated by the faith of God's elect, which is wholly given them from the Lord, and is not predicated upon their exercising the faith, but that all of their enjoyment, and all of their access to it, is by and through them being exercised by the faith. Whatever a sinner asks God in the name of Jesus Christ, that sinner will get. The carnal mind will get impatient and ask, *"Has he forgot, has he gone on a journey?"* but not so with them that ask in Jesus' name. That which is asked for is received; no more, no less.

He has not asked in vain. As with other characters, his faith has saved him (Matt. 9 :22; Mark 5 :34; Luke 8:48; 17:19; 7:50; 18:42). Since the faith is the gift of God (Eph. 2 :8), this salvation, this coming to Christ, this asking, is all to the praise of his grace. Immediately Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, *"I will; be thou clean."* Instantaneous with the reaching forth of his hand, he talked to him; equally so, the cleansing took effect. Unbelief would say what else needs to be done? Unbelief would say, if you are cleansed from sin, it does not matter from here out. Unbelief would say, that nothing more is required of them thus cleansed. Let us see.

If we love God we will keep all of his commandments. The throwing out this or that; ignoring this commandment or that; the substituting of the many chimney corner scriptures for the Bible, all of this shows whether we know much about leprosy (sin) or not. It shows whether we have come to him as the Priest or to a priest that we will have to visit again at the end of a year. The direction is simple but it is rigid and thorough. See that you do not tell a man. You do not have any right to talk to any in Israel until after you see the priest, and he has pronounced you clean.

Why did the Saviour tell him to show himself to the priest ? why did He tell him to offer the gift that Moses commanded? We must remember that He honored Him to whom honor was due.

He came from His Father. While He was accused of breaking the law, he did not. The law was just and holy and good; it came from God. He came under the law. He did not come to break that law, but he did come to fulfil it. His sending him to the priest was in full recognition of that law. The commandment of Moses was in full force here, but it is reckoned as a gift. And such it is, if we are blessed of God to meditate upon it.

Have you seen the effects of sin in your members ? Have you felt the infiltration of sin through and through every part of your being? If so, it has reduced you to despair, and revealed to you how helpless that you were, and how that you needed somebody to carry you to cure. Let us look in on this case. May it please God that we find ourself and find comfort for ourself. The law of a leper was that he be brought to the priest, not that he decided to come, but that One decide and bring him. This law, whether for leprosy as a disease, or for sin as its antitype, has never been changed. It will be noted that this interview was outside the camp. The cure for leprosy can not be carried on in the camp of Israel; the cure for sin is not to be carried on in the church, for it is not a reformatory. The priest, whether under the law for leprosy, or under grace for sin, must, and always does, meet the victim outside the camp. There is not anything said about how far he is to go to meet the victim. Christ went far and near; he did not say anything about it being too far.

Precious reader, it attacks first in the hand. Have you found the sign in your palm? As you looked on what you thought was a hand showing good health, did it cause uneasiness to find that spot that betrayed you? Until this did take place you did not go to the priest. Not once did you go. Suppose that you had gone? What would he have thought? What would he have said? But when it showed in the palm of your hand that you had that dreaded sin, then you did go to the priest. Not one has ever failed to go; not one has ever been failed by the love of God in carrying them to the priest. He examines it. He looks with that keen perception. You feel the scrutiny of those penetrating eyes. You writhe under the gaze. You know what the verdict will be, for you have seen your hands as unclean; you have felt the inward ruination of the silent work. But wait a moment. Is he not going to condemn you? Is he not going to continue the separation? Is he not going to leave you to continue a victim of the dreaded malady? No, no, not that at all.

This cleansing, this cure, these miracles are more than a match for

our tongue, our heart, our understanding. Everything is set in motion *by* the priest *for* the victim. The cure can not come from within, but it does come from without. In the offering there are several things. None of them are supplied by the victim. There must be two clean birds. Not one, not three, but two clean birds. O Lord give me grace to declare the predestination of God; to declare that he has declared the end from the beginning, even to the kind and the number of birds that are used in the figurative cleansing of a sinner. The kind of wood that is to be carried is as important as was the wood from which Noah made the ark. Wood is not enough; it must be cedar wood. But why will wood not do? Why cedar wood? Why be so exact? If any way will do in saving a sinner, no way will do just as well. Cedar wood in the church is most useful (S. S. 1:17). It is used in the foundation of this glorious building. But why is this used in the cleansing? To show forth the duration of the cleansing. One of the best characteristics of cedar wood is its ability to last under water. But why bring that up here? we are talking about one Lord, one baptism, one faith, one cleansing.

We are talking about that which would comfort a poor sinner. The dragon has ever been doing all that he could to engulf the woman in the flood of water that went forth out of his mouth. This water is flooding the earth ere this, but the beams of the church of God are imbedded beneath the earth into the rock. As Jesus was the Building and the Builder while here, he was subjected to all the temptations of his brethren, thus the cedar wood is used to denote the durability of this Building, this cleansing, this forgiveness. But why scarlet? For two reasons. May the Lord give us to drink deeply of each. Though our sins are as scarlet, they shall be white as snow. But how? by blood. That is the only way; no other peddler of just as good will be welcome here in this cleansing. By the blood of Jesus; by the power in his shed blood is a sinner cleansed. The piece of woolen scarlet is the sign of sin, and it is the sign of that which will remove sin. Our sin is as scarlet; his garments are dyed in his blood to remove our uncleanness.

But why hyssop? Why must that be carried? What importance is this? What bearing does such an item have in connection with our cleansing? How precious as I write are my thoughts. I look back and see my three sons as the woman in attendance washed them and anointed them with oil. What a sweet smelling baby they were to their mother and I. How wonderful it is that the fragrant odor of hyssop was to be noticed in this poor sinner after his cleansing.

Arise, poor sinner, and let us view the situation over. A sinner doomed to being outcast, to be de-

nied communion with his people. A sinner such as we (or at least I) did not have anything to offer for our cleansing. We would have never known about the malady had it not been revealed to us; we would never have gotten to the priest had we not been carried; we would never know what it would take for our cleansing. But Christ is everything to a poor sinner. May God enable us to leave off that which divides, that which confuses, that which subverts, and know among the people of God Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Your little brother, if a brother, through grace.

Elder W.D. Griffin

OBITUARIES

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the One Hundred Seventy Third session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will be held with North East Primitive Baptist Church, Jacksonville, North Carolina on October 11-12, 2003. All who believe and love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited.

From Highway US-17 North of Jacksonville, turn on Piney Green Road and go approximately three miles, church is on the left.

Elder Gene Lupton
Association Clerk

EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

The 2003 session of the Eastern Kehukee Association, Lord willing, will convene with Hancocks Church, located near Ayden, North Carolina. The association will be Saturday, October 4 and Sunday, October 5. Services will begin each day at 10:30am.

Out of Raleigh take US64 East. Then take the US264 East exit to Greenville. When you get to Greenville, take Hwy 11 South to Ayden. - Turn left on Hwy 102 East. Go through Ayden and about two miles take the first paved road on the left. Turn on Ayden Golf Club Road. Go about one or two miles and the church will be on the left.

We invite the ministers and lovers of the truth to meet with us.

Naomi Coker, Association Clerk

SULPHUR FORK ASSOCIATION

The One Hundred Fifty-Eight session of the Sulphur Fork Association will, be held, the Lord willing, with Prospect Church on Saturday and Sunday, October 4 & 5, 2000. Prospect Church is located on the north side of Highway 67, about three (3) miles East of Simms, TX. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Miles Bird
Association Clerk
(318) 687-6775

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 2003

Douglas Hodges - VA 5.00
In Memory of Bro. Coley & Sister Mildred Strader 100.00
A Friend - OR .....Anonymous
Amy Keppler - AZ 15.00
James Shelor - VA 10.00
In Memory of
Linda Joyce Hatchett -OK 50.00
Shelby Stratton - MS 5.00
Betty Turner - LA 5.00
Catherine Humbarger - NC 6.00
Grace Manley - AL 5.00
Vivian Underwood - VA 5.00
Victor Terry - VA 5.00
Frances Jarvis - MD 5.00

OBITUARIES

Carl Martin Hollandsworth

We have been made submissive to God's will to say God's will be done, as Brother Martin Hollandsworth was called from our little congregation at Old union Church.

Brother Martin was born February 27, 1914 and fell asleep in Jesus June 2, 2003. He was married to Sister Josie Simpkins Hollandsworth and to this Union was born six children. Kenneth, Jerry, and Evans Hollandsworth, Bonnie Howell, Lucille Fuller, and Judy Hylton. Twenty-seven grandchildren, forty-five great-grandchildren and one great- great grandchild. He was baptized by Elder Sam Terry in the year of 1955, and was a faithful member for forty-eight years. He and Sister Josie were housekeepers for many years at our little meeting house. He loved good preaching and singing, and loved to discuss the scriptures. He expressed his beliefs and the Hope he had of Heaven and Immortal Glory. We had many discussions on the scriptures over the years.

He had many afflictions, yet complained very little of his condition. His funeral was conducted at Mayberry Funeral Home in Floyd, Va., by his Pastor Elder Hale Terry and Elder Larry Hollandsworth. He was laid to rest in the Captain George Cemetery, Floyd County, Va., to await the ressurection morning. Written at the request of Old Union Primitive Baptist Church by: Elder Larry Hollandsworth

Elder Hale Terry, Moderator
Sandra Hollandsworth, Clerk

St. Matt. 18: 10-11.

Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

For the son of man is come to save that which was lost.

IVA G. WADE QUESENBERRY

It is with much sorrow that I attempt to write the Obituary for our dearly departed Sister, Iva G. Wade Quesenberry. Sister Iva passed from this life on Friday, May 30, 2003. She was ninety-four years old. She was the widow of Clayton Quesenberry. Survivors include: a brother, Ervin Wade from Lansing, Michigan; nephew and wife, Clinton and Loretta Wade from Smith Mountain Lake, Va. One great-nephew, Michael Wade from Chesterfield, Va. And one great-niece, Margrit Musselman from Salem, Va.

Sister Iva had a great love for the Brethren and for Old Union Church. She attended faithfully for many years until her health failed. Her quiet walk and softly spoken words manifested the love she had for her Savior. She believed in Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. She also manifested a great love for her Pastor, his wife and family.

Her funeral was held at Mayberry Funeral Chapel in Floyd, Va. Conducted by her Pastor, Elder Hale Terry. She was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in the Pleasant Hill Cemetery to await the Second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We feel such a great loss but know that our loss is her eternal gain. May God have all the praise! Written at the request of Old Union Church in conference Saturday June 21, 2003. One copy to be sent to the family, one copy to the Sign of the Times for publication and one for our church records.

Elder Hale Terry, Moderator
Sandra Hollandsworth, Clerk

PROVERBS 18:10-16.

The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.

The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit.

Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility.

He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.

The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?

The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.

A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

'Twas with an everlasting love
That God his own elect embraced,
Before he made the worlds above,
Or earth on her huge columns placed.

Long ere the sun's refulgent ray
Primeval shades of darkness drove
They on his sacred bosom lay,
Loved with an everlasting love.

Then, in his love and his decrees,
Christ and his bride appeared as one;
Her sin, by imputation, his,
Whilst she in spotless splendor shone.

O Love, how thy glories swell,
How great, immutable, and free!
Ten thousand sins, as black as hell,
Are blotted out, O Love, by thee.

Believer, here thy comfort stands,
From first to last, salvation's free,
And everlasting love demands
An everlasting song from thee.

Kent.

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EDITORIAL

Elder J.B. Farmer

In that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name to take away our reproach. Isaiah 4:1.

God was so wise and all-knowing and powerful that He was able to show to the ancient prophet, the things which should come to pass in the last day; hundreds of years before they were manifested. According to the scripture, God saw the end from the beginning. He purposed all things according to His own will. He has worked and is working and shall work all things together for good to them who love Him, the ones who are the called according to His purpose. His ways and His thoughts are as high above ours as the heaven is above the earth. None, in a natural mind is powered to understand any of His things. It is only when He is pleased to reveal His truth to His little ones that there is any understanding of anything spiritual upon this earth.

It seems evident from the words of the apostles that the world has been in the last day since their own time. We know that a single day consists of nighttime and daytime, or darkness and light, or an evening and a morning. In the first chapter of Genesis, we are taught that, ***"The evening and the morning were the first day."*** We notice that the evening was the first part and the morning was the second part. That is just the opposite of our natural thinking. Was not the apostle's time, the first part or evening of the last day; and are we not presently in the second part or morning of the last day? The apostle said that, ***"The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." 2 Timothy 4:3-4.***

Is not that time now? Is not this the day when seven women (all the assemblies of harlotry) are taking hold of (choosing) one man (Christ) saying, we will eat our own bread (false doctrine) and wear our own apparel (self-righteousness) only let us be called by thy name (Christian) to take away our reproach (shame of being harlots and having no husband). We know that the whole world of false religions, even most of the ones that go by the name "Christian," and that call themselves churches, teach a doctrine that is contrary to the true doctrine of the Lord and Savior, Jesus, Christ. They teach that it is anyone's choice whether or not he should become a Christian. They think that one can take hold of Christ according to his own choice. They are blinded to the truth of Christ which He stated in His own words, ***"You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you." John 15:16. "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." John 6:44.***

The very word "church" means "called out assembly." The true church consists of individuals who have been called out of the world's darkness into His marvelous light by God Himself. They are gathered together into an assembly of believers, by God Himself. And this assembly, by the grace and power of the Spirit of God, is made to walk together in love and truth, obeying the gospel and worshipping the only True God. They are made to walk after the spirit and not after the flesh by the gift of faith of Jesus Christ. They have no food, spiritually, except what is sent down from heaven. This is Christ himself, the true Manna, which only God is powered to give. They have no righteousness but His. All their righteousnesses are as filthy rags in their own sight. They have no hope of salvation outside of Christ and His perfect finished work.

The false church is not composed of ones called out by God, Himself; rather, they have of themselves, come from darkness into their own light, which is kindled by their vain imaginations, which is total darkness. They are not gathered together by God; rather, they have congregated together according to their own wisdom and strength of the flesh. They are not walking together in truth; rather, they are serving their own lusts by disobeying the gospel and worshipping their own works of false religion. They eat their own bread. They have their own doctrine of "free will" and despise the true and precious teaching of election and predestination. They wear their own apparel. They take pride in their own righteousness, which is the supposed keeping of the law of commandments. They keep them outwardly, but never have seen the spirit of the law, which condemns all who are given to see it in truth. They think they

have secured their place in heaven by their own choice.

The true church has been legitimately given His name. Just as a bride has been given the name of her husband, so has the true church been given the name of Christ. The true church is the bride of Christ. She is bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh, even as Eve was to Adam. Christ foreknew His bride. God predestinated her to be conformed to the image of His Son, He called her out of darkness. Christ justified her by his own blood, He glorified her in His own glory, He loves her with an everlasting love, He keeps her by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. She has no reproach. All her reproaches fell on Him and He took them out of the way to be remembered against her no more forever.

The false assembly, which calls itself a church, has not been given His name; rather, she has taken it to herself, against all decency. She is not the bride of Christ and can never be. She is not bone of His bone or flesh of His flesh. She was not foreknown in love, she was not predestinated to be conformed to His image, she was not called out of darkness, she was not justified by His blood, she was not glorified in His glory, She was not loved and was not kept by Him. She is off to herself, pretending to be something, which she is not. She has attempted to remove her reproach by pretense, but her reproach remains. She behaves as the harlot. We are told in the seventh chapter of Proverbs, that she has the attire of an harlot and is subtil of heart. She is loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house: Now she is without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner. Is this not the way the so-called church behaves itself? She has not His righteousness, but has the attire of an harlot which is self righteousness. She is very deceptive. She uses all sorts of devices to attract others to herself. She is loud and stubborn. Her cry is heard over every means at her disposal in hopes of attracting some. She is stubborn. She will not hear the truth. She is not content to be a keeper at home. She is in the streets lying wait at every corner. Solomon was given to say about her by way of inspiration, ***"Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death." Proverbs 7:27.***

The true church walks in love and gentleness and kindness. She takes care of her own house as a faithful wife. The false assembly attempts to walk about in an acceptable manner for appearance sake, but it is full of violence and hatred. We see the proof of this in the scriptures and in the history of the true church and by sad experience. We have on record the persecution and killing of the prophets, and the persecution and killing of apostles and even the persecution and killing of

the Lord Himself. Why? Because the prophets, the apostles, and the Lord laid bare the wickedness, deceit and hypocrisy of the false religious assemblies. Those of God were hated of all men for the truth's sake. Is it any wonder that, even in this day, all should be hated who are held in the doctrine which exposes the false things to be what they are. ***"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake; having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me." Philippians 1:29-30.*** If we are His, there is a measure of suffering for us all to bear, in order that our faith should be precious to us. It must be tried by fire, so that when we are tried, we should come forth as gold.

I am made to believe that there are many false churches and only one true church. The false ones are counterfeit. They try their best to mimic the true, but they come up far short. Those who have been given eyes to see and ears to hear and hearts to understand know the difference. They know by that Holy Spirit which causes them to examine all things. They are made to try the spirits whether they be of God. I am made to believe that God's children, seeing the difference, are made to avoid the false and to hold to the true, looking to the end of their faith, which is the salvation of their souls.

At the very end of the last day, according to the scripture, the Lord shall come in great power and glory to gather His elect together from the whole earth; both the living and the dead in Christ. ***"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." 1 Corinthians 4:17 – 5:1.***

Written in love, I hope.
J. B. Farmer

PSALM 13.

How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?

How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? how long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?

Consider and hear me, O Lord my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death;

Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him; and those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved.

But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.

I will sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.

VOICES OF THE PAST

ACTS 17 : 24-25

"God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;" (Acts 17:24-25)

We realize there are different angles of thought pertaining to these Scriptures, but we wish to present the thought that God does not need any thing; and He certainly does not need any help from weak man. Notice the expression, "as *though* he needed any thing." This reminds us of this Scripture: ***"If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the World is mine, and the fulness thereof." (Psalms 50 :12)***

The text states that God gives to *all* life. God breathed the breath of life unto Adam and man became a living *soul.* God has created *all* things, and God is the giver of *all* life. ***"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." (Col. 1:16-17)*** In reading and believing this Scripture, we know that God is the creator of all things. God is the *supreme* being and He *is* the eternal God. There is nothing *that* is CO-equal with God. God created the devil. ***"His hand hath formed the crooked serpent." (Job 26 :13)*** God did not have to explain to man why He created the devil. ***"I form the light and create darkness: I make peace and create evil, I the Lord do all these things." (Isaiah 45 :7) "Great is the mystery of godliness." (1 Tim. 3:16)*** We know exactly what it has pleased God to reveal to us.

"The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto Us and to our children for ever." (Deut. 29 :29) It is God's business just why it pleases him not to reveal certain things to his people. Jesus said, ***"It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own Power." (Acts 1-17)***

Many times We may be guilty of trying to reason out with natural understanding the Scriptures that are unclear to us. ***"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Proverbs 14:12) "...for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." (Luke 16 :15)***

Let us keep this thought in mind: God is a jealous God, and he will not give his glory to another. If

God should share the glory that rightly belongs unto him, then he would be dividing it with another, and in turn he would be giving his glory to another. But the Scripture says that God will not give his glory to another. (See Isaiah 42:8)

God is a lawgiver, and he is a just God, an holy God, and he loves righteousness and hates evil. God is the only one who can overrule evil for good; He is able to bring good out of what appears to be evil. In order to present our thoughts to the reader, we call your attention to this Scripture: ***"But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." (Gen. 50:20)*** The brethren of Joseph meant evil against him, but it was the secret purpose of God for Joseph to go unto Egypt and to be raised up as governor of the land, and to bring his brethren there during this time of famine when they had corn in Egypt. Bible readers know the history of the travels of the children of Israel in Egypt and the afflictions that were put upon them. God told Abraham before Isaac was born: ***"Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall affict them four hundred years." (Genesis 15 :14)*** It is wonderful to meditate upon the marvelous works of God.

Let us not get away from the main thought that God does not need any help. It pleases God to show his power in a few. It also has pleased God to choose a few people out of fallen mankind. God does not have to explain to anyone just why it has pleased him to only choose a few. ***"There is a remnant according to the election of grace." (Rom. 11:5)*** We know that we hear the world saying that it would be cruel for God not to give everyone a chance to be saved. Such a saying as this springs from Satan. God does not have to explain to anyone the purpose he had when he created the devil. I am glad to know that God has all power. ***"...There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." (Rom. 13:1)*** Satan had to have permission from God to afflict Job. Who made Satan and gave him the power he does have? Let us remember that God is holy and good. ***"... the Lord is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him." (Psalms 92 :15)***

God gave Job the grace to bear the afflictions that were put upon him. Job was given the strength and the grace to have the patience he was blessed with. We read of the patience of Job. (see James 5:11)

God works in a mysterious way. As the Lord blesses us, let us go a little further with the thought that God does not need any help, and come to the thought of the work of convicting sinners and teaching his people. May the Lord bless us to hold to the truth and turn neither to

the left nor to the right. First, God is the first cause of all causes, and he does not limit himself by leaving it up to man to carry out his purpose. Dear reader, please think of this carefully before reading any further. If God should limit himself by leaving it up to man to spread the gospel to all the world, and to convict sinners, to spiritually educate his people, etc., then God would be disappointed in man's failure to carry out his purpose. Jesus would be discouraged and dissatisfied if just one that he died for should miss going to heaven. But *"He shall not fail nor be discouraged." (Isaiah 32:4) "He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." (Isaiah 53 :11) " All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." (John 6:37-39)* Keep in mind that all of the elect shall be saved, and not one shall be lost.

This reminds me of the dragon in the 12th chapter of Revelation that spewed out the flood after the woman. This is the devil spewing out the flood of false doctrine after the church of God. The world just drinks up this false doctrine, but it does not hurt the church, and it never will. Jesus said, *"Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. 16:18)* All the assaults of satan and the powers of hell cannot hurt the church of God. *"My father which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of the father's hand." (John 10:29)* What comfort it is to know that God is able to keep his people, and they shall be kept by the power of God: Notice these words of Peter: *"Who are kept by the power of God." (1 Peter 1:5)* Jesus told Peter: *"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." (Luke 22 :31-32)* Peter was converted from this error of feeling that he could keep himself by his own power. If God does not keep us, we would all fall by the wayside. I trust we realize our enemies are too strong for us. (see Psalms 18:7)

It is true that God uses man as a way to carry out some purposes; As God sent the prophet to speak unto David, and this was a way to let David know how he had sinned against God. (See 2 Samuel 12) But let us be careful in thinking about this point. God did not use man as an instrument, or means or a way to convict Peter of this sin of denying Jesus. God did not use man as a means or instrument or way to convict Paul, as the Scriptures state that God did this directly by his Spirit. *"But I certify you, brethren, that*

the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Gal. 1:11-12) Briefly, Paul received the knowledge of the truth by the direct operation of the Holy Ghost.

At this point, we will quote from Eld. Beebe: ***"It has been reported by some, and believed by others, that we discard altogether the idea of God's using means or instruments for the accomplishment of his divine purposes. This charge is gratuitous and untrue. Although we do most positively deny the supposed power or efficacy of humanly invented means to facilitate the salvation of lost sinners, in the manner the doctrine is preached, believed and acted upon at the present day, we most freely admit, and firmly believe, that the all-wise and glorious God has appointed instrument's by which he will accomplish his adorable purposes."*** (pg. 328, Vol. 1 of his "Editorials.")

After the close of Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, this remark was made: ***"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37)*** What caused their hearts to be pricked? One may say that Peter's sermon was the means or instrument that caused their hearts to be pricked. As the Lord blesses us, let us carefully consider the matter: Now, does preaching cause one's heart to be pricked, or does preaching cause one to be converted? Before we attempt to comment, let us consider another sermon, and notice how this sermon was received: At the close of Stephen's sermon, we read: ***"When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart." (Acts 7:54)*** Notice the difference in the reception of these two sermons. This is proof to show that one's heart is not pricked by the preaching, and neither does preaching cause one to be converted. Again, some were pricked in their hearts during Peter's sermon, and the people were cut to the heart during Stephen's sermon. Why, or what caused the difference in the reception of the two sermons?

Preaching will not have any effect unless the Spirit of the Lord applies it to the heart. ***"The preparations of the heart in man, and answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." (Proverbs 16 :1)*** It is the work of the Spirit to apply the preached word to the hearts of those that receive it. In other words, the preached word will not profit one at all unless the Spirit of God applies it to the heart. ***"For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the Lord preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." (Hebrews 4:2)***

In connection with this, consider the parable of the sower. (read Luke 8:5-15, Mt. 13:3-23; Mk. 4 :3-20)

Notice that the seed which was sown by the wayside, upon a rock, and among thorns did not bear any fruit. The seed that was sown in those places did not profit them at all. Yet the seed that was sown in good ground did bring forth fruit. This ground was good because it was prepared to receive the seed. The preached word profits those who are prepared to receive it. ***"But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience." (Luke 8 :15)***

What is the purpose of preaching? Jesus said, ***"feed my Lambs, feed my sheep." (John 21:15-16)*** The point I am trying to make is this: God does not have to use man as a means, or instrument to convict sinners. This is done by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit. Man thinks that he can help the Lord, but our God does not need any help, and I am glad to know that God did not leave this work up to man.

It is satan who is stiring up the doctrine that God depends upon man as a means or instrument to carry out his purpose. Our God is able to execute his counsel. ***"My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isaiah 46:10)***

Why does satan stir up the false doctrines? The motive is to rob God of the glory that is due his holy name. The doctrines of grace advocate an Almighty God and a weak little man, and this doctrine renders all the honor and praise and glory unto the great name of God. There will not be any creature praise heard in heaven. We know that we are sinners saved only by the mercy and grace of God, and have been made to sing praises within our hearts for this Great Salvation. Salvation is by the grace of God!

W.W. Hudson, Jr.
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Bastrop, La. 71220

Elder Silas H. Durand

Elder H.H. Lefferts-Dear Brother: - When left to myself and to my own thinking powers, the result is not valuable, but when the Lord's most precious thoughts are given me, "the sum of them" and the value and beauty of them are infinite. He says, I know my thoughts concerning you: thoughts of peace, and not of evil; to bring to pass an expected end. Now, at any time when the Lord's thoughts come into my heart and take possession of my soul, then I can understand how a sacred principle of reconciliation is connected with the gospel of the dear Savior. I know that by the peculiar power of faith I am right sure of this; but I am so very seldom, if ever, in possession of that holy, heavenly principle. It is by this faith alone that the di-

vine power of faith can be known, and by that alone can resignation, true resignation to the will of God, be known by mortal, sinful man. The power of this soul-searching principle cannot be obtained by anything that mortal man can do. It is, like all things belonging to the kingdom of Christ, the gift of God. We cannot purchase it, we cannot make or create it, we cannot obtain it by any device of men. In no way can it come into our possession except as the gift of God by the power and will of Jesus Christ. The day after I was baptized, over fifty-six years ago, I found this question in my mind: What is faith? What is there in mind now that was not there before? At that time I was at peace. I was glad all the time for those few days, or, I might say, weeks. The Word was there and the church and the brethren, and I wanted no more. I thought then I could see and feel the power of faith. I was not curious, but had enough for my own poor soul. I do not think I have had much more of a view of faith since then than I had at that time. How many things are said about faith in different parts of the New Testament! The brethren, Paul and others, are so clear in their arguments and write so confidently that it seems I can see their statements as unanswerable and can follow them with assurance. Then I turn to my own heart to see if that holy principle is there, and with a drooping head and with a great deal of uncertainty I have to acknowledge much of the time that I am not sure I have faith sometimes I can see and hear from others the same things that are in my own heart. Then I can but recognize evidence for them, and see it forced back upon me as a reflection in a glass; as the apostle says: ***"We all, with open fact beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."*** I have to acknowledge that. So when evidence of this kind is experienced, we have to acknowledge it is true, we cannot dispute it; and the apostle's lives evidence thus by inspiration, which comes by divine power, showing what is true in us and true in Jesus. He says: ***"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."*** Concerning faith and the exercise of it and many things connected with it in such a wonderful manner, I would love to write a little or talk a little, but the time has gone by for that. I cannot feel that I shall write at length anymore; but I do enjoy talking with the brethren and to hear from the publishers of the SIGNS and others of the brethren scattered far and wide. The unity of the brethren manifested in the writings is delightful to me. The great beauty of the doctrine and of the order of the church takes hold upon my soul most thoroughly. Zion is called in the Psalms ***"the perfection of beauty."*** My mind has been led, when writing or preaching, to

trace out the exercises of such as feel, like I always have, that they are the poorest of the poor, and that strongest doctrine (if there be any difference) would be the only doctrine that could answer the needs of such a weak person as I.

I can go no further just now. On January 5th I entered my eighty-sixth year.

Your brother in hope,
ELDER SILAS H. DURAND.

MATT XVI. 16.

"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

When Jesus asked his disciples the direct question, *"Who say ye that I am ?"* Peter answered, *"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."* Jesus said to Peter, flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven hath given you this knowledge. Thus establishing the everlasting truth of the gospel of the grace of God that our Lord and Savior is known only by revelation, for no man can come unto him except drawn by the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the power of God's Holy Spirit. Everyone who hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto Jesus. This is the way that Jesus builds his church through all ages of the world; that which is perfect cannot be changed. The work of Jesus is perfect, therefore nothing shall be added to it and nothing shall be taken from it; it stands forever, from everlasting to everlasting. He prepared all the lively stones that are in this glorious building, the church of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; he gathers them out of every nation, kindred and tongue under heaven, and they constitute that innumerable company which no man can number, of both Jews and Gentiles, even the world, whose sins Jesus forever put away, by offering up himself unto God without spot. He forever removed the sins of his people, who are his church, that he might present them a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing for his church stands pure and complete in him and receives his name. This is the new name whereby she shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness. When our first parents, Adam and Eve, disobeyed the command of God the whole unborn race was plunged into the pit of sin and corruption, and are all under condemnation and held in bondage by the prince of the power of the air, the prince of darkness, and none comes out of this bondage except those whom Jesus releases, having paid their debt. For if I the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed. They are the purchase of his blood, and Satan cannot hold them prisoners when Christ bids them come unto him. These weary and heavy laden ones find rest in the fold of God, and they ascribe all glory to

him; they are not reckoned among the nations, for his kingdom is not of this world. They are given new life by being born again, even Christ in them the hope of glory, for the life of his people is hid with Christ in God, and they recognize and rejoice that Jesus is the Christ, the beloved Son of God, and this new life in his people is the only life in which the christian cannot sin, this new way created in righteousness. It is the good tree that cannot bring forth corrupt fruit, therefore all these tried and affiicted ones sing the glad new song, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thou hast redeemed us by thy blood, and brought us out of the pit, and put a new song in our mouth, even praise unto thy name. They all sin, It is by the grace of God I am what I am, and unless this grace reigns in our hearts we know that we are without hope.

"Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

Yours in hope,
WM. F. SLOAN.
LEXINGTON, Ky.

Upton, New Mexico, Dec, 3, 1916.

DEAR BRETHREN: — If one so poor and unworthy as I am should be allowed to thus address you. Many long days and years of suffering are allotted to the people of God in this life, and it is written, It is not only given you to believe on his name, but also to suffer for his sake. By faith, Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season esteeming the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect until the recompence of the reward, not of himself not by a change of, his own mind voluntarily, but by faith. He did not come in possession of this faith by hearing someone preach Jesus Christ, nor for any good thing he had done, and not by concluding he would seek for it, because faith is the fruit of the Spirit, and is in every child of God when born of God. When we are born; of the flesh we possess certain characteristics, such as natural love, hatred, anger, envy, jealousy, murder, deceit, &c. So it is true, when we are born of the Spirit we have the fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, and we do not have to work to get these fruits. Our faith is born of God, for the Bible says, Whatsoever is born of God;

overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Faith exercises us, we do not exercise faith. Paul says, Faith is the substance, of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Did you ever know anyone to exercise evidence? Evidence exercises us. You hear one of your loved ones is dead, through a not very reliable source, you doubt it, but when you get home there is the loved one in the cold embrace of death, you have the evidence right before you, and this exercises you, causes you to mourn, and you cannot help it. You were exercised by the evidence. Faith is a wonderful power, controlling us, and not we controlling it. Then by this power Moses was called to make a choice, and that was to suffer, affliction with the people of God. Who would stand up and say Moses did it of his own accord, without something natural to move him to do it? Only the destitute of reason or biblical understanding could. It looks to me anyone with good natural reason would know better, but God has hid these things from the wise and prudent. Look at his surroundings, he has almost everything a natural man could wish the son of the daughter of the king of one of the richest countries on earth, the nicest bed to sleep on, the I finest food in the land, the best clothing, a life of luxury and ease. Who would give that up and go down and be one of a people that were suffering, terribly afflicted? God said, I have heard the cries of my people, and am come down to deliver them. What is the matter with you, Moses? You want to leave all of the natural pleasures of the king's court and go forth and suffer with a people whose cries have gone up to the Lord of Sabaoth. Yes, he is willing now, for *"it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."* Do you not recollect when you were made willing to give up all worldly pleasure When you became tired of earthly joys and can you not well remember when you said with the poet,

"Weary of earth, myself and Sin,
Dear Jesus, set me free ;
And to thy glory take me in,
For there I long to be.
Burdened, dejected, and oppressed,
Ah, whither shall I flee
But to thy arms for peace and rest ;
For there I long to be.
Empty, polluted, dark and vain,
Is all this world to me ;
May I the better world obtain
For there I long to be.
Lord, let a tempest-tossed soul
That peaceful harbor see,
Where waves and billows never roll ;
For there I long to be".

Before this there was so much

joy in the world to you, the days passed with hardly a ripple on the sea of this life, but there came a change, something filled your heart with sadness, dark shadows began to hover over your heretofore bright pathway, there came creeping away down into your heart of hearts a sadness before unknown to you, you began to feel that you needed help, fear came over you that you could not shake off, the dark shadows became more dense, the anxiety increased, and you began to be awfully burdened. I could see the grave open and my bones lying in it, but for the life of me I could see no further, I felt that there I would flee, and there remain forever and forever. So terrible was the darkness, and so heavy the burden, life was a misery to me. What did you say?:

" Till late I saw no danger nigh,
I lived at ease, nor feared to die;
Wrapped up in self, conceit and pride, I shall have peace at last, I cried.
But when, great God, thy light divine
Had shone in this dark soul of mine,
Then I beheld with trembling awe
The terrors of thy holy law.
With melting heart and weeping eyes
My guilty soul for mercy cries;
Where can I go, or whither flee,
To escape the vengeance due to me?"

I can go to the place where the burden rolled off and a text of Scripture came into my mind. This came: And the peace of God, that passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ. It has kept you, it will Keep you, little, trembling one, although the bitter, briny waves of sorrow and affliction will come sweeping over the sea of this life, and will go over you, overwhelming you in the most awful grief and sorrow; still you will be kept, still you are safe. His love is always the same, never changes, and all your sorrows and every pain are for your good. Many waters cannot quench love, the floods cannot drown it; nothing can cause his love to change. The anguish and fear only prepare you to joy in Jesus when he manifests again himself to you as your Savior, Protector, King, Husband, Friend. Although years and years of the deepest sorrow have gone over me, I remember as well as yesterday when I first heard Elder Silas Durand preach on the subject," Who shall separate us from the love of God ?" and still can see in my mind the illustration he used in describing real, true christianity and painted or false religion. That was away over from where I now live, where God has so wonderfully blessed me, away over in what the Indians called " the dark and blood ground," and it proved to be that to me.

So faith forced Moses to suffer affliction with the people of God, choosing rather to suffer than to

enjoy the pleasures ot sin for a season, esteeming the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. Certainly the children prize the services and the joy and sweetness found in him more than all the world. David said, One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple. Worship him in the beauty of holiness. These are the greatest riches: to behold the beauty of the Lord. What is the beauty of the Lord. An upright walk and a godly conversation. Nothing in this life hardly, except the Savior himself, is more beautiful than an upright walk, and this is him manifest in us. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Disorderly conduct and bad language in one professing the name of our Savior are to the people of God very ugly. Do not boast, you cannot keep yourself; the dear Savior only can keep you. Who hath delivered me from so great a death, who doth also now deliver, and who will yet deliver us. Bless his holy name.

Your brother in hope of mercy,
ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

Psalm 14:2.

The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.

HAMMOND, W. Va., Dec. 31, 1917.

DEAR BROTHER KER:-I thought of writing to you and to the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES after reading your article, "Close of volume eighty-five." I want to say that the SIGNS has contended for salvation by grace, and grace alone, of the God of Jacob. As you say, there have been some differences of view. There is none perfect, and if not perfect we need not expect our writings to be perfect. These are trying times for us all, as well as for the dear old SIGNS. In the first place, my mind was called to God's children among the men of England and the warring, nations, and the thought came to me that I wanted them to know that I wish them well, and that I hope I love them for the truth's sake, and hope that we are brethren, and that we desire one another's peace and welfare, and that we have good, kind feelings toward them, God's children are taught by the Spirit to love one another, and they are also taught to do unto others as they would have others do unto them, We learn from the Scriptures that there shall be wars and rumors of wars, and that the wicked shall do wickedly, and that none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand. (Daniel xii. 10.) We read in Acts xvii. 26, that God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times be-

fore appointed, and the bounds of their habitation. Hence we cannot say,why dwell you here or there. Because if our bounds and habitation are set for us to dwell on the face of all the earth, who can hinder the purposes of God and if the wicked shall do wickedly, who shall cause them to refrain from it? So by these Scriptures we plainly see that it is not of him that willeth, nor *of* him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy; for he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Then, if there shall be wars, who can prevent them from coming to pass? No one can, and by coming does it not prove to us that the Scriptures are true and sin is of the devil, and God is the author of peace God cannot he tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.

Yes, the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of them shall understand. So they just go on in the way that seems right unto them, and that way leads unto death, and into death do they go. But there is a class that does understand, and that class is the wise, but not the worldly wise-not the wisdom of the kings of the earth; but the wise receive their wisdom through the revelation of the eternal God, and their wisdom is spiritual; not of the earth, but from heaven; they understand, because they are all taught of the Lord. Then it is useless for you or me to try to make them understand or teach them to know the Lord, or teach them to stop wars and troubles of the nations when it is in the wicked to do wickedly. There is a time and a purpose for all things; a time of war and a time of peace; a time to all things, and who can hinder them from taking place? For that which is determined shall be done, and who can hinder it? The eternal God is the only King of kings and Lord of lords, and he holds the keys of life and of death, and none can deliver out of his hand. I have only one son, and he is liable to be drafted at any time, and I love him and would protect him from misery and pain, and have seen much trouble over him being called away, but that may all be natural; but who knows this except the eternal God, who knows all things? What can I do but wait and see what God will do for him and for me and all his believing children. Abraham was grieved over his son, and are we better than he? O no, no. Then if there is a time of war, is it not true and verily true today, and is there not cause for the children of men dwelling in the bounds and places of their habitation which were before appointed them on the face of all the earth? So where the soldiers' places are for them to dwell, and who can stop them before they land at their dwelling-places, and who can send them beyond their bounds and habitations? I am not able, you are not, so let us trust in the eternal God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will. I remember another Scripture : There is a time to die. Now let us reason; if there is a time of war,

and a time of peace, who can make peace in the time of war? Because there is a time for all things, when the time comes for war to cease, it will cease. Then when war ceases, it will be a time of peace, and peace will last in its season, and when its season ceases peace ceases. Even so with life and death, there is a time and season, and when the time of life ceases, then the time to die is at hand, and die we will; but we cannot die while we have life, and there is a season and place for this life, and it must have its season and its place; even so death must have its season and place, and if that season and place appointed beforehand is on the water, or in the trenches, there is nothing to prevent its coming to pass, and who can hinder us from being there where our bounds and habitations were set for us to dwell? We cannot pass over them. Are we not creatures of time? Are we not the clay? Is not God the potter? And what power has the lump of clay? Is it not in the potter's hand? He uses it as he pleases. Is not the clay without power or will against the purpose and arrangements of God, or sovereign ruler, both in the heaven above and on the earth beneath Dear readers, there might arise in our minds the question. Why then do we worry over our sons? Well, the flesh is weak, and in the flesh there dwells no good thing, and this causes a warfare. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak, and we in the flesh cannot please God. These two, the flesh and the Spirit, are at warfare one against the other, so that we cannot do the things we would. O how good it is to be reconciled to the will of God, but we are only reconciled to God through Christ Jesus our Lord. Dear brethren, you who are in the war, or whose sons are, be of good cheer as much as lieth within you, and may God give you grace to bear it all.

Remember the patience of Job, remember the humility of Jesus Christ our Lord, remember the sufferings of God's children. Lest you might come to the conclusion that I am above trouble and sorrow, I will say to you all that I am a man of sorrows; I have many sorrows, many troubles, but I hope that the Lord is my Shepherd and that I have sufferings and sorrows for Jesus' sake.

Dear children of our God, I hope that I have a tender feeling toward you at this present time. Farewell.

JAMES W. LINN.

FAYETTEVILLE, Ga., Dec. 13, 1917.

DEAR BRETHREN: - The Lord willing, I will write you again, but do not know what to write. First, I want to correct a mistake in my letter in December 1st number of the SIGNS. On page 538, first column, twenty-ninth line, the words, "brother Rees "should be "Rees Prather." I enjoy the good letters in the SIGNS, but the last one brought me unexpected sorrow. When I read of brother W.C. Pennington's death I felt sorrow as I had never felt before for one I had never seen.

We were strangers in the flesh, but I felt that I only needed to see him to be acquainted, for we had corresponded, and I had read his letters in the SIGNS. My sympathy is with his loved ones, and as I think of their sorrow I cannot restrain the tears. I feel that he was a good son and brother, and wish I could be as good as I think he was. May God abundantly bless the bereaved ones, and may they realize that what he does is right and for his glory and for good, for all things work together for good to them who love the Lord. The dealings of the Lord with his people are mysterious, wonderful and beautiful when we can see the good in them. Mysterious to the carnal mind, but not so when revealed by the blessed Spirit to our spiritual mind, but wonderful, amazing, that the great God of everything should be so kind and loving as to bless vile sinners with an inheritance equal to his only begotten Son, for we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. Then as Christ is to live forever in eternal glory with the Father, so shall his people, redeemed from all iniquity. The world is running wild for riches and honor, but the grandest riches and honor bestowed on humanity are hope and faith in Jesus, and just as sure as the anchor (hope) is there, the person will one sweet day rest there. The anchor chain sometimes breaks and lets ships stray, but the spiritual anchor will never give way until the ship, or trusting, hoping sinner, is safely landed on that blissful, eternal shore; then will be no more tossing on seas of sorrow, poverty, sickness and pain. Sometimes we hear people say their hope is so little they are almost ready to give it up or throw it away, but why do they not do so just at that moment if they were asked what they would take for their little hope they could not price it. Although it may seem ever so small, it is large and glittering compared with the riches and honors of all the world, which fade away. I do not claim to know much, am ignorant, it seems to me, but in thinking of our hope being so little, I think we are mistaken about hope being little. It seems to me that it is faith that is now weak, instead of hope. The farther we are from God, the more we desire to see his smiling face, but when we see him, or a token of his love, we are not hoping so much, but are realizing that for which we so earnestly hoped. When we lose sight of these glories faith gets weak and hope grows stronger. When John was with Christ he did not need hope, but when he was cast into prison, shut up in darkness where he could not see Christ, then he needed hope, but faith was weak, and he sent to Christ to know if he were the Christ, or must he look for another.

Bad crops and misfortune have left me in a poor condition financially, but God is the same, and it is according to his mercy that I am enjoying the blessings I now enjoy; I know not how soon I may have to suffer the miseries of poverty, cold, hunger, sickness or warfare, but I hope I will be able to trust him, though he slay me. Pray for me.

Unworthily,
GEORGE W. JACKSON.

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Republican Church, a Presbytery met at Republican Church on Saturday, June 14, 2003 for the examination of Brother Frank Peters if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the discretion of the judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The solemity was begun with prayer by Elder Mark Terry. All Elders of our same faith and order present constituted the Presbytery. Those present were Junior Conner, W.T. Conner, Lane Carter, Carl Terry, Clarence Stone, Mark Terry, Larry Hollandsworth, Thomas Solomon and Marvin Brumfield.

All Deacons were asked to sit together.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Junior Conner as moderator. Jamie E. Cooper as clerk, Elders Carl Terry & Clarence Stone were chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate. Brother Guy Holley having been duly appointed by Republican Church, delivered Brother Frank Peters to the Presbytery. Examination was made by Elders Carl Terry - Acts Ch. 6 & Clarence Stone - 1st Timothy Ch. 3 vs. 8. using scripture. All present Elders were invited to participate. The Presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the Candidate, administered the laying on of Hands. The Ordination Prayer was delivered by Elder Marvin Brumfield. The charge was delivered by Elders Lane Carter & Larry Hollandsworth using Scriptural reference.

The Moderator asked the presbytery if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery which was answered in the Affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brother Frank Peters and the right hand of fellowship was given, The ordained Brother was delivered back to the church as an Ordained Deacon of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Republican Church.

The minutes consisting of the work of the Presbytery were read and approved. The Presbytery was dismissed with Prayer by Elder Thomas Solomon.

Junior Conner, Moderator
Jamie E. Cooper, Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Republican Church, a Presbytery met at Republican Church on Saturday, June 14, 2003 for the examination of Brother Edd Johnson if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the discretion of the judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The solemity was begun with prayer by Elder Mark Terry. All Elders of our same faith and order present constituted the Presbytery.

Those present were Junior Conner, W.T. Conner, Lane Carter, Carl Terry, Clarence Stone, Mark Terry, Larry Hollandsworth, Thomas Solomon and Marvin Brumfield.

All Deacons were asked to sit together.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Junior Conner as moderator. Jamie E. Cooper as clerk, Elders Carl Terry & Clarence Stone were chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate. Brother Guy Holley having been duly appointed by Republican Church, delivered Brother Edd Johnson to the Presbytery. Examination was made by Elders Carl Terry - Acts Ch. 6 & Clarence Stone - 1st Timothy Ch. 3 vs. 8. using scripture. All present Elders were invited to participate. The Presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the Candidate, administered the laying on of Hands. The Ordination Prayer was delivered by Elder Marvin Brumfield. The charge was delivered by Elders Lane Carter & Larry Hollandsworth using Scriptural reference.

The Moderator asked the presbytery if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery which was answered in the Affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brother Edd Johnson and the right hand of fellowship was given, The ordained Brother was delivered back to the church as an Ordained Deacon of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Republican Church.

The minutes consisting of the work of the Presbytery were read and approved. The Presbytery was dismissed with Prayer by Elder Thomas Solomon.

Junior Conner, Moderator
Jamie E. Cooper, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 2003

Kenneth Thompson, VA 5.00
Richard Lawless, W. VA 5.00
Alfred Ratlieff, VA 5.00
Hazel Garland, MD 25.00
Donald Ferguson, BC Can. 45.00
Hugh Walker, NC 10.00
John Vipperman, VA 5.00
J. D. Inman, TX 5.00
Ruby Queen, KY
In memory of Byron Queen .. 100.00
Larrie Bowler, VA 5.00
Betty Nutter, MD 5.00
Donald Arne, SD 35.00

OBITUARIES

C. HOWARD DIVERS

With a very, very, sad heart I will attempt to write the obituary of my Dear husband, C. Howard Divers. He was born September 17, 1929 in Franklin County, Virginia, the son of the late James DeMass and Lillie Crouch Divers. He was married to Nancy Lee Martin

Divers for over fifty years. He passed away August 23, 2003 at his home in Rocky Mount, Virginia with his wife by his side and also his special brother-in-law James Haynes. Surviving is one brother Russell Divers of Roanoke, Virginia and two sisters Bessie Robertson of Roanoke, Virginia and Anne Eillis of Bedford, Virginia also his mother-in-law Nancy Plybon Voorhees of Rocky Mount, Virginia.

Howard joined Camp Branch Primitive Baptist Church in 1990 and was baptized along with his wife in Smith River and was faithful to attend and was always willing to help in any way possible. The only male member he did many things to improve the buildings and grounds even years before he was baptized.

His many kindnesses, humbleness, and generosity to his beloved church, family, and friends whom he loved very dearly and loved for them to visit him, will be cherished and linger long in our hearts.

He so willingly and tenderly cared for all even in his last moments of life.

His life's been full he savored much, good friends, good times, a loved one's touch. God took him now; He set him free.

We at Camp Branch have suffered a great loss but our loss is his eternal gain. We acknowledge the sovereignty of God and hope to be reconciled to His will.

He was blessed with many marks of grace and loved and desired peace in the church.

He had a clear vision of the work of the Lord and looked unto Him as the author and finisher of his faith. Howard fought a good fight and kept the faith.

A few days before his passing he told me he was going to leave me and told me to take care of myself and talked so sweet. He always told me he loved me and was always devoted in his care for me, and kept on hugging me even after he was so weak. He was the best patient a person could ever ask for. He didn't complain, always thanking you for what you did, just a drink of water or whatever. We read the bible and prayed together many times and he picked out the songs out of the Goble Song Book to be sung at his funeral.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

May God in His rich mercy keep us all pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Howard suffered with cancer but his last hours were peaceful and he just went peacefully to sleep. He is now "Asleep in Jesus".

His body was laid to rest beneath a mound of beautiful flowers in Franklin Memorial Park there to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. His pastor, Elder Alan Terry, conducted the beautiful funeral at Flora Funeral

Service in Rocky Mount, Virginia on August 25, 2003.

Done by order of the church at Camp Branch in conference.

Written by his wife,
An unworthy sister in hope,
Nancy M. Divers

MEREDITH B. QUEEN
Born 1923 HITCHENS, KY

Meredith Byron Queen, 80, of Hitchens, left to be with his heavenly father, Thursday, May 22, in King's Daughters' Medical Center in Ashland, KY. Mr. Queen was born January 18, 1923, a son of the late Calvin and Anna Waddell Queen. He was a WWII Army Veteran, was retired from AK Steel in East Processing, and attended the Lost Creek Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church in Denton, KY.

He was preceded in death by two brothers, James Russell Queen and Sharon P. Queen. He is survived by his loving wife of 59 years, Ruby Horton Queen of Hitchens. Other survivors include: two daughters and one son-in-law, Kathy Lewis of Grayson, KY and Donna and Mike Hewlett of Greenup, KY; two Granddaughters, Elizabeth Lewis and Meredith Lewis of Grayson, KY; two step-grandchildren, Christina Thomas and Jacob Hewlett, both of Worthington, KY; Two nephews, James R. Queen of Russell, KY and Paul D. Queen of Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN; four step-great-grandsons, Alex Hewlett, Coleman Thomas, Chase Thomas and Gavin Reed, all of Worthington, KY.

Funeral Services were conducted Sunday, May 25, at the Malone Funeral Home with Pastor Jerry Farmer officiating. Committal was in the East Carter Memory Gardens, Tuesday at 2 p.m.

I have been given permission by Ruby Queen, his wife, to add a personal note to that prepared by the family above, and to submit the whole to the Signs of the Times for publication. Byron was a man of integrity. He was a firm believer in the gospel of the grace of God without any works of men involved. He bore the fruit of the spirit, which is love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, longsuffering, meekness and temperance. He was faithful in attending the services at Lost Creek for many years, until his death, along with his faithful, loving, and believing wife Ruby, and their daughter Kathy and two granddaughters Elizabeth and Meredith. He said that he would love to be a member with the Old Baptists but didn't feel worthy. He, many times, shed tears upon hearing the Gospel preached, and when discussing the pure doctrine with his family and friends. It may truly be said, that he loved his family. He loved the church and the brethren. He loved the doctrine of Christ. It also may be truly said that he was loved by all who knew him in truth, including, I hope, this unworthy writer. May the God of heaven and earth comfort his

family and friends with true faith in Christ, who has gone before us in all things, even in death and in the resurrection from the dead. We miss Byron greatly, but rejoice in the assurance that his spirit is now rejoicing in the very presence of God, where all is peace and love. The apostle, by inspiration said, "To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord." May we be given grace to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer.

SISTER MAE WILLIAMS

Another precious sister, Mae Marshall Williams has been called from our midst at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church "Who can find a virtuous woman, for her price is far above rubies." Sister Mae was a virtuous, humble, and soft spoken lady. She was a wonderul help mate to her husband, Elder Julian Williams. If you visited in her home or she came to yours, she always had something to give you. I have known Sister Mae and her family about 50 years and have always esteemed them most highly. She united with the church at Malmaison, December 1979 and was a devoted and faithful member.

Sister Mae was born in Pittsylvania County, Va. May 24, 1923 and passed away May 14, 2003, after suffering a massive stroke. She was the daughter of William Ira Marshall Sr. and Pearl Dawson Marshall.

Survivors are a daughter, Sister Joyce Pittman and husband, Brother Phil Pittman of Longview, TX. Two sons, Michael Williams of Raleigh, NC. Larry Williams and wife Bessie of Roanoke, Va. Four grandchildren and one brother William Ira Marshall, Jr. of Durham, NC.

In addition to her parents and husband she was predeceased by three brothers. Brother Madison Marshall, Page Marshall and Paul Marshall.

Funeral services were held at Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Home Westover Chapel, with Elder Raymond Goad, C.B. Davis and Marvin Brumfield officiating. Interment was in the Williams Family Cemetery in Keeling, Va.

There were some most unusual similarities between the death of Elder Julian and Sister Mae. He died March 14, 2002, 10 days after his birthday. She died May 14, 2003, 10 days before her birthday. They were both hospitalized on the 10th of the month, died on the 14th and were buried on the 17th.

We believe our dear sister is now "Asleep in Jesus, from which none ever wake to weep." We trust the God of all grace will reconcile us to His will.

Written by on who loved her for Christ sake, I hope.
Peggy Wells

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

Blest be the dear uniting love
That will not let us part:
Our bodies may far off remove,
But we are joined in heart.

Joined in one spirit to one Head,
We wait his will to know,
That we in his right steps may tread
And follow him below.

O may we ever walk in him,
And nothing know beside;
Nothing desire, nor aught esteem,
But Jesus crucified.

Closer and closer let us cleave,
To his beloved embrace;
Expect his fulness to receive,
And grace to answer grace.

C. Wesley

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EDITORIAL

THE PROMISE

ELDER R. H. CAMPBELL

"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made, He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise." (Gal 2:16-18)

The promise was made to one man (Abraham) through one man (Christ), but it was not to all of Abraham's posterity but rather to the chosen generation, which is, Christ in you the hope of glory. As in the case of Abraham, the promise was to Isaac, and not to Ishmael; even though, according to the law, Ishmael was the first born and the one to whom the blessing should go. When God told Abraham that he would have a seed by Sarah, he could not believe it; he laughed, and so did Sarah when the angel told her, and Abraham said, ***"O that Ishmael might live before thee."*** God said in reply, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed, and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him." Isaac, was born to Abraham of Sarah, his lawful wife, and Ishmael was born of Hagar, Sarah's handmaid, which Sarah had given to Abraham to bear him a seed, since she was barren and could bear no children. They were not of identical lineage therefore, and it could be argued here that the promise was to the firstborn son of his legal wife Sarah to keep the lineage pure.

The same situation existed in the case of Isaac, Abraham's seed,

with whom the covenant was passed. Isaac had twin sons, born of Rebecca, they were of the same parentage and even of the same conception, and were, by nature and according to the law identical in every sense of the word, but the covenant was with the chosen one which was Jacob. This fact was revealed to their mother before they were even born. Paul recorded this fact in the new testament and went even further and explained the purpose in it being this way, *(Rom 9:11) "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth."* Neither Isaac nor Jacob had any part in their being the chosen one; but rather, this scripture says that it was to make manifest that it was not as a result of the works or the planning of the creature, or because of the lawful birthright of either, but rather, it was because of the election of God, and that determination was made before the foundation of the world. This is verified by the apostle Paul in his declaring to the church at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, why they were among the chosen ones, *(Eph 1:4) "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will".* Any questions? there is only one plan of salvation, and this covers all of the elect in all ages of time, under the law and under grace. *(Rom 9: 6-8) "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect, For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of promise are counted for the seed."* This promise under consideration, in this text, is the same promise that was made to Abraham, and it was according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, before the foundation of the world, and will stand throughout time and eternity. It was made prior to either of the two covenants which God made with men, and neither of them take precedent over the terms of this promise, that they should render the promise null and void. Nay, rather they are the way and manner in which the promise made is assured unto the heirs of promise, each in their own dispensation of time, and in the way pleasing unto the administrator of the different covenants. Paul says, *(1 Cor 12:5) "And there are differences of administration, but the same Lord."* The same Lord through whom the promise came was the Lord and Savior

Jesus Christ; who was also the administrator of both the old and the new covenant, assuring the absolute fulfillment of the promise, as made to Abraham. The scriptures declare that he ever liveth to make intercessions for the sins of the elect, and to insure that the original intent of the promise is fulfilled, to all, as they come onto the stage of action in due time, whereby they receive the earnest of their inheritance according to this promise. In his epistle to the Hebrews, Paul said, speaking of Christ, *(Heb 7:24-25) "But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come to God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."* This is the absolute assurance that each heir has that as it has been promised, so it shall be.

This promise applies, to those under the Mosiacal law and to those in the gospel day, although the administration may be a little different. The death of Jesus on the cross atoned for the sins under the law, taking their sins upon himself, and delivering them from the just condemnation of the law. In his death he blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that would have been against the gentiles, which was contrary to them, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross, so that henceforth they are no longer under the law of sin and death but rather the law of the liberty of life in Christ Jesus. All of the elect, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world shall be saved by his sacrifice since the efficacy of his blood flowed to the former sea and the hinder sea.

Paul said on one occasion, speaking to the gentiles, regarding the Jews, under the law, *(Rom 11:28) "As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sake, but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers sake."* and so all Israel shall be saved, and it is all by the mercy of God through the death of his only begotten Son. *(Rom 11:32) "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." All are saved by the grace of God, and it is according to the promise made unto Abraham, and therefore, they live their life here in time, as Paul said, (Titus 1:2) "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."*

Even as Abraham, the heirs are given faith to believe God's promise, and it is accounted to them for righteousness, and when this is revealed unto them, they embark upon the pilgrimage that has been set before them, like Abraham, looking for the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. The same faith that enabled

Abraham to go forth on his journey, will also stimulate and quicken them, and create that bond of fellowship for those of like precious faith, in all ages of time. John said that his purpose, in writing his first epistle, was that future generations to come would have fellowship with those in his time, *(1 John Chap 1:1-3) "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life; For the life was manifested and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us; That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ."*

These testimonies, of the brethren in former generations, bear witness to his children in this age and enables them to understand the scriptures, because they are explaining unto them their own travels in this time world. They feel a very special fellowship for Peter, when he says, *(1 Pet 4:12-13) "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's suffering; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."* There are times when his children are made to wonder regarding this change that has occurred in their lives, as to just what, how and why, it is with them as it is. But there is one thing that they are sure of; and that is, that there has been a change in their life and that it was not of their doing. They did not anticipate it, nor expect it, and since they did not originate it, they are made to realize that it is the work of God within them, and are made thankful that they cannot change or alter it; because they have been made to know that they cannot direct, or maintain their own way.

This is the solid foundation upon which, the hope of eternal life and the salvation, of every heir of grace is based, and there is not a more secure position, in heaven or in earth, where this hope could be placed. Paul said, *(1 Cor 3:11) "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."* It is all of the sovereign, work of God, and all of the power and glory of the godhead stands solidly behind this holy promise. There is no power, past, present, or future that can, in any way change or alter, this promise, or the foundation upon which it is built. The psalmist David said, and this is applicable to all of the works of God, *(Psa 33:9) "For he spake, and it*

was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." All scriptures are absolute truths, and they are just as relevant in this day and age, as they were in the day in which they were declared.

There is no hope of salvation other than that which has been firmly established upon this promise, and there is no other foundation which would be any more sure and steadfast than this. Paul, seemed to clinch this once and for all, when he said, *(Heb 6:17-20) "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil: Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."* Just think on that for a moment: the original promise was made by God, and then He confirms it by his own personal oath, to every heir of salvation. This scripture is saying, I believe, that their salvation is as sure and certain as the fact that Jesus is in heaven, because, he as their high priest, has entered heaven for them, and therefore nothing can ever separate them from that holy covenant of promise, or prevent its being fulfilled as it was declared originally.

Peter, speaking of this same promise, tells the apostles on the day of Pentecost, *(Acts 2:39) "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."* All of the chosen generation are included in that original promise; and they are those to whom God was referring, when he told Abraham, *"in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."* This was but confirming the fact that this same promise applies to the church, in the gospel day, which is the church as we know it today, as it was to the church in the wilderness, under the law. As an elder, who on one occasion was discussing a certain scripture with one of another faith, and they said, *"well the bible only mentions that subject once in the bible,"* and the elder asked him; how many times does God have to say something to make it the truth? If God declares anything to be true, it is the truth throughout all eternity, and that is especially true with this promise, because it is the basis of the hope of eternal life in every heir of grace.

If we be one of the elect, we have the greatest possible assurance of a heavenly home, when this time

world is ended. It has been promised by God the Father, it has been preserved in Christ Jesus the only begotten Son, and this fact has been revealed unto us by the Holy Ghost. There is absolutely no possibility of error, or of any misinformation being in this line of communication.

Our experience causes us to believe that we are indeed of that chosen generation, and our faith in him that has promised, enables us to enter into that rest, as regarding salvation, as the apostle Paul wrote, *(Heb 4:3) "For we which have believed do enter into that rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world."* We strive to do those things that are pleasing unto God, not in order to obtain salvation, but rather to make manifest the love and praise that we have for him, and for what we hope that he has done for us.

God, knowing our hearts, accepts our sacrifice continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, rendering praise unto his Holy and matchless name for the wonderful gift that has been bestowed upon all of his beloved, according to this precious promise.

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

CALL TO THE MINISTRY AND BELIEFS OF ELDER MARVIN BRUMFIELD

Told to Elder Jerry & Sherry Farmer, Elder Waymon Chapel, Elder James & Sylvia Howard, Elder Theron & Bobbye Jones, Elder Truman & Geraldine Bradshaw, Jamie & Frances Cooper, Randolph & Peggy Wells, Gene & Libby Howard, Gladston & Jottie Newman, George Hyslip, Rebecca Brumfield, and Bill & Judy Poindexter

On Saturday night during the sitting of the Little Vine Association

August 25, 2001

I had a dream 17 years before I made my first attempt. This was a dream or a vision that I had of my home church. I dreamed that I was called upon and I could see it and I can see it today as plain as it was back many years ago. I was called upon, I got up and I opened the Bible, but I cannot tell you what the scripture was that I turned to. It seemed like I read what I turned to and it was the easiest thing I had ever done. But about three or four months later I had another dream exactly like the first one. Same place, I opened the Bible, I can't tell you where it was. It is just as plain

today as it was then. I read something and was shut completely up. I couldn't even have a comment on it. What did it mean? Now I can see (if I am not mistaken) with the experiences I have had - you brethren who stand in the pulpit know - sometimes it feels like it is the easiest thing you have ever done. Sometimes you feel like you have been blessed. I feel like that was the first dream I had. Sometimes you go and you find you don't have a bit of feeling. Completely shut up. Now, Brethren, if that is not showing you something, telling you something, I don't know what it was. I have found it to be that way. I have seen in that thing, that one is just as important as the other. It just don't make me feel as good. But I am thankful to my Lord that I can see this thing and understand it and realize one is just as good as the other.

As I said I went many years. Sometimes it would get much stronger. Sometimes it would get to the place, I couldn't see how I could stand it any longer. Then it would kindly drift away and I would think, "It's gone, maybe you are completely out of it. Maybe you are okay now." Then later on it would come back again a little bit tighter. I would go for a few weeks wondering what is going to happen. What is going to take place? Here I would go again. I would have another series. I would feel like, maybe it is all gone, maybe it is something you just thought of or maybe it is something you made up for yourself. I don't know about you fellows, but during this time I was trying to work. My wife was trying to work. Later on, it seemed like I was going to die anyway. Maybe it would have been better if I had. I started going to doctors in Lynchburg and there at home. I finally ended up down in Duke Hospital with my wife trying to work and coming to see about me. Still, she didn't know what was wrong and I didn't know what was wrong. I just kept on with one thing and another and finally they run all the tests they could run on me and finally they just sent me home. I reckon I was just as bad when I got back as I was when I went from that standpoint, because I don't think the doctors have any medication for one who is called to stand before a portion of people that we feel now that they must be the wisest people on earth. They know, I believe you know - you can say you know, they know the truth. The ones that have been brought into this thing by His love. You can say, they know the truth when they hear it. I can say one thing, I believe they are a people that have this new birth or born again, (if you want to use the word, born again). They don't have to go to the Bible to know when they hear the truth. If they hear the unsound, they know it. They don't have to go to the Bible to know these things. Why? Because they have been given something that the world does not have. That is knowledge, truth and a great love. This love will

go with you through this world and the world to come.

But let's go back once again. The thing got so tight it seemed like I would not be able to bear it. One week, along towards the end of the week, I said to my wife, "Let's go down to Elder Prescott's." He has been someone I could lean on but he's gone on now. I said, "Let's go down there and see them." But she still didn't know these things. So we went down there and spent the weekend. We went with them to church and Elder Prescott kind of felt what was going on. He could see it. He couldn't ask me to say anything down there but he asked me to return thanks at the table, so I did and I felt a little easier. So we came on back home Sunday afternoon and I still hadn't said anything to my pastor about it. So I said to my wife, "Let's go over to Elder Goad's." So we went over there and I told them what was upon my mind. So we all cried and talked about it. Elder Goad asked what had took place down there and I told him I had the blessing and he said, "Did you feel relief?" I said I felt a little. Sister Phyllis said, "Well, it is going to be a hard road. Nobody knows how it is unless they walk in these shoes." But these things have to be, whether we like it or whether we don't. These things take place in our lives and there is a purpose in it whether we will be able to understand them or not. His purpose will be fulfilled. So I talked to Elder Tench and he said, "Next weekend we will let you try." So I guess I made a try and I still try. But I told some of them the other night, I have had a good life. The Lord has been good to me although the road has been rough. It has not been easy for the last few years, but it has been the sweetest part. I told my wife, since I have come into the church with those I love, I hope, those that I hope I can live with, those that I hope I can sing with, those that I hope I can talk with, those that I hope I can share my burdens, troubles and tribulations and my good times with. I think about maybe that is the way Ruth felt when she said, "Entreat me not to leave thee. Where you lodge, I want to lodge. Where you are buried, I want to be buried." I hope I can live with you. My greatest desire, Brethren, is (I know I can't do it of myself) that I can be kept in such a way to be kept small enough (you cannot do this if you are not kept) to be as a little child and not to cause any trouble. But I hope, by the Grace of God, to be kept so low that I can always look up to my brethren and not down on them.

We have just had our 50th Anniversary and I gave a little speech before we started. I said when we got married, we didn't have much. We just had a little. I think I had $50 when we got married. I didn't have enough to buy Rebecca a ring. By the Grace of God over these years we have - not myself, we have -accumulated enough to buy her a ring.

By the Grace of God! I am what I am by the Grace of God. And I hope and pray that I will be kept and led in such a way that I can say with a true heart that I love you. You know we have a little song:

Love is the sweetest bud that blows.
Its beauty never dies

We love our families but this is a love that reaches beyond this world. You know, I believe this love of God will carry you through these things that are coming. We have to face them. For the last few years-we hate to give our children up; we hate to give our grandchildren up. If you haven't experienced it, you will. And you won't know how it is until you walk in those shoes. But the greatest part, the most precious thing that I can think of, that I can see that this had to be. Losing our grandchild, this had to be. I am glad that the Lord has blessed me to believe that. It had to be exactly like the Lord had foreordained it to be. There was a purpose in it, a reason for it and I told the children, the family, this is the way it had to be. There is a reason and a purpose in it and we might not ever see the reason for it or the purpose in it, but if we go back to what we believe, it had to be. And, Brethren, we have got to walk in that path the Lord has foreordained us to walk in whether we like it or whether we don't like it. We still have got to go down it. That path is laid out for every one of us, whether we believe it or not. He has laid out that walk and we have got to walk in it.

The only way you are a believer is by the revelation of Jesus Christ and if it is not pleasing to Him to reveal this to you, you will never understand it and you will never see it. Because I have said this just recently, you might read the Bible from lid to lid a dozen times or as many times as you want to read it, and if it not pleasing to God to reveal it to you, it won't mean anything to you.

I sit here tonight thinking about it, what we believe. Was it predetermined in the mind and purpose of God for every one of us to be sitting here tonight exactly like this or was it just a haphazard thing. I was thinking about this thing sitting right over there. If we believe we can do even one little thing, just one little thing, we cease to honor Him and call Him a sovereign and almighty and all-wise and all-knowing God. If we believe we can do one thing to inherit the kingdom of God, we see Him as just another man. In the Book of Isaiah, He says, *I am God. I am God! No one like me.*

It is a wonderful thing.

Elder Marvin Brumfield

VOICES OF THE PAST

SOME CAUSES OF THE BAPTIST SPLIT OF 1832

Brief excerpts from Gilbert Beebe

From the earliest settlement of our country by the Puritans in New England, and the Church of England in the Southern colonies, whose religious supremacy was established by law in their several localities, the Baptists, and indeed all other dissenting orders, suffered great oppositions by proscription and oppression from the dominant parties. The Baptists, perhaps, more than any other, were violently treated, and suffered the most cruel persecution. Disfranchisement as citizens, fines, confiscation of property, incarceration in prisons, and banishment for nonconformity, to which was added corporal punishments, public whippings at the stock, cropping of ears, boring their tongues through with hot irons, tying their heads and feet together, and torturing them in the most barbarous manner for days and nights, and in many cases they were put to death for their persistent and inflexible adherence to the faith and order of the gospel by which they were distinguished from all other orders. *In* those days of trial there were no worldly inducements offered to attract the worldly-minded to connect themselves with our churches, and there was harmony of practice among the Baptist churches throughout the breadth of our country.

No sooner were the Baptists of America relieved from the galling yoke of Puritanic and Episcopalian priestcraft than the doctrines of Andrew Fuller were introduced with the professed design to raise up the Baptists from the dung-hill, to rank respectably with other religious denominations. All were inclined to the doctrine of Arminianism, with many others who had been led but sparingly into an understanding of the cardinal doctrine of salvation alone by grace, were ready to embrace the plausible and deceptive views of Fuller and became at once ambitious for the promised elevation.

At this period , which is still fresh in the recollection of the editor of the "Signs of the Times," there was not known among the Baptists of America a single organized *in*stitution in connection with or under the patronage of the Baptists. Theological seminaries on a very small scale then began to be talked of, and a small school of this kind was started in Philadelphia, under the direction of Dr. Staughton, to give grammar lessons to a few illiterate preachers, and soon a college was founded in Washington City, and another educational and theological institution at Hamilton, N.Y., and similar schools began to spring up in various directions. Simulta-

neously with these, missionary enterprises were set on foot, both domestic and foreign, and Sabbath schools and Sabbath school unions, in which various anti-Christian denominations were recognized as hand and glove with Baptists in building up these unscriptural nurseries for the church, as they were modestly called. Then followed the Bible Societies, to give a semblance of piety to the whole system of religious machinery, followed *in* turn by Tract Societies, Temperance Societies, Mite Societies, Magdalene Societies, and a host of other equally unscriptural institutions under the name of Benevolence and Religion, until, to bring up the rear, the Abolition Society which had for a time been struggling into life and power under the patronage of a New England fanatic, was with due ceremony let in and adopted as a pet institution.

While these innovations were being made upon the faith and order of the Baptists, true enough, the Baptists began to rise, according to the prediction of Andrew Fuller, and soon came to be regarded as unsound and as respectable as any other of the wordly churches of this degenerate age. The Baptists were now no longer obliged to pray the Lord of the harvest to furnish preachers; they could supply themselves with a more refined and educated class from their own schools. Converts could now be made to order, and the churches supplied with members from their nurseries and other institutions. Their machinery was now so complete that grace was no longer needed to make their members orderly; *for* they were supplied with societies to keep them sober and benevolent; and if perchance many of them should lose their piety, their machinery was so ingeniously geared that they could run through again, and be reconverted and reconstructed as often as might be thought advisable.

It was during the prevalence of these abominations that the Signs of the Times was commenced. The new order of Baptists had many religious newspapers in the field, which without an exception advocated these institutions named in the foregoing, and the general impression was entertained that there were no churches or preachers left that had not enlisted in this new enterprise for worldly popularity and respectability. A few were found here and there, isolated and despised, who sighed and groaned on account of the prevailing abominations. Yet few as there were, and far between, we were denounced violently as illiberal, inert, slothful, behind the spirit of a progressive age, and enemies to the spread of the gospel, and opposed to all that is good...

- From Introductory Preface to Gilbert Beebe's Editorials, 1868

EZEKIEL 1.10.

"As for the likenesses of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion on the right side and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle."

This prophecy of the likeness of four living creatures undoubtedly has to do with gospel ministry, which, in a sense. can be said to be the teeth in the head used in preparation of the food for the body. Ezekiel was among the captives by the river Ohebar, and the heavens were opened and he saw visions of God. the hand of the Lord being upon him. By the operation of the Spirit of the Most High within him he could, by faith, look forward to the dawning of the gospel day, when the Son of God would come and be made a partaker of flesh and blood, *"for to make in himself of twain one new man."* The coming of Christ Jesus, the God-man, the Lord from heaven, a quickening Spirit, makes manifest that the first Adam is of the earth, earthy; that all flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it. Without the Spirit of the Lord blowing upon it, without God working in us, we could not know that all flesh is grass, and while this reveals a very sad state of affairs, if that were all, we are not left in despair, out in his light we see light, for he is that true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. There is not one in all the universe who has any spiritual light but what comes down from the Father of lights; with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Paul said he was *"confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."* This light shining in the heart has a twofold effect: not only does it show up the creature's true condition, that he is altogether vile and corrupt, that from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot there is no soundness in him, but, *"In that day [that experience] there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness,"* and they shall behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. *"The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."* This is what Jesus taught, and what his ministers are to realize if they are to have fellowship with him. He said, I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. Surely, the servants are not to be

above or better than their Master. If they are to be his ambassadors, if they are to speak in his name, if they are to bear the image or have the face of this man, Christ Jesus, they will be made to know, as it is written, There is none righteous ; no, not one. At best, they will have to confess to being unprofitable. These creatures not only had the face of a man, possessing meekness, gentleness, kindness, forbearance, forgiveness, mercy and love, the fullness of which dwelt only in Jesus, but they also had the face of a lion, the face of an ox and the face of an eagle. One record is to the effect that they were full of eyes within, before and behind. The city lieth foursquare, therefore the watchmen upon the walls of Jerusalem must be full of eyes, turning in every direction, lest the enemy approach from some unsuspected quarter, and they are not only to have the face of an eagle to discern what is right and to detect error, but they are to be as bold and fearless as a lion, and are commanded to ***"Cry aloud, spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins."*** They are to take the little foxes that spoil the vines, for the vines have tender grapes, otherwise they will creep in unawares and lead astray the lambs and the weak of the flock, which are the tender grapes of the vine. There seems to be a disposition, on the part of a great many, throughout our land and country today, to kindle a fire and walk in the light of the sparks thereof; to bring in new things, being no longer satisfied to walk in the old paths, not content to preach ***"salvation by grace,"*** but insisting upon "salvations" which depend upon the do and live system, claiming that in regeneration the flesh is changed, and that thereafter the creature is the ***"master of his fate and the captain of his soul."*** We once heard an Old Baptist minister make the illustration that a man who was addicted to drink for many years rode a mule, and that the mule had invariably taken the left fork of the road, which led to a saloon, but that after the man was regenerated, his old mule was even changed, and thereafter would take the right fork of the road, which led to a church on the hill. From what we know of a mule he can well be used as a figure of the flesh, but our experience has been even though you may allow his mane to grow long and his tail to become bushy, he forever remains a mule by nature, and if he ever takes the right road it is because there is one astride who, with a bit in his mouth and spurs in his side, guides and directs him as seemeth good to the rider. I have thought of our "nature," as being a great, corrupt stream, flowing only downward, and that continually, emptying itself into the sea of death. It cannot change its course, any more than the Ethiopian can his skin or the leopard his spots,

and if there is any inclination to swim up stream, or a desire for holiness, it is because the grace of God hath appeared unto us, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. Recently, we have seen a number of Scripture quotations advanced to support the "many salvations" idea, but when they are sifted down to rock bottom, whether it is converting a brother from the error of his way, the saving one's self from the untoward generation, a taking heed unto one's self, or unto the doctrine therein, after all is said and done, the one and only answer is " grace." If there is any converting, or taking heed, is it not because the love of God constraineth us? If the fruit is good, it is certain that the tree is good. Who makes the tree good? This doctrine does not license or encourage one to sin; grace in the heart causes one to turn from sin and to seek righteousness, and the one thus inclined desires to praise god, and not man. One says, concerning the Scripture, "Work out you own salvation with fear and trembling," that God gives the will to so work, and the power to work, but that God does not do the work, his children are to do that. The question could be asked, If God gives the will to work, and the power to work, is there anything that will or can hinder it? We like the scriptural expression, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and the to do of his good pleasure." There can be no confusing or mistaking what this means, because it is God which worketh the "to will and to do," and his work is always effectual, a perfect work. Jude is also called to the witness stand by some to try to prove there is more than one salvation. He said, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." The next verse explains this one: "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." Therefore it was necessary that he should put them in remembrance of the fact that they had been bought with a price, not with corruptible things, such as gold, silver and creature works, but with the precious blood of the Lamb of God, which not only put away the sins of the past, but for all future time, as well. This is clearly shown in the case of the good Samaritan. Jude addresses his letter "to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called," and to prove that he realized they could not keep themselves in the love of God, or from the influence of those ungodly men even, he sums up his epistle by commending

them unto him, that he is able to keep them from falling, and to present them faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. This is the salvation, kept by the power of God, through faith, that is common to all who are sanctified (set apart from the world) by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called, in every age, nation, kindred and tongue. There cannot be one single exception to this, else God is not the full and complete Savior of his people. The doctrine, "Salvation is of the Lord," does not make the Bible a book of contradictions, as some assert, but rather harmonizes the Scriptures from cover to cover, as well as fitting in with the experience of God's people. It embraced Jonah's deliverance, in time, from the very belly of hell, and brought David up out of an horrible pit. It is the God-dishonoring doctrine of salvation by works that causes no end of trouble among Old Baptists. How an Old Baptist minister can preach a doctrine of conditions is beyond our comprehension. Paul, though at one time a Pharisee of the Pharisees, put all those things behind him, and spoke a pure language, saying, "By the grace of God I am." Such doctrine glorifies God and comforts the poor and needy. Paul had to fight, as it were, with beasts at Ephesus in earnestly contending for the faith and endeavoring to maintain the doctrine of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, just as God's servants will have to do in every age. Men will ever deny the doctrine, but there will be living creatures who will maintain until the very last trumpet is blown that it is "by grace ye are saved." This was spoken to those who were already quickened, and by way of emphasizing the point he continued, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourself; it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Does this not show clearly to whom all the credit is due for the salvation and good works of the christian? They who have the face of an ox, and upon whom the Lord hath placed his yoke, will have to bear the burden with patience, and endure to the end. There can be no compromise made with error; there is not middle ground between truth and that which is not truth. The feet of the likeness of the living creatures Ezekiel saw were straight feet, and they were as burnished brass, showing that the true ministers are to turn neither to the right nor to the left, and that they will meet with persecution, but let them rather remember that Christ also was persecuted and ever press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, looking unto him who is the author and finisher of their faith. Jude's very expression, Earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints,

is to endure hardships as a good soldier, standing firm, and forsaking not his post to which God has called him.

"They four also had the face of an eagle. This seems not only to suggest discernment, but as the eagle soars aloft, far above and beyond the reach of all who would do her harm, so shall the Lord's servants be lifted above all that is earthly, and be made to realize that God is at the helm, doing his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. They will see, as Ezekiel did, the wheel within a wheel, when it moved went only forward, proving that all things, however contrary they may seem to our finite minds to be to God's will, nevertheless do work together for the good of them that love God, those who are the called according to his purpose, that he is glorified, and all his works do praise him. Regardless of what man may do or think, God's undisturbed affairs do move on. Ye faithful servants, hold on your way. If you meet with a lion slay him with a "thus saith the Lord" and later on you will be brought back to find bees working in the carcass, and thus beholding the hand of God you will eat honey and give to those of your kindred in Christ of the sweetness of God's doings, which are marvelous in our eyes. It will be a time of exalting the Lord, and of lifting the name of Jesus on high. Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up in his day, and his train filled the temple, and above it stood the seraphims; each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered this feet, and with twain he did fly, showing that when God's servants go preaching salvation by grace man is hid, not in view; his steps are ordered of the Lord, and he goes in the strength of the Lord. "And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory." There was no room there for the glory of man. On the other hand, Isaiah felt, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." John was seeing eye to eye with Ezekiel and Isaiah when he beheld a throne in heaven, and him that sat thereon was to look upon as a jasper and a sardine stone, and round about the throne sat four and twenty elders, and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne were four beasts, evidently the four gospel writers, who were the four living creatures who actually recorded the things they saw Jesus do and heard him say. These all agreed, and John said, ***"They rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come."*** This seems to include all time, past, present and future. Let us not add to nor take from "the things which are written, but rather study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not to

be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, that we may be found in accord with the prophet, apostles and him who spake as never man spake.

"Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

Elder R. L. Dodson.

PHILIPPIANS IV. 5.

"LET your moderation be known to all men."

First. It seems to us that this brief attendence is inseparably connected with the preceding verse, and with the two following verses, and that this was so in the mind of the apostle. The Holy Ghost has placed these admonitions together so that each one could seem to grow out of that which immediately precedes it. The one central thought in all these four verses is, first, trust in the Lord, and then rejoice in him. The following expressions set this forth clearly: *"Rejoice in the Lord." "The Lord is at hand." "Let your requests be made known unto God." "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds."* The apostle reminds his brethren that theirs is a high and holy calling, that they serve the King of kings, that in him there is safety perfect and entire, and therefore there is for them no need of anxiety, nor care, nor restlessness, but, on the contrary, that they may rest in full assurance that all is well. Men of the world may run to and fro, and here and there, seeking to build for themselves secure hiding-places and settled foundations, but to them no such need existed, since God was himself their refuge and since he is always at hand. These are, as it seems to us, the general thoughts of this Scripture. These things all the people of God have need of, and of all these things it is good to be reminded, that our strife and restless seeking after that which we call good may cease, and that we may come to believe and rest in God. The things presented to the church at Philippi by the apostle, are also needful for all who believe.

Second. Let us trace briefly the connection between the six special clauses of these four verses. First, always rejoicing in the Lord is enjoined; this must include all that pertains to him in his holy, character and in his redemption. Believers rejoice because their Lord is their King, Lawgiver and Judge; because he is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him; because he so loved them that he gave his only begotten Son to die for them, and to justify them freely by his finished work upon Calvary because he never leaves them nor forsakes them; because he is a defense

round about them, so that no enemy can set upon them to do them harm, and because he supplies all their need through riches of grace in Christ Jesus. They are, all of them, poor, weak and sinful, yet they have room to rejoice in him. Yea, just because they lack all things their rejoicing must be in him. All that can produce sorrow and shame is found in them, but though sorrowful they are always rejoicing in him, for in him are riches for their poverty, strength for their weakness, righteousness for their sinfulness and redemption for their lost estate. They are shut out of all room for rejoicing in self and shut up unto rejoicing in the Lord Jesus Christ. A sinner says, What have I to rejoice in I am empty, wretched, blind, miserable, naked and lost. Yes, all this is true, but sinners are not bidden to rejoice in themselves. Is there not enough in the blessed Lord to cause rejoicing in their hearts of all such sinners? Nay, more than this, none save a lost, condemned. perishing sinner ever can see anything in the blessed Lord to cause rejoicing. Jesus is the precious honeycomb. He that is full of self and of his own ways will loathe this precious honeycomb, according to the testimony, A full soul loathes the honeycomb. But if in our weakness we are persuaded of the riches of grace and glory in the blessed Jesus then indeed must we rejoice in the Lord. and rejoice always.

Third. Among the things connected with rejoicing in the Lord will follow a spirit of moderation, according to the next verse. Rejoicing in the Lord and moderation before men, abide in the heart together. This word in moderation " has in it all these following shades of meaning: that which is suitable, or fair, or reasonable, or gentle, or mild, or patient, or upright. The word in the original Greek bears all these shades of meaning. In the text substitute either or all these words for the word in moderation " and we shall do no violence to the meaning of the apostle. When the apostle said, ***"Let your moderation be known,"*** he said all that the above named words convey. Now, is it not apparent that if one has come to trust in God, and to behold such excellence in him as to rejoice in his heart, there will follow the beginning and the growing up of all these graces of the Spirit: uprightness, patience, mildness, gentleness, reasonableness, fairness, with all suitableness of life expressed by the word moderation? That which makes men unkind to each other, unfair in their dealings with each other, unreasonable in their judgment and language about each other, impatient either with their fellow-men, or with the circumstances that surround them, harsh and severe in their treatment of each other, and in short that which leads to that which is unsuitable to the profession of the religion of the meek and lowly Master, is want of trust in God, in the absence of which there can be no joy in the Lord. Rejoicing in God,

and moderation before men, therefore, spring out of the same fountain, and will be found flowing together in the stream of the believer's life.

Fourth. The apostle enforces all this upon the minds of his brethren by reminding them that their Lord is at hand. He is always at hand. Not only shall he come the second time without sin unto salvation, to which glorious hope the believer looks, and looking, is encouraged to endure to the end, as seeing him who is invisible, but even to-day, right in the midst of trials, sorrows, weaknesses and temptations, he is at hand with them one and all. Clouds may obscure our vision, thick clouds may be his chariot, but it is sure that he does ride upon the clouds even though our eyes are holden. I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, he has said for our consolation. This is one of the reasons for rejoicing in him. He is not a God afar off, but he is nigh. The Lord is at hand. Though it be winter or summer, night or day, cold or hot, dark or light, with us still, through every changing season, the Lord, our Lord is nigh, nigh to all them that call upon him In sorrow or gladness, loss or gain, sickness or health, temptation or deliverance conflict or victory, he is never far off. Always he is a very present help in time of trouble the apostle has not then laid upon his brethren an impossible task when he bids them always rejoice in the Lord. What more is needed than the assurance that the Lord is nigh? How true, to experience and to all the word of God, was the testimony of Habakkuk: *"Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olives shall fail and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Revelation. The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places."* And how appropriate the words that close this wonderful testimony: *"To the chief singer on my stringed instruments."* Joy and singing go together.

Fifth. Now, from all this, how natural the admonition that follows: *"Be careful for nothing"* Could this assurance that the Lord is at hand be with us and reign within us we should indeed be careful for nothing. We should be found then bringing all our affairs to the Lord, and then there would be that peace which passes all understanding, which would keep our hearts and minds from all that disturbs us. Then worry and anxiety would cease, and we should not be troubled about the future of our lives here below. These brethren at Philippi were among all the various trials that any of us ever have had; they were subjected to deprivations, dangers and losses, which we know little of in this day, because of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There was need for them to be reminded, as the apostle does remind them, that after all their Lord was at hand. Nothing could then

befall them without his presence, and nothing could possibly harm them, and nothing could beset them that he had not appointed for them. *"The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"* This is no less true of the children now than it was of their Elder Brother. It is our mind that the apostle here is speaking of the life of his brethren in this world, rather than of the inward conflicts between the flesh and the Spirit, or of the temptations of the world and the devil, which so often cause doubts and fears as to whether we have come to know the Lord in salvation or not. The blessed Savior said, *"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."* That is, all needed worldly provisions. And so here, as it appears to us, the apostle is presenting the truth that believers need not be anxious about temporal things when following the commandments of the Lord. "Be careful for nothing," but bring all your desires before the Lord, and this they may do without delay, for he is at hand always.

Sixth. Returning to the words first quoted, "Let your moderation be known unto all men," it seems clear to us that the apostle does not mean by this that his brethren shall go about publishing their moderation, their kindness, mildness, gentleness, &c., but simply live that way day by day. These things cannot be hid if they be indeed in our hearts and lives. It seems to us sure that if one loves the Lord he will not need to call to men from the street corners, Come behold my zeal for Him. He who has the love of God reigning in him will most probably be the last to feel sure that it is so with him. Perhaps he may not even think that the love of God has been shed abroad in his heart, but, on the contrary, many times feel very anxious lest it be not so, though he will with great longing desire that love, but there will be a making that love appear to all those who know him, by the quiet, humble, steadfast adherence to the faith that has been revealed to him, and by his quiet walk of obedience to the commandments of his heavenly Father. The more he loves God the less will he feel satisfied with that love. Indeed, this is one of the infallible marks of love, that one bemoans his lack of love. So will it also be with showing forth moderation. In short, the apostle presents to the church the suitableness of all the things which belong, to moderation, in their daily life. Live before all men with equity, with gentleness and kindness, with mildness and patience. These are not loud-voiced virtues, they do not come before men with the sound of the trumpet heralding them, they belong to the humble walking before God of those who fear him and desire to live to his praise, but who yet so far fail that they never can be satisfied with what they have done, and (least of all) satisfied with their state before the all-seeing eye of God. A servant might boast when among his fellow-servants alone, but hardly any servant would be found doing so in the presence of the master of them

all. He who feels that he is the servant of the Lord first, and then the servant of his brethren for the Lord's sake, while he remembers this, will not find room for boasting, or calling attention to his work. It is sure the inspired apostles never have urged a vainglorious display upon the part of the children of God; it must be, then, that the words, "Let your moderation be known," simply signify that we are to live out that which the Lord has wrought within us. It is a wonderful thing when the spirit of all that this word "moderation" signifies has found a place in the heart, and out of the heart filled with these things it is good that there should flow forth in word and in deed the suitable fruit. This the apostle enjoined upon those to whom he was writing.

Seventh. In conclusion we will say that by these words we are taught that believers are to strive to show forth all godliness, not only in the house of God, but before all men. For instance, we are to show all honesty toward all men. One of the meanings of moderation, as said before, is reasonableness. This also is enjoined upon believers toward all men. We are to deal with them not only justly, but reasonably; that is, not even exacting what the law might give us, but using a justice beyond what any law can provide or demand, save the law of the love of God and the neighbor. The text means, so far as worldly affairs are concerned, that we are not to be exacting or grasping, but to deal with men kindly, mildly and gently. We have hope, and we say that this world is not our home, but that we seek a city above. We say that earthly treasures all perish, but that heavenly treasures endure. The apostle here enjoins that we live as though we possessed the spirit of this truth. As we close these reflections it appears to us that after all the whole matter might as well be summed up and left in the one sentence, In all things let your moderation be known to all men.

Elder F.A. Chick

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union will convene, the Lord willing, the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in November, at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church. Song service beings at 10:00.

An invitation is extended to all our ministers, brethren and friends.

Peggy Wells, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union. will convene at Dan River Church on the fifth Sunday in November.

The church is located on highway #700 between Eden and Danville.

We welcome all lovers of the truth to be with us. We especially invite all ministers of our faith and order. Song service begins at 10:00 a.m.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Brother Allen Carroll, Clerk

PROCEEDINGS OF A PRESBYTERY TO ORDAIN A DEACON

In response to a request by, The Boaz Chapel Church of Fulton Kentucky, a presbytery was called for the purpose of examining and, if found qualified, to ordain, Brother Charles Moon to the office of deacon, on this date, June 29, 2003. All ordained members present, in good standing, among us, were requested to form themselves into a presbytery.

Presbytery was called together by Elder Wayman Chapell, pastor of the Boaz Chapel church.

Presbytery elected Elder Richard Campbell as their moderator.

Moderator appointed Brother Gladsten Newman as clerk, to record the proceedings of the presbytery.

Elder Richard Campbell opened the presbytery with prayer.

Elder Wayman Chapell was appointed to question the candidate, regarding his understanding of the articles of faith of the church, and of his belief being in accordance with them.

Elder Richard Campbell questioned the spokesman for the candidate, regarding his qualification for the office of deacon, and his standing among the brethren. Upon satisfactorily responding, and answering any questions of the members of the presbytery, all were satisfied, and agreed to proceed with the ordination.

The laying on of hands was performed, by the presbytery, during the ordination prayer worded by Elder Wayman Chapell.

Elder Richard Campbell gave the charge to the candidate regarding the duties and responsibilities of the office and the trials and problems that he may be called on to moderate, in the position as a deacon, in the church that he will be serving.

The moderator asked the members of the presbytery if they were satisfied with the proceedings of the presbytery.

The right hand of fellowship was given to, Brother Charles Moon, by all members of the presbytery.

Moderator asked the spokesman for the church, and the members of the church, if they were satisfied with the work of the presbytery.

Upon being advised that all were in agreement, Brother Charles Moon, was turned back to the church as a fully ordained deacon, and recommended to all churches of our faith and order in good standing. All members of the churches were invited to give the right hand of fellowship to the newly ordained deacon.

The clerk was asked to read the minutes of the presbytery and ask the members for any changes or corrections necessary to the minutes.

The clerk was instructed to prepare copies of the minutes for distribution as follows, one to the newly ordained deacon, one to The Boaz Chapel Church and forward one to The Signs of The Times, for publication.

Elder Richard H. Campbell,
Moderator

Brother Gladsten Newman,
Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 2003

Lena Gray -VA	5.00
Elder Alan Terry -VA	5.00
Mrs Frank Pilgreen -LA	5.00
Glenford Sigmon -VA	5.00
Elder James Howard -AL	10.00
Nancy Divers -VA	25.00
Bob Champeau -OK	5.00
Marcy Burgin -TX	5.00
Eveleen Rutrough -VA	2.00

OBITUARIES

SIS. CLEORA IRELAND FOREMAN

With pen in hand and a heavy heart, I will attempt to write a few words about Sister Cleora. She passed from this life on June 29, 2003 at Pitt Memorial Hospital in Greenville, North Carolina. Born September 28, 1923 to the late Grady R. Ireland and Maggie Lupton Ireland, making her stay here on earth just under 80 years.

On July 10, 1940 Sister Cleora married Elder Jesse Foreman and from this union were born four daughters, Sister Linda Lupton, Sandra Foreman-Rice, Sister Patsy Irsik and Sister Beverly Brousard. She had 14 grandchildren and 22 great-grandchildren. Sister Cleora was predeceased by two grandsons, Kevin Foreman and Jesse Carroll Banks plus one sister, Katie Gritz. Two brothers survive her, Grady Ireland, Jr and Jackie Ireland.

In February 1976 Sister Cleora asked for a home with the Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized on the fifth Sunday in February. A true believer of salvation by grace and grace alone. Since 1976, she and Elder Jesse traveled to many churches and associations to visit with brethren of like faith and order. Sometimes I had the pleasure to travel with them, timely good times for me.

Sister Cleora's funeral was held at the Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church on July 1, 2003, officiated by Elders Cleo Robertson, Milton Lupton, Tom Thompson and Gene Lupton. She was laid to rest in the Lowland Community Cemetery to await the resurrection morn.

Submitted to the church by a sister who loved her in grace and hope, a daughter by nature.

Linda Lupton.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

GREAT WAS MY FEAR

("When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child.")
Taught by a loved one whose word to me
Was accepted as the only way to be —
A Christian.

Hell-fire and brimstone each night, each morn;
Don't do this, don't do that — Hell will be
your home. No chance, not one.

I couldn't fight, I couldn't quell
This mounting fear of self-righteous shell —
No victory won.

My desire to be a perfect son
Completely left this erring one —
Tempest tossed.

I tried with all my wits to be
A top-scoring one in deviltry —
Completely boss.

Nothing too daring, nothing too bold;
Impudent rascal — my strength, behold
No one dare cross.

Vile oaths did speak and God to dare
My body with a witness ware —
A mighty hand,

Did grasp my throat. I must say
My life was ebbing fast away —
A tragic man.

"Have mercy, Lord, I did not know
That you would my spirit draw,
A wandering one."

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me;
The Master's voice, my faith and guide —
A work begun.

And how to perform or what to do
My stammering tongue will be
At His command, His word to speak —
Thy will be done.

("But when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." — I Cor. 13:11-12)

A loved one's experience — told by Margaret Baggett Lassiter, Fayetteville, N.C.

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EDITORIAL

ELDER R. H. CAMPBELL

So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

In the beginning, the day of formation that is, God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and in this garden God planted many trees which were pleasant to the sight and good for food and in the midst of the garden he planted the tree of life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and he placed the man there to dress and keep the garden. The garden was the perfect environment which God had created for man to dwell; with all of the necessities for a perfect life in the presence of God. He walked, talked and communed with God in perfect peace and harmony with his surroundings.

This was the beginning of the world, as we know it; the days prior to this were the days of creation and substance when God saw everything that he had made and pronounced it very good, he was seeing it in his mind's eye as we would say. Then began the days of formation in which the things that were created, in the beginning, began to physically take shape and have an existence in this time world, fulfilling the purposes for which they were created.

The days of creation in time were made manifest, even so, all of the things predestinated or determined before the foundation of the world will, with the same certainty and surety be manifested in time, precisely as planned, as are all of the other works and attributes of God.

As was not included with the trees that were pleasant to the sight and good for food and was not included with the tree of life which was in the midst of the garden, but it was added after the tree of life, and in a manner of speaking, seemingly of

less honor in that it was the last one planted. It was, however, a very significant part of God's creation, but it was not included with the naming of the others because its purpose was not for the good of the man whom God had created, in the same manner as were the other trees and creations.

Man was created upright and innocent, a being in the image of God, with no guile nor deceit in his mouth, because God had pronounced all of his creation good, when he viewed it on the sixth day of creation and this included the man as he was created, so as formed he was perfect and well pleasing unto God. This tree of the knowledge of good and evil was, in a sense, foreign to the rest of God's creation, which was all for the good and the welfare of man, because this tree was for his downfall. This was all in the plan from the beginning, its purpose for being planted, if you please, and it served its purpose as did all of the other creation that God made and is also among those, "all things that work together for good to them that love God" in the final analysis, because it ultimately makes manifest a definite and eternal distinction between the elect and the non-elect.

This tree was in God's plan in like manner as Judas, the one who betrayed Jesus. Judas was numbered with the twelve, but his being was not for the same purpose as the other apostles; his work was evil, in fact you might say that Judas's deeds were a typical example of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in Christ's day; for his presence manifested the results of the eating of the fruit of this tree which man partook in violation of God's command, causing all sin which occurs to enter the realm of nature. God told the man that he may freely eat of every tree of the garden, but he added, thou shalt not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. The command is worded in such a way that it precluded the possibility that they would not partake of it, for it says, for in the day that thou eatest thereof, not if thou eatest thereof, but in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

All of these things, which resulted from man's partaking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil were just as necessary in the plan of God as all the rest of his creation; but for a different purpose. The purpose in the whole plan of salvation was that God's love for his chosen generation might be made manifest in his bestowing mercy and grace upon them and saving them from this state of sin and death that was placed upon them because of their partaking of the forbidden tree; this was shown in the fact that the remedy was prepared before the disease occurred. This he did by first creating the tree of life, an antedote for the malady that came upon all men who were

created in his image, but subject to vanity. This procedure separates the elect from the non elect, by revealing his love for the chosen vessels and makes manifest his just and utter condemnation of the wickedness of the serpent and his seed, and his hatred for all evil. This was all determined before time began, but is made manifest in time, and therefore cannot be changed by anything that occurs in time; as one writer said, (Psa. 90, vs. 9) "We spend our years as a tale that is told," already told.

Man did indeed eat, of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and did indeed die to that state of innocent purity into which he was created. By his partaking of the tree he was separated from God, no longer in his image, given coats of skin, the natural characteristic that he assumed when he died to the life that he had previously lived. He was now carnal, at enmity with God and all things spiritual and would forever have remained in that undone and depraved condition unless or until, he is regenerated and brought back to that image in which he was created, which was in the image of God.

Because of sin, judgement was pronounced upon this man, the ground was cursed for his sake and would not yield food unto him, as in the beginning, for God told him that because he had done this, (Gen Chap 4, vs 18-19) "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee and thou shalt eat the herb of the field: In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread til thou return unto the ground: for out of it thou wast taken: for dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return." And he did not say for a short time. God had originally placed man in the garden to dress it and to keep it, but regardless of being given the above command, regarding the eating of the fruit of the trees, the only tree of which it is recorded that man ate, was the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the only one that he was commanded not to eat. Because of this act of flagrant disobedience, judgement was placed upon the serpent, Eve and Adam, and man were driven from the garden and placed in the earth under the dominion of the serpent, which was the world of nature, in which the man lives unto this day, an alien from God and the paradise in which he was originally created.

Carnality is the state of death to which God refers when he said," For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die", death being the separation from God and the world into which he was created. Paul said, to be carnally minded is death, and is enmity with God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. This is all men in nature because this was the judgement that was placed upon them.

Man, as he was now, in nature clothed in those coats of skin, could not partake of the tree of life and therefore God drove him from the

garden and placed a Cherubim and a flaming sword at the east in Eden to keep the way of the tree of life, lest he should put forth his hand and partake of the tree of life and live forever. The tree of life is still in existence today, in Christ, but it is not available to all men, it is reserved for those who were created in the image of God, in the beginning, before the serpent beguiled the woman and before sin entered into the world. It's existance has been demonstrated down through the ages, time and time again, as God raised up servants to lead his children in times of adversity, delivering them from the power and devices of Satan, and through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, delivered them from the fiery furnace, stopped the mouth of lions and overcome odds that the man could never overcome. This he did to demonstrate the eternal presence of the tree of life, under the watchcare of the Cheruba and the Flaming Sword, and made manifest his everlasting love and soverignty among his people.

The tree of life was formed for the good of those who were created in the image of God, in the days of creation; those who were commanded to go forth and replenish the earth, have dominion over it and subdue it. In the transgression, judgement was pronounced upon the man and he was driven out of the garden into the natural world and the curse changed the chain of command insofar as man is concerned. He is now, in the flesh, under the dominion of the serpent, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that works in the children of disobedience, which includes all men in the flesh and are without God and without hope in the world. Although they transgressed, this did not annul the first commandment of God, that they should go forth and multiply and replenish the earth, because, this all was in the plan, from the beginning.

It is in the same manner as the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after the promise to Abram, did not make the promise of none effect, so it is now. God's decrees and commandments stand fast, and must be obeyed, regardless of what may occur in the process of their being executed. To man, it may seem, that the plans are changed by what happens, but this is not so. God speaks and it is done, he commands, and it stands fast regardless of the devices or efforts of man, principalities, powers or any other creature, and he is of the same mind yesterday, today and forever. The tree of life was the assurance that all of the elect would be kept by the power of God although they were under the dominion of the serpent in the flesh.

Isaiah spoke of the way of the tree of life, in this manner, (Isa Chap 35, vs 8-10) "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it

shall be for those: the wayfaring man, though fools shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." This highway, even as the way of the tree of life, is not something that is visible to the eye of the man in nature, yet it is as present with the elect as the things that are visible to him. It is a highway that has no places to enter or exit, the redeemed are placed there and the only destination is the gate of heaven. It is even as is recorded in (Job Chap 28, vs 7-8) ***"There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen: The lions whelp hath not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it."*** The creatures of this world, including man, have no right or claim to the way of the tree of life, nor the way of holiness, nor this path which is unknown to the vultures eye and the beasts of the earth; but by the mercy and grace of God the ransomed of the Lord shall walk there and shall finally come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. This is in spite of the pitfalls and afflictions that may abide them in their journey here in time. The way of the tree of life, or way of holiness, are but different descriptions of the way in which God displays his sovereignty over all of his creation, by his caring for Israel, under the law and in the gospel day in spite of their carnal nature and the enmity that the natural man has toward him and all of his ways.

God chose a man, Abram, of all the men who were upon the face of the earth at that time, told him to leave his home, his kindred and go into a country that he would show him, and he would be a great nation and that all nations of the earth would be blessed in him, and he would be with him in all that he did. Thus began the nation of Israel, God's chosen people, the Lord's portion, those spoken of by Moses in the song that he taught the children of Israel to sing just before his death, (Deut. Chap 32, vs 8-90) ***"When the Most High divided unto the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."*** A people, chosen of God and reserved unto himself, those whom he formed for himself, whom he loved with an everlasting love and whom he draws unto him with loving-kindness. These are the ones for whom the way of the tree of life and the highway of holiness is reserved and it is just as sure and certain to be their heritage as the

fact that there is a God; for the integrity of the Godhead is behind the promise.

God was making manifest the way of the tree of life, in the salvation of Israel, when he called Moses to lead the children out of Egyptian bondage, representative of the bond of flesh which he must dwell in this world, into the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey, an earthly type of the garden of Eden, a paradise on earth where God would dwell with them and would be their God and they would be his people. Just as in the garden, the people rebelled and would turn back from following in his ways, but he never left them nor forsook them completely, he would punish them, for their sins, and bring them back into their land again. You would think that they would learn to obey, but man is a stiff necked and rebellious creature, in nature, and will insist on going his own way as long as he can. It is only because of the longsuffering of God that they were not destroyed in the garden, and only because of his abounding love, grace and mercy that they are continuing unto this day. The way of the tree of life is their assurance that God's plan of salvation from the beginning will be sure and certain to every child of grace chosen in Christ before the world began. This is all according to the promise made to Abraham that his spiritual lineage all down through time would be blessed in him. Peter referred to them as the chosen generation, the royal priesthood, the holy nation, and peculiar people: that they should show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of natures' darkness into his marvelous light, which is the way of the tree of life.

Saul of Tarsus was a living example of God's bringing of the man in nature into the spiritual realm and he said that his experience was a pattern to them that should thereafter believe on Jesus unto eternal life. They do not direct their own steps, cannot explain the reasons for their being called, other than as Paul said, "it is by the grace of God that I am what I am." Saul would have bound the disciples in Damascus, instead of preaching the gospel to them, but by the power of God, utilizing the way of the tree of life, the apostle Paul arrived in Damascus a preacher of righteousness, no longer a persecuter and injurious to the cause. None will ever fail to be brought into the fold, and none so brought in, shall ever fall away and lose that goodly heritage of which David spoke, because it has been reserved for them in heaven from before the foundation of the world.

Jesus Christ the imaculate son of God is the tree of life incarnate, he was the way, the truth and the life and said that "no man cometh unto the Father but by me." The is the way that the tree of life is manifested in this day; for man to see the kingdom of heaven, he must be born again, and for man to be born again Jesus

must have died and taken away the law of sin and death, which was imposed upon man because of sin, that they may have boldness to enter into the holiest by his blood. Jesus told his disciples, when he was with them after the Passover feast and just before he was delivered unto the mob, (John Chap 14, vs. 16-18) ***"And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the word of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."*** This promise was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost when the Spirit came down and sat upon them and they were filled with the Holy Ghost; they began to speak with other tongues as the spirit gave them utterance. This was when the tree of life again became available to the household of faith directly, fulfilling the promise of Jesus which he made unto his disciples when he said, (Matt. Chap 17, vs 19) ***"I give unto you the keys of the kingdom of heaven and whatsoever thou shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."*** This was not a gift to the apostles, but rather a gift to the church by the power of the Holy Ghost, which was given unto them on the day of Pentecost and they went forth declaring these wonderful works of God, binding those who were given ears to hear.

Oh, the beauty and the glory of these wonderful promises that have been left on record for those who have been given eyes to see, ears to hear and hearts to understand and believe these beautiful truths. These are the ones to whom the entire word of God is addressed and they stand in awe that such a wretch, as they feel themselves to be, could be heirs to such a grand and glorious legacy. May the riches of God's grace be with all of the heirs of promise constantly reminding them of the earnest of the inheritance which is laid up in heaven for them awaiting the completion of God's work in their lives.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Terry,

Enclosed find my renewal for the Signs with a little extra for whatever needs there may be.

God has blessed me so much that I could never sufficiently thank Him. How inadequate are my eforts but oh how pleasant are the thoughts and reflections of His mercy shown me if not deceived.

In Precious Hope,
Carrie Jo Williams

HETTY SWINDALL SUTHERLAND

My sister, Hetty Swindall Sutherland, is now 101 years old and still looks forward to reading her Signs of the Times each month.

I am her younger sister, now living with her so that she may remain in her own home as long as possible.

Thank you
Anita Swindall Hibbitts

Pentedon, B.C.
Can. V2A7H1
July 28, 2003

Dear Elder Terry,

Thank you for the reminder that I was neglectful in sending my renewal for the Signs.

The Signs is an oasis in the desert land we find ourselves in these days. When error and lies abound on every hand and the truth is not found in this part of North America. We were blessed with the fellowship of the church at Gleed Wash and the preaching of Elder Ben Preston until his passing. All my times are in His hand. All events at His command. Being thankful for these mercies.

Donald E. Ferguson

A DREAM AND A VISION

112 Bunard Court,
Danville, Va.

Dear Brother and Sister Spangler :

As I enjoyed the good preaching so much this Thanksgiving night, it gave me a mind to write you a few lines. Since I started coming up there to church, and especially since I united, I have repeated it so many times: It has just seemed like an old fashioned Thanksgiving day ever since.

My daughter was born on Thanksgiving day twenty-one years ago this week; she was born with a "V" in her forehead that remained there for a good while. I believe the Lord through her has brought victory to my life in many ways. I feel the Lord has blessed her with a good husband, who has brought much sunshine into our home; because we love him. Only the good Lord knows what we are in need of.

Brother Spangler, I have wanted to tell you the vision I had on the 4th Sunday in April after I joined the church the night before. There were a lot of people there that day; and we had had such good preaching. It was after the services were over, and just about everybody had gone out of the church ahead of me. As I was going down the front steps, I glanced towards all those people there on the front, and, as I saw you shaking hands with them, suddenly they appeared to

me as sheep in a beautiful pasture; and I could see you as a good shepherd over them. I could see you tending and caring for them, and keeping them in place with a staff in your right hand. It was made as plain to me as if a voice had spoken and said, This is the voice his sheep follow, because he has known all of their problems, and what they were in need of just as he has known what you were in need of.

For weeks later I continued to see a staff in your hand caring for those sheep. I have wanted to tell you this ever since, but I didn't know how. I felt like everybody there had seen just what I had: it was all so plain.

I want to tell you a dream again that I had when I was about eighteen years old, because I have felt it come to pass in Dan River Church. I dreamed I was walking alone at night on a country road; and finally I came to an opening and could see this little white church on the side of the road. It was lighted up inside and out; and I could see all those people going in ahead of me. It seemed that I was the last one to get to the doorway; and just as I stood in the doorway, my eyes went towards the pulpit, and Christ was standing there with his eyes on me. I started walking on down the aisle, and there was only one seat left on the right hand side; and as I sat down Christ was still watching me, and gave me a look of satisfaction, as if to say, All are here; and he was ready to start his sermon.

In the past year Christ has become so alive to me that I don't believe the glory of it could ever be told especially the day I was baptized. And that afternoon when I partook of the Lord's Supper, it couldn't have been any different to me if Christ had been sitting there in the midst. It just makes my heart rejoice so, to know that all this has actually come to pass after so many years. I know that if salvation came by works, I could have never been numbered among the saints; because for many years I felt to be the blacksheep of my family because of the terrible sinner I felt to be. Only the goodness and mercy of God could have kept me through it all.

I hope that I haven't been too much of a burden to you good people; I often feel that I am. I would like for you to continue to remember my family in prayer.

Love from above,
Annie Barber

PSALM 115:13-16.

He will bless them that fear the Lord, both small and great.

The Lord shall increase you more and more, you and your children.

Ye are blessed of the Lord which made heaven and earth.

The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.

ARTICLES

2003 CIRCULAR LETTER

Greetings to the messengers, elders, correspondents and friends that may compose this the one hundred seventy-eighth annual session of the Pigg River District Primitive Baptist Association.

It is with a great sense of weakness and unworthiness, I endeavor to write what is known as a circular letter. My prayer is that the Lord will direct my mind and hand, that what I might write will be to the praise of God and to the comfort of his dear people, whom He has saved with His own precious blood.

Dear Brethren,

I would like to call your attention to Jude, third and fourth verses, Beloved when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

This scripture was written many hundred years ago, but is just as true today as it was then, time has revealed this to be true. The history of the church will tell us many years ago, there were men that came among the Lord's people, preaching unsound doctrine, this causes trouble and confusion in the churches. It divided the members, one against the other. God is not the author of such confusion, although they were before of old ordained to this condemnation.

Men with their inventions and enticing words of men's wisdom has never fed the flock or gave them comfort. The teachings of men and the Amenian and conditional doctrines is some of the things that brought much trouble among the churches in times past and will continue as long as the Lord will permit. Sometime I think these things are to try our faith, that faith that was once delivered unto the saints. I believe it will make us stronger when we have to take a stand against such ungodly men, for if we are the called of the Lord, our standing is in Him. If our standing is in the Lord, we cannot fall because it is in Him we live, move and have our being.

May the Lord bless all our elders and those of our correspondents to preach the truth as it is in our Lord Jesus Christ, not turning to the right or to the left, to please any man, but earnestly contending for that faith granted of God.

Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling and to present

you faultless, before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

Submitted in love and hope,
Junior L. Conner

EXPERIENCE OF JOE SAWYER

I hope the Lord willing, I can tell some of the things that brought me to the Old Baptist Church and what I say may be to the praise and honor of God, who has paid the price for His people. I was born in Pitt County, North Carolina, the oldest of four children. I had three sisters. We were raised on a tobacco farm. We didn't have a lot of the natural things of this world, but we lived well in that day. I didn't go to church when I was young. I remember going once with my grandfather, Elder Tillman Sawyer. My parents and oldest sister were members of the Primitive Baptist Church. One sister loved our doctrine and the other two loved the doctrine of salvation by works. Two of my sisters and my parents are now deceased. While living on the farm, the Lord blessed us to have the things we needed.

My experience of being brought to the Primitive Baptist Church would take a long time to tell. Many things have taken place in my life. I stayed home and played when I was a little boy and didn't go to church. After Doris and I got married, I became concerned about what was going to happen to me. Things just caved in more or less, and I went and joined an Armenian Church. I didn't go there long because I felt it wasn't right. I continued to fight against the Old Baptists and read the scriptures to condemn what they believed. I just couldn't believe that God loved one and hated the other. God made me know along the way that I didn't choose to go among the Old Baptists and I certainly didn't choose to become a preacher. I hope God is the One who brought me to the Old Baptist Church. I tried a long time to prove to my daddy that salvation is by works, not grace. I left the church I first joined and went to Greenville. Experience has been a great part of my life. I couldn't talk before a crowd. I was shy and wouldn't say anything. I wanted to farm with my mama and daddy more than anything else, but things didn't work out. I had to leave the farm and go to the city and get a job as a salesman. I had a wife and three children to support, so I learned to talk to make a living. I didn't know this was working for my good. I thought it was the worst thing to happen in my life, but I had it to do. I learned how to talk and to meet people. It was a great experience. I was still down on the Old Baptists. I didn't think they were right, but my daddy did. He always believed it, but I thought they were Wrong. On the fifth Sunday in March 1958, my parents and my wife's parents invited us to go to Hancocks Church to a

union meeting. I had been in a world of trouble and didn't know I was wrong. I had been taught I was a sinner. I knew I had to stand before God's people. I begged Him not to choose me for I was not qualified. I was nothing. I couldn't speak to the Lord's people who I felt were the wisest people in the world. I felt to be a poor sinner and could not speak to His children. I had taught Sunday school that morning, but I told my wife I would go. I continued to criticize that they had the ugliest singing and they thought they were the only people in the world who were saved and everyone else is wrong. When we got to the church, preaching was over and they were singing hymn 322 in the Lloyd's Hymn Book, "Glorious things of thee are spoken". As I sat on the back seat, A voice spoke to me and said, "This is My church, this is My people". I want to tell you something brethren, when that voice spoke it brought tears to my eyes. I thought they were the prettiest people I had ever seen in my life and I wanted to be a part of them. I had thought they were wrong, I had fought so hard not to be a part of it. God opened my eyes and he showed me this was his people. He didn't tell me I was a part of his people, but He told me that this is My church and My people. When God shows you something, you will never forget it. It is just as plain to me today as it was that day. I assure you the things God brings about in your life you won't need encouragement from man, He will make you willing. God will bring His people in His way and time, not ours. God brought me in this way to show me just what I was by nature and what I must be by the Grace of God. I was blind and couldn't see until He opened my eyes. I fought as hard as I could not to be a part of the Primitive Baptists, but when He showed me that they were a beautiful people; I wanted to be a part of them, if they would have me. I thought, above everything else, that these people must be right. They believed salvation is by the grace of God, it is free and something man can't give you. This comes only from God. You can't get any help for it. None of my children, nor my wife, belongs to the Primitive Baptist Church. I've never encouraged any of them, although some of them believe it. I never told my wife she should join, although I feel she believes this truth. God must persuade them, not me.

In my experiences over the years, if I have had any, the Lord has showed me just how helpless I am. I don't know if I'm a preacher or not, but I sure fought not to become one. I'm not sure if I have ever said anything to praise God, but when it's my time to stand before the church, I always try to beg Him to put something in my mouth to praise Him and if not, to just sit me down. We didn't have a car when we first got married and we didn't have a whole lot when I joined the church, but there was a great change in my life from that day forward. I went back to the church I had been a member of and told them to take my name off for I had joined another church. They wanted to

know where I had joined and I told them I had joined a Primitive Baptist Church. They said that was the nearest nothing they had ever heard of. I told them I would tell them some of my experience why I went to the Old Baptists, but I didn't feel they would understand.

I asked my name be removed and I never went back. I believe the Lord's people are a separate people and I don't believe they uphold the things that are not right. If we do, we are going to have to pay for it down the road.

All things work together for good to them who are the called according to His purpose. We think sometimes it is working against us, but it is working for our good. I was a route salesman for Frito-Lay for about 15 years. On one occasion I was asked to be a district manager. This position would allow me to have better benefits and my retirement would be better also. I didn't know what to do. I went to Greensboro to talk with the regional manager and the sales manager. I walked into the office that day and told them I hoped to be a Primitive Baptist minister and would that have any effect on me having the job. I asked if either one knew anything about the Primitive Baptists and Tommy Thompson the regional manager from around Goldsboro said, "that I do Joe. All my family belong to the Primitive Baptist Church, except me, and I belong to the Presbyterian Church." The sales manager said he didn't think much of "jack leg" preachers, they won't work. Tommy told him, "Yes they will work. Old Baptists do what they say they are going to do." So the Lord took care of me there. He has taken care of me all the days of my life. He has watched over me and kept me. I have had some beautiful dreams and experiences and I believe God will continue to give His people more experiences as they live here in this life. Without those bethel spots in my life, I wouldn't even have a hope. Sometimes I get down low, real low, and I'm like David when he said, "is his mercy clear gone forever?"

Having to leave the farm and getting a public job was all working for my good and I didn't even know it. I dreaded the change. I would read the bible to prove to Daddy that he was wrong. I felt the letter would prove him wrong. I would read the bible until two or three o'clock in the morning and learned to quote the scriptures. I thought I could prove the Primitive Baptists to be wrong, but instead I was showed they are the right people. That's why I'm in the Old Baptist Church today, because I trust He brought me. I told God to get anybody to preach but me, I wasn't qualified. God can make you willing to do anything. This is something between you and your God. As far as preaching in the church of the living God, that's the most sacred thing in the world. To walk among God's people, a people that He has loved and separated and made different is most sacred. We are different by His grace and by His goodness.

My daddy and I were baptized together. I joined at Farmville Church and he joined at the water. It was a rejoicing day. Elder A. P. Mewborn baptized both of us. Elder Mewborn never said anything to me about becoming a preacher. I'm a lot like that. I don't think you should encourage people to be anything in the church. If they are not believers, you will just have a world of trouble. Daddy was a deacon at Hancocks Church and my grandfather was an elder. This is not the reason I became a minister. It has been said that some people only join the Primitive Baptists because their parents did, but I don't believe that. We believe the doctrine because God has given us the faith to believe it and thats why we love it. One of the first experiences I ever had before joining the church was in a vision or dream. I thought the Lord or someone had placed me on the straightest highway I had ever seen in my life. I was in a cart like you used to hitch a mule to and I couldn't get out. I had no control of where I was going. On the dirt walked a black man; he didn't walk on the highway. All of a sudden I was carried into this deep pit of water. I fought with all the energy I had to keep from dying. I finally gave up and said that I'm going to die and there is no way I can get out of this place. There were high walls and I couldn't get out. I was trying to cling to little pieces of driftwood to hold me up, but that wasn't helping. That was my works and works won't hold you up. An arm and hand reached down and lifted me out of the water and dried me off. I believe it was the arm of Jesus that lifted me out. I was doomed to die and there was nothing I could do about it. I was helpless and we do become helpless when we become God's children and He reveals the truth to us. We have always been His children; we just didn't know it. I asked someone what the dream meant and they couldn't tell me. Over the years I believe the Lord has showed me what it meant. I was depending upon my own works and I was going to die. God lifted me out and gave me the faith to believe that His works would stand and mine would never stand in that world to come.

All the things that have taken place in my life has been a great mystery to me. God has blessed me beyond measure in so many ways. He has left many little purposes along the way for me. There has been some of joy, some of happiness and some of heartache. There have been a lot of trials and tribulations. I think about what the apostle said, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." Pharaoh will always try to destroy the Lord's people if he can. He is still trying to destroy them today, but God will protect His children. I often think about the scripture, "If God be for you, who can be against you?" I didn't volunteer to become a minister. I used to fall down on my knees in the cornfield and beg the Lord not to choose me.

I wasn't qualified to be anything, but I didn't have a choice. The apostle said, "Woe unto me, if I preach not the gospel." I want to tell you, He brings you down and makes you willing to be anything in His church.

I asked a home with the church at Hancocks, the second Sunday in May 1958. In August of 1959, I began to speak on the floor at my home church for about a year. I was liberated and spoke among the associations for about 3 years. In August of 1963, I was ordained as a minister. Back then we had a lot of ministers. I never thought I would see it as it is today. We don't know what the future holds. God is able to fill up all the Old Baptist Churches again. It has to come from Him, for anything we bring into the church wouldn't be anything in the first place. I believe all the persuasion we ever need, will come from God. In my experience and calling as an elder if I am one, was by the grace of God. He had spoken to me on many occasions. I can't tell you all that has taken place with me since He first spoke to me at Hancocks Church that day. I know that voice. It will make you afraid and to fear Him. The one I seek to please is God, not man.

That is vanity and altogether nothing. If He has called me to be an elder, I'm just a servant to Him and to the churches in which I've been chosen as pastor. I didn't choose to be a pastor, He did the choosing. He gives the church a mind to elect whom He has chosen to be there. I believe the pastor will be given something to say and it will be to praise and glorify God.

This is a little bit of the experiences I have had. I've had a lot more, but it would take too long to tell everything that has taken place with me over the years. I want to say hope I love the Lord, love His people and love the things He has put into the hearts of His people. He has written His laws into their hearts and printed them in their minds and they don't need anybody to tell them what to do, but God. He is the leader and teacher. He is everything and He does His own choosing. If I had a choice, I wouldn't have united with the Primitive Baptist Church; would have gone somewhere else, certainly wouldn't have chosen to become a minister. Flesh likes to be someone, to be looked up to, and the Lord's people are just plain and simple. I hope by the grace of God, I have been made to love the church and to love the things It stands for. I believe these things will stand in that world to come. So may God bless you and I hope He will take me one day to a better place. I don't deserve it by anything I've done. I've done all the sinning and He has done all the saving, but just hope He loves me.

Joe Sawyer
3186 Speight Seed Farm Road
Winterville, North Carolina 28590
June 24, 2003

VOICES OF THE PAST

Copied from Zions Landmark of May 15, 1928.

THE DEALINGS OF THE LORD

Mr. John Gold
Dear Friend,

I have had a mind and desire ever since I united with the Primitive Baptist Church to write what I hope has been the dealings of the Lord with me, if not deceived. I have always attended the Baptist Church from a small child, and always thought they were the kindest, humblest people I ever saw, and it seemed I loved them different from any other people, but I didn't want them to know it, But could not understand their preaching. I do not remember the date, But some 16 or 17 years ago, One Saturday afternoon I came in from work, and my mother said to my brother, I wish for you to hire me a conveyance for tomorrow evening, I asked her where she was going, and she said she was going to the pond, which was at the park. I didn't say anymore to her as I knew she had already been to church that day, Of course I was happy to learn that she was to be baptized, and went with her to church on Sunday morning, and also followed her to the water in the afternoon. I was standing on the bank to kiss her when she came out of the water, for I thought she had the sweetest expression on her face I ever saw on any one's. That night I went to bed thinking of what a gulf between me and mother, and all my sins rolled up before me like mountains. And I felt the bed sinking beneath. I felt like I was sinking to the bottomless pits of torment. Oh that awful feeling I shall never forget. My prayer was Lord save or I perish. Don't remember how long I stayed in this condition, but it was a long time. My burden was so heavy I prayed both day and night. Would walk the floor at my work asking the Lord if it could be His will to remove my burden and show me the right church. I had dreamed one night that I was down under a rugged mountain, and my mother and grandmother were on top of the mountain and I wished to go up where they were. I tried in every way I knew how to get up there. I went to each end of the mountain and it seemed like it would be so easy to go up but could not do it I went back to the middle of the mountain, the very steepest place. And I heard a voice say you will have to go like your mother and grandmother have gone, and in a moment I was on the mountain with them. I didn't know how I got there but knew that it was nothing that I did as I already did all I could to get up there and every effort had failed. When I got up there mother and grandmother were walking

around in the prettiest green grass I ever saw, and they were so happy. There were apple trees blooming and an old fashioned house among the trees. It seemed something came to me and said you see how powerless you are, and this green grass represents heaven, and that old house is the Old Baptlst Church. That dream seemed to relieve me for quite awhile. But doubt seemed to arise, is this all a delusion or is it of the Lord. I prayed that the Lord show me just once more so I might not be deceived. I had another dream that I was at the judgement bar, and Christ was there judging the people for their sins, It was in a great large building, and he had a woman before Him and her face was red as coals of fire, And she belonged to a well known organization. I was standing biting my fingernails and waiting and dreading for my time to come, And while waiting I looked back over the building, And I said there is not an old Baptist here. It then came my turn to go to the Bar and everything seemed to vanish. I also had another dream that the world was on fire and I was standing in a field and saw the waves of fire coming to me as large as the waves on the sea. I thought my time had come, no where to go and no where to hide, I saw a chair sitting beside me, I stooped down beside the chair and the fire passed over me leaving me unharmed. And my love for the Old Baptist people became greater, and I never was satisfied unless I was in their company or under the sound of their voice. And was made to say I may be wrong but the Baptists are right. I was taken sick Christmas 1915, the month I was 25 years old. Continued sick for five long months. Could not tell anyone what was the matter with me. Doctors pronounce it kidney trouble. I didn't want to be with anyone or go any place except to church. Each night when I would go to bed I would think I would never see the sun rise any more. So on May 23, 1916 I went to a hospital at Stuart Va; called Mother's Home, which was run by Dr. Richard Martin, best known as Dick. I was then examined by five different doctors, all said I would have to have an operation did not mind the operation so much my only thought was if I was only prepared to meet Jesus all would be well. I still was bearing my heavy burden praying all the while that Jesus would heal my sin sick soul. I would read the Bible to find comfort but none could I find, Each patient had a Bible by their bed and could read when they wished to. On Monday evening June the 5th I took my Bible and hid it in the folds of my dresser as I did not want anyone to know I was reading it and went out on the porch and tried to read the bible once more, In a few minutes the doctor came out and I tried to hide the bible from him, But he spied it, and he said Miss Eales it is time for you to read and pray, for you will be operated on June the

7th, I said to him it is too late now, The bad man has done got me now.

I closed my bible and went to my room I laid down in such agony no words can express. The next day it was dark and rainy outdoors and it was also dark with me. Not one ray of light could I see, I was restless throughout the day, The nurses put out the lights and all prepared to sleep. I then prayed again for the Lord to forgive my many sins, I said Oh Lord I am in your hands do what thou wilt with me. I then went to sleep and slept a sweet sleep.

Woke the next morning June the 7th the day of my operation. The sun was shining brightly and everything seemed to be praising God, even the little birds in the trees. And I was so happy that all my troubles were gone, and at that moment I was as willing to die as live. I remember the doctor asked me after I got on the operating table how I felt and I told him I am feeling good, He said he was glad to hear that, and he was there to do everything he could for me. And I felt the good Lord was there too. On July 3, I returned home, leaving the most sacred spot in my memory, as I felt the Lord had lifted my heavy burden. I then wanted to be baptized. I asked the Lord if it was right for me to be baptized to show me in some way, I then dreamed that I was baptized by Elder Jacob Spangler at sunrise, I tried in every way to remove this burden thinking it all a delusion. I was married on August 18, 1918 to T. J. Barber of the same belief as I, And thought all my troubles had ended, But not for long, that Great desire came on me to be baptized. It was so great I was made to say as the poet. In all my Lords appointed ways my journey I'll persue. Hinder me not ye much loved saints, for I must go with you. So I went before the church at Spray, N.C. on the first Sunday in September 1925, and related a part of what I have written and was received, Baptized on the Third Sunday in September by Elder Jacob Spangler, The brother of my dreams, If this doesn't do for publication, cast it in the waste basket, If you do publish it, would you please mail me a copy, as I would love for my children to have it when I am gone.

Mrs. T. J. Barber
Box 85
Ruffin, N.C.

ECCLESIATES 8:1-3.

Who is as the wise man? and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? a man's wisdom maketh his face to shine, and the boldness of his face shall be changed.

I counsel thee to keep the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God.

Be not hasty to go out of his sight: stand not in an evil thing; for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him.

ELD. GRIFFIN TO ELD. McGOUGH

Covin, Alabama

Elder and Mrs. W. G. McGough,

Nauvoo, Alabama

Dearly Beloved Brother and Sister:

I am mailing you the minutes of the church conference and the work of the presbytery on the day of your ordination. I will, as I am blessed of the Lord, get your credentials to you as soon as I can get them signed by all members of the presbytery.

I am still rejoicing that the dear Lord has called you into the work of the ministry. I feel to know that many trials and afflictions await you. But be of good cheer, my brother, for they awaited your Saviour, a well as the eminent apostle Paul (Mat.; 16:21; 20:18, 19; Acts 20:22, 23). There is no calling *on* earth that is worthy of comparison to this calling of God. Every calling and vocation of the earth has to do with the handling of perishing objects, things which are seen, things which do not have anything at all to do with the kingdom of heaven. But your new work is taking from the hand of Christ the things of his, and giving it to the sheep. May the Lord bless you to remember that your preaching must all come from him before it will prove comforting and profitable to the household of faith.

While I am glad that God has verified his promise to his people of sending them servants, I have a tender feeling for you as you go into the work. Many times you will come in home with a heart broken by unthinking people.

The very people that you are striving to serve with the ability God has given you. The word of thoughtless brethren and sisters will often pierce your heart to the quick. I feel to exhort you carefully to bear hardness as a good soldier (2 Tim. 2 :3). I do not mean to tell you that it will not hurt; I do not mean to hint that it will not make any difference. It will hurt; and sometimes you will feel that your misery is more than you can bear. But if the Lord gives you this grace to think, always remember that it is the greatest of blessings to be counted worthy in the Lord Jesus Christ to bear persecutions and to suffer for his sake.

The minister finds himself in a quandary many times. The flesh will rise up for sympathy and for the mastery, It is deceiving — slipping up unawares and making sly suggestions to you. Watch this, dear brother, and should you get up on Sunday morning and something suggest to you that but few will come today, and perhaps it will be alright for you to go to this singing or to that picnic, may God give you

grace to say, Get behind, Satan. Be alert for these thoughts, for I assure you that they will arise, but never give them place. Just here is another deadly suggestion that will come your way: often somebody is going to praise some elder in your presence. Sometimes it will be done with a seductive intention, but whether thoughtlessly or intentional, never let it upset you. Always remember that if your brethren think more of themselves than they ought; that if the Old Baptists are knowing some men after the flesh, that God will take care of the matter and sift out all ungodliness and fleshly works; and remember, if the Lord has been pleased to grace your yoke fellows to preach to the satisfaction of the flock more acceptably than yourself, that they, as well as you, are in his hands to do with as seemeth good to him.

I do not hesitate to tell you to avoid arguments. They have never settled anything. But here is another place that calls for extreme carefulness and watching. Always be ready to give a reason of your hope, but let it be in the right place. You do not want to be found in a saloon or like places defending the doctrine of God our Saviour; you do not want to be heard crying on the street corners; you do not want to try to mix your religion and your call to the ministry with your daily business life. No, none of that at all. But if you are accosted at your work; if you are run down by men; if any inquirer comes asking of you; if, in any way, as long as you have a right to be where you are, always step right up and give a reason for your hope. I do not believe in debates that Old Baptists seek out, and where they accost other people and hurl challenges in their face, but neither do I believe that the Apostles would have run from any assailant of the doctrine of God our Saviour. I would admonish you to be careful about this.

You have a fine trio of children. It is wonderful that the Lord has given them to you. Carry them to church with you, but do not be a despotic about it. Remember that you are still in the world, and that an Old Baptist should be a good citizen. Your children must go to school, and they need to be a part of that school to get all the benefit. Do not try to force Old Baptist doctrine on your children, but do teach them obedience and good morals. Never, dear kindred, advocate in the presence of your children, nor of anyone else, that indifference to right standards of living as a part of Old Baptist doctrine. It is not the truth. And by all means, cultivate the friendship of the young, teaching them good behavior always, and admonishing them carefully in clean habits and moral and upright thinking. Urge Old Baptist parents to carry their children to church and admonish the children to honor their father and

mother by going.

My brother and sister, remember that you will have false brethren to contend with. The church of Jesus Christ has always had some deadweight or deadwood it it. This is an inert load that must be carried along, and I warn you that it always has a tendency to pull down the balance of the church. Watch this, and be aware of its slippery attention to you. Oftimes it will pay you little notice until it sees an opportunity to use you. Do not be a tool of anybody; do not carry a torch for another; do not take up with a brother's hobby and support it for him. Be as careful as you can; but when you are mistaken take steps to correct your behavior, but do not go around trying to prop yourself up before brethren. If you are guilty of a wrong, quit it at once; if you are not guilty, live in a way that the old Baptists will know that you are not guilty. Never go around with a pocket full of letters trying to bolster up your position or to establish your faithfulness.

I feel again like telling You to not be sorry for yourself before your congregations. Do not run yourself down before them, telling them that you are a wild desperado. An humble confession of your sins is commendable anywhere, but belittling yourself is not preaching the gospel of peace; And above everything else, do not boast of yout ignorance, nor slyly hint at the learning of an educated brother, I have always felt that I would like to know more about the grace of God, and about good language and good manners. I would admonish you, sister McGough, to watch your husband's manners in the pulpit, and if he develops a bad way of expression or an ungraceful gesture to tell him so.

If you go to church anywhere, other than to one of your own appointments, you must wait the pleasure of them about going into the house to start the song service. Then wait their pleasure about when preaching service starts, but when you are asked into the pulpit, get up and go forward in an orderly manner. Do not use too much of the pastor's time, especially while you are young in the work of the ministry, I do not mean by this that you must be forward, but I mean to tell you that it is not becoming in a minister to be slothful about his Master's call to this work.

In conclusion, I do not tell you these things because I know how to preach. I am just as helpless as you are in the matter. I tell you these things because I love you. I know by bitter experience what you will face time and again. When I began to exercise in public. I got very little notice from the older brethren. I have noticed this all along that the older ones seemed to resent the presence of a boy in the ministry. I have felt to encourage, rather than to discourage. I do not feel that God will ever call a man to preach, and then call

me to help qualify him by ignoring him, or by indifferent treatment. Rather, I feel like that you are my yokefellow, and the load will be heavy to both of us, and that it is easier pulling together than it is working at cross-purposes.

May the God of all grace be your daysman, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight.

Lois joins me in love to you both.

Yours in a precious hope,
William D. Griffin

Sent to the Signs by
Sister Edrie R. Clifton

MEETINGS

MACEDONIA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Macedonia Primitive Baptist Church while in conference on October 19, 2003 organized a Presbytery for the purpose of ordaining Brother Ronald Pitts to the office of Deacon. Elder Richard Campbell was elected moderator and Elder James Pugh clerk. Brother Lamar Pitts was appointed spokesman for Brother Ronald Pitts. Elder C.C. Wilbanks was appointed to question the spokesman of the church as to the candidate's qualifications. Elder Brumfield was appointed to question the candidate as to his beliefs of the Doctrine. Elder Graydon Smith was appointed to pray the ordination with the laying on of hands. Elder C.C. Morris was appointed to deliver the charge to the candidate. The Right Hand of Fellowship was then extended to the newly ordained Deacon. The Presbytery was closed with prayer by Elder James Howard.

ELDERS
James Pugh
Richard H. Campbell
G. R. Smith
Clifford Wilbanks
C.C. Morris
Marvin Brumfield
James T. Howard

DEACONS
Wayne Bains
Troy Morris
Dwight T. Aldridge
Dan Anders
Robert E. Moore
George Hyslip
Roy Havant
Gladston Newman

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 2003

Wanda Brown - NC	5.00
Jennye Osborne - MD	5.00
Catherine Moseley - WI	5.00
Chlonetia Thompson - VA	2.00
Eld. W. C. Chapell - TN	25.00
S. N. Broach - N.C.	5.00
Eld. Jimmy Gray - N.C.	5.00
J. C. Carroll - N.C.	15.00
Flay Mordecai - MS	5.00
Wilton Sutphin - VA	3.00
George Blalock - N.C.	2.00
Lowell Hopkins - VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

Nummie Letcher Dickerson

Brother Nummie Dickerson departed this life on May 10, 2003. He was born on June 11, 1911, making his stay on earth 92 years.

Brother Nummie was born in Rockingham County to the late Louis and Mattie Alma Dickerson. He worked as a farmer in Rockingham County most of his life and also retired from the American Furniture Factory.

He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Ruth Stump Dickerson, sons Eldridge, Eugene and Hennan "Link" Dickerson. Survivors include son, James Elmer Dickerson and wife Evelyn of Ruffin, sister Ola Mae Stump and husband Henry of Ruffin, 12 grandchildren, 19 great-grandchildren, and 3 great-great grandchildren. Brother Nummie Joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on March 27, 1994 and was baptized by his pastor, Elder Kenneth Key.

Funeral services were held at Wilkerson Funeral Home at 2:00 p.m. on May 13, 2003 by the Reverend Kenneth Hall. Interment followed the service in Dan River Primitive Baptist Church cemetery, there to await the coming of our Lord and Savior when God's people will awake in His likeness where there will be no more heartache, pain or sorrow, to forevermore be with the Lord.

We shall sleep, but not forever,
There will be a glorious dawn. We shall meet to part, no never,
On the resurrection morn.

Written by request of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church

Gradie Strader

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Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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POEM

Dear Lord! To us assembled here
Reveal thy smiling face,
While we, by faith, with love and fear,
Approach the Throne of Grace.

Thy house is called the house of prayer:
A solemn, sacred place;
O let us now thy presence share,
While at the Throne of Grace.

With holy boldness may we come,
Though of a sinful race,
Thankful to find there yet is room
Before the Throne of Grace.

Our earnest, fervent cry attend,
And all our faith increase,
While we our heavenly Friend address
Upon the Throne of Grace.

His tender pity and his love
Our every fear will chase;
And all our help, we then shall prove,
Come from the Throne of Grace.

Dear Lord our many wants supply,
Attend to every case;
While humble in the dust we lie,
Low at the Throne of Grace.

We bless thee for thy word and laws;
We bless thee for thy peace;
And we do bless thee, Lord, because
There is a Throne of Grace.

Medley

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EDITORIAL

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again with a lively hope by the resurrection of the dead to an inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. (1 Pet. 1:3-5)

Elder R. H. Campbell

The apostle Peter, in these three verses of scripture, sets forth the absolute certainty of the salvation of the saints of God, and the source from which it comes. The source is first, last and always God, even as Jesus told a group that was following him and asked what they must do to work the works of God. Jesus' response to them was, *(John 6:29) "This is the work of God that ye believe on him who he hath sent."* Jesus did not tell them of anything that they must, or could do, to work the works of God, and this was because all of the works, regarding the salvation of the saints had already been done. They were finished, from the foundation of the world, as is confirmed by many scriptures, and were as certain and sure as though they were already manifested in time. The scriptures state that God rested from all of the work that he had created and made, *(Gen 2:2) "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work which he had made."* and there are no references that he ever went back to work, to do anything that would assure their eternal salvation, or to finish something that he had not completed from the beginning.

The Apostle Paul referred to this

fact, regarding God's resting after his work was completed, when on one occasion he, speaking of man, *(Heb 4:19) "For he that is entered into his rest also hath ceased from his works as God did from his."* Man enters into his rest, when he is brought to the realization that all of the work that was required to accomplish his salvation had already been done, and that there is not anything that he can do, to add to that which has been done for him. When man is born again, or quickened by the Spirit, he is made to know that he has been blessed with a very special and precious gift, called faith, and this faith includes all that is needful for his salvation. He also has been made to know that it is not in the hands of man to do anything that would have any bearing in spiritual matters, because it is beyond the realm of nature in which he dwells. *(Rom 8:7) "For the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."*

Even though the will were present with him, in nature, the ability is not, for it is the work of God that man can even believe on him who he hath sent. Jesus stated very clearly and concisely how, and why, this is accomplished, *(John 6:37-39) "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."* As we said above, the source of the salvation of the saints is of God, first, last and always.

Peter said, when speaking of the faith of the saints, *(1 Pet 6-9) "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: who having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now for a season ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice, with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your soul."* The, trial of their faith, is that highway that leads man unto salvation; it is traveled by man, in nature, but it is determined by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, from before the highest hills were formed, and the world was caused to exist.

(Isa 35:8-10) "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err

therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." This is a positive declaration of things that shall be, and the way and manner that they shall be made manifest in the lives of the saints of God, in days to come. This knowledge is available to man, only by the revelation of God, and is to make manifest that they are of the chosen generation. *(1 Pet: 1:10-11) "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that was to come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."* The holy men of old themselves did not understand whereof they spoke, when they prophesied of the glory that would come, so how could man with the wisdom of this world, understand except that it be revealed unto him, by the same power that ordained it to be..

These are very positive and comforting statements to the soul of those who has been so exercised by them, as in the above subject scriptures, for they speak of an inheritance that has been reserved in heaven for them; an inheritance which is undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved for them according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus. There are no contingencies involved in these declarations, that would even remotely indicate any work contributed by the wisdom or power of the natural mind of man. All of this is to be accomplished by the works of God, before the foundation of the world, and man is not involved, in any way, regarding the success of this venture: it is solely the work of God, who is sovereign in all of his ways and just in all of his judgments. He speaks, and it is done, commands, and it stands fast, regardless of the attitude of man, regarding this work, or the awareness of it until it is done.

The apostle Paul told Timothy, speaking of how God works his will in the salvation of the elect. *(II Tim 1:9-12) "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: whereunto I*

am appointed an apostle and a teacher unto the Gentiles." Notice, all of this is given in Christ Jesus, before the foundation of the world, but is manifested in time by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ who had finished the work that his Father gave him to do, and ascended back unto the heavens where he is even now seated, on the right hand of the Father, victor over death, hell and the grave, for the elect, making intercession unto God for their sins.

In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, Paul related the trial of faith of those under the law, who subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouth of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens, received their dead raised up and others who were tortured, not accepting deliverances from these physical distresses; that they might obtain a better resurrection. He then said, *(Heb 11:39-40) "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."* Those under the law were given faith, that they might endure the tribulations, but looking beyond them to the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham, which is the inheritance that is reserved in heaven for them.

(Heb 12:1) "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." This great cloud of witnesses, is the testimonies of those who have gone this way before, and left a record the way in which the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and by faith, come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, they obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. It is a blessed journey that they experience, although it may include many things that are distressing to the man in nature, but they have been blessed to believe that all of the afflictions and trials are more to be desired than all of the treasures that this world has to offer. These things shall fade away in time, but this city is eternal, and the beauty and glory are everlasting. This faith enables them to keep pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, which the times and tribulations of the world cannot take away.

This better thing that Paul referred to above, to my understanding, is the Spirit that the children of God have, that was not available unto those under the law, as it was in the gospel day. *(John 7:37-39) "In the last day, that great day of the*

feast, Jesus stood up and cried, saying, If any man thirst let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scriptures hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)" This prophecy was fulfilled when the day of Pentecost was fully come, and the apostles were all with one accord in one place and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. This is the time when the gospel, the power of God unto salvation, was made manifest unto man, and the Spirit first indwelled the creature as Jesus stated above. This is the better thing that the gospel has that the law did not have: the better covenant, which was based upon better promises, as Paul said, *(Rom 8:2) "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."* The children of God, from that day forward, were no longer under the dominion of the law of sin and death, as they had been in former days, but rather, were indwelled by the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, and *(Rom 8:16) "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are children of God: and if children, then heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."*

The promise unto all of the saints, that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time, is a blessing beyond the imagination of the natural mind. This grand and glorious promise is made by God, who cannot lie, to a people who were dead in trespasses and sin, aliens from God, and the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world; and then suddenly they find themselves joint heirs with the only begotten of the Father, of an inheritance that is reserved for them, in his Son. This is the ultimate expression of a love, a love that man is incapable of even understanding in the flesh, an everlasting love that assures all of the recipients, that the giver is the Lord, who left on record the following promise for their assurance and comfort in the fact that, as the prophet said, *(Mal 3:6) "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."* impossible that, after receiving the promise, some could fall away and be separated from that love that has been bestowed upon them.

(Heb 6:13-20) "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end to all strife. Wherein God, will more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is entered for us, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." This is possibly the most profound and all encompassing statement, to be found in the whole of scripture. This statement was made by, God the Father, the creator of the heavens and the earth and all the host of them; the God who cannot lie, who also promised these things from the beginning, unto Abraham and to all of his seed through Isaac, in all generations to follow, and then he confirms it by his own personal oath, that by two immutable pledges, the things included in the original promise will most certainly be fulfilled. There is no more possible assurance that could be given unto the heirs of promise, than is given in this one statement. God promised it from the beginning, and confirmed it by his oath, and so it shall be.

The apostle Paul confirms this same fundamental truth in, *(Rom 8:35-39) "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay in all these things we are more then conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

If we had only the two verses of scripture, in the proceeding paragraph, all God called ministers would have the same themes for any of their sermons, regarding the absolute surety of the elect's receiving of the inheritance that is laid up for them. The love of Christ is what assures them of the inheritance, and this scripture says that nothing can

separate them from that love, and Peter said that all of this is according to the abundant mercy of God, by which he hath begotten them again with a lively hope of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The faith of the apostles was strong as long as Jesus was in their midst, but, in spite of his having told them that he must die, and be raised again, they could not actually believe it, so that when it happened, the two disciples on the road to Emmaus said, *(Luke 24:21) "But we trusted that it had been him which should have redeemed Israel:"* The same day that Jesus rose from the tomb, they were questioning the fact that he was actually the Christ, and in the above text, Peter is saying that, *"he hath begotten them again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."* living proof of the claims of Jesus, that he must so suffer.

All of this work is, by God, for man, and is a gift unto the creature. The apostle Paul makes this very plain, and positive, when he said, *(Eph 2:8-9) "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is a gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast."* Don't you just love this scripture? it is the most comforting of the scriptures to be found in the bible, to those who have been brought to the knowledge of the truth, by being exercised in this same way and manner, and being made to believe it by their own experience. They were all, as the apostle Paul, in a state of ignorance and unbelief, until the light of truth shined around about them and into their heart, and they were born again, or quickened by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the seal of approval of their faith. This is, as the circumcision was, the seal of the righteousness of the faith which Abraham had, being yet uncircumcised, even so, the indwelling of the Spirit within their heart is their seal of righteousness.

May this seal be upon your heart, for it is the gift of God unto all of the saints, and it can never fail because God is perfect in all of his works. He does not give this gift to any who are not of the chosen generation which he hath purchased with his own precious blood, the only sacrifice that is acceptable unto God for the sins of his children.

In bonds of love:
Richard H. Campbell.

PSALM 117.

An Exhortation to Praise God

O Praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people.

For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise ye the Lord.

ARTICLES

SIN VS. RIGHTEOUSNESS

I will endeavor to write an article on sin compared to righteousness if it is in the will of, the giver to all good, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Sin entered into the world by the first man, Adam, through disobedience, Righteousness through Christ which is for the forgiveness of man's many sins.

Mankind while in the darkness of nature walks in darkness and the evil acts of the flesh. Righteousness on the other hand comes through the channels of God's Grace which is an unmerited favor from the courts of glory at God's Holy discretion. This comes through the channel of God's Love at his appointed time.

When the seeds of Righteousness is sowed in good ground, that is, in the hearts of his believers, then comes the good works that are experienced through the gifts of his loving Grace. When these seeds, are watered with the dew from on High, then the great workmanship of our Lord and Saviour is exercised. This seed cannot sin, but when it lies dormant, one goes back to the darkness of nature. These seasons are as much purposed as the season of the trees in nature.

The sins that are inherited in the Adam tree or the Adam generation are possessed by all mankind. Paul, one of the greatest preachers that we read about, said of himself that he was a sinner and a chief sinner. Remember that this was after that great light was shown on him on his way to Damascus. The Lord asked, Saul, Saul why do thou persecute me? Then Paul asked the Lord, what will Thou have me do? Paul was made a willing vessel when the power of the Almighty God took abode in his heart.

Paul's fleshly mission, when he reached his destination, was to persecute the Saints of God.

This brings to mind the Bible verse that says, ***"My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power."*** So when he speaks, it is done and when he commands, it is steadfast. None can then say why doest Thou?

This statement that I'm about to make may sound strange, There have been many times that I wondered if there was a God. Then there are other times when I enter this great church of believers, that I am lifted from this darkness in nature, I am made to rejoice when feasting from the food from that for country. Yes, surely there is a God.

When we go back into the darkness of nature this becomes a dormant time in God's Goodness. We are unable while in this darkness of nature to perform spiritual works.

Paul said, ***"When I would do good, evil was present. Not I, but***

the sin that dwells in my flesh." Paul also said, "that the preaching of the gospel is not of man but by the revelation of Jesus Christ Paul gained this great wisdom, by the revealing light, on his way to Damacus.

All believers, who are delivered from the darkness and given a precious hope of heaven and immortal glory, come in a graceful way. They give the praise, glory and honor for the Salvation that is the deliverance of God's goodness to the hearts of his believers, at His disgression, through the precious grace from God's courts of Glory!

It is then their desire to be honest, truthful and do what is right when led by that Holy Spirit. It is the believers desire to do so.

The thorn in the flesh which all believers come to recognize when they go back in the darkness of nature. They, like Paul, find that when they do good that evil was present, again not I, but the sin that dwells in the flesh.

I do not feel worthy to be a partaker of these Holy Events when sitting under that great gospel sound. One is made to rejoice when lifted up and given that ear to hear.

We find in our traveling with the Primitive Baptist, that the population is declining. This doctrine, that we hear and believe is risen to those of the Arminian belief. I find that you don't need five hundred in the congregation to worship his Holy name. God tells us that where two or three are gathered in his name, there am I also. Many times, I have met in these small gatherings and the Preacher was lifted up with a parcel of food that was stored for his little ones. You can look around and see the streams of joy descending down their cheeks, while they feast from his precious rations. This feeding makes your trip to the church worth while.

Before I close this article I would like to stress, that if the Primitive Baptists aren't setting forth this great apostolic doctrine, then it isn't being set forth today. They are the only ones who say, that they could be wrong.

In this world today we have many groups that say the following: *"Let God have his way," or "Let God come into your heart: or "God wants to save you,"* The Bible tells us that God has his way in the whirlwind. Don't exclude God's great word of Grace. If Grace is an unmerited favor, how can one let or not let God have his way?

I also would like to state that if I have been given a mind to see how one comes into this great Church of God, they can only come as beggars asking for God's great mercy. So, in conclusion, that he adds to the church daily of those who are saved, the blood shed on Calvary sealed the destination of the ransomed. In bonds of his precious love I remain.

Riley Justice
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July 4, 2006

Elder Kenneth R. Key
721 Willard Street
Greensboro, N.C. 27405

Dear Elder Key:

For many years now I have thought about writing something to the Signs of the Times, but the Good Lord has not let me. Recently, that may have changed. At least He did let me write what I have written. My mother, Katherine Mathews, and I have talked together about our beliefs for many years now. Also, my 96 year old uncle, Elder David Godwin and I have talked. We all believe that my beliefs are clearly stated in the following writing. I want to know; is the following in harmony with the beliefs of the Primitive Baptists?

I Do Not Want To Be the Author of My Own Salvation

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him." Heb. 5:9." Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name in heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" Ac 4:12. "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Heb. 12;2.

I search for my own salvation, because I have been made to know that I must have it; I am forever lost without it. Feeling a desperate need, I must seek out the place it is to be found. Some claim to think it is within their power to simply "accept" salvation, thereby obtaining it. My experience has shown me that I do not have that power, and I believe the inspired scriptures tell me that Christ alone has that power.

If I were capable of being the author of some kind of salvation, what sort of salvation would that salvation be? I would have a puny man-made salvation of who knows what, and what would I be saved from? It would end up just like everything else I have done in the flesh, and would not accomplish that which I need.

I need to be forgiven of my sins by the very one I have sinned against, by the very one who is the lawmaker of the laws I have not kept. I need to be remade into a child acceptable to God, even a son of God. *"For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Heb. 11:10. "But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city", Heb. 11:16.* I feel to want to know my Creator and Saviour in a way that would cause me to adore Him

forevermore. The only one who can give me that salvation I am hungering for is my Creator. My Creator is perfect in every way, and everything must be accomplished in the manner that He was ordained. All of His rules not only must be followed, but will be followed. He had already seen to it. If He gives me salvation, I will have everything that I ever would need in this lifetime, or any other life time.

If I am to receive salvation, I must receive it from Him through being reborn in His image. I can only be reborn if the Holy Spirit breathe upon me and make me to be so. Even as the first man Adam became a living soul upon having the breath of life breathed into his nostrils, the reborn creature becomes reborn upon being breathed upon by the Holy Spirit. Jesus told Nicodemus, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit." Jn 3:6-8. Life, whether it be natural or spiritual, can only be created by God. No person can receive life simply by wishing for it. I believe God draws those who are His, therefore there certainly will be a desire to have that which you are being drawn to. That is a different matter from desiring something just to have it. A person is "dead" before receiving life, and therefore has no ability to ask for anything. Life can only be obtained if God has ordained that a person have it.

The inspired Apostle stated, ***"Work out your own salvation in fear and trembling" Php. 2:12.*** Does this mean that I can work for and receive my salvation by working for it? No, no, no. ***"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Eph. 2:8,9.*** Salvation is gained by the Grace of God. Works is not the method by which we receive salvation, but works is the process that God leads us through and into His fellowship. (We do not lead Him. He leads us.)

What is this work that I must perform in fear and trembling, what should I fear, and what is it that will cause me to tremble? Christ said, ***"Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life which the Son of man shall give unto you for Him hath God the Father sealed. Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might do the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Joh. 6:27-29.***

Work

"For we are his workmanship,

created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10. "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Ti. 3:17. "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us, for thou also hast wrought all our works in us. Is. 26:12. "Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever, Amen." Heb. 13:21. "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is." 1 Cor. 3:13.

I am not here in this earth simply to pass the time away, but I am here to live out the experiences God has for me to pass through for His pleasure, and for my experiences with Him. In those experiences a work is to be accomplished which could not be accomplished except for those experiences. It is in these experiences that I get to know Him, and find evidence of the fruit of the Spirit: Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. Ga 5:22,23.

"Even so, faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works: . Jas. 2: 17-18. Faith is not needed until we are exercised by the works which God has ordained that we walk in. Once the work begins, then faith becomes a necessity, and it is in these experiences that we learn that we have received the gift of faith. These experiences lead us into the substance of unseen spiritual things that we hope for, as evidenced by our faith. This faith is a marvelous thing, for it reveals to us not only the substance of things hoped for, but also that the Giver of those things truly cares for us and provides all good things to us. That is why Peter said ***"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." 1 Pe. 1:7.***

Fear

Fear plays a big part in showing to us that without salvation we are lost forever. Within ourselves we know that we have sinned dreadfully, and how we want to be freed of those past, present and future sins! "And unto man he said, Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil, that is understanding." Job 28:28. Also, ***"Behold the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy." Ps 33:18.*** We fear because we are afraid that our works will be of the sort to be burned, rather than

an abiding work acceptable to God. ***"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" Ma 10:28.*** God is real, has all power in heaven and earth, and is respected by those who know Him.

Trembling

Inside we tremble for we are afraid, knowing that we have sinned greatly, and, like Paul, we seemingly cannot do that which is right before God. ***"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me: but how to perform that which is good I find not. Ro. 7:18.*** We can only receive salvation if the Lord has chosen us before the foundation of the world. We do not know of a certainty that we have been chosen, therefore we fear and tremble. "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." Ro. 8:19. "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" Ro. 8:24. "Who are kept by the power of God through faith, unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Pe. 1:5. These verses indicate that we are hoping and waiting for a manifestation that we are His elect. We know that God is perfect, and we are not, and that He has the power to destroy both body and soul, and we tremble, hoping against hope that He will spare us.

If I understand the scriptures, no flesh shall glory in His presence, and I believe that this truth is lived out daily in the lives of all who are first man Adam. If I have learned anything at all, I have learned that I, as a representative of first man Adam, am incapable of doing anything that is pleasing to God. If that is true, how then, can I approach God to say ***"Have mercy on me, a sinner."*** The question is not whether I have accepted Christ, but has Christ accepted me? If I am one of the Elect, He found me, and accepted me long ago; even before I was physically born first man Adam. But do I accept Him? Yes, yes, yes, Lord make it to happen!

Christ said, ***"No man can come unto me, except the Father which sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Jn. 6:65. Also, "Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." Jn.6:65.*** What a pleasing and satisfying doctrine it is to feel that the Father loves His own, and sees to it that His Elect are drawn irresistibly to Him. That is proven and perfect love that passeth all understanding, and is greatly to be desired.

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen: He 11:1. If I hope for salvation, I must find it through faith. ***"But without faith, it is***

impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Ro. 10:17.

No, I would not want to be the author of my own salvation. It is more pleasing and satisfying to feel that my God desires me as one of His own children so much that He sent His only Son to die in my stead, and rise from the grave bringing me up from that grave with Him. If He did that for me, I will be very happy to live with Him forever.

My desire is that I let someone know what I believe, and that we share a common belief together. I do thank the Good Lord for all that He has done to me, for me, and with me. It is so good and peaceful to feel that He has done so much for me. I desire to be with Him.

This is the first writing of this sort that I have ever done. If the Spirit led me, then everything is OK in what I have written. Furthermore, if the Spirit did not lead me, I wish that I never had written it.

Charles Mathews

PSALM 30:4.

Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.

VOICES OF THE PAST

North Berwick, Maine, Dec. 23, 1904.

Millie A. Little — My Dear Sister in the Lord: — I have been much hindered I so lacked the inclination for any letter writing. I much appreciate the letters of my dear kindred in Christ Jesus, and sometimes even a glance at their handwriting stirs up affectionate remembrances. Still there are writings that are more wonderful and precious by far than all that all the saints have written, and when I can have a glimpse of and read these writings that are more wonderful and precious by far than all that all the saints have written, and when I can have a glimpse of and read these writings I have blessedness indeed. Look at this: ***"Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." — Luke x. 20. "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." — Jer. xxxi. 33. "Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshy tables of the heart." — 2 Cor. iii. 3. "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name***

written in their foreheads." — Rev. xiv. 1. I "will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." — Rev. ii. 17. "I will write upon him the name of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name." — Rev. iii. 12. These writings are infinitely glorious and incomparably precious. Contemplate with me awhile these writings of the high and holy One that inhabiteth eternity. *"Your names are written in heaven."* These names written in heaven are the names of the church of the firstborn. (Heb. xii. 23.) Christ is the firstborn, as it is written: *"I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth." — Psalms lxxxix. 27; Romans viii. 29; Col. i. 15, 18.* Then as a farther insight into the divine mystery of our names being *"written in heaven,"* it is declared their names are *"written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." — Rev. xiii. 8.* And the book of life was opened, *"and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." — Rev. xx. 15.*

The names written in the book of life are the names of God's elect.

"O wondrous grace and mystery profound,

In God's eternal purpose I was found;

His sovereign love, his grace, his deep decree,

In some mysterious way included me."

The eternal purpose which Jehovah purposed in Christ Jesus embraced this, the exaltation of his chosen one in immutable holiness, and to immortal happiness in union with his incarnate Son, Christ Jesus our Lord. But the subject is far better expressed in the language of inspiration: *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and withou blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved." — Eph. i. 3-6.* As I muse upon the deeps of the doctrine of God I say in my soul, Did the Lord look through the ages and the generations of mankind and see me one of Adam's race, and write me in the book of life? Was I, in the eternal purpose, given to Christ and accounted one with him, and in him promised (Titus i. 2,) and given (1 John v. 11,) and ordained unto eternal life? (Acts xiii. 48.) The date of all this writing is

eternal, before the world began. "Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." God in his everlasting love wrote them there, and is there any power that can erase them? O, is it not

"Sweet to look back and see my name
In life's fair book set down;
Sweet to look forward and behold
Eternal joys my own"?

Then how full of consolation to us poor sinners is the revelation that the book of life in which God's elect are written is the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. His goings forth in the everlasting covenant both as the Shepherd of his people, (Micah v. 2,) and as the Lamb, (1 Peter i. 19, 20,) show how from eternity the thoughts of our eternal God were set upon the exaltation, redemption and regeneration of his people. For our election in Christ Jesus, and being blessed in him with all spiritual blessings, our acceptance in his sight, our redemption and the forgiveness of our sins, our adoption and predestination to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, are all declared to be embraced in and according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in himself. (Eph. i. 9.)

But the inquiry arises in my thoughts, How shall a poor sinner read his name written in the Lamb's book of life? It is only in the experience of the new covenant being written in our hearts by the holy Spirit that we read our names written in heaven. This brings me, dear sister, to put down a few thoughts upon God writing in the fleshy tables of the heart. He gives to his chosen ones in his decreed times a new heart, and a new spirit. (Ezek. xxxvi. 26.) *"I will put my fear in their hearts,"* saith the Lord. This is wonderful writing to be found in a sinner's heart, but the Lord, who hath loved his own with an everlasting love, and who wrote their names in the book of life, will have them fear him, love him, believe him, trust him and confess that he is their exceeding joy. The Spirit of God gives this new heart, and the favored sinner touched with this heart is no more dead in trespasses and sins; he is now alive in a divine life unto God, and the writing begins. If the writing were in tables of stone, the tables of stone might be broken; the ravages of time might at length obliterate what was written, and the very stones themselves crumble into dust; but the fleshy tables of the heart, in which the Spirit of the living God writes the ministration of life, is that new covenant heart (Jer. xxxi. 33,) that pulsates with spiritual, eternal life from God, and therefore forever this writing shall endure, and all the throbbings of this heart shall find its consciousness in the writings that are written therein by the Holy Ghost. Sacred, wonderful is the experience as the Lord is writing. He writes love there, love to him-

self, the just, the holy and gracious God. We find our hearts moved with longings after the Lord, to know him, to taste that he is good. As poor, sin-stricken, condemned transgressors we feel we must have his friendship or we must perish in our sins and grief beneath the curse of the law. We are led to think upon God's infinite greatness and majesty, and that he is just in all his ways, and then as we are led to contemplate that he is kind and gracious, rich in mercy, our heart pulsates with yearnings, and that language is no exaggeration which says, *"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?"— Psalms xlii. 1, 2.* All this declares that God has written his fear and his love in our heart. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy Spirit which is given unto us. *"I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts."* In the gracious fulfillment of this promise God's revealed will become dear to us, and our affection flows forth unto the doctrine of God our Savior, and we are described as believing with all the heart; for our faith in God, in our precious Redeemer and in the gospel worketh my love. The faith of God's elect is an affectionate faith. It is very wonderful that a sinner who in his natural estate is alienated from the life of God, and an enemy of the holy One, should be so turned to the Lord, to seek his face, to yearn with an aching heart for tokens of his compassion, and find also his delight is in the law of the Lord in the heart. The writing goes on; he is still writing, and will continue to write in the hearts of his chosen ones all the days of their pilgrimage. Would we see one in whom God has written his law? A very true likeness is found in that precious 119th Psalm. All through this Psalm one feels the throbbings of the heart in whose fleshy tables the Spirit of the living God has written. Although I am a poor, unworthy sinner I will tell this, that I have read this Psalm a number of times when my heart has panted, thirsted, longed and grieved, and delighted and throbbed in unison with this wonderful Psalm. *"I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved. My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes."* O, I must repeat it again, that the writings of the holy Spirit in the fleshy tables of the heart are wonderful. Not only wonderful, but so blessed, for when we are sin-stricken and tempted, and our hearts are bleeding and contrite, then he takes of the things of Christ, the blessings of the new covenant, and writes them in the heart. Mercy, forgiveness of sins, how sweet, how healing is this to the wounded heart.

This writing by a figure of speech may be said to be written upon the humble heart in the red ink of Jesus' precious blood. We have forgiveness of sins through his blood according to the riches of his grace. (Eph. i. 7.)

"What stream is that which sweeps away
My sins, just like a flood,
Nor lets one guilty blemish stay?
'Tis Jesus' precious blood."

The holy Spirit writes the promises and the sworn mercies of God in the hearts of the elect, and the effect of such writings is that the heirs of promise have a strong consolation and a gracious sanctuary in the gospel of Christ. (Heb. vi. 1-20.) Thus writing in our hearts the things of Christ is called in the Scriptures, sealing us. The sealing of the Spirit, whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption. (Eph. i. 13; iv. 30.) My soul still holds its soliloquy, and I say, Has my heart in very truth felt the impress of the things of Christ? Is Christ himself graven upon my heart? Surely it must be so, for does not my heart cry out, *"Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm"?* — Solomon's Song viii. 6. And can I not say, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee"? Though I write this, a feeling comes over me of *"love and grief my heart dividing,"* and I am saying,

"Lord, it is my chief complaint,
That my love is weak and faint;
Yet I love thee, and adore;
O for grace to love thee more."

O let my heart know more and more of thee, more of thy loving-kindness, which is better than life; O write deeper and deeper the acts of thy love, and thy mercy and grace in the fleshy tables of my heart, that wherever I go, and whatever my state, I may know thee and love thee and never forget thee, but ponder affectionately in my heart thine almighty and gracious acts in behalf of thy church in all the relations and characters that thou sustainest unto them.

What the Spirit writes in the fleshy tables of the heart is always in agreement with the Scriptures of truth, for it was as they were moved by the holy Ghost that holy men of old spake, and so they were inspired by God to write for the comfort and learning of the church of Christ. It is of no avail for me, or for you, or for any one to say, I have experienced this; I was taught it of the Lord in my experience; I love this doctrine; I find much comfort and pleasure in it; it is written in my heart, if that doctrine is contrary to and is not found in the holy Scriptures. No matter how logical it may appear, no matter how lovely and satisfying it may be, if it has not the *"thus saith the Lord"* for it in the Scriptures it is very vanity, a cunningly devised fable, a ly-

ing divinization, the deceit of that heart that is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. (Ezek. xi. 6; Jer. xiv. 14.) Let those who would pervert the gospel of Christ, (Gal. i. 7; Jer. xxiii. 36,) who corrupt the word of God, (2 Cor. ii. 17,) who wrest the Scriptures, (2 Peter iii. 16,) who make a lie, and love what they have made, (Rev. xxii. 15,) let them sport themselves with their own deceivings, (2 Peter ii. 13,) but may my heart and your heart only have affection for and delight in what is verily taught in the word of God. What the holy Spirit writes in the fleshy tables of the heart is never contrary to, but is ever in sacred agreement with the testimony of the holy Scriptures. Sometimes there are things written in our hearts by the Spirit, but we have not yet been able to read with understanding what is there written. Then it may be in the providence of our God we hear Christ's gospel preached, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance; then we read with understanding what God has taught us, and we say, I know that my heart has tasted these glorious, precious things of the covenant ordered in all things and sure. And at times also when we read the Scripture, in what grateful surprise and comfort we find what is written there is in sweet accord with what has been wrought by the Spirit of the living God in our hearts. The Scriptures therefore are for the comfort and learning of Christ's body, the church, and are able to make them wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. (2 Tim. iii. 15.) The redeemed of the Lord have the name of their heavenly Father written in their foreheads. (Rev. xiv. 1.) Christ says, *"I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name."* — *Rev. iii. 12.* This writing is sealing them as the children of God, it is giving them power to become the sons of God. (John i. 12.) It is sending forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts crying, Abba, Father. (Gal. iv. 6.) The Lord writes and thus he speaks, *"Thou shalt call me, My Father; and shalt not turn away from me."* — *Jer. iii. 19. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."* Jesus said to his disciples, *"When we pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven."* We cannot realizingly do so until Christ tells us to say, *"Our Father."* But the gracious covenant work of the holy Spirit is to bring us into intimate relations with the dear Savior; he brings us to know him as ours, through whom we are forgiven, and justified and redeemed, and in whom we are predestinated unto the adoption of children unto God. And because God is our Father we love Jesus. (John viii. 42.) Christ is all our heart's desire, and our faith is all in

him. Being thus in intimacy with Jesus Christ we find his doctrine confesses to us the Father's name. *"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."* As it is written, *"I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." — Heb. ii. 12.* We are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. (Rom. viii. 14-17.) The word also says I will write upon him the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem. This seals us as citizens of Zion, the city of God. Even now there are sacred seasons when the feet of our faith stand within her gates, but this is but the earnest of our inheritance. We are destined for the heavenly Jerusalem, and like the dear saints of olden times, we are looking for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come. We are pilgrims on the earth, but upon our foreheads is (I hope) written the name of our God and the name of the city of our God.

"Jerusalem, my happy home,
Name ever dear to me;
When shall my labors have an end
In joy, and peace, and thee?

Reach down, O Lord, thine arm of grace,
And cause me to ascend
Where congregations ne'er break up,
And Sabbaths never end.

When wilt thou come to me, O Lord?
O come, my Lord, most dear;
Come nearer, nearer, nearer still,
I'm safe when thou art near."

I had not intended writing you so long a letter, but I think I shall be safe in promising you that I will pen you a shorter one next time. Thousands of miles intervene between our earthly abodes, but the God of Israel is near to all that fear him wherever they may be. May the Lord comfort you and bless you, and lift up upon you the light of his countenance.

I am your brother in hope of eternal life,

Fred W. Keene

PSALM 4:1-3.

Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.

O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame? how long will ye love vanity, and seek after leasing? Selah.

But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the Lord will hear when I call unto him.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 2006

Meta Miles, AR 5.00
Angie Cox, NC 5.00
Raymond Adams, VA 5.00
Larrie Bowler, VA 5.00
Buford Thompson, VA 5.00

OBITUARIES

ELDER GRAYDON SMITH

We at New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Spearsville, LA., feel a great loss in the passing of our dear Pastor, Elder Graydon Smith.

Elder Smith united with New Hope Primitive Baptist Church June 5, 1955 and was baptized by Elder R. W. Rhodes. He was ordained an Elder by New Hope Primitive Baptist Church March 6, 1976 and was blessed to serve a number of Churches through the years. He was serving three Churches when he passed away.

He loved the precious doctrine of Salvation by Grace and loved scriptural conversations and talking of the gracious, all wise, all powerful God. He was blessed to travel far and near among those of like precious faith and loved them dearly.

He was born May 22, 1919, the fourth child of Tom and Edna Smith, and departed this life May 2, 2006. He was preceeded in death by the wife, Kathleen Turnage Smith. He is survived by one son: Tommy and wife, Judy; one daughter: Jenny Wimberly and husband, Charles; five grandchildren and three great grandchildren and one sister: Dale Holloway and husband Roy. He is also survived by many friends and loved ones made manifest by all the kindness, floral arrangements and many memorial donations to his Church.

Funeral Services were conducted by Elder C.C. Morris May 5, 2006 at New Hope Primitive Baptist Church. Burial followed in the Spearsville Cemetery, awaiting the fulfillment of the sweet hope which was so precious to him.

Although he will be deeply missed, may we be given to bow in humble submission to the Will of God, giving thanks for the many years of love and fellowship we were blessed to share with him.

Submitted by one
who loved him,
Mary Barron

REVELATION 21:23

And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

SISTER NELLIE JOBE KEY

In the early morning hours of July 17, 2006, as so beautifully stated at her funeral, the Lord, as He walked in His garden, gathered home one of his lilies, Sister Nellie Jobe Key. In the comfort of her earthly home, surrounded by her loving husband of 62 years and her family, she fell asleep in the arms of Christ, as the hymn writer expressed, ***"a sleep from which none ever wake to weep."***

Sister Nellie was born in Guilford County on April 14, 1922 to the late Thurman and Ethel Stout Jobe. On January 29, 1944 she was married to Elder Kenneth R. Key Sr., and it was indeed a marriage made in heaven. To this union was born two sons, Kenneth R. Key, Jr. and Gary Van Key. They were blessed with five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren, one of which Kennedi Mae Lineberry, was born after Sister Nellie's passing. She leaves also two sisters, Irene Sharpe and Annie Fomberg to mourn her.

On the third Sunday in March 1954, Sister Nellie asked for a home in the Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church. She was received into the fellowship and baptized by her late pastor, Elder W.C. King, on the first Sunday in April 1954. Before the foundation of the world in the mind and purpose of God, it was appointed unto her that she must walk the path of a minister's wife. As the hymn writer penned and was so beautifully quoted at her funeral, ***"The steps that I tread, and the station I fill, My Father determined and wrote in his will."*** The Lord blessed her so bountifully with the fruit of the Spirit, particularly that of love, gentleness, and meekness. I've known her as a dear, precious Sister in Christ for the last thirty-four years and as my beloved pastor's wife for the last twenty-one years. There are no words to express what a joy it has been to know her and to be blessed with the sweet fellowship experience when in her presence. She has been a blessing to my home church as well as to the others that Brother Kenneth serves. We deeply miss her loving smile, her warm embrace, and the kindness she showed in all that she did.

In the early years, on one Sunday she stayed behind with their two boys at their cabin on Baden Lake while Brother Kenneth went to the Association. When he returned, she said this has been the longest day of my life. They sold their cabin and rarely has she not been by his side as he served the little flock, traveling near and far, and entertaining many precious brethren and sisters in their home. As the scriptures state in ***Proverbs 31:10, "Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies."*** I feel certain

that there were times when she didn't feel physically able to go, but the Lord blessed her to press on in the station unto which He had appointed her. May He be praised.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder William Hale Terry and Elder Cleo Robertson at Forbis and Dick North Elm Chapel in Greensboro and her body was laid to rest in Lakeview Memorial Park to await that summons from on high "Come ye blessed of my Father and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." May we all find comfort in the words of the dear old hymn *"Am I a Soldier of the Cross":*

"Thy saints in all this glorious war
Shall conquer though they die;
They see the triumph from afar,
And seize it with their eye.

When that illustrious day shall arise,
And all thy armies shine
In robes of victory through the skies,
The glory shall be thine."

May the Lord bless her family who've lost a dear companion, a loving mother, grandmother, great grandmother, and sister with the comfort that only He can give. And, most especially, may the gracious, heavenly Master be with our beloved pastor, Brother Kenneth, strengthen him, and bless him to feel the "everlasting arms" underneath him that he might continue to be blessed to "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" ever "looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." In all things, may the Lord be praised and may He bless us all to witness with Job, "the Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Humbly submitted by one
who loved her dearly,
Mary Hawkins

JOHN 3:12-16.

If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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POEM

PERFECT PEACE

A mind at perfect peace with God,
Oh, what a word is this!
A sinner reconciled through blood;
This, this indeed is peace!

By nature and by practice far,
How very far from God;
Yet now, by grace, brought nigh to Him,
Through faith in Jesus' blood.

So near, so very near to God,
I can not nearer be;
For in the person of His Son,
I am as near as He.

So dear, so very dear to God,
More dear I cannot be;
The love wherewith He loves the Son,
Such is his love to me.

Selected.

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EDITORIAL

Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

And blesseds he, whosoever shall not be offended in me. (Math 11:4-5)

Elder R. H. Campbell

These are the words that Jesus told the two disciples of the prophet John the Baptist, whom he had sent to Jesus, to inquire if he was the one that should come, or should he look for another. John is the one that was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah saying, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight: the one who leaped in his mother's womb when she heard the salutation of Mary the mother of Jesus. John personally baptized Jesus, saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him: and lo a voice from heaven saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. He is the one who told his followers, *(Matt 3:11) "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."* and yet now, in spite of all of this evidence and knowledge regarding Christ. John is in doubt. There is therefore, no mystery in the fact that others, who did not have all of this personal knowledge, and ex-

perience should question their own beliefs.

If there was ever an individual that should have confidence in their experience and knowledge of these things, it is John; and yet here he is, fearfully questioning the validity of his calling, and pleading for confirmation of the fact that Jesus was indeed the Son of God. God's ministers find themselves in much this same position very much of the time, in their travels in this time world. They have received a calling, sufficient to make them go forth and stand before the saints of God, telling them again and again to remember the way and manner in which these things were made known to them, and how it has been with them in former days as they were called out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of the gospel. They go forth declaring the message of the sovereign grace of God, and yet they go much of the time, lowing, even as the Kine pulling the cart with the Ark, when the Philistines were returning it to Israel, because it had been nothing but trouble for them, although it was a very great blessing unto Israel. They, as the Kine who could not turn back, even though their calves were at home in the stalls, they also cannot turn back even when it makes them fear that they are deserting their family and loved ones, and sometimes in very critical situations. It seems that the minister could be confident of his calling, if he does all of this, but alas, this is not the case; he is constantly meditating on the fact, is it a true calling of God, or, as I once asked a fellow minister, do you ever wonder if you have a calling or is it just the vanity of the flesh?

I am sure that we have all, at one time or another, said unto ourselves, Oh, if I could just have had the evidence of the prophet John, or some of the other great men of God, then I would not have all of these doubts and fears that plague me so much of my time. I would feel secure in the knowledge that I was among the chosen people of God and that I had been placed there for a purpose known only unto God. It seems that if I had seen him, been with him in person, and saw the mighty miracles that he did, and especially experienced the scene where he baptized Jesus, and saw the Spirit descending like a dove, and lighting upon him, and Lo a voice from heaven saying, this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, that I could never question my calling. You can see, by the subject scripture that this is not necessarily so, because even the prophet John is found doubting his experiences, and is sending two of his disciples to inquire of Jesus if he was actually the one who was to come.

The difference between these two positions is that he was in the Spirit on those occasions when he was with Jesus and talked with him, and now he is in prison, his prison being the dungeon in which he was

confined, and the prison in which the sheep are confined is in the prison of the natural mind. The apostle Paul described these seasons this way, *(Rom 7:21-22) "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members."* When in this state, of spiritual darkness, the spiritual experiences are clouded by the inability of the natural mind to comprehend spiritual truths, and is unable to remember them with the confidence and clarity that they did when they were in the Spirit.

The prayer of one, on these occasions is, Lord restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, let me feel once again the joy of my first love, the time when all was right with the world and I felt that I would never have doubts regarding my faith. Even so, it is hard to conceive of the fact that John who had all of this evidence, as to the fact that this was indeed the Son of God, but you must remember what Paul said in his letter to the Corinthians, *(I Cor 2:14) "But the natural man receiveth not the things of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."* and John, when he sent his disciples to Jesus was in the bonds of the natural mind, and the natural spirit.

Knowing all of this, and where John was at this particular time in his travels in nature, Jesus told John's disciples to go and show John again those things that he had seen before; this would be sufficient to restore his faith, if accompanied by the Spirit. Jesus did not tell them to tell John of a more perfect way, or of some greater and more impressive experiences, but rather, tell him again the same evidences upon which his faith was founded originally. The apostle Paul wrote, on one occasion, *(I Cor 3:11) "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus."* There is no foundation upon which the faith of the children is laid, and they will respond when they are reminded again of the power that first opened up their understanding of spiritual matters, and which will support them in all of their travels in this life.

The prophet John was a man in nature, even as all men are, who are born into this world of sin and corruption, and he was subject to the same weaknesses and fears that they are, and he was but experiencing the trials of his ministry which had been placed upon him, for that particular season, by God. It is God that gives the trials of faith unto his servants, and it is God that gives them deliverances from them, and he does it, that they may fear before him, and render praise, honor and glory unto him for his grace and mercy that he has blessed them with, as they run with patience the

race that is set before them. These seasons are needful unto them and are included among the all things that work together for their eternal salvation, although they may be very distressing to them at the time.

The burden that was placed upon John was the same burden that is placed upon all of the servants of God. It is that which is called, by the world, the great commission, which Jesus gave unto his disciples just before his ascension unto heaven. *(Matt. 27:19-20) "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."* He was telling them to go into all of the world, and teach all nations the things that he had taught them, and that is the mission that his ministers have been fulfilling, and will continue to do so as long as the world stands. The purpose in this is because his children will continue to stand in need of these constant reminders and assurances of the faith that they are being exercised by, as long as they are confined in these bodies of clay, and subject to the weaknesses and temptations of the flesh. They are to witness to these facts, and to let them all know that this is the way in which all pilgrims will travel, in this life. They direct their minds and hearts to the scriptures, left on record by those who have gone before, that they may realize that they are not alone in these experiences

The apostle Paul's commission was to the Gentiles, *(Acts 26:16-18) "But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."* The apostle Paul was made to be a witness of those things that he had seen, and in which the Spirit gave him understanding, and this he continued to do until relieved of his calling by death: there is no retirement age or pension plan in this work, it is done in love for the giver of this gift, and the calling is for their lifetime. This is the same message that Jesus gave to the prophet John by way of his followers, *"Go show John again,"* the same things that had made him believe in Christ originally and they would restore him to the quickened state upon hearing them again, and again, enabling him to press on to the mark. They are things that his children still come to-

gether to hear, each time that they attend services: they receive reminders of the truths upon which their faith was first founded. We do not come to hear some new doctrine, or theory, but to have our experiences brought to our minds afresh. I love to hear others tell of their experience and I even love to tell my own experience, over and over, because sometimes it brings me back to that point in time, and I am made to weep for joy, just remembering the sweetness of the season, and how precious it was in the beginning.

These remembrances are as new and moving unto the children of God, when the Spirit is present, as when they first experienced them. This is what the world does not understand, that his children come to be fed in church, they do not come together just the learn the bible by the repetition of the reading of the same wording over and over, and this is why it is foolishness to the world. To the saints of God, it is the same as their being fed the natural food that they may eat and live: they eat the same food over and over again, but it is just as nourishing and pleasing to the taste each time that they are fed. The apostle Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, *(Heb 1:21) "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."* He did not say foolish preaching, but the foolishness of preaching, to the world it is foolish because they just do not understand and cannot unless they are born again, but to them that are saved, it is the power of God and the wisdom of God being made manifest in their lives. The preaching of the cross is to the sheep, the necessary food of the soul, and they are nourished and strengthened by it each time that they are given ears to hear, eyes to see and hearts to understand it. They are made again, to feel to have an earnest in the inheritance that is laid up for those who love the Lord.

The apostle Peter wrote, *(II Pet 3:3) "This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Savior; knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."* Peter knew that the children of God, living in this world of nature become so engrossed in the things of the flesh: so caught up with living their natural lives and the stress of their every day life, that they tend to stray, and forget these most important of all

things. They tend to forget the spiritual values that are the basis of their faith, and so Peter says that he is writing to them to stir up their minds, and bring to their remembrance again these precious thoughts and memories, and then he says, (II Pet 3:17-18) "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things, before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen" This does not mean that Peter expected to restore them to the fold, but rather, knowing the nature of man, and having had these experiences of grace himself, he knew how weak that man is, in the flesh, and therefore desired to bring their pure minds back to the realities of their spiritual life, and to renew their minds again unto a lively hope.

This actually, is the calling of the minister; he is to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, not to make sheep out of goats, or to increase the flock, but rather to separate the sheep from the goats, as Jesus said, *(John 10:3-5) "To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers."* When his ministers speak, in the Spirit, they do as Jesus did in the previous verse of scripture; they are even as Elihu said that he was when he told Job, *(Job 33:6) "Behold I am according to thy wish in God's stead: I also am formed of the clay."* The minister speaks from an unction that is given them of God and the Spirit also gives unto his children the remembrance of the things that are more precious to them than the world and all of its riches. When this occurs, communion is experienced by the speaker and the listener: communion in the knowledge that God is in their midst and blessing these sacred truths to both of their understanding. Their praise is not toward the minister, or the hearer, but both realize that it is God working in them both the will and the do of his good pleasure, according to the promises made to them in the scriptures, when he said that he would never leave nor forsake them

Yes, if John, with his experience and knowledge of these spiritual things, could have need to have them brought to his remembrance again, how much more will his children in future generations need repeated prompting in these matters. Jesus himself said unto his disciples, after John's disciples had gone back to report to him what Jesus had told them, *(Matt. 11:11) "Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of women*

there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." If he, of whom this is written, is brought to this position, will not all that are made to call upon God have need of these new refreshings of their hope. I believe that this scripture means that, among them that are born of women, whose abode in this natural world in the flesh, there are none greater than John the Baptist, but he was still only a natural man. He is as Elihu said that he was, speaking to Job ***"I am also of clay."*** John the Baptist was a natural man, under the influence of his natural mind, when he sent his disciples to Jesus; but was ***"the new man"*** when exercised in spiritual matters and under the influence of the spiritual mind, and then he is greater than any man in nature, for he is spiritual and as such, will inhabit the kingdom of heaven, by the grace of God, through faith.

When Jesus had begun to tell his disciples of his coming death, and the things that would follow, and what would be accomplished, he said, ***(John 14:16-17) "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."*** This comforter which is the Holy Ghost establishes that line of communication that exists between God and his children. It is not a party line, nor is it available unto ***"whosoever will"*** but it is only to those that can hear his voice, as Jesus said above, and they will hear and they will follow him, for he said, ***"all that my Father giveth unto me shall come unto me."*** This is the way whereby the saints of God are reminded, time and time again, of the things that they have seen and experienced, as God reveals them unto them again, through his angels, who are but ministers sent to minister unto them who are the heirs of salvation. It is a direct line which is open at all times, but, it can only be accessed from above. His children cannot originate it, in and of themselves, it is a direct and personal spiritual line of communication, and it is only between God and those whom he hath quickened into spiritual life, because the world, in general cannot receive it. ***(John 14:26) "But the comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."*** And Jesus was speaking unto the apostles when he made this statement, and it was regarding the way and manner in which these things would be regularly brought again unto the minds of all of the saints, in the future.

When God said by the mouth of

Isaiah, *(Isa 42:8) "I am the Lord; that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images."* I believe that the above is what he was talking about; he was saying. I am the God of thy salvation, and the glory of my work shall not be given, or assigned to another, for the salvation of the saints is my own particular pleasure, even as he said in, *(Psa 149:4) "For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: and he will beautify the meek with salvation."* and he is saying that it shall be done by him, and in his own way. *(Isa 9-11) "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country; yea, I have spoke it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it I will also do it."* There is no ambiguity in this statement, or in any of the other scriptures for that matter, it is as Elder W. D. Griffin used to say, the scriptures say what they mean, and mean what they say. There are no scriptures that I am aware of, that ascribe any part of the salvation of the saints of God to any other source than God, and this pertains to every detail of it.

May God, in the riches of his grace, continue to send these remembrances of their salvation unto his saints, that they may not faint and fall away, which they would do, if left in their own strength. This he will most certainly do, because their names are already written in the book of life, and this assures them a heavenly abode in that world that is to come, that place that Jesus told his disciples, *(John 14:2-3) "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there may ye be also."* This is the heritage that awaits all of the saints of God; it is incorruptible, undefiled, and fades not away, reserved in heaven for each one. This is based upon the word of Jesus and no more certain a foundation could be laid to support their hope of eternal life than this, so, rejoice each and every time that these remembrances are brought to your mind, and praise him from whom all blessings flow.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

PSALM 139:10.

Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

ARTICLES

"PRESERVE ME, O GOD: FOR IN THEE DO I PUT MY TRUST"

How amazing is our journey in this life when we are blessed to cry unto the Lord as was David in ***Psalms 16:1, "Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust." David continues in Psalms 40:11, "Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord: let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me."*** I believe this is the cry of every child of God.

The word preserve has been heavy on my mind for some time. It means to keep safe, protect and prevent from decaying. A child of God encounters many difficult ways in which he must travel in his sojourn here in this life. These most trying times are but blessings from the Lord for that is how a child of God is taught. The world would question how could afflictions and trials be blessings. They don't understand that ***"we glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."***

In the year 2005, I was given a dream, if not deceived, of seeing a bed lifted down into water. The following week, I was given another dream. In the second dream, I was holding on to two posts of the bed that were in the water and the two posts came off from the bed. I thought the bed would surely decay because there was no way to get the bed up out of the water since the posts had been removed. Immediately, I sought the Lord for interpretation and the words were spoken to me: ***"This is salt water. This bed will not decay but will be preserved."*** I then walked on top of the water with the two posts that were removed from the bed.

I believe this was the bed of affliction in which I was to endure more suffering. Notice that the two posts were removed from the bed. I was blessed to endure the removal of the middle lobe of my right lung in February 2005. In September 2005, I began coughing up much blood and had to endure a second lung surgery which involved removal of the top portion of my left lung. Thinking of this dream in a natural perspective, the bed is my body and the two posts removed were the top portion of my left lung and the middle lobe of my right lung. The water was salt water which would preserve the body. Spiritual water is grace which the Lord gives to His little ones to carry them through each trial that is allotted them to endure. The amazing grace and strength I was given to endure the two surgeries lifted me up spiritually as I walked by faith

trusting in the Great Physician for all my help. He preserved me and kept my eyes fixed upon Him.

After the second lung surgery, my doctors informed me that I needed to take treatment for my lung to prevent any further damage to my lung; for if I had to have any more of my lung removed, my breathing would be greatly affected. I was told it was harsh treatment and there were many side effects. The possible side effect that was most disturbing was that of blindness; and if that happened, there was nothing that could be done. I prayed much about this matter. The night I was to begin the treatment, I sat alone at the table a long time around midnight looking at those three bottles of medication not knowing what the outcome might be after taking them. Since I had undergone chemo twice, my eyes had been affected and I didn't know if they being weaker, as a result of chemo, might make my eyes more susceptible to side effects. I prayed to the Great Physician and begged for mercy. When I finished praying, the words were spoken to me, if I am not deceived, "I will preserve thee." Many have been the trying times from the side effects of the medications but so far no damage to my eyes. The medication causes severe nausea, breathing problems, affects the neuropathy in my feet and legs and sleepless nights. Precious is the prayer recorded in *Psalm 57:1, "Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast."*

Almost nine months have passed since beginning the treatment for my lung. Physically, it has been a most trying time. The treatment is every other day and will last for a year or more. Spiritually, it is a blessed time. On September 16 while suffering much nausea from lung treatment the previous night, I was standing at the kitchen sink gazing out the window when a dove so graciously perched upon a post in the backyard. It seemed as though his eyes were fixed upon me as I gazed through the window at him. He never took his eyes off me except once to look up as though he was looking into the heavens and then again fixed his eyes upon me as words were spoken unto me, *"My peace I give unto thee. I have delivered thee."* After receiving these comforting words, the dove flew away into the wilderness. What a beautiful sight to behold and feel the spirit of God within my heart, if I am not deceived.

The scripture found recorded in Psalms 116: 1-8 has been very precious to me. *"I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me:*

I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul. Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me. Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. For thou has delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling."

"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen." II Timothy 4:18.

Love in Christ
Jeannette Robertson

VOICES OF THE PAST

PRESENT YOUR BODIES

"I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." – Rom. 12:1.

The apostle, in the preceding part of this epistle set forth at large the leading features of the doctrine of God our Savior; such as our choice in him before the world was, and our predestination to the adoption of children, our holy and effectual calling by the Spirit of God, and our justification through the righteous merits of Jesus Christ and our sure glorification in consequences of what Christ had done for us.

Here now comes to our duty to God as his children. A religion that is not practical is of but very little value to him that possesses it. A man who claims a change of heart, and yet there is no reform in his life, is but a "whited sepulcher," at best. And a religion that only asserts itself on Sunday, and only bears fruit while at church, is a stigma on Christianity, and shows the pretender to be a Galvanized Hypocrite at most. It occurs to me that from the method of Paul's writing here, as well as in other epistles written by him, many of our ministers might take a lesson on how to rightly divide the word of truth, and not press duty as entirely abstracted from privilege, nor privilege abstracted from duty entirely; but rather let both go together.

The particular exhortations of this chapter, it seems to me, are drawn from different heads of Christian duty. First, our duty to God; second, our duty to ourselves; third, our duty to our brethren. The grace of God teaches us in a general way to live godly, soberly and righteously in this world, and deny everything that is contrary thereto. And in this chapter we are taught what godliness, righteousness and sobriety are, though the apostle seems to have somewhat intermixed them.

Our duty to God is to yield up all that we have, and are, into his hands, feeling that he careth for us and will shield us from harm and give us that which is best for us, and will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear; but will with every temptation make a way for our escape. Therefore, we can well afford to lean upon him as our covert from the tempest, and rest upon his precious promises as a shadow of a Great Rock in a weary land.

The duty pressed upon us is to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God. As a matter of fact, in this the apostle refers to the sacrifice under the law, which were presented or sat before God at the altar; ready to be offered to him. Sacrifice is here taken for whatever God has determined, or decided them for. Under the Jewish law there were sacrifices of atonement, and there were sacrifices of acknowledgement; but in this our gospel day Christ is the only sacrifice of atonement we have. So we may know that our obedience rendered to our Lord is not to atone for sin, or to appease the wrath of God. But all our sacrifices to God that are rendered to God through Jesus Christ our Great High Priest, are only sacrifices of acknowledgement to the honor of God. And it occurs to us that we should esteem this more as a privilege than a duty.

Presenting here seems to us to denote a voluntary act. We are not ignorant that some of our brethren object to the term voluntary act, and we would not be understood to convey the idea that this is something that the child of God can do independently of the Lord; but while God has given them his Spirit, and has thereby made them partakers of his divine nature, to these, and these only, gave he power to become the Sons of God. And we must confess that we are at a loss to know how they are to become Sons of God after they are born Sons of God, unless it is in a practical way; and should it be granted that this is what was meant, then it must be true that in the new birth God gave them that power; and now to perform that duty must be a voluntary act on their part, growing out of their love to God and his precious cause. It occurs to us that this act implies not only the avoiding of the sins that are commited with or against the body, but as the using of the body as a servant of the soul in the service of God. Of course bodily exercise alone profits little; in its place it is a proof and product of the work of God in us, and proves that we love God more than the world. The Savior once tried poor old Peter on this very point, when he said, *"Simon Peter, lovest thou me more than these?"* having referred to the fishes caught. Peter said, *"Yea, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."*

God requires a living sacrifice, not killed, as they were under the law, and there is no question but what a

soul renewed by divine grace, and governed by the Spirit in its obedience to God is a living sacrifice, and will always be accepted of the Lord.

And it is but reasonable that we should render this service to the Lord. He has a right to expect it of us, and it seems that it should be our delight to render it, and be all the while engaged in the service of the Master.

By doing thus we are refusing to conform to the world and its ways; but are being transformed and renewing our minds that we may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Oh! That we might see more of the zeal for the Master, and less of that jealous spirit, brethren striving to be called the greatest in the Kingdom of God. We have been sick and tired of brethren quarreling and fighting and trying to devour one another over questions that really amount to nothing in the end, simply questions on which the brethren can be divided and each man have his followers and prove by them that he is the leading preacher of the world. Paul says, ***"For I say through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."***

We feel confident that some little sober thought and measuring ourselves by the standard of God's word for a short while and seeing thereby that we are ***"nothing and less than nothing, and altogether vanity;"*** we are inclined to think that such views as this would cause all to see that all we have, God has given us, and all we can expect God must give, therefore we have nothing whereof to boast save in the cross of Jesus, and let each one strictly adhere to the apostle's admonition in the text, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service.

If all would do this, love would flow from breast to breast, and joy from heart to heart; and we could meet as brethren of one common family and unite our voices in the praise of God, and feel when we meet a Baptist that we have met one of our Father's family, and with joy could stoop to his feet and wash them with our tears of joy and wipe them with the hairs of our head.

May God speed the time when these blessings shall be ours to enjoy, if it can be his holy will.

T.S. Dalton.

PROVERBS 1:7.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

GOD'S WAYS

"The angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt." St. Matt. 11:13.

These are the words of St. Matthew concerning the childhood of our Savior. They call our mind back to the time when God's own time had been fulfilled and Christ, the Holy Son of God, was born into the world. All the events concerning his birth are such as would, of themselves, indicate the exercise of a power higher than that of mankind. Christ's birth into the world was as all other things which God alone directs, unchangeable. The circumstances of time, place, and even the name of the Savior, were fulfillment of prophecy. We sometimes attempt to foretell certain events over which we have partial influence, but how often our plans are diverted. The greatest success in forecasting that we can attain is concerning those things of God into whose mysteries he has allowed us to delve, and whose movements are sure. We may calculate the path of the earth, sun and moon, and determine eclipses of them in advance, but it is because their ways are set by the unalterable plans of God. God's ways are sure, his time is definite, his work is done according to his will.

We believe that the time for much of his work has already come and gone, and it has been completed. ***"And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made." Gen. 2:2.*** Where is one so foolish as to say that he has left the work of creation a partly finished task, depending upon the will, all the work which he has completed. Hear Jesus say, as he hung on the cross, ***"It is finished."*** What did he mean. I believe he meant his work here on earth was finished. And what was that? Hear again, ***"I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will but the will of him that sent me, and this is the Fathers's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing but should raise it up again at the last day." John 6:39-40.*** The inspired writer gave us word in Genesis that the Lord's work of creation was done, and none dare claim a part in it. The Savior himself, with his last words, said his work was finished.

Yet there is a work of God that is now going on. We read that ***"The hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and the***y that hear shall live." St. John 5:25. This I believe to be the work of regeneration in the heart. God is caring for it by his Holy Spirit in the same sure, steadfast way that he ever moves to do his will. His work cannot be hastened or hindered by men or devils. It was by his permissive will that Christ was delivered into the hands of his enemies. They could not have taken him sooner. The old king

sought his life as a babe, but God protected him, warning Joseph to flee into the land of Egypt until after the death of Herod, the king. Furthermore, we know that Jesus was aware of the events that were soon to transpire, for he said, ***"Behold the hour is at hand, and the son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners." St. Matt. 26:45.*** Inasmuch as there was no power to hasten or hinder God's work of creation, or his work in atoning for the sins of his people, there is no power that can help or hinder his work of regeneration in the hearts of his children, but whenever his time has been fulfilled the Holy Spirit will speak peace to the troubled soul, and the future which once looked like a troubled river of death becomes a beautiful river of life, upon whose mirrored surface the soul shall be wafted to eternal bliss in the new Jerusalem, in the ark of his redeeming love.

We have reason to believe that God has his work planned for the future. ***"The hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth." St. John 5:28-29.*** This surely must be the resurrection of the bodies. How shall we help God then? Shall it be by becoming willing and yielding ourselves to his proffer of resurrection? How much more reasonable is it to suggest that a soul, dead in trespasses and sin, yield to accept regeneration, than to suggest that a body, dead in the grave, yield to accept resurrection?

How much more consistent it is to claim no part in God's work, but to turn our attention to the abundance of labor he has delegated to us. Let us turn to Paul's exhortation, ***"Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good." Rom. 12:9.*** May we renew our determination to let our light, which God has given us, so shine that others, seeing our good works, may glorify our Father. Our feet should not be idle when there are messages of good news to carry; our hands should not be idle when there are kind deeds that may be done; and our tongue should not be idle when kind words may be spoken; but rather let us present ourselves as a living sacrifice to his glory and the good of ourselves and our fellowmen.

T.S. Dalton

NOT YET, BUT WE SHALL KNOW.

"For we know in part, and we prophesy in part:" 1 Cor., xiii, 9.

It is evident that the text teaches that we can prophesy only as far as we know, and that we, knowing only in part, can prophesy only in part. The knowledge here referred to evidently means that which we receive by revelation, and we know in part because only knowledge in part is revealed unto us.

God in His infinite wisdom and great love for his dear people knows what is best for them, and has revealed a sufficiency for them while they are in this world. Perfect knowledge would not be in keeping with an imperfect state. There are some things that God had kept secret, and they belong unto him. We can not find them out by searching, for they are too wonderful for us. We can not attain unto such knowledge. The things that God has revealed unto us, and we have a right to claim them, and appropriate them to our use as far as we may be able according to our measure of faith.

"Now, we see through a glass darkly." In this world Christ shows himself through the lattice unto his people. In the Scriptures, in our experience, in the preached gospel, he is presented unto us only in part; but we see enough of him to cause us to want to see more of him. The text is comforting to us, because we are conscious of our limited knowledge. In a good sermon we can only get a glimpse of Christ, however full of him the preaching may be, because we can know him only in part. How careful we should be, lest we be found trying to prophesy beyond our knowledge. We can not know all about election; for we can not tell why God has chosen some unto salvation and not others, yet we do know that he has done so, for he has revealed that fact unto us in the Bible. We can not understand how it is that God has always loved his people; that it is part of his nature to love them; and that he will always love them; yet we know that such is the case, for he is love, and changes not, and as long as he has been God, he has been love and been loving.

We can not understand all about predestination, yet we know it is true, for the Bible teaches it. For instance, we can not understand how it was wicked in Joseph's brethren in selling him to the Ishmaelites, and yet God having a good purpose in their going so. Many such cases might be referred to, taught in the Scriptures, but it is not necessary to enlarge here. I will remark, however, before leaving the subject of predestination, that brethren in speaking and writing on this mysterious subject, should not forget that they know only in part concerning it; that they can not measure arms with Jehovah; for his judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out. Instead of being restless and prying, trying to understand and even explain mysteries that God has never revealed unto us, and even falling out with our dear brethren because they will not agree with us in our many speculative notions, I see no reason why we should not rather be content with such things as God has been pleased to reveal unto us, and lovingly trust in him as little children. Let us not forget that at our very best in knowledge in this world we are but children, and have only

enough meted out to us as minors according to our necessities. In this world we can but speak as children, understand as children, think as children, for we are yet in our minority; but our God is our guardian, and has in store for us boundless stores of knowledge which he will show us at the proper time, when we become of age, so to speak, which will be when we leave this world and go home to heaven. It is then we shall know even as we are known. Then that which is perfect will have come, and that which is in part shall be done away.

Your brother in love,
T. J. Bazerore.

Monroe, La.
July 23rd, 1955

Elder E. J. Lambert
Winnsboro, Texas

Dear Brother Lambert (I trust in the Lord),

I have been wanting to write you since you finished your book and get you to send me a copy, and I believe the price is $3.00, so will send a check for that amount plus 25 cents to cover postage.

Brother, the dream I wrote you about worried me quite a lot till after I wrote you about it, then later I was relieved of it and am glad you had no comment.

I will soon be 61 years old, and it seems my vision on things is not as clear as it has been in the past, and I see more and more of the sins of this old man every day that I live and still don't know how to get away from any of them. Sure wish someone would tell me if they know, so that I may try in that way too, but at times I am made to thank Almighty God that He has led me through some very sweet and comforting experiences, which if the Lord will strengthen me to that end, I would like to mention a few of the very comforting and outstanding blessings that I know could come from no other source except through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is through His great love and mercy that I have been brought thus far, and shown the things that I believe I have seen.

The things I have in mind at this time are concerning my oldest son. I believe I will drop back to the time just before he was born into this world; that was when his mother had been in hard labor for some 12 to 18 hours and it seemed her strength was completely gone and she was gone too. The doctor and all our help had completely failed to accomplish anything. The doctor said he saw no other chance except a forced birth, so he began to sterilize his instruments. It seemed all this time my whole supplication had gone out for her, but on this wise

there seemed such a great load came down on me I could not bare it, so I walked out of the house, not knowing if I would see her alive again when I returned or not. I went behind the garden, sat down on the ground, buried my head in my lap, and if not deceived, uttered a prayer to God. I don't know what all I said, but on the completion was, "Lord let the child be born, that it be a normal child and that it might live and do well. If this be not possible with Thee, then save my wife and I will still trust in thee." Now as these words were finished I felt completely relieved. I felt light as a feather and I felt perfectly sure he would be born and that everything would be perfectly alright. So I got up, hurried back to the house through the kitchen where the doctor was. And when I entered the room where she was, she smiled at me very beautifully, and I saw new life in her, and the moment I touched her a son was born and a great alarm went up from the ones that were in the room. We called the doctor to come quick, but he did not need any tools. I could give a lot more details, but this is the main event that is so outstanding with me, though it may not be worth anything to anyone who may read it.

There are two other outstanding events I would like to mention while it seems to be fresh on my mind, and that is, while my boy was in the Army, what warning I felt and the experience he had of two very close calls. The first was on his way overseas to Africa. Some of the ships were sunk and the Army announced 1000 of our boys were lost. The ship he was on was badly damaged, but managed to get into harbor. Now after he came home I never questioned him about the things he went through with over there, but just recently he sat down and told me of these events which linked in with all the things I had seen and felt, (I say that I saw and I believe that Porter you wrote so beautifully about in the July signs did open the door and Christ showed me these things,) one morning around nine or ten o'clock. I saw him in great danger, and this same load that I felt several times before came down over me and I was much in distress and grieved, so I was minded to pray for him, which I stole away to myself and did as the Lord enabled me to do. So after this I felt he was safe and that fear was gone, though we did not hear from him for a long time. But I had a feeling he was alright, even after the report came out. Of course I did not know positively but what he was lost in that 1000 of our boys. I never did know just what took place until some few months ago, but this feeling I had had remained the same with me, and when he told me of the event I knew it was at the same time I had received the warning, and it did make my very soul rejoice to know of the wonderful demonstration of His love and mercy.

Now I will try to mention one other very outstanding experience

that took place while he was in the jungles of India, which proves to me beyond any shadow of doubt that All Wise and Powerful God never makes a mistake and is never too early nor too late, but exactly on time and at the right place. Now this took place some 10 or 12 months later. He was in the Airborne Corp of Engineers, and it was their duty to build air bases for our planes to land and take off. They had just finished one base, and that morning there was a Jap plane spotted them, so they got orders to move everything off the field so many hundred yards back in the jungle, which they did as fast as they could, for they knew the Japs would be back to bomb them soon. They got everything off the base except one thing that was forgotten, and his commanding officer sent him back to get it. Before he got there, running as fast as he could, he heard the planes coming, but he got what he had went after and started back. The Japs spotted him and took after him. They were flying several abreast and all putting out a stream of exploding shells that were so thick a man could not pass between them. They were so close he knew there was no chance for him, so he fell to the ground with his face down. Just as he hit the ground he heard a clear voice speak to him, saying, Divine love has all power. Divine love will save. On hearing this voice he was perfectly calm and not afraid at all; and by now those shells were kicking dust in his face, so they came within a few inches of him and all shut off at once. He lay there until they got out of sight, then got up thanking God for His love and mercy, took up what he was sent after and walked calmly on to where the others were; which they could hardly believe, for they felt sure he had been killed. So after this he was always very calm in everything that took place, always trusting in that one God that does all things well; and would take over at times the control of things when all the others in his bunch would get so frantic they could do nothing.

Now the part with me in this event was about six o'clock in the evening. There was such a heavy burden came over me it looked like I could not stand it. I was alone at the time, or there was no other person near me, and the tears did flow from my eyes, for I saw him in exceeding great danger. Of course I did not know what was taking place, but for about 30 minutes I feel that I prayed to God with groanings which words cannot utter. Now after this I felt perfectly at ease. This trouble was taken from me and I felt light as a feather as if I was floating around, and I could see him perfectly safe and not a hair of his head harmed, (which was not, for he went through the whole thing for two years and came home without a scratch.)

I did not know, as I said, just what took place till a short time ago when he told me about it; which all linked in with the exact time that I had

these experiences.

Both of my sons and my daughter were in the service at the same time. The younger son was in the Navy, and he had it pretty rough at times, and I did have similar experiences about him, but not so vivid and outstanding as the older one; neither were his calls nearly so close.

Now the wonderful and precious blessings of God our Savior toward me and mine are much too numerous to mention, for which I feel very unworthy, but so very, very thankful for all of them. These are some of the things that strengthen my very being and I truly hope they will never be taken from my memory, for these things are food for my soul; and when I am given to joy, I feel to join David and say, Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me. Bless His Holy name. Praise the Lord and forget not all His benefits.

I have written much more than may be of interest, but it will give you an idea of the things I live on.

Now I hope this finds you and yours enjoying good health which is God's blessings.

I surely enjoy all your articles in the Signs of the Times, and if you have a mind and can find the time, I would be glad to have a letter from you. When at the throne of grace, please remember me, a sinner.

Your unworthy Brother, if one at all,
J. H. Calk

EYESALVE

"Anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see." Rev. 3:18.

This was addressed to the Laodician church. She did not know her real state, and could not see her true stand. She thought she was rich when she was poor, and mistook darkness for light, bitter for sweet, and the delusions of Satan for the teachings of God. They were to anoint their eyes with this eyesalve, that they might see their real condition and turn from following after Satan and become followers of God as dear children.

But where do we find this wonderful eyesalve that has such marvelous, miraculous, supernatural effects? Is it not the teachings of the blessed Spirit? This is the only thing that can open the eyes of our understanding that we may know our true condition. So the Lord counseled the Laodician church to anoint her eyes with eyesalve, that is, go to a throne of grace. He did not teach by this that they had the power as creatures to anoint their own eyes with this heavenly unction. If they could do this they could teach themselves, while it is written, *"They shall all be taught of the Lord."* But they were to go to the throne of grace, seeking for the teaching of the Spirit.

The question would arise as to why these church members should need this eyesalve. Because they

are still bearing about a body of death. Their flesh is still weak and leads them into such delusion. If they were all spiritual they would not be troubled with this weakness, but since the spirit is life because of righteousness and the body, or flesh, is dead because of sin when we follow after the flesh, we are blind to the things of the spirit. It would do no good to use eyesalve on the eyes of the dead. Sight could not be given before life, but the living may have the eyes of their understanding opened, which are often darkened by nature as the cataract covers the eye of the body. This often grows gradually over the sight.

This blessed eyesalve of grace can open such eyes and enable them to see again. Divine light in a man's conscience will teach him what he is and to know and see the truth. So we can only know ourselves, see others as the blessed of the Lord, see and feel the truth, and know our interest in our Savior's atoning blood, his justifying righteousness, or his dying love as far as the blessed Spirit anoints our eyes with this eyesalve that we may see.

J. Harvey Daily.

Romans 8:26.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infimities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit inself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

March 5.

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." - REVELATION ii. 29.

THESE words extend the message beyond the church to which they were spoken, and address themselves to every one to whom the word comes, and to whom an ear is given to hear and receive it. Thus each message sent to the churches becomes a message sent personally to us. If we have a spiritually circumcised ear, if we are willing to listen to the voice of the Lord, he speaks to us in every message as personally and as distinctly as he spoke to each individual church. It is indeed an unspeakable blessing to have this ear given to us that we may receive in humility, simplicity, and godly sincerity what the Lord speaks in the word of his grace. It is by his word that he knocks at the door of our hearts; and what a blessing he has pronounced on the man who hears his voice and opens the door when he hears the knock, like a fond and affectionate wife when she hears the knock of her husband at the door of his house: " Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev. iii. 20).

Elder J.C. Philpot

CHESTER COUNTY

MIGUANNAN INDIAN TOWN (Plaque #34):

On the 241st anniversary of the sale of a great tract of land by the Indians to William Penn, this tablet, placed on a shaft of native trap rock, was dedicated on October 18, 1924.

It is located at the Landmark Primitive Baptist Church, formerly London Tract Baptist Church, at LR 15016 (Yeatman Station Road) and LR 15155 (London Tract Road), 1 ½ miles northeast of Strickersville.

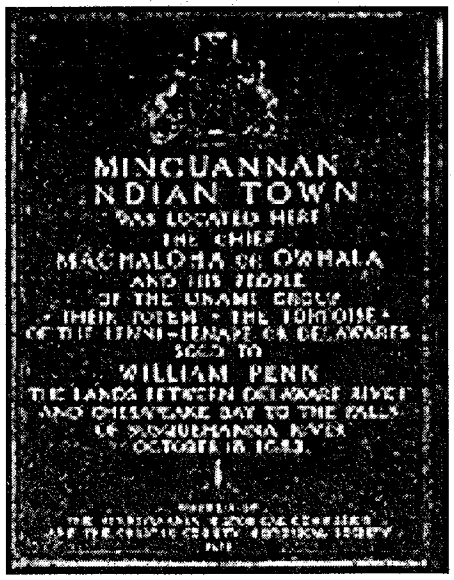

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DECEMBER 2006

Algie Martin, VA 5.00
Samuel Broach, NC 5.00
Charles Jones, TN 5.00
Carlton Sumner, VA 5.00
Hattie Spencer, VA 5.00
Carla Horton, VA 5.00
Elder Wayman Chapell, TN 25.00
Albert Davidson, LA 25.00
Amy Lane, NC 5.00
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Hazel Garland, MD 25.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER DORIS ROWLAND

It is with a sad heart that I try to write an obituary of our sister, Doris Rowland, 85 formerly of 156 Forest Dale, died Tuesday May 16, 2006, at Roman Eagle Memorial home. She had been in declining health since Dec. of 2005.

She was the daughter of the late Robert Lee Brumfield, and the late Maria Dalton Brumfield. She lived her entire life in Danville, Va. She retired after 40 years from Dan River Mills, where she worked in the no. 2 inspection room.

She joined Old Mountain Primitive Baptist Church, June 24, 1952. She served as church secretary for many years.

She was first married to Robert D. Hamilton Sr. in 1938. He died in August of 1973. She married William Rowland in August of 1977, he died in April of 1992.

She is survived by one son, Robert D. Hamilton Jr. of Danville, Va. And one daughter, Betty Hamilton Leachman, of Biloxi, Miss. A Sister, Carry McDaniel of Danville, Va. Three grand children, and two great grandchildren. In addition to her husbands, she was predeceased by two brothers, Perrow Brumfield and Ollie Brumfield. And by three sisters, Minnie B. Willis, Sagasta Brumfield Hudgins and Mamie B. Brumfield.

There was a graveside service Sunday May 21 at Hiland Burial Park with Elder C.B. Davis officiating. Buried beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to wait the second coming of the Lord.

Written by one who loved her,
Sarah Barker

SISTER DOROTHY CONNER YATES

Sister Dorothy Conner Yates of Check, Virginia died October 20, 2006, making her stay here on earth 83 years.

Services were held at 11:00 a.m. Monday, October 23, 2006 at Salem Church with her pastor, Elder Hale Terry and Elder W.T. Conner officiating. She was laid to rest in Restvale Cemetery.

Sister Dorothy was baptized September 13, 1959 and was a faithful member at Salem Church. She was married to Sherman Yates who preceded her in death. She is survived by three sons, Ralph, Barry and David Yates, and two daughters, Brenda and husband David Ramsey and Carolyn Mills. She had ten grandchildren, twenty great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild. Sister Dorothy had one brother, Banks and wife Opal Conner, one brother-in-law, Alfred Ratliff, two sisters-in-law, Jean and Frank Link and Helen Link.

Sister Dorothy will be greatly missed at Salem Church, but we hope our loss is her eternal gain. She fought a good fight and is resting in Restvale Cemetery waiting for the coming of our Savior.

Done by order of Salem Church in conference, November 11, 2006. One copy of this memorial will be included in the church records, one will be given to the family and one will be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Submitted by,
Mary Poff, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

Elder Kenneth,
Read this poem and find how many of these pretty words and expressions have you experienced in you life. I see the depth of our experience in each verse.

Frances

FOREVER

I learn as the years roll onward
And leave the past behind,
That much I have counted sorrow
But proves our God is kind;
That many a flower I have longed for
Had a hidden thorn of pain,
And many a rugged by-path
Led to fields of ripened grain.

The clouds but cover the sunshine,
They cannot banish the sun.
And the earth shines out the brighter
When the weary rain is done.
We must stand in the deepest sorrow
To see the clearest light,
And often from wrong's own darkness
Comes the very strength of right.

(cont. next page)

We must live through the weary winter
If we could but value the spring,
And the woods must be cold and silent
Before the robins sing.
The flowers must be buried in darkness
Before they could bud and bloom
And the sweetest and warmest sunshine
Comes after the storm and gloom.

So the heart from the hardest trial
Gains the purest joy of all,
And from the lips that have tasted sadness
The sweetest songs will fall.
For as peace comes after suffering,
And love is reward of pain,
So after earth comes heaven
And out of our loss the gain.

Anon.

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EDITORIAL

"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant." Psalm 25:14

Elder J.B. Farmer

Having been given a mind to attempt to write down a few things about the secret of the Lord and about His covenant, with much fear I begin. At the outset it must be said that it is my hope and desire to be delivered from all the pitfalls that attend such an endeavor. It is my sincere wish toward God to be delivered from pride, boasting in the flesh, any root of bitterness and also to be brought out of the darkness of a carnal mind. It is also my desire to be filled with love toward all and given an understanding of the truth as it is in Christ, to the comfort of the children of God, and to the praise of the God of heaven and earth.

I am made to believe the ones that the secret of the Lord is with, and the ones that fear Him in truth, and the ones to whom He promised that He will show them His covenant are the children of God. They are the same ones that God loved with an everlasting love and drew with His loving kindness. They are those that were chosen in Christ and the ones whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. They are those that God foreknew, predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son,

called, justified and glorified. They are those to whom He gave grace in Christ Jesus before the world began. They are the vessels of mercy and honor that God prepared unto glory. They are those that are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. They are those, like Jacob, that were found in a waste, howling wilderness and were led about and instructed and kept as the apple of His eye. They are those that were given a great and everlasting love for God and for His people. It is the little flock, the spiritual family of God, in which the Lord has dwelled throughout all generations. By the Spirit, some looked forward to His coming into the world, and by the same Spirit, some look back to it. The secret of the Lord surely has been with each one to sustain him through all his troubles and to bring him to the end of his journey in peace.

What is a secret? A secret, to me, is some knowledge that is committed to certain ones but that is kept hidden from all others. This particular secret of the Lord is unknowable in the natural, carnal mind because it is Spiritual. It is the secret of the Lord. The blessed apostle was given to say, *"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him, but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit."* He was also blessed to say, *"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are Spiritually discerned."* And Jesus said, *"I thank thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."* And He also said, *"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you."* So, God's children are taught to use wisdom when speaking of the secret that is within them.

The secret of the Lord is a secret shared among the Lord's people, although they cannot teach it to one another or to anyone else. The Holy Spirit said by the apostle, *"And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."* The world of carnal religion cannot understand this principle and is therefore constantly trying to persuade others to know their lord, which is not the Lord of Glory. They compass land and sea to make one proselyte and when they finish with him, he is two-fold more the child of hell than they are themselves, ac-

cording to the words of Christ. They are incessantly trying to build a larger congregation and are never satisfied. They are ever learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. But the hidden truth is this according to the inspired word of God. ***"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."*** The things of the spiritual kingdom must remain a mystery to the whole natural world.

What then is the secret of the Lord? I am made to believe that the secret of the Lord is the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, Who is Christ in you, the hope of glory. It is the continuing presence of the hidden Man of the Heart. David said by inspiration, ***"Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man."*** It is knowledge of that spiritual kingdom life that abides within God's little ones. Christ and His kingdom life are so hidden within you that we are told, ***"You are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God."*** The life you live by faith in the Son of God is unseen by those in nature's darkness. You have been killed to the world and the world has been killed unto you. No longer is your life bound up in serving sin and running after the pleasures of the world. You are made to know that the world is not your home and that you are a stranger and pilgrim here. You are a foreigner to the world and are only passing through. You, like God's children of old, have no certain dwelling place here to call home. Yes, we have natural houses and natural things, but we understand that they are just temporary and our futures are not tied to them or to any of the things of this world. As a foreigner, you are considered to be an untrustworthy spy by those whose home is in the world. After all, your language is not understood by them, neither are your principles of life. Your speech and your way of life is a hindrance to all those of contrary minds. It shines light into the dark places that they desire to keep hidden. It spoils their worldly pleasures. Therefore, they want you to be gone from their presence and they shun you, even as they did the prophets and the apostles in their day. Why is it so? It is because the secret of the Lord is with you. They hated Him and they shall hate you also because Christ Himself is with you.

The secret of the Lord is high and wide and broad and deep. The person of the Lord Jesus Christ was such a secret that no one could know who He really was, except by revelation from God. When Peter confessed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God, Jesus said to him, ***"Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."*** The Father and the Son

are hidden. Jesus said, *"All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."* God and the Son and all things of the spiritual kingdom are hidden. But the Holy Spirit, which is Christ in you, teaches you the things of the spiritual kingdom that are a mystery to all others. He teaches you that God is sovereign, that He rules and reigns over all in the army of heaven and amongst the inhabitants of the earth; that God does all His will and is not frustrated or changed by any; that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God; that God has a chosen people that he loved with an everlasting love, and that He, without fail will bring every one of them to glory; and that there are those that God hates with a perfect hatred, that were made to be destroyed by Him at the end of time. These and many other things of that spiritual kingdom, which comes not by observation, are all held in secret by the Lord's chosen few.

Those that have been filled with the secret of the Lord, rejoice in the kingdom of God as they are led about and instructed and kept in the things of it. They are taught precept upon precept and line upon line; here a little and there a little. They are blessed to talk freely to one another about it, and about their experience in it. The over-abounding love that fills their hearts for God and His Son and for one another cannot be contained and God must be praised. *"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."* The Holy Spirit said through the mouth of David, *"Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; for praise is comely for the upright."* They seem to be the weakest of all people, but God's strength is made perfect in weakness. They are the fewest of all people, but they are the wisest, most contented, most honest and humbled people upon the face of the earth. Why is this so? I am made to believe it is because the secret of the Lord is with them. The secret of the Lord guides them, instructs them, comforts them and keeps them in the paths of righteousness.

God, Who cannot lie or fail in a promise, also said through David, *"He will shew them his covenant."* God promised that He would show His people His covenant. The spiritual understanding of this holy, just and good covenant is kept secret from all who have not the Spirit of God. We understand that a covenant is an agreement between two or more parties. There was an old covenant that God made with Israel, which bound Israel to obey the law of God on penalty of death for disobedience. This covenant they broke because of the weakness of the flesh. They all found themselves to be guilty and condemned sinners before God without excuse or remedy. I am made to believe that all of

God's little ones have this covenant written in their hearts. It is the ministration of condemnation and the ministration of death to them. God makes them to understand the same things as the apostle did according to his experience. Paul said this by the Spirit. *"I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died."* When God writes this law in our mind and upon our hearts we are made to know without a doubt what it means to be a condemned sinner without hope in this world. We are also brought into company with the Publican, who could not even look up toward heaven, but smote his breast and confessed that he was a sinner and begged for mercy. We are killed to any thought of goodness in ourselves. This knowledge remains hidden to the world, but it is the Lord's secret with His people.

But God, in His great love and mercy for His people, sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ the Righteous into the world to fulfill the righteous, holy law of God and to make a way of escape for His people, through His suffering, death and resurrection from the dead. God has now revealed the new and everlasting covenant to the minds and hearts of His little ones, and has shown them that the old covenant has been fulfilled and put away. This new and everlasting covenant is the covenant of grace that God made with His Son on behalf of His people. The prophet and the apostle said by the Spirit, *"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."* Although this sure, everlasting covenant seems so plain to those who are given to know the secret, it is a mystery to all others.

This secret unconditional covenant manifests the love of God for His people. It shows that their sins were mercifully and gracefully forgiven and put away - never to appear against them again. By this one offering of Himself to God, Christ perfected forever them that are sancti-

fied. Jesus left the sins of God's little ones in the grave, as sure as He left His grave clothes there when He arose from the dead. And He now is sitting at the right hand of God where He ever lives to make intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And He has promised to never leave you or forsake you, and that He would come again at the end of time, change you into His likeness and to receive you to Himself. This secret everlasting covenant secures all our hopes and desires, because it is God that has promised and God that is able to fulfill all that He has spoken. And He will do it. ***"He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."***

Sometimes I think I have tasted that God is gracious, but sometimes I think I am deceived. Sometimes I am persuaded with the apostle, that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day, although I know I am undeserving. I trust I have been made to know that I am nothing and altogether unworthy according to nature, but yet I must hope in His righteousness and in His mercy and goodness. It is my hope and trust that the God of heaven and earth shall continue His secret presence with you and His hidden mercy and goodness to you and to all His little ones now and forever, and that He may cause you to rejoice in that everlasting and sure covenant of grace in hope of eternal life. David said that he had one desire above all others, which I am made to believe each one of the little flock also has been given, and I trust it is within me also. He said, ***"One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple."***

This was written, I trust, in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J. B. Farmer
12-21-2006

CORRESPONDENCE

This was written by Jamie E. Cooper some years ago. I found it and I am going to copy it word for word and share it with the readers of "The Signs" if you think it is worthy to print.

ONE DISOBEDIENCE

Dear Saints,

As this is my first time to write anything about my experience. I don't have any idea what it will amount to.

I want to tell you of first one of my disobediences of which I have many it seems. Several years back I remember a certain place that I always enjoyed going. But for some reason at this church I always seemed to feel more unworthy than

any place I went. This went on for several years and it seemed to get more heavy each year. Looking back now I believe it was all for my good, and to show me how frail and helpless I really am. As I said it got more severe each time. When I would be called on to serve in the communion, and I would go up to take the bread or wine it would seem that I was actually taking hold of Christ himself and it would almost take my breath away. I can't tell you how unworthy I would feel.

When the preaching was about half over I would begin to start having this awful feeling and yet I cannot say I did not want to serve. Now on this certain occasion just before the preaching was over. I as much believe that God gave me over to Satan for a few moments as he did Peter when he denied Him. I told myself that I just cannot do this, this time without making a scene in public, so the best thing for you to do is get on the back bench and they may not call on you. I don't think I had ever been there that I was not called on to serve. So you know what I did. Yes I got on the back bench and went all the way back to the end of the bench and sat down and I guess I even had my head down so no one would see me even. About this time I was feeling pretty well satisfied with what I had done.

So when they called for the ones to serve the bread, they did not call me. Now about this time is when I started to receive the heavy rod. Even then I would have been glad to have been called, but do you know, oh yes when they chose the ones for the wine they passed me by. Now dear fellow Deacons, I hope I can tell you of the awful weight that was upon me. I don't think if the whole roof had come down it would have been any heavier. As I said before I believe that old satan had tempted me, but now I had someone else to deal with. I have never before nor since had Christ to speak any more plainer or direct to me than at this time. Do you have any idea what He said to me.

He never talked harsh or rebuked me, or accused me but He was just as gentle as He could be. But oh how deep the stripes did cut.

He said to me so plain it almost seems to me the one next to me could have heard it.

He said, ***"you are some deacon, you never cease to ask me day and night to do something for you, and now you have been in the position to do this one simple thing for me and you have refused."***

Now I will have to just let each one of you imagine what an awful condition I was in because I cannot tell you. As I said about Peter being tempted, yes I was like him I went out and I wept bitterly. Now my Brethren I am still wearing those stripes and I think I always will. But I would not have it any other way, because this is one of my experiences and I have come to the place that I had rather

have Christ to visit me in His chastisement than to not visit me at all.

Oh yes you want to know what I have learned is this, I have never since and I don't believe I will ever get on the back seat any more.

Being a deacon is something hard to explain. Sometime you may think well why be, but there is something about it I could not give up. Just being able in some small way to feel you have done just a little to glorify His Blessed and Holy Name.

Your brother in hope and love!
Jamie E. Cooper

Sunday, October 2006
Tarboro, North Carolina

On September 30th and October 1st this past year, I feel that a few vessels of God's mercy assembled themselves together in bond of God's great love in an Association gathering. This wonderful gathering was held on St. James street in the beautiful town of Tarboro, North Carolina.

How these preaching brethren were elevated from the pits of darkness of nature, and set forth that great Gospel! They were blessed to remind us of God's great love, to feast on at His appointed time. How beautiful it is when one is blessed with an ear to hear and to feast from the rations from the Master's table food for the hungry soul. Surely, we that hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled.

All the preaching brethren came forth showing that great love and harmony, setting forth a ruling and sovereign God who controls everything after the counsel of his precious will. We truly rejoiced that He is the author and finisher of this great faith that sustains the believing family of God in this land of sin and sorrow, if not deceived. Oh how those present seemed favored to feast on that Good News, food and consolation from that far country, channeled through God's bountiful grace.

Elder Joe Sawyers opened with remarks and we sang hymn 196. With a gracious prayer, the meeting began in a warm and graceful way. Elder Alan Terry was the second appointed to the stand.

I feel Elder Terry is a very able vessel of God's mercy. The text delivered to Elder Terry's heart came from Corinthians 15: 12-24. We were all blessed with a very moving message from that text.

Elder W. T. Conner was third appointed to the stand. Elder Conner was highly favored to bring forth a beautiful message of comfort to God's household of believers through faith. Elder Conner was given Ephesians 2: 1-10 as his text.

Elder Junior Conner, W. T. Conner's fleshly brother, and I believe Gospel brother was next appointed to the stand. Elder Conner's text came from Corinthians 1:1-31. The second Elder Conner's message was a beautiful spiritual dis-

course that was well and warmly received.

I believe these two brothers are gifted individuals. This concluded preaching before lunch on Saturday.

The ladies of the church outdid themselves with a truly delicious lunch, that was enjoyed by all. Every time I have one of the amazing dinners on the ground, I am humbled to think about when Christ blessed the bread loaves and indeed, fed multitudes. This has always been a very beautiful expression of God's power for me.

Saturday afternoon preaching began with Elder C. B. Davis. Elder Davis was given Psalms 85:7-11. The highly worded message delivered through Elder Davis was great comfort to the recipients of God's great love.

Those gathered being fully fed, Elder Hale Terry dismissed the crowd on Saturday afternoon with Hymn 73 and prayer. I think that all who were present received and were well fed from God's great Gospel that was set forth.

Sunday morning services were opened with hymn 372 followed by prayer delivered through Elder Marvin Brumfield.

Elder Raymond Goad was the first appointed to preach on Sunday morning. He was given for his text St. John 1:3-7. Elder Goad was blessed to bring forward graceful words of great comfort.

Elder Hale Terry was the second appointed to preach on Sunday morning. Elder Terry was given for his text, Romans 8:28-39. Elder Terry was blessed to bring forth a very graceful message from that given text.

Elder Cleo Robertson was the third appointed to preach on Sunday morning. Elder Robertson was given for his text, John 3: 13-14. Elder Robertson was blessed to bring forth a very moving message for those blessed to be recipients of God's love. I have often enjoyed Elder Robertson's thoughtful writing, as well as knowing him as being highly favored to preach the Gospel of the kingdom of God.

Elder Marvin Brumfield, whom I esteem very highly was the fourth Elder appointed to the stand. He was given as his text from Corinthians 17:1-2. Elder Brumfield's message from that text was highly favored from that good land, bringing further words of grace and comfort to those gathered there.

Elder Joe Sawyer was the fifth elder appointed to the stand. Elder Sawyer was given verse from Deuteronomy, and was further given moving remarks from chapter 32. Elder Sawyer is a highly gifted individual.

Looking over the crowd, I was very moved seeing tears of joy flowing down cheeks of those feasting from the rations from the master. I understood clearly the wonder of those of our faith who travel so far often, to be so warmly and beautifully blessed. The long journey to

Tarboro seemed short at that moment.

The preaching brethren were from all up and down the east coast. Coming forth in love and advocating the predestination of all things, they all gave praise to this high and sovereign God. The experiences of our old Baptist Brethren, so steady across the centuries now, in seeking the affirmation of a sovereign God across the miles is very grounding and humbling. How wonderful that this hopeful journey continues, and what peace that anchored mooring gives.

I would like to close these remarks with a personal note, thanking everyone in the Tarboro area for the great and further humbling love and hospitality shown these travelers from the West Virginia during a wonderful and blessed weekend. Indeed, I was most saddened that the wonderful fellowship came to an end. These wonderful blessings will be cherished greatly for a very long time.

Riley Justice
POB 272
War, WV 24892
304-875-2960

PSALMS 98:1

O Sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory.

Elder William Hale Terry
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
Signs of the Times

1/2/2007

Dear Elder Terry,

Please renew my subscription for the "Signs of The Times" for the coming year. I am enclosing a check for $30.00- $15.00 for the subscription and $15.00 for a contribution.

I thank God for blessing us with those individuals, both past and present, whom I believe, have been given the desire, ability, effort, and dedication that is required to continue the publishing of the Signs. I believe that is through this means of communication that we are made to realize that the experiences of the authors, their beliefs, and their discussions are those that we can relate to since some of our own experiences are similar to theirs.

Time has not changed the doctrine that we contend for and nothing has changed with God. As I continue to read the Signs I am made to realize that it does not matter when the editorials and articles were written in time, whether it be one hundred years or just a month ago, we can read, relate to, and enjoy them regardless of when they were written.

A brother in hope
George W. Hyslip

VOICES OF THE PAST

Harbourton, N.J., June 27, 1903

Elder F. A. Chick – Dear Brother In The Lord: - By your request, and that of others, I will try to pen my experience in passing from nature's darkness to the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. I tremble at the attempt, fearing that it will crowd out much richer and better pasture than has grown in me, but if God has planted his word in my heart, and I am made to feed upon it, and to be nourished by it, why should I be ashamed of his workmanship? I hope that I never shall, although at times it seems but a dream and almost gone, yet I cannot forget that wonderful change which I was made to feel most thankful for. It was plainly shown to me that I had no part in this work, and it could not be taught by human knowledge, but it is given from above, and it of the free mercy of God. Words spoken by the apostle long ago suited my case, ***"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."*** It is the gift of God, free and complete, and I saw that I could do nothing but gladly accept his mercy, and walk in humble submission to his will.

It might be well for me to go back to the time of my birth of Adam's race. I was born at Yardville, N. J., April 5th, 1873, and spent my childhood days with my twin brother and three sisters there on my father's farm. I seldom went anywhere to church, as my father was not a member of any church, and my mother was a member at Hopewell, twenty-one miles distant. She could go but a few times in a year, and the most of the time we children were left at home, to keep house when we were old enough. Sunday afternoons Sunday School was held at our district schoolhouse, and against our mother's wishes we children would sometimes go. I was not interested in the Sunday school lesson, but went to see my schoolmates. I well remember one of the teachers telling me about little children in heathen lands without the gospel, and that they without it would be lost, and she said that I with others should bring some money the next time with which they would send a preacher to save them. I did not know what being saved meant, and so did not take the money the next time.

Mother would quite often talk to me about Jesus, who died to save his people from their sins, and of how sinful we all were, and I would get much interested in her talk, and thought it would be dreadful to be destroyed, and in burnings forever, yet I would soon forget all about it.

At the age of ten years I had a strange dream: I thought the world was coming to an end; I was going to school it seemed, and I could

plainly see the devil, as I thought it was, gathering up the wicked and throwing them into a large furnace on wheels, red with the heat, and I was greatly alarmed, and feared that he would take me, and longed for my mother's presence. Instantly she was by my side, and I told her what I was afraid of, and asked her that I might hide under her shawl, and then it seemed that we both crept under the fence out of sight as the devil passed by. This childhood's dream left such an impression on my mind that I never forgot it entirely, and today I can go to the very spot where it seemed that we hid. But soon again my mind was upon fun, and a good time, as I then called it. I can well see myself as I look back, rolling sin as a sweet morsel under my tongue, loving the world and its vanities, laughing at other people's calamities, until the Lord spoke and said, *"Thus far shalt thou go and no further."* And truly I was ripe for a fall, for sin was my all. I had now reached the age of fifteen years, and was slender and very tall. I remember well thinking what a man I was becoming, far ahead of my twin brother and others of my age. Now my fall came; trouble knocked at my door and walked in upon me. That summer my father had a large hay crop, and some of it we sold right from the field. One day I drove a load of hay to market, and while I was waiting for my father to come and unload it, there came a very heavy shower, and fearing the hay would spoil I went at it in great earnest, unloading it alone. That was the last of my work for the summer, I had suffered a strain, and for two long years I was able to do but little work. I now realized that pleasure and health were taken from me, and this worried me greatly, and so at last I thought it would be best for me to starve myself to death. My oldest sister coaxed me hard to eat, but I told her that I would not, for I wished to die, and she left me out of patience. When my mother heard all this she told me that I must not think of such a thing, and that in time I would outgrow this weakness and be all right again. I obeyed my mother, but was discouraged in getting well, as the doctors said it would take a long time. Thinking over my condition, and of what would become of me if I did die, I spent many, many nights crying, desiring no sleep.

At that time I cannot tell just how my past life would come up before me; thoughts like this would come, What an evil, wrong, wicked, sinful, vile life I have led, and soon I would forget my bodily affliction, and began to grieve over my sins, which had now become my chief trouble; I knew not what to do nor where to go; I spent my time in sore distress, crying and weeping week after week, and month after month, until I was compelled to seek the Lord for forgiveness and pardon. My poor heart prayed earnestly and constantly that my sins might be blotted out in his sight, but instead of any relief I grew

worse and worse. While in this miserable state, one day I picked up one of mother's papers, the Signs of the Times, and I became interested in the reading, as it told of things which I had passed through. I was amazed, and did not know how to believe it, for I thought my case was an outside one, and that none could be half so vile as I. From that time until this I have been greatly comforted by the rich things contained in that paper.

About this time sister Lawshe and other Old School Baptists arranged to have meetings at their homes in Trenton, and would send us word, and sometimes mother would ask me to take her, and the preaching did me much good. The Elders spoke of the Lord's people being poor and afflicted, vile and sinful, so that they hated their own nature. This was the very way that I felt, yet I did not want it known by any one. I felt a great desire to know the truth, and resolved to read the Bible, but the more I read, the more it seemed to condemn my wicked ways, and my feelings became such that I can never describe them, for I saw again that I was lost, and that I could not help myself, and what to do I did not know, yet I was begging God for mercy all the time, but as yet no relief came; sorrow, grief and afflictions seemed my only friends, for they were with me day and night. Truly I longed for a ray of light.

One morning while caring for the horses, the words came to my mind clearly and forcibly, *"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in his excellent word,"* and there came a smile on my face, for they seemed to take me in. O, how sweet to my soul these words were; I never can forget them. For days I seemed to live upon their richness. But joy brings sorrow, and sorrow brings joy, and soon I sank more deeply than ever in gloom and distress, and doubted all that I has passed through. About this time we received a card saying that Elder Vail would preach in Trenton, and father, mother and I went. I do not remember the text, but every word went to my heart and condemned my whole life, and my wicked ways. So weeping was all that I could reap from it, and this was what I needed, though then I could not see it so. When we reached our gate on our way home I told my parents that I would open the gate and walk down the lane. As soon as they had passed through I lay down on the ground and cried bitterly, because I felt so badly and so condemned. When I arose my eyes were fixed upon the sky, and it seemed that walking among the stars down towards me I saw the form of a man with large white wings, and in his hand he carried a sword. Speaking to me by my name he said, *"Willie, you are my child,"* and disappeared. It was most wonderful to me, but I said nothing about it.

The friends in Trenton were so kind as to let us know about the appointments there, and we got to

them quite often. My excuse was to take mother. Several times that we went there was no preaching, but this did not discourage either of us. I dearly loved the doctrine which they proclaimed, but thought such mercies could not be for me. These thoughts would bring fresh tears down my cheeks, and then I would seek the Lord in prayer, but while praying such thoughts as this would come into my mind, You know that you do not deserve what you are asking for; be still, and bear what belongs to you; do not place your wrong upon the innocent. This I could not deny, and I would get up and leave the place. O, how I feared the Lord because of my sins. I felt that I was lost, and lost forever, yet I begged the Lord that he would save me from hell and destruction, which path I had all my life been walking in. But the way of God is in himself, and what he does is ever best.

Now the meetings and the Signs had become a great comfort to me, they never failed to bring a sense of peace to my troubled mind when bowed down in distress. As I look back over those then dark, sad days, I now count them the best and happiest days of my life, and can see that they were good for me, turning my thoughts toward Christ Jesus, setting my feet upon the Rock, established my goings, and putting a new song in my mouth, even praise to our God. At the age of twenty-one years, and through the kind providence of an allwise God, we moved to my mother's old home at Ewing. How glad I was that we were nearer Hopewell, yet I thought, What can I do with my sins? For they have grown like mountains before my eyes. I seemed to sink deeper and deeper into the miry clay. Many, many times I wished that I was dead, and several times I dreamed of my own funeral, but would awaken disappointed.

I tried to get relief from my burden and sin, and I went into young company, but soon found it a task to enjoy myself; the things they cared for I did not, and so instead of relief, it but added sorrow to my heart.

One Sunday night Elder Wm. L. Beebe preached at sister Lawshe's, in Trenton. It being a stormy night, I went down alone, and after meeting sister Lawshe spoke to the Elder about me as one interested in the word, and asked him to talk with me about it. He spoke many lovely and comforting words to my mind, but I felt afraid to open my mouth. At last I expressed my feeling as being in the hymn 1022: "I am so vile, so full of sin, I fear that I'm not born again." He took the book and read the hymn, and turning to me said, "If these words express your feeling you should make it known to the church, for in that hymn there is a rich experience of a child of God." This was in the winter of 1895, and this winter had brought more sorrow to my poor soul than any time before. Truly I had come to hate myself,

and felt that I was not fit to sit at the table and eat with the rest of the family. I asked constantly that the Lord would take away my sins, and guide my wayward feet in the paths of righteousness. I do not think that I could get into a much worse hell that my ownself seemed to me to be. I slept but few nights that winter without my pillow being wet with tears. One night I slept but little, and had a wonderful dream, in which I saw the end of time, with the heavens on fire, and above the sky I saw a great white throne made of white marble. It was long and narrow. In the center Jesus stood, and his twelve disciples around him, and at one end was a door, which was also of white marble, and I could plainly see his people going in. I was so happy walking on the clouds in heaven, and I soon came to the door, then the thought came, You are not fit, you are that wicked one. I cannot describe the feeling. I started as it seemed, to everlasting punishment. Going down I seemed to meet my father and mother, and they told me that was the only way to enter in, at the door, and I broke out weeping. At this moment these words were spoken to me in a loud voice, which awoke me from my sleep, ***"Thou shalt be made willing in the day of my power."*** I wondered and felt to praise God for such a token, for it made me so happy, and relieved my sorrow.

At different times that spring these words out of the Bible, that I never remembered reading, or of having heard read, would come upon my mind, as though I had known them by heart: ***"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "The world by wisdom knows not God."*** It was in the school of Christ that I was taught these things. I now began to feel and know that the Lord was shining round about me, and had become merciful to my unrighteousness. O, how happy I felt because of his love. One morning at the table my sister Lizzie about her work was singing a gospel hymn; the words touched my heart, and I left the table crying. My father followed me into the shop and inquired what was the matter. I asked for my mother, and begged him to forgive me all my wrongs. As soon as I could I told my mother all the trouble of heart that had been mine so long. My mother broke down crying with me, but said she was glad the Lord had led me thus, because it was a true Christian experience, as she believed. She said if I felt like telling it to the church, it would be right for me to do so. I felt to ask all the family to forgive me all the wrong that I had ever done them. My love for the people of God grew stronger and stronger, until I asked my parents if they would not ask you down to see me the next time you

came to Hopewell, for as you know they were without a pastor at that time. I thought I would like to talk with you when you came. You spent the night at our home, and quite a number came in, and in a weak way I told them what I have here written. You deemed it a good experience through grace, and that it was not mixed with creature goodness or self-righteousness. Some of the hymns that were sweet to me were sung, and they seemed very sweet that evening. I will mention the numbers of a few in Beebe's collection: 751, 464, 1022, 671, 881. The next morning I took you to the train feeling much better. When I bade you good bye I hoped that I would be able to come to the church before long, and I told you to arrange a time, for I longed to be with them, and the second Saturday in June I came and related what I trusted had been the dealings of God with me, and that I had been made to trust in him alone for salvation, that Jesus was the only way given under heaven and among men, whereby we must be saved. I was received as you know. But while I was so glad to be numbered among them, I do not think that I ever felt so broken up, and unworthy, and out of place, as I did standing there asking favor from so good a people. This Saturday was a clear, beautiful, balmy day in nature, but the next was cold, and it rained in torrents, nevertheless three others as well as myself were baptized. I shall never forget the hymn that was sung before we went down into the water: 1129, *"Jesus, and shall it ever be, a mortal man ashamed of thee?"* Also the words that you spoke to me when you gave me the hand of fellowship; they sank deep into my heart. It all seemed too good for me, but I was happy, and I could not help it.

Happiness is like the wind, it comes and goes without our control. Before dawn the next day the devil seemed to take possession of me, and doubts and fears and blind unbelief filled my mind. When I got home it was a very dark, sad night spiritually to me, and I prayed earnestly that I might know if I had done wrong in uniting with the church, for I thought that perhaps I had deceived the people of the true and living God. Some time the next day the Scripture came sweetly to my soul, *"This is the way, walk ye in it."* Instantly my fear was gone.

Dear brother, I have been trying ever since to walk in the way in a becoming manner, but I am so blind to spiritual things that I go stumbling, falling, fearing, and am so faint and weak that at times I am almost persuaded that I am not a saint at all. Then the word comes as an anchor to the soul sure and steadfast, holding me up to praise his great name, through faith, hope and love, which are the foundation of any experience of grace.

Now in closing, I wish to say that I feel that the dear Lord has been very merciful to me all the days

of my life; I have nothing with which to repay him, but desire to be thankful and submissive to his will. Since I have been in the fold I have seen many brought into the banqueting-house of God, to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. Two of them are very near to me by natural ties: one my twin brother, and the other the wife of my bosom, for which I feel very thankful indeed.

I give this to your hands imperfect; after reading it and correcting it, if anything is left that you think would comfort one of the dear children of God, you are at liberty to put it in print, not to the honor of my name, but alone to the glory of God.

Wm. T. Yard

STRONG IMPRESSIONS.

Elder R. W. Thompson; Dear Brother in the Lord: I wish to write an article on dreams, and incidents of my ministerial life, not that I believe that every thing we dream is of the Lord. I know that I have dreamed things that came to pass, and it is such dreams that I wish to write about in this article. Some five or six years ago I was requested to preach at a certain place in Gonzales county, Texas; after preaching there a few times arrangements were made to offer an opportunity for members. On Thursday night two brethren came to my house to go the next day to the above place of worship. Thursday night I dreamed that myself and others were walking along a road. I thought I found a pile of money in the road, and could see at the same time one Bland dollar after another scattered down the road. I thought I picked up the money that was in the pile, while the crowd that was with me picked up the money that was scattered down the road. When we got our money all picked up I thought some officers came running up and said, *"A bank was robbed last night in town."* I thought the officers made the parties that run around me give up their money, but said nothing to me. When I awoke the interpretation was plain. The money that I picked up was all in a pile. When we offered an opportunity for members eight joined. There was my pile of money just as it was interpreted in my dream. The money scattered down the road was God's people that the Arminian bank robbers had picked up. A church was soon constituted at the above place and increased to thirty-five or forty members in a short while; nearly all were from the Missionary Baptists and among them one Missionary preacher.

Elder P.M. Lancaster was once on a preaching tour in my section of country and I was with him. One night I dreamed that I was walking along by myself and saw a beautiful bright dollar in the edge of some drift wood. When I awoke the thought oc-

curred to me, that just one would join Ephesus church. When we got there (Ephesus church is where my dream above related was fulfilled) I told Brother Lancaster my dream and the interpretation. We had several churches to pass before reaching Ephesus church. Sister Sallie Lowry joined on Friday night, and was the only one to join during the meeting.

Some time after this the Missionary Baptists sent special word for me to visit one of their churches some twenty miles east of me. I went and preached the best I could for them. By their request I left another appointment. After filling my second appointment I told them on Sunday that I believed they had some of the Lord's people in their Arminian pen, and that I would offer them an opportunity to come out at my next meeting if they had no objections. They said they had none. Before the next meeting I dreamed that I was working with a hoe in a very dirty and filthy looking piece of land, and while working I found two pieces of metal. I picked them up, but did not know what they were, only that they were metal of some kind. I commenced rubbing them and soon found them to be two five dollar gold pieces. I thought I rubbed them until they were perfectly bright. The interpretation thereof was plain; four or five are going to join at your next meeting at South Union at the Missionary church mentioned above. They were covered in Arminianism, but you have it all rubbed off. Arminianism is similar to the kid skin on Jacob's neck and hands, all on the outside. So I told the dream to a brother while we were going over to my next appointment. After preaching on Saturday, the wife of one of the deacons joined the church. After she told her experience and was received, I asked her when she wanted to be baptized. She said, *"I believe there are others that want to join the church."* I told the audience we would come to definite conclusions relative to baptism before the meeting was over. We met at the church that night and three more joined, all from that church. So I found my pure gold. The Missionaries soon put a stop to me preaching in their house. One of their preachers not long since told me that I had about all the good material there was in their church at that place. I told him that we had about all we wanted.

After this I dreamed that I was fishing and that I caught two fish, one was easily gotten out of the water, while the other was a flying fish. The dream was interpreted to mean, that two are going to join the church; one is coming up quietly and the other is coming shouting. So at my home church shortly after, at our regular meeting, and opportunity was offered for members, an aged sister got up and quietly gave me her hand. Presently a young sister arose in the rear end of the house and came shouting down the aisle where I was. I said to myself, There is my flying fish. One more and I will close

on the subject of dreams. About two years ago I was from home on a preaching tour and I dreamed one night that a telegraph operator brought me a telegram. I thought its contents were in parallel columns, and that one column was black and the other was bright. I thought the operator read the message to me from the dark column. I thought that all I could get out of it was for me to come home. After the operator was gone I thought I would try to read the telegram, but could make nothing out of it. When I woke up I felt sure that I would be telegraphed home, but I went on to my next appointment which was at Killeen in Bell county, Texas. I told no one about my dream. The church was near the telegraph office, and when I say that I but faintly express my feelings. On Sunday night we had service at a private house in town, and by request I went forward, and when we went to prayer I noticed from some cause that I had singled out my oldest son, and was praying for him, something I had never done before. Little did I know that my son at that very time, who was over two hundred miles from me, was suffering in the very throes of death. Next morning I went to a store to have some money changed and the telegraph operator, who was a stranger to me, came in the store and said to the merchant, *"Where is Mr. Newman or Mr. Downing."* The merchant said, pointing to me, *"That's Mr. Newman."* The operator turned and read the message to me just as the man did in my dream. When he read it he gave it to me and I said, *"My dream has come to pass,"* and a brother preacher that was standing near wanted to know about my dream. I told it to the crowd that had gathered around me, and Brother Baker said, *"your son will be all right when you get home."* The telegram read, *"Come home at once. Walter is seriously hurt."* My son did not drink, go to dances, or keep bad company, and did not have an enemy any where that I knew of. While I was going home I would read the telegram, but the very thing I wanted to know was dark to me, hence the dark column. When I got home my wife met me at the yard gate and said to me, *"Joe, we should be the most thankful people on earth."* When I got so I could speak I said, *"What is the matter with Walter?"* She said, "A wild bull gored him Sunday evening. Sunday evening while he was agonizing apparently in the throes of death, and the family around him broken hearted, thinking he would be dead before I could get home, I was on my knees praying for him. He soon got well.

I will now make mention of a few incidents connected with my ministerial life. Soon after I commenced preaching Brother B. Greenwood of N.C., was in Texas on a preaching tour, and had an appointment at my home church. While I was anxious for him to come, still I did not have a

cent of money to give him. The time came for me to meet him at the depot. I went feeling very sad because I had nothing to give him. When I got to Cuero I hitched my team, and started down the street, and as I was walking along feeling sadly, I passed a store a few steps, and some one in the store said, ***"Stop Mr. Newman."*** I did so and to my surprise the man said, ***"I have been wanting to make you a present for some time and now is as good a time as I will ever have,"*** and he handed me a five dollar gold piece. I said to myself, ***"Thank the Lord, come on, Brother Greenwood."***

Again I was in the same town and had some appointments, and had not money to pay my fare to them, and did not know what to do. I walked by a saddle shop and one of my former associates, a cowboy, stopped me and gave me a ten dollar bill. After this I was from home filling appointments, and had filled the last one, and had failed to get enough money to get back home, and pay back what I had borrowed to start on. I went home with a cowboy friend for dinner, as he had agreed to take me to the depot that evening. Just as we were fixing to start he handed me a ten dollar gold piece and when we got to the depot a brother had bought me a ticket home. Only a short time ago I made some appointments and had to borrow money to get to them. I filled them and got enough money to get back home, but not enough to pay what I had borrowed. I started to the depot and called at a barber shop. The barber asked me where I was going. I told him I was going to the depot to go home. He said, ***"I will go down to the depot with you."*** The barber said to the ticket agent, ***"Give me a ticket to Cuero."*** He turned to me and said, "this is yours." When the train stopped at the next station I saw a brother and sister drive up. I got out and spoke to them, and when I told them goodby, the brother gave me five dollars. A few year ago I was from home on a preaching tour. Elder J.B. Downing and myself were crossing a river, and while our team was drinking I saw quite a crowd of people about two hundred yards below me on the bank of the river. The thought occurred to me that I would baptize some one there is the morning. I said to Brother Downing, ***"I will baptize some one down yonder in the morning."*** He said, ***"I hope so; that's where they baptize."*** A young sister joined that night and said she wanted me to baptize her in the morning. So we met there and I baptized her. This is the first I have ever written on this subject.

Pray for me,
J.S. Newman
Cuero, Tex.
(Sent in by Keith Hiatt)

"In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our Inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."- Ephesians i, 13, 14.

HEAVEN is a prepared place for a prepared people. Holy are its inhabitants, holy its employments, holy its enjoyments. Therefore unless we know something of the teaching, the work, and witness of the Holy Spirit here, and are made partakers of a new, holy, spiritual, and heavenly nature we have no pledge or earnest of our interest in the inheritance of the saints in bliss. A carnal, unsanctified, unholy, unrenewed heart is utterly incapable of understanding, entering into, longing after, and loving an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. But every holy desire, heavenly affection, gracious longing, spiritual enjoyment, and believing, hoping, loving, looking unto and cleaving to the Lord of life and glory by the power of the Holy Spirit, are all so many pledges and earnests of an interest in the glorious inheritance of the saints in light. The love, the joy, the peace, the calm tranquillity, and holy acquiescence in the will of God; the ravishing views of the glory of Christ which change the soul into the same image, from glory to glory; the delight felt in him, and the whole surrender of the heart and affections to the blessed Lord as the chiefest of ten thousand and the altogether lovely, are all so many earnests of the inheritance above, as being heaven begun below.

Elder J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

NEW DAN RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

New Dan River Primitive Baptist Church located in Patrick County, Vesta, Virginia, purposes to hold a fifth Saturday meeting, the Lord willing, on April 28, 2007. The meeting will start with singing at 9:30 am and preaching at 10:00 am. The church is located on State Road 636 (State Shed Road) off US 58, approximately 3 miles east of the Blue Ridge Parkway and 12 miles west of Stuart, Virginia. We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially we would invite all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder J. L. Cassell, Pastor
James L. Shelor, Clerk

SPECIAL MEETING

Lord willing there will be a special meeting held at Republican Primitive Baptist Church on March 17 , 2007, singing to start at 10:00 AM.

There are three churches in and around Asheboro, North Carolina that are standing as independent churches. These churches are Gaines Grove, Rock Hill and Toms Creek. Their pastors, Elder Ralph

Gaines and Elder James Moody along with the members have humbly made their desire known to be affiliated with our association churches and those of our affiliation. They have been invited to come and hold a meeting at said time and place.

We plan to bring out lunch and after lunch have our regular Republican Church meeting. We urge our associated and affiliated churches and invite all believers in Christ to come and meet with us.

Directions: Those traveling 220 north come past Martinsville several miles until you come to a flashing caution light at a big curve, turn left onto Route 605 go approximately seven or eight miles, at the bottom of a hill, turn right at Republican Church Road, church approximately three miles on the right.

Those traveling 220 south take 40 west at Rocky Mount, go to Ferrum, turn left on Fieldcrest Road just before passing the Minute Market, bear left at railroad crossing, then take Ingramville Road approximately three miles, turn left on Republican Church Road, church one mile on the left.

Isaiah 4:2.

In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 2007

Mary Hawkins, NC 5.00
Peggy Phillips, VA 10.00
Eld. Richard Campbell, TN .. 100.00
Dora Vick, NC 5.00
George Hyslip, TN 15.00
L. C. Hornsby, GA 5.00
Nellie Dalton, VA 5.00
Francis Knight, VA 5.00
Ruth Surratt, NC 5.00

OBITUARIES

BROTHER FLOYD
THOMAS OAKLEY

Brother Oakley was born Nov. 20, 1903 and departed this life on Dec. 26, 2006 at the age of 103 years. He was a member of Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church at Fordyce, Ark.

He is survived by a son Rayburn Oakley Fordyce, Ar; two daughters Sarah Stankevitz, Little Rock, Ar. And Reba Jones, Soughhaven, Ms.; brother Dillard Oakley, Pine Bluff, Ar., and brother Clyde Oakley, Little Rock, Ar., four grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, one step-great-grandchild.

Preceded in death by his wife Thelma Clay Scoggins Oakley, father, Thomas Ruffin Oakley and mother Harriett Leona Bryant Oakley.

Brother Oakley was laid to rest at McDonald Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection. The funeral services were conducted by the writer.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." (Psalms 116:15)

Brother Oakley's favorite song was no. 16 in the Lloyd's hymn book. The theme of this song is No matter how many trials and tribulations you are faced with in this life, the grace of God will bring you through all of them. This song is often sung in his memory by the brethren of Pilgrim Rest Church.

Elder Woodrow W. Hudson, Jr.

BESSIE RILEY

Sister Bessie Riley, age 90, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, June 28, 2006. She was a retired employee of Burlington Industries.

On May 19, 1946, she was received into the fellowship of Durham Primitive Baptist Church. She loved the doctrine of salvation by grace, election and predestination and attended her meetings as long as she was able to drive. She was blessed with a humble and generous spirit and was faithful to help with needed maintenance expenses for our building.

Sister Riley and her husband, Olivus Riley, lovingly reared a large family. At her funeral some of her neighbors told of her kindness to them when they needed a friend.

Surviving her are: twin sister Essie W. Pendergraft; daughter Judith R. Fisher; four sons, Harold P. Riley, James T. Riley, Charles R. Riley and Kenneth S. Riley; 23 grandchildren and 40 great grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Olivus Riley; her mother, Sister Roxie Stone, who was also a member of the Durham Primitive Baptist Church; two sons, Bernice Daniel Riley and Olivus Bobby Riley.

Funeral services were held at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 1, 2006, in the Clements Funeral Chapel in Durham, NC, followed by interment in Maplewood Cemetery when I think of Sister Bessie, I am reminded of the scripture in Malachi 3: 16- 17, ***"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name."*** And they shall be mine saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. " We truly feel that Sister Riley was-and is-one of these jewels.

Durham Primitive Baptist Church,
Catherine M. Humbarger, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

Approach, my soul, the mercy seat,
Where Jesus answers prayer;
There humbly fall before his feet,
For none can perish there.

Thy promise is my only plea;
With this I venture nigh:
Thou callest burdened souls to thee,
And such, O Lord, am I.

Bowed down beneath a load of sin;
By Satan sorely pressed;
By wars without fears within,
I come to thee for rest.

Be thou my shield and hiding place,
That, sheltered near thy side,
I may my fierce accuser face,
And tell him, Jesus died.

O wondrous love! to bleed and die,
To bear the cross and shame,
That guilty sinners, such as I,
Might plead thy gracious name.

"Poor, tempest-tossed soul, be still;
My promised grace receive;
'Tis Jesus speaks! I must, I will,
I can, I do believe.

Newton.

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EDITORIAL

"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN IS LIKE APPLES OF GOLD IN PICTURES OF SILVER."
Proverbs 25:11

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

O how beautiful a picture we see when a minister is blessed to preach the gospel and it so wonderfully fits our experience and our feelings at that time. It is a word fitly spoken. A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver. We see the fruit of the Spirit manifested in the person that stands before us. We don't see the frailties and faults of the earthly man; but, rather we see the beauty of the Lord as it shines forth in the word fitly spoken. Proverbs 12:25 reads, ***"Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it to stoop: but a good word maketh it glad." Proverbs 14:23*** continues, ***"A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!"*** Only the Lord could present such a beautiful picture of His love, mercy and grace and bless us to behold it. May His name be praised above every name.

Whenever one is blessed to set forth Christ, it is a word fitly spoken to someone. For that heavenly manna is never wasted and is never sent in vain. Isaiah 55:11 reads: ***"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."*** It is food for someone's hungry soul. A word fitly spoken is both comforting and edifying to the one that the Lord has brought hungering and thirsting after His righteousness. To hear one tell of the suffering, the humiliation, the shame, the death, the burial and the resurrection of Christ touches our heart and brings tears to our eyes. For we ***"look unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set***

down at the right hand of the throne of God." He was ***"despised and rejected of men" and was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." O, our sufferings and sorrows are nothing compared to His. But, He has promised His little ones tribulations as well as His peace; for in John 16:33, He said "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."*** A word fitly spoken. In our cast-down condition and feeling so alone and forsaken, we hear of the love, mercy, and grace of our heavenly friend and feel the warmth of the word in our heart. A word fitly spoken. The comforting and edifying word may be from a gospel sermon or from one of our precious brethren.

As the Lord told Moses when He sent him to the children of Israel when they were in Egypt after the death of Joseph, ***"I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows."*** The Lord knows your condition; He has heard your cry; He knows where you are; He knows just what you need; and He shall supply all your need. For the Apostle Paul wrote in Philippians 4:19, ***"But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."*** All your need is Christ. A word fitly spoken.

A word fitly spoken sets forth that salvation is by grace and not of works lest any man should boast. This is the pure word of God that fits your experience and understanding. A word fitly spoken is the truth as it is in Christ; for Christ said, ***"I am the way, the truth, and the life."*** A word fitly spoken is praise unto God, the giver of every good and every perfect gift.

By a word fitly spoken, we know that one has been sent by God because we behold the apples of gold. Christ said in Matthew 7:17-20: ***"Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."*** Apples are plural, but it is one particular fruit. It sets forth the fruit of the Spirit. Galatians 5:22-23 reads, ***"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." "The fruit of the Spirit"*** is in the singular, meaning that there is only one fruit, but several manifestations. Gold sets forth that the fruit is righteous, holy and very precious. It is of the Spirit which is

Christ in you, the Hope of glory. The Spirit of God produces the fruit in all its manifestations. Gold is always tried by fire; so, with the fruit of the Spirit comes tribulations, and the apples of gold shine forth ever brighter. The more gold is tried, the brighter it shines. Recorded in Zechariah 13:9 are the words, ***"And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God."*** I Peter 4:12-13 reads: ***"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."*** When one is blessed with a word fitly spoken, we behold the love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance manifested. We see the beauty of holiness shine forth and the image of Christ presented to our view.

These apples of gold are in pictures of silver. The pictures of silver are these earthen vessels from which the apples are manifested and framed. The spiritual man dwells within this body of flesh as the kingdom of God is within you where Christ reigns as King of kings. Silver is refined in the fining pot to strip the dross away, but gold is tried in the fiery furnace of affliction. Proverbs 17:3 reads: ***"The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the Lord tried the hearts." Proverbs 25:4 says: "Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer."*** The fleshly or natural man is beset with the dross of this world: the lust of the flesh, the following after the vain and perishable things of the world, the love of the things of the world that satisfies the flesh. The fleshly man is weak; and unless kept by the power of God in His love and mercy, will do anything that those of the world will do. But, thanks be unto our heavenly Father who quickened you and made you alive in Christ who is your life. As the Apostle Paul says in Ephesians 2:1-3: ***"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."***

Also, when Christ speaks directly to your heart a word of comfort and peace, it is a word fitly spo-

ken and the apples of gold (fruit of the Spirit) are produced. You feel such love for Him and His people, you are given faith to believe in Him, feel such joy and peace unspeakable, and brought down in humbleness. You cannot see the beauty of the apples of gold in pictures of silver in yourself, but others can. As the beautiful bloom of the lily, your head is bowed toward the blackness of the earth from which your flesh came. You don't feel worthy to even lift up your eyes unto heaven. But, praise to God from whom all blessings flow seems to fill all of your being.

May the love of God that is shed abroad in the hearts of His people continue to bind us together as one in Christ is my prayer.

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

ROMANS CH. 8:1-3.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.

CORRESPONDENCE

Feb. 10. 2007

Dear Elder Terry,

How wonderful it is to be writing to you today. Please renew my subscription to the "Signs of the Times" for two years. It has been such a blessing to receive my copies. And at the same time very strange, as I had not signed up for the "Times" myself, but received it as a gift subscription from someone whom I don't know.

As no one has stepped forward after asking several members, I would love to thank my benefactor for they have given me many hours of comfort, sometimes in my hour of need.

May the Lord continue to bless you and the other writers and contributors to the "Signs" and may it continue to give comfort to *"His little ones"* is my prayer.

Humbly submitted.
Kathy Lewis,
Grayson, Ky.

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1 JOHN CH. 5:1

Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.

ARTICLES

JONAH'S GOOD INTENTIONS

Some time ago, it came on my mind to explore the travels of Jonah, and his natural born good intentions. These thoughts reflect my look at Jonah, and his encounter with God's infallible will.

We find here that the power of the flesh versus the power of this most sovereign God, that God is steady and does not falter, regardless of our willfulness. While it feels that Jonah was very sincere in his fleshly thinking, the end result shows that God not only was really directing Jonah's journey, but seeing this journey through to the destination.

Jonah would have very much liked to have succeeded in going to Jopa and purchasing a ticket to Tarsus, fleeing from the presence of the Lord. Jonah seemed to show nothing but single minded intentions as he boarded the ship for his chosen destination.

The beautifully mysterious change of transportation that Jonah was to encounter, was shared in a matter of fact way, even in the equally dramatic storm upon the sea that was to sink the ship he was using to flee God. The irony of images, that he should be sleeping deeply in the belly of the ship escapes us somewhat as well. The story continues though.

When the ship's master awakened Jonah and asked him, ***"what meanest though oh sleeper. Arise, and call upon thy God"***, the ship's crew and mariners were already terribly afraid the ship would sink, drowning them all. This fear brought Jonah to think more deeply about why the storm had overtaken the ship.

After casting lots, and the lot falling upon Jonah, he was pressed as to what caused this evil to come upon them, and what was his occupation, and where he came from and finally who his people were.

Jonah answered by telling them he was a Hebrew, and feared the Lord God of heaven, he who made the Heaven and Sea. This magnified the fear among the others on the ship greatly. They then asked why he had done this.

Jonah shared his mission, and told them to take him topside and cast him overboard, and the sea would become calm. It seems Jonah was in so much misery, that he welcomed death at this point, thinking that being cast overboard would further this reprieve quickly.

Jonah even at this point was very much using his willfulness, soon to be cast into one of the great mysteries of Christian faith. That a whale would swallow Jonah and carry him towards God's *intended* destination holds so many meanings.

Jonah was destined to create the symbol of Grace for all Christian-

ity, using the belly of the whale as an image. Eventually through Jonah's experiences he would be hinting the mysteries of the free pardon of sin, and the great salvation which is the deliverance of God's goodness in the hearts of the believing family at God's discretion according to His precious will.

The understanding that came to his mind concerning the imperfections of the flesh were telling: ***"By reasons of my afflictions, I say that I vow that salvation is of the Lord".*** After three days and nights in the belly of the whale, Jonah was cast upon dry land to fulfill the will of the Lord, a journey which the Lord had prepared for him.

"Now the Lord told Jonah to go to that great city of Nineveh and preach what I bode thee to preach". The Lord wasn't finished with Jonah.

Jonah was learning fully, lessons of God's great sovereignty, and another lesson was unfolded. Jonah expected great things to happen in Nineveh after such a dramatic lesson. These things did not occur and Jonah's suffering increased even more. Jonah welcomed death. Even still, the Lord was not finished with Jonah. Eventually Jonah would come to realize fully, the weakness of our flesh.

More importantly, Jonah would come to understand God's sovereignty is complete, and that our flesh is helpless to be a partaker in these heavenly events. The nature of Grace was being expressed through Jonah.

At God's appointed time, and not before, we find that now the population of Nineveh had repented of their sins through the channels of God's Grace. This was beyond Jonah's understanding in his fleshly mind. This was true in Jonah's time and example, as it is today.

Those called to preach today are called by the same God that directed Jonah's journey. He is the same God, a God that changes not. Those who have been called from the darkness of nature and qualified through the channels of God's Grace to preach the incredible riches of the Kingdom, would have a great love for Jonah it would seem.

They who have labored in the Gospel field through God's calling, many times have found themselves in the wildness of confusion when preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom. Paul clarified this experience: ***"Not I but sin that dwells in the flesh"*** Paul too, would take Jonah's journey.

Paul could not make the above statement before he saw that great light that shines in the darkness and the darkness comprehends it not. Paul's Jonah-like journey to Damascus, gave the moment when he was brought from the darkness of nature, through the channels of God's amazing Grace.

Brought from the pits of darkness and made to see through an

eye of faith forever more walking in that heavenly light, Paul was made a vessel of God's mercy on his journey. Previously Paul was completely dead to the knowledge of the great love which is hidden in Christ. A love revealed to Christ's servants at His appointed time, was made more pertinent in Paul's experience it seems, as would be expressed in the volumes of travels and letters that followed.

It seems all preachers find themselves helpless fleshly when it comes to preaching the Gospel of the kingdom. Again as Paul would say: I never learned of man or taught of man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. This is as true for the preaching brethren today as it was then I think. Those imprisoned of God's calling to preach the Gospel, relive first Jonah's then Paul's journeys.

Primitive Baptists are among the few who advocate a truly sovereign God and predestination of all things pertaining to the great salvation that is meted out through God's sovereign grace at His appointed time. God's intercession in Jonah's then Paul's journeys are not words, or ideas, but the testimony of God's infallible will, and the foundation for our faithful existence.

This reliance on God's grace rather than the flesh to give this great salvation we know comes through the goodness of the Lord by his sovereign Grace, and nothing more. While our fleshly journeys are often convoluted and confused, this understanding of God's grace and intercession on our behalf is indeed the hope of those quiet moments we are led to assemble in God's house of faith. For those led to believe, indeed it feels as if we begin with Jonah, and continue with Paul as we gather to feast in the bond of God's great love and made to nourish ourselves on rations from the Master's table. The beautiful irony that God leads us to feast, is the blessed journey of Jonah, Paul, our brethren, and we the believers ourselves. If not deceived, in the bonds of His precious Love.

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When Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit their eyes were opened and they knew that they were naked and sinned against the Lord. ***"We have all sinned and come short of the glory of the Lord."***

When they sewed fig leaves together this is a type of the righteousness of man. ***"Our righteousness are as filthy rags in the sight of the Lord."***
"Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them."(Gen. 3:21) As we think of the coats of skins, we think of the sacrifice of

Christ. *"God was in Christ, reconciling the world (all the Children of God) unto himself-" (2 Cor. 5:19)*

"I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decked himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorned herself with jewels." (Isaiah 61:10) God clothed His people.

The commentary in my Bible says: *"The word Skins presupposes the death of an animal and therefore the idea of blood sacrifice is clearly implied." "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." (Heb. 9:12)*

All the sacrifices mentions in the old testament are a type of Jesus Christ who satisfied Divine Justice.

W.W. Hudson, Jr.

Colossians Ch. 1 V.16

For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principilities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him.

VOICES OF THE PAST

Lord, my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name, for his loving-kindness endureth forever. O, what a fountain of joy and bliss for the poor in spirit! Here they may feast upon the rich bounties of his unwasting fulness, and drink of the streams that make glad the city of our God. It matters not how unworthy we feel to be, how dejected and deserted, how intolerable our anguish of soul, the love of God spread abroad in the heart is a solace for every fear, a balm for every wound, completely alleviating all doubts and fears, and we are made to rejoice in the hope of the glory of God; and, if necessary, to also glory in tribulation. We should also remember that this love, like its author, never changes, but is ever the same through all the perplexing difficulties of this tempestuous life. When we can feel its genial rays, beaming-forth in all the warmth of God's love to poor, erring and sinful mortals, it thrills our bosoms with emotions of praise, and with wondrous admiration we exclaim, ***"Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!"*** Having received of his divine fulness, the notes of solemn praise are sounded forth with deep emotions of gratitude from a heart filled with the love of God. It was from his undiminished fulness that the

Apostle Paul was enabled to say, *"By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace, which was bestowed upon me was not in vain."*

The child of God feels the great need of his glorious presence to support and sustain him, amid foes and fears, trials and disappointments, anguish of soul and distress of mind. It is he, and he only, that conducts us safely through the otherwise insurmountable difficulties that obstruct the uneven journey of our pilgrimage state, turning-darkness into day, making the rough places smooth by extending peace to us like a river, and thereby causing the well-springs of gladness to break forth from our inmost soul. From this glorious fountain all our needs are supplied, for it is of his fulness we have all received, and grace for grace. And O, with what anxiety the poor, thirsty, fainting pilgrim looks to him, from whom proceeds all blessings, for every good and perfect gift, trusting in him that he will lead him forth by the right way, to a city of habitation. Shall we not then sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving and declare his works with rejoicing, for he turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into water-springs, and there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that he may bring them out of all their troubles. He is a present help in time of tribulation, succoring them that are tempted, upholding the weak and encouraging the doubting.

"How binding the obligation that calls forth the deepest emotions of thanksgiving to God from those who have been blessed with the privilege of beholding untold joys from his presence. Often the child of God inquires with deep solicitude, Do I feel thankful to him for his blessings so freely bestowed upon me? Do I render unto him, in return for his mercies, that praise and adoration that I should?" It is the love of God that leads us in obedience to him, and his ways are ways of pleasantness and all his paths are peace, and a halo of light from his blessed presence attends the discharge of every duty, there by making his yoke easy and his burden light. It is in the mighty power of God that we desire to put our trust, feeling confident that he will hold only that which shall redound to his honor and glory.

"With the ability that the Lord is pleased to bestow, on us, we hope to be able to make the Monitor a welcome visitor to the household of faith, as it goes forth laden with the rich fruits of gospel truth from the many able contributors to its columns. We only ask that it be received so far as it is sustained by the Scriptures of divine truth. It is our desire that all who feel interested in the success of the MONITOR, will send in their contributions for its columns, and otherwise assist in making it a

success; and may the Lord bless it to the good of his people, according to his will."

E.J. Harris

Article from Primitive Monitor
By E. J. Harris

GUTHRIE, OKLA. Ter., May 18, 1903.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SON: — I send you the experience of brother W. S. Speer, written at my request. I would be pleased to see it published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES if it meets with your approbation. I love to read of the Lord's dealings with his people. It was said to one of old, Go home to thy friends and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for thee.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
ELIZABETH HUTCHISON.

THE EXPERIENCE.

SISTER:-Your request reading: ***"I desire your experience, written for publication in the SIGNS," is an incentive to "Great searchings of heart,". Judges v. 16,*** and I try to comply, with mixed emotions of gladness, fear and trembling, and awful reverence for God, whose I am, and who put into the heart of one of his children the desire to know something of his dealings with me. I use these words, for it has been given me at times to view my history in that light not at all times, for clouds of sin and ***"conscience of guilt"*** have often darkened the heavenly vision, and made me to wonder could the divine mercy reach my case. Then unspeakable agony would grievously torment my soul. I have always thought that the hardest thing in Scripture to believe is that God sent his Son down from heaven to save sinners; to fetch home again his banished; that his banished be not expelled from him, (2 Sam. xiv. 13, 14.; Gen. iii. 23, 24,) the more especially if they are or were as great sinners as the record in my conscience reports of me. The Bible is and always has been easy of belief with me, the story of creation, of the flood, of Sodom and Gomorrah, the Exodus, the Jews and the history of Jesus our Lord, all is easy reading until I come to his laying down his life and taking it again to save ungodly sinners, unspeakably vile as I know mankind to be. Well, yes, it may be so, I assent, the Scripture says *it* is that way; perhaps he wanted to save people not for what they are as worth saving, but for the educational possibilities in them as vessels of mercy. Yes, I could follow that far, but there came a time when discussions of the extent of the atonement, and of the mercy of God, ceased to charm me in sermon, book or sweet conversation, and a new question startled me, Was I embraced in the plan of salvation? Did Christ love me and give himself for me? That was

Paul's limitation of the atonement. The audacity of the man's faith, as I thought of it, and spoke of it. There was another me that I was carrying about with me. This me, to me the most important me in all the world and the most hateful, for in me there was no good thing, not one, only sin. I saw no door of hope, no way of escape for this me, nor from this me. It would exhaust the plan of salvation to save me. Anybody else might in mercy be reached, but mine was an outside case. But this train of reflection was not so appalling when I was young, a lad, a youth, for in those bright, halcyon days I was taught and believed unquestioningly that sincere people could join the church by complying with certain conditions that entitled them to claim the promise. *"Do your part and God will do his,"* was the formula. I accepted the contract when I was nearly seventeen years old, and tried to believe I had the remission of my past sins. There was something akin to comfort in that frame of mind, but what the readers of this experience understand by "the joy of salvation," *"joy unspeakable and full of glory,"* I had no conception until forty-seven years later, when it pleased God to show me his salvation, (there is but one,) and call me by his grace out of marvelous darkness into his marvelous light. For which I hope to thank and praise him ten thousand years from now.

As I was saying, the time came after forty years wandering in the wilderness of theological controversy and confusion, when I saw there was no salvation for me in the plans expounded from the various pulpits, and presses of the times. I felt that I was lost, had sinned beyond possibility of forgiveness. I had no doubt of it, so I told Elders and brethren and sisters in Tennessee and Georgia, and finally in despair one night in Columbus, Ga., I prayed to God to relieve me or kill me, for I was utterly unworthy to live longer in this world. I felt to be the worst and most inexcusable sinner that did ever live. Mine was the misery of remorse, and the goadings and stings and tauntings of a wounded spirit. I had sinned against light and knowledge, not merely the sin of nature, that our preachers speak of as inherited from Adam, but sure enough sins, for I had broken the commandments again and again, and so I said to God, always adding, *"Is there not one crumb left for me on thy table, or under it?"* I had in other years often made and prayed fashionable prayers, but in these four dismal years of trouble and woe and sorrow I had to pray a prayer borrowed from a despised publican, who stood afar off, and would not lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, *"God, be merciful to me, a sinner."*

I do not know what you will think of me sister, there comes times when that same prayer wells up in my heart, bubbles from my lips and

streams from my eyes. Yet tears of contrition, but not of despair, fill my eyes as I write.

To begin at the beginning, I was born of wealthy parentage, grew up proud and wayward, went to school ten or twelve years, was in two colleges, joined a new church in my seventeenth year, (there have been seven new churches come in since my arrival,) and was ordained to preach the doctrine of the new church when I was turned twenty-one, and preached it twenty-five years. Then I studied, and I may say became proficient in a church newer by eight years, and preached its doctrines fourteen years, when it pleased God that I should see that there was no salvation for me in either of these splendid organizations. Then the darkness of Egypt fell upon me. I knew that I was a doomed and dammed man *"without hope and without God in the world."* I then undertook a review of all current theologies, designing to pick out the good, the beautiful and true in each, and construct a composite theology, a mosaic system, that would wash. I went deep into the mines of comparative theology, and found wood, hay, and stubble in abundance, but of gold, silver and precious stones not a gem. Chaff and trash in plenty, but of the *"corn of heaven"* not a grain. Meantime my sins were crushing my poor soul with mountain weight. Whither should I fly for refuge? The Arminian cities of refuge I had thoroughly explored. There was no safety there for me, this me, the only me, of all the me's in the world, that I was especially concerned for, what is to become of me?

You asked for my experience, sister. I am not writing another's. My concern about myself came of certain events prearranged in the providence, and as I now have the happiness to think of them as the predestination of God, who works all things together for good to them that love him, and are the called according to his purpose in Christ Jesus, before the sun begin to shine, or ever the world was. In those dateless depths there was a book written containing the names of the future citizens of Messiah's kingdom and given to him and called most significantly *"the Lamb's book of life,"* because he, as a condition of his inheriting the headship over them, collectively called *"the city of God,"* must wash them from their sins in his own blood and purify them for himself a peculiar people, the word *"peculiar"* meaning a purchased possession. Happy are they whose names were, written in that book. Whatever may betide them in "this time world," as brethren speak, they shall never perish. Alleluia and Amen, world without end, they shall never perish! O, in those dark days of my trouble of which I have told you, my dread and fear and horror was that I should, without doubt perish forever.

My father and mother of God's own choosing, joined the Old Bap-

tist church the Sunday I was just six weeks old. When I was about four years I heard my first sermon; it was preached by Elder Russian, at old Mars Hill Church, in Williamson Co., Tenn. I sat by mother and was very happy. I do not remember a word he said, but I have the pleasant picture of him on my heart, and I caught his delightful solemn tone of voice, and when a little older in that same tone used to climb the dogwood trees and preach to the negroes as they were clearing new ground. One night there was a meeting at our house, and my blessed Old Baptist mother shouted, (she was about twenty-eight or thirty then) and you see that I have not forgotten that shouting. I might go back, if you can bear so tedious a narrative, and say that Dr. John M. Watson was our family physician, and was present the Sunday morning when I was born. When I was grown and preaching the most brilliant of the varieties of Arminianism, he told me that he had dandled me on his knees many a time. He was the greatest Old Baptist minister of his day. His last words were, *"I'm going in peace."* O, that God would give me to go that way! Me again. Yes, and you and all our brethren and sisters.

One morning when I was about ten years old I stood before my mother; she was sitting on the lower step of the stairway, and I told her that last night I dreamed of seeing the Savior. I had jumped off the hill back of our house and lit in an open plain, and there stood the Lord. With his right hand he smote me on the left cheek about as my mother might smite me when she was vexed, (though I remember nothing of that sort from her) and then said, *"Now, Sheppard, be a better boy."* Mother turned pale and went up stairs, I now think to weep and pray and rejoice at the visitation of her Lord to her boy, who, she told one of her lady visitors, she thought *"would be a mighty good man, or a mighty bad one."* The Lord appeared to me in that dream. I shall know him when I see him again. His tall figure, his kingly, benevolent, concerned look as he said those words to me, will never fade from memory. When in my trouble I related this part of my experience to a company of Old Baptist preachers, in Butler, Ga., Elder Respess said, *"Brethren the Lord has been working with this man from his childhood."* When I related it in Elder Veach's house he said, "That is when you were quickened into life."

"Now, Sheppard, be a better boy." That was my authoritative conviction of sin, to be followed by conviction of rightousness, and then of judgment. But I did not become a better boy. I was a bad boy; conscience smote me day and night. *"Conscience of sin"* followed Sheppard, always at his heels, giving him no rest except such as Arminian opiates afford, and they, you know, only make the case worse, as our Savior pointed out in the case

of *a* certain woman who spent her all paying physicians, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse. There is only one physician for a sin-sick soul, and by his knowledge he justifies and cures, "for he bears their iniquities."

"Now Sheppard, be a better boy," have been ringing in the chambers of my soul through my pilgrimage, over three oceans, in foreign lands, on the Rocky Mountains, and I hope in company with mother to thank the Redeemer for that first visitation.

The next time I saw him, the same Jesus, was in vision 9 o'clock Tuesday morning, Sept. 28th, 1886, in an upper room in a young banker's house, Fort Valley, Ga. There deploring my woeful condition, reading Romans six, a chapter or two in Galatians and Philippians, all of a sudden, in the twinkling of an eye, from feeling that I was the greatest sinner in the world, I was made to feel that I was no sinner at all. Christ whom I saw in the vision, the scene was as plain as was the original reality. He was there dead on his cross, having borne all my sins away 1789 years before I was born. From being the most miserable of all born of woman, I was given to feel the happiest man that ever lived. That very hour, as many a time since, I called on the angels to help me praise God for sending his Son to save sinners. I wanted to fill the vaulted dome of the eternal mansions with hallelujahs. At last my burden was gone, and conscience was free from guilt. Christ had died for me, I saw him there that hour seeming to hold himself on the cross. You know he had to lay down his life. ***"No man taketh it from me. I lay it down of myself."*** All that scene is as plain to me now as it was that Tuesday, 28th of September, 1886, seventeen years ago. But it was with me as in the call of the chief of sinners on his way to Damascus; there was a light above the brightness of the sun laid down upon the bright light of that morning, and it was all over the face of the world eight hours, whichever way I looked. Whether that light was in the body or out of the body, I have never felt to inquire; one thing I do know, that light *was* there, a soft, benevolent, heavenly, restful light, and it was spread over a vast plane. On that plane there was nothing to break the level seemingly ninety miles in its sweep, saving the projection of a large rock, mostly buried in the ground, like the church I was destined to join, most of its members in the dust of the earth, waiting for the ***"better resurrection."*** Only a small portion of this church visible now. And I was to live alone on his wide plane. So it has so far turned out, only now and then finding rest in ***"the shadow of the great Rock in a weary land."*** I have not known how otherwise to interpret this part of the vision. O, I was so glad that day, so happy, so full of joy, words fail me to describe it to you.

Next thing in order I knew I must be baptized by somebody that knew how it was done, and what for. I had, as I thought, been baptized already not once nor twice before. There must be no mistake about the matter this time. The oldest church without a historical founder was the Old Baptist; they were the humblest of religious folk; they were sweethearted, no big I's nor little u's among them. I was on all sides decended of Old Baptist stock. I always venerated the Old Baptist church and people. The next spring after the marvelous light into which I was delivered, out of the marvelous darkness, at Fort Valley, as above narrated, I went before the tribunal of God at Butler, Ga., was received and baptized by order of the church, by Elder John Rowe, lately deceased, and I was again as happy as a soul overwhelmed with the love of God could be. O, I was so happy. Soon after this I had to endure the trial of permitting a brother to wash my feet in church: I submitted with what grace I could, but when I got down on my knees to wash his feet, I was in heavenly places in Christ then; I felt like a big lump of nothing. When you want to get close to God, sister, you must descend the depths of humility, as indeed you had to go when you joined the Old Baptist church. Whatever you may think of them, there is no people like them on the face of the earth. They are the only people I know of that believe their own religion. They worship in spirit, and live by the faith of the Son of God, who loves them now, and loved them before all time, and to the ages of the ages. The Spirit of God in their hearts enables them low at his feet to lay hold of the robe of the eternal Majesty, look up into his face, and with the feeling of little children cry, *"Abba, Father,"* confident that he knows what they want. Their only fear is that they do not behave themselves as prettily as his children ought. What a joy it is to me to be one in the unity of the Spirit with them; to be recognized by even one of them.

This poor relation of my sweet experience admits of a word of comment. I submit to your judgment whether the history of it from *"Now Sheppard, be a better boy,"* to the vision of the Redeemer on his cross, and the great light laid down above the brightness of that bright Tuesday's scene, and the inward feeling of peace and joy, was not the work of the divine Spirit. What but the holy Spirit's power could possibly make a sinner knowing himself vile and guilty feel that he was no sinner at all, Christ having suffered for him the just for the unjust, and this relief coming on him not gradually, not by a course of reasoning, but suddenly and abiding to comfort him with hope as one of the heirs of salvation? O, it must have been the operation of God, I was a saved man saved, yes that is the word. I know my unworthiness before and since, but am afraid to lay anything

to the charge of God's elect. See Romans viii. 32-39. O, let me rejoice in hope of the grace to be brought to his people at the coming of the Lord in that day.

In another dream or vision, glorious beyond words to tell, I saw for the third time the Lord, the same that appeared to me at first, on the Mount Zion, surrounded by thousands of thousands of his saints, in white robes, and golden girdles, and he was placing diadems upon their heads, with a word of welcome to each one, Thus in my case the holy Spirit, may I not believe,convinced me of sin, *"Now, Sheppard, be a better boy,"* then of righteousness, Jesus by his death having fulfilled the righteousness of the law in my stead, and then of judgment when he received and crowned his purchased ones with the immortal life? Yea, let me believe and cherish all this; I can, I do, and fall at his feet a sinner saved by grace, amen and amen.

I feel thankful to our heavenly Father that I am enabled to give, to one of his daughters this account of his mercies to me. If you find it in your heart to recognize me in fellowship, after what you have seen of my awkwardness in church and in this letter, I shall feel strengthened and more joyful in this pilgrimage.

Yours in hope of a better life,
WM. S. SPEER.

BENTON, Ark., June 8, 1903.

1 PETER V. 7.

"CASTING all your care upon him, for he careth for you."

(The children of God often find themselves utterly at a loss to understand or comprehend the ways of divine providence and grace, and can only say as one of old, His ways are past finding out. It is he himself that teaches that he ruleth in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? They confess this, and at times are thankful it is so, for is there not comfort and security in such a doctrine. In it we see that not a dog can move his tongue, or a devil either, unless it be subject to the will and purpose of him that worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Men are also subject to him, even the rulers of this world, for when Pilate said to Jesus, *"Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above."* He is before all things and by him all things consist. An understanding of such a doctrine, imparted to us by God himself, is of great comfort to the soul, but few are able to travel long in the path of life, reconciled, with a calm and thankful heart, from every murmur free. God has or-

dained a furnace of affliction, and if he gives faith that believes that he who has promised is able to perform, he will try that faith; and just so, when we, as we hope, by his Spirit, have been taught to trust in his name and to rejoice in the truth that not a single shaft can hit, until he, the God of love, sees fit, we find the question asked, Do you believe God had anything to do with the sinking of that vessel, or the burning of that family and home? How has God anything, to do with the sickness of this man, or with the death of his wife at such time as this, when he needed her so much Thus we ask ourselves many questions, and are asked many such questions by others, and often such questions, when asked in the face of terrible trials, and what men call accidents, are almost staggering, especially if we are ourselves affected by the trial. If a terrible bereavement comes upon us we find it not so easy to live the doctrine, yet Job, sorely afflicted, did, when be said, *"Though be slay me, yet will I trust in him."*- Job xiii. 15. He has said, *"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father. ***Fear ye not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows."* Again, he saith, *"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed as one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith!"* It is the trial of faith that will show to us how little faith we have, and how little we truly believe the doctrine to which we have subscribed. There is not one of us but has his, or her, trials; some hard to be borne, and we do well to consider that *"Whatever cross lies at thy door, It cometh from the Lord."*

It is a crook of the Lord's making, and so long as he sees fit for it to be, none can straighten it. It may be to bring down our pride, to hide pride from man, or to show us wherein our strength lies, or to make us of comfort to the Saints, or to prove to men and devils, as in the case of Job, that our religion is not a fair weather religion, but that it can stand fire and flood; and in all these trials, and many others too numerous to mention, the presence of Christ is seen, as he was in the furnace of old, thereby proving that he careth for us. In all the ages the Lord has proven his care for his people in the furnace of affliction; such a way is needful or it would not be. He riled up a wicked Pharaoh who knew not Joseph, and he set over Israel taskmasters, to afflict Israel with burdens, but the more they were afflicted the more they multiplied and grew. The Egyptians made their lives bitter with hard bondage, yet the Lord

still cared for them. Moses was born, and was hidden three months by his mother, who feared not the wrath of the king, and when she could no longer hide him she took for him an ark of bulrushes and laid it in the flags by the river's brink, the very river where the wicked Pharaoh had commanded them to drown their sons, yet God cared for him there. He was taken by Pharaoh's daughter and nursed by his own mother in the house of Pharaoh, the very man who wished to destroy all the male children of Hebrew origin. From this we can take this lesson: that the church of God nurses her children in the furnace of affliction. They are strengthened in the doctrine; the more they are afflicted the more they are trained up in the nurture and admonitions of the Lord. In the word of God there are many instances that seem just happen so, mere chance, yet when we trace the chain of circumstances connected with the particular case we find a wonder-working Providence governing all things: as, for instance, the Syrians had gone out by companies and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid. Who can describe the terror and abject loneliness of that little maid? Think of the parents, her mother, if mother she had, wringing her hands, sighing and pining for her little daughter. Many would there be in Israel then who would say, Tell us, did the Lord have anything to do with that. Thank God there were some then, and doubly thankful we ought to be, there are some now, who unhesitatingly would declare, It is the Lord. Some who by faith could see the companies of Syria going, just so far and doing just whatsoever God's hand and God's counsel determined before to be done. The child must leave the arms of the parents, most go into a strange and foreign land, and must go into Naaman's house. God cared for that little captive maid; he had a purpose. In Naaman's house she witnesses to the truth, and her testimony was for one whom God cared for, though in God's purpose he was held by a more relentless foe than even the captive maid. He was none other than Naaman, the captain of the host, but he was a leper. Yes, he cared for Naaman. He cared for Saul of Tarsus, even while he went about breathing threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord. Saul did not understand, he had no eye to see, the Lord using his persecution for the furtherance of the gospel. It is written, ***"As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and hailing men and women, committed them to prison."*** The following verse declares the result in the purpose of God. It says, ***"Therefore they that were scattered abroad, went everywhere preaching the word."*** Thus a persecuting Saul of Tarsus, in the purpose of God, did more then, than all the missionary boards can do today, although they claim to be on the Lord's side, for

there has never been a preacher of the word sent by man, anywhere. Why is it that Saul of Tarsus, Naaman and his companies, Pharaoh and his host, or the devil himself, can do nothing other than God's hand and his counsel determined before to be done? The simple reason is, *"He careth for you."* For God's dear saints there is a covenant, ordered in all things and sure, and in this covenant

"Jesus is engaged to save
The meanest of his sheep,
All that the heavenly Father gave
His hands securely keep.
Nor death, nor hell can e'er remove
His favorites from his breast."

They are loved with an everlasting love. God has predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. As this is his purpose he will care for us along the line that we must travel. I might predestinate my trunk to go from here to New York City by railroad. To bring that about, the track must be there, the sleepers in their place, the station, the signal boxes, the men, the engine, coal, steam, and all other requirements must be there or ever my trunk can safely be delivered to its destination. Thus we believe Pharaoh was in the purpose of God, foreordained to that very condemnation, as was the devil himself, and as were the companies of Syria, and if the word be true, that God has created the waster to destroy, and these wasters of Israel were in Israel's life of old, in the life of the captive maid, yes, and in the life of our blessed Lord, who shall say they will not be in our lives, Peter tells the scattered saints of old of a fiery trial that was to try them, and it is true today. God's dear scattered saints are a poor and afflicted people, having fiery trials; yet Peter by inspiration says, *"Casting all your care upon him, for be careth for you."* There comes before our mind one dear sister, over eighty years of age, whom we once saw lying on her couch under terrible distress. Trouble had come upon her in her advanced age and was crushing her to earth: we said, Why should these things be? Faith answered, "He careth for you."

"Blind unbelief is sure to err
And scan God's world in vain."
He is a very present help in time of trouble.

"The flame shall not hurt thee, I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine."

We have seen another, younger in years, afflicted in body so that she could hardly move a limb, given up by earthly physicians, having little to look forward to but death and that which is beyond, and to the honor

of his name we have seen that he careth for her. Is he not the helper of the helpess? We visited such a one one day, and while there she said, *"Sing Rock of Ages."* W e sang that and "Father, we'll rest in thy love," and we got in our car we heard the afflicted one singing by herself in the house, and all we could think of was, *"And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God."* Later we asked why she sang when we left her a few nights before, and the reply was, *"Because I was happy."* It is because *"he careth for you"* that the theme of Jesus and his love makes the captive's portion sweet. It is his care that made David say, *"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for , thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."* His care for Israel of old was wonderful. He brought them from under Pharaoh's yoke with a high hand and an outstretched arm and led them through the sea, gave them bread from heaven, water from the rock, a cloud by day and pillar of fire by night, their shoes did not wear out, nor their clothing decay, all because *"He careth for you,"* for were they not a type of Israel today? They rebelled and we rebel too. There is nothing that brings out the spirit of rebellion more than trouble. *"The trial of your faith."* It is easy to say, Thy will be done," but his will is a cross, and under the trial he sends we kick like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke. It is galling and so humiliating, especially if it affects our personal reputation, we feel ashamed to he seen among the brethren, we ask the reason why. Pride must be abased. He made himself of no reputation; we would be his, yea, be like him, but it is unpleasant to die daily, to take buffetings. Oh the strugglings and strivings we have to be freed from the yoke!

Paul prayed very regularly to be delivered from a thorn in the flesh, but his request was not granted, and there is not a doubt in our mind the reason for it was that *"He careth for you."* All these trials, crosses, losses, thorns and snares we must and shall endure in this life are for the lifting of Jesus on high. They are to show us, as we are exercised thereby, how base and vile, unworthy and helpless we are, and like Paul, we are taught of him to know that when we are weak, then are we strong, and we glory in our infirmities (that are made plain to us in the furnace) that the power of God might rest upon us. Thus his care is such towards us that we shall at last confess, as did Israel of old, that the Lord delivered us and that *"there failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass."- Joshua xxi. 45.*

Elder George Ruston

"He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true."-John iii. 33.

WE can only set to our seal that God is true in any one point of doctrine, experience, or precept when we feel an inward witness that God indeed has declared it. Thus, upon every manifestation of God's goodness to the soul, every application of Christ's blood to the conscience, and every revelation of God's distinguishing grace, it is only as we receive Christ's testimony, experience the inward approbation of it, and feel its sweetness and blessedness that we can set to our seal that God is true. This, we may be well assured, is the only way to know the power and reality of true religion. To understand the Scriptures, and enjoy a convincing testimony that God is our God, Christ our Saviour, the Holy Ghost our Teacher, heaven our eternal home, and that our soul is saved in the Lord Jesus Christ with an everlasting salvation.

And with what divine certainty can such a soul sometimes speak. Sometimes, indeed, we cannot believe anything; it seems as if there were nothing in God's word that we could set our seal to. All seems a mass of confusion, and our ignorance appears so great that we cannot set our seal to any vital truth. But when the blessed Spirit is pleased to testify of the things of God, and we, receiving the testimony of Jesus Christ, walk in the light of that testimony, then there is a holy certainty of and heavenly acquiescence with God's truth. This divine faith will bring us through all our trials and sorrows, and though we may be dragged through a very hell of temptation, yet shall we know God is true.

Here, then, is the grand trial of faith; first to receive Christ's testimony, and then to hang upon that testimony, in spite of all opposition from within and without, from feeling its weight, power, and sweetness.

Elder J.C. Philpot

ROMANS V. 21.

"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 2007

Edwin Dyer, VA 5.00
Polly & Frank Sizemore, WVA. 10.00
Phyllis Stroud, VA 5.00
Tim Barron, TX 5.00
Betty Nutter, MD 5.00

MEETINGS

ELDER J.B. FARMER COMING TO BIG MEADOWS

Elder J.B. Farmer of Grayson, Ky., the Lord willing, will be with us on the fifth Sunday in April.

Elder Farmer is also an associate editor of the Signs of the Times.

Big Meadows is located about 20 miles below Graham, N.C. Those traveling I-85 take the Pittsboro/Graham exit and go 17 miles toward Pittsboro. After crossing the Cane Creek Bridge take first road to right at top of hill – go 4 miles to a crossroad and turn left – go 1 mile then to church.

We invite all lovers of the Truth to come and be with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key
Sister JoAnn Self, Clerk

LOWER MAYO FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo Association fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday only, April 29th, 2007. We hope to start singing at 10:30 a.m. and preaching at 11:00. Russell Creek Church will host the meeting and it will be held in Russell Creek Meeting House.

The meeting house is located approximately 9 miles south of Stuart, Virginia near the Virginia, North Carolina border on Moorefield Store Road# 631.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in salvation by grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

PROCEEDINGS OF A PRESBYTERY

1. Presbytery was called together consisting of all ministers and deacons of our faith and order by Bordeaux Church, in Nashville, Tn. - Elder R. H. Campbell pastor.

2. Elder Campbell was chosen to serve as moderator and Elder W. G. Chapell was asked to serve as Clerk.

3. The candidate, Brother Tracy Jacks was called and Brother Hyslip was called as spokesman for the Church.

4. Elder Howard opened the presbytery with prayer.

5. The articles of faith were read and Elder Allen Terry questioned the candidate.

6. Members of the presbytery questioned the candidate and was satisfied as to his qualifications.

7. Elder Chapell was chosen to deliver ordination prayer as hands were layed on.

8. The presbytery was asked if they were satisfied with the work of the presbytery and they answered in the affirmative.

9. Elder Hale Terry was appointed to give charge to the candidate.

10. The presbytery was asked to give the right hand of fellowship to Bro. Jacks.

11. Brother Jacks was then given back to the church, an ordained deacon

12. The members of the church were then asked to extend the right hand of fellowship to Brother Jacks.

13. The minutes of the presbytery were read and accepted .

14. All members of the presbytery were asked to and signed the minutes.

15. The clerk was asked to write the certificate of credentials and have it signed by each member of the Presbytery before they left.

Elders Present:
Wm. Hale Terry
Alan Terry and James T. Howard
Richard Campbell
Wayman G. Chapell

Deacons Present:
Gladston Newman
Charles Fox
Kenneth Evans
Charles Moon
George Hyslip
Roy G. Howard
Richard Landeu
Wayne Barnes

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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POEM

KNEEL AND PRAY

At the close of the day, I kneel down to pray,
Repenting for all my sins,
But I know that tomorrow will bring me sorrow,
For I'll do them all over again.
I know that I shouldn't and really I wouldn't,
If sin wasn't planted in me.
If I am one selected, can be one corrected,
How gloriously happy I'd be.
I search every where with no place to spare,
My Lord and my master to find,
I search day and night, I'd know Him on sight,
For His countenance would so gloriously shine.
I know that His grace will shine in my face,
When He enters my heart with love,
I'll praise Him forever, He'll leave me no never,
When He gives me sweet rest from above!

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EDITORIAL

Elder R. H. Campbell

Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus, and called. Mercy unto you, and peace, and love be multiplied. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. (Jude 1:1-4)

At the time that the above scripture was written, it was within a very few years of the death of Christ, and one would think that the doctrine would not have been polluted by the personal opinions of man, and that there would be very little, or no opposition to the truth, as it was originally delivered unto the apostles; and yet here Jude is warning the brethren to beware of the false teachers that were already being made manifest among them. He is advising the apostles to give all diligence to remember the way and manner in which the truth was first made known unto them, and to follow in the footsteps and teachings of Jesus, for they were personal witnesses of his life, death, burial and resurrection, and that this is not a subject that is open to any private interpretation. Their calling must bear a true witness to the doctrine that they received from Jesus, while he was with them, and how these things were revealed unto them, as the way of truth, and how these things are made known unto the sons of men. They are revealed unto them by the Holy Ghost, and bear witness to the teachings of Jesus. Jude is addressing only those who have been sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and called. He is not preaching to

the world in general, nor is he endeavoring to persuade them to receive his personal opinions, but rather, that they earnestly contend for the faith that they have received. He is admonishing them, in all soberness and sincerity, in the same manner that the apostle Paul did unto Timothy, *(II Tim 2:15-16) "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness."* They are to especially beware of any strange new doctrine that may appear in their midst, and to cling fast to the faith as originally delivered to the saints. They are to give all diligence to continue in the way of truth, and the common salvation that they have received. Jude is aware of the old adage that when you once depart from the truth, as believed in the beginning, the further you go, the further from the truth you will get. It is as Jesus told his disciples, *(Luke 23:31) "For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry."* If the flesh begins to creep into the doctrine, especially at this early stage, it will destroy the church, for as Jesus said, *(Mark 3:24-25) "And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand."*

All things that were to be used in the service of the Lord, under the law, were to be sanctified, for a specific purpose, and were considered holy unto the Lord. It is in this sense that Jude refers to those to whom he is writing, as being sanctified by God the Father. Those things, under the law, were anointed with a holy oil, unto the service in the temple, but under the new covenant, which is a spiritual covenant, the saints are anointed with the Holy Ghost unto the service of God, and it is an eternal commitment unto the service in the temple. *(II Cor 1:21-22) "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."* Under the law, those things were anointed to serve in this time world only, but those whom God hath anointed with the Holy Ghost will serve, and worship, him here, and in the world to come.

This sanctification was determined, before the foundation of the world, and is an everlasting charge, and there was nothing that remains to be done later, to insure the completion of this work. It was done in the same manner that God made known his sanctification of Jeremiah. (*Jer 1:4-5) "Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth from the womb I sanctified thee, and I or-*

dained thee a prophet unto the nations." This same type of setting apart or sanctification is applied to all of the saints of God, and it is effective, although as it is recorded, Jeremiah said, he could not perform his work because he was just a child, but this did not change the calling that was required of him. God does not call the qualified, he qualifies the called, and the calling includes the God given ability to fulfill the calling. It was true that Jeremiah could not have done this in his own strength, but it is recorded *(Jer1:9-10) "Then the Lord put forth his hand and touched my mouth, and said, behold I have put my words in thy mouth. See, I have this day set thee over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, to build, and to plant."* Then Jeremiah could do nothing less than what was required of him, and therefore he did go forth and did prophecy unto the nations, as God instructed him. This same absolute is true in the sanctification of every child of God, and they too go forth and perform the work that God has decreed in their life.

In the above scripture, Jude refers to those to whom he is writing, as their being preserved in Christ Jesus, and this too, even as the sanctification, is the work of God the Father. There is nothing that is involved in the salvation of sinners that is not as absolute and certain as the work of God the Father, through Christ Jesus. Jesus said, in his prayer unto his Father just before his crucifixion, *(John 17:4) "I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."* And this was referring to the atonement for the sins of every heir of promise. Jesus came into the world to save sinners, and this he did, without the loss of one. *(John 6:37-39) "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no way cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."* There is nothing that is more certain and secure, than the salvation of the saints of God, because it is based, solely based, upon the promises which God had made to Abraham, and to his seed. It was not, in any way, contingent upon any other series of events or circumstances, than the fact that it was the Father's good pleasure to give unto them the kingdom. It is as Paul stated, very emphatically, *(Eph 1:3-5) "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having*

predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." I think, with these scriptures before us, we can say without hesitation, that if we have learned anything from our experiences, we are most assuredly blessed above anything that this world has to offer, and are indeed preserved in Christ Jesus, for time and eternity.

Jude is writing to a people who have been called, out of nature's darkness, into the marvelous light and liberty of the gospel, and this too is by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God the Father. The Apostle Paul's experience is a classic example of this heavenly calling, as he states, *(I Tim 1:12-13) "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; who was before a blasphemer, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief."* This is where all men are, in ignorance and unbelief, until they are called out of the world of trespasses and sin, and made aware of the spiritual realm which is all around them, they too are in ignorance and unbelief. They are born in this condition, from their mother's womb, because of the sin inherent in them, which was received from their federal head Adam, and they would have died in this state, but by the grace of God, which through faith, delivered them from the law of sin and death into the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

Man, as he is born into the world of nature is flesh, and as such he is not even aware of the spiritual realm; which is the one to which Jesus was referring when he said, my kingdom is not of this world, he was referring to the kingdom of heaven into which man can see only after he is born again. *(John 3:6) "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit."* And this calling, which they all must receive to worship God, is made manifest when they are born of the Spirit, as Jesus told Nicodemus, *(John 3:4) "Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven."* Since God is a Spirit, they that worship him must be spiritual also, to be reconciled to, and understand the ways of the Spirit, when man is born of the Spirit, he becomes a new creature in Christ, a new man as described by the apostle Paul, *(II Cor 5:17) "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation."* By grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God.

All of the above are characteris-

tics of the people to whom Jude is writing, and are blessings which God hath sovereignly bestowed upon them, and they are all things to which the creature could not attain of his own efforts, so, when one tells me that he accepted Christ, based on his own personal decision to become a Christian, then my thoughts are, that you are mistaken, for you do not show forth evidence of a spiritual work of grace in your heart, a work that has been performed on you, and not by you. It is, as Paul wrote, *(I Cor 2:14) "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."* This, to me, is saying that the man with the utmost intelligence, in the things of nature, cannot fathom the things of the Spirit, so then, how could they accept, or reject, things about which they have no personal knowledge or intelligent understanding.

Jude is exhibiting his holy calling, by his desire to remind his brethren, even as Peter did, that they give all diligence to remain constant in the faith, and share their mutual experiences and revelations with their brethren, not to teach them something that they did not already know, but to bring things that they already know to their remembrance again. Paul, in writing to the churches, told them to share their letters with other churches, because any correspondence, on the scriptures, is an open letter to all believers, even as the epistles written by Paul, by all of the other writers. In his epistle to the church at Ephesus, he began, *(Eph 1:1) "Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus."* To me, this means that the epistle is to the faithful in Christ Jesus, whether they live in Ephesus, Memphis, Nashville, Greensboro or anywhere else, and in all ages of time, whether then or now. "The faithful in Christ Jesus" I can remember, in my earlier years, that in my Mother's home I did not hesitate to pick up and read the letters written to her from other brethren, a thing that I would never have done with letters from my immediate family, without first asking my Mother. These things are precious to the saints, and their constant desire is to hear the experiences of others, or to share with others the experiences which they have had, for comparison, even though they may have never have met in the flesh. They are bonded together into a fellowship that will endure the trials and afflictions of their lifetime here on earth and culminate in that New Jerusalem, to which they all aspire.

This communication between brethren is surely in that pure language that Zephaniah referred to, which was given unto the saints that they may all call upon the Lord, to serve him with one consent. This is

not the common language that is spoken, or understood, by the world, because it requires a discerning spirit, and this is the gift of God, and only to those who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. It is a language which is not taught in any of the schools, or seminaries, of the world in which we live now. The people in Athens said, of the apostle Paul, what will this babbler say, because they could not begin to understand his message, because it was in this pure language which is not known by those who worship, the UNKNOWN GOD. This they freely admitted among themselves by their building an altar unto him.

Jude was referring to men, such as those in Athens, when he said, *(Jude vs 4) "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."* Paul said of the Athenians, *(Acts17:21) "For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or hear some new thing. (vs,32) And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and other said, we will hear thee again of this matter."* They were looking at it as an intellectual endeavor, with no spiritual connotation, or import. Jude said, virtually the same of those ungodly men of whom he was speaking, *(Jude vs 10) "But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as beast, in those things they corrupt themselves." And in (vs19) "These be those who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit."* Don't you see a lot of this in the religionists of today: they have so many schisms in the religious world, that you can see, is the results of man's wanting to develop a doctrine, that is compatible with the natural mind, and which they can support, and in reality, isn't this the same as the, UNKNOWN GOD, that the Athenians, and the men who Jude was writing about, who have crept into the church unawares, were doing.

May God, in the riches of his grace, deliver us from following after the idols of this world, but rather enable us to believe, and earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the Saints. It is still ridiculed by the world, as it was then, but isn't that what the apostle Paul wrote, *(II Tim 4:3-4) "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they will turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned into fables."* Sound familiar? Aren't you glad, that true doctrine is still as firm as it was in that day, that day

when the apostle Paul wrote one of the most precious scripture to be found in the bible, *(Eph 2:8-9) "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."*

There may be doctrines that come, and doctrines that go, but, the truth will stand forever, as it was in the day that it was first declared, *(II Tim 2:19) "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his."* And again, *(I Cor 3:11) "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."* This is the foundation upon which the faith of all of the children of God is based, and as stated above having the seal of the Lord, as its surety.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Sunday March 18, 2007

Dear Elder Terry,

Enclosed find a check for renewal of the Signs for 2 years plus the remainder for the fund.

Bill and I saw you at Rep. Church yesterday but did not get to speak to you. It was a wonderful feeling to see these people accepted for fellowship. We have known many of them for several years. They do stand for the "Truth."

Our hearts were saddened to hear of your health problem. But we trust the "God of all Grace" will lift you up and provide a way for healing. If it is in His will, it will surely come to pass. You will be much in our thoughts and prayers along with your family.

Lovers of the truth, we hope,
Bill & Arlene Hole

7003 Flagstaff Ln., 102
Richmond, Va. 23228-3938
March 16, 2007

My dear Elder Terry,

It is time to renew the Signs and I hope to be thankful I can read it and believe the writers speak of the One God.

Thirty nine years ago I was baptized into Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. It is very sad to me to think I am a sinner but I know I am. Of the many things in my life I think of the Lord as being my helper, a most wonderful one is the love of the brethren to me. How could you love me except the God of mercy cover my sins. This is my hope.

I love to hear or read the words of those blessed to speak in a reverent manner, who tell of His power, glory, wisdom and His control of all things.

My dear Brother, I understand pain has come upon your body. I am

very sorry and hope the dear Lord shall be pleased to give you moments of peace, peace to you and your loved ones. The God we hope to love is capable of performing all his pleasure. He is our all and all.

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickeral

ST. JOHN, 15:1-7.

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

VOICES OF THE PAST

MRS. SUSIE RORRER GILBERT

Dear Brother Branscome : *By* the request *of my* mother and with the help of the Lord- I will attempt to write my experience.

When only a child, eleven years old. I became sick and my health ran down till I gave up all hope of ever getting well; and I began to wonder what would become of me after death. I became greatly troubled about my condition; and being shown that I was a vile sinner in the sight of God, I went mourning day and night over my condition. I would try to pray, but all I could say was: *"Lord have mercy on me, a sinner."* I seemed to be such a sinner that, if I should die, torment would be my doom. I well remember creeping from my bed, while sick, to seek a secret place to pray for the forgiveness of my sins. But my prayer seemed not to be heard. My short prayer was, *"Lord have mercy on me."* I went back into the house feeling worse than ever. I went back to my bed and cried myself to sleep. My burden seemed almost more than I could bear, yet in some way managed my burden for a long time. When a few years older, my troubles seemed to be getting worse; and, in the evening, when the sun began to sink in the west, I bade it farewell, saying, to myself, *"I shall never*

live to see you rise in the morning." Before I went to bed, I looked out, through the window, saying, to myself, "I shall never see this world anymore." After I had gone to bed, I could hear the water in the river, in front of the house, rushing over the rock! and, O, how lonely it did sound to me, a poor sinner in the sight of God. And I was made to wonder if that water was in trouble like me. The world seemed to be sinking, sinking down with me, and it seemed that I was bound to die. I wondered what my people would think in the morning when they should awake and find me dead. I awoke next morning in the same trouble. I went to my room one night-no mortal tongue can tell my feelings. But, after I had been asleep for sometime, I awoke and all of my troubles seemed to be gone. I could not go back to sleep, fearing I would awake in trouble. The next morning I felt so happy. I loved everybody and felt like I would never see any more trouble. I wanted to do better myself, and wished that everybody else would do better, too. I seemed to love everybody.

But in less than a year my troubles rose again, worse than ever. This was in the fall of 1910, while I was going to school. My burden was so heavy that it made my life a misery to me. I wondered why it was that I was in so much trouble and could not be relieved. I mourned day and night over my lost soul. It seemed that everybody could see that I was in trouble, and I tried to be merry with the other young people, but could not. When at church I would go up near the pulpit and sit with the church members and old people: for I had no desire to be with the young people. The young people seemed too jolly for me. While I was in so much trouble, I would leave the room where my people were and go into a room where I could be all me. I wanted to be alone to keep them from knowing my troubles. One night I dreamed of joining the church and being baptized by a preacher whom I had never met. But, since I had that dream, I met that dearly beloved Brother, Elder J. M. Dickerson. I dreamed, in the dream of being baptized, that they sang: *"O, how happy are they, who their Savior obey!"* When I awoke and, O how happy I was! I awoke singing, and something seemed to say: Your many sins are forgiven; go home to your friends and tell them what the Lord has done for your soul." I could hardly keep from shouting in my happiness. There was a bright light that seemed to shine around me.

That was in December, 1910; and, ever since, I have loved the good Old Baptist people. All of my hope and trust was in the Lord, and my desire was to go and be with them as one in that happy little flock. When away from them I could see them in a mental vision and hear them, as little Christians, singing God's praise; and, O how I longed to go and be with them. But I felt too unworthy to offer myself to the

church. I prayed one night to know whether I was fit for the church or not and, again, I dreamed of the church and of being baptized, of seeing the daisies on the river bank; and of seeing the people gathered together, with the sweetest singing, that sounded to me like music in the air.

After that, March 2, I went to Dobyns schoolhouse to preaching, and they sung, *"Come, ye sinners, poor and wretched."* The fourth verse being :

> *"Come, ye weary, heavy laden,*
> *Lost and ruined in the fall;*
> *If you tarry till you're better,*
> *You will never come at all:*
> *Not the righteous, not the righteous;*
> *Sinners Jesus came to call."*

It seemed to me that I could no longer stay away. I watched to see if anyone would go up to join. One lady went up and joined, Then I went and talked to the church and was received into their sweet fellowship. My sister joined after and that was a happy day with us.

On May 5, 1912, I, with several others, was baptized by Elder J. M. Dickerson. The happiness of that day can never be expressed.

Brother Branscome, I am sending you my experience. If it is worthy of your attention, you may publish it in the "Messenger of Truth." But if it is not worthy of publication cast it aside, and remember,

Your little sister in hope,
Miss Susie Rorer

Stuart, Virginia.

REMARKS.

My daughter, Miss Susie Rorer, since writing her experience, was married to Mr. Johny Gilbert, of Stuart, Virginia, May 12, 1912.

Mrs. D. C. Rorer.

TO MY BRETHREN AND SISTERS.

Elder F. P. Branscome, Dear Brother: As I have to send money to renew my subscription, I will write to my brethren and sisters; and, also, to them that I think are heirs of grace divine that have never come to their Master's kin. Dear kindred in Christ, I claim this kinship with fear, and yet I must claim it, If any of you are as weak and dark as I am, I will tell you how Elder Daniel Conner strengthened me: While preaching, he asked this question, *"Can you manage your hope?"* He answered it himself, saying, *"If it is yours, you can; but, if it is God's, you cannot. Faith acts the creature, but the creature can-*

not act faith." He then asked, "Can you make your hope as bright as you want it ?" "No," said I, "Can you lay it off and have no more to do with it?" And, again, I said "No." Some change had been made in me that I could never forget; and, right there, my heart was filled with hopefulness, humbleness and thankfulness. A blessed feeling, while it lasts.

Dear brethren and sisters, may I guess at your condition? You must go through a storm, caused by the light of grace. But it makes you feel dark. The light of grace shining in your heart shows you the depth of your sinful heart, that was the first time you ever felt condemned, arrested for your sins. *"You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins,"* but the calm will come; the captive will be set free. The heart is filled with hope and thankfulness; the storm is past, and there is a great calm. But this calm will be clouded with what? With a view of unworthiness, a view of our own vanities. This is shown to us by the light of grace. Carnal nature never works on that line. When we view our sins and vanities, we are made to mourn. Carnal nature loves its own. We pray that God's children, who are out, may come in; and, to them that are in the church, we say, *"Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."* - *Heb. 24, 25.* Let us come together and love one another. Let us encourage our pastor by meeting him. James showed his faith by works. So let us show our love by our acts. How cold, and how far from duty we live! We can think of many good preachers, who spent half of their time from home, by the call of the people to attend churches, to visit the sick and the dead, who received but little from the people to lessen their burdens. Yet, they went on in humbleness, like the ox under the yoke. The church should relieve the pastor of the discipline and government of the church.

We think the church should act carefully and prayerfully in setting apart its members as deacons and preachers. The prophet Samuel would have made a mistake, when he called the sons of Jesse before him, if the Lord had not signified his choice. So, dear brethren, let us attend our church meetings as promptly and prayerfully as we can. The Lord has promised to be with us when we meet in his name. Do not stay away because you cannot understand all that the preacher says. The Lord will give us all the light which is necessary that we should have.

Some writers try to tell what God created the devil to do. Some try to explain all of the purposes and predestination of God. If these things could be fully explained, it would, it seems to me, make the

mystery of godliness a blank. If *God* purposed all *of* the wicked acts of the devil, prayer, it seems to me, would be made a blank. The Savior said, ***"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."*** We believe this. Well, then, he has power to restrain the devil. How much God restrains him we do not know; but we do know that the predestination of God and the existence of the devil is the greatest mystery that enters our minds. We believe in, the doctrine of election and predestination of God. Some call us Predestinarian Baptists, and we do not deny the name. We think that some could profit by reading what the Presbyterians put into their Articles of Faith, one hundred years ago. In speaking of election and predestination they said: ***"these things should be handled with care."*** Seemingly, some handle them carelessly. If one stands and talks himself hoarse, trying to explain these deep things, has he done what Christ told Peter to do? Christ said to Peter, ***"Feed my sheep."*** And, maybe, he could not. say what Peter said, when Christ asked, saying: ***"Lovest thou me more than these?"*** Peter answered, ***"Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."*** They might, at the time, be loving the display they are making more than the Lord. The flesh has a great deal to do with men.

I heard a good preacher say, there is one thing in my way and I cannot get rid of it to save my life, that is, when I *get* up to preach I feel a desire to make a display." I loved that preacher before; but, now, as I thought, I saw the pureness of the inner man: for, in that, he had seen the vain glory in the outer man, and did not fellowship it. It renewed my confidence in the man.

While looking over this writing I am made to feel that, perhaps, I had better put my hand on my mouth, instead of mailing it. Now, dear brother, if you see anything hurtful in this, please put it in the stove and pray the Lord to pity the weakness of my flesh and to pardon the sin of the same. I beg my brethren and sisters to take no offense. I am in *my* eighty-fifth year, childish dotage.

R. J. Wood.

R. 5, Floyd, Virginia.

Sent in by Bro. Keith Hiatt

CHAPTER 11:2-5.

Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples,

And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?

Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see:

The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

COMMUNICATION
BY ELDER F. P. STONE

Elder F. P. Branscome, Dear Brother and readers of the Messenger of Truth: Yesterday and today were our regular meeting days at my home church, Albion, and I were not able to attend. I have been suffering for several years from indigestion and have had several acute attacks, and have been made to feel that my time on earth is short. I am just a few years passed the meridian of the average life. But when I stand before the mirror, I see the silver streaks coming in my hair. I realize that it means, something, that, if I am permitted to live out the time allotted to man, it will not be long. And, today, not being allowed the privilege of meeting with the brethren and sisters, to speak of the goodness and mercies of God to them, I have been reading the Messenger of Truth and a borrowed copy of the Spiritual Law Counsel. I find the manifestation of contention among some brethren, which made me feel sad; and, again, I found others pleading for peace; and I was made to exclaim, *"Why strive ye, one with another? are we not brethren?"* Christ told Peter once to feed his lambs and twice to feed his sheep. He also said that new-born babes (lambs) desire the sincere milk of the word. What does he mean by that? What did he tell John's disciples? John, spiritually, was just where all of the saints of God get, that is, shut up in prison, in the castle of despondency, where the inquiry is, Have I ever met the Christ of God? Was that boy, the carpenter's son, the promised seed? Surely not. John had at one time exclaimed, Behold (that is; look on him the Lamb (Son) of God that taketh away the Sin of the world. Have you not, my brethren and sisters, been spiritually able to exclaim the same? And John had the witness by which he might know that he had baptized the Christ. He saw the Spirit descending and lighting upon him, and heard the voice that said; "This-is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Yet he doubted and sent his messenger, enquiring: *"Art thou the Christ, or shalt we still look for another?" He did not say, "Yes, I am that promised seed, the Star of Bethlehem."* Go show John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." Was that just for John? No; but for you and for me. *"Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they that testify of me."* Is John's experience yours? I say yes: for his is the experience of every child of grace. It is Christ that is formed in us the hope of glory; and when we went down into the watery grave, being buried with him in baptism, and was raised up again to walk in newness of life, did we not feel that spirit of meek-

ness, humbleness and thankfulness? Yes, dear child of God, you felt this, and that was the spirit of Christ, the Comforter with you, which spake to your inmost soul, saying this is my beloved son *or* daughter, in whom I am well pleased. But does this last always? No; we go just where John did and need deliverance again. Now, what was the commandment to Peter? It was to go feed his lambs and his sheep. Some may say, How are we to feed them? By giving them the sincere milk of the word. The sheep can stand strong meat; but they love to be shown the thing which we do see and hear. We are not commanded to experiment with the sheep to see what they can digest, but just to come forth with the plain truth, the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to them that believe. It is not to bring something new, or old, in disguise to bring forth old things? Yes, but they are new when compared by the Spirit of God. In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established. And, when the servant of God comes along, telling of the dealings of the Lord with poor sinners, how he finds them in a waste howling wilderness and how he leads them about and instructs them in wisdom's ways, carrying them to God's banqueting house, where the banner of love is spread over us, and we are enabled to see that it is not only the old prophet's experience, or preacher's experience but ours also. Then we feel like Christ has again taken our feet out of the mire and clay, placing them upon a rock (himself), putting a new song in our mouth, and enabling us to say, ***"My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior."*** John, who was the recipient of a special revelation, said, ***"I saw an angel flying in the midst of heaven having the everlasting gospel to preach."***

I will say to the young preachers, my brother yoke fellows, if I am worthy to call you such, that the old pioneers and soldiers of that Cross, who have endured the chilly winds of many winters and have felt the rain and scorching rays of the sun for many summers, while striving to meet with and to comfort the dear children of God, have passed over the River of Death; and are we commendable to take their places? Are we preaching at all times and on all occasions that same everlasting gospel, that will stand as a lasting monument to our memory, when we shall leave our footprints on the sands of time, and go on to explore the great beyond?

Brethren, let us take heed to ourselves as well as to the doctrine, for sheep are naturally very particular about the kind or vessels they eat and drink from. God's sheep, the children of God, are just as particular as natural sheep. Past experience has taught me that some of our greatest troubles have started *in* the *pulpit.* But I am frank to say that I do not believe that a word of unsound doctrine has ever been preached while

the preacher was overshadowed by the spirit of God. So let us contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. And let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, contending for the *"old paths."* There *is* no progress in the Christian religion. O, that we may leave behind us the same good report that our *old* fathers, who have already laid their armor by, left behind them. This is my message for today. Brethren and sisters, will you accept it from your unworthy servant?

F. P. Stone
Francisco, N.C.

IN COMFORT OF THE SCRIPTURES IN THE TRIAL OF FAITH.

Dear children of God: - The holy Scriptures are a divine store-house of heavenly treasures and a pure fountain of spiritual health and peace, but the Prince of the house of David has the keys, and he must set before us an open door. But he first prepares the souls of his saints for the things which God hath prepared for them that love him and then he opens to them the sealed fountain of his love. The Lord does this in the way that nature would not choose, and that man's wisdom would refuse as impossible. For the way of the Lord of life and peace is through fiery trials and great tribulations. His word to us is, *"I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction."* In this furnace of suffering he purifies and refines his chosen ones, whom he loves, that they may know the power and preciousness of his perfect love and worship him in the beauty of holiness. This love casteth out the fear which hath torment, and it uplifts the children of God's love above the rage of their enemies, who reproach and persecute them. Through such tribulations and afflictions, unto which God has appointed us, as Paul affirms, he ministers to us patience, experience and hope, which maketh not ashamed, because he sheds abroad his love in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. Thus the sufferings of Christ are fulfilled in his members, his brethren, who are baptized with him into his death, and also quickened and raised up together with him, made partakers of his divine nature, saved by his life, and serve God in newness of spirit.

The carnal and legal religionist would condemn all who are thus exercised, afflicted and tried as suffering the displeasure of God, as the legal and false friends of Job condemned him, and would say, If you will live as you should, and be obedient to the commandments of God, you may be at peace with him and enjoy his smiles. All worldly wisdom and legal religion says, Serve God, and he will then reward you with salvation. This way that seemeth right unto man, passes by the poor and suffering, the needy and helpless,

the sick and lame, who are without goodness and strength, and who bemoan their leanness; but it flatters and pleases him who thanks God that he is keeping his commandments, doing much good, and so receiving the rewards for his obedience. This one is without chastisement. He is a stranger to the truth that the true child of God, who in heart both fears and obeys him, yet is called to walk in darkness and have no light, and that the loving voice of the Father bids this tried child to trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon his God. It is a strange doctrine to the self-righteous religionist, who pleases himself, to be told that the only way of perfection and obedience is through suffering and loss of all things, and the only way of life is through death. In this way the holy Son of God himself learned obedience and entered into the perfection and power of endless life and eternal glory. Thus, too, must we follow him in his steps, die his death, and rise up with him in his holy life.

Now, my dear brethren, in him and in his righteous life is all true obedience, righteousness and salvation; nothing else is salvation; nothing else will God accept. This, this only fulfills the holy law of the holy God. We must be in Christ, and he in us, and his suffering obedience for our sins unto death, and resurrection unto life for our justification unto righteousness, must we be wrought in us and be ours, or else we have no obedience, no righteousness, no salvation, no life; nothing but sin and death.

To be brought into this oneness with Christ and fullness in him, we must suffer with him and bear his reproaches; we must drink of his cup of sorrow and woe, and be baptized with his baptism of death. There is no other way into the perfection of God in Christ Jesus. God has ordained this way, and predestinated his chosen people to be conformed to the image of his suffering and dying Son, that he might be the Firstborn among many brethren. *"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."* The Spirit's witnessing evidence with our spirit that we are the children and heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, is, *"If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake."* To every ones of us, my dear brethren in Christ, God gives to believe on him, and also to suffer for

his sake, for the trial of our faith, that it may be found unto the praise and glory of God. Through such revilings and persecutions for the sake of Christ and his doctrine, which many brethren, with myself, have been called to suffer in these latter times, Christ has been made exceedingly precious to me, and he has thus prepared me to understand and with deeper comfort than ever before enter into the precious Scriptures, which faithfully record the reproaches and persecutions which the dear Son of God and his devoted followers were called to endure for the truth's sake. With new and warm interest have I just read the Acts of the apostles, and my heart is more tenderly united with them in their persecutions and sufferings, doctrine and fellowship in the gospel of Christ. And with sorrowing love and clinging faith I have followed in the sacred footsteps of Jesus from the manger to the cross. In all this life, and in all the lives of his true disciples, there came continual reproaches, false accusations and deadly persecutions, for the purpose of destroying them. All this was brought against them, not because they were dangerous or bad men, but for the doctrine they taught – the truth of God. For they were all men of God, whom he sent, and they spoke the words of God, and he was with them. To God they ascribed the kingdom, the power and the glory.

The one startling and most prominent fact in the fearful persecutions against the Son of God and his church, as plainly shown in the Scriptures, is legal religionists were their persecutors. Never before had this fact so deeply impressed me as now. Persecutions against me from the same legal spirit made me go and tell Jesus, and turn to the sacred oracles for comfort, and he opened my eyes to see that I am brought into the fellowship of his sufferings for the truth's sake, and he tells me to ***"Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."***

In spirit I have been drawn near to Jesus when he was falsely accused in the temple, and in Pilate's hall, and on the cross, and legal religion incited and led to it all. With deep emotion have I heard the dying sermon of the faithful Stephen before the priestly council, who gnashed on him in their legal rage and stoned him to death. I have followed Peter and John, when brought before their persecutors, and heard the charges and threatenings against them. At Antioch I have witnessed the controversy between Paul and the legal preachers, and in Jerusalem have I rejoicingly heard the final decision of the apostles and church upon the doctrine in dispute. With deep sympathy and intense anxiety I have journeyed with Paul in his gospel ministry, persecutions and perils, until he was dragged out of the

temple, fearfully abused, and forced to appeal to Caesar to escape death. And to my amazement, it was shown me that all this raging and death-dealing persecution against Christ and his brethren arose from the self-sufficient spirit of legal religion, and was relentlessly waged by the most strict and zealous religious people, who were the professed moral worshipers of God. They expected to obtain salvation by their obedience and good works. But the doctrine of Christ and the apostles was, that salvation is by the mercy and grace of God alone. This greatly offended the legal and self-righteous worshipers of God. They expected to obtain salvation by their obedience and good works. But the doctrine of Christ and the apostles was, that salvation is by the mercy and grace of God alone. This greatly offended the legal and self-righteous worshipers, and for this doctrine of God's sufficient and sovereign grace (not of works) in salvation, the legal religionists hated and persecuted Christ and his church, as we have seen.

As it was then, so it is now. Principles never change. There are only the two principles: law and gospel, works and grace. Salvation is of one, to the exclusion of the other. My beloved Lord gives me the comforting assurance that I am made to suffer persecution and be spoken against for his sake. If I could have fallen from grace into conditional rewards for works, and so divided salvation into parts, and held that it is both by grace and of works, and so divided salvation into parts, and held that it is both by grace and of works, as all do who hold to conditional salvation in part, then I would have been approved and spoken well of by them. But the reproaches of Christ are far more precious to me, and my choice is to suffer for his sake. Paul says, ***"But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now."*** All persecution against the children of God arises from the legal religion of the flesh, for all fleshly religion is legal; it is based upon rewards and punishments; the love of God is not in it; the exaltation of Christ and the glory of God is not its purpose; but its highest aim and supreme end is the self-happiness and self-glory of the religious man. Take this away and he would not worship or be religious, for there would be no active incentive or prompting motive to his morality and religion. His is strictly a religion of works and rewards. His religious works are all performed to obtain salvation. ***"Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt."*** This the legal religionist accepts; to him this only seems rational and good; his religion consigns the grace of God in salvation to eternity, and sets up instead the works of man for salvation in time. Works honor and glorify man, and this is quite suitable

and self-pleasing. It is therefore very popular, for it comes near to man's strong love of self, and present to him a powerful motive to join the so-called church and be religious. It will pay him to do this, he will be happier, more respected and honored, and so multitudes embrace this religion. There is no offense in it, but the world esteems it and is pleased with it, for it is the pride and glory of man.

The gospel of the grace of God is not so; in it man is cut down and abased as less than nothing, but the Lord alone is exalted, and his is all the power and glory. Salvation by free grace only is therefore a religion of suffering, of cross-bearing and of the loss of life. Here man is nothing, that Christ may be all in all. The cross of Christ is an offense therefore, and the legal religionist can never love it nor embrace it, and so the religion of grace is very unpopular, has but few friends, "a small remnant," a *"little flock," "a sect everywhere spoken against."* They are called *"Antinominians," "Extremists," "Fatalists," "Let us continue in sin, that grace may abound,"* and many other hard speeches, by legal religionists So the prime object of all legal and flesh-pleasing religion is, that the offense of the cross might cease, and ceased it has among all conditional religionists; for conditional salvation, salvation by works, has ever been a popular religion in the world, both among the Jews and Gentiles; therefore if Christ and his apostles had taught this doctrince, the Jews would not have crucified him, neither would they have persecuted his suffering followers. And so at this present time it is solely because the remnant according to the election of grace ascribe all dominion and power, salvation and glory, to God and his grace, to Christ and his death and life, that we are falsely accused, reproached and persecuted, and our names are cast out as evil.

It is in this way that our God sifts and tries his people, and separates his own elect from false and carnal religionists, who are of the world, brings his dear children through suffering into a peculiar and blessed nearness to himself in the risen Christ, and keeps them by his power through faith unto salvation, that they should show forth his praise. *"Trials make the promise sweet."* Therefore, *"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified."* O how preciously true this is! We bless and glorify God for his eternal power and Godhead, his sovereign purpose

and grace, but for this he is evil spoken of on their part, his sacred truth is slandered, and his reverend and holy name is reproached by them. ***"Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?"***

In the deepest trials and sufferings of the obedient Son of God in the wilderness, and in the garden, God sent his angels to minister to him. So when Stephen was cruelly abused and being killed for the testimony of Jesus, his face shone as an angel's, and the Lord opened the door of heaven to his tortured servant, and he saw Jesus in his glory standing on the right hand of his Father. So it is in all the evil that men think to do against the Lord's Christ and his church. And Joseph's words to his humbled brethren are the divine key to open and reveal the holy purpose of God in all the afflictions, trials and persecutions that shall come against the children of his love: ***"But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good."*** Nothing great or small can escape his notice. ***"Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell."*** In this, God reveals his power and love to his chosen, ***"to the praise of the glory of his grace."*** Bless his holy name.

In the fellowship of Christ's sufferings,

Yours, D. Bartley.
April 12, 1904

April 15.

"And so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish." – Esther iv. 16.

When we are in darkness, under distress of conscience, or when guilt lies hard and heavy upon the soul, these things do, and must until removed, keep us back from the Lord. But are we ever to give heed to these enemies of our soul's peace? Are we never to press through the crowd? How was it with the man who was paralyzed for so many years? He might forever have lain helpless upon his bed, had he not been brought into the presence of Jesus. So with the woman with the issue of blood? She might for ever have tarried on the skirts of the crowd, a poor, polluted, self-condemned wretch. But she pressed through the crowd, and go to touch the hem of Jesus' garment. So with us. Shall we ever dwell in the outskirts – in the outer court of the temple? Shall we merely walk round Zion's bulwarks and tarry at her doors, or shall we venture into the holiest itself? Shall we, driven out by

fear, act like Cain, and go out from the presence of the Lord? Or shall we, with all our sins and discouragements, still draw near? The Apostle encourages us to come with holy boldness to the throne of grace, and to venture into the presence of the King of kings. Esther would have ruined herself and all her nation had she given way to the weakness of the flesh; but she said, "I will go in unto the king; and if I perish, I perish." She went in with that resolution. The king held forth the sceptre; Esther touched it, and she and the people were saved. So in grace. Shall we ever keep away through guilt, and sin, and shame? Now the Holy Ghost not only in the word of truth encourages, but he himself from time to time enables us to draw near. And when we draw near under his divine operations, we feel the blessedness of so doing. Liberty is operations, we feel the blessedness of so doing. Liberty is given, access, holy freedom, a spirit of prayer, power to take hold of God, to wrestle for the blessing, and sometimes to agonize with earnest sighs and groans and the energy of one of old: *"I will not let thee go except thou bless me."*

Elder J.C. Philpot

Job 37:24.

Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any that are wise of heart.

April 16.

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." – Hebrews xiii. 8.

The eye of our faith must be ever fixed on Jesus, for the Person of Christ is the grand object of faith, and to lose sight of him is to lose sight of the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Is he not the same Jesus now that he was on earth? He is exalted, it is true, to an inconceivable height of glory, so that when John saw him, even as if in some measure veiled, he fell at his feet as dead. But he is the same Jesus now as when he was the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as he wears the same human body, so he has the same tender, compassionate heart. All that he was upon earth as Jesus, he is in heaven still. All that tenderness and gentleness, all that pity to poor sensible sinners, all that compassion on the ignorant and on those that are out of the way, all that grace and truth which came by him and were manifest in him, all that bleeding, dying love, all that sympathy with the afflicted and tempted, all that power to heal by a word all manner of sickness and disease, all that surpassing beauty and blessedness whereby he is to those who have seen him the chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely, he not only retains in the highest heavens, but is, so to speak, endowed with greater capacity to use

them, for all power is given to him in heaven and earth, and all things are put under his feet, and that not only for his own sake, but that he might be the Head over all things to the Church.

Elder J. C. Philpot

MATTHEW 13:11-15.

He answered and said unto them, Because it is give unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

RECIPE FOR COMMUNION BREAD

About one-half cup of Plain (not self rising) flour. Sift into a small bowl, and add only just enough cold water to barely moisten the flour. The dough needs to be stiff. At first it will hardly cling together but, after kneading, the dough gets smoother, and almost "Shiny."

Knead until perfectly smooth, sometimes until you hear the dough begin to "crack", (too much kneading will cause the dough to "blister")

Make out in four small biscuits and roll about at thin as ordinary pie crust, turning round and round to keep it shapely.

Check off with wheel pastry cutter or a dull knife into 3/4 inch squares, which makes it easier for breaking; prick rather closely with fork and bake in Not too quick an oven. I usually sit right by oven to watch. The bread is nicest when baked to a deep cream shade.

The cakes may be cut square or in banquet cracker shape, if you prefer, but I have liked to make the little round cakes as my mother used to do.

If it should be necessary to make the bread a day or so ahead, by putting it in oven a moment till hot, it will be as fresh and crisp as if freshly baked.

Laura Reed Gooch,
Stem, N.C.

MEETINGS

March 17, 2007

A special meeting was called so the brethren of Pigg River, Smith River, Staunton River and our correspondents, could hear the Elders preach from Gaines Grove, Rock Hill, and Toms Creek churches.

This meeting was held on Saturday at 10:00 a.m. at Republican Church on March 17, 2007.

Services were open with song and prayer by Elder Ralph Gaines. Preaching by Elders Jim Moody and Ralph Gaines. The preaching service was dismissed with prayer by Elder Jim Moody.

After hearing Elders Ralph Gains and Jim Moody, a business meeting was held after preaching was over. Motion made and second, and carried that Elder Hale Terry serve as Moderator in this meeting. The moderator appointed Elder Thomas Solomon to serve as Clerk. The business part was opened with prayer by Elder Carl Terry.

The brethren from Gaines Grove, Rock Hill, and Toms Creek Churches, were given the opportunity to speak. The brethren ask that they be received into full fellowship with us. After giving the brethren from our Associations and Correspondents, the opportunity to ask questions, No questions were asked. After this, motion was made and second & carried that we receive them into full fellowship with us.

Dismissed with prayer by Elder Kenneth Key.

Moderator: Hale Terry
Clerk: Thomas Solomon

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 2007

Connie Franco –TX	2.00
Livie Thompson –VA	5.00
David Dodd – NC	25.00
Herbert Dodson – VA	5.00
Katherine Mathews – LA	10.00
John Smith – FL	5.00
Edrie Clifton –VA	5.00
Reidy Pickral –VA	25.00
Arlene Hole –NC	5.00

St. John 1:4-8.

In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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SONG

ZION'S a city God hath blessed
With peace and everlasting rest;
A glorious city, strong and fair;
And Jesus dwells forever there.

Her ancient walls appear to be
The workmanship of Deity;
Founded in grace, they still appear
Without a flaw or chasm there.

Oft has this city's strength been tried,
By mighty foes on every side ;
But all in vain it yet has been,
She baffles Satan, hell, and sin.

Count ye her towers, how high they rise,
Her golden spires, they pierce the skies!
Her golden streets are fair to view;
Her palaces and bulwarks, too.

Then round her walk, her turrets ten;
Mark all her brazen bulwarks well;
Spread far and wide her deathless fame,
Her pearly gates and walls of flame.

Her founder's love has ever proved
Like Salem's mount, which ne'er was moved;
'Tis fixed on this eternal base,
The grace of God, and gift by grace.

Kent.

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EDITORIAL

"Enter ye at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Matthew 7:13-14.

Elder J.B. Farmer

I must confess my ignorance before I can begin to write or to speak in the name of our God. I fear that I would appear to boast as if I knew anything of myself, if I didn't make it plain about my inability. The flesh is strengthless, even contrary, to the things of the Spirit. And God must receive all praise and honor and glory, not man. God has made the knowledge of His great salvation impossible to man, but with Him all things are possible.

For some time I have been given a desire to write something about the strait gate and the narrow way that leads to life, and the wide gate and the broad way that leads to destruction. But I don't know how or where to begin, so I must beg for mercy and wisdom and understanding, hoping the Lord will come to my aid.

It appears that all the things of God are in a mystery, and past finding out apart from revelation. Therefore so also must be the strait gate and the narrow way that leads to life, and the wide gate and the broad way that leads to destruction. The strait gate is the entrance into the narrow way. And that gate is so strait or confining, that no one may press through it. Jesus said, ***"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."*** His disciples said, ***"Who then can be saved?" But Jesus beheld them and said unto them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."*** We know that it is impossible for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. And it is just as impossible for a man to go through

the strait gate. It is not just hard to do, but is entirely unachievable for men. It takes no less than a miracle for anyone to pass through that gate which leads into the narrow way. First, he must be killed to the flesh and to the world. Then, he must be made alive to God and to His kingdom. Man cannot accomplish this, it is altogether the work of God. ***"The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and he bringeth up."*** He kills His own with the letter of the law, and then He makes them alive by His Spirit. Jesus said, ***"No man can come unto me, except the Father which sent me draw him."*** And when the Father draws one, he miraculously is brought through the strait gate and comes to Jesus in the narrow way. And Jesus also said, ***"All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again in the last day."*** I am made to believe that Jesus is the door or the strait gate, and He is the narrow way. And He is the truth and the life. In Him we live and move and have our being. And Jesus shall not lose one of His own, but shall bring each one safely to the end of his pilgrimage here upon earth. And He shall raise them all up in the last day, and bring them to glory, where they shall ever be with the Lord.

The one finding himself in the narrow way is amazed to think that he should be brought into such a fearful and glorious place. And he is given the understanding that it is impossible to walk in this way by himself - just as impossible as it is to press through the strait gate. One must be miraculously protected on either side and be led forward step by step to the end of his journey. There is no turning around and no going back. ***"For he that hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ."*** The children of Israel found themselves in the narrow way when they were brought out of Egypt and led through the Red Sea on dry ground. There was a destructive wall of water on either side with seeming desolation following hard behind. But only God's children were given to pass safely through. When the Egyptians followed them into that way, they found it to be total destruction and they were all drowned. ***"And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools shall not err therin. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the***

redeemed of the Lord shall walk there: And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

On the one side of this narrow way of faith is the so called "free will of man", and on the other side is the presumption of the carnal mind. Both are piled high as menacing walls of water, and they threaten to fall in upon the little ones and overwhelm them. But miraculously the walls do not fall, rather, they are held at bay. The "free will doctrine" is restrained as the children of God are taught that ***"All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"*** God's children are delivered from thinking they are in control of things, and are made to understand that only God actually does according to His will. And they are taught by experience that man is continuously frustrated at every turn by the vanity of the flesh And man's so called "free will" is shown to be powerless in the presence of God. On the other hand, His little ones are kept from being swallowed up by presumption. Since the truth is that one is already predestinated to heaven or to hell, the devil tempts God's children to think that it doesn't really matter what they do here on earth. He whispers to them if they are God's children, they are safe no matter what; and if they are not His there is nothing they can do about it. So the devil tempts them to presumptuously eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow they shall die. But the Lord is merciful to His own as He causes them to walk in the fear and reverence of God as they are chastened and corrected for their fleshly thoughts, words, and deeds. They are blessed to walk by faith and not by sight. Only those who are blessed with faith to know God and to obey the gospel shall ever walk in that narrow way and see heaven and immortal glory. The inspired apostle said, ***"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day."***

As God's little ones travel along the narrow way, they are made to discern between good and evil. By grace they are enabled to ***"try the***

spirits whether they are of God." On the one side, there is the minister of Satan transformed into the angel of light, bringing in damnable heresies of the works of the flesh. He teaches that you can gain acceptance by the works of the flesh - that if your good works outweigh the bad ones, all will be well. He teaches to touch not, taste not, and handle not. He would make self-righteous, hypocritical Pharisees of all if he could. On the other side is the devil with the temptations of the pleasures of the flesh. He teaches that under grace, all things are lawful, so you may take your fill of pleasures according to your desires. He would make presumptuous libertines of them all if it were possible. He would entrap and destroy them on either side of the way if he could. But Jesus said to Peter, ***"Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith fail not."*** The Good Shepherd protects them from Satan's deceptions, and gives them faith to travel safely on. ***"And the sheep follow Him: for they know His voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers."*** They are kept in the narrow way of faith that leads to life. By mercy, the little ones are taught that the only truly good works are those which God has wrought. They are made to trust in His righteousness alone. And they are made to know that, under grace all things are lawful, but all things are not expedient. Thus the children of God ***"are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."***

On one side of the way there are enticements for them to be overly involved or entangled with the world and all its cares. If left to ourselves we would stray from the path of life and be overcome by the daily concerns of this life. If we were not kept, we would be pursuing fame and fortune and pleasure with the whole world. On the other side of the narrow way there is the temptation to totally separate from the world, and to become monk-like hermits. But that would be cowardly. There would be no battles to fight, nor races to run, and no victory or defeat. And God would not be glorified in His continual deliverance of His people from the evil of this world. Jesus prayed to the Father, ***"I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil."*** And this is what He has done for them. He is keeping us, if we are His, in the narrow way, as strangers and pilgrims passing through the evil world, and He is blessing us to ***"run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."*** And in mercy and power, and to His praise and glory, He will bring us to the end of the race, victorious.

On the one side of the way God's children are tempted to speak flatteries, or false praises to men, respecting men's persons and hoping to gain their favor. On the other side they are tempted to fall into bitterness, hatred and evil speaking toward men, in order to exalt themselves. But God, in His mercy is continually delivering His people even from these kinds of pitfalls. They are made to say in truth with Elihu, ***"Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man. For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my maker would soon take me away." And you are made to "love your enemies," and to "love your neighbor as yourself."*** The little ones, by grace, are delivered from speaking with both flattery and hatred. And to the praise of God and His grace, they are made to speak the truth in love one to another and to the world.

On one side of the narrow way is the false peace of compromise. Many in the worldly religions boast of their numbers and of the unity of their faith and of their peace. But they have compromised the truth in order to achieve their goals. They allow all kinds of false doctrine, disorder and confusion in their midst that they may maintain some kind of stability which they call unity and peace. On the other side of the way are those who continuously war with words to try to defeat those who see things differently from themselves. And they seek to arrive at some kind of truce, which they call peace. They think that they are exalted and victorious if they can humiliate and destroy another person. But the children of God are kept from compromising to achieve a false unity and peace, and also are kept from warring with words to try to gain victory. Rather, they are made to patiently and kindly seek peace and ensue it by gently reproving and rebuking and exhorting one another and others in the way of truth. They are found walking in the narrow way, by grace, ***"Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."***

On one side of the narrow way is the religion of false hope. Many hope in the riches of wealth, or in learning, or in positions of honor in the world. Some hope in their own presumed goodness or righteousness. Others hope in their religious practices, believing that duty or ritual will save them. All who hope in such things must be altogether disappointed in the end, when the Lord shall separate the sheep from the goats. On the other side of the narrow way is the religion of hopelessness. Many are without faith and without hope in the world. They think that this world is all there is, and that there is no heaven or no hell. They imagine that the world made itself and that there is no Creator, God. They shall be most surprised at the resurrection of the

dead. But in the narrow way, the little ones are killed to the false hope of riches, and of self-righteousness, and of false religion. And they are given a pure and sure hope of eternal life in Jesus, Who is their only hope of salvation. Their hope is the anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, which is cast within the veil. Their hope is Christ in you the Hope of glory. They are made to believe that God is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Those who have been made to cast all their cares upon the Lord Jesus Christ shall never be disappointed, world without end, for it is impossible for Him to fail in bringing His own to glory.

The wide gate is so wide that it allows any one of any persuasion to enter the broad way. Everyone is welcome. The self-willed and presumptuous are very much at ease passing through that wide gate. Those who trust in riches and who are full of pride and arrogance are their leaders. In the broad way, false doctrine is no shame to them, for they each have their own understanding, and that is fine with them. They have an agreement to disagree, and to cover it all with a cloak of "charity or love" - which appears to be actually the confusion of darkness. But truly, God is not the author of confusion. Walking there in the broad way are the self-righteous, and those that pursue every pleasure. There are those who are at home in the world with all its cares, along with religious monks who have denounced the world and have fled from the persecutions of it. There are flatterers and hateful speakers. There are those who desire a false peace at any cost, and who will readily compromise the truth in order to have a crowd. And there are those who never know peace but continually war about words to no profit. Those with a false hope are at home with those of no hope. Having passed through the wide gate, and traveling in this broad way, the whole world is happily and confidently, but unknowingly, heading for certain destruction.

In the narrow way that leads to life, that must be entered only by the strait gate, are found the children of God. All others are excluded. The elect, who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life before the world was, are found walking together there in holy love and peace. They are following Jesus, trusting Him to keep them in the way of life and to deliver them from evil. These have been killed to the world and made alive to God - their love of riches, their pride, arrogance, self-will, and presumption have been stripped away. Their love of worldly pleasures and their entanglements have been removed. They are no longer afraid of the persecutions of the world, but gladly suffer them, in the name of Christ. Their mouths have

been stopped from flatteries and hateful speaking. Their desire is for the true doctrine to be spoken. They pursue true peace with honor. And their greatest desire is that God must be glorified in all things. This strait gate and the narrow way are found only by the precious few to whom God has revealed it - the same ones that He loved in the beginning with an everlasting love. And they are on their way to life eternal, to the praise and honor of the God of heaven and earth, and His only begotten Son Jesus Christ. Jesus is the strait gate and He is the narrow way. He is all in all to God's children. *"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption."* May God be praised forever. This was written, I trust, in love and in hope of eternal life.

J. B. Farmer 3-29-2007

PSALM 100:1-4.

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.

Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him and bless his name.

CORRESPONDENCE

Salem, Va.
6-19-06

Dear Brother Hale,

Enclosed is a check for 1 years subscription to the "Signs". I thoroughly enjoyed the articles by Elder May and Elder Ashburn. Thanks to the Editors for articles that reinforce the doctrine of absolute predestination and salvation by grace. It is good when we can relatre with the writer in our travels through life and that the Spirit works in the lives of all of God's Elect. May God continue his blessings on this paper.

In bonds of love,
James L. Shelor

April 8, 2007

Dear Elder Terry,

For so many years of my life I was searching, finding little in my search, but always hoping to find that place that would be so special to me. There were times when I was given some special things, but those times were given to me and came when unexpected. I did not find them by the labor of my search. (But I do believe that my search was a part of those good works that we are ordained to walk in). Many years ago it was impressed upon me that I was very unhappy living the Armenian

dream. I had been reading about the doctrines of the various denominations, but had already discovered that none of the ones that I had read about understood that the Saving Power of Christ is His alone, not subject to the whims, desires, or free will of mere man. I knew about the Primitive Baptist, because my mother was and is one, but I did not know what the doctrine was. I asked her for some "Signs" to read. She was so happy to oblige. As I was reading I came upon one of Gilbert Beebe's writings concerning the Shepherd, His sheep, and the fact that the door would only open to the Porter. I knew then that this was a part of what I had been searching for. This is my doctrine, the same doctrine that the "Signs" contends for.

Please renew my subscription to the "Signs of the Times" for two years. Enclosed is a check for more than enough. Use it as you see fit. It has been such a blessing to receive my copies for many years now.

May it please the Lord to continue to bless each of us each day that we are here in this low ground is my prayer.

Humbly submitted,
Charles Mathews
Baton Rouge, La 70874-4181
(225) 775-8078

JAMES 3:18.

And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

Dear Editors of the Signs,

I am sending you $10.00 for help in the cost of your work for this purpose. I look forward each month for this little book. So much comfort as some of us depend greatly on this book.

Also I found many poems as I was looking through the old trunk that I wrote many years ago as I was traveling through some bad times, some good times and some mighty rocky roads. So I decided to send some to you, I have sent some times ago. If you can use them O.K. If not just throw away.

Thank you,
Katherine Mathews

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111 Livingstone Drive
Cary, NC 27513

April 24, 2007

Dear Elder Key,

One of our precious brethren, Brother Carroll Williams, has shared a wonderful experience of the dealings of the Lord with him as he was shown that he is a sinner and brought into the knowledge of the truth. I feel many will be blessed with the reading of this beautiful experience as the Lord is glorified in His marvelous workings in His children. Therefore, I would like to request it be published in The Signs of The Times. I asked Brother Carroll's permission to do so.

I hope you are doing well and that the Lord will bless you and guide you in the way He would have you to go.

Love in Christ,
Jeannette Robertson

ARTICLES

EXPERIENCE OF BROTHER J. CARROLL WILLIAMS

Sister Jeannette, you told me yesterday you would like to hear me tell my experience and I explained truthfully how it is with me. However, you did say one thing about your experience that certainly did parallel mine. You spoke about all of your sins (if I remember correctly) being on a scroll I guess it was a week or two maybe before I offered to the church that I saw the enormity of my sins stacked up before me. It was as though I was sitting in a chair and I was thinking I had not been a terrible fellow in my growing up and young adult life and with each thought of the good that I thought I had done, something was placed beside my chair. I kept talking about the good in me and the stack beside me grew and grew until it was as high as the chair arm. It was made known to me that was a representation of my sins and that I had never done anything good. It made me feel so small and unworthy. I just needed to go crawl in the closet or someplace. When I awoke in the morning, all I could see with my natural eye was that stack of sins placed beside me. I can't tell you just how I did feel for a couple of days... but then, for some reason, my burden began to feel lighter; and as I went about my daily duties (a big part of which was done driving a car), I could not do anything but sing ***"Farewell vain world I'm going home, My Jesus smiles and bids me come."*** I thought then that maybe I had heard those words in a song. I got the hymn book and looked and looked but could not find them. I visited a dear and highly respected brother "Rossie Williams" one night during that time and I asked him and his wife if those words were in a song in our hymn book. They did not have to think twice. They knew the exact number of the song and I told them how those words had been ringing over and over in my soul. Then I thought they tried to make me feel they saw the workings of the Lord in all that, but I became fearful that my time on earth was about up. I just felt frustrated and did not know what it meant, if anything.

On the following fourth Sunday, something moved me when they were singing the closing hymn. I felt like my body floated down to the front of the church. I had no control of it. Elder Bunn motioned to the congregation to stop singing and there I was, so empty handed. He asked me if I wanted to talk to the church. Well, I did not know what I would say if I tried to talk to the

church, but felt I had to do something. So, I told him I loved the church and wanted to live with the folks I loved. I was readily received into the church; and as the brethren extended the right hand of fellowship, they looked like angels coming down to shake my hand and I felt so unworthy. But I do want to say that was the sweetest and dearest group of people that day that I had ever seen or have seen since. It was just a special day and now I feel so unworthy to have had those many brethren and sisters to enjoy for so many years. It has been joy unspeakable along with the heartaches and burdens that go along with all the upsets we experience.

I've had a hope that the vain world I was singing about was the worldly place of our abode and the going home was to live with the brethren we adore. I could not see that until after I was baptized and was beginning to settle down a bit. Not to say that I don't find myself all entangled in worldly things today, I do; and I'm not always happy with it at the time, but I hope I know where my home here on earth is.....with the brethren. And I have a hope there is a better place in the hereafter. I can't believe it, but I've held membership at Pleasant Hill Church for 50 years this year.

I did not mean to be this lengthy. God bless you. We do love you both.

Carroll Williams

VOICES OF THE PAST

EPHESIANS I. 3-6.

"BLESSED be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

This letter of Paul's is addressed ***"to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus."*** All those saints at Ephesus which Paul had in mind have long since been removed from time, but the letter and its words are still in effect, and to a people even today, for there are yet some ***"faithful in Christ Jesus,"*** who love this doctrine as did our eminent apostle Paul, who so earnestly contended for the truth as he had been taught it, giving God preeminence in all things. Man of himself has never believed the truth, never will. The vital truth of God and the fundamental principle on which it is founded have ever been distaste-

ful to man, for one prime reason: it robs man of any glory and places the invisible God preeminent in all things.

Of all creatures and things in existence man has the least right to boast or array himself in any way as prominent in the least things, or capable of even thinking a thought, much less putting one into execution, for man was the last manifestation in creation. Even the beasts of the field, grass and herbs, were brought into a manifest existence before man was, and man after being formed of earth, was an inanimate lump of clay until the Lord God breathed the breath of life into his nostrils and, he, man, became a living soul. Now since he has become a living soul by reason of the God-given breath he exalts himself above the Creator and limits the Holy One, circumscribes his movements and places him in an inferior position to man. If there is one thing God wishes to do or have done and he cannot do it or cause it to be done then he is not omnipotent. If there is anything, even the minutest detail that his all-seeing eye has not seen, even from ancient times, then he is not omniscient. If there is any vacuum in space that is not filled with his presence at any and all times, then he is not omnipresent, and many have borne false witness, for Bible writers declare these three attributes as belonging to him, and to no other. They who feel they can keep the law, or even a part of it, and reap a reward, in claiming this ability to procure a benefit for doing righteous acts and receiving blessings thereby, either in time or eternity, have broken the commandment that reads, ***"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor."*** For to say that salvation, all of it, or any part of it, for time or eternity is in any way conditional is bearing false witness against Christ and overthrowing the testimony of the holy men of old who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The teachings of Christ are in no uncertain terms. ***"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him."*** Here is a positive declaration of Christ that forever bars man coming of his own free will: he must be drawn. They are not drawn against their will, as some affirm that we believe. The psalmist says, " Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." God's ways are equal. When he draws one he makes that one willing. There is much could be written about one's willingness and acceptance. Of course God's people accept him and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. The elect according to the foreknowledge of God, are the only people that do, ever have or shall accept God the Father and his Son, or the salvation which he has wrought. When one talks about accepting Christ as his Savior and feels he can do something to aid his redemption or final preservation in glory, he has not accepted Christ, but he who is wholly

and solely dependent upon Christ for salvation, both now and forever, does accept him as his Savior. There is not a text in the whole Bible that can be claimed as foundation for conditionalism that is not to their destruction, for such *"they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."* Scripture means what it says; if not, it would say what it means. No mortal hated this doctrine more than the writer, but by hard and trying experiences, both in providence and grace, he learned that all power in heaven and earth is of God, and was given unto Jesus Christ, who is God manifest in the flesh, for the accomplishment of God's purpose in earth. Then if all power in heaven and earth, which is time or eternity, the church or the world, providence or grace, is in him it is a foregone conclusion, an undeniable *fact, that there IS none in man. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."* Are we going to doubt Jeremiah's word, *"the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath!"* who said, *"He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light."* Would any walk in sadness and affliction if it could be avoided! It was faith that Moses chose rather to suffer affiiction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Faith is the gift of God, therefore it was of God, and not of Moses, that he refused *to* be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Would Paul have been struck down and turned about in a career of which he was so zealous if left to his own will! Most assuredly not, for his will was to go to Damascus, but like all other of God's chosen, elect and precious, he was made willing in the day of God's power. This power revealed Jesus Christ, whom he was persecuting as an impostor, and now he sees *"Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor,"* as his Savior, and accepts him whom he had rejected, because a power over which he had no control smote him to the ground and blinded him. By the power and magnificence of *"the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ"* he was now willing to accept God the Father and God the Son. Now it was no wonder Paul could write the words at the beginning of our writing, *"To the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus."* Who are the faithful? They who are full of faith. These are the people to whom this writing is addressed and for whom it is kept, and it does not apply to the ones who feel they can help the Lord in his work, either for time or eternity. In sending, this message to the faithful he could boldly and freely speak of them as being chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. It is useless for man to speculate on such solemn

truths, or expect to reconcile them to reason. It is a senseless undertaking for one to try to make God's ways plain to any natural mind. Our finite mind cannot grasp the nearly six thousand years of time, then why dispute or attempt to explain away the mystery of that which took place before time began. There is no measure in eternity. Time and time things alone are measurable. As God is immeasurable, so are all his ways and attributes. Were his mercy or love measurable we would sometimes come to the limit and be without the mercy and law of God, but his mercy endureth forever and his love never fails. Because we cannot measure and understand God is no reason why we should deny the testimony of Paul, this faithful witness, who declares that God chose certain ones in Christ before the world was. It is essential that he did, and this being true there is a living unity between Christ and his people, for be was with the Father before the world was, and we were chosen in him. Then we must have been alive through him, or else he was then composed of dead members. It is not incredible then to one who sees God as sovereign to believe that all his people were foreknown and chosen in Christ Jesus before the world was, for when Christ came in the flesh he was just as verily God as he was verily man, God manifest in the flesh, otherwise he could not be seen, could not suffer, bleed and die; neither could he have been born of a virgin except in the flesh. When man starts out to make the Scripture plain and understandable to natural reason he has reached the height of folly. No man dares question the prerogative of God, for all he does is right. The very fact that he does it is positive proof it is right. It is according to the blessing of spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ that he chose us. It is a blessing, and not a recompense due us. For the children [Esau and Jacob] being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." It was said unto her (Rebecca), The elder shall serve the younger." ***"Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."*** One would necessarily have to blot out such Scriptures as these in order to establish a conditional salvation for either time or eternity, and when he has eliminated this truth he has no foundation on which to stand, much less to build. ***"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."*** The foundation of God is sure and unless we build on this foundation our building must surely fall, so why try to remove some of the foundation which God has laid and eliminate a timber or stone that is objectionable to the natural mind, or try to smooth over a rough place, or make this hard and unendurable doctrine a soft, pliant thing that any man can

bend about his finger to suit his own taste , Having faith in God no doctrine is too hard, and we glory in it because it abases man and exalts God. Makes us dependent creatures upon an independent God. By reason of the fact that God chose us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will, we were appointed to be children of God before time, and the appointing or choosing is done, the election is past. By an unchangeable purpose, irrevocable, impossible of change, sure and certainly all that were thus chosen are surely safe in him. Nothing that I can do can make me any other than the son of my father. Yet not for one moment does one of God's children wish to take advantage of this truth, or use it as a cloak for sin to excise his wrong doing. Being children there is a law and reverence and a desire to do that which is pleasing in his sight. Having seen his holiness we long to be holy as he is holy; we long to live right, being dead to sin, or separated from sin, by the blood of Jesus Christ which cleanseth us from all sin. We hate sin and hunger and thirst after righteousness. He saw all from the beginning, even the behavior of all men, nothing is hung on a contingency and nothing comes as a surprise, for each event is so fitted as to be in perfect harmony with its predecessor and successor, all things going along in the stupendous plan that God alone saw and determined, and he executes his decree according to the good pleasure of his unchangeable will. The doctrine of predestination of all things is so clear that it seems all could see it, but God did not determine that all should see. This doctrine does not in any way charge God with being the author of sin, for how can he who is above any law commit sin, for sin is the transgression of the law. Further, the fact that man is not able to resist sin is not a misdemeanor chargeable to the Creator, for even in this his purpose is so far beyond our finiteness we are lost in the infiniteness of his plan. He had as rich a purpose in the transgression of our foreparents as he had and has in everything else. In speaking of Pharaoh the wicked king, it is written, ***"And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth."*** To which Paul also refers in Romans. If God sees fit to manifest his power in this way what right has man to interfere , all the acts of God are alike good. Also we read of the suffering of Christ in which Peter says, ***"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."*** In type Joseph was also taken in the same way and sold into Egypt where he was evil treated, but afterwards he

could look at his brethren who had sold him and say, Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good, to save much people alive. It is because we cannot see far enough into God's plan, and lack of faith, that we cannot see and believe in the predestination of all things. God had some wise purpose in sin coming into the world, and remember this, had he not seen the awful consequences of sin, that it would condemn the whole world by the act of one man, he would not have prepared the antidote for Adam's transgression. ***"By one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."***

This is not contingent upon the act of any mortal, Christ alone could and did atone for all sin. ***"There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins."*** The atonement has been made by one offering by Christ himself without blemish or spot unto God, which is the only acceptable sacrificial offering for sin. ***"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."*** The perfect gift is Christ, the good gifts refers to the temporal blessings we enjoy in nature. God's plans are as unalterable as they are unchangeable; he having designed from all eternity the course of events as they come along. Knowing exactly what Adam would do, to prepare for this he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. As we were in Adam, so also then were all that ever should be born of the Spirit in Christ. We may take two apples, and before they are ever opened there are just so many seeds in each one. Manifesting them does not add nor diminish the number. The number is fixed. As in Adam there is a fixed number of people to be born on the earth, so there is also a fixed and certain number in Christ. There is not one thing by chance. No event too large to have been managed, designed and planned by him, nothing too finite to escape his decree. It is a truth that he will be glorified in all he does and in all that is done. ***"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."*** There are no teachings in the Bible to warrant the assertion that salvation for either time or eternity is contingent, or conditional, or that God is not sovereign, all-powerful, all-knowing, all-seeing. It is an admissible fact that if we do certain things the result will be so and so. If we fall into the water we shall get wet. If we put our hand into the fire we shall be burned. ***"If we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."*** No one denies the " if " in this, but this does not alter the predetermined

act, step or thought of any man, being, or thing ; neither do we have the ability to alter our course, and the fact that one does or does not do a thing is proof positive that they were to have done, or refrained from doing, the thing. If by the grace of God we refrain from an evil act, it is done by his grace, and we are not rewarded for doing, but in the doing we have our reward ; and, further, this does not frustrate the eternal plan of God. It is the only sure foundation upon which one can rest. Inasmuch as God saw and foreknew all things and determined this course, he saw who would and who would not live a godly life and walk carefully. There is no disposition on the part of a child of God to enjoy the pleasures of sin, for being made dead to sin he has no desire to live any longer therein, but longs to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Even while in this ungodly world he longs to keep unspotted by its evils, even though he be ostracized and have to live alone. There is no pleasure in the transient things of this existence, for there is a continual longing of the heart, soul and mind to be at rest. The only support we have here is the hope that is in mercy given us in Christ Jesus, that we are children, and if children, heirs, joint heirs with Christ: The plan of God is so sure and certain that all hell, with it's legions of tormenting devils, can never pluck us out of his hand, but all for whom he died, which were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, are eternally safe. This, then, is our rest, our only rest in this life. May the Lord enlighten his people that they be not entangled with unsound doctrine.

F. S. FISHER.

HEBREWS X. 23-25.

"LET us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) and let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching!"

A member asked us about six months ago to write using as our subject the words: ***"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is."*** This member having observed some whose attitude towards attending their meetings seemed of more or less secondary consideration was rightfully deeply concerned. It is a matter which calls for self-examination on the part of each and every member of every true Old School Baptist Church throughout our entire country. The life of each member of the visible church should be as a lighted candle placed on the candlestick; it should not be put under a bushel, or submerged be-

neath the things of this world, all of which do but perish with the using. The kernel, or substance, of our Lord and Savior, by word of mouth and the life that he lived while here in the flesh, was *"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto yon."* In that great and wonderful address, his sermon on the Mount, the place where he had gone apart from the multitudes, *"when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them,"* saying, *"Be not ye therefore like unto them [the heathen]: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him."* How prone we are to forget that the hand of Providence supplies our temporal needs. We have to be reminded from time to time that the gold and the silver are his; that the cattle which graze upon a thousand hills are the Lord's; yea, the world and all that in it is, and that it is he who clothes the lilies of the field, whose hand feeds the lone sparrow upon the housetop; and, if not a sparrow can fall without him, will he not give his children bread" The great apostle declares in our text that " he is faithful that promised." Do we really believe and act out the belief that the Lord is our shepherd. The good Shepherd will surely provide for his sheep; he will cause them to lie down in green pastures and lead them beside the still waters. But, those of us who profess to love the Lord in sincerity and in truth, are we holding fast the profession of our faith without wavering? Do we show by a well ordered walk and godly conversation that we are the Lord's, or is our service only of the lip? Is it consistent to say, Lord, Lord, in the meetinghouse and then engage in worldly conversation and jesting until meeting time again; Do we live daily so as to prove that we have been with and learned of Jesus and that our treasure is in heaven? How searching and solemn should these questions be. And do we consider one another to prove unto love and to good works? The apostle says we should do these things. Jesus said, *"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."* What was under consideration was, *"I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat : I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me."* These things are accomplished among the saints when they are assembled together and communicating one with another, as those who receive can well testify, even though those who give or minister are unaware of it. The servant which Abraham sent to take a wife unto his son, Isaac, went questioning and praying, but when he was convinced that the Lord had prospered his journey, *"he bowed down his*

head, and worshipped the Lord," saying, ***"Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." "I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of Thy Master's brethren."*** This deserves to be repeated again and again. Only those who have been in the way and have experienced it know of a truth the joy which is inexpressible and full of glory that is witnessed by those who are raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord. Such characters were said to have been quickened, made alive; their affection was set on things above, not on things on the earth, and they were seeking, yea, as for hidden treasure, those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. The psalmist said, : ***"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."*** Where such scenes are beheld there is no lack of the brethren assembling themselves together; meeting time does not come too often, but rather it seems Sundays are too far apart, even when they are privileged to have meeting every Sunday. Is not the true test of the fruit of the Spirit considering one another and provoking unto love and to good works? Let us pause for a moment and analyze the definition of the word "consider." Does it not mean that we are constantly, yea, every waking moment, as it were, thinking good concerning those we love and endeavoring in every way to show them kindness and manifest our affection? Such provokes unto love and to good works, for love begets love, and the brethren would do well to remember this and bridle their tongues lest they poison the mind of one another against a brother, at the same time walking so as not to offend a weak brother. Paul says, ***"Let us [the household of faith] consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is."*** So we are not only told what to do, but what not to do, this showing that the holy Scriptures, which were given by inspiration of God, throughly and thoroughly furnish unto all good works. While the manner of some is indifference, coldness, walking in the course of this world, the riches whereof choke out the good seed, the exhortation is not to be as they are, but rather to live righteously, soberly, to visit the fatherless and the widows and to keep ourself unspotted from the world. This, James says, is pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father. Old Baptists of all people, need to study to show themselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. They should

search the Scriptures, to know what they teach, both as to doctrine and order, which go hand in hand. David said, ***"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful: but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night."*** It is truly good to think and talk upon the things of the upper kingdom. One said, ***"My heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue, Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am."*** We often think of a band of brethren, three churches composing an association, where they have no regular pastor or minister, only a visitor usually once a year, and yet these brethren are very much alive; they assemble themselves together and talk and sing of the things of Jesus; the theme of their conversation is truly heavenly, and the Lord is wonderfully blessing them with an outpouring of his Holy Spirit, which has been evidenced by an ingathering of twelve during the past three years. This is referred to by way of encouraging churches" that may be without undershepherds or supplies. By way of contrast, we would also call attention to another band of most lovely brethren, among them being (we think) a gifted brother, and yet they seldom meet. Is it not a mistake? Are they not forsaking the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is as the apostle says they should not do? These things are referred to for the earnest consideration of the brethren. We like to see the brethren holding fast the profession of their faith without wavering. We can never tell what time or by whom the Lord will send a message. It is not always necessary for one ordained of men to be present. At best man is but an earthen vessel and the Lord must fill the mouth before It can speak forth his praise, and ***"God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform."*** Therefore let us be found in the way; who can tell but what the Lord will lead us to the house of our Master's brethren ***"Let us be found assembling ourselves together, exhorting one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching. If we rightly discern*** "the signs of the times," there is no mistaking that these are the days prophesied of when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. It is the time when God's called and qualified ministers should ***"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with long-suffering and doctrine."*** The true soldier must stand his ground and meet the enemies of truth; he must put on the whole armor of God

that he may be able to stand the wiles of the devil. The warfare in which he is engaged calls for the helmet of salvation, the breastplate of righteonsness, the girdle of truth, the shield of faith, and his feet to be shed with the preparation of the gospel of peace, for the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; it is not by might, nor by power, *"but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."* Let us therefore take *" the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,"* and go forth to victory. If we are ever brought forth more than conquerors it will be through him that loved us and gave himself for us. This is that new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh, that the apostle is writing to the Hebrews about in the chapter wherein is found our text. He begins his epistle by saying, *"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son."* He was the true substance of all the law had shadowed forth. It was not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin, so the Lamb of God was slain from the foundation of the world, in the purpose of God, as a propitiation for the sins of his people and by this *"one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."* This is all our hope and we are determined not to know anything *"among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."* Jesus said, *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life."* Again, *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber."* God forbid that we should be as Ananias and Sapphira, who *"kept back part of the price."* There are those in the world today who are professing to love the Lord with all their heart, &c., who declare boldly they have forsaken the world for the *"pearl of great price,"* and almost with the same breath contend that only eternal salvation is of God, and that salvation in time is of men. In the apostle Peter's day those who were guilty of such had to give up the ghost and were carried out and buried. These are perilous times and there are many who are departing from the way of the Lord, but the faithful in Christ Jesus will not be found among the number, they are to hold to the profession of their faith without wavering. Therefore let the pastors be ensamples to the flock over which God hath made them the overseers; let them be faithful in doctrine, in order, in practice, and shun not to declare unto them all the counsel of God. Likewise, members, be faithful in holding up the hands of your servant; support him in the manner set forth in the Scriptures and encourage him by your presence at meeting; let it be seen that you do delight in the law of God after the inward man. We can speak feelingly from

experience and say that we thank God continually for having surrounded us with faithful brethren, who have not forsaken the assembling of themselves together. Many, many times have we wondered that they should continue to come out, but therein their faithfulness has been manifested. We do not know how we could have gotten along thus far without them. Surely God has been better to us than all our fears. May he give us all to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering!" forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Finally brethren, Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhort one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching.

R. Lester Dodson

MEETINGS

PAYNES CREEK CHURCH

Starting with the first Sunday in June- the 3rd. The Paynes Creek meeting time will change to 2:30 p.m. Singing and preaching at 3:00 p.m.

We invite all our Brothers and Sisters to be with us.

Elder Wm. Hale Terry, Pastor

CONTRIBUTIONS

Priddy Shaw-VA 5.00
M. H. Brown-AL 25.00
Ted McDaniel-VA 100.00
Pauline Jones -TX 5.00
Walter Craft - WV 5.00
J. D. Neely -AR 5.00
In memory of Mamie Sullivan
Nannie Quarles -AL 25.00
Mary Janney-VA 5.00
Jerry Mourer-AR 200.00
Charles Matthews -LA 35.00
R. T. Jacks-AL 5.00
Pauline Toney-MS 5.00
In memory of Ethlene Watson
Gerry Compton-NC 25.00
Helen Stewart -NC 5.00
James Carr-VA 50.00

OBITUARIES

LETTIE MAE WILLIAMS FLOOD

On Tuesday, February 22, 2007, God called home our sister in Christ, Sister Lettie Mae Flood.

Sister Flood was born September 2, 1918 in Edgecombe County, North Carolina. She was the daughter of Joseph John Williams and Mamie Lancaster Williams, who preceded her in death. She was also preceded in death by her husband of 37 years, Charlie Daniel Flood, as well as her five brothers: Milton,

Joseph Floyd, Thomas Earl, Roscoe Elijah and Rufus Williams. She is survived by her cousin, Sister Lessie Lancaster and several nieces and nephews.

Sister Flood asked for a home at Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church on January 22, 1949. She was baptized in the Tar River at the Falls by the late Elder A. B. Denson.

Sister Flood lived a humble life and was a faithful member, going to church regularly as long as her health permitted. She was always there to help clean the church and do whatever she could to help when she was able. As long as she could drive, she would visit those she had known as family, friends and neighbors. Sister Flood has already been missed, even before her passing, as she had resided for the last three and a half years in Guardian Care Nursing Home in Rocky Mount, NC.

Elder Cleo Robertson held the graveside services on Sunday, February 25, 2007 at the family cemetery in Edgecombe County, NC, where Sister Flood was laid to rest beside her husband.

May we all be blessed to look to our Lord, the author and the finisher of our faith.

This obituary has been written for the church records, *The Signs of the Times,* and a copy for the family and submitted at the request of Pleasant Hill Church in conference on March 25, 2007 by:

Sister Peggy V. Brake

ELDER HENRY CLAY JONES

Sept. 20, 1924 — Oct. 17, 2006

Elder Henry C. Jones has been called home at the age of 82. A devoted member of Pleasant Hill Church, near Rocky Mount, N. C., having been received into the fellowship of the church on Sunday, November 27, 1955 and baptized on the same day by Elder C. Norman Bunn.

Elder Jones was strong in his belief and always ready to stand steadfast for what he believed. The brethren of the church saw the gift of a servant in him and he was ordained a deacon on July 27, 1958 with Elders C. Norman Bunn, A. P. Mewborn, and Johnnie Joyner presiding. In due time, it was obvious that Brother Jones felt burdened to speak and was used as a lay speaker at home and among the sister churches until it was made known the brethren at home and abroad were ready to ordain him to the ministry which took place on February 25, 1968 with Elders C. Norman Bunn, A. P. Mewborn, and Johnnie Joyner presiding. At Elder Bunn's death in May, 1972 Pleasant Hill Church called him to serve as pastor of the church on November 25, 1972 which he faithfully did until his death. He also served the following sister churches for a period of time: Lower Town Creek, Williams, Providence, Skewarky, Smithwicks Creek, and since 1985 he had been serving the Tarboro Church.

He enjoyed his church affiliations and was always eager to be in the meetings at home and visiting sister churches. Going to the associational meetings was always a special joy for him. He looked forward to those times and when his health permitted was always making plans to visit an association. He was well known among the brethren in North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, and perhaps places that I do not recall. Many brethren expressed a special love for him. I'm sure he has been missed by the brethren in recent years while his health was deteriorating and hindered his traveling a distance.

Elder Jones was married to 'Tilda Lancaster Jones for 61 years. They were not blessed with children but were extremely devoted to each other. The last few years found Brother Jones in failing health and in and out of hospitals at home and out of town at times. 'Tilda was always with him at his bedside night and day. When he was away from home, so was she.

In addition to his wife, Elder Jones is survived by one brother, Charlie Lawrence Jones and wife, Virginia, of Newport News, Virginia, the Lancaster family who he was very close to, four nieces, and his church family who reside nearby and far off.

A funeral service was conducted in Bowling Funeral Home, Rocky Mount, North Carolina by Elders Joseph Sawyer and Harold Pittman. His body was laid to rest in the Williams Family Cemetery near Sharpsburg, North Carolina to await the second coming of Christ our Savior, at which time Brother Henry had a fervent hope that he would be carried to that eternal home of peace and joy.

His absence has left a vacancy that will be with us for some time to come. God called him to fill his place and he has completed the call. Now we are thankful for the dear Elders who have come to rescue us and help to make us at Pleasant Hill feel there is still purpose for us to move forward. We know they will fill their places and Brother Henry's place will still be void. We beg your prayers.

This obituary has been written at the request of Pleasant Hill Church in conference October 22, 2006. A copy to be placed on the church records, one sent to *The Signs of the Times* for publication, and one to the family.

J. Carroll Williams
Elder Jimmy Gray, Moderator
J. Carroll Williams, Clerk

MATTHEW 6:21-22.

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

Signs of the Times

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" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

"The Lord has been so good to me
I want to praise His name
His mercy long has been my plea
His grace I would proclaim.

Yea though of sinner I'm the worst
Still I desire to praise
The gracious God who loved me first
To Him my voice I'll raise.

I pray the Lord that I might see
Myself released from sin.
It's burden long has harassed me,
How sore a plague is sin!

I long to leave this world of woe
And with my Savior reign
Where self no longer is my foe
And I am free from pain."

Composed by Joyce Pittman
Sent in by her mother,
Sister Mae Williams

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EDITORIAL

"Your Father Abraham Rejoiced to See My Day: and He Saw It, and Was Glad." John 8:56

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

Recorded in John 8:56-58 are the words, ***"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."***

What manner of man is this? The prophet Isaiah said He had no form nor comeliness and no beauty that we should desire Him. He was despised and rejected of men. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. He bare the sins of all His people in His own body on the tree of the cross. Yet, He was God in the flesh, ***"for in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."*** He had all power. He knew all things that were to come to pass because He had purposed them and ordained them. He was the Word that was in the beginning, that was with God and that was God. He was the One by whom all things were made and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life. Even the wind and the sea obeyed Him. No man took His life from Him, but He willingly layed it down because of the great love wherewith He loved His elect. He had power to lay it down and He had power to take it up again. But His body of flesh, without sin, was a veil that the carnal eye could not penetrate nor the carnal mind comprehend. There were some such as Peter to whom this man was revealed as Christ, the Son of the living God. However, many of the Jews were not blessed to believe in Him and in fact, despised Him and desired to kill Him. But His hour had not yet come and they could not lay their hands on Him.

On the occasion of the above scripture, the Pharisees were con-

tending with Jesus over who He said that He was and who His father was. They said that Abraham was their father and seemed to believe that this natural tie of the flesh entitled them to be the children of God. But Jesus told them that He knew they were the seed of Abraham; and He also said, *"If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But, now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father."* Then, they began to profess that they had but one father, which was God. They had no understanding of this One who stood before them. No man can come to the Father, but by Christ and no man can come to Him, except the Father which sent Christ draw him. For the Father and Christ are one. Very bluntly, Jesus said that they were of their father, the devil. He was a murderer and a liar from the beginning.

Then, Jesus told them that Abraham rejoiced to see His day, and he saw it, and was glad. They had no idea of what He was speaking. They replied that Jesus was not even fifty years old and how could He have seen Abraham. They only knew Jesus after the flesh. They knew nothing of Him spiritually because He did not reveal Himself to them. The world today knows nothing of Him spiritually. They have never experienced His love and mercy. Psalm 107 says, *"O Give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good: for His mercy endured for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy."* The redeemed of the Lord are the only ones who can say the Lord is good because they are the only ones who have experienced His love and mercy. Jesus told them that before Abraham was, I am. God is under no law nor time. There is no past nor any future with Him. It is an eternal now. He is the eternal I AM THAT I AM. As written in Exodus 3:13-15, *"And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, what is his name? What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM; and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations."* Our finite carnal minds cannot begin to comprehend this name of God. He had no beginning and has no end. He doesn't age as we do. He is the same yesterday, and today, and forever. Therefore, in

heaven, His people will not age, but dwell with Him in one eternal now.

When God commanded Abraham to take his only son Isaac (Genesis 22:2) whom he loved and offer him for a burnt offering, He gave Abraham the faith to believe God and that God would provide. So Abraham took Isaac and two young men and began their journey to this certain mountain. This was Mount Moriah upon which some 1,000 years yet to come Solomon would build the temple and yet another some 1,000 years Christ would hang on the cross. So it was not by chance or accident that Abraham was commanded to offer Isaac on this particular mountain, but by the divine purpose of this holy and all powerful God. On the third day, Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off. I believe that Abraham saw more than just a natural mountain. The third day sets forth the gospel day, the day of grace. On the third day, Christ rose from the dead, having fulfilled the righteous, holy law of God to a jot and tittle. With the law having been fulfilled, the day of grace had come. Abraham was given an eye of faith to behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world as He hung on the cross on this very mountain some 2,000 years in the future. Abraham saw the day of Jesus Christ. He saw the place afar off. Therefore, he could tell the two young men to wait there and he and Isaac would go yonder and worship and would come again to them.

As Abraham and Isaac journeyed toward the mountain on which God had commanded him to offer his son, Isaac asked his father, ***"Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Abraham answered, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering."*** By faith Abraham was given to see the day of Jesus Christ and to proclaim that God will provide Himself a lamb for the offering. Christ stood a lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Revelation 5:6 and 13:8). The holy, righteous law of God required a holy, righteous sacrifice to satisfy it. No one of Adam's race was qualified. ***"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." "There is none righteous, no, not one."*** Therefore, God sent His own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, to condemn sin in the flesh that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. As Abraham bound Isaac and laid him upon the wood on the altar and reached for the knife, the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven and said, ***"Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me."*** When Abraham looked up, he saw a ram caught in a thicket by his horns. The ram was a type of Christ and I believe the horns set

forth the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Acts 2:23 says that He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Abraham rejoiced to see His day and he saw it, and was glad.

You, dear children of the heavenly King, also rejoiced to see the day of your beloved Savior and you saw it, and were glad. When the Lord imputed His righteous, holy law into you and you were brought down in condemnation to see yourself as a sinner and the vilest of sinners, you felt your lost condition and were given to know that you could not keep the law. As the Apostle Paul said, ***"For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"*** Then, the Lord appears as the Sun of righteousness as He arises with healing in His wings. Therefore, you shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. You experience the warmth of His comfort and peace in His love and mercy. As calves of the stall, you are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Works of the flesh are done away and grace has come. The Lord feeds you with the bread from heaven which is Christ, the bread of life. As you are calves of the stall, God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Having seen by faith the day of Jesus Christ, you can witness with Psalm 31:7, ***"I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy."***

May the God of all grace continue with each of you is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

VOICES OF THE PAST

Perdita Lowe,
Mt. Airy, N.C.

Dear Brother Denny:

My mind has been impressed for sometime to write a few lines to the "Landmark" in regard to my afflictions and the 'dealings of the Lord with me.

I was born June 1st, 1879 and when I was about 3 years old I had an attack of typhoid fever, which left me with an obscure disease which kept me weak and prevented my recovery; and thought I was able to go about and do some work, yet I could not feel well and strong, or recover my health again. In this enfeebled state I lingered till Jan. 15th., 1898, when I was taken sick in bed and have been in a helpless condition more or less ever since.

I am now 47 years of age-nearly 19 years of activity and 28 years of invalidism. .

In my long and continued sickness I have almost forgotten what it

is to be able to go about where I please, and can hardly imagine just how I felt when I could go about with my sister to church and mingle in society.

I live on the farm and, before confinement, spent much of my time out of doors, working in the field when able, and sometimes doing around the house.

I loved outdoor life, but confinement seemed to me the most dreadful thing imaginable. Soon after I was taken sick, I had to limit my diet to a few articles of food which I could not relish and avoid such food as my appetite craved. During the first year of confinement I had strength enough to walk, and walked out into the yard a few times which caused me much suffering, yet it was hard to give up so long as I had strength to go. After many futile attempts to get up, and walk, when feeling my best, which made me worse each time and rendered me less able, I had to give up and remain in bed. But this was hard to do and I spent many sleepless nights mourning over my fate and the awful condition I was in. Through the day I could pass away the time comparatively well by keeping my mind occupied, and my hands busy knitting, crocheting, sewing and many other little things which I soon learned to do in a horizontal position.

But at the approach of evening when the shadows grew long, I dreaded to see the sun go down, for it seemed to me I should never see it rise again. The long and wearisome nights seemed dreadful, and the little sleep I could get was not refreshing.

Sometimes I would feel smothered, and breathing so difficult that I would have to struggle for breath all night and get no sleep at all, and medicine did me no good. I tried to take an interest in everything going on around me and tried to be helpful whenever there was anything I could do. On Sunday mornings it was my delight to help my little sisters dress and get ready to go abroad or to church and I was busy and happy till I watched them leave, then I would feel so lonesome and as I thought of the days passed when I was able to go, my heart would get so heavy I would have to cover my face and give way to bitter weeping. But weeping over my lamentable condition only weakened my nervous system, and rendered me less able to withstand my disease.

As I felt my nerves giving away, my thoughts scattered, a deep depression of mind, and other systems which indicate insanity, I was convinced that if I proceeded further in this course, I should soon lose my mind. My condition was deplorable; but it could be worse; I could be insane, a condition which seemed to me most awful, the contemplation of which made me shudder and feel that I could endure almost anything if only I could keep my right mind. Thus I reasoned and at length re-

solved to put forth every effort possible to throw off my troubles, and stop mourning over my fate which I could not possibly alter. I would try to look on the bright side of everything and instead of brooding over my calamities, I would try to think of something for which I ought to be thankful. I would grasp every opportunity I had to pass away my troubles. I tried to enforce a cheerful disposition, especially when my friends were about to encourage me, which I soon found to be an excellent tonic to my weak nerves.

I was so successful in my attempts at cheerfulness that some of my friends seemed to think that I was comparatively contented and happy in this miserable condition. They would frequently ask me if I did ever try to get up and then add. *"There is nothing like a resolution,"* which very much annoyed me, remembering as I did the awful things which I had suffered in my attempts to get up and go in this diseased condition. I prayed for strength and courage to face all trials, mount all difficulties, and overcome every obstacle, and prevent my falling again into despair.

When a child I had a vague idea of heaven and the joys of that world to come. I understood it was a happy place where all the good and righteous would be gathered when they left this world. I had a seriousness of mind, even when a child, and loved to hear others talk of that beautiful world beyond. I thought when I grew older and learned to read it would be delightful to read about Christ and the world above. I felt out of harmony with my surroundings here in this low ground of sorrow, sickness and dying and rejoiced in the thought of a perfect home where no death could ever come. I thought I would try to live right and be good and make certain of that happy state after death.

I always enjoyed hearing the good old songs, and when the family had gathered around the fireside at night, nothing pleased me better than to hear my father call for the hymn book, then my father and mother and older sisters, would join in singing beautiful hymns, which I enjoyed immensely. My mother had a beautiful voice and my father had a good bass voice, and it was delightful to hear them mingle their voices in such songs as: O happy day when saints shall meet; O when shall I see Jesus and reign with Him above; Come we that love the Lord, which were among their favorite songs. But now their voices are silent. My mother and father have long since left earth's cares and tribulations and gone to their reward. My brother and sisters, too, have left the old home and gone into homes of their own ; only one dear sister remaining to attend my wants and share my troubles, and comfort me in my afflictions. The memories of those songs and fireside conversation are the sweetest of my childhood days.

As I grew older and learned to read and study my bible, which was my greatest delight, I found that it was not so easily understood as I had anticipated. But I learned that the hopes of a home beyond the grave, the thoughts of which had filled my childish mind and brightened my youthful days, were for those only who had been regenerated and born again; and as I could not point to a time when I had such a radical change in my feeling, I was convinced that I was yet in my sins, and an alien from God, in darkness, and in the shadows of death. The future looked so dark to me, and at that time I was in very bad health and felt that I could not live long and would soon die and pass into the unknown. I would often ask myself the question-if I should die tonight, where would I be? I tried to pray but the spirit that giveth utterance to prayer was not manifest in me. For several years I mourned over my lost condition and went about my daily occupation with a heavy heart. and a soul longing for peace with God and a knowledge of His will. About a year after I was taken sick, one evening in Jan. 1899, my heart began to feel very heavy, and after the family had retired I tried to pray, but the darkness grew deeper and all was darkness around me, and I could see that I was in the shadows of death; out of Christ and without God in the world; and for a moment I felt that I was cut off forever, and could never be numbered with the redeemed, or come into the congregation of the righteous. Just then the light sprung up within my heart to lighten my way and manifested the scriptures to me and many passages of scriptures which I had learned by heart, but could not understand their meaning, were opened to me, so much so, I longed for day when I could read my bible, as I could understand it so much better than I ever could before. ***"For God who commandeth the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. 4-6.*** I thought of the Lord's parables of the kingdom of heaven: ***"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hid in a field, the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field."***

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman, seeking goodly pearls; who, when he had found one of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it." Matthew 13 :44, 45, 46. Even so I felt that I could give up all the world for this little hope. I spent the night in sweet meditation.

After I had been confined for several years, I longed to hear the sound of preaching again.

About this time Elder J. A. Ashburn (now deceased) called to see me, and in our conversation I

asked him to have preaching at my home as I wished to hear him preach once more. He left an appointment for Christmas eve night. I looked forward to the time, and it was delightful to hear preaching and singing again. His sermon was very interesting, and I well remember his text, ***"It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing." John 6:63.***

When I had been sick about 12 years they bought me a wheel chair which enabled me to go out to preaching. I well remember the first time I went to Stony Creek, (a church organized since my confinement) a short distance from my home, and as I neared the church I heard them singing, which made me feel very happy. It was my first time to hear Elder F. P. Stone preach.

He preached so comforting and the singing sounded so good. It was delightful to be with my friends in the house of worship. I continued able to go to church about 4 or 5 years and looked forward to the meeting days, and always tried to go when the weather would permit it.

In Feb. 1911, my father died, and the, next day after he was buried my mother was taken sick, and lived about 3 weeks when she, too, was laid to rest beside my father. This was a terrible strain on my nerves, and seemed to me the darkest period of my life. My home was broken up and could never be the same again. But the Lord who has carried me over all my trouble gave me strength to endure and has preserved me unto this day.

On the 3rd Sunday in November, 1912, I related my experience to the church and was received into fellowship with them and on the 3rd Sunday in June following, I was baptized in Stony Creek on my chair by Elders G. O. Key and F. P. Stone, the pastor. Soon after this I was again confined to my bed and have remained helpless ever since. I have not walked a step in over 27 years, and cannot even sit up in bed.

Before closing, I will mention some scripture which has been a consolation to me in my afflictions, and to which often referred when in deep distress: ***"For which cause we faint not, though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." 2 Cor. 4:16, 17. "My brethren count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire wanting nothing." James 1:2, 3, 4.***

"They that sow in tears shall reap in Joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." Psalms, 126:56.

For His anger endureth but a moment, in his favor is life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. Psalms 3:5.

I try to be reconciled to the will of the Lord, and put all my trust in Him, ***"and commit the keeping of my soul to Him, in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator," "knowing that all things work together for good to them that love God,"*** and feel to say with the patriarch of old ***"The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh; blessed be the name of the Lord."***

Your sister in hope of a better life,

Perdita Lowe,

THE PRODIGAL SON
Luke, XV.

In reply to the request of Sister Conner, found on page 440 of this issue of the MONITOR, we offer the following thoughts, First, it will be observed that the Savior is here addressing himself to the Pharisees and scribes, who were a very self-righteous people. They embellished the outside of the sepulcher, but the greatest of disorder reigned within. When they saw ***"all the publicans and sinners"*** coming to Jesus, though they sought with humble modesty an opportunity to learn of the precious doctrine he taught, they were disposed to criticize, saying, ***"This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them."*** This was an offense to them. They esteemed very highly their boasted dignity, and looked in great contempt upon those the Savior had now made his companions. It was too much for their wounded pride. Evidently they greatly mistook his mission into this world of suffering humanity, as do many to this day. He therefore spake three parables to them, which are recorded in this chapter, in which he draws his lessons from the analogies of human nature and circumstances current in daily life.

His mission was to save the lost. Not what is safe, but what is lost is the just occasion of his laboring in finding and joy upon recovering. This is clearly brought out in the three parables. ***"There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, more than ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."*** Then why should he not receive publicans and sinners, however wicked they may have been, when they come to him bringing fruits meet for repentance? And thus with strong emphasis he clearly vindicates his kind treatment, sympathy, and love for poor sinners ***"Even so it is not the will of our Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish;" Matt., xviii, 14.***

The inference is not to be drawn from what is said in the seventh verse concerning the "just," that there are any who were never lost and never needed repentance. The Savior is here reasoning with the

Pharisees and scribes upon common principles, as much as to say, You think you are all right, safe within the fold, why find fault with me for finding and saving the lost? How sharp his rebuke to them. Instead of giving them a word of commendation, he rebukes them for their selfish pride in the good opinion they had of themselves. It is a bad fault when one gets to thinking more highly of himself than he ought to think, but let him think soberly and he will feel very humble and little. He will esteem any of his brethren more worthy of attention than himself.

The prodigal son represents to us what the Savior saw in those publicans and sinners who so earnestly came to him for the living bread, feasting upon his words which were to them spirit and life; John, vi, 63. And for all this younger son had shamefully and prodigally wasted all his substance, bringing shame and poverty, ruin and desolation upon himself, until he fain would have nourished his famishing body *"with the husks that the swine did eat,"* yet he is not to be denied the blessings of a loving father's hand, a merciful father moved with tenderest sympathy for his sorrowing, repenting child. There is joy at his returning. The father is made happy. Such is the undying love of him who says to poor sinners, who are ready to perish, *"Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved,) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, [mercy], in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."* With endearing love to the Father the soul responds quickly, *"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. We were prodigals sure enough, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls."*

The elder son is taken to represent the Pharisees and scribes who were displeased when Jesus so readily received the poor souls of want-publicans and sinners. This parable he gives to them by way of reproof, to show the envy and wickedness of their hearts. How, like the Pharisee who boasts of himself and glories in his own obedience are these words of the elder son; *"Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandments."* Those who fear they are better than others are very apt to speak of it. They even at times boast before the Lord as if he were really brought under obligation to them. How vain and presumptious is the proud heart of

man until God breaks it in pieces. One has said, ***"Those that think highly of themselves and their services, are apt to think hardly of their master, and meanly of his favors."***

In Conclusion we would say to any that have gone out from their Father's house and ***"began to be in want,"*** Do not think you can be satisfied on husks. You may have promised yourself satisfaction, but you will as certainly find disappointment as you are a child of God. In vain do you apply to the world for help, for they haven't that to give that will feed and nourish the child of God. You are away from your Father's house; cut off from its privileges you can not be contented and happy. Have you thought how much it would be to your interest to go home to your own kindred? In your Father's house there is abundant provision to supply all his children, and strangers do not want it. We are not debtors to the flesh, we are under no obligations to Babylon, but may say, ***"I will arise and go to my Father."***

R. W. Thompson

WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH THE CHURCH AND WORLD?

Having been ordained as a minister of the gospel, and having done some writing and much reading, I am asked over and over again as to why there is so much disagreement in the church and the world.

Some people seem to believe that all Christian people should be in perfect agreement on all points of doctrine, and practice, and that unless it is so, there is something radically wrong with religion.

Since it is evident that there was lack of perfect understanding, in the days of Christ's ministry here in the world, and especially so in the Apostolic age, can we expect perfect harmony in this age?

My opinion is, and has been, that as long as men are men, self opinionated, selfish, self willed, there will be conflictions of opinion.

What is the remedy? John said, in chapter 3, verses 3, etc., answering Nicodemus, who said to Jesus, ***"Rabbi, we know thou art a teacher sent from God, for no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him."***

Jesus answered and said unto him, "Verily, verily, I say upto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of Heaven of God." Nicodemus said, ***"How can a man be born when he is old?"***

Jesus answered, ***"Verily, verily. I say unto thee. except a man be born of water and of the spirit. he cannot enter the Kingdom of God."***

Jesus said, "That which is born of the, flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.

Does not this answer the question? Why are men in disagreement so generally?

By the natural birth of Christ,

and the world at large, born under the law, and justly condemned by the law, a remedy is the only escape from the curse of the law and Jesus alone, the sinless one made that perfect and acceptable remedy effectual. In Him alone is the righteousness of the family of God.

The New Birth, through Christ the Head, thus fulfilling the glorious covenant of redemption, the lawful captives are set free, and can sing free grace, first, last and through all time.

Jesus continued as the teacher sent from God, saying, ***"Marvel not that I said unto thee" "Ye must be born again."***

And this explains why unconverted men everywhere trust in the flesh, and fleshly engagements, and have no confidence in spiritual worship.

Jesus explains how this spiritual worship, and conduct is brought about.

Said He, ***"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence to cometh and whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit."***

The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto Him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Does not this answer the question? Men, in nature, act out the principle that is in him and the Spiritual judgeth all things. (Ist Cor. 2 :14-15).

The things of the Spirit are only understood by those who have been taught of the Lord. The worldly-minded man cannot understand, those who have been taught of the Lord. The worldly minded man cannot understand that there is a difference among men, some Spiritually minded, humble, meek, lowly in Spirit, beggars at a throne of grace, imploring the Mercy of God, upon their unworthy head, while there are many, in the broad way that leads to death, feeling that they are better than others, and yet we are taught that there is a straight and narrow way that leads to life, and immortality. And while it is said, ***"Few there be that find It, the Book of Revelations records John's vision which he says HE SAW FIRST AN HUNDRED. AND FORTY AND FOUR THOUSAND of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel He then saw them come from every land, nation, kindred, tongue and people, AN INNUMERABLE Host WITH THEIR ROBES MADE WHITE IN THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB."***

So, let God be true, and every man a liar. ***"We are saved by hope, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but we are taught that as long as we are in the world, we will be subject to temptation, and that even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to-wit, the REDEMPTION OF OUR BODIES, FOR WE ARE SAVED BY***

HOPE, but hope that is seen is not hope, but if for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. ***"LIKEWISE THE SPIRIT ALSO HELPETH our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the SPIRIT ITSELF MAKETH INTERCESSION FOR US WITH GROANINGS WHICH CANNOT BE UTTERED."***

"And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is in the mind of the SPIRIT, BECAUSE HE MAKETH INTERCESSION FOR THE SAINTS ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF GOD."

"What shall we say to these things IF GOD BE FOR US, WHO CAN BE AGAINST US?" "WHO SHALL SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through HIM THAT LOVED US, FOR I AM PERSUADED THAT, NEITHER DEATH, NOR LIFE, NOR ANGELS, NOR POWERS, NOR THINGS PRESENT, NOR THINGS TO COME, NOR HEIGHT, NOR DEPTH, NOR ANY OTHER CREATURE, SHALL SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF GOD, WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD. (Rom. 8th. Ch.)

It is enough.

O.J. Denny

"LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED"

"Let not your heart be troubled ; ye believe in God, believe also in me."

Jesus was soon to depart, and sought to comfort His disciples, and to prepare their minds against the time when He was to go home, and described to them the person, and grace of the Holy Ghost, which He promised to send, to comfort them. Read John 14, 1st to 7th vs.

As a dying father, surrounded by his family, standing on the threshhold of the eternal world, He spake these comforting words: ***"Let not your heart be troubled."*** He, in this quiet hour shortly before His crucifixion, teaches the eternal nature of the God-head and His oneness with the Father, as He is the way, the truth and the life of all the children of promise.

Jesus assures them of His unceasing love for them and knows that after His departure they are to be kept by the Father, and the Son through the visitation of the Holy Spirit, unto the last and final day. And in the second verse, ***"I go to prepare a place for you."*** He said to them, ***"It is expedient that I go, and, if I go, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also."***

"He did not promise that He would send for them, that they might long to go to that home that He was to prepare for them; but said, I, will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am ye may be also." They were troubled in spirit; but Jesus assures them that it is expedient and for their good, that He was leaving them in person; but not in spirit, for He is ever watchful over His children, never leaving them nor forsaking them; but as a good shepherd, keepeth watch over His flock; so Jesus is ever watchful over His people.

He said, *"Nevertheless, I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away; I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart I will send Him unto you. (John 16:7)*.

Though Jesus is absent in body, He is not in spirit, for He said, *"I will not leave you comfortless."* He also promised that We, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, will make our abode with you. He is the life, light, and joy of the whole family of God.

And said, *"As I live ye shall live also."*

O. J. Denny

Sent in by Keith Hiatt.

"A KING SHALL REIGN"

"A King shall reign in righteousness" Isaiah 32:1-2.

The prophet Isaiah was inspired of "God to say, *"A king shall reign in righteousness,"* over seven hundred years before the birth of our blessed Lord. Truly Isaiah said, *"reign in righteousness,"* not try to reign, but reign. Which means to have and to exercise power. And our blessed Lord said, *"As thou, (meaning God) has, given me power over all flesh, (that he, the Son) should give, (not try to give) eternal life to as many as thou bast, (past tense) given me."* This comforts me greatly, it does not depend on my righteousness, for I have none, except the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ my Lord. Jesus was made unto us, *"Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption." Romans, 8:31. "What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"* Dear children Christ Jesus still reigns, and shall forever reign.

Did he not stop Saul as he went to bind and put in prison, those that called upon the name of our blessed Lord ? Did he not cause Saul to say *"who art thou Lord ?"* Did Saul, (after this experience) ever persecute the church? No, but rather on every hand jeopardized his life for the church.

Little children, have you ever tried to find a hiding place from the wind and a covert from the storm? Oh the many times I have watched with a great dread the approach of the storm and how I feared the wind. I wondered if the house would stand up against the pressure. When Daddy appeared on the scene, I would get just as close to him as I could; I felt safe as long as I was close to him. But there came a time With me, that strong as he was, my Daddy could not hide me from the great storm that raged in my soul. This wind was so strong, that I felt myself being swept into eternal oblivion, yes separated from all the things that my soul desired and yearned for. And when I looked; there was no eye to pity, and no arm to save. I heard a voice Say. *"And a man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the storm."* I looked and lo it was Jesus. I cried out, Lord save or I perish.

If the above is your experience, you need not ask some what you may do in order to be born again, you are born already. Yes born of a incorruptable seed. Born of God. Redeemed by his blood. From here on you will need, each hour of the day, each day of the week, each week of the month, each month of the year, yes the rest of your life, a man behind whom you can hide from the winds of this ungodly world, and a *covert from the storms of adversity. "One mighty to save." This man is* Jesus. *"For there is none other name given in heaven, or among men, whereby we must be saved."* And we have his promise that he will never forsake us, nor leave us alone, but will go with us even to the end of the world.

O. J. Rives.

DIVINE REVELATION

Dear Brother Crawford:

This morning, after having been sick the last few days, but was able to attend church yesterday and enjoy a good service and feeling somewhat better in body, my mind is on Divine Revelation. I know this is a broad subject, but I want to mention a few instances where God revealed Himself to His people, even to Adam the first man that ever lived on earth. After he had eaten of the forbidden fruit, that he was commanded not to eat, he and his wife knew that they were naked and endeavored to cover their nakedness with the work of their own hands, and hid themselves as they thought from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden and the Lord called unto Adam, and said unto him, *"Where art thou?"* Not inquiring where Adam was but to reveal Himself to Adam that he (Adam) might know the Lord was still mindful of his existence on earth, and of his transgression of Divine law. For sin is the transgression of the law.

Therefore he sinned, he and his wife were driven out or rather sent forth from the garden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. I'm not so sure what he lost, it wasn't eternal life I'm sure, because he only possessed natural life, yet he lost communion in some sense or a state of happiness that he enjoyed while in the garden. So he and all his race thereafter where lost in the ruins of the fall, being alienated from God and became dead in trespasses and sins, strangers to God and foreigners, so they had no will, nor power to acquaint themselves with God since they, or we were all dead, but it gives us great joy to know that God reveals Himself to His own, His elect, His chosen people, that He chose out of Adam, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to the holy prophets and said, ***"I am the Lord Almighty,"*** and to His people in this age as He did show who profited in the Jews religion above many of His equals in His own nation. He was exceedingly zealous of the traditions of His Father.

But when it pleased God, he said, ***"Who separated Me from My Mother's womb, and called Me by His grace, to reveal His Son in Me. Not only in regeneration, but that I might preach Him among the heathen."*** So I love to think of the expression of Jesus when He said ***"I thank Thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in Thy sight, all things are delivered unto Me of My Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and He whomsoever the Son will reveal Him."***

Paul the apostle in his epistle to the churches in Golatia said, ***"I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."***

When Jesus asked His disciples, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" And they said, ***"Some say that Thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets."*** He said unto them, "But whom say ye that I am?" Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus answered and said unto him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. After having Peter say that he knew He was the Son of the living God by divine revelation He follows this statement by saying, ***"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."*** So I feel the church is built upon divine revelation. So all we know about God or His church is what is revealed to us.

Why has he hidden these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes? Well, for so it seemeth good in His sight.

After His resurrection His o w n people didn't know Him, while some of them as they walked toward a village talked of the things that had happened. Jesus drew near and went with them, but their eyes were covered so they should not know Him, He said unto them, ***"What manner of communication are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk and are sad."*** One of them said, ***"Art Thou only a stranger in Jerusalem and hast not known the things that have come to pass in these days, concerning Jesus of Nazareth which was a prophet mighty indeed. We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel."*** But by and by as they sat at meat, He took bread and blessed it and gave to them and their eyes were opened and they knew Him. Then they said one to another, "Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked with us by the way and while He opened to us the scriptures?"

When Jesus saw Mary weeping He said, ***"Why weepest thou?"*** She said, ***"Because they have taken away my ord and I know not where they have laid Him."*** Jesus was standing by and she knew not that it was Jesus. She supposed Him to be the gardener and even said, ***"Sir, if thou hast borne Him away, tell me where thou hast laid Him."*** But Jesus only had to speak, and said, "Mary." She then turned at this point and knew that it was Jesus speaking to her, and said unto Him, ***"Master."*** She knew Him because of divine revelation. And so it is written, ***"Eye hath not seen nor ear heard neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."*** But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit, yea, the deep things of God. So the Father reveals the Son. The Son reveals Himself, the Spirit reveals the Father and the Son. And so God reveals Himself to whomsoever He will. The secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever. So we must conclude it's all in His power to withhold or to reveal. What a sweet thought to feel in our own heart that the Lord has revealed Himself to us as our Saviour and Lord, yes, to us the fairest among ten thousand and altogether lovely. Yes revealed to us that our sins were forgiven, and gave us a sweet hope of heaven's pure world. So often we forget Him here in this troubled world and feel so far from God, wondering where our beloved has gone. Oh, how wonderful to find Him, when He finds us. He makes us realize from time to time that He is God and that we are His people. This has grown too long now. There is no end to this subject it seems.

May the God of revelation bless Zion everywhere.

In humble hope of a better world.

Elder Walter Evans.

TRUSTED IN THEMSELVES THAT THEY WERE RIGHTEOUS

Kind friends: when you and I consider the admonition of our Dear Lord in the many great lessons found in the grand old Bible, it is very easy for us to think: well this is intended for Mr. so and so. It is not meant for me, for I know I am not guilty *of* this or that, I remember well once when I had used the text I have in mind, to make an effort to introduce for a man to preach and I felt then as I do now, that to some extent we are all guilty of this great sin, But the preacher who went into the stand said *("I am not guilty of this myself,")* To my way of thinking that is a good sign one is truly guilty. The Lord here teaches a much need of praying always, of having as much as possible at all times, the desire of our poor hearts to know and to do the will of God, A desire that God might lead us, might direct us in the way that is pleasing unto him etc, Luke chapter 18 and verse 8 says: ***"And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that, they were righteous and despised others;"*** Friends: that looks awful ugly when we behold it in the other fellow, but after all that is not at all hard for God's children to do, One thing I do know and that is this: Satan is always real handy, and he will cause you to think anything possible that might tend to destroy your most precious possession, and mind you kind friends; one of the most precious possessions is the spirit of meekness; Just as soon as you and I can begin to behold good in us. Of course we will in a measure feel to be righteous. We will in a measure trust in ourselves that we are righteous. Is is not always easy for one to acknowledge this, but just the same whether we acknowledge it or not, we can rest assured God knows every thought; Not one is ever hid from Him; and another bad thing is, Dear Friend: just as sure as we trust in ourselves that we are righteous, we automatically despise others. Isn't that an awful condition for our hearts to be in? We are not aware of the condition we are actually in, and yet we are made to wonder at times why God will not harken unto our cries. Wonder why thus and so is wrong with us. Wonder why we are so far from God. On the other hand, just as sure as we find we are in the condition, the poor publican was in, we are blessed with an humble and a contrite spirit and feel unworthy to even call upon HIS GREAT and GOOD NAME. We can only plead for His mercy. Then we, instead of despising others, will behold them better

than ourselves. We will see, the good in them and the evil in ourselves. God will hear our humble cries and will revive our spirit, ***"will revive the hearts of the contrite ones." Isa. 57 and 15.***

God loves and approves the sweet spirit of HUMBLENESS and MEEKNESS. Christ was humble and Meek. He said so Himself. He said, ***"Come unto me all that labor and are heavy laden, for I AM MEEK and lowly of heart."*** Oh; that you and I were MEEK and LOWLY IN HEART more often, I am persuaded that there would BE MORE SWEET PEACE and REST AMONGST OLD BAPTISTS. Just as long as we Trust in ourselves that we are righteous, we will despise others and we will NOT GO DOWN TO OUR HOUSE JUSTIFIED EITHER. But just as sure as we come, as did the poor publican, then we will get the same results he got. God has not changed in the least.

God knew how wicked and how sinful His little children would be all down through the ages of time, and for that reason He spake this parable for their learning, for their good, for their profit that they might look into the mirror and behold their sinful condition and might want to change from that ugly way and go down to their house justified, and have the sweet felt presence of the Lord, might desire that our poor spirits be REVIVED, that we might enter into the JOYS of the Lord. One will never do that so long as he trusts himself that he is righteous. For he will then despise others, even though they might not actually be aware of it. God is aware of it and God rewards His ***"according as their works shall be."*** REV. 22. No reward like the SWEET FELT PRESENCE OF THE LORD. We all know this is so. Oh; Lord Please give me a sweet spirit of humility. Enable me to behold my sinful ways, that I may have Thy sweet felt presence, is my prayer.

David P. Bridgman,
Tallassee, Ala.

HOPEWELL, N .J., March 14, 1904.

DEAR SISTER HELLINGS:- I received your kind and interesting letter of March 4th in due time, and feel like replying with a few words this morning. I feel glad for the blessing the Lord gave you through his word, of which you spoke, and hope that many such blessings are still in store for you. How precious are such summer seasons when they are given to the soul. They are like refreshing sunshine after a long dark time. ***"My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning,"*** and his coming is like the rising of the sun. You were thus favored, and were glad in the favor. I am glad you wrote me about it. I am glad always in the gladness of the children of God when I know of it. But you also speak of dark seasons, and of the

sense of your own vileness and weakness. This is a common experience, and it is a needful one to all of us. As we learn to know ourselves we come to know the fullness of the grace of God more and more that can save such sinners as we are.

I hoped you would be able to meet with us yesterday. We had a good meeting together. I used as a text the words found in 2 Chronicles xx. 26. I had a very pleasant exercise of mind while speaking. Because the people did not need to fight in the battle, as the Lord fought for them, therefore, they could only bless the Lord for the victory. It is truly a valley of blessing. It is only when we are humbled and occupy the lowly places that we ever do really bless God, and the one thought that came to me with comfort was this: that we never do need to fight for ourselves. No matter who or what the enemy may be, let us go forth only singing and praising God and the Lord will undertake for ns. If some one speaks unjustly of us let us still not contend against him, but go forward in the way in which we are commanded of God steadfastly, only remembering to sing to his praise, and we shall soon come to the cliff, where we see the enemy, all dead bodies on the plain. So Israel was bidden to go forward with the singers and prayers upon instruments in the forefront; not swords and shields and spears, but instruments of music and praise. I was glad I was enabled to speak.

I must close now. May God bless you and yours in all things. Remember me to Mr. Hellings and to all. We all join in kind regards to you. Bonnie is now steadily mending. Little Mary has been sick since last Wednesday, but is now better, though as yet in bed.

I remain as ever, your brother and pastor,

Elder F. A. Chick.

Chatsworth, Ga., Sept. 27, 1928.

Dear Brother Lefferts: If indeed I may be permitted under the Sprit of Jesus to claim such precious relationship. I would be pleased, the Lord giving you the spirit and desire to do so, to have you comment at some length upon the seventeenth chapter of John, especially the second verse. From my very limited conception, the sentiment contained in this second verse seems to be the very fundamental principle and capstone covering the salvation of God's people. Not one more nor one less. It seems to me it covers it, and should put an end to all doubts whatsoever as entertained by the world's religion. It seems these, whomsoever they may be, were given to the Son by the Father before the hills were formed; These are they that fell in the transgression of Adam and whom Christ, the Son of God, in his crucifixion and death redeemed from their lost and ruined state. These are they whom God in his mercy has invited to drink

from that fountain whose springs never run dry. These are those to whom the Scriptures were written as a guide to lead them in paths of righteousness. These are those referred to by the angel of God when Joseph was told that Mary should bear a SON, and that he shall save his people from their sins." There are many, many more who come under this; in fact, it seems to cover the entire scope of the plan of salvation.

Dear brother, please pardon me for having unnecessarily taken up your time, but for the time being I almost lost sight of myself, and of the object in view. I have a few special friends, and although they belong to the religions of the world, yet they seem to have an ear for the truth of the Scriptures as advocated by the Old School Baptists, therefore I am I very desirous that you comply through the columns of the SIGNS on said Scrip ture for the benefit of said friends, and for my special comfort and consolation. I take several Old Baptist periodicals, but in none of the others do I see and read the deep things of God and his truth that I do in the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. When I was married (in the year 1882) my dear departed companion, whose maiden name was Nannie B. Woodall, was then taking this dear paper, and it continued coming, to her, but under the name of Mrs. G. M. Edwards, until her death, March, 1923. I have continued taking, it since then, and if it is the Lord's will I hope to never be without it as long as he shall spare this poor undeserving and unprofitable sinner.

I beg you to remember me when at the throne of God's sweet grace.

In sorrow and tribulation,
GEORGE M. EDWARDS.

MEETINGS

The July 4th meeting in 2007 will be held, the Lord willing, with Head Of The River Church. Preaching to begin at 10:00 a.m.

Elder William Hale Terry

STAUNTON RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist meeting will convene according to previous arrangements on July 7th and 8th, 2007 at Weatherford Church which is our usual meeting place.

The church of Springfield will be the host. Weatherford Church is located on Music Street at the intersection of 760 and 765 highways in Pittsylvania County about 5 miles from Gretna, Va.

We invite our correspondents and believers of our faith.

Burnell B. Williams, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 2007

Allene Gallimore, NC	5.00
A.U. Hocutt, GA	5.00
Randolph Plybon, VA	5.00
James Pugh, AL	5.00
John Swilley, AR	25.00
Grace Manly, AL	5.00
Geneva Pettis, LA	75.00
Edward Ambrose, VA	5.00
Elder Barnabas Brammer, PA	10.00
Elder Theron James, LA	5.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER AGNES UTLEY HOCUTT

Sister Agnes Utley Hocutt, age 93, of Albany/Americus, Georgia, departed this life on Sunday evening, May 6, 2007 at The Magnolia Manor Nursing Center in Americus, Georgia. She was born on May, 21, 1913 in, and was a native of, Tuscaloosa County, Alabama.

She had resided in Albany/Americus, Georgia since late 1991. Her husband of 61 years, Brother Ralph A. Hocutt Sr., preceded her in death February 1997.

Sister Hocutt was a member of The Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church located near Berry, Alabama. She had attended The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church in Worth County, Georgia until her health failed in 1997.

Sister Hocutt is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, Ralph A. Hocutt Jr. and Beverly J. Hocutt; three grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; a sister and brother in-law, Sister Christine Utley Ramsey and William Ramsey of Huntsville, Alabama; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held on May 9, 2007 at The Heritage Chapel Funeral Home In Cottondale, Alabama, with Elder James T. Howard officiating. Internment was in The Alberta City Cemetery where she was laid to rest beside her husband.

Sister Agnes traveled extensively during her many years to attend the meetings and associations among The Old Baptist Churches in the Southern, Southeastern and Eastern parts of The United States. She loved to be with the Brothers, Sisters and Friends of the Church. She will be missed by all of those who knew her.

Submitted by The Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church

George W. Hyslip, Clerk

CATHERINE PAGE WYCHOCKE

Sister Catherine Page Wychocke passed from this life in Chicago, Illinois, on January 7, 2007, at the age of 83 after a long illness.

She was received into the Durham Primitive Baptist Church on December 16, 1951, and was baptized by Elder J. W. Gilliam. Later, she moved to Chicago, Illinois, where she lived for many years. Whenever she had the opportunity, she began looking for the Primitive Baptists in the area. As the scriptures tell us in the Song of Solomon *"Go forth by the footsteps of the flock"* and she found them.

Sister Catherine attended the church there for a number of years and later requested dismission from the Durham Church that she might join the church in Illinois; On October 19, 1987, the Durham Church gave her a letter of dismission showing that she was in good standing here. She joined the Chicago Church upon confession of faith. After a few years, that church disbanded after a long decline. Then she requested that she be allowed to rejoin the Durham Primitive Baptist Church. She wanted her name to be with the Primitive Baptist people even though she was unable to come here often, She was received by the Durham Church on confession of faith on May 20, 2000. It was good to have her home again.

Because of the frigid weather conditions in that area of the nation her family felt it would be better to hold her funeral service in a Chicago Funeral Chapel. This was done and their regular chaplain conducted the service. She was placed in the mausoleum beside her husband, Matthew Wychocke.

Sister Catherine was preceded in death by three husbands: Aaron Mason, Harvey Sanderson and Matthew Wychocke; she was well acquainted with sorrow, grief and loss. She is survived by her daughter, Judith Mason Lencioni; two grandchildren, Angelo and Lance Lencioni; and two sisters, Dorothy Brinkley of Fortville, Indiana, and Frances Brinkley of Gainesville, Georgia.

Her hope was anchored in the finished work of Christ. She felt that she could witness with *Job in Chapter 19, Verses 25-26: "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."*

Sister Catherine was a lovely member.

Catherine M. Humbarger, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

Romans 8:29.

DEEP in the everlasting mind
The great mysterious purpose lay,
Of choosing some from lost mankind,
Whose sins the Lamb should bear away.

Them, loved with an eternal love,
To grace and glory he ordained ;
Gave them a throne which cannot move,
And chose them both to ways and end.

In them he was resolved to make
The riches of his goodness known;
Them he accepts for Jesus' sake,
And views them righteous in his Son.

No goodness God forsaw in his,
But what his grace decreed to give;
No comeliness in them there is
Which they did not from him receive.

Faith and repentance he bestows
On such as he designs to save;
From him their souls' obedience flows,
And he shall all the glory have,

Gadsby's Col

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EDITORIAL

Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, For his seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. (1 John 4:9)

Elder R. H. Campbell

This scripture has caused more concerned inquiry among the children of God than most any other scripture in the bible. There is one thing that they all feel to know, and that is that they do commit sin, and here John is telling them that he that is born of God cannot commit sin, because his seed remaineth in him, and this makes them question very seriously the fact; are they indeed children of God? There is much evidence, in their daily experiences that causes them to wonder about this fact, without the above scripture, and, then to read where John makes such a statement, it adds fuel to the fire that they are indeed mistaken in their calling. This is a perfectly normal response, for, in the wisdom of this world, they cannot honestly and completely disregard that possibility, but, this must be considered with the wisdom that they have been given, in the Spirit. Remember, God said, by the word that came unto Isaiah, (Isa. 55:8-9) ***"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are my ways your ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."*** It is in the wisdom of God that this statement is made, and must be discerned in the same way, and in the mind of God, the man that is born of the Spirit cannot sin, because the Spirit of God dwells in him, and that is a place where sin cannot dwell.

The fact to consider, in reading this scripture, is that there are two men within the body of all men, who have been born of the Spirit: there is the old man who was born, in nature, from his mother's womb; and then, there are some men who are born again, as Jesus told Nicodemus. These are the only ones that

shall ever see the kingdom of God; and they are the ones to whom the above scripture is directed: in fact, these are the only ones to whom all scriptures are directed. The bible is printed and distributed throughout the whole world, but, that does not mean that it is to all men. To the man in nature, it is foolishness, and is just an accumulation of myths, which are just stories written, by man to man, without any foundation or basis in fact. I heard a commentator say, just the other day, when referring to the flood, that it was just a myth. The world looks upon the bible in much the same way that the Athenians considered the truth in that day, They had an altar labeled, "to the unknown god." They were correct in their labeling the idol that way, but not in the way that they were thinking. This is actually the opinion of the natural man, in the flesh, of the scriptures, but they are not directed to them in any manner because they have neither lot nor part in these matters.

All scriptures are directed to the inner man, the one who has been born again, and has been given the spirit of discernment, whereby he understands the scriptures, which were written by holy men of God as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. They are the only ones who know the voice of the shepherd of the flock, and will respond intelligently to the words that are said. Jesus made this very plain in, (John 10:1-5) ***"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth them by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth his own sheep forth, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of the stranger."*** Jesus is referring unto the fact that only those who hear his voice and follow him are his sheep, and the above scripture is addressed to the same ones; those who have been given ears to hear, hearts to understand and faith to believe what they hear, regardless of whether it sounds reasonable to the natural mind.

The natural man responded to the words of truth that was preached to them, on the day of Pentecost, by saying, ***"these men are full of new wine"*** but Peter rebuked them, (Acts 2:14-15) ***"But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell in Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken unto my words: For these men are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day."*** The natural man always

misinterprets the word of truth, because it is unreasonable unto him, since he has no basis of comparison, whereby he can understand it. It does not confirm to the laws of nature, the wisdom that he has learned in the flesh; from other men in nature.

Jesus told Nicodemus that except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus's response, was of the wisdom of the man in the flesh, "How can a man be born when he is old, can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born." This will always be the response of the man, in nature, when presented with this question, because it is not in the vernacular of the world. When one is born again, he enters into a new realm, one that he was totally unaware of previously, but, one in which he sees, hears, and understand things that he would never have believed possible before. These are the ones to whom the scriptures are always directed, and they will hear the word, and they will most assuredly believe it, although they cannot turn around and explain it to anyone else, unless they have been given a hearing ear, and an understanding heart.

(Eph 2:1-6) ***"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others. But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved): and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."*** Until man has been quickened, by the Holy Ghost, he has no basis on which to pass judgment on the scriptures; they are spiritually inspired , and he is natural, or as Paul stated it, in ignorance and unbelief. This was the situation with many, on the day of Pentecost, when the heard the disciples declaring the wonderful works of God, for it was in an unknown tongue unto them.

The, old man, is still walking according to the course of this world, and according to the prince of the power of the air, and will continue to do so throughout his entire lifetime here on earth, but, the new man, who indeed dwells in the same body, has been quickened and set apart, sanctified in Christ Jesus, if you

please, and made a new creature in Christ. The old man still is, as he was born into the world of nature, and is still under the law, because Christ did not redeem him from the penalty due him for his sins. He will continue to be liable for them as long as he lives, because, the wages of sin is death in the lake of fire and brimstone, and there is no escape from that just penalty. The new man is delivered from the law of sin and death, for righteousness, and enters into the new covenant with God, where grace and mercy reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Christ Jesus the Lord, as is stated, (Heb 10:9-10) ***"Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that he may establish the second. By the which will, we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."*** And this is the man to whom all scriptures, in the new testament are written, as it is stated in the first verse of the new testament, (Math 1:1) ***"The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham."*** And this applies to all that follows, in that they are the generation of Jesus Christ as beneficiaries of the new covenant of grace.

This is the man that does not commit sin, for (Gal 3:26) ***"For ye are all children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond or free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."*** If the children of God, are in Christ Jesus, surely, there is no sin there; it was left in the body of the old man, which is what the following scripture says to me, (Rom 8:3-4) ***"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."*** And that is where sin was consigned, and it has never infected the children of God, as is stated in (Rom 6:3-8) ***"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?"*** An again in (vs. 6) ***"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him."*** And neither doth it have dominion over those that are in him, for they were baptized into his death, which is where sin hath no dominion.

The sins of the old man are not imputed unto the new man, because his seed (Christ into whom he was baptized) remaineth in him, and there is no sin in Christ. This fact is

stated in, (Rom 4:6-8) ***"Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."*** This is true because, the apostle Paul said, speaking of Christ, (and what he accomplished in his death on the cross, (Eph 2:15) ***"Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of Commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace: and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby."*** In this statement, to me, the writer is saying that the Jew and the Gentiles were separated by the law, because the law was never applicable to the Gentiles, and required a sacrifice, to reconcile man unto God. In his death: on the cross Christ made the sacrifice required, and the law was satisfied: the sins under the law were atoned for by the shedding of blood, and in his taking away the law of ordinances, he hath broken down the middle wall of partition between them, and in so doing, he establishes the second covenant, which is a spiritual covenant and he hath reconciled both Jew and Gentile unto God in one body. (Eph 2:18) ***"For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto God."*** (vs 14) ***"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."*** The Jews were redeemed from their sins under the law, by the death of Christ making atonement for them, and the Gentiles were exempted from the law of sin and death, that would have condemned them, its being removed from them, and where there is no law, there is no sin.

All of the above conditions were met in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, and is the foundation upon which the precious scripture found in the apostle Paul's letter to the Ephesians, is based, (Eph 2:8) ***"For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourself, it is the gift of God,"*** and brethren, no higher price was ever paid for any gift than that, and no greater gift was ever given than that which was bestowed on unworthy sinners such as his children acknowledge themselves to be. They indeed worship him in Spirit and in truth, because each one knows that this blessing was not bestowed upon them for any inherent righteousness within themselves, and therefore it must be because God first loved them, and gave himself for them, and provided everything necessary for their salvation from this sinful life in this low ground of sin and sorrow. The scriptures declare, (1 Cor. 1:30) ***"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteous-***

ness, and sanctification and redemption: That according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." His children realize this, and they praise God in Spirit and in truth, for this precious gift that has been bestowed upon them.

David expressed the feelings that inspired the heart of each one, when these things were first made known unto them, and the joy and love that permeated their very being, for God, his word and the brethren and sisters of like precious faith. (Psa 40:2-5) ***"He brought me up also out of the horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he put a new song in my mouth, even praises unto our God; many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord. Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies."*** Does not this express your travels of mind, and the faith that you were given, as you reflect on your life before, and after your change was made known to you. It is all of God, and man is but the blessed recipient of this marvelous work of grace.

I would say unto all, although you may not understand fully all scripture, believe them as written, and pray that you be given a better understanding because they are talking to you, and all of the promises are sure and certain to those who rejoice in a finished salvation that cannot be changed, or voided, regardless of whether you understand every point of doctrine, or not. You can most assuredly rest on the promise made in, (Eph 1:3-6) ***"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Christ to himself, according to the pleasure of his will. To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."*** Now, I cannot imagine a more comforting and positive scripture, that reflects the perfect security, and peace of mind, of every heir of grace, than this one. Believe it, because God has inspired it's being written by the pen of the apostle Paul, and that makes it true, because it was given to bring peace and comfort to the heart of those who are blessed to know God. It is to these that Jesus was speaking in, (Math 11:28) ***"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give your rest,"*** He certainly was not speaking to the old man, in nature, because he never tires of his natural life, he is at home there, happy and at peace with all the things going on around him; is all that he has ever known, or will

ever know.

Now, to what conclusion do we come, after all of this rhetoric regarding the subject scripture, and the question of, whether or not the man that is born of God, commits sin. Well, we must say that he sinneth not, because that is clearly what the scripture states, so, why is there so much question in the minds of the children of God regarding this subject? The child of God, dwelling in this body of death, which is where sin dwells, cannot see the forest for the trees. He sees the constant sinning of the old man, and cannot distinguish where the line of separation lies. He cannot see the whole picture, of the salvation of the saints of God, from his position in this natural body of flesh. As we have stated before, the above scriptures show that there are two entities within the one body, and since Christ condemned sin in the flesh, we must acknowledge that, that is where the sin lies, and not in the new man that is born of God. When the scripture says that he doth not commit sin, because his seed remaineth in him, he is referring to the seed (Christ), or else, the verse means nothing, because the natural seed remaineth in all of God's creation as long as they live: and if he means the seed (Christ) remaineth in him, he must of necessity be referring to the new creature, because, that is where all righteousness dwells. The sin that is committed by the man is, as Paul said above, (Rom 7:16-17) ***"If I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in me."*** As I understand this, he is saying that the sin dwells in the natural body, but not in the new creature in Christ, for this would be saying that Christ, who died for the sins of the new creature was still being contaminated with the sin of the old man. This was taken care of when Paul said, to repeat the scripture quoted above, (Rom 8:3) ***"For what the law could not do because it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."***

With the above understanding of the scriptures, the saints can indeed enter into rest, realizing that all necessary work has been done to assure them that they will receive the inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for them. Otherwise, with all of the doubts and fears that they experience in the flesh, they could not possibly rest. This rest has been promised to them, by God, and they will receive it, (Heb 4:9-10) ***"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from*** his own works, as God did from his." It may be though many trials and temptations, but beloved, it will come, and through much searching and studying of the scriptures you will find evidence along

the way, and you will come to the realization, and hope, that these blessed truths do indeed apply unto you.

May God, in the riches of his grace and mercy enable the sheep to continue to persevere and follow along, in the footsteps of the flock, seeking and finding those handfuls of purpose that God leaves, strewn along their path, in this low ground of sin and sorrow. They are to encourage them to continue to follow the example of those that have gone before, and to continue to press toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God. The apostle Paul admonished the saints, in his epistle to the Hebrews, (Heb 12: 1-2) ***"Wherefore seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."*** If they can be thus richly blessed, it will be a joyful journey, in spite of the trials and tribulations that they face. They shall, in the final analysis, agree with the apostle Paul when he said that he gloried in tribulations. I believe that he meant when he was given, by faith, to see the forest, not the trees which are nearby, but the whole plan of salvation of the household of believers, in all ages of time, he rejoiced in the sweet anticipation and looked eagerly to that day.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE QUESTION HAS BEEN ASKED

What is done FOR, and IN, the sinner in Regeneration, or New Birth? This is an important question, and it has been argued Pro and Con. The Scriptures are a Perfect Thorough Furnisher, and contain all the answers pertaining to such questions. The Scriptures states that there is Certainly Something done FOR, and IN, a man that makes him different from the alien world. If not, how could you tell the child of God from the dead alien sinner? In the New Birth, the alien sinner is raised up out of a state of death in sin, to a state of life in Jesus Christ. It is the children of men, that are given Eternal, or Spiritual Life, which makes them Actually and Vitally the children of God. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. Sovereignly, and Independently, without the help, or hindrance of any man, or set of men. This work brings about a Change in the Heart and Soul of, the child. ***"Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given***

unto us." This causes the children of men to love God. *"He that loveth is Born of God."* The Scriptures describes the alien as having Eyes, but cannot See, has Ears, but cannot Hear, has a Heart, but cannot Understand Spiritual things. In the New Birth, the Holy Spirit brings about a change in the condition of the man. Eph. 2 :10, *"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."* It is the work of the Holy Spirit, that gives the child, Eyes to See, and Ears to Hear, and an Heart to Understand Spiritual things. That is why Paul said in 2nd. Corr. 5:17. *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature : old things are passed away; behold all things are become new."* The alien sinner has only a carnal nature, which is sinful and corrupt. The child of God, has the old sinful nature, and also a New Nature, which is Spiritual. Therefore they have a Cross, that is something contrary to their natural nature. Gal. 5:17, *"For the flesh (carnal nature) lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."* The child of God has Spiritual desires, and hungers and thirsts after righteousness, yet they often do things that causes them to mourn in Soul and Spirit. The alien sinner hates God, and resents the Gospel of Jesus Christ, while the child of God loves God, and by the Spirit, is able to rejoice in the Gospel of Christ. Many have said, Why has God reached down in condemnation and ruin, and saved poor dead alien sinners? The Scriptures gives us the answer, Eph. 2:4-5. *"But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved:)" "We were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."* It is the Divine work of God, that makes the children of men, the children of God. God provided every thing necessary for the salvation of the children of promise, whom He foreknew. Notwithstanding, death will consume our bodies, yet we will live on in Soul and Spirit. And in the Resurrection, God will send His Son, to gather up our bodies from death and the grave, and fashion them like unto His own Glorious Body, and carry us home to live with God forever and ever.

In love and hope,
Elder C.M. Mills

PSALM 136 : 23 & 26.

Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy endureth for ever:

O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy endureth for ever.

"And Whosoever Liveth and Believeth in Me Shall Never Die." St. John 11 Ch. 26th V.

Here is a very strange expression, especially to those who sincerely believe in the Divinity and Messiahship of the speaker, Jesus of Nazareth. Yet it is true. We all know that, so far as this earthly body of ours, the human frame, is concerned it is sure to become lifeless and must be laid away in the earth from which it was gathered. But is that death? So far as we can see with our natural eyes and our natural mind from this side of the grave, it is. But we, who have eternal life, have other means of seeing. The eyes of our faith go on into the great unseen and lay hold upon facts that cannot be reached by our five natural senses.

We may have an accident and lose a limb or all our limbs, which are a part of our flesh and blood body, but we are still alive because our mind and reason remains untouched. We are actively conscious. On the same principle to some extent, though all the body be separated from the spirit we will still be conscious. The London confession of faith, 31st chapter reads, ***"The bodies of men after death return to dust and see corruption; but their souls, which neither die nor sleep, having an immortal subsistance immediately return to God who gave them. The souls of the righteous, being made perfect in holiness, and received into Paradise, where they are with Christ, and behold the fact of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies; and the souls of the wicked are cast into Hell where they remain in torment and utter darkness, reserved to, the judgment of the great day."*** This is not by Divine inspiration, but is the general opinion of our people of what Divine inspiration, as given in the Bible, teaches. Eccl. 12:7 is clear. ***"Then shall the dust return to earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."***

He that liveth and believeth in our Lord Jesus Christ is alive with Eternal life. He is a new creature. God's work in joining the soul of that man to Eternal life is a perfect work and shall not be undone when the body fails and is laid in mother earth. If the life that is given to us in regeneration was taken away from us at earthly death of our bodies, that indeed would be death, but it is not so. What God doeth is forever and believers shall not die.

We step out of our dwelling house and go our way about our business or journey. Even so, we will depart from this house of clay when death comes to it and we enter into, or are taken into, a new environment in which, for a time, this body is not necessary, and there, in peace and love and with our Saviour, we wait the time appointed when

these laid aside bodies are to be raised up and fitted for us and for the new environment into which we are then to be taken. But in all of it we shall be, conscious. The Bible clearly shows this. In Rev. 6:9; John saw the souls of them that were slain for the word of God and they cried with a loud voice. So they were conscious and waiting the resurrection. So we have the assurance that at our time of departure we will be conscious and also will have company of our Saviour or his angels so that happiness of our new environment will begin immediately, Jesus said I will come and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also"; Luke 16:22 tells us that ***"Angels carried the poor beggar into Abraham's bosom at his death. Nothing of the believer goes back to earth when God takes him from earth but the poor broken body, and it only for awhile until the time when Jesus Christ, the Judge of all the earth and the Saviour of all true believers shall call forth all our bodies and reunite them with our spirit."***

Thus the believer is in a state of life because of his union with Christ's life within him and forever afterward will continue in that condition. What a wonderful blessing the very poorest believer now has, and will ever have. In that living condition we are kept by the power of God unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. May God give us grace and opportunity to show our appreciation of this wonderful condition while we are yet in this time world.

Yours in Love,
Leon H. Clevenger
Excelsior Springs, Mo. R-2

WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION

When God delivered the law to Moses, it was composed of TEN COMANDMENTS. Of course, there was the ordinances of worship; rules to govern the actions of the worshipers, that whatever they did in compliance with those ordinances, might be done decently, and above criticism, so as to glorify GOD, while performing the demands of the ordinance, and not be ashamed of their effort. The apostle Paul, so admonished the young ministers in his day. ***"Study to show thyself approved unto God", a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing, the word of truth."*** 2 Tim. 2:15. The word "approved unto God," was given in the Alexandrian version, ***"Approved in Christ."*** The apostle again referred to the same thought, in Romans 16:10. ***"Approved in Christ."*** However, when we stop to consider the fact that God and Christ is one and the same, either version is correct, and in perfect harmony.

The children of God worshiped under the law by commandment,

expounded to them by both the priest and Levite who read the law and repeated it to them. No, they never read the books of the law themselves, and it was kept in the Ark of the covenant. Only the priest was eligible to look therein. The high priest being human, and no different from any other man in the flesh, desired as much glory for themselves as they could obtain. And also as much of filthy lucre, as they could swindle their brethren out of. So when our Lord Jesus Christ came into the world, He found that there had been added to the LAW, 110 new commandments, making 120 in all. These new commandments, were added so that the income of the worshippers, might be taxed sufficiently, to increase the income of the priest accordingly. This was going on when Jesus came, and He called them "A DEN OF THIEVES." They weren't satisfied with the provision God had made for them in the Law given to Moses; they wanted to live high on the hog regardless of how the poor got along.

Our Lord came, and fulfilled the law for every one of His children, and took them out from under it, and made them free from the law of sin and death. He made them Kings and Priests unto God, A royal family. No more slaves to ordinance, but He kept every ordinance, in their room and stead.

And now, they are no more debtors, he paid every farthing that they owed, and satisfied His Father perfectly, for all their sin, both commission, and omission. It is true that they were sinners by commission, because they did wrong, willfully. It is also true they were sinners, because they failed to keep many of the commandments, sometimes intentionally, and other times because they were not able to do so. Many of the ordinances demanded more of them than they were able to meet. Being poor, and not having the wherewithal to justify themselves, they failed through inability. But the Law would not excuse them, so they were guilty, But, Jesus Christ, came and paid what they could not, and charged it to their credit. And He paid it in full. Yes they had nothing to their credit, for what they had done in OBEDIENCE, was overthrown, as to virtue, in their failure. ***"For to be guilty of one, you are guilty of the whole law. Why then did the apostle Paul admonish the brethren at Philippi, "to work out your own salvation ?"*** They did not have the law, Christ had lifted them above the law, and made them free. What then, were they to work out that which would save them? We could talk all around this subject for the space of ten years, and never get any closer to the truth, if we failed to take under consideration, that GOD, in his mercy knew the weakness of His children. They were without strength, even though He had imparted eternal life in their hearts. They were babes in Christ, and did not know what the will of the

Father was, concerning them. They had not long been begotten in the gospel and had been living according to the guidance of the word, preached by their pastor. He had been with them constantly, to guide them in every work, that was necessary to keeping a clean house for GOD. Exercising themselves in charity, to the relief of the suffering saints, both in a temporal and spiritual way, dividing their worldly goods, with the poor, and comforting, and strengthening those that mourn. Encouraging the weak, and carrying the young in their bosom. All these things were done, without thought of themselves, or without expectation of anything in return. But with one goal in view, and that to show forth the love of GOD that the HOLY GHOST had shed abundantly in their hearts. Having this love one to another, bound them, not only to one another, but to the cause of their master, (the church). The apostle knew that false teachers was abroad in the land, and; was ever looking for an opportunity to fleece the flock. And this knowledge, caused him much anxiety concerning them in his absence. Hence, the letter of admonition. ***"Wherefore my beloved, as ye have always; obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence work out your own salvation with fear and trembling:*** The same message was taken to the children of Israel by the prophet, Haggai 2:41 ***"Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel saith the*** LORD; and be strong, Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; saith the LORD, and work for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts." We notice that He said, "I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts". As I search the Bible for my own instruction, I have so far, failed to find in the records of GOD's word where He has ever commanded only of His spiritual born children to work out anything, without His help. Always promised to be with His servants, both ministery and laymen. He has never forgotten, that we are constrained by the flesh, to adhere the will of the flesh. And He knows that unless He affords us His strength, to fulfill His commandment, We will be just as unable to do so, as those poor and weak Israelites were, to keep the law and ordinances, before he came. So, as He promised to be with them, even so, He promised to be with His children in the gospel age, to strengthen them, with His own strength, (the Holy Ghost) sufficiently to enable them to perform every work, that He impresses their heart with. And in that instant, the apostle, (by the Holy Ghost) reaffirms the promise, by telling them "that it is GOD, that worketh in you, both to will, and to do of His own good pleasure." Phil. 2:13. When the apostle spoke of ***"GOD being in you"*** he was speaking of the Holy Ghost. We seem to discount the Holy Ghost, and His mission in the world. Jesus prayed for the Holy Ghost to come, or, for the

Father to send Him, that we might have His guidance, strength, and be comforted with the realization of it, and be encouraged thereby. So it was God, in the person of the Holy Ghost in them; working, both to will, and to do. Not of, or according to their good pleasure; which could have been nothing less than their own self preservation. But their work in the kingdom of GOD must be to the praise of His glory.

For this to be in effect, their work must be, to the denial of self, and a sacrifice made for others. This one cannot do, unless God, in the person, of the Holy Spirit, enables one to so do, by overcoming the spirit of the flesh, (binding the strong man) and giving strength to the babe in Christ. Then God will be pleased, and the work will testify of Christ, that He has arisen from the grave, and lives forever more. And lives in His children, "For, know ye not that your bodies are the tabernacle of the living GOD?" And further, *"That without ME, you can do nothing."* That is the reason He told the disciples, *"and lo. I am with you"* when He sent them to preach the gospel. That is the reason His ministers go with bowed heads in this age, not knowing whether their going is of the LORD or not. But the love for Him, and His children, and the burden of their welfare, which GOD has laid on their heart, constrains them to go and see. Yes, they go hoping that their impression is of Him, and not of their own desire. Hoping that He will afford them His strength, to "stand in the temple, and declare all the words of this life" not knowing whether or not it is the time of the LORD, yet LOVE urges them on. And Oh, if their breast is full, and sometimes hurting, they know that the babes in Christ, is hungering. Even so the brethren, when they are filled with a spiritual desire to be useful in the kingdom, they fear and tremble, lest it be of their own asperation, and not of GOD. But love urges them on, and a good pastor will admonish them in love, to work so as to show their love to one another, and thereby glorify their SAVIOUR. Oh, what a sweet comfort it is to me, when the servants of God, say to me, "Brother Tommie, the LORD is with you. Go trusting His sweet promise, that He will never forsake you. May we remember His sweet promises, the rest of the way.

Yours in humble hope,
T. R. Crawford

Job 37: 23-24.

Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict.

Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any that are wise of heart.

ABIDING IN LOVE

"I am the vine, ye are the branches He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without Me ye can do nothing:" John:15:8. "If ye keep My commandments ye shalt abide in My love," verse 10. They who abide in Him and His love bear the fruits of the spirit, The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, long suffering, goodness, faith, meekness; temperance," Galatians 5:22,23, This is My commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. If we would abide in His love and bear the fruits of the Spirit we must love one another.

God's children can never be separated from His everlasting love, (Romans 8:38,39) but this love does not always abide in them because they do not always abide in it. That is, love is not always ruling our lives. They who do not continue to love His truth and His people, but are led away by the flesh after the world will be barren and unfruitful.

Many disciples of Jesus became offended at His doctrine and followed Him no more. Without Him we can do nothing religiously that is pleasing to Him. If we would bear the fruits of the Spirit we must continue faithful to His cause and truth.

"If any man will come after Me let him deny himself take up his cross and follow Me." Matthew 16:24. If we would abide in His love we must be followers of Him by keeping His commandments, be baptized and then continue faithful in His service. The works of the flesh destroy spiritual peace and cause us to walk in darkness.

Elder J. Harvey Daily

The Experience of Stephen R. Burk

It seemed that In the spring of the year 1865, I first saw myself a sinner. I had had some thought previous to this in regard to my spiritual welfare, one particular day my trouble began in earnest. That night I could scarcely sleep. I thought I must die before morning. Eternity seemed to be just before me, and I just ready to plunge into hell, for I thought I had sinned away my day of grace. Such passages of Scripture as, ***"Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity,"*** would pass through my mind. I just rolled from side to side of the bed and longed for the dawn of day. I did not know what was the matter with me; so I thought I would get up and read in the Testament and see if I could not get relief in so doing. But to my sorrow I could find nothing but condemnation. It seemed that the book would open to such portions as were against me. There was nothing for me but all against me. When morning came I was so glad I was alive. I was a little more thoughtless

through the day, but I dreaded to see night come again, which brought the same trouble as the previous night. And so I got along for several days, until finally I thought I would do better and get relief in that; but, oh, how disappointed I would try to pray, and while on my knees I would have wicked thoughts; my mind was overwhelmed with grief. Then I would try to weep but alas! I could not weep. I would exclaim, *"Woe is me! I am of unclean lips."* It seemed that I was getting worse instead of better, as I thought. Oh, I did not see how God could spare me, living so badly as I had done. Many an evening I have stood and watched the sun sink in the horizon and wondered if I possibly would be permitted to ever see it rise again. In reading, in trying to pray, all condemned me. But one day I thought I had a new plan.

I would promise to do better and would seal the promise by driving down a stake, which I did, and dated the day of the month on it. But oh that night I found the promise broken, which made me feel worse than ever; so I just gave myself up as lost, and if the Lord sent my soul to hell, his righteous law approved it well. As I never had heard anyone relate an experience, I did not know what was the matter with me.

I thought surely no one ever had such thoughts as I, and I thought if people knew what wicked thoughts I had they would not permit me to live. I often looked at a man that seemed to me to be the best man living, and wished that I might be just as good as he seemed to be.

By this time I could get a crumb of comfort occasionally by reading the Book of books, and also get relief by asking the Lord to be merciful to me a sinner. Soon after this my father, my brother older than me, and myself went to the Baptist church for the purpose of helping to fix some Ditching-racks. When on the way every thing seemed to look so sad the trees and all things. When we arrived I looked across to where some had been baptized. I thought if I were only fit, oh, how I would love to go down into the water, as the dear Savior did, and be buried as he was. While at the church that day it seemed to me that the men who were helping were so good, whether professors or not, they all were so much better than I was. Soon after this a preacher by the name of Strickland came to Bethel church and had meeting two days and nights. The first night my brother and I went. While on our way we scarcely spoke a word. The cannons were firing, as peace had just been declared between the United and Confederate States. Yet I feared that I was not at peace with God, which was of greater importance to me than all things else. However, I was glad that peace was declared. But after we were in the house the preacher took his text. It seemed to me that he meant it for me, it suited me so well. I felt like the woman of Samaria, "*Come and see a man*

that told me all things that ever I did." The next day I thought I would love to go, but thought the folks would suspicion something if I went. But about meeting-time my brother fixed and started off on horseback to meeting. I looked after him, and this was the first thought I had, that he had been in trouble as I had been; and oh, how I wished I was with him, for I thought he was going to join the church that day, and there was hope for him and none for me. Oh, how bad I felt while he was at the meeting. I learned as soon as he came home that no one had joined.

The next day there was meeting at Village Creek church. We all went. The preacher preached at me all the time, I thought. After the sermon was over an invitation was given when my brother went forward. Oh, how bad I felt I thought if I was just only fit to go to the church. After they heard the experience they extended the hand of fellowship, when in spite of myself I went forward and extended my hand, and oh as I returned to my seat it seemed to me I would sink through the floor, and such thoughts came to me as: Now you have done a pretty act. You have shown how bad you are. Now there is no mercy for you. And oh, such a load as I had to carry down to the water where four were to be immersed. But as they were being immersed, I became very happy, and felt that if they would just give the invitation I would gladly go with them down into the water and be buried with Christ by baptism. But I see another meeting at Bethel Church, Which was in about three weeks, I would try to Improve the time and be better by that time. By this time I could find some comfort in the Scriptures, and in trying to pray, could find relief. But by the last week before the meeting had become so thoughtless of God's goodness and my promise. But on Friday before the meeting I learned that my sister Maria intended to join at that meeting, and oh, how I felt I was back where I was at first, instead of being better. Oh, what trouble of mind, I rather doubted if I would go now. I tried to pray, but was so guilty. That night I lay a long time thinking how I had wasted the time. Finally I fell asleep, and of all the dreams that ever I had this one was the most terrifying. I dreamed that I saw God, and that he was so angry with me for the way I had done. It seemed the lightning was flashing, ready to strike me down. I awoke to find myself all of a tremble, and oh, such a night the rest of that night was. I Finally gave up that I was doomed to everlasting punishment, which I justly deserved. The next day I was in deep distress of mind, and to hide my trouble I took the gun and went out as though I was going to hunt, but when out of sight I sat down on a log and meditated on my sad state, and whether I would do as I had promised or not, if I was spared as the meeting was that day and the next

(Sunday). I finally concluded that the Lord only knew, as I had made so many promises, just to be broken. Then I had some ease of mind, and that night, if I ever prayed I did then, that the Lord would have mercy on me; which I felt to be answered, as I had sweet rest that night, and the next morning I could read with the spirit and the understanding.

But when I first awakened In the morning I began to think of the promise I had made three weeks before. But, I had to admit that the Lord only knew whether I would make the promise good or not. I prayed that the Lord would enable me to take up the cross and follow the blessed Savior in baptism. When at the meeting-house the preacher (Eld. Sparks) took his text, which seemed to suit me and just preached at me all through. I now loved the brethren as I never had before. They looked so lovely, when preaching was over they gave the invitation, when two of my sisters went forward, and I could not stay away any longer. Oh, how my heart melted and I could not tell much of my trouble. We were to be baptized in the evening. Oh, how I feared that I was not just as I ought to be! but when baptized I was so happy. But, it did not last long, as on way home something told me I would bring reproach upon the cause; I was a hypocrite and had deceived the church and myself. Such doubts as these continued that night, until I really wished that I had stayed away, as I did not want to backslide. But the next morning was the happiest season I ever enjoyed. It seemed that all things were praising God. But this happy season did not last long.

Stephen R. Burk

"My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word." - Psalm cxix. 81.

How difficult, for the most part, it is, and we may add, how rare to be able to realise for ourselves, with any degree of abiding permanency, a sweet experimental sense of, and an assured interest in those spiritual blessings with which, so far as we are believers in the Son of God, we are blessed in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Glimpses, glances, transient views, sips and tastes, drops and crumbs sweet beyond expression whilst they last, but rarely given and soon gone, are, generallly speaking, all we seem to get after much hard labour, many cries, earnest entreaties, and vehement longings before the Lord, as he presents himself to our faith, seated on the throne of his grace. How many there are who are daily and sometimes almost hourly crying out, if not in the exact words, yet in the substance of them:

"O come, thou much-expected guest;

Lord Jesus, quickly come!"

And yet how long he seems to delay his coming! How continually are they looking upward till eyes and heart seem alike to fail, waiting for his appearing more than they that watch for the morning; how willing to make any sacrifice, to do anything, be anything, or bear anything, if he would but manifest himself to their souls. How often are they searching and examining their hearts, lips, and lives, to see if there be any evil way in them which makes him hide his lovely face, and not drop one word into their longing breasts, whereby they might hold sweet communion with him! How they desire to be blessed with real contrition of heart, and godly sorrow for their sins, and be melted and dissolved at his feet, under a sight and sense of his bleeding, dying love!

But whence spring all these longing looks waiting expectations? Do not all those earnest desires and vehement longings shew that those in whom they so continually are found are begotten again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead? It is divine life in their souls which is the spring and source of these inward breathings, lookings, and longings; and this divine life arises out of a new and spiritual birth, which is itself the fruit of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. It is not the still-born child that cries; it is the cry of the living child which so goes to the heart of the mother. Thus the cries of which we have spoken shew that there is life. But with life there is hope; for why should a man be ever crying after waiting for, and anxiously expecting a blessing which he has no hope ever to obtain? If, then, these had no living hope, would they cry? There are no cries in a dead hope. It is because the grace of hope in their breasts is, like every other grace of the Spirit, alive unto God, that it acts in union with faith and love, to bring them and keep them earnest, sincere, and unwearied before the throne, expecting and anticipating what God has promised to bestow on those who wait upon him.

J.C. Philpot

PSALM 119:9-11.

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.

With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

MEETINGS

PIGG RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Pigg River Primitive Baptist meeting will convene according to previous arrangements on Friday before the First Sunday in August 2007 and two days following, and Basham is the Host Church.

The meeting will be held on the grounds of Chestnut Church in Franklin County.

Those coming from North 220, turn left on 724 (Goose Dam Road) two and one half miles to church.

We welcome and invite all ministers of our faith and order; our brethren and friends to be with us.

Elder Thomas Solomon, Clerk

SMITH RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Smith River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Old Union Church in Floyd County, VA, On Friday before the first Sunday in September, Aug. 31, Sept 1, Sept 2.

Directions to Old Union Church, starting at the intersection of Rt. 8 and 221, Follow Rt 221 eleven and seven tenths miles to Indian Valley Road, (State Rd, 787), Turn right and travel five and eight-tenths miles to Indian Valley Post Office Road, (State Rd. 622), Turn left and travel seven tenths of a mile to Macks Mountain Road, (State Rd. 754), Turn right and travel two-tenths miles to Old Union Church.

We invite all of our faith and order to meet with us at this meeting.

Association Clerk,
Tony R. Horton

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The West Country Line Union meeting will convene on Sunday, July 29, 2007 hosted by Dan River Church.

We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 2007

Edna Graves, AL 5.00
Francis Jarvis, MD 5.00
Robert Thomas, AR 5.00
James Shelor, VA 5.00
Loy Rodgers, AR 5.00
Carrie Williams, TN 5.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER JANIE FANNING

Sister Janie Fanning, departed this life on Saturday, June 9, 2007 at the age of 92 years. She was born on December 4, 1914 near New Market in Madison County, Alabama to the late Brother Milton and Sister Laura Fanning. She was preceded in death by two sisters, Nara Fowler and Edith Phillips, and a brother, George Fanning. She is survived by one sister, Cleona Piper and several nieces and nephews.

Graveside services were held at the Taylor Cemetery near New Market Alabama, with her pastor Elder Richard Campbell, Elder James Howard, and William Phillips officiating. Scripture reading by Chad Easter.

Sister Fanning asked for a home with the Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church in June, 1983 and was baptised by our pastor, Elder Richard Campbell. She remained a member of the Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee which she attended faithfully until declining health forced her to remain at home.

Sister Janie traveled extensively over her many years to attend meetings and Associations among The Old Baptist Churches in the Southern, Southeastern and Eastern parts of the United States. In the early 1940's Sister Janie started a thirty year career with the United States Government at Redstone Arsenal, located near Huntsville, Alabama. After her retirement from government service on June 30th 1972, she continued to travel visiting in Europe, Israel, New Zealand, and Australia.

She dearly loved the Brothers, Sisters and Friends of the Church and as long as her health permitted, she often entertained them in her home in Huntsville. She will be missed by all of those who knew her.

Written at the request of The Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church in conference Sunday July 1, 2007. One copy will be sent to the family, one copy to The Signs of The Times for publication, and one copy for our church records.

George W. Hyslip, Clerk

ANNIE MARTIN REED

It is with much sadness and unworthiness, that I attempt to write a memorial for Sister Annie Reed. She was a special friend I have known and loved for many years.

Sister Annie was born on January 10, 1906, and left her earthly home March 13, 2007. Making her stay on earth 101 years.

Sister Annie was married to Arthur Reed who preceded her in death. She is survived by her son Raymond Odell Reed and his wife Jean. Two granddaughters, Mary and her husband Steven Smith and Robin Anne Reed. Two great grandsons Matthew Steven and Joshua Reed Smith, and many friends. Her beautiful funeral service was held on March 16, 2007, at Salem (Head of the River) church, Conducted by her pastor Elder Larry Hollandsworth and Elder Junior Conner. She was laid to rest in Restvale, Cemetery, to await the coming of our Lord in the resurrection.

Sister Annie united with Laurel Creek Primitive Baptist Church June 28, 1936, and was baptized August 22, 1936. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, a faithful member and enjoyed going to her church as well as others of like faith. I had the sweet privilege of taking her to meetings for several years. Sister Annie rejoiced in talking about the goodness and mercy of our Lord and Savior. If she wasn't able to go to church, she always wanted me to call her, so she could hear from the meeting.

The last few years of her life, she had to have help to be able to stay at home. She was blessed to have a loving family and good care givers. She never complained about her afflictions. Sister Annie had a strong faith and praised God for all the blessings He had given her. Through all her struggles and tribulations, she never relinquished her firm hold of grace.

Although we will miss her expression of love, when she greeted her brethren, we feel she looked forward to her departure with joy. God has called up one of his precious jewels, a mother in Israel, and our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by Mary Janney, as requested by her pastor, Elder Larry Hollandsworth.

SISTER DOROTHY SMITH

On September 19, 2006 Sister Dorothy Smith was gathered home to be with the Lord. Her body was laid to rest beside her first husband, William Hampton Smothers, in Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery on September 22, 2006 to await the resurrection morn and that summons from on high, ***"Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."*** She was born January 30, 1930 to Brother Vel and Sister Dora Alverson, who preceded her in death.

Her first husband, William Hampton Smothers, and her second husband, Jeter Clifton Smith, also preceded her in death. Among those left to mourn her passing are her son Gregg Smothers and wife Pam of Graham, N.C., her daughter, Leta S. Robles and husband Marcus of Warner Robins, Georgia, six grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, three sisters, Barbara Harrell of Raleigh, N.C. Nettie Woods of Reidsville, N.C., Jean Nelson of Madison, N.C., one brother Hunter Alverson of Ruffin, N.C. in addition to three stepchildren and numerous step grandchildren and step great-grandchildren.

Sister Dorothy suffered many afflictions and trials during her life, one of which was the tragic loss of her first husband on February 25, 1970 when he was only age fifty-one and before her children were grown. The two of them, though not members, frequently attended Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church with their children. On April 25, 1987 Sister Dorothy asked for a home with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, was received and baptized by her pastor, Elder Kenneth Key. On occasion when we traveled to church together, she would talk of the joy she found in her early years in the church when she would travel to her mother's home for the weekend and they would prepare lunch for our Sunday meeting. It was as she described it, "the only time of grace, the only joy in this life." During my last visit with her, she seemed "to rejoice with joy unspeakable" as she related what a condition she had been in and how the doctors had given her family no hope that she would ever talk or walk again. She described it as a miracle from God. It brought to mind the scripture found in 1 Peter 1: 7-8. ***"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love, in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."*** It was a great blessing to be there with her and to share in her joy. Words fail me in trying to relate the experience. It is best summed up in the words of the hymn writer:

All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem
And crown him Lord of all.

May the Lord bless her family and those of us, who loved her for Christ's sake, with grace to bow in humble submission to His most holy will and to render all praise, all honor, all glory to His great and holy name.

Humbly submitted by one who loved her dearly,

Mary Hawkins

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

Kindred in Christ, for his dear sake,
A hearty welcome here receive;
May we together now partake
The joys which only he can give.

To you and us by grace 'tis given
To know the Saviour's precious name;
And shortly we shall meet in heaven,
Our hope, our way, our end the same.

May he, by whose kind care we meet,
Send his good Spirit from above;
Make our communications sweet,
And cause our hearts to burn with love.

Forgotten be each worldly theme,
When Christians see each other thus:
We only wish to speak of him,
Who lived, and died, and reigns for us.

We'll talk of all he did and said,
And suffered for us here below;
The path he marked for us to tread,
And what he's doing for us now.

Thus, as the moments pass away,
We'll love, and wonder, and adore;
And hasten on the glorious day,
When we shall meet to part no more.

Newton

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EDITORIAL

"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food: the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." Genesis 2:8-9.

Elder J.B. Farmer

Considering my weakness, I have been fearful to endeavor to set forth the understanding I have been given about the meaning of the scriptures relating to the Garden of Eden. We have been taught that the things of the heavenly kingdom are too high, wide and deep for us to understand apart from revelation, and that every good gift and perfect gift comes down from above. By ourselves, we can do nothing. I have written about these things some time ago, and finally seem to be given liberty to submit them to the "Signs of the Times." It is my desire that anyone reading this should receive it only as far as it is in agreement with the doctrine of Christ found in the Holy Scriptures, and as far as it is in agreement with your experience of grace.

I am made to believe that the scriptures concerning the Garden of Eden, as most if not all of the other scriptures, have not only a surface meaning, which is readily understood naturally, but also have deep, hidden and mysterious meanings, which may only be known by God's little ones; and then only by revelation. If we are given any light, surely it is only in part that we know these things. The fullness of them is as high above us as are the heavens. May God be praised for His goodness to us in showing us the least of His mercies, even though we know that we are unworthy.

Briefly, according to the scriptures and in my language: God formed the first man Adam of the dust of the ground. God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and he became a living soul. He put Adam in the Garden of Eden and gave him to eat of all the trees of the

garden, but commanded that he not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for in the day that he should eat of it he should surely die. God took one of Adam's ribs and made a woman called Eve. Eve, being tempted of the serpent and deceived, took of the forbidden fruit and gave to Adam and he also did eat. After eating of the fruit, they perceived that they were naked, were ashamed and hid themselves. God made them aware of their sin, then made them coats of skins, and then drove them from the garden. There, on cursed ground amidst thorns and thistles, Adam was to till the soil and was to eat bread by the sweat of his face until he returned to the ground from which he was taken.

The readily understood meaning of these things by the natural mind, to me, is that the first man sinned and took all mankind down in sin and death with him. Because of their disobedience, Adam and Eve and all their posterity were banished from the paradise- like garden. They suffered the loss of happiness and contentment they had in the garden and had to remain the rest of their lives outside the garden in the world with all its troubles. I believe that these things are literally true, and so do almost all people who name the name of Jesus.

But there also seems to be a deeper spiritual meaning in these scriptures, which I am made to believe, is according to the experience of God's little ones. This experience can never be known or understood apart from being born of God and without the revelation of the truth. The little children of God, being born from above, are given to see and to know many things by the Holy Spirit that the world shall never see or know. They are made to know that they are sinners, who can only be saved by the grace of God. They are made to believe and to confess that salvation for time and eternity is altogether by the grace of God, and that this great salvation is separate from any works of the creature. Therefore, the children of God are misunderstood and hated by the whole world, even by some who claim to follow Jesus, but have not the Spirit. But by the Spirit, the children of grace are given to truly understand one another's condition and experience, and to understand one another's hope in Christ. And they are made to love one another for the truth's sake.

In order to know what Adam experienced as a condemned sinner and what kind of death he suffered, I am made to believe that one must be given to understand what sort of creature Adam was from the beginning of his creation. Many say he was made a perfect spiritual being. They say that since God is a Spirit, that Adam was made a perfect spiritual man in the image of God and after the likeness of God. Many go on from there and say that Adam, a perfect spiritual being, sinned, died a spiritual death, lost his fellowship with God, and was cast away from

His presence. I have not been able to follow this reasoning since it seems to be impossible for a perfect spiritual man to sin. And also it would appear to be impossible for a perfect spiritual man to die a spiritual death since the Spirit is eternal and cannot die. God made man in His image and after His likeness, according to the scriptures. So then, believing that man was formed of the dust of the ground, and not altogether like God, in what aspects was man made in the image of God and after His likeness?

To give an answer, one must be given eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart of understanding. May God help us to know the things needful. To have been made in the image of God and after the likeness of God, to me, was to be one who had been created much higher than the animals and who was given dominion over them; one that could reason; one that had a conscience; one that had some idea of right and wrong; one that had discernment of the concept of past, present and future; and one that had some conception of the Creator and of heaven and hell. When I consider what the inspired apostle Paul said about the man that God made, it seems plain in my mind that Adam was not a perfect spirit being like God as some have said. Paul said by the Spirit, ***"The creature was made subject to vanity..."*** It seems to me to be undeniable that the first man Adam was a created being, made like God in some respects, but not altogether like Him. Man was made much higher than the animals, but it is evident that he was made much lower than God because man was made subject to the vain things of this world. I am made to believe that Adam, at the very beginning of his creation, was made subject to the vanity of pain, sorrow, temptation, sin and death - otherwise he could never have experienced those things. I am made to believe that he was made a creature subject to vanity just like we were made creatures subject to vanity. I cannot help believing that we are Adam multiplied.

The inspired apostle Paul, who was the pattern for all who should believe after him, in order to identify himself and others of like precious faith with Adam in his weakness, said, ***"I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died."*** This takes my mind directly back to the Garden of Eden and what transpired there. Adam and Eve seemed to be alive and happy naturally before they partook of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (the law). Paul was alive before the law came to him. Before we had any knowledge of the law, we were alive and happy in our ignorance (if we share in Paul's experience). I am made to believe that this has been the experience of all of God's little ones from the beginning until now. In what ways then were Adam and Eve, and Paul, and we trust ourselves, alive before the law came? We were going about in

our own self-righteousness, thinking we were just as good as the next fellow, and maybe a little better. We were taking delight in the things of the world. We had no fear of God. We thought we were doing well, but we were actually walking according *to the desires of the flesh. Paul said, "We all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."* We were in our own little world of ignorant bliss.

How then were we brought into the knowledge of our true condition in the flesh, if not by the commandment of God? And how did the commandment come to Adam and Eve, and to Paul and to us? According to the scripture, God put His holy law in the mind and heart of His children. What was the effect of the law being put in the minds and hearts of Adam and Eve and Paul, and also in our minds and hearts? It worked in all of us the desire for that thing which God had forbidden. Paul said by inspiration, *"I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence* [desire for that which is forbidden]. *For without the law sin was dead."* No one ever had any knowledge of sin until the commandment came. The inspired apostle said, *"By the law is the knowledge of sin."* According to the scriptures, the law is the ministration of condemnation and the ministration of death. It condemns us and makes us know that we are sinners and that our actions are worthy of death. It kills us to all our self-righteousness and supposed goodness. Just as eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (partaking of the law) caused Adam and Eve to realize and be ashamed of their nakedness, the law was given for the very purpose of making the whole world guilty before God. There is none good, no, not one.

The beloved apostle said, *"When the commandment came, sin revived and I died."* So the death that Adam and Eve and Paul suffered, and the death that we also suffered, according to our experience, is the death to our ignorant bliss, to our self-righteousness, and to the pleasures of the perishing world. We are killed to our old way of life and to our old way of thinking, and are driven far away from it. The children of God are killed to the world and made alive to Christ. Paul said by the Holy Spirit, *"Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."* And, *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."*

After the law was used to condemn and kill Adam and Eve and Paul and us, God showed mercy in that He provided coats of skins to

cover our nakedness, to protect us, and to comfort us. The coats of skins appear to me to represent the righteousness of Christ. There must be a death of an animal in order to provide a skin for a coat. Christ, the sinless Lamb of God, died and imputed His righteousness to His little ones. His people are given His righteousness for a covering. The law not only condemns and kills, but it also has the beneficial effect of being the schoolmaster that brings us to Christ. I am made to believe that all of God's little ones were brought down into the pit of condemnation and death by the law. They were made to see that there is nothing good in their flesh. The law brought them to the feet of the merciful Jesus. Their only hope was to have cast themselves upon the mercy of God, as did the publican, and to have cried, *"God be merciful to me a sinner."* When all hope in the flesh has been extinguished, Christ is merciful to reveal Himself to us as the Savior, and causes us to hope in Him and to hope and trust that His righteousness has been given unto us for a covering. *"Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."* Our fear and dread of destruction are cast out and are replaced by a hope and trust in Christ.

After Adam and Eve and Paul were made to see themselves as sinners, and we were made to see ourselves as sinners, and we all were killed to our old way of life, and were made alive and given coats of skins, and were driven out from our formerly blissful home, where did we find ourselves? We were found in the wilderness of this world. This is the place that the Spirit drove the Lord Himself to be tempted of the devil. This is where the Lord found Jacob. This is the place where the Dragon persecuted woman flew to safety when she was given the two wings of a great eagle. This is where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time (the span of time until Christ shall come to receive His bride to Himself). This is where God has placed His people that they should show forth His praises. This is where their faith is given its fiery trial that it should come forth as gold. The wilderness is the place from whence they come up out of great tribulation. This is where God makes His great power known. It is where God glorifies Himself in His people. This is where Adam and Eve were placed when they were driven from the Garden of Eden. This is where Paul found himself, and we trust it is where we are now. This is where we groan, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies at the promised coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. All of God's children are pilgrims and strangers traveling through this wilderness by faith. This wilderness world is not their home – they seek a better place, where sin, sorrow, suffering and death cannot enter.

Many more wonderful things are connected with these scriptures, which I am made to believe are also

hidden to the world, but are revealed to His little ones. For brief examples: Adam is presented as a figure of Christ and so is Eve presented as a figure of the church. Eve originally had her being in Adam, as the church has her being in Christ. As Eve was flesh of Adam's flesh and bone of his bones, even so is the church spiritually flesh of Christ's flesh and bone of His bones. Paul said by the Spirit, *"We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones....This is a great mystery: but I speak of Christ and the church."* Adam loved Eve. After she was deceived and had sinned, he gave his life for her by partaking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, knowing fully that it would result in his death. In like manner, Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it by taking upon Himself the curse of the law. He willingly laid down His life and died to satisfy the wrath of God against all ungodliness for His bride, the church. *"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us." And this, "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."* And there are many other similar examples of scripture too numerous to mention here.

I believe that a little about the tree of life also should be included before closing. As recorded in the third chapter of Genesis, the Lord sent Adam forth from the Garden of Eden, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever. And it says He placed at the east of the Garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword, which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life. It appears that the tree of life is Christ, the Lord. I believe that the Cherubims indicate the very dwelling place of God. The flaming sword, to my understanding, is the word of the Lord, which prohibits anyone from coming to Him voluntarily. Jesus said, *"No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."* And Jesus also said, *"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."* So God has kept away the wicked, but has made a narrow way for only the elect to come to Jesus, the Tree of Life, in order that they should take and eat and live forever.

In my weak way, I have tried to set down briefly what the scriptures mean to me that relate to the Garden of Eden. I am made to believe that they have at least three meanings on three different levels. The first shows that the first man and woman sinned, the sentence of death was passed upon them, and they were sent forth from the Garden of Eden, which most everyone seems to understand. The second, to me, is a veiled and hidden description of the experience of grace of the child of God, which only those that are born of God and have had the experience

are enabled to understand. And the third, I am made to believe, is figurative of Christ and His bride, the church, whom He loved even before the world was. And it seems that only God's children are enabled to see and believe this. Although there are many, many more scriptures that bear on this subject, for brevity's sake I think I should bring this to a close.

With my whole heart, I believe the things set forth here are true, but God is the final and perfect Judge of all things. It is my hope and prayer and trust that God's little ones may be edified and comforted by the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. I trust this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

J. B. Farmer
7-28-2007

PROVERBS 21:1-3.

The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the Lord pondereth the hearts.

To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice.

CORRESPONDENCE

7-10-07

Dear Elder Terry,

Please enter my 2 years subscription to Signs of the Times. I have enclosed a check for $25 for that purpose. I have also enclosed a $50.00 donation for the editors to use as they see fit. I read The Signs for the first time only a few months ago and was so very impressed by the beautiful writing. I was afraid that it had ceased publication. I was so happy when Elder Haywood Wray told me that the publication was alive.

Let me say that the area in which you live is one of my favorite places. We had breakfast at Mabry Mill a few weeks back. I love to visit that area, and I consider it among the most beautiful locales. I hope this note finds you well. Perhaps I will have the pleasure of meeting you at some point.

Please mail my subscription to:

Ronald Patterson
1316 Witty Road
Summerfield, N.C. 27358

Sincerely,
Ronald E. Patterson

Dear Editors of the Signs of the Times,

Please renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times for another year. Enclosed is a check for more than the amount. Please use the rest to hopefully help in some way.

I look forward each month for this wonderful book, I enjoy it very much, and thank you so much for it.

Gladys Shelton
2210 Mabry Dr., Apt. #2
Clovis, N.M. 88101

July 9, 2007
4033 Calderwood Dr.
Shreveport, La. 71119

Dear Elder Terry:

I am renewing my subscription for one year and put the rest in the fund.

My husband and I are 92 years old and I don't know how long the Lord has for us on this Earth. He has been so good to us on this Earth. He has been so good to us – I have been on a walker for 5 years and thank the Lord I can walk some. I enjoy the writings in the Signs so much. May the Lord bless and keep the writers and Elders.

A sister in Hope,
Lessie Smith

Collinsville, Va.
July 7, 2007

Dear Elder Terry,

I am enclosing a check to renew my subscription to the Signs use the balance as you see fit.

I thoroughly enjoyed the July issue of the Signs.

Hope you are doing well now and hope to see you at church this summer.

Thank you,
Vivian Underwood
3266 Daniels Creek Rd.
Collinsville, Va 24078

7-14-07

Dear Brothers,

Thank you for your faithful and valuable ministry, for the sweet, wonderful, delicious, nutrious, and wholesome spiritual food.

Please renew our subscription.

Van Solek & Family

Dear Elder Terry:

Please find enclosed check for two year subscription to the Signs of the Times.

I enjoy the writings very much and don't want to be without it.

Sincerely,
Ruby Queen

Dear Elder Terry,

I am so sorry; we got so busy and overlooked that our Signs was due to be renewed. I am sending enough we hope and trust, is enough for two more years renewal subscription. We really enjoy reading the writings of these like faith believers.

Neal and I really enjoyed our visit at the Staunton River Association last weekend. The church house was full on Saturday and we were blessed to hear some wonderful preaching from the Elders. The Lord was surely in the midst.

Please use the remainder of the money for your expense in publishing this wonderful little magazine that feeds our hungry spirit. May our Lord forgive us for our many sins and be with us unto the end.

In Hope,
Neal & Sue Reed

THESSALONIANS 3:8-11.

For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God:

Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.

ARTICLES

The following is a sermon preached by Elder Raymond Goad at Little Creek Church near Delmar. Del. April 10. 1988.

Perhaps if there is one chapter in the Bible that identifies Old Baptist belief, it would be the eighth chapter of Romans. I am sure there are those who had rather this scripture not even be printed, but that's beside the point. I believe that all scriptures are profitable for the doctrine, and in order to understand these scriptures, we must understand in the spirit and in truth. As we read and all we ever see in these beautiful truths is the natural things of this life, it is evidence that we have not the spirit of God. Yet I believe that much of our time we are left to ourselves, that as we read we do not understand what we are reading, in the spirit. There are many times when I have opened the scriptures, my mind would wander away on earthly things. I trust that what few moments we stand before you that our minds may be removed from the vain and perishable things of this life, and be set on things that are eternal.

I will begin, the Lord willing with the sixteenth verse of the eighth chapter of Romans. ***"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children***

of God." Paul writes to the brethren here, to the church ; He is speaking something that is present with children of God. He says the spirit itself bears witness with our spirit and as we read these beautiful truths we beg for understanding and enlightening in what they mean. Certainly we could not rejoice in the writing that Paul has written, unless that our spirits are along the same lines as Paul's experience was. In order to rejoice in the truth as it is written we must know something about the spirit in which it was written. Paul says the spirit itself, that is the spirit of God, the new heart, the understanding that God gives his people, bears witness that we are the children of God.

I believe that God's people from time to time rejoice in the spirit. Not only when they are at church, not only when their hearts are turned to the hymns of Zion, but when it pleases God. Maybe, when about our work, when it seems everything else is removed, only the things that be of God. I have a few times took the wrong road as I drove along the highway when meditating upon the things that be of God. I trust that my spirit, if indeed I have one this morning witnesses with the spirit in which Paul records these beautiful truths. The truth bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.

I have told those who talk about things that they believe, if they could find some other teachings that I enjoy more in the things that you believe, then I would go that way. For more than twenty years, I trust by the Grace of God, that I haven't found anything that I love better than the teachings that the Primitive Baptists stand for, that is salvation by Grace. Then he says the children are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. If so be if we have suffered with him that we may also be glorified together. Sometimes it melts me as I read these beautiful truths. We have read the experience of Paul, we have read many of your experiences from time to time as you have been blessed to write them. We have rejoiced in hearing those who have come to the church tell their experience.

We think sometimes, perhaps that we suffer more than anyone else. We do in one sense of the word and Christ in the seventeenth chapter of John tells us why that we suffer. I am not talking about physically, but I am talking about spiritually. He tells us we are in the world but we are not of the world. That's why you are here today, that's why there is nothing out there in the world that is more important than to go to church. For me this is the most important thing in life, that we are blessed to meet together, to mingle our voices in hymns of praise, to talk about the goodness and mercies of God. Certainly it was the most important thing in Paul's life after he was converted. It wasn't important before, neither was it in your life, neither was it in mine. There was a

time in our lives when this was not important with us. I can remember going to church when it was boring to set even the short period of time while the minister preached. Yet I can remember even back then when I saw those dear saints set back there and shed tears of joy under the sound of the gospel. Paul said that I reckon the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. We know that we have aches and pains, sometimes we feel ours is greater than anyone else, but you know as we read these beautiful truths we find that God' s people suffer at the hand of the enemy, many of them were beheaded, many of them were put to death. Paul was beaten and was in prison and even left for dead. He said he counted it all joy that he was blessed to suffer for the name of Christ, for Christ sake. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time is not to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. Isn't this beautiful, ***"the glory that shall be revealed in us."*** The word us as it is used has reference to the church of God, every heir of promise. For the ernest expectations of the creature waits for the manifestation of the Son of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. He said they shall be delivered. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. I know the Bible says we know nothing as we ought. It says the eye has not seen, the ear has not heard, neither has entered into the heart of man what God has prepared for them that love him. And we yearn for those little Bethel spots along life' s journey. When our minds have been completely removed from earthly things, and yet they are not even to be compared with that which you shall receive. For we know that the whole creature groan and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourself, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth , why does he yet hope for it ? There are those who criticize us for this. I will confess to you that this is all I have in this life is a hope. Sometimes it seems so small, but I don't believe it is ever completely removed. I have a hope that the Lord shall keep me from doing the things I see taking place in the world, from the things I have done and I have a hope that someday beyond this life, beyond these sufferings and trials that are mine and yours that we shall see him for ourselves and not another. We are saved by hope, but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. I believe God's

children wait for it with patience. I believe that they are completely satisfied with the promises of God. God is not slack concerning his promises as some men count slacknes.If we hope for that we see not then do we with patience wait for it.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. And then he says these beautiful words. He that searches the heart. I think that so much of the time we are too anxious to judge. The Bible teaches us that we should not judge. It tells us in the book of Matthew to judge not that ye be not judged. He that searches the heart knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercessions for the saints according to the will of God. Satan would have you to believe it's according to your will, but it's according to the will of God. He taught his disciples to pray in this manner *"That Thy Will Be Done,"* not what we will. It's not always in our best interest for what we pray for, it's not that he doesn't hear our prayers, it's not that he doesn't answer them. Paul sought the Lord that he might remove the thorn in the flesh. He told him it's there lest you get exalted above measure, my Grace is sufficient for you. Then he says this , and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called accord ing to his purpose. Not according to your purpose, not according to something that we have done, or something that we give, but according to the purpose of God. We spend much time in life wondering about those things and then we are reminded of this scripture. We find comfort in our hearts to know that these things are not out of control. If they were, then God ceases to be God. He is the supreme being of this universe and it tells us in this scripture there is no power except the power of the things of God. Then they are not out of control, they are working for your good. I know we can't always see that but we find comfort. He says my peace I give unto you. I find peace when I think of this. I find peace knowing that He is in control. That these things are not going to over run anything unless it is according to the will of God. We are not always blessed to see that, but when we are we find peace. I am at peace with what God has promised. I have no doubt whatsoever that he is able to raise those stones up. I have no doubt whatsoever that he shall raise the dead. I am at complete peace at the promises of God. I am not at peace with myself, but I have complete peace and confidence in the promises and will of God. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: He did

not leave anything to chance. In the 11th Psalm it reads, ***"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."*** In His prayer He says, all the Father has given me I have lost none and shall raise them up in the last day. We had a dear brother come among us who had been in many different churches. And not long ago he joined the church, my home church and he told me this," "Brother Goad, what I like about your preaching is you all preach eternal security." He said that's what I want, eternal security. If we preach Jesus , we must preach eternal security for all the heirs of God. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called When we are blessed in the Spirit to see these things they are very clear, we see the calling of Paul, we see the calling of all the Patriarchs of old and we don' t find where they made any great to do's about their calling. They were about their business following after the things of Satan as you and I and would still be, had it not been for the love of God in our hearts, we would still be following after those things. Paul says it is no more I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me.

Moreover them he did predestinate, them he also called, we see the calling of many of the others. We see the calling of many of you. We have seen those who had said they would not be old Baptists, they would not come among them, would criticize them and make fun of them and later on made to love them. They were called out of nature's darkness and brought in to the marvelous light. There are those of you who have told me of a calling. You were predestinated, and called here in time. Them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified. Paul said what shall we then say to these things if God be for us, who can be against us There is no powers, nor principalities nor things present, nor things to come that shall separate us from the love of God, which is our Christ Jesus He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. All, has reference to all whose name is in the Book of Life. That is who this scripture is written to. That's who he is talking to. That's why He came to this low ground of sin and sorrow and took upon himself a body of flesh, that's what he did it for. He said for this cause was I born. What shall we then say to these things, if God be for us , who can be against us. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things. Something that you work for is not free.

Something you inherit is not something you work for. That's what the scriptures teach us, that we inherit these things. They are free. By Grace are you saved. Grace is a free and unmerited favor. You might go out and talk till you are blue in the face and you couldn't make one believe this. But God can, with even the Gaderene who lived among the tombs, when he cast the devils out and into a herd of swine and they ran

down into the sea. He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast.

Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? I have heard those who believe differently say, oh yes, that was of election. You cast one vote, Christ casts a vote and Satan casts one and you have to cast for the deciding vote. I wasn't around here before the foundation of the world. The Bible teaches this took place before the foundation of the world. How could I have had anything to say in it. This is hid from the wise and the prudent. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect. It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine , or nakedness, or peril, or sword ? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long! We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God; which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I am glad Paul was talking about us. I am glad he didn't just say me, he said us, shall not separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus.

My dear hearers if this is not eternal security, I don' t know what it is. If that is not the love of the things that you believe, the basis of the things that you love, the things that you hope for. I can tell you this morning I have no doubt whatsoever but that none of God' s children will be left out. I don' t believe God is slack concerning his promises as some men count slackness, but is long suffering toward us. He came, he suffered as no other man has ever suffered, bled and died and hung between Heaven and Earth and shed his precious blood on the tree of the cross for you and I trust for me, that someday beyond the trials of this life that we shall see him, be made like him and be satisfied. I don't know what kind of body it will be, one of the writers said, it does not yet appear what we shall be, but I am satisified with this promise, we shall be like him and and be satisfied. I believe with all my heart that he is able to perform that which he has promised to the children of God. I hope to live my days out among you people, I hope I never bring trouble among you and I apologize for my mistakes, but for the things I love I stand firm upon salvation by grace and grace alone.

Elder Raymond Goad

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE WIND

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit." (John 3:8)

These two things are produced by the Lord. Not the first created thing had the least part of these two productions being carried or developed to full fruition. Furthermore each and everyone from the first one in the pristine morning of time, have, if they have, come into the kingdom of heaven under just such trying cirumstances as are described here by our Saviour. That is not the construction that I put on what He said, but it is the experience that I hoped to have passed through at the time.

That early experience was something terrible to endure, and it is still that way. I know that what the Bible says does not mean anything to anyone unless they have (and are) experiencing the things described. Therefore, I do not appeal (I do not preach nor write to those that have a vain philosophy) to those that have not, nor do not experience the power set forth by the Saviour's description of the New Birth.

Although the learned Saul had never bowed the knee to anyone, nor to anybody, yet, I have never, in all of my reading, come across a man as helpless and ignorant as he had shown himself to be on the Damascus road. While we are at this particular place in the travel of one who has come under the experience and power of this wind, let me go a step further and say that anyone that leaves the spot where this wind has blown, that comes away knowing where it came from and what it is about, and what they are to do, one and all of them are mistaken about the Lord having demonstrated His power in their life.

Now I did not say that there wasn't a voice or a thunder or some other demonstration of great affairs. Many such occurrences happen which get a lot of attention, but when the dust has settled the Lord was not in any of them. Moreover, some of the time there is not a voice from outside the hearer Only his or her imagination is using them. In what I desire to call your attention to, each and everyone is brought into the presence of this devastating storm, and each one is brought into the scene when everything is yielding to this gigantic wind they feel the tremors that involuntarily pass through them; they bow down to great buildings that they have built to house their goods, and these are all laid waste about them; they feel the surge of the mighty power within and around them, Yes, they are aware that their house has been wrecked for all time to come. But

they fail to learn one thing that multiplied tens of thousands are learning every time that a breeze rises, to wit, they know where it comes from, and, as they arise, and pick up the fragments, they soon have still greater blueprints for better barns and storehouses in which to store their goods.

Not so with the true Israelite, the true child of God. He or she leaves that stromy ground in a lot worse state than when the wind arose. They know something happened to them that had never occurred before, but they spend the balance of their days in amazement and in wonder. What did happen to me? Where did it come from? Where did it go? Did it come from God or did it come from my depraved mind?

This was indeed the greatest wind to ever blow. It does not leave you with a lot of goods intact. It spoils all of that which you laid up. It does not take this great spoil away. You have to live with the spoiling goods (they get worse as time goes on), and you need not think you are going to find out where the wind came from, neither are you going to find out where it goes. There is not a shred of conditionalism that you can perform and get some relief. You will never get any while you live. For you see a Stronger Man than you has come on the scene and has from the start routed you. He spoils your goods and then binds you. People talk about that they are free to perform this and that and get blessings, or to leave off this and that and miss them. That is not true. When this wind arises and blows itself out it leaves everyone a poor helpless sinner not knowing anything as he or she ought. They do not know where the storm came from much less do they know whether it is of God or not.

Once again I would urge that where this wind (Spirit) has blown there is not one that knows whether it is God that has dealt with them or not. Instead of all of those born of the Spirit being godly, they do not any of them know whether they are godly or not. Thus, as I leave this phase of the subject, I would kindly ask, have you evercome this wind, or has it overcome you?

Now let us follow the wind and the storm. Let us see if we ever do get to where we can master this Spirit. In order for us to have power to save ourselves, we must have power over the Spirit. Do we have this ? Have we the ability to retain the Spirit ? If so , we must also have the will to do so . Have we got that power? The question is: Are we able to stay in the Spirit or to retain that Spirit ? If there Is a passage of Scripture that declares that wonderful fact, certainly, I desire to find it. I find to the contrary. There cannot be any mistake about two things. Even though there is right much in writing and more still of loud talking that any child of God can walk in the Spirit at will, yet the wise man declared that no man could retain the Spirit anymore than he could retain

life in the day of death. It is passing strange that those professing to be saved by the grace of God, yet boldly and blindly declared that if we just would do it that we can walk in the Spirit at all times. Or have I misunderstood you - do you mean to suggest that you can save yourself whether in or out of the Spirit?

All of the great blessings in nature are also spiritual gifts. Ever so many times, in divers manners the written word is teeming with references about the wind in the travels and experiences of those who are of the members of the kingdom of heaven. As far as the references to the wind it always finds the poor sinner at its mercy. At this period in our dealing with the subject, let us remember that God is the direct and immediate cause of there being any natural wind . Of course, if you have some kind of a book that gives a source of wind in a nature other than our wise and gracious Creator, you get all out of it that you can, but for those who learned in the outset of their experience that it blows where it listeth, and that is in keeping with what our heavenly Father does, we that hope in Him will continue to believe that He holds it in His fists, and thus that every cooling breeze from the south, as well as every frigid blast out of icy lands, together with every tornadic wind that ever hit Kansas came as a result of Him opening His fists. If those that can master the winds will be so kind as to tell us where they find that fact in the Bible, we will appreciate it so much. But I think that they have an insurmountable problem to begin with for we are all reminded that the wind blows where it listeth , which is to say that it blows where it pleases and in relation to it blowing where it pleases, we are likewise reminded that God holds it in His fists, and that not only does that wind blow where God pleases for it to blow, both the wind of the Spirit and that in nature, but likewise that bound the waters in a garment that He has established all the ends of the earth, therefore, not only is every item of nature bounded, but that each time any of these natural gifts are spiritualized that in each case the Spirit is settled, fixed, arranged so definitely that happen so or maybe so or conditionality just cannot be found in the Bible concerning them by the children of God.

The people of God went down to sea to do business in great waters and on good ships. The wind arose, a storm was sent. The wind became quite rough. They could not master their vessels. They were tossed to and fro. About the time that they thought the storm was abating, lo and behold, the wind tossed them fro. Every last one of them lost their wits . A man and a woman that has lost their wits is not able to rescue themselves , to save themselves. It is useless for you to write me that you are able to maintain your wits at all times. If you have ever been to sea, you have, and you didn't know

what to do, and like these that I am describing, you would have been lost had not He that sent the storm caused it to abate. Salvation is of the Lord.

Jonah determined not to go to Nineveh. God determined that he go. He used what he had to keep from going, but he did not have the power to keep from going when the storm broke in its fury on him. At that time he said, even declared, that salvation was of the Lord. Both the wind of the Spirit, and the natural wind were effective in making Jonah renounce all subterfuges and all dodgeings of the flesh and to say without reservation, that salvation comes from the Lord.

In the 148th Psalm we have a long list of things that fulfil the word of the Lord. If the Lord spares my unprofitable life, I may at a future date touch upon all of these things, but right now I am delighted to call your attention to stormy winds fulfilling His word, and His word in every way that it is used in the Bible is used for the mutual benefit of His children these stormy winds are kept harnessed in the strong hands of the Lord and will never blow in a way to destroy their hope, their heritage, their home beyond this travail.

If I am not mistaken, I have seen and felt the tossing of the wind of the Spirit. I have felt, as I hope, the bending down of every plant that I have planted. I have known that a power greater than I was laying waste to what I had thought to have done. I did not know then, as I would have liked to have known where the wind was from. I have sought time after time that He in whom I sometimes am given a faint hope that it was He at the helm, but that this been nearly sixty years ago, and my testimony today is the same that it was that day of yore. I do not know as I would like to know that it was the Spirit of the Lord. If I got brave and said that I did know I would then be subjected to the same rebuke that is due all these that have withstood the Spirit and the wind in salvation.

But I write in hope. I do hope that I have been to sea, and that the storm has been furious, and that I, together with all of those whose hope of salvation now and hereafter is in the hands of the Mariner that rests in His own love (Zeph. 3:17), but is ever kind and merciful to the cry of His sea and wind tossed trophies of His covenant, and that HE rebukes the wind and the waves and out of His fulness gives them to rest also in His redeeming love.

Elder W.D. Griffin

PSALM 84:1-2.

How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!

My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

PREACH IN ALL THE WORLD

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature;" Mark, xvi. 15.

Elder R. W. Thompson; Dear Brother in Christ: The Monitor of July the first is before me, and I notice that Brother G. W. Chancy, of City Point, Fla., requests any brother that may think the above scripture binding upon preachers today, to write on it. I can assure dear Brother Chancy that I do not aim to animadvert his position. I only wish and aim to humbly present such views as I may have on the text. Evidently the dear Lord enabled the twelve apostles to do some things that he does not see proper to have his dear tried preachers to do in our day.

Because God worked special miracles by the hands of the apostles does not militate against his servants going and preaching the *"gospel to every creature."*

Before the middle wall of partition was broken down the gospel was confined as well as the preachers to *"The lost sheep of the house of Israel,"* but after the middle wall of partition was broken down by our precious Redeemer, the imperative command of Jesus Christ was and is, *"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."* The preaching of the gospel of the grace of God is a lifetime work to all of his servants that he has called and separated unto the gospel of the Son of God. Some desire to "go into all the world," while others desire to serve churches. It would not work well for all to go into all the world, for the churches would be left pastorless.

Because Paul says the *"gospel was preached to every creature,"* certainly does not mean that it should not be preached with the *"Holy Ghost sent down from heaven"* to every creature in our day. If there is a text of Scripture similar to the one at the head of this article, that is binding on the preachers in our day, how is it that the above text is not also binding? I feel sure that it is the duty of some preachers to spend their entire time in preaching the gospel to every creature, and to fail to encourage them is to impede the prosperity and peace of our beloved Zion. The preacher is to *"Go ye,"* because God has said so. He is to *"Go ye into all the world"* for the same reason. Not only so, but he is to preach the gospel to every creature, for the very good reason that God has commanded it. If my mind serves me right, I read in the Old Testament something like this: *"One sea and twelve oxen under it;"* three oxen looking towards the north, three looking towards the west, three looking towards the south, and three looking towards the east; and I believe three times four are twelve. The *"one sea"* represents the *"Burden of the word of the Lord,"* or the gospel of Jesus Christ. The twelve oxen represent the twelve

apostles, and as the twelve apostles were commanded to *"go,"* I presume they went in the direction they were looking. If so, they went in every direction, and as preaching was their calling, they went into all the world and preached the gospel to every creature. If the apostles went and did not go in the direction they were looking they went backwards.

Again I read in the last chapter of Ezekiel that there was a certain city that had twelve gates, three in the north, three in the east, three in the south, and three in the west; and I also learn that there was a certain man to go in and out at his respective gate, and I think that as he went in and out he found pasture. It was not the duty of Benjamin to go in and out at Dan's gate, nor Dan's duty to go in and out at Benjamin's gate. If a brother is satisfied to stay around home and serve the churches, that is his gate; on the other hand, if a brother desires to *"go into all the world,"* or *"into regions beyond,"* that is his gate. Let each preacher abide in his calling and thus fulfill his vocation.

In conclusion I will say, that I think the above text is binding only upon those whom God has impressed to devote their entire time to the *"work of the ministry."* I hope I have written in love, and that Brother Chancy will not think me unkind for thus writing. May God bless us, is my sincere desire.

J.S. Newman

"Love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. -- 1 John iv. 7, 8.

If ever you have loved Jesus with a pure affection; if ever you have felt him near, dear, and precious to your soul, that love can never be lost out of your heart. It may lie dormant; it does lie dormant. It may not be sweetly felt in exercise; but there it is. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha" (1 Cor. xvi. 22). You would be under this curse if the love of the Lord Jesus Christ were to die out of your heart. But this love is often sleeping. When the mother sometimes watches over the cradle and looks upon her sleeping babe with unutterable affection, the infant knows not that the mother is watching its slumbers; but when it awakes, it is able to feel and return its mother's caresses. It is so with the soul sometimes when love in the heart is like a babe slumbering in the cradle. But as the babe opens its eyes, and sees the mother smiling upon it, it returns the smiles, and stretches forth its arms to embrace the bending cheek; so when the eyes of the soul are opened to see the smiling face of Jesus stooping to imprint a kiss of love, or drop some sweet word into the heart, and there is a flowing forth toward him of love and affection -- this is the power of love.

J. C. Philpot

MEETINGS

EASTERN KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The twenty-fifth session of the Eastern Kehukee Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Hancocks Church located near Ayden, NC. The meeting will be held on Saturday October 6 and Sunday October 7, 2007. Services will begin each day at 10:30 a.m.

From Raleigh take US 64 East. Then take the US 264 East exit to Greenville. When you get to Greenville, take Hwy 11 South to Ayden. Turn left on Hwy 102 East. Go through Ayden and about two miles turn on the first paved road to the left. This will be Ayden Golf Club Road. Go about 1 1/2 miles and the church will be on the left.

We invite the ministers and lovers of the truth to meet with us.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton river Union meeting will convene the Lord willing the 5th Sunday in Sept. at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church. Song service begins at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30 a.m.

An invitation is extended to all our ministers, brethren and friends.

Peggy Wells, Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 22 & 23, 2007.

Union Church, located about 5 miles Southeast of Marion, Louisiana, will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
(318) 778-4217

SULPHUR FORK ASSOCIATION

The One Hundred Sixty-Second session of the Sulphur Fork Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Prospect Church, on Saturday before the first Sunday in October, 2007.

Prospect Church is located on the North side of Highway 67, about three miles East of Sims, Texas. (Look for sign.)

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Miles Bird
Association Clerk
318 / 687-6775

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held the Lord willing, at Greensboro Church on the 5th Sunday in September.

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Wayne Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 2007

Gladys Shelton, MN	20.00
Pamela Screen, TN	10.00
Cleo Underwood, VA	9.00
Vivian Underwood, VA	5.00
Elizabeth Webb, IL	10.00
Lessie Smith, LA	35.00
Ronald Patterson, NC	50.00
Roscoe Reed, OH	10.00
Donald Ferguson, BC	25.00
Van Solek, NJ	5.00
Joe & Connie Wall, TX	25.00
Norvell Godwin, LA	10.00

MATTHEW 18:20.

For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

OBITUARIES

LULA IZOLA HOLLANDSWORTH SLAUGHTER

Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church bows in humble submission to our Lord in the calling of our dear Sister Izola H. Slaughter from this life to her Eternal Home on May 24, 2007 at the age of 84 years.

Sister Izola joined the Indian Creek Primitive Church on April 24, 1977 and was a member for 30 years. She was baptized, by her Pastor, J.S. Sechriest, on May 15, 1977. Her funeral was held at her home church on Sunday, May 27, 2007 at 3:00 p.m. by her Pastor Elder Kenneth D. Hopkins and Elder Tommy Pegram.

Survivors of Sister Izola H. Slaughter are her husband of 66 years, Herman L. Slaughter, one daughter, Rachel S. Marshall, one son and daughter-in-law, Donnie and Yvonne Slaughter. Also surviving are three grandchildren, Tammy Costigan and husband Scott, Sonya Gautier and husband Tony, Joshua Slaughter and two great-grandchildren, Trista Costigan, Seth Gautier and one sister and several nieces and nephews.

She was a dear Sister who believed in the Doctrine of Salvation By Grace and Grace Alone. She will be missed, by her family and her family in the church. She was laid to rest in the Captain George Cemetery. We feel that our loss is Heaven's gain.

Arrangements were made by Maberry Funeral Home, Floyd, Va.

Done in Conference,
Moderator,
Elder Kenneth D. Hopkins
Committee,
Brother J. B. Mitchell, Clerk
Sister Jean Mitchell

ALSEBERRY EVINS SMITH

Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church bows in humble submission to our Lord in the calling of our dear Brother, Alseberry E. Smith from this life to his Eternal Home on May 5, 2007 at the age of 90 years.

Funeral arrangements were made and held at Maberry Funeral Home in Floyd County, Va. His funeral was held at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday May 8, 2007, by his Pastor, Elder Kenneth D. Hopkins and Elder Tommy Pegram.

Bro. Alseberry was laid to rest beside his loving wife, Clessie H. Smith in the Captain George Cemetery in Floyd County, Va. Survivors of Bro. Smith are his loving son and daughter-in-law, Michael and Sue Smith and his loving daughter and son-in-law, Phyllis S. and Harold Hollandsworth. Also surviving are two grandchildren, Brian Smith and Diane Smith and husband Tommy Smith and two great-grandchildren, Annabelle and Tommy "Bubby" Smith and five sisters and two brothers and one brother-in-law.

Brother Alseberry was blessed to ask for a home with the Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church on May 15, 1965, and was baptized by his Pastor, J.S. Sechriest and Brother G. E. Duncan. He was a true and faithful member to his church for 42 years. He and his companion were blessed to travel far and near to sister associations of like faith and order, but come his meeting time at his home church he tried always to be there.

We feel this scripture fits our dear Brother found in 2nd Timothy Ch. 4 Verses 7 & 8; I have kept the faith, hence forth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness with the Lord. We have lost a dear Brother, but feel that our loss is Heaven's gain.

Done in Conference, at the Church,
Moderator,
Elder Kenneth D. Hopkins
Committee,
Brother J. B. Mitchell, Clerk
Sister Jean Mitchell

REVELATION 7:16-17.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

My God, the sping of all my joys,
The life of my delight,
The glory of my brightest days,
The comfort of my nights!

In darkest shades if he appear,
My dawning is begun;
He is my soul's sweet morning star,
And he my rising sun.

The opening heavens around me shine
With beams of sacred bliss,
While Jesus shows his heart is mine,
And whispers I am His!

My soul would leave this heavy clay
At that transporting word,
Run up with joy and shining way
To embrace my dearest Lord.

Fearless of hell and ghastly death
I'd break through every foe;
The wings of love, and arms of faith,
Should bear me conqueror through.

Watts.

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EDITORIAL

"Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after." - I Timothy 5:24

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

I believe this scripture is setting forth that God's elect will not stand before God in the end of time and face judgment, but others will.

When God gave Adam the law of sin and death in the Garden of Eden, all of Adam's race were covered by that law. That included all of the Lord's people in the flesh, for the Apostle Paul says that we all were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Some say that everyone of Adam's race will stand before God in the end of time, be judged according to their works and that judgment will be rendered at that time. They also say those who have done good or received Christ as their savior will be given eternal life and those who have done evil or not accepted Christ will be cast into hell. But, I believe that judgment has already been rendered because Romans 5:12 reads, ***"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."*** Judgment was rendered. Romans 3:23 says, ***"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."*** Judgment was rendered. Romans 9:11-13 states, ***"For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."*** Judgment was rendered. Romans 3:10-12, ***"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.***

They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Judgment was rendered. All are guilty.

God's law being spiritual, holy, just and good required a perfect sacrifice that was holy. It could have no blemish (sin). Therefore, none of Adam's sinful race could satisfy the demands of God's law and redeem themselves from its curse. ***"The carnal mind is enmity against God for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."*** Since it was impossible for God's little ones to pay their debt and redeem themselves, God sent His own Son in the likeness of their sinful flesh and yet without sin under the same law that they were under to stand in their room and stead. Here was the perfect Lamb of God without spot or blemish who stood a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. He took the sins of all His people in His own body on the tree of the cross and was made to be sin for us. He took our judgment and the execution of that judgment. The wrath of God was poured out upon Him who knew no sin. Innocent, but oppressed; humble, but afflicted; He opened not His mouth. He, in his great love, willingly laid down His life for His friends and satisfied every demand of His father's holy law. Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment.

You must experience the condemnation of the law which says you are guilty. Romans 14:10-12 says, ***"But why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then, every one of us shall give account of himself to God."*** You stand before the judgment seat of Christ and your knee bows in humble submission and repentance and you confess that you are a lost sinner and you beg for mercy. As the publican who stood afar off and alone, you felt so sinful and such a wretch that you could not even lift your eyes unto heaven, but could only cry out, Lord be merciful to me a sinner. The judgment seat of Christ is only for His people and is within you. Psalms 99:4 says ***"thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob."*** Psalms 101:6 reads, ***"The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed."*** The law was given that sin might abound. When the law was applied to you, your sins abounded

and you died. As the Apostle Paul said, ***"I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived (abounded), and I died."*** We cry as the Apostle, ***"O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"*** Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment. Your sins are open to you as you are shown that you are a sinner. Your sins have gone before to judgment as Jesus took them in His own body on the cross. The execution of the judgment was accomplished when the Lord suffered, shed His blood, and died to pay the price demanded by His father's holy law for your redemption. Therefore, you will not have to face the judgment of God at the end of time. Your names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life from the foundation of the world. Therefore, in the resurrection, you will be with all the sheep on His right hand and will hear the summons, ***"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."***

All others will experience their sins following after them. In this life, they will never know the Lord and will never know their sinful condition. But at the end of time, they will be brought to stand before God in all His power and glory and be judged out of those things written in the books of the law according to their works. Judgment has already been rendered and they are all guilty, but their judgment has not been executed. They will stand before God in all His power and glory and be shown that they are indeed sinners and lost. Then, they shall be cast into the lake of fire. I believe this lake of fire or everlasting punishment is described by the Apostle Paul in II Thessalonians 1:7-9, ***"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power."*** To have their sins made known to them and to stand in the presence of God and then to be banished from His presence eternally is a hell that burns as a fire that cannot be quenched. As Cain said when God banished him from His presence after slaying Abel, ***"My punishment is greater than I can bear."***

Romans 6:23 states, ***"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."*** Also recorded in Psalms 107:1-2, *it says:* ***"O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy."***

In bonds of love,
Cleo D. Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

Elder Terry,

Enclosed find a check for $100.00 to cover a 2 years renewal and $75.00 is a contribution to be used where needed.

This past winter Dan and I had a chance to visit Elder Campbell's Church in the Memphis, Tenn. area and enjoyed hearing him on a Sunday morning. The past couple winters we have spent about 6 weeks each year toward the south and I try to locate us on each Sunday near a Primitive Baptist or a Sovereign Grace Church that I have previously found on the internet. I wish we had some of these churches closer to us.

Sincerely,
Annabel Arne

VOICES OF THE PAST

ELDER AUSTIN JONES CASSELL

Born: March 22, 1820
Died: October 14, 1901

Elder A. J. Cassell

Eld. A. J. Cassell was received by experience by the arm of Jack's Creek Church, Patrick Co., Va., at Green Hill meeting house, Patrick Co., Va., April 9, 1836. Green Hill was constituted into a church on Sept. 10, 1836. He remained a member until granted a letter of dismission, Feb. 8, 1873. He placed his membership with Center Church, Henry Co., Va., where he remained until his death. He was ordained as a deacon, Aug. 11, 1849; licensed to preach, March 8, 1851; ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, July 10, 1852. He pastored several churches and was the moderator of the Smith River Association for many years. It is also interesting to note that he was the father of Elder John R. Cassell, and the great-grandfather of Elders Bennie Neal Clifton, Leonard Lester Cassell, and J.L. Cassell.

CIRCULAR LETTER

From the minutes of the Smith River Primitive Baptist Association, held with West Fork Church, Floyd Co., Va., July, 1882, and also Charity Church, Patrick Co., Va., October, 1882.

To the churches of the Smith River District Baptist Association and all whom it may concern, greeting.

Beloved, we have met together in associational deliberations twice this year, each time in love and continued in love and peace, while we your messengers were together, and parted in love and peace. How good it is for brethren to be in love and peace with each other. Such has been the case for some year or two.

It appears that the interest of one is the interest of all the others; the mind of one, the mind of all the rest; no jars, no new resolutions, no debates; nothing to chafe the feeling of each other, but all seem to wish for and labor for peace.

No big, self-opinionated messengers have you in your association; whether public or private all appear to be valley livers, dwelling in the valley of humility, poor and dependent upon the Lord, having one general aim for the good of each other, enjoying each others' company and conversation, esteeming each other better than themselves. Never to my recollection, have I seen or known your association more in union and peace than at the present time. Most of the churches are healthy and in peace, strong in faith, trusting alone in the Lord. When any of the dear brethren come to see us at our association as correspondents or visitors they are kindly received in our body and treated with special respect that they may feel welcome and pleasant with us, and I hope they do.

Though our body may be small yet it is blessed with peace. Sometimes small families have as much enjoyment as large families do, expecially when some of it's members are unruly, possessing self importance. Oh that we may still live in peace while we are permitted to stay here on earth, that we may be poor in spirit, and often at the throne of grace asking the Lord to lead us; that we may not do ourselves any harm, nor harm to others.

Let us try to watch over our ways and words, and look at our weakness and nothingness instead of looking at our poor hobbling brother and complaining of him; for to his Master he stands or falls. What poor judges we are when left to ourselves.

Oh that we could and would do this, see that we did not lay something in the way that our brother would stumble over to his hurt, for if one of the members suffer, all must suffer with it, for all of the members are of great use, for God has set the members of the body as it pleases Him; so the hand has no right to say to the foot I have no need of you; neither has strong members a just right to say to the weak you are of no use to me. The strong ought to bear with the weak, and when such is in distress try to comfort them.

Oh, that we could have patience to bear the many trials of this life, and especially with our dear brethren, that instead of looking down on our brethren and sisters we might feel that we had good cause to look upon them, viewing them in worthiness above us, for ofttimes we feel to say, Oh, is there any one like me? Jesus said, *"learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest unto your souls."*

It is good for us to have poor opinions of ourselves, so that we may not trust in ourselves, but in the

Lord, who is able and will give strength to the poor and needy. Our faith hovers around His promises, believing that the time appointed of God they will all be fulfilled. Dear brethren and sisters, the Lord attends to and maintains the cause of the poor; so if you are poor it is in self, but you are rich in the Lord, for unto this man will I look that is poor and of a contrite heart and that trembles at my Word. I am such a poor hand to gather up fragments that I fear I shall not hardly get a taste for any. The brethren desired me to write, but it is surely a task. It looks like most anything that I write is awkward and weak; but such as I have I wish to give unto you in the name of the Lord. Oh that I was prepared by the Spirit of the Lord to admonish you not only to love but to good works, to let our light shine, but it seems to me often that I have but little light that I know not how to travel, and say like David said to the Lord, "is thy mercy clean gone and will He be favorable to us no more?" We are yet in the flesh and have the warfare to encounter which often brings us so low, and our condition seems to be a pitiful one, but it is necessary for us to go through great tribulations, even the furnace of afflictions. But God has appointed a time for them to end. We hope He has chosen us out of the world, and if so He will bring us safe to that Heavenly home, where Jesus says are many mansions. No breeches of fellowship will be there; then little children, we will all get together to dwell in peace in love forever; then the days of trials and grief will be over; then the dear brethren that are scattered away from each other, wishing greatly to see each other will get together. Oh, what a happy time it then will be with the poor tired pilgrim. Heartaching days will be over, doubts and fears left behind, tears no more flow down our poor withered cheeks, no more death to dread. We will be beyond the wilderness where we will receive truly the milk and honey. Bless God for such a prospect.

Elder Austin J. Cassell

REVELATION 7:14-17.

And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes? and whence came they?

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

ROMANS VIII. 28.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God."

These words bring to our minds solemn thoughts and reflections, of the ground they cover, and the real true meaning of the words here spoken by the apostle, under the inspiration of the holy Spirit of God. How hard it is for poor insignificant creatures to understand or comprehend the working of his almighty power, as he (God) works all things after the counsel of his own will. As we contemplate the majesty and glory of our God in all his works let us ever remember that *"as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher that your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."* It seems to me that Paul was here contemplating the work of God from the beginning to the end, from creation to the final glorification of all the redeemed, and not a single link in the chain of God's providence could be left out and his most holy will and purpose accomplished for his dear saints and his glory. We poor finite creatures cannot sit as judges of what our God should do or not do, or divide between the good and the bad, from our viewpoint. It has often been said that God predestinated the good things, but not the bad. Who of us is able to sit as judge and draw the dividing line; place the good things on the right, the bad on the left?

Let us examine a few things left on record for our learning. God created Adam upright, a good created being, gave him a law. He broke that law and fell under its curse: sin and death upon all his posterity. Now we all know that our God could have made Adam strong enough to have withstood the temptation, but in the purpose of God, with an end in view in the far future, he made Adam just as he was. We would place this evil step on the left, not comprehending the thing to be accomplished: the glorification of our God and his only beloved Son Jesus, the Savior of sinners. But I want it distinctly understood that God is not the author of sin; man is wholly responsible for all his sins and misdeeds. We note again among the "all things" the selling of Joseph. Joseph had a dream. (Read the narrative.) Was it a mere chance dream, or did the God of heaven inspire it? He had a purpose in it, therefore it was a link in the chain. Joseph told it to his brethren and they put their interpretation upon it (and a correct one). The evil of their corrupt nature arose and they conspired against Joseph and sold him to merchantmen, who carried him to Egypt. See the sorrow of poor old Jacob. Would we not all place this on the left, with the bad things, as Jacob did when he said,

these things are against me? Dear reader how often have we said in our hearts as Jacob did, not seeing the end? But reader, follow Joseph in all his career, shut up in the prison cell by evil intention, is this for good? Yes in the purpose of God, though yet hid from mortals. Pharoah dreamed a dream, Joseph was there to interpret it. Suppose Joseph had not been there, then what? But he was there to interpret the dream. Seven years of plenty, seven years of famine. Joseph finds favor with the king, and is made head over all, to save much people alive. God sent him there; the end is good, and when made known his brethren bowed to him willingly, and Joseph told them, Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. Again, the betrayal of Christ by Judas. Where in all the history of the world was there a blacker or more heathenish crime? yet it was all in the fixed, predestinated purpose of our God. Suppose there had not been a Judas; then what? The Scriptures would not have been fulfilled, nor the purpose of God. It is written, *"As Jonas was three day and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."* When Jonah took ship it was evil upon his part, but God meant it for good. He was to learn obedience by the things he suffered. The storm came. Was it by chance? Certainly not. They cast lots, and it fell upon Jonah, the guilty one, and they cast him overboard. Then what? Our God was superintending it all, and had prepared a great fish to swallow him up and carry him to the place appointed, ordained or fixed. Had our God control of that fish? Most assuredly he had, and when the three days and nights were up he was delivered. So they "were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Now how any true believer can repudiate and hold up to ridicule this blessed doctrine I cannot understand. I am satisfied many are prejudiced by wrong interpretations of evil doers. I have heard of some, in trying to refute the doctrine of predestination, taking up some atrocious crime of murder, and holding it up in all of its most heinous nature, crying out with a loud voice, Tell me that God made that man do this awful deed? Now that is a false statement. I have traveled extensively in twenty-two states, and Canada, and have never heard any one ridicule such an idea, and I could not fellowship any one who did. God is not the author of sin, neither tempteth he any man, man of his own lust is tempted. I know of one man who thus tried to justify himself in an evil deed, but the church excluded him, and did right in so doing. I have never favored setting this up as a standard in church fellowship, but have opposed it. I have full fellowship, but have opposed it. In all my travels I have met but one man who favored

it as a standard. I opposed it, and do yet. For the elect's sake the world stands, and many of the dark scenes that take place, that are beyond our comprehension, will be among the "all things" in the providence of God, and in some way, though remote, be for the good of his people, individually or collectively. The wrath of man shall praise God, the remainder of wrath will He restrain. The wicked are his sword for the chastisement of his people. What a sweet comfort when we can rest all in his blessed hand and power, and know that the darkest scene is as necessary as the brightest one. Darkness and light are alike with the Lord. He dwells in the thick clouds; he maketh the clouds his chariot. Truly it is a day of darkness. Darkness has covered the earth, and it truly seems gross darkness the people, and I sometimes wonder why his wrath is not poured out; but for the elect's sake will the world stand until the last one for whom Jesus died be made manifest.

"Chained to his throne, a volume lies,
With all the fates of men,
With every angel's form and size,
Drawn by the eternal pen."

What a blessed comfort to feel that
"The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will?"

Dear reader, I trust you may be favored to gather a few crumbs of comfort from these scattered thoughts, for there has been a little comfort to my soul as I have penned them, and a relief to an exercised and burdened mind. The dear Lord bless you all, and lead and guide us all in the pathway of peace and righteousness.

Yours in sweet gospel fellowship, though the least and poorest in my Father's house.

P. W. Sawin
Shelbyville, Kentucky

PRAYER

No subject of the Bible holds more interest than this. Perhaps, we do not understand much about it. I am sure that I do not, and I realize how presumptuous it is for me to think I could teach any one how to pray. This world professes to teach that and some theologian has gone to the trouble to write a book called "God's Minute." In the book he has a short prayer for each day in the year. Not being able to give you that many in advance. While I do not know that I have ever prayed, and if I have that I will ever be blessed to do so again it does not mean that it is not gospel subject. If it is, it certainly is profitable, under spiritual guidance, for our discussion and examination.

By way of encouragement to the dear saints I want to say to you that none of our leaders have a mo-

nopoly on prayer. Although prayer is a gift it is not one we can use any time men call on us to pray. If I am mistaken about it don't follow me, but I believe that any minister feels a great hesitancy offering prayer at times.

Prayer is, after all, a close-up with God, a veritable talking face to face. When we are really and truly given to see our sins, it is enough to cause a trembling in body and spirit to ask God for anything, seeing that it is the prayer of a righteous man that avails anything. In this connection let me say that I have impressions to pray just like I trust I do to preach. At these times it is the sweetest yielding and compliance to his blessed command as it is in standing in the pulpit and preaching the doctrine of grace. Trying to pray is like trying to preach - it is mighty hard work - in fact it cannot be done. While trying to pray, we invariably are in the flesh and our object is selfish, begging for the things that we want. But that is not all, trying to accomplish a thing not only shows a lack of how but of what and why. I believe we pray as we preach and live and die, depending on the eternal fixed purposes of God. It is in faith that we come to him at all. This faith, at all times, is the substance of the things hoped for.

This has never been changed and, although it moved Abel, Daniel, Jacob, Paul and all those gone before and will move every communicant that is yet to come, it is as unchangeable as God. In every step of our obedience to his commandments, it is faith that goes before, revealing the eternal perfection and sovereign purpose of God in disposing of all created things. Faith does not go before, bringing to light the unfinished things of God, as though he was a little undecided as to his rule of conduct, but it is the substance of our hope.

Now come hither little child and let us look at our hope. We do not hope that we will exercise faith to the end, but we hope that God eternally arranged for our salvation in Jesus Christ. Our prayer is not an effort to change God, but it is because he is unchangeable. The world (that is, the ungodly world) may swerve and tauntingly tell us that if they believed everything was fixed they would not pray, we know better things than that. We know our eternal destiny is fixed and that all our spiritual blessings are as settled and stable in the mind and purpose of God as is his choice.

Furthermore, we are assured that he has given us all things pertaining to life and godliness. It is according to this knowledge that every prayer is uttered. If we must try to pray then we must guess as to what to pray for. Guessing, we are told is all right when it hits, but unless we ask according to his will, our will would, if permitted to pray, as for things that would forever remove us and land us away from every providential and parental blessing. If we

must try to pray (that is, if we must pray more often, or more fervently) then we must guess as to what to pray for and, on that conditional basis, we would have a right to ask why if it was not answered.

A prayer is not something excited in you by the wisdom of this world. Just think of the prayer (that is, words called prayers) addressed to God (as they suppose) for favor in converting the heathen. That is a conditional, selfish, carnal utterance. If it was asked according to the will of God he would certainly grant it, because God answers that kind. We sometimes are motivated in like manner in the dear old church.

We get over zealous and ask God promiscuously to bring the regenerated into the church. He does not answer this kind of prayer because it is not prayer.

This is a wonderful subject, it is a blessing from God. We cannot pray unless blessed in spirit, yet the apostles commanded us to pray.

Now we realize that it is a gift from God. Would God give us a gift to ask that any will be done except his own? Is not all prayer a complacent acknowledgement of his will being done in heaven and in earth? Having been taught his sovereignty, and being kept by his power do we not have a desire to see and feel the doing of that will?

Elder W.D. Griffin
(Sept., 1947)

1 SAMUEL XVI. 23.

"And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him."

Our inquirer wants to know if this means that natural music had the power to drive the evil spirit out of Saul. In other words, did the effect of the music upon Saul prove an influence which music is of itself capable? The crux of this matter lies in an expression in the eighteenth verse of this same chapter. This expression spoken with reference to David is this, *"And the Lord is with him."* This fact explains the power of David's music on the harp. The fact that the Lord was with David gave his music that peculiar potency over the evil spirit in Saul. David slew Goliath with a stone from the brook. Does that prove that stones picked up from brooks have the power to kill giants? By no means. The power to kill the giant was not in the stone, but resided in the truth that God was with David and guided the stone unerringly to his mark. The secret of David's success lay in the fact that God was with him. His cunning skill with the harp could not of itself have availed to drive the evil spirit from Saul, but the fact that the Lord was with David imbued his music with a

peculiar charm that the devil himself could not resist. Music is refreshing, and we love it, but it would not do to say that music is an infallible recipe to drive the devil away. It takes the Lord to do that. If the Lord chooses to use music to refresh us in our evil hours, well and good, but music without the Lord cannot do it.

Elder Lefferts

"Looking unto Jesus, the author and finIsher of our faith."- HEBREWS xii. 2.

No one can ever run the race set before him, except by looking unto Jesus. He is at the head of the race; he stands at the goal, holding the crown of victory in his hand, which he puts upon the head of the successful runner. And we can only run on as we view Jesus by the eye of faith at the right hand of the Father opening his blessed arms to receive us into his own bosom at the end of the race. Nor indeed can anyone really look to him but by the special gift and grace of God. He must be revealed to the soul by the power of God; we must behold his glorious Godhead and his suffering manhood by the eye of faith; and we must view him as the incarnate God; the only Mediator between God and man. We must see the efficacy of his atoning blood to purge a guilty conscience; the blessedness of his obedience to justify a needy, naked soul; the sweetness of his dying love as an inward balm and cordial against all the thousand ills and sorrows of life, We must see his glory, as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; his suitability to every want and woe; his infinite compassion to the vilest and worst of sinners; his patient forbearance and wondrous long-suffering of our sins and backslidings; his unchanging love, stronger than death itself; his readiness to hear; his willingness to bless; and his ability to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, Thus the heavenly runner looks not to the course however long, nor to the ground however rough, not to his own exertions however multiplied, nor to his own strength whether much or little; nor to applauding friends nor condemning foes; but wholly and solely to the incarnate Son of God, Jesus draws him onward with his invincible grace, Every glance of his beauteous Person renews the flame of holy love; every sight of his blood and righteousness kindles desires to experience more of their efficacy and blessedness; and every touch of his sacred finger melts the heart into conformity to his suffering image, This is the life of a Christian, day by day, to be running

a race for eternity; and as speeding onward to a heavenly goal, to manifest his sincerity and earnestness by continually breathing forth the yearnings of his soul after divine realities, and to be pressing forward more and more toward the Lord Jesus Christ, as giving him a heavenly crown when he has finished his course with joy.

Elder J.C. Philpot

PSALM 93.

The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.

Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlating.

The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.

The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.

Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever.

BELIEVERS BAPTISM

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:16)

Article 9 of *Signs of the Times* "PROSPECTUS" says: "That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God."

The purpose of this Article 9 is to briefly state the position of the SIGNS relative to the members, ministers, and rule of the Church of Christ. We pray God to enable us to more fully define the term, BAPTIZED BELIEVERS, in this treatise. We are deeply impressed of the necessity of this endeavor because of so many varied and conflicting opinions confusing our people this day on the subject of VALID BAPTISM. Lack of information often causes misunderstanding. Misunderstanding begets confusion. Confusion leads to errors. Errors often results in strife. Strife breeds hatred. Hatred breeds malicious actions. Malicious actions cause divisions. Divisions in churches result in each faction declaring null and void all actions of others. For this cause the Lord removes *candlesticks* and *spues* churches and ministers *out of His mouth.* We desire to carefully exam-

ine this vital subject and consider prevalent questions.

Primitive Baptists are careful relative to the mode or manner of baptism; that is, the method in which the act is performed. Proper qualifications of the person receiving baptism is important. The administrator of the ordinance of baptism must be properly authorized before the baptism could be considered valid. Proper ceremony connected with this act is worthy of consideration. Different elements are mentioned in the Scriptures in connection with baptism; so, we must ascertain when *water* is the *element* under consideration. We want to reconcile the expression: "One baptism", in Ephesians 4:5, and ***"The doctrine of baptisms"***, in Hebrews 6:2. We shall define the word, baptism.

The shortest and most comprehensive definition of the word from which baptism is derived is: *To dip.* This dipping includes casting down, submerging, and raising up. When this process is followed it is rightly called baptism. The administrator puts his subject into the element, causes this element to completely engross, and then raise the subject up. There is always a change in status by the subjects being baptized with the baptism spoken of in the Scriptures. We shall now take up the baptisms which are administered by the Holy Ghost in face of this definition.

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus ***Christ were baptized into his death?"*** To sum this up, it means that we were baptized into the death of Jesus Christ, being chosen in Him. It means that we who were chosen in Him, were in Him, while He was dying, engrossed in death, and raised up in Him from death. The changed status was that Jesus having been cast down and engulfed in suffering and death arose to die no more. The changed status of His people who were in Him was; the dying, the death, and the raising of Jesus from death, made certain eternal life for all who were in Him. No man can perform this baptism of which Paul speaks. Yet, Paul uses this baptism to show what water baptism portrays. Paul speaks of the baptism in Jesus' death, which was two thousand years ago, to preface a baptism of the present day. Paul further reasons: ***"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from death by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."***

Water baptism is the ***"Likeness"*** of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul emphasizes that this baptism is but ONCE. Then he adds: ***"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."*** *(v.11)* When you obey from the heart that form of doctrine you become free from sin to become the servants

of righteousness. The carnal man is a servant of lust.

This man has no knowledge of the law, and is alive without it. God causes His Holy law to be written in the mind and heart of this carnal man. This servant of carnality has been thus brought under the dominion of the law, consequently he tries to be a servant of the law, His failure in every attempt to serve the law makes him to know that he is in every case a servant of sin because he has disobeyed the holy law. This servant of sin despairs of life to such extent that his soul faints. (What a terrible death!) Sin has reigned unto death. The spirit of grace and truth raises this servant of sin from death to become a servant of our Lord Jesus Christ who accomplished the law for us, and died for us! The killing and making alive is a baptism God administers.

God administers the baptism of repentance of heart, repentance means turning. If we were immersed in repentance and left there, we would forever be turning in a circle. The godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto salvation need not to be repented of according to 2 Cor. 7:10. There is a turning from error to truth, from darkness to light, from law to Gospel; from which there is no need of further turning.

John *preached* the baptism of repentance, and baptized in water all who gave evidence that they had been given repentance by the Lord. He would not baptize those who came to him for baptism unless they brought forth the evidence that they had repented. See Luke 3:7-8. John was a qualified judge of the ones worthy of water baptism. The administrator is the Spirit not man in the expression: ***"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body..."*** (I Cor. 12:13) These baptisms that God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost performs are essential unto eternal Life. Water baptism is the only baptism that is to be performed by man as the administrator. This baptism is essential unto obedience as it is the answer to a *good* conscience toward God. Scriptural water baptism changes the classification of the one baptized. Before baptism one is classed with those who ***"walked according to this world"***. After baptism one is classed with ***"fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God"***. (Eph. 2) Paul was told to, "Purify thyself with them." (Acts 21:24) This was neces sary because of so many misrepresentations concerning Paul which had caused the Jews to be very angry with him. The actions and explanations of Paul in response to this request did not make him more pure to himself or God; but it did make him more pure in the sight of the Jews. The sins they had against him were washed away. While in the process of telling his experience in order to abate the anger of the Jews, Paul quoted Ananias:, ***"Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling***

on the name of the Lord." The water baptism purified Paul in the sight of the brethren whom he had before persecuted. Before baptism he persecuted Jesus Christ. It took baptism to wash away the accusation of persecution of Jesus Christ and bring him into a new status as a proclaimer of Jesus Christ.

John, the Baptist, and Jesus, the Saviour, were both named by the angel Gabriel. Both had miraculous births in that one was born of a virgin; the other was born to a barren woman well stricken in years. John was filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb. John was termed by Jesus as *"More than a prophet."* John had the authority from Heaven to baptize with water. Jesus was sent to baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. John instituted water baptism and had no authority to baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Jesus did not baptize with water but submitted to baptism of John in water, making manifest that John had this special authority. John was the first preacher in the gospel dispensation.

Facing the fact that a great majority of professed Christians of this age consider that a little water sprinkled or poured upon a person constitute baptism, it becomes necessary to point out a few expressions of Scripture that prove otherwise. One who has never heard of baptism can take the New Testament, begin reading, soon simple language will convince the reader of proper mode. The first chapter in which baptism is mention ed is 3rd. chapter of Matthew. Verse 16 says: *"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water."* This statement would simply prove that Jesus himself was *in the water* when He was baptized. The reader will find in the second book of the New Testament, Mark 1:5, *"...and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins."* The simple expression, In the river of Jordan, convinces the reader that the baptism was performed in the river, not by a little water taken from the river. Mark says, *"And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit Like a dove descending upon Him."* This shows simply that the baptism was *in Jordan,* the river, and that He came up out of the water. John 3:23 says, *"And John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salem, because there was much water there, and they came and were baptized."* Why the necessity *of much water?* The unprejudiced reader would by now know that the ones John baptized were in the river at a place in the river where there was more water than at other places of the same river. According to these expressions much water is neces-

sary to perform baptism. As Philip and the eunuch were riding along in the chariot, they came unto a certain water. This must have been a place where there was *much water,* Enough water for both of them, Philip and the eunuch, to go down into the water, Philip to baptize the eunuch, and both of them to come up out of the water.

Let us quote acts 8:38-39: ***"and he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing."*** We have already quoted Romans 6:4 elsewhere in this treatise which shows baptism to include burial. The person uninformed of the meaning of the word baptize, would gather the meaning of it by the time he read the New Testament to include the 6th chapter of Romans. We now understand that baptism in water means that the one doing the baptizing takes the one to be baptized down into much water, buries him in water, raises him up out of the watery grave, and brings him completely *out* of it by bringing him to the shore. Sprinkling or pouring a little water upon a subject is not Scriptural Baptism. The administrator really baptizes part of his finger, or hand, by dipping it into the water. He does not baptize the subject upon whom the water is sprinkled or poured. Burying one in water is not baptism until the buried is raised up. Baptism pictures the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We shall next consider the question, Who is qualified to be baptized?

Scriptures plainly show that John baptized persons who confessed their sins, brought forth evidence worthy of repentance, and professed belief in Jesus Christ the Saviour. The same qualifications are necessary now. Last Sunday afternoon I led a brother down into the water and baptized him. My ceremony was something like this: Upon confession of your sins and your admission that you cannot save yourself from this condition in any sense by your own merit; and, upon confession of your faith in Jesus Christ being the complete and perfect Saviour of His people; and upon the evidence of your trust in Jesus Christ, your perfect Saviour; and, upon expression of your desire to follow the commandments of Jesus Christ, - depending upon Him for imputed strength and, in obedience to the command of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ: I baptize you, Brother P__, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. ***"As I raised him up I concluded the ceremony with, Amen".*** This Is the longest baptismal ceremony I have ever spoken. This is not a model ceremony but it does give in essence the requirements of one qualified for baptism.

We next refer to Acts, 2nd chapter, 37th verse, to show that those who were qualified to be baptized were first, ***"Pricked in their heart."*** They were undoubted terribly upset by these pricking sensations caused by the working of the Holy Ghost. Peter's sermon had brought condemnation to their hearts. The last words of Peter's sermon must have pierced them sharply. ***"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."*** (Acts 2:36) I have wondered if their thoughts were: I crucified Him! I crucified Him! What Guilt! No wonder they said, ***"Men and brethren, what shall we do?"*** They had undergone such remorse in their hearts toward themselves for having part in such terrible crime! It did not take an altar call to entice them to respond. The Holy Ghost pricking their hearts with condemnation and guilt of the crucifixion of Jesus was enough to make them ask the question: What shall we *do?* Then Peter said unto them, ***"Repent and be baptized, everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."*** Scholarly men fed by pride have argued over the term, *for the* remission *of* sins, used in this expression which greatly confuses the readers and hearers. Let us look to Matthew 27:24; ***"When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather*** a tumult was made, he took ***water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it."*** He washed his hands in the presence of the people there to prove his abhorence of the crucifixion of Jesus. This act of washing his hands in water is the presence of this people with the expression, ***"I am innocent of the blood of this just person,"*** cleared Pilate in the sight of the people. The people responded, ***"...His blood be on us, and on our children." (v. 25)*** These people who were pricked in heart on the day of Pentecost, as well as all of us who feel that our sins crucified this Jesus, are, and were, willing to do anything to prove our sorrow for such crime. They, as well as we, respond to that command: Repent, be baptized, save yourselves from this untoward generation: calling upon the Lord.

First, these were pricked in heart by the Holy Ghost. Next, their cases were presented before men and brethren. Thirdly, they wished to know what to do. Next, they received special instructions consisting of definite commands, promises of gracious gifts of God, the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost; testimonies, exhortations of many words; all added up to:-***"Save yourselves from this untoward generation."*** Fifthly: ***"They that gladly received his word were baptized."*** Sixthly, they were added to the

Church. This is the order of procedure which is given in the second chapter of Acts. This proves that one must be a *Baptized Believer* before becoming a member of the Church. We have no Scriptural evidence that this order has ever been changed.

We next consider: *Who is a Believer? "And when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women."* Acts 8:12) We *ask, what was Philip's subject on this occasion?* We *read Acts* 8:5; *"Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached CHRIST unto them."* We read again in the same chapter of Philip preaching to the eunuch: *"Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." (v. 35) When the eunuch asked, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? Phillip said, if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest."* The eunuch answered, *" I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."* This testimony was sufficient to satisfy Philip that the eunuch was a believer. It was enough to prove that he was a proper subject for baptism. The case of the eunuch's baptism gives proof that the baptism may be administered before taking the matter up with the church. Of course the church must be consuled before one could become a member of a certain church. He must be baptized before a church could consider him as a member. According to the scriptures we have no precept given which necessitates one subscribing to a list of doctrinal theological ideas before one could be baptized. A true believer in Jesus Christ the Saviour, plus a desire to be baptized is sufficient. A proper administrator who is properly ordained and set apart by a presbytery, is qualified to preach the gospel and baptize believers. If one is not qualified to properly judge who the true believers in Jesus Christ the Saviour are, he should not be set apart by a presbytery to preach the gospel and baptize believers. We shall quote a portion of *Church Covenant* as recorded in "Hassell's History of the Church of God," page 695: *"Forasmuch as Almighty God by His grace, has been pleased to call us (whose names are underneath subscribed) out of darkness into His marvelous light, and all of us have been regularly baptized upon profession of our faith in Christ Jesus, and have given up ourselves to the Lord, and to one another..."* This quotation shows that in the 18th century that the baptism was based upon profession of their faith in Christ Jesus. It shows that they were baptized before constituting themselves into a church by covenant. These were already baptized when they composed this covenant. The specifics in this covenant was by the mutual consent of

the members. Mutual agreement is necessary on many things in order that brethren may agreeably walk together in church capacity. Because of the many and varied opinions expressed by professed Christians relative to faith in Christ Jesus; it need be that we clarify our position upon this. A mere assent to the fact that they believe Jesus Christ is the Son ofGod is not sufficient proof that they believe in him. I must first be convinced that an inquirer does not have faith in himself to save himself from his sins confessed. My reasoning is that the person who thinks he can merit salvation does not actually feel the need of salvation. Next, I must be convinced of his vehement desire for salvation. Then, I want to know whether or not he has been made to trust in Jesus Christ only for salvation from his sins. I want to be further persuaded that his desire is to keep the commandments of Jesus Christ. I want to be convinced that he looks only to Jesus Christ to strengthen him to perform works of righteousness. Lastly, I want evidence that he has the God-given, God pleasing faith without which it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. 11:6) Upon satisfactory evidence of these facts, I gladly baptize anyone in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and leave it to the judgment of the church concerning their membership. We shall conclude this installment on Believer's Baptism by quoting the last paragraph of the last *editorial* prepared by Elder Gilbert Beebe as recorded on page 941 of "Hassell's Church History."

In more than three score years of our labors in the gospel ministry we have never demanded or required of any candidate for baptism that they should sign any pledge to adhere to any other standard of faith or practice than that which is given in the Scriptures. We have said to them, 'If thou believest in the Lord Jesus Christ with all thy heart, thou mayest.' After hearing from them a satisfactory relation of what we believe to be a genuine experience of the new birth, we have usually asked them if they believe the doctrine and order held and preached by the Old or Primitive Baptist, so far as they understand it, and if their experience is in harmony with it. Upon receiving an affirmative reply, we bid them welcome to the ordinance, and hold ourselves ready, if need be in the same hour of the night or of the day, to administer that sacred ordinance. We know of no divine authority for delaying the administration for a more convenient season, or to first bury a father, or take leave of those we are to leave behind us. As every one who is born from above, and who loves the precious Saviour, is commanded to take his yoke, bear his cross and follow Him,and as baptism is the first act of obedience of the Heavenborn child, no other duty

or religious privilege can be in order until this is performed.

May the Lord bless this attempt to your edification. Amen.

Elder E. J. Lambert
Reprint from ("Signs" 1968.

FRAGMENTS

WHAT a wonderful word is Love; how deep, how broad, how full of sacred meaning, how infinitely comprehensive, and yet inexpressible. In the New Testament it is dwelt upon by all of the inspired writers with great variety, and yet everyone who has felt its sweet and holy power and blessedness will seek some new form of words in which to tell of its wonders.

The apostle John says: *"Perfect love casteth out fear."* These words were given to me once, I must believe, with divine power; they lived in my soul many days, and I lived in them, it seems to me, though that is much for me to claim.

Paul, speaking of the abiding power and enduring quality of the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, names sixteen things which cannot separate us from that love, and then includes every "other creature" in that wonderful list, thus assuring the absolute security of all who have ever known that love (Romans xxxv. 39,) and yet those who have surely felt that dear love in their hearts will give place to doubts and fears, and say:

"'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought,)
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

In another place this same apostle, expressing to his brethren at Ephesus his desire and prayer for them that they may know the love of God, tells some wonderful things concerning that love and those in whom it dwells. First, he bows his knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in prayer for them, that they may know this love ; this knowledge I understand being a daily vital experience of its blessed power.

Second, he expresses the truth that part of the family of God are in heaven and part on earth, and that all of them in heaven and earth are named of Jesus Christ.

Third, his prayer shows that all the living children of God in earth, in order to know this love, must be strengthened, according to the riches of Christ's glory, with might by the Spirit in the inner man, and that Christ must dwell in them by faith.

Fourth, those in whom this infinitely blessed grace of the Spirit shall be felt and manifested must be rooted and grounded in love, sending their roots, as a plant or a tree, down into the sacred soil of love, and grounded like a pillar standing firmly

upon the solid Rock, upholding the order of God's house.

Fifth, all saints have a measure of this comprehension, which includes and embraces the breadth and length and depth and height of this boundless and incomprehensible love.

Sixth, still a greater wonder; to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge; to know what cannot be known. The mortal powers of the wisest man cannot know this love, but to the babe in Christ the knowledge comes without effort, as the breath of spiritual life. The love of Christ passes all human knowledge, the natural heart cannot know it. It is not the love of man, but the love of God, which is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost. We feel to be so vile, so unholy, that we cannot be a fit dwelling-place for that holy principle. But sunshine may fall into a polluted atmosphere, and it cannot be polluted; it may fall upon a heap of corruption, but it will not be corrupted or stained.

Seventh, and the last and best, is that to know that love of God as it is here so wonderfully presented is to be filled with all the fullness of God. This is beyond my power to comprehend, or even to think, yet I do love the sweet truth so wonderfully presented. O that I may be given more ability to comprehend this wonderful love, and to feel some little measure of the fullness of God. Love is the deepest, broadest, most glorious thing within the range of thought, and yet nothing is so easy and so sweet to do, or rather to experience. ***"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us."*** God is love, and he that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. May that love be more felt in our hearts, and go out in word and act to all the family of God.

Elder Silas H. Durand

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Contentnea Association will convene with Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church on Saturday before the second Sunday in October. The date is October 13-14, 2007. The Church is located at 144 Middle Prong Road, Lowland, Pamlico County, North Carolina.

We welcome and invite all who love the truth to come and worship with us.

Elder Gene Lupton
Association Clerk
252-745-7441

LOWER MAYO FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo Association Fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday only, September 30th, 2007.

We hope to start singing at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30 a.m. Coleman Church will host the meeting. The meeting house is located approximately 9 miles south of Fancy Gap, Virginia, just off the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Those coming south on parkway, from Fancy Gap, turn right a short distance past milepost #209, on road #715. Go about 50 yards and turn left on Cole Creek Road. Go about 1 mile to church location on left. Those coming north on parkway, turn left at mile post 211 on Cole Creek Road. Go 1 1/4 miles to church location on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in salvation by grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of Love
Carlton Brown, Clerk
(336) 366-2112

LOWER MAYO ASSOCIATION

The Lower Mayo Association is to be held, the Lord willing, on October 5th, 6th, and 7th, 2007. Mayodan Church will host the meeting and it will be held in Russell Creek meeting house. The meeting house is located approximately 9 miles south of Stuart, Virginia near the Virginia, North Carolina Border. Those coming North or South on Route #8, turn East on Ayers Orchard Road #653 for about 1 mile. Turn right on Moorefield Store Road #631. Go 1/4 mile to church location on right Those coming east or west on Route #58, turn south on Southfork Loop #827, turn on Ayers Orchard Road #653. Go 3 miles to Moorefield Store Road #631. Turn left, go 1/4 mile to church location on right.

We invite the Ministers, Brothers, Sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of Love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

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FOR AUGUST 2006

Clara Jones, VA 5.00
Larrie Bowler, VA 5.00
John Vipperman, VA 25.00
Margaret Link, TN 5.00
Carl Terry, VA 5.00
Alan Terry, VA 5.00
Donald Arne, VA 75.00

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

We, the staff of the "Signs," are very saddened at the loss of our good friend and Editor, Elder Hale Terry. Here is the notice of his passing from the Moody Funeral Home in Stuart, Va. an obituary will follow later.

ELDER WILLIAM HALE TERRY

Elder Wm. Hale Terry

Elder William Hale Terry, age 71 of Meadows of Dan, passed away Wednesday, October 3, 2007 at his home. He was born in Patrick County on May 25, 1936. Elder Terry was a member of New Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church, and had pastored at four Primitive Baptist churches, Old Union Church in Indian Valley, Paynes Creek Church in Floyd, Salem Head of the River Church in Check and New Bell Spur Church in Meadows of Dan. He was the moderator of the Smith River Primitive Baptist Association and managing editor of the Signs of the Time magazine periodical based on the Primitive Baptist faith. He had served in the United States Army

and had retired as an engineering supervisor with Appalachian Power Company with over 37 years of service. Elder Terry was preceded in death by his father, William Hugh Terry; a grandchild, Hannah Fleming; a brother, Lee Terry.

Elder Terry is survived by his wife, Glenna Turman Terry of the home; three daughters and sons-in-law, Jennifer and Jon Coleman of Bassett, Carla and Tony Horton of Hillsville and Gina and Frank Fleming of Mount Airy, North Carolina; one son and daughter-in-law, Marcus and Mary Ann Terry of Meadows of Dan; four grandchildren; Joshua Coleman, Austin Horton, Megan Fleming and Makayla Terry; two great-grandchildren, Skylar Coleman and Benjamin Coleman; his mother, Ilene Hale Terry Clifton of Meadows of Dan; three sisters, Marie Bowman of Meadows of Dan, Ruth Hall of Hillsville and Jane Largen of Dugspur; two brothers, Elder Alan Terry of Floyd and Tom Terry of Woodlawn; and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services for Elder Terry will be held Saturday at 11 :00 a.m. at New Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church with Elders Larry Hollandsworth, Kenneth Key, Alan Terry and Carl Terry officiating. Burial will follow in the church cemetery with a flag presentation by the Patrick County Veterans Memorial Honor Guard. The family will receive friends Friday evening from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the New Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church. Flowers will be accepted, or memorials may be made to the New Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery Fund, c/o Odetta Terry, 1222 Woodstock Road, Laurel Fork, Virginia 24352, or to Hospice of Patrick County, 835 Woodland Drive, Suite 101, Stuart, Virginia 24171. Moody Funeral Home in Stuart is in charge of the arrangements. Online condolences may be sent by visiting:

www.moodyfuneralservices.com

Oct. 7, 2007.

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EDITORIAL

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." 2 Corinthians 4:7.

Elder J.B. Farmer

The children of God are great mysteries, even unto themselves. But God is merciful to show each one of them a little about themselves and about the kingdom of God, that they might not be utterly perplexed and totally cast down. If God had not shown us some things about ourselves and about the things of the Spirit of God, we would be in complete confusion, because spiritual things cannot be understood by the natural mind. Can you think back to your earliest days, when your troubles came upon you like a powerful and overwhelming army? You were given a love toward God, and a desire to please Him, but everything seemed to be against you. Your sins rose up like a mountain and you had no ability to remove them, even though you tried everything in your strength to make things better. You tried to read the scriptures, but they only condemned you. You were too embarrassed to tell even your closest friend of your troubles, because you thought you were the most miserable sinner on the face of the earth. You tried to pray for relief, but felt to be too hypocritical even to make the attempt. After many long and grief filled days and nights of groaning, you were brought completely to the end of your wisdom and strength and felt to be too exhausted to go on. You thought you were all alone in your desperation. You were about to give up and concede that death, hell, and destruction surely and deservedly would be your end, when the Lord appeared to you with a word of mercy. Have you ever been brought through things similar to these? If so, I believe you have been blessed with some of the experience of all the saints that have ever lived.

There is a reason for all these trials and tribulations, and God is merciful to explain some of it to His people, out of love and pity for them. The Lord said by His apostle, ***"The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."*** The creature under consideration, I am made to believe, is the little child of grace. He is subject to all the vain things of this world and of this life. He is familiar with sin, sorrow, suffering, pain and death. He was made this way from the very beginning in order to experience these things. He

was made of the dust of the ground, and shown that he must return to the dust from which he was made. He was made first a natural man, and second a spiritual man. The creature, who was made subject to the vanity of this world, was put here in this condition that he might be delivered by God from this miserable state unto the freedom of the Spirit and to the hope of glory, which shall be manifest fully in the last time at the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. And through all these things a great mystery is presented. How can a person be natural and spiritual at the same time?

Jesus said to Nicodemus, ***"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."*** This great mystery was far too great for Nicodemus and also for us to understand without revelation from God. Jesus made it plain that the little children of grace are born of nature and also born of the Spirit from above. They have a fleshly nature by their natural birth and a spiritual nature resulting from being born from above. These natures are contrary to one another, to the extent that the little child of grace is not able, by himself, to do that which he most desires – to walk in the light and to speak the truth in love. Aren't you glad the apostle Paul said, according to his experience and according to the wisdom of God, ***"When I would do good, evil is present with me."***? And aren't you glad he was blessed to say, ***"How to perform that which is good, I find not."*** And thankfully he also was given to say, ***"He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."*** He was shown these truths by grace that he might relate them to the saints of God for their comfort and edification. The child of God was made subject to vanity according to nature, and by grace he was blessed to hope and trust in the good works of God.

There is an inward man, the new spiritual man, Christ in you the hope of glory, who is not subject to vanity. And there is the outward man, which is the old natural man, who is subject to all the vanity of the flesh. In the opening verse of scripture, the children of God are likened to earthen vessels, having a spiritual treasure stored inside. The outward part is of the earth earthy, and the inward part is of the Holy Spirit. But all vessels are not the same. Although all men are made up of one lump of clay, only those vessels that have been chosen of God and sanctified for holy use receive holy things and are preserved for glory. Those vessels not chosen and not sanctified receive only the base things of this world, and are therefore fitted for destruction. By Wisdom the apostle said, ***"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another to dishonor? What if God, will-***

ing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of Jews only, but also of the gentiles?" The earthly vessel, or body of the child of God, is sanctified and made holy and is shown to be the temple of the Holy Spirit. The inspired apostle said, *"What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."*

It appears to be evident from the scriptures that the vessel, or the outward man of the child of grace, is highly favored above the vessel of the child of the devil. The vessels of mercy are made up unto honor and glory, even eternal life. The vessels of the wicked ones are made up unto dishonor and wrath, even eternal destruction. It is manifest that the earthly vessels of the children of God shall be preserved forever and that the vessels of the wicked ones shall be destroyed. The beloved apostle Paul was empowered to say, *"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Here is another mystery. How can the body be preserved, seeing that it must return to the dust from which it was made? God is merciful and kind to make known to His little ones what they need to know concerning these things. God spoke through his apostle concerning this earthen vessel saying, *"It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold I shew you a*

mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." This flesh and blood body cannot inherit the kingdom of God. It must be changed and made a spiritual body.

So we understand from all these scriptures, believing they have been opened a little for our edification, that although the body of the saint is corrupt because of sin, it has been sanctified and cleansed by the Spirit and made holy unto God. And God shall preserve that body, even though it goes down in corruption to the grave. According to the scriptures, God shall raise and change these corruptible bodies into bodies of incorruption. According to the scripture, which cannot be broken, mortality shall be swallowed up of life. *"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."* This is the earnest expectation of the creature. He yearns for the redemption of his body. According to the understanding given to me, if not deceived, when we die the body returns to the dust and the spirit returns to God who gave it. The spirit is joined to the soul, which Jesus said no man is able to kill. As it was with the poor beggar Lazarus, so it is with the child of God. After he dies, the spirit joined with the soul of the child of God shall be carried to the bosom of Abraham by the angels of God, where Lazarus is now being comforted. There, he, and all that die in the Lord, shall remain at rest and at peace until the Lord returns to gather His elect from the four cor-

ners of the earth. This includes both those living at that time and those dead in Christ. According to the Holy Scriptures, the Lord in His glorious appearing shall bring with Him the spirits of just men (the elect that have already died in Christ). And at the resurrection of the dead, by the power of the living God, the bodies of the dead in Christ shall be raised and changed, and the bodies of those who are alive and remain at His coming shall be changed, and each one of their bodies shall be made like unto the glorious body of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then shall the earnest expectation of the creature be fulfilled, all things shall be brought into subjection unto God, and forever and ever all shall be praise and glory and honor to God, who alone is worthy. The body shall be redeemed from the grave, changed and united with its soul and spirit, and together with those alive at His coming and changed, each child of God then shall be a complete spiritual man in body, soul, and spirit. In this wondrous spiritual state each shall be blessed to look upon the face of the living God and not die, but live, and each shall have full enjoyment of heaven and immortal glory world without end.

He shall sing the song with all saints that none other than the redeemed of the Lord may sing. John heard them singing during the revelation that he was given. *"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever."*

Yes, the sanctified earthen vessel, the body of the child of God, shall be preserved and shall not be destroyed with the wicked. It shall be changed and made a glorious vessel by the power of God at His coming. This shall be to the praise and honor and glory of His grace and mercy toward the poor sinners

that He foreknew and loved with an everlasting love, to the extent that He laid down His life for them. This is my hope and my trust, as I desire to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. It is also my constant desire that I should be blessed with all saints to be faithful unto death that I might receive the crown of life, although I know I am not worthy of the least of the mercies of God.

This was written, I trust, in love toward God and all saints, and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer.
8-7-2007

PSALM:93.

The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.

Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting.

The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.

The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.

Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Hale Terry,

Our hopes are for the Lord's blessings to be showered upon you and your family during this trying time.

I truly hate to burden you with another chore but I would like to order the Signs of the Times. I am enclosing a check for $25.00.

My name and address is:

Ada V. Beeghly
4935 Henry Rd.
Henry, Va. 24102

With sincerest regards,
A sister in Christ I hope,
Ada V. Beeghly.

Dear Elder Terry,

I am so sorry about being late with the Signs of the Times payment. I am almost blind. I have to have someone to read it to me.

I love the Old School Primitive Baptist Church, the brethren and Jesus so much.

My husband Elder Clovis Towney's loving wife.

Frances Neal

9-1-07

Elder Wm. Hale Terry
202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va.

Brother Terry,

Please renew my "Signs" for 2 years. Enclosed is my check for $30.00.

Thank you so much. God bless you and all those who write for the "Signs of the Times".

In fellowship,
Rebecca Jean B. Moran

ARTICLES

"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him: he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin—"(Isaiah 53:10)

Why did it please the Lord to bruise Jesus? The answer was to satisfy Divine justice. The justice of God demands death for the broken law.

Notice the expression: ***"When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin."*** The sins of God's people were laid upon Jesus. ***"For he hath made him to be sin for us, "Who knew no sin." (2 Cor. 5:21) "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, (the world does not mean all of mankind, but means all of the children of God, whether they are Jews or Gentiles), not imputing their trespasses unto them;" (2 Cor. 5:19)*** God the Father charges Jesus for the sins of the Children of God.

"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman" (enmity between the church or bride of Christ and satan) ***"and thy seed and her seed."*** (the seed of the bride of Christ or the church and satan) ***"it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3: 15)*** When satan bruises the heel of Christ shows the sufferings of Jesus when he was crucified. How does Christ bruise the head of satan? This Scripture gives the answer: –***"That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil." (Heb. 2:14)***

Jesus said: ***"At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."(John 14:20)*** We cannot explain this close connection.

Christ's soul was made an offering for sin on the cross. Jesus told Pilate: ***"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world-"(John 18:37)*** This was determined before in the purpose of God. ***"For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." (Acts 4:28)***

The sentence of death was placed upon the world, and Jesus suffered in the place of his *people. Jesus suffered the pain* and *sorrows of* hell *upon the cross. "How long, Lord? Wilt thou hide thyself for ever? shall thy wrath burn like fire?" (Psalm 89:46) "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27 :45-46)*

All of the sins of the children of God were placed upon Jesus. *"The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all)" (Isaiah 53:6)*

"My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (John10:29)

May the Lord bless what is written in honor and praise to almighty' God. *"I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." (Isaiah 42:8)*

Elder W. W. Hudson, Jr.

PSALM 4:1.

Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE WATCHES

Elder J. A. Monsees
Ellenwood, Georgia

The principle watches originally among the Hebrews were those of the night, from sunset to sunrise, and these were divided into four watches, three hours of each, called respectfully "Even", "Mid-night", "Cock-crowing" and "Morning."

No doubt these watches were drawn from the expression of our Savior. *(Mark 13:35) "Watch ye, therefore, for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at evening or at mid-night, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning."*

These watches, "acoemetea, or acometi" according to the Encylopedia of Religious Knowledge, inspired what was known as an "Order of Monks at Constantinople, in the fifth century, whom the writers of that time and the following age called, "aeometi" that is, watches, because they performed divine services day and night without intermission. They divided themselves into three classes, alternately succeeded one another, so that they kept up a perpetual course of worship. This practice they founded upon that passage, *"Pray without ceasing." (1 Thes. 5 :17)*

From the above we gather some of the importance of the office of watchmen. The watchman was an important person in the nation and society throughout the different periods before the coming of the Lord. The importance of which varied with the object of the watch. Where there was the life and liberty of men, women, and children involved, imminent perils made these watches so important that severe penalties were annexed when the watchmen or sentinals were found careless, indifferent, or sleeping at their posts.

Watchmen were supposed to be alert at their post, and informed of everything and at all times during their watch, so that when called upon, they may be able to give an accurate account of all that happened during such a period. The duties, oft times were pains taking and arduous, and the watchmen were relieved of their duties sometimes when they had served for a short time as two hours. Where the duties were not so important services for longer duration were required.

At an early age shipping was the important method of transportation, and the lives and valuable treasures of the nations were transported from one country to another, and so lured pirates upon the seas which menaced and imperiled the lives and property of all nations, that these watches were made important.

The watchmen, therefore, were obligated as a matter of necessity to remain awake at their post of duty during the period of their watch, as the pirates may come upon them at any hour, killing the passengers and officers of the ship and robbing them of the treasures and valuables thereof. We get a picture of the church, sometimes referred to as the "old ship of Zion" upon the sea of time imperiled by many pirates and enemies of the truth infinitely more important than any watches of a national or commercial nature.

Jesus says, ***"Take ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is." (Mark 13:35) "What I say unto you I say unto all, watch." (Mark 13:37)*** The importance of the watch referred to was not for a thief or pirate, but for the passing away of the heaven and the earth, and the coming of our Lord Jesus, who as a man taking a far journey left this earth with the watchmen and porters on duty, with the command to watch for His return, without giving any specific indication of when it will be. If He should return and find these watchmen asleep, we shudder to think of the consequences.

We get the idea sometimes that watchmen are preachers. The preacher is a watchman but the watchman is not necessarily a preacher. The preacher is better qualified to give an accurate account of the happenings during the watch, and the burden of his duty is to proclaim such happenings as to give warning of dangers, and com-

forts, and assurances when the voyage is peaceful and the sea clear of pirates.

In Isaiah 21:11, the watchman was called upon to give an account of the night, or of his watch, in which there was some penalty annexed for his failure to do so. This penalty is described as the "burden of Dumah" (silence)- the burden of silence. Such a penalty is described by Jeremiah as *"fire shut up in the bones."* Such fire as can not be described with human tongue. The fire which burns and consumes our flesh is a sufficient torture, to take away our natural lives, so that we will never feel the pain of the bones burning. In this case the interior of the bones are ignited and the burning from this point is outward, and no way for us to reach this point to extinguish the fire, and the burning continues on so long as the silence endures. *"This is the burden of Dumah."* The preacher is placed upon the wall as a watchman, and with the eagle eye sees danger from a greater distance than the other watchmen, and is supposed to give warning of its approach. Many times these dangers are of a perilous nature, and for the minister to be silent, and give no warning makes his crime unforgiveable in his own conscience, and of others who are imperiled by it. Happily in these watches he has the company of real comrades — comrades in arms — to stand and hold up his hands, give comfort and aid in every time of trouble.

What watchfulness! What attention! We give over the sick beds of our loved ones, we watch their breathing, the pulse, the flushes of the face, the smiles, the frowns, in fact every symptom, constantly hoping for improvement. With the Lord's children there were many sickly among them and need to come under the watch care of those who are alike interested in their welfare. In such a case we both watch and pray. You do not watch over your loved ones for evil but for good. All these watches are intended for the good and protection of the household of faith. You do not destroy one of your own passengers in order to kill pirates, but you kill the pirates to protect your own passengers.

We are mindful, of course, there are wolves in sheep's clothing that get among the flock and some disposition must be made of these, but we don't want to destroy all of the flock in order to get rid of one wolf. We feel sure the proper amount of watchfulness will protect sheep from the wolves. Wolves creep in unawares when the watchmen are asleep and when he fails to give the proper warning. The wolves must be dealt with before he enters among the flock; if we wait until he gets in, the destruction of the flook is certain.

Old Baptists are censured for preaching too much on the fundamentals, such as election, predestination, and the final preservation of

the saints, etc. These may *seem* dry principles, but they furnish an impregnable wall over which the wolf, the carniverous animal that feasts upon the flesh and blood of other animals, cannot pass. He can't eat straw. These dry principles are too much like straw, therefore, those who are established upon these walls are a safeguard against the wolves entering.

The thing that creates a definite blockade for the wolf, is the requirement of what Old Baptists; call an *"experience of grace"* or reason for their hope. This is the evidence of a revelation of Jesus Christ to His child. The scriptures asserts No man knoweth the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him. Jesus says *"Upon this rock (of revelation) I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."* The watchman standing at the threshold are careful to see that those who enter have the evidence to support a claim of such knowledge, or revelation. Our Lord does not reveal himself to wolves, so they cannot rightfully enter.

Elder J. A. Monsees

LUKE 22:42

Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

JEALOUSY

Webster says that jealousy is a suspicious fear or watchfulness, especially the fear of being supplanted by a rival. Solomon said that *"it is cruel as the grave."*

We might add to the above that it is a dreadful disease, entirely without reason, and denotes lack of faith in God. It is selfish, caring nothing for the misfortune of another, and has been the destruction of many people, for it always destroys the person thus afflicted.

Many of God's servants have suffered this ailment to destroy their usefulness and influence in the church, and that without cause. When a preacher begins to manifest a spirit of jealousy toward another, he seeks in every way possible to build himself up by promoting the downfall of him whom he supposes to be his rival. The cause of jealousy is a lack of faith in God, and also proves a lack of love for the cause of Christ in the world. One preacher seems to have a greater talent than another, and this causes the one who seems to have the lesser talent to try to destroy the other.

We hear brethren say that they esteem their brethren as better than themselves, and then many times belie that statement by showing a spirit of envy toward others who seem to be more prosperous in the service. We should all remember that we have the talents God has given us, and that He is not unjust

to ignore those with lesser talents while He heaps blessings °upon those with greater ones, and if we use our one talent to the glory of God and the upbuilding of His kingdom, He will bless us with peace of mind and satisfaction. We should also remember that we could not handle our brother's talents, because God gives us talents according to our several abilities.

I have met many preachers who had greater gifts than the one I have, if indeed I have one, but they have not given me any cause to be jealous of them, because the greater number of them have treated me kindly and with respect, and have never shown by their attitude that they considered me as unworthy of their fellowship. They have treated me as an equal, and so how could I desire their downfall? I have NEVER wanted to serve a church that any of them served, and when some church calls one of them to serve it instead of calling me I am perfectly happy about it, because I have no fleshly desires in the matter.

I can assure all of God's servants that just so long as they conduct themselves as they ought, they will never lack for a place to preach, nor will they be made to feel that their labors are not appreciated. When one preacher thinks he is envying another preacher because he feels that he has more advantages than he himself has, he is mistaken, for it is not the other preacher he envies, but he envies God who gave the gifts. To envy another preacher would be the same as saying that God has not dealt fairly in dispensing His gifts, but has slighted us.

There is one sure preventive for jealousy, and this is it: never have a fleshly desire to serve churches, nor to obtain any special notice in the church; never think more highly of yourself than you should, and don't ever want something in the kingdom that IS NOT yours. If you deserve blessings in the service you will receive them, that is, if you deserve the fellowship and true companionship of God's humble children you will have them. God is the founder of His kingdom and He is the keeper of His servants, if we can but keep this in mind and then strive to serve in humility and godly fear, we will receive as many blessings as we can contain.

When one permits himself to be jealous of another servant, he does so without cause, and reason gives place to fear, and fear produces panic. Suppose some brethren do show more consideration for one preacher than they do another, what does that prove? It either proves that the one they show more consideration for is more active and consecrated in the service, or it shows that they are in the flesh and are not seeking to glorify God but to gratify the flesh. If the first reason is true, we can build ourselves up in their esteem by being more faithful and devoted to the cause,

while we manifest a humble spirit; if the second reason is true, we should feel sorry for them and for the preacher, if he permits them to continue their flattery toward him. We should remember at all times that the faithful and devoted members of the church will love and appreciate us if we conduct ourselves in the right manner.

Maybe we have not applied ourselves as we should and our fellow preacher has, and if this is the case we cannot think hard of him nor the Baptists if they are a little more attentive to him than they are to us. Carelessness on our part has been the cause for some of us being jealous, for we somehow come to the conclusion in our befuddled minds that the preacher who is appreciated more is to blame for our not being appreciated so much. I have often felt condemned in my own mind when some preacher manifested in his preaching that he had applied himself to the study of the Bible, but I have never thought to blame him for my fault. If a preacher seems to show by attitude toward me that he is rather important in the church I only feel sorry for him, because I know that he is in the flesh and will soon come to a fall. The truly great preachers are the most humble, the most approachable, and the ones who are never known to boast of their own ability. I do not envy other preachers their ability to preach but I rejoice when I am permitted to hear them.

I learn from them, and can feel safe when in their company. If we aspire to be called to churches, or to surpass our brethren in preaching, we are sure to be disappointed, for our aspiration is of the flesh and is out of harmony with the spiritual blessings of God.

My prayer is that God will bless all His humble servants who contend for the doctrine of the Bible, both fundamentally and practically, and that I may continue to have opportunities to hear them preach; they comfort and instruct me, and their fellowship and companionship strengthen me. If and when God impresses churches to call them, I bid them Godspeed. They are the salt of the earth and the finest companions a poor unworthy one such as I could ever have. I trust they will overlook my imperfections and continue to let me walk with them, that they will pray for me, and that they will feel free to visit the churches I try to serve. I cannot be jealous of those I love and have so much confidence in.

R. K. Blackshear.
Sent in by Keith Hiatt.

HEBREWS 2:9.

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

REASON OF MY HOPE

Elder R. W. Thompson, Dear Brother:—This vile worm of the dust is in no wise worthy to claim relationship with the Lord's dear children; but, if love makes us akin, I feel a hope that I can beg to be permitted the sweet privilege. When I read the sweet and comforting testimony of the precious brethren and sisters, and they tell my feelings so plainly, make themselves as nothing and exalt the name of the Lord, I am constrained to praise his holy and exalted name for his mercy and compassion on poor worms of the dust. We are taught in the Holy Scriptures of divine truth that the people of the Lord are begotten in love; for God the Father, is love, and to be born of him is to be born of this holy love; and if we love the Father whom we have not seen, surely we should love the brethren and sisters whom we have seen; and when they tell the same story we have to tell, and sing the same song we love to sing, even though we have never seen them in the flesh, are we not made to love them for the truth's sake?

This morning I have been reading the April number of the dear old MONITOR, which you kindly sent me, and it was all so good and comforting that I felt as if I wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed it. Your editorial, "Why Baptize for the Dead?" was so wholly in accordance with my understanding of that holy ordinance and brought me so much pleasure, that I must speak of it, though I feel my inability to say anything worthy of notice. But, dear brother, if I have ever been made to know anything of spiritual things, I do feel that I have been made to see a holy beauty in this. All my life, since I was old enough to think of such things, it was rather a boast with me that when I asked for baptism I would be able to give some reason for it; but how vain is the thought of man! When I tried to talk to the dear brethren and sisters, to relieve my troubled mind, it seemed I had so little to tell, and felt too unworthy to tell even that; and when they received me, with such tender love and fellowship, I was almost overcome. All night long I tossed to and fro in my distress, fearing I had deceived the dear people whom I held in such high esteem, and I resolved I would go to them when morning came and ask them to let me tell them more of my vile self, for I thought I must surely have misrepresented the matter. But when morning came I found no opportunity to speak with them, and was not so forcibly impressed to do so.

We were to meet at the water at ten o'clock, and all morning I went about sad and cast down; I wondered how the family could all appear so cheerful when we were going to a burial. Again and again the thought would come that we were going to a burial, though never once did the thought enter my mind that baptism is a symbol of a burial.

When we met at the water's edge, I was so cast down and burdened I did not know what to do, I feared I was doing wrong, and felt so dead and lifeless. But do people bury the living? Certainly not. It is only the dead that have need of being buried, and I humbly hope I was dead to the law of sin and death. When we came to the water, the dear brethren and sisters began to sing, and I thought it was the sweetest, saddest music I ever heard, and it sounded just like a burial hymn. Then the dear old servant of God began to offer up prayer, and my very heart, it seemed, was melted to tears. When he was constrained to make petition for this poor, vile, sinful wretch, O, how unworthy I felt! I could not doubt but that he was indeed blessed with the true spirit of prayer, but how could it be that a servant of the most high God could offer up a petition in my behalf? I cast my vile body prostrate upon the earth and almost wept aloud. I thought I had never heard such an able prayer, but it seemed to me to be the saddest, also, that I ever heard; and again came the thought that it was just like a prayer at a burial, but all this time, strange as it may seem, no thought came to me that a baptism represents a burial. Even at the last moment I was tempted to tell them that I must not take this step, for I did not feel fit, but, as I walked down into the water, these words came into my mind: *"I leave it all to the Lord."* As I went under the water, a groan seemed to escape me (I felt, rather than heard, it), and some real burden seemed to leave me, and I seemed to be sinking into eternal rest and peace. I cannot describe it. I felt as one who had labored until all his strength was gone, and the load had become so burdensome that it could no longer be borne, when it then pleased the Lord in his wisdom and mercy to lift from my shoulders the heavy load, and joy and peace filled my soul. No bed could be made so soft and restful as that watery grave felt, and I wished that I could just remain there. When I came up out of the water, all my burden was gone and my soul was filled with a holy peace and rest that words are inadequate to describe.

As I came out of the water these blessed words came into my mind:, Arise to walk in newness of life. I felt no wild, tumultuous joy; no desire to shout or sing but it seemed that peace like a dove rested upon my soul, and all my burdens and troubles were gone. The dear ones were singing, *"I'm going home to die no more,"* and while I had always despised that song, it now seemed the sweetest I ever heard, and I thought they could have chosen nothing more appropriate. Such peace and rest filled my soul, that I did not care whether I spoke to anyone or not, and had I been left to my own inclinations, I would have simply gone my way without so much as removing my wet garments.

The dear old apostle says that baptism is not the putting away of the sin of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God. It has seemed to me that of all the words in the English language, there are none that could so well describe and define baptism as those. Being buried in the watery grave, does not wash away our sins; for they are covered up, hid and overcome by the robe of righteousness, which is Jesus; but when he is made manifest in the poor sinner, the fairest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely and that poor sinner is given a mind to follow his blessed Master in the holy ordinance of baptism, in the performance of his duty, he finds a free mind and an acquitted conscience, such as nothing else can give. Peace, like a river, attendeth the way. Surely, I felt this to be true; for it seemed that nothing of this world troubled my mind for weeks afterwards, but my time was spent in sweet and holy communion with the gracious Lord. It seemed that the Scriptures were opened up to my understanding in such a way that I cared to think of nothing else, and most of my time was spent in singing and making melody in my heart unto the Lord. I would seldom read the Bible, for that seemed unnecessary; so many scriptures came to my mind, and with them the interpretation in a way that brought such joy and comfort to my soul, that many times when I sat in the company of others, I had no idea of what they were talking for my mind was on far different subjects. I felt a desire to put off the "old man," and as he who hath called us is holy, so should we be holy in all manner of conversation; for as many of us as are buried with him by baptism into death, like Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For, if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection, knowing that our "old man" is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. It was the glory of the Father that raised up our blessed Savior from the dead, and it is the glory of the Father that raises poor, dead sinners from the darkness of nature and gives them a mind to praise his holy name. And, when Jesus, the great Conqueror, shall come in the morn of the resurrection, in the clouds of love and glory to bear his jewels home, this same glory shall raise these vile bodies from the tomb, change them in the twinkling of an eye, from corruption to incorruption; from mortality to immortality; fashion them like unto the glorious body of Jesus; and cause them to be caught up with Jesus In the air to join the innumerable host in his praise throughout for his goodness and mercy! All that is within me, praise his holy name!

Lola Holland
FAYETTEVILLE, W.VA.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF RUTH

ELDER J. A. MONSEES
Ellenwood, Georgia

The Book of Ruth consists of only four short chapters, but it is an excellent diagram of the Church of our Lord Jesus through all the ages.

Naomi (representing the church in the broad or aggregate sense, and more particularly the Jewish Church) and Ruth (representing the separating and obedient followers of Jesus, and more especially the organized church of the Gentiles, which we think today are the Primitive Baptists) are the principal characters of this Book.

Orpah represents the unfaithful hordes of the aggregate church, and particularly, those who have been in close contact with the dear people of the Church, and have heard, believed and loved the gospel, but the church's desolation, combined with their own poverty, creates an obstacle their weak faith cannot or does not overcome; hence they falter and turn back weepingly.

Elimilech, Hahlon, and Chilion represent the law under which the church has lived with contentment, under all conditions, so long as the husband remains alive. The three perhaps represent three branches of the law considered most vital to their well-being. The Samaritan woman had five, and when Jesus met her at the well,she was then trying out one she knew was not her husband. Those unmarried to Jesus in service sometimes have a plurality of husbands, and the more they have, the better, they are inclined to think. A complete marriage to Jesus means a complete separation from these other husbands, for Jesus is a complete Savior and Redeemer who provides all our needs.

Naomi looked longingly during the famine in her own land into the land of Moab, which appeared to be a land of prosperity and contentment, where she could enjoy the comradeship and association of her own husband and family. Hence, she, her husband, Elimelech, her two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, left Bethlehem Judah, their native land, to sojourn in the land of Moab, for she had heard the Lord had visited His people there with bread, and the famine had made it difficult to live in their native land. The four continued their residence in Moab and the two sons married native girls, Ruth and Orpah.

Soon Elimelech died, but Naomi had two strong sons upon whom she could depend. His death was a major loss to Naomi, but this was not enough to wean her from the lures of the land of Moab, for she had two strong sons, the issue from a strong husband, upon whom she could look for support and maintenance.

Then these two sons, husbands of Ruth and Orpah, die, leaving Naomi not only a widow, but with two widowed daughters-in-law, and in a strange land.

Perhaps Naomi knew of no famine in her native land like the one she was now suffering in the land of Moab, among strangers. In her native land she suffered for bread, but she is now suffering in heart and with leaness of soul, a famine for the word of the Lord is of much greater magnitude than any of an earthly nature.

It was during these sore afflictions, Naomi determines to return to her native land. So sad in heart was she, that she requests that those of her loved ones ***"Call me not Naomi (pleasant) but Mara (bitter)" (Ruth 1:20),*** and mournfully proclaims, ***"I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty; why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me." (Ruth 1:21)***

Upon reaching the decision to return, Naomi intreats both Ruth and Orpah to remain in their native land and return to their people. She had no way to feed, clothe, and house them, and could promise no husband for them. She had no living sons, could have no more, and if she did, they could not wait for them, and weepingly kissed them, as a signal, "Good bye." There is nothing to indicate that Naomi loved Ruth better than Orpah. The church loves all her subjects, the obedient and the disobedient, those who are with her and those who turn back. The church is sad when she cannot provide the destitute and helpless with the things they need. In these circumstances, there are many Orpahs with weak faith, who let hunger for the things of this world control them, and with sad hearts turn from the fold to look for an easier way. The way of the cross is hard, they say, and the church is too poor." ***"It may be hard to find bread,"*** they murmur, ***"to say nothing of the luxuries of life."***

Ruth gives us the interesting part of this drama, for when Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, and turned back, Ruth clave to her, held *on to* her would not go and would not let Naomi go, and pleadingly said, ***"Intreat me not to leave thee or to return from following after thee, for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God, my God" (Ruth1:16)***

Just how well Ruth was rewarded for her faithfulness to Naomi is revealed in the remaining chapters. Back in the land of Bethlehem Judah, she finds Boaz, representing Jesus, who was a rich planter. She was given permission to glean after the reapers, with orders from the master to let some handsful fall on purpose. There were other gleaners in the fields of

Boaz, as there are other gleaners besides the organized church in the field of our Lord, but Ruth was given special consideration, *"Hard by the reapers,"* with orders for special favors, with ***"handsful of purpose"*** to her.

The marriage of Ruth to the rich Boaz follows with all the privileges and blessings of this wealthy and merciful friend.

As to Orpah, we have left her in the land of Moab, and as to her subsequent prosperity, we hear no more. Her life, so far as the following generations are concerned, is closed. She lives no more. There are no recorded eulogies at her passing, no flowers for her casket, no one of God's ministers say, ***"She hath done what she could."***

Not so with Ruth; she lives on, and like Mary Magdalene, who anointed the head of Jesus with expensive ointment, washed his feet with the tears of her eyes, and wiped them with the hair of her head, Ruth will be pleasantly and lovingly mentioned wheresoever this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached.

The gist of the story, it seems to me, is to show the blessings of a faithful and diligent life. The gospel urges us to press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:14). To live this life, and then die in Christ, in the faith, we have the assurance of resting from our labors, and the works will follow after, or be remembered after we are gone. ***"The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger" (Job 17:9).***

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 2007

Amy Heppler	10.00
Lowell Hopkins	5.00
Glenford Sigmon	5.00
Victor Terry	5.00
David Spangler	5.00
Jean Moran	5.00
Eva Cruise	5.00
Brandon Lane	5.00
Frances Neal	5.00

HEBREWS 1:1-3.

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

OBITUARIES

JAMIE EVERETT COOPER

Jamie E. Cooper

It is with sadness that I write the obituary of my dear husband Jamie E. Cooper. He was blessed to leave this world of suffering and his hope and desire was to die and go home. Like the white doves that circled over the grave site that holds his earthly body, he too had traveled far and was given the desire to go home there to be sheltered and at rest. Brother Jamie E. Cooper was born July 2, 1918 and raised in Patrick County, Va.

He was found dead in bed, September 8, 2007, at our home. His stay on earth was 89 years - 3 months 6 days. He died from asbestosis and had suffered a long time with the affliction. He asked the Lord to let him go to sleep and never wake up. God granted Jamie a dying wish. Oh the beauty to see the unfolding of God's love and mercy.

He was given a good hope when a young man. Jamie joined Reed Creek Church July 11, 1940 at the age of 22, served as clerk of Reed Creek since 1947, served as deacon since 1955. He served as clerk of the Pigg River Association from August 3, 1979 until 2004 resigned due to health. He served as trustee of The Signs of the Times since 1985. He was a trustee of the Primitive Baptist Assistance Inc. He was a Navy Veteran of World War II.

He was a man of few words, that were weighed before spoken. He was a firm believer that stood for the truth, order and doctrine and he was a peacemaker with a tender heart. He was a good husband, daddy, grand daddy and great grand daddy. God truly blessed us to have him in our lives. Our blessings have been many and wonderful.

Jamie and I were married June 11, 1938 at the home of his uncle, Elder Lonnie Cummings. We were married 69 years. Also surviving are two daughters Judith C. Owen of Martinsville; Stephany C. Simpson and husband Henry Simpson of Roanoke, Va., four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren a brother, nieces, nephews and so many lovely brethren and friends. May God bless us to behold God's love for us and to know that all things are in His hand to unfold at the time and place that He appointed.

His funeral was held September 10, 2007, conducted by Elder C. B. Davis and Elder Thomas Solomon, at Norris Funeral Home, interment was at Roselawn Burial Park in Martinsville, Virginia.

Truly missed and loved by many.

Jamie's wife,
Frances M. Cooper.

IN MEMORY OF
DEACON GUY JUDSON HOLLEY

Our Heavenly Father in His wisdom and mercy saw fit to call our beloved and highly esteemed Brother Guy Holley from the walk of life and give him peaceful rest until He comes again to gather the jewels of His mercy, whom He redeemed with His own precious blood.

Brother Guy was born November 26, 1918, a son of the late Tom Pete and Wilda Emberson Holley. He was a U.S. Navy Veteran of WWII and experienced The Hand of God deliver him from danger. He founded Holley Used Auto Parts in 1954, which was very successful and provided well for his family. He was married to Mary E. Holley and to this union was born a son, Ronald and Phyllis Holley and daughters, Deborah Trail, Linda Underwood and Rose Mary Mason. He was preceded in death by his wife, Mary E. Holley, daughter Rose Mary Mason and sons-in-law Jackie Underwood and Sam Trail. He is also survived by wife Dorothy C. Holley, stepchildren Darrell and Mary Ann Craighead and Linda Watson, seven grand-children, three step-grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren and brother, Grady Holley.

Brother Guy Holley joined Republican Primitive Baptist Church September 21, 1975, ordained Deacon December 20,1980 and chosen clerk October 21, 1995. He was blessed to serve faithfully to the end, always having the welfare of the church and his pastor at heart.

Funeral services were held August 7, 2007 at Flora Funeral Chapel by Elders Junior Conner, W.T. Conner, Larry Hollandsworth, Clarence Stone, and Thomas Solomon. His body was laid to rest at Franklin Memorial Park to await the call of our blessed Lord, whom he loved and served.

We feel our loss to be great, but we believe his gain is even greater and eternal. May The Lord bless and comfort the family and his church with the comfort that He only can give.

Done by order of Republican Primitive Baptist Church in conference August 18, 2007.

Elder Junior Conner, Moderator
Sister Ada Beeghly, Clerk

REVELATION 14:5-6.

And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.

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SONG

WAIT, my soul, upon the Lord,
To his gracious promise flee,
Laying hold upon his word:
"As thy days, thy strength shall be."

If the sorrows of thy case,
Seem peculiar still to thee,
God has promised needful grace:
"As thy days, thy strength shall be."

Days of trial, days of grief,
In succession thou mayst see;
This is still thy sweet relief:
"As thy days, thy strength shall be."

Rock of Ages, I'm secure,
With my promise, full and free,
Faithful, positive and sure:
"As thy days, thy strength shall be."

W. F. Lloyd.

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EDITORIAL

I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:

That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else.

I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.

(Isa 45:5-7)

Elder R. H. Campbell

The above scriptures, sets forth as candidly as possible, and as only wisdom can, the absolute power, wisdom and sovereignty of God, and his control over all things, his being answerable to no one but himself, and he is clearly declaring the fact that there is no God beside himself. He created all things by power of his word, and according to his own will and purpose, and none can stay his hand, or, say unto him why doest thou? And, as Elder Griffin used to say, he always says what he means, and means what he says. This applies to everything, and is not contingent upon anything being contributed to it from any other source, whether it be for it against it, whether by principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world, or against spiritual wickedness in high places, None of these are of any avail when they are confronted by the absolute power of God.

(Rom 9:17-23) "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his

will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shalt the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hath thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels, which he hath afore prepared unto glory." It is even as Moses said, on one occasion, ***(Job (34:29) "When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? And when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a nation, or a man only:"*** God's power is effective against any, or all powers, for they were allotted by him.

There are those who will question some, or all, of the above declarations and say that this would not be fair, because it excludes some and embraces others who are no better than they are, and also the fact that there is no way that they can have any input into the equation, or the outcome. This is absolutely true, that they may be as good as any other man, in the flesh, but the error of this rationale is covered by the scripture, ***(Isa 64:6) "But we all are as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags: and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind have taken us away."*** They are using their human reasoning, and do not understand, that God created all things for himself, and according to his own good will and pleasure, and is accountable unto no power, higher than himself, because there is none.

They are using the wisdom of the carnal mind, which is enmity against God; and it is not subject to the law of God neither can be. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are complete foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned, and this fact also is by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of the creator, ***(1 Cor. 2-21) "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."***

The world will, especially question, vs 7, ***"I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I the Lord do all these things."*** They will violently disagree with the stated fact that God creates evil, and darkness, but Isaiah, per the above scripture says that he does. They will quote ***(Rom 8-28), "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."*** They will say that since all things work together for good to

the children of God, this could not possibly include the evil, and the darkness. Well it most certainly does, as per Isaiah's quote above, and both are just as necessary in the plan of God, for the purpose that he had for them. The apostle Paul, said, *(II Cor:15) "For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace, through the thanksgiving of many, will redound to the glory of God."* The, "all things" in, II Cor 4:15, and again in Rom 8:28 are one and the same, and they certainly do include the light, and the darkness, and the peace and evil mentioned in the subject scripture.

The reason for the disparity between man's understanding and God's reasoning is explained by Isaiah in, *(Isa 55:8-9) "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."* Well, so much for the mind of man, imagine his trying to judge the actions and decrees of God with the vain and corrupt intellect of the man of flesh. They are not on the same basis, for their reasoning, and therefore they cannot be compared: it is like trying to compare apples and oranges, they are two entirely different realms. God's judgment is based on the infinite love and compassion that he has for his children, and things that are for their welfare spiritually, and includes all things that are needful to assure their eternal salvation, and they are all judged good, in the mind and purposes of God.

I heard a man state one day that all of God's creation was for the good of his children, whether they knew and understood it or not. He said, to have good, you must have evil to make it manifest, and to have light you must have darkness to make it manifest, and so goes all of the other, seemingly opposites, in the plan of God. He went on to pose a reasonable and hypothetical situation. The angels were discussing the attributes of God and said, we all agree on the absolute omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience of God in the affairs of his children, and then someone said, but what about his mercy, and they said, what's that? another said what about his grace, and they did not understand what he was talking about. The same thing is applied to all of the other absolute essentials and all of the other characteristics of God which are so precious and meaningful to those who love God, and trust him for their salvation. The way and manner that they are made manifest to them in life, is by their having experienced the opposites, to which they can compare them, in their travels here, in this low ground of sin and sorrow. They will then understand light, by their having experienced the darkness, and they will understand good by their having suffered the pangs of the evil, and then

having them all made manifest unto them in their own lives, in this manner, they then will worship and praise God for their deliverance from the realms of darkness and evil, and by their being blessed with an understanding of the love and grace which God has bestowed upon them. They realize that they all have free and precious gifts of faith, given by a merciful and loving heavenly Father making these precious truths known unto them in this manner.

It is upon this knowledge and understanding that the apostle Paul was given to pen this scripture, *(Eph. 2: 8-9) "For by grace are ye saved, through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."* They will then realize that all things do indeed work together for their good, and that anything that is involved in the further accomplishment of this glorious goal in their lives, are all certainly good, and this most certainly includes the darkness, evil and all of the other negatives included in their experience, because they all work to make manifest the positives.

I believe that it is in this train of thought that the apostle Paul was in when he said, *(Rom 5:1-5) "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."* He rejoiced in tribulations also, because, he knew that they were also steps along the path that had been set before him, whereby he would receive the end of his faith, that precious inheritance, which was reserved for him, from before the foundation of the world, even the salvation of his soul.

So, looking at them in this perspective; light and darkness are alike good, in God's economy, as well as peace and evil, and all of the trials and tribulations that they experience in this life work together for good, because they are all the sum total of God's love and care for them. Jesus' promise to his disciples, on one occasion was, *(John 16:33) "In the world ye shall have tribulations: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world."* In this statement he was telling them that, tribulations must come in the path that they must run in this life, but to fear not because he has already overcome them for their sake.

Therefore they are to run their race with patience, looking for and hasting to the day that they will receive that blessed inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them. In that day, faith will

be replaced with reality, and they will enter into the joy of their God and his Son Jesus Christ, to reign in his presence throughout the endless ages, Oh, blessed thought.

It is therefore, in this manner, that all of the seasons, good, evil, light, darkness, and the many other characteristics are wrought in their lives to make them see and understand that they all did indeed, work together, and in harmony for good to them, and to all who are called according to the eternal purposes of God. These characteristics are all contrary to the inherent characteristics of the natural man, and are given them by the indwelling of the Spirit of God within their heart, as evidence that they are indeed, new creatures in Christ.

Taking them individually, there are many of these steps that we would avoid if at all possible, but, on one occasion when Paul had just been stoned and thought dead, he rose up and continued to preach unto them these same basic truths, *(Acts 14:22) "Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."* and this is the only way that they may come, for Jesus himself said, *(John 14:6) "I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."* and in me ye shall suffer tribulations. Can anyone question any of these facts?

There will be tribulations, for the children of God, in all ages of time, and which they must endure, as evidence that the same God, who reigned in Isaiah and Paul's day, is reigning now, Isaiah then went on to make the statement, *(Isa 46:9-11) "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the thing that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all of my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass, I have purposed it, I will also do it."* Is not this the same God that we hope that we worship today? (vs13) *"I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry; and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory."* This is the purpose for it all, and who would question the fact that everything included in this process is for good, and is needful, including the seasons of light, darkness, peace and evil?

Oh! The peace and joy that fills the heart of those who believe this doctrine, and feel to have a portion in these promises left on record.. It instills in the hearts of all of those who do, such a sense of confidence and assurance, when blessed with

the presence of the Holy Ghost, and abiding faith, which is the gift of God, that they can stand firm against the powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, and against spiritual wickedness in high places in Jesus' name. They stand in the same manner in which the three Hebrews stood, in the book of Daniel, and faced the king, declaring that although they may die, they will not bow down and worship the gods and deities of this world.

When so blessed, they can witness with David, when he penned the following text, *(Psa 149:1-4) "Praise ye the Lord, Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints. Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. Let them praise his name in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp. For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: he will beauty the meek with salvation."* When so blessed, all darkness and evil flee away, and all is light and joy and peace. In this moment, the words of Moses comes to mind, *(Josh 33:27) "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee: and shall say, Destroy them."* Such peace and joy as this, cannot be found in this low ground of sin and sorrow, but it will be the eternal abode of those for whom Jesus went to the cross to prepare such a place for them. This is the earnest expectation of all of those who look for the second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to whom all things promised in the future are as sure and certain, as those things past.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

NOTICE

Elder Thomas Solomon has moved, the following is his new address:

Elder Thomas Solomon
255 Morgan Clay Drive
Glade Hill, Virginia 24092

Phone: (540) 483-7176

PSALM 18:1-4.

I will love thee, O Lord, my strength.

The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.

I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid.

CORRESPONDENCE

Please renew my subscription to the Signs for one year and use the remainder as you see fit.

I enjoy reading the Signs and look forward to getting it each month.

May God bless you,
Sister Helen Pittman

Address:
2920 N. Eastman Rd., Apt. 226
Longview, Tx. 75605

10-12-07

My Dear Brothers,

I'm sending you a check for twenty five dollars for one year subscription. The rest you can use as you see fit to do so. Its been a trying time this year, no rain, but deep down He knows whats best for us all. God is too good and too merciful, to forget just what we need. Not what we want. I think so much of my time how good He has been to me at age 88 able to take care of myself and live alone. My health is very good, to tend me a garden, which I love to do. Its been a difficult time, but God sent enough rain blessed with a plenty. I love to read my brother's experience and to know I have been there.

Sister Lovie Q. Thompson

VOICES OF THE PAST

SELF EXAMINATION

Feeling so low in spirit, I began to examine myself, which I confess is not a very pleasant employment, (though it could be profitable, and will be, if one will be honest and make proper use of his findings) and hardly had I begun to make this examination before I began to wonder, "Am I a hypocrite?" Usually when I thought of the hypocrite, I thought that it was some other person or persons and surely not me, now I am not so sure about it. There are at least two ways of examining oneself. The first way is to MEASURE YOURSELF BY YOURSELF. You will be well pleased with the result. All measurements will be the same, they will come out even, and there will be no room to suggest improvement. You will conclude that you have attained the desired goal, in learning, thinking, and in action. And you might just get lifted up with pride (false pride) and begin to look down on your brother or neighbor and wonder why they don't see, think and act just as you do. And no doubt you will begin to think that if

all members of my church were just like me, we would have a wonderful church.

The second method is to measure yourself by the word of God, in the light of His commandments, written both in His Holy Book and on the tables of your heart, and in all probability the result will be somewhat different.

An honest, sincere private examination of yourself will, no doubt, cause you to be glad that the inward thoughts and emotions that motivate your words and actions are not seen and known to others. You might find an affliction we might call "Borderline Anemia almost a Christian and almost a hypocrite. Christ frequently accused the Pharisees of hypocrisy. See 23rd chapter of Matthew. They say and DO NOT. What about you? Do YOU SPEAK and SO DO as the hypocrite, or as those who shall be judged by the law of liberty? Their practice was not agreeable to their doctrine. Is yours?

They severely exacted obedience in others, but they themselves did not observe the least part of the law. Are you of this temper? Do you demand perfection in others, while you excuse yourself for your own failings? What good things they did were for the praise of men. What is your reason for doing, or pretending to do good? They were very zealous for an outward show of religion, are you? They pretended a great deal of respect for the ancient prophets, disallowing what their fathers" did to them, and yet were so ready to practice to like themselves to Christ and His apostles. What about you? Do you profess to love Christ, His church, and to have fellowship for His ministers and the gospel, and yet will only go to church if your pastor or favorite preacher is to be there? Do you go to church to worship or admire the preacher, or to hear the gospel of your salvation and worship God in spirit and in truth? Sometimes one professes to join the church, yet in reality they join the preacher, and never love the church. They are never truly a part of the church, but just have a name on the church book. What about you?

Hypocrites only pray to God in time of trouble or affliction, and when things go well they turn their faces" from Him, from His service and worship. When do you pray? They are quick-sighted in worldly affairs, also very zealous, and will make any sacrifice to go where they will be recognized and honored with a high seat; while they disdain to go humbly to the place where God's humble poor assemble only to worship God, eat from His table, enjoy His fellowship, rejoice in the riches of His kingdom, and enjoy their inheritance with the saints in light. Worldly honor and friendship seem to mean more to them than the praise of God. What about you?

You and I will probably never be tried or examined in a civil or ecclesiastical court, so we will probably be the only one to know if we be a

hypocrite, for men can't look into our hearts or know our thoughts. However, GOD KNOWS!

It is written in His word, *"The hope of the hypocrite shall perish." Job 8: 13. "For an hypocrite shall not come before Him." Job 13:16, "The joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment." Job 20:5. "A hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbor-" Prov. 11 :9. "The congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate." Job 15 :34. And again, "Woe unto you hypocrites." Matt. 23 :13.*

I have not written this to insinuate in any way that any of you dear readers are in this category, but rather am persuaded better things of you. But perhaps it will be profitable to subject ourselves to a thorough examination in private, and if there be found a need for improvement, we might give ourselves diligently to the task; that we might show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not to be ashamed. *"So speak ye, and so DO, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." James 2:12.*

W. H. Hancock.

COMMENT-Elder Hancock has given all of us a task, and if we are sincere in our efforts to worship and serve God, we will begin our self-examination at once. If we find ourselves desiring special notice when we go among God's children, we need to consider the spirit we are in.

R.K. Blackshear

CHILDREN MANIFEST

"In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil." 1 John 3:10.

National Israel were called children of Israel. By keeping the law God gave them, they were to have material blessings and national protection. They were chosen in Abraham and the law was given to them by Moses. Spiritual Israel was chosen in Christ, and are to have spiritual blessings on earth and to be with Him in glory after death. They are born again in time but this birth is of the Spirit and is an internal work of grace, and can only be seen and known by its fruits. *"By their fruits ye shall know them."*

Spiritual Israelites are compared to sheep. They are a chosen generation and belong to Christ by sovereign love, mercy and grace. They were predestinated to be conformed to the image of God's Son, but the rest of the world were left to die in their sins. They are compared to goats. Men may make a profession of religion and may deceive other men, but God looks at the heart and knows His sheep.

The chosen in Christ are made manifest by effectual calling. *"Whom He predestinated He also called."* They who are the called according to His purpose were given to Him in the decrees and purposes of God. When this

calling brings them to know God experimentally they begin to appear like sheep. They follow Jesus, hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Jesus is their bread of life, He reveals Himself to them as their justification and redemption, and they are satisfied, being at peace with God.

Who are the children of the devil? They are those who follow the devil. They are said to be his children who are his servants and under his control. Jesus said to some of the Jews, *"Ye are of your father, the devil, and his works will ye do."* Although these Jews were religious, they were enemies to God and to His truth, fighting against Jesus and His people. Being ignorant of God's righteousness, they went about trying to justify themselves and cover up their wicked ways. They are justly condemned under the law of God and declared to be the children of wrath.

The heirs of promise are also the children of wrath by nature even as others, (Eph. 2:3) until quickened and saved by grace. They are then made free from the law of sin and death, and are under the new covenant of grace. (Rom. 8:10). Under this covenant God puts laws into their minds and writes them in their hearts. This law of grace condemns sin in the flesh, causes the soul to hate evil and love righteousness. They pray in the spirit, *"Lord, be merciful unto me a sinner."* No sooner had Saul been quickened by grace than *"Behold, he prayeth."* This change was wrought in him and he passed from death unto life, not by works of righteousness he had done, but according to the purpose of God in Christ before the world begun. *(2 Tim. 1:9)*. *"In this the children of God are manifest."* The children of God are also manifest by being His disciples, followers of God as dear children. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." They are said to do righteousness when they love God and keep His commandments. His manifest children are they who trust in Him and love the brethren. *"Lord, help us to manifest thy Sonship."*

J. Harvey Daily.

Psalm 9:1-3

I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.

I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.

When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence.

For thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou satest in the throne judging right.

Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name for ever and ever.

HOPE

Webster defines hope as *"The desire for good accompanied by expectation,"* and it takes these two elements to constitute hope. Desire without expectation is not hope, neither is expectation without desire. We desire many things we have no way of obtaining, and we expect many things we do not desire. This is common to humanity, and wherever there is hope there is uncertainty also.

We never hope for things that we already possess, nor do we hope for things we have a perfect knowledge of, but in order to have hope we must first desire something and then have some reason to expect to receive it.

Now, do we hope to live in heaven with God and all His redeemed children? If so we HAVE A DESIRE to that end, and then there must be a basis upon which to found our expectation. The desire to live with God in heaven does not spring from the natural mind of man, nor can that mind ever be educated up to the point of this great desire. One must first know something of his own sinful condition and be made to hate sin before he will ever desire things righteous and holy, and this knowledge comes ONLY by the Spirit of God in the heart. This is the result of regeneration, and regeneration is a PERFECT work-the work of God. All men DO NOT desire to live in heaven because all men do not have the Spirit of Christ formed in them, and preachers cannot give them this Spirit. All men would desire to escape the terrors of eternal destruction, but many would be satisfied to remain forever on earth, or else pass into eternal oblivion when they die.

There are two spirits manifest on earth, one of them hates God and godliness and loves sin, while the other one hates sin and loves God and godliness. These facts are proven by the walk and conversation of many people with whom we come in contact every day. Some folks never go to church, while others think and talk about it as a painful duty. Why? Is it not evidence that they do not love the church and the things it stands for? There are other people who eagerly look forward to an opportunity to attend the service of God, they never seem to get tired of listening to the gospel and of greeting fellow members in fellowship and love. This is their meat and their drink. They did not make themselves come to love the worship of God. It is the work of God's Spirit alone.

Many people say that a hope is not worth much, that people can know that they are children of God and that they are saved for heaven, but I have noticed that the people who enjoy the service of God the most are those who do not know so much, they ONLY HOPE they are children of God; And so hope is just as much a part of the Christian ser-

vice of God as being baptized, because without hope there is no baptism, no communion with God and His children, and no real church membership.

Hope does not save people for heaven but saves them in time, from despair, fear and many gloomy doubts. The unregenerated do not need hope in Christ, because they have never felt their need of Him, and they do not feel their need of Him because they have never seen themselves as lost and ruined sinners. The law of God brings to the hearts of men and women the knowledge that they are vile, corrupt sinners in the sight of God, and after this knowledge comes the blessed hope that Christ has done for them what they could not do for themselves saved them from the just consequence of their sins.

The reason God's children need a hope in Christ to comfort them while in this life is that they DO NOT have perfect knowledge, but only know in part and see in part. So many conflicting evidences come into their lives that they can never be as sure of their salvation as they would want to be, but they never finally love hope until it ends in reality. They have many emotions in their hearts that they cannot define; they love things that they once hated, and hate things they once loved. No, hope and faith are not CAUSES of men and women being the children of God, but are sweet evidences that they are His children. They find many things in themselves that they despise, many things that they often mourn over, which things are caused by the weakness of the flesh, but then again they find themselves thrilled in their very souls at even the mention of the name of Jesus. Their confidence is in Him. They KNOW that He is a COMPLETE Saviour, that all for whom He died will be ultimately housed in heaven, and they HOPE THEY ARE IN THAT NUMBER!

Talk about hope being worthless! It is the most precious possession the child of God has. Without it life would be miserable. There would be no soothing balm to dry up the fountain of his tears in times of sorrow and despair, nothing to keep him hoping in the grace and mercy of God when he takes a look at himself to learn again just how sinful and unworthy he is. Yes, he looks to the worthiness of Christ, whom he has been made to feel died for him upon the rugged cross. And he longs to meet together with others who cry for mercy in the night time and shout for joy in the day, and who base their hope of heaven upon the perfect work of a perfect, sinless, holy and righteous God, who, for some reason they cannot understand, loved them before they had a being in the world.

Their cry is, *"Let others know they are children of God if they can, but let me continue to abide in that precious hope that Jesus died for me."* For the child of God

remembers a time when he had no hope, and the misery and darkness and fear of that hour is something they have no desire to experience again. They were contented once without hope, but now they are happy with it, and would be miserable and wretched without it.

R. K. Blackshear.

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2 COR. 6:14

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"

If it was not for many of us doing this, the apostle would not have given us this instruction. He had found all kinds of irregularities in the church at Corinth, as well as most of the others. These letters of the apostle were sent in lieu of his visits. He had found many hateful sins among them when he had visited, and now he is writing to keep up the objection that had been previously raised against these things. It is a well balanced charge to them. Three things are brought to bear in this charge to them, to wit, in yoke together, in fellowship with, and communion at, the same table.

If a man or woman is a believer in Jesus Christ his whole mind is aflame with service and devotion to Him. The kingdom and the subjects of it will be the first thought in regard to all things. Will it promote the welfare of the subjects? Will it glorify Him who has called us out of darkness into light? To serve God and His people will be the most absorbing thing in all the world to a believer. His traveling will be toward the light, for he is a child of the light and of the day. He will be going a different direction than an unbeliever will go. A believer will always want to go up; an unbeliever will always want to go down. A believer, regardless of the steepness of the hill, or the fierceness of the combat, will want to press on toward the prize of the mark of his high calling that is Jesus Christ; an unbeliver will shun the way that calls for going upward and meeting foes.

What a struggle to be yoked with an unbeliever. Regardless of the effort put forth for the welfare of the subjects of the kingdom, it will all be nullified by being yoked to one who Is doing all he can for the destruction of those subjects. As long as one is thus yoked with an unbeliever, it will be a standstill battle. Nothing can be gained in a march like that.

If we, through the weakness of the flesh, have succumbed to such an uneven yoking, let us strive to break apart from it. Your words will be denied, and mocked, and misconstrued; your walk will be belittled; your conversation will be intermingled with the odors and marks

and likenesses of this ungodly world; your feasts will have green and wild gourds in them, with drink that is polluted. Moreover, a yoke that is pulled in two directions will gall and cause a lot of unpleasantness.

"What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?" Do you know what fellowship is? Have you ever come to the church of the living God and found them all walking as a unit? Have you come on a long and tiresome journey and found a good place to rest? If so, it was fellowship to you in the same things. If you had come on this journey and had stopped to rest and had found everybody in an uproar about starting on a trip, I assure you that you would not find what you were looking for. Your whole thought would be that they would *let* everybody rest. Then why do we join in with such things? What do we find there? It is not fellowship. That is, it is not fellowship, unless we too are workers of unrighteous things. The apostle is not writing to those who have a common tie here. That is not his concern, and it is not mine. I do not want to enter into such dens of unrighteousness, nor do I want my brethren to be found among them. A child of God does not have any business, nor do they have any right, in such stink holes of sin. I do not know what it is that possesses a child of God, one that has been given to see the righteousness of the Lamb of God, to be found hanging around a place like this. These places are two kinds but they are both unrighteous. One of them is the place of vice; the other is the place of false doctrine. How can you associate with those who drink the wine of fornication, while you desire to drink living water; how can you eat with those who eat stale bread, while you are famishing for living bread? How, oh, tell me how, can you go arm in arm with one whose whole tending is toward liberalizing the work of Redemption to include all men ? Do you have any confidence in such falsehoods? If, so, do not try to travel under the auspices of the banner of Christ. Do you have any fellowship for these unrighteous characters and their acts? If so, do not palm yourself off on the church of Jesus Christ as one who is trusting in the righteousness of Him.

"What does light have in common with darkness, in that they commune together?" Does light and darkness come from the same source? Is one fountain the cause of both? If so, but ONLY IF SO, then communion is to be had between darkness and light. Communion, in the very nature of it, is between that which is at an unity. Two parties, in order to commune together, must have a primary likeness between them. If not, one of them is eating with one thought in mind, the other with another thought. Jesus Christ is the light of the world. I must say that HE IS the light of the world, It is not a case of

He being the greater and another being the lesser. No, sir, not that. He is the light of the whole world. Moreover, He lighteth everyone that cometh into the world. If you have come into this world, which He loved and gave Himself for, you have been initiated into light, as He is the light. God is light, and He was made flesh and dwelt among us, and if we are children of light, He dwells in us. Are you trying to mix darkness and light? Are you trying to blend them together, shamefacedly saying that there is no harm in this little thing, or that we are almost together and therefore ought to live in peace, or that we are all going to the same place and ought to work and live together here ? If so, you are trying to do that which Paul is condemning. If you are trying to live in the light and in the darkness at the same time, you are proving most conclusively that something is wrong. There is NOT ANY darkness in God at all. God is our God in the light and the darkness, but HE IS NOT THE CAUSE of the kind of darkness Paul is writing about. If so, he would not have needed to stress the difference. In fact, there would not be ANY difference.

God is the true source of the light. The Satanic powers are the true source of the darkness under consideration. Are you a child of the light? If so, how much fellowship and communion and enjoyment do you get in communion with the things of darkness?

Now once more. What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? What communion hath light with darkness? If the answer is none, then may I ask, where are your affections in the matter? And if they are, really set on the things of a believer, *of* one who is righteous, one who is in the light, may I admonish you, to kindly examine yourself as to whether you are walking in the light, and in the fellowship, and as a believer. In an abiding hope,

William D. Griffin,
511 Kent Ave.
Cantonsville 28, Md.

THE SCRIPTUAL VIEW OF CHRIST AND HIS ZION

In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in; Isa. xxvi, 1, 2.

The prophet then continues his description: ***"Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone [Christ], a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation;" Isa. xxviii, 16. "For other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ;" I Cor. iii, 11. "Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citi-***

zens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets; Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together [by a Master Workman, God the Father] groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit;" Eph. ii, 19-22.

Who built this city? I say God Almighty. Who did he place as King over the city? He says, *"Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion; I will declare in the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen [his people among the Gentiles were the heathen spoken of] for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession;" Ps. ii, 6-8. "Let Mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments. Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death;" Ps. xlviii, 14. "For God will save Zion [he is the only one who can save] and will build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell there, and have it in possession. "The seed [this is the seed that is counted to him for a generation] also of his servants shall inherit it: and they that love his name shall dwell therein." "His foundation [Christ] is in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God." "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favor her, yea, the set time is come. * * * When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory." "For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread [that bread that comes down from Heaven, like the manna which he fed the Israelites in the wilderness]. I will also clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall shout aloud for joy. There will I make the horn of David [Christ] to bud.*

I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed [Christ]." "The Lord shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the Lord;" Ps. lxix, 35, 36; lxxxvii, 1-4; cii, 13-17; cxxxii, 13-18.

We are told: *"There are threescore queens and fourscore concubines, and virgins without*

number." "My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother [Jerusalem, which is above, is her mother]; she is the choice one of her that bare her. The daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her. Who is she that looketh forth as the morning-, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, terrible as an army with banners? Hear this wonderful description: "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valley. As the lily among the thorns, so is my love among the daughters. As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love"- Solomon's Song.

"Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." How sublime these declarations! *"And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." "Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains; for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted. But Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken me." "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands (alluding- to his hands being pierced with nails on the cross] and thy walls are continually before me." "For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like the Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord." "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him [Christ] that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace (made by Christ's blood alone]; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion: Thy God reigneth! He hath redeemed Jerusalem." See Isa. xii, 6; xxvi, 1-2; xxxv, 10; xlix, 13-17; 1,6; lix, 21; lx.* Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein. For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a *"wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her."*

"For behold I will bring forth my servant, the Branch (Christ]. For behold the stone [Christ] that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone (Christ} shall be seven eyes: behold, I

will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day (the day Christ died on the cross]," Zech. ii, 3. "God sent a man to measure Jerusalem to see what is the breadth and length thereof;" Rev. xi, 1.

R. S. BANKS.

GOD SEEN IN CREATION AND IN CHRIST

There is a great deal said among the wise as to how God is to be seen and felt in his handiwork. True, the day speaks of his wisdom and power, but in his Anointed we see his grace and truth, and share his love. Men wonder at the sun, moon, and stars, but Christians rejoice in the sweet covenant of his word. Reason may teach us that he who formed the eye, who, likewise, gave the sense of hearing and reasoning, must see, hear, and understand all things, but the work of grace in the soul enables us to get a more exalted view of him. Sense and reason may harmonize in this; that God made and governs the world, but grace enables us to look back to the time when he called us from darkness to light, and enabled us to trust him by faith as our present help in every time of need. Faith enables us to trust in the promise made in Christ before the world began; that when the world is no more, we shall be at his right hand, blessed for evermore.

He is to be regarded as wonderful, because of the mysterious workings of the different members of the natural body, all of which work in harmony; for we are his workmanship. But he is much nearer to us because of the union of our souls with him, which shall never be severed. He is to be loved and reverenced as our Creator. We have reason to love and worship him as the God and Father of our salvation.

Human philosophy claims that nature is the best glass to see the glory of God, and indeed it speaks in great force; for the heavens declare the glory of God, and the skies preach of his handiwork. But the glory of God in Christ Jesus endures forever. It takes poor sinners out of this low ground of sin and sorrow and fits them with his robe of glory, that they may rest in his presence forever.

Let others please themselves with their study of nature and their views of the replenished creation; but while I would not despise these, let me search the pages of the divine revelation and learn more of the plan of redeeming love, where the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost appear in the great work of man's redemption; how that all things in the divine plan work so harmoniously and result in the full accomplishment of its great purposes.

To be sure, the plan of redemp-

tion in Christ will not interest the world at large, because it is not of the world. The world will love its own. But they who are born from above, take delight in the cross of Christ, and rejoice in hope of the world to come.

J. Harvey Daily.
Greenfield, Ind.

IT SHALL NOT COME NIGH THEE; PS. XCI, 7.

When Noah was shut up in the ark, Noah and the favored few, you know how they were tossed about, the rains coming down from Heaven, the waters rushing and dashing below. The windows of Heaven were opened and the fountains of the great deep were broken up; and while they were thus dashed upon the waters, not a drop came in unto them that *were within. "It shall not come nigh thee."* So you see the believer may be surrounded with troubles, and yet. *"it shall not come nigh him."* And there is something more in the expression used in reference to the making of the ark:

"And shalt pitch it within and without with pitch;" Gen. vi, 14. Now, it is a most remarkable fact that the word pitch in Hebrew (the word is Gopher) signifies also atonement. Now see, the slime or pitch with which the Ark was daubed within and without kept every drop of water out. This very expression for slime or pitch in the Hebrew signifies also atonement; and is it not the atonement that keeps out the water? Can anything but the atonement keep the soul from the waters of God's wrath and from the floods of vengeance that shall sweep away the world with the ungodly? There is nothing but the atonement; and that bears up the soul, and keeps out every drop of rain.

J. C. Philpot.

EXPERIENCE OF GRACE.

Elder R. W. Thompson; Dear Brother: - I wish to write you my experience, or a part of it. In *the* year 1893, it pleased the good Lord to convict me of my sin and show me my dreadful condition. My sins justly condemned me and I could only say, *"God, have mercy on me, a poor, vile sinner."* When I was in the house alone, my husband away at his work, I would close the doors and kneel down and ask the good Lord to have mercy on me, a poor sinner. O, my sins were constantly before me, when awake, it seemed. It seemed to me as if I could not bear the burden of them. But I could do nothing but beg God for mercy. When I retired at night I tried to pray, and the first thing in the morning called upon the Lord. It re-

ally seemed the more I prayed, the worse I felt condemned. It seemed that all my prayers were unanswered. I was deeply tried and felt as if I did not have a friend anywhere. It seemed as though I had lost all hope of forgiveness. I continued in this condition for a longtime.

I was sorely tried by old satan. He showed me my dark and gloomy grave. It was dismal to me. I felt as if I was not prepared to die, and I begged God so earnestly for mercy, if it could be his will. A door of hope opened to me and light came to my mind and I praised the Lord. I felt that my sins were all gone; but still I was not entirely satisfied. I attended church and heard the preaching, and it would relieve me, somewhat. I wanted to offer myself to the church, but was afraid they would not receive me. I have left the church house when they gave the opportunity for uniting with the church to keep from going forward for membership. I felt too unworthy to be a member with them. But the last time I went to Old Union church, in North Carolina, I asked for membership with them and they received me and I was baptized by Elder William Craft.

Yours in hope,
Mrs. D. F. Caudill
Penick, Ky.

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union at its last session voted to hold our meeting on Saturdays only because of the age of our members.

Our next union will convene with Canaan Church on the 5th Saturday December 29.

Singing will begin at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30.

We invite our correspondents and visitors to this meeting.

Burnell B. Williams
Asso. Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene with Moons Creek Church on the 5th Sunday in December. The Church is located about a 1/2 mile east of Hwy 86 between Danville and Yanceyville on Park Springs Rd.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Sister Sue Blalock, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER

Andrew Agee, VA	5.00
Flay Mordeca, MS	5.00
Susan Shelton, NC	5.00
Lovie Thompson, NC	10.00
George Blalock, NC	10.00
Wilton Sutphin, VA	5.00
H. L. Knight, NC	75.00
Helen Pittman, TX	5.00
Clonetta Thompson, VA	3.00
Jennye A. Osbourne, MD	25.00

ISAIAH 42:10.

Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof.

OBITUARIES

JEREMIAH (Jerry) LEWIS, Jr .

Our dear brother in Christ was called by our Heavenly Father from his labors on earth to his eternal home Wednesday night, August 29, 2007. Had he lived another week, he would have been eighty-seven years of age. Brother Lewis was a kind and gentle person and had much compassion and love for his church family. We at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church will greatly miss his presence.

Brother Lewis, also known by some as "Pap" was born September 6, 1920 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia to the late Jeremiah Lewis, Sr and Bessie Ferguson Lewis. He was one of nine children and lived in Virginia all his life. For many years he was the owner and operator of Lewis Grocery before his retirement. Before this he worked with Holland Grocery in Axton, Virginia.

Brother Lewis was married twice. He and his first wife had five children. He and his second wife to whom he was married for thirty-nine years have no children.

Survivors of Brother Lewis are his wife, Juanita Hundley Lewis of the home. Other survivors are daughters, Linda Douglas and husband Keith, Jean Smart and Cindy Lewis all of Axton, Va.; Sons, Jeremiah Lewis, III and wife Sandy, and Leonard Lewis both of Ridgeway, Va.; Step-daughter Sheila Patterson Murray of Raleigh, N.C., sister, Ruby Dillon of Eden: brothers, James "Jim" Lewis of Cascade and Jacob "Jake" Lewis of Martinsville. Grandchildren are Donna Spence, Danielle Lewis, Joey Lewis, and Lori Lewis. There are also seven great grand-children.

Brother Lewis joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on August 23,1986. He was baptized the following fourth Sunday by his pastor, El-

der Kenneth R. Key. He loved his church dearly and was a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. As long as he was physically able you could expect to see him in church.

For the past several years he was in declining health and was brought to church when he felt able by his sister Ruby. Until the very end he was a faithful and dedicated member. We are left with many great memories and appreciate the fact that we had the privilege of knowing and being in fellowship with this dear brother.

The funeral for Brother Lewis was conducted on Saturday, September I, 2007 at the Fair Funeral Home Chapel by his pastor Elder Kenneth R. Key. His body was laid to rest at Roselawn Burial Park in Martinsville, Virginia.

May the Lord bless this family and give them comfort and strength to bear the sorrow. The Church, the family and the community have suffered a great loss, but we know we must submit to God's will, for he doeth all things well.

Humbly submitted by,
John Collie

SISTER LEMANTHA LOWE

To know Sister Lemantha Lowe was to love her. She was blessed to bring forth the fruits of the spirit; love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance because she was born of the spirit. We miss her greatly, but feel our loss is her gain.

Sister Lemantha Lowe asked for a home with Fisher Gap Primitive Baptist Church on September 9, 1962. She was baptised the first Sunday in October, 1962 by Elder J. C. Dunbar.

She moved her membership to Coleman Primitive Baptist Church on June 7, 1970 where she remained a loving and faithful member until her death on Saturday, July 14, 2007.

Funeral services were held at Moody Funeral Home Chapel by Elder Kenneth Hopkins on Monday, July 16, 2007 at 11:00 AM. Sister Lemantha was laid to rest beside her husband, Brother Spencer Lowe, in Fisher Gap Church Cemetery. Survivors are her loving nieces and nephews who were her "Special Children", having no children of her own, and a host of friends and church family.

Sister Lemantha's passing made me to realize "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven" Ecclesiastes 3:1. This is a wonderful and great truth of God that there is an appointed time. She believed God controlled all things and none could stay his hand. I was blessed to spend several enjoyable months talking and rejoicing together with her in the Lord's Word, Humbleness, Love and Hope with association with

her brothers and sisters to sit in peace with all was her desire. She also loved to hear our Lord's Doctrine preached in the Predestination of all things. Now she sleeps at peace, awaiting the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Copies of this obituary to be sent for publication and for the church record.

With loving memories,
Carlton Brown

Elder Kenneth Hopkins, Moderator
Carlton Brown, Clerk

SISTER MILDRED A. MARTIN

On April 25, 2007 the Lord of Glory called home the soul and spirit of our dear sister in Christ, Mildred Axsom Martin, just a few days before her 86th birthday.

Sister Martin was born in Vesta, Virginia on May 4, 1921 to the late Joseph and Ella Thompson. Early in life she moved to North Carolina, where she was united in marriage to Mr. John Lloyd Axsom. To their union were born one son, John L. Jr.; and one daughter, Mrs. Joe (Norma A.) Zanetti, who died in 2006. Some years following the death of Mr. Axsom, she was united in marriage to Lonzie L. Martin of Patrick Springs, who survives her. Sister Martin was a beautician by trade about 30 years in Spray, N. C.

On the Ist Sunday in December 1986, Sister Martin requested a home with, and was received by, Liberty Church. She was baptized by our pastor, Elder John Wingfield. She was a loyal and faithful member, and attended her meetings as long as her health permitted. She was much afflicted by health problems the last several years of her life. She was strong in faith and thereby laid hold on a solid hope of eternal life.

In addition to her parents, her first husband and her daughter, Sister Martin was preceded in death by one brother, Curtis Thompson; one sister, Ruth Thompson; one stepson, Mike Martin; and one great-grandson, Blake Clark. She was survived by her son J. L. and his wife Shelby; Her loving son-in-law Joe Zanetti; two sisters, Mrs. Bill (Annette) Habeski and Mrs. Mary M. Pulliam; four grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Her funeral service was held on Saturday, April 28th, at Howell Funeral Home by Pastor Palmer Lowery and her pastor. Her mortal body was laid to rest in Patrick Memorial Gardens, to await her summons from the Lord in the day of His coming.

We live in hope that one day, we shall meet with her and all the redeemed of the Lord at the feet of our dear Savior. May all who knew and loved her be reconciled to their loss, and comforted by her eternal gain.

Submitted by her pastor.
Elder John T. Wingfield

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Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS"

The existence, sovereignty, immutability omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah - the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the attonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistable, and in all cases. effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace. The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers - that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

NOTICE

With this issue of "The Signs of the Times", begins the 173rd year of continuous publication.

The board of trustees met on Friday, the day after Thanksgiving 2004. This was an appropriate time of year because we have so much to be thankful for. God has so blessed the Signs to be of so much comfort to so many. He has given us able Editors and most of all our Associate Editors who have been so inspired to furnish us with comforting editorials each month.

Elder Wilbanks was so faithful until his death last year. At our board meeting Elder Cleo Robertson was chosen and agreed to serve as an Associate Editor to follow Elder Wilbanks.

Elder Richard Campbell has been so faithful and blessed for many years. We want to acknowledge our appreciation for his untiring efforts and a prayer that he may continue for many more years. Elder Farmer has also been so faithful an we want to thank him and wish him good health that he may continue to write.

Brother Burnell Williams, after serving ably the Clerk of the board for 25 years, asked that he might be relieved, that someone younger might serve. Brother Tony Horton was elected to follow him.

Time brings on many changes but we have learned that God makes ways for his people where it seems there is no way.

We want to thank all of our subscribers for your interest and ask for your continued support.

As you enjoy the Signs please tell others about it and invite them to subscribe.

The board has agreed to publish personal notices of your anniversaries, weddings, etc. If you wish to publish notices of your regular meetings either monthly or yearly. You may list all meetings scheduled throughout the year, send in early in the year and we will publish at the appropriate month.

We would like to hear from you the readers of the Signs. Share your experiences of grace that it may also comfort others. And we can be mutually comforted together.

May God bless all of us to run with patience the race that he has set before us, ever looking unto him the author and finisher of our faith.

Editors

ISAIAH 43: 18-19.

Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old.

Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.

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EDITORIAL

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." Luke 9:23.

Why is it that we love the Holy Scriptures so? Not because they present a set of rules to live by, or not because they are a description of how to be saved, but rather because they are the words of God. They are the words of power and wisdom and nourishment given by God Himself, to the elect for their very spiritual food and edification and comfort. The children of God find themselves on a journey through a hostile land, which requires natural food for the strength of the outward man, but much more it requires spiritual food for the inward man. We know that the outward man is perishing, but the inward man is renewed day by day. God said in power, ***"It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Matthew 4:4.***

Jesus, the Son of God is the Lord God Almighty. In Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily. His words are the words of God. ***"No man ever spake as this man spake." "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe before him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." Psalm 33:6-9.***

Jesus spoke to all in His hearing, but only those who had been prepared to hear His words received them in truth. Jesus separated his hearers by His words. Some had followed Him for the natural benefits, such as the loaves and fishes, and the natural healing of their bodies. They were like fair weather

friends. However, when the words seemed hard to the flesh, the many always shrunk away to accommodate their fleshly desires of comfort and pleasure. The few others could not turn away. When many of the disciples of Jesus turned away from Him because of His words, He said to the twelve, ***"Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." John 6:67-68.*** The children of God cannot go back. Why? Because they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. They have nowhere else to go.

The children of God are given a great desire to follow Jesus, all the while knowing that they, of themselves are not able to stay the course. This is where the power of God is manifested. Here is where faith is revealed. They are made to strike out on a journey through an unfamiliar and unfriendly territory toward the land of promise - a land that flows with milk and honey. They are made to travel against the strong nature of the outward man, but are made willing to go in the stronger spirit of the inward man. They are instructed of God that the way will not be easy. Nevertheless, onward they go, being made content with the promise that the Lord God will go with them and never leave them nor forsake them, even to the end of the world.

Jesus said that if any man wills to come after Him, he must deny himself. To ***"deny oneself"*** means literally to ***"utter off against oneself."*** This means, to me, that one is made to recognize that in the flesh there dwells no good thing; that one is made to have no confidence in the flesh of man – neither his own, nor that of others. This means, to me, that one is made to acknowledge that if he is to be delivered from this evil world and brought to glory, it is altogether the work of the grace of God, not of the works of man. ***"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." Titus 2:11-12.***

Jesus said that that same one must take up his cross daily. This journey of the child of God is not just for a little while, but for all the days of his life. Jesus said, ***"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Revelation 2:10.*** The elect are in the race all the way to the finish line. The beloved apostle was blessed to say, ***"Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3:13-14.*** And, ***"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to***

keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." 2 Timothy 1:12 And, "I die daily."

Now, we know that the cross is the instrument of death. Jesus took up His cross, on which He was nailed, and on which he gave His life a ransom for many. He did this once, and for all of the elect. He bore their sins upon the cross, where they were fastened and pardoned, never again to be remembered against His people. He offered up Himself unto God, a lamb without spot. And by this one offering, He perfected forever them that are sanctified. He took up His cross and laid down His life for His friends. He did for His friends, what they were not able to do for themselves. He brought to them eternal salvation by the loving grace and infinite mercy of God.

We could never take up a cross as He did, to bring salvation for ourselves or for any other person, because it took a perfect sacrifice to satisfy the justice of God – none of us would qualify, for we are all sinners. Only God could and did provide that sinless Lamb of God which takes away the sins of the world. So our cross is not a literal physical cross, made of a tree, but rather is our suffering for the truth's sake as we seek to follow Him. It is not only given for us to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake. If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him. Taking up our cross daily, to me, means to be made willing, by the grace of God, to suffer the reproaches of the world directed at Him and His people. It is written, ***"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Hebrews 11:24-25.*** So also are all of God's little ones made willing to suffer here in this world for the truth's sake, rather than to walk in the broad way which leads to destruction.

To follow Jesus, to me, means to walk in the way He walked. Every thing that Jesus did was for the good of the ones that he loved with an everlasting love. He never considered Himself, but always sought their welfare. We know that it is impossible, of our weak sinful selves, to walk this way. But we are taught that, ***"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." John 15:13.*** And this, ***"Hereby we perceive the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." 1 John 3:16.*** We know that He did lay down His life for His friends. Being so weak in the flesh, how then are we to lay down our lives for one another? By the grace of God, His little ones are given to do this very thing.

We see each one at the feet of

the other as they seek to please one another for their good and edification. We see the little ones strike out great distances, leaving their homes and families and friends in order to be with those of like mind, whom they are made to love with a love greater than anything in this world. We see the dear brothers and sisters turn over their homes to their brethren when they come to visit. We see them labor to prepare food and make a comfortable place for their friends. We see great mercies extended to the elderly and infirm and bereaved. We see the humble children of God evil spoken against falsely for righteousness sake. We see the dear ministers go against nature – in great weakness, fear and trembling – as they enter the stand to speak the glorious gospel of the Son of God in the power of God. We see the love that flows down the cheeks in tears of joy as they greet one another. Surely these are the children of God who have been given a desire to follow Jesus, to deny themselves, and to take up their cross of suffering and service daily along with their brethren, and by doing so, are found following Him in truth.

Written in love and
in hope of eternal life.
Elder J. B. Farmer 7-30-2004

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

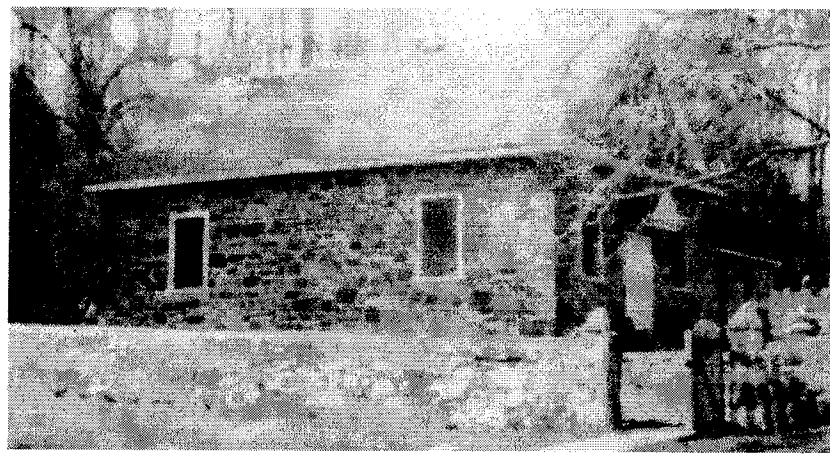

LONDON TRACT LANDENBURG, PA

LONDON TRACT

LONDON TRACT is located in Southern Chester County, Pa., just East of Route 896 and North of Newark, Delaware, to the edge of the Circle that defines the Northern boundry of Delaware, at the intersection of Bank, Yeatman Station and Indian town roads. London Tract is surrounded by a State Park known as the White Clay Creek Preserve.

The Dupont Company gave 1700 acres to the wilderness park.

The improvements include the stone meetinghouse within the walled cemetery, the nearby brick sexton's house and backyard small barn and stable, and in the middle of the intersection the raised platform where the ladies mounted horses to ride side- saddle. The meeting house was erected on or before 1729 and is thus the oldest surviving building to have been used by the Old Baptists. The improvements are rare examples of Colonial Architecture in a secluded and enchanting rural setting. The site has been recognized by the Pennsylvania Historical Commission and by the Chester County Historical Society as being the location of the MINGUANNAN INDIAN TOWN where William Penn purchased lands from the Indians between the Susquehanna and Delaware Rivers in 1683.

London Tract was and remains important to the history and heritage of Pennsylvania, Chester County, and in particular to the Old School Baptists in America. London Tract was a land grant to early welsh settlers who came to the region in the first decade of the eighteenth century. The London Tract Church was finally set apart from the Welsh Tract Church (in Newark, Delaware) in 1780.

The Church became extinct in the mid-1930's with the death of the last member. London Tract was a member of the Delaware Association.

London Tract served active Baptist Congregations for over 200 years. The proposal to flood the site with a reservoir to supply water to Newark was effectively defeated by a very active community that recognized the significance of London Tract.

Today, London Tract is the centerpiece of the White Clay Creek Preserve. The meetinghouse is used by the park rangers for wildlife exhibits and lectures. Its believed that a local historical group is attempting to restore the old sexton's house. There is reason to believe London Tract will survive a useful purpose. May all the praise be given the Lord and the work of the Holy Spirit.

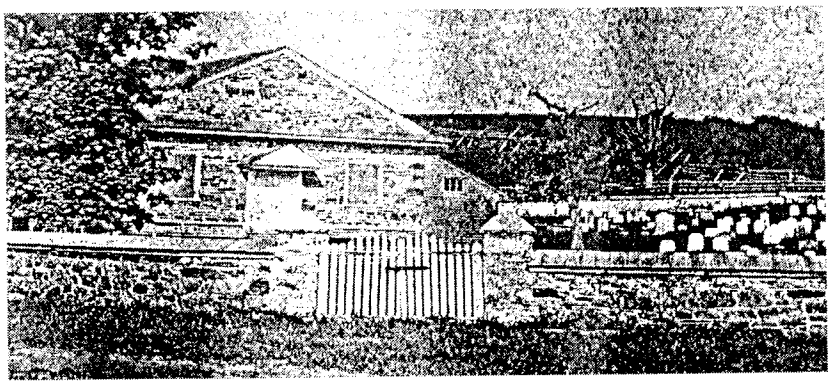

LONDON TRACT BAPTIST CHURCH

Mary Marshall Russell Little, a member, standing by the tree. (Presented by I. Lowell & Edith (Russell) Dutton, Dec. 25, 1939).

The early records of the "Welsh Tract" Church were written in the Welsh language and are said to be quite complete, but most of the early records of the London Tract outpost Church appear to have been lost. According to legend a domestic in one of the church's prominent, families used the pages of its record book to light the fire on cold mornings and the history of the church for a long period is now a complete blank. There appears to be no doubt, however, that services have been held continuously there for more than 230 years.

The records that have survived indicate the the London Tract Church became an independent congregation in 1780. One of its pastors, the Rev. Thomas Barton who died in 1870, served the congregation for 50 years. In 1863 the present church building was remodeled and the entrance changed, and in 1879 the graveyard was enlarged by the purchase of additional land, the present time services are held in the quaint old building once each month.

The graveyard has long been famous for its "ticking grave." The caretaker who keeps the property looking neat and well kept is frequently called upon by visitors from afar who have heard legend of the "ticking grave" to point it out to them. He shows them a tomb stone apparently of native stone lying flat, flush with the adjoining sod. They invariably get down and place an ear to the stone, and those with the most vivid imaginations often declare that they can distinctly hear the "tick, tick."

For those with less vivid imaginations arrangements have sometimes been made to improve their perception by hiding an alarm clock near the grave. In some cases, according to reports, this has had a surprising effect in banishing skepticism. In one instance, however, the man who placed the clock forgot to turn off the alarm which went off while one visitor had his ear to the stone. Fearful that it might be Gabriel blowing his horn, the visitor jumped to his feet, suddenly, expecting to see unprecedented ghostly developments occur all around him.

Picture of church and graveyard along with brief history furnished by Brother Eugene Osborne.

ARTICLES

I have a few thoughts on my mind concerning my travel here on earth, if the Lord would direct my mind for a few minutes and bring them to my remembrance. I was given a hope in Christ Jesus at an early age but wasn't able to confess it for many years later, but it was still there all of that time and I'm glad that whatsoever God does is forever. Nothing can be put to it nor anything taken from it and God does it that we should fear Him. In 1954 I married my wife, Rowena, neither

one of us were church members or never attended church regular. But somewhere in the early 60's it got on my mind, and it wouldn't leave my mind, to join the church. I felt like (and still do) that God has a people in every nation, kindred, tongue and people and surely he has his people where he purposes for them to be or he could bring them to one group very easy so God's people are a scattered people on the face of this earth.

I went though a lot, tried to pray a lot, Lord if you want me in a church show me which one you want me to join, because I can go to any of them and tell what I feel like you have done for me and they will accept me as a member; but if you want me in a church, if it's your will, show me which one to go to. If not deceived, God heard that prayer and answered it. In 1966 on Easter Sunday I asked for a Home and they accepted me as a member. The following Sunday I was baptized somewhere about 2:00 o'clock. My wife was baptized that same day about 2:00 o'clock into another church. For many years I went to church by myself and my family went with her and I never did question them and I never did beg them to go with me. I believe everybody should be satisfied within his own mind. So she never did argue the doctrine or what I believed, we just never talked about it. She went to her church and I went to mine. Because I knew I couldn't open her eyes to see the way I did, and I knew she couldn't open mine to see the way she did. So we were both honest in where we went and all of that. So many years I worked twelve hours a day during that time barbering, six days a week a lot of times and on Sunday I'd get up and go to the Old Baptist Church and she'd go the Missionary Church.

Many years later, several years later, my great granddaughter was born, Amanda, and when she got big enough she wanted to go to church with Pap-pa. Just me and her would go and she would set there beside of me and when I would start preaching and walking the floor she would get me by the hand and she'd walk along with me. So she asked me if she could sing a song and I said "is it a church song" and she said "yes". She would get up and sing "Jesus Loves Me". The last time she tried to sing it, she choked up and just dropped her little head and stood there and looked down toward the floor. She raised her head back up and she said "I just want to tell you that I love you". I believe that is when God began that good work in her heart and I believe there is a scripture that says ***"He that began a good work in you, He will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ".***

So quite a while after that, I have this farm rented and a lot of it is up hill and down hill and me and her was walking the fence one day and we was climbing this mountain, she looked around (she was in front of me) and she looked around and she said Pap-pa tell me about Jesus.

Well, if God called me to do anything it is to tell people about Jesus, that he loved his people, that he died for them and his blood redeemed them. So we sat down on top of the mountain, and I told her how it was with me. That I tried everything that come into my mind, and I tried everything that anybody had ever told me you had to do to be saved by the Grace of God, and I said "it all failed" and I become a beggar. I began to look to Jesus for His mercy and asking Him to have mercy on me, and I explained to her that He came into this world to seek and to save that which is lost, and that there is no other name given among men whereby we should be saved but the name of the darling Son of God. That was the day before Thanksgiving. The next day, on Thanksgiving morning, she took a tape player out (she lived with my daughter) and my daughter was watching her cause she felt like the Lord was dealing with her. (Course I had never said a word about what we had already experienced). So she goes out in the yard and she sits down with that tape player a playing a song *As I Went Down to the River to Pray, studying about that good ole way , good Lord show me the Way.* I'm sure there's some out there that remembers a time when they wanted God to show them the way cause Jesus is the Way. So she started crying and then she got down on her little knees and she went to calling on God and God Almighty lifted that burden from her and gave her a hope in Christ Jesus.

So they come up to the house for Thanksgiving dinner and I was sitting in the living room and she walks by me and goes into another room and sits down. I get up and follow her in there and she looked up at me and said "Pap-pa, I'm alright now". She said " I want you to baptize me". So shortly after that she joined the church at Dotson Creek Primitive Baptist Church and I baptized her. Since then, my daughter joined the church. Since then, my granddaughter (the little girl's mother) joined the church.

So our God works in mysterious ways His wonders to perform. He does His will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay His hand. But, I'm thankful for the grace of God, I'm thankful for the love of God, cause there's never been a weapon formed any stronger than the love of God it has a drawing power. Jesus said ***"no man can come unto me except the father which sent me draw him and I will in no wise cast out"***, so love is a drawing power. I remember when I first started going and attending these Old Baptist churches, that sometimes they would be singing when I'd get there. I'd stop out in the yard and that singing was so sweet you could feel a drawing power. God's love a drawing me to the church, and I want to say this, I've never regretted following Jesus down into the River of Jordan, down into a liquid

grave showing forth His death, burial and His resurrection. He's our leader, He's our teacher, "the same one that anoints you will teach you"; the scripture says, and I'm thankful for that. It seems like that God's people are linked together kindly like a chain. I remember when I asked for a home in the church there was two more come up there when they was shaking hands with me and joined the church one of them were in his eighties. I'm just thankful that God still adds to the church daily such as should be saved. No one can add himself, but God can. On the Day of Pentecost there was about three thousand souls added to the church and were added to the church daily such as should be saved, them that was pricked in their heart and cried out and said ***"men and brethren what can I do"***. They didn't feel that way before the Holy Ghost came down and the Spirit quickened them but now they are not satisfied. So now they asked the question ***"men and brethren what can we do"***? Peter said ***"repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus for the remission of sin for the promise is unto you, it's to your children, it's to all that's afar off, even to as many as the Lord God shall call"***. No one can go without that call first. Without the drawing power, the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

I just thought that I would share this with the little children of God scattered abroad. God is still God. He said ***"I am God, I change not"***. He said ***"I am God, therefore ye son's of Jacob are not consumed"*** He's still God. He's never changed. The way that God manifested his love on the Day of Pentecost before sinners, before mourners, is the same way that God manifests his Grace to them today by the appearance of Jesus Christ like he appeared to Saul on the road to Damascus and brought forth that change and he became a new creature in Christ Jesus. Old things passed away and behold all things were made new to him. He was now a new creature, he was now a spiritual child of God, been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.

So, I want to say this, If there's anybody out there that their companion don't believe like they do and don't go to an Old Baptist church, don't persuade them, be patient with them, look to God, He's our leader The wife now goes with me to these meetings around home. She's not able to travel, to ride too far but she goes, she helps us sing and there never was a time when I was getting ready to go to an Association but what she didn't lay my clothes out on the bed. I thank God for her and believe that God joined us together a long time ago; and He said ***"whatsoever God joins together, let no man put asunder"***. I don't believe that man can put asunder what God Almighty joined together. But anyway, just wanted to share that with you.

I love you. Someday it will all be over here. I'm 73 years old, I've experienced a lot of pain in this life but I've never suffered like Jesus Christ did when he died for us, when he laid down his life for us. He said ***"I have power to lay it down, I have power to take it again, this commandment have I received of my father."***

In Bonds of Love
Elder D. R. Cabbage

VOICES OF THE PAST

Article 9 of *Signs of the Times'* "PROSPECTUS" says: "That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers – that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God."

The purpose of this Article 9 is to briefly state the position of the SIGNS relative to the members, ministers, and rule of the Church of Christ. We pray God to enable us to more fully define the term, BAPTIZED BELIEVERS, in this treatise. We are deeply impressed of the necessity of this endeavor because of so many varied and conflicting opinions confusing our people this day on the subject of VALID BAPTISM. Lack of information often causes misunderstanding. Misunderstanding begets confusion. Confusion leads to errors. Errors often results in strife. Strife breeds hatred. Hatred breeds malicious actions. Malicious actions cause divisions. Divisions in churches result in each faction declaring null and void all actions of others. For this cause the Lord removes *candlesticks* and *spues* churches and ministers *out of His mouth.* We desire to carefully examine this vital subject and consider prevalent questions.

Primitive Baptists are careful relative to the mode or manner of baptism; that is, the method in which the act is performed. Proper qualifications of the person receiving baptism is important. The administrator of the ordinance of baptism must be properly authorized before the baptism could be considered valid. Proper ceremony connected with this act is worthy of consideration. Different elements are mentioned in the Scriptures in connection with baptism; so, we must ascertain when *water* is the element under consideration. We want to reconcile the expression: "One baptism", in Ephesians 4:5, and "The doctrine of baptisms", in Hebrews 6:2. We shall define the word, *baptism.*

The shortest and most comprehensive definition of the word from which baptism is derived is: *To dip.* This *dipping* includes casting down, submerging, and raising up. When this process is followed it is rightly called *baptism.* The administrator puts his subject into the element, causes this element to completely

engross, and then raise the subject up. There is always a change in status by the subjects being baptized with the baptism spoken of in the Scriptures. We shall now take up the baptisms which are administered by the Holy Ghost in face of this definition.

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" To sum this up, it means that we were baptized into the *death* of Jesus Christ, being chosen in Him. It means that we who were chosen in Him, were in Him, while He was dying, engrossed in death, and raised up in Him from death. The changed status was that Jesus having been cast down and engulfed in suffering and death arose to die no more. The changed status of His people who were in Him was; - the dying, the death, and the raising of Jesus from death, made certain eternal life for all who were in Him. No man can perform this baptism of which Paul speaks. Yet, Paul uses this baptism to show what water baptism portrays. Paul speaks of the baptism in Jesus' *death,* which was two thousand years ago, to preface a baptism of the present day. Paul further reasons: *"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from death by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."*

Water baptism is the "Likeness" of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul emphasizes that this baptism is but ONCE. Then he adds: *"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (v. 11)* When you obey from the heart that *form* of doctrine you become free from sin to become the servants of righteousness. The carnal man is a servant of lust. This man has no knowledge of the law, and is alive without it. God causes His Holy law to be written in the mind and heart of this carnal man. This servant of carnality has been thus brought under the dominion of the law, consequently he tries to be a *servant of the law.* His failure in every attempt to serve the law makes him to know that he is in every case a *servant of sin* because he has disobeyed the holy law. This *servant of sin* despairs of life to such extent that his soul faints. (What a terrible death!) Sin has reigned unto death. The spirit of grace and truth raises this servant of sin from death to become a *servant of our Lord Jesus Christ* who accomplished the law for us, and died for us! The killing and making alive is a baptism God administers.

God administers the *baptism of repentance of heart.* Repentance means turning. If we were immersed in repentance and left there, we would forever be turning in a circle. The godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto salvation need not to

be repented of according to 2 Cor. 7:10. There is a turning from error to truth, from darkness to light, from law to Gospel: from which there is no need of further turning.

John *preached* the baptism of repentance, and baptized in water all who gave evidence that they had been given repentance by the Lord. He would not baptize those who came to him for baptism unless they brought forth the evidence that they had repented. See Luke 3:7-8. John was a qualified judge of the ones worthy of water baptism. The administrator is the Spirit not man in the expression: ***"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body..."*** (I Cor. 12:13) These baptisms that God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost performs are essential unto eternal Life. Water baptism is the only baptism that is to be performed by man as the administrator. This baptism is essential unto obedience as it is *the* answer to a *good* conscience toward God. Scriptural water baptism changes the classification of the one baptized. Before baptism one is classed with those who *"walked according to this world"*. After baptism one is classed with *"fellow- citizens with the saints, and of the household of God". (Eph. 2)* Paul was told to, *"Purify thyself with them." (Acts 21:24)* This was necessary because of so many misrepresentations concerning Paul which had caused the Jews to be very angry with him. The actions and explanation of Paul in response to this request did not make him more pure to himself or God; but it did make him more pure in the sight of the Jews. The sins they had against him were washed away. While in the process of telling his experience in order to abate the anger of the Jews, Paul quoted Ananias: ***"Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."*** The water baptism *purified* Paul in the sight of the brethren whom he had before persecuted. Before baptism he persecuted Jesus Christ. It took baptism to wash away the accusation of persecution of Jesus Christ and bring him into a new status as a proclaimer of Jesus Christ.

John, the Baptist, and Jesus, the Saviour, were both named by the angel Gabriel. Both had miraculous births in that one was born of a virgin; the other was born to a barren woman well stricken in years. John was filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb. John was termed by Jesus as "More than prophet." John had the authority from Heaven to baptize with water. Jesus was sent to baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. John instituted water baptism and had no authority to baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Jesus did not baptize with water but submitted to baptism of John in water, making manifest that John had this special authority. John was the first preacher in the gospel dispensation.

Facing the fact that a great ma-

jority of professed Christians of this age consider that a little water sprinkled or poured upon a person constitutes baptism, it becomes necessary to point out a few expressions of Scripture that prove otherwise. One who has never heard of baptism can take the New Testament, begin reading, soon simple language will convince the reader of proper mode. The first chapter in which baptism is mentioned is 3rd. chapter of Matthew. Verse 16 says: ***"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water."*** This statement would simply prove that Jesus himself was *in the water* when He was baptized. The reader will find in the second book of the New Testament, ***Mark 1:5, "...and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins."*** The simple expression, *In the river of Jordan,* convinces the reader that the baptism was performed in the river, not by a little water taken from the river. Mark says, ***"And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit Like a dove descending upon Him."*** This shows simply that the baptism was *in Jordan,* the river, and that He came up out of the water. John 3:23 says, ***"And John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salem, because there was much water there, and they came and were baptized."*** Why the necessity of *much water?* The unprejudiced reader would by now know that the ones John baptized were in the river at a place in the river where there was more water than at other places of the same river. According to these expressions much water is necessary to perform baptism. As Philip and the eunuch were riding along in the chariot, ***"they came unto a certain water."*** This must have been a place where there was *much water.* Enough water for both of them, Philip and the eunuch, to go down into the water, Philip to baptize the eunuch, and both of them to come up out of the water.

Let us quote acts 8:38-39: ***"and he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing."*** We have already quoted Romans 6:4 elsewhere in this treatise which shows baptism to include *burial.* The person uninformed of the meaning of the word *baptize,* would gather the meaning of it by the time he read the New Testament to include the 6th chapter of Romans. We now understand that baptism in water means that the one doing the baptizing takes the one to be baptized down into much water, buries

him in water, raises him up out of the watery grave, and brings him completely out of it by bringing him to the shore. Sprinkling or pouring a little water upon a subject is not Scriptural Baptism. The administrator really baptizes part of his finger, or hand, by dipping it into the water. He does not baptize the subject upon whom the water is sprinkled or poured. Burying one in water is not baptism until the buried is raised up. Baptism pictures the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We shall next consider the question, Who is qualified to be baptized?

Scriptures plainly show that John baptized persons who confessed their sins, brought forth evidence worthy of repentance, and professed belief in Jesus Christ the Saviour. The same qualifications are necessary now. Last Sunday afternoon I led a brother down into the water and baptized him. My ceremony was something like this: ***"Upon confession of your sins and your admission that you cannot save yourself from this condition in any sense by your own merit; and, upon confession of your faith in Jesus Christ being the complete and perfect Saviour of His people; and upon the evidence of your trust in Jesus Christ, your perfect Saviour; and, upon expression of your desire to follow the commandments of Jesus Christ, depending upon Him for imputed strength and, in obedience to the command of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ: - I baptize you, Brother, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."*** As I raised him up I concluded the ceremony with, "Amen". This Is the longest baptismal ceremony I have ever spoken. This is not a model ceremony but it does give in essence the requirements of one qualified for baptism.

We next refer to Acts, 2nd chapter, 37th verse, to show that those who were qualified to be baptized were first, "Pricked in their heart." They were undoubtedly terribly upset by these pricking sensations caused by the working of the Holy Ghost. Peter's sermon had brought condemnation to their hearts. The last words of Peter's sermon must have pierced them sharply. ***"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." (Acts 2:36)*** I have wondered if their thoughts were: I crucified Him! I crucified Him! What Guilt No wonder they said, ***"Men and brethren, what shall we do?"*** They had undergone such remorse in their hearts toward themselves for having part in such terrible crime! It did not take an altar call to entice them to respond. The Holy Ghost pricking their hearts with condemnation and guilt of the crucifixion of Jesus was enough to make them ask the question What shall we do?

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized, everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Scholarly men fed by pride have argued over the term, *for the remission of sins,* used in this expression which *greatly* confuses the readers and hearers. Let us look to ***Matthew 27:24; "When Pilot saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it."*** He washed his hands in the presence of the people there to prove his abhorence of the crucifixion of Jesus. This act of washing his hands in water in the presence of this people with the expression, ***"I am innocent of the blood of this just person,"*** cleared Pilate in the sight of the people The people responded, ***"...His blood be on us, and on our children." (v. 25)*** These people who were pricked in heart on the day of Pentecost, as well as all of us who feel that our sins crucified this Jesus, are, and were, willing to *do anything* to prove our sorrow for such crime. They, as well as we, respond to that command: Repent, be baptized, save yourselves from this untoward generation: calling upon the Lord.

First, these were pricked in heart by the Holy Ghost. Next, their cases were presented before men and brethren. Thirdly, they wished to know what to do. Next, they received special instructions consisting of definite commands, promises of gracious gifts of God, the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost; testimonies, exhortations of many words; all added up to: - ***"Save yourselves from this untoward generation."*** Fifthly: ***"They that gladly received his word were baptized."*** Sixthly, they were added to the Church. This is the order of procedure which is given in the second chapter of Acts. This proves that one must be a *Baptized Believer* before becoming a member of the Church. We have no Scriptural evidence that this order has ever been changed.

We next consider: *Who is a Believer?* ***"And when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Acts 8:12)*** We ask, what was Philip's subject on this occasion? We read *Acts 8:5;* ***"Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached CHRIST unto them."*** *We read again in the same chapter of Philip preaching to the eunuch:* ***"Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." (v. 35)*** When the eunuch asked, ***"See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? Phillip said, if thou believest with all thine heart,***

thou mayest." The eunuch answered, *"I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."* This testimony was sufficient to satisfy Philip that the eunuch was a *believer.* It was enough to prove that he was a proper subject for baptism. The case of the eunuch's baptism gives proof that the baptism may be administered before taking the matter up with the church. Of course the church must be consulted before one could become a member of a certain church. He must be baptized before a church could consider him as a member. According to the scriptures we have no precept given which necessitates one subscribing to a list of doctrinal theological ideas before one could be baptized. A true believer in Jesus Christ the Saviour, plus a desire to be baptized is sufficient. A proper administrator who is properly ordained and set apart by a presbytery, is qualified to preach the gospel and baptize believers. If one is not qualified to properly judge who the true believers in Jesus Christ the Saviour are, he should not be *set apart* by a presbytery to preach the gospel and baptize believers. We shall quote a portion of *Church Covenant* as recorded in "Hassell's History of the Church of God," page 695: ***"Forasmuch as Almighty God by His grace, has been pleased to call us (whose names are underneath subscribed) out of darkness into His marvelous light, and all of us have been regularly baptized upon profession of our faith in Christ Jesus, and have given up ourselves to the Lord, and to one another..."*** This quotation shows that in the 18th century that *the baptism was based upon profession of their faith in Christ Jesus.* It shows that they were baptized before constituting themselves into a church by covenant. These were already baptized when they composed this covenant. The specifics in this covenant was by the mutual consent of the members. Mutual agreement is necessary on many things in order that brethren may agreeably walk together in church capacity. Because of the many and varied opinions expressed by professed Christians relative to *faith in Christ Jesus;* it need be that we clarify our position upon this.

A mere assent to the fact that they believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God is not sufficient proof that they believe in him. I must first be convinced that an inquirer does not have faith in himself to save himself from his sins confessed. My reasoning is that the person who thinks he can merit salvation does not actually feel the need of salvation. Next, I must be convinced of his vehement desire for salvation. Then, I want to know whether or not he has been made to trust in Jesus Christ only for salvation from his sins. I want to be further persuaded that his desire is to keep the commandments of Jesus Christ. I want to be convinced that he looks only to Jesus Christ

to strengthen him to perform works of righteousness. Lastly, I want evidence that he has the God-given, God pleasing faith without which it is impossible to please him: ***"for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. 11:6)*** Upon satisfactory evidence of these facts, I gladly baptize anyone in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and leave it to the judgment of the church concerning their membership. We shall conclude this installment on Believer's Baptism by quoting the last paragraph of the last *editorial* prepared by Elder Gilbert Beebe as recorded on page 941 of "Hassell's Church History."

"In more than three score years of our labors in the gospel ministry we have never demanded or required of any candidate for baptism that they should sign any pledge to adhere to any other standard of faith or practice than that which is given in the Scriptures. We have said to them, ***"If thou believest in the Lord Jesus Christ with all thy heart, thou mayest."*** After hearing from them a satisfactory relation of what we believe to be a genuine experience of the new birth, we have usually asked them if they believe the doctrine and order held and preached by the Old or Primitive Baptist, so far as they understand it, and if their experience is in harmony with it. Upon receiving an affirmative reply, we bid them welcome to the ordinance, and hold ourselves ready, if need be in the same hour of the night or of the day, to administer that sacred ordinance. We know of no divine authority for delaying the administration for a more convenient season, or to first bury a father, or take leave of those we are to leave behind us. As every one who is born from above, and who loves the precious Saviour, is commanded to take his yoke, bear his cross and follow Him,and as baptism is the first act of obedience of the Heavenborn child, no other duty or religious privilege can be in order until this is performed.

May the Lord bless this attempt to your edification. Amen.

ELDER E. J. LAMBERT
Reprint-from "Signs" 1968

THINK.

"THEN they that feareth the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name."- Mal. iii. 16.

There are times when this Scripture has afforded me some comfort, especially the very last clause, for that seems to embrace or include me. Yes, even me, who am not able to speak as others

do, but feel that I am made to think upon his name, that name which has all power in heaven and on earth. I might also say under earth, for is there any place that he is not, to whom alone might dominion and power be ascribed. Surely there are times when it is most sweet when enabled to meditate upon these things and I to have a view (although in small degree) of his might and majesty, to know something of his most holy character and glorious attributes, but these things are only known as he is pleased by the light of his Spirit shining in the heart to reveal to us, and that same light that makes known unto us something of his holy character and divine perfection also shows us something of our own vileness and imperfection; and oh what a contrast, how infinitely great the difference, even to the limited view we have of these things. But I trust my God has made known to me that I am altogether vile, and have been made to cry out, Unclean, unclean! and have no power to cleanse myself. This truth we never want to lose sight of, nor to forget the hole of the pit from whence we were digged; but we know that our own heart is treacherous and deceitful and desperately wicked, and it will not do to depend upon, but if kept it will not be by our own strength, which is only weakness, but it must be alone by the power of God, which we know to be sufficient. He alone can keep us from idolatry (giving to the creature that which belongs to the Creator, which we all are naturally inclined to do), but let this be our desire, that he keep us from denying him and claiming that for ourselves which does not belong to us; that is, the ability to do or not do, which my own experience teaches me is untrue, and my understanding of the Scripture the same. I can do that which is good and well-pleasing in my Master's sight only as he is pleased to work in me. If I have ever done one truly good, unselfish act it was, only as the love of Christ constrained me, and the only cause I know of that I have not gone to the same excess in sin as some others have, is because of restraining grace. If there is any difference in my nature from others, I do not know it, all being children of wrath. The only difference is what grace makes them; to grace all the glory belongs. Then, knowing these things, how very wicked it would be on my part to claim for myself that which I know does not belong to me (power to do good if I see fit and proper to do it), thereby robbing God of his glory. Will a man rob God? The question is asked and answered by God himself. (See Mal. iii. 8.) But God is not mocked. If we sow to the flesh we shall of the flesh reap corruption, and when we undertake to walk by the light of the spark of the fire of our own kindling this shall we have at God's hand: we shall lie down in sorrow. Then how vain to

claim anything of ourselves, who are nothing, less than nothing, and vanity. But how good it is when our minds are led away from the vanity of the flesh, and the utter vileness and weakness of the same, and look alone to that God who has all power, and has created all things for his own glory, who is the only all-wise Creator, and supreme Ruler of the universe, controlling and governing all things after the counsel of his own will, working in his people that which is good and well-pleasing in his sight. He works and none can hinder, and I know that unless he works in me all is vain, for without him I cannot do anything. This truth I never want to lose sight of, that he alone can keep me, and that he alone is my Savior, now, henceforth and forever. I love to think of him, and rejoice in him, having no confidence in the flesh, knowing that if we live after the flesh we die, but if through the Spirit we do mortify the deeds of the body we live. Let us not forget that it is through or by the Spirit that this is done. Then to God, the Spirit, all praise is due, and I love to think of it this way, and right here I want to quote from the apostle Paul to his beloved brethren at Philippi that which has appeared beautiful to me : *"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things."* But this I can only do as I am enabled by him whose thoughts and ways are as far above my thoughts and ways as the heavens are above the earth.

Brother Dodson, I will mail what I have written to you, not for the purpose of it being published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, of which you are an associate editor, for I consider that the limited space in the paper should be taken up, with the writings of those who are better enabled to write of the honor of our King than I am, and also to the good and comfort of his subjects, so this is for your perusal. I have written to ease my own mind, with hope that it may not be a burden to you to read my imperfect writing; you being my beloved pastor, and knowing my weakness as you do, I feel assured of the charity you possess, and I make free to you some of my mind and thoughts.

From one who trusts he has been made to love the Lord, and to be a lover of good men, made good only as the love of God has been shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Spirit that has been given unto them.

Your little brother,
MARTIN D. FISHER.

CHARITY.

FOR some cause my mind has been directed to the word "charity", I have decided to pen a few thoughts as they occur to me. If I have the right conception of the word "charity" ninety percent of the people have the wrong view. The Apostles often use the word in their writings. Paul said in 1 Corinthians xiii. Yet *"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I have become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up."* Faith, hope and charity, and the greatest of these is charity (love). It has been for a number of years the idea among worldly religionists that charity is a gift bestowed upon persons, and for a long time there have been institutions organized for the purpose of taking care of donations named as charity, and they have officers of different ranks to take care of the funds, and of course these officers have to be paid, and now it is a custom to give of their abundance a small amount for charitable purposes, not knowing what person or persons their gift is going to benefit. But listen to Paul: *"And though I bestow all [not part] my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."* Now compare Paul's statement with the general idea, and note the difference. If he gives all his goods, and even his body, to be burned, and has not charity (love) it profiteth nothing. Charity means love, and where no love is there is no real charity. It has been a practice among the Old Primitive Baptists in all ages to look after their afflicted members, not through institutions, but according as the Lord hath prospered them. (See 1 Cor. xiv. 1-4.) I can well remember back in the latter seventies and eighties, on each Saturday the pastor would during conference make an inquiry as to the welfare of the brethren. His question was: Brethren, is there anyone in need? Anyone sick, needing attention? If so, let it be known. I have witnessed several times some one would rise and address the moderator and brethren with, Brother or sister so-and-so is sick, or had some misfortune. Then the moderator would direct the body to get together and take steps for their relief. The deacons were admonished to do this duty. No contributions were begged from the world, no funds as charity to be sent to some charitable institution, but sent direct to the one in need. Charity doth not behave itself unseemly, rejoiceth not in iniquity; beareth all things, and never faileth. Love is of God, and he that loveth is born of God. So we may safely say true charity is as much the fruit of God's Spirit as is love, peace and hope, for all true love is the outgrowth of that

indwelling love of God, and the performance of any of the commands as are laid down by Jesus and his apostles is only evidence of that love of God shed abroad in the heart. Charity is not, and cannot be, only a custom just handed down for generations, but is the direct command handed down by Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. Where there is no love there is no charity, and I have often said love is the strongest and most profound word in use, for God is love, and he hath loved us (those whom he foreknew) with an everlasting love. Yes, those he loved in eternity he still loves, and will love in time and all eternity, manifesting his love to them, causing them to cry, Abba, Father, and also to love one another; for there is no greater evidence of a true child of God than the expressions of love one toward another. Love will let itself be known, for by the standard of honest weights and measurements a true manifestation of God's love is made manifest, for said the apostle John, *"But whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"* Well, if charity is love, and one claims to be a lover of God, how can we know it unless there is some manifestation of that love by its fruits, John said, My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

Brethren, I have written this in fear. I hope to be remembered by all when at the throne of grace.

I am, I hope, your brother in hope, and in afflictions,

J. B. BOWDEN.
WARING, Texas, April 4,1923.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 2004

Lessie Sladky, NC 5.00
Joann Fletcher, MD 25.00
Buford Thompson, VA 5.00
Glenna Link, TN 5.00

ST. MATTHEW 18:1-5.

At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

And Jesus called a little child unto them, and set him in the midst of them,

And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.

OBITUARIES

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

We hopefully bow in humble submission to the will of our merciful and kind Heavenly Father, who works all things after the council of his will. Our Heavenly Father saw fit to call from our midst Sister Gracie E. Mc Clure on October 8, 2004. Sister Gracie was born June 7, 1917, making her stay on this earth 87 years and 4 months. She was afflicted and in ill health many years, which prevented her from attending meetings, She went to sleep in her sleep, now waiting for that great day, when Christ shall return, with a great shout and unite her spirit and body and be made like Christ's glorious body. She had a hope that she was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and her name was written in the Lamb's Book of Life. ***"Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they rise."*** Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead, Our deepest sympathy and prayers goes out to her family. May God in his wisdom and mercy send to them that great comforter to give unto them comfort, bind up their broken hearts and ease their pain with his everlasting love, ***"He will swallow up death and victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces." "Oh death where is thy sting, oh grave where is thy victory ."*** She was married to Okey K. McClure (Deacon) for 52 years who preceeded her in death. To this marriage was born 3 daughters and 2 sons who mourn her passing, also 17 grandchildren, 20 great grandchildren, and 15 great great grandchildren, two brothers and 1 sister, Sister Gracie had her membership moved to Fairview Primitive Baptist Church when it was built in 1963. Services were conducted at Curry's Funeral Home, Alum Creek,WV. by Elder Ronald K. Crouch, Harold R. Johnson, and Brother William A. Johnson. She was laid to rest beside her husband at Midkiff Cemetery, Sumerco,WV. Written by request of the church.

Resolved 1 copy for church records, 1 copy for her family, and 1 to be sent to the Signs of the Times.

Elder Ronald K, Crouch,
Moderator
Elder Harold R. Johnson,
Co. Moderator
Brother William A. Johnson,
Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

Breathe from the gentle South, O Lord,
And cheer me from the North;
Blow on the treasures of thy word,
And call the spices forth!

I wish, thou knowest, to be resigned,
And wait with patient hope;
But hope delayed fatigues the mind,
And drinks the spirits up.

Help me to reach the distant goal;
Confirm my feeble knee,
Pity the sickness of a soul
That faints for love of thee.

Cold as I feel this heart of mine,
Yet since I feel it so,
It yields some hope of life divine,
Within, however low.

I seem forsaken and alone,
I hear the lion roar,
And every door is shut but one,
And that is mercy's door.

There, till the dear Deliverer come,
I'll wait with humble prayer;
And when he calls his exile home,
The Lord shall fine me there.

Newton.

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EDITORIAL

"...who is my neighbor." Luke 10:29

Elder J. B. Farmer

Here is a great question that was raised and was answered by the same man about two thousand years ago. I am made to believe that this question is also raised and answered in our minds and hearts by the Holy Spirit, if we are the children of God. The true answer to the question ***"who is my neighbor?"*** is hidden from all whose names were not written in the Lamb's Book of Life from the foundation of the world – the ones called ***"wise and prudent"*** by Jesus Christ, the Son of God. But it is revealed to the ones that were loved with an everlasting love – the ones called ***"babes"*** by Him. May God give us understanding of His truth.

The man who asked the question so long ago was a lawyer. In those days a lawyer was a religious man who spent his time trying to interpret the legal scriptures. He was one who tried to give practical applications for others to follow as they endeavored to keep the law of commandments. No doubt, he labored over hard questions daily, in order to try to do his duty as a lawyer. At some point, this lawyer was given to know that there was such a thing as eternal life, which was to be received by inheritance. And he was given a desire to obtain that life. So he tested Jesus by asking Him this question. ***"Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"***

When the ***"babes"*** of God are brought to the place where they are given a desire to know the truth, and given a desire for it to be applied to themselves, they must have answers to their deepest questions. They must be stripped from all self-righteousness and confidence in the flesh, in order to really know the truth. They must be taught that there is nothing they can do to obtain salvation, for salvation is alto-

gether of the Lord. Any idea that they can do something to gain the favor of God must be killed.

So Jesus put the question back to him saying, ***"What is written in the law? How readest thou?"*** Jesus drew from the lawyer the understanding that was hidden in his heart. He caused him to make a confession of faith. Certain things were revealed to the lawyer, I am made to believe, that he had never seen before. Things came from his mouth, which were as high above the natural man as the heaven is above the earth.

The lawyer had the written law for reference. He had the commandments, which were written on the tablets of stone. He also had the perfect law of God written upon his tender heart of flesh and in his spiritual mind. This is evident since he gave a good answer to Jesus by saying, ***"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself."***

And Jesus said to him, ***"Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live."*** Now here is where the killing comes in. The child of God is made to experience the truth for himself. He is given to try to keep the perfect commandments of God again and again. He always finds himself to be a failure. Because of this, he is made to conclude that he is a sinner. He is made to know that in the flesh there dwells no good thing. He is made to see with the apostle, that when he would do good, evil is present with him. He is made to see that he is vile according to nature. He is made to see that he is lost world without end, if his keeping the perfect law of God is the way to salvation.

The child of God is given to desire to love his neighbor as himself, in order to keep the commandment and to please God. But first, he must know who his neighbor is. Is it the man who lives next door, or one who lives in his town? Is it his relative in the flesh, or the one with whom he is friendly and comfortable? Or is it some other one? So, willing to justify himself, the lawyer said unto Jesus, ***"And who is my neighbor?"***

Jesus, in profound wisdom, and in a way of teaching, which is applicable to all generations said, ***"A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up***

his wounds, Pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves?"

The words of Jesus, God in the flesh, went way beyond the answer expected by any man. They not only revealed who was the neighbor, but went into the deep and hidden spiritual substance of the matter. Jesus, in a mystery, gave the experience of the child of God. This account bears a striking resemblance to the experience of Paul on the road to Damascus. And we are taught that Paul was singled out as a pattern or an example to all who would believe after him. Therefore, in my poor way of expressing what I have been made to believe, all of God's little ones are given to know a little of what Paul and this traveler experienced.

Here was a man that was going somewhere. He was traveling down. We know that to travel downhill is a very pleasant experience since it requires very little labor. It is easy. So it is easy to be traveling along in nature with a feeling of self-satisfaction in ones accomplishments and strengths. That one is alive in self-righteousness and confidence in the flesh. Paul said that at one time in his life he was like this. He said that he was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, he died. Paul was killed by the law.

All of a sudden, when it is least expected, trouble comes. And this trouble is of an extremely serious nature. It is a life or death struggle. When one experiences this trouble, he sees that death is upon him. He sees no way of escape. He is stripped of his raiment of self-righteousness. He is wounded in his flesh, and shown the weakness of it, and that the pains of death are upon it by the righteous law of God. And he is left half dead. The outward man is killed, but the inward man is still alive. It is made apparent to the man that the flesh is dead to righteousness – there is no goodness in his flesh. But there is still life within him. The outward man is perishing, but the inner man is renewed day by day. So there is still a little window of hope open to the child of grace by the Spirit, even when he sees himself dead in trespasses and sins.

We are made to see that no one, no matter how religious, or how perfect in his own eyes, is able to render the least bit of aid to the suffering child of God. They look upon him, and pass by on the other side. The worldly religionists cannot know the trouble experienced by the child of God. They do not know what

it is to be made to realize that one is a sinner worthy of the wrath of God, even eternal destruction. They think that the suffering of others is a direct result of sin. And they think that the suffering of others is the just reward to them. And they think that others are much more sinful than they are themselves. They are like Job's miserable comforters. They cannot help the suffering child, but only add to its misery. They can only look on the one suffering and pass on by.

But Jesus said that there was a certain Samaritan who came where the wounded traveler was, saw him and had compassion. Now we know that a Samaritan was an outcast. He was neither Jew nor Greek. He was considered a half-breed, which was thought to be worse that any other person in the world. He was thought to be so bad that no righteous person should speak to him, and surely could not touch him lest he should be defiled. Jesus was called a Samaritan by His enemies. Those who hated Him also accused Him of having a devil, or demon, and sought to kill Him. I am made to believe that the Samaritan in this account, stood for Jesus, Himself. A Man of Sorrows aquainted with grief. A Man despised by His own countrymen, and an outcast - one deemed worthy of death.

The Samaritan came to the stripped, wounded, half-dead man and had compassion upon him. So Jesus comes to the Child of God, who has been brought under the law, which is the ministration of death. The law is the schoolmaster, which brings us to Christ. Jesus sees his helpless condition, has pity, and renders aid. As the Samaritan went to him and bound up his wounds and poured in oil and wine, so Jesus comes to the aid of the half-dead child of God. He binds up his wounds with forgiveness, and pours in the oil of the Spirit, and pours in the wine, which stands for the cleansing blood of the Lamb. The Samaritan set him on his beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. Jesus, in grace and mercy, does for the wounded child what he cannot do for himself. He carries him to the inn, which I am made to believe, stands for the church, and the little one is nurtured there.

The care for the wounded one didn't end when the Samaritan left. But the Samaritan guaranteed that all the needs of the helpless one should be met until he would come again. Even so, Jesus made provisions for the child of grace, which were sufficient for all his days upon the earth and beyond. He is the Author and Finisher of our faith. He is the One who has begun a good work in you, and He shall perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ. As the Samaritan promised to come again, so Jesus promised with a promise that cannot fail. He said, ***"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you***

unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Jesus is coming back to gather His own unto Himself.

Now, what is the answer to the great question, *"who is my neighbor"?* Who was neighbor to the wounded, half-dead man? The lawyer indicated, when asked, that it was the one that showed mercy. That one who showed mercy was the Samaritan. Who is the neighbor to the broken hearted child of God? Without a doubt it is Jesus. Jesus is our neighbor - the one who showed mercy on us. When we could not help ourselves, He came to the place where we were and ministered unto us. He forgave us our sins, gave us of His Spirit, cleansed us from all unrighteousness, carried us to the church, cared for us, paid all our debts, and will come again to receive us to Himself.

Jesus gave the lawyer a command. He said, *"Go, and do thou likewise."* Here is the command from God to every true believer. They are commanded to do as He did. By the grace of God, we must show pity and mercy to one another. By the grace of God, we must lay down our lives for one another. By the grace of God, we must love one another. Jesus said, *"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man should lay down his life for his friends."* And He said, *"These things I command you, that ye love one another."* And He also said, *"Inasmuch as you have done it to one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto Me."* May God give us grace to fulfill His law of love. May we be given to walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh. May we be given grace to show mercy to one another, and to be found in Him and in His righteousness.

Written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J. B. Farmer
8-6-2004

CORRESPONDENCE

Dec. 3, 2004

My Dream

Elder Key and dear readers of the Signs:

For two or more years I have wrestled as to whether to share the following beautiful experience with my family - both naturally and spiritually.

When I awoke from this dream that morning I felt that I was standing on holy ground and I seemed to be in a daze. I waited awhile before I told my wife about this wonderful revelation which I hope was from the Lord as it seemed too much for me to fathom.

In Mal. 3:18 it relates that those that feared the Lord spake often one to another and the Lord hearkened and heard it. May this be His will in relating this experience to you. May

this book of remembrances embrace each of us that think upon His name.

Note: The natural brothers that were in the dream were Elder Julian R. Williams and J. Leland Williams.

May 20, 2002

During the night of May 16, 2002 I was given a precious dream that I want to leave in writing before I forget all of the details. Some of the dream I'm sure will never leave me.

After two months I was still trying to realize that Julian was gone from this natural life forever. In this dream I met him face to face. It seemed that he had returned from someplace, not clear in the dream as to where. I asked him where he had been and he said I love where I am now. His face was Julian but it had a beautiful shining expression. His eyes were different and good to look into. My next question to him was if I could tell his family I had seen him. He said no, not to do that. This to me meant all of this was just for me to ponder. Next, after this some people around us remarked how wonderful he looked.

We were seated on the front pew in a church. Leland, my older brother that died in 1999 appeared and sat down between us. He said I was hoping that you two would be here. I did not in this dream see his face - just heard his voice and felt his body against me as we sat together. We three were touching as we sat together and it was a feeling of reunion with my natural brothers but in a way and place I had never experienced before.

After awakening I pondered the dream. We were talking and looking natural it seemed but each had a different countenance.

I believe with all my heart that God showed me in this dream that my brothers were with Him in paradise and my vision was as looking through a glass darkly to glimpse the spiritual realm. While in the natural realm we cannot see fully the spirituality of His beauty. I am not sure of a heavenly home as I was seeing this in a natural view. Great are the mysteries of Godliness.

I'll never see those mysteries fully in this natural world but I hope I have been given a view of the glory that awaits His saints after death. While in this body of clay we cannot see God and I do not believe in natural recognition in heaven as the natural can never see spiritual until we are in the spiritual realm. When the saints see Him as He is, they will be like Him and all will be joy unspeakable and glory forever.

Your unworthy brother,
Burnell B. Williams

PSALM 119:11-12.

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Blessed art thou, O Lord: teach me thy statues.

542 Friendly Dr.
Goldsboro, NC 27530
Dec. 8, 2004

Dear Elder Terry,

Enclosed is a 1 yr. renewal and a gift for the Signs. We are blessed to have this publication that stands for the truth. God bless everyone who works so hard to keep the Signs coming to us.

We have visited Smith River and Pigg River Associations. We love you and enjoy the ministers whom we have heard preach.

In hope,
Dora Vick

December 7, 2004
Elder Wm. Hale Terry
202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, VA 24120-4403

Dear Elder Terry:

I wish to renew my subscription to the Signs Of The Times for another two years. Enclosed is my check for $50.00. Please use the remainder as you see fit.

May we thank the Lord that He has enabled you and the others associated with the Signs to continue to publish the paper for those of us who enjoy it so much.

Sincerely yours,
Charles Alders

Elder William Hale Terry
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
Signs of the Times

12/14/2004

Dear Elder Terry:

Please renew my subscription for the "Signs of The Times" for the coming year. I am enclosing a check for $30.00- $15.00 for the subscription and $15.00 for a contribution.

As I continue to read the Signs I am made to realize that it does not matter when the editorials and articles were written in time, whether it be one hundred years or just a month ago, we can read, relate to, and enjoy them regardless of when they were written. Time has not changed the doctrine that we contend for and nothing has changed with God. I am thankful that He continues to bless us with individuals, both past and present, whom are blessed to write, and individuals whom have dedicated themselves to the publishing of the Signs. I have a hope that God will continue to bless the publishing of the Signs for as long as there are brothers, sisters, and friends, whom are seeking and searching for the truth.

A brother in hope
George W. Hyslip

ARTICLES

6130 Old Cifax Road
Forest, VA 24551
Oct 14, 2004

To the Signs of the Times,

I have had the blessed privilege recently to examine an old family Bible belonging to the late Elder Henry Valentine Cole who lived in Floyd County, Virginia, near Locust Grove. This Bible is now in the possession of Elder Cole's grandaughter, Nancy Cole Leftwich of Madison Heights Virginia.

Elder Cole's parents, Fleming and Abigail Vest Cole were among the early settlers of Floyd County. His paternal great-great-grandfather was Joseph Cole, a soldier in the Revolutionary War. On Oct. 18, 1877 he married Miss Tempy Lawrence A document found in the Bible states the following: Laurel Creek Primitive Baptist Church Floyd County Va. Saturday before the fourth Sunday in July 1897 Henry Valentine Cole is liberated to go into all the world wherever the Lord may cast his lot and preach the Gospel of Christ. Amos Dickerson,Moderator, A.F. Ferguson Clerk.

Elder Cole faithfully served various Primitive Baptist Churches in the Floyd area including: Laurel Creek, Valley View and County Line and others. He was a close friend of Elder P.G. Lester who was one of the editors of the Primitive Baptist publication "Zion's Landmark".

Elder Cole was instrumental in the establishment of the Locust Grove Telephone Company and also served as it's president. He was also a well known schoolteacher in Floyd County and also served the County in the capacity of land assessor and justice of the peace. He and his wife were blessed to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary in 1928 before his death on Dec 12, 1935 at the age of 82 years.

In his family Bible Elder Cole documented a very accurate record of all the persons he baptized in the time period 1901-1925. No doubt many of the names listed have descendants still living in the Floyd County and Roanoke, Virginia area.

I have attempted to transcribe this list as accurately as I possibly could. I stand to be corrected on some of the spelling as some of it was not legible due to the age and condition of the paper.

Perhaps you would like to publish these names in some future edition of the "Signs" I am also including a photo of Elder Cole and his wife, Tempy Lawrence Cole, a memorial that Elder Cole wrote on the occasion of his mother's death in 1924 and a copy of a Circular Letter to the churches of the Smith River Association in 1897 also found in the Bible. Any or all of this you are more than welcome to publish. I hope it will be of interest to some of the readers.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve A. Everett, Forest, Va.

Elder Henry Valentine Cole and wife Tempy Lawrence Cole

A record of persons baptized by
Elder Henry Valentine Cole
1901-1925

Cole Shanks-1901
Frazier Sowers wife-1902
Austin Martin and wife-1902
Andy J. Martin's wife-1902
Cannon Smith-1902
Wilmouth Jane Conner wife of George B. Conner-1902
Carra Munsey, wife of Kyle Munsey 1902
widow Dillon (near Auburn)
Wife of Jack Peters
James Maxey
Ellen Roop wife of James Roop-June 1903
Sallie H. Phillips (a widow)-June 1903
Elzora Poff Wife of James Poff - August 4, 1904
Cannada Light-August 16, 1904
Osburn Sowers-May 26, 1907
Charles Reed-August 7, 1907
William C. Booth - May 26 1907
Charles Poff-August 11 1907
Mrs. James Lemon and Daughter Mrs Plegar-Sept 1907
Joseph Board and wife-Sept 19 1907
Miss Ida Dobyns-Oct 61907
Mrs. William H. Poff Nov 9 1907
Miss Bet tie Spangler-May 1908
H. A. Spangler-June 1908
Columbus Rakes-Nov 1908
Letcher Cole-May 1909
Noah Spangler and wife-Oct 3, 1909
Archie Sowers-Nov 1909
Mary Cole Kyle Cole's wife-Nov 1909
A Sister Willis at Salem Church-March 18, 1910
Laura 0 Board wife of Ras Board-March 271910
Pearly Cole wife of Letcher Cole -March 27, 1910
Eliza Cannady wife of Otho Cannady-1st Sunday in June 1910
Cloe Martin wife of J. T. Martin-Aug. 27 1910
Oma Board wife of Henry Board-Aug. 27, 1910
Founch Cole wife of Waller S. Cole -Aug. 27, 1910
Mrs. Conner wife of Walter Conner -Aug 27, 1910
Florence Lester wife of William Lester-June 1910
Samuel and wife-Jan 1911
Henry Board-Jan 1911
Mrs. Amelia Poff wife of Riley Poff April 8 1911
Miss Sarah Furrow-April 91911
Charles Poff's wife-July 8 1911
Giles Martin's wife-July 8 1911
Samuel Terry-July 22 1911
Samuel Nowlin-July 22 1911
S. M. Poff-July 291911
Oscar Wickman's wife-Aug 4, 1911
Vinie Mills-Aug 4, 1911

Mrs. Oscar Poff-Aug 12, 1911
Mrs. Charles Reed-Aug 12, 1911
Robert Conner and wife-June 16, 1912
Both couples baptized at Laurel Creek
Jasper Jones and wife-June 16, 1912
Mrs. Smith-June 23 1912-County Line
Sister Janie Nichols-July 14, 1912-Salem
Mary E. Poff (Wife of K. Poff)-Sept 29, 1912-Salem
Lucy Austin-Oct. 13 1912
Mande Blackwell (wife of Arthur)-March 22, 1913
Mrs. Gracie Basham-Aug. 17, 1913
R. H Bugg - Aug. 24 1913
Annie Wilson - Aug. 31, 1913
H. A. Conner and wife-Sept. 18, 1913
Joseph Clower-2nd Sunday in June 1914
Wife of Tom Trail 4th Sunday in Aug. 1914
James Ferano and wife, Abigail-2nd Sunday in June 1915
Lucy Martin-2nd Sunday in June 1915
Mrs Cynthia Booth (date not stated
Lemuel Farris and wife (date not stated)
Mrs. Poage Sept 29, 1917
Mrs. Jarrels-May 1918
Mrs Palmer-1918
Mrs. Hattie Collins (widow)-May 25, 1919
Waskie Conner and wife-July 13, 1919
Ervine Poff's wife-July 13, 1919
Mrs. James Conner and daughter, Oakey-April 1921
William Turner-April 1921 at County Line
Balard Dobyns-June 5, 1921
Joseph Justin-Aug. 14, 1921
Thomas Agee and wife-Aug. 20, 1921
the widow Aldridge-July 29, 1923 (for Pure Creek)
Mrs. Robert Smith-1923
D.W. Vest-1925
Mrs Homer Kelly-Oct 4, 1925
Dallas Young-Oct 12, 1925
Sam Poff-Oct 12, 1925
Mr.Mrs Roy Conner, Laura Conner-Nov. 8, 1925
J.D. King-Nov. 8, 1925
Mary Conner, widow of John Aaron Conner
(handwriting very shaky on last entry)

I will try to write a few lines in memory of the death of my mother Abigail Cole who died on the 8th day of Dec. 1924, at the age of 91 years and 2 months. She was a member of the Primitive Baptist church for about 68 years and had the confidence and fellowship of the church, and lived at peace among her neighbors and was always ready to make any sacrifice that she could make for their comfort. She lived a widow for 36 years. Her husband, Flemming Cole, died in the year 1888. The writer was the only child. She leaves 5 living grand children. O.F., S.W., S.L., C.R. and Minnie M. Cole and several great-grand children, and while she lived with us was old and feeble, yet we miss her and feel so sad and lonely and when we enter her room we are made to feel so keenly that we have no mother. She always tried to impress upon our minds the vital principals of morality and industry. She was called aunt Abbie by all the neighbors and was loved and respected by all so far as I was able to know.

H. V. Cole

CIRCULAR LETTER.

TO THE CHURCHES OF THE SMITH'S RIVER DISTRICT PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION--

BRETHREN: According to our custom you will expect a circular letter, and for a subject we will call your attention to Hebrews, 13th chapter, Ist verse, which reads as follows: *"Let brotherly Love continue."* Jesus says that by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another. Let brotherly love continue. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently, being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor. Love is the fulfilling of the law. We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. It seems to us that by the quotation of the apostle to let brotherly love continue ye ought to strive against everything that would hinder that brotherly love. James says: Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you. Brethren, we see many things in our brethren we don't like, but let us remember that we are in the flesh, and Paul said in my flesh dwelleth no good thing; for to will with me is present, but how to perform that which is good I find not, for the good that I would I do not, but the evil I would not that I do. Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? We groan within, and can say, like Paul, Oh, wretched man that I am, a poor sinner. Oh, my leanness, if saved saved by grace. *"Nothing in my hand I bring; simply to Thy cross I cling."* We trust, brethren, when we have these feelings that we are dead to sin; that is, dead to the-love and enjoyment in sin. We are still sinners and there is a groaning within us that was not so when we were dead in trespasses and in sins. When we were dead in trespasses and in sins there was no groaning within us, but we were satisfied, but when we were quickened by the Spirit then trouble came, and tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience and experience hope. Then we have hope that entereth into that with the vail. Then let us love one another, for love is of God, and he that loveth is born of God. Then let brotherly love continue. Now, brethren, Let us point out some plain duties and please do not get offended. We are commanded to assemble ourselves together and forsake it not. Pay attention to the word preached. Read your Bible at home to your children. Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Do not send them to Sunday school. We are to observe what is commanded. Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the Law of Christ. Visit the father-

less and widows in their affliction and keep himself unspotted from the world. Let the deacons look after the poor and exhort the brethren to their duty. Remember your pastors that watch over you and feed you with spiritual things; minister to him of your carnal things; consider his labors; how he travels over hills and mountains, through heat and cold to preach to you and you not give him a nickel. Does that look like Paul's preaching in the 9th chapter of Ist Corinthians? Does it look like feeding a flock and eating of the milk of the flock, sowing spiritual things and reaping carnal things. Is not preaching the gospel to you comforting to you in all our tribulations, building you up and strengthening you in the faith? When you grow in grace. Then remember your feeder and feed and clothe him. Then you will be blessed, for it is more blessed to give than to receive. He that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give, not grudingly nor of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver. Now, brethren, consider well what we have said, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things. Signed by order of the Association.

W. A. VIA, Clerk.
THOMAS L. ROBERTSON,
Moderator.

"If We Suffer, We Shall Also Reign with Him"

As I awakened this morning, a precious scripture was upon my mind, ***"If we suffer, ye shall also reign with Him."*** I had always thought of this scripture in an eternal setting but this morning I was given to reflect upon the infirmities I had been blessed to endure through my Lord and Saviour over the past four-and-a-half years and given to think of this time of great affliction as a time of reigning with Christ.

Through all of the suffering, I experienced a great peace and joy in my heart, being made content in whatsoever state I was. We know that this is not possible in the flesh. I also was given to reflect upon a dream I was given many years ago, if not deceived: I was in a high, lifted up place, carried to and fro; and beneath me was water, and I could not understand why I would not fall into that water, but I never did. During these past four-and-a-half years, I have certainly been carried to and fro. I endured a stroke, surgery for ovarian cancer, gone through chemo twice, had my entire digestive system repaired because of damage from chemo, had a staff infection from the hospital after this previous surgery , suffered a stitch abscess in my incision after surgery performed two-and-a-half years ago, and coughing up blood.

One would think that the natural man would be overcome in such a state of constant trials and afflictions that he would give up and curse God as Job's wife told Job to do when he was enduring his time of afflictions. This is how the flesh responds, but thanks be unto God that the spiritual man is kept by the power of God and in the spirit his feelings are, ***"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."*** As I was lifted up above the water in my dream, the water (trials and afflictions) were still there for me to have to bear, but the power of God sustained me and gave me grace and strength to endure the great trials and afflictions. I never fell into that water; I have not been consumed thus far. My Lord and Saviour has lifted me in the spirit above the trials and afflictions and given me to rejoice in His love and mercy and experience a time of reigning with Him.

We are made to witness with Paul when he said he didn't know if he was out of the body or in the body, that he experienced things it was unlawful for man to speak. You cannot understand how you can feel such peace and joy when the natural body is in such a state of suffering. Your reign with Christ lessens the pain and suffering the flesh is experiencing because your eyes are fixed on Christ. You feel to have a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

I've thought many times over the past years during this great time of affliction about the precious scriptures recorded in the Bible and how you read them hoping the Lord will bless you with understanding; but when you are blessed to experience the scriptures, they are made alive and you feel the presence of the Lord walking with you in the cool of the day. The night (darkness where there is no understanding) is dispelled and the light (understanding) shines and the Lord blesses you with His wisdom and you can see things you never saw before.

How pleasant it is when you can feel to be in the cleft of the rock. You are in a safe and secure place in the bosom of Christ encradled in His everlasting arms above the cares of this world. You don't feel the pain of your afflictions. Your eyes are fixed upon Christ. I believe this is how it was with Stephen when he was being stoned to death. He wasn't feeling the pain because His Lord had lifted him above the natural state he was in.

The natural man cannot comprehend the great mystery of God and understand how this can be. ***"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell***

in You. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." (Romans 8:5-10) "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Romans 8:16-18).

I believe the glory of the Lord which is revealed in His children is manifest to those of like precious faith to show forth the power of God in His little ones in their sojourn of their path which is laid out for them to walk in this life. The ways of the Lord are so much higher than our ways and past finding out. He is so omnipotent and we are nothing. ***"Without Him, we can do nothing."***

I feel the Lord's people do reign with Him in this life when they are lifted up in His spirit. That is the only time they can lie down and rest in peace and joy. ***"Perfect love casteth out fear."*** His love is a gift, free and unmerited. Aren't we so thankful it is this way? If it depended on something we had to do, we would all fall by the wayside.

We bask in the warmth of His tender love and mercy. ***"Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings."*** All things are possible in the Lord. ***"He is the author and finisher of our faith."*** He blesses us to reign with Him in the spirit. How precious are these bethel spots which He blesses us to experience. May His name be glorified forever.

Love in Christ,
Jeannette Robertson
December 14, 2004

VOICES OF THE PAST

ELDER LEWIS EDWARDS

Sand Lick, Dickenson Co.,Va.
August 1, 1893

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Old Baptist faith and order;

I have been impressed in mind for a long time to leave for you and my dear children a short history of my life, and the many sins I have passed through since I have been a pilgrim through this unfriendly world, from the year 1812 to 1893. I, Lewis Edwards, was born in Franklin county, Va., March 10, 1812. My parents were Brice and Jane Edwards. I was raised by pious parents, they taught me to be strictly honest and never to use profane language, and I can say now I never swore an oath in my life. My father

moved to patrick county in my 15th year, and though I was called a pious youth, I was a sinner, and sin was sweet to the flesh. I loved the company of young people and, their sinful ways until I was about 16 or 17 years old, when my mind began to be troubled about my condition. I saw I was a sinner, and not ready to die and the Bible said the wicked should be turned into hell. I became uneasy, for I knew I was a sinner. I became so uneasy and could see no rest; I thought I must try to pray; I did not want anyone to know that I was trying to pray. At last I went off in a lonesome dark hollow where I thought no one would see me. There the devil tried to shame me out of it; he said I was too young to begin now; I would be slighted by all my comrades ; I might yet have a great deal of pleasure with them and then there'll be time enough when I was much older. But I can say bless the Lord, He is above the devil.

I did not know how soon I might be called to die, and then I would be forever gone to that awful place, forever there to dwell. At last I ventured to get on my knees; I didn't know what to say, I could only say, Lord have mercy on me, A poor wretched sinner. I still went to my self and tried to pray, and I have never got entirely shut of my troubles until the Lord set me free, although it sometimes wore off and I did wrong. I would make promises to try to do better, and some times I would fail, then I would feel dreadful. I went on in that way trying to do something good in the sight of God and failing until I lost all confidence in myself. The Lord spared me until I was twenty years old, and in my 21st I was married to Nancy Howell, in Floyd County, Va., daughter of Benjamin Howell. After I was married I think it was the blessed will of the Lord to make my condition plain to me in a dream. It was so great I never can forget it.

I dreamed I was going to school with all of my playmates, we were all assembled at the schoolhouse, and I saw our teacher. He was an uncommonly large black man. It seemed I was badly dissatisfied with the teacher, and some of the scholars told the teacher I was going to run away and leave him. I thought he said if I did he would bring me back and burn me in hell fire. I started to run with all my power, for I expected he would follow me, and I awoke running. When I awoke none but the Lord can tell my feelings, the dream was made so plain to me.

My playmates and myself had been going to school to the devil; he was our teacher. My brethren, I then saw my condition, but feared I had seen it too late. I intended to pray as long as the Lord would spare me, I felt there was no chance for me. I wandered from place to place, in secret places, feeling lost and undone forever until at last I dreamed another dream with a circumstance in connection with the other dream.

I dreamed I was standing at the door of torment and the keeper was standing at the door, one said to the keeper, "let us see the souls of some that's gone to torment." he opened the door wide and brought out three, set them on the ground, and they burned continually with a blue blaze like brimstone. I thought he or they must go back. I thought the poor creatures crawled back into a place which looked melting hot, and they held up their heads blowing; It looked like their condition was dreadful indeed beyond expression.

Oh! reader, think before it is too late! I then turned and walked away; I seemed to have a load on my back, and in very bad clothing; I was going straight up to a fine house where sat Col. Jacob Helem at an upper door of his house. I thought I looked mighty low going up to such a fine gentleman, but I thought it was made known to me that he would, in a short time, have to die and go to that dreadful place I had just passed. In a short time when working in my field, a man passed by me and said, "Col. Helem is dead." My dear brethren, it was dreadful to me, I never will be able to tell my feelings. I then had no hope, my trouble, it seemed was more than I could bear. I wandered through the wild woods with my Bible in my hands crying, Lord have mercy on me, a poor sinner, and save me ere I am gone. I had tried all my good works and all had done no good; I saw I was gone unless blessed Jesus was pleased to help me. I thought I was in a strange way that no man ever was in before; I did not think the Lord ever would have mercy on such a wretch as I was. I cried, Lord, if I must go to torment, let me go a beggar. In that dreadful condition I went to meeting to see my sister; Sarah Arrington baptized. We met at the place and after preaching the church was called together, they began to sing, and their song I can never forget, I was sitting off like a poor criminal, their song was:

What a mercy is this, what a heaven of bliss,
How unspeakably favored am I
Gathered into the fold with believers enrolled,
With believers to live and to die.

My feelings I never can tell, it did seem my very soul hungered within me. I would have given all the world if it had been mine, to have had a seat with the true church. I saw my sister baptized, we started home, it looked like my sister and I were parted; it was a dreadful day with me; we went to my father's and stayed all night, in the morning we started home. We had to go along a spur of the Blue Ridge, called Witt's spur, just before we got to the top, my mind was off my condition; when we got to the top my mind returned to my condition and was entirely easy, the next thought was,

what is the cause?

It seemed like something answered in feelings; *"Your sins are forgiven."* My mind answered it cant be possible, such a wretch as I am can have such good news to tell. In a moment my soul was running over with joy;

I felt like all my trouble was gone and I had awoke in a new world everything looked new; the trees and the mountains looked new and I felt new. It was the best day I had ever seen. I had been so lost, and had thought there was no mercy for me, then to be filled with the love of God. Oh, my brethren, I want you to help me praise the Lord for what he has done for me. I want to praise him while I live. I thought I was free from trouble, free from pain of all kind. I could not see what would trouble me, but alas I was badly mistaken. I have found it a world of trouble. I now wanted to go home to my father's house and tell them what great things the Lord had done for me. I went to Jack's Creek church, and was recieved; there was an arm of Jack's Creek church given off called Green Hill, in Patrick County, Va., and there I was baptized by old brother John Conner; there was a great revival at Green Hill, and from from three to twenty persons were baptized in one day. I was one of the deacons chosen when the church was fully organized. I was delighted with the church and had a great feeling for mourners. I felt like I ought to tell them what a great Saviour I had found, and exhort them to look to God for he is all in all. So I appointed prayer meetings and we seemed to have a good time. After awhile I began to think seriously about what I was doing, and the greatness of the cause, and whether or not I was called of the Lord. I did not think the Lord would call a man that could not preach, and I had but little learning and hardly common sense, and I began to be badly alarmed, I thought I had dishonored the good cause of my blessed Lord and I did not think I ever could live in that country where I had so dishonored the cause of my Lord. So I thought I would leave my native country and go among strangers and it should never be known that I had ever tried to speak in public, but when I got to Russell county, the weight of preaching was worse than in my own country. Often in my mind I was preaching, then I would shake my head and say in mind, *"I never will try anymore, I have done wrong and left my old country to get shut of the great reproach, and I will never try it again."* My troubles got worse and I would leave home and wander in Clinch mountain alone, trying to pray to the Lord O show me what was the matter. At last one of my children, about three years old, having clear blue eyes, was suddenly black. It greatly alarmed me, I thought my child was entirely ruined. I did not know what to do, it came to my mind to go and pray to the Lord, and if He had any-

thing for me to do, He would make it known by restoring my child's eyes. In a very short time it was alright,though yet I could not believe such a being as I would be called. I went in trouble day after day. At last my life of religion seemed to be taken away and I was left in a miserable condition. I felt like my peace on earth was gone. In that condition I promised the Lord if He was pleased to set me free once more, I would try, let the case be what it may. So I went to meeting and went home with brother Shadrick Williams, and my trouble was so great I could not stay with him in the house. I wandered from place to place by myself. At last on Sunday morning, suddenly as I walked alone, these words came on my mind with such power it nearly took the use of my limbs. The words were; *"The day is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and those that hear shall live."* Now the request is granted, what will you do? Now came my trial, will you do what you promised, or lie to God? Lord have mercy on me. Lord I am willing if I knew I was called, but I cant believe; I fear I shall dishonor thy cause. My troubles were so bad I told a brother my feelings. He says *"Appoint a meeting house next Sunday."* I did so and that same passage of Scripture was my text, it was with power all the week. On the next Saturday I started to my meeting. Dear brethren, that was one of the timesI never can forget. My trouble, none but God knew, I was greatly afraid I was going to bring a reproach on the good cause of my blessed Lord. I tried to pray to the Lord if I was not called of God, I might be dumb, not able to apeak the next day, so I could go home in peace and then I would know I was not called, if the Lord was pleased to answer my prayer in that way. But it was not to be. My tongue seemed to be in a different way to what it ever was in my life. It was, I hope, God's will to show me on that day I had to go. I was made willing to try on that day. I promised the Lord if He would be with me I would try as long as the Lord let me live. So I have been trying in my awkward manner ever since. But my beloved brethren I often think if I have a gift from God I am one of the least and not hardly worthy of the name of a preacher.

Then in a short time I bought land in Dickenson County, Va., it was then in Russell county. In a short time I moved to my land near the Sand Lick church. The church was without a pastor, and the church called me to be their Moderator so I could not refuse and in a short time they sent for a presbytery to ordain me and brother Morgan F. Lipps and brother Shadrick Williams ordained me, so by the request of the church I took the care of Sand Lick church. In a short time the Union church in Buchanan county called on me and I took the care of the Union church and then the Mount Pleasant church

was constituted and I was chosen their first pastor. Then Johnson's Bottom church was constituted and I was chosen their moderator. Then the Cedar Grove church in Pike county, Kentucky, called on me and I took the care of Cedar Grove church. Part of my time there was a considerable number of members recieved and baptized by all the churches named.

Then the Union Association was constituted and I was chosen their first moderator. Brethren I never could tell why it was that I was chosen either by the churches or the associations, when it did look to me that I was the last and the least of all.

It did seem to me nearly any of my brother preachers had a better gift than I, though I tried to always conduct the business of the churches and Associations strictly by my master's rule laid down in His word, though with tenderness and brotherly kindness. All my churches have generally treated me with more respect, it seemed to me, than I deserved. My Association would never give me up until I got so old and deaf I could not do the business. Brethren, if I ever have been any benefit in the cause of my Master the Lord is to be praised, for I am nothing of myself. Brethren, I have travelled over the high and rugged mountains, often alone, wondering and thinking could it be possible if the Lord had sent such a being as I am to do such important work as it appeared to be. Brethren, if I am saved, I am saved by grace alone, if I have ever preached, God is to be praised; if I have ever done any good in the churches or Associations, the Lord is to be praised, for I am nothing of myself, if I ever had any true hope in the Lord,it was the last day of December, fifty-six years ago. About fifty-five or nearly that time, since I first began to speak in public. Brethren, the Lord has spared me for a long time in this poor world of trouble. I often think it won't be long before the summons will come, then, brethren, it will be well with all the children of God, we will then no more sigh and mourn for fear we are decieved, but then all the children of God will get home to their father's house, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, where they will see their blessed Lord, who bled and died to Set them free. Dear brethren of the Old Baptist faith, I love you all you are my people. I want to live with you, I want to die with you, I want to go home with you, there to part no more.

My beloved brethren, Paul says, *"eye hath not seen nor ear hath heard the good things that is laid up for them that love the Lord."* Brethren, I have been through many hard trials in this poor world. I lost my first wife the 20th of January,1860; I have lost three daughters and one son, all nearly grown; I have raised twelve children. I have always been a poor man, sometimes in great trouble, some-

times it seems, for a short time, all my troubles are gone when it is God's will to speak peace to my weary soul. My dear brethren I am now about to wind up my little book, many of you I shall never see in this world, but when you read these lines, remember me, and that Jesus Christ died to set the mourning free, and you, my dear children, when you read my little book perhaps years after I am gone to my long eternal home and you are left here in a world of dangers, sorrows and troubles, I want you all to have my little book, and to take good care of it; and think you once heard the old white head preach, and tell that Christ died to save the true mourners, I want everyone to take care of my little book.

I am now in my 82nd year, and will shortly have to bid you all farewell, but I hope I shall meet you beyond this vail of tears, where parting is no more. I hope to meet my old father and mother, I hope to see my children. I now say to all my friends, when you hear that I am gone, weep not for me but rejoice that I am gone from the evil to come. Farewell.

Sent in by Edrie Clifton

Job 37: 23-24.

Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict.

THOUGHTS ON THE TWO PEOPLE THAT TRAVEL IN THIS TIMELY WORLD

Dear Beloved,

A few thoughts concerning the two people that travel in this timely world.

One of these people is described in the scriptures. ***"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."*** I think all people, until touched by the hand of God, travel this way. These people are at enmity with God, have no true knowledge of Him, nor sincere desire for Him. They will not have this Man rule over them. All people are in this condition by nature. They have a heart that is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked and who can know it. This heart is all that a man, by nature, has to go with and the Bible tells us that ***"Out of the heart are the issues of life."***

Jesus tells us that he that does not forsake all, including himself, is not worthy to be His disciple. He tells us to take up our cross daily and follow Him. Man by nature cannot and will not do this, because this is in direct contrast to the desires of the natural heart. Who by nature would choose afflictions, sorrow, and heartaches? We desire and do directly opposite to this except led by the Spirit of God. The scriptures say that God seeks those with a broken and contrite heart and we, natu-

rally speaking, would run as hard as we could from such a condition.

Thanks be unto God, His little ones don't travel this road. Theirs is called "the way of holiness". Nothing foul or unclean shall travel this way, but the redeemed of the Lord shall walk this road.

As I said before, out of the heart are the issues of life. When God, at His appointed time, sees fit to take away this naturally hard and stony heart and gives a heart of flesh, He implants new desires and new thoughts in this man. The scriptures tell us in Proverbs that the preparations of the heart and the answer of the tongue is of the Lord. He does not leave it up to us whether we travel this way of holiness. He goes before His sheep and leads then in paths of righteousness for His name sake. He calls His sheep by name and His sheep do follow Him. In the Songs it tells us He brings His people into the banqueting house and His banner over them is love.

Isn't it wonderful when we consider that our travels on this road are not left to us. The scriptures tell us we are the husbandry of God. As clay in the hands of the Heavenly Potter, He molds His little ones as He sees fit; conforms them by trials, afflictions, and sorrows to a vessel of honor: causes them to walk this way of holiness in such a manner as is well pleasing in His sight. He gives His little ones this quiet still voice, which I believe is the work of the Spirit in the heart of all His chosen people. In this way we do learn to follow on to know the Lord. We learn by our trials this way of holiness. Now we run from all the things we at one time ran after. May it be the Lord's will to keep us always on this road that is called "The Way of Holiness".

In that Blessed Hope,
Elder Graydon R. Smith
Minden, LA. 71055

"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." -- Revelation i. 18.

What a mercy that he who was dead lives at God's right hand! that he lives as a risen head; that he is not a dead Saviour; but a Saviour that lives for evermore; that can and does bless; that can and does comfort; that can and does bring the soul safely through all. He is not a Saviour that stands as it were upon the brink of a river, and pulls us out when we have swum half way out ourselves; he is not a Saviour that will take us half way to heaven, and then, as Rutherford says, let us ***"fend"*** or shift for ourselves. He must take us to heaven throughout. We are nothing, we have nothing without him. He must be, as he is, our ***"all in all."***

We value him in his death, nothing but his death could reconcile us to God; we value him in his life, nothing but his life can save. We want salvation now; salvation in the heart; a Spiritual salvation revealed in and unto the soul; a salvation worthy of the name, wholly, fully, completely, finally, and everlastingly to the praise of super-abounding grace; a salvation indefeasible, never to be lost; worthy of God, worthy of the God-man; adapted to every want of the soul, coming into every trial of the heart, and able to save the vilest and the worst, ***"without money and without price."***

Elder J. C. Philpot

MEETINGS

THE STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union will be held at Springfield Church on the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in January. The song services will begin at 10:00 a.m.

All ministers of our faith and order are invited.

Job 37:24.

Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any that are wise of heart.

THE WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene with Moons Creek Church the 5th Sunday in January. The Church is located about a 1/2 mile east of Hwy 86 between Danville and Yanceyville on Park Springs Rd.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Sister Sue Blalock, Clerk

PSALM 84:1-2.

How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!

My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 2004

Meta Mills, AR	5.00
Francis Knight, VA	5.00
Wanda Brown, NC	5.00
Eld. Cleo Robertson, NC	5.00
George Blalock, NC	5.00
Charles Alders, TX	25.00
Lena Duncan, VA	5.00
George Hyslip, TN	15.00
Eva Wyatt, NC	5.00
Willie Shelton, VA	5.00
Garlon Vick, NC	10.00

OBITUARIES

RUTH BEATRICE COLEMAN JEFFREYS

Our dear sister in Christ, Ruth Jeffreys, finished her course in this life on December 3, 2003, at High Point Regional Hospital, High Point, North Carolina. Though a native and long- time resident of Alamance County , North Carolina, she spent the last several years of her life as a resident of an assisted living facility in Greensboro, North Carolina. Her husband, Claude Walker Jeffreys, preceded her in death. She is survived by a son, Arnold Coleman Jeffreys and wife, Carol, of Greensboro, North Carolina; a stepdaughter, Doris Jeffreys Allen of Burlington, North Carolina; three step grandchildren; and five great-step grandchildren. She was preceded in death by two stepsons, Jennings and Norman Jeffreys; two sisters, Euphrasis (Becky) Coleman Ingle and Eunice Coleman Gallaway; and six brothers, Osia Coleman, Lofton Coleman, Ira Coleman, Jones Coleman, Percy Coleman and E. W. "Doc" Coleman.

Sister Ruth was a homemaker and a longtime active member in the Alamance County Extension Service and served on many of its county, district and state programs. She also was a longtime member and clerk of McCray Primitive Baptist Church. The Lord blessed her with understanding of doctrine and order and the courage and firmness to defend it. She stood alone at times in defense of that which she was given to believe and love. She possessed the gift of a beautiful soprano voice and loved to sing the hymns of Zion. She also loved to entertain those of like precious faith and prepared many meals for them over the years. She is missed by all who knew and loved her. Her trials and afflictions are over and now she is at rest awaiting that summons, ***"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."***

The funeral service was conducted by Elder Kenneth Key and Elder C. B. Davis at the McClure Funeral Home Chapel with burial in the McCray Church Cemetery.

Written by request,
Elder Cleo Robertson

ST. JOHN, 15: 23-25.

He that hateth me hateth my Father also.

If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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POEM

Grace is defined as an unmerited favor,
That comes to us from our Lord and Savior,
All of our blessings, comes through his grace,
as things unfold, while he sets our pace.

Carnally we are prone to these earthly sins.
He relieves these earthly burdens within.
He pays us a visit, day by day,
And he reaches down and paves our way.

All the blessing comes through his love,
That's meted out from the courts above.
We give thanks for the blessings we receive
And ask him daily, that we might believe.

We are completely helpless to grasp the light,
That guides us in the earthly fight.
Only he has the power to lighten our load.
He guides us on this earthly road.

In conclusion I would like to say,
That he looks down and guides our way.
We thank him daily, for the blessings he brings,
And give thanks to him for all earthly things.

Riley J. Justice

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Sister Dora M. Adams

EDITORIAL

"Now the Birth of Jesus Christ Was on This Wise"
St. Matthew 1:18

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

The birth of Christ has always been controversial and always will be so far as the world is concerned. Many deny the virgin birth of Christ and are constantly seeking to prove that it did not take place. We see programs on television and articles in newspapers, magazines and books devoted to this purpose. There were those in the days that Christ was upon earth who saw Him and heard Him and yet knew Him not. He had never been revealed to them so they could not know Him. But, there is a remnant called out of nature's darkness into His marvelous light that has an experience of grace that testifies of His virgin birth. Isaiah prophesied that unto us a child is born and unto us a son is given. Every little child of grace experiences the birth of Christ in their heart. As the Holy Ghost came upon Mary and the power of God overshadowed her, she conceived and a holy child was born which was the Son of God. No works of the flesh were involved. Therefore, it was a virgin birth. So it is with each of God's elect. The Holy Ghost came upon you and the power of God overshadowed you and you conceived and Christ was born in your heart. No works of man were involved in this birth. It is a spiritual birth and is all of grace. Therefore, His little ones believe by faith in the virgin birth of Christ because they have experienced it.

We hear it set forth that there were three wise men who were kings from the east that came to worship the Christ child. First of all, we do not know who counted the wise men or ascribed a number to them because Matthew does not. He says only that there were wise men. These wise men set forth God's people and were as many as the

Lord God called. They were wise, not with the wisdom of men, but rather the wisdom of God which is spiritual understanding. If this wisdom was of the flesh, then King Herod and his counselors could have seen the star and understood what it was. By faith, these wise men were following a star they believed was the star of the King of the Jews and they had come to worship Him. God had given them understanding of what the star was and who the child was. Therefore, they are said to be wise men. There is no mention of them being kings. However, Revelation 5:10 says, ***"And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."*** In that spiritual sense, they were kings and priests unto God and so are each of you who have experienced the birth of Christ in your heart.

The star is setting forth the Holy Spirit which leads and guides the children of the heavenly King. It is from above and is manifested only to the children of God. No one else, with all their human learning, could see this star nor determine where the child was born. Even so today can no man by all the schooling of men know Christ nor where He is born—born in your heart the Hope of glory. The star, so high and so bright, led the wise men to where the child was. When they saw the star over where the child was, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. When each of you experienced the birth of Christ and felt the comfort and peace for which you had so longed, you too rejoiced with exceeding great joy. Your soul sang out and tears of joy ran down your cheeks. Your very being praised Him whom your soul loveth.

The wise men fell down and worshipped Christ and opened their treasures and presented unto Him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Christ said, ***"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."*** Their hearts were opened and the gifts manifested. There were three gifts and perhaps this is why the world thinks there were three wise men. The world believes that each one brought a gift. Why would the One who created all things need their gold, frankincense and myrrh? Christ said on one occasion that ***"the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."*** Though Christ created all things, yet in the world He possessed none of the world's riches. The Apostle Paul writes in *II Corinthians 8:9*, ***"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich."*** I believe these gifts were spiritual. Each wise man possessed all three gifts that they neither made nor purchased. These were not presents, but gifts and were free with no conditions. They were gifts given to the wise men by

God and are manifested when Christ is born in your heart. They were faith, hope and charity. Every child of grace possesses these gifts from God and when one experiences the work of God in them, these gifts are manifested. The wise men could not go back the same way they came, but went a different way. So every child of God has a different walk and travels a different path after they experience a work of grace. They hate the things they once loved and love the things they once hated. They have no desire to go back to what they once were.

There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. These shepherds set forth the ministers under the law. They were in darkness and only abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock during the nighttime of the law. They had no food with which to feed the flock. Then an angel appeared unto them and told them that he brings them *"good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."* By this sign, the shepherds would know that this was the Christ that was born. He was wrapped in swaddling clothes signifying that He was bound by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God to be delivered into wicked hands to be crucified and die. He was lying in a manger. No one would have expected the Son of God, the King of kings, to be in a manger but there was no more appropriate place for Him to be as a sign unto the shepherds. This was where the food for the animals was put and where they were fed. He is the food for those who hunger and thirst after His righteousness. Therefore, this was indeed a sign unto the shepherds who this child was. Christ said, *"I am the bread of life"* and *"the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world."*

A multitude of the heavenly host praised God and said, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." This did not mean that Christ had brought peace on earth to all mankind. You and I know that there has never been peace on earth among all peoples and nations for any period of time. For Christ said, *"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword."* Rather, the angels were proclaiming that Christ who is our peace had come to earth. Christ also said, *"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."* Good will toward men speaks of the will of God

as it only is good. Christ stated that He had come to do the will of His father that sent Him and the will of His father was that of all which His father had given Him He should lose none, but should raise it up again at the last day. According to the good will of His father, He had come to earth to redeem those His Father had given Him from their sins and to satisfy the demands of His Father's righteous and holy law. Now, the shepherds had something with which to feed their flock. Day had come and the light of Christ shined forth. Grace had come and the day star had arisen and the Sun of righteousness arose with healing in His wings. The shepherds went preaching the gospel, telling those things which they had seen with their own eyes, handled with their own hands, and heard with their own ears. In other words, they preached that which had been revealed to them and which they had experienced—no man having taught them. God's ministers throughout all ages of time have been called and qualified in the same way. Men taught of man will preach the ways and works of man. Men taught of God will preach Christ.

May the God of all grace continue with each of you is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

1-11-2005

To Elder Terry:
Also other Editors of the Signs:

I just received January issue of "Signs" which I enjoyed, sure sound doctrine.

Elder Lambert on baptism was good seems he was (near) he was my pastor at Rehobeth Church in Eldorado, AR for so many years. Of course the other writers were good also.

I was 96 in Nov. 04 can still stay by myself. I thank the Lord for his watch over me and in all blessings he is my all and all. I send Love to all.

A sinner saved by grace if saved.
Jane Carroll

Newport, N.C.
1-12-05

Dear Brother Terry,

Enclosed find my check for 1 years renewal for the Signs. Please accept the balance as a contribution to your paper.

Thank you for sending the Signs, I have had an eye operation and can't read long at a time but still desire to support the cause. When you are brought down at the Throne of Grace Remember me.

Thank you,
God Bless You and Yours,
J.C. Carroll

Bryan, Texas
Jan. 5, 2005

Dear Elder Terry:

On Jan. 25, 2005 I will pass the 100 mark God chose to leave me here for a purpose I don't quite understand, but do know it is for a purpose he understands.

I want the Signs for as long as I can read it so please send it for another year.

The Signs was in our home when I was a child may it be continued on and on for all lovers of the truth.

Sincerely,
Inez Gearner

ARTICLES

My life among the Old Baptists has given me a rich and rewarding religious life. I would like to try and gather and express my thoughts concerning predestination, prayer and Christ's spiritual message, because these allow me to truly celebrate God's sovereignty. Besides filling my best memories growing up, my journey with the old Baptists has also provided me with the most joyful expression of God's Grace, if not deceived.

First, I would like to elaborate on the word predestination, the idea of being preordained. In substance, we have to say that this means, His will be done on earth as it is in heaven. All the events that transpire, according to His will from the courts of glory at his discretion according to his sovereign power are timed to perfection. They will unfold as proposed.

The Baptist people who advocate the doctrine of predestination are the worst criticized people on earth. They are the only ones who deny the power of the flesh, giving God the glory, praise and honor for this great salvation, which is God's deliverance of his goodness in the hearts of the believing family. This comes through the channels of his precious grace, an unmerited favor from his court above. Only when these things are pleasing to the giver of all good, do they transpire. I want to stress here, that the flesh is helpless in any way to be a partaker of holy events.

When one is elevated from the pits of darkness by his loving kindness and made to see through eyes of faith, they are elevated from this place to walk in the heavenly light. This elevating of our hearts is the fruit of that spiritual birth that makes our nights appear as day. We are pilgrims of God's mercy here on earth, looking to him, the giver of all good, to lead and direct us in this low ground of sin and sorrow.

Though in the pits of darkness we would like to call out in prayer, prayer is not of this nature. I think that the word prayer is one of the worst misused words that there is and it is so abused. The only time an individual ever prays is when he

petitions the God of Heaven at the throne of grace, and asks for his will be done. If this utterance of words are in harmony with his will the believer's prayer will be answered. If this prayer is not in accordance with his will it is just an utterance of words that doesn't go any higher than the head. The old Baptist knows that God knows our weaknesses.

The Lord told Jonah ***"to go to Nineveh, that great city and cry against it for their wickedness has come up before me."*** Jonah rose up to flee to Tarsus from the presence of the Lord. He went to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarsus. He paid his fare to Tarsus so he thought. All the time he was on his way to Nineveh, which was unknown to him.

A great storm arose instilling fear in the ship's crew and passengers that the ship would be lost. Awakening Jonah from a deep sleep, he was asked, "what meanest thou the sleeper – arise and call upon thy God." This prompted Jonah to tell them that the sea would calm if they would cast him overboard. He told them that he was a Hebrew and that he feared the Lord God of heaven.

The men knew that he had fled from the presence of the Lord. When they cast Jonah overboard, he thought surely death would come. He only changed his form of transportation on the way from Nineveh from a ship to the belly of a whale.

Jonah prayed to the Lord out of the belly of the whale. ***"Out of the belly I cried and thou heard my voice."*** The Lord's people shall be a willing people in days of his power. While Jonah was in the belly of hell three days he learned something about the Grace of God. "I have vowed that salvation is of the Lord." I don't think Jonah knew anything about the free pardon of sin until he had this graceful experience while in the belly of the whale. Don't you know that Jonah was thankful to be alive? The misery Jonah experienced was horrid, but seeing God's sovereignty demonstrated the saving of his life is definitely a mystery to the fleshly mind.

Jonah's example of the weakness of the flesh was only one. Another example of the weakness of the flesh was when Christ told Peter that he would deny him three times before the cock crowed three times, which he did. That experience brought Peter to real repentance.

Paul, one of the greatest preachers we read about, was on his way to Damascus to persecute the saints of God. When that light shone and Paul heard the voice that said, ***"Saul, Saul, why do thou persecute me"***. This is when Paul asked the Lord, ***"what will thy have me to do"***? Paul was made a willing vessel in the day of God's power. I think that everyone who comes to the knowledge of his truth comes through the channels of his grace, comes forth singing the same song, praising his high and lofty name.

My experience too has been that of a sovereign God, while traveling on life's journey. I have traveled far and wide to many churches and associations. If not deceived I have been made to feast from the messages that came from the giver of all good, for food for the hungry soul. If there is no hunger there is no feasting from the rations of God's table. The bible says that he who hungers and thirsts after righteousness shall be filled. I have also experienced going to meetings not to be filled from the messages sent forth.

I have heard many of the preaching brethren say what a dreadful thing it was for them to come to the stand, another good example of the weakness of the flesh. A few times I have seen the elders come to the stand and not be blessed with a message, and they sat down. God's sovereign courts of glory delivers the message, or there will be no preaching.

The above is a beautiful example of God's goodness, bringing to mind the bible verse that says: "take no thought of what you will say as it will be given to you in that self same hour". If one isn't induced with the power on high to preach the unsearchable riches of the kingdom, likewise there will be no preaching. Paul said the preaching of the gospel is not of man, it was taught by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Paul learned all of this when that light shone on his way to Damascus.

These perceptions and feelings about central beliefs of the Old Baptist journey have been wrapped in a wonderful cloak of meaning for me if not deceived. Each having an individual journey and personal road to Damascus, I was born on a little mountain farm at Asco West Virginia. Times were hard and money was near to none. The great depression was an experience I could never forget. Having something to eat was a blessing from God's bountiful table. Looking back I can see how the channels of God's grace prevailed on my own journey,

While we had very little, many times someone would knock on the door and ask for something to eat. My father never turned anyone away hungry, regardless of race or anything else. He always told them that if they could eat what we ate they were most welcome. He always said, never turn anyone away hungry-you might be turning away an angel unknowingly.

My mother was no stranger to poverty. She knew how to can, pickle or dry anything in preparation for the winter. We had pickled beans and corn, made our own molasses, jellies, jams and preserves. Besides all of the canning of vegetables we had root storage areas for potatoes, cabbage, and other things. The apple butter mama made was delicious. Many times it would fall in our lot to entertain the visiting folks during the association. I always looked forward to this. We had a big barn

loft full of hay, and that was where the men slept. There would be as many as twelve or fourteen people sleeping up in the hayloft, among the aromas of a farm that farmers come to appreciate.

We had a high apple orchard where my dad placed hand-hewn benches under the beautiful apple trees for seating. Thinking back, I cannot think of a more fitting environment for the events held here. My dad would always kill a sheep or beef for the association event. When the crowd left the meat would be gone. I have many times wondered how my mother came through with all the cooking and bedding for so many people.

My twin brother Rush and I ran a barbershop in War West Virginia for 55 years. However, we have cut hair since we were twelve years old. During the Great Depression the principal of our school would take us to the basement to cut the hair for the students who could not afford a haircut at the barbershop.

We always had a faithful group of customers. We retired on December 19, 2003, with a great retirement party given by friends and neighbors. There were many farewell speeches, gifts and "tears" throughout the evening. While in the barbershop we had the experience of cutting the hair of families over several generations, including fathers, sons, grandsons, great-grandsons, and even great- great-grandsons. We developed friendships that will live with us forever.

While working, there were very few times that we had the opportunity to communicate with anyone who advocated the belief in a sovereign God. Most of our customers believed in the free will of the flesh.

In closing, I hope readers will enjoy this article, in the bonds of love I hope.

Riley J. Justice
P O Box 272
War WV

VOICES OF THE PAST

OBSERVATIONS ON THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES BY AUGUSTUS M. TOPLADY 1740-1778

Toplady flashed upon and past the world like a meteor. A brilliant streak of light, and he was gone. But he will ever live in the affections of all who love pure religion, and scorn every touchstone save the Holy Scriptures. To have produced the greatest hymn in the English language-"ROCK OF AGES" has, by general consent, been assigned the place of honour - would alone have earned him the gratitude of the churches. So remarkable, indeed, has been its vogue that the public are apt to overlook the fact that he was the author of many other hymns, some of which for example, "Deathless Principle," and "What

Though My Frail Eyelids Refuse" - surpass in euphony and ethereal beauty, though not in depth and intensity of feeling, his acknowledged master piece. In these hymns, written in rapturous moments that come only to the privileged few, and to them but rarely, the ardent soul dissevers itself from earth, mounts on eager and confident pinions, and flutters ecstasied before its God. But it is not as a hymnwriter only that Toplady excels. The best of his essays are studded with vitalizing thoughts expressed in noble and virile English. His sermons, which contain many magnificient passages are storehouses of sound and lucid divinity.

Necessary to be premised, in order to our better understanding the Doctrine of Predestination.

Although the great and ever Blessed God is a Being absolutely simply, and infinitely remote from all shadow of composition; he is, nevertheless, in condescension to our weak and contracted faculties, represented in Scripture as possessed of divers properties, or attributes, which, though seemingly different from his essence, are in reality, essential to him, and constitutive of his very nature.

Of these attributes, those on which we shall now particularly descant (as being more immediately concerned in the ensuing subject), are the following ones; 1. His eternal wisdom and foreknowledge. 2. The absolute freedom and liberty of his will. 3. The perpetuity and unchangeableness both of himself and his decrees. 4. His omnipotence. 5. His justice. 6. His mercy.

Without an explication of these, the doctrine of predestination can - not be so well understood: we shall, therefore, briefly consider them, by way of preliminary to the main subject.

1. With respect to the divine wisdom and foreknowledge, I shall lay down the following positions:

Pos.1 God is, and always was, so perfectly wise that nothing ever did, or does, or can, elude his knowledge. He knew, from all eternity, not only what he himself intended to do, but also what he would incline and permit others to do, ***"Known unto God are all his work, from eternity."***

Pos. 2 Consequently, God knows nothing now, nor will know any thing hereafter, which he did not know and foresee from everlasting: his foreknowledge being co-eternal with himself, and extending to everything that is or shall be done. All things, which comprise past, present, and future, are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

Pos. 3 This foreknowledge of God is not conjectural and uncertain (for then it would not be foreknowledge) but most sure and infallible; so that whatever he foreknows to be future shall necessarily and undoubtedly come to pass. For his knowledge can be no more frust-

rated, or his wisdom be deceived, than he can cease to be God. Nay, could either of these be the case, he actually would cease to be God; all mistakes and disappointment being absolutely incompatible with the divine nature.

Pos. 4. The influence which the divine foreknowledge has on the certain futurition of the things fore - known does not render the intervention of second causes needless, nor destroy the nature of the things themselves.

My meaning is that the prescience of God does not lay any coercive necessity on the wills of beings naturally free. For instance, man, even in his fallen state, is endued with a natural freedom of will; yet he acts, from the first to the last moment of his life, in absolute subserviency (though perhaps, he does not know it nor design it) to the purposes and decrees of God concerning him; notwithstanding which He is sensible of no compulsion, but acts as freely and voluntarily as if he was, subject to no control, and absolutely Lord of himself. This made Luther, after he had shewn how all things necessary and inevitably come to pass, in consequence of the sovereign will and infallible foreknowledge of God, say that *"We shall carefully distinguish between a necessity of infallibility and a necessity of co-action; since both good and evil men, though by their actions they fulfil the decree and appointment of God, yet are not forcibly constrained to do any thing but act willingly."*

Pos. 5 God's foreknowledge, taken abstractedly, is not the sole cause of beings and events; but his will and foreknowledge together. Hence we find, Acts ii. 23 , that his determinate counsel and foreknowledge act in concert ; the latter resulting from, and being founded on, the former. We pass on.

II. To consider the will of God; with regard to which we assert as follows:

Pos.1 Deity is possessed not only of infinite knowledge, but likewise of absolute liberty of will; so that whatever he does, or permits to be done, he does and permits freely and of his own good pleasure .

Consequently, it is his free pleasure to permit sin; since, without his permission, neither men nor devils can do any thing. Now to permit is, at least, the same as not to hinder, though it be in our power to hinder if we please; and this permission or non hindrance, is certainly an act of the divine will. Hence, Austin says, *"Those things which seemingly thwart the divine will are, nevertheless, agreeable to it; for if God did not permit them, they could not be done, and whatever God permits, he permits freely and willingly. He does nothing, neither suffers any thing to be done, against his own will."* And Luther observes that *"God permitted Adam to fall into sin, because he willed that he should so fall."*

Pos. 2 Although the will of God, considered in itself, is simply one and the same; yet in condescension to the present capacities of men, the divine will is very properly distinguished into secret and revealed.

Thus it was his revealed will that Pharaoh should let the Israelites go; that Abraham should sacrifice his son; and that Peter should not deny Christ: but as proved by the event, it was his secret will that Pharaoh should not let Israel go, Ex. iv. 21, that Abraham should not sacrifice Isaac, Gen. xxii. 12, and that Peter should deny his Lord, Matt. xxvi. 34.

Pos. 3 The will of God, respecting the salvation and condemnation of men, is never contrary to itself; he immutably wills the salvation of the elect, and vice versa: nor can he ever vary or deviate from his own will in any instance whatever, so as that should be done which he willeth not; or that not be brought to pass which he willeth. Isaiah xlvi.10. My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure-Psalm xxxiii. 11. The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations. Job xxiii. 13,14. He is in one mind, who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth; for he performeth the thing that is appointed for me; and many such things are with him. Eph. i. 11. Being predestinated, according to the purpose of him, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

Thus, for instance, Hophni and Phineas hearkened not to the voice of their father, who reproved them for their wickedness, because the Lord would slay them, 1 Sam. ii. 25. And Sihon, king of Heshbon , would not receive the peaceable message sent him by Moses, because the Lord God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into the hand of Israel, Deut. ii 26, 30. Thus also, to add no more, we find that there have been, and ever will be some, whose eyes God blindeth, and whose hearts he hardeneth, i.e. whom God permits to continue blind and hardened, on purpose to prevent their seeing with their eyes, and understanding with their hearts, and to hinder their conversion to God and spiritual healing by him, Isa. vi. 9. John xii. 39-40.

Pos. 4. Because God's will of precept may, in some instances, appear to thwart his will of determination, it does not follow either, 1. That he mocks his creatures, or 2. That they are excusable for neglecting to observe his will of command.

1. He does not hereby mock his creatures; for if men do not believe his word, nor observe his precepts, the fault is not in him, but in themselves; their unbelief and disobedience are not owing to any ill infused into them by God, but to the vitiosity of their depraved nature! and the perverseness of their own wills. Now, if God invited all men to come to him, and then shut the door

of mercy against any who were desirous of entering; his invitation would be a mockery, and unworthy of himself; but we insist on it, that he does not invite all men to come to him a saving way; and that every individual person, who is, through his gracious influence on his heart, made willing to come to him shall, sooner or later, be surely saved by him! and that with an everlasting salvation. 2. Man is not excusable for neglecting God's will of command. Pharaoh was faulty, and therefore justly punishable, for not obeying God's revealed will, though God's secret will rendered that obedience impossible. Abraham would have committed sin, had he refused to sacrifice Isaac; and, in looking to God's secret will, would have acted counter to his revealed one. So Herod, Pontius Pilot, and the reprobate Jews, were justly condemned for putting Christ to death, inasmuch as it was a most notorious breach of God's revealed will. *"Thou shalt do no murder;"* yet, in slaying the Messiah, they did no more than God's hand and his counsel, i. e. his secret ordaining will, determined before should be done, Acts iv. 27, 28; and Judas is justly punished for perfidiously and wickedly betraying Christ, though his perfidy and wickedness were (but not with his design) subservient to the accomplishment of the decree and word of God. The brief of the matter is this; secret things belong to God, and those that are revealed belong to us; therefore, when we meet with a plain precept, we should simply endeavour to obey it, without tarrying to inquire into God's hidden purpose. Venerable Bucer, after taking notice how God hardened Pharaoh's heart, and making some observations on the apostle's simile of a potter and his clay, adds that, *"though God has at least the same right over his creatures, and is at liberty to make them what he will, and direct them to the end that pleaseth himself, according to his sovereign and secret determination, yet it by no means follows that they do not act freely and spontaneously, or that the evil they commit is to be charged on God."*

Pos. 5 God's hidden will is peremptory and absolute; and , therefore, cannot be hindered from taking effect.

God's will is nothing else than God himself willing: consequently it is omnipotent and unfrustratable. Hence we find it termed by Austin and the school men, *voluntas omnipotentissima* because, whatever God wills cannot fail of being effected. This made Austin say, *"Evil men do many things contrary to God's revealed will; but so great is his wisdom, and so inviolable his truth, that he directs all things into those channels which he foreknew. "And again" No free will of the creature can resist the will of God; for man cannot so will, or nill, as to obstruct the divine determination, or overcome the divine power."*

Once more *"It cannot be questioned, but God does all things, and ever did, according to his own purpose: the human will cannot resist him, so as to make him do more or less than it is his pleasure to do; quandoquidem etiam de ipsis hominum voluntatibus quod vult tacit since he does what he pleases even with the wills of men."*

Ps. 6. Whatever comes to pass comes to pass by virtue of this absolute, omnipotent will of God which is the primary and supreme cause of all things. Rev. ix. 11. Thou has created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created. Psalm xv. 3. Our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he pleased. Dan. iv. 35. He doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou? Psalm cxxxv. 6. Whatsoever the Lord pleased that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places. Mat. x. 29. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father. To all which, Austin subscribes, when he says, *"Nothing is done but what the Almighty wills should be done, either efficiently or permissively."* As does Luther, whose words are these, *"This, therefore, must stand; to wit, the unsearchable will of God, without which nothing exists or acts."* And again, *"God would not be much, if he was not almighty, and if any thing could be done without him."* And elsewhere, he quotes these words of Erasmus: *"Supposing there was an earthly prince who could do whatever he would and none were able to resist him, we might safely say of such a one, that he would certainly fulfill his own desire, in like manner, the will of God, which is the first cause of all things, should seem to lay a kind of necessity upon our wills."* This Luther approves of, and subjoins, *"Thanks be to God, for this orthodox passage in Erasmus's discourse! but, if this be true, what becomes of his doctrine of free-will, which he at other times so strenuously contends for?"*

Pos. 7. The will of God is so the cause; for nothing can be the cause of that which is the cause of every thing.

So that the divine will is the ne *plus ultra* of all our inquiries; when we ascend to that, we can go no farther. Hence we find every matter resolved untimately into the mere sovereign pleasure of God, as the spring and occasion of whatsoever is done in heaven and earth. Matt. xi xi. 25. Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. Luke xii. 32. It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Matt. viii. 3. I will: be thou clean. Mark iii. 13. He went up into a mountain, and called unto him whom he would. Jam. i. 18. Of his

own will begat he us, with the word of truth. John i. 13. Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Rom. ix. 15, 18. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. Therefore, he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. And no wonder that the will of God should be the main spring that sets all inferior wheels in motion, and should likewise be the rule by which he goes in all his dealings with his creatures; since nothing out of God, i. e. exterior to himself can possibly induce him to will or nill one thing rather than another. Deny this, and you, at one stroke, destroy his immutability and independency; since he can never be independent who acts *pro re nata,* as emergency requires, and whose will is suspended on that of others; nor unchangeable, whose purposes vary and take all shapes, according as the persons or things vary who are the objects of those purposes. The only reason, then, that can be assigned why the Deity does this, or omits that, is because it is his own free pleasure. Luther, in answer to that question, "Whence it was that Adam was permitted to fall, and corrupt his whole posterity; when God could have prevented his falling & c., says, *"God is a being whose will acknowledges no cause: neither is it for us to prescribe rules to his sovereign pleasure, or call him to account for what he does. He has neither superior nor equal: and his will is the rule of all things. He did not, therefore, will such and such things because they were in themselves right, and he was bound to will them; but they are therefore equitable and right because he wills them. The will of man, indeed, may be influenced and moved; but God's will never can. To assert the con trary is to undeify him."* Bucer likewise observes, *"God has no other motive for what he does than ipsa voluntas his own mere will; which will is so far from being unrighteous, that it is justice itself."*

Pos. 8. Since, as was lately observed, the determining will of God, being omnipotent, cannot be obstructed or made void; it follows that he never did, nor does he now, will that every individual of mankind should be saved.

If this was his will, not one single soul could ever be lost; (for who hath resisted his will?) and he would surely afford all men those effectual means of salvation without which it cannot be had. Now, God could afford these means as easily to all mankind, as to some only; but experience proves that he does not; and the reason is equally plain, namely, that he will not; for whatsoever the Lord pleaseth, that does he in heaven and on earth. It is said, indeed, by the apostle, that God would have all men saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth; i. e. as Austin, consistently with other

Scriptures, explains the passage, *"God will save some out of the whole race of mankind,"* that is, persons of all nations, kindreds and tongues. Nay, he will save all men, i.e. as the same father observes, *"every kind of men, or men of every kind,"* namely, the whole election of grace, be they bond or free, noble or ignoble, rich or poor, male or female. Add to this, that it evidently militates against the majesty, omnipotence, and supremacy of God, to suppose that he can either will anything in vain, or that anything can take effect against his will; therefore, Bucer observes very rightly, ad Rom. ix. *"God doth not will the salvation of reprobates, seeing he hath not chosen them neither created them to that end."*

Consonant to which are those words of Luther, *"This mightily offends our rational nature, that God should, of his own mere unbiased will, leave some men to themselves, harden them, and then condemn them; but he has given abundant demonstration, and does continually, that this is really the case; namely, that the sole cause why some are saved, and others perish, proceeds from his willing the salvation of the former, and the perdition of the latter, according to that of Paul, He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."*

Pos. 9. As God doth not will that each individual of mankind should be saved, so neither did he will that Christ should properly and immediately die for each individual of mankind; whence it follows that, though the blood of Christ, from its own intrinsic dignity, was sufficient for the redemption of all men; yet, in consequence of his Father's appointment, he shed it intentionally, and, therefore, effectually and immediately, for the elect only.

This is self evident. God, as we have before proved, wills not the salvation of every man; but he gave his Son to die for them whose salvation he willed; therefore, his Son did not die for every man. All those for whom Christ died are saved; and the divine justice indispensably requires that to them the benefits of his death should be imparted; but only the elect are saved; they only partake of those benefits; consequently for them only he died and intercedes. The apostle, Rom. viii. asks, Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies , i. e. his elect, exclusively of others; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died for them, exclusively of others. The plain meaning of the passage is that those whom God justifies, and for whom Christ died (justification and redemption being of exactly the same extent), cannot be condemned. These privileges are expressly restrained to the elect; therefore, God justifies and Christ died for them alone.

In the same chapter Paul asks ; *"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all,*

(i. e. for all us elect persons) how shall he not, with him, also freely give us all things? i. e. salvation, and all things necessary to it. Now, it is certain that these are not given to every individual; and yet, if Paul says true, they are given to all those for whom Christ was delivered to death; consequently , he was not delivered to death for every individual. To the same purpose St. Austin argues, in Johan . 45. Col. 335. Hence that saying of Ambrose, *si non credis non tibi passus est, ie* ll if you are an unbeliever, Christ did not die for you." Meaning, that whoever is left under the power of final unbelief, is thereby evidenced to be one of those for whom Christ did not die; but that all for whom he suffered shall be, in this life, sooner or later, endued with faith. The Church of Smyrna , in their letter to the dioceses of Pontus, insist everywhere on the doctrine of special redemption. Bucer, in all parts of his works, observes, that *"Christ died restrictively for the elect only; but for them universally."*

Pos .10 From what has been laid down it follows that Austin, Luther, Bucer, the scholastic divines, and other learned writers, are not to be blamed for asserting that *"God may, in some sense, be said to will the being and commission of sin ."* For was this contrary to his determining will of permission, either he would not be omnipotent, and sin has place in the world; which it could not have, if God willed otherwise; for who hath resisted his will? Rom. ix. No one can deny that God permits sin; but he neither permits it ignorantly, nor unwillingly; therefore, knowingly and willingly. Vid. Aust. Enchir. c. 96. Luther steadfastly maintains this in his book *De Serv Arbitr* and Bucer in Rom. i. However, it should be carefully noticed 1. That God's permission of sin does not arise from his taking delight in it; on the contrary, sin, as sin, is the abominable thing that his soul hateth; and his efficacious permission of it is for wise and good purposes. Whence that observation of Austin, *"God, who is no less omnipotent than he is supremely and perfectly holy, would never have permitted evil to enter among his works, but in order that he might do good even with that evil,"* i. e. over-rule it for good in the end. 2. That God's free and voluntary permission of sin lays no man under any forcible or compulsive necessity of committing it; consequently, the Deity can by no means be termed the author of moral evil; to which he is not, in the proper sense of the word, accessary, but only remotely or negatively so inasmuch as he could, if he pleased, absolutely prevent it.

We should, therefore, be careful not to give up the omnipotence of God, under a pretence of exalting his holiness; his is infinite in both, and therefore, neither should be set aside nor obscured. To say that God absolutely nills the being and commission of sin, while experience convinces us that sin is acted everyday, is to represent the Deity

as a weak, impotent being, who would fain have things go otherwise that they do, but cannot accomplish his desire. On the other hand, to say that he willeth sin doth not in the least detract from the holiness and rectitude of his nature; because, whatever God wills, as well as whatever he does, cannot be eventually evil: materially evil it may be; but, as was just said, it must ultimately be directed to some wise and just end, otherwise he could not will it; for his will is righteous and good, and the sole rule of right and wrong, as is often observed by Austin, Luther, and others.

Pos. 11. In consequence of God's immutable will and infallible foreknowledge, whatever things come to pass, come to pass necessarily; though, with respect to second causes, and us men, many things are contingent; i. e. unexpected and seemingly accidental.

That this was the doctrine of Luther, none can deny, who are in any measure acquainted with his works: particularly with his treatise *De Serva Arbitrio*, or free-will a slave; the main drift of which book is to prove that the will of man is by nature enslaved to evil only, and, because it is fond of that slavery, is therefore said to be free. Among other matters, he proves there that *"whatever man does he does necessarily, though not with any sensible compulsion; and that we can only do what God from eternity willed and foreknew we should; which will of God must be effectual, and his foresight must be certain."* Hence we find him saying, *"It is most necessary and salutary for a Christian to be assured that God foreknows nothing uncertainly; but that he determines, and forsees, and acts, in all things, according to his own eternal, immutable, and infallible will; adding, Hereby, as with a thunderbolt, is man's freewill thrown down and destroyed."* A little after, he shews in what sense he took the word necessity; *"by it,"* says he, *"I do not mean that the will suffers any forcible constraint, or coaction; but the infallible accomplishment of those things which the immutable God decreed and foreknew concerning us."* He goes on: *"Neither the divine nor human will does any thing by constraint; but, whatever man does, be it good or bad, he does with as much appetite and willingness as if his will was really free. But, after all, the will of God is certain and unalterable, and is the governess of ours."* Exactly consonant to all which are those words of Luther's friend and fellow-labourer, Melancthon: *"All things turn out according to divine predestination; not only the works we do outwardly, but even the thoughts we think inwardly: adding in the same place, There is no such a thing as chance, or fortune; nor is there a readier way to gain the fear of God, and to put our whole trust in Him, than to be thoroughly versed in the doc-*

trine of predestination." I could cite, to the same purpose, Austin, Aquinas, and many other learned men; but for brevity's sake, forbear. That this is the doctrine of Scripture very adapt in those sacred books cannot but acknowledge. See, particularly, Psalm cxxxv .6 . Matt .x. 29. Prov. xvi. 1. Matt. xxve. 54. Luke xxii. 22. Acts iv. 28. Eph. i. 11. Isa. xlvi. 10.

Pos. 12. As God knows nothing now which he did not know from all eternity; so he wills nothing now which he did not will from everlasting.

This position needs no explanation nor enforcement; it being self - evident that, if any thing can accede to God, *de novo i.* e. if he can at any time be wiser than he always was, or will that at one time which he did not will from all eternity, these dreadful consequences must ensue: 1. That the knowledge of God is not perfect, since what is absolutely perfect, *non recipit magis et minus,* cannot admit either of addition or detraction. If I add to any thing, it is from a supposal that, that thing was not complete before; if I detract from it, it is supposed that, that detraction renders it less perfect than it was. But the knowledge of God, being infinitely perfect, cannot consistently with that perfection, be either increased or lessened. 2. That the will of God is fluctuating, mutable, and unsteady; consequently that God himself is so, his will coinciding with his essence, contrary to the avowed assurances of Scripture and the strongest dictates of reason, as we shall presently shew, when we come to treat of the divine immutability.

Pos. 13. The absolute will of God is the original spring and efficient cause of his people's salvation.

I say the original and efficient; for, *sensu complexo*, there are other intermediate causes of their salvation, which, however, all result from, and are subservient to, this primary one, the will of God. Such are his everlasting choice of them to eternal life: the eternal covenant of grace entered into by the Trinity on behalf of the elect; the incarnation, obedience, death, and intercession of Christ for them; all which are so many links in the great chain of causes; and not one of these can be taken away without marring and subverting the whole gospel plan of salvation by Jesus Christ. We see, then, that the free, unbiased, sovereign will of God is the root of this tree of life, which bears so many glorious branches, and yields such salutary fruits: he therefore loved the elect, and ordained them to life, because he would; according to that of the apostle, having predestinated us according to the good pleasure of his will; Eph. i. 5. Then, next after God's covenant for his people and promises to them, comes in the infinite merit of Christ's righteousness and atonement; for we were chosen to salvation in him as members of his mystic body, and through him, as our surety, and substitute , by whose vicarious obedience to the moral law, and submission to its

curse and penalty, all we, whose names are in the book of life, should never incur the divine hatred or be punished for our sins, but continue to eternity as we were from eternity, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. But still the divine grace and favour (and God extends these to whom he will) must be considered as what gave birth to the glorious scheme of redemption, according to what our Lord himself teaches us, John iii. 16. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, & c.; and that of the apostle, 1 John iv. 9. In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that he sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him.

Pos. 14. Since this absolute will of God is both immutable and omnipotent, we infer that the salvation of every one of the elect is most infallibly certain, and can by no means be prevented. This necessarily follows from what we have already asserted and proved concerning the divine will, which, as it cannot be disappointed or made void, must undoubtedly secure the salvation of all whom God wills should be saved.

From the whole of what has been delivered under this second head, I would observe that the genuine tendency of these truths is, not to make men indolent and careless, or lull them to sleep on the lap of presumption and carnal security, but, 1. To fortify the people of Christ against the attacks of unbelief and the insults of their spiritual enemies. And what is so fit to guard them against these as the comfortable persuasion of God's unalterable will to save them, and of their unalienable interest in the sure mercies of David? 2. To withdraw them entirely from all dependence, whether on themselves or any creature whatever; to make them renounce their own righteousness no less than their sins, in point of reliance, and to acquiesce sweetly and safely in the certain perpetuity of his rich favour. 3. To excite them, from a trust of his goodwill towards them, to love that God who hath given such great and numberless proofs of his love to men; and in all their thoughts, words, to aim, as much as possible, at his honour and glory. We were to consider.

III. The unchangeableness which is essential to himself and his decrees.

Pos. 1. God is essentially unchangeable in himself. Were he otherwise, he would be confessedly imperfect; since whoever changes must change either for the better or for the worse: whatever alteration any being undergoes, that being must, *ipso facto,* either become more excellent than it was, or lose some of the excellency, which it had. But neither of these can be the case with the Deity: he cannot change for the better, for that would necessarily imply that he was not perfectly good before; he cannot change for the worst, for then he could not be

perfectly good after that change. *Ergo,* God is unchangeable. And this is the uniform voice of Scripture. Mal. iii. 6. I am the Lord: I change not. James i. 17. With him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Psalm cii. 27. Thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.

Pos. 2. God is likewise absolutely unchangeable with regard to his purposes and promises. Numb. xxiii. 19. God is not a man that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it; or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? 1 Sam. xv. 29. The strength of Israel will not lie nor repent; for he is not a man that he should repent .

Job xxiii. 13. He is in one mind, and who can turn him? Exek. xxiv.14. I, the Lord, have spoken it; it shall come to pass, and I will do it: I will not go back, neither will I spare, neither will I repent. Rom. xi. 29. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance. 2 Tim. ii. 13. He abideth faithful, and cannot deny himself.

By the purpose of decree of God we mean his determinate counsel, whereby he did from all eternity preordain whatever he should do, or what permit to be done, in time. In particular, it signifies his everlasting appointment of some men to life and of others to death; which appointment flows entirely from his own free and sovereign will. Rom. ix. The children not yet being born, neither having done any good or evil (that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth), it was said, the elder shall serve the younger; as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

The apostle then, in the very next words, anticipates an objection which he foresaw men of corrupt minds would make to this: What shall we say, then? is there unrighteousness with God? which he answers with, God forbid! and resolves the whole of God's precedure with his creatures into his own sovereign and independent will: for he said to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

We assert that the decrees of God are not only immutable as to himself, it being inconsistent with his nature to alter in his purposes or change his mind, but that they are immutable likewise with respect to the ob jects of those decrees: so that whatsoever God hath determined concerning every individual person or thing shall surely and infallibly be accomplished in and upon them. Hence we find that he actually sheweth mercy on whom he decreed to shew mercy, and hardeneth whom he resolved to harden: Rom. ix. 18. For his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure: Isa. xlvi. 10. Consequently his eternal predestination of men and things must be immutable as himself, and, so far

from being reversible, can never admit of the least variation.

Pos. 3 Although, to use the words of Gregory, ***"God never swerves from his decree, yet he often varies in his declarations:"***

That is always sure and immoveable; these are sometimes seemingingly discordant. So when he gave sentence against the Ninevites by Jonah, saying, ***"Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown,"*** the meaning of the words is, not that God absolutely intended, at the end of that space, to destroy the city, but that, should God deal with those people according to their deserts, they would be totally extirpated from the earth; and should be so extirpated unless they repented speedily.

Likewise when he told king Hezekiah, by the prophet Isaiah, ***"Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live;"*** the meaning was that, with respect to second causes, and considering the king' s bad state of health and emiciated constitution, he could not, humanly speaking, live much longer. But still the event shewed that God had immutably determined that he should live fifteen years more; and, in order to that, had put it into his heart to pray for the blessing decreed; just as in the case of Nineveh lately mentioned, God had resolved not to overthrow that city then; and, in order to the accomplishment of his own purpose in a way worthy of himself, made the ministry of Jonah the means of leading that people to repentance. All which, as it shews that God's absolute predestination does not set aside the use of means, so does it likewise prove that, however various the declaration of God may appear (to wit, when they proceed on a regard had to natural causes), his counsels and designs stand firm and immoveable, and can neither admit of alteration in themselves, nor hindrance in their execution. See this farther explained by Bucer, in Rom. ix., where you will find the certainty of the divine appointments solidly asserted and unanswerably vindicated.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 2005

Carla Horton, VA	5.00
Polly Sizemore, WVA	5.00
J.C. Chandler, NC	5.00
Grace Locke, KY	5.00
Patsy Mitchell, TX	5.00
Inez Gearner, TX	2.00
Tina Walker, MS	15.00
Edna Shipman, TX	5.00
Dorothy Yates, VA	5.00
L.C. Hornsby, GA	5.00
Nellie Dalton, VA	5.00
P.T. Phillips, VA	5.00
Ellen Sellars, CA	3.00
J. C. Carroll, NC	35.00
Edwin Dyer, VA	5.00
Lloyd Spikes, OR	10.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER ELLEN M. ADAMS

With sorrow for our loss but joy for her great gain, we record the death of a beloved sister in Christ, Annie Ellen Martin Adams, at the age of 88.

Sister Ellen was born in Rockingham County, N. C. on May 2, 1916, a daughter of the late Elder Benjamin H. Martin and Mary Susan Hopkins Martin.

On December 17, 1932 she was united in marriage to the late James Lester Adams. To their union were born five sons: David, Lenwood (who preceded her in death), Troy, Roger and Lonnie Adams. The entire family settled in the Henry County community of Sanville, near Bassett.

Sister Ellen was a devoted wife, mother and homemaker. She took her mother-in-law into the home with her family, and cared for her for several years. She did not hold a public job until the last five years before her retirement age. Truly, ***"Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her" (Prov. 31:28).***

She and Brother Lester shared many things together most particularly their religious experience. They were brought under conviction close to the same time; both asked for a home with Liberty Church in July 1967, and were baptized together by the late Elder Bennie Clifton and her dad, Elder Ben Martin. Two months later, Brother Adams was ordained deacon, together with two other brethren. He served in that capacity for four years, and died in the Fall of 1971.

For the balance of her life on earth. Sister Ellen was a faithful and devoted member of Liberty Church. No one who knew her well ever had to wonder about her love for the Lord and for her home church. Her good example of godly conduct and her wise counsel in church affairs were highly regarded by all her brethren and sisters. She attended our meetings regularly until her physical strength was gone and afterwards she maintained a lively interest in all church-related activities.

Sister Ellen died at the hospital in Martinsville on September 26. 2004. Her funeral service was held at Collins Funeral Chapel on September 29. and was conducted by Elder John Lee and her pastor. Elder John Wingfield. Her mortal body was laid to rest beside the remains of Brother Lester in the Old Center Church Cemetery. The writer feels justified in saying that she died the death of the righteous, and sleeps the peaceful sleep of the redeemed.

In addition to her sons. Sister Ellen was survived by their wives. Bea., Carol, Patricia, and Marcia Adams; a beloved former daughter-in-law. Mrs. Moyer (Peggy) Merriman; three brothers. Harry, Benny, and Jerry Martin; one sister, Dora M. Adams; ten grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren.

This memorial record was authorized by Liberty Church in con-

ference, the 4th day of December, 2004.

Elder John T. Wingfield, Mod.
Bro. Paul A. Puckett, Clerk

SISTER DORA M. ADAMS

At the request of Liberty Primitive Baptist Church, I will endeavor to record the life and death of our beloved sister in Christ, Dora Martin Adams. Sister Dora was born in Rockingham County, N. C. on October 5, 1917 and died in the hospital at Martinsville, Va. on November 22, 2004, at the age of 87. She was a daughter of the late Elder Benjamin H. Martin and Sister Mary Susan Hopkins Martin.

On December 22, 1934 she was united in marriage to Lemley Jackson Adams To their union were born eleven children, six of whom preceded her in death. Sister Dora never held a public job; her home, her family and her faith were her chief concerns in life. In her nature, she was very self-reliant, and thus a pillar of strength to her family. Her home was a delightful place to visit; she was always kind and hospitable.

Sister Dora joined at Liberty Church by experience the Ist Saturday in October 1967, and was baptized by the late Elder Bennie Clifton and her dad, Elder Ben Martin. She was a loyal and faithful member for 37 years, and was much respected for her honesty and integrity. Her heart and her hands were always open to her brethren and sisters.

When Sister Dora began losing her health, her decline was rapid. She dreaded the debilitating effects of disease, and the Lord mercifully shortened its course by taking her spirit home. She was preceded in death by her husband around thirty years ago, together with four sons, Elwood "Woodzie," Dale, Paul and Timothy Adams; and two daughters, Joan Marie and Linda Sue Adams. Her surviving children are: Mrs. W. D. (Doris) Hudson, and John, Carl, Noel and Daniel Adams, together with their companions.

She also left three brothers, Harry, Benny and Jerry Martin; sixteen grandchildren; fifteen great-grandchildren; and three step-grandchildren.

Her funeral service was conducted at Liberty Church by Elders Carl Terry and John Wingfield. after which her mortal body was laid to rest beside that of her husband at Old Center Church Cemetery.

While we bow in humble submission to the Lord's will in removing Sister Dora from among us, we take comfort in the firm conviction that she peacefully sleeps in anticipation of a glorious resurrection.

As our custom is, we agreed to prepare three copies of this memorial: one for our church records, one for the family and one to be submitted to the Signsof the Times for publication.

Elder John T. Wingfield, Mod.
Bro. Paul A. Puckett, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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THE HOUSE OF GOD

O Come into the house of God,
The temple of our Lord;
Thou pilgrim of the earthly sod
What joy, what peace afford.

Tis here we come to worship him,
The author of our faith,
The finisher also to them -
His own, the Scripture saith.

Where two or three meet in my name,
I'm in the midst of them;
So does his holy word proclaim,
And prayer is made to him.

The word of truth is sweet to hear,
The gospel sound is great:
On wings of glory, he'll appear;
His mercies is made to him.

His gracious, heavenly love we crave
To save from shame of sin;
His holy, righteous life he gave
To blot the guilt we're in.

May we our hope in Christ defend
The sinner's race we run;
By faith we view our journey's end
Praise Father, praise the Son.

By Charles B. Osborne

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EDITORIAL

Elder R. H. Campbell

And David said. "What have I now done? Is there not a cause? (1 Sam. 17:29)

I have read this scripture many times, and I have always felt that it was a very important statement, containing much of the doctrine that is declared in all of scripture, but never felt to have any understanding of all that it contained. I may still not have any understanding, but it has arrested my mind of late, and I pray that I may be given light on it, for my own benefit, as well as for anyone else who has pondered its meaning. If not, I pray that I may be given the wisdom to discard my attempt to delve into things beyond my understanding. All of my writings are, in truth, written to myself. I originally began, and I continue to do so, to write in an attempt to get down on paper, in legible form, exactly what I believe about a subject. Many times, in my writing and research, on a subject I will arrive at a different understanding of the scripture than I had when I first began. If I succeed in my research to my own satisfaction, I may then submit it for publication, if not, I delete it, and this has happened many times in my attempts. My prayer is always that the Lord will direct me in making this decision in my efforts, for your benefit, and for mine.

These words were spoken, by David, at a very pivotal point in his life, although he was not aware of it, at the time. He was about to embark upon a race that had been set before him, long before he was born into the world of nature; and although he did not fully understand the meaning of what he was saying, he was made to realize from his experiences, that all things are for a purpose, and therefore this too had a specific cause. As I understand the scriptures, this was the way in which many of the prophets were given to tell of events that would come to pass, many years in the future, never realizing the full intent of that which they spoke. *(2 Peter 1:21) "For the prophecy*

came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

They were but declaring truths, as revealed unto them by the Holy Spirit, and they declared them, never fully realizing themselves, the full import of their prophecy. This is because they were written, to and for the benefit of future generations that they might see in the fulfilling of these prophecies, the handiwork of God in disposing of his will unto the heirs of promise. The apostle Paul said, ***(Rom 15:4) "For whatsoever things were written aforetime was written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."***

David's father, Jesse, had sent him to learn of the welfare of his brothers who were fighting in the battle, and to take cheeses to the captains of the host. At least, this was the purpose in the venture, as far as Jesse was concerned, but, there was a much deeper purpose of God, and although David quoted these words, he was unaware of what the cause, of which he spoke, was.

When David got to the battlefield, the Philistine, a giant of a man Goliath, came forth again and challenged the army of Israel to choose a man from their ranks to come and fight with him, and victory of the battle would be determined by the winner of that conflict. David was moved greatly by this experience, when he heard this challenge to the armies of Israel, and he inquired of the people saying, ***(1 Sam 17:26) "And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done for the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?"*** He was advised, by the people that the king would enrich the man who killed Goliath with great riches, give him his daughter to wife, and make his father's house free in Israel. David continued to turn from one to another asking them this same question.

David's interest in this situation, and his reason for asking what would be done for the man who killed the philistine, was not that he might profit by it, but his anger was aroused, that Goliath had assailed the honor of the God of Israel, as he stated on one occasion, ***(Psa 139:21-22) "Do not I hate them, O Lord that hate thee? And am I not grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies."*** This is the attitude of all who have been given faith to see the beauty of the spiritual kingdom, and they will have a feeling of personal animosity for anyone who would attack those things which are so precious to them. This is why David so violently opposed this Phi-

listine: his challenge was to the armies of Israel; and the children of God will always take this very personally and oppose it.

Because of his actions Eliab, his oldest brother, rebuked him and asked him, *"Why camest thou down hither? And with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle."* And it was this rebuke that prompted David to say, *"What I have now done is there not a cause."*As far as David was concerned, he was only giving an answer to Eliab's question, but in truth, as it is in many situations such as this, that which seems to be the cause, on the surface, is not the real issue at all. David did not realize that what he was doing was in fact, prophesying to the generations to come, a truth that would be of great comfort to them of how God works all things according to the counsel of his own will. It gives them great comfort and supports their faith when their own personal situation seems bleak and unsolvable, because it makes them realize that God is in control of all things, at all times, whether they realize it or not.

It is in this manner, according to my understanding, that all of prophesy has been revealed, down through the ages unto the prophets. There was a purpose to be dealt with, and the inspiration was given to them, of God, to declare the truth, concerning future events that Israel may know that they are of God. *(2 Peter 1:24) "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."* They were not fully aware of the full meaning of those things that they were saying, but it would be understood by the generations following: those who were alive in the time that the prophecy was fulfilled, and they would be greatly blessed by seeing the end results. As on one occasion, God said by the mouth of one of the prophets, *"If the thing prophesied comes to pass, then you will know that it is of me. If not, you will know that he speaks of himself,"* and this is their assurance that their problems too, are in the hands of God.

These prophecies are the foundation upon which their faith in God is based. This belief was expressed by the apostle Paul many times such as, *(Rom 8:31) "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"* And again Isaiah said, *(Isa 54:17) "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise up against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righ*teousness is of me, saith the Lord." These scriptures are comforting indeed to those

who believe that their only hope of salvation is by the grace of God, that these things are true, and that these scriptures are a personal assurance unto them that they are involved in them. With this evidence, which is given them by faith, they can face their own personal trials and tribulations, without fear, believing that for all things which come to pass, there is a cause, that it is of God and is for their eternal good.

When the words of David were rehearsed before Saul, he sent for him and David said to Saul ***"Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine."*** Saul's response was, ***"Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for thou art but a youth, and he is a man of war from his youth."*** David then said, ***(I Sam 17:34-36) "Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: And I went out after him and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by the beard, and smote him and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God."*** This was sufficient evidence for Saul to cause him to believe that this was indeed of God and therefore he said unto David, ***"David, Go, and the Lord be with thee."*** Saul wanted to arm David with the armor and weaponry of the soldiers, to go up against Goliath, but David said that he could not go forth with them because he had not proved them. David's faith was that God would give the victory without man made weapons of war.

David then took his staff, chose five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in his shepherd's bag. He then took his sling and went forth to meet Goliath, confident that God would deliver him, and I say this because, when he confronted Goliath he said, ***(I Sam 17:46) "This day, will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel."*** Now, the real cause, of which David spoke, was made manifest, although it was unknown by him at the time he said it. The scriptures do not say what David thought when the deliverance came, but in retrospect, it must have been of great comfort and joy to David to realize that God was with him in this battle, as he had been in all of his battles.

Surely it was upon the memories of these seasons of deliverance that he was blessed to say, in his final days. ***(2 Sam23:1-5) "Now these be the last words of David.***

David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel said, The spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of the God. And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain. Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." This is a most beautiful testimony of one, who was a man after God's own heart, who expresses the very essence of his faith in such a manner that it renders all of the glory and honor unto God, the Rock upon which the plan of salvation rests.

I believe that it was in like manner that the three Hebrew children faced the trial of the fiery furnace, or Daniel faced the lion's den, and surely they must have experienced the same elation as they experienced the fulfillment of their deliverance. We would say, Oh, I could not do that, my faith is too weak. Well, you could in the same manner that they did, because it is always of God, as the apostle Paul said, *(Phil 4:13) "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth Me."* and this scripture still holds true today, for Christ was there even as he is with the saints today.

I believe that these experiences occur many times, in the lives of God's children, even in this day and age, when those who are sent about their Father's business, go not knowing, what the outcome may be, nor where it may lead. They go in faith, believing that there is a cause, even as David did; though they do not really understand the purpose in the calling. I believe this to be true, particularly in the calling of his ministers; the impression is there to go yet they cannot really believe or understand it to be possible, seeing themselves as they are in nature.

I read a column in the daily newspaper one time, written by one of the worlds most famous evangelists of our time, where the question was asked, ***"How does a man know that he is called, of God, to preach?"*** His answer was, simply, "you'll know", and added no further information. I agreed more with him on his answer to this question than I have ever agreed with him on any of his other writings that I have read. Only if you have experienced it, will you understand fully the truth of his answer. You will question the calling, but the impression is there, and will not let you rest until it is accomplished, and you have no choice

in the matter. I believe that it was in this way that David prophesied as he did; he was given an impression, although he did not fully understand it; and therefore he certainly could not have explained it to his brother, in any way that he would understand.

I believe that Elihu, once explained how these occurrences enter the lives of men, when he said, *(Job 33:14-17) "For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in the slumberings upon the bed; Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man."* In this manner, the will of the Lord is accomplished in the affairs of men, and they are not even aware of how and why these things are wrought in them. They proceed to perform them, unaware that it is God working in them both the will and the do of his good pleasure, and as the work unfolds, they are made to marvel at the power and wisdom which God gives unto men, because they know that it is not of themselves that these things are accomplished.

Many times, as I enter the church building, before services, I utter a silent prayer, *"Oh Lord go with me this day, that I may have some assurance that it is of thee, that it will be profitable unto someone, and is not just from the vanity of the flesh."* How many times have you said unto yourself, *"Oh Lord, what I am now doing, or am about to do, give me the strength, courage and the assurance that it is of thee, that there is a cause, and that it will be profitable to someone, sometime, in the household of faith."*

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

OBSERVATIONS ON THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES
BY AUGUSTUS M. TOPLADY
1740-1778

We now come, to consider the omnipotence of God.

Pos.1. God is, in the most unlimited and absolute sense of the word, Almighty. Jer. xxxii. 17. Behold, thou has made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee. Mat. xix. 26. With God all things are possible. The schoolmen very properly distinguish the omnipotence of God into absolute and actual: by the former, God might do many things, which he does not; by the latter, he actually does whatever he will. For instance, God might, by virtue of his absolute power, have made more worlds than he has. He might have eternally saved every individual of mankind, without reprobating any: on the other hand he might, and that with

the strictest justice, have condemned all men, and saved none. He could, had it been his pleasure, have prevented the fall of angels and men, and thereby have hindered sin from having footing in and among his creatures. By virtue of this actual power he made the universe; executes the whole counsel of his will both in heaven and earth; governs and influences both men and things, according to his own pleasure; fixes the bounds which they shall not pass; and, in a word, worketh all in all: Isa. xlv. 7. Amos iii. 6. John v. 17. Acts xvii. 26. 1 Cor. xii. 6.

Pos 2. Hence it follows that, since all things are subject to the divine control, God not only works efficaciously on his elect, in order that they may will and do that which is pleasing in his sight; but does likewise frequently and powerfully suffer the wicked to fill up the measure of their iniquities by committing fresh sins. Nay, he sometimes, but for wise and gracious ends, permits his own people to transgress; for he has the hearts and wills of all men in his hand, and inclines them to good, or delivers them up to evil, as he sees fit: yet without being the author of sin; as Luther, Bucer, Austin, and others have piously and scripturally taught.

This position consists of two parts: (1.) That God efficaciously operates on the hearts of his elect, and is thereby the sole author of all the good they do. See Eph. iii. 20. Phil. ii.13.1 Thes. ii.13. Heb. xiii. 21. St. Austin takes up no fewer than nineteen chapters in proving that whatever good is in men, and whatever good they are enabled to do is solely and entirely of God; who, says he, *"works in holy persons, all their good desires, their pious thoughts, and their righteous actions; and yet these holy persons, though thus wrought upon by God, will and do all these things freely: for it is he who rectifies their wills which, being originally evil, are made good by him; and which wills, after he hath set them right and made them good, he directs to good actions and to eternal life; wherein he does not force their wills but makes them willing."* (2.) That God often lets the wicked go on to more ungodliness: which he does, 1. Negatively, by withholding that grace which alone can restrain them from evil. 2. Remotely, by the providential concourse and meditation of second causes; which second causes, meeting and acting in concert with the corruption of the probate's unregenerate nature, produce sinful effects. 3. Judicially, or in a way of Judgment. Prov. xxi. 1. The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of waters; he turneth it whithersoever he will; and if the king's heart, why not the hearts of all men? Lam. iii. 38. Out of the mouth of the Most High proceeded not evil and good? Hence we find that the Lord bid Shimei curse

David, 2 Sam. xvi. 10. That he moved David himself to number the people, compare 1 Chron. xxi. 1 with 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. Stirred up Joseph's brethren to sell him into Egypt, Gen. 34, 20. Positively and immediately hardened the heart of Pharaoh, Ex. iv. 21. Delivered up David's wives to be defiled to Absalom, 2 Sam. xii. 11. and xvi. 22. Sent a lying spirit to deceive Ahab, 1 Kings xxii. 20-23.

And mingled a perverse spirit in the midst of Egypt, i.e. made that nation perverse, obdurate and stiff-necked, Isa. xix. 14. To cite other instances would be almost endless, and, after these, quite unnecessary; all being summed up in that express passage, Isaiah xlv. 7, I make peace and create evil; I the Lord do all these things. See farther 1 Sam. xvi. 14. Psalm cv. 25. Jer. xiii. 12, 13. Acts ii. 23 and iv. 28. Rom. xi. 8.2 Thess. ii. 11. Every one of which implies more than a bare permission of sin. Bucer asserts this, not only in the place referred to below, but continually throughout his works: particularly on Matt. vi. 2, where this is the sense of his comments on that petition, Lead us not into temptation; *"It is abundantly evident, from most express testimonies of Scripture, that God occasionally in the course of his providence, puts both elect and reprobate persons into circumstances of temptation: by which temptation are meant, not only those trials that are of an outward, afflictive nature; but those also that are inward and spiritual; even such as shall cause the persons so tempted actually to turn aside from the path of duty, to commit sin, and involve both themselves and others in evil, Hence we find the elect complaining, Isa. lxiii. 17. O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our hearts from thy fear? But there is also a kind of temptation which is peculiar to the non-elect; whereby God, in a way of just judgment, makes them totally blind and obdurate in as much as they are vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," See also his exposition of Rom. ix.*

Luther reasons to the very same effect; some of his words are these; *"It may seem absurd to human wisdom that God should harden, blind, and deliver up some men to a reprobate sense; that he should first deliver them over to evil, and then condemn them for that evil: but the believing spiritual man sees no absurdity at all in this; knowing that God would be never a whit less good even though he should destroy all men,"* and again *"God worketh all things in all men; even wickedness in the wicked: for this is one branch of his own omnipotence."* He very properly explains how God may be said to harden men, & c. and yet not be the author of their sin: *"It is not to be understood,"* says he, *"as if God found men good, wise*

and tractable, and then made them wicked, foolish and obdurate, but God, finding them depraved, judicially and powerfully excites them just as they are (unless it is his will to regenerate any of them) and, by thus exciting them, they become more blind and obstinate than they were before." See this whole subject debated at large in the places last referred to Pos. 3. God, as the primary and efficient cause of all things, is not only the author of those actions done by his elect as actions, but also as they are good actions; whereas, on the other hand, though he may be said to be the author of all the actions done by the wicked, yet he is not the author of them in a moral and compound sense, as they are sinful; but physically, simply, and, *sensudiviso*, as they are mere actions, abstractedly from all consideration of the goodness or badness of them.

Although there is no action whatever which is not in some sense either good or bad, yet we can easily conceive of an action purely as such without adverting to the quality of it; so that the distinction between the action itself, and its denomination of good or evil, is very obvious and natural.

In and by the elect, therefore, God not only produces works and actions through his almighty power, but likewise through the salutary influences of his Spirit, first makes their persons good, and then their actions so too; but in and by the reprobate he produces actions by his power alone; which actions, as neither issuing from faith, nor being wrought with a view to the divine glory, nor done in the manner prescribed by the divine word, are, on these accounts, properly denominated evil. Hence we see that God does not immediately and *per* se, infuse iniquity into the wicked; but, as Luther expresses it, powerfully excites them to action, and withholds those gracious influences of his Spirit, without which every action is necessarily evil. That God, either directly or remotely, excites bad men as well as good ones to action, cannot be denied by any but atheists, or by those who carry their notions of freewill and human independency so high as to exclude the Deity from all actual operation in and among his creatures, which is little short of atheism. Every work performed, whether good or evil, is done in strength and by the power derived immediately from God himself, in whom all men live, move, and have their being, Acts xvii. 28. As at first without him was not any thing made which was made; so now without him is not any thing done which is done. We have no power or faculty, whether corporeal or intellectual, but what we received from God, subsists by him, and is exercised in subserviency to his will and appointment. It is he who created, preserves, actuates and directs all things. But it by no means follows

from these premises that God is therefore the cause of sin; for sin is nothing but illegality, want of conformity to the divine law, 1 John iii. 4, a mere privation of rectitude: consequently, being itself a thing purely negative, it can have no positive or efficient cause, but only a negative and deficient one, as several learned men have observed.

Every action, as such, is undoubtedly good; it being an actual exertion of those operative powers given us by God for that very end; God therefore may be the author of all actions (as he undoubtedly is), and yet not be the author of evil. An action is constituted evil three ways; by proceeding from a wrong principle, by being directed to a wrong end, and by being done in a wrong manner. Now, though God, as we have said, is the efficient cause of our actions, as actions, yet if these actions commence sinful, that sinfulness arises from ourselves. Suppose a boy who knows not how to write has his hand guided by his master, and nevertheless makes false letters, quite unlike the copy set him; though his preceptor who guides his hand is the cause of his writing at all, yet his own ignorance and unskillfulness are the cause of his writing so badly. Just so, God is the supreme author of our action, abstractedly taken; but our own virtuosity is the cause of our acting amiss.

I shall conclude this article with two or three observations. And, (1) I would infer that if we would maintain the doctrine of God's omnipotence we must insist upon that of his universal agency: the latter cannot be denied without giving up the former. Disprove that he is almighty, and then we will grant that his influence and operations are limited and circumscribed. Luther says *"God would not be a respectable being, if he were not almighty, and the doer of all things that are done; or if any thing could come to pass in which he had no hand."* God has at least a physical influence on whatsoever is done by his creatures, whether trivial or important, good or evil. Judas as truly lived, moved, and had his being from God as Peter; and satan himself as much as Gabriel; for to say that sin exempts the sinner from the divine government and jurisdiction is abridging the power of God with a witness; nay, is raising it from its very foundation.

(2) This doctrine of God's omnipotence has a native tendency to awaken in our hearts that reverence for, and fear of, the divine majesty which none can either receive or retain but those who believe him to be infinitely powerful, and to work all things after the counsel of his own will. This godly fear is a sovereign antidote against sin; for if I really believe that God by his unintermitted operation upon my soul produces actions in me, which, being simply good, receive their malignancy from the corruption of my

nature (and even those works that stand opposed to sins are more or less infected with this moral leprosy); and if I consider that, should I yield myself a slave to actual iniquity, God can, and justly might, as he has frequently done by others, give me up to a reprobate mind and punish one sin by leaving me to the commission of another; surely such reflections as these must fill me with awful apprehensions of the divine purity, power and greatness, and make me watch continually, as well against the inward risings as the outward appearance of evil.

(3) This doctrine is also useful, as it tends to inspire us with true humility of soul; and to lay us as impotent dust and ashes at the feet of sovereign omnipotence. It teaches us, what too many are ignorant of, the blessed lesson of self despair; i.e. that in a state of unregeneracy our wisdom is folly, our strength weakness, and our righteousness worth nothing: that therefore we can do nothing either to the glory of God or the spiritual benefit of ourselves and others but through the ability which he giveth; that in him our strength lieth, and from him all our help must come. Supposing we believe that whatsoever is done below or above God doeth it himself; that all things depend, both as to their being and operation, upon his omnipotent arm and mighty support; that we cannot even sin, much less do any good thing, if he withdraw his aid; and that all men are in his hand, as clay in the hand of the potter; I say, did we really believe all these points, and see them in the light of the Divine Spirit, how can it be reasonably supposed that we can wax insolent against this great God, behave contempestuously and superciliously in the world, or boast of anything we have or do ? Luther informs us, that he, "used to be frequently much offended at this doctrine because it drove him to self-despair; but that he afterwards found that this sort of despair was salutary and profitable, and near akin to divine grace."

4) We are hereby taught not only humility before God, but likewise dependence on him, and resignation to him. For if we are thoroughly persuaded that of ourselves, and in our own strength, we cannot do either good or evil; but that being originally created by God we are incessantly supported, moved, influenced and directed by him, this way or that, as he pleases; the natural inference hence will be that with simple faith we cast ourselves entirely, as on the bosom of his providence, commit all our care and solicitude to his hand; praying without hesitation or reserve that his will may be done in us, on us, and by us, and that in all his dealings with us he may consult his own glory alone. This holy passiveness is the very apex of Christianity. All the desires of our great Redeemer himself were reducible to these two; that the will of God might be done,

and that the glory of God might be displayed. These were the highest and supreme marks at which he aimed throughout the whole course of his spotless life and inconceivably tremendous sufferings. Happy, thrice happy that man, who hath thus far attained the mind that was in Christ.

(5) The comfortable belief of this doctrine has a tendency to excite and keep alive within us that fortitude which is so ornamental to, and necessary for, us while we abide in this wilderness. For if I believe with the apostle that all things are of God. 2 Cor. v. 18, I shall be less liable to perturbation when afflicted, and learn more easily to possess my soul in patience. This was Job's support: he was not overcome with rage and despair when he received news that the Sabers had carried off his cattle and slain his servants, and that the remainder of both were consumed with fire; that the Chaldeans had robbed him of his camels; and that his seven sons were crushed to death by the falling of the house where they were sitting: he resolved all these misfortunes into the agency of God, his power and sovereignty, and even thanked him for doing what he would with his own Job. i. 21. If another should slander me in word, or injure me in deed, I shall not be prone to anger when, with David, I consider that the Lord hath bidden him, 2 Sam. xvi. 10.

(6) This should stir us up to fervent and incessant prayer. For does God work powerfully and benignly in the hearts of his elect? And is he the sole cause of every action they do, which is truly and spiritually good? Then it should be our prayer that he would work in us likewise both to will and to do of his good pleasure: and if, on self-examination, we find reason to trust that some good thing is wrought in us, it should put us upon thankfulness unfeigned, and cause us to glory, not in ourselves, but in him. On the other hand, does God manifest his displeasure against the wicked by blinding, hardening, and giving them up to perpetrate iniquity with greediness? Which judicial acts of God are both punishments for their sin and also eventual additions to it? We should be the more incited to deprecate these tremendous evils, and to beseech the king of heaven that he would not thus lead us into temptation. So much concerning the omnipotence of God. I shall now,

(V. Take notice of his justice.

vs.1. God is infinitely, absolutely and unchangeably just.

The justice of God may be considered either immanently, as it is in himself, which is, properly speaking, the same with his holiness; or transiently and relatively, as it respects his right conduct towards his creatures, which is properly justice. By the former he is all that is holy, just and good; the latter manifests him to be so in all his dealings with angels and men. For the first see

Deut. xxxii. 4. Psa. xcii. 15; for the second, Job viii. 3. Psalm. cxlv. 17. Hence it follows that whatever God either wills or does, however it may at first sight seem to clash with our ideas of right and wrong, cannot really be unjust. It is certain that for a season he sorely afflicted his righteous servant Job; and on the other hand enriched the Sabeans, an infidel and lawless nation, with a profusion of wealth and a series of success; before Jacob and Esau were born, or had done either good or evil, he loved and chose the former and reprobated the latter; He gave repentance to Peter and left Judas to perish in his sin: and as in all ages, so to this day he hath mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth. In all which he acts most justly and righteously, and there is no iniquity with him.

Pos. 2. The Deity may be considered in a threefold view: as God of all, as Lord of all, and as Judge of all.

(1) As God of all, he created, sustains, and exhilarates the whole universe; causes his sun to shine, and his rain to fall upon the evil and the good, Matt. v. And is the pre - server of all men, 1 Tim. iv. 19 .For as he is infinitely and supremely good, so also is he communicative of his goodness; as appears not only from his creation of all things, but especially from his providential benignity. Every thing has its being from him, as Creator; and its well-being from him as a bountiful preserver. (2) As Lord or sovereign of all, he does as he will (and has a most unquestionable right to do so) with his own; and in particular fixes and determines the everlasting state of every individual person as he sees fit. It is essential to absolute sovereignty that the sovereign have it in his power to dispose of those over whom his jurisdiction extends just as he pleases, without being accountable to any; and God, whose authority is unbounded, none being exempt from it, may, with the strictest holiness and justice, love or hate, elect or reprobate, save or destroy any of his creatures whether human or angelic, according to his own free pleasure and sovereign purpose. (3) As Judge of all he ratifies what he does as Lord, by rendering to all according to their works; by punishing the wicked, and rewarding those whom it was his will to esteem righteous and to make holy.

Pos. 3. Whatever things God wills or does, are not willed and done by him because they were, in their own nature, and previously to his willing them, just and right; or because, from their intrinsic fitness, he ought to will and do them; but they are therefore just, right and proper, because He who is holiness itself wills and does them.

Hence Abraham looked upon it as a righteous action to slay his innocent son. Why did he so esteem it? Because the law of God authorized murder? No; for on the con-

trary both the law of God, and the law of nature peremptorily forbad it: but the holy patriarch well knew that the will of God is the only rule of justice, and that what he pleases to command is on that very account just and righteous. It follows:

Pos. 4. That although our works are to be examined by the revealed will of God and be denominate materially good or evil, as they agree or disagree with it; yet the works of God himself cannot be brought to any test whatever; for his will being the grand universal law, he himself cannot be, properly speaking, subject to, or obliged by, any law superior to that. Many things are done by him (such as choosing and reprobating men) without any respect had to their works; suffering people to fall into sin, when if it so pleased him, he might prevent it; leaving many backsliding professors to go on to perish in their apostacy, when it is in the divine power to sanctify and set them right; drawing some of his grace, and permitting many others to future misery whom, if he pleased, he could undoubtedly save, with innumerable instances of the like nature (which might be mentioned, and which, if done by us, would be apparently unjust, inasmuch as they would not square with the revealed will of God, which is the great and only safe rule of our practice. But, when he does these and such like things, they cannot but be holy, equitable, and worthy of himself; for since his will is essentially and unchangeably just, whatever he does in consequence of that will must be just and good likewise. From what has been delivered under this fifth head I would infer, that they who deny the power God has of doing as he will with his creatures, and exclaim against unconditional decrees, as cruel, tyrannical, and unjust; either know not what they say nor whereof they affirm; or are willful blasphemers of his name, and perverse rebels against his sovereignty: to which at last, however unwillingly, they will be forced to submit.

I shall conclude this introduction with briefly considering in the,

Sixth and last place, the mercy of God.

Pos. 1. The Deity is throughout the Scriptures represented as infinitely gracious and merciful. Exod. xxxiv. y. Mehem. ix. 17. Psalm ciii. 8. 1 Pet. i. 3.

When we call the divine mercy infinite, we do not mean that it is in a way of grace extended to all men without exception (and supposing it was, even then it would be very improperly denominated infinite on that account, since the objects of it, though all men taken together, would not amount to a multitude strictly and properly infinite), but that his mercy towards his own elect, as it knew no beginning, so is it infinite in duration, and shall know neither period nor intermission.

Pos. 2. Mercy is not in the Deity as it is in us, a passion, or affection;

every thing of that kind being incompatible with the purity, perfection, independency and unchangeableness of his nature; but, when this attribute is predicated of him, it only notes his free and eternal will or purpose of making some of the fallen race happy, by delivering them from the guilt and dominion of sin, and communicating himself to them in a way consistent with his own inviolable justice, truth and holiness. This seems to be the proper definition of mercy, as it relates to the spiritual and eternal good of those who are its objects. But it should be observed.

Pos 3. That the mercy of God, taken in its more large and indefinite sense, may be considered, (1) as general, (2) as special.

His general mercy is no other than what we commonly call his bounty, by which he is more or less providentially good to all mankind, both elect and non elect: Matt. v. 45 Luke vi. 35. Acts xiv. 17; and vie. 25, 28. By his special mercy, he, as Lord of all, hath in a spiritual sense compassion on as many of the fallen race as are the objects of his free and eternal favor: the effects of which special mercy are the redemption and justification of their persons, through the satisfaction of Christ; the effectual vocation, regeneration and sanctification of them by his Spirit; the infallible and final preservation of them in a state of grace on earth; and their everlasting glorification in heaven.

Pos. 4. There is no contradiction, whether real or seeming, between these two assertions, (1) That the blessings of grace and glory are peculiar to those whom God hath in his decree of predestination set apart for himself; and (2) That the gospel declaration runs that whosoever will may take of the water of life freely, Rev. ixia. 17. Since, in the first place, none can will or unfeigned and spiritually desire a part in these privileges but those whom God previously makes willing and desirous; and secondly, that he gives this will to, and excites this desire in, none but his own elect.

Pos. 5. Since ungodly men, who are totally and finally destitute of divine grace, cannot know what this mercy is, nor form any proper apprehensions of it, much less by faith embrace and rely upon it, for themselves; and since daily experience, as well as the Scriptures of truth, teaches us, that God doth not open the eyes of the reprobate as he doth the eyes of his elect, nor saintly enlighten their understandings; it evidently follows that his mercy was never, from the very first, designed for them, neither will it be applied to them: but, both in designation and application, is proper and peculiar to those only who are predestinated to life; as it is written, the election hath obtained, and the rest were blinded, Rom. axe. 7.

Pos. 6. The whole work of salvation, together with every thing that is in ode to it, or stands in connec-

tion with it, is sometimes in scripture comprised under the single term mercy; to show that mere love and absolute grace were the grand cause why the elect are saved, and that all merit, worthiness and good qualifications of theirs were entirely excluded from having any influence on the divine will, why they should be chosen, redeemed, and glorified, above all others. When it is said, Rom. ix. He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, it is as much as if the apostle had said, *"God elected, ransomed, justified, regenerates sanctifies and glorifies whom he pleases:"* everyone of these great privileges being briefly summed up, and virtually included in that comprehensive phrase, *"He hath mercy."*

Pos. 7. It follows that whatever favor is bestowed on us; whatever good thing is in us, or wrought by us; whether in will, word, or deed: and whatever blessings else we receive from God, from election quite home to glorification, all proceed, merely and entirely, from the good pleasure of his will, and his mercy towards us in Christ Jesus, To him, therefore, the praise is due, who put the difference between man and man, by having compassion on some and not on others.

Psalm 50:6.

And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself. Selah.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. (psa. 34:19).

What a wonderful consolation is found in this statement. Of one thing we are certain, the Lord is not afflicting us because of our unrighteousness. This statement calls for comments in two ways at least. None of us feel that we are righteous, even Christ not excepting himself, And yet a wonderful meditation awaits he and she that has their mind staid on Him. As the sin bearer of His chosen flock, he was guilty by reason of our transgression on him; in His relationship with His father He was all fair, no spot in Him.

It is my own feeling that in the text, He is speaking of His people and the tender relationship that exists between He and them. In the outset let us ever remember that:

Not from the dust afflictions grows
Nor troubles rise by chance.
Yet we are born to cares and woes;
A sad inheritance.

As sparks break out from burning coals,
and still are upwards borne,
So grief is rooted in our souls and man grows up to mourn.

When called upon to watch during the trying hours of our often

long night watches, we are inclined to feel that the reason of our afflictions is because that the Lord is displeased with us. Oh, no, no, not that. If His servants are righteous surely it is He that dwells in them as the Lord their righteousness. Whatever his dealing with us, it is then in righteousness. How bright the picture becomes as He teaches us that He loves us, and that all things given us are in love and in mercy given, and that not only are they given for our direct and immediate good, and that ultimately there can be no question, there can be no doubt but that it works together with every experience that we have for good and the glory of He whom we are His and He is ours.

I hope dear reader, that you have noted that these afflictions are many. How can that be? How is it that He esteems me righteous in that He gives me many of these tokens of His love. His messages that when each and every affliction has brought me to lose confidence in myself, then that He overwhelms me with His love by delivering us from every affliction.

I do not come to you in a scolding attitude. Oh, yes, my soul knows the sad lamentations of Jeremiah and Job. I have been hid behind the hedge when the sun has gone down, and the Lord has hid his face. I too have sent inquiries to Him, Art thou the Christ or shall we look for another. I know the long flickering, grotesque shadows when He is seemingly gone forever. But that is why I desire to write to you poor afflicted saint. If I am not mistaken I have felt the dismal feelings when He is eclipsed from my peering eyes, and my heartstrings are seemingly broken asunder because He is not present. But such a thing cannot be. If he is ours and we are His, sores and losses and crosses may multiply on our body and in our mind, but He is not gone. That will never be that cannot be. Oh, yes He seems to go, He seems to hide Himself from us, but that is an affliction sent in mercy to teach us our frailness, our dependence on Him.

Everything pertaining to life and godliness has been freely given. The thorn to Paul was at first hard to be borne, but when seen as an affliction from His Elder Brother to teach him, to wean him, strengthen him, then it was not a token of His displeasure, but a remembrance of the everlasting love of He that had called him out of darkness into His marvelous light.

Wisdom has indeed built her house. The wisdom of God has given his children every affliction. Not one of them has come by satan's hand, nor has God nor Christ nor the Holy Spirit sent one of them as punishment. Perish the thought. God the Holy One, the Perfect Rock who never made a mistake never sent an affliction on a righteous man or woman to punish he or she for their transgression. My soul knows right well better than that. This is a righ-

teous Father giving gifts to His obedient children for their instruction and teaching.

To the afflicted saint it would not do to belittle or to minimize their afflictions. At the time of enduring them, as it was with Paul in regard to the thorn in the flesh, it seems ofttimes, that their afflictions are far more than they can bear. How wonderful that Paul learned the intent of His Lord and Master. This dealing with Paul continued (and with us, if we are subjects of His work) and becomes more glorious as we explore the amazing blessings that were taught him. He says to Paul, For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God, for which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day, for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more and exceeding weight of glory (2 Cor. 4: 15, 17).

As the Lord prospers our investigation may we rejoice and be exceedingly glad with unspeakable joy and full of glory at the difference between what David sang long years ago and what the apostle affirmed two thousand years ago. We are not calling in question the number of afflictions of the righteous. They came in great numbers upon every member of that righteous nation whose God is the Lord. However, there is a so called system of salvation that makes a spurious claim that God's children bring afflictions, adversity, tribulations upon themselves by a neglection of their Christian duties. David did not say, many are the afflictions of the negligent and indifferent and careless. He did not say that. Why is it that in the face of the inspired evidence that this is not true, people continue to make this claim?

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory (11 Cor.4:17). Did you listen carefully to that? Did it strike a note of praise to your Redeemer God? Yes, we all that are experienced in the dealings of God with us, can readily agree with David that the afflictions of the righteous are many. There are many trials (God sent trials); there is a fiery trial accompanying each child of grace, but the sweetness of the morsels of the feeding time for the sheep, the unity, the togetherness of each delivered child, leads them to join in union of mind and heart as we survey the shortness of those moments of holy ecstasy. They are many, and yet they are light when attended by whispers of His love.

Let us go over that again. This is worth repeating time and again. These numerous afflictions come as a dark and gloomy cloud at times, but there is not a frown in a single one of them. There is not a time when all that occurred in the life of Paul of sorrow and trials and perse-

cutions and tribulations that anything was working against anyone at Corinth. Everything that occurred in the life of Paul, as he wrote these wonderful things that was against them. Perish that thought. Let it ring out loud and clear, as the song of the triumph in the hearts of God's humble poor. Let Mount Zion say, The Lord afflicts His children in love, and that each one of them is in mercy sent, and that every one of them is in the hands of our kind and gracious Father too good to make a mistake and too wise to err.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith, into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. And not only so but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us Rom. 5: 1, 5)

What an array of covenant blessings. Yet, if I had a nation of people under my thumb that I desired to herd them into prison and to deal with them in a harsh manner because of their shortcomings, I would not seek any further. But to the contrary, instead of sending hard tribulations upon them, our kind and gracious Father works right opposite to that way of doing business with them. This gracious God tells us that He has justified them by faith which He has given them. These poor sinners in His charge have peace freely bestowed upon them. And that is not all. They have access by faith into this grace wherein they stand (are now standing), and their hope of better things to come is founded in the glory of God. No poor sinner would ever think of asking more, but the good things the sweet mercy of God still comes stealing in upon us and we are indeed in wonderment and amazement. But there is more yet, Not only so, but we glory in tribulations also. Ah, dear brethren and sisters, What a great mercy it is to have Him on our side (Psa. 124). He is not the hard taskmaster that conditionalists would make Him out to be. Instead, behold how good and kind that He is to His poor weak children. Instead of sending tribulations for punishment for our shortcomings we have better news to tell you. God takes the things that seem so strongly entrenched against us, and we are found rejoicing in those things. Have you ever heard of anything better than that? Has any of the wild fire doctrines ever had the allurement and captivation of your mind like the doctrine of God's sovereign care for poor sinners? Tribulations are not an enemy to the saints of God when they are heaven sent. We glory in them, not in they themselves, but in what God brings out with and by them. I am an impa-

tient person. I am always in a hurry, always a minute man. But God has placed in my life, as I humbly hope and believe, tribulations, and they are as effectual to produce results, being sent, as I hope, by the Sovereign Ruler and in His hands they bring about, again, as I hope, some degree of patience. That much is good; no man has a better doctrine than that, but that is not all. The Lord always has supplied our needs, and He always will. With patience wrought effectually by the Strength of the Lord, any problem ceases to be a stumbling block and becomes a stepping stone to higher ground. Ah, what triumphs are brought about through patience. She is indeed a virtue unexcelled. Of course, we have the full weight of resourcefulness working on our side, and for us, and in us. She works an experience in the children, and those wrought in and wrought out experiences are never forgotten. In exchanging interviews about where we have been, and what we have been taught, are the things we have discussed when we remembered always and all the ways through which He has led us on.

With the cluster of blessings, all in the hand of He that loved us unto death, green fields of living verdure will be opened to us. That lovely gift from God's dealings with us will be in His hands to give us additional beauty to enjoy. This is all the mighty, and yet tender love of God in brightening our little hope. That is the best news of all other messages. To have our hope revived; to have the borders of the kingdom of heaven enlarged to where we are not ashamed, but rather blessed to lift our feeble voices in praise to He that has delivered, and, by reason of this revival, not afraid, nor not ashamed to claim a hope in the merits of the risen Lord.

And when the borders of the land of Israel are enlarged to you by reason of shedding in our hearts by the Holy Ghost the love of God, our hearts will be melted together in love to God our Father, Jesus Christ, our saviour, and the Holy Ghost, who is the only Teacher that Wisdom our mother has sent us.

Rejoice evermore, brethren,
Elder W. D. Griffin

From Elder Lamberts book,
"Tried In The Furnace",
CHARITY May, 1947

It is alarming to me when I am given to meditate upon the strife and confusion that exists in Zion today! It is heart-breaking to find brethren trying to devour and subdue one another! It makes me shudder to note the coldness that seems revelent in our own midst. All this perplexity of mind has made me to inquire the Lord for an understanding of His Spirit of love. May He define charity for us and make manifest that spirit in us.

Let us now consider the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians where Paul was inspired to write to the Church at Corinth on this grand subject. I realize the modern usage of the word is the giving of alms, but the 3rd verse of this chapter states the possibility of bestowing all goods to feed the poor, yet be destitute of charity. I am persuaded to believe that charity is the love of God, love of Christ, and love to saints. God loves us with a godly love. This same love is reciprocated and also includes Christ and the brethren. We love God because He first loved us. God's children do love one another. I think that Paul in the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians was blessed to treat upon the greatness of charity and its properties. He says, ***"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal."*** To be enabled to speak with the tongues of men is a natural gift from God, but to be able to speak with the tongues of angels is a spiritual gift from God. Man naturally cannot learn the language of the truth as pertaining to God and the holy Scriptures. Though a man be spiritually blessed to speak fluently and eloquently of the doctrine of God our Savior and have not charity, he is as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. If a person be blessed So that he can understand all mysteries and knowledge and have all faith both believing and doing miracles and have not charity, he is nothing. Paul does not mean that these gifts are nothing but that the man possessing these gifts is nothing, destitute of charity. If I bestow all my goods to feed the poor in order to gain the reputation of men or for the purpose of obtaining eternal life it would be not profit to me. These deeds must be motivated by love to God or to Christ or to the saints before they could be rightly considered as profitable for me.

Now let us consider the properties and characters of love as Paul was inspired to note them. "Charity suffereth long." The person blessed with charity is patient. He is slow to anger, and not hasty to revenge. He is enabled to bear much; has the grace of forbearance, and is blessed to forgive. ***"And is kind."*** He does good to all men, even to his enemies. ***"Charity envieth not."*** He that is possessed with this wonderful grace of God's love does not envy the temporal happiness of others. He rejoices when he beholds a brother is blessed with gifts both temporal and spiritual. He does not envy the happiness of others even though they are decidedly more blessed than he. Joseph's brethren were not charitable when they envied Joseph because he had a greater share in the affections of their father. The charitable person does not envy one of God's children whose usefulness and success in spiritual undertakings are decidedly greater (seemingly) than his. ***"Char-***

ity vaunteth not itself." He does not boast of either his natural or spiritual wisdom or possessions. He does not boast of what he does as his motive is love and not for the applause of men. "Is not puffed up." He is not swelled with pride but is humble. *"Doth not behave itself unseemly."* He is not unbecoming in his conversation or actions and has due respect for the aged and those of authority. *"Seeketh not her own."* He is not seeking to promote his own selfish ambitions and desires but his care and concern is to the glory of God and to the children of the kingdom. *"Is not easily provoked."* He is not easily offended. *"Thinketh no evil."* Not that he is free from evil thoughts such as are sinful and vain, for testimonies throughout the holy scriptures affirm to the contrary. God's children are forever desiring to be delivered from these sinful thoughts that are daily experienced. But I think that this character will forgive a brother his trespasses and will not try to find some way of revenge. He thinks not upon how to get even with someone who has wronged him.

"Rejoiceth not in iniquity." He mourns because of his own iniquities. He is grieved because of the sinfulness of professors. He is troubled when he meditates upon the profanity and immorality of the world. "But rejoiceth in the truth." He rejoices in the doctrine of God, our Savior, he is pleased when God is praised and man is set forth as nothing, yea less than nothing. Salvation by grace is his meat and drink. *"Beareth all things."* He feels that all things work together for good to them who love God, even the suffering, persecution, and affliction is not in vain. He bears them without complaint, feeling that if justice were meted out they would be more intense. He does not feel that he should revenge wrong doing. "Believeth all things." Everything that exists is according to the decrees of God. All things are for the praise of God and for the perfecting of God's saints. None of the things existing is by chance. *"Hopeth all things."* All things yet future is predetermined so that nothing will frustrate any of the promises of God from being fulfilled. *"Endureth all things."* He is confident that all things are embraced in the eternal decrees of an all-wise and all-powerful God. He endures all the afflictions and persecutions for the elect's sake and for Christ's sake. The last to be endured is death.

"Charity never faileth." It may fail in the lively exercise of it. Selfishness and the cares of the world may be prevalent at times, but the love of God will not permit a child of God to fall finally into perdition. Charity is everlasting. It is ever the same. Prophecies will be fulfilled then cease to be prophecy. Hope will become a reality thus cease to be hope. Faith will terminate into a reality. Charity will be charity in the beyond the same as it was before

the beginning of time. Every object of God's love is just as certain for heaven and immortal glory as before time began. There is no change in the love of God for His people.

Now, I feel that the Lord has blessed us with a few sweet thoughts on the properties and characteristics of God's love as made manifest in brethren. Permit me to say, *"By their fruits we shall know them."* I wish to suggest to the citizens of Zion, that you beware of impostors. Beware of those having a form of godliness but not manifesting the grace of charity. I believe the time has come to watch as well as pray. May God grant us the grace of charity and the eye of watchfulness.

Elder E. J. Lambert

GEN. VI. 3.

And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his day shall be an hundred and twenty years.

"The Lord God said; not to Noah, for as yet he is not taken notice of, or any discourse addressed to him; but to himself: *my spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh;* not only carnal and corrupt, but sadly corrupted, and wholly given up to, and immersed in sensual lust and carnal pleasure, so as not to be restrained or reformed; even the posterity of Seth, professors of religion also, as well as the profane world and posterity of Cain: *yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years;* meaning not the term of man's life reduced to this, from the length of time he lived before the flood; but the space of time God would give for repentance, before he proceeded to execute his vengeance upon him; this is that *long suffering of God,* the apostle speaks of, that waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing. 1 Pet. iii. 18, 19, 20."

J. K. Booton

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WAITING

How long dear Lord will troubles last
How long before the storms are past
How long before the trials cease
How long before I feel Thy peace

It seems so long since I have known
The hand that Thou alone hath shown
Times of sorrow that have no end
Joy and peace I long Thee to send

We know that we should not complain
For its in Thy hands to come again
Yet longing hearts desire to know
That Mercy and Love continue to flow

Thou measureth time not in days
As do men of worldly ways
Yet it seems so long between
The times when Thou alone art seen

Give us patience Lord to wait
Until Thou openest Grace's gate
To let us look within the Fold
And view the Flock of young and old

Relieve us Lord of toil and strife
Renew our hope of eternal life
Manifest Thy presence so dear
Among Thy children Thou holdest near

Give us to feel that short at hand
We'll see and walk the Promised land
Where trials and tears come no more
On God's celestial and peaceful shore

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

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EDITORIAL

Elder J.B. Farmer

"And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth." John 9: 39-41.

As with all scripture, that which is written above is hidden in a great mystery, and the mystery is impossible to be unraveled by the natural mind. Only the little children of God are given to understand His words in truth, and to take them to heart as they are revealed to them. The understanding of the words of God is hidden from all others, regardless of their intellectual powers, their intensive study or their religious zeal. Though a spiritual thing be explained ever so carefully and exactly, it cannot be understood apart from revelation. The inspired apostle said, ***"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, even the deep things of God." 1 Cor. 2:9-10.*** The natural eye is blinded to the things of the Spirit of God, and the natural ear is deafened to them, and the natural heart of understanding has no place for them. But God, in mercy and love, reveals His things to His elect vessels of mercy as it pleases Him. May He give us understanding in these things.

With much assurance we may say that no one on earth knows anything about the kingdom of God except the children of God, and they know only as much as has been revealed to them. Thus, boasting is

excluded. So, all people are blind in the beginning, and only certain ones are ever given sight into Spiritual things. Now here is a great and deep mystery. Those who are blind spiritually, think they see. They think that by their efforts to see and their diligence to know they may take hold of the things of the Spiritual kingdom. They set about to make a religion based on their understanding naturally. They are deceived into thinking that the works of their own hands and heads can save them. They develop a self-righteousness that despises any who fall short of their supposed attainments. They exalt themselves and think they are able to instruct others. Pride and arrogance fills their hearts to the exclusion of love. This not only applies to the wicked, but also to the children of God before they are converted. God made that plain, through the beloved apostle Paul, who was made to be the pattern for all that should believe after him. Paul hated and persecuted the church before he was converted.

Here is another profound mystery. Before Paul was given eyes to see the Spiritual kingdom, he was blinded. The one who thought he could see and who had his own religion and righteousness, was blinded. A great light shined round about him from heaven, and the Lord spoke to Saul, as Paul was called in those days. The Lord said to Saul, ***"Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and did neither eat nor drink." Acts 9:6-9.***

To what then was Saul blinded? We know that he was blinded naturally, but what was it that he seemed to see so clearly before this experience, that he would never see again? What is it that he would forever be blinded unto? He initially thought he saw that a man could be saved by his own works. He thought he saw that it was a good thing to be exalted above others - that it was good to outstrip them in zeal and knowledge. He was proud of his attainments. He, in his extreme self-righteousness, thought he saw that he could justly pursue and violently persecute others whom he categorized as heretics. When the Lord appeared to Saul, He changed him into a totally different person. *"He saw no man."* Paul's former confidence in the fleshly abilities of men was taken away. He was made to deny all that he thought he saw before. He could no longer view himself or any one else as being righteous of himself, but was made to see with all saints, that all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. He could no longer look to his at-

tainments with pride. They were made to be worthless to him, even as dung. All his previous boasting was excluded. He could no longer see the church as the enemy of the truth, but rather as the very pillar and ground of the truth – even the bride of Christ and beloved. Saul was a new man, set on a new journey, with new thoughts and a new understanding and a heart of love. Is it so with you? Is it so with me? If so, I am made to believe that we are walking in the way the fathers trod.

Isaiah, the prophet, uttered these words by the inspiration of God, and as prophesy, and as a promise to the people of God: *"And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." Isa. 42:16.* And also: *"Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the Lord's servant?" Isa. 42:19.*

I am made to believe that all of God's servants are blinded to the things of this world when they are in a Spiritual mind. They are made to have no confidence in their fleshly work or in their carnal mind or in that of others. They are made to look unto God for all things. They are lifted up and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ. All their confidence and trust is placed in Him who cannot lie or fail in a promise. The apostle said, *"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." 2 Tim. 1:12.*

I am made to believe that the little children of God are blinded to the world, as was their pattern, Paul, before they are made to see Spiritual things. After they are made to see the weakness, corruption and futility of the flesh, then are the wonderful, powerful, incorruptible things of God made manifest to them by the Spirit. They, like little babes, begin to see the wonders of a kingdom high and lifted up, which is not of this world. With the Spiritual eye of faith and love, they view the King of glory upon His majestic throne. They begin to see the Son of God as the creator and the One Who sustains all creation. They see Him as the victorious Savior of His beloved people. They are made to see the church, the new Jerusalem, as a bride adorned for her Husband. They see her as without spot, wrinkle, or any other kind of blemish. They see her as all glorious, the perfection of beauty in whom God is shining.

They begin to sing a new song of salvation in the pure language of grace. They begin to hear and know the certain sound of the gospel. They overflow with thanksgiving

and praise to the One Who took away all their sins forever, never ever to be remembered against them. They begin to learn and speak a new language, which the world cannot learn. They begin to hope in that great salvation with the faith, which is given to them. Their hearts begin to glow with love for their brethren who travel with them here on their journey. They begin to see and know that this world is passing away. It is not their home. They are strangers and pilgrims in a desert land, just passing through. They are given a great desire to please Him Who loved them, and gave Himself for them. Now instead of heaping up for themselves the pleasures and treasures of this world, they desire to have the treasure, which is laid up in heaven for them. They are looking for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. They are even made to glory in infirmities and sufferings for Christ's sake. They are made willing to suffer the reproaches of the world, that they might please God. They are considered by those who hate them as the off-scouring of the world - wretched, miserable, poor, naked and blind.

Yes, God's people are all these things according to the flesh, including being *"made blind."* But as Jesus said, they *"have no sin."* Their sins have all been forgiven and washed away. But concerning all who say *"We see,"* Jesus said that their *"sin remaineth."* Their sin is not forgiven. May we be given to know and to acknowledge that we are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and naked, and blind according to the flesh. And may we be given to buy of Him (without price) gold tried in the fire, that we may be rich, and white raiment, that we may be clothed, and that the shame of our nakedness doesn't appear. And may we be given eye-salve to anoint our eyes, that we may see. The wicked are never blind in their own thinking, and they go on in the broad way that leads to destruction. The righteous, who are made so by the blood of the Lamb, are made blind to the things of this world, that they might see the glorious things of heaven. And they are given eyes of faith to see the narrow way that leads to life, and ears to hear, and a heart to hearken to the voice of the Son of God, which says, *"This is the way, walk ye in it." Isa. 30:21.* May God continue to bless and keep you in his love and care.

This was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

J. B. Farmer
1-17-2005

PSALM 116.5-6.

Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.

The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me.

VOICES OF THE PAST

GENESIS I. 3.

"AND God said, Let there be light: and there was light."

I will first say that this is a subject too high, sublime and wonderful for me to attempt to expound, but I am impressed to write a few thoughts in connection with it. I trust that he who is able to guide our minds, will guide my pen, and I will leave what I shall write for the brethren to judge.

In the first place, I believe every word that is written in the Scriptures was written by inspiration of God, and that holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. In the first verse we are told: " In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." What is intended by the expression, " In the beginning, With our God there was no beginning; for if we believe the Scriptures he is eternal. But there was a beginning with this earth, and this creation which God created and of which he said that it was good, was the beginning that is spoken of. We should carefully notice the first thing that was created. It was the heaven, the abode of his people, and then the earth, which is his footstool. Then all things were created upon the earth before man was made, to support and sustain his natural life. As all things were created before man was made, he could not say that he created anything; to God he must give all the glory. If this be so naturally, much more must it be so spiritually. Then God prepared the garden and all the trees that were in it, of which Adam might partake, save the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; but by this man's transgression were many made sinners. The Lord purposed that Jesus should come in the flesh, and prepared him a body to this end, yet without sin, that by one Man's obedience many might be made righteous. We are told that the earth in the beginning was without form and void. Now, to my mind, the Scriptures do not only set forth these things as one would write history, but they are also types of better things. To the carnal mind they are not anything more than a history of that which is natural and that is as far as the natural mind can see. It is as impossible for the natural mind to see above this as it is for water to rise above its own level; but to the spiritual mind, when it pleases God to reveal the glory and beauty which shines forth out of these things, they bring forth praise to God for his goodness and mercy in preparing such things for them that love him. We can see that this earth which was created, and upon which we live, with all creeping things, with all its storms and tempests and all things else that it contains, is a type of the heavenly world; but how void was this body of ours of all spiritual things when it was born into this world.

It is said, ***"Darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."*** These Scriptures are beautiful when it pleases God to give us to look into their depths and see the spiritual beauty which is in them. As the natural earth was void and dark, so we by nature are void of the knowledge of God until he moves upon the face of the great deep. Darkness covers from our view all spiritual things. We have no thought of the things that are hidden, as it were, beneath the sod until in the warm springtime they burst forth, green and tender.

Now I come to the first verse which I quoted: ***"And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."*** How mysterious is the work of God. He created the heaven first, showing that the heaven is above the earth, and that the darkness was before the light. The earthly man is before the spiritual man, and all is darkness to the soul until God says, ***"Let there be light,"*** or until he moves upon the face of the waters, and we are born into that new kingdom. We knew no more about that light until he said, ***"Let there be light,"*** than we knew about the natural light of this world before we were born into it; and when we are delivered we know not what the light is. But the newborn babe soon learns to know the light from the darkness, and while it does not know what either is, it soon learns to cry for the light; just so it is with every one who is born of the Spirit, like Saul of Tarsus, when the Lord says, ***"Let there be light,"*** they fall to the ground. Not that they all fall to the ground literally, but they are brought down and made to cry with Saul, ***"What wilt thou have me to do?"***

Now further on in this chapter it is said that God divided the light from the darkness. In spiritual experience we are made to realize this dividing, for at the first, as said before, the child does not know one from the other; yet it knows that it likes the light and will cry for it. Until it pleases God to divide the light from the darkness we are constantly crying for the light, yet not knowing what we are crying for, but we know that there is something we desire and long for, and when it pleases God to divide the one from the other, then the evening and the morning are the first day with our souls. This, the first day in our experience; we have not known what all this meant before. We may have seen the light for some time, but to us it was dim, and as though in the distance, but now it is divided, and we are basking in the sunlight of his presence. He does not take away the darkness entirely, he only divides it from the light. Had he taken away the darkness altogether, we should never have any more dark seasons. This would not be good for us, the night must come. But we do now know the night from the day, the darkness from the light. Our God has divided them, and how we long for the light when the dark seasons come, and how we rejoice when we hear the

singing of the birds again and catch a glimpse of the light in the east shining forth from the Sun of righteousness. We rejoice to see the dark cloud pass over, and to behold the bow in the cloud shining in its radiant beauty as a token of the covenant of God with man. O what glory is in these things; it is high; I cannot attain to it. How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out. It is written: *"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."-2 Cor. iv.6.* What wondrous grace he has bestowed upon his people, saying, *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."* It is not glorify man, but give God all the glory. O may he divide the light from the darkness in us, that we may praise him for his goodness, and to him be all the praise, honor and glory. Amen.

Your brother,
JOHN L. HASTINGS.
BROOKLYN, N. Y., Nov. 6, 1907.

REVELATION 7:15.

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

ALEXANDRIA, Va., Dec. 4,1907.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH: - If we read the Bible as a history, and study its admonitions, it is profitable. It warns us to do unto others as we would wish to be done by; this is morality. Then we reach the limit of our earthly power, and to hope for a better and purer life. We must leave this vile body, *"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."- 1 Cor. ii. 14.* Then we are helpless children, tossed by the temptations of a carnal, sinful world, dead in trespasses and sins, so prone to err that sometimes we cry out in anguish of soul for mercy and strength, and wonder if the Lord has entirely forsaken us, or if we have an inheritance not made by the law as given by Moses, but grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ. Then the sweet, assuring memory comes back to us of our first love and our baptism; surely they were not of the law. How lovely everything spiritual seemed to us then, and we felt assured of the Savior's pardoning love. If this joy was permitted to last we would be unfitted to cope with the carnal world. Our Savior was a man of sorrows, and if we in any way try, or are led, to follow him, we must glory in tribulation; it is the christian's heritage, *"And we know that all*

things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."-Rom. 1 viii. 28. There are times when our trials are almost more than we can bear, but, the Lord suffers it to be so, and we rest on his everlasting arm; this life's trouble is only for a short while, if we have a hope in Christ our compensation is incomparable. ***"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ-shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril or sword", "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us."- Romans viii. 35, 37.*** Though our lives are passed with those who fear not God, our best and truest impulses are of ***"the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." - John xiv. 17.*** May our humble petitions always follow this glorious Leader, the humble christian's unfailing Friend.

We have a dear, aged sister who is seldom absent from our meetings; she is afflicted with deafness, but seems to enjoy meeting with us, and always seems cheerful and ready to talk about those glorious things pertaining to our Father's kingdom. The Lord gives her consolation in a way that I know not of rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation and continuing instant in prayer. It is the sweetest privilege we experience in life to meet with our brethren and hear them tell about their hope through Christ; these dear ones, who come so close to us in our experience of grace, whom we love with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Our cognizance of this love is not premature; it is our birthright, given before the world was made, with those ***"which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."- John i. 13.*** Knowing our weakness in the flesh, can we be over zealous in our supplications for divine mercy ***"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."- John v. 24.*** Can we doubt this support? O no, it comes from the Rock.

"Rock of Ages, shelter me,
Let me hide myself in thee;
(Let the water and the blood,
From thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and power."

Sometimes we get gloomy and impatient when we look over our small congregations and count less than are visible members of the church, and in our fleshly weakness

we wonder if the Lord will sustain this little band, then we compare them to our neighbor's larger congregations and their beautiful houses of worship, and we note they are zealous of good works; then we are made to feel and know the Lord's purpose in choosing the meek and lowly to confound the wise and great; they boast of their wealth and power, we are just poor sinners, saved by God's grace. Would any of these lowly little children exchange their inheritance for our neighbors' self-confident faith I think not. Only to know that we are heirs to that inheritance spoken of in Daniel's vision and the final redemption.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life."- John iii. 15.

I trust we can rest on this support as we journey through this vale of tears. I feel to be one of the least, if one at all, in our Father's love.

We dearly appreciate the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and congratulate our dear editors on their constant adherence to the faith; also our dear brethren and sisters, who write such comforting letters; we feel that we love them, and hope we will hear often one from another.

Unworthily, your sister,
HANNIE B. GREHAN.

THEY SHALL NOT HURT NOR DESTROY. (Isaiah xi. 6-9; I xv. 29.)

THE natural disposition of the four wild beasts and the two serpents presented in this wonderful figure, is to hurt and destroy the four domestic animals and the little child spoken of in connection with them. In nature the contrast between the animals here placed in pairs is very striking, the one of each pair being ferocious and destructive, while the other is mild, peaceful and defenseless. But here each of the wild beasts is placed in an attitude and position contrary to that which it would naturally assume, and in which its ferocious disposition does not appear. This natural disposition, however, does not appear as changed or eradicated, but as brought into subjection and held under powerful control. So the lion is eating straw like the ox, the wolf is dwelling with the lamb, the leopard lies down with the kid, the cow and the bear are feeding and the sucking child is safely and fearlessly playing with the most deadly of serpents.

It is not in nature that this miracle is seen, not in any earthly place, but in God's holy mountain, the church of our Lord Jesus Christ. Here are seen two contrary and inconsistent principles, the flesh and the Spirit, brought together in one person, in the experience of grace, and held under the control of that Spirit of Christ which is represented

by the little child.

The coming and kingdom of Jesus Christ is presented by the prophet Isaiah in each of the places referred to above, and this figure is employed by the Spirit to show the effect of gospel power in the church of the living God. I do not regard this figure as showing something that is hereafter to be seen upon this earth among the nations of men, but as something that belongs to the work of grace, and is seen and felt in the gospel church and in the experience of every child of God.

These wild beasts do not represent natural men tamed, but natural principles, passions and propensities belonging to the flesh of a child of God. In our natural birth the life of Adam is manifested in us, with all the qualities and powers created in him, which are now depraved and vile. In our spiritual birth there is manifested in the same person the life of Jesus, with all its holy and sinless principles and perfections. This new birth, manifesting a new life from above, does not change the sinful nature of the Adamic life, but brings it into subjection.

Now are seen and felt in the one person of the christian the two lives, two principles, flesh and Spirit, the result of two births, *"and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."- Gal. v. 17.* This in spiritual birth causes a great change to be experienced in the heart and life of a poor sinner but not a change of the Adamic nature, as he soon discovers to his sorrow. A birth does not change the nature of anything, but greatly changes the circumstances.

If these animals, coupled together in this peculiar figure, are intended to represent the opposing principles of the human and the divine nature in the christian, how well and appropriately is the contrast arranged. The lion and the ox, the bear and the cow, the leopard and the kid, the wolf and the lamb, the asp and the suckling child. Here we may see the graces of the Spirit, as faith, affection, meekness, love, peace and the like, and over against each one is represented that natural power, passion or propensity which is most directly opposed to that spiritual grace, and most likely to hurt and destroy it. So the lion may well represent the natural intellect, the carnal mind. It is lordly, proud, self-confident, domineering, and has controlling power in natural things, but it *"is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."* Opposed to that towering intellect is faith, which is the only power that can see and receive and understand spiritual things. They stand contrasted with each other, as the lion and the ox. The ox is patient, steady, reliable. Without faith it is impossible to please God, for faith sees the things of God, and by faith we walk, and not by sight.

Now the ox has no power over

the lion, but the Spirit, the little child, has controlling power, and in God's holy mountain, in the church of God, the mind is brought under control by the Spirit, and is made to employ its powers, as a servant, in the work that will be to the benefit of the Lord's people. So, as the lion eats straw like the ox, the natural powers of the mind, when controlled by the Spirit, are employed in things that are for our good. Its learning and knowledge are used in reading, in writing, as holy men of old did, moved by the Holy Ghost, in attending to the things that pertain to external forms of worship. In these things the controlling power is manifested through faith. The ox does not do things like the lion, but the lion eats straw like the ox. But the lion is a lion still, and when in any degree released from the controlling power of the Spirit in that holy mountain it will tear and devour. The mind that was employed in reading the Bible, speaking of experimental things, singing hymns to God's praise, will, if controlled by the flesh, be engaged in profane and unwholesome literature, and in worldly and even vile enterprises. Thus living after the flesh we die, in the sense meant by the apostle; but neither faith nor any other grace of the Spirit shall be finally hurt or destroyed. Even Peter's faith did not fail, though he appeared to be at the borders of death and destruction. He yielded much to his strong, determined mind, but the little child had still the controlling power. Sometimes the intellectual power seems to prevail, and we are proud to see so fine and powerful a creature as the lion engaged in the things of the kingdom of Christ, and feel that the brighter mind and the superior learning do have more influence and success in religious work. Then we are suddenly brought to see that we seem to be coming down from the beautiful eminence of God's holy mountain, and are being drifted to a fancied exaltation of our own, and the lion is not seen beside the unmoved, patient ox, but is "seeking whom he may devour."

How good it is of the Lord that *"the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."- 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.* We cannot trust our own minds, we need the constant presence of the little child to lead us. Our own minds would lead us soon away from the things of faith, and then we cease to walk in the path of holiness, for we walk in that path only by faith, not by sight. How constantly we feel our need to call upon the Lord to lead us *"in the paths of righteousness."*

Sometimes we seem unable to distinguish between natural and spiritual affection, though there is

as much difference as between the cow and the bear. When feeding together we might be well satisfied with them; but one is altogether a selfish principle. True spiritual affection, brotherly kindness and motherly care may be represented by the cow. They are unselfish. These affections are to be set upon things above.

I do not understand the leopard, the wolf, the asp and other animals to represent some specially vile and terrible passion or evil propensity that may spring up in our hearts suddenly, as fierce intruders which do not really belong there, and which we ought to, and can, drive out and destroy, but I regard them as representing all the principles and characteristics of the flesh, in which, Paul says, dwelleth no good thing. *"The heart is deceitful above all things;"* it is as a cage of unclean birds; it is a waste howling wilderness; nothing good dwells there, but howling beasts of prey and deadly serpents. To the wise of this world such statements appear the height of foolishness, but the exercised people of God know that the representation is none too strong. And the really good things that are in any man are from the Spirit; they are the fruit of the Spirit, as *"love, joy, peace, long-suffering; gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."* When we consider the terrible list of the works of the flesh given by the apostle, we wonder how one spiritual grace can remain unhurt and not destroyed, and how hope can be left alive; But here is where we see the manifestation of spiritual power, *"the power of God unto salvation."* Power can only be manifested by an opposing force. We could see no power in the wind if we did not see the grass wave and the tree fall before it, or feel its force against ourselves. The power *of* God caused peace on earth. The power of Jesus was seen in the falling of the wind and the waves before his word. How can there be peace in the heart of a sinner when such opposing principles are there as are represented by these different animals mentioned by the prophet Only by the power of the Spirit bringing the natural powers under control. And, still more wonderful, when the lion or the leopard or the asp appear to us to have broken away from under control and to have done their destructive work, so that we feel that love and peace and spiritual joy are dead in our hearts forever, to find ourselves again melted down in thankfulness and love before the Lord, and to find that all those things which the kid and the lamb and the weaned child mean to us are still there in our poor hearts.

This is because the decree has gone forth that they shall not hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain.

We shall die if we live after the flesh; if we sow to the flesh we shall of the flesh reap corruption; if we do

despite to the Spirit of grace we shall have sore punishment, (Heb. x. 29,) but the fruit of the Spirit, though its manifestation cease for the time, shall not be hurt nor destroyed.

We feel sometimes the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit so fierce that we wonder if we still live; but today we have to acknowledge that the same hope is ours which was given so long ago, and although we still see evil and vileness in us, that is, in our flesh, yet we have to acknowledge that we are favored at times to enjoy sweet peace and confidence in our souls. Why is this? Because these graces of the Spirit cannot be hurt nor destroyed; they are altogether spiritual, but it is through the flesh they must be manifested. The little child leads not only the ox and the lamb, but the wild beasts also, when we are in God's holy mountain; that is, the whole man is led. Not only is the spiritual mind led to desire to dwell in the Lord's house, but the natural mind is made to yield to that desire, and the feet are turned toward the place of meeting. It is as men, as having the two contrary natures, flesh and Spirit, that we are led, and desire to be led, by the Spirit of God. Sin is terrible to a child of God, and he can but groan under "the bondage of corruption;" but it is a comfort to be assured that the spiritual graces once planted within us shall never be hurt nor destroyed, but shall remain till our change comes, when we *"shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."- Romans viii. 21.*

"For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." This cannot mean the literal earth, nor the nations of people upon it. The language and the figure will not allow of such a thought. Like all gospel truth this is known only in experience. The knowledge of the Lord is life, eternal life. (John xvii.3.) It is said to fill the earth as the waters cover the sea. This is the new earth which the Lord has created, the people of Jerusalem. (Isaiah lxv. 18.) They are new creatures in Christ, but are partakers of flesh and blood, and so are still troubled by a sinful nature. No man can teach them the things of God. It is written in the prophets, *"They shall be all taught of God."* Just as knowledge concerning natural things comes from the head to every member of the body, so the knowledge of the things of God comes from Jesus, the Head, to every member of his body. The knowledge in each case is life. This knowledge of God, which is eternal life, fills the earth as the waters cover the sea. All the dark depths of the sea and its fearful gulfs are covered and hidden from our sight by the water; so when the Lord is pleased to give us to feel the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, the power and blessedness of that

eternal life-knowledge so fills these earthen vessels, this new earth, that we lose sight for the time of the great depths and gulfs of evil and sin in our depraved nature, and to see Jesus only as our life and our righteousness, our song and our salvation.

SILAS H. DURAND.,
SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Dec. 4, 1907.

THE EMPTY VINE.

"ISRAEL is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself."-Hosea x. 1.

This solemn, momentous prophecy of Hosea was announced and put forth to the Jewish nation, or chosen Israelites, according to Bible chronology, about the year 760 B. C., for reproof and sundry judgment because of their idolatry and disobedience to the mandates of the eternal God, also as indicated in similar places of the Scriptures. The forlorn condition and adverse state of the churches here in Texas, as well as elsewhere, our barrenness and declension, brought the above subject seriously to bear upon my mind, and therefore, by the mercy and grace of God, I will endeavor briefly to write a few things relative to this sacred portion of holy writ.

In touch with its importance of warnings, and the absolute necessity of correction, returning to the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, the church in her typical order is frequently alluded to under the appellation of a vine, showing the culture, growth and fruit are of the vine, which, in the literal rendering, means *"a plant producing grapes; the slender, trailing stem of other plants."* How beautiful to see the lily, or vine, growing in rich soil under the vitalizing Influence of the sun and the cool, refreshing showers of the rain, bringing forth fruit in its season. But when the carnal Israelites, or national Israel, became elated through the lusts of the flesh and allured by the vanities of the world to follow strange gods, being enticed by their cunning craftiness to join field to field, then they become as represented by our text, *"an empty vine," bringing "fruit unto himself," and become" the degenerate plant of a strange vine." "For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God."-Jer. ii. 21, 22.* All through the ages of the old testament dispensation we notice numerous instances this vine withered, became sickly by reason of the poisonous nature of sin and rebellion, producing confusion and discord in their midst; a decay, distemper, and, for a time, a cessation of growth, until God's divine justice was satisfied and his holy law vindicated, delivering Israel from the

iron grasp of her enemies and again planting them in their own land to be a goodly heritage unto the Lord their God; (Jer. iii. 19; Psalms xvi. 6,) corrected in measure, chosen in the furnace of affliction, led through the angry floods of persecution, tortured in the vehement flames of temptation, buffeted by the cold waves of a frowning world, yet in all the visitations of God's judgments upon his people, the objects of his love, he remembered them in mercy even in the midst of deserved wrath succored them and fed them in the wilderness with "angels food," led them about, instructed them and kept them as the apple of his eye, and there was no strange god with him. *(Deut. xxxii.- 12.) "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end! How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up? For their Rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges."* The rock of antichrist "is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps," so antagonistic to Christ, the Rock of our salvation. The old vine or covenant of works must languish and vanish away. Christ is our Redeemer, our Passover, the High Priest in the blood of the new covenant ordered in all things and sure, the Intercessor and Mediator of a better covenant, established on better promises. The poor, weeping children of Zion have —, one Father and one Lord, Jesus Christ, who atoned for their sins through perfect sacrifice of himself, the perfect coetaneous Son of God, the gracious Preserver of Israel, the cloud and pillar of fire that directed them in all their wanderings across the river Jordan into the land of promise. The ceremonial law was given from Mount Sinai, with its typical offerings and divers washings, to be perpetuated to the coming of Christ. When left to ourselves we are an empty vine that can only bring fruit to the idol." Their heart is divided: now shall they be found faulty: he shall break down their altars, he shall spoil their images."

Affectionately,
ASA HOWARD.

Job 37: 21-24.

And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds: but the wind passeth, and cleanseth them.

Fair weather cometh out of the north: with God is terrible majesty.

Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict.

Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any that are wise of heart.

"My soul followeth hard after thee."-PSALM lxiii. 8.

THE Lord (we would speak with reverence) does not suffer himself at first to be overtaken. The more the soul follows after him, the more he seems to withdraw himself, and thus he draws it more earnestly on the pursuit. He means to be overtaken in the end: it is his own blessed work in the conscience to kindle earnest desires and longings after himself; and therefore he puts strength into the soul, and makes the feet like hinds' feet " to run and continue the chase. But in order to whet the ardent desire, to kindle to greater intensity the rising eagerness, the Lord will not suffer himself to be overtaken till after a long and arduous pursuit. This is sweetly set forth in the Song of Solomon, v. 2-8. We find there the Lord coming to his bride; but she is unwilling to open to him till "he puts his hand in by the hole of the door." She would not rise at his first knocking, and therefore he is obliged to touch her heart. But when she opened to her Beloved, he was gone; and no sooner does he withdraw himself, than she pursues after him; but she cannot find him; he hides himself from her view, draws her round and round the walls of the city, until at length she overtakes, and finds Him whom her soul loveth. This sweetly sets forth how the Lord draws on the longing soul after himself. Could we immediately obtain the object of our pursuit, we should not half so much enjoy it when attained. Could we with a wish bring the Lord down into the soul, it would be but the lazy wish of the sluggard, who" desireth, and hath not." But when the Lord can only be obtained by an arduous pursuit, every faculty of the soul is engaged in panting after his manifested presence; and this was the experience of the Psalmist, when he cried, ***"My soul followeth hard after thee."***

Elder J.C. Philpot

CHAGRIS, Ind. Ter.

BRETHREN EDITORS: - The time for renewal of subscription to our dear family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, is at hand, and I cannot do without it, for it is all the preaching I get. I sometimes wonder if the good Lord has forgotten me, but when my paper comes then I say, No, for he has sent me some more sweet messages of his love. I am not worthy of such, so with tears running down my cheeks and my soul filled with joy I trace the lines, with my heart all a glow. Dear brethren and sisters, none but those isolated from the

people of God can know how precious it is to read after the dear saints; by this *"we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."* I feel from my heart that I love the Old Baptists above all people. I know if I love them with a pure love I am one of them; the Lord is my Judge, and I leave it all with him. He is my only help, for of him and to him are all things, and without him I can do nothing. Yes, according to the Lord's will, mercy and love I shall wait on the Lord all my appointed time till my change come. Through the many years of toil, hardship, trouble, sorrow, affliction and mourning I can say the Lord has been with me, and I can say, Wait, O my soul, upon the Lord. Sometimes I am so cast down that I begin to look and wonder, and say, Where is my hope? I cannot place it on anything good I have done, and sometimes my path is so dark I fall by the way and mourn like the dove. O where is my Love, that I might find him. Sometimes when I have stayed in this dark pit for days and weeks the light begins to shine and I rejoice, and the first thing I know I am praising the Lord for the great and mighty work he hath done for me. *"Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name."* Dear saints, tell me, is it thus with you? O that I may run and not look back, for surely my soul is the fall of the love of God and my tongue is loosed and I can say, The Lord be magnified. Sorely the Lord is good to me, for he has had mercy upon me. *"Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sack-cloth, and girded me with gladness; to the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent." "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together."* My dear friends, it seems to me when I read after you that we all do magnify him who is the Author of our redemption. O that I were a Mary, or a Hannah, or a Ruth. When I read about them it seems that I am nothing at their feet, and I feel to say with the woman at the well, *"O give me this water, that I thirst not, neither came hither to draw." "Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to usward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered." "Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, and. thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. Thy righteousness is like the great mountain; thy judgments are a great deep: O Lord, thou preservest man and beast: How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God!*

Therefore the children of

men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings." "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light. Let not the foot of pride come against me, and let not the hand of the wicked remove me." "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

I would thank some brother or sister to give their views on Revelation xvii. 17, if it is not requesting too much.

Now, my friends, this letter I commit unto your care, it is with your judgment to publish or not; as for me, I had rather read after you than myself. I will make one request of you: if it is not in accordance with the divine teaching of our Savior and the travel of those born of the Spirit, please throw it aside; I would rather be silent than deceive anyone, for I find in me, that is, in my flesh, no good thing; but by the grace of God I am what I am. May the Lord's mercies be over all the household of faith. O that it is his will to count unworthy me one of that number. Remember me at the throne of grace.

Farewell in the Lord.
NANCY CREEL.

MEETINGS

MALMAISON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God Malmaison looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift. They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed Sat. 5th March at 2:30 pm. at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church, Hwy 726, for the purpose of examination of this gift, brother Randolph Wells and if found qualified to be ordained to the full work and service as deacon.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together. The meeting was opened by prayer by Elder Carl Terry. Elder Raymond Goad was elected as moderator and Carl Terry to serve as Clerk.

Brother Burnell Williams, acting as spokesman for the church, delivered brother Randolph Wells to the presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon was read as set forth in scriptures 3rd Chapter of Timothy by Elder Junior Conner. Examinations followed by Elders Tom Solomon, W.T. Conner, Marvin Brumfield, Jimmie Gray, Joe Sawyer, Mark Terry & Cleo Robertson, The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of this candidate proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was

offered by Joe Sawyer. The charge was delivered to brother Wells by Elder Junior Conner. He was then delivered back to the church by Smith Walton as an ordained deacon.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted, a copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication and a copy to be given to Randolph Wells along with a certificate of ordination.

Presbytery was dismissed by Elder Cleo Robertson.

Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
Elder Carl Terry, Clerk

ELDERS:
W.J. Conner
Thomas Solomon
Mark I. Terry
Junior L. Conner
Joe Sawyer
Jim Gray
Cleo Robertson
Marvin Brumfield
Raymond Goad
Carl Terry

DEACONS:
Jamie Cooper
Harvey Wood
Guy J. Holley
Donald L. Agee
Calvin L. Plybon
Irvin Holley
William Midkiff
Hubert W. Murphy
Dave Duncan
R. Allen Carroll
John Collie
Oscar Pickral
Burnell B. Williams

Dear Brethren,

We were so honored by you coming to Randolph's ordination service. In what ever way you participated, we thank you more than words can say.

Our love,
The Wells Family

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union will be held at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, located on Route #29 - South Main Street, Gretna, VA, (Pittsylvania County) the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in May, 28th & 29th, 2005.

The song services will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite the ministers of our Faith and Order, our Brethren and all lovers of the truth to be with us.

Oscar D. Pickral, Clerk
1-434-656-1782

THE WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene with Moons Creek Church the 5th Sunday in May. The Church is located about a 1/2 mile east of Hwy 86 between Danville and Yanceyville on Park Springs Rd.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Sister Sue Blalock, Clerk

Romans 8:24

For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 2005

Livie Thompson, VA 5.00
Betty Nutter, MD 5.00
Bernard Cox, VA 5.00
John Smith, FL 25.00
Ted McDaniel, VA 100.00
Eld. Kenneth Hopkins, VA 5.00
Priddy Shaw, VA 5.00
Francine Fortner, TX 10.00
Mrs. Bennie Clifton, VA 5.00

ANNIVERSARY NOTICE

On April 1, 2005 Brother R. Allen Carroll and wife Virginia J. Carroll were blessed to celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary.

OBITUARIES

IN LOVING MEMORY OF SISTER VERA WORLEY BRUMFIELD

Our beloved Sister Vera Worley Brumfield was born May 22, 1921 in Pittsylvania County and passed away January 1, 2005 in Gretna Health Care Center.

Sister Vera was the daughter of the late Claude Swanson Worley and Fannie Dalton Worley. She was married to the late Brother Elmo Brumfield and to this union they were blessed with three sons. She was predeceased by her husband Brother Elmo Brumfield and a son, Marshall Dean Brumfield. She is survived by two sons Roney Brumfield of Gretna and Shelby Brumfield of Richmond, one brother, J. B. Worley of Danville, four sisters Audrey Slaughter of Kentuck, Freda Metz of Roanoke, Gerline Weatherford of Danville and Ginny Talley of Richmond. Seven grandchildren, five great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.

Sister Vera was given a hope and joined Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church August 2, 1962 and was baptized August 12,1962 along with her husband. She faithfully attended worship service until her death and was a believer in salvation by grace.

Her strong faith carried her through life's trials and tribulations and she had many. She believed everything happened for a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven.

I was blessed to visit her and she always greeted me with a smile and asked me to pray for God's will to be done. Sister Vera was a loving mother and if she could not say anything good about someone she would not say anything.

Her family did all human hands could do for her. Sister Vera's sisters and brother were there when she needed them and she said many times she had the best sisters and brother that anybody could have. She praised them highly.

Her funeral was held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church at 2:00 p.m. January 3, 2005 by her pastor Elder Raymond Goad and Elder Marvin Brumfield. Her body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in the Gretna Burial Park waiting that day when God will come in the cloud with great power and glory to receive his elect from the four winds of earth, be like him and be satisfied without spot wrinkle or any such thing.

May we all be reconciled to her death and be able to look back on what we had and not what we have lost.

Written I hope in Love
Elder Marvin Brumfield
Elder Raymond Goad-Moderator
Pam Betterton - Clerk

MABEL COX CAREY

It is with much sadness that I attempt to write a memorial for Sister Mabel Cox Carey. It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst another precious member.

Sister Mabel was born March 6, 1921 in Floyd County, Virginia. Her parents were the late Isaac Luther Cox and Necie Hollandsworth Cox.

Sister Mabel lived all her adult life in Danville, Virginia where she worked as a spinner in No. 4 Dress for 38 years before her retirement.

On June 5, 1948 Sister Mabel married Brother R. W. (Bill) Carey. To this union was born a son, Wayne, who is a very talented and artistic person. They were blessed to be married for 56 years.

Sister Mabel joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church December 16, 1962 and was baptized by her dear pastor, the late Elder David Spangler. She was a faithful member and attended church regularly until her health failed about two years ago. Sister Mabel and Brother Bill visited many different churches in several states. The joy of her life was cooking and preparing meals in her home which was always open to the brethren. Often visitors in our area spent the night with them. It was her great pleasure to entertain large groups in her home. Many of her church family have enjoyed hours of sweet fellowship and wonderful meals in their home as well as at church, especially her delicious flat snaps and hot homemade rolls which disappeared quickly. Their home was a haven for the Lord's people. Also Sister Mabel departed this life January 28, 2005. She is survived by her husband of the home and her son Wayne of Atlanta, Georgia. Also she is survived by a brother, Herbert Cox of Christiansburg, Virginia and four sisters: Mary Marshall of Christiansburg, Virginia, Dorcie Semones of Salem, Virginia, Nettie Duncan of Virginia Beach, Virginia and French Hogan of Roanoke, Virginia.

Her funeral was held at Dan

River Primitive Baptist Church on February 2, 2005 by her pastor Elder Kenneth Key and Elder Raymond Goad. She was buried in Dan River Church Cemetery to await the second coming of Christ.

May God comfort and sustain all who mourn the loss of our dear sister but we feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Written in love,
Phyllis H. Stroud

OCIE ELLAR PHILLIPS HOLLANDSWORTH

Our dearly beloved Sister in Christ, Ocie Ellar Phillips Hollandsworth fell asleep peacefully at the Heritage Hall Nursing Home on February 10, 2005. We feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Sister Ocie was born December 11, 1904 in Indian Valley, VA., making her stay on this earth 100 years. She was the daughter of the late Elkana C. and Ruth Jane Phillips. Sister Ocie was preceded in death by her husband, Brother Burman T. Hollandsworth, three son's, Alpha, Theodore, and Vernon. One daughter, Belva also preceded her in death.

She is survived by: daughter's and son-in-laws Sister Lena and Brother Vance Duncan, Sister Lora and Sonny Gunter, Helen and David Haynes, Phyllis and Glen Boyd, and Eloise Funkhouser. Eight Grandchildren and eight Great-Grandchildren.

The loving care given to Sister Ocie by her family could only come from God above. Each family took turns caring for her in their own homes and made her as comfortable as they possibly could.

In the last few months of her life she was not able to attend her meetings at Old Union Church, due to ill health. Sister Ocie was a faithful member of the Primitive Baptist faith for 75 years. She believed in Salvation by Grace and Grace alone, and loved to hear good preaching. Her mild manner, loving handshake and beautiful smile manifested the love she had for her dear family, and for all her Brothers and Sisters in the church.

Her funeral was conducted at the Mayberry Funeral Home Chapel in Floyd, Va., by her Pastor Elder Hale Terry and by Elder Larry Hollandsworth. She was laid to rest at the Hollandsworth Family Cemetery in Willis, Va., under a beautiful mound of flowers to await the second coming of our Lord.

Although we have suffered a great loss we feel she has much more to gain. May God reconcile us to his will and give us comfort as only He can. Done by order of the church in conference February 27, 2005, with one copy to be sent to the family, one to the Signs of the Times for publication, and one copy for our church records.

Elder Hale Terry, Moderator
Sandra Hollandsworth, Clerk

WADE MARSHALL POFF

It is with great heartache and God's everlasting grace that I attempt to write the obituary of my dear husband of 55 years, Wade Marshall Poff, who was called away from his earthly home on December 14, 2004. There will be no more heartaches, trials or troubles for him. He loved the church long before he became a member.

He was born May 1, 1925 to William H. and Ora Rierson Poff who have preceded him in death. Also a brother and foster sister preceded him in death. Survivors include his wife, Mary Conner Poff; five daughters and husbands; Judy & C. J. Ravan, Cathy & Elwood Holden, Cindy & Wayne Sutphin, Candy & Charles "Bubba" Creasy; all of Copper Hill, Virginia and Vicky & Stuart Childress, of Ararat, Virginia; eleven grandchildren, three great-grandchildren; one sister and husband, Becky & Richard Janke, Seattle, Washington; one niece, Dawn Gray of Dunaee, Oregon; one nephew, Derek Janke of Edmonds, Washington.

Brother Wade believed that salvation was by the grace of God without any works of man involved. He was a member of Salem Primitive Baptist Church, also a deacon and trustee. He was drafted into the U.S. Navy on January 11, 1944 and served until April 16,1946. He was Seaman First Class, serving on the USS Wisconsin.

The funeral service was conducted at 11:00 a.m., Friday, December 17 at Salem Primitive Baptist Church with his pastor Elder Hale Terry and Elder Lane Carter officiating. Interment followed in Restvale Cemetery with the flag ceremony by the Floyd V. F. W. Post #7854.

His passing saddens our hearts but we hope that our loss is his eternal gain. God has given me much strength to get through my heartaches. He gave me a dream showing me that trouble was coming and there was nothing I could do. I was helpless in the dream and I knew that everything was in His hands. The helplessness was my feelings as I stood by Wade's bed and could only say, "Lord have mercy". God is my strength as I continue my journey here. May He have all the praise.

Written by request of Salem Church.

Mary Poff, Clerk
Hale Terry, Moderator

EPHESIANS i. 21-23.

Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:

And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

Which is his body the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

VOL. 173 MEADOWS OF DAN, VA., JUNE 2005 NO. 6

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

LOVE

Love gives us this guiding light,
Love gives us this Godly sight.
Love is imputed day by day,
this love guides us on our way.

Through this love we come to confess,
this love comes daily to us to bless.
Oh how precious does this love appear,
love brings rations from our Savior dear.

Love keeps us under the cloak of Amazing Grace.
Love sustains us daily in this earthly place
Oh how precious is this Godly love,
that's meted out from the court above.

Through this love we are made to see,
through this love He sets us free.
Love makes God's believing family able,
to feast from the rations from His table.

Love gives us this precious hope within,
love brings about the forgiveness of sin.
Love is a deep and tender fondness of devotion,
that guides the believing family in motion.

By Riley Justice

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EDITORIAL

Power and Purpose of God

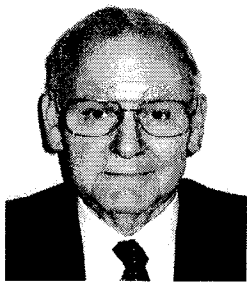
Elder Cleo D. Robertson

There has been much in the news about the tsunami that devastated portions of several countries on December 26, 2004. The reports state that over 170,000 people in eleven nations were killed and over 125,000 are still thought to be missing. Tsunami in Japanese means "storm wave" and may occur when there is an undersea earthquake or a hurricane far out in the ocean.

When a major catastrophe occurs, everyone begins to question the reason for it. How could such a deadly event happen? Many ask how God could allow such a thing to take place. Some say that it is by God; some say it is by Satan; and some say that it just happened by chance. Over the centuries, catastrophic events have affected most countries including the United States. There have been earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, famines, droughts, wars, and violence that have killed multitudes of people and destroyed many homes and possessions. The bible records such events showing that these are nothing new. A very wise man wrote, ***"There is no new thing under the sun."*** His name was Solomon.

In the days of Noah, men began to multiply upon the earth and the wickedness of man was rampant as ***"every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually ."*** The Lord said He would destroy man, beast, creeping things, and the fowls of the air from the face of the earth. The earth was corrupt and filled with violence, but Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. God commanded Noah to build an ark and then commanded Noah and his family to come into the ark. The ark was a type of Christ. God opened the fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven and it rained forty days and forty nights. The waters of the flood were

upon the earth and this was a flood the like of which the world has never witnessed since. The waters covered the highest mountains and all flesh that moved upon the earth died. The ark, with Noah and his family inside, was lifted up as Christ was on the cross. This was not by Satan nor by chance, but by the decree of an omnipotent God. It showed forth His power. ***"I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God."***

The Lord appeared unto Abraham and told him that He was going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah because their cry was great and their sin very grievous. Abraham asked the Lord would He destroy the city of Sodom if there were fifty righteous found in the city. The Lord answered that He would not if He found fifty righteous in the city. Abraham continued to ask down to ten righteous and the Lord answered that He would not destroy the city if there were ten righteous. Abraham did not know the number to be delivered from the city , but the Lord did. Two angels took Lot, his wife, and two daughters out of Sodom before the Lord rained fire and brimstone upon both cities. The people of those cities were destroyed along with their properties. The cities were never rebuilt. The Lord showed His power.

When God brought Israel out of Egypt, He brought them to the Red Sea. There appeared to Israel no way for them to go. The sea was in front of them and God hardened Pharaoh's heart and the Egyptian army followed behind them. Israel felt that they had come to the end-that death was eminent. The Lord revealed to Moses that Israel would be delivered and the Egyptians destroyed. ***"And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will show to you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more forever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace."*** The Lord rolled back the waters of the Red Sea with a high wall of water on either side. A way was opened for Israel that was life and deliverance. Then, as the Egyptian army attempted to follow, God brought the waters together again and closed the way. The Egyptians died. God had said that He would be honored upon Pharaoh and upon all his host that the Egyptians may know that He was the Lord. Also, " And Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and His servant Moses." The Egyptians that remained in Egypt knew His power because they knew that the God of Israel had destroyed their army. Israel saw the power of God manifested and feared and believed. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom or understanding.

There was a famine in the land

of Israel and a certain man of Bethlehem went to the country of Moab with his wife and two sons. The man died and the two sons married women of Moab. The country of Moab was located east of the Dead Sea near where the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah once were. In the current day, the country of Jordan encompasses that land. The country of Moab was named after one of Lot's sons who was born of one of Lot's daughters. The name means "from my father." The two sons of Naomi also died leaving her daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth. When Naomi returned to Bethlehem, Orpah stayed with her people but Ruth went with her mother-in-law. Her plea was ***"Entreat me not to leave thee or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thy diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me," Ruth 1:16-17.*** God sent the famine in the land of Israel that Ruth would be brought to Bethlehem to marry Boaz and become the great grandmother of David and through this lineage Jesus was born of the virgin Mary God has a purpose in all things.

There were earthquakes, famines, droughts and other events recorded throughout the bible as well as in our time. The Lord hath said, ***"I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." Isaiah 45:5-7.*** We either believe that God controls all things or He doesn't. If He doesn't, then did Christ suffer and die in vain? How could He foreknow all things? How could His prophecies be sure to come to pass? How could the foundation of God standeth sure? What great power and authority He has over all things!

In the experience of a child of grace, he faces tsunamis in the trials, tribulations and afflictions that he must go through. These storm waves seem to overflow and overwhelm us and we feel they will surely destroy us. ***"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."*** Jesus rebukes the wind, and the raging sea and commands, ***"Peace, be still."*** What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him? The storm that was raging about you is now a calm and you have a peace that surpasses all understanding. Never a man spake like this man. God has given you faith to believe that He has all power and He controls all things. He doesn't take you out of the trial, but He gives

you faith to believe that He is God and all is well. ***"My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness."***

We grieve over the loss of loved ones no matter how they die. We understand that there is a time to be born and a time to die, but the death of a loved one is a break in the ties of nature. It brings sorrow to the flesh. But, not even death can separate a little child of grace from the love of God. We do not understand why one person dies and another one does not. The issues of life and death are in God's hand. It is not for us to understand. Aren't you comforted that your life is in His hand?

The point that I want to make is that no matter what the catastrophe that occurs, God has a purpose in it and power over it. Roman 8:28 says, ***"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."*** This covers all things, not just those that we consider good. Somehow, someway, every trial that you are blessed to endure is working for your good. It is conforming you to the image of Christ. Someway, even in the tsunami, God received praise and honor. Our hope is that when we experience such a trial, God will bless us with His reconciling grace and comfort and peace. May we be blessed to praise Him in the midst of our greatest tribulation.

Cleo D. Robertson

VOICES OF THE PAST

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES.

IN the obituary of sister Charlotte Wright, which appeared on page 701 of the last number of the SIGNS, we said that it was in our mind to write editorially of some things which we came to know in connection with her experience of the grace of God. It is not in our mind neither is it in our power, to give a narration of all the early exercises of mind and heart by which she was taught to know the things of God, but to write of some things of which she spoke during our conversation with her concerning the dealings of the Lord with her. She said (and we give here her exact words), ***"The name of the Savior has been precious to me from my earliest recollection; I cannot remember when I did not feel drawn to that name. It has always been so with me to the present time, but I cannot speak of sudden convictions of sin, nor of sudden change to joy and peace."*** We said, ***"What kind of a change do you desire?"*** In reply she said, ***"All christian experience of which I have read, or which I have heard about tells of a sudden deep conviction of sin. and then of a sudden deliverance into light and peace. It has not been so with me, and so I cannot think that I am a child of God, yet I love the preaching***

of the name of Jesus, and it is sweet and precious to me." In reply we recall that we said, *"What change could take place that would give you greater assurance of the love of God shed abroad in your heart than just this state of feeling? There are some things recorded in the word of God that may prove to be light to your mind and consolation to your heart."* We then went on to speak of some things recorded in the Scriptures, of which it is our mind to write here.

We will add however to the above, that the Lord blessed the conversation to her, and the next Sunday she came to the church in Baltimore, during the prayer-meeting, and the next Sunday it was our privilege to baptize her in the name of the Lord.

The things of which we spoke to her, and of which we desire to write now, enlarging somewhat upon what we then said, are these: There is no fixed or settled standard of circumstances laid down in the Bible which must always attend the dealings of God with his chosen, neither is there any fixed standard of the travel of the mind and heart recorded there as the Lord leads souls to himself. There are indeed some things inseparable from the works of grace in the heart; of some of these things we spoke in the SIGNS for November 15th. There must be a conviction of sin and guilt, and of just condemnation, and then of the futility of all human excellence and power, and a coming at last to rest in the finished work of the crucified and risen Jesus for justification and salvation. These things must become real and abiding in the soul of all who are taught of God, and without them there is no evidence that one is a subject of saving grace. The sum and substance of all this is summed up in the brief sentence, *"A sinner saved by grace."* Of this we spoke in the last number of the SIGNS, and we do not desire to repeat it here, but in this unity there is wonderful variety of exercise of mind and heart. As no two faces of men are precisely alike, so no two records of christian travel are precisely alike. So the blessed Lord by the prophet has said, *"I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known."* Here we see one way, but many paths, and while the apostle meant the various gifts of the church when he said, There is a diversity of operatious, but one Spirit, yet we do not think it will be doing violence to the text to speak of the same language as applying to varied experiences in the call by grace.

Still further, as we read of the Lord's dealings with numbers of the children of men in the Scriptures, we see great variety of circumstance, and equal variety of thoughts and feelings; to some was given that which was not given to others. Paul was no more or no less a child of

God called by grace to be His disciple than were all the rest of the apostles, and yet of none of them was it true that they were stricken with blindness in that solemn hour of their call of the Lord. Of many of them it is just said that the Lord called them and they followed him. So also in the Old Testament the record of the way in which holy men were led is as diverse as the men themselves were diverse. It is sure that the Lord led each one according to His own will, and that he led them all to know and love him as their Savior and their God, but yet each one was led in ways peculiar to himself. The Lord dealt with each one as each one had need, and as should be most to the glory of, His holy name. So also in the record of healings wrought by the Lord in the days of his flesh no two instances are alike. Two things were alike in each and every case, viz., the fact of need and despair on the one hand, and the power of Jesus to save on the other. But what a variety of circumstance appears in the different records. Some were blind, some were deaf, some were lame, some were leprous, some were bowed with a spirit of infirmity, and some were possessed of devils. One man was told to take up his bed and walk; one was told, Thy sins are forgiven thee. Jesus touched the eyes of another; one touched the hem of his garment; one he seemed not to answer for a time, and then apparently rebuffed her all together; one he healed at a distance, and another he touched, yet all had deep need, and all were healed. Infinite variety, and yet perfect unity in the Spirit. So also to some were given deeper experiences than to others. Moses was led in ways peculiar to himself, for the accomplishment of wonderful things by him, for which he was thus prepared. David could write of experiences peculiar to himself, as a living type of the great King. Visions were given to the prophets that do not seem to have been vouchsafed to others of their time, and there is equally as great a variety to be seen in the lives and travel of mind of the various prophets as is to be seen in their writings, yet they all spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Referring again to the New Testament, we do not read of any having been called up into the holy mount and made witnesses of the transfiguration of the Lord, save Peter, James and John, and of these three alone is it recorded that they were near Him in the garden in the hour of his supreme agony. So also it is recorded of none but Paul that they were caught up to the third heaven, into paradise; and to John it was given to see visions, as they were not revealed to any other of the apostles.

Now how many of the people of God think of these recorded instances of peculiar experiences and write bitter things against themselves, because they know that such peculiar leadings have not been

theirs. How many have wished that their experience had been like that of Paul, or like that of some other brother or sister whose travel they have heard narrated, or of which they have read, and because they cannot tell of such deep convictions, or of sleepless nights and wretched days, when their whole life was a burden to them, nor of receiving such a deliverance that they could not contain themselves for joy, they have sorrowfully thought that they had never known the plague of their own heart at all, nor had ever received any tokens of love from the Master's hand, and yet, when these same troubled ones hear the name of Jesus, like the sister referred to above, that name is precious to them, and when they hear narratives of christian experience they can but feel sure that they do know what the writers mean; and when they read many things which Paul wrote, as recorded in the New Testament, they cannot say that these things sound strange to them. How many times the words of Paul come to the hearts of even such doubting ones, searching their very thoughts, and revealing themselves to themselves. Could this be so did not they also know these things for themselves? While not stricken blind, and while not hearing any voice with the natural ear, as did Paul, yet the things which he writes out of his soul's experience come to them with power, and falls upon their hearts as the words of a familiar friend who has shared with them common experiences. After all, they do know what Paul knew; after all, they do know what those of deepest experiences in the present day know, and so they have fellowship with them in these things.

In response to the words of sister Wright at the time when she said that she had never known any change as had others, but to her the name of Christ had from the first been sweet, we called attention to some instances recorded in the word to which we now also desire to refer, for the comfort of some others who may be troubled in the same way. There are instances recorded in the Scriptures which have always seemed to us to be similar. First, the prophet Samuel was set apart to the service of God from his infancy. This was not only so by the desire of his mother, but he was possessed of a devout spirit; his heart was reverent toward God from the first. It is not our mind that he ever could have pointed to any special time when he was first called by grace to know himself a sinner and to know Christ as a Savior.

He could refer to occasions when the Lord spoke to him with reference to the special work as a prophet to which the Lord had appointed him, and special gifts were bestowed upon him, and seasons of blessed communion with God were his in after life, of which mention is made, but, so far as the narrative goes, he was a follower of God in

heart and spirit from his earliest childhood. Likewise the prophet Jeremiah is expressly said to have been known and sanctified and ordained as a prophet to the nations before his birth; the Spirit of God was with him from his birth. No doubt the name of the Lord was always his delight, and In the word of the Lord it must have been his delight to meditate. With him also there is no mention of deep struggles of mind before the coming of peace, nor of great and overwhelming joy when that peace came. Our understanding has always been that he could never have pointed to any period of time as that in which he was called by grace, yet how deeply was he led into the knowledge of the Lord, and how steadfast he was in defense of the truth. Of Timothy it was said that from a child he had known the holy Scriptures. How wonderful is the inspired language concerning John the Baptist, who by the Spirit recognized his Lord, even before he was born, and thus assured Elizabeth, his mother, that she was come into the presence of the mother of the blessed Lord. In all these instances we feel well assured that from infancy the Spirit of God was with them, and that they could not have told of any special time when the good work of the Lord began with them. There was doubtless a time when that work did begin, but they could not have known of that hour. So there is also a time when the work of the Lord in grace begins with all his, but in many instances the subjects of that work cannot point to the time of its beginning, and this is not needful. It is needful that the work of the Lord be begun, but it is not needful that the subjects of it should be able to fix that time. It is needful however that the fruits of that work of grace should appear, and, as in the natural world, some come to a knowledge of (their own feelings, and of the things around them, sooner than others, so also is it, as we have long believed, in the kingdom of God. The evidences of life naturally, are not deep, profound things; the little child has just as many and just as satisfactory evidences that he lives as does the man of grey hairs. He sees the sunlight, he breathes the air, he hungers and thirsts, he can move, think and feel, he knows what love and fear and hope mean just as much as the man of many years, and these simple every day things are the evidences of life. So also in the kingdom of heaven the evidences of living in that kingdom are just as plain as and evident to the little child of grace as to the man who has long traveled there. Love to the brethren, calling upon the name of the Lord, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, desiring to know the Lord and to follow him, a knowledge of one's own sinfulness, and a deep conviction of unfitness and unworthiness, which often produce doubts and fears as to whether the subject of these conflicts can be a child of God

or not, are the true evidences of the new birth, and these the babe in Christ knows and feels as well as I they of older years.

Again we say that the time when these exercises begin to be felt in the soul does not matter, but it does greatly matter that these fruits of the Spirit be found there, and by the indwelling of these fruits do we know that the Spirit of God dwells in the heart.

Reading the obituary of sister Wright, and recalling her words upon the occasion above named, have suggested these reflections to us. May they be as pleasant to others as they have many times been to us.

Elder F. A. Chick

WILMINGTON, Del.
November, 1909.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:-I am sitting here alone, and my mind has falled to, musing upon the things of the kingdom, and how the Lord leads his children through the wilderness-journey, and the time has gone quickly while I have been writing. I will send what I have written to you; do with it as you think best.

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness." What does he cry? One thing is, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Dear heaven-born child, when did you first cry? It was when you were first made alive to God. What did the blessed Lord do, allow you to perish? No, he lifted you out of the horrible pit and miry clay, and placed your feet upon a rock. How firm and sure is this foundation; there is no stronger. He said, *"Upon this rock I will build my church,"*- He establishes our goings.

How glad I am that he establishes my going. I cannot get far away from it. He does this, yet how often I feel that I am not established in the truth, rooted and grounded in it. Then he puts a new song in our mouths, even praise to his name. What is more sweet and beautiful than to hear the children of God sing. Some of them may have cracked voices, but O how sweet they sing unto the Rock of their salvation. *"Let the inhabitants of the rock sing."*

What else do we find in this wilderness-journey. We have found a desert, a waste howling wilderness. The desert is of burning sand, with no food and no raiment, and no water to drink; all is desolate. We feel that there is no hope, that the Lord has forgotten to be gracious, and has left us to die. Ah! but he finds us even there, and he makes the desert blossom like the rose, and to send forth richest perfume and beauty when the presence of God is with us.

Then he feeds us on his precious word of truth, and we know that it is the Lord. He gives us to

drink from the cup of everlasting life, and clothes us in purple and fine linen. He leads us into green pastures, and we come up out of the wilderness leaning upon the arm of our Beloved, and we say, *"My beloved is mine, and I am his." "This is my Beloved; his person is divine."* How beautifully the words of this hymn describe him.

I have come to the place where nothing seems to give me joy or comfort except these blessed things concerning Jesus. The world is gay, but it has no charms for me. Let me sit down with and clasp the hand of some dear saint of God, or some precious child just learning to walk. These cry in the wilderness, and sing, *"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear."* I sometimes get in such fearful places, and doubt whether I am a subject of grace or not. What if, after all, I should be but a wolf in sheep's clothing God knows my heart, and I am glad it is so; I cannot deceive him. I often wish that I could express my mind at all times regarding these things, but more often I am shut up. If one asks me to tell my exercises, I stop to think, and wonder if I ever had spiritual exercises. One thing I do know: that I love these dear people who bear the name of Old School Baptists. I cannot remember the time when I did not love them. If I am saved at all it is by the grace of God; it is nothing that I have done, for all my righteousness is as filthy rags. I am glad that when the sheet Peter saw was let down, it was filled with all manner of four-footed beasts and creeping things; even the worm was there. That has been of much comfort to me. I am a poor worm of the dust, so that this suits me. *"O thou worm, Jacob."* I pray that God may ever keep me walking in that manner which is pleasing in his sight, and that becomes a child of God. May he keep me at his feet. This I know means great and sore trials. I feel that I know something of them, yet I love to sit at his feet, and wash them with my tears and wipe them with the hairs of my head, as did one of old. *"Trials make the promise sweet." "Tis my happiness below, not to live without the cross."* Pray for me; I need your prayers. The strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and hold up their hands, and strengthen the feeble knees.

I have written here as my mind has been led; if it be in accord with christian experience God be praised. My dear brother and pastor, may God fill you with his divine presence, and give you food for the lambs, as he has so graciously done in tbe past, is my prayer for his name's sake.

From a poor sinner, for whom I hope Jesus died,

MARY D. BREWSTER.

THE POOL OF BETHESDA.
(John v. 2-4.)

Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda [House of mercy], having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, or blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certaln season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

In one of Newton's hymns he says :

"Beside the gospel pool,
Appointed for the poor,
From time to time my helpless soul
Has waited for a cure."

Why this wonderfully experienced and clear-minded man should have called this a "gospel pool" I do not know, since he has acknowledged in this hymn that he has waited in vain, and since also, he is waiting for a cure, as appears from this same sweet hymn, not from the troubled waters, but from the hoped for appearing of the dear Savior, and the manifestation of his gracious power.

There appears in this pool nothing like the gospel to me. We are not told of anyone who has been healed by stepping into the troubled water. No individual case is mentioned, but the statement is made in a general way, as one would repeat a tradition. How often the angel came down is not told. "At a certain season;" the seasons may have been far apart. But only one can be healed at each season, and all the rest of that "great multitude" must wait for the next coming down of the angel. We may also be sure of one thing concerning the one who will be healed at each season: he will be the strongest, the least afflicted, of all the multitude; the one who is best able to crowd by the others, who are weaker than he, and to stand nearest the water, and be on the alert, ready to step in in a moment; or he will be one who has some powerful friends to help him, and who can rush him in before the rest who are struggling to get in. There is nothing, that has a gospel appearance in all of this, for the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, and therefore it is "glad tidings" to the poor. No rushing, and crowding, and pushing the weaker aside in the gospel, such as we see always in the crowds of this world. When the gospel finds one it finds him alone, helpless, undone, with no strength to go forward any more, nor to step into the pool, even if there were no one to push him aside, and the gospel does not require any movement on his part as a means of cure and salvation, but brings him health and cure just where he is, in a way he had never thought of before, causing his soul

to *"break out in unknown strains and sing surprising grace."*

The way of salvation by unexpected grace is evidently taught in this wonderful incident, as contrasted with that salvation which the natural man expects to result from some effort of his own, or from some help that another man may give him. The two systems of salvation are side by side in this world, among men. The one can be seen and understood by all men; the other can never be seen or understood but in its experience.

"And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years." Here is the gospel character. He has been a long time in this condition. There appears to be no difference between this man and all the rest of the great multitude, only that he has become absolutely helpless. He is still looking to the pool alone for salvation, as all the rest are, and evidently has no thought or hope of help from any other source. He represents the poor sinner who is at the ends of the earth, unable to do anything for his own help, or to find help from any other. He looks hopelessly at the pool, but cannot look elsewhere, for he knows of no other way in which a cure is possible. To every such poor, helpless soul salvation will come in the Lord's own time, and by a new and unexpected way.

"When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole", What tenderness is expressed in this language, and what care for the poor and helpless. The path of Jesus just now, on this Sabbath morning, passes this way, and comes to this poor man. His paths always lead to the afflicted souls, and always "drop fatness." A wonderfully strange question to ask of one in this infirm condition; but it brings out an expression of his pitiful state, and evidently causes some little hope to spring up in his heart that here at last may be a man who can and will help him into the pool when next its waters are troubled, and he answers by an expression of his sad and helpless state, still looking alone at the pool:

"Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me." That will always be the case with every poor sinner who is looking for salvation by any work of his own, or by the help of any man; others appear to him to be getting salvation, but with him it is impossible. There must be manifested to such an one another way, a new and living way.

Now a wonderful miracle is performed; words are spoken such as have never been thought of by this infirm man before, words that are spirit and life: *"Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk."* In an instant the bondage of disease is broken, and the flood of

life are flowing healthfully and gladly through his frame; he was made whole immediately, *"and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath."* It was always the Sabbath when Jesus did his works of healing. Whenever the day is named it is the Sabbath. It is the day when Jesus gives to his poor, affiicted people rest from work, rest from their vain labor under the law, rest from the sickness and pain of sin. The Pharisees never could understand the Sabbath, or anything more or less than the literal seventh day of the week. The natural man cannot see that the end, or spiritual meaning, of the Jewish Sabbath is Christ; that the Sabbath is one of those legal ordinances which are the shadow of good things to come, but the substance or body is Christ; that he has fulfilled the legal ordinances, and rested from them, and that those who believe have entered into this rest of Jesus; and he who hath entered into this rest hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. (Hebrews iv. 10.) So the Jews told the man that it was unlawful for him to carry his bed on the Sabbath; he gave them all the answer he could: *"He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk."* But he did not know who he was, for Jesus had conveyed himself away in the multitude. *"Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee."* Sin is the cause of the infirmity which renders the poor sinner helpless. He appears to himself vile beyond expression when his sins are shown to him in the light of God's countenance. When his sins are forgiven, and he is made whole of his infirmity, then the temple, the church, is his dwelling-place, and there Jesus finds him, and teaches him more of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and teaches him of the sad condition into which those are brought who live after the flesh, who sin wilfully, who walk in the ways of the wicked. He teaches them to profit, and says to them: *"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."*

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND.
SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.,
Sept. 29, 1909.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

INVITATIONS OF THE GOSPEL.

WE have received a communication from the north, over the signature, "A Friend of Truth," desiring our views in regard to what are called the invitations of the gospel; whether they are addressed indiscriminately to sinners or exclusively to the quickened children of God. We learn from the letter that

some of our esteemed brethren are differing seriously on the subject. Such passages as Matthew xi. 28-30: *"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,"* &c. *"Many are called, but few are chosen." The marriage of the kings son: " I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."* Also the first and eighth of Proverbs. Some brethren take the position that these are invitations to sinners indiscriminately, and others contend that these are invitations addressed only to the children of God.

In giving our views we beg leave to differ, very respectfully, however, from both parties. We deny that there are any invitations, either in the law or gospel, to saints or sinners. We think that a little reflection on the subject will satisfy all honest inquirers after truth that it would be altogether incompatable with the eternal perfections of Jehovah to issue invitations to any of his creatures.

First. We will remark that none of the communications from God to men are, anywhere in the Bible called invitations, and it is therefore speculative and idle to "argue theologically a position or question which has no scriptural foundation, and therefore, like the endless genealogies and questions about the law, which the apostle warns us against, is only calculated to gender strife, but cannot edify or comfort the family of God.

Second. An invitation is a complimentary request or message from a party having, and claiming to have, no authority to enforce the request, or message, which concedes to the party invited the undisputed right to respectfully decline the invitation, leaving it entirely optional with the party invited to accept or decline without transcending his right.

Third. All who have been brought to a saving knowledge of God will admit that He speaks the word, and it stands fast; he commands and it is done. *"Where, the word of a king is, there is power,"* and God is the King eternal, and the word that proceeds from him shall not return unto him void of the work hereunto he hath sent it. Even the carnal Jews perceived that our Redeemer spake as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Should the writer of these remarks receive a card of invitation from the president of these States, or from the governor of New York, the fact of its being an invitation guarantees the right to accept or to decline without involving a wrong or a crime in doing either. But should either the president or governor, as chief magistrate of the nation or the State, send an authoritative message to any citizen, summoning him to be or appear at any place, that message would be clothed with all the authority and power of the magistrate from whom it issues; but it could not be regarded as an invita-

tion, because it does not concede to the party to whom it is addressed any right to decline or disobey its authority.

Will any of our brethren contend that when the God of heaven peremptorily says to the seed of Israel, *"Seek ye my face,"* that they have a right to disobey or regard it only as a mere invitation, If he says to them, "look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else," does this imply that the people thus addressed have the same right to decline it as an invitation as to obey it as a sovereign mandate from the throne of God, Since God has commanded men to look to him for salvation, have they a right to look anywhere else for that salvation , If there be any authority implied in the address it destroys the nature of an invitation. Indeed, we cannot, without detraction from a proper sense of the eternal power and majesty of Jehovah, entertain the preposterous idea that he deals in invitations to any of his creatures in heaven, earth or hell. All his words are big with power and high in authority; he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and submits nothing to the volition of any of his creatures' wills. But in regard to the passages referred to, they bear the impress of his divine authority; they can none of them be disregarded or disobeyed. The passage referred to, Isaiah xlv. 22, is a sovereign command to the seed of Jacob scattered to the ends of the earth, to look to him for salvation, because he is God, and beside him there is no Savior. All who looked anywhere else, or to any other being, or to themselves, for salvation, were not only guilty of disobedience, but also of idolatry.

The passage, *"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden," &c.,* is sufficiently clear and explicit. It is addressed to all who labor and are heavy laden, and to no others; and whenever and wherever these words are applied by the eternal Spirit to any poor, laboring, heavy laden sinner that sinner will as surely come to Jesus as it is sure that the dead will rise when the voice of God calls them forth. The dead neither labor nor are they heavy laden, they slumber unconsciously in their graves; and all men are dead in sin, and as destitute of spiritual vitality until they are quickened by the Spirit, as the body of Lazarus was of natural life before Jesus raised him from the grave. But as soon as a sinner is quickened by the Holy Ghost he becomes a laborer, and is burdened with a heavy weight of guilt, and such are called to Jesus and find rest to their souls in bearing his yoke, which is easy, and his burden, which is light. To take the yoke of Jesus is to come under his law, to be baptized in his name and be yoked together in communion and fellowship with his disciples in all the privileges of the church of God. But are the unregen-

erated called to be baptized and identify themselves with the church of God? Philip did not so understand it when he said to the eunuch, *"If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest."-Acts viii.37.* None but believers are called or commanded to be baptized and come under the yoke of Jesus, for they must first be delivered from the yoke of Moses, the yoke of bondage.

In Matthew xx. 16, in the conclusion of the parable of the householder and his hired laborers for his vineyard, Jesus used these words: *"So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen."* There was murmuring among some of the disciples; the sons of Zebedee desired distinguished places in the kingdom, and some said, *"We have forsaken all,"* &c. What shall we receive? The parable was to rebuke this selfish principle, and to show not only the right of our Lord to choose from the whole company of his called children whom he pleased, to labor in his vineyard, but also to reward them equally. Those who had labored the most or longest were amply rewarded, but Jesus chose to make those who had labored least, equal with those who had borne the heat and toil of the day.

Again, in Matthew xxii. 14, the same words are used at the end of the parable of the marriage of the kin son. The application was made to the Jewish nation, which had been called as the carnal or fleshly descendants of Abraham, and under the covenant of works. God, by the prophets, had informed them of the approaching marriage. In the type they were bidden to the marriage, but in the election of grace they were not the chosen people of God. As the apostle Paul explains: *"For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."- Rom. ix. 6-8.* Although the whole nation of Israel was called in the type, or shadow of good things which were to come, how very few of them were found to be included in the covenant of grace. *"Esaias, also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved."-Romans ix. 27. "What then Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election [or the few chosen] hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—Romans xi. 7.* We have not time or space to enlarge on these parables, but it is sufficient for us to demonstrate that there are none called by grace but the chosen people of God, whose salvation is fully secured in our Lord Jesus Christ. *"For whom he [God] did foreknow, he also did*

predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."-Romans viii. 29, 30. In this calling none but the predestinated are called, and all who are called are justified and ultimately glorified. They are saved and called with a holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own (God's own) purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. (2 Tim. i. 9.) To prove, therefore, that they are the called according to God's purpose, is to prove that they love God; that all things work together for their good; that they are predestinated to bear the image of the Son of God; that they are justified and glorified in Christ. The passages, therefore, which speak of many being called and but few chosen, do not, nay, they cannot possibly relate to this holy calling in which Christ, the good Shepherd, calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. For in this calling the dead shall hear his voice, and they that hear shall live. (John v. 25.) The promise of God is unto ***"all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."-Acts ii. 39.***

The declaration of Christ to the self- righteous Jews that he had not come to call or save righteous people, but to call sinners to repentance, does not admit of the construction that he had come to call all the sinners of Adam's race to repentance, for millions of them had already left these mortal shores. The Pharisees up-braided him for associating with publicans and sinners, and he told them that this was his business into the world, to save sinners. The whole did not need a physician, nor did the righteous need one to save and purge them from sin.

The first chapter of Proverbs is also referred to as favoring the doctrine of invitations, &c. But an examination of, the Proverbs of Solomon will show that Solomon personifies Wisdom; and Wisdom, we are told, is justified of her children. In a spiritual sense Christ is the Wisdom of God to his children. He is of God made unto them wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. But wisdom, abstractly considered, is the opposite of folly and madness. As rational beings, we disobey the maxims or proverbs of wisdom when we transgress her dictates; and wisdom will laugh at all in our calamities, into which we foolishly plunge ourselves, and mock us when our fear cometh. The voice of wisdom is loud in her reproofs when we rush heedlessly into trouble. But the wisdom of God is only known to those who are made wise unto salvation, through faith, which is in Christ Jesus.

Brethren should be careful to avoid any interpretation of the Scriptures which will clash with other plain declarations of the inspired word. We may fail to comprehend or understand some portions of the divine testimony, but our ignorance will not justify us in forcing interpretations which must necessarily conflict with the teachings of the word and the Spirit of the Lord. If our views are right, both the word and the Spirit will harmonize with our views, but if we entertain opinions or views which the Scriptures do not so justify, they must be discarded as wrong; and pernicious. Now, in conclusion, we will reiterate to our legally inclined brethren of the north the appeal which the great apostle to the Gentiles made to the bewitched Galatians: *"This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith Are ye so foolish having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh,"- Gal. iii. 2, 3.* Review your own experiences, see if in your own salvation you only accepted an invitation and availed yourself of it to secure your acceptance with God, or were you awakened to a sensibility of your guilty, lost and helpless condition by the irresistible and almighty power of God was it left optional with you to decide whether you would live or die, when by the arrows of the Almighty you were arrested and arraigned before the bar of eternal Justice, Why did you there cry, Lord, save, I perish? Why did you not say, Lord, I will accept thy Invitation.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.,
March 1, 1863.
Elder Gilbert Beebe

PSALMS CXIX. 89.

"For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven."

This Psalm no doubt was written with a twofold object. The primary object was to sing unto the Lord the song of the heart, touching the many and varied strings and chords in harmonic rhythm, echoing sweet strains of entrancing grace in the fullness of justly measured faith, now soaring to the very top of God's holy mount in heavenly strains of exaltation and praise for God's abundant and enduring mercy, then descending the scale to the deepest depths of the valley of humiliation, sorrow and weeping, with pleadings of a bleeding heart for life and light, strength and salvation, again ascending to the walk of faith in love and obedience, beholding the church in its order and beauty, with the King of saints reigning with power and majesty, clothed in the glory of the Father, full of grace and truth. Clustered together in the many verses of this one hundred and nineteenth Psalm is the burden of the whole song of the redeemed, in its line and

shadows, in its varied hues of joy and suffering, of heartaches and soul searchings. The transcendent loveliness of faith's view of the travel of the saints from nature to grace can never be attained unto by the natural mind, but when viewed by faith and not by sight we look beyond in flight of time, to the crowning glory of the risen, living Savior, who hath put all things under his feet which stain and spot the raiment of the King's daughter, who "is all glorious within," whole clothing is of wrought gold, who "shall be brought unto the Kind in raiment of needlework." Again we hear the enticing music of the soul's confession to the Father of mercies, laying upon the altar of God's grace the body's vileness, blasted with sin, its infirmities, faithlessness, backslidings, with every evil from the heart, which is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," all of which is surely felt and passed through because," Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." This confession which declares the truth of God's salvation is written in the fleshly tables of the heart, never to be erased until "forever" is dissolved and melted away in eternity. "Forever" applies to time, and embraces the things of time it is that which is from the beginning to the ending. In time the Lamb of God was led to the slaughter, in time we become followers of him, in time his work is accomplished, in time we fulfill all that God has ordained concerning us. Jesus is the beginning and the end of all our hopes. "For ever" embraces our life under the law and under the gospel. "Forever, O Lord." The confession and declaration is to the Lord alone; no human agency stands between the confessing soul and his God, and when he takes the name of his Lord upon his lips it is with reverence and godly fear, and comes direct from a broken heart and a contrite spirit.

"Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." Jesus is the word of God, that perfect word which is life and light to his people, the glory of which filleth the earth with the "knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea;" it has all power in heaven and in earth, it killeth and it maketh alive, it teareth down and it buildeth up, it changeth the night into the morning, and the morning stars sing for joy. When the legal heaven-encompassed spiritual Israel in its firm grasp of death, the "word," yet unrevealed, was forever settled there, guiding the church through every vicissitude, through all dark places and every trial. For the "Word" was in the beginning with God, and the Word was God." The power of "the Word" delivered the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage, it was a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night to Israel through all the wilderness journey. It was the sword that turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life at the entrance of Eden; its wondrous power turned back the

proud waves of the Red Sea, and also the Jordan. It was the end of the law for righteousness. When the settled Word finished the work under the law in righteousness, making honorable the law, in the death of the gracious Word (Christ Jesus), then the legal heaven was put away and rolled up as a scroll, yet still living in the memory of all who continue in time, and whose forever is enfolded in the beginning and the end. Immediately, however, a new heaven and a new earth spread their canopy and carpet about our lives, "wherein dwelleth righteousness." The "Word" fills the new creation, and is forever settled there. The gospel bringeth good tidings of the " Word," what its signs of promise are, how every promise is fulfilled in the heart of the church, and the faith and the order of the church are made beautiful and glorious in its ordinances and in its assemblies. " Out of Zion, [the church] the perfection of beauty, God hath shined " in his word. In him they obey, in him they walk in the light of truth, in him the little ones of the flock abide, and he in them. ***"In my Father's house are many mansions."*** Each individual heart is a mansion in the Father's house (the church), where Jesus, the living Word, has set up his temple and makes his glories known. The church as a loving mother watches over and cares for all her children, and clothes them with the spirit of her precious grace, which the happy bridegroom bestows upon her to comfort them withal. Then the "Word" is to them a strong tower in his garden of nuts and pleasant fruits. Far reaching and in perfect control is the sacred word of God as it becomes settled in every secret place in the gospel heaven. As the dew of heavenly grace spreads its mantle of moisture over the parched earth of our thirsty souls, bringing strengthened hope and renewed life through the night, so in the morning light the Sun of Righteousness with healing rays to brighten and cheer our lonely way. God is our sun and shield, whom having not seen, we love, for his word is settled, established and confirmed in our life of faith. Where Christ is, there is heaven; he reigneth his kingdom; throughout all his kingdom his law and firm decrees are all obeyed; his one commandment ruleth his subjects: "That ye love one another." The song of the redeemed is a song love, divine, unchanging love. It was love that caused the dear Redeemer to suffer and to die for the objects of his great love. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," and it was while we were yet sinners that Christ died for us, therefore is his love entirely unmerited on our part. May we all sweetly rest in his love and be established and settled therein forever.

B. F. COULTER.

STATE ROAD, Del., Dec. 3, 1897.

My DEAR YOUNG FRIEND:- Yours just came to hand this morning. You are justly entitled to a reply, and I am seated to reply today for some reasons that seem to urge it upon me. I want to say to you that you have given me all the outlines of a genuine christian experience. You do not go into very extensive details, but so far as you go you have evidently learned the lessons that are taught in the school of Christ. As to believing, the apostle John says, *"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself."* When we have the evidence in our own experience we believe, and the belief comes along with the evidence. We believe what we know, and we do not and cannot believe beyond that. If we come to know the Savior it is as a deliverer. We know him in what he has done for us in giving us to hope in his mercy and opening the prison door. No one ever believes in the Savior or loves the Savior until he becomes a Savior to them, then they know what a loving and pitying Savior he is, and they love the salvation that has come to them, and they cannot help loving it. For myself, I did not experience any outburst of joy, or feel like shouting. I was disappointed, for I had been led to think that if I ever experienced that change it would come in a sudden outburst of joy unspeakable. I did not have to say,

"On the wings of his love
I was carried above
All sin and temptation
and pain,"

but there was a sweet calm, and an entering into peace and rest, and the condemnation and gloom passed away, but the peace that came to me then came to stay, and the Savior that found me then I still believe in and love, and I love all his little ones, and love to encourage and comfort them. I think that those who have the most trouble with themselves, and the most doubts, and worry about their experience and their fitness, have the most satisfaction afterward. Preaching does them more good, for the reason, I suppose, that they are more needy. I do not wonder that you could get nothing at the kind of meetings you spoke of; there are many places about that city where the bread that comes down from above is unknown. Your experience will lead you to the right place and to the right people, and I cannot advise you to wait to become more fit or more worthy. You do not say whether it has been on your mind to ask a place in the church. It may have been that that was just what you wanted to have some talk with me about. It could hardly be otherwise but, that you would feel to want the company and confidence of those who had traveled in the same pathway with yourself. Folks who have waded through trouble and sorrow

want sympathy and companionship. The Lord's people are called companions. I wanted to know something more of the state of your mind, so I could know better what I might say to you. The story you have told me will satisfy experienced people that you have come to know and love the same gospel that they have, and I doubt not you would be gladly welcomed to a home and a place among them. If we have the Spirit of Christ we have also a spirit of obedience to his will, and it leads us to desire to follow him and to confess him before men. We do not persuade people, but we try to encourage them and help them along. We know that they are often timid and weak. Write again if you feel so inclined.

Yours to serve in the gospel,
E. RITTENHOUSE.

MEETINGS

GLENWOOD CHURCH

Glenwood Church, Princeton, WV, announces a Saturday meeting, July 30, 2005 starting at 10:00.

Those coming by way of 1-77 take exit 9. Turn left onto 460W. Go 5 miles, Turn Right onto 19N, then immediately left on Glenwood Park Road, 1 1/2 miles to the church on the left.

Those coming by way of 460, follow the same directions from the 1-77/460 Intersection.

Sister Marilyn Shaw

VALLEY VIEW CHURCH
4th of July Meeting

The meeting will be held at Valley View Church meeting to begin at 10:00 a.m.

Traveling on Highway I -81 exit at #114. Take #8 south for 4 miles turn left on Rustic Rift Road - then right on Valley View Church Rd. Church will be on right.

From Floyd, Va. take route 8 north. Turn right on Rustic Ridge Road, then right on Valley View Church Road.

All lovers of the Truth are invited to come.

Elder Hale Terry

REVELATION 7:15-16.

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 27, 2005

A. U. Hocutt, GA 5.00
Mary Poff, VA 3.00
Herbert Dodson, VA 5.00
Reidy Pickral, VA..... 25.00
J. D. Neely, AR 5.00
Mary Janney, VA..... 5.00

OBITUARIES

ANNIE BELLE ROWLAND PICKRAL

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst, sister Annie Belle Rowland Pickral. She was born July 16, 1921, a daughter of the late Robert Lee Rowland and Nannie Simpson Rowland. She was predeceased by nine brothers and four sisters.

Sister Bell passed from this life December 13,2004. She was married to the late Arthur Oscar Pickral.

Sister Bell united with Springfield Primitive Baptist Church September 14, 1952.

She was a faithful member and attended meetlngs as long as her health allowed. She believed and loved the doctrine Salvation by The Grace of God.

Sister Bell's funeral was held December 15, 2004 at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. Her pastor Elder Marvin Brumfield and Elder Raymond Goad conducted her funeral. She was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park, to await the coming of our Lord and Savior.

These left to mourn her are daughters Elaine Gibson and husband Bobby, Vivian Dawson, Brenda Rowland and husband Tommy, Donna Clemmons and husband Steve, eight Grandchildren and fifteen Great-Grandchildren.

May each and every one be reconciled to God's Holy Will.

Written in Love and Hope,
Carol R. Pickral

Elder Marvin Brumfield,
Moderator

Oscar Pickral - Clerk

ST. MATTHEW 5:9-10.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

"The Lord has been so good to me
I want to praise His name
His mercy long has been my plea
His grace I would proclaim.

Yea though of sinner I'm the worst
Still I desire to praise
The gracious God who loved me first
To Him my voice I'll raise.

I pray the Lord that I might see
Myself released from sin.
It's burden long has harassed me,
How sore a plague is sin!

I long to leave this world of woe
And with my Savior reign
Where self no longer is my foe
And I am free from pain."

Composed by Joyce Pittman
Sent in by her mother,
Sister Mae Williams

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EDITORIAL

Elder Kenneth R. Key

The following is an article written a long time ago by Sister Mary Ellison of Topeka, Kansas. I want to present it to you as our editorial for this issue. I hope you will be given to enjoy the sweetness and the similitude of the days of a tree as the days of the Lord's people. Please read on.

"They shall not build. and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. " Isaiah 65:22).

I have thought that the *"tree"* here spoken of represents Christ, who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and as his days so shall the days of his people be. As I lay back, with closed eyes, I seemed to see a little tree in all its verdant, springtime beauty, clothed with leaves and blossoms. In the warm sunshine and gentle breeze it waved and beckoned with its spreading branches, and how sweet to rest beneath its shade, enjoy its fragrant bloom, and reflect on the prospect of fruit to follow. So shall the days of my people be. Where is the similitude of the days of a tree and the days of the Lord's people? Let us go back to the early experience of a child of God,

"When converts first begin to sing,
Their happy souls are on the wing:
Their theme is all redeeming love,
Fain would they be with Christ above."

Oh what lovely blossoms, and what a sweet savor of Christ they send forth as they call and beckon to us to ***"come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." "Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord***

hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein." The trees of the field do clap their hands, the cedars of Lebanon (the older brethren) bow at his feet, and praise him in fullness of joy, resting in the blessed promise that the Lord will not leave himself without witnesses. Perhaps the little tree had stood unnoticed, apparently dead, until the little leaves began to grow and the signs of life involuntarily began to appear. What rejoicing now that we see it is not dead, as it appeared, and now we hope to see the sweet fruits of the Spirit evidenced later on, for they shall take root downward and bear fruit upward. But, as the days of a tree, by and by the sun does not shine so brightly, clouds appear, and oh how dark it becomes. A storm arises, and in the raging the poor little tree sways and bends, the lovely bloom is beaten off and swept away, or covered with earth. The storm passes, and the little tree is left standing, not so proudly, perhaps, but of a more sore dignity, as, the promising bloom gone, the fruit buds begin to appear, and as the fruit buds begin to appear, and as the fruit increases in the upward branches the root is taking deeper hold in the earth. So are the days of my people.

"It is not long before they feel
Their feeble souls begin to reel;
They think their former hopes are vain,
They're filled with sorrow, grief and pain."

Cannot every child of God go back in memory to the time they thought they would always go on their way rejoicing in the bloom of their earliest love, believing the enemies of their carnal nature were all slain, and would never vex or annoy them any more? But alas, the little clouds begin to arise, vexations come, and the lovely bloom is beaten off as the sorrows of the world worketh death to the sweet spiritual enjoyment, perhaps leading them as far as Peter, to even deny the Lord, saying in doubt and unbelief, that after all it is only a delusion, and they were deceived and had deceived others. Where now is the blessedness ye spake of? The beautiful promising bloom which looked so pleasant is gone from their view, swept away and buried in the storm of earthly cares and sorrows that has so unexpectedly fallen upon them. *"But the root of the righteous shall not be moved."* The storm passes, and they find themselves still standing in the faith of God's elect, cast down, but not destroyed. Oh then the fruit buds begin to appear, as in humbleness they are brought to see that it is not in their own strength they stand. *"I am the root and the offspring of David"* This is the Root that extends downward in the

earthen vessel of mercy. Each can say, O Lord, *"my goodness extendeth not to thee,"* but his goodness does reach down to every vessel of mercy. The strong downward Root holds firm, and will not let them be overwhelmed. They are made to realize that *"the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit", which* is borne upward in praise and thanksgiving to God for deliverance from the storm. The many storms of affliction and sorrow, trials and tribulations, perils and persecutions break and beat upon the *"trees of righteousness the planting of the Lord..."* until they bow and bend, so shaken in mind they fear they cannot stand; no, not another day.

"I fear at last that I shall fall,
For if a saint, the least of all."

Yet when the storm passes, and the Son of righteousness once more beams forth, then in this light, and not their own feeble sight, they see it is not in their own strength they still stand, but the Strength of Israel has held them. Not by works of righteousness which they have done, not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord. Much more of the cherished fruit is gone. But when blooming youth is gone, and old age comes on, we are made to realize that it is the bitter, gnarly fruit of self-confidence and fleshly ambition that is being beaten off. It came from earth, and must fall back from whence it came, for *"Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up,"* but the *"tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord,"* its fruit shall remain. One by one we see every earthly hope and joy beaten off and swept away, but the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace and fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, oh nothing shall ever be able to separate us from that. How gladly we should have the gnarly, poisonous fruits of the flesh pruned away, so that we might shine forth as the morning, with not a cloud to intervene between us and our Rock, who shelters us in their weary land of storms and trouble. As the tree grows older, as the growth in grace and in the knowledge of truth increases, the poor tempest-tossed child of God seems to gain strength in the storms, often stands more firm, and is not so easily tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine; does not so lightly bow and bend to the 10 heres and 10 theres, but the sweet fruits of the Spirit are borne upward to him, the Strength of Israel, the Root of David, in the earthen vessel, has kept him from falling, and enables him to say, I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me. If it is his will that I shall weather another storm he will give the old trunk, stripped of all the foliage of youthful hopes and ambitions, every branch of earthly aspirations and joys broken off,

strength to endure. But oh the weakness of the flesh. How we do shrink and dread when we see the storm coming, though there is a *"needs be"*for it all, and we know that

> ***"Not a single shaft can hit,***
> ***Until the God of love sees fit."***

How we do feel the need of the prayers of all saints, for it does seem at times that this flesh and heart will surely fail. Oh may he, by the power of his might, when the adverse winds do blow, give me strength to still stand in the way, ready for whatever is in the counsel of his will to come next.

"As the days of a tree." How often have we seen the tall cedars, the sturdy oaks, beaten by the storms of many seasons almost to the ground, nothing left but their bare old trunks, and to all appearance have lived their time and served their purpose, yet they do not quite fall; not yet, their downward roots have not yet parted from the earth, they must wait the appointed time to fall. So shall the days of my people be. Old age is come, the bare old trunk is stripped of every alluring earthly joy, until there is nothing left to live for, and ***"I long to lay my armor by, and dwell with Christ at home,"*** for

> ***"Surely like a withered tree,***
> ***No fruit to me is found,***
> ***Why do I live, O Lord, I cry,***
> ***A cucumber of the ground?"***
>
> ***"When a few more days I've wasted,***
> ***When a few more scenes are o'er,***
> ***When a few more griefs are tasted,***
> ***I shall fall, to bloom no more."***

But not yet. The downward Root has not yet parted from the earthen vessel, and though I often feel, especially in the heart-rending trials I have endured of late, that there is no fruit borne upward from such a withered and weather-beaten old trunk, yet all the days of my appointed time I must wait until my change comes.

One night as I lay thinking of the trials and conflicts of the Lord's peculiar people these words came to my mind with force, ***"I see men as trees walking,"*** and I thought how like a tree is the walk of the Lord's people. None can see men, nor the people of God, walking as trees, untilled out of the town, or world, as was the blind man, by God's own hand, and how short the time until made to see that as the days of a tree, so are the days of the Lord's people. He sometimes lays his hand heavily upon us, showing us what great things we must suffer for his sake, until we cry, ***"Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me."*** Whom he loves he rebukes and chastens, and it is his chastening hand that makes us look

up, until we see clearly every man, every child of God, walking the same path, every one enduring the same storms and afflictions, for if ye be without chastisement, then are ye bastards and not sons. There is no place of rest for us in the town, or world; we cannot go back there, or tell to any in the town of the things we see clearly. They know nothing of the reproach of the cross, and have no sympathy for the mourning people of God. But to our own house, there we may freely go, sure to find there the sympathy and fellowship we crave. There all speak the same language, weeping with those who weep and rejoicing with those who do rejoice. Here we see men as trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, walking the same road, buffeted on every hand by storms without and within. The same storms that beat and bend one old tree beat upon all, and though one may feel that the storm has brought him a little lower than the richest ever get, yet all the rest feel the same way: less than the least of all saints. But in this is our fellowship and our love made perfect, and we often find the lowest tree bears the sweetest fruit, as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood. What a comparison. The low apple-tree is the one that bears the fruit. The ones that stand the highest are not always the most fruitful. But *"as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons." "Though the Lord be high, yet has he respect unto the lowly."* His loved ones among the sons of earth are lowly. A proud look he hates and abominates. The proud he knoweth afar off. But the fruit of his love on the lowly trees is sweet to our taste; yes, sweet, because when we are made to look up we see that his banner over us is love, and know that, *"Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me. "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."*

As the days of a tree, so are my people. As the tree falls, there shall it lie. It falls to earth, and returns to the dust as it was, and so shall it be until the bright morning of the resurrection, when the Lord shall bring again in power that which fell in weakness, and will clothe it again in the beauty of holiness, then shall we be satisfied. Every idol that now intervenes between us and our love will be swept away, and we shall see his face, and never, never sin. No more storms of darkness and sorrow falling upon us, no more crying of pain and anguish, no more griefs and heartaches, no more trouble and mourning, no more losses and crosses, no more wars and fighting, the conflict will be over, our warfare ended, and God himself shall wipe the tears from off all faces, for, *"as one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you."* Then shall we see him as he is, and be like him. *"As the days of a tree [He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief] are the*

days of my people."

Elder Kenneth R. Key

VOICES OF THE PAST

"WHAT THOU OUGHTEST TO DO"
A Meditation on Acts 10
By Gerald D. Buss

The events of Acts chapter 10 and their further telling in the following chapter have a deep significance in pointing the manner in which it is ordained of God that the gospel is to be preached to sinners.

It was the Lord's will that the Apostle Peter should, contrary to his own preconceived traditions and notions, be the instrument in the hands of the blessed Spirit in being the first to bring the glad tidings of sins forgiven through a precious Christ to the Gentiles. In bringing this to pass the Lord, as always, worked at both ends of the matter.

Firstly, there was the Gentile, Cornelius, one of the centurions of the New Testament of whom is recorded some good thing. In his case it is evident that the Holy Spirit had already implanted the fear of the Lord in his heart and that of his household. The fruits of this were apparent to all with whom they had to do. Yet for all of his prayers and alms-giving Cornelius felt that there was an aching void in his heart that had not been filled. It was this Holy Ghost-wrought emptiness which prepared him for such a filling of the Spirit under Peter's ministry and especially for that revelation of Christ which alone can fill the hungry with good things whilst the rich are sent empty away. Nothing short of this could render him acceptable to his Creator before whom he so deeply felt to be standing. He deeply felt that there was a solemn, unanswered question in his life for which he had neither wisdom nor strength to attend to aright. Yet how vital it was to Cornelius that this solemn matter be dealt with!

But how could he learn the way of salvation? "How shall they hear without a preacher, and how shall they preach except they be sent?" Whilst the Holy Spirit could have revealed a precious Jesus to him without any human instrumentality, yet it is His general method to save sinners through the foolishness of preaching. So at the other end of the matter the Holy Spirit was preparing His servant Peter to be the minister of grace to Cornelius and his household. It was to Simon the tanner's house that the angel of the Lord commanded him to send, which command Cornelius immediately obeyed.

We find Peter resting upon the housetop awaiting his meal, when he falls into a trance. Before him descends, from heaven, a great sheet, knit at the four corners, thus securing all the contents of this

mysterious vessel. Within it, to Peter's deep consternation are found all manner of unclean creatures, forbidden under the law of Moses to be touched. Yet a command attends the vision, ***"Arise, Peter, slay and eat." "Not so, Lord,"*** answers Peter with his usual instinctive reaction to events. ***"I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean."*** Back comes the almighty silencing voice of divine majesty: ***"What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common."***

Three times this was repeated, before the sheet was finally received up into heaven, intimating that whatever objections Peter may have on earth, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit each welcomed into heaven these cleansed beasts. This reminds us of the work of each of the three glorious Persons of the Trinity in salvation. The Father's electing love, the Son's redeeming love and the Holy Spirit's regenerating love. Again it is very significant to notice that in the holy Word of God there are three beginnings referred to. We have the beginning of creation in Genesis I; the beginning of redemption in John I; and then in Acts II. 15 Peter refers to the beginning which was wrought by the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. This inward regenerating beginning which the outward anointing of the Holy Spirit confirmed with His special gifts at that time, Cornelius was a subject of to Peter's amazement. Surely Peter's hesitancy was somewhat like Jonah's, though thankfully not with the same spirit of rebellion to which that well-known prophet was left.

Just as Peter was meditating on these things, the three men commanded of God to be sent by Cornelius arrived at Simon's house where Peter lodged. At that very moment Peter was shown what he "ought" to do. "Behold, three men seek thee Go with them, doubting nothing." How wonderful is God's timing of His works. Just as minutely planned here as at the well when Eliezer met Isaac's, God- appointed wife to be, Rebecca. So Peter, without gainsaying (that is without any more questioning!), departs on the next day to find the congregation to which God had appointed him to preach.

How wonderful is the constraining power of the Spirit, when He overrules all objections and sweetly draws the feet of Christ's disciples in the appointed way! Then what we "ought" to do is no longer a cumbersome duty, but a loving privilege, all the strength and willingness coming from Him whose command it is. It is the Holy Ghost who reveals these solemn obligations and responsibilities to the children of God and then gives the enabling grace to do what we ***"ought." "It is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure." "I will walk in them,"*** says their God. This is what Peter means in his Epistle when he speaks of being

elect unto obedience. Not just to be justified by the obedience of Christ, but also to be sanctified by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ.

How different the law is in this respect! It clearly reveals our responsibilities but lends no help to the awakened sinner to fulfil its obligations.

"Run, run and work,' the law commands,
Yet finds me neither feet nor hands;
But sweeter news the gospel brings;
It bids me fly, and lends me wings."

How transcendent in all this is the sacred example of Christ, who in speaking of His sufferings to the two favoured disciples on the Emmaus road said, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?" O how attractive is the sweet submission of Christ to His Father's will in the Garden of Gethsemane! What holy love and zeal filled His holy Person, God and Man, to bear that solemn *"ought"* that His Father had laid upon Him! Isaiah says of Him in prophecy: *"Behold My Servant, whom I uphold; Mine elect, in whom My soul delighteth."*

On Peter's arrival at Cornelius' house he finds an expectant congregation waiting to receive the Word. How diligent Cornelius was for the souls of those with whom he had to do, to gather them in this manner! And of how many congregations can it be said: *"We are all here present before God, to hear the things commanded thee of God"?*

Before he preached, Peter had to remind his attentive hearers that he was but a man, and therefore was not to be the object of adoration or praise. How even John in the Revelation was twice reproved for worshipping an angel! In all our gatherings in His name how conscious we need to be of the command: "worship God"! But how is He to be worshipped?

"Worship God, then, in His Son; There He's love and there alone."

This was the lesson Cornelius and his household and the gathered friends were about to learn.

What subject did Peter preach? He preached of Christ as the Judge of all; of Christ crucified; of Christ the one Mediator between God and Man. In all this he published (not offered) the glad tidings that *"through His name whosoever (Jew or Gentile) believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins"*; that God is no respecter of persons. The dear Holy Ghost, who alone can give power to the ministry, accompanied Peter's sermon with double power: the power to believe on Christ for salvation within, and the outward witness of His work so often repeated in New Testament times, the speaking of tongues to magnify God. Whilst the miraculous gift of speaking with other tongues has

ceased, the grace and gift of God in putting a new song in the mouth of God's believing people, ***"even praise unto our God,"*** has not ended. At such times of love, the very stones would cry out if these should hold their peace.

Cornelius' aching void was at last filled with an application of the atonement and a view of a precious Christ. Now at last his cup ran over in praise to God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Like Simeon his eyes had seen by faith His salvation. Nothing else could have brought his weary, aching soul into "the peace of God which passeth all understanding." It was the cross of Christ which alone answered his deepest needs.

Peter, on seeing the evident approbation of God Himself upon these Gentile believers, commanded them, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to attend to His own command, to be baptized, asking that question: ***"Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?"*** Without any gainsaying on either Peter's or Cornelius' part, they entered into loving obedience in that which the Lord had showed them that they "ought" to do.

"What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the midst of all His people."

"He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

From The "Gospel Standard"
December 2004

We need trial upon trial upon trial, and stroke upon stroke to bring our soul out of carnality and death. We slip insensibly into carnal ease; but afflictions and trials of body and mind stir us up to some degree of earnestness in prayer and supplication, give a force and reality to the things of God, show us the emptiness and vanity of earthly things, make us feel the suitability and preciousness of the Lord Jesus; and as we taste any measure of sweetness and blessedness in Him, He becomes more feelingly and experimentally all our salvation and all our desire.

Elder J.C. Philpot

LUKE 6:45.

A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

PERSECUTION OF BAPTISTS

Benjamin Keach was often seized when preaching and committed to prison, sometimes bound, sometimes released on bail, and sometimes his life was threatened.

On one occasion soldiers, who had been sent into Buckinghamshire to suppress meetings of Dissenters, with great rage and violence swore they would kill Keach. He was seized, tied up on the ground, and four horse soldiers prepared to ride over him to trample him to death. At the last minute an officer forbade it. Keach was then tied behind one of the soldiers on horseback and taken to prison, where he suffered great hardship.

The following is taken from J. M. Cramp (based on Crosby's History of the Baptists). Crosby was Benjamin Keach's son-in-law.

Benjamin Keach, a Particular Baptist minister, wrote a small book for children, entitled, *The Child's Instructor; or, a New and Easy Primer.* In the catechetical portion of the book, Baptist sentiments were inculcated. It was affirmed that ***"believers, or godly men and women only, who can make confession of their faith and repentance,"*** should be baptized. The personal reign of the Saviour on earth for a thousand years, held at the time by some Baptists [for example, Bunyan], was taught. And, which was peculiarly offensive, Mr. Keach said, that "Christ's true ministers have not their learning and wisdom from men, or from universities, or human schools; for human learning, arts and sciences are not essential to the making of a true minister; but only the gift of God, which cannot be bought with silver or gold. And also, as they have freely received the gift of God, so they do freely administer; they do not preach for hire, for gain or filthy lucre; they are not like false teachers, who look for gain from their quarters, who eat the fat, and clothe themselves with the wool, and kill them that are fed: those that put not into their mouths they prepare war against. Also, they are not lords over God's heritage; they rule them not by force and cruelty, neither have they power to force and compel men to believe and obey their doctrine, but are only to persuade and entreat; thus is the way of the gospel, as Christ taught them."

For this he was indicted at the assizes. The language of the indictment may seem strange to the reader:

"Thou art here indicted by the name of Benjamin Keach, of Winslow, in the county of Bucks., for that thou, being a seditious, heretical and schismatical person, evilly and maliciously disposed, and disaffected to his Majesty's government of the Church of England, didst

maliciously and wickedly, on the first day of May, in the sixteenth year of the reign of our sovereign lord the King, write, print and publish, or cause to be written, printed and published, one seditious and venomous book, entitled, The Child's Instructor; or, a New and Easy Primer; wherein are contained, by way of question and answer, these damnable positions, contrary to the Book of Common Prayer, and the Liturgy of the Church of England."

The trial took place October 9th, 1664. [Keach was 24.] Chief Justice Hyde presided, and conducted himself with a malignity wholly unbefitting his office. Under his direction, a verdict of "Guilty" was recorded, and the judge then proceeded to pass sentence, in the following terms:

"Benjamin Keach, you are here convicted for writing, printing and publishing a seditious and schismatical book, for which the court's judgment is this, and the court doth award: That you shall go to jail for a fortnight, without bail or mainprise; and the next Saturday to stand upon the pillory at Aylesbury, in the open market, for the space of two hours, from eleven of the clock to one, with a paper upon your head with this inscription: 'For writing, printing and publishing a schismatical book, entitled, *The Child's Instructor; or, a New and Easy Primer.* ' And the next Thursday to stand in the same manner, and for the same time, in the market of Winslow; and there your book shall be openly burnt, before your face, by the common hangman, in disgrace of you and your doctrine. And you shall forfeit to the King's Majesty the sum of twenty pounds, and shall remain in jail until you find sureties for your good behaviour, and appearance at the next assizes, there to renounce your doctrines, and make such public submission as shall be enjoined you."

The punishment of the pillory was abolished by Act of Parliament in the year 1837. The instrument so called was an upright frame placed on a scaffold, upon which the offender stood, his head appearing through one hole of the frame, and his hands fixed in two others. As this punishment was generally reserved for persons guilty of perjury and other infamous crimes, the mob were accustomed to pelt them with rotten eggs or various kinds of filth, and even with stones and brickbats, so that death sometimes ensued. To such an exposure the Lord Chief Justice of England delivered up a worthy minister of the gospel. The sentence was duly carried into execution, and the sheriff, who was himself a fierce opposer of the truth, took care that the judge's directions should be obeyed to the very letter.

It was market day at Aylesbury. The town was thronged. People flocked thither from all parts of the country to see the new and strange spectacle. But though many of them were prepared to deride and sneer,

the usual expressions of popular indignation were wanting. Hitherto the pillory had been reserved for the vilest criminals. But Mr. Keach was a good man, and a preacher of the gospel. They could not find it in their hearts to pelt *him.*

Precisely at eleven o'clock he was placed in the pillory. Many friends attended him, and stood around the instrument of torture for the purpose of sympathy and encouragement. And there, too, stood his wife, and "frequently spoke in vindication of her husband, and of the principles for which he suffered." A true helpmeet!

"Good people," said he, "I am not ashamed to stand here this day, with this paper on my head; my Lord Jesus was not ashamed to suffer on the cross for me; and it is for His cause that I am made a gazing-stock. It is not for any wickedness that I stand here, but for writing and publishing His truth."

"No!" exclaimed an Episcopal clergyman, who was standing by; "it is for writing and publishing *errors."*

"Sir," replied Mr. Keach, "can you prove them errors?"

He would have answered, but he was too well known by the multitude. One told him of his being pulled drunk out of a ditch. Another upbraided him with being lately found drunk under a haycock. At this all the people fell to laughing, and turned their diversion from the sufferer in the pillory to the drunken priest; insomuch that he hastened away with the utmost disgrace and shame.

When the uproar had subsided, the voice from the pillory was heard again. Having somehow slipped one of his hands out of the hole, he took his Bible from his pocket and said, "Take notice, that the things which I have written and published, and for which I stand here this day a spectacle to men and angels, are all contained in this Book." The jailer snatched the book from him, and replaced his hand in the hole.

Still the voice came from the pillory: ***"A great concernment for souls was that which moved me to write and publish those things for which I now suffer, and for which I could suffer far greater things than these. It concerns you therefore to be very careful, otherwise it will be very sad with you at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven; for we must all appear before His tribunal."***

The officers interposed, and he was compelled to be silent for a time. But again he ventured: ***"O! did you but experience the great love of God, and the excellences that are in Him, it would make you willing to go through any sufferings for His sake. And I do account this the greatest honour that ever the Lord was pleased to confer upon me."***

The sheriff was furious, and declared that he should be gagged if he did not hold his tongue. So he refrained from speaking. Yet he

could not forbear uttering these few words: "This one 'yoke' of Christ, which I can experience, is 'easy' to me, and a 'burden' which He doth make 'light.' "

When the two hours had expired, he was released, and "blessed God with a loud voice for His great goodness unto him."

That day week he was exposed to the same indignity at Winslow, where he lived, and bore it with equal patience and manliness. There also his book was publicly burnt, according to the sentence.

From "Gospel Standard"
January 2005

From Elder Lambert's Book,
"Tried In The Furnace."

Paul says in this first letter to the *"Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ"; "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1:18).* The preaching of the cross is far more extensive than proclaiming that Christ was crucified on the cross on Golgotha Hill almost two thousand years ago. May God reveal unto us and inspire us to grasp a little of the "greatness" of the subject of the cross.

The construction of two pieces of timber so that one crosses another results in a cross, Two lines drawn so that one crosses another is said to be a cross. Figures of the cross both in nature and craftsmanship are too numerous for you to count, even from where you are now sitting. One principle contradicting another principle creates a cross. Trials and tribulations are crosses because they are the result of conflicting principles. When life comes into contact with death there is suffering which manifests a cross.

Proclaiming the contrasting characteristics of Christ would be preaching the cross of Christ. The subject of the cross of Christ would necessarily embrace all His life from the time He was born as Son of man until the time He was resurrected from the tomb. Paul was inspired to write in Ephesians 2: 15, 16, *"For to make in himself twain one new man, so making peace: and that he might reconcile both unto God by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby."* It was befitting that the final climax of Christ's sufferings be on a cross. He took up His cross when He was made lower than the angels. When the Son of God took upon Himself the character of the Son of Man the cross was made manifest. The new man was the cross-breeding of God and man. We must proclaim the dual characteristics of Christ to preach the cross. When we preach Him as

God-man, Divine-human, King-priest, Master-servant, abased-exalted, and crucified-resurrected, we preach the cross. When we declare Him to be possessed of both strength and weakness; flesh and Spirit; us and Him, and, the Creator and creature we are preaching the cross.

He being both divine and human, He was possessed with the cross of wills. The human will prayed, *"If it be possible let this cup pass"*; yet the divine will said, *"Not my will but Thine be done."* Jehovah was the Father of Jesus and Mary was His mother. As the Son of God, He lives eternally; as the Son of man He had a timely existence which began to be made manifest when He was born of the virgin, Mary, and ended when He died on the cross. Did the body of Jesus come to an end when He died on the cross. Did the body of Jesus come to an end when it was placed in the tomb? No! No! No!

There was a dissolution of His body and Spirit on the day of crucifixion. His Spirit was commended unto His Father; the body was laid in the tomb. This same Spirit raised Jesus from the dead on the third day. He became the "first fruits." His body was the first human body to be clothed with immortality. The Man, Christ Jesus, was raised from the dead! This was accomplished in His resurrection. He being a cross of Himself and us, we being in Him, He being raised from the dead, gives us the basis of our hope of the resurrection of our bodies by the same Spirit. (See Romans 8:11).

Jesus Christ was King-priest. He was ruler over His own body. He was the first and only one born of woman who was able to keep His body under subjection to such extent that He did not sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. His composition being such, His body was an acceptable sacrifice and gift to the Father for His people. We find in Hebrews 5:1 that the duties of a high priest were to *"offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins."*

This High Priest forever perfected His people in the sight of God by offering His own blood as a sacrifice and His body, the life He lived here, as the acceptable gift unto His Father. He is our King-priest. He is the sole head and governor of the church, those who are called out by Him. His divine generation, His royal descent, His perfect nature, His wonderful offering, all this well qualifies Him to atone for His people. It further qualifies Him as the perfect King and Priest to illuminate His people with His light and nourish them with His wonderful gifts of grace and peace. He blesses them with that consoling peace that the world knows nothing about. He orders His people to walk in paths of righteousness. He leads them and holds them steady with His hand. When they falter and fall by the wayside, His eye is ever on them and His hand beneath them so that He gen-

tly picks them up and encourages them with the wonders of His power and grace. He purifies their souls with the washing of regeneration and promises purification of their bodies. He intercedes for them to the Father within the Holiest of Holies. Priests before Him could only offer sacrifice of the blood of animals; He offered Himself.

It was necessary for high priests before Him to offer sacrifices daily. He offered Himself once. They offered for their own sins as well as the sins of the people; He being without sin, could offer Himself for the sins of His people only. He entered once into the Holy Place and obtained eternal redemption for us by His own blood which could take away sin; they could only enter into the shadow of the Holy Place in the worldly sanctuary by blood of goats and calves which could not take away sin. The maneuvers of the high priests of the Levitical Priesthood were only shadows and types; His was the real and true.

We must preach Him as being both Master and servant if we preach the cross. As master His demands were that the law be kept to a jot and tittle; as servant, He perfectly fulfilled the law. As master, He demanded that the sinner be punished, as servant, He took upon Himself this punishment in behalf of His people. As master, He instructs His people; as servant, He comes into their hearts and enables them to carry out His instructions. He orders them to perform and performs for them that which He orders.

He is great and small. He is so great that all His people are in Him. He is small enough to dwell in the heart of one of His little ones. He is strong enough to have power over all flesh; yet weak enough that He said while upon earth, ***"The Son of man Himself can do nothing." "The Father worketh hitherto, and I work."*** He was rich and poor. He was so rich that He owns all things; so poor that He said, ***"The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head" (Matt. 8:20).*** He experienced all the crosses of opposing characteristics and experiences. We must preach this in order to preach the cross.

Dear ones, is it not a comfort to you to realize that your Savior knows how to sympathize with your cross? You have never felt grief more than He. Your temptations have never been greater than His temptations. You have never experienced being forsaken to a greater extent than He experienced. Is He not a wonderful sympathizing Savior? He knows by experience your every trial and sorrow.

Preaching the cross includes not only the Cross of Jesus Christ but also the cross of His people. We read in ***Matt. 16:24, 'Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross,***

and follow me." The cross of two opposing characteristics consisting of the flesh and the Spirit must have been the cross under consideration. Each child of God *"takes* up *his cross* "when he is born of the Spirit. He is not familiar with the cross before this time because all he knows is his carnal natural desires, thus he is in fellowship with himself. He is in perfect agreement with himself before this miraculous work of the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit takes up its abode in the soul of an individual he begins to experience the cross the world knows nothing about. A child of God soon learns, ***"That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit" (John 3:6).*** We learn by sad experience that we cannot spiritualize the flesh nor "fleshilize" the Spirit. (Pardon the newly coined word, but this is the only way I know to make it plain.) There is no blending the two together in this world, thus, the cross. The flesh shall be spiritualized in the resurrection. The soul is spiritualized in being born of the Spirit in this life. We cannot reform nor renovate the flesh so that it can agree with the spiritual, neither can we bring the Spirit down so that it can agree with the flesh. Paul said in Galatians 5: 17, ***"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: [the cross] so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."*** Those born of the Spirit are possessed with dual contrary characteristics and experiences. No wonder we are strangers to ourselves!

The Spirit is spiritual and the flesh is natural. The flesh is carnal and the Spirit is holy. The Spirit is immortal and the flesh is mortal. The Spirit is righteous and the flesh sinful. The Spirit is living and the flesh is dying. The regenerated mind serves the law of God but the flesh serves the law of sin. We experience the cross of life and death, joys and sorrows, good and evil, abased and exalted, humility and pride, forsaken and owned, and many, many other conflicts too numerous to mention.

Hart was inspired to write many hymns in harmony with the strange conflicting crosses of a child of God. He wrote:

"How strange is the course that a Christian
must steel,
How perplexed is the path he must tread!
The hope of his happiness rises from feal,
And his life he receives from the dead.
His fairest pretensions must wholly be waived,
And his best resolutions be crossed;
Nor can he expect to be perfectly saved,
'Til he finds himself utterly lost.

When all this is done, and his heart is assured
of the total remission of sins,
When his pardon is signed and
his peace is procured,
From that moment his conflict begins."

How strange that one must lose his own life to find it! He must feel himself to be lost before he can be saved. He must die in order to live. He must fear before he hopes. The righteous views himself as sinful and the greatest is made to feel *"less than the least."* The way up is down.

The text says, *"The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness."* It has a reverse effect upon those who perish. Those who are not born of God cannot receive the things of the Spirit. Preaching the cross *"cuts them to the heart"* while it *"pricks us in the heart."* It antagonizes them and comforts us. It drives them away while it draws us. It edifies us and confuses them. It is to us, *"the power of God"*; to them, *"foolishness."*

It is foolishness to them because they feel capable of performing righteousness, atoning for their little mistakes, reforming and renovating themselves, dedicating their lives to God, and making heaven their home; so, why the cross? Why was it necessary for Christ to perform righteousness and it be imputed to them? Why was it necessary for Christ to die on the cross considering they are able to take care of themselves?

Why is it necessary for the Spirit of God to directly work in their hearts when they feel capable of performing the work required with the spirit they naturally possess? Why is the Spirit of God a cross to the spirit of the carnal or natural mind when the natural mind itself seems to them to be sufficient to choose God and work righteousness? Why are they not in strict agreement?

The aforestated questions above I know to be in harmony with the thoughts of the unregenerated mind. Preaching the cross was to me foolishness for years after I was ordained by man to preach! I religiously preached the power of man and the wisdom of man to make heaven his home! I have no stones to throw at them because I was as conscientious and honest in my convictions as anyone could be. I had not experienced the cross; therefore, I could not preach it. I know that something occurred to me one night as I closed a discourse on the subject, *"Sinners in the hands of an angry God."* This mighty something that took hold of me crossed everything I had ever known and brought to nought all I had thought myself to be. I trust this was the Holy Spirit that manifested my righteousness as filthy rags in His sight. I trust that I was given the Holy Ghost conscience which was

a cross to my natural conscience. My life since that time has been full of conflicts and crosses. I have been convinced that it is through hell we enter heaven, and by the cross we obtain the crown.

"But unto us, which are saved, it is the power of God." God's power caused us to look to the cross of Christ for remission of sins. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission for sin. It is through the power of God that our sins are remitted because it required the blood of His own Son shed on the cross to justify the remission of our sins. It is through the power of God that we are given His Spirit which is so contradictory to our natural carnal spirit that it is neither desired nor can be obtained by the power. The things we naturally love the cross causes us to hate. The things we naturally consider wisdom the cross manifests as foolishness. What a cross between the natural and spiritual mind! What a rugged cross experienced by those upon whom the power of God hath wrought a work!

Sometime ago at a funeral the choir sang, *"The Old Rugged Cross."* As they sang the words, *"I'll exchange it some day for a crown,"* my mind was deeply impressed upon that grand exchange. A crown of immortality awaits the mortal. A crown of righteousness awaits the enlivened sinner. A crown of glory is laid up for those who feel so low and insignificant. A crown of eternal life will swallow up those who die in the Lord. The incorruptible crown shall clothe the corruptible body. We experience the cross here, but beyond this sphere of time we shall realize the crown.

It was said of Jesus in Hebrews 12:2, *"Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."* We are to follow Him. Because of His accomplishments, that joy is set before us. We press towards the mark of the prize of the high calling when we shall be called upon high to sit with Him. Should we not be emboldened to endure the cross and be encouraged to run the race that is set before us seeing that such a crown is our reward and prize at the end of the race. May God give you strength and courage to endure the cross with patience and persevere in the race with faith. May He grace you with the gifts of His Spirit so that you can fight as a good soldier the foes that dwell within. May you be supplied with all your need so that at the end of the way you may say with Paul, *"For I am now ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: not to me only, but unto them also that*

love His appearing" (2 Tim. 6:6-8). May God bless these thoughts to your comfort and edification.

Elder E.J. Lambert

THE NECESSITY OF THE BLOOD
From Robert Trail on
"The Throne of Grace"

Let us consider Christ's death for encouraging us to confidence in coming to the throne of grace. This is the main ground of boldness in coming (Heb.10:19): *"Having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus."*

Precious blood must be shed, or we cannot enter; we must see it by faith, or we dare not venture. We must *"come to the blood of sprinkling"* (Heb. 12:24). We dare not step one step into God's awful presence unless we see the way marked, consecrated and sprinkled with the Mediator's blood. How shall the unholiest of sinners venture to come into the holiest of all, God's presence? Yes, saith the Holy Ghost, such may *"by the blood of Jesus."* Let us therefore consider what this blood of Christ does and speaks in order to our boldness in approaching to the throne of grace.

This blood satisfies justice, and answers all the claims and charges of the law against us. What mars boldness like fears of a standing controversy betwixt heaven and us? God is holy, we are vile sinners; God's law is strict, we have sinfully broke it, and deserve hell most justly. No answer can be given but by this blood. What would the law have, but Christ gave? Would the law have a sinless man to answer it as it was first given to sinless Adam? "Lo, I come," saith our Lord Jesus, without all sin: a Man against whom, for Himself, no charge or challenge. Would the law have perfect sinless obedience? Christ did perform it. Must the law have life and blood for every breach of it? Christ never broke the law; but the burden of millions of breakers and breaches of it lay on Him, and His blood was shed for them: and hereby He fulfilled the law, *"put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb. 9: 26); "finished the transgression, made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, brought in everlasting righteousness, sealed up the vision and prophecy, and anointed the most holy" (Dan. 9:24).*

You can never have boldness at the throne of grace unless this blood is applied. *"Christ is set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in His blood" (Rom. 3:25).* The propitiation is in His blood; faith in it makes it our propitiation.

Copy, Dec. 1992,
Gospel Standard

March 26.

"All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." - ISAIAH liv. 13.

The teaching of God can only be known and realized by those who have seen an end of all creature perfection, and who are completely and experimentally destitute of all wisdom in the flesh. And God's teaching does not leave a man where it found him, dead, stupified, worldly, unfeeling, and carnal. If he is in distress, it does not leave him in distress if he feels guilty, it does not leave him guilty, if he is in darkness, it does not leave him in darkness; but lifts him out of these evils. Thus God's people are continually led to come unto him for his instruction, because they feel that without his special teaching they can know nothing as they ought to know. Nay, the more they have, the more they want to have; for no sooner is the light withdrawn, than the darkness is more sensibly felt. If any text of Scripture has been opened up to them, it makes them want to have others made known in a similar way; if they have had any consolation, and it is taken away, it makes them want it again. So that the more wise and spiritual God's people become, the more foolish and carnal they appear in their own eyes; the stronger they are in the Lord in the power of his might, the more sensibly do they feel the weakness of their flesh; and the more they are enabled to walk closely with the Lord, the more they discover the wretched wanderings of their base and sinful hearts.

Elder J. C. Philpot

June 8.

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." - 2 CORINTHIANS iv. 17.

Ye suffering saints of God! ye tried and afflicted children of the most High! raise up your thoughts as God may enable you - lift up your eyes, and see what awaits you. Are you tried, tempted, exercised, afflicted? It is your mercy. God does not deal so with every one. It is because you are his children, that he lays on you his chastening hand. He means to conform you to the image of his Son in glory, and therefore he now conforms you to the image of his Son in suffering. 'O but,' you say, 'I cannot believe it is so!' No; if you could, it would not be much of a trial. This is the trial of faith - to go groaning on, struggling on, sorrowing on, sighing on; believing against unbelief, hoping against hope; and still looking to the Lord, though there is everything in nature to damp the hopes and expectations of pectations of your waiting souls. Yet all

will end well with the people of God. Their life here is a life of temptation, of suffering and trial; but heaven will make amends for all. And if our faith is now tried as "with fire," it will one day "be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." In that day when the secrets of all hearts will be brought to light, the faith of thousands will be found to be little else than presumption; but the faith of God's dear family will then be crowned with "praise and honour and glory;" and they shall see the Lamb as he is face to face, when all tears are wiped away from all faces.

Elder J.C. Philpot

PSALM 43.

Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation: O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man.

For thou art the God of my strength: why dost thou cast me off? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacle.

Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceedingly joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God.

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The 5th Sunday meeting of the "West Country Line Union," consisting of Dan River, Greensboro, Moons Creek and Big Meadows Churches, will convene the 5th Sunday the 31st day of July 2005. Big Meadows will be host.

Follow Highway 87 from Reidsville and after crossing I-85 South of Graham, NC, go approximately 17 miles, across "Cane Creek" bridge and turn right at top of hill, go 4 miles to crossroad and turn left 1 mile to Church.

All lovers of the truth are invited and we especially welcome any Elders who have a mind to come.

ROMANS 14:8.

For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 2005

Cleo Underwood, VA ---------- 5.00
Winfred Young, NC ---------- 5.00
Randolph Plybon, VA ---------- 5.00
Edna Graves, AL ---------- 5.00
Andrew Agee, VA ---------- 5.00
Eld. Barnabus Brammer, PA -- 5.00
Arlene Hole, NC ---------- 5.00
Don Ferguson, CAN----------25.00
Eld. James Pugh, AL ----------15.00

OBITUARIES

MEMORIAL FOR DEWEY ANDERSON TATE

In early September, 2002, I had the opportunity to have a very interesting and emotional visit in my driveway with Brother Dewey. On this bright, sunny day he had come to my home because of what he advised as a "need to talk to somebody". Brother Dewey was in a lot of physical pain and with his cane and some assistance from me he got out of his truck to talk, but would not agree to go inside the house. For about an hour he shared with me some of his innermost feelings and how he needed help. He was quite distraught, very despondent, and felt as "alone" as he said he had ever felt. He talked a lot about what medical doctors had done for him, but in a very emotional and tearful manner conveyed that his recent experiences had led him to believe how much he needs his Lord and Savior. Building this relationship was important to him.

As a result of our discussion, he wanted to know who our pastor was at Dan River Church and if I would set up an appointment for the two of them to get together. I made contact with Elder Kenneth Key who scheduled visitation with Brother Dewey. From this time forth Brother Dewey began attending church services.

Since Brother Dewey's death I learned from his daughter, Karen, that one year after the terrorists attacks in 2001 that Brother Dewey had a dream. This would have been about the time he came to my home "to talk" in September 2002. She said that he had shared with her that in this dream the Lord and three Angels appeared before him. He was greatly moved by this experience and other things happening in his life and I believe this is what prompted our meeting in my driveway.

As indicated earlier, Brother Dewey immediately began attending Church.

His daughter, Karen, supported him, and was responsible in getting him to church and just being there for him. On the fourth Sunday in

September (09-22-2002) he joined the church and was baptized the fourth Sunday in October 2002. As long as he was able he attended church and was a good and faithful member; A lover of the doctrine of salvation by grace.

Brother Dewey grew up in a Primitive Baptist family. His parents, Harry and Nellie Tate, who preceded him in death, were members at Dan River Church, and in his early childhood he attended with them and his siblings. He often heard his mother sing a lot of the old hymns. One that she sang a great deal was ***"How Tedious and Tasteless the Hours When Jesus no Longer I see"***. According to his daughter, Karen, this was one of his favorites and was sung at his funeral.

Brother Dewey was born on February 10, 1933 in Rockingham County, NC. His death occurred at Carolina Medical Center in Charlotte, NC on March 26, 2005. On this date it pleased our Heavenly Father to call our beloved brother home above. He was taken from his labors here to rest in God's eternal love.

On December 20, 1952, he was united in marriage to Shirley Pruitt. She preceded him in death on September 9, 1991. They were blessed to have three children; All of whom survive; A son, Dewey Keith Tate, and Daughters, Karen Tate Reynolds, and Kimberly Tate Spaulding.

Other surviving family members include six grandchildren and one great grandchild. Brothers: Robert, John Dillard, Cecil and George.

Stepbrother: John Wayne Tate.

Sisters: Lorene Lawrence, Bessie Sparks, Elaine Smith and Debra Boulding. Step-Sisters: Glenda Gunn and Betty Carol Ellington.

Brother Dewey had great faith in the Lord. After his surgery and during his hospitalization, prior to his death his patience and humbleness was an example of what the grace of God can do in one's heart. All was done for him that loved ones could do, but still the Lord saw fit to call him home.

The church, family, and community will miss him, but we know that we must submit to God's will for he doeth all things well. Our hope is that God will comfort the bereaved family and give them the strength to bear their loss ever looking to him for guidance.

The funeral service was conducted at Dan River Church on Tuesday, March 29, 2005 by his pastor, Elder Kenneth R. Key. Many paid tribute to this beloved Brother. The body was laid to rest in Dan River church cemetery to await the coming of our Lord.

May God bless this lovely family and comfort and reconcile them as only He can do.

Written by request of Dan River Church.

John Collie April, 2005

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

Let worldly minds the world pursue,
It has no charms for me;
Once I admired its trifles, too,
But grace has set me free.

Its pleasures now no longer please,
No more content afford;
Far from my heart be joys like these,
Since I have know the Lord.

As by the light of opening day
The stars are all concealed,
So earthly objects fade away
When Jesus is revealed.

Creatures no more divide my choice,
I bid them all depart;
His name, and love and gracious voice,
Have fixed my roving heart.

Now Lord, I would be thine alone,
And wholly live to thee;
But may I hope that thou wilt own
A worthless worm like me?

Yes, though of sinners I'm the worst,
I cannot doubt thy will;
For if thou had'st not chose me first,
I had refused thee still.

Newton

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EDITORIAL

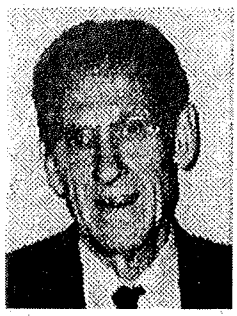
Elder R. H. Campbell

"For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead." (Rom 11:15)

I have read this text, many times and wondered about it, and passed on to read other scriptures without any understanding on the meaning of this verse. I felt that I could see that the olive tree, which is referred to in this chapter, was the household of faith, but, when you get to the point of the branches being broken off, others being grafted into the tree, and others being grafted back in again, it just did not make sense according to my understanding of the other scriptures. I read it again a few weeks ago, and seemed to see more in it than I had ever seen before. I believe that it is a very significant event in the salvation of the children of God, for I see it as a parable of how the new covenant was introduced into the plan of salvation, and how the old covenant was brought to an end. As I read it, and began to meditate upon it this time, I began to see a picture unfold, and for the first time felt to have an understanding of what was under consideration. I will leave it to your discretion as to whether I have any understanding of it now.

The eleventh chapter of Romans, it seems to me, is a detailed description of the fulfillment of the words of the apostle Paul, as recorded in, ***(Heb 10:9) "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that he may establish the second."*** This is what occurred when, Jesus the Son of man, had fulfilled his mission here on earth, dying for the sins of Israel under the first covenant. ***(Heb 10:15) "For this cause he is the mediator of the new testament that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal life."*** This was

the time when the law was taken away, as Paul describes in, *(Col 2:14) "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."* Now with the law of Moses being ended, the Jews were no longer under a covenant relationship with their God, as they had formerly been, and therefore they were now in the same position in their relation to God that the Gentiles had been under the mosiacal law. They had no legal standing before God, in the form of a covenant relationship, as they had under the law. This was not a change in plans, but rather a fulfillment of prophecies as made by Isaiah and many of the prophets of old, in which the old testament, would give way to the new.

(Jer 31:31) "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember them no more." When this covenant was established, as the apostle Paul stated, *(Heb 8:13) "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to pass away."* And the hope of Israel is cut off because the covenant relationship was ended.

This is the new covenant which God, by the mouth of the prophets, had said that he would make with his people, in that day. This covenant was not with all of the people, even as the law of Moses which God had established beforehand, did not include the whole nation of Israel, for Paul said, speaking of Israel, *(Rom 9:5-6) "Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect, for they are not all Israel, which are of Israel."* Under each covenant, there was an elect people with whom the covenants were made; and they were those who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, and is effective with none

other. These covenants were with the Lord's portion, Israel the lot of his inheritance: for when he set the bounds of the people, in the beginning, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel, the seed of the woman, as mentioned in, Genesis 3:15, the elect seed.

As the apostle Paul was quick to point out, *(Rom 11:1-3) "I say then hath God cast away his people? God forbid, for I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot not the scripture saith of Elias? How he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life."* This is the cry of many, in all ages of time, as they see how the world has gone after the gods of the world and have no time for the true and living God. Paul then updated Elias' prophecy by saying, that even as it was in Elias' day, so it was in Paul's day, a remnant according to the election of grace was not cast away, and this same thing can be said in our day. The covenants did not save the Lord's people, as he said *(Rom 11:7) "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it and the rest were blinded."* It is by election, whether under the gospel or under grace. Election and grace are but the ways in which their salvation is manifested in the different administrations, as regarding who are God's chosen people. This is made known unto them by the grace of God, and no one else is aware of it, and will deny that it is true. Under the law Paul said, "All are not Israel, which are of Israel because God gave some of them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, and the same applies today, and this caused them to be completely unaware of this truth. In the gospel dispensation Jesus said, *(Mark 4:11-12) "And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: That seeing they may not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them."* Note the similarity of the work of God, under the different covenants, both included definite impossibilities for man to find out the ways of God, in his own wisdom.

Israel, as a nation, rejected Christ, and therefore were cut off, (cast away) from the olive tree (which represents the whole household of the elect), because of their unbelief, and are therefore now in the same position that the Gentiles

were under the law. They are in the same state of ignorance and unbelief that the apostle Paul said that he was, before his experience on the road to Damascus, where, as regarding the gospel; they were enemies for the Gentiles (gospel's) sake, but as concerning the election they are beloved for the Father's sake. Paul was quick to point out, that none of the elect are actually permanently cast away, because they are received back as he said, *(Rom 11:15) "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead. They are brought back into the olive tree, even as the gentiles are, (Eph 2:1) "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and in sins:"* They are grafted back again into the olive tree, in the same manner that the gentiles are grafted in for the first time.

The change in the administration from the law of Moses, to the covenant of grace did not increase the total number of saints of God, because that determination was made before the world began, they were all chosen in Christ Jesus originally. This fact is proven by Paul's statement above, God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew, *"for I am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin."* He had been under the law, and as such was cast away, when the law was ended, and he was blaspheming and persecuting the church of Christ, trying to destroy it, but now he has been grafted back into it, under the new covenant of grace, and was made to be a preacher of righteousness of the faith that he once hated. This is brought to pass because of holy calling of God, by which he was sent, by Jesus, unto the Gentiles, to open their eyes, turn them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Christ. This method of calling has not changed from the old covenant, case in point, Jacob and Esau. *(Rom 9:11) "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth."* So, as it has ever been, the election hath obtained the salvation of all of the Lord's people, and it is by the grace of God unto all.

As stated above, the Jews had no legal claim to the olive tree, because the first covenant had expired, and the Gentiles had never had a right to the tree of life: (of which the olive tree is representative) but by the grace of God, all of the chosen, both Jew and Gentile, will be grafted into the olive tree. This is accomplished when they are born of the Spirit, because this is the only way that any can see the king-

dom of God. Jesus confirmed this again when he said, (John 14:6) "Jesus said unto them, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." and this applies to both Jews and Gentiles whether under the law or grace. Paul said that the Gentiles could not boast against the branches, who have been cast away because of unbelief, because they must all stand by faith. (Rom 11:22) "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness: otherwise thou shall be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in again, for God is able to graft them in again." The proof of this text is in the fact, as quoted above, that the apostle Paul was cut off, when the new covenant came into effect, but was grafted in again, by his experience on the road to Damascus. This is the way and manner in which it happened to the apostle Paul, and he said that he was a pattern to them who would thereafter believe on Christ unto life everlasting.

(Rom 11:25) "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceit; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." None can boast of this or be wise in their own conceit, for as Paul recorded *(I Cor 4:7) "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not receive it? So the last shall be first and the first last: for many be called, but few are chosen: there were many Jews but few were chosen of God, and in like manner there are many gentiles, and only a remnant shall be saved."* Paul realized this, and mourned for his brethren according to the flesh, as all of God's children do, for there is no pleasure to them, that any should perish. *(Rom 9:1-6) "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsman according to the flesh: who are Israelites; to who pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect, for they are not all Israel, which are of Israel."* (many are called, but few are chosen) There is an elect group among both Jews and Gentiles who will inherit heaven and immortal glory, but not all that cry

unto him, Lord, Lord, are his children. All of the chosen vessels, of both groups, are the ones to whom the promise is made, and are the ones to whom the scripture refers when it says, ***"And so all Israel shall be saved."*** Moses said, ***"The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance, and Jacob's name was later changed to Israel, and where this name appears in scripture it represents the Lord's portion."***

The gifts and the calling of God are without repentance, for God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. They are all where the apostle Paul said that he was, ***(I Tim 1:15-16) "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."*** This statement was made after his experience on the road to Damascus, after he had received his commission of God to go and preach unto the Gentiles, and not prior to his conversion, when he had said that he was in a state of ignorance and unbelief. This is one of the most comforting of all scriptures, to the little trembling child of grace, because each feels this same unworthiness, and upon reading this scripture will say, if the apostle Paul felt this way, and he is a pattern, then surely there is hope for me, because that is certainly the way that it is with me.

As I understand the above scripture, it is but a part of a parable of how the transition from the law to grace was performed, by God, and as is stated above, all Israel shall be saved without the loss of one, because there is no instant in time where the salvation of any of the saints was in jeopardy. The old and new covenant are not the result of a change in the original plan of God, but a demonstration of the power, wisdom love and grace of God toward his children, and his bringing them home safely without the loss of one, in spite of what they were in nature, or any lack of righteousness of their own..

(Rom 11:33) "O, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the lord? Or who hath been his counselor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, And through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen." Man cannot, by searching, find out the ways of God, for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him;

neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned, for as Paul wrote to Timothy, *(I Tim 3: 16) "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world and received up into glory."* We meditate on the scriptures, and study them daily, in an attempt to discern the truth, but it comes only by revelation, and that comes at God's appointed time. This may be when they are reading or meditating upon the scriptures, or it may come at a time when they are busy with other matters, but if they arrest the mind, then they will stop, in their mind, and experience one of those precious times of refreshing, of being raised up above the cares and troubles of this life, for a season, and are given, to feast on that heavenly manna which comes down from above, and they are blessed to worship him in Spirit and in truth, and they are blessed to experience one of those little Bethel spots that Abraham spoke of, in his travels here on earth.

How grand and glorious is his power, wisdom, and love as it is made manifest in the salvation of the saints. He alone, is worthy of the worship, praise and adoration of his children, worlds without end, because he is their salvation, under both the old and the new covenants. There are differences of administrations, but the same Lord, God the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; these three are one, and bear record to these truths.

In bonds of love.
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Summerfield, NC
June 19, 2005

Dear Elder Terry:

Please renew our Sign's of the Times for two years. Enclosed is a check for fifty dollars ($50.00) please use the rest for anything needed.

We are 85 years old but thankful we are able to stay home and look after each other. We thank the Lord for his merciful kindness to us all these years.

We appreciate your work with Signs of the Times.

Thanks,
W. H. Norman
Maedell Norman
3221 Pleasant Ridge Road
Summerfield, N.C. 27358

426 Lilly Rd. N.E.
Apt. 133
Olympia, WA 985106-6932

Dear Elder Wm. H. Terry

Considering the fact I am now 96 years old, in good health, and having taught school for 35 years before I retired in 1967. I still know how to write correctly; but it doesn't suit me to fail using what little I do know.

I love to receive the Signs of the Times and I hungrily read it from cover to cover. I couldn't believe I had failed to send a renewal check this month because I was sure I had mailed the renewal a month ago. It has been dear of you to continue sending the Signs in spite of my failing mind.

I feel my life has been in God's Holy Hands for as long as I have lived. And I felt His urge to ask for membership with my mother's Primitive Baptist Church in Yakima, WA in August 1973. Two of favorite Elders of the church (Elder Spangler from Danville, VA and Elder Ben Preston (both now deceased),. baptized me in Lake Mayfield near Mossy Rock.

My heart rejoices with the several close contacts I have had to know that Jesus has blessed me with The Holy Spirit in my heart and soul. I have had spoken words to me in answer to my prayers to answer problems that beset me.

My mother, Josie C. Mitchell was a life long Primitive Baptist. Her love and gentle guidance has been the story of my life as I was led to joining the church. Elder Beebe's sermons were enjoyed in the Signs as long as Mother lived. There is no church in my vicinity; that is, our church. To me, it is the pure essence of "The Rock" God's Holy Church.

Excuse this long letter, but I feel so blessed; and I'm happy to know a few of the brethren on the East Coast. It keeps me in touch along with the "Signs."

Thank you for the part you do to produce and send such a spiritual help to me.

Sincerely,
Alma Wilson

ST. JOHN 15:20-23.

Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin.

He that hateth me hateth my Father also.

ARTICLES

Having been requested by some of the brethren to write some of the experiences I hope has been the dealings of the Lord with me and what I hope the Lord has done for me a helpless sinner.

After having a dream a few months ago that I saw a precious sister (Mary Poff) standing alone in this large field where she looked so forsaken and alone.

It seemed I walked slowly up to where she was at, desiring I might say something to her for comfort. I asked if there was anything that I might do to help. Her reply was you can write your experience and I am now trying to attempt to do that. Somehow I feel I must try to make this effort. I feel to be so insufficient for this task yet I feel I must try to make the effort to write with the feeling that if anyone would find any comfort in it that God would be praised. Here trusting that God would reveal to me some of the things, and the joys I have received by His mercy to a helpless hell deserving sinner as I feel to be.

When but young around 13 or 14 years of age I can't remember dates as some are blessed to do, because I thought at first that the thoughts I was having and concerned about were imaginary. I remember my brother Roy and myself were spraying apple trees. Our stepfather Charlie Sutphin had passed away leaving three young boys 3, 4, and 5 years of age. Roy and I were trying to help mother make a living for us. I also has a sister (Hazel) approximately 11 years of age. While I was pumping the sprayer which was a hand pump in a 50-gallon barrell fastened on a sled, there was a terrible condemned feeling that came over me. That was a great sinner before a holy and mighty God. It seemed that I had mistreated everyone and I was in a miserable condition. I thought as soon as we quit for the day it being later in the afternoon that I would seek some secret place and try to beg God to forgive me of my many sins which came up before me they being so great, they seemed to be as mountains.

That evening I sought a secret place not to be seen of anyone to try to beg God to have mercy upon me a great sinner. It seemed God wouldn't hear one such as I. I made promises I would quit doing some of the things I was doing and do better. I found out that I couldn't keep the promises I would make that I only became worse. I think this was about the year 1938. We all had to work close together to stay together and we were all very close to our Mother and each other. I stayed in this condition until about the year of 1942. We had moved to Floyd County on a little farm and one night I awoke, and a great light came down through the house and it carried one away very close to me. As the light

went upward it seemed *it* was taking this one so close to me away.

Odell one of my three half brothers had to have an appendix operation and the thought of this light was the first thing that entered my mind, but he got along all right. In 1943 my wife had to have a serious operation and I almost lost her but she recovered and I was so thankful still thinking of this vision I had seen.

One day my brother Roy and I were cutting corn and he said that he couldn't see. I had to lead him to the house. We brought him to the Gill Memorial Hospital where they run a series of different tests, but it seemed they couldn't find the trouble and we would have to take him to the University of Virginia in Charlottesville.

I got my Uncle Talmadge Young, who was always so willing to help any way he could.

When we got to the Doctor appointment in Charlottesville, Virginia the Doctor said there was no doubt in his mind that he had a tumor on the brain. We were heartbroken, and we had to leave him down there. In those days it seemed to be a long ways to us. He was operated on in a few days and he lived approximately 2 years from that time being completely blind. When he passed away it seemed I had lost part of myself. I felt a great comfort feeling he was the one God took in the vision. I couldn't wish him back for the Lord gave him a beautiful hope and I feel he is at rest. He desired a hope so much or some evidence that he could feel some assurance when he passed away of a better home when he was gone. One Sunday Elder John P. Helms came from Paynes Creek to see him and ho told Elder Helms some of his feelings and how he desired a hope or some evidence that he was a child of God. Elder Helms told him when the desire of this was there that it would come in time. Not long before he died be was on his bed in the daytime and he said a voice spoke to him ***"Open your eyes and you shall see."*** He said he opened his eyes and saw the most beautiful place he had ever seen, everyone was dressed in the prettiest white that he had ever seen and so peaceful. He was so happy that he called me from my work and told me and Mother that he wanted me to take him over to Elder B. O. Thompson's who lived not far away. So we took him and he wanted to join the church. Elder Thompson told him some of the brethren and himself: would come over which was in a night or so and he could tell the brethren his desire. He told me if I had not taken him to Elder Thompson's that night he believed he could have driven himself. The brethren received him into the fellowship of the church and when he was baptized; there was ice on the water but he said it wasn't cold to him. He was most of the time rejoicing what he hoped the Lord had Done for him, and desired to meet with the breth-

ren until his death.

Before he died I had been in such a state of condemnation it seemed I couldn't live. I couldn't understand what was wrong with me if I was Losing my mind or if I had a dreadful disease." I do believe it was the worst disease you can have and that is a state of sin and condemnation. I being the only one to help support the family at this time it seemed that there was a continual prayer in my heart to God that he would direct my mind in a way that I could make a living for I realized that my life, mind, breath, and everything was in God's hands, that without him I could do nothing. I would work long hours and at night it seemed there was a burning bottomless pit, the most terrible place I had ever seen was around me. I don't care what anyone had done to me I couldn't wish anyone to go to this horrible place. It seemed that I was condemned to be cast into this place. I was afraid to go to sleep, afraid God would cast me into this place for I knew He would be just in doing so. But how I did beg to Him for His mercy and to spare me. My pillow would be wet with the tears each morning when I would try to thank him that I had been spared another night. Yet through the day I would feel so heavy and a groaning in me that God would spare me. I felt so cast down when in the fields plowing. It seemed I couldn't make it from one end to the other. I would at the ends leave the team and hide behind the bushes to try to beg for strength to continue and that I might have strength to work to provide for the family. Sometimes I would become so heavy that I would stop in the middle of the field down in the furrow, and try to beg God for strength to continue.

I went in this condition for sometime. It seemed I had come to my end. I had spent more of the day among the bushes trying to beg God for mercy and for strength than I had worked. It seemed I had come to my end and that night I must die and be forever lost; there was no hope for one such as I and I would go to this terrible place prepared for the wicked. That evening I went to the house and my Mother had supper ready, I sat down but I couldn't eat. My burden was so great. I couldn't hold back the tears not wanting anyone to know I was in so much trouble.

The thought came to me, I will try to go one more time and try to beg God to have mercy upon me, for this night I must die. There was a large oak tree just away from the house where no one could see me. I thought I would go there. It seemed I had just enough strength to get to this oak tree I fell to the ground with my mouth in the dirt. It seemed I had not strength to open my mouth to say a word but there was a groaning in my being to God to save me, I perish. All at Once something wonderful happened to me. I arose clapping my hands, I seemed so light and great joy filled my heart and I

was praising my God for such a great deliverance from this great condemnation. This great condemnation has never returned. Somehow I believe we are delivered from something (sin and condemnation) to something (a hope of eternal life when this life is over) and we have a desire to be with ones (our brethren) which have been through their similar trials and have been brought along in the same manner.

The Lord having been so good to me and delivering me from such a horrible condition I so often doubt if I am mistaken. Yet I know such blessings as these can't be purchased with or be compared with such things as silver and gold or anything in this world. Not long after I felt I had been delivered from this death I started to bed one night and there was such a heaviness upon my heart that I can't describe the weight that I thought I couldn't live. A still small voice spoke into my very soul (please be still) and all this weight was gone. I was singing the hymn.

I know that my redeemer lives, What comfort this sweet sentence gives,
He lives, He lives who once was dead,
He lives my ever living head.

At this time I believe if anyone had asked me if I was saved, I would have said yes.

This feeling didn't last long. I was doubting if this could be for one such as I. I would take my Mother, Roy and at times the rest of the family to church most every weekend. We would often attend a little church at the top of Bent Mountain at that time called Union Church, where Elder John Wood preached every third Sunday afternoon. Often he would tell how I was getting along and I wondered how he knew so well my feelings. It seemed he was preaching to me and the tears would stream down my face. I didn't want anyone to know I was interested in the Old Primitive Baptist. I wondered what few friends I had would think. It seemed people would make fun and criticize them. I wanted to be popular and have a large farm and be important. Sometimes I would enjoy the preaching so much I would wish I could just get under the floor and hear this preaching and no one would see me shedding tears. About this time I had become so heavy again. I was a stranger to myself and I thought to everyone else. How sweet the hymn seemed to me at this time. I am a stranger here below and what I am this hard to know. This hymn seemed to my case.

At this time we had a little farm close to Paynes Creek church where Elder B. O. Thompson ran a mill. I had to go through the mill lot to get over to our place. One day as I drove by the mill I was in such a condition and so heavy I stopped my truck and went inside the mill, and seeing Elder Thompson I went and put my arms around his neck weeping and told him I would like to talk to him. I

requested that we go down in the basement. I didn't want anyone to see me in this condition. After telling him my feelings he told me there would be a baptizing in the mill race a certain time and for me to bring my clothes that he felt I was burdened to join the church. He was so kind to me I felt relieved after talking to him. Then a little later I began to have bothered him with my troubles. I thought he wouldn't have anything to do with me anymore. When the time came for the baptizing I was afraid not to take my clothes as Elder Thompson had asked me but at that time there was no way I could offer to the church. My mind was so far away.

Not long after this I was at the Mt. Union church and Elders J.P. Helms and B.V. Helms held services at this time as Elder John Wood had moved up to Manassas, Virginia. I enjoyed the preaching so much not thinking anything about joining the church.

When they closed the meeting and had published an open door for the reception of members, as they were singing and shaking hands, there was such a great love that filled my heart before I knew what I was doing I was up at the pulpit asking for a home with these dear people. (I hope this was the love of God that drew me to the church.) I looked around and my wife came also asking for a home. They received us into the fellowship of the church as candidates for baptism. Not having any thought of joining the church but when they asked me the question, it seemed the answer was present and I said Paynes Creek. Then they asked who we wanted to baptize us and the answer was present Elder J. P. Helms.

I seemed to be lifted up with rejoicing but when I started to open the car door to come home the feeling came upon me what is this you have done, I thought I deceived these people. I went home feeling very low. Certainly not telling or boasting we had joined the church. At this time I was 20 years old, and it seemed I was certainly going through life the opposite way I had planned. This was in the year 1944. In the year 1945 the church chose me to serve as assistant clerk and at a later date was chosen clerk. Being unlearned and not knowing anything about church business I didn't think there was anyway I could perform such a task. Yet I had a desire to be submissive to the brethren's wishes. I had such a hard task trying to write the minutes of a meeting and I couldn't read it for crying when the business meeting came. Elder Thompson was so patient with me and would just wait until I was given grace to continue.

In the year 1946 the church asked me to serve them as deacon. This I thought to be another impossibility. Yet desiring to be submissive to the church, I told Elder Thompson if this was the request of the church I would do as best I could as

God would give me strength. I could not refuse feeling I had a great burden, and such a stranger to myself and I didn't know what it was for. A presbystery was called in 1946 and ordained me a deacon for Paynes Creek church. Oh how I tried to beg the Lord if I wasn't called to such a sacred place that he would manifest to me and my brethren to not go through with this work. It seemed I was praying in my heart continually and would seek secret places to beg the Lord to guide me and to keep me.

I hope this has been a easier task for my brethren who have been ordained to this work.

I have now tried to serve the brethren at Paynes Creek over 4O years. Sometimes it seems I am made to take inventory myself and the requirements of a deacon and it seems I have not filled the first requirement or qualifications but yet I am blessed to press on by God's grace. The church has given me a wonderful home and have looked over my imperfections. The Lord has been so good to me.

David says when trouble came I remembered the Lord. When things seem to be going along smooth how we do forget Him and what we are but when afflictions arise and troubles come we know there is only one that can save us and we do beg Him for His mercy. Not justice, if we got justice God would have destroyed me long ago and banished me from His presence forever. Never to feel His presence or have any hope of eternal life when this life is over.

I have been brought to realize and I will say know that parents, kinsman, friend or anyone on earth could or can not help my helpless condition but the only true and living God can. Twice in later years, one night in my home and once in a motel in Braderton, Florida, I was blessed to feel I hope and believe that I felt the presence of Jesus was around my bed and this great love filled the room. It seemed I knew it was Jesus and I desired so much that He wouldn't leave, for the peace and love seemed to fill the room. My pillow was wet with tears of joy. Feeling that He would leave but hoping that He would stay and I could feel this peace and love forever. My hope is this is a taste of heaven on earth also meeting with our brethren when we are blessed to feel His presence in our meeting, and His love manifested. It is my hope that in the resurrection morning He will raise this body and change it into a body like unto His own glorious body to praise Him in perfect praise forever. Then we will come into possession of our hope that He has given us.

Oh to think that this will last forever no day or night there. No sorrow or pain. No afflictions, but all will be peace and joy in praising God forever in perfect praise. Then we will come into possession of hope that He hath given us. It seemed in my early life after I joined the church

that not anything was important to me. I only wanted to know I was a child of God. One day I was reading in Romans 8:24 and it reads ***"For we are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for. But if we hope for that we see not there do we with patience wait for it."*** After reading this scripture I felt so highly favored to be blessed to hope in the hope, and I am so thankful I am blessed to hope in the Lord. So much of my time I wonder if I have been taught of God, or if all these things that I have experienced have been imaginary. Sometimes I don't think so this way being contrary to our carnal nature. I don't think any flesh would nor could follow or choose to come through these great afflictions as His lot but God brings, His children through great afflictions to show them how weak and sinful they are and without Him they can do nothing. There are other experiences I have had in life I would desire to write but it seems I can't at this time write them. Hoping that if there be any comfort to you Sister Mary that you will be blessed to give all the praise to Jesus who suffered, bled, and died upon the cross that sinners must be saved. Written by a sinner saved by the grace of God, if I am saved and not by anything I can do or have done. God chose a special people in before the foundation of the world and He came willingly He was born of the Virgin Mary, conceived by the Holy Ghost to do the Father's will and when He said "It is finished" I believe He saved everyone that the Father gave Him in the beginning. For He said all that the Father hath given me I have lost none, but the son of perdition that the scriptures might be fulfilled.

Not one will ever be added to this number, neither will there ever be one taken away or lost but it is all fixed eternally. I feel I must quit. I hope you will pardon all errors and come to see us when you can.

A brother in Christ, I hope
Harry Cannaday

VOICES OF THE PAST

GENESIS I. 3.

"AND God said, Let there be light: and there was light."

I will first say that this is a subject too high, sublime and wonderful for me to attempt to expound, but I am impressed to write a few thoughts in connection with it. I trust that he who is able to guide our minds, will guide my pen, and I will leave what I shall write for the brethren to judge.

In the first place, I believe every word that is written in the Scriptures was written by inspiration of God, and that holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. In the first verse we are told: ***"In the***

beginning God created the heaven and the earth." What is intended by the expression, "In the beginning", With our God there was no beginning; for if we believe the Scriptures he is eternal. But there was a beginning with this earth, and this creation which God created and of which he said that it was good, was the beginning that is spoken of. We should carefully notice the first thing that was created. It was the heaven, the abode of his people, and then the earth, which is his footstool. Then all things were created upon the earth before man was made, to support and sustain his natural life. As all things were created before man was made, he could not say that he created anything; to God he must give all the glory. If this be so naturally, much more must it be so spiritually. Then God prepared the garden and all the trees that were in it, of which Adam might partake, save the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; but by this man's transgression were many made sinners. The Lord purposed that Jesus should come in the flesh, and prepared him a body to this end, yet without sin, that by one Man's obedience many might be made righteous. We are told that the earth in the beginning was without form and void. Now, to my mind, the Scriptures do not only set forth these things as one would write history, but they are also types of better things. To the carnal mind they are not anything more than a history of that which is natural and that is as far as the natural mind can see. It is as impossible for the natural mind to see above this as it is for water to rise above its own level; but to the spiritual mind, when it pleases God to reveal the glory and beauty which shines forth out of these things, they bring forth praise to God for his goodness and mercy in preparing such things for them that love him. We can see that this earth which was created, and upon which we live, with all creeping things, with all its storms and tempests and all things else that it contains, is a type of the heavenly world; but how void was this body of ours of all spiritual things when it was born into this world.

It is said, ***"Darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."*** These Scriptures are beautiful when it pleases God to give us to look into their depths and see the spiritual beauty which is in them. As the natural earth was, void and dark, so we by nature are void of the knowledge of God until he moves upon the face of the great deep. Darkness covers from our view all spiritual things. We have no thought of the things that are hidden, as it were, beneath the sod until in the warm springtime they burst forth, green and tender.

Now I come to the first verse which I quoted: ***"And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."*** How mysterious is the work of God. He created the heaven first,

showing that the heaven is above the earth, and that the darkness was before the light. The earthly man is before the spiritual man, and all is darkness to the soul until God says, "Let there be light," or until he moves upon the face of the waters, and we are born into that new kingdom. We knew no more about that light until he said, " Let there be light," than we knew about the natural light of this world before we were born into it; and when we are delivered we know not what the light is. But the newborn babe soon learns to know the light from the darkness, and while it does not know what either is, it soon learns to cry for the light; just so it is with every one who is born of the Spirit, like Saul of Tarsus, when the Lord says, " Let there be light," they fall to the ground. Not that they all fall to the ground literally, but they are brought down and made to cry with Saul, "What wilt thou have me to do?"

Now further on in this chapter it is said that God divided the light from the darkness. In spiritual experience we are made to realize this dividing, for at the first, as said before, the child does not know one from the other; yet it knows that it likes the light and will cry for it. Until it pleases God to divide the light from the darkness we are constantly crying for the light, yet not knowing what we are crying for, but we know that there is something we desire and long for, and when it pleases God to divide the one from the other, then the evening and the morning are the first day with our souls. This, the first day in our experience; we have not known what all this meant before. We may have seen the light for some time, but to us it was dim, and as though in the distance, but now it is divided, and we are basking in the sunlight of his presence. He does not take away the darkness entirely, he only divides it from the light. Had he taken away the darkness altogether, we should never have any more dark seasons. This would not be good for us, the night must come. But we do now know the night from the day, the darkness from the light. Our God has divided them, and how we long for the light when the dark seasons come, and how we rejoice when we hear the singing of the birds again and catch a glimpse of the light in the east shining forth from the Sun of righteousness. We rejoice to see the dark cloud pass over, and to behold the bow in the cloud shining in its radiant beauty as a token of the covenant of God with man. O what glory is in these things; it is high; I cannot attain to it. How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out. It is written: "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."-2 Cor. iv.6. What wondrous grace he has bestowed upon his people, saying, "Let your light so shine before men, that they

may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." It is not glorify man, but give God all the glory. O may he divide the light from the darkness in us, that we may praise him for his goodness, and to him be all the praise, honor and glory. Amen.

Your brother,
JOHN L. HASTINGS.
BROOKLYN, N. Y.,
Nov. 6, 1907.

"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." -- Revelation i. 18.

What a mercy that he who was dead lives at God's right hand! that he lives as a risen head; that he is not a dead Saviour; but a Saviour that lives for evermore; that can and does bless; that can and does comfort; that can and does bring the soul safely through all. He is not a Saviour that stands as it were upon the brink of a river, and pulls us out when we have swum half way out ourselves; he is not a Saviour that will take us half way to heaven, and then, as Rutherford says, let us *"fend"* or shift for ourselves. He must take us to heaven throughout. We are nothing, we have nothing without him. He must be, as he is, our *"all in all."* We value him in his death, nothing but his death could reconcile us to God; we value him in his life, nothing but his life can save. We want salvation now; salvation in the heart; a Spiritual salvation revealed in and unto the soul; a salvation worthy of the name, wholly, fully, completely, finally, and everlastingly to the praise of super-abounding grace; a salvation indefeasible, never to be lost; worthy of God, worthy of the God-man; adapted to every want of the soul, coming into every trial of the heart, and able to save the vilest and the worst, *"without money and without price."*

Elder J. C. Philpot

BENNING, D. C., April 17, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:-With much love for the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace I make the attempt to write a few lines, knowing full well that if it were not for grace this poor, helpless worm of the dust would be forever lost. My mind of late has been on Christ's sermon on the mount. (Matthew v.) He taught his disciples, saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." Throughout that whole chapter what comforting words to those who know the joyful sound, having

been taught of the Lord, for we cannot know It any other way. Christ said, " Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." The servants who testify of him today are they who are born of the Spirit; no others can testify of him. Dear brethren, if we love this doctrine, then we are the poor in spirit and certainly are blessed. He speaks to those who know the joyful sound. I feel to thank the Father in heaven that he has "hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father for so it seemed good in thy sight." When we feel in our hearts that we are the children of God, then we can say,

"Come, happy souls, approach your God
With new melodious songs;
Come, render to almighty grace
The tribute of your tongues.
So strange, so boundless was the love
That pitied dying man,
The Father sent his equal Son
To give them life again."

We know our lost and ruined condition before the just and holy God, and those who know are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; ***"If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect. It is God that justifieth." "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword".***

Now, dear brethren, knowing these things, what manner of love we should have toward one another, for God is love; he loved us when we were dead in trespasses and sins, living in open rebellion against him, as Saul was. We should not let trifles prevent us from attending the meetings of the church. Christ told his disciples to love one another as he had loved them, and to forsake all and follow him, and said, ***"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."*** What wonderful love, to suffer and die for his people, his church, his bride; such love is past our natural understanding; his ways are as high above our ways as the heavens are above the earth.

Please pardon me for intruding on your time and patience with my poor letter. May God's richest blessings abide with you both, and all the readers of the SIGNS. It is a welcome visitor to my house. If you see anything in this you can publish it, if not, it will be all right with me.

Your unworthy brother, if one,
THOMAS ALDEN.

BALTIMORE, Md.,
August 24, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:- Inclosed you will please find two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have nothing to tell, but thought to try and write you a few lines, though I cannot explain my feelings. I am a deaf mute, yet I do not complain about it; but I often wish I could speak and hear, but God knows what is best for me. No tongue can express the gratitude I feel in my heart, for I know I am with God's people, and am a member of the church, which is the Primitive Baptist. I thought I could never explain the condition of my mind with regard to my dear mother's religion, but my mind follows hers. She died four years ago, and I was so sorry to lose my darling mother, but I know certainly she is in heaven, where I hope I will be when God calls me. I feel that I could never stop praising my God, and also never want to leave the church. As I am a deaf mute, I have a very good reason to subscribe for the SIGNS, which teaches me about the love of God because I cannot hear the preaching. I think every mute should subscribe for the SIGNS, and they could read it in their own homes, and learn more about God and his love. I will be glad in my heart to read the SIGNS when it comes to me.

Well, I had better bring this letter to a close; if you wish to publish it, please correct all mistakes. Very respectfully,

RAY KAUFFMAN.

NOTICE

In the July issue of the "Signs" we listed a notice of the West Country Line Union Meeting. We listed names of Churches in the Union and by human error Pleasantville was left out. Pleasantville Church is indeed a member of the West Country Line Union. WE want to apologize to Elder Wray and other members of Pleasantville Church and beg them to please pardon the error.

Elder Kenneth R. Key

PSALM 119:9-12.

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.

With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Blessed art thou, O Lord: teach me thy statues.

MEETINGS

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

Directions to the Pigg River Association to be held, the Lord willing, the first Sunday in August, Friday and Saturday before August 5th, 6th, and 7th. The meeting will be held on the grounds of Chestnut Church in Franklin County Virginia.

Those coming from the North on 220 after passing Rocky Mount, at first stop light, turn left on 619; go 3.7 miles, turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Rd.), go 1 mile to church.

Those coming from the South on 220, go app. 13 miles from Bassett Forks, turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Rd.) App. 2 1/2 miles to church.

We welcome and invite the ministers of our Faith and Order, our Brethren and Friends to be with us.

Jamie E. Cooper, Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Smith River Association will convene the Lord willing; with Union Church, Patrick County, Va.

The Meeting to begin on Friday before the first Sunday in September, (Sept. 2, 3, 4.)

The church is located on state road #623. Those traveling 57 east or west turn on Fairystone Park Road travel a short distance and turn left on 623, follow to church on the right.

Those traveling north or south on highway 220 turn on State Road 605 north of Oak Level (at blinking light designating sharp curve). Stay on 605 (Henry Road) thru Henry, across railroad tracks for several miles. Turn left on 623 to church on the left.

Those traveling highway 40, (Franklin St.) east or west turn on State Road 605 about 5 miles west of Ferrum Va. at Crossroad Market. Go through Ingramville over hill, turn right on 623 and follow to church on the left.

We invite all of our faith and order to come and be with us

Tony R. Horton

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 24 & 25, 2005.

New Hope Church, located at Spearsville, Louisiana, will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Thanks,
Ned Barron
Association Clerk
(318) 778-4217

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 2005

Albert Krewatch-DE	25.00
James Shelor-VA	5.00
Carrie Jo Williams-TN	5.00
Gene Ambrose-VA	5.00
Loy Rodgers-AR	5.00
Ruby Queen-KY	10.00
Tim Barron-TX	5.00
W.H. Norman-NC	25.00
Alma C. Wilson-WA	5.00
Amy Lane-NC	5.00

ST. MATTHEW 5:10.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

OBITUARIES

GEORGIA LOUISE EATON EDWARDS

Our Precious Mother, Sister and Friend finished her walk in this life on Sunday, February 27, 2005 at her home. She was the widow of Roscoe E. Bud" Edwards; they were married for 44 years.

Born Oct. 5, 1932, in Patrick County, Va., to the late Roy and Vera Bowman Eaton. She was retired from Proctor-Silex Inc. and was a member of Old Hollow Primitive Baptist Church. She is survived by three daughters and sons-in-law, Kathy and Douglas Handy of Stuart, Va., Susan and Jerry Shelton of Ararat, N. C. and Anita and Eric Linville of Winston-Salem; a son and daughter-in-law, Anthony and Melanie Edwards of Rural Hall; six grandchildren, Shawna, Rebecca and Jill Handy all of Stuart, Va., Chad Edwards of Rural Hall, Patrick and Erica Linville, both of Winston-Salem; three sisters Jean Young of Ararat, Va., Janice Collins of Winston-Salem and Eva Wyatt of Reidsville; six brothers, Roger Eaton of Tobaccoville, Roscoe Eaton of Stuart, Va., Noel Eaton of Ararat, Va., Clayton Eaton of King, Dillard Eaton of Dobson and Terry Eaton of Mount Airy. In addition to her husband and parents, a son, Barry Scott Edwards; and a sister, Betty Johnson preceded her death.

"Mama" was blessed with a strong faith and praised God for all the blessings he had given to her and her family. She never spoke of her illness much except that it was part of her trials and tribulations on earth and to have a home in heaven, it would be worth it all.

On Sunday morning at 3:00 surrounded by her children, their spouses and her dear sister Eva she took her last breath. How fitting for our precious Mother to go to sleep in Jesus on Sunday. As long as I can remember Sunday was her favorite day of the week because she would get to go to church and hear her belief. I thank God and feel privileged to have had her as a Mother and Friend. The funeral service was conducted by Elder Alan Terry, Elder Hale Terry and Elder Larry Hollingsworth at Moody Funeral Home Chapel in Mount Airy. Burial was at Mountain View Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery.

Written by: Your Loving Daughter and Sister in Christ I hope, Susan.

Done by order of Old Hollow Church in conference June 12, 2005. 1 copy sent to Signs of the Times and 1 copy given to the family.

Elder Alan Terry, Moderator
Ola Moser, Clerk

GENEVA K. MUSGROVE PETTIS

It is with much sadness that I attempt to write a memorial for my mother Geneva K. Musgrove Pettis.

Sister Geneva was born July 28th, 1921 in Forest Hill, Louisiana. She was a faithful member of Concord Primitive Baptist Church for many years, joining in 1949. She became the clerk in 1964. When the old church closed, she traveled 45 minutes to Union Primitive Baptist Church in Hale, Louisiana. The trip was often hard for her, but it didn't make a difference how far she had to travel to hear God's words.

The joy of her life was cooking. She not only prepared countless meals for her family, but she often cooked for the sick and frail in her neighborhood. She always cooked enough for any army, but none ever went to waste . Her home was always open to everyone – even to those who were, at times, not the kindest to her.

Her parent's Ezell and Cass Musgrove were also Primitive Baptists. Ezell was a deacon for Concord Church on the Hamburg, Arkansas Road.

Sister Geneva married Homer Pettis--who preceded her in death a few years ago-and they are both survived by their four children: Paul, Ouida, Betty Jo, and Margie, and by seven grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

Her funeral was held at Golden's Funeral Home in Bastrop, Louisiana. She will be loved and missed by so many.

Thank you,
Margie Nell Pettis Ray

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

VOL. 173 MEADOWS OF DAN, VA., SEPTEMBER 2005 NO. 9

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

KIND are the words that Jesus speaks
To cheer the drooping saint,
"My grace sufficient is for you,
Though nature's powers may faint.

"My grace its glories shall display,
And make your griefs remove :
Your weakness shall the triumphs tell
Of boundless power and love.

What though my griefs are not removed,
Yet why should I despair?
While my kind Saviour's arms support,
I can the burden bear .

Jesus, my Saviour, and my Lord,
'Tis good to trust thy name:
Thy power, thy faithfulness, and love,
Will ever be the same.

Weak as I am, yet through thy grace
I all things can perform ;
And, smiling, triumph in thy name
Amid the raging storm.

Needham.

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EDITORIAL

"For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." Zeph.3:9

Elder J. B. Farmer

Sitting down, I have thought to write down a few of the things I trust have been revealed to me and to others also. I have been made to believe that the truth of the gospel is opened up to the preacher and to the hearer at the same time. Things that are too wonderful for us in nature are graciously given to us by the Spirit of God that we may glory in Him and rejoice together in hope of eternal life.

Every word of God is pure. To be pure, to me, means to be unblemished and undefiled. It means to be altogether healthful, and good and profitable. It would be like a clear stream of water that has no impurities. It would be like a fresh baked loaf of bread just out of the oven. They are sweet and pleasant to the taste and nourishing — all good and nothing bad. We are taught that man does not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. May our God cause us to look into His word and to understand it and to be edified and comforted by it, to His glory and praise.

God said that He would do certain things *then*. When is *then*? I am made to believe that *then* is in His time. He has made all things beautiful in His time. When it pleased God, He sent his Spirit to His people and arrested them and subdued them and revealed Himself to them as He did with Saul on the road to Damascus. Saul was going about in nature as a self-righteous, religious man, thinking that he was doing God service. He was persecuting the church and trying to destroy it -not realizing that he was not working the righteousness of God, but rather the wrath of man. I am made to believe that this is also a picture

of us when we were in darkness — not realizing our state.

God said that He would *turn* to the people a pure language. What does it mean to *turn* anything? In this case I have been given to believe that it means to give or to teach or to establish something. In one place it is written that He led captivity captive and gave gifts to men. The Lord Himself gained the victory over sin, death, Satan, hell and the grave. He led captivity captive, and having done that, He gave gifts to men. Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given. He gave Himself to and for us if we are His. If He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not freely give us all things? He gave us His Spirit, and in Him we live and move and have our being.

God said that He would turn to the *people*. Who are the *people?* The *people* must be the ones that God foreknew in His everlasting love and kindness. They must be the ones He predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son -- to be made in His likeness at His appearing. They must be those whose names He wrote down in the Lamb's book of life before He made the world. They must be those that He saved and called according to His own purpose and grace, even the ones He gave grace in Christ Jesus the Lord before the foundation of the world. They must be those who He called out of darkness into His marvelous light. They must be the ones that He chose, even the ones to whom He revealed Himself. They must be those who are made to love Him with all their heart, mind, soul and strength. They must be the ones who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. They must be the ones who are made to walk by faith in the good works that God has before ordained for them to walk in. They must be the ones who are made to be faithful unto death that they might receive the crown of life.

God said that He would *turn to the people a pure language.* Now we know that a language is a form of speech that is particular to a specific people in a certain region. God has fixed it so that the people in one part of the world may not understand a single word of the language of the people in another part of the world. And that is the way it seems to be with the world when they hear the language of the children of God. God's children are given a different language from all other people. It is a *pure language.* It is undefiled with the wisdom of the world. It is the language of grace and love. The whole world of false religion speaks the impure language of works. They think that the supposed good works of the flesh or of the law will justify them before God. They think their own righteousness will save them. They think that if their good works outweigh the bad ones that they will be all right. But God's little ones are

taught by the pure language that salvation is by grace alone. ***"By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast."***

We have been made to believe that the children of God are taught the ***pure language*** in a way similar to the child of nature. At first they are non-speakers — they have no words, so all they are able to do is cry. They are made to know they are helpless in themselves and dependent for all their needs. They are not able to express their thoughts in words, but their crying is understood by God because their crying is in a ***pure language***. The first words of a natural child are usually Ma or Daddy. The first words of the child of grace are Abba Father .They are made to look to Him with love and trust, and to speak His name with all devotion in the ***pure language.***

As the child grows in grace and knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, his words increase. He is taught line upon line and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. But his words are words of grace. His heart is established in grace, being made to know by experience that he is a sinner, and that apart from the grace of God, he is gone world without end. He is made to know that there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved except the name of Jesus. When one's heart is established in grace, he must speak the word of grace, because out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. If his heart is established in grace by God Himself, nothing is able to change it. What God has done is forever. No one is able to persuade even one of God's little ones — not even that great deceiver, the devil himself — that salvation for time and eternity is other than by the grace and mercy of God.

By that same ***pure language*** all the children of the Father are made to call upon the name of the Lord. They are made to know the fear of God. His law is placed in their minds and written upon their hearts. This pure and holy law is the ministration of condemnation and death to them. They are shown that they are sinners before God and that there is a penalty for sin — even death. They are shown by experience that they cannot keep the law and are condemned and without hope in the flesh. But the law is a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ. We are taught that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to all them that believe. When Christ reveals Himself to his little ones, they call upon Him with that pure language saying, ***"God be merciful unto me a sinner."*** And, ***"Lord, what will You have me to do?"***

In this ***pure language*** the children of grace serve Him with one consent, that is, in the unity of the faith. There is one Lord,one faith,

one baptism, and one God and Father of us all. They are made to desire to speak the same things in truth. They are made to labor together for the unity of the faith. They are made to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. They are made to examine themselves, whether they are in that faith. They are made to try the spirits, whether they be of God. They are made to examine all things and to reject that which is bad and to cling to that which is good. By grace and the wisdom of God, they are blessed to separate the precious from the vile. In this pure language they are made to speak the truth in love — to reprove, rebuke and exhort with all long suffering and doctrine.

True preaching of the gospel is in the *pure language* that God has given to His own people. It is spoken in the *pure language*, and it is understood in the *pure language*. The true gospel is like a trumpet that gives a certain sound. And we are taught that the one who knows that certain sound only knows it because he is blessed of God to know it. The gospel of grace is the savor of death to those who perish, and the savor of life to those who are saved. Even as the priests of the Lord compassed the city of Jericho once a day for six days, so the preachers of the gospel have compassed the world for the six days of creation blowing their trumpets with a certain sound. To most of the inhabitants of Jericho it was a sound that brought great fear of certain death and destruction. So also it is in the world today when the true gospel is preached. But to one house in the city, the house of Rahab the harlot and her family, it was a sound that caused great joy in anticipation of life and salvation to come. So also it is in the church of the living God today when the true gospel is preached.

On the seventh day the priests compassed the city seven times. And when they were commanded, they gave a great shout, and the walls of Jericho fell down flat and every man went up straight before him. I am made to believe that the great shout was in the *pure language* — that it was the shout of victory. When Christ comes in great power and glory with His holy angels, there will be a trump and a shout of victory. The world shall be destroyed by the flaming fire of His vengeance, and the family of God shall be delivered from the wrath of God and saved with that great salvation by the grace and mercy and power and love of God.

And when Christ comes to gather His jewels, they shall hear Him say in that *pure language, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."* To all others they will hear Him say, *"I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."* In the mean time, God who cannot lie promised His people this:

"For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."

This was written in love, and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J. B. Farmer
9-1-2004

ARTICLES

A LIFE OF STRUGGLES AND HOPE

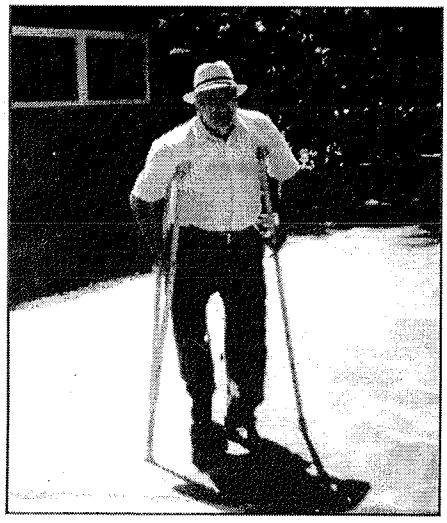

Carnar Bud Crotts

A small farm boy by the name of Carnar Bud Crotts came out of Cana, Virginia.

He was about the age of fourteen and was in search of work in the area around Mt. Airy, North Carolina. President Hoover was in office and times were hard. Carnar went in search of a job in Virginia and North Carolina. One of the jobs that did not work out was peddling peaches and apples in the area. Failing in this venture then Carnar set out to find steady employment in the area of Bassett, Virginia.

Being poor, Carnar did not worry about the natural things of life, such as transportation and clothing, he just started walking in the hope that the Lord God would provide. The blessings of the Lord came in many ways for this young man. Through divine intervention, his steps were guided safely to Bassett and he obtained employment at Bassett Furniture Company. Since his father, Wiley Thomas Crotts, was a deacon of Sandy Ridge Primitive Baptist Church and was a wood worker, Carnar had prior knowledge of working with wood. During his earlier years, Carnar gained experience with the Civil Conservation Corps, furniture industries, and sawmill work.

God smiled on Carnar in his provision of shelter. The place that God led Carnar's footsteps was a boardinghouse owned by Sam and Pearl Turner of Bassett. The Turner's had eleven children but were able to find room for Carnar. The oldest daughter was Annie and would become my mother.

Carnar and Annie had three children and I was the youngest. In retrospect, I can see that there was much love in the family and with the blessing of the Lord we were able to attend different churches to hear

the Old Baptist preaching of *"good news from a far country"*. Dad would ask me *"do you believe that what is to be will be?"*, and in my youthful ways and lack of revelation I would answer and not fully understand. I thought I believed it then and now I realize the true meaning of the words. My father asked the question in true faith, and I answered him out of respect.

The Lord God had a place for Dad with the true believers of the salvation by the Grace of God. This love carried him to all the Primitive Baptist churches that were foreordained for him to attend. In one year, my parents visited seventeen different Associations held in Alabama, Kentucky, West Virginia, Mississippi, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia. These bethel spots he would visit in the time span of thirty years. Even though he became disabled and had to walk with the aid of crutches, he did not let his disability stop him: from hearing the *"good news: from a far country"*.

Brother Crotts was a true believer and his hope was in the Lord Jesus Christ and the hope of glory. He loved reading his Bible and different articles of faith; in particular, Signs of the Times. Dad would read a printed letter from a reader and would write his own comments in the margins pertaining to his enjoyment of the article. The gift of the spirit was evident in his short comments. As his son and I hope, brother in faith and love, I felt strongly the need to share some of the struggles and trials and tribulations of my dad's walk upon this earth. *"If we suffer, we shall reign with him" (Timothy 2: 12)*. From these words, I find comfort in the hope that my Dad and Brother is with Christ.

A Brother in Hope:
Elder Larry Crotts

Included with this tribute is the obituary written by Sister Patricia Crotts.

PSALM 93.

The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.

Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlating.

The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.

The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.

Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever.

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

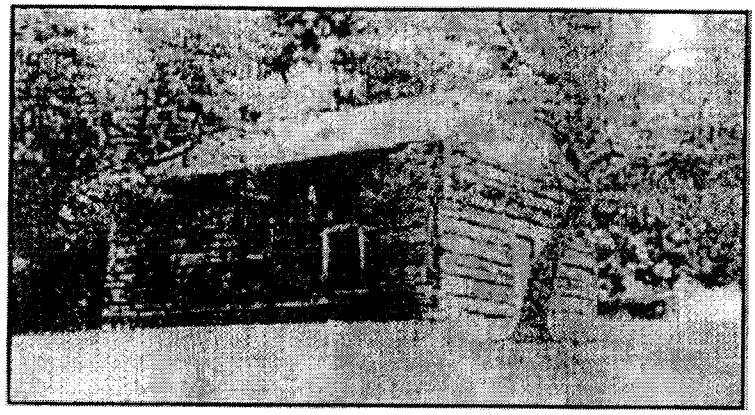

250TH ANNIVERSARY SERVICE AT SANDY CREEK CHURCH

On page 625 of Hassell's History you will find a reference to Sandy Creek Primitive Baptist Church, stating that more than a thousand Baptist churches throughout the south can trace their history back to this church either directly or indirectly. Elder Shubal Stems was the first pastor, answering a call from God to "go south" with the message of grace. Elder Stems arrived at Sandy Creek November 22, 1755, and he and his companions were constituted into a church called Sandy Creek (16 in number); Elders Joseph Breed and Daniel Marshall being in this number. In 17 years this church became a mother, grandmother or great-grandmother to 42 churches, from which sprang 125 ministers.

Sandy Creek Primitive Baptist Church will hold their 250th anniversary observance on Saturday before the 5th Sunday in October (Oct. 29, 2005), the Lord willing. Services will begin around 10:00 a.m. and there will be morning and afternoon services. The brethren have restored the old log meeting house, which was built around 1802, and services will be held there and in the present meeting house. All are welcome to these services. As the membership of this church is very small, we ask that you bring a covered dish or the equivalent to help provide dinner for the large crowd anticipated.

Sandy Creek Church is located on Sandy Creek Road, just off the Ramseur-- Julian Road, 4 miles west of Liberty, NC. The nearest lodging is 15 miles away in Asheboro, NC: Comfort Inn (336-626-3680); Days Inn (800-222-05I9); Holiday Inn Express (800-holiday); Hampton Inn (800-426-7866); Ramada Limited (800-2ramada); Super 8 (336-625-1880). For further information contact Elder Gene Hogan, Pastor, 336-857-2968.

Printed as it appears in the Gospel Appeal in June 2005.

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE of the late ELDER JOHN STIFF

A pioneer of Oregon Territory in 1848. Clackamas Co., March 15, 1872.

Dearly beloved Brother Beebe,

By your permission I will endeaver to give through the medium of the Signs, a reason of the hope (Though small it may appear to me) which is in me. I was born November 10th, 1806, in Berkeley Co, Va. five miles west of Martinsburg, where also I was brought up to manhood. I was the youngest of nine children, of which number only two sisters with myself are now living. My parents were both Baptists of the strict Predestinarian order. My father was a deacon of the Mill Creek Church, then holding meetings in Gerardstown; but my father died when I was only one year and six months old; consequently the care of the family devolved upon my mother, who raised us up very strictly. But subsequently, however the Mill creek Church changed the place of holdings from Gerardstown to Opequan Creek, which latter place was nine miles from where my mother lived, for which cause I but seldom heard the truth preached. I however attended the meetings of the following denominations nearly every Sunday, Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, and Episcopalians but generally the presbyterians, this being the most convenient. They adopted the *"Westminster Confession of Faith."* Nevertheless their preachers preached a conditional salvation telling their hearers that if they would accept the offers of mercy and use the means of grace they would be saved; but if they rejected or slighted the overtures of mercy they would be damned, etc, This for the most part was the kind of preaching that I heard in my bringing up, except once in a while when an opportunity would occur that I could go to Opequan, and hear the late Elder John Hutchinson preach, who was the pastor of Mill Creek Church from my earliest recollection until I left that country A. D. 1832. I also occasionally heard Elder Francis Moore, Thomas Buck, James Reed, Wm. Gilmore, Whitely and others preach. I was born a natural religionist, and grew up a Pharisee. I had great preference however, in hearing the Baptists preach to any other denomination, and loved them above any other people, especially the preachers, whom I regarded as a superior order of beings. Then my hopes of heaven appeared firm and bright, not so much on account of the good I did, as the evil I refrained from. When a boy going to school, I really thought that I was better than any

of my schoolmates. And so self righteous was I, that I actually would refrain from stepping in the footprints of other boys, lest I should be defiled. In those days the Bible was my constant companion, and I loved to read it above any other book; why it was I cannot tell; but I was so delighted in reading, especially the New Testament scriptures, that I committed the greater portion of them to memory. Would to God that I could take as much delight in reading the scriptures now as I did then. One Sunday I went to the Opequan meeting alone and after the close, I asked Elder Hutchinson to accompany me home. He said he would like to do so, but he had left his horse at the widow Gorrel's (who afterwards married Morgan A. Vancleave) and came to the meeting in her buggy; but, said he, if you will go round that way, so I can get my horse, I will go home with you. To this I agreed, and there while dinner was being made ready, I was sitting in the portico, and the Elder and widow were seated in the parlor; I overheard the Elder talking about me. He said that I was the best boy he ever knew, that I was an exception, that there was not another boy in his knowledge that was so nice, and genteel as me. This was the very thing to feed my vanity, for I thought, Surely he knows. For I looked upon him as being almost inspired, and the Elder had often tarried at my mothers.

During all this time I delighted in reading the Bible, and other religious books and writings, and had no relish for any others; and above all subjects none delighted me more than to talk on religion or listen to others talking. Why it was I cannot tell. One day I took up the Bible to read, and opened to Luke xiii; There was present at that season some that told him of the Gallieans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

And Jesus answering, said unto them, suppose ye that these Gallileans were sinners above all the Gallileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you Nay, but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish &c., verses 1-3. I then had different views on the above passage from what I now have. I then thought the perishing after death in another mode of existence. I had no idea that the pronoun ye, referred to the Jewish nation, and that the verb, perish, had reference to the destruction of Jerusalem in the general siege and dispersion of the Jewish people. I had often read the passage before without any particular impression being made on my mind; but now it fell with a degree of weight sufficient to cause the serious inquiry to arise in my mind, Have I repented? My answer was, NO! I have not. Well, now I must go to work. Here now is something for me to do. I must repent and be converted, or at last perish eternally in hell fire. Also Christ's words to Nicodemus, *"Ye must be born again,"* fell with a degree of weight

on my mind; I had no evidence that I was born again. So to work I went with might and main to accomplish these things; but alas! to my utter dismay and astonishment I found I might just as soon dislodge the starry firmament, and remove the earth's foundations, as to repent of my sins, be converted and be born again! During all this time I had no knowledge of what sin really is. I had never felt it as a heavy burden on my mind; but I had a great desire to be a Christian. I saw something so exceedingly beautiful in the religion of the meek and lowly Jesus that I desired it above every other object, and would according to my feelings have given ten thousand worlds, had I possessed them, for the evidence of an interest in the blood of Jesus. I would envy the apostles and disciples who were personally with Jesus. In all their troubles and sorrows they had a friend to go to. A Friend who was always ready to listen to their tale of sorrow, and who was willing at all times, and upon all occasions to administer to their comfort. They could know the words that he would say to them. And he never turned one poor hungry, thirsty soul empty away. Oh, that I like them could be with Jesus! I would tell him all my sorrows, the desire of my heart, and the secrets of my soul; and would know the words he would say to me. Would he turn me away? Would he bid me "Depart?" No he would not. But here I am in sore distress, and no friend to go to. No one to communicate troubles to, or hear the sad tale of my woe. I call but get no answer; I seek Him but cannot find Him. Oh, that I could hear for myself, from His dear heavenly lips, those sweet words of consolation, once spoken to His disciples of old, ***"Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God believe also in me" &c. "Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." "It is I, be not afraid."*** This would be enough! This would satisfy my longing heart, and would be the delight of my soul. This would be far better than millions of gold, or the wealth of ten thousand worlds like this. With these feelings I grew up to manhood, left my mother's home, and lived among strangers. Now I lost in a measure my relish for reading the Bible, and other religious books; months passing without even seeing a Bible; living for months where religion was never talked of, and perhaps never thought of. Consequently I sank into a kind of careless unconcerned state of mind, but still attended Baptist, preaching whenever an opportunity would occur. In the winter of 1832 I married, and in the months thereafter, my wife and I bid a last farewell to the place of our nativity, and started for the then far west, the state of Illinois, three of my brothers having gone there some years before. I purchased a piece of land joining two of them and settled

among them. My eldest brother had been a Baptist for many years, and lived religious, as well as talked religion. The nearest Baptist church to that place, held her meetings in the town of Danville, which was distant about seven miles. I occasionally went to their meetings. But I was not long living in that country until I was taken down sick of a fever and Oh, the horror and unspeakable anguish which seized my mind, my pen can never describe! My whole life now appeared one continuous course of sin and rebellion against God. Truly the hail of almighty wrath appeared to sweep away my refuge of lies, and the waters of trouble appeared to overflow my hiding places. See Isa. xxviii; 17,18. And Justice, stern Justice with his voice of thunder cried, *"Cut him down! cut him down!"* Oh, how exceedingly sinful did sin now appear! I could see now fully and for the first time realize in my own soul the truth of the saying, Isa.156; *"The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the soul of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it but wounds and bruises, and putrefying sores; they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment."* I now thought my day of grace was past, the door of mercy was forever closed, and I must sink down to irretrievable woe, and be shut up in the prison house of sin, never more to be delivered. Oh! that I had my days to live over again, thought I, I certainly would more earnestly seek the Lord's favor and my soul's salvation; but now it is too late. These feelings I kept pent up in my own soul as a fire that burned to the lowest hell. One day while burning with a hot fever, and the force of hell burning in my breast, I asked my wife to give me a little saltpeter to cool my burning fever. She gave me a piece about the size of half a bean. I had no sooner taken it than, according to my feelings I became as cold as an iceburg, and had a numbness all over me, and I thought I was dying. My wife became alarmed, and ran to my brothers to get them to come and stay with me. I was now left alone to deplore my dreadful condition as a lost and ruined sinner. And Oh, the dreadful consternation and agony of soul I was in, no tongue can tell nor imagination picture out! and none can know or have the least idea, save those only who have traveled the same road. For according to my feelings I was standing upon the very brink, and about to take my final leap into the vast unfathomable abyss of endless perdition. My distress and agony of soul was so great, that I really conceived that I was already in hell, and in order to know, I looked around the room to see whether I was yet in this world or had gone hence. At length my wife returned with two of my brothers. They rubbed me with flannel cloths saturated with vinegar, and gradually brought me to my natural feelings again. My fever

now left me, and I became convalescent; but it was not long before my fever returned in the form of an ague, which continued with me nearly all winter. And what a dark gloomy winter it was to me. During this time I did not even try to pray, viewing that my fate was already unalterably fixed, and my damnation sealed. All winter, dark and gloomy clouds of guilt and unbelief appeared to hang over my mind. But now where, O where is that dear Friend from whose heavenly lips those words of mercy once so sweetly flowed; *"Let not your heart be troubled,"* &c. *"It is I be not afraid."* and who oftimes said to the disconsolate, Fear not, and of whom I so lately envied the disciples the privilege of being personally with? Alas in my feelings I beheld him now in dreadful majesty, high seated upon a throne, the habitation of which was JUSTICE and JUDGEMENT! and from whose awful lips issued and came forth in thunder tones from the dreadful sentence of my eternal condemnation! Sometimes I thought I could see far off through the thick gloom, and dark lowering clouds of unbelief, a glimmering light for me. One evening the next spring I retired to bed wearied in mind by reason of sin and unbelief, and fell asleep.

I dreamed that I was in a garden and saw the Lord Jesus rising from the dead, and coming forth from the tomb. O! thought I, I have often envied the disciples the privilege, in all their troubles and distress, of going to Jesus and hearing words of comfort from His heavenly lips; and now I have the like opportunity, and ran to him, imploring His mercy. I thought in my dream that He frowned on me, and looked extremely angry, which so distressed my soul that I fell at His feet weeping, and crying with a bitter cry, Lord Jesus, have mercy on me! In my dream I thought He then smiled, and took me up in His arms as though I were a little infant, and said *"Thy sins, Which are many, are all forgiven thee."* In ecstacy of joy I awoke, and behold, it was a dream, and all the joy vanished, and I found myself just where I was before. The next day I went to assist a neighbor raise a house, where I met with my Baptist brother, to whom I related my dream. He said to me, *"Well, in old times God revealed himself to his people in dreams and visions of the night, and why not now?"* To which I replied, if it had been real, it would have remained with me. Still this dream was of great use to me afterwards, for through it I saw the manner in which God deals with His children. The language of my soul was now almost continually, day and night, *"God be merciful to me a sinner."* Sometimes I would wake up in the night with such awful distress of mind, burdened with sin that in a moment the sweat would be standing in great drops all over my body. I now attended meetings every opportunity and O how

my Soul would go out in prayer to God, on my way to meeting; that He would speak a word of comfort through the preacher for poor distressed me. I could clearly see that the gospel of the Son of God contained exceeding great and precious promises for others, but ah me, I was an outside case, beyond the reach of mercy. Sometimes I thought I could see the promises for me afar off. At other times they appeared so near that I could almost embrace them; but when I would reach after them they were gone, and I knew not where. Sometimes a little hope would spring up within, but it would soon be gone. Thus I went on month after month. O! how my soul longed for deliverance. I was by this time stripped of all hope, confidence, or trust in the arm of flesh. I plainly saw that I must be saved by a power superhuman or lost forever. Thus I was brought by a way that I knew not, and in paths I had not known; and some of it appeared to me extremely crooked. I did not doubt the ability of the Lord Jesus, nor undervalue the blood of the everlasting covenant; but I could realize no interest in it. The following summer I taught a school in the neighborhood where I lived. One day when on my way to school bemoaning my sad condition as a lost, ruined and helpless sinner, suddenly these ever blessed words of the Lord Jesus came with power, as though spoken directly to me; *"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." Matt. v. 6.* I immediately spoke out aloud, Lord, do not I hunger and thirst after righteousness? Therefore fill me out of Thy unwastefulness. I was enabled now for the first time to embrace the promises; for I viewed myself the very character to whom they belonged. I however went to school. At noon recess I went into a forest nearby as I thought to pray. I kneeled down, when a strange feeling came over me which I cannot describe. I arose to my feet and commenced singing, and wandered through the woods, sometimes singing and sometimes praising God, not knowing where I was nor where I was going, until I came again in sight of the schoolhouse. I turned to go away, feeling that I never wanted again to engage in worldly pursuits; my whole mind, for the time being, appeared set on things above. After some time however I returned to school, and on the 2nd day of June, 1838 I related briefly in substance the foregoing to the Danville church of Regular Baptists, and was received, and the next day, with my wife, was baptized by the late Elder Richard N. Newport, in the Vermillion River. But I have been a poor doubting sinner ever since, and the older I get the worse I grow.

ELDER JOHN STIFF.

HOSEA II. 14, 15.

"THEREFORE behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and to the valley of Achor for a door of hope; and she shall sing there, as in the days of her older youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt."

God never forgets his people, but it cannot be said that they never forget him. They are full of waywardness and rebellion, which call forth his fatherly chastisements to reprove and correct them. It seems incredible that the people especially blessed with the presence of the Lord, and who had witnessed again and again his omnipotent power and omniscient oversight working in their behalf, could ever forget him or grow cold and indifferent toward him; not only so, but that they should give themselves over repeatedly to the foolish vanities (and idolatries which they had before learned could bring them naught but shame and sorrow, seems far more incredible; but of all this was national Israel guilty at the time of the prophecy quoted above. This nation so singularly chosen of God from among all nations of the earth, whereby it pleased him to show forth his honor and glory, was seen lusting after heathenish idols, forsaking the law of her Maker and all his holy ordinances as prescribed by Moses, to seek the satisfaction of her natural inclinations in bowing the knee unto the gods of the Gentile nations about her. She had forgotten God's wonderful deliverance of her from Egyptian darkness and bondage, of his parting the Red Sea waters that she should pass through dry- shod, and had entirely lost sight of his guidance of her through the forty-year wilderness journey in the cloud by day and fire by night. In the time of great thirst he caused the rock to be smitten, that it should pour forth a stream for her sake; but it was forgotten, together with that time of great hunger when he sent manna from heaven for food. The service of the holy temple, the intercession of the high priest and the offering for sin were all forgotten. God brought her safely through Jordan's swelling flood into the promised land (Canaan) flowing with milk and honey, gave her the victory over her enemies and established her in that country which he gave her for her own. What more evidences could she require of his faithfulness? And how did she requite Him? Her answers were rebellion, pride, depravity and idoltry. At the time of the prophet Hosea, Israel was steeped in national corruption and was standing on the verge of the Babylonian captivity, and in all this was an ensample unto the Israel of the gospel age, not very far distant. These events of national Jewish his-

tory typify spiritual truths imparted unto the gospel church at the present time. There is a proneness to wander felt by the child of God that often gives him great concern, and this very concern, so long as it is present, is in itself a safeguard against yielding to temptation, but when one comes to that state wherein his wanderings do not cause anxiety, he is treading very near Babylon's captivating lure. When in the christian experience one passes from law to gospel, nature to grace, first realizes a hope in the virtures of Jesus' blood and sings for the first time the new song of praise unto God, then in the ardor of his first love is lost entirely to view the weakness of the flesh which will later endeavor to ensnare him into yielding to its temptations. Were the new birth a change wrought in the old man of our Adamic nature, no such danger could exist, nor would one ever wander after the false gods of the flesh. The new birth is the coming into manifestation of a new creature, created in righteousness and true holiness, but it is not a renovation of the old creature of sin and depravity. This makes the subject of grace a dual being experiencing the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit. There are times in the experience of gospel churches, and of individuals, when there seems to be little or no response to spiritual things, and a coldness as of frost seems to nip in the bud every good and beautiful tendency to higher and better things; accompanying this condition there is also no manifestation of anxiety or grief concerning the matter, but instead an inclination to worldliness is manifested in a careless walk or conversation unbecoming the profession of a disciple of Christ, and a disposition to use the principles of Bible doctrine as a cloak to cover one's actions or utterances. This condition of a church or an individual answers to the condition of national Israel in the type at the time of Hosea's prophecy. The remedy for this condition is not in our hands, but in God's hand, and he will distribute to us of reproof and correction that we shall be ashamed before him for all our ways, and confessing our sins, be brought into repentance and forgiveness. The child of God that hugs some fleshly idol to his heart is sowing to the flesh, and will of the flesh reap corruption. Do any of us ever strive to lay up for ourselves treasures on the earth Scarcely any are guiltless on this score, but labor and sorrow are all we get for our pains. This state of affairs cannot long exist with the Lord's people, for he is a jealous God and will not give his glory to another, nor his praise to graven images. " Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," is a command that must be fulfilled, and as surely as God has determined it, so shall they most certainly be brought to serve him to the exclusion of all things else.

"I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness." To allure is to attract and entice. In being thus drawn into a snare one is not conscious of his danger, nor that he is being tempted. Our slight indulgences of fleshly impulses unconsciously lead to more and more ungodliness, until we are enmeshed in a web from which we are unable to extricate ourselves. The wilderness referred to in the text is the utter worldliness of Babylon, and represents the wilderness of total depravity. It is waste howling. "Waste" because it is entirely destitute of any spiritual qualities wherewith to satisfy the desires of the new creature, and "howling" because it is full of the wild beasts of our nature, prowling around seeking what they may devour. When dominated by the flesh a child of God is drawn away by the lusts thereof and enticed. He is led into the wilderness, but when, within him, the motions of eternal life manifest themselves, total depravity becomes a mightily oppressive burden; then one knows the panting of the soul after God and what it is to be as a pelican in the wilderness, or as a sparrow alone upon the housetop; this is the depth of woe and the pit of miry clay. One deeply questions whether the Lord has forgotten to be gracious, and if his mercy is clean gone forever. I trust I do no violence to the text when I say that our fleshly lusts are those principles which allure us toward Babylon, although the pronoun "I" in the text refers to God. Our heavenly Father not only takes cognizance of our fleshly wanderings, but ordains them, not as an end in themselves, but as evil out of which good shall come. We, his people, are not at liberty to do evil that good may come, but God has a perfect right to appoint such a path for us if he so chooses, and that without in the least impeaching any of his divine attributes. Whatsoever he does is right, because he does it. By causing his wayward children to realize the bitterness of the fruits of their idolatries, they are brought into that attitude of soul towards him of which he says: ***"I will speak comfortably unto her."***

Words able to comfort must be spoken by one fully acquainted with the needs of the case. Herein does the repentant child touch the Daysman, the Mediator, Christ Jesus, who was tempted in all points like as his people are, yet without sin, and is able to succor them when tempted, for he is touched with the feeling of their infirmities. He is the speaker of the comfortable words. Thus amidst the shattering of one's idolatries there arises a blessed communion with Christ as he comes near to comfort her who had wandered from her true Husband after false lovers.

"I will give her her vineyards from thence." The fruitfulness of the church arises from her realization of the vanities of the flesh and of the value of Christ to her. When

mindful of her inherent weakness and infirmity, and aware that without him she can do nothing, she is not in danger of being taken captive by unbelief, but treads softly and humbly, leaning upon the staff of his precious promises. It is in her high-mindedness and self-confidence that temptation lurks, and until the Husbandman prunes these dead twigs the fruit of the vine will not come to perfection. It is in being made to realize the utter spiritual destitution of the wilderness of the carnal mind and heart that the soul is prepared for the growth of those vineyards whose grapes are the fruits of the Spirit enumerated by the apostle Paul in his letter to the Galatian Church. (Gal. v. 22, 23.)

"And the valley of Achor for a door of hope." This is the valley wherein Achan, he that troubled the peace of Israel with his relics of Jericho's corruption, was stoned to death with all his house. It is the valley of purging or of purification, and is the place wherein we are made to fellowship the sufferings of Jesus, who purged away all our dross and sin and purified us of unrighteousness. The golden wedge of self-confidence is often buried in our tents, but when the light of Jesus' truth discovers its hiding-place, a sense of guilt fills us with anguish, and we are found crying, " Lord, save us: we perish." This is the fiery trial wherein is wrought the refinement of faith's gold and the destruction of unbelief's wood and stubble. This deep distress which serves to tear our idols from us and turns our faces toward the temple again, is the door of hope, or that by which hope enters anew and afresh into our souls. When we were drifting idly and calmly upon the smooth surface of fleshly security, we lost sight of our hope or any necessity for such an anchor. But in the midst of the storm its " anchor pull " is felt, for the severity of the tempest tests its security. If our hope were centered in some earthly thing, it could not endure the tempest's rage, but the christian's hope, though lost sight of in times of fleshly ease, is anchored in heaven above, in God's love and power and infinite mercy. The higher we are tossed on the billows of trouble, the nearer we approach unto our anchor (hope), which is never so precious as when earth and its idols perish.

"And she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt." She shall sing" there;" in that very place where has been witnessed her humiliation and distress she is made to sing; not in some other place, but there, where she has experienced so much hunger and thirst of spirit, shall she rejoice unspeakably. The very wilderness wherein her entanglement caused shame and sorrow shall be glad for her with the rising of the Sun of righteousness. The desert wherein her strength utterly

failed shall blossom as the rose with the presence of Him, the Bridegroom of her soul. God does not need to remove us from amid desolate conditions in order to make us happy in him. A prison is just as good to dwell in as a palace if Jesus dwells with us there. God does not wait until our bodies die to impart unto us the doctrine of the resurrection and its experimental comforts and benefits, but while yet in this time state we come forth from death in Adam unto life in Christ, and, like Paul, die daily, but nevertheless live by the life of Christ, which dwells in us. Though the experience of the wilderness causes repentance in sackcloth and ashes, yet it is where Jesus speaks comfortable words to his tried ones, and when he has revived their hope from the valley of trouble they find again that song in their heart which was theirs in the days of their spiritual youth, when in their first love and first enjoyment of a hope in the virtues of Jesus' blood. This song of praise, yea, even God's praise, testifies to the victory which God through Christ has given the church over all enemies of righteousness.

Unto all those that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, I affectionately tender the above message, I trust, in the fear of God.

Yours in gospel bonds,
HORACE H. LEFFERTS.
WARWICK, N.Y.,
Dec. 11, 1907.

BENNING, D. C., April 17, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS: - With much love for the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace I make the attempt to write a few lines, knowing full well that if it were not for grace this poor, helpless worm of the dust would be forever lost. My mind of late has been on Christ's sermon on the mount. (Matthew v.) He taught his disciples, saying, *"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn : for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."* Throughout that whole chapter what comforting words to those who know the joyful sound, having been taught of the Lord, for we cannot know any other way. Christ said, *"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."* The servants who testify of him today are they who are born of the Spirit; no others can testify of him. Dear brethren, if we love this doctrine then we are the poor in spirit and certainly are blessed. He speaks to those who know the joyful sound. I feel to thank the Father in heaven that he has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. When we feel in our hearts that we are the children of God, then we can say,:

"Come, happy souls, approach your God
With new melodious songs;
Come, render to almighty grace
The tribute of your tongues.

So strange, so boundless was the love
That pitied dying man,
The Father sent his equal Son
To give them life again."

We know our lost and ruined condition before the just and holy God, and those who know are *"born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God;" "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin ; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect it is God that justifieth." "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword,"* Now, dear brethren, knowing these things, what manner of love we should have toward one another, for God is love; he loved us when we were dead in trespasses and sins, living in open rebellion against him, as Saul was. We should not let trifles prevent us from attending the meetings of the church. Christ told his disciples to love one another as he had loved them, and to forsake all and follow him, and said, *"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."* What wonderful love, to suffer and die for his people, his church, his bride; such love is past our natural understanding; his ways are as high above our ways as the heavens are above the earth.

Please pardon me for intruding on your time and patience with my poor letter. May God's richest blessings abide with you both, and all the readers of the SIGNS. It is a welcome visitor to my house. If you see anything in this you can publish it, if not, it will be an right with me.

Your unworthy brother, if one,
THOMAS ALDEN.

MATTHEW 18: 18-19.

Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

MEETINGS

DIRECTIONS TO THE EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

The twenty-third session of the Eastern Kehukee Association, Lord willing, will convene with Skewarkey Church located in Williamston, NC. Meeting time is October 1 &2, 2005 at 10:30 am each day. The church is just off US 64E. Take Exit 514 toward Williamston. Go about 1 1/2 miles and the church sits on the left. It is a big white board building.

All our correspondence and friends are welcome.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

SULPHUR FORK ASSOCIATION

The One Hundred Sixtieth session of the Sulphur Fork Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Prospect Church on Saturday and Sunday, October 1 & 2, 2005.

Prospect Church is located on the North side of Highway 67, about three miles East of Sims, TX. (look for a sign.)

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Miles Bird
Association Clerk
318 / 687-6775

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 2005

Jerald Hatchett - OK *In memory of* Linda J. Hatchett 50.00
John Swilley, Jr - AR 5.00
Vivian Underwood - VA 5.00
Victor Terry - VA 5.00
Amy Heppler - AZ 15.00
Margie Ray - LA *In Memory of Mom* (Geneva Pettis) 100.00
Douglas Hodges - VA 5.00
Margaret Smothers - NC 25.00
Susan Shelton - NC 5.00
Mary Lee - NC 5.00
Mary Hawkins - NC 25.00

OBITUARIES

CARNAR BUD CROTTS

Carnar Bud Crotts, 89 of Bassett, departed from this life on Friday, December 12, 2003. Carnar was a true believer in the power and grace of God. For many years, Carnar was a familiar sight coming into the churches struggling to walk with the aid of his crutches. Never losing sight of the true doctrine, through all his earthly struggles, he remained an inspira-

tion to those of us who loved him and called him husband, father, and brother. He was born in Carroll county April 29, 1914, the son of the late Wiley Thomas Crotts and Mary Hawks Crotts. He was preceded in death by four brothers; Robey Crotts, Virgil Crotts, Greeley Crotts, and Nuel Crotts, and a sister, Ellen Hawks.

Surviving are his wife of sixty-seven years, Annie Turner Crotts of the home, a daughter Shirley Crotts Shelton of Bassett; two sons, Buddy Crotts of Ridgeway; and Larry Crotts of Bassett, seven grandchildren, two step-grandchildren; ten great-grandchildren; three step-grandchildren, and three great grand-children.

Funeral services were held on Sunday December 14 at the Old Center Primitive Baptist Church by Winfred Young, Elder Michael Young, and Elder Lane Carter. Interment was in Old Center Primitive Baptist Church cemetery.

Carnar became a member of New Spoon Creek Primitive Baptist church on August 11, 1991. Laying to rest one of dear brothers in hope, our final earthly gesture of respect, left us with a desire that our hope and faith could match our dearly departed brother. His absence in the churches will be felt by all who knew and loved the humble spirit of Carnar Crotts.

Sister Patricia Crotts

LOTTIE RIDDLE MINTER

It is a feeling of unworthiness and sadness, I attempt to write an obituary for Dear Sister Lottie.

I grew up knowing and loving Sister Minter, our families were so close!

She was always there to help us, and anyone that needed her. I remember one night when we were small, my Mother was in the hospital. Brother and Sister Minter went with us to see Mother, and when we left the hospital our family was devastated not knowing what was to become of us, we were crying. There was a heavy fog, and my Father (ELDER DAVID SPANGLER) had a difficult time getting down the mountain; but Sister Minter's arms were around us and she helped us to know that we would be all right. I will always remember that night and her.

She taught me so many things and there was a joy about her as she served.

When I joined Dan River Church, she reminded me of things I was expected to do as a member. I happen to know there are many members who could tell you the ways she guided them and helped them. This was very helpful, or it was to me. This was done with love.

Brother Gold Minter was one of our special deacons, and Sister Lottie as a caring deacon's wife. She met all the requirements mentioned in the Bible:

"Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderous, sober, faithful in all things."

Sister Lottie was all of these. Much of her life was spent caring for those who needed help and comfort. She took care of the things she could do to make Dan River Church a haven for Brothers and Sisters of our Church and Sister Churches. She entertained people from all over our country and Canada with love and wonderful food. My Mother, Sister Nannie Spangler, joined the Church one night (Feb. 2, 1932) at the hospital, and Sister Minter joined that night, also. Juanita their daughter and I were baptized many years after that night, together.

Brother and Sister Minter, after the division and the Church was restored to the group who believed in the doctrine we still believe. They were blessed to see how the Church was blessed and grew. I strongly believe God blessed the Church and people, like the dear Minters, to walk together, to pray together and worship together. We all know from where our blessings come from — from above!

Sister Lottie was born July 5,1910 and died April 6, 2005 in Winston-Salem, N.C. She was born to the late John Ira Riddle and Lenora Eanes Riddle. She was a faithful Sister, Mother, Grandmother, Great Grandmother, Aunt and Friend.

She was a member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church (since 1932). She served her community with much Caring. She was a Volunteer at Morehead Memorial Hospital from 1974 to 1996.

When there was a job that needed to be done she always was the first one to volunteer. She wanted the job to be done, the way it should be done.

Sister Minter a much loved wife of Brother Gold Minter for 58 years until his death. She was preceded in death by her husband, a niece Lottie M. Law and her husband Roy Law, Son-in-Law George S. Law, two sisters Alva Hailey and Virginia Garrett, two brothers Willie and Emmet Riddle.

She is survied by her daughter Juanita Law, her grand-daughter Delores Law Sanders and husband Robert, great-grandchildren Kirk and Caroline Sanders all of Winston, Salem, N.C. A great nephew and wife Larry Law and wife Rhonda of Kernersville, N.C.; and Linda Law Sasser and husband, David, of High Point, N.C.; and a Sister Betty Everlena Cannady of Eden, N.C. and beloved nieces and nephews.

Her beautiful funeral services were April 9, 2005 by Elder Kenneth Key, her pastor, and Elder Raymond Goad.

Interment was in Dan River Cemetery.

May the Lord comfort us at Dan River and give the family, especially dear Sister Juanita Law, grace to comfort her at this time. We will miss Sister Minter but she will be remembered by all of us at Dan River as a

faithful and fearless defender of the Gospel of her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Written by request of Dan River Church and Sister Juanita Law.

Submitted With Love
By a Sister In Hope,
Mildred Spangler Graham

ORA TURNER NICHOLS

Sister Ora was born in Floyd County Virginia on September 10, 1909. Her parents were Stant and Ella Turner. She was a graduate of Radford College and worked as a teacher for several years.

Sister Ora was married to Brother Deacon Lonzie Nichols on March 26, 1932. To this union they were blessed with 4 children. 2 sons and her husband preceded her in death. Sister Ora departed this life February 9, 2005 at her home surrounded by her family.

Surviving are 2 daughters and son-in-laws: Venda & Bobby Booth, Audrey and Lawrence Eugene Cahill. 3 grandchildren: Blaine & Vanessa Cahill, Tim & Kim Cahill and Vickie and Richard Smith. 5 great-grandchildren: Pam Smith, Heather Cahill, Jennifer Smith, Brad Cahill and Brooke Cahill. 2 step great-grandchildren: Darrell Cox and Pam Burns. Brothers and sisters: Sparrell Turner & Venice Barton. 3 sister-in-laws: Arlene Turner, Nola Pulcher and Janice Pulp. One month later after Sister Ora's funeral, Eugene Cahill followed her in death.

Sister Ora at Paynes Creek Church was blessed to be baptized on October 13, 1961. I was also blessed to be baptized with her by the late Elder Odell Thompson. Sister Ora was a firm believer in the Primitive Baptist Church and believed in Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. She attended her meetings as long as her health permitted. She loved her church and family and you were always welcome in her home. Sister Ora was blessed to read her Bible daily and always wanted to hear from the churches. She was blessed with a wonderful mind and she looked forward to her mail.

The funeral was conducted at Woods Funeral Home in Floyd, Virgina by her Pastor Elder Hale Terry and Elder Alan Terry. Her body was laid to rest in the Jacksonsville Cemetery in Floyd County.

May God comfort and sustain all who mourn the loss of our Dear Sister and my aunt. We feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by request of Paynes Creek Church.

Agnes N. Sutphin, Clerk
Elder Hale Terry, Moderator

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

VOL. 173 MEADOWS OF DAN, VA., OCTOBER 2005 NO. 10

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POEM

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
He rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding ever hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

Cowper.

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EDITORIAL

UPON THIS ROCK I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH

"When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." St. Matthew 16:13-19.

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

The scripture that seems primarily upon my mind is: ***"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church."*** But, I believe that the other scriptures are necessary for the context of this statement by Christ. Since the beginning of this year, there has been much said about Peter being the rock on which Christ built His church and Peter being the first pope.

Christ asked his disciples, ***"Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?"*** They responded that some say you are John the Baptist; some say you are Elias; some say you are Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. In other words, the people of the world did not know who He was and neither do they today. They

saw Him with their natural eyes; they heard Him with their natural ears; but, they did not know that He was truly the Son of God. Would we, in our flesh and with only our carnal minds, have known who He was? No, we would not. His body of flesh was a veil that they could not see beyond with their natural eyes nor understand with their carnal minds. Christ was not asking to find out what the ones of the world thought of Him. He knew. He was God. The fullness of the Godhead dwelt in Him bodily. It was for the benefit of His disciples. For then He said unto them. ***"But whom say ye that I am?"*** Simon Peter spoke up and said, ***"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."*** Jesus said unto him, ***"Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."*** Christ did not address him as Peter, but rather as Simon Barjona. Barjona means son of Jona. Simon was the name he had been given by his parents. Christ was telling Simon that he did not learn who Christ was by any means of the flesh. Neither did his father in the flesh teach it to him, but this understanding was given by God. God revealed to Simon who Christ was. No one this day can know Him any other way.

Then, Christ said, ***"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church."*** Simon's parents did not name him Peter. Christ gave Simon the surname of Peter. ***"And Simon he surnamed Peter." Mark 3:16. "Simon, (whom he also named Peter)" Luke 6:14. "And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: Thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone." John 1:42.*** Some say that Peter means rock and therefore Christ built His church upon Peter. Peter was the surname that Christ gave to Simon and, therefore, a family name. It means "A stone" and sets forth that Peter is of the rock. Simon Barjona sets forth the family that he is of in the flesh. Peter sets forth the family that he is of spiritually. When the two names are used together, Simon is always first as Simon Peter. The natural or fleshly name is first and the spiritual is afterward. ***"Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." I Corinthians 15:46.*** In our experience, the natural or fleshly man came first and then the spiritual or new creature in Christ. If the church were built upon Peter, it would be as the man that built his house upon the sand. ***"And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened to a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that***

house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it." Matthew 7:26-27. Built upon Peter, the church could not stand for it would have no foundation. When Christ began to tell His disciples that He must suffer many things, die, and be raised again the third day, Peter rebuked Him and said, *"Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee."* Then Christ sharply rebuked Peter, saying, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offense unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." When Christ was in the Garden of Gethsemane, Judas came with a great multitude with swords and staves to take Him. Peter and the other disciples forsook Him and fled. Later, when told that he was with Jesus, Peter denied Christ three times. Built upon Peter, the church would have been destroyed.

There are many scriptures in the Old Testament, as well as the New Testament, that state unequivocally that Christ is *"the rock." "Because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." Deuteronomy 32:3-4. "For who is God, save the Lord: and who is a rock, save our God?" II Samuel 22:32. "And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." I Corinthians 10:4.* The serpent upon the rock could in no way inflict his poisonous venom into the rock nor leave any mark upon the rock. This points to Christ after He was baptized and led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of Satan. He was tempted in every point as we are and yet without any sin. He told Satan to get behind Him and the church being in Him, He put Satan behind the church. Isaiah prophesied, *"And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."* O, to rest in the shadow of our rock! We find no relief under the scorching heat of our sins, temptations, afflictions, and trials of every sort. But, in the cool, refreshing shadow of the great rock is rest and peace for our weary souls. His grace is indeed sufficient. *"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." I Corinthians 3:11.* These scriptures should be sufficient to show that Christ only is the Rock.

"And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The Apostle Paul set forth the gates of hell in Romans 8:38-39, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor

any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." This includes trials, tribulations, afflictions, and persecutions. Since none of these things can separate you from the love of God, the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church upon the rock. Christ said, *"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 5:10.* The gates of hell shall not prevail against it. *"Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Matthew 5:11-12.* The gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Christ said in Matthew 7:24-25, *"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken Him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock."* The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Christ told Peter that He would give unto him the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Peter was never given any authority to decide who went to heaven or who did not. God elected His people unto salvation before the foundation of the world and gave them unto His son. The kingdom of heaven spoken of here is the militant church on earth. The keys are the gifts of understanding of the doctrine and order of the church as given to the apostles by Christ. The apostles, including Peter, preached and wrote epistles to the militant churches declaring what was bound and what was loosed. In other words, the apostles set forth the doctrine and the order of Jesus Christ which the churches were to follow, as well as those things the churches were not to follow which were unsound doctrine and disorder. *"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Acts 2:41-42.* The Apostle Paul writes Titus, *"But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine."* The Apostle also writes, *"Let all things be done decently and in order." I Corinthians 14:40.* Also, to the Colossians, he writes, *"For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the stedfastness of your faith in Christ." Colossians 2:5. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and*

offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." Romans 16:17. "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." II John 9-10. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." II Timothy 3:16-17.

Peter was given the gift of an apostle and there were only twelve. There have never been any since. He also writes that he was an elder. *"The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder." I Peter 5:1.* But, he was never the rock nor was he ever a pope.

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

ISAIAH 43:1.

But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.

CORRESPONDENCE

8-10-05

My Dear Brethren:

I am so thankful we have people like you, that can write the blessed thoughts to send out to people like me to read. What a wonderful feeling it is to know that my Redeemer, My Saviour, that has kept me all these many years, believing this truth as it is in Christ Jesus. I have been a member since August 1947 of the Primitive Baptist Church. I would not change it for the whole world. It is something I have in my heart that man can't take away. What a glorious feeling that man has nothing to so with. Its not bought with Silver or Gold, but through this Blessed Saviour our God that gives it freely.

Its so wonderful to read the experience of my Brethren, whom I have never met, but feel such love for them. Remember this poor sinner in Prayer.

Sister Lovie A. Thompson
122 Lighthouse Church Rd.
Siler City, NC 27344

CORINTHIANS 1:3.

Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

VOICES OF THE PAST

ELDER JAMES M. BLANCETT EXPERIENCE AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY

Dear Brethren; - feeling impressed to write some of my thoughts in childhood and youth upon the subject of death and religion, and at the request of many brethren, to write my experience and call to the ministry, though feeling incompetent to the task, I attempt it. I was reared between two mountains of the Blue Ridge, where my opportunities were limited. I went to school only three months. No church was nearer than seven miles. My father and mother were Primitive Baptists. My mother's conversation on the subject of death brought solemn thoughts on my mind. On one occasion, at the age of five years, she was taken sick very suddenly, and looked down at me at her feet and said, ***"Matt, without a change I shall have to leave you. But I have a hope that I will be with my blessed Jesus in heaven. Be a good boy, and it may be he will bring you to me."*** I left the room, but did not get out of her sight. An awful gloom arrested my mind. I felt that I wanted to do as she told me, for I loved her. I could not sleep — when I would retire at night, my mind being so concerned about dying, and being put under the ground. As I grew up to the age of nearly thirteen my mother was taken suddenly ill and in a few days passed away. She called the family to the bed and bade them farewell.

When she gave me her hand she said to me, ***"I am going to heaven, be a good child. The Lord will bring you where I am."*** She then sang, ***"Bright angels crowd around my bed, To carry me home when I am dead,"*** and then passed away. But there was not power enough in her language to make me feel that I was a poor lost sinner. Something very strange took place with me a few months hence. On the 14th day of February, 1848, some of the larger children mortified my feelings, and the first thing on my mind was that I had no mother to comfort me. I went to her grave, and got on my knees to beg the Lord to send her back to me. While there I felt as some voice said to me, It is not my will that she should come to you. But I will bring you to her. I left the grave somewhat reconciled to my lot. I believed that there is a great God, and there must be a great change in me before I could meet Him in peace, and that depended on the life that I lived. Many times under the fear of impending danger I would say, if the Lord would let me live I would live a better life. But as soon as danger was passed I was the same in practicing the vanities of a sinful mind, but often troubled in mind about death, until about the age of twenty when it was suggested to my mind to not concern myself about religion—that it was an un-

popular thing — that the world would slight me. Wait until you are married. Then will be time enough. On the 18th day of January, 1855, when in my field, about 1 mile from home, in a minute I felt that I was going to die, and eternal judgement was now what I dreaded. I left work and went to the woods to confess to the Lord what an awful sinner I was, and to beg Him to let me live to get home. I returned to my work feeling a little relieved. But in a few minutes the same trouble fell on me again. I left and went home. I wanted to see my wife before I died. When I reached home she came to the door. Her appearance pierced me, for she knew I was a poor condemned sinner. I bursted into tears, and went to search for some secret place to try to pray. I did not want anyone to know that I was in any such deep distress. I felt that I had commited the unpardonable sin, the day of grace had passed, the door of mercy was forever closed against me. Sometimes my heart was so hard that I could not shed a tear, and yet I felt sensible that I was a dreadful sinner. In a moment I would be in tears and my cry was, Oh Lord have mercy on me a poor sinner, When I would try to pray my words would seem to fall to the ground. I viewed myself to be so sinful that I became afraid to lie down for fear the Lord would smite me with death. At the same time the breathing of my heart was, Lord have mercy on me. I felt that I had some fatal disease, that would soon take me away. I thought that everyone knew that I was in this condition. I had not told anyone, but condemnation must be visible to all. On the 16th day of September, 1856, about 4 o'clock in the evening, I was impressed with the attempt that I had made to pray, and my words did not go above my head and that Jesus was above all heavens. My words could not reach him. No comfort could I find, nothing but condemnation to me in the Bible, and oh that it had been my lot to live when Jesus was in the world when I could fall at his feet and beg him for mercy, there might then have been some chance for poor sinful me; but wicked men have crucified him, and if I had been there I would have fought for him. Until I lost my life to rescue him, and thereby there might have been some chance for me. But in a moment I viewed him on the cross with his hands and feet expanded. I felt that I could hear the hammer driving the nails in his hands and feet, and the words sounded in my poor soul, Your sins helped to nail him there. My poor sinful body fell to the ground. I know not how long I lay there, but when my strength returned I went to the house. I wanted to see some of God's children. I loved them, and the great grief with me was that I had sinned against such a good and merciful God, and now to be cast off from him and his beloved children was more than I could bear. The next morning was Sunday. Mother

Barnard was going to visit our house. I wanted to see her come, and felt that I wanted to beg her to pray for me. When morning came I looked for her with eager desire. But when she came in sight with her two little twin boys in her arms, my beloved and much estemmed brethren E.M. and E.P. Barnard, I felt to be too great a sinner to be in her presence. I left and went to the woods remaining there for some time. In the evening I concluded that I would go with her and help her carry her babies, and ask her to pray for her poor, wicked and sinful son. I went about three hundred yards when I suddenly felt that I was not worthy to be where she was. I made a moan, and she turned and looked at me. I handed her the babies and her looks at me sounded in my soul, farewell, poor condemned sinner. I walked a short distance and fell to the ground. I wanted to see some way to be saved if it could be without God changing from his perfect holiness. I could not see how that could be. All that evening and at night when the sun set I bade farewell to it in feelings. I lay down that night, whether awake or asleep I know not. I viewed my life as a candle dazzling in the air. I felt that I was dying and called my wife, and told her that without a change I could not live, and not to sin against a good and merciful God as I had done. I begged her to go after her father and mother to come and pray for me. She cried aloud and said she could not leave me, to go with her. I made arrangements to go, but was pierced with the feeling that I would commit a sin in disturbing those good people. I told her to lie down. I sat by the bed side, and walked the floor that night. When day broke I felt thankful that the Lord had let me live to see another day. I went to the woods to beg remained there till called to breakfast.

I went to the table with my hat on to conceal my grief. I made an effort to eat, but felt that I was not worthy to partake of the smallest of God's blessings, and burst into tears and left, and went to the woods again. I fell on my face and wanted to be more humble. Oh that I had never been born was my cry. I wanted to be anything of God's creation but that sinner. I remained there until about 9 o'clock in the morning, when I felt to go to the field in sight of my wife for her comfort. When I came in sight of her she was looking for me. In a moment I felt that I was sinking, and turned to tell her I was gone. But the burden was gone and I felt that I was changed soul and body. I cried, as far as the east is from the west, so far hast thou separated me from my sins O God. There were a few minutes that seemed that everything was praising the Lord for his blessed salvation. But it was here, if the Lord has ever called me to the work of the ministry in these words, ***"Blow the trumpet in Zion, sound an alarm in my holy mountain."*** In a mo-

ment the depravity and helplessness of a sinner was presented to me. I cried, Lord, I cannot do them any good. In a moment I sensibly felt and saw that all power is in Jesus, and that every sinner that mourned on account of sin would not be turned empty away. I stood amazed and wondered what it all meant.

I went back to the woods to try to pray again, and when I got on my knees to beg as before, to my surprise I asked the Lord to pardon my sins, if he had not pardoned them. I was amazed at my request, so I paused, and aimed to leave out the if, but it was the same thing again, and I found myself praying for a lady relative who came out of a Methodist family. In less than two years she professed a hope in Christ, and joined the church. I loved the brotherhood. My soul was weighted with prayer, and supplication for sinners, and to try to comfort the mourner. Unfortunately at that time all the churches in this country were in confusion, which gave me a great deal of trouble. In consequence there of, and owing to my impressions to preach I remained out of the church till July 5th. My distress during that time I cannot express. I concluded that if I would join the church that my mind in regard to preaching might be relieved. I joined at State Line and was baptized on the second Sunday in Sept., by Bro. S.J. Lackey. When he raised me out of the water my soul leaped with joy. As I reached the bank the text again came with great force, ***"Blow the trumpet in Zion, sound an alarm in my holy mountain."*** It was of such weight that I burst into tears. I hope that I felt the unction of the Holy Ghost. We returned to the house and at the close of the meeting there were eleven persons came and asked Bro. Lackey to pray for them. One was the companion of my youth who I hope had been in trouble for a long time. I returned home feeling joyful in part. But owing to my impressions I was cast down when I would view the perfect holiness of God, and compare it with my sinfulness, oh how I would shrink, and one scripture after another would come on my mind, ***"Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God."***

Let me be where I might be it was so. I was almost continualy begging the Lord to send some other and release me. I was not eloquent, and had no learning. I roved in the mountain to try to ease my mind in regard to preaching, but could not. I think I have realized as loud preaching between my plowhandles as I ever heard. I lived in rebellion against my impressions to the sorrow of my soul. I could not help fearing that it was all imaginary, or Satan was thereby endeavoring to entangle me.I tried to beg the Lord to give me some sign whether he called me or not, and to take me out of the world rather than that I should attempt to preach un-

called. Many times did I feel that death would be sweet to me.

When the war broke out I felt that I would rather go to the war than the pulpit, for I would be in obedience to my country, but could not know that the Lord had called me to preach. I believed that the war would test the matter. If I was wounded I might know that the Lord had not called me. I served three years and was not wounded, nor even had my clothes cut with a ball, but passed through many dangers. At Resaca, Ga., I well remember, in a charge on the enemies work, my front man was shot dead, and a cousin on my right was wounded. The line charged to their works. They were firing on me from two ways while I was in a few feet of their breast-works. I believe that the Lord was with me. I feared no danger. It was one of the brightest times of my life. It seemed to be said to me, ***"Fear not, no harm shall befall you, for you shall testify of me before many people."*** I turned and looked each way and I was alone. No man except one was on the whole line. I went back to the line, carrying with me a wounded companion, feeling humble, and I trust meek. I felt from that time on as if the Lord would let me live to get home that I would not rebel any longer. I reached home the first of April, 1865. Oh how thankful I trust I felt to meet with my family, and the dear children of God. Our meeting time came off. The Brethren, Arrington and Plasters asked me on the stand, but the cross was too great. I wanted a greater sign to satisfy and confirm me in this great matter. On Sunday evening of our July meeting, when I left the congregation, in my feelings I bid farewell to them. I reached my father-in-law's. I felt that the Lord was going to kill me for my disobedience.

There was a time I was unconscious, I know not how long. But the first I knew, old mother Barnard was consoling my wife in her humble manner, telling her there was no danger of my dying until I had filled my course in the ministry. I reached home that night feeling feeble. I lay down on the bed my companion standing by me.

I was begging the Lord to tell me what my duty was, and I would obey. Oh what vehemency, oh what desire of soul and mind I felt— that I could not live. In a moment I viewed Jesus and the apostles in the kingdom of glory. In a moment I viewed the obedience of them to the fulfillment of the Father's will. I realized my disobedience so sensibly that I was not worthy, and the scripture came again, ***"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, sound an alarm in my holy mountain."***

I cried aloud and said, ***"Lord, let me live, and if thou wilt give me one word to say, let it be to the glory of thy name."*** The next meeting came, and I went on the stand with a heavy cross, begging the Lord to convince me by the feelings that followed my labor.

After talking some minutes I sat down, and I think I felt as pleasant as I did when I recieved my hope.

I want to relate the events that I have passed in my ministry. On Friday night before the second Sunday in November, 1865, I dreamed that I was south of my house, standing on the bank of a beautiful stream of water. Some distance in front I saw six beautiful men walking on the water leaning on staves in their hands, and drawing a net having seven wings. One staff, there was no man by it. I was taken up and carried, and my hands placed on it, and it seemed to carry me with ease for a short distance, when I became weighty, I let loose, and I fell into great distress.

The next morning I left for State Line where I was expected to meet with Elder Cassell and Lackey on a funeral occasion. I met brother Lackey and attempted to preach, and I felt well a few minutes, and stopped in a few minutes. An awful dread came on. I went with brother Lackey to the widow Hill's, the wife of Elder James Hill, to attend some funerals on the next day. My distress that night I cannot tell. My wife and three children I felt would perish if I did not return and provide for them. About 9 o'clock I parted with brother Lackey in tears. He went one way and I another I started to the hills of Dan River to stay till the meeting was over, and return to my poor wife and children, to try to care for them and never try to preach any more. I went to the river hill, and looked for the most comfortable place, as it was cool. I made an effort to go, and fell on my face, and felt that I should die. I begged the Lord to let me go home to my poor wife and children and care for them. While there I viewed my wife and the three children between the heavens and the earth with a wreath of light around them, and it was said to me in my soul, ***"Let the dead bury their dead. Go thou and preach the kingdom of God. I will sanctify your labor to their support."*** I arose reconciled, and went to the house, and met with brother Lackey. We burst into tears and he said to me, Brother Blancett, you can't get out of the bounds of God's power, go on and preach. I willingly went, and felt in my labors that surely I was not in this sinful world.

Just one year after the church at Bell Spur liberated me to exercise a public gift, they licensed me to preach; and the second year, to a day they ordained me. I felt that they were too hasty, and that they were putting me under greater responsibilites than I was able to fulfill to the glory of God and the good of the church. But the Lord, I hope, has been my only trust, both in preaching and the administration of the ordinances of the church. But owing to the perverseness of my human nature, it all seems to have been imperfectly done. And, were it not for the evidence received in my labors in preaching and baptizing,

and for the dreams and visions of those whom I esteem as being the children of God, I should have sunk in despondency long ago.

I have served five churches as pastor and have baptized three hundred and forty-five persons; and the most of them have expressed in their experience, in some way or other, some relation to me or my labors. I now have the care (in the true sense, I hope) of four churches. I never would accept the care of a church till it had been made known to me that the church was a unit in the choice made.

Oh, what a joy and consolation we find when we meet all the brethren and sisters in peace and fellowship, filling their seats and manifesting their love, one to another. But how discouraging it is to find them in confusion and striving one against another. These things ought not to be, and could be avoided.

I will now relate one of the most consoling and blessed seasons of my ministerial life, My only son, who was afflicted with a serious lung trouble, and the Lord having blessed him with a good hope, sent to me, on Saturday of our July meeting, to have preaching at his house that evening; and that he wanted to see all of the church. He had not been able to speak for sometime above a whisper. So I made the appointment and served in preaching, and when I closed he said, *"Pa, I want to talk to the church, if I can be heard."* The church assembled about his bed; in a few minutes he recieved strength in speaking so that those in the yard could hear him. The brethren and sisters united in singing *"Amazing Grace;"* and then my dear neice, that we raised, Molly L. Hall, became so wrought upon by the Spirit that she came forward and was recieved.

It was a time of inexpressible joy realized by all that were present. The next Sunday meeting was set for their baptism. When the time came, my son had not stood alone for about five weeks. Some of the brethren visited him in the morning and gave up all hopes of him being able to go to church. He said with power, "I want to go to meeting," He arose from his bed and walked alone to the door, and they put him in a buggy with his father-in-law, Brother Simmons. When I met him he was looking very feeble, but was strong in the faith.

After a joyful service at the stand, and after hearing the experience of Brother Ambrose Jessup, I said to my son, *"Do you want to be baptized"?* and he answered, *"I do."* He was lying on a spring couch, and they picked him up and, as he was being borne to the water, the brethren and sisters sang; and it seemed to me that their singing entered heaven, while the holy unction from the blessed Lord filled my soul.

Brother E. P. Barnard helped me carry with several others into the water, and I baptized them all, four of old Brother Sanders Jessup's

children and a daughter-in-law were of that number: That was one of the most heavenly days of my life.

I have now given some of the reasons why I hope the Lord has called me to the ministry, and some of the blessed seasons that I have enjoyed, which have encouraged me to continue to labor for these forty-five years. I have merited none of the blessings of God; and can truly adopt the language of Jacob, who said, ***"few and evil have the days of the years of my life been."Gen. 47;9.*** I only live by hope. For over fifty-six years election, predestination, sanctification, and the holy calling, unmerited by the sinner, has been my meat and drink, believing it to be the doctrine of Christ and the apostles.

Brother Branscome, my mind is on some points of doctrine, but I will close for this time. I have given some of my reasons for trying to preach, and would say to all, who may profess a call to the ministry, that they should weigh their impressions by the scriptures, and take the advice of Paul, who said, ***"Study to show thyself approved unto God a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."***

Brother Branscome, I feel unworthy to ask you to publish anything that I have written in your worthy and highly esteemed paper, the MESSENGER OF TRUTH which is so worthy of its title. Consider this scribble, and if it goes to the waste-basket, you will not hurt me; for I want your valuable paper maintained.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
James M. Blancett.
Mayberry, Va.

From Elder Lamberts book,
"Tried In The Furnace".

BAPTISM
February, 1951

The subject of baptism has been a subject of great controversy throughout the centuries. Many false erroneous theories have been advocated which have tended to confuse the minds of God's little children. This is due to the fact that theologians have attempted to supplant a theological meaning of the term that is foreign to the classical meaning in order to prop up their false theories in trying to hinge salvation on the volition and work of the creature. This has narrowed the conception of the term, baptism, to that ceremonial use of water to admit members into an organized body here upon earth termed the church. I do not believe the term is so narrow in its scope. When I think of baptism I like to meditate upon the classical meaning instead of the theological use of the term.

To baptize is to immerse, submerge, envelope, overwhelm or sink; to dip, wash, or drench; to consecrate; to completely subdue. This

is the essence of the classical meaning. Even theologians who advocate sprinkling as the proper mode of baptism admit this. I think that baptism in literal water is figurative and typical of the baptism that is essential unto salvation. No man is able, empowered or authorized to do that. This is the work of God.

I want to call your attention to one Scripture that will conclusively prove that water baptism is not meant every time the term is used in the Scriptures. Jesus said as recorded in *Luke 12:50, "But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished."* The word straitened means pained. He was undoubtedly speaking of His baptism in death. He was speaking of the time when death would envelop Him, when He would be overwhelmed with suffering and submerged into death. This statement was made approximately two years after His baptism in Jordan. (I think His baptism in Jordan was pointing to, and figurative of, His baptism in death.)

Now, let us consider *Romans 6:3. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?"* Paul did not say or hint at water in this expression. If Paul had said, know ye not that as many of us as were baptized in water were baptized in Jesus Christ and into His death; then, the modern theorists would have something to base their arguments upon. Since he did not say this, let us take for granted that he said what he meant and meant what he said. He said, *"were baptized into Jesus Christ."* Can any man immerse one into Jesus Christ? We may baptize in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost but man cannot baptize into Jesus Christ. I believe that God chose His people in Christ in the annals of eternity before time ever began. *"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world" (Eph.1 :4). "Whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son" (Rom. 8:29).* The entire family of God was baptized into the body of Christ by God, our Father. *"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body: so is Christ. For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body" (Cor. 12:12, 13). "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:10).* If we were chosen in Him, created in Him, and baptized in Him, we were mysteriously in Him being bone of His bone as He accomplished the law to a jot and tittle while He sojourned in this world of sin and sorrow. I believe that as Jesus performed the law to a jot and tittle, Jehovah could see the entire family of God performing it as they were members of His body, being baptized in Him. The one baptism spoken of in Ephesians 4:5 is that performed by God, the

Father in the Son through the operation of the Spirit upon His children. This baptism is essential unto salvation but cannot be performed by man.

Yes, God's children were "baptized into His death." They went down with Him into death because they were chosen, created, and baptized in Him. If we be children of God we paid the penalty of death in Him! This being true, justice is completely satisfied in Him for each and every child of God. Nothing can be charged to them.

We have touched upon the subject of baptism relative to all the family of God being baptized at once together into Jesus Christ and into His death. Now, we want to meditate upon the experimental phase of baptism. We want to consider the individual, personal baptism that is experienced by each and every child of God. This experimental phase of baptism is progressive in its application as we shall see, the Lord willing. It begins in regeneration and ends in the immortalization of the body. John preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins as recorded in Mark 1:4. All those who made manifest that they were in possession of this baptism by confessing their sins he baptized in the river Jordan, (Mark 1:5) which was an outward manifestation of being in this condition. The rule is according to the words of Jesus as recorded in *Mark 16: 16, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."* The form of the verb used shows that it is not water baptism that is under consideration. The present tense of the verb shows that it is a condition they are now in. They are overwhelmed, immersed, or enveloped now. Are they now enveloped in water by the administrator? No, they are now enveloped in repentance by the Holy Ghost! This being submerged in repentance affects the cry for deliverance or salvation from their sins. This salvation is promised in this statement by Jesus. The hope of each child of God, who is so baptized in repentance by the Holy Ghost, is salvation from their sins through the merits of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. When one is baptized in water he outwardly manifests this condition and hope through the grace of the Father, the merits of the Son, and guidance, operation and revelation of the Holy Spirit.

"John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire" (St. Luke 3:16). The effect of the Holy Spirit baptism is regeneration. The souls of God's people are baptized into death and resurrected unto life here in time; and, the bodies of God's people shall be baptized into death and resurrected unto life immortal into the great beyond - the end of this sphere of time. This is

that for which we patiently wait and hope.

The natural soul trusts in natural man being inspired by the natural carnal spirit This is the soul that sins. It shall die (Ezek. 18:4). All people are born naturally in this condition. When it pleases God to baptize the soul of one of His people by the Holy Spirit, He kills and makes spiritually alive the soul. Yes, the soul is overwhelmed, immersed, and submerged into death and resurrected into a new life. The soul that has been so wrought upon by the Holy Spirit shall never die. It is a new creature. According to ***Psalms 107 the experience of the redeemed is, "Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their troubles and he delivered them out of their distresses."***

This is brought about by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We read in ***Luke 3:3, "And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."***

This does not say baptism of water but of repentance. This means that you must be overwhelmed, submerged, and immersed with repentance. It is a godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of (2 Cor. 7:10). When you are overwhelmed with repentance you abhor yourself; you repent in dust and ashes. When you abhor yourself you die to the love of self. You sink into despair; you are immersed in trouble and distresses. As He did not leave Christ in the grave He does not leave your soul in despair but raises it up a new soul. This is verified in ***Psalms 23:3, "He restoreth my soul."*** You are then a new creature motivated by a spiritual soul. The mortal soul which is subject to death, has been baptized with immortality. This makes the soul immortal. Now, you are an immortal soul dwelling in a mortal body. This body has not yet been baptized with immortality. That will be the crowning work of the Holy Spirit.

Paul says in ***Romans 7:24, "Oh wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"***

Paul realized the sinfulness and mortality of his body. All God's children are possessed with the thorn in the flesh and infinnities of the flesh. Our bodies are subject to weaken and die. We cannot do the things we would because of the evil that is present in our fast decaying bodies. The body becomes lame and tottery with age. Our bodies become weak because of disease. Our natural eyes become dim and our natural ears deafen. Our memory fails and our ability to comprehend is affected. Our natural minds fail to function as they once did. I feel that as we experience these things we become more and more desirous of the immortalization of the bodies. ***"Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adop-***

tion, to wit, the redemption of our body. (Rom. 8:23). Yes, the bodies of the saints shall be baptized into death and shall be completely submerged, enveloped, swallowed up, or baptized with immortality. *"So, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15: 54).* This will be the answer to the prayer as recorded in *1 Thess. 5: 23, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

The baptism in water is figurative of this baptism that is essential unto salvation. This is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God: which is a figure of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. See 1st Peter 3:21. There are two kinds of conscience. There is a natural conscience and there is a Holy Spirit conscience. A good conscience is a Holy Spirit conscience. I believe that God's people are wrought upon by His Spirit and are made anxious to follow Jesus in baptism. They are desirous to outwardly manifest this faith in the Father baptizing them in the Son by the Spirit by submitting themselves to baptism in water in the name of the Father, and the son, and the Holy Ghost. As the candidate for baptism is passive in the hands of the administrator in the act of baptism in water, so he manifests that he is passive in the hand of God in Holy Spirit baptism which is essential unto salvation. He manifests his faith in being in Christ as He went down into the grave and came up out of the grave. As baptism into Jesus Christ and into His death is the door of entrance into the Church which is the one invisible body including all the children of God, so baptism in water is the door of entrance into the church in its organized form upon earth.

John required those whom he baptized to bring forth fruit worthy of repentance. I believe such characters are the only ones worthy to be received into the organized Church. When one comes confessing his sins, and considering himself as the chief of sinners and less than the least of all saints, speaking of his unworthiness, my heart goes out to him and I am given to fellowship him. When such an one comes testifying that his hopes for salvation from sins is solely based on the grace of God and the merits of the Lord Jesus, I consider him as a proper subject for baptism in water into the fellowship of the organized Church. None but those who have been baptized with repentance would come bringing such testimony from the heart desiring a home with God's people. The Church receives such into their fellowship and one properly ordained will gladly

administer the ordinance to that character.

I realize that I have just hinted upon this grand subject These thoughts are my earnest and conscientious convictions. If they be true, may God be praised. If they be false, charge them to my ignorance and vain imaginations. May God bless this to your comfort and edification, if it be His will, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Elder E. J. Lambert

"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." -- Revelation i. 18.

What a mercy that he who was dead lives at God's right hand! that he lives as a risen head; that he is not a dead Saviour; but a Saviour that lives for evermore; that can and does bless; that can and does comfort; that can and does bring the soul safely through all. He is not a Saviour that stands as it were upon the brink of a river, and pulls us out when we have swum half way out ourselves; he is not a Saviour that will take us half way to heaven, and then, as Rutherford says, let us *"fend"* or shift for ourselves. He must take us to heaven throughout. We are nothing, we have nothing without him. He must be, as he is, our *"all in all."* We value him in his death, nothing but his death could reconcile us to God; we value him in his life, nothing but his life can save. We want salvation now; salvation in the heart; a Spiritual salvation revealed in and unto the soul; a salvation worthy of the name, wholly, fully, completely, finally, and everlastingly to the praise of superabounding grace; a salvation indefeasible, never to be lost; worthy of God, worthy of the God-man; adapted to every want of the soul, coming into every trial of the heart, and able to save the vilest and the worst, *"without money and without price."*

Elder J. C. Philpot

ST. JOHN 15:9-

As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

These things I command you, that ye love one another.

If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

PRAYER

No subject of the Bible holds more interest than this. Perhaps, we do not understand much about it I am sure that I do not, and I realize how presumptuous it is for me to think I could teach anyone how to pray. This world professes to teach that and some theologian has gone to the trouble to write a book called "God's Minute." In the book he has a short prayer for each day in the year. Not being able to give you that many in advance. While I do not know that I have ever prayed, and if I have that I will ever be blessed to do so again it does not mean that it is not gospel subject if it is, it certainly is profitable, under spiritual guidance, for our discussion and examination..

By way of encouragement to the dear saints I want to say to you that none of our leaders have a monopoly on prayer. Although prayer is a gift it is not one we can use any time men call on us to pray. If I am mistaken about it do not follow me, but I believe that any minister feels a great hesitancy offering prayer at times.

Prayer is, after all, a close-up with God, a veritable talking face to face. When we are really and truly given to see our sins, it is enough to cause a trembling in body and spirit to ask God for anything, seeing that it is the prayer of a righteous man that avails anything. In this connection let me say that I have impressions to pray just like I trust I do to preach. At these times it is the sweetest yielding and compliance to his blessed command as it is in standing in the pulpit and preaching the doctrine of grace. Trying to pray is like trying to preach-it is mighty hard work-in fact it cannot be done. While *trying* to pray, we invariably are in the flesh and our object is selfish, begging for the things that we want but that is not all, trying to accomplish a thing not only shows a lack of how but of what and why. I believe we pray as we preach and live and die, depending on the eternal fixed purposes of God. It is in faith that we come to him at all. This faith, at all times, is the substance of the things hoped for. This has never been changed and, although it moved Abel, Daniel, Jacob, Paul and all those gone before and will move every communicant that is yet to come, it is as un-

changeable as God. In every step of our obedience to his commandments, it is faith that goes before, revealing the eternal perfection and sovereign purpose of God in disposing of all created things. Faith does not go before, bringing to light the unfinished things of God, as though he was a little undecided as to his rule of conduct, but it is the substance of our hope.

Now come hither little child and let us look at our hope. We do not hope that we will exercise faith to the end, but we hope that God eternally arranged for our salvation in Jesus Christ Our prayer is not an effort to change God, but it is because he is unchangeable. The world (that is, the ungodly world) may swerve and tauntingly tell us that if they believed everything was fixed they would not pray, we know better things than that We know our eternal destiny is fixed and that all our spiritual blessings are as settled and stable in the mind and purpose of God as is his choice. Furthermore, we are assured that he has given us all things pertaining to life and godliness. It is according to this knowledge that every prayer is uttered. If we must try to pray then we must guess as to what to pray for. Guessing, we are told is all right when it hits, but unless we ask according to his will, our will would, if permitted to pray, ask for things that would forever remove us and land us away from every providential and parental blessing. If we must try to pray (that is, if we must pray more often, or more fervently) then we must guess as to what to pray for and, on that conditional basis, we would have a right to ask why if it was not answered.

A prayer is not something excited in you by the widom of this world. Just think of the prayer (that is, words called prayers) addressed to God (as they suppose) for favor in converting the heathen. That is a conditional, selfish, carnal utterance. If it was asked according to the will of God he would certainly grant it, because God answers that kind. We sometimes are motivated in like manner in the dear old church. We get over zealous and ask God promiscuously to bring the regenerated into the church. He does not answer this kind of prayer because it is not prayer.

This is a wonderful subject, it is a blessing from God. We cannot pray unless blessed in spirit, yet the apostles commanded us to pray. We are told that we ought to pray. Now we realize that it is a gift from God. Would God give us a gift to ask that any will be done except his own? Is not all prayer a complacent acknowledgement of his will being done in heaven and in earth? Having been taught his sovereignty, and being kept by his power do we not have a desire to see and feel the doing of that will?

Elder W. D. Griffin
(Sept., 1947)

PSALM 95

O COME, let us sing unto the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the rock our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the Hills is his also.

The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land.

O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.

For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. Today if ye will hear his voice,

Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

When your fathers tempted me, proved me and saw my work.

Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways:

Unto whom I sware in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the One Hundred Seventy Fifth session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will be held with North Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Beaufort County, North Carolina on October 8-9, 2005. All who believe and love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited.

The Church is located 8 miles West of Belhaven, N.C. State Route 99.

Elder Gene Lupton
Association Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing the Staunton River Union will be held at Canaan Primitive Baptist Church located on the Mt. Crossroad in Pittsylvania County, Virginia the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in October.

The song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

All ministers of our faith and order are invited.

Elder Mark Terry, Moderator
Fred Murphy, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene with Dan River Church the fifth Sunday in October 2005. We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially we would invite all ministers of our faith and order who would have a mind to come. Singing will start at 10:30 a.m.

Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Bro. Allan Carroll, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 2005

Lena Gray-VA 10.00
Eld. Larry Hollandsworth-VA ... 5.00
Glenford Sigmon-VA 5.00
Walter Craft-W.VA 5.00
Helen Pittman-TX..... 5.00
Jerry White-KY 5.00
Larry Evans-MS 10.00
John Vipperman-VA 10.00
Wilma Cox-MS..... 5.00
Jean Moran-NC 5.00
Samuel Broach-NC 5.00

OBITUARIES

GRACE CREASON LOCKE

Sister Grace Locke of Benton, Kentucky died August 10, 2005 at her home. She was 95 years old.

Services were held on Friday August 12, with Elder Wayman Chapell officiating. Burial was in the Lyles Cemetery.

Sister Locke was baptized and received into the fellowship of Soldier Creek Primitive Baptist Church of Benton, KY, June 1968 along with her late husband, Warnard Locke and late son Roy Locke. Her late husband Warnard was ordained as a deacon at Soldier Creek in 1969, and remained so until his death May 31, 1986.

She remained faithful to the church and it's doctrine until her death. She was blessed to have good health up until three months before her death, but she never missed a church service.

She is survived by a son Charles Ronald Locke and 5 grandchildren, 5 great grandchildren, and 2 great,-great grandchildren. She was known by family, friends, neighbors and church brothers and sisters as a very loving person.

Submitted by:
Son and Daughter-in-law
Ronnie and Barbara Locke

OBITUARY OF IRIS FREEMAN PUCKETT

With a mixture of spiritual joy and personal sadness we record the recent death of our beloved sister, Iris Freeman Puckett, at the age of 75. Sister Iris was born in Henry County, Virginia on September 30, 1929, a daughter of the late Harvey Freeman and Sis. Clara Harbour Freeman. She lived in Patrick County for the greater portion of her life, and was a long-time employee of United Elastics Corp.

On July 3, 1960 she was united in marriage to Bro. Paul A Puckett. They lived happily together until the Lord called her spirit home. She attended Liberty Church off and on most of her life. On the 1st Sunday, of April 1985, she was present on the occasion of the final appearance of our late pastor, Elder Bennie Clifton, who died the following month. She went forward to speak to him, and the Lord laid it on her heart to ask for a home with the church. She was gladly received and was baptized one month later by the acting pastor, Elder John Wingfield.

Sister Puckett was a loving and faithful member of Liberty Church. Her heart, her hands and her resources were always open to her brethren and sisters. Whenever Bro. Puckett was unable to be present because of providential hindrances, she would carry out his responsibility as clerk, and she did an excellent job. Her presence and her sweet influence will be greatly missed by all of us.

Sister Puckett died in Reynolds-Patrick County Hospital on June 10, 2005. Her funeral service was conducted at the Moody Funeral Home Chapel in Stuart by Elder John Wingfield and Bro. David Wright, a close friend of the family. Her mortal body was laid to rest in Patrick Memorial Gardens. In addition to her husband, she was survived by one first cousin, Troy Harbour, his family and the children of his deceased brother, Henderson Harbour.

Our deepest sympathy is extended to Bro. Puckett and to all who knew and loved Sis. Iris both by natural and spiritual ties. We have the blessed consolation of believing very strongly that her soul is peacefully at rest. Waiting for the final coming of her Dear Redeemer and Lord.

Done by order of Liberty Church in conference the 2nd day of July, 2005. One copy of this memorial record will be included in our church minutes, one will be given to the family and one will be submitted to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

Elder John T. Wingfield, Mod
Deac. Paul A. Puckett, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

VOL. 173 MEADOWS OF DAN, VA., NOVEMBER 2005 NO. 11

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

POEM

LILLY OF THE VALLEY

A garden grows in the hills of Zion
Where there are beautiful blossoms
of A special kind
The king of the garden is their love
to call
He's the lilly of the valley the most
precious of them all.
Sometimes these blossoms began to
droop
When they're hungry and thirsty for
the needed food
That's given to them in A special rate
By the lilly of the valley in His own
special way.
They just wait quietly for they know
He'll come
To brighten up their day with the
food they want
For He'll never leave them very long
in despair
The lilly of the valley very soon will
be there
Hark they hear the voice of the King
near by
They began to open for they know
He's nigh
Pretty little dew drops form in their
eyes

As they speak to one another in tones of light
Of love and joy and peace that the lilly gives
To the blossoms that He cares for in His lovely hill.

PS. 23-3 "He restoreth my soul. He leadeth me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake"

Katherine Mathews

ST. MATTHEW 5:10.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

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EDITORIAL

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth the seed; and the mountains shall drop down sweet wine, and the hills shall melt." (Amos 9:13)

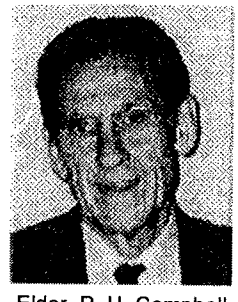
Elder R. H. Campbell

I have always felt that this is not just talking about the crops and the seasons of the year, because the subject under consideration is the future of the children of Israel, and something which is to come to pass at some future time, regarding them. According to this text, there will be an ending of one era, or season, and the beginning of another, even seasons follow season and as crops follow crops except that it will all occur at the same time. It will be a time which will have a very great and significant impact in the lives of the elect children of God: a time when he would bring their captivity out from under the law of sin and death, and Amos says; that at this time God would plant them upon their own land, which he had promised unto Abraham and his seed after him, and that no more would they be pulled up and sent into captivity again for their sins; as they had been repeat-

edly, in the past. The days referred to in the subject scripture, I believe, relates to the time in which the first covenant will have been fulfilled, and the second covenant will be initiated, and it will all be done in a matter of days. This will be the time, as is recorded in the book of Hebrews, where referring to Christ Paul says, *(Heb 10:9-10) "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."* Amos describes this change in terms we would normally use in farming, saying a time of plowing, sowing, reaping and the treading of grapes: using the various stages of a crop as an analogy, but I believe that it is actually referring to the ending of the mosiacal law, and the establishing of the gospel era. This is the time that Israel had been looking forward to for so long: the season when the Messiah would come and restore the glory of the nation of Israel, as it was in the former days. This event is described by many of the prophets, and is always depicted as a time of great change in the life of the children of Israel, a time like no other, and it would be accomplished by God; and would be for his own holy name's sake. *(Eze. 36:32) "Not for your sake do I this, saith the Lord God, but be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel."*

Jeremiah prophesied of these days, when he said, *(Jer. 31:31-34) "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts: and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."* This would certainly be a very drastic change indeed from the law of Moses, the covenant under which Israel was living at the time that this prophecy was written. It would be as dramatic a change as when God gave the law to Moses when he brought the Israelites out from under the captivity of Pharaoh, the ruler of the land of Egypt. Jeremiah did not fully understand just what

this meant, for he was but recording what been shown him, and that was that there would be this great change, and it would be by the will and pleasure of God. Jeremiah is actually speaking of a spiritual covenant which God would make with man, whereby, by the grace of God through faith and the new birth, man would receive the gift of eternal salvation, but it would be only to those that were chosen, in Christ, before the foundation of the world. This would be understood fully by those who lived in the time of the fulfillment of the prophecy, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Jeremiah had no knowledge regarding the new creature that would come forth, in a spiritual birth, nor that man would worship God in Spirit and in truth, because these were terms of which Israel, under the law, was completely ignorant. Peter explains how Amos and Jeremiah were inspired to record these truths, *(II Pet 1:21) "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."* And the apostle Paul gave the reason that things were done in this manner, *(Rom. 15:4) "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."* The things which were written by the prophets were true and certain, and are great comfort to those who live under the new covenant, because they believe that as God has promised by the prophets, He is still working things according to his will and purpose in their fulfillment.

I remember being in Hawaii many years ago, and we came to a place in the road where there was a large pineapple plantation which was on both sides of the road that we were traveling. There was a particular spot where four large fields of pineapple came together, two on each side of the road; and in the four pineapple fields, the process of plowing was going on in one field, planting in another, the harvesting of the crop in the third field and burning the old crop in preparation for the next crop, in the next field, and it was all happening at the same time. The climate is so uniform there that they do not have to wait for another season because of differing temperature and climate, as we do here, so that when one crop is harvested they immediately begin preparing for the next crop, and all four phases of a crop are being done at the same time.

To my understanding, this is exactly what is described in the above text, Amos is saying that the days are coming when the plowing, sowing of the seed, and the reaping, and harvesting of the crops will all be accomplished at the same point in time. In my personal experience described above, of course, it was in the things of nature, and we un-

derstand that the text is describing spiritual matters, but the occurrence is the same. The first dispensation (covenant) follows the second and they will both occur simultaneously. This is a necessity, in the subject which is under consideration here, because, there could never be an instant in time, in which the salvation of the saints was not secure and provided for, and under the direction and control of the administrator of the covenants. He does not have to wait for the changing of the seasons, the correct temperature, or the correct phase of the moon, because all of these things are under his control, as Solomon said in, *(Pro. 16-33) "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.*

It is recorded, *(1 Cor. 12:5) "And there are differences of administration, but the same Lord". Christ is the administrator of both the first and the second covenant, as stated by the apostle Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews:" (Heb 9:15)*

"And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal life." This scripture covers the first portion of the subject scripture, regarding the reaping of the harvest and the treading of the grapes, by which Israel, under the law, would be justified, and receive the promise of eternal life. The sacrifices made by the children of Israel, under the law, did not atone for sin, but were only remembrances made each year that they were still sinners, but by faith, they were looking forward to the coming of the Messiah, who was to come, and who would make the true and atoning sacrifice that would put away their sins forever. *(Heb 10: 11-13) "And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool."* Christ, the promised Messiah did come, and as the administrator of the covenants, fulfilled the law covenant to a jot and a tittle in their room and stead and they stand justified before God, and he established the second covenant by his resurrection. God's children, in this day, do not live under the law of sin and death, but rather, under the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus.

Christ's sacrifice, as the administrator of the first covenant, was the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. This was accomplished by his, *(Col. 2:14) "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it*

to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it." Where there is no law, there is no sin, so under the new covenant, God's elect, are without sin before God. Sin certainly continues to dwell in the flesh, but does not dwell in the new creature in Christ, as John said, *(John 3:9) "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his sin remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."* I believe that the apostle Paul was referring to this fact when he said, *(Rom. 8:3) "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh"* and this is where sin would dwell thereafter: in the flesh, for it has no dominion over the new creature in Christ, he is a spiritual being that has been born of the Spirit of God, and whose seed remaineth in him.

I recently read, *(John 4:36) "And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto eternal life: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together."* And my mind went back immediately to the subject scripture, regarding the sower and the reaper. This scripture, in the fourth chapter of John is where Jesus is talking to his disciples, after he had talked with the Samaritan woman at the well, and he is talking about the gathering of fruit unto eternal life and saying that one soweth and another reapeth. In my meditations on this, I was puzzled for a while, because he said one soweth and another reapeth, and then the thought came to me, that Jesus, the son of man, by his sacrifice reaped the harvest, which was the Jews, under the law as stated above, and as the eternal Son of God, he was here with his disciples, plowing the ground and sowing the seed of the new covenant.

He began this process by telling them of the future changes that would occur in their lives, in the future. This must have seemed strange unto them indeed, with their having lived all of their lives under the strict ordinances of the law. He began this labor in the fourteenth chapter of John when he said, (vs. 2-3) *"In my Fathers house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."* In the sixteenth chapter of John, he says in, (vs:7) *"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."* Also in, (vs. 13) *"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you in all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but*

whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come." And again, (John 14:26) "But the comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." These scriptures are the seeds of the second covenant, a spiritual covenant: one for which the apostles were unprepared, at the time, for these new conditions were not met by sacrifices and burnt offerings, or by the efforts or commitment of man. These conditions would be accomplished by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God which was in position before the foundation of the world, and would insure the salvation of every heir of grace without the loss of one. On one occasion, someone asked Jesus, (John 6:28-29) *"What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."* Surely, the plowing of the ground and the planting of the seed of the new covenant; was Christ's teaching to the disciples these new things that were to come, before they came forth.

When the day of Pentecost was fully come, these things began to be made manifest as the disciples came together, all of one accord, and the prophecies of the men of old who were inspired by the Spirit of God began to be fulfilled as the apostles began to experience the beginning phase of the second covenant. This was by the fulfillment of the prophecy by Joel, who said the Holy Ghost would be poured out upon all flesh, and their sons and daughters would prophecy, their old men would dream dreams, and their young men would see visions. This is the first evidence of the new covenant, the establishing of the church, as we know it today. This is the work of the administrator, as the mediator of the better covenant, which is established on the better promises.

For the reference above to the fact that, Jesus the son of man, reaped the harvest and tread the grapes, and that the Son of God plowed the ground and sowed the seed: I would refer you to, *(Rom. 7:1-6) "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?"* For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore. my brethren, ye also are become dead to the

law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that ye should bring forth fruit unto God. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of the spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." In these verses, I believe that the days that are referred to by Amos, in the subject text are accomplished. Under the terms of the first testament, the wife (Israel), is bound to one husband (the law) who died that she might be freed from the law of sin and death.

The church triumphant, is composed of both Jews and Gentiles, and it is by this means that those under the law of sin and death were freed from her husband, whose death atoned for her sins, under the law, and fully justified them before God. Those who were to follow were released from the law of sin and death and were free to be married to another, even unto him that rose from the dead. Remember, the above scripture, "differences of administrations, but the same Lord". It is in this manner that the middle wall of partition was broken down, thereby making of himself one new man, and so making peace, with continuity, among the whole household of faith. They are no longer twain, but one entity, Christ having abolished the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, which had separated them in the former days, and then by his establishing the second covenant under which the saints live in this day and age. *(Heb. 8:10-13) "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be their God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest, For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away"* This is the better covenant, which is established upon better promises, because all that is required under the new covenant had already been accomplished before it was established.

(Mal 3:6) "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." So, whether they lived under the law of sin and death, or the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, the promise made to Abraham stands sure, unto his seed, and cannot fail because the promise was made by God. The second covenant was not a change in the plans of God, but rather was a judgment of man in the flesh, as

he was when driven from the garden of Eden, and the law was given to make man see and acknowledge his total inability to attain unto righteousness, of himself. The righteousness under the law was but obedience to the oracles of God, but, that never promised eternal life. The law of sin and death was but a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ, for under it the people learned that it is not in man that walks to direct his steps, and that he must look to another, the one prophesied by Moses who was to come, and to whom they were to look. They did not realize the fullness of this prophesy, and just what the prophet would do, but, since the prophecy was given by Moses, a recognized man of God and witnessed by God himself, they believed and looked for the day of his coming.

(Amos 9: 11) "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old;" The Jews were looking for the restoration of the tabernacle of David as it had been when built, but the glory of the new one would be on a grander and even more glorious scale than the first, because the glory would be spiritual rather than natural, as they were in the days of the original tabernacle. The glory of the new will exceed the glory of the first, and will continue until the end of this age, at which time it will be replaced with an even greater age, in which all of the household of faith will be gathered together in the presence of God, where they shall see him as he is, be like him, and be satisfied. They will then understand all mysteries, and see the reason and purposes for all things, they will know even as they are known.

In the eleventh chapter of Paul's epistle to the Hebrews, the chapter which records many of the trials of God's children in their journey of faith, he said, *(Heb 11:39-40) "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."* Amos, in the above text is referring to the bringing in of that, better thing, which was the better covenant, established on better promises, that those who lived under the law should not be made perfect until the fullness of the gentiles should be brought in. They did not receive the fulfillment of the promises, in this lifetime, but all, Jews and Gentiles will receive the fulfillment of the promises together, in the final restitution of all things. *(Rom 11:32) "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." And again, (Eph 2:8) "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."*

The apostle Paul then continues

in the same theme, *(Heb 12:1-2) "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God,"* The great cloud of witnesses are the scriptures, written by those who have gone on before, and which are left on record to confirm your hope that you too are among those for whom Jesus came to seek and to save. When the scriptures say that Jesus came to seek and to save, I do not believe that he meant that he came to hunt for them, or to see how many he could find, but rather, he comes to them where they are and makes it manifest unto them that they are of the chosen generation. He knows who they are, where they are, and his coming to them is to give hope to the hopeless, strength to the weary, sight to the blind, and joy to the downhearted who have been made to see their own lost and undone condition in the flesh.

The beauty and comfort of these scriptures, to God's children in this day, is that they can look back, on the promises of God unto his chosen people; see the power, love and mercy of God being manifested as he fulfills those promises, in spite of what man is in nature. God calls his people, from nature's darkness into his marvelous light, not because of any redeeming characteristics that man may possess, but, because it is his own good pleasure and purpose to do so, and that they should show forth all praise and honor unto his holy name, for his mercy and grace which he has bestowed upon them.

If this has been your experience, you can have fellowship for Amos, Jerimiah and all of the other apostles and prophets, and you are in good company. The prophets and apostles wrestled with these same afflictions, as you do now, and which you will continue to do, as long as you are clothed with this body of death. The apostle Paul cried, *(Rom. 7:24) "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death."* But he did not leave it there, he then went on to say, *(vs. 25)" I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."* If this is your dilemma, then take heart, and continue to press on to the mark of the prize of the high calling of God, for you are on that highway, which is called the way of holiness, and where only the redeemed of the Lord shall walk.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

July 4, 2005

Brother Terry;

Enclosed is personal check #2635 in the amount of $30.00 for an extension of subscription to *"Signs of the Times"*. I would also compliment the staff for selection of articles in Vol. 173, 7, July 2005.

Keep up the good work for the saints shall rejoice.

Yours in Christ,
John Suilley

July 23, 2005

Dear Brother Terry,

I hope this finds you, Sister Terry, and all of your family doing well. Please excuse me for being so late in getting my renewal of the Signs to you. I'm enclosing my check and my moms. Please use the remainder of each check as needed to publish the Signs or to help someone who can't afford the subscription. It is such a wonderful blessing that the Lord has blessed us with you, Brother Kenneth, and all the lovely editors that this dear old publication might continue. It has been a blessing to me since my teenage years when I first read issues at my grandparents home. As I get older, my meetings, the fellowship of my brethren, reading my Bible, and the Signs becomes more precious as each year passes. I'm sure the Signs is an even or greater blessing to those who are not granted the sweet enjoyment of meeting together with those of like precious faith.

We miss seeing you and Sister Terry - had hoped to see you at the Staunton River Assoc. The Lord willing we hope to visit your Assoc. this year. May the Lord continue to bless and keep you both as the apple of His eye.

With much love and fellowship,
Mary Hawkins

ARTICLES

The Experience written and sent in by Belle Chaney of which was right many years back written with Love and Hope.

I remember the time in my life when I was greatly desiring something that I was unable to obtain. I read the Bible so much until my head could hardly hold up. I just kept on hunting, searching but still couldn't find and hardly knew what I was searching for. All I knew that I was searching for deliverance and peace from the state I was in. I remember just laying my Bible down for I had become so weary I was just about to lose all my strength I thought at that time I would never receive what I was searching for, but

lo and behold, in about 2 weeks I began to feel something within me raising my whole body up off of the ground. I knew of a surety it was of nothing I had done. I shouted out loud this is it, "the spirit of deliverance and peace. I felt I had obtained what I had been searching for so long. I felt I had all I needed to live by and go with me to the grave. I was satisfied and have been ever since. What the Lord does is done forever. After that sweet experience, I had a great desire, but kept putting it off, to read my Bible. One day I picked it up then I knew why, when reading I found something I had never found before. I had a new outlook as I felt so free, that sweet freedom, from the law of sin and death, from the old to the new. I have tried to explain the great mystery to the best of my ability. I felt, at the time, I knew what the song, "Amazing Grace," was all about.

Before concluding, I would love to thank him the True and Living God for all he has done for me.

From one who wishes to praise the Lord now, in the past, and in the future. Amen.

Love to all in Christ I hope,
Belle Chaney

REVELATION 7:15.

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE EXPERIENCE OF ELDER JACOB CASTLEBURY(1804-1885)

Plymouth, Ill., Jan 10, 1875.

Dr. J. E. Goodson, - Dear brother in Christ; By your request, and now, by your permission, I will try to write something for the readers of your paper, the Messenger of Peace.

I will first give you a sketch of my life. I was born in the state of Tennessee, in Robertson County, in the year of our Lord, One thousand, eight hundred and four, on February the 28th. There was nothing remarkable in my early history; I grew up, as most young people do, thoughtless and unconcerned, about my future state, except occasionally, when circumstances forced me to think I must die, and leave all my friends and the things behind; but I soon forgot this when I returned to my comrades and the sports I loved so well. Thus my time passed until I was sixteen or seventeen years old. When I heard, preaching, I would feel bad, acknowledge that I was unfit for heaven, but thought that I would make amends for all the evils I had done.

When I became older, I settled in life, thus flattering myself that if I was married, and settled in some

regular vocation, I could then perform religious duties to a better advantage; and that I would do it so earnestly, that I would be entitled to forgiveness for the ommissions of my former life. With these conclusions before me, I married young, in my twentieth year, and Immediately emigrated to Illinois, when and where the struggle to gain a support for my family commenced, in a new and sparsely settled country, and, as you may judge, without experience. I met with many disappointments and reverses, in regard to accumulating property as I had anticipated. So much so that I found that instead of being better prepared to attend to religious matters than ever before, I found myself more perplexed and embarassed, and had less time to spare to be devoted to that subject, than ever before, and fewer inducements held out to me.

For a part of the time I had been living among religious people, both Methodists and Baptists; but now, at the end of ten years experience of married life, I found myself living in a very irreligious neighborhood, and the People very much given to drinking and other dissipations; and although I partook with them in their sports, I was not at all satisfied with the prevailing principles of the neighborhood, and again resolved to move to a new settled place, and did so, stopping in Hancock County, in the year 1833, in the neighborhood where I have lived up to the present time.

But I state, that before I left my former neighborhood, I greatly desired that God would so order that I might find, and become settled, in a good religious community; and the Lord did so grant my desire, that I found one Baptist church, Middle Creek, with two preachers, located six miles north of my place, where I attended, in two weeks after stopping, and I heard the late Elder William Bradley, and Elder Thomas H. Owen, now in California; and although I did not endorse the doctrine they preached, yet they made a favorable impression on my mind, and I attended the meeting pretty regularly during the summer, during which time Elder M. B. Rowland moved into the country and settled on the quarter- section next to mine. He got on my track, and he told me everything I had ever done, or thought, on the subject of religion, and a great deal I had never thought of and it caused me a great deal of trouble, for it caused me to think of my past promises, and my failures to comply. I was thus exposed, as I verily thought the preaching all aimed at me, and that the congregation all had their attention drawn to me.

Under these circumstances, I resolved that I would quit going to the meetings, but I was so anxious to hear, that I would go again and again, to hear what they would say next.

Thus I passed the time during the winter of 1834, until in the month

of March, in which month I was taken sick. I then verily thought I was going to die and be forever lost. The thoughts of my former promises, all seemed to stare me in the face. It was then that I lost all hope of ever making any amends for my past sins.

The thought of leaving my family in a new settled country, with but little means of support, and without any permanent home or but few friends to care for them, when I should leave them, added to my troubles about the loss of my poor soul, which I then thought would be inevitable, I felt that it would be just if "I were sent to hell; God's righteous law would approve it well."

And here I will say, that I have now no recollection of having any thoughts about the salvation or damnation of anyone but myself. As a matter of course, I tried everything I could, and every form of prayer I could think of, to recommend myself to God; but all to no purpose.I read the promises to the poor, but could not appreciate them. It was in this condition that the ministers would describe my convictions, and I knew that what they said was true; but when they spoke of the joys of the believer, I could not understand them, for it was something I had not experienced, nor did I ever expect to. But still I would try to pray to God, to be merciful to me, a sinner.

I remember, one evening, after I had got a little better of my sickness, I concluded to go to a very lonely, secluded place, a distance of about two or three hundred yards from my cabin, and once more to ask God for His mercy upon me. When I reached the place, Twas afraid to kneel, but sat down on a log, and after studying over *my* Case awhile, I arose to return to the house but, on rising a hill on the way, I looked to the west, the sun was just setting, and I stopped and viewed it for a few minutes, and I verily thought that I should never see it again. Passing on home, I went to my bed, with the belief fully on my mind, that I never would live to see the sun rise. After long worrying, I seemed to drop into a doze of sleep, and dreamed that I was traveling with a large concourse of people. I had once before dreamed of being with the same people, but this time we were traveling on a different direction, and we had the river Jordan to cross; but before we reached it we were traveling over deep pits, which appeared to be covered over with a crust of sand, so that they could not be seen, until someone stepped on them, and fell in, from whence they were never recovered, nor did anyone stop to look after them, but journeyed on, merrily singing, until we reached the river, where the greatest confusion prevailed; some turning up, and some turning down to find a crossing place, while thousands were sinking in quicksands, and were seen no more, I turned down the stream, and on approaching the water, it shrank away, the sand dis-

appeared, and I stepped over with great ease, I immediately turned around to shout to others, where I had found good crossing, a little lower down; and these words were so sweet to me, that I continued to sing, that I had found good crossing a little lower down, until I awoke. My wife, and my mother, who was living with me at the time, after listening to me for awhile, said to me, "You are better as you have gone to singing." To which I replied, ***"You need not be surprised, if I got to preaching as well as singing."*** I afterwards regretted having said it but it was just as I felt at the time.

This, dear brethren, is the first time I ever realized the love of God to my poor soul. I did, then and there, believe for myself, that he had saved me, for Jesus sake; and no man could at that time make me believe otherwise. I was then so happy that I was ready to conclude I should never see any more trouble; but I was soon taught a different lesson. I wanted to see Elder Rowland, and talk with him but he had gone that day, to help raise a cabin, some three-fourths of a mile away. I was so anxious to see him that I made mention of it to the family, but they objected to my going; they said I was too weak to walk so far. However, in the afternoon, I did go without their knowledge, hoping to have a good talk with him, on the way home, but when I reached the place they had about finished their job, and all them were in a merry glee, joking and laughing heartily with the preacher, and all the company. I did not condemn them. It did not shake my confidence in the preacher, or the church clerk who was there both of whom I highly esteemed, but it did shake all the confidence I had in myself as a christian. I feared that I had been deceived in the whole matter, and started home with a new trouble on my mind. The thought of being deceived, on so important a matter, as the salvation of my soul, was more intolerable than anything I had ever thought of before. It was on my mind all the way home, until I was overtaken by the clerk, Brother Brattain. Brother Rowland had business on the other way home. When the clerk overtook me, we fell into conversation, and I related to him as best I could, my present troubles, as well as the happy state which I enjoyed the night before, and that day, up to the time I got to the house-raising. Upon hearing my relation of my feelings, he expressed no opinion, but sat down in the road and told me his experience; which, in many particulars corresponded with me, and seemed to afford me some relief at the time, but still left me in some fears. At length he reminded me that I had better go to my home, as the evening air was getting too damp for me to be out, as I was not well, so we parted. I had not been in the house long, before Brother Rowland came in, and I asked him some questions about revealed religion answered, but he said to me, *"tell it*

yourself;" and then I related my feelings and fears to him, to which he made no reply, but immediately left me and went home.

This circumstance was like a dagger to my heart, for I then thought that he knew that I was a poor deluded creature, and would not tell me so, for fear of hurting my feelings as a neighbor. O! what anguish of soul I then passed, for about one week; My conviction for sin had all left me; I could not mourn for sin as I had done, I could not pray for forgiveness as I had done, but I prayed to God, that if I was deceived, he would give me an evidence of it, by the returning of my former convictions, so that if it left again, I might have some evidence of my acceptance with God.

At length a verse of Scripture came to my mind, which gave me great relief. It set me to rejoicing again. ***"These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace; in the world ye shall have tribulations, but be of good cheer. I have overcome the world."*** But I was too ignorant to know where the text was to be found, though it removed all doubts at the time; and I have realized the truth of this text of Scripture all the journey of my way, ever since that time; both as regards the troubles of the world, and the peace of Jesus. I know, indeed, that it passeth the knowledge and understanding of man, no matter how well he is skilled in the science of the day.

On Saturday before the second Sunday in April, 1834, I attended the church meeting, and related the experience of my mind, and desired the church would deal faithfully with me, and to my surprise they receieved me for baptism, without asking any questions.

I was baptized the next month, on Sunday, by Elder M.B.Rowland, who remarked to the brethren, when he came out of the water, that he had baptized a preacher. I suppose he inferred it from the relation of feelings, as I could not give a relation of my experience, without referring to it; and here, dear brethren, I will say that if I had any call or promptings to the work of the ministry, previous to my engaging in it, it is so intimately connected with my deliverance from the guilt and bondage of sin, that I cannot separate them; but shortly afterward, my experience commenced.

During the next Fall, the brethren would insist on my taking some part in the public services of the meeting; which I did to some extent, until the next Summer,1835, when a motion was made in the church to liberate myself and two others to exercise a public gift in the church. This brought on me some new trials.

I perfectly agreed with the church as to liberating the other two; but fearful the church had my name added, for fear of wounding my feelings, as I had been exercising with them; but in a private conversation,

the brethren assured me that my fears were groundless. Thus they continued to encourage me, and so to bear with me in my weakness, and instruct me until my ordination was called for, by some of the brethren in 1837.

This gave me new trouble; I felt that I had all the liberties that I wanted, or needed, and told the church so, and further, I told them that I did not feel that I was worthy to be promoted to so holy a position. That I could not feel that I could administer the holy ordinances of the gospel; and so the matter was deferred for a time; but was subsequently brought up again, when a brother objected to it because I had not desired it, which objection suited my feelings perfectly, for I thought that if the church waited for me to tell her that I desired it, that it never would be called for.

But, again in the Fall of 1838,the same brother that raised the objection, motioned for my ordination, when it was agreed upon, by the church; and here my heart rebelled against the church, and at my urgent request, the ordination was postponed for one month.

During which time I was driven to the Bible, to ascertain the will of god concerning me; and in my investigation, became satisfied that all the gifts of God to the church rightfully belonged to her, and that she was, and is, the proper judge of the same, and thus becoming reconciled to the will of God, and the will of the brethren, no words can express the joy of my heart. It removed a burden off my mind, equal to that of my first forgiveness.

I have been thus particular in this place, to show my experience, as agreeing with the Bible, and that I could not experimentally agree with any man, who would say he desired the office, or felt that he was worthy of it.

When the church came together and I let them know that I was reconciled to their wishes, in this matter, a presbytery was called, and I was set apart according to the order in such cases.

By the forbearance of God and the brethren, and their encouragement, I continue to this time, witnessing the things which Moses and the Prophets did say should come, that Jesus should come, has come, and should be the light to the people, and to the Gentiles.

My experience in the ministry, from the first until now, has been a checkered scene; sometimes fearing and doubting, and sometimes full of rejoicing, and hope of the glory of God.

But dear brethren, I cannot say that I have been instrumental in the promotion of any great revival, or of the extension of the kingdom of God on earth; but I do think that I have enjoyed great comfort in my own soul, in proclaiming the gospel of Christ, where and when God has

revived his own cause in His people. And the brethren have given me great encouragement, to persevere in the good cause.

Some have professed to be comforted and edified by my preaching. Had it not been for such encouragement, I don't know but I should long since have abandoned the work, in despair; but by the grace of God, I am what I am, and I trust that His grace was not bestowed on me entirely in vain. Though my labors have been limited to a small scope of country, except when I have visited some association, though I have had, and still have, a great desire to travel, and form a more extended acquaintance with the brethren; but being limited in means, and having a great part of the time, a sickly companion to care for. This, dear brethren, is the only reason I have to offer for not visiting the churches at a distance, more often than I have. I hope you will forgive me and pray for me and mine.

Dear brethren, let us hear from you often, do write things that make for peace, and the things whereby one may edify another.

Your brother in hope,
ELDER JACOB CASTLEBURY

Originally published in
The Messenger of Peace

ACTS VIII. 33,

"In his humiliation his judgment was taken away."

We have been asked by a sister to use the above words at the head of an editorial. As much as in us is we desire to comply with such requests from our kindred in Christ. If the Lord stirs up the pure mind of his people and implants in their hearts a desire to know what the Scriptures teach, he is able to give the pen of a ready writer whereby their questions will be answered to their satisfaction, edification and comfort. All who have been taught of him know full well that he must enlighten the mind of his servant and give him understanding in order that he may be able to set things in their proper place. If we know our own heart we earnestly desire, both in speaking and in writing, to shew ourself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. While we do not wish to court the favor of man, we are confident if we give expression to the things of God they will find lodgment in the hearts of those begotten of him and we will have their approval. There is abundant scriptural proof of the fact that God dwells in his people, and we can trustfully affirm, if we have any knowledge of the Lord's mercy, his long suffering, his forbearance and loving kindness, it has come to us

in a way of life at the hands of our brethren. Surely they have not dealt with us as we have deserved to be treated by them. It has greatly encouraged us at times to realize that we have brethren who can and do feel for us, whose prayers are continually going out to our covenant keeping God to make bare his arm in our behalf and fill our mouth with such things as will be suited to the needs of his children.

The words referred to are only a portion of the thirty-third verse of the eighth chapter of Acts, and considered by themselves at best can present only a part of the picture. In order that we may have a more complete background it will be necessary to bring to view some of the surrounding scenery, or the conditions leading up to and following after the utterance. In those days, as in these times and all other ages, the world was not a friend to the cause of righteousness. The forces of good and evil have ever been arrayed against each other. Paul tells us in the beginning of the chapter, *"At that time there was a great persecution of the church which was at Jerusalem."* He, himself, as Saul, having no knowledge of God, *"made havoc of the church, entering into every house and haling men and women, committed them to prison."* Because of this persecution, the saints were "scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria," but *"they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word."* Though scattered, they were the *"elect according to the foreknowledge of God,"* and *"the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."* God's people can never be so scattered, or so far off but that his all-seeing eye is ever upon them, and he supplieth all their needs. *"The angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south, unto he way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert."* The eunuch of Ethiopia is a type of the church in nature; she is black as the tents of Kedar, and her place of dwelling is desert, and she is as powerless to change her condition as the Ethiopian is his skin or the leopard his spots, but God having begun a good work in the eunuch's heart, continues that good work by sending Philip to meet with him. As the eunuch read Esaias the prophet, *"The Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest what thou readest?"* Philip's heart seemed to have delighted toward this one with whom the Lord was dealing, for he *"ran thither to him,"* and the question he asked of the eunuch was evidence of the bond that bound them. It was the very question which he desired most of all to have answered.

As the king of old was troubled about his dream, which none of his wise men or magicians could tell him, and Daniel, the prophet of the Lord, came telling not only the dream, but the interpretation thereof, so Philip saw into the very depths of the secret places of the soul of this one who realized he was black and in a desert land, and as he spoke the language of his heart he had the witness within that Philip was a true prophet of the Lord. His reply could only have endeared Philip to him more than ever: ***"How can I, except some man should guide me?"***

What a confession to helplessness and dependence upon the great Teacher. ***"And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him."***

Oh how the poor heart that is hungering and thirsting after righteousness yearns for the messenger of the Lord to come this way, that he might come in and tarry in his house, in the place where he dwells, and deliver the message of the power and the peace of the gospel of the Son of God. ***"The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth; in his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth."*** What an appropriate figure inspiration uses here to typify the spirit that moved every thought and action of our blessed Lord. Guile was never found in his mouth, and when he was reviled he reviled not again. As a sheep, inoffensive and harmless, he was led to the most ignominious slaughter of all ages. While his humanity was weak and cried out again in the bitterness of the cup, being led of the Spirit, he could say, ***"Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done."*** He ***"made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled him self, and being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."*** When his hour had come, he opened not his mouth to utter a word of complaint or objection, not a single struggle did he offer against his crucifiers. Unto such an hour and to die such a death came he into the world, according to the will of God. What great condescension that the King of glory should bow the heaven and come down into this world of degradation, to hang upon Calvary's cross between two thieves, and yet without assemblance of revenge or pride in all that he said or did. He was thus manifested to be the Son of God, or the Son of love, for God is love.

"In his humiliation his judgment was taken away." In his mortification and abasement he was deprived of his capacity to judge, and as they crucified him, ***"and the***

malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left," he said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. *"In the Spirit he was perfectly resigned to the Father's will, and there is nothing on record to indicate that he desired any compromise, or that his own will should prevail in any way whatsoever, for he rendered a perfect obedience. Who, then, shall declare his generation? Who shall tell of the manner of his coming? He was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of a virgin, in a manger, and there was no place for him in the inn. Who shall declare the purpose of God in his advent into the world, his sufferings, death and resurrection? Who shall explain the necessity of his life being taken from the earth, the dying of the Just for the unjust, and the power which wrought in him when God raised him from the dead? There can be but one answer to these queries: Those to whom is given "power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."* Only they that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep. They must pass through the gall of bitterness, and be made to know that vain is the help of man, and cursed is the man that maketh the arm of flesh his trust, before they can discover the pearl of great price and know that great and marvelous are the works of our God in the salvation of his people. No others can declare the generation of him whose life was taken from the earth, whose kingdom was of this world. *"And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?"* What is the answer? *"Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;"* they prophesied of one whose name was *"Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."* Truly he was full of wonder, the man of wisdom and the government of his kingdom is upon his shoulder. In that kingdom where Jesus reigns, peace prevails and he is the *"Prince of Peace,"* and those who are bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh seek peace, and pursue it. In the day when the Lord alone shall be exalted the lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down. *"Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." How wonderful when the Lord fills the mouth of his servant and he is enabled to preach Jesus, the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end, who liveth, and was dead, and, be-*

hold, is alive for evermore; preach Christ, and him crucified, as the Way, the Truth and the Life." The Scriptures testify of him. Therefore, whatever Scripture is used, whether in the Old or the New Testament, Jesus is the sum and substance of it, and *"the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."* This is the word that searches all things, yea, the deep things of God, and when it is preached in demonstration of the Spirit and with power to one it shows him all things whatsoever he did, and he is made to ask, Is not this the Christ? It shows him that Christ is all his worthiness and that he should not trust in himself; that to be like Jesus he must be humbled, brought low, and "in his humiliation" his judgment must be taken away. He is thereby made willing to submit his case to the brethren and be subject unto them. In the case of the eunuch it had to do with one outside of the visible church, and there was such power and sweetness in the opening up of the word to his understanding he was made to say, *"Here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both unto the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him."*

There are evidently many who are followers of the flock to day who have not been that they might take up the cross and follow him. This matter is one between the individual and his God. All the servant can do is to preach Jesus, and this is done only as he is endued with power from on high. We wish to emphasize, however, that the humility of Christ did not end at the water's edge. Truly he did humble himself in demanding baptism at the hands of John, and none realized this more keenly than did John, as was clearly shown by what he said, but the humility of Jesus was unchanging, ever abiding. There are those in the church today who act as though they left their humility outside when they were received into the fellowship of the church and were baptized. They are no longer willing to subject themselves unto the brethren, but in the lusts of their pride and desire for leadership boast that they will not take orders from anyone on earth. Nothing but wreck and ruin can follow such a course. We would to God that he might make known unto them that he dwells in his people, that *"the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of*

God: and if it first began at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?"

One may proclaim love and peace from the housetop, and yet every action proving selfishness to be the foundation upon which they are building. Let the servant remember Peter's exhortation to *"feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the over sight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder: yea, all of you be subject to one another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."* We would like to impress indelibly upon the mind of all the inspired writing: *"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings."* In other words, how beautiful is the walk, the life, that makes for peace, and unity, and love. *"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."* Brethren, let us be nothing, and less than nothing, that Christ may be all and in all.

"Jesus the great, the mighty God, A man of grief became;
In paths of meekness here he trod,
And bore the sinner's shame.
Humility, how bright it shined
In every act he wrought;
What lowliness of heart and mind,
Appeared in all he taught.
His love to men of sinful race
Glowed in his tender breast;
For man be yielded to disgrace,
Forsaken and distressed.
Led as a lamb to meet the sword,
He bowed beneath the stroke;
Not one revengeful, angry word,
The dear Redeemer spoke.
Oh may his meekness be my guide,
The pattem I pursue;
How can I bear revenge or pride,
With Jesus in my view?"

Elder R. L. Dodson

CONTRIBUTIONS

SEPTEMBER 2005

Shelby Stratton - MS	25.00
Judith Poindexter - VA	5.00
Roy Ingram - VA	10.00
Alvis Shelton - VA	10.00
Hazel Garland - MD	25.00
Gayle Phillips - AL	15.00
Wanda Brown - NC	5.00
Ronald Locke - KY	5.00
Donald Arne - SD	25.00
Allene Gallimore - NC	5.00
Julian Rutrough - VA	5.00
Grover Rogers - KY	5.00

OBITUARIES

ELDER HARVEY HOLLAND

Elder Harvey C. Holland of Kenly, NC was born July 21, 1921 and died May 29, 2005. His funeral was conducted on May 31 at Coley Funeral Home in Kenly, NC by Elder Harold Pittman. He united with Pittman Grove Primitive Baptist Church on April 11, 1971 and was ordained a deacon on October 10, 1971. Being told by God to preach, he was ordained as a Primitive Baptist minister in July, 1972. Elder Holland served as pastor at Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church and Nashville Primitive Baptist Church. These churches were in Nash County. He was still serving Old Beulah Primitive Baptist Church and Pittman Grove Primitive Baptist Church at the time of death. These churches are in Johnston County. He served as moderator of the Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association from 1977 until his death. We the members of the Black Creek Association have sustained a great loss. He served the churches faithfully over the past 33 years. Elder Holland believed in a God who rules and reigns over all things and that eternal life was a free and unmerited favor that came by the mercy and grace of God Almighty.

Harvey C. Holland and Alice T. Holland were married for 59 1/2 years. They were highly favored with five beautiful children: Harvey Holland, Jr., Judy Batts, Nancy Johnson, Joan Driver, and Laura Thornton. He is survived by one sister, Rachel Outland and one brother, Bill Holland.

As well as serving his church and family in a noble manner, he also served his country on the battle field. He was proud to have served in the U.S. Marines during World War II. During this time he lost a finger and received a purple heart.

I met Harvey Holland in the mid-sixties and was present at the meeting on the day he joined the church. My father made the statement on that day that Harvey Holland would be a preacher. We walked together for many years in the Black Creek Association as the only ordained ministers. I do miss him greatly but I do believe he is at rest. Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to all that knew him and especially to his companion, children, and grandchildren.

Written by:
Elder Harold Pittman

PSALMS 26:7.

The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

Signs of the Times

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SONG

ZION'S a city God hath blessed
With peace and everlasting rest;
A glorious city, strong and fair;
And Jesus dwells forever there.

Her ancient walls appear to be
The workmanship of Deity;
Founded in grace, they still appear
Without a flaw or chasm there.

Oft has this city's strength been tried,
By mighty foes on every side ;
But all in vain it yet has been,
She baffles Satan, hell, and sin.

Count ye her towers, how high they rise,
Her golden spires, they pierce the skies!
Her golden streets are fair to view;
Her palaces and bulwarks, too.

Then round her walk, her turrets ten;
Mark all her brazen bulwarks well;
Spread far and wide her deathless fame,
Her pearly gates and walls of flame.

Her founder's love has ever proved
Like Salem's mount, which ne'er was moved;
'Tis fixed on this eternal base,
The grace of God, and gift by grace.

Kent.

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EDITORIAL

"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Luke 12:32.

Elder J.B. Farmer

We all are brought, from time to time, into situations and states of mind, which cause us to fear. The prophets felt this fear, and so did the apostles and so do we. Paul even confessed that he was with the church at Corinth in weakness and in fear and much trembling. What a great comfort it is to know that we are not by ourselves in these things. I think the called ministers of the gospel feel this most acutely when they are brought before the people of God to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. Why is this? I am made to believe that they see themselves as worms of the dust that are not sufficient for these things in themselves. They are made to know that the preaching of the gospel is not in the strength of the flesh, but rather in the power of God by the Holy Spirit. Likewise, all the little ones of God, when they are made to view themselves as being undone and so weak in the flesh, fear, knowing that they cannot find how to perform that which is good. They are made to understand that they are not able to keep themselves from the evil one.

When we say or do or think things not fitting for God's children, Satan whispers, ***"Surely you don't have a part in the kingdom of God or you wouldn't behave this way."*** Then the fears descend upon us and bring us down in the dust of the earth. And here we must remain until the Holy Spirit speaks peace to our souls. God is merciful unto His people and makes them to understand that salvation is by grace, not of works. He shows them that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. And He tells them that Jesus Christ came to save sinners.

He speaks the truth to them that no one is able to bring anything to the charge of God's elect, for Christ died for them and He washed them from their sins in His own blood, and that He has been raised from the dead, and is now at the right hand of God making intercession for them according to the will of God. Why does God do such things for His people? I am made to believe that it is because He loves them and has loved them with an everlasting love. God so loved the world (His people) that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth (the ones given faith to believe) upon Him should not perish but should have everlasting life.

This perfect love casts out fear. Do we not see evidence of this when the minister is delivered from the bondage of fear as the Spirit of God moves upon him and the congregation? Do we not see this fear replaced with holy boldness as the truth is brought forth in the power of God? Have we not experienced this fear being cast out, after we sinned and were made to suffer godly sorrow, which works repentance? Has not this fear been removed when our attention has been taken from our sins to His righteousness and holiness? Have we not experienced the casting out of fear when the dread of destruction has been replaced with the assurance of the forgiveness of our sins? And do we not see our fears put away when our hearts are filled with love and hope?

Jesus said in power, *"Fear not."* This is the command of God to His people. It literally means that the child of God must not continue in the state of fear. He must be delivered from that fear by the power of God by the operation of His Spirit. It is a sure thing with God. The Child of God must be lifted up out of that fearful state and made to rejoice in hope of eternal life because God has declared it to be so. His little ones are made to reject the whisperings of the devil and to fulfill the commandment of God to resist him. And the certain promise of God, Who cannot lie, is that when we resist the devil, he shall flee from us.

Jesus called His people the, *"little flock."* Aren't you glad that Jesus referred to His people in this way? When we look around and see a few members here and there in the various churches across the country, is it not a comfort to have assurance that the people of God are the fewest of all people upon the face of the earth? They are as the stars of the heavens and the sand of the seas, innumerable. But they are the remnant according to the election of grace. Jesus said that where two or three are gathered together in His name that He would be there in their midst. It has ever pleased the God of heaven to confound the mighty

with the weak things of this world. The mighty cities of Sodom and Gommorah were destroyed, but a few souls, even righteous Lot and his family were preserved by the mercies of God. The great city of Jericho was destroyed along with all in it except for Rahab the harlot and her family – one house out of the entire city. So it was with Noah and his family when God destroyed the world with the flood. And so has it been with the whole family of God through the ages. The family of God is a little flock which God has loved from the beginning, and which He will bring to glory without fail.

We know that a flock of sheep is totally dependant upon the shepherd. When the wolf comes, if the shepherd were not present, it would tear and destroy at its will, because the sheep would not be able to defend themselves. They look to the shepherd for help and deliverance. So it is with the little flock of the Good Shepherd. He is ever with them to deliver them out of all their troubles and He will never leave nor forsake them. He is not afraid of the wolf because He has power over it. And he loves the sheep, even to the extent of laying down His life for them. And they are made to love and trust the Good Shepherd.

Jesus said to His sheep, ***"for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."*** It is evident that Jesus is comforting His people with His words. He called His Father, ***"your Father."*** Jesus makes it plain that the heavenly Father is not only His Father but also your Father. And He makes it manifest that your Father loves you. Your Father proved His love for you in that it pleased Him to give you the kingdom. We are all children of parents, and some of us have children. Either way we are made to know that good parents delight to give their children good gifts because of the love that is present with them. If we being evil know how to give good gifts to our children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

We are taught to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. By the grace and mercy and power of God this we do, if we are His. The little children of God are made to seek to enter that kingdom and to walk around in it and to behold the things in it. But they are taught that the kingdom comes not by observation. They are made to see that this heavenly kingdom is not of this world but is spiritual. They are made to know that the kingdom of God is within them. God has given the kingdom to His little flock. They, with the eye of faith see the King upon His throne, high and lifted up. They see the strong walls of the

city, which keep out every thing that would defile or destroy. They see the inhabitants of the city in robes of pure white, which is the righteousness of Christ. They are made to understand the law that rules the citizens there is the law of love. They are made to know that the city is eternal in the heavens. They are given a sure and steadfast hope that the heavenly city is their home, and that they are strangers and pilgrims in this world – that they are only passing through this low ground.

Even though the devil tells us that we must surely come short of that kingdom and fall by the wayside, the Spirit of God continues with us, and the Hope of glory never fails us. The Holy Spirit counteracts the lies of the wicked one and gives assurances all along the way. He says by the apostle and to our souls, *"We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren."* And He gives us faith to say with the beloved apostle Paul, *"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."* And He gives us the steadfastness to believe along with Job, *"Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."* Even though we know we are weak and unworthy according to the flesh, we are given all confidence that He is able to finish the good work, which He began. Thanks be to God that, *"He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."* And thanks be unto God that the apostle said by the Holy Spirit, *"I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

May we be given faith and hope and love to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. May we be given to be faithful unto death that we should receive the crown of life. Written in love and in hope of eternal life.

J. B. Farmer
11-12-2004.

PSALM 90:1-3.

Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations,

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men.

CORRESPONDENCE

We were blessed to be partakers of a great feast that lasted for two days during our Association on the fourth Sunday in August. Not only were we blessed with the rations of spiritual food, the ladies of the church came through with an abundant amount of natural food, which was delicious and enjoyed by all.

Elder Marvin Brumfield, whom I have a great love for , preached an introductory sermon. Elder Brumfield comes from the Staunton River Association. Elder Brumfield was made to elaborate on things pertaining to this great salvation which is the deliverance of God in the hearts of God's believing family through God's precious grace. Elder Brumfield also expounded on righteousness that this favored few comes in posession of.

Elder Terry, the second speaker to come to the stand, is another very able speaker. Elder Terry comes from the Smith River Association. Elder Terry spoke of this highly favored few who are elevated from the pits of darkness, through God's precious grace, and made to feast from these heavenly rations when given the opened ear to hear. Elder Terry's sermon was well received.

Elder Connor, from the Pigg River Association, was the third able speaker to approach the stand. Oh, how he was elevated from the pits of darkness, to bring that good news from that far country. Tears of Joy descended down the cheeks of that highly favored few who were made to rejoice through the channels of God's precious grace.

The fourth speaker, Elder Wayman Chappel was favored to bring forth one of the most highly worded discourses that I have ever heard him preach. Elder Chappel visited from Memphis Tennessee.

During this association, we had visitors from several states. The love that was manifested, is beyond comprehension of man. Everyone made themselves at home; and the love expressed in their countenances gave proof that all feasted from what was set forth .

Elder Wayman Chappel opened the Sunday morning portion of the association. Elder Chappel was blessed to bring a message of comfort for God's little ones.

Elder J.B. Farmer, our local pastor preached the closing sermon. Elder Farmer was blessed to speak comforting words to Jeruselem, telling them that their warfare was accomplished, and that they had recieved double at the Lord's hand for all of their sins. Elder Farmer was high favored to set forth a sovereign, loving, ruling God, a God who works everything after the counsel of his will. Elder Farmer is a highly gifted servant who sets forth God's sovereignty, throughout the channels of God's loving grace.

All the preaching inspired and delivered from the attending elders,

came forth in harmony, all declaring a loving, sovereign, ruling God; a God that rules and controls everything after the counsel of His will. I think the beauty of God's goodness was expressed in fellowship and nurturance unsurpassed over these two days.

After hearing the Good News from that far country, *some* verses come to my mind. These verses from the book *of* Ruth, focus on a point in time when Orpha and Ruth were leaving their mother in law Naomi. Orpha appears to demonstrate the way of the flesh when returning to her people and the ways of their god. Ruth, it seems, demonstrates this great love of the believer in sovereign grace. Naomi bade Ruth to follow Orpah. Ruth told Naomi, ***"not to; urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go, I will go; and, where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God".*** Isn't this the words that the believers of this great church of God sets forth when they are lifted from the pits of darkness, and made to see through an eye of faith and walk in in that heavenly light?

I hope the reader will enjoy this telling of our Association meeting, thinking this is the way most associations unfold around the country.

In the bonds of love I hope.

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VOICES OF THE PAST

Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy. The king of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more. In that day it shall be said unto Jerusalem, Fear thou not: and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save thee; he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing." (Zeph. 8:14-17)

The Sabbath is a beautiful text, a wonderful subject. Rightly understood, the whole of the New Testament is about gospel rest. Before we will ever come to enjoy that rest fully, we must have some understanding of God's rest from His work. This work embraces everything treated upon in the Old Testament. It is a time of turmoil, strife, law labor, with austere threatenings for not keeping the Sabbath holy. First, let us, as blessed of God, see what God's work as the creator consisted of, and let us not be threatening our brethren, nor enter into controversy about whether He made this or that, whether he did this or that. To treat the subject so carelessly and uncon-

cerned as to say that God did not make everything that was made, and all for Himself, is forever under the death knell for finding a safe promise of rest. If, in the examination of God's pre- Sabbath work, He did not make everything that was made, it does not matter how much text book knowledge is poured into the effort, there is absolutely no Sabbath rest for God or man that can ever be conjured up. God nor men can rest in another's work - only in His own.

There is no need for me to quote an array of Scripture to prove God made all things. Only one is enough; only one will suffice. *"All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." (John 1:3).* Arguing about things is bad enough, arguing against God is worse. Therefore we will not have any of that. In the labor, and also in the past six thousand years since then, there has been nothing to disturb God, the Creator in Sabbatical rest. All of those eons of time with His rest from the natural creation, I am sure that the text before us is a good one, and that our Saviour God is now resting in His love since this rest is a perfect work of Him who is perfect. (Deut. 32:4) Furthermore, since He is to perfect that which concerns us (Psa. 138:8). I am sure that poor worn out sinners will also rest in Him as children:

"What think ye of Christ? is the test,
To try both your state and your scheme;
You cannot be right in the rest,
Unless you think rightly of Him.

So guilty, so helpless am I,
I durst not confide in His blood, Nor on His protection rely,
Unless I were sure He is God."

And thus I left my feeble voice and wield my wobbling pen in defense of the glorious doctrine of God our Saviour, and that He is alright with the natural creation, having began His rest in and from what He created, and is still resting from, and resting in His natural creation knowing and having determined that no particle of that natural creation shall ever keep one whom He chose to bear witness to His saving grace will ever fail of formation as a son of Adam, and consequently shall be made manifest as a son or daughter of the most High God.

Personally, I believe that God made everything that was made, and that He had an object in view worthy of Himself in everything that is a thing. Neither the object nor the purpose has been side tracked in the least degree, even down to a hair breadth, for if He designed to make a thing, and it did not come up to, His predetermined specification, I cannot visualize Him as being able to rest with His failure.

In regard to God resting from His work and in His love; an imperfection in any of His work leaves all

room and expectation for failure in all of His work. Let me elaborate. I sometimes say both in the pulpit and on the printed page that I have not been called to preach absolute predestination—in fact, I doubt that any other man has such a calling. A man called of God is called to preach the gospel, to preach Christ and Him crucified; to present every man perfect in Christ (1 Cor. 2:2; Col. 1:28) That determination of Paul was voiced and useless unless God had declared or predestinated the end from the beginning. If I have ever felt called and impressed with the divine preaching of the gospel, it was at the beginning, and it is still the same today, to tell sinners of the great salvation that is in Christ J esus. When a man -any man - yea, if you and you, ever preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified, it is worthless unless the testimony of Christ is true, to wit, ***"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world that I should bear witness to the truth".*** Every truth of the Bible is based on an earlier truth. The first deed leads to another deed; the first step into the bounds of the doctrine takes us all of the way through it. There is not any way, except the one way, which was, and always is, God's way. Never having been anything but a poor country rustic, and even now lingering close around the evening shades with afflictions of the body increasing day by day, I still feel boldly to say that no writer or preacher can get Joseph down to Egypt that he might engage in planting and storing corn for the preservation of much people, except the way God sent him. God purposed him to go that way, and I am not ashamed nor fearful in saying that no man can save the Egyptians, nor the Israelites, unless that way includes the wicked brethren, the wicked wife of Potiphar, the forgetful butler; and yet that in each case they were thoughtful of themselves in the satisfying of their own lusts.

Ah, yes, I say again, although I probably will have to run the gauntlet of unjust criticism, that unless I am mistaken in my calling, my impression, my experience from beginning until tonight, as I write, that it is to preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Again, I could not have preached the first time had God not had control of everything under the sun to that end. Also, it is that way with the effectual callings; it is that way about the preservation of the saints to glory, it is that way in regard to the predestination of the saints to glory; it is that way about the resurrection of the dead. All of these doctrines are the solid truth of God, and to preach Jesus Christ, for me to rest in His love and in His work, is for me to have equally so from Him that the fixedness of one of them lays the inevitable decree of God and carries with it that each one and all of them are predestinated of God. This is why God rested from the six days of work. Everybody knows how you study about an un-

finished work. There can be no rest, no safety, no security for any of the work, unless all of the work is finished. I am sure; I am without a lingering doubt, but that He had everything pertaining to the salvation and deliverance of His people perfectly finished before He rested.

What a beautiful thought Zephaniah has presented to us of our God. *"Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people"*. What will it take to comfort God's people? I cannot rest for a moment in His everlasting love unless I am equally assured that He has everlastingly fixed everything. To poor finite mortals there is nothing more disturbing than the unknown road, the uncertain quality and quanity of that with which we have to deal. Every farmer, every businessman, is non-plussed about every crop, every new order of business because of the unknown facing him. How sad it is to hear people talk so convincingly (?) of their relationship with God, and yet neither He nor they are sure about the outcome. There is no rest to a child of God in any such doctrine. God Himself, could never rest in His love in behalf of our salvation if He did not know and determine beforehand what the actions of those that He did not love would be.

But I know the unspoken harsh criticism of those who do not believe in the absolute sovereignty of God. They tell me with a glow of smugness and placidness in their countenance that they believe that God knows the future of all things, but that He did not predestinate all things, but that He works accordingly along with His fore knowledge. My Lord and my God! How misleading such a thought is to me What? God foreknows all things, but He did not have anything to do with predestinating or establishing or fixing or limiting them? Tell me, dear reader, dear brethren, how in the name of reason could God ever rest in His love with such a horrible spectre facing Him at every turn? He knows adversities are coming; He knows that the foreknown things outside the pale of His determination can come up and bring things about that would destroy the welfare or the future home of one of those that Christ died for? Is that what you mean when you deny the unlimited sovereignty of God? Is that what you really mean when you say that since God foreknows all of these things that finally and eventually no one of His children will ever be lost. That reduces Him to a puppet held in tow by Satan who holds the string on Him. How sad, how eternally insecure has God been; no relationship with wickedness save that He knows about it; no control over it, save that He knows about it. It is in existence, although He knows about it, and it is presumed that He knew while He was before all things that it would come, but that He was helpless to keep it from coming. Yet He knew about it; He did not desire it to come, He did not have any purpose

in it coming, but He knew it was coming, and He had to stand by and see it enter into the world, while He hated it, and would much rather it not enter, yet He stood by and it came into existence in spite of His opposition; His hatred to it.

God rest in His love when He had In all the universe a principle of sin that is engaged in opposition to one sinner being saved! There is not honor to be accorded such a weakling as God is, if that doctrine has a semblance of truth in it; there is no rest to God, and moreover no rest to the famlly of God, nor any rest to be had anywhere in this world or in promise for the next one, if this is true.

God is not resting in the fact that He has been and is continuing to out- maneuver Satan, to out-wrestle him and obtain liberty for His people. Perish the thought! But He is resting in Himself, resting in His love, in His six days of work, in His having gotten the victory on the high and exalted Mount Calvary as the Man, Christ Jesus the Lord was put to death. I am sure that the prophet by the inspiration of God had the nucleus *of* the rich and glorious doctrine *of* redeeming love. The basis and foundation of this doctrine is in the finished work of God. Not one thing has been left out of His counsel. If so, no rest for God, no rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, no keen anticipation of the coming day when all of His blood-washed throng will be gathered home, and based on such a weak system of salvation at this, I look back at Calvary and I am sure there was not joy for our dying Saviour, as there cannot be any rest for God in His love.

As God rested from His work in creation, thus bringing in the approved Sabbatical year of gospel rest, I look from that great and outstanding event in the history of the ancient world, and I look down from there across from the vista of the ages, and I see a great historic event transpiring in the rest and the completed salvation of God's family.

I beg you to travel back one step with us and we find the prophet being moved by the inspiration of God to write and to treat upon one of the most restful topics that has ever engaged the mind of man. He says ***"The Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and ye shall call his name Immanuel, which, being interpreted is God with us." (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:23)*** Everything that the devil could muster was engaged to out wit God, but God was with us. God being in the whole assembly of the first born, what could occur to cause the saints misery and unrest? It being God with them (us), yea, it having been God there in a body of flesh, what would have kept Him in the thousands of years, and the myriad and sundry events of all that time from resting in His love? It was He who was there; certainly God had not sent an emissary on this important work; He

came Himself, and He was One with us. How conclusively He sealed the destiny of all those that boast of their power, of what they can do. All free-willism, all self-righteousness coming from wherever it may, received a death blow. ***"Thou couldst not have any power against me save it be given thee from above." (John 19:10, 11)*** Talk to me about God resting in His love, but every blood-bought sinner is resting in His love; not in their love, nor in any other of the many works of faith, but in God's love.

Thousands of years ago God came down and wrought salvation in the earth. Ever after the saints rested in that love. Abraham saw and rejoiced in it; the Hebrew children had Him with them in the fiery furnace and rested through all of that fiery persecution; Job received from his Redeemer sustenance and a reconciled waiting and resting in hope of seeing Him for himself and not another.

When this Saviour was born of His mother by the work of the Holy Ghost, He tarried with her about twelve years. Did you ever notice that He rested that early in what He came to do? He forgot His mother. Have you noticed that she forgot Him for three days journey? Did you notice, after He began doing that which He came to do, that He did not rest in her, but His rest was in doing the things that He was born to do; the things that He came to do? When His mother came back seeking Him, He did not say to her, ***"Mother, I am safe,"*** but He spoke to them on that occasion, as He did on other occasions, as though she was a stranger. Even then, as the Christ lad, He was resting in His Father's business. His meat (food), His delight, His rest, was to be about the work that He came to do.

As He engaged in this work, it was a matter of necessity with Him. ***"I must work the works of God, while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work".*** The whole work of God in salvation was in His hands. I am not afraid to be positive about this. I find no objective that would be served by me being anything less than positive about this important matter. If, in preaching Jesus as the Way, the Truth, and the Life; if, in coming to you in the *Signs* for nearly fifty years, I had presented a number of secondary matters to you in addition to Christ, there would have been no truth in it; there would have been no gospel in it; yea, there would have been no rest in it. Had He left off the least thing in His work which His Father sent Him to do, I seriously doubt that He would have gotten back to His Father. I do not want to sound off on that, but His father was well pleased in Christ; He was trusting in Him, if you please; He was resting in Him, and He did receive Him back into His bosom. I do not know whether He would have received Him back had He failed to do His will, but I do say that had He failed His Father would not

have been pleased, and God's displeasure would have been everlastingly known in heaven. You say as to whether it would be restful to look forward to, or as to whether it would be restful for a poor sinner to spend eternity in an unrestful atmosphere.

In conclusion, I know that such cannot be. Let me change that phraseology, and say that it could not be that way. It was fixed, predestinated, purposed in Christ, that He finish the work which His Father gave Him to do for therein He (Christ) found meat, food, delight, rest, and His Father has rested in His eternal love for His children, which love was manifested in Him sending Christ into the world, and verified by His dying words, to wit, *"I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."*

There is no other doctrine that sets Him forth as the God of poor sinners Anything short of this in what is called time means that we do not have any dependable rest here, and it means that God never has, and never will rest in His love concerning the salvation of His elect people.

Now a word to one and all. My whole-hearted support of this restful God honoring doctrine does not mean that I expect to use predestination as a text every time that I write or preach. It does not mean that I am endorsing everything that is called Absolute Predestination. I never have done that, and God willing, I never will do that, but it does mean that wholeheartedly I do endorse that the Bible abundantly teaches what I prefer to call the sovereignty of God over all His creation, but if you had rather call it Absolute Predestination, then I whole-heartedly endorse your right to do so, and you are my brother and my sister, if, indeed, I am a brother.

Furthermore, my unlimited endorsement of the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty or predestination does not mean three things, to wit:

1. I do not declare non-fellowship for any dear brother and sister that is not able to see and understand predestination as I have outlined in this article.

2. This does not mean in any sense that I believe or condone the doctrine that God is the Author of my sins.

3. This does not mean that I will not quote, believe, or even use as the best I can, any text that is in the Bible, going so far as to say that all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and that all of it is profitable, and that God has said what He meant to say.

Now in conclusion let me say that for fifty years I have read the *Signs,* and for nearly that many years I have been writing for its pages. I do not think that I am wrong when I say that I have examined ninety percent of the issues that have been published since that memorable day in October, 1832. During that time the editors and contributors have differed on various

portions of the Bible. However, with but a couple of times nobody has run off home with the only glove that we had to play with, saying, ***"If you do not play according to my rules, you will not be able to play at all."***

Dearly beloved brethren, none of us are perfect (or am I mistaken in my assumption)? This is our only paper. Will you stand by and see it destroyed? For years I have solicited subscribers for it; for years I have solicited brethren and sisters writing for it. In the last thirty seven years I have, by the grace of God and by His tender mercy, been closely associated with Elder Spangler. Not the first time has he reprimanded me for not writing, nor has he found fault with what I did write. Elder Dodson told me when I joined the staff of the *Signs* at his earnest solicitation, that my writing would never have an editing pencil used on it unless it was a grammatical mistake that I had made. No one has ordered me around in these fifty years of reading its pages and writing for them. Nor has anybody been sending out guidelines for me to follow in my writings. As far as I know, I have not been denied access to all business matters pertaining to the *Signs.* I have not been to any meetings, nor have I sought to be. At the outset, Elder Dodson told me that all that he expected of me was to keep them supplied with copy for the *Signs.* I have tried to do that, and God being my helper, I will continue to do that.

I did not always agree with Elder Dodson, but we had a kind brotherly agreement in the beginning and our relationship was as pleasant as it has been with any minister among us about anything. For forty years I have been intimately and familiarly acquainted with Elder David Spangler. We agreed years ago that we would be frank and cooperative about any matters concerning the *Signs.* I feel sure that no friction has entered into our relationship, and we have served churches together; I have baptized candidates for him at Dan River when he was unable, physically, to do so; we have jointly served two churches for a number of years; we have officiated at communions together; we have both gone into the water together and have both in joint action baptized candidates together. To be sure, we have not always seen everything just alike, and in those cases I would say to him, "David, I do not see that like you do," or he has said to me, "Dorris, I think this is a better way", and my testimony today after this close laboring together in the common cause of the churches and the paper, let us all lay down our bickering and let us go on to perfection.

Your little brother, trembling,
but pursuing,
Elder W. D. Griffin

TRANSCRIBED FROM A SERMON PREACHED BY ELDER D. V. SPANGLER

Snow Hill Church, October 23, 1975

May we turn to page 156. I would like for us to think about the sentiment of this hymn as we sing it. If you sing it without taking note of what it says, it is worthless:

Come, thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing thy grace!
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise.

Teach me some melodious sonnet,
Sung by flaming tongues above:
Praise the mount! O, fix me on it!
Mount of God's unchanging love.

Here I raise my Ebenezer;
Hither by thy help I'm come;
And I hope, by thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home.

Jesus sought me, when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God;
He, to save my soul from danger,
Interposed his precious blood!

O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be:
Let thy grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee.

Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it!
Prone to leave the God I love!
Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it;
Seal it for thy courts above!

I am thankful to be with you. We had two things happen since arriving that has, you might say, made my trip worth-while; if there was nothing else. Some time ago I received an invitation to spend our time at this meeting in the home of one of the young members, Linda Adkins. Now I have a reputation in this country, of writing short letters, when I write. So I wrote, she said, in maybe two lines, "The Lord willing, I'm coming". As I said to her yesterday morning, "I am going to write you a long letter now, and the letter will say this, that if I hadn't received your letter, I don't think I would have come." So you all might take that as you want to. The other thing is I visited an old friend in the nursing home yesterday morning, Mr. Clarence Robinson, who attended my services many years ago. He is blind now and he didn't recognize my voice. When I told him who I was, the reaction was worth my whole trip. Oh, the reaction of joy he showed for a poor sinner like I am. It surely meant something to me.

In the 17th chapter of the book of John, I shall begin reading with the first verse.

"These words spake Jesus, and lifted Up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life

eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

These are the words of Jesus. And the occasion was the approach to the cross and the laying down of His life for His people. I think the message begins with His summing up in the 14th Chapter of John. You know, Matthew, Mark and Luke tell us about the birth of Christ, the virgin birth, the geneology and the events surrounding His natural birth. But the Apostle John soars away in his bringing Him to us. He loses sight, you might say, of His humble birth, His geneology , as he said, ***"In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God and the word was God. The same was in the beginning with God."*** All the ministers here and elsewhere could never expound the expression, "The same was in the beginning with God." For the unity of the Godhead is there. The covenant relationship is there, in the description, "The same was in the beginning with God." And much of this chapter is bringing to us the relationship and the unity of God the Father and God the Son in the realm of salvation. Embraced in that unity is the people of God. Jesus in God and God in Jesus, and He in them, and them in Him, etc.

In the 14th Chapter of John, Jesus begins to tell His disciples that He is going away. They are puzzled often concerning His going away. In the 14th Chapter He tells them, ***"If ye believe in God, believe also in me. Let not your hearts be troubled. In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you".*** As the time would open and develop and be brought to pass they would see and know more about it. ***"I go and prepare a place for you, and I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there you may be also."*** He tells them they know the way. Yet there is an inquiry in the mind of Phillip, and he said to Jesus, "Show us the Father". Show us the Father. You have talked about Him. Jesus said, ***"Have I been so long with you and yet thou hast not known me, Phillip?" "Has all the work that I have unfolded as the eternal will of God in my life been unnoticed and unknown ?" "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father ."***

The word of God says, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." How many? Everyone! Everyone under consideration. So the 14th Chapter is laying the foundation of His coming again. We are still holding that forth to the people. If it has not become the key to hold, it never

will be. I am looking for the coming of our Lord. If I wasn't, I wouldn't be here this morning. I anticipate the event because He said, "I'm coming again." You can say it in the gospel, or however you please, but there is a second coming of the Lord.

Then Jesus brings the matter a little closer as He comes to the 15th Chapter of John regarding the unity of the Father and the Son. He said, "I am the true vine. My Father is the Husbandman." And He didn't forget to say in that chapter, "Ye are the branches". That is bringing into view in a lovely way, the unity of the Father and of the Son and with His people. "Branches". And in connection with that expression He said, " As I live, ye shall live." Just as certainly as I am alive, there is your life. "Ye shall live". There are about five occasions where the expression is used in these three chapters, "These words spake Jesus". It seems that there was a special significance in what He was saying at certain times. "These words spake Jesus" unto them.

I especially delight in the 15th Chapter in the words of Jesus when He said, "These words have I spoken unto you that my joy might remain in you; that your joy might be full." We will never know what salvation really is until we know the joy of our Saviour in saving us. Our cup will never be full. It will be half empty, until there is in our heart the knowledge that it was just as great a joy for Christ to save us as it is for us to be saved. Paul said, ***"For the joy set before him."*** It was always set before Him, and every movement of His life, He endured the cross despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God. God has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name that is above every name. Not only while Christ walked upon the earth, but in every phase of the salvation of His people did He have the preeminence in all things. But His place in heaven now, this morning, is as our Intercessor. He appears in the presence of God for us.

I remember the time I read that scripture in the 15th Chapter. It was at night and I was setting in my room. Whatever He had been telling in the 14th Chapter, and coming on down to the 15th, ***"Ye are the branches," etc., it seems now, He said, "These words He spake".*** He says, ***"I spake these words unto you that my joy might remain in you; that your joy might be full."*** I don't think that we would detract anywhere from God's grace and His mercy and His everlasting love for His people to say that even the Father in bringing many sons to glory through the work of His son will take pleasure in it, also. And in connection with that; there is something about the doctrine of grace and the wonders of God's grace that presents these two thoughts. When this world has been brought to a conclusion, and is over, there will be a people in heaven that God won't

be ashamed of. And the only reason there will be a people that He won't be ashamed of is because He will prepare them for it. And we also, my hearers, won't be ashamed. Christ was not ashamed to call His people, "Brethren". God was not ashamed to be called our God, He says that in the book of Hebrews. God was not ashamed to be called the God of the people pictured in the IIth chapter of Hebrews. It is the only way God could have a people in heaven that He wouldn't be ashamed of. He prepares them for it. And one of the great blessings of Grace is that God prepares us for what He has prepared for us. Have you learned that in your life? That same hand must prepare you for what God has prepared for you? Whether it is either joy or sorrow, it is the same thing . One is no different than the other. God must prepare us for joy as well as sorrow.

And now, Jesus in the 14th and 15th chapters has been preparing them for His going away. He has stressed to them that "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name it shall be given to you". That used to be a great puzzle to me. But when I found that the various names of Christ and the titles of Christ was found over 100 times in the Bible, I said, "His name must embrace every need of His people." Whether He is the Advocate, the Intercessor, or whoever He is, it must embrace it all. His Name! These Great Right Reverends, so and so's might think they have a right long handle when they have two or three words attached to their names. But think of the Lord Jesus Christ having over 100 names and titles in the word of God, and each one suited to each characteristic of Him. Oh, my friend, isn't it a wonderful thing? I would travel thousands of miles to see Him one moment. He is the Kings of Kings. He is the Lord of Lords. Everywhere!

I have been in the city of Washington a few times, and they say every avenue leads to the Capitol. You go down Pennsylvania Avenue or Massachusetts Avenue, or any other, and they lead to the Capitol. But think here, every name of salvation, every phase of salvation of the people of God embodied in the Name of Christ that leads to Him!

You can have a dozen avenues in the city of Washington, and they would be crowded thoroughfares, wouldn't they? But there can be over a hundred names and titles of Christ pointing to Him and the virtue of Him and there is never any congestion in the way. There is always a way to see Him, and there is always a desire in the heart of those at the throne of God to say, "I would see Jesus."

Paul admonished Timothy to preach the word: to reprove, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine. I said not long ago that if the doctrine of exhortation wasn't in the New Testament I had been preaching a lie over 50 years. It is there and it is for the minister as God directs him. If it is preached in blind zeal it

is just as terrible as he is, but if it is through the constraining grace of God, then it is, as recorded in the New Testament, *"Exhort the church of God with all long suffering, and doctrine." "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but they will heap to themselves teachers having itching ears".* You know, I used to wonder what that was, "Teachers having itching ears". I said, *"I have heard of the nose itching, but not the ears itching".* Probably I shouldn't say this, but I say a lots of things I wish I hadn't said, and lots of things I don't say that I wish I had said. But not long ago I heard a minister speak, and when he got through he took out of the pulpit like he was in a race with somebody. And he looked like he was itching to hear what somebody was going to say about the sermon he had preached. He must have had itching ears, do you suppose? I don't know. I will leave that for you to decide.

But these words, now we are coming to the hour of Christ. We are coming to Him and the hour appointed in eternity that our Saviour must die for us. And now His prayer. His people come first. The awful hour is approaching that He must pay the debt that all mankind couldn't pay. All the blood of all Adam' s race from Adam's day to today couldn't pay it. The blood of the Son of God only, could. And the hour, He recognizes very well. He says, *"Father". "These words spake Jesus and lifted Up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour is come. Glorify thy son that thy son may also glorify thee."* That is the unity of the Godhead. There is the husbandman and the true vine. *"As thou has given him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."* That's what we preach! Christ had power over all flesh for one end. To give eternal life to as many as thou has given Him. *"And this is life eternal; that they might know him".* That is what it is. God has a sure and certain and definite way of bringing that life to them. The only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. *"And now, O Father."* There was a time that our Saviour couldn't call God His Father. There was a time when in His humiliation His judgment was taken away. There was a time that the literal words that were in the 22nd Psalm must be brought out of the lips of Christ. *"My God; My God, why hast thou forsaken me."* Now what was He asking God for? He calls Him Father, and I like the expression. *"And now, Oh Father."* We only hint at what is involved. We can't tell it. What is He asking for now? What is the special request of Christ? *"Glorify thou me with thine own self".* That is what He wanted. That is what He was asking for. And the kind of glory that He asked God to give Him was the kind

that He had with Him before the world was. Could He have asked anything greater? That in the hour of departure, the wonders of the covenant might be brought truly into view; that He who He entered into covenant with before this world was, there would be a continuation and a fulfilling of it in bringing Him from the dead. Paul said in the last chapter of the book of Hebrews, ***"The God of peace"; "The God of Peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, through the blood of the everlasting covenant."*** The blood of the everlasting covenant! Make you perfect, etc., and in every good work it was good. And now He asked God to glorify Him with His presence. That the fulness of the love of God in the moment when the covenant was entered into, and God's love for His Son and His Son for Him, and the love for His people and the love of the people of God for them. "With thine own self'. That is the glory Christ is asking for. There is no question, is it? That is the glory He has asked God for . Glorify Him with Himself. ***"With the same glory I had with you before the world was."***

Some try to tell us now and try to bring us a saviour like one peddling something on the street. That isn't the God I worship. Our Lord Jesus Christ stresses in these chapters in John that though He was going away, He wasn't going to leave them comfortless. ***"I will send the Comforter, the Holy Spirit in my name, and he shall take the things of mine and show them unto you."*** That work is still going on. You talk about experiences of grace. Every time the Holy Spirit brings to the heart of a sinner the assurances of Christ's work and their need of it, it is an experience of grace. It is of grace, however it may come, and that which doesn't come by grace isn't of the Holy Spirit. It is of the flesh, whatever it might be. The Holy Spirit doesn't wander around at random looking for something to bring to the people of God. He doesn't bring just anything. He brings the things of Christ. He applies every promise that a sinner has ever received in his heart of heaven and immortal glory .The Holy Spirit brings it. And there is no substitute for it. You can have a lots of substitutes, but not the Holy Spirit because He is equal with Jesus Christ, Himself. ***"And now, Oh Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the same glory I had with you before the world."*** And an answer was given Jesus on one occasion from the Father, ***"I have already glorified thee".*** My beloved children, this morning, our Saviour is at the right hand of the Throne of God. He is as much alive today as He was when He was here, and He now in heaven appears in the presence *of* God for us. He is our Mediator; the only one between God and man that has the power of mediation. Every requirement of God for His people,

Christ has met in His death and His righteous life.

And as the hour approaches that He must depart, He said, *"Oh Father"*. Have you ever felt you could call God your Father? Have you ever felt the sweetness of your Saviour's love that you could never tell anyone of? Oh, my friend, I wake up in the hours of night sometime, and it is like day. Some avenues pointing me to the virtues of Christ. Something I haven't seen will appear. I want to exalt His name. I sometimes think as the poet said:

"I want to praise Him while He gives me breath; I hope to praise Him after death."

And in the 24th verse of the 17th chapter our Saviour prayed. Yes, my friend, He prayed, that those He died for would be with Him. And He didn't only pray for that, but that *"They shall see my glory"*. I expect to see the glory of Christ. I expect to share in the glory of my Master. Will that be fulfilled? As sure as you are setting there, this morning. And when the hour arrives, Jesus said, *"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."* But He tells us here, *"I have finished the work"*. Before He died He said, *"I finished the work"*, *"All things that are written in the proph*ets and in Moses and the Law and the Psalms concerning me". As He approached the cross He said, *"They have been fulfilled"*. Every one of them. There hasn't been a one left out. *"And now, Oh Father, glorify thou me with thy own self, with the same glory I had with you before the world."* Then in the next chapter when He leaves His disciples, He goes out to meet our great foe and His. As He approaches those that Judas was bringing He said, *"Who are you looking for?"* And then He said, *"I am the one"*. *"I am the very one you are looking for"*. His great love led Him to meet them. His great love for you, my friends, led Him to meet His enemy. The eternal relationship and the eternal love of God in Him led Him, and the enemy fell on the ground. I'm glad they didn't have to send after Him. I'm glad they didn't have to tie Him. I know that the lamb was tied for a time in the eternal covenant as a type of Jesus on the Jewish altar. He was bound with cords on it, bound to the altar, but here I see the Lamb loose, now. And He goes to meet them, and He opens not His mouth. *"Dumb before His shearers"*. I said yesterday afternoon I had some thoughts the other day about Christ being dumb. I just touched it. I can't tell you about it. Dumb. Mute. Beyond speech! Carrying our sins to that cross. Oh, my friends, lift up your heads this morning. Many of us may never meet again here on the shores of time. Lift up your heads. Lift up your heads! Our redemption is drawing nigh! I thank you!

Elder D. V. Spangler

Dear Brethren:

Since the God of all grace has loved us from eternity with an everlasting love, and has manifested this by making us new creatures in Christ Jesus, may we, even here in this Association, give unto Him the glory due His Name.

It was God that began the good work in us, and as sure as He has begun it, so surely will He complete it-in His own way and time. Our God is for us, and this is our consolation under all circumstances.

We shall soon pass through Jordan to the blissful shores of our heavenly Canaan. Our Leader, Jesus, has taken possession of that inheritance for us: He has gone to come again for us. This should cheer us to the lot of our inheritance in this vale of tears, assured that He will lead us on safely until we enter into that rest where none of the inhabitants will say, "I am sick". Then the days of our mourning will be ended.

It is this we are hoping for; it is this we are waiting for; it is the anticipation of this that sometimes causes us to rejoice. How delightful it is to the mind of a believer, to think that this inheritance is infallibly secured to all the family of God. Brethren, how bright are your prospects: Your Sun is rising to set no more. Soon you will receive a palm of victory and a crown of glory.

You ought to rejoice, though now, if need be, ye are in manifold temptations. You may be poor, you may be tried in body and in mind, you may be Borrowing, but look up, your redemption draweth nigh.

"A few more rolling suns at most
Will land us safe on Canaan's coast:
Where we shall sing the song of grace,
And see our glorious Hiding Place."

In bonds, J. L. Bocock

CONTRIBUTIONS

OCTOBER 2005

Norvell Godwin, LA	5.00
Eld. Jimmy Gray, NC	5.00
Alfred Ratliff, VA	5.00
Mrs. Walter Harrell, TX	5.00
Flay Mordecai, MS	5.00
Thomas Nichols, VA	5.00
Wilton Sutphin, VA	2.00
Emmie Grayson, AL	5.00

OBITUARIES

DREAMER LYNN HALE

Sister Dreamer Lynn Hale passed away at her home on August 19, 2005. Her father, Lynwood C. Hale and grandparents Caleb and Clara Hale preceded her in death. She is survived by her mother, Martha Blount Hale and one

sister Marjorie Dawn Hale, both of Vinton, Virginia; also a special friend, Peter Egan of Lorton, Virginia.

A private burial was held on Wednesday, August 24, at Mountain View Cemetery in Vinton.

Sister Dreamer manifested a love for her church. She had many afflictions but was present at her church meetings when possible. She was blessed to be present the weekend of communion service and left a gift for her church. Sister Dreamer always gave her gifts as anonymous.

We will miss Sister Dreamer very much but may our loss be her eternal gain. I thank God and feel privileged to have known Sister Dreamer. May we all be submissive to God's will.

Written in request of the Salem Church.

Mary Poff, Clerk
Hale Terry , Moderator

EUGENE FIELDING OSBORNE, SR.

Eugene Fielding Osborne, Sr. 83 of Westminister, Md., died Friday afternoon, Sept. 16, 2005, at his home.

Born March 10, 1922, in Peach Bottom, Pa., he was the son of the late Isom V. and Rosa Miller Osborne. He was the husband of Jennye A. Gladding Osborne for 58 years.

He was a graduate of Quarryville High School, Franklin and Marshall College and Penn State College in Pennsylvania. He also graduated from University of Maryland Law School.

He was a veteran of the U.S. Army Air Corp., having served in World War II.

He was an electrical engineer, having worked at the Applied Physics Lab, Westinghouse Corp. and Air Arm. He later went into private practice as a patent attorney. He was a member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church.

Surviving, in addition to his wife, are daughter and son-in-law Janet Pellam-Ford and Gordon Ford of Basin, Mont.; son and daughter-in-law. Eugene L. Jr. and Cindy Osborne of Westminister, Md.; brother Bliss Osborne of San Antonio, Texas; grandchildren Amber and Allison Osborne, Jessica and David Pellam and Gwendolyn Culbertson and husband Charles; and many nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased in death by siblings Vaughn, Charles, Tommy, John, James and Grace Osborne, Mary Payne, Barbara Grace and Brucie Leftwich.

Funeral services was held at Myers-Durboraw Funeral Home in Westminister, Md., with Elder Kenneth R. Key and Gerald D. Fuss co-officiating. Interment was in Emmanual Baust Cemetery on top a high hill with a beautiful view of the

country side and the little villages of Tyrone below.

Brother "Gene" was esteemed highly among the membership of Dan River Church. Although they lived many miles away they were able to come to our meetings as long as health would permit. It brought joy to our hearts each time they came. Brother "Gene" had a very spiritual mind and his greatest concern was the welfare of the Lord's people and their churches. He had a deep understanding of the scriptures and was a wise counselor. He had a photographic mind and read a lot and could remember what he read.

He loved the God he worshiped and worshiped the God he loved. As his outer body began to perish, his inner man grew stronger. In his last hours upon his bed Sister Peggy heard him praying a most beautiful prayer to God.

May the God of all grace and mercy be with Sister "Peggy" and her dear family.

Humbly submitted,
Elder Kenneth R. Key

CLAUDIS "SQUIB" TUCKER

Brother Claudis "Squib" Tucker departed this life June 21, 2005 at the age of 84. He was born December 28, 1920 and passed away at North Monroe Hospital after a brief illness.

Brother "Squib" united with New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Spearsville, Louisiana June 30, 1951 and was baptized August 5, 1951 by Elder R. W. Rhodes. He was ordained a deacon August 3, 1980. He remained a devoted member until his death.

He was well versed in the scriptures and was blessed with a good memory of the scriptures and would help supply the Elders when they needed assistance with a word or portion of scripture.

He was also blessed with a beautiful and strong singing voice and will be sorely missed as our song leader. Not only was he gifted in singing but also in prayer.

Over the years, Brother "Squib" and his dear wife traveled far and near attending the various meetings. He loved to engage in scriptural discussions with those of like precious faith.

Brother "Squib" married Clemmie Everett, who was a loving, devoted wife and helpmate for 62 years. She survives him, along with their son Stephen, and wife Rosemary. He is also survived by four grandchildren: Tonya Worsham and husband, Eric, Lonnie Tucker, Tiffany Tucker and Aaron Chen.

His funeral was conducted by Elder Theron Jones at New Hope Primitive Baptist Church on June 23, 2005. Burial followed in Spearsville Cemetery, awaiting the fulfillment of that sweet hope he was blessed to live by.

Submitted in Love,
Mary Barron

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Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS"

The existence, sovereignty, immutability omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah - the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistable, and in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace. The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers - that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

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EDITORIAL

MELCHISEDEC

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

Of this mysterious man, very little is written. He appears briefly in the Old Testament and is gone. There have been many different views on who this man really was. No one feels more inadequate to write or speak on any scripture than I do. Yet, I feel to express what understanding I have been given for your consideration. Based upon the few scriptures concerning Melchisedec, I hope to show who this man was and his purpose in appearing when he did.

Genesis 14:18 describes Melchisedec as King of Salem and priest of the most high God. In the Apostle Paul's epistle to the Hebrews, he uses this same description but elaborates more. Paul says that his name means King of righteousness and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace. Now, could any man born after the manner of the flesh be called King of righteousness or King of peace? None, including Abraham, Moses, David, or any other man fit this description. ***"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one."*** Only the Lord himself is King of righteousness and King of peace. In I John 2:1, He is called ***"Jesus Christ the righteous." Psalm 11:7 "For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness."*** All our righteousness is as filthy rags. Christ is the only righteousness His people have for He is indeed the King of righteousness.

Christ is King of Salem which is King of peace. You will not have peace in this world; only confusion, strife, and tribulation. But, Christ is our peace. ***John 16:33, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."*** He promised His people tribulation in the world, but also comfort in that He has overcome everything you will ever encounter in this life. Therefore, in Him, we have peace. O, what com-

fort in the words of Christ, "Peace I leave with you, ***my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."*** The King of peace is our peace that passeth all understanding.

The Apostle writes, ***"Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils."*** In Galatians, it is written that Abraham believed God and it was accounted unto him for righteousness and that they which are of faith are the children of Abraham. Also, to Abraham was the gospel preached, saying, ***"In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."*** And the scriptures set forth that Christ came to this earth through the lineage of Abraham. Abraham is called the friend of God. Abraham had just killed four kings and rescued Lot. As wonderfully blessed as Abraham was, he worshipped Melchisedec by giving unto him a tenth of the spoils. Melchisedec blessed Abraham and always the less is blessed of the greater. This king and priest of the most high God was greater than Abraham.

Melchisedec brought bread and wine and there in the Valley of Shaveh, the king's dale, communed with Abraham. Dear ones, hasn't it been in the valley after you have gone through a battle that the Lord came to you and you experienced such sweet and precious communion? You felt His presence with you and there was such comfort and peace. Dale means valley and this was the king's dale. I believe that you are blessed to commune with your Lord in this valley, the king's dale. This has been prepared for you. Your King and priest has prepared it for you. There in the king's dale the green grass of the gospel is fed to you in the pasture of his grace. There you are fed. There you find rest for your weary, troubled soul. There, the lilies grow. You cannot see the beauty of the flower as it blooms in you as your head is bowed with humbleness and meekness toward the black dirt from which your fleshly body was formed. But, others see the beauty of the image of Christ as it shines forth as gold tried in the fiery furnace of affliction. The fruit of the spirit is manifested.

The bread and wine were setting forth the suffering, shedding of blood, and death that Christ would endure some 2000 years in the future. When Abraham was commanded by God to take his son Isaac and offer him as a sacrifice on Mount Moriah, on the third day he lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off. The third day sets forth the gospel day or day of grace. Abraham saw more than just a mountain on which he would offer Isaac as a sacrifice. It would be on this mountain some 2000 years in the future that Christ would die on the cross. By faith Abraham had been given to see that and could tell the young men with

him, "you wait here and the lad and *I will go yonder and worship and we will come again to you."* He could tell Isaac, *"my son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering."* Revelation 13:8 says that the Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world.

Melchisedec is described as "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life." In other words, he was not born into this world. In the fullness of time, Christ was born of a virgin as the Holy Spirit came upon her and she was overshadowed by the power of God. He came under the law in order to satisfy it to a jot and a tittle to redeem His people. He came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, to condemn sin in the flesh that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. Christ as the savior of His elect must suffer, die, and rise again. The Lord came in the form of Melchisedec and appeared unto Abraham to establish that the order of His priesthood was an everlasting one. His priesthood had no beginning and it has no end. It was not descended in any way from carnal man. Melchisedec appeared unto Abram before God changed his name to Abraham; before Isaac was born; before Jacob and the twelve tribes of Israel existed; and before the Levitical priesthood was established. The Levitical priesthood had a beginning and an end. It was established under the law covenant and was but a type and shadow of the everlasting priesthood of Christ. The high priests were all descendants of Aaron and were to serve until death and another would take his place. He went into the second tabernacle, which was the Holiest of all, once a year with blood which he offered for himself and for the sins of the people. God commanded that special garments be made for Aaron and his sons and God decreed the garments as holy. Aaron as high priest was not holy and therefore he must wear these holy garments when he ministered unto the Lord and entered into the Holy of holies. He must wear a plate in his mitre upon his forehead engraved with HOLINESS TO THE LORD. He would die if he entered in the holy place before the Lord without any of these garments, because he had no righteousness of his own. Also, the breastplate of judgment had twelve stones with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel so that all the people would be included when Aaron entered the holy place and ministered unto the Lord. The priests of the Levitical priesthood were made priests without an oath. Christ was made priest with an oath, *"The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."* Christ as the high priest of spiritual Israel does not need any garments designated as holy because He is holy himself. His people are in Him.

As their high priest, He is mediator between them and God. He died once and is now entered into heaven itself to appear in the presence of God for us. He who is without sin bore the sins of all His elect that they might have life and have it more abundantly. Christ did not come through the tribe of Levi but rather through the tribe of Judah; He lives forever; therefore, His priesthood was after the order of Melchisedec.

Christ only is the high priest of the most high God. Melchisedec appeared unto Abraham to establish that the order of the priesthood of Christ was an everlasting one. Psalms 110:4, *"The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."* The Apostle Paul refers to this scripture several times in describing the priesthood of Christ. That the Lord took the form of Melchisedec was not unusual. Another time, He appeared unto Abraham when the Lord and two angels came down to deliver Lot from Sodom and to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. *Genesis 18: 1-2, "And the Lord appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw* them, he ran *to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground."* On another occasion after Christ's resurrection, He appeared in another form to two of His disciples as they walked, St. Mark 16:12.

The Apostle wrote that the sum of all of this is that "we have a high priest who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Dear ones, aren't you thankful that we have a high priest who *"is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercessions for them."* Isn't it comforting to you that your high priest can be touched with the feeling of your infirmities and was in all points tempted like as you are, yet without sin? You are called a royal priesthood. You are royal because you are of the family of the King of kings. *"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."* You are a priesthood because as the priests of old offered up sacrifices so you offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. These spiritual sacrifices are your prayers and praise.

May you taste that the Lord is gracious and experience the com-

fort and peace that only He can give.

May brotherly love continue,
Elder Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

The first weekend of October showed us blessed to meet with this peculiar bunch of people in the state of North Carolina known as the Primitive Baptists. The Primitive Baptists are called this because of the great doctrine they advocate. The Primitive Baptists are a selected group who deny the power of flesh through sovereign grace, and gives God the praise, glory and honor for any salvation. This salvation is the deliverance of God's goodness in the hearts of the believing family at his discretion from the courts of glory, according to his sovereign will.

While I do not feel worthy to partake in these holy events, my hope is that a day will come, in His precious will that I will be enabled by His grace to come forth from the pits of this darkness and be made to see, and understand some of the great mysteries of his precious will.

We fully realize that the Baptist people who advocate the doctrine of predestination are the worst criticized people on earth. The Primitive Baptist are the only ones who deny the power of the flesh, giving God the praise, glory and honor for this great salvation. Realizing that all this comes through channels of precious grace, through his precious love.

I would like to stress here before I go into detail of the events transpiring in the Association, that these remarks are made possible because of the generosity of Naomi Coker, who furnished me with the footnotes of this meeting; and I appreciate her very much. Ms. Coker is the clerk and Hassel Allen was the moderator for the meeting. Both are to be commended for a great job in taking care of the business as well as setting the rotation of preachers during this two day event. The entire church rolled out the carpet for us, who traveled from West Virginia, with open and loving arms.

The harmony and the precious love that existed these two days besides, being beyond comprehension, was also beyond words for my natural mind. This manna from God's table seems to have been meted out according to God's will and time. All these purposes will ripen in his season.

Elder Henry Jones was scheduled to preach the introductory sermon. Due to his confinement in the hospital, he was not able to fulfill this appointment.

Elder Joe Sawyer who was Elder Jones alternate, came forth and began with hymn, and the prayer was by Elder Raymond Goad. Elder Sawyer chose for the introductory sermon Titus 1:12. Elder Sawyer was lifted up and made to bring forth

a message that was for food and consolation to the recipients of God's love. He expounded on several things of interest to the household of faith.

The next one called to the stand was Alan Terry. Incidentally, the Terry name was well represented. They all came forth in harmony declaring God's sovereignty, giving God the Praise, Glory and Honor for this great salvation saying that puny man was excluded from being ***a partaker of these Holy events. Elder Terry chose for his text Isaiah 63:1-9.*** Elder Terry expounded on Jesus Christ our Lord being a perfect man with no guile in his mouth. He compared him to the man in which is a sinner by nature. All this comes in the Adam tree. This is all inherited in this Adam generation. Mankind being the receiver of this inheritance. His remarks were very interesting and well received.

The next one called to the stand was Elder Hale Terry. He chose for his text John 17: 1-10. He gave a very moving discourse that was well received.

The fourth preacher called to the stand, is very able when blessed, to declare God's sovereignty in a graceful way. He chose for his text Genesis 2: 8-9. Elder Robertson, not only is able to set forth a sovereign God, but he is a very able writer who writes some highly gifted articles.

Elder Mark Terry a cousin of the Terry preaching brothers was called on to preach in the afternoon session. To me I thought he was blessed to bring forth one of the best messages that I had ever heard him elaborate on. He took his text from Hebrews 12: 1-2. He was highly favored to bring a beautiful message from this text.

Elder Jimmy Gray was the sixth brethren called to the stand and took his text from John 6:40-47. Elder Gray was highly favored to bring a message of comfort to the highly favored few. When one is lifted from the pits of darkness and made to rejoice in these messages from the Master's table, we hate to see this come to an end.

Sunday morning's meeting was opened with a hymn, then a prayer by Elder Joe Sawyer. Elder Junior Conner was the first one called to the stand on Sunday morning, taking his text from Colossians 1:9-15.

Elder Conner is a highly gifted favored servant of Israel's God to preach the unsearchable riches of God's grace. Elder Conner was elevated up in that good land to bring a message of comfort to this little flock who came to feast. This feast of rations, stored for this highly favored few. I think all present were made to rejoice in this message.

Elder Raymond Goad was the second called on Sunday morning. He took his text from Revelation 16: 17-21 and chapter 17: 1-9. Elder Goad elaborated on the deep rooted subject about the devil and his angels, and this bottomless pit. Elder Goad was blessed to bring a great

message of comfort from the deep rooted subject. Revelation is a deep rooted book, the contents only being interpreted through God's sovereign grace.

Elder Joe Sawyer came forth with some closing remarks. In closing these remarks, I would like to say if not deceived, that all of the Elders that came forth in a preaching way, were partakers of that heavenly manna which is stored up to be meted out, to the recipients of his love—to feast upon at God's appointed time. Blessed be his holy name for favoring us all to be partakers of what I feel to be this holy event.

In bonds of love I hope,
Riley Justice

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426 Lilly Rd. N.E.
Apt. 133
Olympia, WA. 98506-6932
November 3, 2005

Dear Sister Mildred,

I m sorry I have been this long in getting a letter off to you; but at my "age and stage", I'm slower than usual and have to rest too often, I think.

My dear, your letter was one of the sweetest treasures I have ever received.

First of all, it was a surprise to me "out of the blue"; but I can know it was another proof of what the Lord keeps doing for those who love Him as we do. I never feel alone; and I know, with the evidence because His words have been spoken out loud in answer to a prayer twice. You spoke of Mother's facial expression and I must relate to you that I came out of a grocery store recently just walking along, and a young, person in her 30's walked right up in front of me, stopped; and said, "I surely like your hair" and I said, "It's the same old wig: I've had for 96 years." Then she said, "It's not your hair, you're a Christian". My reply, "So you're one too!" and she was.

My thoughts were of my sweet Mother, because her face radiated with God's love and it has been my lifelong hope I could be like my mentor and loving person like Mother. My son Stuart and daughter, Carole are so special and loving God as I do, I'm so happy for them.

It touched my very soul to read your letter and know you are the Spangler's daughter; and to also know you were here when I asked for acceptance with those dear ones in The Primitive Baptist Faith.

And, my baptism was so special having Elder Spangler and Elder Ben Preston baptize me. What a blessing that was for me and I feel and know I have been blessed every day of my whole life by "my" Lord. Praise His Holy name!! I will always keep your letter. I shed tears to read it – as I was reminded of all you mentioned.

It's hard to realize the changes there are in one's lifetime. I was saddened when your mother and dad

passed away. They had so much to do with my spiritual life; and now, I worship alone. The Yakima Church Group are all gone and the closest church is with Brother or maybe Elder Lloyd Spikes over in Weiser, Idaho. Anyway, I have the Signs of the Times and Zion's Sentinel to read; and Brother and Sister Wells sent an assortment of cassettes of the church's singing which I love. I can sing along because I have a hymn book, too. I feel a loving closeness to you Sister Mildred so I'd like to keep in touch with you; at least as long as I can call you by phone or write a letter.

To describe me now, I'm sending this picture with Stuart, who still remembers that trip to the Eastern churches with his grandmother, our Sister Josie Mitchell. My! They had such a wonderful trip. Your letter says it all and it pleased "Stu" to have me read your letter to me and mentioned their trip.

I'd like to hear from you again if you feel able. I'm concerned that your age has covered illnesses or is it true?

For my 96 ½ years I have been unusually well. No arthritis, diabetes, cancer, or any lingering illness; but at my age, my nerve endings are eroding so I have neuropathy (numbness in my fingers and toes and legs. I'm ready for the Lord's call when my time comes; but I have a happy spirit and except for a back pain or two, I'm fine. I have so much to be thankful for.

So, let me hear from you; and my heartfelt love goes to you today. My telephone number is 1-360-456-3561. I'll have your phone number and will call you. Thanks a million for your precious letter, the Lord willed you to write!

I love you dearly
Alma Coate-Wilson

Mary B. Weber 11-13-05
2162 Standiford Rd.
Union Hall, VA 24176

Dear Elder Terry,

I have finally moved to Smith Mountain in Union Hall. I enclosed a check for a one year subscription to the Signs of the Times.

I am a member of Gills Creek Church. We had our meeting today. It was a wonderful meeting, we had a very large crowd. Elder C.B. Davis was there. I had not seen him in 21 years. He baptized me at Lebanon Church at Bracey, VA. In 1984. He left us in 1987. It was good to see him and his wife again. They remembered me. I was received in Gills Creek on relation. The Lord has been so good to me. May He bless and keep you in His loving care. Forgive mistakes as I will be 79 years old the 27th of this month. Writing not too good and memory not too good.

Love for Jesus sake,
Mary B. Weber

11-15-05

Dear Elder Terry:

Enclosed check for "Signs". You editors are doing great job.

I sure enjoy all the good writers telling some old (truths) sure good.

I'll be 97 on 11-29-05 I believe. My days will soon be over here.

The 23rd Psalm sure sounds Precious,

With love,
Jane Carroll

ARTICLES

THY ROD AND THY STAFF THEY COMFORT ME

As you have traveled with me during many severe trials and afflictions, I would like to share with you a blessing I received from God's majestic throne of grace, if I am not deceived, in the night hour at the beginning of the new year of 2005. I was given a dream of seeing a bed lifted down into water. The following week, I was given another dream about this bed. In the second dream, I was holding on to two posts of the bed that were in the water and the two posts came off from the bed. I thought the bed would surely decay because there was no way to get the bed up out of the water since the posts had been removed. Immediately, I sought the Lord for interpretation and the words were spoken to me: ***"This is salt water. This bed will not decay but will be preserved."*** I then walked on top of the water with the two posts that were removed from the bed.

I believe this was the bed of affliction in which I must endure yet another trial. When the two posts came off the bed, there could not be felt the presence of the Lord; destruction seemed imminent and no way for recovery. One encounters an experience of being helpless, weak, lost, and absent from the presence of God. But the Lord said, ***"This is salt water."*** Salt water sets forth His grace that preserves His people. The two posts, the rod of His strength and the staff of His word, would sustain me during my affliction and I would be lifted up in His spirit and given to trust in Him for all my help. The Lord would be my ***"refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." David writes in Psalm 110:2, "The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies."*** The staff of the word is what we lean upon in our journey through this life, and it is especially comforting in times of afflictions and troubles. ***"By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff."*** Therefore we will not bear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early." Psalm 46:1-5.

My Oncologist told me that the middle lobe of my right lung which was dead must be removed to prevent suffocation when coughing up blood. Two days prior to surgery on February 3, 2005, I was home alone resting in bed when suddenly I was overcome with prayer, if I am not deceived, that poured out of my heart from that heavenly throne. My mouth was moving but the words from within were pouring forth so fast that they could not be spoken but were within begging the Lord to watch over me during my surgery and guide the doctor and those who would care for me. I believe, if not deceived, this prayer was given to me from Him above and would not return unto Him void; for after this miraculous experience, if I even attempted to start to ask for something pertaining to the surgery, I was shut up and these words were given, *"I have heard thy petition."* I could ask no more. My trust was in the Great Physician and I felt His peace and comfort and that all would be well with my soul. I recalled when Hannah spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. The Lord remembered Hannah's petition when she prayed for a man child. She conceived and bare a son and called his name Samuel because she asked him of the Lord.

The words recorded by David in the twenty-third Psalm became so precious to me. "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." I felt, if not deceived, I was given faith to believe that the tender hand of God would watch over me, protect me and provide grace sufficient for this time of affliction. "He maketh me to *lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters."* I desired to be fed upon the green grass of the gospel, rest in the pasture of God's love and be led by the Holy Spirit to be still and know that He is God. *"He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."* My cry was as David's, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." It was my hope that the Lord would again reveal the promises of His word to me and lead me in the paths of truth and holiness for His glory and not for the praise of men. *"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."* Though I was compassed about with a great time of affliction, I feared not that one who would try to destroy me but felt the power of God's love which casteth out all fear, and was com-

forted by the rod of His strength and the staff of His word which would be sufficient for that which I would experience. As Christ told Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." The Lord prepared me for surgery to remove the middle lobe of my right lung which was dead. The inner man experienced peace and comfort as the outer man endured much pain and suffering. The surgery was successful and the doctor said it was the first time he had ever had someone to go through lung surgery and have only a teaspoon of blood drain after surgery. Even though the middle lobe of my right lung was not functioning at all, the doctor told me that I had the lungs of a 30-year old when my age was twice that. The Lord strengthened the healthy part of my lung to compensate for that which was unhealthy. That is how it is with the natural man who is blessed with the spirit of God. The flesh is weak but the spirit in him is strong.

I felt to witness with Hannah as recorded in I Samuel 2:1-2: "My heart rejoiceth in the Lord, mine horn is exalted in the Lord: my mouth is enlarged over my enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation. There is none holy as the Lord: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God." Our praise is exalted in the Lord when He hears our cry and blesses us to feel His omnipotent power. It is joy unspeakable even in the midst of the greatest trial. Hannah said her horn was exalted in the Lord. She was praising the Lord from the depths of her soul. Her mouth was enlarged over her enemies because she rejoiced in the salvation of the Lord. The Lord commanded, "Brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Ephesians 6:10-12. Those were Hannah's enemies and the enemies of the Lord's people today.

But God protects His little ones. He commands and it stands fast. He says, "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer

and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel." How precious a scripture the Lord has left on record for His people to receive comfort. I love this scripture, for I believe if I am one of His little children, there will never be too great a battle for me to fight if I am clothed with His armour. If I am not deceived, this armour has protected me in many trials and afflictions. Those posts in my dream, the rod and staff, carried me through yet another battle where I felt to have reigned with Christ.

Psalm 119:75-77 reads, *"I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me. Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy servant. Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for thy law is my delight."* Precious also are the words spoken by David in Psalms 40:5, *"Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to usward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered."* What a loving God! May His name be praised forever and may we witness with David when he wrote, *"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."* The child of God desires that the love and mercy of God will endure with him continually each day that the Lord has made for him in this life; and when he must depart from this life, to dwell in that house whose builder and maker is God, a house not made with hands but eternal and in the heavens for all eternity. The hymn writer expresses it so beautifully:

Sovereign Ruler of the skies
Ever gracious, ever wise!
All my times are in thy hand,
All events at thy command.

His decree, who formed the earth,
Fixed my first and second birth:
Parents, native place, and time,
All appointed were by him.

He that formed me in the womb,
He shall guide me to the tomb;
All my times shall ever be
Ordered by his wise decree.

Times of sickness, times of health,
Times of penury and wealth;
Times of trial and of grief,
Times of triumph and relief:

Times the tempter's power to

prove;
Times to taste a Saviour's love:
All must come, and last, and end,
As shall please my heavenly friend.

Plagues and deaths around me fly;
Till he bids, I cannot die:
Not a single shaft can hit
Till the God of love sees fit.

O thou Gracious, Wise, and Just,
In thy hands my life I trust:
Have I somewhat dearer still?
I resign it to thy will.

Thee, at all times, will I bless:
Having thee, I all possess:
How can I bereaved be,
Since I cannot part with thee?

"Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken. Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate. The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate." Psalm 34:19-22. How precious it is to be blessed with grace and strength to endure the many afflictions that are our lot to encounter in this life. As Job said, *"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."*

Love in Christ
Jeannette Robertson
April 21, 2005

VOICES OF THE PAST

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER WELLBORN

I was born 31st July, 1859, in extreme poverty. My father's house was of that rank that is meanest and most despised of all the families around in this part of North Carolina; wherefore I have nothing of rank to boast of as others have, neither do I desire it; but instead thereof, I glory in my infirmities and low state according to the flesh, that I may the more abundantly exalt my God. I was born and reared in about eight miles of where I now live, in the most obscure part of Surry County, N.C. I was the oldest child of my father's family. My next brother was nearly two years younger than myself, and was dumb and perfectly helpless, and he lived to be about fourteen years old and died. I have two other brothers, the next in birth, and they are about grown young men, and are very wicked; and many times have I bowed in prayer for them; and O, may all who read this unite in prayer with me for them. The fifth child of my father's is a girl, now nearly grown, and is my only sister,

and is yet out of the Ark of Safety. O, that God may bring her tender soul in. The sixth and last child was my infant brother who died in infancy, and is therefore better off than any of us yet living in time. My dear mother died when I was at the tender age of ten years, and left an old log cabin nearly full of little children, none of whom at that time were able to do any labor but myself; for all were too small to do anything, except my oldest brother, and he was helpless, and my father was a weakly man, being diseased from a child. I had been brought up, until this period, without any education, or any knowledge of religion; for my parents never had any thought for religion, as it seemed, for they never went to any kind of meeting; neither did they seem to have any thought for reading, as they had no Bible or any other kind of a book in their possession.

I was reared in perfect obscurity; for I lived until I was about eighteen year's old and had never been at any public gathering, never been to school, nor heard any one speak in public. As I have said, mother died and left me at the age of ten years to take care of a pitiful and helpless family; but my little infant brother in a few weeks followed his mother. My dear reader, I cannot tell the trouble, turmoil I have undergone since the death of my dear mother; and if I were to write for days and days I could not tell half of the many hardships, troubles and trials I have had in this world of sin and sorrow. I had to work out of doors in the day time in summer, to try to make something for us all to eat; and also had to prepare our meals three times a day, and had to carry those little children with me to the field. I also had to chew everything my little helpless brother ate, and had to strip him three times a day, and many times, oftener. I had to wash and patch for them (my three little brothers, father and one little sister) of nights; for my father was gone from home the most of his time. O, the lonesome hours I saw; for no one came to see us, though there were two dwellings just across the small stream from where we lived, both in sight; and after I had become a grown man, I visited those houses and they did not know who I was—even those people who lived in sight of where I was raised did not know me when I went to their houses, for they had never seen me, only at a distance, since I was a little fellow and nobody ever came to see whether we were dead or alive. Now the general excuse that they (the people in the neighborhood in which I was raised) put up for not visiting us was that my father was such a wicked and sorry man; but my notion is different from that; I think that the cause was they lacked charity.

Now, dearly beloved in the Lord, I cannot describe what I have suffered during those cold and stormy winters; for I never wore a coat or vest, nor anything else, save a shirt and pantaloons of domestics, until

after I was eighteen years old. How piercing those sharp winds felt to my thinly-dressed body when I had to leave my little brothers and sister and sometimes father, and go to the woods for wood to burn, to keep them from freezing! When I would return with my turn of wood on my shoulder, I would be so cold that I would be benumbed all over. When I look back over my rugged road, I am made to wonder that I am still alive. But my wonder ceases when I consider that the omnipotent hand of a loving Father has led me through this terrible desert and preserved me from its numberless dangers. O, was it not the loving hand of Jehovah that kept a poor blind (spiritually blind) boy from having childish ways and from the carelessness common to children. For if I had been of the disposition common to children, I would not have striven to maintain my father and his helpless family, but to the reverse. I have often thought if it had not been for God's kind providence we would all have been burned up together In our little old log cabin years ago. But, thanks to His holy name! he watched over us and brought me to manhood without any help of man, and without any of the luxuries of earth. Then does he not work all things after the counsel of his own will, and out of the sight of poor, finite mortals?

After my helpless brother had died my labor was not so severe. Well do I recollect when he died; it was one evening during a thunderstorm. I was sitting by his side, rocking him in his cradle when the thunders were rolling and the sharp lightning were flashing, and it was almost as dark as night. I looked my little brother in the face and saw the hand of death there; his eyes were turned into death. How awful I felt! While looking on him the tears rolled down my cheeks, and I called to my father, for I could not endure to gaze alone upon that dying boy. Time moved on with me and still I knew but little, and thought less, of a Supreme Being. I knew God only by these names, "The Good Man," and the "Lord." This was all I could learn of God by my father. When I would ask him what caused the thunder, etc., he would say that it was the "Good Man" that thundered. When I was a little boy I remember that my mother told me the same, and that he (the Good Man) would destroy all that stole, told lies, etc., in a pit of fire. So sometimes I would be much afraid of these things, and dreaded frightful dreams. But my disposition was dreadfully wicked. I will mention a few of my many wicked thoughts and intentions while in a state of death. I had heard of the many pleasant (to me then) sinful practices of mankind from my father telling me of them. So I thought that I would work very hard and lay up, and when I became a man I would buy a suit of clothing and fix up and go out into the world and take my pleasure in all the sins common to wicked young men; for I thought as I had always

been a subject, of obscurity and sorrowful privations, that when I became a man I would see some pleasure. But all my expectations were cut short by the hand of Omnipotence; for I became greatly burdened, and my troubles were very great, for I felt myself to be the greatest sinner on earth. O, how wretched I felt! I was ashamed of myself. There were some black people who lived near us, and I was ashamed of them, so that when they came about I would hide from them. O, how wicked I did feel! I often went and tried to pray, though I knew little about what men or women did when at prayer; what position they occupied, or what words they used, for I had never heard anyone pray. So when I went out to pray I would some times, and most of the time, fall on my face. So finally I concluded that I was going to die and sink down into a lake of fire unquenchable and everlasting, and that because of my sinfulness. I viewed myself as nothing but a great mass of corrupted wickedness, and that the Good Man, as I knew, was going to sink me into irretrievable woe and misery on account of my sin. Then I began to examinee myself to see why it was that I must sink down into hell, and why it was that I was the worst being on earth, and could not solve the mystery; for I had never been as wicked as I had heard of some being. I had never acted the thief, neither had I been a liar, nor had I been guilty of any big crime. Then what is the matter? I could not tell why I was so guilty. But when I had viewed sin in all its deformity, then I could solve the mystery; for I then saw that it was that original guilt and my total depravity in nature that condemned me. But all my reasoning about not having been guilty of any great crime did me no good; and finally sleep fled from me; and one evening I watched the sun go down, and as he sank below the horizon I bade him farewell, and never expected to see the sun rise again. O, how dreadful I felt! for I thought I would soon be dead, and no sooner dead than damned. When night came on and all my father's family were asleep, I arose softly and went out and going a considerable distance from the house, I fell down upon my face to pray. I thought I must now sink into eternal woe and misery, for what hope have I? I had never heard anything of such a being as Christ Jesus, or Saviour; neither did I know anything of the New Testament at that time; but just at the moment when I thought I was gone, saw Jesus as it was a bright star descend from heaven and the next I saw to that superior bright star was a little infant lying in a very shabby-looking stable, and I thought, or it was revealed to me, that this shining light left heaven to become a way for my redemption from death and hell, and became an infant to that end. I then had a view of the whole life of Christ, even to his crucifixion. I then saw Jesus suspended between the heavens and

the earth, as an outcast of both. He was hanging, I thought, about half way between the heavens and the earth; his feet were crossed a large iron about the size of a forty-penny nail pierced through them both, his hands were pierced with smaller irons, and his side was pierced open, and a great stream, of bloody water was pouring or gushing out of it; and I saw that his whole blessed body was streaming in blood, every part being bathed, and the blood streamed unto the earth. Then I heard a voice say, Fear no longer, for this will overcooled and overspread you from all harm, from the thunder storms, etc. This voice was sweetest melody to me; my whole being; was filled with sweet and holy melody, and I felt as innocent as a little new-born infant; for all my load of sin and guilt was gone. Now it was right here I saw, or it was revealed to me, just how Jesus came into the world; for I viewed that he lived for me a perfect life of obedience in the flesh, and that he died for me, or died in my stead, and arose for me a victorious conqueror over death, hell and the grave; and then ascended to heaven for me. I also had the same view in regard to the whole church in her triumphant state. Now this heavenly view and divine revelation was so great to me that in after years when I had gotten in possession of the New Testament and began to read it, it seemed as though I had always been acquainted with its readings.

Now I have never gone to school but about two months in all my life, and that during the winter of 1878, and during this same winter I borrowed some clothing and went to Rock Springs meeting house and heard Elder B. E. Caudle preach, which was the first sermon I ever heard preached in my life. So time passed on with me in many ups and downs, doubts and fears, until the 18th of May, 1878, when I went to the church and told some of the great things which I hoped the Lord had done for me.

In June following I borrowed clothing of Brother C. W. York to be baptized in, and walked to Mitchell's River meeting house, about eighteen miles, and was baptized by Elder B. E. Caudle. Now, I never had heard anyone tell an experience, or join the church, nor had seen anyone baptized until after I was baptized myself. I moved on in poverty's vale in many severe trials, and was favored with many rich blessings of God's grace, as I some times hope, until the second Sunday in August, 1878, when contemplated trying to preach. When I commenced trying to preach I did not know a tune of any song in the world; neither could I give out a hymn correctly, for I could scarcely read. So I passed on in my trials, having to toil yet very hard for my father, and he was all the time opposed to my religious exercises; but I would beg him often to let me go and try to preach, which he would sometimes consent to. So

I would go in my rags and walk for many miles to preach to the people. Yes, I would go through the dark as well as the daytime; going through wet and dry , cold and heat, preaching to the poorer sort of people.

On the 25th of August, 1880, I was married to Miss A. L. Moody, a beautiful girl seventeen years old. She was a very poor girl, for she had nothing but her clothing. We leased a piece of land in the woods and built a little log cabin and moved in it., and we got shingles for a sustenance during the fall and winter, working day and night; for I would some nights dress or draw three hundred shingles after supper. But when summer was come we rented stock and land and made a crop, and have been doing that way ever since. The first meal we ever ate in our little log cabin was in one teacup and one saucer; I ate out of the saucer and my wife out of the cup; and she had one old knife, made in the shop, to eat with, while I used my pocket-knife. We had to go in debt the year we were married for bedding and other household and kitchen necessaries, and we paid out the next fall, but had to go in debt again. I have had a powerful hard struggle to barely keep something to eat and wear, and many times both myself and family have suffered for want of food and raiment, and are in need even now. I have tried to go and preach Jesus as often as I possibly could, and have always had to walk, for the Primitive Baptists are very few in this country , and are very poor and widely scattered, therefore I never have had a helping hand from any mortal in this part. My family consists at present of my wife and three little children.

I was set apart and ordained to the gospel ministry by Elders Joshua Long and Wm. Hall on the 3rd Saturday in May 1882, and have been trying to fill that calling , ever since but have labored under so many disadvantages that It seems there was never given for me any ease or satisfaction in this world. Yes, it seems that I was born unto trouble tribulations and disappointments, for my days have been as prone to trouble as the sparks are to fly upwards. And there are but two things that make me want to stay here in Time's many distempers, and that is my poor little poverty-stricken family and the poor little saints who are scattered here in this mountain country .They are but few in number and poor in the world, and yet I am knit to them in love.

Brother Respess, I submit this to your kindness, hoping it may find grace in your sight. I am your poor little unworthy brother in hope of the resurrection of life eternal.

State Road, N. C.
William R. Welborn

P .S.—Dear Brother Respess :—It is at the request of several of your readers that I have written this short sketch of my life and experience for

your precious paper, THE GOSPEL MESSENGER; please give it a corner in your precious paper.

The Gospel Messenger—May 1887

It is now the seventh day of December, 1906. Forty-two years ago a council met at my former home in Herrick, Bradford Co., Pa., in accordance with the request of the Middletown and Wallkill Church, in Orange Co., N.Y., to consider the question of ordaining me to the gospel ministry. On account of the inability of my father and mother to travel a distance, the meeting was appointed at our home, about two hundred miles from the church of which I was a member. Of the six ministers who constituted the presbytery only one is now living. Elder Gilbert Beebe was the moderator. The examination and a sermon occupied the first day. The ordination services were on the 8th. The weather was pleasant, and there was a very large congregation both days. What my feelings were at the time, a mingling of hopes, doubts, fears, zealous desires, I would like to tell, but cannot. As I look back how short the time seems, which would have appeared so long to look forward to at that time. How little I thought I should live forty-two years. Though the time seems so short to look back to, yet how few of those who were present then are living now; of those who were the council I do not remember of but two now living. Of my father's family and the families of two brothers living near, there were eleven who were members of the church at Vaughan Hill in 1865; only two of these are still on earth: my sister Bessie and myself. What questionings were mine at the time as to whether the Lord had called me to preach, and what questionings many times since. I was Baptized on the second Sunday in June, 1864, by Elder Beebe, in Middletown, N.Y., and from that time I had but one subject to talk about, and that was salvation by grace. But it was near the last of August that I was told by the Spirit that I must preach. I had listened to a sermon in which there was no gospel, but error from beginning to end. My desire was to get up in that congregation and tell the people that this that they had heard was not the truth; that if they knew what the text meant it would comfort them. I had been a member there, and would have felt no hesitation in speaking, but the Spirit suffered me not; but in an instant it was made known to me that I must preach. My one desire was (and has been ever since) to go and tell to all the ends of the earth that salvation is of the Lord. I wrote Elder Beebe, and asked him what such feelings meant. He replied that the church had thought I had a call to preach, and was waiting till the Lord should let me know it. Well, sometimes I feel that my work has been of the poorest kind, not worthy to he called preaching, and

Sometimes it seems to me that it has been a glorious work, and that all the praise belongs to Jesus, the dear Savior, who has at times filled my heart with love to him, and has filled my soul with laughter and my tongue with singing. But O, the dark nights, the terrible afflictions, the awful desolations of soul that have been mine to experience; they cannot be told. During these years I have traveled much, and spoken often, and met many kinds of people, and experienced many wonderful things. There are many of these experiences and incidents that would be of interest, I know, to the brethren, and I have sometimes thought I would try to tell some of them, and recount some of the circumstances of my travels, and tell of the ministers I have intimately known. I know of only one now who has been ordained a longer time than I. How poor appears my work, and myself. Truly I can say I feel to be the least of all saints, if I am one. But how sweet is the fellowship of the saints to me. If I ever write of these things I hope it will surely be by the direction of the Lord, so that I may write nothing that will hurt the cause of truth or any of the Lord's people.

Silas H. Durand

MATTHEW 5:8.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

No subject of the Bible holds more interest than this. Perhaps, we do not understand much about it. I am sure that I do not, and I realize how presumptuous it is for me to think I could teach anyone how to pray. This world professes to teach that and some theologian has gone to the trouble to write a book called "God's Minute." In the book he has a short prayer for each day in the year. Not being able to give you that many in advance. While I do not know that I have ever prayed, and if I have that I will ever be blessed to do so again it does not mean that it is not gospel subject. If it is, it certainly is profitable, under spiritual guidance, for our discussion and examination.

By way of encouragement to the dear saints I want to say to you that none of our leaders have a monopoly on prayer. Although prayer is a gift it is not one we can use any time men call on us to pray. If I am mistaken about it do not follow me, but I believe that any minister feels a great hesitancy offering prayer at times.

Prayer is, after all, a close-up with God, a veritable talking face to face. When we are really and truly given to see our sins, it is enough to cause a trembling in body and spirit to ask God for anything, seeing that it is the prayer of a righteous man that avails anything. In this connection let me say that I have impressions to pray just like I trust I do to preach. At these times it is the sweetest yielding and compliance to his blessed command

as it is in standing in the pulpit and preaching the doctrine of grace. Trying to pray is like trying to preach-it is mighty hard work-in fact it cannot be done. While trying to pray, we invariably are in the flesh and our object is selfish, begging for the things that we want. But that is not all, trying to accomplish a thing not only shows a lack of how but of what and why. I believe we pray as we preach and live and die, depending on the eternal fixed purposes of God. It is in faith that we come to him at all. This faith, at all times, is the substance of the things hoped for. This has never been changed and, although it moved Abel, Daniel, Jacob, Paul and all those gone before and will move every communicant that is yet to come, it is as unchangeable as God. In every step of our obedience to his commandments, it is faith that goes before, revealing the eternal perfection and sovereign purpose of God in disposing of all created things. Faith does not go before, bringing to light the unfinished things of God, as though he was a little undecided as to his rule of conduct, but it is the substance of our hope.

Now come hither little child and let us look at our hope. We do not hope that we will exercise faith to the end, but we hope that God eternally arranged for our salvation in Jesus Christ. Our prayer is not an effort to change God, but it is because he is unchangeable. The world (that is, the ungodly world) may swerve and tauntingly tell us that if they believed everything was fixed they would not pray, we know better things than that. We know our eternal destiny is fixed and that all our spiritual blessings are as settled and stable in the mind and purpose of God as is his choice. Furthermore, we are assured that he has given us all things pertaining to life and godliness. It is according to this knowledge that every prayer is uttered. If we must try to pray then we must guess as to what to pray for. Guessing, we are told is all right when it hits, but unless we ask according to his will, our will would, if permitted to pray, ask for things that would forever remove us and land us away from every providential and parental blessing. If we must try to pray (that is, if we must pray more often, or more fervently) then we must guess as to what to pray for and, on that conditional basis, we would have a right to ask why if it was not answered.

A prayer is not something excited in you by the wisdom of this world. Just think of the prayer (that is, words called prayers) addressed to God (as they suppose) for favor in converting the heathen. That is a conditional, selfish, carnal utterance. If it was asked according to the will of God he would certainly grant it, because God answers that kind. We sometimes are motivated in like manner in the dear old church. We get over zealous and ask God promiscuously to bring the regenerated

into the church. He does not answer this kind of prayer because it is not prayer.

This is a wonderful subject, it is a blessing from God. We cannot pray unless blessed in spirit, yet the apostles commanded us to pray. We are told that we ought to pray. Now we realize that it is a gift from God. Would God give us a gift to ask that any will be done except his own? Is not all prayer a complacent acknowledgement of his will being done in heaven and in earth? Having been taught his sovereignty, and being kept by his power do we not have a desire to see and feel the doing of that will?

Elder W. D. Griffin (Sept., 1947)

"Who loved me, and gave himself for me." -- Galatians ii. 20.

Many of the saints of God may not be so highly favoured as to take into their lips Paul's language of strong, personal assurance. They may hope, and at times may rise beyond a hope, into a sweet confidence, by the shining in of the Sun of righteousness, that the Son of God has loved them, and given himself for them. But the strength of Paul's persuasion and the full expression of his confidence so far outstrip both their assurance and the language, that many real saints of god confess they come short both in heart and tongue. Yet their coming short of this blessed certainty as an enjoyed reality in the heart, and as a declared confidence by the mouth - for conscience and tongue must move together where God works - does not affect the fact. Clouds and mists sometimes obscure the sun, but they do not blot him out of the sky. So the mists and fogs of unbelief may obscure the Sun of righteousness, yet they do not blot him out of the spiritual hemisphere. He still loved you and gave himself for you who believe in his name, though you may not be able to rise up to the faith of Paul, or speak with the same fulness of assurance. The bud has the same union with the vine as the branch, but not the same strength of union; the babe is as much a member of the family as the grown-up son, but has not the same knowledge of its relationship; the foot is as much a part of the body as the eye or the hand, though it has not the same nearness to the head, or the same honours and employments.

Elder J.C. Philpot

St. John 20:29.

Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

PSALM 119: 129--133.

Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them.

The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments.

Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.

Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 2005

Vivian Viverette - NC 5.00
Chlonetia Thompson - VA 3.00
Patsy Lankford - LA 25.00
Buford Thompson - VA 5.00
Angie Cox - NC 3.00
Freida Dennis - FL 5.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER GLADYS MCCOOL

It is with great sadness that I attempt to write the obituary of our Dear Sister Gladys McCool.

Sister Gladys died October 18, 2005 at the age of 90. She is survived by two daughters, Sister Lorene Young and Fannie (Phillip) Taylor and one son Harold (Diane) McCool, two brothers Lloyd (Virginia) Crowley and Robert (Bobbie) Crowley, eleven grandchildren, thirty-three great grandchildren and two great-great grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband Dewey McCool, one daughter Jannie Coleman, and brothers Jonas, Horace, and James Crowley.

Sister Gladys was a member of Zion Primitive Baptist Church. She believed in the True and Living Sovereign God who works all things after the pleasure of His own will and her Hope was Christ Jesus and His finished work. Although health problems kept her from church she was blessed by God to profess her Hope to the end.

Her funeral was conducted at Zion Church on October 21, 2005 by her pastor Elder James Pugh and her grandsons Elder Tim McCool and Chris McCool. Her earthly remains were laid to rest beside her late husband in the adjoining cemetery. In Hope of the Resurrection, may we be reconciled to the will of God.

Written by one who loved her and was always blessed to hear her speak of Hope.

Elder James Pugh

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

Faith adds new charms to earthly bliss
And saves us from its snares:
It yields support in all our toils,
And softens all our cares.

The wounded conscience knows its power
The healing balm to give;
That balm the saddest heart can cheer,
And make the dying live.

Unveiling wide the heavenly world,
Where endless pleasures reign,
It bids us seek our portion there;
Nor bids us seek in vain.

Faith shows the promise fully sealed
With our Redeemer's blood;
It helps our feeble hope to rest
Upon a faithful God.

There still unshaken, would we rest
Till this frail body dies;
And then on faith's triumphant wing
To endless glory rise.

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EDITORIAL

Elder R. H. Campbell

As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they might glory in your flesh.

But God forbid that I should glory, save in our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." (Gal 6:12-15)

The above scripture, in (vs 12) describes, very accurately, the modern day churches in the world today, as I understand them, although it was written almost two thousand years ago, in another era, another time when the church was young and many of the Christians were still living who were alive when Christ walked upon face of the earth. We normally tend to think of that age as being a very pristine time, when the doctrine and practices were pure and void of the errors that have crept into the church since then. This, sadly to say, is not true however, for Jesus himself, while still here among his disciples, and speaking unto the Jews who were the established religion of that day, charged them, (Matt. 23:15) ***"Woe unto you. Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves."***

This is very much the same situation that we see in most of the churches around us today; as they raise their billions of dollars and encircle the earth to, as they say, carry the gospel to the heathen. In the first place, you cannot carry the gospel anywhere, it is not merchandise that can be packaged and dispensed at

will, it can only be revealed by the Holy Ghost, and he does not have to carry it anywhere, he is everywhere, and was there for a long time before the missionary ever got there. If God has children in those foreign places, he is the one who must reveal the truth to them, whether there is a church, missionary or anyone else there or not. The Lord stated, in the new covenant, *(Heb 8:11) "And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."*

These scriptures are evidence that the man, in nature, is the same, in all ages of time, that he was when driven from the Garden of Eden in the beginning. He is still subject to the vanity which causes him to desire to walk his own way, build his own air castles, or empires, whether it is concerning the things of this world, or the things of a spiritual nature. This characteristic is what is being demonstrated in the verses above in Paul's day, and we see it evidenced today in many of the churches of the modern world. There is an old saying that, when you begin to vary from the truth: the farther you travel, the further you get from the truth, and the evidence today has proven that old adage to be true.

The natural man will sanction any doctrines, adopt any traditions or accept any practices that will add to their numbers, and therefore, build themselves up in the eyes of mankind. Their desire is to be leader of a much larger organization, with all of its prestige and privileges, and receive glory from their fellowman. To my own personal understanding of the situation, these do not desire, nor do they claim to suffer the persecution of the cross, for it is an undesirable characteristic to them in this modern day and age. In this day everything must be pleasing to the natural mind of man, and it is to this end that they direct their efforts in time and money. They seek words that are to be pleasing to the ear, attractive to the ego of man, and they will avoid the harsh reality of the cross, and all of the afflictions that accompany it.

One will see, appreciate and glory in the cross of Christ, only when they are given to see and realize the beauty and power in it, knowing what was accomplished, and are made to see and to feel that it was in their behalf, that it was for the dead alien sinners, such as they see themselves to be. They must first be made to see what they were by nature, and understand that it took this sacrifice, the very Son of God, to redeem them from the just condemnation that they are under, as the son of Adam. They feel themselves to be, as Paul said that he felt to be, the chiefest of sinners, in their own eyes.

The scriptures say, *(II Cor 6:17) "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto*

you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." and yet seemingly their desire and practices are to bring all of the ways of the world into the church, so that there is no suffering for the cross, nor any lack of the pleasures in those things which are so appealing to the flesh. They are not crucified unto the world, nor is the world crucified unto them: for their goal is to appeal directly to the inhabitants of the world, as the source of converts to be added to their fold, and then they will say, see how God is adding to his church daily, as the results of their efforts. This is not how God worked in the former days, and it is not how he adds to the church in this day and age. His method is by calling each one individually, without the assistance of any man or a committee composed of their peers. There is no evangelistic revival; to stir the emotions of the natural man, no great display of the things which appeal to the eyes and ears of the crowds and claiming that it is the Spirit of God at work in their midst. God's work is in the heart of the creature, not an outward display designed to persuade man to join them by carnal reasoning. It is today, even as it was in Elijah's day, God did not come in mighty display of his wrath, in the great strong wind, nor the earthquake or the fire, but, after the fire a still small voice, and Elijah responded to the still small voice. God's coming unto his people is a very solemn, sober, personal, and soul searching experience, and it is effective only to the one being so exercised.

This experience is unknown to the so called religious world in these days, because the modern world, with it's complete lack of moral principles, the flood of obscene actions and practices which are so readily accepted by a proud and boasting "enlightened generation," which is no longer bound by the traditions of their fathers. They cannot understand the truths as contained in the scriptures, because they are spiritually discerned and man it trying to interpret them with his natural reasoning, and this cannot be done. *(I Cor 1:18) "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."* The same information that is foolishness unto some, and salvation unto others, is because only the chosen vessels of mercy have been given the understanding by which the scriptures may be rightly interpreted. This same dilemma has been the downfall of man in the flesh, in all ages, and will continue to be among those who are not taught of God.

(II Thess 2:12) "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.", is witnessed

by the prophet Habakkuk in his day, referring to the evil practices of the natural man, *(Hab 1:14-17) "And makest men as the fishes of the sea, as the creeping things, that have no ruler over them? They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag: therefore they rejoice and are glad. Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous. Shall they therefore empty their net, and not spare continually to slay the nations?"* Is not that the same vain underlying characteristic of man, being exhibited in the text above, that we witness in the world around us today? The ambitions and lust of the natural man are exerted toward the building of a memorial to God, one of their own design and fashion, but it is not according to the pattern that is laid down in the scriptures. They worship the work of their own hands, striving to add to their borders, in any manner that they can, and then glorying in the results, as though this manner of deception had the approval of God.

There is another manner of people, however, that can not and will not, accept these teachings and practices, because, they have been taught of God, of the vanity and foolishness of these schemes. I say schemes, and not doctrines: for they are but the devices of the natural man to deceive, and to ensnare the world with their social programs designed to appeal unto it's, imagined, self esteem. Those who will not follow their teachings, are referred to in the subject text as, *"a new creature"*. These have been born of the Spirit of God, and have been given the desire and the ability to rightly discern the word of truth, sift the wheat from the tares, feast on the pure and unadulterated word of God, which is that pure language which God promised unto a poor and afflicted people. This is their delight, and they will follow it all the days of their life because God's calling is not on a trial and error basis, *(Rom 8:30) "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Zeph. 3:9) "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."* They are all called with the same holy calling, and will come forth speaking this pure language as evidence of that fact; although they may not be the first to notice it, those who have been so blessed will recognize it immediately. These are the ones referred to, by Moses, in the song that God told him to teach to the people just prior to his death, *(Deut 32:8-9) "When the Most*

High divided unto the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob the lot of his inheritance."

This distinction was also made manifest by God's judgment of the Serpent, for his beguiling of Eve in the Garden of Eden, when He said, (*Gen 3:15*) ***"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shall bruise his heel."*** The seed of the woman are those who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. God placed enmity between, the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent, and that enmity continues to exist, and will, as long as the world stands, and there can never be any bonds of love and fellowship between them.

The illustrations of this separation, by God, of his creation into two manner of people, are emphasized many times in the, normal course of the scriptures: the accounts of Cain and Abel, Isaac and Ishmael, the elect and the non elect, the carnal and the spiritual are but a few of them. The natural man is described, by Paul, in, *(Eph 2:12)* ***"That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope and without God in the world:"*** and the spiritual man, the new creature, has been born of the Spirit of God, and worships him in Spirit and in truth; Jesus said, God is a Spirit and they that worship, must worship him in Spirit and in truth. The apostle Paul states this, in his epistle to the church at Ephesus, *(Eph1:4)* ***"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."***

Those that have been so chosen, are as the three Hebrew children, when they were commanded to fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up and commanded that all men worship it. Their reply was, *(Dan 3:17-18)* ***"If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou has set up."*** These, in this day, will not join in with the idol worshippers because, they cannot, they have been made to see and understand the truth, and therefore recognize the fallacy of the doctrines of the world which are repugnant to them. They all see and know that the gods of this world, exist only in the minds of man, and they will have no part of that, for *(Psalm 115:4-8)*

"Their idols are silver and gold, the work of man's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not, eyes have they, but they see not, ears but they hear not, noses have they but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not, feet have they but they walk not; neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them."

The apostles on the day of Pentecost were all of one accord, and in one place, and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting, and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost and they began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Those who witnessed this occurrence on the day of Pentecost were amazed and said, how can this be? For, we each hear them in our own tongue, wherein we were born. This was the beginning of the true church, as we know it, and it has continued, unchanged, down to the present time, and will do so until the end of time, when an even more grand and glorious era will begin, for all of the saints of God.

The truth as preached on the day of Pentecost, after Christ's resurrection, is foolishness to the natural man; even as it was to the strangers on that occasion: they could not understand it because it is a foreign tongue to the unlearned, for it is in the pure language of the Spirit. It is contrary to anything that they have ever heard, or, have been taught by the world, and therefore they have no accurate basis of comparison that they can use in the interpretation of it. There were some who did hear, and understand, and the same is true today, for it takes the same degree of revelation by the Holy Ghost, for the speaker to declare the truth, that it does for the hearer to discern the truth of that which is being declared.

This is indeed a great comfort and consolation to the children of God when they have been given an ear to hear, the heart to understand and the mind to believe this preaching, for the first time, and this is the greatest evidence that they will ever have, that they are among the chosen few who have been given faith, by the grace of God, which will save them to the uttermost. They had heard the sound of the preaching before, but were not able to understand or get any comfort from it, and they realize that the change was not the results of anything that they have done, and they begin to understand that it is by faith, which is a gift from God, and that it has been given unto them.

The sovereign way and manner in which they have received it, causes them to believe this is in accordance with the revealed terms of

the new covenant which God made with his children as described in, *(Heb 8:10-11) "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me from, the least to the greatest."* At this most wonderful time, in their experience, there is no other plausible explanation that they can give, for the mysterious way and manner that this change came over them. They were not seeking it, nor did they anticipate it. It just came upon them suddenly, and they began to speak and think, in that pure language that God promised to give unto them that love Him, and it is given so that they may all call upon him, and serve him with one consent.

This is the experience and the calling of all of those who are designated in the above text as, *"a new creature"*, and elsewhere in the scriptures as, the elect, the saints of God, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation and a peculiar people, and it is always, that they may worship God in Spirit and in truth. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him indeed and in truth, and since man is not born a spiritual being, he must be changed before he can worship God in the Spirit. Jesus first told Nicodemus that except a man be born again, he could not see the kingdom of heaven, and therefore, worship Him in the Spirit, so, this change that has come over the natural man is his new birth.

This happened to the apostles when the day of Pentecost was fully come, and to the apostle Paul, on the road to Damascus, and each time that it occurs in the life of an individual, their walk, talk and countenance undergoes a drastic change; they love things that they were unaware existed before, and they hate the things that they had once loved and delighted in. They are indeed, a new creature, and the apostle Paul describes their change, in this manner, *(II Cor 5:17-18) "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given unto us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."* You see, their experience is much more than just, an acceptance of the fact that you believe that there is a God, or make a decision to follow him: they are made a new creature, and are made ambassadors for

Christ who are to come forth and witness unto all, whether they realize that they are doing it or not. Their walk, talk and very countenance will witness to the fact that they are a different person from what they had formerly been.

When ones reads these scriptures for the first time, after their experience, it causes him to weep for joy, sing praises unto his holy name, because right at that moment, they feel to know that they have indeed been born again. They may be made to question it from time to time, later on, but they are also made to believe as each new experience builds, line upon line, line upon line; precept upon precept, precept upon precept; here a little, and there a little, that it will, according to the promises of God, result in a finished work that God is making in their life. *(Phil 1:6)* ***"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."*** They can hardly contain themselves for the sheer joy and praise that floods their heart and they feel that it will be permanent, but alas, will learn by bitter experience, that this will not be the case. They must be shown, time and time again, that they are not directing their own steps, but must ever depend on that same source for strength and courage to enable them to run, with patience, the race that has been set before them.

Jesus' words, *(John 16:32-33)* ***"Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world,"*** These are some of the most comforting of the words to be found in the scriptures, because, they are referring to the Lord's people, the new creature, and all of the things that are done, for their sake. Jesus was left alone, of any human support, because man could not be of any help there. Man could only stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, and His children see it in this day, by the same faith He said that he spoke these things unto them that they might have peace, and this is when they are given the mind of the Spirit. *(John 14:26-29)* ***"But the comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said to you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled neither let it be afraid. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye love me, ye will rejoice, because I***

said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it come to pass, that when it come to pass, ye might believe." They will have tribulation as long as they dwell in these bodies of flesh, and to this they can all attest, but he said, be of good cheer I have overcome the world and he overcame it for them, the new creature, that is dwelling in this old man in this low ground of sin and sorrow.

If the above scriptures teach lessons that you have learned in your own personal experiences in this life, then you are one of those designated as a new creature in Christ, and one to whom all of the promises of God apply. You may seriously question this, at times, but the problem is that you cannot see the forest for the trees. You are so surrounded by the sins in your life, that you cannot see that these things too, are but a part of the all things that work together for good, to them who love the Lord. The trees are the thing nearest you, your sins, the daily afflictions which abide you, thorns in the flesh, if you will, while the forest is the whole picture which includes your being called, quickened, born again, the heartfelt love for God, the love and fellowship of the brethren which is the most precious possession to each one of the poor and afflicted saints: the trial of you faith that you face daily, as you travel the journey that has been laid out before you. When given to consider all of these things which make up your life, your hope and faith, you are not nearly as doubtful as you felt to be, when you are in darkness for a season.

The beauty and glory, which you behold in the countenance of the brethren belies the sin and corruption that dwells within them. When Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." I believe, that he meant a light which shines unto all that are in the house, one which comes from within the heart of the individual, and surely it is the glory of the Spirit of God that dwells there. The individual is unaware that the light is shining unto his brethren, for he cannot see it. (II Cor 4:6) "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." There is an old adage which says, the beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and is seen because of the love that dwells there. This love first begins when they became new creatures in Christ, and is beheld only by others that have been like blessed. You will understand all of these things, only if you are one of those who have experienced this miracle of the grace of God in your life.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

12-7-05

Dear Elder Terry,

We look forward to reading the Signs. Many thanks to all who work so faithfully to publish it.

Enclosed is a check for two years renewal and a small gift to use as needed.

Love and sweet fellowship to the household of faith.

Garlon and Dora Vick

VOICES OF THE PAST

SPIRITUAL SONGS ACCORD WITH GOD'S STRINGED INSTRUMENTS JANUARY, 1953

MY LATE visit with the editors and many readers of the *Signs* in Virginia, Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania and other places has stimulated me with a greater desire to write to the Household of Faith through this medium. The visit with the Welsh Tract, Hopewell, and other historical meeting places of God's children through the centuries past has peculiarly affected me. It is inspirational to learn that the same principles of Truth have been loved, cherished and contended for by His people these hundreds of years in the same meeting place.

While attending Salisbury Association held at Delmar, Delaware, the text of this article began to arrest my attention. God willing, I shall use Isaiah 38:20, as basis for my remarks: ***"The Lord was ready to save me; therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord."*** We shall attempt to prove that the songs of God's people are their spiritual experiences and the stringed instruments are the harp of God, the hearts of His people, the Bible, etc. We want to show that a psalm or an hymn is not necessarily a spiritual song to one of God's people at all times. We expect to show that the stringed instruments under consideration are not pianos, organs, or any like instrument made and tuned by man-which will get out of tune-but, that which God has tuned, strung, and prepared, which never gets out of tune. Re-read the paragraph above and may it become fixed in your mind before we meditate further upon the text. Read Isaiah 38, and then prayerfully consider the following meditations.

The expression found in the 20th verse was made by Hezekiah, King of Judah, after undergoing critical experiences brought about by the Lord dealing with him. Even though he be king he was brought low by the Lord. He was sick until

death, and word came to him from the Lord. Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die and not live, (Isa. 38:1) . We read a similar command in Amos 4:12 to Israel, " Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." I am persuaded a similar command comes to every spiritual Israelite in the beginning of an experience of grace. When we try to cope with the situation in trying to set our house in order in preparation to meet God, we find ourselves as miserable failures in the attempt. This forces us to pray to God for mercy. Surely Hezekiah's attempts were in vain to set his house in order and he was made to depend upon God for this. We would all sink into death were it not for what the Lord adds unto our life. Our life is sinful, He adds holiness; our life is unstable; He adds stability; our life is earthly, He adds heaven; our life is ungodly. He adds godliness. We come to the end of our path. He leads us into a new path. We die, He adds life. Dear trembling child, has the Lord added unto your life? Our life is unstrung and untuned. He tunes and strings our hearts to sing His praise! This must have been Hezekiah's experience as he said, ***"The Lord was ready to save me."***

We learn that we cannot save ourselves. It is not the question: am I ready for the Lord to save me? But, is the Lord ready to save? All things are so ordered and arranged, tuned and strung by the Lord that events so fall in perfect order and rhythm that a fixed time, place, and circumstance comes for the Lord's salvation to be made manifest to each and every one of the trophies of His amazing grace.

Because the Lord was ready to save me- ***"we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments."*** We read in Ephesians 5:19, of, ***"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."*** What were the songs Hezekiah had under consideration Psalms and hymns would include all compositions written with natural verse to be used in religious worship. When any hymn or psalm is in perfect harmony with our experience and feelings, it becomes our spiritual song. Paul says in 1st Cor. 14:15, ***"I will sing with the understanding also."*** There is a natural song and there is a spiritual song. There are experiences that are natural and there are experiences that are spiritual. The song that is natural is the old song and the song that is spiritual is that the Lord adds by putting into your mouth the new song. We would like to contrast the old song and the new.

The old song is sung in the key of man-man being the central keynote. The new is sung in the key of Jesus Christ-He being the foundation key. If you want to hear a discord, try singing the old and the new together. They will not harmonize, for the old song praises man and the new song praises God. The old

sings of the ability of man and the new song proclaims man's inability. The old song utters salvation is hinged upon the volition and works of the creature, while the new bases the creatures salvation upon the volition and work of the three-one God. The new song being opposed to the old prevents the harmonization of the two.

You will note that Hezekiah says, my songs. This means his own personal spiritual experiences. Unless the Lord has added to your individual life you cannot sing these songs. There are more spiritual experiences than one. Sometimes you sing, ***"All things work together for good."*** Sometimes you feel, ***"All things are against me."***

Sometimes you are asking, ***"Is God gone forever!"*** Sometimes you say, I know that my Redeemer liveth." Sometimes you sing, ***"Jesus, Lover of my soul"***; and at other times, "I am a stranger here below." Sometimes you ask, ***"My God, why hast thou forsaken me!"*** Sometimes you sing, ***"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want."***

The stringed instruments these new songs perfectly accord with are the instruments God has prepared, strung, and tuned. The word 'instrument', is translated from a word meaning "prepared." Our songs are sung to that which God has prepared. We find recorded in Proverbs 16:1, ***"The preparations of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord."*** When the Lord strings and tunes the hearts of His people there is perfect harmony in their experiences. When your experience harmonizes with the experience of Hezekiah, Jacob, Paul, and others whose lives are recorded in the Bible, it is singing your songs to the stringed instruments. When your experience harmonizes with the fundamental principles expressed in the Scriptures, and held sacred by your brethren, it *accords* with the stringed instruments.

Pianos and organs are made, strung, and tuned by man. These may be damaged, get out of tune, and the strings broken. Natural musical instruments only give forth natural mechanical tones. The instruments under consideration give forth spiritual godly melody. The command to the Church is to, speak to yourselves, singing, not, to play a mechanical instrument. The question should be, ***"Is our singing to accord with the mechanical instruments or spiritual instruments? Is our singing to be in accord with the piano, organ, or heart? I am persuaded the singing should be in harmony with our hearts that God has prepared, tuned and strung; thus, making melody in the heart."*** When brethren are blessed to come together and sing with the Spirit and understanding in sweet fellowship and harmony it is much greater and sweeter melody than the best of singing without the Spirit accompa-

nied by the best mechanical musical instruments. The accompaniment of mechanical musical instruments is pleasing to the natural ear. The accompaniment of the Spirit and understanding is pleasing to the spiritual ear.

We read in the Psalms of the harps of God, and also in Revelations. According to Josephus and what we can find in the Scriptures, these harps and ten strings. We can call you attention to Psalms 33:2,3, "Praise the Lord with harp; sing unto Him with psaltery and an instrument of ten strings. Sing unto Him a new song. We want to quote the following stanzas from the hymn "There Is A Fountain":

Lord, I believe thou hast prepared
(Unworthy though I be)
For me a blood-bought free reward-
A golden harp for me.

'Tis strung and tuned for endless years
And formed by power divine,
To sound in God the Father's ears No other name but thine.

Hezekiah stated in the same chapter from which the text of this article was taken, "He hath both spoken unto me and himself hath done it" (Isa. 38:15). Here is a double. He commanded *"Set thine house in order,"* and He performed the command Himself by setting it in order. He works both the will and the do. Children of God receive *"of the Lord's hand double" (Isa. 40:2).* Scores of doubles come to our mind that neither time nor space will permit us to mention. Suffice it to suggest that the harp of God consists of a number of double strings. If the harps used back at that time under the ceremonial worship had ten strings, the spiritual harp must have five doubles which results in ten. Let us turn to the 8th chapter of Romans to find these five principles of the doctrine briefly stated. As we read them let us keep in mind that He has both spoken and Himself hath done it. Now, *"For whom He did (1) foreknow, He also did (2) predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also (3) called and whom He called, them He also (4) justified: and whom He justified, them He also (5) glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:29-31).*

This foreknowledge is an intimate relationship with His people even before the manifestation of His decrees in time. He chose them in His Son. *"Thine eyes did see my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there were none of them:" Psalms 139:16).* He knew them in eternity; they shall know

Him in time. He predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son. He has ordered, arranged, and fixed all things to work together for the fulfillment of this grand purpose. See Romans 8:28. He calls and they shall answer. He performs the double as the word that goes forth out of His mouth returns not to Him void, but accomplishes that which He pleases and prospers in the thing whereunto He sends it. He decreed the justification of His people and He justifieth them by sending His Son into the world to pay the penalty for their sins, thus satisfying justice. The just bore the sins of the unjust that justice divine might be perfectly satisfied. He not only justified them but also glorified them through the divine righteousness of His own Son. ***"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled (justified) to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled (justified) to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved (glorified) by His life" (Rom. 5:10).*** We are glorified by the imputed righteousness of His Son. These five wonderful things are both spoken and performed by God the Father, Son, and Spirit. These ten strings ring clear the melodious son of praise to Him. This ten-stringed harp becomes ours when it pleases God to give it to us that we receive it with praise and thanksgiving. Then we are harpers harping with their harps. See Revelation 14:2. We have the harps of God (Rev. 15:2). We sing to the accomplishment of these harps in the ***"house of the Lord," Zion, the new Jerusalem, the Church, or with the children of God. We sing "all the days of our life."*** Sometimes the day is gloomy because of the clouds of trouble and despondency which hides the view of the brightness of the Son of Glory. Sometimes the day is cold because of the felt sense of our unworthiness. We experience cloudy and bright days; but, they are all days because it takes the light to manifest the darkness that is in our heart and the coldness in our thoughts. Nevertheless the expression of days in the plural shows that there are night times in our experience.

We hang our harps upon the willows by the river, Babylon, during the nights of our experience (Psalms 137). We have no use or regard for the Lord, nor Zion nor His people during the night. We are then resting in our own carnality and we are at ease. We do not think upon Zion nor His people. We forget Zion as is intimated in the expression, ***"We wept when we remembered Zion" (Ps. 137:1).*** When the dwellers in Babylon require of us in mirth to sing one of the songs of Zion, we are made to realize we cannot sing the Lord's song in a strange land. We must be brought again out of Babylon into Zion before we have any more use for the harp. It is not in the night that we feel unworthy,

unfit, and so wreteched but on dark and cloudy days. In the night we have no feeling, no sense of guilt, no deep concern over our spiritual welfare, neither any regard for His house. It is when we are awakened in the morning that we are made to weep because of our forgetfulness and unconsciousness of His providential care over us. It is when we are awakened by His Spirit before the rising of the Son of glory. Thanks be to God, when the Son rises and we see the brightness of His face whose rays warm and calm our troubled breasts, fear is driven from our souls and love springs forth. Songs of praise again are sung to His matchless and glorious name for His amazing grace toward us.

You notice that Hezekiah says "our life" in the text. It seems to the natural mind that he should have said, "my life" or "our lives" to have been consistent with the proper usage of language. Let us see. The Lord added unto his life. My life had its end as my life when the Lord added His life to my life. My natural life ended as only a natural life when the Lord added that which is spiritual to my life. The life of a child of God prior to regeneration (or the addition of the graces of His Holy Spirit) is only a lustful fleshly life. After God adds that which is spiritual it becomes our life. When the Lord adds His Spirit there is set up a dual character in one. This results in a warfare. The flesh so that you cannot do the things that you would, these being contrary one to the other. See Gal. 5:17. What the Lord adds is contrary to that naturally posessed.

One more thought and I shall close. The last night will be when death shall come at the end of our sojourn here.

Then will be the dawning of the final day when we awaken in His likeness and shall be satisfied. There will be no night there but one eternal Day of perfect joy and peace. No cloudy and cold times to mar our peace. There will be no night nor river of Babylon. There will be no hanging of harps in the willows. We will all sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb harmoniously to the harps of God forever and forever.

Elder E.J. Lambert

Reprint from Elder E.J. Lambert's book "Tried In The Furnace" at the request of:

Elder W.W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La 71220

ECCLESIATES 8:6-7.

Because to every purpose there is time and judgment, therefore the misery of man is great upon him.

For he knoweth not that which shall be: for who can tell him when it shall be?

EPHESIANS 1:1, 13.

Having found in our last the family of God as they were chosen in Christ, we now come to the delightful theme of what they were chosen to. The contrast between what we were by nature and practice, to what we were chosen to, is so great our finite minds are carried away in wonder and holy ecstasy. All of the skill of linguists cannot describe the gloom and despair of a soul when sin is revealed in us. Sin, when it is finished, brings forth death, and there is a death at the manifest entrance of sin into our consciousness that cannot be described by tongue or pen. The effort to describe it to one to whom sin has not been revealed, is one of the most futile things among men. The love of God now takes on a meaning that we have never contemplated before. What we were chosen to, and the suffering of the precious Saviour to bring this delightful state about is more that a match for our dull comprehension.

Look upon the theme in our text. The height and length, the breadth and the depth of the love of Christ for His church passes all understanding. Well might the apostle say, *"O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God, how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out". (Romans 11:33).* The love of God as manifested in the love of Christ for the church, can never be described by mortal man -in fact, it is past finding out. The choosing of His people in Christ before the world began is full of nutrition for the hungering and thirsting children of the kingdom. No other name would do; no other personage could measure Up to our sin. My soul is astounded as I stand before the bar of God's judgment. Out of Christ there is not any salvation. Only the righteous have an acceptable standing where sin has abounded. The costliness of our salvation is seen in the crucifixion of our Master. Pilate, in answer to the demands of the high priest for the crucifixion of the Saviour said, *"Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him" (John 10:6).* If there has ever been an execution like unto that, the pages of history are silent about it. That is understandable because He needed only once to die; the offering had to be a perfect one. We, like Barabbas, were guilty, and we the guilty went free, but although Christ had no fault, He was a fit offering for our sins. He did not have any sin, but we did, and He loved us and made our cause as His cause. May the Spirit of the Lord arise in our being, that we understand and be blessed to praise His high and lofty name for coming to earth in a body to suffer, to be mangled, spit upon. Being the son of Mary , who had fallen into sin, being under the rigid, death dealing law of God He came in a body to meet and endure the penalty for our sin,

and yet He was God the conqueror of all the enemies.

Let it be remembered that these things must needs be. The rites and ceremonies and ordinances had to be fulfilled. They could not be passed by. How weak and trifling is that doctrine that would leave one thing missing, one thing unfulfilled, one step, one journey missing from His travels here below. Could it be so, my soul knows, that there being no acceptable sacrifice for sin since He gave up the ghost and died, that the portion of His mission's work unfulfilled would still be charged to me. How beautiful, how gracious, how kind that if I am not deceived, He made my cause as His cause. He came to earth to solve a case that hopelessly involved the sinner, you and I, as each of us hopes, even a case that we never could have won and never could have extricated ourselves from out of it. What a beautiful doctrine. To this end was the covenant of redemption set up from all eternity. That covenant involved Him in coming and making the sinner's cause as His. Whatever our transgression brought upon us, He took that upon Himself; all privation, all sorrow, all His being cut off out of the land of the living. All His coming to the ignominious end that He did was for the purpose of giving poor covenant children a home beyond this vale of sorrow.

However, let me retrogress backwards. In the annals of eternity, His love was so great, so strong, so lasting, that He was ever rejoicing among the inhabitants of the earth, ever delighting in this people, in this family that God chose in Him in eternity and that He was so in agreement and in unity with every single individual of that family, and in support of, and a part of every stipulation of that Covenant that He delighted always in the beneficiaries of that covenant. How my poor heart leaps for joy that such a Being is on the side of sinners (psa. 124); that this is not something that had its beginning among the sons of Adam, but that this is an old arrangement, as old a covenant, as ageless a purpose, as the eternal predestination of God to the end that His Son came down from heaven in behalf of His bride, his people, and that he came down from heaven as God's free gift to the children of men, and that He came to do what He did do, that His life from conception in Mary's womb was laid out, appointed for Him from the cradle to the grave.

My soul is astonished at such a display of sovereign mercy, and to see the eternal fixedness of God in us being chosen in Him, and as a result of that choice of the Father of us in Him, the arrangements of every step, every thought, every action, every bitter draught of vinegar, every taunting and sneering insinuation and reflection on Him and His mother, all, all was for the lifting of Him on high, and that it was for the bringing of poor sinners into such a manifest relationship that they be

brought before Him holy without blame in love.

"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will" O my dear children of God, there are not any dropped stitches or broken links in the salvation of God's people. He made the world and the fullness of it. Now who will dispute that? It is still His world. That likewise is indisputable. He does His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. That is indisputable. He declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure (Isa. 46:10). This is Israel's God and Saviour speaking. Let us keep the record straight; let us settle every doctrinal tenet of faith by His word, for it is forever settled in heaven (Psa. 119:9). When I survey the vast degree of difference betweeen me and my God in the dispensation of His purposes, I am thrown upon His mercy time and time again. I need His counselling grace to teach me that as high as the heavens are above the earth, even so are His ways above my ways. There is a tendency in all of the roving around of my mind, to mark out a way and a channel in which my God can consistently work. If He does not stay in the channel that I have marked out for him, He immediately crosses me. His doctrine becomes heretical; His ways become austere; His ways become partial and tyrannical. This is universal among the children of men, some even going so far , when they read of His ways in the Bible, or hear the rich gospel of grace preached by the hearing of the natural ear, that if He is that kind of God, that they do not want any part of Him. At this juncture of my investigation of God's fulness, let me note this thought, to wit, It may be thought that only dyed-in-the-wool Arminians would say such hard things about God. How wrong we are. The hardest things said about God, about His doctrine, about His children that trust in the arm of Jehovah God, are said by those that come the nearest to saying that God is a Sovereign over all things, worlds, and times.

At every step of the way, in all kinds of situations, under all kinds of circumstances, I need the leadership, the guidance, the superintendence, the keeping power of God's Holy Spirit to keep me meek, submissive, graciously reconciled to His way and His will. No mother's knee is sufficient, no fatherly elder in the church can do it, but enabling us to say, *"Have thine own way Lord,"* is taught alone by the Spirit of God. It is the same fleshly lusting and workings of the nature of men that objects to God choosing one and leaving the other that is to say that He cannot raise up and bring together the mob that crucified our Saviour. The flesh has always objected to God's way, whether it has

to do with some being elected to glory or to His having wicked men do His will. Both are objecting to His right to do what He wills with that which is His alone (Matt. 20:15). Since this question did not stop the carping objections of unbelievers, I am not expecting my expounding of these things to make objecters to the glorious doctrine of God's Sovereignty to suddenly turn and give credence to it. I do not expect it, nor am I out to overcome the objections of creatures that are at variance with God over His ways, but I do write, and I humbly trust that I speak the truth in Christ Jesus our Lord that they, one and all, even everyone that is called by His great name be reconciled to God.

Perhaps I will be criticized for using the word, but I do hope that I am not amendable to men for the words that I use. I use many words not in the King James version of the Bible. And those that object to me using the word theory are just as guilty of using other words not in the lids of the Bible. Thus, the doctrine of God's election is as much spoken against as is His unlimited doctrine of predestination. Anything said against God's predestination of anything is equally to be said against His election of some of Adam's race to eternal glory. Our text tells us so clearly that God had predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to good pleasure of his will.

Undoubtedly, and without reservation, I declare unto you that God's determining act of predestination of some unto the adoption of children, and the leaving out of some who were not adopted, that if it is unfair to predestinate and determine to leave them out, and yet hold them accountable for being left out, that there is not any difference in doing that, and in predestinating the act of men in wickedness and charging their sin to them. I have read all of the sob sister stories that God did not predestinate the wicked going to hell. Whoever heard of God preparing an abode for a class of people and He did not know whether He would have anybody to send there or not? When God chose a certain number to be saved of Adam's race, the very fact that He did not choose them left them for the devil, in the relationship that each of them bore to their earthly father, they were all children of wrath, all exactly alike, the only difference in the two portions of the race of Adam was in the fact that one portion of that race had an everlasting place of rest prepared for them, and the other portion of that race of Adam had a place prepared in the abode of Satan and his angels.

It does not make any difference how much name calling is indulged in, it is still solidly established that there is a great gulf fixed between those for whom the adoption was not carried out for, and no man has ever crossed that gulf and got in among the redeemed of the Lord.

When some are predestinated to a certain end, that end is just as certain as a thing can be, if those that are left out of God's predestination to the adoption of children, or to a home in heaven. Nothing, not one thing at all, be that thing whatever you desire to call it, that can be sure of the outcome of His predestination concerning it, unless the whereabouts, the coming, the going, the movements in every way of the thing left out of the predestination is secured in some way. Yes, I realize what men say. They say, since God foreknows all things, He is able to avert disaster by outwitting the devil. But let us see. If God only foreknew what any given part of His creation knows, if only some things are predestinated, who is establishing the other things which, it is said, God foreknows alright, but that He did not declare, fix, ordain or predestinate. Have we got a third party that makes the things foreknown a certainty? Who is it that makes these things certain? They must be certain by someone because God does not foreknow anything except certainties.

Furthermore, if it was according to the good will of God to predestinate the chosen of God unto the adoption of sons, was it not equally according to the good pleasure of God to leave the others out. What kind of God have we before us? Is He so weak, or so unconcerned or so helpless that really and truly He had rather have predestinated all of them unto the adoption of children, but that His hands were tied? Is that what you are preaching for gospel? Is that kind of spurious fulness to be preached to the Gentiles? The limiting of God as to what and when He does a thing, the sitting in judgment on what He is involved in, and how entangled and involved He becomes if He does things this way instead of that way, is not the fulness that satisfies a poor sinner.

What God does he does it freely. No creature can say unto Him, You doing this or that or the other is wrong. He is under no restraint, nor is He constrained by any of His creation from doing His will in heaven or in earth. He does as He pleases and He is pleased with what He does. I do not blush when I say it; I do not apologize to Him for preaching it, but, by the grace of God, as I humbly hope, I preach that the acts of Joseph's brethren, the acts of Potiphar's wife, and everything else connected with getting Joseph down to Egypt was from God-it all was the direct, the moving, the intentional work and purpose of God. It may be said that I am being childish—and I hope that is true, for the brethren of Joseph, the brethren of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ acknowledged the salvation that they were given came immediately from God meaning it, intending it, to be for their good. Every hungry destitute Israelite in that day, and every hungry and destitute Israelite today rises up and pays homage and

adoration to the God of Israel that according to the good pleasure of His will He sent Joseph a man of sorrow, a man who was hated and persecuted in his own household to save much people alive by the sacrifice of Himself to the evil caprices of them for whom He was laboring in for them to have bread, even the fullness of life forevermore.

May the Lord enable Israel to know that all of our blessings here, and the precious and waiting things ahead for them comes as the fulness of the gospel of the grace of God. God forbid that any one of the family of God ever again raise their voice or lift their pen to ascribe this fulness as coming from us that are filled from time to time on these things. The man of God was received without grumbling by the poor widow woman. They, (she and her son) with Elijah, ate what she had. He was willing to eat the last she had, and she was willing for him to eat the last she had. When he left a promise of fulness was left with her. The barrel of meal wasted not (was not consumed), and the cruise of oil continued. Elijah (God sent or God Himself) promised her that kind of sufficiency, that kind of fulness. I humbly trust that, by the grace of God, I have known that fulness, even that fulness which is in the Lord Jesus Christ among you for more than fifty years, and I hope that as long as I am on this time journey not to know anything more among you other than the fulness, other than the salvation that is in Him, and that of Him and by Him each of us will be brought to His table and fed on it.

Elder W. D. Griffin

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will be held at the Greensboro Church on the fifth Sunday in January.

The Church is located on the corner of Tate and Carr streets in Greensboro.

We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us. We especially invite all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Wayne Edwards, Clerk

REVELATION 7:15-17.

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 2004

Mark Jordon, NC 1.00
Riley Justice, WVA 5.00
Hattie Spencer, VA 5.00
Mildred Duke, SC In memory of
Robert N. Duke 100.00
Kenneth Thompson, VA 5.00
Guy Holley, VA 5.00
Norma Smith, VA 5.00
J.B. Mitchell, VA 5.00
Clinton Ferris, VA 5.00
Garlon Vick, NC 10.00
Willie Shelton, VA 5.00
Noel Lavinder, VA 5.00
Michael Williams, NC 5.00

OBITUARIES

IN LOVING MEMORY OFSISTER MERKLEY MURPHY GILES

At the request of Union Primitive Baptist Church, I will endeavor to write the obituary of our beloved Sister Merkley Murphy Giles. Sister Giles was born August 4, 1923 and passed away August 2, 2005.

Sister Giles was the daughter of the late John William and Hattie Doss Murphy. She married William Clyde Giles December 19, 1947 and to this union they were blessed with a son and a daughter. She was predeceased by two brothers, George Murphy and Percy Murphy, and two sisters, Connie M. Jefferson and Bertie Hill Craddock. She is survived by her son and daughter in law, Frederick James "Jim" and Laura Lee Giles of Buchannan, VA, her daughter, Jonnie G. McDowell of Chatham, VA, two sisters, Sister M. Thompson and Frances M. Giles, one brother, Brother Fred W. Murphy, four grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

Sister Giles asked for a home with Chapel Primitive Baptist Church in October, 1977 and was baptized by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench. She was granted a letter from Chapel Church March, 1993 and moved her membership to Union Primitive Baptist Church August, 1, 1993.

Sister Giles was a believer in salvation by grace and attended her meetings as long as her health permitted. She was always concerned that her Church was taken care of and gave freely of her handmade crafts.

Her graveside service was held August 4, 2005 at Hillcrest Burial Park, Chatham, VA by her pastor, Elder Raymond Goad, and Elder Marvin Brumfield. Her body was laid

to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the glorious resurrection.

She will be greatly missed by her family, church and friends. May all that mourn her loss be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father who never makes a mistake.

Written by: Pam Betterton
Elder Raymond Goad - Moderator
Brother William Midkiff - Clerk

SISTER PAULINE G. SHELTON

With sorrow for our loss but joy for her great gain, we record the death on August 29, 2005 of our beloved sister, Mildred Pauline Gilley Shelton, at the age of 81. Born in Patrick County, Virginia on October 26, 1923, she was a daughter of the late James Harbour Gilley and Alice Spencer Gilley.

On March 27, 1948 she was united in marriage to Vernard Albert Shelton. who preceded her in death about six years ago. To their union were born two children: a daughter. Glenda. who is now Mrs J. Randolph Joyce of Martinsville; and a son. Albert Daryl Shelton, of the home.

Sister Shelton joined Liberty Church by experience in May, 1975 and was baptized the following 1st Sunday by the late Elder Bennie Clifton. For the remaining 30 years of her life she was a loving and faithful member, seldom missing a meeting until she had to care for her husband in the last stages of his life. Her loss is keenly felt by all of us, though by her godly example, we feel that, being dead, she yet speaketh. Her funeral service was conducted at Moody Funeral Home Chapel in Stuart, Va. by her pastor, Elder John Wingfield; after which her mortal body was laid to rest in Liberty Cemetery, beside that of her late husband. We feel that she lived and died in the faith, and now awaits her resurrection in the likeness of her dear Savior and Redeemer.

In addition to her children. Sister Pauline was survived by her son-in-law, Randolph Joyce; one granddaughter, Brittany Joyce; one brother, John Albert Gilley of Bassett; three sisters, Mrs. Barney (Madeline) Adams and Mrs. Myrtle Wright of Patrick Springs and Mrs. Dolly McNabb of Atlanta, Ga.; and several nieces and nephews.

We agreed to prepare three copies of this memorial record: one to be included in our church minutes, one to be given to her family, and one to be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Liberty Church in conference, the 3rd day of September 2005.

Elder John T. Wingfield. Mod.
Deacon Paul A. Puckett, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

Behold the Shepherd's tender care
Towards the sheep that strays!
Throughout the desert waste and bare
He tracks its wandering ways.

So Jesus, while he sojourned here,
Amidst the waste of sin,
'Tis said he travelled far and near,
And sought his sheep therein.

To save from everlasting woe
An object of his care,
Behold him through Samaria go!
A sheep had wandered there.

Though she insults him to his face
It mattered not to him,
Her name was found among that race
That Jesus must redeem.

Amidst this flock, beloved of God,
Manasseh we behold,
And though his fleece was stained with blood
He brought him to the fold.

Yea, from the dregs of sin and woe
Shall grace her trophies wave,
And each to glory safe shall go,
Whom God ordained to save.

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EDITORIAL

For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also In power, and in the Holy Ghost , and in much assurance: As ye know what manner of men we were among you, for your sake. (I Thes 1:5)

Elder R. H. Campbell

The apostle Paul, in this short verse of scripture, is describing his own experience of how he was brought to the knowledge of the truth, and declaring the way and manner that all of the saints of God are brought into the fold. It is accomplished not just by the hearing of the word, because the word even though it is the truth, is foolishness to the natural man and until this same special miracle of grace is wrought in their heart they cannot believe it. This truth was demonstrated, most vividly, to the apostle in his experience on the road to Damascus, and to a certain degree, in the experience of all as they are brought from out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of the gospel. Most all of the apostle Paul's writings are based upon his own experiences even as Jesus told him *(Acts 26:16) "But rise and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee."* This is the complete foundation upon which the whole gospel, which Paul preached was based, and is because as Jesus told him *(Acts 18:10) "For I am with thee,"* and therefore we know that what he preached was the truth.

Our gospel came unto you not in word only, but in power: You will remember, that he was struck down, blinded and heard a voice that came to him with such force and power, that this former blasphemer and persecutor of the way of truth, was astonished and made to tremble as he meekly asked, *"Lord what wilt*

thou have me to do?" He was no longer the proud boaster of his heritage as a Jew: he no longer boasted that he was of the stock of Abraham, an Hebrew of the Hebrews: as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law blameless, because he was made to realize that these things had nothing to do with his change. On a later occasion he declared that he counted all of these things, which he had claimed as blessings in the Jewish religion, he counted but dung that he might know this one who was speaking to him, on this occasion. This is power that made him declare, in the above text, that it came to him, not in word only, but also in power, which power made him a different man, when he arrive in Damascus, from the one who left Jerusalem. He later referred to this in his writings as being, a new creature in Christ, whose old ways are passed away and behold all things have become new, the natural had given way to the spiritual. *(1 John:4:4) "Ye are of God little children, and have overcome them (the antichrist) because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."*

I have always felt that, in this experience, the same lesson was being taught as when Moses was told to take his shoes from off his feet, at the burning bush, because he was standing on holy ground. God appeared to Moses, and told him that He was going to send him in ways that he had never traveled before, he was being called from being a shepherd, to contending with the Pharaoh over the captivity of the children of Israel, and who would eventually deliver the children of Israel out of the hand of the Pharaoh. He told Moses that he was going to lead the Lord's children out of their bondage in the land of Egypt. The apostle Paul was also being sent in a new direction, unto the Gentiles, to lead them in ways that they had not previously known, and teach them the things that Jesus had made known unto him.

A man's feet represent his walk, and Moses was being sent on a mission by God, to go and tell Pharaoh to let his people go, so that they might serve the Lord their God. Paul was to go unto the Gentiles; to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. This similarity is in the fact that Moses and Israel, and Paul and the Gentiles were made to experience a great change in their lives because of their calling of God. Moses' immediate response was that he could not do it because he was of a stammering tongue and could not speak to Pharaoh, he said, *(Exo. 3:11) "And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?"* This has been the response of all when they are called upon to serve

the Lord in a work which is beyond their abilities in the flesh: they do not feel up to the task, and in and of themselves they are not, but Paul was made to say because of the power of the Holy Ghost, *(Phil 4:13) "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." and he boldly proceeded to do as his heavenly Father told him to do, and this same power enables all of his children to perform deeds of greatness because of this same gift, the gift of faith."*

I have always felt that Jesus' washing the feet of his disciples denoted a change in their walk, as he said on one occasion, because I go unto my Father, and their way was to be in ways that they had never known. I know that, Jesus' washing the disciples demonstrates humility, which is to be a basic characteristic of the saints of God, and that they are to serve their brethren, but I also believe that it goes further than that, in that he is cleansing their walk which is accomplished by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. Just prior to his leaving them, here on the earth, he told them *(Matt. 28:19-20), "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen".* As we said above, a man's feet represents his walk, and Jesus is preparing them to go forth, and perform those greater works that he referred to in (John 14:12). He was cleansing their walk as they were to go forth, in the Spirit, proclaiming the gospel to all who were given eyes to see and ears to hear and hearts to understand. Their commission was not to go forth and make sheep, but rather, go forth feeding the sheep and the lambs, making manifest who are the sheep and who are the goats, and to comfort all that mourn because of their sins.

Our gospel came unto you by way of the Holy Ghost: *(John 14:26) "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."* If you have any understanding of spiritual matters it is because that it was given of God, and was not as a result of your studying, meditating on the scriptures, or making a decision to accept the scriptures as the word of God. A man cannot make a decision to believe a thing; for you to believe it, there must be solid evidence, over which you have no control, and in spiritual matters, this evidence must be given of God, by revelation. This is the results of the operation of the Holy Ghost, as Christ told his apostles, *(John 16:15) "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he*

will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

Jesus referred to this change as being born again into a new life, a spiritual life where there was no condemnation to them that are blessed therewith. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made them free from the law of sin and death, as Paul recorded in the eighth chapter of Romans. You will say immediately, well, I am afraid that this cannot be said of me, because I am still a sinner in this body of flesh. That is true, and you will still walk in sin, in the flesh, but you will not serve sin, because now your whole desire is to walk after the Spirit because that is the yearning of your whole heart and soul, and you mourn the weakness and inability of the flesh to accomplish this. You will never attain the state of perfection in this life that you desire, but you will always be seeking to follow along in the footsteps of the flock, showing forth your calling, and to be found rejoicing in the love and fellowship of those who are partakers of this same heavenly calling, walking after the Spirit.

Have no fear, or distress, over the fact that you do not attain your goal, in this life, because this is true of all. The apostle Paul, who was blessed above most men, in his experiencing and understanding the truth, left on record his own testimony lamenting this same fact in the seventh chapter of the book of Romans. He said that he was not able to walk as he desired, he said, ***(Rom. 7:22-23) "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity of sin which is in my members."*** So you see, you are in good company, bemoaning the sin that is in your members, and this testimony was recorded, by the apostle Paul, after he had been made a preacher of the gospel of God. Now this should bring things down to the level on which you can relate, and he is the same one who later declared that he felt to be the chiefest of sinners, (sound familiar) but, then said that he was a pattern to them that should thereafter believe in God to life everlasting, so should we expect anything else. This enables you to rejoice and praise God, for what you believe has been done for you, in bringing you unto the knowledge of this blessed truth, and delivering you from the lost and undone condition, that you were made to realize that you had been in previously. And in much assurance: ***(Heb. 12:1-2) "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily be-***

set us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith: who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God." We tend to see so much sin in our way that we cannot feel the assurance that we have, actually, in our hope of salvation.

The dark threads are as needful, in the weavers skillful hands.
As the threads of gold and silver,
In the pattern he has planned.

It is the complexity of the colors, shades and shadows, which make the weaving beautiful; and this is where you live for if it was all one color, or hue, there would not be the beauty that the whole weaving portrays: and so it is in the experience of the saints, the evidence is there, but you have to step back, with the leading of the Holy Ghost, and see how it all fits together. It is then that you can say, with the apostle Paul *"All things work together for good for them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose"*. The great cloud of witnesses, is the evidence that you have been given, first by your own calling and experience, and then by the empathy for those who have been so exercised in spiritual matters. You have a love and fellowship for them that you did not have before your calling, and yet, you may have known many of them in the flesh, for many years, but there was not the love and fellowship that you now feel. You did not create this love; it came with the calling out of nature's darkness into the light and liberty of the gospel. I believe that this is the one that God created in the beginning, separating the light from the darkness that had prevailed previously, before the light of the sun and the moon: it is the light that shined around the apostle Paul, on the road to Damascus; the light which Jesus told his disciples to let their light so shine that it gives light to all that are in the house, the household of faith that is. It is not seen by the world, because only those who have been given to experience the mystery, beauty and power of that light can understand why this doctrine is so sweet and precious to the saints.

You may spend much time in the darkness, and wonder if you have ever seen the light, but you still keep following along with the flock, because that's where your heart, and your treasure is. The darkness of nature is as perfect and complete, as the light of the liberty of life because they are both the work of God, and he is as perfect in all of his ways. This is true in the experience of those who have been traveling this path for many years, they are just as helpless in the matter as the novice,

man does not exercise the gift; the gift exercises the man. You will try, but, you will find that your best efforts avail you nothing, and then suddenly you are being exercised, and are amazed that you could not before, when you desired it so much. This is why the apostle Paul said in the above verse of scripture, ***"run with patience the race that is set before you"***, it is even as the children of Israel, at the Red Sea; they were in extreme trauma, at the time, and wanted help, right now, but they were told to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. At his own time, deliverance will come, ***(Eccl. 3:1) "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven"***, you cannot hurry it up, nor can you slow it down: so, even as they were told to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, so must you. This race must be run, with much patience, and endurance, but also, with the assurance that your calling is indeed of God, and that he that hath begun a good work in your life will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. (Psa 27:14) ***"Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord."***

I knew a sister who followed in this path for sixty years, who had said originally, that if she remained firm in her faith, that she would know that it was of God, because, she was not able to keep herself, even in the things of nature, much less in spiritual matters. She walked by faith all of those sixty years, and was still fearful that she had run in vain, at the age of ninety. Walking by faith is not seeing your way clearly, for, that would be walking by sight; so, your continuing to walk by faith, exhibits the assurance that you, really have deep down in your heart and soul, that you are in the way.

Jesus said, ***"I am the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." And (Isa 35: 8-10)*** said, ***"and an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be The way of holiness: the unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there: but the redeemed shall walk there: And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."*** The blessings of the redeemed, as describe by Isaiah, are contained in this scripture and were fulfilled in Christ and when he said, ***"I am the way,"*** Christ said, "I am the way" not a way, as being one of many, but the way, the only way, and that highway of which Isaiah was speaking, when he said, it shall be called the way of holiness, and nothing except the redeemed shall walk

there in THE WAY. There is nothing unclean, no lion nor ravenous beast shall walk there, and the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; there shall be nothing that offends, nothing of this world except the redeemed of the Lord, none of the sorrows, sighing and mourning endured because of sin, but rather joy and gladness of heart.

John describes this scene, as follows, *(Rev 14: 1-3) "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth."* The only ones who can sing the song of deliverance are those who have been delivered, even as the children of Israel, who sang the song of deliverance when they saw Pharaoh and his army destroyed by the waters of the Red Sea. They were the sole beneficiaries of the deliverance, and therefore are the only ones who are entitled to sing the song.

This is the eternal hope of those to whom this gospel comes, and it certainly is not, just in word only, it is in power, because it will not let them go, and it is their assurance as Paul said, *(Phil 1:6) "Being confident of this very thing, that he that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."* I like to think of, (Heb 11:1) as saying, *"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for"*, and I do not think that it does any violence to the scriptures to say it this way. Faith which is given of God, is, the blessed assurance that these things are true, and that they do apply to those whom it is given.

May god, through the comfort of his word, and by his mighty power, bless us to live out our lives, and die with the blessed assurance that we will be numbered among that one hundred forty and four thousand, who only, can sing the song of deliverance.

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

PSALM 22: 1-3.

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?

O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent.

But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

CORRESPONDENCE

Jan. 9, 2006

Dear Elder Terry,

The Signs of the Times has been a blessing to my wife and I. We have enjoyed the writings so very much.

I trust the good Lord will continue to bless you with the good paper.

Love in Christ,
Eld. James Moody

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33 Hilcrest Ave, N.E.
Roanoke, VA 24012
Jan. 31, 2006.

Dear Elder and Sister Key,

We hope you are both well. We are so glad our Lord has graciously blessed the publication of the Signs, though it has been here so many years. It is still a labor, but being a labor of love makes it lighter, which reminds us of the scripture of the easy yokes. The words of our Saviour to his servants. We have heard it quoted down through the ages. The best I can remember it is: come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and take my yoke upon you and I will give you rest.

You may have heard Sister Rlee Houchins entered into rest a few months back. Enclosed is her obituary by Sister Mary Poff. We were so grateful for her labor of love and could not see how it could have been better. Thanks be unto God!

May God continue to bless us and be our all.

Sister Mamie Rose Ferguson

PSALM 23.
A Psalm of David.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

VOICES OF THE PAST

HOW THEY GROW

"CONSIDER the lilies of the field, how they grow."

To his disciples the dear Savior thus taught precious truths concerning his people, how they are manifested, how they are provided for, how they are clothed in beauty and purity by no power of their own, and how their confidence and trust must be alone in the Lord.

The church is called a lily by her heavenly Husband, and is distinguished from all other religious organizations ***"as the lily among thorns."***

The Lord says of Israel that he shall grow as the lily. (Hosea xiv. 5.) Therefore we are sure that when we consider how the lilies of the field grow we shall be considering in this beautiful and striking figure that peculiar experience and doctrine of the Lord's people, which distinguish them as "a peculiar people." Growth in vegetable or animal is a great mystery. We cannot fully understand *why* things grow, for it is a part of the unsearchable mystery of life; but we can consider and in some measure understand, *how* they grow. Growth cannot be regarded as an act, for that would imply that it depended upon an exercise of will. It is not an act of the thing growing; but it is a movement which is a necessary consequence of life. The will of the person or thing growing has nothing to do with the growth. It is an experience. The plant grows because of the life that is in it, not because it wills to grow. If that growth is to be increased it might be by the work of the one attending it in enriching and stirring the soil and giving it, water and light and warmth. A man may affect his own natural growth, under certain circumstances, by attention to food and drink, while the principle of life that causes growth remains beyond the possible power of his will or his understanding.

In the figure of the lily in the text, and in similar figures throughout the Scriptures, the subject of God's spiritual work is regarded as a plant or tree, more controlled and exercised by the power of the life within, but not exercising in the least degree any power over that life.

When a poor sinner, ***"who knows the plague of his own heart,"*** considers the lilies of the field, so white, so pure, so beautiful, and then looks into his own heart, so sinful, so full of evil, how can he think of himself as one of those who the dear Savior would represent by the lily? With what grief and consternation he sees the absolute contrast between the lily and its unspeakable loveliness and himself. Where can he see in himself any principle or feature which can answer to the purity of the lily? ***"In every respect they seem to him to be contrary the one to the other."*** The poor

soul cannot realize at such a time that only by the power of the Spirit can he see and feel the evil of the flesh. The natural one does not receive the truth that he is sinful and depraved; that is one of those things which can only be known by the revelation of the Spirit of God. That sad knowledge is an evidence of life, but the Spirit alone can make the poor soul see that evidence. "In him is life; and the life is the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. *John i. 4, 5. "All things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light." Eph. v. 1:3.*

But let us consider how the lilies grow. The first work in order to the growth of a plant is the preparation of the soil. This is the work of the gardener. The first movement made by the seed after it has been put into the soil prepared for it is to send roots downward. The roots will be working and extending into the ground for several days before the plant appears. This order in the work of growing, both in natural plants and in the Lord's plants which grow in the garden of grace, is recognized in the words of the Lord by Isaiah: *"And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward."*

The soil for plants generally must be broken up and rendered soft and fine, so that the roots can easily work into it. The soil for lilies of some kinds needs much softening by water, and in some kinds to be covered by it. There are in great many things of most obnoxious kind that need to be gotten together to make a good rich soil for the lily. We speak of the soil as "good," "rich," but put some of it out of place, on the face or on a white garment, and we pronounce it vile and loathsome.

What a sad, dark, fearful time that is for the poor soul when his thoughts are engaged day and night in searching his own vile heart and finding nothing but evil there. He cannot tell how he first came to see himself so sinful, cannot tell how his thoughts first began to be engaged in such a doleful search, in which he finds no good, but deeper and darker depths of evil.

This broken heart; this depraved and sinful nature, this mass of corruption felt in the soil, is the soil which the Lord has prepared. It is he, the heavenly Husbandman, who has broken up the heart, who has made its corruption appear to our startled view, who has made us sick of sin, and sick of self because of sin.

Into this vile soil our thoughts are working downward like roots from a good seed which the Lord has planted. This vile nature, this corrupt heart, is the "good ground" into which the good seed has fallen. It is "good ground" because it is well broken up and pulverized and made soft and tender. It is not the corruption, the sinfulness, which makes it

good ground, but the knowledge of that corruption and sin, and the hatred of it. All men are corrupt and sinful, but until the Law of God enters into the heart no one can know and feel it. And until that knowledge of one's just condemnation comes to him by the quickening power of God his heart is hard like the rock, the wayside or the thorny ground.

When the thoughts are working down in the darkness of our heart, and observing the sinfulness of all our life, trying if they can find some good thing there, what terrible anxiety and distress we feel. We cannot give up the search for something to give us hope, some way of escape from the sin and evil that everywhere so afflict us. But we can find no relief, no way of escape from evil, for we seem to be all evil. Think of the roots that are working downward and abroad in the depths of the earth; what hopelessness we may imagine is theirs as they work in the darkness, the mass of fine, minute rootlets struggling, pushing themselves down into the soil, which grows more and more mellow, creeping and forcing themselves outward, to find they know not what. But they are doing the work appointed for them, and it is through the work done by them that the tender blade finally appears in sight.

It is through the work done by the thoughts down in the broken soil of the heart that finally the tender hope appears. The thoughts have been working downward, but the hope is reaching upward. The search must be exhaustive and in vain. Again and again we must learn the sad truth: no light, no hope, no good thing down there in the earth; in the flesh no good thing. That must be learned deeply again and again.

But the tender roots with their mysterious, delicate life-power are taking up something from that dark, obnoxious soil which will be conveyed by the miraculous processes of nature upward and cause the appearance of the blade, the flower and the fruit. So the thoughts have gathered the sad assurance that there is nothing but evil in us, and because there is left no question of that truth, and because we are cut off from all hope in ourselves, we are prepared to wonder and adore when a blessed hope is given unto us reaching upward instead of downward. What a glorious surprise when the hope in Jesus appears to us! What thanksgiving and praise fill our poor hearts!

So the lilies grow, and the corn and the vine. *"They shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine." "I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon." – Hosea xiv. 5, 7.*

When at any time the roots cease to be sent forth downward and outward in the soil, then the plant or the tree will cease to grow. When the thoughts cease to work in the soil of a sinful, broken heart,

then the growth in grace ceases. When we lose sight of our sinfulness in any degree, and begin to feel some contentment and satisfaction with our own condition, then we may think that we have attained to some excellent growth, but we have truly not grown at all in a spiritual sense, but have really diminished. *"Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord."*

So from time to time the Lord sends a winter time upon us, when we can only send roots downward; when we can only think of our vileness; when our life looks to us utterly unworthy; when we can hardly see anything in our heart and life to take any comfort in. The things that we have been enabled to do in obedience to the Lord we are thankful to him for, but we have still to think of our own unprofitableness as servants. All that was of ourselves in every work seems to display our own weakness and sinfulness. We feel a tender thankfulness to the Lord for his goodness in leading us in the paths of righteousness, but we feel also that *"the sins of one most righteous day might sink us in despair."*

How many a time I have seemed to be at the point of giving up, assured that my hope was not good, because for days I could seem to think of nothing but my own sinfulness and depravity. It was not long ago that while in this dark state of mind, my thoughts active, but active in a downward direction, when all at once I saw them as the roots of a plant working downward that the plant might grow upward. What a sweet comfort that was.

Think of the pure, white flower of the lily looking downward at the black mud out of which it has grown! Think of the Spirit contrasted with the flesh. In the same person the flesh is felt lusting *"against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."* No wonder that the Lord's people feel conflicts within themselves. There must be a warfare where there are two contrary principles. None but quickened souls can feel that warfare.

The lilies, how wonderfully beautiful they are. Do they know of their beauty? Do they not feel ashamed as they look down at that black, uncomely soil where they live? Could they grow otherwise or elsewhere than they do? Could they transfer themselves to some whiter, cleaner ground? Can they by exerting some power of their own grow more rapidly, or by neglect can they cease to grow? Can they cause themselves to be more or less pure and fair and lovely? Consider them, how they grow, and then you will see how the Lord's children grow in grace.

It is by no effort or power of their own, and yet they are constantly, when exercised by the Spirit, anxious to grow, and feeling that some-

thing depends upon them, and are hiding and condemning themselves for their lack of growth. But all their efforts are vain, and they only show them how helpless they are, how unable to make themselves any more worthy in the sight of God. Then they come again to the knowledge that all their goodness and power are in Jesus; that He is their righteousness. When they truly grow, not in themselves, but in Jesus. Then they grow, not in their own works, but in grace. Then it can be said of them:

Blessed are you when you strive in vain,
And all your works no comfort yield;
For when you cease to toil and spin,
You are as lilies of the field,
And he who richly clothes the flower,
Which passes almost as a breath,
Will show his riches grace and power
In you, O ye of little faith.

The plants in nature grow in the night. I have measured the growth of corn. Once from six at night to six in the morning it grew thirteen inches, and only an inch during the following day. It is authoritatively said that corn will sometimes, under most favorable circumstances, grow sixteen inches in one night. It is in the night time of sorrow and affliction that the Lord's plants grow in the knowledge and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is while under a distressing sense of their own weakness that they grow in the knowledge of Jesus as their Strength. It is through an especially dark and oppressive experience of their own sinfulness and depravity that they grow in the knowledge of Jesus as their Righteousness. When their thoughts have long been working and groping, like the roots of plants, in the dark depths of their earthly nature, and have found no good thing dwelling there, but only evil, then with what glad surprise they see the same thoughts reaching upward and coming beautifully into flower, and rejoicing in the pure light of the Sun of Righteousness. Then they learn that all their sad and weary night work has not been in vain. Those creeping, searching roots, those struggling, groping thoughts, have brought up into the soul something that was necessary to the real growth of the true plant of grace. Their work down there in the darkness has caused the growth to be away from the earth, away from self-confidence, and have caused the blade to reach upward, and the flower to bloom in the sunlit atmosphere of grace. The poor soul can now see that by the faith and hope and love that are now blooming in their hearts, and filling them with the beauty and perfume of Jesus' blessed name, they are even more gloriously clothed than are the lilies

of the field.

SILAS H. DURAND.
HAMPTON, PA - Dec. 10, 1904.

ELDER T.M. POULSON
Massey, Va., 1902

Dear brethren Editors;—Something has seemed to prompt me to pen a few things incidental to my life in a general way, and forward them to you for your disposal, whether to give them a place in our family paper, The Signs of the Times, or not.

I was born in the year 1831, in the same county (Accomac, Va.,) where I have resided ever since. I experienced a hope in God through his abounding grace in August 1851; was united in marriage with my present companion January 1852; was receieved, and baptized by Elder Thomas Waters, in the fellowship of the Old Baptist Church at Messongo, Accomac Co., Va., March, 1852. So you see that I have very few more mileposts to pass to my journey's end, as I have passed the 71st year of my natural life, and the fiftieth of my spiritual life, and also the fiftieth year of my married life.

In the year 1865 I became very much impressed in mind in regard to the things of the kingdom of God, and what constituted that kingdom. The more I thought about it the more beautiful the subject became, and the stronger my interest grew, In my deep meditations I would find myself talking all alone, not supposing that was preaching, my ignorance would forbid it, but these things still grew more and more oppressive until it brought me into a state of questioning myself, what this all meant? And soon brought me before others also, who would inquire with reference to my exercise of mind. Thus I was led along until I was prevailed upon to talk a little in the meetings, and I think sometime in the year 1866, I was given a license to speak as I felt led, and in the year 1869 or 70 I was set apart to the full work of the gospel ministry, and immediately afterwards I accepted the care of four of the churches of the Salisbury Association, viz; Messongo, Accomac Co., Va., Indiantown, Wicomico Co., Md., Nassaongo, Wicomico Co., Md., Pitt's Creek, Worcester Co., Md., and a few years later the church was organized in Snow Hill, Worcester Co., Md., and they called me to the care of that also, and I have been paying my best attention to those churches ever since, traveling from twenty-two to twenty-three hundred miles each year to fill my appointments, and nearly all by private conveyance. But if you will notice the above dates you will see that my labor is nearly over. I have experienced varied seasons in the churches during this period of thirty-five years. Nearly all have passed away that composed

the whole five churches when I first commenced my feeble labors among them. I have witnessed the coming in of all the five churches at present but eighteen persons. During the thirty-five years there has not been an "ism" nor "schism"nor any new thing to interrupt the fellowship of those churches. There have been times when the churches were full of life and zeal, and of frequent additions, and also times of drought and coldness. Sometimes when I am looking for some evidence of my hope and call to the work of the ministry, the only evidence that I can rest upon is in the remembrance of what the apostle Paul said referring to believers; "Ye are our epistles, written in our hearts, known and read by all men." Then my mind surveys the faithful brethren and sisters, and it brings comfort with it. But O, how wretched and miserable I do feel at times, for as much as I have witnessed and experienced during the fifty years passed, I have fallen so far short of living up to the scribe that I pictured in my mind years ago. I have been tempted to mark upon the walls where I can have it to look at, Watch your words and your thoughts, and also every evil lust, but I have failed. Finally a longing desire has been following me that I wanted to be an angel just for the time being, so I could not be contaminated with sin in any way, but I wanted to die a sinner saved by grace, for I know that will be the theme of the heavenly host, and then I think that an angel cannot magnify the grace of God, and then I am brought to a standstill, and can only say, keep me O lord, and I shall be kept; draw me and I shall run after thee. I feel and know that this tabernacle in which I now groan must soon be taken down, and one of the strongest evidences that I have to rest upon is what Paul said; "For I know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternally in the heavens.

For in this we groan "being burdened." This is a strong evidence to me, for I know this is so. How the thought gladdens our hearts that in that building of God there will be no burdens, there will be no groaning there, and all tears will be wiped from weeping faces. I am trying to be as contented as I can, and live as much for others as I can. I sometimes get to think that my usefulness is nearly over, and then I have an unrest. I sometimes hear the brethren talk over their spiritual comforts, then I think my life and labor among them is of some profit, and then I am contented to live on, and fill up the measure of my days. How it is that my poor labors and mingling among the Lord's people has been acceptable, I have never been able to tell, only to hope that the things to which I bear testimony, finds a witness in the hearts and lives of others. I hope that this is so.

It is more than likely this is the last time that I shall trouble you with my scribble. I thought that I wanted

the brethren all to know some of my feelings and experiences before I passed away.

This from a poor old sinner whose only hope of salvation is through the blood and righteousness of a crucified and risen Savior.

Farewell.
T. M.Poulson

RIVERVIEW, ALA.

DEAR READERS Of THE SIGNS :- Last week I was Jacob's companion, and derived much comfort from his conversation and surroundings, but I soon almost lost sight of Jacob. The only thing I could hear of him was, *"It is even the time of Jacob's trouble."-Jer. xxx. 7.* This followed me all the past week, till this morning I fell in company with Samson; not Samson as he slew the lion, nor as he slew the Philistines with the jawbone of an ass, but Samson shorn of his strength, and eyes plucked out. In this respect I feel to be a veritable Samson. My experience has been indeed to me a mystery. I am a profound mystery to myself.

Whether I am a child of God, and a called minister of the gospel, I know not, but I do know that in my experience I have been a companion of almost every prominent character mentioned in the Scriptures, and at the time when I was with them I felt that it was I, as well as they. I fellowshipped them, and was one with them in all their varied experiences, and in my experience I have been with the wicked as well as the righteous, and yet when with the wicked I could have no fellowship for them. I have been with David in his varied experience. I have thought I felt what he did when he wept over Abraham and said, "Would God I had died for thee, O Abraham my son, my son!" I have been with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in all their trials and afflictions. I have read the book of Job, and felt that he was my brother, and that his experience was me, and as I read I wept. I have been with Daniel in Babylon; the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace; Daniel in the lion's den; Jeremiah in the dungeon; Mordecai before the king's gate, clothed in sackcloth; Christ in his temptations in the wilderness; John the Baptist in prison; Peter denying the Savior all preaching among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;" Stephen being stoned; with Paul in his sufferings, hunger, nakedness, peril and sword; in perils on land, on sea, among false brethren, among his own countrymen; privations, sorrows, prayers and tears, night and day. The same accusations that were hurled against Paul; have been hurled against me. I have been with John on the isle of Patmos, find with all the ancient saints in their pilgrimage. I have also felt to be like Esau, "who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright;" I have also felt to be a wandering star, a raging wave of the sea, foam-

ing out my own shame, and to whom the mist of darkness was reserved forever; a tree whose fruit was withered, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; the accuser of the brethren; the unfaithful, unprofitable servant, and instead of giving them their meat in due season, smiting the men servants and the maidens; eating and drinking with the drunken, for which cause I am cast out into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth; having my portion with the hypocrites. Sometimes I am a murmurer and a complainer, walking after my own lusts: of man of corrupt mind, destitute of the truth, supporting that gain in godliness, and as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do I also resist the truth. I eat with the wicked, and drink with the drunken. I feel that I am an impostor, hypocrites, pencil in the nostrils of the Lord's people, and unfit instead of the Lord preserving me unto His heavenly kingdom, he is only reserving me unto the day of judgment to be punished. Then again I am like an owl of the desert, a pelican of the wilderness, or sparrow upon the housetop. I come to an experience that I hesitate to mention, but it is my experience, and if deceived in this I am deceived in all. I have been brought into such close fellowship with the sufferings of Christ that I have felt that in a measure I have suffered for the sins of his people. I would not be misunderstood here; Jesus is the only Savior, he bare the sins of his people in his own body on the tree, but what does Paul mean when he says, *"Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is in him of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church?"* Again, *"I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."* Other Scriptures might be cited, but is it not true that the people of God still sin, collectively is well is individually? Moses, Samson, David and all the prophets suffered for the people of God, and often on account of their sins; the Apostles likewise suffered for the errors of the people, and is it not true that all the ministers today have to suffer for the errors and sins of the Lord's people? Is it not true that a gospel minister has an experience that no other man under the sun has, or can have? I believe that all the prominent characters are set forth in the Scriptures as a type of the true gospel minister, and their trials and experiences are recorded for the comfort and encouragement of such. Samson was a chosen servant of God to deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines; his strength was in his long hair; the Spirit of the Lord moved him; he slew many of the Philistines; his marriage to the Philistine woman was of the Lord. But when his hair was shorn he lost his strength, then the Philistines bound him and put out his eyes and cast

him into prison. But it seems that his hair grew out again, and it is said of him that the *"dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life."* Is it not true that a gospel minister may be "shorn of his strength," and his eyes put out . Are not the Philistines a type of the sins of the flesh, or the works of the flesh in the Lord's people? For at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel." Do not the Philistines now sometimes have dominion over Israel?

When I take a retrospective view of my past life and the changing vicissitudes through which I have been called to pass, I am utterly astonished, and can but feel that the Lord has graciously and mercifully preserved me all the days of my life. I was born and brought up in rags and poverty, and have lived (as the saying goes) from "hand to mouth" all my life, and labored at almost all kinds of drudgery until this day, and aside from spiritual trials and temptations and afflictions, I have been a constant sufferer from nervous dyspepsia, heart trouble and other ailments for a number of years, often feeling that death was at hand, even at the door. I have buried eight children, one of them a grown daughter killed in Opelika, Ala., by a car; I have once been shot at by an incendiary, because he thought I was watching him set fire to a bank ; I have had a long knife drawn on me by a convict; I have had a man abuse me and threaten me with death because he said I owed him ninety cents; I have fallen from treetops and housetops, and I cannot recount all the dangers through which I have passed, and still I am here. I have preached in private houses, in hovels and huts, schoolhouses, under trees and bush arbors, in my own house, standing, sitting and lying down. I have preached in fine structures in many places, and surely the Lord has been with me and preserved me for some wise and glorious purpose. *"It is even the time of Jacob's throne; but he shall be saved out of it."*

I can but wonder if this sketch of my life and experience be published, will it be of any comfort to any one I have told the truth.

In tribulation, yours,
H. J. REDD

Roman 1: 6-9.

Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:

To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers.

JESUS AS A SHEPHERD.

AMONG the many names by which Jesus is recognized by his people, in his multiplied relationship to them, is that of "Shepherd," and in that relationship they are likened unto sheep. In the tenth chapter of John, the Savior himself points out with peculiar clearness the difference between the Shepherd whose own the sheep are, and the one who tendeth the sheep as a hireling, at the same time presenting himself as the true Shepherd. The sheep follow the Shepherd because they know his voice. A very clear evidence that one is a follower of Jesus, is that he knows his voice. The Apostle John, in the Spirit on the Lord's day, saw Jesus and heard his voice and described it as "The voice of many waters. " Elijah, at the mouth of the cave, hears the same voice, and he describes it as a *"still small voice."* The Israelites heard it in the wilderness at Mount Sinai, and to their ears it was a voice of thunder, yet they all knew it and recognized its import also. Observe how the sheep follows its natural owner, willingly, gladly, without doubt or question, or a moment's hesitancy, aught but obedience is not thought of because love is the incentive, and obedience the result. Hark, saith the bride in the song, *"The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills."*

It is the time of love, and now we hear the divine Shepherd calling to his sheep, it is not a command, there is no need of that; it is love calling to love, *" deep calleth into deep,"* the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith. You hear the voice in your heart saying: *"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."* And immediately we become his true and faithful followers. Some one will ask, How do I know when Jesus speaks to me. What are the signs of his beloved presence. Satan is so cunning that I am often deceived. Well, in the first place, the apostle tells you what to do, he says: *"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God."* Then he gives you the evidence that will convince you of the truth, he says: *"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God."* On the other hand, all those spirits that confess not that Jesus is come in the flesh, are antichrist and false prophets. Again, you are not ignorant of your own condition, you know that if you are alive to righteousness, you are dead to sin. The voice of the messenger from God that speaks to you, brings with it life, and peace, and quietness, and joy in the Holy Ghost; while the messenger from Satan brings confusion, and evil thought, and a discontented mind. When you can say out of a full heart, *"The Lord*

is my Shepherd, I shall not want," then you may know that the Spirit of the Lord dwelleth in you. This Spirit within you is of faith, and enables you to say: This is the voice of my beloved. Added to the loving voice of the Shepherd is the tender care which he devotes to the sheep; of him the prophet says: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." In every vicissitude of our life the pitying eye of our tender Shepherd looks upon us. He does not look down upon us and our afflictions are his afflictions, we are weak but he is strong, but he becometh weak that we may be made strong. In our fleshly lusts and worldly ambitions, our backslidings and uncomeliness, we are made to realize his long and tender forbearance toward us. We also observe that this watchcare is so persistent that he never leaves nor forsakes us. When Israel traveled in the wilderness the Lord was with them, and as a shepherd leadeth his sheep and careth for them, so the Shepherd of Israel led His sheep about in the wilderness and instructed them in all the way he would have them go. He was unto them a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night; his vigilant eye was always upon them. The helplessness of sheep to care for themselves is well known; when separated from the shepherd they are utterly incapable of protecting themselves from the enemy, or of taking care for themselves in anyway. The shepherd being fully aware of this fact, constantly watches over them, he knoweth all their weakness and frailties, and so nourisheth and cherisheth them as a father careth for his children. As sheep of the fold of the flock of God, we are under complete control of our precious Shepherd, of ourselves we can do nothing, left alone for a little time we become scattered from our fellows, and soon fall into the hand of the enemy, and are lost. But the watchful Shepherd leaveth the ninety and nine that are safe in the fold, and goeth out into the darkness to seek the lost one, and he seeketh until he findeth and restoreth the precious one to the fold. Thus do we die daily, and thus are daily delivered. As the natural sheep are found in flocks, so also the Lord setteth the solitary in families, whence they organize themselves into bodies that they may worship the Lord, and maintain the order of God's house. Ever since the visible church has been set up this has been the case, but in order to maintain this, they have had to suffer many trials and undergo much persecution. These little groups, or families, called churches, have, when available, an undershepherd who ministereth to them in word and deed, but the spirit of the Shepherd is with them, according as he (Jesus) has promised, that where two or more are gathered together in his name, he is in their

midst.

They are to be distinguished from the religionists of the world, in that they continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship; they manifest the faith of God's elect, they use not humility as a cloak, but with fear and trembling they worship God in spirit and in truth; they preach not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. The way and the works of man all lead unto death, but the way of God is unto life eternal. Like sheep their trust is in their master who leadeth them and careth for them. Of Joseph it is declared: *"Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall: * * * from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel."* Of David he saith: *"And will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, he shall be their shepherd."* Joseph and David both being lively types of our Lord Jesus Christ. The gospel assurance also comes to us with much sweetness : *"Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ." Again: For ye were as sheep going astray but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls."* And also both assurance and promise: *"And when the chief Shepherd shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."* Wondrous Shepherd blessed sheep, how strong is our hope, and how secure our inheritance, and how faithful the promise.

B. J. COULTER.
Philadelphia, Pa.,
Nov. 25, 1904.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 2006

T. R. Pullig -TX	5.00
Majorie Cook -TN	10.00
Sarah Barker -VA	5.00
Reed Harper- TX	5.00
George Hyslip -TN	10.00
Tommy Clayton -NC	2.00
Benny Abernathy -NC	10.00
Jessie & Elaine Jones -TN	5.00
Elder W. T. Conner-VA	5.00
Billie Dunn Speir-LA	15.00
James Lambert -GA	5.00
Lloyd Spikes -OR	10.00
Elder W. L. Gardner-GA	25.00
Carla Horton -VA	5.00

MEETINGS

ELDER J.B. FARMER COMING TO BIG MEADOWS

Elder J.B. Farmer of Grayson, Ky., the Lord willing, will be with us on the second Sunday in April.

Elder Farmer is also an associate editor of the Signs of the Times.

Big Meadows is located about 20 miles below Graham, N.C. Those traveling I-85 take the Pittsboro/Graham exit and go 17 miles toward Pittsboro. After crossing the Cane Creek Bridge take first road to right at top of hill – go 4 miles to a crossroad and turn left – go 1 mile then to church.

We invite all lovers of the Truth to come and be with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key
Sister JoAnn Self, Clerk

OBITUARIES

CHARLES PIERCE HAYES

Born Sept. 7, 1914, died Dec. 26, 2005 of a massive stroke in Birmingham, Al. Before having to move to Birmingham he served as Moderator of the Buttahatchie and the Buttahatchie-Hopewell Association.

After moving to Kirkwood By The River in Birmingham he was

unable to attend church. He was a true believer in Christ and his finished work.

He was a faithful member and deacon of Poplar Springs Church for 58 years. He was laid to rest in Vernon City Cemetery, Vernon, Ala.

Survivors include his wife Arva Rae Hayes, a daughter Beth Hayes Nigri and son-in-law Victor Nigri.

Looking forward to the resurrection. May we be reconciled to the will of God.

Beth Hayes Nigri
3605 Ratliff Rd.
Birmingham, Ala. 35210

RLEE BLANKENSHIP HOUCHINS

At the request of Sister Rlee's church I will make the attempt to write an obituary for her. May God's grace bless this pen to write in her honor. We had been friends since our teenage years so this is hard for me.

Sister Rlee was called from our midst on May 11, 2005. God only knows how this lovely Sister is missed, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. She was so good in telling the many wonderful experiences that the Lord had blessed her. When she finished telling one of them you would know that God still performs miracles.

As she laid in the hospital she could see God's beautiful mountains out her window and she told me that she would soon be to the top of that mountain and her journey would soon be over.

Sister Rlee had been a member of the church fifty-six years. Her first home was at Head of the River, then moving her membership to Roanoke in later years. She was baptized on her 20th birthday and was a true soldier of the cross all those years.

Sister Rlee was preceded in death by her loving husband of 48 years, Harding Houchins who passed away June 22, 1998. Surviving are two sons and daughters-in-law, and Jo Ann Houchins and Philip and Robin Houchins, five grandchildren, two great-grandsons and one brother and sister-in-law, Garlin and Claudine Blankenship.

Funeral services were held at Oakey's South Chapel May 13,2005. She was laid to rest beside her dear husband in the Blue Ridge Memorial Gardens. Humbly submitted to the Roanoke Church in Christian love.

Sister Mary Poff

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

How sweet how heavenly is the sight,
When those who love the Lord
In one another's peace delight,
And thus fulfil his word:

When each can feel his brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part;
When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart:

When free from envy, scorn and pride,
Our wishes all above,
Each can his brother's failings hide,
And show a brother's love.

When love in one delightful stream
Through every bosom flows,
And union sweet, and dear esteem,
In every action glows!

Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love.

C.M.

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Lloyd Cummins Spikes

EDITORIAL

ARK OF THE COVENANT

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

God called Moses up into Mount Sinai and he was there forty days and forty nights. During this time, God gave Moses tables of stone upon which God had written ten commandments and also gave him instructions for making an ark, a tabernacle, and items that were to be in the tabernacle. These were types and shadows of heavenly things and were made according to the pattern God showed Moses in the mount.

If the Lord would bless me, I would like to touch upon the ark, called the Ark of the Covenant. It was called the Ark of the Covenant because the tables of stone upon which were written the Ten Commandments were placed inside the ark. This was the law covenant as stated in Exodus 34:28. The ark was a type of Christ and the tables of the law being inside the ark set forth Christ fulfilling the law to a jot and a tittle. He did not destroy the law, but He fulfilled it as He was the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

The ark was made of shittim wood which was a very hard wood with a very close grain. The density of the wood did not allow anything to enter that would cause decay. Insects were repelled by the very taste of it. Therefore, the type of wood sets forth the incorruptible body of Christ. He was without sin. Righteous and holy was He. As the Apostle Peter said, ***"Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth." Psalm 16:10, "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither will thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." And Acts 13:37, "But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption."*** After John baptized Him, Christ was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. Though he was tempted in all points like as we are, yet he was without sin.

The ark was overlaid within and without with pure gold. Pure gold

sets forth the purity, righteousness, and holiness of Christ within His body of flesh as He was indeed the Son of God. The fullness of the Godhead dwelt in Him bodily and He was the express image of God and the brightness of His glory. All the attributes of God were in Him bodily as He was God in a body of flesh. He had all power as He walked upon the earth. He had the power to lay down His life and the power to take it up again. No man takes it from Him. Then, when His hour had come, no man nor army could keep Him from that appointed time to suffer and die. Pure gold without also sets forth the purity, righteousness, and holiness of His body as it had no sin in it. He was born of a virgin overshadowed by the power of God. He was a man who could experience everything that you and I experience except sin. He wept. He endured mockings, pain, and even the dread of death. His father sent an angel to strengthen Him. He learned obedience by the things He suffered. His body was a vail that no man could see beyond. He appeared as any other man. There was no beauty that anyone should desire Him or follow Him. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, despised, and was not esteemed. Yet, in that body prepared for Him, He bore our sins, our griefs, and our sorrows. In that body, He suffered so greatly—the just for the unjust.

A crown of gold was around the top of the ark. This sets forth the kingship of Christ. He is the King of kings, and Lord of lords. As king, He has absolute power and authority and is under no law nor bound by any limits. He speaks and it's done. He commands and it stands fast. As King Nebuchadnezzar proclaimed after he had been thoroughly taught of the Lord, ***"And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?"*** A king must have a kingdom. Christ said his kingdom was not of this world and that it cometh not with observation. He said, ***"Behold the kingdom of God is within you."*** There is no end to His kingdom for it is an everlasting kingdom. The Apostle Paul preached that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. The inhabitants of this kingdom are those whom He chose before the foundation of the world and whose sins He bore in His body on the cross. They are those that Peter said, ***"were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."***

The ark had four rings of gold in the four corners of it. To me this

sets forth the gospel of Jesus Christ. Gold points to the purity of the gospel: its richness in the righteousness and holiness of Christ and its preciousness far beyond the material wealth of the world. The gold rings on the four corners of the ark speak of the gospel being preached to God's people wherever they are in the world. Christ commanded His Apostles after His resurrection to *"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."* This command was fulfilled as Mark 16:20 says, *"And they went forth, and preached every where."* The two staves were of shittim wood overlaid with gold and were in the gold rings and by these was the ark borne. The staves were not to be taken from the rings of gold. The staves were typical of grace and truth for grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Without grace and truth, there is no gospel. The staves being of shittim wood overlaid with gold presents a picture of Christ as the Son of man and as the son of God. We are to preach that He came in the flesh without sin, born of a virgin, suffered, died and rose again and is seated at the right hand of the Father making intercession for His people. He bare the sins of His little ones in His own body redeeming them from under the curse of the law, being made a curse for them. The Apostle Paul wrote that He had not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

There was a mercy seat of pure gold above upon the ark with two cherubims of beaten gold in the two ends of the mercy seat. God told Moses that He would meet with him and commune with him from above the mercy seat between the cherubims. The mercy seat is a type of Christ as He is our mercy seat. He is rich in mercy. His mercy endureth forever. God said to Moses, *"I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."* So the Apostle Paul writes, *"So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."* The Apostle adds, "*Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy; and whom He will he hardeneth.*" The man dwelling among the tombs in the mountains crying and cutting himself with stones was experiencing the condemnation of the law. He had no rest day nor night. Men had tried to bind him with chains of conditional salvation but he could not find any peace or comfort in these efforts of the flesh. He was dwelling among the dead. There was no life there. The more he tried, the more he was cut by the stones or application of the law. No man could tame him. Tame is to make submissive or bring into subjection. Men had tried to make him submissive to a religion of self-works, but they could not. Dear people, haven't you been there? Can't you witness with him? He was oppressed, alone, and no one could

reach his case or even understand what he was going through. But, Oh dear one, there was One who knew exactly where he was and in what condition he was in. Christ came to where he was and when the man saw Him, he ran and worshipped Him. He didn't need any man to introduce him to Christ. ***"My sheep know my voice."*** He was at the mercy seat, clothed and in his right mind. Clothed with the righteousness of Christ and possessing a spiritual mind, he was resting in the peace and comfort of His Lord.

The cherubims were in each end of the mercy seat facing each other toward the mercy seat and were of beaten gold. I believe they were both looking at one place on the mercy seat—the cross. One cherub set forth the prophets and prophesies of Christ from the beginning of time looking toward the cross. The beaten gold signifies suffering and trials and death that not only the prophets endured but that which they prophesied concerning Christ. The other cherub set forth the gospel ministers who look back to the cross. These not only endured sufferings, trials, and death but they preached the sufferings and death of Christ on the cross.

Inside the ark were the tables of the covenant which I have already mentioned as well as the golden pot of manna and Aaron's rod that budded. The golden pot of manna is a type of the spiritual food that Christ feeds His people—that heavenly manna that comes from above. Christ said He was the bread of life. As with the Israelites in the wilderness, this heavenly food never gives out. It is always enough, but never too much. You can not store it up, but it is always provided when you need it. It is strengthening and comforting. Aaron's rod that budded signifies Christ as high priest. When Korah and others rebelled against Moses and Aaron and accused them of lifting themselves above everyone else and that everyone in the congregation of Israel was just as qualified to lead and serve as high priest as Moses and Aaron were, God opened the earth and swallowed some of them and brought fire down and consumed others. God, then, told Moses to have each tribe take a rod with the name of the head of the tribes and lay them in the tabernacle before the ark. Aaron's name was on the rod for the tribe of Levi. The twelve rods were left there over night and the following day Moses saw that Aaron's rod had budded, bloomed blossoms and yielded almonds. The Lord said unto Aaron, ***"Thou and thy father's house with thee shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary: and thou and thy sons with thee shall bear the iniquity of your priesthood."*** Aaron's rod that budded being in the ark sets forth the priesthood of Christ and that He must bear the iniquity of His people. Isaiah 53:11, ***"He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied:***

by His knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities."

The ark always went before the children of Israel. Numbers 10:33 reads: ***"And they departed from the mount of the Lord three days' journey: and the ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them in the three days' journey, to search out a resting place for them."*** Christ is the resting place of His little ones. As one of the hymn writers wrote, ***"Father, we'll rest in thee."*** When the children of Israel came to Jordan, they lodged there three days. After three days, the people were commanded that when you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, you are to remove from your place, and go after it. So with every little child of God, when Christ is manifested to them, they have a desire, a love, to follow Him. When the priests bearing the ark came to the brink of the water of Jordan, they stood still in the river and the waters rolled back. So the people passed over on dry ground into the promised land.

I realize that I have but skimmed the surface of this beautiful and precious subject, but my hope is that your pure minds have been stirred with thoughts far beyond mine.

Yours in hope,
Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Terry,

Please find enclosed a check for the renewal of "Signs of the Times" for two years. The rest of the money to be used as you need. May God continue to give His ministers His sovereign grace to feed his flock through the "Signs of the Times."

In Christian Love,
Anne Pearson

2-3-06

Greetings,

I see my subscription is expiring with this month's issue. Attached is a check for $30.00 for two years renewal and the balance to use as you see fit.

Thank you for your labor in getting the Signs out every month. I look forward to it and enjoy it each month. I keep them and re-read them at various times.

May God continue His blessings on each of you at the Signs!

Thank you,
In hope,
M. L. Richardson

Feb. 18, 2006

Dear Elder Terry,

Enclosed is a check for $25.00 to renew my subscription to the "Signs of the Times" for another two years.

I really look forward to each issue, and enjoy the writings/remarks very much.

Hope you are doing well and look forwards to seeing you soon.

Love and Fellowship,
Brother John Collie

VOICES OF THE PAST

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH AND PICTURE OF ELDER PETER CORN, MODERATOR OF THE PIG RIVER P. B. ASSOCIATION.

Elder Peter Corn

Having a desire to leave something for future generations to look upon when I am gone, I will give a sketch of my life both natural and spiritual, as I hope. According to the record in my father's Bible, I was born into this visible kingdom Feb. 26, 1834, in Patrick Co., Va. I was the youngest of thirteen children, nine girls and four boys, one of which died in infancy. My oldest brother was twenty years, four months and seventeen days older than myself, My other brother, who grew to manhood, was about fourteen years and six months older than myself.

My parents were Jesse and Elizabeth Corn. My father, being crippled by rheumatism in his feet from childhood, never could walk without a cane and consequently, could not labor as most men. He was a Justice for fifty-four years; and held some public office nearly all his life. He was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church before I was born. My mother was a professor, strong in the same faith, but never joined the church. They were strict disciplinarians in their family, impressing upon the children the great necessity of truth, honesty and virtue. My father being in moderate circumstances, his children consequently had to labor hard, which deprived them of the opportunity of going to school much; and there were then no public schools. So my education was quite limited. I learned to read and to write very imperfectly, and went as far as "Rule of Three" in Pike's old arithmetic. I served my father till I was twenty-one years of age, and then set out trying to make a living in this world. I hired to my father for a two-year-old colt and a few barrels of corn. I feel to say, the Lord has blessed my efforts to live an honest and upright life. But I have been in great straits and did not see how I was to get out, but the Lord always opened up a way; and I to day, though not rich, have a sufficiency of this world's goods to keep me comfortable; and, if I ever

wronged any man out of a cent or failed to pay every cent owed to any man, and he will make me sensible of the fact, I will pay him four-fold. I have tried to live a moral and sober life. I have used some spirits during my life, but have never been intoxicated, nor have I ever gone to a bar room and bought a drink of intoxicating spirits and have never been warranted or sued on any of my contracts with my fellow man. I will now give some of the reasons of a hope beyond death. When quite a child, I had very serious thoughts on death and eternity, and frequently had dreams regarding the same; and, like all children, would tell them to mother. who would say, to me, *"These are loud calls to you."* But I hardly knew the meaning of what she said, These thoughts followed me to manhood, when I became fond of young and gay company, especially the society of decent young ladies; desiring to have my pleasure with them. Often I asked the Lord to remove the impressions of death and eternity from me, promising that, if he would till I should get married, I would turn and be good, believing, as most of Adam's children do, that I could bring the Lord under obligations to save me. For a time, as it seemed, the Lord gave me over to my desires: I became fond of dancing, so much that I could not control myself, when the music started. Notwithstanding this, I would become greatly distressed on account of it. So that, in the year 1858, I solemnly promised the Lord, if he would forgive me, I would not dance again. But the Christmas following, myself and another young man came to Franklin County, near where I now live, to spend the Christmas. We met with two young ladies (who had attracted us here) on Sunday, at Union church, and spent that night at the home of one of those young ladies. The next day the lady whom I was with invited me out to the home of the other young lady. As we went our crowd increased. It was a house into which they admitted dancing, and they had a dance there that night, and the young lady whom I was with invited me out to dance with her; and, thinking it ungentlemanly to refuse, I went. I think we were the last couple that went out. I remained out on the floor only a short time, and do not think that any criminal on the gallows ever felt more condemned than I. I felt like sinking to the floor; and, remembered my vow, I was sensible that I had lied to God. I feigned an excuse that I was sick, laid down on the bed and did not mix any more with the company that night. The next morning I proposed to the young man that we would go back to Patrick. But he said, *"No; we came to see our fun, and let's have it out."* I told him that he could do as he pleased, but I was going to Patrick. Breakfast being over, I, according to my resolve, saddled my horse and went, feeling, as I suppose, like a bird just liberated from a cage.

My troubles, more or less severe, continued from then on.

In 1859, I became engaged to my wife, Nancy C. Turner, with the understanding that we were to marry the next fall or winter. My troubles continued to grow on me all the while. In that year, June, 1859, there was an association at Jack's Creek, Patrick Co., Va. I, together with other young company, stopped at my wife's father's till bed time, and, as young people will, spent the time talking and laughing. Having to return home to accompany my sisters to the association I, at bed time, left for home, meditating on how I had spent the day and night, and became awfully distressed. While riding along crying and trying to pray, it seemed to me that I had committed an unpardonable sin, and that there was no hope for me. But there seemed to be a voice speaking in me, saying, "He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Not being familiar with the scriptures; I did know that it was scriptural language. It created within me a little hope for mercy in the future. But I went on in great distress through the summer and fall, remembering I had promised the Lord, if he would spare me till married, I would then try to serve him. But the very thought of marrying became a terror to me: for, not wanting anyone to know the condition I was in, I did not see how I could possibly keep it hid from a wife. I had no personal objections to her, but continued in that condition till fall. The time we had agreed to marry was approaching. But it did not seem possible for me to enter into the married state, if I should live to the time, which I did not think I could do. I went on in this condition till October 24, 1859, when I gave up all hope. Before lying down that night, I went out to pray, not thinking that I would live to see another day. Fearing the family might mistrust something, I returned to the house and went upstairs to bed. While lying there on my back, nearly in the position of one in death, meditating and trying to pray for mercy, verily believing that I had a breast disease which would soon end my days; and how long I had been in bed I do not know, but I know that I had not slept any, when, all of a sudden, a light appeared to shine all around me, and into my inmost soul. The burden of my heart passed away. I clapped my hands upon my breast, believing that I was changed soul and body. A verse from two poets ran through my mind. The first was :

"I love my blessed Savior,
And I am his forever."
Second was :
"O may I worthy prove to see
The saints in full prosperity;
The bride, the glittering bride,
Close seated by the Savior's side."

The family had not all gone to bed yet; and I thought I would have

to go down and tell them what I hoped the Lord had done for me. But the thought, *"I had better keep it to myself,"* occurred to my mind, as I might be deceived. I laid there in a state of peace and composure, feeling that I loved the Lord and all created things. I could not then remember but one human being who had aught against me. A short time before this an old lady had given me a terrible tongue-lashing about my father's hogs getting into her corn. She was the first person I thought of, and felt that, if she had been present, I could have taken her into my arms. The next was my promised wife, and every obstacle seemed to be removed that should hinder us from being joined in marriage.

I had seen the plan of salvation so plainly that I thought I could, if she had been present, have shown it to her. Two days after this occurrence, old Brother Joshua Adams had an appointment at a graveyard in the woods. He came by my father's on his way. My sister, who was a member of the church, and myself went with him to the meeting. They rode along together, talking on the subject of godliness and experimental religion. I ride along behind them listening and, frequently, shedding tears; but cautiously concealed my tears from them. Arriving at the place appointed, I took a seat by a gum tree in front of the stand. I had been accustomed to hearing him all of my life, but on this occasion, as I thought, he preached altogether different to me. I enjoyed the meeting and returned home in a state of enjoyment. But between that time and the going down of the sun, I was thrown into *"Doubting Castle;"* my joy was gone; my burden, also, was gone; and I thought I was deceived in the whole matter. I prayed to the Lord, if deceived, to undeceive me. I laid down in that condition, in great distress of mind, and praying to the Lord to make it manifest to me whether I was deceived or not. Whilst lying on the bed, the plan of salvation was opened so plainly that I saw clearly how sinners were justified through the righteousness of Jesus Christ. At this time my soul was so filled with love that I arose from my bed and went down stairs. The family had not yet retired. I told them of some of the wonderful things which I hoped I had experienced, affecting the family very much; and I myself was shedding tears of joy. On the Sunday following this event, I attended a funeral service at a neighbor's house, conducted by Elders Cassell and Lackey. I thought they preached wonderfully and had a good meeting. The most of my young comrades were present and became very much carried away in feelings; and feeling so much over-joyed, and viewing so much beauty, I thought I could show it to them, and undertook to do so, by talking to them. But it was like casting straws before the wind, and I saw that it took a higher power than man to open the eyes of the blind.

I now pass on to the 15th day of Dec. 1859, at which time my wife and myself were joined together in marriage. I can truthfully say, with the wise man, Solomon ***"A good woman is a gift from the Lord." We have been living together about 48 years. Other men may have as good a woman for a wife, but none have a better one. She has been blessed with a good constitution and good health, only having to call a doctor on but one occasion."***

By this union nine children were born, five daughters and four sons; but five, three sons and two daughters, are now dead. The three sons and one daughter died in infancy, and the other daughter died, leaving four children. I entertain the hope that she is at rest, and entertain no fears regarding the state of the four that died in infancy : for Jesus said, ***"Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."*** Three daughters and one son are still living. Two of the daughters are members of the Primitive Baptist church; but the other daughter and son have made no open confession.

I was received into the Primitive Baptist church at Union, the fourth Saturday in March, 1860; and was baptized the third Sunday in April, 1860, by Elder Joshua Adams.

Sent in by Brother Keith Hiatt.

Williamston, N.C.,
July 9, 1864

Dear Brother Temple;

I have thought that an account of the Christian experience and ministry of old brother James Hinton, an aged colored preacher of our faith and order yet living in this neighborhood, would not be uninteresting nor unprofitable to the readers of the Primitive Baptist. His truthfulness and sincerity are attested by the uprightness of his character, and by the excellence of his teachings. ***"By their fruits ye shall know them." (Matt. 7:20).*** With his thoughts, his conversation is continually directed towards heaven, where all his treasures lie.

Brother James does not know a "letter in the book"; he has evidently derived his information from a divine source.I give it in very nearly his own simple and expressive language ; I am 83 years old. I was born and raised in Bertie County, N.C.

My first master was old man Billie Hinton. I have had five or six owners during my life. They have been kind to me. I have been married twice, having twelve children by my first wife, two by my last and present wife. Most of them died in infancy. My son, Bosen, became a Baptist and a preacher, though unlearned, like myself. But with his master and others of my children, he moved many years ago to Mississippi. I do not know the number of my grandchil-

dren nor great grandchildren.

I was twelve years old when first struck under conviction; up to that time I had been required to do scarcely any work my old master wanted me to grow and get strong, and be of some account.

One day I challenged several of my playmates to box with me, declaring I could out fist them all put together. We had been thus roughly engaged for some moments, when I heard a voice, loud enough I thought to be heard four miles, calling out most distinctly, "James". I looked all around and up, but saw nobody. My arms and wrists at once grew weak; and at a second similar call, powerless; so I backed away in silence, and sat upon the ground. I wondered that the boys didn't hear the call, but they did not for they kept thumping me for some time, crying out that they had whipped me; but I did not care for it. After they had left me, something seemed to fall from the heavens and drop into my bosom. Ere long it spoke and said, *"Christ is the way for saving sinners."* I trembled like a leaf and wept like a child. From that day forward it kept talking to me gospel, scripture, justice and righteousness, continually pointing out the way for me to go. I never was more puzzled, and could form no idea what it was.

I tried my best to run away from it by moving from place to place, but all in vain the talking went everywhere I did. It kept up with and annoyed me so that I thought it must be my tongue somehow was speaking; so I pulled it out and tried to hold it and stop it, but quickly it darted back, and the talking went on worse than ever. Well, I thought, what is it? What can it be? I was fond of frolics; the voice told me to stop going. I resolved not to obey it, and continued to go, but at last I was so much troubled that I promised that I would not dance, but would sit civil, and not be chargeable. I did it; but while walking along one day the voice reminded me of my promise, and said, *"James, I say unto you, if you will go into such places when not compelled, I threaten you with dreadful wrath!"*

I shook with terror I wept as though my heart would break. I never went to any more frolics after that. I kept wondering what could be the matter with me. One time it spoke to me and said *"Come out from among them; be ye unspotted from the world, and I will receive you, sayeth the Lord."* Then I knew, and not till then, that it was the Lord who had been dealing with me.

"Come you, by prayer, to me," he said. I told him I did not know how to pray. "Cry out to me," he replied, *"through faith for God to have mercy on you a poor sinner, and I will have mercy."*

I tried to pray this prayer a long time, and thought I had been heard by the great Master; but one night I went off to pray in great distress. My

tears struck the ground before my knees did. I prayed with a new and true fervency of the Spirit; and the Lord said to me, *"James, this is the first prayer of yours I have heard."* My deliverance occurred in May, about corn weeding time. I had been abroad over the swamp, and came home at early sunset. I went to bed and slept until two or three hours of day, then woke up and found myself straight and flat on my back as though I was dead and laid out- a position I never lay in to my knowledge. I was as wide awake as I am now. I felt a weight press down on the middle of my breast; and I could not imagine what it was.I looked and saw, hanging from three cords, a great body of darkness about two and a half feet from my breast. I could not tell what it was. A strange thing in my bosom then moved, and spoke, *"God be merciful to me a sinner."* I knew what was the matter then. This cry was repeated. I thought I would get up and move away from the terrible object, but found myself unable to stir; and looking up, saw myself right on the middle of the jaws of hell. Oh what a great ocean!

I gave up utterly, and confessed; *"Lord, this is my sins; would you be merciful, would you be so good, would you be so kind as to pardon and forgive me? O Lord I am not able to stand them, they are greater than I can bear."* At once a straight line of light came as swiftly as a shot and cut down the great body of darkness, and slipped it by me. Then there broke a light in and about me, as old Brother Paul says, above the brightness of the sun. If brought into this world, it would make noonday look like darkness. I thought it was day, but found it was not. I felt as light as any down in your "head-pillar".

My old master was a mild, free and open-hearted man. He had hundreds of servants, whom he clothed and fed well. He used to sell a thousand barrels of corn a year, and send off hundreds of fattening hogs to Richmond, Petersburg, Suffolk, Smithfield, and Edenton.

He would put them under my charge and allow me to bring home the bags of money received in payment. One Spring when I was hauling rails, he thought I was staying too long in the woods, so he took to watching me. He did not tell me of it though until I asked for an order to relate to the church what I had faith to believe the Lord had done for my soul. *"Jim,"* he said, *"do you believe He has done anything for your soul?" "Yes sir," I said. "And I believe it too,"* he answered, *"for I have been watching you for years, and often see you in the woods, after you had loaded your car, kneel down and pray for yourself and for me; but I would not interrupt you."*

He told me to take the rest of the day to talk with him, and that I might go to meeting whenever I pleased, for the time was not his but mine;

but I only stayed awhile with him, and then slipped off to my work it was such a good day for work.

The Lord promised me that when I went to give an account of my exercises to the church, He would be with me and bless the day. It, indeed, proved to be a lovely day, and the Lord seemed to manifest His special presence. As I was telling of His dealings with my poor soul, I could see the gentlemen and ladies trembling and wiping their eyes. The old Elder declared it was useless to examine the candidate any further; For said he, *"we cannot go anywhere he cannot go with us."* Many said they had not seen such a candidate in thirty years; and after I was through talking, they told me to talk on, for it was greater than the preaching they had heard. One great gentleman was struck then and there under conviction. At the beginning of the service he sat away up high in one corner of the meeting-house, but before I finished speaking, he was standing by my side, half bent and trembling. He did not rest until he experienced conversion, and was baptized a year later.

He used to hail me and talk with me every time we met; and we loved each other.

On the day of my baptism, before I reached the water, the devil tried to persuade me that if I were baptized, I would be drowned; but I did not believe him. And, as always, he turned out to be a liar. Six years after I joined the church the Lord told me he was going to make me a minister of His gospel; and that, too, before the year was out, no matter how much I might run and hide from it. But I thought surely not yet; and went one Sunday to Billy Thompson's quarter where two colored brethren were expected to preach that day. When I arrived they urged me to go forward and speak to the people, saying that I was better taught of the Spirit than they. I wanted to run away, but saw no chance. I felt I had nothing to say, and trembled like a leaf; but when I arose this hymn came to me at once, and I gave it out; *"That awful day will surely come; The appointed hour makes haste When I must stand before the Judge And pass the solemn test."* etc.

I tried to pray; and when I had finished that duty, I was as much at a loss what to say as ever. But this text was given me, as well as every word I spoke from it; *"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in unto him, and sup with him and he with me." (Rev. 3:20)*

The strength and warmth of feelings came over me, and I could not help from weeping while I spoke the Saviour's sweet kind call and welcome to the poor, lost sinners unto him. The people said that they had never heard better preaching than on that day. They called me "preacher" after that. Another text given me once was, *"The eyes of the Lord*

are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry." (Psalms 34;15). Another was *"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it that it bring forth more fruit." (John 15;1,2)*

By invitation, I would often preach, especially on funeral occasions, in porches of gentlemen's houses, to congregations two or three hundred persons. After service the gentlemen crowd around me, and push a book before my face, and see if I could not read. I assured them that I did not know a letter; could not tell one if they were going to hang me unless I did. *"How can you preach, then? We would rather hear you preach than anyone else."* I told them the Lord was my teacher. Other books can be burned up, but mine is fixed with the seven seals of the Lord. Oh, if any person wants high learning, let him get the grammer of Christ!

I must not forget to tell you that He once said to me, "Always be dutiful to your earthly master, and tell him the truth, and you can ever meet him gladly. And so, by always living in prayer and faith to me, you will at last invite, instead of dreading, death; and face it boldly." This command was put over me, and I thought that I could not do enough for him after that.

In the Lord's direction to me in pursuing his ministry, He has said, *"James, you know my terrors, and shall persuade men to strive for beauty that will never die, for crowns of righteousness that shall never perish. You shall warn sinners to repent; you shall preach my gospel by the tree of life."* I once prayed to the Lord to take away this talking and deal with me as other of his people; and for awhile He left me in silence, and did not visit me at all. But, as I was going across an old field one day, I heard a singing low down at a distance, which gradually ascended the heavens, and followed and overtook me, and struck down on my face. "Ah, James," said my inward mentor, *"You disbelieved in the way in which I was bringing you, but I shall not deal with you otherwise. Talk with your brethren, and you will find that they and you witness the same truths; have all drunk of the same spring, and have been born of the same God. I shall talk with you thus, as man to man; you shall feel, hear, and see with your inward ears and eyes, and you shall believe. These are the great witnesses that shall stand death and face judgement."* You shall pray and thank me every Christmas day and New Years day that your life has been preserved. You shall glorify me. I will be with you and support and supply you with gospel and scriptures. You shall drink of me and never run dry. I will

keep you here a long time, working for me. You need not think that pain or chill will carry you off. You shall know when I call you. I will send six angels when you expire, who shall convey you home to heaven, and then one of your attendant spirits shall exclaim 'Fly wide open, ye pearly gates of the New Jerusalem, and let the righteous nation in,' ***"A crown of glory shall be put on your head, and you shall take your seat at my right hand, and your end shall be peace."***

One day, while I was in the field, it seemed that He slipped around in front of me, and treated me with a drink far sweeter than all the sugar and coffee in the world; that, if the taste had remained, I should have never wanted water.

During the night of the shelling (6th of July, 1863), I sat in my door facing the river, assured by the Lord that I should not be harmed; and I was not, though I could see the shells bursting through my walling, and firing a neighbor's dwelling house. TheYankees asked me if I did not want to go with them and have my freedom. I told them I did not want to go from my old home, where I knew my people, off with them where I knew nobody; and, besides, that I was already free- that I had a freedom that no man could take from me, even the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. They said they wished they had that freedom, (I thought to myself, you won't get it by throwing bomb-shells), and they left me alone.

Oh, this something within me often sings its own praise, prays its own prayers, and preaches its own sermons. As I am working with my hoe in my little field, it often holds a meeting like an association! And as it talks to me of the greatness and goodness of God, I have to stop working and sit down; and my eyes become leaky as a spring, and my tears drop like the rain. I never stop thinking of Him; I can never thank him enough for his blessings. I have tried hard many a year to get a better love for Him, but I find I can only feel the same old love still. Sometimes I rise and sit up in my bed at night, rapturously listening to the marvelous glorious language of my God. Oh, the teachings of this heavenly voice will never leave me! No thunder or bombshell can drown it. The world and the devil cannot stop it. Old Jim is going to die there! For almost 50 years he has been a mouth for God, laboring for Him, and laying off his parables. Poor old fellow, he is "most gone," but not afraid to die; for his life is hid with Christ in God, safe from all harm. (Col.3;3). There's my dependence. I'm not living here for a peck of meal or pound of meat, that I may have something to eat hereafter, that I may not perish there. I long to die the death of the righteous, and have my last end like His. (Num.23; 10). The Lord sustains me with his comforting word, ***"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. Yea, sayeth the***

Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

Our last work is not done after God speaks peace to our souls.

It is rather begun than ended. We must follow all the directions of the Spirit, try to serve the true and living God aright, to get all our help from Him, for without Him we can do nothing, endeavor to die in the triumphs of faith. Ours is a whispering God. He speaks so softly that even if another head be touching yours, it cannot hear Him. While He is speaking the tears run down your cheeks.

The Spirit is made overseer of the body, to mortify its lusts. We shall carry the warfare with us until death. When we offend, the good Lord whips us well from it, but will never take his loving kindness from us. (Psalms89;30-34) We are careful to avoid that place in the future.

"When grace is given to the soul", He said to me, ***"it keeps pushing away sin, and distilling in the soul until it drives out every unclean thing, and in death washes it as pure as gold, and fit for the kingdom of heaven."***

I could not tell the end of his instruction in a thousand years. We shall all meet at the great Day. All the judges in the world shall be there, and be silent and tremble, while the great judge only will speak. There will be no rocks or mountains to hide the wicked from his vengeance. They will all be turned into Hell; while the righteous shall be welcomed to life eternal.

Sometimes I doubt, but deliverance comes and stamps the foundation sure. I feel that I know that God who thunders when he pleases, and calms the rolling seas; who directs the whirlwind and rides upon the storm. I have thought I loved my wife and children better than anything else in the world, but now I know that, ***"I love my God, his ways, and his people better than these; and best of all."***

Thus, dear Brother Temple, I have given you an account of some of the exercises of this truly wonderful man of God. His brethren know that his is the ***"path of the just, which is a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."***

REMARKS:

I was baptized by my father at Williamston, N.C, in Roanoke River, January 11 , 1864 , and in the same year wrote the above narrative. The testimony of the old brother was a blessing to me then, and is a blessing to me now. I cannot read it without tears. May the Lord bless it to thousands of the present readers.

The shelling of Williamston by the Federal gunboats on the river July 6, 1863, was an account of a few Confederate soldiers passing through, who, however, did not shoot at the Federals. The bombardment continued part of the afternoon and all night. Nearly every resident, except a few Old Baptists, left

the town. Two houses were burned by the shells, but no person hurt. When the Marines marched up main street next morning they saw my father sitting on his front porch, and asked him what he had been doing all night. He replied, ***"I have been praying for you."***

If all men had this spirit, there would be no more wars.

Silvester Hassell

(The above was re-published in the Gospel Messenger of August, 1917, and is re-published in the Signs by request We found it very interesting, and feel that our readers will also. - J. D. Wood)

A MYSTERY

There was a mystery which was kept secret from the foundation of the world, "hid in God," a mystery which was revealed to none of the sons of God before the gospel age, a mystery of which Paul alone of all the apostles was made a minister. This dispensation of the gospel was committed unto him, that whether he preached willingly or by constraint, still it had to be preached. Necessity was laid upon him, and there was a woe unto him if he preached it not. The whole work of salvation is a mystery, and no part of it can be understood with the natural mind. But there was a special feature of this great work of salvation which had been hidden until the gospel age, and this special feature of the work of grace was given to Paul to preach unto the Gentiles. It was for the Gentiles' sake that Paul was a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and while there were twelve apostles unto the Jews, we, the Gentiles, have Paul, who is the thirteenth apostle.

This mystery of which Paul was made a minister he tells us about in his letter to the church at Ephesus. Now, the church at Ephesus was a Gentile church and Paul was a Jew. The same truth which was revealed in Paul was also revealed in these Gentile brethren. These Gentiles knew nothing about Judaism,. and were strangers to that covenant which God gave Israel by the hand of Moses. This Mosaic covenant forbade the Jews to deal with the Gentiles. According to that covenant no Gentiles had any right to the feasts or the solemn assemblies of the Jews; they could not partake in the temple service, nor in any of the sacrifices or holy things. From all these the Gentiles were shut out. He did not have the oracles of God, he did not have the prophets, none of the types or shadows, was indeed barred from all the blessings and privileges of the Israelites. Consequently the Mosaic law constituted a barrier between Jew and Gentile, it was a "middle wall of partition" forbidding intercourse and fellowship between them. It was a handwriting of legal ordinances enjoined upon Israel for their obedience, car-

rying with it blessings for the observance and punishments for the breach. But none of these blessings or punishments could ever be the lot of the Gentiles, for the Gentiles were never under the Mosaic law. If Jesus, therefore, were made under the Mosaic law he would be the Savior of none but Jews, no Gentile could ever benefit by the shedding of Jesus' blood.

When the Scripture says that Jesus was made of a woman, made under the law, it is not the Mosaic law which is meant, but the law under which Adam fell in condemnation, which fall embraced all the elect of God in Adam. This fall embraced both Jew and Gentile, for there was yet no difference between Jew and Gentile when Adam transgressed. The obedience of Jesus was not confined to the law of Moses, but his obedience was unto the law of God, of which law of God the law of Moses was but a faint shadow, portraying in the temporal blessings which fell to the lot of Israel the spiritual blessings which under the new covenant fall to the lot of spiritual Israel.

Indeed, literally, Jesus did not keep the Mosaic law at all. That law forbade any work whatsoever on the sabbath day, and Jesus did pluck ears of corn on that day. That law said, Honor thy father and mother, and Jesus never did honor Mary as his mother nor Joseph as his father. That law said that any man calling himself equal with God was a blasphemer and was to be put to death, and Jesus did say, I and my Father are one. All these, and other acts which Jesus did, were looked upon as literal breaches of the law. But in the spirit Jesus did keep the law, and fulfilled to every jot and tittle its spiritual import; but he did far more, he obeyed the law and the will of God, so that his salvation is not confined to Jews, which it would have been had he obeyed merely the law of Moses, but reaches out and takes in both Jew and Gentile: all his people from the four winds of heaven and from the four corners of the earth, in every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue.

Thus we see that the Mosaic law comprised a "handwriting of ordinances" which was against the Gentiles, being contrary to them, because they were barred from the observance of it and from the blessings or privileges or punishments of it.

This Mosaic covenant made an enmity between Jew and Gentile. So when Jesus died it ended the old covenant. He took away the handwriting of ordinances, nailing them to his cross, thus abolishing the enmity. This expression, *"Having abolished in his flesh the enmity,"* and that other expression, *"Having slain the enmity"* by the cross, both found in the second chapter of Ephesians, do not refer at all to the enmity of the carnal mind and the mind of Christ, nor to the enmity between the flesh and the Spirit, but to the enmity between Jew

and Gentile, which enmity arose from the makeup of the Mosaic covenant which excluded Gentiles from participating in it. This enmity, this old covenant, had to be abolished before Gentiles could come into the kingdom of God. This abolition Jesus performed by the death of the cross.

Resulting from this death of Jesus comes the revelation of the mystery kept hid from the foundation of the world, and it is thus: the church, or body of Christ, composed of both Jews and Gentiles, are one in the kingdom of God. Having broken down the middle wall of partition Christ made of the twain one new man. The "twain" means two, and the two are Jew and the Gentile. Of these two he makes one new man, or one new body, the body of Christ. All are members of his flesh and of his bones, all fitly joined together, growing unto a holy temple in the Lord, builded through the Spirit for the habitation of his honor and glory. The children of God are not destined to become perfect men and perfect women. No, never. The gospel holds forth no such promise, but we all shall, that is, all his people from among both Jews and Gentiles, shall ultimately come unto the one perfect man, and that one perfect man is the measure of stature of the fullness of Christ. We shall all become as we already are, molded into one body, the body of our Lord.

Paul says somewhere in writing to the church at Corinth, Ye are all one bread. No loaf of bread can by any possibility be resolved back into its original grains of wheat. Each grain and all the grains lose their separateness when in the loaf of bread. Just so, only infinitely more so, the body of Christ while composed of redeemed sinners of Adam's fallen race can never be resolved back again into the individual men and women whence it came. Now this is the mystery which Paul particularly refers to in his letter to the church at Ephesus: ***"That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body (with the Jews), and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel."*** This doctrine of the new man; that is, of the body of Christ, made of Jew and Gentile, a wholly new thing until the resurrection of Christ, that is the special dispensation which was committed unto Paul to preach. It was not in other ages made known unto the sons of men, but it is now in the gospel age revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.

In some of the prophecies of the Old Testament, to be sure, there is abundant evidence of the bringing of the Gentiles to the light of the truth. Especially is this true of the prophecies of Isaiah. But that One body, or one new man, was to be formed of the hosts of the redeemed from among both Jews and Gentiles that both were to be quickened together with Christ and to be raised up together with Christ, and both to

be made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ; we say all this had been kept hid throughout all the ages heretofore to be revealed and made known in these last times, and was first made known in the ministry of Paul, the Gentiles' apostle, and was the special dispensation of the gospel committed unto him. This, the unity of the whole church of God in the one body of the new man, Christ Jesus, is the "unsearchable riches of Christ" which Paul says he was especially called to preach among the Gentiles. This oneness of Christ and his people, whosoever they may be in the flesh, whether Jew or Gentile, bond or free, Greek or barbarian, is the gist and kernel of the whole gospel matter. It is the fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined, on which God feasts his children in his holy mount.

Elder H. H. Lefferts
Nov. 1, 1920

(We question if Paul was the 13th Apostle. Ed.)

ECCLESIATES 8:6-7.

Because to every purpose there is time and judgment, therefore the misery of man is great upon him.

For he knoweth not that which shall be: for who can tell him when it shall be?

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities ; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." - Hebrews iv.15,16.

What heart can conceive or tongue recount the daily, hourly triumphs of the Lord Jesus Christ's all conquering grace? We see scarcely a millionth part of what he, as a King on his throne, is daily doing; and yet we see enough to know that he ever lives at God's right hand, and lives to save and bless .

What a crowd of needy petitioners every moment surrounds his throne! What urgent wants and woes to redress; what cutting griefs and sorrows to assuage; what broken hearts to bind up; what wounded consciences to heal; what countless prayers to hear; what earnest petitions to grant; what stubborn foes to subdue; what guilty fears to quell ! What clemency, what kindness , what long suffering what compassion, what mercy, what love, and yet what power and authority does this Almighty Sovereign display! No circumstance is too trifling; no petitioner too insignificant; no case too hard; no difficulty too great; no suer too importunate; no beggar

too ragged; no bankrupt too penniless ; no debtor too insolvent, for him not to notice and not to relieve. Sitting on his throne of grace, his allseeing eye views all, his almighty hand grasps all, and his loving heart embraces all whom the Father gave him by covenant, whom he himself redeemed by his blood, and whom the blessed Spirit has quickened into life by his invincible power. The hopeless, the helpless; the out - casts whom no man careth for; the tossed with tempest and not com - forted ; the ready to perish; the mourners in Zion; the bereaved widow; the wailing orphan; the sick in body, the still more sick in heart ; the racked with hourly pain; the fevered consumptive; the wrestler with death's last struggle O what crowds of pitiable objects surround his throne; and all needing a look from his eye, a word from his lips, a smile from his face, a touch from his hand! O could we but see what his grace is, what his grace has, what his grace does; and could we but feel more what it is doing in and for ourselves, we should have more exalted views of the reign of grace now exercised on high by Zion's enthroned King!

Elder J. C. Philpot

ST. JOHN 15:5

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

Job 37: 23-24.

Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict.

Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any that are wise of heart.

MEETINGS

LOWER MAYO FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo Association fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday only, April 30th, 2006. We hope to start singing at 10:30 A.M. and preaching at 11:00. Spoon Creek Church will host the meeting and it will be held in Russell Creek Meeting House.

Directions for those who do not know the location; the meeting house is located approximately 9 miles south of Stuart, Virginia near the Virginia, North Carolina Border. Those coming north or south on Route #8, turn east on Ayers Orchard Road #653 for about 1 mile. Turn right on Moorefield Store Road #631. Go 1/4 mile to Church location on right. Those coming east or west on Route #58, turn south on Southfork Loop #827, turn on Ayers

Orchard Road #653. Go 3 miles to Moorefield Store Road #631. Turn left, go 1/4 mile to Church location on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of Love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk

ELDER J.B. FARMER COMING TO BIG MEADOWS

Elder J.B. Farmer of Grayson, Ky., the Lord willing, will be with us on the second Sunday in April.

Elder Farmer is also an associate editor of the Signs of the Times.

Big Meadows is located about 20 miles below Graham, N.C. Those traveling I-85 take the Pittsboro/Graham exit and go 17 miles toward Pittsboro. After crossing the Cane Creek Bridge take first road to right at top of hill – go 4 miles to a crossroad and turn left – go 1 mile then to church.

We invite all lovers of the Truth to come and be with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key
Sister JoAnn Self, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene, the Lord willing, with Moons Creek Church the 5th Sunday in April 2006. The church is located about ½ mile east of Highway #86 between Danville and Yanceyville.

Traveling from Danville toward Yanceyville on Highway 86, turn left onto Parks Springs Road.

Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Sister Sue Blalock, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 2006

Sheryl Jackson -TX	25.00
M. L. Richardson -FL	5.00
Ruby Dyer -VA	5.00
Lowell Hopkins -VA	5.00
Herbert Dodson -VA	5.00
Nellie Dalton -VA	5.00
Clemmie Tucker -LA	5.00
Anne Pearson -MI	15.00
Connie Franco -TX	2.00
Livie Thompson -VA	3.00
Ralph Dale -NC	5.00
Alvis Beacham -NC	5.00

OBITUARIES

LLOYD CUMMINS SPIKES

Brother Lloyd Spikes was the last remaining member of Big Springs Primitive Baptist Church in Elgin, Oregon. He had been a member for over 50 years. He died on February 14, 2006, at the age of 90 years. Brother Spikes was born May 1, 1915, to Lloyd F. and Elva Cummings Spikes in Elgin and was the oldest of seven children.

Brother Lloyd grew up living and working on farms in the area and did occasional carpentering jobs. During World War II, he served in the Navy in the Pacific. Following the war, he was a partner in a small sawmill operation and then started his own construction business which he operated for over 24 years. He also served as Mayor of Elgin for three terms after serving on the City Council for several years.

He married Florence E. Walter in 1936 and to this union were born three children. They are: daughter Carrol and husband Chuck Turk of Portland; daughter Connie and husband Tom Flaskerud of Las Vegas, NV; and son Mike and wife Kristy Spikes of Corvallis, OR. He is also survived by two sisters, Helen Maxwell of Walla Walla, WA, and Mary Ann Hazelwood of Ellensburg, WA and his aunt Katherine Strauss of Coos Bay, OR. He leaves behind five grandchildren, four great grandchildren and numerous younger relatives. He was predeceased by siblings Dorothy Faught, Tom Spikes, Jean Weaver and Dale Spikes.

His first wife, Sister Florence, was a member of Big Springs Primitive Baptist Church and also predeceased him December 1996. It was a privilege and blessing for my wife and I to visit in their home and to hold a service in their home. Brother Lloyd was blessed with much spiritual understanding and loved to discuss the scriptures. We continued to do so by correspondence and telephone until shortly before he had a heart attack. In 1998, he married Beth Miller who passed away in 2004.

There were no ministers of like-precious faith in his area so he requested that there be no funeral or graveside service. He was blessed to live his faith and to die in it.

Submitted in love,
Cleo D. Robertson

ROMANS 5:1-2.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into the grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Signs of the Times

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SONG

My God, my life, my love,
To thee, to thee I call;
I cannot live if thou remove,
For thou art all in all.

The smilings of thy face,
How amiable they are!
'Tis heaven to rest in thine embrace
And nowhere else but there.

Not all the harps above
Can make a heavenly place
If God his residence remove,
Or but conceal his face.

Nor earth, nor all the sky
Can one delight afford;
No, not a drop of real joy
Without thy presence, Lord.

Thou art the sea of love,
Where all my pleasures roll;
The circle where my passions move,
And centre of my soul.

To thee my spirits fly,
With infinite desire;
And yet how far from thee I lie!
Dear Jesus, raise me higher.

C.M.

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EDITORIAL

"For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to youward." 2 Corinthians 1:12

Elder J.B. Farmer

In agreement with the conversation or way of life of God's children, the gospel containing the true doctrine is so simple that it confounds the minds of all men who are wise in their own conceits. It is so mysteriously simple that the little babes in Christ who still have need of milk, and also those who are brought to maturity and have need of meat, are all glad to receive it. And they all are miraculously fed and edified by it. This gospel does not stand in the wisdom of the fleshly man but rather stands in the unfathomable wisdom of God in a mystery. In the beginning of the revelation of the gospel of truth we are taught that the eternal God, by His unimaginable wisdom and power, made the world and all things in it. He perfectly made all these things, both seen and unseen, for His good pleasure. Although many, by natural means, have tried to find out how things came to be as they are, they have all been confounded and made to stumble as blind men in the dark. By God's great hidden wisdom He orders and sustains all things that He made. His little ones all rejoice and marvel at the great and mysterious creation by the almighty God of the world and all that is in it, and the sun, the moon and the whole universe of stars. His little ones hold the mystery of creation in simple faith and are taught to simply, ***"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."***

Men in their carnal minds and ungodly insincerity try to confuse things. They say that there was no creation - that all things just happened without any guiding wisdom or power. They say that life sponta-

neously began and that it gradually became more complex over time. And they say that life, all by itself, developed into the intricate world that we know today. Since the world is so plainly full of the majesty and mystery of the Creator's work, how foolish is the carnal mind, and what blindness is manifest by those who deny Him? In the world there is no Godly sincerity or simple faith that acknowledges God as God in all His marvelous works and ways. ***"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."***

Here is the simple truth that I am made to believe according to the scriptures concerning God's people. Before God made the world, He foreknew His own people, who are His generation. He foreknew them in that He created them in Christ Jesus and set His everlasting love upon them. Before we had a being in this world God knew us and knew all about us. He knew the instant of our natural and spiritual births. He knew the day of our death. He knew where and how we would live. He knew what we would look like and what our name would be. He knew all our troubles and our joys. He knew every step we would take and even every word that would come from our mouths, yea even our thoughts before we had them. He loves His own much better than a good natural father loves his children, and He seeks their benefit always. There is nothing that is able to separate the Children of God from that everlasting love of God. Here is how far God went to secure the happiness of His little ones that He foreknew. He loved them to the extent that He gave His only begotten Son to live and die for them in order that they should not perish, but have everlasting life.

The simplicity of the gospel of salvation by grace is that God predestinated all those whom He loved and gave to Christ, to be conformed to His image. He fixed it so that none would be lost, but all should be raised up in the image and glory of Christ at His coming. Nothing can withstand the word of God. God promised that He would bring His people to glory and He cannot lie, neither can He fail in a promise. Otherwise He would not be God. But our Lord certainly is the God of all creation, even of heaven and earth and none can stay His hand or even ask, "Why doest Thou." God has promised to save His people and to raise them up in His likeness and He shall do it. ***"He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."***

Spiritual things are spiritually discerned, but natural men only see natural things. They use their imaginings to build up a kind of complicated religion that satisfies the natural reasoning. Many even take the scriptures and twist them around and try to make them fit their fleshly ideas. The carnal mind would like to think that all men have a chance at salvation. They do not see that

God made the choice of His elect long before man was ever placed here on earth. They falsely think rather that through a man's proper choices he may secure his place in heaven. But even his heaven is little better than this earth. It has all the elements of this earth. To his understanding, families will be reunited there, and they will follow out their favorite old pursuits after some fashion. He even imagines that men will have larger and smaller rewards and positions in his supposed heaven. But according to the scriptures, I am made to believe that there shall be neither male nor female there, and we shall be as the angels. And those that labored in the vineyard were all given the same reward whether they worked one hour or many hours through the heat of the day. The reasoning of the carnal mind is always false. *"That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."*

The practice of the true church is the very model of simplicity. It is all of grace. The people He has called with a holy and effectual calling must hear His voice and live. God before determined that all of His chosen people must be brought out of the darkness of this world and into the glorious light of the gospel. Jesus built His church and set in it all the things necessary to glorify the Father. His people are made to love the Light rather than the darkness. They are made to love Him with all their heart, mind, soul and strength; and they are made to love His people as their own selves. His people are given a mind to please Him that made all things. They are given a good understanding concerning the practice of true religion. All things must be done in love and therefore in decency and in order. There shall be no respecting of persons. All true believers are made to count their brethren better than themselves, and must not lord over one another. Even the meetings themselves are utter simplicity. There we find His people singing from the heart, praying prayers indited of God, preaching in the power of the Holy Spirit, and fellowshipping in love. *"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."*

There are many organizations that have taken His name, but actually despise Him and depart from His commandments and His ways. They always confuse and complicate things. Instead of singing from the heart, they must have musical instruments and fleshly emotion to lead them. Instead of prayer being sent down from above, there are

men's ideas coming from the earth and going no higher than the earth. In place of the wisdom of God being preached in a mystery, enticing words of men's wisdom abound. Rather than having humble loving fellowship, there is a respecting of persons and the pride of life and the lust of the flesh. They introduce Sunday schools, missions, women's and men's organizations, tithing, programs of all kinds, unsound literature, and all sorts of other fleshly practices. God, knowing their ways has perfectly described them in His word. ***"In that day seven women shall take hold of one man saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach."***

This one great salvation by grace alone is so simple that it cannot be understood by the wise of this world. This salvation was complete before the world was made. It extends from God in the beginning and returns to Him in the end. He has wrought all of it from the creation of His people in Christ; to the foreknowledge and predestination of them; to the formation of them on the earth; to the sending of His only begotten Son to save them from their sins; to the giving of faith to them in the Spirit; to the calling of His people out of darkness; to the establishment of their hearts in the doctrine of grace; to their walk in the obedience of faith; to their being kept and being made to be faithful to death; to their resurrection and change, and to their eternal abode with Him. God is our all and all and our great salvation. ***"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption."***

By their carnal reasoning, men seek to confuse the simple truth of salvation by grace. They falsely say that God wants all men to be saved; and that salvation is secured in time by a man's so called "free will" choice; and that God writes one's name in the Lamb's book of life when he decides to believe; and that one obliges God to save him by deciding to believe; and that obedience depends upon the creature; and many even falsely say that one of God's children may fall away from grace and perish. But salvation for time and eternity is of the Lord. And Jesus said, ***"And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."***

The true doctrine of the Lord concerning the resurrection of the dead is so simple that the least of God's little children in knowledge, and the greatest of them, believe it and embrace it and long for it. They are made to see themselves as vile worms of the dust, that cannot do anything good of themselves. They cry out with the apostle, ***"O wretched man that I am! Who***

shall deliver me from the body of this death?" They are made to know that this world is not their home and that they are strangers and pilgrims here. They are taught that the whole world lies in wickedness. They, as did righteous Lot, vex their righteous souls from day to day with their unlawful deeds. They are the creation of God that groans and travails until this very hour, earnestly waiting for and expecting the adoption, which is the redemption of our body. They desire to be absent from the body and present with the Lord. It is their hope and expectation that when the Lord shall appear, they shall see Him as He is and shall be made like Him in a glorified body like His.

Men in a carnal mind, be they ever so knowledgeable, always end up corrupting the simplicity of the gospel. And many use the scriptures to try to prove their positions. But we have been forewarned of them. We are told that some will come saying there is no resurrection of the body. Some will teach that the resurrection is accomplished when one dies and the spirit returns to God who gave it. Others will say the resurrection is already past. Some will say that the resurrection could come at any moment. Some will say there are two resurrections of God's people. Some will say that Jesus, after the resurrection, will set up a thousand year reign upon the earth. All those teachings, to my understanding, are very misleading and false.

We must not be deceived by any of these things. When anyone uses a line of teaching that is complicated and hard to follow, he has departed from the simplicity of the gospel. When one makes many assumptions about the meaning of scriptures, especially if he says he has reasoned these things out using the scriptures, in my judgment, his word is to be closely tried by the simplicity of the gospel. One does not have to be a linguist or a bible scholar to understand the truth. If one comes in meanness of spirit, and condemns others that disagree with him, we are taught to beware. If one's teachings agree with the things being taught in the worldly religions, we must take heed. We are taught to try the spirits whether they are of God. We are taught to examine ourselves whether we are in the faith. We are cautioned that we are not to be blown about by every wind of doctrine. The gospel is simple. The true gospel preachers are humbled down by God Himself to have a Godly sincerity. They come not with enticing words of men's wisdom, but in the power and wisdom of the Holy Spirit. They come speaking the simple truth in love. The apostle Paul, by the Spirit of God, desired that the saints not *"be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."*

According to the scriptures, at the end of time, only after the falling away and only after the man of sin is revealed, Christ shall come once, not upon the earth, but in the air. At His coming, all shall be raised from

the dead – some to life eternal and some to everlasting destruction. The dead in Christ shall be raised first, then those which are alive and remain at His coming shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. All those that have died in Christ, whose spirits had before returned to God, shall be brought with Christ at His coming to be united with their bodies which shall have been made spiritual, and each one shall be perfected, along with all other children of God, into one spiritual body. All of God's children shall see Him as He is and shall be made like Him and shall be with Him forever. The wicked shall be destroyed by the brightness of His coming with an everlasting destruction. The earth shall melt with a fervent heat and the elements shall clean dissolve away at His presence. That will be the end of the world as we know it. David was blessed to say, ***"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."*** This is the simple testimony of the inspired writers, as I understand it.

I am sure that some will say this is much too simplistic. They will say that the truth about salvation, church practice, obedience and the resurrection is way more complex than what has been briefly stated here. Of course the truth can never be fully expounded, but the truth is always profoundly simple. You must be the judge of these things. These are the things I believe that God has shown to me, and not to me alone, but unto many that I count to be faithful, loving and sound brethren. If I am in the dark, I must remain so until the God of heaven and earth is pleased to raise the veil for me, if indeed He ever does. However, if these things are true, which I am made to wholeheartedly believe that they are; by grace let us hold them fast until the Lord of glory shall appear; let us, with all saints, press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus; let us rejoice in the truth, and have our conversation in Godly sincerity and in simplicity toward one another; let us glory in the power and wisdom of God and not in the weakness and foolishness of fleshly, worldly wisdom; let our hearts be established in the grace of God to the end, and let all greatness be ascribed to our God.

Written in love and in
hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer

JOHN 1:1-3.

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the word was God.

The same was in the beginning with God.

All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

CORRESPONDENCE

February 23, 2006

Dear Brother and Sister Terry,

This afternoon I realized in my weak way that my subscription for "The Signs of the Times" was way past due. I thought of you and how that you had continued to send "The Signs" even when it was past due. I very much appreciate the fact that you desired that I continue to receive it. I enjoy the paper very much each month. I have enclosed a check to pay for the months I am past due as well as for two more years. In it's editorials and experiences it speaks of things that God has accomplished for his people and blessed me to believe and experience.

I have been blessed to meet all present writers and editors and some of the voices of the past writers. I hope that I am thankful to God for editors that He blesses with His grace, and gives them the desire to write and put the paper together.

"The Signs" causes me at times to look back to the book of remembrance - how that God blessed me to meet and visit with such loving and humble brothers and sisters in Christ in past years during my visits to the Stauton River and Smith River Associations. Also, this book of remembrance causes me to think of changes God has blessed my life with. The Apostle Paul said ***"We glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."*** That us we believe is the ones Christ went to the cross for, the ones that have that love. I have people to tell me that I don't have much if Hope is all I have, but that Hope that God's children have is not to be ashamed of, for it is the love of God in our hearts. Brother Terry, this is sweet to me because this love has changed the way I walked. I believe it quickened us who were dead in trespasses and sins. Paul wrote to the Corinthians ***"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new."***

Elder Terry, a few weeks back in my discourse, prayers and gracing the table, I would beg God to give me wisdom and understanding. Something (I believe it was God) caused me to study the book of Job. I found in the 28th chapter that Job was asking ***"where shall wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding?"*** God showed him that it couldn't be found in the land of the living or bought with jewels of silver and fine gold. Then he asked, ***"and whence then cometh wisdom, and where is the place of understanding?"*** God showed

him that it is hid from all living.

To make this short - for what I was shown that God told Job. "And unto man he said, ***"behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom and to depart from evil is understanding."*** This to me is when man begins to see what he is by nature and to realize who this Sovereign God is - the one that holds the keys to all things. You are made to know you need his Grace and Mercy. This causes his children to turn from evil-this is the beginning of understanding. This wisdom and understanding is a gift from God.

We have been blessed to believe in a Savior who loved his children with an everlasting love. We have been made to believe as the Apostle Paul when he asked, ***"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"*** He went on to answer his question. ***"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*** The Apostle Paul covered it all. To me this is the sweetest doctrine there could be, knowing that nothing will be able to separate God's people from this love of God has been merciful to Sylvia and I. He blesses me and Sylvia (when health permits her) to go each month to our home church Bordeaux. I still try to serve some of the churches down in the Buttahatchie-Hopewell Association each month. As we get older and closer to the end of this life's journey this doctrine of predestination, election and grace is sweet.

Hope you and Sister Terry are doing well. We love you two and all brothers and sisters up East that we have met. Our desire is to have any of you to visit in our churches or home anytime, with the help of God we will try to make you feel welcome.

I didn't intend on writing such a long note, as you can tell I am not a very good writer. I would like to leave you with this last thought though. I hope we are blessed to leave this world looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.

In Bonds of Love,
James T. Howard

February 20, 2006

Dear Elder Terry,

May this find the elect in peace, resting in the finished work of Christ.

By grace may the Editors of the Signs continue to serve the believers.

Enclosed is a check for two more years of the Signs of the Times.

Unworthy brother,
Earl W. Hall
8307 Appaloosa
Austin, Tx 78737-4004

March 7, 2006

Dear Elder Terry,

I received my issue of the Signs yesterday, and I noticed the subscription is due for renewal this month. Therefore, please find enclosed with this short letter a check in the amount of $15.00 to renew my subscription to this periodical for another year.

The article beginning on page 65 by H. J. Redd is the only one that I have read, so far. It is a good story written by Mr. Redd who apparently was from Riverview, Alabama. However one cannot *tell* at what date it was written, only that it is listed in front as "VOICES OF THE PAST."

Those church fires down in Bibb County Alabama were really a terrible thing to happen last January. This was the county where my late Grandfather, William Ashley Barrett was born and raised. My wife and I were at the Rehobeth Baptist Church (one that was burnt clear to the ground) to attend a Family Reunion back in 1995. We did not go inside this old church which was founded in 1819, but were there to hear an historian tell about the history of this old church and of some of our ancestors buried in the church cemetery nearby. I do not believe this was a Primitive Baptist Church, however, the name of Barrett appears on some of the old records there. Grandpa Barrett later lived in Louisiana, Texas, and California. He was a deacon back in the 1940's of the old Seclusia Church of Southern California. He died at the age of 86 in 1953 and is buried in the Exeter Cemetery.

We hope this finds you doing well, Elder Terry. We are doing fairly well at this time. May the Lord continue to bless you and your household. Please pray for us when at the Throne of Grace.

Sincerely,
Bill

Oct. 14, 2006

Elder Wm. Hale Terry,

Dear Terry,

I trust this finds you well. I still enjoy reading the writing of different ones who are so able to write of the Gospel of Christ Jesus.

I can only read a short time - my eyes are failing also. I have hearing problems at 97 years but I thank the Lord I am as able as I am. I thank the Lord for his goodness and mercy to me.

My plans are to live with my twin sister Jane S. Carroll until I get an apartment or move in with someone else.

One in Hope of
eternal life in
Christ Jesus our Lord
Ellen Sellars

3-18-06

Elder Hale Terry:

Dear Brother Hale,

Enclosed is money to renew my subscription to the Signs for another year. Use what is left over as needed.

I enjoy reading the Signs, and would not like to be without it. I am now reading some old Signs from the 1950's to 1970's and really do enjoy the good experiences and letters as well as the articles on doctrine and order.

I wish more people would write for publication, and would love to see someone write on Genesis, 49th Chapter, 10th verse, where Jacob was blessing his sons before his death, especially Judah's blessing which reads: The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law given from between his feet, until Shiloh come: and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. Would you please write on it? I hope someone will.

Just an old sinner and a weary stranger.

Aunt Edrie Clifton

THESSALONIANS 5:21.

Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.

3-1-06

Elder Wm. Hale Terry,

The Signs of the Times is such a blessing.

Enclosed is our subscription for 2 more years. Ours doesn't expire until May 2006 but I wish to renew now and give a gift subscription at the same time. I have enclosed a one year subscription for the following.

Please send their subscription to Mr. Jimmy & Darlene Wilson
125 County Road 4116
Quitman, TX 75783-4957

Thank you for so much and God Bless Our Country, its Leader, the men and women fighting to keep this country free.

Amazing Grace
John & Faith Ballard

Enclosed check for $40.00

John 3:1-2.

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

ARTICLES

God's mysteries are both great and small. I would like to write these thoughts on some of these mysteries of this sovereign God, who rules and controls, after the counsel of his will.

Some of the mysteries, occurring along life's journey, are beyond the comprehension of these fleshly minds. The beautiful words of the number one song in Goble's hymnal saying, ***"God moves in mysterious ways, His wonders to perform, He plants his footsteps on the sea, and rides upon the storm,"*** besides being my mother's favorite song, seems especially important to these thoughts.

All of these things both great and small that we read and hear of, unfold through the channels of God's grace, are timed to perfection and unfold at God's appointed time. God's mysterious ways are so much broader and deeper than even the events we encounter along life's journey, and have been considered through all of time. Mankind has always wondered his role in the tides of God's splendor, and given symbols and meanings to the questions in our minds.

One of our first hints of God's mysteries is the greatest of all: Love. Even the worst critics of the Old Baptist beliefs cannot fathom our complete and utter dependence on Isaiah's "still small voice," so beautifully expressed in Paul's powerful words in Corinthians: ***"if I have not love."*** This beginning idea has confounded the greatest of religious scholars both in the spans of time since the time when Christ walked on earth, through the wrangling away of the pearl before the swine well over a thousand years later.

Through all known history humans have considered their role in life's journey. Often led to mountain of jubilation through God's mysterious ways, even non-Christians expressed God's greatness: ***"my feet no longer touched the earth."*** And when our hearts being fully fed at God's beckon, it is predictable that people would wish to control and relive those moments of spiritual clarity.

When we say we are helpless creatures here on earth asking that His will be done, it is in respect of both Isaiah's "still small voice," as well as the central idea that makes old Baptist belief distinctive.

This distinctiveness is especially important in light of the Arminian belief that one can accept or reject God's salvation through the flesh.

Now, if it is pleasing to this sovereign God to lead and guide one through the channels of His precious grace, which is defined as "an unmerited favor," to ask for a home in this great church of God, we come beggars, through God's mercy to do so. The old Baptist hear that "still

small voice" both on the mountain as well as in the valleys of our lives.

This difference in beliefs between the old Baptist and more Arminian beliefs is important. Our recognition that we are helpless to be partakers of God's holy events in any way is not an expression so much of our weakness, but of God's great sovereignty and complete grace. While it may be understandable that the Arminian would wish to stay upon the mountain, we find that this simply is not God's way.

God in heaven rules and controls everything, after the counsel of his will. Everything is everything, including this great salvation which is the deliverance of God's goodness in the hearts of His believing family—at God's discretion, through the channels of His precious grace, from the courts of glory, according to His precious will. God's work is a finished work, a work created as God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus from all eternity.

The bible says that He works and none can hinder, and hinders and none can work. When the old Baptist relinquishes the fleshly mind to these greater truths, it is in respect of our sovereign God. It is the ultimate act of faith, that we see a truly sovereign God as the ruler who controls not some, but all spiritual things pertaining to this great salvation.

All Christians marvel when God confounds our fleshly minds. But it is the old Baptists who truly live the meanings found In these important examples. I heard the following story some years ago, so I can only hope to relate it to the best of my ability.

A distinguished lady in the south, who was well fixed materially, decided she would host preaching at her place. She had heard about a preacher Leland, who had the reputation of being a very able preacher. She contacted him with an appointment which he accepted. She had never met Elder Leland, but he was to arrive on a Saturday evening before preaching and spend the night. Arriving later than expected after a long dusty journey, he was greeted by this lady. His modest appearance assured her that this wasn't her expected visitor, so he was directed to the slave quarters to sleep.

The slaves knew she was expecting him, because they had been helping with preparations. Welcoming Leland in his modest quarters, the guest of honor would thus pass the night. The lady of the house, had made extensive arrangements and invited people from all over the country side.

When night came, the slave asked Leland if he would like to petition the God of heaven in a word of prayer. When Leland was led to pray, the words sounded so highly that the rafters were said to ring with joy. It became immediately obvious to the slave who his guest was. The next morning when the slave went to the lady's house, he found her very disappointed because her

guest had not arrived.

Recounting last night's prayer to the lady, the slave told her how the rafters rung with joy, from this beautiful sound of God's prayer. It then donned upon the lady that she had made a terrible mistake, as she remembered the scripture about turning an angel away unaware. She begged Leland's forgiveness and asked him to complete his appointment.

God's mysteries belong to both the great and small. The moral of the story is when God sends one of his servants to feed this little flock, they will be enabled through the channels of His grace to do so, his will being often if not predictably beyond the reaches of our understanding. The old Baptist have championed God's sovereignty in these matters as no other people.

Along the same lines, my father heard an elder preach several years ago who was sentenced to die in the electric chair in pennsylvania. The elder had come upon a wounded man who someone had left to die. Seeing the man suffering he offered his assistance, though later he did die. The elder could not get authorities to believe his story, and he was subsequently sentenced to die in the electric chair.

The night of the execution brought the sentenced elder to the electric chair. The elder was strapped in the electric chair, and current was applied. The electricity had no effect. The executioners tried yet again, with the same effect. Seeing the seriousness of the situation, the executioners called the governor. They were told by the governor, ***"Let that man loose, he is innocent."***

We see example after example of God's authority throughout the bible. God's intercession on behalf of the Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, where not even their garments were scorched is a phenomenal example of God's power and sovereignty. God's protection of Daniel in the lion's den is another powerfully beautiful example of not our will, but God's will, God's plan is complete. He rules and controls everything after the counsel of his precious will.

God leads his little ones through the fiery trials of afflictions, and through the darkness in nature, bringing them forth victorious over many trials and tribulations they encounter. God's sovereignty is given as the first cause of the universe, not man's. Though we often confuse our dominion of the earth with God's grace, we are continuously reminded that God is a loving, ruling, sovereign, controlling God who works everything after the counsel of his precious will, needing no help from puny man.

God's grace works through most of our lives in subtle and meaningful ways. The old Baptist are recorded as often living close to the land, often in rural settings throughout wherever they may be

found. At crossroads in the paths of life, Gods mysteries are especially meaningful to our journeys. He speaks in seasons and hope, in comfort and sorrow, in both substance and idea, in the morning and in the evening, behind the plow and on the mountain, in fellowship, in solitude, and in love.

God hides his mysteries in our daily lives in beautiful ways that make the words to a beautiful song worth repeating: ***"God moves in mysterious ways, His wonders to perform, He plants his footsteps on the sea, and rides upon the storm"*** bonds of his precious love,

Riley Justice
POB 272
War, WV 24892
304-875-2960

CHAPTER 11:2-5.

Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples,

And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?

Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see:

The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

VOICES OF THE PAST

MANNA

What is it? It is an edible gum, a miraculous gift of God from heaven, in the form of food, for the sustenance of life.

When the children of Israel had been brought out of Egypt by the Lord (Moses leading them), and came to the wilderness of sin, they began murmuring against Moses and Aaron, and wishing they had died by the flesh pots of Egypt. Moses informed them that their murmurings were not against him (Moses), but against the Lord: and that the Lord would send them flesh at evening and bread in the morning. So at evening there came quails, and in the morning something like unto round frost on the ground. As none could account for the appearance of this wonderful diet, or food, they called "manna." They gathered up, some more, and some less; and they that gathered much had nothing over, and they that gathered little had no lack. What a wonderful figure!

When Jesus was here in the flesh, his followers desired of him a sign saying, ***"Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat."*** Jesus answered them saying, ***"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the***

true bread from heaven." He also said, *"I am the bread of life;"* and *"If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever."* And to the angel of the church at Pergamos, he commanded John to write, saying, *"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna."*

In the figure, we see a people chosen of God, called out of bondage, led by the Lord; and although they are rebelious and murmur, yet see them fed with "manna" from "heaven." We worship a God who changes not. And now, in this gospel day, the Lord has a people chosen of God, elect and precious. "A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people." This is a fact that none will dare to deny. Who is this people? Let us search for them. In the figure we saw a people in bondage in servitude, serving task masters. Have you ever felt the bondage of sin? Have you felt that you could not keep God's holy law? that you could not pray to God so as to be heard? that you could not praise his holy name? that you were not free to join the church of God, to be baptized, to commune with God's people, and to glorify God in your body and in your spirit? If so we have found you in bondage, and we follow you through a sea of tribulation to the wilderness where you hear the messenger of God crying, *"Prepare ye the way of the Lord."* We see you hungering and murmuring, and saying, Why can't I enjoy myself pride humbled, the world overcome, and as I once did (by the flesh pots of Egypt)? God sends you a little morsel now and then. But you wonder and ask the question, in your mind, What is it? You may call it "manna." You are a stranger in a strange land, and there you begin a battle with unbelief. Satan tells you that you are not a child of God. Yet you look to God for all your help, as a child looks to its father; and, as such, you look to God and, as you are aware, your very breathing is prayer to God.

Can I ever overcome? Yes, by faith in God. *"This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"* you now believe this, and you believe also that Jesus died to save sinners. So we find you freed from the bondage of sin, eating manna in the wilderness, and asking, What is it? and, by faith in God, overcoming unbelief. But now comes your pride, which also must be overcome; You want to know that you are a Christian; that you are good enough to join the church; that you are as good as any, and even better than some. But you must deny self if you would follow Christ. You should be willing to saying with Paul, I am less than the least; with Job, *"Behold, I am vile;"* with David, *"Have mercy on me, O God: according to thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions! "I acknowledge my transgressions and my sin is ever before me."* In these we find you are found eating

that *"hidden manna,"* going into baptism, communing with the saints, and finding freedom in the praise of the Lord.

J. A. Ashburn

AARON'S ROD

Among the mysteries contained in the Scriptures none is greater, perhaps, than Aaron's Rod. A question was raised by some of the children of Israel against Korah and company and they murmured against Moses and Aaron, claiming that they had killed the people of the Lord, so Moses and Aaron came before the tabernacle of the congregation. The Lord commands Moses to get up from among the congregation , that he might consume them as in a moment. But Moses commands Aaron to make an atonement for them. The plague is stayed, as Aaron *"stood between the dead and the living."*

God then gave command to Moses that a rod be prepared for each of the tribes of Israel, twelve rods, and that the name of every man be written, upon his rod. *"And thou shalt write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi for one rod shall be for the head of the house of their fathers."*

The "rod," according to the best available authority, is of a twofold nature, serving both as an instrument for the infliction of punishment and also as a staff to lean upon while walking, It also originally carried the idea of a branch or scion, and also the idea of dominion, as a scepter. While some have given these latter ideas, our conception of the word is simply a staff for walking, a rod for correction, or a scepter of dominion. Still we will not say much about the latter.

Now let us consider its material. We can see nothing but a mere stick cut off from the roots at the ground, the branches cut from the top, a mere stick. Should you wish to propagate a tree, you could never look for life or growth from such a branch, let the environments be what they may. Twelve of these are laid up in the tabernacle of the congregation. We see neither sunlight nor moisture on the rods.

We see neither life nor growth in the eleven. But we see signs of life in the rod on which the name of Aaron appears.

It has budded. The cause is invisible. Where is the root? Where is the branch? Where is the culture? All are invisible. The original bark bursts, as the life appears, and all eyes are fixed upon it. Mere signs of life is not all; it puts on beauty, for we see blossoms. Nor does it cease with beauty: for, it bears fruit, and we see the almonds, the strengthening, rich, luscious, soul-cheering fruit upon it. Wonderful mystery! What can compare with it? No hand has planted it, and none has activated it; but God causes it to manifest life, to put on beauty and to bear

fruit.

We now have a wonderful figure of the Gospel Ministry and *also* of the church. Now *let* us behold a poor sinner as he, for the first time, sees himself lost, and tries over and over to find joy and life in the things of earth, but cannot: for he is cut off and cannot find pleasure in the things of earth. He attempts to communicate with God in prayer, is cut off both root and branch. He is all alone; he feels, he sees no life, no beauty, no fruit: night comes, and he has no light; But ***"night unto night showeth knowledge."*** The morrow comes and we see signs of life. The buds appear, as the heaving heart gives away in anguish, and we see the bloom of beauty (humility) depicted on a calm and serene face. It is the image of Jesus. Then we see the fruits, when we see the humble child of God obeying the heavenly Father in baptism, in the communion, in washing the saint's feet, and in bringing the members of the body into subjection.

Now let us look for a little while, at the Gospel Ministry. The man of God must be called as was Aaron: for no man taketh this honor unless he is thus called-has hope on which he leans as a staff. He is so lame that he cannot walk without it, and often so weak that he cannot stand without it. Often we see him cast it down and it becomes a serpent before him as he trembles before earthly rulers, but it *is* his whether serpent or rod. He must take it at God's command, but, fearfully, he takes *it* by the tail. Where he sees danger he finds strength, for the serpent becomes a: rod *in* his, hand. But what of it? It is only a rod. He examines it carefully. He sees no life in it and lays it away under the order of Moses. Yet it is his, whether day or night, serpent or rod, living or dead. It *is* his. He cannot get along without it, and often stumbles with it, and is afraid of it; but, still it is his. He has laid it aside during the night time, but the morning star arises; and, while many, very many rods were thus laid aside, we see buds on his, and oh, how the heart swells with emotion as the signs of life are manifested. Yet he feels so unworthy, so little-has some of the meekness that was manifested in Moses. He feels as Paul said: ***"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given."*** As this meek humble feeling steals over him we see the beauty, or the rod blooming. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings." This gives him standing. Next we see him feeding the flock of God, for the almonds have appeared with their luscious strengthening. He has the honor thrust upon him, and the greater the honor the more humble he feels, and the more humble he feels the more he praises the Lord. Aaron's rod praised God, hence it was kept in the ark of the covenant with the tables of the law and the golden pot that held the manna. So this manifestation of life from the

dead is stored in the heart in which is written the law of God and is sustained by the invisible manna from heaven. J.A. Ashburn

---

Ephesians 2:8.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.

Dear Brother Branscome,-I have felt a desire to write a few lines for your perusal; but fear to make the attempt, because my thoughts are of such a rambling nature that I may fail to interest you. And, again, when I review my vile and corrupt nature, I feel so sensibly my unworthiness to be taken into notice by any of the ransomed throng; of the true Israel of God. Yet my heart goes out to them in love, as I see them wearing the breast plate of faith and love, and the greatest desire of my heart is to be like them: for I believe them truly to be the servants of the living and true God, whether I am a child of God or not. It has been my desire to know this, but I have not been brought into this knowledge yet. I only live by hope; and when I joined the church, I went there willing for them to be the judge. And more than that: I believe that I was in the most bitter torment till I did go. But, as I said, I am tangle-minded. I most go back and give you some evidence to believe this.

A few years ago I wrote you two letters, never thinking that you would publish them; but you did and I was made to mourn over writing them. O, how I did wish that I had waited awhile: for what if I should be deceived? and then I would have so many deceived. But now I am a member of the Primitive Baptist church; and as sinful and as Unworthy as I am, I have found a home which the world could never have given. Though I do feel to be the least among them, If I could have stayed away, I would have done so, for I was determined not to go. I tried with all my strength to get released from that burden. But nothing I could do would suffice. I went under this oppression for several long years; but the longer I went the heavier grew my burden. I became so I could hardly stand on my feet at the close of religious services. And still, I would say, I will not go; I will die first. Because, I am not worthy, and can't tell them of anything good that I have ever done. I had once thought that I was about as good as anybody, but now everybody was better than myself. At last a great affliction was laid upon me, and I tried three different physicians; but they could do it no good, and it seemed that it was far from disobedience. I was made on one night to arise from my bed and to kneel down beside my little children's bed, I prayed to the Lord to take care of them so long as they should live in this unfriendly world. I

felt that I must die and it seemed that I was in the worst condition that any poor mortal ever could be in. My life was no enjoyment to me home was no pleasure my husband and children could not comfort me, and, truly, I felt to be a great burden to them, And I prayed to the Lord that, if all this was for my disobedience, to manifest it to me whether it was my duty to go and tell to the church what little I had to tell or not, When I closed my eyes-I can't say whether I was asleep or awake-I viewed the Old Baptists, the true servants of God, standing beside a pool with their shoes off ; they were bidding me to come and be baptized and I thought I said, *"Lord, why is it that I can't go, if it is my duty to go?"* when I heard a voice saying, *"The church has bid you come, and the Spirit bids you go, and you just will not."* Then I begged the Lord to release me from my sufferings and I would go the next opportunity, And added, *"If I perish, I will perish."* Three or four days before the meeting, it began to rain, and I never saw such wet weather in my life, Oh! now, I thought, there is no purpose in my going: for if so it would not have rained, On Friday night, I prayed (seeking a sign) that, if the Lord had a purpose in my going to the church the next day, to manifest it by causing the weather to be clear the next morning. But, behold, when I arose the next morning, I found it still raining. I took this as an evidence that I was mistaken: and, to myself I said, *"Now, I will never go."* About eight o'clock, amid one of the hardest rains I ever saw, I saw a gentleman ride up into our yard; and, behold, Who should it we but Elder Jesse A. Ashburn? He alighted and came into the house. I felt like I wanted to fall at his feet and tell him that I was deceived and that the Lord had no purpose in my going *to* the church. My heart ached, my limbs trembled, and I felt that I was choking to death. I sat there till about ten o'clock. Elder Ashburn went to the door, clapped his hands together, and said, *"It will be as clear as a whip in a few minutes."* When a voice in this poor heart of mine, said, "Be still and know that I am God." O, how it did cheer me! I got up and told my husband that I was going to preaching. But he said, *"I won't go with you on such a day as today."* As he has always been good to go with me to preaching, I don't know why it was so he refused to go this time. But I answered him, saying, *"I am going and I don't want you to think that I am doing this for contrariness, for I can't live here."* He made me no answer, and went out as though he meant not to go. But when he came back to the house, I was almost ready to go and he said, *"Well, if you will go, I will go with you,"* My prayers all the while, had been to God to direct him aright and as soon as he spoke this same voice replied, "Be still, and know that I am God." So we went on to the

church, but owing to the wind and rain, there were but few out. Perhaps a dozen members and fifteen or twenty others were there. The thought struck me, If you join today people will say, we have expected you a long time, and you just picked this time because there were not many out. I knew the world would talk this for on other occasions I had heard of it. So I thought I would wait a little longer. But when Brother Ashburn got up to preach, It seemed that he knew my condition just as well as I knew it. And he tore up every place where I could have sought shelter, except the church. And Oh! I was there without a home and without friends, and I had to go begging the church for a home with them. I could not leave without telling them what the Lord had done for my poor soul. I was received without one question being asked. Oh, how light I did feel. I felt like a new being, and was baptized the next meeting on Saturday, after the other services. A large congregation and a number of preachers were present. Brother Ashburn led me down into the water, and, as I left the bank, I felt like I was going in duty, and had exchanged hell for heaven. And, *O* what a peaceful and clear conscience I received as I arose from the water. I felt that my troubles were all alone and that I should live happily the remainder of my days. But I have, not so found it I have seen much enjoyment, but cannot live one day as I would wish to live. The warfare that is going on within bends me low; Satan and the vain and perishing things of this vain and perishing world besets me so that I know the mercy and free grace of God is still my whole dependence for instruction. If God is not my worthiness, then I am unworthy. And I wish to say to all the trembling saints, who have a hope and have not gone in the way of duty, to go home to their friends and tell them the dealings of the Lord with them. You will never regret it. I know that I was born in sin, both dead and blind; and the more I advanced in years the more debased and fitted for woe I found myself to be. I grew in this till God, at last, threatened me with his dreadful wrath. Before this I had taken no thought of the welfare of my poor soul. But Jesus had dearly bought it; and it pleased him to visit me and teach me that I ***"must be born again;"*** or else I could never meet him in peace.

So I went to work to keep the law. It appeared just and true, and I failed. I could do nothing good. But, in silent places, where I secreted myself to hide from my people, on bended knees, I poured out my grief. I prayed to God for mercy and not for justice at all. But Satan would say, ***"Don't be so dull; go on and be cheerful, and wait till you are older. You are too young, and there is yet plenty of time."*** But Oh, when the threatening law of God came I felt that it was already too late, and that I had sinned away the day of grace; and it was suggested, ***"Now it is too late, so be con-***

tented." But I was resolved to seek the Lord. And O, how I was made to mourn my vileness and my wretchedness: for I knew without free grace my soul must be forever lost. When I tried my strength to satisfy the law's just demands I failed and gave up all for lost, and lay helpless, expecting to be banished to torment in a few minutes. But that kind and merciful God spoke peace to my poor soul and bid me rejoice in him. Immediately my soul did rise and was, for a time, borne away beyond sorrow and trouble. I counted all things here but dross, and could glory in the cross.

I now know that none, but God himself, is able to save a soul from death. And now, I can say, Come, one and all let us sing his praise. And now, if I am not deceived, you, who have passed through such fiery trials, can do no better than to go home to your friends and tell them what he has done for you. And if you love him as I hope I did, you are not afraid to risk their judgment. I believe they will act justly with you. And O, what a consolation it would be: for, "Tis a heaven below the Redeemer to know well, I have written much more than I expected, and am taking too much of your time. I have written my thoughts, just as they were presented to my mind; and now, I feel that I have written all on my mind; and, with love to one and all, and special love to those who have met Christ in a pardon of their sins, I bid you adieu. I remain

Your unworthy sister in hope;

Mrs. Pearley E. Smith.
R. 1, Danbury, N. C.

August 14.

"And if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together," - ROMANS viii, 17.

O the blessedness of being a child of God! Can heart conceive or tongue express the heights and depths of grace and glory, the safety, the happiness, the honour, the bliss, the delight of being an heir of God and a joint-heir with Christ? We soon shall have to put off our mortal bodies-soon have to lie down with the worms of the grave and the clods of the valley-soon have to enter into the invisible world. Well may we then ask ourselves what are our prospects of eternity? Where then will be our inheritance? Will it be one of eternal misery and woe, of weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, or of the pleasures which are at God's right hand for evermore? Have we any evidence or testimony that we are the children of God? Has the Spirit ever borne any direct or indirect witness to our adoption into his family-to our sonship and to our

heirship? When we review our past experience, can we find any marks that we can look upon with a good measure of faith and hope as sound, scriptural evidences that we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ? Can you look back upon that memorable season when the Lord was first pleased to work upon your conscience and convince you of your sins? - to that time of love when Christ was first revealed to your heart? - to that day of affliction and trouble when a sweet promise of interest in his love and blood was sealed with divine power upon your soul? Can you find any solid, substantial marks or tokens that you are a partaker of saving and sanctifying grace, born of God, separated from the world as a pilgrim and a stranger, and pressing onward through a thousand foes and fears to a heavenly country? It is of no use leaning upon the testimony of man, or upon any vain hopes or presumptuous confidence that may spring up in a self-righteous, deceitful heart. It is the witness of the Spirit with our spirit, more or less clear - the shining in of the light of the Lord's countenance - the manifestations of his presence and love, which alone can really satisfy a child of God of his being a partaker of grace and of the glory that is to be revealed at the coming of the Lord Jesus.

Elder J.C. Philpot

ACTS. CH. 2:1-4

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 2006

J. C. Carroll –NC	35.00
James Shelor –VA	5.00
Banks Conner –VA	10.00
Bruce Smith –VA	25.00
Eld. Mark Terry –VA	5.00
Lorene Thurman –VA	5.00
Marion Meeks –NC	5.00
Romer Wade–VA	5.00
Edrie Clifton–VA	5.00
Betty Lovltte –NC	5.00
J. D. Inman –TX	5.00
FrancineFortner –TX	5.00
Mary Phillips – AL	5.00
Naomi Rouser –VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

BROTHER COLEN WADE

At the request of Old Union Church, I will attempt to write the obituary for our beloved Brother, Colen Culbert Wade. Brother Colen was born December 6,1914 and passed from this life February 14, 2006, making his stay on this earth 91 years. He resided at the Heritage Hall Nursing Home in Blacksburg, Virginia, until his death.

In the last few months of his life he could not speak clearly because he had suffered a stroke.

But, we could always tell when we came to visit him that he wanted us to sing him some songs from our little Goble Hymn Books and to have a word of prayer before we left. He never complained about his afflictions that was laid upon him, a true Soldier of the Cross.

Brother Colen asked for a home with Old Union Church on October 21 , 2000 but was not able to be Baptized until July 22, 2001 due to poor health. He was Baptized by his pastor, Elder Hale Terry and Elder Larry Hollandsworth. Brother Colen attended his meetings at Old Union Church faithfully, even when he could barely walk, he stlll had that great deslre to meet wlth the Saints of God, and to hear the preaching of the Word. One of his most favorite songs was the Hymn Amazing Grace. Brother Colen was a quiet and gentle man, and had such a humbleness about him, he manifested the love of God in his heart for all to see.

Brother Colen's funeral was conducted at the Mayberry Funeral Home in Floyd, Virginia. He is survived by, three Son's and Daughter's-in-law, Clinton C. and Brenda Wade, Earnest and Pam Wade, Jimmie and Ellen Wade. One Brother, Esker Wade and Sister- in-law Reva Wade. One sister, Lola Roy. Four Grandchildren and Two Great-Grandchildren, and a host of Brothers and Sisters in the Lord. He was laid to rest in the Big Sand Cemetery in Floyd County, Virginia under a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the Second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. May the Lord make us all submissive to his Will and purpose, for it is written: All things work together for good to them who are The called according to His purpose. May God' s name be praised above all other names. Done by order of the. Church in conference, Sunday February 26, 2006, one copy to be sent to the famlly, one to the Signs of the Tlmes for publlcation, and one for our Church records.

Elder Hale Terry, Moderator
Sandra Hollandsworth, Clerk

Signs of the Times

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" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

RESOLVING thus, I entered in,
Though trembling and depressed,
I bowed before the gracious King,
And all my sins confessed.

Sweet majesty and awful grace
Sat smiling on his brow;
He turned to me his glorious face,
And made my eyes o'er flow.

He held the sceptre out to me,
And bade me touch and live ;
I touched, and O what mercy free .
He did my sins forgive.

I touched, and lived and learned to love,
And triumphed in my God;
I set my heart on things above,
And sang redeeming blood.

Come, sinners, grieved with sins, distressed,
And ready to despair,
Take courage, though with guilt oppressed
Jesus still answers prayer.

Come, enter in with cheerful haste;
You may his glories see ;
You may his richest mercy taste –
He has forgiven me.

C. M.

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Clarabel Jones Massey

EDITORIAL

I AM THAT I AM

(Exo 3:13-14) And Moses said unto God, "Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, what is his name? What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you."

Elder R. H. Campbell

God's name is I AM, which is ever in the present tense with no passage of time, or change of mind or purpose, he is the eternal I AM. All things are ever present before him, for he dwells in one eternal now, with no past, or future in that realm in which no man dwells. Because he is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent and changes not, he will save to the uttermost all of those that call upon him in Spirit and in truth, and will fulfill that which he has promised, from the beginning.

This fact is confirmed many times in the scriptures, as he comforts his children, in each generation, assuring them that he is the same, yesterday, today and forever, because there is time, as far as his children are concerned, and therefore the scripture uses time references. The promises that he made to Abraham in, (Gen 17:7) ***"And I will establish my covenant with thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee."*** is just as inclusive to Isaac, Jacob and all of the chosen generation today, as it was in the day in which it was first spoken to our father Abraham. This is confirmed by Malachi, (3:6) ***"For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."***

The apostle Paul related to this covenant in, (Eph 1:4-5) ***"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."*** These are solemn and positive statements that as he has declared it, so it shall be.

Jesus said unto the Jews, (John 8:56-58) ***"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it and was glad."*** Then said the Jews unto him, ***"Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?"*** Jesus' response unto them was, ***"Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am."*** Since there is no time with God, all of those things that exist, or will exist are included in God's ways and thoughts, which are as much higher than man's ways and thoughts as the heavens are above the earth, it defies the natural reasoning power of man. The late Elder Biggs used to say, the doctrine of God, is not reasonable to the natural mind. Man can believe it, by the grace of God, but he can't begin to try to explain it to anyone to whom it has not been revealed by the Holy Ghost. When God said, "My glory I will not give to another, I believe that this is what he meant: he would never give the powers by which he accomplishes all of the works that he has promised unto any other, for this glory is reserved unto the God of the heavens and earth.

It is even as the apostle Paul said, regarding speaking in tongues, (I Cor 14:23) ***"If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad."*** Even so, when the church gathers together to worship God, in Spirit and in truth, they speak in that pure language spoke of by Zephaniah, which is an unknown tongue to the world. All men are born in the same state of ignorance and unbelief that the apostle Paul said that he was, before he took the trip down to Damascus and met Jesus. They cannot comprehend the mystery of godliness until they are blessed with the Holy Spirit, and the things of God are revealed unto them, and this occurs when they are born again, for Jesus said, only then, can they see the kingdom of God.

The God, of the bible is positive in all of its references to Jehovah, there is no ambiguity in the scriptures which refer to God, who is the author and finisher of the faith of his children, as is recorded in (Isa 46:9-11) ***"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things***

that are not yet done, saying my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." These are the words of God who created the heavens and the earth in the beginning, is sustaining it, and controlling all things according to his own will and purpose at the present time; and all according to the terms of the covenant that he made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He is subject to no power or authority above himself, and will certainly accomplish his own will, in disposing of all things in the heavens and on the earth.

The gods of this world are silver and gold, the works of man's hands, and in the ramblings of his natural mind. They have mouths, but they speak not, eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not, feet have they, but they walk not: neither do they speak through their throat. They bear them upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth; from his place shall he not remove: yea one shall cry unto him, yet he cannot answer, nor save him out of his trouble. According to nature, it really is a mystery why they feel a need for their god, since he seems to be subject only to their whims, and desires: having no will and purpose of his own. He cannot speak to them, hear them, or help them in any way or provide any of those things that are necessary to accomplish any purpose in their existence, or give them any reason for their being here on earth, or a plan for their future. What, in their minds, can cause them to worship idols which they have made, from stone, ashes or in the likenesses of man and four footed beasts, then set them up as a god.

This applies, not only to those who have physically made and set up their idols, but also unto those who, in the imagination of their mind, have created an idol, of their own design, which is subject to them, rather than their being subject unto it. They determine the limits of its wisdom and power, and these limits are all but figments of the imagination of the human mind, and are subject to change by their own vanity and desires. It has no power or wisdom, of its own, whereby it can deliver them from their troubles. You can see why they boast long and loud of their working for their god, because he is incapable of doing anything in and of himself.

Does this not describe the god that the natural men in the world worship today? They will tell you that he cannot save them against their will, he is trying to save everyone, but, some just will not accept him, or let him have his way in their life. One even went so far as to say

that, "God was just as surprised and hurt by the New Orleans storm as they were," so, evidently he has no advantage over them, in that he is just an observer of events, even as they are. This is no semblance of the God of the bible, who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast, and which even goes so far as to say, ***"even as I have thought so shall it come to pass."***

Is there any wonder at the enmity that exists between these two manner of people, those that worship the God who created the heavens and the earth and all of the host of heaven, and those who liken their gods unto the natural man, or stone images of animals, or whatever. Both peoples are firm in their convictions and there can be no reconciliation between them, because they are diametrically opposed in every respect, and to worship one, you must deny the existence of the other. This enmity was placed there in the Garden of Eden, and will exist throughout time, and surely this is the work of the beast, striving against God, but the earth opens up and swallows this doctrine which was designed to destroy the Lord's people, and they are delivered (Rev. 12:16).

Jesus himself said, speaking of the world's rejection of him, when he was here on earth, if they have done this unto a green tree what shall they do unto a dry tree. The apostle Paul said, the time shall come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall heap unto themselves teachers having itching ears; and shall be turned unto fables. We are surely witnessing that day now, because the doctrine preached in the pulpits of the religions of the world, in this day, is but an amalgamation of half truths, sheer fantasies, words spoken to please the natural man, and are intended to glorify man as the principal instigator of his faith, because he can either accept or refuse it. Where is the comfort to be derived from that kind of faith, or belief? There is no assurance, or promises of what to expect in the future, because it all revolves around the will of the creature, as he is in nature, with no spiritual connotation, and he certainly cannot be depended upon because his will changes with the seasons, and with each generation, so, who can tell what the end would be.

This does not even remotely resemble the God of the bible, who appeared unto Moses and told him to go and lead his children out of the Egyptian bondage. He was not subject to man, or any principalities or power that exists or will ever exist in the world. When God appeared unto Moses, in the back side of the desert, where he was tending his father-in-law's sheep, he first told him who he was, for he said, I AM THAT I AM, and appeared unto him in a flaming bush that was not consumed by the fire, and then told Moses what he would have him to do. It was not in the form of a request, subject to Moses' approval,

but rather it was in the form of a command, for him to perform the mission that he would have him to do. He told him that he would be with him, saying, certainly I will be with thee, and this shall be a token unto the children of Israel, that I have sent thee, the evidence being the many miracles that he was to perform before Pharaoh to cause him to release his people.

God is with his sheep at all times, caring for them and leading them in the paths that he would have them to go, for he said, *"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee,"* so that they may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man can do unto me. This is very different from the statement of the followers of that god which cannot see, speak, walk or move from the place where he has been set: very different from the one who has been created by man, and changes with the each succeeding generation, having only the power that they ascribe unto him, and that according to the whims of man of that era.

I recently heard one television minister say, *"If you will send me so much money, God will bless you, and I will guarantee it,"* Now, it seems they are even having to pay his debts for him, because he cannot, he does not live, move or have any real existence in the world, so how could he possibly fulfill that man's promise. Now this may be, being facetious, but that's what the man said, and before millions of the followers of that god. If I want to know what a man believes, I want him to tell me, not someone else who will give me their version of it, and this statement came from the lips of this minister.

Now, let me get away from the negative and foolishness of the false doctrines, of false gods, and end on a very blessed, positive and solemn note, by paraphrasing a benediction of the apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews. This is, (as Elder Paul Poyner, of the Soldier Creek Association used to say) the very quintessence of the faith of the Lord's portion and it will stand the test of time and eternity. *"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."* This is the very foundation of our faith: that we are in the hands of God who does the working out of our salvation in us, and solemnly said, it is finished, when he had completed the work that his Father gave him to do.

In bonds of love;
Elder Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

7003 Flagstaff Ln., 103
Richmond, VA 23228
April 7, 2006

My dear Elder Terry,

I hope you and your family see blessings of the dear Lord each day. I find myself begging Him for strength of mind and body so often. I confess He is God and I love to think of God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit.

Brother Terry, please renew Sign another year for me. I have enjoyed Signs for many years. I've kept them and at times read older issues. I like editorials, letters and even read obituaries as with a new issue. I feel I have love for some Elders I never saw or heard speak. I do believe and hope God Himself gave me such love. The God we hope to love is our "all and all."

I realize there is work involved in getting the Signs. May the dear Lord be pleased to continue blessings to all editors, writers and those who contribute to publication of Signs.

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickral

JOHN 4:48.

Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.

March 31, 2006

Dear Elder Terry,

Please forgive my slothness, for I have no excuse, and there can be none for letting this go so long. I am sending the amount of $100.00 to bring my father's subscription up to date and to also extend mine. Please use any left over as a contribution.

I enjoyed the conversation we had when I called you and hope that we can meet someday.

Our church is called Pilgrims Rest and we meet the second and fourth Sunday at 10:30 a.m. Also on the Saturday night before the 3rd Sunday at 7 p.m. We are a small church as membership goes, but do enjoy the sweet blessings that He supplies us with as He sees the need. I feel and believe that it was a type and a shadow of the visible church when Christ fed the multitude with the small fishes and bread and set them down in small groups apart from each other that they represented the small churches of today.

We stand as an independent church, but correspond and fellowship with the churches in the Poccatallico Association here in West Virginia.

Our moderators name (Pilgrims Rest) is Elder Hubert Sears and our joint Moderator is Elder Ronald Sargent. We have two deacons Brother Brad Nettles and myself.

Our church clerk is Sister Hazel Staner.

Brother Terry, I thank you and all the other Brethren who spend their time to bring us these wonderful messages. I have been reading the Signs for quite a few years as my Father would save them for me. Now, I hope to pick up where he left off.

I pray that you all will continue to be blessed in your efforts.

Yours in hope,
Gary D. Whaling

VOICES OF THE PAST

ELDER HOWARD WALLACE MAY

Having been born January 26, 1873, I am 58 years old at this writing. Born on the head of Pond Creek, Pike County, Ky., the days of my pilgrimage have been few and evil. I was raised a poor boy by a kind and loving mother with the aid of two brothers, John and Harvey. I grew up a vile wretched boy. Only at times, I would have some serious thoughts but was mostly unconcerned until the age of 22. I plainly saw my state as a vile and wretched sinner condemned to die and go to an awful hell indeed. I went on in that condition for some time; there seemed no mercy for a poor sinner like me. One Wednesday evening about 3 o'clock I thought the time was up for the execution to be made on poor wretched me. My natural strength seemed to be gone. I laid down on the upper end of the family porch not expecting ever to get up when to my surprise a still, calm and loving voice seemed to say in my poor burdened heart, son, thy sins, which are many are all forgiven you for Jesus' sake. I was made to praise the Lord, I hope for saving a poor sinner like me. It was the happiest time I ever experienced before or since. Then and there I received what I have thought was a blessed hope for heaven not something in me but ME, which was worth all the world to me. Since that time I have had many, many doubts and fears and thoughts that I was deceived. These fears I have daily and hourly. O how could I ever live without this God blessed hope. Then something began to press this poor mind of mine. You must go and stand before my people and tell them what the blessed Lord has done for you by the way of grace, but my thoughts were O Lord I never can, I am too vile too weak, and I am slow of speach and slow of tongue but this impression was on my mind. I would often dream of trying to preach the blessed Gospel of Christ, yet I would think that I was deceived. Sometimes I would go to meeting and after trying in my weakness to pray in public when it was time for the meeting to commence I would go out of the house until it began. All, this time this heavy burden was on this poor

mind of mine. Since those times I have made many attempts though I often think it has all been a failure. The Lord knows I have never reached the place that I can feel that I have been a comfort to God's blessed children.

Most two years have passed since I began this wrestling and I have thought many times I would not finish it, but of late have thought to write some more before I go hence and be no more. I want to leave a record behind me as to what I do believe in regard to the doctrine I believe and enjoy; God and his soverign will over all things; that he created this vast universe, and that he (God) had a purpose in everything that he created, and there was nothing created or made only what God created or made and to say that he does not use it for the self-same purpose that he created it for is a false reflection on the thrice holy God for he says he created *"even the wicked for the day of evil." Prov.16;4.* Also in Romans 8:24 to 30 inclusive; *"For we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified."* God is sovereign over all things, he (God) is unchanging and his purpose is as certain and as sure as he is: for he says in Psalms 33: 7 to 9 inclusive, *"He gathereth the waters of the sea together as a heap; he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For he spake,and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. I would as well believe that God himself would fail to be God as to believe that one of his purposes would fail. One often hears it said, Oh, I believe his eternal purpose is sure. There are none but that are eternal and the eternal salvation of God's people is sure. There is but one salvation and that is Jesus Christ, the Lord, and that*

salvation is enjoyed here in this time world. I believe that it is all of grace and there is nothing left on condition. The enemy of truth says, *"If you will, God will; If you will not, God cannot."* Lord save me from such delusion and falsehood. God says concerning Jacob and Esau. *"For the children being not yet born , neither having done any good or evil;" "Jacob have I loved but Esau, have I hated."* Was this not a predestinated purpose of God to love Jacob and to hate Esau? *"behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy." Isa. 54:16.* If he created the waster to destroy how can he keep from it? *"That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else, I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace and create evil; I the Lord do all these things."* Isa 45: 6,7. We will have to admit that God made and created these things according to his will or against his will and I would hate to believe that the thrice holy God ever did anything that was contrary to his will. Amos 3:5, 6, 7 says, *"Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth where no gin is for him? Shall one take up a snare from the earth, and have taken nothing at all? Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it? Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants and prophets."* When one scripture says a thing we need not hunt for anything else in the scripture to condemn it for all scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. It was impossible for those men to pen the scriptures except when they were moved by the Holy Ghost and at those times it was absolutely impossible for them to make mistakes.

There are some that claim to be Old School Baptists who say they believe in Predestination but not in Absolute Predestination. Anything that is not absolute is not predestinated at all. Take the word water and say there is a cup of water; does it not imply that it is wet water? Say there is a fire in the grate; does it not imply that it is hot? Using the words ice and snow; does it not mean that it is cold? The word predestination implies that it is absolutely fixed, settled and unchangeable. There is an unchangeable God, *"and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth."*

I know I shall soon go the way of all the earth and be no more, but that is in God's purpose. This is a dark and cloudy day with God's people and I sometimes think I

would be glad and rejoice to leave this unfriendly world, then I think of leaving God's blessed children in this poor world and want to stay with them. I want to quote one scripture, Acts 4:24 to 28 inclusive; *"And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that in them is; Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast annointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined to be done,"* If they were gathered together to do what before was determined to be done, was it not the unchangeable purpose of an unchangeable God, and they were gathered together to do that for the inspiration of God says they were. I would as well believe that God would fail to be God as to believe that his people could fail of being together, or have failed at doing what his hand had before determined to be done, no more or less. All scripture was given by the inspiration of God and holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Could we believe that the Spirit of the thrice Holy God ever moved men to speak in any way that was wrong, or speak something that he (God) did not want left on record here for his dear children to see? His afflicted and poor people is the object of his love, and he is the same yesterday today and forever, and changes not. He does not teach some one way and others another way; he does not teach some that God's mercy is bestowed on them here in this time world by their good works, and teach others *"that it is the gift of the the Lord. God does not work that way. He teaches that it is of free and unmerited grace of God bestowed on poor mortals, men and women of Adam's race, and it was according to his love and mercy that his darling Son came into this low ground of sin and sorrow to suffer, bleed and die for his people who were given him before the world began. David said, He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure for this is all my salvation, and all my desire although he make It not to grow."* This blessed covenant was made just as God wanted It to be. God's purpose is like a great chain, link in link. If anywhere in the chain one link was to fail it would separate the two ends of the chain. If God's purpose was to fail in one thing there would be no certainty of the

Lord's poor people being taken to that God blessed home where they will never have to suffer. If one thing had failed, with Joseph being in Egypt, the corn would not have been stored up for the famine, but Jacob sent Joseph to see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flock, and when he (Joseph) came to where his brothers were they aimed to kill him, or some of them did. Reuben aimed to deliver him back to his father, but God over-ruled both of their intentions for he (God) had decreed from all eternity, within himself, that Joseph should be sold to Pharaoh's officer and captain of the guard, to be lied about, to be cast into prison on a false accusation, and to interpret the dreams of the chief butler and baker. If this lie had not been told on him he would not have been in prison, and he would not have interpreted their dreams; then the chief butler could not have told Pharaoh, I remember my faults, there is a young man, an Hebrew, that can interpret dreams. Joseph was brought before Pharaoh and he (Joseph) told Pharaoh what God was going to bring to pass. The hand or power that caused the dreams to be dreamed caused these three to be in the prison The chief butler, the baker, and Joseph were all there according to God's will and purpose. The same hand or power that sent Joseph down there caused these dreams to be, and the way was fixed of God from all eternity, and God watched over Joseph and took care of him all the time. Joseph said to his brethren, ***"be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; For God did send me before you to preserve life."*** It was all of the Lord from the start to the finish like everything else both in heaven and in earth.

I believe it was God's purpose for sin to be in the world. He did, from all eternity, purpose that his name should be praised by poor sinners here in this time world. Had there not been any sin there would have been no sinners to praise his blessed name, but God, unchangeable, fixed that sinners should be in the world. Paul said, ***"this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."*** If there had been no sinners Christ Jesus never would have come into this sin-cursed world, if there had been no sin there would have been no sinners and God's name never would have been praised, but it was all fixed in God's eternal mind for each and everything to be just as it is without any failure, that God's name might be praised by poor sinners which was the object of his love. Paul says, ***"of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question."*** He also says by the authority *of* high Heaven that these bodies shall be changed from natural to spiritual bodies, ***"It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual***

body." If Paul was not talking about the bodies of God's children pray tell me what he was talking about. Who ever heard of a spiritual body being changed. He was absolutely talking about these mortal bodies of God's children. It makes no difference what anyone says they are to be made like him, Jesus. If it is something in this mortal body why did Paul say, *"O death where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"* If all that ever goes or is taken to Heaven and Immortal Glory is when God's blessed children die the common death of all men, what did the grave have victory over and why would Christ appear the second time without sin unto salvation if he, Christ, is not coming after the very thing the grave has the victory over? Thes. 4:13 to 18 inclusive. *"But I would not have you to be ignorant brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words,"* Paul was talking about the dead that had died the common death of all men, and was buried in the grave, or wherever they be if it be in the bottom of the mighty deep. The Lord knows where they are and he will bring them with him at his second coming without the loss of one of them. What words are we to comfort one another with? That the Lord himself shall descend the second time and that he, the Lord, will raise the dead from their sleeping dust. Brethren and friends I believe the dust of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob with all the rest of the redeemed family of God will raise then to meet the Lord in the air, and God's people that are alive at that time will be changed in a moment from a mortal body to a spiritual body. Brethren, Paul was talking about the dead that had died and they that were alive of the redeemed family of God when time will be no longer. This is as plain as the sun at noonday when there is not a cloud to be seen and cannot be explained away to mean anything else. Men can say they do not believe it, but that does not change God's purpose in raising the dead and changing the living. If Paul was not talking about when this world was coming to an end, pray tell me what was he talking about? If the dead are not going to be raised

from the graves, and the living are not going to be changed, and all caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and ever be with the Lord, Heaven will be a blank for we know that we take our people out and bury them in the grave, and if that very body that is laid down in the grave never is raised from the grave it would never meet the Lord in the air to ever be with the Lord. All the arguing that men and devils can do will never keep this from coming to pass at God's time. God's people are saved by grace and grace alone in time and eternity for the scripture says in Gal. 3, 21, ***"Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, but there was no law given that could give life, life comes by Jesus Christ, the Lord, and by him only. By grace are ye saved."*** I want to say regarding the time on the end of the old family porch referred to at the beginning of this writing, the first Saturday in August 1895, that I went down to the Little Hope Church and tried to tell those good old baptist people what I hoped the blessed Lord had done for poor, unworthy me by his work of grace and was received. The next day, Sunday, I was baptized by my uncle Elder W. J. May. I had been in water many a time before, but never that felt like that time, and went home that evening with an easy mind. The next day my wife and I were out in the woods singing when I just lacked one step of stepping on a large copperhead and I thought then it was God's eternal purpose that I should not make that step. John 9:22, ***"These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews; for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was the Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue."*** The same threatening is going on in this world in our day and time. If you preach the Absolute Predestination of all things, Salvation by grace and grace alone, that God is Soverign, and that Christ Jesus is the obedience of his children they put you out of the church. You have to preach that you can do something of yourself to merit God's blessings.

(The late)
ELDER HOWARD WALLIS MAY
Copied from the
Signs of the Times

John 6:32-33.

Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

JONAH AND THE GOURD.

More than eight hundred and fifty years before the birth of Christ, God commanded his servant to go to Nineveh and cry against it. Jonah refused and attempted to go to Tarshish, but was prevented by a great wind and tempest. When lots were cast it was decided that Jonah was the cause of the tempest being sent, and he was cast out into the sea. God had prepared a great fish or whale to swallow up Jonah, and it swallowed him. And, after three days,and nights God's command, the fish vomited out Jonah upon the dry land. Thus Jonah was made willing to go, at God's command, and preach to the Ninevites, saying, ***"Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown."*** This was sounded out by Jonah. Could any other mortal man have had more convincing proof than he? and could there have been any doubt regarding such a call? Even the wicked Ninevites believed and repented at the preaching of Jonah. Yea, even the king arose from his throne, laid aside his robe and sat in sackcloth and ashes. When such repentance was manifested, God repented of the evil that he said he would do, and did it not. But where is Jonah, his words and his integrity? Jonah became angry and said, ***"I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil."*** Then he desired the Lord to take his life, saying, ***"Therefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live,"*** Jonah then prepared himself a booth, "or tent"; but God prepared for him a gourd. The original Greek meaning is "nauseous," to vomit or spue. This gourd came up in a night to be a shadow over his head, and ***"Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd."*** Then ***"God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd so that it withered."*** And it perished in a night. In this way did God teach Jonah.

Dear reader, do you see your experience in this? Have you ever felt that God had spoken to you? Have you ever felt that, afterward, he had left you in doubt and in shame? Have you ever felt that you could never maintain your own integrity and make an open confession of religion? Have you ever been made to fear that the little hope you have was not sufficient to rest upon, and that you must build you a tent or booth of your own works, under which to shelter?

Have you ever decided that, if you could live up to the requirements of God's commands, you could rest in the church, or in the confidence of the brethren? Has there ever come, for a short while in your life, when, for some reason, your will was fastened upon some earthly thing; and, for awhile, you could rejoice in this object or that

occupation? Perhaps God has given to you a loving husband, wife, or child, and you rejoiced for awhile. Perhaps he gave you earthly prosperity, and for awhile you rejoiced in that. But, alas! these things – though they were given to you – were taken away, ere you were aware, and you could not tell why. The husband, wife, or child died, or your prosperity fled, the tent was torn down and the vine withered suddenly, and your joys were gone. Is not the worm at work? A parching wind dries up the gourd; its beauty and comforts fade, and nothing is left, except bitterness and sorrows. O, that I could die! *"It is better for me to die than to live,"* Have you not some of the experience of Jonah? And does not the Lord love you, even as he did Jonah? And is not God merciful unto you, even as he was to the Ninevites? There is so much sameness in the experiences of God's people that they love one another for Christ's sake; and they love God for his mercies and goodness. Like David, they can sing: *"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."*

Elder Jesse A. Ashburn
Sent in by Keith Hiatt

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP.

Dear Readers of the Messenger: for some time my mind has been exercised with the desire to write an article on the subject of Christian fellowship but have been so cumbered with cares that it seemed that I could not get the time; and have been down in the valley so much I feared to try to take my harp down from the willow, fearing I might find it out of tune. But now I feel that I can no longer find excuses, as my son has recovered his health, and the doctor says my wife is out of danger from her trouble. Yet all is not clear to me.

Hoping my brethren will read with a spirit of charity, I will attempt to write. "My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that she might be saved."

Today has been set apart by those in authority as a day of thanksgiving, and I trust that I do really feel thankful for the numerous blessings which almighty God hath so abundantly bestowed upon us for another year of peace and plenty, and the many other natural blessings, so numerous that they cannot be counted. But, most of all, I do feel thankful for the gift of God's only begotten Son, through whom we have eternal redemption and Christian fellowship, one with another.

When I look back to the pit from whence we were digged, then to the rock from whence we were hewn, I realize that all was accomplished by

that "Amazing grace" of God, which fills my heart with emotions too big for utterance. Still I desire to continue in his praise, to mingle with my brethren, though feeling so unworthy and to be less than the least of all. I desire to meet them in peace and love. I hope I love them all, and desire to see all live in peace, love, union and fellowship, praising God in sincerity, with all meekness and lowliness, with a pure heart.

I have noticed in the past, sometimes, we do not exactly understand each other, and, instead of getting, together and trying to work for unity, we speak of each other's faults or wrong interpretation of the scriptures in the pulpit, or through some periodical and wound the feelings of some for whom Christ died. Then the matter is talked and agitated by the friends on both sides and division follows. Especially is this the case sometimes in speaking or writing on the doctrine of predestination. Some brother desiring to show the certainty of the salvation of God's elect will speak in very bold terms of certainty of God's purposes being carried out and to show ***"that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things to some, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God; which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*** Perhaps he will dwell at length on the predestination or purpose of God in bringing this to pass and he may, perhaps, get so bold as to assert that all the powers of Satan combined cannot. destroy one saint, that God's purposes are so absolutely fixed that all the powers of earth and hell cannot frustrate them. He may not be skilled in language or fluent in speech, or we may not be able to fully get his meaning. Then some person or persons will say, He made God the author of sin and sets out to slay the man or preacher, to save the cause. We are all zealous for the cause of Christ. Then the fight begins. He has friends and the opposite has his friends and division follows. Or, vice versa, a preacher desirous of seeing God's children living obedient to the heavenly calling, keeping the body under subjection, not walking in vanity, but living "soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world," will grow very bold and assert that to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." He may go so far as to say that much of our happiness in this life depends upon our obedience to God. He, likewise, may not be very well skilled in language, or we may misunderstand him; "not, at once, we begin to say, He is soft; he preaches conditionalism, or Arminianism. So, the first thing we know, we have two factions "Softshell" and "Fatalist," or perhaps three, "Softshell or Conditionalist," "Absoluters or Fatalists," "Orthodox or Regular" Primitive Baptists.

Now, brethren, I have not writ-

ten these things with any other purpose other than to show the danger of extremes. The apostle Paul shows how the church at one place (Corinth, I believe,) was divided into four factions. It is very unpleasant to see brethren divided. It grieves us to see our brethren, the church of God, divided. Extremes cause divisions. Let us avoid extremes. Let us avoid hard expressions, such as Softshell Conditionalism, Absolute, and all such terms as generate hatred and strife.

I suppose there is not a Primitive Baptist on earth that would disclaim his responsibility to God. I have never heard a man preach "Infants to torment.," or preach that man is not responsible to God for his actions; all agree that God chastens, even them that he loves, and that we all learn obedience by the things we suffer. This being true, why not strive ***"to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace?"*** I have never heard any Primitive Baptist preach that eternal life is based on acts of obedience.

So, brethren, let us all labor in love like a company of horses in Pharoah's chariots, or a flock of sheep that came up from the washing.

We all know that the world hates us; and, hence, it is folly for us to bite and devour each other. So let each preacher, editor, associate editor, deacon and lay member strive to avoid hard expressions, such as generate strife and divisions. If it becomes necessary to reprove let it be done in love; better none present save the reprover and the reproved. If open rebuke is necessary let it be done tenderly and in brotherly love, in such a way to cause the rebuked brother to feel that you love him and want to save him.

If a preacher is in a habit of travelling through our section and preaching in such way as to divide our flock would it not be better to talk with him privately and advise him that he is causing trouble; then, if he loves the cause, he will go elsewhere.

So, brethren, I will conclude by saying, by way of quotation, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth Peace, Good Will toward men.

Elder Jesse A. Ashburn

... PRAYER ...

No subject of the Bible holds more interest than this. Perhaps, we do not understand much about it. I am sure that I do not, and I realize how presumptuous it is for me to think I could teach anyone how to pray. This world professes to teach that and some theologian has gone to the troubte to write a book called "God's Minute."In the book he has a short prayer for each day in the year. Not being able to give you that many in advance. While I do not know that I have ever prayed, and if I have that I will ever be blessed to

do so again it does not mean that it is not gospel subject. If it is, it certainly is profitable, under spiritual guidance, for our discussion and examination.

By way of encouragement to the dear saints I want to say to you that none of our leaders have a monopoly on prayer. Although prayer is a gift it is not one we can use any time men call on us to pray. If I am mistaken about it do not follow me, but I believe that any minister feels a great hesitancy offering prayer at times.

Prayer is, after all, a close-up with God, a veritable talking face to face. When we are really and truly given to see our sins, it is enough to cause a trembling in body and spirit to ask God for anything, seeing that it is the prayer of a righteous man that avails anything. In this connection let me say that I have impressions to pray just like I trust I do to preach. At these times it is the sweetest yielding and compliance to his blessed command as it is in standing in the pulpit and preaching the doctrine of grace. Trying to pray is like trying to preach-it is mighty hard work-in fact it cannot be done. While trying to pray, we invariably are in the flesh and our object is selfish, begging for the things that we want. But that is not all, trying to accomplish a thing not only shows a lack of how but of what and why. I believe we pray as we preach and live and die, depending on the eternal fixed purposes of God. It is in faith that we come to him at all. This faith, at all times, is the substance of the things hoped for. This has never been changed and, although it moved Abel, Daniel, Jacob, Paul and all those gone before and will move every communicant that is yet to come, it is as unchangeable as God. In every step of our obedience to his commandments, it is faith that goes before, revealing the eternal perfection and sovereign purpose of God in disposing of all created things. Faith does not go before, bringing to light the unfinished things of God, as though he was a little undecided as to his rule of conduct, but it is the substance of our hope.

Now come hither little child and let us look at our hope. We do not hope that we will exercise faith to the end, but we hope that God eternally arranged for our salvation in Jesus Christ. Our prayer is not an effort to change God, but it is because he is unchangeable. The world (that is, the ungodly world) may swerve and tauntingly tell us that if they believed everything was fixed they would not pray, we know better things than that. We know our eternal destiny is fixed and that all our spiritual blessings are as settled and stable in the mind and purpose of God as is his choice. Furthermore, we are assured that he has given us all things pertaining to life and godliness. It is according to this knowledge that every prayer is uttered. If we must try to pray then we must guess as to what to pray for. Guess-

ing, we are told is all right when it hits, but unless we ask according to his will, our will would, if permitted to pray, ask for things that would forever remove us and land us away from every providential and parental blessing. If we must try to pray (that is, if we must pray more often, or more fervently) then we must guess as to what to pray for and, on that conditional basis, we would have a right to ask why if it was not answered.

A prayer is not something excited in you by the widom of this world. Just think of the prayer (that is, words called prayers) addressed to God (as they suppose) for favor in converting the heathen. That is a conditional, selfish, carnal utterance. If it was asked according to the will of God he would certainly grant it, because God answers that kind. We sometimes are motivated in like manner in the dear old church. We get over zealous and ask God promiscuously to bring the regenerated into the church. He does not answer this kind of prayer because it is not prayer.

This is a wonderful subject, it is a blessing from God. We cannot pray unless blessed in spirit, yet the apostles commanded us to pray. We are told that we ought to pray. Now we realize that it is a gift from God. Would God give us a gift to ask that any will be done except his own? Is not all prayer a complacent acknowledgement of his will being done in heaven and in earth? Having been taught his sovereignty, and being kept by his power do we not have a desire to see and feel the doing of that will?

Elder W. D. Griffin (Sept., 1947)

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom." - Colossians iii. 16.

This surely means something more than merely reading the word in a careless, formal manner. It is ***"to dwell in us,"*** that is, take up its firm and lasting abode in our heart, and that "richly;" not poorly and niggardly, but copiously and abundantly, unfolding to us and putting us into possession of the wealth of its treasures; and that in ***"all wisdom,"*** making us wise to salvation, opening up to us the manifold wisdom of God, and how it displays itself in the great mystery of godliness. Now we shall not attain to this rich and heavenly wisdom unless we search and study the Scriptures with prayer and supplication to understand what the Holy Ghost has revealed therein, and what he is pleased to unfold therefrom of the will and way of God for our own personal instruction and consolation. We very easily fall off from abiding in Christ; nor can we expect to keep up sensible union and communion with the Lord Jesus

if we neglect those means of grace which the Holy Ghost has provided for the sustentation of the life of God in the soul. When we get cold, sluggish, and dead, to read the word of God is a task and a burden; but not so, when the love of God is warm and gushing in the soul. Then, to read his holy word with prayer and supplication, entering by faith into its hidden treasures, and drinking into the mind of Christ as revealed therein, is a blessed means of maintaining the life of God in the heart, and keeping up union and communion with Christ.

Elder J.C. Philpot

"Thou wilt cast all their sins Into the depths of the sea."- MICAH vii. 19.

WHEN God takes all our iniquities with his own hand, and casts them with his own arm into the depths of the sea, they will never come out of those depths to witness against the family of God in the great and terrible day. Your sins now may seem to be all alive in your breast, and everyone of them to bring accusation upon accusation against you. This sin is crying out for vengeance, and that for punishment. This slip, this fall, this backsliding, this foolish word, this wrong action, are all testifying against you in the court of conscience. Do what you may, be where you may, live holy how you may, watch and pray how you may, keep silent and separate from the world or even from your own family how you may, sin still moves, lives, acts, works, and often brings you into guilt and bondage. But if God has had mercy upon us he has cast all our sins with his own hands into the depths of the sea, and those sins have no more eyes to look at us with angry indignation, have no more tongues to speak against us in voices of accusation, have no more life in them to rise up and testify that they have been committed by us, that God's law has been broken by them, and that therefore we are under its condemnation and curse. And there is no truth in God's word more certain than the complete forgiveness of sins, and the presentation of the Church of Christ at the great day faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

Elder J.C. Philpot

Phillipians 2:2-3.

Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

Let nothing be though strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

MEETINGS

The Annual July 4th meeting will be held the Lord willing; on Tuesday July 4th with Union Church, Patrick County Va. Meeting to began at 10:00 AM.

The Church is located on State road #623. Those traveling Rt 57 east or West Turn on Fairystone park road (Rt 346) travel a short distance and turn left On Rt. 623, follow to Church on right.

Those traveling north or south on highway 220 turn on state road 605 north of Oak Level (at blinking light designating sharp curve) stay on road 605 (Henry Road) thru Henry , cross railroad tracks for several miles. Turn left on 623 to church on the left.

Those traveling highway 40, east or west turn on state road 605 about 5 miles West of Ferrum, Va. At Crossroads Market. Go through Ingramville over hill, turn Right on 623 and follow to Church on the left.

We invite all of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Tony R. Horton

CONTRIBUTIONS

Elder Gene Lupton -NC 5.00
Katherine Mathews -LA 10.00
Steve Everett -VA 15.00
J. D. Neely -AR 5.00
Andrew White -MD 5.00
Gary Whaling -W.VA 10.00
Eva Wyatt -NC 5.00
Flora Vest -VA 5.00
Rosalie Walker -VA 10.00
Reidy Pickral -VA 25.00
E. H. Chandler -LA 5.00
Armedia Taylor- LA 10.00
Dan Sokolovic -NC 5.00
Jerry Morgan -LA 10.00
Pauline Toney- MS 5.00

OBITUARIES

GERTRUDE LOIS COX

As I attempt to write this Obituary for our beloved Sister in Christ, (Gertrude Lois Cox), I pray the Lord will guide my pen and my thoughts. Sister Gertrude was born February 22, 1925; and fell asleep in Jesus on March 22, 2006, making her stay on this earth 81 years. She united with Old Union Church and was Baptized in October, 1980; by her Pastor, Elder Hale Terry.

Sister Gertrude attended the meetings at Old Union Church so faithfully. She loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. Her walk and talk manifested the love she felt for her church and the members at Old Union. She dearly loved her Pastor and his family, always concerned about his welfare.

In her later years her memory began to fail her, but she was blessed to be able to remember when her meeting day was at Old

Union. Her children said that was the one thing she did not forget.

Sister Gertrude always seemed to rejoice in the singing and the preaching of the Gospel, and knew where all her help and strength came from. And as I have heard our dear Pastor say in his preaching; we have more to die for than we have to live for. I am most sure that Sister Gertrude believed that with all her heart. She suffered many trials and afflictions during her lifetime, and was given strength to bear it all.

Her children were so faithful to see that she came to her meetings when her health started to fail her. Sister Gertrude's family manifested the love they had for her in the much needed care they gave her in her last days here on earth. She was a precious Mother in Israel.

Her funeral service was conducted at the Maberry Funeral Home in Floyd, VA by her Pastor Elder Hale Terry and Elder Larry Hollandsworth. She was laid to rest in the Sumpter Cemetery, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the Second coming of her Lord. May God make us all reconciled to His will and purpose, and that some sweet day we will all be joined together praising God forever .

Done by order of the church in conference, Sunday March 26, 2006; one copy to be sent to the family, one to the Signs of the Times for publication and one for our Church records.

Elder Hale Terry, Moderator,
Sandra Hollandsworth, Clerk

SIS. ELIZABETH MAYHEW JONES

Sister Elizabeth Mayhew Jones was born December 30,1921 in West Virginia. She was a daughter of the late Oscar Harris Mayhew Sr. and Mary Crouch Mayhew.

Sister Jones passed from this life January, 2006 in Franklin Memorial Hospital.

Sister Elizabeth was predeceased by her husband, Robert Harry Jones, a sister Olive Mayhew Simpson, three brothers, P. C. Mayhew, Oscar Harris Mayhew Jr. and Elton Titus Mayhew.

She is survived by a daughter Lee Mayhew Jones of Santa Monica California, two grandchildren, Dora Delarrey and Tatyana Tureen Jones, two half brothers, Jerry Mayhew and Donald Mayhew; three half sisters, Perry Miller, Billie Jean Ingole and Alice Shaw, nieces Joyce S. Mayhew of Gretna, VA, and Pat S. Beck of Danville.

Sister Jones was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by experience and Baptism May 11, 1986.

She always enjoyed the meetings, love and fellowship. She attended services as long as her health permitted.

Sister Elizabeth's funeral was held January 2, 2006 by her pastor, Elder Marvin Brumfield and Elder Raymond Goad. She was laid to rest in the Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery.

May all be reconciled to God's Will.

Written in Love and Hope,
Carol R. Pickral
Elder Marvin Brumfield,
Moderator:
Oscar Pickral, Clerk

CLARABEL JONES MASSEY

On February 19, 2006, Clarabel Jones Massey of Elberton, Georgia, passed from this earth to her eternal home. She was 86 years of age and the widow of Stuart B. Massey. She was preceded in death by her daughter, Merrel Jane Massey Ginn; five Jones brothers: J.V., Clint, Horace, Fred and Sam; and two sisters: Ruth Kidd and Mary Emma Seagraves.

She was born April 9, 1919 in Bostwick, Morgan County, Georgia and was the daughter of the late Samuel H. and Mary Eberhart Jones. She resided in Athens-Clarke County and Madison County, Georgia most of her life. She retired from the Navy Supply Corps School, Athens, Georgia and received many awards during her career. She was the tour hostess in the City of Athens, Georgia for the new Navy officers.

She joined the Primitive Baptist Church April 20, 1957 and was a member of Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, Athens-Clarke County, Georgia, when she died. She was Assistant Clerk for Mt. Zion for many years, doing a beautiful job. She also wrote "Historical Notes on Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church" while she was taking a journalism class at the University of Georgia. Her health prevented her from attending her Church that she loved so dearly for the last several years.

Survivors include one son; Stuart Lynn Massey, six grandchildren; five great - grandchildren, and two sisters, Agnes Marshall and Betty Ford, who are the only ones left out of a family of ten children (five boys and five girls).

Services were held February 22,2006, at Little-Ward Funeral Home, Commerce, Georgia with Elder Kenneth Adams officiating. A eulogy was given by her grandson-in-law, Patrick Cramer. She was laid to rest in Gordon' s Chapel United Methodist Church Cemetery beside her beloved husband.

Written By:
Sister Betty J. Ford, Clerk and
Brother Meredith Watson,
Assistant Clerk Mt. Zion
Primitive Baptist Church
Approved in Mt. Zion
Primitive Baptist Church
conference on April 9, 2006

Matthew 14:27.

But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of Good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

DESCEND, celestial Dove,
And make thy presence known ;
Reveal our Saviour's love,
And seal us for thine own ;
Unbless'd by thee. our works are vain
Nor can we e'er acceptance gain.

When our incarnate God,
The sovereign Prince of light,
In Jordan's swelling flood
Received the holy rite,
In open view thy form came down,
And dove-like flew the King to crown.

The day was never known
Since time began its race,
On which such glory shone,
On which was shone such grace,
As that which shed in Jordan's stream
On Jesus' head the heavenly beam.

Continue still to shine,
And fill us with thy fire ;
This ordinance is thine,
Do thou our souls inspire ;
Thou wilt attend on all our sons :
Till time shall end,' thy promise runs,

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EDITORIAL

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than yours, and my thoughts than your thoughts. (Isa 55:8-9)

Elder R. H. Campbell

In these two verses Isaiah sets forth a very basic truth that I had never considered actually seriously before, although, I have heard them quoted many times, and I believed what was said, regarding the subject which they were discussing. As I read it the other day, it seemed to me that there is a very great separation between the realm in which God dwells, and the realm in which man dwells in the realm of nature. This separation between the two extremes are as great as that gulf which was placed between the place where Lazarus was, which was in the bosom of Abraham, and where the rich man was, which was hell. It was said at that time that, between them there was a great gulf fixed; so that no man could go from one place to the other.

I believe that the same condition exists in the above text, so that no man can breach the great gulf between the wisdom and thoughts of God and the wisdom and thoughts of men. This truth is set forth very clearly in, ***(1 Cor. 1:21) "For when in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."*** The natural man with the wisdom of the world, cannot understand the ways and thoughts of God, and neither is he in a position to judge God for the decisions that he makes concerning the affairs of the world in which man dwells. All communication between these two realms must originate with God, by means of the Holy Ghost, for this is the only way that man can understand things of the spiritual realm It is even as David said, ***(Psa. 139:6) "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me: it is high. I cannot attain unto it."***

God sent Paul to preach the gospel, which is foolishness to them that perish, but, unto them that are saved, it is the power of God and the wisdom of God. The reason that the same message that is foolishness to some and salvation to others is that the elect have been born again, and a line of communication been opened unto them, and the remaining are left in the state of darkness into which all men are born into the world of nature. This is by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, as is stated very clearly in, *(Rom 9:22-23) "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he hath afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also to the Gentiles."*

The reason behind all of this is that God's thoughts and ways are so much above the thoughts and ways of man, that the natural reasoning and intellect of the creature, cannot fathom the depth of these truths, so that Paul could only say, (Rom 11:33-36) *"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counselor? Or who hath first given unto him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."* The entire plan of the salvation of the children of God, is in the fact that it was completed before man was even created, and is just as sure and certain as all of the rest of the creation of God, and we all are witnesses to the sun coming up every day and going down at night as was decreed at the same time.

This leaves man with no valid reason to boast, or any claim of any credit, for his being able to understand the ways and thoughts of God. It was not because of any intelligence that he has above others, or any lineage that he received from his forefathers, but strictly because he was chosen of God and elected unto this high and lofty place among the children of God, before time began, and this fact is plainly stated by the prophets and apostles in their writings. Isaiah said, *(Isa 43:1) "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by name; thou art mine."* And again in (verses 6 and 7) *"I will say to the north, give up, and to the south, keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth: even every one that is called by my name: for I have*

created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him."

In the beginning, God made man, and when he had completed the creation of all things, he pronounced that they were very good, and this included man, as he was created. Then man put forth his hand and partook of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which God had commanded him to not do, and because of this, God, because of man's disobedience, drove man from the Garden of Eden, and consigned him to the earth, which is the devil's domain. When God saw that the wickedness of man was very great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart were only evil continually, it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth and it grieved him at his heart. This was his assessment of the man that he had made, after he was when driven from the Garden of Eden, and this is the nature of the man when left to his own devices. Solomon said, ***(Eccl. 7:29) "Lo, this only have I found, that God made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."*** Now, with this in mind, is man saved because of what he may be able to do, or in spite of what he has done? If justice had been meted out to the man, at the time, God would have destroyed all men, because they were all equally guilty, but, by the mercy of God, Moses found grace in the eyes of the Lord, and a remnant was spared. It is even as Paul said, when speaking of the seven thousand whom God told Isaiah that he had reserved unto himself, ***(Rom. 11:5) "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace."*** This can equally be applied unto the elect of God in all ages, because the seven thousand is the whole household of faith.

It is because that God's ways and thoughts are not as man's, ways and thoughts, that there are any who remained to fulfill the commands which God gave man, in the day that he was created. When God created man, he blessed him and said unto him, be fruitful, and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth, and for this to be fulfilled, a remnant was spared that God's command concerning the population of the whole earth would be accomplished.

The Lord told Noah that he had found him righteous in this generation, and that he was to build an ark and take two of every species of his creation, male and female into the ark, because he was going to destroy the rest from the face of the earth. By faith Noah built the ark, and took himself, his wife, their three sons and their wives and all of the animals into the ark. God caused it to rain forty days and forty nights and destroyed all living creatures

from the earth. After the flood had receded from the face of the earth God told Noah, *(Gen 8:16-18) "Go forth of the ark, thou and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons wives with thee. Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee, of all flesh, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and be fruitful and multiply upon the earth. And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him:"* Noah then built an ark unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar, and the Lord smelled a sweet savour: and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day ands night shall not cease." and this promise remains unto this day.

God is a merciful and forgiving God, unto those whom he hath chosen, those for whom he has blessed with his loving kindness. *(Isa 43:3-4) "For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy one of Israel, thy Savior: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thy life."* He has had an elect people that were given grand and glorious promises before the foundation of the world, and because of his command given unto them, that they were to go forth and replenish the earth, all future generations must fulfill their allotted time on earth, be redeemed from their sinful and corrupt condition and receive the inheritance that was laid up for them from the beginning. This was assured when Noah found grace in the eyes of the lord, and he was sent on his mission to perpetuate the fulfillment of the purposes of God.

God then made his covenant with Noah and his sons after him, saying, behold I will establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you, and I will set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: and I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh, and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

Because God's ways are higher than man's ways, he dispenses his wrath upon the vessels of wrath whereunto they were appointed, and at the same time, grace to the vessels of mercy which he hath afore prepared unto glory. The man in nature will say, now that's not fair, but fairness has nothing to do with it: all men are in a state of just condemna-

men are in a state of just condemnation for their actions; but because of the love that God had for the chosen vessels of mercy from the foundation of the world, they are redeemed from their condemnation by the blood of Jesus, and the rest are left, as they were, in the care and control of their father the devil. Jesus did nothing to justify them, and therefore they will receive their just reward in the lake of fire and brimstone, which is their true heritage. This is not done in the sense that man dispenses his favors or enmity unto his enemies, but rather, in the fact that God blesses all men with many favors in the things of nature, but also dispenses spiritual blessing unto the elect, which is reserved for them alone.

There was an occasion where David sinned against the Lord by numbering the children of Israel, and David said unto the Lord, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now I beseech thee, O Lord, take away the iniquity of thy servant: for I have done very foolishly. The Lord's response to David, by the prophet Gad, was I offer thee three things, choose one of them, that I may do unto thee. Shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land? Or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee? Or that there be three days' pestilence in thy land? Now advise, and see what answer I shall return to the Lord. And David said unto God, I am in a strait: let us fall now into the hand of the Lord; for his mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man.

David was aware that the ways of the Lord were not as the ways of man, for he had suffered many years, at the hand of man, and knowing that God is merciful unto those that fear him, whatever happened unto him would be for his good and for the good of the house of Israel; for he said I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house, meaning his earthly father's house. All of God's children would respond in like manner, because, they know that all of their salvation is by the grace of God, and believing that he has begun a good work in them, he will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ, and that all things will work together for good to them that love the Lord.

May God's longsuffering, mercy and grace, follow us all the days of our lives, and may we ever be mindful of the fact that the Lord's ways are not as our ways and that we will not be dealt with, as we deserve, but, have been given a blessed hope that we have been judged worthy. This is not because of anything that we have done to merit that blessing, but rather, as a member of the body of his only begotten Son we are justified, if we be one of his. It is all in Christ Jesus, who of God, who has been made unto us wisdom, and

and redemption; and as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

May 10, 2006

Dear Brother Terry,

Please accept my apology for being late in getting my renewal money to you. At my age of 97, I realize my usual doing my business duties on time has often failed me. Thank you for continuing to send the Signs and reminding me of the time to renew. (This time for 2 years)

The Lord continues to bless me with good health. My eye specialist told me that my vision was in the upper 10% of all people my age. How thankful I am to be able to enjoy all the precious spiritual writings of those who contribute their God-given words of comfort to the flock of those of us who love the risen Savior. The Lord remains very close to me in personal comfort and advice. I feel that I am being led by His almighty hand as He so clearly answers my prayers.

I feel like I would like to offer a writing of what these spiritual episodes have done for me in praise of my Lord Jesus and eternal God.

Thanks to you Elder Terry and to those of like faith who contribute so much talentt in publishing the Signs of the Times.

Alma F. Coate-Wilson

May 15, 2006

Dear Elder Terry,

I see my subscription is expiring with this month's issue. Enclosed is a check for $25.00 to renew my subscription for another two years.

Thank you for all you do in getting the Signs out every month. My mother and I look forward to each issue. I keep them and re-read them at various times.

May God continue his blessings on each of you at the Signs.

In Christian Love,
Gloria B. Reese and
Violet M. Barton

Dear Elder Terry,

Enclosed is my check for 1 year renewal and $5.00 to help with the paper.

Your editorial in the May issue by Elder Farmer was just the message I needed to hear.

May God bless you,
Grace Manly

Dear Elder Terry,

My grandpa, Ed Johnson ordered the subscription for the Signs. He liked for me to read aloud and we spent many happy hours doing this. I see that the subscription is due. I have enclosed a check for 2 years. Please deduct any months due and send me the rest. I would like to continue getting it. I have a love for the Old Baptist people and the Gospel that is preached there. I work weekends and don't get to go much.

If I may I would like to tell you my grandpa's experience. Grandpa went to a Methodist church when he was a boy and changed to The Holiness later, where he joined. This is the story in his words – "I thought I believed what the Holiness said and did, I tried to shout and roll on the floor like everyone else did but it just never felt natural to me. When I married your Granny her mama and papa believed in the Old Baptist and so did she. Bob and Lucy Carter were some of the finest people I ever met and it was interesting to see her talk to some of the preachers and read the Bible and go deep in scripture. They sometimes asked her questions and she tried to answer, they would sit on the old porch for hours.

Well Martha, and I, went first one Sunday to her Old Baptist and next Sunday to the Holiness.One day she and I were cutting wood with an old two man saw that Johnny Carter gave me from the sawmill. We were talking about what I believed and what she believed. She said only the ones pre-elected would go to Heaven. I told her if old preacher George Dye with all that cigarette smoking he did, went to heaven, then everybody in the world would go. It hurt her feelings and made her mad. She threw down her side of the saw and went inside.

That same night I had a dream. I thought the whole sky was on fire and when I looked up the Lord was as big as the whole sky. I could not see his face but I heard his voice. He said "Don't believe on cigarettes but believe on me." That dream was more real than any I've ever had before or after. When I woke Martha up and told her. As I remember she shed tears with me, I couldn't get that dream out of my head. It was like it really happened.

The next week my church was having some kind of play about Christmas, Martha went with me but she really didn't want to. About half way through the play they had a baby doll that was suppose to be Jesus, none of it seemed right to me. The play or what the preacher said. – I asked Martha if she was ready to go and she said "yes" she sure was ready.

The next weekend we went to Union Church, as I sat there everything that preacher said seemed right to me. I was filled with tears, how could I have ever believed what The Holiness Church said. I guess I

never really did believe or feel right, at the Holiness Church. I never stepped back in that church again. The Old Baptist that was the place for me.

Every time someone went forward to ask a home with the church I thought why can't that be me. One Sunday at the end of handshaking I looked up and saw Martha at the front of the church with tears rolling down her cheeks and I thought this is our day. We both asked a home with the church at Republican and were accepted. What a good day. When we got baptized there was ice on the water but Martha or I never felt cold much. It was so special, we couldn't change ourselves but the good Lord had a plan for us and we hope that we are thankful.

My Grandpa's love for the Old Baptist faith and its people was strong. In his last months and weeks on this old earth the most important thing to him was to be with and serve God's little children.

When he was too weak to walk from one room to the other and had to have help with the smallest daily things, somehow he would, with a little help, get dressed and go to church. We took his power wheel chair and he rode it inside. He rode that chair up and down the isle to serve communion. And do his part as a deacon.

When I asked him how he did it he said "When I get in the church a feeling of comfort and strength comes over me and I am able.

The good Lord gave me that, and I always hope that I am thankful to him for it. I feel unworthy of such a blessing."

We all love and miss my grandparents. They were sweet and kind and precious to me.

Thank you,

Deborah Ingram Heath,
Granddaughter of
Ed and Martha Johnson

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1 John 4: 1-6.

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.

We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

VOICES OF THE PAST

EXPERIENCE

Elder F. P. Branscome, Dear Brother: I have thought for some time I would try to write some of what I hope is the dealings of the Lord with me. I don't know just when I began to fear the Lord, but it was at a very early age. When I was nine years old I remember getting in a fearful condition, so sleep seemed to leave me and I feared I would be lost. My father was killed when I was a baby. I had a good mother; she was the daughter of Elder A. J. Cassell. She gave me the best instruction a christian mother could give, but for all this I was often doing things to grieve her. Shortly after this I dreamed of throwing a rock and killing a boy, I thought I was certain for torment then; and when I awoke I thought surely the dream was intended to show me that I was to be lost. When ten or eleven years old I dreamed that I and one of my playmates were confined in a large pile of wood, and all it lacked of being torment was being set on fire, and I thought he was trying to set it. This was still more evidence that I was to be lost. Soon after this I dreamed of being at Concord church and being baptized by Elder J. M. Blansett and realizing the happiest time that I had ever witnessed at that time. That gave me some hope of heaven, still I didn't know anything about what preaching was; I had never been to preaching many times. Sometimes after going to bed there was such a burden on me I would cry, but no one knew of, neither did I tell my dreams; yet I enjoyed the things of the world. Time went on, and I grew no better. When about sixteen years old I went with my mother to an Old Baptist meeting to hear Elders J. M. Blansett and J. W. Barnard. I sat down on the outer edge of the crowd, but when Brother Blansett took his text that was the first preaching I ever heard, or the first that ever took hold on me. I believed he was a preacher of the gospel and I was an awful sinner. I thought I would try to live a better life from then on. I verily thought I could live in such a way that God would forgive my sins. Sometimes I would look around and think that I was just about as good as anybody; I didn't curse nor steal; I tried to be truthful. I would think sometimes I almost had religion, but still I would sing bad songs, would play marbles, hunt and fish on Sunday; and sometimes when I would lie down at night I would think how I had spent the day and try to promise I would do better. Sometimes I would think about trying to pray, but I did not know how and thought it would be a sin for me to try. When about nineteen years old I married. I thought then I could be better. I still believed in works. I would go to preaching and enjoy it.

I would try to conceal my tears. I would look upon the church with

admiration and longed to be numbered with them, and when one would go to the church I would think "there is mercy for others but none for me." I gradually grew worse until I was about thirty years old, when I took typhoid fever. While very low one night, I thought I had to die, and I begged God to have mercy on me. I thought I was dying without any hope. It seemed that I could realize the pains of torment take hold on me. I wanted my mother to pray for me, but she was out of reach. I believed that Brother Blansett was a servant of God, and I thought if he could only pray for me perhaps the Lord would hear him, but there was no way of letting him know. So after a while I became reconciled to the will of the Lord.

I thought if it was his will he would save me anyway. So I became willing to die and after a while I began to get better, and I had a great desire to be baptized. So one day I told my wife I wanted to be baptized and she said, *"Well, you can when you get well;"* but it was not long till it began to bother me I thought I knew I was not fit to be baptized, but I tried to promise that if I ever got well I will live a better life, but instead of getting better I seemed to get worse, until about three years had passed. By this time I had almost given up ever having any hope. My confidence in man, I thought was already lost, there was but one chance, and that depended alone on the mercy of God, and it seemed so unreasonable for Him to remember such a sinner as I was. It seemed that I had sinned with a better informed judgement. I would often go to bed desiring to dream of something for relief, but instead of that perhaps I would dream something wicked. But if my memory serves me right, about the 22nd of December, 1899, I went to bed very much unconcerned, and dropped off to sleep, and about midnight I dreamed the end of time came. I thought the Lord came down and immediately returned toward heaven, or a light above, and I thought I was lifted up with him, together with my wife and others when some were left, and I wondered what power was carrying me up and I thought it was the power of the Lord; I awoke and the first thought was, *"Is this a hope?"* and a few moments and my soul, I trust, was filled with love and thanks to God for his mercies. I could for one time claim a hope. I thought of some and wanted to tell my experience to just them, but I decided to wait until morning, but when morning came I was fearful I had no hope and kept it to myself about three months before I told anybody. On Saturday before the fourth Sunday in May, 1900, I offered myself to the Primitive Baptist church at Dan River and was received and was baptized *by* our much esteemed Eld. J. M. Blansett.

C. A. VIPPERMAN.

TO OUR MINISTERS

Dear brethren: There are no people who stand so close to our heart as the gospel ministry, especially our young ministers. None but the minister himself can sympathize with them. Their struggles, weakness, doubts and fears, forebodings and sorrows, temptations and dark feelings of unfitness, with the desire to be clothed with righteousness from on high, trials and tribulations too numerous to mention, all appeal to us in no uncertain manner. The God-called ministers feel all these aches, pangs and, pain, and the bitter groaning says, in itself, that *"Deep calleth unto deep."*

But, my dear fellow-suffers in the ministry, these are essentials to each that he may see his own weakness and the sinfulness of his nature, so as to be able to understand something of the love, mercy and grace of God in the salvation of sinners. You will, no doubt, often feel that everybody is against you, even your nearest friends and neighbors, your brother preachers, members of the church; and, at the same time, you may feel that God Himself is against you. But, my brother, our pride must be humbled, and our poor sinful flesh is so haughty, selfwilled, stubborn and proud, that these things are necessary in order that we may walk humbly before God and his people; and, while the flesh and the devil, with all opposing, are trying to persuade you that "All these things are against me," yet they are necessary to prevent us from being puffed up with pride, thereby falling into condemnation of the devil. The devil (your worst enemy) will continually try to stir you up to envy and hatred, and, should you fail to watch and keep your members in subjection, he would utterly destroy your usefulness, and yourself become a castaway. But your gift will make room for you. You may desire to preach at some time or place where God has not sent you; you may fail and satan induce you to put the blame on some one for your failure.

Perhaps satan will tempt you to desire to preach to the largest audience and try to get you to take the time of some pastor, or take the time belonging to the preacher who made the appointment. This is one of satan's "tricks," to stir up confusion. At regular meetings where churches have pastors the people, as a rule, go out to hear their pastor. When others make appointments the people go out to hear them: but all this does not release you. You must do the preaching God bids you, and you will have to bear a cross—A great cross—to do it, but take up that cross. You can make your effort on Saturday before the church itself – this is a cross – and let the church judge. Any God-called minister feels that the church is able to *"Judge angels"* and ministers but perhaps you are not satisfied with this and if your gift is profitable for others you will feel im-

pressed to preach to others. Now here is another cross, satan will whisper, *What if you fail? But you must "Make full proof of your ministry."* Make an appointment yourself, then the people will come out to hear you. Let some minister or deacon go with you. They will be glad to do so. You will find a freedom here you have never found before, and you will also feel a responsibility you have never felt before. As soon as your appointment is arranged satan will, no doubt, begin to discourage you. Perhaps, you will spend sleepless nights trying to pray to God to be with you, and the meaning of your prayer will be, *"Oh Father glorify thy son that thy son may glorify thee,"* You remember that you are preaching for the glory of God and not your own glory. Your glory must be laid at the feet of Jesus. God must be glorified, and whether you preach or fail, remember that God is the one that the glory is due. Remember what the Apostle Paul enjoined on Timothy and Titus relative to their duty as ministers of the Gospel. Give attendance to reading. *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness"* &c. *"Search the Scriptures,"* said Jesus. *"Preach the word." "Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine."* Said the Apostle Paul, *"put them in mind to be subject to principalitites and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men."*

We might dwell more at length on these, but will close by saying that there is a way of saving both thyself and them that hear thee.

J.A. Ashburn

WHAT SHALL WE SAY

"What shall we say? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abount?" - Rom. 6:1.

We are saved by grace. This doctrine has been assailed ever since the dawn of the gospel day, when Jesus was here on earth in person, healing the sick, cleansing the lepers and raising the dead. We learn that the accusers were here heaping accusations upon Him, while he taught that salvation is the gift of God; that eternal life came from heaven by the will of God. Now all who have received this life, and peace, and love, are willing, while under the influence of the Spirit, that God shall have all the glory; are willing to the knowledge that we are kept by the power of God from sin unto salvation; willing to confess their sins, and even to say, *"I know* that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing."

But the enemies of salvation by grace, the enemies of the righteous-

ness of Christ, and of the salvation of God, even in the apostolic day, accused the apostles of saying, *"Let us do evil that good may come."* This expression is a slander to believers in Christ, because all of them realize that they are begotten unto good works. They do not wish to continue in sin, but desire to walk humbly before God, realizing their continual dependence upon God for continued grace. We may do all the good in our power, and still we are sinners and need his abounding grace every day, every hour, all the time. But, shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? *"God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? We cannot. Yet it is true that our bodies are filled with corruption; that sin is condemned in the flesh; that the flesh must die, the penalty which none can escape." "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."* While we art living in vanity we are living after the flesh and dying daily, for death is working in us all the time. But as we "were baptized into Jesus Christ we were baptized into his death: Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. *"In this we mortify the deeds of the flesh; and, as this"*, mortification takes place, we walk in newness of life: for we are born again, not of coruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God. And yet, while this is all true, we are carnal, sold under sin. Of this, Paul said, *"For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing. for to will is present with me; but how to perform that, which is good I find not. For the good that would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." — Rom. 7:15-25.*

So, brethren, if I can use the above in spirit and in truth,

I must be content.

J.A. Ashburn

Dear Brother Mitchell: - Supposing you are still on time's side of the river of death, I feel like writing to you. I have often thought of your. And, by your permission, I will write also to the readers of the Messenger, many of whom are my acquaintances and former religious associates. This is, in all probability, the last attempt I will ever make to write, as it is with much difficulty that I write, owing to the weakness of eyesight. I have never been able to express my thoughts either in writing or speaking as they were entertained in my mind.

In connection with the above texts; I desire to write some of my thoughts or experience in the christian warfare: and; as the theme is so copious I can only give a short sketch in this letter.

"These are they that came out of great tribulation." Rev. vii. 14. *As thy days thy strength shall be."* Deut. xxxiii. 25. In all the checkered and varied scenes through which the Christian is led or driven, almighty power and sovereign grace shine with resplendent glory, and this, sooner or later, is realized in the experience of the tried saints, and they are only led or driven where their best and surest may abide.

Here I wish to refer to some of my own travels. When, in my twentieth year, on Friday I was walking in my father's orchard, as quick as thought I was made to realize that I was the most miserable and undone hell-deserving sinner that ever drew the breath of life, and that eternal banishment from my offended sovereign was my certain doom. To the heavy charge of guilt that then racked my soul; I plead guilty, yea thrice guilty: for at the same time He made known to me my awful state by reason of: sin and incessant rebellion. Under the weight of such trying scenes we can only imagine *the* pensive moans, the bitter, but, penitent tears, and plaintive *cries for* mercy. A poor soul thus enviorned with "a deep felt sense *of his* desperate condition has, for the first time in his life, a thought of pleading for mercy. In and with this view I retired to a secret spot to try to ask for mercy: but, before retiring to the place, the thought occurred that if such a vile wretch attempts to address such a holy, just and glorious being as then impressed my mind, He would surely strike me dead, and then my portion would be with the damned. But as my troubles seemed to increase and grow intense, I finally knelt and plead with my offended Sovereign for mercy, but it seemed that my words fell unheeded before me; and being thus barred from His throne and presence, my condition became desperate, and I was driven to the necessity of making a full surrender. So, on the enduing Sunday evening, as I returned, as I thought, for the last time to try to plead for mercy, and , after walking to and fro in a dense grove of timber, I prostrated myself on the ground, having become perfectly

willing from my Maker to dispose of me as seemed good to Him.

The change that now took place and the emotions of soul that animated and moved my entire being, can never be fully portrayed by men or angels. Imagine a poor, hell-deserving wretch, whose numerous sins from early youth, with all their aggravated enormity, are sufficient to sink him to the lowest hell. He is brought before the fiery tribunal of his offended Sovereign, the high God who alone inhabits eternity, whose every perfection shines with the most resplendent glory. Yet, having charged his Son with all this heavy load of guilt, He issues to this poor self-condemned culprit a free and full discharge; Yea, He takes him to His banqueting-house, and His banner over him is love.

This is a wonderful and miraculous change, indeed; for it seems to be an instantaneous exit from the dark and dismal regions of despair or hell to the portals of the most dazzling glory. Instead of being cast off as an alien enemy, he is caressed and nurtured as a dear son; and, like the poor Gadarene he is clothed, and in his right mind, and at the feet of his dear redeemer, whose righeousness covers and hides all his guilt, his happiness seems complete, and adoring gratitude fills his heart, warms his affections. He feels as clear of guilt as though he had never committed a sin. All nature seems to join his happy soul in ascribing praise to his ever-blessed Lord. His transformation seems so complete that he concludes he is changed in both soul and body, and that the principle of sin is completely eradicated, never more to return to annoy and vex him; and it does seem that such transporting views and exuberant joy as then possess and animate his entire being would be sufficient to impress his mind and influence his conduct his remaining days. But alas! he soon finds that the strong man that possessed and ruled in his palace was only bound. When, as I hope, I was favored with a view and realized the blessed influence of the scenes through which I was passing, I made a solemn vow that I would serve Him the balance of my days, and verily thought I could live in strict conformity to His will and word.(I was then about three hundred yards from the house). The thought occurred to me of telling my mother, who was a Baptist and a Christian, My father was dying when I left the house to go to the place above named. After proceeding a short distance toward the house, the thought struck me that I might be too hasty in telling what had taken place with me, and maybe deceive mother, So I was in that short lapse of time doubting, and could say but little, and that in a doubting way to her. When I returned to the house my father was dead. I suppose that his, natural death and my spiritual birth, as I hope, occurred about the same time. From this time on for fourteen years I lived in a state of incessant

rebellion, so far as practical obedience is concerned; for it was not until 1854 that my hard and rebellious heart, seemingly by stress of sore afflictions, yielded obedience, and I joined Old Macedonia Church, in Franklin County, Tennessee, and" was baptized by Elder John P. Walker. I felt, when coming out of the water, an ease of mind and peace of conscience, that led me to conclude that my troubles were over, and so expressed myself to the brethren. But how soon my fancied hopes were blasted! For soon after uniting with the church my mind was deeply impressed with the duty of appearing before my brethren and fellowman in a public capacity. And I cannot think that any poor creature ever had better or more solid grounds to enter a protest against such a duty that was seemingly absolutely impossible for him to fill. To just think, a poor little illiterate creature, unaccustomed to mixing much with society, without any training or qualities that would admit of such training, and with a felt sense of his corruptions and depravity of heart, and of his supreme ignorance of the inspired word of God, and the great fear of provoking the censures of brethren and the jests and derisive merriment of the world, with numerous other obstacles, but above all, to bring a reproach upon a cause that he held dear as life.

And yet the half, and most important half, is yet to be told. For, notwithstanding this formidable array of unfitness, he is called to appear as an ambassador or witness before the mighty God of Jacob, before whose throne angels cast their glittering crowns, ascribing greatness to His adorable name. The disciples on the holy mount, when favored with a view of His divine majesty, prostrated themselves before Him. And when Isaiah had glimpses of His glory, he cried out, *"Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts Job, when favored with a view of the divine glory, said; I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee; wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes."* And the apostle Paul, the greatest luminary of the Christian church, said to his Corinthian brethren; *"I was with you in weakness and fear and in much trembling."*

The striking contrast thus drawn between the creator and creature is well adapted to strike our senses with the most profound awe and reverence. But notwithstanding this, it seemed that I was well fortified with objections. I was again driven to the necessity of yielding all. And though it seemed the most fearful and startling enterprise of my life, in the short space of time from the time I was baptized to the next meeting, all my scruples seemed to be entirely overcome, and I rose in conference and told the brethren some of my impressions, among

other things saying, that I had become willing to fill or take the place of a little child in the church. This was so unexpected to most of the brethren that they seemed almost panic-stricken. They gave me liberty to exercise such a gift as I had. As the seeming excitement subsided and I had time to reflect on what I had done, I was so ashamed of myself that I left the place as soon as possible, and I thought if I had it back I would not divulge it again for the world. To be deceived myself was bad enough, but to deceive my brethren in particular, and provoke the derision of the world, seemed awful indeed, and beyond my powers of endurance. With a sad and distressed mind, I tried to ask the Lord for help in this time of utmost need to enlighten my darkened mind, soften and rectify my hard heart, and speak peace to my troubled soul. I was and am yet very desirous of having a correct understanding of the inspired word of God, and to learn more and more of His glorious character, and read the scriptures daily, and frequently got up at different hours of the night to examine some passage of scripture that was bearing upon my mind. I will here name one incident that occurred during my distress. While striving against my impressions to preach, it seemed indelibly impressed on my mind that, in the parable of the talents, I was the slothful servant entrusted with one talent, and my condition was equally deplorable. While in this sad plight I asked Brother Walker for his views on this parable.

Though he was illiterate, he was well versed in the scripture, and was regarded as one of the ablest preachers among the Baptists.

In treating on this parable he referred to other scriptures, and reached the conclusion that this man only seemed to have the talent. From this standpoint I very readily concluded that I was a hypocrite of the deepest dye, and of course my distress, though very trying, was much intensified, as though I had almost unbounded confidence as a man and his ability as a teacher, nor could I be driven from my conclusion of being the man with one talent. Soon after this I received the "Southern Baptist Messenger" published by William L. Beebe, containing an article written by Elder W.M. Mitchell on this parable, in which he traced and lined out my travels seemingly with as much precision as though he knew the secrets of my heart and travels of my mind. He held that the man with one talent was a rebellous and disobedient servant and as it fitted my case so well, it was like cooling streams on parched ground healing balm to a distracted mind: for above all things, I abominated the thought of being a hypocrite. I here learned that it was too much wrapped in men, and that they all have their failings, and that God often when dealing with His people makes trivial and unlooked for means subserve His purpose,

and turns the current of events in order to their relief. I will here say that, after beginning this scribble, my mind has become much impressed with some trials and conflicts through which I have been called to pass. I designed writing on the Christians warfare in general. In conclusion I will say that I hope the Lord has of late blessed me with more and brighter manifestation of His love and more resignation to His dealings with me, and more constancy in seeking His presence or closer communion with Him: and though the strokes of His chastening rod have been very heavy and very trying, yet they were not as heavy as my guilt deserved, and were given for my correction. I have no complaints to make, but in the bitterest trials, I wish to say with good old Eli, "It is the Lord, let Him do as it seemeth Him good and with the *poet* —

"*Wait, O my soul thy Makers will,*
Tumultious passions all be still:
Nor let a murmuring thought arise-
His ways are just, His counsels wise.

I think in my travels I have often realized text at the head of this article, that tribulations more or less attend every true believer, and that as their days their strength shall be. Also what Elihu, in the book of Job says;

"When He hideth His face, who then can behold Him?" and what Watts says --

"When He shuts up in long despair,
Who can remove the heavy bar?"

The Lord is pleased to exercise His people in these sad desertions and fiery, but always for their good and His glory.

"These inward trials I employ
From self and pride to set thee free,
And break thy schemes of earthly joy,
That thou mayest seek thy all in Me."

Sometimes it seems that we are reduced to such straits, and dark and gloomy clouds prevail to such an extent, that we can derive no comfort from what we hope the Lord has done for us heretofore; past deliverances will not always suffice to relieve us of our present distress: Yet God is as near and as much our shield and preserver as when we are on the mount enjoying His smiles. For as He loves us in their relation to His dear Son, His love to us is everlasting and unchangeable. So thine are still the objects of His care while smarting under His rod. Here the language of the poet seems very

appropriate:

"Wait, then my soul, submissive wait,
Prostrate before His awful seat;
And midst the terrors of His rod,
Trust in a wise and gracious God."

All the saints have a rugged road to travel from grace to glory yet they have a safe escort, grace within to guide, and providence without to guard them..

Brother Mitchell, I submit this to your disposal.

Your brother, I hope, in Gospel bonds,

James Wagner.

Note: These are they that came out of great tribulation. As thy days thy strength shall be. Deut. xxxiii;25.

These are the texts referred to at beginning of article.

(copied from THE GOSPEL MESSENGER, November, 1897)

PSALMS 26:7.

The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

EXPERIENCE OF ADDIE SNYDER

Elder J. A. Ashburn, Dear Brother in Christ: I cannot be satisfied to be received into the church and baptized without telling you something more of myself; and so, by the help of Him that reigneth on high, I will try to write some of my feelings. If He is in the matter, I feel quite sure that He will guide my pen.

At about the age of eight years, as I told you, I became seriously concerned about my eternity, as to where I should spend it. I then knew nothing of salvation by grace; and of course, I felt that I could get religion, if I would try. I then began reading my testament, and trying to pray. This continued for sometime and I found no relief, but only became worse. I would go to revivals and see the people shouting, and wished that I could feel as happy as they seemed to be.

But I soon found that I had not the power to save myself, that, if ever saved, it would be through the merits of Christ. And, although I had never heard the doctrine preached, I felt that, if He had the will to save me, He had the power, but I felt so small that it seemed He would never notice one so small and foolish and sinful as I felt myself to be.

At last I became less concerned and soon forgot about those things until one day, when I was eleven years old. My little sister and I were at home alone, and it seemed I must soon die and enter into eternal pun-

ishment. A few weeks later we went to hear Elder O. J. or C. F. Denny, I do not remember which; but it seemed that they (Primitive Baptists) were a very peculiar people. After that they rented a hall in town, where they held their meetings. I loved to hear them, and it seemed that they were the sweetest people I ever saw. I wished to be like them, and was always ready to go through any weather to hear them, when any one would go with me.

It is almost useless to try to express my feelings. But I felt to be one of the worst of sinners. I would read my Bible as much as I could, trying, if possible, to find some relief. I did sometimes, feel relief while reading. But my troubles would return again. I went begging the Lord for mercy day after day. I could hardly keep back my tears when I saw one whom I believed to be a child of God.

One day, while in a terrible condition, I seemed to lose all sight of natural things, and all my breathings were prayers to God for mercy. Then, at once, I found myself singing, *"How happy are they who their Savior obey," and, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound!"* Never before did the words sound so sweet to me. Then the scripture, *"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,"* came forcibly into my mind. I then felt very much relieved for a short while, but was soon as low as ever. I went on in trouble, as before, until one beautiful spring day. I was looking out thinking how beautiful everything was, when the twenty-third psalm came into my mind. I had known every word of this psalm well for sometime, but never before had I seen it as I did then. I felt, deep down in my heart, that. *"The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want."* I again lost sight of earthly things and felt that, *"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters."* I felt very happy.

Later I felt that it was my duty to offer myself to the church, but, O! I felt that they would not receive me, as I was so young. I was then about fourteen years of age. I love the church and longed to be a member.

Later, we went to the association at High Point. It was a time I will never forget. I enjoyed the meeting very much, especially on Monday. Elder Jones, of Burlington, preached a wonderful sermon. But it seemed, when Elder Flinchum arose, that the very heavens were opened before him, and that he was looking into them. That sermon I often enjoy yet.

Still, after that, I became so low in feelings that I decided that, perhaps, I knew nothing of God, and feared that I had never felt the pardon and forgiveness for my sins.

I attended a revival meeting; and it seemed that I could harldly stay away from the altar, but did not go. But one night my sister and I went to a little prayer meeting near our home. I was greatly distressed because of the death of my grandfather; and, also, because of my con-

dition. They asked all who wished to be prayed for to kneel there at the altar, and pray with them. I did not go forward, but buried my face in my hands and began crying. The minister noticed it and came up and began talking to me. I had promised myself that I would never make a confession to any one until I felt that I was really changed. He said, "I believe you have been converted already and asked me if there was any scripture that I wished him to read I asked Him to read the fourteenth chapter of St. John. This he did, and I (remembering the comfort those words had been to me) arose and gave him my hand; and, as soon as I did it, a great darkness fell upon me. I felt that I had committed the unpardonable sin. I could not sleep that night, and was afraid to close my eyes.

Mama asked sister about the meeting that morning, and it seemed like a sentence of death upon me for her to tell what I had done; and for many weeks, yes, months. I was afraid to close my eyes, lest I should be hurled into eternity. I cried, "O, the miserable wretch that I am!" But, at last, I was shown that "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men," except blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. And again I felt it my duty to go before the church; but, because of a feeling of unworthiness, I stayed away as long as I could. At High Point, the other Sunday, it seemed, if I should fail to offer myself to the church then that I never would have the opportunity again. So I went and you all received me, I cannot tell why, as I could not say anything much.

I will try to stop now. Please excuse me for writing this. But I desire your earnest prayers, that I may always be faithful.

Your little sister in Christ,
I hope,
Addie Snyder.

PSALM 142

I cried unto the Lord with my voice; with my voice unto the Lord did I make my supplication.

I poured out my complaint before him: I shewed before him my trouble.

When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path. In the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me.

I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul.

I cried unto thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.

Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I.

Bring my soul our of prison, that I may praise thy name: the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shalt deal bountifully with me.

MEETINGS

Abbott's Creek Association

The 179th Annual Session of the Abbott's Creek Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Lamm's Grove Church, Moore County, NC on Friday before the fourth Sunday in August, 2006, and will continue through Sunday. These dates being August 25th through 27th.

Lamm's Grove meeting house is located in Moore County, NC about 200 yards off southeast side of U.S. Hwy 15 and 501, six miles east of Carthage, NC and about ten miles southeast of Sanford, NC. Those coming by way of Sanford, NC leave U.S. Hwy No. 1 onto U.S. Hwy 15 and 501 and continue westwardly for about 5 miles to church on your left. Those coming eastwardly by way of Carthage, NC follow U.S. Hwy 15 and 501 to the same point.

We cordially invite our ministering brethren, brethren, sisters and friends to be with us this year, 2006, in our 179th session.

James M. Jones, Clerk
Katherine Harward, Asst. Clerk

Matthew 8:13.

And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.

PIGG RIVER DISTRICT PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

One hundred eightieth first session of Pigg River District Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Town Creek Church August 4th, 5th, & 6th, 2006.

Direction to church from Rt. 220 to Town Creek Church on 605 Henry Rd. mileage is 3.3 miles, church on the right. State Rd. 40 to Town Creek Church take 605 Henry Rd. and mileage is 10 miles.

Elder Thomas Solomon, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, on July 8th and 9th, beginning at 10:00 A.M. Saturday and will continue through Sunday.

The host church Canaan will entertain the association at Weatherford Church as this is our permanent association location.

Weatherford Church is located at the insections of Music Street and Weatherford Drive (Hwy 760 and 763) about 5 miles from Gretna, Va.

We invite believers of our faith to attend.

Burnell B. Williams, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 2006

Agnes Sutphin, VA	3.00
Charlie Fox, AR	3.00
Edna Graves, AL	5.00
Sarah Barker, VA	5.00
Gladys Shelton, NM	15.00
Dan Anders, AL	5.00
Maxey Delp, VA	5.00
Miles Bird, LA	5.00
Cleo Underwood, VA	5.00
Nancy Pollack, NC	50.00
Grace Manley, AL	5.00
Dan Delp, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

Dear Signs of the Times,

I would like to submit my mother's obituary. She looked forward to getting each issue. It fed her soul so long as she was able to read.

DANNIE MOORE STRICKLAND

It is with a sad heart to report this dear sisters death. A time to be born and a time to die. That time was October 15, 1915 and March 22, 2006 her earthly life ended, living to be 90 years old. She was a wonderful person believing God had a plan. She asked for a home with Pleasant Ridge Primitive Baptist Church in the Buttahatchie/ Hopewell Association in Alabama 1st Sunday in September 1950. She attended her church and was church clerk for many years also attended sister churches as long as her health permitted. During her last 6 years she was confined to her home and the last 8 months was confined to bed with her children staying with her.

Sister Dannie was preceded in death by her husband Tom Strickland also a member of Pleasant Ridge. They were married 52 years. Of their union they had one daughter and 4 sons, 11 grandchildren, 16 great grandchildren.

Her funeral was held at Pleasant Ridge with church pastor Elder James Pugh, March 25, 2006. Sister Dannie was an avid singer. She loved sacred music. Service began with one hour of sacred heart music with special singers. It was a beautiful service. Burial was in the church cemetery.

May we be blessed to cling to the hope our loss is her heavenly gain.

Thank you so much for printing this.

Benay White, Daughter

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

VOL. 174 MEADOWS OF DAN, VA., AUGUST 2006 NO. 8

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

NELLIE JOBE KEY

Nellie Jobe Key

GREENSBORO- Mrs. Nellie Jobe Key, 84, of 721 Willard St., died Monday, July 17, 2006 at her residence.

Mrs. Key's funeral will be held at 4 pm Wednesday, July 19 in the Forbis and Dick North Elm Chapel with Elder William Hale Terry officiating. Interment will follow in Lakeview Memorial Park.

Nellie Key was born In Guilford County on April 14, 1922 to the late Thurman and Ethel Stout Jobe. Mrs. Key was a 1941 graduate of McLeansville High School, a homemaker and faithful member of Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church.

Mrs. Key is survived by her husband, Elder Kenneth R. Key, Sr. of the home; sons, Kenneth R. Key, Jr. and his wife, Sharon and Gary Van Key; sisters Irene Sharpe and her husband Dwight, and Annie Fomberg and her husband Bob, five grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

The family will receive friends from 6 to 8 pm tonight at Forbis and Dick North Elm Street and other times at the residence.

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EDITORIAL

LUCIFER

Isaiah 14:12-15, ***"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most high. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit."***

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

The most common use of the name, Lucifer, is in reference to Satan. The most prevalent belief is that this is an angel who turned evil and fell from the eternal heaven and became the devil. O dear people, if this were true, what hope would we have that the Lord could keep us! But, bless your heart, I want to emphatically say that God has never nor will He ever lose one of His chosen, man nor angel. St. John 6:37-39, ***"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."*** I believe that God created Satan as He did everything else. He created him as an adversary and tempter of His people. 1 Peter 5:8, ***"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." Matthew 4:1-3. "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted***

forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But He answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Hebrews 2:18, *"For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."* Hebrews 4:15, *"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."* In John 8:44, Jesus said that the devil was a murderer and a liar from the beginning. There is no truth in him and there never was.

I do not believe Isaiah used the name, Lucifer, to refer to Satan. I believe Isaiah is referring to the king of Babylon as evidenced by Isaiah 14:4, *"That thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! The golden city ceased!"* Though he does not mention the king by name, I believe he is referring to Nebuchadnezzar. In the fourth chapter of Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar relates his experience. He dreamed of seeing a tree in the midst of the earth and its height was great. The tree grew and was strong and the height of it reached unto heaven and the sight of it to the end of all the earth. The leaves were fair (beautiful) and there was much fruit. There was meat in it for all. The beasts of the field had shadow under it and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs, and all flesh was fed of it. In his dream, Nebuchadnezzar saw a holy one come down from heaven and command to *"hew down the tree, cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit. Let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches. But, leave the stump of his roots in the earth."* Daniel interpreted the dream for the king and told him things he would have to experience to be taught that the most High rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomsoever He will.

Nebuchadnezzar conquered many nations including Judah when he invaded Jerusalem. He destroyed the temple taking items in it back to Babylon. He also took many of the inhabitants to Babylon as slaves. Daniel was one. Other nations and people were subject to his rule and were dependent upon him for their protection and livelihood. Thus, fulfilling his dream that *"the beasts of the field had shadow under it (tree) and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs, and all flesh was fed of it."* During his reign, Babylon was considered to be one of the most magnificent cities of the world and his palace one of the most beautiful. This fulfilled the de-

scription of him as the great tree in his dream. He was puffed up with vanity, pride, self-importance, and filled with the belief that he had all power, majesty and honor. He exalted himself like unto God as Isaiah prophesied, ***"For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High."***

The Apostle Paul, before he was converted, also persecuted the saints of God. He, too, was puffed up with vanity, pride, self-importance and thought he was doing God's service. Lucifer means "brightness" or "light." Nebuchadnezzar thought of himself as the brightness equal with God. He saw himself as the light of the world. Isaiah refers to him as Lucifer, not in a favorable way, but because Nebuchadnezzar thought of himself that way.

Now after twelve months (twelve sets forth completeness), the king walked in his palace in Babylon saying that by his mighty power and for his own honor, he had built such a great kingdom. In that moment, a voice spoke and declared, "*the kingdom is departed from thee.*" The king was taken out of his palace and into the field to dwell with the beasts. Daniel 4:33, ***"The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws."*** The tree was cut down, but the stump of his roots was left. He was not destroyed, but he was stripped of all self-works and self-righteousness and shown that he had no power of himself. He could witness with Isaiah 64:6, ***"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."*** As Isaiah had prophesied, the King of Babylon was brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. Surely, Isaiah 14:16-17 describes the condition of Nebuchadnezzar, ***"They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?"*** He could cry with the Apostle Paul, ***"O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death!"***

Nebuchadnezzar was in that condition until the fulfillment of God's appointed time ***("till seven times passed over him")*** and then, he was given to look up. My dear people, have you not experienced being brought so low and in such a

horrible state that it was hell to you. There, you had your self-works and self-righteousness stripped from you and you were completely helpless and lost and felt surely hell was your home and justly so. Who drove Nebuchadnezzar from men where he could not look to the arm of flesh for support? This is the place where each of you is taken. A place in your experience where no fleshly man could reach your case. The scripture says, ***"They shall drive thee from men."*** It was not the army of Babylon nor of any other nation, but I believe the "*They*" was God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God worked in Nebuchadnezzar the "to do" of His good pleasure. God brought Nebuchadnezzar down from his heaven to the depth of hell in his experience, a place of great tribulation, a place where no flesh could help him. Nebuchadnezzar was taught that ***"tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."*** You, too, were given to look up and cry for mercy. You had been given to see yourself as a sinner in all its blackness. What a horrible sight. But, then Christ appears in love and mercy and gives unto you hope and peace that surpasses all understanding. The gift of faith is given so that you believe in one that you can't see nor touch.

Nebuchadnezzar says his understanding was returned unto him and he praised and honored Him that liveth forever. He came forth confessing that God's dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation; that all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; that God doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and that none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, what doest thou.

Daniel 4:37 reads: "***Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and His ways judgment: and those that walk in pride He is able to abase.***"

I believe that each child of grace can in some measure witness with the experience of this king of Babylon.

In hope,
Cleo D. Robertson

St. John 1:10-12.

He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

ARTICLES

IS GOD LIMITED?

R.F.D. 3, Box 123,
Axton, Virginia

To the Signs of the Times:

Is God a limited God, or is he just limited in the minds of men? I believe it was David who said that they limited the Holy One of Israel; and I believe David also said that He does his will in the sea and all deep places.

We find in the Old Scriptures that there isn't anything too hard for God; and in the New Testament that all things are possible with God. Yet some say He wants to save everyone, but some won't let him.

The Scriptures say that Abraham believed that whatever God promised, he was able to perform; and, since the Scriptures also say that God cannot lie, and the impossibility of it, it would seem, that if God has promised to save every man that ever lived, it would be impossible for anyone to be lost.

I hope I believe in the sovereignty of God, - yet I doubt that everyone who says so, does. I have heard some say that they believed it, and then say that it is impossible for God to save a man unless the man "hears" the Gospel. And then some say that God can't hate, even though the Bible says that he did. And some say that He can't be displeased, even though he was displeased with some of the things that David had done. I don't believe in a God that can't be displeased; but I hope I believe in one that can do, and does, as He pleases, and has a perfect right and the power to do so; one that is not limited in any direction by what I believe, or by what any other man or group of men might believe; though most men claim to have a lot of wisdom.

Paul said that our faith is not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Some say that God's people can't be disobedient, but, if that is the way it is, then I am not one; for it is how to perform that which is good I find not. No man, except Jesus, ever lived in perfect obedience, and pleased God at all times. This is the reason I would hate to think that anything was conditioned on man's obedience. I believe God predestinated all things, but I do not believe that limited him, or made a sinner out of a man; for I read where Paul said that by the disobedience of one man, many were made sinners; and that by the disobedience of one man sin entered the world. So disobedience is what made me a sinner, and I do not believe that anything can justify man in what he does or does not do, but God. Jesus is the only reason I have a hope; and I wouldn't trade my hope for what most people claim they know, even if I could.

I hear some say that it doesn't make any difference what we do, but

I do not get the idea. I do not believe that salvation is by man, but rather that salvation is of the Lord. And I fail to see how Adam, or any man, could sin, if he had a right, or was free to partake of any and everything. I also feel that anything we can't freely partake of, is just at much sin now as ever.

These are just a few thoughts I would like to send along. If there should be anything that is in error, I hope you could feel to forgive, as I am very limited in knowledge. I don't want to hurt anyone, unless with the truth.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Howard T. Edwards

VOICES OF THE PAST

EXPERIENCE AND CALL TO PREACH

This article written by Rufus Hutchens and printed June, 1914 - Died 1897

Dear Brethren,

I will attempt to write my experience and call to the ministry for publication. My education is so limited, I am almost ashamed to appear in print.To attempt to tell when I first felt that I was a sinner carries me back to eight years of age. About that age I had a dream that made me feel very sinful and from then on I began to try to pray. At the age of twelve, I had read the New Testament through and formed many great resolutions that I would live free from sin and often thought I was not near so bad as some in my knowledge. Not withstanding my father being poor and my advantages quite limited, it was my intention to educate myself when I became a man, and make a great mark in this world. After I passed the age of twelve I learned to swear and dance, and would often do so with my conscience condemning me, and yet thought I was not such a great sinner. Sometimes I would pray until feeling much better, but soon it would all leave me. Soon after passing my twentieth year, one day while in the field, suddenly my heart was opened unto me, and I saw myself not only a sinner, but a condemned sinner in the sight of God. It seemed to me that God was looking into my heart with power, and all I had ever done was sin. It seemed that if I died in that condition hell was my doom. But I began to try to shake off the condemned feeling. I had serious thoughts before me, but now I was condemned, and I tried to keep it hid from father and mother. So dreadful was the feeling of condemnation that I began to forsake my former associates, and go to some secret place to ask the Lord for mercy. Swearing had left me, even the desire was gone and I cannot tell today when it left me. I continued to feel worse until my prayers seem to avail nothing

and I felt that my doom was certain destruction. My father was a member of the primitive Baptist Church, my mother claimed a hope in Christ, and I looked on them as christians, and I was not worthy to be their son. I thought if I could only ask them to pray for me, that surely the Lord would hear them, but that would be asking too much of them.

My doom was already sealed. It seemed when I was in the ballroom or engaged in swearing, they had often bowed their knees at a throne of grace in my behalf. I verily thought that their prayers would stand as a witness against me in judgement. About this time I first felt the call to the ministry. Right here I leave some of my dear brethren in the ministry, but I must date my call there, if I have one at all. While feeling that I was sinking into everlasting woe, my prayers had all failed me, and I saw that without mercy, soverign mercy, I was forever gone, all that I could say was Lord be merciful to me a sinner. While in that condition one day in the field at work with my brother, a great power seemed to come down from above and surround me. There was no possible way for my escape and with that came a voice that said, *"You have to preach."*

The suddeness and power of the voice made me tremble, I stood dumfounded for a moment, then the dreadful thought rushed into my mind that my doom was fixed, for the Lord surely would not call such a miserable wretch to preach as I felt to be. Language is inadequate to describe my feelings. For three weeks I labored under a double burden, I could not tell which was the greater. I saw no hope for me. I had sinned away the day of grace, and now it was forever too late. I could say, "It is just, it is just,"I felt sure that in a few more days I would meet my doom and I saw so clearly, the justice of almighty God in my condemnation, that I tried to pray with all the earnestness of my heart that even in the flames of torment I might be reconciled to His will. One morning I went to the field to work with my brother, but such was the condition of my mind that I could not work. I told them I was sick, though I was not conscious of a bodily pain.The disease was of the mind and heart, for the very groanings of my soul were *"God be merciful to me a sinner."* I went to the house and lay down across a bed and while there, whether I went to sleep or not I am not able to tell, but I know I became unconscious. I saw myself traveveling up a hill toward the west. The noonday sun was shedding a flood of light around me, my clothing was beautiful, and I was leaning upon a staff that I held in my right hand. Just at the brow of the hill was a dark grave, and as I entered there the burden rolled backward from me, and a glorious light filled my heart, and immediately I was praising God. I rose up from the bed, but before I even stepped away something said, *"you are deceived, this is not for you"*

and I began to feel that I was mistaken and it was all imagination. From that time on my prayer was *"Lord, if I am deceived, undeceive me"*, but the burden of the ministry was not gone. The words, *"you have to preach"* were continually with me and at times a subject of scripture would offer to my mind, and for hours I would be absorbed in the beauty of it until I would forget everything that was going on around me. Again, I would set a resolution never to think of such a thing again, I thought it was a sin for me to think of such a thing as my preaching. I felt sure I was mistaken in the matter for I was so young and my education so limited.

In a vision of the church, God in His mercy, established my little hope, and at the same time I was forcibly impressed to join the church, but I felt so unworthy I did not feel fit to be with the church, and I thought if I never joined the church I would never have to try to preach. For three years I was thus exercised. Then my health failed me and friends and family at home, and the doctor thought I had consumption. About this time I concluded to leave home. The impression to preach and the great burden seemed almost more than I could bear. I wanted to run away from the impression. My father and mother begged me not to leave, but all their kind and tender persuasion did no good. I was determined to go, though I believe the Lord had shown me the consequence of leaving. Oh I had been so stubborn and rebellious, often I had trampled God's tender mercies under my feet, and passed His warnings by unheeded. At Mt. Airy, N.C., I found employment with a respectable farmer, and there worked nearly two months at good wages, though I was hardly able to work at all. But I was soon taken down on the bed of affliction. I employed one of the best physicians in the town, but the first visit he said my case was doubtful. I gradually grew worse, yet all the while my mind was active and my appetite good. One night after I had been sick about three weeks, I was taken with a pain in my head, and in early morning it was easy, but so severe was the pain in that short time, it took my eyesight, so that I could not tell one person from another. On the following Sunday I was stricken with paralysis in my right side, yet so stubborn was I that I did not yield to the impression, though I was resigned to death.

My nature was soon to be subdued. On Monday at twelve o'clock I was taken with convulsions. the agony I endured then I have never been able to tell. I saw I was suffering for my disobedience. The judgement of the Lord was upon me and I could only say it is just. My friends gave me out at the first convulsion which they said lasted two hours. When I regained consciousness I was speechless, though my mind was active, and I knew as well what I wanted to say as I do my name. My

right arm was helpless, my tongue was dumb so that I could only make known to those around me by motioning with my left hand. But while in this condition when all had given me up to die, even the doctor saying I was out of the reach of medical skill, I saw the road of my life laid out in my view. I saw that my time must be devoted to the work of the ministry, and all the doctors in the world could not have made me believe I would die then. Amidst the tortures I then endured I was made to vow I would join the church, and if received I would try to preach. My whole desire was for some of those old despised Baptists to pray for me. I endured five of those convulsions from twelve o'clock Monday until two o'clock Tuesday night. It seems to me that death is not more dreadful than what I suffered this time. Now a cloud of condemnation intervened between me and my God, in so much that I could not pray for myself,I begged my father to pray for me after I had regalned the power of speech, and on Tuesday evening he knelt down beside my bed and prayed a most wonderful prayer. That night at two o'clock there was a change for the better and in three weeks I was able to be carried home on a wagon. During my illness, though, after I was much better, Elder J.M. Wyatt visited me, and has since told me he never expected to see me again when he left, for he thought I was in the last stages of consumption. But God in his mercy raised me up, I was carried home. How wonderful it appears to me that God almighty should be mindful of such a vile sinner as I am. Soon after I got home I began to be persuaded that I was deceived, but the judgements of the Lord urged me on to duty so that I was carried to the church, still paralyzed and blind and after I was there resisted the impression to offer until they had sung the last lines of the hymn for dismission. Then I felt death come over me, and I saw that I would be carried away a corpse if I did not offer. Right here my little experience was taken away from me. I was compelled to go and nothing to go with but went and told very little reason of a hope and was received for Baptism. It seemed to me I could not wait until the next morning to be baptized, though some of my friends said it would kill me, I had no fears of its hurting me. Soon, on Sunday morning I was carried to the water and baptized, and while in the water, my paraiyzed arm was restored, and I come out praising God. From Saturday until Monday I had no doubts and thought the burden of the ministry was gone. The secret peace of my mind, the joy of those hours, I can't describe, but could shed tears of joy. On Monday the same power settled around me that I had felt at first, the same voice said, *"you have to preach,"* and from then on I saw no more peace.The vow I had made at Mt. Airy during my illness come into my mind, and something kept saying,

go pay thy vows unto the Lord. All this rendered me miserable. The days and nights I spent in heart rending trouble, I will not attempt to describe; but I am making this article longer than I expected.

For five months I persisted in gross rebellion before I would try to preach. I felt so ignorant and incomplete that I was sure for me to make the attempt to preach, would only reproach the cause.

I often tried to ask the Lord to relieve me of this impression or take me from time. The burden became so great and such a cloud envailed my mind that I thought I could not endure it much longer and keep my mind. One day after I had made many promises to go my overburdened feelings gave way, and I began to shed tears, and to cry aloud when it seemed to me that reason had left me, and I lost control of myself. Oh, the horror of mind I endured then, all the unfilled promises, all the broken resolutions came upon me, and my miserable condition by reason of my disobedience almost drove me frantic, but then, with all the earnestness of my soul I promised to go. I thought I would never let another opportunity pass, but when the opportunity was offered I was just as stubborn as ever.

I refused to go, and thought I had better wait longer, I was so afraid I was mistaken. After I refused this time I hourly expected some dreadful judgement from the Lord. There was no soundness in me, I had lied to the creator after solemnly promising to go, I had not gone. With great dread I watched the sun set night after night and as the gloomy shadow of night began to gather, the fear of coming judgement would increase and the dark hours would be spent in tossing to and fro on the bed, or walking the floor. One night I retired very early, but not to rest, for a miserable feeling of death and judgement come over me. I could not lie on the bed, but, soon got up and sat by the fire, or walked the floor, I was sure the family would find me a lifeless corpse in the morning. I tried to pray with all my heart, but my doom was unalterably fixed. I thought I did not dread death so much, but a yearning hell was just beneath me, and I felt as soon as I died I was damned.Before this time I had prayed to die, but now I prayed to live. I went out and knelt down that night in the rain, and tryed to promise the Lord, with all the powers of my poor Soul that I will go. About midnight while sitting by the fire, I felt the floor and the chair I was sitting in and myself sink down, I thought into the arms of everlasting destruction. When the sinking sensation left me I got up and walked the floor, every avenue of my soul seemed to be drawn out in prayer to God, and if I ever prayed in my life it was that night. From then until our church meeting I felt like a condemned criminal and the day of execution fixed. I went to meeting, which I felt that if I did not make the

attempt I could not live longer. Our pastor invited me into the pulpit, and when he did, all my strength gave way, and a new power took possession of me and carried me through the day, the sweetness of which I will never forget. A great cloud of trouble rolled away and I felt that the Lord was smiling upon me. This is a part of my experience and call to the ministry. I cannot tell it as I feel, sometimes it seems so great to me and so wonderful indeed that the Lord would condescend to bless such a poor vile wretch as I am, that my imperfect language fails to express it. But sometimes it seems so small I am almost ashamed to tell it. Trusting that the God of all grace will continue to bless and unite the household of faith and love,

I remain your unworthy Brother in Hope,

Rufus Hutchens

Inserted by Sceney D. Boyd.

The best I can find out is that Rufus Hutchens was married to a Sallie Allen and had one child by the name of Ervin Hutchens. Mr. Hutchens joined the church at North View and that is the place of his burial. He was the first person to be buried at that church, according to family, in 1897. He still has relatives living in Patrick County, Va. One of his nieces is Hattie Roark that lives near Moorefield's Fire department. Don't think he ever pastored a church, but he preached at a lot of the area churches.

Elder Francis P. Stone

Dear Brother Branson: By request of my aged mother, I will try to write my experience and call to the ministry. If I have one I have both; and, if I am deceived in the one I am also deceived in the other. They are so closely connected that I cannot well define one without the other.

I will go back to my boyhood days, when I was about ten years of age. I dreamed that I was lying by my grave, while two men were digging it, and was conscious of what was going on; but was as helpless as a dead man. And it appeared to me, if buried, hell would be my doom; and, Oh! what a horrid condition I was in. I often think of this dream and dread death, and try, to pray. But, at the same time, the thought would often come into my mind, ***"Someday you will have to preach."*** From this until I was about fourteen or fifteeen years of age, I was often asking God for mercy. Then I began to love to hear preaching. I was at the Cedar Hill (the old Ararat church) and heard Elder Isaac Jones preach. After preaching they went to the water for baptism, and while they were singing I could not hide my tears: for I so much desired to be with the

people that my father and mother were with. After baptism, Brother J.A. Ashburn asked me to go with him to Union church the next day to preaching. I can't tell how much I desired to go, for I loved to hear the Old Baptist preach; but my father refused to let me go. It was about six miles and we were afoot, and so I went home, carrying a double burden. I was so burdened because I could not go to preaching the next day, and because Brother Ashburn, I feared, had took me for a good boy. O my life was so black before me! When I reached home, I went into a room to myself, lay down on a bed, and wished so much to go to preaching the next day, and thinking how much I loved to hear preaching. I was cast down but not destroyed: for unexpectedly it were as a cloud hanging over my bed, and I heard preaching in the cloud, I did not understand any words, but it was as a soothing balm to a hungry soul, and I felt easy and contented.

Now I will pass on a few years to a time when I found myself enjoying the things of this world, as much so as a young man could. I was a musician and loved dancing, but thought there was no harm in it then, and tried to think I was as good as most anyone else. But still I would find myself trying to pray and making promises to be a better boy. Often have I sat down by the roadside and read my testament, which was almost a constant companion with me, and begged the Lord to be merciful to me a sinner. I often went to protracted meetings and asked them to pray for me. I was willing to do most anything to get rid of that awful fear of torment. Often would my mind go back to the time when I heard the preaching in the cloud, and I truly believed that if I had lived as I should have lived from that time there would have been a chance for me.

But now it seems too late; I have trampled God's mercies under my feet, and sinned against the Holy Ghost. If there is any chance for me it must be through the prayers of my father and mother that keeps the Lord from cutting me off. In the year 1891, in August, I think, I was thrown from a horse, fracturing my skull, and which disabled me from doing much work for two or three years. Tongue can never tell what I suffered, for I felt that everybody had turned against me because I would not stay on the farm with my father, who was old and not able to work much. But my head hurt me so much when working in the sunshine that I truly believed if I continued there it would send me to the asylum for the insane or to the grave. So in the winter of 1892, while on my knees grubbing (it hurt my head to stoop), I decided to enter school; and, my father consenting, entered the school at Westfied, N.C., determined to work my way through, and get a good education. But my hopes were blasted. My head hurt me so that, at the end of ten weeks, I left school.

But in the fall of 1893, I entered school at Pilot Mountain, N. C. and begin a preparatory course for medicine, for it was my highest ambition to be a doctor. But something would often tell me that there would be a different work for me to do. I remained there about eight weeks; and, being disappointed again, I left school, hoping my head would get so I could study: for I was still determined to get an education.

March 21, 1895, I left my home town, Pilot Mountain, for the state of Indiana, and stopped part of the summer with my uncle. Then went to Illinois, where I remained till November, and returned to my uncle's home in Indiana. But while I was in Illinois I learned, one Sabbath morning, that an Old Baptist was to preach about one mile from my town (Arcola), and I got a man who knew the way to go with me to the meeting. The preacher was an old man but I have forgotten his name. The preaching was so sweet to me that I was sorry when he quit. But he gave out that he would preach that night at a certain man's house in that community. I inquired for the way to the place; and, being so anxious to hear what I then believed and still believe to be the gospel, I was willing to risk myself in the dark in that strange land. I found the place and feasted on the sermon that night. The people were so kind to me that I felt that there were no people so good and kind as the Primitive Baptists.

Coming back to Indiana, I remained with my uncle till the fall of 1896. Sometimes I would go with him and wife (both of them being members) to hear the Baptists preach, and enjoyed their preaching, but did not want any one to know that I was interested in religion. But still I often drank sin as an ox doth water, and rolled sin under my tongue as a sweet morsel. But it would be followed by an awful feeling of condemnation, causing me to beg God for mercy. I would promise the Lord to do better; but all my promises were broken, I would set times in which to get religion, but the times never ripened up to suit me. I tried to draw some comfort from the impression, *"I will have to preach some day."* I looked upon preachers as being good men, and that if I ever preached I would have to be a changed man. Then my life would rise before me, that I was so vile a sinner that I would almost sink into despair. I believe my uncle and aunt were true worshipers of God, and I dearly loved them; but did not feel worthy to be in their home and receive the kindness which they bestowed upon me. But since I've left them I've desired to tell them what I feel the Lord has done for me. They were as a father and mother to me, while I stayed with them.

Leaving my uncle and aunt, I went to Indianapolis, expecting to stay there a few days, and, if I failed to get a position to suit me, go back to Illinois and work till cold weather, and, then, perhaps, enter school. I

had given up the idea of trying to be a physician, but intended to get a business education, so I could rise above a farm laborer and a house carpenter, for that had been my work while out there. But, behold, the castle I was building fell: for, while in that city, I awoke from my slumbers to find my throat and mouth dry and burning with fever.

I felt that I was sure in the hands of a dreaded disease, and tried to wear it away, but could not. My mind turned homeward, but would not consent to come till I had grown so weak that I could hardly go. My appetite failed me, and I felt that I was without friends, either on earth or in heaven. Then I decided to go home. And Monday, 10 o'clock, I boarded the train, and arrived at Greensboro, N.C., at 9:30 Tuesday night, without eating or sleeping. I got off the train and went to a boarding house (that I had stopped at before) run by Miss Monroe.

I was soon shown to a room, where my brother found me the next day, in response to a telegram. My temperature was 106. He secured a stretcher, in which I was borne to my home in Pilot Mountain. I do not remember what passed for several days, as I was unconsious most of the time. Under the care of a good physician, loving friends and the tender mercies of an all wise God I was spared to live. I cannot see how anyone, as weak as I was, could have undergone what I underwent without the strong and merciful hand of God to hold him up. I was bound to acknowledge the goodness of and mercy which had been with me and had helped me to get among loving friends. Yet I felt to be too sinful to claim God as my friend. I ever have believed that that sickness was sent on me to bring me back home.

While confined to my bed, I made many promies, feeling, if the Lord would only let me get well, I would live a better life than I ever had lived before. Once I felt to be as moral as anyone, but then the worst of the vilest of sinners. I was spared to get well, But, did I keep my promises? No; but broke them all. Like that chief butler, whose dream Joseph interpreted, when it went well with me, I forgot the one who delivered me, and partook of the things of this world as before: but often felt the need of a Savior; and the impression would come over me that I would have to preach; and while laying plans for the future, something would be saying, *"There is a different work for you to do,"* I had often vowed that, when I should get married, I would live a better life and get religion: for I would then be cut off from my old associates to some extent. I soon had a chance to see what I could and would do: for, March 21, 1897, I took unto myself my first love, a good and noble wife, who helps me to bear the burdens of this life in a kind and loving way. I tried to treat her as a man should treat his companion, but the first four years of our married life was, surely,

the darkest part of my life. I grew more wicked all the time, it seemed to me I often begged the Lord for mercy and to help me to be a better man, feeling that I was not fit to live and was afraid to die. I prayed, O that I could leave off my old life and put on a new one, that home could be more happy. I sometimes spoke harshly to my wife, and would grieve over it; but she was always ready and willing to forgive me.

While in this state I attended a Presbyterian protracted meeting to hear one of their noted preachers, a Mr. Black. He put up a nice talk and made the way seem so plain, that I thought if I would follow his advice the Lord would hear my prayers and save me. I came home, ate my dinner, and took my testament and went off to a secluded place and, if a poor mortal ever tried to give himself up into the hands of the Lord, I surely did. I did all I knew to do, all that I could do; and there I was taught to know the weakness of man. I have not believed in protracted meetings, for the purpose of making Christians, since that time.

In the summer of 1900, I became so dissatisfied, I determined to leave the farm and live a different life. So our little farm was rented out; and, my wife consenting to settle in the West, we broke up housekeeping. So, leaving my wife and little girl at my wife's parents, to spend the winter and go to me in the spring, I departed. But the nearer the time came for me to go the worse I felt over it: for I preferred the company of the loved ones I was so soon to leave behind me, before that of silver and gold. But I had given up my home to go, and go I did, leaving my wife in tears. On the morning of Nov, 14, I boarded the train at Pilot Mountain, N.C., for the state of Indiana. No tongue can describe my feelings on that morning, as the train sped on its way, bearing me, as I felt, to my doom. I realized that it would have been better for me never to have been born: for I was giving my wife so much trouble, and for which I had no excuse, except I just wanted to settle in the West, thinking to make an easier living there. I don't think I could have felt worse had I been bound in chains and going to the hangman's gallows for murder. Surely the Lord was punishing me for leaving my home, I felt that I could never see my wife again, and that if she ever should see me again it would be my corpse. But on I went, and that awful feeling left me to some extent. Reaching my destination, I secured work and board at a Mr. Wall's a native of N.C. . He and his wife were as kind to me as I could ask, and I remained with them till the first of January, 1901, when I took sick, and Dr. Thompson said I had Typhoid fever; and, O how I did dread it, for I had left that state once before with the same fever, I felt sure I could not have a spell of fever that far from home and live to see my wife again, But I could not bear the thought of coming back and settling

down here, but I wanted to be with my wife. The doctor told Mr. Wall if I could be contented I would stand a chance to get well but I knew I could not be contented. I lay all night with a burning fever, my bones aching, begging for mercy, and trying to decide what to do, tossing to and fro. That was the most awful night I ever witnessed. Just before day I decided to go home to my wife and baby, if the Lord would spare me to get there. Then, for the first time that night, I was allowed to rest in ease. The next day I took the train for home, and arrived safe. I did not have the fever but was confined for several days with Lagrippe. I was in bad health all the winter and the next summer; but still I was not satisfied, I continued to study and plan the future, while something would say, *"There is a different work for you to do,"* I often thought of my early boyhood days, and of the impressions I had then, thinking if I had obeyed my father and mother's instructions I might have someday been fit to be a preacher. I went often with my wife to protracted meetings, but left her at the door and went to the lonesome grove to beg for mercy, feeling that there was a place for me. The summer after my return from the west, God saw fit to take our infant son from us. I felt it was for my disobedience and was made to be the most miserable wretch on earth. I continued this way till I found myself wanting to join some church, but could not decide what kind. The Old Baptist church was not popular enough; and when I thought of others, the thought would come, If you have to preach, can you preach the doctrine that they preach. My answer was, No; and I soon found myself loving to hear the Old Baptist preach again, and desired, O, so much to be worthy to be with them. One day while hoeing tobacco, I sat down to rest, and was studying about how much I loved the Baptists, and how much I desired to be with them. When I arose to work I looked for the sun, and it was so cloudy I could just see the outlines of it. As I began work: a bright light shown around me. My first thought was, It has cleared off quick. I looked for the sun again, but could not see it. I wished to know what it meant. Surely it could not be a light from heaven, as I was too sinful for that. The next spring the interpretation came to me in this way: The light that shown around you is the Christian influence thrown around you to keep you from the snares of this world.

One night, I dreamed of being on a large rock wall, and that about twenty feet from it was another wall just like the one I was on, and the two walls were connected at the top by a long brass rod, and between the walls was a great gulf, which I thought to be torment. I knelt down on the wall, put my right hand on the brass rod and looked down. As far as I could see was dark and smokey, but I was not afraid of falling into the

gulf. This gave me some relief, but still I could not claim a hope in Christ. I had never felt happy as I imagined others do when changed. But my desire to be in the church grew stronger. Sometimes when my church door was opened, it would be as a flame of love in my heart.

But I still had a great desire for an education, and wrote to a corresponding school at Scranton, Pa. One night while looking over their circulars I decided to borrow enough money to pay the first cost, and I could manage to pay for the course and so get an education at home. Then these words came as forcible as if they had been spoken to me, *"There is a greater work for you to do."* So I threw the papers down, and said, *"I will never try again, to get an education."* But my way was dark before me. I would fear that my impressions to preach were only imaginations. My prayer by day and by night was, *"God be merciful to me a sinner; God save or I will perish."* Often have I walked the road at night and begged the Lord for mercy.

The Spring of 1903, my burdens grew so heavy that it seemed I could not live. I would sometimes leave my work, go to the house and lie down on the bed. My wife would ask what ailed me and I would tell her nothing. But there was something awful the matter with me, but I did not want her to know it. During the week before the first Sunday in April, Brother D.S, Webb preached at Tom's Creek Church. I studied a great deal about joining the church on that day: for it seemed I could not carry my burden and do my work till their next conference meeting: but I did not feel like I was a changed man, and was sure that I was not fit to be with the people of God. On that day they published an open door, but I did not feel fit to go, and there were other things in the way, although I had a great impression to go; and after I left, my burden became so heavy, I felt if not relieved in some way, I would have to give up work entirely. On Saturday before the second Sunday in April I intended going to Albion to preaching, but went to my new gound to do some work before starting; but became so restless, I quit work and went to my plant bed thinking I would weed it till time to go to church. Remaining there about ten minutes, I went to the house. I could not be contented till I had started to the meeting. I went and Elders Ashburn and Collins preached. Each, at the close of his discourse, had spoken of the light and liberty enjoyed by the saints, and I said to myself, *"If that is the way they feel, I will go home just as I came."* But when Elder Ashburn proclaimed an open door, there was an awful fear, with a sinking sensation, came over me. I feared I would die if I did not go, but had, it seemed, nothing to go with. But when they began singing for dismission, I could not stand it, but did not want to deceive anyone. But,

dear brethern and sisters, I do believe I was in the spirit on the Lord's day; the feast was spread and the guests were invited, and I was compelled to go: for I could say with a feeling heart,

"I can but perish if I go,
I am resolved to try;
For if I stay away I know,
I must forever die."

I related to them a part of what I have written, and was received amidst weeping and rejoicing. I could then realize what the poet meant, when he said,

"O how happy are they
Who their Savior obey,
And whose treasures are
laid up above!
Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort of peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

On the 4th Sunday following-two brethren, one sister and myself were baptized. That was a day of rejoicing to me. But soon I found myself in the wilderness and Satan telling me that I was a hypocrite, and at times I believed it: for I had heard so many people say that when they were baptized all their burden left them. But it was not the case with me; and the preaching of the brethren soon failed to comfort me. What, now, is the matter? Surely I am deceived and have deceived the brethren and sisters. I still had hope, but where is the evidence? I had one time thought, if I never join the church I will never have to preach. But what must I do now? The impression stayed with me, and I tried to dodge it; but excuses did no good. Never have I dreaded our court houses, jails or penitentiaries as I did the pulpit. I was so incompetent for the place. Thought if anything could be impossible with God, it was to make a preacher out of me. I continued my excuses till our conference meeting in September 1903. On the way to the church that day I fell in company with our beloved moderator, Elder Ashburn. He asked me how long it would be before I should tell them something. I do not know, was my reply; but I was bound to admit that my impressions had been stronger, since the past evening, than ever before. He asked me to go on the stand with him and open the services, but I refused. And when we arrived at the church he invited me again, and still I refused; and what I suffered during the services tongue cannot tell; and, as I went home, two scriptures were on my mind. One was, *"Resist the devil and he will flee from you;"* and the other was; "Hear ye now what the Lord saith; contend thou before the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice." I had become willing to do the will of my Master. So my prayers that evening and on my bed that night were, O, Lord, if thou hast given me a talent, show it to me in some way that I may know, and I will use it. And while I slept that night, I viewed myself in a large room where it was made my duty to light up the house that a young lady present might join the

church. I had nothing to light the room by, but felt it my duty to try. So I walked toward the fire place; and, when in six or eight feet of it, I saw in my left hand a bundle of pine splinters about a foot long, all the same length, nice and smooth; and in the fire place was a bed of live coals of fire. I stuck the splinters among the coals and they blazed up, illuminating the house. When I awoke the next morning, my first thought was, *"Go, God will furnish the material."* Then, for a few moments, and for a few moments only, I was satisfied that there was a work for me to do. But soon doubts before me rolled. Did I doubt God? No; but myself. I said to myself, I have promised to go, can not. I am too weak and sinful to put myself before the people as a servant of the most high God. I walked the road and begged the Lord to excuse me, and decided not to go to church that day, went into the house and laid down on the bed. But everything seemed dark and gloomy before me; and, all at once, my bed seemed to he sinking with me, and I felt to be going down through the floor. I cried in my heart, *"Lord, deliver me and I will go."* And at once I stood on my feet and went to church. And, when Brother Ashburn invited me, I went on the stand and spoke a few words; but each word, it seemed to me was out of place. Yet I found great relief in the effort, and am still, through hopes and fears, trying to do what I sometimes feel that God has commanded me to do. And if I am deceived and lost in the end it will be just, for I have merited nothing; and if saved it will be through the mercies of a just and all wise God. Surely there is no one who feels less competent to perform, or more unworthy to receive the blessings of God than I do. But, O what is there this side of the grave that is worth living for? if there is nothing beyond worth living for.

Through the many years which I have passed, God has given me evidence enough to claim a hope; and to sometimes believe I am called of God to feed the people of God. And may it be the will of God, when this mortal shall have put on immortality, and this corruptible incorruption all the oldness and corruption of this body being left in the grave-to bid me come in and inherit the kingdom, where, we will forget the troubles of this world, and will no more have to leave home with bowed heads and aching hearts, wishing, had it been the will of God, that the work had been laid on some other one, that we might have remained at home with our families; and where all will be peace and happiness, and where we shall not see as now, through a glass darkly, but shall see our Redeemer face to face. But I must close. Dear brethren and sisters, pray for me and mine.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,
Elder Francis P. Stone.

Served as Moderator 1929-1957

Luke 12: 26-28.

If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?

Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?

The following poem was written by the author at an early age. They are included here to show some of the ideas and high ambitions entertained by the author before experiencing the trial in the "furnace of afflictions."

by Elder E.J. Lambert

WHAT IS LIFE WITHOUT LOVE?

Is there anything I can enjoy
That will not create love in my heart,
Should there be anyone in employ
Who cannot love with the art,

I have seen people work very hard,
When each task would produce a big frown.
For their work they would have no regard,
Their efforts will not meet with renown.

For they lack the great love for their work
That should prompt anyone in the choice,
Who intends to work and not shirk,
And in every act choose to rejoice.

It is, also, important that we
Learn to love all our friends whom we meet;
And to try to admire and agree
To make life very pleasant and sweet.

E'en in choosing companions for life
Burning love should be active so strong,
In the hearts of both husband and wife
That they'll smile e'en when everything's wrong.

What is Life without Love? I'll request.
And your answer will evidently be,
"It's a failure without comfort or rest,
Destitute of all joys that should be."

-- February 16, 1928

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Salem Primitive Baptist Church, a Presbytery met June 10th, 2006 at 10:00 A.M. for the examination of Brother Banks Conner, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgement, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Carl Terry. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows:

Elders Wm. Hale Terry, Carl Terry, Alan Terry, Mark Terry, Larry Hollandsworth, Junior Conner, W.T. Conner, Thomas Solomon, Raymond Goad, Marvin Brumfield, Jimmy Gray.

Deacons present were as follows:

Wilton Sutphin, Robert Smith, Gray Holley, Frederick Murphy, Donald Agee, Julian Rutrough, Richard Lawless, Vance Duncan, Andrew Agee, Calvin Plybon, Alfred Ratliff, Vaughn Ferris, Tony Horton.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Hale Terry as moderator and Tony Horton as clerk. Elders Junior Conner and Marvin Brumfield were chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate. Brother Alfred Ratliff having been duly appointed by Salem Church in conference June 10th, 2006 as spokesman for the Church, delivered Brother Banks Conner to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elders present in the presbytery using scriptural reference in First Timothy, Chapter 3. The presbytery being satisfied with examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands with ordination prayer being delivered by Elder Larry Hollandsworth. The charge was delivered by Elder Raymond Goad, using scriptural reference in First Timothy.

The moderator asked the Church if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brother Banks Conner and the right hand of fellowship. The ordained brother was delivered back to the Church as an ordained Deacon of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Salem Primitive Baptist Church.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and approved. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Thomas Solomon.

Elder Hale Terry, Moderator
Tony Horton, Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the One Hundred fiftieth session Of the Smith River Association will convene with Paynes Creek Church, located in Floyd county, VA, on the Blue Ridge Parkway between milepost 150 and 151 on Sept. 1,2,3, 2006.

We invite all those who love the truth.

Tony R. Horton
Association Clerk
276-728-5651

OBITUARIES

July 6, 2006

Elder Kenneth R. Key
721 Willard Street
Greensboro, NC 27405
For publication in the
Signs of the Times

Dear Elder Key,

It has come to my attention that two items may not have been reported to you for publication in the *Signs of the Times,* that may be of interest to many of your readers.

My dear Mother, Mrs. Gertie C. Holley, left the earthly bonds of life on Sunday, November 27, 2005, to wait in paradise for the coming of our Lord and Savior. Born July 22, 1908, she was blessed to live a long and happy 97 years. She was a member of Strawberry Primitive Baptist Church near Chatham, Virginia, where she had served as clerk since June 1976. She was preceded in death by her husband Posey L. Holley who passed away in 1979 and was the last Deacon of Strawberry Church.

Her funeral was conducted November 30, 2005 by Elder Thomas Solomon and Elder Wallis Smith, with interment in Highland Burial Park in Danville, Virginia.

Following 226 years of service to our faith and order, Strawberry Church in Pittsylvania County, Va. has been closed. A special called meeting of Strawberry Primitive Baptist Church was held in the meeting house on Strawberry Road, Chatham, Virginia on April 1, 2006 for the formal dissolution of this old and storied church. Strawberry Church was originally constituted in the year 1779 and was a charter member of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association formed in 1841. The last regular meeting of Strawberry Church was conducted Sunday, November 6, 2005 by Pastor Thomas Solomon and Elder Marvin Brumfield. The church building and grounds may be preserved as a Pittsylvania County historical landmark.

Thank you.
Don Holley
9267 Rex Turner Road
Kenly, NC 27542
919-284-5866

VICTOR CALVERT PHILLIPS

Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church bows in humble submission to our Lord in the calling of our brother and friend.

Victor C. Phillips was born March 23, 1917 and was called to his heavenly home April 24, 2006; making his stay here on earth 89 years. He was preceded in death by his parents Andrew "Curtis" and Lena Phillips, a beloved son Joe Phillips and grandchildren, Belcher and Andrew Phillips and great grandchildren, Misty Jo Cox and Alex Love. Survivors include his wife of 66 years, Sister Nannie T. Phillips, three sons; Wayne, Nelson and Tobias Phillips and one brother, Carlysle Phillips, six grandchildren, eighteen great grandchildren and six great, great grandchildren.

Bro. Victor joined Indian Creek Church on May 25,1957 and was baptized on June 23, 1957, by his Pastor, Elder G. P. Harris. Bro. Victor was ordained to serve as deacon of Indian Creek Church on April 26, 1986 and was blessed to serve in this until his death. He had also served as Clerk and Assistant Clerk.

Bro. Victor was founder of Phillips Brothers Builders and constructed numerous homes throughout Floyd and Montgomery Counties. In 1978 the Phillips Brothers built the present Indian Creek Church. Before Bro. Victor lost his eye sight, he made many, many clocks for family, church members and friends. Bro. Victor was blessed to travel many, many miles to corresponding churches and associations and believed firmly in Salvation by Grace and showed the love for his church, family and friends.

Funeral service was held at Indian Creek Primitive Church at 11:00 A.M. on April 27, 2006 by his Pastor, Elder Kenneth D. Hopkins and Elder Thomas C. Pegram and was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the Second Coming of the Lord. Arrangements was handled by Maybery Funeral Home of Floyd, Va.

Done by order of Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church in conference on May 22, 2006. One copy to be sent to the family, one to the Signs of Times, one to Zions Landmark and one for church records.

Bro. J.B. Mitchell, Jr.
Sis. Jean Mitchell,
Committee
Elder Kenneth D. Hopkins,
Moderator

Romans 8:24-25.

For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

Lord, in humble, sweet submission,
Here we meet to follow thee,
Trusting in thy great salvation,
Which alone can make us free.

Nought have we to claim as merit;
All the duties we can do
Can no crown of life inherit;
All the praise to thee is due.

Yet we come in Christian duty,
Down beneath the wave to go;
O bliss, the heavenly beauty!
Christ the Lord was buried so.

Come, ye children of the kingdom,
Follow him beneath the wave,
Rise, and show his resurrection,
And proclaim his power to save.

Is there here a weeping Mary,
Waiting near the Saviour's tomb,
Heavy laden, sick and weary,
Crying, ' O that I could come! '

Welcome, all ye friends of Jesus,
Welcome in his church below;
Venture wholly on the Saviour,
Come, and with his people go.

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EDITORIAL

"And as He sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto Him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Matthew 24:3

Elder J.B. Farmer

Have you ever wondered about the second coming of Christ and about the end of the world, or the end of this age? The disciples of His day wondered, and they asked Jesus to tell them how to recognize the events leading up to that day. If we are of that same heaven-born generation as His disciples, we are also concerned with the same thoughts. We desire to be given wisdom in these matters so that we will neither be deceived by false teachers and their false doctrines, nor caught off guard as that day approaches.

Jesus was very specific in His answers to His disciples as were the prophets and apostles when they were inspired to testify about the same things. Jesus said to take heed that no man deceive you for many would come in his name, and would even claim to be Christ, and deceive many. He said that some awful things must come to pass which would precede the very end things. He called these the beginning of sorrows. Jesus said that there must be wars and rumors of wars, famines, pestilences and earthquakes in divers places. He also said that His disciples would be delivered up to be afflicted and killed and that they would be hated of all nations for His name's sake. He said that many would be offended and that some would betray and hate one another. He said that iniquity would abound and that the love of many would wax cold. We have records of these kinds of things all through history even to this present time. But the end is not yet.

Concerning the very end things, Jesus said that this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. He also said that *the abomination of*

desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet would stand in the holy place. The apostle Paul, when writing about the coming of Christ said that the day was not at hand or eminent but that two things must generate first. One was the *falling away* and the other was that *the man of sin must be revealed, the son of perdition*. John wrote of a beast that came up out of the earth, which had two horns like a lamb but spoke as the dragon. I am made to believe that the abomination of desolation, the man of sin and the beast with two horns are all the same person. Please read Daniel 11:34-45, Matt. 24:15-22, II Thes. 2:3, and Rev. 13:11. When that wicked one comes before the world proclaiming that he is God in the flesh and that he is setting up the kingdom of God upon the earth, the children of God will flee from him-knowing not his voice. The multitudes will be deceived, but the elect of God will not be deceived. I am made to believe that they are taught that Christ has already set up His kingdom in the hearts of His people, and that there will be no future kingdom set up here on earth.

Is it not apparent that we are in the period of the falling away? Some of the true churches have died out. Many have only a few members, and most of them are aged. Has there not been a great change in your lifetime? If these things are so, and it seems apparent that they are, the thing remaining before the Lord comes is the revelation of *the man of sin*. This *man of sin* will claim to be the Christ who has come to set up his kingdom upon earth, and he will deceive the multitudes. But Jesus said, ***"Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert, go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not."*** Jesus also said, ***"For as the lightning that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part of heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day."*** The children of God are not looking for Christ to come again upon the earth, but the deceived are. The apostle John said by revelation, ***"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him."*** We do not know the day or the hour of His coming, but when these things begin to generate, we are commanded to look up for redemption draweth nigh.

We know that most of the so-called Christian churches, protestant and catholic alike, are teaching that Jesus is coming back upon the earth to set up a kingdom which will last for a thousand years. Dearly beloved brethren, I am made to believe that this is an impossibility. For Christ shall appear a second time without sin unto salvation. We are taught that when He comes, it will be in great power and glory. And He will come with His mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance upon them who know not God and who obey not the gospel. We are taught

that when He comes, every eye shall see Him. We are taught that at His coming the dead in Christ will be raised first, and that those who are alive and remain will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and that they shall be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air. And so shall they ever be with the Lord. When the Lord comes, no flesh will be able to stand in His presence. The elements will melt with a fervent heat and the earth will be dissolved according to the scriptures. The wicked will be destroyed from His presence with an everlasting destruction. Since there will be no world left standing at the powerful, glorious coming of Jesus in that day, it appears that there will be no possibility of a kingdom being set up on the earth. I am made to believe that those who are promoting a thousand year reign of Christ to come upon the earth may be unwittingly preparing the way for the great deception and for the reception of the one who has been called the man of sin, the son of perdition, the abomination of desolation, the false prophet, and the beast who had two horns like a lamb and spake as a dragon.

The apostle John wrote of the thousand years reign of Christ along with his people in Revelation chapter twenty. John said, by the Holy Spirit, *"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath not power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breath of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved*

city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

If God is willing, let us look carefully into this scripture and let us beg God to show unto us the truth of it. For we are fully assured that no one may know anything about the kingdom of God except by revelation from above. Speculation will do us no good here. The reasoning of a natural mind will always come to the wrong conclusion. The positions taken by the great minds of others are of no help. We must cast ourselves upon the mercy of God and ask for wisdom and understanding. It is certain that as God's little ones have a need to know the things of the kingdom, they will cry out to Him. And as a good father in nature that pities his children that cry unto Him and that gives them the things they need naturally, how much more will our Father in heaven supply His little ones with the things they cry for and have need of spiritually.

First of all, John saw an angel come down from heaven with the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. The angel took hold of the dragon, bound him with the chain, cast him into the prison of the bottomless pit, shut him up and set a seal upon him that he should deceive the nations no more for a period of a thousand years. Several questions immediately arise. May God be merciful and gracious to give us the answers we need for our comfort and edification and learning.

What does the angel that came down from heaven represent? This appears to be none other than the great power of God, Who has all power in heaven and earth. He is in control of all things – events, men, the angels of heaven, and even the Devil himself. God formed the old serpent, the devil, with His own hand for His own purpose. Without a doubt, God has control of all of His creation, to do with it whatever He pleases. What was the purpose of the key and the chain and the bottomless pit and the seal? It seems abundantly evident that the purpose of God was to subdue Satan and to bind him and to lock him away in a place for a space of time where he cannot harm the children of God.

What is the thousand years period that the old serpent should be locked away? We are taught that with God a day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as a day. In other words, His ways are not our ways, and His thoughts are not our thoughts. His ways and thoughts are as high above ours as the heavens are above the earth. Where God abides is eternal day. There is no night there. God abides in His people. The day of God's rule in the hearts of His people is as a thousand years. God has always been upon

His throne. He has always ruled in the hearts of His people, from righteous Abel ahead to every heir of promise that has or ever will love His appearing. While God is ruling in the hearts of His little ones, Satan cannot come near. He has been subdued, bound, and locked away by the perfect sacrifice and resurrection from the dead of the Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. He destroyed the power of Satan, and He rules victorious over sin, Satan, death, hell and the grave.

Who are the nations that Satan should deceive no more until the thousand years are fulfilled? Who makes up the world of God's elect? The nations, or the world that is not deceived for the duration of the reign of Christ is not the whole world. But the remnant according to the election of grace makes up the number of those who cannot be deceived while God is upon His throne ruling in their hearts in His kingdom. One might think to say, *"How can Satan be bound and shut away, since we see his work on every hand in the world?"* Satan is bound as much as it pleased God even in this present world, for there is a measure of peace and order evident here. But we know that even though the whole world lies in wickedness, there is a much worse time coming. When Satan is loosed out of his prison, the measure of peace and order in the present world shall be replaced with hatred and violence as has never been experienced. But Satan is bound where the children of God are concerned, because the Spirit of God abides within them and keeps them from the devil's deception.

What is the meaning of the scripture, that after the thousand years are fulfilled, Satan shall be loosed a little season? I am made to believe that in the very end of time, in the last hour of the sixth day, that Satan will be loosed in the world. This appears to be the time that Jesus spoke of when He said, *"For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."* It appears that in that day the whole world shall erupt in violence. Not only shall every nation turn on the other, but also individuals will do the same. But the elect shall not be forsaken. Jesus has promised that He would be with His people unto the end of the world, that He would never leave them nor forsake them. It is impossible for Him to lie or to fail in a promise. So, no matter what comes in the very end of time, we may be assured that His presence will be enough to sustain us through every trial and suffering. But Satan shall not have the victory. The Devil and all his angels will be destroyed from the presence of Christ with everlasting destruction when Jesus

comes and brings all things into perfect completion.

What were the thrones that John saw? And who were they that sat upon them? They were, doubtless to me, the thrones of the kingdom, and the children of God through the ages that have ruled and reigned with Christ in His spiritual kingdom. They were those that were persecuted for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their hands. The people of God are the ones that suffer for the truth's sake in this world. They are the ones that cannot worship the beast, the devil, to gain his favor, or to escape his wrath. They are the ones that will not fall down before his image, which image stands for the supposed good works of the flesh. They are the ones who have not received the mark of the beast in their hands, which is the spirit of wickedness, that rules and reigns in the works of the flesh of all the children of wrath. The children of God, rather, have been given the seal of the Holy Spirit, which keeps them safe in this evil world. They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The children of God all lived and reigned and shall continue to reign with Christ in His kingdom from Old Testament times until the time when Christ came in the flesh, and even until He comes in glory. Many have already fallen asleep in Christ and many more shall do the same before He comes in great power and glory. And many shall be alive and remain until His glorious appearing.

"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Who are the rest of the dead? They, doubtless to my mind, are the ones that have fallen asleep in Christ. They are those that the beloved, inspired apostle called the dead in Christ that should be raised first. They are the ones that shall instantly be joined together with those that are alive and remain, who shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye at the coming of the Lord. Together, all the elect family of God from all ages shall be caught up together to the Lord in the air and shall ever be with Him. What does it mean that the thousand years were finished? To me, it points to the very end of time, when the world shall be destroyed. It indicates that day when Jesus shall appear in glory, and when all things shall be brought into completion. It means that great resurrection day. John said by revelation, ***"This is the first resurrection."*** To my understanding, this is the first and only resurrection to eternal life of the saints. There is also a resurrection of damnation for the wicked, which seems to me to be simultaneous with the first resurrection. This seems evident because of the words of Jesus. He said, ***"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne***

of his glory. And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." It appears that all men, just and unjust shall stand before Jesus and be separated into two groups. Than shall it be truly manifested who are the children of God and who are the children of the devil.

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." Those that shall have a part in the future glorious first resurrection of the bodies of the saints are surely a blessed people that were given grace in Christ Jesus before the world was made. They are holy in that they were set apart by God and sanctified by the blood of Jesus Christ, and made to be vessels of honor unto God. There is a first death, which is a natural death, to which all men are appointed. But there is a second death, which is that eternal lake of fire, where shall be cast the devil, the beast, the false prophet, death, hell, and all whose names were not found written in the Lamb's book of life. This second death has no power on God's redeemed people. By one offering He has perfected forever them that are sanctified. Before the first resurrection, God's people shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. After the first resurrection they shall be with Him in eternity. Peter said, by the Spirit, *"Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."* They have reigned, are reigning, and shall reign with Him in His kingdom, which is set up in their hearts, which kingdom the world does not and can never perceive.

John said, *"And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up of the breath of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."* At the very end of the world, or the very end of this age, when the thousand years are brought to completion, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison. His release is for the purpose of deceiving the nations, which are in the four quarters of the

earth, which in this case, I am made to believe, stands for the wicked or the world at large. Then Gog, who is Satan, and Magog, which stands for the innumerable group of followers of Satan, shall go out together with the purpose of totally destroying the saints of God. When they surround the beloved city, and all seems to be lost, fire shall come down from God out of heaven and shall devour them. Now, what is the fire that shall come down from God out of heaven, other than the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ Himself? For the inspired apostle wrote, *"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe."*

Since this writing is getting lengthy, it must be brought to a close. So, what else John saw, the Lord willing, I will endeavor to mention only briefly, and this without further comments on the scripture. John said, *"And I saw a great white throne and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."* May each of His children be given an eye to see, an ear to hear, and a heart of understanding to the praise of the glory of His grace. May we be kept in the true faith once delivered unto the saints. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

This was written in love and in hope of eternal life,

Elder J. B. Farmer
8-12-2005

PSALM 62 : 1-2.

Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation.

He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved.

CORRESPONDENCE

July 11, 2006

Dear Elder Terry,

Thank you for all those years that I have received the Signs. It has been in my home since childhood. My mother had it for over 50 years until she died in 1974. I have received it since. I am 91 years old look forward to it every month.

May God bless all those that make it available.

In bonds of love,
Frances Jarvis

June 13, 2006

Dear Elder Key,

I don't know if you would use this in the Signs of the Times, but I thought you might like to read this and wanted to send a copy to you. My brother, Kenneth (Knight), had this scripture on his mind for several months and spent a lot of time studying this chapter in Ezekiel. He got out of bed during the night to write this down and I believe he had finally come to an understanding of the chapter, perhaps through a dream, and had to get up to write this down. This was about two or three weeks before he passed away.

Kenneth felt he had been called by God to preach His word. He received this calling to spread the gospel through a dream, or vision, one night several years ago. He knew he could not preach at Hillsdale, as he was divorced some three or four years before he became a member of Hillsdale Primitive Baptist Church. In spite of this, I know he shared his beliefs with most all of whom he was in contact and I be lieve this was his preaching and spreading of God's word on this earth. Kenneth was very perceptive in reading and understanding God's word and had one of the best recalls of scripture that I've ever experienced in anyone. He awoke one morning, not long before he died, and told his wife that he was tired. She asked why he was tired, since he had just awakened.

He told her that he preached for three hours last night at Hillsdale. I'm not sure if he elaborated on what he preached. If he did, she did not share this with me. When his wife told me this, I told her that I wish I could have heard him preach because I know it would have been a most wonderful sermon.

While Kenneth's "before death" experience was not like the conversation that my father (Hugh Knight) and I had in the early morning of his death, he did leave us with two experiences that let us know he was seeing heaven. Once he said "It's so beautiful, you just never want to come back." On the Wednesday before he passed away on Friday night he said "Oh what a beautiful place."

I believe that Kenneth, my father, and my mother are all reunited in heaven and I envy their peace and joy at being finally home in the glorious presence of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Heavenly Father.

I thank you again for your participation in the burial services for Kenneth and my father, for the kind words for our loved ones gone on, and for the kind and comforting words for our famlly left here on this earth, for now. May the God of our fathers bless us all and have mercy on us.

Sincere regards,
Vicki Knight Al-Shawa
336-643-3623 Home Phone
14741 U.S. Hwy. 158 West
Summerfield, NC 27358

The valley of dead bones have been given to me to see all of the hopeless and helpless souls that were dead in sin and, of themselves, could not help themselves. Ezekiel was commanded to preach to the bones. Before he was commanded by God, God called him Son of Man. Then God asked Ezekiel, "Can these bones live?" Ezekiel answered, "Thou knowest." Then Ezekiel prophesied unto the bones saying, "Hear the word of the Lord." I feel this was the drawing of God, by His word, to the child of God and the child of God is drawn by the power of God, at God's time. With this word comes the knowledge of the Lord and He calls His children with His holy calling, into His eternal life, and His hand is upon them.

As Ezekiel prophesied, a great shaking came upon the bones and they were joined, bone to his bone, which is the child of God, a part of the body of Jesus, and who is placed there by grace and not of any other means. Ezekiel found that as these bones were joined and covered with flesh and skin, they still did not live. Flesh and skin are of this world and not of the spiritual life of Jesus Christ. No life came into anyone until God commanded Ezekiel to prophesy to the wind and the breath came into them. Until it is God's time, the spirit is dead in man. Until the moment God commands life into a child of God, he is truly dead in sin and transgression and cannot be alive in the spirit until the true breath of eternal life is placed into his nostrils by the hand of God. These bones were cut off, all their hope lost, and their spirit was dry and needed the nourishment of the word of God.

God commanded the prophet again and Ezekiel said to them, ***"Thus saith the Lord. I will open your graves and cause you to come out of your graves."*** I feel this is the grave of death and sin. Ezekiel said further to them that He will place His spirit in them that were brought up out of their graves. God brings you out of the grave in resurrection by the Son of Man, Jesus, who was resurrected at the cross of

Calvary on the third day. As the land of Judah was split in parts, so was Joseph of Ephraim's land. Both were brought together never to be separated again from each other, becoming one in God's hand as children of Israel.

With Jesus Christ, idols and sacrificed things are no more and His children shall be forgiven all transgressions and shall be cleansed by His blood. God said my servant David shall be their king, and they shall have one shepherd, and walk in my judgments and statutes and do them. These children of God shall dwell in His promised land and David, a man after God's heart, shall be their prince forever. And they shall be called into the kingdom of heaven in the last day.

As the prophet Ezekiel spoke of the covenant, God told him of the covenant of peace. This everlasting covenant, I feel, is Jesus laying down His life for His people. And as it was revealed to Ezekiel by God, I will set my tabernacle and my sanctuary in their midst forevermore, and this is the body of Christ, slain for our sin and to release us from the hands of death, that we may have eternal life of joy and peace in His promise to be to them their God, and they shall be my people. And He will rule and reign supreme in heaven and earth forever and ever. Eternal salvation, given freely of our Savior, Jesus. No cost. All things have been seen from the beginning and also seen from the end. My hope stands in Glory and that hope is Jesus, who is perfect in His work and all things are as His will commands. So thanks be to God that, of myself, I have nothing to say in this matter, except may God have mercy and pity on my soul.

ARTICLES

THE APPLE TREE

For some time it has been on my mind to write an article on things in nature compared to spiritual things. We all fully realize that God's sovereign power controls them both. Things in nature come forth in their season and fulfills their purpose. The believing who are led and directed by his holy spirit are made to feast in his rightness at the appropriate time in his season. We find them both controlled by his mighty power.

I will use an apple tree to describe the ways of nature, I will stress its functions in its season. First, it lays dormant in the winter and comes forth in the springtime. It then takes on leaves, followed by buds, then its beautiful flowers. As the flower sheds its petals the fruit appears. The apple ripens in its season and when fully ripened it falls to the ground. This completes the mission of the apple tree until it sheds the leaves in the fall, again to lie dormant in the winter. All of these before mentioned things depend on the roots for survival.

Now I will try to compare this tree in nature with spiritual things. When the tree rests in a dormant stage this represents one who is dead to the knowledge of truth with no hope. The leaves represent the springtime of the believer's joys. The buds represent the works of the flesh that fall by the wayside and wither and decay. The fruit that comes forth represents rightness in the believer's heart through the channels of his grace. When the fruit ripens it represents the beauty of God's goodness when one is lifted from the pits of darkness. When the apple falls this represents those who hunger and thirst after his righteousness. When the leaves fall this is a time of darkness in the believer's heart.

So, we see the beauty of his sovereignty demonstrated in nature and in all spiritual things.

Riley J. Justice
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PROVERBS 21:1-3.

The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the Lord pondereth the hearts.

To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice.

VOICES OF THE PAST

SERMON ON AMOS 7:8
BY
ELDER LOYD WALL

A few weeks ago I read a verse of scripture and have had some meditations on it. This morning it is back again. There is no way to get it out of my mind because I stayed awake this morning until 20 minutes until 2 o'clock. I got up and turned the light on to see what time it was. I took a nap after that. I don't believe there is any way in the world to get away from the Lord. And I am going to tell you also that the devil can't get away from the Lord, either. And I will tell you the reason why I can't get away from Him. Because if I am not altogether deceived. He gave me a thorn in the flesh. Since I was 11 years old, old Satan has really been a thorn to me. He goes everywhere I go. He gets ugly. And I have done more than Paul did, if I am not over-judging. Paul prayed twice for God to remove his thorn. And the answer was every time ***"My grace is sufficient for thee."***

Brother John Bain, who we laid back to the dust a few days ago, said he didn't know if he had ever prayed in his life, but he had done a lot of begging: That is what I am saying. I've done a lot of begging God to remove this thorn out of my flesh this messenger of Satan that buffets me. But I never have gotten God to

trade with me. Never have. He never would. And right now I want to say that I am thankful that He doesn't trade any. Because if I could get Him to trade one time, I know by experience, I would lose every bit of confidence that I have in Him.

God's confidence is all we need. And the reason why that God the Lord didn't save the Apostle Paul from this thorn is because He is an unchanging God. The Bible says that. ***"I am the Lord and I change not therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."***

I don't desire to hurt the feelings of any human being. But more especially here of late I hear so much about accepting the Lord, and wanting people to be saved. I don't want to hurt those people's feelings that advocate that. They believe that because they can't help it. But I am going to tell you that according to the teachings of the scriptures that is not the way it is. God's people accept the Lord because they can't help it. One might ask the question, ***"Well, do they accept Him contrary to their will?"*** No, that is not so. They are always willing to accept Him and yet it is not of them voluntarily to do so. They are made accepted in the Beloved.

Now I want to give you something else. It is not left up to you to acquaint yourself with the Lord. And according to the text that is on my mind you don't have to get out and look Him up. We are going to prove that by the scriptures. I would like to call your attention to the last verse of the 46th chapter of Isaiah, and I want you to pay close attention to my reading if it be God's will. I am a very poor reader. Isaiah speaking out here, he said, ***"I bring near my righteousness."*** Now the book plainly teaches that "except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and the pharisees you have no part with God." And we know what the scribes and the pharisees were. They fasted twice a week and paid tithes of all that they possessed and they were not like other people. Now I didn't write that, and you didn't either, but that is the truth. Do you find anybody doing that? Do you? I want to ask you a question. Do you find people out paying a tenth of all that they earn, regardless of how much it is needed at home? My book says charity should begin at home. Do you find people that fast? Do you find people that say that they are not like other people? That they are better than so and so? Do you find them? I want to ask you. I am just asking you a simple question. I think you do. Now he says, ***"I bring near my righteousness."*** Not yours, but his. And He didn't leave us to guess how near He brought it. ***"It shall not be far off and my salvation shall not tarry; and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory."*** Now what is He saying? Zion is the church of the Living God. So I want to ask you a question, dear hearers. What did it leave for you to

do when He places salvation in Zion? I want to ask you. What in the world has the poor creature of the dust to do? What in the world did it leave Him to do when He said that He placed salvation in Zion, and then I want to tell you that you don't need to guess where salvation is, because the Apostle Paul says, "In Him." In who? In Christ is salvation. Neither is there salvation in any other. Now I want to ask you one more question, and that is, doesn't that cut out all hardshell preaching, too? I mean preaching about bringing salvation to anybody. What is the reason why a hardshell preacher, can't bring salvation to anybody? It is because they can't bring it to themselves. They don't need to bring it. They don't have to, because God places it there in Zion.

I would like to call your attention to a scripture that I read a few days ago, because it is in harmony with that one that I just read; it is found in the 7th chapter of Amos, verse 8. I believe again that it says what it means and it means just exactly what it says. The Lord here asked Amos something. We read, ***"And the Lord said unto me. Amos, what seest thou?"*** Now we don't have to guess who asked Amos that, do we? The Lord asked Amos that. Not a preacher, not a deacon, not a lay member, not an organization, but the Lord asked Amos, ***"What are you seeing?"*** Amos saw something, or the Lord wouldn't have asked him.

He would have told him what He wanted him to see. ***"What seest, thou Amos?" "And I said, A plumbline".*** Amos told the Lord just what he saw, ***"A plumbline". "Then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumbline in the midst of my people Israel: I will not again pass by them any more."*** My dear hearers, we know that a plumbline is what carpenters use in building a building. And we know that a natural plumbline does not make a crooked wall. But I tell you what you can do. You can take a building after it has settled and after it has been built for some time and you can stretch that plumbline to the plummet and it will show you every crook and every flat place that is in the building, and I want to tell you that a natural plumbline will do that. And I want to tell you dear children of the Heavenly King, until Israel has a plumbline placed in the midst of them, they won't know anything about their crooked ways. And I want to tell you, dear children, that the Lord has just one plumbline and that plumbline is His Darling Son, for in Him is salvation, neither is there salvation in any other. When He places that plumbline within your very being, that plumbline, which is Christ Jesus, shows you every crook and every turn that is in your very being. And it makes the individual to confess that sin is mixed with all that he does. why does it make him confess that sin is mixed with all that he does? It is because there is no sin about this plumbline,

as sure as you live.

And now too, I want to tell you one more thing. I am going to have to preach what I believe this morning, if I preach at all. Now children of God, if you stretch a plumbline down the side of this building and I want to tell you, it shows you where it is crooked, and where the crooked places are in this building. That plumbline will not make the building straight, by no means. And I want to tell you something, dear children of the Heavenly King. When Christ is born in you, the hope of glory, that doesn't make you to quit sinning. It just shows you what a sinner you are and it makes you to hate sin. It makes you to wish that you could never sin again, as sure as you live. Now as the plumbline does not straighten up the building, but only tells you there is a little crook here, and a crook there; there is no perfection in them. I'm talking about that place, now. I want to prove that. Even though after Christ is born in them the Hope of Glory, because the Apostle Paul said, ***"In me is no good thing, that is in my flesh."*** And you know, he said, "I thank God that with my mind I serve the law of God, but with my flesh the law of sin." I want to ask you, my dear hearers, would you have known anything about your crooked ways until the plumbline was placed by you? You didn't reach up and get it and you didn't go to where it was. It came to you, as sure as you live, and you know the reason why it came to you? It came because in the beginning your mother, Eve, transgressed. She transgressed in that home back yonder in the garden, so she was separated from her head. There wasn't a way in the world that poor Eve could go to Adam. Why? Because she had fallen in sin. And what caused her to commit that sin? She transgressed the holy law God had given, and you know, where there is no law, there is no sin. So did Sister Eve. She violated the law. She fell under sin, and when she fell under sin her whole being ultimately became crooked. And I am going to have to preach this hard doctrine, as sure as you live.

Solomon said in Ecclesiastes, ***"Consider the work of God; who can make that straight which God has made crooked."*** I want to tell your there is not enough preachers in the United States or in the whole world, to make one perfect in this time world, as sure as you live. So Eve was separated from her husband and there wasn't a way in the world that poor old Mother Eve could go back to Adam. You know that Adam had to go to Eve, as sure as you live, and because of the love he had for that woman, he was willing to go down in sin, knowing what; the results would be. And he took of that fruit, as sure as you live, because of the love he had for her. He was willing to die for her and that is exactly what he did. And when he did, that put everyone of his posterity into sin; every last one of them.

Now, if you know any human beings who came from anyone except Adam, then you might get them out of the condition that they are in. But everyone that is his offspring, that is, everyone that came from Adam and Eve was born in this horrible condition. They were born in sin, and a destitute condition, and there is nothing they can do about it. They could not, and we cannot go to Christ, just as Eve could not go back to Adam after she fell. We are just as helpless to go to Christ as Eve was to go to Adam. I am going to prove that by the Bible, and don't make me out a horrible person if I fail to do that. Now, they both have transgressed the law, and God put a curse on the earth, and I want to tell you that He used different language when He cursed the earth, because curse means death with God. You know, we might use the same language and call that cursing, but that is not. A curse means death, as sure as you live. And so God cursed the earth for man's sake and it brought forth thorns and thistles. And then God drove man out of the garden, and his wife with him.

And you know, the tree of life represented Christ Jesus, and it was also in the midst of that garden. The Godhead then said, ***"Man has become as one of us to know good and evil."*** And lest they reach forth and take of the tree of life and live forever, they were forbidden to stay. I want to prove that to you by the Bible. ***"And he placed a Cherubim and a flaming sword which turned every way"***, not to keep them away from the tree of life, no, because that tree of life didn't need such. But that which I want to get to is to keep the way of the tree of life; lest man reach forth and partake and live forever. And I want you to tell me where in the word of God it says that sword has ever been taken down from around that tree that keeps he way of the tree of life. As sure as you live, it never has been taken down. I want to prove that to you, because Jesus said in the 6th Chapter of John that ***"No man can come to me except my father who sent me draw him."*** You know the reason they can't come? Because there is a flaming sword turning every way which keeps the way of the tree of life. The tree doesn't need keeping, itself, because it *is* the way of life, as sure as you live. And as long as eternity remains it will keep the way of the tree of life.

I want to tell you something, brethren, when I started on this subject, I said he would place salvation in Zion Forever more. He said,; ***"I will place a plumbline among Israel, and I will place it there"*** And in the: land of Eden He put His only begotten Son in the person of Jesus Christ, here upon this low ground of sin and sorrow. And the Bible says He was born on this wise. ***"And when Joseph was espoused to Mary before he knew her he found her with child,"*** and

you know, he being a just man, he thought to put her away privately. But while he thought on these things, behold the angel of the Lord appeared to him in his sleep and said to him, ***"Fear not Joseph, to take unto thee Mary, thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. For she shall bring forth a Son and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."*** Isn't that what Isaiah has said, when he said, "I place salvation in Israel," and isn't that what Amos saw when he saw that plumbline and God told him, ***"I will place a plumbline in the midst of Israel. I will not pass them by any more."*** And then when that plumbline came, it was Jesus, and he gives proof. And I want to tell you one thing. There is no crook in the person of Jesus. He is the plumbline, as sure as you live. And I want to tell you something else, He is not only straight, but He is strait. And He said for all His people, "Strait is the way, and few there be that go that way." ***"Strait is the gate, that leads to life everlasting, and few there be that find it."*** I will tell you just how many are going to find it; yes, everyone that had that way placed in them, as sure as you live. In everyone that believes has that plumbline been placed there. He says, ***"I go before my sheep. I put them forth and they do follow me. And a stranger they will not follow because they know not the voice of a stranger."***

You know, children, I want to preach now what I believe. You never would have given your heart and life to Christ. No. No. But Christ was given to you in eternity. As sure as you live. I want to prove that by the Bible. ***"No man is able to pluck them out of my hand, for my Father who gaveth them me is greater than all."*** Oh, yes: No man is able to pluck them out of My hand. The Lord told Amos, ***"I will put a plumbline in the midst of Israel. And I will not again pass by them any more."*** And you know, Paul said, ***"I am persuaded that thing's present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord."*** Oh, that is a sweet promise to me, that He won't pass us by any more. And now Jesus, who was born in Bethlehem of Judah and was born of a virgin, and with all those miracles He did, it didn't cause people to move toward Him. Oh, no! But let me tell you, the only ones who did believe were His sheep, as sure you live.

You can't find in all the pages of the Bible that everything doesn't happen just like He planned it. No where is there any goats made into sheep. It didn't even make them want to be a sheep. They didn't have the want to. And I will tell you the reason why they didn't have the want to, because He said" ***"For this***

cause I will send them a strong delusion that they should believe a lie and be damned, who, receive not the love of the truth, but have faith in their own righteousness." The next verse says, ***"We are bound to give thanks always for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, for God hath from the beginning chosen you into salvation through sanctification and belief of the truth."*** Are you not for all eternity, to give thanks for it? I will tell you also, dear brethren, if there was something we could do, we would do it, but Paul said, ***"Brethren we are bound to give thanks always to the preacher? Oh, no, no. Give thanks unto the church? Oh, no, no, but we are bound to give thanks always unto God for you brethren, beloved of the Lord, for God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth."*** Now then, do you know Him, who for something like 33 years went about preaching, and then was crucified? Before they crucified Him, He said, ***"But it is needful that I go away. For if I go not away, the comforter shall not come."*** And brethren, I want to tell you something else. He didn't send it to the non-elect. But He said, ***"I will place a plumbline among Israel; and Israel is His people."*** And He said, ***"I will place salvation in Zion"***, and not in the world, but in Zion. As sure as you live.

Now I want to prove to you that when God sent out His twelve, He didn't say, ***"Go among the goats"***. Oh, no, no. But they were sent to one people. And you know, when He sent the twelve, He told them not to go to the general public, but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. I want to tell you dear hearers, they never were sent among the non-elect. And they never will be sent unto the non-elect. God sends them, as sure as you live, not to do their own will, but the will of Him that sends them. And He told the twelve, ***"Go not in the way of the Gentiles, but rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."***

And while Christ was preaching to those lost sheep of the house of Israel to whom He was sent, He said, ***"other sheep have I which are not of this fold. But them must I also bring."*** I want to tell you one thing, if He hadn't brought the Gentiles to that fold, the plumbline would never have been among them. As sure as you live. Why? Because the Gentiles couldn't go to Him. That is why: They know that no one can go to Him except the Father which sent Him draw them. And He said, ***"Other sheep have I which are not of this fold. Them I must also bring. And there shall be one shepherd and one fold."*** Oh, dear children, have you ever felt the plumbline? It doesn't vary. It doesn't turn, either to the right or to the left. It is straightway, as sure as you live. It doesn't wait for me and you to decide to

have everlasting life.

But there is a way opened. And that is the way that Isaiah spoke of in the 35th chapter when he said, *"And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness: The unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools shall not err therein."* You know the reason why those that err are not there? You would have to turn aside to get in this way should you err, and that is why there is no erring in that way, because there are no errors in that way. That is a straight way. That is a plumbline. There is no error in the plumbline; which is Christ Jesus, as sure as you live.

Now He said, *"I will place a plumbline among Israel, and my people, and I won't pass them by any more."* And also He said, *"I will bring near my righteousness and it shall not tarry. I will place salvation in Zion, among my people for my glory, saith the Lord."* Now then for the Jews I will preach, *"Other sheep have I which are not of this fold, them also will I bring, and there shall be one shepherd and one fold; And you know,* He said then, *"It need be that I go away, for if I go not away, the comforter will not come. But if I go away, I will pray the Father and he will send you the Spirit, which the world cannot see."*

It has been there a long time, and that is another sermon, as sure as you live. He said, *"I will send to you another spirit, which the world cannot receive, and it shall take the things of mine and try to show them unto you? No, no. And it shall take the things of mine and show them unto you."* I want to tell you, my little children, that He will save you from sin unto Himself. That is the plumbline, because God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, these three are One, as sure as you live. And you know, He told them to go to Jerusalem, and there came unto them a message from on high. And the number was about 120, and out of every nation, kindred, tongue, they were assembled at that place when the Holy Ghost came. I heard a man this morning over the radio, I won't call a name, but I heard the man say as he was preaching on Holy Ghost baptism that you can go to the altar and say *"Lord, Lord"* until the Holy Ghost comes. And that, I want to tell you, is making fun of the Holy Ghost. I believe that is blaspheming the Holy Ghost. I want to preach what I believe, now, if God will allow me to do so. They were told of God to go to Jerusalem and there tarry until visited from on high, and it came upon the group, like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the whole house. What was it He said for them to do? He said to go there and tarry. And the Bible says in another place, *"Be still and know that I am God."* Stand still and see the salva-

tion of the Lord. I want to tell you one thing. You don't have to go anywhere, or to any altar. Why? Because He said, ***"I will place a plumbline among Israel, my people. And I will place salvation in Zion."*** I will tell you, brethren, you don't have to go anywhere. And He told them at Jerusalem, ***"And there tarry."*** Stand still. Stop your works.

And there tarry until you are endowed from on high. And it came a rushing and mighty wind, and it filled the whole house. Everyone there spoke in his own tongue and everyone understood the words of God. You can take a man, I don't care how able he is and you can send him to preach all over the United States over the radio and over the TV and every church house, and I guarantee you, it won't profit anything unless that plumbline had already got there before the preacher gets there, a sure as you live - Why? Because they won't understand it, and I am going to prove that by the Scriptures. Paul didn't know who the children of God were: I know he didn't. Only the Lord knew who they were. Paul and Barnabas preached, and they didn't know who was and who wasn't. And they said, ***"Seeing that you put it from you, and count yourselves unworthy of eternal life, so we turn to the Gentiles. When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the name of the Lord."***

Did everyone of them do that? No. The book tells us just how many. were glorifying the Lord, and how many weren't. ***"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the name of the Lord, and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."*** I want to tell you that ordained means set apart. Everyone that the plumbline had been placed in, that one is the one that salvation had been placed in. And I want to tell you, they can't help glorifying the name of the Lord.

Transcribed from a recorded sermon by Elder Loyd Wall, Bivens, Texas

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the One Hundred Seventy Sixth session of the Contentnea Association will convene with Stump Sound Church on Saturday before the second Sunday in October. The date is October 7-8, 2006. The Church is located at the end of Airport Road in Holly Ridge, Onslow County, NC.

We invite all who love the truth to come and worship with us.

Elder Gene Lupton
Association Clerk
252-745-7441

LOWER MAYO ASSOCIATION

The Seventy Fourth Annual Session of the Lower Mayo Association is to be held, the Lord willing, on Friday before the first Sunday in October and continue through Sunday the dates being

September 29th , 30th and October 1st, 2006. Spoon Creek Church will host the meeting and it will be held in Russell Creek Meetinghouse. The Meeting House is located approximately 9 miles south of Stuart, Virginia near the Virginia, North Carolina border. Those coming North or South on Route #8, turn East on Ayers Orchard Road # 653 for about 1 mile. Turn right on Moorefield Store Road #631. Go 1/4 mile to Church location on right. Those coming East or West on Route #58, Turn South on Southfork Loop # 827, turn on Ayers Orchard Road #653. Go 3 miles to Moorefield Store Road #631. Turn left, go ¼ mile to church location on right. Those coming West on NC #704, Turn right on Va-Line Road, #1730. Go 1 mile and turn left on Moorefield Store Road, #631. Go 2 ½ miles to church on left.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in salvation by grace to come and be with us during this 2006 Association.

In bonds of Love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276-952-2098)

LOWER MAYO FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo Association Fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday only , October 29th, 2006. We hope to start singing at 10:00 A.M. and preaching at 10:30 A. M. Russell Creek Church will host the meeting and it will be held in Russell Creek Meeting House. The Meeting House is located approximately 9 Miles south of Stuart, Virginia near the Virginia, North Carolina border. Those coming north or south on route # 8, Turn east on Ayers Orchard Road # 653 for about 1 mile. Turn right on Moorefield Store Road # 631. Go 1/4 mile to church location on right. Those coming East or West on route #58, turn south on Southfork Loop #827 , Turn on Ayers Orchard Road #653. Go 3 miles to Moorefield Store Road #631. Turn Left, go 1/4 mile to church location on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in salvation by grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of Love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276 -952 -2098)

ISAIAH 26:12.

Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us.

NEW RIVER ASSOCIATION

The two hundred and twelfth annual session, of the New River Association, will convene the Lord willing at Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church in Floyd County, Va. entertained by Little Vine Primitive Baptist Church in Carroll County, Virginia. Beginning on Friday before the 4th Sunday in September and to continue thru Sunday. Dates being Sept. 22, 23, 24 in 2006.

Indian Creek Church is located on Va. Hwy 787 in Indian Valley those coming by route 221, 52 or route 8 take 221 to Willis, Va. then turn on route 787 go appro. 7 miles to church. Located on your left those coming by way of 81 interstate turn on exit 114 right go to Childress Road on right to 600 go on to 693 then turn left on 787 go appro. 15 miles to P.B. Church on right, if you come by route 8 come to drive in restaurant turn on 693 go left until you come to 787 turn left go approx. 15 miles to church on right.

We invite our ministering brothers, also our brethren, sisters, and friends, to be with in the setting of our association, Lord willing.

Elder Kenneth D. Hopkins,
Moderator
J.B. Mitchell, Jr.,
Clerk
Harold Hollandsworth,
Asso. Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 23 and 24, 2006.

Rehobeth Church, located at ElDorado, Arkansas, 5 miles North on Hwy. 7 and 1/2 mile West on Hwy. 335, will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
(318) 778-4217

SULPHUR FORK ASSOCIATION

The One Hundred Sixty-first session of the Sulphur Fork Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Pleasant Hope Church on Saturday September 30, and Sunday October 1, 2006.

Pleasant Hope Church is located on the East side of Highway 251, south of Atlanta, TX. on CO 4556. (Look for Sign).

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Miles Bird
Association Clerk

MATTHEW 13:47.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 2006

Richard Lawless - WVA 5.00
Lula Holley - VA 5.00
In memory of Hartzel Nelson
Ronald Nelson - WVA 50.00
Winfred Young - NC 5.00
G. T. Newman - TN 10.00
Alan McDaniel - VA 5.00
Melvin Cruise - VA 10.00

OBITUARIES

BEATRICE CARTER MILLER

Beatrice Carter Miller died March 28, 2006 at Morehead Nursing Center in Eden, NC, after a long illness. She had lived a good life for 90 years plus fifteen days.

Born March 13, 1916 to Brular and Mary Carter in Pittsylvania County, Virginia.

She asked for a home with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on May 23, 1982 along with her husband, Frank Miller. They were both baptized by the late Elder David Spangler. Sister Bea loved her church, the brethren and the pastor. She looked forward to meeting with them as often as possible. A faithful member and a true believer in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace.

Bea did volunteer work at Morehead Memorial Hospital in Eden until her health no longer permitted her to.

She is survived by: daughter Sister Mary Margaret Cannady of Martinsville, Virginia and sons Frank W. and Don Lee Miller of California, eight grandchildren, three sisters: Maxine Ely of Alexander, Virginia, Mary Sue Little of Florida and Meredia C. Kovath of Delaware. She was preceded in death by her husband, three brothers and one sister.

Funeral service was held at Dan River Church on Saturday, April 1, 2006 by Elder Kenneth R. Key. Interment was in the church cemetery.

Written by request of Dan River
Primitive Baptist Church.
By Amanda Saunders

THESSALONIANS 3:8-11.

For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God:

Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

How sweet how heavenly is the sight,
When those who love the Lord
In one another's peace delight,
And thus fulfil his word:

When each can feel his brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part;
When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart:

When free from envy, scorn and pride,
Our wishes all above,
Each can his brother's failings hide,
And show a brother's love.

When love in one delightful stream
Through every bosom flows,
And union sweet, and dear esteem,
In every action glows!

Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love.

C.M.

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EDITORIAL

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again with a lively hope by the resurrection of the dead,

To an inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. (1 Pet 1:3-5)

Elder R. H. Campbell

The apostle Peter, in these three verses of scripture, sets forth the absolute certainty of the salvation of the saints of God, and the source from which it comes. The source is first, last and always God, even as Jesus told a group that was following him and asked what they must do to work the works of God. Jesus' response to them was, (John 6:29) ***"This is the work of God that ye believe on him who he hath sent."*** Jesus did not tell them of anything that they must, or could do, to work the works of God, and this was because all of the works, regarding the salvation of the saints had already been done. They were finished, from the foundation of the world, as is confirmed by many scriptures, and were as certain and sure as though they were already manifested in time. The scriptures state that God rested from all of the work that he had created and made, (Gen 2:2) ***"And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work which he had made."*** And there are no references that he ever went back to work, to do anything that would assure their eternal salvation, or to finish something that he had not completed from the beginning.

The Apostle Paul referred to this fact, regarding God's resting after his work was completed, when on

one occasion he, speaking of man, (Heb 4:19) ***"For he that is entered into his rest also hath ceased from his works as God did from his."*** Man enters into his rest, when he is brought to the realization that all of the work that was required to accomplish his salvation had already been done, and that there is not anything that he can do, to add to that which has been done for him. When man is born again, or quickened by the Spirit, he is made to know that he has been blessed with a very special and precious gift, called faith, and this faith includes all that is needful for his salvation. He also has been made to know that it is not in the hands of man to do anything that would have any bearing in spiritual matters, because it is beyond the realm of nature in which he dwells. (Rom 8:7) ***"For the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."***

Even though the will were present with him, in nature, the ability is not, for it is the work of God that man can even believe on him who he hath sent. Jesus stated very clearly and concisely how, and why, this is accomplished, (John 6:37-39) ***"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."*** As we said above, the source of the salvation of the saints is of God, first, last and always.

Peter said, when speaking of the faith of the saints, (1 Pet. 6-9) ***"Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: who having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now for a season ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice, with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your soul."*** The, trial of their faith, is that highway that leads man unto salvation; it is traveled by man, in nature, but it is determined by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, from before the highest hills were formed, and the world was caused to exist.

(Isa 35:8-10) ***"And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall***

walk there: and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." This is a positive declaration of things that shall be, and the way and manner that they shall be made manifest in the lives of the saints of God, in days to come. This knowledge is available to man, only by the revelation of God, and is to make manifest that they are of the chosen generation. (1 Pet: 1:10-11) ***"Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that was to come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."*** The holy men of old themselves did not understand whereof they spoke, when they prophesized of the glory that would come, so how could man with the wisdom of this world, understand except that it be revealed unto him, by the same power that ordained it to be.

These are very positive and comforting statements to the soul of those who have been so exercised by them, as in the above subject scriptures, for they speak of an inheritance that has been reserved in heaven for them; an inheritance which is undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved for them according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus. There are no contingencies involved in these declarations, that would even remotely indicate any work contributed by the wisdom or power of the natural mind of man. All of this is to be accomplished by the works of God, before the foundation of the world, and man is not involved, in any way, regarding the success of this venture: it is solely the work of God, who is sovereign in all of his ways and just in all of his judgments. He speaks, and it is done, commands, and it stands fast, regardless of the attitude of man regarding this work or the awareness of it until it is done.

The apostle Paul told Timothy, speaking of how God works his will in the salvation of the elect. (II Tim. 1:9-12) ***"Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: whereunto I am appointed, an apostle and a teacher unto the Gentiles."*** Notice, all of this is given in Christ Jesus, before the foundation of the

world, but, is manifested in time by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ who had finished the work that his Father gave him to do, and ascended back unto the heavens where he is even now seated, on the right hand of the Father, victor over death, hell and the grave, for the elect, making intercession unto God for their sins.

In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, Paul related the trial of faith of those under the law, who subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouth of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens, received their dead raised up and others who were tortured, not accepting deliverances from these physical distresses; that they might obtain a better resurrection. He then said, (Heb 11:39-40) ***"And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."*** Those under the law were given faith, that they might endure the tribulations, but looking beyond them to the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham, which is the inheritance that is reserved in heaven for them.

(Heb 12:1) ***"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and*** let us run with patience the race that is set before us." This great cloud of witnesses, is the testimonies of those who have gone this way before, and left a record the way in which the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and by faith, come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, they obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. It is a blessed journey that they experience, although it may include many things that are distressing to the man in nature, but they have been blessed to believe that all of the afflictions and trials are more to be desired than all of the treasures that this world has to offer. These things shall fade away in time, but this city is eternal, and the beauty and glory are everlasting. This faith enables them to keep pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, which the times and tribulations of the world cannot take away. This better thing that Paul referred to above, to my understanding, is the Spirit that the children of God have, that was not available unto those under the law, as in the gospel day. (John 7:37-39) ***"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood up and cried, saying, If any man thirst let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the***

scriptures hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)" This prophecy was fulfilled when the day of Pentecost was fully come, and the apostles were all with one accord in one place and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. This is the time when the gospel, the power of God unto salvation, made manifest unto man, and the Spirit first indwelled the creature as Jesus stated above. This is the better thing that the gospel has that the law did not have: the better covenant, which was based upon better promises, as Paul said, (Rom 8:2) "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." The children of God, from that day forward, were no longer under the dominion of the law of sin and death, as they had been in former days, but rather, were indwelled by the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, and (Rom 8:16) *"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are children of God: and if children, then heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."*

The promise unto all of the saints, that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time, is a blessing beyond the imagination of the natural mind. This grand and glorious promise is made by God, who cannot lie, to a people who were dead in trespasses and sin, aliens from God, and the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world; and then suddenly they find themselves joint heirs with the only begotten of the Father, of an inheritance that is reserved for them, in his Son. This is the ultimate expression of a love, a love that man is incapable of even understanding in the flesh, an everlasting love that assures all of the recipients, that the giver is the Lord, who left on record the following promise for their assurance and comfort in the fact that, as the prophet said, (Mal 3:6) *"For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."* impossible that, after receiving the promise, some could fall away and be separated from that love that has been bestowed upon them.

(Heb 6:13-20) *"For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself,*

saying, surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end to all strife. Wherein God, will more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is entered for us, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." This is possibly the most profound and all encompassing statement, to be found in the whole of scripture. This statement was made by, God the Father, the creator of the heavens and the earth and all the host of them; the God who cannot lie, who also promised these things from the beginning, unto Abraham and to all of his seed through Isaac, in all generations to follow, and then he confirms if by his own personal oath, that by two immutable pledges, the things included in the original promise will most certainly be fulfilled. There is no more possible assurance that could be given unto the heirs of promise, than is given in this one statement. God promised it from the beginning, and confirmed it by his oath, and so it shall be.

The apostle Paul confirms this same fundamental truth in, (Rom 8:35-39) ***"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."***

If we had only the two verses of scripture in the proceeding paragraph, all God called ministers would have the same themes for any of their sermons, regarding the absolute surety of the elect's receiving of the inheritance that is laid up for them. The love of Christ is what assures them of the inheritance, and this scripture says that nothing can separate them from that love, and Peter said that all of this is according to the abundant mercy of God, by which he hath begotten them

again with a lively hope of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The faith of the apostles was strong as long as Jesus was in their midst, but, in spite of his having told them that he must die, and be raised again, they could not actually believe it, so that when it happened, the two disciples on the road to Emmaus said, (Luke 24:21) ***"But we trusted that it had been him which should have redeemed Israel:"*** The same day that Jesus rose from the tomb, they were questioning the fact that he was actually the Christ, and in the above text, Peter is saying that, ***"he hath begotten them again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."*** living proof of the claims of Jesus, that he must so suffer.

All of this work is, by God, for man, and is a gift unto the creature. The apostle Paul makes this very plain, and positive, when he said, (Eph 2:8-9) ***"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is a gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast."*** Don't you just love this scripture? it is the most comforting of the scriptures to be found in the bible, to those who have been, brought to the knowledge of the truth, by being exercised in this same way and manner, and being made to believe it by their own experience. They were all, as the apostle Paul, in a state of ignorance and unbelief, until the light of truth shined around about them and into their heart, and they were born again, or quickened by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the seal of approval of their faith. This is, as the circumcision was the seal of the righteousness of the faith which Abraham had, being yet uncircumcised, even so, the indwelling of the Spirit within their heart is their seal of righteousness.

May this seal be upon your heart, for it is the gift of God unto all of the saints, and it can never fail because God is perfect in all of his works. He does not give this gift to any who are not of the chosen generation which he hath purchased with his own precious blood, the only sacrifice that is acceptable unto God for the sins of his children.

In bonds of love:
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Terry,

It is time for renewal of the Signs of the Times. Have been reading the Signs for a good many years I enjoy reading everyone's experience and trust I have been given to see the wonderful workings of the holy Spirit from the Eternal God Head.

In Christian Love I hope,
Charles Hatchett

8-7-06

My Dear Brethren,

This magazine is very dear to me to read. God has blessed me with good eye sight but my hearing has gotten very poorly in the last year or so.

But I think God as the years travel by at the age of 87 I'm still able to stay by myself and take care of my home. What a great blessing it is to me to think of a God who has been so good and so kind and merciful to me. He is my all and all. I think so much of the time how can He be so good to such a sinner as I feel to be the chief among all. Please don't think I have forgotten to send my donation for another year, just been so busy in my Garden canning and freezing. Sending $25.00 for one year subscription.

Very unable poor sister,
Lovie A. Thompson

Shreveport, La.
August 11, 2006

Dear Editors of the times - I have enjoyed this little yellow book from many years and always enjoy reading the entire book and especially I enjoyed the article on "Lucifer" that Elder Roberson wrote this time - He explained it so well.

I know I have at times felt high and mighty but more often I feel lowliness over the sins I have done but when I read about Lucifer I wondered about him and have looked up the meaning in my self pronouncing dictionary and it said Lucifer is the Light bearer, so at times I wondered about him being thrown out of Heaven, but now I believe I understand much better after reading this article, and I am so glad we have such wonderful ministers which helps to Comfort us and to understand the wonders of our God and His Son Jesus.

I did not mean to write so much but did want you to know how much I enjoyed this article. I am sending a check for $25.00 for 2 years.

Thanks and please pray for me when you're at the your throne of grace.

A sister I hope,
Katherine Mathews

July 18, 2006

Elder Wm. Hale Terry,

Dear Brother Terry I trust this finds you well and blessed of God.

I'm still weak, as I've had strained muscle the Dr said. I have suffered so much with a cracked bone a few months ago, but I am strong enough to get around. I thank the Lord for all his goodness and love, grace and mercy to me this year, an old afflicted one of his I

hope. My address is changing to Ellen M. Sellars, 22221 Bloomfield #1, Cypress, CA 90630.

Please send Signs of the Times here. I enjoy reading but can't read though at times, eyes so weak, but if one of God's chosen ones I am promised- As thy days thy strength shall be.

I trust you can read this. One in Hope of Life Eternal.

Ellen Sellars

ARTICLES

MY EXPERIENCES

An experience of a believer is a hard subject for an individual to explain or to come up with an answer. First of all this comes through his believing power of God's Grace which is an unmerited favor from the courts of glory at his discretion according to his holy and divine will.

We find this grace is an unmerited favor. We have to say that the flesh is helpless to be a partaker of holy events in any way. All works that the believing family performs is the workmanship that comes though his loving kindness that leads his little ones in this low ground of sin and sorrow.

We have a group that believes in the free will of the flesh. I think they are sincere in their belief but have not been made to see the definition of God's salvation through grace; which is the deliverance of God's goodness in the hearts of his little ones that by his grace which is pleasing unto him at his appointed time. This group says that they know heaven will be their home. If they know this, (which they don't) this completely disallows the precious hope whereby mankind is saved through his grace. They also say just let him come into your heart and he will. He works in the armies of heaven, amongst the inhabitants of the earth and none can say do thou this great Jehovah. If this workmanship was created in Christ Jesus, how can puny man be given the power to let the Lord do or not do the things that are according to his precious will.

A few times I feel that I have been lifted from the pits of darkness and made to rejoice in his goodness if not deceived in my belief.

A few times I have been made to rejoice in his mercies that are extended when it pleases him to do so. The Bible says that he who hungers and thirsts after righteousness shall be filled. If one hasn't hungered then they can't feast from the rations of God's table. This being a table that feeds the flock. Fear not little flock for it is your father's good pleasure to give unto you the kingdom.

God's little ones have been elevated from the pits of darkness, given a hope and made to walk in his heavenly light. They are kept by

his great power and guided in the low grounds of sin and sorrow. They have been made dependent on him when given the hope that he will lead and direct them in all things. All this before they will reap heaven and immortal glory in that land with no end.

The word carnal has a deep rooted meaning. If the carnal mind is not subject to the laws of God, how or in what way can the dead to the knowledge of truth, have the power to let God take his abode in this darkened fleshly mind. When one is lifted from the pits of darkness and given a hope and made to see though an eye of faith the channels of his precious love, then they look to him as the giver of all good to lead and direct them on life's journey.

The Bible says that an eye has not seen nor an ear has heard, neither has it entered into the heart what God has prepared for those that love him. This sweet hope that the believing family possesses is what anchors the soul and sustains them in the walks of life as they journey here. Paul said, ***"If in this life only I had hope I would be of all men most miserable."*** Paul lets us know, that it isn't in the power of the flesh to know what God has prepared for them that love him.

We often hear different ones say that he preaches the Bible. The Bible has never been preached. It is a dead letter that was written by inspiration and it is interpreted likewise. When the apostles were sent out they were instructed to preach the word, which is Christ the Hope of Glory. The Bible is instructions to the church, that every believer should be thoroughly furnished into every good work. Now we can see the workmanship of Christ Jesus manifested here.

As a young man on a March day and the snow was flying and I was made to meditate on some thing in the Bible. Anyway I found myself in a wilderness of confusion. The thought came to me that the Bible wasn't written to those who are dead to the knowledge of the truth. This is when I was made to see that the flesh is helpless to work out his great salvation. We have to say that if God isn't in the arrangement, there is no rejoicing. The believing family is lifted up from the pits of darkness and they give thanks to him for his many blessings that are bestowed on them at his appointed time. All spiritual things are rooted and grounded in our Lord and Saviour.

Riley J. Justice

Isaiah 60:1-2.

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.

VOICES OF THE PAST

ELDER F. L. OAKLEY, VERY DEAR FRIEND: – You asked me, the 3rd Sunday in July to tell you my experience, but I felt so much like I had nothing to tell, and felt so cold every way, I thought I would not fool any more of God's people, for I felt like I had deceived myself and others too, and would keep my little hope to myself. But it is bad enough for one to be deceived, much more so to deceive others who feel so dear to him.

With the help of God, I'll try, in a brief way to tell you what I hope the Lord has done for me. At the age of ten or eleven years I began to have serious impressions about my soul's future destiny. My father called us around the family altar, and told us we had a sister who had seen her lost and ruined condition, and she felt she was going to hell. I began to think of my soul's welfare that night. I thought if I should die my soul would be lost. Oh! such thoughts as I had about going to hell to burn forever and ever. I said to myself, "I'll try to live better, I'll do all the good I can." So I commenced to try to pray to God to make me a better boy, to live more up to my duty, and to keep me from sinning, etc. And many times when I was in the field at work I would try to ask God to have mercy on me. I went on in this way several years. But I couldn't see, as I was getting worse and worse every day. So I was too young any way, and I would wait till I got grown, then I would get religion. I thought I would go on and have as much pleasure as I wished, while I was young.

When I got grown it would be time enough to think on such things. I commenced to go to dances and play cards for fun, I didn't bet till I commenced going to school at Gilliam's Academy.

My conscience would whip me for it, but I was determined to conquer. So I kept on till the Lord, as I believe, commenced a work in me. I remember the time so well. I was in the parlor at Mrs. Gilliam's, with a crowd of young folks, joking and making merriment, when in a moment, I was seized with the worst trouble I ever had. I immediately went down in Mr. Gilliam's room and thought I would read the LAND MARK some to drown my troubles. That was my custom when I got lonesome and felt bad. But I soon found I couldn't do that. I went to my room and that didn't do any good. O! I had so much trouble I didn't know what to do. I felt like I didn't have a friend on earth. My best friends seemed to be enemies to me. They seemed to make light of my ways and actions. I wanted to be alone for I couldn't enjoy anyone's company. Right here I want to use a little scripture that suited my case, and I believe suits every one when they are under conviction, whether I was in that condition or not. ***"She weepeth sore in***

the night, and her tears are on her cheeks. Among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her. All her friends have dealt treacherously with her. They are become her enemies." Lam. 1:2. That explains how I felt. Among, all my lovers I had none to comfort, and all my friends seemed treacherous, and seemed to be my enemies. A person cannot be comforted while in this condition. Though one may tell them it is conviction (which ought to comfort), they will not believe it. They feel they must die and hell will be their portion, and justly so. I am digressing.

I thought I was going to die and that very soon, and the worst of it all was I felt like I was going to hell but I knew it would be just. For I felt to be the worst, the vilest of sinners. I lost my appetite. I couldn't sleep but very little, and it was impossible for me to study. Many times have I stole out of the school-room to go off about one mile on a high hill, unmolested by anyone, and there I would weep and try to ask God to have mercy on me a sinner. Many times when I would get to my secret place – I couldn't pray to save my life. Some worldly thing would get on my mind in spite of me. O, such feelings as I had, no one knows anything about it but the ones that have passed over. This was in the winter and spring of 91. I remained in this condition two or three months. It gradually wore away and I don't know when my troubles left me. That is one reason, Mr. Oakley I'm so slow to tell people the reason of my hope. For I hear others say they felt the happiest when their burden left, and if they had ten thousand tongues they couldn't praise God enough. I seem to be different from anyone else. I commenced making promises and as often as I made them I would break them. I tried to live better, but I finally concluded I was mistaken about it all, and I would go on in my old paths again. I thought if that had been conviction I would have known it.

And, Mr. Oakley, what you said yesterday in your sermon made me think how I felt. You said you had felt this year like you wanted to put an end to your existence. When I was in my deepest troubles I felt like I wanted to do the same. But back to my subject. I soon found myself going to parties again, and doing other things that I had done. But my conscience would whip me every time, still I thought I will have my way, and I kept on, and while I was on the floor dancing I was taken sick, oh, so sick I had to leave. I promised the Lord that night if He would spare me and let me get well I would not dance any more.

Next morning I was well, but I felt so mean. I am not certain, but I believe I went to one more party after that, but God has taken all such desires from me now. I have no desire whatever to participate in any more such sports.

Last 3rd Sunday in May a year ago I was made to feel the happiest I had ever been in my life. It was while Mr. Burch was preaching. It seemed he touched on all the points that I felt so justly accused. I felt like God had shown himself to me the second time.

I love the Primitive Baptists so much, and I want to be with them, but I know I am too vile and sinful to offer myself.

I have been groping my way about ever since. Sometimes I think I have a hope, and then I think I am mistaken about it all. If I wouldn't be so easy to get mad, and would be better every way then I might have some reason to hope. I think I have prayed, or tried so much if I was deceived to undeceive me. For if I am wrong in every thing else I want to be right on that. I could tell you many other things but guess I have told you more now than I ought; I feel like if I just could be good enough to live with the Baptists I would be the happiest man on earth. My will is to be right if I miss it. But when I would do good evil is always present. There is no good thing that dwells in the flesh, and where no good dwells, how can we expect to reap any good. When it goes well with you, think of me. But that is the time we don't think of anyone but self. If I had asked you to remember me when you get in trouble, you would be more apt to do it.

Joseph told the Butler that, but he didn't do it. He didn't think of him till the king had a dream that no one could interpret, then the others said, I do this day remember my faults.

I have written you only a part of what I have passed through. Have you, please tell me, had any such trials as these. If so, it will be a comfort to me to know it for I believe you are a Christian. I have had impressions to join the church for sometime, but unworthiness keeps me back. I have felt it was a duty, but I have not performed it, and I believe sickness has been sent on me to make me willing.

I had a lot of sickness in the spring, and I thought to myself *"If I would join the church I would get well."* I tried in my feeble way to ask God to give me back my health and if I felt impressed to join the church I would try to do so by next meeting. Immediately I felt better, and I felt so happy I praised the Lord, and I was willing, then to join, but when I got to the church on Saturday after, somehow I could not go up. I must desist. Sometime; if its the Lord's will, I'll tell you more about my impressions, Oh! I feel so bad today I wish I could tell you all.

T.A. Stanfield

EXPERIENCE OF A POOR WANDERER.

Elder F. P. Branscome, Dear Friend: I have often thought of writing to you what I hope the Lord has done for me. From my earliest recollection I feared death and judgment, and was made to call upon the name of the Lord for his great mercy: for I could see no other way whereby I might be saved. But I went on, as I grew up, and partook of the evil ways of the world. But often thinking I would change my way, and made many promises that I would do better. But all of my promises I would break, until my mind was so troubled about my condition that I was made to beg and pray to the Lord for mercy. But it seemed that I grew worse. I could see myself to be such a great sinner and nothing that I could do was any benefit to me. I would try to pray, but my words seemed to fall to the ground. It appeared to me that I was such a great sinner that the Lord would not hear my prayers. I went on in this way so long. I thought I had surely committed the unpardonable sin and would be forever lost. O, such a condition I was in! No pen nor tongue will ever describe it. I could not rest day nor night. Often I could not sleep any, but would roll on my bed and beg for mercy. If I did sleep, my last thoughts would be, Lord, have mercy on me, a poor sinner; and I had the same prayer on awaking in the morning. I went on in this way till I thought it a sin to take the name of the Lord between my sin-defiled lips, and that I never would try to pray again. But the very next words would be, "Lord, have mercy on me." And all the time the tempter was along trying to persuade me that there was no such a being as God, and that I was no more than the brute creation; that I had no soul to be saved or lost. I could get no satisfaction out of anything. O, how I did wish that I had never been born, or had died when I was young. Then I would have been saved; but now I had sinned away the day of grace. My prayers were: *"O Lord, save, or I perish." "O Lord, if thou turnest away from me, where else can I look? For man can do nothing. I felt to be less than nothing, and beneath the notice of either God or man." And my prayer was: "O Lord, if I die, let me die in my right mind, that my last words may be, Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner."* I wanted to die begging for mercy. It appeared to me that everybody had turned against me, and that the Lord had long since forsaken me: and I was without a friend in heaven or in earth.

While going on in this condition with, it seemed to me, almost more than I could bear, all my burden left me, and I felt like I had been carrying some great heavy burden on my shoulder. I felt so light and easy, and even walked off easily. And it seemed like love sprang up in my heart, for everybody. I felt to praise

God for his mercy. It was the brightest time of my life, and it seemed to me that all nature was praising God. The boughs of the trees, it seemed to me, towered toward heaven in praise to God. I went home and my family seemed the most *lovely* that I had ever seen them.

The next morning I walked out of the house, singing :

"I want to live a christian here, I want to die rejoicing:

I want to know a Savior near,

When soul and body's parting."

The thought struck me almost as forcibly as a voice, saying, ***"Go and tell the church and world what great things the Lord has done for you,"*** I thought, then, on the first opportunity I would tell the Church what I hoped the Lord had done for me. But doubts and fears arose and I did not go. And I am ever praying and hoping for a brighter evidence. I feel so little and unworthy. I don't feel worthy to ask those, whom I feel to be God's children , to fellowship such an unworthy creature as I feel myself to be.

Now, Mr. Branscome; if ever I send you this you may examine it; and, if you think it a gospel experience, you can answer through the "Messenger." But, if not a gospel experience, commit to the flames and all will be well.

A POOR WANDERER

REMARKS.

The foregoing experience of one who styles himself "a poor wanderer," was forwarded to me by Elder Isaac Webb, saying: ***"The writer of the within experience wishes your reply, but does not wish you to use his name. It may be relied on; it is all right."*** We have no idea who this "poor wanderer is, and know nothing about his life and character. But if his is not a gospel experience we have none. It is according to the doctrine of the Bible, and we feel sure that his expression of how the Lord has led him will beget fellowship and love in the hearts of all God's people who read it.

We would like to encourage this "poor wanderer" to go home to his friends, the church, and follow the Savior in baptism. If he is still waiting for a brighter evidence, the probability is, it may never come. The pathway of disobedience does not lead to the light. This "poor wanderer," no doubt, has the real scriptural evidence that, he is a child of God. What is that? It is this: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." John 3:14. There is no greater evidence than this. To feel unworthy is no excuse, for that is just how all whose hearts are right must feel. If we love the church, we should tell her so; and, if we love Christ, we should keep his commandments. Christ said, ***"If ye love me keep my commandments."***

Christ has never said to one of his little ones to stay away from him and learn of him. But he did say, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls."-Matt. 11:29, 30. This speaks to our "poor wanderer," to the living and the anxious inquirer, and not to those dead in trespasses and in sins. We feel that all who have hope should be encouraged to take their cross and follow Jesus in baptism; and not only in baptism, they should be taught to observe all things whatsoever" that Jesus has commanded. See Matt. 28:19,20. It is not enough that they should be made to feel that this commandment of the Savior is right and ought to be observed ; but, feeling so, they should do all that is commanded in God's word. May this "poor wanderer" be drawn into the fold by the constraining love of Christ, and made to serve the Lord with gladness – *Editor.*

PSALM 119:10-12.

With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Blessed art thou, O Lord: teach me thy statues.

Elder F. P. Branscome, Dear Brother: I send you a copy of a letter I received sometime ago from Sister Goad ; and, also a view I had of Brother Gold and the Father and Son, which I think applies equally as well to you and also all of God's ministers.

This morning I viewed Brother Gold sitting between two, and I said, in my mind, ***"That is the Father and Son."*** I believe they were for his guidance and protection in preaching and writing, hence the great power and ability given him to discharge his duties; and; while I was standing before him, the Father and Son, Brother Gold said, "Sister Octavia could see that it would not do for Brother Jones' reputation to go down." I believe this knowledge was given of the Lord. The letter I send you, written by Sister Octavia Goad, (who is a daughter of the beloved Elder Isaac Webb) is an answer to one I wrote her that was published in the ***"Messenger of Truth."*** While reading her good letter, which filled my soul with love and gratitude to God, I heard a voice say, "Send this to the Landmark." So, by her consent, I have sent it, and I feel like, Brother Branscome, that I want you also to have a copy of it: for the comfort and instruction of your readers. While reading her good letter, I had to stop to give vent to my tears and thoughts. My thoughts were, ***"Glory to God and the Lamb: glory to God in the highest strains."*** It fills my soul with joy

that God has seen fit to show them my spiritual condition, and bless them to help me: for we are to be fellow helpers, one of another; and no more aliens nor strangers, but fellow citizens of the household of faith. As ever,

Yours in love,
J. R. JONES.

SISTER GOAD'S LETTER.

Mr. J. R. Jones, Dear Brother: My heart was filled with joy and thanksgiving when I received your letter of congratulation to one who deserves nothing. I oftimes fear that the good people of the Lord are deceived in me.

Surely they do not know me as I am. I have a special remembrance of you since you stayed at my father's on your way to an association, when I was but a child - by a deed of charity, in making my mother a present before leaving our home and, not only to her, gifts that my father has received at your hand, causes us to cast our best wishes for you. How precious still are the names of the ones that administered little deeds of kindness to us, in appreciation of father's labor in the ministry . I have said little about that, but it seems but few regard the feelings and comfort of a poor minister's family. Of course we had a common, but pleasant home. But the absence, near all the time, of father made it lonely and the great responsibility that was thrown upon mother and the children was not a bouquet of roses. We missed his good and kind instruction. The good company, that visited our home, had to be entertained without him. While other fathers had the privilege of driving with their families to preaching, and of many other things of interest, that we could mention. The preacher's family enjoys but little of that. For the odds and ends must be done at home; and, sometimes, in some cases, without dressing to appear in intelligent company. Certainly they feel then to be forsaken, and like they have lost sympathy of the one that is nearest and dearest to them. How much we all need the charity that few practice and try to remember that the good minister is away from home and business most every Saturday and Sunday. Besides being called to the sick bed and to funerals in the week time. But I scarcely think that a true husband and rather ever leaves his dear family without feeling the heavy obligation that rests upon his dear ones. Oh! those poor burdened souls that feel they must go and labor in the name of Jesus, and feeling that he has married a lady and made a slave of her. Yet some say, ***"You must not give a preacher anything; it will spoil him;"*** and say, ***"He that preaches the gospel shall live of it."*** They seem to think the pleasure of preaching is enough for them to enjoy, and many other mistaken views that make them look pitiful and deficient to the upright hearer and do-

ers of God's word. Read the 9th chapter of 1 Cor. and see how plain a truth it is that we should well consider this neglected subject. *"Blessed is the cheerful giver!"* And I feel sure that we can say, We have been multiplied with great joy in so giving. If it were in my power, I would remove every burden and discouragement from the path of our faithful ministers. But we can only lend a helping hand to each other, as we journey along this rugged way of life.

If it were not for the words of comfort that I sometimes get from a brother or sister, surely I would sink into despair. My life seems to have so many broken vows, and disappointments that my fondest dreams of natural life have proven to be but vanity to my soul; and my almost constant cry is, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And without the sweet hope in Jesus, and the blessed promise of the resurrection after death, I would be of all persons most miserable. But, with these evidences, I feel that it will be better farther on. Just a little while and the surging billows of time will cease and the peace of heaven will be ours. O, blessed home!

Please excuse this scribble of scattering thoughts, for I did not think of writing on this subject when I took up my pen. But I hope we can see eye to eye and speak the same thing, and wish the understanding of our brethren and sisters might be opened up, that they might enjoy the sweets of doing their duties one toward another.

Trustingly yours,
OCTAVIA J. GOAD.
Fancy Gap, Va.

BREWERS, Ky., Dec. 21, 1923

DEAR EDITORS: I have just finished reading the December 15th number of the SIGNS, and am so stirred that I am made to take up my pen to express some appreciation of the spiritual food the great Shepherd has enabled his undershepherd to give out to the bleating lambs of his fold. I realize I am weak, sinful and ignorant, but the Lord has dealt richly with me, whereby I am made to lay hold on some of his promises, of which I sometimes try in the light the God of mercy gives me to speak of the riches of his grace, and now in attempting to write it, as in speaking, unless guided by the Spirit of truth what I write will be as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. When the dear Lord is pleased to give the pen of a ready writer it is easy to write, or loosing our stammering tongue, it is easy to speak. God has said, My speech shall distil as the dew. When we begin to consider who spoke these words we find that God, who has all power both in heaven and in earth, needs not the help of puny man to arrange or take care of all his creatures, which were created for him and by him. Holy writ tells us that he (God)

formed a people for himself, and they shall show forth his praise. Now we understand that God not only created this people, but be formed them of the dust of the earth, and breathed into tbe nostrils of Adam, the head, or first man, the breath of life, and he (Adam) became a living soul. Adam did not know then, nor even after he had transgressed God's law, that any part of his seed should be so blessed as to be fitted for a paradise of bliss, yet it was so, and for no other purpose than His holy name's sake. The God of wisdom had well planned the structure of the new Jerusalem. He could view all of Adam's family, all steeped in sin; yes, and took into consideration all the cost of a well devised plan to bring a portion of this people from the thraldom of sin and place them around a great white throne, with their voices filled with sweetest strains of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made them accepted in the Beloved. Yes, *"Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table,"* and now, away down the steps of time, we, the pensioners upon that bounty, are given the eye of faith whereby we can with some boldness enter into the holy of holies and begin to take a view of this well devised plan of redemption to save rebellious man, who deserves nothing but the wrath of God. Dear reader, let us pause a moment, and by the eye of faith take a view back through tbe streams of time, and join with the faithful shepherds who were abiding in the field and watching over their flocks by night, when the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were afraid. I will add just here that every true shepherd is afraid when, the glory of God shines about him. But the point in view was to join in sentiment with tbe expression the angel gave those true servants. *"Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."* Then we can join in one accord, and say, Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and we want to call his name Wonderful, for , he counsels with us in the dark hours of midnight, when the enemy would hurl fiery darts at us until we despair of life. This Prince of peace would even give us to see our acceptance with the Father by and through the death and suffering of this loved Wonder from heaven, who came not to do his own will, but the will of the Father, and he said, *"This is the Father's will that sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."* Here again, dear child of God, we see a choice of love manifest. When tbe darling Son of God's love bowed his head and cried, *"It is finished,"* the prisoners were sent forth from the pit of sin wherein is no water. In this act of obedience

to the Father's will the Son broke down the middle wall of partition between us poor Gentiles and the Jews, who had become overzealous and pharisaical, to the extent they (the Jews) would call the poor Gentiles "dogs." Christ came to his own people and but few of them would own him as their kinsman, only those who were born again by the will of God. He said on one occasion, Other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them I also must bring. The striking point in all this "I must bring" is so suited to us poor Gentiles that we would want to say that our blessed Redeemer is still upon the throne of David ordering and establishing his kingdom with men. When the Comforter, which Christ promised his disciples the Father would send in his name, begins to take of the things of God and show them unto the heirs of promise they are often made to say, Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. These heirs of promise do not always reside upon the mountain; it is needful that they journey through the valley. The Lord appoints wearisome nights unto them. They, like one of old, are made to feel that they are left alone, but when the speech of the Comforter begins to distil into their benighted soul they are often made to say with the apostle, We are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God. When we would consider all of God's dear children with whom the Lord in his mercy has cast our lot, saying nothing of the countless millions scattered here and there, we are made to think it is an innumerable company, which man cannot number, but God's power and wisdom is so great he knows them that are his, and he will one day bring them all into his banqueting-house, and the banner of love will float over all, until all the redeemed of the Lord join in one song: Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory and honor, both now and for evermore. Amen.

Dear brethren, I submit this poor rambling article to your judgment. Do not let. it crowd out more worthy material.

Your brother in hope of blessed immortality,

J. C. CHESTER.

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union meeting will be held, the Lord willing, at Canaan Primitive Baptist Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in October.

The church is located on 844 (Mt. Cross Road.)

We welcome all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

Elder Mark Terry, Pastor
Fred Murphy, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene with Dan River Church the fifth Sunday in October 2006. We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially we would invite all ministers of our faith and order who would have a mind to come.

Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Bro. Allan Carroll, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 2006

Vivian Underwood-VA 5.00
Eld Ken Hopkins-VA 5.00
Eld Ralph Gaines-NC 5.00
Clara Jones-VA 5.00
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PSALM 136 : 26.

O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy endureth for ever.

OBITUARIES

SAMUEL G. BLANKENSHIP

S. G. Blankenship

Samuel Garlin Blankenship, 85, of 1025 Owens Road, Martinsville, died Thursday, July 14, 2005, at the Rehabilitation and Skilled Nursing Center at Oak Summit, Winston-Salem, N.C.

He was born in Floyd County on May 12, 1920, to Giles Elery Blankenship and Trudy Conner Blankenship.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by three sisters, Fannie Conner, Theodra Conner and Rlee Houchins; a brother, Odell Blankenship and a granddaughter, Rebecca Lynn Blankenship.

He served in the Army during World War II in the European Theater. He received the Purple Heart with Cluster.

Blankenship retired after 40 years as an optician, having co-founded Martinsville Optical Co. Inc. in 1951. He was a member of Martinsville Primitive Baptist Church on Rives Road where he served as a deacon.

Surviving are his wife of 60 years, Claudine Agee Blankenship of the home; three sons, James E. Blankenship of Martinsville, Herbert R. Blankenship of Winston-Salem and Samuel L. Blankenship of Charlotte, N.C.; seven grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

The funeral was held at 11 a.m. Monday at Norris Funeral Services chapel with Elder Clarence Stone officiating. Burial was in Roselawn Burial Park.

IN LOVING MEMORY
ELDER HAROLD RUDOLPH TONEY

On January 6, 2006. it pleased the Eternal God of Heaven to call Harold Rudoph Toney from his labor here in this world. He was born September 10, 1925 in Smith County, Miss. Brother Toney served his country during World War II and the Korean War, and remained in the military until his retirement on June 30, 1961.

The highlight of his life was being among the brethren in the churches that he served. He served several churches in Alabama during his ministry. He joined the church in 1961 because he believed and preached the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone.

He was ordained into the ministry in 1991. His faithful companion of 60 years. Sister Pauline, was always by his side.

Brother Toney leaves to cherish his memory 4 children, 2 sons and 2 daughters and his loving wife.

When I think of Brother Toney, I think of the text found in 2nd Timothy, Chapter 4, verses 7 and 8.

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

Written in love by Elder Theron Jones and a brother in hope in the Lord. We feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

Resolved 1 copy for church records, 1 copy for his family and 1 to be sent to the Signs of the Times.

Elder Theron Jones

Submitted in love
Your Bro. Theron Jones

PSALM 84:1-2.

How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts !

My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

United States Postal Service

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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SISTER, SISTER,

TAKE MY HAND
and we'll go back
as far as we can,
Back through the fields
of Memory
To the long-ago you and me.

childhood was home,
and home was light
and love and warmth
On a cold, dark night,
and there at the heart
of home were we,
The long-ago you and me.

We whispered secrets, laughed and cried,
Ran wild outdoors
or stayed inside,
Held safe in the arms
of family,
The long-ago you and me.

We were little then.
Now we are grown,
But I love you still,
My sister, My own-
and still at home
in my heart are we,
The long-ago you and me.

My wife Nellie Mae received this card from a sister on her birthday.

Kenneth Key

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EDITORIAL

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." James 1:27

Elder J.B. Farmer

There are many things in the world that are called religions. In some so-called pagan religions, the sun and moon and stars have been worshipped. Some have taken up the worship of the natural world in general. Some have looked to so-called "prophets" of the past for wisdom and for paths to right living. Some have made idols of wood or stone or precious metals and precious stones and have fallen down before them and have called upon them for guidance and deliverance. Some have even taken to themselves the name of God the Father or of His Son Jesus the Christ, but go about denying the true faith in words and deeds. Out of the innumerable multitudes of people upon the earth, only a very small remnant composed exclusively of God's elect has been given wisdom to serve the true and living God in that pure, undefiled religion in Spirit and in truth, by the grace and mercy and power of God.

There is a great difference between the false religions of the world and the pure religion of God. All the false religions have several things in common. They all have at their heart the teaching of the *"free will of man."* They all say that it is up to the individual to make the proper choices and prosper, or to make the improper choices and suffer the consequences. They all teach that their god can only work in a person's life to the extent that a person will allow it. They all teach that if the "good" deeds of an individual outweigh the "bad" ones, that individual will have a good outcome when his life is completed. They also teach the reverse – too many "bad" deeds will result in a bad outcome. They all subscribe to a certain code of behavior, which, if obeyed, they think will result in a kind of salvation. To sum it up, every false religion is a works religion that denies

the grace and power of God. They have no perceived need of the Savior. On the other hand, the pure and undefiled religion is grounded in the grace, love, wisdom and power of the God of heaven and earth.

The pure religion of God is altogether hidden from the person in a carnal mind. He, spiritually, has neither the eyes to see it, nor the ears to hear it, nor the heart for the understanding of it. It is written, ***"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."*** It also seems plain from the scriptures that ***"the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*** It matters not how diligently the things of the spiritual kingdom are inquired into, they are always hidden from the one in nature. It matters not how carefully a spiritual thing is explained – even in truth - the carnal mind cannot comprehend it. The simplest thing, of which a little babe in Christ is given an understanding, is a mystery, world without end, to the wise and prudent of this present evil world.

Since the pure religion of God is altogether hidden to the world, how then may anyone know anything about it? Since the things of God are in a mystery past finding out by the natural man, who may know any of them? And who is it that even has an interest in these things? These seem to me to be key questions. Since we are helpless in ourselves to know the things of the kingdom of God, it seems beyond a doubt in my mind that the things of God may only be known by revelation. God said that He hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes. Now, the babes must be the children of God, who are born from above. They are the only ones given a perfect interest in the things of the spiritual kingdom. If we are His children, born into the kingdom of God, we are given to desire to know the things of the kingdom. But we cannot just reach out and take them - all we are enabled to do is to ask for wisdom and then to wait upon the mercies of God. It is written one place, ***"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."*** Confessing our lack of wisdom, we beg that God would condescend to show us what is the pure religion and undefiled before God the Father, and what it is to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

The apostle James, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, describes the pure and undefiled religion. He says that it is ***"to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."*** But we know that this pure religion and this keeping cannot be what it seems to be, as

understood by the carnal mind, else revelation would not be required to know it. The world of false religion takes this literally and sets out to do a supposed good work by visiting and providing for natural orphans and natural widows. We also see them urging people to keep themselves by the works of the flesh. We see them as they go around the world, finding people in distress and begging for money to help relieve their misery. This might seem to be a worthy natural endeavor, but do we really know where the money goes? Do we really know what sort of people these are that put on a religious face? Do we really know what lifestyles they lead on the money they take in? Do we really know the depths of the false doctrine they teach to those they seem to be helping? Is providing naturally for indiscriminate people of the world really what James was indicating as pure religion and undefiled before God the Father? I am fully persuaded that the answer to each of the questions is, no.

Then what was James writing about? Who are the fatherless and who are the widows? And what does it mean to keep oneself unspotted from the world? I am made to believe that the fatherless and the widows refer to those who are destitute and helpless in this world according to the Spirit. They are those who are of a broken heart and a crushed spirit because of sin - those who are deeply in debt spiritually with no way to pay what they owe. They are those who are pilgrims in a desert land – a strange land where no man has pity – a wilderness where there is no food or water to sustain their life. They are those who are totally dependent upon the grace of God for survival and deliverance. They are the children of God. And we are taught by experience that it is impossible to keep oneself unspotted from the world. Because, when we would do good, evil is present with us. How to perform that which is good we find not. So, those who keep themselves unspotted from the world, no doubt to me, are those who have committed their keeping to Him that is able to do all things. The apostle said, ***"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day."***

May we take a brief look at what God did in Elijah's day? The scriptural account is found in the first book of Kings, chapters 17 and 18. God caused Elijah to pray that it rain not upon the earth. And a great drought came upon the land, which lasted for a period of three and a half years (a time and times and half a time). Near the beginning of the drought, Elijah was sent to a certain widow of Zarephath that was to sustain him during that time. When he came to the gate of the city, there was a widow woman gathering sticks. She and her fatherless son were destitute and were thinking to

die shortly because there was not enough food to sustain them. She was gathering sticks in order to dress a little cake for her son and herself, which she thought would be their last meal upon earth. Elijah asked her for a drink of water, which she gave him. Then he asked for a little bread to eat. She told him she only had a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse. And she said she meant to prepare that for her son and herself that they may eat it and die. Elijah then asked a hard thing. He asked her to make a cake for him first and to bring it to him, and after to make for herself and her son. All the substance of the widow and of her son was required. And she gave it in faith. But she and her son were not left to die. ***"And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah."*** Does this make you think of the widow that Jesus saw casting her two mites into the treasury? She had given all she had, even all her living. Jesus commended her and said that she had given more than the others, since the others gave out of their abundance and she gave out of her want. I cannot imagine that she was left to die, but rather I am made to believe that she was sustained all her days by the mercies of God, as have been all of God's little ones in this barren land.

There, to me, is the picture of the fatherless ones and the widows that James wrote about. They are the children of God, who by the gift of faith in God, are made to present their bodies a living sacrifice, which is their reasonable service, which is wholly acceptable unto God. These are the ones who are made to lay down their lives for their brethren. They are the ones who Jesus will set on His right hand when He comes in glory. He said that they had given Him meat and drink when He was hungry and thirsty. And they had clothed Him when He was naked, and had come unto Him when He was sick and in prison. They are the ones who didn't even realize that they had done a good work. These are the children of God. They are made to commit all unto God and shall never be disappointed because He keeps His own. He promised that He would never leave you nor forsake you. And He cannot lie or fail in a promise.

This also makes me think of the woman spoken of in Revelation chapter 12. If not deceived, this woman represents the church of the living God. She was persecuted by the dragon, who is the devil. It is written, ***"And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent."*** The wilderness is where the church is found, even where Jacob was found. Of God and Jacob it was written, ***"He***

found him in a desert land, and in a waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." The church, or the assembly of God's children, is carried by God into a desert land where it is nourished for a time and times and half a time, even as the widow and her son were preserved long ago. I am made to believe that this period of time is the same as the length of the drought in the days of Elijah, and that it stands for the total time from the beginning of the church until the coming of Christ to receive her to Himself. This, to me, is the same as the thousand years reign of Christ in his people, the church. It is the total time of the drought in the desert land where the church is placed and nourished, or the time when Jesus is not bodily with His people. It is also the span of time when He is with them in the Spirit prior to His coming bodily in great power and glory. It is evident that the drought is in the land, not in the church, because the church is nourished and sustained there.

In conclusion I must say that the pure religion that is undefiled before God the Father is the only true religion. It is altogether of grace and none of works. All other religions are false and counterfeit and worthless before God, like the religion of Cain. Only the little children of God ever have a part in the pure religion that is undefiled before God the Father, as did Abel. They are the only ones that are given to know the identity of the widows and the fatherless. Only they are enabled to understand the extent of the afflictions and persecutions of God's children as they travel in this world of wickedness. Only they are enabled to comfort and strengthen and encourage one another in the gospel of the grace of our Lord Jesus the Christ, as they travel together along the way. To them only is it revealed, from faith to faith, what the children of God must suffer. Only they are taught by experience of the hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and what it is to be poor and miserable and naked and blind spiritually. Only they have been given knowledge of what it is to be sin sick and in prison and under the bondage of Satan. Only those who have been generated of God are enabled to see and to enter into the spiritual kingdom and to embrace one another in it. Only God's little ones have the experience of passing from death to life, and being made to truly love their brethren. Only they are blessed to lay down their lives for one another, and to cast themselves upon the mercy and grace of God for their keeping. They are the only ones that ***"are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."***

May The God of heaven and earth give us a spiritual understanding of these things. May God be praised in all things, world without

end. This was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

J. B. Farmer
9-7-2005

VOICES OF THE PAST

"FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE." (1 JOHN III. 14.)

There is a class of professors who talk about loving the brethren, and thus proclaim themselves to be passed from death unto life. But, do they declare that Christ is precious to them? Do they tell how he became dear and precious to them? Have they seen and felt themselves to be base, things to be despised, vile transgressors? Is Christ Jesus the Lord that altogether lovely One, whom having not seen they love, in whom they rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory? Do they always manifest they have ever felt themselves to be poor lost sinners, that with a broken and contrite heart they were brought to Jesus' feet, and there in the crucified Lamb of God they found forgiveness, justification and hope of eternal salvation God hath called his own unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, and in due time Christ is revealed in them, he dwells in their hearts by faith. *"Christ liveth in me,"* saith the apostle. (Gal. ii. 20.) Do I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me? Oh this is the all-important question, a vital matter with a poor sinner like me, I know the apostle John speaks of the love of the household of God, one toward another, and speaking of the family of God he says, *"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren,"- 1 John iii. 14.* We have been taught of God, our heavenly Father, to love one another. But this love of the brethren is not apart from Christ and him crucified, but it is the fruit of, and flows from, our divine nearness to the Father, and to Christ, the Son of his love, our precious Savior. If we look into this epistle we find who they are that the apostle John is speaking of when he says, "We know," &c. They are the very family of God, they are fellows, the household of God, who are such in vital knowledge and experience of the things of the Father and of Christ, and that thus in this fellowship, this kinship, this union and communion, they love one another and so they are passed from death unto life. Let us hear the apostle declaring this matter: *"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)*

that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."- 1 John i. 1-3. What ministrations of the Holy Ghost have been our portion to bring unto us this divine fellowship. Christ saith, *"All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."-Matt. xi. 27.* Jesus saith, *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."John xiv. 6.* In the times decreed in Jehovah's counsel the Holy Ghost quickeneth the elect, who by nature are children of wrath even as others, dead in trespasses and sins. He convinceth them of Sin, to know themselves to be under the curse of the law, he leads them to Jesus, to the crucified Savior, He takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto them. And into the teachings and guidance of the Spirit of truth, into the truth of Christ's gospel we are led graciously yearningly into the blessed fact that we must be redeemed from under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons. (Gal. iv. 5, 6.) So in this fellowship of the gospel we have fellowship one with another. In the beginning of the knowledge of Christ the called of God have repentance given, a humble, contrite, supplicating heart, and that precious cry is put forth in their heart, *"God be merciful to me a sinner."* And oh when in Jesus it is ours to taste we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, what union then we have with our Savior, what fellowship! And, joined to Christ we are one Spirit with him. We have the Spirit of Christ, we are his, and he is ours, our dear Savior, and by his gracious Spirit in us we cry, *"Abba, Father."* Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. Without this union with Christ no sinner can be in truth of the household of God, and consequently can have no knowledge of kinship to the family of God. We must be born of God to love God, and to love the brethren. (1 John iv. 7.) For he that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. (1 John v. 1.) Beloved of God, this love of the brethren is more than mere lip love, for there have ever been carnal men among the people of God, who, as the Holy Spirit describes them to Ezekiel, *"They sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not."-Ezek. xxxiii.*

31, 32. "Love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous."- 1 Peter iii. 8. If we have passed from death unto life, and in this life love the brethren, our love will be more than words, there will be love's deeds. *"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."- 1 John iii. 18.* The carnal religionist with his superficial profession of love of the truth and to the brethren knows nothing of the work of the Holy Ghost in his heart, he has never known the burden of his vile transgressions, has never been ready to perish in his condemnation under the curse of the law, he knows nothing of repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ; he has never mourned unto God over his iniquities, was never prostrated at the feet of the Lord with a humble and contrite heart. Neither has he tasted the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputes righteousness without works. Oh blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. (Rom. iv. 6-8.) If through grace I am a believer in Christ what a favored sinner am I.

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress,
Midst flaming worlds in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

If Christ and him crucified be not in the heart's experience our consolation, our hope, our glory, then all this talk about loving the brethren, believing certain points of doctrine amounts to nothing and will be found of no account before the throne of God. These matters are of eternal importance, and that counsel of the apostle is not to be tossed aside as though we were beyond such counsel. *"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates." - 2 Cor. xiii. 5.* If Christ be in us, and we are his, then, *"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."- Gal. v. 24.*

FREDERICK W. KEENE.
Raleigh, North Carolina.

ST. JOHN, 15:174-19.

These things I command you, that ye love one another.

If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

1 PETER V. 7.

"Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you."

The children of God often find themselves utterly at a loss to understand or comprehend the ways of divine providence and grace, and can only say as one of old, His ways are past finding out. It is he himself that teaches that he ruleth in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou. They confess this, and at times are thankful it is so, for is there not comfort and security in such a doctrine. In it we see that not a dog can move his tongue, or a devil either, unless it be subject to the will and purpose of him that worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Men are also subject to him, even the rulers of this world, for when Pilate said to Jesus, *"Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee, Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above."* He is before all things and by him all things consist. An understanding of such a doctrine, imparted to us by God himself, is of great comfort to the soul, but few are able to travel long in the path of life, reconciled, with a calm and thankful heart, from every murmur free. God has ordained a furnace of affliction, and if he gives faith that believes that he who has promised is able to perform, he will try that faith; and just so, when we, as we hope, by his Spirit, have been taught to trust in his name and to rejoice in the truth that not a single shaft can hit, until he, the God of love, sees fit, we find the question asked, Do you believe God had anything to do with the sinking of that vessel, or the burning of that family and home. How has God anything to do with the sickness of this man, or with the death of his wife at such time as this, when he needed her so much. Thus we ask ourselves many questions, and are asked many such questions by others, and often such questions, when asked in the face of terrible trials, and what men call accidents, are almost staggering, especially if we are ourselves affected by the trial. If a terrible bereavement comes upon us we find it not so easy to live the doctrine, yet Jobe sorely afflicted, did when he said, *"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."- Job xiii. 15.* He has said, *"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father." "Fear ye not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows."* Again, he saith, *"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed as one of these. Wherefore, if God so*

so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith." It is the trial of faith that will show to us how little faith we have, and how little we truly believe the doctrine to which we have subscribed. There is not one of us but has his, or her, trials; some hard to be borne, and we do well to consider that

"Whatever crosses at thy door, It cometh from the Lord."

It is a crook of the Lord's making, and as long as he sees fit for it to be, none can straighten it. It may be to bring down our pride, to ***"hide pride from man,"*** or to show us wherein our strength lies, or to make us of comfort to the saints, or to prove to men and devils, as in the case of Job, that our religion is not a fair weather religion, but that it can stand fire and flood; and in all these trials, and many others, too numerous to mention, the presence of Christ is seen, as he was in the furnace of old, thereby proving that he careth for us. In all the ages the Lord has proven his care for his people in the furnace of affliction; such a way is needful or it would not be. He raised up a wicked Pharaoh who knew not Joseph, and he set over Israel task- masters, to afflict Israel with burden, but the more they were afflicted the more they multiplied and grew. The Egyptians made their lives bitter with hard bondage, yet the Lord still cared for them. Moses was born, and was hidden three months by his mother, who feared not the wrath of the king, and when she could no longer hide him she took for him an ark of bulrushes and laid it in the flags by the river's brink, the very river where the wicked Pharaoh had commanded them to drown their sons, yet God cared for him there. He was taken by Pharaoh's daughter and nursed by his own mother in the house of Pharaoh, the very man who wished to destroy all the male children of Hebrew origin. From this we can take this lesson: that the church of God nurses her children in the furnace of affliction. They are strengthened in the doctrine; the more they are afflicted the more they are trained up in the nurture and admonitions of the Lord. In the word of God there are many instances that seem just happen so, mere chance, yet when we trace the chain of circumstances connected with the particular case we find a wonder-working Providence governing all things: as, for instance, the Syrians had gone out by companies and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid. Who can describe the terror and abject loneliness of that little maid? Think of the parents, her mother, if mother she had, wringing her hands, sighing and pining for her little daughter. Many would there be in Israel then who would say, Tell us, did the Lord have anything to do with that? Thank God there were some then, and doubly thankful we ought to be,

there are some now, who unhesitatingly would declare, It is the Lord. Some who by faith could see the companies of Syria going just so far and doing just whatsoever God's hand and God's counsel determined before to be done. The child must leave the arms of the parents, must go into a strange and foreign land, and must go into Naaman's house. God cared for that little captive maid; he had a purpose. In Naaman's house she witnesses to the truth, and her testimony was for one whom God cared for, though in God's purpose he was held by a more relentless foe than even the captive maid. He was none other than Naaman, the captain of the host, but he was a leper. Yes, he cared for Naaman.

He cared for Saul of Tarsus, even while he went about breathing threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord. Saul did not understand, he had no eye to see, the Lord using his persecution for the furtherance of the gospel. It is written, " As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and hailing men and women, committed them to prison." The following verse declares the result in the purpose of God. It says, " Therefore they that were scattered abroad, went every where preaching the word." Thus a persecuting Saul of Tarsus, in the purpose of God, did more then than all the missionary boards can do today, although they claim to be on the Lord's side, for there has never been a preacher of the word sent by man, anywhere. Why is it that Saul of Tarsus, Naaman and his companies, Pharaoh and his host, or the devil himself, can do nothing other than God's hand and his counsel determined before to be done? The simple reason is, *"He careth for you."* For God's dear saints there is a Covenant, ordered in all things and sure, and in this covenant

"Jesus is engaged to save
The meanest of his sheep,
All that the heavenly Father gave
His hands securely keep.
Nor death, nor hell can e'er remove
His favorites from his breast."

They are loved with an everlasting love. God has predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. As this is his purpose he will care for us along the line that we must travel. I might predestinate my trunk to go from here to New York City by railroad. To bring that about, the track must be there, the sleepers in their place, the station, the signal boxes, the men, the engine, coal, steam, and all other requirements must be there or ever my trunk can safely be delivered to its destination. Thus we believe Pharaoh was in the purpose of God, fore-

ordained to that very condemnation, as was the devil himself, and as were the companies of Syria, and if the word be true, that God has created the waster to destroy, and these wasters of Israel were in Israel's life of old, in the life of the captive maid, yes, and in the life of our blessed Lord, who shall say they will not be in our lives, Peter tells the scattered saints of old of a fiery trial that was to try them, and it is true today. God's dear scattered saints are a poor and afflicted people, having fiery trials; yet Peter by inspiration says, casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you." There comes before our mind one dear sister, over eighty years of age, whom we once saw lying on her couch under terrible distress. Trouble had come upon her in her advanced age and was crushing her to earth: we said, Why should these things be? Faith answered, "He careth for you."

"Blind unbelief is sure to err
And scan God's work in vain."

He is a very present help in time of trouble.

"The flame shall not hurt thee, I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine."

We have seen another, younger in years, afflicted in body so that she could hardly move a limb, given up by earthly physicians, having little to look forward to but death and that which is beyond, and to the honor of his name we have seen that he careth for her. Is he not the helper of the helpless? We visited such a one and while there she said, *"Sing Rock of Ages."* We sang that and *"Father, we'll rest in thy love,"* and as we got in our car we heard the afflicted one singing by herself in the house, and all we could think of was, *"And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God."* Later we asked why she sang when we left her a few nights before, and the reply was, *"Because I was happy."* It is because, *"he careth for you"* that the theme of Jesus and his love makes the captive portion sweet. It is his care that made David say, *" Yea. though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."* His care for Israel of old was wonderful. He brought them from under Pharaoh's yoke with a high hand and an out stretched arm and led them through the sea, gave them bread from heaven, water from the rock, a cloud by day and pillar of fire by night, their shoes did not wear out, nor their clothing decay, all because " He careth for you," for were they not a type of Israel today? They rebelled and we rebel, too. There is nothing that brings out the spirit of rebellion more than trouble. " The trial of your faith." It is easy to say, " Thy will be done," but his will is a cross, and under the trial he sends we kick like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke. It is galling

and so humiliating, especially if it affects our personal reputation, we feel ashamed to be seen among the brethren, we ask the reason why. Pride must he abased. He made himself of no reputation; we would be his, yea, be like him, but it is unpleasant to die daily, to take buffetings. Oh the strugglings and strivings we have to be freed from the yoke!

Paul prayed very regularly to be delivered from a thorn in the flesh, but his request was not granted, and there is not a doubt in our mind the reason for it was that *"He careth for you."* All these trials, crosses, losses, thorns and snares we must and shall endure in this life are for the lifting of Jesus on high. They are to show us, as we are exercised thereby, how base and vile, unworthy and helpless we are, and, like Paul, we are taught of him to know that when we are weak, then are we strong, and we glory in our infirmities (that are made plain to us in the furnace) that the power of God might rest upon us. Thus his care is such towards us that we shall at last confess, as did Israel of old, that the Lord delivered us and that *"there failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass."- Joshua xxi. 45.*

Elder George Ruston

ELDER THOMAS J. PRINCE (1857)

Martin, Tennessee

Dear Brethren;- For some time I have been impressed to write a sketch of my experience of my past life.

I was born in the year 1857, of Old Baptist parents, and in my childhood days at times I had some serious thoughts of death, but I grew to manhood loving the pleasures of this world of sin, yet I never got into the habit of cursing as other boys did, and of course I thought I was a very good boy. In the year 1876, when I was about nineteen years old, one day I was at a church meeting of Old Baptists with my father and mother, and after services I was walking home with my brother and two of my cousins when very suddenly I was deeply impressed with the thought that I was a lost and ruined sinner. I felt that I wanted to seek some place where I would be alone and ask the Lord to have mercy on me.

I did not want those who were with me to know how I felt. That day my mourning began. I mourned sore like the dove and did chatter as the crane, and my very breathing was, Lord,be merciful to me, A poor, lost, ruined sinner. It seemed there was no mercy for me, yet I continued to beg for mercy. At times I would feel the burden not so heavy, and think I was mistaken, and think to turn back to the pleasures of the world, but,oh my soul, my burden would return

with more force than ever and I would think that surely there never would be any relief for my pressed down and burdened soul. In the meanwhile, father was badly afflicted with dropsy. We were living in Tennessee at that time, but had been living in Illinois, and Father wanted to go back to Illinois, so we took him back, and he died there in the year 1882. I was at that time in the deepest of my troubles, had no hope, and was without God in the world. When Father was dying he bid me farewell, hoping to meet me in that rest that is prepared for them that love God. Oh, that was the darkest hour of my life! Father going to that home of rest and I feeling doomed to eternal punishment of the presence of God. I had come to the place where I felt I was too unworthy to even try to pray the Lord to have mercy on me. In fact, I felt there was no mercy for me. After Father died we moved back to Tennessee, but I could not be still, for I was in such deep trouble. This heartfelt trouble went on with me until the winter of 1883. But I came to a place in my life I will never be able to express. I seemed to fall into a subconscious condition. In fact, I had come to the end; I could do nothing more. I felt sure the day of grace was past for me, and I had to stand still. I could not turn back, for when I looked back over the way I had come it was nothing but eternal banishment from the Lord. So it was with me for about a month, as nearly as I can tell, that I was in a dormant state of life, and I seemed that I could do nothing else but stand still. While in that sub-conscious state, one day I went to hear two traveling preachers speak at Old Gibson Church, and went again that night to hear an old brother preach in a schoolhouse, and the rest of the night after preaching I staid at the home of a brother Stallings. When I awoke the next mornrng the burden that had been pressing me down since the year 1876 was gone, and I felt like shouting praise to God. I felt like I wanted to take brother Stallings in my arms and tell him what a change I had met with, but something kept me from telling anyone how I felt. My heart was filled with praise to God. The next day I went back to my home, feeling I would tell my mother and brother what a glorious change I had met with, but something kept me from telling them, yet my heart was full of praise to God for four days and nights. On the fourth day my brother and I were in the field gathering corn, when these words were spoken in my heart; Go preach the gospel. When this heavenly call came I almost fell to the ground, and felt in my heart to answer, O Lord, I cannot preach the gospel. I surely did feel to be nothing; yes, less than nothing but I was given a strong impression to go. I tried to think I surely was mistaken, but the impression grew stronger instead of leaving me, but I said in my heart I would never try to preach. After that I even denied I had ever had any change,

when a preacher asked me to do my duty and join the church. They saw in me something I had tried to keep secret, and when I did join I went to meeting, saying in my heart I would not join. But I was made willing, and could not forbear any longer,so I offered myself, was received and was baptized the next day. After I was recieved as a candidate for baptism, as we were coming home my sister-in-law said to me, Tom, you have gotten rid of a burden you have carried a long time. I said, Yes Mary, but there is a greater burden behind it all. I had reference to my impressions to try to preach. The next time I went to meeting after I was baptized the preacher asked me to take part in the preaching. I declined, and told him he was sadly mistaken in me to think I would try to preach. Soon after I joined the church in Gibson County, Tennessee, we moved to Union City, Obrian County, Tennessee, and I said, They shall never know I have been impressed to try to preach. So I suffered under the impression for about four years. My mother would say to me, You will have to try to preach.

I would reply, No, I will die before I will try to preach. I just could not be obedient to the heavenly call. I was as the apostle Paul was, I went on suffering, until one night the Lord showed me he had power to kill, and I thought my time had come, that I must die. It seemed I felt the burning of hell for my disobedience, as I begged the Lord to spare my life and I would try to speak in his great and dear name. So the next meeting day I went, and the pastor of the church asked me again, as he had been doing, to take part and try to preach, and I feared to not try at least to open services, by song and prayer, so I humbly went into the stand, gave out a hymn and kneeled down and offered a few words of prayer. I thought that was all I would try to do, but as I arose to my feet my mouth was opened and I spoke for about twenty minutes as fast as my tongue could speak, and I sat down in perfect peace. That was my first effort in the way of preaching. If I am not mistaken, that was in the latter part of the year 1888 or some time in 1889. The brethren seemed to think my gift was self-evident, so in the month of May, 1890, they called for my ordination, and the third Sunday of that month I was ordained and set apart to the full work of the gospel ministry, or duties of an Elder in the church of Christ, and from that time until now I have been trying with the ability God has given me to speak to God's beloved Zion of his wonderful love and mercy to the children of men.

I could tell many more things, but this letter is getting too lengthy Now may the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well

pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Dear editors, if you deem this article worthy of a place in the Signs, please publish it, for I have for some time been impressed to write to the household of faith. I have passed my eighty-third birthday and have become feeble. I have heart trouble, and know not the time when I shall be called from this world of affliction, so farewell.

I remain your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life.

THOMAS J. PRINCE.

"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." -- Revelation i. 18.

What a mercy that he who was dead lives at God's right hand! that he lives as a risen head; that he is not a dead Saviour; but a Saviour that lives for evermore; that can and does bless; that can and does comfort; that can and does bring the soul safely through all. He is not a Saviour that stands as it were upon the brink of a river, and pulls us out when we have swum half way out ourselves; he is not a Saviour that will take us half way to heaven, and then, as Rutherford says, let us *"fend"* or shift for ourselves. He must take us to heaven throughout. We are nothing, we have nothing without him. He must be, as he is, our *"all in all."* We value him in his death, nothing but his death could reconcile us to God; we value him in his life, nothing but his life can save. We want salvation now; salvation in the heart; a Spiritual salvation revealed in and unto the soul; a salvation worthy of the name, wholly, fully, completely, finally, and everlastingly to the praise of super-abounding grace; a salvation indefeasible, never to be lost; worthy of God, worthy of the God-man; adapted to every want of the soul, coming into every trial of the heart, and able to save the vilest and the worst, *"without money and without price."*

Elder J. C. Philpot

ST. JOHN, 15:20-21.

Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

DAYS OF A TREE

"They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." Isaiah 65:22.

I have thought that the *"tree"* here spoken of represents Christ, who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and as his days so shall the days of his people be. As I lay back, with closed eyes, I seemed to see a little tree in all its verdant, springtime beauty, clothed with leaves and blossoms. In the warm sunshine and gentle breeze it waved and beckoned with its spreading branches, and how sweet to rest beneath its shade, enjoy its fragrant bloom, and reflect on the prospect of fruit to follow. So shall the days of my people be. Where is the similitude of the days of a tree and the days of the Lord's people? Let us go back to the early experience of a child of God,

"When converts first begin to sing,
Their happy souls are on the wing:
Their theme is all redeeming love,
Fain would they be with Christ above."

Oh what lovely blossoms, and what a sweet savor of Christ they send forth as they call and beckon to us to *"come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." "Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein."* The trees of the field do clap their hands, the cedars of Lebanon (the older brethren) bow at his feet, and praise him in fullness of joy, resting in the blessed promise that the Lord will not leave himself without witnesses. Perhaps the little tree had stood unnoticed, apparently dead, until the little leaves began to grow and the signs of life involuntarily began to appear. What rejoicing now that we see it is not dead, as it appeared, and now we hope to see the sweet fruits of the Spirit evidenced later on, for they shall take root downward and bear fruit upward. But, as the days of a tree, by and by the sun does not shine so brightly, clouds appear, and oh how dark it becomes. A storm arises, and in the raging the poor little tree sways and bends, the lovely bloom is beaten off and swept away, or covered with earth. The storm passes, and the little tree is left standing, not so proudly, perhaps, but of a more sore dignity, as, the promising bloom gone, the fruit buds begin to appear, and as the fruit buds begin to appear, and as the fruit increases in the upward branches the root is taking deeper hold in the earth. So are the

days of my people.

"It is not long before they feel
Their feeble souls begin to reel;
They think their former hopes are vain,
They're filled with sorrow, grief and pain."

Cannot every child of God go back in memory to the time they thought they would always go on their way rejoicing in the bloom of their earliest love, believing the enemies of their carnal nature were all slain, and would never vex or annoy them any more? But alas, the little clouds begin to arise, vexations come, and the lovely bloom is beaten off as the sorrows of the world worketh death to the sweet spiritual enjoyment, perhaps leading them as far as Peter, to even deny the Lord, saying in doubt and unbelief, that after all it is only a delusion, and they were deceived and had deceived others. Where now is the blessedness ye spake of? The beautiful promising bloom which looked so pleasant is gone from their view, swept away and buried in the storm of earthly cares and sorrows that has so unexpectedly fallen upon them. *"But the root of the righteous shall not be moved."* The storm passes, and they find themselves still standing in the faith of God's elect, cast down, but not destroyed. Oh then the fruit buds begin to appear, as in humbleness they are brought to see that it is not in their own strength they stand. *"I am the root and the offspring of David"* This is the Root that extends downward in the earthen vessel of mercy. Each can say, O Lord, *"my goodness extendeth not to thee,"* but his goodness does reach down to every vessel of mercy. The strong downward Root holds firm, and will not let them be overwhelmed. They are made to realize that *"the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit", which* is borne upward in praise and thanksgiving to God for deliverance from the storm. The many storms of affliction and sorrow, trials and tribulations, perils and persecutions break and beat upon the *"trees of righteousness the planting of the Lord..."* until they bow and bend, so shaken in mind they fear they cannot stand; no, not another day.

"I fear at last that I shall fall,
For if a saint, the least of all."

Yet when the storm passes, and the Son of righteousness once more beams forth, then in this light, and not their own feeble sight, they see it is not in their own strength they still stand, but the Strength of Israel has held them. Not by works of righteousness which they have done, not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord. Much more of the cherished fruit is gone. But when blooming youth is gone, and old age comes on, we are made to realize that it is the bitter, gnarly fruit

of self-confidence and fleshly ambition that is being beaten off. It came from earth, and must fall back from whence it came, for *"Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up,"* but the *"tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord,"* its fruit shall remain. One by one we see every earthly hope and joy beaten off and swept away, but the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace and fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, oh nothing shall ever be able to separate us from that. How gladly we should have the gnarly, poisonous fruits of the flesh pruned away, so that we might shine forth as the morning, with not a cloud to intervene between us and our Rock, who shelters us in their weary land of storms and trouble. As the tree grows older, as the growth in grace and in the knowledge of truth increases, the poor tempest-tossed child of God seems to gain strength in the storms, often stands more firm, and is not so easily tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine; does not so lightly bow and bend to the 10 heres and 10 theres, but the sweet fruits of the Spirit are borne upward to him, the Strength of Israel, the Root of David, in the earthen vessel, has kept him from falling, and enables him to say, I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me. If it is his will that I shall weather another storm he will give the old trunk, stripped of all the foliage of youthful hopes and ambitions, every branch of earthly aspirations and joys broken off, strength to endure. But oh the weakness of the flesh. How we do shrink and dread when we see the storm coming, though there is a *"needs be"* for it all, and we know that

"Not a single shaft can hit,
Until the God of love sees fit."

How we do feel the need of the prayers of all saints, for it does seem at times that this flesh and heart will surely fail. Oh may he, by the power of his might, when the adverse winds do blow, give me strength to still stand in the way, ready for whatever is in the counsel of his will to come next.

"As the days of a tree." How often have we seen the tall cedars, the sturdy oaks, beaten by the storms of many seasons almost to the ground, nothing left but their bare old trunks, and to all appearance have lived their time and served their purpose, yet they do not quite fall; not yet, their downward roots have not yet parted from the earth, they must wait the appointed time to fall. So shall the days of my people be. Old age is come, the bare old trunk is stripped of every alluring earthly joy, until there is nothing left to live for, and *"I long to lay my armor by, and dwell with Christ at home,"* for

"Surely like a withered tree,
No fruit to me is found,
Why do I live, O Lord, I cry,

A cucumber of the ground?"
"When a few more days I've wasted,
When a few more scenes are o'er,
When a few more griefs are tasted,
I shall fall, to bloom no more."

But not yet. The downward Root has not yet parted from the earthen vessel, and though I often feel, especially in the heart-rending trials I have endured of late, that there is no fruit borne upward from such a withered and weather-beaten old trunk, yet all the days of my appointed time I must wait until my change comes.

One night as I lay thinking of the trials and conflicts of the Lord's peculiar people these words came to my mind with force, *"I see men as trees walking,"* and I thought how like a tree is the walk of the Lord's people. None can see men, nor the people of God, walking as trees, untilled out of the town, or world, as was the blind man, by God's own hand, and how short the time until made to see that as the days of a tree, so are the days of the Lord's people. He sometimes lays his hand heavily upon us, showing us what great things we must suffer for his sake, until we cry, *"Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me."* Whom he loves he rebukes and chastens, and it is his chastening hand that makes us look up, until we see clearly every man, every child of God, walking the same path, every one enduring the same storms and afflictions, for if ye be without chastisement, then are ye bastards and not sons. There is no place of rest for us in the town, or world; we cannot go back there, or tell to any in the town of the things we see clearly. They know nothing of the reproach of the cross, and have no sympathy for the mourning people of God. But to our own house, there we may freely go, sure to find there the sympathy and fellowship we crave. There all speak the same language, weeping with those who weep and rejoicing with those who do rejoice. Here we see men as trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, walking the same road, buffeted on every hand by storms without and within. The same storms that beat and bend one old tree beat upon all, and though one may feel that the storm has brought him a little lower than the richest ever get, yet all the rest feel the same way: less than the least of all saints. But in this is our fellowship and our love made perfect, and we often find the lowest tree bears the sweetest fruit, as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood. What a comparison. The low apple-tree is the one that bears the fruit. The ones that stand the highest are not always the most fruitful. But *"as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the*

sons." "Though the Lord be high, yet has he respect unto the lowly." His loved ones among the sons of earth are lowly. A proud look he hates and abominates. The proud he knoweth afar off. But the fruit of his love on the lowly trees is sweet to our taste; yes, sweet, because when we are made to look up we see that his banner over us is love, and know that, *"Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me. "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."*

As the days of a tree, so are my people. As the tree falls, there shall it lie. It falls to earth, and returns to the dust as it was, and so shall it be until the bright morning of the resurrection, when the Lord shall bring again in power that which fell in weakness, and will clothe it again in the beauty of holiness, then shall we be satisfied. Every idol that now intervenes between us and our love will be swept away, and we shall see his face, and never, never sin. No more storms of darkness and sorrow falling upon us, no more crying of pain and anguish, no more griefs and heartaches, no more trouble and mourning, no more losses and crosses, no more wars and fighting, the conflict will be over, our warfare ended, and God himself shall wipe the tears from off all faces, for, *"as one whom his mother comfort-eth, so will I comfort you."* Then shall we see him as he is, and be like him. *"As the days of a tree [He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief] are the days of my people."*

Mary Ellison

MEETINGS

BLESSED ASSOCIATION

The thirteenth annual session of the Little Vine Olde Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association was held with the Newfound Church on Brier Creek in Wyoming Co., W. Va., 10:30 A.M. The fourth Sunday and the Saturday before in August, 2006.

I feel that a few vessels of God's mercy assembled themselves in bonds of His great love, This love binds the believing family of God together in this lower ground of sin and sorrow.

Saturday morning, Aug. 26, greetings were given to the visiting brethren, members and friends by the moderator, Elder Jerry Farmer.

Service was opened by Elder Alan Terry using hymn 259 and prayer. The introductory discourse was then delivered by Elder Terry from John 7:37-39. He preached a very moving sermon about the great rivers of love that descends from the courts of glory for the receivers of

God's great love. After preaching we agreed to pause for lunch.

Saturday afternoon early we began our business session which opened with hymn 188 and prayer by Elder Hale Terry.

Letters from the churches were requested. The letter from the Newfound Church was received and read. Messenger Letha Sizemore was present. The letter was accepted and the messenger was seated. the letter from Lost Creek Church was received and read. Messengers Grover Rogers, J.B. Farmer, Sherry Farmer and alternate Kathy Lewis were present. The letter was accepted and the messengers were seated.

Recognized Churches and Associations of like precious faith and order who are in fellowship but not in direct correspondence with us.

Bordeaux Church: Elder James Howard, Sister Sylvia Howard, Brother Gene Howard, Sister Libby Howard, Brother George Hyslip and Brother Tracy Jacks.

Buttahachie-Hopewell Assoc.: Sister Shelby Stratton.

New Dan River Church: Brother James Shelor.

Pigg River Assoc.: Elder Junior Conner, Sister Sally Hodges.

Smith River Assoc.: Elder Alan Terry, Sister Lorraine Terry, Elder Hale Terry and Sister Glenna Terry.

Staunton River Assoc.: Elder Marvin and Sister Becky Brumfield, Brother Randolph and Sister Peggy Wells, Sister Libby Hedrick.

Valley View Church: Brothers Donald Agee and Kenneth Thompson.

Agreed to seat these brethern and the business session was dismissed with prayer by Elder Alan Terry.

After a brief pause a hymn was sung and Elder Junior Conner came to the stand. He preached from Galatians 5:22. He remarked that he could fly as easily as he could preach the Gospel of the Kingdom. Elder Conner was lifted from the darkness of nature and brought such a message of comfort from that good land, that all present feasted from it. After Elder Conner sat down, Elder Farmer read the following scripture relating to Elder Conner's first remarks: Isaiah 40:31. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with their wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

I believe sincerely that Elder Conner was visited from that good land on high to tell the good news that is stored for his chosen race.

Elder Hale Terry then came to the stand and preached from Matthew 25: 31-46, it was a very moving sermon that all seemed to feast from. Words cannot describe his ability.

The Saturday Meeting was then closed with hymn #175 and prayer by Elder James Howard. Saturday evening brethern and friends met for fellowship and singing.

Elder Jerry Farmer welcomed all,

visitors, brethern and friends on Sunday morning. He called Elder James Howard to the stand who opened the service with hymn 174 and a prayer. Elder Howard preached from Isaiah 40 1-2, who brought forth a very moving message to the household of faith. Elder Marvin Brumfield then preached from Ephesians, Chp. 1. He was lifted up in that good land. Elder Hale Terry then preached from Acts 20:28. Words again cannot express the love and fellowship that was presented by these Elders and received by all. Elder J.B. Farmer closed the preaching from Galatians 31: 28-29. It is beyond the comprehension of fleshly minds to know and understand the beauty of God's Goodness that existed. You see the tears of love and joy descending down the cheeks of those feasting from the Master's Table of Love.

We certainly missed several of the preaching brethern that couldn't make the services, either due to illness or other commitments: Elders Kenneth Key, Elder Waymen Chappel, Elders Cabbage and Cleo Robertson. Physically and spiritually, you always miss your brothers.

The meeting was closed by Brother George Hyslip with hymn 175 and prayer.

In closing, I will confess that I have never attended an association where God's great love was manifested any more beautiful than this one.

We want to thank Elder Farmer and Sherry for their generousity in presenting us with the minutes of the services.

In bonds of love,
Riley & Delores Justice

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 2006

James Campbell, CO	5.00
Donald Agee, VA	5.00
Naomi Coker, NC	10.00
Eld. Raymond Goad, VA	15.00
Doris Giles, VA	5.00
Billy Poindexter, VA	5.00

REVELATION 7:15-17.

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

POEM

REST.

Resting in the Rock of Ages
We may fear no earthly foe;
In him all our joys are centred,
From him all our blessings flow.

Resting from the world's tempta-
tions,
Resting from the strife within,
Resting from ourselves and Satan,
Resting from the blight of sin.

Resting when the darkness hovers
O'er the ever moving deep,
Resting when our hearts are aching,
And our eyes they cannot sleep.

Resting if we cannot answer
All the questions that arise;
Though cast down we're not for-
saken—
Faith and hope still underlies.

Kept by such a wonderous power,
Can our hearts refuse to sing,
Glory, praise and glad thanksgiving
Unto Christ, our living King?

Lizzie Macallum.

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EDITORIAL

ESTHER

Esther 4:14, "And who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

Though the name God is not mentioned in the book of Esther, I know of no book that sets forth the purposes of God, His power, and His love for His people any more clearly and beautifully than Esther. There is none like our God. ***Isaiah 46:9-11: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."*** God has a purpose in all things that come to pass both that which seems evil to us as well as that which seems good to us. ***Proverbs 16:4: "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Romans 8:28. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."*** But, God says concerning His chosen people, ***"This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." Isaiah 43:21.***

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, invaded Jerusalem and carried many of the Jews back to the lands he ruled. Now, in the days of Esther, another king (Ahasuerus) reigned from India to Ethiopia which included Persia and Media. At the time of Esther, Persia was the current-day southern Iran and Media was the current-day northern Iran. Among the Jews living under the rule of this king were Mordecai and

Hadaseah (the Hebrew name of Esther). Esther was her Persian name. No one but Mordecia knew that Esther was a Jew. Even though Mordecai and Esther did not know the trials that lay before them, God had brought them to this place for such a time as this. He would manifest His love for His people and His power to watch over them and provide for them, all to His praise, honor and glory.

For 180 days the king showed off ***"the riches of his glorious kingdom and honour of his excellent majesty"*** to his princes, nobles and servants. Afterward, he made a feast for all the ones present and commanded the queen be brought to show off her beauty. She refused to come. Why would the queen refuse the commandment of the king to exhibit her physical beauty? The vanity of the flesh would have given most in her position great satisfaction. I believe God imputed into her a desire to refuse the commandment of the king because God had ordained that Esther be the queen for such a time as this. Neither king Ahasuerus, queen Vasti, Mordecai, nor Esther knew the purpose of God that was unfolding. The king and his advisors decided that the queen must be replaced. Though none of these people knew anything of the purposes of God, He was working all things after the counsel of His own will. God provides that which His people need before they ever experience the need of it. Christ was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world as set forth in Revelation 13:8. The cure was already provided before the disease made its entry into the world. Thus, God brought to pass His will that the queen be replaced. He had already prepared someone to take the queen's place, but no one knew that yet. All the beautiful young virgins of the kingdom were gathered together and brought to the king's palace. God gave Esther great beauty but I also believe that God gave her an inward beauty that she was shown great kindness and preference by those of authority in the palace. She ***"obtained favor in the sight of all them that looked upon her."*** The king loved Esther more than all the other women. She was chosen as queen, but she did not reveal that she was a Jew for Mordecai had charged her not to reveal it.

As Esther sets forth a little child of grace, Mordecai is a type or figure of the Holy Spirit. He sat in the king's gate. The gate was the entrance into the city. It was where business was conducted. The gate sets forth the heart as the Holy Spirit is in the heart of the Lord's people. There, the Holy Spirit comforts you, teaches you, and brings all things to your remembrance. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth and as Christ said, He will abide with you forever and dwelleth with you and shall be in you. The Spirit will guide you into all truth. Mordecai in-

structed and guided Esther in things that she should and should not do and revealed things to her. He revealed to Esther a plot by two of the king's chamberlains to kill the king. Esther made the matter known to the king and the two men were hanged on a tree. The incident was written in the book of the chronicles. This may seem such an inconsequential matter, but it was all a part of God's purpose to deliver His people.

Then, the king promoted a man named Haman above all others in the kingdom and everyone was commanded to bow and reverence this man. But, Mordecai refused to do so. Mordecai told the king's servants that he was a Jew so Haman knew also. Haman, filled with wrath, was determined to destroy Mordecai and all the Jews throughout all the provinces of this king. The king gave Haman approval to do with the Jews as he saw fit; therefore, it was decreed that on a certain day all Jews would be killed, both young and old, little children and women. Haman promised to pay money to those in charge of the killing. Mordecai knew what Haman had done and sent word to Esther that she must go before the king and make supplication for her people. She must let it be known that she also was a Jew. Esther knew there was a law that whosoever came unto the king in the inner court without being called would be put to death unless the king held out the golden scepter. She told Mordecai that she had not been called to come in unto the king for thirty days. Mordecai responded, ***"Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For it thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"***

God, in his infinite wisdom and sovereign grace, had purposed and prepared Esther for this moment. Esther did not know the purpose of God in her being made queen and neither did anyone else. But, can't you see that everything that had taken place was leading to this time and place? So with every child of grace. You do not understand why you must travel the road that you do and why you must experience the things that you do, even severe trials and afflictions. You have a great fear to go before the Lord's people and ask for a home with them. You feel that you are not worthy; that you do not have an experience to tell them. Dear ones, that is an experience. As the Lord put the question to Adam in the garden, ***"Who told thee thou wast naked?"*** Who told you that you were a sinner and unworthy? Only the Lord can show you that you are a sinner without any worthiness of your own. But at the

Lord's appointed time, He makes you willing in the day of His power. Esther was made willing to go before the king. She said *"...so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish."* By the law, she must die. The law is an administration of death. We all have transgressed the law which is sin. Therefore, we are judged guilty and the penalty is death. The Lord's people have one who is without sin who stood in their stead. He bore their sins in His own body; took the judgment for them; took the penalty for them and the wrath of God's divine justice and satisfied it by laying down His own life; and justified them by coming forth from the dead-conqueror of death, hell and the grave. So Esther transgressed the law. But, now she stood in the presence of the king and was clothed in royal apparel. She did not have on her own clothes of the works of the flesh, but rather royal apparel of the king. So the child of God is clothed with royal apparel of the King of kings—His righteousness.

You have been brought to the end of your works and now feel to be so helpless and so alone. There is no support or strength in the flesh. There is no one to lean upon or that can reach your case. As Esther was alone before the king, so you find yourself alone before the King of kings, feeling so condemned and lost because you have been made to see yourself as a transgressor and not worthy to even lift your eyes toward heaven or call upon one who is holy and altogether lovely. And, it seems you find yourself before him not knowing whether you will live or die. You confess that you are a sinner and not worthy of His love and mercy; but, yet begging for it. You viewed yourself as black as the earth from which you were formed. Now, you are given to behold one who is the perfection of beauty. Without spot, blemish or any such thing, you gaze through the eye of faith upon the very beauty of holiness. There is a joy unspeakable as you feel in the very depths of your bosom a love for one you call your savior, your friend, your Lord and at the same time you feel a love for His people. You are given a desire to tell them what the Lord has done for you and you want to say to them *"Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me."* Esther was given life by the king holding out the golden scepter which was a manifestation of his love and mercy to her and the scepter sets forth his power and authority. The gold of the scepter sets forth righteousness. *"The scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter."*

Psalm 45:6. Christ had all power when He walked upon the earth as a man in the flesh yet without sin. For the fullness of the Godhead dwelt in Him bodily. He was God in the flesh. He had the power to lay down His life and the power to take it up again. No man took it from Him. His love and mercy was manifested in bearing the sins of all His little ones in His own body and laying down His life. He said Himself, ***"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." John 15:13.***

Esther requested that the king and Haman attend a banquet that she would prepare. Haman was exalted within himself as he felt to be the favorite of the king and queen. Yet, he was filled with wrath at Mordecai for not bowing to him and reverencing him. On the advice of his wife and friends, Haman built a gallows upon which he purposed to hang Mordecai. However, that night the king could not sleep and he commanded the book of the chronicles be brought and read to him. Then the record of Mordecai revealing the plot of the two chamberlains to kill the king was read. God caused this king not to sleep because it was God's purpose that this incident be brought to the king's remembrance. God controls all things no matter how insignificant they may seem because He has a purpose in all things that come to pass. Haman came to the king to request that Mordecai hang on the gallows that he had built, but instead the king honored Mordecai by putting royal apparel and the royal crown on him and having Haman bring Modecai on horseback through the city. Haman was even more angry. But, the events that took place with the two chamberlains plotting to kill the king, Mordecai revealing it, the incident being recorded, the king unable to sleep and reading about it were all in the purpose of God to deliver Mordecai from being hung upon the gallows. ***"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."***

At the banquet that Esther prepared, she told the king that she was a Jew and that this wicked Haman had sold she and her people to be destroyed. Haman was hung on the gallows that he had built to hang Mordecai. The king granted to Esther and Mordecai to write to all the Jews and the Persian leaders of all the provinces that the Jews could gather together and defend themselves by killing anyone who would assault them. The scripture says that many of the people of the land became Jews for the fear of the Jews fell upon them. Over 75,000 of their enemies were slain by the Jews in that one day.

Esther 10:3 reads: ***"For Mordecai the Jew was next unto king Ahasueus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the***

wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed."

The festival of Purim was established to celebrate the deliverance of the Jews of Persia from a plot to destroy them. Purim comes from the Persian word pur which means lot. Haman had drawn lots to fix the certain day that the Jews would be killed. Aren't you thankful that you believe in a God who has all power, who controls all events and all things, and who loves and is merciful to His people? ***"And who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this."***

Yours in hope,
Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

September 29, 2006

Dear Brother Terry,

I am sorry the renewal of the Signs slipped my mind. So I have just gotten the October issue and sit right down to renew.

I am including a check in the amount of $30.00 Twenty-five for Signs and rest to use as you see fit. Thanks and may the Lord continue to bless you in all your endeavers.

Sincerely yours,
A brother in Christ is My Hope,
Love, G.M. Lockey

Oct 10, 2006

Dear Elder Terry,

Enclosed please find money for a 2 year renewal for The Signs.

I do so enjoy reading all of the good editorials and articles from the past. Even though there is no longer an established church here in the Northwest, I I have been blessed with O.P.B. friends who also take The Signs and who believe in the doctrine of election and the absolute predestination of all things.

God has brought all this to pass for me since I was blessed to subscribe to The Signs ten years ago, after being without it for over ten years or more.

May He bless you all to rightly divide The Word of Truth and enable you to publish this paper which has been so precious to so many of the Lord's people for so many years.

My hope and prayer is that I am included in that number.

In the ties that bind and in that precious hope, I trust.

Caroline Martin
Seven Bays, Wash.

JOHN 6:67-68.

Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

October 4, 2006

Dear Elder Terry,

I really enjoy all of the reading in the Signs of the Times. I am sending you $30.00 and please renew my subscriptions for 2 more years?

Thanks so much
A little Sister in Hope,
Sallie R. Hodges

Sept. 25, 2006

Dear Elder Terry,

Here's my check for two years subscription to The Signs of the Times.

I enjoy reading each and every word in it.

Thank you and every one that works on this wonderful paper, but I thank "The Precious Lord" most of all for giving you all the knowledge, strengh and inspiration for what you do. I know that it is all through Him anyway!

I enjoyed so much being with you and your wife and everyone at the Little Vine Association. (I'm the one running around with the camera.)

Do what you'd like with the extra money.

I love each of you for Christ's sake.

Libby Hedrick

September 30, 2006

Elder Terry,

Enclosed is my check for $15.00 to renew The Signs of the Times for a year.

I look forward each month to getting the Signs of the Times and I enjoy it so much.

Shirley Breggs,
3201 S. Miami Blvd.
Durham, NC 27703

Dear Elder Terry,

Enclosed is a check for $40.00 renewal for two years and rest to use as you see fit. I enjoy reading the Signs. My daughter came across some Signs of the Times dated back to 1889 and the doctrine of Salvation by Grace and grace alone was preached and wrote about then and still today because God changes not neither does his Word.

A brother in Hope
Elder Ronald K. Crouch, Sr.

---

1 CORINTHIANS 2:9.

But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

September 2, 2006

Dear Brother Randolph and Sister Peggy,

It was good to see you both and the other faithful Brethren and Sisters yesterday at the Smith River Association. Sherry and I both enjoyed the singing, preaching and fellowship there. Once again, I believe that God was merciful and good to us in giving us a blessed and peaceful meeting. Thankfully, we safely returned home last night at about 10 pm. We have thought about the ongoing meeting today and hope all will be blessed to continue in love and decency and order throughout the remainder of the Association. We are looking forward to our meeting tomorrow with Lost Creek Church here and are thinking about you both as you prepare for your meeting with the Malmaison Church there.

I would like to sit down and write a short letter, according to your suggestion Brother Randolph, concerning the *"foolishness of preaching"*, which you mentioned Sister Peggy, if God would bless me to that end. And I hope we may be given to talk together about these things in the future if the Lord is willing. I am made to believe that these things are in a mystery , which is hidden to the carnal mind and is past finding out by anyone in nature. These things are hidden from the wise and the prudent but are revealed unto babes.

The first thing that comes to mind is how foolish Spiritual things are to natural men. The apostle Paul said by the Holy Spirit, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." In order for anyone to see, hear or understand anything that God has done, that one must have been born from above into the Spiritual kingdom. If one has not that birth, it is impossible to even know or acknowledge that a Spiritual kingdom exists. He is totally dead to the Spiritual realm. Jesus said unto Nicodemus, *"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."* The person not born of God cannot help thinking that anyone is deluded who professes to believe in the sovereign God or who professes that God rules in the affairs of men. And he thinks the true believer is the worst kind of fool to believe in something that does not exist. And the preaching of the gospel of grace is surely foolishness to him.

Those in the religious world even many that call themselves Christians and profess to believe the things written in the Bible cannot fathom the Spiritual kingdom truth of the gospel of grace, for they are still in nature. The inspired apostle said, *"The natural man receiveth not the things*

of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned." Even those religious men who have spent their lives studying the scriptures cannot imagine that God rules in the army of heaven and amongst the inhabitants of the earth. They cannot look into that Spiritual kingdom and see that God chose His people in Christ before He made the world, even though it is so plainly written in the scriptures. That thought is foolishness to them because the carnal mind cannot see the kingdom of God. When God's people are given to tell the truth of the gospel of grace and the power and wisdom of God, they are to the unbeliever and false professor as one who is bearing false tales. So the preaching of the gospel is foolishness to the world. It is no wonder that God said through the apostle, *"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."*

Along these same lines He was blessed to say, *"It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."* This same foolish preaching, as perceived by natural men, is salvation to the family of God. It is not, as the world says, necessary for one man to preach to another in order to get him saved. Rather, the preaching of the gospel is to the household of faith for edification, comfort and deliverance from the false doctrines and traps of the devil. Salvation is deliverance from the evil things in the world. Paul instructed Timothy by inspiration, *"Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."*

God is so wise that He has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty.The true preaching of the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit is total confusion to the one who is wise in his own conceits. Those who have worked to search out the meaning of the scriptures or the meaning of life have always come to wrong conclusions, but they unknowingly and falsely hold on to them as truths. When the actual truth is presented to their hearing, it does not match their strong, falsely held positions, and therefore they must reject the Spiritual truth. The truth confounds them. God has chosen a people who are the weakest of the weak. They are the fewest of all people. They are the most uninstructed in the ways of the world. They are made to have no confidence in their own strength or in the strength of other men. either in worldly wealth, worldly knowledge or worldly position. Their confidence and strength is in the Lord alone. Isaiah was blessed to say, *"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They*

shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

The world is strong and wise and confident, but it shall be brought down. The children of God are weak and foolish and have been humbled, but they shall be lifted up. Jesus said, ***"Whoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted."*** Jesus also said, ***"Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."*** God has humbled His little ones and caused them to know that they are nothing, even less than nothing. He has converted them, or turned them around. He has made them to see themselves differently than they once did. He has made them to behave differently than they once did. He has given them a view of things they never saw before. He has taught them the language of grace and put a new song in their mouth of praise toward Him, Who alone is worthy. He has given them a desire to please Him and has given them a love for His people. He has become all things to them. Christ Jesus of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

Even though our little meetings, and our foolish preaching, and our lack of confidence in men is despised and counted for nothing by the world, we continue on by the grace and power of God. Though the world may laugh us to scorn and ridicule us for our foolishness and weakness, we are made to take it and to understand that this is our lot in this world. Even though the world may hate us and speak evil of us falsely for the truth's sake, we must expect it. Jesus said if they hated Him, they would also hate us. The world is not our home. We are strangers and pilgrims here. We are only passing through.

I know that you both know these things and are established in them, but it seems good from time to time to speak of them. May God keep you in His love and care all your days, and may He cause you to be faithful unto death that you may receive the crown of life.

We look forward to seeing you both again, if and when the way is opened for us. Sherry joins me in sending our love. Jerry.

P. S. We have been invited to the New Dan River Church meetings on the fourth weekend this month and hope to attend.

PSALM 131.

Lord my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me.

Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child.

Let Israel hope in the Lord from henceforth and for ever.

VOICES OF THE PAST

NOW AND THEN

Things continue as they were of old. There is nothing of this world that has been created since the creation of the world in the six days. Men have discovered things that they did not know. Such things are new to them, but they were of old.

However there have been many changes in my memory. The customs that prevailed when I was a lad in many respects have undergone great changes. Concerning morals, manners, standards of action, rules of life, and results there are manifest differences.

In the manners of children and the demeanor to their parents there have been many mortifying changes. Then parents took more oversight of their children, and required more of them in obeying, and that they should remain more at home. Parents felt that their children needed the watch-care of parents, and children had more affection and love for their parents then.

There was much less going to school then, and more labor performed by children. The discipline gave the children more physical and mental strength. The labor they performed gave hardihood and physical endurance. But little medicine was given. Food was plainer; simpler and less productive of indigestion.

When children went to school then fewer books were used, less lecture work, more was required of pupils to dig out, solve and explain the things of the text books, so that the mental discipline which the children received gave them more vigor of mind, and greater power of declaring what they knew. There was more regard for character then-greater carefulness in speaking the truth, and complying with their obligations. They were more careful to save their earnings. They labored far more, and spent much less. Now give a child money and his first thought is to spend it, whether for anything of value or not. Then the thought was to save money. It is not so now. The habit or saving now is a lost art. Then young men were afraid of debt, and sought to have a reserve fund beyond what their expenses were.

There were no banks then in my section, but young men were their own bankers, and loaned their money, or invested it in some way. But few debts were made by them.

They didn't use tobacco often. Cigarettes were unknown. Drinking was not much practiced. Seldom did a young man become intoxicated. If he drank much he was disgraced. No sane man wished to intrust important business to him. A man did not smoke in the presence of a lady. Manners were much more genteel then. A man's word was his bond. These remarks applied to first-class men. There were a few of

the baser sort that had no respect for themselves or anyone else.

There were but few divorces then. When a man married a woman then it was with the aim to make her a husband. Nor did the wife expect to spend her time in dressing and other extravagances. But she had her duties to help in keeping-house. There was not so much trouble then about cooks. For mothers taught their daughters while they were growing up to cook and do other house work so that a young man's wife knew how to prepare meals and did it: nor was it half prepared meals that caused indigestion.

Such a thing as suiciding was seldom heard of. People were happier, loved life better, were more healthy, and sought better things than to waste money, kill time &c.

There was much more staying at home then than now, because the restless spirit of going and spending money, and killing time was not known then as it is now.

At the present time there is much disregard for Sunday by many people. It was a day of cessation more from ordinary labor then, and man and beast rested more. People that labor six days in a week should rest from their labors one day in seven, and so should beasts of burden. But one cannot rest until he has first labored. It is not a good sign to see people engaged in plays, frolicking, drinking and such things on Sunday. Time spent more in the study of the Bible, and in attending the worship of God is far better.

What we sow we also reap. They that aim for and seek nobler things than the vanities of earth, and remember their creator in the days of their youth, lay a better foundation that do such as waste the days of their youth in the formation of habits that bring on dissipation and end in woe and misery.

P.D. Gold, in Zions Landmark.
Thanks to Brother Keith Hiatt,
Reidsville, NC

LOVE

Volumes have been written, books published, language employed, images made, money, time, and even life itself have been sacrificed for the purpose of demonstrating the power of love; and, yet, we find ourselves as blind and as much at a loss to understand the vital meaning of the word as though it was entirely new and had just dawned upon us. We consult our dictionary and find it defined as warm affection, devotion, courtship and charity. We take each of these words, especially the word charity and undertake to exhaust it and we are carried back to the word "love," So we are left, at last, to wrestle with the word *"love,"* or not so much with-the word as with the living vital principle.

We cannot do better than to take the expression of John, who said,

"God is love."-1 John 4:9. And, again, *"Love is of God."* If we were to seek for the origin of love, we would be compelled to seek to find the origin of God, a task that we could never perform. So let us content ourselves, as much as in us is, to look for the manifestation of love. *"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him."- 1 John 4:9.*

A thing may exist and we know nothing of it; and its mere existence gives us no comfort, because it is not manifested. Still there are things embraced by hope and manifested by faith so that we can well and truly say, We know. *"For, through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."- Heb. 11:3,* By faith we know we love the brethren, and we know that we have passed from death to life because we love the brethren. And we know that we have been made alive (quickened) unto a love which we had not hitherto known. *"Love worketh no ill to his neighbor : therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." - Rom. 13:10. "Love covereth all sins,"* God has manifested his love to us by giving us eternal life, putting his spiritual life into us, and giving us spiritual exercises, such as prayer, hope, faith, love (charity), joy, long-suffering, repentance, and fellowship in the spirit. But, while this is true, we cannot always see the good things that God has given to us, for he is a Spirit and his spiritual gifts are invisible to the carnal man. So we need some one to guide us. He also gave us the ordinance of baptism, in obedience of which we have the gift of the Holy Ghost, which also manifests the gifts of God; and, as these things are manifested to us we rejoice in them. Accordingly, he manifests his love to us in taking away our sins. Under the old covenant, *"The blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh." Heb. 9:13.* But, under the new covenant, "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" In baptism, we have the answer of this good conscience toward God (1 Peter 3:21). Now, as God has so loved us as to give us eternal life, and to purify our conscience by the blood of his own Son, is it great wonder if we love him? Surely he first loved us. If we love him, what a grand and a glorious privilege it is for us to manifest our love for him, and for each other by keeping his commandments, which are not grievous (1 John 5:3). Now the commandment which we had from the beginning is that we love one another. If we love God, we love his people, the church;

and, if we love his people, we love him. We manifest our love for God by attempting to draw near unto him; and our love for each other by attempting to draw near to each other. The apostle Paul, in his letter to the Hebrews, puts it this way *"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."- Heb.10:22.* When we see people drawing near we say; O how they love! We may be prompted to give our goods to feed the poor, to speak with the tongue of angels, or even attempt to exercise faith in doing some wonderful thing, and yet, if we are not prompted by love or charity, it is no profit. Love (charity) is long-suffering, kind, affectionate, not easily puffed up, it behaves itself seemly or comely, is gentle, easily entreated, thinketh no evil, does not envy, endureth hardness, is not conceited or proud or boastful, does not seek her own, and, instead of blowing the faults of others, uses a mantle of charity or forgiveness to cover them. Love seeks the good of the brethren, instead of trying to injure them. Could I but possess the traits above mentioned, with their accompanying virtues, it would be of more import to me than much wealth.

Elder J.A. Ashburn

SOME TRIALS AND DELIVERANCES.

Elder F. P. Branscome, Dear Brother: I am sending you two dollars, and wish you to send the Messenger of Truth to Mrs. Mary E. Johnson, of Anson, Texas. The other dollar is for your charity list.

I have just read September number of Messenger, which I think is unusually good. The editorials are words of truth spoken in soberness, and seem to appeal to my feelings more than usual. The poetry was good and the letter to the dear old brother was so timely and good. How I do love to see the aged, poor, and afflicted ones remembered an cheered on their sorrowful journey. Jesus says he receives such conduct as being done to himself.

I feel a desire to tell you of some of my trials and deliverances during this year. Last spring I was walking along the path from the family cemetery, where repose the precious dust of my dear husband and children, weeping bitter tears over my sad and desolate life and, also, over a felt toss of the comfortable presence of the Lord to my soul, when, suddenly, my mind was caught away from present surroundings.

And, when I next realized where I was I was standing some distance from the place, singing that dear old song, *"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound !"* The verse that I was repeating was:

"The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures."

And though I cannot sing, because *of* throat trouble, and had not attempted to do so for nine years; yet I do think I Sing with the spirit and made melody in my heart to the Lord. And though doubtless my singing would have been poor music to creatures, I believe the dear Lord received it as a song of praise and thanksgiving. Then how my mind reverted to a precious blessing that I received some years ago, from the words: *"Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee."* These words came at a time when my iniquities were gone over my head and were a burden too heavy for me, And I seemed to reason with the Lord and tell him I was a great sinner, and asked, How can the promise apply to me? And when I saw, as I never did before, how I stood in Christ all fair and spotless; and that the Father beheld me thus:

I could not describe the view I had, by faith, of *my* safe standing in that covenant ordered in all things and sure. Neither can I tell you of my great joy — O; it was unspeakable! And it did seem enough to forever dispel all doubts. But, as David Says, *"He restoreth my soul;"* and how often, since then, I have *felt* the need of restoring mercies, that I may walk in paths of righteousness.

During the past summer I have been very ill and did not regain my strength as I usually do, after the warm weather is past, and feel much impressed that the end is near; and often do I long to depart and be with Christ which is far better. The hymn:

"What cheering words are these?
Their sweetness who can tell?
In time, and to eternity,
'Tis witb the righteous well,"

is often mine, every word seems to be mine. During my illness the Lord seemed so precious, and I was often sweetly meditating on the scriptures, and on the sweet promises which I hoped the Lord had given to me at different times, so that, I could say, *"I called upon the Lord and he heard me and delivered me from all my fears,"* And I did so much dread returning, even for a short time, to the things which are seen, which are temporal. And, as I improved a little in strength, I had to take on worldly cares, my felt comfort seemed to decline. But I have the promise that I shall see Him again, and my heart shall rejoice with a spiritual joy that no one can take away.

The first epistle of Peter has been very good to me recently, and I do feel an abiding hope. I am desiring the sincere milk of the word, that I may grow in grace. How sweetly Peter speaks of the Lord's

dear people as being a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people," etc., and further admonishes them how they should live, giving Christ as their example, who, when he was reviled; reviled not again. When he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously. Why, my dear brother, there are many admonitions that I need to pray hourly; and, surely, I need to pray hourly,

"And lead us not into temptations, but deliver us from evil;" Many times I feel an impression to tell or write of the Lord's goodness and mercy to me. But, when I attempt to do so, words fail to convey half of its sweetness, and I can adopt the poetry:

"Living tongues are dumb at best, And we must die to speak of Christ ;" etc.

If you see anything in this worthy of a place in your paper, and can decipher my penciling, you may use it. But I shall not object to its being consigned to the flames. I am too nervous to use a pen.

May the Lord bless you and make you useful, and a comforter of his people. And this means much tribulation and many sorrowful hours to you, Pray for me, a needy sinner.

Mrs. Fanny P. McNeely
Ridgeway, Virginia

Sent in by Brother Keith Hiatt, Reidsville, NC

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF ELDER ASA D. SHORTT.

Elder F. P. Brancome, Dear Brother: By your request, I will give a sketch of my life for the benefit of your many readers.

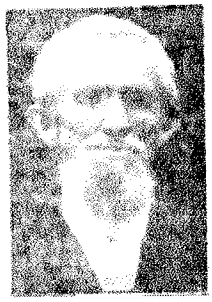
Elder Asa D. Shortt

I was born in Floyd Co., Va., April 17, 1842 : and was a son of Joseph N. and Mary Shortt. My parents were both Old Baptists. I can remember something that occurred before I was four years old. I have a sister four years younger than myself, and can remember very distinctly when she was born.

My schooling was very limited: for; all put together, was about six months. My first two monthg at school were before I was eight years old, and the last months were before I was sixteen years old.

I had some very serious thoughts about my future condition, when about twelve years of age, and continued so from time to time till I was nearly twenty-six years of age, when I hope that my sins were manifestly pardoned: my raising was very moral, and was not given to the use of profane language. But I know I was tempted with it at times. In June, 1861, I volunteered as a soldier in the Confederate army; and, in the following September, was

mustered into service. I remained in the army, and prison together, until the 13th day of March, 1865. During the last fifteen months of my service, I was a prisoner of war, at Rock Island, Ill. I was taken prisoner in the battle at Missionary Ridge, November; 1863. I wish to relate an incident that occurred at the battle of Chicamauga. Our regiment had to double-quick for a distance of about four miles, in order to take its position in line of battle. We expected it to be a very hard battle. It seemed to be facing almost certain death, and that I would, if killed, go away into everlasting punishment. I could hardly endure the thought of going into the battle. But this scripture was presented to me. *"I have planted, Apollas watered; but, God gave the increase."* It was applied to me in this way. You may do all you can to save your life, but if you are spared God will do it. The fear of being killed was greatly removed. My right hand man was slightly wounded, and my left hand man was mortally wounded and died the next day. But I was spared and desire, even to this day, to be thankful to the Lord for his protecting hand that sheltered me during that trying time.

After returning home from prison, I was married, January 9, 1866, to Miss Sarah A. Graham. Ten children, seven daughters and three sons, were born unto us. Five daughters and one son are all that are now living. For nearly two years after I was married I lived the most careless life that I had ever lived. When I came to myself, as I trust, I thought my condition was sealed. Then for nearly three months I never bowed my knees in prayer, for something seemed to say, *"It will do no good: for there was a time when you could have repented, but now it is too late."* It was Satan talking to me, and I did not know it at the time ; but I think I know it now. I did not love sin, and it was very annoying to me: for I felt to be accountable to God for all of my sins. I had sinned knowingly, and had no cloak for my sins. On the night of the 8th of January, 1868, after retiring for the night: we were talking of a thing of a dishonest nature that had taken place in the neighborhood. I said to my wife, *"We may hide from men, but we cannot hide from God."* At that time, I felt to be as honest as I ever was in my life. I had felt, for quite awhile before this time, a desire to know something about the love of God. After we had ceased from talking, something seemed to say, to me, *"get up; go out of the house and pray ;"* but something replied, Saying, *"It will do no good."* I thought I would pray in secret, for I did not want my wife to know anything of the exercise of my mind. But my mind became very dark, and I could not think of one word to say. I then went a short distance from the house and knelt down, and all that I remember saying was, "Oh Lord, if it is thy will, shed abroad thy love in

my heart this night." (And in all of my prayers since then, I have been very sensible that I must pray for God's will to be done.) Then I returned to the house; and, in a few minutes, something effected my whole being, and with it the tbought came, *"It is a change."* I thought I would not tell my wife, but could not refrain from it: for my heart was full of love, not only to the Lord, but to all of my fellow creatures, especially to the household of faith. At that very time of rejoicing, I was forcibly impressed that I would have to preach; and, also, of some of the reproaches that would befall me. From then till the Saturday before the first Sunday in April, 1868, my mind was impressed in regard to joining the church and being baptized. When I talked to the church, I never thought of trying to preach. I was received and baptized the next day, the first Sunday in April, 1868, by Elder Thomas L. Robertson. From then till the next meeting I was impressed daily; more or less, to talk in public; and made my first effort to talk publicly the first Sunday in May, 1868. I tried to talk occasionly for neariy two years before I received much strength in trying to preach. Though, occasionally, while trying to preach, I received a renewal of that strength, and do occasionally, to the present time; and this is the strongest testimony that I have that I am called to preach. I was ordained to the ministry, Saturday before the first Sunday in September; 1873, by Elders Daniel Conner, G. L. Tuggle, and Wilson H.Dodd. It was quite awhile before I was called on to serve as pastor of churches. But for five or six years I have been serving as pastor, and am now serving four churches, Salem, Paynes Creek, Long Branch and Country Line. I but seldom let my domestic affairs prevent me from attending the churches. At times I am very desirous to meet with the churches; but, at other times, it is a cross. But I go all the same, for I feel to be accountable to God for my stewardship.

I have never traveled any great distance from home to preach, until the last two years. There are two notable reasons for it. One was: I had a wife and several children to help care for; and the other was: I was fearful that, if I should travel among brethren with whom I was unacquainted, they could not make any allowance for my failures. But, as I get older I feel more inclined to visit some of the churches at a distance.

Brother Branscome, I submit this for your inspection, hoping it may be, if printed, of some comfort to some of the readers of the MESSENGER OF TRUTH. I am,

Yours in hope of eternal life,
ASA D. SHORTT.
Floyd,Va., Nov. 21, 1908.

PSALM 136:26.

O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Southampton, Pa., Jan. 22, 1918.

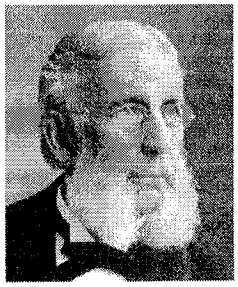
Elder Silas H. Durand

Elder H.H. Lefferts — Dear Brother: — When left to myself and to my own thinking powers, the result is not valuable, but when the Lord's most precious thoughts are given me, "the sum of them" and the value and beauty of them are infinite. He says, I know my thoughts concerning you: thoughts of peace, and not of evil; to bring to pass an expected end. Now, at any time when the Lord's thoughts come into my heart and take possession of my soul, then I can understand how a sacred principle of reconciliation is connected with the gospel of the dear Savior. I know that by the peculiar power of faith I am right sure of this; but I am so very seldom, if ever, in possession of that holy, heavenly principle. It is by this faith alone that the divine power of faith can be known, and by that alone can resignation, true resignation to the will of God, be known by mortal, sinful man. The power of this soul-searching principle cannot be obtained by anything that mortal man can do. It is, like all things belonging to the kingdom of Christ, the gift of God. We cannot purchase it, we cannot make or create it, we cannot obtain it by any device of men. In no way can it come into our possession except as the gift of God by the power and will of Jesus Christ. The day after I was baptized, over fifty-six years ago, I found this question in my mind: What is faith? What is there in mind now that was not there before? At that time I was at peace. I was glad all the time for those few days, or, I might say, weeks. The Word was there and the church and the brethren, and I wanted no more. I thought then I could see and feel the power of faith. I was not curious, but had enough for my own poor soul. I do not think I have had much more of a view of faith since then than I had at that time. How many things are said about faith in different parts of the New Testament! The brethren, Paul and others, are so clear in their arguments and write so confidently that it seems I can see their statements as unanswerable and can follow them with assurance. Then I turn to my own heart to see if that holy principle is there, and with a drooping head and with a great deal of uncertainty I have to acknowledge much of the time that I am not sure I have faith. Sometimes I can see and hear from others the same things that are in my own heart. Then I can but recognize evidence for them, and see it forced back upon me as a reflection in a glass; as the apostle says: ***"We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."*** I have to acknowledge that. So when evidence

of this kind is experienced, we have to acknowledge it is true, we cannot dispute it; and the apostle gives evidence thus by inspiration, which comes by divine power, showing what is true in us and true in Jesus. He says: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, evidence of things not seen." Concerning faith and the exercise of it and many things connected with it in such a wonderful manner, I would love to write a little or talk a little, but the time has gone by for that. I cannot feel that I shall write at length any more; but I do enjoy talking with the brethren and to hear from the publishers of the Signs and others of the brethren scattered far and wide. The unity of the brethren manifested in the writings is delightful to me. The great beauty of the doctrine and of the order of the church takes hold upon my soul most thoroughly. Zion is called in the Psalms *"the perfection of beauty."* My mind has been led, when writing and preaching, to trace out the exercises of such as feel, like I always have, that they are the poorest of the poor, and that strongest doctrine (if there be any difference) would be the only doctrine that could answer the needs of such a weak person as I.

I can go no further just now. On January 5th I entered my eighty-sixth year.

Your brother in hope,
Silas H. Durand.

THE FREE GIFT.

"For the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification." - Romans v. 16.

How grand is the bountiful mercy and far-reaching power of God declared through the above Scripture! Sinners with a multitude of sins are rescued from the power of death and justified, notwithstanding their mountains of sin. To human minds this seems unreasonable and outlandish. Finite minds cannot comprehend the great condescension of our God to his chosen people, or the disparity shown in the text: that for one single offence, and that offence somewhat mitigated in favor of man because of Satan's interference with the affections of the woman, all the unborn nations should fall under the curse of death, without a single exception, and that the free gift should fall upon many whose offences were many and great, displaying the mighty power of grace through the Lord Jesus Christ. Briefly stated, just one transgression sunk a world of unborn human beings into the pit of death, but the free gift is given unto millions irrespective of their numberous transgressions. Though their "sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." - Isaiah 1. 18. Though death holds a firm grip over all the sons

of Adam, yet how much more shall the blood of Christ deliver the chosen vessels from the grasp of Satan unto the glorious liberty of the children of God. When mortals are led to behold the manifold beneficence of God to unborn, undeserving sinners, dead in sins, the cry of grace, grace, looms up in their hearts, and they are made to taste of the wonders of the free gift and the powers of the world to come. It is always supposed that a gift is free; that is, not in exchange for something valuable, but altogether one-sided. A gift bestowed upon a person often signifies that the donor has love for the receiver, which would indicate that the gift was free. The apostle uses the phrase, "free gift," clearing all doubt from our minds of any meritorious work on our part. No carnal reason can be given why God loved sinners when they were dead in sins. The fact is that God did love his people when they were dead in sins, and did quicken them together with Christ, and did raise them up together and made them to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, for the very purpose "that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." Surely the "free gift" manifests the exceeding riches of his grace. No saint moved by the Spirit of Christ can crave anything better than redemption through the blood of Jesus, and no better way to receive the knowledge of the free gift than through the channel of faith and grace. Having faith and grace we have hope, the free gift, an all things belonging to the household of faith. Love and mercy were stronger than death, the work of the devil, so that many offences, as it were, brought complete justification. Just so, according to Scripture, the wrath of man and the work of the devil shall all finally praise the Lord Jehovah.

All for the saints,
J. F. Beeman.
Tiawah, Okla., August 13, 1917.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 2006

Elizabeth Hedrick, VA	25.00
Glenna Link, VA	25.00
Susan Shelton, NC	5.00
Elder Ronald Crouch, WVA	15.00
G.M. Lockey, NC	5.00
Bluma Pryor, NC	5.00
Elder W.W. Hudson, LA	5.00
Hazel Garland, MD	2.00
Sallie Hodges, VA	5.00
Alfred Ratliff, VA	25.00
Michael Stiltner, VA	5.00
Bernice Haygood, TX	5.00
W. W. Stutts, TX	5.00

Vera Potter, MS 5.00
Jerry Mourer, AR 75.00
Ferne Harrell, TX 5.00
Caroline Martin, WA 5.00
Owen Dalton, VA 5.00
Chlonetia Thompson, VA 3.00

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1 CORNITHIANS 15:26-27.

The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.

OBITUARIES

OBITUARY OF SIS. EVA EDWARDS GILLEY

With a mixture of joy and sadness, I will endeavor to give an account of the life and death of a dearly beloved sister in Christ, Eva Mae Edwards Gilley. Sis. Gilley was born in Carroll County, Virginia on October 16, 1945 and died at Martinsville Memorial Hospital on July 7, 2006, at the age of 60. She was one of the 12 children of the late Arthur C. Edwards and his wife, Nannie Tolbert Edwards.

Sis. Eva attended Fieldale High School and was later employed for many years by American Furnitire Co. She was first married to a Mr. Nichols, by whom she had two daughters: Cheryl Marie Nichols, who preceded her in death; and Mrs Eddie (Teresa) Stewart. On January 18, 1980 she was united in marriage to Bro. Linwood A. Gilley with whom she lived happily until her passing.

On the 1st Saturday in September, 2005 Sis. Eva asked for a home with Liberty Church and was joyfully received. She requested immediate baptism and was baptized the next afternoon by Elders John Wingfield and John Lee. During the remaining ten months of her life, she manifested a great love for the church and for God's children everywhere She abundantly demonstrated her faith by her works. She made a profound impact on the church in such a short period of time that her memory will be cherished by us all a long time.

Her funeral service was conducted at Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church in Patrick County on July 9th by her pastor. Her mortal body was laid to rest in the church cemetery near Bro Gilley's parents and other members of his family In addition to her husband and her daughter, she was survived by four brothers, two sisters and three grandchildren.

How appropriate and applicable to Sis. Eva is that scripture which declares ***"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his***

Saints." We rest in hope that, one day, we shall meet her again where death and sorrow will be unknown."

In accordance with our custom we agreed to prepare three copies of this memorial: one for our church records, one to be given to her family and one sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Elder John T. Wingfield,
Moderator and Acting Clerk

OBITUARY OF SIS. SADIE RATLIFF JOYCE

With sorrow for our loss but joy for her great gain, we record the death of our dear sister in the faith, Sadie Ratliff Joyce. She was born in Patrick County, Virginia on April 3, 1915 and died at the Blue Ridge Nursing Home in Stuart on May II, 2006, at the age of 91. She was a daughter of the late Pierce L. and Sis. Rosa Graham Ratliff, both of whom attended Liberty Church most of their lives and Sis. Rosa was a long-time member.

On July 27, 1940 she was united in marriage to Rufus Elgin Joyce, with whom she lived happily for over 63 years, until his death in 2003. To their union were born two children: one daughter, Mrs. Billy (Jean J.) Stone; and one son, Troy Joyce. In addition to her children Sis. Sadie was survived by four grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and two step-great-grandchildren.

For fourteen years Sis. Sadie worked as a nurse's aide at the Blue Ridge Nursing Home, where she herself lived the last few years of her life. While employed there, she was blessed to assist in the care of her mother, among others.

Sis. Joyce united with Liberty Church by experience the Ist Sunday in December 1992, and was baptized two months later by her pastor. She was a faithful and well-loved member; her attendance was hindered when her husband became bedfast due to bodily infirmity. We did their mowing for some time until they both were confined to the nursing home and they were always kind and courteous to us. A severe disease of the mind was what eventually led to her death.

Funeral services for Sis. Joyce were conducted at Howell Funeral Home Chapel on May 13th by Pastor Rick Anderson and Elder John Wingfield. During those proceedings, our foremost thought was, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Her mortal body was laid to rest in the Liberty Church Cemetery beside that of her late husband.

As is our usual custom, we agreed to prepare three copies of this memorial record: one for our church minutes, one for her family and one to be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Elder John T. Wingfield,
Moderator and Acting Clerk

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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POEM

Dear Lord! To us assembled here
Reveal thy smiling face,
While we, by faith, with love and fear,
Approach the Throne of Grace.

Thy house is called the house of prayer:
A solemn, sacred place;
O let us now thy presence share,
While at the Throne of Grace.

With holy boldness may we come,
Though of a sinful race,
Thankful to find there yet is room
Before the Throne of Grace.

Our earnest, fervent cry attend,
And all our faith increase,
While we our heavenly Friend address
Upon the Throne of Grace.

His tender pity and his love
Our every fear will chase;
And all our help, we then shall prove,
Come from the Throne of Grace.

Dear Lord our many wants supply,
Attend to every case;
While humble in the dust we lie,
Low at the Throne of Grace.

We bless thee for thy word and laws;
We bless thee for thy peace;
And we do bless thee, Lord, because
There is a Throne of Grace.

Medley

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EDITORIAL

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again with a lively hope by the resurrection of the dead to an inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. (1 Pet. 1:3-5)

Elder R. H. Campbell

The apostle Peter, in these three verses of scripture, sets forth the absolute certainty of the salvation of the saints of God, and the source from which it comes. The source is first, last and always God, even as Jesus told a group that was following him and asked what they must do to work the works of God. Jesus' response to them was, *(John 6:29) "This is the work of God that ye believe on him who he hath sent."* Jesus did not tell them of anything that they must, or could do, to work the works of God, and this was because all of the works, regarding the salvation of the saints had already been done. They were finished, from the foundation of the world, as is confirmed by many scriptures, and were as certain and sure as though they were already manifested in time. The scriptures state that God rested from all of the work that he had created and made, *(Gen 2:2) "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work which he had made."* and there are no references that he ever went back to work, to do anything that would assure their eternal salvation, or to finish something that he had not completed from the beginning.

The Apostle Paul referred to this

fact, regarding God's resting after his work was completed, when on one occasion he, speaking of man, *(Heb 4:19) "For he that is entered into his rest also hath ceased from his works as God did from his."* Man enters into his rest, when he is brought to the realization that all of the work that was required to accomplish his salvation had already been done, and that there is not anything that he can do, to add to that which has been done for him. When man is born again, or quickened by the Spirit, he is made to know that he has been blessed with a very special and precious gift, called faith, and this faith includes all that is needful for his salvation. He also has been made to know that it is not in the hands of man to do anything that would have any bearing in spiritual matters, because it is beyond the realm of nature in which he dwells. *(Rom 8:7) "For the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."*

Even though the will were present with him, in nature, the ability is not, for it is the work of God that man can even believe on him who he hath sent. Jesus stated very clearly and concisely how, and why, this is accomplished, *(John 6:37-39) "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."* As we said above, the source of the salvation of the saints is of God, first, last and always.

Peter said, when speaking of the faith of the saints, *(1 Pet 6-9) "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: who having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now for a season ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice, with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your soul."* The, trial of their faith, is that highway that leads man unto salvation; it is traveled by man, in nature, but it is determined by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, from before the highest hills were formed, and the world was caused to exist.

(Isa 35:8-10) "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err

therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." This is a positive declaration of things that shall be, and the way and manner that they shall be made manifest in the lives of the saints of God, in days to come. This knowledge is available to man, only by the revelation of God, and is to make manifest that they are of the chosen generation. *(1 Pet: 1:10-11) "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that was to come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."* The holy men of old themselves did not understand whereof they spoke, when they prophesied of the glory that would come, so how could man with the wisdom of this world, understand except that it be revealed unto him, by the same power that ordained it to be..

These are very positive and comforting statements to the soul of those who has been so exercised by them, as in the above subject scriptures, for they speak of an inheritance that has been reserved in heaven for them; an inheritance which is undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved for them according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus. There are no contingencies involved in these declarations, that would even remotely indicate any work contributed by the wisdom or power of the natural mind of man. All of this is to be accomplished by the works of God, before the foundation of the world, and man is not involved, in any way, regarding the success of this venture: it is solely the work of God, who is sovereign in all of his ways and just in all of his judgments. He speaks, and it is done, commands, and it stands fast, regardless of the attitude of man, regarding this work, or the awareness of it until it is done.

The apostle Paul told Timothy, speaking of how God works his will in the salvation of the elect. *(II Tim 1:9-12) "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: whereunto I*

am appointed an apostle and a teacher unto the Gentiles." Notice, all of this is given in Christ Jesus, before the foundation of the world, but is manifested in time by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ who had finished the work that his Father gave him to do, and ascended back unto the heavens where he is even now seated, on the right hand of the Father, victor over death, hell and the grave, for the elect, making intercession unto God for their sins.

In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, Paul related the trial of faith of those under the law, who subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouth of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens, received their dead raised up and others who were tortured, not accepting deliverances from these physical distresses; that they might obtain a better resurrection. He then said, *(Heb 11:39-40) "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."* Those under the law were given faith, that they might endure the tribulations, but looking beyond them to the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham, which is the inheritance that is reserved in heaven for them.

(Heb 12:1) "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." This great cloud of witnesses, is the testimonies of those who have gone this way before, and left a record the way in which the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and by faith, come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, they obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. It is a blessed journey that they experience, although it may include many things that are distressing to the man in nature, but they have been blessed to believe that all of the afflictions and trials are more to be desired than all of the treasures that this world has to offer. These things shall fade away in time, but this city is eternal, and the beauty and glory are everlasting. This faith enables them to keep pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, which the times and tribulations of the world cannot take away.

This better thing that Paul referred to above, to my understanding, is the Spirit that the children of God have, that was not available unto those under the law, as it was in the gospel day. *(John 7:37-39) "In the last day, that great day of the*

feast, Jesus stood up and cried, saying, If any man thirst let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scriptures hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)" This prophecy was fulfilled when the day of Pentecost was fully come, and the apostles were all with one accord in one place and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. This is the time when the gospel, the power of God unto salvation, was made manifest unto man, and the Spirit first indwelled the creature as Jesus stated above. This is the better thing that the gospel has that the law did not have: the better covenant, which was based upon better promises, as Paul said, *(Rom 8:2) "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."* The children of God, from that day forward, were no longer under the dominion of the law of sin and death, as they had been in former days, but rather, were indwelled by the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, and *(Rom 8:16) "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are children of God: and if children, then heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."*

The promise unto all of the saints, that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time, is a blessing beyond the imagination of the natural mind. This grand and glorious promise is made by God, who cannot lie, to a people who were dead in trespasses and sin, aliens from God, and the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world; and then suddenly they find themselves joint heirs with the only begotten of the Father, of an inheritance that is reserved for them, in his Son. This is the ultimate expression of a love, a love that man is incapable of even understanding in the flesh, an everlasting love that assures all of the recipients, that the giver is the Lord, who left on record the following promise for their assurance and comfort in the fact that, as the prophet said, *(Mal 3:6) "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."* impossible that, after receiving the promise, some could fall away and be separated from that love that has been bestowed upon them.

(Heb 6:13-20) "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end to all strife. Wherein God, will more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is entered for us, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." This is possibly the most profound and all encompassing statement, to be found in the whole of scripture. This statement was made by, God the Father, the creator of the heavens and the earth and all the host of them; the God who cannot lie, who also promised these things from the beginning, unto Abraham and to all of his seed through Isaac, in all generations to follow, and then he confirms it by his own personal oath, that by two immutable pledges, the things included in the original promise will most certainly be fulfilled. There is no more possible assurance that could be given unto the heirs of promise, than is given in this one statement. God promised it from the beginning, and confirmed it by his oath, and so it shall be.

The apostle Paul confirms this same fundamental truth in, *(Rom 8:35-39) "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay in all these things we are more then conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

If we had only the two verses of scripture, in the proceeding paragraph, all God called ministers would have the same themes for any of their sermons, regarding the absolute surety of the elect's receiving of the inheritance that is laid up for them. The love of Christ is what assures them of the inheritance, and this scripture says that nothing can

separate them from that love, and Peter said that all of this is according to the abundant mercy of God, by which he hath begotten them again with a lively hope of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The faith of the apostles was strong as long as Jesus was in their midst, but, in spite of his having told them that he must die, and be raised again, they could not actually believe it, so that when it happened, the two disciples on the road to Emmaus said, *(Luke 24:21) "But we trusted that it had been him which should have redeemed Israel:"* The same day that Jesus rose from the tomb, they were questioning the fact that he was actually the Christ, and in the above text, Peter is saying that, *"he hath begotten them again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."* living proof of the claims of Jesus, that he must so suffer.

All of this work is, by God, for man, and is a gift unto the creature. The apostle Paul makes this very plain, and positive, when he said, *(Eph 2:8-9) "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is a gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast."* Don't you just love this scripture? it is the most comforting of the scriptures to be found in the bible, to those who have been brought to the knowledge of the truth, by being exercised in this same way and manner, and being made to believe it by their own experience. They were all, as the apostle Paul, in a state of ignorance and unbelief, until the light of truth shined around about them and into their heart, and they were born again, or quickened by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the seal of approval of their faith. This is, as the circumcision was, the seal of the righteousness of the faith which Abraham had, being yet uncircumcised, even so, the indwelling of the Spirit within their heart is their seal of righteousness.

May this seal be upon your heart, for it is the gift of God unto all of the saints, and it can never fail because God is perfect in all of his works. He does not give this gift to any who are not of the chosen generation which he hath purchased with his own precious blood, the only sacrifice that is acceptable unto God for the sins of his children.

In bonds of love:
Richard H. Campbell.

PSALM 117.

An Exhortation to Praise God

O Praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people.

For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise ye the Lord.

ARTICLES

SIN VS. RIGHTEOUSNESS

I will endeavor to write an article on sin compared to righteousness if it is in the will of, the giver to all good, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Sin entered into the world by the first man, Adam, through disobedience, Righteousness through Christ which is for the forgiveness of man's many sins.

Mankind while in the darkness of nature walks in darkness and the evil acts of the flesh. Righteousness on the other hand comes through the channels of God's Grace which is an unmerited favor from the courts of glory at God's Holy discretion. This comes through the channel of God's Love at his appointed time.

When the seeds of Righteousness is sowed in good ground, that is, in the hearts of his believers, then comes the good works that are experienced through the gifts of his loving Grace. When these seeds, are watered with the dew from on High, then the great workmanship of our Lord and Saviour is exercised. This seed cannot sin, but when it lies dormant, one goes back to the darkness of nature. These seasons are as much purposed as the season of the trees in nature.

The sins that are inherited in the Adam tree or the Adam generation are possessed by all mankind. Paul, one of the greatest preachers that we read about, said of himself that he was a sinner and a chief sinner. Remember that this was after that great light was shown on him on his way to Damascus. The Lord asked, Saul, Saul why do thou persecute me? Then Paul asked the Lord, what will Thou have me do? Paul was made a willing vessel when the power of the Almighty God took abode in his heart.

Paul's fleshly mission, when he reached his destination, was to persecute the Saints of God.

This brings to mind the Bible verse that says, ***"My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power."*** So when he speaks, it is done and when he commands, it is steadfast. None can then say why doest Thou?

This statement that I'm about to make may sound strange, There have been many times that I wondered if there was a God. Then there are other times when I enter this great church of believers, that I am lifted from this darkness in nature, I am made to rejoice when feasting from the food from that for country. Yes, surely there is a God.

When we go back into the darkness of nature this becomes a dormant time in God's Goodness. We are unable while in this darkness of nature to perform spiritual works.

Paul said, ***"When I would do good, evil was present. Not I, but***

the sin that dwells in my flesh." Paul also said, "that the preaching of the gospel is not of man but by the revelation of Jesus Christ Paul gained this great wisdom, by the revealing light, on his way to Damacus.

All believers, who are delivered from the darkness and given a precious hope of heaven and immortal glory, come in a graceful way. They give the praise, glory and honor for the Salvation that is the deliverance of God's goodness to the hearts of his believers, at His disgression, through the precious grace from God's courts of Glory!

It is then their desire to be honest, truthful and do what is right when led by that Holy Spirit. It is the believers desire to do so.

The thorn in the flesh which all believers come to recognize when they go back in the darkness of nature. They, like Paul, find that when they do good that evil was present, again not I, but the sin that dwells in the flesh.

I do not feel worthy to be a partaker of these Holy Events when sitting under that great gospel sound. One is made to rejoice when lifted up and given that ear to hear.

We find in our traveling with the Primitive Baptist, that the population is declining. This doctrine, that we hear and believe is risen to those of the Arminian belief. I find that you don't need five hundred in the congregation to worship his Holy name. God tells us that where two or three are gathered in his name, there am I also. Many times, I have met in these small gatherings and the Preacher was lifted up with a parcel of food that was stored for his little ones. You can look around and see the streams of joy descending down their cheeks, while they feast from his precious rations. This feeding makes your trip to the church worth while.

Before I close this article I would like to stress, that if the Primitive Baptists aren't setting forth this great apostolic doctrine, then it isn't being set forth today. They are the only ones who say, that they could be wrong.

In this world today we have many groups that say the following: *"Let God have his way," or "Let God come into your heart: or "God wants to save you,"* The Bible tells us that God has his way in the whirlwind. Don't exclude God's great word of Grace. If Grace is an unmerited favor, how can one let or not let God have his way?

I also would like to state that if I have been given a mind to see how one comes into this great Church of God, they can only come as beggars asking for God's great mercy. So, in conclusion, that he adds to the church daily of those who are saved, the blood shed on Calvary sealed the destination of the ransomed. In bonds of his precious love I remain.

Riley Justice
Box 272, War, W. Va. 24892
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July 4, 2006

Elder Kenneth R. Key
721 Willard Street
Greensboro, N.C. 27405

Dear Elder Key:

For many years now I have thought about writing something to the Signs of the Times, but the Good Lord has not let me. Recently, that may have changed. At least He did let me write what I have written. My mother, Katherine Mathews, and I have talked together about our beliefs for many years now. Also, my 96 year old uncle, Elder David Godwin and I have talked. We all believe that my beliefs are clearly stated in the following writing. I want to know; is the following in harmony with the beliefs of the Primitive Baptists?

I Do Not Want To Be the Author of My Own Salvation

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him." Heb. 5:9." Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name in heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" Ac 4:12. "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Heb. 12;2.

I search for my own salvation, because I have been made to know that I must have it; I am forever lost without it. Feeling a desperate need, I must seek out the place it is to be found. Some claim to think it is within their power to simply "accept" salvation, thereby obtaining it. My experience has shown me that I do not have that power, and I believe the inspired scriptures tell me that Christ alone has that power.

If I were capable of being the author of some kind of salvation, what sort of salvation would that salvation be? I would have a puny man-made salvation of who knows what, and what would I be saved from? It would end up just like everything else I have done in the flesh, and would not accomplish that which I need.

I need to be forgiven of my sins by the very one I have sinned against, by the very one who is the lawmaker of the laws I have not kept. I need to be remade into a child acceptable to God, even a son of God. *"For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Heb. 11:10. "But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city", Heb. 11:16.* I feel to want to know my Creator and Saviour in a way that would cause me to adore Him

forevermore. The only one who can give me that salvation I am hungering for is my Creator. My Creator is perfect in every way, and everything must be accomplished in the manner that He was ordained. All of His rules not only must be followed, but will be followed. He had already seen to it. If He gives me salvation, I will have everything that I ever would need in this lifetime, or any other life time.

If I am to receive salvation, I must receive it from Him through being reborn in His image. I can only be reborn if the Holy Spirit breathe upon me and make me to be so. Even as the first man Adam became a living soul upon having the breath of life breathed into his nostrils, the reborn creature becomes reborn upon being breathed upon by the Holy Spirit. Jesus told Nicodemus, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit." Jn 3:6-8. Life, whether it be natural or spiritual, can only be created by God. No person can receive life simply by wishing for it. I believe God draws those who are His, therefore there certainly will be a desire to have that which you are being drawn to. That is a different matter from desiring something just to have it. A person is "dead" before receiving life, and therefore has no ability to ask for anything. Life can only be obtained if God has ordained that a person have it.

The inspired Apostle stated, ***"Work out your own salvation in fear and trembling" Php. 2:12.*** Does this mean that I can work for and receive my salvation by working for it? No, no, no. ***"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Eph. 2:8,9.*** Salvation is gained by the Grace of God. Works is not the method by which we receive salvation, but works is the process that God leads us through and into His fellowship. (We do not lead Him. He leads us.)

What is this work that I must perform in fear and trembling, what should I fear, and what is it that will cause me to tremble? Christ said, ***"Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life which the Son of man shall give unto you for Him hath God the Father sealed. Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might do the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Joh. 6:27-29.***

Work

"For we are his workmanship,

created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10. "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Ti. 3:17. "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us, for thou also hast wrought all our works in us. Is. 26:12. "Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever, Amen." Heb. 13:21. "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is." 1 Cor. 3:13.

I am not here in this earth simply to pass the time away, but I am here to live out the experiences God has for me to pass through for His pleasure, and for my experiences with Him. In those experiences a work is to be accomplished which could not be accomplished except for those experiences. It is in these experiences that I get to know Him, and find evidence of the fruit of the Spirit: Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. Ga 5:22,23.

"Even so, faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works: . Jas. 2: 17-18. Faith is not needed until we are exercised by the works which God has ordained that we walk in. Once the work begins, then faith becomes a necessity, and it is in these experiences that we learn that we have received the gift of faith. These experiences lead us into the substance of unseen spiritual things that we hope for, as evidenced by our faith. This faith is a marvelous thing, for it reveals to us not only the substance of things hoped for, but also that the Giver of those things truly cares for us and provides all good things to us. That is why Peter said ***"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." 1 Pe. 1:7.***

Fear

Fear plays a big part in showing to us that without salvation we are lost forever. Within ourselves we know that we have sinned dreadfully, and how we want to be freed of those past, present and future sins! "And unto man he said, Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil, that is understanding." Job 28:28. Also, ***"Behold the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy." Ps 33:18.*** We fear because we are afraid that our works will be of the sort to be burned, rather than

an abiding work acceptable to God. ***"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" Ma 10:28.*** God is real, has all power in heaven and earth, and is respected by those who know Him.

Trembling

Inside we tremble for we are afraid, knowing that we have sinned greatly, and, like Paul, we seemingly cannot do that which is right before God. ***"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me: but how to perform that which is good I find not. Ro. 7:18.*** We can only receive salvation if the Lord has chosen us before the foundation of the world. We do not know of a certainty that we have been chosen, therefore we fear and tremble. "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." Ro. 8:19. "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" Ro. 8:24. "Who are kept by the power of God through faith, unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Pe. 1:5. These verses indicate that we are hoping and waiting for a manifestation that we are His elect. We know that God is perfect, and we are not, and that He has the power to destroy both body and soul, and we tremble, hoping against hope that He will spare us.

If I understand the scriptures, no flesh shall glory in His presence, and I believe that this truth is lived out daily in the lives of all who are first man Adam. If I have learned anything at all, I have learned that I, as a representative of first man Adam, am incapable of doing anything that is pleasing to God. If that is true, how then, can I approach God to say ***"Have mercy on me, a sinner."*** The question is not whether I have accepted Christ, but has Christ accepted me? If I am one of the Elect, He found me, and accepted me long ago; even before I was physically born first man Adam. But do I accept Him? Yes, yes, yes, Lord make it to happen!

Christ said, ***"No man can come unto me, except the Father which sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Jn. 6:65. Also, "Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." Jn.6:65.*** What a pleasing and satisfying doctrine it is to feel that the Father loves His own, and sees to it that His Elect are drawn irresistibly to Him. That is proven and perfect love that passeth all understanding, and is greatly to be desired.

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen: He 11:1. If I hope for salvation, I must find it through faith. ***"But without faith, it is***

impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Ro. 10:17.

No, I would not want to be the author of my own salvation. It is more pleasing and satisfying to feel that my God desires me as one of His own children so much that He sent His only Son to die in my stead, and rise from the grave bringing me up from that grave with Him. If He did that for me, I will be very happy to live with Him forever.

My desire is that I let someone know what I believe, and that we share a common belief together. I do thank the Good Lord for all that He has done to me, for me, and with me. It is so good and peaceful to feel that He has done so much for me. I desire to be with Him.

This is the first writing of this sort that I have ever done. If the Spirit led me, then everything is OK in what I have written. Furthermore, if the Spirit did not lead me, I wish that I never had written it.

Charles Mathews

PSALM 30:4.

Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.

VOICES OF THE PAST

North Berwick, Maine, Dec. 23, 1904.

Millie A. Little — My Dear Sister in the Lord: — I have been much hindered I so lacked the inclination for any letter writing. I much appreciate the letters of my dear kindred in Christ Jesus, and sometimes even a glance at their handwriting stirs up affectionate remembrances. Still there are writings that are more wonderful and precious by far than all that all the saints have written, and when I can have a glimpse of and read these writings that are more wonderful and precious by far than all that all the saints have written, and when I can have a glimpse of and read these writings I have blessedness indeed. Look at this: ***"Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." — Luke x. 20. "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." — Jer. xxxi. 33. "Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshy tables of the heart." — 2 Cor. iii. 3. "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name***

written in their foreheads." — *Rev. xiv. 1. I "will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."* — *Rev. ii. 17. "I will write upon him the name of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name."* — *Rev. iii. 12.* These writings are infinitely glorious and incomparably precious. Contemplate with me awhile these writings of the high and holy One that inhabiteth eternity. *"Your names are written in heaven."* These names written in heaven are the names of the church of the firstborn. (Heb. xii. 23.) Christ is the firstborn, as it is written: *"I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth."* — *Psalms lxxxix. 27; Romans viii. 29; Col. i. 15, 18.* Then as a farther insight into the divine mystery of our names being *"written in heaven,"* it is declared their names are *"written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."* — *Rev. xiii. 8.* And the book of life was opened, *"and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."* — *Rev. xx. 15.*

The names written in the book of life are the names of God's elect.

"O wondrous grace and mystery profound,

In God's eternal purpose I was found;

His sovereign love, his grace, his deep decree,

In some mysterious way included me."

The eternal purpose which Jehovah purposed in Christ Jesus embraced this, the exaltation of his chosen one in immutable holiness, and to immortal happiness in union with his incarnate Son, Christ Jesus our Lord. But the subject is far better expressed in the language of inspiration: *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and withou blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved."* — *Eph. i. 3-6.* As I muse upon the deeps of the doctrine of God I say in my soul, Did the Lord look through the ages and the generations of mankind and see me one of Adam's race, and write me in the book of life? Was I, in the eternal purpose, given to Christ and accounted one with him, and in him promised (Titus i. 2,) and given (1 John v. 11,) and ordained unto eternal life? (Acts xiii. 48.) The date of all this writing is

eternal, before the world began. "Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." God in his everlasting love wrote them there, and is there any power that can erase them? O, is it not

"Sweet to look back and see my name
In life's fair book set down;
Sweet to look forward and behold
Eternal joys my own"?

Then how full of consolation to us poor sinners is the revelation that the book of life in which God's elect are written is the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. His goings forth in the everlasting covenant both as the Shepherd of his people, (Micah v. 2,) and as the Lamb, (1 Peter i. 19, 20,) show how from eternity the thoughts of our eternal God were set upon the exaltation, redemption and regeneration of his people. For our election in Christ Jesus, and being blessed in him with all spiritual blessings, our acceptance in his sight, our redemption and the forgiveness of our sins, our adoption and predestination to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, are all declared to be embraced in and according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in himself. (Eph. i. 9.)

But the inquiry arises in my thoughts, How shall a poor sinner read his name written in the Lamb's book of life? It is only in the experience of the new covenant being written in our hearts by the holy Spirit that we read our names written in heaven. This brings me, dear sister, to put down a few thoughts upon God writing in the fleshy tables of the heart. He gives to his chosen ones in his decreed times a new heart, and a new spirit. (Ezek. xxxvi. 26.) *"I will put my fear in their hearts,"* saith the Lord. This is wonderful writing to be found in a sinner's heart, but the Lord, who hath loved his own with an everlasting love, and who wrote their names in the book of life, will have them fear him, love him, believe him, trust him and confess that he is their exceeding joy. The Spirit of God gives this new heart, and the favored sinner touched with this heart is no more dead in trespasses and sins; he is now alive in a divine life unto God, and the writing begins. If the writing were in tables of stone, the tables of stone might be broken; the ravages of time might at length obliterate what was written, and the very stones themselves crumble into dust; but the fleshy tables of the heart, in which the Spirit of the living God writes the ministration of life, is that new covenant heart (Jer. xxxi. 33,) that pulsates with spiritual, eternal life from God, and therefore forever this writing shall endure, and all the throbbings of this heart shall find its consciousness in the writings that are written therein by the Holy Ghost. Sacred, wonderful is the experience as the Lord is writing. He writes love there, love to him-

self, the just, the holy and gracious God. We find our hearts moved with longings after the Lord, to know him, to taste that he is good. As poor, sin-stricken, condemned transgressors we feel we must have his friendship or we must perish in our sins and grief beneath the curse of the law. We are led to think upon God's infinite greatness and majesty, and that he is just in all his ways, and then as we are led to contemplate that he is kind and gracious, rich in mercy, our heart pulsates with yearnings, and that language is no exaggeration which says, *"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?"— Psalms xlii. 1, 2.* All this declares that God has written his fear and his love in our heart. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy Spirit which is given unto us. *"I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts."* In the gracious fulfillment of this promise God's revealed will become dear to us, and our affection flows forth unto the doctrine of God our Savior, and we are described as believing with all the heart; for our faith in God, in our precious Redeemer and in the gospel worketh my love. The faith of God's elect is an affectionate faith. It is very wonderful that a sinner who in his natural estate is alienated from the life of God, and an enemy of the holy One, should be so turned to the Lord, to seek his face, to yearn with an aching heart for tokens of his compassion, and find also his delight is in the law of the Lord in the heart. The writing goes on; he is still writing, and will continue to write in the hearts of his chosen ones all the days of their pilgrimage. Would we see one in whom God has written his law? A very true likeness is found in that precious 119th Psalm. All through this Psalm one feels the throbbings of the heart in whose fleshy tables the Spirit of the living God has written. Although I am a poor, unworthy sinner I will tell this, that I have read this Psalm a number of times when my heart has panted, thirsted, longed and grieved, and delighted and throbbed in unison with this wonderful Psalm. *"I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved. My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes."* O, I must repeat it again, that the writings of the holy Spirit in the fleshy tables of the heart are wonderful. Not only wonderful, but so blessed, for when we are sin-stricken and tempted, and our hearts are bleeding and contrite, then he takes of the things of Christ, the blessings of the new covenant, and writes them in the heart. Mercy, forgiveness of sins, how sweet, how healing is this to the wounded heart.

This writing by a figure of speech may be said to be written upon the humble heart in the red ink of Jesus' precious blood. We have forgiveness of sins through his blood according to the riches of his grace. (Eph. i. 7.)

"What stream is that which sweeps away
My sins, just like a flood,
Nor lets one guilty blemish stay?
'Tis Jesus' precious blood."

The holy Spirit writes the promises and the sworn mercies of God in the hearts of the elect, and the effect of such writings is that the heirs of promise have a strong consolation and a gracious sanctuary in the gospel of Christ. (Heb. vi. 1-20.) Thus writing in our hearts the things of Christ is called in the Scriptures, sealing us. The sealing of the Spirit, whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption. (Eph. i. 13; iv. 30.) My soul still holds its soliloquy, and I say, Has my heart in very truth felt the impress of the things of Christ? Is Christ himself graven upon my heart? Surely it must be so, for does not my heart cry out, *"Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm"?* — Solomon's Song viii. 6. And can I not say, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee"? Though I write this, a feeling comes over me of *"love and grief my heart dividing,"* and I am saying,

"Lord, it is my chief complaint,
That my love is weak and faint;
Yet I love thee, and adore;
O for grace to love thee more."

O let my heart know more and more of thee, more of thy loving-kindness, which is better than life; O write deeper and deeper the acts of thy love, and thy mercy and grace in the fleshy tables of my heart, that wherever I go, and whatever my state, I may know thee and love thee and never forget thee, but ponder affectionately in my heart thine almighty and gracious acts in behalf of thy church in all the relations and characters that thou sustainest unto them.

What the Spirit writes in the fleshy tables of the heart is always in agreement with the Scriptures of truth, for it was as they were moved by the holy Ghost that holy men of old spake, and so they were inspired by God to write for the comfort and learning of the church of Christ. It is of no avail for me, or for you, or for any one to say, I have experienced this; I was taught it of the Lord in my experience; I love this doctrine; I find much comfort and pleasure in it; it is written in my heart, if that doctrine is contrary to and is not found in the holy Scriptures. No matter how logical it may appear, no matter how lovely and satisfying it may be, if it has not the *"thus saith the Lord"* for it in the Scriptures it is very vanity, a cunningly devised fable, a ly-

ing divinization, the deceit of that heart that is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. (Ezek. xi. 6; Jer. xiv. 14.) Let those who would pervert the gospel of Christ, (Gal. i. 7; Jer. xxiii. 36,) who corrupt the word of God, (2 Cor. ii. 17,) who wrest the Scriptures, (2 Peter iii. 16,) who make a lie, and love what they have made, (Rev. xxii. 15,) let them sport themselves with their own deceivings, (2 Peter ii. 13,) but may my heart and your heart only have affection for and delight in what is verily taught in the word of God. What the holy Spirit writes in the fleshy tables of the heart is never contrary to, but is ever in sacred agreement with the testimony of the holy Scriptures. Sometimes there are things written in our hearts by the Spirit, but we have not yet been able to read with understanding what is there written. Then it may be in the providence of our God we hear Christ's gospel preached, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance; then we read with understanding what God has taught us, and we say, I know that my heart has tasted these glorious, precious things of the covenant ordered in all things and sure. And at times also when we read the Scripture, in what grateful surprise and comfort we find what is written there is in sweet accord with what has been wrought by the Spirit of the living God in our hearts. The Scriptures therefore are for the comfort and learning of Christ's body, the church, and are able to make them wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. (2 Tim. iii. 15.) The redeemed of the Lord have the name of their heavenly Father written in their foreheads. (Rev. xiv. 1.) Christ says, *"I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name."* — *Rev. iii. 12.* This writing is sealing them as the children of God, it is giving them power to become the sons of God. (John i. 12.) It is sending forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts crying, Abba, Father. (Gal. iv. 6.) The Lord writes and thus he speaks, *"Thou shalt call me, My Father; and shalt not turn away from me."* — *Jer. iii. 19. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."* Jesus said to his disciples, *"When we pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven."* We cannot realizingly do so until Christ tells us to say, *"Our Father."* But the gracious covenant work of the holy Spirit is to bring us into intimate relations with the dear Savior; he brings us to know him as ours, through whom we are forgiven, and justified and redeemed, and in whom we are predestinated unto the adoption of children unto God. And because God is our Father we love Jesus. (John viii. 42.) Christ is all our heart's desire, and our faith is all in

him. Being thus in intimacy with Jesus Christ we find his doctrine confesses to us the Father's name. *"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."* As it is written, *"I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." — Heb. ii. 12.* We are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. (Rom. viii. 14-17.) The word also says I will write upon him the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem. This seals us as citizens of Zion, the city of God. Even now there are sacred seasons when the feet of our faith stand within her gates, but this is but the earnest of our inheritance. We are destined for the heavenly Jerusalem, and like the dear saints of olden times, we are looking for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come. We are pilgrims on the earth, but upon our foreheads is (I hope) written the name of our God and the name of the city of our God.

"Jerusalem, my happy home,
Name ever dear to me;
When shall my labors have an end
In joy, and peace, and thee?

Reach down, O Lord, thine arm of grace,
And cause me to ascend
Where congregations ne'er break up,
And Sabbaths never end.

When wilt thou come to me, O Lord?
O come, my Lord, most dear;
Come nearer, nearer, nearer still,
I'm safe when thou art near."

I had not intended writing you so long a letter, but I think I shall be safe in promising you that I will pen you a shorter one next time. Thousands of miles intervene between our earthly abodes, but the God of Israel is near to all that fear him wherever they may be. May the Lord comfort you and bless you, and lift up upon you the light of his countenance.

I am your brother in hope of eternal life,

Fred W. Keene

PSALM 4:1-3.

Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.

O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame? how long will ye love vanity, and seek after leasing? Selah.

But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the Lord will hear when I call unto him.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 2006

Meta Miles, AR 5.00
Angie Cox, NC 5.00
Raymond Adams, VA 5.00
Larrie Bowler, VA 5.00
Buford Thompson, VA 5.00

OBITUARIES

ELDER GRAYDON SMITH

We at New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Spearsville, LA., feel a great loss in the passing of our dear Pastor, Elder Graydon Smith.

Elder Smith united with New Hope Primitive Baptist Church June 5, 1955 and was baptized by Elder R. W. Rhodes. He was ordained an Elder by New Hope Primitive Baptist Church March 6, 1976 and was blessed to serve a number of Churches through the years. He was serving three Churches when he passed away.

He loved the precious doctrine of Salvation by Grace and loved scriptural conversations and talking of the gracious, all wise, all powerful God. He was blessed to travel far and near among those of like precious faith and loved them dearly.

He was born May 22, 1919, the fourth child of Tom and Edna Smith, and departed this life May 2, 2006. He was preceeded in death by the wife, Kathleen Turnage Smith. He is survived by one son: Tommy and wife, Judy; one daughter: Jenny Wimberly and husband, Charles; five grandchildren and three great grandchildren and one sister: Dale Holloway and husband Roy. He is also survived by many friends and loved ones made manifest by all the kindness, floral arrangements and many memorial donations to his Church.

Funeral Services were conducted by Elder C.C. Morris May 5, 2006 at New Hope Primitive Baptist Church. Burial followed in the Spearsville Cemetery, awaiting the fulfillment of the sweet hope which was so precious to him.

Although he will be deeply missed, may we be given to bow in humble submission to the Will of God, giving thanks for the many years of love and fellowship we were blessed to share with him.

Submitted by one
who loved him,
Mary Barron

REVELATION 21:23

And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

SISTER NELLIE JOBE KEY

In the early morning hours of July 17, 2006, as so beautifully stated at her funeral, the Lord, as He walked in His garden, gathered home one of his lilies, Sister Nellie Jobe Key. In the comfort of her earthly home, surrounded by her loving husband of 62 years and her family, she fell asleep in the arms of Christ, as the hymn writer expressed, ***"a sleep from which none ever wake to weep."***

Sister Nellie was born in Guilford County on April 14, 1922 to the late Thurman and Ethel Stout Jobe. On January 29, 1944 she was married to Elder Kenneth R. Key Sr., and it was indeed a marriage made in heaven. To this union was born two sons, Kenneth R. Key, Jr. and Gary Van Key. They were blessed with five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren, one of which Kennedi Mae Lineberry, was born after Sister Nellie's passing. She leaves also two sisters, Irene Sharpe and Annie Fomberg to mourn her.

On the third Sunday in March 1954, Sister Nellie asked for a home in the Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church. She was received into the fellowship and baptized by her late pastor, Elder W.C. King, on the first Sunday in April 1954. Before the foundation of the world in the mind and purpose of God, it was appointed unto her that she must walk the path of a minister's wife. As the hymn writer penned and was so beautifully quoted at her funeral, ***"The steps that I tread, and the station I fill, My Father determined and wrote in his will."*** The Lord blessed her so bountifully with the fruit of the Spirit, particularly that of love, gentleness, and meekness. I've known her as a dear, precious Sister in Christ for the last thirty-four years and as my beloved pastor's wife for the last twenty-one years. There are no words to express what a joy it has been to know her and to be blessed with the sweet fellowship experience when in her presence. She has been a blessing to my home church as well as to the others that Brother Kenneth serves. We deeply miss her loving smile, her warm embrace, and the kindness she showed in all that she did.

In the early years, on one Sunday she stayed behind with their two boys at their cabin on Baden Lake while Brother Kenneth went to the Association. When he returned, she said this has been the longest day of my life. They sold their cabin and rarely has she not been by his side as he served the little flock, traveling near and far, and entertaining many precious brethren and sisters in their home. As the scriptures state in ***Proverbs 31:10, "Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies."*** I feel certain

that there were times when she didn't feel physically able to go, but the Lord blessed her to press on in the station unto which He had appointed her. May He be praised.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder William Hale Terry and Elder Cleo Robertson at Forbis and Dick North Elm Chapel in Greensboro and her body was laid to rest in Lakeview Memorial Park to await that summons from on high "Come ye blessed of my Father and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." May we all find comfort in the words of the dear old hymn *"Am I a Soldier of the Cross":*

"Thy saints in all this glorious war
Shall conquer though they die;
They see the triumph from afar,
And seize it with their eye.

When that illustrious day shall arise,
And all thy armies shine
In robes of victory through the skies,
The glory shall be thine."

May the Lord bless her family who've lost a dear companion, a loving mother, grandmother, great grandmother, and sister with the comfort that only He can give. And, most especially, may the gracious, heavenly Master be with our beloved pastor, Brother Kenneth, strengthen him, and bless him to feel the "everlasting arms" underneath him that he might continue to be blessed to "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" ever "looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." In all things, may the Lord be praised and may He bless us all to witness with Job, "the Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Humbly submitted by one
who loved her dearly,
Mary Hawkins

JOHN 3:12-16.

If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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POEM

PERFECT PEACE

A mind at perfect peace with God,
Oh, what a word is this!
A sinner reconciled through blood;
This, this indeed is peace!

By nature and by practice far,
How very far from God;
Yet now, by grace, brought nigh to Him,
Through faith in Jesus' blood.

So near, so very near to God,
I can not nearer be;
For in the person of His Son,
I am as near as He.

So dear, so very dear to God,
More dear I cannot be;
The love wherewith He loves the Son,
Such is his love to me.

Selected.

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EDITORIAL

Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

And blesseds he, whosoever shall not be offended in me. (Math 11:4-5)

Elder R. H. Campbell

These are the words that Jesus told the two disciples of the prophet John the Baptist, whom he had sent to Jesus, to inquire if he was the one that should come, or should he look for another. John is the one that was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah saying, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight: the one who leaped in his mother's womb when she heard the salutation of Mary the mother of Jesus. John personally baptized Jesus, saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him: and lo a voice from heaven saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. He is the one who told his followers, *(Matt 3:11) "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."* and yet now, in spite of all of this evidence and knowledge regarding Christ. John is in doubt. There is therefore, no mystery in the fact that others, who did not have all of this personal knowledge, and ex-

perience should question their own beliefs.

If there was ever an individual that should have confidence in their experience and knowledge of these things, it is John; and yet here he is, fearfully questioning the validity of his calling, and pleading for confirmation of the fact that Jesus was indeed the Son of God. God's ministers find themselves in much this same position very much of the time, in their travels in this time world. They have received a calling, sufficient to make them go forth and stand before the saints of God, telling them again and again to remember the way and manner in which these things were made known to them, and how it has been with them in former days as they were called out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of the gospel. They go forth declaring the message of the sovereign grace of God, and yet they go much of the time, lowing, even as the Kine pulling the cart with the Ark, when the Philistines were returning it to Israel, because it had been nothing but trouble for them, although it was a very great blessing unto Israel. They, as the Kine who could not turn back, even though their calves were at home in the stalls, they also cannot turn back even when it makes them fear that they are deserting their family and loved ones, and sometimes in very critical situations. It seems that the minister could be confident of his calling, if he does all of this, but alas, this is not the case; he is constantly meditating on the fact, is it a true calling of God, or, as I once asked a fellow minister, do you ever wonder if you have a calling or is it just the vanity of the flesh?

I am sure that we have all, at one time or another, said unto ourselves, Oh, if I could just have had the evidence of the prophet John, or some of the other great men of God, then I would not have all of these doubts and fears that plague me so much of my time. I would feel secure in the knowledge that I was among the chosen people of God and that I had been placed there for a purpose known only unto God. It seems that if I had seen him, been with him in person, and saw the mighty miracles that he did, and especially experienced the scene where he baptized Jesus, and saw the Spirit descending like a dove, and lighting upon him, and Lo a voice from heaven saying, this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, that I could never question my calling. You can see, by the subject scripture that this is not necessarily so, because even the prophet John is found doubting his experiences, and is sending two of his disciples to inquire of Jesus if he was actually the one who was to come.

The difference between these two positions is that he was in the Spirit on those occasions when he was with Jesus and talked with him, and now he is in prison, his prison being the dungeon in which he was

confined, and the prison in which the sheep are confined is in the prison of the natural mind. The apostle Paul described these seasons this way, *(Rom 7:21-22) "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members."* When in this state, of spiritual darkness, the spiritual experiences are clouded by the inability of the natural mind to comprehend spiritual truths, and is unable to remember them with the confidence and clarity that they did when they were in the Spirit.

The prayer of one, on these occasions is, Lord restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, let me feel once again the joy of my first love, the time when all was right with the world and I felt that I would never have doubts regarding my faith. Even so, it is hard to conceive of the fact that John who had all of this evidence, as to the fact that this was indeed the Son of God, but you must remember what Paul said in his letter to the Corinthians, *(I Cor 2:14) "But the natural man receiveth not the things of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."* and John, when he sent his disciples to Jesus was in the bonds of the natural mind, and the natural spirit.

Knowing all of this, and where John was at this particular time in his travels in nature, Jesus told John's disciples to go and show John again those things that he had seen before; this would be sufficient to restore his faith, if accompanied by the Spirit. Jesus did not tell them to tell John of a more perfect way, or of some greater and more impressive experiences, but rather, tell him again the same evidences upon which his faith was founded originally. The apostle Paul wrote, on one occasion, *(I Cor 3:11) "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus."* There is no foundation upon which the faith of the children is laid, and they will respond when they are reminded again of the power that first opened up their understanding of spiritual matters, and which will support them in all of their travels in this life.

The prophet John was a man in nature, even as all men are, who are born into this world of sin and corruption, and he was subject to the same weaknesses and fears that they are, and he was but experiencing the trials of his ministry which had been placed upon him, for that particular season, by God. It is God that gives the trials of faith unto his servants, and it is God that gives them deliverances from them, and he does it, that they may fear before him, and render praise, honor and glory unto him for his grace and mercy that he has blessed them with, as they run with patience the

race that is set before them. These seasons are needful unto them and are included among the all things that work together for their eternal salvation, although they may be very distressing to them at the time.

The burden that was placed upon John was the same burden that is placed upon all of the servants of God. It is that which is called, by the world, the great commission, which Jesus gave unto his disciples just before his ascension unto heaven. *(Matt. 27:19-20) "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."* He was telling them to go into all of the world, and teach all nations the things that he had taught them, and that is the mission that his ministers have been fulfilling, and will continue to do so as long as the world stands. The purpose in this is because his children will continue to stand in need of these constant reminders and assurances of the faith that they are being exercised by, as long as they are confined in these bodies of clay, and subject to the weaknesses and temptations of the flesh. They are to witness to these facts, and to let them all know that this is the way in which all pilgrims will travel, in this life. They direct their minds and hearts to the scriptures, left on record by those who have gone before, that they may realize that they are not alone in these experiences

The apostle Paul's commission was to the Gentiles, *(Acts 26:16-18) "But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."* The apostle Paul was made to be a witness of those things that he had seen, and in which the Spirit gave him understanding, and this he continued to do until relieved of his calling by death: there is no retirement age or pension plan in this work, it is done in love for the giver of this gift, and the calling is for their lifetime. This is the same message that Jesus gave to the prophet John by way of his followers, *"Go show John again,"* the same things that had made him believe in Christ originally and they would restore him to the quickened state upon hearing them again, and again, enabling him to press on to the mark. They are things that his children still come to-

gether to hear, each time that they attend services: they receive reminders of the truths upon which their faith was first founded. We do not come to hear some new doctrine, or theory, but to have our experiences brought to our minds afresh. I love to hear others tell of their experience and I even love to tell my own experience, over and over, because sometimes it brings me back to that point in time, and I am made to weep for joy, just remembering the sweetness of the season, and how precious it was in the beginning.

These remembrances are as new and moving unto the children of God, when the Spirit is present, as when they first experienced them. This is what the world does not understand, that his children come to be fed in church, they do not come together just the learn the bible by the repetition of the reading of the same wording over and over, and this is why it is foolishness to the world. To the saints of God, it is the same as their being fed the natural food that they may eat and live: they eat the same food over and over again, but it is just as nourishing and pleasing to the taste each time that they are fed. The apostle Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, *(Heb 1:21) "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."* He did not say foolish preaching, but the foolishness of preaching, to the world it is foolish because they just do not understand and cannot unless they are born again, but to them that are saved, it is the power of God and the wisdom of God being made manifest in their lives. The preaching of the cross is to the sheep, the necessary food of the soul, and they are nourished and strengthened by it each time that they are given ears to hear, eyes to see and hearts to understand it. They are made again, to feel to have an earnest in the inheritance that is laid up for those who love the Lord.

The apostle Peter wrote, *(II Pet 3:3) "This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Savior; knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."* Peter knew that the children of God, living in this world of nature become so engrossed in the things of the flesh: so caught up with living their natural lives and the stress of their every day life, that they tend to stray, and forget these most important of all

things. They tend to forget the spiritual values that are the basis of their faith, and so Peter says that he is writing to them to stir up their minds, and bring to their remembrance again these precious thoughts and memories, and then he says, (II Pet 3:17-18) "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things, before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen" This does not mean that Peter expected to restore them to the fold, but rather, knowing the nature of man, and having had these experiences of grace himself, he knew how weak that man is, in the flesh, and therefore desired to bring their pure minds back to the realities of their spiritual life, and to renew their minds again unto a lively hope.

This actually, is the calling of the minister; he is to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, not to make sheep out of goats, or to increase the flock, but rather to separate the sheep from the goats, as Jesus said, *(John 10:3-5) "To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers."* When his ministers speak, in the Spirit, they do as Jesus did in the previous verse of scripture; they are even as Elihu said that he was when he told Job, *(Job 33:6) "Behold I am according to thy wish in God's stead: I also am formed of the clay."* The minister speaks from an unction that is given them of God and the Spirit also gives unto his children the remembrance of the things that are more precious to them than the world and all of its riches. When this occurs, communion is experienced by the speaker and the listener: communion in the knowledge that God is in their midst and blessing these sacred truths to both of their understanding. Their praise is not toward the minister, or the hearer, but both realize that it is God working in them both the will and the do of his good pleasure, according to the promises made to them in the scriptures, when he said that he would never leave nor forsake them

Yes, if John, with his experience and knowledge of these spiritual things, could have need to have them brought to his remembrance again, how much more will his children in future generations need repeated prompting in these matters. Jesus himself said unto his disciples, after John's disciples had gone back to report to him what Jesus had told them, *(Matt. 11:11) "Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of women*

there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." If he, of whom this is written, is brought to this position, will not all that are made to call upon God have need of these new refreshings of their hope. I believe that this scripture means that, among them that are born of women, whose abode in this natural world in the flesh, there are none greater than John the Baptist, but he was still only a natural man. He is as Elihu said that he was, speaking to Job ***"I am also of clay."*** John the Baptist was a natural man, under the influence of his natural mind, when he sent his disciples to Jesus; but was ***"the new man"*** when exercised in spiritual matters and under the influence of the spiritual mind, and then he is greater than any man in nature, for he is spiritual and as such, will inhabit the kingdom of heaven, by the grace of God, through faith.

When Jesus had begun to tell his disciples of his coming death, and the things that would follow, and what would be accomplished, he said, ***(John 14:16-17) "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."*** This comforter which is the Holy Ghost establishes that line of communication that exists between God and his children. It is not a party line, nor is it available unto ***"whosoever will"*** but it is only to those that can hear his voice, as Jesus said above, and they will hear and they will follow him, for he said, ***"all that my Father giveth unto me shall come unto me."*** This is the way whereby the saints of God are reminded, time and time again, of the things that they have seen and experienced, as God reveals them unto them again, through his angels, who are but ministers sent to minister unto them who are the heirs of salvation. It is a direct line which is open at all times, but, it can only be accessed from above. His children cannot originate it, in and of themselves, it is a direct and personal spiritual line of communication, and it is only between God and those whom he hath quickened into spiritual life, because the world, in general cannot receive it. ***(John 14:26) "But the comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."*** And Jesus was speaking unto the apostles when he made this statement, and it was regarding the way and manner in which these things would be regularly brought again unto the minds of all of the saints, in the future.

When God said by the mouth of

Isaiah, *(Isa 42:8) "I am the Lord; that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images."* I believe that the above is what he was talking about; he was saying. I am the God of thy salvation, and the glory of my work shall not be given, or assigned to another, for the salvation of the saints is my own particular pleasure, even as he said in, *(Psa 149:4) "For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: and he will beautify the meek with salvation."* and he is saying that it shall be done by him, and in his own way. *(Isa 9-11) "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country; yea, I have spoke it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it I will also do it."* There is no ambiguity in this statement, or in any of the other scriptures for that matter, it is as Elder W. D. Griffin used to say, the scriptures say what they mean, and mean what they say. There are no scriptures that I am aware of, that ascribe any part of the salvation of the saints of God to any other source than God, and this pertains to every detail of it.

May God, in the riches of his grace, continue to send these remembrances of their salvation unto his saints, that they may not faint and fall away, which they would do, if left in their own strength. This he will most certainly do, because their names are already written in the book of life, and this assures them a heavenly abode in that world that is to come, that place that Jesus told his disciples, *(John 14:2-3) "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there may ye be also."* This is the heritage that awaits all of the saints of God; it is incorruptible, undefiled, and fades not away, reserved in heaven for each one. This is based upon the word of Jesus and no more certain a foundation could be laid to support their hope of eternal life than this, so, rejoice each and every time that these remembrances are brought to your mind, and praise him from whom all blessings flow.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

PSALM 139:10.

Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

ARTICLES

"PRESERVE ME, O GOD: FOR IN THEE DO I PUT MY TRUST"

How amazing is our journey in this life when we are blessed to cry unto the Lord as was David in ***Psalms 16:1, "Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust." David continues in Psalms 40:11, "Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord: let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me."*** I believe this is the cry of every child of God.

The word preserve has been heavy on my mind for some time. It means to keep safe, protect and prevent from decaying. A child of God encounters many difficult ways in which he must travel in his sojourn here in this life. These most trying times are but blessings from the Lord for that is how a child of God is taught. The world would question how could afflictions and trials be blessings. They don't understand that ***"we glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."***

In the year 2005, I was given a dream, if not deceived, of seeing a bed lifted down into water. The following week, I was given another dream. In the second dream, I was holding on to two posts of the bed that were in the water and the two posts came off from the bed. I thought the bed would surely decay because there was no way to get the bed up out of the water since the posts had been removed. Immediately, I sought the Lord for interpretation and the words were spoken to me: ***"This is salt water. This bed will not decay but will be preserved."*** I then walked on top of the water with the two posts that were removed from the bed.

I believe this was the bed of affliction in which I was to endure more suffering. Notice that the two posts were removed from the bed. I was blessed to endure the removal of the middle lobe of my right lung in February 2005. In September 2005, I began coughing up much blood and had to endure a second lung surgery which involved removal of the top portion of my left lung. Thinking of this dream in a natural perspective, the bed is my body and the two posts removed were the top portion of my left lung and the middle lobe of my right lung. The water was salt water which would preserve the body. Spiritual water is grace which the Lord gives to His little ones to carry them through each trial that is allotted them to endure. The amazing grace and strength I was given to endure the two surgeries lifted me up spiritually as I walked by faith

trusting in the Great Physician for all my help. He preserved me and kept my eyes fixed upon Him.

After the second lung surgery, my doctors informed me that I needed to take treatment for my lung to prevent any further damage to my lung; for if I had to have any more of my lung removed, my breathing would be greatly affected. I was told it was harsh treatment and there were many side effects. The possible side effect that was most disturbing was that of blindness; and if that happened, there was nothing that could be done. I prayed much about this matter. The night I was to begin the treatment, I sat alone at the table a long time around midnight looking at those three bottles of medication not knowing what the outcome might be after taking them. Since I had undergone chemo twice, my eyes had been affected and I didn't know if they being weaker, as a result of chemo, might make my eyes more susceptible to side effects. I prayed to the Great Physician and begged for mercy. When I finished praying, the words were spoken to me, if I am not deceived, "I will preserve thee." Many have been the trying times from the side effects of the medications but so far no damage to my eyes. The medication causes severe nausea, breathing problems, affects the neuropathy in my feet and legs and sleepless nights. Precious is the prayer recorded in *Psalm 57:1, "Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast."*

Almost nine months have passed since beginning the treatment for my lung. Physically, it has been a most trying time. The treatment is every other day and will last for a year or more. Spiritually, it is a blessed time. On September 16 while suffering much nausea from lung treatment the previous night, I was standing at the kitchen sink gazing out the window when a dove so graciously perched upon a post in the backyard. It seemed as though his eyes were fixed upon me as I gazed through the window at him. He never took his eyes off me except once to look up as though he was looking into the heavens and then again fixed his eyes upon me as words were spoken unto me, *"My peace I give unto thee. I have delivered thee."* After receiving these comforting words, the dove flew away into the wilderness. What a beautiful sight to behold and feel the spirit of God within my heart, if I am not deceived.

The scripture found recorded in Psalms 116: 1-8 has been very precious to me. *"I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me:*

I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul. Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me. Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. For thou has delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling."

"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen." II Timothy 4:18.

Love in Christ
Jeannette Robertson

VOICES OF THE PAST

PRESENT YOUR BODIES

"I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." – Rom. 12:1.

The apostle, in the preceding part of this epistle set forth at large the leading features of the doctrine of God our Savior; such as our choice in him before the world was, and our predestination to the adoption of children, our holy and effectual calling by the Spirit of God, and our justification through the righteous merits of Jesus Christ and our sure glorification in consequences of what Christ had done for us.

Here now comes to our duty to God as his children. A religion that is not practical is of but very little value to him that possesses it. A man who claims a change of heart, and yet there is no reform in his life, is but a "whited sepulcher," at best. And a religion that only asserts itself on Sunday, and only bears fruit while at church, is a stigma on Christianity, and shows the pretender to be a Galvanized Hypocrite at most. It occurs to me that from the method of Paul's writing here, as well as in other epistles written by him, many of our ministers might take a lesson on how to rightly divide the word of truth, and not press duty as entirely abstracted from privilege, nor privilege abstracted from duty entirely; but rather let both go together.

The particular exhortations of this chapter, it seems to me, are drawn from different heads of Christian duty. First, our duty to God; second, our duty to ourselves; third, our duty to our brethren. The grace of God teaches us in a general way to live godly, soberly and righteously in this world, and deny everything that is contrary thereto. And in this chapter we are taught what godliness, righteousness and sobriety are, though the apostle seems to have somewhat intermixed them.

Our duty to God is to yield up all that we have, and are, into his hands, feeling that he careth for us and will shield us from harm and give us that which is best for us, and will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear; but will with every temptation make a way for our escape. Therefore, we can well afford to lean upon him as our covert from the tempest, and rest upon his precious promises as a shadow of a Great Rock in a weary land.

The duty pressed upon us is to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God. As a matter of fact, in this the apostle refers to the sacrifice under the law, which were presented or sat before God at the altar; ready to be offered to him. Sacrifice is here taken for whatever God has determined, or decided them for. Under the Jewish law there were sacrifices of atonement, and there were sacrifices of acknowledgement; but in this our gospel day Christ is the only sacrifice of atonement we have. So we may know that our obedience rendered to our Lord is not to atone for sin, or to appease the wrath of God. But all our sacrifices to God that are rendered to God through Jesus Christ our Great High Priest, are only sacrifices of acknowledgement to the honor of God. And it occurs to us that we should esteem this more as a privilege than a duty.

Presenting here seems to us to denote a voluntary act. We are not ignorant that some of our brethren object to the term voluntary act, and we would not be understood to convey the idea that this is something that the child of God can do independently of the Lord; but while God has given them his Spirit, and has thereby made them partakers of his divine nature, to these, and these only, gave he power to become the Sons of God. And we must confess that we are at a loss to know how they are to become Sons of God after they are born Sons of God, unless it is in a practical way; and should it be granted that this is what was meant, then it must be true that in the new birth God gave them that power; and now to perform that duty must be a voluntary act on their part, growing out of their love to God and his precious cause. It occurs to us that this act implies not only the avoiding of the sins that are commited with or against the body, but as the using of the body as a servant of the soul in the service of God. Of course bodily exercise alone profits little; in its place it is a proof and product of the work of God in us, and proves that we love God more than the world. The Savior once tried poor old Peter on this very point, when he said, *"Simon Peter, lovest thou me more than these?"* having referred to the fishes caught. Peter said, *"Yea, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."*

God requires a living sacrifice, not killed, as they were under the law, and there is no question but what a

soul renewed by divine grace, and governed by the Spirit in its obedience to God is a living sacrifice, and will always be accepted of the Lord.

And it is but reasonable that we should render this service to the Lord. He has a right to expect it of us, and it seems that it should be our delight to render it, and be all the while engaged in the service of the Master.

By doing thus we are refusing to conform to the world and its ways; but are being transformed and renewing our minds that we may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Oh! That we might see more of the zeal for the Master, and less of that jealous spirit, brethren striving to be called the greatest in the Kingdom of God. We have been sick and tired of brethren quarreling and fighting and trying to devour one another over questions that really amount to nothing in the end, simply questions on which the brethren can be divided and each man have his followers and prove by them that he is the leading preacher of the world. Paul says, ***"For I say through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."***

We feel confident that some little sober thought and measuring ourselves by the standard of God's word for a short while and seeing thereby that we are ***"nothing and less than nothing, and altogether vanity;"*** we are inclined to think that such views as this would cause all to see that all we have, God has given us, and all we can expect God must give, therefore we have nothing whereof to boast save in the cross of Jesus, and let each one strictly adhere to the apostle's admonition in the text, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service.

If all would do this, love would flow from breast to breast, and joy from heart to heart; and we could meet as brethren of one common family and unite our voices in the praise of God, and feel when we meet a Baptist that we have met one of our Father's family, and with joy could stoop to his feet and wash them with our tears of joy and wipe them with the hairs of our head.

May God speed the time when these blessings shall be ours to enjoy, if it can be his holy will.

T.S. Dalton.

PROVERBS 1:7.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

GOD'S WAYS

"The angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt." St. Matt. 11:13.

These are the words of St. Matthew concerning the childhood of our Savior. They call our mind back to the time when God's own time had been fulfilled and Christ, the Holy Son of God, was born into the world. All the events concerning his birth are such as would, of themselves, indicate the exercise of a power higher than that of mankind. Christ's birth into the world was as all other things which God alone directs, unchangeable. The circumstances of time, place, and even the name of the Savior, were fulfillment of prophecy. We sometimes attempt to foretell certain events over which we have partial influence, but how often our plans are diverted. The greatest success in forecasting that we can attain is concerning those things of God into whose mysteries he has allowed us to delve, and whose movements are sure. We may calculate the path of the earth, sun and moon, and determine eclipses of them in advance, but it is because their ways are set by the unalterable plans of God. God's ways are sure, his time is definite, his work is done according to his will.

We believe that the time for much of his work has already come and gone, and it has been completed. ***"And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made." Gen. 2:2.*** Where is one so foolish as to say that he has left the work of creation a partly finished task, depending upon the will, all the work which he has completed. Hear Jesus say, as he hung on the cross, ***"It is finished."*** What did he mean. I believe he meant his work here on earth was finished. And what was that? Hear again, ***"I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will but the will of him that sent me, and this is the Fathers's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing but should raise it up again at the last day." John 6:39-40.*** The inspired writer gave us word in Genesis that the Lord's work of creation was done, and none dare claim a part in it. The Savior himself, with his last words, said his work was finished.

Yet there is a work of God that is now going on. We read that ***"The hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and th***ey that hear shall live." St. John 5:25. This I believe to be the work of regeneration in the heart. God is caring for it by his Holy Spirit in the same sure, steadfast way that he ever moves to do his will. His work cannot be hastened or hindered by men or devils. It was by his permissive will that Christ was delivered into the hands of his enemies. They could not have taken him sooner. The old king

sought his life as a babe, but God protected him, warning Joseph to flee into the land of Egypt until after the death of Herod, the king. Furthermore, we know that Jesus was aware of the events that were soon to transpire, for he said, ***"Behold the hour is at hand, and the son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners." St. Matt. 26:45.*** Inasmuch as there was no power to hasten or hinder God's work of creation, or his work in atoning for the sins of his people, there is no power that can help or hinder his work of regeneration in the hearts of his children, but whenever his time has been fulfilled the Holy Spirit will speak peace to the troubled soul, and the future which once looked like a troubled river of death becomes a beautiful river of life, upon whose mirrored surface the soul shall be wafted to eternal bliss in the new Jerusalem, in the ark of his redeeming love.

We have reason to believe that God has his work planned for the future. ***"The hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth." St. John 5:28-29.*** This surely must be the resurrection of the bodies. How shall we help God then? Shall it be by becoming willing and yielding ourselves to his proffer of resurrection? How much more reasonable is it to suggest that a soul, dead in trespasses and sin, yield to accept regeneration, than to suggest that a body, dead in the grave, yield to accept resurrection?

How much more consistent it is to claim no part in God's work, but to turn our attention to the abundance of labor he has delegated to us. Let us turn to Paul's exhortation, ***"Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good." Rom. 12:9.*** May we renew our determination to let our light, which God has given us, so shine that others, seeing our good works, may glorify our Father. Our feet should not be idle when there are messages of good news to carry; our hands should not be idle when there are kind deeds that may be done; and our tongue should not be idle when kind words may be spoken; but rather let us present ourselves as a living sacrifice to his glory and the good of ourselves and our fellowmen.

T.S. Dalton

NOT YET, BUT WE SHALL KNOW.

"For we know in part, and we prophesy in part:" 1 Cor., xiii, 9.

It is evident that the text teaches that we can prophesy only as far as we know, and that we, knowing only in part, can prophesy only in part. The knowledge here referred to evidently means that which we receive by revelation, and we know in part because only knowledge in part is revealed unto us.

God in His infinite wisdom and great love for his dear people knows what is best for them, and has revealed a sufficiency for them while they are in this world. Perfect knowledge would not be in keeping with an imperfect state. There are some things that God had kept secret, and they belong unto him. We can not find them out by searching, for they are too wonderful for us. We can not attain unto such knowledge. The things that God has revealed unto us, and we have a right to claim them, and appropriate them to our use as far as we may be able according to our measure of faith.

"Now, we see through a glass darkly." In this world Christ shows himself through the lattice unto his people. In the Scriptures, in our experience, in the preached gospel, he is presented unto us only in part; but we see enough of him to cause us to want to see more of him. The text is comforting to us, because we are conscious of our limited knowledge. In a good sermon we can only get a glimpse of Christ, however full of him the preaching may be, because we can know him only in part. How careful we should be, lest we be found trying to prophesy beyond our knowledge. We can not know all about election; for we can not tell why God has chosen some unto salvation and not others, yet we do know that he has done so, for he has revealed that fact unto us in the Bible. We can not understand how it is that God has always loved his people; that it is part of his nature to love them; and that he will always love them; yet we know that such is the case, for he is love, and changes not, and as long as he has been God, he has been love and been loving.

We can not understand all about predestination, yet we know it is true, for the Bible teaches it. For instance, we can not understand how it was wicked in Joseph's brethren in selling him to the Ishmaelites, and yet God having a good purpose in their going so. Many such cases might be referred to, taught in the Scriptures, but it is not necessary to enlarge here. I will remark, however, before leaving the subject of predestination, that brethren in speaking and writing on this mysterious subject, should not forget that they know only in part concerning it; that they can not measure arms with Jehovah; for his judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out. Instead of being restless and prying, trying to understand and even explain mysteries that God has never revealed unto us, and even falling out with our dear brethren because they will not agree with us in our many speculative notions, I see no reason why we should not rather be content with such things as God has been pleased to reveal unto us, and lovingly trust in him as little children. Let us not forget that at our very best in knowledge in this world we are but children, and have only

enough meted out to us as minors according to our necessities. In this world we can but speak as children, understand as children, think as children, for we are yet in our minority; but our God is our guardian, and has in store for us boundless stores of knowledge which he will show us at the proper time, when we become of age, so to speak, which will be when we leave this world and go home to heaven. It is then we shall know even as we are known. Then that which is perfect will have come, and that which is in part shall be done away.

Your brother in love,
T. J. Bazerore.

Monroe, La.
July 23rd, 1955

Elder E. J. Lambert
Winnsboro, Texas

Dear Brother Lambert (I trust in the Lord),

I have been wanting to write you since you finished your book and get you to send me a copy, and I believe the price is $3.00, so will send a check for that amount plus 25 cents to cover postage.

Brother, the dream I wrote you about worried me quite a lot till after I wrote you about it, then later I was relieved of it and am glad you had no comment.

I will soon be 61 years old, and it seems my vision on things is not as clear as it has been in the past, and I see more and more of the sins of this old man every day that I live and still don't know how to get away from any of them. Sure wish someone would tell me if they know, so that I may try in that way too, but at times I am made to thank Almighty God that He has led me through some very sweet and comforting experiences, which if the Lord will strengthen me to that end, I would like to mention a few of the very comforting and outstanding blessings that I know could come from no other source except through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is through His great love and mercy that I have been brought thus far, and shown the things that I believe I have seen.

The things I have in mind at this time are concerning my oldest son. I believe I will drop back to the time just before he was born into this world; that was when his mother had been in hard labor for some 12 to 18 hours and it seemed her strength was completely gone and she was gone too. The doctor and all our help had completely failed to accomplish anything. The doctor said he saw no other chance except a forced birth, so he began to sterilize his instruments. It seemed all this time my whole supplication had gone out for her, but on this wise

there seemed such a great load came down on me I could not bare it, so I walked out of the house, not knowing if I would see her alive again when I returned or not. I went behind the garden, sat down on the ground, buried my head in my lap, and if not deceived, uttered a prayer to God. I don't know what all I said, but on the completion was, "Lord let the child be born, that it be a normal child and that it might live and do well. If this be not possible with Thee, then save my wife and I will still trust in thee." Now as these words were finished I felt completely relieved. I felt light as a feather and I felt perfectly sure he would be born and that everything would be perfectly alright. So I got up, hurried back to the house through the kitchen where the doctor was. And when I entered the room where she was, she smiled at me very beautifully, and I saw new life in her, and the moment I touched her a son was born and a great alarm went up from the ones that were in the room. We called the doctor to come quick, but he did not need any tools. I could give a lot more details, but this is the main event that is so outstanding with me, though it may not be worth anything to anyone who may read it.

There are two other outstanding events I would like to mention while it seems to be fresh on my mind, and that is, while my boy was in the Army, what warning I felt and the experience he had of two very close calls. The first was on his way overseas to Africa. Some of the ships were sunk and the Army announced 1000 of our boys were lost. The ship he was on was badly damaged, but managed to get into harbor. Now after he came home I never questioned him about the things he went through with over there, but just recently he sat down and told me of these events which linked in with all the things I had seen and felt, (I say that I saw and I believe that Porter you wrote so beautifully about in the July signs did open the door and Christ showed me these things,) one morning around nine or ten o'clock. I saw him in great danger, and this same load that I felt several times before came down over me and I was much in distress and grieved, so I was minded to pray for him, which I stole away to myself and did as the Lord enabled me to do. So after this I felt he was safe and that fear was gone, though we did not hear from him for a long time. But I had a feeling he was alright, even after the report came out. Of course I did not know positively but what he was lost in that 1000 of our boys. I never did know just what took place until some few months ago, but this feeling I had had remained the same with me, and when he told me of the event I knew it was at the same time I had received the warning, and it did make my very soul rejoice to know of the wonderful demonstration of His love and mercy.

Now I will try to mention one other very outstanding experience

that took place while he was in the jungles of India, which proves to me beyond any shadow of doubt that All Wise and Powerful God never makes a mistake and is never too early nor too late, but exactly on time and at the right place. Now this took place some 10 or 12 months later. He was in the Airborne Corp of Engineers, and it was their duty to build air bases for our planes to land and take off. They had just finished one base, and that morning there was a Jap plane spotted them, so they got orders to move everything off the field so many hundred yards back in the jungle, which they did as fast as they could, for they knew the Japs would be back to bomb them soon. They got everything off the base except one thing that was forgotten, and his commanding officer sent him back to get it. Before he got there, running as fast as he could, he heard the planes coming, but he got what he had went after and started back. The Japs spotted him and took after him. They were flying several abreast and all putting out a stream of exploding shells that were so thick a man could not pass between them. They were so close he knew there was no chance for him, so he fell to the ground with his face down. Just as he hit the ground he heard a clear voice speak to him, saying, Divine love has all power. Divine love will save. On hearing this voice he was perfectly calm and not afraid at all; and by now those shells were kicking dust in his face, so they came within a few inches of him and all shut off at once. He lay there until they got out of sight, then got up thanking God for His love and mercy, took up what he was sent after and walked calmly on to where the others were; which they could hardly believe, for they felt sure he had been killed. So after this he was always very calm in everything that took place, always trusting in that one God that does all things well; and would take over at times the control of things when all the others in his bunch would get so frantic they could do nothing.

Now the part with me in this event was about six o'clock in the evening. There was such a heavy burden came over me it looked like I could not stand it. I was alone at the time, or there was no other person near me, and the tears did flow from my eyes, for I saw him in exceeding great danger. Of course I did not know what was taking place, but for about 30 minutes I feel that I prayed to God with groanings which words cannot utter. Now after this I felt perfectly at ease. This trouble was taken from me and I felt light as a feather as if I was floating around, and I could see him perfectly safe and not a hair of his head harmed, (which was not, for he went through the whole thing for two years and came home without a scratch.)

I did not know, as I said, just what took place till a short time ago when he told me about it; which all linked in with the exact time that I had

these experiences.

Both of my sons and my daughter were in the service at the same time. The younger son was in the Navy, and he had it pretty rough at times, and I did have similar experiences about him, but not so vivid and outstanding as the older one; neither were his calls nearly so close.

Now the wonderful and precious blessings of God our Savior toward me and mine are much too numerous to mention, for which I feel very unworthy, but so very, very thankful for all of them. These are some of the things that strengthen my very being and I truly hope they will never be taken from my memory, for these things are food for my soul; and when I am given to joy, I feel to join David and say, Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me. Bless His Holy name. Praise the Lord and forget not all His benefits.

I have written much more than may be of interest, but it will give you an idea of the things I live on.

Now I hope this finds you and yours enjoying good health which is God's blessings.

I surely enjoy all your articles in the Signs of the Times, and if you have a mind and can find the time, I would be glad to have a letter from you. When at the throne of grace, please remember me, a sinner.

Your unworthy Brother, if one at all,
J. H. Calk

EYESALVE

"Anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see." Rev. 3:18.

This was addressed to the Laodician church. She did not know her real state, and could not see her true stand. She thought she was rich when she was poor, and mistook darkness for light, bitter for sweet, and the delusions of Satan for the teachings of God. They were to anoint their eyes with this eyesalve, that they might see their real condition and turn from following after Satan and become followers of God as dear children.

But where do we find this wonderful eyesalve that has such marvelous, miraculous, supernatural effects? Is it not the teachings of the blessed Spirit? This is the only thing that can open the eyes of our understanding that we may know our true condition. So the Lord counseled the Laodician church to anoint her eyes with eyesalve, that is, go to a throne of grace. He did not teach by this that they had the power as creatures to anoint their own eyes with this heavenly unction. If they could do this they could teach themselves, while it is written, *"They shall all be taught of the Lord."* But they were to go to the throne of grace, seeking for the teaching of the Spirit.

The question would arise as to why these church members should need this eyesalve. Because they

are still bearing about a body of death. Their flesh is still weak and leads them into such delusion. If they were all spiritual they would not be troubled with this weakness, but since the spirit is life because of righteousness and the body, or flesh, is dead because of sin when we follow after the flesh, we are blind to the things of the spirit. It would do no good to use eyesalve on the eyes of the dead. Sight could not be given before life, but the living may have the eyes of their understanding opened, which are often darkened by nature as the cataract covers the eye of the body. This often grows gradually over the sight.

This blessed eyesalve of grace can open such eyes and enable them to see again. Divine light in a man's conscience will teach him what he is and to know and see the truth. So we can only know ourselves, see others as the blessed of the Lord, see and feel the truth, and know our interest in our Savior's atoning blood, his justifying righteousness, or his dying love as far as the blessed Spirit anoints our eyes with this eyesalve that we may see.

J. Harvey Daily.

Romans 8:26.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infimities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit inself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

March 5.

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." - REVELATION ii. 29.

THESE words extend the message beyond the church to which they were spoken, and address themselves to every one to whom the word comes, and to whom an ear is given to hear and receive it. Thus each message sent to the churches becomes a message sent personally to us. If we have a spiritually circumcised ear, if we are willing to listen to the voice of the Lord, he speaks to us in every message as personally and as distinctly as he spoke to each individual church. It is indeed an unspeakable blessing to have this ear given to us that we may receive in humility, simplicity, and godly sincerity what the Lord speaks in the word of his grace. It is by his word that he knocks at the door of our hearts; and what a blessing he has pronounced on the man who hears his voice and opens the door when he hears the knock, like a fond and affectionate wife when she hears the knock of her husband at the door of his house: " Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev. iii. 20).

Elder J.C. Philpot

CHESTER COUNTY

MIGUANNAN INDIAN TOWN (Plaque #34):

On the 241st anniversary of the sale of a great tract of land by the Indians to William Penn, this tablet, placed on a shaft of native trap rock, was dedicated on October 18, 1924.

It is located at the Landmark Primitive Baptist Church, formerly London Tract Baptist Church, at LR 15016 (Yeatman Station Road) and LR 15155 (London Tract Road), 1 ½ miles northeast of Strickersville.

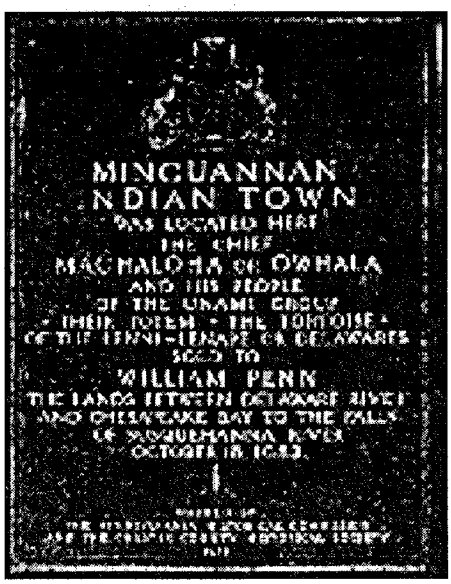

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DECEMBER 2006

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Charles Alders, TX 25.00
Eva Wyatt, NC 5.00
Hazel Garland, MD 25.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER DORIS ROWLAND

It is with a sad heart that I try to write an obituary of our sister, Doris Rowland, 85 formerly of 156 Forest Dale, died Tuesday May 16, 2006, at Roman Eagle Memorial home. She had been in declining health since Dec. of 2005.

She was the daughter of the late Robert Lee Brumfield, and the late Maria Dalton Brumfield. She lived her entire life in Danville, Va. She retired after 40 years from Dan River Mills, where she worked in the no. 2 inspection room.

She joined Old Mountain Primitive Baptist Church, June 24, 1952. She served as church secretary for many years.

She was first married to Robert D. Hamilton Sr. in 1938. He died in August of 1973. She married William Rowland in August of 1977, he died in April of 1992.

She is survived by one son, Robert D. Hamilton Jr. of Danville, Va. And one daughter, Betty Hamilton Leachman, of Biloxi, Miss. A Sister, Carry McDaniel of Danville, Va. Three grand children, and two great grandchildren. In addition to her husbands, she was predeceased by two brothers, Perrow Brumfield and Ollie Brumfield. And by three sisters, Minnie B. Willis, Sagasta Brumfield Hudgins and Mamie B. Brumfield.

There was a graveside service Sunday May 21 at Hiland Burial Park with Elder C.B. Davis officiating. Buried beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to wait the second coming of the Lord.

Written by one who loved her,
Sarah Barker

SISTER DOROTHY CONNER YATES

Sister Dorothy Conner Yates of Check, Virginia died October 20, 2006, making her stay here on earth 83 years.

Services were held at 11:00 a.m. Monday, October 23, 2006 at Salem Church with her pastor, Elder Hale Terry and Elder W.T. Conner officiating. She was laid to rest in Restvale Cemetery.

Sister Dorothy was baptized September 13, 1959 and was a faithful member at Salem Church. She was married to Sherman Yates who preceded her in death. She is survived by three sons, Ralph, Barry and David Yates, and two daughters, Brenda and husband David Ramsey and Carolyn Mills. She had ten grandchildren, twenty great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild. Sister Dorothy had one brother, Banks and wife Opal Conner, one brother-in-law, Alfred Ratliff, two sisters-in-law, Jean and Frank Link and Helen Link.

Sister Dorothy will be greatly missed at Salem Church, but we hope our loss is her eternal gain. She fought a good fight and is resting in Restvale Cemetery waiting for the coming of our Savior.

Done by order of Salem Church in conference, November 11, 2006. One copy of this memorial will be included in the church records, one will be given to the family and one will be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Submitted by,
Mary Poff, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

Elder Kenneth,
Read this poem and find how many of these pretty words and expressions have you experienced in you life. I see the depth of our experience in each verse.

Frances

FOREVER

I learn as the years roll onward
And leave the past behind,
That much I have counted sorrow
But proves our God is kind;
That many a flower I have longed for
Had a hidden thorn of pain,
And many a rugged by-path
Led to fields of ripened grain.

The clouds but cover the sunshine,
They cannot banish the sun.
And the earth shines out the brighter
When the weary rain is done.
We must stand in the deepest sorrow
To see the clearest light,
And often from wrong's own darkness
Comes the very strength of right.

(cont. next page)

We must live through the weary winter
If we could but value the spring,
And the woods must be cold and silent
Before the robins sing.
The flowers must be buried in darkness
Before they could bud and bloom
And the sweetest and warmest sunshine
Comes after the storm and gloom.

So the heart from the hardest trial
Gains the purest joy of all,
And from the lips that have tasted sadness
The sweetest songs will fall.
For as peace comes after suffering,
And love is reward of pain,
So after earth comes heaven
And out of our loss the gain.

Anon.

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EDITORIAL

"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant." Psalm 25:14

Elder J.B. Farmer

Having been given a mind to attempt to write down a few things about the secret of the Lord and about His covenant, with much fear I begin. At the outset it must be said that it is my hope and desire to be delivered from all the pitfalls that attend such an endeavor. It is my sincere wish toward God to be delivered from pride, boasting in the flesh, any root of bitterness and also to be brought out of the darkness of a carnal mind. It is also my desire to be filled with love toward all and given an understanding of the truth as it is in Christ, to the comfort of the children of God, and to the praise of the God of heaven and earth.

I am made to believe the ones that the secret of the Lord is with, and the ones that fear Him in truth, and the ones to whom He promised that He will show them His covenant are the children of God. They are the same ones that God loved with an everlasting love and drew with His loving kindness. They are those that were chosen in Christ and the ones whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. They are those that God foreknew, predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son,

called, justified and glorified. They are those to whom He gave grace in Christ Jesus before the world began. They are the vessels of mercy and honor that God prepared unto glory. They are those that are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. They are those, like Jacob, that were found in a waste, howling wilderness and were led about and instructed and kept as the apple of His eye. They are those that were given a great and everlasting love for God and for His people. It is the little flock, the spiritual family of God, in which the Lord has dwelled throughout all generations. By the Spirit, some looked forward to His coming into the world, and by the same Spirit, some look back to it. The secret of the Lord surely has been with each one to sustain him through all his troubles and to bring him to the end of his journey in peace.

What is a secret? A secret, to me, is some knowledge that is committed to certain ones but that is kept hidden from all others. This particular secret of the Lord is unknowable in the natural, carnal mind because it is Spiritual. It is the secret of the Lord. The blessed apostle was given to say, ***"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him, but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit."*** He was also blessed to say, ***"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are Spiritually discerned."*** And Jesus said, ***"I thank thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."*** And He also said, ***"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you."*** So, God's children are taught to use wisdom when speaking of the secret that is within them.

The secret of the Lord is a secret shared among the Lord's people, although they cannot teach it to one another or to anyone else. The Holy Spirit said by the apostle, ***"And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."*** The world of carnal religion cannot understand this principle and is therefore constantly trying to persuade others to know their lord, which is not the Lord of Glory. They compass land and sea to make one proselyte and when they finish with him, he is two-fold more the child of hell than they are themselves, ac-

cording to the words of Christ. They are incessantly trying to build a larger congregation and are never satisfied. They are ever learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. But the hidden truth is this according to the inspired word of God. ***"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."*** The things of the spiritual kingdom must remain a mystery to the whole natural world.

What then is the secret of the Lord? I am made to believe that the secret of the Lord is the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, Who is Christ in you, the hope of glory. It is the continuing presence of the hidden Man of the Heart. David said by inspiration, ***"Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man."*** It is knowledge of that spiritual kingdom life that abides within God's little ones. Christ and His kingdom life are so hidden within you that we are told, ***"You are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God."*** The life you live by faith in the Son of God is unseen by those in nature's darkness. You have been killed to the world and the world has been killed unto you. No longer is your life bound up in serving sin and running after the pleasures of the world. You are made to know that the world is not your home and that you are a stranger and pilgrim here. You are a foreigner to the world and are only passing through. You, like God's children of old, have no certain dwelling place here to call home. Yes, we have natural houses and natural things, but we understand that they are just temporary and our futures are not tied to them or to any of the things of this world. As a foreigner, you are considered to be an untrustworthy spy by those whose home is in the world. After all, your language is not understood by them, neither are your principles of life. Your speech and your way of life is a hindrance to all those of contrary minds. It shines light into the dark places that they desire to keep hidden. It spoils their worldly pleasures. Therefore, they want you to be gone from their presence and they shun you, even as they did the prophets and the apostles in their day. Why is it so? It is because the secret of the Lord is with you. They hated Him and they shall hate you also because Christ Himself is with you.

The secret of the Lord is high and wide and broad and deep. The person of the Lord Jesus Christ was such a secret that no one could know who He really was, except by revelation from God. When Peter confessed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God, Jesus said to him, ***"Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."*** The Father and the Son

are hidden. Jesus said, *"All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."* God and the Son and all things of the spiritual kingdom are hidden. But the Holy Spirit, which is Christ in you, teaches you the things of the spiritual kingdom that are a mystery to all others. He teaches you that God is sovereign, that He rules and reigns over all in the army of heaven and amongst the inhabitants of the earth; that God does all His will and is not frustrated or changed by any; that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God; that God has a chosen people that he loved with an everlasting love, and that He, without fail will bring every one of them to glory; and that there are those that God hates with a perfect hatred, that were made to be destroyed by Him at the end of time. These and many other things of that spiritual kingdom, which comes not by observation, are all held in secret by the Lord's chosen few.

Those that have been filled with the secret of the Lord, rejoice in the kingdom of God as they are led about and instructed and kept in the things of it. They are taught precept upon precept and line upon line; here a little and there a little. They are blessed to talk freely to one another about it, and about their experience in it. The over-abounding love that fills their hearts for God and His Son and for one another cannot be contained and God must be praised. *"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."* The Holy Spirit said through the mouth of David, *"Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; for praise is comely for the upright."* They seem to be the weakest of all people, but God's strength is made perfect in weakness. They are the fewest of all people, but they are the wisest, most contented, most honest and humbled people upon the face of the earth. Why is this so? I am made to believe it is because the secret of the Lord is with them. The secret of the Lord guides them, instructs them, comforts them and keeps them in the paths of righteousness.

God, Who cannot lie or fail in a promise, also said through David, *"He will shew them his covenant."* God promised that He would show His people His covenant. The spiritual understanding of this holy, just and good covenant is kept secret from all who have not the Spirit of God. We understand that a covenant is an agreement between two or more parties. There was an old covenant that God made with Israel, which bound Israel to obey the law of God on penalty of death for disobedience. This covenant they broke because of the weakness of the flesh. They all found themselves to be guilty and condemned sinners before God without excuse or remedy. I am made to believe that all of

God's little ones have this covenant written in their hearts. It is the ministration of condemnation and the ministration of death to them. God makes them to understand the same things as the apostle did according to his experience. Paul said this by the Spirit. *"I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died."* When God writes this law in our mind and upon our hearts we are made to know without a doubt what it means to be a condemned sinner without hope in this world. We are also brought into company with the Publican, who could not even look up toward heaven, but smote his breast and confessed that he was a sinner and begged for mercy. We are killed to any thought of goodness in ourselves. This knowledge remains hidden to the world, but it is the Lord's secret with His people.

But God, in His great love and mercy for His people, sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ the Righteous into the world to fulfill the righteous, holy law of God and to make a way of escape for His people, through His suffering, death and resurrection from the dead. God has now revealed the new and everlasting covenant to the minds and hearts of His little ones, and has shown them that the old covenant has been fulfilled and put away. This new and everlasting covenant is the covenant of grace that God made with His Son on behalf of His people. The prophet and the apostle said by the Spirit, *"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."* Although this sure, everlasting covenant seems so plain to those who are given to know the secret, it is a mystery to all others.

This secret unconditional covenant manifests the love of God for His people. It shows that their sins were mercifully and gracefully forgiven and put away - never to appear against them again. By this one offering of Himself to God, Christ perfected forever them that are sancti-

fied. Jesus left the sins of God's little ones in the grave, as sure as He left His grave clothes there when He arose from the dead. And He now is sitting at the right hand of God where He ever lives to make intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And He has promised to never leave you or forsake you, and that He would come again at the end of time, change you into His likeness and to receive you to Himself. This secret everlasting covenant secures all our hopes and desires, because it is God that has promised and God that is able to fulfill all that He has spoken. And He will do it. ***"He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."***

Sometimes I think I have tasted that God is gracious, but sometimes I think I am deceived. Sometimes I am persuaded with the apostle, that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day, although I know I am undeserving. I trust I have been made to know that I am nothing and altogether unworthy according to nature, but yet I must hope in His righteousness and in His mercy and goodness. It is my hope and trust that the God of heaven and earth shall continue His secret presence with you and His hidden mercy and goodness to you and to all His little ones now and forever, and that He may cause you to rejoice in that everlasting and sure covenant of grace in hope of eternal life. David said that he had one desire above all others, which I am made to believe each one of the little flock also has been given, and I trust it is within me also. He said, ***"One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple."***

This was written, I trust, in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J. B. Farmer
12-21-2006

CORRESPONDENCE

This was written by Jamie E. Cooper some years ago. I found it and I am going to copy it word for word and share it with the readers of "The Signs" if you think it is worthy to print.

ONE DISOBEDIENCE

Dear Saints,

As this is my first time to write anything about my experience. I don't have any idea what it will amount to.

I want to tell you of first one of my disobediences of which I have many it seems. Several years back I remember a certain place that I always enjoyed going. But for some reason at this church I always seemed to feel more unworthy than

any place I went. This went on for several years and it seemed to get more heavy each year. Looking back now I believe it was all for my good, and to show me how frail and helpless I really am. As I said it got more severe each time. When I would be called on to serve in the communion, and I would go up to take the bread or wine it would seem that I was actually taking hold of Christ himself and it would almost take my breath away. I can't tell you how unworthy I would feel.

When the preaching was about half over I would begin to start having this awful feeling and yet I cannot say I did not want to serve. Now on this certain occasion just before the preaching was over. I as much believe that God gave me over to Satan for a few moments as he did Peter when he denied Him. I told myself that I just cannot do this, this time without making a scene in public, so the best thing for you to do is get on the back bench and they may not call on you. I don't think I had ever been there that I was not called on to serve. So you know what I did. Yes I got on the back bench and went all the way back to the end of the bench and sat down and I guess I even had my head down so no one would see me even. About this time I was feeling pretty well satisfied with what I had done.

So when they called for the ones to serve the bread, they did not call me. Now about this time is when I started to receive the heavy rod. Even then I would have been glad to have been called, but do you know, oh yes when they chose the ones for the wine they passed me by. Now dear fellow Deacons, I hope I can tell you of the awful weight that was upon me. I don't think if the whole roof had come down it would have been any heavier. As I said before I believe that old satan had tempted me, but now I had someone else to deal with. I have never before nor since had Christ to speak any more plainer or direct to me than at this time. Do you have any idea what He said to me.

He never talked harsh or rebuked me, or accused me but He was just as gentle as He could be. But oh how deep the stripes did cut.

He said to me so plain it almost seems to me the one next to me could have heard it.

He said, ***"you are some deacon, you never cease to ask me day and night to do something for you, and now you have been in the position to do this one simple thing for me and you have refused."***

Now I will have to just let each one of you imagine what an awful condition I was in because I cannot tell you. As I said about Peter being tempted, yes I was like him I went out and I wept bitterly. Now my Brethren I am still wearing those stripes and I think I always will. But I would not have it any other way, because this is one of my experiences and I have come to the place that I had rather

have Christ to visit me in His chastisement than to not visit me at all.

Oh yes you want to know what I have learned is this, I have never since and I don't believe I will ever get on the back seat any more.

Being a deacon is something hard to explain. Sometime you may think well why be, but there is something about it I could not give up. Just being able in some small way to feel you have done just a little to glorify His Blessed and Holy Name.

Your brother in hope and love!
Jamie E. Cooper

Sunday, October 2006
Tarboro, North Carolina

On September 30th and October 1st this past year, I feel that a few vessels of God's mercy assembled themselves together in bond of God's great love in an Association gathering. This wonderful gathering was held on St. James street in the beautiful town of Tarboro, North Carolina.

How these preaching brethren were elevated from the pits of darkness of nature, and set forth that great Gospel! They were blessed to remind us of God's great love, to feast on at His appointed time. How beautiful it is when one is blessed with an ear to hear and to feast from the rations from the Master's table food for the hungry soul. Surely, we that hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled.

All the preaching brethren came forth showing that great love and harmony, setting forth a ruling and sovereign God who controls everything after the counsel of his precious will. We truly rejoiced that He is the author and finisher of this great faith that sustains the believing family of God in this land of sin and sorrow, if not deceived. Oh how those present seemed favored to feast on that Good News, food and consolation from that far country, channeled through God's bountiful grace.

Elder Joe Sawyers opened with remarks and we sang hymn 196. With a gracious prayer, the meeting began in a warm and graceful way. Elder Alan Terry was the second appointed to the stand.

I feel Elder Terry is a very able vessel of God's mercy. The text delivered to Elder Terry's heart came from Corinthians 15: 12-24. We were all blessed with a very moving message from that text.

Elder W. T. Conner was third appointed to the stand. Elder Conner was highly favored to bring forth a beautiful message of comfort to God's household of believers through faith. Elder Conner was given Ephesians 2: 1-10 as his text.

Elder Junior Conner, W. T. Conner's fleshly brother, and I believe Gospel brother was next appointed to the stand. Elder Conner's text came from Corinthians 1:1-31. The second Elder Conner's message was a beautiful spiritual dis-

course that was well and warmly received.

I believe these two brothers are gifted individuals. This concluded preaching before lunch on Saturday.

The ladies of the church outdid themselves with a truly delicious lunch, that was enjoyed by all. Every time I have one of the amazing dinners on the ground, I am humbled to think about when Christ blessed the bread loaves and indeed, fed multitudes. This has always been a very beautiful expression of God's power for me.

Saturday afternoon preaching began with Elder C. B. Davis. Elder Davis was given Psalms 85:7-11. The highly worded message delivered through Elder Davis was great comfort to the recipients of God's great love.

Those gathered being fully fed, Elder Hale Terry dismissed the crowd on Saturday afternoon with Hymn 73 and prayer. I think that all who were present received and were well fed from God's great Gospel that was set forth.

Sunday morning services were opened with hymn 372 followed by prayer delivered through Elder Marvin Brumfield.

Elder Raymond Goad was the first appointed to preach on Sunday morning. He was given for his text St. John 1:3-7. Elder Goad was blessed to bring forward graceful words of great comfort.

Elder Hale Terry was the second appointed to preach on Sunday morning. Elder Terry was given for his text, Romans 8:28-39. Elder Terry was blessed to bring forth a very graceful message from that given text.

Elder Cleo Robertson was the third appointed to preach on Sunday morning. Elder Robertson was given for his text, John 3: 13-14. Elder Robertson was blessed to bring forth a very moving message for those blessed to be recipients of God's love. I have often enjoyed Elder Robertson's thoughtful writing, as well as knowing him as being highly favored to preach the Gospel of the kingdom of God.

Elder Marvin Brumfield, whom I esteem very highly was the fourth Elder appointed to the stand. He was given as his text from Corinthians 17:1-2. Elder Brumfield's message from that text was highly favored from that good land, bringing further words of grace and comfort to those gathered there.

Elder Joe Sawyer was the fifth elder appointed to the stand. Elder Sawyer was given verse from Deuteronomy, and was further given moving remarks from chapter 32. Elder Sawyer is a highly gifted individual.

Looking over the crowd, I was very moved seeing tears of joy flowing down cheeks of those feasting from the rations from the master. I understood clearly the wonder of those of our faith who travel so far often, to be so warmly and beautifully blessed. The long journey to

Tarboro seemed short at that moment.

The preaching brethren were from all up and down the east coast. Coming forth in love and advocating the predestination of all things, they all gave praise to this high and sovereign God. The experiences of our old Baptist Brethren, so steady across the centuries now, in seeking the affirmation of a sovereign God across the miles is very grounding and humbling. How wonderful that this hopeful journey continues, and what peace that anchored mooring gives.

I would like to close these remarks with a personal note, thanking everyone in the Tarboro area for the great and further humbling love and hospitality shown these travelers from the West Virginia during a wonderful and blessed weekend. Indeed, I was most saddened that the wonderful fellowship came to an end. These wonderful blessings will be cherished greatly for a very long time.

Riley Justice
POB 272
War, WV 24892
304-875-2960

PSALMS 98:1

O Sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory.

Elder William Hale Terry
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
Signs of the Times

1/2/2007

Dear Elder Terry,

Please renew my subscription for the "Signs of The Times" for the coming year. I am enclosing a check for $30.00- $15.00 for the subscription and $15.00 for a contribution.

I thank God for blessing us with those individuals, both past and present, whom I believe, have been given the desire, ability, effort, and dedication that is required to continue the publishing of the Signs. I believe that is through this means of communication that we are made to realize that the experiences of the authors, their beliefs, and their discussions are those that we can relate to since some of our own experiences are similar to theirs.

Time has not changed the doctrine that we contend for and nothing has changed with God. As I continue to read the Signs I am made to realize that it does not matter when the editorials and articles were written in time, whether it be one hundred years or just a month ago, we can read, relate to, and enjoy them regardless of when they were written.

A brother in hope
George W. Hyslip

VOICES OF THE PAST

Harbourton, N.J., June 27, 1903

Elder F. A. Chick – Dear Brother In The Lord: - By your request, and that of others, I will try to pen my experience in passing from nature's darkness to the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. I tremble at the attempt, fearing that it will crowd out much richer and better pasture than has grown in me, but if God has planted his word in my heart, and I am made to feed upon it, and to be nourished by it, why should I be ashamed of his workmanship? I hope that I never shall, although at times it seems but a dream and almost gone, yet I cannot forget that wonderful change which I was made to feel most thankful for. It was plainly shown to me that I had no part in this work, and it could not be taught by human knowledge, but it is given from above, and it of the free mercy of God. Words spoken by the apostle long ago suited my case, ***"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."*** It is the gift of God, free and complete, and I saw that I could do nothing but gladly accept his mercy, and walk in humble submission to his will.

It might be well for me to go back to the time of my birth of Adam's race. I was born at Yardville, N. J., April 5th, 1873, and spent my childhood days with my twin brother and three sisters there on my father's farm. I seldom went anywhere to church, as my father was not a member of any church, and my mother was a member at Hopewell, twenty-one miles distant. She could go but a few times in a year, and the most of the time we children were left at home, to keep house when we were old enough. Sunday afternoons Sunday School was held at our district schoolhouse, and against our mother's wishes we children would sometimes go. I was not interested in the Sunday school lesson, but went to see my schoolmates. I well remember one of the teachers telling me about little children in heathen lands without the gospel, and that they without it would be lost, and she said that I with others should bring some money the next time with which they would send a preacher to save them. I did not know what being saved meant, and so did not take the money the next time.

Mother would quite often talk to me about Jesus, who died to save his people from their sins, and of how sinful we all were, and I would get much interested in her talk, and thought it would be dreadful to be destroyed, and in burnings forever, yet I would soon forget all about it.

At the age of ten years I had a strange dream: I thought the world was coming to an end; I was going to school it seemed, and I could

plainly see the devil, as I thought it was, gathering up the wicked and throwing them into a large furnace on wheels, red with the heat, and I was greatly alarmed, and feared that he would take me, and longed for my mother's presence. Instantly she was by my side, and I told her what I was afraid of, and asked her that I might hide under her shawl, and then it seemed that we both crept under the fence out of sight as the devil passed by. This childhood's dream left such an impression on my mind that I never forgot it entirely, and today I can go to the very spot where it seemed that we hid. But soon again my mind was upon fun, and a good time, as I then called it. I can well see myself as I look back, rolling sin as a sweet morsel under my tongue, loving the world and its vanities, laughing at other people's calamities, until the Lord spoke and said, *"Thus far shalt thou go and no further."* And truly I was ripe for a fall, for sin was my all. I had now reached the age of fifteen years, and was slender and very tall. I remember well thinking what a man I was becoming, far ahead of my twin brother and others of my age. Now my fall came; trouble knocked at my door and walked in upon me. That summer my father had a large hay crop, and some of it we sold right from the field. One day I drove a load of hay to market, and while I was waiting for my father to come and unload it, there came a very heavy shower, and fearing the hay would spoil I went at it in great earnest, unloading it alone. That was the last of my work for the summer, I had suffered a strain, and for two long years I was able to do but little work. I now realized that pleasure and health were taken from me, and this worried me greatly, and so at last I thought it would be best for me to starve myself to death. My oldest sister coaxed me hard to eat, but I told her that I would not, for I wished to die, and she left me out of patience. When my mother heard all this she told me that I must not think of such a thing, and that in time I would outgrow this weakness and be all right again. I obeyed my mother, but was discouraged in getting well, as the doctors said it would take a long time. Thinking over my condition, and of what would become of me if I did die, I spent many, many nights crying, desiring no sleep.

At that time I cannot tell just how my past life would come up before me; thoughts like this would come, What an evil, wrong, wicked, sinful, vile life I have led, and soon I would forget my bodily affliction, and began to grieve over my sins, which had now become my chief trouble; I knew not what to do nor where to go; I spent my time in sore distress, crying and weeping week after week, and month after month, until I was compelled to seek the Lord for forgiveness and pardon. My poor heart prayed earnestly and constantly that my sins might be blotted out in his sight, but instead of any relief I grew

worse and worse. While in this miserable state, one day I picked up one of mother's papers, the Signs of the Times, and I became interested in the reading, as it told of things which I had passed through. I was amazed, and did not know how to believe it, for I thought my case was an outside one, and that none could be half so vile as I. From that time until this I have been greatly comforted by the rich things contained in that paper.

About this time sister Lawshe and other Old School Baptists arranged to have meetings at their homes in Trenton, and would send us word, and sometimes mother would ask me to take her, and the preaching did me much good. The Elders spoke of the Lord's people being poor and afflicted, vile and sinful, so that they hated their own nature. This was the very way that I felt, yet I did not want it known by any one. I felt a great desire to know the truth, and resolved to read the Bible, but the more I read, the more it seemed to condemn my wicked ways, and my feelings became such that I can never describe them, for I saw again that I was lost, and that I could not help myself, and what to do I did not know, yet I was begging God for mercy all the time, but as yet no relief came; sorrow, grief and afflictions seemed my only friends, for they were with me day and night. Truly I longed for a ray of light.

One morning while caring for the horses, the words came to my mind clearly and forcibly, *"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in his excellent word,"* and there came a smile on my face, for they seemed to take me in. O, how sweet to my soul these words were; I never can forget them. For days I seemed to live upon their richness. But joy brings sorrow, and sorrow brings joy, and soon I sank more deeply than ever in gloom and distress, and doubted all that I has passed through. About this time we received a card saying that Elder Vail would preach in Trenton, and father, mother and I went. I do not remember the text, but every word went to my heart and condemned my whole life, and my wicked ways. So weeping was all that I could reap from it, and this was what I needed, though then I could not see it so. When we reached our gate on our way home I told my parents that I would open the gate and walk down the lane. As soon as they had passed through I lay down on the ground and cried bitterly, because I felt so badly and so condemned. When I arose my eyes were fixed upon the sky, and it seemed that walking among the stars down towards me I saw the form of a man with large white wings, and in his hand he carried a sword. Speaking to me by my name he said, *"Willie, you are my child,"* and disappeared. It was most wonderful to me, but I said nothing about it.

The friends in Trenton were so kind as to let us know about the appointments there, and we got to

them quite often. My excuse was to take mother. Several times that we went there was no preaching, but this did not discourage either of us. I dearly loved the doctrine which they proclaimed, but thought such mercies could not be for me. These thoughts would bring fresh tears down my cheeks, and then I would seek the Lord in prayer, but while praying such thoughts as this would come into my mind, You know that you do not deserve what you are asking for; be still, and bear what belongs to you; do not place your wrong upon the innocent. This I could not deny, and I would get up and leave the place. O, how I feared the Lord because of my sins. I felt that I was lost, and lost forever, yet I begged the Lord that he would save me from hell and destruction, which path I had all my life been walking in. But the way of God is in himself, and what he does is ever best.

Now the meetings and the Signs had become a great comfort to me, they never failed to bring a sense of peace to my troubled mind when bowed down in distress. As I look back over those then dark, sad days, I now count them the best and happiest days of my life, and can see that they were good for me, turning my thoughts toward Christ Jesus, setting my feet upon the Rock, established my goings, and putting a new song in my mouth, even praise to our God. At the age of twenty-one years, and through the kind providence of an allwise God, we moved to my mother's old home at Ewing. How glad I was that we were nearer Hopewell, yet I thought, What can I do with my sins? For they have grown like mountains before my eyes. I seemed to sink deeper and deeper into the miry clay. Many, many times I wished that I was dead, and several times I dreamed of my own funeral, but would awaken disappointed.

I tried to get relief from my burden and sin, and I went into young company, but soon found it a task to enjoy myself; the things they cared for I did not, and so instead of relief, it but added sorrow to my heart.

One Sunday night Elder Wm. L. Beebe preached at sister Lawshe's, in Trenton. It being a stormy night, I went down alone, and after meeting sister Lawshe spoke to the Elder about me as one interested in the word, and asked him to talk with me about it. He spoke many lovely and comforting words to my mind, but I felt afraid to open my mouth. At last I expressed my feeling as being in the hymn 1022: "I am so vile, so full of sin, I fear that I'm not born again." He took the book and read the hymn, and turning to me said, "If these words express your feeling you should make it known to the church, for in that hymn there is a rich experience of a child of God." This was in the winter of 1895, and this winter had brought more sorrow to my poor soul than any time before. Truly I had come to hate myself,

and felt that I was not fit to sit at the table and eat with the rest of the family. I asked constantly that the Lord would take away my sins, and guide my wayward feet in the paths of righteousness. I do not think that I could get into a much worse hell that my ownself seemed to me to be. I slept but few nights that winter without my pillow being wet with tears. One night I slept but little, and had a wonderful dream, in which I saw the end of time, with the heavens on fire, and above the sky I saw a great white throne made of white marble. It was long and narrow. In the center Jesus stood, and his twelve disciples around him, and at one end was a door, which was also of white marble, and I could plainly see his people going in. I was so happy walking on the clouds in heaven, and I soon came to the door, then the thought came, You are not fit, you are that wicked one. I cannot describe the feeling. I started as it seemed, to everlasting punishment. Going down I seemed to meet my father and mother, and they told me that was the only way to enter in, at the door, and I broke out weeping. At this moment these words were spoken to me in a loud voice, which awoke me from my sleep, ***"Thou shalt be made willing in the day of my power."*** I wondered and felt to praise God for such a token, for it made me so happy, and relieved my sorrow.

At different times that spring these words out of the Bible, that I never remembered reading, or of having heard read, would come upon my mind, as though I had known them by heart: ***"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "The world by wisdom knows not God."*** It was in the school of Christ that I was taught these things. I now began to feel and know that the Lord was shining round about me, and had become merciful to my unrighteousness. O, how happy I felt because of his love. One morning at the table my sister Lizzie about her work was singing a gospel hymn; the words touched my heart, and I left the table crying. My father followed me into the shop and inquired what was the matter. I asked for my mother, and begged him to forgive me all my wrongs. As soon as I could I told my mother all the trouble of heart that had been mine so long. My mother broke down crying with me, but said she was glad the Lord had led me thus, because it was a true Christian experience, as she believed. She said if I felt like telling it to the church, it would be right for me to do so. I felt to ask all the family to forgive me all the wrong that I had ever done them. My love for the people of God grew stronger and stronger, until I asked my parents if they would not ask you down to see me the next time you

came to Hopewell, for as you know they were without a pastor at that time. I thought I would like to talk with you when you came. You spent the night at our home, and quite a number came in, and in a weak way I told them what I have here written. You deemed it a good experience through grace, and that it was not mixed with creature goodness or self-righteousness. Some of the hymns that were sweet to me were sung, and they seemed very sweet that evening. I will mention the numbers of a few in Beebe's collection: 751, 464, 1022, 671, 881. The next morning I took you to the train feeling much better. When I bade you good bye I hoped that I would be able to come to the church before long, and I told you to arrange a time, for I longed to be with them, and the second Saturday in June I came and related what I trusted had been the dealings of God with me, and that I had been made to trust in him alone for salvation, that Jesus was the only way given under heaven and among men, whereby we must be saved. I was received as you know. But while I was so glad to be numbered among them, I do not think that I ever felt so broken up, and unworthy, and out of place, as I did standing there asking favor from so good a people. This Saturday was a clear, beautiful, balmy day in nature, but the next was cold, and it rained in torrents, nevertheless three others as well as myself were baptized. I shall never forget the hymn that was sung before we went down into the water: 1129, *"Jesus, and shall it ever be, a mortal man ashamed of thee?"* Also the words that you spoke to me when you gave me the hand of fellowship; they sank deep into my heart. It all seemed too good for me, but I was happy, and I could not help it.

Happiness is like the wind, it comes and goes without our control. Before dawn the next day the devil seemed to take possession of me, and doubts and fears and blind unbelief filled my mind. When I got home it was a very dark, sad night spiritually to me, and I prayed earnestly that I might know if I had done wrong in uniting with the church, for I thought that perhaps I had deceived the people of the true and living God. Some time the next day the Scripture came sweetly to my soul, *"This is the way, walk ye in it."* Instantly my fear was gone.

Dear brother, I have been trying ever since to walk in the way in a becoming manner, but I am so blind to spiritual things that I go stumbling, falling, fearing, and am so faint and weak that at times I am almost persuaded that I am not a saint at all. Then the word comes as an anchor to the soul sure and steadfast, holding me up to praise his great name, through faith, hope and love, which are the foundation of any experience of grace.

Now in closing, I wish to say that I feel that the dear Lord has been very merciful to me all the days

of my life; I have nothing with which to repay him, but desire to be thankful and submissive to his will. Since I have been in the fold I have seen many brought into the banqueting-house of God, to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. Two of them are very near to me by natural ties: one my twin brother, and the other the wife of my bosom, for which I feel very thankful indeed.

I give this to your hands imperfect; after reading it and correcting it, if anything is left that you think would comfort one of the dear children of God, you are at liberty to put it in print, not to the honor of my name, but alone to the glory of God.

Wm. T. Yard

STRONG IMPRESSIONS.

Elder R. W. Thompson; Dear Brother in the Lord: I wish to write an article on dreams, and incidents of my ministerial life, not that I believe that every thing we dream is of the Lord. I know that I have dreamed things that came to pass, and it is such dreams that I wish to write about in this article. Some five or six years ago I was requested to preach at a certain place in Gonzales county, Texas; after preaching there a few times arrangements were made to offer an opportunity for members. On Thursday night two brethren came to my house to go the next day to the above place of worship. Thursday night I dreamed that myself and others were walking along a road. I thought I found a pile of money in the road, and could see at the same time one Bland dollar after another scattered down the road. I thought I picked up the money that was in the pile, while the crowd that was with me picked up the money that was scattered down the road. When we got our money all picked up I thought some officers came running up and said, *"A bank was robbed last night in town."* I thought the officers made the parties that run around me give up their money, but said nothing to me. When I awoke the interpretation was plain. The money that I picked up was all in a pile. When we offered an opportunity for members eight joined. There was my pile of money just as it was interpreted in my dream. The money scattered down the road was God's people that the Arminian bank robbers had picked up. A church was soon constituted at the above place and increased to thirty-five or forty members in a short while; nearly all were from the Missionary Baptists and among them one Missionary preacher.

Elder P.M. Lancaster was once on a preaching tour in my section of country and I was with him. One night I dreamed that I was walking along by myself and saw a beautiful bright dollar in the edge of some drift wood. When I awoke the thought oc-

curred to me, that just one would join Ephesus church. When we got there (Ephesus church is where my dream above related was fulfilled) I told Brother Lancaster my dream and the interpretation. We had several churches to pass before reaching Ephesus church. Sister Sallie Lowry joined on Friday night, and was the only one to join during the meeting.

Some time after this the Missionary Baptists sent special word for me to visit one of their churches some twenty miles east of me. I went and preached the best I could for them. By their request I left another appointment. After filling my second appointment I told them on Sunday that I believed they had some of the Lord's people in their Arminian pen, and that I would offer them an opportunity to come out at my next meeting if they had no objections. They said they had none. Before the next meeting I dreamed that I was working with a hoe in a very dirty and filthy looking piece of land, and while working I found two pieces of metal. I picked them up, but did not know what they were, only that they were metal of some kind. I commenced rubbing them and soon found them to be two five dollar gold pieces. I thought I rubbed them until they were perfectly bright. The interpretation thereof was plain; four or five are going to join at your next meeting at South Union at the Missionary church mentioned above. They were covered in Arminianism, but you have it all rubbed off. Arminianism is similar to the kid skin on Jacob's neck and hands, all on the outside. So I told the dream to a brother while we were going over to my next appointment. After preaching on Saturday, the wife of one of the deacons joined the church. After she told her experience and was received, I asked her when she wanted to be baptized. She said, *"I believe there are others that want to join the church."* I told the audience we would come to definite conclusions relative to baptism before the meeting was over. We met at the church that night and three more joined, all from that church. So I found my pure gold. The Missionaries soon put a stop to me preaching in their house. One of their preachers not long since told me that I had about all the good material there was in their church at that place. I told him that we had about all we wanted.

After this I dreamed that I was fishing and that I caught two fish, one was easily gotten out of the water, while the other was a flying fish. The dream was interpreted to mean, that two are going to join the church; one is coming up quietly and the other is coming shouting. So at my home church shortly after, at our regular meeting, and opportunity was offered for members, an aged sister got up and quietly gave me her hand. Presently a young sister arose in the rear end of the house and came shouting down the aisle where I was. I said to myself, There is my flying fish. One more and I will close

on the subject of dreams. About two years ago I was from home on a preaching tour and I dreamed one night that a telegraph operator brought me a telegram. I thought its contents were in parallel columns, and that one column was black and the other was bright. I thought the operator read the message to me from the dark column. I thought that all I could get out of it was for me to come home. After the operator was gone I thought I would try to read the telegram, but could make nothing out of it. When I woke up I felt sure that I would be telegraphed home, but I went on to my next appointment which was at Killeen in Bell county, Texas. I told no one about my dream. The church was near the telegraph office, and when I say that I but faintly express my feelings. On Sunday night we had service at a private house in town, and by request I went forward, and when we went to prayer I noticed from some cause that I had singled out my oldest son, and was praying for him, something I had never done before. Little did I know that my son at that very time, who was over two hundred miles from me, was suffering in the very throes of death. Next morning I went to a store to have some money changed and the telegraph operator, who was a stranger to me, came in the store and said to the merchant, *"Where is Mr. Newman or Mr. Downing."* The merchant said, pointing to me, *"That's Mr. Newman."* The operator turned and read the message to me just as the man did in my dream. When he read it he gave it to me and I said, *"My dream has come to pass,"* and a brother preacher that was standing near wanted to know about my dream. I told it to the crowd that had gathered around me, and Brother Baker said, *"your son will be all right when you get home."* The telegram read, *"Come home at once. Walter is seriously hurt."* My son did not drink, go to dances, or keep bad company, and did not have an enemy any where that I knew of. While I was going home I would read the telegram, but the very thing I wanted to know was dark to me, hence the dark column. When I got home my wife met me at the yard gate and said to me, *"Joe, we should be the most thankful people on earth."* When I got so I could speak I said, *"What is the matter with Walter?"* She said, "A wild bull gored him Sunday evening. Sunday evening while he was agonizing apparently in the throes of death, and the family around him broken hearted, thinking he would be dead before I could get home, I was on my knees praying for him. He soon got well.

I will now make mention of a few incidents connected with my ministerial life. Soon after I commenced preaching Brother B. Greenwood of N.C., was in Texas on a preaching tour, and had an appointment at my home church. While I was anxious for him to come, still I did not have a

cent of money to give him. The time came for me to meet him at the depot. I went feeling very sad because I had nothing to give him. When I got to Cuero I hitched my team, and started down the street, and as I was walking along feeling sadly, I passed a store a few steps, and some one in the store said, ***"Stop Mr. Newman."*** I did so and to my surprise the man said, ***"I have been wanting to make you a present for some time and now is as good a time as I will ever have,"*** and he handed me a five dollar gold piece. I said to myself, ***"Thank the Lord, come on, Brother Greenwood."***

Again I was in the same town and had some appointments, and had not money to pay my fare to them, and did not know what to do. I walked by a saddle shop and one of my former associates, a cowboy, stopped me and gave me a ten dollar bill. After this I was from home filling appointments, and had filled the last one, and had failed to get enough money to get back home, and pay back what I had borrowed to start on. I went home with a cowboy friend for dinner, as he had agreed to take me to the depot that evening. Just as we were fixing to start he handed me a ten dollar gold piece and when we got to the depot a brother had bought me a ticket home. Only a short time ago I made some appointments and had to borrow money to get to them. I filled them and got enough money to get back home, but not enough to pay what I had borrowed. I started to the depot and called at a barber shop. The barber asked me where I was going. I told him I was going to the depot to go home. He said, ***"I will go down to the depot with you."*** The barber said to the ticket agent, ***"Give me a ticket to Cuero."*** He turned to me and said, "this is yours." When the train stopped at the next station I saw a brother and sister drive up. I got out and spoke to them, and when I told them goodby, the brother gave me five dollars. A few year ago I was from home on a preaching tour. Elder J.B. Downing and myself were crossing a river, and while our team was drinking I saw quite a crowd of people about two hundred yards below me on the bank of the river. The thought occurred to me that I would baptize some one there is the morning. I said to Brother Downing, ***"I will baptize some one down yonder in the morning."*** He said, ***"I hope so; that's where they baptize."*** A young sister joined that night and said she wanted me to baptize her in the morning. So we met there and I baptized her. This is the first I have ever written on this subject.

Pray for me,
J.S. Newman
Cuero, Tex.
(Sent in by Keith Hiatt)

"In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our Inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."- Ephesians i, 13, 14.

HEAVEN is a prepared place for a prepared people. Holy are its inhabitants, holy its employments, holy its enjoyments. Therefore unless we know something of the teaching, the work, and witness of the Holy Spirit here, and are made partakers of a new, holy, spiritual, and heavenly nature we have no pledge or earnest of our interest in the inheritance of the saints in bliss. A carnal, unsanctified, unholy, unrenewed heart is utterly incapable of understanding, entering into, longing after, and loving an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. But every holy desire, heavenly affection, gracious longing, spiritual enjoyment, and believing, hoping, loving, looking unto and cleaving to the Lord of life and glory by the power of the Holy Spirit, are all so many pledges and earnests of an interest in the glorious inheritance of the saints in light. The love, the joy, the peace, the calm tranquillity, and holy acquiescence in the will of God; the ravishing views of the glory of Christ which change the soul into the same image, from glory to glory; the delight felt in him, and the whole surrender of the heart and affections to the blessed Lord as the chiefest of ten thousand and the altogether lovely, are all so many earnests of the inheritance above, as being heaven begun below.

Elder J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

NEW DAN RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

New Dan River Primitive Baptist Church located in Patrick County, Vesta, Virginia, purposes to hold a fifth Saturday meeting, the Lord willing, on April 28, 2007. The meeting will start with singing at 9:30 am and preaching at 10:00 am. The church is located on State Road 636 (State Shed Road) off US 58, approximately 3 miles east of the Blue Ridge Parkway and 12 miles west of Stuart, Virginia. We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially we would invite all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder J. L. Cassell, Pastor
James L. Shelor, Clerk

SPECIAL MEETING

Lord willing there will be a special meeting held at Republican Primitive Baptist Church on March 17 , 2007, singing to start at 10:00 AM.

There are three churches in and around Asheboro, North Carolina that are standing as independent churches. These churches are Gaines Grove, Rock Hill and Toms Creek. Their pastors, Elder Ralph

Gaines and Elder James Moody along with the members have humbly made their desire known to be affiliated with our association churches and those of our affiliation. They have been invited to come and hold a meeting at said time and place.

We plan to bring out lunch and after lunch have our regular Republican Church meeting. We urge our associated and affiliated churches and invite all believers in Christ to come and meet with us.

Directions: Those traveling 220 north come past Martinsville several miles until you come to a flashing caution light at a big curve, turn left onto Route 605 go approximately seven or eight miles, at the bottom of a hill, turn right at Republican Church Road, church approximately three miles on the right.

Those traveling 220 south take 40 west at Rocky Mount, go to Ferrum, turn left on Fieldcrest Road just before passing the Minute Market, bear left at railroad crossing, then take Ingramville Road approximately three miles, turn left on Republican Church Road, church one mile on the left.

Isaiah 4:2.

In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 2007

Mary Hawkins, NC 5.00
Peggy Phillips, VA 10.00
Eld. Richard Campbell, TN .. 100.00
Dora Vick, NC 5.00
George Hyslip, TN 15.00
L. C. Hornsby, GA 5.00
Nellie Dalton, VA 5.00
Francis Knight, VA 5.00
Ruth Surratt, NC 5.00

OBITUARIES

BROTHER FLOYD THOMAS OAKLEY

Brother Oakley was born Nov. 20, 1903 and departed this life on Dec. 26, 2006 at the age of 103 years. He was a member of Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church at Fordyce, Ark.

He is survived by a son Rayburn Oakley Fordyce, Ar; two daughters Sarah Stankevitz, Little Rock, Ar. And Reba Jones, Soughhaven, Ms.; brother Dillard Oakley, Pine Bluff, Ar., and brother Clyde Oakley, Little Rock, Ar., four grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, one step-great-grandchild.

Preceded in death by his wife Thelma Clay Scoggins Oakley, father, Thomas Ruffin Oakley and mother Harriett Leona Bryant Oakley.

Brother Oakley was laid to rest at McDonald Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection. The funeral services were conducted by the writer.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." (Psalms 116:15)

Brother Oakley's favorite song was no. 16 in the Lloyd's hymn book. The theme of this song is No matter how many trials and tribulations you are faced with in this life, the grace of God will bring you through all of them. This song is often sung in his memory by the brethren of Pilgrim Rest Church.

Elder Woodrow W. Hudson, Jr.

BESSIE RILEY

Sister Bessie Riley, age 90, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, June 28, 2006. She was a retired employee of Burlington Industries.

On May 19, 1946, she was received into the fellowship of Durham Primitive Baptist Church. She loved the doctrine of salvation by grace, election and predestination and attended her meetings as long as she was able to drive. She was blessed with a humble and generous spirit and was faithful to help with needed maintenance expenses for our building.

Sister Riley and her husband, Olivus Riley, lovingly reared a large family. At her funeral some of her neighbors told of her kindness to them when they needed a friend.

Surviving her are: twin sister Essie W. Pendergraft; daughter Judith R. Fisher; four sons, Harold P. Riley, James T. Riley, Charles R. Riley and Kenneth S. Riley; 23 grandchildren and 40 great grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Olivus Riley; her mother, Sister Roxie Stone, who was also a member of the Durham Primitive Baptist Church; two sons, Bernice Daniel Riley and Olivus Bobby Riley.

Funeral services were held at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 1, 2006, in the Clements Funeral Chapel in Durham, NC, followed by interment in Maplewood Cemetery when I think of Sister Bessie, I am reminded of the scripture in Malachi 3: 16- 17, ***"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name."*** And they shall be mine saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. " We truly feel that Sister Riley was-and is-one of these jewels.

Durham Primitive Baptist Church,
Catherine M. Humbarger, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

Approach, my soul, the mercy seat,
Where Jesus answers prayer;
There humbly fall before his feet,
For none can perish there.

Thy promise is my only plea;
With this I venture nigh:
Thou callest burdened souls to thee,
And such, O Lord, am I.

Bowed down beneath a load of sin;
By Satan sorely pressed;
By wars without fears within,
I come to thee for rest.

Be thou my shield and hiding place,
That, sheltered near thy side,
I may my fierce accuser face,
And tell him, Jesus died.

O wondrous love! to bleed and die,
To bear the cross and shame,
That guilty sinners, such as I,
Might plead thy gracious name.

"Poor, tempest-tossed soul, be still;
My promised grace receive;
'Tis Jesus speaks! I must, I will,
I can, I do believe.

Newton.

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EDITORIAL

"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN IS LIKE APPLES OF GOLD IN PICTURES OF SILVER."
Proverbs 25:11

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

O how beautiful a picture we see when a minister is blessed to preach the gospel and it so wonderfully fits our experience and our feelings at that time. It is a word fitly spoken. A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver. We see the fruit of the Spirit manifested in the person that stands before us. We don't see the frailties and faults of the earthly man; but, rather we see the beauty of the Lord as it shines forth in the word fitly spoken. Proverbs 12:25 reads, ***"Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it to stoop: but a good word maketh it glad." Proverbs 14:23*** continues, ***"A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!"*** Only the Lord could present such a beautiful picture of His love, mercy and grace and bless us to behold it. May His name be praised above every name.

Whenever one is blessed to set forth Christ, it is a word fitly spoken to someone. For that heavenly manna is never wasted and is never sent in vain. Isaiah 55:11 reads: ***"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."*** It is food for someone's hungry soul. A word fitly spoken is both comforting and edifying to the one that the Lord has brought hungering and thirsting after His righteousness. To hear one tell of the suffering, the humiliation, the shame, the death, the burial and the resurrection of Christ touches our heart and brings tears to our eyes. For we ***"look unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set***

down at the right hand of the throne of God." He was ***"despised and rejected of men" and was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." O, our sufferings and sorrows are nothing compared to His. But, He has promised His little ones tribulations as well as His peace; for in John 16:33, He said "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."*** A word fitly spoken. In our cast-down condition and feeling so alone and forsaken, we hear of the love, mercy, and grace of our heavenly friend and feel the warmth of the word in our heart. A word fitly spoken. The comforting and edifying word may be from a gospel sermon or from one of our precious brethren.

As the Lord told Moses when He sent him to the children of Israel when they were in Egypt after the death of Joseph, ***"I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows."*** The Lord knows your condition; He has heard your cry; He knows where you are; He knows just what you need; and He shall supply all your need. For the Apostle Paul wrote in Philippians 4:19, ***"But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."*** All your need is Christ. A word fitly spoken.

A word fitly spoken sets forth that salvation is by grace and not of works lest any man should boast. This is the pure word of God that fits your experience and understanding. A word fitly spoken is the truth as it is in Christ; for Christ said, ***"I am the way, the truth, and the life."*** A word fitly spoken is praise unto God, the giver of every good and every perfect gift.

By a word fitly spoken, we know that one has been sent by God because we behold the apples of gold. Christ said in Matthew 7:17-20: ***"Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."*** Apples are plural, but it is one particular fruit. It sets forth the fruit of the Spirit. Galatians 5:22-23 reads, ***"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." "The fruit of the Spirit"*** is in the singular, meaning that there is only one fruit, but several manifestations. Gold sets forth that the fruit is righteous, holy and very precious. It is of the Spirit which is

Christ in you, the Hope of glory. The Spirit of God produces the fruit in all its manifestations. Gold is always tried by fire; so, with the fruit of the Spirit comes tribulations, and the apples of gold shine forth ever brighter. The more gold is tried, the brighter it shines. Recorded in Zechariah 13:9 are the words, ***"And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God."*** I Peter 4:12-13 reads: ***"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."*** When one is blessed with a word fitly spoken, we behold the love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance manifested. We see the beauty of holiness shine forth and the image of Christ presented to our view.

These apples of gold are in pictures of silver. The pictures of silver are these earthen vessels from which the apples are manifested and framed. The spiritual man dwells within this body of flesh as the kingdom of God is within you where Christ reigns as King of kings. Silver is refined in the fining pot to strip the dross away, but gold is tried in the fiery furnace of affliction. Proverbs 17:3 reads: ***"The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the Lord tried the hearts." Proverbs 25:4 says: "Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer."*** The fleshly or natural man is beset with the dross of this world: the lust of the flesh, the following after the vain and perishable things of the world, the love of the things of the world that satisfies the flesh. The fleshly man is weak; and unless kept by the power of God in His love and mercy, will do anything that those of the world will do. But, thanks be unto our heavenly Father who quickened you and made you alive in Christ who is your life. As the Apostle Paul says in Ephesians 2:1-3: ***"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."***

Also, when Christ speaks directly to your heart a word of comfort and peace, it is a word fitly spo-

ken and the apples of gold (fruit of the Spirit) are produced. You feel such love for Him and His people, you are given faith to believe in Him, feel such joy and peace unspeakable, and brought down in humbleness. You cannot see the beauty of the apples of gold in pictures of silver in yourself, but others can. As the beautiful bloom of the lily, your head is bowed toward the blackness of the earth from which your flesh came. You don't feel worthy to even lift up your eyes unto heaven. But, praise to God from whom all blessings flow seems to fill all of your being.

May the love of God that is shed abroad in the hearts of His people continue to bind us together as one in Christ is my prayer.

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

ROMANS CH. 8:1-3.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.

CORRESPONDENCE

Feb. 10. 2007

Dear Elder Terry,

How wonderful it is to be writing to you today. Please renew my subscription to the "Signs of the Times" for two years. It has been such a blessing to receive my copies. And at the same time very strange, as I had not signed up for the "Times" myself, but received it as a gift subscription from someone whom I don't know.

As no one has stepped forward after asking several members, I would love to thank my benefactor for they have given me many hours of comfort, sometimes in my hour of need.

May the Lord continue to bless you and the other writers and contributors to the "Signs" and may it continue to give comfort to ***"His little ones"*** is my prayer.

Humbly submitted.
Kathy Lewis,
Grayson, Ky.

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1 JOHN CH. 5:1

Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.

ARTICLES

JONAH'S GOOD INTENTIONS

Some time ago, it came on my mind to explore the travels of Jonah, and his natural born good intentions. These thoughts reflect my look at Jonah, and his encounter with God's infallible will.

We find here that the power of the flesh versus the power of this most sovereign God, that God is steady and does not falter, regardless of our willfulness. While it feels that Jonah was very sincere in his fleshly thinking, the end result shows that God not only was really directing Jonah's journey, but seeing this journey through to the destination.

Jonah would have very much liked to have succeeded in going to Jopa and purchasing a ticket to Tarsus, fleeing from the presence of the Lord. Jonah seemed to show nothing but single minded intentions as he boarded the ship for his chosen destination.

The beautifully mysterious change of transportation that Jonah was to encounter, was shared in a matter of fact way, even in the equally dramatic storm upon the sea that was to sink the ship he was using to flee God. The irony of images, that he should be sleeping deeply in the belly of the ship escapes us somewhat as well. The story continues though.

When the ship's master awakened Jonah and asked him, ***"what meanest though oh sleeper. Arise, and call upon thy God"***, the ship's crew and mariners were already terribly afraid the ship would sink, drowning them all. This fear brought Jonah to think more deeply about why the storm had overtaken the ship.

After casting lots, and the lot falling upon Jonah, he was pressed as to what caused this evil to come upon them, and what was his occupation, and where he came from and finally who his people were.

Jonah answered by telling them he was a Hebrew, and feared the Lord God of heaven, he who made the Heaven and Sea. This magnified the fear among the others on the ship greatly. They then asked why he had done this.

Jonah shared his mission, and told them to take him topside and cast him overboard, and the sea would become calm. It seems Jonah was in so much misery, that he welcomed death at this point, thinking that being cast overboard would further this reprieve quickly.

Jonah even at this point was very much using his willfulness, soon to be cast into one of the great mysteries of Christian faith. That a whale would swallow Jonah and carry him towards God's *intended* destination holds so many meanings.

Jonah was destined to create the symbol of Grace for all Christian-

ity, using the belly of the whale as an image. Eventually through Jonah's experiences he would be hinting the mysteries of the free pardon of sin, and the great salvation which is the deliverance of God's goodness in the hearts of the believing family at God's discretion according to His precious will.

The understanding that came to his mind concerning the imperfections of the flesh were telling: ***"By reasons of my afflictions, I say that I vow that salvation is of the Lord".*** After three days and nights in the belly of the whale, Jonah was cast upon dry land to fulfill the will of the Lord, a journey which the Lord had prepared for him.

"Now the Lord told Jonah to go to that great city of Nineveh and preach what I bode thee to preach". The Lord wasn't finished with Jonah.

Jonah was learning fully, lessons of God's great sovereignty, and another lesson was unfolded. Jonah expected great things to happen in Nineveh after such a dramatic lesson. These things did not occur and Jonah's suffering increased even more. Jonah welcomed death. Even still, the Lord was not finished with Jonah. Eventually Jonah would come to realize fully, the weakness of our flesh.

More importantly, Jonah would come to understand God's sovereignty is complete, and that our flesh is helpless to be a partaker in these heavenly events. The nature of Grace was being expressed through Jonah.

At God's appointed time, and not before, we find that now the population of Nineveh had repented of their sins through the channels of God's Grace. This was beyond Jonah's understanding in his fleshly mind. This was true in Jonah's time and example, as it is today.

Those called to preach today are called by the same God that directed Jonah's journey. He is the same God, a God that changes not. Those who have been called from the darkness of nature and qualified through the channels of God's Grace to preach the incredible riches of the Kingdom, would have a great love for Jonah it would seem.

They who have labored in the Gospel field through God's calling, many times have found themselves in the wildness of confusion when preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom. Paul clarified this experience: ***"Not I but sin that dwells in the flesh"*** Paul too, would take Jonah's journey.

Paul could not make the above statement before he saw that great light that shines in the darkness and the darkness comprehends it not. Paul's Jonah-like journey to Damascus, gave the moment when he was brought from the darkness of nature, through the channels of God's amazing Grace.

Brought from the pits of darkness and made to see through an

eye of faith forever more walking in that heavenly light, Paul was made a vessel of God's mercy on his journey. Previously Paul was completely dead to the knowledge of the great love which is hidden in Christ. A love revealed to Christ's servants at His appointed time, was made more pertinent in Paul's experience it seems, as would be expressed in the volumes of travels and letters that followed.

It seems all preachers find themselves helpless fleshly when it comes to preaching the Gospel of the kingdom. Again as Paul would say: I never learned of man or taught of man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. This is as true for the preaching brethren today as it was then I think. Those imprisoned of God's calling to preach the Gospel, relive first Jonah's then Paul's journeys.

Primitive Baptists are among the few who advocate a truly sovereign God and predestination of all things pertaining to the great salvation that is meted out through God's sovereign grace at His appointed time. God's intercession in Jonah's then Paul's journeys are not words, or ideas, but the testimony of God's infallible will, and the foundation for our faithful existence.

This reliance on God's grace rather than the flesh to give this great salvation we know comes through the goodness of the Lord by his sovereign Grace, and nothing more. While our fleshly journeys are often convoluted and confused, this understanding of God's grace and intercession on our behalf is indeed the hope of those quiet moments we are led to assemble in God's house of faith. For those led to believe, indeed it feels as if we begin with Jonah, and continue with Paul as we gather to feast in the bond of God's great love and made to nourish ourselves on rations from the Master's table. The beautiful irony that God leads us to feast, is the blessed journey of Jonah, Paul, our brethren, and we the believers ourselves. If not deceived, in the bonds of His precious Love.

Riley Justice
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When Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit their eyes were opened and they knew that they were naked and sinned against the Lord. ***"We have all sinned and come short of the glory of the Lord."***

When they sewed fig leaves together this is a type of the righteousness of man. ***"Our righteousness are as filthy rags in the sight of the Lord."***
"Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them."(Gen. 3:21) As we think of the coats of skins, we think of the sacrifice of

Christ. *"God was in Christ, reconciling the world (all the Children of God) unto himself-" (2 Cor. 5:19)*

"I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decked himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorned herself with jewels." (Isaiah 61:10) God clothed His people.

The commentary in my Bible says: *"The word Skins presupposes the death of an animal and therefore the idea of blood sacrifice is clearly implied." "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." (Heb. 9:12)*

All the sacrifices mentions in the old testament are a type of Jesus Christ who satisfied Divine Justice.

W.W. Hudson, Jr.

Colossians Ch. 1 V.16

For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principilities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him.

VOICES OF THE PAST

Lord, my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name, for his loving-kindness endureth forever. O, what a fountain of joy and bliss for the poor in spirit! Here they may feast upon the rich bounties of his unwasting fulness, and drink of the streams that make glad the city of our God. It matters not how unworthy we feel to be, how dejected and deserted, how intolerable our anguish of soul, the love of God spread abroad in the heart is a solace for every fear, a balm for every wound, completely alleviating all doubts and fears, and we are made to rejoice in the hope of the glory of God; and, if necessary, to also glory in tribulation. We should also remember that this love, like its author, never changes, but is ever the same through all the perplexing difficulties of this tempestuous life. When we can feel its genial rays, beaming-forth in all the warmth of God's love to poor, erring and sinful mortals, it thrills our bosoms with emotions of praise, and with wondrous admiration we exclaim, ***"Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!"*** Having received of his divine fulness, the notes of solemn praise are sounded forth with deep emotions of gratitude from a heart filled with the love of God. It was from his undiminished fulness that the

Apostle Paul was enabled to say, *"By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace, which was bestowed upon me was not in vain."*

The child of God feels the great need of his glorious presence to support and sustain him, amid foes and fears, trials and disappointments, anguish of soul and distress of mind. It is he, and he only, that conducts us safely through the otherwise insurmountable difficulties that obstruct the uneven journey of our pilgrimage state, turning-darkness into day, making the rough places smooth by extending peace to us like a river, and thereby causing the well-springs of gladness to break forth from our inmost soul. From this glorious fountain all our needs are supplied, for it is of his fulness we have all received, and grace for grace. And O, with what anxiety the poor, thirsty, fainting pilgrim looks to him, from whom proceeds all blessings, for every good and perfect gift, trusting in him that he will lead him forth by the right way, to a city of habitation. Shall we not then sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving and declare his works with rejoicing, for he turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into water-springs, and there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that he may bring them out of all their troubles. He is a present help in time of tribulation, succoring them that are tempted, upholding the weak and encouraging the doubting.

"How binding the obligation that calls forth the deepest emotions of thanksgiving to God from those who have been blessed with the privilege of beholding untold joys from his presence. Often the child of God inquires with deep solicitude, Do I feel thankful to him for his blessings so freely bestowed upon me? Do I render unto him, in return for his mercies, that praise and adoration that I should?" It is the love of God that leads us in obedience to him, and his ways are ways of pleasantness and all his paths are peace, and a halo of light from his blessed presence attends the discharge of every duty, there by making his yoke easy and his burden light. It is in the mighty power of God that we desire to put our trust, feeling confident that he will hold only that which shall redound to his honor and glory.

"With the ability that the Lord is pleased to bestow, on us, we hope to be able to make the Monitor a welcome visitor to the household of faith, as it goes forth laden with the rich fruits of gospel truth from the many able contributors to its columns. We only ask that it be received so far as it is sustained by the Scriptures of divine truth. It is our desire that all who feel interested in the success of the MONITOR, will send in their contributions for its columns, and otherwise assist in making it a

success; and may the Lord bless it to the good of his people, according to his will."

E.J. Harris

Article from Primitive Monitor
By E. J. Harris

GUTHRIE, OKLA. Ter., May 18, 1903.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SON: — I send you the experience of brother W. S. Speer, written at my request. I would be pleased to see it published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES if it meets with your approbation. I love to read of the Lord's dealings with his people. It was said to one of old, Go home to thy friends and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for thee.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
ELIZABETH HUTCHISON.

THE EXPERIENCE.

SISTER:-Your request reading: ***"I desire your experience, written for publication in the SIGNS," is an incentive to "Great searchings of heart,". Judges v. 16,*** and I try to comply, with mixed emotions of gladness, fear and trembling, and awful reverence for God, whose I am, and who put into the heart of one of his children the desire to know something of his dealings with me. I use these words, for it has been given me at times to view my history in that light not at all times, for clouds of sin and ***"conscience of guilt"*** have often darkened the heavenly vision, and made me to wonder could the divine mercy reach my case. Then unspeakable agony would grievously torment my soul. I have always thought that the hardest thing in Scripture to believe is that God sent his Son down from heaven to save sinners; to fetch home again his banished; that his banished be not expelled from him, (2 Sam. xiv. 13, 14.; Gen. iii. 23, 24,) the more especially if they are or were as great sinners as the record in my conscience reports of me. The Bible is and always has been easy of belief with me, the story of creation, of the flood, of Sodom and Gomorrah, the Exodus, the Jews and the history of Jesus our Lord, all is easy reading until I come to his laying down his life and taking it again to save ungodly sinners, unspeakably vile as I know mankind to be. Well, yes, it may be so, I assent, the Scripture says *it* is that way; perhaps he wanted to save people not for what they are as worth saving, but for the educational possibilities in them as vessels of mercy. Yes, I could follow that far, but there came a time when discussions of the extent of the atonement, and of the mercy of God, ceased to charm me in sermon, book or sweet conversation, and a new question startled me, Was I embraced in the plan of salvation? Did Christ love me and give himself for me? That was

Paul's limitation of the atonement. The audacity of the man's faith, as I thought of it, and spoke of it. There was another me that I was carrying about with me. This me, to me the most important me in all the world and the most hateful, for in me there was no good thing, not one, only sin. I saw no door of hope, no way of escape for this me, nor from this me. It would exhaust the plan of salvation to save me. Anybody else might in mercy be reached, but mine was an outside case. But this train of reflection was not so appalling when I was young, a lad, a youth, for in those bright, halcyon days I was taught and believed unquestioningly that sincere people could join the church by complying with certain conditions that entitled them to claim the promise. *"Do your part and God will do his,"* was the formula. I accepted the contract when I was nearly seventeen years old, and tried to believe I had the remission of my past sins. There was something akin to comfort in that frame of mind, but what the readers of this experience understand by "the joy of salvation," *"joy unspeakable and full of glory,"* I had no conception until forty-seven years later, when it pleased God to show me his salvation, (there is but one,) and call me by his grace out of marvelous darkness into his marvelous light. For which I hope to thank and praise him ten thousand years from now.

As I was saying, the time came after forty years wandering in the wilderness of theological controversy and confusion, when I saw there was no salvation for me in the plans expounded from the various pulpits, and presses of the times. I felt that I was lost, had sinned beyond possibility of forgiveness. I had no doubt of it, so I told Elders and brethren and sisters in Tennessee and Georgia, and finally in despair one night in Columbus, Ga., I prayed to God to relieve me or kill me, for I was utterly unworthy to live longer in this world. I felt to be the worst and most inexcusable sinner that did ever live. Mine was the misery of remorse, and the goadings and stings and tauntings of a wounded spirit. I had sinned against light and knowledge, not merely the sin of nature, that our preachers speak of as inherited from Adam, but sure enough sins, for I had broken the commandments again and again, and so I said to God, always adding, *"Is there not one crumb left for me on thy table, or under it?"* I had in other years often made and prayed fashionable prayers, but in these four dismal years of trouble and woe and sorrow I had to pray a prayer borrowed from a despised publican, who stood afar off, and would not lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, *"God, be merciful to me, a sinner."*

I do not know what you will think of me sister, there comes times when that same prayer wells up in my heart, bubbles from my lips and

streams from my eyes. Yet tears of contrition, but not of despair, fill my eyes as I write.

To begin at the beginning, I was born of wealthy parentage, grew up proud and wayward, went to school ten or twelve years, was in two colleges, joined a new church in my seventeenth year, (there have been seven new churches come in since my arrival,) and was ordained to preach the doctrine of the new church when I was turned twenty-one, and preached it twenty-five years. Then I studied, and I may say became proficient in a church newer by eight years, and preached its doctrines fourteen years, when it pleased God that I should see that there was no salvation for me in either of these splendid organizations. Then the darkness of Egypt fell upon me. I knew that I was a doomed and dammed man *"without hope and without God in the world."* I then undertook a review of all current theologies, designing to pick out the good, the beautiful and true in each, and construct a composite theology, a mosaic system, that would wash. I went deep into the mines of comparative theology, and found wood, hay, and stubble in abundance, but of gold, silver and precious stones not a gem. Chaff and trash in plenty, but of the *"corn of heaven"* not a grain. Meantime my sins were crushing my poor soul with mountain weight. Whither should I fly for refuge? The Arminian cities of refuge I had thoroughly explored. There was no safety there for me, this me, the only me, of all the me's in the world, that I was especially concerned for, what is to become of me?

You asked for my experience, sister. I am not writing another's. My concern about myself came of certain events prearranged in the providence, and as I now have the happiness to think of them as the predestination of God, who works all things together for good to them that love him, and are the called according to his purpose in Christ Jesus, before the sun begin to shine, or ever the world was. In those dateless depths there was a book written containing the names of the future citizens of Messiah's kingdom and given to him and called most significantly *"the Lamb's book of life,"* because he, as a condition of his inheriting the headship over them, collectively called *"the city of God,"* must wash them from their sins in his own blood and purify them for himself a peculiar people, the word *"peculiar"* meaning a purchased possession. Happy are they whose names were, written in that book. Whatever may betide them in "this time world," as brethren speak, they shall never perish. Alleluia and Amen, world without end, they shall never perish! O, in those dark days of my trouble of which I have told you, my dread and fear and horror was that I should, without doubt perish forever.

My father and mother of God's own choosing, joined the Old Bap-

tist church the Sunday I was just six weeks old. When I was about four years I heard my first sermon; it was preached by Elder Russian, at old Mars Hill Church, in Williamson Co., Tenn. I sat by mother and was very happy. I do not remember a word he said, but I have the pleasant picture of him on my heart, and I caught his delightful solemn tone of voice, and when a little older in that same tone used to climb the dogwood trees and preach to the negroes as they were clearing new ground. One night there was a meeting at our house, and my blessed Old Baptist mother shouted, (she was about twenty-eight or thirty then) and you see that I have not forgotten that shouting. I might go back, if you can bear so tedious a narrative, and say that Dr. John M. Watson was our family physician, and was present the Sunday morning when I was born. When I was grown and preaching the most brilliant of the varieties of Arminianism, he told me that he had dandled me on his knees many a time. He was the greatest Old Baptist minister of his day. His last words were, *"I'm going in peace."* O, that God would give me to go that way! Me again. Yes, and you and all our brethren and sisters.

One morning when I was about ten years old I stood before my mother; she was sitting on the lower step of the stairway, and I told her that last night I dreamed of seeing the Savior. I had jumped off the hill back of our house and lit in an open plain, and there stood the Lord. With his right hand he smote me on the left cheek about as my mother might smite me when she was vexed, (though I remember nothing of that sort from her) and then said, *"Now, Sheppard, be a better boy."* Mother turned pale and went up stairs, I now think to weep and pray and rejoice at the visitation of her Lord to her boy, who, she told one of her lady visitors, she thought *"would be a mighty good man, or a mighty bad one."* The Lord appeared to me in that dream. I shall know him when I see him again. His tall figure, his kingly, benevolent, concerned look as he said those words to me, will never fade from memory. When in my trouble I related this part of my experience to a company of Old Baptist preachers, in Butler, Ga., Elder Respess said, *"Brethren the Lord has been working with this man from his childhood."* When I related it in Elder Veach's house he said, "That is when you were quickened into life."

"Now, Sheppard, be a better boy." That was my authoritative conviction of sin, to be followed by conviction of rightousness, and then of judgment. But I did not become a better boy. I was a bad boy; conscience smote me day and night. *"Conscience of sin"* followed Sheppard, always at his heels, giving him no rest except such as Arminian opiates afford, and they, you know, only make the case worse, as our Savior pointed out in the case

of *a* certain woman who spent her all paying physicians, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse. There is only one physician for a sin-sick soul, and by his knowledge he justifies and cures, "for he bears their iniquities."

"Now Sheppard, be a better boy," have been ringing in the chambers of my soul through my pilgrimage, over three oceans, in foreign lands, on the Rocky Mountains, and I hope in company with mother to thank the Redeemer for that first visitation.

The next time I saw him, the same Jesus, was in vision 9 o'clock Tuesday morning, Sept. 28th, 1886, in an upper room in a young banker's house, Fort Valley, Ga. There deploring my woeful condition, reading Romans six, a chapter or two in Galatians and Philippians, all of a sudden, in the twinkling of an eye, from feeling that I was the greatest sinner in the world, I was made to feel that I was no sinner at all. Christ whom I saw in the vision, the scene was as plain as was the original reality. He was there dead on his cross, having borne all my sins away 1789 years before I was born. From being the most miserable of all born of woman, I was given to feel the happiest man that ever lived. That very hour, as many a time since, I called on the angels to help me praise God for sending his Son to save sinners. I wanted to fill the vaulted dome of the eternal mansions with hallelujahs. At last my burden was gone, and conscience was free from guilt. Christ had died for me, I saw him there that hour seeming to hold himself on the cross. You know he had to lay down his life. *"No man taketh it from me. I lay it down of myself."* All that scene is as plain to me now as it was that Tuesday, 28th of September, 1886, seventeen years ago. But it was with me as in the call of the chief of sinners on his way to Damascus; there was a light above the brightness of the sun laid down upon the bright light of that morning, and it was all over the face of the world eight hours, whichever way I looked. Whether that light was in the body or out of the body, I have never felt to inquire; one thing I do know, that light *was* there, a soft, benevolent, heavenly, restful light, and it was spread over a vast plane. On that plane there was nothing to break the level seemingly ninety miles in its sweep, saving the projection of a large rock, mostly buried in the ground, like the church I was destined to join, most of its members in the dust of the earth, waiting for the *"better resurrection."* Only a small portion of this church visible now. And I was to live alone on his wide plane. So it has so far turned out, only now and then finding rest in *"the shadow of the great Rock in a weary land."* I have not known how otherwise to interpret this part of the vision. O, I was so glad that day, so happy, so full of joy, words fail me to describe it to you.

Next thing in order I knew I must be baptized by somebody that knew how it was done, and what for. I had, as I thought, been baptized already not once nor twice before. There must be no mistake about the matter this time. The oldest church without a historical founder was the Old Baptist; they were the humblest of religious folk; they were sweethearted, no big I's nor little u's among them. I was on all sides decended of Old Baptist stock. I always venerated the Old Baptist church and people. The next spring after the marvelous light into which I was delivered, out of the marvelous darkness, at Fort Valley, as above narrated, I went before the tribunal of God at Butler, Ga., was received and baptized by order of the church, by Elder John Rowe, lately deceased, and I was again as happy as a soul overwhelmed with the love of God could be. O, I was so happy. Soon after this I had to endure the trial of permitting a brother to wash my feet in church: I submitted with what grace I could, but when I got down on my knees to wash his feet, I was in heavenly places in Christ then; I felt like a big lump of nothing. When you want to get close to God, sister, you must descend the depths of humility, as indeed you had to go when you joined the Old Baptist church. Whatever you may think of them, there is no people like them on the face of the earth. They are the only people I know of that believe their own religion. They worship in spirit, and live by the faith of the Son of God, who loves them now, and loved them before all time, and to the ages of the ages. The Spirit of God in their hearts enables them low at his feet to lay hold of the robe of the eternal Majesty, look up into his face, and with the feeling of little children cry, *"Abba, Father,"* confident that he knows what they want. Their only fear is that they do not behave themselves as prettily as his children ought. What a joy it is to me to be one in the unity of the Spirit with them; to be recognized by even one of them.

This poor relation of my sweet experience admits of a word of comment. I submit to your judgment whether the history of it from *"Now Sheppard, be a better boy,"* to the vision of the Redeemer on his cross, and the great light laid down above the brightness of that bright Tuesday's scene, and the inward feeling of peace and joy, was not the work of the divine Spirit. What but the holy Spirit's power could possibly make a sinner knowing himself vile and guilty feel that he was no sinner at all, Christ having suffered for him the just for the unjust, and this relief coming on him not gradually, not by a course of reasoning, but suddenly and abiding to comfort him with hope as one of the heirs of salvation? O, it must have been the operation of God, I was a saved man saved, yes that is the word. I know my unworthiness before and since, but am afraid to lay anything

to the charge of God's elect. See Romans viii. 32-39. O, let me rejoice in hope of the grace to be brought to his people at the coming of the Lord in that day.

In another dream or vision, glorious beyond words to tell, I saw for the third time the Lord, the same that appeared to me at first, on the Mount Zion, surrounded by thousands of thousands of his saints, in white robes, and golden girdles, and he was placing diadems upon their heads, with a word of welcome to each one, Thus in my case the holy Spirit, may I not believe,convinced me of sin, *"Now, Sheppard, be a better boy,"* then of righteousness, Jesus by his death having fulfilled the righteousness of the law in my stead, and then of judgment when he received and crowned his purchased ones with the immortal life? Yea, let me believe and cherish all this; I can, I do, and fall at his feet a sinner saved by grace, amen and amen.

I feel thankful to our heavenly Father that I am enabled to give, to one of his daughters this account of his mercies to me. If you find it in your heart to recognize me in fellowship, after what you have seen of my awkwardness in church and in this letter, I shall feel strengthened and more joyful in this pilgrimage.

Yours in hope of a better life,
WM. S. SPEER.

BENTON, Ark., June 8, 1903.

1 PETER V. 7.

"CASTING all your care upon him, for he careth for you."

(The children of God often find themselves utterly at a loss to understand or comprehend the ways of divine providence and grace, and can only say as one of old, His ways are past finding out. It is he himself that teaches that he ruleth in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? They confess this, and at times are thankful it is so, for is there not comfort and security in such a doctrine. In it we see that not a dog can move his tongue, or a devil either, unless it be subject to the will and purpose of him that worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Men are also subject to him, even the rulers of this world, for when Pilate said to Jesus, *"Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above."* He is before all things and by him all things consist. An understanding of such a doctrine, imparted to us by God himself, is of great comfort to the soul, but few are able to travel long in the path of life, reconciled, with a calm and thankful heart, from every murmur free. God has or-

dained a furnace of affliction, and if he gives faith that believes that he who has promised is able to perform, he will try that faith; and just so, when we, as we hope, by his Spirit, have been taught to trust in his name and to rejoice in the truth that not a single shaft can hit, until he, the God of love, sees fit, we find the question asked, Do you believe God had anything to do with the sinking of that vessel, or the burning of that family and home? How has God anything, to do with the sickness of this man, or with the death of his wife at such time as this, when he needed her so much Thus we ask ourselves many questions, and are asked many such questions by others, and often such questions, when asked in the face of terrible trials, and what men call accidents, are almost staggering, especially if we are ourselves affected by the trial. If a terrible bereavement comes upon us we find it not so easy to live the doctrine, yet Job, sorely afflicted, did, when be said, ***"Though be slay me, yet will I trust in him."***- Job xiii. 15. He has said, ***"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father. ***Fear ye not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows."*** Again, he saith, ***"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed as one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith!"*** It is the trial of faith that will show to us how little faith we have, and how little we truly believe the doctrine to which we have subscribed. There is not one of us but has his, or her, trials; some hard to be borne, and we do well to consider that ***"Whatever cross lies at thy door, It cometh from the Lord."***

It is a crook of the Lord's making, and so long as he sees fit for it to be, none can straighten it. It may be to bring down our pride, to hide pride from man, or to show us wherein our strength lies, or to make us of comfort to the Saints, or to prove to men and devils, as in the case of Job, that our religion is not a fair weather religion, but that it can stand fire and flood; and in all these trials, and many others too numerous to mention, the presence of Christ is seen, as he was in the furnace of old, thereby proving that he careth for us. In all the ages the Lord has proven his care for his people in the furnace of affliction; such a way is needful or it would not be. He riled up a wicked Pharaoh who knew not Joseph, and he set over Israel taskmasters, to afflict Israel with burdens, but the more they were afflicted the more they multiplied and grew. The Egyptians made their lives bitter with hard bondage, yet the Lord

still cared for them. Moses was born, and was hidden three months by his mother, who feared not the wrath of the king, and when she could no longer hide him she took for him an ark of bulrushes and laid it in the flags by the river's brink, the very river where the wicked Pharaoh had commanded them to drown their sons, yet God cared for him there. He was taken by Pharaoh's daughter and nursed by his own mother in the house of Pharaoh, the very man who wished to destroy all the male children of Hebrew origin. From this we can take this lesson: that the church of God nurses her children in the furnace of affliction. They are strengthened in the doctrine; the more they are afflicted the more they are trained up in the nurture and admonitions of the Lord. In the word of God there are many instances that seem just happen so, mere chance, yet when we trace the chain of circumstances connected with the particular case we find a wonder-working Providence governing all things: as, for instance, the Syrians had gone out by companies and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid. Who can describe the terror and abject loneliness of that little maid? Think of the parents, her mother, if mother she had, wringing her hands, sighing and pining for her little daughter. Many would there be in Israel then who would say, Tell us, did the Lord have anything to do with that. Thank God there were some then, and doubly thankful we ought to be, there are some now, who unhesitatingly would declare, It is the Lord. Some who by faith could see the companies of Syria going, just so far and doing just whatsoever God's hand and God's counsel determined before to be done. The child must leave the arms of the parents, most go into a strange and foreign land, and must go into Naaman's house. God cared for that little captive maid; he had a purpose. In Naaman's house she witnesses to the truth, and her testimony was for one whom God cared for, though in God's purpose he was held by a more relentless foe than even the captive maid. He was none other than Naaman, the captain of the host, but he was a leper. Yes, he cared for Naaman. He cared for Saul of Tarsus, even while he went about breathing threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord. Saul did not understand, he had no eye to see, the Lord using his persecution for the furtherance of the gospel. It is written, ***"As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and hailing men and women, committed them to prison."*** The following verse declares the result in the purpose of God. It says, ***"Therefore they that were scattered abroad, went everywhere preaching the word."*** Thus a persecuting Saul of Tarsus, in the purpose of God, did more then, than all the missionary boards can do today, although they claim to be on the Lord's side, for

there has never been a preacher of the word sent by man, anywhere. Why is it that Saul of Tarsus, Naaman and his companies, Pharaoh and his host, or the devil himself, can do nothing other than God's hand and his counsel determined before to be done? The simple reason is, *"He careth for you."* For God's dear saints there is a covenant, ordered in all things and sure, and in this covenant

"Jesus is engaged to save
The meanest of his sheep,
All that the heavenly Father gave
His hands securely keep.
Nor death, nor hell can e'er remove
His favorites from his breast."

They are loved with an everlasting love. God has predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. As this is his purpose he will care for us along the line that we must travel. I might predestinate my trunk to go from here to New York City by railroad. To bring that about, the track must be there, the sleepers in their place, the station, the signal boxes, the men, the engine, coal, steam, and all other requirements must be there or ever my trunk can safely be delivered to its destination. Thus we believe Pharaoh was in the purpose of God, foreordained to that very condemnation, as was the devil himself, and as were the companies of Syria, and if the word be true, that God has created the waster to destroy, and these wasters of Israel were in Israel's life of old, in the life of the captive maid, yes, and in the life of our blessed Lord, who shall say they will not be in our lives, Peter tells the scattered saints of old of a fiery trial that was to try them, and it is true today. God's dear scattered saints are a poor and afflicted people, having fiery trials; yet Peter by inspiration says, *"Casting all your care upon him, for be careth for you."* There comes before our mind one dear sister, over eighty years of age, whom we once saw lying on her couch under terrible distress. Trouble had come upon her in her advanced age and was crushing her to earth: we said, Why should these things be? Faith answered, "He careth for you."

"Blind unbelief is sure to err
And scan God's world in vain."
He is a very present help in time of trouble.

"The flame shall not hurt thee, I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine."

We have seen another, younger in years, afflicted in body so that she could hardly move a limb, given up by earthly physicians, having little to look forward to but death and that which is beyond, and to the honor

of his name we have seen that he careth for her. Is he not the helper of the helpess? We visited such a one one day, and while there she said, *"Sing Rock of Ages."* We sang that and "Father, we'll rest in thy love," and we got in our car we heard the afflicted one singing by herself in the house, and all we could think of was, *"And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God."* Later we asked why she sang when we left her a few nights before, and the reply was, *"Because I was happy."* It is because *"he careth for you"* that the theme of Jesus and his love makes the captive's portion sweet. It is his care that made David say, *"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for , thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."* His care for Israel of old was wonderful. He brought them from under Pharaoh's yoke with a high hand and an outstretched arm and led them through the sea, gave them bread from heaven, water from the rock, a cloud by day and pillar of fire by night, their shoes did not wear out, nor their clothing decay, all because *"He careth for you,"* for were they not a type of Israel today? They rebelled and we rebel too. There is nothing that brings out the spirit of rebellion more than trouble. *"The trial of your faith."* It is easy to say, Thy will be done," but his will is a cross, and under the trial he sends we kick like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke. It is galling and so humiliating, especially if it affects our personal reputation, we feel ashamed to he seen among the brethren, we ask the reason why. Pride must be abased. He made himself of no reputation; we would be his, yea, be like him, but it is unpleasant to die daily, to take buffetings. Oh the strugglings and strivings we have to be freed from the yoke!

Paul prayed very regularly to be delivered from a thorn in the flesh, but his request was not granted, and there is not a doubt in our mind the reason for it was that *"He careth for you."* All these trials, crosses, losses, thorns and snares we must and shall endure in this life are for the lifting of Jesus on high. They are to show us, as we are exercised thereby, how base and vile, unworthy and helpless we are, and like Paul, we are taught of him to know that when we are weak, then are we strong, and we glory in our infirmities (that are made plain to us in the furnace) that the power of God might rest upon us. Thus his care is such towards us that we shall at last confess, as did Israel of old, that the Lord delivered us and that *"there failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass."- Joshua xxi. 45.*

Elder George Ruston

"He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true."-John iii. 33.

WE can only set to our seal that God is true in any one point of doctrine, experience, or precept when we feel an inward witness that God indeed has declared it. Thus, upon every manifestation of God's goodness to the soul, every application of Christ's blood to the conscience, and every revelation of God's distinguishing grace, it is only as we receive Christ's testimony, experience the inward approbation of it, and feel its sweetness and blessedness that we can set to our seal that God is true. This, we may be well assured, is the only way to know the power and reality of true religion. To understand the Scriptures, and enjoy a convincing testimony that God is our God, Christ our Saviour, the Holy Ghost our Teacher, heaven our eternal home, and that our soul is saved in the Lord Jesus Christ with an everlasting salvation.

And with what divine certainty can such a soul sometimes speak. Sometimes, indeed, we cannot believe anything; it seems as if there were nothing in God's word that we could set our seal to. All seems a mass of confusion, and our ignorance appears so great that we cannot set our seal to any vital truth. But when the blessed Spirit is pleased to testify of the things of God, and we, receiving the testimony of Jesus Christ, walk in the light of that testimony, then there is a holy certainty of and heavenly acquiescence with God's truth. This divine faith will bring us through all our trials and sorrows, and though we may be dragged through a very hell of temptation, yet shall we know God is true.

Here, then, is the grand trial of faith; first to receive Christ's testimony, and then to hang upon that testimony, in spite of all opposition from within and without, from feeling its weight, power, and sweetness.

Elder J.C. Philpot

ROMANS V. 21.

"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 2007

Edwin Dyer, VA 5.00
Polly & Frank Sizemore, WVA. 10.00
Phyllis Stroud, VA 5.00
Tim Barron, TX 5.00
Betty Nutter, MD 5.00

MEETINGS

ELDER J.B. FARMER COMING TO BIG MEADOWS

Elder J.B. Farmer of Grayson, Ky., the Lord willing, will be with us on the fifth Sunday in April.

Elder Farmer is also an associate editor of the Signs of the Times.

Big Meadows is located about 20 miles below Graham, N.C. Those traveling I-85 take the Pittsboro/Graham exit and go 17 miles toward Pittsboro. After crossing the Cane Creek Bridge take first road to right at top of hill – go 4 miles to a crossroad and turn left – go 1 mile then to church.

We invite all lovers of the Truth to come and be with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key
Sister JoAnn Self, Clerk

LOWER MAYO FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo Association fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday only, April 29th, 2007. We hope to start singing at 10:30 a.m. and preaching at 11:00. Russell Creek Church will host the meeting and it will be held in Russell Creek Meeting House.

The meeting house is located approximately 9 miles south of Stuart, Virginia near the Virginia, North Carolina border on Moorefield Store Road# 631.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in salvation by grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

PROCEEDINGS OF A PRESBYTERY

1. Presbytery was called together consisting of all ministers and deacons of our faith and order by Bordeaux Church, in Nashville, Tn. - Elder R. H. Campbell pastor.

2. Elder Campbell was chosen to serve as moderator and Elder W. G. Chapell was asked to serve as Clerk.

3. The candidate, Brother Tracy Jacks was called and Brother Hyslip was called as spokesman for the Church.

4. Elder Howard opened the presbytery with prayer.

5. The articles of faith were read and Elder Allen Terry questioned the candidate.

6. Members of the presbytery questioned the candidate and was satisfied as to his qualifications.

7. Elder Chapell was chosen to deliver ordination prayer as hands were layed on.

8. The presbytery was asked if they were satisfied with the work of the presbytery and they answered in the affirmative.

9. Elder Hale Terry was appointed to give charge to the candidate.

10. The presbytery was asked to give the right hand of fellowship to Bro. Jacks.

11. Brother Jacks was then given back to the church, an ordained deacon

12. The members of the church were then asked to extend the right hand of fellowship to Brother Jacks.

13. The minutes of the presbytery were read and accepted .

14. All members of the presbytery were asked to and signed the minutes.

15. The clerk was asked to write the certificate of credentials and have it signed by each member of the Presbytery before they left.

<u>Elders Present:</u>
Wm. Hale Terry
Alan Terry and James T. Howard
Richard Campbell
Wayman G. Chapell

<u>Deacons Present:</u>
Gladston Newman
Charles Fox
Kenneth Evans
Charles Moon
George Hyslip
Roy G. Howard
Richard Landeu
Wayne Barnes

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

POEM

KNEEL AND PRAY

At the close of the day, I kneel down to pray,
Repenting for all my sins,
But I know that tomorrow will bring me sorrow,
For I'll do them all over again.
I know that I shouldn't and really I wouldn't,
If sin wasn't planted in me.
If I am one selected, can be one corrected,
How gloriously happy I'd be.
I search every where with no place to spare,
My Lord and my master to find,
I search day and night, I'd know Him on sight,
For His countenance would so gloriously shine.
I know that His grace will shine in my face,
When He enters my heart with love,
I'll praise Him forever, He'll leave me no never,
When He gives me sweet rest from above!

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EDITORIAL

Elder R. H. Campbell

Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus, and called. Mercy unto you, and peace, and love be multiplied. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. (Jude 1:1-4)

At the time that the above scripture was written, it was within a very few years of the death of Christ, and one would think that the doctrine would not have been polluted by the personal opinions of man, and that there would be very little, or no opposition to the truth, as it was originally delivered unto the apostles; and yet here Jude is warning the brethren to beware of the false teachers that were already being made manifest among them. He is advising the apostles to give all diligence to remember the way and manner in which the truth was first made known unto them, and to follow in the footsteps and teachings of Jesus, for they were personal witnesses of his life, death, burial and resurrection, and that this is not a subject that is open to any private interpretation. Their calling must bear a true witness to the doctrine that they received from Jesus, while he was with them, and how these things were revealed unto them, as the way of truth, and how these things are made known unto the sons of men. They are revealed unto them by the Holy Ghost, and bear witness to the teachings of Jesus. Jude is addressing only those who have been sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and called. He is not preaching to

the world in general, nor is he endeavoring to persuade them to receive his personal opinions, but rather, that they earnestly contend for the faith that they have received. He is admonishing them, in all soberness and sincerity, in the same manner that the apostle Paul did unto Timothy, *(II Tim 2:15-16) "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness."* They are to especially beware of any strange new doctrine that may appear in their midst, and to cling fast to the faith as originally delivered to the saints. They are to give all diligence to continue in the way of truth, and the common salvation that they have received. Jude is aware of the old adage that when you once depart from the truth, as believed in the beginning, the further you go, the further from the truth you will get. It is as Jesus told his disciples, *(Luke 23:31) "For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry."* If the flesh begins to creep into the doctrine, especially at this early stage, it will destroy the church, for as Jesus said, *(Mark 3:24-25) "And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand."*

All things that were to be used in the service of the Lord, under the law, were to be sanctified, for a specific purpose, and were considered holy unto the Lord. It is in this sense that Jude refers to those to whom he is writing, as being sanctified by God the Father. Those things, under the law, were anointed with a holy oil, unto the service in the temple, but under the new covenant, which is a spiritual covenant, the saints are anointed with the Holy Ghost unto the service of God, and it is an eternal commitment unto the service in the temple. *(II Cor 1:21-22) "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."* Under the law, those things were anointed to serve in this time world only, but those whom God hath anointed with the Holy Ghost will serve, and worship, him here, and in the world to come.

This sanctification was determined, before the foundation of the world, and is an everlasting charge, and there was nothing that remains to be done later, to insure the completion of this work. It was done in the same manner that God made known his sanctification of Jeremiah. *(Jer 1:4-5) "Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth from the womb I sanctified thee, and I or-*

dained thee a prophet unto the nations." This same type of setting apart or sanctification is applied to all of the saints of God, and it is effective, although as it is recorded, Jeremiah said, he could not perform his work because he was just a child, but this did not change the calling that was required of him. God does not call the qualified, he qualifies the called, and the calling includes the God given ability to fulfill the calling. It was true that Jeremiah could not have done this in his own strength, but it is recorded *(Jer1:9-10) "Then the Lord put forth his hand and touched my mouth, and said, behold I have put my words in thy mouth. See, I have this day set thee over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, to build, and to plant."* Then Jeremiah could do nothing less than what was required of him, and therefore he did go forth and did prophecy unto the nations, as God instructed him. This same absolute is true in the sanctification of every child of God, and they too go forth and perform the work that God has decreed in their life.

In the above scripture, Jude refers to those to whom he is writing, as their being preserved in Christ Jesus, and this too, even as the sanctification, is the work of God the Father. There is nothing that is involved in the salvation of sinners that is not as absolute and certain as the work of God the Father, through Christ Jesus. Jesus said, in his prayer unto his Father just before his crucifixion, *(John 17:4) "I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."* And this was referring to the atonement for the sins of every heir of promise. Jesus came into the world to save sinners, and this he did, without the loss of one. *(John 6:37-39) "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no way cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."* There is nothing that is more certain and secure, than the salvation of the saints of God, because it is based, solely based, upon the promises which God had made to Abraham, and to his seed. It was not, in any way, contingent upon any other series of events or circumstances, than the fact that it was the Father's good pleasure to give unto them the kingdom. It is as Paul stated, very emphatically, *(Eph 1:3-5) "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having*

predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." I think, with these scriptures before us, we can say without hesitation, that if we have learned anything from our experiences, we are most assuredly blessed above anything that this world has to offer, and are indeed preserved in Christ Jesus, for time and eternity.

Jude is writing to a people who have been called, out of nature's darkness, into the marvelous light and liberty of the gospel, and this too is by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God the Father. The Apostle Paul's experience is a classic example of this heavenly calling, as he states, *(I Tim 1:12-13)* ***"And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; who was before a blasphemer, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief."*** This is where all men are, in ignorance and unbelief, until they are called out of the world of trespasses and sin, and made aware of the spiritual realm which is all around them, they too are in ignorance and unbelief. They are born in this condition, from their mother's womb, because of the sin inherent in them, which was received from their federal head Adam, and they would have died in this state, but by the grace of God, which through faith, delivered them from the law of sin and death into the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

Man, as he is born into the world of nature is flesh, and as such he is not even aware of the spiritual realm; which is the one to which Jesus was referring when he said, my kingdom is not of this world, he was referring to the kingdom of heaven into which man can see only after he is born again. *(John 3:6)* ***"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit."*** And this calling, which they all must receive to worship God, is made manifest when they are born of the Spirit, as Jesus told Nicodemus, *(John 3:4)* ***"Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven."*** Since God is a Spirit, they that worship him must be spiritual also, to be reconciled to, and understand the ways of the Spirit, when man is born of the Spirit, he becomes a new creature in Christ, a new man as described by the apostle Paul, *(II Cor 5:17)* ***"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation."*** By grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God.

All of the above are characteris-

tics of the people to whom Jude is writing, and are blessings which God hath sovereignly bestowed upon them, and they are all things to which the creature could not attain of his own efforts, so, when one tells me that he accepted Christ, based on his own personal decision to become a Christian, then my thoughts are, that you are mistaken, for you do not show forth evidence of a spiritual work of grace in your heart, a work that has been performed on you, and not by you. It is, as Paul wrote, *(I Cor 2:14) "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."* This, to me, is saying that the man with the utmost intelligence, in the things of nature, cannot fathom the things of the Spirit, so then, how could they accept, or reject, things about which they have no personal knowledge or intelligent understanding.

Jude is exhibiting his holy calling, by his desire to remind his brethren, even as Peter did, that they give all diligence to remain constant in the faith, and share their mutual experiences and revelations with their brethren, not to teach them something that they did not already know, but to bring things that they already know to their remembrance again. Paul, in writing to the churches, told them to share their letters with other churches, because any correspondence, on the scriptures, is an open letter to all believers, even as the epistles written by Paul, by all of the other writers. In his epistle to the church at Ephesus, he began, *(Eph 1:1) "Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus."* To me, this means that the epistle is to the faithful in Christ Jesus, whether they live in Ephesus, Memphis, Nashville, Greensboro or anywhere else, and in all ages of time, whether then or now. "The faithful in Christ Jesus" I can remember, in my earlier years, that in my Mother's home I did not hesitate to pick up and read the letters written to her from other brethren, a thing that I would never have done with letters from my immediate family, without first asking my Mother. These things are precious to the saints, and their constant desire is to hear the experiences of others, or to share with others the experiences which they have had, for comparison, even though they may have never have met in the flesh. They are bonded together into a fellowship that will endure the trials and afflictions of their lifetime here on earth and culminate in that New Jerusalem, to which they all aspire.

This communication between brethren is surely in that pure language that Zephaniah referred to, which was given unto the saints that they may all call upon the Lord, to serve him with one consent. This is

not the common language that is spoken, or understood, by the world, because it requires a discerning spirit, and this is the gift of God, and only to those who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. It is a language which is not taught in any of the schools, or seminaries, of the world in which we live now. The people in Athens said, of the apostle Paul, what will this babbler say, because they could not begin to understand his message, because it was in this pure language which is not known by those who worship, the UNKNOWN GOD. This they freely admitted among themselves by their building an altar unto him.

Jude was referring to men, such as those in Athens, when he said, *(Jude vs 4) "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."* Paul said of the Athenians, *(Acts17:21) "For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or hear some new thing. (vs,32) And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and other said, we will hear thee again of this matter."* They were looking at it as an intellectual endeavor, with no spiritual connotation, or import. Jude said, virtually the same of those ungodly men of whom he was speaking, *(Jude vs 10) "But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as beast, in those things they corrupt themselves." And in (vs19) "These be those who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit."* Don't you see a lot of this in the religionists of today: they have so many schisms in the religious world, that you can see, is the results of man's wanting to develop a doctrine, that is compatible with the natural mind, and which they can support, and in reality, isn't this the same as the, UNKNOWN GOD, that the Athenians, and the men who Jude was writing about, who have crept into the church unawares, were doing.

May God, in the riches of his grace, deliver us from following after the idols of this world, but rather enable us to believe, and earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the Saints. It is still ridiculed by the world, as it was then, but isn't that what the apostle Paul wrote, *(II Tim 4:3-4) "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they will turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned into fables."* Sound familiar? Aren't you glad, that true doctrine is still as firm as it was in that day, that day

when the apostle Paul wrote one of the most precious scripture to be found in the bible, *(Eph 2:8-9) "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."*

There may be doctrines that come, and doctrines that go, but, the truth will stand forever, as it was in the day that it was first declared, *(II Tim 2:19) "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his."* And again, *(I Cor 3:11) "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."* This is the foundation upon which the faith of all of the children of God is based, and as stated above having the seal of the Lord, as its surety.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Sunday March 18, 2007

Dear Elder Terry,

Enclosed find a check for renewal of the Signs for 2 years plus the remainder for the fund.

Bill and I saw you at Rep. Church yesterday but did not get to speak to you. It was a wonderful feeling to see these people accepted for fellowship. We have known many of them for several years. They do stand for the "Truth."

Our hearts were saddened to hear of your health problem. But we trust the "God of all Grace" will lift you up and provide a way for healing. If it is in His will, it will surely come to pass. You will be much in our thoughts and prayers along with your family.

Lovers of the truth, we hope,
Bill & Arlene Hole

7003 Flagstaff Ln., 102
Richmond, Va. 23228-3938
March 16, 2007

My dear Elder Terry,

It is time to renew the Signs and I hope to be thankful I can read it and believe the writers speak of the One God.

Thirty nine years ago I was baptized into Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. It is very sad to me to think I am a sinner but I know I am. Of the many things in my life I think of the Lord as being my helper, a most wonderful one is the love of the brethren to me. How could you love me except the God of mercy cover my sins. This is my hope.

I love to hear or read the words of those blessed to speak in a reverent manner, who tell of His power, glory, wisdom and His control of all things.

My dear Brother, I understand pain has come upon your body. I am

very sorry and hope the dear Lord shall be pleased to give you moments of peace, peace to you and your loved ones. The God we hope to love is capable of performing all his pleasure. He is our all and all.

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickeral

ST. JOHN, 15:1-7.

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

VOICES OF THE PAST

MRS. SUSIE RORRER GILBERT

Dear Brother Branscome : *By* the request *of my* mother and with the help of the Lord- I will attempt to write my experience.

When only a child, eleven years old. I became sick and my health ran down till I gave up all hope of ever getting well; and I began to wonder what would become of me after death. I became greatly troubled about my condition; and being shown that I was a vile sinner in the sight of God, I went mourning day and night over my condition. I would try to pray, but all I could say was: *"Lord have mercy on me, a sinner."* I seemed to be such a sinner that, if I should die, torment would be my doom. I well remember creeping from my bed, while sick, to seek a secret place to pray for the forgiveness of my sins. But my prayer seemed not to be heard. My short prayer was, *"Lord have mercy on me."* I went back into the house feeling worse than ever. I went back to my bed and cried myself to sleep. My burden seemed almost more than I could bear, yet in some way managed my burden for a long time. When a few years older, my troubles seemed to be getting worse; and, in the evening, when the sun began to sink in the west, I bade it farewell, saying, to myself, *"I shall never*

live to see you rise in the morning." Before I went to bed, I looked out, through the window, saying, to myself, "I shall never see this world anymore." After I had gone to bed, I could hear the water in the river, in front of the house, rushing over the rock! and, O, how lonely it did sound to me, a poor sinner in the sight of God. And I was made to wonder if that water was in trouble like me. The world seemed to be sinking, sinking down with me, and it seemed that I was bound to die. I wondered what my people would think in the morning when they should awake and find me dead. I awoke next morning in the same trouble. I went to my room one night-no mortal tongue can tell my feelings. But, after I had been asleep for sometime, I awoke and all of my troubles seemed to be gone. I could not go back to sleep, fearing I would awake in trouble. The next morning I felt so happy. I loved everybody and felt like I would never see any more trouble. I wanted to do better myself, and wished that everybody else would do better, too. I seemed to love everybody.

But in less than a year my troubles rose again, worse than ever. This was in the fall of 1910, while I was going to school. My burden was so heavy that it made my life a misery to me. I wondered why it was that I was in so much trouble and could not be relieved. I mourned day and night over my lost soul. It seemed that everybody could see that I was in trouble, and I tried to be merry with the other young people, but could not. When at church I would go up near the pulpit and sit with the church members and old people: for I had no desire to be with the young people. The young people seemed too jolly for me. While I was in so much trouble, I would leave the room where my people were and go into a room where I could be all me. I wanted to be alone to keep them from knowing my troubles. One night I dreamed of joining the church and being baptized by a preacher whom I had never met. But, since I had that dream, I met that dearly beloved Brother, Elder J. M. Dickerson. I dreamed, in the dream of being baptized, that they sang: *"O, how happy are they, who their Savior obey!"* When I awoke and, O how happy I was! I awoke singing, and something seemed to say: Your many sins are forgiven; go home to your friends and tell them what the Lord has done for your soul." I could hardly keep from shouting in my happiness. There was a bright light that seemed to shine around me.

That was in December, 1910; and, ever since, I have loved the good Old Baptist people. All of my hope and trust was in the Lord, and my desire was to go and be with them as one in that happy little flock. When away from them I could see them in a mental vision and hear them, as little Christians, singing God's praise; and, O how I longed to go and be with them. But I felt too unworthy to offer myself to the

church. I prayed one night to know whether I was fit for the church or not and, again, I dreamed of the church and of being baptized, of seeing the daisies on the river bank; and of seeing the people gathered together, with the sweetest singing, that sounded to me like music in the air.

After that, March 2, I went to Dobyns schoolhouse to preaching, and they sung, *"Come, ye sinners, poor and wretched."* The fourth verse being :

> *"Come, ye weary, heavy laden,*
> *Lost and ruined in the fall;*
> *If you tarry till you're better,*
> *You will never come at all:*
> *Not the righteous, not the righteous;*
> *Sinners Jesus came to call."*

It seemed to me that I could no longer stay away. I watched to see if anyone would go up to join. One lady went up and joined, Then I went and talked to the church and was received into their sweet fellowship. My sister joined after and that was a happy day with us.

On May 5, 1912, I, with several others, was baptized by Elder J. M. Dickerson. The happiness of that day can never be expressed.

Brother Branscome, I am sending you my experience. If it is worthy of your attention, you may publish it in the "Messenger of Truth." But if it is not worthy of publication cast it aside, and remember,

Your little sister in hope,
Miss Susie Rorer

Stuart, Virginia.

REMARKS.

My daughter, Miss Susie Rorer, since writing her experience, was married to Mr. Johny Gilbert, of Stuart, Virginia, May 12, 1912.

Mrs. D. C. Rorer.

TO MY BRETHREN AND SISTERS.

Elder F. P. Branscome, Dear Brother: As I have to send money to renew my subscription, I will write to my brethren and sisters; and, also, to them that I think are heirs of grace divine that have never come to their Master's kin. Dear kindred in Christ, I claim this kinship with fear, and yet I must claim it, If any of you are as weak and dark as I am, I will tell you how Elder Daniel Conner strengthened me: While preaching, he asked this question, *"Can you manage your hope?"* He answered it himself, saying, *"If it is yours, you can; but, if it is God's, you cannot. Faith acts the creature, but the creature can-*

not act faith." He then asked, "Can you make your hope as bright as you want it ?" "No," said I, "Can you lay it off and have no more to do with it?" And, again, I said "No." Some change had been made in me that I could never forget; and, right there, my heart was filled with hopefulness, humbleness and thankfulness. A blessed feeling, while it lasts.

Dear brethren and sisters, may I guess at your condition? You must go through a storm, caused by the light of grace. But it makes you feel dark. The light of grace shining in your heart shows you the depth of your sinful heart, that was the first time you ever felt condemned, arrested for your sins. *"You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins,"* but the calm will come; the captive will be set free. The heart is filled with hope and thankfulness; the storm is past, and there is a great calm. But this calm will be clouded with what? With a view of unworthiness, a view of our own vanities. This is shown to us by the light of grace. Carnal nature never works on that line. When we view our sins and vanities, we are made to mourn. Carnal nature loves its own. We pray that God's children, who are out, may come in; and, to them that are in the church, we say, *"Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." - Heb. 24, 25.* Let us come together and love one another. Let us encourage our pastor by meeting him. James showed his faith by works. So let us show our love by our acts. How cold, and how far from duty we live! We can think of many good preachers, who spent half of their time from home, by the call of the people to attend churches, to visit the sick and the dead, who received but little from the people to lessen their burdens. Yet, they went on in humbleness, like the ox under the yoke. The church should relieve the pastor of the discipline and government of the church.

We think the church should act carefully and prayerfully in setting apart its members as deacons and preachers. The prophet Samuel would have made a mistake, when he called the sons of Jesse before him, if the Lord had not signified his choice. So, dear brethren, let us attend our church meetings as promptly and prayerfully as we can. The Lord has promised to be with us when we meet in his name. Do not stay away because you cannot understand all that the preacher says. The Lord will give us all the light which is necessary that we should have.

Some writers try to tell what God created the devil to do. Some try to explain all of the purposes and predestination of God. If these things could be fully explained, it would, it seems to me, make the

mystery of godliness a blank. If *God* purposed all *of* the wicked acts of the devil, prayer, it seems to me, would be made a blank. The Savior said, ***"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."*** We believe this. Well, then, he has power to restrain the devil. How much God restrains him we do not know; but we do know that the predestination of God and the existence of the devil is the greatest mystery that enters our minds. We believe in, the doctrine of election and predestination of God. Some call us Predestinarian Baptists, and we do not deny the name. We think that some could profit by reading what the Presbyterians put into their Articles of Faith, one hundred years ago. In speaking of election and predestination they said: ***"these things should be handled with care."*** Seemingly, some handle them carelessly. If one stands and talks himself hoarse, trying to explain these deep things, has he done what Christ told Peter to do? Christ said to Peter, ***"Feed my sheep."*** And, maybe, he could not. say what Peter said, when Christ asked, saying: ***"Lovest thou me more than these?"*** Peter answered, ***"Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."*** They might, at the time, be loving the display they are making more than the Lord. The flesh has a great deal to do with men.

I heard a good preacher say, there is one thing in my way and I cannot get rid of it to save my life, that is, when I *get* up to preach I feel a desire to make a display." I loved that preacher before; but, now, as I thought, I saw the pureness of the inner man: for, in that, he had seen the vain glory in the outer man, and did not fellowship it. It renewed my confidence in the man.

While looking over this writing I am made to feel that, perhaps, I had better put my hand on my mouth, instead of mailing it. Now, dear brother, if you see anything hurtful in this, please put it in the stove and pray the Lord to pity the weakness of my flesh and to pardon the sin of the same. I beg my brethren and sisters to take no offense. I am in *my* eighty-fifth year, childish dotage.

R. J. Wood.

R. 5, Floyd, Virginia.

Sent in by Bro. Keith Hiatt

CHAPTER 11:2-5.

Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples,

And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?

Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see:

The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

COMMUNICATION
BY ELDER F. P. STONE

Elder F. P. Branscome, Dear Brother and readers of the Messenger of Truth: Yesterday and today were our regular meeting days at my home church, Albion, and I were not able to attend. I have been suffering for several years from indigestion and have had several acute attacks, and have been made to feel that my time on earth is short. I am just a few years passed the meridian of the average life. But when I stand before the mirror, I see the silver streaks coming in my hair. I realize that it means, something, that, if I am permitted to live out the time allotted to man, it will not be long. And, today, not being allowed the privilege of meeting with the brethren and sisters, to speak of the goodness and mercies of God to them, I have been reading the Messenger of Truth and a borrowed copy of the Spiritual Law Counsel. I find the manifestation of contention among some brethren, which made me feel sad; and, again, I found others pleading for peace; and I was made to exclaim, *"Why strive ye, one with another? are we not brethren?"* Christ told Peter once to feed his lambs and twice to feed his sheep. He also said that new-born babes (lambs) desire the sincere milk of the word. What does he mean by that? What did he tell John's disciples? John, spiritually, was just where all of the saints of God get, that is, shut up in prison, in the castle of despondency, where the inquiry is, Have I ever met the Christ of God? Was that boy, the carpenter's son, the promised seed? Surely not. John had at one time exclaimed, Behold (that is; look on him the Lamb (Son) of God that taketh away the Sin of the world. Have you not, my brethren and sisters, been spiritually able to exclaim the same? And John had the witness by which he might know that he had baptized the Christ. He saw the Spirit descending and lighting upon him, and heard the voice that said; "This-is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Yet he doubted and sent his messenger, enquiring: *"Art thou the Christ, or shalt we still look for another?" He did not say, "Yes, I am that promised seed, the Star of Bethlehem."* Go show John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." Was that just for John? No; but for you and for me. *"Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they that testify of me."* Is John's experience yours? I say yes: for his is the experience of every child of grace. It is Christ that is formed in us the hope of glory; and when we went down into the watery grave, being buried with him in baptism, and was raised up again to walk in newness of life, did we not feel that spirit of meek-

ness, humbleness and thankfulness? Yes, dear child of God, you felt this, and that was the spirit of Christ, the Comforter with you, which spake to your inmost soul, saying this is my beloved son *or* daughter, in whom I am well pleased. But does this last always? No; we go just where John did and need deliverance again. Now, what was the commandment to Peter? It was to go feed his lambs and his sheep. Some may say, How are we to feed them? By giving them the sincere milk of the word. The sheep can stand strong meat; but they love to be shown the thing which we do see and hear. We are not commanded to experiment with the sheep to see what they can digest, but just to come forth with the plain truth, the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to them that believe. It is not to bring something new, or old, in disguise to bring forth old things? Yes, but they are new when compared by the Spirit of God. In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established. And, when the servant of God comes along, telling of the dealings of the Lord with poor sinners, how he finds them in a waste howling wilderness and how he leads them about and instructs them in wisdom's ways, carrying them to God's banqueting house, where the banner of love is spread over us, and we are enabled to see that it is not only the old prophet's experience, or preacher's experience but ours also. Then we feel like Christ has again taken our feet out of the mire and clay, placing them upon a rock (himself), putting a new song in our mouth, and enabling us to say, ***"My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior."*** John, who was the recipient of a special revelation, said, ***"I saw an angel flying in the midst of heaven having the everlasting gospel to preach."***

I will say to the young preachers, my brother yoke fellows, if I am worthy to call you such, that the old pioneers and soldiers of that Cross, who have endured the chilly winds of many winters and have felt the rain and scorching rays of the sun for many summers, while striving to meet with and to comfort the dear children of God, have passed over the River of Death; and are we commendable to take their places? Are we preaching at all times and on all occasions that same everlasting gospel, that will stand as a lasting monument to our memory, when we shall leave our footprints on the sands of time, and go on to explore the great beyond?

Brethren, let us take heed to ourselves as well as to the doctrine, for sheep are naturally very particular about the kind or vessels they eat and drink from. God's sheep, the children of God, are just as particular as natural sheep. Past experience has taught me that some of our greatest troubles have started *in* the *pulpit.* But I am frank to say that I do not believe that a word of unsound doctrine has ever been preached while

the preacher was overshadowed by the spirit of God. So let us contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. And let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, contending for the *"old paths."* There *is* no progress in the Christian religion. O, that we may leave behind us the same good report that our *old* fathers, who have already laid their armor by, left behind them. This is my message for today. Brethren and sisters, will you accept it from your unworthy servant?

F. P. Stone
Francisco, N.C.

IN COMFORT OF THE SCRIPTURES IN THE TRIAL OF FAITH.

Dear children of God: - The holy Scriptures are a divine store-house of heavenly treasures and a pure fountain of spiritual health and peace, but the Prince of the house of David has the keys, and he must set before us an open door. But he first prepares the souls of his saints for the things which God hath prepared for them that love him and then he opens to them the sealed fountain of his love. The Lord does this in the way that nature would not choose, and that man's wisdom would refuse as impossible. For the way of the Lord of life and peace is through fiery trials and great tribulations. His word to us is, *"I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction."* In this furnace of suffering he purifies and refines his chosen ones, whom he loves, that they may know the power and preciousness of his perfect love and worship him in the beauty of holiness. This love casteth out the fear which hath torment, and it uplifts the children of God's love above the rage of their enemies, who reproach and persecute them. Through such tribulations and afflictions, unto which God has appointed us, as Paul affirms, he ministers to us patience, experience and hope, which maketh not ashamed, because he sheds abroad his love in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. Thus the sufferings of Christ are fulfilled in his members, his brethren, who are baptized with him into his death, and also quickened and raised up together with him, made partakers of his divine nature, saved by his life, and serve God in newness of spirit.

The carnal and legal religionist would condemn all who are thus exercised, afflicted and tried as suffering the displeasure of God, as the legal and false friends of Job condemned him, and would say, If you will live as you should, and be obedient to the commandments of God, you may be at peace with him and enjoy his smiles. All worldly wisdom and legal religion says, Serve God, and he will then reward you with salvation. This way that seemeth right unto man, passes by the poor and suffering, the needy and helpless,

the sick and lame, who are without goodness and strength, and who bemoan their leanness; but it flatters and pleases him who thanks God that he is keeping his commandments, doing much good, and so receiving the rewards for his obedience. This one is without chastisement. He is a stranger to the truth that the true child of God, who in heart both fears and obeys him, yet is called to walk in darkness and have no light, and that the loving voice of the Father bids this tried child to trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon his God. It is a strange doctrine to the self-righteous religionist, who pleases himself, to be told that the only way of perfection and obedience is through suffering and loss of all things, and the only way of life is through death. In this way the holy Son of God himself learned obedience and entered into the perfection and power of endless life and eternal glory. Thus, too, must we follow him in his steps, die his death, and rise up with him in his holy life.

Now, my dear brethren, in him and in his righteous life is all true obedience, righteousness and salvation; nothing else is salvation; nothing else will God accept. This, this only fulfills the holy law of the holy God. We must be in Christ, and he in us, and his suffering obedience for our sins unto death, and resurrection unto life for our justification unto righteousness, must we be wrought in us and be ours, or else we have no obedience, no righteousness, no salvation, no life; nothing but sin and death.

To be brought into this oneness with Christ and fullness in him, we must suffer with him and bear his reproaches; we must drink of his cup of sorrow and woe, and be baptized with his baptism of death. There is no other way into the perfection of God in Christ Jesus. God has ordained this way, and predestinated his chosen people to be conformed to the image of his suffering and dying Son, that he might be the Firstborn among many brethren. *"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."* The Spirit's witnessing evidence with our spirit that we are the children and heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, is, *"If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake."* To every ones of us, my dear brethren in Christ, God gives to believe on him, and also to suffer for

his sake, for the trial of our faith, that it may be found unto the praise and glory of God. Through such revilings and persecutions for the sake of Christ and his doctrine, which many brethren, with myself, have been called to suffer in these latter times, Christ has been made exceedingly precious to me, and he has thus prepared me to understand and with deeper comfort than ever before enter into the precious Scriptures, which faithfully record the reproaches and persecutions which the dear Son of God and his devoted followers were called to endure for the truth's sake. With new and warm interest have I just read the Acts of the apostles, and my heart is more tenderly united with them in their persecutions and sufferings, doctrine and fellowship in the gospel of Christ. And with sorrowing love and clinging faith I have followed in the sacred footsteps of Jesus from the manger to the cross. In all this life, and in all the lives of his true disciples, there came continual reproaches, false accusations and deadly persecutions, for the purpose of destroying them. All this was brought against them, not because they were dangerous or bad men, but for the doctrine they taught – the truth of God. For they were all men of God, whom he sent, and they spoke the words of God, and he was with them. To God they ascribed the kingdom, the power and the glory.

The one startling and most prominent fact in the fearful persecutions against the Son of God and his church, as plainly shown in the Scriptures, is legal religionists were their persecutors. Never before had this fact so deeply impressed me as now. Persecutions against me from the same legal spirit made me go and tell Jesus, and turn to the sacred oracles for comfort, and he opened my eyes to see that I am brought into the fellowship of his sufferings for the truth's sake, and he tells me to ***"Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."***

In spirit I have been drawn near to Jesus when he was falsely accused in the temple, and in Pilate's hall, and on the cross, and legal religion incited and led to it all. With deep emotion have I heard the dying sermon of the faithful Stephen before the priestly council, who gnashed on him in their legal rage and stoned him to death. I have followed Peter and John, when brought before their persecutors, and heard the charges and threatenings against them. At Antioch I have witnessed the controversy between Paul and the legal preachers, and in Jerusalem have I rejoicingly heard the final decision of the apostles and church upon the doctrine in dispute. With deep sympathy and intense anxiety I have journeyed with Paul in his gospel ministry, persecutions and perils, until he was dragged out of the

temple, fearfully abused, and forced to appeal to Caesar to escape death. And to my amazement, it was shown me that all this raging and death-dealing persecution against Christ and his brethren arose from the self-sufficient spirit of legal religion, and was relentlessly waged by the most strict and zealous religious people, who were the professed moral worshipers of God. They expected to obtain salvation by their obedience and good works. But the doctrine of Christ and the apostles was, that salvation is by the mercy and grace of God alone. This greatly offended the legal and self-righteous worshipers of God. They expected to obtain salvation by their obedience and good works. But the doctrine of Christ and the apostles was, that salvation is by the mercy and grace of God alone. This greatly offended the legal and self-righteous worshipers, and for this doctrine of God's sufficient and sovereign grace (not of works) in salvation, the legal religionists hated and persecuted Christ and his church, as we have seen.

As it was then, so it is now. Principles never change. There are only the two principles: law and gospel, works and grace. Salvation is of one, to the exclusion of the other. My beloved Lord gives me the comforting assurance that I am made to suffer persecution and be spoken against for his sake. If I could have fallen from grace into conditional rewards for works, and so divided salvation into parts, and held that it is both by grace and of works, and so divided salvation into parts, and held that it is both by grace and of works, as all do who hold to conditional salvation in part, then I would have been approved and spoken well of by them. But the reproaches of Christ are far more precious to me, and my choice is to suffer for his sake. Paul says, ***"But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now."*** All persecution against the children of God arises from the legal religion of the flesh, for all fleshly religion is legal; it is based upon rewards and punishments; the love of God is not in it; the exaltation of Christ and the glory of God is not its purpose; but its highest aim and supreme end is the self-happiness and self-glory of the religious man. Take this away and he would not worship or be religious, for there would be no active incentive or prompting motive to his morality and religion. His is strictly a religion of works and rewards. His religious works are all performed to obtain salvation. ***"Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt."*** This the legal religionist accepts; to him this only seems rational and good; his religion consigns the grace of God in salvation to eternity, and sets up instead the works of man for salvation in time. Works honor and glorify man, and this is quite suitable

and self-pleasing. It is therefore very popular, for it comes near to man's strong love of self, and present to him a powerful motive to join the so-called church and be religious. It will pay him to do this, he will be happier, more respected and honored, and so multitudes embrace this religion. There is no offense in it, but the world esteems it and is pleased with it, for it is the pride and glory of man.

The gospel of the grace of God is not so; in it man is cut down and abased as less than nothing, but the Lord alone is exalted, and his is all the power and glory. Salvation by free grace only is therefore a religion of suffering, of cross-bearing and of the loss of life. Here man is nothing, that Christ may be all in all. The cross of Christ is an offense therefore, and the legal religionist can never love it nor embrace it, and so the religion of grace is very unpopular, has but few friends, "a small remnant," a *"little flock," "a sect everywhere spoken against."* They are called *"Antinominians," "Extremists," "Fatalists," "Let us continue in sin, that grace may abound,"* and many other hard speeches, by legal religionists So the prime object of all legal and flesh-pleasing religion is, that the offense of the cross might cease, and ceased it has among all conditional religionists; for conditional salvation, salvation by works, has ever been a popular religion in the world, both among the Jews and Gentiles; therefore if Christ and his apostles had taught this doctrince, the Jews would not have crucified him, neither would they have persecuted his suffering followers. And so at this present time it is solely because the remnant according to the election of grace ascribe all dominion and power, salvation and glory, to God and his grace, to Christ and his death and life, that we are falsely accused, reproached and persecuted, and our names are cast out as evil.

It is in this way that our God sifts and tries his people, and separates his own elect from false and carnal religionists, who are of the world, brings his dear children through suffering into a peculiar and blessed nearness to himself in the risen Christ, and keeps them by his power through faith unto salvation, that they should show forth his praise. *"Trials make the promise sweet."* Therefore, *"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified."* O how preciously true this is! We bless and glorify God for his eternal power and Godhead, his sovereign purpose

and grace, but for this he is evil spoken of on their part, his sacred truth is slandered, and his reverend and holy name is reproached by them. ***"Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?"***

In the deepest trials and sufferings of the obedient Son of God in the wilderness, and in the garden, God sent his angels to minister to him. So when Stephen was cruelly abused and being killed for the testimony of Jesus, his face shone as an angel's, and the Lord opened the door of heaven to his tortured servant, and he saw Jesus in his glory standing on the right hand of his Father. So it is in all the evil that men think to do against the Lord's Christ and his church. And Joseph's words to his humbled brethren are the divine key to open and reveal the holy purpose of God in all the afflictions, trials and persecutions that shall come against the children of his love: ***"But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good."*** Nothing great or small can escape his notice. ***"Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell."*** In this, God reveals his power and love to his chosen, ***"to the praise of the glory of his grace."*** Bless his holy name.

In the fellowship of Christ's sufferings,

Yours, D. Bartley.
April 12, 1904

April 15.

"And so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish." – Esther iv. 16.

When we are in darkness, under distress of conscience, or when guilt lies hard and heavy upon the soul, these things do, and must until removed, keep us back from the Lord. But are we ever to give heed to these enemies of our soul's peace? Are we never to press through the crowd? How was it with the man who was paralyzed for so many years? He might forever have lain helpless upon his bed, had he not been brought into the presence of Jesus. So with the woman with the issue of blood? She might for ever have tarried on the skirts of the crowd, a poor, polluted, self-condemned wretch. But she pressed through the crowd, and go to touch the hem of Jesus' garment. So with us. Shall we ever dwell in the outskirts – in the outer court of the temple? Shall we merely walk round Zion's bulwarks and tarry at her doors, or shall we venture into the holiest itself? Shall we, driven out by

fear, act like Cain, and go out from the presence of the Lord? Or shall we, with all our sins and discouragements, still draw near? The Apostle encourages us to come with holy boldness to the throne of grace, and to venture into the presence of the King of kings. Esther would have ruined herself and all her nation had she given way to the weakness of the flesh; but she said, "I will go in unto the king; and if I perish, I perish." She went in with that resolution. The king held forth the sceptre; Esther touched it, and she and the people were saved. So in grace. Shall we ever keep away through guilt, and sin, and shame? Now the Holy Ghost not only in the word of truth encourages, but he himself from time to time enables us to draw near. And when we draw near under his divine operations, we feel the blessedness of so doing. Liberty is operations, we feel the blessedness of so doing. Liberty is given, access, holy freedom, a spirit of prayer, power to take hold of God, to wrestle for the blessing, and sometimes to agonize with earnest sighs and groans and the energy of one of old: ***"I will not let thee go except thou bless me."***

Elder J.C. Philpot

Job 37:24.

Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any that are wise of heart.

April 16.

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." – Hebrews xiii. 8.

The eye of our faith must be ever fixed on Jesus, for the Person of Christ is the grand object of faith, and to lose sight of him is to lose sight of the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Is he not the same Jesus now that he was on earth? He is exalted, it is true, to an inconceivable height of glory, so that when John saw him, even as if in some measure veiled, he fell at his feet as dead. But he is the same Jesus now as when he was the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as he wears the same human body, so he has the same tender, compassionate heart. All that he was upon earth as Jesus, he is in heaven still. All that tenderness and gentleness, all that pity to poor sensible sinners, all that compassion on the ignorant and on those that are out of the way, all that grace and truth which came by him and were manifest in him, all that bleeding, dying love, all that sympathy with the afflicted and tempted, all that power to heal by a word all manner of sickness and disease, all that surpassing beauty and blessedness whereby he is to those who have seen him the chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely, he not only retains in the highest heavens, but is, so to speak, endowed with greater capacity to use

them, for all power is given to him in heaven and earth, and all things are put under his feet, and that not only for his own sake, but that he might be the Head over all things to the Church.

Elder J. C. Philpot

MATTHEW 13:11-15.

He answered and said unto them, Because it is give unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

RECIPE FOR COMMUNION BREAD

About one-half cup of Plain (not self rising) flour. Sift into a small bowl, and add only just enough cold water to barely moisten the flour. The dough needs to be stiff. At first it will hardly cling together but, after kneading, the dough gets smoother, and almost "Shiny."

Knead until perfectly smooth, sometimes until you hear the dough begin to "crack", (too much kneading will cause the dough to "blister")

Make out in four small biscuits and roll about at thin as ordinary pie crust, turning round and round to keep it shapely.

Check off with wheel pastry cutter or a dull knife into 3/4 inch squares, which makes it easier for breaking; prick rather closely with fork and bake in Not too quick an oven. I usually sit right by oven to watch. The bread is nicest when baked to a deep cream shade.

The cakes may be cut square or in banquet cracker shape, if you prefer, but I have liked to make the little round cakes as my mother used to do.

If it should be necessary to make the bread a day or so ahead, by putting it in oven a moment till hot, it will be as fresh and crisp as if freshly baked.

Laura Reed Gooch,
Stem, N.C.

MEETINGS

March 17, 2007

A special meeting was called so the brethren of Pigg River, Smith River, Staunton River and our correspondents, could hear the Elders preach from Gaines Grove, Rock Hill, and Toms Creek churches.

This meeting was held on Saturday at 10:00 a.m. at Republican Church on March 17, 2007.

Services were open with song and prayer by Elder Ralph Gaines. Preaching by Elders Jim Moody and Ralph Gaines. The preaching service was dismissed with prayer by Elder Jim Moody.

After hearing Elders Ralph Gains and Jim Moody, a business meeting was held after preaching was over. Motion made and second, and carried that Elder Hale Terry serve as Moderator in this meeting. The moderator appointed Elder Thomas Solomon to serve as Clerk. The business part was opened with prayer by Elder Carl Terry.

The brethren from Gaines Grove, Rock Hill, and Toms Creek Churches, were given the opportunity to speak. The brethren ask that they be received into full fellowship with us. After giving the brethren from our Associations and Correspondents, the opportunity to ask questions, No questions were asked. After this, motion was made and second & carried that we receive them into full fellowship with us.

Dismissed with prayer by Elder Kenneth Key.

Moderator: Hale Terry
Clerk: Thomas Solomon

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 2007

Connie Franco –TX	2.00
Livie Thompson –VA	5.00
David Dodd – NC	25.00
Herbert Dodson – VA	5.00
Katherine Mathews – LA	10.00
John Smith – FL	5.00
Edrie Clifton –VA	5.00
Reidy Pickral –VA	25.00
Arlene Hole –NC	5.00

St. John 1:4-8.

In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

ZION'S a city God hath blessed
With peace and everlasting rest;
A glorious city, strong and fair;
And Jesus dwells forever there.

Her ancient walls appear to be
The workmanship of Deity;
Founded in grace, they still appear
Without a flaw or chasm there.

Oft has this city's strength been tried,
By mighty foes on every side ;
But all in vain it yet has been,
She baffles Satan, hell, and sin.

Count ye her towers, how high they rise,
Her golden spires, they pierce the skies!
Her golden streets are fair to view;
Her palaces and bulwarks, too.

Then round her walk, her turrets ten;
Mark all her brazen bulwarks well;
Spread far and wide her deathless fame,
Her pearly gates and walls of flame.

Her founder's love has ever proved
Like Salem's mount, which ne'er was moved;
'Tis fixed on this eternal base,
The grace of God, and gift by grace.

Kent.

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EDITORIAL

"Enter ye at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Matthew 7:13-14.

Elder J.B. Farmer

I must confess my ignorance before I can begin to write or to speak in the name of our God. I fear that I would appear to boast as if I knew anything of myself, if I didn't make it plain about my inability. The flesh is strengthless, even contrary, to the things of the Spirit. And God must receive all praise and honor and glory, not man. God has made the knowledge of His great salvation impossible to man, but with Him all things are possible.

For some time I have been given a desire to write something about the strait gate and the narrow way that leads to life, and the wide gate and the broad way that leads to destruction. But I don't know how or where to begin, so I must beg for mercy and wisdom and understanding, hoping the Lord will come to my aid.

It appears that all the things of God are in a mystery, and past finding out apart from revelation. Therefore so also must be the strait gate and the narrow way that leads to life, and the wide gate and the broad way that leads to destruction. The strait gate is the entrance into the narrow way. And that gate is so strait or confining, that no one may press through it. Jesus said, ***"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."*** His disciples said, ***"Who then can be saved?" But Jesus beheld them and said unto them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."*** We know that it is impossible for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. And it is just as impossible for a man to go through

the strait gate. It is not just hard to do, but is entirely unachievable for men. It takes no less than a miracle for anyone to pass through that gate which leads into the narrow way. First, he must be killed to the flesh and to the world. Then, he must be made alive to God and to His kingdom. Man cannot accomplish this, it is altogether the work of God. ***"The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and he bringeth up."*** He kills His own with the letter of the law, and then He makes them alive by His Spirit. Jesus said, ***"No man can come unto me, except the Father which sent me draw him."*** And when the Father draws one, he miraculously is brought through the strait gate and comes to Jesus in the narrow way. And Jesus also said, ***"All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again in the last day."*** I am made to believe that Jesus is the door or the strait gate, and He is the narrow way. And He is the truth and the life. In Him we live and move and have our being. And Jesus shall not lose one of His own, but shall bring each one safely to the end of his pilgrimage here upon earth. And He shall raise them all up in the last day, and bring them to glory, where they shall ever be with the Lord.

The one finding himself in the narrow way is amazed to think that he should be brought into such a fearful and glorious place. And he is given the understanding that it is impossible to walk in this way by himself - just as impossible as it is to press through the strait gate. One must be miraculously protected on either side and be led forward step by step to the end of his journey. There is no turning around and no going back. ***"For he that hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ."*** The children of Israel found themselves in the narrow way when they were brought out of Egypt and led through the Red Sea on dry ground. There was a destructive wall of water on either side with seeming desolation following hard behind. But only God's children were given to pass safely through. When the Egyptians followed them into that way, they found it to be total destruction and they were all drowned. ***"And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools shall not err therin. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the***

redeemed of the Lord shall walk there: And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

On the one side of this narrow way of faith is the so called "free will of man", and on the other side is the presumption of the carnal mind. Both are piled high as menacing walls of water, and they threaten to fall in upon the little ones and overwhelm them. But miraculously the walls do not fall, rather, they are held at bay. The "free will doctrine" is restrained as the children of God are taught that ***"All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"*** God's children are delivered from thinking they are in control of things, and are made to understand that only God actually does according to His will. And they are taught by experience that man is continuously frustrated at every turn by the vanity of the flesh And man's so called "free will" is shown to be powerless in the presence of God. On the other hand, His little ones are kept from being swallowed up by presumption. Since the truth is that one is already predestinated to heaven or to hell, the devil tempts God's children to think that it doesn't really matter what they do here on earth. He whispers to them if they are God's children, they are safe no matter what; and if they are not His there is nothing they can do about it. So the devil tempts them to presumptuously eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow they shall die. But the Lord is merciful to His own as He causes them to walk in the fear and reverence of God as they are chastened and corrected for their fleshly thoughts, words, and deeds. They are blessed to walk by faith and not by sight. Only those who are blessed with faith to know God and to obey the gospel shall ever walk in that narrow way and see heaven and immortal glory. The inspired apostle said, ***"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day."***

As God's little ones travel along the narrow way, they are made to discern between good and evil. By grace they are enabled to ***"try the***

spirits whether they are of God." On the one side, there is the minister of Satan transformed into the angel of light, bringing in damnable heresies of the works of the flesh. He teaches that you can gain acceptance by the works of the flesh - that if your good works outweigh the bad ones, all will be well. He teaches to touch not, taste not, and handle not. He would make self-righteous, hypocritical Pharisees of all if he could. On the other side is the devil with the temptations of the pleasures of the flesh. He teaches that under grace, all things are lawful, so you may take your fill of pleasures according to your desires. He would make presumptuous libertines of them all if it were possible. He would entrap and destroy them on either side of the way if he could. But Jesus said to Peter, ***"Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith fail not."*** The Good Shepherd protects them from Satan's deceptions, and gives them faith to travel safely on. ***"And the sheep follow Him: for they know His voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers."*** They are kept in the narrow way of faith that leads to life. By mercy, the little ones are taught that the only truly good works are those which God has wrought. They are made to trust in His righteousness alone. And they are made to know that, under grace all things are lawful, but all things are not expedient. Thus the children of God ***"are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."***

On one side of the way there are enticements for them to be overly involved or entangled with the world and all its cares. If left to ourselves we would stray from the path of life and be overcome by the daily concerns of this life. If we were not kept, we would be pursuing fame and fortune and pleasure with the whole world. On the other side of the narrow way there is the temptation to totally separate from the world, and to become monk-like hermits. But that would be cowardly. There would be no battles to fight, nor races to run, and no victory or defeat. And God would not be glorified in His continual deliverance of His people from the evil of this world. Jesus prayed to the Father, ***"I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil."*** And this is what He has done for them. He is keeping us, if we are His, in the narrow way, as strangers and pilgrims passing through the evil world, and He is blessing us to ***"run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."*** And in mercy and power, and to His praise and glory, He will bring us to the end of the race, victorious.

On the one side of the way God's children are tempted to speak flatteries, or false praises to men, respecting men's persons and hoping to gain their favor. On the other side they are tempted to fall into bitterness, hatred and evil speaking toward men, in order to exalt themselves. But God, in His mercy is continually delivering His people even from these kinds of pitfalls. They are made to say in truth with Elihu, ***"Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man. For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my maker would soon take me away." And you are made to "love your enemies," and to "love your neighbor as yourself."*** The little ones, by grace, are delivered from speaking with both flattery and hatred. And to the praise of God and His grace, they are made to speak the truth in love one to another and to the world.

On one side of the narrow way is the false peace of compromise. Many in the worldly religions boast of their numbers and of the unity of their faith and of their peace. But they have compromised the truth in order to achieve their goals. They allow all kinds of false doctrine, disorder and confusion in their midst that they may maintain some kind of stability which they call unity and peace. On the other side of the way are those who continuously war with words to try to defeat those who see things differently from themselves. And they seek to arrive at some kind of truce, which they call peace. They think that they are exalted and victorious if they can humiliate and destroy another person. But the children of God are kept from compromising to achieve a false unity and peace, and also are kept from warring with words to try to gain victory. Rather, they are made to patiently and kindly seek peace and ensue it by gently reproving and rebuking and exhorting one another and others in the way of truth. They are found walking in the narrow way, by grace, ***"Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."***

On one side of the narrow way is the religion of false hope. Many hope in the riches of wealth, or in learning, or in positions of honor in the world. Some hope in their own presumed goodness or righteousness. Others hope in their religious practices, believing that duty or ritual will save them. All who hope in such things must be altogether disappointed in the end, when the Lord shall separate the sheep from the goats. On the other side of the narrow way is the religion of hopelessness. Many are without faith and without hope in the world. They think that this world is all there is, and that there is no heaven or no hell. They imagine that the world made itself and that there is no Creator, God. They shall be most surprised at the resurrection of the

dead. But in the narrow way, the little ones are killed to the false hope of riches, and of self-righteousness, and of false religion. And they are given a pure and sure hope of eternal life in Jesus, Who is their only hope of salvation. Their hope is the anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, which is cast within the veil. Their hope is Christ in you the Hope of glory. They are made to believe that God is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Those who have been made to cast all their cares upon the Lord Jesus Christ shall never be disappointed, world without end, for it is impossible for Him to fail in bringing His own to glory.

The wide gate is so wide that it allows any one of any persuasion to enter the broad way. Everyone is welcome. The self-willed and presumptuous are very much at ease passing through that wide gate. Those who trust in riches and who are full of pride and arrogance are their leaders. In the broad way, false doctrine is no shame to them, for they each have their own understanding, and that is fine with them. They have an agreement to disagree, and to cover it all with a cloak of "charity or love" - which appears to be actually the confusion of darkness. But truly, God is not the author of confusion. Walking there in the broad way are the self-righteous, and those that pursue every pleasure. There are those who are at home in the world with all its cares, along with religious monks who have denounced the world and have fled from the persecutions of it. There are flatterers and hateful speakers. There are those who desire a false peace at any cost, and who will readily compromise the truth in order to have a crowd. And there are those who never know peace but continually war about words to no profit. Those with a false hope are at home with those of no hope. Having passed through the wide gate, and traveling in this broad way, the whole world is happily and confidently, but unknowingly, heading for certain destruction.

In the narrow way that leads to life, that must be entered only by the strait gate, are found the children of God. All others are excluded. The elect, who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life before the world was, are found walking together there in holy love and peace. They are following Jesus, trusting Him to keep them in the way of life and to deliver them from evil. These have been killed to the world and made alive to God - their love of riches, their pride, arrogance, self-will, and presumption have been stripped away. Their love of worldly pleasures and their entanglements have been removed. They are no longer afraid of the persecutions of the world, but gladly suffer them, in the name of Christ. Their mouths have

been stopped from flatteries and hateful speaking. Their desire is for the true doctrine to be spoken. They pursue true peace with honor. And their greatest desire is that God must be glorified in all things. This strait gate and the narrow way are found only by the precious few to whom God has revealed it - the same ones that He loved in the beginning with an everlasting love. And they are on their way to life eternal, to the praise and honor of the God of heaven and earth, and His only begotten Son Jesus Christ. Jesus is the strait gate and He is the narrow way. He is all in all to God's children. *"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption."* May God be praised forever. This was written, I trust, in love and in hope of eternal life.

J. B. Farmer 3-29-2007

PSALM 100:1-4.

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.

Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him and bless his name.

CORRESPONDENCE

Salem, Va.
6-19-06

Dear Brother Hale,

Enclosed is a check for 1 years subscription to the "Signs". I thoroughly enjoyed the articles by Elder May and Elder Ashburn. Thanks to the Editors for articles that reinforce the doctrine of absolute predestination and salvation by grace. It is good when we can relatre with the writer in our travels through life and that the Spirit works in the lives of all of God's Elect. May God continue his blessings on this paper.

In bonds of love,
James L. Shelor

April 8, 2007

Dear Elder Terry,

For so many years of my life I was searching, finding little in my search, but always hoping to find that place that would be so special to me. There were times when I was given some special things, but those times were given to me and came when unexpected. I did not find them by the labor of my search. (But I do believe that my search was a part of those good works that we are ordained to walk in). Many years ago it was impressed upon me that I was very unhappy living the Armenian

dream. I had been reading about the doctrines of the various denominations, but had already discovered that none of the ones that I had read about understood that the Saving Power of Christ is His alone, not subject to the whims, desires, or free will of mere man. I knew about the Primitive Baptist, because my mother was and is one, but I did not know what the doctrine was. I asked her for some "Signs" to read. She was so happy to oblige. As I was reading I came upon one of Gilbert Beebe's writings concerning the Shepherd, His sheep, and the fact that the door would only open to the Porter. I knew then that this was a part of what I had been searching for. This is my doctrine, the same doctrine that the "Signs" contends for.

Please renew my subscription to the "Signs of the Times" for two years. Enclosed is a check for more than enough. Use it as you see fit. It has been such a blessing to receive my copies for many years now.

May it please the Lord to continue to bless each of us each day that we are here in this low ground is my prayer.

Humbly submitted,
Charles Mathews
Baton Rouge, La 70874-4181
(225) 775-8078

JAMES 3:18.

And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

Dear Editors of the Signs,

I am sending you $10.00 for help in the cost of your work for this purpose. I look forward each month for this little book. So much comfort as some of us depend greatly on this book.

Also I found many poems as I was looking through the old trunk that I wrote many years ago as I was traveling through some bad times, some good times and some mighty rocky roads. So I decided to send some to you, I have sent some times ago. If you can use them O.K. If not just throw away.

Thank you,
Katherine Mathews

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111 Livingstone Drive
Cary, NC 27513

April 24, 2007

Dear Elder Key,

One of our precious brethren, Brother Carroll Williams, has shared a wonderful experience of the dealings of the Lord with him as he was shown that he is a sinner and brought into the knowledge of the truth. I feel many will be blessed with the reading of this beautiful experience as the Lord is glorified in His marvelous workings in His children. Therefore, I would like to request it be published in The Signs of The Times. I asked Brother Carroll's permission to do so.

I hope you are doing well and that the Lord will bless you and guide you in the way He would have you to go.

Love in Christ,
Jeannette Robertson

ARTICLES

EXPERIENCE OF BROTHER J. CARROLL WILLIAMS

Sister Jeannette, you told me yesterday you would like to hear me tell my experience and I explained truthfully how it is with me. However, you did say one thing about your experience that certainly did parallel mine. You spoke about all of your sins (if I remember correctly) being on a scroll I guess it was a week or two maybe before I offered to the church that I saw the enormity of my sins stacked up before me. It was as though I was sitting in a chair and I was thinking I had not been a terrible fellow in my growing up and young adult life and with each thought of the good that I thought I had done, something was placed beside my chair. I kept talking about the good in me and the stack beside me grew and grew until it was as high as the chair arm. It was made known to me that was a representation of my sins and that I had never done anything good. It made me feel so small and unworthy. I just needed to go crawl in the closet or someplace. When I awoke in the morning, all I could see with my natural eye was that stack of sins placed beside me. I can't tell you just how I did feel for a couple of days... but then, for some reason, my burden began to feel lighter; and as I went about my daily duties (a big part of which was done driving a car), I could not do anything but sing ***"Farewell vain world I'm going home, My Jesus smiles and bids me come."*** I thought then that maybe I had heard those words in a song. I got the hymn book and looked and looked but could not find them. I visited a dear and highly respected brother "Rossie Williams" one night during that time and I asked him and his wife if those words were in a song in our hymn book. They did not have to think twice. They knew the exact number of the song and I told them how those words had been ringing over and over in my soul. Then I thought they tried to make me feel they saw the workings of the Lord in all that, but I became fearful that my time on earth was about up. I just felt frustrated and did not know what it meant, if anything.

On the following fourth Sunday, something moved me when they were singing the closing hymn. I felt like my body floated down to the front of the church. I had no control of it. Elder Bunn motioned to the congregation to stop singing and there I was, so empty handed. He asked me if I wanted to talk to the church. Well, I did not know what I would say if I tried to talk to the

church, but felt I had to do something. So, I told him I loved the church and wanted to live with the folks I loved. I was readily received into the church; and as the brethren extended the right hand of fellowship, they looked like angels coming down to shake my hand and I felt so unworthy. But I do want to say that was the sweetest and dearest group of people that day that I had ever seen or have seen since. It was just a special day and now I feel so unworthy to have had those many brethren and sisters to enjoy for so many years. It has been joy unspeakable along with the heartaches and burdens that go along with all the upsets we experience.

I've had a hope that the vain world I was singing about was the worldly place of our abode and the going home was to live with the brethren we adore. I could not see that until after I was baptized and was beginning to settle down a bit. Not to say that I don't find myself all entangled in worldly things today, I do; and I'm not always happy with it at the time, but I hope I know where my home here on earth is.....with the brethren. And I have a hope there is a better place in the hereafter. I can't believe it, but I've held membership at Pleasant Hill Church for 50 years this year.

I did not mean to be this lengthy. God bless you. We do love you both.

Carroll Williams

VOICES OF THE PAST

EPHESIANS I. 3-6.

"BLESSED be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

This letter of Paul's is addressed ***"to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus."*** All those saints at Ephesus which Paul had in mind have long since been removed from time, but the letter and its words are still in effect, and to a people even today, for there are yet some ***"faithful in Christ Jesus,"*** who love this doctrine as did our eminent apostle Paul, who so earnestly contended for the truth as he had been taught it, giving God preeminence in all things. Man of himself has never believed the truth, never will. The vital truth of God and the fundamental principle on which it is founded have ever been distaste-

ful to man, for one prime reason: it robs man of any glory and places the invisible God preeminent in all things.

Of all creatures and things in existence man has the least right to boast or array himself in any way as prominent in the least things, or capable of even thinking a thought, much less putting one into execution, for man was the last manifestation in creation. Even the beasts of the field, grass and herbs, were brought into a manifest existence before man was, and man after being formed of earth, was an inanimate lump of clay until the Lord God breathed the breath of life into his nostrils and, he, man, became a living soul. Now since he has become a living soul by reason of the God-given breath he exalts himself above the Creator and limits the Holy One, circumscribes his movements and places him in an inferior position to man. If there is one thing God wishes to do or have done and he cannot do it or cause it to be done then he is not omnipotent. If there is anything, even the minutest detail that his all-seeing eye has not seen, even from ancient times, then he is not omniscient. If there is any vacuum in space that is not filled with his presence at any and all times, then he is not omnipresent, and many have borne false witness, for Bible writers declare these three attributes as belonging to him, and to no other. They who feel they can keep the law, or even a part of it, and reap a reward, in claiming this ability to procure a benefit for doing righteous acts and receiving blessings thereby, either in time or eternity, have broken the commandment that reads, ***"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor."*** For to say that salvation, all of it, or any part of it, for time or eternity is in any way conditional is bearing false witness against Christ and overthrowing the testimony of the holy men of old who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The teachings of Christ are in no uncertain terms. ***"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him."*** Here is a positive declaration of Christ that forever bars man coming of his own free will: he must be drawn. They are not drawn against their will, as some affirm that we believe. The psalmist says, " Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." God's ways are equal. When he draws one he makes that one willing. There is much could be written about one's willingness and acceptance. Of course God's people accept him and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. The elect according to the foreknowledge of God, are the only people that do, ever have or shall accept God the Father and his Son, or the salvation which he has wrought. When one talks about accepting Christ as his Savior and feels he can do something to aid his redemption or final preservation in glory, he has not accepted Christ, but he who is wholly

and solely dependent upon Christ for salvation, both now and forever, does accept him as his Savior. There is not a text in the whole Bible that can be claimed as foundation for conditionalism that is not to their destruction, for such *"they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."* Scripture means what it says; if not, it would say what it means. No mortal hated this doctrine more than the writer, but by hard and trying experiences, both in providence and grace, he learned that all power in heaven and earth is of God, and was given unto Jesus Christ, who is God manifest in the flesh, for the accomplishment of God's purpose in earth. Then if all power in heaven and earth, which is time or eternity, the church or the world, providence or grace, is in him it is a foregone conclusion, an undeniable *fact, that there IS none in man. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."* Are we going to doubt Jeremiah's word, *"the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath!"* who said, *"He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light."* Would any walk in sadness and affliction if it could be avoided! It was faith that Moses chose rather to suffer affiiction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Faith is the gift of God, therefore it was of God, and not of Moses, that he refused *to* be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Would Paul have been struck down and turned about in a career of which he was so zealous if left to his own will! Most assuredly not, for his will was to go to Damascus, but like all other of God's chosen, elect and precious, he was made willing in the day of God's power. This power revealed Jesus Christ, whom he was persecuting as an impostor, and now he sees *"Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor,"* as his Savior, and accepts him whom he had rejected, because a power over which he had no control smote him to the ground and blinded him. By the power and magnificence of *"the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ"* he was now willing to accept God the Father and God the Son. Now it was no wonder Paul could write the words at the beginning of our writing, *"To the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus."* Who are the faithful? They who are full of faith. These are the people to whom this writing is addressed and for whom it is kept, and it does not apply to the ones who feel they can help the Lord in his work, either for time or eternity. In sending, this message to the faithful he could boldly and freely speak of them as being chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. It is useless for man to speculate on such solemn

truths, or expect to reconcile them to reason. It is a senseless undertaking for one to try to make God's ways plain to any natural mind. Our finite mind cannot grasp the nearly six thousand years of time, then why dispute or attempt to explain away the mystery of that which took place before time began. There is no measure in eternity. Time and time things alone are measurable. As God is immeasurable, so are all his ways and attributes. Were his mercy or love measurable we would sometimes come to the limit and be without the mercy and law of God, but his mercy endureth forever and his love never fails. Because we cannot measure and understand God is no reason why we should deny the testimony of Paul, this faithful witness, who declares that God chose certain ones in Christ before the world was. It is essential that he did, and this being true there is a living unity between Christ and his people, for be was with the Father before the world was, and we were chosen in him. Then we must have been alive through him, or else he was then composed of dead members. It is not incredible then to one who sees God as sovereign to believe that all his people were foreknown and chosen in Christ Jesus before the world was, for when Christ came in the flesh he was just as verily God as he was verily man, God manifest in the flesh, otherwise he could not be seen, could not suffer, bleed and die; neither could he have been born of a virgin except in the flesh. When man starts out to make the Scripture plain and understandable to natural reason he has reached the height of folly. No man dares question the prerogative of God, for all he does is right. The very fact that he does it is positive proof it is right. It is according to the blessing of spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ that he chose us. It is a blessing, and not a recompense due us. For the children [Esau and Jacob] being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." It was said unto her (Rebecca), The elder shall serve the younger." ***"Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."*** One would necessarily have to blot out such Scriptures as these in order to establish a conditional salvation for either time or eternity, and when he has eliminated this truth he has no foundation on which to stand, much less to build. ***"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."*** The foundation of God is sure and unless we build on this foundation our building must surely fall, so why try to remove some of the foundation which God has laid and eliminate a timber or stone that is objectionable to the natural mind, or try to smooth over a rough place, or make this hard and unendurable doctrine a soft, pliant thing that any man can

bend about his finger to suit his own taste , Having faith in God no doctrine is too hard, and we glory in it because it abases man and exalts God. Makes us dependent creatures upon an independent God. By reason of the fact that God chose us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will, we were appointed to be children of God before time, and the appointing or choosing is done, the election is past. By an unchangeable purpose, irrevocable, impossible of change, sure and certainly all that were thus chosen are surely safe in him. Nothing that I can do can make me any other than the son of my father. Yet not for one moment does one of God's children wish to take advantage of this truth, or use it as a cloak for sin to excise his wrong doing. Being children there is a law and reverence and a desire to do that which is pleasing in his sight. Having seen his holiness we long to be holy as he is holy; we long to live right, being dead to sin, or separated from sin, by the blood of Jesus Christ which cleanseth us from all sin. We hate sin and hunger and thirst after righteousness. He saw all from the beginning, even the behavior of all men, nothing is hung on a contingency and nothing comes as a surprise, for each event is so fitted as to be in perfect harmony with its predecessor and successor, all things going along in the stupendous plan that God alone saw and determined, and he executes his decree according to the good pleasure of his unchangeable will. The doctrine of predestination of all things is so clear that it seems all could see it, but God did not determine that all should see. This doctrine does not in any way charge God with being the author of sin, for how can he who is above any law commit sin, for sin is the transgression of the law. Further, the fact that man is not able to resist sin is not a misdemeanor chargeable to the Creator, for even in this his purpose is so far beyond our finiteness we are lost in the infiniteness of his plan. He had as rich a purpose in the transgression of our foreparents as he had and has in everything else. In speaking of Pharaoh the wicked king, it is written, ***"And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth."*** To which Paul also refers in Romans. If God sees fit to manifest his power in this way what right has man to interfere , all the acts of God are alike good. Also we read of the suffering of Christ in which Peter says, ***"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."*** In type Joseph was also taken in the same way and sold into Egypt where he was evil treated, but afterwards he

could look at his brethren who had sold him and say, Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good, to save much people alive. It is because we cannot see far enough into God's plan, and lack of faith, that we cannot see and believe in the predestination of all things. God had some wise purpose in sin coming into the world, and remember this, had he not seen the awful consequences of sin, that it would condemn the whole world by the act of one man, he would not have prepared the antidote for Adam's transgression. ***"By one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."***

This is not contingent upon the act of any mortal, Christ alone could and did atone for all sin. ***"There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins."*** The atonement has been made by one offering by Christ himself without blemish or spot unto God, which is the only acceptable sacrificial offering for sin. ***"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."*** The perfect gift is Christ, the good gifts refers to the temporal blessings we enjoy in nature. God's plans are as unalterable as they are unchangeable; he having designed from all eternity the course of events as they come along. Knowing exactly what Adam would do, to prepare for this he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. As we were in Adam, so also then were all that ever should be born of the Spirit in Christ. We may take two apples, and before they are ever opened there are just so many seeds in each one. Manifesting them does not add nor diminish the number. The number is fixed. As in Adam there is a fixed number of people to be born on the earth, so there is also a fixed and certain number in Christ. There is not one thing by chance. No event too large to have been managed, designed and planned by him, nothing too finite to escape his decree. It is a truth that he will be glorified in all he does and in all that is done. ***"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."*** There are no teachings in the Bible to warrant the assertion that salvation for either time or eternity is contingent, or conditional, or that God is not sovereign, all-powerful, all-knowing, all-seeing. It is an admissible fact that if we do certain things the result will be so and so. If we fall into the water we shall get wet. If we put our hand into the fire we shall be burned. ***"If we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."*** No one denies the " if " in this, but this does not alter the predetermined

act, step or thought of any man, being, or thing ; neither do we have the ability to alter our course, and the fact that one does or does not do a thing is proof positive that they were to have done, or refrained from doing, the thing. If by the grace of God we refrain from an evil act, it is done by his grace, and we are not rewarded for doing, but in the doing we have our reward ; and, further, this does not frustrate the eternal plan of God. It is the only sure foundation upon which one can rest. Inasmuch as God saw and foreknew all things and determined this course, he saw who would and who would not live a godly life and walk carefully. There is no disposition on the part of a child of God to enjoy the pleasures of sin, for being made dead to sin he has no desire to live any longer therein, but longs to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Even while in this ungodly world he longs to keep unspotted by its evils, even though he be ostracized and have to live alone. There is no pleasure in the transient things of this existence, for there is a continual longing of the heart, soul and mind to be at rest. The only support we have here is the hope that is in mercy given us in Christ Jesus, that we are children, and if children, heirs, joint heirs with Christ: The plan of God is so sure and certain that all hell, with it's legions of tormenting devils, can never pluck us out of his hand, but all for whom he died, which were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, are eternally safe. This, then, is our rest, our only rest in this life. May the Lord enlighten his people that they be not entangled with unsound doctrine.

F. S. FISHER.

HEBREWS X. 23-25.

"LET us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) and let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching!"

A member asked us about six months ago to write using as our subject the words: ***"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is."*** This member having observed some whose attitude towards attending their meetings seemed of more or less secondary consideration was rightfully deeply concerned. It is a matter which calls for self-examination on the part of each and every member of every true Old School Baptist Church throughout our entire country. The life of each member of the visible church should be as a lighted candle placed on the candlestick; it should not be put under a bushel, or submerged be-

neath the things of this world, all of which do but perish with the using. The kernel, or substance, of our Lord and Savior, by word of mouth and the life that he lived while here in the flesh, was *"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto yon."* In that great and wonderful address, his sermon on the Mount, the place where he had gone apart from the multitudes, *"when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them,"* saying, *"Be not ye therefore like unto them [the heathen]: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him."* How prone we are to forget that the hand of Providence supplies our temporal needs. We have to be reminded from time to time that the gold and the silver are his; that the cattle which graze upon a thousand hills are the Lord's; yea, the world and all that in it is, and that it is he who clothes the lilies of the field, whose hand feeds the lone sparrow upon the housetop; and, if not a sparrow can fall without him, will he not give his children bread" The great apostle declares in our text that " he is faithful that promised." Do we really believe and act out the belief that the Lord is our shepherd. The good Shepherd will surely provide for his sheep; he will cause them to lie down in green pastures and lead them beside the still waters. But, those of us who profess to love the Lord in sincerity and in truth, are we holding fast the profession of our faith without wavering? Do we show by a well ordered walk and godly conversation that we are the Lord's, or is our service only of the lip? Is it consistent to say, Lord, Lord, in the meetinghouse and then engage in worldly conversation and jesting until meeting time again; Do we live daily so as to prove that we have been with and learned of Jesus and that our treasure is in heaven? How searching and solemn should these questions be. And do we consider one another to prove unto love and to good works? The apostle says we should do these things. Jesus said, *"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."* What was under consideration was, *"I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat : I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me."* These things are accomplished among the saints when they are assembled together and communicating one with another, as those who receive can well testify, even though those who give or minister are unaware of it. The servant which Abraham sent to take a wife unto his son, Isaac, went questioning and praying, but when he was convinced that the Lord had prospered his journey, *"he bowed down his*

head, and worshipped the Lord," saying, ***"Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." "I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of Thy Master's brethren."*** This deserves to be repeated again and again. Only those who have been in the way and have experienced it know of a truth the joy which is inexpressible and full of glory that is witnessed by those who are raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord. Such characters were said to have been quickened, made alive; their affection was set on things above, not on things on the earth, and they were seeking, yea, as for hidden treasure, those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. The psalmist said, : ***"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."*** Where such scenes are beheld there is no lack of the brethren assembling themselves together; meeting time does not come too often, but rather it seems Sundays are too far apart, even when they are privileged to have meeting every Sunday. Is not the true test of the fruit of the Spirit considering one another and provoking unto love and to good works? Let us pause for a moment and analyze the definition of the word "consider." Does it not mean that we are constantly, yea, every waking moment, as it were, thinking good concerning those we love and endeavoring in every way to show them kindness and manifest our affection? Such provokes unto love and to good works, for love begets love, and the brethren would do well to remember this and bridle their tongues lest they poison the mind of one another against a brother, at the same time walking so as not to offend a weak brother. Paul says, ***"Let us [the household of faith] consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is."*** So we are not only told what to do, but what not to do, this showing that the holy Scriptures, which were given by inspiration of God, throughly and thoroughly furnish unto all good works. While the manner of some is indifference, coldness, walking in the course of this world, the riches whereof choke out the good seed, the exhortation is not to be as they are, but rather to live righteously, soberly, to visit the fatherless and the widows and to keep ourself unspotted from the world. This, James says, is pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father. Old Baptists of all people, need to study to show themselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. They should

search the Scriptures, to know what they teach, both as to doctrine and order, which go hand in hand. David said, ***"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful: but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night."*** It is truly good to think and talk upon the things of the upper kingdom. One said, ***"My heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue, Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am."*** We often think of a band of brethren, three churches composing an association, where they have no regular pastor or minister, only a visitor usually once a year, and yet these brethren are very much alive; they assemble themselves together and talk and sing of the things of Jesus; the theme of their conversation is truly heavenly, and the Lord is wonderfully blessing them with an outpouring of his Holy Spirit, which has been evidenced by an ingathering of twelve during the past three years. This is referred to by way of encouraging churches" that may be without undershepherds or supplies. By way of contrast, we would also call attention to another band of most lovely brethren, among them being (we think) a gifted brother, and yet they seldom meet. Is it not a mistake? Are they not forsaking the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is as the apostle says they should not do? These things are referred to for the earnest consideration of the brethren. We like to see the brethren holding fast the profession of their faith without wavering. We can never tell what time or by whom the Lord will send a message. It is not always necessary for one ordained of men to be present. At best man is but an earthen vessel and the Lord must fill the mouth before It can speak forth his praise, and ***"God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform."*** Therefore let us be found in the way; who can tell but what the Lord will lead us to the house of our Master's brethren ***"Let us be found assembling ourselves together, exhorting one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching. If we rightly discern*** "the signs of the times," there is no mistaking that these are the days prophesied of when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. It is the time when God's called and qualified ministers should ***"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with long-suffering and doctrine."*** The true soldier must stand his ground and meet the enemies of truth; he must put on the whole armor of God

that he may be able to stand the wiles of the devil. The warfare in which he is engaged calls for the helmet of salvation, the breastplate of righteonsness, the girdle of truth, the shield of faith, and his feet to be shed with the preparation of the gospel of peace, for the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; it is not by might, nor by power, ***"but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."*** Let us therefore take ***" the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,"*** and go forth to victory. If we are ever brought forth more than conquerors it will be through him that loved us and gave himself for us. This is that new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh, that the apostle is writing to the Hebrews about in the chapter wherein is found our text. He begins his epistle by saying, ***"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son."*** He was the true substance of all the law had shadowed forth. It was not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin, so the Lamb of God was slain from the foundation of the world, in the purpose of God, as a propitiation for the sins of his people and by this ***"one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."*** This is all our hope and we are determined not to know anything ***"among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."*** Jesus said, ***"I am the way, and the truth, and the life."*** Again, ***"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber."*** God forbid that we should be as Ananias and Sapphira, who ***"kept back part of the price."*** There are those in the world today who are professing to love the Lord with all their heart, &c., who declare boldly they have forsaken the world for the ***"pearl of great price,"*** and almost with the same breath contend that only eternal salvation is of God, and that salvation in time is of men. In the apostle Peter's day those who were guilty of such had to give up the ghost and were carried out and buried. These are perilous times and there are many who are departing from the way of the Lord, but the faithful in Christ Jesus will not be found among the number, they are to hold to the profession of their faith without wavering. Therefore let the pastors be ensamples to the flock over which God hath made them the overseers; let them be faithful in doctrine, in order, in practice, and shun not to declare unto them all the counsel of God. Likewise, members, be faithful in holding up the hands of your servant; support him in the manner set forth in the Scriptures and encourage him by your presence at meeting; let it be seen that you do delight in the law of God after the inward man. We can speak feelingly from

experience and say that we thank God continually for having surrounded us with faithful brethren, who have not forsaken the assembling of themselves together. Many, many times have we wondered that they should continue to come out, but therein their faithfulness has been manifested. We do not know how we could have gotten along thus far without them. Surely God has been better to us than all our fears. May he give us all to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering!" forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Finally brethren, Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhort one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching.

R. Lester Dodson

MEETINGS

PAYNES CREEK CHURCH

Starting with the first Sunday in June- the 3rd. The Paynes Creek meeting time will change to 2:30 p.m. Singing and preaching at 3:00 p.m.

We invite all our Brothers and Sisters to be with us.

Elder Wm. Hale Terry, Pastor

CONTRIBUTIONS

Priddy Shaw-VA 5.00
M. H. Brown-AL 25.00
Ted McDaniel-VA 100.00
Pauline Jones -TX 5.00
Walter Craft - WV 5.00
J. D. Neely -AR 5.00
In memory of Mamie Sullivan
Nannie Quarles -AL 25.00
Mary Janney-VA 5.00
Jerry Mourer-AR 200.00
Charles Matthews -LA 35.00
R. T. Jacks-AL 5.00
Pauline Toney-MS 5.00
In memory of Ethlene Watson
Gerry Compton-NC 25.00
Helen Stewart -NC 5.00
James Carr-VA 50.00

OBITUARIES

LETTIE MAE WILLIAMS FLOOD

On Tuesday, February 22, 2007, God called home our sister in Christ, Sister Lettie Mae Flood.

Sister Flood was born September 2, 1918 in Edgecombe County, North Carolina. She was the daughter of Joseph John Williams and Mamie Lancaster Williams, who preceded her in death. She was also preceded in death by her husband of 37 years, Charlie Daniel Flood, as well as her five brothers: Milton,

Joseph Floyd, Thomas Earl, Roscoe Elijah and Rufus Williams. She is survived by her cousin, Sister Lessie Lancaster and several nieces and nephews.

Sister Flood asked for a home at Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church on January 22, 1949. She was baptized in the Tar River at the Falls by the late Elder A. B. Denson.

Sister Flood lived a humble life and was a faithful member, going to church regularly as long as her health permitted. She was always there to help clean the church and do whatever she could to help when she was able. As long as she could drive, she would visit those she had known as family, friends and neighbors. Sister Flood has already been missed, even before her passing, as she had resided for the last three and a half years in Guardian Care Nursing Home in Rocky Mount, NC.

Elder Cleo Robertson held the graveside services on Sunday, February 25, 2007 at the family cemetery in Edgecombe County, NC, where Sister Flood was laid to rest beside her husband.

May we all be blessed to look to our Lord, the author and the finisher of our faith.

This obituary has been written for the church records, *The Signs of the Times,* and a copy for the family and submitted at the request of Pleasant Hill Church in conference on March 25, 2007 by:

Sister Peggy V. Brake

ELDER HENRY CLAY JONES

Sept. 20, 1924 — Oct. 17, 2006

Elder Henry C. Jones has been called home at the age of 82. A devoted member of Pleasant Hill Church, near Rocky Mount, N. C., having been received into the fellowship of the church on Sunday, November 27, 1955 and baptized on the same day by Elder C. Norman Bunn.

Elder Jones was strong in his belief and always ready to stand steadfast for what he believed. The brethren of the church saw the gift of a servant in him and he was ordained a deacon on July 27, 1958 with Elders C. Norman Bunn, A. P. Mewborn, and Johnnie Joyner presiding. In due time, it was obvious that Brother Jones felt burdened to speak and was used as a lay speaker at home and among the sister churches until it was made known the brethren at home and abroad were ready to ordain him to the ministry which took place on February 25, 1968 with Elders C. Norman Bunn, A. P. Mewborn, and Johnnie Joyner presiding. At Elder Bunn's death in May, 1972 Pleasant Hill Church called him to serve as pastor of the church on November 25, 1972 which he faithfully did until his death. He also served the following sister churches for a period of time: Lower Town Creek, Williams, Providence, Skewarky, Smithwicks Creek, and since 1985 he had been serving the Tarboro Church.

He enjoyed his church affiliations and was always eager to be in the meetings at home and visiting sister churches. Going to the associational meetings was always a special joy for him. He looked forward to those times and when his health permitted was always making plans to visit an association. He was well known among the brethren in North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, and perhaps places that I do not recall. Many brethren expressed a special love for him. I'm sure he has been missed by the brethren in recent years while his health was deteriorating and hindered his traveling a distance.

Elder Jones was married to 'Tilda Lancaster Jones for 61 years. They were not blessed with children but were extremely devoted to each other. The last few years found Brother Jones in failing health and in and out of hospitals at home and out of town at times. 'Tilda was always with him at his bedside night and day. When he was away from home, so was she.

In addition to his wife, Elder Jones is survived by one brother, Charlie Lawrence Jones and wife, Virginia, of Newport News, Virginia, the Lancaster family who he was very close to, four nieces, and his church family who reside nearby and far off.

A funeral service was conducted in Bowling Funeral Home, Rocky Mount, North Carolina by Elders Joseph Sawyer and Harold Pittman. His body was laid to rest in the Williams Family Cemetery near Sharpsburg, North Carolina to await the second coming of Christ our Savior, at which time Brother Henry had a fervent hope that he would be carried to that eternal home of peace and joy.

His absence has left a vacancy that will be with us for some time to come. God called him to fill his place and he has completed the call. Now we are thankful for the dear Elders who have come to rescue us and help to make us at Pleasant Hill feel there is still purpose for us to move forward. We know they will fill their places and Brother Henry's place will still be void. We beg your prayers.

This obituary has been written at the request of Pleasant Hill Church in conference October 22, 2006. A copy to be placed on the church records, one sent to *The Signs of the Times* for publication, and one to the family.

J. Carroll Williams
Elder Jimmy Gray, Moderator
J. Carroll Williams, Clerk

MATTHEW 6:21-22.

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

"The Lord has been so good to me
I want to praise His name
His mercy long has been my plea
His grace I would proclaim.

Yea though of sinner I'm the worst
Still I desire to praise
The gracious God who loved me first
To Him my voice I'll raise.

I pray the Lord that I might see
Myself released from sin.
It's burden long has harassed me,
How sore a plague is sin!

I long to leave this world of woe
And with my Savior reign
Where self no longer is my foe
And I am free from pain."

Composed by Joyce Pittman
Sent in by her mother,
Sister Mae Williams

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EDITORIAL

"Your Father Abraham Rejoiced to See My Day: and He Saw It, and Was Glad." John 8:56

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

Recorded in John 8:56-58 are the words, ***"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."***

What manner of man is this? The prophet Isaiah said He had no form nor comeliness and no beauty that we should desire Him. He was despised and rejected of men. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. He bare the sins of all His people in His own body on the tree of the cross. Yet, He was God in the flesh, ***"for in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."*** He had all power. He knew all things that were to come to pass because He had purposed them and ordained them. He was the Word that was in the beginning, that was with God and that was God. He was the One by whom all things were made and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life. Even the wind and the sea obeyed Him. No man took His life from Him, but He willingly layed it down because of the great love wherewith He loved His elect. He had power to lay it down and He had power to take it up again. But His body of flesh, without sin, was a veil that the carnal eye could not penetrate nor the carnal mind comprehend. There were some such as Peter to whom this man was revealed as Christ, the Son of the living God. However, many of the Jews were not blessed to believe in Him and in fact, despised Him and desired to kill Him. But His hour had not yet come and they could not lay their hands on Him.

On the occasion of the above scripture, the Pharisees were con-

tending with Jesus over who He said that He was and who His father was. They said that Abraham was their father and seemed to believe that this natural tie of the flesh entitled them to be the children of God. But Jesus told them that He knew they were the seed of Abraham; and He also said, *"If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But, now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father."* Then, they began to profess that they had but one father, which was God. They had no understanding of this One who stood before them. No man can come to the Father, but by Christ and no man can come to Him, except the Father which sent Christ draw him. For the Father and Christ are one. Very bluntly, Jesus said that they were of their father, the devil. He was a murderer and a liar from the beginning.

Then, Jesus told them that Abraham rejoiced to see His day, and he saw it, and was glad. They had no idea of what He was speaking. They replied that Jesus was not even fifty years old and how could He have seen Abraham. They only knew Jesus after the flesh. They knew nothing of Him spiritually because He did not reveal Himself to them. The world today knows nothing of Him spiritually. They have never experienced His love and mercy. Psalm 107 says, *"O Give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good: for His mercy endured for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy."* The redeemed of the Lord are the only ones who can say the Lord is good because they are the only ones who have experienced His love and mercy. Jesus told them that before Abraham was, I am. God is under no law nor time. There is no past nor any future with Him. It is an eternal now. He is the eternal I AM THAT I AM. As written in Exodus 3:13-15, *"And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, what is his name? What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM; and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations."* Our finite carnal minds cannot begin to comprehend this name of God. He had no beginning and has no end. He doesn't age as we do. He is the same yesterday, and today, and forever. Therefore, in

heaven, His people will not age, but dwell with Him in one eternal now.

When God commanded Abraham to take his only son Isaac (Genesis 22:2) whom he loved and offer him for a burnt offering, He gave Abraham the faith to believe God and that God would provide. So Abraham took Isaac and two young men and began their journey to this certain mountain. This was Mount Moriah upon which some 1,000 years yet to come Solomon would build the temple and yet another some 1,000 years Christ would hang on the cross. So it was not by chance or accident that Abraham was commanded to offer Isaac on this particular mountain, but by the divine purpose of this holy and all powerful God. On the third day, Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off. I believe that Abraham saw more than just a natural mountain. The third day sets forth the gospel day, the day of grace. On the third day, Christ rose from the dead, having fulfilled the righteous, holy law of God to a jot and tittle. With the law having been fulfilled, the day of grace had come. Abraham was given an eye of faith to behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world as He hung on the cross on this very mountain some 2,000 years in the future. Abraham saw the day of Jesus Christ. He saw the place afar off. Therefore, he could tell the two young men to wait there and he and Isaac would go yonder and worship and would come again to them.

As Abraham and Isaac journeyed toward the mountain on which God had commanded him to offer his son, Isaac asked his father, ***"Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Abraham answered, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering."*** By faith Abraham was given to see the day of Jesus Christ and to proclaim that God will provide Himself a lamb for the offering. Christ stood a lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Revelation 5:6 and 13:8). The holy, righteous law of God required a holy, righteous sacrifice to satisfy it. No one of Adam's race was qualified. ***"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." "There is none righteous, no, not one."*** Therefore, God sent His own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, to condemn sin in the flesh that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. As Abraham bound Isaac and laid him upon the wood on the altar and reached for the knife, the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven and said, ***"Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me."*** When Abraham looked up, he saw a ram caught in a thicket by his horns. The ram was a type of Christ and I believe the horns set

forth the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Acts 2:23 says that He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Abraham rejoiced to see His day and he saw it, and was glad.

You, dear children of the heavenly King, also rejoiced to see the day of your beloved Savior and you saw it, and were glad. When the Lord imputed His righteous, holy law into you and you were brought down in condemnation to see yourself as a sinner and the vilest of sinners, you felt your lost condition and were given to know that you could not keep the law. As the Apostle Paul said, ***"For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"*** Then, the Lord appears as the Sun of righteousness as He arises with healing in His wings. Therefore, you shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. You experience the warmth of His comfort and peace in His love and mercy. As calves of the stall, you are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Works of the flesh are done away and grace has come. The Lord feeds you with the bread from heaven which is Christ, the bread of life. As you are calves of the stall, God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Having seen by faith the day of Jesus Christ, you can witness with Psalm 31:7, ***"I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy."***

May the God of all grace continue with each of you is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

VOICES OF THE PAST

Perdita Lowe,
Mt. Airy, N.C.

Dear Brother Denny:

My mind has been impressed for sometime to write a few lines to the "Landmark" in regard to my afflictions and the 'dealings of the Lord with me.

I was born June 1st, 1879 and when I was about 3 years old I had an attack of typhoid fever, which left me with an obscure disease which kept me weak and prevented my recovery; and thought I was able to go about and do some work, yet I could not feel well and strong, or recover my health again. In this enfeebled state I lingered till Jan. 15th., 1898, when I was taken sick in bed and have been in a helpless condition more or less ever since.

I am now 47 years of age-nearly 19 years of activity and 28 years of invalidism. .

In my long and continued sickness I have almost forgotten what it

is to be able to go about where I please, and can hardly imagine just how I felt when I could go about with my sister to church and mingle in society.

I live on the farm and, before confinement, spent much of my time out of doors, working in the field when able, and sometimes doing around the house.

I loved outdoor life, but confinement seemed to me the most dreadful thing imaginable. Soon after I was taken sick, I had to limit my diet to a few articles of food which I could not relish and avoid such food as my appetite craved. During the first year of confinement I had strength enough to walk, and walked out into the yard a few times which caused me much suffering, yet it was hard to give up so long as I had strength to go. After many futile attempts to get up, and walk, when feeling my best, which made me worse each time and rendered me less able, I had to give up and remain in bed. But this was hard to do and I spent many sleepless nights mourning over my fate and the awful condition I was in. Through the day I could pass away the time comparatively well by keeping my mind occupied, and my hands busy knitting, crocheting, sewing and many other little things which I soon learned to do in a horizontal position.

But at the approach of evening when the shadows grew long, I dreaded to see the sun go down, for it seemed to me I should never see it rise again. The long and wearisome nights seemed dreadful, and the little sleep I could get was not refreshing.

Sometimes I would feel smothered, and breathing so difficult that I would have to struggle for breath all night and get no sleep at all, and medicine did me no good. I tried to take an interest in everything going on around me and tried to be helpful whenever there was anything I could do. On Sunday mornings it was my delight to help my little sisters dress and get ready to go abroad or to church and I was busy and happy till I watched them leave, then I would feel so lonesome and as I thought of the days passed when I was able to go, my heart would get so heavy I would have to cover my face and give way to bitter weeping. But weeping over my lamentable condition only weakened my nervous system, and rendered me less able to withstand my disease.

As I felt my nerves giving away, my thoughts scattered, a deep depression of mind, and other systems which indicate insanity, I was convinced that if I proceeded further in this course, I should soon lose my mind. My condition was deplorable; but it could be worse; I could be insane, a condition which seemed to me most awful, the contemplation of which made me shudder and feel that I could endure almost anything if only I could keep my right mind. Thus I reasoned and at length re-

solved to put forth every effort possible to throw off my troubles, and stop mourning over my fate which I could not possibly alter. I would try to look on the bright side of everything and instead of brooding over my calamities, I would try to think of something for which I ought to be thankful. I would grasp every opportunity I had to pass away my troubles. I tried to enforce a cheerful disposition, especially when my friends were about to encourage me, which I soon found to be an excellent tonic to my weak nerves.

I was so successful in my attempts at cheerfulness that some of my friends seemed to think that I was comparatively contented and happy in this miserable condition. They would frequently ask me if I did ever try to get up and then add. *"There is nothing like a resolution,"* which very much annoyed me, remembering as I did the awful things which I had suffered in my attempts to get up and go in this diseased condition. I prayed for strength and courage to face all trials, mount all difficulties, and overcome every obstacle, and prevent my falling again into despair.

When a child I had a vague idea of heaven and the joys of that world to come. I understood it was a happy place where all the good and righteous would be gathered when they left this world. I had a seriousness of mind, even when a child, and loved to hear others talk of that beautiful world beyond. I thought when I grew older and learned to read it would be delightful to read about Christ and the world above. I felt out of harmony with my surroundings here in this low ground of sorrow, sickness and dying and rejoiced in the thought of a perfect home where no death could ever come. I thought I would try to live right and be good and make certain of that happy state after death.

I always enjoyed hearing the good old songs, and when the family had gathered around the fireside at night, nothing pleased me better than to hear my father call for the hymn book, then my father and mother and older sisters, would join in singing beautiful hymns, which I enjoyed immensely. My mother had a beautiful voice and my father had a good bass voice, and it was delightful to hear them mingle their voices in such songs as: O happy day when saints shall meet; O when shall I see Jesus and reign with Him above; Come we that love the Lord, which were among their favorite songs. But now their voices are silent. My mother and father have long since left earth's cares and tribulations and gone to their reward. My brother and sisters, too, have left the old home and gone into homes of their own ; only one dear sister remaining to attend my wants and share my troubles, and comfort me in my afflictions. The memories of those songs and fireside conversation are the sweetest of my childhood days.

As I grew older and learned to read and study my bible, which was my greatest delight, I found that it was not so easily understood as I had anticipated. But I learned that the hopes of a home beyond the grave, the thoughts of which had filled my childish mind and brightened my youthful days, were for those only who had been regenerated and born again; and as I could not point to a time when I had such a radical change in my feeling, I was convinced that I was yet in my sins, and an alien from God, in darkness, and in the shadows of death. The future looked so dark to me, and at that time I was in very bad health and felt that I could not live long and would soon die and pass into the unknown. I would often ask myself the question-if I should die tonight, where would I be? I tried to pray but the spirit that giveth utterance to prayer was not manifest in me. For several years I mourned over my lost condition and went about my daily occupation with a heavy heart. and a soul longing for peace with God and a knowledge of His will. About a year after I was taken sick, one evening in Jan. 1899, my heart began to feel very heavy, and after the family had retired I tried to pray, but the darkness grew deeper and all was darkness around me, and I could see that I was in the shadows of death; out of Christ and without God in the world; and for a moment I felt that I was cut off forever, and could never be numbered with the redeemed, or come into the congregation of the righteous. Just then the light sprung up within my heart to lighten my way and manifested the scriptures to me and many passages of scriptures which I had learned by heart, but could not understand their meaning, were opened to me, so much so, I longed for day when I could read my bible, as I could understand it so much better than I ever could before. ***"For God who commandeth the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. 4-6.*** I thought of the Lord's parables of the kingdom of heaven: ***"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hid in a field, the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field."***

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman, seeking goodly pearls; who, when he had found one of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it." Matthew 13 :44, 45, 46. Even so I felt that I could give up all the world for this little hope. I spent the night in sweet meditation.

After I had been confined for several years, I longed to hear the sound of preaching again.

About this time Elder J. A. Ashburn (now deceased) called to see me, and in our conversation I

asked him to have preaching at my home as I wished to hear him preach once more. He left an appointment for Christmas eve night. I looked forward to the time, and it was delightful to hear preaching and singing again. His sermon was very interesting, and I well remember his text, *"It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing." John 6:63.*

When I had been sick about 12 years they bought me a wheel chair which enabled me to go out to preaching. I well remember the first time I went to Stony Creek, (a church organized since my confinement) a short distance from my home, and as I neared the church I heard them singing, which made me feel very happy. It was my first time to hear Elder F. P. Stone preach.

He preached so comforting and the singing sounded so good. It was delightful to be with my friends in the house of worship. I continued able to go to church about 4 or 5 years and looked forward to the meeting days, and always tried to go when the weather would permit it.

In Feb. 1911, my father died, and the, next day after he was buried my mother was taken sick, and lived about 3 weeks when she, too, was laid to rest beside my father. This was a terrible strain on my nerves, and seemed to me the darkest period of my life. My home was broken up and could never be the same again. But the Lord who has carried me over all my trouble gave me strength to endure and has preserved me unto this day.

On the 3rd Sunday in November, 1912, I related my experience to the church and was received into fellowship with them and on the 3rd Sunday in June following, I was baptized in Stony Creek on my chair by Elders G. O. Key and F. P. Stone, the pastor. Soon after this I was again confined to my bed and have remained helpless ever since. I have not walked a step in over 27 years, and cannot even sit up in bed.

Before closing, I will mention some scripture which has been a consolation to me in my afflictions, and to which often referred when in deep distress: *"For which cause we faint not, though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." 2 Cor. 4:16, 17. "My brethren count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire wanting nothing." James 1:2, 3, 4.*

"They that sow in tears shall reap in Joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." Psalms, 126:56.

For His anger endureth but a moment, in his favor is life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. Psalms 3:5.

I try to be reconciled to the will of the Lord, and put all my trust in Him, ***"and commit the keeping of my soul to Him, in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator," "knowing that all things work together for good to them that love God,"*** and feel to say with the patriarch of old ***"The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh; blessed be the name of the Lord."***

Your sister in hope of a better life,

Perdita Lowe,

THE PRODIGAL SON
Luke, XV.

In reply to the request of Sister Conner, found on page 440 of this issue of the MONITOR, we offer the following thoughts, First, it will be observed that the Savior is here addressing himself to the Pharisees and scribes, who were a very self-righteous people. They embellished the outside of the sepulcher, but the greatest of disorder reigned within. When they saw ***"all the publicans and sinners"*** coming to Jesus, though they sought with humble modesty an opportunity to learn of the precious doctrine he taught, they were disposed to criticize, saying, ***"This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them."*** This was an offense to them. They esteemed very highly their boasted dignity, and looked in great contempt upon those the Savior had now made his companions. It was too much for their wounded pride. Evidently they greatly mistook his mission into this world of suffering humanity, as do many to this day. He therefore spake three parables to them, which are recorded in this chapter, in which he draws his lessons from the analogies of human nature and circumstances current in daily life.

His mission was to save the lost. Not what is safe, but what is lost is the just occasion of his laboring in finding and joy upon recovering. This is clearly brought out in the three parables. ***"There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, more than ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."*** Then why should he not receive publicans and sinners, however wicked they may have been, when they come to him bringing fruits meet for repentance? And thus with strong emphasis he clearly vindicates his kind treatment, sympathy, and love for poor sinners ***"Even so it is not the will of our Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish;" Matt., xviii, 14.***

The inference is not to be drawn from what is said in the seventh verse concerning the "just," that there are any who were never lost and never needed repentance. The Savior is here reasoning with the

Pharisees and scribes upon common principles, as much as to say, You think you are all right, safe within the fold, why find fault with me for finding and saving the lost? How sharp his rebuke to them. Instead of giving them a word of commendation, he rebukes them for their selfish pride in the good opinion they had of themselves. It is a bad fault when one gets to thinking more highly of himself than he ought to think, but let him think soberly and he will feel very humble and little. He will esteem any of his brethren more worthy of attention than himself.

The prodigal son represents to us what the Savior saw in those publicans and sinners who so earnestly came to him for the living bread, feasting upon his words which were to them spirit and life; John, vi, 63. And for all this younger son had shamefully and prodigally wasted all his substance, bringing shame and poverty, ruin and desolation upon himself, until he fain would have nourished his famishing body *"with the husks that the swine did eat,"* yet he is not to be denied the blessings of a loving father's hand, a merciful father moved with tenderest sympathy for his sorrowing, repenting child. There is joy at his returning. The father is made happy. Such is the undying love of him who says to poor sinners, who are ready to perish, *"Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved,) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, [mercy], in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."* With endearing love to the Father the soul responds quickly, *"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. We were prodigals sure enough, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls."*

The elder son is taken to represent the Pharisees and scribes who were displeased when Jesus so readily received the poor souls of want-publicans and sinners. This parable he gives to them by way of reproof, to show the envy and wickedness of their hearts. How, like the Pharisee who boasts of himself and glories in his own obedience are these words of the elder son; *"Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandments."* Those who fear they are better than others are very apt to speak of it. They even at times boast before the Lord as if he were really brought under obligation to them. How vain and presumptious is the proud heart of

man until God breaks it in pieces. One has said, *"Those that think highly of themselves and their services, are apt to think hardly of their master, and meanly of his favors."*

In Conclusion we would say to any that have gone out from their Father's house and *"began to be in want,"* Do not think you can be satisfied on husks. You may have promised yourself satisfaction, but you will as certainly find disappointment as you are a child of God. In vain do you apply to the world for help, for they haven't that to give that will feed and nourish the child of God. You are away from your Father's house; cut off from its privileges you can not be contented and happy. Have you thought how much it would be to your interest to go home to your own kindred? In your Father's house there is abundant provision to supply all his children, and strangers do not want it. We are not debtors to the flesh, we are under no obligations to Babylon, but may say, *"I will arise and go to my Father."*

R. W. Thompson

WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH THE CHURCH AND WORLD?

Having been ordained as a minister of the gospel, and having done some writing and much reading, I am asked over and over again as to why there is so much disagreement in the church and the world.

Some people seem to believe that all Christian people should be in perfect agreement on all points of doctrine, and practice, and that unless it is so, there is something radically wrong with religion.

Since it is evident that there was lack of perfect understanding, in the days of Christ's ministry here in the world, and especially so in the Apostolic age, can we expect perfect harmony in this age?

My opinion is, and has been, that as long as men are men, self opinionated, selfish, self willed, there will be conflictions of opinion.

What is the remedy? John said, in chapter 3, verses 3, etc., answering Nicodemus, who said to Jesus, *"Rabbi, we know thou art a teacher sent from God, for no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him."*

Jesus answered and said unto him, "Verily, verily, I say upto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of Heaven of God." Nicodemus said, *"How can a man be born when he is old?"*

Jesus answered, *"Verily, verily. I say unto thee. except a man be born of water and of the spirit. he cannot enter the Kingdom of God."*

Jesus said, "That which is born of the, flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.

Does not this answer the question? Why are men in disagreement so generally?

By the natural birth of Christ,

and the world at large, born under the law, and justly condemned by the law, a remedy is the only escape from the curse of the law and Jesus alone, the sinless one made that perfect and acceptable remedy effectual. In Him alone is the righteousness of the family of God.

The New Birth, through Christ the Head, thus fulfilling the glorious covenant of redemption, the lawful captives are set free, and can sing free grace, first, last and through all time.

Jesus continued as the teacher sent from God, saying, ***"Marvel not that I said unto thee" "Ye must be born again."***

And this explains why unconverted men everywhere trust in the flesh, and fleshly engagements, and have no confidence in spiritual worship.

Jesus explains how this spiritual worship, and conduct is brought about.

Said He, ***"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence to cometh and whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit."***

The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto Him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Does not this answer the question? Men, in nature, act out the principle that is in him and the Spiritual judgeth all things. (Ist Cor. 2 :14-15).

The things of the Spirit are only understood by those who have been taught of the Lord. The worldly-minded man cannot understand, those who have been taught of the Lord. The worldly minded man cannot understand that there is a difference among men, some Spiritually minded, humble, meek, lowly in Spirit, beggars at a throne of grace, imploring the Mercy of God, upon their unworthy head, while there are many, in the broad way that leads to death, feeling that they are better than others, and yet we are taught that there is a straight and narrow way that leads to life, and immortality. And while it is said, ***"Few there be that find It, the Book of Revelations records John's vision which he says HE SAW FIRST AN HUNDRED. AND FORTY AND FOUR THOUSAND of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel He then saw them come from every land, nation, kindred, tongue and people, AN INNUMERABLE Host WITH THEIR ROBES MADE WHITE IN THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB."***

So, let God be true, and every man a liar. ***"We are saved by hope, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but we are taught that as long as we are in the world, we will be subject to temptation, and that even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to-wit, the REDEMPTION OF OUR BODIES, FOR WE ARE SAVED BY***

HOPE, but hope that is seen is not hope, but if for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. ***"LIKEWISE THE SPIRIT ALSO HELPETH our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the SPIRIT ITSELF MAKETH INTERCESSION FOR US WITH GROANINGS WHICH CANNOT BE UTTERED."***

"And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is in the mind of the SPIRIT, BECAUSE HE MAKETH INTERCESSION FOR THE SAINTS ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF GOD."

"What shall we say to these things IF GOD BE FOR US, WHO CAN BE AGAINST US?" "WHO SHALL SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through HIM THAT LOVED US, FOR I AM PERSUADED THAT, NEITHER DEATH, NOR LIFE, NOR ANGELS, NOR POWERS, NOR THINGS PRESENT, NOR THINGS TO COME, NOR HEIGHT, NOR DEPTH, NOR ANY OTHER CREATURE, SHALL SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF GOD, WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD. (Rom. 8th. Ch.)

It is enough.

O.J. Denny

"LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED"

"Let not your heart be troubled ; ye believe in God, believe also in me."

Jesus was soon to depart, and sought to comfort His disciples, and to prepare their minds against the time when He was to go home, and described to them the person, and grace of the Holy Ghost, which He promised to send, to comfort them. Read John 14, 1st to 7th vs.

As a dying father, surrounded by his family, standing on the threshhold of the eternal world, He spake these comforting words: ***"Let not your heart be troubled."*** He, in this quiet hour shortly before His crucifixion, teaches the eternal nature of the God-head and His oneness with the Father, as He is the way, the truth and the life of all the children of promise.

Jesus assures them of His unceasing love for them and knows that after His departure they are to be kept by the Father, and the Son through the visitation of the Holy Spirit, unto the last and final day. And in the second verse, ***"I go to prepare a place for you."*** He said to them, ***"It is expedient that I go, and, if I go, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also."***

"He did not promise that He would send for them, that they might long to go to that home that He was to prepare for them; but said, I, will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am ye may be also." They were troubled in spirit; but Jesus assures them that it is expedient and for their good, that He was leaving them in person; but not in spirit, for He is ever watchful over His children, never leaving them nor forsaking them; but as a good shepherd, keepeth watch over His flock; so Jesus is ever watchful over His people.

He said, *"Nevertheless, I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away; I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart I will send Him unto you. (John 16:7)*.

Though Jesus is absent in body, He is not in spirit, for He said, *"I will not leave you comfortless."* He also promised that We, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, will make our abode with you. He is the life, light, and joy of the whole family of God.

And said, *"As I live ye shall live also."*

O. J. Denny

Sent in by Keith Hiatt.

"A KING SHALL REIGN"

"A King shall reign in righteousness" Isaiah 32:1-2.

The prophet Isaiah was inspired of "God to say, *"A king shall reign in righteousness,"* over seven hundred years before the birth of our blessed Lord. Truly Isaiah said, *"reign in righteousness,"* not try to reign, but reign. Which means to have and to exercise power. And our blessed Lord said, *"As thou, (meaning God) has, given me power over all flesh, (that he, the Son) should give, (not try to give) eternal life to as many as thou bast, (past tense) given me."* This comforts me greatly, it does not depend on my righteousness, for I have none, except the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ my Lord. Jesus was made unto us, *"Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption." Romans, 8:31. "What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"* Dear children Christ Jesus still reigns, and shall forever reign.

Did he not stop Saul as he went to bind and put in prison, those that called upon the name of our blessed Lord ? Did he not cause Saul to say *"who art thou Lord ?"* Did Saul, (after this experience) ever persecute the church? No, but rather on every hand jeopardized his life for the church.

Little children, have you ever tried to find a hiding place from the wind and a covert from the storm? Oh the many times I have watched with a great dread the approach of the storm and how I feared the wind. I wondered if the house would stand up against the pressure. When Daddy appeared on the scene, I would get just as close to him as I could; I felt safe as long as I was close to him. But there came a time With me, that strong as he was, my Daddy could not hide me from the great storm that raged in my soul. This wind was so strong, that I felt myself being swept into eternal oblivion, yes separated from all the things that my soul desired and yearned for. And when I looked; there was no eye to pity, and no arm to save. I heard a voice Say. ***"And a man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the storm."*** I looked and lo it was Jesus. I cried out, Lord save or I perish.

If the above is your experience, you need not ask some what you may do in order to be born again, you are born already. Yes born of a incorruptable seed. Born of God. Redeemed by his blood. From here on you will need, each hour of the day, each day of the week, each week of the month, each month of the year, yes the rest of your life, a man behind whom you can hide from the winds of this ungodly world, and a *covert from the storms of adversity.* ***"One mighty to save." This man is*** Jesus. ***"For there is none other name given in heaven, or among men, whereby we must be saved."*** And we have his promise that he will never forsake us, nor leave us alone, but will go with us even to the end of the world.

O. J. Rives.

DIVINE REVELATION

Dear Brother Crawford:

This morning, after having been sick the last few days, but was able to attend church yesterday and enjoy a good service and feeling somewhat better in body, my mind is on Divine Revelation. I know this is a broad subject, but I want to mention a few instances where God revealed Himself to His people, even to Adam the first man that ever lived on earth. After he had eaten of the forbidden fruit, that he was commanded not to eat, he and his wife knew that they were naked and endeavored to cover their nakedness with the work of their own hands, and hid themselves as they thought from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden and the Lord called unto Adam, and said unto him, ***"Where art thou?"*** Not inquiring where Adam was but to reveal Himself to Adam that he (Adam) might know the Lord was still mindful of his existence on earth, and of his transgression of Divine law. For sin is the transgression of the law.

Therefore he sinned, he and his wife were driven out or rather sent forth from the garden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. I'm not so sure what he lost, it wasn't eternal life I'm sure, because he only possessed natural life, yet he lost communion in some sense or a state of happiness that he enjoyed while in the garden. So he and all his race thereafter where lost in the ruins of the fall, being alienated from God and became dead in trespasses and sins, strangers to God and foreigners, so they had no will, nor power to acquaint themselves with God since they, or we were all dead, but it gives us great joy to know that God reveals Himself to His own, His elect, His chosen people, that He chose out of Adam, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to the holy prophets and said, ***"I am the Lord Almighty,"*** and to His people in this age as He did show who profited in the Jews religion above many of His equals in His own nation. He was exceedingly zealous of the traditions of His Father.

But when it pleased God, he said, ***"Who separated Me from My Mother's womb, and called Me by His grace, to reveal His Son in Me. Not only in regeneration, but that I might preach Him among the heathen."*** So I love to think of the expression of Jesus when He said ***"I thank Thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in Thy sight, all things are delivered unto Me of My Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and He whomsoever the Son will reveal Him."***

Paul the apostle in his epistle to the churches in Golatia said, ***"I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."***

When Jesus asked His disciples, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" And they said, ***"Some say that Thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets."*** He said unto them, "But whom say ye that I am?" Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus answered and said unto him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. After having Peter say that he knew He was the Son of the living God by divine revelation He follows this statement by saying, ***"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."*** So I feel the church is built upon divine revelation. So all we know about God or His church is what is revealed to us.

Why has he hidden these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes? Well, for so it seemeth good in His sight.

After His resurrection His o w n people didn't know Him, while some of them as they walked toward a village talked of the things that had happened. Jesus drew near and went with them, but their eyes were covered so they should not know Him, He said unto them, ***"What manner of communication are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk and are sad."*** One of them said, ***"Art Thou only a stranger in Jerusalem and hast not known the things that have come to pass in these days, concerning Jesus of Nazareth which was a prophet mighty indeed. We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel."*** But by and by as they sat at meat, He took bread and blessed it and gave to them and their eyes were opened and they knew Him. Then they said one to another, "Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked with us by the way and while He opened to us the scriptures?"

When Jesus saw Mary weeping He said, ***"Why weepest thou?"*** She said, ***"Because they have taken away my ord and I know not where they have laid Him."*** Jesus was standing by and she knew not that it was Jesus. She supposed Him to be the gardener and even said, ***"Sir, if thou hast borne Him away, tell me where thou hast laid Him."*** But Jesus only had to speak, and said, "Mary." She then turned at this point and knew that it was Jesus speaking to her, and said unto Him, ***"Master."*** She knew Him because of divine revelation. And so it is written, ***"Eye hath not seen nor ear heard neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."*** But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit, yea, the deep things of God. So the Father reveals the Son. The Son reveals Himself, the Spirit reveals the Father and the Son. And so God reveals Himself to whomsoever He will. The secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever. So we must conclude it's all in His power to withhold or to reveal. What a sweet thought to feel in our own heart that the Lord has revealed Himself to us as our Saviour and Lord, yes, to us the fairest among ten thousand and altogether lovely. Yes revealed to us that our sins were forgiven, and gave us a sweet hope of heaven's pure world. So often we forget Him here in this troubled world and feel so far from God, wondering where our beloved has gone. Oh, how wonderful to find Him, when He finds us. He makes us realize from time to time that He is God and that we are His people. This has grown too long now. There is no end to this subject it seems.

May the God of revelation bless Zion everywhere.

In humble hope of a better world.

Elder Walter Evans.

TRUSTED IN THEMSELVES THAT THEY WERE RIGHTEOUS

Kind friends: when you and I consider the admonition of our Dear Lord in the many great lessons found in the grand old Bible, it is very easy for us to think: well this is intended for Mr. so and so. It is not meant for me, for I know I am not guilty *of* this or that, I remember well once when I had used the text I have in mind, to make an effort to introduce for a man to preach and I felt then as I do now, that to some extent we are all guilty of this great sin, But the preacher who went into the stand said *("I am not guilty of this myself,")* To my way of thinking that is a good sign one is truly guilty. The Lord here teaches a much need of praying always, of having as much as possible at all times, the desire of our poor hearts to know and to do the will of God, A desire that God might lead us, might direct us in the way that is pleasing unto him etc, Luke chapter 18 and verse 8 says: ***"And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that, they were righteous and despised others;"*** Friends: that looks awful ugly when we behold it in the other fellow, but after all that is not at all hard for God's children to do, One thing I do know and that is this: Satan is always real handy, and he will cause you to think anything possible that might tend to destroy your most precious possession, and mind you kind friends; one of the most precious possessions is the spirit of meekness; Just as soon as you and I can begin to behold good in us. Of course we will in a measure feel to be righteous. We will in a measure trust in ourselves that we are righteous. Is is not always easy for one to acknowledge this, but just the same whether we acknowledge it or not, we can rest assured God knows every thought; Not one is ever hid from Him; and another bad thing is, Dear Friend: just as sure as we trust in ourselves that we are righteous, we automatically despise others. Isn't that an awful condition for our hearts to be in? We are not aware of the condition we are actually in, and yet we are made to wonder at times why God will not harken unto our cries. Wonder why thus and so is wrong with us. Wonder why we are so far from God. On the other hand, just as sure as we find we are in the condition, the poor publican was in, we are blessed with an humble and a contrite spirit and feel unworthy to even call upon HIS GREAT and GOOD NAME. We can only plead for His mercy. Then we, instead of despising others, will behold them better

than ourselves. We will see, the good in them and the evil in ourselves. God will hear our humble cries and will revive our spirit, *"will revive the hearts of the contrite ones." Isa. 57 and 15.*

God loves and approves the sweet spirit of HUMBLENESS and MEEKNESS. Christ was humble and Meek. He said so Himself. He said, *"Come unto me all that labor and are heavy laden, for I AM MEEK and lowly of heart."* Oh; that you and I were MEEK and LOWLY IN HEART more often, I am persuaded that there would BE MORE SWEET PEACE and REST AMONGST OLD BAPTISTS. Just as long as we Trust in ourselves that we are righteous, we will despise others and we will NOT GO DOWN TO OUR HOUSE JUSTIFIED EITHER. But just as sure as we come, as did the poor publican, then we will get the same results he got. God has not changed in the least.

God knew how wicked and how sinful His little children would be all down through the ages of time, and for that reason He spake this parable for their learning, for their good, for their profit that they might look into the mirror and behold their sinful condition and might want to change from that ugly way and go down to their house justified, and have the sweet felt presence of the Lord, might desire that our poor spirits be REVIVED, that we might enter into the JOYS of the Lord. One will never do that so long as he trusts himself that he is righteous. For he will then despise others, even though they might not actually be aware of it. God is aware of it and God rewards His *"according as their works shall be."* REV. 22. No reward like the SWEET FELT PRESENCE OF THE LORD. We all know this is so. Oh; Lord Please give me a sweet spirit of humility. Enable me to behold my sinful ways, that I may have Thy sweet felt presence, is my prayer.

David P. Bridgman,
Tallassee, Ala.

HOPEWELL, N .J., March 14, 1904.

DEAR SISTER HELLINGS:- I received your kind and interesting letter of March 4th in due time, and feel like replying with a few words this morning. I feel glad for the blessing the Lord gave you through his word, of which you spoke, and hope that many such blessings are still in store for you. How precious are such summer seasons when they are given to the soul. They are like refreshing sunshine after a long dark time. *"My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning,"* and his coming is like the rising of the sun. You were thus favored, and were glad in the favor. I am glad you wrote me about it. I am glad always in the gladness of the children of God when I know of it. But you also speak of dark seasons, and of the

sense of your own vileness and weakness. This is a common experience, and it is a needful one to all of us. As we learn to know ourselves we come to know the fullness of the grace of God more and more that can save such sinners as we are.

I hoped you would be able to meet with us yesterday. We had a good meeting together. I used as a text the words found in 2 Chronicles xx. 26. I had a very pleasant exercise of mind while speaking. Because the people did not need to fight in the battle, as the Lord fought for them, therefore, they could only bless the Lord for the victory. It is truly a valley of blessing. It is only when we are humbled and occupy the lowly places that we ever do really bless God, and the one thought that came to me with comfort was this: that we never do need to fight for ourselves. No matter who or what the enemy may be, let us go forth only singing and praising God and the Lord will undertake for ns. If some one speaks unjustly of us let us still not contend against him, but go forward in the way in which we are commanded of God steadfastly, only remembering to sing to his praise, and we shall soon come to the cliff, where we see the enemy, all dead bodies on the plain. So Israel was bidden to go forward with the singers and prayers upon instruments in the forefront; not swords and shields and spears, but instruments of music and praise. I was glad I was enabled to speak.

I must close now. May God bless you and yours in all things. Remember me to Mr. Hellings and to all. We all join in kind regards to you. Bonnie is now steadily mending. Little Mary has been sick since last Wednesday, but is now better, though as yet in bed.

I remain as ever, your brother and pastor,

Elder F. A. Chick.

Chatsworth, Ga., Sept. 27, 1928.

Dear Brother Lefferts: If indeed I may be permitted under the Sprit of Jesus to claim such precious relationship. I would be pleased, the Lord giving you the spirit and desire to do so, to have you comment at some length upon the seventeenth chapter of John, especially the second verse. From my very limited conception, the sentiment contained in this second verse seems to be the very fundamental principle and capstone covering the salvation of God's people. Not one more nor one less. It seems to me it covers it, and should put an end to all doubts whatsoever as entertained by the world's religion. It seems these, whomsoever they may be, were given to the Son by the Father before the hills were formed; These are they that fell in the transgression of Adam and whom Christ, the Son of God, in his crucifixion and death redeemed from their lost and ruined state. These are they whom God in his mercy has invited to drink

from that fountain whose springs never run dry. These are those to whom the Scriptures were written as a guide to lead them in paths of righteousness. These are those referred to by the angel of God when Joseph was told that Mary should bear a SON, and that he shall save his people from their sins." There are many, many more who come under this; in fact, it seems to cover the entire scope of the plan of salvation.

Dear brother, please pardon me for having unnecessarily taken up your time, but for the time being I almost lost sight of myself, and of the object in view. I have a few special friends, and although they belong to the religions of the world, yet they seem to have an ear for the truth of the Scriptures as advocated by the Old School Baptists, therefore I am I very desirous that you comply through the columns of the SIGNS on said Scrip ture for the benefit of said friends, and for my special comfort and consolation. I take several Old Baptist periodicals, but in none of the others do I see and read the deep things of God and his truth that I do in the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. When I was married (in the year 1882) my dear departed companion, whose maiden name was Nannie B. Woodall, was then taking this dear paper, and it continued coming, to her, but under the name of Mrs. G. M. Edwards, until her death, March, 1923. I have continued taking, it since then, and if it is the Lord's will I hope to never be without it as long as he shall spare this poor undeserving and unprofitable sinner.

I beg you to remember me when at the throne of God's sweet grace.

In sorrow and tribulation,
GEORGE M. EDWARDS.

MEETINGS

The July 4th meeting in 2007 will be held, the Lord willing, with Head Of The River Church. Preaching to begin at 10:00 a.m.

Elder William Hale Terry

STAUNTON RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist meeting will convene according to previous arrangements on July 7th and 8th, 2007 at Weatherford Church which is our usual meeting place.

The church of Springfield will be the host. Weatherford Church is located on Music Street at the intersection of 760 and 765 highways in Pittsylvania County about 5 miles from Gretna, Va.

We invite our correspondents and believers of our faith.

Burnell B. Williams, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 2007

Allene Gallimore, NC	5.00
A.U. Hocutt, GA	5.00
Randolph Plybon, VA	5.00
James Pugh, AL	5.00
John Swilley, AR	25.00
Grace Manly, AL	5.00
Geneva Pettis, LA	75.00
Edward Ambrose, VA	5.00
Elder Barnabas Brammer, PA	10.00
Elder Theron James, LA	5.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER AGNES UTLEY HOCUTT

Sister Agnes Utley Hocutt, age 93, of Albany/Americus, Georgia, departed this life on Sunday evening, May 6, 2007 at The Magnolia Manor Nursing Center in Americus, Georgia. She was born on May, 21, 1913 in, and was a native of, Tuscaloosa County, Alabama.

She had resided in Albany/Americus, Georgia since late 1991. Her husband of 61 years, Brother Ralph A. Hocutt Sr., preceded her in death February 1997.

Sister Hocutt was a member of The Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church located near Berry, Alabama. She had attended The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church in Worth County, Georgia until her health failed in 1997.

Sister Hocutt is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, Ralph A. Hocutt Jr. and Beverly J. Hocutt; three grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; a sister and brother in-law, Sister Christine Utley Ramsey and William Ramsey of Huntsville, Alabama; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held on May 9, 2007 at The Heritage Chapel Funeral Home In Cottondale, Alabama, with Elder James T. Howard officiating. Internment was in The Alberta City Cemetery where she was laid to rest beside her husband.

Sister Agnes traveled extensively during her many years to attend the meetings and associations among The Old Baptist Churches in the Southern, Southeastern and Eastern parts of The United States. She loved to be with the Brothers, Sisters and Friends of the Church. She will be missed by all of those who knew her.

Submitted by The Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church

George W. Hyslip, Clerk

CATHERINE PAGE WYCHOCKE

Sister Catherine Page Wychocke passed from this life in Chicago, Illinois, on January 7, 2007, at the age of 83 after a long illness.

She was received into the Durham Primitive Baptist Church on December 16, 1951, and was baptized by Elder J. W. Gilliam. Later, she moved to Chicago, Illinois, where she lived for many years. Whenever she had the opportunity, she began looking for the Primitive Baptists in the area. As the scriptures tell us in the Song of Solomon *"Go forth by the footsteps of the flock"* and she found them.

Sister Catherine attended the church there for a number of years and later requested dismission from the Durham Church that she might join the church in Illinois; On October 19, 1987, the Durham Church gave her a letter of dismission showing that she was in good standing here. She joined the Chicago Church upon confession of faith. After a few years, that church disbanded after a long decline. Then she requested that she be allowed to rejoin the Durham Primitive Baptist Church. She wanted her name to be with the Primitive Baptist people even though she was unable to come here often, She was received by the Durham Church on confession of faith on May 20, 2000. It was good to have her home again.

Because of the frigid weather conditions in that area of the nation her family felt it would be better to hold her funeral service in a Chicago Funeral Chapel. This was done and their regular chaplain conducted the service. She was placed in the mausoleum beside her husband, Matthew Wychocke.

Sister Catherine was preceded in death by three husbands: Aaron Mason, Harvey Sanderson and Matthew Wychocke; she was well acquainted with sorrow, grief and loss. She is survived by her daughter, Judith Mason Lencioni; two grandchildren, Angelo and Lance Lencioni; and two sisters, Dorothy Brinkley of Fortville, Indiana, and Frances Brinkley of Gainesville, Georgia.

Her hope was anchored in the finished work of Christ. She felt that she could witness with *Job in Chapter 19, Verses 25-26: "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."*

Sister Catherine was a lovely member.

Catherine M. Humbarger, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

Romans 8:29.

DEEP in the everlasting mind
The great mysterious purpose lay,
Of choosing some from lost mankind,
Whose sins the Lamb should bear away.

Them, loved with an eternal love,
To grace and glory he ordained ;
Gave them a throne which cannot move,
And chose them both to ways and end.

In them he was resolved to make
The riches of his goodness known;
Them he accepts for Jesus' sake,
And views them righteous in his Son.

No goodness God forsaw in his,
But what his grace decreed to give;
No comeliness in them there is
Which they did not from him receive.

Faith and repentance he bestows
On such as he designs to save;
From him their souls' obedience flows,
And he shall all the glory have,

Gadsby's Col

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EDITORIAL

Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, For his seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. (1 John 4:9)

Elder R. H. Campbell

This scripture has caused more concerned inquiry among the children of God than most any other scripture in the bible. There is one thing that they all feel to know, and that is that they do commit sin, and here John is telling them that he that is born of God cannot commit sin, because his seed remaineth in him, and this makes them question very seriously the fact; are they indeed children of God? There is much evidence, in their daily experiences that causes them to wonder about this fact, without the above scripture, and, then to read where John makes such a statement, it adds fuel to the fire that they are indeed mistaken in their calling. This is a perfectly normal response, for, in the wisdom of this world, they cannot honestly and completely disregard that possibility, but, this must be considered with the wisdom that they have been given, in the Spirit. Remember, God said, by the word that came unto Isaiah, (Isa. 55:8-9) ***"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are my ways your ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."*** It is in the wisdom of God that this statement is made, and must be discerned in the same way, and in the mind of God, the man that is born of the Spirit cannot sin, because the Spirit of God dwells in him, and that is a place where sin cannot dwell.

The fact to consider, in reading this scripture, is that there are two men within the body of all men, who have been born of the Spirit: there is the old man who was born, in nature, from his mother's womb; and then, there are some men who are born again, as Jesus told Nicodemus. These are the only ones that

shall ever see the kingdom of God; and they are the ones to whom the above scripture is directed: in fact, these are the only ones to whom all scriptures are directed. The bible is printed and distributed throughout the whole world, but, that does not mean that it is to all men. To the man in nature, it is foolishness, and is just an accumulation of myths, which are just stories written, by man to man, without any foundation or basis in fact. I heard a commentator say, just the other day, when referring to the flood, that it was just a myth. The world looks upon the bible in much the same way that the Athenians considered the truth in that day, They had an altar labeled, "to the unknown god." They were correct in their labeling the idol that way, but not in the way that they were thinking. This is actually the opinion of the natural man, in the flesh, of the scriptures, but they are not directed to them in any manner because they have neither lot nor part in these matters.

All scriptures are directed to the inner man, the one who has been born again, and has been given the spirit of discernment, whereby he understands the scriptures, which were written by holy men of God as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. They are the only ones who know the voice of the shepherd of the flock, and will respond intelligently to the words that are said. Jesus made this very plain in, (John 10:1-5) ***"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth them by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth his own sheep forth, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of the stranger."*** Jesus is referring unto the fact that only those who hear his voice and follow him are his sheep, and the above scripture is addressed to the same ones; those who have been given ears to hear, hearts to understand and faith to believe what they hear, regardless of whether it sounds reasonable to the natural mind.

The natural man responded to the words of truth that was preached to them, on the day of Pentecost, by saying , ***"these men are full of new wine"*** but Peter rebuked them, (Acts 2:14-15) ***"But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell in Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken unto my words: For these men are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day."*** The natural man always

misinterprets the word of truth, because it is unreasonable unto him, since he has no basis of comparison, whereby he can understand it. It does not confirm to the laws of nature, the wisdom that he has learned in the flesh; from other men in nature.

Jesus told Nicodemus that except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus's response, was of the wisdom of the man in the flesh, "How can a man be born when he is old, can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born." This will always be the response of the man, in nature, when presented with this question, because it is not in the vernacular of the world. When one is born again, he enters into a new realm, one that he was totally unaware of previously, but, one in which he sees, hears, and understand things that he would never have believed possible before. These are the ones to whom the scriptures are always directed, and they will hear the word, and they will most assuredly believe it, although they cannot turn around and explain it to anyone else, unless they have been given a hearing ear, and an understanding heart.

(Eph 2:1-6) ***"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others. But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved): and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."*** Until man has been quickened, by the Holy Ghost, he has no basis on which to pass judgment on the scriptures; they are spiritually inspired , and he is natural, or as Paul stated it, in ignorance and unbelief. This was the situation with many, on the day of Pentecost, when the heard the disciples declaring the wonderful works of God, for it was in an unknown tongue unto them.

The, old man, is still walking according to the course of this world, and according to the prince of the power of the air, and will continue to do so throughout his entire lifetime here on earth, but, the new man, who indeed dwells in the same body, has been quickened and set apart, sanctified in Christ Jesus, if you

please, and made a new creature in Christ. The old man still is, as he was born into the world of nature, and is still under the law, because Christ did not redeem him from the penalty due him for his sins. He will continue to be liable for them as long as he lives, because, the wages of sin is death in the lake of fire and brimstone, and there is no escape from that just penalty. The new man is delivered from the law of sin and death, for righteousness, and enters into the new covenant with God, where grace and mercy reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Christ Jesus the Lord, as is stated, (Heb 10:9-10) ***"Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that he may establish the second. By the which will, we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."*** And this is the man to whom all scriptures, in the new testament are written, as it is stated in the first verse of the new testament, (Math 1:1) ***"The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham."*** And this applies to all that follows, in that they are the generation of Jesus Christ as beneficiaries of the new covenant of grace.

This is the man that does not commit sin, for (Gal 3:26) ***"For ye are all children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond or free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."*** If the children of God, are in Christ Jesus, surely, there is no sin there; it was left in the body of the old man, which is what the following scripture says to me, (Rom 8:3-4) ***"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."*** And that is where sin was consigned, and it has never infected the children of God, as is stated in (Rom 6:3-8) ***"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?"*** An again in (vs. 6) ***"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him."*** And neither doth it have dominion over those that are in him, for they were baptized into his death, which is where sin hath no dominion.

The sins of the old man are not imputed unto the new man, because his seed (Christ into whom he was baptized) remaineth in him, and there is no sin in Christ. This fact is

stated in, (Rom 4:6-8) ***"Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."*** This is true because, the apostle Paul said, speaking of Christ, (and what he accomplished in his death on the cross, (Eph 2:15) ***"Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of Commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace: and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby."*** In this statement, to me, the writer is saying that the Jew and the Gentiles were separated by the law, because the law was never applicable to the Gentiles, and required a sacrifice, to reconcile man unto God. In his death: on the cross Christ made the sacrifice required, and the law was satisfied: the sins under the law were atoned for by the shedding of blood, and in his taking away the law of ordinances, he hath broken down the middle wall of partition between them, and in so doing, he establishes the second covenant, which is a spiritual covenant and he hath reconciled both Jew and Gentile unto God in one body. (Eph 2:18) ***"For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto God."*** (vs 14) ***"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."*** The Jews were redeemed from their sins under the law, by the death of Christ making atonement for them, and the Gentiles were exempted from the law of sin and death, that would have condemned them, its being removed from them, and where there is no law, there is no sin.

All of the above conditions were met in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, and is the foundation upon which the precious scripture found in the apostle Paul's letter to the Ephesians, is based, (Eph 2:8) ***"For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourself, it is the gift of God,"*** and brethren, no higher price was ever paid for any gift than that, and no greater gift was ever given than that which was bestowed on unworthy sinners such as his children acknowledge themselves to be. They indeed worship him in Spirit and in truth, because each one knows that this blessing was not bestowed upon them for any inherent righteousness within themselves, and therefore it must be because God first loved them, and gave himself for them, and provided everything necessary for their salvation from this sinful life in this low ground of sin and sorrow. The scriptures declare, (1 Cor. 1:30) ***"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteous-***

ness, and sanctification and redemption: That according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." His children realize this, and they praise God in Spirit and in truth, for this precious gift that has been bestowed upon them.

David expressed the feelings that inspired the heart of each one, when these things were first made known unto them, and the joy and love that permeated their very being, for God, his word and the brethren and sisters of like precious faith. (Psa 40:2-5) ***"He brought me up also out of the horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he put a new song in my mouth, even praises unto our God; many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord. Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies."*** Does not this express your travels of mind, and the faith that you were given, as you reflect on your life before, and after your change was made known to you. It is all of God, and man is but the blessed recipient of this marvelous work of grace.

I would say unto all, although you may not understand fully all scripture, believe them as written, and pray that you be given a better understanding because they are talking to you, and all of the promises are sure and certain to those who rejoice in a finished salvation that cannot be changed, or voided, regardless of whether you understand every point of doctrine, or not. You can most assuredly rest on the promise made in, (Eph 1:3-6) ***"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Christ to himself, according to the pleasure of his will. To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."*** Now, I cannot imagine a more comforting and positive scripture, that reflects the perfect security, and peace of mind, of every heir of grace, than this one. Believe it, because God has inspired it's being written by the pen of the apostle Paul, and that makes it true, because it was given to bring peace and comfort to the heart of those who are blessed to know God. It is to these that Jesus was speaking in, (Math 11:28) ***"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give your rest,"*** He certainly was not speaking to the old man, in nature, because he never tires of his natural life, he is at home there, happy and at peace with all the things going on around him; is all that he has ever known, or will

ever know.

Now, to what conclusion do we come, after all of this rhetoric regarding the subject scripture, and the question of, whether or not the man that is born of God, commits sin. Well, we must say that he sinneth not, because that is clearly what the scripture states, so, why is there so much question in the minds of the children of God regarding this subject? The child of God, dwelling in this body of death, which is where sin dwells, cannot see the forest for the trees. He sees the constant sinning of the old man, and cannot distinguish where the line of separation lies. He cannot see the whole picture, of the salvation of the saints of God, from his position in this natural body of flesh. As we have stated before, the above scriptures show that there are two entities within the one body, and since Christ condemned sin in the flesh, we must acknowledge that, that is where the sin lies, and not in the new man that is born of God. When the scripture says that he doth not commit sin, because his seed remaineth in him, he is referring to the seed (Christ), or else, the verse means nothing, because the natural seed remaineth in all of God's creation as long as they live: and if he means the seed (Christ) remaineth in him, he must of necessity be referring to the new creature, because, that is where all righteousness dwells. The sin that is committed by the man is, as Paul said above, (Rom 7:16-17) ***"If I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in me."*** As I understand this, he is saying that the sin dwells in the natural body, but not in the new creature in Christ, for this would be saying that Christ, who died for the sins of the new creature was still being contaminated with the sin of the old man. This was taken care of when Paul said, to repeat the scripture quoted above, (Rom 8:3) ***"For what the law could not do because it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."***

With the above understanding of the scriptures, the saints can indeed enter into rest, realizing that all necessary work has been done to assure them that they will receive the inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for them. Otherwise, with all of the doubts and fears that they experience in the flesh, they could not possibly rest. This rest has been promised to them, by God, and they will receive it, (Heb 4:9-10) ***"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from*** his own works, as God did from his." It may be though many trials and temptations, but beloved, it will come, and through much searching and studying of the scriptures you will find evidence along

the way, and you will come to the realization, and hope, that these blessed truths do indeed apply unto you.

May God, in the riches of his grace and mercy enable the sheep to continue to persevere and follow along, in the footsteps of the flock, seeking and finding those handfuls of purpose that God leaves, strewn along their path, in this low ground of sin and sorrow. They are to encourage them to continue to follow the example of those that have gone before, and to continue to press toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God. The apostle Paul admonished the saints, in his epistle to the Hebrews, (Heb 12: 1-2) ***"Wherefore seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."*** If they can be thus richly blessed, it will be a joyful journey, in spite of the trials and tribulations that they face. They shall, in the final analysis, agree with the apostle Paul when he said that he gloried in tribulations. I believe that he meant when he was given, by faith, to see the forest, not the trees which are nearby, but the whole plan of salvation of the household of believers, in all ages of time, he rejoiced in the sweet anticipation and looked eagerly to that day.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE QUESTION HAS BEEN ASKED

What is done FOR, and IN, the sinner in Regeneration, or New Birth? This is an important question, and it has been argued Pro and Con. The Scriptures are a Perfect Thorough Furnisher, and contain all the answers pertaining to such questions. The Scriptures states that there is Certainly Something done FOR, and IN, a man that makes him different from the alien world. If not, how could you tell the child of God from the dead alien sinner? In the New Birth, the alien sinner is raised up out of a state of death in sin, to a state of life in Jesus Christ. It is the children of men, that are given Eternal, or Spiritual Life, which makes them Actually and Vitally the children of God. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. Sovereignly, and Independently, without the help, or hindrance of any man, or set of men. This work brings about a Change in the Heart and Soul of, the child. ***"Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given***

unto us." This causes the children of men to love God. *"He that loveth is Born of God."* The Scriptures describes the alien as having Eyes, but cannot See, has Ears, but cannot Hear, has a Heart, but cannot Understand Spiritual things. In the New Birth, the Holy Spirit brings about a change in the condition of the man. Eph. 2 :10, *"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."* It is the work of the Holy Spirit, that gives the child, Eyes to See, and Ears to Hear, and an Heart to Understand Spiritual things. That is why Paul said in 2nd. Corr. 5:17. *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature : old things are passed away; behold all things are become new."* The alien sinner has only a carnal nature, which is sinful and corrupt. The child of God, has the old sinful nature, and also a New Nature, which is Spiritual. Therefore they have a Cross, that is something contrary to their natural nature. Gal. 5:17, *"For the flesh (carnal nature) lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."* The child of God has Spiritual desires, and hungers and thirsts after righteousness, yet they often do things that causes them to mourn in Soul and Spirit. The alien sinner hates God, and resents the Gospel of Jesus Christ, while the child of God loves God, and by the Spirit, is able to rejoice in the Gospel of Christ. Many have said, Why has God reached down in condemnation and ruin, and saved poor dead alien sinners? The Scriptures gives us the answer, Eph. 2:4-5. *"But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved:)" "We were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."* It is the Divine work of God, that makes the children of men, the children of God. God provided every thing necessary for the salvation of the children of promise, whom He foreknew. Notwithstanding, death will consume our bodies, yet we will live on in Soul and Spirit. And in the Resurrection, God will send His Son, to gather up our bodies from death and the grave, and fashion them like unto His own Glorious Body, and carry us home to live with God forever and ever.

In love and hope,
Elder C.M. Mills

PSALM 136 : 23 & 26.

Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy endureth for ever:

O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy endureth for ever.

"And Whosoever Liveth and Believeth in Me Shall Never Die." St. John 11 Ch. 26th V.

Here is a very strange expression, especially to those who sincerely believe in the Divinity and Messiahship of the speaker, Jesus of Nazareth. Yet it is true. We all know that, so far as this earthly body of ours, the human frame, is concerned it is sure to become lifeless and must be laid away in the earth from which it was gathered. But is that death? So far as we can see with our natural eyes and our natural mind from this side of the grave, it is. But we, who have eternal life, have other means of seeing. The eyes of our faith go on into the great unseen and lay hold upon facts that cannot be reached by our five natural senses.

We may have an accident and lose a limb or all our limbs, which are a part of our flesh and blood body, but we are still alive because our mind and reason remains untouched. We are actively conscious. On the same principle to some extent, though all the body be separated from the spirit we will still be conscious. The London confession of faith, 31st chapter reads, ***"The bodies of men after death return to dust and see corruption; but their souls, which neither die nor sleep, having an immortal subsistance immediately return to God who gave them. The souls of the righteous, being made perfect in holiness, and received into Paradise, where they are with Christ, and behold the fact of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies; and the souls of the wicked are cast into Hell where they remain in torment and utter darkness, reserved to, the judgment of the great day."*** This is not by Divine inspiration, but is the general opinion of our people of what Divine inspiration, as given in the Bible, teaches. Eccl. 12:7 is clear. ***"Then shall the dust return to earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."***

He that liveth and believeth in our Lord Jesus Christ is alive with Eternal life. He is a new creature. God's work in joining the soul of that man to Eternal life is a perfect work and shall not be undone when the body fails and is laid in mother earth. If the life that is given to us in regeneration was taken away from us at earthly death of our bodies, that indeed would be death, but it is not so. What God doeth is forever and believers shall not die.

We step out of our dwelling house and go our way about our business or journey. Even so, we will depart from this house of clay when death comes to it and we enter into, or are taken into, a new environment in which, for a time, this body is not necessary, and there, in peace and love and with our Saviour, we wait the time appointed when

these laid aside bodies are to be raised up and fitted for us and for the new environment into which we are then to be taken. But in all of it we shall be, conscious. The Bible clearly shows this. In Rev. 6:9; John saw the souls of them that were slain for the word of God and they cried with a loud voice. So they were conscious and waiting the resurrection. So we have the assurance that at our time of departure we will be conscious and also will have company of our Saviour or his angels so that happiness of our new environment will begin immediately, Jesus said I will come and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also"; Luke 16:22 tells us that ***"Angels carried the poor beggar into Abraham's bosom at his death. Nothing of the believer goes back to earth when God takes him from earth but the poor broken body, and it only for awhile until the time when Jesus Christ, the Judge of all the earth and the Saviour of all true believers shall call forth all our bodies and reunite them with our spirit."***

Thus the believer is in a state of life because of his union with Christ's life within him and forever afterward will continue in that condition. What a wonderful blessing the very poorest believer now has, and will ever have. In that living condition we are kept by the power of God unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. May God give us grace and opportunity to show our appreciation of this wonderful condition while we are yet in this time world.

Yours in Love,
Leon H. Clevenger
Excelsior Springs, Mo. R-2

WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION

When God delivered the law to Moses, it was composed of TEN COMANDMENTS. Of course, there was the ordinances of worship; rules to govern the actions of the worshipers, that whatever they did in compliance with those ordinances, might be done decently, and above criticism, so as to glorify GOD, while performing the demands of the ordinance, and not be ashamed of their effort. The apostle Paul, so admonished the young ministers in his day. ***"Study to show thyself approved unto God", a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing, the word of truth."*** 2 Tim. 2:15. The word "approved unto God," was given in the Alexandrian version, ***"Approved in Christ."*** The apostle again referred to the same thought, in Romans 16:10. ***"Approved in Christ."*** However, when we stop to consider the fact that God and Christ is one and the same, either version is correct, and in perfect harmony.

The children of God worshiped under the law by commandment,

expounded to them by both the priest and Levite who read the law and repeated it to them. No, they never read the books of the law themselves, and it was kept in the Ark of the covenant. Only the priest was eligible to look therein. The high priest being human, and no different from any other man in the flesh, desired as much glory for themselves as they could obtain. And also as much of filthy lucre, as they could swindle their brethren out of. So when our Lord Jesus Christ came into the world, He found that there had been added to the LAW, 110 new commandments, making 120 in all. These new commandments, were added so that the income of the worshippers, might be taxed sufficiently, to increase the income of the priest accordingly. This was going on when Jesus came, and He called them "A DEN OF THIEVES." They weren't satisfied with the provision God had made for them in the Law given to Moses; they wanted to live high on the hog regardless of how the poor got along.

Our Lord came, and fulfilled the law for every one of His children, and took them out from under it, and made them free from the law of sin and death. He made them Kings and Priests unto God, A royal family. No more slaves to ordinance, but He kept every ordinance, in their room and stead.

And now, they are no more debtors, he paid every farthing that they owed, and satisfied His Father perfectly, for all their sin, both commission, and omission. It is true that they were sinners by commission, because they did wrong, willfully. It is also true they were sinners, because they failed to keep many of the commandments, sometimes intentionally, and other times because they were not able to do so. Many of the ordinances demanded more of them than they were able to meet. Being poor, and not having the wherewithal to justify themselves, they failed through inability. But the Law would not excuse them, so they were guilty, But, Jesus Christ, came and paid what they could not, and charged it to their credit. And He paid it in full. Yes they had nothing to their credit, for what they had done in OBEDIENCE, was overthrown, as to virtue, in their failure. ***"For to be guilty of one, you are guilty of the whole law. Why then did the apostle Paul admonish the brethren at Philippi, "to work out your own salvation ?"*** They did not have the law, Christ had lifted them above the law, and made them free. What then, were they to work out that which would save them? We could talk all around this subject for the space of ten years, and never get any closer to the truth, if we failed to take under consideration, that GOD, in his mercy knew the weakness of His children. They were without strength, even though He had imparted eternal life in their hearts. They were babes in Christ, and did not know what the will of the

Father was, concerning them. They had not long been begotten in the gospel and had been living according to the guidance of the word, preached by their pastor. He had been with them constantly, to guide them in every work, that was necessary to keeping a clean house for GOD. Exercising themselves in charity, to the relief of the suffering saints, both in a temporal and spiritual way, dividing their worldly goods, with the poor, and comforting, and strengthening those that mourn. Encouraging the weak, and carrying the young in their bosom. All these things were done, without thought of themselves, or without expectation of anything in return. But with one goal in view, and that to show forth the love of GOD that the HOLY GHOST had shed abundantly in their hearts. Having this love one to another, bound them, not only to one another, but to the cause of their master, (the church). The apostle knew that false teachers was abroad in the land, and; was ever looking for an opportunity to fleece the flock. And this knowledge, caused him much anxiety concerning them in his absence. Hence, the letter of admonition. ***"Wherefore my beloved, as ye have always; obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence work out your own salvation with fear and trembling:*** The same message was taken to the children of Israel by the prophet, Haggai 2:41 ***"Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel saith the*** LORD; and be strong, Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; saith the LORD, and work for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts." We notice that He said, "I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts". As I search the Bible for my own instruction, I have so far, failed to find in the records of GOD's word where He has ever commanded only of His spiritual born children to work out anything, without His help. Always promised to be with His servants, both ministery and laymen. He has never forgotten, that we are constrained by the flesh, to adhere the will of the flesh. And He knows that unless He affords us His strength, to fulfill His commandment, We will be just as unable to do so, as those poor and weak Israelites were, to keep the law and ordinances, before he came. So, as He promised to be with them, even so, He promised to be with His children in the gospel age, to strengthen them, with His own strength, (the Holy Ghost) sufficiently to enable them to perform every work, that He impresses their heart with. And in that instant, the apostle, (by the Holy Ghost) reaffirms the promise, by telling them "that it is GOD, that worketh in you, both to will, and to do of His own good pleasure." Phil. 2:13. When the apostle spoke of ***"GOD being in you"*** he was speaking of the Holy Ghost. We seem to discount the Holy Ghost, and His mission in the world. Jesus prayed for the Holy Ghost to come, or, for the

Father to send Him, that we might have His guidance, strength, and be comforted with the realization of it, and be encouraged thereby. So it was God, in the person of the Holy Ghost in them; working, both to will, and to do. Not of, or according to their good pleasure; which could have been nothing less than their own self preservation. But their work in the kingdom of GOD must be to the praise of His glory.

For this to be in effect, their work must be, to the denial of self, and a sacrifice made for others. This one cannot do, unless God, in the person, of the Holy Spirit, enables one to so do, by overcoming the spirit of the flesh, (binding the strong man) and giving strength to the babe in Christ. Then God will be pleased, and the work will testify of Christ, that He has arisen from the grave, and lives forever more. And lives in His children, "For, know ye not that your bodies are the tabernacle of the living GOD?" And further, ***"That without ME, you can do nothing."*** That is the reason He told the disciples, ***"and lo. I am with you"*** when He sent them to preach the gospel. That is the reason His ministers go with bowed heads in this age, not knowing whether their going is of the LORD or not. But the love for Him, and His children, and the burden of their welfare, which GOD has laid on their heart, constrains them to go and see. Yes, they go hoping that their impression is of Him, and not of their own desire. Hoping that He will afford them His strength, to "stand in the temple, and declare all the words of this life" not knowing whether or not it is the time of the LORD, yet LOVE urges them on. And Oh, if their breast is full, and sometimes hurting, they know that the babes in Christ, is hungering. Even so the brethren, when they are filled with a spiritual desire to be useful in the kingdom, they fear and tremble, lest it be of their own asperation, and not of GOD. But love urges them on, and a good pastor will admonish them in love, to work so as to show their love to one another, and thereby glorify their SAVIOUR. Oh, what a sweet comfort it is to me, when the servants of God, say to me, "Brother Tommie, the LORD is with you. Go trusting His sweet promise, that He will never forsake you. May we remember His sweet promises, the rest of the way.

Yours in humble hope,
T. R. Crawford

Job 37: 23-24.

Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict.

Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any that are wise of heart.

ABIDING IN LOVE

"I am the vine, ye are the branches He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without Me ye can do nothing:" John:15:8. "If ye keep My commandments ye shalt abide in My love," verse 10. They who abide in Him and His love bear the fruits of the spirit, The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, long suffering, goodness, faith, meekness; temperance," Galatians 5:22,23, This is My commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. If we would abide in His love and bear the fruits of the Spirit we must love one another.

God's children can never be separated from His everlasting love, (Romans 8:38,39) but this love does not always abide in them because they do not always abide in it. That is, love is not always ruling our lives. They who do not continue to love His truth and His people, but are led away by the flesh after the world will be barren and unfruitful.

Many disciples of Jesus became offended at His doctrine and followed Him no more. Without Him we can do nothing religiously that is pleasing to Him. If we would bear the fruits of the Spirit we must continue faithful to His cause and truth.

"If any man will come after Me let him deny himself take up his cross and follow Me." Matthew 16:24. If we would abide in His love we must be followers of Him by keeping His commandments, be baptized and then continue faithful in His service. The works of the flesh destroy spiritual peace and cause us to walk in darkness.

Elder J. Harvey Daily

The Experience of Stephen R. Burk

It seemed that In the spring of the year 1865, I first saw myself a sinner. I had had some thought previous to this in regard to my spiritual welfare, one particular day my trouble began in earnest. That night I could scarcely sleep. I thought I must die before morning. Eternity seemed to be just before me, and I just ready to plunge into hell, for I thought I had sinned away my day of grace. Such passages of Scripture as, ***"Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity,"*** would pass through my mind. I just rolled from side to side of the bed and longed for the dawn of day. I did not know what was the matter with me; so I thought I would get up and read in the Testament and see if I could not get relief in so doing. But to my sorrow I could find nothing but condemnation. It seemed that the book would open to such portions as were against me. There was nothing for me but all against me. When morning came I was so glad I was alive. I was a little more thoughtless

through the day, but I dreaded to see night come again, which brought the same trouble as the previous night. And so I got along for several days, until finally I thought I would do better and get relief in that; but, oh, how disappointed I would try to pray, and while on my knees I would have wicked thoughts; my mind was overwhelmed with grief. Then I would try to weep but alas! I could not weep. I would exclaim, *"Woe is me! I am of unclean lips."* It seemed that I was getting worse instead of better, as I thought. Oh, I did not see how God could spare me, living so badly as I had done. Many an evening I have stood and watched the sun sink in the horizon and wondered if I possibly would be permitted to ever see it rise again. In reading, in trying to pray, all condemned me. But one day I thought I had a new plan.

I would promise to do better and would seal the promise by driving down a stake, which I did, and dated the day of the month on it. But oh that night I found the promise broken, which made me feel worse than ever; so I just gave myself up as lost, and if the Lord sent my soul to hell, his righteous law approved it well. As I never had heard anyone relate an experience, I did not know what was the matter with me.

I thought surely no one ever had such thoughts as I, and I thought if people knew what wicked thoughts I had they would not permit me to live. I often looked at a man that seemed to me to be the best man living, and wished that I might be just as good as he seemed to be.

By this time I could get a crumb of comfort occasionally by reading the Book of books, and also get relief by asking the Lord to be merciful to me a sinner. Soon after this my father, my brother older than me, and myself went to the Baptist church for the purpose of helping to fix some Ditching-racks. When on the way every thing seemed to look so sad the trees and all things. When we arrived I looked across to where some had been baptized. I thought if I were only fit, oh, how I would love to go down into the water, as the dear Savior did, and be buried as he was. While at the church that day it seemed to me that the men who were helping were so good, whether professors or not, they all were so much better than I was. Soon after this a preacher by the name of Strickland came to Bethel church and had meeting two days and nights. The first night my brother and I went. While on our way we scarcely spoke a word. The cannons were firing, as peace had just been declared between the United and Confederate States. Yet I feared that I was not at peace with God, which was of greater importance to me than all things else. However, I was glad that peace was declared. But after we were in the house the preacher took his text. It seemed to me that he meant it for me, it suited me so well. I felt like the woman of Samaria, "*Come and see a man*

that told me all things that ever I did." The next day I thought I would love to go, but thought the folks would suspicion something if I went. But about meeting-time my brother fixed and started off on horseback to meeting. I looked after him, and this was the first thought I had, that he had been in trouble as I had been; and oh, how I wished I was with him, for I thought he was going to join the church that day, and there was hope for him and none for me. Oh, how bad I felt while he was at the meeting. I learned as soon as he came home that no one had joined.

The next day there was meeting at Village Creek church. We all went. The preacher preached at me all the time, I thought. After the sermon was over an invitation was given when my brother went forward. Oh, how bad I felt I thought if I was just only fit to go to the church. After they heard the experience they extended the hand of fellowship, when in spite of myself I went forward and extended my hand, and oh as I returned to my seat it seemed to me I would sink through the floor, and such thoughts came to me as: Now you have done a pretty act. You have shown how bad you are. Now there is no mercy for you. And oh, such a load as I had to carry down to the water where four were to be immersed. But as they were being immersed, I became very happy, and felt that if they would just give the invitation I would gladly go with them down into the water and be buried with Christ by baptism. But I see another meeting at Bethel Church, Which was in about three weeks, I would try to Improve the time and be better by that time. By this time I could find some comfort in the Scriptures, and in trying to pray, could find relief. But by the last week before the meeting had become so thoughtless of God's goodness and my promise. But on Friday before the meeting I learned that my sister Maria intended to join at that meeting, and oh, how I felt I was back where I was at first, instead of being better. Oh, what trouble of mind, I rather doubted if I would go now. I tried to pray, but was so guilty. That night I lay a long time thinking how I had wasted the time. Finally I fell asleep, and of all the dreams that ever I had this one was the most terrifying. I dreamed that I saw God, and that he was so angry with me for the way I had done. It seemed the lightning was flashing, ready to strike me down. I awoke to find myself all of a tremble, and oh, such a night the rest of that night was. I Finally gave up that I was doomed to everlasting punishment, which I justly deserved. The next day I was in deep distress of mind, and to hide my trouble I took the gun and went out as though I was going to hunt, but when out of sight I sat down on a log and meditated on my sad state, and whether I would do as I had promised or not, if I was spared as the meeting was that day and the next

(Sunday). I finally concluded that the Lord only knew, as I had made so many promises, just to be broken. Then I had some ease of mind, and that night, if I ever prayed I did then, that the Lord would have mercy on me; which I felt to be answered, as I had sweet rest that night, and the next morning I could read with the spirit and the understanding.

But when I first awakened In the morning I began to think of the promise I had made three weeks before. But, I had to admit that the Lord only knew whether I would make the promise good or not. I prayed that the Lord would enable me to take up the cross and follow the blessed Savior in baptism. When at the meeting-house the preacher (Eld. Sparks) took his text, which seemed to suit me and just preached at me all through. I now loved the brethren as I never had before. They looked so lovely, when preaching was over they gave the invitation, when two of my sisters went forward, and I could not stay away any longer. Oh, how my heart melted and I could not tell much of my trouble. We were to be baptized in the evening. Oh, how I feared that I was not just as I ought to be! but when baptized I was so happy. But, it did not last long, as on way home something told me I would bring reproach upon the cause; I was a hypocrite and had deceived the church and myself. Such doubts as these continued that night, until I really wished that I had stayed away, as I did not want to backslide. But the next morning was the happiest season I ever enjoyed. It seemed that all things were praising God. But this happy season did not last long.

Stephen R. Burk

"My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word." - Psalm cxix. 81.

How difficult, for the most part, it is, and we may add, how rare to be able to realise for ourselves, with any degree of abiding permanency, a sweet experimental sense of, and an assured interest in those spiritual blessings with which, so far as we are believers in the Son of God, we are blessed in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Glimpses, glances, transient views, sips and tastes, drops and crumbs sweet beyond expression whilst they last, but rarely given and soon gone, are, generallly speaking, all we seem to get after much hard labour, many cries, earnest entreaties, and vehement longings before the Lord, as he presents himself to our faith, seated on the throne of his grace. How many there are who are daily and sometimes almost hourly crying out, if not in the exact words, yet in the substance of them:

"O come, thou much-expected guest;

Lord Jesus, quickly come!"

And yet how long he seems to delay his coming! How continually are they looking upward till eyes and heart seem alike to fail, waiting for his appearing more than they that watch for the morning; how willing to make any sacrifice, to do anything, be anything, or bear anything, if he would but manifest himself to their souls. How often are they searching and examining their hearts, lips, and lives, to see if there be any evil way in them which makes him hide his lovely face, and not drop one word into their longing breasts, whereby they might hold sweet communion with him! How they desire to be blessed with real contrition of heart, and godly sorrow for their sins, and be melted and dissolved at his feet, under a sight and sense of his bleeding, dying love!

But whence spring all these longing looks waiting expectations? Do not all those earnest desires and vehement longings shew that those in whom they so continually are found are begotten again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead? It is divine life in their souls which is the spring and source of these inward breathings, lookings, and longings; and this divine life arises out of a new and spiritual birth, which is itself the fruit of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. It is not the still-born child that cries; it is the cry of the living child which so goes to the heart of the mother. Thus the cries of which we have spoken shew that there is life. But with life there is hope; for why should a man be ever crying after waiting for, and anxiously expecting a blessing which he has no hope ever to obtain? If, then, these had no living hope, would they cry? There are no cries in a dead hope. It is because the grace of hope in their breasts is, like every other grace of the Spirit, alive unto God, that it acts in union with faith and love, to bring them and keep them earnest, sincere, and unwearied before the throne, expecting and anticipating what God has promised to bestow on those who wait upon him.

J.C. Philpot

PSALM 119:9-11.

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.

With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

MEETINGS

PIGG RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Pigg River Primitive Baptist meeting will convene according to previous arrangements on Friday before the First Sunday in August 2007 and two days following, and Basham is the Host Church.

The meeting will be held on the grounds of Chestnut Church in Franklin County.

Those coming from North 220, turn left on 724 (Goose Dam Road) two and one half miles to church.

We welcome and invite all ministers of our faith and order; our brethren and friends to be with us.

Elder Thomas Solomon, Clerk

SMITH RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Smith River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Old Union Church in Floyd County, VA, On Friday before the first Sunday in September, Aug. 31, Sept 1, Sept 2.

Directions to Old Union Church, starting at the intersection of Rt. 8 and 221, Follow Rt 221 eleven and seven tenths miles to Indian Valley Road, (State Rd, 787), Turn right and travel five and eight-tenths miles to Indian Valley Post Office Road, (State Rd. 622), Turn left and travel seven tenths of a mile to Macks Mountain Road, (State Rd. 754), Turn right and travel two-tenths miles to Old Union Church.

We invite all of our faith and order to meet with us at this meeting.

Association Clerk,
Tony R. Horton

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The West Country Line Union meeting will convene on Sunday, July 29, 2007 hosted by Dan River Church.

We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 2007

Edna Graves, AL 5.00
Francis Jarvis, MD 5.00
Robert Thomas, AR 5.00
James Shelor, VA 5.00
Loy Rodgers, AR 5.00
Carrie Williams, TN 5.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER JANIE FANNING

Sister Janie Fanning, departed this life on Saturday, June 9, 2007 at the age of 92 years. She was born on December 4, 1914 near New Market in Madison County, Alabama to the late Brother Milton and Sister Laura Fanning. She was preceded in death by two sisters, Nara Fowler and Edith Phillips, and a brother, George Fanning. She is survived by one sister, Cleona Piper and several nieces and nephews.

Graveside services were held at the Taylor Cemetery near New Market Alabama, with her pastor Elder Richard Campbell, Elder James Howard, and William Phillips officiating. Scripture reading by Chad Easter.

Sister Fanning asked for a home with the Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church in June, 1983 and was baptised by our pastor, Elder Richard Campbell. She remained a member of the Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee which she attended faithfully until declining health forced her to remain at home.

Sister Janie traveled extensively over her many years to attend meetings and Associations among The Old Baptist Churches in the Southern, Southeastern and Eastern parts of the United States. In the early 1940's Sister Janie started a thirty year career with the United States Government at Redstone Arsenal, located near Huntsville, Alabama. After her retirement from government service on June 30th 1972, she continued to travel visiting in Europe, Israel, New Zealand, and Australia.

She dearly loved the Brothers, Sisters and Friends of the Church and as long as her health permitted, she often entertained them in her home in Huntsville. She will be missed by all of those who knew her.

Written at the request of The Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church in conference Sunday July 1, 2007. One copy will be sent to the family, one copy to The Signs of The Times for publication, and one copy for our church records.

George W. Hyslip, Clerk

ANNIE MARTIN REED

It is with much sadness and unworthiness, that I attempt to write a memorial for Sister Annie Reed. She was a special friend I have known and loved for many years.

Sister Annie was born on January 10, 1906, and left her earthly home March 13, 2007. Making her stay on earth 101 years.

Sister Annie was married to Arthur Reed who preceded her in death. She is survived by her son Raymond Odell Reed and his wife Jean. Two granddaughters, Mary and her husband Steven Smith and Robin Anne Reed. Two great grandsons Matthew Steven and Joshua Reed Smith, and many friends. Her beautiful funeral service was held on March 16, 2007, at Salem (Head of the River) church, Conducted by her pastor Elder Larry Hollandsworth and Elder Junior Conner. She was laid to rest in Restvale, Cemetery, to await the coming of our Lord in the resurrection.

Sister Annie united with Laurel Creek Primitive Baptist Church June 28, 1936, and was baptized August 22, 1936. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, a faithful member and enjoyed going to her church as well as others of like faith. I had the sweet privilege of taking her to meetings for several years. Sister Annie rejoiced in talking about the goodness and mercy of our Lord and Savior. If she wasn't able to go to church, she always wanted me to call her, so she could hear from the meeting.

The last few years of her life, she had to have help to be able to stay at home. She was blessed to have a loving family and good care givers. She never complained about her afflictions. Sister Annie had a strong faith and praised God for all the blessings He had given her. Through all her struggles and tribulations, she never relinquished her firm hold of grace.

Although we will miss her expression of love, when she greeted her brethren, we feel she looked forward to her departure with joy. God has called up one of his precious jewels, a mother in Israel, and our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by Mary Janney, as requested by her pastor, Elder Larry Hollandsworth.

SISTER DOROTHY SMITH

On September 19, 2006 Sister Dorothy Smith was gathered home to be with the Lord. Her body was laid to rest beside her first husband, William Hampton Smothers, in Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery on September 22, 2006 to await the resurrection morn and that summons from on high, ***"Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."*** She was born January 30, 1930 to Brother Vel and Sister Dora Alverson, who preceded her in death.

Her first husband, William Hampton Smothers, and her second husband, Jeter Clifton Smith, also preceded her in death. Among those left to mourn her passing are her son Gregg Smothers and wife Pam of Graham, N.C., her daughter, Leta S. Robles and husband Marcus of Warner Robins, Georgia, six grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, three sisters, Barbara Harrell of Raleigh, N.C. Nettie Woods of Reidsville, N.C., Jean Nelson of Madison, N.C., one brother Hunter Alverson of Ruffin, N.C. in addition to three stepchildren and numerous step grandchildren and step great-grandchildren.

Sister Dorothy suffered many afflictions and trials during her life, one of which was the tragic loss of her first husband on February 25, 1970 when he was only age fifty-one and before her children were grown. The two of them, though not members, frequently attended Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church with their children. On April 25, 1987 Sister Dorothy asked for a home with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, was received and baptized by her pastor, Elder Kenneth Key. On occasion when we traveled to church together, she would talk of the joy she found in her early years in the church when she would travel to her mother's home for the weekend and they would prepare lunch for our Sunday meeting. It was as she described it, "the only time of grace, the only joy in this life." During my last visit with her, she seemed "to rejoice with joy unspeakable" as she related what a condition she had been in and how the doctors had given her family no hope that she would ever talk or walk again. She described it as a miracle from God. It brought to mind the scripture found in 1 Peter 1: 7-8. ***"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love, in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."*** It was a great blessing to be there with her and to share in her joy. Words fail me in trying to relate the experience. It is best summed up in the words of the hymn writer:

> ***All hail the power of Jesus' name!***
> ***Let angels prostrate fall;***
> ***Bring forth the royal diadem***
> ***And crown him Lord of all.***

May the Lord bless her family and those of us, who loved her for Christ's sake, with grace to bow in humble submission to His most holy will and to render all praise, all honor, all glory to His great and holy name.

Humbly submitted by one who loved her dearly,

Mary Hawkins

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

Kindred in Christ, for his dear sake,
A hearty welcome here receive;
May we together now partake
The joys which only he can give.

To you and us by grace 'tis given
To know the Saviour's precious name;
And shortly we shall meet in heaven,
Our hope, our way, our end the same.

May he, by whose kind care we meet,
Send his good Spirit from above;
Make our communications sweet,
And cause our hearts to burn with love.

Forgotten be each worldly theme,
When Christians see each other thus:
We only wish to speak of him,
Who lived, and died, and reigns for us.

We'll talk of all he did and said,
And suffered for us here below;
The path he marked for us to tread,
And what he's doing for us now.

Thus, as the moments pass away,
We'll love, and wonder, and adore;
And hasten on the glorious day,
When we shall meet to part no more.

Newton

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EDITORIAL

"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food: the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." Genesis 2:8-9.

Elder J.B. Farmer

Considering my weakness, I have been fearful to endeavor to set forth the understanding I have been given about the meaning of the scriptures relating to the Garden of Eden. We have been taught that the things of the heavenly kingdom are too high, wide and deep for us to understand apart from revelation, and that every good gift and perfect gift comes down from above. By ourselves, we can do nothing. I have written about these things some time ago, and finally seem to be given liberty to submit them to the "Signs of the Times." It is my desire that anyone reading this should receive it only as far as it is in agreement with the doctrine of Christ found in the Holy Scriptures, and as far as it is in agreement with your experience of grace.

I am made to believe that the scriptures concerning the Garden of Eden, as most if not all of the other scriptures, have not only a surface meaning, which is readily understood naturally, but also have deep, hidden and mysterious meanings, which may only be known by God's little ones; and then only by revelation. If we are given any light, surely it is only in part that we know these things. The fullness of them is as high above us as are the heavens. May God be praised for His goodness to us in showing us the least of His mercies, even though we know that we are unworthy.

Briefly, according to the scriptures and in my language: God formed the first man Adam of the dust of the ground. God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and he became a living soul. He put Adam in the Garden of Eden and gave him to eat of all the trees of the

garden, but commanded that he not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for in the day that he should eat of it he should surely die. God took one of Adam's ribs and made a woman called Eve. Eve, being tempted of the serpent and deceived, took of the forbidden fruit and gave to Adam and he also did eat. After eating of the fruit, they perceived that they were naked, were ashamed and hid themselves. God made them aware of their sin, then made them coats of skins, and then drove them from the garden. There, on cursed ground amidst thorns and thistles, Adam was to till the soil and was to eat bread by the sweat of his face until he returned to the ground from which he was taken.

The readily understood meaning of these things by the natural mind, to me, is that the first man sinned and took all mankind down in sin and death with him. Because of their disobedience, Adam and Eve and all their posterity were banished from the paradise- like garden. They suffered the loss of happiness and contentment they had in the garden and had to remain the rest of their lives outside the garden in the world with all its troubles. I believe that these things are literally true, and so do almost all people who name the name of Jesus.

But there also seems to be a deeper spiritual meaning in these scriptures, which I am made to believe, is according to the experience of God's little ones. This experience can never be known or understood apart from being born of God and without the revelation of the truth. The little children of God, being born from above, are given to see and to know many things by the Holy Spirit that the world shall never see or know. They are made to know that they are sinners, who can only be saved by the grace of God. They are made to believe and to confess that salvation for time and eternity is altogether by the grace of God, and that this great salvation is separate from any works of the creature. Therefore, the children of God are misunderstood and hated by the whole world, even by some who claim to follow Jesus, but have not the Spirit. But by the Spirit, the children of grace are given to truly understand one another's condition and experience, and to understand one another's hope in Christ. And they are made to love one another for the truth's sake.

In order to know what Adam experienced as a condemned sinner and what kind of death he suffered, I am made to believe that one must be given to understand what sort of creature Adam was from the beginning of his creation. Many say he was made a perfect spiritual being. They say that since God is a Spirit, that Adam was made a perfect spiritual man in the image of God and after the likeness of God. Many go on from there and say that Adam, a perfect spiritual being, sinned, died a spiritual death, lost his fellowship with God, and was cast away from

His presence. I have not been able to follow this reasoning since it seems to be impossible for a perfect spiritual man to sin. And also it would appear to be impossible for a perfect spiritual man to die a spiritual death since the Spirit is eternal and cannot die. God made man in His image and after His likeness, according to the scriptures. So then, believing that man was formed of the dust of the ground, and not altogether like God, in what aspects was man made in the image of God and after His likeness?

To give an answer, one must be given eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart of understanding. May God help us to know the things needful. To have been made in the image of God and after the likeness of God, to me, was to be one who had been created much higher than the animals and who was given dominion over them; one that could reason; one that had a conscience; one that had some idea of right and wrong; one that had discernment of the concept of past, present and future; and one that had some conception of the Creator and of heaven and hell. When I consider what the inspired apostle Paul said about the man that God made, it seems plain in my mind that Adam was not a perfect spirit being like God as some have said. Paul said by the Spirit, *"The creature was made subject to vanity..."* It seems to me to be undeniable that the first man Adam was a created being, made like God in some respects, but not altogether like Him. Man was made much higher than the animals, but it is evident that he was made much lower than God because man was made subject to the vain things of this world. I am made to believe that Adam, at the very beginning of his creation, was made subject to the vanity of pain, sorrow, temptation, sin and death - otherwise he could never have experienced those things. I am made to believe that he was made a creature subject to vanity just like we were made creatures subject to vanity. I cannot help believing that we are Adam multiplied.

The inspired apostle Paul, who was the pattern for all who should believe after him, in order to identify himself and others of like precious faith with Adam in his weakness, said, *"I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died."* This takes my mind directly back to the Garden of Eden and what transpired there. Adam and Eve seemed to be alive and happy naturally before they partook of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (the law). Paul was alive before the law came to him. Before we had any knowledge of the law, we were alive and happy in our ignorance (if we share in Paul's experience). I am made to believe that this has been the experience of all of God's little ones from the beginning until now. In what ways then were Adam and Eve, and Paul, and we trust ourselves, alive before the law came? We were going about in

our own self-righteousness, thinking we were just as good as the next fellow, and maybe a little better. We were taking delight in the things of the world. We had no fear of God. We thought we were doing well, but we were actually walking according *to the desires of the flesh. Paul said, "We all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."* We were in our own little world of ignorant bliss.

How then were we brought into the knowledge of our true condition in the flesh, if not by the commandment of God? And how did the commandment come to Adam and Eve, and to Paul and to us? According to the scripture, God put His holy law in the mind and heart of His children. What was the effect of the law being put in the minds and hearts of Adam and Eve and Paul, and also in our minds and hearts? It worked in all of us the desire for that thing which God had forbidden. Paul said by inspiration, *"I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence* [desire for that which is forbidden]. *For without the law sin was dead."* No one ever had any knowledge of sin until the commandment came. The inspired apostle said, *"By the law is the knowledge of sin."* According to the scriptures, the law is the ministration of condemnation and the ministration of death. It condemns us and makes us know that we are sinners and that our actions are worthy of death. It kills us to all our self-righteousness and supposed goodness. Just as eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (partaking of the law) caused Adam and Eve to realize and be ashamed of their nakedness, the law was given for the very purpose of making the whole world guilty before God. There is none good, no, not one.

The beloved apostle said, *"When the commandment came, sin revived and I died."* So the death that Adam and Eve and Paul suffered, and the death that we also suffered, according to our experience, is the death to our ignorant bliss, to our self-righteousness, and to the pleasures of the perishing world. We are killed to our old way of life and to our old way of thinking, and are driven far away from it. The children of God are killed to the world and made alive to Christ. Paul said by the Holy Spirit, *"Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."* And, *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."*

After the law was used to condemn and kill Adam and Eve and Paul and us, God showed mercy in that He provided coats of skins to

cover our nakedness, to protect us, and to comfort us. The coats of skins appear to me to represent the righteousness of Christ. There must be a death of an animal in order to provide a skin for a coat. Christ, the sinless Lamb of God, died and imputed His righteousness to His little ones. His people are given His righteousness for a covering. The law not only condemns and kills, but it also has the beneficial effect of being the schoolmaster that brings us to Christ. I am made to believe that all of God's little ones were brought down into the pit of condemnation and death by the law. They were made to see that there is nothing good in their flesh. The law brought them to the feet of the merciful Jesus. Their only hope was to have cast themselves upon the mercy of God, as did the publican, and to have cried, *"God be merciful to me a sinner."* When all hope in the flesh has been extinguished, Christ is merciful to reveal Himself to us as the Savior, and causes us to hope in Him and to hope and trust that His righteousness has been given unto us for a covering. *"Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."* Our fear and dread of destruction are cast out and are replaced by a hope and trust in Christ.

After Adam and Eve and Paul were made to see themselves as sinners, and we were made to see ourselves as sinners, and we all were killed to our old way of life, and were made alive and given coats of skins, and were driven out from our formerly blissful home, where did we find ourselves? We were found in the wilderness of this world. This is the place that the Spirit drove the Lord Himself to be tempted of the devil. This is where the Lord found Jacob. This is the place where the Dragon persecuted woman flew to safety when she was given the two wings of a great eagle. This is where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time (the span of time until Christ shall come to receive His bride to Himself). This is where God has placed His people that they should show forth His praises. This is where their faith is given its fiery trial that it should come forth as gold. The wilderness is the place from whence they come up out of great tribulation. This is where God makes His great power known. It is where God glorifies Himself in His people. This is where Adam and Eve were placed when they were driven from the Garden of Eden. This is where Paul found himself, and we trust it is where we are now. This is where we groan, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies at the promised coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. All of God's children are pilgrims and strangers traveling through this wilderness by faith. This wilderness world is not their home – they seek a better place, where sin, sorrow, suffering and death cannot enter.

Many more wonderful things are connected with these scriptures, which I am made to believe are also

hidden to the world, but are revealed to His little ones. For brief examples: Adam is presented as a figure of Christ and so is Eve presented as a figure of the church. Eve originally had her being in Adam, as the church has her being in Christ. As Eve was flesh of Adam's flesh and bone of his bones, even so is the church spiritually flesh of Christ's flesh and bone of His bones. Paul said by the Spirit, ***"We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones....This is a great mystery: but I speak of Christ and the church."*** Adam loved Eve. After she was deceived and had sinned, he gave his life for her by partaking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, knowing fully that it would result in his death. In like manner, Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it by taking upon Himself the curse of the law. He willingly laid down His life and died to satisfy the wrath of God against all ungodliness for His bride, the church. ***"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us." And this, "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."*** And there are many other similar examples of scripture too numerous to mention here.

I believe that a little about the tree of life also should be included before closing. As recorded in the third chapter of Genesis, the Lord sent Adam forth from the Garden of Eden, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever. And it says He placed at the east of the Garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword, which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life. It appears that the tree of life is Christ, the Lord. I believe that the Cherubims indicate the very dwelling place of God. The flaming sword, to my understanding, is the word of the Lord, which prohibits anyone from coming to Him voluntarily. Jesus said, ***"No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."*** And Jesus also said, ***"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."*** So God has kept away the wicked, but has made a narrow way for only the elect to come to Jesus, the Tree of Life, in order that they should take and eat and live forever.

In my weak way, I have tried to set down briefly what the scriptures mean to me that relate to the Garden of Eden. I am made to believe that they have at least three meanings on three different levels. The first shows that the first man and woman sinned, the sentence of death was passed upon them, and they were sent forth from the Garden of Eden, which most everyone seems to understand. The second, to me, is a veiled and hidden description of the experience of grace of the child of God, which only those that are born of God and have had the experience

are enabled to understand. And the third, I am made to believe, is figurative of Christ and His bride, the church, whom He loved even before the world was. And it seems that only God's children are enabled to see and believe this. Although there are many, many more scriptures that bear on this subject, for brevity's sake I think I should bring this to a close.

With my whole heart, I believe the things set forth here are true, but God is the final and perfect Judge of all things. It is my hope and prayer and trust that God's little ones may be edified and comforted by the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. I trust this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

J. B. Farmer
7-28-2007

PROVERBS 21:1-3.

The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the Lord pondereth the hearts.

To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice.

CORRESPONDENCE

7-10-07

Dear Elder Terry,

Please enter my 2 years subscription to Signs of the Times. I have enclosed a check for $25 for that purpose. I have also enclosed a $50.00 donation for the editors to use as they see fit. I read The Signs for the first time only a few months ago and was so very impressed by the beautiful writing. I was afraid that it had ceased publication. I was so happy when Elder Haywood Wray told me that the publication was alive.

Let me say that the area in which you live is one of my favorite places. We had breakfast at Mabry Mill a few weeks back. I love to visit that area, and I consider it among the most beautiful locales. I hope this note finds you well. Perhaps I will have the pleasure of meeting you at some point.

Please mail my subscription to:

Ronald Patterson
1316 Witty Road
Summerfield, N.C. 27358

Sincerely,
Ronald E. Patterson

Dear Editors of the Signs of the Times,

Please renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times for another year. Enclosed is a check for more than the amount. Please use the rest to hopefully help in some way.

I look forward each month for this wonderful book, I enjoy it very much, and thank you so much for it.

Gladys Shelton
2210 Mabry Dr., Apt. #2
Clovis, N.M. 88101

July 9, 2007
4033 Calderwood Dr.
Shreveport, La. 71119

Dear Elder Terry:

I am renewing my subscription for one year and put the rest in the fund.

My husband and I are 92 years old and I don't know how long the Lord has for us on this Earth. He has been so good to us on this Earth. He has been so good to us – I have been on a walker for 5 years and thank the Lord I can walk some. I enjoy the writings in the Signs so much. May the Lord bless and keep the writers and Elders.

A sister in Hope,
Lessie Smith

Collinsville, Va.
July 7, 2007

Dear Elder Terry,

I am enclosing a check to renew my subscription to the Signs use the balance as you see fit.

I thoroughly enjoyed the July issue of the Signs.

Hope you are doing well now and hope to see you at church this summer.

Thank you,
Vivian Underwood
3266 Daniels Creek Rd.
Collinsville, Va 24078

7-14-07

Dear Brothers,

Thank you for your faithful and valuable ministry, for the sweet, wonderful, delicious, nutrious, and wholesome spiritual food.

Please renew our subscription.

Van Solek & Family

Dear Elder Terry:

Please find enclosed check for two year subscription to the Signs of the Times.

I enjoy the writings very much and don't want to be without it.

Sincerely,
Ruby Queen

Dear Elder Terry,

I am so sorry; we got so busy and overlooked that our Signs was due to be renewed. I am sending enough we hope and trust, is enough for two more years renewal subscription. We really enjoy reading the writings of these like faith believers.

Neal and I really enjoyed our visit at the Staunton River Association last weekend. The church house was full on Saturday and we were blessed to hear some wonderful preaching from the Elders. The Lord was surely in the midst.

Please use the remainder of the money for your expense in publishing this wonderful little magazine that feeds our hungry spirit. May our Lord forgive us for our many sins and be with us unto the end.

In Hope,
Neal & Sue Reed

THESSALONIANS 3:8-11.

For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God:

Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.

ARTICLES

The following is a sermon preached by Elder Raymond Goad at Little Creek Church near Delmar. Del. April 10. 1988.

Perhaps if there is one chapter in the Bible that identifies Old Baptist belief, it would be the eighth chapter of Romans. I am sure there are those who had rather this scripture not even be printed, but that's beside the point. I believe that all scriptures are profitable for the doctrine, and in order to understand these scriptures, we must understand in the spirit and in truth. As we read and all we ever see in these beautiful truths is the natural things of this life, it is evidence that we have not the spirit of God. Yet I believe that much of our time we are left to ourselves, that as we read we do not understand what we are reading, in the spirit. There are many times when I have opened the scriptures, my mind would wander away on earthly things. I trust that what few moments we stand before you that our minds may be removed from the vain and perishable things of this life, and be set on things that are eternal.

I will begin, the Lord willing with the sixteenth verse of the eighth chapter of Romans. ***"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children***

of God." Paul writes to the brethren here, to the church ; He is speaking something that is present with children of God. He says the spirit itself bears witness with our spirit and as we read these beautiful truths we beg for understanding and enlightening in what they mean. Certainly we could not rejoice in the writing that Paul has written, unless that our spirits are along the same lines as Paul's experience was. In order to rejoice in the truth as it is written we must know something about the spirit in which it was written. Paul says the spirit itself, that is the spirit of God, the new heart, the understanding that God gives his people, bears witness that we are the children of God.

I believe that God's people from time to time rejoice in the spirit. Not only when they are at church, not only when their hearts are turned to the hymns of Zion, but when it pleases God. Maybe, when about our work, when it seems everything else is removed, only the things that be of God. I have a few times took the wrong road as I drove along the highway when meditating upon the things that be of God. I trust that my spirit, if indeed I have one this morning witnesses with the spirit in which Paul records these beautiful truths. The truth bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.

I have told those who talk about things that they believe, if they could find some other teachings that I enjoy more in the things that you believe, then I would go that way. For more than twenty years, I trust by the Grace of God, that I haven't found anything that I love better than the teachings that the Primitive Baptists stand for, that is salvation by Grace. Then he says the children are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. If so be if we have suffered with him that we may also be glorified together. Sometimes it melts me as I read these beautiful truths. We have read the experience of Paul, we have read many of your experiences from time to time as you have been blessed to write them. We have rejoiced in hearing those who have come to the church tell their experience.

We think sometimes, perhaps that we suffer more than anyone else. We do in one sense of the word and Christ in the seventeenth chapter of John tells us why that we suffer. I am not talking about physically, but I am talking about spiritually. He tells us we are in the world but we are not of the world. That's why you are here today, that's why there is nothing out there in the world that is more important than to go to church. For me this is the most important thing in life, that we are blessed to meet together, to mingle our voices in hymns of praise, to talk about the goodness and mercies of God. Certainly it was the most important thing in Paul's life after he was converted. It wasn't important before, neither was it in your life, neither was it in mine. There was a

time in our lives when this was not important with us. I can remember going to church when it was boring to set even the short period of time while the minister preached. Yet I can remember even back then when I saw those dear saints set back there and shed tears of joy under the sound of the gospel. Paul said that I reckon the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. We know that we have aches and pains, sometimes we feel ours is greater than anyone else, but you know as we read these beautiful truths we find that God' s people suffer at the hand of the enemy, many of them were beheaded, many of them were put to death. Paul was beaten and was in prison and even left for dead. He said he counted it all joy that he was blessed to suffer for the name of Christ, for Christ sake. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time is not to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. Isn't this beautiful, ***"the glory that shall be revealed in us."*** The word us as it is used has reference to the church of God, every heir of promise. For the ernest expectations of the creature waits for the manifestation of the Son of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. He said they shall be delivered. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. I know the Bible says we know nothing as we ought. It says the eye has not seen, the ear has not heard, neither has entered into the heart of man what God has prepared for them that love him. And we yearn for those little Bethel spots along life' s journey. When our minds have been completely removed from earthly things, and yet they are not even to be compared with that which you shall receive. For we know that the whole creature groan and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourself, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth , why does he yet hope for it ? There are those who criticize us for this. I will confess to you that this is all I have in this life is a hope. Sometimes it seems so small, but I don't believe it is ever completely removed. I have a hope that the Lord shall keep me from doing the things I see taking place in the world, from the things I have done and I have a hope that someday beyond this life, beyond these sufferings and trials that are mine and yours that we shall see him for ourselves and not another. We are saved by hope, but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. I believe God's

children wait for it with patience. I believe that they are completely satisfied with the promises of God. God is not slack concerning his promises as some men count slacknes.If we hope for that we see not then do we with patience wait for it.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. And then he says these beautiful words. He that searches the heart. I think that so much of the time we are too anxious to judge. The Bible teaches us that we should not judge. It tells us in the book of Matthew to judge not that ye be not judged. He that searches the heart knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercessions for the saints according to the will of God. Satan would have you to believe it's according to your will, but it's according to the will of God. He taught his disciples to pray in this manner *"That Thy Will Be Done,"* not what we will. It's not always in our best interest for what we pray for, it's not that he doesn't hear our prayers, it's not that he doesn't answer them. Paul sought the Lord that he might remove the thorn in the flesh. He told him it's there lest you get exalted above measure, my Grace is sufficient for you. Then he says this , and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called accord ing to his purpose. Not according to your purpose, not according to something that we have done, or something that we give, but according to the purpose of God. We spend much time in life wondering about those things and then we are reminded of this scripture. We find comfort in our hearts to know that these things are not out of control. If they were, then God ceases to be God. He is the supreme being of this universe and it tells us in this scripture there is no power except the power of the things of God. Then they are not out of control, they are working for your good. I know we can't always see that but we find comfort. He says my peace I give unto you. I find peace when I think of this. I find peace knowing that He is in control. That these things are not going to over run anything unless it is according to the will of God. We are not always blessed to see that, but when we are we find peace. I am at peace with what God has promised. I have no doubt whatsoever that he is able to raise those stones up. I have no doubt whatsoever that he shall raise the dead. I am at complete peace at the promises of God. I am not at peace with myself, but I have complete peace and confidence in the promises and will of God. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: He did

not leave anything to chance. In the 11th Psalm it reads, ***"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."*** In His prayer He says, all the Father has given me I have lost none and shall raise them up in the last day. We had a dear brother come among us who had been in many different churches. And not long ago he joined the church, my home church and he told me this," "Brother Goad, what I like about your preaching is you all preach eternal security." He said that's what I want, eternal security. If we preach Jesus , we must preach eternal security for all the heirs of God. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called When we are blessed in the Spirit to see these things they are very clear, we see the calling of Paul, we see the calling of all the Patriarchs of old and we don' t find where they made any great to do's about their calling. They were about their business following after the things of Satan as you and I and would still be, had it not been for the love of God in our hearts, we would still be following after those things. Paul says it is no more I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me.

Moreover them he did predestinate, them he also called, we see the calling of many of the others. We see the calling of many of you. We have seen those who had said they would not be old Baptists, they would not come among them, would criticize them and make fun of them and later on made to love them. They were called out of nature's darkness and brought in to the marvelous light. There are those of you who have told me of a calling. You were predestinated, and called here in time. Them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified. Paul said what shall we then say to these things if God be for us, who can be against us There is no powers, nor principalities nor things present, nor things to come that shall separate us from the love of God, which is our Christ Jesus He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. All, has reference to all whose name is in the Book of Life. That is who this scripture is written to. That's who he is talking to. That's why He came to this low ground of sin and sorrow and took upon himself a body of flesh, that's what he did it for. He said for this cause was I born. What shall we then say to these things, if God be for us , who can be against us. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things. Something that you work for is not free.

Something you inherit is not something you work for. That's what the scriptures teach us, that we inherit these things. They are free. By Grace are you saved. Grace is a free and unmerited favor. You might go out and talk till you are blue in the face and you couldn't make one believe this. But God can, with even the Gaderene who lived among the tombs, when he cast the devils out and into a herd of swine and they ran

down into the sea. He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast.

Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? I have heard those who believe differently say, oh yes, that was of election. You cast one vote, Christ casts a vote and Satan casts one and you have to cast for the deciding vote. I wasn't around here before the foundation of the world. The Bible teaches this took place before the foundation of the world. How could I have had anything to say in it. This is hid from the wise and the prudent. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect. It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine , or nakedness, or peril, or sword ? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long! We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God; which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I am glad Paul was talking about us. I am glad he didn't just say me, he said us, shall not separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus.

My dear hearers if this is not eternal security, I don' t know what it is. If that is not the love of the things that you believe, the basis of the things that you love, the things that you hope for. I can tell you this morning I have no doubt whatsoever but that none of God' s children will be left out. I don' t believe God is slack concerning his promises as some men count slackness, but is long suffering toward us. He came, he suffered as no other man has ever suffered, bled and died and hung between Heaven and Earth and shed his precious blood on the tree of the cross for you and I trust for me, that someday beyond the trials of this life that we shall see him, be made like him and be satisfied. I don't know what kind of body it will be, one of the writers said, it does not yet appear what we shall be, but I am satisified with this promise, we shall be like him and and be satisfied. I believe with all my heart that he is able to perform that which he has promised to the children of God. I hope to live my days out among you people, I hope I never bring trouble among you and I apologize for my mistakes, but for the things I love I stand firm upon salvation by grace and grace alone.

Elder Raymond Goad

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE WIND

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit." (John 3:8)

These two things are produced by the Lord. Not the first created thing had the least part of these two productions being carried or developed to full fruition. Furthermore each and everyone from the first one in the pristine morning of time, have, if they have, come into the kingdom of heaven under just such trying cirumstances as are described here by our Saviour. That is not the construction that I put on what He said, but it is the experience that I hoped to have passed through at the time.

That early experience was something terrible to endure, and it is still that way. I know that what the Bible says does not mean anything to anyone unless they have (and are) experiencing the things described. Therefore, I do not appeal (I do not preach nor write to those that have a vain philosophy) to those that have not, nor do not experience the power set forth by the Saviour's description of the New Birth.

Although the learned Saul had never bowed the knee to anyone, nor to anybody, yet, I have never, in all of my reading, come across a man as helpless and ignorant as he had shown himself to be on the Damascus road. While we are at this particular place in the travel of one who has come under the experience and power of this wind, let me go a step further and say that anyone that leaves the spot where this wind has blown, that comes away knowing where it came from and what it is about, and what they are to do, one and all of them are mistaken about the Lord having demonstrated His power in their life.

Now I did not say that there wasn't a voice or a thunder or some other demonstration of great affairs. Many such occurrences happen which get a lot of attention, but when the dust has settled the Lord was not in any of them. Moreover, some of the time there is not a voice from outside the hearer Only his or her imagination is using them. In what I desire to call your attention to, each and everyone is brought into the presence of this devastating storm, and each one is brought into the scene when everything is yielding to this gigantic wind they feel the tremors that involuntarily pass through them; they bow down to great buildings that they have built to house their goods, and these are all laid waste about them; they feel the surge of the mighty power within and around them, Yes, they are aware that their house has been wrecked for all time to come. But

they fail to learn one thing that multiplied tens of thousands are learning every time that a breeze rises, to wit, they know where it comes from, and, as they arise, and pick up the fragments, they soon have still greater blueprints for better barns and storehouses in which to store their goods.

Not so with the true Israelite, the true child of God. He or she leaves that stromy ground in a lot worse state than when the wind arose. They know something happened to them that had never occurred before, but they spend the balance of their days in amazement and in wonder. What did happen to me? Where did it come from? Where did it go? Did it come from God or did it come from my depraved mind?

This was indeed the greatest wind to ever blow. It does not leave you with a lot of goods intact. It spoils all of that which you laid up. It does not take this great spoil away. You have to live with the spoiling goods (they get worse as time goes on), and you need not think you are going to find out where the wind came from, neither are you going to find out where it goes. There is not a shred of conditionalism that you can perform and get some relief. You will never get any while you live. For you see a Stronger Man than you has come on the scene and has from the start routed you. He spoils your goods and then binds you. People talk about that they are free to perform this and that and get blessings, or to leave off this and that and miss them. That is not true. When this wind arises and blows itself out it leaves everyone a poor helpless sinner not knowing anything as he or she ought. They do not know where the storm came from much less do they know whether it is of God or not.

Once again I would urge that where this wind (Spirit) has blown there is not one that knows whether it is God that has dealt with them or not. Instead of all of those born of the Spirit being godly, they do not any of them know whether they are godly or not. Thus, as I leave this phase of the subject, I would kindly ask, have you evercome this wind, or has it overcome you?

Now let us follow the wind and the storm. Let us see if we ever do get to where we can master this Spirit. In order for us to have power to save ourselves, we must have power over the Spirit. Do we have this ? Have we the ability to retain the Spirit ? If so , we must also have the will to do so . Have we got that power? The question is: Are we able to stay in the Spirit or to retain that Spirit ? If there Is a passage of Scripture that declares that wonderful fact, certainly, I desire to find it. I find to the contrary. There cannot be any mistake about two things. Even though there is right much in writing and more still of loud talking that any child of God can walk in the Spirit at will, yet the wise man declared that no man could retain the Spirit anymore than he could retain

life in the day of death. It is passing strange that those professing to be saved by the grace of God, yet boldly and blindly declared that if we just would do it that we can walk in the Spirit at all times. Or have I misunderstood you - do you mean to suggest that you can save yourself whether in or out of the Spirit?

All of the great blessings in nature are also spiritual gifts. Ever so many times, in divers manners the written word is teeming with references about the wind in the travels and experiences of those who are of the members of the kingdom of heaven. As far as the references to the wind it always finds the poor sinner at its mercy. At this period in our dealing with the subject, let us remember that God is the direct and immediate cause of there being any natural wind . Of course, if you have some kind of a book that gives a source of wind in a nature other than our wise and gracious Creator, you get all out of it that you can, but for those who learned in the outset of their experience that it blows where it listeth, and that is in keeping with what our heavenly Father does, we that hope in Him will continue to believe that He holds it in His fists, and thus that every cooling breeze from the south, as well as every frigid blast out of icy lands, together with every tornadic wind that ever hit Kansas came as a result of Him opening His fists. If those that can master the winds will be so kind as to tell us where they find that fact in the Bible, we will appreciate it so much. But I think that they have an insurmountable problem to begin with for we are all reminded that the wind blows where it listeth , which is to say that it blows where it pleases and in relation to it blowing where it pleases, we are likewise reminded that God holds it in His fists, and that not only does that wind blow where God pleases for it to blow, both the wind of the Spirit and that in nature, but likewise that bound the waters in a garment that He has established all the ends of the earth, therefore, not only is every item of nature bounded, but that each time any of these natural gifts are spiritualized that in each case the Spirit is settled, fixed, arranged so definitely that happen so or maybe so or conditionality just cannot be found in the Bible concerning them by the children of God.

The people of God went down to sea to do business in great waters and on good ships. The wind arose, a storm was sent. The wind became quite rough. They could not master their vessels. They were tossed to and fro. About the time that they thought the storm was abating, lo and behold, the wind tossed them fro. Every last one of them lost their wits . A man and a woman that has lost their wits is not able to rescue themselves , to save themselves. It is useless for you to write me that you are able to maintain your wits at all times. If you have ever been to sea, you have, and you didn't know

what to do, and like these that I am describing, you would have been lost had not He that sent the storm caused it to abate. Salvation is of the Lord.

Jonah determined not to go to Nineveh. God determined that he go. He used what he had to keep from going, but he did not have the power to keep from going when the storm broke in its fury on him. At that time he said, even declared, that salvation was of the Lord. Both the wind of the Spirit, and the natural wind were effective in making Jonah renounce all subterfuges and all dodgeings of the flesh and to say without reservation, that salvation comes from the Lord.

In the 148th Psalm we have a long list of things that fulfil the word of the Lord. If the Lord spares my unprofitable life, I may at a future date touch upon all of these things, but right now I am delighted to call your attention to stormy winds fulfilling His word, and His word in every way that it is used in the Bible is used for the mutual benefit of His children these stormy winds are kept harnessed in the strong hands of the Lord and will never blow in a way to destroy their hope, their heritage, their home beyond this travail.

If I am not mistaken, I have seen and felt the tossing of the wind of the Spirit. I have felt, as I hope, the bending down of every plant that I have planted. I have known that a power greater than I was laying waste to what I had thought to have done. I did not know then, as I would have liked to have known where the wind was from. I have sought time after time that He in whom I sometimes am given a faint hope that it was He at the helm, but that this been nearly sixty years ago, and my testimony today is the same that it was that day of yore. I do not know as I would like to know that it was the Spirit of the Lord. If I got brave and said that I did know I would then be subjected to the same rebuke that is due all these that have withstood the Spirit and the wind in salvation.

But I write in hope. I do hope that I have been to sea, and that the storm has been furious, and that I, together with all of those whose hope of salvation now and hereafter is in the hands of the Mariner that rests in His own love (Zeph. 3:17), but is ever kind and merciful to the cry of His sea and wind tossed trophies of His covenant, and that HE rebukes the wind and the waves and out of His fulness gives them to rest also in His redeeming love.

Elder W.D. Griffin

PSALM 84:1-2.

How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!

My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

PREACH IN ALL THE WORLD

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature;" Mark, xvi. 15.

Elder R. W. Thompson; Dear Brother in Christ: The Monitor of July the first is before me, and I notice that Brother G. W. Chancy, of City Point, Fla., requests any brother that may think the above scripture binding upon preachers today, to write on it. I can assure dear Brother Chancy that I do not aim to animadvert his position. I only wish and aim to humbly present such views as I may have on the text. Evidently the dear Lord enabled the twelve apostles to do some things that he does not see proper to have his dear tried preachers to do in our day.

Because God worked special miracles by the hands of the apostles does not militate against his servants going and preaching the *"gospel to every creature."*

Before the middle wall of partition was broken down the gospel was confined as well as the preachers to *"The lost sheep of the house of Israel,"* but after the middle wall of partition was broken down by our precious Redeemer, the imperative command of Jesus Christ was and is, *"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."* The preaching of the gospel of the grace of God is a lifetime work to all of his servants that he has called and separated unto the gospel of the Son of God. Some desire to "go into all the world," while others desire to serve churches. It would not work well for all to go into all the world, for the churches would be left pastorless.

Because Paul says the *"gospel was preached to every creature,"* certainly does not mean that it should not be preached with the *"Holy Ghost sent down from heaven"* to every creature in our day. If there is a text of Scripture similar to the one at the head of this article, that is binding on the preachers in our day, how is it that the above text is not also binding? I feel sure that it is the duty of some preachers to spend their entire time in preaching the gospel to every creature, and to fail to encourage them is to impede the prosperity and peace of our beloved Zion. The preacher is to *"Go ye,"* because God has said so. He is to *"Go ye into all the world"* for the same reason. Not only so, but he is to preach the gospel to every creature, for the very good reason that God has commanded it. If my mind serves me right, I read in the Old Testament something like this: *"One sea and twelve oxen under it;"* three oxen looking towards the north, three looking towards the west, three looking towards the south, and three looking towards the east; and I believe three times four are twelve. The *"one sea"* represents the *"Burden of the word of the Lord,"* or the gospel of Jesus Christ. The twelve oxen represent the twelve

apostles, and as the twelve apostles were commanded to *"go,"* I presume they went in the direction they were looking. If so, they went in every direction, and as preaching was their calling, they went into all the world and preached the gospel to every creature. If the apostles went and did not go in the direction they were looking they went backwards.

Again I read in the last chapter of Ezekiel that there was a certain city that had twelve gates, three in the north, three in the east, three in the south, and three in the west; and I also learn that there was a certain man to go in and out at his respective gate, and I think that as he went in and out he found pasture. It was not the duty of Benjamin to go in and out at Dan's gate, nor Dan's duty to go in and out at Benjamin's gate. If a brother is satisfied to stay around home and serve the churches, that is his gate; on the other hand, if a brother desires to *"go into all the world,"* or *"into regions beyond,"* that is his gate. Let each preacher abide in his calling and thus fulfill his vocation.

In conclusion I will say, that I think the above text is binding only upon those whom God has impressed to devote their entire time to the *"work of the ministry."* I hope I have written in love, and that Brother Chancy will not think me unkind for thus writing. May God bless us, is my sincere desire.

J.S. Newman

"Love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. -- 1 John iv. 7, 8.

If ever you have loved Jesus with a pure affection; if ever you have felt him near, dear, and precious to your soul, that love can never be lost out of your heart. It may lie dormant; it does lie dormant. It may not be sweetly felt in exercise; but there it is. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha" (1 Cor. xvi. 22). You would be under this curse if the love of the Lord Jesus Christ were to die out of your heart. But this love is often sleeping. When the mother sometimes watches over the cradle and looks upon her sleeping babe with unutterable affection, the infant knows not that the mother is watching its slumbers; but when it awakes, it is able to feel and return its mother's caresses. It is so with the soul sometimes when love in the heart is like a babe slumbering in the cradle. But as the babe opens its eyes, and sees the mother smiling upon it, it returns the smiles, and stretches forth its arms to embrace the bending cheek; so when the eyes of the soul are opened to see the smiling face of Jesus stooping to imprint a kiss of love, or drop some sweet word into the heart, and there is a flowing forth toward him of love and affection -- this is the power of love.

J. C. Philpot

MEETINGS

EASTERN KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The twenty-fifth session of the Eastern Kehukee Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Hancocks Church located near Ayden, NC. The meeting will be held on Saturday October 6 and Sunday October 7, 2007. Services will begin each day at 10:30 a.m.

From Raleigh take US 64 East. Then take the US 264 East exit to Greenville. When you get to Greenville, take Hwy 11 South to Ayden. Turn left on Hwy 102 East. Go through Ayden and about two miles turn on the first paved road to the left. This will be Ayden Golf Club Road. Go about 1 1/2 miles and the church will be on the left.

We invite the ministers and lovers of the truth to meet with us.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton river Union meeting will convene the Lord willing the 5th Sunday in Sept. at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church. Song service begins at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30 a.m.

An invitation is extended to all our ministers, brethren and friends.

Peggy Wells, Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 22 & 23, 2007.

Union Church, located about 5 miles Southeast of Marion, Louisiana, will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
(318) 778-4217

SULPHUR FORK ASSOCIATION

The One Hundred Sixty-Second session of the Sulphur Fork Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Prospect Church, on Saturday before the first Sunday in October, 2007.

Prospect Church is located on the North side of Highway 67, about three miles East of Sims, Texas. (Look for sign.)

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Miles Bird
Association Clerk
318 / 687-6775

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held the Lord willing, at Greensboro Church on the 5th Sunday in September.

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Wayne Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 2007

Gladys Shelton, MN	20.00
Pamela Screen, TN	10.00
Cleo Underwood, VA	9.00
Vivian Underwood, VA	5.00
Elizabeth Webb, IL	10.00
Lessie Smith, LA	35.00
Ronald Patterson, NC	50.00
Roscoe Reed, OH	10.00
Donald Ferguson, BC	25.00
Van Solek, NJ	5.00
Joe & Connie Wall, TX	25.00
Norvell Godwin, LA	10.00

MATTHEW 18:20.

For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

OBITUARIES

LULA IZOLA HOLLANDSWORTH SLAUGHTER

Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church bows in humble submission to our Lord in the calling of our dear Sister Izola H. Slaughter from this life to her Eternal Home on May 24, 2007 at the age of 84 years.

Sister Izola joined the Indian Creek Primitive Church on April 24, 1977 and was a member for 30 years. She was baptized, by her Pastor, J.S. Sechriest, on May 15, 1977. Her funeral was held at her home church on Sunday, May 27, 2007 at 3:00 p.m. by her Pastor Elder Kenneth D. Hopkins and Elder Tommy Pegram.

Survivors of Sister Izola H. Slaughter are her husband of 66 years, Herman L. Slaughter, one daughter, Rachel S. Marshall, one son and daughter-in-law, Donnie and Yvonne Slaughter. Also surviving are three grandchildren, Tammy Costigan and husband Scott, Sonya Gautier and husband Tony, Joshua Slaughter and two great-grandchildren, Trista Costigan, Seth Gautier and one sister and several nieces and nephews.

She was a dear Sister who believed in the Doctrine of Salvation By Grace and Grace Alone. She will be missed, by her family and her family in the church. She was laid to rest in the Captain George Cemetery. We feel that our loss is Heaven's gain.

Arrangements were made by Maberry Funeral Home, Floyd, Va.

Done in Conference,
Moderator,
Elder Kenneth D. Hopkins
Committee,
Brother J. B. Mitchell, Clerk
Sister Jean Mitchell

ALSEBERRY EVINS SMITH

Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church bows in humble submission to our Lord in the calling of our dear Brother, Alseberry E. Smith from this life to his Eternal Home on May 5, 2007 at the age of 90 years.

Funeral arrangements were made and held at Maberry Funeral Home in Floyd County, Va. His funeral was held at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday May 8, 2007, by his Pastor, Elder Kenneth D. Hopkins and Elder Tommy Pegram.

Bro. Alseberry was laid to rest beside his loving wife, Clessie H. Smith in the Captain George Cemetery in Floyd County, Va. Survivors of Bro. Smith are his loving son and daughter-in-law, Michael and Sue Smith and his loving daughter and son-in-law, Phyllis S. and Harold Hollandsworth. Also surviving are two grandchildren, Brian Smith and Diane Smith and husband Tommy Smith and two great-grandchildren, Annabelle and Tommy "Bubby" Smith and five sisters and two brothers and one brother-in-law.

Brother Alseberry was blessed to ask for a home with the Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church on May 15, 1965, and was baptized by his Pastor, J.S. Sechriest and Brother G. E. Duncan. He was a true and faithful member to his church for 42 years. He and his companion were blessed to travel far and near to sister associations of like faith and order, but come his meeting time at his home church he tried always to be there.

We feel this scripture fits our dear Brother found in 2nd Timothy Ch. 4 Verses 7 & 8; I have kept the faith, hence forth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness with the Lord. We have lost a dear Brother, but feel that our loss is Heaven's gain.

Done in Conference, at the Church,
Moderator,
Elder Kenneth D. Hopkins
Committee,
Brother J. B. Mitchell, Clerk
Sister Jean Mitchell

REVELATION 7:16-17.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

My God, the sping of all my joys,
The life of my delight,
The glory of my brightest days,
The comfort of my nights!

In darkest shades if he appear,
My dawning is begun;
He is my soul's sweet morning star,
And he my rising sun.

The opening heavens around me shine
With beams of sacred bliss,
While Jesus shows his heart is mine,
And whispers I am His!

My soul would leave this heavy clay
At that transporting word,
Run up with joy and shining way
To embrace my dearest Lord.

Fearless of hell and ghastly death
I'd break through every foe;
The wings of love, and arms of faith,
Should bear me conqueror through.

Watts.

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EDITORIAL

"Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after." - I Timothy 5:24

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

I believe this scripture is setting forth that God's elect will not stand before God in the end of time and face judgment, but others will.

When God gave Adam the law of sin and death in the Garden of Eden, all of Adam's race were covered by that law. That included all of the Lord's people in the flesh, for the Apostle Paul says that we all were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Some say that everyone of Adam's race will stand before God in the end of time, be judged according to their works and that judgment will be rendered at that time. They also say those who have done good or received Christ as their savior will be given eternal life and those who have done evil or not accepted Christ will be cast into hell. But, I believe that judgment has already been rendered because Romans 5:12 reads, ***"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."*** Judgment was rendered. Romans 3:23 says, ***"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."*** Judgment was rendered. Romans 9:11-13 states, ***"For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."*** Judgment was rendered. Romans 3:10-12, ***"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.***

They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Judgment was rendered. All are guilty.

God's law being spiritual, holy, just and good required a perfect sacrifice that was holy. It could have no blemish (sin). Therefore, none of Adam's sinful race could satisfy the demands of God's law and redeem themselves from its curse. *"The carnal mind is enmity against God for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."* Since it was impossible for God's little ones to pay their debt and redeem themselves, God sent His own Son in the likeness of their sinful flesh and yet without sin under the same law that they were under to stand in their room and stead. Here was the perfect Lamb of God without spot or blemish who stood a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. He took the sins of all His people in His own body on the tree of the cross and was made to be sin for us. He took our judgment and the execution of that judgment. The wrath of God was poured out upon Him who knew no sin. Innocent, but oppressed; humble, but afflicted; He opened not His mouth. He, in his great love, willingly laid down His life for His friends and satisfied every demand of His father's holy law. Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment.

You must experience the condemnation of the law which says you are guilty. Romans 14:10-12 says, *"But why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then, every one of us shall give account of himself to God."* You stand before the judgment seat of Christ and your knee bows in humble submission and repentance and you confess that you are a lost sinner and you beg for mercy. As the publican who stood afar off and alone, you felt so sinful and such a wretch that you could not even lift your eyes unto heaven, but could only cry out, Lord be merciful to me a sinner. The judgment seat of Christ is only for His people and is within you. Psalms 99:4 says *"thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob."* Psalms 101:6 reads, *"The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed."* The law was given that sin might abound. When the law was applied to you, your sins abounded

and you died. As the Apostle Paul said, *"I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived (abounded), and I died."* We cry as the Apostle, *"O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"* Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment. Your sins are open to you as you are shown that you are a sinner. Your sins have gone before to judgment as Jesus took them in His own body on the cross. The execution of the judgment was accomplished when the Lord suffered, shed His blood, and died to pay the price demanded by His father's holy law for your redemption. Therefore, you will not have to face the judgment of God at the end of time. Your names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life from the foundation of the world. Therefore, in the resurrection, you will be with all the sheep on His right hand and will hear the summons, *"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."*

All others will experience their sins following after them. In this life, they will never know the Lord and will never know their sinful condition. But at the end of time, they will be brought to stand before God in all His power and glory and be judged out of those things written in the books of the law according to their works. Judgment has already been rendered and they are all guilty, but their judgment has not been executed. They will stand before God in all His power and glory and be shown that they are indeed sinners and lost. Then, they shall be cast into the lake of fire. I believe this lake of fire or everlasting punishment is described by the Apostle Paul in II Thessalonians 1:7-9, *"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power."* To have their sins made known to them and to stand in the presence of God and then to be banished from His presence eternally is a hell that burns as a fire that cannot be quenched. As Cain said when God banished him from His presence after slaying Abel, *"My punishment is greater than I can bear."*

Romans 6:23 states, *"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."* Also recorded in Psalms 107:1-2, *it says: "O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy."*

In bonds of love,
Cleo D. Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

Elder Terry,

Enclosed find a check for $100.00 to cover a 2 years renewal and $75.00 is a contribution to be used where needed.

This past winter Dan and I had a chance to visit Elder Campbell's Church in the Memphis, Tenn. area and enjoyed hearing him on a Sunday morning. The past couple winters we have spent about 6 weeks each year toward the south and I try to locate us on each Sunday near a Primitive Baptist or a Sovereign Grace Church that I have previously found on the internet. I wish we had some of these churches closer to us.

Sincerely,
Annabel Arne

VOICES OF THE PAST

ELDER AUSTIN JONES CASSELL

Born: March 22, 1820
Died: October 14, 1901

Elder A. J. Cassell

Eld. A. J. Cassell was received by experience by the arm of Jack's Creek Church, Patrick Co., Va., at Green Hill meeting house, Patrick Co., Va., April 9, 1836. Green Hill was constituted into a church on Sept. 10, 1836. He remained a member until granted a letter of dismission, Feb. 8, 1873. He placed his membership with Center Church, Henry Co., Va., where he remained until his death. He was ordained as a deacon, Aug. 11, 1849; licensed to preach, March 8, 1851; ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, July 10, 1852. He pastored several churches and was the moderator of the Smith River Association for many years. It is also interesting to note that he was the father of Elder John R. Cassell, and the great-grandfather of Elders Bennie Neal Clifton, Leonard Lester Cassell, and J.L. Cassell.

CIRCULAR LETTER

From the minutes of the Smith River Primitive Baptist Association, held with West Fork Church, Floyd Co., Va., July, 1882, and also Charity Church, Patrick Co., Va., October, 1882.

To the churches of the Smith River District Baptist Association and all whom it may concern, greeting.

Beloved, we have met together in associational deliberations twice this year, each time in love and continued in love and peace, while we your messengers were together, and parted in love and peace. How good it is for brethren to be in love and peace with each other. Such has been the case for some year or two.

It appears that the interest of one is the interest of all the others; the mind of one, the mind of all the rest; no jars, no new resolutions, no debates; nothing to chafe the feeling of each other, but all seem to wish for and labor for peace.

No big, self-opinionated messengers have you in your association; whether public or private all appear to be valley livers, dwelling in the valley of humility, poor and dependent upon the Lord, having one general aim for the good of each other, enjoying each others' company and conversation, esteeming each other better than themselves. Never to my recollection, have I seen or known your association more in union and peace than at the present time. Most of the churches are healthy and in peace, strong in faith, trusting alone in the Lord. When any of the dear brethren come to see us at our association as correspondents or visitors they are kindly received in our body and treated with special respect that they may feel welcome and pleasant with us, and I hope they do.

Though our body may be small yet it is blessed with peace. Sometimes small families have as much enjoyment as large families do, expecially when some of it's members are unruly, possessing self importance. Oh that we may still live in peace while we are permitted to stay here on earth, that we may be poor in spirit, and often at the throne of grace asking the Lord to lead us; that we may not do ourselves any harm, nor harm to others.

Let us try to watch over our ways and words, and look at our weakness and nothingness instead of looking at our poor hobbling brother and complaining of him; for to his Master he stands or falls. What poor judges we are when left to ourselves.

Oh that we could and would do this, see that we did not lay something in the way that our brother would stumble over to his hurt, for if one of the members suffer, all must suffer with it, for all of the members are of great use, for God has set the members of the body as it pleases Him; so the hand has no right to say to the foot I have no need of you; neither has strong members a just right to say to the weak you are of no use to me. The strong ought to bear with the weak, and when such is in distress try to comfort them.

Oh, that we could have patience to bear the many trials of this life, and especially with our dear brethren, that instead of looking down on our brethren and sisters we might feel that we had good cause to look upon them, viewing them in worthiness above us, for ofttimes we feel to say, Oh, is there any one like me? Jesus said, *"learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest unto your souls."*

It is good for us to have poor opinions of ourselves, so that we may not trust in ourselves, but in the

Lord, who is able and will give strength to the poor and needy. Our faith hovers around His promises, believing that the time appointed of God they will all be fulfilled. Dear brethren and sisters, the Lord attends to and maintains the cause of the poor; so if you are poor it is in self, but you are rich in the Lord, for unto this man will I look that is poor and of a contrite heart and that trembles at my Word. I am such a poor hand to gather up fragments that I fear I shall not hardly get a taste for any. The brethren desired me to write, but it is surely a task. It looks like most anything that I write is awkward and weak; but such as I have I wish to give unto you in the name of the Lord. Oh that I was prepared by the Spirit of the Lord to admonish you not only to love but to good works, to let our light shine, but it seems to me often that I have but little light that I know not how to travel, and say like David said to the Lord, "is thy mercy clean gone and will He be favorable to us no more?" We are yet in the flesh and have the warfare to encounter which often brings us so low, and our condition seems to be a pitiful one, but it is necessary for us to go through great tribulations, even the furnace of afflictions. But God has appointed a time for them to end. We hope He has chosen us out of the world, and if so He will bring us safe to that Heavenly home, where Jesus says are many mansions. No breeches of fellowship will be there; then little children, we will all get together to dwell in peace in love forever; then the days of trials and grief will be over; then the dear brethren that are scattered away from each other, wishing greatly to see each other will get together. Oh, what a happy time it then will be with the poor tired pilgrim. Heartaching days will be over, doubts and fears left behind, tears no more flow down our poor withered cheeks, no more death to dread. We will be beyond the wilderness where we will receive truly the milk and honey. Bless God for such a prospect.

Elder Austin J. Cassell

REVELATION 7:14-17.

And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes? and whence came they?

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

ROMANS VIII. 28.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God."

These words bring to our minds solemn thoughts and reflections, of the ground they cover, and the real true meaning of the words here spoken by the apostle, under the inspiration of the holy Spirit of God. How hard it is for poor insignificant creatures to understand or comprehend the working of his almighty power, as he (God) works all things after the counsel of his own will. As we contemplate the majesty and glory of our God in all his works let us ever remember that *"as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher that your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."* It seems to me that Paul was here contemplating the work of God from the beginning to the end, from creation to the final glorification of all the redeemed, and not a single link in the chain of God's providence could be left out and his most holy will and purpose accomplished for his dear saints and his glory. We poor finite creatures cannot sit as judges of what our God should do or not do, or divide between the good and the bad, from our viewpoint. It has often been said that God predestinated the good things, but not the bad. Who of us is able to sit as judge and draw the dividing line; place the good things on the right, the bad on the left?

Let us examine a few things left on record for our learning. God created Adam upright, a good created being, gave him a law. He broke that law and fell under its curse: sin and death upon all his posterity. Now we all know that our God could have made Adam strong enough to have withstood the temptation, but in the purpose of God, with an end in view in the far future, he made Adam just as he was. We would place this evil step on the left, not comprehending the thing to be accomplished: the glorification of our God and his only beloved Son Jesus, the Savior of sinners. But I want it distinctly understood that God is not the author of sin; man is wholly responsible for all his sins and misdeeds. We note again among the "all things" the selling of Joseph. Joseph had a dream. (Read the narrative.) Was it a mere chance dream, or did the God of heaven inspire it? He had a purpose in it, therefore it was a link in the chain. Joseph told it to his brethren and they put their interpretation upon it (and a correct one). The evil of their corrupt nature arose and they conspired against Joseph and sold him to merchantmen, who carried him to Egypt. See the sorrow of poor old Jacob. Would we not all place this on the left, with the bad things, as Jacob did when he said,

these things are against me? Dear reader how often have we said in our hearts as Jacob did, not seeing the end? But reader, follow Joseph in all his career, shut up in the prison cell by evil intention, is this for good? Yes in the purpose of God, though yet hid from mortals. Pharoah dreamed a dream, Joseph was there to interpret it. Suppose Joseph had not been there, then what? But he was there to interpret the dream. Seven years of plenty, seven years of famine. Joseph finds favor with the king, and is made head over all, to save much people alive. God sent him there; the end is good, and when made known his brethren bowed to him willingly, and Joseph told them, Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. Again, the betrayal of Christ by Judas. Where in all the history of the world was there a blacker or more heathenish crime? yet it was all in the fixed, predestinated purpose of our God. Suppose there had not been a Judas; then what? The Scriptures would not have been fulfilled, nor the purpose of God. It is written, ***"As Jonas was three day and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."*** When Jonah took ship it was evil upon his part, but God meant it for good. He was to learn obedience by the things he suffered. The storm came. Was it by chance? Certainly not. They cast lots, and it fell upon Jonah, the guilty one, and they cast him overboard. Then what? Our God was superintending it all, and had prepared a great fish to swallow him up and carry him to the place appointed, ordained or fixed. Had our God control of that fish? Most assuredly he had, and when the three days and nights were up he was delivered. So they "were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Now how any true believer can repudiate and hold up to ridicule this blessed doctrine I cannot understand. I am satisfied many are prejudiced by wrong interpretations of evil doers. I have heard of some, in trying to refute the doctrine of predestination, taking up some atrocious crime of murder, and holding it up in all of its most heinous nature, crying out with a loud voice, Tell me that God made that man do this awful deed? Now that is a false statement. I have traveled extensively in twenty-two states, and Canada, and have never heard any one ridicule such an idea, and I could not fellowship any one who did. God is not the author of sin, neither tempteth he any man, man of his own lust is tempted. I know of one man who thus tried to justify himself in an evil deed, but the church excluded him, and did right in so doing. I have never favored setting this up as a standard in church fellowship, but have opposed it. I have full fellowship, but have opposed it. In all my travels I have met but one man who favored

it as a standard. I opposed it, and do yet. For the elect's sake the world stands, and many of the dark scenes that take place, that are beyond our comprehension, will be among the "all things" in the providence of God, and in some way, though remote, be for the good of his people, individually or collectively. The wrath of man shall praise God, the remainder of wrath will He restrain. The wicked are his sword for the chastisement of his people. What a sweet comfort when we can rest all in his blessed hand and power, and know that the darkest scene is as necessary as the brightest one. Darkness and light are alike with the Lord. He dwells in the thick clouds; he maketh the clouds his chariot. Truly it is a day of darkness. Darkness has covered the earth, and it truly seems gross darkness the people, and I sometimes wonder why his wrath is not poured out; but for the elect's sake will the world stand until the last one for whom Jesus died be made manifest.

"Chained to his throne, a volume lies,
With all the fates of men,
With every angel's form and size,
Drawn by the eternal pen."

What a blessed comfort to feel that
"The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will?"

Dear reader, I trust you may be favored to gather a few crumbs of comfort from these scattered thoughts, for there has been a little comfort to my soul as I have penned them, and a relief to an exercised and burdened mind. The dear Lord bless you all, and lead and guide us all in the pathway of peace and righteousness.

Yours in sweet gospel fellowship, though the least and poorest in my Father's house.

P. W. Sawin
Shelbyville, Kentucky

PRAYER

No subject of the Bible holds more interest than this. Perhaps, we do not understand much about it. I am sure that I do not, and I realize how presumptuous it is for me to think I could teach any one how to pray. This world professes to teach that and some theologian has gone to the trouble to write a book called "God's Minute." In the book he has a short prayer for each day in the year. Not being able to give you that many in advance. While I do not know that I have ever prayed, and if I have that I will ever be blessed to do so again it does not mean that it is not gospel subject. If it is, it certainly is profitable, under spiritual guidance, for our discussion and examination.

By way of encouragement to the dear saints I want to say to you that none of our leaders have a mo-

nopoly on prayer. Although prayer is a gift it is not one we can use any time men call on us to pray. If I am mistaken about it don't follow me, but I believe that any minister feels a great hesitancy offering prayer at times.

Prayer is, after all, a close-up with God, a veritable talking face to face. When we are really and truly given to see our sins, it is enough to cause a trembling in body and spirit to ask God for anything, seeing that it is the prayer of a righteous man that avails anything. In this connection let me say that I have impressions to pray just like I trust I do to preach. At these times it is the sweetest yielding and compliance to his blessed command as it is in standing in the pulpit and preaching the doctrine of grace. Trying to pray is like trying to preach - it is mighty hard work - in fact it cannot be done. While trying to pray, we invariably are in the flesh and our object is selfish, begging for the things that we want. But that is not all, trying to accomplish a thing not only shows a lack of how but of what and why. I believe we pray as we preach and live and die, depending on the eternal fixed purposes of God. It is in faith that we come to him at all. This faith, at all times, is the substance of the things hoped for.

This has never been changed and, although it moved Abel, Daniel, Jacob, Paul and all those gone before and will move every communicant that is yet to come, it is as unchangeable as God. In every step of our obedience to his commandments, it is faith that goes before, revealing the eternal perfection and sovereign purpose of God in disposing of all created things. Faith does not go before, bringing to light the unfinished things of God, as though he was a little undecided as to his rule of conduct, but it is the substance of our hope.

Now come hither little child and let us look at our hope. We do not hope that we will exercise faith to the end, but we hope that God eternally arranged for our salvation in Jesus Christ. Our prayer is not an effort to change God, but it is because he is unchangeable. The world (that is, the ungodly world) may swerve and tauntingly tell us that if they believed everything was fixed they would not pray, we know better things than that. We know our eternal destiny is fixed and that all our spiritual blessings are as settled and stable in the mind and purpose of God as is his choice.

Furthermore, we are assured that he has given us all things pertaining to life and godliness. It is according to this knowledge that every prayer is uttered. If we must try to pray then we must guess as to what to pray for. Guessing, we are told is all right when it hits, but unless we ask according to his will, our will would, if permitted to pray, as for things that would forever remove us and land us away from every providential and parental blessing. If we

must try to pray (that is, if we must pray more often, or more fervently) then we must guess as to what to pray for and, on that conditional basis, we would have a right to ask why if it was not answered.

A prayer is not something excited in you by the wisdom of this world. Just think of the prayer (that is, words called prayers) addressed to God (as they suppose) for favor in converting the heathen. That is a conditional, selfish, carnal utterance. If it was asked according to the will of God he would certainly grant it, because God answers that kind. We sometimes are motivated in like manner in the dear old church.

We get over zealous and ask God promiscuously to bring the regenerated into the church. He does not answer this kind of prayer because it is not prayer.

This is a wonderful subject, it is a blessing from God. We cannot pray unless blessed in spirit, yet the apostles commanded us to pray.

Now we realize that it is a gift from God. Would God give us a gift to ask that any will be done except his own? Is not all prayer a complacent acknowledgement of his will being done in heaven and in earth? Having been taught his sovereignty, and being kept by his power do we not have a desire to see and feel the doing of that will?

Elder W.D. Griffin
(Sept., 1947)

1 SAMUEL XVI. 23.

"And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him."

Our inquirer wants to know if this means that natural music had the power to drive the evil spirit out of Saul. In other words, did the effect of the music upon Saul prove an influence which music is of itself capable? The crux of this matter lies in an expression in the eighteenth verse of this same chapter. This expression spoken with reference to David is this, *"And the Lord is with him."* This fact explains the power of David's music on the harp. The fact that the Lord was with David gave his music that peculiar potency over the evil spirit in Saul. David slew Goliath with a stone from the brook. Does that prove that stones picked up from brooks have the power to kill giants? By no means. The power to kill the giant was not in the stone, but resided in the truth that God was with David and guided the stone unerringly to his mark. The secret of David's success lay in the fact that God was with him. His cunning skill with the harp could not of itself have availed to drive the evil spirit from Saul, but the fact that the Lord was with David imbued his music with a

peculiar charm that the devil himself could not resist. Music is refreshing, and we love it, but it would not do to say that music is an infallible recipe to drive the devil away. It takes the Lord to do that. If the Lord chooses to use music to refresh us in our evil hours, well and good, but music without the Lord cannot do it.

Elder Lefferts

"Looking unto Jesus, the author and finIsher of our faith."- HEBREWS xii. 2.

No one can ever run the race set before him, except by looking unto Jesus. He is at the head of the race; he stands at the goal, holding the crown of victory in his hand, which he puts upon the head of the successful runner. And we can only run on as we view Jesus by the eye of faith at the right hand of the Father opening his blessed arms to receive us into his own bosom at the end of the race. Nor indeed can anyone really look to him but by the special gift and grace of God. He must be revealed to the soul by the power of God; we must behold his glorious Godhead and his suffering manhood by the eye of faith; and we must view him as the incarnate God; the only Mediator between God and man. We must see the efficacy of his atoning blood to purge a guilty conscience; the blessedness of his obedience to justify a needy, naked soul; the sweetness of his dying love as an inward balm and cordial against all the thousand ills and sorrows of life, We must see his glory, as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; his suitability to every want and woe; his infinite compassion to the vilest and worst of sinners; his patient forbearance and wondrous long-suffering of our sins and backslidings; his unchanging love, stronger than death itself; his readiness to hear; his willingness to bless; and his ability to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, Thus the heavenly runner looks not to the course however long, nor to the ground however rough, not to his own exertions however multiplied, nor to his own strength whether much or little; nor to applauding friends nor condemning foes; but wholly and solely to the incarnate Son of God, Jesus draws him onward with his invincible grace, Every glance of his beauteous Person renews the flame of holy love; every sight of his blood and righteousness kindles desires to experience more of their efficacy and blessedness; and every touch of his sacred finger melts the heart into conformity to his suffering image, This is the life of a Christian, day by day, to be running

a race for eternity; and as speeding onward to a heavenly goal, to manifest his sincerity and earnestness by continually breathing forth the yearnings of his soul after divine realities, and to be pressing forward more and more toward the Lord Jesus Christ, as giving him a heavenly crown when he has finished his course with joy.

Elder J.C. Philpot

PSALM 93.

The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.

Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlating.

The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.

The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.

Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever.

BELIEVERS BAPTISM

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." {Mark 16:16)

Article 9 of *Signs of the Times* "PROSPECTUS" says: "That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God."

The purpose of this Article 9 is to briefly state the position of the SIGNS relative to the members, ministers, and rule of the Church of Christ. We pray God to enable us to more fully define the term, BAPTIZED BELIEVERS, in this treatise. We are deeply impressed of the necessity of this endeavor because of so many varied and conflicting opinions confusing our people this day on the subject of VALID BAPTISM. Lack of information often causes misunderstanding. Misunderstanding begets confusion. Confusion leads to errors. Errors often results in strife. Strife breeds hatred. Hatred breeds malicious actions. Malicious actions cause divisions. Divisions in churches result in each faction declaring null and void all actions of others. For this cause the Lord removes *candlesticks* and *spues* churches and ministers *out of His mouth.* We desire to carefully exam-

ine this vital subject and consider prevalent questions.

Primitive Baptists are careful relative to the mode or manner of baptism; that is, the method in which the act is performed. Proper qualifications of the person receiving baptism is important. The administrator of the ordinance of baptism must be properly authorized before the baptism could be considered valid. Proper ceremony connected with this act is worthy of consideration. Different elements are mentioned in the Scriptures in connection with baptism; so, we must ascertain when *water* is the *element* under consideration. We want to reconcile the expression: "One baptism", in Ephesians 4:5, and ***"The doctrine of baptisms"***, in Hebrews 6:2. We shall define the word, baptism.

The shortest and most comprehensive definition of the word from which baptism is derived is: *To dip.* This dipping includes casting down, submerging, and raising up. When this process is followed it is rightly called baptism. The administrator puts his subject into the element, causes this element to completely engross, and then raise the subject up. There is always a change in status by the subjects being baptized with the baptism spoken of in the Scriptures. We shall now take up the baptisms which are administered by the Holy Ghost in face of this definition.

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus ***Christ were baptized into his death?"*** To sum this up, it means that we were baptized into the death of Jesus Christ, being chosen in Him. It means that we who were chosen in Him, were in Him, while He was dying, engrossed in death, and raised up in Him from death. The changed status was that Jesus having been cast down and engulfed in suffering and death arose to die no more. The changed status of His people who were in Him was; the dying, the death, and the raising of Jesus from death, made certain eternal life for all who were in Him. No man can perform this baptism of which Paul speaks. Yet, Paul uses this baptism to show what water baptism portrays. Paul speaks of the baptism in Jesus' death, which was two thousand years ago, to preface a baptism of the present day. Paul further reasons: ***"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from death by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."***

Water baptism is the ***"Likeness"*** of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul emphasizes that this baptism is but ONCE. Then he adds: ***"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."*** *(v.11)* When you obey from the heart that form of doctrine you become free from sin to become the servants

of righteousness. The carnal man is a servant of lust.

This man has no knowledge of the law, and is alive without it. God causes His Holy law to be written in the mind and heart of this carnal man. This servant of carnality has been thus brought under the dominion of the law, consequently he tries to be a servant of the law, His failure in every attempt to serve the law makes him to know that he is in every case a servant of sin because he has disobeyed the holy law. This servant of sin despairs of life to such extent that his soul faints. (What a terrible death!) Sin has reigned unto death. The spirit of grace and truth raises this servant of sin from death to become a servant of our Lord Jesus Christ who accomplished the law for us, and died for us! The killing and making alive is a baptism God administers.

God administers the baptism of repentance of heart, repentance means turning. If we were immersed in repentance and left there, we would forever be turning in a circle. The godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto salvation need not to be repented of according to 2 Cor. 7:10. There is a turning from error to truth, from darkness to light, from law to Gospel; from which there is no need of further turning.

John *preached* the baptism of repentance, and baptized in water all who gave evidence that they had been given repentance by the Lord. He would not baptize those who came to him for baptism unless they brought forth the evidence that they had repented. See Luke 3:7-8. John was a qualified judge of the ones worthy of water baptism. The administrator is the Spirit not man in the expression: ***"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body..."*** (I Cor. 12:13) These baptisms that God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost performs are essential unto eternal Life. Water baptism is the only baptism that is to be performed by man as the administrator. This baptism is essential unto obedience as it is the answer to a *good* conscience toward God. Scriptural water baptism changes the classification of the one baptized. Before baptism one is classed with those who ***"walked according to this world"***. After baptism one is classed with ***"fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God"***. (Eph. 2) Paul was told to, "Purify thyself with them." (Acts 21:24) This was neces sary because of so many misrepresentations concerning Paul which had caused the Jews to be very angry with him. The actions and explanations of Paul in response to this request did not make him more pure to himself or God; but it did make him more pure in the sight of the Jews. The sins they had against him were washed away. While in the process of telling his experience in order to abate the anger of the Jews, Paul quoted Ananias:, ***"Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling***

on the name of the Lord." The water baptism purified Paul in the sight of the brethren whom he had before persecuted. Before baptism he persecuted Jesus Christ. It took baptism to wash away the accusation of persecution of Jesus Christ and bring him into a new status as a proclaimer of Jesus Christ.

John, the Baptist, and Jesus, the Saviour, were both named by the angel Gabriel. Both had miraculous births in that one was born of a virgin; the other was born to a barren woman well stricken in years. John was filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb. John was termed by Jesus as ***"More than a prophet."*** John had the authority from Heaven to baptize with water. Jesus was sent to baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. John instituted water baptism and had no authority to baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Jesus did not baptize with water but submitted to baptism of John in water, making manifest that John had this special authority. John was the first preacher in the gospel dispensation.

Facing the fact that a great majority of professed Christians of this age consider that a little water sprinkled or poured upon a person constitute baptism, it becomes necessary to point out a few expressions of Scripture that prove otherwise. One who has never heard of baptism can take the New Testament, begin reading, soon simple language will convince the reader of proper mode. The first chapter in which baptism is mention ed is 3rd. chapter of Matthew. Verse 16 says: ***"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water."*** This statement would simply prove that Jesus himself was *in the water* when He was baptized. The reader will find in the second book of the New Testament, Mark 1:5, ***"...and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins."*** The simple expression, In the river of Jordan, convinces the reader that the baptism was performed in the river, not by a little water taken from the river. Mark says, ***"And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit Like a dove descending upon Him."*** This shows simply that the baptism was *in Jordan,* the river, and that He came up out of the water. John 3:23 says, ***"And John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salem, because there was much water there, and they came and were baptized."*** Why the necessity *of much water?* The unprejudiced reader would by now know that the ones John baptized were in the river at a place in the river where there was more water than at other places of the same river. According to these expressions much water is neces-

sary to perform baptism. As Philip and the eunuch were riding along in the chariot, they came unto a certain water. This must have been a place where there was *much water,* Enough water for both of them, Philip and the eunuch, to go down into the water, Philip to baptize the eunuch, and both of them to come up out of the water.

Let us quote acts 8:38-39: ***"and he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing."*** We have already quoted Romans 6:4 elsewhere in this treatise which shows baptism to include burial. The person uninformed of the meaning of the word baptize, would gather the meaning of it by the time he read the New Testament to include the 6th chapter of Romans. We now understand that baptism in water means that the one doing the baptizing takes the one to be baptized down into much water, buries him in water, raises him up out of the watery grave, and brings him completely *out* of it by bringing him to the shore. Sprinkling or pouring a little water upon a subject is not Scriptural Baptism. The administrator really baptizes part of his finger, or hand, by dipping it into the water. He does not baptize the subject upon whom the water is sprinkled or poured. Burying one in water is not baptism until the buried is raised up. Baptism pictures the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We shall next consider the question, Who is qualified to be baptized?

Scriptures plainly show that John baptized persons who confessed their sins, brought forth evidence worthy of repentance, and professed belief in Jesus Christ the Saviour. The same qualifications are necessary now. Last Sunday afternoon I led a brother down into the water and baptized him. My ceremony was something like this: Upon confession of your sins and your admission that you cannot save yourself from this condition in any sense by your own merit; and, upon confession of your faith in Jesus Christ being the complete and perfect Saviour of His people; and upon the evidence of your trust in Jesus Christ, your perfect Saviour; and, upon expression of your desire to follow the commandments of Jesus Christ, - depending upon Him for imputed strength and, in obedience to the command of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ: I baptize you, Brother P__ , in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. ***"As I raised him up I concluded the ceremony with, Amen".*** This Is the longest baptismal ceremony I have ever spoken. This is not a model ceremony but it does give in essence the requirements of one qualified for baptism.

We next refer to Acts, 2nd chapter, 37th verse, to show that those who were qualified to be baptized were first, ***"Pricked in their heart."*** They were undoubted terribly upset by these pricking sensations caused by the working of the Holy Ghost. Peter's sermon had brought condemnation to their hearts. The last words of Peter's sermon must have pierced them sharply. ***"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."*** (Acts 2:36) I have wondered if their thoughts were: I crucified Him! I crucified Him! What Guilt! No wonder they said, ***"Men and brethren, what shall we do?"*** They had undergone such remorse in their hearts toward themselves for having part in such terrible crime! It did not take an altar call to entice them to respond. The Holy Ghost pricking their hearts with condemnation and guilt of the crucifixion of Jesus was enough to make them ask the question: What shall we *do?* Then Peter said unto them, ***"Repent and be baptized, everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."*** Scholarly men fed by pride have argued over the term, *for the* remission *of* sins, used in this expression which greatly confuses the readers and hearers. Let us look to Matthew 27:24; ***"When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather*** a tumult was made, he took ***water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it."*** He washed his hands in the presence of the people there to prove his abhorence of the crucifixion of Jesus. This act of washing his hands in water is the presence of this people with the expression, ***"I am innocent of the blood of this just person,"*** cleared Pilate in the sight of the people. The people responded, ***"...His blood be on us, and on our children." (v. 25)*** These people who were pricked in heart on the day of Pentecost, as well as all of us who feel that our sins crucified this Jesus, are, and were, willing to do anything to prove our sorrow for such crime. They, as well as we, respond to that command: Repent, be baptized, save yourselves from this untoward generation: calling upon the Lord.

First, these were pricked in heart by the Holy Ghost. Next, their cases were presented before men and brethren. Thirdly, they wished to know what to do. Next, they received special instructions consisting of definite commands, promises of gracious gifts of God, the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost; testimonies, exhortations of many words; all added up to:-***"Save yourselves from this untoward generation."*** Fifthly: ***"They that gladly received his word were baptized."*** Sixthly, they were added to the

Church. This is the order of procedure which is given in the second chapter of Acts. This proves that one must be a *Baptized Believer* before becoming a member of the Church. We have no Scriptural evidence that this order has ever been changed.

We next consider: *Who is a Believer? "And when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women."* Acts 8:12) We *ask, what was Philip's subject on this occasion?* We *read Acts* 8:5; *"Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached CHRIST unto them."* We read again in the same chapter of Philip preaching to the eunuch: *"Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." (v. 35) When the eunuch asked, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? Phillip said, if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest."* The eunuch answered, *" I belieue that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."* This testimony was sufficient to satisfy Philip that the eunuch was a believer. It was enough to prove that he was a proper subject for baptism. The case of the eunuch's baptism gives proof that the baptism may be administered before taking the matter up with the church. Of course the church must be consuled before one could become a member of a certain church. He must be baptized before a church could consider him as a member. According to the scriptures we have no precept given which necessitates one subscribing to a list of doctrinal theological ideas before one could be baptized. A true believer in Jesus Christ the Saviour, plus a desire to be baptized is sufficient. A proper administrator who is properly ordained and set apart by a presbytery, is qualified to preach the gospel and baptize believers. If one is not qualified to properly judge who the true believers in Jesus Christ the Saviour are, he should not be set apart by a presbytery to preach the gospel and baptize believers. We shall quote a portion of *Church Covenant* as recorded in "Hassell's History of the Church of God," page 695: *"Forasmuch as Almighty God by His grace, has been pleased to call us (whose names are underneath subscribed) out of darkness into His marvelous light, and all of us have been regularly baptized upon profession of our faith in Christ Jesus, and have given up ourselves to the Lord, and to one another..."* This quotation shows that in the 18th century that the baptism was based upon profession of their faith in Christ Jesus. It shows that they were baptized before constituting themselves into a church by covenant. These were already baptized when they composed this covenant. The specifics in this covenant was by the mutual consent of

the members. Mutual agreement is necessary on many things in order that brethren may agreeably walk together in church capacity. Because of the many and varied opinions expressed by professed Christians relative to faith in Christ Jesus; it need be that we clarify our position upon this. A mere assent to the fact that they believe Jesus Christ is the Son ofGod is not sufficient proof that they believe in him. I must first be convinced that an inquirer does not have faith in himself to save himself from his sins confessed. My reasoning is that the person who thinks he can merit salvation does not actually feel the need of salvation. Next, I must be convinced of his vehement desire for salvation. Then, I want to know whether or not he has been made to trust in Jesus Christ only for salvation from his sins. I want to be further persuaded that his desire is to keep the commandments of Jesus Christ. I want to be convinced that he looks only to Jesus Christ to strengthen him to perform works of righteousness. Lastly, I want evidence that he has the God-given, God pleasing faith without which it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. 11:6) Upon satisfactory evidence of these facts, I gladly baptize anyone in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and leave it to the judgment of the church concerning their membership. We shall conclude this installment on Believer's Baptism by quoting the last paragraph of the last *editorial* prepared by Elder Gilbert Beebe as recorded on page 941 of "Hassell's Church History."

In more than three score years of our labors in the gospel ministry we have never demanded or required of any candidate for baptism that they should sign any pledge to adhere to any other standard of faith or practice than that which is given in the Scriptures. We have said to them, 'If thou believest in the Lord Jesus Christ with all thy heart, thou mayest.' After hearing from them a satisfactory relation of what we believe to be a genuine experience of the new birth, we have usually asked them if they believe the doctrine and order held and preached by the Old or Primitive Baptist, so far as they understand it, and if their experience is in harmony with it. Upon receiving an affirmative reply, we bid them welcome to the ordinance, and hold ourselves ready, if need be in the same hour of the night or of the day, to administer that sacred ordinance. We know of no divine authority for delaying the administration for a more convenient season, or to first bury a father, or take leave of those we are to leave behind us. As every one who is born from above, and who loves the precious Saviour, is commanded to take his yoke, bear his cross and follow Him,and as baptism is the first act of obedience of the Heavenborn child, no other duty

or religious privilege can be in order until this is performed.

May the Lord bless this attempt to your edification. Amen.

Elder E. J. Lambert
Reprint from ("Signs" 1968.

FRAGMENTS

WHAT a wonderful word is Love; how deep, how broad, how full of sacred meaning, how infinitely comprehensive, and yet inexpressible. In the New Testament it is dwelt upon by all of the inspired writers with great variety, and yet everyone who has felt its sweet and holy power and blessedness will seek some new form of words in which to tell of its wonders.

The apostle John says: *"Perfect love casteth out fear."* These words were given to me once, I must believe, with divine power; they lived in my soul many days, and I lived in them, it seems to me, though that is much for me to claim.

Paul, speaking of the abiding power and enduring quality of the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, names sixteen things which cannot separate us from that love, and then includes every "other creature" in that wonderful list, thus assuring the absolute security of all who have ever known that love (Romans xxxv. 39,) and yet those who have surely felt that dear love in their hearts will give place to doubts and fears, and say:

"'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought,)
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

In another place this same apostle, expressing to his brethren at Ephesus his desire and prayer for them that they may know the love of God, tells some wonderful things concerning that love and those in whom it dwells. First, he bows his knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in prayer for them, that they may know this love ; this knowledge I understand being a daily vital experience of its blessed power.

Second, he expresses the truth that part of the family of God are in heaven and part on earth, and that all of them in heaven and earth are named of Jesus Christ.

Third, his prayer shows that all the living children of God in earth, in order to know this love, must be strengthened, according to the riches of Christ's glory, with might by the Spirit in the inner man, and that Christ must dwell in them by faith.

Fourth, those in whom this infinitely blessed grace of the Spirit shall be felt and manifested must be rooted and grounded in love, sending their roots, as a plant or a tree, down into the sacred soil of love, and grounded like a pillar standing firmly

upon the solid Rock, upholding the order of God's house.

Fifth, all saints have a measure of this comprehension, which includes and embraces the breadth and length and depth and height of this boundless and incomprehensible love.

Sixth, still a greater wonder; to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge; to know what cannot be known. The mortal powers of the wisest man cannot know this love, but to the babe in Christ the knowledge comes without effort, as the breath of spiritual life. The love of Christ passes all human knowledge, the natural heart cannot know it. It is not the love of man, but the love of God, which is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost. We feel to be so vile, so unholy, that we cannot be a fit dwelling-place for that holy principle. But sunshine may fall into a polluted atmosphere, and it cannot be polluted; it may fall upon a heap of corruption, but it will not be corrupted or stained.

Seventh, and the last and best, is that to know that love of God as it is here so wonderfully presented is to be filled with all the fullness of God. This is beyond my power to comprehend, or even to think, yet I do love the sweet truth so wonderfully presented. O that I may be given more ability to comprehend this wonderful love, and to feel some little measure of the fullness of God. Love is the deepest, broadest, most glorious thing within the range of thought, and yet nothing is so easy and so sweet to do, or rather to experience. ***"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us."*** God is love, and he that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. May that love be more felt in our hearts, and go out in word and act to all the family of God.

Elder Silas H. Durand

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Contentnea Association will convene with Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church on Saturday before the second Sunday in October. The date is October 13-14, 2007. The Church is located at 144 Middle Prong Road, Lowland, Pamlico County, North Carolina.

We welcome and invite all who love the truth to come and worship with us.

Elder Gene Lupton
Association Clerk
252-745-7441

LOWER MAYO FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo Association Fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday only, September 30th, 2007.

We hope to start singing at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30 a.m. Coleman Church will host the meeting. The meeting house is located approximately 9 miles south of Fancy Gap, Virginia, just off the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Those coming south on parkway, from Fancy Gap, turn right a short distance past milepost #209, on road #715. Go about 50 yards and turn left on Cole Creek Road. Go about 1 mile to church location on left. Those coming north on parkway, turn left at mile post 211 on Cole Creek Road. Go 1 1/4 miles to church location on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in salvation by grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of Love
Carlton Brown, Clerk
(336) 366-2112

LOWER MAYO ASSOCIATION

The Lower Mayo Association is to be held, the Lord willing, on October 5th, 6th, and 7th, 2007. Mayodan Church will host the meeting and it will be held in Russell Creek meeting house. The meeting house is located approximately 9 miles south of Stuart, Virginia near the Virginia, North Carolina Border. Those coming North or South on Route #8, turn East on Ayers Orchard Road #653 for about 1 mile. Turn right on Moorefield Store Road #631. Go 1/4 mile to church location on right Those coming east or west on Route #58, turn south on Southfork Loop #827, turn on Ayers Orchard Road #653. Go 3 miles to Moorefield Store Road #631. Turn left, go 1/4 mile to church location on right.

We invite the Ministers, Brothers, Sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of Love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 2006

Clara Jones, VA	5.00
Larrie Bowler, VA	5.00
John Vipperman, VA	25.00
Margaret Link, TN	5.00
Carl Terry, VA	5.00
Alan Terry, VA	5.00
Donald Arne, VA	75.00

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

We, the staff of the "Signs," are very saddened at the loss of our good friend and Editor, Elder Hale Terry. Here is the notice of his passing from the Moody Funeral Home in Stuart, Va. an obituary will follow later.

ELDER WILLIAM HALE TERRY

Elder Wm. Hale Terry

Elder William Hale Terry, age 71 of Meadows of Dan, passed away Wednesday, October 3, 2007 at his home. He was born in Patrick County on May 25, 1936. Elder Terry was a member of New Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church, and had pastored at four Primitive Baptist churches, Old Union Church in Indian Valley, Paynes Creek Church in Floyd, Salem Head of the River Church in Check and New Bell Spur Church in Meadows of Dan. He was the moderator of the Smith River Primitive Baptist Association and managing editor of the Signs of the Time magazine periodical based on the Primitive Baptist faith. He had served in the United States Army

and had retired as an engineering supervisor with Appalachian Power Company with over 37 years of service. Elder Terry was preceded in death by his father, William Hugh Terry; a grandchild, Hannah Fleming; a brother, Lee Terry.

Elder Terry is survived by his wife, Glenna Turman Terry of the home; three daughters and sons-in-law, Jennifer and Jon Coleman of Bassett, Carla and Tony Horton of Hillsville and Gina and Frank Fleming of Mount Airy, North Carolina; one son and daughter-in-law, Marcus and Mary Ann Terry of Meadows of Dan; four grandchildren; Joshua Coleman, Austin Horton, Megan Fleming and Makayla Terry; two great-grandchildren, Skylar Coleman and Benjamin Coleman; his mother, Ilene Hale Terry Clifton of Meadows of Dan; three sisters, Marie Bowman of Meadows of Dan, Ruth Hall of Hillsville and Jane Largen of Dugspur; two brothers, Elder Alan Terry of Floyd and Tom Terry of Woodlawn; and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services for Elder Terry will be held Saturday at 11 :00 a.m. at New Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church with Elders Larry Hollandsworth, Kenneth Key, Alan Terry and Carl Terry officiating. Burial will follow in the church cemetery with a flag presentation by the Patrick County Veterans Memorial Honor Guard. The family will receive friends Friday evening from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the New Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church. Flowers will be accepted, or memorials may be made to the New Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery Fund, c/o Odetta Terry, 1222 Woodstock Road, Laurel Fork, Virginia 24352, or to Hospice of Patrick County, 835 Woodland Drive, Suite 101, Stuart, Virginia 24171. Moody Funeral Home in Stuart is in charge of the arrangements. Online condolences may be sent by visiting:

www.moodyfuneralservices.com

Oct. 7, 2007.

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EDITORIAL

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." 2 Corinthians 4:7.

Elder J.B. Farmer

The children of God are great mysteries, even unto themselves. But God is merciful to show each one of them a little about themselves and about the kingdom of God, that they might not be utterly perplexed and totally cast down. If God had not shown us some things about ourselves and about the things of the Spirit of God, we would be in complete confusion, because spiritual things cannot be understood by the natural mind. Can you think back to your earliest days, when your troubles came upon you like a powerful and overwhelming army? You were given a love toward God, and a desire to please Him, but everything seemed to be against you. Your sins rose up like a mountain and you had no ability to remove them, even though you tried everything in your strength to make things better. You tried to read the scriptures, but they only condemned you. You were too embarrassed to tell even your closest friend of your troubles, because you thought you were the most miserable sinner on the face of the earth. You tried to pray for relief, but felt to be too hypocritical even to make the attempt. After many long and grief filled days and nights of groaning, you were brought completely to the end of your wisdom and strength and felt to be too exhausted to go on. You thought you were all alone in your desperation. You were about to give up and concede that death, hell, and destruction surely and deservedly would be your end, when the Lord appeared to you with a word of mercy. Have you ever been brought through things similar to these? If so, I believe you have been blessed with some of the experience of all the saints that have ever lived.

There is a reason for all these trials and tribulations, and God is merciful to explain some of it to His people, out of love and pity for them. The Lord said by His apostle, ***"The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."*** The creature under consideration, I am made to believe, is the little child of grace. He is subject to all the vain things of this world and of this life. He is familiar with sin, sorrow, suffering, pain and death. He was made this way from the very beginning in order to experience these things. He

was made of the dust of the ground, and shown that he must return to the dust from which he was made. He was made first a natural man, and second a spiritual man. The creature, who was made subject to the vanity of this world, was put here in this condition that he might be delivered by God from this miserable state unto the freedom of the Spirit and to the hope of glory, which shall be manifest fully in the last time at the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. And through all these things a great mystery is presented. How can a person be natural and spiritual at the same time?

Jesus said to Nicodemus, ***"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."*** This great mystery was far too great for Nicodemus and also for us to understand without revelation from God. Jesus made it plain that the little children of grace are born of nature and also born of the Spirit from above. They have a fleshly nature by their natural birth and a spiritual nature resulting from being born from above. These natures are contrary to one another, to the extent that the little child of grace is not able, by himself, to do that which he most desires – to walk in the light and to speak the truth in love. Aren't you glad the apostle Paul said, according to his experience and according to the wisdom of God, ***"When I would do good, evil is present with me."***? And aren't you glad he was blessed to say, ***"How to perform that which is good, I find not."*** And thankfully he also was given to say, ***"He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."*** He was shown these truths by grace that he might relate them to the saints of God for their comfort and edification. The child of God was made subject to vanity according to nature, and by grace he was blessed to hope and trust in the good works of God.

There is an inward man, the new spiritual man, Christ in you the hope of glory, who is not subject to vanity. And there is the outward man, which is the old natural man, who is subject to all the vanity of the flesh. In the opening verse of scripture, the children of God are likened to earthen vessels, having a spiritual treasure stored inside. The outward part is of the earth earthy, and the inward part is of the Holy Spirit. But all vessels are not the same. Although all men are made up of one lump of clay, only those vessels that have been chosen of God and sanctified for holy use receive holy things and are preserved for glory. Those vessels not chosen and not sanctified receive only the base things of this world, and are therefore fitted for destruction. By Wisdom the apostle said, ***"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another to dishonor? What if God, will-***

ing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of Jews only, but also of the gentiles?" The earthly vessel, or body of the child of God, is sanctified and made holy and is shown to be the temple of the Holy Spirit. The inspired apostle said, *"What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."*

It appears to be evident from the scriptures that the vessel, or the outward man of the child of grace, is highly favored above the vessel of the child of the devil. The vessels of mercy are made up unto honor and glory, even eternal life. The vessels of the wicked ones are made up unto dishonor and wrath, even eternal destruction. It is manifest that the earthly vessels of the children of God shall be preserved forever and that the vessels of the wicked ones shall be destroyed. The beloved apostle Paul was empowered to say, *"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Here is another mystery. How can the body be preserved, seeing that it must return to the dust from which it was made? God is merciful and kind to make known to His little ones what they need to know concerning these things. God spoke through his apostle concerning this earthen vessel saying, *"It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold I shew you a*

mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." This flesh and blood body cannot inherit the kingdom of God. It must be changed and made a spiritual body.

So we understand from all these scriptures, believing they have been opened a little for our edification, that although the body of the saint is corrupt because of sin, it has been sanctified and cleansed by the Spirit and made holy unto God. And God shall preserve that body, even though it goes down in corruption to the grave. According to the scriptures, God shall raise and change these corruptible bodies into bodies of incorruption. According to the scripture, which cannot be broken, mortality shall be swallowed up of life. *"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."* This is the earnest expectation of the creature. He yearns for the redemption of his body. According to the understanding given to me, if not deceived, when we die the body returns to the dust and the spirit returns to God who gave it. The spirit is joined to the soul, which Jesus said no man is able to kill. As it was with the poor beggar Lazarus, so it is with the child of God. After he dies, the spirit joined with the soul of the child of God shall be carried to the bosom of Abraham by the angels of God, where Lazarus is now being comforted. There, he, and all that die in the Lord, shall remain at rest and at peace until the Lord returns to gather His elect from the four cor-

ners of the earth. This includes both those living at that time and those dead in Christ. According to the Holy Scriptures, the Lord in His glorious appearing shall bring with Him the spirits of just men (the elect that have already died in Christ). And at the resurrection of the dead, by the power of the living God, the bodies of the dead in Christ shall be raised and changed, and the bodies of those who are alive and remain at His coming shall be changed, and each one of their bodies shall be made like unto the glorious body of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then shall the earnest expectation of the creature be fulfilled, all things shall be brought into subjection unto God, and forever and ever all shall be praise and glory and honor to God, who alone is worthy. The body shall be redeemed from the grave, changed and united with its soul and spirit, and together with those alive at His coming and changed, each child of God then shall be a complete spiritual man in body, soul, and spirit. In this wondrous spiritual state each shall be blessed to look upon the face of the living God and not die, but live, and each shall have full enjoyment of heaven and immortal glory world without end.

He shall sing the song with all saints that none other than the redeemed of the Lord may sing. John heard them singing during the revelation that he was given. *"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever."*

Yes, the sanctified earthen vessel, the body of the child of God, shall be preserved and shall not be destroyed with the wicked. It shall be changed and made a glorious vessel by the power of God at His coming. This shall be to the praise and honor and glory of His grace and mercy toward the poor sinners

that He foreknew and loved with an everlasting love, to the extent that He laid down His life for them. This is my hope and my trust, as I desire to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. It is also my constant desire that I should be blessed with all saints to be faithful unto death that I might receive the crown of life, although I know I am not worthy of the least of the mercies of God.

This was written, I trust, in love toward God and all saints, and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer.
8-7-2007

PSALM:93.

The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.

Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting.

The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.

The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.

Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Hale Terry,

Our hopes are for the Lord's blessings to be showered upon you and your family during this trying time.

I truly hate to burden you with another chore but I would like to order the Signs of the Times. I am enclosing a check for $25.00.

My name and address is:

Ada V. Beeghly
4935 Henry Rd.
Henry, Va. 24102

With sincerest regards,
A sister in Christ I hope,
Ada V. Beeghly.

Dear Elder Terry,

I am so sorry about being late with the Signs of the Times payment. I am almost blind. I have to have someone to read it to me.

I love the Old School Primitive Baptist Church, the brethren and Jesus so much.

My husband Elder Clovis Towney's loving wife.

Frances Neal

9-1-07

Elder Wm. Hale Terry
202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va.

Brother Terry,

Please renew my "Signs" for 2 years. Enclosed is my check for $30.00.

Thank you so much. God bless you and all those who write for the "Signs of the Times".

In fellowship,
Rebecca Jean B. Moran

ARTICLES

"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him: he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin—"(Isaiah 53:10)

Why did it please the Lord to bruise Jesus? The answer was to satisfy Divine justice. The justice of God demands death for the broken law.

Notice the expression: ***"When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin."*** The sins of God's people were laid upon Jesus. ***"For he hath made him to be sin for us, "Who knew no sin." (2 Cor. 5:21) "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, (the world does not mean all of mankind, but means all of the children of God, whether they are Jews or Gentiles), not imputing their trespasses unto them;" (2 Cor. 5:19)*** God the Father charges Jesus for the sins of the Children of God.

"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman" (enmity between the church or bride of Christ and satan) ***"and thy seed and her seed."*** (the seed of the bride of Christ or the church and satan) ***"it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3: 15)*** When satan bruises the heel of Christ shows the sufferings of Jesus when he was crucified. How does Christ bruise the head of satan? This Scripture gives the answer: –***"That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil." (Heb. 2:14)***

Jesus said: ***"At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."(John 14:20)*** We cannot explain this close connection.

Christ's soul was made an offering for sin on the cross. Jesus told Pilate: ***"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world-"(John 18:37)*** This was determined before in the purpose of God. ***"For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." (Acts 4:28)***

The sentence of death was placed upon the world, and Jesus suffered in the place of his *people. Jesus suffered the pain* and *sorrows of* hell *upon the cross. "How long, Lord? Wilt thou hide thyself for ever? shall thy wrath burn like fire?" (Psalm 89:46) "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27 :45-46)*

All of the sins of the children of God were placed upon Jesus. *"The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all)" (Isaiah 53:6)*

"My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (John10:29)

May the Lord bless what is written in honor and praise to almighty' God. *"I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." (Isaiah 42:8)*

Elder W. W. Hudson, Jr.

PSALM 4:1.

Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE WATCHES

Elder J. A. Monsees
Ellenwood, Georgia

The principle watches originally among the Hebrews were those of the night, from sunset to sunrise, and these were divided into four watches, three hours of each, called respectfully "Even", "Mid-night", "Cock-crowing" and "Morning."

No doubt these watches were drawn from the expression of our Savior. *(Mark 13:35) "Watch ye, therefore, for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at evening or at mid-night, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning."*

These watches, "acoemetea, or acometi" according to the Encylopedia of Religious Knowledge, inspired what was known as an "Order of Monks at Constantinople, in the fifth century, whom the writers of that time and the following age called, "aeometi" that is, watches, because they performed divine services day and night without intermission. They divided themselves into three classes, alternately succeeded one another, so that they kept up a perpetual course of worship. This practice they founded upon that passage, *"Pray without ceasing." (1 Thes. 5 :17)*

From the above we gather some of the importance of the office of watchmen. The watchman was an important person in the nation and society throughout the different periods before the coming of the Lord. The importance of which varied with the object of the watch. Where there was the life and liberty of men, women, and children involved, imminent perils made these watches so important that severe penalties were annexed when the watchmen or sentinals were found careless, indifferent, or sleeping at their posts.

Watchmen were supposed to be alert at their post, and informed of everything and at all times during their watch, so that when called upon, they may be able to give an accurate account of all that happened during such a period. The duties, oft times were pains taking and arduous, and the watchmen were relieved of their duties sometimes when they had served for a short time as two hours. Where the duties were not so important services for longer duration were required.

At an early age shipping was the important method of transportation, and the lives and valuable treasures of the nations were transported from one country to another, and so lured pirates upon the seas which menaced and imperiled the lives and property of all nations, that these watches were made important.

The watchmen, therefore, were obligated as a matter of necessity to remain awake at their post of duty during the period of their watch, as the pirates may come upon them at any hour, killing the passengers and officers of the ship and robbing them of the treasures and valuables thereof. We get a picture of the church, sometimes referred to as the "old ship of Zion" upon the sea of time imperiled by many pirates and enemies of the truth infinitely more important than any watches of a national or commercial nature.

Jesus says, ***"Take ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is." (Mark 13:35) "What I say unto you I say unto all, watch." (Mark 13:37)*** The importance of the watch referred to was not for a thief or pirate, but for the passing away of the heaven and the earth, and the coming of our Lord Jesus, who as a man taking a far journey left this earth with the watchmen and porters on duty, with the command to watch for His return, without giving any specific indication of when it will be. If He should return and find these watchmen asleep, we shudder to think of the consequences.

We get the idea sometimes that watchmen are preachers. The preacher is a watchman but the watchman is not necessarily a preacher. The preacher is better qualified to give an accurate account of the happenings during the watch, and the burden of his duty is to proclaim such happenings as to give warning of dangers, and com-

forts, and assurances when the voyage is peaceful and the sea clear of pirates.

In Isaiah 21:11, the watchman was called upon to give an account of the night, or of his watch, in which there was some penalty annexed for his failure to do so. This penalty is described as the "burden of Dumah" (silence)- the burden of silence. Such a penalty is described by Jeremiah as *"fire shut up in the bones."* Such fire as can not be described with human tongue. The fire which burns and consumes our flesh is a sufficient torture, to take away our natural lives, so that we will never feel the pain of the bones burning. In this case the interior of the bones are ignited and the burning from this point is outward, and no way for us to reach this point to extinguish the fire, and the burning continues on so long as the silence endures. *"This is the burden of Dumah."* The preacher is placed upon the wall as a watchman, and with the eagle eye sees danger from a greater distance than the other watchmen, and is supposed to give warning of its approach. Many times these dangers are of a perilous nature, and for the minister to be silent, and give no warning makes his crime unforgiveable in his own conscience, and of others who are imperiled by it. Happily in these watches he has the company of real comrades — comrades in arms — to stand and hold up his hands, give comfort and aid in every time of trouble.

What watchfulness! What attention! We give over the sick beds of our loved ones, we watch their breathing, the pulse, the flushes of the face, the smiles, the frowns, in fact every symptom, constantly hoping for improvement. With the Lord's children there were many sickly among them and need to come under the watch care of those who are alike interested in their welfare. In such a case we both watch and pray. You do not watch over your loved ones for evil but for good. All these watches are intended for the good and protection of the household of faith. You do not destroy one of your own passengers in order to kill pirates, but you kill the pirates to protect your own passengers.

We are mindful, of course, there are wolves in sheep's clothing that get among the flock and some disposition must be made of these, but we don't want to destroy all of the flock in order to get rid of one wolf. We feel sure the proper amount of watchfulness will protect sheep from the wolves. Wolves creep in unawares when the watchmen are asleep and when he fails to give the proper warning. The wolves must be dealt with before he enters among the flock; if we wait until he gets in, the destruction of the flook is certain.

Old Baptists are censured for preaching too much on the fundamentals, such as election, predestination, and the final preservation of

the saints, etc. These may *seem* dry principles, but they furnish an impregnable wall over which the wolf, the carniverous animal that feasts upon the flesh and blood of other animals, cannot pass. He can't eat straw. These dry principles are too much like straw, therefore, those who are established upon these walls are a safeguard against the wolves entering.

The thing that creates a definite blockade for the wolf, is the requirement of what Old Baptists; call an *"experience of grace"* or reason for their hope. This is the evidence of a revelation of Jesus Christ to His child. The scriptures asserts No man knoweth the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him. Jesus says *"Upon this rock (of revelation) I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."* The watchman standing at the threshold are careful to see that those who enter have the evidence to support a claim of such knowledge, or revelation. Our Lord does not reveal himself to wolves, so they cannot rightfully enter.

Elder J. A. Monsees

LUKE 22:42

Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

JEALOUSY

Webster says that jealousy is a suspicious fear or watchfulness, especially the fear of being supplanted by a rival. Solomon said that *"it is cruel as the grave."*

We might add to the above that it is a dreadful disease, entirely without reason, and denotes lack of faith in God. It is selfish, caring nothing for the misfortune of another, and has been the destruction of many people, for it always destroys the person thus afflicted.

Many of God's servants have suffered this ailment to destroy their usefulness and influence in the church, and that without cause. When a preacher begins to manifest a spirit of jealousy toward another, he seeks in every way possible to build himself up by promoting the downfall of him whom he supposes to be his rival. The cause of jealousy is a lack of faith in God, and also proves a lack of love for the cause of Christ in the world. One preacher seems to have a greater talent than another, and this causes the one who seems to have the lesser talent to try to destroy the other.

We hear brethren say that they esteem their brethren as better than themselves, and then many times belie that statement by showing a spirit of envy toward others who seem to be more prosperous in the service. We should all remember that we have the talents God has given us, and that He is not unjust

to ignore those with lesser talents while He heaps blessings °upon those with greater ones, and if we use our one talent to the glory of God and the upbuilding of His kingdom, He will bless us with peace of mind and satisfaction. We should also remember that we could not handle our brother's talents, because God gives us talents according to our several abilities.

I have met many preachers who had greater gifts than the one I have, if indeed I have one, but they have not given me any cause to be jealous of them, because the greater number of them have treated me kindly and with respect, and have never shown by their attitude that they considered me as unworthy of their fellowship. They have treated me as an equal, and so how could I desire their downfall? I have NEVER wanted to serve a church that any of them served, and when some church calls one of them to serve it instead of calling me I am perfectly happy about it, because I have no fleshly desires in the matter.

I can assure all of God's servants that just so long as they conduct themselves as they ought, they will never lack for a place to preach, nor will they be made to feel that their labors are not appreciated. When one preacher thinks he is envying another preacher because he feels that he has more advantages than he himself has, he is mistaken, for it is not the other preacher he envies, but he envies God who gave the gifts. To envy another preacher would be the same as saying that God has not dealt fairly in dispensing His gifts, but has slighted us.

There is one sure preventive for jealousy, and this is it: never have a fleshly desire to serve churches, nor to obtain any special notice in the church; never think more highly of yourself than you should, and don't ever want something in the kingdom that IS NOT yours. If you deserve blessings in the service you will receive them, that is, if you deserve the fellowship and true companionship of God's humble children you will have them. God is the founder of His kingdom and He is the keeper of His servants, if we can but keep this in mind and then strive to serve in humility and godly fear, we will receive as many blessings as we can contain.

When one permits himself to be jealous of another servant, he does so without cause, and reason gives place to fear, and fear produces panic. Suppose some brethren do show more consideration for one preacher than they do another, what does that prove? It either proves that the one they show more consideration for is more active and consecrated in the service, or it shows that they are in the flesh and are not seeking to glorify God but to gratify the flesh. If the first reason is true, we can build ourselves up in their esteem by being more faithful and devoted to the cause,

while we manifest a humble spirit; if the second reason is true, we should feel sorry for them and for the preacher, if he permits them to continue their flattery toward him. We should remember at all times that the faithful and devoted members of the church will love and appreciate us if we conduct ourselves in the right manner.

Maybe we have not applied ourselves as we should and our fellow preacher has, and if this is the case we cannot think hard of him nor the Baptists if they are a little more attentive to him than they are to us. Carelessness on our part has been the cause for some of us being jealous, for we somehow come to the conclusion in our befuddled minds that the preacher who is appreciated more is to blame for our not being appreciated so much. I have often felt condemned in my own mind when some preacher manifested in his preaching that he had applied himself to the study of the Bible, but I have never thought to blame him for my fault. If a preacher seems to show by attitude toward me that he is rather important in the church I only feel sorry for him, because I know that he is in the flesh and will soon come to a fall. The truly great preachers are the most humble, the most approachable, and the ones who are never known to boast of their own ability. I do not envy other preachers their ability to preach but I rejoice when I am permitted to hear them.

I learn from them, and can feel safe when in their company. If we aspire to be called to churches, or to surpass our brethren in preaching, we are sure to be disappointed, for our aspiration is of the flesh and is out of harmony with the spiritual blessings of God.

My prayer is that God will bless all His humble servants who contend for the doctrine of the Bible, both fundamentally and practically, and that I may continue to have opportunities to hear them preach; they comfort and instruct me, and their fellowship and companionship strengthen me. If and when God impresses churches to call them, I bid them Godspeed. They are the salt of the earth and the finest companions a poor unworthy one such as I could ever have. I trust they will overlook my imperfections and continue to let me walk with them, that they will pray for me, and that they will feel free to visit the churches I try to serve. I cannot be jealous of those I love and have so much confidence in.

R. K. Blackshear.
Sent in by Keith Hiatt.

HEBREWS 2:9.

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

REASON OF MY HOPE

Elder R. W. Thompson, Dear Brother:—This vile worm of the dust is in no wise worthy to claim relationship with the Lord's dear children; but, if love makes us akin, I feel a hope that I can beg to be permitted the sweet privilege. When I read the sweet and comforting testimony of the precious brethren and sisters, and they tell my feelings so plainly, make themselves as nothing and exalt the name of the Lord, I am constrained to praise his holy and exalted name for his mercy and compassion on poor worms of the dust. We are taught in the Holy Scriptures of divine truth that the people of the Lord are begotten in love; for God the Father, is love, and to be born of him is to be born of this holy love; and if we love the Father whom we have not seen, surely we should love the brethren and sisters whom we have seen; and when they tell the same story we have to tell, and sing the same song we love to sing, even though we have never seen them in the flesh, are we not made to love them for the truth's sake?

This morning I have been reading the April number of the dear old MONITOR, which you kindly sent me, and it was all so good and comforting that I felt as if I wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed it. Your editorial, "Why Baptize for the Dead?" was so wholly in accordance with my understanding of that holy ordinance and brought me so much pleasure, that I must speak of it, though I feel my inability to say anything worthy of notice. But, dear brother, if I have ever been made to know anything of spiritual things, I do feel that I have been made to see a holy beauty in this. All my life, since I was old enough to think of such things, it was rather a boast with me that when I asked for baptism I would be able to give some reason for it; but how vain is the thought of man! When I tried to talk to the dear brethren and sisters, to relieve my troubled mind, it seemed I had so little to tell, and felt too unworthy to tell even that; and when they received me, with such tender love and fellowship, I was almost overcome. All night long I tossed to and fro in my distress, fearing I had deceived the dear people whom I held in such high esteem, and I resolved I would go to them when morning came and ask them to let me tell them more of my vile self, for I thought I must surely have misrepresented the matter. But when morning came I found no opportunity to speak with them, and was not so forcibly impressed to do so.

We were to meet at the water at ten o'clock, and all morning I went about sad and cast down; I wondered how the family could all appear so cheerful when we were going to a burial. Again and again the thought would come that we were going to a burial, though never once did the thought enter my mind that baptism is a symbol of a burial.

When we met at the water's edge, I was so cast down and burdened I did not know what to do, I feared I was doing wrong, and felt so dead and lifeless. But do people bury the living? Certainly not. It is only the dead that have need of being buried, and I humbly hope I was dead to the law of sin and death. When we came to the water, the dear brethren and sisters began to sing, and I thought it was the sweetest, saddest music I ever heard, and it sounded just like a burial hymn. Then the dear old servant of God began to offer up prayer, and my very heart, it seemed, was melted to tears. When he was constrained to make petition for this poor, vile, sinful wretch, O, how unworthy I felt! I could not doubt but that he was indeed blessed with the true spirit of prayer, but how could it be that a servant of the most high God could offer up a petition in my behalf? I cast my vile body prostrate upon the earth and almost wept aloud. I thought I had never heard such an able prayer, but it seemed to me to be the saddest, also, that I ever heard; and again came the thought that it was just like a prayer at a burial, but all this time, strange as it may seem, no thought came to me that a baptism represents a burial. Even at the last moment I was tempted to tell them that I must not take this step, for I did not feel fit, but, as I walked down into the water, these words came into my mind: *"I leave it all to the Lord."* As I went under the water, a groan seemed to escape me (I felt, rather than heard, it), and some real burden seemed to leave me, and I seemed to be sinking into eternal rest and peace. I cannot describe it. I felt as one who had labored until all his strength was gone, and the load had become so burdensome that it could no longer be borne, when it then pleased the Lord in his wisdom and mercy to lift from my shoulders the heavy load, and joy and peace filled my soul. No bed could be made so soft and restful as that watery grave felt, and I wished that I could just remain there. When I came up out of the water, all my burden was gone and my soul was filled with a holy peace and rest that words are inadequate to describe.

As I came out of the water these blessed words came into my mind:, Arise to walk in newness of life. I felt no wild, tumultuous joy; no desire to shout or sing but it seemed that peace like a dove rested upon my soul, and all my burdens and troubles were gone. The dear ones were singing, *"I'm going home to die no more,"* and while I had always despised that song, it now seemed the sweetest I ever heard, and I thought they could have chosen nothing more appropriate. Such peace and rest filled my soul, that I did not care whether I spoke to anyone or not, and had I been left to my own inclinations, I would have simply gone my way without so much as removing my wet garments.

The dear old apostle says that baptism is not the putting away of the sin of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God. It has seemed to me that of all the words in the English language, there are none that could so well describe and define baptism as those. Being buried in the watery grave, does not wash away our sins; for they are covered up, hid and overcome by the robe of righteousness, which is Jesus; but when he is made manifest in the poor sinner, the fairest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely and that poor sinner is given a mind to follow his blessed Master in the holy ordinance of baptism, in the performance of his duty, he finds a free mind and an acquitted conscience, such as nothing else can give. Peace, like a river, attendeth the way. Surely, I felt this to be true; for it seemed that nothing of this world troubled my mind for weeks afterwards, but my time was spent in sweet and holy communion with the gracious Lord. It seemed that the Scriptures were opened up to my understanding in such a way that I cared to think of nothing else, and most of my time was spent in singing and making melody in my heart unto the Lord. I would seldom read the Bible, for that seemed unnecessary; so many scriptures came to my mind, and with them the interpretation in a way that brought such joy and comfort to my soul, that many times when I sat in the company of others, I had no idea of what they were talking for my mind was on far different subjects. I felt a desire to put off the "old man," and as he who hath called us is holy, so should we be holy in all manner of conversation; for as many of us as are buried with him by baptism into death, like Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For, if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection, knowing that our "old man" is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. It was the glory of the Father that raised up our blessed Savior from the dead, and it is the glory of the Father that raises poor, dead sinners from the darkness of nature and gives them a mind to praise his holy name. And, when Jesus, the great Conqueror, shall come in the morn of the resurrection, in the clouds of love and glory to bear his jewels home, this same glory shall raise these vile bodies from the tomb, change them in the twinkling of an eye, from corruption to incorruption; from mortality to immortality; fashion them like unto the glorious body of Jesus; and cause them to be caught up with Jesus In the air to join the innumerable host in his praise throughout for his goodness and mercy! All that is within me, praise his holy name!

Lola Holland
FAYETTEVILLE, W.VA.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF RUTH

ELDER J. A. MONSEES
Ellenwood, Georgia

The Book of Ruth consists of only four short chapters, but it is an excellent diagram of the Church of our Lord Jesus through all the ages.

Naomi (representing the church in the broad or aggregate sense, and more particularly the Jewish Church) and Ruth (representing the separating and obedient followers of Jesus, and more especially the organized church of the Gentiles, which we think today are the Primitive Baptists) are the principal characters of this Book.

Orpah represents the unfaithful hordes of the aggregate church, and particularly, those who have been in close contact with the dear people of the Church, and have heard, believed and loved the gospel, but the church's desolation, combined with their own poverty, creates an obstacle their weak faith cannot or does not overcome; hence they falter and turn back weepingly.

Elimilech, Hahlon, and Chilion represent the law under which the church has lived with contentment, under all conditions, so long as the husband remains alive. The three perhaps represent three branches of the law considered most vital to their well-being. The Samaritan woman had five, and when Jesus met her at the well,she was then trying out one she knew was not her husband. Those unmarried to Jesus in service sometimes have a plurality of husbands, and the more they have, the better, they are inclined to think. A complete marriage to Jesus means a complete separation from these other husbands, for Jesus is a complete Savior and Redeemer who provides all our needs.

Naomi looked longingly during the famine in her own land into the land of Moab, which appeared to be a land of prosperity and contentment, where she could enjoy the comradeship and association of her own husband and family. Hence, she, her husband, Elimelech, her two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, left Bethlehem Judah, their native land, to sojourn in the land of Moab, for she had heard the Lord had visited His people there with bread, and the famine had made it difficult to live in their native land. The four continued their residence in Moab and the two sons married native girls, Ruth and Orpah.

Soon Elimelech died, but Naomi had two strong sons upon whom she could depend. His death was a major loss to Naomi, but this was not enough to wean her from the lures of the land of Moab, for she had two strong sons, the issue from a strong husband, upon whom she could look for support and maintenance.

Then these two sons, husbands of Ruth and Orpah, die, leaving Naomi not only a widow, but with two widowed daughters-in-law, and in a strange land.

Perhaps Naomi knew of no famine in her native land like the one she was now suffering in the land of Moab, among strangers. In her native land she suffered for bread, but she is now suffering in heart and with leaness of soul, a famine for the word of the Lord is of much greater magnitude than any of an earthly nature.

It was during these sore afflictions, Naomi determines to return to her native land. So sad in heart was she, that she requests that those of her loved ones *"Call me not Naomi (pleasant) but Mara (bitter)" (Ruth 1:20),* and mournfully proclaims, *"I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty; why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me." (Ruth 1:21)*

Upon reaching the decision to return, Naomi intreats both Ruth and Orpah to remain in their native land and return to their people. She had no way to feed, clothe, and house them, and could promise no husband for them. She had no living sons, could have no more, and if she did, they could not wait for them, and weepingly kissed them, as a signal, "Good bye." There is nothing to indicate that Naomi loved Ruth better than Orpah. The church loves all her subjects, the obedient and the disobedient, those who are with her and those who turn back. The church is sad when she cannot provide the destitute and helpless with the things they need. In these circumstances, there are many Orpahs with weak faith, who let hunger for the things of this world control them, and with sad hearts turn from the fold to look for an easier way. The way of the cross is hard, they say, and the church is too poor." *"It may be hard to find bread,"* they murmur, *"to say nothing of the luxuries of life."*

Ruth gives us the interesting part of this drama, for when Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, and turned back, Ruth clave to her, held *on to* her would not go and would not let Naomi go, and pleadingly said, *"Intreat me not to leave thee or to return from following after thee, for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God, my God" (Ruth1:16)*

Just how well Ruth was rewarded for her faithfulness to Naomi is revealed in the remaining chapters. Back in the land of Bethlehem Judah, she finds Boaz, representing Jesus, who was a rich planter. She was given permission to glean after the reapers, with orders from the master to let some handsful fall on purpose. There were other gleaners in the fields of

Boaz, as there are other gleaners besides the organized church in the field of our Lord, but Ruth was given special consideration, *"Hard by the reapers,"* with orders for special favors, with ***"handsful of purpose"*** to her.

The marriage of Ruth to the rich Boaz follows with all the privileges and blessings of this wealthy and merciful friend.

As to Orpah, we have left her in the land of Moab, and as to her subsequent prosperity, we hear no more. Her life, so far as the following generations are concerned, is closed. She lives no more. There are no recorded eulogies at her passing, no flowers for her casket, no one of God's ministers say, ***"She hath done what she could."***

Not so with Ruth; she lives on, and like Mary Magdalene, who anointed the head of Jesus with expensive ointment, washed his feet with the tears of her eyes, and wiped them with the hair of her head, Ruth will be pleasantly and lovingly mentioned wheresoever this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached.

The gist of the story, it seems to me, is to show the blessings of a faithful and diligent life. The gospel urges us to press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:14). To live this life, and then die in Christ, in the faith, we have the assurance of resting from our labors, and the works will follow after, or be remembered after we are gone. ***"The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger" (Job 17:9).***

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 2007

Amy Heppler	10.00
Lowell Hopkins	5.00
Glenford Sigmon	5.00
Victor Terry	5.00
David Spangler	5.00
Jean Moran	5.00
Eva Cruise	5.00
Brandon Lane	5.00
Frances Neal	5.00

HEBREWS 1:1-3.

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

OBITUARIES

JAMIE EVERETT COOPER

Jamie E. Cooper

It is with sadness that I write the obituary of my dear husband Jamie E. Cooper. He was blessed to leave this world of suffering and his hope and desire was to die and go home. Like the white doves that circled over the grave site that holds his earthly body, he too had traveled far and was given the desire to go home there to be sheltered and at rest. Brother Jamie E. Cooper was born July 2, 1918 and raised in Patrick County, Va.

He was found dead in bed, September 8, 2007, at our home. His stay on earth was 89 years - 3 months 6 days. He died from asbestosis and had suffered a long time with the affliction. He asked the Lord to let him go to sleep and never wake up. God granted Jamie a dying wish. Oh the beauty to see the unfolding of God's love and mercy.

He was given a good hope when a young man. Jamie joined Reed Creek Church July 11, 1940 at the age of 22, served as clerk of Reed Creek since 1947, served as deacon since 1955. He served as clerk of the Pigg River Association from August 3, 1979 until 2004 resigned due to health. He served as trustee of The Signs of the Times since 1985. He was a trustee of the Primitive Baptist Assistance Inc. He was a Navy Veteran of World War II.

He was a man of few words, that were weighed before spoken. He was a firm believer that stood for the truth, order and doctrine and he was a peacemaker with a tender heart. He was a good husband, daddy, grand daddy and great grand daddy. God truly blessed us to have him in our lives. Our blessings have been many and wonderful.

Jamie and I were married June 11, 1938 at the home of his uncle, Elder Lonnie Cummings. We were married 69 years. Also surviving are two daughters Judith C. Owen of Martinsville; Stephany C. Simpson and husband Henry Simpson of Roanoke, Va., four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren a brother, nieces, nephews and so many lovely brethren and friends. May God bless us to behold God's love for us and to know that all things are in His hand to unfold at the time and place that He appointed.

His funeral was held September 10, 2007, conducted by Elder C. B. Davis and Elder Thomas Solomon, at Norris Funeral Home, interment was at Roselawn Burial Park in Martinsville, Virginia.

Truly missed and loved by many.

Jamie's wife,
Frances M. Cooper.

IN MEMORY OF
DEACON GUY JUDSON HOLLEY

Our Heavenly Father in His wisdom and mercy saw fit to call our beloved and highly esteemed Brother Guy Holley from the walk of life and give him peaceful rest until He comes again to gather the jewels of His mercy, whom He redeemed with His own precious blood.

Brother Guy was born November 26, 1918, a son of the late Tom Pete and Wilda Emberson Holley. He was a U.S. Navy Veteran of WWII and experienced The Hand of God deliver him from danger. He founded Holley Used Auto Parts in 1954, which was very successful and provided well for his family. He was married to Mary E. Holley and to this union was born a son, Ronald and Phyllis Holley and daughters, Deborah Trail, Linda Underwood and Rose Mary Mason. He was preceded in death by his wife, Mary E. Holley, daughter Rose Mary Mason and sons-in-law Jackie Underwood and Sam Trail. He is also survived by wife Dorothy C. Holley, stepchildren Darrell and Mary Ann Craighead and Linda Watson, seven grand-children, three step-grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren and brother, Grady Holley.

Brother Guy Holley joined Republican Primitive Baptist Church September 21, 1975, ordained Deacon December 20,1980 and chosen clerk October 21, 1995. He was blessed to serve faithfully to the end, always having the welfare of the church and his pastor at heart.

Funeral services were held August 7, 2007 at Flora Funeral Chapel by Elders Junior Conner, W.T. Conner, Larry Hollandsworth, Clarence Stone, and Thomas Solomon. His body was laid to rest at Franklin Memorial Park to await the call of our blessed Lord, whom he loved and served.

We feel our loss to be great, but we believe his gain is even greater and eternal. May The Lord bless and comfort the family and his church with the comfort that He only can give.

Done by order of Republican Primitive Baptist Church in conference August 18, 2007.

Elder Junior Conner, Moderator
Sister Ada Beeghly, Clerk

REVELATION 14:5-6.

And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.

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SONG

WAIT, my soul, upon the Lord,
To his gracious promise flee,
Laying hold upon his word:
"As thy days, thy strength shall be."

If the sorrows of thy case,
Seem peculiar still to thee,
God has promised needful grace:
"As thy days, thy strength shall be."

Days of trial, days of grief,
In succession thou mayst see;
This is still thy sweet relief:
"As thy days, thy strength shall be."

Rock of Ages, I'm secure,
With my promise, full and free,
Faithful, positive and sure:
"As thy days, thy strength shall be."

W. F. Lloyd.

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EDITORIAL

I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:

That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else.

I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.

(Isa 45:5-7)

Elder R. H. Campbell

The above scriptures, sets forth as candidly as possible, and as only wisdom can, the absolute power, wisdom and sovereignty of God, and his control over all things, his being answerable to no one but himself, and he is clearly declaring the fact that there is no God beside himself. He created all things by power of his word, and according to his own will and purpose, and none can stay his hand, or, say unto him why doest thou? And, as Elder Griffin used to say, he always says what he means, and means what he says. This applies to everything, and is not contingent upon anything being contributed to it from any other source, whether it be for it against it, whether by principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world, or against spiritual wickedness in high places, None of these are of any avail when they are confronted by the absolute power of God.

(Rom 9:17-23) "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his

will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shalt the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hath thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels, which he hath afore prepared unto glory." It is even as Moses said, on one occasion, ***(Job (34:29) "When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? And when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a nation, or a man only:"*** God's power is effective against any, or all powers, for they were allotted by him.

There are those who will question some, or all, of the above declarations and say that this would not be fair, because it excludes some and embraces others who are no better than they are, and also the fact that there is no way that they can have any input into the equation, or the outcome. This is absolutely true, that they may be as good as any other man, in the flesh, but the error of this rationale is covered by the scripture, ***(Isa 64:6) "But we all are as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags: and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind have taken us away."*** They are using their human reasoning, and do not understand, that God created all things for himself, and according to his own good will and pleasure, and is accountable unto no power, higher than himself, because there is none.

They are using the wisdom of the carnal mind, which is enmity against God; and it is not subject to the law of God neither can be. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are complete foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned, and this fact also is by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of the creator, ***(1 Cor. 2-21) "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."***

The world will, especially question, vs 7, ***"I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I the Lord do all these things."*** They will violently disagree with the stated fact that God creates evil, and darkness, but Isaiah, per the above scripture says that he does. They will quote ***(Rom 8-28), "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."*** They will say that since all things work together for good to

the children of God, this could not possibly include the evil, and the darkness. Well it most certainly does, as per Isaiah's quote above, and both are just as necessary in the plan of God, for the purpose that he had for them. The apostle Paul, said, *(II Cor:15) "For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace, through the thanksgiving of many, will redound to the glory of God."* The, "all things" in, II Cor 4:15, and again in Rom 8:28 are one and the same, and they certainly do include the light, and the darkness, and the peace and evil mentioned in the subject scripture.

The reason for the disparity between man's understanding and God's reasoning is explained by Isaiah in, *(Isa 55:8-9) "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."* Well, so much for the mind of man, imagine his trying to judge the actions and decrees of God with the vain and corrupt intellect of the man of flesh. They are not on the same basis, for their reasoning, and therefore they cannot be compared: it is like trying to compare apples and oranges, they are two entirely different realms. God's judgment is based on the infinite love and compassion that he has for his children, and things that are for their welfare spiritually, and includes all things that are needful to assure their eternal salvation, and they are all judged good, in the mind and purposes of God.

I heard a man state one day that all of God's creation was for the good of his children, whether they knew and understood it or not. He said, to have good, you must have evil to make it manifest, and to have light you must have darkness to make it manifest, and so goes all of the other, seemingly opposites, in the plan of God. He went on to pose a reasonable and hypothetical situation. The angels were discussing the attributes of God and said, we all agree on the absolute omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience of God in the affairs of his children, and then someone said, but what about his mercy, and they said, what's that? another said what about his grace, and they did not understand what he was talking about. The same thing is applied to all of the other absolute essentials and all of the other characteristics of God which are so precious and meaningful to those who love God, and trust him for their salvation. The way and manner that they are made manifest to them in life, is by their having experienced the opposites, to which they can compare them, in their travels here, in this low ground of sin and sorrow. They will then understand light, by their having experienced the darkness, and they will understand good by their having suffered the pangs of the evil, and then

having them all made manifest unto them in their own lives, in this manner, they then will worship and praise God for their deliverance from the realms of darkness and evil, and by their being blessed with an understanding of the love and grace which God has bestowed upon them. They realize that they all have free and precious gifts of faith, given by a merciful and loving heavenly Father making these precious truths known unto them in this manner.

It is upon this knowledge and understanding that the apostle Paul was given to pen this scripture, *(Eph. 2: 8-9) "For by grace are ye saved, through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."* They will then realize that all things do indeed work together for their good, and that anything that is involved in the further accomplishment of this glorious goal in their lives, are all certainly good, and this most certainly includes the darkness, evil and all of the other negatives included in their experience, because they all work to make manifest the positives.

I believe that it is in this train of thought that the apostle Paul was in when he said, *(Rom 5:1-5) "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."* He rejoiced in tribulations also, because, he knew that they were also steps along the path that had been set before him, whereby he would receive the end of his faith, that precious inheritance, which was reserved for him, from before the foundation of the world, even the salvation of his soul.

So, looking at them in this perspective; light and darkness are alike good, in God's economy, as well as peace and evil, and all of the trials and tribulations that they experience in this life work together for good, because they are all the sum total of God's love and care for them. Jesus' promise to his disciples, on one occasion was, *(John 16:33) "In the world ye shall have tribulations: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world."* In this statement he was telling them that, tribulations must come in the path that they must run in this life, but to fear not because he has already overcome them for their sake.

Therefore they are to run their race with patience, looking for and hasting to the day that they will receive that blessed inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them. In that day, faith will

be replaced with reality, and they will enter into the joy of their God and his Son Jesus Christ, to reign in his presence throughout the endless ages, Oh, blessed thought.

It is therefore, in this manner, that all of the seasons, good, evil, light, darkness, and the many other characteristics are wrought in their lives to make them see and understand that they all did indeed, work together, and in harmony for good to them, and to all who are called according to the eternal purposes of God. These characteristics are all contrary to the inherent characteristics of the natural man, and are given them by the indwelling of the Spirit of God within their heart, as evidence that they are indeed, new creatures in Christ.

Taking them individually, there are many of these steps that we would avoid if at all possible, but, on one occasion when Paul had just been stoned and thought dead, he rose up and continued to preach unto them these same basic truths, *(Acts 14:22) "Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."* and this is the only way that they may come, for Jesus himself said, *(John 14:6) "I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."* and in me ye shall suffer tribulations. Can anyone question any of these facts?

There will be tribulations, for the children of God, in all ages of time, and which they must endure, as evidence that the same God, who reigned in Isaiah and Paul's day, is reigning now, Isaiah then went on to make the statement, *(Isa 46:9-11) "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the thing that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all of my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass, I have purposed it, I will also do it."* Is not this the same God that we hope that we worship today? (vs13) *"I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry; and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory."* This is the purpose for it all, and who would question the fact that everything included in this process is for good, and is needful, including the seasons of light, darkness, peace and evil?

Oh! The peace and joy that fills the heart of those who believe this doctrine, and feel to have a portion in these promises left on record.. It instills in the hearts of all of those who do, such a sense of confidence and assurance, when blessed with

the presence of the Holy Ghost, and abiding faith, which is the gift of God, that they can stand firm against the powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, and against spiritual wickedness in high places in Jesus' name. They stand in the same manner in which the three Hebrews stood, in the book of Daniel, and faced the king, declaring that although they may die, they will not bow down and worship the gods and deities of this world.

When so blessed, they can witness with David, when he penned the following text, *(Psa 149:1-4) "Praise ye the Lord, Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints. Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. Let them praise his name in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp. For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: he will beauty the meek with salvation."* When so blessed, all darkness and evil flee away, and all is light and joy and peace. In this moment, the words of Moses comes to mind, *(Josh 33:27) "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee: and shall say, Destroy them."* Such peace and joy as this, cannot be found in this low ground of sin and sorrow, but it will be the eternal abode of those for whom Jesus went to the cross to prepare such a place for them. This is the earnest expectation of all of those who look for the second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to whom all things promised in the future are as sure and certain, as those things past.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

NOTICE

Elder Thomas Solomon has moved, the following is his new address:

Elder Thomas Solomon
255 Morgan Clay Drive
Glade Hill, Virginia 24092

Phone: (540) 483-7176

PSALM 18:1-4.

I will love thee, O Lord, my strength.

The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.

I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid.

CORRESPONDENCE

Please renew my subscription to the Signs for one year and use the remainder as you see fit.

I enjoy reading the Signs and look forward to getting it each month.

May God bless you,
Sister Helen Pittman

Address:
2920 N. Eastman Rd., Apt. 226
Longview, Tx. 75605

10-12-07

My Dear Brothers,

I'm sending you a check for twenty five dollars for one year subscription. The rest you can use as you see fit to do so. Its been a trying time this year, no rain, but deep down He knows whats best for us all. God is too good and too merciful, to forget just what we need. Not what we want. I think so much of my time how good He has been to me at age 88 able to take care of myself and live alone. My health is very good, to tend me a garden, which I love to do. Its been a difficult time, but God sent enough rain blessed with a plenty. I love to read my brother's experience and to know I have been there.

Sister Lovie Q. Thompson

VOICES OF THE PAST

SELF EXAMINATION

Feeling so low in spirit, I began to examine myself, which I confess is not a very pleasant employment, (though it could be profitable, and will be, if one will be honest and make proper use of his findings) and hardly had I begun to make this examination before I began to wonder, "Am I a hypocrite?" Usually when I thought of the hypocrite, I thought that it was some other person or persons and surely not me, now I am not so sure about it. There are at least two ways of examining oneself. The first way is to MEASURE YOURSELF BY YOURSELF. You will be well pleased with the result. All measurements will be the same, they will come out even, and there will be no room to suggest improvement. You will conclude that you have attained the desired goal, in learning, thinking, and in action. And you might just get lifted up with pride (false pride) and begin to look down on your brother or neighbor and wonder why they don't see, think and act just as you do. And no doubt you will begin to think that if

all members of my church were just like me, we would have a wonderful church.

The second method is to measure yourself by the word of God, in the light of His commandments, written both in His Holy Book and on the tables of your heart, and in all probability the result will be somewhat different.

An honest, sincere private examination of yourself will, no doubt, cause you to be glad that the inward thoughts and emotions that motivate your words and actions are not seen and known to others. You might find an affliction we might call "Borderline Anemia almost a Christian and almost a hypocrite. Christ frequently accused the Pharisees of hypocrisy. See 23rd chapter of Matthew. They say and DO NOT. What about you? Do YOU SPEAK and SO DO as the hypocrite, or as those who shall be judged by the law of liberty? Their practice was not agreeable to their doctrine. Is yours?

They severely exacted obedience in others, but they themselves did not observe the least part of the law. Are you of this temper? Do you demand perfection in others, while you excuse yourself for your own failings? What good things they did were for the praise of men. What is your reason for doing, or pretending to do good? They were very zealous for an outward show of religion, are you? They pretended a great deal of respect for the ancient prophets, disallowing what their fathers" did to them, and yet were so ready to practice to like themselves to Christ and His apostles. What about you? Do you profess to love Christ, His church, and to have fellowship for His ministers and the gospel, and yet will only go to church if your pastor or favorite preacher is to be there? Do you go to church to worship or admire the preacher, or to hear the gospel of your salvation and worship God in spirit and in truth? Sometimes one professes to join the church, yet in reality they join the preacher, and never love the church. They are never truly a part of the church, but just have a name on the church book. What about you?

Hypocrites only pray to God in time of trouble or affliction, and when things go well they turn their faces" from Him, from His service and worship. When do you pray? They are quick-sighted in worldly affairs, also very zealous, and will make any sacrifice to go where they will be recognized and honored with a high seat; while they disdain to go humbly to the place where God's humble poor assemble only to worship God, eat from His table, enjoy His fellowship, rejoice in the riches of His kingdom, and enjoy their inheritance with the saints in light. Worldly honor and friendship seem to mean more to them than the praise of God. What about you?

You and I will probably never be tried or examined in a civil or ecclesiastical court, so we will probably be the only one to know if we be a

hypocrite, for men can't look into our hearts or know our thoughts. However, GOD KNOWS!

It is written in His word, *"The hope of the hypocrite shall perish." Job 8: 13. "For an hypocrite shall not come before Him." Job 13:16, "The joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment." Job 20:5. "A hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbor-" Prov. 11 :9. "The congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate." Job 15 :34. And again, "Woe unto you hypocrites." Matt. 23 :13.*

I have not written this to insinuate in any way that any of you dear readers are in this category, but rather am persuaded better things of you. But perhaps it will be profitable to subject ourselves to a thorough examination in private, and if there be found a need for improvement, we might give ourselves diligently to the task; that we might show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not to be ashamed. *"So speak ye, and so DO, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." James 2:12.*

W. H. Hancock.

COMMENT-Elder Hancock has given all of us a task, and if we are sincere in our efforts to worship and serve God, we will begin our self-examination at once. If we find ourselves desiring special notice when we go among God's children, we need to consider the spirit we are in.

R.K. Blackshear

CHILDREN MANIFEST

"In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil." 1 John 3:10.

National Israel were called children of Israel. By keeping the law God gave them, they were to have material blessings and national protection. They were chosen in Abraham and the law was given to them by Moses. Spiritual Israel was chosen in Christ, and are to have spiritual blessings on earth and to be with Him in glory after death. They are born again in time but this birth is of the Spirit and is an internal work of grace, and can only be seen and known by its fruits. *"By their fruits ye shall know them."*

Spiritual Israelites are compared to sheep. They are a chosen generation and belong to Christ by sovereign love, mercy and grace. They were predestinated to be conformed to the image of God's Son, but the rest of the world were left to die in their sins. They are compared to goats. Men may make a profession of religion and may deceive other men, but God looks at the heart and knows His sheep.

The chosen in Christ are made manifest by effectual calling. *"Whom He predestinated He also called."* They who are the called according to His purpose were given to Him in the decrees and purposes of God. When this

calling brings them to know God experimentally they begin to appear like sheep. They follow Jesus, hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Jesus is their bread of life, He reveals Himself to them as their justification and redemption, and they are satisfied, being at peace with God.

Who are the children of the devil? They are those who follow the devil. They are said to be his children who are his servants and under his control. Jesus said to some of the Jews, *"Ye are of your father, the devil, and his works will ye do."* Although these Jews were religious, they were enemies to God and to His truth, fighting against Jesus and His people. Being ignorant of God's righteousness, they went about trying to justify themselves and cover up their wicked ways. They are justly condemned under the law of God and declared to be the children of wrath.

The heirs of promise are also the children of wrath by nature even as others, (Eph. 2:3) until quickened and saved by grace. They are then made free from the law of sin and death, and are under the new covenant of grace. (Rom. 8:10). Under this covenant God puts laws into their minds and writes them in their hearts. This law of grace condemns sin in the flesh, causes the soul to hate evil and love righteousness. They pray in the spirit, *"Lord, be merciful unto me a sinner."* No sooner had Saul been quickened by grace than *"Behold, he prayeth."* This change was wrought in him and he passed from death unto life, not by works of righteousness he had done, but according to the purpose of God in Christ before the world begun. *(2 Tim. 1:9)* ."*In this the children of God are manifest."* The children of God are also manifest by being His disciples, followers of God as dear children. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." They are said to do righteousness when they love God and keep His commandments. His manifest children are they who trust in Him and love the brethren. *"Lord, help us to manifest thy Sonship."*

J. Harvey Daily.

Psalm 9:1-3

I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.

I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.

When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence.

For thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou satest in the throne judging right.

Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name for ever and ever.

HOPE

Webster defines hope as *"The desire for good accompanied by expectation,"* and it takes these two elements to constitute hope. Desire without expectation is not hope, neither is expectation without desire. We desire many things we have no way of obtaining, and we expect many things we do not desire. This is common to humanity, and wherever there is hope there is uncertainty also.

We never hope for things that we already possess, nor do we hope for things we have a perfect knowledge of, but in order to have hope we must first desire something and then have some reason to expect to receive it.

Now, do we hope to live in heaven with God and all His redeemed children? If so we HAVE A DESIRE to that end, and then there must be a basis upon which to found our expectation. The desire to live with God in heaven does not spring from the natural mind of man, nor can that mind ever be educated up to the point of this great desire. One must first know something of his own sinful condition and be made to hate sin before he will ever desire things righteous and holy, and this knowledge comes ONLY by the Spirit of God in the heart. This is the result of regeneration, and regeneration is a PERFECT work-the work of God. All men DO NOT desire to live in heaven because all men do not have the Spirit of Christ formed in them, and preachers cannot give them this Spirit. All men would desire to escape the terrors of eternal destruction, but many would be satisfied to remain forever on earth, or else pass into eternal oblivion when they die.

There are two spirits manifest on earth, one of them hates God and godliness and loves sin, while the other one hates sin and loves God and godliness. These facts are proven by the walk and conversation of many people with whom we come in contact every day. Some folks never go to church, while others think and talk about it as a painful duty. Why? Is it not evidence that they do not love the church and the things it stands for? There are other people who eagerly look forward to an opportunity to attend the service of God, they never seem to get tired of listening to the gospel and of greeting fellow members in fellowship and love. This is their meat and their drink. They did not make themselves come to love the worship of God. It is the work of God's Spirit alone.

Many people say that a hope is not worth much, that people can know that they are children of God and that they are saved for heaven, but I have noticed that the people who enjoy the service of God the most are those who do not know so much, they ONLY HOPE they are children of God; And so hope is just as much a part of the Christian ser-

vice of God as being baptized, because without hope there is no baptism, no communion with God and His children, and no real church membership.

Hope does not save people for heaven but saves them in time, from despair, fear and many gloomy doubts. The unregenerated do not need hope in Christ, because they have never felt their need of Him, and they do not feel their need of Him because they have never seen themselves as lost and ruined sinners. The law of God brings to the hearts of men and women the knowledge that they are vile, corrupt sinners in the sight of God, and after this knowledge comes the blessed hope that Christ has done for them what they could not do for themselves saved them from the just consequence of their sins.

The reason God's children need a hope in Christ to comfort them while in this life is that they DO NOT have perfect knowledge, but only know in part and see in part. So many conflicting evidences come into their lives that they can never be as sure of their salvation as they would want to be, but they never finally love hope until it ends in reality. They have many emotions in their hearts that they cannot define; they love things that they once hated, and hate things they once loved. No, hope and faith are not CAUSES of men and women being the children of God, but are sweet evidences that they are His children. They find many things in themselves that they despise, many things that they often mourn over, which things are caused by the weakness of the flesh, but then again they find themselves thrilled in their very souls at even the mention of the name of Jesus. Their confidence is in Him. They KNOW that He is a COMPLETE Saviour, that all for whom He died will be ultimately housed in heaven, and they HOPE THEY ARE IN THAT NUMBER!

Talk about hope being worthless! It is the most precious possession the child of God has. Without it life would be miserable. There would be no soothing balm to dry up the fountain of his tears in times of sorrow and despair, nothing to keep him hoping in the grace and mercy of God when he takes a look at himself to learn again just how sinful and unworthy he is. Yes, he looks to the worthiness of Christ, whom he has been made to feel died for him upon the rugged cross. And he longs to meet together with others who cry for mercy in the night time and shout for joy in the day, and who base their hope of heaven upon the perfect work of a perfect, sinless, holy and righteous God, who, for some reason they cannot understand, loved them before they had a being in the world.

Their cry is, ***"Let others know they are children of God if they can, but let me continue to abide in that precious hope that Jesus died for me."*** For the child of God

remembers a time when he had no hope, and the misery and darkness and fear of that hour is something they have no desire to experience again. They were contented once without hope, but now they are happy with it, and would be miserable and wretched without it.

R. K. Blackshear.

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2 COR. 6:14

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"

If it was not for many of us doing this, the apostle would not have given us this instruction. He had found all kinds of irregularities in the church at Corinth, as well as most of the others. These letters of the apostle were sent in lieu of his visits. He had found many hateful sins among them when he had visited, and now he is writing to keep up the objection that had been previously raised against these things. It is a well balanced charge to them. Three things are brought to bear in this charge to them, to wit, in yoke together, in fellowship with, and communion at, the same table.

If a man or woman is a believer in Jesus Christ his whole mind is aflame with service and devotion to Him. The kingdom and the subjects of it will be the first thought in regard to all things. Will it promote the welfare of the subjects? Will it glorify Him who has called us out of darkness into light? To serve God and His people will be the most absorbing thing in all the world to a believer. His traveling will be toward the light, for he is a child of the light and of the day. He will be going a different direction than an unbeliever will go. A believer will always want to go up; an unbeliever will always want to go down. A believer, regardless of the steepness of the hill, or the fierceness of the combat, will want to press on toward the prize of the mark of his high calling that is Jesus Christ; an unbeliver will shun the way that calls for going upward and meeting foes.

What a struggle to be yoked with an unbeliever. Regardless of the effort put forth for the welfare of the subjects of the kingdom, it will all be nullified by being yoked to one who Is doing all he can for the destruction of those subjects. As long as one is thus yoked with an unbeliever, it will be a standstill battle. Nothing can be gained in a march like that.

If we, through the weakness of the flesh, have succumbed to such an uneven yoking, let us strive to break apart from it. Your words will be denied, and mocked, and misconstrued; your walk will be belittled; your conversation will be intermingled with the odors and marks

and likenesses of this ungodly world; your feasts will have green and wild gourds in them, with drink that is polluted. Moreover, a yoke that is pulled in two directions will gall and cause a lot of unpleasantness.

"What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?" Do you know what fellowship is? Have you ever come to the church of the living God and found them all walking as a unit? Have you come on a long and tiresome journey and found a good place to rest? If so, it was fellowship to you in the same things. If you had come on this journey and had stopped to rest and had found everybody in an uproar about starting on a trip, I assure you that you would not find what you were looking for. Your whole thought would be that they would *let* everybody rest. Then why do we join in with such things? What do we find there? It is not fellowship. That is, it is not fellowship, unless we too are workers of unrighteous things. The apostle is not writing to those who have a common tie here. That is not his concern, and it is not mine. I do not want to enter into such dens of unrighteousness, nor do I want my brethren to be found among them. A child of God does not have any business, nor do they have any right, in such stink holes of sin. I do not know what it is that possesses a child of God, one that has been given to see the righteousness of the Lamb of God, to be found hanging around a place like this. These places are two kinds but they are both unrighteous. One of them is the place of vice; the other is the place of false doctrine. How can you associate with those who drink the wine of fornication, while you desire to drink living water; how can you eat with those who eat stale bread, while you are famishing for living bread? How, oh, tell me how, can you go arm in arm with one whose whole tending is toward liberalizing the work of Redemption to include all men ? Do you have any confidence in such falsehoods? If, so, do not try to travel under the auspices of the banner of Christ. Do you have any fellowship for these unrighteous characters and their acts? If so, do not palm yourself off on the church of Jesus Christ as one who is trusting in the righteousness of Him.

"What does light have in common with darkness, in that they commune together?" Does light and darkness come from the same source? Is one fountain the cause of both? If so, but ONLY IF SO, then communion is to be had between darkness and light. Communion, in the very nature of it, is between that which is at an unity. Two parties, in order to commune together, must have a primary likeness between them. If not, one of them is eating with one thought in mind, the other with another thought. Jesus Christ is the light of the world. I must say that HE IS the light of the world, It is not a case of

He being the greater and another being the lesser. No, sir, not that. He is the light of the whole world. Moreover, He lighteth everyone that cometh into the world. If you have come into this world, which He loved and gave Himself for, you have been initiated into light, as He is the light. God is light, and He was made flesh and dwelt among us, and if we are children of light, He dwells in us. Are you trying to mix darkness and light? Are you trying to blend them together, shamefacedly saying that there is no harm in this little thing, or that we are almost together and therefore ought to live in peace, or that we are all going to the same place and ought to work and live together here ? If so, you are trying to do that which Paul is condemning. If you are trying to live in the light and in the darkness at the same time, you are proving most conclusively that something is wrong. There is NOT ANY darkness in God at all. God is our God in the light and the darkness, but HE IS NOT THE CAUSE of the kind of darkness Paul is writing about. If so, he would not have needed to stress the difference. In fact, there would not be ANY difference.

God is the true source of the light. The Satanic powers are the true source of the darkness under consideration. Are you a child of the light? If so, how much fellowship and communion and enjoyment do you get in communion with the things of darkness?

Now once more. What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? What communion hath light with darkness? If the answer is none, then may I ask, where are your affections in the matter? And if they are, really set on the things of a believer, *of* one who is righteous, one who is in the light, may I admonish you, to kindly examine yourself as to whether you are walking in the light, and in the fellowship, and as a believer. In an abiding hope,

William D. Griffin,
511 Kent Ave.
Cantonsville 28, Md.

THE SCRIPTUAL VIEW OF CHRIST AND HIS ZION

In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in; Isa. xxvi, 1, 2.

The prophet then continues his description: *"Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone [Christ], a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation;" Isa. xxviii, 16. "For other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ;" I Cor. iii, 11. "Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citi-*

zens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets; Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together [by a Master Workman, God the Father] groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit;" Eph. ii, 19-22.

Who built this city? I say God Almighty. Who did he place as King-over the city? He says, *"Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion; I will declare in the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen [his people among the Gentiles were the heathen spoken of] for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession;" Ps. ii, 6-8. "Let Mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments. Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death;" Ps. xlviii, 14. "For God will save Zion [he is the only one who can save] and will build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell there, and have it in possession. "The seed [this is the seed that is counted to him for a generation] also of his servants shall inherit it: and they that love his name shall dwell therein." "His foundation [Christ] is in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God." "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favor her, yea, the set time is come. * * * When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory." "For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread [that bread that comes down from Heaven, like the manna which he fed the Israelites in the wilderness]. I will also clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall shout aloud for joy. There will I make the horn of David [Christ] to bud.*

I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed [Christ]." "The Lord shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the Lord;" Ps. lxix, 35, 36; lxxxvii, 1-4; cii, 13-17; cxxxii, 13-18.

We are told: *"There are threescore queens and fourscore concubines, and virgins without*

number." "My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother [Jerusalem, which is above, is her mother]; she is the choice one of her that bare her. The daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her. Who is she that looketh forth as the morning-, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, terrible as an army with banners? Hear this wonderful description: "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valley. As the lily among the thorns, so is my love among the daughters. As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love"- Solomon's Song.

"Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." How sublime these declarations! *"And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." "Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains; for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted. But Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken me." "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands (alluding- to his hands being pierced with nails on the cross] and thy walls are continually before me." "For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like the Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord." "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him [Christ] that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace (made by Christ's blood alone]; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion: Thy God reigneth! He hath redeemed Jerusalem." See Isa. xii, 6; xxvi, 1-2; xxxv, 10; xlix, 13-17; 1,6; lix, 21; lx.* Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein. For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a *"wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her."*

"For behold I will bring forth my servant, the Branch (Christ]. For behold the stone [Christ] that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone (Christ} shall be seven eyes: behold, I

will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day (the day Christ died on the cross],"* Zech. ii, 3. *"God sent a man to measure Jerusalem to see what is the breadth and length thereof;" Rev. xi, 1.

R. S. BANKS.

GOD SEEN IN CREATION AND IN CHRIST

There is a great deal said among the wise as to how God is to be seen and felt in his handiwork. True, the day speaks of his wisdom and power, but in his Anointed we see his grace and truth, and share his love. Men wonder at the sun, moon, and stars, but Christians rejoice in the sweet covenant of his word. Reason may teach us that he who formed the eye, who, likewise, gave the sense of hearing and reasoning, must see, hear, and understand all things, but the work of grace in the soul enables us to get a more exalted view of him. Sense and reason may harmonize in this; that God made and governs the world, but grace enables us to look back to the time when he called us from darkness to light, and enabled us to trust him by faith as our present help in every time of need. Faith enables us to trust in the promise made in Christ before the world began; that when the world is no more, we shall be at his right hand, blessed for evermore.

He is to be regarded as wonderful, because of the mysterious workings of the different members of the natural body, all of which work in harmony; for we are his workmanship. But he is much nearer to us because of the union of our souls with him, which shall never be severed. He is to be loved and reverenced as our Creator. We have reason to love and worship him as the God and Father of our salvation.

Human philosophy claims that nature is the best glass to see the glory of God, and indeed it speaks in great force; for the heavens declare the glory of God, and the skies preach of his handiwork. But the glory of God in Christ Jesus endures forever. It takes poor sinners out of this low ground of sin and sorrow and fits them with his robe of glory, that they may rest in his presence forever.

Let others please themselves with their study of nature and their views of the replenished creation; but while I would not despise these, let me search the pages of the divine revelation and learn more of the plan of redeeming love, where the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost appear in the great work of man's redemption; how that all things in the divine plan work so harmoniously and result in the full accomplishment of its great purposes.

To be sure, the plan of redemp-

tion in Christ will not interest the world at large, because it is not of the world. The world will love its own. But they who are born from above, take delight in the cross of Christ, and rejoice in hope of the world to come.

J. Harvey Daily.
Greenfield, Ind.

IT SHALL NOT COME NIGH THEE; PS. XCI, 7.

When Noah was shut up in the ark, Noah and the favored few, you know how they were tossed about, the rains coming down from Heaven, the waters rushing and dashing below. The windows of Heaven were opened and the fountains of the great deep were broken up; and while they were thus dashed upon the waters, not a drop came in unto them that *were within. "It shall not come nigh thee."* So you see the believer may be surrounded with troubles, and yet. *"it shall not come nigh him."* And there is something more in the expression used in reference to the making of the ark:

"And shalt pitch it within and without with pitch;" Gen. vi, 14. Now, it is a most remarkable fact that the word pitch in Hebrew (the word is Gopher) signifies also atonement. Now see, the slime or pitch with which the Ark was daubed within and without kept every drop of water out. This very expression for slime or pitch in the Hebrew signifies also atonement; and is it not the atonement that keeps out the water? Can anything but the atonement keep the soul from the waters of God's wrath and from the floods of vengeance that shall sweep away the world with the ungodly? There is nothing but the atonement; and that bears up the soul, and keeps out every drop of rain.

J. C. Philpot.

EXPERIENCE OF GRACE.

Elder R. W. Thompson; Dear Brother: - I wish to write you my experience, or a part of it. In *the* year 1893, it pleased the good Lord to convict me of my sin and show me my dreadful condition. My sins justly condemned me and I could only say, *"God, have mercy on me, a poor, vile sinner."* When I was in the house alone, my husband away at his work, I would close the doors and kneel down and ask the good Lord to have mercy on me, a poor sinner. O, my sins were constantly before me, when awake, it seemed. It seemed to me as if I could not bear the burden of them. But I could do nothing but beg God for mercy. When I retired at night I tried to pray, and the first thing in the morning called upon the Lord. It re-

ally seemed the more I prayed, the worse I felt condemned. It seemed that all my prayers were unanswered. I was deeply tried and felt as if I did not have a friend anywhere. It seemed as though I had lost all hope of forgiveness. I continued in this condition for a longtime.

I was sorely tried by old satan. He showed me my dark and gloomy grave. It was dismal to me. I felt as if I was not prepared to die, and I begged God so earnestly for mercy, if it could be his will. A door of hope opened to me and light came to my mind and I praised the Lord. I felt that my sins were all gone; but still I was not entirely satisfied. I attended church and heard the preaching, and it would relieve me, somewhat. I wanted to offer myself to the church, but was afraid they would not receive me. I have left the church house when they gave the opportunity for uniting with the church to keep from going forward for membership. I felt too unworthy to be a member with them. But the last time I went to Old Union church, in North Carolina, I asked for membership with them and they received me and I was baptized by Elder William Craft.

Yours in hope,
Mrs. D. F. Caudill
Penick, Ky.

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union at its last session voted to hold our meeting on Saturdays only because of the age of our members.

Our next union will convene with Canaan Church on the 5th Saturday December 29.

Singing will begin at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30.

We invite our correspondents and visitors to this meeting.

Burnell B. Williams
Asso. Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene with Moons Creek Church on the 5th Sunday in December. The Church is located about a 1/2 mile east of Hwy 86 between Danville and Yanceyville on Park Springs Rd.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Sister Sue Blalock, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER

Andrew Agee, VA	5.00
Flay Mordeca, MS	5.00
Susan Shelton, NC	5.00
Lovie Thompson, NC	10.00
George Blalock, NC	10.00
Wilton Sutphin, VA	5.00
H. L. Knight, NC	75.00
Helen Pittman, TX	5.00
Clonetta Thompson, VA	3.00
Jennye A. Osbourne, MD	25.00

ISAIAH 42:10.

Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof.

OBITUARIES

JEREMIAH (Jerry) LEWIS, Jr .

Our dear brother in Christ was called by our Heavenly Father from his labors on earth to his eternal home Wednesday night, August 29, 2007. Had he lived another week, he would have been eighty-seven years of age. Brother Lewis was a kind and gentle person and had much compassion and love for his church family. We at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church will greatly miss his presence.

Brother Lewis, also known by some as "Pap" was born September 6, 1920 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia to the late Jeremiah Lewis, Sr and Bessie Ferguson Lewis. He was one of nine children and lived in Virginia all his life. For many years he was the owner and operator of Lewis Grocery before his retirement. Before this he worked with Holland Grocery in Axton, Virginia.

Brother Lewis was married twice. He and his first wife had five children. He and his second wife to whom he was married for thirty-nine years have no children.

Survivors of Brother Lewis are his wife, Juanita Hundley Lewis of the home. Other survivors are daughters, Linda Douglas and husband Keith, Jean Smart and Cindy Lewis all of Axton, Va.; Sons, Jeremiah Lewis, III and wife Sandy, and Leonard Lewis both of Ridgeway, Va.; Step-daughter Sheila Patterson Murray of Raleigh, N.C., sister, Ruby Dillon of Eden: brothers, James "Jim" Lewis of Cascade and Jacob "Jake" Lewis of Martinsville. Grandchildren are Donna Spence, Danielle Lewis, Joey Lewis, and Lori Lewis. There are also seven great grand-children.

Brother Lewis joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on August 23,1986. He was baptized the following fourth Sunday by his pastor, El-

der Kenneth R. Key. He loved his church dearly and was a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. As long as he was physically able you could expect to see him in church.

For the past several years he was in declining health and was brought to church when he felt able by his sister Ruby. Until the very end he was a faithful and dedicated member. We are left with many great memories and appreciate the fact that we had the privilege of knowing and being in fellowship with this dear brother.

The funeral for Brother Lewis was conducted on Saturday, September I, 2007 at the Fair Funeral Home Chapel by his pastor Elder Kenneth R. Key. His body was laid to rest at Roselawn Burial Park in Martinsville, Virginia.

May the Lord bless this family and give them comfort and strength to bear the sorrow. The Church, the family and the community have suffered a great loss, but we know we must submit to God's will, for he doeth all things well.

Humbly submitted by,
John Collie

SISTER LEMANTHA LOWE

To know Sister Lemantha Lowe was to love her. She was blessed to bring forth the fruits of the spirit; love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance because she was born of the spirit. We miss her greatly, but feel our loss is her gain.

Sister Lemantha Lowe asked for a home with Fisher Gap Primitive Baptist Church on September 9, 1962. She was baptised the first Sunday in October, 1962 by Elder J. C. Dunbar.

She moved her membership to Coleman Primitive Baptist Church on June 7, 1970 where she remained a loving and faithful member until her death on Saturday, July 14, 2007.

Funeral services were held at Moody Funeral Home Chapel by Elder Kenneth Hopkins on Monday, July 16, 2007 at 11:00 AM. Sister Lemantha was laid to rest beside her husband, Brother Spencer Lowe, in Fisher Gap Church Cemetery. Survivors are her loving nieces and nephews who were her "Special Children", having no children of her own, and a host of friends and church family.

Sister Lemantha's passing made me to realize "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven" Ecclesiastes 3:1. This is a wonderful and great truth of God that there is an appointed time. She believed God controlled all things and none could stay his hand. I was blessed to spend several enjoyable months talking and rejoicing together with her in the Lord's Word, Humbleness, Love and Hope with association with

her brothers and sisters to sit in peace with all was her desire. She also loved to hear our Lord's Doctrine preached in the Predestination of all things. Now she sleeps at peace, awaiting the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Copies of this obituary to be sent for publication and for the church record.

With loving memories,
Carlton Brown

Elder Kenneth Hopkins, Moderator
Carlton Brown, Clerk

SISTER MILDRED A. MARTIN

On April 25, 2007 the Lord of Glory called home the soul and spirit of our dear sister in Christ, Mildred Axsom Martin, just a few days before her 86th birthday.

Sister Martin was born in Vesta, Virginia on May 4, 1921 to the late Joseph and Ella Thompson. Early in life she moved to North Carolina, where she was united in marriage to Mr. John Lloyd Axsom. To their union were born one son, John L. Jr.; and one daughter, Mrs. Joe (Norma A.) Zanetti, who died in 2006. Some years following the death of Mr. Axsom, she was united in marriage to Lonzie L. Martin of Patrick Springs, who survives her. Sister Martin was a beautician by trade about 30 years in Spray, N. C.

On the Ist Sunday in December 1986, Sister Martin requested a home with, and was received by, Liberty Church. She was baptized by our pastor, Elder John Wingfield. She was a loyal and faithful member, and attended her meetings as long as her health permitted. She was much afflicted by health problems the last several years of her life. She was strong in faith and thereby laid hold on a solid hope of eternal life.

In addition to her parents, her first husband and her daughter, Sister Martin was preceded in death by one brother, Curtis Thompson; one sister, Ruth Thompson; one stepson, Mike Martin; and one great-grandson, Blake Clark. She was survived by her son J. L. and his wife Shelby; Her loving son-in-law Joe Zanetti; two sisters, Mrs. Bill (Annette) Habeski and Mrs. Mary M. Pulliam; four grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Her funeral service was held on Saturday, April 28th, at Howell Funeral Home by Pastor Palmer Lowery and her pastor. Her mortal body was laid to rest in Patrick Memorial Gardens, to await her summons from the Lord in the day of His coming.

We live in hope that one day, we shall meet with her and all the redeemed of the Lord at the feet of our dear Savior. May all who knew and loved her be reconciled to their loss, and comforted by her eternal gain.

Submitted by her pastor.
Elder John T. Wingfield

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Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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POETRY

Could we with ink the ocean fill,

And were the skies of parchment made;

Were every stalk on earth a quill,

And every man a scribe by trade.

To write the love of God above,

Would drain the ocean dry.

Nor could the scroll contain the whole,

Though stretched from sky to sky.

From the collection of J. Burch Blaylock.

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EDITORIAL

In the 25th verse of St. John, the 5th Chapter, you will find these words:

"Verily. verily, I say unto you. the hour is coming, and now is. when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."

Elder Kenneth R. Key

He is speaking of that day—Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when they that hear the voice of God shall live and we believe that it is this day, that now they are hearing the voice of the Son of God.

As you have sat here on this hillside throughout this day and throughout this meeting, you have been hearing the voice of the Son of God as He spake to you through his ministers that He has called and qualified and brought and filled their mouths with words that would be comforting unto your soul. The hour is coming, and now is that every heir of God will hear His voice. He speaks to his sheep, and they hear His voice and a stranger they will not follow. We know there are some who say that you don't hear the voice of God, but I believe with all of my heart that He speaks to his sheep and they hear his voice. It might not be an audible voice as you are hearing me this afternoon, but it could be a small still voice as He speaks to you. And when He speaks to you, I believe you know his voice. I believe you know the one that is speaking to you. I believe that every heir of promise, everyone whose name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life, that sometime between the cradle and the grave they shall hear His voice and will heed His call. We who were born in sin and trespasses, we who were lost in trespasses and sin, by nature children of wrath even as others; we who this day profess a hope in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. There is a reason that you have a profession of this hope. There is a reason that you come to

believe in Him. There is a reason that you look unto Him as your Shepherd. He has stirred up your pure minds, and manifested within you that spirit that has given you life, has given you to hunger and to thirst after righteousness here in this world, has caused you to drive for many miles to come and be with those of like precious faith that you might speak one to another, that you might hear the experiences of those of your brethren, that you might find that you have something in common with them, and know that you are not traveling this way alone, but find there are fellow travelers traveling along with you.

Dear beloved, the time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God. I believe that every heir of promise does hear this voice and they do follow Him. You will leave whatever you are doing when He says, *"Take up thy cross and follow me."*

If we are partakers of the Spirit of God, if we are one of the heirs of promise, we must partake of the suffering of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We must take up the cross with Him, and suffer with Him here in this world if we are to reign with Him in that world to come. It is our precious hope, as we heard the dear Elder who stood before you, standing and trembling, coming as it were down to the end of the sunset of life, yet triumphant in that faith, speaking of how good that God has been to him, He has fought the battles for him.

Haven't you learned already that you don't have to fight these battles, that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. He fights the battles for his children. We have worked out of tools and timbers, and have nothing to fight with, we stand as little children, come humble, being cast down sometimes, but thanks be unto God we are not destroyed. The precious hope is that He that has begun a work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. What a glorious way it is. How thankful we are for the blessed hope within our breast, that He has stirred up our pure mind, given us to feel that He is our heavenly Father, caused us to seek that which is food for our hungry souls, given us to hunger and thirst for something, that is better than this time world could ever give, given us to hunger and thirst for something that can only come from His storehouse of mercy. Aren't you glad that the provisions have already been made for you, stored up in His storehouse of mercy, His grace sufficient for all your needs while here in this world. He that has called you from nature's darkness, brought you into the fellowship and the light with those of like faith and taught you to know that He will supply every needed blessing.

Haven't you learned already, as He said unto the Apostle Paul, *"My grace is sufficient."* Haven't you learned already these things? How

gracious and how good God is? And that His mercy is from everlasting to everlasting. Through every trial you have ever had in this world, He has been there with you to comfort you: A VERY PRESENT HELP IN THE TIME OF NEED. What a gracious heavenly Father we have. How thankful we are that He has promised never to leave us, never to forsake us, but be with us always, even unto the end of the world. Isn't it a precious promise, dear mothers and fathers of Israel, that He has promised these things and you who have lived longer than some, how you have been made to know these precious truths, how comforting they are to you when you come to travel through the valleys and shadows of death, and to feel His presence with you. The power to lift you up when you come to the end of your way when you felt there was no way to turn, that you couldn't go on, the burden is too great, you just couldn't stand up. And yet, in some miraculous way you felt strength, you felt at ease, you felt that peace that passeth all understanding.

Yes, I believe the time is coming, and now is, when the children of God shall hear His voice and they know from whence it comes, and they will be given to trust in Him as they journey from day to day as One who will go with them. Oh, how wonderful it is. I want to tell you if you are His, you are not walking alone because He is with you. He ascended back to the Father. He said it is necessary that I go away but if I go away, I will send the holy comforter and he shall abide with you always. Oh, what a blessing this is! As we journey along, and the older we get the more we realize that this world — as the dear brother said a moment ago, this world is not my home. Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble and we are journeying through a desert land while here. We are suffering with Him if we are to reign with him. As we journey on, as the trials and afflictions of life rain upon you, and as the times come when you feel you can't stand up and you can't go on, this God makes a way for you when it seems there is no way.

Mary and Martha as they went to the tomb to see the Saviour, they went along the journey no doubt they pondered in their minds, who shall roll the stone away? Sometimes the burden becomes so great that we wish we could roll the stone away, we wish we could roll the burden away, but when tomorrow comes we find the way has been opened up.

This God of heaven who promised never to leave you and never to forsake you, knows all of your circumstances. There's nothing that we can acquaint Him with that He doesn't already know. You, who may be feeling that surely there is none like you, that your trials and your afflictions and your sorrows are greater than any. And you begin to worry as Gideon of old, as he asked

of the Lord if indeed I have found grace in thy sight, why have these things befallen me? And yet we feel to know that if we are to reign with Him we must suffer with Him. And in this life He said, ye shall have trials and tribulations. I don't want to preach to you, I would love to, but the Bible doesn't teach it, and I haven't learned it from experience, that this would be an easy way for He said, in this world you shall have trials and tribulations. He said that your bread, the bread I will feed you is the bread of adversity, and ye shall drink the waters of affliction. That is your food, that is your drink as you journey here. But it is not all sorrow, it's not all down in the valley, there are times of being upon the mountain top. There are times when we want to sing praises unto His great and matchless name for the things that He has done for us. Oh, how good He is!

We heard this morning, He doesn't withhold any good thing from Israel. Sometimes our greatest blessings come in the trials of afflictions. If we are never brought down, if there is never a famine in our lives, I doubt if we would be here today, I doubt if we would know any of the joys of the fellowship and the love of God's children. But through these trials, through the afflictions, through the famine that we have to come through, we are brought down to the feet of Jesus and from there we can look up and praise His great and matchless name and know it's from Him that every good and every perfect gift comes.

When you were cast down, He stirred up your pure minds. You didn't know what was the matter with you, you didn't know and you went from day to day, one brother, I believe he said he went for three years under the burden of the ministry.

I went for three years under the burden that some day I would have to come and to stand before God's people and it came to me in a dream at night and I could see myself standing before the pulpit speaking to God's people and the text that He gave me then was ***"Fear not him that is able to destroy the body, but to fear Him who is able to destroy both the body and soul."*** I woke up troubled. Troubled, troubled was I! Never was there anyone who felt as unworthy as I. I was so bashful in my boyhood days. I couldn't stand before my school class and speak unto them. It just scared me to death. And when this came unto me, I felt that I couldn't go. Surely this dream will pass and I can find relief. But it didn't pass. It was on my mind every day. Every hour! I tried to get involved in work. I tried to pass it away. I tried to think of everything else but it would come back again. It troubled me.

I can tell you this afternoon, I can fellowship some of the experiences of Jonah as I had to go down to the depths as he went. This went on for several months and the Lord,

I hope it was the Lord, visited me again in a dream and it stirred me up even more. And I began to get sick, I began to be so troubled. I began to go to doctors. I didn't seek the help of the Lord. I didn't cry unto Him. It seems that I was seeking the help of man. I went to many doctors. I went to a chiropractor doctor for nine months for three nights a week. Someone told me that they would be good for your nerves, that they could help you but the last trip I went, I left his office as miserable as ever before. As I found only temporary relief. I finally decided — I was going to a medical doctor and I told him, I have no physical pain, but I feel I am going to die. I feel that I can't live. He told me that this is something that you have inherited. You will just have to live with it.

How many nights I have had to rise from my bed and sit in the living room by myself in a chair, just sitting and waiting to die. This was a miserable condition and a horrible pit. As time passed on I got no relief, but got worse and worse. My wife would have to get up at night and carry me to the doctor. I hope you can bear with me, as I look back upon it. You have heard so much here today as the dear elders have looked back in their book of remembrances that the Lord has written for them to talk of these things, to tell you just a little bit of the journey and the way that we've come.

And as time went on and finally one night, after a period of three years, I was awakened in another dream. But before this time — I felt that I didn't know the letter of the Bible. I didn't know anything about the Bible and I knew that our people didn't believe in seminaries. They didn't believe in going to school (to learn to preach). I just thought if I would slip out at night and attend this bibical college, I would learn the letter and if it pleased God He would reveal it to me.

And this time I awoke, my pillow was wet with tears, I had been crying. I saw myself again standing in this place. And the scripture that was given to me for a text that night was, they shall all be taught of the Lord.

I had been begging for more evidence as I went along in this trial of three years, I begged for more evidence and finally I went to my pastor, (Elder Curry King) I told him of my troubles and I told him of the experiences I had been having. He said, I appreciate your coming to me but I have been looking for this for a long time. He asked me if I would come and take a part in the next service. I told him I couldn't do that, I want more evidence, I want to be more sure of this. I don't want to do that yet. Let's just wait a while. And that's when the dream was given to me: ***"They shall all be taught of the Lord,"*** and the congregation was singing ***"How Firm a Foundation Ye Saints Of The Lord."*** When they came to the verse in the song: ***"What more can he say than to you he hath said,"*** it was

like a record stuck. It was over and over, What more can he say than to you he hath said? I awoke from my dream and it was then I was given to go talk to my pastor.

And a few months after that the deacons came to my home. They wanted me to open service next meeting. I said, no, no, I want more evidence and finally one Sunday when our pastor was away and we had a visiting elder, Elder Ingram was there, and they called on me again. They didn't ask me if I would take part, but the deacon asked me to open service. Elder Ingram invited me into the stand with him and I went and there attempted my first time to speak in public. From that time until now that burden, that feeling that I was dying, was taken away from me. My nerves were strengthened. I have had no more trouble with it until this day, but I don't thank the doctors because I believe I know from whence my help comes.

I believe I know that my help come from the Lord. Before this came to the end I was at an Association and the Elder was speaking from the 121st Psalm where David is saying, ***"I will lift mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help"*** and I believe if I've ever heard the voice of God, I believe it spoke to me and it was like a voice saying, you've been going to the wrong doctor and if I've ever tried to pray in my life, I tried to pray then, but it was to a different doctor. It was to the heavenly Physician. One that is able and does heal all manner of sickness. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.

If you hear these blessed truths, if you've been taught in your heart, and these things have been written in your mind, you shall live. Jesus said I give unto you everlasting life and ye shall never perish. You can be cast down but you are not destroyed. You are in a safe place as you've heard today, that our lives are hid with Christ, in God. It's in a safe place. And He knows your circumstances here in this life and He'll be with you all of the way. I believe I know from experience these things. I can testify to you, and if I had only read of these things or someone had told me of them I'd be a false witness as I stand before you. I believe these are some of the things that God has shown me, that God has taught me and I believe that they that hear the voice of the Son of God SHALL LIVE. The children of the world don't hear His voice. They are the ones that make fun when you try to tell them of your experience. They are the ones who these things have been hid from and it pleased the heavenly Father to do so. We don't understand it, we don't know why these things are hid from them, but Christ said, ***"I thank thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."***

Dear beloved, you have something precious, and is worth more to you than all the gold of Ophir or the cattle of a thousand hills. It's worth more than all of the money in this world. It's the only thing you've got that doesn't perish with the using.

This is everlasting life, this is something that is with you through this life, it is an anchor to your soul both sure and steadfast. It's with you here for all of your needs. It's a stay, it's a rod, it's something to hold you up, it's something to keep you pressing on through all your trials and afflictions. It's something that's precious, it gives you fellowship one with the other, it gives you that love that flows from heart to heart and from breast to breast. Oh, what joy it is! Yea, it's not all in sorrow, it's not all in distress, it's not all cast down. There are times of joy, there are times when we can rejoice together as we talk of these blessed truths. This heavenly Father has called us with an heavenly calling and how precious it is. AND THEY SHALL HEAR THE SON OF GOD AND THEY THAT HEAR SHALL LIVE, and then He says: ***"Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice."*** Yes, the time is coming when they that are in the grave shall hear His voice. The graves shall not hold the children of God. If in this life only, you had hope, you would be of all men most miserable.

But dear beloved, there is something better awaiting you. Here you have had only a little tast, it's been sweet to your taste and you desire more of it and you would get more of it if you could but He gives it to you daily, that daily bread — that which He would have you to have. He drops it down as handsfull of purpose. It's not accidently that you get it, but it's by purpose that you get it. Every heir of promise is going to get everything that God has in store for him. It's going to come down as handsfull of purpose.

I want to tell of a little experience that I had a few days ago as we stood one night in the bedroom of this loved one. He seemingly had a few days to live and is now passed on. He asked that we have prayer together. And while we were there in prayer in this room I witnessed there a light with my eyes closed — that room lit up brighter than any light I have ever seen. I asked my wife and those that were with me when we left his home, did you see any light? Was there a light turned on while I was bowed in prayer? There was none they said. But it was the brightest light that I've ever seen and I believe surely that the Lord was present there with us.

Oh, how these things humble us, how they cause us to fear and to tremble. It's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Just a few days after that, he was called home.

These blessed things, these little experiences we have, they are they which keep us pressing on

through all of the trials and all of the troubles that we have here, yet not to be compared with that joy God has in store for you. We wouldn't ask Him to change that which He has ordained or purposed. No, it's never been my prayer to ask Him to change that which he has purposed for me. I want to suffer with Him, I want to suffer with Him because I know we must if we are to reign with Him. And it is our precious hope that we some day shall see Him, be made like Him and there be satisfied.

The time is coming that they that are in the grave shall hear. One day He's going to call those from the sleeping dust wherever they are. The final end of time and when that resurrection day comes, He's going to call all of those and it's going to be the ones I believe John saw on the Isle of Patmos. He inquired who they were, and they were those that have come through great trials and tribulations. You have to go through them, there is no detour. There's no way around them. Those who have come through great trials and tribulations and their robes had been washed in the blood of the Lamb and made white as snow. It is our hope and through the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ that we do have this precious hope. If the grave had been able to hold Him, we would have no hope beyond the grave, BUT HE AROSE FROM THE GRAVE. He arose, ascended back to the Father and is there making intercession for you and He knows everything that you need and He will not withhold any good thing from you. May God bless you, may He give you encouragement to press on when your troubles come. Don't think it's because He has forsaken you because your Saviour suffered for you, He paid the redemption price, He suffered, He was acquainted with grief, and knew much sorrow. May we continue to journey in the oneness of faith, in that unity of the spirit, and may we continue to enjoy the sweet fellowship and have the desire that we might meet together from time to time, one with another.

A dear sister came to me at the lunch hour who I met probably some thirty years ago in this Association. She said, most of all I desired that I might see you today and that I might hear you, not that she was looking to me as a man but I hope it was because of the sweet fellowship that we had had in Christ in days gone by. She said, ***"Now I'm blind, I can't see you, I wouldn't know who you are if someone hadn't lead me to you, and it's good to see you."*** And there we talked of the things God had written in that book of Remembrance. That book of Remembrance has been so precious to me. We've heard so much of it here today as the old elders have gone back in their experiences. There's a Book of Remembrance – written in Malachi, I believe it is. He has written a Book of Remembrance for those who fear the Lord. There is a

book of Remembrance written for each of you. How many times we see dear mothers and fathers in Israel come down, maybe shut in, in the nursing home, places where they can't come out and have the privileges that we have enjoyed today. But there they can go back in their Book of Remembrance, still precious and sweet to them as they remember the good times they've had together with those of like precious faith. Some day we shall look back upon this meeting, and the joys we've received here today in our Book of Remembrance.

May God continue to record these blessed things that we might look back upon them when we travel through the barren lands. We have to look back to yesterday to those things. We have to go back and we find David, I believe it was, there were times when he felt to be in a barren land and he asked the Lord to ***"Restore unto me the joys of Thy salvation."*** Yes, we are made to cry unto Him from time to time that He might restore unto us again the joys of His salvation, not another, but His salvation. May God bless you is my prayer.

Transcribed from tapes of Sermon Preached by Elder Kenneth R. Key at Staunton River Association July 7 , 1984.

Elder Kenneth R. Key

VOICES OF THE PAST

Mr. and Mrs. H. L. Rogers

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

My full name is Hiram Louis Rogers. I was named after my Uncle Hiram Ratcliff who is still living and getting about. He seems to be in good health and is 95 years old. He was one of the charter members of the Lost Creek Church and the only one still living.

I was born December 21, 1883. My father was George Washington Rogers; my mother was Elizabeth Rareliff Rogers. I was born in Carter County. Kentucky, and have lived within a few miles from my birth place all my life. My parents were very poor people. I was the second oldest one of ten children, one sister older then myself. So I was taken out of school at twelve or thirteen to

work on the farm. so I did not get much education. I married in 1904. January 29, to Martha Mullins. We celebrated our fifty-fifth wedding anniversary the 29th of last January. We have had thirteen children born to us of which are living 6 girls and 5 boys; 25 grandchildren living, 12 great grandchildren.

We had it very tough in our early married life when our children were small. I was baptized by Elder J. E. Thornbury the third Saturday in December, 1909 and received into the Lost Creek Church and I was appointed Clerk of the church the third Saturday in June 1910, which I have served as clerk continuously up to the present time. I was also ordained Deacon of the church September 18, 1915 and on December 5, 1953 I was ordained to the ministry and am at the present time Moderator, Deacon and Clerk of the said Lost Creek Old School Primitive Baptist Church. My wife was baptized by Elder J. S. Hunnicutt May the 6th. 1944 in the same church. All matters of business which has come before this church since it was organized. has been disposed of by a unanimous voice or vote. This we feel very thankful to God for. In all these many years since I have been a member, I have been blessed to attend the meetings almost perfectly. I have probably missed four or five meetings in the fifty years which I have been a member and that principally on account of sickness.

One more thing I would like to mention. When I was baptized, it was very cold. I went to church that Saturday evening with no thought of offering myself to the church. The brethren broke the ice and raked it back to baptize one of my younger brothers, after which the moderator asked if there were anyone who would like to unite with the church. So it seemed that I lost sight of myself and met him at the water's edge giving him my hand. He asked me when I wanted to be baptized. I told him that I was as ready now as I ever would be, not thinking that I had no change of clothing with me and about one and a half miles to walk home. But my uncle, Jim Ratcliff, who lived close to where I was baptized, took me to his home and gave me a change of clothing. He was a short man and heavier than I. I was tall and slim, so his clothes did not fit very well. The pants scarcely came to my shoe tops and much too large around the waist. It was laughable to the carnal minds of people who did not understand. When I got home to my young wife, she stared at me, but did not say a word, asked no questions, neither did I say anything; but I was full of rejoicing in my soul. Everything looked to be full of love, and giving praise to God. My burden which I had carried all my life since I could remember was all gone, and I felt I would be happy the rest of my life. It seemed that I was in a new world. I felt so light that it

seemed that I was scarcely walking on the ground, but soon doubts and fears began to come upon me, and I began to wonder if I might be mistaken about it all, and wondered if it might just be imagination of the carnal mind. I heard of Elder Thornbury telling some of the brethren that he had baptized a preacher. I wondered how or why he thought that, as I had never mentioned my feelings to anyone.

PREFACE EXPERIENCE AND GOSPEL TRUTH

This book contains articles written by me, H. L. Rogers, on different subjects of Bible doctrine. While I am fully aware that the writing is by no means perfect – probably contains many errors and mistakes, like the writer, of which I am full of – yet I feel that in a general way, it contains the scriptural truth. I hope the reader will read it with an open mind, and overlook the errors as it is my soul's desire to know and write nothing but the truth. I don't have much book education as you will see from my writings, but I hope that I have been taught in the school of spiritual experience. The things which I believe and preach, I received them not from man neither was I taught them, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. I have not written this book of articles for the purpose of displaying any eloquence or superior knowledge over the least and most humble brother, for I do surely feel the least of them all.

If what I have written in this is in accord with spiritual truth, it is not because I have learned them by my reading and searching but because it has pleased God to reveal them to me through and by His Holy Spirit; so no credit is due me but all honor and praise belongs to our blessed Lord.

I feel to be less than the small dust of the balance – nothing and less than nothing and vanity. May He give us all, His elect, to see and feel our littleness before Him, that we may look to Him for His mercy and grace to preserve us through time into eternity where we shall always be able to praise His great and Holy name. If I have written anything in these articles that is not in accord with the true foundation which Jesus Christ has laid, it has been through ignorance of the carnal mind and will be burned up, for other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build up this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built there upon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himelf shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

EXPERIENCE AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY

Mrs. Annie Lawhead,
Amelia, Ohio.
Dear Sister Lawhead:

We received your card and were all pleased to hear from you all, and note your request that we write more often for publication. We very much appreciate your request, but we do not think it best to burden our editors too much, taking up time and space from better material and more able writers than myself. Nevertheless, I will write as often as I deem it expedient or as the blessed Lord gives me a mind and ability to do so. I have learned, as He says, *"Without Me ye can do nothing,"* and only by Him that *"We live, move and have our being,"* and so it is that we are daily and momently being saved and preserved by His grace. As the apostle Paul says, *"For by grace are ye saved,"* (notice he says are ye saved, in the present tense). *"Through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast."* So when we hear men boasting, it is evidence of itself that they know but little about the grace of God, if indeed anything at all. While the Lord's people were chosen and eternally saved by grace in Christ before the world was, before they existed in person on the earth. That grace did not stop back there, but follows them on through time and preserves them daily through time into the end of time, and finally houses them in eternal glory.

"Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved.
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed."

"Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days.
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

We do not receive grace as a reward because of volunteered obedience, but to the contrary, we are made obedient by grace. *"For by grace are ye saved and that not of yourself."* If we had to render volunteered obedience, or could render volunteered, that much would be of ourselves, and would lack that much being all of grace, and so we would have that much to boast of, but with me, I have nothing to boast of, except the blessings of my God, for with me it is grace first, grace last, and grace all the time.

Through many sufferings, toils and trials
I have already come,
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace I hope, will lead me home.

Grace taught my soul to pray,
And made eyes o'erflow,
'Twas grace that kept me to this day,
And will not let me go.

I have generally tried to stay away from my own experience or travels, but it seems that I have drifted into it, so I will mention some of my travels. The first serious thought that I recall, I must not have been more than four or five years old, when an old man died, one of our closest neighbors. Father and mother went to the burying and took us children, which was the first burying that I can recall ever being at. When they lowered the corpse in the grave, and began to shovel dirt in on him, serious thoughts began to run through my mind.

I began to wonder if that would be the end of that old man, who was very old, or would he live again some time. I began to become sensitive to the fact that everybody was going in the grave some time, so it gave me much concern. I thought of it for days and nights, in fact, it never did leave me, but thoughts would run through my mind, and I would ask my self questions such as, where will we all go then, after death. So such thoughts continued to bother me all through my childhood days.

It seemed that I was not allowed to enjoy the sports that other children enjoyed because of the fear that was always before me. I would try to think at times that this fear was imaginary and try to throw it off, and it seemed that I could for a little while, but then it would seem to return with a greater force than ever. I would say to myself, *"Lord, what have I done?"* I would feel so wretched, and so condemned that I thought everyone knew it, so I would slip off to myself and try to pray and beg God to forgive me. I felt my time on earth was short, I thought I knew positively that I would never live to see manhood. As the year would pass I would think it would be the last one that I would live to see. Each birthday I would say to myself, this would be the last one that I will see, but many of them have past and I am here yet and today is my birthday, Dec. 21, 1951 and is the 68th one.

So I traveled on this way until I was 26 years old. I united with the Old School Baptist Church and was baptized December 21, 1909 and I thought my troubles were over; I felt so good for awhile. Then there came another that I had wrestled with for years. I had many dreams and visions which are too numerous to mention; in this letter I will mention one. I thought I was going to a little village and on my way I came to a palace of a king. It was up to the right above and I saw the king sitting on the throne, so I felt that he would require something of me and I realized what it would be, so I dropped my head and thought maybe I could slip by but just as I reached the foot of the beautiful stairs, he sent his waiter

to meet me there. She had in her hand a silver cup and it looked to me full of fine seed which looked as pure as gold.

She said, Here, take these seed and sow them. I dropped my head and paused for a moment, and thought of my plans. I had just bought a little farm and was in debt and had two or three small children. So I said, *"I can't sow them now, but if you will wait until I get out of debt I will sow them."* She said, *"Well, you will have to sow them."* She returned with the seed to the king. I went on my way feeling very much burdened, and thought that I had put the king off about sowing the seed. But nay I learned that he had just begun to school me; I must go through the lowest belly of hell and the sea weeds wrapped around my head, and made to cry from the belly of hell that salvation is all of the Lord, and every act of obedience is of grace and grace alone.

'Twas grace that set me on the mountain top,
Twas grace alone that brought me low;
Grace alone is all my prop,
For grace alone is all I know.

'Twas grace in Christ that gave me life.
By grace alone I persevere;
Grace alone is all my delight,
'Tis grace alone that I am here.
Grace alone is all my theme,
And grace alone is all my song;
Grace alone did my soul redeem
And grace alone has led me along.

By grace alone I am what I am,
By grace alone I stand or fall;
By grace alone I have hope in the Lamb,
For grace alone is my all and all.

'Twas grace alone that saved me from the fall,
And grace alone has housed me in;
For grace alone is a solid wall;
So grace alone will keep me to the end.

By grace alone He made His choice,
And sealed it in His Son;
By grace alone we are made to rejoice,
That we were chosen in Him before the world begun.

There is no end to the grace story,
So I now shall come to a cease,
And ascribe to Him all the glory,
And hope by grace to lay down in peace.

I have just told my travels in part,

but it would take pages to tell in full. I do not recall the time when I did not have the impression to preach but fought and rebelled against it. I have been forty years in the wilderness of rebellion, making promises and breaking them and lying, saying that I can't preach and I will not try. At the same time preaching to the hills, rocks, trees, birds and the insects that fly and crawl on the earth, and in my sleep preach until I was entirely exhausted and could not speak above a whisper; yet I have tried all these many years to wear the impression out, but it has worn me out, so I give up; I have surrendered in full.

I am now willing by the power of God to do that which I feel is my duty to do. If I can do that which is pleasing to my God, that which will relieve my burden and give me peace,

I am not much concerned what man thinks about it. I feel that God will take care of that result. One planteth, another watereth, but God giveth the increase.

Your brother in tribulations,
H. L. ROGERS, Denton, Ky.

The Signs of the Times,
Dear Editor:

With Brother H. L. Rogers' permission, I am enclosing his letter to us, for publication, providing it meets with your approval. We enjoyed it so much we wish to share it with others.

We enjoy reading the Signs very much. I have been a subscriber since 1922, but it has been in our family for many years and I hope I can still take it as long as I live.

May God's richest blessings uphold you to carry on with the Signs to His own honor and glory.

Yours in hope,
ANNIE LAWHEAD
Amelia, Ohio

"For by grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. " Ephesians 2:8-10.

All people receive what we may term a grace in a natural way, in having a being, a life, and the preservation of it with the mercies of life such as food and raiment, yea, even the very air that we breathe which man is unworthy of. But the special or particular grace of God which is applied to some people only such as electing, redeeming, justifying, pardoning, adopting, calling, and sanctifying grace is what we are, I hope, interested in.

May we now look at the grace of God as displayed in acts of goodness toward his people. The grace

of God when displayed toward his people is an act of love, mercy, and goodness bestowed upon them. It is no other than love unmerited and undeserved, exercising and communicating itself to them by Christ in a free and generous manner. The grace of God arises from the goodness of His nature and not from anything in the creature; and is exercised according to His own sovereign will and pleasure. ***"I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. " Exodus 33: 19.***

First, the grace of God appears in the election of His people to everlasting life and is therefore called the election of grace and is denied to be of works. ***"Even so then at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work." Romans 11:5-6.*** This act of the grace of God was passed on in His eternal mind before any works were done, good or evil, and without any consideration of them. ***"For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." Romans 9:11.***

May we at this time view some cases of God's dealings with His people as recorded in the word of truth. First, let us view the case of Rahab, the harlot. ***"And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and came into an harlot's house, named Rahab and lodged there." Joshua 2:1.*** I believe they were divinely directed to Rahab's house even though it was not likely the two spies were personally conscious of it, at least, until after they had arrived there. God's providence sometimes acts silently by working in us ***"Both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Phil. 2: 13.*** The two spies may have thought they acted freely in going to Rahab's house, yet their steps were ***"ordered by the Lord."***

It seems clear from the scriptures that Rahab was converted before the two spies entered her home, for she said unto the two men: ***"I know that the Lord hath given you the land." "For the Lord, your God, He is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath." Joshua 2:9, 11.*** Surely the language is that of a believer. ***"By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she received the spies with peace. " Heb. 11:31.*** It is indeed a rare sight to see one stand alone for a righteous cause when surrounded by her own idolatrous people who believed not. This change in Rahab's heart came about only by the operation of God's di-

vine grace. Rahab, being a Canaanite was a complete *"stranger to the covenant of promise."* There were no scriptures for her to read, no preachers so as to hear the gospel. She had been playing the role of a harlot, and was *"by nature a child of wrath, even as others."* There was nothing in this poor sinful woman to commend her to God. By her own choice she was given up to the vilest of sins. But by the divine mercy of God, she was predestinated a chosen vessel in Christ Jesus from all eternity. *"Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Romans 5:20. "But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love, wherewith he loved us. Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved.)" Ephesians 2:4-5.* Do we not see in Rahab's case (as well as our own) the wondrous workings of God's power in His exercise of divine sovereignty and the manifestation of divine grace? God being the Supreme Judge is not bound by any law other than his own free will, and therefore he will *"have mercy on whom he will have mercy and on whom he will he hardeneth."*

The great Apostle Paul whose name was changed from Saul to Paul is another example of *"By grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." "Not of works."* Saul was in authority when Stephen was stoned to death. *"And cast him out of the city and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul." Acts 7:58. "And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem." "As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and hailing men and women committing them to prison." Acts 8: I, 3.* Saul was filled with fury against the church up to the very moment of his conversion, and believed that in persecuting them he was rendering the highest service to God. He did not seem to doubt that what he was doing was of a righteous nature. Saul was a religious man who believed in the works of the law as a means of his salvation. He fully despised the new sect and their crucified Messiah and regarded them as religiously dangerous. How many people in this world today, who profess to be religious, consider the blessed truth (as it is in Christ Jesus) to be dangerous? Paul was, by the grace of God, called from the darkness and ignorance which he was dead in, into the marvelous light of God's grace.

After Paul's conversion, he was a new man and was shown what he must do which was a spiritual work the ages would bless. He was *"baptized"* and was with the Lord's disciples several days at Damascus. He became a member of a noble broth-

erhood of Christians. The lion had become a lamb. Why? Because of his good works? No, because he was a chosen vessel unto the Lord and was ordained for a great work unto the Lord. He bore the name of the Lord to the Gentiles. When we look at Paul's conversion, can we not say that it was from first to last the work of the Lord, the work of His grace and mercy toward Paul? *"I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy."* Can we not look back on our own experience (if we have experienced a change and have been given a blessed hope) and say the same? Paul by his sudden transition was made to realize the impossibility of man saving himself or to have any part in his eternal salvation. He was given to see his total dependence upon the sovereign grace of God and the redeeming work of Jesus Christ through his death and resurrection. I trust we have all (by the grace of God) been shown the same.

The conversion of the thief upon the cross was indeed a great display of divine grace and mercy. The cross of Christ is to some a saviour of life unto life and to others death unto death. To them that perish it is foolishness, but to them that are saved, it is the wisdom of God and the power of God. Matthew and Mark both record that they who were crucified with Jesus, reviled him which seems that both may have reviled him at first while hanging on their crosses. But by the grace of God, the heart of one was changed in a moment. The one changed when ready to fall into the hands of Satan was plucked as a brand out of the fire and made a monument of divine grace and mercy.

The thief was given faith to believe that the kingdom of Christ was of a spiritual nature and not of this world. He was also given faith to believe that Christ was the Messiah and was without doubt that Christ would enter into his kingdom and glory after death. The thief said to our Lord Jesus, *"Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Luke 23:42.* This was a prayer of a dying sinner to a dying saviour. Jesus grants a blessed favor to him. *"This day thou shalt be with me in paradise." (verse 43)* What a glorious display of God's grace, love, and mercy rendered to one of his elect vessels in the last few minutes of his natural life. *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast."*

"By grace are ye saved." This is a spiritual salvation contrived and secured in the covenant of grace for those who are of Christ's love. It is applied to His people by the Holy Spirit who applies it in faith and hope. Because of the certainty of it, they are said to be already saved through Christ their head. It is a salvation from sin, Satan, the law, its curse, justice, and from death and the wrath to come. It includes all the

blessings of grace and glory and is. entirely owing to free and sovereign grace.

This grace involves all the three persons in the Godhead, for men are saved by the grace of the Father who drew the plan of salvation. The Father made a covenant with the Son, in which it is provided and secured, and sent him into the world to obtain it. By the grace of the Son it is provided and secured. The grace of the Holy Spirit makes his people sensible of the need of it and supplies it to them giving them faith to hope in it. For it says, ***"through faith and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God."*** Salvation is through faith, not as a cause or condition of salvation, or as what adds anything to the blessing itself, but is the way, or means, or instrument which God has appointed for the receiving and enjoyment of it. Faith is not the product of man's free will, but is is the gift of God. Salvation through faith is consistent with salvation by grace.

The elect of God were chosen in Christ Jesus from all eternity. They were given to Christ as his bride, as his church. The death of Christ was the means set apart from before the foundation of the world for the saving of them. Christ died as a sponsor ***"For when we were without strength in due time, Christ died for the ungodly." Romans 5:6.*** The grace of God toward his people is independent of all merit and worth in them. ***"Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." 2 Tim. 1:9.*** Grace is not grace unless it is altogether free.

The very statement that we are saved by grace implies that we are fit subjects for grace; and who are fit subjects for grace but the guilty, the wretched, the condemned? When the law of God condemns us and brings us guilty before God and like an iron bolt, closes the gates of heaven against us in our feelings; yet this cannot be so if salvation be of grace. Whatever our many sins may be, their greatness will only serve to illustrate the greatness of God's grace, for ***"Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," Rom. 5:20.*** Undeserved mercy can pardon one sin as well as another. If God acted on the rule of merit with us, then no sin would be pardonable; but when God deals with us in a way of grace, he can pass by any offence as seeing us in Christ Jesus, for ***"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Rom. 8:1.***

If salvation be of pure mercy only, why should not God forgive ten thousand sins as well as one? To blot out ten thousand sins is with him no effort of grace, for ***"He is plenteous in mercy, " Psa. 86:5.*** The Lord's mercy is an ocean which cannot be filled though mountains of sins be cast into it. You may say, I

believe God can save me but my nature is so inclined to sin, especially inclined to certain kinds of sins; but remember God does not deal with his people according to nature. ***"For we were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."*** God does not deal with us on the grounds of our nature, but upon the blood and righteousness of his only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus. Why should the harlot perish? Why should the thief perish? Why should the murderer perish? For thus saith the Lord, ***"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red as crimson, they shall be as wool." Isa. 1:18.***

You may feel as I so often do and say, why do my thoughts and even my acts be so involved in worldly things? O, Lord, teach me to pray, let me not pray as the Pharisee offering up a legal plea that is based upon self. There is nothing in me, O, Lord, but sins and corruption. My sins are laid before thy all seeing eyes as the grains of sand on the seashore. My words are laid bare before thee. Lord, save me from these black and foul things for thy infinite mercy's sake. Lord, thou art merciful, thy mercy will find ample scope in me. Lord, thou are the great physician, I'm sick through and through of my sins. Lord, is not thy mercy free? Come to me, O, Lord, for thy mercy will find a grievousness of misery in me. Lord, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgression. ***"Have mercy upon me, O, God, according to thy lovingkindness. According unto the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." Psa. 51: 1, 2.***

"By grace are ye saved." The statement of the text means that all his people need saving. Saving from our sins, and from the consequences of them: And if we are saved, it is not because of any works which we have already performed. Neither are we saved on account of any works foreseen which are yet to be performed by us. Who among his quickened children, upon looking back on his past life, would dare say that he deserves salvation? Thank God that ***"Christ died for the ungodly" and that "He came into the world to save sinners. By grace are ye saved."*** This is true of every saint on earth and every saint in heaven. May God have mercy upon us all is my prayer.

In bonds of love,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

PSALM 98:1.

O Sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory.

Dear Elder Williams:

Elder Burgess, served Camp Branch Church, in the Pigg River Association for a member of years. He died in 1963, at the age of 86 years. His daughter, Mrs. Louis (Nina) Koogler found this letter that he had written to brother Perdue. At the time of this writing his eye sight had failed and he was trembly, so he dictated this letter to his wife to write for him. Nina knowing that Jamie and I knew her daddy so well thought that we would enjoy his writing, we did as have some others, and thought that we would pass it along to you, and if you see fit to use it in the Signs for others to enjoy it is in agreement with his daughter.

Love to you and your family,
Frances M. Cooper

Elder J. A. Perdue:

Dear Brother, your good letter came as a surprise, but a most precious one. I fully endorsed every word you have written which is to the praise of God's glorious grace. My hope is, I have been taught by the same power you have. It seems to me we are sitting together in a heavenly place. I have been believing in a sovereign God that rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth in all events from the chigger to the elephant. To me He is God Almighty, none like Him, and none beside Him. I hope my trust is in this God of power, it would be folly to trust in any other. I have preached the gospel as being the power of God unto salvation to the believers (if I have preached), with the ability my God has given me, not shunning to declare what my experience has taught me, I hope not to please man but to glorify God. My efforts began near forty years ago, some of the old brethren preachers told me it never would be popular, but to continue to contend for the doctrine and if I went down they would go down with me. They have gone to their reward, I have been feeling I was almost alone in believing in a Sovereign God over all worlds, principalities, and powers, yet I feel He will have some faithful witness here when He comes again, I deem you one of those witnesses, not afraid to declare the truth. The doctrine of absolute predestination of all things is the most glorious doctrine on earth to me. It certainly does not make God the author of sin. The testimony is sin entered the world by the transgression of Adam, just one man, the devil was the cause of that. God is under no law, and can not do wrong, man alone is the sinner and God is the only Savior, does not need the help of man. He is the salvation of the elect for time and eternity, He keeps them as the apple of His eye, all this great salvation came to us and the blessings we are recipients of through the mercy and grace of God.

Grace is a free favor, no worth or merit on the part of the creature. I have not written as I thought I would, I aimed to say in the beginning, you said too many good things about me, I am not worthy of such things, it humbles me. I fear I am mistaken, and that you are mistaken in me. We were at Rocky Mount last meeting and hope to be there next meeting and hope to see you there. Do hope your wife has fully recovered. May the Lord bless you and family. Come to see us and write often, I love you and your writing.

Your brother in hope,
Elder J. E. Burgess

CONTRIBUTIONS

NOVEMBER 2007

Betty Walker, VA	15.00
Douglas Hodges, VA	10.00
Tina Walker, MS	25.00
Jimmy Gray, NC	5.00
Gradie Strader, NC	5.00
Buford Thompson, VA	5.00
Thomas Nichols, VA	5.00
Earl Thurman, VA	5.00
Angie Cox, NC	3.00
Steven Terry, VA	15.00
Sheryl Jackson, TX	5.00
Bodie Lankford, LA	15.00
Kenneth Thompson, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

DEACON JAMIE EVERETT COOPER

The "Signs" has lost another of its long-time pillars. Brother Jamie Cooper was born July 2, 1918, and died September 8, 2007, being 89 years of age. He had been a trustee of the "Signs" since 1985 and his wise counsel will be sorely missed. His counsel was that of a peacemaker and he was a staunch believer in sound doctrine and order. Over the years, he and Sister Frances traveled among the brethren throughout the states of the Southeast and Northeast and were widely known and loved.

Brother Jamie had been blessed with many precious dreams that comforted and edified him. These were crumbs from the Master's table that kept him pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. So many times we have witnessed the tears flowing down his face as he was touched by a sermon or rejoiced in relating an experience.

For over 69 years, Brother Jamie was blessed with a wife who supported him and always attended the "Signs" meetings with him. To Sister Frances, we extend our love and may the Lord comfort you in your loss. We also will miss our dear brother in Christ. ***"Precious in the***

sight of the Lord is the death of his saints" Psalms 116:15.

Editors

ELDER WILLIAM HALE TERRY

With much sadness and heavy hearts, the staff of the "Signs" joins with the family, brethren and friends of Elder Hale Terry in mourning his death. He was co-editor, vice president, treasurer, circulation manager and trustee of the "Signs" and was blessed to perform all his responsibilities most ably. He had been a trustee since 1983 and co-editor since 2002. Brother Hale was born May 25, 1936, and passed away October 3, 2007, being 71 years of age.

Brother Hale was blessed with the gift of sound judgment and wisdom in business matters as well as matters of the church. He loved sound doctrine and order and unabashedly preached Christ the way, the truth and the life. Therefore, he could witness with the Apostle Paul in *II Timothy 4:6-8, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."* He said many times that he did not fear death, but he didn't know what he must endure before death. What a blessing that we do not know that which we must experience before death!

We gratefully acknowledge, with much appreciation and love, the support and assistance of his dear wife, Sister Glenna, with all the duties involved with the "Signs." *Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her" Proverbs 31:28.* Our hearts go out to her and to their children. Our loss is but his gain.

May the Lord of all grace and mercy comfort those who mourn.

Editors

Luke 2:9-11.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shown round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

SONG

There is a friend that sticketh fast,
And keeps his love from first to last,
And Jesus is his name:
An earthly brother drops his hold,
Is sometimes hot, and sometimes cold,
But Jesus is the same.

He loves his people great and small,
And grasping hard embraceth all,
Nor with a soul will part:
No tribulations which they feel,
No foes on earth, or fiends of hell,
Shall tear them from his heart.

His love before all time began,
Shall through all time the same remain
Though rods and frowns are sometimes brought,
And man may change, He changeth not,
His love abideth sure.

The law demanded blood for blood,
And out he poured his vital flood
To pay the mighty debt!
He toils through life, and pants through death,
And cries with his expiring breath,
"Tis finished," and complete.

Berridge

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EDITORIAL

"And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! How shall we do? And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." II Kings 6:15-17.

Elder J.B. Farmer

Did you ever wonder about the angels of God, especially those angels who protect and preserve the elect children of God? We see pictures of what some think angels must look like. And we read of and hear of angels described as some kind of human-like beings with large snowy white wings. Many times they are depicted in the female form. But do those images really describe the angels of God, or are those kinds of thoughts purely fanciful? We desire that God should be merciful and show us the truth of the matter, that we should not be led about with every wind of doctrine and that we should be kept from error. May the Lord help us to see and to understand the truth to the praise of God's mercy and grace, and for our comfort and strength.

Elisha and his servant dwelt in a city, which was compassed about by the Syrian army – a host of seemingly invincible military men with horses and chariots. They had come to conquer and to destroy that city. The servant of Elisha, upon seeing the host, greatly feared for his life and looked to Elisha for comfort and instruction about what they should do. When we are overwhelmed, our nature tells us to do something, and do it quick. We are told by the carnal mind either to stand and fight, or to flee for our lives. But the Spirit, in that small, still voice tells us, *"Fear*

ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." The Spirit calms us down and gives us a vision that we could not see on our own. He comforts us by again and again teaching us that our God rules and reigns in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. He shows us by God given faith, which is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen, that our God is greater than all. He made the world and all that is in it, and He controls it and will surely bring glory and honor to Himself by keeping His children. When the servant's eyes were opened, he was blessed to see the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. There were more with them than there were with the enemy. He was in a safe place, because God had not forgotten him, and had made provision to keep him and to deliver him, even before the servant had any knowledge of God's powerful purpose to save. *"Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world." "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."*

Jacob, when fleeing from his angry brother Esau at the command of his mother and father, lighted on a certain place and tarried there all night, because the sun was set. Here is another child of God, afraid for his life, but still desiring to please his mother and father. He was out in the wilderness, seemingly alone, with darkness coming on and not knowing how things would come forth. It seems that he had nothing of this world to comfort him, because we are told that he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. But Jacob was not alone. He was like David who said, *"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there, If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."* God was with Jacob. Jacob dreamed, and behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. Here is manifested the provision for one of God's little ones, even one in trouble. The angels, or messengers (for that is what the word angels means), were shown to Jacob in a dream ascending and descending on that ladder between earth and heaven. The messengers of God are continually coming down in that small, still voice bringing the good news, teaching, and encouragement from a far country. And the desires and prayers, sometimes in songs of praise and thanksgiving, and sometimes in groans, go up from God's children by way of those messengers to God. The apostle instructed

the children of God to pray without ceasing. This they do as freely as they breathe – as freely as those angels ascend and descend that ladder. And the Lord appeared to Jacob in that dream and said, among other things, "*Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again to this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.*" God brought the sure word of comfort and strength to Jacob in time of need. And He made Jacob aware that His angels are continually ascending and descending for the benefit of God's little ones.

On the way to Rome in a ship, the apostle Paul was comforted by the presence of the angel of God when all hope of being saved was about gone. They had been exceedingly tossed upon the stormy sea by a tempest for many days. The storm bore heavily upon them, and neither sun nor the stars appeared for many days. It must have been something like a hurricane, in which they were caught. Paul and the shipmen had fasted long, for they perceived that unless God intervened for them all was lost. They were in such distress that they cast overboard the tackling of the ship and finally even the cargo in the vain attempt to save themselves. "*After long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Saying Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island.*"

I cannot help believing that these things were written and preserved for the comfort and teaching of God's little children. These are not just historical facts or exciting stories to entertain us, but these historical details, given by the Holy Spirit, also speak of our experience. Can you think back on times in your life when all about you seemed to be in chaos and confusion? Can you remember when you were in such great fear and doubting about the outcome of the trial you were in that you thought you must perish in it? Can you identify with the apostle and the men of old when they were brought to their wits end and said, "*Lord save us: we perish.*" It seems that this has been my lot time and again since being set in this way. Yes, there have been many long and peaceful seasons, but from time to time, if not deceived, I have been brought to the end of my strength

and made to look unto God, who only can deliver. There have been many sleepless nights and days of groaning and begging for mercy and wisdom. There have been times when I thought I would surely perish in the affliction. But God has been merciful through all. And many times, I believe He has sent His holy angel in that small, still voice speaking peace to my soul. In the midst of the trial, that voice speaks saying, all is well, God is in control, even this shall pass, ***"and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."***

God has promised never to leave us or to forsake us, and that He will be with us even unto the end of the world. God cannot lie or fail in a promise. None who are given to believe His promises shall ever be disappointed. And all who are blessed to hear His word and to believe in Him whom God hath sent have everlasting life, and they have passed from death unto life. He has gone before us in all things, even in our afflictions. The way of salvation has been made. Christ suffered and died for our sins, and was raised up again the third day for our justification. God's children are now in a safe place – they are in His hand and no one is able to pluck them out of the Father's hand for He is greater than all. The Holy Spirit said through the prophet Isaiah, ***"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old."*** God is with us, and the angel of His presence is delivering us from moment to moment, and shall bring us to the end of our journey in peace. We are not alone. This is our hope and our confidence. We cling to it with all the faith and strength we are given.

Jesus said concerning the ones beloved of Him, ***"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."*** This is the extent of the care of God the Father for His children. He has appointed their angels in heaven to continually behold His face on their behalf. These messengers of God carry from you every burden, grief, sorrow, trouble, and joy directly into His presence always. And these same messengers return to you with assurances of His love and mercy for you. He pities you, and loves you, and cares for you. And He will deliver you out of your troubles and will bring you safe to heaven's shore without fail. Jesus said, ***"Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give to you the kingdom."*** God has loved His people with an everlasting love, and has determined to keep them while they are in the world. He has given them of His Spirit, which I be-

lieve is the messenger that continually communicates between them, while earth bound, and the throne of God. There is never a moment when they are out of His sight and care, though sometimes we doubt it. Now, we have need of the angels of God to protect and to preserve us. But soon, His people will all behold the Lord God of heaven face to face. They shall see Him with their own eyes. As Job said, ***"Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever! For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."***

This was written in love, and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer 12-9-2007

PSALMS 77:12-13.

I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.

Thy way, O God is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Key,

It is good to speak with you by phone last month. Sherry and I are sorry we were not able to be with you and the other faithful brethren in meetings last fifth weekend. We are feeling some better, but still are not fully recovered from the flu. We hope we will be blessed to visit with you again in the future, Lord willing. We hope you are well and able to attend your meetings.

I was overjoyed to read the last issue of the *Signs of the Times.* Several things seemed to have a great effect upon me. The poem on the first page is one of my favorites, not only because of the words given, but also because of the story behind them. I heard that this, was found written on the wall of an insane asylum many years ago. The author is not known, but must have been highly blessed to know God and His love, even in the midst of horrible circumstances. How I was also made to rejoice in the transcription of what you were given to preach during the Staunton River Association in 1984. The text you quoted from ***John 5:25, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."*** was recently made pre-

cious to me. And in my weak way, I attempted to preach from it last month, and some time later I attempted to write down some of the thoughts I believe were given to me while speaking the things that seemed to be opened to me were much the same as those you brought forth, in your preaching, although I was unaware of your preaching from this text at the time of my speaking and writing.

I was also much moved by the account of your experience of grace and call to the ministry which, we have heard several times before each time with much power and grace. It seems so good that is now in print and hopefully preserved for the benefit of the faithful in Christ.

It was also very good to read a little of the life, experience, and doctrine of Elder Hiram L. Rogers. This wonderfully gifted servant of God was ordained an elder at age 70. As you know, he is also the father of faithful Deacon Grover A. Rogers, recently deceased, whom we already greatly miss. They were both members of the Lost Creek Church our home church. I am sending along with this an obituary of Brother Grover for publication in the *Signs,* at the request of Lost Creek Church. Also included is an article for you to do with as you please. If it seems unsuitable to be published, please feel to set it aside.

Elder Joe Hamrick was wonderfully blessed to preach grace for grace, and and the letter Sister Cooper sent in from Elder J. E. Burgess was good news from a far country, setting forth the sovereign God and the absolute predestination of all things. The two obituaries - one of Brother Jamie Cooper and Elder Hale Terry were also precious to me.

It seems like this issue of the *Signs* was written just for me, but I suppose there may be many readers that feel the same way. Sherry joins me in sending our love to you.

Elder J. B. Farmer

4201 Willow Haven Ct.
Raleigh, NC 27616
December 18, 2007

Dear Tony,

I hope you and your family are well. I was very pleased that you agreed to be circulation Manager and Treasurer for the Signs of the Times. As you know, my father had that responsibility for about twenty years.

I hope you will find the contacts with subscribers as rewarding as my parents did. I often think of the many years of fellowship between my family and Elder Hale Terry and his family. We have a lot of good memories, yet I know he is greatly missed by his family and all who knew him.

I am renewing my subscription for two years. Use the remainder as needed. Give my regards to your family.

Sincerely,
Michael Williams

VOICES OF THE PAST

SORROW UNTO DEATH

The loneliest thing that can be imagined in all the world was the ark as it went upon the face of the waters. Not another object to be seen on all that wide and dismal waste of water that covered the earth,not even a mountain top. ***"The waters prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered."*** Alone upon that dark and dreary expanse, tossed upon that heaving, shoreless flood, with the terrible rain still falling from the black and angry heavens, what scene of greater and more awful desolation can be pictured to the mind; what lonelier object can be imagined?

But there is a scene of greater desolation, of more utter and hopeless loneliness in sorrow and suffering, as the reality is greater than the type. It is Jesus in the wilderness, in the garden, on the cross. When the great deep of God's judgments was broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened to pour out the just wrath of God against sin, only One felt the full power of that terrible flood. It fell upon Jesus the Son of God, and he was alone in bearing it. He was appointed unto this suffering and prepared for it. The infinite wisdom and power of God in this mystery are ***"unsearchable and past finding out."***

All flesh upon the earth died while the rain was falling, but the ark was prepared to feel the full force and terror of the storm to the end. In that was the salvation of those within the ark. So while death was passed upon all men because of sin, Jesus was prepared to feel all the terrors and pains of that death, and to bear all the curse of that law which condemns all flesh to death, until every jot and tittle of it should be fulfilled, until the last drop of the rain of God's wrath had fallen. It must all fall upon him while in our flesh. His sorrow was unto death while he was yet in this mortal life. He must taste all the bitterness of death before he died. Unconsciousness could not come to relieve him of one pang.

And he was as absolutely alone in that suffering as the ark was alone in the flood. In a wonderful and mysterious sense the life of all his people was in him, and they were ***"preserved in him,"*** as all those who were to people the earth after the flood were preserved in the ark. But in his suffering and sorrow while under the curse of the law, he was alone. His disciples could go with him to the garden, but not the place where extremity of sorrow brought

him down to the ground. Three of them, who seemed more closely his companions on special occasions than the rest, could be with him a little farther, but could not yet follow him in his great sorrow. *"Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here and watch with me."* But they could not watch at that time. They slept for sorrow. The sorrow that prevents sleep was not yet upon them. That sorrow was his. He had looked forward to this hour, for he had come into the world for the suffering of this soul; yet now that it had come, *"he began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy."* No matter how certain our expectation of any affliction may be, yet we cannot feel it before the time, and then it will appear almost as though we had not foreseen it. This sorrow of Jesus was the greatest and most bitter sorrow and grief that ever was felt by man. It was by his Spirit, and concerning his suffering, that Jeremiah said, *"Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger."* And again, *"I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath," (Lam. i. 12; iii. 1.)* Now that the hour had come, his own will as a man, weak before the law because of others' sins, full of terror of soul on account of death under the curse of the law, caused him to cry unto his Father to save him from that hour, and to cause the cup to pass from him if it were possible. So great was his suffering that *"an angel appeared unto him from heaven, strengthening him." And even then, "being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."* But the strength that the angel brought prevailed. He came down from heaven to do his Father's will, not his own, and his prayer was, *"Not as I will, but as thou wilt."* He must bear the suffering alone. His people cannot share the burden of sorrow, pain and death, with him. It is their salvation that he, the pure and holy Son of God, a spotless sacrifice, bears the awful suffering alone. If that death that fell on him had touched one of them, that one must have suffered an everlasting death. If any of the water of the flood could have broken through the ark to touch one of those within, then the ark, with all it held, must have sunk forever. But it *"was pitched within and without,"* so that it alone should bear the beating of the storm from which the eight souls within are securely shielded.

So Jesus was prepared to suffer to the full alone, and to die alone, in this sense, as a sacrifice. The part his people have in that suffering and death is not with him, but in him.

In the ark the eight souls were saved by water. (1 Peter iii. 20.) The water that drowned all flesh upon

the earth lifted the ark and those within it above its own destroying power. So the death that Jesus died raised him and all who were in him above the power of death forever. Death was all that was due for their sin. When he died the wages were fully paid, and when he arose by the power of God, the dominion of death is at an end. Death is abolished, and life and immortality brought to light.

Those who saw the rainbow on Mount Ararat had all been in the ark, and had felt the terror and buffetings of the storm which fell upon the ark, though they had not at the time known what it all was. So those who are able to see the everlasting covenant of grace are manifest as having been saved in Christ.

This wonderful story of the sufferings of the dear Savior can never be told to the understanding of anyone who had not been already made to feel it in his own experience. It is not by the application of our mental powers that we come to know what Jesus suffered, but by experience. It is a revelation. The disciples, who loved him, and were near him in the garden, could not then know what he was suffering. How much less is our ability to enter into that awful and solemn mystery by our own efforts. It is one thing to have our natural sympathies stirred by reading the inspired recital of his pains and sorrows, and meditating upon them, and quite another thing to feel a measure of those same pains and sorrows within our own souls. In the latter case the poor soul that is experiencing the fellowship of Jesus' sufferings never knows at the time that it is the fellowship of his sufferings that is felt. Those who were in the ark must have been in great terror and perplexity much of the time while they felt the tossing and shaking of the ark, not knowing what was going to become of them. They could not look out around them, for there was only one window, and that above. But after the covering was removed from the ark, and they came on the new earth, then they understood what had been done, and knew the ming of their strange experience.

In coming into the knowledge of Jesus' sufferings each one is alone. It is so in the beginning of this necessary knowledge, and at every farther advance into an awful mystery the learner is alone. My people are led by a solitary way. ***"They mourn apart; every family apart, and their wives apart."*** Each one says to self, ***"No one can be as vile in heart,"*** Each one feels his own to be a special case of depravity. If he has been kept from out breaking sins, and has not forfeited the respect of men, yet sees that evil in his heart and in his thoughts which appears to him to set him apart as especially vile. He has to *say* with Job, ***"Behold, I am vile, I abhor self."*** Yet he cannot feel that he stands where Job was when he said those words.

It is wonderful how this sense of

being alone in all our troubles on account of our special sinfulness attends all of the Lord's people, and follows them in a measure all the way through. And yet how seldom it is that during the time of especial tribulation they ever think that in this they are following the dear savior. Just what his sufferings were they must know, though only in measure, it was for them he suffered, and they suffer in him. As soon as the thought come to them that the great tribulation on account of sin that is pressing them down into the depths is because Jesus suffered for that very sin, and that they are mourning *"for him whom they have pierced,"* then the trouble is lifted and they rejoice, though still mourning on account of sin, and being in bitterness because their sins caused him such awful sorrow and anguish.

What cries for mercy go up from the poor soul while being tossed as it were on the waves of that desolate, shoreless sea. The cries may be unspoken, silent to the ear of any but the Lord, but O, how bitter, how full of anguish they are. Truly they are *"groanings that cannot be uttered."* What a tender, quieted feeling takes possession of our souls when we first feel a hope that peradventure the Lord hears us. And who can tell the deep joy when we first get a glimpse of the beautiful bow of promise in the cloud, the everlasting covenant of grace, and feel in our souls the blessed promise of the Lord that *"the waters shall no more go over the earth,"* and *"that the Lord will no more be wroth with us nor rebuke us."* How many a time since that blessed experience we have feared his wrath and felt the rebukes of the gospel, yet that promise has held good, and will be good unto the end, for it is *"Yea and amen in Christ Jesus to the glory of God by us."*

"As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."-2 Cor. i. 5. So we learn that suffering is the experience of the Lord's people all through their pilgrimage. They have consolation, but it is only according to the suffering of Christ in them, and as the result of those sufferings. When they stand before the throne, beholding the power of God with praise, it is as having come out of great tribulation. When the life of Jesus is made manifest in their mortal flesh, it is because they bear about in their body the dying of the Lord Jesus. (2 Cor. iv. 10) When they are favored to lean upon their Beloved, it is as they are *"coming up out of the wilderness."*

Now this suffering is not some exalted, holy feeling, such as you, my brother or sister, have imagined belongs only to those who are far above you in purity and goodness, but it is just what you feel of sorrow, shame and self-loathing while you see the evils of your corrupt nature, and the sins and sinfulness of your heart and life. This is sometimes proved to you while in humble con-

trition and self abasement before God when you are enabled humbly to confess them, and are given the soul-surprising assurance that these very evils and transgressions in thought and word and deed that have made you hate yourself, are the ones that were laid upon the dear Son of God, the very sins for which he died. While in the darkness, with only your sinful flesh in sight, how very much alone you felt, and how your soul was tossed about, and buffeted, and almost overwhelmed, like a ship on the stormy sea; but now as your soul gets a sweet view of Jesus, and rises to a blessed hope that you are feeling the fellowship of his sufferings, you feel like singing praises to his name, and telling to all that fear God what he has done for your soul.

At such times his service is very sweet and comforting. We count it a blessing to feel the Spirit of obedience, and to be enabled to act out that obedience. But how often we are tempted to doubt our motives in our religious works, and fear that we are prompted by the vanity of the flesh. From first to last the experience of the exercised soul leads him to doubt the movements of the flesh, and to earnestly seek unto the Lord to be led by his holy Spirit.

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." When the Spirit of the Lord is searching and probing our hearts, what anxiety, what jealousy we feel lest it be the flesh instead of the Spirit which is leading us, even when we are doing what we know it is the privilege of the Lord's people to do. We question sharply our motives, fearing they are selfish, and that we are not doing all to the glory of God. We are sometimes told that we ought to obey in order that we may feel better, but the word of God and his Spirit do not teach us that, but that *"whatsoever we do we should do all to the glory of God."* The Spirit alone can lead us in that holy way. Every fleshly motive is selfish, and hence our fear and anxiety.

It does not help to encourage a poor soul who is tried in this way to say to him, *"You ought to obey in order that you may feel better."* The Saviour's obedience did not make him feel better, but brought him into darkness and into the depths, and filled his soul with bitterness. But what he did was for the glory of God. We may say to one in whom we have seen an experience of grace, "You ought to be baptized; it is your duty. If you obey you will feel better." But his reply may be, *"I fear that such a holy privilege is not for such as I. I fear it would not be obedience, but presumption in me to receive that ordinance which belongs to the Lord's people."*

Now it is for us not to urge such an one forward while his conscience, which is very tender in the fear of the Lord, is filled with such solemn questionings. We can show

to him, as we may be enabled, the scriptural marks of those to whom that ordinance belongs, but we must all remember that the assurance in his soul that the sweet command rests upon him must come from the Lord.

Brethren in the ministry, if your obedience to the call which you have felt in your souls to preach the gospel was in order that you might feel better, how many of you would or could go on in that solemn work? Think over your experience in that business which you did not seek, but into which you were thrust. What shrinkings and sinkings of soul you have felt as you have approached the time when you must stand before the people of God, and have tried to begin to try to preach in the name of Jesus, the gospel of his grace. Sometimes your trembling sense of unworthiness, inability and unfitness for that great work have continued through the sermon, and sometimes you have been lifted above yourself and you have been filled with the sweetest, holiest joy a poor mortal can feel as you declared, in the power of the spirit, the glad tidings of salvation. Sometimes it has been quiet work, and you have felt thankful that you were in any degree enabled to speak a word in season to him that is weary.

But oh, the trials, the misgivings, the wretched, wearying doubts after your work for the time is done, and you are alone again. What heart-searchings, what questionings whether you have not been preaching yourself more than Christ, whether your glorying was not more in yourself than in the Lord. How many a time you have said to yourself, *"Surely I must never undertake to preach again."* Well, the Lord knows how to deal with his servants. You have not quit the work yet, nor will you until you have fulfilled the work unto which he has called you. You are not preaching in order that you may feel better, but for the glory of God. You cannot stop, though you feel as though you could not go on. There is a blessedness in the work, even in the sufferings and sinkings down, for in it all Christ is exalted.

And you, poor soul, who look with love and longing upon the ordinances and privileges of the church, and wish that they might be yours, in the Lord's own time the sweet persuasion will be yours that they belong to all who want them. In the Lord's good time the power of his word of sweet command as written in the Scriptures will be felt in your heart: *"Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her."-Isa. lxvi. 10.* We must all wait for the Lord, and, blessed be his name, he always comes "right early." All our times are in his hand, and they can neither be hastened or delayed.

We all see in ourselves enough of disobedience, and enough of sin in the best obedience of our hands,

to give us daily errands at the throne of grace, and to bring out of our souls the publican's cry for mercy.

How many of the Lord's dear people go far in disobedience, living after the flesh until they die away from spiritual things. How often we feel that in faithfulness we ought to exhort, reprove or rebuke them, but are held back for fear we are not spiritual, and therefore are not qualified to restore such ones, or thinking that we ourselves need the reproof as much as they, if not more. But we must try to do our duty; yet if it is only as a duty we do anything it is of but little account before God; and if it is only to relieve ourselves of responsibility, and *"to feel better,"* that we do anything, the motive is only a fleshly one.

When the love of Christ constrains us, then love to the erring or needy one will prompt what we do or say, and while we do our work faithfully, and in the fear of the Lord, we shall remember that the Lord only can give repentance. Scolding never restored a wanderer, nor ever honored the Lord. The fire which the Lord kindles on the altar of the heart will never quite go out. The Lord will brighten it in his own time. He and not man, gives the stripes which bring back the children who forsake his law. However far they wander, he knows where they are, and is visiting their transgressions with the rod, as he said he would, and they are often feeling that rod most when to us they appear most defiant and stubborn.

The salvation of God which grace brought to us in our first experience of a hope, is the same salvation which that grace bringeth through all our earthly pilgrimage in every time of need. That grace which bringeth this salvation teaches all the various subjects of it all things in their walk and life which become sound doctrine, and in which that salvation is manifested unto them from day to day, in all the various circumstances of their life, and that grace will keep them through faith unto the full and glorious revelation of that salvation in the last time. (I Peter i. 5.) It is that salvation which the psalmist prays may set him up on high. It is that salvation that appears in all the beautiful order of the church, and which the saints minister to each other while walking in the commands of Jesus. It is the salvation of God of which the apostle speaks when he says to Timothy. *"In so doing thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee,"* and which appears in the faithful ministration of him who converteth a sinning brother from the error of his ways, when he thus *"saves a soul from death and hides a multitude of sins."*

The saints have no salvation of their own to handle, and deal in, and minister, separate from the salvation of God. Jesus is our salvation, and to him the poor soul cries in time of darkness and distress, *"Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.*

Without Jesus, our salvation, we can do nothing. He is our Sun, and his salvation, like the sunlight, reaches "to the ends of the heaven, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof." That salvation will not fail any of the saints. Who speaks of another salvation which is not of grace, but of works? That salvation, and the grace that brings it, are sufficient for us in all our times of need. They appear in the obedient walk of the faithful people of God, who walking in his fear and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost are edified and multiplied, (Acts ix. 3) and also in the rod and the stripes with which our faithful and loving Saviour visits his erring children, and restores them to the joys of his salvation. All our times are in his hand, and provisions of grace and salvation are made for each of them. The child of God who has gone farthest in rebellion and sin, when, restored to his right mind, feeble and sore broken, humble and contrite, crying bitterly, he feels the sweet and compassionate and loving beams of salvation falling softly into his sorrowing soul, has to say, ***"Behold, what wondrous grace and mercy that could save such a sinner as I."*** And the most obedient child of God, as he looks over his life, and contemplates his labors in the Lord, and the love and fellowship which the brethren have manifested to him, and then sees in his own heart and life such evidences of a depraved nature as sink him into the dust, wonders at the mercy which, like Paul, he has obtained of the Lord to be faithful, is astonished that he has been kept in the comfort of obedience while others have been suffered to wander far away, and suffer much for disobedience, and instead of feeling that any praise or reward is due to him, he says, ***"What have I that I did not receive? If God had dealt with me according to my deserts, I should not have stood. To him be all the praise. It was not I that did these works of obedience, but the grace of God which was with me."*** So the most faithful saint on earth, joins with the worst backslider when restored to the manifest favor of and says, ***"By the grace of God I am what I am,"*** and there is no one left out of that heavenly, choir when they sing in perfect accord, ***"Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake."***

Elder Silas H. Durand

Romans 1: 22-23.

Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

And changed the glory of the uncorruptible god into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

PSALM XXXI. 15

"My times are in thy hand."

DEAR BRETHREN :-As a traveler upon a journey often when he reaches a mile-stone will pause and look back over the way his feet has trodden, and then forward, if perchance he may gain some view of what yet lies before him, so it seems natural that when the yearly mile-stones of our lives are reached we should reflect upon the past, and think of the future, and of what may lie before us in our journey. This is true of all men in every age and clime; but it must be specially true of the christian pilgrim. He has so much more than unregenerate men to reflect upon in the past, and so much more to anticipate in the future. But whether he thinks of the past or of the future, the believer sees one thing along every step of the way that no one else sees, and that is the hand of God guiding and the will of God ordering his steps. His journey has been no uncertain wandering of a blind man groping in the dark, but the ordered pathway of a father safely, wisely and lovingly guiding or bearing his child. The Bible teaches us that no more surely is it true that God appoints and controls all the coming and going and changes of the natural elements of the world, as the seasons, day and night, cold, heat, clouds, storms, sunshine, appointing to all their times and places, than it is true that he is equally sovereign in all the providences of our lives, and what is still more precious to be believed, in all the spiritual mutations through which we pass.

It is sure that the child of God has a providential pathway in which to walk, as well as a spiritual travel. It is equally sure that his God has appointed the one for him as well as the other; and we have but to read the life of David, together with his Psalms, or the life of Paul in connection with his letters, to see how our providential life is bound up with our spiritual life. God has ever made the former subservient to the latter; and in the latter no more than in the former does his sovereign will and eternal purpose appear.

I have felt moved for a few years past to insist upon a *"God of providence"* as well as a God of grace, because there has seemed to me to be a tendency to ignore this side of the matter, to throw out of the calculation our providential surroundings, doings, willings and sufferings, and to present exclusively our spiritual exercises, wherein God leads us with sovereign wisdom and power. It is sure that holy men of old counted it joy to believe in a God of providence as well as of grace. In their view his providence entered into and appointed the minutest step of their lives. Naturally as well as spiritually they believed that they lived, moved, and had their being in God. No matter by what channel sorrow or joy came to them, they always said, *"It is the Lord."* Now it has

seemed to me that we are in danger of drifting away from this. Instead of seeing God in all our lives, both providential and spiritual, we are prone to put him far off, and consider him not. Holy men of old rejoiced that the God whom they worshiped had ordained all their paths for them, and why should not we?

At this end of the old year I have been looking back and striving to look forward. I see much that looks dark and devious in the past, and much that seems threatening in the future. Personal trials in the past, personal anxieties for the future; and what is worse, church trials in the past, church trials for the future. Now it has seemed to me that underneath the throne of God I can see nothing to rest in; but by faith beholding the divine rule I can rest. ***"The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof."*** - Psalm xcvii. I do not know what may be in all the future of God's providence or grace toward me, but I am sure that his will, purpose, love and grace will be everywhere. "Not a sparrow falls to the ground without him"; and surely if, as the Lord said, we are of more value than many sparrows, we cannot take one step without him. Whatever may be unexpected to us, we may be sure that nothing is unexpected to the God whom we serve; for ***"known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world."*** So that from the beginning our God has not done one thing that from the beginning he had not appointed. With him there are no new purposes caused by changing and unforeseen circumstances. In this we may rest. We seem to be tossed by varying winds upon a restless sea; but he holds the winds in his fists, and "the sea is his, and he made it." In the midst of these various reflections upon the past and present, called up by the advent of this new year, my mind has been led to these words of David, ***"My times are in thy hand,"*** and they have made me glad; and through these words I have been led into some reflections which I desire to pen down and submit to you.

First, these words of David are not only the expression of his personal faith, but are the words of divine inspiration as well. They are not only the expression of that which David most certainly believed, but are the words of God to us, so that we may count them as being most certainly true. They are the expression of the sovereign, over-ruling and faithful care of Jehovah for his believing child David every moment of his life. They declare that God has appointed the variety and number of his times, and that they are measured out to him according to the one supreme will. This affirmative implies a full negative also. Our times are not in our hands. It is not ours to bid our seasons come and go at will. We cannot command the darkness nor the light, neither can we influence their coming or going.

Who can bind either leviathan or the sweet influences of Pleiades? Let it be borne in mind that I speak here more especially of the providence of our God, but let it also be remembered that this is all true of the spiritual life as well.

Now, secondly, David speaks these words as though he were glad above measure. It seems to be a sort of exultant cry. The words are not the language of one who submits to the inevitable, to which he is opposed, but they express a great joy. David must have learned two things ere he could utter these words as he did. He must have learned that he could not guide his own feet safely, that he could not be trusted to measure out his own times, that he had not to look to blind chance in this matter; and on the other hand, he must have learned some things about the God whose sovereign appointment he confessed and rejoiced in. M a n y of the heathen believed in a blind fate; but it was David's joy, and it is ours also, to believe in an all-seeing and all-ruling and all-appointing God. In order to rejoice and exult that his times were in the hands of God, David must have learned that here was to be found almighty power, supreme wisdom, infinite love, and unchangeable purposes. Leave out any or all of these things, and there could be no room for rejoicing that *"his times"* were in the hands of God. The word teaches us that our minds are finite, while all the attributes of Jehovah are infinite. The finite cannot comprehend the infinite, and at best it can but dimly apprehend infinite things. How much we must believe of which we can see but a dim outline or shadow! So omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, eternity, holiness, heaven, are all words expressive of truth which we must believe, and yet we do not begin to grasp the meaning of one of them; and yet it is such a Being who reigns, and of whom David could rejoicingly say, *"Many times are in thy hand."* Right here I am reminded that another and a greater than David, *"he who was David's Lord,"* also said, "The Son of man indeed goeth as it was written of him" (Mark) , or *"as it was determined."*- Luke. This he said specially of his betrayal. His God had determined the fact, and the time and the way of his betrayal. Jesus confesses this, and declares that all must be, as it was written in the prophets. Jehovah had decreed this time for the dear Savior, and that Judas should sell his Lord just then; and yet Jesus said, *"Woe to that man by whom he is betrayed. It were good for that man had he never been born."* Concerning this I will only remark further that two things meet us in the text, viz., that God had determined beforehand that Judas should betray Jesus, and that Judas was condemned for doing this act.

But Satan may take hold of the natural unbelief of our hearts, and

tempt us after this fashion. David was a great man, and he had a great work to do in the world, and therefore his times were of vast importance, and therefore God held his times in his hand, and measured them out to him; but I am but a worm, a babe; I am of little use in the world; it matters little whether I live or die; and I cannot suppose that what was true of David is true of me. But this is truly a temptation of the evil one, and is met by the testimony of Jeremiah when he said *"O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."* This is true of all men; and so by this testimony we learn that the times of the very least as well as the greatest are in the hands of God.

But now the question comes up in my mind, What does David include in this expression? Does he leave anything out? Does he say that any of his times are not in the hand of God? Who would venture to say that David made any exception? Who could point to any period in David's life and say, That time was not in the hands of God? From the time when he kept the flocks safely from the bear and lion, to the time when God called him home, was there one spot when it could be said, This did not come from God ? The words of the text might present to our minds the picture of a child who stands waiting with expectancy the appointments of a father or guardian. All that this child can hope for or dread, that guardian has in his own control; but the child has no fear, and is well content, for he has learned to believe that his guardian is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. So he comes or goes, studies, works or plays, eats such food and wears such apparel as his guardian appoints; and because of his faith in and love to his guardian, he confidingly and joyfully confesses, *"All my times are in his hand. He orders all my ways, and I must and do leave it all with him."* So our sovereign Guardian and Friend holds our times, of whatever sort they are, in his absolute control. O that we may, like David, have a heart to praise God that it is so!

If we turn to this Psalm, we learn (verse 4) that men were covertly seeking David's overthrow, (verse 7) that he had been having trials and adversities, (verse 8) that he had been assailed by enemies, and (verses 9 and 10) that he was filled with trouble and grief. Such times as these he had met with, and of them he said, They are in God's ha- nds. Also, all through the Psalm he prays for deliverance and sal- vation; and these times of deliverance are also in the hands of God. David by this could learn submission under the afflictions, and patience while waiting for relief. Once he said, *"I was silent, because thou didst it."* And Job said, *"Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath*

taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." So we learn that our times of trial, in whatever garb they appear, are all in the control of the Almighty. He measures them out to us at his will; and so also the joy comes when and how he pleases. Nothing in our lives is left to chance. With Jehovah there can be no contingencies. "Known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world." He does nothing that he did not purpose to do ere time began. He works *"all things after the counsel of his own will;"* all things, without exception. Unless David had believed all this he could not have said, *"My times are in thy hand."*

How exactly similar to this confidence of David is the language of Paul in portions of the eighth chapter of Romans. In verse twenty eight of that chapter we hear him saying most confidently, *"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."* Paul here takes strong ground: *"We know."* He takes broad ground: *"That all things."* He takes comforting ground: *"Work together for good."* He takes discriminating ground: *"To them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."* I have just said that Paul takes broad ground. He says, " All things." Down in verse thirty-seven, in this same eighth chapter of Romans, he says precisely the same thing in other words. He enumerates tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and the sword; and then he says, *"In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."* We are *"more than conquerors."* That is, we turn even enemies into our service; and thus all things work for our good, as he said in verse twenty-eight. God works secretly, and often we cannot see his hand, and still oftener we cannot trace out how good is to result from many providences; but his word says it all does work for good, and can we not believe his word, and trust him even when we cannot trace him?

To the sick ones this applies. Much is said in these days about health and cure-alls, mind cures and faith cures not excepted. Much is said also about the care of our bodies, and sanitary regulations for houses and cities; but I notice that men suffer and die everywhere alike. After all is said and done, it still is true that our times of sickness are in his hand. If there be sickness, it is from his hand; and the same hand makes us well again. Each in its place and time is fulfilling the purpose of God, and working for good to his loved ones. In this faith, patience and cheerful resignation are to be found; but if sickness does not come from the hand of God, and is not meant for our good, then it is vain to speak of resignation, for we have a right to murmur at what comes from the devil, or grows out of our own folly. May God help each sick one to say, *"My times are in thy*

hand." The faith of Job is the best faith. In his losses and afflictions he saw neither Sabeans, nor Chaldeans, nor wind, nor fire, nor Satan himself, but only God himself. My brother or sister, whatever your afflictions may be, and however long they may endure, *"it is the Lord."* All is in his hand.

To those who are passing through the sorrows of bereavement these words apply. A dear sister whom I know had lost an only child. While the child lay dead in the house she was filled with great bitterness, and would not be comforted, and could not weep. As the hour of burial drew near an uncle came to her as she sat alone in her room, and said to her, *"Think who has done it."* Her heart responded to this, and all the bitterness gave place to submission at the thought, *"The Lord has done it."* This time of her trouble was in the hands of God.

This word suits those who are persecuted or slandered, or whose names are cast out as evil; those who are poor and needy and distressed. On the other hand, if we are well and happy and strong, if we have friends and prosperity, if a good name and riches be ours, these words are still just as true as before. Our times are in the hands of God; and if we believe these words we shall not be in despair when sorrow comes, and neither shall we be exalted above measure in the day of our prosperity. We receive either one or the other according to the sovereign will of God.

Our circumstances may change, but there is no change with him. With him there is nothing new. He has no new knowledge, no new purposes, but all was fixed in the infinite mind from vast eternity. He who created the ponderous world also created the mote that we see floating in the sunbeam; and so he who set bounds to nations also ordained the feeble steps of such finite worms as we. Just as carefully and omnipotently as he struck out the track of worlds in space, so accurately and omnipotently has he from the beginning struck out our pathways of joy or sorrow. Our times are in his hand.

I said in the beginning that I had been striving to look into the future, but I am glad that I cannot pierce that vail. I am also glad that all my ways of word or thought or deed, all that I shall do or suffer or enjoy, are in God's hands.

"The steps that I take, and the station I fill, My Father determined and wrote in his will."

My brethren, I send this as a sort of New Year's greeting. I wish for you all, if it be God's will, a Happy New Year.

As ever, I remain your brother in hope of life,

F. A. Chick.
Reisterstown, Md.

(We enjoyed reading the above so much that we felt our brethren would enjoy it too. It was written by Elder Chick and published Feb. 1, 1888. - J.D.W.)

St. John 1: 6-13.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of flesh, not or the will of man, but of God.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 2007

Wanda Brown, NC	5.00
T.R. Pullig, TX	5.00
Jim Jones, NC	5.00
Mabel Hedrick, VA	5.00
Glenia S. Shelton, VA	5.00
Ruby Dyer, VA	5.00
Eva Wyatt, NC	5.00
Michael Williams, NC	25.00

OBITUARIES

CARL LEONARD MOORE

Brother Carl Moore, 82 of 8391 N.C. 700 Hwy., Ruffin, N.C., departed this life on July 22, 2007 at Morehead Memorial Hospital in Eden, N.C.

Brother Carl was born on January 15, 1925 in Guilford County to the late Thomas and Pearlie Tedder Moore. He was a retired farmer and carpenter and was a U.S. Army veteran of World War II, having served in the Philippines. He was a self-taught man and was skilled in welding, plumbing, electrical wiring and masonry.

He is survived by his wife of over 61 years, Alease Pruitt Moore, of the home, daughters June Strader and husband Percy of Reidsville, N.C., and Debbie Mills and husband Allen of Ferrum, Virginia. Sons, Linton Moore and wife Rita of Ruffin, N.C., and Charles Moore and wife Pam of Roxboro, N.C., eight grandchildren, 13 great grandchildren and one great-great grandchild. Sister, Grace Southern of Reidsville, N.C. and step-sister Judy Jacobs and husband Lee of Madison, N.C.

He spoke of his wish to join Dan River Church and be baptized, but he was very sick and was unable to return to church. The family asked Elder Key to come to the Veterans

Hospital in Durham, N.C. where Brother Carl was a patient. He and his wife, Sister Alease, joined the church there that day. That was July 16 and he died on July 22, 2007 before he was baptized, but the Blble says his people were baptized with Jesus In the River of Jordan.

Brother Carl suffered much, as he was sick for several years. The Bible says if we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him. There remaineth, therefore, a rest for God's people. For the sufferings of this world are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Funeral services were conducted at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on July 24, 2007, with Elder Kenneth R. Key officiating, with burial in the church cemetery to await the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We shall miss him, but our loss is his eternal gain.

Gradie H. Strader

SISTER NANNIE PHILLIPS

It pleased our Heavenly Father to call Sis. Nannie Phillips home on Nov. 20, 2007 just past her 91st birthday, Sis. Nannie was born Sept. 25, 1916 and lived in Floyd Co., Va. her entire life. She was preceded in death by her parents and other family members, also her husband Victor C. Phillips, and son Joe F. Phillips. She leaves three sons and daughters-in-laws, Wayne Phillips, Nelson and Gelia Phillips, Tobias and Kathy Phillips, and one sister and brother-in-law, Helen and Elza Cox and 6 grandchildren, 19 great-grandchildren and 6 great-great grandchildren.

Sis. Nannie united with Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Sunday Oct. 24, 1948 and was baptized the same afternoon by her Pastor, L. A. Harris. She was a faithful member for 59 years.

Sis. Nannie related many times that the day she was baptized was the happiest day of her life and felt she had obeyed her Lord and Savior. She was a firm believer in Salvation by the Grace of God. She traveled many miles with her companion to Sister Churches of like faith and order and would welcome those who attended her church to her home.

Sis. Nannie's funeral service was held, at her home church, Indian Creek on Friday Nov. 23, 2007, by her Pastor, Elder Kenneth Hopkins, Elder Thomas Pegram, Elder Eugene Gunter. She was laid to rest in her home church cemetery beside her husband to await the calling of our Lord and Master on that final day, which all days were made for. We live in Hope to hear the same calling. Done by order of Indian Creek Church in conference on Nov. 22, 2007.

Elder Kenneth Hopkins, Moderator

J. B. & Jean Mitchell, Committee

DEACON GROVER ARLEN ROGERS

On November 12, 2007, it pleased our heavenly Father to call Brother Grover Arlen Rogers from the walks of men at 78 years of age. He never married but cared for his family and made kind provisions for them as long as they lived. Brother Grover was the son of the late Elder Hiram Lewis Rogers and the late Martha Mullins Rogers. He was born August 21, 1929, at Denton, Kentucky and lived there all his life except for the time he spent in the U.S. Army from 1950 until 1952. He was Private First Class and served in Texas and in Germany. He retired from the Columbia Gas Company. Brother Grover was the youngest of eleven children. All his siblings preceded him in death except for Harmie Rogers of Grayson, Kentucky. Those gone before are brothers Clayton, Clifton, Homer and Hubert Rogers; and sisters Delphia Black, Irene Watson, Lorain Bellew, Madgel Rogers, Mary Waugh, and Mavie Cooksey. His other survivors include several nieces and nephews and many friends.

Brother Grover was blessed to be a good and faithful man. He asked for a home with the Lost Creek Primitive Baptist Church of the old absolute predestinarian order on August 1, 1993 and was received on his profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. On September 5, 1993 he was baptized. Elder J.B. Farmer officiated with Elder W. P. O'Neal assisting. Brother Grover was ordained to the office of deacon on August 24, 1996. He was a very quiet and soft-spoken person, but was wonderfully blessed to set forth the truth in the power of the Spirit. He was sound in the doctrine and order, which Christ gave to His church. He was faithful in attendance at home, and also visited other churches at some distance as much as he was enabled. He was also blessed to utter some of the sweetest, most humble prayers in the closing of our meetings. We always trusted his judgment, and could always depend on his word. He took good care of the meeting-house and grounds, and greatly helped in carrying out the business at our associations. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. This fruit was abundantly evident in Brother Grover. A tree is known by its fruit. We already greatly miss him, but must submit to the loving will of the Father in taking him home.

The Lost Creek Primitive Baptist Church requested in her December, 2007 conference that the Moderator and Clerk write this obituary and present it to the *Signs of the Times* for publication and have one copy entered into the church's minutes. This was written in love and in hope of eternal life. 12-10-07

Elder J.B. Farmer, Moderator
Sister Sherry Farmer, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

SONG

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my Lord;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.

See from his head his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet?
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

His dying crimson like a robe
Spreads o'er his body on the tree,
Then I am dead to all the globe,
And all the globe is dead to me.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

Watts.

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EDITORIAL

Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, how long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you and ye believed me not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not because ye are not my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my Fathers hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one. (John 10:24-31)

Elder R. H. Campbell

Many times, in the past, I have read scriptures that at that particular time, seemed to contain the fullness of the doctrine of God our Savior, and other times they do not, and the other day as I read the above verses they seemed to do that very thing for me. The Jews were gathered around Jesus, and they asked him to tell them plainly if he was the Christ; which he had already done. He said, I told you and ye believed me not, now the question arises, why are they following him, and why do they ask the same question, over and over again, if they are not going to believe what he says anyway? They were just seeking an occasion against him and a desire to draw attention to their own belief, and are not really concerned with what the truth of the matter is, but rather a desire to further the spread of their own doctrine, and authority. Then Jesus answered, as candidly as it can be stated, the reason that they did not believe, which was simply because they are not his sheep: end of conversation on the

subject, at least it should have been.

Jesus had told them who he was, and what his mission was; and yet they respond by asking him the same question again. *"If thou be the Christ tell us plainly."* This is the normal response that you will get from those who are in this same position, and that position is the same one that the apostle Paul said he was in, prior to his meeting Jesus on the road to Damascus, he was in a state of ignorance and unbelief, and giving them the answer again and again will not change that position of ignorance. This is where all men are born, and where they shall ever remain, unless the truth is revealed unto them, by the Holy Ghost. They will not hear and understand the truth, even when it is explained unto them in great detail, and they will not believe it, even when it is shown unto them, by the mighty works of God. It is even as the incident of Jesus' raising Lazarus from the dead; the Jews, on this occasion were not concerned about the fact that it was a work of God, but rather, what effect the truth would have on their own position in the world. Jesus told them in the above scripture, that the works that he did, in his Father's name, bore witness of him, and although they did not believe his words, they should believe him for the very works sake, for they were not the works of mortal men.

Jesus told them very plainly, ye believe me not because ye are not my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me, but, as the scriptures declare there have always been two different types of people upon the earth, those that see, hear and believe him and those who do not. They were each designated, in the book of Genesis, as the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman, the seed of the serpent would bruise the heel of the seed of the woman, and the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the seed of the serpent. This is prophesying the death of Christ for the sins of the seed of the woman, and by which the seed of the woman would overcome the seed of the serpent. This caused enmity between the two peoples, and will continue to do so, as long as the world stands, and they will never agree on the things of the spirit, because the seed of the serpent is unaware of its existence. It is even as the scriptures said of Pharaoh in, *(Rom 9:17) "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth."* Each of these groups of people were created, to make manifest the power and glory of God, in his working his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, in making a distinction between those he loved, and those that he hated, as in the case of Jacob and Esau.

He told those who believed not

on him, on one occasion, *(John 8:44) "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth ye believe me not."* These are those who are the seed of the devil, and they shall show forth their true character, by their rejecting all things that are good and righteous, and their whole desire is to mislead and confuse the sheep, and to resist God, and there can be no reconciliation between them.

The scriptures are written only to those who are his sheep: those who have been made a new creature in Christ, and who worship God and have no confidence in the flesh. It is through the experience of having been called out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of the gospel that they have been spared, as Paul said, *(Rom 8:20) "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."* It is only then that they are given hearing ears, seeing eyes and a heart which understands the prophecies such as the one made by Ezekiel, and claim it as being unto them. *(Eze 37:24-27) "For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather ye out of the countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh, and I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God."* All of this was accomplished in the death burial and resurrection of Christ, when he made an atonement for the sins of those under the law: in his taking away the law for those who will live in the gospel day, who have been blessed to experience this miraculous transformation and will understand the mystery of godliness. Those who, even though dead in trespasses and sin, were quickened into spiritual life, and who will hear and know the voice of the shepherd who called them, and sent them forth worshipping God in Spirit and in truth.

This is all the sovereign work of an all wise God, who predestinated it from the beginning, and did not leave it to the will of the creature, or to the whims of the natural man, but rather, to the good pleasure of his own will, who created them to this

end. It is a permanent work that is for time and eternity, and will culminate in their eternal salvation, where they shall dwell in the presence of God and the heavenly host, in that world of love, joy, peace, happiness and rest that shall never end. There has been much writing, and lots of discussion on this subject, of just what the glory world will be like. No man knows for sure just how it will be, but, I sure hope that I find out, for it is as my daddy always said regarding the resurrection, he did not know how it was going to be, but, however it is, that is the way that he wanted it.

There was a time when all of the people in the world were of one language, dwelling together and were, of one consent, and feeling that they were in control of their own destiny and planning to build their own means of getting into heaven. *(Gen 11:3-4) "And said they one to another, go to, let us make brick, and burn then thoroughly, and they had brick for stone, and slime for mortar. Go to and let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."* Does this not sound familiar to you, for that same manner of people dwells among us even today, a people who are still attempting to work out their own salvation, endeavoring to earn it by their own efforts, and therefore bypassing the redemptive work of God, in Christ. It was not successful in that day, and it will not be successful today, for God has before declared, *(Isa 42:8) "I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images."* He had declared before by the mouth of the prophets how this *would be, as Isaiah said, (Isa 42:1) Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles."* The plan of salvation, of all of the elect, was already in place, before time began, nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it, and it covered every heir of grace that will ever exist in this time world, and will absolutely assure their place in that heavenly abode. This is the glory that he was referring to when he said he would not give it to others, but reserved it unto himself.

The Lord also insured that the plan of these would not prosper by, *(Gen 11:-6-7) "And the Lord said, behold, the people is one, and they have one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech."* God, by this means dispersed the builders of the tower of Babel, when they all spoke the same language, and gave

them confusion instead, so that they gave up on building their tower, for they could not understand their language, when speaking it one to the other. This caused them to be scattered abroad, upon the face of the whole earth, speaking diverse languages, and becoming separate nations. This was one of the main reasons that they had for building the tower in the beginning, that they not be scattered upon the face of all the earth, but that they should remain one people, with the combined ability to accomplish anything that their hearts desired, but where the word of the King is, there is power: power to overcome any other powers or the devices of men.

The children of God have a very special language, in this day, one of which the world is not even aware. It is their very own spiritual language which was given unto them, to regroup God's people into that one union and fellowship in which they now exist, one which causes them to follow along in the footsteps of the flock, with all of those others of like precious faith and calling and who speak that language. The precious truths expressed above, are only communicated in that pure language, *(Zeph 3:9) "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."* This pure language is given unto them in the new birth, and is God's way of bringing his sheep together, in peace, love and harmony as a chosen generation, royal priesthood, holy nation and peculiar people, that they may all worship God of one mind. The other people are made to wonder just what it is that binds them together in such a close knit and loving relationship, which is evident even to strangers, and even they are made to realize that the saints have something that is not to be found elsewhere. When God's children come together to worship God, in Spirit and in truth, they are in the Spirit, and are separated from the world, because the world cannot understand their speech, and they certainly do not have the experience, or the precious heritage that stirs in the bosom of all of the saints of God.

The separation between the people of this world, is caused by the fact that they have nothing in common: the one is of the earth, earthy, and the other is of that spiritual realm and walk after the things of the spirit. This is a permanent state of separation because it was determined a long time ago, by God. *(Deut 32:8-9) "When the Most high divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel, for the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."* This will ever remain because Paul reaffirmed it when he said, *(1 Cor 3:11) "For other foun-*

dation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus." and since the foundation is laid, in Christ Jesus, it shall never change,, (Mal 3:6) "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." The very foundation of the salvation of the saints rests in the fact that God never makes a mistake, his wisdom is infinite, and he cannot err in judgment, for all things are ever open before him, and his determinate counsel will ever be the same.

I am ever amazed as I read the scriptures, such as those quoted above and many others, which declare the sovereignty of God as being the author and finisher of the salvation of the sheep, to then see the world try to use the same scriptures as evidence to deny it. I have always been of the opinion that the natural man does not believe what he reads in the bible, but rather, he reads into the bible what he believes from a natural heart. He will never arrive at the correct understanding of the truth that way, for Paul said, ***(1 Cor. 1:21) "For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knows not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness. But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."*** The difference is in the calling of God, for it carries with it, the understanding of the truth, which is written in the heart in that pure language, which only his sheep know and understand. That is why they can never come to a mutual agreement of the truth that is taught in the scriptures, as Jesus said above, ***(John 9:43) "Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word"*** That would be like Americans trying to understand a Japanese person, speaking in his own language, which they could not understand. There is no communication possible there, and neither is there between the chosen generation, and the children of wrath.

The most comforting thought in the above scripture is, ***"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my Father's hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."*** There is no safer or more secure place that the sheep can dwell than in the hand of God, and if you believe the scriptures above, feel to have experienced that calling, heard the shepherd's voice and are following along in the footsteps of the flock, then this last promise that no man

is able to pluck the sheep out of his hand is talking about you. It is as sure and certain as the fact that Jesus himself came into the world to seek and to save the lost sheep, finished the work that his Father gave him to do, and returned triumphant, over death hell and the grave for your salvation. and is now seated at the right hand of the Father.

You know, by your experience that you were lost in sin, because the Spirit made you aware of this in the new birth, and you believe that you have been called out of that horrible pit into the marvelous light and liberty of the gospel, because of the change that was wrought in your heart and soul, and you began immediately to understand the scriptures in a way that you had never done before. The first comment usually received to this statement is, but, I don't know if this applies to me, or not. Well, you don't know, and never will know, for sure in this life, but you will always live in the hope that you have, and this hope is not as fragile as we sometimes tend to think that it is. This hope is actually an earnest expectation that has been placed in the heart of every child of God that he cannot lay it down, nor pick it up, of his own volition, but must wait until the time appointed of the Father to proceed further. It is based on evidence that you have received which causes you to believe these words are to you, as improbable as it may seem, seeing yourself as you know yourself to be. God is the only source of power which can enable you to come to this conclusion, and it was given to you for this purpose, that you may realize that it is not of the flesh and it must therefore be of the Spirit. This is one of the first evidences that you see and hear from one newly being brought to this faith, is that they do not feel worthy and fear that they are mistaken.

As a Sister said, last night at our Monday night meeting, sometimes I am so amazed that we can have such doubts regarding our salvation, seeing that we have so great a cloud of witnessing from the testimony of those who have gone before, who left on record the footsteps of the flock, and we will all freely admit that the love that we have for these things is greater than for anything that the world has to offer. We therefore believe this to be indisputable evidence that these things are our meat and drink spiritually, and will sustain that spiritual connection that has been established between us, because, if it be of God, the scriptures says that he that has begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ, at his second coming.

The apostle John, in his desire to comfort and strengthen his brethren in the ages to come, seeing that they were not eyewitnesses to these things, penned some of the most precious scriptures to be found in the bible. *(1 John 1-4) "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have*

seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and which our hands have handled, of the word of life; (For the life was manifested and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." This testimony was not left on record for the benefit of those in his day, for they were all eye witnesses of these same things, but rather, for those who are to follow in the ages to come, that they may understand their own precious travels and experiences, for they may seem mysterious at times, but, then to hear from one who lived in that time, over 2000 years ago, it gives them strength and courage to continue to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, believing God is still on his throne, insuring the eternal salvation unto all that he chose as his own peculiar people, before the foundation of the world. This journey is by faith, and faith is not by sight, so it is a uneven journey for the traveler, but sure and certain in the mind of the shepherd.

May God bless all who believe and understand these precious truths, and may we ever be found contending for and claiming those promises as our own, because of the way in which these things were made known unto us. *(1 Tim 3:16) "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the* Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received into glory." These things are a mystery to the natural man, and must be discerned by the Spirit which prints them in the heart and mind of the sheep whereby they receive the Spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba Father, and go on their way rejoicing in their new found love, and fellowship for the brethren, believing that there in no other name under heaven or given among men whereby this knowledge can be known. This grand and glorious truth is settled, once and for all when Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the life and no man cometh unto the Father but by me.

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

PROVERBS 10:25.

As the whirlwind passeth, so is the wicked no more: but the righteous is an everlasting foundation.

CORRESPONDENCE

Jan. 9, 2008

Mr. Tony Horton
Circulation Manager:
Signs of the Times
202 Carousel Ln.
Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

I am enclosing my check for $100.00.

The remaining funds are for the use of and expenses of Signs of the Times.

Just an old sinner, but a believer in the blessed truth in Hope, that not of myself, but by the Grace of God.

Bryant Huff

January 7, 2008

Dear Bro. Tony,

Enclosed is a check for $30.00 to renew my subscription to the "Signs of the Times" for another two years. Use the extra as you see fit.

I appreciate the interest and commitment you have shown in the publication, and wish you the very best in your endeavors.

Look forward to receiving each issue.

In bonds of love,
John Collie
1620 Hampton Rd.
Reidsville, NC 27320

Dec. 22, 07

Brother Tony,

I'm sending $30.00 for the next two years use the other as you see fit.

Hope you're well and your family good. We look forward to the Signs of the Times. May God Bless You.

Regards,

J.B. Mitchell, Jr.
Clerk - New River Assoc.

Mr. Tony Horton
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
1429 Howlett St.
Hillsville, Va. 24343

Dear Mr. Horton,

Enclosed you will find my check in the amount of $50.00; I would like for $15.00 to be used for one years subscription to the Signs of the Times paper and the rest to be used as you see fit. I enjoy reading this so much. We are blessed to have it.

I was very saddened to read of Elder Terry's death. I only heard him once or twice, but what a blessing it was !!!

May you be blessed in your work as Circulation Manager and Treasurer.

Sincerely,
Bille G. (Dunn) Speir

1-9-08

Dear Mr. Horton:

Enclosed is a check for $50.00 to assist in the publication of the Signs. Please use the money as you see fit.

I hope that it will be the will and purpose of the Almighty that the Signs be continued for those that enjoy it.

Sincerely yours,
Charles Alders

1-20-08

Dear Brother Horton,

I see it is time to renew, enclosed is $20 dollars for the Signs, and the rest whatever you see fit. Feb. 4th. I will be 94, since I don't get out to church much any more. I love to read the new ones, and reread the old ones. The Editorials and The Voices of the Past, are like reading a sermon. Which I greatly rejoice, and try to thank the Good Lord for the Signs.

Yours in Hope,
Sarah Barker

JUDE 1:2.

Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE HEBRON MEETING.

Dear Brother Thompson:- There were three additions by experience and baptism to the church at Hebron, Ohio, last Sunday, it being their regular meeting in November. They all were received in the sweetest bond of fellowship, with rejoicing. The church is much revived on account of the manifestation of God's mercy to them, in showering upon them his divine blessing with such glorious results. We are made to pray and to hope that the good work will go on in this place. I have been the unworthy pastor of this church for sixteen years and I am made to praise God for thus blessing my weak labors in his service.

I had the pleasure of baptizing a precious young brother at our last meeting at Thompson, also. O that God would remember Zion, and may all her children turn from every false way and walk humbly before him in the narrow way which leads to life!

Adam F. Dove
Van Buren, Ohio, Nov. 9, 1915.

PREPARATIONS FOR DEATH

The remark is often made when preaching on funeral occasions, that the departed one made pre-

parations for death. This is a question that should be considered carefully and prayerfully, because each one of us must die; Are we ready to step into the vast unknown future? To be sure, we have what God has recorded for our instruction, but, after all, we know but very little about eternity. A great many seem to be satisfied that what they have decided was necessary to do is sufficient to prepare them for that happy home hereafter. This step is not, however, for a day or a year, but it is for eternity and we should consider it well. It is argued that this is a matter that should be left to the option of each one, but there seems to be so many different opinions. It cannot be that all are right. We must have some other guide.

We find that the Savior tells us that in preparing his sheep for death and eternity, he gives unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. Again, he calls it passage from death unto life. ***"He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."*** Here the Savior makes the safety of his people depend, not on that which may seem right to them, but on passing from death unto life. Then, none have true Bible evidence that they are truly prepared for death unless they have the evidence that they have passed from death unto life. From a natural standpoint, it would not do to say that one who is a corpse can do something that may seem right to him that will restore the natural life and enable him to walk and talk and enjoy the company of his dear friends again. There is nothing that the friend can do, or help him do, that can restore the life and cause the pulse to beat and the lips to smile. "O," says one, ***"I do not believe that the alien sinner is dead."*** But, my kind friend, does that change the matter? The apostle says they are; the Savior so teaches, and if we do not believe what the Bible says, where can we *get* our starting point. This should no longer be a question in our minds. The statement of the Lord should forever decide this matter.

What evidence have we that we have passed from death unto life? While looking at the lives of our dear departed brethren and sisters in the Lord, who spent their lives in service for God, we have no doubt about their case, and we feel that if we should reach that happy home, we shall most assuredly meet them again, and unite with them in singing the sweet song of redemption. But are the external evidences, as we see them in others, all we have by which to determine this matter? John tells us, ***"He that believeth hath the witness in himself."*** This most surely tells us that there is *inward* evidence. ***"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God."*** This can only be that we

feel to know, or, I might say, as the Spirit makes us to *feel* to know that this is true. How sweet it is when the burden of gloomy doubts, which lay so heavily on the soul, are made to disappear by the light of the Spirit of truth, which breaks in on the soul with a sweet heavenly message! It is through this spirit of worship that we are enabled to say, ***"Abba, Father."*** It is this light, or evidence, that the soul desires to see. That which we can view as evidence in others we cannot always take as a certain evidence in ourselves. When, by experience, we see how prone we are to do that which we had resolved we would not do, and which we readily concluded that a Christian would not do, doubts even arise as to the principle that has prompted us in doing that which we have already done. We see so much self, which is of the flesh, that we wonder whether or not the Spirit of Christ is in us.

However, the apostle Peter would admonish us to make our calling and election sure. He tells us several things to do: ***"Add to your faith virtue; to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity."*** He tells us in doing these things we shall be fruithful. Faith is one of the fruits of the Spirit. Then in doing these things we shall have more faith or evidence that we have passed from death unto life. The one who knows what the Bible would require of him can never be fully satisfied until he feels that he has done his duty. However, all this will not fully fit us for this great ordeal. Jesus said to Paul, ***"My grace is sufficient for thee."*** It takes dying grace to fully prepare us for death, which shall not be withheld from any of his trembling children.

J. HARVEY DAILY,

Thanks to Brother Keith Hiatt for sending us many of The Voices of the Past that we republish.

LIVING WATER

Jesus told the Samaritan woman who had come to Jacob's Well to draw water, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, ***"Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him and He would have given thee LIVING WATER." (John 4:10)*** The woman evidently did not know either the gift of God or who He was because she began to reason with Him on procuring natural water from a deep natural well. Her reasoning and questions were based on the same principles as that of Nicodemus as recorded in the first part of the third chapter of John relative to being born again. Nicodemus thought Jesus was speaking of being born again. Nicodemus thought Jesus was speaking of being born

again naturally. The woman thought He was speaking of natural water. Our natural finite minds can not conceive that which is spiritual. I am thoroughly convinced that when Jesus told Nicodemus, *"Except a man be born of WATER and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;"* He was speaking of this same LIVING WATER that was under consideration in His conversation with the Samaritan woman. What is this LIVING WATER? What is its source? Through Whom does it come? What does this LIVING WATER do for its beneficiaries? These are a few of the questions in my mind. May God give us the answer in sweet meditations while we work through this treatise.

Jesus said, *"The water that I shall give him shall be in him a WELL OF WATER SPRINGING UP INTO EVERLASTING LIFE." (John 4:14)* This well of water is placed in the individual. It springs up. Sometimes in our experience we may feel that it has dried up to the extent that our hopes are blasted – then, it SPRINGS UP to revive us again, which strengthens our faith, and our hope is renewed. Have you not experienced many times the SPRINGING UP of this well of water?

We read in Isaiah 12:3 *"Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the WELLS OF SALVATION."* This LIVING WATER comes from the wells of salvation. It brings joy and gladness to those who drink it. The Psalmist said, *"There is a river, the streams whereof, shall make GLAD the City of our God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High." (Ps. 46:4) "This LIVING WATER makes glad the grieved heart and brings joy to those who mourn because of their sins. It save us from despair and gives relief to our parched soul. This water is soothing and enlivening. It is that Fountain that is opened to the Lord's people for sin and uncleanness."* (See Zechariah 13:1) It proceeds from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Has God ever showed you what He showed to John as recorded in Revelations 22:1-2? Have you seen this pure river of water of life flowing from the Throne of God through the Tree of Life? If this Tree of Life stood in the midst of the street of that River and on either side of it – surely, the river flowed through the tree. Every stream of mercy that has ever reached you came through Jesus Christ who is our Life. Yes, this LIVING WATER, or water of life, comes from Heaven. These gifts of His grace come down from the Father through the Son to us. Every comfort received by the child of God is because of this LIVING WATER.

We have concluded from our meditations upon this subject thus far that this LIVING WATER gives to us the glorious and joyous portion of our experiences of grace. Many of the Lord's people who have been born of the Spirit have not yet re-

joiced in these wonderful revelations. The first experiences of those born of the Spirit are grievous and condemning. Jesus cited two facts that must be revealed to an individual before they would ask Him to give them to drink. These two facts are that the person must know what is the gift of God and that Jesus Christ is His Son and Saviour of His people. A person learns much through tribulations after He is born of the Spirit, before he experiences these joyful experiences. A child of God must be born of the Spirit before he can SEE the kingdom of God. He must be born of the WATER before he can ENTER into the kingdom of God – before he can really experience the joys of Eternal Life. Jesus said, ***"Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matt. 7:14)*** It is a painful entrance into life. It is through many tribulations that we enter the kingdom. As the new-born babe comes forth into the natural realm crying; so, the new-born spiritual babe comes crying that lamenting into the spiritual realm. What does it require to constitute ETERNAL LIFE? Let us ask Jesus what is Life Eternal and listen at His answer as recorded in His prayer to the Father in St. John 17:4 – ***"And this is LIFE ETERNAL, that they might know Thee the only true god, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."*** There are two lessons to be learned in this ordeal of ETERNAL LIFE. The first lesson brings the bitter experiences; the second lesson reveals the sweet. We learn the vengeance of a Holy God upon an unholy creature in the first lesson; we learn of His mercy and grace in the second lesson. We stand condemned creatures before a righteous judge in the first lesson; we are freed from this just condemnation in the second lesson. We learn in the first experience that we are unable to lift ourselves from the pitfalls of sin into which we have fallen; we see Jesus lifting us out without any effort of our own in the second experience. We are tried in the fiery furnace and suffer great tribulations before we come to the position to ask Him, ***"GIVE US TO DRINK?"***

Our first lesson has been such an ordeal that we are indeed THIRSTY. WE HAVE BEEN MADE WILLING TO BE A BEGGAR AT His footstool and plead to Him for mercy and grace – for LIVING WATER to cool the fiery indignation! Hungry and THRISTY our soul faints in us. Then, we CRY to the Lord in our troubles, and He delivers us from our distresses! (See Psalms 107:5-6) How soothing is that first LIVING WATER experienced by a parched soul! Do you not remember when you pleaded with Him, ***"GIVE ME TO DRINK?"*** Do you recall the first time you experienced that sweet inviting command, ***"Ho, every one that thirtieth, COME YE TO THE WATERS, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat;***

yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price?" We learn in the first lesson that we have nothing with which to buy, barter, or trade. The imputed righteousness of Christ becomes that with which we buy wine and milk without money and without price.

Let us turn to Isaiah 40:6-7 for a scriptural explanation of the effect of the Spirit so that we might better understand the need for this LIVING WATER. *"All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass WITHERETH, the Flower FADETH: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass."* The Spirit of the Lord causes our flesh to wither and our goodliness to fade away. There is exceeding dryness experienced by everyone upon which the spirit of the Lord comes. It withers the works of the flesh to such extent that we have no confidence in it. Our faith in our merits is so withered that we can see no evidence of life. Our righteousness fades to such degree that instead of righteousness the very best becomes as filthy rags. This is the proper and appointed time for us to beg of Jesus, *"GIVE ME TO DRINK."*

Have you ever looked upon grass and pronounced it dead because of its withered condition? A shower of rain comes and you behold greenness and see its drooping blades begin to raise up. Life is manifested in that which YOU thought and considered to be dead. This LIVING WATER enables you to lift up arms that hang down. It steadies at the feeble knees. It causes the lame to walk. This LIVING WATER gives power to the fain, and to them that have no might, it increaseth strength. It causes His people to run and not be weary; to walk and not faint.

When we are blessed to drink His righteousness it revives our drooping spirits. What a blessing to drink down greedily the streams of the Lord's mercies and to realize that the fountain can never run dry but endures forever! Yes, we drink His blood to cleanse our sin-sick soul. We drink the wine of the kingdom which stimulates to press forward regardless of difficulties, and run with patience the race set before us. We desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby. Drinking from this fountain of LIVING WATER causes us to GROW in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour. It saves us from despair and from sinking into oblivion.

Never shall I forget the hour that I was made to vehemently cry, *"Give me to drink."* My faith in self was shattered and my hopes were all blasted. I felt that I was forever doomed with the off casts of the earth. I felt that hell was my eternal abiding place. One night God was pleased to bless one of His ministers to give me just one small ray of hope when he was blessed to

preach Jesus as a complete saviour. I immediately grasped at the straw and began to plead to the Lord to have mercy upon me. I began crying, GIVE ME TO DRINK. The Lord had mercy upon me and showed me that His Holy arm was so mighty that it could reach down into the terrible pitfalls of sins and rescue a vile sinner like me, make him holy, and safely secure his final abode with redeemed sinners! He showed me that His right hand was sufficient to keep secure from all harm so that nothing could pluck me from His hand. His minister was blessed to WATER so that my hope became anchored in that which was sure and steadfast. I trust that I drank many times from that Fountain through His ministers while they were being blessed to preach the comforting doctrine of the Love and amazing grace of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We read in 1 Corinthians 3:6, that *"Apollos watered."* Seeing that it is God that gives the increase through the minister it must be this LIVING WATER coming from the throne of God and the Lamb. Your thirst has been quenched many times under the dripping of the sanctuary while feasting upon the preaching of a God-called minister. Were it not for the grand experience of drinking this LIVING WATER while speaking from the pulpit, I feel, I would die in despair. It is an unspeakable wonder to see Heaven opened, to hear the Voice of the Son, and to feel the soothing effect of this LIVING WATER as it is calmly and sweetly applied to your soul. Oh how it does lift our drooping spirits and encourages us to persevere on our journey. Even though we feel to be lone pilgrims trotting in a desert land where there is no water – the Lord is gracious to us sometimes in directing us to an oasis where there is LIVING WATER for us. Could we enjoy these precious drinks as much as we do if this water could be at our command each and every step of our pilgrimage? It is glorious when all of us can drink of the same spiritual drink – when we can drink of that spiritual Rock, Christ Jesus.

I am persuaded that it has pleased the Lord to bless us often with this LIVING WATER when we are congregated together in church capacity to worship God. Could that be the reason the Lord's people are so anxious to meet together regularly with one another in their church meetings? I have seen them from several states convened together in associations eagerly drinking that LIVING WATER as it flowed from the mouths of His ministers in such grand meetings. Such love and joy can only be experienced by the Lord's humble poor who are made to depend upon Grace for salvation to be experienced here and for eternity. I praise God that He has so arranged that His children can meet together from the different parts of the United States and worship together the King in

such a demonstration of the power of the Spirit of God in these associations. God forbid that anything shall come among us to mar the chain of correspondence that exists with our people interlinking them together with the whole of the United States and the British Isles. It is my trust that before the end of our sojourn here that this LIVING WATER will draw together all the nations of the earth in such unity that it can indeed be said of us, ***"The Lord has done great things for them! The Lord has done great things for us whereof we are glad."***

I appreciate very much the love manifested for me by the Lord's children from the rivers to the ends of the earth. My interest is in the remote places from Canada to Florida – from Washington to California – All over the globe where those of like faith and order resides.

Please pray that this LIVING WATER will be enjoyed by me and mine as the Lord sees fit to distribute it to us. My wife asks an interest in your prayers. The churches of my pastorate need your prayers. If you could stoop so low as to remember an insignificant thing like me – remember me when you are at the throne of God's Grace from which this LIVING WATER flows!!

E. J. Lambert

Dear Elder Spangler:

I should have complied with my promise to write for the Signs, but many duties have prevented. First, I would like to say that I greatly enjoyed my recent visit to Reidsville and Greensboro Churches, and the spiritual association with those people. All were so very kind to me in many ways that shall remain as fond memories in spiritual paths. I trust that I was added to Mt. Gilead Church in the Western Primitive Baptist Association, of Alabama, forty-one years ago last September, and began speaking there in my feeble manner in March, 1918. It has fallen my lot to try to serve as pastor at Mt. Gilead, Mt. Moriah, Mt. Carmel, Wrights Creek, New Hope, Hopeful, Ramah and Bethlehem Churches. Several years I went to six of these churches regularly, and now to five. I am thankful that there has been little trouble in any of them while I was pastor, and may the Lord continue to direct us in the paths of peace. I am so glad that He has added four able young ministers to these churches during my pastorate, and that they are seeking the peace and welfare of Zion. First, there was Elder W. A. Williams of Mt. Carmel, Coffee Springs, Alabama. He is now the pastor, a prominent teacher, Clerk of the Claybank Association, and pastor of several of its churches. Next, Elder A. B. Chumney, of Madrid, Alabama; pastor of some churches in the Chipola Association. Then, Elder

William H. Smith, Graceville, Florida; also pastor in the Chipola Association, and an able teacher in our schools. Last June I baptized Brother John F. Tisdale, of Ozark, Alabama; and he has since been licensed to speak at Hopeful Church, and is proving a blessing to the church. May each of these continue in the paths opened by the Lamb and trodden by the apostles and succeeding ministers of the true church of the ages.

Among the principles I believe to be paramount in the church is sovereignty. I humbly believe that each member of the vine should have sovereign rights, and keep its house in order, watching over each other for good. I feel that God called ministers should obey the heavenly edict, *"Go ye into all the world preaching the gospel to every creature,"* and cry aloud unto Zion that her warfare is accomplished, her strife over . Such ministers should study to show themselves approved unto God, rightly dividing the word of truth, and feeding sheep and lambs. All should preach the word, be instant in season out of season, reproving, rebuking and instructing in righteousness. Great and mysterious is thy way and past finding out. *"I have loved thee with an everlasting love,"* saith Jeremiah, and he surely meant it. May such love abound everywhere in Zion today. It is pitiful to see brethren divided over minor issues. May peace be restored and brethren dwell together in unity.

It fell to my lot, along with Mr. J. P. Davis, and Elder E. R. Sorrells and F. A. Collins, to conduct the funeral of Elder J. J. Smith, who was truly a gospel minister. Elder Smith went quietly home on March 6, 1955. He was eighty-eight years of age, and has been active in the church for about sixty-five years; and served as minister for about fifty years. His wife preceeded him in death about ten years. Both lived model lives. Final services were conducted at Ephesus, his home church, Slocomb, Alabama, on March 7, with interment in Pleasant Hill Cemetery. He served as pastor at Mt. Carmel, Mt. Gilead, New Hope and Ephesus, and perhaps other churches. Truly a good shepherd has gone to his home.

On Saturday, as the evening shadows were falling, the writer spoke in memory of Sister Ida F. Thomley, a devoted member of Mt. Gilead Church for some fifty-five years. She reached the age of four score years and two, but the noblest act of her life was when she followed the Lamb of God in Jordan's stormy billows. Jesus said, *"Suffer it to be so, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness;"* and your Lord and mine was buried beneath the turbulent waters. It is precious to the believer to follow Jesus in baptism.

Brother Spangler, I remember quite well meeting you at the Staunton River Association, at Springfield Church, in 1940; and

then two weeks later at Bush Arbor Church, in the Upper Country Line Association. It seemed that glory shone around and that peace and unity abounded in Zion. May the Lord lead us in the paths of peace and love, and may all wounds be healed *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them."* I believe that I love my Saviour Lord because he first loved me.

May the Signs seek peace and order everywhere in Zion. May love always abound. I hope to meet you somewhere soon, and the dear saints in your section.

Yours in bonds of love,
(Elder) J. J. Collins

MY FLOCK

Elder R. W. Thompson: - The question: "When are we his sheep?" is one of deep interest to the saints of God. "And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God;" Ezek. Xxxiv, 34. Were the sheep created for the pasture or the pasture for the sheep? God in his wisdom foreknew a people, his sheep. His all-seeing eye beheld their substance, yet being unperfect; and in his book all the members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, while as yet there were none of them (Ps. Cxxxix, 16). They were in his vision an afflicted people (his sheep). And in all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old. God bless you, dear saints, you were his sheep before the hills were formed. You are God's elect – chosen in Christ Jesus, redeemed by his blood, called from darkness and sin into his marvelous light, that you might sing to praise of his glory while in the world, and ultimately around his eternal throne in Heaven.

Hear the words of your dear Savior: *"He that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. * * * And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice. And a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him;"* John x, 2, 4, 5. In the wisdom of God the precious lambs were always his. And this blessed truth is revealed unto all his precious sons and daughters by the Spirit of God in the fullness of time.

In love to all the saints.
J.V. Noblitt.

PSALM 12 5-6.

For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.

The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

"But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." -- 1 John ii.27.

Have you ever had a solitary drop of this holy anointing oil fall upon your heart? One drop, if it be but a drop, will sanctify you for ever to the service of God. There was not much of the holy anointing oil used for the service of the tabernacle, when we consider the size and quantity of what had to be consecrated, for Moses had to anoint therewith the whole of the tabernacle of the congregation, as well as all the vessels, with all their various appurtenances. When he went through the sacred work, he touched one vessel after another with a drop of oil; for one drop sanctified the vessel to the service of the tabernacle. There was no repetition of the consecration wanted; it abode. So if you ever had a drop of God's love shed abroad in your heart, -- a drop of the anointing to teach you the truth as it is in Jesus; a drop to penetrate, to soften, to heal, to feed and give light, life, and power to your soul, -- you have the unction from the Holy One; you know all things which are for your salvation, and by that same holy oil you have been sanctified and made meet for an eternal inheritance.

Elder J.C. Philpot

MEETING

LOWER MAYO FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo Association Fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday Only, March 30th, 2008. We hope to start singing at 10:30 a.m. and preaching at 11:00. Russell Creek Church will host the meeting and it will be held in Russell Creek meeting house. The meeting house is located approximately 9 miles south of Stuart, Virginia near the Virginia, North Carolina border on Moorefield Store Road #631.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in salvation by grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 2008

J.B. Mitchell, VA 5.00
G. Hyslip, TN 15.00
J. Collie, NC 5.00
W.T. Conner, VA 5.00
B.L. Abernathy, NC 5.00
C. Alders, TX 50.00
B. Speis, LA, ... 35.00
B. Huff, GA 50.00
S. Barker, NC 5.00
N. Dalton, TX 5.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER BETTY DISHMON SOUTHARD

It was the will of the Heavenly Father to call from our midst Sister Betty Southard on December 28, 2006. Sister Betty was born August 24, 1931. Left to mourn her are her son, Steve Southard and wife Amanda and five grandsons, three great grandchildren and her sister Velva Rakes in addition to all of us who loved her for Christ's sake. Her pastor, Elder Kenneth Key conducted her funeral on December 31, 2006 at Wilkerson Funeral Home Chapel after which her body was laid to rest in the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery to await the Resurrection morn. Sister Betty asked for a home with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on November 11, 1981, was received, and baptized by her former pastor, Elder David Spangler. Her journey through this life was marked by many trials and tribulations, but she was blessed with an abiding faith in God, who promised his children, ***"that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear"*** as voiced through the prophet, Isaiah. We miss so much her lovely smile and warm embrace. The Lord blessed her greatly with the fruit of the spirit most especially with gentleness and meekness. Her love for her God, her church, and her family was manifested in her walk. She was always enquiring into the welfare of the brethren and visiting the sick as God worked in her ***"both to will and to do of his own good pleasure." Philippians 2:13.***

On my last visit with her she was unable to get out of bed and was visibly very physically ill. She was sleeping when I entered her room. When I gently touched her shoulder, she opened her eyes, smiled and asked how I was and how my family was. This was so like her. The Lord blessed her to put others needs and welfare above her own. She would often say to those of like precious faith, "I love all of you, but I can't see how anyone would love me." As is the experience of the Lord's little ones, they can see the light of the countenance of the heavenly Master in the faces of their brethren but not in themselves. I'm sure she felt as the hymn writer penned:

Marks of grace I cannot show;
All polluted is my breast;
Yet I weary am, I know,
And the weary long for rest!

There are no words to express how much we miss her. Yet we know that our loss is her eternal gain. We're instructed in first Thessalonians 4:13-14 "***to sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them***

also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." We believe that our precious Sister is asleep in Jesus and what better place could there be as the hymn writer described it, *"Asleep in Jesus blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep!"* May the Lord bless her family and those of us who were blessed to walk with her in love and fellowship to bow in humble submission to His most Holy will and to witness with Job ***"the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."***

Humbly submitted by one
who loved her dearly,
Mary Hawkins

GLADSTON THOMAS NEWMAN

Gladston T. Newman 84, beloved Deacon of the First Primitive Baptist Church, of Memphis, died December 12, 2007. He was born October 17, 1923, in Lauderdale County, near Ripley Tennessee. He died in his home, near Stanton, Tennessee, lovingly cared for by his large family, which was the pride and joy of his life, and his many friends. This love and respect for Brother Newman was evidenced by over 500 people attending his funeral.

Gladston, was born in 1923 to Joseph and Nealy Ann Newman. He was a longtime farmer and cattleman in the area, served in the U. S, Navy in WW II, aboard an aircraft carrier, and was a lifetime member of the Fayette County V.F.W Post #5013.

He was the husband of Birdie Marie Leath Newman, who preceded him in death in 1972. He is survived by his wife, Jottye Epsey Newman, five children, Diane Newman Graves, Ronnie Gene Newman Sr, and Thomas Glenn Newman, all of near Stanton, Tennessee and Sandra Newman Dowdy, Judy Newman Patton, both of Somerville, Tennessee his sister Mary Forsythe of Ripley, Tennessee, his stepchildren; Danny and Jimmy Leath both of Stanton, Tennessee and Faye Leath Howse, of Brownsville, eight grandchildren, and three great grandchildren.

The funeral was conducted by: Elders Richard H. Campbell, Wayman G. Chapell and Kenneth Adams, at the Peebles West Funeral Chapel on Highway 64 near Oakland, Tennessee.

Gladston and Jottye, were greatly loved and respected by the members of the, First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis, where both of their memberships were, and also among the Primitive Baptists in Tennessee and the many neighboring states, which they visited, as long as he was able to travel. They were sadly missed, when his health prevented his traveling among them as

he had previously.

The following poem (Author Unknown) states, my feelings about Brother Newman, and I believe that it expresses the feelings among his many friends, both inside and outside of his church.

God looked around his garden,
And found an empty place.
He then looked down upon the earth,
And saw your tired face.

He put his arms around you, and lifted you to rest.
God's garden must be beautiful,
He only takes the best.
He knew that you were suffering,
He knew you were in pain.
He knew that you would never be,
Well on earth again.

He saw the road was getting rough,
So he closed your weary eyelids,
And whispered, "Peace be thine".

It broke our hearts to lose you,
But you didn't go alone.
For a part of us went with you,
The day God called you home.

Be it resolved: That a copy of this letter be sent to the members of his family, one to the Signs of the Times and one to be recorded in our church minutes as a memorial to a very precious Brother and Deacon. He will be greatly missed by the little flock of the Memphis Church, and all who knew him.

Written per family's request,
His Pastor, and devoted friend,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

---

2 John: 1-4.

The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth;

For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever.

Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

SONG

My God, my portion, and my love,
My everlasting all,
I've none but thee in heaven above,
Or on this earthly ball.

In vain the bright, the burning sun
Scatters his feeble light ;
'Tis thy sweet beams create my noon;
If thou withdraw 'tis night.

And whilst upon my restless bed, Among the shades I roll,
If my Redeemer shows his head,
'Tis morning with my soul.

Were I possessor of the earth,
And called the stars my own,
Without thy graces and thyself
I were a wretch undone.

Let others stretch their arms like seas,
And grasp in all the shore,
Grant me the visits of thy face,
And I desire no more.

Watt.

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EDITORIAL

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." 2 Corinthians 4:7.

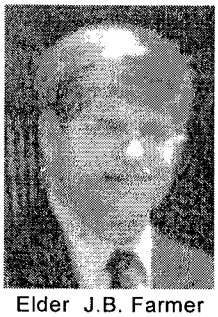
Elder J.B. Farmer

The children of God are great mysteries, even unto themselves. But God is merciful to show each one of them a little about themselves and about the kingdom of God, that they might not be utterly perplexed and totally cast down. If God had not shown us some things about ourselves and about the things of the Spirit of God, we would be in complete confusion, because spiritual things cannot be understood by the natural mind. Can you think back to your earliest days, when your troubles came upon you like a powerful and overwhelming army? You were given a love toward God, and a desire to please Him, but everything seemed to be against you. Your sins rose up like a mountain and you had no ability to remove them, even though you tried everything in your strength to make things better. You tried to read the scriptures, but they only condemned you. You were too embarrassed to tell even your closest friend of your troubles, because you thought you were the most miserable sinner on the face of the earth. You tried to pray for relief, but felt to be too hypocritical even to make the attempt. After many long and grief filled days and nights of groaning, you were brought completely to the end of your wisdom and strength and felt to be too exhausted to go on. You thought you were all alone in your desperation. You were about to give up and concede that death, hell, and destruction surely and deservedly would be your end, when the Lord appeared to you with a word of mercy. Have you ever been brought through things similar to these? If so, I believe you have been blessed with some of the experience of all the saints that have ever lived.

There is a reason for all these trials and tribulations, and God is merciful to explain some of it to His

people, out of love and pity for them. The Lord said by His apostle, ***"The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."*** The creature under consideration, I am made to believe, is the little child of grace. He is subject to all the vain things of this world and of this life. He is familiar with sin, sorrow, suffering, pain and death. He was made this way from the very beginning in order to experience these things. He was made of the dust of the ground, and shown that he must return to the dust from which he was made. He was made first a natural man, and second a spiritual man. The creature, who was made subject to the vanity of this world, was put here in this condition that he might be delivered by God from this miserable state unto the freedom of the Spirit and to the hope of glory, which shall be manifest fully in the last time at the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. And through all these things a great mystery is presented. How can a person be natural and spiritual at the same time?

Jesus said to Nicodemus, ***"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."*** This great mystery was far too great for Nicodemus and also for us to understand without revelation from God. Jesus made it plain that the little children of grace are born of nature and also born of the Spirit from above. They have a fleshly nature by their natural birth and a spiritual nature resulting from being born from above. These natures are contrary to one another, to the extent that the little child of grace is not able, by himself, to do that which he most desires -to walk in the light and to speak the truth in love. Aren't you glad the apostle Paul said, according to his experience and according to the wisdom of God, ***"When I would do good, evil is present with me."*** And aren't you glad he was blessed to say, ***"How to perform that which is good, I find not."*** And thankfully he also was given to say, ***"He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."*** He was shown these truths by grace that he might relate them to the saints of God for their comfort and edification. The child of God was made subject to vanity according to nature, and by grace he was blessed to hope and trust in the good works of God.

There is an inward man, the new spiritual man, Christ in you the hope of glory, who is not subject to vanity. And there is the outward man, which is the old natural man, who is subject to all the vanity of the flesh. In the opening verse of scripture, the children of God are likened to earthen vessels, having a spiritual

treasure stored inside. The outward part is of the earth earthy, and the inward part is of the Holy Spirit. But all vessels are not the same. Although all men are made up of one lump of clay, only those vessels that have been chosen of God and sanctified for holy use receive holy things and are preserved for glory .Those vessels not chosen and not sanctified receive only the base things of this world, and are therefore fitted for destruction. By Wisdom the apostle said, *"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another to dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured witb much long suffering tbe vessels of wratb fitted to destruction: And that he might make known tbe riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of Jews only, but also of the gentiles?"* The earthly vessel, or body of the child of God, is sanctified and made holy and is shown to be the temple of the Holy Spirit. The inspired apostle said, *"What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."*

It appears to be evident from the scriptures that the vessel, or the outward man of the child of grace, is highly favored above the vessel of the child of the devil. The vessels of mercy are made up unto honor and glory, even eternal life. The vessels of the wicked ones are made up unto dishonor and wrath, even eternal destruction. It is manifest that the earthly vessels of the children of God shall be preserved forever and that the vessels of the wicked ones shall be destroyed. The beloved apostle Paul was empowered to say, *"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Here is another mystery. How can the body be preserved, seeing that it must return to the dust from which it was made? God is merciful and kind to make known to His little ones what they need to know concerning these things. God spoke through his apostle concerning this earthen vessel saying, *"It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a*

quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this I mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." This flesh and blood body cannot inherit the kingdom of God. It must be changed and made a spiritual body.

So we understand from all these scriptures, believing they have been opened a little for our edification, that although the body of the saint is corrupt because of sin, it has been sanctified and cleansed by the Spirit and made holy unto God. And God shall preserve that body, even though it goes down in corruption to the grave. According to the scriptures, God shall raise and change these corruptible bodies into bodies of incorruption. According to the scripture, which cannot be broken, mortality shall be swallowed up of life. *"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."* This is the earnest expectation of the creature. He

yearns for the redemption of his body. According to the understanding given to me, if not deceived, when we die the body returns to the dust and the spirit returns to God who gave it. The spirit is joined to the soul, which Jesus said no man is able to kill. As it was with the poor beggar Lazarus, so it is with the child of God. After he dies, the spirit joined with the soul of the child of God shall be carried to the bosom of Abraham by the angels of God, where Lazarus is now being comforted. There, he, and all that die in the Lord, shall remain at rest and at peace until the Lord returns to gather His elect from the four corners of the earth. This includes both those living at that time and those dead in Christ. According to the Holy Scriptures, the Lord in His glorious appearing shall bring with Him the spirits of just men (the elect that have already died in Christ). And at the resurrection of the dead, by the power of the living God, the bodies of the dead in Christ shall be raised and changed, and the bodies of those who are alive and remain at His coming shall be changed, and each one of their bodies shall be made like unto the glorious body of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then shall the earnest expectation of the creature be fulfilled, all things shall be brought into subjection unto God, and forever and ever all shall be praise and glory and honor to God, who alone is worthy. The body shall be redeemed from the grave, changed and united with its soul and spirit, and together with those alive at His coming and changed, each child of God then shall be a complete spiritual man in body, soul, and spirit. In this wondrous spiritual state each shall be blessed to look upon the face of the living God and not die, but live, and each shall have full enjoyment of heaven and immortal glory world without end.

He shall sing the song with all saints that none other than the redeemed of the Lord may sing. John heard them singing during *the revelation that he was given. "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and*

under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever."

Yes, the sanctified earthen vessel, the body of the child of God, shall be preserved and shall not be destroyed with the wicked. It shall be changed and made a glorious vessel by the power of God at His coming. This shall be to the praise and honor and glory of His grace and mercy toward the poor sinners that He foreknew and loved with an everlasting love, to the extent that He laid down His life for them. This is my hope and my trust, as I desire to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. It is also my constant desire that I should be blessed with all saints to be faithful unto death that I might receive the crown of life, although I know I am not worthy of the least of the mercies of God.

This was written, I trust, in love toward God and all saints, and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J .B. Farmer.
8-7-2007.

CORRESPONDENCE

Obucholu, Fl. 34974
1590 SW 28th St.
Jan. 28, 2008

Dear Brothers,

Please renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times and accept this small donation. I enjoy reading the "Signs" and read it over and over. May God bless you.

Freida Wise-Dennis

1052 Middle View Drive
Forest, Virginia 24551
Feb. 8, 2008

Dear Brother Tony,

I would like to renew my subscription for 2 years. The remainder you may use for the ongoing of the "Signs" as you see fit. I am thankful and I hope grateful that "The Signs of the Times" has been a standard in my home for nearly all my life. May the Lord continue to bless you in all your efforts to keep this fine Primitive Baptist paper in publication.

A friend in hope,
Steve A. Everett.

February 4, 2008

Dear Brother Tony:

Enclosed is a check to cover a two year subscription to the Signs for a friend and member who attends the Newfound Church in W. Va. Information will follow: (name, address, etc.)

Please know that our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family as you continue the work of circulation manager and treasurer of Signs of the Times. May all things necessary to this service be provided by the grace and mercy of our dear Lord.

Jerry joins me in sending our love and best wishes to you and your family.

Yours in hope,
Sherry Farmer.

2-16-08

Dear Tony,

It's time to renew my subscription. Attached is a $30.00 check to cover 2 years and use the balance as you deem necessary.

I enjoy the "Signs" and look forward to receiving it each month.

May God continue to bless you and everyone connected to this great publication.

In hope,
M.L. Richardson
6907 Jolee Rd.
Panama City, FL 32404

Feb. 2, 2008

Mr. Horton,

I'm renewing this paper because you have so faithfully continued to send it even though it has been expired nearly a year. My husband read it faithfully before his illness. He is unable to even understand if I read it to him. My time is so consumed with his care I hardly ever get to look at it. But today I sat down to go through the mail and I just opened the cover and started to read Elder Farmer's article about angels. I couldn't lay it down. I thank God he was blessed to pen it down and I opened and read it. It was such a blessing to me. I'm in such a struggle physically and emotionally and it brought peace to me. May God continue his blessings on the paper and I will try to do better about renewing it. I owe for the year past and I'm sending enough for two more years. Thank you for your patience with me.

Gracy R. Goodman
281 Reece Drive
Carrollton, Ala. 35447

PSALM 134: 1-3.

Behold, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord.

Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord.

The Lord that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion.

VOICES OF THE PAST

EXPERIENCE

Dora Ellen, my dear child, As I can't get my mind on my work today, I will try to do what you asked me to do for you some time back. I feel just as unworthy now to attempt to write as I did years ago when I tried to write and would end up burning what I had written. I hope the God of all power will give me strength and guide my hand to write only what is the truth for your sake as well as mine.

Dora Ellen, I don't know hardly how to begin, but I do know nearly as far back as I can remember I felt that I knew there was a power stronger than man's power. I would have serious feelings about myself and would want to get by myself and cry. I would not even know why I was crying and I didn't seem to have fun playing with other children. These feelings stayed with me off and on after I was in my teenage. Sometimes the feelings were worse than others. I went on in this way until a few years before I was married. My burden would get so heavy at times that I wondered what was going to happen. I felt to be one to myself and didn't care for the good times other young people seem to enjoy. I tried to think it was because I was left at home with no one except one brother and my father. My mother passed away when I was very young and then my brothers and sisters were all married and gone except one brother who was younger than me. Most of my time was spent at home alone and I thought this had something to do with my feelings. There would be times I could see my way brighter, but those dark and lonely days would come back.

A few months before your Daddy and I were married I seemed to feel better. I felt that I had found one person on earth who cared for me. I was hoping that my life would be more at ease and for a short time it was. Soon these feelings began to come back and I tried in every way I could to keep them hid. When I went to bed at night I would lie for hours shedding tears and trying to ask God to have mercy on me. This went on for years. Every time these unworthy feelings came back they would be worse.

In the year 1936 my burden was so heavy at times that I thought my time to leave this world was close by. I could hardly sleep and had a desire to talk to someone, but felt that no one would want to listen to me. I could only beg God for mercy. One night it seemed I had stood about all I could without telling someone how I felt. I spoke to your Daddy about how I felt. He tried to tell me how wrong I was for feeling that my friends had forsaken me and that our friends were good to us. I told him they were his friends and that no one cared for me and in spite

of all I could do, I began to shed tears. He asked me if the church was worrying me. I told him no, that I was not fit to even think of the church. We had been going to church when we could and I enjoyed going, but I never thought I would join. I lay awake for a long time that night after everyone was asleep. I was thinking about what Leland said and I tried to pray to God if the church had anything to do with my feelings, if He would let me sleep I would go to church the following Sunday and ask for a home.

God knew I was telling a story, but I really thought I was telling the truth. He blessed me with a good nights sleep. I don't even remember hearing my baby cry during the night. Next morning I felt better and did for the rest of the week. It was the week before the fourth Sunday. I thought I would go to church at Upper Black Creek on Sunday and join if they would have me in the church and be baptized Sunday evening. That was my plan; not God's. I went to church Sunday feeling the best I had for a long time. I enjoyed the preaching and singing and got along fine until the doors of the church were open and they began to sing. The feelings that came over me, I can't tell you or anyone else. It just seemed to me if I stayed in the house I would die. I got up and went out and waited for Leland to come out after church was over. *later* that Sunday my burden was worse. I decided that anybody that could lie to God as I had was not fit to even go to church and I decided to stay away from the church and live the best I could at home. So I stopped saying anything about my feelings. This went on for a year or longer.

We moved from where we were living and I thought the change would help me. I did feel some better for a while, but soon my troubles were worse than ever. My health grew from bad to worse. Some of the children were sick nearly all of the time. I just felt that all of this was put on me because I was so full of sin. I felt that I was the biggest sinner on earth; not fit to live and less fit to die. Finally I had the greatest desire to go to church I had ever had, but then we didn't have any way to go nor any money to pay anyone to take us. No one lived close to us who I thought would want to go to a Primitive Baptist Church and that was the only church I wanted to go to. The burden I was carrying was getting heavier all the time, but the worst was still ahead. I got where I didn't care to live and begged God to take me out of my troubles.

Dora Ellen, please don't let what I'm about to write upset you for it's not because I didn't want you, it was a thing I couldn't help. I feel it was a very sinful thought for me to have. You ask me to write this for you and I want only to write the truth as far as I can remember and I can remember the things that happened during those years better than I can things that happen now. This was a few

days before you were born. I tried to pray that God would take both of us. I didn't want to live and didn't want to leave a baby for someone else to bring up. I guess I thought the rest of the children and Leland would be better off without me. To tell the truth, I don't know what I was thinking, but I do know that it was not God's will for either one of us to die. As for me, I thought my prayers were being answered. Everyone around me thought I was dying. I thought I was too and I was not the least bit afraid. I could feel death coming on and I couldn't talk or get a long breath. I was just weakning away. The doctor came back and with God's help I was soon better. God was showing me what a power He has. Then there I was seeing myself a bigger sinner than ever before.

Before you were a year old, you were taken sick. I was afraid this would be the way God would punish me for the many sins I had committed. This time my prayers were for you to live; not to die. you got well, but my troubles stayed with me. I was always afraid something would happen to you. This went on for over a year. I was taken sick again and thought I wanted to die. There seemed to be nothing ahead for me but troubles and they were getting worse all the time. I got seriously sick and the doctor had me sent to the hospital. I was so sick that I don't remember leaving home and don't remember getting to the hospital. I was unconscious for three or four days. When I regained consciousness, I was told that my baby was dead and had been buried. The thoughts of all that had happened were almost more than I could bear. What I went through lying on that hospital bed no one but God and me will ever know. I can't tell it all. While I was there I had a dream; I guess it was a dream. I don't know whether it was day or night, but I saw myself lying on a high bed. It was as white as snow. There seemed to be two of me. I could see myself on this bed and down below us were all you children running around trying to get to me. When I woke up I lay for a long time wondering: what it meant and it came to me as plain as if someone spoke these words, ***"you children needed me"***. Before then I didn't much care if I lived or died, but from then on I wanted to live and go back home to Leland and you children. I couldn't get back fast enough. After I got home my burden was heavier than ever to think how I wanted to be taken away from my family and then to see how much it meant to them to have me back.

After I came home I found out that my brother died while I was in the hospital. They were afraid to tell me about it until after I got well. It just looked like trouble at home was piling up again. This was in September of 1939.

I went on with this burden till the spring of 1940. I felt if I couldn't get to church I would go crazy. By this time we had moved again and no

one in that neighborhood went to church and we still had no way of our own to go. I would speak about going to church, but that was as far as I got. I would dream of starting to church but would never get there. Then one night I dreamed I went to church. It was night and I had a lantern for a light. I had to go a long way through the woods, but I wasn't afraid. I went until I found this church. It was in the woods. I walked up to the door steps and didn't see anybody. There was a light inside. I stood for awhile not knowing whether to go in or not. A voice said, ***"Pull off your shoes and go in."*** I pulled off my shoes and left them on the steps and went in. I saw only one person inside. It was a man sitting as if he was asleep. He didn't speak or notice me. I sat down on a seat near the door and began looking around. The lights were very dim. A second voice said, "If you come to this church you will have to bring such as this if you don't have any money ." Looking the way the voice came from, I didn't see anyone, but I saw a lot of canned food. This thought came to me -if I have got to pay to come to church I won't come. I got up and went out. Then I woke up and lay for a long time thinking and wondering about the dream.

My burden got so heavy that I could neither eat or sleep. It just seemed like I was forsaking my God and friends. I felt to be one to myself and had the same feelings I had before going to the hospital. I felt that my family had forsaken me, oh, I was so alone. All I could do was beg God to have mercy on a lost sinner, for that was what I felt to be. One night I had another dream. This time I found myself in a big house by myself and I was the happiest I had ever been. There was a hall in the house and I looked and saw Leland standing in the door. I was overjoyed at seeing him. I met him at the door and he took me in his arms and said it won't be long now. He didn't say what he meant by those words, but I believe I know what they meant. Then we both walked out into the hall and down at the end of this hall was the whitest bed I have ever seen. Dora Ellen, you were out there playing on that bed and you were the prettiest little angel. You were just as white as snow and you would rise and fly and fall on that bed and it was like down and would cover you when you fell on it. I stood there watching you for awhile and I felt so happy for you. Then I missed Leland and went outside to see if I could find him. I found him working on a new building and he seemed to be happy. He was whistling a hymn. I don't know the name of the hymn but I know it was one. I thought that was the prettiest place I had ever seen. The ground was as white as snow and out a little way from the building that Leland was working on was a great place of water as blue as the sky. Out in the water were places that looked like white stone with the prettiest

flowers around the edges of the water. I walked up to the edge of the water , and was standing there thinking how pretty it was when I heard someone speak. I turned and looked. It was L.C. He asked me if he could get some of the flowers that were out in the water. I told him he might get wet and he said, "no, I won't." Then I heard someone crying and I looked and it was Celion coming to me. I went to meet him and put my arms around him and he stopped crying. Then I turned to look for L.C. He was way out in the water. The water was up over his knees and he had his arms full of flowers. he came where I was and said, ***"Mama, I told you I wouldn't get wet."*** I felt of his clothes and they were dry .Then I woke up and lay there a long time thinking how good it would be if I could be as happy always as I was in my dream. I couldn't believe anyone could be that happy here on this earth.

In another dream, I was going to a brick church. When I went in there was a woman sitting holding a little child. I wondered about that dream and where that church was. I couldn't remember going to a brick church except Lower Black Creek. I couldn't believe that was the church I dreamed about. It had been so long since I had gone to church, if I had heard that they had taken Pittman's School for a church I had forgotten it. However, I felt that the church I had seen in my dreams was somewhere and I would see it.

When Leland came in from work one evening, he said he had thought of a way I could go to church. I don't think he could have said anything that would have pleased me more. I asked him how I was to go and he said to catch the school bus to Mr. Leroy Jackson's and see if they would take me. I got ready the next morning, which was Friday before the second weekend. I got on the school bus and went to Mr. Jackson's. When I spoke to Sister Jackson about going to church, I thought my trip was for nothing. When the boys came in for dinner she asked them if they would take us. They promised to take us on Sunday.

On Sunday when I got to church there was the brick church I saw in my dream. I don't remember ever seeing Brother Turner before, but I thought he preached the sweetest sermon I had ever heard. When the doors of the church were opened I don't remember getting out of my seat. When I came to realize what I was doing, I was on my way to the stand. I was received into the church. I experienced part of the happiness I saw in my dream. I put off being baptized until the next second Sunday which I regretted for the next month was a miserable one for me. I had never wanted to do anything as badly as I wanted to be baptized. It seemed the time would never come and when Brother Turner brought me up out of the water I felt the same happiness I had felt in my

dream. It seemed I had left all my troubles and fears in the water. I wanted to shake everyone's hand. When I got back to the church and went in, there sat the woman with the child in her lap as I saw in my deam. I have had more pleasure since my name has been on the church book than I had ever had in all my life before. It's a different kind of joy and pleasure than I had ever known before and that's why that dream stays with me. I feel like it showed me the joy there was ahead for me. I think the words Leland spoke to me had something to do with the joy I have found, but I can't explain how I feel about it all.

The dear brothers and sisters have been more than kind to me. They treat me better than I feel to deserve when they took me in among them. I wonder sometimes after going through all I have if I had any right to go before the church and ask for a home. Then I wonder what would have become of me if I had stayed away.

Dora Ellen, I don't know if this is a true experience of a child of grace or not. All I know is it's just a part of what I have felt and seen, but so much of the time I feel the way these hymns go:

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am tis hard to know.
I am so vile, so prone to sin.
I fear that I'm not born again."
"O for a closer walk with God."

Experience of grace as felt and written by Mrs. Peircy D. Holland.

REPLY.

Among he hundreds of dear brethren and sisters whom we had the pleasure of meeting for the first time, at the Pigg River Association, in August last, it would not be expected that we could distinctly recollect but few, but this one thing we shall not soon forget, that we were most affectionaly greeted in love and Christian fellowship by the whole assembly of the saints who all appeared to be truly of one heart and one spirit, joyfully mingling in the worship of our God and Savior. Of the multitude assembled, there was not a face that we had ever before to our knowledge seen, except that of brother Leachman, who accompanied us in our journey to visit them. Our preaching, imperfect as it certainly was, seemed to be warmly received, and heartily indorsed by all the brethren and sisters, without one dissenting voice, and the preaching of the brethren of that vicinity was as cordially received and indorsed by us.

But we were admonished by faithful brethren, that the enemy was close upon our heels to scatter arrows, fire-brand and death, insinu-

ating that we were abolitionists, arians, non-regenerationists, non-resurrectionists, and almost anything but what we profess to be. Being thus advised we were the more explicit in avowing our sentiments on all subjects on which we were assailed, and were happy to learn that our views on every point were in perfect harmony with the doctrine constantly proclaimed by the brethren of that section of the counry, as well as in harmony with what has always distinguished the Old School Baptists from the days of John the Baptist.

Soon after our return, we were informed by a beloved brother, and highly esteemed minister of the Pigg River Association, that we had been assailed by one of Zion's adversaries, and a rehash of the stereotyped slanders which had been so frequently made by our enemy, met, denied, and refuted by us, for years past, were reiterated and as boldly reaffirmed, as though they had never been contradicted by us, and garbled sentences collected from the files of the Signs, to fasten the base slanders upon us. Although we have so frequently replied to substantially the same questions many times within the last few years, we cheerfully re-assert our views on the subjects embraced in the inquiries of our correspondent, in the order in which they are stated:

First. *"On the dying with Christ, lying in the grave with him arising and ascending with him to glory."* Or in other words, our views of the vital, or life union of Christ as the spiritual Head, and his church as the mystical body of our Redeemer. That such was the identity of spiritual, immortal and eternal life of the Head and body, that when the members of the body of Christ had in their earthly nature transgressed the law of God, under which we were created in the earthly Adam, and the law of God demanded that we should die. Christ, who is the second Adam, and the Lord from heaven, came into this world, and took on him the seed of Abraham; was made of woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons, and in his own person laid down that life which the law required for our transgressions, suffered the very death which was due to his people, "was delivered up to death for our offences, and raised from the dead for our justification. And thus were all his people *"buried with him, by baptism into death,"* including as many and all who were baptized into Jesus Christ, they were baptized into his death. (Rom. vi. 3-4.) Also Col. ii. 11-14, *"In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; buried WITH HIM in baptism, wherein also ye are risen WITH HIM, through the faith of the operation of God,*

who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting our the handwriting of ordinances," & c. *"For the love of God constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, them were all dead." – 2 Cor. v. 14. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved, and that raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." – Eph. Ii. 4-. "If ye then be risen with Christ, (by grace ye are saved,) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." – Eph. ii. 4-6. "If ye then be risen with Christ seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." – Col. iii. 1.* These passages embrace all that we know, all that we believe, and all that we contend for, upon the subject of the first question proposed by our correspondent. If this amounts to heresy, we cannot see how the apostles of the Lamb can escape the charge, or what defence the Old Baptists can make for singing,

"One in the tomb, one when he rose,
One when he triumphed o'er his foes,
One when in heaven he took his seat,
While seraphs sung all hell's defeat."

If there ever was a period in time or eternity when Christ was not the Life of his church, when the church was not one with him, even as he is one with the Father, we desire that some one more enlightened than we, should tell us when and where it was. We have thought it safe to believe just what the Bible says on the subject. But if Paul must be denounced as an heretic for what he was inspired by the Holy Ghost to write, it will not be the first time he has been so charged. See Acts xxiv. 14.

Second. The second point suggested, is an article written by us on the doctrine of predestination, in answer to questions proposed by a brother Howard. We have reviewed the article, and can see nothing in it to recall. We certainly now believe, as we did in 1855, that the power, government and decrees of God extend to all beings, all things, and all events, and think we should feel quite miserable, were we compelled to believe otherwise. If to believe that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, be heresy, then Paul, as well as the humble editor of this paper, must lie under the imputation, for Paul has asserted it, Eph. i. 11. And with all our heart we do believe it.

Third. We are called on to say whether we believe that Christ is a created being. We answer, as we have often answered the same interrogatory before, most emphatically, We do not. We never have either believed or asserted any such thing. We have often made the same interrogatory before, most emphatically, We do not. We never have either believed or asserted any such thing. We have often made the same protestation., but still there are some who persist in charging us with that belief, and without paying the least regard to our disavowal, have labored with indefatigable zeal to garble something from the past volumes of the Signs to prove either that they know better than we do what we believe, or that we are insincere and false in our protestations. We envy not the disposition of those who can make it their business from year to year to vainly endeavor to elevate themselves by scandalizing those who can find better business.

Fourth. Next comes the extracts, said to be copied from the past files of the Signs. The design of which seems to be to show that we have both affirmed and denied that we hold that Christ is a created being. Take the extracts as we wrote and published them, (and not as they have garbled and misquoted them,) and take them in their connection with the articles in which they are found, and we still indorse each of those which are copied from our own writings. But the one which charges us with saying in number 16 of volume 17, and page 121, that *"the life-giving Spirit of God is a created existence,"* we positively deny that we ever wrote, published or indorsed that sentence, as our own. The words are contained in an article written by Elder Trott, in the volume, number and page referred to, and were written by him, in a controversy upon the precise meaning of the word made as applied to the "last Adam being made a quickening Spirit." It was not said by brother Trott that Christ was a created existence, for brother Trott has always contended, if we have understood him, that Christ is the self-existent god, One with the eternal Father. But in these passages, in which it is said, He is of God made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, that the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit, that as such he is the beginning of the creation of God, and firstborn among many brethren, whether the words created and made are in those and other passages synonymous was the point in controversy, as we understood it. But we have no recollection that we have ever even expressed an opinion in the affirmative, but upon mature deliberation we have repeatedly said in our published articles on the subject that we do not believe the term created is admissible in that place, especially if by creation we mean the origination of something that did not before ex-

ist, as in the creation of the world.

Is it not strange that the brother, in searching the old files of the Signs, should entirely overlook, should find but one disclaimer, and then put the words of another writer into our month, in order to give it the appearance of a contradiction of ours? In all the other extracts he copies from us, (but not correctly in the first,) and then, in the second extract, writes, *"He says, I will in all candor answer the question they put to me; the first is, whether the life-giving Spirit of God is a created existence? I answer decidedly, Yes."* Did not the brother who copied these extracts know that in his use of the pronoun he, in "He says," that the writer of the other extracts would, according to the rules of our language, be the antecedent and implicated as saying what he never said? Was this done through ignorance of the rules of our language, or was it done to convey the idea that the editor, who is charged with saying the other things, also said what is contained in that extract? Whatever caused him to make the misrepresentation, it is no less a misrepresentation and an untruth, for we never said it, we never thought it, and we have not been slow to disclaim it from time to time.

The extract purporting to be from volume 17, page 87, should read, if copied correctly, *"Christ as the Life and seminal Head of his own* church or body, dwelt in the bosom *of the Father, was the begotten, and the only begotten of the Father, and the begetting and setting up of that Head was the begetting and setting up of the body of which he is the Head and Life."* Is there anything wrong in this? If he is not the seminal Head of his church, how are they his seed? (Psa. Xxii. 30; Isa. liii. 10; Gal. iii. 29, and 1 Cor. xv. 45-49.) Does he not dwell in the bosom of the Father? Read John i. 18. Was he the begotten and only begotten of the Father? See John i. 18. Was the Head and body both born of God? Read Heb. li. 11. Or is it more scriptural to believe that the Head was set up without the body? When Christ died for his members, were they buried with him by baptism into death? If not, when were they so baptized? Were they, his members, quickened together with Christ, and raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places, or not? If they were, what is wrong in the extract? And if they were not, why did the inspired Paul say they were? (Eph. li. 6, and Col. iii. 1.) But we will copy the rest of the extract: "And when that Head was put to death in the flesh, the life of the body or church was taken away." We hope this is not heresy, seeing that it is Bible doctrine. *"For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if Christ died for all, then were all dead." – 2 Cor. v 14.* And all her members were dead, so long as he remained

in the grace, but when he was raised up, together with his dead body did they arise from death, and were quickened together with him.

Now we have given the whole of the first extract; it is nearly all of it in Bible language, and all that is not in the very words of Scripture may be wrong, as it is only the view entertained by one who is, to say the least, quite as likely to err in his judgment as any of his brethren are. Of course we do not intend to be understood that the children of God were literally dead while Christ was in the grave, for many of them were not born, but all who were redeemed by his blood were legally dead, the death to which they were sentenced was met and canceled, and when he arose from the dead he raised up his church from sin, and death, and hell, so as to justify the express declaration, that *"God hath us raised up with him."*

In conclusion, we hope our brethren will examine our views, and take what we have written as we have written it, and not run over the volume of the Signs for twenty-eight years to garble and detach passages, and by unfair, uncandid and unchristian constructions of our words, labor to make us an offender for a word, or even without a word by us, uttered to justify them.

We have been hunted like a partridge in the wilderness, for years, and we have been charged with the most awful heresies, but when our volumes are searched for years, we are glad that so little can be found to justify the charges, and we submit to our brethren whether anything has been found that when fairly construed can be refuted by the Scriptures.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, NY,
November 15, 1806.

January 23.

"Man's goings are of the Lord ...how can a man then understand his own way;" - *PROVERBS xx. 24.*

DOES not your heart sometimes quake with fear lest you have nothing but a nominal profession, lest the god of this world be blinding you, and lest your conscience be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin? It is good to have such fears. He who feareth not, who has no solemn apprehensions, no anxious inquiries, who is never exercised with some internal trepidation of soul, it is much to be feared has never known what it is to have *"the candle of the Lord searching the inward parts of the belly."* But if God has quickened your soul into spiritual life, and you have ears to hear, I would just put two questions to you: Have you obtained righteousness by a manifestation of Christ's righteousness;

pardon by the application of Christ's blood; love by a shedding abroad of love; deliverance by a discovery of God's outstretched hand ? My other question is this - If you have not, and let conscience bear its honest testimony-if you have never experienced righteousness, pardon, love, and deliverance, is there a cry in your soul after them? Is there anything like fervent supplication that God would bestow them? Is there anything of a groan in the depth of your spirit that the Lord would reveal them? These are marks of life; and he that has these marks will have the blessing, because God has quickened him into spiritual life. It may be long delayed, but it will come at last; *"it will surely come, it will not tarry."* It may be withheld for wise purposes, and you may have to travel through many a dark season and many an anxious hour, but deliverance is sure ; it is reserved for you in Christ, and you are reserved for it, kept by God himself unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

Elder J. C. Philpot

ST. JOHN 9: 38-39.

And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.

July 25.

"He that hath received hls testimony hath set to hIs seal that God Is true."- JOHN iii. 33.

WE can only set to our seal that God is true in any one point of doctrine, experience, or precept when we feel an inward witness that God indeed has declared it. Thus, upon every manifestation of God's goodness to the soul, every application of Christ's blood to the conscience, and every revelation of God's distinguishing grace, it is only as we receive Christ's testimony, experience the inward approbation of it, and feel its sweetness and blessedness that we can set to our seal that God is true. This, we may be well assured, is the only way to know the power and reality of true religion, to understand the Scriptures, and enjoy a convincing testimony that God is our God, Christ our Saviour, the Holy Ghost our Teacher, heaven our eternal home, and that our soul is saved in the Lord Jesus Christ with an everlasting salvation.

And with what divine certainty can such a soul sometimes speak. Sometimes, indeed, we cannot believe anything; it seems as if there were nothing in God's word that we could set our seal to. All seems a mass of confusion, and our ignorance appears so great that we cannot set our seal to any vital truth. But when the blessed Spirit is

pleased to testify of the things of God, and we, receiving the testimony of Jesus Christ, walk in the light of that testimony, then there is a holy certainty of and heavenly acquiescence with God's truth. This divine faith will bring us through all our trials and sorrows, and though we may be dragged through a very hell of temptation, yet shall we know God is true.

Here, then, is the grand trial of faith; first to receive Christ's testimony, and then to hang upon that testimony, in spite of all opposition from within and without, from feeling its weight, power, and sweetness.

Elder J. C. Philpot

PSALM 129

MANY a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say:

Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth: yet they have not prevailed against me.

The plowers plowed upon my back: they made long their furrows.

The Lord is righteous: he hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked.

Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion.

Let them be as the grass upon the house tops, which withereth afore it groweth up:

Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom.

Neither do they which go by say, The blessing of the Lord be upon you: we bless you in the name of the Lord.

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held, the Lord willing, on the 5th Sunday in March at Big Meadows Church.

Big Meadows is located about 20 miles below Graham, NC. Those traveling I-85 take the Pittsboro Graham exit and go 17 miles toward Pittsboro. After crossing Cane Creek bridge take first road to right at top of hill - go 4 miles to a crossroad and turn left - go 1 mile to church on right.

We invite all lovers of the Truth to come and be with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Sister JoAnn Self, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 2008

Freida Wise, FL	20.00
Herbert Dodson, VA	5.00
Milton Houston, NC	5.00
Steve Everett, VA	75.00
James Knight, NC	10.00
Phil Pittman, TX	10.00
Dorothy Holley, VA	5.00
M. L. Richardson, FL	5.00

OBITUARIES

IN LOVING MEMORY OF SISTER EMILY ADAMS DALTON

Our beloved Sister Emily Adams Dalton was born October 21, 1923 in Pittsylvania County and passed away November 6, 2007 at the age of 84. She was married to the late Noel Gatewood Dalton and to this union they were blessed with one son, Garith Dalton, of Gretna and one daughter, Joyce Clay, of Gretna. She was predeceased by her husband, a brother, Vincen Adams, and a sister, Madaline Shelton.

Sister Emily is survived by her son, daughter, four sisters, Jacaline Shelton of Altavista, Rose Johnston of Lynchburg, Linda Thacker of Forest and Agnes Brumfield of Dublin, five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Her strong faith carried her through her total blindness for ten years, along with other trials and tribulations and she had many.

I was blessed to visit her and she always greeted me with a smile and said she believed in everything, even going blind, happened for a reason and a time to every purpose under the heaven. Her family did all human hands could do for her. Sister Emily's daughter, Joyce, was there when she needed her. But Sister Emily said all her family was there when she needed them also. Her funeral was held at Colbert Moran Chapel at 11:00 a.m. November 8, 2007 by her pastor, Elder Raymond Goad and Elder Marvin Brumfield. Her body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in the Carl O. Moran Memorial Garden awaiting that day when God will come in a cloud with great power and glory to receive his elect from the four winds of the earth, be like him and be satisfied without spot, wrinkle or any such thing. May we all be reconclled to her death and be able to look back on what we had and not what we have lost.

Written I hope in love,
Elder Marvin Brumfield
Elder Raymond Goad - Mod.
Sister Pam Betterton - Clerk

IN MEMORY OF SISTER REBA DALTON MYERS

It has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst our beloved Sister Reba Dalton Myers, Monday, January 14, 2008 at the age of 88.

Sister Myers was born July 6,1920 and was the wife of the late James Louis Myers. She united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church July 24, 1949 and was baptized Aug. 28, 1949. She was the daughter of the late Charlie Ander-

son Dalton and Mary Yeatts Dalton. Sister Myers was predeceased by her husband, a grandson, Kenneth Phelps, one brother, Carroll Dalton, and seven sisters, Sister Irene Myers, Vivian Dalton, Pearl McCracken, Frances Marsh, Sister Gertrude Myers, Gillie May Dalton and Gillie Ida Dalton.

Sister Myers is survived by one son, Gary L. Myers and wife, Sabrina of Dry Fork, two daughters, Faye M. Phelps and husband, Carl of Rustburg, and Emily M. Jacobs and husband G. W. of Gretna; a foster son, David Myers and wife, Carmen, of Petersburg; five grandchildren Sheila Callahan, Sandra Williams, Vickie Johnston, Dixie Cummings and Davy Myers; eight great-grandchildren; and seven great-great-grandchildren.

Funeral Services were conducted at 2 p.m. on Thursday, January 17 at Weatherford Primitive Baptist church by her pastor, Elder Raymond Goad and Elder Marvin Brumfield. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

May all that mourn her be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father who does all things well and never makes a mistake, for it is He that gives and He that takes away.

Written by,
Elder Marvin Brumfield
Elder Raymond Goad - Mod.
Pam Betterton - Clerk

SIS. AMANDA SNOW SAUNDERS

On May 20, 2007 our precious Sister Mandy was called from this vain world of sin and sorrow. She was born on July 15,1923 in Wilkes County, North Carolina. Elder Kenneth Key, her pastor, conducted her funeral service at Fair Funeral Home Chapel on May 23, 2007 after which her body was laid to rest in Woodlawn Cemetery to await the second coming of her Lord. Her loved ones who preceded her in death include her husband, Roy Saunders, her son, Russell, her brothers George and Russell, and sisters Ruby and Jo. Her beloved daughter, Rebecca Warf, in addition to many nieces and nephews as well as her beloved church family are left to mourn her passing.

Sister Mandy asked for a home with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on November 11, 1969, was received, and baptized by her former pastor, Elder David Spangler. She was so blessed to walk humbly and softly before her brethren and as blessed as anyone I've ever known in manifesting the fruit of the spirit most particularly that of love. I simply have no words to express what she has meant to me for the last 35 years. She has truly been a dear, precious mother in Israel to me, and I could never be thankful enough for the wonderful blessing of her love and fellowship. Over the years we've often talked of how good the Lord has been to us, and reminisced

about the lovely, precious brethren and sisters whom we've been privileged to know through this journey of life. I miss that so very much. Since her passing, so many of the little flock at Dan River have spoken of how much they miss her. The Lord blessed her so in visiting and calling to check on the sick and in letting us all know how they fared. Sister Mandy wouldn't want us to praise her, but rather the God of love who took up His abode in her earthen vessel, and that treasure was evident in her countenance and her love for those of like precious faith.

The last time I was blessed to visit with her was on Mother's Day before she was called home. Her dear daughter was kind enough to allow me to visit her in intensive care that day. I will always be grateful that I was blessed to see her then. She said, *"This is my cup"*. We had often talked of the cup that is appointed to each of the little children of God to drink. I believe that she was blessed to not fear death but rather to look forward with joy and anticipation to that day when she would fall asleep in Christ. Though our sorrow in the loss of this precious Sister is great, we would not wish her back for we know that she is at rest. Sister Mandy, I'm sure, could witness with Paul in second Timothy 4:6-8:

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

May the Lord bless her family, most especially her daughter, Becky, and all of us, who loved her so dearly as a beloved Sister in Christ, with the comfort that only He can give. May we all be blessed with that love of God and of our brethren that the Lord so bountifully displayed in the life of Sister Mandy.

Humbly submitted by one who loved her greatly,

Mary Hawkins

CORINTHIANS 12: 1-5.

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

Wherefore I give you to uncierstand that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

I THERE is a friend that sticketh fast,
And keeps his love from first to last,
And Jesus is his name:
An earthly brother drops his hold,
Is sometimes hot, and sometimes cold,
But Jesus is the same.

He loves his people great and small,
And grasping hard embraceth all,
Nor with a soul will part:
No tribulations which they feel,
No foes on earth, or fiends of hell,
Shall tear them from his heart.

His love before all time began,
Shall through all time the same remain,
And evermore endure:
Though rods and frowns are sometimes brought,
And man may change, He changeth not,
His love abideth sure.

The law demanded blood for blood,
And out he poured his vital flood
To pay the mighty debt!
He toils through life, and pants through death,
And cries with his expiring breath,
"Tis finished," and complete.

Berridge.

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EDITORIAL

"...we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Romans 5:3-5.

Elder J.B. Farmer

Once again, at the outset, I must acknowledge my great fear because of the weakness and inability of my flesh to perform anything good. If anything worthwhile is to be written, it must be by the grace and mercy of God. I am made to believe that writing spiritual things is much like preaching. One must wait upon the Lord until power comes down from above, and only then may any spiritual preaching or writing be done. God has fixed it this way so that no man is able to take God's glory to himself. Any one attempting to write or to speak apart from the power of God will always err from the truth and manifest his own carnality. Is it any wonder that we fear and tremble at the prospect of coming before God and His people in the way of writing or of preaching the gospel? Without Him, we can do nothing.

It is altogether against nature to willingly enter into troubles or tribulations. We flee from them as one would run away from a raging fire or from a wild beast. But the things of God are opposite to the things of nature. Jesus said, ***"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted the prophets which were before you."*** There is a wonderful blessedness in partaking of a measure of the sufferings of Christ.

Who, in a natural mind, wants to

be persecuted and reviled and lied against? It appears that none do. But the blessed apostle said that he gloried in tribulations. He must have been out of his natural mind to say such a thing - and no doubt he was. I believe he was caught up above this world in a spiritual mind which is contrary to nature. Instead of hating the troubles which he endured, he was made to embrace them and even to glory in them. The apostle has not been alone in these things. The Lord's people all through the ages, even until now have suffered for the truth's sake and have been made to rejoice in the blessedness of it.

God mercifully has made known, through the apostles, that tribulations are necessary in order that the faith of each little one must be tried. And when that little one is tried, by the mercy, grace and power of God, he is brought forth as gold, purified by the fire, to the glory of God. The apostle Peter said, ***"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you..."*** It is a needful part of our experience for us to suffer with Him if we are to reign with Him.

There is a golden chain of events that is in store for each of the children of God each time one is tried. The links are tribulation, patience, experience, hope, and love. The tribulation that shakes to pieces the world of the believer leaves him in fear and trembling at the end of his wits, and at the end of his strength. He is brought to the place of the publican, who had no place to go or to look except unto God. He was in great tribulation because he was made to see his corruption and his inability to do anything about it. He thought he must surely perish unless God should intervene for him. He was like the disciples in the little ship in the great tempest in the sea, who said, ***"Lord save us: we perish."*** Daniel found himself in that case in the den of lions. The three Hebrew children also had to cast all their cares upon Him, since they could not deliver themselves from the fiery furnace. And this is where we sometimes find ourselves, if we are His.

Instead of running from the trial of faith, the child of God is made to endure it for Christ's sake. This is the patience, or longsuffering or endurance of the saints, which is part of the fruit of the Spirit. By being given grace to endure the trial, and seeing the manifestation of patience in his life, each of God's children is given some of the experience of a child of grace. Without God given patience there would be no experience. But God's little ones are given grace to

wait upon the Lord and to trust in Him.

When one is brought through a difficult and trying experience, he is given to compare his journey to that of the saints who went before him. And when one is blessed to see and identify his experience with those that God loved and protected and delivered through the ages, he begins to have hope that he may be among the family of God that has been misunderstood and abused by the world. Without this experience there would be no reason even to think one might have a part with God's people. But this experience causes one to hope, even though he feels so unworthy of the least of the mercies of God.

And this hope makes not ashamed. The child of God who has suffered for the sake of Christ and the gospel, and has patiently endured it, and has been given the experience of grace, and has been made to hope he is a part of the finished work of Christ: this one shall not be made ashamed or disappointed at His appearing. The disciples, when they had forsaken all and had followed Jesus, asked what they should receive in return. Jesus told them that if they had forsaken father, mother, brother, sister, houses and lands, that they would be given in this life, fathers and mothers and brothers and sisters and houses and lands an hundred fold, and in the world to come, eternal life. God's little ones find that when they have been made to turn away from the world and its false doctrine and to suffer reproach with God's children, they are given the abundant life here with the elect family of God, and are given the promise of eternal life in glory. These are the sure mercies of David. David was blessed to say, ***"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."*** This is our hope and our trust.

This hope is Christ in you the hope of glory. And God's little ones have no place to run, except to Him, for help in time of need. The world is not our home, and it has nothing to give us in the way of spiritual help. All our help must come from Him. In the book of Hebrews we are reminded of those, ***"...who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."*** This is the Hope that will not let you go. He is the anchor of the soul, which holds the ship fast against all storms and danger. And all within that ship shall be preserved unto the day of Jesus Christ. He is the secure anchor; He is the strong threefold cord or cable (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) that is not

quickly broken, or snapped; and He is the ark or ship in whom the family of God is kept safe. He is all in all to His people.

What is it that affirms all this? What is it that gives assurance to God's little ones that they are truly being kept in the true Hope, and are not deceived? How may we have assurance that we are born of God and have passed from death unto life? How do we know that we have really suffered tribulations with patience, and had some of the experience of God's children, and have a true hope of eternal life, and that we will not be ashamed or disappointed when the Lord comes to separate the sheep from the goats? The inspired apostle Paul said, *"...because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."* And the blessed apostle John, by the Holy Spirit of God tells us, *"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."* The love of God, which He shed abroad in the hearts of His people, is sufficient to assure them of their part in the kingdom, to keep and to carry them to the end of their journey in faith and hope, and to deliver them beyond this life into heaven and immortal glory.

Thanks be unto God for the unspeakable gift of His Son by Whom we are saved. Thanks be unto God, Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Thanks be unto God, Who has promised that He would never leave us or forsake us but that He would be with us unto the end of the world. He has loved us with an everlasting love, which cannot fail. Everlasting praise be unto God from Whom all blessings flow.

I trust that this was written in love and in hope of eternal life, unworthy as I am.

Elder J. B. Farmer

1st CORINTHIANS
CHAPTER 2: 1-5.

And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, "but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

CORRESPONDENCE

March 10, 2008
Anacoco, La.

Signs of the Times,

I don't have a way to go to church, so I especially enjoy the Signs.

Enclosed is payment for two years and the rest to use as needed.

With my love,

Armedia Taylor
1298 Marion Taylor Rd.
Anacoco, La.

Dear Sir:

I would like to subscribe to the Signs of the Times for 1 yr.

Carol R. Lansaw
P.O. Box 787
Gretna, Va. 24557

I am a member of Spingfield Primitive Baptist Church. My mom was a member also. She passed away from this life July 28th. Her obituary has been submitted.

Thanking you in advance,

A sister in Hope,
Carol R. Lansaw

Exeter, CA
March 21, 2008

Dear Sir,

Enclosed please find my check in the amount of $15.00 to renew my subscription for another year. I continue to enjoy reading each issue. The March issue arrived in the mail yesterday, and I see that it is time to once again send in my renewal payment.

Last summer we had the pleasure of visiting our friends in North Carolina. Had not been back there since 1997. Enjoyed our stay with Brother and Sister Mewborn of Coats, N.C. I joined his church at Snow Hill, N.C. in June and was baptized several days later.

We drove up into Virginia to Mabry Mill near Floyd, Va. to see this beautiful spot that I love to take pictures of with my camera.

I was very sorry to learn of Elder Hale Terry's death, and wish I could have met him.

In bonds of love,
Bill Clinton

A believer's affections are, too often, like a cascade, or waterfall, that flows downward; instead of being like a fountain, which rises and shoots upward toward heaven.

Toplady

VOICES OF THE PAST

MATTHEWS 1:20, 21.

"And while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost, And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins."

Recently, while seemingly, at the point of death, and after some unkind attempts upon my life in the church, and while feeling already the approach of the grim monster that has never asked leave of any victim, there appeared to me in my irregular thinking as I was slowly being engulfed in the steam of death, there was a still small voice that spake as no man has ever spoke, said to me, the time is not yet. Then and there was an invisible, yet a power that was effectual and sovereign and inevitably coming down from God out of heaven turning me in an eddy of water from the stream which I was drifting into, and into this peaceful, restful, gift of life giving and life restoring waters, wherein no galley with helpful oars went by, nor no gallant ship sailed by (Isa. 33:21). ***That restful "not yet" restored my desire to live and, as I have hoped and believed that I had testified before this to the goodness and mercy of God, that I yet would be blessed "also" (Acts 21:11).***

How singularly blessed art thou O Israel, anointed of God, for thou, O Lord are the Comforter of thy blood bought children. His promises are yea and amen to the glory of God. If His promises are fulfilled in Him to His name's honor and glory, then, by all means, and to all dying (even though they think they can give life) men and women, is, depart from me, ye workers of iniquity. The old time worn expression of man that men and women are masters of their own destiny, is with Babylon fallen, fallen!

Ministering angels are from the Lord. All of them are given to those that need ministering to. Certainly this truth is clearly substantiated in the episode in which our text takes and finds its background. All of the writings of heaven sent men are to those that need comforting. Let us apply the text. Was Joseph in a condition where he *could* have comforted God or man? Are the afflicted and poor people of God in a fit condition for imparting comfort and instruction to the Lord Jesus Christ, or to any of His elect family? When life is ebbing out of you, and it seems that man and God has forsaken you, are you qualified to comfort and instruct the lamenting children of God? If you are, then by all means, I write to you in a singular manner. I

could never bring anything to you worthwhile. I am reminiscing from a recent sick bed, and it was doubtful if I would ever leave it or not. What little of life was left me, certainly I could not have mustered up a revival of that life to where my advice, my instruction, my handling of the things of God, would have meant anything to you. That able character does not desire, and does not need what a dying man would have to offer. I feel a lingering desire to write to those that have been in darkness for a long, long time and in the shadow of death that I have been looking for and seeking the rays of a new day dawning, even the appearance of the lovely Saviour of sinners. Perhaps the greatest news that the Gentile believers ever heard was when the herald voice of mercy said unto these that were not a people, behold thou art now my people. Individually, as well as collectively, was when the Lord said, *"Say unto Zion, Behold thy salvation cometh" (Isa. 62:11).* When the time came for the Lord' s people to know a thing, the Lord taught it to them by signs and wonders, by ways past finding out by his people, as well as those not His people (Rom. 11:33, I Cor. 2:8). No man, by seeking or researching can find out God, equally so, can no man, nor set of men, find any excuse for making an exception to this divine rule, for God does not ever come to creatures for an increase in His wisdom. If any of my readers have ever thought that He stood in need of their help, or have thought that general principles would devolve upon creatures to be instant ready to teach him to reach a helping hand or to ladle out wisdom to him, then that person has not been taught how frail that he is before God. If any have a notion that this is treason to the cause of Christ, or that I am guilty of blasphemy , then by all means say so. God willing, I will notice your case. However, dear readers, one and all, the needy, the destitute, those that are afflicted, that are poor, that oftimes are made to see your needy and lost condition, that you need instruction, that you need the guiding hand of the Lord to lead, to beckon, to point out to you the Way, then, this is sent forth to you hoping that it may be a heavenly breeze sent your way to ease your burdened soul.

This has been, as I humbly trust, my lot for more than fifty-five years. O, how good and merciful He has been through these trying and soul searching years. I have been of times afraid that I am deceived in it all, and yet, for what I hope in, and what I hope for and that which has been taught me in part, here a little and there a little, a line here, another one there, and it all woven into a glowing fabric into a covering for my naked soul, how precious it has been, and how precious it still is to a poor sinner.

Oh, it is admitted that I have, as I hope, sent two disciples to the Sav-

iour to know if he was what my longing heart and soul desires, or should I look for another. I long to know more, for being weak, the evil one often inveigles my soul and my spirit into a troubled dream.

The dream is from the Lord, those that dream or are lulled to false dreaming are under the influence of the evil one, but they that are given dreams of warning or of good tidings, are under the divine care. How little is known of Israel's God, and what a great favor and blessing it is to be taught in dreams. God's children (all of His children) are taught salvation is of the Lord; they are taught of the Lord, not about Him. Every dream sent by the Lord has had the intended effects upon the dreamer. There is not any loose or broken links in the teachings of the Lord. The text at the head of this little epistle condemns such an interpreta tion. Filthy dreamers may interpret their dreams, giving them the bent that suits their preconceived doctrines, but the God given dreams carry weight, conviction, teaching, satisfaction, encouragement. (Acts 4:12).

I must urge about the sufficiency of what the Lord teaches in the dreams given to His saints. Let me repeat the text. It is the voice of an angel speaking words of instruction to one of the Lord's precious saints. It was a time of great trouble to that saint. He was in the same condition as all those to whom I write. He could not solve the trouble with which he was being assailed. He was not going about seeking to put to the front his prowess as a follower of the Lord; he was not looking for something to do wherein he might do the works of God. Tossed to and fro, tossed about in mind, seeking guidance, at a loss as what to do. It was a tedious question. It was a question that concerned he and his wife. No man had answered him; no man had suggested a number of plans whereby he could do any one of them and do very well by himself and his wife.

Please allow me to digress. If you are walking on your own highway; if you are travelling where the saints have trod, you have indeed been loved with an everlasting love. God indeed has set His love on you in His eternal mind, even before the world ever had a beginning.

At the manifestation of this distinctive love upon you, God has given to you His Son with all of the glorious benefits that comes to sinners. In giving you His Son, he likewise freely and unequivocally gives you all things. Gives you all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus before morning stars sang together.

What support to the text. What corroboration of one truth by another . What more can God say to you than what He has already said. He set aside all time. Nothing that has occurred in the time state to undo that which God, out of His own will, and for a purpose of His own declarative glory, placed His love on

His people. This love of God was solemnized between God and you when Jesus died. No man-made love was mixed in this solemn work, nor was any of it mixed in the solemn work when the Man that has His way with a maid takes you and presents you unto himself in the holy bonds of wedded bliss: (Pro. 30:19; Eph. 5:27).

This is the work of the Lord Jesus Christ with His chosen people. As the tiny helpless infant out in a cold field was noticed by its lover as He passed its way, even so, each of God's chosen people are ever before Him in love. I would, yea, I must insist, that the love of God never ceases for one of His little ones. What a deplorable condition was this little one in. In our relationship with earthly matters it would call for a turning away for such a polluted one as was this. As deplorable as the description gives us to see the babe, yet to this glorious Benefactor, it was a time of love, and it was given to live instead of perishing. (See Ezek. 16:4-8)

Joseph was thrown out on his own resources. He did not know what to do about his wife Mary. Wearily and desperate, he went to sleep. What a great blessing to go to sleep. I have heard it so much of late coming out of the mouths of those that have professed to be taught of the Lord, that so and so sure was lucky. In the face of God's great love and mercy, the use of the word luck is the most misplaced word that is ever heard from the lips of a professed believer in God. The Lord gives His beloved sleep; this He does to one and all. In addition to that, He is the maker of their bed in all of their sickness (Psa. 41:3; 127:3). In addition to these glorious promises, he loved (and He loves) His church, His people, His bride. He gave Himself for her that He might redeem her from all iniquity, and present her unto Himself without spot or blemish or wrinkle or any such thing. There were not any exceptions; there were no ifs or conditions or strings attached to His promise. His blood cleanses from all sin, or, to be explicit, from all sins. This gives me place to mention the pieces that is often talked about as peace is talked between brethren. There are no exceptions. Peace does not have a set of qualifying terms for peace, that is, it does not, unless I have missed the true import of the Saviour's salvation. If He made an "if" or set a condition for sinners to be housed in heaven, only then do we have the right to limit fellowship to those that will meet a set of rules for fellowship. Where fellowship is, peace is there; where peace is, there is fellowship.

All the peace that is peace, is that which is wrought in us by His Spirit. He always takes the initiative in bringing this about. He comes to us, He crosses the sea to get where the Gaderene is at in his awful condition. (Mk. 5:1) In all of the approaches of a man towards a maid, it is He that makes the first approach,

although this world (and unless we, as a people, are preserved in Christ Jesus, we are apt to catch it) has gone mad in reversing heaven's order, and is wooing and beseeching the maid to take the initiative and have her way with Him.

He gives His people sleep. He gave Joseph a sweet rest in sleep. In no sense of the word could Joseph wake up of himself and say, Now I have found out what to do. No sir, not that. Joseph was as much at a loss as to what to do when he went to sleep as he had been at anytime. If salvation had been in the power of the Jews, there would not have been any need for Christ to have come. If those things attributed to Christ could have been as easily done without Him having come, then by all means God the Father, certainly would not have made a mockery, a travesty, on His darling Son as that would have been. Manifestly, to Joseph, the Prophet prophesised of did come (Deut. 18:18).

That prophesy not only was devoid of conditions as to His work, but the reaction of those to whom He was sent was likewise devoid of conditions. He comes, they hear. I like that, don't you? Isn't that heaven's language to poor sinners? And isn't our example fitting for that kind of doctrine? Isn't Joseph showing forth, even before Christ's arrival, that His Spirit was dwelling in him?

Let us remember that Christ loved (loves) the church, and gave himself for it, and that we are commanded to love our wives as He loved His wife, and that Joseph shows that he was a follower of Christ and indeed a doer of the word. His concern was for his wife. What to do about her? Whether to do this or to do the other. There is not a theologian on God's green earth that can prove that Joseph met God in sleep with a plan half way concocted as to how to take care of the situation. Nor was Joseph about to complete a plan, and that God builded on his scheme. That is a doctrine that is part from below, and a part from above, and my soul abhors it. That is part of grace and part of works, and my soul abhors that also. Maybe I am mistaken, but I think not.

Only that which is from above saves sinners; only that name given under heaven and among men is today, or ever has saved men. This is what was taught Joseph when he was asleep, when he was not able to think, to concoct, to perform. Every unanswered question was answered from heaven. The answers were all baffling to nature-bred sinners, and was enlightening to heaven born sinners. With all the sophists in the universe, from time immemorial until the glorious and final coming of the blessed Redeemer berating and lamenting sound doctrine, they will never set aside the doctrine that satisfied Joseph, and not only he, but all the true Israel of God forever and forever. One thing is sure, Joseph would have waved

an Arminian flag and would have solved the dilemma that he was in without having to wait. Yet, how great the lesson taught him in God's way and in God's time. David waited and yet longed for that salvation that comes from the Lord. This longing and yearning and waiting after and for the Lord, is for a display of His saving hand. This is the history of God's people without exception. There isn't, nor cannot be such a thing as a saved sinner satisfied with his own righteousness or his accomplishments. In our text, when applied to us by His Spirit, is the history of us all, without exception. It causes anxiety and a longing after and for, and Joseph did not know where to turn nor what to do. In that time, in just such a time as that, it was and is made manifest that He loves His own, and that He giveth His own sleep. Joseph was put to sleep by Him that gives sleep.

God's care continued after sleep was given. Joseph did not have a nightmare in order to scare him into activity, but he had a dream. In all the universe that there is not one that can give a dream. (If I have overlooked something or somebody that can, please feel free to communicate with me, and I will be glad to retract this). Again, angels are messengers to comfort to instruct, and this is not an exception. He was given sleep with the problem unsolved, and he was awakened with it solved. The union is soleminized, the coming together of man and wife is given heaven's approval, all of the gossip talk about Mary's being with child is stilled and she was made honorable before God and His children.

The question of the virgin Mary, to wit ***"How shall I know this?"*** shall be to every querist of like import, answered by the angel of mercy to she, and the question of Joseph is answered in the same way, and that from heaven, to wit, this is the work of God wherein He shall save His people from their sins. And, like all solved problems, great joy is always felt in Zion the city of our God, whether it is an anxious Mary or a perplexed Joseph.

Elder W. D. Griffin

LAZARUS, COME FORTH

Dearly beloved brethern, if the Lord will bless me to do so, I will share with you a few of the precious thoughts that have lingered with me for several days concerning that glorious command from the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, found in the eleventh chapter of John.

At the time Jesus gave this command, Lazarus had been dead four days, and buried. Who else could have given such a command, and know that it would be obeyed? On another occasion he touched the bier of a dead man and said, ***"Young man, I say unto thee, Arise."*** And he that was dead sat up and began

to speak. And again: he spake to the dead daughter of the ruler of the synagogue, saying, "Maid, arise." And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway.

"Verily , verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." Jesus is the resurrection and the life. *"For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will."*

Every born-again child of God has heard the voice of Jesus speaking to his soul; though he was dead in trespasses and sin. *"Lazarus, come forth." "Young man, arise." "Maid, arise."* The very moment you heard this majestic command, you came forth; from a state of death, sin and darkness you came forth into the marvelous light of Jesus Christ: you passed from death unto life. The world knows nothing of this passing from death unto life, for they have never heard his word. *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."* Death means, to be separated from or cut off. When Adam transgressed the law of God he died a spiritual death: he was cut off or separated from fellowship with God. Adam was the federal head of all men; and when he fell, all his posterity fell with him. In Adam they all died: they were separated from God. As surely as death separates loved ones here on earth, were they separated from God.

Now let us carefully examine what Jesus said in the 24th verse of John, fifth chapter. *"He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."* He did not say *"if he will hear my word"* and *"if he will believe"* I will give him everlasting life, etc. No, he definitely did not say that: but that the ones who hear his word and believe on him hath everlasting life. That life is eternal; it has ever been with the Father. That life is in Jesus Christ: but no one knows anything about that eternal life until Jesus speaks to his soul. Birth does not give life; it only makes manifest the life that already is.

"Lazarus, come forth." And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Lazarus came out of the grave still bound by the law and his eyes were covered so that he could not see the end thereof. What advantage would it be to a child of grace if he came forth, but was still under the law that he could in no wise keep, and could not see Jesus thru the eye of faith? None that I can see; but the One who gave the commandment to

come forth also said, ***"Loose him, and let him go."***

What a marvelous command! Jesus is the end of the law; he completely fulfilled it to a jot and tittle, and paid to justice all her due; therefore he could justly command, "Loose him, and let him go." He is now free from the law thru faith, and the vail has been taken away. He can see Jesus thru the eye of faith, and walk in the law of the Spirit of life in Jesus Christ which has made him free from the law of sin and death. As Paul wrote: ***"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God thru Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. Therefore there is now no condemnation to them which are in Jesus Christ, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."***

"Maid, arise." And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat. Every living thing must have food to survive. Natural food sustains the flesh, but spiritual food must be the diet of the spiritual. Jesus is that spiritual food. ***"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."*** Natural man cannot eat the flesh of Christ nor drink his blood, for ***"the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*** Only the ones who have spiritual life need spiritual food and drink, and, ***"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day ."*** Those who hear his command to come forth, those who believe in him, those who eat his flesh and drink his blood, are those who have eternal life; and shall never come into condemnation, and are passed from death unto life. ***"Young man, I say unto thee, Arise."***

And he that was dead sat up and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother. Jesus hath called you forth from your dead estate; he hath set you free; he hath fed you manna from heaven; and he delivers you to your mother. Who is your mother? Is she not the church of God; and Paul says, ***"Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."*** And when Jesus delivers you to the church, you begin to speak and tell your friends what great things God has done for you.

I do not know for a certainty that

I have heard the voice of Christ; but I do believe I have been given a good hope, however small and weak it may seem at times. I am certain of this however, all who have heard that majestic voice have eternal life; and shall be called home on that great day when Christ shall come again and say, *"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."*

Beloved brethern, cast a mantle of charity over my mistakes. I beg an interest in your prayers of faith for this poor worm of the dust.

Clifford Wilbanks

BENNING, D. C., April 17, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:- With much love for the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace I make the attempt to write a few lines, knowing full well that if it were not for grace this poor, helpless worm of the dust would be forever lost. My mind of late has been on Christ's sermon on the mount. (Matthew v.) He taught his disciples, saying, *"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they sball be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."* Throughout that whole chapter what comforting words to those who know the joyful sound, having been taught of the Lord, for we cannot know any other way. Christ said, *"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."* The servants who testify of him today are they who are born of the Spirit; no others can testify of him. Dear brethren, if we love this doctrine then we are the poor in spirit and cer tainly are blessed. He speaks to those who know the joyful sound. I feel to thank the Father in heaven that he has *"hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."* When we feel in our hearts that we are the children of God, then we can say,

"Come, happy souls, approach your God
With new melodious songs;
Come, render to almighty grace
The tribute of your tongues.
So strange, so boundless was the love
That pitied dying man,
The Father sent his equal Son
To give them life again."

We know our lost and ruined condition before the just and holy God, and those who know are *"born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are*

the sons of God." "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect' It is God that justifieth." "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" Now, dear brethren, knowing these things, what manner of love we should have toward one another, for God is love; he loved us when we were dead in trespasses and sins, living in open rebellion against him, as Saul was. We should not let trifles prevent us from attending the meetings of the church. Christ told his disciples to love one another as he had loved them, and to forsake all and follow him, and said, *"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."* What wonderful love, to suffer and die for his people, his church, his bride; such love is past our natural understanding; his ways are as high above our ways as the heavens are above the earth.

Please pardon me for intruding on your time and patience with my poor letter. May God's richest blessings abide with you both, and all the readers of the SIGNS. It is a welcome visitor to my house. If you see anything in this you can publish it, if not, it will be all right with me.

Your unworthy brother, if one,
THOMAS ALDEN.

REPENTANCE AND A BROKEN AND CONTRITE HEART.

People talk about believing, about faith and hope, and loving the brethren, but how seldom do we hear a word about repentance, confession of sin unto God, godly sorrow for sin, a broken and contrite heart. Have all such experiences been removed from the lives of God's children now in the world. Can it be that there is gospel faith and hope and love in the soul and that person never to have known repentance, godly sorrow for sin, mourning over iniquity, never experienced in them a broken and a contrite heart. Surely all these things are now wrought in the souls of God's elect as verily as they have been in the ages that are past, and as verily as faith, and hope, and love. The apostle Paul testified, both to Jews and also to the Gentiles, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. (Acts :xx:v.21.) Christ has gone into heaven, there to appear in the presence of God for us, and he is exalted a Prince and Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins. It is through his all-gracious mediation in our behalf that we are granted repentance unto life. (Acts xi. 18.) According to the everlasting covenant, which is ordered in all things and sure, the heirs of promise are so wrought by the Holy Ghost that they not only see themselves vile transgressors, and feel that they are con-

demned, and under the curse of the law, and their heart meditates terror, but they are so taught, the things of Christ are so revealed to them, that they are moved to mourn every one of them over their sins. The Holy Spirit dissolves their hard, stubborn hearts into sighs and moans, and they are abased and loathe themselves for their iniquities, and they crave the mercy of God; they sigh and yearn for the forgiveness of their Sins through Jesus' precious blood. It is not in our early experiences alone that these things are known, but all our lifelong pilgrimage we are frail, sinful beings, needing mercy, and therefore God in covenant faithfulness and love performs the good work which he has begun until the day of Jesus Christ, and we often find within us, under the ministered kindness of our God, a broken and contrite heart.

"Law and terrors do not harden,
All the while they work alone;
But a sense of blood-bought pardon Soon dissolves a heart of stone."

There are with the people of God times of depression and grief and times of refreshing and relief. The Lord healeth the broken in heart and bindeth up their wounds. *"Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive tbe heart of the contrite ones."-Isa. lvii.* 15. Christ crucified is a blessed, sacred balm such as the world knows nothing of. For that professor who in his very heart does not know Christ, and him crucified, knows him not. That believers in Christ have peace with God by the blood of his cross, that they are reconciled unto God by the death of his Son, that they are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, are matters not only testified of in the Scriptures, but they are matters of faith wrought in the hearts of the taught of the Lord. They are vital, comforting experiences, in which poor sinners live unto their God.

"Emmanuel for me hath died,
My Lord, my Love, was crucified."

His flesh is meat indeed, his blood is drink indeed. It is in our intimacy with Jesus our hearts thrive, and everlasting consolation and a good hope through his grace abound in us. Grace comes unto us by our dear Savior. He declares the Father unto us. *He says, and it is blessedly true, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."*- Heb. ii. 12. Blessed are we to know the joyful sound of our beloved Savior's voice. We shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. Truly blessed are the renewings of the Holy Ghost, who in his communion with our souls takes of the things of

Christ and shows them unto us. *"He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."* We are at periods of our sojourn in the world tempted and plagued by sin and Satan, and so burdened by the afflictions and perplexities of life that it appears a task to get through the day.

"See every day new straits attend,

And wonders where the scene will end."

O at such times I have gone down as into a dismal valley, where murmurings, rebellion, hard thoughts and a hardened heart have made my life wretched indeed. The promises come into my mind, but they only appear to mock my case they are only in the letter, and my perverse heart says, How can they be for you? I am not persuaded of them, and have no arms to embrace them. What I need, and what many times has very graciously been given me, is a word of reconcilation, in power, in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance. This will break my hard heart and subdue me and bring me down a suppliant at Jesus' feet. There I lie in penitence, in meekness, in all affection, and I am then all acquiesence to all the providences of our God, and I then truly believe that as my days so shall my strength be.

" He shows me that all shall end well,

His blood is my prevalent plea,

And through his rich grace I believe

He saved a sinner like me."

It is our precious Christ who has reconciled us unto God by his blood, and in our union and communion with him he says in our hearts, *" Be ye reconciled to God."*-2 Cor. v. 20. How softening, how reconciling it is to see by faith Jesus the man of sorrows, to have glimpses of his sorrows in Gethsemane and on Calvary.

" Love moved him to die, on this I rely,

My Jesus hath loved me, I cannot tell why,

But this I can tell, he hath loved me so well

As to lay down his life to redeem me from hell."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

HEBREWS 4: 1-3.

LET a us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest; although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

THE FREE GIFT.

" FOR the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification."- Romans v. 16.

How grand is the bountiful mercy and far-reaching power of God declared through the above Scripture! Sinners with a multitude of sins are rescued from the power of death and justified, notwithstanding their mountains of sin. To human minds this seems unreasonable and outlandish. Finite minds cannot comprehend the great condescension of our God to his chosen people, or the disparity shown in the text: that for one single offence, and that offence somewhat mitigated in favor of man because of Satan's interference with the affections of the woman, all the unborn nations should fall under the curse of death, without a single exception, and that the free gift should fall upon many whose offences were many and great, displaying the mighty power of grace through the Lord Jesus Christ. Briefly stated, just one transgression sunk a world of unborn human beings into the pit of death, but the free gift is given unto millions irrespective of their numerous transgressions. Though your ***"sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."***- Isaiah i. 18. Though death holds a firm grip over all the sons of Adam, yet how much more shall the blood of Christ deliver the chosen vessels from the grasp of Satan unto the glorious liberty of the children of God. When mortals are led to behold the manifold beneficence of God to unborn, undeserving sinners, dead in sins, the cry of grace, grace, looms up in their hearts, and they are made to taste of the wonders of the free gift and the powers of the world to come. It is al ways supposed that a gift is free; that is, not in exchange for something valuable, but altogether one-sided. A gift bestowed upon a person often signifies that the donor has love for the receiver, which would indicate that the gift was free. The apostle uses the phrase, ***"free gift,"*** clearing all doubt from our minds of any meritorious work on our part. No carnal reason can be given why God loved sinners when they were dead in sins. The fact is that God did love his people when they were dead in sins, and did quicken them together with Christ, and did raise them up together and made them to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, for the very purpose ***"that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."*** Surely the ***"free gift"*** manifests the exceeding riches of his grace. No saint moved by the Spirit of Christ can crave anything better than re demption through the blood of Jesus, and no better way to receive the knowledge of the free

gift than through the channel of faith and grace. Having faith and grace we have hope, the free gift, and all things belonging to the household of faith. Love and mercy were stronger than death, the work of the devil, so that many offences, as it were, brought complete justification. Just so, according to Scripture, the wrath of man and the workof the devil shall all finally praise the Lord Jehovah.

All for the saints,
J.F. Beeman
Tiawah, Okla., August 13, 1917.

MEMORY.

Of all *"the manifold grace of God"* there is nothing more wonderful to me than the memory of man. In fancy I go back thirty-three years in time to the hallowed spot where I first experienced the consoling influence of the Spirit, assuring me that I had found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write-Jesus of Nazareth.

"Hard was my toil to reach the shore, Long tossed upon the ocean;
Above me was the thunderous roar,
Beneath the waves' commotion.

Darkly the pall of night was thrown Around me, faint with terror;
In that dark hour how did my groans Ascend for years of error."

The poet has told my story in fewer words, if less in detail, than I can hope to do at this time, but standing on an eminence of a third of a century, during which I have enjoyed a precious hope, I cannot refrain from repeating a story that is especially precious to me at this time when

"Memory to her duty true,
Bring back those
precious scenes to view."

The hallowed spot in my case was the I northeast corner of a sod school, near the present site of Mason City, Custer County, Nebraska, where I first my Savior found and felt my sins forgiven. For some time previous to this date, December 1st, 1884, I had felt that my hope to attain to a good hope in Christ was forever lost. I had left my native home, at Southside, Mason County, West Virginia, in April 1883, feeling sure that I would go west and get so mixed up with worldly affairs that I never would find Him for whom I sought. Gradually I sank lower and lower in the miry sinks of sin, until all hope was lost. I had earnestly asked the Lord to deliver me out of the snares of the evil one-that of profanity, having lost all hope of that balm in Gilead, which is now my chief joy, but, in this dark hour, when I surely thought mercy could never reach my case, as quick as thought I felt him mine. My Savior stood before me, I saw his brightness round me shine and shouted, Glory, glory. A protracted meeting had been in progress at the schoolhouse for sev-

eral weeks, and I had gone night after night, mainly to be in the company of a young lady with whom I was keeping company at that time. She was a consistent member of the Missionary Baptists, and being much in my company she is a living witness to what I now believe to have been my spiritual birth.

"O sacred hour, O hallowed spot,
Where love divine first found me;
Wherever falls my distant lot
My heart shall linger round thee.
And when from earth I rise to soar
Up to my home in heaven,
Down will I cast my eyes once more
Where I was first forgiven."

J. M. AMSBERRY.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 2008

Elder Carl Terry, VA	5.00
Elder Gene Lupton, NC	5.00
Elder Mark Terry, VA	5.00
Connie Franco, TX	2.00
Betty Lovitte, NC	5.00
Maxey Delp, VA	5.00
Carol Lansaw, VA	5.00
Armedia Taylor, LA	25.00
The Fergusons, VA	5.00
J.D. Neely, AR	5.00
Banks Conner, VA	10.00
Reidy Pickral, VA	50.00
Bruce Smith, VA	25.00
Edna Graves, AL	5.00

OBITUARIES

IN LOVING MEMORY OF SIS. CLARA BRUMFIELD PAYNE

Our beloved Sister Clara Payne was born September 28, 1926, in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, and departed this life on Saturday, February 16, 2008 at the age of 81.

Sister Payne was daughter of the late Bradley Newman Vasser and Sister Bessie Dalton Vasser. She was first married to the late George Newman Brumfield and to this union they were blessed with three children and she later married Brother Silas A. Payne.

In addition to her husband, of the residence, she is survived by two sons, Eddie Dean Brumfield of Gretna and James Newman Brumfield of Blairs; one daughter, Alice Myers of Gretna; two stepsons Andy Payne and Harry Payne of Chatham; two brothers, Felix Vasser of Gretna and George Vasser of Pawley's Island, SC; one sister, Odessa Hill of Timberlake, NC; three grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

Sister Payne was given hope and joined Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on September 26, 1993 and was baptized by Elder Marvin Brumfield on October 24, She always greeted her brethren and friends with a smile on her face and was faithful to attend her meetings as long as her and her dear companion' s health permitted.

After Sister Payne was unable to be cared for at her home she went to stay with her daughter and she and her brothers did all human hands could do to care for her.

Her funeral was held at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, February 19,2008 at the Colbert-Moran Funeral Home Chapel by her pastor, Elder Raymond Goad, Elder Marvin Brumfield and Rev. Bert Johnson and was laid to rest in the Brumfield Family Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the coming of our Lord.

She will be greatly missed by her family, friends and church and may we all that mourn her be reconciled to God's will, he never makes a mistake.

Elder Raymond Goad - Moderator
Elder Marvin Brumfied - Assistant Moderator
Pam Betterton - Clerk

SISTER NORA LEE ROWLAND

Our hearts are saddened by the loss of one so dear to us by Spiritual and natural ties. Sister Nora Lee Rowland passed from this life July 28, 2007 at Autumn Care of Altavista, Va.

Born March 11, 1912, she was a daughter of Silas L. Rowland and Ruby Shields Rowland. Sister Rowland was predeceased by her husband Laughton Talmages Rowland Sr., a son Reubin C. Rowland, two brothers, Sonny Rowland and Eugene Rowland, four sisters Lillian Thompson, Odell Wallace, Addie B. Angel and Inez Rowland, two grandsons, Reubin C.Rowland Jr., and Christopher Scott Harmon. She was a member of the Springfield Primitive Baptist Church.

She was received by experience October 10, 2004. Sister Rowland loved visits from her pastor, Elder Marvin Brumfield. Sister Nora loved to hear him talk of the goodness of her God. As long as her mind was good, she never failed to thank the Lord for his blessings and for taking care of her.

Those left to mourn her are three sons Wesley B. Rowland of Fredericksburg, Frank W. Rowland of Chatham, and Laughton (Tootie) Rowland of Chatham, one daughter Carol R. Lansaw of Gretna, two brothers George D. Rowland of Columbus, Ga., and Bernard L. Rowland of Gretna, 15 grandchildren, 24 great-grandchildren and 2 great-great-grandchildren.

Sister Rowland's funeral was conducted at 1:00 pm, July 31, 2007 by her pastor Elder Marvin Brumfield. Her body was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park, to await the coming of our Lord and Savior.

Sister Nora will be sadly missed, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. May each one of us be reconciled to God's will.

Written in Love and Hope,
Carol R. Lansaw

ELDER WILLIAM HALE TERRY

It is with a saddened but humbled heart that I write the obituary of our beloved brother, Elder William Hale Terry. Our Father in Heaven saw fit to make brother Terry a peaceful resting place to await his calling. ***"Come yea blest of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the world."***

Elder Terry was born May 25, 1936, a son of the late Willam Hugh Terry and sister Ilene Terry Clifton who survives him. He ended his suffering on October 3, 2007 in the early hours of the morning. The Lord blessed his loving wife, sister Glenna Terry, and his loving family, to be at his side when he took his last breaths and ended many months of pain and suffering. Elder Terry loved the fall of the year and did most of his medical treatments with his family on every Wednesday. It only seemed so fitting the Lord took from his sufferings on this day in October, a Wednesday.

Brother Hale and Sister Glenna Turman Terry were blessed to be married 48 years. They both were baptized by Elder Amos Hash on the third Sunday in April, in the year 1969. Brother Terry was ordained October 30, 1971, to the ministry, at New Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church. Surviving brother Terry, is his beloved wife and Sister in the Lord, Glenna Terry, three daughters and husbands, Jennifer and Jon Coleman, Carla and Tony Horton, Gina and Frank Fleming, one son and wife, Marcus and Mary Ann Terry. Four grandchildren, Joshua Coleman, Austin Horton, Megan Fleming and Makayla Terry. Two great-grandchildren survive, Skylar and Benjamin Coleman. Elder Terry was preceded in death by his dad, William Hugh Terry, brother Lee Terry and a ; granddaughter Hannah Marie Fleming.

Elder Terry loved the churches he was blessed to serve, and went as long as his health would allow. He firmly believed in predestination and God's will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Elder Terry told me he was not afraid of death itself, but was afraid of the suffering. He was blessed until he could not speak to us anymore to give the Glory to God, for His Will Be Done. I feel in my heart if I know anything of the spirit, the Lord was merciful unto my dad, my brother in the Lord to allow him a peaceful passing. So many times I can still hear his comforting voice say, ***"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*** He loved this scripture and believed it, for not my will but thy will be done.

Brother Terry's funeral was conducted by Elder Alan Terry, Elder Kenneth Key, Elder Larry Hollandsworth, and Elder Carl Terry on October 6, 2007 at 11:00 a.m. The body was laid to rest in the New Bell Spur Church Cemetery. Family and friends will miss him so much. Elder Terry being my dad in the flesh, beloved pastor, brother and dear friend will finally have that long sought rest which he most desired. When I was growing up, he never wanted us kids to call him father, he always wanted to be called dad because there is only one Father, he would say, our Heavenly Father. He is to have all the Honor, Praise and Glory. May he be merciful unto us, that we be submissive to his Holy Will.

Written in love and hope,
Carla T. Horton

IN MEMORY OF
SISTER LERA HARDY VASSER

It has pleased God to call from our midst Sister Lera Hardy Vasser. Born December 18, 1912, she was the daughter of the late Haney L. (Tommy) Hardy and Cora Mae Dalton Hardy. Sister Vasser was predeceased by her husband, Willie Owen Vasser, a grandson, Brian Vasser, two brothers, Herman Hardy and Harold Hardy; and two sisters Alice Gibson and Belva Gibson. Both sisters were members of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church.

She is survived by two sons Sherril Vasser and wife, Vinnie, of Winston-Salem, NC and Bill Vasser and wife, Ellen, of Virginia Beach, one sister, Sister Larrie Bowler and husband, Wlliam of Gretna; three grandchlldren, Dana, April and Scott and five great-great grandchlldren.

Sister Vasser asked for a home in the church and was received by experience August 23, 1964 always filling her seat as long as her health permitted. She believed in a God with all power. I can hear her say time and time again ***"The truth will make you free, free indeed."*** She loved to sing.

Funeral services were conducted at 3:30 p.m. January 29 , 2008 at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by her dear pastor, Elder Raymond Goad. Buried in the church cemetery.

Written in love and
with humbleness,
By her niece,
Sister Christine Payne

Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
Elder Marvin Brumfield, Assistant Moderator
Pam Betterton - Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

*Tis winter in my soul; my sins
Like clouds o'erspread the sky;
While wailing winds and dreary rains
To me all joys deny.*

*My heart lies hopeless of relief,
And filled with deep alarm,
Like the cold earth, benumbed with grief,
Under the pelting storm.*

*I try to look to God, but sin
Forbids to lift my eyes;
My cries and prayers are all in vain,
Guilt will not let them rise.*

*O weary winter of the soul,
How sad and full of gloom!
The heavy hours, how slow they roll
While griefs my heart consume.*

*And must I thus fore'er remain?
Will the sun shine no more?
May I not hope that yet again
His beams will warmth restore?*

*Turn my captivity, O Lord!
Once more to thee I call;
And let thy sweet forgiving word
Make summer in my soul.*

*Then shall the streams of joyful praise,
Loosed by thy gracious hand,
To thy blessed name flow all my days,
In my heart's southern land.*

Silas H Durand.

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EDITORIAL

"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord. and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." (Isa. 54:17)

Elder R.H. Campbell

The prophet was blessed in this one verse of scripture to condense into a very few words a truth that is as basic to the doctrine of salvation by the sovereign grace of an almighty and merciful God as is to be found in the printed word. It sets forth the complete security of the servants of the Lord and the absolute assurance that their righteousness before a just and holy God will ever remain sure and steadfast. The Apostle Paul expressed the same sentiment this way, ***"If God be for us, who can be against us."*** Just think for a moment of the awesome majesty and power of these statements: who is making them and to whom the statements are directed. They are from the infinite wisdom and power of a loving and merciful Heavenly Father and they are directed to a specific people who are the objects of His love and care that He created for Himself to show forth His glory.

The scripture does not say that no weapon shall be formed against His servants, but that ***"No weapon that shall be formed against thee shall prosper or be successful in overcoming them and separating them from their Father's care."*** Actually the servants of God are confronted daily by weapons that are formed against them and tongues that rise up against them in judgment, and this has been true since the beginning of time. This began in the Garden of Eden when the serpent beguiled Eve and the judgment was pronounced. God said, ***"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head and thou shall bruise his heel."*** Ever since that time the seed of the serpent has

been making war against the seed of the woman and is continually forming weapons against the seed of the woman but the scripture above promises that the seed of the serpent shall never overcome. It will continue to attack because it hates everything that the servants of the Lord stand for and uses every weapon it can devise to hurt them.

The beautiful and comforting thought in the above scripture is the fact that there is no possibility that these weapons and tongues can prosper. If they could prosper or the promise and power supporting the promise could fail, then the children of Israel would have perished at the Red Sea; the three Hebrew children would have burned in the fiery furnace; Daniel would have been eaten by the lions; Isaac would have been slain by Abraham, and Joseph would have been killed by his brethren. If any of these could have happened, It would have changed the entire course of the world. The certainty of all things in the future rests in the hands of the same power that has determined all things in the past and not one in either category did or can fail. The hope of all who declare that if they have any righteousness it can only be by the imputed righteousness of Christ, acknowledge that all of their salvation depends upon the fact that the adversary cannot prosper in his attacks on them by the same power that has supported those in ages past. They realize that but for promises such as the one above, and the continuous demonstration of this care and lovingkindness in their lives that they could not stand for a moment.

The prophet says that the fact that God is fighting their battles for them and that their righteousness is of Him is the heritage of all of those who were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. In the song that God gave to Moses to teach to the people, He refers to this choosing of His people as a separation of the sons of Adam and a setting of the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. ***"For the Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance."***

These and many other scriptures speak of the way and manner in which the Lord's people were called out from among the nations of the earth. They are given a knowledge of God through faith, which is the sovereign gift of God, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The song of Moses began, ***"Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass."*** This is the solemn and mysterious way in which the truth is instilled into the heart and soul of man. It is the gracious and majestic work of the God who created the world by the word of His power, the One who speaks and it is done; the One who commands and it stands fast. Oh, the

beauty and the glory of this God and all His work, and the comfort to those who have been exercised and can claim these promises as their own because of a work of grace in their heart.

Man who will declare that God wants things a certain way but must have the cooperation of the creatures has never known God; has never been changed from the natural into which he was born; has never been born of the Spirit of which all must be born before they can see God and the glories of His kingdom. He is the one that raised up His voice in judgment against the Lord's servants and is condemned by them because they realize where the judgment is coming from, for they were also once in that condition. He is in the same place that the Apostle Paul was before the light shined around him and Jesus revealed Himself to the Apostle. This experience is a part of the lives of all of the children of the Almighty God of heaven and of earth and regardless of how and when it happens, it is sufficient. They then have fellowship for the Apostle Paul when he said, ***"Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves: but our sufficiency is of God."*** It is a wonderful and glorious heritage to live among and enjoy the fellowship of a people who have been made to acknowledge that their righteousness is of God because they are not sufficient of themselves.

Jude is speaking of this heritage when he said, ***"To them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus, and called."*** This is declaring the absolute safety and security of the salvation of all the saints of God and it involves all of the Godhead. God the Father sanctified them, before the world was, unto His glory; Jesus the Son preserved them, His death atoning for all of their sins and making them accepted in the Beloved and the Holy Spirit calls them in this life and reveals to them that they are indeed a chosen vessel of the Most High God and heirs of the fulness of His kingdom.

Speak of a heritage! Can you imagine a more grand and glorious heritage that could belong to a people and all because it was their Father's good pleasure to give it to them. It seems that they would never doubt or question their experience or fear anything that might confront them in this life with such evidence that cannot be denied. The Apostle Paul must have been thinking on these things when he wrote, ***"Wherefore seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."*** There is a race that is set and it includes every weapon that shall be formed against them and every tongue that shall be raised against them in judg-

ment. They are all for a specific purpose and they shall fulfill that purpose, but Isaiah says they shall not prosper. The cloud of witnesses that encompasses the children of God are their brethren from former generations who have left on record their travels that those that were to follow would be encouraged as they learn that the trials and afflictions that they are suffering have ever been the footsteps that the redeemed of the Lord have walked in. They will see and bear witness that these truths are eternal and are a heritage that all of creation does not possess. They strengthen the hope of the weary pilgrim that theirs is the journey of the people that are called *"A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people."* They witness with David who said, *"The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea I have a goodly heritage."*

In Bonds of love,
Elder Richard Campbell

PSALM 85:9-11.

Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land.

Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

Truth shall spring out of earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

CORRESPONDENCE

March 29, 2008

Mr. Tony Horton
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

Dear Brother Tony,

Both my parents and grandparents were subscribers to the Times. All found love and peace in each issue and it is my hope that Liz will too.

May the Lord richly bless you and yours,

Kathy Lewis
204 Meadowview Lane
Grayson, Ky 41143

March 31, 2008

Mr. Tony Horton,

Just received my April issue of the Signs and see it is time for me to renew.

Have enjoyed and feel to have been greatly blessed by the Signs this past year. And never want to miss an issue. The unsearchable truth of our Lord and Master as portrayed in the Signs is indeed priceless!

Roland G. Allen
4235 3rd Ave.
Columbia, Ga. 31904

Dear Brother Tony,

Here is my renewal to the Signs for 1 year. At my advanced age 93 I only renew for one year. I enjoy reading it and do not want to be without it. Best wishes to the ones who do so much that others may read. I enjoy reading the ones written when it was first published and wish I could get some of the older ones.

Thank you so much.

Mrs. Bennie Clifton

ARTICLES

THE LITTLE MAMA BIRD

On a Monday in June of 2000, I was sitting on my glassed-in porch and what a lesson God taught me that day. It started off a pretty and fairly sunny day in the morning. I love to go out on this porch because it seems to bring me closer to nature and the life that God has given to his little creation that live outside. As the day went on, it began to cloud up. The wind started blowing and I started hearing thunder and seeing some lightning. Outside in a hanging basket, right at my porch window, a bird had a nest with four little eggs in it. When the lightening and thundering started, the little mama bird came right to the nest. God just showed me through this little bird that when our storms come he also is over us, sheltering and protecting us from our storms. The bird came and sat on those eggs and yet the lightening was very sharp and the thunder really loud. The wind was blowing the basket back and forth, turning the basket half around, again and again. It just went this way and that, yet the bird was still sitting and protecting those eggs. God is over us when a storm comes. He is our shield like that mama bird was a shield to those eggs. I watched the bird as she held her head high. She stayed calm in the midst of the storm, as if she was just waiting for the Lord to speak, ***"Peace, be still."*** This is a lesson to me and to whoever is going through a storm right now; a lesson to remember that Jesus is our protector, shield and hiding place. When our storms come, like the little bird, we have to wait on the Lord until He says, ***"Peace, be still."***

Shirley Renfrow

VOICES OF THE PAST

LUKE 15:1-7

"Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him, and the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. And he spake this parable unto them, saying, What man of you, hav-

ing an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me,. for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you; that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentence."

Over the last nearly fifty years many subjects have been discussed among the saints of God. I am glad to say that except in a few instances I have agreed with the general thoughts about the Bible. In none that I recall have hot words been exchanged in our conversations. Some of the time I did not agree nor disagree. I did not have any settled convictions about the subject under investigation. I could often, and did, tell them that their views sounded plausible but that I was not able to subscribe to them, although I did not have anything better to put in their place. This subject, together with others, has been like unto that. I would hear it expounded one way, and it seemed like trying a prisoner in court. I would think, well it must be that way for it sounds good. Soon I would hear it from another quarter by as lovely a brother as the first, and he had entirely another version of it. I knew that I was not in any condition to write on the subject or to attempt preaching on it. A man without convictions does not have any right to his opinion in fact, he does not have any.

Recently, out of a blue bolt of sky lit beauty, it came flooding into my mind that this had to do with the Gentiles. Frankly, I was elated, because I had been asked about it from time to time and had been without any comment, except to say that I did not have a settled mind in regard to it.

In nearly all public preaching in the Bible there were mixed congregations. Usually, there were some believers and some unbelievers; some that came because of hunger and thirst, and some to gainsay. This occasion was not any exception. The subject at the end of the preceding chapter was fraught with interest to the publicans and sinners, they desired to know and feel the savoriness of this salt. The motive of the Pharisees and scribes was entirely different. The desire of the first was to be taught; the desire of the second was to trap the Teacher and get Him into a snare whereby He would ridicule Himself. Clearly, it is seen where all the jeers and sneers and scathing insinuations and unclean innuendos come from upon the dear Man and His humble train of followers. It would seem that at first He paid attention to their murmur before He did the desire of poor

sinners to hear Him. But that is not true. No doubt they thought so, but the people of God were given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven even if they were spoken in parables, and they understood the goodness of God towards poor sinners, while the wrath of the Pharisees and scribes was intensified.

"What man of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?" If these had understood the significance of what His question implied, their chagrin would have been multiplied over and over. It is necessary to note that they were in the wilderness, and He left them in it. True, the wandering lost sheep was also in the wilderness, but the wilderness were not the same. One was dense, but they that were in it did not know it; the other was dense, and the one in it knew that he was in it, and knew that it was dense. Both were sinners; one knew it, the other did not. If the ninety and nine had known that they were in the wilderness, they could as they thought, have gotten out. The lone sheep was in the wilderness and knew that it could not get out. The condition of the ninety and nine was the condition of all of us while in nature. The condition of the lone sheep is the condition of us all when we were conscious of having strayed away.

The Jews as a nation were chosen to show forth God's care for His chosen people. No nation has ever been so signally blessed in natural resources as had Israel. The Lord had given them so many rich tokens of His care for them. He fed them; He fought their battles; He gave them favor after favor. It would seem that they would walk humbly in His presence forevermore, after being so graciously dealt with in the famine caused by drought. It would seem that they could never forget His sovereign and universal deliverance out of the land of the enemy at the Red Sea. When God called them to Sinai and they fled in consternation at the sound of His threatening voice, they persuaded Moses to go for them, and God had mercy and received him as an emissary from them, although they had grumbled and complained and questioned His every act toward them. Even though the Lord acknowledged that they could not hear Him and live because of their sin, yet His mercy was extended in promise that He would raise them up a prophet from among themselves, and they would hear Him. Every prophet that He called from among them, the Spirit of Christ in them testified that He would come among them. They told in the most minute detail His manner of coming, and yet not one of them as National Israel believed in Him when He arrived as their Prophet.

This unbelief was accompanied by the most sarcastic arrogancy that has ever been known. There was a

bicker and a murmur and a constant arraignment of God before their tribunal of so called justice, because their sins brought down upon them the consequences of their sins. During all of these four thousand years God's care and mercy did not diminish. There were no overtures made toward the people that never had been a people unto Him. Even though they (the Jews) insulted Him to His face, and treated Him like a common criminal, yet He continued in mercy to take care of them.

The promise of God embraced the Gentiles. ***"I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved, and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of God." (Rom. 9 :25-26) "What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness."*** What shall be said of this? What a strange statement, what a mysterious phenomenon, what a blessing to the Gentile nation. Paul asks, Wherefore? Why this? Then he answers, ***"Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law." (Rom. 9:30-32)*** The Jews did not stumble that they fall, but through their fall salvation is come to the Gentiles. (Rom. II:11)

Their fall was manifested in their self esteem. In their eyes they had not whereof to repent; they had not done any wrong, because to them they had carried out the law of God. That law had said, Thou shalt have no other gods before me, and, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. These ninety and nine sheep called Jesus a breaker of these two laws, as well as His breaking the law of the Sabbath. This is, to them, the main reason for their kind of justice. They thought themselves just because of their zeal in carrying out the law of God.

The law of God condemned having any god other than the God of Israel. The law of God condemned the taking of His name in vain. The law of God condemned doing any labor on Sunday. All of these the Jews charged the saviour with violating. This charge of guiltiness by the Jews gave impetus to their wicked nature, and whetted them into rejection and crucifixion of the Saviour, and into their feud with Him over His guilt and their self righteous justness. All of this was in God's mercy towards the Genitles. Men may carp about how hard such a doctrine is, but the truth of the matter is that mercy and justice were both carried out justice against Christ because of His agreement with the covenant of grace, and mercy for the Gentiles. Our natural

mind, being as contrary to God's way of doing things as was that mind in the Jews, we are prone, as human beings, as natural men and women, ready to charge and arraign God before our tribunal of justice for such a hard way of doing things. But suppose, even as some say it should have been, that the sheep had all wandered into the mountains and were lost as the one? Where in the world would the Gentiles come in? What would have become of them? What would have become of you?

The good news of the gospel of the grace of God as it concerns us Gentiles is this, to wit, God had set His love on Israel as a special people. The continuation of that love was dependent on them. That is the covenant made with them. The mandates of that law applied to them. It was not given to anyone else; no other people were under it. Every penalty for violation was against them; every blessing for obedience was their's exclusively. This law they agreed to as a rule of conduct. Did it work? It did not. Strange as it may seem, their violations increased, and as they increased their arrogancy, obstinacy and self-righteousness increased. God had according to the covenant that He had made with them, held His hands out-stretched to them all of the law day. Had they given heed? Had they received the prophets which God sent them? Did they bless, or crucify Him that came as the Lord? The answer is obvious to every student of the Bible. This despotic attitude of theirs continued even after our Saviour left them and went after the one lost sheep. They had seen His miracles; they had witnessed that He lived and died as their prophets had predicted; they still flouted all this proof, and, when many attended the preaching of the word, it was to continue the jeers and sneers on the apostles that had been heaped on the Saviour. (1 John 3:3; John 15:18-19) ***"Then (the time had come. This adverb is one of time) Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, we turn to the Gentiles, for so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth; and when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." (Acts 13:46-18)***

As the ninety and nine were left in their self righteousness, even so was the elder brother left out of the glorious meeting when the poor sinful prodigal arrived at home, and the rich man was left to die in his riches and go to hell, and as the Pharisee supposedly prayed (but in truth informed God of his own justness), and then the publican prayed and

went down to his house justified; even so will justification come to every Gentile represented by the lost sheep, even everyone chosen unto eternal life.

Somtimes I am asked, Did God not know what the men of Shinar were building until He came down? Did Jesus not know what things His two followers were talking about ? Did Christ have to hunt for the lost sheep? (Gen. 11:5; Luke 24:17-19) My answer is, yes, to all such calling of God in question. It is not anything short of unbelief to ask such questions. As the Man Christ Jesus He did not have ability to work apart from His Father, and as the same Man He did not have eminence, and as the same Man He had hurts and anxieties, thus I am not backwards nor reluctant to say that it was necessary for Him to hunt for the Gentile sheep. Let me hasten to add that in their experience and in their relationship to the covenant of grace that He found everyone of them. Too, I want to urge that all sheep knew such a little amount about redeeming love that our God speaks in language that little sheep understand. Do you need that kind of talking to, or are you qualified (just) to be left in your satisfaction?

He found this sheep, which means, experimentally, that each of them were lost. He finds them all in a lost and ruined condition. As it is with every heir of eternal life, they were indeed in a waste howling wilderness, and in a desert land. (Deut. 32:10) They would not have gotten out had the Saviour not hunted and found them. (Luke 19:10)

I must urge upon you that you keep in mind His leaving the ninety and nine. Remember where He left them. Remember the self righteousness of them. Now look in amazement at His treatment of the lost sheep. We too were sinners, but when He finds us there is not a proposition made to us, to the lost sheep. It seems that I would be ashamed to go into the pulpit and preach Jesus, and come down before the congregation (and in the presence of God) and make a proposition to my hearers. He did not question this sheep nor make an "iffy" proposition to it. And that is not all. Wonder of wonders, that is not all! He did not remonstrate or repudiate or rebuke the sheep. Ah, how favored are our people by our Lord and Master! He held no consultation to ask if they would. That is Old Baptist doctrine all the way. That is good news to a lost and ruined sinner; it is as salt rubbed into a sore of ninety and nine just persons.

He picked it up and put it on His shoulders. Has there ever been any doctrine as good as this? He put it on His shoulders. Let us remember who this Man is. He has been born unto us; He fulfilled those predictions of the destruction of Jerusalem, of their consequent judgment at that time, and of all those signs which should indicate the near approach of the judgment of that great

and terrible day.

From all these considerations, let the saints throughout all subsequent time be admonished. The destruction of these false teachers and prophets among the Jews, as also the destruction of the old world, the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, were all presented by these faithful apostles as examples of what should be developed in the last days, when perilous times should come; when false teachers should come among the saints, bringing in damnable heresies and doctrines of devils, when they should turn away from the truth, and be turned unto fables; (tracts, ficticious stories, dairymen's daughters, and the like,) and when they with feigned words, (professing great reverence for God, and extravagant love for souls, &c:') shall make merchandise of the saints; but the apostle adds, ***"Their judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."***

"But oh! their end, their dreadful end,
Thy sanctuary taught me so;
On slippery rocks I see them stand,
And fiery billows roll below."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, January 15, 1840)

FROM AN OLD SIGNS

Dalrk, Arkansas,

Dear Brother in Bonds:

I received your very comforting letter about a month ago, and was certainly elated over the contents, but wonder why anyone would stoop so low as to even notice such a wretched character as I am.

Brother Griffin, I feel to hope that we have a few things in common. Your age exceeds mine only about four years. In relating your experience you gave the "way-marks" so plainly that I believe we were brought over the same road. We are both members of the same faith and order. We have both been placed under the same yoke of the ministry. Having so many things in common, I am impressed to relate to you by pen some things of my experience along life's way, if it be God's will. I have never attempted to write it before, but have been blessed to tell it in public a few times. It seems so different from the experience of most people that I very often doubt it being an experience of grace. I was raised by very religious parents, my father being an ordained minister of the Missionary Baptist people. Very few Sundays did I miss Sunday School and church services. I was reared in an Arminian atmosphere.

I do not remember ever hearing the term "Primitive Baptist," or ever meeting a ***"Hard Shell,"*** until I was

grown. I was taught that there were a very few ignorant, devilish people, who lived in the backwoods, who were called ***"Hard Shells,"*** who I was to shun as a wild beast. Of course I did not want to even meet one. At a very early age I, too, joined the organization with my parents. Being termed as one of the best "kid speakers" in our community, I was solicited to take part in the testimony meetings. When I was sixteen years of age I obtained a teacher's license, and began to teach both literary and Sunday School. This, of course, helped me "practice up" on public speaking. Being first in the schoolroom, first in the Sunday School class, and first in the other community socials, gave me a good case of "Big I," and the foremost symptom was self-righteousness. Then I was solicited to preach, and having such a good opinion of myself, and seeing so many of my fellow-men falling so far short of me, I also thought it prudent that I should be clothed with the authority to tell them of their wicked ways, and admonish them to "get right." Therefore, I was ordained, and zealously pursued my task, and went along smoothly for awhile.

Now, dear brother, the saddest, most heartrending and serious part of my experience I am about to tell. The thoughts of it even now make me shudder. One certain night, during a protracted meeting in our community, I was called by the ***"big preacher"*** from the city, to take full charge of the service. He called me the night before, and thus spoke: "Brother Lambert, I have been preaching here every night for almost a week with no results. No mourners have come forward. Tomorrow night I want you to make the altar call after you have preached." Of course I was elated over the opportunity to try my luck. The next day I studied the proposition seriously. I decided on the theme, ***"Sinners in the hands of an angry God,"*** using ***"Thou shalt be cut off, and that without remedy ,"*** as a text. That particular night I must have been blessed with rhetorical eloquence, for when I made the altar call old men, old women, boys and girls began at once to flock to the altar. Dear brother, I suppose you think I should have been somewhat overjoyed. Naturally I would have been, but alas! there seemed to be an audible voice which spoke, "Who are you, that you should invite?" This would not have been so bad if the answer had not come immediately by the same voice, ***"You are a sinner vile and needy."*** I wanted to run out at the door and hide from everyone. As soon as I could I did get away from there. Oh how miserable I was! On that night I saw myself as a sinner for the first time, and I went about to right myself. The more I tried to do the deeper in sin I sank. I tried until I could try no more, and gave it up as a hopeless task. Of course I gave up trying to preach, but I was still in possession of my

credentials.

Some little time after that, I drove into a little town quite some distance from home, about sundown. Some of the people there knew I was coming, but did not know I had given up trying to preach, and had given out an appointment for me that night. As I drove in town the church bell began to ring, and I asked the one that I was stopping with what it meant, and he informed me that I was to preach that night. I told him I could not do it, but he informed me that it was too late to back out then. I saw the trap I was in. I was in a strange community, so decided to act the hypocrite and get up one of my old themes and texts and raise a reputation for myself in that community. But alas! I could not think of a thing. I tried to think of some Scripture and to take some of my Sunday School knowledge, but that had all sunk into oblivion. I know I tried to think soberly on the Scriptures, but I could not, I could think of nothing except how sinful I was, and I knew it would not do to tell them that, for instead of giving me a reputation I would lose it. A great audience was in front of me when I went behind the pulpit and I was as blank of thoughts of the Bible as anyone could be. If I ever prayed I did then. I groaned, *"Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner."* I became unconscious of action or thought, and when I became conscious I was exhausted and was standing there feasting upon the power, holiness and wisdom of God. I left that place thrilled to the highest, still feasting upon several of the attributes of God. I was driving home in my car that night by myself, still feasting, when the train of thoughts was turned. I saw myself the blackest of black sinners, and then glimpsed God as the Holiest of Holies. I saw myself as most foolish and God as all-wise. I saw myself unable to perform anything, and God as having all power. What a great gulf there was to be spanned between my condition and the requirements of the law. I went along groping in this predicament for quite some time. Finally the sweetest of my experience came. I was teaching school in the community where I had witnessed that glimpse of God, when one day a neighbor came to the place where wife and I resided. He suggested that we go to a home that night to preaching. He said Elder A. D. Wall, of Amity, Arkansas, would preach. I asked him if they were *"Hard Shells,"* and told him if they were I did not care to hear them, because they believed that a man was justified in killing another because God predestinated it. He answered thus: *"I just supposed you would be interested, for if I ever heard a Primitive Baptist sermon you preached it here last year."* I answered, *"For curiosity's sake I will go."* I have never been able to recall anything that I said that night, as I seemed to be in a subconscious state, and have often wondered what I did say. Therefore, I

consented to go for the first time to hear a *"Hard Shell"* preach, and I was glad I did go. I accused Elder Wall of being a mind reader that night. He was blessed to take up each question that came to my mind and to thresh it out to my satisfaction. That night I was blessed to see another attribute of God: that of mercy. I saw the character who was able to span the gulf between my sinfulness and God's holiness; my inability and God's power; my foolishness and God's wisdom. I saw Jesus, who was verily God and man, with one foot on God's side of the gulf and the other on puny man's side. I saw him, as it were, pickup sinful men, whom God had chosen, and cleanse them with his blood and place them safely on the other side, without spot or blemish, to bask in the sunlight of God's eternal love and power forever on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance. Jesus died in my low room and stead, tread the winepress alone. In my stead (as I hope) he kept the law to a jot and tittle. The keeping of this law by Jesus was charged to my account, my sins were laid on his shoulders and he bore the penalty. His life's blood was shed while hanging on the cross of Calvary for the remission of my sins, as I hope.

This experience was so consoling to me that I thought my troubles were over. But my lot seems to be akin to Job's. The last of my experience told was at the dawn of the year 1930. I will tell briefly some of the things that took place with me that year. Three cars were wrecked for me, a son was born to us and in about a month my wife died with pneumonia. I lost my position and health. I had to give up teaching because I was not able to meet the requirements for a license of course. With all this, and doctor bills, funeral expenses and other things, I suffered a nervous breakdown. In that year I was received in Cedar Hill Church. In September I was visiting the South Ouachita Association, among strangers in the flesh. I was so nervous and burdened down with something that I could not face anyone. One night, at the home of Elder J.R. Evers, a sister (who was a total stranger to me) requested that I be called on to say a few words. I was on the outside of the house, but was called in, and God blessed me with the light and liberty of unloading that burden. In the course of time I was licensed to preach. Then, against my protests of not being qualified, called for my ordination, which was carried out while the South Arkansas Association was in session, in September, 1934. I met and married my second wife in that year and God blessed me with the privilege of baptizing her last year.

Brother Griffin, I have tried to give you some of the marks of the road I was forced to travel. I am glad that God blessed you to come to Arkansas, and hope that we may meet again. If you receive any comfort from this give God all the praise. Pray for me at the throne of grace.

Hoping in Christ for my soul sufficiency, I am your brother,

(Elder) E. J. Lambert
Jan. 1938

PROVERBS XVI. 9.

"A MAN'S heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps."

In order to acknowledge truly one's utter inability to carry ont one's plans and purposes one must have learned the supremacy of God in humility and bitterness of soul. The Scriptures are very plain and positive as to the utter depravity of the heart of man, yet man cannot be. lieve he is so utterly wicked as the Scriptures say until the light of truth is shining within him to reveal the depth of evil in the heart of flesh. Man simply cannot bring himself voluntarily to think that there is not one whit of good in him. When David said he came forth from the womb speaking lies, he said that which is exceedingly repulsive to every natural man to believe; yet it is absolutely true that man is by nature a deceiver, and he deceives no one more than himself. It is so profoundly natural for men to think themselves otherwise than they are, to think their motives pure when they are really evil, to appraise their acts as benevolent when they are simply selfish, to consider themselves serving others, when they are really ministering to their own personal ends. Man is constantly dressing up in a disguise to deceive himself, and is all the time blind to the fact that he is not the man he thinks he is. If a man really knew himself as he is, he would feel every impulse to get away from self, and would see that his own bitterest enemy is dwelling in the same house with him, that is, in his own heart. It is the highest wisdom to know one's self, and this wisdom comes only by revelation of the Spirit of God. To know that one is at his best estate nothing but vanity, calls for divine instruction, which none but God can impart, and this knowledge is imparted in the deepest depths of the helplessness and woe. What man proposes to do is one thing, what God actually does with that man is quite another. Nothing is truer than that a man's heart does lay plans and proposes to perform this and that, but the will and purpose of God are paramount and direct the man's steps in paths wholly unsought to results wholly unlooked for. At the command of God to Nineveh and preach, Jonah devised in his beart that he would not do so, but that he would go exactly in the opposite direction, so took ship to Tarshish. The Lord, however, directed Jonah nearer and nearer to Nineveh the farther and farther Jonah though the was getting away from Nineveh. The longest way around is many times, in the providence of God, the most

direct way to one's journey's end. Because of the unpopularity of his doctrine, Jeremiah resolved it was useless to preach what Jerusalem seemed not inclined to hear, so he devised in his heart he would speak no more in the name of the Lord. However, when he refrained from speaking, be found the word of God was like fire in his bones, and that the very stones of the street threatened to cry out if he longer held his peace. Nothing remained but for the prophet to declare what was given him to say, no matter whether the people heard or not. He, poor man, learned in fiery soul-anguish to say, Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps; Joseph's brethren devised in their hearts to get rid of Joseph, and so they sold him to the Midianites; but this so worked out that Joseph's being in Egypt caused the very same brethren to afterward wend their steps thitherward to procure food of him they had despised. Though that which they had planned was evil in them, God directed their steps unto the saving of much people alive, to bring about in Joseph a great deliverance. Nebuchadnezzar devised in his heart to rule the whole world, and to this end captured Jerusalem and led Israel away captive; but though he meant to firmly establish himself securely against all defeat, yet the farther he pushed his conquests, the more and more the elements of decay imbedded themselves in his kingdom, so that he who would have ruled the world came afterward to serve those who triumphed over him. The wise men from the east who came to where the child Jesus lay in the manner that Bethlehem thought within themselves to return to Herod at Jerusalem to apprise him of the birthplace of the holy child, but an angel from God appeared to these men and directed them out another way, so that Herod never received the message for which he so much yearned; not, however, that he might worship him, but that he might destroy Jesus and thus rid himself of a rival in the kingdom. The apostle Paul thought at one time to take a trip into Asia and preach the gospel there, but the Spirit thwarted him; again he essayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit prevented. Afterward the Lord directed him into Macedonia; a striking instance of how the Lord disappoints where man appoints, and carries his creatures into places not anticipated by them. The Bible from cover to cover abounds in many such instances as those we have given here, but we have mentioned only those which sprang into our mind. Man predestinates, that is, makes in his mind beforehand to do this or that; but God's predestination, being based on his infinite ability to execute his will, makes him abundantly sufficient to direct men here and there, while man's determining, being founded in frailty and short-sightedness, fails to bring to

successful ends the things devised within his heart. Many able spiritual writers have multiplied words in the endeavor to show how God's ways are not man's; to show how God is different from man, and so forth; but these are things better felt than known, and better known than said. Faith is the only thing that can give to man any adequate conception of what God is and of how God's ways and thoughts are higher than man's, as the heavens are higher than the earth a distance that no reckoning of man has ever comprehended. Also, there is another way of looking at this matter. What a man plans within himself he may be prospered of the Lord to carry out, only to find that the end to which his plans bring him are not the ones his soul desired. We believe that very rarely is one whom the world looks upon as a successful man satisfied with what he has accomplished. Many have planned to get themselves riches, and have gotten their gains only to find the wealth an empty shell, without the comfort and solidity they had supposed it to be. Many have sought fame and have achieved it, only to find that the applause of men brings not with it the sweetness they had sought. Travelers in deserts are often deceived by mirages to seek water where there is none so does the mirage of fancy induce ambitious men to press forward to roseate goals, only to find there emptiness and desolation. The cunning and genius of man's heart often unleash forces that cannot afterward be bridled, and which ride their inventor to destruction. Does anyone suppose that when Franklin discovered electricity by the simple device of a key on a kite-string that be had any idea the force he had bit upon would come to be an agency of destruction in supposed-to-be civilized world, when men would kill one another with it, outvieing one another in schemes of electrical machination. The Lord often directs these things to ends unguessed and unsought by those who discover or invent them. Every civilization that the world has ever known has inevitably carried within it the seeds of its own decay. People talk about the world being civilized now, as though it had never been civilized before, when, as a matter of fact, there were some things in the civilizations of the ancients that are superior to what is called civilization today. Just as the civilizations of Egypt and of Greece and of Rome each perished in their turn, so we are witnessing today the crumbling of modern civilization, which is bound to be superseded by a civilization of another order, whatever that may be. The world which many of us lived in prior to the summer of 1914 is gone never to return. What the future will be none can say, but it will be different. We do not mean by this assertion that what is coming will be any better than what has been, but it will differ from what has been, as one age has differed from preceding ages in

all the history of the world. The civilization decaying all around us has carried unsuspected within it the seeds of its own destruction. Forces have been unleashed through the devising of men's hearts which men have been unable to control once they were committed. These men guessed forces have carried the nations to unguessed ends, and are threatening to engulf us all in worldwide calamity, whence none but the mighty arm of God can ever deliver us. The doctrines of Arminius had gained such a foothold in the world we all have been living in, man's ability to bring about his own salvation was so widely preached and universally believed, man was thonght to be so mighty, while God merely an auxiliary, such mighty strides were being made to convert the whole world to christianity through millions of dollars sent to the heathen, such great reforms were thought to be assured in all walks of life and among all conditions of men, that the world awoke affrighted and astounded four years ago when hell opened its jaws to swallow us all. What happened was but the consequence of man's own doctrines and institutions. They had sown the wind and were now to reap the whirlwind, and the harvest is not ended yet. Christ had said two thousand years ago that they compassed both land and sea to make proselytes, converts to hell and not to heaven but then this modern world regarded Christ as out of date, and his teachings not applicable to this gilded age of ours. The gods worshipped by this generation have gone back on their worshippers and left them floundering in a welter of blood and sorrow, from which they cannot find their way out. These gods, what are they. First of all, gold. Men and nations and religions have worshipped at the shrine of gold. They are now calling upon their god to deliver them, but their god is dumb, the whole world is sweeping onto the rocks of financial ruin. Gold is all right in its place, just as every gift of God is made to be used and not abused. The right place for gold is as man's servant, but when men serve gold, then woe betide them. Another god of this age has been science and learning. What magic could not these accomplish in the minds of their adorers? Science had proved the Bible a fake, and learning had relegated to back numbers the sacred sayings of Christ and his apostles. Science and learning, like gold, are all right in their places, and that is, as man's servants; but when men serve learning and science and make them their gods, then woe is coming their way. Truly men's hearts devise tremendous things, but to what evil ends their plans do often come. Money and science and learning, these have been the trinity of this modern civilization; these have been the, gods expected to usher in the regenerated world of universal brotherhood. Now they stand unmasked as devils pursuing man to

destruction, hurling their victims, into abysmal woe. In the midst of the havoc man's ingenuity has wrought we have a strong tower, a sure defence: the mighty God, the everlasting Father. His dear Son is a hiding-place from the wind to all who trust in him, a covert from the tempest, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Come, all ye weary travelers whom faith guides on your way. Rest in him, ye prisoners of hope.

Elder Lefferts.

" Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly In all wisdom."-Colossians iii. 16.

This surely means something more than merely reading the word in a careless, formal manner. It is "to dwell in us," that is, take up its firm and lasting abode in our heart, and that " richly;" not poorly and niggardly, but copiously and abundantly, unfolding to us and putting us into possession of the wealth of its treasures; and that in *"all wisdom,"* making us wise to salvation, opening up to us the manifold wisdom of God, and how it displays itself in the great mystery of godliness. Now we shall not attain to this rich and heavenly wisdom unless we search and sludy the Scriptures with prayer and supplication to understand what the Holy Ghost has revealed therein, and what he is pleased to unfold therefrom of the will and way of God for our own personal instruction and consolation. We very easily fall off from abiding in Christ; nor can we expect to keep up sensible union and communion with the Lord Jesus if we neglect those means of grace which the Holy Ghost has provided for the sustentation of the life of God in the soul. When we get cold, sluggish, and dead, to read the word of God is a task and a burden; but not so, when the life of God is warm and gushing in the soul. Then, to read his holy word with prayer and supplication, entering by faith into its hidden treasures, and drinking into the mind of Christ as revealed therein, is a blessed means of maintaining the life of God in the heart, and keeping up union and communion with Christ.

Elder J.C. Philpot

---

2 CORINTHIANS 5: 1-3.

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

MEETINGS

NEW DAN RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH MEETING

New Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, located in Patrick County, Vesta, Virginia, purposes to hold a fifth Saturday meeting, the Lord willing, on June 28, 2008. The meeting will start with singing at 9:30am and preaching at 10:00am. The church is located on State Road 636(State Shed Road) off US 58, approximately 3 miles east of the Blue Ridge Parkway and 12 miles west of Stuart, Virginia. We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially we would invite all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder J. L. Cassell, Pastor
James L. Shelor, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

Dan River Primitive Baptist Church will host the next West Country Line Union. The fifth Sunday in June 29, 2008.
We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.
Especially ministers of our correspondence. Church is located
On Highway 700 between Eden, North Carolina and Danville, Virginia.

Love and Fellowship,
R. Allen Carroll, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST UNION MEETING

The Staunton River Union Fifth Saturday meeting will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday only, June 28, 2008. Singing will start at 10 o'clock a.m. and preaching at 10:30.

Springfield Church will host the meeting and it will be held at Springfield Church, located at U.S. 29, South Main Street, Gretna, Va. Pittsylvania County.

We invite all ministers, brothers, sisters, and all believers in salvation by grace to join with us during this meeting.

Elder Marvin Brumfield, Moderator
Oscar D. Pickral, Clerk
434-656-1782

JULY 4th MEETING

The annual July 4th meeting will be held, the Lord willing, this year at Paynes Creek Church. It is located near milepost 150 on the Blue Ridge Parkway. The meeting

Time is Friday July 4th. We invite our Brothers, Sisters, and Elders to be with us.

Tony R. Horton

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 2008

Roland G. Allen, GA 5.00
Livie Thompson, VA 5.00
Elsie Poindexter, VA 10.00
Elizabeth Lewis, DC 25.00
Pearl Pendelton, VA 5.00
Donald Arrington, NC 5.00
A.L. Shelton, VA 15.00
Rosalie Walker, VA 25.00
E.H. Chandler, LA 5.00

OBITUARIES

BEULAH WATSON DAVIDSON

It is with a feeling of much unworthiness and sadness that I attempt to write the obituary of our dear sister, Beulah Davidson, by request.

Sister Davidson was born Nov. 12, 1917 and passed away Sept. 24, 2007, making her stay on earth almost 90 years.

She united with Old Union Primitive Baptist Church, Aug. 5, 1951 and was baptized by Elder C.E. Turner. She had been a member of this church for 56 years.

To know Sister Davidson was to love her. She was a faithful member and attended her church regularly as long as she was able. When I would go visit her in the nursing home, she always enjoyed us telling her about the meetings and she enjoyed the Brethren visiting her. I feel she was kept by the Almighty Power, to walk in that straight and narrow path that leads to life everlasting.

She was married to the late Herden W. Davidson, he died in July 1969, and to this union four children were born, all of whom survive, they are: Charlotte Woodson, William Davidson, Brenda Davis and Ralph Davidson.

She was preceded in death by one grandson, Terry Davidson, two sisters, Evelyn Towler and Agnes Blair and two brothers, J.W. Watson and Calvin Watson.

She is survived by three grandchildren, Justin Davidson, Jason Davidson and John Davidson, six sisters: Sallie Towler, Kitty Doss, Elmore Ester, Patsy Rice, Dorothy Yeatts and Virginia David and one brother, Gordon Watson.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Raymond Goad and Elder Marvin Brumfield at Colbert-Maran Chapel in Gretna. She was laid to rest beside of her husband, in Liberty Memorial Cemetery, Sandy Level.

May God grant her eternal peace and rest.

Written by one who loved Her dearly,
Mabel Hedrick.

The family requested that a copy be sent to them.

Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
William Midkiff, Clerk

Elder Carlton Robinson

Facts:
Born: January 1, 1927
Place of Birth: Clayton County, Georgia
Death: February 28, 2007
Place of Death: Haralson County.

Survived By:
Edna Ruth Robinson, Wife
Debbie Faulkner, Daughter
Robert Robinson, Son
Tommy Robinson, Son
Mrs. Margaret Hester, Sister
Mrs. Sue Duncan, Sister
Mrs. Elsie Brock, Sister
Billy Robinson, Brother
Bobby Robinson, Brother
Leonard Robinson, Brother

ELDER CARLTON ROBINSON
January 1, 1927- February 28, 2007

Elder Carlton passed away February 28, 2007.

Elder Robinson was born on January 1, 1927 in Clayton County, Georgia the son of the late W.T. "Coot" Robinson and Martha Barrow Robinson.

A retired steamfitter and welder with Plumbers and Steamfitters Local #72 of Atlanta, Veteran of The United States Army and Member of Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church.

In addition to his parents, he was also preceded in death by a son, Jerry Lee Robinson, brothers, Adrian Robinson, James Robinson and Max Robinson, sisters, Hvacinth Harris and Genevive McKibben.

Survivors include his wife, Mrs. Edna Ruth Robinson of Waco; daughter, Debbie Faulkner of Villa Rica; sons, Robert Robinson of Waco and Tommv Robinson of Meansville: sisters. Mrs. Margaret Hester, Mrs. Sue Duncan and Mrs. Elsie Brock all of Carrollton: brothers, Billy Robinson of Mt. Zion. Bobby Robinson of Douglasville and Leonard Robinson of Waco; five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Funeral Services was conducted Saturday, March 3, 2007 at 2 P.M. at Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church with Elders Frank Andrews. Leonard Robinson. Homer Benefield and Mr. Tommy Howard officiating.

I have no more conception of a true believer without morality, than of a river without water, or of a sun without light and heat.

Toplady

MR. CHARLES F. STEWART, JR.

On August 2, 2007, our Lord called Brother Charles Stewart to his heavenly home.

Brother Charles was born in Mebane, North Carolina, to Charles and Lula Ann Wray Stewart and lived to be 89 years of age. He honorably served his country in the U. S. Army during World War II. Brother Charles was employed with Liggett & Meyers Tobacco Company for nearly 35 years and lived most of his life in the Durham, North Carolina, area. A few years ago he and Sister Novaline moved to Manteo, North Carolina, near their son, Ronnie and his wife, who faithfully looked after them.

Brother Charles joined the Durham Primitive Baptist Church on November 17, 1985, and was blessed with a quietness of spirit. He was a good listener and thoughtful in responses to his brethren. The members of the church at Durham have really missed him and Sister Novaline since they moved away.

Surviving are his wife of nearly 70 years, Novaline S. Stewart; his two children, Charles "Ronnie" Stewart, Sr., and wife, Alice, of Manteo, North Carolina, and Jo Ann Rhew of Bahama, North Carolina; eight grandchildren; 21 great grandchildren; and 6 great great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at Durham Primitive Baptist Church on Tuesday, August 7, 2007, at 11:00 a.m. followed by interment at Woodlawn Cemetery. Elder Cleo Robertson, Pastor, conducted the services.

Brother Charles quietly rejoiced in hearing the sweetness of the Gospel with its assurance of salvation by grace. He loved to sing the old hymns and could witness with the words of Toplady who wrote:

Sweet in the confidence of faith,
To trust His firm decrees;
Sweet to lie passive in His hands,
And know no will but His.

If such the sweetness of the stream
What must the fountain be
Where saints and angels draw their bliss
Directly Lord from thee.

With love and respect,
Catherine Humbarger, Clerk

EPHESIANS 1:8-9.

Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;

Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

SONG

My God, what silken cords are thine;
How soft, and yet how strong;
While power, and truth, and love combine
To draw our souls along.

Thou sawest us crushed beneath the yoke
Of Satan and of sin:
Thy hand the iron bondage broke,
Our worthless hearts to win.

The guilt of twice ten thousand sins
One moment takes away;
And grace, when first the war begins,
Secures the crowning day.

Comfort through all this vale of tears,
In rich profusion flows,
And glory of unnumbered years
Eternity bestows.

Drawn by such cords, we onward move,
Till round thy throne we meet:
And captives in the chains of love,
Embrace our Conqueror's feet.

Doddridge.

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EDITORIAL

I HAVE COMMANDED THE RAVENS TO FEED THEE

1 Kings 17:4 reads, ***"And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there."***

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

In the days of Elijah, Ahab was king over the ten tribes of Israel and was more evil than any king before him. He married Jezebel who was the daughter of the king of Zidon which was a nation that worshipped Baal. So Ahab built an altar to Baal and worshiped the idol as well as setting up other idols and images in the land.

God sent Elijah to Ahab to tell him that there would be no dew nor rain these years. James 5:17 tells us that it was for a period of three years and six months. Then the Lord told Elijah to hide himself by the brook Cherith as Ahab and Jezebel sought to find Elijah to kill him. Cherith means ***"to cut off or separate."*** Elijah was cut off or separated from King Ahab and according to 1 Kings 18:10, Ahab sought Elijah in every nation and kingdom but could not find him. They could not because what God has hidden, no man can find. In all his searching, Ahab could not locate Elijah. God raised up Elijah as His prophet for the times. The Lord always raises up His servants and qualifies them for the work for which He has purposed. How alone Elijah must have felt as he was being hunted to be killed! God had called him to confront the king of this nation with all the evil and worship of false gods. One man against a king and his army, but God was with Elijah and neither the king nor his army could touch Elijah. The Lord does not forsake His little ones in times of trouble and afflictions. He feeds them with grace and truth that is comforting and strengthening.

The Lord told Elijah he would drink of the brook and that He had commanded the ravens to feed him

with bread and flesh in the morning and in the evening. Ravens by nature would not bring food to anyone. They are scavengers that feed on dead or decaying matter and prey on small defenseless things such as worms, crickets and even young birds. They are black in color and in Leviticus 11:15 and Deuteronomy 14:14 were said to be unclean and an abomination. To me, the ravens set forth God's ministers in their fleshly or carnal nature. The natural man is a sinner and as black as the raven. To be carnally minded is death because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Therefore, those in the flesh cannot please God. In their carnal nature, men could not bring spiritual food to anyone as they feed upon the dead things of natural man as the ravens do. In my own experience, I never had any thought of bringing any food of the gospel to any of the Lord's people. I had other plans and desires that did not include the Lord or His people. But, the Lord commands and it stands fast, speaks and it's done. I am made to feel so weak and unworthy and to feel surely one such as I am cannot be one of the Lord's ministers. Yet, there is great comfort in the Lord's words to the Apostle Paul, *"My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."*

In his raven nature, King Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, captured the city, destroyed the temple and took many vessels of the temple as well as many of the Jews to Babylon. He worshiped other gods and boasted of his power and majesty in building a magnificent kingdom. In Jeremiah 43:10, God calls Nebuchadnezzar His servant. Therefore, at God's appointed time, He took Nebuchadnezzar out of his palace and into the wilderness where he was shown that he was nothing and had no power of his own. Again, at God's appointed time when Nebuchadnezzar had been throughly taught, he said he lifted up his eyes unto heaven and came forth praising God proclaiming that God's dominion *"is an everlasting dominion and His kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him what doest thou?"* Nebuchadnezzar was blessed to set forth his experience of grace in the book of Daniel. Daniel 4:1-2 reads, *"Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. I thought it good to show the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me."* Daniel 4:37 further reads, *"Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the king of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment:*

and those that walk in pride he is able to abase." The Lord had commanded the raven (Nebuchadnezzar) to feed His little ones with bread and flesh.

As with the Apostle Paul before his conversion, his raven nature was persecuting the Lord's people and binding them and putting them in prison. He even consented to the gnashing of teeth and stoning of Stephen. But, then, on the way to Damascus, the Lord brought him down and showed him the blackness of his earthly nature. The apostle experienced that which he was blessed to write in Ephesians 2:1-3, ***"And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."*** There on that road he also experienced what the psalmist wrote in Psalm 107:1-2, ***"O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endured for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy."*** Paul could proclaim that by grace you are saved and that grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. The raven (the Apostle Paul) was commanded to feed the Lord's elect with bread and flesh.

Noah sent the raven out of the ark first and it did not return because it found its desires of death and decay in the natural world. The dove was sent out afterward which was a type of the spiritual and it found no rest in the world and returned to the ark. I Corinthians 15:46 states, ***"Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual."*** God chose His ministers as He did all His people from the foundation of the world, brought them into an understanding of the truth at His appointed time, and made them willing in the day of His power. He commanded the ravens to feed His prophet and they did. Christ commanded Peter to ***"feed my lambs. Feed my sheep."***

The scripture says that the ravens brought Elijah bread and flesh in the morning and in the evening. I believe that this event actually took place, but I also believe this is setting forth God's ministers preaching the gospel of Christ. Elijah could not provide any food for himself. He was in a helpless condition and totally dependent upon the Lord. John 6:33 states, ***"For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world."*** Jesus said, ***"I am the bread of life."*** The food that the ravens brought to Elijah was

not raven's food. They did not make it nor prepare it. God made and prepared the bread and flesh and gave it to the ravens to bring to Elijah. It was nourishing and strengthening to him. It was life to Elijah. So is the gospel to every little child of grace. John 6:51 reads, ***"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."*** The world that Jesus refers to is not this natural world, but the world of believers, His elect people. This bread and flesh that the ravens brought to Elijah sets forth that which was to come, namely, Christ in the flesh. It speaks of His suffering and death and the redemption of His people from their sins by the giving of His flesh or body on the cross and the shedding of His blood. When Jesus fed the five thousand with five loaves and two fish, He was setting forth Himself as the bread and flesh. I believe the five loaves are five manifestations of the one bread. Jesus is manifested to His people as Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace: five manifestations of the one bread. The two fish set forth grace and truth that came by Jesus Christ. Every little heir of promise feeds upon this bread and flesh. Every God-called minister preaches this bread and flesh. To eat of His flesh is to experience in a measure the suffering of Christ. Christ told His disciples in the upper room to ***"take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me."*** The Apostle Paul writes in II Timothy 2:12, ***"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him"*** and in Romans 8:17, ***"And if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."*** When the apostles were brought before the Sanhedrin, which was the highest Jewish council, for preaching Jesus, they were beaten and told not to do it any more. But, the apostles departed rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for His name. As the psalmist wrote, ***"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep."*** O, dear people, haven't you feasted upon this bread and flesh? What joy you experienced! Yet, how humble and small you were made to feel with the precious hope that you were included in His suffering, death and resurrection. His resurrection was the first resurrection; and all that hath part in that resurrection, on such the second death hath no power.

The water of the brook which Elijah was commanded to drink was setting forth the Holy Spirit. As natural water is essential for natural life, so the Spirit is essential for spiritual life. As Christ said in John 3:6, ***"That***

which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The Spirit was manifested to Elijah as it kept him safe and provided for him. As David experienced and wrote, ***"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters."*** In the green pastures of His grace, his little ones are given rest and feed upon the green grass of the gospel. No works of the flesh are involved. They are led beside and drink of the still waters of His Spirit, that pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, that flows from the throne of God. But, at God's appointed time, the brook dried up. God did not leave nor forsake His prophet, but the appointed time for Elijah to leave this place had come. The Lord commanded Elijah to go to a certain village to a certain widow woman whom God had commanded to sustain him and the Spirit was manifested in the barrel of meal that wasted not and the cruise of oil that failed not as well as the miracle of raising her son from the dead.

How marvelous are His works and His ways past finding out! May the Lord of all grace be with each of you and feed you with this bread and flesh and bless you with comfort and peace.

In bonds of love,
Cleo D. Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Tony, Please renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times for two more years, enclosed find check, with a little extra to use were needed.

May the Lord continue to bless the Editors, and writers, of this fine paper, with words of wisdom that can only come from our dear Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ; To feed and comfort the little flock of the Lord's people. If it be according to His Holy and divine will.

With love and sweet fellowship in the truth, as it is in our Lord and Savior. I hope.

C. Fox

ISAIAH 53: 1-3.

WHO hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

VOICES OF THE PAST

EXPERIENCE AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY OF THE LATE ELDER S.L. MORAN, FLOYD COUNTY, VA.

I have had a desire to leave something with my people in regard to the Doctrine that I have contended for from a child.

I had serious thoughts about things of God, and I was made to know without a doubt there was a God in Heaven, and that he loved me and that I loved him. And I felt that love filled my soul, and if I had to throw that away it would leave me with nothing.

I was very young but that stayed with me. I grew up as other boys and as wild as any of them, but when I did wrong it would hurt me and I would say I would not do that anymore. I would find myself going on in the same way, and continued to make the same promises but never able to keep them. I went on in this way until I was a grown man. I thought I could live a different life, but the more I promised - the worse I got. I thought I could do better but found I was a failure.

After my first wife died, I felt she was saved, and I had a feeling I wanted to be prepared to meet her. I got down on my knees and tried to pray, and of all the wretches that ever made the attempt, I was the worst, and said in my mind that I would never attempt such a thing again.

I went on in my wild way until I married again, and I felt the Lord had given me a help- mate. Everything seemed to be getting along well with me until suddenly a change took place in my life. One night after going to bed, sometime during the night I was brought up before the Great God of all the earth. He was taking the Righteous on the right and the Sinners on the left. I was wondering what would be my doom. When I was brought up, I thought I would make some plea, but before I could speak I was taken on the left, and then I knew I was a lost sinner, justly condemned before a just God; and if all the world had told me there was a chance for me, it would not have done any good. My life had been so wrong and sinful, I knew there was no hope for such a sinner as I. And from that time on for months and years I went begging for mercy. I would go in the mountains to try to find peace of soul. I had to give up all for lost and thought I would not try any more, but I was still begging in my mind. I felt I must try one time more. I went to the lowest place I could find and fell on my face and put my mouth in the dirt and all I could say was, ***"God be merciful to me a condemned Sinner."*** And when I got up everything was new and that burden of sin and condemnation was gone. I felt to be in a new world, and made to praise God from whom all blessings flow. I thought I

would go to the house and tell my wife, but I did not. I was afraid I was mistaken.

I went on sometime wondering what all of this meant. I had never heard any preaching for I had not attended any church, for I was not interested in church matters, and I had no thought of where the church was. I thought anywhere they claimed to worship was Church.

There came a time I felt I wanted a home among God's people. I went to the Methodist to find a home. I went with full intention of joining them. But, lo, when the preacher began his sermon everything he said was against my hope. When he got through he left me without any hope. I went home and felt then I would not go to church anymore, but I soon got restless, and it came in my mind to go to Laurel Creek Church and see what Elder Cole would say. I went and when he began preaching, in the place of condemning me, he told my troubles better than I could. And when he got through I knew he had told the truth; and I did not have to look for the church anymore. Since that time I have not searched for the church. I have no doubt where the church is and no desire to find any other .

I went on for a year or two going to hear the Baptist preach. The more I heard the more I loved them. I did not feel I would ever join the church. But there came a time something took place with me very unexpected to me. The 4th Sunday in November, 1910, I told my wife that morning, I was going to Laurel Creek Church to hear Elders Cole and J. J. Spangler preach. She said, *"If you are going to join the church I want to go with you."* I said, *"If that is all you are going for, don't worry I have no thought of that, and I don't guess I ever will; and I know, not today."* I went to church and both preachers preached. Elder Cole gave invitation for members and when they began singing to dismiss, something took hold of me with such power it caused me to tremble. I said, *"I am not going,"* but getting up and starting to the pulpit still saying, *"I am not going."* But went on and began telling what I felt the Lord had done for me. They received me, and I rejoiced.

Then came a question in my soul, *"What kind of a man have you been?"* I answered that question, "Very bad." Then, "What have you done? Can you do any better?" And I said, *"No." "You know you will have to be turned out of the church, they will not keep you in the church."* I went home with a greater burden than I have ever been able to tell in words.

Elder Cole asked when I wanted to be baptized. I replied, *"I don't know."* He said, *"that is unfinished business."* I went on until the next meeting which was the 4th Sunday in December, 1910 and yet I had no desire to be baptized. But on the night of the same month, if I have

been called to preach it was the 25th of that month. I went under a great burden since joining the church and had no thought of preaching until during the night. I saw a cloud come over me. I felt it was the power of God and a weight was so powerful it was pressing my life out; and a voice spoke out of that cloud and said, ***"Take up thy cross and follow me."*** I said, ***"Is it to Pray?"*** And the power got harder. I said, "Is it to preach ?" The weight was lifted off me and I sat up in bed, and I felt a power over me that I never will be able to tell. I commenced speaking. I felt to know that it was the power of God. I had no doubt at that time, and I commenced speaking with as much assurance as I ever have since; and I said, ***"I will go wherever I am sent for the God of Heaven has called me."*** I did not have any doubt at that time, but when I came to my self I knew that was impossible. I told my wife not to tell of what I have said for I can't do that. I felt I would not go to church the January meeting. I still had no feeling to be baptized. I thought they would think strange of me for not saying anything about being baptized.

I had some work to do that day and started out to get some help. I was stopped on the way and this Scripture came into my heart, ***"He that forsaketh not father, mother, house and land, wife and children for my name's sake is not worthy of me. Take up thy cross and follow me."*** That turned me around and I went back to the house. My wife said, ***"I thought you were going to haul hay."*** And I said, ***"No, I am going to church."*** I went and after the meeting was over, invitation for members was given. Henry Board came forth and gave a good reason of his hope and was received. He said, ***"I want to tell a dream. I had. I was baptized in a pretty pond of water and there were two fishes one on each side of me, and I loved them."*** Elder Cole said, ***"When do you want to be baptized?"*** And he said, ***"This evening."*** I felt I was bound to be baptized with him. I said, ***"Brother Cole, I want to be baptized tomorrow."*** And Brother Board was willing to wait until the next day.

The next day it was raining. I thought there was not any reason in going out on such a day, but fixing all the time to go. When we got to the place they were coming out of the house to go to the pond. Elder Cole had told me to tell my wife to bring her clothes and be baptized with us. I told her and she said she couldn't do that. I said, ***"He told me to tell you and that is all I will say."*** My wife went and was received. Elder Cole took me in and baptized me first, then took brother Henry Board, and then my wife. Brother Board said, ***"I see my two fishes and I love them."***

That was the happiest day I have ever seen fulfilled and there

was not a thing that stood against me. I felt I was in a new world.

I thought all my troubles were over, but in this I was sadly mistaken. I had to go down, so much so that I felt I had deceived the Church. I felt I had to go to the church and tell them I was mistaken, but before the next meeting, I was more satisfied when Paul's writing came in my mind so sweetly, ***"There is a thorn given me in the flesh to buffet me lest I become exalted above measure. I besought the Lord thrice that it might be removed from me. The Lord said, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."***

That was my case. When that came in my heart I had read the Bible but very little, but I knew that was Scripture. I went to the house and opened the Bible and it opened at that place without turning a leaf. That gave me great consolation.

After that my burden became the same as it did that night when the Lord said, ***"Take up thy cross and follow me."*** The same voice said, ***"You have lied to God."*** I awoke my wife crying aloud. She asked me what was the matter. I told her I had lied to God, and it was more than I could stand. I went on wondering what to do.

Sometime after that I had a trip to make. I had to go in the mountains, and as I was walking along thinking of my troubles, it came in my mind that all I had seen was in the night. Maybe it was only a dream. That same voice came in my heart and soul, ***"You have lied to God."*** I fell on my face and made a promise to God if he would let me live, if I was ever called on, I would go, I thought that would let me off for I was not going to tell anyone; but it was not long until I told a brother and asked him not to tell anyone. It was not long after that, Elder Sumner came to our house. We were talking over many things, and the first thing I knew, I was telling him; but told him it was impossible for me to ever preach.

I went to Pine Forest Church. Brother Sumner asked me to go home with him. I went that night. He asked me if my impression was with me as much as it had been, and I told him not as much as it had been. We went back to the church the next day and he told me he was going to call on me. It shocked me so I could hardly speak. Then I remembered the vow I had taken and said, ***"If it doesn't make any difference with you, don't call on me, it will embarrass me for I just can't go."*** I will never be able to tell the feeling that went in my heart and soul. I could not stay in the house. I walked below the church and stood for a few minutes, and if I know my heart, I asked the Lord to take my life for it was more than I could bear. It was not because I did not want to preach, I would have given anything if I could but I knew I could not. I thought I would go to the woods and

try to ask the Lord to let this cup pass, but I was unable to even bow. A voice seemed to say, ***"You fool, why stand you here!"***

I went back to the house. Elder Sumner was in prayer. I slipped in the house and got in behind someone. Elder Sumner saw me and said, ***"You just as well come on up here, you will have to anyway ."*** I went and stood on the steps of the stand. I spoke a few words, but in the place of getting relief, I felt I had brought disgrace on my people; but the worst was, I had disgraced the Church. When I got home, I told my wife she could be getting things in shape for I was not going to stay in this country, and I certainly meant every word at that time. The next Sunday was the 4th Sunday, which was Laurel Creek meeting. Elder Cole hearing I had gotten up at Pine Forest, asked me in the stand. It seemed I had no resistance and went on and that was still worse than the first.

My wife and I started to Brother Board's to spend Saturday night. As we went I told her that was the last time I would ever go; and I verily thought I was telling the truth. That night at Brother Board's, something took place with me, I will never forget. After retiring, I will never know if I was asleep or awake, but let that be as it may. All at once I was in a strange country and I wanted to go home. I came out to go home, but I found myself in a wilderness. I could see a narrow path. I would follow that path until it would come to a solid wall. I would have to turn back and try another path it seemed. I continued trying and felt I would have to give up, then I saw a narrow path leading up a hill. I knew I would have to go that way. And when I got to the top of that hill, I looked across a Beautiful Valley and saw a passenger train, and I was glad for I knew I would be able to get home. When I got to the train the first thing I knew I was in a buggy with a young man, and I will never be able to tell the sweetness I felt in that ride. But it soon came to an end. All at once we came to a wide river and there was a covered bridge. When we got to the bridge, a shutter came down and cut us off. The young man was gone and I was left alone. I wondered what to do. I walked around the end of the bridge and looked at the river. It looked deep but I knew I had to go that way. I dreaded it but it was not as deep as I expected it to be. Then I got in the same road, it was a plain old road. When I got in this road, I looked ahead of me and I saw an old-like woman walking ahead of me. She had on an old-time slat bonnet like my mother used to wear. I thought if I could catch up with her she could tell me of my troubles. But when I caught up with her, I began telling her my troubles. She began kissing her hand and laid it on my cheek, showing the love she had for me.

When I came to myself, I never doubted she was the Church, for the

church had shown me all the kindness I could ask of them. That vision caused me to go, and I went to some church every weekend, but felt to have no liberty to preach; until I got to the place I lost all hope of ever being able to preach. I feel the Lord gave me endurance and I feel that it was his time.

I went to Old Pine Creek Church. As I went around the cemetery, a Scripture came in my mind. It was sweet to me. I was not in the habit of reading a text. Elder Cole passed by me and dropped the Bible in my lap. I turned to the text that was on my mind. I read it and then began talking I felt with another tongue, for it was altogether different to me. I looked over that crowd of folks and they all looked good to me. I spoke for around 30 or 35 minutes and felt satisfied the Lord turned me loose and I would go and preach the rest of my time just like I did then. Only I would preach longer.

That was the first Sunday. The next Sunday there was meeting at Old Salem Church. That was the longest week I thought I had ever seen, but when Saturday came I went. But not to preach. I knew there would be more people there on Sunday, so I refused on Saturday. There an old Brother said to me, ***"Go with me to my nephew's."*** And I said, ***"Alright."*** That night after retiring, whether asleep or awake I cannot tell, but I was in a room and the man that kept that room had to keep everything just right in that room. I used to dance and I thought I had not tried to dance for a long time. I began dancing over the floor, and the man that kept the room began whipping me with fire. It came around my waist and began taking my breath. I looked back over my shoulder to see who it was whipping me. I saw no one but I was picked up like a feather, and there was liquid fire in front of me and I was thrown in that fire and consumed. And a voice came into me, ***"God is a consuming Fire."*** I wondered what that meant.

When I got to the Church that morning, I found out what that meant, for instead of preaching, if I ever opened my mouth I never knew it. I sat down crying, longing to get out of that church and never to be there any more. When I was leaving I was bidding every thing goodby. But before I got out of sight of the church something took place with me. This sentence of Scripture came into my mind with sweetness, ***"We rejoice therefore in tribulations, knowing tribulations works patience, patience experience and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, for the love of God is shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost which is given us."*** So I was made to rejoice and shed tears of joy. I was made glad the Lord had shut my mouth and taught me some sense.

The next Sunday was the third

Sunday and I went to Pine Forest. And I went in the fear of the Lord, and he gave me liberty to speak; and I have been going ever since. I know I am about through for if I live until February 22, 1959, I'll be 82 years old. And I can't expect many more years. The Lord has been wonderfully good to me and my Brethren and Friends have showed me all the kindness I could wish for. They are bound to see something in me that I can't see in myself, for I see nothing in my vile flesh that is good.

I hope I have not set forth anything in this writing to give myself any honor, for if I have been shown anything, it is the rottenness of my nature. It makes no difference how m u c h the Lord has shown me I still see nothing good in my flesh.

There was a period of time in my ministry that the sweetness of the Gospel seemed to be completely taken from me. I felt I would have to give it up, but in that time I had a dream. I was traveling a road that was muddy and I was so worried on my journey. I felt I had gone as far as I could go and had given up. Then I viewed a road in front of me that was so beautiful, I can't describe it. When I had put my feet in that road, I felt as light as a feather. I began leaping and jumping and quoting one Psalm after another in praises to God, and I wondered how long that would last. When I awoke I told my wife I had been seeing something wonderful to me. And from that time on for a few years I had sweet liberty continually for a while, baptizing six or eight. Then I could see what that beautiful road meant.

The longer I live the more of my vileness I see in the flesh. And I can say of a truth, *"In my flesh dwelleth no good thing."*

S. L. Moran

(Elder Moran is well remembered among the Baptists of Virginia. He united with Laurel Creek Church, Floyd County, Va., and later united by letter with the Salem Church (Head of the River) in the same county. He served as Moderator of the Smith River Association from 1932 until his death in 1960. He was ordained in 1916 and served five churches during his ministry.

The above was written by Elder Moran December 30, 1958, and we are glad to publish it in his memory.-J.D.W.)

ST. LUKE 1: 1-2.

Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us,

Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word;

SERMON BY
ELDER D. V. SPANGLER .
(Tape Recorded and Edited)

Last evening I read and commented from the 5th chapter of II Corinthians, and I will read that again this morning, as I have not expounded that scripture fully. We will begin reading in the 17th verse, ***"Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."***

It is a blessing that God has described the pathway of the sinner. We are told in the word of God that the spirit in the heart of those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious will cause them to hear a voice behind them saying, ***"This is the way; walk ye in it."*** Though we assent unto a truth, that which makes the word of God precious is the application of it to our heart. All the promises of God in the Bible would mean little to us if we hadn't had somewhere along the way these promises applied to us. When our Master said to His disciples, ***"I will be with you always, even to the end of the world,"*** that promise is precious to all who have had that said to them in the inward man.

Paul, in using the expression, "Therefore" in the 17th verse, had reference to the things contained in the former verses in this 5th chapter of II Corinthians. ***"If any man be in Christ."*** He now describes the effect of it. Sometime ago I spoke in connection with the subject of a person being in Christ, which is an endless subject. Paul, in the first chapter of Ephesians, said to the church, "He has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Paul is not talking about the eternal vital union of Christ and His people before the world began in this scripture. He, in this scripture, was talking about the manifestation of that union that Christ had with His people before the world began. Christ is formed in their heart, "The hope of glory." I would never belittle the doctrine of hope religion, as some do. The scripture teaches that we have a hope in Christ, as Christ Himself formed in us, the hope of glory. So if a person ever has an inclination to speak lightly or belittle the doctrine of hope religion, you will just have to take Christ out of the picture. There are a lot of people who say, "I just don't believe in that kind of religion." I have no quarrel with them. But the precious thing that we want to keep in mind is that if you have a hope of heaven when you die, that hope is Christ formed in you,and it is the hope of glory. That's what Paul is talking about in this chapter. ***"If any man be in Christ."***

If there is a manifestation in the life of a person that Christ has been formed in them, that is the hope of glory, and they are new creatures. Paul speaks of this as the new man. (The old man is the

outer man.) He speaks of the effects of regeneration, and I want to emphasize that, though the world is full of conversions (so called) of people. it isn't full of regenerations of people. There is a difference in being converted and being regenerated. Conversion is substituted today by man, by saying that is all you need. Just change your opinion about a thing. Regeneration is the work in the heart, and the other is in the head. A man can be converted a lot of times, but he is only regenerated one time. You may have to be converted after you are born again. Jesus told Peter " And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." If it has been manifested that Christ has been formed in one's heart, (and there will be a manifestation of it, for the tree is known by the fruit it bears,) he is a new creature.

This *"new creature"* is then brought to understand something of the new covenant. One cannot really understand and get any comfort from what is called the new covenant in the Bible unless he knows something about being made a new creature in Christ. The new covenant which God said He would make with the house of Israel after the days of the law was, *"I will write my laws in their heart."* That's being made a new creature, isn't it? *"I will write my laws in their heart."* I used to think that read, *"I will write my law in their heart,"* but it doesn't. What does it mean? I will write the law of Moses in their heart? No! I will write the laws of Christ in their heart; the general principles that brings truth into their hearts. The laws - "I will write my laws" - the laws are the new covenant, *"in their heart."* And no more shall a man teach his neighbor or his brother saying, "Know the Lord; for they all shall know me from the least of them to the greatest." That sets aside men teaching men to know Christ, doesn't it? I would feel right guilty this morning if I had started out here to make christians in the face of that scripture. God said that no more it is to be that men teach his neighbor; men teaching men to know God.

If any man be in Christ there will be a manifestation of it. There will be a manifestation of new life in that person where the work of grace has been wrought. One of the manifestations of the child when it is born into the world do you know one of the first things that happens to a baby when it is born? Most of the time a cry goes up. They begin to cry. And it isn't but a little while until they are hungry. They begin to hunger. These are some of the evidences that they are a new creature, (and they can be classed as one). In the Book of Matthew it is recorded *"Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."* And then they can adopt the sentiment of the hymn on page 179, as they are brought to know these things in their own heart;

"O that the Lord would guide

my ways
To keep his statutes still!
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will!
O send thy spirit down to write
Thy law upon my heart!
Nor let my tongue indulge deceit,
Nor act the liar's part.
From vanity turn off my eyes;
Let no corrupt design,
Nor covetous desires arise
Within this soul of mine."

Did you ever pray that God would turn your eyes from vanity? And then the next verse says

"Order my footsteps by thy word,
And make my heart sincere;
Let sin have no dominion, Lord,
But keep my conscience clear."

Read that hymn sometime. It's wonderful. If any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away, and all his old views of God are passed away.

I can't have much hope in any person's profession of religion, regardless of who they are, if I don't find Christ in him. I must see Christ in him. The keynote of all their hope must be in the Person of Jesus. Regardless of what we may claim is the ground of our hope when we die, if Christ isn't in it, don't count on it too much. Discard it! The poet knew what I'm talking about when he said

"On Christ the solid rock I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.
I dare not trust the sweetest frame "

How true that is. You know, people can get emotional and trust the frame sometimes instead of the grace of God. Somebody can get up and tell you about their grandmother dying and touch your heart, but I want to be touched by the gospel of the Son of God. That's what I want to be touched with; not sentimentality, not emotionalism! Oh, no! I want, and you want, to rest on something else, not anything attached to this world. *"I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus name."*

Isn't that wonderful, that there is a place of rest for those who are brought into this new relationship; that they need rest? All of us in the kingdom of heaven; if we know the truth, find there are places and times that we need rest. Where will we find it? Can you find it in your zeal? Can you find it in your wisdom? Can you find it anywhere in yourself? If you can, you don't know the wonderful rest that comes to the people of God through our Saviour, who said, "Come unto me all ye." How many? " All ye that labor." The laboring is the evidence of life, isn't it? It is the evidence of the new creature in Christ. *"Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."* Don't tell me that in the christian experience there

aren't places of rest for the soul. ***"Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart."*** That's how He describes Himself. ***"And you shall find rest for your soul."*** So with the newborn child. At times they need rest; regardless of their outward situation, they need rest. God has provided one place for it -in Christ. Well, somebody said, ***"Just how can I rest in Christ?"*** You rest in His blood. You rest in His righteousness. You rest in everything He has wrought for you. You are a new creature; old things have passed away.

There was a man on the Eastern Shore of Maryland years ago who carried the mail, and he was teaching Sunday School, trying to teach people to know God, and become the children of God. He was a leader in his church. One day that man began to tell them that salvation was of God. He began to tell them that all the salvation they had, God gave them, and that they had no part in producing it. They told him, ***"You're an Old School Baptist."*** He said, ***"Who are they?"*** The man had never heard one of them preach. He said, ***"Who are they?"*** They said, ***"They are people who preach about what you are talking about. We don't need you any longer."*** Why? Because all things had become new with him when God gave him a view that all he needed was Christ. All things had become new with him when the time came that He showed him in his flesh there was not anything good, and he couldn't teach other people to know God. He just started teaching the true way, and they got rid of him. I was up there later on and met the man who carried the mail, and you know I said to him, ***"Have you heard from the King, lately?"*** I wanted to get his reaction. "Have you heard from the King, lately?" And he said, ***"I hope I hear something every day from Him."*** He told me a dream he had. He said, ***"I dreamed I was by a stream, and I looked over and there were lots of sheep across that stream, and I wanted to get over and I couldn't find a place to pass. I kept looking, and looking, and there was a shepherd over there with that flock of sheep, and I wanted to move over to where they were."*** And he said, ***"Suddenly, I was there. I didn't find the passageway across by myself." "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away."*** The former things are passed away in God's working with us, and God through the work of His Son does everything needful for the sinner, and his view of God is different when Christ is revealed in his heart. All things do become new.

Somebody would say in listening to me this morning, ***"Does everything become new with me? Tell me that I might have some evidence that everything is become***

new with me." You know, all people's experiences are different. Some are gradually brought to see Christ by faith. Some can't tell when the burden fell off their back. Some are lead one way, and some another, but in substance, the leading is the same way. And we are inquiring now, ***"Just what is the ground of my hope that I have passed from death to life; have all things been made new with me?"*** Let's examine a few things the word of God says. John said, ***"By this ye may know you have passed from death unto life because you love the brethren."*** Religion isn't sociability. No, no, it is founded upon Christian love. And a man can love a man that maybe some way in nature he doesn't care too much for, but if he bears the mark of Christ he will love that man in his heart. He said, ***"By this ye may know you have passed from death unto life because you love the brethren."*** And that love was so great that when Ananias heard about Paul, he said, ***"I'm afraid of him. I'm afraid of that man." And when he met him, he said, "Brother Saul." "Brother Saul."*** That's what the grace of God does for a man.

In the 89th Psalm it is recorded, ***"Blessed is the people that do know the joyful sound. They shall walk, Oh, Lord, in the light of thy countenance, and in thy name shall they rejoice all the day."*** One of the marks of a new creature is that they know the joyful sound. The gospel of Christ has a joyful sound. Oh, my friends, I mentioned last night when I first heard it, it seemed like something gradually going through my very being at the name of Christ. And I have searched everything else for heavens ways, and I haven't found it. All things pass away! Old things pass away, and all things become new. These all things - (I like that expression, don't you?) are of God. Everyone of them are of God; not half of them, not 99% of them, but they are all of God.

Now let us move on. I don't want to take too much time with this. " And all things are of God." What does he mean? He means what he said. That the conviction, the conversion, the regeneration, and everything that is wrought in the sinner's heart is of God, because of Christ's work. ***"Who hath reconciled us to himself."*** It is an endless subject - the union of Christ with His people and God Himself. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. That's the spiritual, heavenly world, those people. "Who have reconciled us to Himself by Christ Jesus." There is no sinner who has ever stood on the face of the earth who has ever had what is needful to reconcile himself to God. What is reconciliation ? It is to remove whatever has separated. That's simple - bring them into union. We are reconciled to God by the death of His Son. There has never been a substitute for that. If Jesus

Christ in His death didn't reconcile us to God, we will never be reconciled in this life or in the one to come. ***"And hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation."*** What does he mean by that? He means absolutely what he said. God has given to the church the ministry of preaching the reconciliation between God and man by His Son. That's the one He reconciled. That's what He teaches. To wit, that God was in Christ. If you follow the pathway of our Saviour through Bethlehem, you will see God there. Christ said, ***"The Father worketh, and I work. I and the Father are one."*** This is reconciliation, that God was in Christ. He was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, and what's more, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and has committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Not charging the sins of His people, but laying them on His Son, and then commits to us the minlstry, the word of reconciliation.

How many of you, this morning, are glad there has been a reconciliation made between God and man, and that your hope is in that? And in that alone, and nothing else? And He has committed to us in the gospel, wherever it is preached, he has committed the word of reconciliation that the death of Christ paid all the debt for His people, and justified them with His blood, brought them to God.

Paul, as he entered Athens, preached God as sufficient, who made all things, and he said, ***"He's not far from any of us." "In Him we live, and move, and have our being."*** Now then, we are ambassadors of Christ. A minister is an ambassador for Christ. ***"As though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ stead, be ye reconciled to God."*** A minister is an ambassador from heaven. If I am preaching the gospel to you, I hold the highest office that ever a man held in this world. They bring a message from God to man, and we pray you in Christ's stead, as Paul said, be ye reconciled to go. What does he mean? A believer here has lots of trials the world knows nothing about. He examines the things that come to him in life, whether the hand of God is in it. He will ask during the hours of night, ***"Is this the hand of the Lord in my life?"*** Is this some trial that has come to me to bring me closer to God? I never fear trials, if they bring me closer to my Master. Do you know what I mean? In the nature of believers, they wrestle with themselves and with their imperfections in the flesh. That the world knows nothing about. Sometimes they are on bended knee because of indwelling sin, and their life isn't what they would have it.

Sometimes they find themselves under God's chastening hand. If God loves you, He is going to chasten you somewhere along the way. The Bible says that if you be without chastisement, of whom all are partakers, ye are bastards and not

sons. I heard the doctrine preached that we can so live that God will not chastise us. That hasn't been my experience, my dear brethren. It hasn't been my lot. And yet it said, *"Whom the Lord loveth, he chastens, and he scourgeth every son that he receives."* Be ye reconciled to God, and when trouble comes, remember my friends, they are always for your good.

"Trials make the promise sweet; Trials give new life to prayer.

Trials bring us to His feet,

Lays us low and keeps us there.

Did I meet no trials here;

No chastisement by the way;

May I not by reason fear I should be a castaway,"

I remember many years ago, one night, I had a great burden. I had a burden I didn't know whether I could carry or not. I remember a spot I went to that night, and the hymn sweetly began to sink like rain into my heart, and that song was,

"If God is mine, then present things,

And things to come are mine;

Yea, Christ, his word, and spirit, too

And glory all divine.

If he is mine, let friends forsake,

Let wealth and honors flee:

Sure, he who giveth me himself,

Is more than these to me.

If he is mine, I'll boldly pass Through death's tremendous vale;

He is a solid comfort, when All other comforts fail."

I will never forget on that dark night that He showed me He is mine, and *"I'll boldly pass through death's tremendous vale." I believe that. "He is a solid comfort, when all other comforts fail."*

"Oh, tell me, Lord! that thou art mine;

What can I wish beside?

My soul shall at the fountain live,

When all the streams are dryed."

"For he hath made him to be sin for us." It is hard for us to comprehend that wonderful truth, but it is truth. Not to be made a sinner for us, but to be made, in the eyes of God, sin for us, as our sins imputed and charged to Jesus Christ, in the eyes of God He was made to be sin for us. He was born of a woman, to redeem His people under the law. Paul said, *"Sent he forth his son, made of a woman."* And he was not a sinner, but a sinless, holy person, and yet He was made to be sin for us. God imputed or charged the sins of His people to His Son. Did He take them ? Yes, He did. Yes, He did. How many? All of them! It wouldn't do you any good if He hadn't taken them all. One single sin will sink you into hell. You wouldn't need but one. How many? All of them! What did Peter say about it? *"He bare our sins in his own body on the tree*

of the cross and put them away by the sacrifice of himself," and when he comes they will all be in that great assembly of the saints. I don't know how it will be over there, and you don't either. But I've had a foretaste of it, and if it's like the foretaste I've had, it is indescribable. The few moments of praise to God and with all the work of Christ is all I need for heaven, and it would make a heaven below, the Redeemer to know.

I will remember the hymn being sung when I was baptized. They gathered at Dan River, on the bank of Dan River, and we sang that hymn,

"O how happy are they
Who their Saviour obey,
And whose treasures are laid Up above!
Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

And as I walked down into that water beside my dear natural father, on the bank the dear people were singing

"Now my remnant of days
Would I spend to his praise,
Who hath died my poor soul to redeem; Whether many or few,
All my years are his due,
May they all be devoted to him."

My dear brethren and sisters and kind friends, this morning, what few days I have I want to be devoted to my Master . May He bless you is my prayer.

Elder D. V. Spangler

SALINE, La., Jan. 27, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS: - As it is time for me to renew my subscription to the good old SIGNS, I feel that I want to write a few lines to let you know that I certainly love to read that paper, for it advocates the doctrine I hope I love, as it is the only doctrine that does me any good. It gives God all the praise, and none to man, and it is sweet to be enabled to trust in a God that has all power both in heaven and in earth, who is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient. I feel too unworthy sometimes to claim that I have a hope, as I am so wicked, and my heart so deceitful, but as it is the sinner that is saved, I sometimes hope that my name is written in the Lamb's book of life as saved by grace, and if so, it is according to the love and mercy of the holy God who changes not; and if I am one of his redeemed, all the powers of hell cannot undo what has been done for me in redemption's glorious plan, for his people are safe in his hands. I very often think of the terrible distress that is in the land now, and dread to think of the future, for we do not know what it will bring forth. It is best that we do not know what is in store for us, as brother Ker said in January 1st SIGNS. My only consolation is, that God rules in all things, there is nothing that can go beyond its limits; the devil can go no further than the Lord sees fit for him to go. God. has a purpose in all

this woe and misery, and it will be to his honor and glory, but we poor mortals cannot understand why these things must be. May his people be enabled to trust in him, and not fear them that can only kill this old body, and cannot do that unless it is the Lord's will for it to be done. I am not afraid of dying one moment before my time comes; for Solomon has said there is a time to all things; a time to be born and a time to die, and we who live here on this earth know that our time will soon be spent, although we should live to be old. The longer I live, the less I see to live for; but may we be reconciled to his holy will, and patiently wait until our appointed time to leave this world of sin and sorrow. Everything that God's people have to suffer is for their good and his glory; we cannot follow Christ unless we follow him in suffering. He came here and suffered and died that his people might live. They have joys that the world knows nothing of, which are inexpressible and full of glory, which joys they would not give for all that is in this world, for they realize the vanities of this earth, which are perishable and only endureth for a short time. May the God of all grace guide and direct his people in the way they should go.

Your brother, I hope, in Christ,
E. F. READHIMER

MEETINGS

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

Directions to the Pigg River Association to be held, the Lord willing, the first Sunday in August, Friday and Saturday before, August 1st, 2nd, and 3rd. The meeting will be held on the grounds of Chestnut Church in Franklin County, Virginia.

Those coming from the North on 220 after passing Rocky Mount, at first stop light, turn left on 619; go 3.7 miles, turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Rd.), go 1 mile to church.

Those coming from the South on 220, go app. 13 miles from Bassett Forks, turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Rd.) App. 2 1/2 miles to church.

We welcome and invite the ministers of our Faith and Order, our Brethren and Friends to be with us.

Clerk: Elder Thomas Solomon

PSALM 8: 3-5.

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

For thou has made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

STAUNTON RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene for its one hundred Sixty-Seventh session on July 12th and 13th at Weatherford Church according to previous arrangements and if we are granted this privilege by our God.

The church is located on State Roads 760 and 763 intersections (intersection of Music Street) and (Weatherford Drive).

Malmaison is the host church for this association.

The time of the service begins on Saturday at 9:30 am. We invite all that have a desire to worship with us.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

ST. JOHN 4: 13-15

Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 2008

Ralph Hocutt, GA 100.00
In memory of Parents:
Ralph A. and Agnes D. Hocutt
Flora Vest, VA 5.00
Tommy Middleton, NC 5.00
Billie Freeman, AL 20.00
Charlie Fox, AR 5.00
Grace Manley, AL 5.00
Lula Holley, VA 5.00

OBITUARIES

ELDER LOWELL BERNARD HUTCHENS

We bow in submission to the will of our heavenly Father in removing from our midst our beloved Brother and Elder, Lowell Bernard Hutchens. We miss him greatly, but feel our loss is his eternal gain. He suffered much during the last several years, but bore his afflictions, looking for that day in which his suffering would be over, and he could go to praise the God He loved. He was a firm believer in the doctrines of the Old Baptists. He was blessed to believe that God is, and that He has all power. He preached the sovereignty of God and the weakness of mankind, salvation by grace alone and that God declared the end from the beginning.

Brother Bernard asked for a home, at Russell Creek Church, the first Saturday in April, 1993. He was ordained a deacon the first Saturday in August, 1993. He served the churches well as deacon. He asked for Liberty to speak the first Saturday in December, 1993. Elder Bernard was ordained an Elder the first Saturday in December, 1994. He served as Moderator of the Lower Mayo Association in 2002 and 2003. It was amazing to see this frail and weak Elder bow in prayer or stand behind the pulpit and see the transformation as God delivered him with power from on high. How unsearcheable is his grace.

Brother Bernard was born June 21, 1929 to the late John Beal and Ether Biggs Hutchens. He was married to Martha Clark Hutchens April 12, 1951. He passed from this life March 29, 2008, at Martinsville Hospital, with his wife and sons by his side, making his stay on earth almost 79 years. At God's time, he received the answer to his prayer, ***"Oh Lord, please, take me home."*** In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by two brothers, John Winford Hutchens and Wilbur Gene Hutchens and a son, Lowell Hutchens. Survivors include Martha, his wife of 57 years and three sons, Elmo Hutchens, J.B. Hutchens and Kenneth Hutchens, and 7 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren. Also surviving are two sisters, Dorothy H. Dollarhite and Dornice H. Carter, and a host of friends and loved ones. He was owner and operator of Moorefield Store, near his home, for many years.

The funeral was conducted on Tuesday, April 1, 2008, at Community Funeral Home in Stuart, Virginia by Elder Kenneth Hopkins and Elder Ralph Gaines. His body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, in the Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery, there to await that great rising day, when he, along with all of the elect, shall hear that welcome voice saying ***"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."*** May God reconcile us to his will, knowing he is too wise to err and too gracious to be unkind.

At the request of the church, copies of this obituary for the church records, for the family and for publication. Approved in conference May 4, 2008.

Committee: Donald Moore
Lowell Hopkins

CORINTHIANS 12: 6-8.

And there are diversities of operations. but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

ON CHRIST THE SOLID ROCK

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness
I dare not trust the sweetest frame
But wholly lean on Jesus' name

When darkness veils his lovely face
I rest on his unchanging grace
In every high and stormy gale
My anchor holds within the veil

On Christ the solid rock I stand
All other ground is sinking sand
All other ground is sinking sand

His oath, his covenant, his blood
Supports me in the whelming flood
When all around my soul gives way
He then is all my hope and stay

When he shall come with trumpet sound
Oh may I then in him be found
Dressed in his rightousness alone
Faultless to stand before the throne

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EDITORIAL

"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Corinthians 4:6.

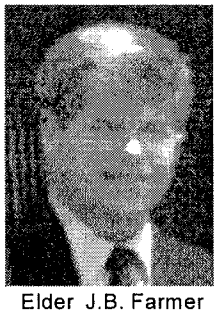
Elder J.B. Farmer

This scripture, as all scripture, is of no private interpretation. No carnal understanding will do for God's little ones, who hunger and thirst after the righteousness of God. For a scripture to be brought forth in truth, it must be rightly divided. It must be explained according to truth with no error added. To speak the truth without falling into some kind of trap of the devil, who was a deceiver and a liar from the beginning, is an impossible task for the sons of men. It is impossible with men, but all things are possible with God. If anything is written that is not in accordance with the truth, and I know I am subject to error, may it be rejected and attributed to my ignorance. It is my desire to be kept by the power of God through faith while writing on this profound subject. It is my desire that the truth of it may be revealed to the writer as well as the dear reader - that all may be edified and comforted, and that God may be praised in all things.

It appears that the heart of the matter is the glory of God, and Who it is that gives the knowledge of it, and by what means the glory is given, and whom it is that is taught of God, and what specifically is the glory of God.

It seems plain that it is the true and living God, Who has all power, even to command the light into existence, Who gives the knowledge of His glory by shining in the hearts of His little ones. The question that comes to mind is this. What is the glory of God under consideration here, and how was it shined into the hearts of His people? For the beginning of the answer, I believe we must back up to the days of Moses, when he was called into the mount and was given the ten commandments

by God Himself. When Moses came down from the mount, he knew not that the skin of his face shone with the glory of God. When the children of Israel saw it, they were afraid. The glory upon Moses, I am made to believe, was the glory of God and represented the presence of God. The children saw that glory and feared, knowing their own imperfections and sinfulness and also the perfection of God.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Before we knew anything of the scriptures, or of the doctrine, or of the church, or of the Lord Himself, we were made to fear before God. His glory was all around us in all the things He had made. Even small children, if asked from whence all things come, will say that God made them. Those having this revealed to them in truth and in power begin to see something of the all-wise, and all-powerful God of perfection. They are blessed to know Him in the simplest manner possible. From this simple beginning, they are blessed to grow in the knowledge of God and His kingdom. It is precept upon precept, and line upon line, here a little and there a little.

It is recorded that Moses put a veil on his face when he talked to the children of Israel, and gave the commandments of God unto them. The veil upon his face was to cover the glory, in order that the children of Israel might come into the presence of Moses without fear. Moses was given the law and was a symbol of the law for all ages. There was a glory upon him representing the same glory, which is upon the old covenant of the law. The old covenant was glorious in that it was good and holy and just. But the law was not given to save, but rather to condemn and to kill. For the law is the ministration of condemnation and the ministration of death. The law was given as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.

Without the law written in our hearts, we would never have known that we were sinners and that we were under the sentence of death. We would never have known a need of the Savior. We would have gone on through life thinking we were just as good as the next fellow, if not a little better, and that we were on our way to a better place based upon our supposed goodness. But the law was not given to save us, so it had a little glory, but not to be compared with the glory of salvation to come. There was prepared a glory to come that excelled the glory of the law as much as the glory of the sun excels the glory of the moon.

The blessed apostle was given to say, *"But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the min-*

istration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." Now, here is where the apostle was inspired to explain the veil of Moses. He said, *"Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: but their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn unto the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."*

That same veil stood between us, and that great glory, which afterward should be revealed. We were shut up under the law, condemned, and killed to all self-righteousness, and led to the feet of Jesus and made to beg for mercy. It was not until that veil was lifted, that we were enabled to look to the end of the law for righteousness. For Christ is the end or the perfection of the law for righteousness to all that believe. Today multitudes have that same veil upon their hearts and minds where the new covenant is concerned. Christ and the gospel of grace is hidden to all who are not blessed to believe in Him. When Christ was resurrected the veil covering the entrance to the holy of holies was rent from top to bottom. This shows to us, I believe, that the way was opened for the children of God to look in to the most holy place, where God dwells. When the veil was rent, I believe it symbolized the veil being taken away from the hearts and minds of God's children.

When the veil was taken away for us, we were blessed to see the end of the law, which is Christ, and to believe and trust in Him. Our blindness and fear of destruction were taken away. We were not only blessed to know the glory of the old covenant, which was unto death, but to also know the excelling glory of the new covenant which is in Christ to life. We were blessed to see that the old covenant was good and served its purpose, which was to show us our sin and condemnation. And then we were shown the new covenant, which proclaimed our pardon and redemption in Christ. And as the moon shines at midday and is barely seen, because of the brightness of the sun in its strength; so does the old covenant pale in comparison to the new. We are blessed

to see the image of the glory of God transformed from the glory of the old covenant to the glory of the new covenant when the veil is removed.

The blessed apostle said, ***"But we all, with open [uncovered] face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed in the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."*** So it is by grace that we have been brought the way we have come. We have been enlightened to know the terrors of the law. We have been enlightened to know that we are sinners. We have been enlightened to know the need of the Savior, and He has been merciful to reveal Himself to us and in us in the brightness of His Spirit, if so be that we have tasted that He is gracious. All this is according to the purpose of the merciful God to save alive a remnant according to the election of Grace. And it is all to the praise and honor of Him unto Whom all praise is due. Thanks be unto God forever. ***"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."***

I trust that this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer
4-11-2008

VOICES OF THE PAST

From Zion's Landmark

ADAM.

Elder P.D. Gold

The word Adam means earth or dust. He is the figure of Him that was to come, the Second Adam, the quickening Spirit, the Lord from heaven. As a figure or type he must answer two purposes: he must shine in brightness enough to foreshadow the reality furnishing outline that reflects the substance, and he must be only a shadow with no substance or reality.

The Lord made Adam upright, but Adam abode not in that uprightness.

Was he able to stand but liable to fall? That is a question that has puzzled and perplexed many. Articles of faith declared by churches are intended to abbreviate what the brethren believe. So that if one asks you what do you believe, you refer to the articles of faith to set this forth. To my mind no articles of faith can better set forth our faith, if it be the faith of God's elect, than the Bible does. When Peter says, be ready to give to every man that asks you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and with fear, you do not refer to the articles of faith declared by your church. When you seek

membership in the church you do not offer the articles of faith of the church, but you state that you believe that Jesus is the Christ. How? By telling what great things the Lord has done for you and has had mercy on you.

I am not objecting to articles of faith, if they faithfully declare the truth. But the half cannot be told.

To the question, was Adam able to stand, but liable to fall, it is difficult to say yes or no. If you say he was made able to stand why did he not stand? If he was made liable to fall, it implies ability to stand, yet liability to fall. That Adam sinned in disobeying God is evident. For as by the disobedience of one many were made sinners proves that Adam transgressed God's law. The Lord said to him, cause thou has hearkened to thy wife therefore the earth is cursed for thy sake. What excuse had Adam for his sin? None. His nakedness proves this.

For years I found fault with Adam, thus endeavoring as he did, to put the blame on some one else, as Adam did on his wife, until the Lord showed me that I am Adam, that I am the guilty one, and am without excuse, and have no shelter as an excuse for sinning; but that God is holy and I am vile.

Any theory , doctrine, articles of faith, or apology that man offers excusing his sin, or reflecting on his Maker is false. Any pretense that because I am conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity I can in any degree palliate my sin, or supply any excuse therefor, is false. This is taught the child of God under conviction. By nature he is wrapt up and covered with a refuge of lies, with all manner of excuses for his wrong doing, and hard thoughts against God until the Lord sweeps away this refuge of lies, and shows a man that he is dust and ashes, a liar, corrupt, yet full of pride and rebellion, possessed of the devil and serving him.

When this is done man is abased and can truly say, let God be true and every man a liar and knows that his nature is sinful and his element is to do wrong?

Then he knows that he is of earth earthy. God placed the man which he had made in the garden giving him holy and spiritual law. His failure to keep that law proved the purity of the law and also the frailty of man. For he was in the likeness of his Maker and the figure of him that was to come, which was that as by the disobedience of one many were made sinners - or Adam is the head of his generations, and by his one act of disobedience death passed upon all because all of his off-spring sinned in him; so by the one perfect obedience of the one man Christ Jesus shall many be made righteous.

Hence the unity of Adam and his off-spring, and the unity of Christ and his seed. Sin reigns unto death by Adam and grace reigns through rightousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. For, since by

man came sin and by sin came death, So by man came the resurrection of the dead.

Those who love sin hate God and find fault of his government. Those who love God abhor themseives and justify the ways of Providence.

Was it as certain before Adam's transgression that he would transgress? If not why was grace given to the elect in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world?

This is God's way of showing what sin is and what man is, and what the holy law, of God is, and the revelation *of* grace is. Man being in his finite state could not know the heights and depths of sin, nor the super-abounding heights of holiness. Whether man should abide in his finite character, or should be translated by the obedience, death and resurrection of Jesus, the second Adam, the quickening spirit into conformity with Jesus, who is the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his person is solved by the revelation of Jesus who is found in a fashion is a man as the Surety and Redeemer of his people, and the revelation of the mystery of grace in him. When we know that where sin abounded grace did much more abound, then we can say by the grace of God I am what I am; and that we should be to the praise of the glory of his grace.

Is man able to do all that he ought to do? He ought to love the Lord God with all his heart, mind, soul and strength, and his neighbor as himself. But who does it? Not one. Is man excused because he is carnal sold under Sin, and cannot do the things he would? Because I cannot keep a holy law am I therefore released from a desire to do this? The more I fail to keep a holy law the more I abhor myself and love God that supplied his Son to me who gave himself for me.

Through the riches of God's grace in Jesus who loved me, died for me and rose again, I am translated out of Adam the failure into Jesus the Savior, and shall be glorified in him, and be satisfied when I awake with his likeness.

God cannot deny himself. He is of one mind and changes not. The God-head is brought to view in the transgression of Adam and in his salvation. The entire character of God, mercy rejoicing against judgment is brought to view. In the end the sinner saved shall praise God: forever and forever for what, God hath wrought, and because God's way, is holiness. The strength of God is shown in man's weakness. When the sinner is humbled in self he is exalted in the Lord. Through Adam's fall the door of mercy is open and in Jesus' resurrection it is shown that Jesus came that we might have life and have it more abundantly.

"I AND MY FATHER ARE ONE."

This confession of Jesus which *he* knew would cost him his life. He distinctly makes and repeats.

How absurd that appeared to a carnal Jew. The Jews that knew his mother and supposed father and his brethren saw nothing in him but an ordinary man, and to them it was the greatest impiety for him to say he was the Son of God.

Their blindness of heart excluded every reason he gave, every prophecy he expounded, every miracle he wrought, every display of power he exhibited.

We wonder at their unbelief and the hardness of their heart, as we read the scriptures. We do not see how the rulers among the Jews could have acted as they did. Had they known him they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. He prayed on the cross, ***"Father forgive them; they know not what they do."*** Yet they had no cloak for their sin.

Can it be said of any two men that they are one? Can it be said of any natural father and his son that they are one? The son may delight to please his father, yet they are not both one. A principal may have an agent or deputy that does his will officially, yet the two are not one. A husband and wife may be one, and are one in law, and in the marriage relationship, yet they are not one as Jesus and his Father are one.

The Son of Man said, my Father in greater than I, yet he said I and my Father are one.

All things are of God. The Father is greater than all. He is the fountain whence all proceeds. There is nothing in Jesus that is not of God. There is nothing he does but that which is well pleasing to God. Everything he did was the highest service and most well pleasing to his Father. It was the Father's work in him, for he came from heaven to do the will of his Father which was in heaven at that time. He understood that will and it was his delight to do his Father's will. The counsel of peace was between them both. Jesus was so joined unto his Father that all he did was all of his Father. His redemption of those under the law which were given him brings them from under the curse of the law. For he who knew no sin was made sin for them that they should be made the rightousness of God in him.

The Father is first of all, older than all, above all, and greater than all, the Son came out from the Father was one with the Father, and received a body in which he delights to do his Father's will. Jesus came in the flesh to put away sin that the people which were the Father's and which he gave to the Son, might receive a standing and goodness in the Son as heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, that they might receive the adoption of sons, and be one with Christ even as Christ is one with the Father. The father principle,

the mother principle, and every principle or relationship is in the father, and proceeds from the Father, and is manifest in and through the Son, for in him all the fulness of God dwells; so that whoever does his will is his mother and sister and brother.

Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, and in him every relation of life is sanctified, every jot and tittle of the law is fufilled, and all things are made new.

In the revelation of Jesus sin is ended, death is abolished, and life and immortality are brought to light in the gospel, and all to and in whom Jesus is revealed shall be manifested in the resurrection as children of God being children of the resurrection.

Thus the whole family of God shall be gathered and manifested in Jesus who shall say, Behold I and the children who thou hast given me.

They shall all be one in Christ Jesus, even as the Father and the Son are one, Do you believe in Jesus? He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, for God is love.

Elder P. D. Gold

HEBREWS 2:7.

Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:

MATTHEW XIII. 8.

"BUT other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold."

The Savior in this parable of the sower takes a natural illustration to teach us a spiritual truth. The sower went forth to sow. As he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, some on stony ground and some among thorns, while others fell into good ground. Since the ground was cursed for man's sake, the natural production of the earth is to bring forth thorns and thistles? And in this respect all the ground is just the same. Good ground is prepared ground. All intelligent farmers know that in order to reap a crop they must first prepare the ground for the reception of the seed. He takes out the stones, digs up the thorns, breaks up the soil and then sows the seed. What would be thought of the farmer who would sow his seed to prepare his ground? Would he not be judged insane. As foolish as this may seem, there are thousands today doing this very thing in what they think a spiritual sense. Further, the Savior in the parable shows what may naturally take place with the sower: some seeds fall by the wayside, some on stony ground, and some among thorns. But if a farmer did this he could not expect to reap anything from the grains that fell by the wayside, nor on stony ground, nor

among thorns. No, he knows the grain that falls into such places will never bear fruit. Do you think the Lord would expect fruit from such conditions. In the preparation of the ground for the reception of the seed we know it is passive. The good ground is the ground that has had the stones and thorns removed by the husbandman, and the ground is perfectly passive as to the reception of the seed, and, too, it is perfectly passive as to the growing of the seed sown in it. Growth depends upon the rain, so the prophet says: ***"For as the rain cometh down, and the snow, from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void ; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."*** The apostle in his letter to the Hebrews says: ***"For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth a blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned."*** Here we are shown the ***"dressed ground"*** only brings forth herbs meet, but the undressed brings forth thorns and briers. The flood, the prepared ground, represents the sinner "born again," given eternal life, raised up from the dead. The ground that bears ***"thorns and briers"*** represents the unregenerate, the sinner dead in trespasses and in sins; both by nature just the same, and the work of grace alone makes the difference, as represented in Cain and Abel. God had respect unto Abel and to his offering, but unto Cain and his offering he had not respect. Notice, God had respect first to Abel, and then to his offering. That respect first made Abel righteous, by which he was enabled to offer an acceptable sacrifice. Let us notice what Paul says of Abel: ***"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he, being dead, yet speaketh."*** His more excellent sacrifice was not the cause of him being righteous, but rather testified that he was righteous, and this is the key to all acceptable service. The "respect" God has to his people fits and prepares them to serve him. God said unto Cain, ***"If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door."*** How true; sin is the cause of all evil doing. Men sin because they are sinful; their acts are but the fruit of a sinful, depraved nature; so Cain's offering was the fruit of the ground, and God said to Adam, Cursed is the ground for thy sake; thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee. So Cain's of-

fering was but thorns and thistles, ***"the cursed thing, but Abel's offering of the lamb was acceptable; it was a type of the Lamb of God, who should come into the world and put away sin by the shedding of his own blood. But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God."***

I believe I have said enough to show the farmer does not sow his seed in order to prepare the ground. Then if we are taught anything by the parable or less on, we are taught the gospel is not preached to prepare the sinner for the reception of the truth. Even the preaching of Jesus did not prepare men to hear and believe the gospel. He said unto the Jews: ***"Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word." "He that is of God [first] heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God."*** Here we see that even words of Jesus could not be received or believed, because men were not first prepared of God were not born again. I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me : and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." If preached!, the gospel had been God's plan to give life to the dead sinner, the preaching of Jesus would have certainly accomplished that end, but we see it did not; they would not, yea, they could not believe. ***"Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life,"*** said Jesus. "Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. To come to Jesus, we here see, is the work of God, and is the direct result of the gift of eternal life. ***"For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will."*** No peradventure or maybe here. ***"It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and learned of the Father, cometh unto me."*** The old prophet said, ***"All thy children shall he taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children."*** Not one shall be forgotten or neglected; all shall be taught to the remotest bounds of earth; and not only that, but everyone taught shall come to Jesus. He is the way, the truth and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by him. For there

is none other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. There must first be a preparation, a learning of the Father, in order to come to and believe on Jesus, and the preached gospel does not do this; even the preaching of Jesus did not do this. Jesus said to the Jews, ***"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."*** The same was true of the apostle's preaching. Paul said, ***"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."*** Who could believe that God would choose as a means for the salvation of a sinner that which is a stumblingblock and foolishness unto them? Would not such be charging God with folly John says: ***"We are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error."*** Does this not show the seed of the kingdom must fall into good ground, the good and holiest heart, made so by the grace of God? The quickening, regenerating power of God that raiseth up the dead is given before the reception of the gospel, just as the farmer prepares the ground before be sows the seed. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith. Is ever any of this fruit found in the unregenerate heart, or could it produce them? No, no more than we would expect the wayside, stony ground to produce fruit. In the more than fifty years that I have farmed there is no doubt that many times I have literally done what the parable says: sown some seed that fell by the wayside, and some among stones; and, too, there is no doubt in my mind that in the nearly forty-five years I have been trying to preach, some of the spiritual seed sown fell by the wayside, and on stony ground, and among thorns. The gospel is to be preached to every creature. I did not expect in my sowing my natural wheat that the seed which incidentally fell on the unprepared ground would yield fruit, nor have I expected spiritual fruit to grow in unregenerate hearts, nor do I believe the Lord does. But who has not seen many who have done just as the Savior said in the parable about the stony ground and the thorny, ground-hearers who manifested quite a lively interest in the truth, and showed much zeal, even uniting with the church, but by and by their zeal and love began to grow cold and they finally fell away. This condition was evident in the apostles' day. John said, ***"They***

went out from us, but they were not of us." Is it not evident that they could not have gone out unless they had first gone in? ***"For if they had been of us, (the good ground] they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."*** I am with the beloved John here, that they went out because they were not of us. Had they been ***"born again"*** they would have borne fruit and have continued; but it has happened to them as the true proverb said: ***"The dog has returned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire."*** Peter did not say they, like the dog or the sow, but the dog and the sow have returned. The returning did not make them either, but it made manifest what they were. No one ever saw a sheep do what the dog and the sow did, nor ever will. I have often observed how careful a sheep is to keep out of a mud hole. John says, They went out from us, that it might be made manifest that they were not of us; and he added without a doubt about the matter: ***"Had they been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us."*** These characters are, as Peter says, wells without water and clouds without rain, or virgins without oil in their vessels. In the kingdom of heaven under the law dispensation, all the seed of Abraham were included; the wheat and the tares grew together- no separation. But when the Bridegroom came, at the cry, go ye out to meet him, all arose and trimmed their lamps. The wise had oil, and their lamps burned; the foolish said, Our lamps are gone out. Being the seed of Abraham gave them no right now, that light had gone out. Saying, We are the seed of Abraham, could not be accepted. Bring forth fruits meet for repentance, for now in this new dispensation the axe is laid to the root of the tree, and he who does not bring forth good fruit (faith and repentance) is cut down; the door is forever shut, and it ever will be against that law religion.

Jesus said, I never knew you, depart from me. He never said to that people whom he foreknew in the covenant of grace and mercy, depart from me, I never knew you, but, Come unto me. All the Father hath given me shall come unto me, and he that cometh I will in no wise cast out. The wheat and the tares teach the same truth under the law dispensation; both grew together, and when the time of the harvest came (the beginning of the gospel dispensation) it was said to the reapers (John the Baptist and the apostles, yes, and the ministers of the gospel), Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn (church). The gospel always takes the precious from the vile. I believe the proclamation of the truth always does this. ***"If thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou***

shalt be as my mouth." So that separating the wheat from the tares is not to be at the end of this natural world, but at the end of the law dispensation, and at the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ. ***"And then shall he send his angels [gospel ministers], and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost parts of earth, to the uttermost parts of heaven."*** Jesus said, This shall come to pass before this generation shall pass away, showing that these things have taken place. This is the gospel day, the day the old prophet had lived to see. ***"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem."*** The ones who shall come are the ready to perish ***"and the outcasts." "Gospel is good news and what was good news to the poor, the halt, the lame and the blind, was not good news to the men who had bought land and oxen and married a wife. It must be a prepared people to receive the gospel. The poor lonely have the gospel preached to them,"*** in spirit and power; as Paul says, not in word only, but in spirit and power, and they can no more reject the word that comes in power than can the earth reject the rain that comes down from heaven to make it bring, forth and bud. Imagine a poor man, dying with thirst, rejecting a cup of cold water and I could as easily believe that as to believe the heaven-taught soul could reject the mercy of God.

While God's people are not willing until the day of his power, they shall be willing then. ***"I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even everyone that is called by my Name."*** Everyone is brought from a long distance, for all are far off. The angel said to Joseph, ***"Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."*** And, all thy children shall be taught of the Lord. ***"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me."*** Not one shall be left in the broad way of sin and death that leadeth to destruction, the way in which all the world dead in sin is going. What a failure would the mission of Jesus have been had he only saved a "special few " of his elect, and left the greater part to wander in the broad way that leadeth to destruction. Would not the angel blush with shame who heralded the purpose and mission of the Savior into the world' "He shall save his people from their sins." Solomon says, ***"There is a way which seemeth right unto a***

man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

The legal way; by the deeds of the law is the ***"broad way"*** all men dead in trespasses and sins are in. But if any man be in Christ Jesus no matter who he is or where he is) he is a new creature; old things have passed away, and, behold, all things have become new. Not every character spoken of in the Bible was a child of God, even if they had taken the communion with the Savior. Satan was once in heaven, the legal or law heaven, but was cast out into the earth. ***"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out."*** He was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. These are the tares that grew with the wheat until the time of the harvest, the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The axe was then laid to the root of the tree. These things we notice took place soon after. He that was born was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. (See Revelation xii.)

Dear brother Ker, these thoughts I leave in your hands to do with as you may see fit. I wish you not to publish if you think it not best, for I desire the peace and prosperity of Zion.

In gospel bonds,

G. E. MAYFIELD.

ELGIN, Ore.,

Feb. 21, 1918.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.,
Jan. 22, 1918.

Elder H. H. Lefferts - Dear Brother: - When left to myself and to my own thinking powers, the result is not valuable, but when the Lord's most precious thoughts are given me, "the sum of them" and the value and beauty of them are infinite. He says, I know my thoughts concerning you: thoughts of peace, and not of evil; to bring to pass an expected end. Now, at any time when the Lord's thoughts come into my heart and take possession of my soul, then I can understand how a sacred principle of reconciliation is connected with the gospel of the dear Savior. I know that by the peculiar power of faith I am right sure of this; but I am so very seldom, if ever, in possession of that holy, heavenly principle. It is by this faith alone that the divine power of faith can be known, and by that alone can resignation, true resignation to the will of God, be known by mortal, sinful man. The power of this soul-searching principle cannot be obtained by anything that mortal man can do. It is, like all things belong-

ing to the kingdom of Christ, the gift of God. We cannot purchase it, we cannot make or create it, we cannot obtain it by any device of men. In no way can it come into our possession except as the gift of God by the power and will of Jesus Christ.

The day after I was baptized, over fifty-six years ago, I found this question in my mind: What is faith? What is there in mind now that was not there before. At that time I was at peace. I was glad all the time for those few days, or, I might say, weeks.

The Word was there and the church and the brethren, and I wanted no more. I thought then I could see and feel the power of faith. I was not curious, but had enough for my own poor soul. I do not think I have had much more of a view of faith since then than I had at that time. How many things are said about faith in different parts of the New Testament! The brethren, Paul and others, are so clear in their arguments and write so confidently that it seems I can see their statements as unanswerable and can follow them with assurance. Then I turn to my own heart to see if that holy principle is there, and with a drooping head and with a great deal of uncertainty I have to acknowledge much of the time that I am not sure I have faith. Sometimes I can see and hear from others the same things that are in my own heart. Then I can but recognize evidence for them, and see it forced back upon me as a reflection in a glass; as the i apostle says: ***"We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."*** I have to acknowledge, that. So when evidence of this kind is experienced, we have to acknowledge it is true, we cannot dispute it; and the apostle gives evidence thus by inspiration, which comes by divine power, showing what is true in us and true in Jesus. He says: ***"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."*** Concerning faith and the exercise of it and many things connected with it in such a wonderful manner, I would love to write a little or talk a little, but the time has gone by for that. I cannot feel that I shall write at length any more; but I do enjoy talking with the brethren and to hear from the publishers of the SIGNS and others of the brethren scattered far and wide. The unity of the brethren manifested in the writings is delightful to me. The great beauty of the doctrine and of the order of the church takes hold upon my soul most thoroughly. Zion is called in the Psalms ***"the perfection of beauty."*** My mind bas been led, when writing or preaching, to trace out the exercises of such as feel, like I always have, that they are the poorest of the poor, and that strongest doctrine (if there be any difference) would be the only doctrine that could answer the needs of

such a weak person as I. I can go no further just now. On January 5th I entered my eighty-sixth year.

Your brother in hope,
SILAS H. DURAND.

HABAKKUK 2. II

"For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it."

Sin is a burden to the people of God. The Spirit of God causes one to have a very tender conscience regarding sin. Thoughts and imaginations which would not, give the natural man a moment's not easiness, prick like thorns in the conscience of the spiritually-minded. At no time in the history of Israel was that chosen nation without the witnesses of God among it. To these living witnesses, as Habakkuk, the corruption of Israel was a source of great sorrow.

Habakkuk preached in Israel prior to the Babylonian captivity. Israel was then exceedingly corrupt. It was a mystery to the prophet that the Lord should tolerate such wickedness in Israel. The book of Habakkuk begins with the crying out of the prophet unto the Lord because of the sins of Israel. Habakkuk complains that the Lord does not hear his crying, that he has complained unto him of violence, but still he receives no answer, the Lord does not appear to save.

Habakkuk cannot understand why the Lord has caused him to see iniquity and to behold grievance, yet the power of the Lord is not manifested to clear away the evil. We think there are many, very many, of the Lord's people living in this are of the world who have experienced something of the same as Habakkuk. We often wonder how much longer it will be before the Lord's purpose in all the evil that is going on at the present time will be accomplished and the evil brought to an end by the outcome of righteousness. These are mysteries that no human mind can fathom, and it is good to have living faith to await the Lord's time to reveal himself to us and to bring to light the good which must surely ensure out of all that comes to pass. Habakkuk lived when spoiling and violence were going on in Israel, when strife and contention were rampant. The law was slacked, that is, its mandates were being wantonly disregarded and wrongdoing was indulged; judgment was abased; wickedness enjoyed immunity from the law, at the expense of the righteous. Those whose duty it was to uphold the law were traitors to the duties of their office and sought to uphold and protect evil in its stronghold, instead of sheltering the righteous against the schemes of the wicked. Such was the condition of Israel at the time of Habakkuk's crying unto the Lord, as told in the first

four verses of the first chapter of the book. Now, from the fifth to the eleventh verses of the first chapter, inclusive, we have the answer of the Lord to Habakkuk's cry. In this answer the prophet is assured that the Lord is not unmindful of the evil going on among his people, and will rectify it at the right time. This coming of the Lord to judge his people is to be a time of great trouble and affiiction, a day of darkness, and not light.

"For, so, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwelling-places that are not their's." God's people sowing to the flesh inevitably reap corruption; the experience of every subject of grace will attest to this. The fruit slowly ripening out of the disobedience and corruption of Israel prior to the Babylonian captivity was that they were to be led captive to Babylon, there to remain for seventy long years. These Chaldeans were to sweep over Israel on horses swifter than leopards, fiercer than the evening wolves; they were to come for violence among the Israelites and to gather them into captivity like heaps of sand. These Chaldeans, to whom war was a business and a science, would laugh at the Kings and princes of Israel and hold their fortifications in derision. Such was to be the terrible punishment visited by Jehovah upon his Israel of the old covenant for their evil transactions and corrupt living. When the Lord revealed to Habakkuk the coming captivity at the hands of Babylon, which was to ensnare them all, then Habakkuk in turn testified to the Lord of the purity and holiness of God, and that surely God would not allow his people to perish forever in Babylon. Habakkuk, while sorely grieved at the corruption of Israel, and deeming some sort of punishment necessary, was astonished at the awful calamity about to be visited upon them, and begged the Lord that the affliction might be tempered with mercy, lest they be swallowed up and lost. forever. He asked the question: *"Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One"* This being true, then, *"we shall not die."* The Chaldeans were the arch-imperialists of that day and time, and at the height of their power ruled well-nigh all the known world of that era. Habakkuk says they raked all the peoples like fishes into their net of dominion. They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag: therefore they rejoice and are glad.

And now even Israel was not to be spared captivity, but was also to be dragged into the net of Chaldean world-dominion. Habakkuk says to the Lord: *"Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity ."* This being true, it mystified Habakkuk to understand how the Lord could prosper

insatiable Chaldea to the extent of delivering Israel into its power. Habakkuk did not know that Chaldea was itself to fall while yet the Jews were captive in her midst, and that Gyrus the Great was to be the deliverer of Israel back into their own land. So it often occurs that God's purposes are hid from our eyes while yet we stand astounded at the present's tale of woe. Habakkuk feared that after Chaldeans had gathered all nations into its net that it would never let go. Alas, the prophet forgot that no temporal power remains fixed, that all nations have their periods of increase and of decrease; they rise and fall. Nevertheless the prophet thus voiced his fear: Shall they therefore empty their net, and not spare continually to slay the nations. Thus, you see, Habakkuk feared the victorious progress of the Chaldeans would ever remain unchecked, and that, having gotten their hold on the necks of all peoples, they would never forego their hold. Like all of us weak, short-sighted mortals, the dear prophet for a moment forgot there is a God in heaven, and that this Providence rules among the affairs of men and nations, so that the tyrant of today is the servant of tomorrow. God will never fail at the proper time (which is God's time, not ours) to appear for his people's safety, and no matter how hard and difficult the place they are in, God is abundantly able to deliver their soul from the snare of the fowler and his darling from the jaws of the lion. Now, coming to the second chapter, the Lord again answered Habakkuk, and this time the prophet was shown that the power of the Chaldeans would not prevail continually, but that Babylon itself should fall and Israel be delivered when they should have learned the truth for which God purposed their captivity. Chaldea, who had spoiled the nations, should itself be spoiled. ***"Because thou hast spoiled many nations, all the remnant of the people shall spoil thee; because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein."*** Chaldeans was so powerful and so well fortified that it thought itself invulnerable aud supreme forever. Chaldea set its nest on high, that it might be secure against all dangers; yet it took the Lord a very little while to bring all that pomp and power low in the dust of defeat and to disclose the sham of all its fancied security. Chaldea was built up by blood and established through iniquity. Her palaces were built by her slaves, those whom she had conquered. The blood of her captives mingled with the feasts of her princes. Greed, vice, lust, oppression and all manner of sin were the mortar that held Chaldea together. Was it any wonder it crumbled and fell when the Lord blew upon it to deliver his people Israel, and that it consumed away like chaff. The very stones and

beams and timbers of her magnificence cried out against her wickedness. Her splendor was the mute condemnation of her wickedness. This is what is meant primarily by the words: ***"The stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it."*** The very stones of their palaces testify to the oppression and guilt through whlch they were erected, and the beam out of the timber should add its witness to this condemnation. God's people were slaves in Babylon. The ear of their God was ever open to their cry, even though he seemed often not to hear. Their wounds and stripes, their burdens and tears, were all borne in their Jehovah's mind until it came his time to recompense them on their enemies. Their very sorrows cried out against their captors. Thus did God's living stones and timbers cry out against the evil round about them and unto their God to deliver them. When a subject of grace is made to see himself a sinner, he sees the vileness of the house and the earthly kingdom in the midst of which he lives. He is now a living stone, and cries out of the wall because of oppression, and his cry is answered by all the beams and timbers of the house of God. All of God's people have a tender and compassionate fellow.

I feel for every mortal that has ever been made to see himself a sinner in the sight of God. This testimony of sinfulness brings aliens out of the hearts of all the members.of the temple. Every testimony of weakness, of unworthiness, of sinfulness, awakens a response in every contrite heart, for all have been made to know what the burden and oppression of sin is. Just as the very stones and beams of those palaces, reared through oppression and vice, cried out against their builders, so our frail refuges of lies tumbled about our ears when the Spirit of the Lord disclosed to us the rottenness of our works and swept away the spider's web In which we had sought to clothe ourselves. Then we saw that all is vanity, that even man at his best estate is altogether vanity. We had vainly sought justification by the deeds of the law, but any building so reared is founded on the sinking and shifting sands of human wisdom, and cannot abide the day, the terribleness of our Lord's coming! It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, and none know it better than God's own people, for they are the ones who fall there.

We have written on this subject at the request of Mrs. J. B. Holloway, of Gorman, N. C. The third chapter of Habakkuk, which closes the book, is the best of all, and is the glorious psalm of praise welling up from the heart of the prophet unto the throne of God. After the Lord disclosed to him how Chaldea would eventually fall and Israel be delivered, the prophet had a wonderful exercise of faith, and narrated in

psalm the goodness ;and mercy of the Lord in his dealings with his people. However, we will not go into this now, as we were only asked Ito write on Habakkuk ii. 11, so this will suffice for this time.

Elder Lefferts

ELDER T.M. POULSON
Massey, Va., 1902

Dear brethren Editors;—Something has seemed to prompt me to open a few things incidental to my life in a general way, and forward them to you for your disposal, whether to give them a place in our family paper, The Signs of the Times, or not.

I was born in the year 1831, in the same county (Accomac, Va.,) where I have resided ever since. I experienced a hope in God through his abounding grace in August 1851; was united in marriage with my present companion January 1852; was recieved, and baptized by Elder Thomas Waters, in the fellowship of the Old Baptist Church at Messongo, Accomac Co., Va., March, 1852. So you see that I have very few more mileposts to pass to my journey's end, as I have passed the 71st year of my natural life, and the fiftieth of my spiritual life, and also the fiftieth year of my married life.

In the year 1865 I became very much impressed in mind in regard to the things of the kingdom of God, and what constituted that kingdom. The more I thought about it the more beautiful the subject became, and the stronger my interest grew. In my deep meditations I would find myself talking all alone, not supposing that was preaching, my ignorance would forbid it, but these things still grew more and more oppressive until it brought me into a state of questioning myself, what this all meant? and soon brought me before others also, who would inquire with reference to my exercise of mind. Thus I was led along until I was prevailed upon to talk a little in the meetings, and I think sometime in the year 1866, I was given a license to speak as I felt led, and in the year 1869 or 70 I was set apart to the full work of the gospel ministry, and immediately afterwards I accepted the care of four of the churches of the Salisbury Association, viz; Messongo, accomac Co., Va., Indiantown, Wicomico Co., Md., Nassaongo, Wicomico Co., Md., Pitt's Creek, Worcester Co., Md., and a few years later the church was organized in Snow Hill, Worcester Co., Md., and they called me to the care of that also, and I have been paying my best attention to those churches ever since, travelling from twenty-two to twenty-three hundred miles each year to fill my appointments, and nearly all by private conveyance. But if you will notice the above dates you will see that my labor is nearly over, I have experienced varied seasons in the churches during this period of thirty-five years. Nearly all have passed away that composed

the whole five churches when I first commenced my feeble labors among them. I have witnessed the coming in of all the five churches at present but eighteen persons. During the thirty-five years there has not been an "ism" nor "schism"nor any new thing to interrupt the fellowship of those churches. There have been times when the churches were full of life and zeal, and of frequent additions, and also times of drought and coldness. Sometimes when I am looking for some evidence of my hope and call to the work of the ministry, the only evidence that I can rest upon is in the remembrance of what the apostle Paul said referring to believers; ***"Ye are our epistles, written in our hearts, known and read by all men."*** Then my mind surveys the faithful brethren and sisters, and it brings comfort with it. But O, how wretched and miserable I do feel at times, for as much as I have witnessed and experienced during the fifty years passed, I have fallen so far short of living up to the scribe that I pictured in my mind years ago. I have been tempted to mark upon the walls where I can have it to look at, Watch your words and your thoughts, and also every evil lust, but I have failed. Finally a longing desire has been following me that I wanted to be an angel just for the time being, so I could not be contaminated with sin in any way, but I wanted to die a sinner saved by grace, for I know that will be the theme of the heavenly host, and then I think that an angel cannot magnify the grace of God,and then I am brought to a standstill, and can only say, keep me O lord, and I shall be kept; draw me and I shall run after thee. I feel and know that this tabernacle in which I now groan must soon be taken down, and one of the strongest evidences that I have to rest upon is what Paul said; ***"For I know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternally in the heavens. For in this we groan being burdened."*** This is a strong evidence to me, for I know this is so. How the thought gladdens our hearts that in that building of God there will be no burdens, there will be no groaning there, and all tears will be wiped from weeping faces. I am trying to be as contented as I can, and live as much for others as I can sometimes get to think that my usefulness is nearly over, and then I have an unrest. I sometimes hear the brethren talk over their spiritual comforts, then I think my life and labor among them is of some profit, and then I am contented to live on, and fill up the measure of my days. How it is that my poor labors and mingling among the Lord's people has been acceptable, I have never been able to tell, only to hope that the things to which I bear testimony, finds a witness in the hearts and lives of others.

I hope that this is so.

It is more than likely this is the last time that I shall trouble you with my scribble. I thought that I wanted the brethren all to know some of my feelings and experiences before I passed away.

This from a poor old sinner whose only hope of salvation is through the blood and righteousness of a crucified and risen Savior.

Farewell.
T. M. Poulson

MEETINGS

NEW RIVER ASSOCIATION

The two hundred, and 14th Annual Session of the New River Association, will convene the Lord willing, at Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church located in Floyd County, Va. It will be entertained by Flower Gap (P.B.C.) located in Carroll County, Va.

It will begin on Saturday before the fourth Sunday, continue through Sunday the dates being September 27, & 28, 2008 the Lord willing.

Indian Creek Church is located on Hwy (787) in Indian Valley, Va.

Those coming by way of Rt.1 221 or 52 or Rt. 8 go to Willis, Va. then turn on 787 approximately 7 miles to church on left.

If you travel by way of I-81 take exit 114 south to Route 8 watch for Route 693 Childress Road then turn left on 787 go approximately 15 miles on 787 to church on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and friends who believe in salvation by grace to be with us.

Kenneth D. Hopkins
Moderator
J. B. Mitchell Jr.
Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION 2008

The Smith River Association will convene the Lord willing at New Bell Spur church the first Sunday in September, Friday and Saturday before September 5,6,7.

Those traveling the Blue Ridge Parkway exit the parkway at mile post 184 and take Terrys Mill road (Rt. 610) to the church on right.

Those traveling US-58 turn on Terrys Mill road Rt. 610 near the Carroll County line and go approximately three mies to the church on the left.

We invite the Ministers of our faith and order, our Brethren and friends to be with us.

Tony R. Horton
Association Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 27 & 28, 2008.

New Hope Church, located at Spearsville, Louisiana, will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
318-778-4217

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 2008

Dan Delp, VA 10.00

Gladys Shelton, NM 35.00

Miles Byrd, LA 5.00

Alan McDaniel, VA..... 5.00

Shelby Stratton, MS 25.00

Alvis Beachum, NC 25.00

Jerald Hatchett, OK 50.00
In Memory of Linda Joyce Hatchett

PROVERBS 18:1.

Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than a house full of sacrifices with strife.

OBITUARIES

SISTER MARCY BURGIN

On Monday, March 17th, 2008, in Tyler, Texas, Sister Marcy Burgin was called from this vain world of sin and sorrow. She was born on January 21 st,1924 in Wood County, Hawkins, Texas. Elder Jimmie Hamrick, her pastor, conducted her funeral service at Caudle-Rutledge Funeral Home Chapel in Lindale, Texas. On March 20th, 2008, her body was laid to rest in the Smith Cemetery, Hawkins, Texas to await the second coming of her Lord. Her loved ones who preceded her in death include: her husband, Wilborn Burgin, her brothers, Leon Kennedy, Willey Kennedy, and Howard Kennedy. Her beloved daughters were Jane Norris and Linda Strickland and son Jimmie Wayne Burgin. In addition to her grandchildren, her great grandchildren are left to mourn her passing as well as her beloved church family. May all that mourn be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father who does all things perfectly and in a timely manner, for it is He that gives and He that takes away.

Humbly submitted by family who loved her deeply.

Flora Marie Stutts
Paron Church
Hawkins, Texas

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

POEM

When the arm of the Lord is thus, revealed,
Through his grace all things are sealed.
The believing family is rejected of men,
In this low ground of sorrow and sin

Through the grace of God we become able,
To feast from the rations from the master's table.
In the green pastures of his loving grace,
He guides us daily in the things we face,

We are guided daily by his mighty power
All blessings come at his appointed hour.
A sinner feels so vile and lost,
Then God reveals how he paid the cost.

When one experiences God's precious love
That 's meted out from his court above.
They then walk in God's graceful light,
When lifted from the darkness of the carnal fight.

Through this faith we come to see
by his power the bad things will flee.
We are helpless creatures to do one thing,
We only give thanks for the blessings he brings.

Riley Justice
Box 272
War, W.Va. 24892

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EDITORIAL

Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. (Eph 6:11)

Elder R.H. Campbell

We believe that this is always by faith, which is a gift from God, that these things are understood and for the deeds to be accomplished by his children. Paul said, (Phil 4:13) ***"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."*** and again, Gal 3:27) ***"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."*** Therefore, it is by baptism into Christ that this power, or ability is given, and that is not speaking of the baptism by water, that is under consideration here. The apostle Paul is speaking of that baptism that John the Baptist referred of when he said, (Luke3:16) ***"I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier that I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire."*** This, baptism with the Holy Ghost and with fire is the baptism into Christ by which man puts on the whole armor of God, for Christ is the whole armor of God, and then and only then, can the natural man wrestle against principalities, against powers, against the ruler of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Surely, Christ is the whole armor of God, for it is in him that the saints stand, him who of God is made unto them wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, and what more do they need. When they are clothed with all of these things they can stand against anything, for as Paul said, if God be for us who can be against us.

This requires an ability far beyond that of mortal man, and this wrestling is not an offensive maneuver, but rather, a defensive stand against the powers of Satan, for then (Eph 6:13) goes on to say, ***"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand in the evil day, and***

having done all to stand." This is an armor whereby man may stand, not that he may be aggressive and strive to overcome the enemy, by force or by the wisdom of man, but, to stand fast in the faith and to be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh him a reason of the hope that is in him in all meekness and fear. This takes a courage and strength that the natural man does not possess, but, Paul said, (II Tim 1:7) ***"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love and of a sound mind, and with this they can respond to the admonitions."***

Peter, one of the apostles who traveled with Jesus during his ministry here on earth, for three years; and who made the solemn declaration that he would stand with Jesus unto the death; was not able to do so, when confronted with the anger of the mob who came to take Jesus. He could not walk on the water when he saw the waves boisterous about him, even though Jesus had told him to come. This is not to infer that Jesus' command was insufficient for the task, but it was to teach Peter the lesson that he could not walk on the water, or attain to any of the other admonitions made unto him, when he takes his mind and eyes off of Jesus, and neither can we. Then this same man, who failed these tests in the flesh: did stand after his baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire on the day of Pentecost. He boldly stood in the face of the doubters and mockers who had heard them speak in other tongues, and who were amazed and marvelled at the things that they saw but accused them of being drunk, and preached unto them Jesus and expounded, using the scriptures, the meaning of those things which were transpiring on that day, to the extent that three thousand believed and were baptized. Peter could not do this of himself; any more than man can put on the whole armor of God, in and of their own wisdom or ability, but with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, which gave him utterance, he could preach Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God to the converting of the souls of many present on that occasion, and it was because he had on the whole armor of God. He had his loins girded about with truth, had on the breastplate of righteousness, his feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and therefore he was enabled to stand and preach the gospel.

Paul said, (Rom 1:15) ***"So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also."*** and then again, with the same reasoning he said, (Rom 12:18) ***"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."*** If Paul had preceded the above text with the phrase, as much as in you is, or, as much as

lieth in you, it would have been seemingly more easily understood by man, because his children believe this to be a requirement to perform the admonitions given by the writers. It is in much the same manner that Jesus taught his disciples, when he said, (James 4:13-15) ***"Go to now, ye that say, Today or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For what ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that."*** Man should always precede a statement of his intentions with the phrase, "the Lord willing I will do thus and so". It is however understood by all true believers, that this is necessary for man to do anything, but he doesn't say it each and every time that he states his intentions, and neither did Paul; it is just automatically understood that this stipulation applies when man makes such a statement, and also the above phrase, as much as in you is, applies when considering the admonitions made by the writers of the scriptures which were left on record for the instruction of the saints. The scriptures are never addressed to the world in terms of, ***"whosoever will"*** and are never given as a condition upon which man can expect to receive a reward, or to earn favor with God, by their complying with them. They are directed to those who have been made to know, by experience, their own weak and helpless condition in the flesh, and their dependence upon God to enable them to comply with any of the admonitions to perform any acts of righteousness.

Peter admonished the brethren, (II Pet 1:5-8) ***"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."*** Again, this seems to be an admonition to the brethren to do these things, as if it was left up to their own determination or ability, but remember, he had just qualified this statement by preceding it with the words, (II Pet 1:3-4) ***"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: hereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."*** and with this stipulation the saints can

indeed do all of these things. This goes back to the fact, that it is the results of the work of God in revealing unto his children his kingdom and power, and the results are from this power working in them; both to will and to do, of his good pleasure.

The apostle Paul said, (Rom 12:1) ***"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."*** This is indeed what should be reasonably expected of the children of God, because of what has been done for them in the sacrifice of our Lord and Savior who laid down his life for them, when he experienced the cruel death of crucifixion, that they might have a more abundant life than they could ever experience in the flesh, but they must first be given the unction and the ability from God. Their whole life should be dedicated to these things that the apostles admonished the disciples to do, in the gospel dispensation, are to be understood in the same manner as the commandments of the law under the first covenant, they were imposed upon them, and they were under the obligation to do them; but the scriptures clearly state that there is none righteous by the law because righteousness does not come that way, but nevertheless the requirements still stands. (Gal 3:11) ***"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, is evident: for the just shall live by faith."*** And again, (Gal 3:24) ***Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith."*** They are admonished to do these things, even as the law commanded them to observe it, but in both cases they learn that they cannot do them, of themselves, and therefore they must look to the schoolmaster. Those under the law are made to look to and trust in the Messiah that was to come, and who would make the acceptable sacrifice for their sins. In like manner those in the gospel day must look to the Christ who has already come and who took the law of sin and death away for them, and ushered in the law of the Spirit of life which they received in the new birth; and therefore those who lived under both the old and the new covenants are brought by their schoolmaster to Christ, who is the way, and the truth, and the life, and the only way whereby man can draw nigh unto God.

Jesus came to do all of these things, in their room and stead, and it is by his sacrifice alone that they are enabled to put on the whole armor of God, and that they are able to stand against the wiles of the devil, the rulers of darkness in this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. The whole armor of God is Christ in you the hope of glory. This enables the children of God to do, as Paul continued in the above text, (Eph 6:14-17) ***"Stand***

therefore, having you loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." As we stated above, this is in order that, (I Cor 1:29-31) ***"That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."***

It is normal for man to be concerned when he reads the admonitions, knowing how far short he comes of living up to them; but just remember, they are setting forth perfection, and the natural man can never attain to that standard. Peter said, (II Peter 1:12) ***"Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things though ye know them, and be established in the present truth."*** The admonitions are only to those who are already doing those things, as much as in them is, but each time they are admonished, they are again reminded that it is only by the grace of God that they ever have a hope of things eternal. It is by the Holy Ghost that indwells them, enabling them to see and understand that it is the longsuffering love of God that reaches them in their lost and undone condition; and gives them the assurance that they are of the Lord's portion.

With this assurance they can rejoice in the admonitions, because they now see that they are not as the stern unyielding demands of the law, but rather loving encouragements from a brother who is speaking from experience; and yet yearning to see in the fearful, humble walk of a brother, which are the fruits of the Spirit, being made manifest in them. He knows how the brethren need these gentle expressions of love along the way that they faint not, nor be discouraged by their feelings of unworthiness in and of themselves. They are, as Paul's statement which he made many time to the churches and to Timothy, (I Tim 12:2) ***"To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord."*** He was speaking as moved by the Spirit reminding them of God's love for them, and the grace and mercy that will accompany them in their pilgrimage in this low ground of sin and sorrow in spite of their analysis of themselves. When I go to other churches or associations, many times I will say, ***"The church at Memphis sends their love and fellowship for you."*** Now, no one directly told me to tell them those words but I feel that I can freely say

this and it be the truth. It is in this manner that Paul admonishes the church at Ephesus to put on the whole armor of God. He cannot give them the power to do it, but is lovingly calling to their mind the way in which they should walk to show forth the evidence of that precious robe of righteousness that they have been clothed with, as a new creature in Christ, and that the whole household of faith may rejoice with them in seeing this love manifested in their fearful walk and conversation in the church. Surely these are the good works that Titus affirmed that the brethren be careful to maintain, because they are good and profitable unto the church.

May the grace of God be with all who love these admonitions, and who receive them in the same spirit and understanding that they are given, and whose heartfelt desire is to be found, as much as in them is, doing them.

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

July, 2008
563, FM115
Scroggins, Tx., 75480

Mr. Tony Horton,

We received our July issue a few days ago and I noticed it is time to renew our subscription for another year. We look forward to it each month.

I have really enjoyed Elder Farmers writings.

Mrs. C. G. Elledge

July 5, 2008

Bro. Tony Horton:

Since I am 93 years old I will renew my subscription for one year. Enclosed is my check and use the rest where you see fit.

I really enjoy the "Signs of the Times" and especially Elder J.B. Farmer. May the Lord Bless all the writers and Editors.

Thank you,
Lessie Smith
4033 Caederwood Dr.
Shreveport, La. 71119

7-10-08

Dear Bro. Horton,

Please renew my subscription to "The Signs." I look forward to each issue. I am pastor of a church in Huntersville, N.C. We are a very small flock and believe in salvation by God's free and sovereign grace and mercy. To sinners who are helpless to save themselves. The Lord continues to pour out his blessings upon us who are so undeserving.

Yours in hope,
Ralph Dale
2508 Governor's Pointe Ct.
Concord, N.C. 28025

VOICES OF THE PAST

JAMES 2:26.
October 1939

"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

The chapter from which the above verse is taken is very plain, and simple, so that a child might understand it. This is one of many Scriptures that deal with practical religion, teaching that there is something else beside a belief in, or assent to, the word. While in this chapter James says that one is doing well if he believes there is one God, yet he tells us that devils also believe and tremble. Not all that hear the word do it, therefore James also said, ***"Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But who so looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." - James 1:22-25.***

It is true that faith does come by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, but there is as decided a difference between a living faith and a dead faith as there is between a living child and a doll. The doll can be dressed up with dress, shoes and hat, as the living child, but it is still a doll, it is dead. In the child is life, and life must always be there before any evidence of life can be manifested. The heart beats, breathing and movement of limbs, the crying, hearing and seeing are evidence of life which, as others see them, cause them to conclude that this is a living child.

True faith is a living principle in the soul, that works by love, causing the possessor to do the word of God, as well as to hear it, while false faith stalks about in an empty profession. Paul says, ***"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." Titus 1:16.***

To some, perhaps, as they read these things, it will seem hard to reconcile them with the utterance of Paul in Romans 3:28, where he tells ***"That a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law,"*** using the testimony concerning Abraham as a proof, but does not James also use the same testimony in the chapter before us to prove his assertion that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only? Paul refers to works of the law; James is referring to very different works, as

we shall try to prove.

We fully believe that Paul and James were agreed, for the Holy Spirit inspired their testimony, and neither of them would have been faithful had he tried to mix works and grace, or law and gospel. One who has never been delivered from the law by the body of Christ does works which he, in his own mind, feels will help him to get to heaven and God's presence with a "WELL DONE." Working for a blessing.

One under the gospel, led by the Holy Spirit, and blessed with a living faith, which is the fruit of the Spirit, will do those things that are well-pleasing unto God, and such a one is blest in his deed. We would have our readers note that he is blest, not for his deed, but in his deed. How strange that we should find such unruly characters in the church even in the apostles' days, who were so high-minded and indifferent as to their walk and conversation. They had *"crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation."*-Jude 4. It was so that God's servants should contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

There have always been those who seem to have a strong faith, a faith that could move mountains, and have not charity, and Paul says of such, they are nothing. They can speak with tongues of men and of angels, yet they know not how to bridle their tongues; they deceive their own hearts, and their religion is vain. Paul and James were both agreed in the cardinal truth of justification by faith. In Hebrews Paul tells us of the works of those who walked by faith, while James in the afore mentioned chapter is insisting upon the evidence of true faith in the everyday life of the brethren. He would not have them rest in a head knowledge, which they might call faith, and reckon that such is sufficient for salvation, when it does not affect the heart, nor influence the walk and conversation. Thus he first mentions "respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool." - James 2:1-3. *"If ye fulfill the royal law, according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors."*-James 2:8, 9. Again, *"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can such faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them*

not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only thing that can make us acceptable unto God, but such a faith proves itself true and genuine, for it works by love and is accompanied by every good work.

As faith in the Lord Jesus Christ makes us acceptable unto God, so the works of faith make us acceptable unto the brethren. A person professing that faith, yet who is at home in the world, having little or no care for better things, while he is enslaved by the love of money, and under the dominion of sin, his religion is vain. No doubt it was such people that James had seen. He noticed that in their excitement to bestow attention upon the man with the gold ring and goodly apparel, that they would slight God's humble poor. As an example of a true and living faith, James takes our father Abraham, who is called the father of the faithful. He says, *"Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God." "Faith wrought with his works."* Though he knew that in Isaac his seed should be called, and was told by God that that seed would be innumerable, yet he believed God, and went to offer up Isaac, doing the work, going under the power of faith, or, as James says, faith wrought in what he did. Such a work was to be fulfilled of the Scripture. Every word of God shall come to pass, the things that God has said his people will do, faith will work in them, enabling them to work out those things well-pleasing unto God. This is what Paul meant when he said to the Philippian Church, *"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."-Phil. 2:12, 13.*

Many who believe that there is one God, creator and disposer of all things, who has planned and purposed all things whatsoever come to pass, reason with a carnal mind, and say, that seeing that God has declared the end from the beginning, etc., and that his people are to be blessed, then why pray for a blessing which is purposed for us? With the same reasoning, Why go to meeting? Why read the Scriptures? Why try to influence our young to attend where the truth is preached, for if they are to be saved they will be saved? Why ask God for any-

thing when he knows what we need, and in asking we might ask amiss? Why profess his name, or strive to live godly, for if we are to be saved we will be saved anyhow? We call all such reasoning carnal reasoning, and it is from our carnality it springs, and it is God-dishonoring, resulting in this day from ignorance of the Scripture and of the power of God. There is a place for prayer in God's purpose, a very special place, it is called a throne of grace, and God's children rejoice that there is a throne of grace, and they know that praise is comely to the upright, and it is said that ***"God inhabiteth the praises of Israel."-Psalms 22:3.*** God has not only purposed the end, but every link in the chain of events, and his worship is in his appointments.

The woman of Canaan was in trouble, her daughter was vexed with a devil. The Lord had sent this trouble, other women, perhaps; had the same trouble, but God's Spirit was in her, and a God-given faith was there also, and she pushed aside every obstacle. So mightily did faith work in her that she faced a rebuff from Jesus, and opposition from his disciples, and she worshipped him (what a work of faith), saying, Lord, help me. (Matt. 15:22-28).

Public worship is also of God's appointment, and it is longed for by those who are deeply tried, to them it is a relief to leave the world and its noise; they often have a gladness of heart, as when David said, ***"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."-Psalms 122:1.*** Where true faith is there will be an exercise or work that will redound to the good of the soul and the glory of God. In the preacher, it will prompt him to go, leaving his home, and, if necessary , suffer privation for the cause of truth, he will endure the cross and despise the shame. He will lose sight of the gold ring and goodly apparel as in his heart he feels to be at the footstool of God's humble poor, and he is blest in his deed. Although he may feel that he cannot pray, yet many will desire an interest in his prayers, and it is good when his faith is exercised in the word of God to the comfort and edification of the saints.

It is in faith and by faith that brethren will esteem others better than themselves, it will enable those who have it to choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. What sweet fellowship there is enjoyed in the church of God when brethren are doers of the word as well as hearers. It was a work of faith when the jailer took Paul and Silas and washed their stripes, when he submitted to the believer's baptism and received them into his house and set meat before them. (Acts 16:33, 34.) What a work of faith was Abraham's and Isaac's as they journeyed into the mount. Isaac said, My father, behold the fire and

the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And faith working in him mightily, Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb. What a blessed road, and what solemn thoughts were theirs as they journeyed. James not only gives us Abraham as an example, but he seems to go from the greatest to the least, bringing in the harlot Rahab, the last one that man would expect to look to for an example of good works. A fallen creature, like ourselves, who had done nothing good, and of herself could do nothing good, yet it is said ***"she believed in God."*** The proof of that was her works. She received the spies into her house, and sent them out another way, and she perished not with them that believed not, when she received the spies with peace. Her faith did not fail, for after she had sent the spies out another way, she confessed her belief in the God of heaven and earth, and she displayed the scarlet thread in her window. Steadfast in the faith, she waited until she was taken by the spies, with all that she had, into Israel's camp in peace.

We cannot possibly see how our subject can be twisted to strengthen a system of duty religion in which the soul would build up a store of works which would force God to change his mind. ***"He is in one mind, and who can change him?"*** There is no way of acceptance with God but in Jesus Christ our Lord. The creature by nature has no righteousness acceptable unto God, all he may have is a righteousness of the flesh, which Paul had made much of, but of which he spoke when he said, ***"Yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."- Phil. 3:8, 9.***

To those who have another and different way to that which Paul had, in which they would set up the old creatures to work for heaven, we would say, should God, who is rich in mercy, lay judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, ***"hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place."- Isaiah 28:17.*** Then they would confess themselves vile, without ability to do any good things. Jesus, the Savior of sinners, would then be the one thing needful and they would want to feel the word with power. It was the word with power that enabled Abram to leave his father's house and go to a land that God would show unto him. This word with power is ***"a springing well,"*** within the person to whom it comes, enabling them to walk and do those things that are acceptable

unto God.

Faith embraces the beginning and the end, and every step of the way, it believes God and embraces the faith once delivered unto the saints. It enables the possessor to *"hold fast the form of sound words,"* and accounts that *"the words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times."-Psalms 12:6.* A respect unto the word will often bring about a self-examination, while a neglect of the word in its precepts and exhortations will result in a coldness, and the soul will soon find itself lusting after, and minding the things of the flesh. The carnal mind ever results in death, a death to all joy and peace in believing, but it is a work of faith, a faith of the operation of God, that makes one remember God and be troubled. Those precepts and exhortations are given that we may see our shortcomings and realize that only by faith, which is the fruit of God's Spirit, can we do them. They are given by inspiration of God, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Some, of course, will say that it is a lack of faith when one is troubled. We do not think so. True faith lives and labors under loads, though damped it never dies. It, like a star, shines brightest in the darkest night. There may be a fearfulness lest we slip, yet such are kept by the power of God. It is through much tribulation, yet faith enables them to wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. While passing through trouble, Job, a possessor of faith, could say, *"The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure; into whose hand God bringeth abundantly ,"* as much as to say that there are no bounds in their death, their strength is firm, while the child of God seems often ready to slip. Surely this is for the trial of faith, which is more precious than of gold, though it be tried by fire.

Many of us can look back to the time when we knew the Lord helped us, but this is not sufficient, faith wants a present help, past helps will encourage us to wait upon the Lord, knowing that he who has promised is able to perform. It will cause us not to despise the chastisement of the Lord, nor to faint when we are rebuked of him. We may not be able to say that our prayer is a prayer of faith, and we know that whatsoever is not of faith is sin, but our needs will be such that pray we must, it will seem to be our life's breath, and whether we are answered or not, we know at such times it is right to pray.

The same applies to all our ways: if it is going to meeting we do not know that there will be a blessing for us, but the word saith, "Not forsaking the assembling of your-

selves together, as the manner of some is," and we know it is right to go, and wrong to absent ourselves. If it is not our pleasure to go, it is our duty , for we should not please ourselves. If we are concerned as to our duty to the Lord and to those who have offended against us, the word of God is plain and will be followed if we walk in the faith, though often such work will be very unpleasant to the flesh. It is not easy to pray for our enemies, to do good to those who despitefully use us, yet it becomes us so to do, even though it is a painful work.

Much could be said bearing on this subject, but we close with the observation that in the foregoing chapter James tells us in the last ten verses no less than three times that faith without works is dead.

Elder George Ruston

PSALM 89:2-5.

For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens.

'I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant,

Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne "to all generations. Selah.

And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.

TRANSCRIBED FROM A SERMON PREACHED BY ELDER D. V. SPANGLER

Snow Hill Church, October 23, 1975

May we turn to page 156, I would like for us to think about the sentiment of this hymn as we sing it. If you sing it without taking note of what it says, it is worthless:

Come, thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing thy grace!
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet,
Sung by flaming tongues above:
Praise the mount! O, fix me on it!
Mount of God's unchanging love.
Here I raise my Ebenezer;
Hither by thy help I'm come;
And I hope, by thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me, when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God;
He, to save my soul from danger,
Interposed his precious blood!
O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be:
Let thy grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it!
Prone to leave the God I love!
Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it;
Seal it for thy courts above!

I am thankful to be with you. We had two things happen since arriving that has, you might say, made my trip worthwhile; if there

was nothing else. Some time ago I received an invitation to spend our time at this meeting in the home of one of the young members, Linda Adkins. Now I have a reputation in this country of writing short letters, when I write. So I wrote, she said, in maybe two lines, ***"The Lord willing, I'm coming."*** As I said to her yesterday morning, ***"I am going to write you a long letter now, and the letter will say this, that if I hadn't received your letter, I don't think I would have come."*** So you all might take that as you want to. The other thing is I visited an old friend in the nursing home yesterday morning, Mr. Clarence Robinson, who attended my services many years ago. He is blind now and he didn't recognize my voice. When I told him who I was, the reaction was worth my whole trip. Oh, the reaction of joy he showed for a poor sinner like I am. It surely meant something to me.

In the 17th chapter of the book of John, I shall begin reading with the first verse.

"These words spake Jesus, and lifted Up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

These are the words of Jesus. And the occasion was the approach to the cross and the laying down of His life for His people. I think the message begins with His summing up in the 14th Chapter of John. You know Matthew, Mark and Luke tell us about the birth of Christ, the virgin birth, the genealogy and the events surrounding His natural birth. But the Apostle John soars away in his bringing Him to us. He loses sight, you might say, of His humble birth, His genealogy , as he said, ***"In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God and the word was God. The same was in the beginning with God."*** All the ministers here and elsewhere could never expound the expression, ***"The same was in the beginning with God."*** For the unity of the Godhead is there. The covenant relationship is there, in the description, ***"The same was in the beginning with God."*** And much of this chapter is bringing to us the relationship and the unity of God the Father and God the Son in the realm of salvation. Embraced in that unity is the people of God. Jesus in God and God in Jesus, and He in them, and them in Him, etc.

In the 14th Chapter of John,

Jesus begins to tell His disciples that He is going away. They are puzzled often concerning His going away. In the 14th Chapter He tells them, ***"If ye believe in God, believe also in me. Let not your hearts be troubled. In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."*** As the time would open and develop and be brought to pass they would see and know more about it. ***"I go and prepare a place for you, and I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there you may be also."*** He tells them they know the way. Yet there is an inquiry in the mind of Phillip, and he said to Jesus, "Show us the Father." Show us the Father. You have talked about Him. Jesus said, ***"Have I been so long with you and yet thou hast not known me, Phillip?" "Has all the work that I have unfolded as the eternal will of God in my life been unnoticed and unknown?" "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."***

The word of God says, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." How many? Everyone! Everyone under consideration. So the 14th Chapter is laying the foundation of His coming again. We are still holding that forth to the people. If it has not become the key to hold, it never will be. I am looking for the coming of our Lord. If I wasn't I wouldn't be here this morning. I anticipate the event because He said, "I'm coming again." You can say it in the gospel, or however you please, but there is a second coming of the Lord.

Then Jesus brings the matter a little closer as He comes to the 15th Chapter of John regarding the unity of the Father and the Son. He said, ***"I am the true vine. My Father is the Husbandman."*** And He didn't forget to say in that chapter, ***"Ye are the branches."*** That is bringing into view in a lovely way, the unity of the Father and of the Son and with His people. ***"Branches."*** And in connection with that expression He said, ***"As I live, ye shall live."*** Just as certainly as I am alive, there is your life. ***"Ye shall live."*** There are about five occasions where the expression is used in these three chapters, ***"These words spake Jesus."*** It seems that there was a special significance in what He was saying at certain times. ***"These words spake Jesus"*** unto them.

I especially delight in the 15th Chapter in the words of Jesus when He said, ***"These words have I spoken unto you that my joy might remain in you; that your joy might be full."*** We will never know what salvation really is until we know the joy of our Saviour in saving us. Our cup will never be full. It will be half empty, until there is in our heart the knowledge that it was just as great a joy for Christ to save us as it is for us to be saved. Paul said, ***"For the joy set before him."*** It was always set before Him, and

every movement of His life, He endured the cross despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God. God has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name that is above every name. Not only while Christ walked upon the earth, but in every phase of the salvation of His people did He have the preeminence in all things. But His place in heaven now, this morning, is as our Intercessor. He appears in the presence of God for us.

I remember the time I read that scripture in the 15th Chapter. It was at night and I was setting in my room. Whatever He had been telling in the 14th Chapter, and coming on down to the 15th, ***"Ye are the branches," etc., it seems now, He said, "These words He spake."*** He says, ***"I spake these words unto you that my joy might remain in you; that your joy might be full."*** I don't think that we would detract anywhere from God's grace and His mercy and His everlasting love for His people to say that even the Father in bringing many sons to glory throughout the work of His son will take pleasure in it, also. And in connection with that there is something about the doctrine of grace and the wonders of God's grace that presents these two thoughts. When this world has been brought to a conclusion, and is over, there will be a people in heaven that God won't be ashamed of. And the only reason there will be a people that He won't be ashamed of is because He will prepare them for it. And we also, my hearers, won't be ashamed. Christ was not ashamed to call His people, ***"Brethren."*** God was not ashamed to be called our God He says that in the book of Hebrews. God was not ashamed to be called the God of the people pictured in the 11th chapter of Hebrews. It is the only way God could have a people in heaven that He wouldn't be ashamed of. He prepares them for it. And one of the great blessings of Grace is that God prepares us for what He has prepared for us. Have you learned that in your life? That same hand must prepare you for what God has prepared for you? Whether it is either joy or sorrow, it is the same thing one is no different than the other. God must prepare us for joy as well as sorrow.

And now, Jesus in the 14th and 15th chapters has been preparing them for His going away. He has stressed to them that "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name it shall be given to you." That used to be a great puzzle to me. But when I found that the various names of Christ and the titles of Christ was found over 100 times in the Bible, I said, ***"His name must embrace every need of His people."*** Whether He is the Advocate, the Intercessor, or whoever He is, it must embrace it all. His Name! These Great Right Reverends, so and so might think they have a right long handle when they have two or three words attached to

their names. But think of the Lord Jesus Christ having over 100 names and titles in the word of God, and each one suited to each characteristic of Him. Oh, my friend, isn't it a wonderful thing? I would travel thousands of miles to see Him one moment. He is the Kings of Kings. He is the Lord of Lords. Everywhere!

I have been in the city of Washington a few times, and they say every avenue leads to the Capitol. You go down Pennsylvania Avenue or Massachusetts Avenue, or any other, and they lead to the Capitol. But think here, every name of salvation, every phase of salvation of the people of God embodied in the Name of Christ that leads to Him!

You can have a dozen avenues in the city of Washington, and they would be crowded thoroughfares, wouldn't they? But there can be over a hundred names and titles of Christ pointing to Him and the virtue of Him and there is never any congestion in the way. There is always a way to see Him, and there is always a desire in the heart of those at the throne of God to say, ***"I would see Jesus."***

Paul admonished Timothy to preach the word: to reprove, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine. I said not long ago that if the doctrine of exhortation wasn't in the New Testament I had been preaching a lie over 50 years. It is there and it is for the minister as God directs him. If it is preached in blind zeal it is just as terrible as he is, but if it is through the constraining grace of God, then it is, as recorded in the New Testament, ***"Exhort the church of God with all long suffering, and doctrine." "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but they will heap to themselves teachers having itching ears."*** You know, I used to wonder what that was, ***"Teachers having itching ears."*** I said, "I have heard of the nose itching, but not the ears itching." Probably I shouldn't say this, but I say a lots of things I wish I hadn't said, and lots of things I don't say that I wish I had said. But not long ago I heard a minister speak, and when he got through he took out of the pulpit like he was in a race with somebody. And he looked like he was itching to hear what somebody was going to say about the sermon he had preached. He must have had itching ears, do you suppose? I don't know. I will leave that for you to decide.

But these words, now we are coming to the hour of Christ. We are coming to Him and the hour appointed in eternity that our Saviour must die for us. And now His prayer. His people come first. The awful hour is approaching that He must pay the debt that all mankind couldn't pay. All the blood of all Adam's race from Adam's day to today couldn't pay it. The blood of the Son of God only, could. And the hour, He recognizes very well. He says, ***"Father." "These words***

spake Jesus and lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour is come. Glorify thy son that thy son may also glorify thee." That is the unity of the Godhead. There is the husbandman and the true vine. " As thou has given him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." That's what we preach! Christ had power over all flesh for one end. To give eternal life to as many as thou has given Him. "And this is life eternal that they might know him." That is what it is. God has a sure and certain and definite way of bringing that life to them. The only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. ***"And now, O Father."*** There was a time that our Saviour couldn't call God His Father. There was a time when in His humiliation His judgment was taken away. There was a time that the literal words that were in the 22nd Psalm must be brought out of the lips of Christ. ***"My God; My God, why hast thou forsaken me."*** Now what was He asking God for? He calls Him Father, and I like the expression. ***"And now, Oh Father."*** We only hint at what is involved. We can't tell it. What is He asking for now? What is the special request of Christ? ***"Glorify thou me with thine own self."*** That is what He wanted. That is what He was asking for. And the kind of glory that He asked God to give Him was the kind that He had with Him before the world was. Could He have asked anything greater? That in the hour of departure, the wonders of the covenant might be brought truly into view; that He who He entered into covenant with before this world was, there would be a continuation and a fulfilling of it in bringing Him from the dead. Paul said in the last chapter of the book of Hebrews, ***"The God of peace"; "The God of Peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, through the blood of the everlasting covenant."*** The blood of the everlasting covenant! Make you perfect, etc., and in every good work it was good. And now He asked God to glorify Him with His presence. That the fulness of the love of God in the moment when the covenant was entered into, and God's love for His Son and His Son for Him, and the love for His people and the love of the people of God for them. ***"With thine own self."*** That is the glory Christ is asking for. There is no question, is it? That is the glory He has asked God for. Glorify Him with Himself. ***"With the same glory I had with you before the world was."***

Some try to tell us now and try to bring us a saviour like one peddling something on the street. That isn't the God I worship. Our Lord Jesus Christ stresses in these chapters in John that though He was going away, He wasn't going to leave them comfortless. ***"I will send the Comforter, the Holy Spirit in my name, and he shall take the***

things of mine and show them unto you." That work is still going on. You talk about experiences of grace. Every time the Holy Spirit brings to the heart of a sinner the assurances of Christ's work and their need of it, it is an experience of grace. It is of grace, however it may come, and that which doesn't come by grace isn't of the Holy Spirit. It is of the flesh, whatever it might be. The Holy Spirit doesn't wander around at random looking for something to bring to the people of God. He doesn't bring just any thing. He brings the things of Christ. He applies every promise that a sinner has ever received in his heart of heaven and immortal glory .The Holy Spirit brings it. And there is no substitute for it. You can have a lot of substitutes, but not the Holy Spirit because He is equal with Jesus Christ, Himself. "And now, Oh Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the same glory I had with you before the world." And an answer was given Jesus on one occasion from the Father, ***"I have already glorified thee."*** My beloved children, this morning, our Saviour is at the right hand of the Throne of God. He is as much alive today as He was when He was here, and He now in heaven appears in the presence of God for us. He is our Mediator the only one between God and man that has the power of mediation. Every requirement of God for His people, Christ has met in His death and His righteous life.

And as the hour approaches that He must depart, He said, ***"Oh Father".*** Have you ever felt you could call God your Father? Have you ever felt the sweetness of your Saviour's love that you could never tell anyone of? Oh, my friend, I wake up in the hours of night sometime, and it is like day. Some avenues pointing me to the virtues of Christ, Something I haven't seen will appear. I want to exalt His name. I sometimes think as the poet said:

"I want to praise Him while He gives me breath I hope to praise Him after death."

And in the 24th verse of the 17th chapter our Saviour prayed. Yes, my friend, He prayed, that those He died for would be with Him. And He didn't only pray for that, but that ***"They shall see my glory."*** I expect to see the glory of Christ. I expect to share in the glory of my Master. Will that be fulfilled? As sure as you are setting there, this morning. And when the hour arrives, Jesus said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." But He tells us here, ***"I have finished the work."*** Before He died He said, ***"I finished the work." "All things that are written in the prophets and in Moses and the Law and the Psalms concerning me."*** As He approached the cross He said, ***"They have been fulfilled."*** Every one of them. There hasn't been a one left out. ***"And now, Oh Father, glorify thou me with thy own self, with the same glory I had with you before the***

world." Then in the next chapter when He leaves His disciples, He goes out to meet our great foe and His. As He approaches those that Judas was bringing He said, *"Who are you looking for?"* And then He said, "I am the one." *"I am the very one you are looking for."* His great love led Him to meet them. His great love for you, my friends, led Him to meet His enemy. The eternal relationship and the eternal love of God in Him led Him, and the enemy fell on the ground. I'm glad they didn't have to send after Him. I'm glad they didn't have to tie Him. I know that the lamb was tied for a time in the eternal covenant as a type of Jesus on the Jewish altar. He was bound with cords on it, bound to the altar, but here I see the Lamb loose, now. And He goes to meet them, and He opens not His mouth. *"Dumb before His shearers."* I said yesterday afternoon I had some thoughts the other day about Christ being dumb. I just touched it. I can't tell you about it. Dumb. Mute. Beyond speech! Carrying our sins to that cross. Oh, my friends lift up your heads this morning. Many of us may never meet again here on the shores of time. Lift up your heads. Lift up your heads! Our redemption is drawing nigh! I thank you!

Elder D. V. Spangler

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the One Hundred Seventy Eighth session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Hadnot Creek Primitive Baptist Church on October 11-12, 2008. All who believe and love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited.

The Church is located on Peliter Loop Road, Carteret County, North Carolina. From Maysville travel East approximately 15 miles on Route 58. Turn right on Peliter Loop Road and the Church is one half mile on the left.

Elder Gene Lupton
Association Clerk
252-745-7441

EASTERN KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The 2008 Eastern Kehukee Association will convene, the Lord, willing, with Tarboro Church located in Tarboro, North Carolina. The meeting will be held on Saturday, October 4 and Sunday, October 5. Services will begin each day at 10:30 a.m.

Tarboro Church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albermarle Avenue. Out of Raleigh, take US 64 East. Stay on the bypass until you get to Exit 485. Take this

exit and turn left at the stop sign. Go over the overhead bridge and turn right at the second stoplight. This will be St. James Street. Go about one mile and the church will be on the right, next to the railroad tracks.

We invite the ministers and lovers of the truth to meet with us.

(Our association was originally scheduled to be held with Skewarkey Church, in Williamston, NC. Due to illness of the dear brother, it was agreed they would try to have the association another year.)

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

Staunton River Union meeting will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday only, August 30, 2008. Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church is the host.

Singing to start at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30.

An invitation is extended to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Peggy Wells - Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held at Greensboro Church, located at Tate and Carr streets, on the 31st of August. We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

Wayne Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 2008

Elder Junior Conner, VA	5.00
Cleo Underwood, VA	5.00
Lessie Smith, LA	35.00
Woodrow Abshire, VA	5.00
Ralph Dale, NC	5.00
James Shelor, VA	5.00
Vivian Underwood, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

FRANCES T. JARVIS

SALISBURY-Frances T. Jarvis, 93 of Salisbury went home to be with the Lord on Sunday, July 13, 2008.

Born on May 16, 1915, she was a daughter of the late Wilmer Francis Townsend and Bertha Townsend White.

Mrs. Jarvis retired from the state of Maryland. She was a volunteer for Peninsula Regional Medical Center for 15 years.

Her greatest joy in life came from her longtime membership in Forest Grove, Salisbury Old School Baptist Church.

She is survived by her sister, Willsie M. Wood of Chesapeake, Va.; her stepdaughter, Norma Larmon of Philadelphia; and many nieces and

nephews.

She was preceded in death by her brothers, John W. Townsend and Will H. Townsend; and sisters, Mary E. Jarvis and Elizabeth Adkins.

The family wishes to thank all the wonderful people at Pine Bluff Village and Deers Head Hospital for the wonderful care they have given Frances throughout the years. The family sends a very special thank you to her minister, Elder Elbert Robbins. Frances could not have had the quality of life and peace of mind she had without you.

A funeral service at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday at Holloway Funeral Home.

Elder Elbert Robbins officiated. Interment was in Wicomico Memorial Park in Salisbury.

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1 CORINTHIANS 2:6-9.

Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not "the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

ANNIE DAVIS HOLLEY

Annie Davis Holley was blessed to live in the midst of family, friends, and a community who loved her for more than ninety years. Annie was born on September 13, 1916 and died on May 9, 2007.

Her parents were Raleigh and Mary Davis. Annie Holley is survived by her husband of seventy-three years, Irvin Holley.

Annie Holley is survived by three daughters Gladys (Boots) H. Elliott, Shelby H. Shelton, Nancy H. King, and by their husbands, E.C. Elliott, Norman Shelton, and Gary King. She is also survived by two sisters, Gladys D. Astin and Sallie D. Powell, and a brother, Jack Davis. Annie Holley also leaves seven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren to mourn their loss.

Annie Holley never joined the Primitive Baptist Church, although she served admirably as a deacon's wife for many years. She and her husband in earlier times served as hosts to groups of the Primitive Baptists, near and far, until their home was overflowing.

Annie Holley spoke softly and with well-chosen words. A smile, a nod, or a brief word of encouragement were treasured by those who knew her.

The Apostle Paul in his epistle to the Galatians 5th Chapter, Verses

22 and 23 wrote about " ...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance..." I believe that all who knew Annie Holley well can see these qualities manifest in her life.

The funeral for Annie Holley was held on May 11, 2007. Elders C.B. Davis, and Jimmy Gray conducted her funeral. We hope the Lord will reconcile her loved ones to their loss.

Written by one who loved her,
Michael Williams

"He is just away" Awaiting the Great Resurrection Day

Bro. Clifton A. King

Brother Clifton King of 3795 Zoo Parkway, Asheboro, N.C. was called away on the Eighth Day of April, Two Thousand Eight, at the age of 89.

Clifton was born to the late Jonah and Bertha Lassiter King.

Brother King was retired from the Weiman Furniture Company of Ramseur, NC and continued to earn a living in woodworking. He served in the US Army during World War II.

Funeral services were held April, 11, 2008 with Elder Calvin Harward officiating and the burial was at Randolph Memorial Park. He is survived by his wife of 61years, Vera S. King, two sons, Gary Dewey King and his wife Sylvia of Asheboro, NC, son Tony Clinton King and His wife Debbie of Spartanburg, SC, brother Lacy King of Montgomery, Alabama, 4 Grandchildren and 3 Great Grandchildren.

Brother Clifton asked *for* a home at Rock Hill Primitive Baptist Church in Asheboro, NC in December 18th, 1977 and was blessed to express His love for the church. He was joyfully baptized on Sunday morning, February 19, 1978. A beautiful light snow was falling as he was laid beneath the liquid grave by Elder Ralph Gaines and Elder James Moody.

Even though the snow was falling, it was such a warm feeling that was scattered over the children of God, Rock Hill Members saw and felt that Brother Clifton was yet still carrying another banner. The church saw fit to ordain Brother Clifton as a Deacon March 18, 1979.

He served Rock Hill Church faithfully for 28 years.

We miss him so much, but know that God's will is done.

"The grass withers and the flowers fall,
But the word of our God stands forever."
Isaiah Chapter 40, verse 8

A Sister in Christ, I hope
Carolyn S. Gaines

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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1429 Howlett Street
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POEM

Always be concerned of our duty to the Lord
As we gather in harmony and one accord
at the Throne of Grace, we are blessed to pray
As He reaches down and guides our way.

We find faith without work is dead,
Through his Grace, we are daily led.
We find this faith more precious than gold,
As his graceful blessings are daily unfolded.

Faith embraces the beginning and the end
As he reaches down to this low land of sin,
For instructions to the man of God
To be led in the way our Father trod.

True faith labors under a heavy load
As he guides us daily on this sinful road,
Faith enables one to wash their robes of sin
And he daily visits our hearts within.

Faith comes through God's Holy Spirit
Which carnal flesh cannot merit.
Through the goodness of our all wise Lord
We assembled together on one accord.

This faith becomes our guiding Ray
Which sustains us daily on our way.
This is meted out from his court above
That we resume through his immaculate Love.

R.J. Justice

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EDITORIAL

"Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." Luke 24: 39.

Elder J.B. Farmer

I must again acknowledge the weakness of all flesh and express my desire that the God of heaven and earth will keep me in the faith as this is being written. We are taught that all see through a glass darkly and only know in part, which makes us to depend upon Him for light and understanding and causes us to fear and tremble. We are commanded to rightly divide the word of truth, which means, to me, to not handle the word deceitfully but to explain it with as much light as we are given. I also believe that this fear causes us to remain silent about those things which are unclear or doubtful in our own minds. Also, I must say that all men are fallible and none should be heeded except as they are kept in the doctrine of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In the end our God will be praised and His people will be comforted and edified.

Jesus had lain down His life for His friends, was buried and was raised after three days according to His word and the word of prophesy. When Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James came to the sepulcher, they were told by the two men in shining garments that Jesus was risen. They came *and told these things to the apostles "and their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not."* After Jesus had appeared to some in the way, they came to Jerusalem and told the eleven and others these things. *"And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? And why do these thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is myself: handle*

me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it and, did eat before them."

Now, we see that none believed, neither could believe that He was actually raised from the dead until he revealed Himself unto them. This is the way it has ever been. ***"No man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the son will reveal Him."*** When Jesus unexpectedly and at once stood in their midst, they were terrified and thought they had seen a ghost. This is the best the flesh can do since it is faithless. However, Jesus did not leave them in that faithless condition with doubts and fears and misunderstandings. But He appeared to them, at that time, to show them that He, Himself was risen from the dead and was not a ghost. They had to know that it was Jesus, Himself who was raised in a recognizable body which could be seen and handled. Jesus showed Himself in the ways which He did after His resurrection, not to confound us, but rather that all His own would be comforted and would be given to understand enough about the resurrection to sustain our hope here in this evil world. He showed that He was not raised a spirit or a ghost but that He had a substantial body of flesh and bones. Now, we know from the scriptures, ***"that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."*** Flesh and blood here, I believe, refers to the natural body while ***"flesh and bones"*** spoken of by the risen Lord refers to His spiritual body.

If included, in times past, I may have stumbled at this point, thinking that Jesus somehow came forth in a natural body and that He was changed later when He ascended into heaven. He, according to the scriptures, was the firstborn of all that sleep. He was the example for all who would follow Him in the regeneration. His resurrection must have been, in essence, what ours also will be. It seems to me that it was impossible that He could come forth from the grave in a natural body because a natural body is subject to death and He had just gotten the victory over death. If it was not a natural body that He arose with, it must have been a spiritual body. Then, how is it possible for a spiritual body to have flesh and bones? The inspired apostle, speaking of the relation of the spiritual church with its spiritual head, even Christ, said, ***"For we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones." Ephesians 5:30.*** This is a great mystery which can only be received by faith. Jesus, in a resur-

rected spiritual body, manifested Himself in a way that He would be known by His little ones; that is, in a body with spiritual flesh and spiritual bones. It was not possible for Him to appear in the fullness of His glory at that time because the fullness of His glory would have consumed them and all flesh together. We know that no man, in his natural flesh, has ever seen God and lived. Only when the saints are changed and given spiritual bodies will they be enabled to stand in the presence of Him in all His glory.

Many have speculated about what kind of body the saints will come forth with in the resurrection of life. The apostle called all who do such, fools, since all speculation about spiritual things is foolishness. What we are given to know about the resurrection is contained in the scriptures and may only be known by revelation. So then, what does the inspired apostle tell us about the resurrected body? First, we are told that it is a quickened or living body. It is a celestial or heavenly body. It is raised in incorruption and therefore can never perish. It is raised in glory or honor. It is raised in power, therefore, is not subject to any of the forces of this world of vanity. It is a spiritual body, yet not a ghost which Jesus abundantly showed to His disciples in the above account. It is an immortal body and so is not subject to death.

I cannot escape the conclusion that Jesus was raised a living, heavenly, incorruptible, glorified, powerful, spiritual and immortal body. He had power to appear in any form which pleased Him and even to appear and to disappear at will. He could appear in a substantial body as he did with His disciples at Jerusalem or in flaming fire as He will at His glorious coming. In that substantial body, he manifested Himself in times past to His apostles and disciples as a spiritual man with spiritual flesh and spiritual bones showing that it was He, Himself who was raised from the grave. In our time, we are given to see by the eye of faith, the risen Christ as a spiritual man, as they did, and are also given to see, as they were, a faint view of His glory which is to come. But when He comes, every eye shall behold Him in all His glory and in the fullness of His power and majesty. Both those who have died and have been buried and those who are alive and remain at His coming shall see Him; both the righteous and the wicked.

Jesus said, ***"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5:29.*** The inspired apostle Paul said, ***"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his***

mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day." 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10. And finally, the holy apostle John said, *"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." 1 John 3:3-4.*

This was written in love, I hope,
Elder J.B. Farmer

PSALM 103:1-4.

Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;

Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies.

CORRESPONDENCE

Sept. 25, 2005

Dear Elder Key,

I think all who attended our last association were well fed Spiritually as well as naturally.

I think sound doctrine of God our Saviour, was set forth on both days, in a beautiful way.

I will be in Greensboro on the 27th of Sept. to celebrate with the hundred elected nurses who were chosen from 58 thousand my daughter Edith Bayless was one of the hundred. Needless to say we are very proud of her. She works in a hospital in Tarboro, N.C.

If you see fit to enter this in the Signs you may do so.

In bonds of love,
Riley Justice

8-5-08

Dear Brother Tony:

Enclosed please find money to renew my subscription for two years.

My wife and I sure enjoy the Signs of the Times. We don't have a church in Central Louisiana to go to, or can't find one that believes in absolute predestination of all things, or of the Old School faith.

I was in the military for 20 years and never had a church to go to any length of time. I thought when I retired I could find a church, but they are few and far between. The nearest one of the faith we believe in is close to a hundred miles from us. If you know of one of the Old School faith (Hardshell) please let us know.

I've been retired from the military since 1974 and am still looking for a church.

Sincerely with loving kindness,
Jerry & Bobbie Morgan

890 Jeff McNeal Road
Center Point, LA. 71323
318-253-7567

NOTE: If anyone knows of a Church near Jerry please let him know.

ROMANS 8:27-29.

And he that searcheth the hearts and mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

ARTICLES

A little article on graceful spiritual blessings has been on my mind for some time.

God's grace that is funneled through the channels of God's amazing power to the recipients of his love, belongs to God.

I find this word grace to be one of the most beautiful words to be found in the human language, a word that has a very distinctive particularly spiritual, meaning for old Baptist beliefs. Grace, though having many colors, has a meaning to old school people, and Christians more generally. Grace for old school believers is the center of our faith, and is an unmerited favor.

Grace brings God's little ones to the knowledge of the truth-the truth that is hidden in Christ Jesus the Lord. Our exercised belief, is that Grace comes to those lifted from darkness through God's loving kindness, and most importantly at God's appointed time. And those lifted from darkness are made through God's Inspiration to feast at the Master's table.

This appointed time of God's discretion rather than man's, becomes food and consolation for the believer. God's deliverance through an eye of faith is one of the greatest mysteries of the Christian experience. This walking in the light where the darkness comprehends it not, brings the believer to hunger and

thirst for God's righteousness, making the mystery of Grace the spiritual idea that it is. These spiritual rations that the believer hungers for, clearly are food that are stored and delivered at God's appointed time.

The Gospel of the kingdom of God is the very breath of life for the believer; and, enriches and enlightens our hope when blessed with an eye to see, an ear to hear and a heart to comprehend. Though our human nature is deaf to spiritual manna, this is correct because our carnal mind and body cannot lift a hand in working out the great salvation.

Though the birth of our conscience seems similar to the rebirth of our God's deliverance speaks specifically to the birth of our spirit, and makes the believer *suffer* for their sins through God's chastening power. We are all sinners by nature, of the Adam nature, and of the Adam tree. God's transformation of the believer's heart though deeply personal, is not unlike the tiller of God's Eden.

Some believe that one has a free will to accept or reject God's great salvation.

Our human natures' certainly make this seem apparent; however, the true meaning and intent of Grace is just unimaginably more powerful, and for the believer intently more beautiful. The whisper of God's grace in the believer's ear, is as broad and as deep as all life and beyond. God, the singular reality of all that exists is the great architect, and for old school believers, the only thing that can be thought of as Holy.

Just as God designed the ebbing of the tides, the drift of the night sky, the rhythms of the seasons and the very breath of life; we believe that God's judgment in forming the church is likewise complete. It was God's holy will that disbanded Satan from heaven, and crafted the plan in all it's detail to reconstitute God's, not man's church.

These mysteries of truth hidden in Christ Jesus, are the origin of the idea of spiritual paradox. Old school belief, is a hardly wrought wrangling of the pearl before the swine, over a period of several hundred years. Reaffirming God's true power and supremacy, was not an act of submission so much as an affirmation of God's brilliant love. The core of these ideas have been much misunderstood over the past five to seven hundred years to where one chooses to enter the history.

Part of the Baptist paradox is that old Baptist people, though knowing their helplessness in God's spiritual work, are at the same time completely nourished by Christ's parable of the mustard seed. Old Baptist people's hope is firmly secure in God's supremacy. There could, or perhaps should, be comfort in God's many many examples of turning the table on the human will, both within and without the Christian circle.

Christ told Peter that he would deny him before the cock crowed.

Peter really did not really think this denial would happen, basically denying his denial. Peter denied. God clearly demonstrated his knowledgeable authority.

Paul a non-Christian began a mission to Damascus to persecute God's Saints, or so he thought. God's transforming power redirected Paul's entire route and life in a single breath. The light of God in all its brilliance filled paul's heart was a very new song.

God's song of love in the believers heart, has been penned a thousand times as the believer's candle in the darkness. These examples if not deceived, are the workings of God's Grace.

And Paul's will was made new as well. He was blind before he saw, and he saw and Paul heard; and Paul sang his new song of praise on new missions that made real the beauty of the poetry of David's Psalms. Paul's spiritual birth was an unmerited gift of grace.

Faith is the only thing that can give man both individual and collectively any adequate concept of God's breadth, and the individual's very breath. Just as ancient people named the stars and constellations variously, a conditional God based on our will as a grain of sand in the sea, is just plain shallow.

Early on, there were fewer words. And our first utterances of the great Jehovah were a reverence for our blindness in God's great universe. Our respect for God even in philosophy was complete, and much more attached to our understanding of the wholeness of not only God's authority, but God's great immutable creative love.

These foundations of faith that inspired through Grace Jesus' disciples, them leaving their homes and families; and, provide examples that remain beyond our carnal understanding. And like the sparrow, their needs were supplied. But the greater mystery remains grace and faith, as their heart transformed as new vessels hidden in Christ Jesus.

And these foundations of faith as God instructed his disciples that his journey would continue with his father so they would not grieve, completed the paradox of God's love by instructing the disciples to rejoice in God's plan. There indeed, is a season. Our very comfort remains this season. God's season.

Carnal man's state of being dead to the knowledge of the truth, is not something that old Baptists take pleasure in, though clearly true. Ephesians 1:3-4 shows God's design in it's entirety to begin with: ***"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be Holy and blameless in his sight."***

So this mysterious beautiful spiritual attraction and attachment

through God's grace to God's purpose, at God's time, God knew about in creation. And the quickening of our hearts, Paul reflects on as well.

Ephesians 2: 1-2 ***"As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient."***

And of course Ephesians gives it's most famous comfort: ***"for it is by grace you have been saved".*** This working of Grace in a noisy world taunting free will, has molded the beautiful modest church of the believing family of Christ since the Master walked in Galilee. Equally beautiful and perhaps mysterious however, is that more often than not, those who understand God's loving authority have as often as not been few if we look intently at history.

The breadth of God's creation today as yesterday, has no working of God's atonement likewise is whispered to the heart of the believer ebbing at God's instruction.

Likewise, the courage to relinquish the human will to God's authority is heavenly designed, and I believe complete. Though we may create and build, in God's eyes we are the clay and He, is the potter. And for me if not deceived, I hope to say thankfully so.

Recognizing God's supremacy in dispensation of grace and all spiritual blessings truly seems a psalm to Elijah's still small voice on Mount Horeb. And again, I hope to say, thankfully so.

In the bonds of Love,
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VOICES OF THE PAST

IS CHRIST DIVIDED?

THE following article I think was written in February, 1905, but not finished and sent for publication, to the best of my knowledge and recollection of the matter now. I also have many other articles unfinished. Is Christ divided? These were the words of Paul to his Corinthian brethren, recorded in 1 Cor. i. 13.

The connections show that this church of God was living as though Christ is divided; therefore Paul's question, ***"Is Christ divided?"*** This was an all-important question for those brethren to consider; it is just as important today as when the words were written. O that all of God's people everywhere could be impressed by the Spirit of Christ to repeat these words: ***"Is Christ divided?"*** before they act in taking sides in the wars that are now raging in so many places over different

subjects that so disturb and divide God's people. Dear brethren, what do you think would be the result among the Primitive Baptists if all would consider well the words of Paul before they act harshly in declaring nonfellowship for their brethren? Paul said, ***"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord."-1 Cor. i. 9.*** Here we learn that it is a God-given fellowship which his people have for his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, Therefore Paul continued: ***"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment."*** If this was good admonition for Paul to give and for his brethren to heed then, it is good to heed now. It yet would be good for the church of Christ to be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. To thus live would be to live as though Christ and his people were one in fellowship, instead of living as though Christ were divided. If God calls the members of his church (which is the body of Christ) into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, then it evidently is wrong for any man or set of men to work to cause the church of God to declare non fellowship for each other or a church of Christ.

John said: That which we have ***seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."-1 John 1. 3.*** John was desirous that his brethren have fellowship with him, therefore he declared unto them what he had seen and heard. We note that his great reason for his brethren ***having fellowship with him was, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."*** O how sad would our condition be if we were seeking to break fellowship with our brethren and at the same time claiming that we had fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. Evidently to make such a claim would be equivalent to claiming that it mattered not whether he had fellowship for the church of Christ; that we could have fellowship with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, just the same. We note John taught differently. He continues: ***"And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth."*** Let us note these words. O how solemn these things are! John here is teaching first the necessity of fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus

Christ; and second, if we say we, have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. John continues: ***"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another."*** From this we learn why God's people have true fellowship, one with another. On the other hand, John says: ***"He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now."***

John continues to contrast between the conditions of those who are in darkness and those who are in the light. He says: ***"He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he doeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes."*** It is when the church of Christ is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither they goeth, that they are led to live as though Christ were divided.

My dearly beloved brethren, I have learned to my sorrow and shame what it means to live as if Christ were divided, yet I plead that I did it ignorantly; yes, I verily thought I must take sides, and I did take sides, to the extent that sweet fellowship which once existed was broken. O how cruel these things are, and yet they do exist in many places even to this day. I verily believe many are just as honest as I was, and yet there is no doubt in my mind, if the truth were known, many like myself are under the influence of some would-be leader who has men's persons in admiration because of advantage. Read Jude sixteenth verse. Such as these, evidently do not have true love and fellowship for their brethren, but are seeking advantage, and it is done so cunningly that some never detect their craftiness. It is such as those who seemingly have great admiration for their brethren as long as they can control and lead them; but just as soon as they find out their selfish advantage is at an end, such ones will have no more use for their brethren, and they even will go to the extent of trying to kill the very ones that they seemingly manifested such great admiration and love for, John said: ***"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen,"*** This is very plain language, and it seems very easily understood, if indeed we ourselves are in the light. But if darkness hath blinded our eyes, so that we ourselves know not whither we go, we fail to see aright. It is then that we are willing to live as though Christ is divided. Paul said to his Corinthian brethren: ***"That everyone of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ then the words of our text, Is Christ divided ?"*** Paul did

not take sides with any of them, no, not even with those who said, I am of Paul. Paul attributed their condition to their being carnal instead of spiritual. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men. For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal. From Paul's argument here and elsewhere no man can justly claim to be spiritual, and at the same time laboring to divide God's people. The truth of the matter is, we are carnal whenever we try to divide God's people.

None of the apostles ever tried to divide the church of Christ. Then let me ask, O why should we work to divide the church of Christ, and at the same time claim to be apostolic both in faith and practice. At the same time we certainly know that the apostles did not teach or practice trying to divide the church of Christ. Notwithstanding the carnality and the lack of spirituality on the part of these brethren, Paul yet labored with them and said to them, ***"To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."*** He then tells why he did this: " And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you." This was Paul's way of dealing with the weak; this was true love manifested on the part of Paul toward his brethren. Now let us reason together. Suppose Paul had taken sides with those who said, I am of Paul, and they had declared nonfellowship for those who said, And I of Apollos; then suppose Paul and his faction were right, as far as doctrine was concerned, and Apollos and his faction were wrong. We see in such case Paul would be deprived of preaching the true gospel to those weak brethren who said, And I of Apollos. They were wrong and would in all probability have remained wrong, seeing they were cut off from hearing the truth. Brethren, let me ask which would be the better way, if we truly love our brethren. Would it be better to declare nonfellowship for the weak, or would it be better to do as Paul said he did for the gospel's sake one way he could not be partaker with them of the Gospel. On the other hand, Paul could be partaker thereof with his weak brethren, if no divisions were allowed to the extent of breaking church fellowship. Now the fact of the matter was, and is yet, God had given a diversity of gifts to the church. Paul said, ***"I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase."*** Both gifts were useful for the church as a whole ***while undivided. Paul continues: "For we are laborers together with God."*** In such a case there is fellowship first with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; and in the second place there should be and evidently is fellowship one for the other. How would it sound for

two ministers to claim that they were laborers together with God, and yet working to divide the church of Christ. To make such a claim would be to claim that Christ is divided, and that God is the author of confusion, yet Paul said: ***"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."- 1 Cor. xiv. 33.*** James said : ***"For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work."*** James tells from whence this wisdom comes and also tells them from whence it doth not come. It would have been vain for James' brethren to have claimed that they were laborers together with God. He told them plainly not to lie against the truth. They were living as though Christ was divided, aud they wanted to live that way. James said: ***"Ye have condemned and killed the just, and he doth not resist you."*** All of James' warring brethren would condemn and kill the just. That is one sorrowful feature of those who want to live as though Christ is divided they do not want to be opposed by the just. ***"Is Christ divided?"*** What shall we answer? Paul said to these Corinthian brethren ***"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."*** It would be just as reasonable to say that Christ has two bodies, as it is to live as though Christ were divided. Christ is not divided, neither has he two bodies for by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink of one Spirit. Paul makes an illustration by comparing the visible church of Christ to a human body. He shows that no member of the human body can say to another member of the same body, I have no need of thee. Paul asks the question, And if they were all one member, where was the body. He then says, But now are they many members, yet one body. Paul's argument is that the body of Christ is composed of different members, yet note he says, members in particular; meaning, as the connection shows, that each member has its particular place to fill in the body of Christ, the same as the members of the human body have their particular places to fill in the human body. The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee, nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. When we divide into factions we then live as though we had no need of the different gifts of God to the church of Christ, which is the body of Christ.

Submitted in love,
Joseph Ford.

Seneca, Kans., Feb. 1, 1918.

CORINTHIANS 12:8.

For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another m the word of knowledge by the same Spirit.

EXPERIENCE

In the year 1915 I was about 12 years old, and I was walking a farm road reading Revelations 21 :8. Many of the things mentioned in this passage of scripture I have never put into action, but I, for the first time in my life, knew what it meant to be guilty of the whole. As I walked along the road I was crying out, ***"God have mercy on me"***.

I came to the place that I thought I had made my last step on earth. I went down on my face thinking that I would never get up again; that was the place that I would die and awake in hell, knowing that God was just in doing so. I feel that was the place where heaven and earth kissed. I felt that my sins were pardoned and forgiven. I arose to my feet praising God. Everything that I could see seemed to be praising the Lord. I could not believe that I would have any more troubles. Little did I know about the tribulations that were before me.

I went about 14 or more years before I ever had a desire to ask the church for a home. I was so depressed that I thought I was losing my mind. I went this way for about two and a half years. During this time I had a double burden because also I had a weight to go and preach the gospel. I vowed that I would never do it for the people would not want to hear me. Yet I had rather preach than anything. I knew that I could not of myself preach the gospel, or I would be preaching only to myself.

In the year of 1935, the fourth Saturday in May, I went before the church and asked for a home and was received. I was baptized the next day. I did not say anything about my feeling I thought I would have to go to the pulpit, but Sister John Ramsey said, ***"A minister has joined the church today, and I want to hear him when he first speaks"***. I was liberated in 1937, and ordained in 1941.

Now I want to come to some of my visions and revelations. Before I ever went to the pulpit I had this double vision in a dream. I was walking in a forest of woods, and I saw a tree about 20 feet high, with blue flashes of lightening coming down to about knee high. I had to walk through it. I had a great fear, thinking that no man could go through this and live without the faith of God. I went through and was not harmed. Then I heard these words coming from the tree, ***"Surely Jim has seen the hand of God"***. And in the same night, I saw myself standing in a field, and two men came before me, looked me over, and then they went back from whence they came. Then I heard the same voice say to me, "Thou shalt have two children before that you can see my face". There was one daughter born, and after that my wife died. I went about thirty years puzzled over the meaning of this dream.

It caused me much trouble. In 1972 I was hunting in the woods,

and as I was walking by the trees, this dream came to me with the interpretation, and I saw that my two grandchildren were the two children. I believe that was the meaning of that dream. I came down with a gall operation, and was very nervous. I thought my time was nigh at hand; the two children had been born. I wanted to die. I have been from coast to coast more that once since that time and have met a good many of the faithful of God.

Now another vision before that I ever began to speak in public I was standing in a field looking at a hill covered with oak trees. From my right I heard a sound like mighty rushing wind and a sweet rumbling sound. As it went through the trees every tree bowed under the pressure of it, but not even a leaf fell. Then I heard these words coming from the trees, ***"A God-born man can not sin. You know not who they are, but I do".*** Now when I go into the stand I never try to be the judge of the people, but try to preach the truth and let the chips fall were they will.

This vision was about 1962. I was troubled about what to do. I begged the Lord to tell me what to do. I prayed nearly three days and nights over this matter. The third night at 12:25 A.M. I heard these words so sweet and loud that the earth rang, ***"Be still and know that I am God."***

I awoke thanking the Lord. I looked it up in the bible, and it was found in the book of Psalms 46:10.

I have seen myself ascending upward toward heaven shouting praise to God. I have seen behind the gloomy cloud, and what a beautiful blue sky, with a golden Sun in the midst of it.

After all of these visions it seems that I would not be so depressed as much of the time as I am.

Dear readers, please join in and let us know what the Lord has done for you.

Elder J.R. Hollandsworth

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Romans 8:1.

Who is this scripture talking to? Who does it have meaning to? We could answer simply by saying that it is talking ***"to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."*** But that is not the message of the scripture. The message is that there is now no condemnation. The full meaning of this scripture can be felt only by someone who feels to be condemned. Do we not find within us sinful thoughts, sinful lusts, the working of corruption in our hearts to cause us to cry out, ***"For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find***

not." Romans 7:18. Can we find anything good dwelling in our old carnal self or flesh? If you had no faulty plumbing in your house, you would have no need to call a plumber.

If your house was not on fire, you would feel very foolish calling the fire department. If you don't feel condemned by God's just and holy law, the message of "no condemnation" would mean very little to you. What is a joyful sound to one is foolishness to another. ***"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness..." 1 Cor. 1:18.***

Dear sinners, how do you feel? Have you exhausted all of your own means to get out from under the condemnation of the law? Are you not aware of your sinful nature? Do you have daily conflicts within you? Are you ready to ask is there anyone like me? Why? Because you seem to stand so far from the things of God and godliness. You may say, my mind and thoughts go astray most of my waking hours. I have bouts with my temper, say and do things that are so contrary to what I feel a child of God should do. I so often lust after the things of this world, and in my thoughts and mind harbor idols that come between God and me. It seems I'm always partaking of the things that I would not and failing to do the things I would. How can I hope to be in Christ Jesus?

You see that you certainly had no control over your first birth. Then you feel with awe that ***"wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men for that all have sinned." Romans 5:12.*** There are no escape loopholes in this scripture.

All have sinned. And when you look at your own sins, the guilt and weight of them seem to get heavier and heavier. You realize more and more the purity of God's law. His commandments are good, just, and holy, yet they are broken in an uncontrollable manner. ***"For the good that I would, I do not, but the evil I would not, that I do." Romans 7:19.***

Yet, dear ones, if we by the grace of God are given to feel that we are corrupt sinners, is it not true evidence that we are live sinners? Yes, we are sinners but we are not dead sinners. If we were dead sinners, we would not be so aware of the ***"weights and the sin which doeth so easily beset us."*** It is through His grace that we are alive to our sins and corrupt nature. If we, through the quickening and teaching of the Holy Spirit, have been made alive to our sinful and corrupt nature, our weakness and inability to alter our condition; we are then ready to cry out with the Apostle Paul, ***"O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death." Romans 7:24.*** If this be So with US, then my beloved friends, I believe this is true evidence that we are live sinners.

Your interest is sparked with Nicodemus when Jesus tells him, "Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3. Then you realize that you have no more power over this second birth than you have over your first birth. The quickening power is completely and totally out of your hands.

And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins " Eph. 2:1. You cannot quicken yourself. If you are born again, it is "not of blood, nor of the will of flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:13

So then you are condemned in a corner from which there is seemingly no escape. But this corner acts as the most important turning point of your life. It turns you from self to Savior.

Remember in your schooldays when someone who broke the school's laws had to go sit in a corner? It could be a sorrowful place, - but usually a lesson was learned. *"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ..." Gal. 3:24.* This process may unfold rapidly as it did with Paul on the road to Damascus, or it may be very gradual over a period of many months and even years. But the results are the same: you are turned away from self to Savior.

And, oh what a turning away! When Jesus shines his countenance upon your soul and implants an earnest hope in your heart, the whole world seems to take on a new glow! You see Jesus everywhere! His is your all in all! Many of the beautiful old songs come to life because they echo your experience:

"Jesus! my Shepherd, Husband, Friend,
My Prophet, Priest, and King,
My lord, my Life, my Way, my End,
Accept the praise I bring."
(From "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds")

"On the wings of his love
I was carried above
Ev'ry sin, and temptation, and pain!
I could scarcely believe
That I ever should grieve,
That I ever should suffer again."
(From "O how happy are they',)

"Bright garlands of immortal joy
Shall bloom on ev'ry head;
While sorrow, sighing, and distress,
Like shadows, all are fled."
(From "Sing, all ye ransomed of the Lord")

Now our scriptural text leaps alive with power and beauty. The meaning of gospel as good news is clearly evident. It is exceedingly good news to your soul that "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. *"You feel to be in Christ Jesus; you have no desire*

*to walk after the flesh; your over*whelming desire is to worship the Lord in Spirit and in truth forever and ever. But eventually, the rich fullness of your experience seems to slip away. Cares of this world creep in. That once solid faith is being attacked by its counterpart, unbelief.

And you begin to think, how could such a sinner as I, really expect to be included in that precious flock?

Again, some of the old songs seem to express your sentiments as if they were written especially for you:

"Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I saw the lnrd?
Where is the soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus and his word?"
(from "O for a closer walk with God.")
"I find myself out of the way;
My thoughts are often gone astray;
Like one alone I seem to be:
Oh! is there anyone like me?"
(from "I am a stranger here below")

It is a wonderful source of comfort to find that there are truly others like you, others who believe and feel the sovereignty of God and the depravity of man. You find considerable comfort in the companionship they give" in the songs you sing, in the preaching you hear, and in the Word you read. You feel certain that surely these people are the children of God. And your certainty is anchored in scripture when you read, "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." John 15:5. You see that this fruit is brought forth not in order to have union with Christ, but because of a union with Christ. You have no spiritual independent existence out of him. Thus without a union with Christ, you cannot be a partaker of any spiritual fruit. So all the fruit of the Spirit, your faith, hope, love and the other graces flow out of a personal spiritual and experimental union with the Lord Jesus Christ. Every quickened child of God is to bring forth fruit. ***"For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10.***

But sometimes you wonder if you have any of these fruits. What are they? Some, for example, include fear, faith, love, and hope.

One of the first fruits ripened by the Spirit is that of fear. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.— When you first understand the consequences of being condemned, it can be exeeedingly fearful. Yet the Lord sees fit to make fear a fruitful attribute. ***"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of***

*wis*dom." Psalm 11:10.

As the fruit of faith comes to mind, we can only think of the Savior. He is the author and finisher of our faith. We firmly believe that he is indeed our only way, truth, and life. And this faith must be alive. It gives us access to the promises of the gospel and at the same time it demands fruitful works. "Faith without works is dead." James 2:20, Love toward God's people is a fruit that seems to give strength to my hope more than any other. A special love for the brethren seems to flow from breast to breast. There are no strangers. ***"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." 1 John 3:14. "What a comforting scripture! Hope is a fruit I believe we feel most of the time. Sometimes it seems to sink out of sight, yet even then you would not trade it for all the riches of this world. Even then, it is the "hope we have as an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast" Heb. 6:19.*** It is an earnest expectation of gospel promises yet unseen. ***"Who walk not after the flesh"*** We may all feel to walk after the flesh most of our time, but what is it to walk in this way? They that are led, or walk, after the flesh will never be led to the sight of their sins; for to walk after the flesh is to walk in darkness of this world, in ignorance of Christ and his grace, walking according to the course of this world. To walk after the flesh is to be continually pursuing and doing the things that pleases the flesh — whether it includes the profane things of the world or whether it is a more refined and deceptive form of godliness under a robe of worldly religion that glorifies the flesh by works and limits God's power in the work of eternal salvation. ***"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away ." II Tim. 3:5.***

"But after the Spirit." To walk after the Spirit is to walk in "newness of life." He will lead you to a sight of your sins and misery, to a clear understanding of your fallen nature. He will lead you out of self and to a crucified Christ. He will lead you into a love for the truth and a love for those who have had like experiences. He will lead you into this gospel truth. ***"For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Jesus Christ, and have no confidence in the flesh." Phil. 3:3.*** If the Holy Spirit has brought divine life and light into your soul and feeling into your conscience, you will be made to realize that you of yourself have no way of putting away sin, nothing to bring you close to God, no way to fulfill the demands of his righteous law, nothing to deliver you from condemnation, nothing to remove your doubts and fears and nothing to make you mete for heaven. The grand truth is we are just as helpless to partake of divine things after regeneration as we were

before.

"But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." Gal. 4:4. Jesus Christ came into this world for your sake, to save his people from their sins. To fulfill the law to a jot and tittle, to satisfy justice and bring in mercy, he paid double for all the sins of his people. He is the end of the law for righteous ness for you. His stripes heal you. His blood cleanseth you from all your sins. His righteousness delivered you from the curse and wrath of God. You are in a sanctuary in Christ. Your sins were condemned in the flesh of Christ and punishment fully rendered. Justice being once satisfied cannot demand a second satisfaction. Therefore there is no sentence of condemnation against you from the mouth of God because you are in Christ Jesus.

May we be forever thankful for blessed evidences, whose certainty is encouched in an all-powerful, unchangeable God. *"Being confident of this very thing, that he who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil. 1:6. "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." John 10:28. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:38, 39.*

Three words out of our text embody a force sufficiently strong to carry you past the chilly waters of death and into life everlasting. These three words are *"in Christ Jesus"* He is the resurrection, the truth, and the life. And when your time comes to face the sting of death, may that sting be removed by the loving presence of the Savior. May you truly feel to be in Christ Jesus, where there is victory over sin and the grave.

(Elder) Joe L. Hamrick

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Middletown, N. Y., April 1876

Mr. Slauson: In fulfillment of my promise, I will state some of the most important incidents of my life. I was born in the town (now city) or Norwick, Conn., on the 25th day of November , 1800. At a very early period, and as far back as my memory extends, I was seriously impresed with a solemn conviction of my sinful and lost condition as a sinner, and of the necessity of being "born again", to qualify me to see the kingdom of God. When I think from my best remembrance of the date, I was not more than seven or eight years old, I was made

to hope and rejoice in God as my Savior, and to feel his love shed abroad in my heart. I think that at that tender age I was taught of God to know what no other being could teach me, that *"Salvation is of the Lord"*. From that hour I have had no confidence in the power of men to effect or help in the least to effect the salvation of a sinner. In 1811 I was baptized by Elder John Sterry, and received as a member of the Baptist Church in Norwick. This was many years before the division of the Missionary or Fullerite Baptists from the Primitive order, and before any organized religious societies or institutions were known or tolerated in the Baptist denomination in our country.

In 1816, I came to the city of New York, and afterward became identified, by letter, with the Ebenezer Baptist Church, where I was called to exercise my gift, and was finally licensed to preach the gospel, this was about the year 1818. I then traveled in several states as an itinerant preacher, and supplied the Third Baptist Church in Baltimore three or four months in about 1821-2, but it suited my mind better to be traveling. I never failed to find places where I was well received, and without any support from missionary arrangement I was fully sustained, so that I could say as did the disciples whom Jesus sent out without purse or script, when they returned, that I had lacked nothing.

In 1823, February 4, I was married in the city of New York, and in the same year was ordained to the pastoral care of the Baptist Church of Ramapo, in Rockland County, N.Y., and continued with them until May, 1826, when I accepted a call to the pastorate of the Baptist Church at New Vernon, N.Y. This church was constituted about 1786, and my predecessor, Elder Benjamin Montanye, had served them as pastor thirty-three years. He died in December, 1825, and I succeeded him the following May. So it will be seen that this ancient church has been supplied for the last eighty-three (now eighty-eight) years by but two pastors. During the fifty years of my connection I spent the principal part of three years and a half in Alexandria, and Upper Broad Run, Va., and the Shiloh Church in Washington, D.C., but continued to visit New Vernon regularly during the time, and finally removed to New Vernon, in April, 1840.

For about forty years I have also served the Middletown and Wallkill Church, in connection with my labors in and with New Vernon.

During the half century all the members of both churches have been called to their inheritance above with the exception of about four or five. The two churches contain a membership now of about one hundred and eighty, nearly all of whom have been gathered into the fold, besides many others who have been called away, since I have been with them.

The division, or separation, of the Missionary Baptists in these parts, from those of the old order, took place about forty years ago. I stand today rooted and grounded in the faith and order on which the whole Baptist denomination in our country stood when I united with them sixty five years ago. I have found no occasion to depart from either the faith or order of the Church of God, as organized on the day of Pentecost. I cannot find by sixty-five years of careful and prayerful searching of the Scriptures, that those primitive saints who gladly received the word at Pentecost and continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, had any religious organizations as auxiliaries to the Church of God, existing among them. No Mission Boards for converting the heathen or for evangelizing the world; no Sunday Schools as nurseries to the church; no schools of any kind for teaching theology or divinity, or for preparing young men for the ministry; no pious rehearsals of the "Melodies of Mother Goose" or "Jack Horner" or the "cow jumping over the moon", among the institutions of Christ or his apostles. I am content to be considered all of eighteen hundred and forty-three years behind the progressive religious doings of the more popular religionists of the present time. I have never been identified with, nor have I had any fellowship for any religious rites, forms, fashions, or customs which cannot be found in the laws of Christ, and practice of the apostles and primitive saints. I do not denounce those who differ with me in regard to these things; to their own masters they stand or fall; nor do I dispute that there are among them some of God's quickened ***children; that is not my province. "The Lord knoweth them that are his"***, and he can bring them out of their idolatry in his own good time. But while I live I expect to protest solemnly, soberly, but not with unkind or malicious feelings, against their spiritual wickedness in high places.

The Signs of the Times, as you are aware, has been published by me nearly forty-four years. During all this time it has been devoted to the defense of what my eternal destiny rests upon as the truth as it is in Jesus. My warfare is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, and against the rulers of the darkness of this world.

My race is nearly run. I am now in the seventy-sixty year of my age. My voice will soon be silenced in death, my pen will pass into the hands of another, and I hope abler writer, but the eternal truth for which I have so long contended will be lasting as the days of eternity. And when all the deceptive and luring doctrines and institutions of men shall be exposed, and all who have trusted in a refuge of lies shall bewail their folly and call for rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the presence of the

Lamb, those who know and love the truth shall in the truth rejoice forevermore.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

MEETINGS

LOWER MAYO ASSOCIATION

The Lower Mayo Association is to be held, the Lord willing, on October 3rd and 4th, 2008. Russell Creek Church will host the meeting. The meeting house is located approximately 9 miles south of Stuart, Virginia near the Virginia, North Carolina border. Those coming North or South on Route #8, turn east on Ayers Orchard Road #653 for about 1 mile. Turn right on Moorefield Store Road #631. Go 1/4 mile to church location on right. Those coming east or west on route #58, turn south on southfork loop #827, turn on Ayers Orchard Road #653. Go 3 miles to Moorefield Store Road #631. Turn left, go 1/4 mile to church location on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in salvation by grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
276-952-2098

SULPHUR FORK ASSOCIATION

The above association normally held on the first weekend In October will NOT be held until further notice. After 162 sessions, we are no longer able to properly host the association.

We wish to thank each of you for your presence and support of the past associations and extend a warm welcome for you to attend any of our churches at their regular meeting dates.

Miles Bird
Association Clerk
318/687-6775

CORINTHIANS 12:6.

And there are diversities of operations. but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 2008

Douglas G. Hodges, VA 10.00
Elder Raymond Goad, VA 15.00
Ollie C. May, AL 10.00
Elder Kenneth Hopkins, VA ... 10.00
Charles Hatchett, OK 5.00
Charlie Wood, VA 5.00

OBITUARIES

CORA ILENE TERRY CLIFTON

It is with great love and sadness that I attempt to write the obituary of our beloved sister, grandmother, mother and dear friend, Cora Ilene Terry Clifton. She was born March 10, 1913 and fell asleep in Jesus June 16, 2008. She was 95 years old and we feel very blessed to have had her in our presence so many wonderful years. I felt she was "grandma" to everyone who knew her.

Sister Ilene united with New Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church, Sept. 17, 1966. She served as clerk for 41 years. Until her health would not allow her to do so, she faithfully attended her church and sister churches as long as she was able. Many Brethren and Sisters visited and fellowshipped in her home, and as a child I remember these precious times, having Sunday meals with her. Sister Ilene had strong belief in predestination and the Lord's will be done. She would tell you while she was bedridden in her last few months; she was waiting on the Lord to take her from this world of pain and suffering.

Sister Ilene was preceded in death by her husbands, William Hugh Terry, and Arzie E. Clifton; two sons James Lee Terry, and Elder William Hale Terry; one granddaughter; two great granddaughters and one step grandson; her parents George W. and Emma Turner Hale. The only siblings that survive her out of 15 brothers and sisters, is a brother, Warren G. Hale and wife Pauline Hale.

She is survived by her sons and daughters in law, Elder Alan and Lorraine Terry, Tommy and Gardella Terry. Daughters and sons in law; Marie and Dale Bowman, Ruthy and Garnett Hall, Janie and Garnett Largen. Step Children and Spouses; Shelby and Chuck Cochran, David and Winkie Clifton and Linda and Roger Chilton. Two special daughters in law, Lucy W. Terry and Glenna T. Terry.

Our beloved sister was laid to rest June 19, 2008 in the New Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord. Her funeral was conducted by Elders Larry Hollandsworth, Carl Terry, Mark Terry, Tim Mcgrady and Reverend Russell Payne. We know our loss is her eternal gain.

I feel very blessed by the Lord as does her family to have known such a precious sister. She loved her church and her family and will be greatly missed.

Written in Love,
Carla T. Horton

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

CHRIST MY STRENGTH.

I KNOW I'm weak and sinful,
My very nature's vile,
But Jesus Christ will guide me,
And lead me as a child.

His special care engages
To be my strength and shield
Against the wiles of Satan,
In all the doubtful field.

My strength is often banished,
And I'm left alone to mourn,
But then I'm made to witness
The strength of God alone.

His strength is only perfect
When all my own is gone,
And I am less than nothing,
Bewildered and forlorn.

My sins will not allow me
To merit one kind word;
They make me know my weakness;
And rob me of all good.

I must rely on Jesus
For all things here below,
And all my hope of heaven
His goodness must bestow.

I stretch my arms to Jesus,
And crave supplying grace
To lead, uphold, support me
Till I have run my race.

J. G. EUBANKS.

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EDITORIAL

"And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times and half a time, from the face of the serpent." Revelations 12:14.

Elder J.B. Farmer

It seems that the scriptures in Revelation are especially mysterious because of the all the figurative language used there. But we are taught that ***"all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."*** And we are taught that ***"the natural man receiveth not the things of God for they are foolishness to him: neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned."*** So these things are as high above us as the heavens are above the earth, and we cannot know them unless God is pleased to open them unto us. I cannot help believing that He shall make them known to His people as they have need to know them.

The woman John saw was clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. The woman, I must believe, represents the church of the living God, being clothed with the most glorious imputed righteousness and grace of God, and having the less glorious fulfilled law under her feet. She has been redeemed from the curse of the law and now shines in the brightness of the glory of God. Upon her head, which is Christ, is a crown of twelve stars, which appear to be the twelve apostles, which are built upon the chief cornerstone, which also is Christ. And this woman brought forth a child, Jesus Christ, and a great dragon, the devil, was ready to devour the child as soon as it was born. But the child was caught up to God and to his throne, which I am

made to believe is speaking of the resurrection and ascension of Christ. And the great dragon persecuted the woman to destroy her. But to the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

I am made to believe that the two wings of a great eagle are the same as those that were referred to in Deuteronomy 32 where it is recorded that Jacob was found in the waste howling wilderness, and was led about, instructed and kept as the apple of God's eye. God was with him as He is with the church: ***"As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him."*** Those wings, to me, represent the delivering power of God to continually make a way of escape for God's little ones that they might not be tempted above that they are able to bear. They represent the Holy Spirit of God that carries you out of danger and keeps you safe in God's appointed wilderness place all your days here on this earth.

The woman fled into the wilderness. We know that a wilderness is a desert land, where there is no water and no food to sustain life. The wilderness, spiritually, is where the children of God now live in this world. There is nothing in the natural world to nourish that life which is in you by the Spirit. The manna must be sent down from above to feed you, and the water must be sent forth from the spiritual Rock that follows you all your life, in order to sustain you in this barren land. My mind is taken to 1 Kings 17 and the prophet Elijah. This passage is the account of the time when there was no rain in the land, according to Elijah's word, for three and a half years (a time, and times, and half a time). Everything was drying up. There was a drought and the people there were becoming destitute, having neither crops nor streams to provide for their needs. The brook Cherith furnished drink for the prophet for a season, but even it dried up because there had been no rain in the land. ***"And the word of the Lord came to him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee."***

So Elijah arose and went to Zarephath. And he found a widow at the gate gathering sticks. He asked that she fetch him a little water, and as she went he asked her to bring him a little morsel of bread. ***"And she said, As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and behold, I am gathering two sticks, that***

I may go and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat and die." This, I am made to believe, is the experience of the saints and the church in the dry and inhospitable desert wilderness. Many times they feel that there is but a step between them and death. But God is merciful to deliver them in a miraculous way that they could not have imagined. They are given faith to believe and trust in God, and God is faithful to meet their needs abundantly, as was the case with this widow woman.

This woman was called to walk by faith, believing God was able to deliver, even when there seemed to be no way. *"And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth."* So she was commanded to take what little she had and give it to the prophet first, having the promise of God that she and her son would be nourished until the Lord would send rain upon the earth again. She was like the widow woman that Jesus observed, who gave her two mites – all her living – into the temple treasury, trusting that the Lord God of heaven and earth would provide for her. Neither widow was disappointed. And neither shall the church be made ashamed, believing that God is able to keep that which she has committed unto Him against that day – even her life.

"And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days. And the barrel of oil wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah." Here is the picture of a woman in the wilderness, being nourished for a time, and times, and half a time (three and a half years), from the face of the destroying famine. And so is the church of the living God now being sustained in the desert place where God has put her. She is being nourished from the face of the serpent until the time of refreshing comes. I am made to believe that the time of refreshing shall be the coming of the Lord in the clouds. He will be as welcome as the life giving rain to a thirsty and seemingly perishing soul, to one who is a weary pilgrim and hated stranger in a foreign desert land. At the Lord's coming all our troubles shall be past and forgotten. The comfort and joy shall be unspeakable in His glorious presence, where there shall be no more crying or pain, no more hungering and thirsting, and no more sorrow and distress.

"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and

blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God. Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isaiah 35.

From time to time we are given little seasons of rejoicing while here in the wilderness, but they soon pass, and we begin to sorrow once again. But the time of refreshing is coming in the Day of the Lord, and there shall be no end to it. Everlasting joy is yours and is laid up for you and cannot fail to come, for God has promised, and He cannot lie or fail in a promise. God has been merciful to give us a little taste of heaven here on earth, and it is precious. That taste causes us to desire the fullness of it. What shall it be to stand in His presence and look into His face and see Him as he is and to be like Him? What shall it be to hear the myriads of angels and the elect of God singing everlasting praises to the Lamb of God that took away our sins with His own precious blood? What shall it be to have no more remembrance of sin, no more sorrow and pain and no more fear of death? It shall be the eternal life of joy and peace and comfort, which God has promised and which is the earnest expectation of the creature, who groans here in this wilderness and travails until it comes.

John, in the Spirit, said, *"After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the Lamb,*

clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen." Revelation 7:9-10.

May the Lord keep us pressing on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. May He cause us to lay aside every weight and the sin, which does so easily beset us, and to run with patience the race that is set before us. May He keep us looking to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. May we finish our course with joy, and may we be blessed to be faithful unto death that we may receive the crown of life – even eternal life. May this glorious hope, which is Christ in you the hope of glory, sustain us in all the days of our wilderness wanderings. May we be given grace to praise our God from whom all blessings flow while strangers and pilgrims here, then render perfect praise to the Lamb of God in glory for ever and ever.

I trust this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

J.B. Farmer
8-28-2008

CORRESPONDENCE

September 10, 2008

Please renew the subscription of Barbara Runyon for 2 years.

Enclosing a check for $30.00. Use the balance where needed.

This is a birthday gift for my mother who will be 72 years of age on September 21, 2008.

Thank you,
Reta Runyon Medford

Send to: Barbara Runyon
1803 Augusta Drive
Thomasville, NC 27360

---

1 CORINTHIANS Ch. 1:29-31.

That no flesh should glory in his presence.

But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

That, according as it is written, He that glorifieth, let him glory in the Lord.

VOICES OF THE PAST

FRAGMENTS.

Where to begin in writing upon the wonderful work and the wonderful experience of salvation, is sometimes a serious question. We cannot begin with the Lord's purposes and work, because we know nothing of that until we experience it. The rescued lamb, if it could talk, would not begin by talking of the wisdom and power of the Shepherd, of his ownership of the lamb and his work in redeeming it, but would begin with its own remembrance of its painful, hungry, helpless condition and then of its surprised delight in being taken up into the bosom of this wonderful man whom it came afterward to know as its shepherd. We can know nothing of the Sun of righteousness until his healing beams touch us; we see him only in his own light.

In the case of Joseph's brethren, the beginning of their knowledge of him as having been sent before them to save them, was a famine called for by the Lord upon the land where they dwelt. So the beginning, of the knowledge of salvation on the part of the Lord's people is an experience of a famine upon all this world; not a famine of bread and worldly riches, but a famine of righteousness. (Psalms cv.) The mountains and hills of human power and wisdom are made waste, and all the herbs dried up, so that we find nothing growing there any more to feed our souls that are hungering for righteousness. Instead of rivers of salvation, which we had formerly thought of as flowing from the exaltations of worldly and fleshly power and goodness, we see only islands; no water at all, but the opposite, and all the pools of human wisdom and merit, at which we had before satisfied our thirst, dried up. (Isaiah xlii. 15, 16.) O what a terrible thing sin is and this we are going to learn more and more while we live in this mortal state.

My thoughts are much upon my unworthiness in the sight of a holy God. Unworthiness is too mild and weak a word to express what I feel concerning, myself. ***"Behold, I am vile,"*** said Job, but he was one pronounced perfect by the Lord, therefore we know that their expression, and the one that follows: ***"I abhor myself,"*** tell only what is experienced by a child of God. When one, however, sees in his own heart and mind what I am seeing in mine, it seems to him very questionable whether such a one can possibly be a child. The feeling of anguish of one in such a condition is unspeakable. He will be thinking that he is one who, like Esau, has sold his birthright; nothing that he can do can restore it to him; or that he is the one who has sinned wilfully, and now there is only a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation; or like one who has trampled under foot the Son of God by

thoughts and acts of disobedience.

It is true that Esau could not have had a birthright as Isaac's son to sell if he had not been a son, and that his sonship he could not lose, whatever rights he might sell; and so one cannot sell a birthright to the spiritual blessings, privileges and enjoyments of the church of Jesus Christ unless he has been born of God, for none other can have them to sell, and that relationship of a son cannot be sold. This may and probably does save the disobedient child from despair, but it does not take from him the terror of tbe Lord, nor restore to him the joy of God's salvation. So in the other cases alluded to by the apostle, we know that the one who is convicted in his soul before the Lord of having sinned wilfully, and of having trampled under foot the Son of God, by disobeying his sweet commands, is a child of God. The natural man is not *"under the law to Christ,"* and cannot sin against that law, nor do despite to the Spirit of grace, for he is not *"under grace,"* but is under the law of Moses, and is dead in sin under that law. It is because One is a child, and under grace, and under law to Christ, that disobedience and wilful sinning cast him so terribly into the depths, which close him about *"even to the soul,"* and cause him such fearful suffering. *"The man who has not been quickened by the Spirit of God does not know that kind of suffering; there are no bands in his death; his strength is full, he prospers in his worldly religion, and has more than heart can wish." (Psalms I xxiii.)*

But while we are shut away from spiritual enjoyment, and feel that the Lord has made our chain heavy very justly, and has shut out our prayer, there is a kind of relief in reading our state and condition of mind in the inspired Scriptures of truth, and in the hope, which cannot entirely lose its power as an anchor of the soul, that deliverance will come to us some time and in the Lord's own good way. The Lord's love and tender care will never leave his erring, wandering, disobedient child, he watches over him, he looks upon the one who says, *"I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; he will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. Lo, all these things worketh God often times with man, to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living."- Job xxxiii. 27-30.*

I have been thinking of the great goodness of the Lord toward such as I, who have to say:

"O Lord! how vile am I;
Unholy and unclean!
How can I dare to venture nigh,
With such a load of sin!

But when I think not only of his

wonderful long-suffering and goodness in causing this vile creature to suffer such keen humiliation in order to withdraw him from his purpose, and hide pride from him, keeping back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword, but also of his glorious goodness in giving him, when the trial is complete, prevailing faith to see and feel his sins all gone, washed away in the cleansing fountain of Jesus' precious blood, how can I but rejoice and say, ***"I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord;"*** I have by faith a deliverance from the body of this death. More than forty-two years ago my soul rejoiced in this expression of the psalmist: ***"O how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men! Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man; thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues."- Psalms: xxxi. 19, 20.*** What a sweet rest is here for the poor soul who has been found by the Shepherd, helpless and undone in the mountain of worldly strength and righteousness, lost in the bewildering mazes of worldly vanity, and has been tenderly brought back upon his shoulders and hidden from the world in the secret place of the Most High, where he shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

It is now the seventh day of December, 1906. Forty-two years ago a council met at my former home in Herrick, Bradford Co., Pa., in accordance with the request of the Middletown and Wallkill Church, in Orange Co., N.Y., to consider the question of ordaining me to the gospel ministry. On account of the inability of my father and mother to travel a distance, the meeting was appointed at our home, about two hundred miles from the church of which I was a member. Of the six ministers who constituted the presbytery only one is now living. Elder Gilbert Beebe was the moderator. The examination and a sermon occupied the first day. The ordination services were on the 8th. The weather was pleasant, and there was a very large congregation both days. What my feelings were at the time, a mingling of hopes, doubts, fears, zealous desires, I would like to tell, but cannot. As I look back how short the time seems, which would have appeared so long to look forward to at that time. How little I thought I should live forty-two years; Though the time seems so short to look back to, yet how few of those who were present then are living now; of those who were the council I do I not remember of but two now living. Of my father's family and the families of two brothers living near, there were eleven who were members of the church at Vanghan Hill in 1865; only two of these are still on earth: my sister Bessie and myself. What

questionings were mine at the time as to whether the Lord had called me to preach, and what questionings have been mine many times since. I was baptized on the second Sunday in June, 1864, by Elder Beebe, in Middletown, N.Y., and from that time I had but one subject to talk about, and that was salvation by grace. But it was near the last of August that I was told by the Spirit that I must preach. I had listened to a sermon in which there was no gospel, but error from beginning to end. My desire was to get up in that congregation and tell the people that this that they had heard was not the truth; that if they knew what the text meant it would comfort them. I had been a member there, and would have felt no hesitation in speaking, but the Spirit suffered me not; but in an instant it was made known to me that I must preach. My one desire was (and has been ever since) to go and tell to all the ends of the earth that salvation is of the Lord. I wrote Elder Beebe, and asked him what such feelings meant. He replied that the church had thought I had a call to preach, and was waiting till the Lord should let me know it. Well, sometimes I feel that my work has been of the poorest kind, not worthy to be called preaching, and sometimes it seems to me that it has been a glorious work, and that all the praise belongs to Jesus, the dear Savior, who has at times filled my heart with love to him, and has filled my soul with langhter and my tongue with singing.

But O, the dark nights, the terrible afflictions, the awful desolations of soul that have been mine to experience; they cannot be told. During these years I have traveled much, and spoken often, and met many kinds of people, and experienced many wonderful things. There are many of these experiences and incidents that would be of interest, I know, to the brethren, and I have sometimes thought I would try to tell some of them, and recount some of the circumstances of my travels, and tell of the ministers I have intimately known. I know of only one now who has been ordained a longer time than I. How poor appears my work, and myself. Truly I can say I feel to be the least of all saints, if I am one. But how sweet is the fellowship of the saints to me. If I ever write of these things I hope it will surely be by the direction of the Lord, so that I may write nothing that will hurt the cause of truth or any of the Lord's people. ***"Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life."*** This is what the angel said to the apostles when he had brought them out of prison.

"All the words of this life." What a solemn and sweet expression this is! This is the divine life; this is the life that was in the Lord, and which is the light of men; this is the life which Jesus is to his people, and in which they are all one with him. ***"He that hath the Son,***

hath life." Our natural life has to do with the things of this world, and the words of this natural life tell of the wisdom and knowledge of this world, and of its interests and activities and pleasures of every kind. All of these shall come to an end with the end of this world; they are all corruptible, defiled, and shall soon fade away. But the words of this divine, holy, spiritual life tell of all that pertains to God and the things of God; they tell of infinite wisdom and knowledge and power, and of love and mercy and grace, and of salvation and all spiritual blessings; they tell of tbe wonderful love of Jesus, which passeth knowledge, which caused him to die for his people that they might live; they tell of his glorious resurrection and his ascension to the right hand of God; they tell of all the precious things which he hath prepared for them that love him, and of the inheritance which he hath begotten us unto by his resurrection from the dead, which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. To feel these spiritual things, to know their power and blessedness, is better than all this world can give; and how inexpressibly good and pleasant it is to be given this grace to speak all the words of this life, this holy, pure and infinitely exalted life, and what an unspeakable blessing it is to anyone in this world to be favored with power to hear and understand these words, to hunger and thirst for them and the things they tell, and to find that they are spirit and life to us, and are living in our hearts and lives.

Elder Silas H. Durand

PROVERBS 15: 1-9.

A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.

The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit.

A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.

In the house of the righteous is much treasure: but in the revenues of the wicked is trouble.

The lips of the wise disperse knowledge: but the heart of the foolish doeth not so.

The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the upright is his delight.

The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord: but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness.

"I REMEMBER THEE."

"Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown."- Jeremiah ii. 2.

Unless you have a heart to know the Lord, the things declared in this chapter will be altogether unintelligible; you can have no apprehension of their spiritual significance. But if we are those who fear the Lord there will be found in this chapter very sacred things, which, when unfolded to us by the Holy Spirit, will move our hearts to throb with manifold emotions. I said in my heart a few moments ago, Here are love's chidings and chastenings, pleadings and grievings.

Then came the question, Is the Lord in very truth such as he is declared to be in the Scriptures and my heart said, In very truth he is. Then the question comes, How can I so confidently pen this? and this is my answer, I hope in very truth I know the Lord. O, it is I wonderful that any poor sinner should have the right to say this, and I feel it is only by a miracle of grace that I dare say, I know the Lord, or rather, am known of God. (Gal. IV. 9.)

"Loved of my God, for him again
With love intense I burn ;
Chosen of thee ere time began,
I choose thee in return."

"Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee." This is marvelous condescension, that Jehovah should have regard to sinful creatures, and that he should reveal himself in such near and dear relations. *"Who hath God so nigh unto them?" Deut. iv. 7. "For that thy name is near, why wondrous works declare."- Psalms lxxv. 1.* This may well excite the wonder and adoration of those who are made partakers of such distinguishing favor.

"Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee." As I look into these words of God this gleams forth to my view: it is love's entreaty; it is the Lord declaring to his sinful, straying, ungrateful people that he loves them still, that he has never forgotten them, and cherishes remembrances of their love to him. Thus he speaks: *"O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee."* This is the constancy of the love of God. But in contrast to this, look at these words: *"Can a maid forget her ornaments, or bride her attire yet my people have forgotten me days without number."- Jer. ii. 32.* While the elect of God are dead

in trespasses and sins Christ is unknown, undesired, we see in him no beauty that we should desire him. At that time (saith the apostle) *"ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."- Eph. ii. 12.* As I just penned this quotation a sort of a shudder passed over me as I looked upon the dark and awful picture of man's unregenerate estate.

Ah, the whole world lieth in wickedness, pursuing its course in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, with no concern over their lost condition under the curse of the law, and with no regard for the true and living God. *"Without Christ," "having no hope, and without God in the world."* Such were we, *"by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ."* When God called us by his grace he awakened us and made us alive to our bondage to sin. Like Israel in Egypt, our life was unto us as in an iron furnace (Deut. iv. 20,); yes, we were in the furnace of affiiction in very truth. We were alive to the knowledge that we were vile transgressors, and the frown and condemnation of the law weighed down our hearts. Like Israel in Egypt, we toiled in the field, but our hard labors were all insufficient to accomplish our daily tasks; we could not yield to the law what it in righteousness demanded. Every day we came short, and we were beaten with stripes, the yoke of the law was more than we wretched transgressors could bear. (Acts xv. 10.) Then we fell down and cried in our affiiction for mercy unto the Lord. The Lord did not despise nor abhor the affiiction of his afflicted ones in Egypt, neither did he hide his face from them, but when they cried unto him he heard, and came in power and all graciousness, and brought them out of the house of bondage. He bare them on eagles' wings, and brought them unto himself. (Exodus xix. 14.)

So the God of our mercy comes to sinners whose souls he hath quickened into divine life and called by his grace. Jesus comes to us, he is revealed by the Holy Ghost in us. (Ga]. i. 16.) He shews himself the crucified One, our Sacrifice, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Poor, guilty sinners, we mused upon his sufferings, his wounds, his blood, we believed the story of our Pascal Lamb; his love, his sacrifice told to our sin-wounded, mourning hearts good tidings, healing tidings, we believed the Gospel, we believed in Jesus; we girded our loins, put our shoes on our feet, and with our staff in our hand we feasted on the Lamb of God, Christ our passover sacrificed for us. (Ex. xii. 11; 1 Cor. v. 7.) The

tribes of Israel went forth of Egypt into the wilderness; they followed the Lord, who in the cloudy, fiery pillar went before them. He led them through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and pits, through a land of drought, and the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt. (Jer. ii. 6.)

The time of the soul's espousal to Christ is a sacred and memorable time. Have we forgotten? Christ has not, he will recall it to our minds, he will awaken the memories of this season of our first love. ***"Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals."*** Jesus found us poor and wretched, In our rags and filth, so sin-defiled.

We were sinners feelingly "ready to perish,"- Deut. xxvi. 5. There was none to help, no comforter to relieve our souls, no eye pitied us to do anything for our salvation. We must have perished in our sins under the curse of the law, but Jesus came, he looked upon us, and we looked unto him. (Jsa. xlv.22.)

His speech was full of compassion, his gospel was good news indeed, we saw in his wounds and blood that love moved him to die for our sins. We were drawn to him confessing our impurities and pleading his forgiveness. His obedience even unto death became the refuge to which in faith we fled for deliverance from the law's condemnation. With sweet tokens of pardon and salvation, Christ espoused us to himself, and in our soul's love to him our heart's sweet song was:

"Love moved him to die, on this I rely;
My Savior hath loved me, I cannot tell why;
But this I can tell, he hath loved me so well
As to lay down his life to redeem me from hell."

Yes, we believed in the Son of God, we loved him. In those days our heart was ever kindly toward the Savior, so desired was he; in his gospel we caught glimpses of him, and so longed for was the Savior. Some sweet word of his gospel was sent, brought by the Holy Ghost to us, and our sin-distressed heart said, Can such a, kind word be for me? We were thrilled with longings, with hope it might be so, We sought the Savior, we sent a secret petition to him, asking, Are such gracious words of thine in the gospel for me? These were the days of our espousals, love-letter days. He wrote to us, and in a return our heart moved us to send some poor, broken sentences to him. Our letters were such a mixture of sighs and longings, trust and distrust, we told him we were uncomely, and so unworthy of his regard, and after we had sent a letter to him we were ashamed of it;

we said to ourselves, It is so badly penned, it is just like myself, poor, worthless sinner, he wlll see it; is from an ignorant creature, and after a glance or two he will cast it from him into the fire; I fear I shall never have another line penned by him to me. His letters were so well written, so noble, gracious, full of tenderness, we could hardly believe they were written to us, so poor, sinful and ignorant we knew ourselves to be. Well, what do you think Christ has done? I will tell you; he did not throw these letters away, but he has kept them as, every scrap of them, locked up in his heart. *"Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth,the love of thine espousals."* As I have intimated, this means he has treasured up all her love-letters to himself, and now he brings them forth from the casket of his heart and reads them in her ears. *"Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem."* Can you, O backsliding daughter of Zion, disown these letters? Did not she indite them? Are they not Zion's own heart penmanship? Were they not addressed to him only? Was there at the time of writing them any other in her thoughts? Can she defy her own signature? Take a glimpse of these letters written by the saints or God in the days of their spiritual youth; there are photographs of them in the holy Scriptures.

"Some of them are blithesome and gay, happiness in Christ the Lord sparkles in every word; some are tear-stained, telling the sighs and moanings of her sin-languished heart, beseeching him to come and in his pity redeem her from her miseries. All these letters have a sweet-smelling fragrance. Was it not her own hands, dropping with sweet-smelling myrrh, that perfumed them? (Song of Solomon v.5.)

O the wayward, backsliding believer cannot deny these things, and when our Lord comes saying in our tears, *"I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals,"* how we are stirred; we then remember, too, and we are ashamed and blush, and sigh beneath these memories of our early attachment to our Lord Jesus Christ. Then it was that *"Jesus all the day long was our joy and our song;"* then the heart flowed forth in its freshness, simplicity and fervor; then, O believer, thine heart was kind, thy thoughts were yearning and tender toward the Lamb of God, thine eyes were often turned to him with tearful entreaty, and his smile was then thy heaven. In the day of our espousals to Christ we were hopeful and happy in him; Sin was atoned for, we were pardoned and we had peace with God through him.

Such loveliness and desirableness had been revealed to us in him, the suffering, sin-atoning sacrifice, that we were drawn to him. (John xii. 32.)

"His loveliness hath won my

heart;
Dear Jesus, let us never part;
I'll sound thy lovely name abroad,
My altogether lovely Lord."

Yes, in the love of our espousais we crowned him as our Husband, Shepherd, Savior, King; Christ was our all. It was a time of reciprocal love and gladness, it was the day of the gladness of Christ's heart. (Song of Solomon iii. 11.) He rejoiced over us with singing. (Zeph. iii. 17.) His speech, his gospel was a gladsome song, and our happy, sin-pardoned heart in all kindliness and love did sing, He is the chiefest among ten thousand, he is altogether lovely; worthy is the Lamb that was slain. No stranger inter-meddleth with the joy (Prov. xiv. 10,) of Christ and the church in these espousals days. Of Jacob it is written, ***"The Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him."- Deut. xxxii. 12.*** All gods were utterly renounced and famished out of the land, (Zeph. ii. 16.) They had cheated and mocked us, in our distresses they gave us no sustenance, afforded us no help, they were lying vanities, (Jonah ii. 8,) and we cast them to the moles, and to the bats. (Isa. ii. 20.) .We now knew it had been very folly to say to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods. (Hosea xiv. 3.) Now we could sing:

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and rigteousness."

To Jesus we looked, he altogether satisfied us, and all things and all others were now counted but dung, that we might win Christ. (Phil. iii. 8.) He had attracted, won us, and we would win him who had won us. For there was no other one to save a poor sinner, (Acts iv. 12,) and no other was there that we worshiped, trusted, loved; we were leaning on him alone. Are you able to enter into this sacred mystery? Christ and the believer, these two, espoused, no third one. ***"I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown."*** Thus it was with typical Israel; forth from Egypt they came, the Lord going before them in the cloudy, fiery pillar; after him they went into the wilderness, a land not sown. Here God nourished them with bread from heaven. (Ex. xvi. 35.) He opened the rock, the waters gushed out to give drink to his people, his chosen Israel was holiness unto the Lord, a peculiar treasure unto me, saith the Lord, above all people. In the first happy season of the believer's espousals to Jesus when he is saying, My Savior is mine and I am his, he thought, Through a delightsome land I shall go with Jesus, my Redeemer, until he shall bring me into his palace on high. Is-

rael having passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, (Heb. xi. 29,) sang most joyously, The Lord hath triumphed gloriously.

(Ex. xv. 1.) From the Red Sea they went out into the wilderness of Shur: and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water. And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah."-Ex. xv. 22, 23. Then, and many times afterwards, the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way."-Num. xxi. 4.

Nevertheless a divine power drew them on; here and there they were led about in the wilderness; though unworthy and rebellious they found grace in the wilderness, (Jer. xxxi. 2,) God kept them to himself as the apple of his eye, (Deut. xxxii. 10,) and at length he brought them in rest into that land which is the glory of all lands. (Deut. xi. 12; Ezek. xx. 6.) In our first days of blissful intimacy with our Redeemer we dwelt and walked where the flowers cast forth their fragrauce, and the birds were sweetly singing. (Song of Solomon ii. 12.) These were sacred moments, for we were drinking the forgiveness of all our sins of Christ, our Fountain of living waters. (Jer. ii. 13.)

"Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

One such, some time ago, said, *"Master, I will follow thee whither-soever thou goest. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."* A believer, in the kindness of his youth feels altogether willing to go anywhere with Jesus, and sometimes in his soul's simplicity he sings:

"Through floods and flames,
if Jesus lead,
I'll follow where he goes."

Ah, little does he understand what his loving heart is singing. Let me repeat once more that when Christ our Savior and King, betrothed us unto himself (Hosea ii. 19,) he did not immediately take us to his palace, into heaven itself. No, the Holy Spirit shewed us some pictures of it, and the "better country;" (Heb. xi. 16 ; Isa. xxxiii. 17,) we had foretastes of the heavenly felicity given us, and we were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, and in this comforting earnest of our inheritance, (Eph. i. 14,) by faith we journeyed in hope of eternal glory with our dear Savior. It was a terrible wilderness we came into shortly after our espousal to Christ; (2 Cor. xi. 2,) it was a waste and howling place, and there were scorpions and fiery flying serpents. Ah, how often do we find that we are in this wilderness

even to this day. While we have the felt companionship of our beloved *"Savior, while we are walking in the highway with him, (for in the wilderness an highway shall be there."-Isa.* xxxv. 8.) while we are following hard after him, (Psalms lxiii. 8,) all is well. He is our Guide and Protector, but O, when we step aside from the highway, scorpions and fiery flying serpents abound, and fears and miseries, hunger and thirst, plague our life. We thought in our youthful days our life henceforth as a ransomed, pardoned sinner was to be to live and journey in a land of corn and wine, a land of brooks and gentle rivers, flowing with the loving-kindnesses of the Lord; but only for some little moments nave we found our way to be such. We have had to come into the knowledge of the dreary, howling desert of the human heart. Our vile, sinful heart we have found to bring forth only briars and thorns; truly it is a land "not sown, with any good thing, (Rom. vii. 18,) consequently we can harvest nothing there from for our sustenance and spiritual comfort. Look back, O believer, to those early days of the kindness of thy youth, and the love of thine espousals to the Lamb that was slain for thy sins; was not thy heart all kindness toward him? It was. But this coming into the wilderness astounded us, we did not know then that there could be such a horrible wilderness as it is. We trembled, we blushed we mourned, but to the Savior we were clinging; we confessed it all to him and implored his compassion and salvation. Those fiery flying serpents, our sinful thoughts, are dreadful; a child of God cannot tell when or where they will attack him, and so he is often harrassed and bitten and soul-sick indeed because of the plague of his own heart. *(1 Kings viii. 38.) "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked,"* breeds these scorpions and serpents, (Gen. viii. 21; Matt. xv. 19,) and surely we need to be ever watchful, and to have our healing balm near by.

"Precious is my dear Physician,
Oft I prove his power to heal;
Curing every sad condition
When he does his love reveal.
Precious Jesus,
Much I need thy healing power."

The world, its trials and temptations are as a devouring waste to famish and shrivel up the ardor and blessedness of the love of our espousals; but through the rugged wilderness, through tribulation, the church of Christ must travel, and when our Lord is near, when on him we are leaning, we can hold on our way and tread temptations under our feet.

Thus saith the Lord, *"I did know thee in the wilderness."-Hosea xiii. 5.* Yes, dear Lord, thou hast owned us, pitied and succored

us in all our dreadful straits. O thou hast been pitiful indeed, so rich in mercy, ever revealing thyself in all gracious intimacy to us vile, unworthy sinners. Though rough and thorny was the way, the kind words of Christ's gospel revived our courage, creating for us here and there a grateful oasis. Out of the heart-wearying cares and conflicts of our pilgrimage we entered these pleasant places of living green. The doctrine of Christ came to us in power, in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance. How transforming is the word that Christ speaketh to us! Then in the wilderness waters break forth, and streams in the desert; in fellowship with Christ we drank of the brook in the way, and our face was lifted up unto God, (Psalms cx. 7,) and thus our scenes of desolation are made to become unto us as the garden of Eden. (Ezek. xxxvi. 35.) What though we are perplexed by Satan, and our old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, weighs down our life in the dust, and with weak hands, feeble knees and fearful heart we are ready to halt, (Psalms xxxviii. 17,) soon all is changed when we are moved by the Holy Spirit to look unto Jesus. In his atoning sacrifice we see sin's destruction, our old man crucified with him, Satan defeated, death and the grave swallowed up in victory. Yes, Christ is with the church in the wilderness, (Acts vii. 38,) and through the world and all tribulation with eye of faith and love she followeth him to the realms of immortal love. Read again with me our text: *"Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown."* Have we not recollections of it all *"Thou wentest after me in the wilderness," but saith the Lord, "Have I been a wilderness unto Israel a land of darkness"- Jer. ii. 31.* No, dear Lord, thou hast not. *"O my people, what have I done unto thee and wherein have I wearied thee to testify against me."- Micah vi. 3.* Is there a voice in all the host of Israel to testify against God? Not the first syllable is uttered, but all heads must be bowed with confusion of face before him. O there is not an instance in all our pilgrimage wherein Christ has been wearisome, a wilderness unto his people. Then why, O backslider, hast thou changed, become so degenerate, so cold, so indifferent to the things of Jesus Christ. Why art thou so far removed from the fervor of thy first love. Why are thy privileges in the church of God so neglected. Come, dear brethren, let us not put away these searching questions, it is profitable to examine ourselves whether we are in the faith. Is Jesus Christ less precious, less needful, than in the days of the kindness of our youth and the love of our espousals.

Is he not still the only Fountain of living waters? What are all things

else, all others, but broken cisterns that can hold no water? Are you crucifying the flesh with the affections and the lusts? (Gal. v. 24.) Are you seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness? Are you seeking your carnal ease, so greedy for money, so swallowed up with the things of time? Are you so looking upon the things that are seen, which are temporal, that your eyes are become bleared that you scarcely see the things which are unseen, which are eternal? (2 Cor. iv. 18.) Can it be that temporal things have become more weighty with us than things which are eternal, the far more exceeding and the eternal weight of glory? If so, then our scales are in a wretched plight, we are miserably deceived and are in a dreadful condition. Perhaps, notwithstanding our profession of the name of Christ, we are none of his. (*Rom. viii. 9.*) *"Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee."*

What, remember a sinner like me?

FREDERICK W. KEENE.
NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

HEBREWS 13:1-2.

Let brotherly love continue.

Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

SOUTH RIVER, N.J.

ELDER B.F. COULTER-DEAR BROTHER:- I can scarcely realize that six weeks have passed since your letter was received. I thought I would answer immediately, but every day has brought its cares and duties, and time goes so rapidly. I cannot tell you how much your letter was appreciated, but I am afraid you will think otherwise by the delay in answering. The inclosed letter for brother Stults I delivered the same day, also I took mine and read it to him; he seemed interested, and when I came to these lines "With me the question comes, Am I a part of that perfect body of Christ? he said, *"That is it;"* he could scarcely talk for crying. His trial has been greater, than any can imagine, but he bears it well, and says it is right. I am pleased to have you express your feeling as you did for this little church at South River, and to know you enjoyed your visit among us. I feel that we also were profited by your presence and cheering words.

How much I wish we could have such meetings oftener. You say, *"Is it not well that we can rejoice that we are born to die."* I think so. Some time ago I said to a friend, "If I thought there was not an end to this life I would be unhappy." He said, Well, I would not give much for your happiness. *"There is very little in this life to cling to, all things seem so empty and vain, and without the hope that we*

have been born again there would be but little if any comfort." The question now comes to me. How do I know that I have been born again?" *"We know that we have passed, from death unto life, because we love the brethren."* If this is an assurance, I feel. that I can claim it, for I do love the Old Baptists, and strange to say, I cannot remember the time when I did not. Some of my most pleasant recollections are the times I have spent with them. I am glad I have been received among you and can speak of you as my people, for I have been a wanderer so long, and why I cannot understand. I feel that I have been brought in a very peculiar way. If I knew it was my Savior that had been leading me in this way I would be satisfied, but I have made so many mistakes. I might have done differently, but how I do not know. I regret so much uniting with the New School Baptists. My greatest desire was to be among the people of God, and I thought it made but little difference as to the denomination. I still feel that some of God's dear children are there. I only remained with them two years; I was a member there at the time of the last association here; at that time Elder Durand said to me, *"You are in Babylon, come out."* Does it not seem strange that he should say that to me at that time, and I a stranger to him? He does not remember saying it, but with me it left an impression.

You have asked me to write you some of my experience, so I will try to comply with your request, but I feel my inability to express myself. It is a subject I love to hear, but one I can talk but little on.

I cannot tell you of my first convictions; I had serious thoughts when I was quite young and a desire to be good, and had a very sensitive nature. When I grew older and went to any amusement I would enjoy myself for a time, but there would come such a depressed feeling that I would wish I had stayed at home; I would think, I will not again. I did not want to be so different from other young people, and would try to overcome the feeling. I attended the Methodist revival meetings quite often during the winter, and would be much interested, but I did not understand them. At times I have heard them say, *"How different you would do if you knew your soul would be required of you before the morning,"* and *"If this was the last opportunity you would have to give your heart to God."* I thought it would be no different with me, for I knew I could do nothing, I felt my utter helplessness so much. One night, after hearing that kind of talk, I was speaking to my mother, and how bitterly I cried; I said, if I knew this would be my last night on earth I could do no more. Some years after, when I was so burdened, I spent such a restless night, my sleep was so broken it seemed that I scarcely slept at all; in the early morning these words

came to me, ***"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."*** Those words did not bring me comfort, I doubt if I understood them at the time. I said to my mother, ***"I would rather not have been born than to feel as I do."*** Soon I arose and went down stairs, I had been there but a short time when my burden was gone, and a sweet peace came to me; I can never forget it. I know it was peace that this world can never give.

Now this is some of my experience, and my hope that I have been born in Christ's kingdom. This was in February, 1880; the following June I was baptized, and united with the New School Baptists. The years that have intervened to the present time have been a mixture of doubts and fears, feeling I had no place either in the world or with the people of God. Have you ever been comparatively void of feeling? I scarcely think you have, and I wonder how anyone can feel that way who has experienced such joy. The evening of September 26th, after I was baptized by Elder Durand, at my request he spoke from Ephesians ii. 19. It was an expression of my feeling after wandering so many years.

"There would I find a settled rest,
While others go and come,
No more a stranger or a guest,
But like a child at home."

I have tried to write you the best I can, and also to condense it as much as possible, but while writing on this subject many things came to my mind, and perhaps I have written too much.

My mother wishes to be remembered to you and your wife, also to sister Craven. I hope you will feel like writing me again. Adieu for the present.

Yours in a precious hope,
EMMA MARTIN.

OTEGO, N.Y.

DEAR ELDER KER :- I have felt a desire for several days to write to you; why it is I cannot tell, for I do not know what I will say, or why such a great sinner as I feel myself to be, should even dare attempt to write to one of God's ministers, but I have you so much in mind, and thinking of the many good things you have said to my comfort in days past, I have a great desire to hear you again. A year ago you were with us here at Otego, I would be so glad if you were coming this year.

I could not be spared from home to go away and attend any meetings the past year, for Mrs. Guernsey has been very poorly, and Mrs. Beesley is feeble, she cannot get out of bed or her chair alone.

Our dear pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, was with us last Saturday and Sunday, he comes laden with the good things of the Master's kingdom, and

we have good meetings each month, and have no reason to complain. I like to hear the different gifts and ministers, and often wish I could go to meetiug every Sunday. Dr. D. M. Leonard and wife were with us last Sunday, and said they were with you the fourth Sunday in October.

I hope you are well, and enjoying the presence of your Savior, which is far above anything in this world. I feel so dull and dead, I often wonder if I do really know anything of spiritual things, then my mind goes back about eleven years, when I hope the Lord did speak peace to my troubled soul, and all was joy for weeks and months; then after time that season of joy gradually left me, and it seems that I keep sinking down, down all the time, and often wonder who or what I am; but still amid all the gloom I cannot, dare not, say I have no hope; there seems to be something that holds me, a poor, weak, sinful creature, unworthy of the least of his mercies. There is such a gloom around and over me when I go to bed and when I awake. The other morning as I awoke these lines came to me:

" Weary of earth, myself and sin,
Dear Jesus, set me free,
And to thy glory take me in,
For there I long to be."

I am a mystery to myself, and often wonder why I was born, and for what purpose? I am just good for nothing and the greatest sinner on earth, still I do believe God has a purpose in all things, and what he does is ever best, though I cannot understand it; but I do desire to be content with my lot and not murmur, for the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell herein: for he hath founded it upon seas and established it upon the floods. I love to hear the people of God talk on spiritual things, but I cannot write or talk myself; it is not given me to talk but I hope I am thankful to be given to understand even a little of the great and glorious plan of salvation by grace; Truly what a great blessing to be given to hope that I have a hope.

"What was there in me to merit esteem,
Or give the Creator delight,
'Twas 'evenso, Father,'
I ever must sing,
Because it seemed good in thy sight."

I enjoy your writings in the Signs very much, and wish you would write more. The last SIGNS has much good reading in it.

I feel sure you will overlook all imperfections in this poor attempt at writing; it is only such as I have give I unto you. I felt I must write a little, and will not expect a reply, for I know your time is fully occupied with the work your Master has called and qualified you for.

From a sinner, saved by grace, if at all,

ROSE B. TAMSETT.

October 22.

"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart."- JEREMIAH xxix. 13.

AFTER the Lord has quickened our souls, for a time we often go, shall I say, blundering on, *not* knowing there is a Jesus.

We think that the way of life is to keep God's commandments, obey the law, cleanse ourselves from sin, reform our lives, and cultivate universal holiness in thought, word, and action; and so we go, blundering and stumbling on in darkness; and all the while never get a single step forward. But when the Lord has suffered us to weary ourselves to find the door, and let us sink lower and lower into the pit of guilt and ruin, from feeling that all our attempts to extricate ourselves have only plunged us deeper and deeper, and the Spirit of God opens up to the understanding and brings into the soul some spiritual discovery of Jesus, and thus makes known that there is a Saviour, a Mediator, and a way of escape - this is the grand turning point in our lives, the first opening in the valley of Achor of the door of hope. And when the soul has once seen that there is a Jesus, and once felt a measure of the power of his resurrection, it never goes to any other quarter for pardon, justification, and salvation. When the Spirit of God begins to open up with power in his conscience that there is a Jesus, that he is the only Mediator, that the Son of God has come down and taken a holy human nature into union with himself, and is now at the right hand of the Father, it is the first break of day, the first dawn of hope; and upon that bright spot does the shipwrecked soul fix his longing eyes till the Sun of righteousness arises upon it with healing in his wings. It is a great step in a man's experience to turn wholly and solely to the Lord, and renounce all creature righteousness, all forms and ceremonies as a way of salvation. It is a great mercy to turn away from them, as the shipwrecked mariner turns away from his sinking ship, and looks to the rising sun to shew him some way of escape, and thus afford him some gleam of hope.

Elder J.C. Philpot

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
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SONG

Approach my soul the mercy seat,
Where Jesus answers prayer,;
There humbly fall before his feet,
For none can perish there.

Thy promise is my only plea;
With this I venture nigh:
Thou callest burdened souls to thee,
And such, O Lord, am I.

Bowed down beneath a load of sin;
By Satan sorely pressed;
By wars without and fears within,
I come to thee for rest.

Be thou my shield and hiding place,
That, sheltered near thy side,
I may my fierce accuser face,
And tell him, Jesus died.

O wondrous love! to bleed and die,
To bear the cross and shame,
That guilty sinners, such as I,
Might plead thy gracious name.

Poor, tempest-tossed soul, be still;
My promised grace receive;
'Tis Jesus speaks! I must, I will,
I can, I do believe.

Newton.

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EDITORIAL

And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, recieved not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. (Hebrews Chapter 11, vs 39-40)

Elder R.H. Campbell

These are the last two verses of the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, the chapter describing the faith of the children of God under the law, incidentally, the word faith, only appears once in the old testament, and then it is referring to those who have not faith. Israel, under the law suffered many afflictions and died not having the fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham, in his day. They were blessings promised to his seed in each generation following, and were promised to him because they were his seed. In this chapter the apostle Paul enumerates many of those afflictions that were endured by Israel because of their faith, and then at the last end states that they received not the promise, meaning the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham.

They were looking for the coming of the Messiah, the prophet that Moses said would come, and to him the gathering of Israel would be. By faith they looked for his coming, even as his children of this day look, by the same indewlling faith his coming again, in all of his glory, to gather all of Israel unto himself, and present them spotless unto God as his bride. This hope enables them to the trials that they will endure, and although they are considered as the off scouring of the peoples of the earth in this day, they look by the same faith to the fulfilling of the same promise that Israel looked for when the above scripture was written.

This trial of faith was originated, by God, from the beginning when he placed enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman. This has been the lot of the seed of the woman, and will be until the restitution of all things. when God sends his Son again, and this time to claim his bride.They are com-

forted in the fact that Christ overcame the serpent in behalf of the seed of the woman, and therein lies their confidence that they too shall prevail in the end.

Their belief in this fact is faith, which is the gift of God by his free grace, and not the result of any works or efforts on the part of the creature. Jesus confirmed this fact again when he told his disciples, *(John 16:33) "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world."* Peter referred to this trial of faith from its positive aspect, *(1 Pet 1 :7) "That the trial of your faith being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."* His children would not change this hope for anything that the world has to offer.

Paul goes on to say that there were better things provided for those, under the second covenant, than those things that were received by Israel under the law. The law was for natural man and pertained to natural things promised to them for their keeping of the natural law. Man could never attain unto salvation under its terms. The better things that were promised, which were not received by Israel under the law, is the Spirit of God indwelling them as it does in our day, they never experienced this blessing, because Jesus had not been glorified. I used to read this to mean that this was something that we have that they did not have nor ever would have. I now understand it to mean that those under the law had not received this blessing because, at that time Jesus had not been glorified.

Jesus told Nicodemus that except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of heaven, and this had happened to none under the law. Salvation is treasured in the finished work of Christ, and this had not been completed until Jesus overcame the serpent in his death on the cross, and redeemed his sheep from under the curse of the law.

(John 7:37-39) "At the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood up and cried saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified." The promise that the Jews had not received under the law was the glorification of Christ in his death, and when that is fulfilled, all, both Jews under the law, and the Gentiles under grace will receive the fulfillment of the promise, that was made to Abraham, so that they with us will be made perfect.

The apostle Paul, writing to the Gentiles at Ephesus and referring to the position of those under the law versus the Gentiles (Eph 2:12-19) "That at that time ye (Gentiles) were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ, for he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle walll of partition between us, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby. And came and preached peace to you which are afar off, and to them that were nigh, for through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. *(Rom 11 :32-33) "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."* These truths are beyond the scope of human reasoning, they can be discerned except by the revelation of God in the person of the Holy Spirit. They do not succumb to the reasoning of the natural mind, as the apostle Paul said, in his epistle to the churches at Galatia, *(Gal. 11-12) "But I certify you, brethren that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."* This is still true today, man with all of his proposed intelligence, cannot learn them in a seminary, or any school of higher learning, for the natural man can only teach the things of nature, and that has no part in spiritual matters. This is attested to only by those who have experienced it: until then; they are even as they were born in nature, natural creatures with natural understanding, and then suddenly they are instructed in matters that they had never known nor seen before, even as the apostle Paul on the road to Damascus, and he immediately began to preach the doctrine that he had previously attempted to destroy. Then Paul said that his experience was a pattern to them that would thereafter believe in Jesus unto everlasting life.

Elihu, a type of the Holy Spirit stated it this way, *(Job 33:14-17) "For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not, in a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from hls purpose, and hide pride from man."* Then man awakes and proceeds to follow

those instructions, never realizing the source of the intelligence. Paul said it, on one occasion, ***"work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and and to do of his good pleasure."*** Aren't you glad of these scriptures which set forth salvation as the work of God, in all of his ways, and that your salvation is not dependent upon the wisdom of the creature. These things are sure and steadfast, and shall never be changed by man, or set of men. They are established by God who changes not, and who is of one mind, and will ever be. This is predestination in its purest form, and is the basis upon which the salvation of all of the heirs of promise is based, for the scriptures state it so very clearly, (1 Cor 3:11) ***"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus"*** or, as Jesus himself said it, ***(John 14:6) "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me."***

In bonds of love:
Richard H. Campbell

ST. JOHN 5: 19.

Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, the son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

CORRESPONDENCE

Oct. 2nd, 2008

Mr. Horton,

Please renew my subscription to the signs of the times for 2 years.

My husband and I look forward each month to getting the signs.

Thank you,
Doris Giles

Oct. 16, 2008

Dear Mr. Horton,

Enclosed please find a check for renewing my subscription to the "Signs" for two years, plus a little extra to use as you see fit.

I feel your selections for "Voices from the Past" have been made a blessing to this reader, along with all the good editorials that have been sent in by the Editors.

Even though I live so far from any established church, God has blessed me with fellowship with those of like faith since I became a subscriber to the "Signs" twelve years ago.

My heart felt prayers is that He will enable all of his people to worship him in Spirit and in truth, as only He can give, and to give Him all the

praise and glory.

In that hope, and in the ties that bind I trust,

Caroline Martin

Oct. 19, 2008

Dear Tony,

I hope this finds you and your family doing well. Please find enclosed my check to renew the Signs for another year.

The extra can be used as you see fit. Thanks for all you do in getting the Signs out each month. May the Lord continue to bless all who take part in this publication that it might always be in accord with the gospel once delivered to the Saints as it has been for these many years.

Sincerely,
Mary Summers Lee
1191 Hampton Road
Eden, N.C. 27288

10-13-08

Please renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times for two years, and the rest to use where needed.

The writing is greatly appreciated and I pray for peace and understanding of it all.

Thanks,
Faye G. Brown

131 Kayla S.
Shreveport, La. 71105
Oct. 15, 2008

Bro. Tony Horton,

Enclosed please find check for $30.00 to be used to pay for one year subscription of "The Signs of the Times", which I really enjoy reading and the rest to be used as you see fit.

I hope all is well with you and your family.

Sincerely yours in Christ I hope,
Billie G. Speir

Oct. 21, 2008

Dear Brother Horton,

Please renew my subscription to Signs of the Times for 2 years. I really enjoy all the writings and everyone who has anything to do with the Signs of the Times.

A little sister in hope,
Sallie R. Hodges

Brother Horton,

I see that it is time for renewing my subscription.

Enclosed is money for 2 years and the rest use as you see fit. Enjoy reading the Signs and have for years.

A brother in hope,
Elder Ronald K. Crouch

Sept. 29, 2008

Dear Editors of the Signs,

Please renew my subscription for two years.

I enjoy the dear Signs so much and I don't want to miss a single issue.

Thank you very much,
Libby Hedrick
4 Ash Lane
Altavista, Va 24517
If there is any left over.
Please use as you see fit.

ARTICLES

From "A Treasure of Hymns"
Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken

NONE of our hymn-writers has had a history so remarkable as that of John Newton, who wrote this noble hymn. He was born in London, July 24, 1725. His mother was a pious woman, who taught him the Catechism and many other good things but she died when the lad was only six years old.

His father was a sea-captain, and could not supply the place of a mother. He took the boy to sea when he was eleven years old, and the young fellow learned to curse and blaspheme, and became very wild. After his father retired from the sea, the son made several voyages by himself. At one time he was forced into the navy , a war being expected, and he became a midshipman. But he was very restless and he deserted, was caught, stripped, whipped severely, and degraded to the ranks.

By this time he had become a thorough infidel, and was steeped in all kinds of sin. He fell into the hands of a slave-trader in Africa, and suffered all manner of hardships there, being continually insulted and almost starved. Delivered providentially from that terrible situation, after many strange and hazardous adventures he became a slave-trader himself, and made several voyages to Africa in that shameful occupation.

The reading of Thomas a Kempis, the fearful experiences of a storm at sea in which his ship was almost lost, his deliverance from a severe fever in Africa, these, and other experiences, at last awoke in the sinful man the memories of the religion his mother had taught him, and he turned from his sins with true repentance.

His conversion was so complete that he became a minister of the gospel. This was in 1764, when he was thirty-nine years old. He settled in Olney, England, and there it was that he formed the beautiful friendship with William Cowper which has given to the world so many splendid hymns. Some think that it was

with the desire to draw Cowper's mind away from his deep melancholy that Newton proposed that the two should compose a series of hymns together. Of the famous collection that resulted, "The Olney Hymns," Cowper is said to have written sixty-six, while Newton wrote the rest of the three hundred and forty-nine. But more of Cowper's hymns than of Newton's have become famous.

"Safely through another week" is one of Newton's hymns that is most often sung. Others are: "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds," "Approach, my soul, the mercy seat," "Come, my soul, thy suit prepare," " For a season called to part," "Great Shepherd of Thy ransomed flock," "In evil long I took delight" (which surely paints his own experiences), "Jesus who knows full well," "Lord I cannot let Thee go," "One there is above all others," "Quiet, Lord my froward heart," "Saviour, visit Thy plantation," "Sometimes a light surprises," " 'Tis a point I long to know"

"While with ceaseless course the sun," and still others that are found in most of our hymn-books. But the greatest of all the hymns of John Newton is "Glorious things of thee are spoken." It is a noble description of the people of God, under the protection of their supreme leader. Newton wrote five stanzas, and you will like to see all of them. The last two, however, are inferior to the first three, and are seldom printed in our hymn-books.

Glorious things of thee are spoken, Zion, city of our God!
He whose word cannot be broken, Form'd thee for His own abode:
On the Rock or ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
Thou may'st smile at all thy foes.

See the streams of living waters,
Springing from eternal love,
Well supply thy sons and daughters, And all fear of want remove.
Who can faint when such a river
Ever flows their thirst to assuage?
Grace, which, like the Lord, the giver,
Never fails from age to age.

Round each habitation hovering,
See the cloud and fire appear,
For a glory and a cov'ring,
Showing that the Lord is near,
Thus deriving, from their banner,
Light by night, and shade by day:
Safe they feed upon the manna
Which He gives them when they pray.

Blessed inhabitants of Zion,
Wash'd in the Redeemer's blood
Jesus, whom their souls rely on,

Makes them kings and priests to God.
'Tis His love His people raises
Over self to reign as kings,
And as priests, His solemn praises
Each for a thank-off'ring brings.

Saviour, if of Zion's city
I through grace a member am,
Let the world deride or pity,
I will glory in Thy name:
Fading is the worldling's pleasure,
All his boasted pomp and show:
Solid joys and lasting treasure,
None but Zion's children know.

"Olney Hymns" was published in 1779. In that year Newton became rector of a church in London, and died there December 21, 1807. Thus he had a long life after his conversion.

It was a very useful life. Wesley and Whitefield were his friends. Among his converts were Claudius Buchanan, the great missionary to the East Indies, and Thomas Scott, the eminent Bible commentator. He preached almost to the time of his death, asking, *" Shall the old African blasphemer stop while he can speak?"* And he still preaches through his strong and spirited hymns.

VOICES OF THE PAST

CHRISTMAS! WHOSE BIRTHDAY?

Deceivers and deceived think that Christmas is Christ's birthday and we may expect soon to hear them making much of the occasion from their pulpits and the press. And it is customary at this season of the year to send kinsmen and friends some token of remembrance.

There is no harm in remembering family and friends at any season. It is good that we remember each other, but Christmas is NOT what we hear from the pulpits of AntiChrist it is. Besides, the Lord taught not that we remember His birthday, but that we remember His suffering and death.

Neither the Bible not history informs us of the day that Jesus was born. Not even the year. But a study of the Bible and history will convince us that Christ was not born on or even near the day we call Christmas. This festival, and its manner of commemoration, is of pagan origin, having its beginning some three hundred years before the birth of Christ and observed by the heathen in commemoration of the wine god Bacchus, or Dionysus an Olympian god, worshipped by the heathen as the god and giver of the grape and wine, in art figured as a bearded man

corresponding with our present day myth of Santa Claus, in which character he was worshipped with rites characterized by estatic singing and dancing.

By the time Christ was born this heathen festival now called Christmas had become the greatest of all pagan holidays, and had come to be observed throughout the pagan world. The festivities began a week before the day now known as Christmas day, with that day the high day of festivities and most wanton exuberance. Singing carols, drinking, dancing, carousal and dissolute revelry, the dregs of which have come down to our day characterized the festivities celebrating the wine god Dionysus. Until this day, even right here in so-called Christianized America, people consume more liquor during the Christmas season than at any other time of the year and that in celebration of Christ's birthday! That is, they say it is His birthday. But it is NOT Christ's birthday. It would be better to call it the birth day of Antichrist. It is observed throughout the world in a manner befitting Antichrist. Christmas? Why is the day called Christmas? Well, it wasn't for over three hundred years after the birth of Christ. That made it over six hundred years from the time of its origin to the time when it began to be called Christmas or Christ's Mass, which in time was shortened to Christmas.

It was after Constantine became Emperor of Rome in 323 and professed to be converted to Christianity and by decree compelled all his subjects to pretend Christianity, that the old pagan festival began to be called Christmas. It was made a "Christian festival" (in pretense) just as all the rest of the pagan rituals and festivals were made Christmas. It was done to please the people, who had been required by their Emperor to give up their former religion and embrace another. But the only thing it turned out to be was to change the name of their religion, and for their accommodation Constantine provided In subsequent decrees for all of their festivals, idols, etc., to be retained and continue on in their same old way but pretend that all of it was some part of Christianity, and give everything a name accordingly. Thus their old heathen wine god day (Bacchus day) became Christ's Mass, or Christmas. And until this day the people are being told that it is Christ's birthday!

The ancient festival of the wine god was, according to history, the greatest holiday of the Roman Empire when Christ was on the earth. Then, as now, the people were not required to perform duties to the government on their holidays. But it was the decree of Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed, and this is the reason that Joseph and Mary were in Bethlehem when Jesus was born (Luke 2:1-5). The Emperor's decree would not have required them to be in Bethlehem

during the festival of wine god, Bacchus, the biggest *of* all Roman holidays. Also the heathen wine god festival came in mid- winter when shepherds did not keep their flocks in the fields by night, as they were doing when Jesus was born (Luke 2 :8) .

The birthday that should be of concern to Christmas is the day of our spiritual birth, the day we are born again. This, to me, is the true birthday of Christ His birthday to everyone in his time. We are not due to observe Christ's birthday. His birthday would be only ONE DAY a year, but we are due to observe Him behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, and observe Him EVERY day. Let us keep Him and all that He sayeth in memory every day. If we do this and find joy in it, the pagan revelry and carousals of Antichrist will be of no appeal but rather of disgust to us.

True Christianity requires full time and a different kind of observance. Which best do we enjoy?

Elder J. L. Kimbro
Kinston, Ala.

SAVED BY HOPE.

Hope is the Christian's anchor. He is saved by hope, but not in the sense that he is saved by the blood of Christ. The distinction is very broad and easily seen. However he is not saved by hope independent of the blood of Christ, but he is saved by the blood of Christ independent of hope in Christ as his Savior: There could be hope independent of Christ as the Savior. He is the hope of all who believe in him. Hope is that precious God-given grace that has for its origin the gift of eternal life. It is born of eternal life.

The blood of Christ saved at the cross all for whom it was shed. It was in order that he should save his people, that he gave his life a ransom for them. Time will develop through the gift of eternal life who they are. Hope lays hold upon the work finished on the cross and rejoices in the victory through the Lamb of God that was slain. This is salvation by hope; it saves the believing one from gloomy despair, from unbelief, but does not save a soul from death in sin or from eternal perdition. Doubts and fears ofttimes seize the child of God and he feels he cannot claim the promises of God; feels he is a stranger and without hope. But, nay, hope is the anchor that is sure. ***"It rests in nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness."*** Men must and will ever fail to provide such refuge for the faint and weary ones. God has set before you a hope which is sure and steadfast and it enters into that within the vail, and that is to Jesus your Savior.

This hope of homeward-bound saints has stood amid the storms of centuries an unfailing support, an impregnable fortress, the imperishable rock of safety. It is the one hope

of their calling, and will abide until death shall remove them, and they shall *"know as they are known."* Then they will have passed beyond the power of hope to save, but not beyond the efficacy of the blood of Christ, the reedemed sinner's only plea. By the patience of hope they here wait the fulfillment of the promise of God, and though it tarry, they wait for it, knowing that he who promised is faithful and true. Is this my hope? It is the Christian's beacon light, reaching out over the dark clouds of sin and death; abides amidst the wreck of thrones and kingdoms of men, and finds its victory over every obstacle in the one God and Father of all, to whom be glory and dominion for evermore.

R. W. Thompson

THE DEAD IN SIN.

The Scriptures frequently use the word "dead" or "death" to properly convey to us what is the true state of the unquickened sinner. Various theories are advanced as to the real condition of one who is dead in sins, and hence the contention among the masses as to the means to be applied for his restoration, or rather his salvation. It is readily admitted by those of sober deliberation that if the sinner is totally depraved-dead in sin- then conditions of salvation cannot be complied with by him. But inconsistent and contradictory as it is, many deny that his state of death is such, as to render him unable to comply with "the terms of the gospel," the conditions by which he may obtain his eternal salvation. Most of the professed religious world hold this view, from the Catholics to the Mormons, the Primitive Baptists excepted.

"Dead in sins." This form of expression is used in the Scriptures to show what is the condition of those who are willingly the servants of sin, being lead of the prince of darkness. The Holy Spirit would not have made use of this strong expresssion had it not fitly stated the sinner's lost condition, previous to regeneration, It is used a number of times and places in the Scriptures and this should impress us with the importance with which we should regard it. We have an eternity of existence to spend somewhere. Are we dead in sin or are we dead to sin? If we hate our sins it is evidence we are dead to sin and alive unto righteousness, This is a blessed state, *"Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord, imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile;" Ps. xxxii, 2.*

There is another class we wish to call attention to. They differ from those of whom we have just spoken in that they are not dead in sin, but are asleep. In outward appearance they bear strong resemblance to the dead in sin, but these are admonished to awake and arise from the

dead. This points out the difference in the two classes. It requires more than exhortation to the dead in sin to quicken them - arouse them to spiritual activity. They must have life from God: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;" Eph, ii, 1. This is a very different work than that of "waking" one out of slumber. It can only be effected by the irresistible power of God: *"It is the Spirit that quickeneth;" John vi, 63, "I give unto them eternal life;" John x, 28. "The gift of God is eternal life;" Rom. vi, 23.* When the call is to arise from slumber, *"awake to righteousness and sin not,"* it is not a call to the dead in sins, but to those who are asleep to gospel privileges and the commands of righteousness of life. They are living saints, but have their dwelling among the dead. How much better it would be for them to awake from sleep and arise from the dead, and Christ will give them light! *"If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin;" 1 John i, 7.*

R.W.Thompson

Acts 2:1.

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

SCRIPTURAL PRAYER.

By request of a humble saint of God, I will try to give my views to the MONITOR readers on the above subject, *"Scriptural Prayer."* I desired to give the name of the one making the request, but was asked to omit the name.

Believers were enjoined by Christ to pray, with assurance that they would receive. All necessary encouragement is given true believers to pray. Scriptural prayer never fails; it availeth much. It is the expression of the motion of a righteous soul to God; the expression of the real felt needs of the dependent soul. The truly penitent soul pleads and begs in prayer for God's forgiveness and blessings. In wisdom penitents confess their sins and plead for mercy. They believe the knowledge and goodness and mercy of God are infinite. James admonished his brethren, saying, *"If any of you lack wisdom, let, him ask of God, that giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him, but let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like the wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord;" James i. 5-7.*

What must the believer believe to ask in faith, nothing wavering? He must believe the Lord can grant his request, if it is his will to do what he asks him to do. And, behold, there

came a leper and worshipped him, saying, *"Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed;" Matt. viii, 2, 3.* Jesus prayed in the garden, saying *"Father, if thou be willing remove this cup from me: nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done;" Luke xxii, 42.* Jesus, the Son of God, understood that his Father, God, knew best, and said, "Not my will, but thine be done.

The knowledge of our God is infinite; he cannot be informed. Great is our Lord and of great power: his understanding is infinite;" Ps. cxlvii. He knows what we need before we ask him, and he knows whether it will be good for us to give us and do for us what we ask before we ask him. *"Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things;" Matt. vi, 32.* But Jesus did not commit himself to them, because he knew all. And needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man (John ii, 24, 25). He knew his thoughts and desires before they were expressed in prayer. Our heavenly Father knows far better than we do what favors we should have from his hand. And as all his blessings to us are blessings of mercy and grace, it is not becoming to ask him for anything; only conformable to his perfect will. And whether we always word our prayers as James instructed his brethren: *"If the Lord will,"* etc., or not, it should be in our hearts, *"If the Lord will," Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst;" Thy will be done."* Our will should be that his will be done at all times.

In prayer we should address God as our superior in every way as having a perfect knowledge of all things, past, present, and future; our thoughts, our actions, our needs, and whether we will be thankful for his blessings, praise, honor and serve him. He knows whether they will be remembered or forgotten. How ungrateful his people have been! How forgetful of his mercies! What we poor finite, imperfect, erring creatures might think would be a great blessing, might prove to be a great curse. Paul said, *"We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."* This becomes us as unmeriteous recipients, to be reconciled to God. What he does for us or with us will be right; being too wise to err, and too good to do wrong. Then, let us come boldly to the throne of grace, come with confidence and obtain mercy, and find grace to help in times of need. Pray for grace, for the blessing of wisdom from above, that we may know how to pray; pray for grace to help, that we may have spiritual strength to conform our lives to his revealed will; pray God to increase our faith, that the fiery darts of the wicked may fall harmless at our feet, and that his

whole armor may be our vesture, and that spiritual weapons may be our defense and success.

J. M. Thompson

And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand and when ye turn to the left. (Isa. 30:21)

As I endeaver to write something from this text, I would pray that the Lord guide my every thought, for I often turn to the left or right and do not follow the straight and narrow path when left to myself: and invariably I go wrong and fall into many traps and errors. I would desire to pray as David, Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.

We know there are many ways to use the word 'walk', but it is my desire to apply it as a way of life. The things that we think, the things we say, the things we do, and the attitude toward these, formulate our walk before men and God.

It is of variable importance to each of us what our neighbors and friends think of us, and, because of our vanity, we sometimes say and do things to improve our image or esteem in the eyes of others for false reasons. When we do this, we turn out of the way and are not walking as we should before our Maker. We may deceive our fellowman, but God is never deceived, for He knows our thoughts and intents of our hearts from afar. There is not a word in our tongue that our Lord does not know before we ever speak it. This is what causes the children of the Heavenly Father to fear, and desire to walk before Him in truth and humbleness. It is only His people who desire to walk righteous in His sight, and they are the only ones who hear, ***"This is the way, walk ye in it."*** In my youth I was taught that if I would walk in the straight and narrow way I would find Jesus and walk thru those Pearly Gates with him. But I found that I could not walk in a way that I knew nothing about. I did not know Jesus, therefore I did not know the way, nor the truth, nor the life. It may be that I do not know him now, but at times my heart rejoices in the hope that I believe he has given me. I was also taught a system of works, and I applied myself vigorously, expecting to be saved and blessed for doing these good works. Naturally my efforts were for naught, and eventually I was made to see what a great sinner I am and that all of my works of self-righteousness is as filthy rags in His sight. Every child of grace is brought to this knowledge at some point in his life; and from that time forward he constantly begs for mercy. He is made to realize that if he is saved it is by grace thru faith; and that if he has this faith it is not of himself, but is a gift of God. Consider the two thieves who were

crucified with Christ. Had either done any good thing that he could plead before God? One of them railed on Christ and said, If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us. But the other was made to see in that last hour that he was justly condemned, and pleaded for mercy: Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. You know the answer Christ gave. And this is the way every child of grace feels when he is made to know that he is justly condemned.

But there is a vast difference between self-righteous works and works of faith. James tells us that faith without works is dead. The work that Abraham did in offering up his son was a work of faith. He believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness. On the other hand, Saul thought he was doing great works for God as he went about persecuting the church. This was the works of the flesh and a carnal mind, but on the road to Damascus he was taught a great lesson. When that light from heaven shined round about him, he fell to the earth and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? He had been working in the name of One he had never known. It seems to me that is what most of the world is doing today. We should never criticize them for their belief, but have compassion. Remember who maketh us to differ. It is these same people, however, that charge that Old School or Hardshell Baptists are a 'do nothing' people; but I do not believe this for one moment. God's people will do every good work appointed unto them; For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. As surely as God hath ordained our works, we will walk in them; for His word returneth not to Him void, but it shall accomplish that which pleases Him, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto he sent it.

God's children walk by faith, not by sight. They are blessed to work, not for working; and they are blessed to hear the joyful sound, 'This is the way, walk ye in it.' And, Blessed is the people that hear the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.

There was a time when you were dead in trespasses and sin, and walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: but God, who is rich in mercy, has quickened you. You are no longer in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. If you are in the spirit, you will walk in the spirit and not in the flesh. Paul tells us, There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ J esus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. However, there is always conflict between the flesh

and the Spirit; they are contrary one to the other so that you cannot do the things that you would. Therefore, as Paul admonishes us, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh. What are the works of the flesh ? Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry , emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkeness, revellings, and all such things. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, peace, joy, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Brethren, let us heed Paul's admonition: If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory , provoking one another, envying one another.

Brethern, I ask you to accept this only as far as you find it to be in accord with the Holy Scriptures. May God bless you to hear His word, This is the way, walk ye in it.

Your prayers of faith are greatly needed and desired.

Elder Clifford Wilbanks

ROMANS 8:1.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Beloved in the Lord, as the Holidays approach, there is a rush, here and there in anticipation of what is called Christmas, or Christ-mass, this is supposed to celebrate the birthday of Jesus Christ.

We find no record in the Bible, to establish the birthdate of Jesus Christ. Only a few will pause, to even think of his birth.

I like to refer to this time of year as a holiday, instead of Christmas, regardless of how it was established though we do not join the "Merry Christ Theme", such occasions can prove a blessing to God's humble poor.

If the pause for the holidays, bring us closer together, causes some to open their heart to those in need, brings families together in closer ties, and leads us to express and manifest our love for our saviour and each other more, it is blessing.

The question is not the date of the birth of Jesus, but rather an examination of self. What is the evidence that He has been born unto us?

Have we been born of that incorruptible Spirit? are we blessed to love our brethren, with a pure heart fervently? We have a forgiving Spirit? are we blest to forgive one another, even as our Lord has forgiven us. Are we patient under trial? As the New Year approaches, may he bless us to re-dedicate our lives to His service, more and more. May

we be given to hold fast the profession of our faith, without wavering, knowing that he is faithful that promised. May he lead us, more and more: to seek first the Kingdom without wavering, knowing of God, and his righteousness. May we all in the coming year, be brought closer to him in our walk, our conversation and our hearts, that we may be found in him, not having our own righteousness which is through faith in Him.

It is not the date of the birth of Christ, that is important, but the power of Him, who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, yet took on him the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. He who became poor, that we through his poverty, might become rich, that left the glory of his Father's presence, and was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem us from its curse. What a great blessing it will be if during the coming year, we are blessed, more and more to live separate from the world, as not partaking of its worldliness. In the past, you may have heard Him say to you, when you were under trials, ***"Be not afraid, it is I".*** As we examine our hearts, our prayer would be unto Him, lead us more and more, to adorn our profession with the fruit of the Spirit, which are, "Love, Joy, Peace, Long Suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness and Temperance.

Adding to our faith virtue: and to virture knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity; for if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Gal. 5th Chaper, and second Peter, first chapter. Several of our members and dear friends have been called to be with Him during the year. May he who suffers not a sparrow to fall without him, comfort those who mourn, and if we are called before another year, May we be blessed to say; "even so come Lord Jesus"

May his grace and love abound in our hearts.

Elder & Sister D. V. Spangler.

PERRY Kansas.

MRS. MARY ELLISON, R. L. AND DELLA DAVIS,--DEAR SISTERS AND BROTHER:-- Received your letter a few days ago and I was glad to hear from you, but sorry to know Della is so ill again, and hope this will find her much improved. But whether in sickness or in health, I wish we could be resigned to the will of our Maker, for he works all things and never errs. His works, all of them, are laid deep

in divine wisdom, and just a portion, a very small portion is given to us to understand. Through his gracious providence he has arranged to send both sickness and health, and has appointed a time to every purpose under heaven. The night as well as the day proclaims his providence, The winter as well as the summer bespeaks his infinite wisdom. He has created man for his own glory, and therefore if he has appointed one to strength and vigor and another to pain and suffering, his glory is accomplished in the one just the same as in the other, for each one must fill the sphere allotted to him. No one can do more nor less than that. All things are the work of his creation, and he has created nothing too small nor too great to be subservient to his will. The ants are not beneath his notice. They are a people not strong, they have no guide, overseer or ruler, yet they gather their meat in the summer, and gathereth his food in the harvest. The conies, the locust, the spider, they all have no leader nor king, save their Creator, and they all dwell in their respective habitations. Behemoth moves about and dwells in his jungle, as he is ordained to do. Leviathan, that crooked serpent, is just as much subject to the will of his Creator as any other creature, small or great, weak or strong. I have been impressed with the language of the one hundred and fourth Psalm: *"O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches. So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. There go the ships; there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein. These wait all upon thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good. Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled; thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust."* He has ordained the moon and the stars so that "they move with amazing regularity. He placed the sun in its orbit. It has always ruled the day, and always will, according to the earliest word spoken concerning it. Once upon a time it stood still, according to the command of its Creator, and hasted not to go down about the space of a whole day. It shines in dazzling glory, but can shine on only half of the earth at once. Its Creator far excels it in glory and his brightness shines to the four corners of the earth. The winds and the waves obey him. Is he a complete Sovereignty? We may say he is. *"Life, death and hell and worlds unknown, hang on his firm decree."* Death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. They cannot come forth to prey upon us until God himself shall send them forth. Satan is cast into the bottomless pit and the angel of

the Lord holds the key. He was bound with a great chain, which no doubt represents the lethal tenets which bound the beast. He must remain bound with this great chain until God in his wisdom and providence sees fit to loose him for a little season. Sometimes it looks as if these legal shackles were about to be taken off, but when they are, whether it be soon or a long time hence, it must be remembered that the angel of God shall have turned the key.

Speaking of the wind and waves obeying him, I tried to speak from Matthew xiv. 25, where it is recorded that Jesus came to his disciples walking on the sea. It impressed me as a wonderful example of the way he traveled while here on earth, for whose sake he traveled and the final result. A master mechanic will build a machine, and oftentimes he sends forth a small pattern, an exact duplicate of his machine. If he receives a patent it is an evidence that his machine is a good workable machine and he has the sole right to it. This may be a rather crude illustration, but when I think ot that little band of disciples in the ship in the midst of the sea, and Jesus walking on the sea, it seems to be an exact pattern of the great work of salvation which he came to accomplish. It was necessary that he walk on the waters to accomplish this. The waters, an emblem of tribulation and affliction. This is the way he walked while here, I am man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He trod the winepress of the wrath of almighty God alone, and of the people there was none to help. It was alone for the sake of this little band of disciples that he walked out upon the boisterous sea. To accomplish their salvation was his whole intent. Did he reach the ship in time? He did. Glory to God in the highest, their little barge did not sink. It would have been the utmost folly to have urged this little band to exercise free agency, for they were utterly helpless; or to make the start and Jesus would meet them half way. Peter did try that, only to find that he was entirely at the mercy of Jesus after all. Hear his pitiful cry: " Lord, save me." Their whole salvation depended entirely upon Jesus coming to them. He came, and when he had entered into the ship immediately they were on the land whither they were going. The pattern is admirably workable, but no more so than the whole work of salvation which he wrought while here, and it is his. He worked it out himself, and therefore it is his. Anyone else claiming any credit for this great work is an impostor. The pattern has been accepted of the great Master Builder, and he has granted to Jesus the Sole right to all the praise, honor and glory of it. Hear the Father speak of him: ***"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*** Hear the Son's triumphant sponse: ***"I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou***

gavest me to do." He must walk upon the waters of affliction to accomplish all this. He must be reviled, persecuted, crucified. He must go down in death and rise again before he could sit in triumph at the right hand of God. But ought not Christ to have suffered these things and entered into his glory? It is certainly good, but solemn tidings, to know that Jesus has walked upon the waters for us. In all our afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them. He has come in and suffered with us and we with him. Our Jesus has walked on the water. This truth is most sacred to you.

" Twas sacred to those few disciples who tossed on the boisterous Red Sea. He walked on the sea of affliction, He trod the winepress alone, He murmurs not reproaches, but graciously comes to his own.

And when we come down to death's river. We dread the dark waters to cross; but Jesus has walked on those waters."

And softened the billows for us.

You may take the foregoing thoughts for what they are worth. They are like myself, quite imperfect.

With much love for you all,
L. L. SCHENEK.

HURRICANE, W. Va.,
July 1 , 1928

DEAR BROTHER BIRD:– I feel at times that I have a hope, although I cannot see why God would be so merciful to as weak a worm of the dust as I to give me such a precious hope of eternal salvation. I feel to know that if I am one of God's little ones that it is not because of anything good which I have done, or will ever accomplish, but through the tender mercy and divine love of God who reigns eternally on high. I know I am full of wickedness and sin, and knowing this how could I believe that I could ever merit a place around God's throne singing praises to his high and holy name, I hope I am thankful for the few bright hours which I have, for there are so many dark and stormy days in which I despair and feel I have probably been deceived in my experience, and that my desire to be with God's children is only a fleshly desire, and my love for those people only earthly love and not the love which is born of God. Then comes a bright day, and I feel that God has been very merciful and good to me in giving me a little hope. I do not know whether I will ever go to the church or not. At the last meeting, on Saturday, I could hardly stay away. I had the greatest desire then I have ever had to unite with the church but I could not, for something held me back. I stood and trembled as a leaf shaken by the wind and could not keep the tears

back. I was miserable. I felt like I imagine one would feel to have to see some one drown, or burn to death and not be able to help them, so great was my desire to go home to the church. That shows very plainly that we are governed by a higher power, ***"for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."-Phil. ii. 13.***

Excuse these few broken thoughts. I did not aim to write to you when I sat down at this table, but was so led. We will be glad to hear from you at any time, for we get so few letters.

Yours in hope,
EULA B. BYRNSIDE.

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene with Moons Creek Church on the 5th Sunday in November. The Church is located about a 1/2 mile east of Hwy 86 between Danville and Yanceyville on Park Springs Rd.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Sister Sue Blalock, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 2008

Chlonetia Thompson, VA	5.00
Oscar Pickral, VA	5.00
Doris Giles, VA	5.00
Elizabeth Hedrick, VA	15.00
Susan Shelton, NC	5.00
Ronald Crouch, WV	15.00
Jim Campbell, CO	5.00
Faye Brown, NC	10.00
Algie Martin, VA	5.00
Caroline Martin, WA	5.00
Mary Lee, NC	5.00
W. W. Hudson, LA	3.00
Billie Speir, LA	15.00
Sallie Hodges, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER SYLVIA WILSON CONNER

We once again bow in submission to the will of our Heavenly Father in removing from our midst our beloved Sister Sylvia Conner. We miss having her with us but feel our loss is her eternal gain. Our beloved Sister was always present at her church, Salem Primitive Baptist, with a cheerful word and smile for everyone. She was a firm

believer in salvation by grace and grace alone. She believed that God is and has all power in heaven and in earth.

She quietly breathed her last breath on Saturday July 5, 2008, making her stay here on earth 91 years. She is survived by her daughter, Rushie Conner and husband, William (Bennie) Conner, Check, Virginia; one sister, Rushie Violet Smith, Roanoke, Virginia; six grandchildren and spouses, William Glenn and Sue Conner, Calvin Ray and Barbara Conner, Leslie Dale and Shawn Conner, Randall B. and Melissa Conner, Donna Reynolds, Jeffery and Ginger Conner, twelve great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday July 8, 2008 at the Salem Primitive Baptist Church with Elder Larry Hollandsworth and Don Wilson officiating with interment following in Restvale Cemetery.

Written by one who loved her.
Mary Poff, Clerk

OBITUARY FOR BROTHER PHILLIP HUGHES COX

One of our members at Old Union Church has been called to rest, awaiting the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; Brother Phillip Hughes Cox.

He was born August 10,1941, and fell asleep in Christ on September 20, 2007, at 66 years of age. Elder B. O. Thompson baptized him the 4th. Sunday in May, 1966 as a member of Old Union Church. Brother Phillip was severely injured in an automobile crash when he was 19 years old, and was afflicted in body because of this, for the rest of his life. He loved the church and his Saviour. His funeral service was conducted at 2:00pm at Mayberry Funeral Home Chapel, September 22, 2007, by Elder Larry Hollandsworth and he was laid to rest at the Sumpter Cemetery in Floyd County, VA. He is survived by; Sister and Brother-in-law Effie and Troy Higgs, Glenda and Arnold Dehart, Reba Wade, Brother and Sister-in law Brother Bernard Cox and Sister Bessie Cox, Coleman L. Cox, Allen and Geneva Cox, and many Nieces and Nephews. May we all be made submissive to God's Holy will. One copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times, one for the family and one for the church record. Done by order of the church in conference on Sunday, September 23, 2007. Written in Love by: Elder Larry Hollandsworth.

Elder Larry Hollandsworth,
acting Moderator
Sandra Hollandsworth, Clerk

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SONG

How charming is the place
Where my Redeemer God
Unveils the beauties of his face,
And sheds his love abroad?

Not the fair palaces,
To which the great resort,
Are once to be compared with this,
Where Jesus holds his court.

Here, on the mercy seat,
With radiant glory crowned,
Our joyful eyes behold him sit,
And smile on all around.

To him their prayers and cries
Each humble saint presents;
He listens to their broken sighs,
And grants them all their wants.

To them his sovereign will
He graciously imparts;
And in return accepts, with smiles,
The tribute of their hearts.

Give me, O Lord, a place Within thy blest abode,
Among the children of thy grace,
The servants of my God.

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EDITORIAL

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting." 1 Timothy 1:15-16.

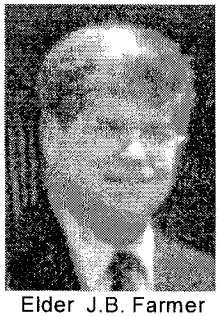
Elder J.B. Farmer

In hearing the brethren speak and in viewing my own journey, it is evident that there are many times when those seeking the kingdom of God have desired more evidence to indicate they are not deceived in their hope of eternal life. When one is cast down because of the remembrance of sins, and brought low in feelings of unworthiness, and sees no goodness in himself, he moans and groans inwardly and begins to utter the prayer of the publican, ***"God be merciful unto me a sinner."*** Many times, I have sought to know plainly what is the true experience of grace for God's little ones. I look back upon the way I have been brought and wonder if it is really in accordance with that of true believers. When we read and hear the experiences of those we count to be faithful brethren, their travels appear to be somewhat different in their details. I have been made to look for a common thread among them and wonder if it may be found. Believing that God has made provision for His children to have assurance in these things, it appears that He has given an answer, which cannot be denied. May we be blessed to look into the scriptures and find comfort and strength for our sojourn here in this world of sin and sorrow, weak and unworthy as we know ourselves to be.

The apostle Paul, also called Saul, declared by the Holy Spirit that God showed all longsuffering toward him, so that in him would be manifest a pattern to stand constantly before the household of faith. In him is the example of the way true believers are led of God in the experience of grace. A pattern is a type

or is typical of other things. We understand that the pattern of God's dealing with Saul is not given to only describe the outward details or the degree of intensity of the several parts of his experience, but rather to manifest the principles that are in operation. It is because of the principles in evidence that we so wonderfully enjoy the speaking and writing of our friends in the faith as they give their own personal accounts. How many times have you said or thought that someone told your experience better than you could yourself? I believe the reason is that the true experience of grace among the saints is similar in principle, though not necessarily in the particulars.

The blessed apostle Paul made it plain that before he was converted he walked contrary to the Holy Spirit. In this he was an extreme example of ignorance and unbelief. He revealed that he was a blasphemer, a persecutor and an injurious one toward the church. He confessed that he caused certain of the saints to be put in prison, and when they were put to death, he gave his voice against them. He compelled the saints to blaspheme and persecuted them unto strange cities. He even held the garments of those that stoned Stephen and was consenting to his death. We cannot find the same degree of violence and opposition in our unbelief, but we at one time also were without any feeling or compassion for the saints of God. We had no interest in Christ, or His doctrine, or the sorrows of the church. Even if faithful parents had brought us up from babes to attend church meetings, we must confess that at one time we were in darkness and hardness of heart toward the things of God. The difference between Saul and us concerning our former enmity against God appears to be a matter of degree. But the principle of the enmity is the same.

During Saul's headlong pursuit of the church, he was arrested and changed by the Lord in an instant. Suddenly a great light shined round about him greater than the noonday sun. The terrors of the Lord were upon him and he was made to see what a vile fellow he was. He began to tremble in fear and astonishment when the Lord appeared to him. The Lord came to Saul unexpectedly. Can you remember when you were brought, without warning - whether suddenly or gradually - under the righteous law of God, and shown your sin and your worthiness for death and destruction? The converted apostle later made it plain that the whole world must become guilty before God, for there is none good. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. This personal knowledge of our wretchedness is common to all that have been brought in the way of grace. This work of the law written in our hearts condemns us for our sin and kills us to self-righteousness. And this law is the schoolmaster that leads us to Christ. The law is that which pre-

pares us to know the need of the Savior, and leads us unto Him.

Saul was greatly humbled and shown that his sins were not only against people, but were against the Lord Jesus Christ himself. Jesus said to Saul, ***"Saul, Saul, why persecutest me?*** In saying this, I believe Jesus showed that to persecute one of the least of God's saints is to persecute Him. Have you been made to see that your sins were against God, and that those sins demand the punishment of death for you? Having been given a Spiritual birth and a tender heart, and being brought into this knowledge, makes one fall into a state of weakness and fear and trembling. Most of the saints have not seen that great light in the same way as Saul, but all have been awakened to the brightness of the kingdom of God. It seems our experience is akin to that of the little newborn babe, when it is delivered from the darkness of the womb to the light of day. How great is that light it first sees. And how little the babe knows. And how much it needs the comfort of love, and to be cleansed and fed and clothed. Saul was brought forth as a little babe, and so it is with us, if we have been born into the kingdom of God.

This great change having come over Saul, he was made to be submissive and compliant to the Lord of glory. He inquired, ***"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do."*** Have you yet been brought to the same place as Saul where all your desire is to please God? It is a place of not knowing, but trusting Him. Abraham, by grace and through the gift of faith, believed God and at God's command left his familiar home and friends, not knowing where he was to go. All of the saints are called to walk by faith and not by sight. When Saul's eyes were opened, he saw no man. He had to be led into the city. He was three days without sight and neither ate nor drank. He was in a pitiful condition. Even though we may not have had the extreme experience of Saul in these things, I believe we have been shown the essence of what it means to be brought to the end of our strength and killed to self-righteous confidence in the flesh, and to be made to trust the all-wise and merciful God. Saul's whole life was changed forever. Once he was strong, but now he is exceedingly weak. Once he was wise, but now he knows nothing. Once he thought he was righteous, but now he sees himself as the chief of sinners. Once he destroyed the church and made it suffer, but now he loves it and is made very glad to suffer all things for the sake of the church and to spend and be spent for it. Old things have passed away, behold, all things are become new.

Saul was led, not seeing, to the house of Judas in the street called Straight in Damascus. It appears

that this house represents the church. For it was here that Saul was instructed in the way of truth. The Lord appeared to Ananias and sent him to the house where Saul was praying. The Lord gave Saul a vision of a man named Aninias coming in and putting his hands on him that he might receive his sight. Ananias came, put his hands on Saul and Saul received his sight and was filled with the Holy Spirit and was baptized. The Lord generated Saul as a babe, brought him into the city into a certain house, and sent His minister unto him. God worked all the arrangements. Man had not purposed any of these things. Salvation is altogether of the Lord. The Lord sent the preacher, who by the Spirit preached Christ to Saul. Saul was given an ear to hear the gospel, and was given faith to believe and to call upon the name of the Lord, and by grace he was saved. The Lord deals individually with His people as He did with Saul. They are born of the Spirit, convinced of sin and are led to the church as blind, not knowing anything. God sends His ministers preaching the gospel of grace. And His people are given an ear to hear it, faith to believe it, and given the mouth of confession unto salvation. The Lord adds to the church daily, such as should be saved. Many, but not all of God's children are baptized and become members of the visible church. I am made to believe that all desire baptism, but some are hindered as was the thief on the cross. Nevertheless, the thief was not the rule, but was rather the exception.

A dear friend and fellow laborer in the gospel gave an example of a tree that was blown upon by the wind. Some of the leaves were barely moving, but others were violently shaken by the same wind. So it is according to our experience. Some have been given earth-shaking experiences, while others have been only gently moved, but all are moved. All the movement of the leaves is caused by the same wind, and all the experiences of God's children are by the same Spirit. All the leaves shake similarly. The difference is only in the intensity of the shaking. The essence of the shaking is the same, as is the essence of the experience of God's little ones.

We are taught to make our calling and election sure. We are assured that God knows the ones that He elected and called since knowing all things He said, ***"The foundation of God standeth sure having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his."*** We are faulted by some for saying we have a hope of salvation, but do not have certain knowledge of it. Since we cannot be absolutely sure of our calling and election until the Lamb's book of life is opened and our names are called, what does the scripture ***"Make your calling and election sure"*** refer to? I believe it means that by grace we must walk in the light and speak the truth in love, and be made will-

ing to suffer for the Truth's sake. Walking after the Spirit makes our calling and election sure unto others, but only gives us some hope and assurance that we are in the way of truth. The apostle John was inspired to say, ***"Hereby we may know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."*** This is the greatest thing I know that gives assurance that we belong to Christ. When all else fails and we sink down in fears and doubts, the undeniable fact that we love the brethren comforts and strengthens us and gives us hope that we may indeed have a part in this great salvation.

We look for an experience of grace in ourselves as we are commanded to examine ourselves, whether we are in the faith. We examine the pattern God has given in the apostle and look to see if we have been brought along in similar paths. And we search ourselves to see if we find the love of God in our hearts for the brethren. If we detect a similar experience to that of Saul, accompanied by this great love, we may be assured that we are not deceived in our profession, and that we shall not be disappointed at the coming of the Lord.

I trust that this was written in love and faithfulness and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J. B. Farmer
10-21-2008.

CORRESPONDENCE

November 7, 2008

Tony Horton
1429 Howlett St.
Hillsville, VA 24343

Greetings Brother Horton,

Please renew my subscription to the Signs for two more years.

I have lost count of the years that I have been receiving the Signs, but they are many.

My husband was in the military and we travelled the country and the world for 29 years. There were never any Old Baptist Churches where we were.

It was always a joy to find a copy of the Signs or another paper of our faith in my mailbox when I arrived home from work everyday. I read them usually in one sitting.

We are retired now close to a group of believers that it is an honor to be among and we are thankful. I have more time to enjoy reading now.

Thank all of you for feeding the sheep who are scattered. God bless.

In hope,
Vera Potter

10-25-08
120 Gunn Road
Reidsville, N.C. 27320

Dear Bro. Tony,

Please renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times for two more years.

Enclosed you will find a check to cover the cost. We would love for you and Sister Horton and Sister Terry to come to see us at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church again, whenever you can. Thanks for all you are doing to help out with this paper. Hope to see you all someday soon.

Love & Fellowship,
R. Allen Carroll

VOICES OF THE PAST

"BETHLEHEM EPHRATAH."
(Micah v. 2.)

How peculiarly blessed it is to us that God decreed and chose Bethlehem as the place where Jesus Christ, the Son of God, should be born into this world. This" was foretold by the prophet Micah; and when it was demanded by Herod of the chief priests and scribes where Christ should be born they readily answered, ***"In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet; and thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel."- Matt. ii. 5, 6.*** But Joseph and Mary this espoused wife, have their home in Nazareth of Galilee, a long way, after the manner of journeying in those days, from Bethlehem. The Scriptures cannot be broken, the counsel of the Lord it shall stand. God's decree, declared by the mouth of the prophet seven hundred and ten years before the birth of Jesus Christ, is that he should be born in Bethlehem. So, when the fullness of time was come God by his unerring wisdom, in the execution of his counsel, by his providence, for he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, caused a puny creature (but he was considered among men to be the greatest in the earth at that time) to make a decree, and the fruit of this decree was to make Joseph the carpenter with Mary his wife take that long journey from their home to Bethlehem. But let us read together the story as told in Luke ii. 1-7: ***"And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, (be-***

cause he was of the house and lineage of David,) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn," The Lord taught his people to look for Christ the Lord to be born in Bethlehem. This was of sacred signification unto them. This is how the Lord foretold the matter unto them: *"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."* Bethlehem signifies the house of bread, and Ephratah, fruitful, fertility. Christ is the Bread of Bethlehem, and there is no bread in all the world except Christ, the tr*ue and living Bread. (John vi. 48.)*

"Without this Bread I starve and die,
No other can my need supply;
But this will suit my wretched case
Abroad, at home, in every place.
This precious food my heart revives;
What strength, what nourishment it gives!
O let me evermore be fed
With this divine, celestial Bread."

Jesus Christ is peculiarly the food of his people; he nourishes and cherishes the church. (Eph. v. 29.) It is in Christ that a poor sinner is made to know his sins are all forgiven. It is in him we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of our sins, according to the riches of his grace. O how the sin-famished soul feasts upon the pardon of sin. By Jesus we receive the atonement, and our sins are covered by Emmanuel's blood how blessed before our God is our condition. The quickened sinner hungers and thirsts after righteousness, and no such food is to be found in his sinful, wretched life. But Christ, who came forth in Bethlehem, is Jehovah our Righteousness. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth, and his righteousness is unto and upon them that believe in him. Here we are filled and our hungeriugs are satisfied, for we are made the righteousness of God in him.

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."
"The terrors of law and of God
With me can have nothing to do;
My Savior's obedience and blood

Hide all my transgressions from view."

Jesus Christ is the ***"hidden manna," (Rev. ii. 17,)*** the golden pot of manna in the ark of the covenant. (Heb. ix. 4.) O Christ, thou hast the words of eternal life, and on these our hungry souls must live. To whom shall we go if we should go away from thee? Thou art our Bethlehem, the house of bread. Thou only, Jesus dear, art the life and sustenance, the living bread of poor, perishing sinners. Christ, our Passover Lamb, is sacrificed for us. (I Cor. v. 7.) He is our feast of fat things, of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined. (Isaiah xxv. 6.) Out of Bethlehem Christ came forth unto the Father, the Ruler in Israel. The Son of God was made of a woman, the Word was made flesh. In Bethlehem he was born of the virgin Mary, and she laid him in a manger. He was thus in fashion as a man; he was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. Christ was born a king, (John xviii. 37,) and we remember that Nathaniel exclaimed, ***"Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel."- John i. 49.*** The dying thief, beholding Christ upon the cross, according to the working of God's gracious and mighty power in his heart believed in Jesus, and prayed unto him, ***"Lord, remember me when thou , comest into thy kingdom," and our dear Savior said unto him," Verily, I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."- Luke xxiii. 42,43.***

"Rejoice, the Savior reigns,
The God of truth and love;
When he had purged our stains,
He took his seat above.
Lift up your hearts, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, aloud , ye saints Rejoice.

His kingdom cannot fail,
He rules o'er earth and heaven;
The keys of death and hell
Are to our Jesus given.
Lift up your hearts, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, aloud, ye saints Rejoice."

The shepherds were watching over their flocks by night. "And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."- Luke ii. 8-11. And I am sure if we poor sinners have had the testimony of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, in our hearts that Jesus is our Savior we shall in truth believe that he is not only our Friend and Redeemer, but that he is Christ the Lord, the Ruler in Israel, the blessed and only Potentate, King of kings and Lord of lords. (1 Tim. vi. 15.) Christ came the Deliverer and Ruler

in Israel to deliver his people from sin and death, hell and the grave. He came to redeem us from the curse of the law; he spoiled principalities and powers, sin, death and Satan, and made a show of them openly, tri umphing over them in his cross. (Col. ii. 15.) He finished the work the Father gave him to do; he was the Surety of the everlasting covenant, and ratified it with his precious blood. On the night in which he was betrayed he said, ***"This is the new covenant in my blood, shed for the remission of sins."*** Truly it is our precious Christ who has done worthily in Ephratah, and who is pre-eminently famous in Bethlehem. (Ruth iv. 11.) The renown of his fame has gone into all the world. The queen of Sheba heard of the renown of Solomon, and she came from the ends of the earth to partake of his wisdom. O, she found he was so glorious that she was overcome with his magnificence and wisdom, and she said to the King, ***"It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes have seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard. Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and bear thy wisdom. Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighteth in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king" to do judgment and justice. And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon... And king Solomon gave unto the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, besides that which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants."- 1 Kings x. 6-10, 13.***

Our Lord Jesus Christ being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God. (Phil. ii. 6.) In him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and one in his Deity with the Father and the Holy Ghost, he is the eternal God. No other being save the one self-existent, eternal Jehovah, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, inhabiteth eternity. (Isaiah lvii. 15.) In the beginning the heavens and the earth and all the host of them were created by the breath of his mouth. (Psalms xxxiii. 6.) ***"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all***

things, and by him all things consist."- Col. i. 16, 17. "All these creative acts of God were according to his eternal purpose. He created not the earth in vain, he formed it to be inhabited. I am the Lord, and there is none else. (Isaiah xlv. 18.) There is not an atom too many nor too few in all the universe, and no atom thereof shall exceed or come short of fulfilling his holy, wise, eternal decrees. In heaven, and earth, and air, and seas, He executes his firm decrees; And by his saints it stands confessed That what he does is ever best."

And it is peculiarly in connection with the church, the elect of mankind, that his goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the wisdom and power of God; yes, he is *"the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory; which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crncified the Lord of glory."- l Cor. ii. 7, 8.* So in Proverbs viii. 22-31, we have so blessedly declared his goings forth from of old, from everlasting, in the covenant ordered in all things and sure: *"The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was brought forth: while as yet be had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.*

When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: when he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." Some scoffers have asked, What was God doing in eternity before the creation of the world? All that he was doing we do not know, but the transactions of Jehovah the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, that he has been pleased to reveal unto us in the Scriptures, *"are most surely believed among us"* and we muse upon these acts of the eternal God, his goings forth from of old, from everlasting, with sacred pleasure. Contemplate a few of the testimonies of the holy Scriptures relative to these matters. In Ephesians i. 3-6, the apostle Paul testifies: *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord*

Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessiugs in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having, predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." And Christ said, *"I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word."* And then he says, *"Thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world."- John xvii. 6, 23, 24.* Christ, the Lamb of God, was verily foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God. (1 Peter i. 20,21.) Christ is the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory. (1 Cor. ii. 7.) God hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. (2 Tim. i. 9,10.) And thus the apostle Peter writes: Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. All the sufferings, death, resurrection and ascension to glory of Christ, was in fulfillment of the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the covenant Head of the church. He was set up as such from of old, from everlasting, and all the characters he should sustain unto his people, and all the offices he should fulfill in their behalf, were provided for in the counsel of Jehovah's will, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Eph. iii. 11.) But these matters of the goings forth from of old, from everlasting, are too deep and too extensive to enlarge upon just now.

This belief is our comfort, that we are in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; but hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me, according to the commandment of God our Savior."- Titus i. 2, 3.

"Vast were the settlements of grace
On millions of the human race,
And every favor richly given
Flows from the high decree of heaven."
O wondrous grace, and mystery profound,
In God's eternal purpose I was found;
His sovereign love, his grace, his deep decree,
In some mysterious way included me."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.
NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

DEUTERONOMY XXXII. 9.

For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."

That the Lord will receive and keep his portion is as certain as it is that he possesses ***"all power in heaven and in earth,"*** and is immutable. In the same chapter where my text is found it is recorded, ***"Just and right is he."***

Justice and right guarantee to everyone his portion; and when there is power on the side of justice to enforce its demands, the end of righteousness is always attained. The Lord's portion is said to be his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. The lot is all of his inheritance, or all of his portion. The ends of justice could no more be served by one taking more than his portion than they could by his taking less than his portion; he must receive all of his, no more and no less. So we conclude the Lord will take all of his people, and nothing more. His people are identified as Jacob. Jacob was the twin brother of Esau, yet the Lord loved Jacob and hated Esau; this was so that the purpose of God according to election might stand. (Rom. ix. 11.) But it is not my purpose in this article to investigate the relation of Jacob and Esau Jacob will claim all of our attention. The Lord chose Abraham, and through him Isaac, and through him Jacob, and in him all Israel to be his special people, and separated them from all other people, and distinguished them in many ways as his separate people. Likewise those who were chosen in Christ to obtain salvation and eternal glory are separated from the world of mankind (which is just like them by nature, and their equal in every respect by ordinary generation) by the distinguishing grace of God, and thereby manifested the spiritual Israel of God. On the way as Jacob journeyed toward the promised land, the angel of the Lord met him, and he wrestled with the angel all night until the break of day, and the angel blessed him, and his name was changed from Jacob to Israel. His person was not changed; his walk was changed, but the same person did the walking now that walked before. His condition was so changed that his walk

was uneven henceforth, and he needed his staff to lean upon. Now the people of the Lord were chosen in Christ before the foundations of the earth were laid; this choice or election embraced the persons of his" people, not something that descended or was to descend from heaven. These people constitute the members of the body of Christ. The Lord speaking by David tells of their origin; he says: *"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."- Psalms cxxxix. 15, 16.* This locates the origin of the Lord's people in the lowest parts of the earth. Thus we see that the people that God loved, chose, and gave to his Son to be his portion and the lot of his inheritance, and that he separates from the world and manifests as the members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones by distinguishing grace, are creatures of earth. They are in no way different by nature from all other people. They had their origin in the earthy Adam, and became transgressors of the law in him, and came under its penalty. Now the people that sinned are the people that needed redemption from sin. The inspired record abounds with testimony declaring that the loved and chosen people of God became transgressors of the law and fell under its curse in Adam, and that redemption was provided in Christ Jesus to deliver them from their bondage and from death and to secure into them the riches of eternal life and glory. Is not this the burden of the gospel to poor sinners? Yes, poor sinners; the very persons that sinned are the persons who need salvation from sin, and are the ones whom Christ came to seek and to save. Jesus says, *"I am come to seek and to save that which was lost." "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick."*

The angel said of Mary his mother, *"She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."- Matt. i. 21.* Paul said, *"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."* Again, in speaking of Christ, Paul says, Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Testimony might be added to testimony until every inspired witness had been examined, and all would be found declaring the same great truth that the salvation of sinners was the object of Christ's mission into the world. The covenant of grace and mercy embraced sinners and provided all the things

necessary for their complete redemption and emancipation from sin and all of its baneful influences and effects before time began. The stipulations of this covenant were but the expressions of the will of the Father, and in it Christ became surety for his people and the executor of his Father's will. He said of his mission here: I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me; and this is the will of my Father which hath sent me, that of all he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day. We affirm that all that Christ ever did in execution of his Father's will, was done for his people, for sinners. There is such oneness existing between Christ and his people that they are inseparable. Neither of them can be perfect or happy without the other. The messenger of the covenant was held in contemplation and used as a pattern in the creation of man; for it is said, *"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."* So when Christ the-Husband of the bride, was manifested in that body which the Father had prepared for him to do the will of God, it was a body like unto his bride's body. He was made in all things like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. This is the work of the omnipotent God, and is marvelous in our eyes.

Great is the mystery of godliness. There is a profound mystery running through the whole work of God in the work of grace, a mystery that finite creatures cannot understand or explain, and yet faith embraces it as truth, and hope delights to cherish the bright anticipation of it. The resurrection and the changes attending the same are by no means the least mystery connected with the work of salvation, yet the crowning work in the salvation of sinners could never be reached until the resurrection is attained. The apostle says, If the dead rise not, then our hope is vain, our preaching is vain, Christ is yet in the grave, and we are found false witnesses of God. But such fearful consequences do not confront the trembling prisoners of hope, for Christ is risen and became the first fruits of them that slept. The apostles were called in question for preaching Christ and the resurrection, which were inseparable themes with them, yet they proclaimed it the more and withstood and condemned those who denied the resurrection or taught that it was past already. Let us keep in mind that the resurrection is part of the work of salvation which Christ came to bring unto his people, and the people that were the recipients of all of the other provisions of the covenant are the recipients of this last and most glorious of them all, which admits them into the fullness of those blessings and glories which they have only been enabled to see and know in part heretofore. The faith and hope of the

people of God-sinners redeemed, embrace a future state of bliss and glory, where they cease from sin and have perfect rest from all their fears within and foes without. To deny them this faith and hope would rob them of the only pleasant anticipations they know, and render them most miserable indeed. Paul says, ***"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."*** But hope reaches beyond the shores of time, beyond this life, and embraces a higher and holier life where, as Job says, the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. Poor, halting, trembling, doubting ones, are you hoping for this blessed state? If so, then says the apostle, ***"do we with patience wait for it."*** And your waiting will not be in vain, for it is written, To them that look for him will he appear the second time without sin unto salvation. He appeared unto you once as your sin-bearer, and lifted that load of guilt and condemnation from you, and revealed to you how he had borne all your sins in his own body, and that they were not remembered against you any more forever; and he gave you faith to embrace this truth and rejoice in it, and here your hope still rests; but he is going to appear again, not to reveal himself as your sin-bearer, but as he who hath reigned until he hath put all enemies under his feet. He is coming in the clouds of his glory to receive his ***"portion," "the lot of his inheritance," "his people,"*** all that the Father gave him; for he said they should come unto him, and that he would in no wise cast them out. I think I hear you say, I am such a great sinner; my thoughts and my conversation lie so far from God and righteousness. Yes, but Christ is an infinitely greater and richer Savior, and he is full of grace and truth. So wonderfully great is his Grace that when he extended it to his people-to you, my reader, it completely covered all your sins and blotted out not only them, but all the stain of them, and made you as clean in the eyes of God as though you had never been a sinner. While all this has been done for the people of God and is here revealed to them, yet there is a great change that must come before they are ready to meet the Lord at his second coming. They are still mortal, are bound by mortal relations, and are bearing the image of the earthy. These mortal relations must be dissolved, they must be made spiritual, and made to bear the image of their glorified Redeemer. This wonderful change is what Paul speaks of when he says, ***"Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."- 1 Cor. xv. 51,52.*** Indeed, this is a great mystery, yet the Spirit of God revealed it to the apostle, and he by the inspi-

ration of that Spirit shewed it unto us, and it is no intrusion into the secret things of God for us to look at it and rejoice in the hope of its fulfillment. True, the apostle did not explain the mystery, for then it would have no longer remained a mystery; neither did he explain any other part of the mystery of godliness, but the children of God delight to contemplate its glories and rejoice in the part which they hope they have in it. The apostle in speaking of this same mysterious event on another occasion said, ***"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."- l Thess. iv. 15-18.*** Where in all the inspired record is the mystery of election, of redemption, of pardon or of quickening presented in simpler or clearer words as embracing the persons of the people of God. Reader, it is of no consequence what you or I believe and teach for the resurrection; here is the simple truth of it declared by the Inspired apostle, and our contrary belief or teaching will never change the divine arrangement. Let us pause for a moment and consider this grand, this sublime event toward which the flight of time is hastening all the people of God: ***"We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,"*** writes the apostle to the Corinthian Church. I understand the sleep here mentioned to be the sleep in mortal death, for in this same connection it speaks of the dead rising. In his letter to the Thessalonians the apostle says, ***"We which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent [go before] them which are asleep," "but that they shall rise first, and then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."*** The truth of the apostle's words then is this: some of the Lord's people will be dead, and some will be still alive, engaging in the various pursuits of this life as they now are at the second coming of Christ, at which time those that are dead will be raised up and those who are alive will with them instantaneously be changed, and all will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. The language of our text, The Lord's portion is his people," will be as true at that moment as when it was uttered; it will be verified in the presence and to the perfect understanding of all his cho-

sen, redeemed and resurrected people. They have labored and toiled, while they mingled their tears of penitence with their ecstasies of hope; they have hungered and thirsted for that satisfaction which this world is too poor to afford; they had often drank at the streams of this river that flowed from the throne of God and the Lamb, but they longed to drink at the fountain-head. You may be a doubting Thomas, you may be a denying Peter, you may be a trembling jailer; your trembling, your doubting or your denying will not hasten nor retard this supreme moment, this moment of all moments; it will certainly come, and your Savior will come with it. In their present condition the Lord's people are not suitable companions for him, therefore when that moment comes in which they are to be caught up in the clouds to meet him they will be changed. This, says the apostle, is what that change consists of: *"This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."- 1 Cor. xv. 53.* When this has been done for the Lord's people, their salvation from sin and all of its influences, effects and consequences will have been accomplished, their complete victory over death, hell and the grave been given, their feet will quit this earth as they rise to meet the Lord in the air, bearing his likeness, and" so shall they ever be with the Lord." Should you, who see my face, I want you to know that my hope embraces that salvation, which had, its incipiency in eternity, is sufficient to reach down into the lowest depths of sin and degradation and embrace the persons, of poor sinners, quicken them into divine life, lift them up above the claims of a broken law, give them a standing in Christ Jesus, put a song of praise to him in their mouths, set their affections upon things which are above, preserve their whole spirit and soul and body until the coming of the Lord Jesus, and then deliver them into the presence of the Father in the resurrection at the last day incorruptible and immortal. At this haven is where my hope, the anchor of the soul, is resting, and here my faith is staid; but as my frail bark is tossed to and fro on the billows of doubt, and its destruction threatened upon the shoals of unbelief, I am often compelled to take soundings and pause to consult my mariner's chart and compass in a vain effort to assure myself whether I am in reality sailing on those *"broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no valley with oars,"* and where gallant ships cannot pass. May the glorious Lord dwell richly in your hearts.

In humble hope,
J. R. HARDY.

ABOUT PRAYING.

"AND in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed."- Mark i. 35.

What a solemn interest there is for me in this incident concerning the dear Savior, and in the form of words in which it is related. I would love to be able to tell some of the thoughts and emotions which have been in my mind from time to time for many years as I have read this most wonderful and touching portion of his history. But it has appeared to me so sacred and solemn that I have felt a kind of backwardness as I approached the subject, as though it were a kind of intrusion upon a most solemn scene. What a strong, overpowering desire he must have had to be alone. Could I rudely break in upon this holy solitude with my worldly, coarse mind Many a time I have hesitated when my mind has been drawn out by words used by holy men of old, feeling that my mind was too coarse, and I was too unworthy to use them. How much more ought I to hesitate when contemplating the words and works of the Savior. Nevertheless I have found it most sweet and comforting to let the spirit of my mind follow the dear Savior as *"he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed."* Why would he be alone when he prayed' Why would he go beyond the sound of human voices and the tumult of moving feet when he prayed to the Father, Crowds of people had gathered when the sun was set, and were now waiting to be healed when he should come out of this solitude and appear again; for in the crowd were those who had all manner of disease to cure, and devils to cast out, false doctrine to withstand, and the gospel to preach. The whole city was at the door. Can we wonder that he should need to be alone at times a little while, alone with the Father, alone with that mighty work, and that fearful responsibility resting upon him. If I ask questions concerning this most solemn work it is with trembling of soul. I would not send my poor thoughts rashly into this sacred solitude where the Savior is alone with the Father, beyond where he gives me the gracious right and privilege. But I may remember that he has caused his servants to write and speak of these blessed things to the poor and unlearned, and revealed them to babes. The precious promises are all given to those who especially feel and humbly acknowledge that they are unworthy of them. They are all given in the dear name of Jesus, and in his name alone. How many questions are asked in ourselves concerning prayer; how to pray, this and what to pray for! What is true prayer before the Lord? As for me, this subject of prayer is one that has given me much trouble and perplexity of

mind. Questions arise with reference to it which we reach to the depths of my soul. Can any man, except Jesus, teach another man to pray? Can anything be done to any form of words which will cause them to become a prayer By the mystery of faith Jesus teaches, and his work is perfect and without fault. But I am talking of our experiences here in time, and of our trials and troubles concerning the work of faith in our hearts. Sometimes poor souls try to come to the Lord in prayer, and they can only whisper. Then they fear they are all wrong. For me, when I am alone my prayers are much oftener in a whisper than spoken aloud. Did Jesus speak aloud when in that solitary place? When one can pray only in whispers he is sometimes tempted to question his hope. But there are times when that temptation is so sweetly and powerfully overcome that he finds his soul swallowed up in whispers of love and joy and peace. After having suffered many trials upon this subject as the poorest of the Lord's ministers, for more than fifty years, I find myself at the age of eighty-four years with no more ability to pray as I ought than the ability of a little babe to cry. (Romans viii. 26.) My mind keeps going again and again to that sacred solitude of the dear Lord our Savior where he was in holy communion with the Father, with whom he was so fully alone that he did not desire, just then, that one soul in all the world should be with him. In the work in which he was soon to engage, no one could render him any help. That was his work; but no one could minister unto him in that great, holy and mysterious work. All that great crowd of people sleeping a little way from the solitary place where he was praying went there for their own benefit, and he was doing everything for them.

We know that the attitude of the body, the tone of voice, or any circumstance of the kind has nothing to do with the prayer of anyone. The prayer must be in the soul first, and it will bring the poor soul to the mercy-seat in the Lord's own time. But he does not yet know that this cry which comes up from the depths of the heart is prayer, nor can any uninspired man tell him so he can understand. But in the Holy Spirit's own way and time he will come to feel and understand the *"groanings which cannot be uttered."* How little we think that these inward groanings are prayer. But it is the desire of the pure heart which causes us to feel this trouble. As for prayer, we thought we understood clearly enough about that, and were sure that if we prayed in the right way, and did the best we could, the Lord would bless us. But he who searches the heart made us to know what is the mind of the Spirit, who showed us more fully the depths of our depravity, and who made intercession for us according to the will of God.

How often we have to be taught

that we do not know what to pray for as we ought, (Rom. viii. 26,) but if we were left to ourselves to choose what to pray for, what bungling work we would make of it. How good it is for us that the Lord has kept all this in his own hands, so that whatever he commands us to do no mistake is made by the Lord. There is none to stay his hand, nor to say unto him, What doest thou? has it sometimes appeared to us that the object in praying is to let the Lord know what to do, and that the success of our petitions will be according to some power and energy and attractiveness with which we may be able to address the Lord? And have we been surprised to find our words entirely without life or strength? And to remember that the Lord does not need any words of ours to tell him what to do, nor will he allow anyone to persuade him. His power and purposes are beyond our reach. There is just as much power before the Lord in the prayer of a little babe, or of a feeble-minded man, as in that of the wisest man. Eloquence of speech has no place here. The true prayer must be felt in the depths of the soul before it can be understood in the mind of the one who spiritually prays. When we feel our helplessness in this respect, and are ready to give up, then we are surprised to feel a renewal of strength in our souls, and to feel some words of inspiration living in us, as of Paul, *"Pray without ceasing,"* and to find that by prayer and supplications our requests are being, made known unto God.

What sweet and astonishing surprises are sometimes given to us as we try to get near the dear Savior with our griefs and longings and poor petitions, and with our vain efforts to reach the hem of his garment. It seems to me that Elijah was as much surprised when he saw the effect of his earnest prayer that it might not rain for three years and six months, as was the poor widow when she found a handful of meal in the barrel after she, had taken the last handful out. Elijah thought he was alone. If he had known about the seven thousand it might have been. different with his feelings. He thought there were no true worshippers of the Lord near him. It is wonderful that he should feel such an earnest desire for so terrible a drought. The Lord had purposed to bring that awful judgment upon that guilty nation. It was undoubtedly a wonderful experience. It is a work beyond the power of any man to say of himself honestly, " Thy will be done." Elijah could be afraid, but not when the Lord put a prayer into his heart. The apostle speaks of this prayer of his as an encouragement to the timid and fearful. The dear Savior also refers to Elijah and the poor widow as representing the elect of God. (Luke iv. 27; James v. 17.)

When Jesus comes into that solitary place, in the garden of Gethsemane, there he prays for

them, but would still be alone. He would go a stone's throw beyond the chosen three, but his inexpressible suffering, brings him down to the ground. Now in his death and resurrection and entrance into glory he is with them forevermore. Unworthy of the divine favor of the Lord they all feel themselves to be, but it is that favor they forever desire and long for. Only in the felt presence of Jesus can they feel that favor to be theirs. Loneliness because of the dear Savior's absence is distressing. They cannot but continue to seek his face sorrowing. When he rises up now a great while before day, and goes out, and departs into that solitary place, they at once try to follow him. His prayer now is their prayer. They try to get near to him. They are afraid they are going to lose him. His prayer is in their hearts. Any place is lonely without him. This is because the dear Savior has gone with them and they with him. And he has prayed for them, and has said to the Father: The glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, even as we are one. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 5, 1917.

"Beloved of God, called to be saints."- Romans i. 7.

THE very word *"saint"* has become, through man's perverseness and wickedness, a word of reproach and contempt. But God will honour it, let men dishonour it as they please. God has put a crown of glory upon it, let men despise it as they may. There is no privilege or blessing that God can confer so great and glorious as to crown you with the crown of saint. He might have given you titles without number; he might have showered riches upon your head in the greatest profusion, rank, fame, talent, beauty, health, all might have been poured at your feet; but what would all these be compared to making you a saint of God? But what is it to be a saint? It is to be sanctified by God the Father, set apart for himself, to shew forth his praise. It is to be washed in the atoning blood and clothed in the justifying righteousness of the Son, and to be regenerated by the Spirit of God. It is to be introduced into a new world by being delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. What heart can conceive or tongue express the state of blessedness to which the despised saints of God are advanced even in this time state! They are sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty jewels in Jesus' mediatorial crown; members of his mystical body, and as such united to him by

indissoluble ties; pillars in the temple of God which shall go no more out; sheep redeemed by precious blood; virgin souls espoused to the Lord the Lamb. They are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, and mansions of glory are prepared for them beyond the skies. There they shall sit as overcomers wilh Christ on his throne, and there they shall sing upon harps of gold the praises of a Three-One God to all eternity.

Elder J.C. Philpot

CORINTHIANS 1: 26-29.

For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:

But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

That no flesh should glory in his presence.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 2008

Hattie Spencer, VA 5.00
Vera Potter, MS 10.00
Meta Mills, AR 10.00
Hazel Garland, MD 25.00

OBITUARIES

JEAN ELLEN GUNTER GRAY

The Church at Russell Creek acknowledges God's will in the passing of our dear Sister in Christ, Sister Jean Gray. She was born June 15, 1903 and died February 5, 2005, making her stay on Earth 101 years and 8 months. She was preceded in death by her parents, Ulysses Reid Cap Gunter and Minnie Conway Gunter; her husband, Walter L. Gray; four sisters, Beatrice G. Ballard, Wayra G. Hazelwood, Evelyn G. Heath, Ethel G. Goad; and four brothers, Roy Gunter, Emmitt Gunter, William Gunter and an infant brother. She leaves to mourn her passing a host of friends and Church family. She attended Elon College and taught school, music and singing at Gilbert's School for awhile. After her husband's death she lived alone and spent her devotion to the Church at

Russell Creek and to her nieces, whom she shared a mutual love and respect for, always cooking "sweets" for them and inviting them to cook something and go with her to the Communion Service at Russell Creek. She fell while gathering wood for her cookstove at age 97 and had to leave home. She stayed a while in the Landmark Center in Stuart, Va. and spent the last year in the Skilled Nursing Facillity at Stuart Hospital.

Sister Jean came before the Church at Russell Creek the first Sunday in May, 1978, professing a love for the Church and was received into the fellowship. She was Baptized the first Sunday in June, 1978, by her pastor, Elder Frank Pegram. She remained a faithful member until death. Even after she was confined to a nursing home, she arranged for her nieces to come and bring her to Russell Creek on the first Sunday in August. Although almost deaf, with her good ear turned toward the singers, she could sing "Amazing Grace.. and ..When I can read my title clear" when some of the Old Baptists met to sing for the residents of the nursing home. Her funeral was conducted February 8, 2005 by Elders Kenneth Hopkins and Bernard Hutchens. Her body was laid to rest in the Gunter Family Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to await that final day.

This unworthy writer had an unusual experience in Sister Jean's death. I was not a member of the Church at that time, but was seeking for a way to get there, to no avail. When Sister Jean died, I seemingly lost hope of finding a way to go to the Church, as there was only one other member, and he was disabled to attend. At the funeral, Sister Jean had written down a scripture, the 12th chapter of Hebrews, and requested that whomever preached her funeral should comment on it. The substance of it was ***"Run with patience the race that is set before you."*** I believe Sister Jean wrote this scripture for me, as a feeling of reconciliation to God's Sovereign Will came over me and remained until I came to the Church.

Sister Jean is greatly missed by all who loved her, but we feel our loss is her eternal gain. She was blessed to show forth the Fruits of the Spirit, Love, Joy, Peace and Meekness because she was born of the Spirit. One day ere long, we hope to be with her to hear that welcome voice say ***"Come you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world".***

At the request of the church, copies to be made for the church record, for the family and for publication.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

SONG

JESUS, O name divinely sweet !
How charmiug is the sound!
What joyful news! what heavenly sense
In that dear name is found!

Our souls all guilty, and condemned,
In hopeless fetters lay;
Our souls, with numerous sins depraved
To death and hell a prey.

Jesus, to purge away this guilt,
A willing victim fell,
And on his cross triumphant broke
The bands of death and hell.

Our foes were mighty to destroy,
He mighty was to save;
He died, but could not long be held
A prisoner in the grave.

Jesus! who mighty art to save,
Still push thy conquests on;
Extend the triumphs of thy cross,
Where' er the sun has shone.

O Captain of salvation! make
Thy power and mercy known;
Till crowds of willing converts
come And worship at thy throne.

Stennett.

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EDITORIAL

For as much then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.

Elder R.H. Campbell

I have always read the above verse of scripture and thought of it as referring specifically to the suffering of Christ, in his cruel death on the cross at Calvary, but, as I read it recently it seemed to say something different to me. I could be mistaken, but I believe that it goes much deeper than that one event. Of course, Christ's suffering included his death on the cross, but I think that what the writer is referring to here is his entire life, in the flesh. He was, and is, the immaculate son of God, a part of the trinity, a perfect entity without sin, or any of the natural characteristics of man until he was given this body of flesh; one who inhabited the portals of heaven with all of the glory of that kingdom, and now as a man he must suffer the temptations of the flesh, yet without sin. (*Heb 2:16-18) "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people, for in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." It* was a sore trial indeed, and required this suffering to fulfill his mission and accomplish the work that his Father gave him to do.

(Isa 53: 1-6) "Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected

of men: a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely, he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." You can see, from this scripture, the extent of the sufferings and shame that he endured, in the world, for his children.

Paul said of him, ***(Heb 5:8) "Though he were a Son, yet he learned obedience by the things which he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."*** In his life here on earth, he was in somewhat of a similar position to that of the righteous Lot; when he dwelled in the city of Sodom before the overthrow. ***(II Pet 2:8) "For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds."*** If Lot, a natural man, endowed only with the characteristics of the natural man, suffered, being surrounded with the wickedness of those around him; how much more intense must the suffering have been, for Christ, whose suffering was his constant companion, as long as he dwelled in this body of flesh. His soul must have been even more vexed witnessing the unlawful deeds and that from the very ones that he loved, and came into the world to seek and to save.

On one occasion, it is recorded that Jesus would not commit himself to those that were with him, at the time, because he knew all men, and needed not that any man should testify of man: for he knew what was in man. He knew the natural man for what he was, as is recorded in, ***(Gen 6:5) "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."*** When God came down and visited man whom he had made, it repented him that he had made man, and it grieved him at his heart. It is recorded in, ***(Gen 6:3) "And the Lord said, my Spirit will not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years."*** This fleshly nature is what grieved God, and now Jesus must dwell among them in the body of flesh, and learn the temptations that his children suffered.

If, it repented God that he had made man, from observing his actions in the flesh, how much more must Jesus have suffered as a man dwelling in the flesh, with the perfection and purity of the Holy Ghost

within him and then his living among them, as God, and also as man. In doing this, Jesus, was in truth, himself bearing a cross, even as he told his children that they must do, when he said, *(Mat 16:24) "Then Jesus said unto his disciples, if any man will come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me."* as for that cross it was laid upon him as a results of that council that was held between the Father, Son and Holy Ghost before time began, and he must bear it to accomplish the work that his Father gave him to do, and it included the suffering that he must bear, as well as the cruel death on the cross.

Then, in the subject text, it is written, *"as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin."* Man cannot arm himself with the mind of Christ, but as Paul said in *(I Cor 2:16) " For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."* and again it is written, *(II Tim 1:7) "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."* When one is quickened by the Spirit, he is given these qualities and does indeed take up his cross, follow Jesus, and by so doing he begins to suffer in the flesh. He had previously been at home in the flesh, enjoying the pleasures and follies of the flesh, but now things have taken on a different perspective with him. He now realizes the sin and depravity of his natural life, in the flesh, and his prayer now is the same as that of the apostle Paul when he prayed, *(Rom 7:24) "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death? And he, as it would have been said in the old scripture language, repented of his sin in sackcloth and ashes."*

Although man is never able to accomplish the task of ceasing from sin, in the flesh, it is to the creature that has, that Paul is referring when he said that he walked after the Spirit and not after the flesh and therefore there was no condemnation to him. This is in the sense in which, as I understand it, that John said, *(John 3:9) "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."* This is the new creature in Christ who cannot sin because the Spirit of God is his director, although the old man continues in sin, and will continue to do so, as long as he is clothed with this body of flesh.

This change in the man is wrought by the bringing in of the new covenant, as described in, (Heb 10:9) *"Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will O God. He taketh away the first, that, he may establish the second."* The first being the law of sin and death, which came by Moses, and which Jesus

fulfilled to a jot and a tittle, for the sins of his children under that covenant, by his death; and the second being the new covenant which he set up, and which is described in, *(Heb 10:16-20) "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."* Notice, the wording of the scripture regarding the establishment of the new covenant, *"I will put my laws in their heart, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquites will I remember no more."* the establishing of the new covenant in their hearts removes their sins into the land of forgetfulness before God. It is as the sacrifice made under the law for the sins of Israel, *(Lev 16:21) "And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all of the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and shall let go the goat in the wilderness."*

The time in which all of this is accomplished, Jesus's suffering in the flesh, and his crucifixion on the cross was recorded by the prophet Amos *(Amos 9:13-15) "Behold, the days come saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop down sweet wine, and the hills shall melt. And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine therof: they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God."* The plowman overtaking the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth the seed are the beginning and the ending of a crop, in nature, and isn't the season of which we are considering, the end

of the old, and the beginning of the new, they are both occurring at the same time. Then, it is recorded that they will rebuild the waste cities, they will plant their vineyards and reap the fruits thereof, make gardens and eat them. This is the time that he will restore the glory of his kingdom, but it will not be a natural kingdom as it was when Solomon built the temple and restored the glory of Israel as it once had been, but rather, it will be a spiritual kingdom in which he will indwell them, be their God and lead them in the paths of peace. This will be a spiritual kingdom and the blessings will be spiritual and not of the natural things of this world, and it shall stand forever, throughout time and eternity, *(Amos 9:15) "And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God."*

I have always felt that the apostle Paul, in his statement in the eighth chapter of his epistle to the church at Rome addressed this issue when he said, *(Rom 8:1-3) "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."* Those who have been born again are the ones who are in Christ Jesus, and whose desire it is to walk after the Spirit, and not after the flesh. They have been made to see the flesh for what it really is, and then, since they are now armed with the mind of Christ, sin has no more dominion over them as it did in nature. Sin does continue to dwell in the flesh, but not in the mind of Christ with which they have now been armed, and which enables this new creature in Christ to desire with all of his heart, to walk after the Spirit.

(Heb 10:9) "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will O God. He taketh away the first, that, he may establish the second." The first being the law of sin and death which came by Moses, which he fulfilled to a jot and a tittle for the sins under the law covenant, by his death; and the second being the new covenant which he set up, and which he described in, *(Heb 10:16-20) "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh."* Notice, the wording of the establishing of the new covenant, *"I will put my laws*

in their heart, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.", the establishing of the new covenant in their hearts removes their sins into the land of forgetfulness before God. It is as the sacrifice made under the law for the sins of Israel, ***(Lev 16:21) "And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all of the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and shall let go the goat in the wilderness."*** This is the only way that I can understand the fact that the man who continues to sin daily, can lay any claim to having a portion of that blessed inheritance that is laid up for those who love the Lord. This is because their sins have been atoned for, and the man stands just and without sin before God. Peter clarifies this when he says, they are those, ***(Pet 1:5) "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."*** These are those under the new covenant where there is no sin unto the Lord's people because the law that would condemn them has been taken away when Jesus nailed it to his cross, in his death. ***(Col 2:13-14) "And you being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."***

His death, on the cross, was for the new man who is quickened, or born again. It did nothing for the flesh, for Paul told the Romans that he had condemned sin in the flesh, or, in other words, restricting sin to the flesh of the old man, where it will continue to reign as long as he lives, for as Paul said, ***(I Cor 1:14) "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*** This natural man has no part in that inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. All men are born of the flesh, but only those chosen in Christ are born of the Spirit, and they are the only ones who will worship God in Spirit and in truth.

Following the great chapter of Hebrews regarding the works of faith of the saints under the law, he admonished those, in his day, saying, ***(Heb 12:1-3) "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed***

about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." The great cloud of witnesses of which Paul speaks, are the experiences of those who have gone on before, and who left them on record for future generations, that they might know of the salvation of the Lord, as it will be revealed unto them by the Spirit, and that they may have fellowship with the saints of God in all ages.

John, who was an eye witness of the sufferings and death of Jesus, in a most loving and caring manner stated it this way. *(I John 1-4) "That which was from the beginning, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life; for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and manifested unto us; that which we have seen and heard declare unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ, and these things we write unto you, that your joy may be full."*

The arming of your self with the mind of Christ is not optional with the creature; it is even as the whole armor of God. They are both included in the gift of faith, and this is not of works, lest any man should boast. They are the workmanship of God, who created them in Christ Jesus, before the foundation of the world. and ordained that they should walk in them.

Isaiah said, (Isa 40:1-2) "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." If the above has been comforting unto you, it is because that you are among those to whom the promises are given, for these truths are of no comfort to those who do not understand your speech. They are not stirred, as they have no evidence in their travels of their being included in these precious promises, and they are foolishness unto them. If you have been fed and comforted by the presentation of these truths, then you are one of those to whom the promises were made.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

VOICES OF THE PAST

"NO MAN HAS SEEN GOD AT ANY TIME." (John 1:18).

Dear Elder Spangler: — In conversation with you recently at Mossy Rock, you indicated that I should send further writings for the Signs. Of my poor weak self, nothing can be offered of interest to those seeking enlightenment on the Scriptures. It will be only thru the enlightenment given by the Lord, if these thoughts on the above scriptures are found to be worthy of publication.

Upon meditation, after noting these words of St. John, who I believe was the deepest spiritual writer of those four gospel writers, his reason for so stating or writing these words, seemed to stem from the fact that he had just set forth certain things that strongly indicated he had seen God with natural eyes. In verse 6 of Chapter I, ***"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John,"*** which would generally be accepted as showing that he had actually been in the presence of God, or could not have started traveling away from Him. In verse 7, he says — ***"The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light,"*** etc. This also would indicate he possibly had seen that LIGHT with natural eyes. Also, since he had written ***"In the beginning was the WORD, and the WORD was with God, AND THE WORD WAS GOD"*** which was soon followed by his words in verse 14, showing how the WORD had been made flesh and dwelt among them, and ***"We beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father,"*** etc, would cause many to believe that he actually had seen God the Father, and by seeing the WORD, which he before had said was God. Therefore, in order to definitely establish the fact he had not seen God with natural eyes, he so wrote that ***"NO MAN HAS SEEN GOD AT ANY TIME."*** He thus made it clear that God is seen only in a Spiritual sense thru eyes that have been opened by and thru the new birth, like those, ***"Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, BUT OF GOD." (Verse 13)***

Now we find that a little later — when Jesus was confronting those Jews that sought to kill him as recorded in the late part of Chapter 5, He told them ***"And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape." (Verse 37)***

While treating on this subject, let us examine Exodus 33, the last part thereof, where Moses heard the Lord speaking, and in verse 18, Moses begged the Lord, ***"Shew me thy glory."*** The Lord gave answer in verse 20, ***"Thou canst not see***

my face; for there shall no man see me and live." He told Moses he should see his back parts, but not his face. (Verse 23)

Now we have the testimony of St. John, Jesus and the Lord God, that His face - God's countenance, could never be seen with natural eyes. The Lord made it clear to Moses that should mortal man behold his face, it would cause his death. After considerable meditation and study of this mysterious fact, I believe I can see why God Almighty has so designed that His face cannot be seen by mortal eyes. It would first seem to be definitely to show the lowly, weak and helpless state of man as compared to the majesty and glory and power of God. David seemed to have this very thing in mind in Psalms 22:6, when he wrote, ***"But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of man and despised of the people."*** A worm is invaribly looked upon as a contemptible thing, and there is a great gulf, indeed, between the worms we see daily upon this earth, and mankind. Just as the worms about mankind cannot look upon his face or being, so mankind that was created from the dust of the earth, cannot look upon the countenance of Almighty God. Also we must consider the fact that God is a great LIGHT, such as to be beyond the comprehension of poor mankind. We have the best of evidence in the experience of the Apostle Paul who was struck down and blinded by the countenance or LIGHT of God when it shone around about him, as recorded in Acts 9:3. It is not said that Paul was looking upward into that LIGHT, but that it shone around about him. We do not have to guess what would have happened to Paul's eyes had he been staring intently up into that great LIGHT. It was not God's purpose to take away his eyesight permanently.

I am inclined to view the Sun and God Almighty as the two great LIGHTS, the one to give light for the world as purposed and directed by God, and the greater SPIRITUAL LIGHT, that gives off that needed light to His chosen ones, from the beginning to the ending of time on this earth. Now God, in his creation of the Sun and all things created, certainly would not create anything, with greater power or brilliance than He has, and He made the Sun to be lesser in brilliance and power than that of Himself. Yet man cannot gaze into the Sun without great damage to his natural eyes. If man cannot gaze into or behold directly the lesser light, the Sun, then we can see why God told Moses - ***"There shall no man see me and live."***

Let us remember too, that God's countenance and great LIGHT will suffice to brilliantly light the Heaven of Heavens and it will be the most glorious and wonderful LIGHT to behold. I go along hoping and praying that I will be one of the countless number to be in that glory world of eternity.

Concluding, will state that those few of us scattered about in this Northwestern area, were greatly

blessed in having you among us recently. I could only be present for the three day meeting in Mossy Rock where you and Elder Attebery preached most enlightening sermons. It was most wonderful of you to make the long trip out to this West Coast area.

I hope it is the Lord's will that I shall be privileged to hear you preach during January when the wife and I will be back in that area, visiting in Northeastern Tennessee, North Carolina and on down to Miami, Florida and New Orleans. I have hopes of being with Elder R. W. Rhodes while in the New Orleans area. Remember this poor sinner when at the throne of grace.

Wm. O. Hall
P. 0. Box 595,
Mount Vernon, Wash.

Lyles, Tenn. , March 18, 1927.

DEAR BROTHER STAFFORD:- Your unexpected letter received, read and reread with much interest. I say unexpected, because I do not think I ever saw you, but when I find that a person reads the SIGNS OF THE TIMES I have to believe he is a subject of grace. I notice you do not belong to the church, but I discover you trust in Jesus. I also note that you are fifty-six years of age, live on a hill side farm and are alone in the world. I passed my seventy-first year February 23rd last. I was injured in my left knee joint by an axe in the year 1900, which crippled me for life, and I cannot work or get around much. I was raised on a farm, but now have none, except a garden I work in. I was born eighty miles east of Waverly, the county seat of Humphreys County, Tennessee. My brother, you close your good letter by saying, ***"Write to a poor helpless sinner like me."*** Oh what good words! How they suit my feelings! ***"Helpless,"*** means that our Savior has done and must do all things for us. He must be, and is, made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. He is all these things to us, as we hope, though we often doubt. We feel too unworthy for such glorious things. We not only feel to be sinners before we are quickened, but we are yet sinners, and I am glad this is so, for ***"Christ Jesus came in to the world to save sinners; of whom I [Paul] am [now] chief."*** Jesus is our prophet., priest and king. He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the Almighty. Then he is all things to us, for we are helpless, and he is the Almighty, no power but of him. The powers that be are ordained of God. Listen: ***"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of ev-***

ery creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him."- Col. i. 13-16. Read all the chapter. This proves the universal reign of God's government over all worlds, creatures and things, from the smallest atom that floats in space to the great archangel around God's throne. I do not believe that the great supreme God looked through time and there saw who would do good, and then fixed his purposes to suit the convenience of his creatures, for such an idea would make him a God subject to influence. This is not the character of the God of all power, but I believe God was before all things, and therefore there was none that could influence him, and so our God, without any influence, declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Yes, he declared this, and who but an enemy would say, Jehovah, why doest thou? I hope your pure mind of Christ will grasp this eternal truth. If God is before all things, and he alone inhabiteth eternity, then who can hinder even one of these things coming to pass in its precise order as he declared it Listen: *"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell."* Do you ever read in the Bible of any fullness dwelling in finite men. No sir, but all the fullness dwells in Christ. Men and devils must bow to God's divine control. God's government is above all governments; He raises up kings to develop his purposes to his people, and he says of Pharaoh, *"Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth."* Pharaoh was a persecutor of the children of Israel, and was just as sinful in persecuting those Israelites as he would have been had God had no purpose in it. Pharaoh meant it for evil, but God meant it for good, as in the case of Joseph's brethren. When Joseph, the type of Christ, made himself known to his brethren he said, *"Be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you, to preserve life," &c.* So he raised Pharaoh up for a purpose to persecute the children of Israel, the type of his people of all nations. Pharaoh is still living and persecuting the children of God and through this persecution God has the gospel declared throughout all the earth. Look at the persecution of the Son of God through the Pharaoh principle which God ruled over to the salvation of his people. Look at the per-

secutions of the prophets and apostles. See where many of the saints were put to death, but our God stood by them and ruled over it for the good of his people and still held the preeminence. The holy apostles were persecuted from one city to another, they preached the gospel of the grace of God everywhere. God ruled all these things over to his own divine purpose and to his own glory and still held the preeminence. In this crowning work of grace you see how helpless men are in God's sight. All these things are in your experience and you are made to say in your dear letter that you are a helpless sinner. God holds you under his divine control, and best of all, he keeps you by his omnipotent power and has saved you by his grace. This power of God in you causes you to not desire to persecute the saints. You are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God, and *"when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."* Our dear Lord will allow his children to drift away from him only so far, and no farther, and then he gives them repentance, and thus they are taught to feel humble, for had not God given them repentance they could not have returned, for all are poor helpless sinners, trusting in the living God. Yes, without strength, helpless. Thus all the strength we have comes from our dear Lord. In him all fullness dwells. This fullness lies in none other; but in him. *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."* Now listen to the best of all: *"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."* Listen: *"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."* Oh I cannot quote all on this glorious subject. God's government is above all the governments of this world. *"The government shall be upon his shoulder [power]; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Councellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."* He is all these things to his people. How strange to think that some would limit God's absolute predestination of all things, or think that one link of his chain of divine providence could be left out. We poor finite creatures cannot sit as judges of what God shall do or what he shall not do. It has often been said that God predestinated the good things but he did not predestinate the bad things. Now what man, or set of men, is able to sit as judge of the Almighty and prescribe boundaries for our God, and draw the dividing line, seeing that men are altogether helpless, and vanity. But inspiration says they limit the Holy

One of Israel. While they do this very thing, the truth remains just the same: no change in the government of God; never has been, and never will be. Death or hell can do no more than what the Father pleases. This chain of all the events of time is linked together so minutely that even our God told a lying spirit to go and entice Ahab to go to Ramoth-Gilead and to be killed, so the dogs should lick his blood to fulfill the word of the Lord. Jesus said to Judas, *"That thou doest, do quickly,"* to fulfill the prophecy of God which says, *"He that eateth bread with me, hath lifted up his heel against me."* When Judas betrayed the Son of God he made him known to the enemies by giving the Lord a kiss. If God did not predestinate those most sinful acts what is it he has predestinated? If he only predestinated the good, and left the wicked men and devils to drift along upon the scale of blind chance, may it not upset the government of our God. If he has only predestinated the good actions of men, and has left evil men and devils to drift along as they desire, is it not a fact that they might enter heaven itself and destroy the inhabitants of God's supreme government? Suppose that God in the setting up of his planetary system. had placed one single star in space to run at random who could know what the destruction of the multiplied millions of stars might be and might not all things, with men and angels, have gone into nonentity, and not a single soul left to tell the sad story. God might have been dethroned and with all of his royal family sunk in oblivion, and not a trace of anything to be found in all the eternal purpose of God; that is, if all things had not been predestinated of God. To my mind, God has predestinated all things, or else he has predestinated nothing. It is said by holy inspiration, *"The wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain [keep from being]."* O my brother, how this view of the high and lofty One has brought us down to the dung hill in deep contrition of soul, and he sits upon the throne of his majesty in the highest heavens working all things after the counsel of his own will.

I have not written as I expected, but hope you can understand me, and that God may give you a crumb of spiritual food to feed your hungry soul. Write again, my brother, when God gives you a mind. Remember poor me at the throne of grace.

A poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all,

J. R. Hatcher.

JOHN XVII. 20.

A DEAR sister in the west asks that we write upon the words, ***"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word."*** She says that a young Primitive Baptist minister asked her about this text, and that they could see no kind of Arminianism in it, as some in these days claim.

There is a very good reason why our sister and the young minister could see no Arminianism in this text, and that is because there is none in it at all. Arminianism means that by human instrumentalities sinners are raised from the dead to the possession of divine life. It is claimed that preaching, praying, singing, exhortation, and a thousand other works of human device, are the means of bringing sinners to know, and love, and serve God, and be saved everlastingly. This Scripture, and some others, have been used as a support to this theory. No doubt this has been done honestly enough by many, for these Scriptures have seemed to them, on the face of them, to teach this theory, which is to the exaltation of man rather than God.

The result has been in thousands of cases at the end to put the efforts of man first and foremost, and to ascribe salvation to human effort rather than to the power of God; and a thousand times more is said, and a thousand times more stress is laid upon man's share in this salvation, than upon what the Lord has wrought. In the finality there is no half way ground between giving all the glory of salvation to God, and all of it to man. If we are not saying in heart. Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory, we shall soon be saying, Not unto thee, not unto thee, but unto us be all the glory. But all who truly believe know that it is all of grace, from first to last, in this matter of salvation. A song with which we have been familiar many years expresses the travel of that soul that is truly being led by the Spirit of God; the first verse ends, ***"All of self, and none of thee;"*** the second verse ends, ***"Some of self, and some of thee;"*** the third verse ends, "Less of self, and more of thee," and the last verse ends, ***"None of self, and all of thee."*** All the travel of grace is to this end; it is from self to the Lord. First the soul seeks to save itself, but at the end it comes to seek salvation of the Lord. All this our sister (and we doubt not, the young minister also) knows well we are assured, and the text suggested cannot mean anything contrary to this.

We feel like saying a few things with regard to what it does signify, if the Lord will. First, it is clearly stated in the word that man, since the transgression of our first parents, is not only depraved, condemned, lost and guilty, but also is dead to God, dead in sins, under the dominion of Satan and in, bondage in every fac-

ulty of his being. These are not mere figures of speech, but plain statements of truth, literal truth. They are not hyperbolical expressions, intended to arrest the attention of men, but they are simple expressions of plain but dreadful facts. Man is as much dead to God, and dead in sin and as literally so, as are men in their graves from whom the breath of this mortal life is departed. *"In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."* This was not spoken in vain, man did die in that very day. It need not be said that men are not dead to this natural life, but they are dead to God, and one day all men will die to this natural world, even as all our fathers before us. This we need not argue, for we doubt not that Old School Baptists all believe it. And, what is more, know it each one for himself. It is also manifestly involved in this thought of death that men cannot even will to live, since where any will whatever exists there must be life preceding the will, and out of which the will comes forth. The dead know not anything, and they that are in their graves naturally cannot even desire to live, and do not know that there is such a thing as life. So in that death of which we have been speaking there is no capability of even desiring life eternal and immortal. The dead, in this sense, do not know they are dead, neither do they know anything of the life of which they are destitute. Unless this be so, there is no force no settled meaning in language. In this death there is no knowledge of sin or righteousness, no knowledge of separation from God, or of communion with him, no knowledge either of enmity to God or of peace with him; therefore this dead man cannot mourn over sin, nor long for redemption. While abiding in this state of death to God, and in sin, he desires not God, and knows him not; neither does he realize the dominion of sin and Satan, nor can he desire release from this bondage. So complete is this bondage that he does not know that he is in bondage. He looks with pleasure upon the very chains that bind him, counting them ornaments rather than chains. How then shall man be recovered from this state of death? There is a way, and that way is revealed in the word of God; it is summed up in this language of the apostle, *"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."* He *"hath quickened us together with Christ."* And, *"The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him."* Two things are apparent in these quotations from the word. One is that the dead are made alive to God, and the other is that God himself performs this work; and a third thing is to be noticed, viz., that in all these Scriptures there

is no mention of any human means used in this quickening; the language is direct in all these Scriptures: *"You hath he quickened."* Concerning the word *"quickened,"* it has been argued that it does not always mean giving life to the dead, but, sometimes, to revive that which is languishing. That is true, but even when used in this secondary sense, the work is still the Lord's, and it still remains true that the primary signification is to give life where it was not before; and in these Scriptures it is expressly said that it is the dead that are quickened. Whatever secondary meaning, therefore, the word may have, in the Scripture quoted above its meaning is the primary one: of making alive the dead. This, then, is the work of God, without human instrumentalities. Many things are committed to the servants of God in their ministry, but this is not one of them; this our God has reserved in his own hand. It was so in the beginning; all life, of all sorts and kinds, came forth from the hand of God. Adam could till the ground and cultivate the fruit of it, but he could not give life to that which was dead. No plant in all the world can point to man as he who has caused it to live. Many a plant could testify that man has watered, and pruned, and nourished it, because it was living, that it might bring forth fruit more abundantly, but its life, its power to grow and thrive, is of God. So it is solemnly true that all life is of God and flows out from God to all things. This the apostle taught when he said, It is *"in him we live, and move; and have our being."* We are here referring to these things, not because we anticipate that any of our readers will dispute them, but to refresh the minds of all who read, and to cause them to remember these things.

These things are but figures of the higher life, the life of the Spirit. It might justly be reasoned that if all inferior life is from God, surely that which is the highest life of all must be from him also, and, as it was in the beginning with the things committed to Adam, so is it now in the spiritual world with the things committed to the servants of God. Many things are committed to the children of God, but life is not one of them.

Let us remember that in the word our Lord Jesus Christ is called a quickening spirit. We never read there of quickened spirits. Indeed, that which is essentially life itself could not be thought of as ever needing to be quickened. We never read of any spirit being dead, so as to need to be made alive from the dead. Jesus himself is not a quickened, but a quickening spirit. That to which life must be imparted cannot impart that life to another. Jesus is life itself, and his very words are spirit and life. Men are the receivers of life, and receivers only; never do they, never can they, impart life. One quickened man cannot say, I was made to live by the power of Jesus, the quickening spirit, while another

shall say, I was made to live through the work of another quickened man; all alike must say, by the power of God in Christ we live. In this alone can be found true fellowship with the Father, and with the Son, and with one another. The hand does not receive its quickening from the arm, while the arm receives its life from the head, but all alike, arm, hand and head, live and move and have their being in God. But we do not need to continue these thoughts here.

We will return to the text named at the beginning of this article. First, we will say that to believe on him through their word is not to be made alive from the dead. Jesus prayed for his quickened and called disciples, and for quickened and called disciples in all ages, and in all places he also prayed that they all might believe on him, as well as these immediately around him. Every prayer of the blessed Lord was effectual, all of them have been and ever shall be fulfilled. All who are made alive in Christ in every age, when they hear the word of the apostles in the Scriptures, or from the called servants of God in the pulpit, or elsewhere, do come to believe on him as the Savior of sinners, as the one Redeemer, Lord and King. To believe, is one of the functions of this natural life, so also is it of spiritual life. But let it be borne in mind that there is the same difference between spiritual faith and natural belief that there is between the sources from which they severally spring. It is then the living in Christ who shall believe on him through the word of his called servants, and these living souls believe because God, who gives the word, also seals it to their hearts and consciences, so that it becomes a living word to them. We now desire to call attention to a few other similar expressions in the word concerning the work and effect of the gospel ministry: *"How then shall they call on him in whom they believe not and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard and how shall they hear without a preacher and how shall they preach, except they be sent Here is also the same thought of believing through their word."* So also the eunuch believed in the word of preaching; by Philip. So Lydia, and also the jailer at Philippi; believed through the preaching of Paul. Saul received his sight when Ananias came to him. But Saul was a living man, else he would not have been spoken of as being blind and receiving his sight. So while Lazarus received life from the power of Jesus, it was given only to the disciples to take away the stone, and the grave clothes from him. Paul was sent to open the blind eyes, and to turn many from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. John the Baptist was sent *"to give knowledge of salvation," "to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet in the way of peace."* All

these things are committed to the ministry of the word. So we read that under the preaching of Peter on the day of Pentecost many were pricked in the heart, and cried out, *"Men and brethren, what shall we do?"* Is it not manifest that these were living men and women? If not, they might have been pricked in the heart all the day long, and no sign of hurt would have appeared in them. Then Paul is spoken of opening the blind eyes; this is not to impart life to the dead; In fact we never speak of the dead as being blind. If we say one is blind, by the same words we say that he is a living man. If a man be turned from darkness to light it is manifest, so manifest that it needs not to be said that this man is living. If a man be turned from the power of the enemy to his rightful sovereign, by the same token we know that that man lives, and that he was living before being thus turned. If to any man is given knowledge of salvation, this also is proof of life in that man (we mean spiritual life), and so is the same true of all that is said in the quotations that we have made.

All this we have been saying is not a play upon words; we are not using these words merely as catchwords, God forbid that any of us should handle the word of God in that way. In these Scriptures is defined, and defined carefully and strictly, just that which God has imparted to the ministry, and just that which he has not imparted to his servants. After the Lord has gone before and given spiritual life to him that was dead, then the servant of God, at the bidding of the Master, comes in, and through preaching that living soul is given light, knowledge, understanding is pricked in the heart, and then is blessed and comforted, and given, not salvation, but the knowledge of it. One feels some day that every word of the preaching he hears is a word of cursing to him, the next day he hears and every word is a word of blessing. This is exactly the language by which one dear child of God expressed her feelings to us years ago, after she had listened to two sermons, one preached two weeks after the other. She meant that the first came with condemnation, showing her all her life as a sinner before God; the other came to her in the revelation of Jesus Christ as the Savior of just such sinners; and so the voice of cursing was in the one to her, and the voice of blessing in the other. But before the time of hearing the first sermon the Lord had wrought that miracle of grace in her soul by which dead men live. Thus we have tried to present the work of God in salvation, and in giving life to the dead, and we have tried to present the work of the ministry as it is blessed to the living in Zion. The one is God's work alone, the other is the work of God ministered to us through his servants. In this sense alone are any of us laborers together

with God. It is not ours to aid in giving life to the dead, but how blessed to be admitted into the vineyard where the living plants grow and thrive, to plant and water them, but God giveth the increase.

Elder Chick.

DID THE FATHER'S WILL

Dear Brethren: May we consider the saying found in *Luke 2 :52, " And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."* I know that this subject is too deep for me, but I have had some serious thoughts concerning it. I quote also the following scriptures: *"Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead." (Romans 1:3, 4).*

"For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." (John 3:34).

"The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day." (Luke 9:22).

"For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." (Hebrews 2:16, 17).

I believe that Jesus as a man did grow in wisdom and in stature, and in favour with God and man,--only in a manifest sense to his people. *"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."* (Col. 2:9). Jesus was man in the flesh without sin, yet the fulness of the Godhead was in him: in this sense Peter could say, This was him declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, *"My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isaiah 46:10).*

I do not believe that it was the fleshly will of Jesus to die on the cross, but the divine will of the Father, yet the will of the flesh was made submissive to the divine will of the Father. *"And he saith, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt. And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepeth thou? couldst not thou watch one hour? Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak."*

If he had not been human as well as divine, it would not have been a cross : he could not have been tempted in all points like unto his brethren -not even one point, yet he was tempted in all points, and sinned not. (See Hebrews 4 :15.) If Jesus had failed in one thing, even in his flesh, then he would not have been an offering without spot or blemish. His fleshly will was completely submissive to the will of the Father. He learned obedience by the things he suffered. He denied himself of all natural wealth, and was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

Jesus did his Father's will in all things, and finished the work he was given to do; and God raised him on the third day. And He revealed himself to his disciples before he ascended into heaven. *"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." (Hebrews 9:24)."* So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

My brethren there is but one God. When we enter heaven we will not see the Father in one place and the Son in another, as two, but only one God. *"Fear not neither be afraid: have not I told thee from time to time, and have declared it? ye are even my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any." (Isaiah 44:8). "As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one." (I Cor. 8:4).*

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:1-3, 14). All things were made by Him, not by them. And if he had not taken on himself a body of flesh, there could be no death of the testator. *"For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." (Hebrews 9:16, 17).*

Let me say that in trying to write on this subject, I know I have come far short of expressing what I think I can faintly see: seemingly there is something that I cannot quite reach; but almost. I hope the readers will

pardon all errors; and if there is any comfort, give God the praise.

(Elder) James R.
Hollandsworth
Birmingham, Ala.
October 31, 1968

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:- There is no law now applying to us except that we love one another, and that we cannot help doing, for when the Spirit of Christ in us sees the Spirit of Christ in others there is love inexpressible and never yet explained by mortal man, and none but the redeemed know anything about this love. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. Ishmael, the child of the bondwoman, was cast out with his mother, and could not inherit with Isaac, the child of the free woman. Ishmael was a bond-child, representing the product of legalism, which are all under the law and under bondage; they are children of a harlot, and cannot share with the free or legal child. Isaac represents the children of the freewoman, or the church of God, she who is espoused to one Husband, whose righteous name has become hers, and no one can bring reproach to her, for he will shield her. Still, Ishmael should become a great nation, and I suppose that he did. They of the married wife are legal offspring, and cannot sin, for the seed of God remaineth in them. The question arising in my mind is this, Am I born again? But then I sometimes think about it this way: No one could mar my feelings nor my happiness in the least if they should tell me, Selby, you are not the child of George Washington. That would not cause me any pain or humiliation; but let anyone approach me with a strong testimony and say, Selby, you are not a child of Martin D. Fisher by his legal wife, such an assertion would hurt me beyond measure; it would cause me to grieve and mourn, and beg my father for evidence of being his son by his lawful wife and a legal heir. I would continually search for evidence, and trace all records in every way I could to satisfy my mind; but still I might remain in doubt until I should bear in the reading of his will such words as these: I will and bequeath to my son Selby so and so, then I would be satisfied. How often Satan appears to us with a very plausible testimony that we are not God's children, and this grieves us, because we are susceptible to feeling, having been born of God, born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible. It is because we have life that it hurts us to be told that we are not the children of God, and this leads us to search for evidence continually. I have been at this almost every

day for several years, searching the old records, searching in myself for some family favor, for I can see the favor in others' ways and actions; but if I am given to see any resemblance to a subject of grace in my reflection, I go straight away and forget what manner of man I am. So I cannot be satisfied here, and will not until I have attained to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, then indeed I shall see him as he is, and shall be satisfied.

Your brother,
F. Selby Fisher

PSALM 100
A Psalm of praise.

MAKE a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.

Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto h1m, and bless his name.

For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

"We are saved by hope."- Romans viii. 24.

WHAT is the meaning of being saved by hope? It does not mean saved actually, but instrumentally; not saved as regards our eternal security, but as regards our experience of salvation. By hope we are instrumentally saved from despair, saved from turning our backs upon Christ and the gospel, saved from looking to any other Saviour, or any other salvation; and especially saved from making this world and this life our happiness and home, as *"waiting patiently for what we see not," even " the redemption of our body."* Now it is by hope that we hang upon and cleave to the Lord Jesus, and thus by this grace we abide in him. It is therefore spoken of as an *"anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that which is within the veil."* What holds the ship firm in the storm, and prevents it falling upon the rocks? The anchor. The ship abides firm as long as the anchor holds. So by hope the soul abides in Christ. He is within the veil; we are without, and, it may be, tossed up and down on a sea of doubt and fear, distress and anxiety, and yet there is a bond of union between him and us firmer than the Atlantic Cable.

Elder J. C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 2008

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Eva Wyatt, NC	5.00
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Elder J.C. Carroll, NC	75.00
Tommy Wall, VA	5.00
Wayne Oxley, WV	15.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER ANNIE BELL POSEY MALONE

Sister Posey age 85 passed away on November 12, 2008. She had been a member of Salem Primitive Baptist church and when that church closed she moved her membership to Pleasant Ridge Primitive Baptist church. She was preceded in death by her first husband Elder W. T. Posey and children Carolyn Jean Lee and William Ralph Posey and her second husband A.A. Malone.

Survivors include her children, Jewel Dean Gay and Teresa Diane Dambach (Dale); daughter-in-law, Linda White Posey; grandchildren, Sheila Hill Lawrence (Carl), Tony Lester Hill (Bethany), Samuel Brent Gay, Terrell Gay Phipps (Theron), Stephanie Posey Williams (Shannon), Heather Posey Redd (Johnny), Erica Posey Babcock (Dave), Brandon Hunter Dambach, Dyanna Lynn Dambach, and William Ralph Posey, Jr.; 19 great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandchildren. Sister Posey will always be remembered for her kind and gentle nature and her firm — belief in the Sovereign Grace of God.

Elder and Sister Posey traveled among the Old Baptists all their allotted days and she was a wonderful helpmate to Elder Posey during his travels. After Elder Posey passed away she married Brother A.A. Malone who was a member of Zion Primitive Baptist church and they were very supportive of the Churches of the Buttahatchie-Hopewell Association. After the death of Brother Malone she spent the last years of her life at Skyland Oaks in Tuscaloosa, and later at Mount Royal Towers in Birmingham.

Her services were held on November 16, 2008 at Heritage Chapel Funeral Home in Tuscaloosa by Elder James Pugh. She was laid to rest beside her first husband in Tuscaloosa Memorial Park, to await the second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

May we at Pleasant Ridge Church be reconciled to the will of Almighty God.

Sister Agnes Sullivan, Clerk
Elder James Pugh, Moderator

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
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SONG

There is a friend that sticketh fast,
And keeps his love from first to last,
And Jesus is his name:
An earthly brother drops his hold,
Is sometimes hot, and sometimes cold,
But Jesus is the same.

He loves his people great and small,
And grasping hard embraceth all,
Nor with a soul will part:
No tribulations which they feel,
No foes on earth, or fiends of hell,
Shall tear them from his heart.

His love before all time began,
Shall through all time the same remain,
And evermore endure:
Though rods and frowns are sometimes brought,
And man may change, He changeth not,
His love abideth sure.

The law demanded blood for blood,
And out he poured his vital flood
To pay the mighty debt!
He toils through life, and pants through death,
And cries with his expiring breath,
"Tis finished," and complete.

Berridge

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EDITORIALS

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Romans 12:2.

Elder J.B. Farmer

The children of God are full of questions about the kingdom of heaven and how they relate to it, if I am not greatly deceived. They wonder and meditate upon the great mysteries of that kingdom. They desire to have that knowledge which is from above where their treasure is laid up. However, they are helpless to obtain it by themselves alone. Therefore, they must wait until it pleases the God of heaven and earth to show it to them and to give them their heart's desire. Jesus said, ***"Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Luke 12:32.*** He is well pleased to teach His little ones as they are able to receive it, line upon line and precept upon precept.

One of those deep things which, it seems to me, takes the attention of His people and is of continual concern to them is this. Just what kind of a person am I? On the one hand I have the desire for the things of this world, but on the other hand I have the desire to forsake those things altogether. In some ways, I seem to desire the praise of men but in other ways I have no desire for their approval at all. Sometimes my thoughts are only on natural things but at other times they seem to soar far above this world. Many times, I think that I am the world's worst creature and hope seems to be completely out of sight. Other times, I am fully persuaded that it would be much better to leave this world and go on to be with Christ. Why do I have such wars raging in my soul? Who am I? Am I altogether in the flesh or am I of the Spirit? Or is it possible that I am both?

God has given to us His inspired

scriptures which help us to understand more about ourselves as it pleases Him to reveal them unto us. The beloved apostle was inspired to write the instructive and comforting words, ***"I find a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O Wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Romans 7:21-24.***

According to these scriptures and according to our own experience, we are taught that there are two of us in one person. There is an inward man who is spiritual and an outward man who is carnal. The inward man always desires to please God, and the outward man always seeks the things of the flesh. Therefore the warfare rages. But thanks be unto God, the inward man is much greater than the outward man. That inward man is Christ in you, the Hope of glory. No matter how strong the flesh appears to be, the Spirit is stronger. You have the victory in Him.

Now, since there are two men, there must be two minds. There is a carnal mind which is controlled by the flesh and there is a spiritual mind which is of Christ. The one is unto death and the other is unto life. ***"For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Romans 8:6.*** To be controlled by the carnal mind is to be abiding in death. ***"She who liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth."*** To walk after the Spirit is to be abiding in life and peace. ***"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Romans 12:1.***

Since the mind controls the body, when one walks after the flesh, the carnal mind is ruling. On the other hand, when one walks after the Spirit, it is because the Spirit is ruling. Since the child of God has both minds, he must be controlled by one or the other. How is it then that one is enabled to walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh? Here is the glorious promise unto the tempest tossed child. God has Spoken with power. ***"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for you are not under the law, but under grace." Romans 6:14. "Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world."*** The child of grace is given to walk after the Spirit because the mind of Christ is in him and Christ has assured the victory. ***"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus the Lord."*** God is not saying that you should let Him do something for you, but rather this is a divine and powerful "Let" which the God of heaven and earth has uttered. It is the same "Let" that brought the

world into existence. It is a sure thing that the mind of Christ shall abide in each of His members.

This brings us to the scripture at the head of the article. It shows how the little one is separated from the world and its thinking. He is saved from being conformed to the wicked and destructive ways of this evil age. His mind is transformed or changed into right thinking by the renewing of the Spirit of the living God. The carnal mind is overcome and brought into submission so that it cannot rule. The spiritual mind dominates. This is totally the work of God in and for His people. He has done for us what we could not do for ourselves. We walk according to the Spirit as He has given us grace.

It makes me think of Lot when he had been captured by the four kings when they made war on Sodom and Gomorrah. He was taken captive with all he had and could not escape. God, in His mercy, sent Abraham and his trained servants to save him from their evil clutches. Likewise, in love and mercy and in power, God has come to our aid and delivered us from this corrupt world which is passing away. May all praise be rendered unto the God of heaven and earth unto whom it is due.

Written in love, I hope,
Elder J.B. Farmer

VOICES OF THE PAST

Hobucken, N. C.

Dear Brethren Editors of the Signs:

I am sending you an article which appeared in the Old Faith Contender in 1948, entitled Baptism in a Boat. I read it over often for the beauty I see in it, and I thought it might mean as much to someone else as it has to me. I have never seen it in any other periodical, so would like to see it in the Signs.

I am acquainted with this dear old father in Israel, who will be ninety years old in September. Although very feeble, he attends his meetings; and at times the Lord strengthens him to preach the gospel of Christ in its purity. He preached for us at our March meeting, and spent the night in our humble home. We were so glad to have him, and enjoyed him so much; and pray that the Lord will strengthen him yet to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. We feel him to be one of those dear old saints of God whom the Lord has lengthened his days to bring the glad tidings to some poor hungry souls. ***"God works in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform."***

Dear brethren, we have been taking the paper for several years, and it is a welcome visitor in our

home. We don't want to miss any copies because of what it contains. If I could write of His great riches in mercy as I can read what the dear children of God write, what a joy it would be to this poor sinner. We have been blessed as yet to get to meetings, but there are so many that are shut-in, or bed-ridden, so that they never hear the word of God only through the columns of the paper - they who are seeking the blessed rightousness of our, Lord and Saviour. We are sending what we can to help on the Fund.

Dear brethren, pray for our little flock; there are just a few of us, and without a pastor. Pray that the Lord in due season will send us one like we need, not like we want; for he has promised to supply our needs, which I believe he will.

So, hoping your spiritual needs will be filled, pray for us both that we might be given faith to press on to the mark of the prize of the high calling as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. May God bless you all in your every effort to get the paper out to the poor and needy, who are seeking His love to know. Oh, if I could only tell it as I feel it in my heart. Sometimes I feel I know that my Redeemer lives, and I am not ashamed to own my Lord, or blush to speak his name. Husband and I ask your prayers that we may live at the feet of our brethren, and not bring any reproach on the church. We want to live and die with the family of God, so as not to be weighed in the balance and found wanting. Please cast a mantle of charity over these scattering remarks, for they are like the writer, imperfect. Do as you wish just cast it in the waste basket, that will be a good place; but we want to live in sweet fellowship with all our brethren. May the saving grace of our God keep us in the bonds of the gospel for His name's sake. My husband, Elder J. G. Gaskill is very feeble.

Mrs. J. G. Gaskill

BAPTISM IN A BOAT

Grantsboro, N. C.
November 15, 1948

Dear Brother Berry: At your request and the request of others, I will again try to give an account of baptizing an aged invalid brother and his wife in a boat, which was placed in their home for that purpose.

Saturday morning and fourth Sunday in March 1917, was my regular meeting time with the church at Macedonia, near Ernul, Craven County, N. C. That Saturday morning appeared with rain and snow, which caused me to hesitate about going. My wife had said, ***"Nobody will meet you, for those members are old and live too far away from the church to go out in such weather as this."***

Like Abraham's servant, called and bound under oath to seek a wife for his son, Isaac, yet his servant did

not like to take that oath, and likely all true servants hesitate to take such an oath. But such an obligation prompted me to go. So I met the train, went to the church, kept a good fire going and truly, no one met me at the church that day. At five o'clock in the afternoon, I hurried through rain and snow, to the railroad station for my return home. There was in my heart a sense of quarrel with the Almighty for weather conditions and the prompting obligation to go at such a time, with a kind of resolve, not to go back the next day, even if the weather should be fair. I wrestled all night with these troublous thoughts. Next morning rain and snow continued to fall. All the time I tried to be quiet, with nothing to say. Soon I heard the train whistle about three stations below. Here ended my quarrel and perplexing thoughts. I quickly moved to get ready for the train when it reached Grantsboro station. My wife came and wanted to know what I was doing. I told her I was going back to Macedonia, for the obligation impressed me to go, whether the members met me or not. She said, ***"I think you are foolish, for you know no one will go there in weather like this, and you will be out your railroad fare for both days."***

For the time being, I ceased to wrestle with flesh and blood and went. Upon my arrival at the church, I saw the rain and snow had ceased in that section, though it was cold and cloudy. A lively congregation was in the house, sweetly singing, and two young men were the first to meet me on the church ground. They introduced themselves as sons of Mr. Kelly Gaskins. They said, ***"Our father is 79 years old, very sick, and has been for a long time. He sent us to see if you would go and preach for him this afternoon."*** I said, ***"Yes, I will try to do so."*** The meeting in the house was excellent and the singing was with melody and power. I entered the stand and after a hymn of praise, and prayer, I spoke about fifty minutes upon the great theme of the gospel as the true bread, in every word, proceeding out of the mouth of God. At the close, we announced services at the home of Mr. Kelly Gaskins at two o'clock p. m. We then dismissed with a hymn, and our usual benediction.

The two young men took me to their home, and the bedside of their father. I found him very thin and weak, could talk but little above a whisper and had to be turned in a sheet. To me, he seemed as one of only a few more days.

Soon after the noon lunch, a large crowd was standing on the porch, in the hall and in the invalid's room. Being placed near the foot of the invalid's bed, I began the services with a hymn of praise and prayer to almighty God.

Then for a text, I read, ***"Tell me, O Thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou***

makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions ?" Song 1 :7. With unusual liberty, I spoke about thirty minutes. Then for conclusion, I turned to hymn No. 201 Lloyd's Selection. Deacon A. P. Whitford led the singing. At the end of the first stanza, he stopped and requested that door be announced open for the reception of members, which was done. The deacon resumed his singing. We saw the invalid raise his hand. I stepped forward and took hold of it. In a low whisper, he said, ***"I want to be baptized and have a home with you all in the Church."*** The singing was again halted and I told the Church present what the brother had said. The deacon said, ***"I have had fellowship for him for a long time, and believe all the rest have perfect fellowship for him too, therefore, I move we receive him,"*** to which all agreed. Then his wife, Rachel, offered herself, with about the same expressed desires, and was likewise received. The singing was again resumed and we all extended the right hand of fellowship to both as candidates for baptism. Every voice seemed full of sweet melody. At the close of the hymn, I announced that I would be back next month and arrange for the baptism. Then the old Brother Gaskins strained up his voice and said, ***"I want to be baptized now."*** Now, what shall I say; for I could not believe he would live more than a week. Should we take him two miles to the creek and if he should not die on the way, he surely would die when dipped into the cold, snowy water. With these thoughts, I had to stand still for a moment. At this juncture, one of his sons stepped up and in a low tone said to me: ***"I think I know how you feel. Should we start and Father lived to reach the creek, he would die when dipped into the cold water, but I would be glad if he could be baptized, for it has been his talk for more than three months."*** He then suggested that a boat could be brought and placed in the hall, filled with water, and use it if that would do.

I said, Yes, and explained to the Church and audience the suggestion of the boat, and further said, ***"Any way just so a person can be buried in the water and raised up again is baptism; for by this act every true believer declares his faith in the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord, which is the capstone of all the gospel."***

All present agreed to this plan. Here we adjourned the meeting until the boat and water could be provided. Everyone was quiet, with nothing to say, waiting for the final result. I stepped out in the back yard and saw two large water pots and requested some young men to fill the pots with water and rush a fire to heat it. The boat, which was a nice, clean skiff, was soon placed in

the hall. I had rear end blocked up so as to force the water in the bow, which would take less water to fill and partly filled it with water drawn from the well, and finished up with hot water drawn from pots and other vessels for heating, and raised the temperature of the water near blood heat. We then placed a sheet under the invalid brother. I took hold of one corner, the brother deacon the other, with other brethren holding the center and lower corners, then carried him and lowered all under the water except top of his head and face, raised my right hand and said, ***"In obedience to the command of the Will of heaven, I baptize this our brother in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost,"*** As I dipped and raised him up, I said, " Amen." The baptism was without a strangle and pleasant as any I ever saw. We took him back to his room, placed him on a small cot for an exchange of clothing. Then Sister Rachel, his wife stepped up and said, ***"Why can't I be baptized in that same water where my husband was baptized?"*** I said, ***"You can, if you so desire."*** She said, ***"I do."*** I said, ***"Get ready ."*** She said, ***"I am ready ."*** I had her step in the boat and sit down. Then after the same order I baptized her in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, Amen. This also was a pleasant baptism.

When everything was cleared up in the hall, we entered the brother's room. He looked pleasant, and wanted us to sing and we did so long as we could stay. Brother and Sister Gaskins were both filled with joy and gladness at the passing events of the day, and their joy was good, and I could joy with them.

Upon my return home, I soon learned there had been no slackening of the rain and snow during the day in my county of Pamlico. On reaching home, my wife said, ***"I hope you are now satisfied with another long and lonely day ."*** With a smile, I said, ***"We have had a good day, two lively congregations, preached twice, and baptized two."*** She could not believe the report, and turned away as though it was a dry joke. The smile on my face seemed to increase her doubt. The next morning she said, ***"Tell me the truth, did you have any meeting yesterday?"*** I said, "Sure! one at the church, and one at the home of a sick man." I then had a chance to tell her the whole story, which I did.

I expected the next time I heard from the dear old brother Gaskins, he would be dead, but not so. He recovered and was out again.

Therefore a remarkable Providence. I am as ever, yours in hope,

(Elder) J. P. TINGLE.
Grantsboro, N. C.

MATTHEW VII. 19, 20.

"Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and is cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

This truth, spoken by Jesus, was recorded by Matthew for the testimony of Jesus relative to the people of God bearing fruit of eternal life. We know, regarding the truth as to natural trees, that if the tree bears good fruit the tree is good, so, naturally speaking, the tree is preserved by the husbandman and the fruit gathered. The tree and fruit here spoken of is to the Scribes and false prophets of every description, which embraces those who falsely profess Christ Jesus, or claim to be the kingdom of God. One born of God is of the good tree. This sets forth God as the good tree, and every other is of the flesh, in which the embodiment of corruption and iniquity is put forth, which is recorded as the corrupt tree. (Matt. vii. 17, 18.) The text we have here quoted declares that every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Whoever hews down and casts into the fire must have the anthority of ownership in order to be able to discriminate as to the quality and kind of fruit it bears. We know the fruit of carnality, because we have tasted the bitterness thereof and know that it is not good.

The question arises, What is the fruit of carnality? It is in every way at enmity against good fruit and is destructive to, instead of the building up of life, and the more we are given to note the bitterness of it the more condemnation or death we feel reigning in us. Good fruit nourishes, and life and vigor are felt as the effect of our partaking of it; in other words, it has been given to us to eat. These remarks are to present the true results of fruit given us in the state of nature. So we turn to the spiritual relation of poor sinners. We know if a man or woman is not born of God they have no good fruit in them, hence they cannot do the works of God, and when one is born of that incorruptible seed by the word of God they bring forth fruit unto the seed of which they are born. What do we expect to find upon the good tree? That which is produced by the Spirit of God in the heart, and that fruit will remain the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith. (Gal. v. 22.) The frnit of the Spirit as given by Paul to the Galatians to be manifested by mortal creatnre, and we know he was controlled by a higher power than that conceived in mortal flesh. Jesus knew the, fruit of all the trees, and we, in nature, hew down the trees bearing bitter fruit and use them for fuel and other purposes, but the apple tree is preserved becanse of its fruit. Man in nature is hewn down or brought low by the Spirit, and all

the stay formerly felt, as we would term the root of the tree, is cut off, all his strength is gone, and he goes down and is cast into the fire for the consuming of all pertaining to the flesh. *"As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons."* The first taste of the fruit of the Spirit is love, and love is stronger than man. We know we cannot create love, and love casteth out fear. When Ananias was commanded of God to go to Saul he was told, *"Behold, he prayeth,"* and Ananias immediately went to him and called him brother Saul, and this manifested humility by which be was hewn down and cast into the furnace of affliction because of his sins, and the fruit was manifested in the life he lived, for instead of persecuting and going forth to the satisfaction of the flesh he was made to bear the fruit of the Spirit: love, gentleness, longsuffering, faith. All the spiritual relation was manifested in the apostles, who are our ensamples as faithful disciples of Jesus. The church looks upon every member for these fruits of the Spirit, and when there is no fruit coldness is felt and all the relations of life are dormant. The fruit of the Spirit was what Paul had under consideration when he said that when he would do good evil was present with him and he could not do the things he would. If we were permitted to live as becomes saints what a great difference we would witness among the brethren, as each one would show his love for his brother, treat each other gently, expressing brotherly kindness, and joy would shine out in each countenance, expressing relations of love and fellowship, and meeting places would be a bethel to all of like precious faith, peace would abound and we would never hear the expression, *"I am for peace,"* for peace would be there and longsufferlng would abound in the heart of everyone. What is long suffering? To our mind it is the manifested forbearance of one with another, in which all their faults and personalities are not collected and bundled to bring accusation against another brother. Faith, one of the quoted fruits of the Spirit, bears with vital importance on the evidences of eternal life, as we note that without faith it is impossible to please God, and is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. but with patience we wait for it. What wonderful fruit is born by faith and faith is easily entreated, patient and is kind. The fruit of the Spirit in the church is the drawing cord that binds in one bundle of love all the members, and makes them sit together in heavenly places in Christ, and in these manifestations each can say, There my best friends, my kindred, dwell, there God, my Savior, reigns. What wonderful rest belongs to the people of God, to be partakers with the household of faith in the fruits of the Spirit, giving such strength that one feels rested, and

the virtue of holy writ is felt which says, *"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart : and ye shall find rest unto your souls."* We have noted some very sweet fruit borne forth during the past year in the beautiful expressions of love and fellowship commuuicated to the editors and publishers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which was much appreciated. Our writing has been a labor of love, and we trust you may have found some of the sweet fruit of the Vine in it, and in the many other communications found in the pages of the SIGNS. We crave your support in Soliciting new subscriptions and urging those in arrears to forward the amounts to the publlshers. We trust It may be the will of God that we serve you during the year 1929 in the Spirit of God, that you may be built up and strengthened in the most holy faith, which will bear to you of the tree of life good faith.

C. W. V.

PSALM 104:32-34.

They looked on the earth, and it trembleth: he toucheth the hills, and they smoke.

I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.

My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord.

"BE YE STEADFAST."

"Take heed that no man deceive you."

Perhaps the SIGNS has never known a time when there was so much inquiry relative to the sayings of Revelation as now. The office is, and has been for several months, flooded with requests that either Elder Lefferts or ourself, or both, write, explaining different chapters and verse.

In the March 15th SIGNS Elder Lefferts mentioned this, and said it was for lack of definite views that he had not replied to many requests, and exhorted our readers to continue in the old paths," that all was right, and if any of us needed special revelation the Lord would give it. His advice is good, and we join with him in his admonition. We, however, ventured to give a few thoughts on the twentieth chapter of Revelation in the same number, and feel assured that we did no violence to the Scripture. All the saints of God have in different ages confessed their lack of understanding in those deep, durative and mysterious things, but in this age of the world the learned clergymen do not hesitate to interpret them, and are stirring the people of all classes to excitement and wonder. No doubt this very thing is causing the saints to desire the real import of the Scriptures.

We remember hearing a faithful brother say some years ago that in

listening to the preachers of the world he could readily tell what was wrong, but to tell himself what was right he could not. This is true now, and will ever be. The children of God detect error at the twinkling of an eye, but if called upon to present the truth concerning that same matter few likely could do it; but when they hear the truth of the subject they discern that as readily as they do error. This is the advantage the redeemed have over worldly religionists: they know both truth and error, while the wise and prudent know only error, yet think it truth. Some folks are said to put darkness for light, and Satan himself boasts of having the power and knowledge of God. It matters not who the man is, nor what his natural attainments are, everything of a spiritual nature must be tried by the Scriptures, and if found wanting must be discarded. Some of these mighty men, in their own estimation, are telling the people that this world war is a spiritual war, and that every christian therefore must get into the fight, and that the first step is to ***"close the saloons and prohibit the manufacture of all intoxicating liquors; in doing so we shall win the war for Christ."*** They know nothing whatever of the power of God, and little or nothing of his purposes. How long would the war last if Christ wanted it to cease. All weapons of warfare would be laid down in a moment, if he so desired or purposed, and the banner of peace float the world over. But such is not his plan, hence the war contiuues. If Christ were on earth today as he was more than nineteen hundred years ago even he would be judged and condemned by the self-righteous Pharisees of this age, as he was by the same class then, saying, ***"He is a winebibber and a friend of sinners."*** He did drink wine, and did not prohibit the use of it, but rather encouraged the use, but not abuse of it. When at the wedding and the wine gave out he turned water into wine, that the users of it might have more; and surely it was real wine, ***"the best wine,"*** so pronounced by those who were judges. He visited and ate with sinners such as are shunned today by self-righteous Pharisees. These men are, in their vain attempts to be christians, trying to turn the world upside down, and all who do not follow in their wake are termed ***"slackers,"*** and turned down as not being the followers or servants of Christ. How very blind the blind are, yet they say, We see, but Jesus says their blindness remains.

We now want to fully emphasize the fact, in opposition to the assertion of the wonderful " D. D.'s," that the present is not a spiritual or religious war at all. There is absolutely no question, either of religion or doctrine of the Scriptures, involved. Further, we want to assert and affirm that no prophecy, either of the Old or New Testament, points to or foretells of it. Neither is there the slight-

est shadow of reference to the Kaiser in the Bible, either by name, number or figure.

If the aim or intent of this war was the persecution of the saints of God for their faith in and worship of Christ, then we might think more seriously that some sayings in Matthew xxiv., Revelation xx., , &c., were being fulfilled, but since no question of religion or Bible doctrine is involved (which the much quoted and talked of Scriptures most positively declare should be) they can have no reference to the present war. The Kaiser is said to be, by the false teachers, represented by the beast, but since he has not made war with the saints and put the faithful worshipers of Christ to death he most assuredly is not the character spoken of as the beast, and it matters not who says so. There seems no doubt from history that Nero was "the beast" who persecuted the saints, and power was given those who had his image, that is, to those who felt as he felt, who despised and hated the servants of Christ as he did, who desired their destruction as he did, to persecute and put to death the saints of God. Nero and the powers which followed him are represented by the dragon, the old serpent, who sought the life of the child, or early church, born of the woman, as is recorded in the twelfth chapter of Revelation. Everything said in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew concerning, wars and rumors of wars, earthquakes, pestilences, nation rising against nation and kingdom against kingdom, was positively declared by the Savior to take place during the lifetime of some of that generation, and all those things denoted the end of the world, or that age legal dispensation, when all legal worship should end and the saints serve God with reverence and fear, which are the outcome of grace. The readers of the SIGNS, as well as all Old School Baptists generally, have long been established in the doctrine preached by the apostle Peter, that no prophecy of the Scriptures. is of any private interpretation, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. As, therefore, the Scriptures were given by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, holy men speaking as they were moved, the same Holy Spirit must enlighten the hearts and minds of spiritual men now in order that they understand the things written. Of one thing the church of God may be certain, viz., that whether the saints can or cannot interpret the Scriptures, all said of them by those never called of God to preach is absolutely wrong. Brethren, be ye steadfast; why be troubled or concerned about all they say since they all are blind leaders of the blind. Such men as would now be leaders of the world have a form of godliness, but by their works deny the power, thereof. They claim to be the servants and ministers of Christ, yet deny his divinity, his power and Godhead, declaring that

he is helpless to accomplish his work without the assistance of men. Be ye steadfast, brethren, be not weary in well doing; continue to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. Be not shaken by the cunning craftiness of men, who lie in wait to deceive, whose god is their belly and whose end will be shame and contempt. Take heed that no man deceive you; for many shall say, Lo, Christ is in the desert; believe it not; or, Behold, he is in the secret cham ber; go not after them. These things are to establish the children of God in the doctrine which Paul declares: The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

How prone we all are to forget these things and at times become disturbed in mind when we see and hear so much that is called good. If we all would read God's word more and the sayings and doings of men less we would be far better off, and more established in the doctrine of God our Savior, that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose; that all nations before the Father are as a drop in a bucket; that he holds the waters in the hollow of his hand that he doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; that none can stay his hand or say, What doest thou? Let us all bear in mind, regardless of all the notions and ideas now advanced by different classes of men, that Jesus assured his disciples, as recorded in Matthew xxiv., that all the terrible things he declared there should come to pass, should take place during the lifetime of some of the generation then living. We have every reason to believe that the Son of God spake the truth, hence none of those things was two thousand years in the future, even though they may seem, in the minds of some, to fit conditions now. Let us remember also that the things revealed and declared in the book of Revelation were ***"things shortly to come to pass,"*** therefore were not events to take place two thousand years in the future, nor were they past events, nor were they immediately present, but things shortly to come to pass.

Having felt impressed to write as we have, we feel to hope that the Lord may bless it to the comfort and satisfaction of his distressed and perplexed people, that being reminded of the things of God, his power and omnipotence, they may rest under the shadow of the Almighty, having implicit confidence and trust in him that all is and will be right. He is the Captain of our salvation, and is ever at the helm, and will guide the church safely into the haven of rest, where wars, deceivers and false prophets are unknown, ***"but where the righteous shall shine in the glory and presence of God and the Lamb."***

Elder H.C. Ker.

HEARING PAUL DECLARE THE UNKNOWN GOD

Sometime ago, while in the pulpit with the Bible opened to the 17th chapter of Acts, I began to read at the 16th verse. When I had read through the 26th verse I was carried by the Spirit to Mars Hill in Athens, Greece; and became a live listener as Paul preached this mighty sermon on the text, THE UNKNOWN GOD. I was one who had helped erect the inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. I had to stop reading as I began to experience extraordinary visions and wonderful meditations relative to the actual setting and circumstance of this memorable occasion. I was so astonished at the sight of Athens, Mars Hill, and the many altars and inscriptions and gods made of stone and wood; and the people who worshiped them; that I have done research since then to see if it was a true picture. G. Frederick Owens says, Athens, one of the greatest cultural centers on Paul's day, grew up around a 520-foot-high rocky plateau called "the Acropolis". Here, on this elevated area, stood the many-columned Parthenon, far famed architectural wonder, *and* so my *o*ther sacred edifices that the place was called, ***"the many templed Acropolis".*** May God grant that you relive with me as I relate this.

I came to Athens because I had learned that the most wise of the earth were there. I had such a craving for wisdom because of my convictions that I was so ignorant and unlearned. I had itching ears to hear something that would satisfy my hunger for wisdom. I had a worshipful heart and a strange feeling that I must come to Athens in order to hear these great wise men talk of wisdom. I had a feeling that I would find unity there and that the wise men would all be agreed. I was disappointed upon my arrival when I found wise men in the Market Place disagreeing and quarreling. I learned that the wise men spoke constantly on Mars Hill. I attended the lectures and found that they disagreed. I began to venture out and behold the many altars and the constant flow of people. Some went to one altar; others went to another; while others formed in companies to go to the various images. I followed one company to an altar and while the people were bowing before this image I read a long inscription about this god. They knew so much about their god; yet the inscription meant nothing to me. It was empty and meaningless. I thought of how foolish it was to fall down and worship something that couldn't see, feel, or even stretch forth his hands. I exclaimed in anguish, ***"Do all of you worship in reality this graven image whom you have to move and carry about?"*** Some raved against me, but a few walked to my side and one of them inquired, ***"Tell us about your god?"*** I answered, ***"I know nothing about a god,***

however, I feel there is but One - Who has more power than this god whom you worship." We agreed to investigate all of the other shrines and altars. We read each and every inscription printed on the banners at the many edifices and a few from each company joined us as we proceeded from one place to another.

After investigating all these long inscriptions of the many gods we concluded that we had not found any that suited the feelings and convictions of any of us. What could we do? We were all anxious to worship together THE GOD whom we could not define. We talked freely one with another and found a relationship with each other that we could not explain. We reasoned that there were so many altars that surely we could erect one and worship together. We found that we could not match the long inscriptions found on the other altars. We all confessed to one another that we wanted to worship the God whom we knew nothing about. We thought we must put up an inscription as all of the others had. They wrote long inscriptions about their gods but we could write nothing because we all confessed our ignorance of Him. Finally we agreed on a short inscription of four little words: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. We did not know how to worship Him but we tried. How we wanted and wished that we could know more of Him.

One day a lone stranger passed our way and he paused long as he read the inscription. While he was standing there some men came hurriedly up and yanked him by the arm and said to him, ***"We are taking you before Areopagus that we may know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is."*** Something drew us to follow him as there was something magnetic in the expressions of his eyes and manner . It had such a drawing effect upon us that we began to wonder, IS HE A GOD? We kept as close to him as possible as arrangements were made for him to speak, and our company was clustered together as Paul stood in the midst of Mars Hill and began to speak. Other companies were there too in that throng of people. His words rang loud and clear in powerful tones as he began, ***"Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with the inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you."*** I thought of all the inscriptions that he read he called attention only to ours. It seemed he was speaking only to us. Is he ridiculing us for being wholly given to idolatry ? was the question that came to my mind as he paused in this sermon. As I was thinking, Are we worse than they?, I really heard his words, ***"Whom ye ignorantly worship."*** As he spoke, "Him declare I unto

you", I thought He is making known to us the God that we do not know. Our God sent him to us.

I reasoned further that this man is taking special notice of us who confess our ignorance. We know that we are ignorant of Him and that we do not know how to properly worship Him. This man is recognizing us as the ones who truly worship Him even though it is an ignorant worship. This God Whom Paul preached had properly tuned our ears to hear and our hearts to understand and our minds to receive as Paul thundered, ***"God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of Heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands"***. Again the speaker paused as my thoughts raced on. I thought, there is not a plurality of Gods each one having his own little dominion - JUST ONE! He is THE GOD! What a Being! One Supreme God! He IS sovereignly ruling *NOW* in both heaven and earth. All things are under His almighty supervision to such extent that He is Lord of all creatures. All things are held in the hollow of His hand instead of Him dwelling in temples made with men's hands. I heard Paul's voice become clearer as he continued, ***"Neither is worshipped with men's hands as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth to ALL life, and breath, and all things."***

As Paul paused I experienced a multitude of comforting thoughts. Our God owns all things, controls all things, and works all things and does not need our power to assist Him. He does not need our wealth to make Him richer. He does not need our wisdom to inform Him, neither our political ability to advance His cause. I began to fear and tremble as I was swallowed up in thoughts of God's majesty and greatness. I felt His great hand swallow me and all the earth and fullness into its hollow with room to spare. I thought I had felt little but I had never felt so insignificant as this. Paul continued: ***"And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."*** No nation could boast of being better than other nations because God made them all of *ONE* blood. The same blood that coursed through the arteries, heart, veins, and capillaries of Adam and Eve had come in a continual flow through the generations to follow uninterrupted to the present time. Even though seas of blood have been shed, this blood has been made to grow in volume until now. No person can estimate its volume now.

No one could say so much in so few words unless he had been sent of God: a time to be born, die, plant, harvest, mourn, dance, laugh, cry; - all times of persons, nations, days, nights, and events were before determined. Not only *when* but *where*

of all events were before appointed and determined by THE GOD of the Heaven and of the earth. The time and the prescribed place of all beings from the smallest insect to the greatest creature that ever existed, or will exist, were all before appointed and determined by Him. If all the plants were pens; if all the seas were ink; if all outer space were paper ; and every creature were a ready writer, I venture to say, that God's sovereignty could never be fully told in this short duration of thousands of years of time. The subject becomes so great in its magnitude that I am lost in amazement and awe; while a multitude of thoughts flood my mind.

The question of WHY takes hold upon me as I hear Paul continue, ***"That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, AND FIND HIM, though He be not far from Every one of us."*** Seeking the Lord, feeling after Him, and finding Him: all this is the constant labor and glorious victory of everyone whom God has touched with His eternal Spirit. Everyone who knows his own weakness and dependence seeks the Lord, for they have found through sad experience that the wisdom of the world, the might of men, and the riches of the earth can never progress us one inch toward God nor satisfy our fainting souls. I must seek His guidance in prayer without ceasing. I must feel after Him if I am so fortunate to be an object of His care and providence. *He* cares for me, is the sweetest feeling a poor worm of the dust ever felt. He provides for me, is a sublime feeling for poor beggars to feel. He holds me in the hollow of His hand, is the most protective feeling experienced when confronted with the powers that be, who would take us and kill us if they could. Finding that He helps us, undertakes for us, and fights our battles in our stead, all this gives ease of mind, comforts the heart, and restores the soul. A question enters my mind which startles me: Where can I go to find Him? Who can I send into the heavens or across the sea?

Paul continues ***"For in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring."*** It is because of Him that we live. Any time He should withdraw Himself from us we would die naturally. Even the natural life within us is GOD. It is through Him that we move a finger, foot, tongue, or eye. We could not naturally see without Him. We can not write, think, nor speak without Him. We cannot retain things in our memory without Him. We owe Him our lives for creating us and numbering our days, as well as providing all things necessary for our natural existence. He owns us. We can never repay Him with praise for what He is to us as natural human beings. If He be in us ALL, as surely He is, then, to partially understand ourselves is a lesson toward understanding God. I

cannot analyze my mind, neither can I understand my thoughts. Even the study of my own physical anatomy becomes so complex, or complicated, that I cannot understand the functionings of my natural body. What makes my heart beat? What induces the thoughts that enter my mind? How is the food digested that I put into my mouth? How are these digestive juices distributed to the various parts of the body? Surely I am a complicated mechanism that only God can run! Paul interrupts my thoughts again as he says: ***"Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device."*** Such foolishness, I reasoned, that man who is so wonderfully made should want to worship something far less than he himself is. What folly to try to help God when man can't, without God, help himself? I thought, vain is the help of man. I vowed, Never again will I worship a creature but the ONE Who created all things.

Paul had stood so dignified and spoke with such power and authority until now that I was startled at the emotions that softened the tone of his voice as he made a step forward with a gesture of his hands and proclaimed; ***"And the times of this Ignorance God winked at ; BUT NOW COMMANDETH ALL MEN EVERYWHERE TO REPENT".*** I thought, Paul is not commanding us to repent; he is telling us that *GOD* commands it. The fullness of the time of this ignorance had really come to its end. The time of this ignorance God winked at. This time of ignorance was included in the time before appointed. Of course He winked at it because it needs be that we go through this time of ignorance in order to teach us that we cannot be wise of our own volition ; but that *ALL* wisdom comes down as a free gift from Him who made us. His command to repent from this ignorant worship is certainly effectual and will cause the least to turn from their own ignorant ways of worship and to praise Him rightly. This command which is NOW being proclaimed exercises the minds, hearts, and souls of each and everyone of His people in every nation, kindred, and tongue under Heaven. I heard Paul proclaim it. I felt the power of it in my soul. I prayed, ***"Turn me, Lord, and I shall be turned."*** He was turning me then. How anxious I was to hear the next words that Paul spoke: ***"Because He has APPOINTED a Day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that MAN whom He HATH ORDAINED: whereof HE hath given assurance unto all men in that HE HATH RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD."*** Paul gave the proper gesture that he had finished speaking and paused for a moment before leaving the rostrum. As he paused I thought, I want to know more about that man whom God hath Ordained; I want to know more about that Appointed Day in which He would

judge the world in righteousness; and, I want to know more of this Assurance given unto all men. In short, I want to read over and over again this mighty heart- stirring sermon on the GREATNESS OF GOD.

By this time Paul was leaving the rostrum, and all of our company as well as some from other companies met together at the exit that we might be closer to the man, and say a word to him. I heard some say, ***"We will hear thee again on this matter."*** Some from out in the audience mocked him. I was one of those who clave to him. I said to Paul, I want a copy of this. He answered, ***"There is a man with me who wrote my sermon out word by word while I was speaking. I not only paused in order that the words have time to grow in your own minds, but another purpose was that the one who is preparing a treatise for Theophilus could have time to write every word of it. You shall have a copy to read over and over again."*** I thanked God for having led me to this place to hear this mighty sermon. I am awakening from my trance and have a few observations to make before closing this article. I have read all of the sermons and letters delivered and written by Paul as published in the New Testament; but none holds me more spellbound than the one delivered on Mars Hill in Athens, Greece. If I ever become doubtful of God's sovereignty and almighty ruling and working of all things I turn to that sermon again to remove the doubts. When I question His right and authority to take vengeance and render severe judgments; I read again this sermon.

Paul reached the climax of this sermon in his last words, ***"Whereof He hath given assurance unto all men that HE HATH RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD."*** Paul had disputed daily in the Market Place and had ***"Preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection"***. Dionysius, the Areopagite a very wise man of literature was one who clave to Paul after hearing this sermon.

It would be a good idea when confronted with those who affirm the might of man and deny the sovereignty of God in all things, to just quote to them the full text of Paul on Mars Hill. If this will not shut the mouth of those who argue that God needs our help nothing can be said that will close their, mouths from speaking blasphemy. Dear reader: will you please turn again to the 17th chapter of ACTS and begin reading the 22nd verse, slowly read through the 31st verse as the conclusion of this article. Thanks.

Elder E. J. Lambert

DID THE FATHER'S WILL

Dear Brethren: May we consider the saying found in ***Luke 2:52. "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."*** I know that this subject is too deep for me,

but I have had some serious thoughts concerning it. I quote also the following scriptures: *"Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead." (Romans 1:3,4). "For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." (John 3:34). "The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day ." (Luke 9:22). "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." (Hebrews 2:16, 17). I believe that Jesus as a man did grow in wisdom and in stature, and in favour with God and man, only in a manifest sense to his people. "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. 2 :9).* Jesus was man in the flesh without sin, yet the fulness of the Godhead was in him: in this sense Peter could say, *"Lord thou knowest all things."* This was him declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, *"My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isaiah 46:10). "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me." (John 37, 38).*

I do not believe that it was the fleshly will of Jesus to die on the cross, but the divine will of the Father, yet the will of the flesh was made submissive to the divine will of the Father. *"And he saith, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt. And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepeth thou ? couldst not thou watch one hour? Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak."*

If he had not been human as well as divine, it would not have been a cross: he could not have been tempted in all points like unto his brethren not even one point, yet he was tempted in all points, and sinned not. (See Hebrews 4:15.) If Jesus had failed in one thing, even in his flesh, then he would not have been an offering without spot or blemish. His fleshly will was completely submissive to the will of the Father. He learned obedience by the things he suffered. He denied him-

self of all natural wealth, and was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Jesus did his Father's will in all things, and finished the work he was given to do; and God raised him on the third day. And He revealed himself to his disciples before he ascended into heaven. ***"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." (Hebrews 9 :24). "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."***

My brethren there is but one God. When we enter heaven we will not see the Father in one place and the Son in another, as two, but only one God. ***"Fear not neither be afraid: have not I told thee from time to time, and have declared it? ye are even my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any." (Isaiah 44:8). "As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one." (I Cor. 8:4). "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:1-3,14).*** All things were made by Him, not by them. And if he had not taken on himself a body of flesh, there could be no death of the testator. ***"For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." (Hebrews 9:16, 17).***

Let me say that in trying to write on this subject, I know I have come far short of expressing what I think I can faintly see: seemingly there is something that I cannot quite reach; but almost. I hope the readers will pardon all errors; and if there is any comfort, give God the praise.

(Elder) James R. Hollandsworth

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 2008

Sara Baker, VA	5.00
Bernard Cox, VA	5.00
George Hyslip, TN	15.00
Nellie Dalton, VA	5.00
Peggy Phillips, VA	5.00
Myrtle Thompson, VA	10.00
Robert Smith, VA	5.00
Charles Alders, TX	25.00
Don Norman, NC	15.00

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union will be held at Canaan Primitive Baptist Church located on the Mt. Cross Road in Pittsylvania County Virginia. Saturday before the fifth Sunday in March the song services will begin at 10:00 a.m.

All ministers of our faith and order are invited.

Elder Mark Terry, Moderator
Fred Murphy, Clerk

February 2, 2009

Signs of the Times
Elder Kenneth R. Key, Editor
721 Willard Street
Greensboro, NC 27405

New Dan River Primitive Baptist Church located in Patrick County, Vesta, Virginia purposes to hold a fifth Saturday meeting, the Lord willing, on March 28, 2009. The meeting will start with singing at 9:30am and preaching at 10:00am. The church is located on State Road 636 (State Shed Road) off US 58, approximately 3 miles east of the Blue Ridge Parkway and 12 miles west of Stuart, Virginia. We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially we would invite all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder J. L. Cassell, Pastor
James L. Shelor, Clerk

WEST COUNTY LINE UNION MEETING

The West Country Line union meeting will be held with Big Meadows Church on the 5th Sunday in March 2009.

Big Meadows is located about 20 miles below Graham, N.C. Those traveling I-85 take the Pittsboro/Graham exit and go 17 miles toward Pittsboro. After crossing the Cane Creek Bridge take first road to right at top of hill, go 4 miles to a cross road and turn left, go 1 mile to church.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Sister Jo Ann Self, Clerk

ST. JOHN 5:24.

Verily, verily, I say unto you He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

OBITUARIES

IN MEMORY OF JEWEL HAGOOD INGRAM

She was born April 23, 1914 in Ferrum, Va, a daugher of Robert Spotswood Ingram and Mae Peters Ingram. She died Sunday, June 1, 2008 at Stanleytown Health Care Center. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Chester Hagood and three brothers, Guy Ingram, Poff Ingram and Lindsey Ingram. Sister Jewel and Bro. Chester asked for a home and was received by experience June 16, 1951, on the grounds of Riverview Church. They were baptized by Eld,.Cecil Turner, and had their membership placed at Martinsville Primitive Baptist Church. They both were devoted members, and attended as long as their health permitted. Brother chester was a deacon for many years.

Sister Jewel retired from Fieldcrest Towel Mill after 40 years service.

She is survived by her daughter, Lynda H. Milteer and husband, Everett Milteer Jr. of Virginia Beach; a granddaugher, Courtney R. Synder and husband Ken Synder of Virginia Beach; a grandson, Scott Rizer and wife, Lea Rizer of Richmond, Va. Three great grandchildren,Casey Rizer, Nicole Rizer, and Emma Synder. Four sisters, Elva Turner and Ruby West of Ridgeway, Va. Marie Hazelwood of Fieldale, Va. And Iva Moran and husband, Odell Moran of Colllinsville, Va.

Her funeral was conducted on June 3,2008, at Norris Funeral Services Chapel by her pastor, Eld Mark Terry. She was laid to rest beside her husband at Roselawn Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

She was loved by all. I remember when my husband and I were baptized on Easter Sunday morning in 1976, we went to her house to change clothes, and she made us feel so welcome. And from that day she and her husband were "special" to us. We would visit each other often, went shopping out of town together, rode to church together, and always had that special love for each other. She is greatly missed by all who knew her.

Submitted by:
Mael Lavinder, Clerk
Mary H. Hall, Treasurer

ROMANS 11:23-24.

And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again.

For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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1429 Howlett Street
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SONG

How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
When those who love the Lord
In one another's peace delight,
And thus fulfil his word:

When each can feel his brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part;
When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart:

When free from envy, scorn, and pride,
Our wishes all above,
Each can his brother's failings hide,
And show a brother's love:

When love in one delightful stream
Through every bosom flows;
And union sweet, and dear esteem
In every action glows!

Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love.

Swain.

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Give thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son. Colossians 1:13

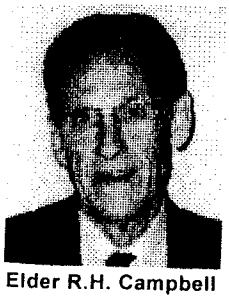
Elder R.H. Campbell

This scripture is found in Paul's epistle to the church at Colosse. This was a group of brethren that had never seen the apostle, but whom he had heard of from the other churches and who he hoped to meet in the future. The only information that he had in common with them was their mutual faith, and experience. He wrote much about the experience which they had shared, and which caused him to write this epistle. He made it very clear, in the above scripture, that their common hope of salvation was something that was the direct results of God working in them, and bringing them into the household of faith. It was the work of God who made them meet to be partakers of their portion of the inheritance that is laid up for all the chosen generation, those who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, as his own peculiar treasure.

The apostle Paul, in his epistle to the church at Ephesus stated it this way. ***(Eph 1,3-6) "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. To the praise of the glory of his grace: wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."***

In this sentence, you see who accepts who, into the beloved family of God. The natural man cannot

receive the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned, and he has no basis of comparison, on which to make his decision whether to accept or reject them. The only way that man can receive any knowledge of the spiritual realm is for them to be translated into that spiritual realm, and this is the work of God, for being, born or translated into it, is beyond the ability of the natural man.

They, as all of like precious faith have been delivered from the power of darkness, the state into which they were born from their Mother's womb, and have been translated into the kingdom of heaven. This translation is something that no man can perform for himself, because it is a spiritual work, which can only be wrought upon man for he is God's creation, and only God can perform such a work on his creatures. It is the same change that Jesus referred unto Nicodemus when he said that, ***"except a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven."*** All men will acknowledge that they cannot cause themselves to be born the first time, and they are equally unable to contribute anything to the second birth. I believe that this is the reason that Jesus used this analogy to demonstrate the only way they could see, or be translated into the kingdom of heaven and they are both actions that are beyond the ability of man.

If you ask them this direct question, they will say that they cannot cause themselves to be translated from one realm to another, or cause them to be born again and yet in the next breath turn around and declare to the millions of their followers that by repeating a small prayer after the minister, right at that moment they can become a child of God, and worthy of the blessings relative thereto. They say that they must accept Jesus as their own personal savior by their praying a small prayer and saying that they accept Jesus as their personal savior, and then this causes him to be under obligation to save them. I don't find this doctrine in the bible, for there is nothing spiritual about that, and Jesus said that God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in truth. Since man is not spiritual, as he is born into this world, they must be changed, from this state to be able to worship God in the Spirit. I believe that any other than the true doctrine set forth in the scriptures is just a figment of the imagination of the creature, to wrest the truths as contained in the scriptures to accommodate what the natural man imagines as a doctrine that will include him as he is in nature. He eliminates the spiritual element which he cannot see, or understand, and proceeds to claim all of the blessings of the elect of God, because he understands the scriptures to be directed to all men alike, and this is foreign to all scriptures.

Jesus never asked anyone if they would accept him, or his teach-

ings, based upon anything being done by the efforts of the natural man. The subject scriptures state, it is the work of God that they believe on him whom he hath sent, and in every case they will, because all upon whom this work of God is wrought, are the ones who have been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of heaven.

(I Tim 3:16) "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory ." The apostle Paul is advising Timothy that salvation of the saints of God is a mystery to the natural man, who dwells in the world of nature, and godliness is in the realm of the Spirit, and these things are foreign to the natural mind of man. God's thoughts and ways are as much higher than those of man that they can only be understood by him when they are revealed unto him, by God. The natural man cannot and will never understand the fact that being born again, or being translated into the kingdom of God are things beyond the grasp of the natural mind. They are in the same position as the Russians when they first went to the moon. They said they could prove there was no God because they had been in the heavens, and he was not there. How can you explain to him the way that these things can occur in the world of nature, and yet the natural man be completely unaware of their existence. He has experienced no change, from the way in which he was born in nature, and therefore cannot possibly discern the spiritual realm in which these things dwell. He can only believe them when he is given spiritual eyes to see, ears to hear and hearts for him to understand by faith, which is God's gift only to his chosen people.

(Isa 42:5) "Thus saith God the Lord, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath to the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light to the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory I will not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." These mighty works that God displays in the salvation of his children, are the assurance that they have, that they will receive the inheritance that he has reserved for all of his children in heaven and then, in the last verse he gives his reason, when he says, I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory I will not give to another. All

of these works bear the seal of God who created the heavens and the earth, and he would not give any of the glory and praise for these things to any other, because there is none else who is able to perform these works in his room and stead.

The apostle Paul, in his epistle written to Timothy, the young minister who was following along in the footsteps that Paul had walked for many years in the ministry, one that he loved and who was a personal friend of the family for several generations, and who Paul said was his own son in the faith. He was lovingly writing him of the trials he would face, that he not be overly distressed when he faced them. He did not lecture him or speak as one who was an authority in the word, but rather as his fellow servant in their mutual calling, and told him, *(II Tim 2: 7) "Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things,"* He was telling him to follow the written word, as revealed unto him personally, for he could not preach from the apostle Paul's experience.

Each is called in his own special calling, and should therefore preach the word as it was given unto him, even as Jesus told the apostle Paul, when he appeared unto him on the road to Damascus, he said, *(Act s 26:16) "Rise and stand upon thy feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things that I will appear unto thee: delivering thee from the people and the Gentiles from the Gentiles, unto whom I now send thee; to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."* You see, you have received a special calling and it is unto as special people and you will be given the words to speak to accomplish God's purpose in that calling. Do not try to preach from Paul's experience, or any of the other apostles because that would be hearsay evidence and not from the heart.

The Apostle Paul's admonition to the church at Colosse, was much as the same as the one that he gave unto Timothy. *(Col. Il 2: 7) "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him."* Their preaching and teaching of the doctrine was to confirm the truth that their calling was from Jesus, even as Paul's was. The apostle Paul's calling was to the Gentiles particularly, and the other apostles were sent to the Jews. The doctrine preached would bear witness with the other because they were from the same source, but just a different administration, which was the law covenant. They were both from our Lord Jesus Christ, and expressing God's love for his cho-

sen generation, which will be an eternal love.

The apostle Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, *(1 Cor 7:20) "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he is called. Art thou called being a servant? Care not for it, but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant. Ye are bought with a price; be not the servants of men. Brethren, let every man, where he is called, therein abide with God. God has a people in every nation tongue and people and he has called them as they are, even as you were, so don't try to force yourself to fit your personal imagination of what a child of God should be. Any changes that are of any needful will be accomplished in the new birth, or in your translation from the natural to the spiritual realm.*

I have had people say to me, "if I believed what you do, I would do anything that I wanted too, for once saved always saved. I would always answer them, well if you still want to do those things that you have done all of your life, you may as well do them, because that is where your heart is, and may God correct either of us that may be wrong. I then tell them that according to my personal understanding, and experience, the first thing that God changes about his children is their "want to". They no longer want to follow those ways that they formerly delighted in, because the heart has been changed. I believe that is why Paul admonished the Church at Corinth to, *(Ist Cor 7:20) "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he is called."* Paul believed that the calling would take care of any needful changes in your "want to" and your endeavor will be to follow them, rather than the things you had previously delighted in.

The apostle Paul, in his epistle to the church at Corinth stated it this way, *(II Cor 5: 17)- "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made righteousness of God in him."* So you can see that you are not the same man that you were, you are a new creature, and

your desires and hopes will be new and different from the old man, you have been made an ambassador for Christ, and this is because of the work of God that has been wrought in you.

The hope and prayer of every child of God is that this work that has been wrought in his heart will produce the same results that John said, speaking of the manner of love that has been bestowed upon us, and I believe it will, for he said, *(I John 3:1) "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."* This statement applies to these works, as well as all others that God has wrought within their heart and soul; nothing that he ever does is by chance, but for a purpose known only to him.

If these things cause a stirring in your heart, it is because of the presence of the same spirit within you. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, but from the very depths of our soul we do feel to understand what the writer is saying, and this can only be from the fact that these things have been revealed unto you. We cannot see them clearly with the natural eye, but we do see them, as through a glass darkly, and claim the substance as ours, for otherwise it would not produce any response within us at all.

Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus that great shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever Amen.

In bonds of love:
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

33 Hillcrest Ave N.E.
Roanoke, Va. 24012
Dec. 9, 2008

Dear Editors,

It is time to renew my Signs. I value it very much. It brightens up a dark world when we are blessed to comprehend it.

I believe it is somewhere in the scriptures that God will not leave himself without a witness. The writings of The Signs of the Times have been in praise, honor and glory to God. May they continue to be.

Please renew our subscriptions for another year.

Again, thank you very much.
Sister Mamie Rose D. Ferguson

Feb 9, 2009

Brother Horton,

Please renew my subscription for two more years and add my brother for one year.

I look forward to the articles every month.

Seeing the stacks of bright yellow at my grandmother's as a child, I never imagined those same words would someday be such a comfort.

In hope,
Pamela Screen

Feb. 9, 2009

I am so sorry to have overlooked my subscription to the Signs since Christmas.

I do enjoy it so much and remember helping my father Elder Spangler when he was an Editor back in the fifties. I am his youngest child.

Rebecca Spangler Smith

CORINTHIANS 12: 7-8.

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another m the word of knowledge by the same Spirit.

VOICES OF THE PAST

SALVATION

"I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no saviour. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God." (Isa. 43:11,12)

In the last forty-five years I have been writing to various publications. During the last thirty-five years I have been speaking from the pulpit to the children of God. My course during this time has been strange indeed. Much of the time I labored in much fear of not been called, and yet had a sentence or woe upon me that I felt the terrors of both if I did not speak. (1 Cor. 9:16) I have had my share of fault finding with what I have written and preached. Too many times, I did not accept that criticism in the right spirit. Of late years, I have quit defending myself against those that objected to my opinions. I would much rather have the good will of one and all, but it would be my ruin if I did have (Luke 6:26) , therefore I desire to leave everything in the hands of the Lord. I am sure that it will give a man itching ears when every class of people are acclaiming him as a great preacher.

I do not think that I have a desire to reach everybody, but I hope that I have a desire to reach all that my text applies to from time to time. I hope that I am not ashamed of the truth, of the gospel ; and I hope that I am ready to preach among those that have a hearing ear. I do not know, by looking into faces, or by looking over the list of subscribers to any periodical, who has ears to hear. I am sure that I cannot give them hearing ears, and I hope that there is not a desire about me to try.

My subject, and the text on which I hope to lay a good foundation, are pertinent matters for our consideration. However, the recipients of this gospel, are limited. None but the children of God can enjoy and witness to what God has said, and only they are witnesses to it. Not all of God's children are witness to this singular salvation.

"I am the Lord." If, from the moment of the creation until every trophy of God's grace is housed in heaven and immortal glory, things take such a turn that God can not say what He said to Israel in the present tense, then the "I AM" has not been in control. If there was ever any likelihood of salvation failing, then God knew it from all eternity, and He has not been our "I am" at any time. It is "I AM" that sent Moses; He is today the Lord our "I am that I am" and as He sends minister to hearers, it is as effective today as it was several thousand years ago when it looked so uncertain to Moses. The one of whom I write is the Lord; I do not write. (If I am called of God) about a dead or "has been" gospel; it is the power of God to believers, to witnesses of it. Unbelievers do not necessarily mean that hearers and readers are not children of God. The man that got the hands of Jesus applied to his eyes the first time saw men as trees, walking. Thomas was certainly a child of God, but he could not believe until he had evidence. I do not write about a "has been" Lord; nor do I write to people that think thus of the Lord. He is alive forevermore, and will always be *"the I am that I am."*

" And beside me there is no saviour."

Not all of the Israelites were witnesses to this declaration, nor are all of God's children witnesses now to it. Whatever their name in the world might be, the ones that were witnesses of these things believed what the Lord said relative to salvation. Come, dear reader, and let us take a little journey down into the garden where the "I AM" is the only gardener. In this garden He is the only Saviour. In fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy, the Spirit of the Lord came upon the Saviour and He alone performed all of the work to make every plant a tree of righteousness. (Isa. 61:3)

Mary did not have twins. Only one Saviour was born; no other maiden, even though virgins romp the landscape, ever have given birth to another Saviour.

Yet, even though an angel heralded the coming of the Saviour, the masses were not witnesses to it. I say that had Herod and Pilate seen in Jesus what the centurion did (Luke 23 :47) they certainly would have witnessed as did he, but not having known Him nor His Father, they could not witness to what they had not witnessed. Following the same line of reasoning, one who has not been a witness to the Lord's testimony concerning salvation, he or she will be found trying to lend a hand in salvation.

Those that have witnessed this *"only salvation"* will lie down in the green pastures of salvation; those that have not, will always find another salvation besides that one that Jesus saves always to deliverance home to glory. These witnesses have a right to sing,

"Amazing grace how sweet the sound,"

and as they have it declared to them, and they are saved, and they have salvation shown unto them, they continue to sing,

"Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far, And grace will lead me home."

For centuries the saints have sung this high and lofty theme of salvation by grace with out another salvation standing in the offing, waiting for them to work out. This is what I endeavor to preach and write, to wit, Salvation, from God's eternal design to save, to the triumphant bringing home to glory every chosen vessel of mercy, and all of it being given to us, and we witnessed to it, if we have indeed been saved by this One and only Saviour.

Regardless of the cavelling of men, this salvation is known only in time. What heaven is, none of the witnesses to this salvation know at the time of it being presented to them. They know (as taught of the Lord) that He is the only Saviour, that without His salvation, we do not have salvation. I hope that I am writing to many witnesses of this "only" salvation, but I do not believe that with the church in her time state a single witness will be found that has witnessed that salvation is further than a time state.

The Lord is the only Saviour. The attributes of God are all engaged in this salvation; the seven spirits are all sublimely and gloriously working in the children of God to save them. This is a present salvation. He was the Saviour before the Red Sea; He was the Saviour at the Red Sea; He was the Saviour in the wilderness road, and in our journeying on that road in our experience, He is our Saviour. At the time of the prophet, there was not any Saviour save the wrd. I call for an answer to this statement: Did Isaiah know the truth? Did he tell all the truth? Did the Inspiration of God mislead the prophet? Did He withhold something that is vital to the welfare of the chosen Israel of

God? I hope that I desire to be right. I think I know the certainty of death, and if I am hanging precariously on a high cliff with impending doom below me, and Israel was mistaken— all these witnesses misunderstanding God, and there is a Saviour beside the Lord, I certainly need to know it.

I do not want to be extreme. I do not want to go beyond the scriptures in comparing truth with error. I do not want to say hurtful things toward those that bring some other saviour other than the Lord. But my brethren and sisters, my dear perishing readers, I am as I hope, being undressed of what I thought I had.

I hope that I am being made ready for a lovely and much desired transition. I do not want to be unfaithful to Him that has called me out of nature's darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son. If His brethren bring something among us that is not in keeping with His testimony, it behoves me to point out the fallacy of that thing. Someone is going to be wounded whenever error is preached among us. I had much rather wound my brethren than to wound my Saviour; I had much rather (since error demands that somebody be arraigned) rebuke my brethren sharply than to let my silence rebuke my Saviour. This does not mean that I am to declare nonfellowship for them; it does not mean that I am to step on their toes purposely, but it does mean that I must not step on the toes of my only Saviour.

At the expense of being trite, I desire to point out that this Saviour was the only Saviour of Israel all the way through from Eden to the end of the legal dispensation; that this salvation was all timely; that it was saving at the flood; it was time saving at the Red sea; that it was time saving at the water of Marah, that it was time saving in giving manna, that it was time saving the whole wilderness through, that it was time saving in giving bread in Egypt, in causing fire to be reversed in its nature to burn away bonds but not to consume the bound. If this is not the picture of Israel and the Saviour, the only Saviour, then I freely confess that I do not know what I am writing.

This God, this Saviour, stands alone to His people Israel. Israel witnessed to this doctrine that I would, were it not for a dreadful fall that I got, declare to one and all. God declared this truth to them, but His care for them did not cease in a mere declaration. Oh, no, for men declare, and do not, and God is not likened unto men. God made manifest the singularity of this "only Saviour" by saving them. That is not all. Oh no, dear saint, there. is always something more that is in reserve yet to be served to Israel; it always has been, it always will be. He showed this salvation to them. He showed it to them. Oh yes, tried soul, He shows unto you the tenderness of His saving power. The Holy Ghost, the Comforter and teacher and keeper of

God's people, is sent unto you (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7). He also shows His people the things of Christ, the only Saviour of sinners.

This showing to the children of God Christ as their Saviour is under peculiar and trying and singular circumstances. When this is done, there is not any strange god present. This strange god, whom men in ignorance would present, is not found in the experience of these witnesses. He is the work of our deluded minds; he is the god of whom our souls would dare rely until the show begins. The children of God made them one out of a calf, but the calf-god was vanquished from sight, from show; Peter would have made a man as another saviour, but God, the only Saviour, vanquished him from sight, and He showed them in the most dazzling show that has ever been brought to sight of poor sinners that no name, no god, no man could ever share in the honor and glory of the Holy One of Israel. I love these scenes of divine saving; my soul is enraptured, my pace is quickened, my attention is called heavenward, as I am shown the care of God for His people. If I am not mistaken, the text has grown; its beauties have been enhanced, my spiritual faculities have been weaned from every false God, every false saviour, and I am standing at the giving up and turning the kingdom over to another Joshua. At this time, I know what those people knew, to wit, that God my Saviour has not failed to keep every promise that he has made, and that as the show was put on, there was not a strange god to assist in making the screen of my soul straight, nor to adjust my sight and vision that I might see better than I see. by the work of this only God, this only Saviour. (See Joshua 23)

I do not mean to separate Christ and grace. Paul's letter to the Corinthians was based on what Christ did for them and he thanked God (through Christ) for the grace that He had given them by Christ. In substance, Paul did write Amazing Grace. It was his theme in the beginning of his experience; it was his theme in all of his preaching and in every letter that he sent to the churches. It was in time that all these gracious deliverances took place; it was the experience of Paul that the grace of God was sufficient. That which is sufficient I will not allow a strange god or a different saviour. When he wrote that heavenly experience to the Ephesians (Eph. 2:1,10), there was not a part works and part grace system lingering to be heard. It was not with doubt and reluctance that he told them how that they were saved; it was not that grace was present and a strange system, a strange god, in the offing ready to bolster the failure of the grace of God.

This grace is as much in the present tense, as God, the only Saviour was to Israel. In the presense of two or three witnesses shall every

word be established; One of those witnesses is God, and He witnesses to His people Israel when no strange god was present, when no Egyptian was there. (Gen. 45:1) God witnessed to them, and He made them His witnesses. God witnessed to Saul, in that witnessing the law was not present; Gamaliel had lost all his ability and charm; all of the things that had kept him until that time were gone. God made" him His witness to the Gentiles, and his witnessing was that salvation is by grace.

There are different aspects of this salvation, but there is only one salvation. To bring up any other way, is another way; to say that there is a salvation other than the grace salvation, is, to say the least of it, a strange saying, a strange doctrine, instigated by a strange god. This grace salvation will not permit me to deny nor ignore scriptures that the strange gods would have us to believe set forth some other salvation, some other saviour. God has not witnessed to us, nor has He sent witnesses to us, extending to us one way to be saved and another way to stay saved. I have enjoyed the testimony of God's people in their minutes (not that I can trace their history back to the setting up of the kingdom) showing forth that God had witnessed to them. I am sorry to have to report, that some of those that accepted the doctrine of the imputed righteousness to us; that have accepted the doctrine of God's preservation of the saints to glory, are, like the Galatians, finishing as they think, in the flesh what grace started in them at the outset.

God's children are presently working out their own salvation. This is their salvation. The salvation is in the work, but by no means for the work. This salvation is in the work of God working in them. It is an effectual work of God. It is a perfect work of God. Moses is not on hand to give a helping hand; Elijah is not on hand to reach a helping hand when the grace of God fails; no strange god, no strange saviour is present, but a perfect work, is being done –(Heb. 13: 21), and this perfection enables us, the witnesses of God, to walk well pleasing in His sight, and let us remember, dear children of God, that He has a desire toward the work of His own hand. (Job 14 :15) And let us remember that God does not work at something ; let us remember that He does not talk at His people to get them to be witnesses, but that He talks to them by the effectual, the mighty workings of His Spirit in them. (Eph. 1:19, 20; 3:7; 4:16; I Th. 2:13)

This Saviour, Jesus Christ the Lord, through His grace, enables the witnesses to this saving grace to save themselves from every evil and false way, from every strange god and doctrine. This effectual saving grace enables Paul to write about taking heed to oneself and to the doctrine, and it (the same effectual grace) enable the recipient to take heed to both, to continue in them, to

save themselves and those that have a hearing ear.

Where this grace is preached, where this Saviour is showing us how it is, there is health in the body. When it is not preached, it is a strange fire that has come into the camp of Israel, a strange god is present that the witnesses did not know in the time of which Isaiah was speaking; that was not present when Jacob had that singular experience in the wilderness and in the desert (Deut. 32:9,12); that was not present when Jesus was transfigured before His disciples; that was not present when Saul had no man (no strange god) to stand with him. (2 Tim. 4:16)

Elder W. D. Griffin

WINGS OF SALVATION

"And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then I would flyaway, and be at rest." (Psalms 55:6)

Fearfulness and trembling had come upon David. Horror and the terrors of death had overwhelmed him. His heart was sore pained within so that he could only mourn, complain and pray. Even though David was King he was made to fully realize that nothing he could do would save him from this awful condition of being the victim of wrath of his haters, oppression of the wicked, and the judgment of God. His cry for mercy seemed to be but a noise. David's most brilliant thought in the midst of severe afflictions was, ***"Oh that I had wings like a dove."*** David was mourning like a dove, yet the dove was more fortunate than he because the dove had wings. According to Isaiah 38:14, 59:11 and Nahum 2:7, the mourning of doves is a figure of lamentations in the most bitter and desperate manner.

It takes two wings for a bird to fly. David did not even have one. He mourned like a dove but he could not fly like one. It is said that a dove mourns throughout its life after the death of its mate. It will not mate with another. David had once tasted the mating with the Holy One, therefore he would continue to mourn persistently in His absence. He was like a dove in that he was weak, perplexed, disspirited, and would not fight against those who would ruin him. No doubt he felt to be a ***"silly dove without heart." (Hosea 7 :11).*** He needed the two wings of Faith and Hope or else his prayers could be but a noise. His faith was withered and his hopes blighted. He could not fly without the two wings of the Spirit, Light and Truth, to enliven his spirit. He needed the two wings of Jehovah, Love and Power to swoop down to him in order that he might be covered with God's wings of Grace and Providence, under which he would trust. His heart was so frigid and dark that he needed the Sun of righteousness to arise with healing in His wings, rays

and beams to give heat and light to his soul.

We, like David, yearn for the wings of salvation. We know that God's power without His love would destroy us, not save us. We know that His judgment without His mercy, would banish us from His presence. We know that His providence without His grace, would never raise us up above earthly things. We know that the natural birth without the spiritual birth, could never mean eternally living. We know the law of Moses would kill our souls, and we would forever be dead without the law of Jesus Christ. We know that truth is truth but we could never believe it without the heavenly light shining upon it. We know that we may be regenerated but unless God works both the will and do in us, we can never walk Godly. We may have been numbered with the many whom Jesus redeemed with His blood, but unless God reveals it to us here, we can not realize it.

God's wings of power and love can swiftly snatch us from the bottomless pit and toward Mount Zion, causing us to fly toward higher goals. Had we wings like angels we would always be ready and willing to obey God in ministering and serving God and His creatures. Had we ***"Wings of the wind"***, we would be swift and secret, yet effective in our soaring. Had we the ***"Wings of the Morning"***, we would disperse darkness and impart heat by lighting and inspiring those fellow pilgrims with whom we come in contact. Had we the ***"Two wings of a great eagle"***, we could fly as the church into the wilderness and be separate from Satan for awhile. See Revelation 12 :14. These wings denote strength and support received from God in delivering His church from satanic control and influence.

We cry for wings like a dove; we cry not for dove's wings. We want dovish wings. We do not want the wings of a raven. The raven, when he was sent out by Noah from the ark, failed to return with any tidings. The raven is ravenous, selfish, and was considered unclean for it thrives upon dead carcases. The dove brought back to the ark the message that the waters had abated. The dove was the first heralder of good tidings to Noah after the flood. The dove was the especial symbol of the Holy Spirit as it descended upon Jesus at His baptism. The dove is recognized for its beauty by Christ in the dialogue between Christ and His church as recorded in Solomon's Song. He calls for His fair one, His love, and His dove. Christ says to His spouse, "Thou hast dove's eyes within thy locks," as He describes her. The church praises her Saviour with such beautiful words: ***"His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of water, washed with milk, and fitly set". (Sol. Song 5: 12)***

The dove was used by Christ as a symbol of fear of danger and timid-

ity; as is manifested in His instructions to the twelve as He sent them forth, "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves." (Matt. 10 :16) The dove, as has already been noted, has but one mate. The dove is forever faithful to this one mate unto death. The dove knows not the pollution of an adulterous bed. The dove is happy with its mate but miserable when they can be together no more. When we are once married to the church, we can never be satisfied apart from her. If we be married to Christ, we are miserable in His absence, have no desire to be joined to another. We are so fearful without Him. We are so weak without Him. When we see danger we desire to run to Him for love and protection.

Constant fruitfulness is a characteristic of doves. This applies to the faithful. Most months in the year their young are brought forth. The tree of life yieldeth her fruit every month. The fruit of the Spirit is the works of righteousness that the faithful yield constantly. Faith is fruitful in that it is ever pregnant of good works, travails in anguish in bringing forth, and rejoice when they are brought to view. The church sympathizes with those on the outside who are travailing in birth, but greatly rejoice when they are manifest as born into the kingdom.

The true church is like a dove because it is different from all other birds. Other birds have talons and beaks with which they defend themselves and devour others. The dove is not so equipped. Some have written that the dove has no gall, signifying that they are free from the bitterness of anger. It is said that the mocking bird can mock the sounds with exception of the dove. It cannot mimic the dove. We hear of such doves but we have yet to hear of such a person; yet the true church yearns for this characteristic. Other birds fight among themselves while doves dwell together in unity and peace. Many birds fly separately, but doves fly in companies. Other birds eat separately; doves feast together. Doves eat the cleanest of food, fly in companies of few, make the most peculiar sounds; and do not mingle with other birds. The church eats heavenly manna; her members are few in number; her doctrine is peculiar to other doctrines; and she does not mingle with false churches.

The mourning sound of a dove is significant of the prayers of the saints. Sincere prayers of saints prove their fervent desire to be lifted above their present condition. Sanctified ones who compose the church ***"Pray without ceasing"*** that they might be raised higher. Zion mourns! There is a woe pronounced them who are ***"At ease in Zion"***. Am I at ease in Zion? I mourn because of my ignorance; I pray to God to give understanding. I mourn because of my disobedience; I pray God to impart power to me that I may obey more perfectly. I mourn because I have a man-pleasing spirit within me; I pray God to enable me to please Him. I

mourn because of my selfishness; I pray God to so flood my soul with His love that selffishness would be driven out. Yes, there are many other things that cause me to mourn. I mourn because the number of churches are decreasing, ministers are fewer in number, and prejudices prevail!

It takes TWO wings for a child of God to fly upward and onward. I might be given the wing of faith but without the wing of love I cannot soar above carnality. Faith without charity would profit me nothing. The wing of will has been given me, yet without the imputed power to perform I could never do a good deed. ***"To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not."*** I may know the doctrine of faith, but if I know nothing of the grace of faith; my knowledge is vain. My belief that God supremely rules is insufficient unless I have experienced that He rules me. I may be acquainted with the Law of Moses which kills, yet I must be acquainted with the grace of Jesus Christ in order to live and to realize the joys of eternal life. ***"The letter killeth, but the spirit maketh alive"***. I may deny myself but if I follow not Christ, I cannot be His disciple. I may possess gifts of the Spirit but void of the grace of the Spirit; they would be unprofitable. I need wings! God grant me wings!

It takes two wings for the churches to soar above other organizations. The two wings of a great eagle, given to the true church for flying with into the wilderness most surely denotes God's special assistance. ***"And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place; where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." (Rev. 12:14)*** God said to Israel, ***"I bare you on eagles wings." (Ex. 19:4)*** The church was established upon two wings during the dispensation of the Old Testament time. She flew on the wings of the law and protection.

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Jesus established His church upon the two-winged doctrine of truth and revelation. The truth is the truth anywhere anytime but we cannot see it, realize it, or appreciate it unless it be revealed. The central core of true doctrine is: ***"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."*** This is the TRUTH. Only those to whom it is revealed by the Father can say it from the heart.

Jesus established His church upon the two-winged commandment of love. One wing is toward God. The other wing is to the brethren. This same two-winged commandment was able to hold up the law and the prophets. The answer Jesus gave to those who inquired concerning the greatest commandment: ***"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great com- mandment, and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, upon these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." (See Matt. 22 :35-40)*** The law and the prophets were based upon the principle of love. Grace and truth is based upon the principle of love. Those who obey this two-winged commandment now, as in the past, must love God and the brethren from the heart. If our desires are in harmony with God's will, pure godly love both to God and the brethren will determine what is right.

"But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his

wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." (Malachi 4:2) God had ruled His people Israel, by use of judges and kings. Prophets had accompanied these in instructing, warning, and rebuking Israel. The sovereignty of God is certainty claimed throughout the Old Testament. Anytime and every time judges, kings, and prophets forgot His sovereignty, He would bring them to know that He ruled. God delivered them into the hands of the enemy to teach them that He sovereignly ruled. As long as a judge, king, or prophet was pleading to the Lord for strength and guidance, he and his people were upheld by Jehovah. Righteous judges and kings were favored as well as the people over whom they presided. The judges and kings greatly influenced the people as though they were joined together. The same was true of the prophets. Judges failed, and kings were instituted. Kings failed and Israel was delivered into Babylon. Prophets failed and God's people were in a very bad condition. It surely was at the Lord's appointed time that Malachi should state the true condition and status of Israel. It was certainly comforting to those who feared God to give them hope of the rising of the Sun of righteousness. They were in such bad state that they needed the, ***"Healing in His wings."***

What a dark and cold time that Israel was experiencing. They needed heat to warm their cold hearts, and light to show them a better way. God had proved His love, yet they questioned it. (Mal. 1:2) They had despised His name. (V.6) They had presented blemished offerings and the priests had become stumbling-blocks instead of leaders. They selfishly withheld tithes and thought it vain to serve God. They questioned the importance of keeping the ordinances and dealt treacherously with their brethren. They inter-married with heathen and divorced wives. READ MALACHI.

Even though it was about four hundred years before John the Baptist and Jesus Christ made their appearance upon earth, it is apparent that those who feared the Lord were given hope through the prophet Malachi. How terrible it must have been when John and Jesus came upon the scene. Surely Israel had suffered so much and long that they, the people of God, were convinced that it would take the mighty wings of love and mercy to save them. They did not want any more political kings; they wanted the King whose kingdom would never be destroyed. They had been confused by normal men as prophets; they desired one who was greater than a prophet to usher in this everlasting kingdom. John prepared the way and the people to receive this kingdom by preaching Jesus and repentance, and baptizing those who repented. Jesus came with healing in His wings. Jesus was a two-winged creature: the Son of God and the Son of man in one. The everlasting King was Jesus; and John prepared

the way. The King and His messenger came from Heaven. Both had miraculous births and were named by a special angel. Jesus Christ healed with His wings. His name denotes His wings. Jesus saves from woe and Christ anoints us with His righteousness. The man part of Him paid the penalty for our sins: the God part of Him inputed His righteousness. King Jesus established the doctrine and order of His Church through His apostles. This is minutely given in the New Testament.

The Bible and a God-devoted ministry are necessary wings that King Jesus uses in leading and delivering His people out of Babylon. The people so led are given rest from the confusion of Babylon. King Jesus joins wing to wing with the ministry which is joined wing to wing with the church. The two-winged officeship composed of elders and deacons is necessary for the good and welfare of the churches. When the officers and members of churches have their eyes toward the King in prayer and righteous living, the churches soar above the political confusion of Babylon.

The two wings of almsgiving and prayer winged the memorial before God from Cornelius, a God-fearing Gentile. (See Acts 10:4) These two wings are the mark of devoted and God-fearing men. Jesus gave special instructions to His disciples in His great sermon on the mountain concerning giving of alms and prayer. He did not say, "If" in either case but, "When." The two wings of praise and prayer constitute the simple worship services of churches. The two ordinances of Jesus Christ for believers are baptism and communion. The two commandments given His ministers as recorded in the gospels are to preach the gospel and teach baptized believers. Pastors are to plant and water churches. They are to gather the flock and feed them. Pastors are to constitute churches and Instruct them. They are careful to commend the orderly and to rebuke the disorderly. True pastors watch for evidences of the intrusion of satanic principles, and warn the churches of their pastorate of these departures. A pastor's career is measured not only by what he says, but how he does. His words must be adorned by his life. The devoted pas- tor and church will "Pray without ceasing," because they learn the lesson well that they can do nothing righteously without Him.

God alone can give us the wings of salvation. *"Oh that I had wings"*, is our cry daily. We are pilgrims looking and longing for a better country.

Some day after awhile the wings of God shall fly us into that Heaven of heavens. We shall then fly as the angels. No mortal body will so imprison us as to keep us from the joys of Heaven. Now we see through a glass darkly; but then we shall see God in all His glory face to face. We will be given the wings as angels and together with them sing praises

to Him forever and ever. Then, our prayers will not be, *"Oh that we have wings like a dove."* We shall forever be borne on the everlasting wings of God's promises. Won't that ve a wonderful flight??!! May the Lord give you the wings of salvation is our sincere prayer.

Elder E. J. Lambert

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."- PHILIPPIANS ii. 12.

NONE but God's people under the teachings of the Spirit know what it is to *"work out their own salvation."* And all who work out their own salvation will work it out *"with fear and trembling."* For when a man is taught by God to know what he is; when he feels what a deceitful heart he carries in his bosom; when the various snares, temptations, and corruptions by which he is daily encompassed are opened up to him; when he knows and feels what a ruined wretch he is in self, then he begins to fear and tremble lest he should be damned at the last. He cannot go recklessly and carelessly on without *"making straight paths for his feet,"* without " examining himself whether he be in the faith." And whenever a man's dreadfully deceitful heart is opened up to him; whenever the hollowness of an empty profession is un- masked; whenever he feels how strait is the path, how narrow the way, and how few there are that find it; whenever he is brought to see how easily a man is deceived, and how certainly he must be deceived unless God teach him in a special manner; -- whenever a man is brought to this point, to see what a rare thing, what a sacred thing, and what a spiritual thing religion is, that God himself is the author and finisher of it in the conscience, and that a man has no more religion than God is pleased to give him, and cannot work a single grain of it in his own soul; when he stands on this solemn ground, and begins to work out that which God works in, it will always be *"with fear and trembling;"* with some *"fear"* lest he be deceived, until God assures him by his own blessed lips that he is not deluded and *"with trembling,"* as knowing that he stands in the immediate presence of God, and under his heart-searching eye.

Elder J. C. Philpot

ACTS 13:25-26.

And as John fulfilled his course, he said, "Whom think ye that I am? I am not he. But, behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of his feet I am not worthy to loose.

Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent.

"For we which have believed do enter into rest."-HEBREWS iv.3.

We enter into rest by ceasing from our own works, and resting on Christ's; according to the words, ***"For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."*** Now when you can fully rest upon the finished work of the Son of God, and believe by a living faith that your sins were laid upon his head; that he bore them in his body on the tree; that he has washed you in his precious blood, clothed you with his righteousness, and is sanctifying you by his Spirit and grace, then you can rest. There is something here firm and solid for the conscience to rest on. Whilst the law thunders, whilst Satan accuses, whilst conscience condemns there is no rest. But you can rest where God rests. God rests in his love; in the finished work of his dear Son; in the perfection of Christ's humanity; in his fulfilment of all his covenant engagements; in the glorification of his holy law; in the satisfaction rendered to his justice; in the harmonising of all his attributes; in the revelation of his grace and his glory to the children of men; for he is his beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased. The tabernacle in the wilderness, and afterwards the temple on Mount Zion, was a type of the pure and sacred humanity of the Lord Jesus. There God rested in a visible manner by a cloud upon the mercy seat, called by the Jewish writers the Shekinah. This, therefore, was the place of his rest, as he speaks, ***"For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it" (Psalm cxxxii. 13, 14).***

Elder J. C. Philpot

ST. MATTHEW 11:27-30.

All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn, of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 2009

Herbert Dodson, VA 5.00
Rebecca Smith, FL 25.00
L.C. Hornsby, GA 5.00
Estelle Thompson, VA..... 5.00
Connie Franco, TX 2.00
Pamela Screen, TN 10.00
Lovie Thompson, NC 5.00

OBITUARIES

Dear Brother Key,

Would you please print this obituary over, with the corrections I have made. I have had several calls about it.

Thank you so much,
Mary Wall

IN MEMORY OF JEWEL INGRAM HAGOOD

She was born April 23, 1914 in Ferrum, Va, a daugher of Robert Spotswood Ingram and Mae Peters Ingram. She died Sunday, June 1, 2008 at Stanleytown Health Care Center. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Chester Hagood and three brothers, Guy Ingram, Poff Ingram and Lindsey Ingram. Sister Jewel and Bro. Chester asked for a home and was received by experience June 16, 1951, on the grounds of Riverview Church. They were bap- tized by Eld. Cecil Turner, and had their membership placed at Martins-ville Primitive Baptist Church. They both were devoted members, and attended as long as their health permitted. Brother Chester was a deacon for many years.

Sister Jewel retired from Fieldcrest Towel Mill after 40 years service.

She is survived by her daughter, Lynda H. Milteer and husband, Everett Milteer Jr. of Virginia Beach ; a granddaugher, Courtney R. Synder and husband Ken Synder of Virginia Beach; a grandson, Scott Rizer and wife, Lea Rizer of Richmond, Va. Three great grandchildren, Casey Rizer, Nicole Rizer, and Emma Synder. Four sisters, Elva Turner and Ruby West of Ridgeway, Va. Marie Hazelwood of Fieldale, Va. And Iva Moran and husband, Odell Moran of Colllinsville, Va.

Her funeral was conducted on June 3, 2008, at Norris Funeral Services Chapel by her pastor, Eld Mark Terry. She was laid to rest beside her husband at Roselawn Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

She was loved by all. I remember when my husband and I were baptized on Easter Sunday morning in 1976, we went to her house to change clothes, and she made us feel so welcome. And from that day she and her husband were "special" to us. We would visit each other often, went shopping out of town together, rode to church together, and always had that special love for each other. She is greatly missed by all who knew her.

Done by request of Martinsvile Church.

Written by,
Mary Wall

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

SONG

CHRIST bears the name of all his saints, Deep on his heart engraved;
Attentive to the state and wants
Of all his love has saved.

In him a holiness complete,
Light and perfection shine;
And wisdom, grace, and glory meet
A Saviour all divine.

The blood, which, as a priest, he bears
For sinners, is his own;
The incense of his prayers and tears Perfumes the holy throne.

In him my weary soul has rest,
Though I am weak and vile;
I read my name upon his breast,
And see the Father smile.

Newton

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EDITORIALS

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation ...." Heb. 2:3

Elder J.B. Farmer

In the world, almost all we hear is bad news. But, thanks be unto God, what we hear in the church is good news. The good news of the gospel of grace has sounded to all generations. That good news has been proclaimed and is now being proclaimed of that great salvation which God has wrought on behalf of His people. I would love to be enabled, by the grace and mercy of God, to ascribe greatness to our God and to write a little concerning His great salvation.

First of all we understand that our God is greater than all. ***"He is the Rock, His work is perfect: all His ways are judgement: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He." Deut. 32:4*** He is the great I Am. He was before all things, without beginning and having no end of days. By Him all things consist. He made all things by the Word of His power. He made all things for Himself and for His pleasure. He has done all things well. This world and the universe and even the things not seen or known by us were made by Him. He is the Word, He is love, He is a Spirit and He is even a consuming fire to all that know Him not and obey not the gospel. He has all Power in heaven and earth. He has worked all things together for the good of His people. He has seen the end from the beginning and declared it so that all things must come to pass according to His will and purpose. He is all in all to us that believe. In Him we live and move and have our being.

This great God, in His wisdom and love and mercy, purposed in Himself to create a people in Christ Jesus for Himself. They would be a people generated by Himself for Himself to love and to show His great kindnesses and mercies unto. These people, the vessels of honor, He would form of the dust of the

ground naturally and make them to be earthen vessels into which He would place a great treasure, even His Holy Spirit by which they would be kept and show forth His praise.

Of the same lump of clay from which He would make His people, He also would make another people which He called the vessels of wrath. They, not having His Spirit, would be left to themselves to follow out the lusts of the flesh. They would know not God and would neither see nor know the things of the holy kingdom and would not obey the gospel of Jesus Christ. They, like wicked Cain who hated and killed Abel his brother in the flesh for no good reason, would persecute the people of God. But they would be held in check and could only go as far as it suited the wise purpose of God. God said that the wrath of man would praise Him and the remainder of wrath He would restrain.

This warfare has been going on from the time of Cain and Abel and continues to this day. God's holy prophets and saints of old, Jesus Christ, the disciples and apostles in Christ's day and even His people today have been misunderstood and hated for the truth's sake. But, thanks be unto God, because our God is greater than all, He has delivered His people, He is delivering them and we trust He shall yet deliver. We are made to say with the apostle I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day. No weapon formed against them shall prosper.

This great God whom we hope to serve, prepared a great salvation for His people before He made them. God, with all wisdom and knowledge, foresaw the fall of all creation into sin and ruin and prepared a remedy for His people that He had created in Christ Jesus. This remedy for sin was necessary for them since the righteous God of heaven and earth is also a just God. In His great wisdom and justice, God declared, that according to His law, the soul that sins must surely die. The penalty for sin is death. God saw that there would be no help for them by the arm of flesh. According to nature, they would be without God and without hope in this world. In order to deliver the chosen vessels of mercy from that awful condition, God in His great love, mercy, wisdom and justice, purposed to send His only begotten, sinless, spotless, holy and undefiled Son into the world to redeem His beloved people to Himself by His own blood. All this was done before the world was made according to the scriptures.

God in His perfect wisdom also determined to keep His people that He had given to His Son by His power and through His faith. He would keep those that He brought into the world so that sin could not have dominion over them. Although the whole world lies in wickedness, God determined that he would cause

His people to overcome the world in Christ and that they should show forth His praise. He, as with Peter, prayed for them that their faith fail not therefore it cannot fail. He has placed His Holy Spirit in them to keep them and to preserve them through their many trials and afflictions unto His coming. He promised to be with them even to the end of the world and is fulfilling His promise.

God also determined that He would raise up in the last day all that He had given to His Son. He predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son that He might be the firstborn of many brethren. Jesus said ***"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."*** He said ***"because I live, ye shall live also."*** He said by His apostle *that* ***"He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth within you."*** After Jesus as our great high priest offered up His body as a perfect sacrifice for our sins - after He gave His life a ransom for many - after He died the cruel death of the cross - after He layed in the tomb for three days and three nights- He came forth victorious over death, hell and the grave. And He, by resurrecting His earthly body changed to a spiritual body, gave us the victory and assured us of the promise that we also will be raised up in that same power at His coming.

God's great salvation is manifest to His people in many ways of which I would like to mention a few. God saved His people in eternity by choosing and electing them to salvation by His grace. He saved His people before the world was by preparing a remedy for their hopeless condition. He saved them from the curse of the law by sending His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, but without sin, to fullfill it in every aspect. He saved them by offering up His Son for their sins - the just for the unjust, that their sins would be remembered against them no more forever. He saved them by His resurrection from the dead in giving them a lively hope. He saves them by the gospel and by the truth in delivering them from error and false doctrine. He saves them from the power of sin by putting them under grace. He saves them from death by His life. He saves them from their enemies by holding their enemies back so they cannot do the things that they would. He saves them by the gift of faith and the Spirit that they no longer are controlled by the flesh. There are many other ways He has saved and is saving us, I am fully assured, which you may be given to reflect upon as He gives light. His riches are unsearcheable. I would like to conclude with this one other facet of His great salvation. When He comes again, He will save us from hell and the grave by raising up our

mortal bodies and fashioning them like unto His own glorious body. ***"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. Every man that hath this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure." 1 John 3:2-3***

These things are written in love and in hope of eternal life. Your little brother (I hope).

Elder J. B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

Monday 3-16-2008
Littleton, NC 27850

Dear Brethren,

I am enclosing check for $45.00. I am way over due, I know. Thanks for sending the Signs anyway.

I enjoy them so much. I especially enjoyed the article; Baptism in a Boat. I also enjoy the experience of the brethren. Please keep up the good articles about the wonderful work of God and his mercy and grace on all of us.

Thanks again and may God Bless us all.

Love, a little sister, if one at all.

Mary Alford

ARTICLES

HOW GREAT THE NAME OF JESUS

With a deep-felt yearning of my heart, I desire, if blessed of the Lord, to share some experiences of witnessing with how great the name of Jesus has been to one as unworthy as I feel to be. Before telling my experiences, I pray the Lord will bless me with His understanding of this wonderful scripture that we might be mutually comforted as we go into the beauty of His words.

Precious are the words recorded in ***Psalm 76:1-3, "In Judah is God known: his name is great in Israel. In Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion. There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. Selah."***

"In Judah is God known." Christ came through the tribe of Judah. Judah represents the spiritual man for it is through Christ that the spiritual man knows Christ in love. The words of Paul are a witness, ***"And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. But if any man love God, the same is known of him." (I Corinthians 8:2)*** His people know Him because He is in them, their hope of glory. John 10:14 reads: ***"I am the good shepherd,***

and know my sheep, and am known of mine." Did any man have to introduce Christ to you? No, because He revealed Himself to you.

"His name is great in Israel." Spiritual Israel includes both Jews and Gentiles. Romans 3:29 states, *"Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also."* So the Lord has a people in every nation, kindred and tongue. His name is great among His chosen people (spiritual Israel). Great because He leads His people out of the darkness of Egypt (unbelief and ignorance, and from the bondage of sin) into His marvelous light of understanding. Great because He redeemed His people from their sins and the curse of the law. Psalm 107:2 reads, *"Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy."* His chosen people witness with the hymn writer who penned the precious words:

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole,
And calms the troubled breast;
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary rest.

Dear name! the rock on which I build,
My shield and hiding-place,
My never-failing treasury, filled
With boundless stores of grace.
Jesus, my Shepherd, Husband, Friend,
My Prophet, Priest, and King,
My Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,
Accept the praise I bring.

"In Salem also is his tabernacle." Salem means peace. The peace of God dwells in His people. *"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."* The Lord gives us His peace in these tabernacles of clay and it surpasses all understanding. It is sufficient for all trials including death. The clothing with which He clothes His people is His own righteousness. Christ is our peace. *"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27)*

"And his dwelling place in Zion." Christ dwells in the hearts of His people. Zion represents the spiritual church which is all of God's elect. God's people are separated from unbelievers as is written: *"For ye are the temple of the living God: as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they*

shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." As Christ said, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; Neither shall they say, Lo here! Or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." (II Corinthians 6:16-18)

"There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle." The Lord must break the carnal weapons in which the arm of flesh trusted before being brought into the knowledge of the truth. These are weapons that the flesh or carnal man used for support, but that God broke in every child of grace. The bow sets forth power or strength. Carnal man thinks he has the power to accept or reject the Lord and to save others but he is shown that he has no power of himself. ***"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."*** The arrows of the bow are the works of the flesh. These arrows are broken by God as you are shown that you have no strength and no righteousness of yourself. The shield is used as a defensive weapon to defend against any opposition to the works of the flesh. This too is broken for the flesh has no defense. The sword that is broken is our espousal of beliefs of the carnal mind that are enmity against God and not subject to His law and which are used to try to slay those who believe in the truth. The battle is the combat between two opposing forces—the flesh against the spirit. We are brought down in a helpless condition and all our carnal weapons are broken. We are as the hymn writer wrote:

> ***Nothing in my hand I bring!***
> ***Simply to thy cross I cling;***
> ***Naked, come to thee for dress;***
> ***Helpless, look to thee for grace;***
> ***Black I to the fountain fly;***
> ***Wash me, Saviour, or I die!***

The church's weapons are not carnal but spiritual. The spiritual man is blessed with spiritual weapons. As the Apostle Paul wrote, ***"Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, above all,***

taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit." (Ephesians 6:10-18)

The shield of faith is what God gives to His little ones wherewith they shall be able to quench all the fiery darts (arrows) of the wicked. ***"For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall live by faith."***

The *sword* is the word of God, ***"for the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."***

The manner of our warfare is illustrated in *II Corinthians 10:3-4:* ***"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.)"*** David says, ***"He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me: for there were many with me." (Psalm 55:18)*** In this life, there are many battles to endure; there is a constant warfare that takes place after one has been shown what he is by nature and what he must be by the grace of God. I hope the Lord will bless me to share how great the name of Jesus has been to this poor undeserving soul.

One night I was given a dream, if not deceived, where the words were spoken to me, "The bow is bent." I pondered much over the meaning of these words and desired understanding of how they applied to me. I felt, if not deceived, I had been strengthened and prepared for many arrows that had been directed in my pathway over the past eight years during my battle with ovarian cancer and the many surgeries, chemo treatments and lung treatment I had endured. It seemed as though I would have one arrow shot at me, and after I recovered from that arrow, another would follow. Many have been the times I would think of the scripture where it reads ***"Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."*** When one is tried in the furnace of affliction, he is strengthened by the power of God. Now, the bow was bent signifying there would be another battle where the power of God would be manifested.

On the night of October 24, 2007, while experiencing great pain and suffering, the words were spoken to me, if not deceived, ***"Thou are highly favored of the Lord."*** Feeling to be of such a lowly state, I pondered how could this be. I was

then taken to the scripture where the angel came unto Mary and said, ***"Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women."*** And the angel also said, ***"Fear not Mary; for thou hast found favour with God."*** The words, ***"thou art highly favored"*** are so precious. I believe God's children are highly favored of the Lord. The words spoken to me, if not deceived, have brought comfort to my weary soul as it has been my lot to again suffer great pain through much affliction. My oncologist told me my cancer has again appeared and a mass is up against a lot of blood vessels making surgery not an option and the mass is pressing on a nerve that goes to the groin which causes severe pain which is almost unbearable. I must endure chemo for a third time. I carry a great burden.

During the night of November 14, when sleep was deprived as I wrestled with great pain, the burden became so heavy that I sought the Lord for help. If not deceived, the words were spoken to me, ***"After you suffer a while, I will settle thee."*** Another great battle must be fought and it takes the armour of the Lord to be sustained in the difficult places wherein we must fight. It seems it is my lot to be in the rough terrain. Another arrow is shot. On the night of December 9, no sleep would come as I wrestled with the unbearable pain and I sought the Lord for help. If I am not deceived, He spoke these words to my troubled soul, ***"I suffered on the cross for you; and you must suffer."*** The night seemed as being in hell with no relief. How long must I wait to be delivered?

Again, another arrow is shot. The day after Christmas my entire leg and foot became so swollen that it became necessary that I go to the emergency room. An ultrasound revealed there was a blood clot in the groin area. This meant I was not only suffering from pain from the mass that was sitting on the nerve that goes to the groin but also a blood clot in the groin area. My precious companion and I were told that one of us would have to administer a shot twice a day to prevent more clots from forming. The pain was so excruciating; I continued to beg the Lord to give me grace and strength for that which is His will that I must endure. I feel, if not deceived, these times of great suffering are indeed blessings for this is where a child of grace is taught and experiences the love and mercy of the omnipotent God. I feel blessed that He would choose me to suffer for His name sake. How great and how precious is the name of Jesus.

My first chemo treatment was scheduled for January 11, 2008. The treatments were so debilitating that each treatment felt to be a sickness unto death. I was unable to eat solid food for five days after each chemo and my blood counts were so

greatly lowered that I was unable to be out in public. These counts became so low that it became necessary for me to take very strong antibiotics for seven days because if I were to get an infection, virus, etc., it could be fatal. The blood counts had to rebuild so that the next chemo treatment could be administered. The treatments were planned every two weeks for a period of six months. Each chemo was a battle that could only be fought with the armour of the Lord—His grace and strength.

I was blessed to complete half of my chemo treatments before complications made it necessary to stop treatment. On April 1, I had to be admitted to the hospital because I had been vomiting for a week and I was told by the doctor that inhaling the bile could cause fatal pneumonia. To stop the vomiting, an engie tube was inserted into my nose and throat and then it was replaced with a tube in my stomach. I could have nothing to eat or drink by mouth for six weeks. It was such a trying time and I prayed the Lord would give me grace and strength sufficient for the great trial I must endure. TPN was administered through my IV to sustain me until such time that I could have food go into my stomach. My precious husband had to prepare this TPN each night. The Lord blessed him to care for me with such love that can only come from the Lord. It makes me think of the scripture that reads, ***"Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily unto the Lord and, not unto men."*** I have truly been blessed with such a loving and devoted husband. After six weeks, I began to take liquid, then soft food, and then meat. Doesn't this witness with the scripture where it speaks of drinking the milk and eating the strong meat. First, we have to drink the sincere milk of the word before we are able to digest the strong meat of the expounding of the great depth of the word. I believe I witnessed with the scripture that says ***"Eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart." (Ecclesiastes 9:7)*** How sweet is the name of Jesus.

Chemo treatments were resumed in June and continued through mid September. One night, if not deceived, I had a dream where I saw this stone on the ground which was round and had a face on it. It was speaking to me and I thought it was the Lord speaking. It seemed that when the voice began to speak, others came to hear what was being said. I have pondered over what the dream means and, if not deceived, I was given meditation. A stone is something hard with much strength. The Lord has blessed me with grace which has strengthened my faith and lifted me in the spirit to experience much suffering with great joy in my heart. Many have marveled at the wonder of the Lord and how it has been my lot to endure years of great suffering. The Lord has been my comforter, lifted me up and kept

me pressing toward the mark of the high calling as it is in Christ Jesus. The words spoken to me from the stone are those comforting words from the Lord that are a witness to those around me. They hear me tell of what great things I have suffered for His name's sake. It is a witness with the scripture, ***"Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of the Lord which He spake unto us; it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God." (Joshua 24:27)*** How precious is the name of Jesus. When one is grounded and settled, it means you have been given faith to believe and you are unchangeable and unmovable; you are very secure.

Starting in November through January, 2009, my pain became so severe that it was necessary to be hospitalized most of those three months. I broke my hip on the third Sunday before Christmas and had hip replacement surgery and spent the Christmas holidays in the hospital. Three weeks later in January, I fell and cracked the same hip. I could put no weight on my left leg for six weeks making the recovery twelve weeks. My mother had been so burdened over my cancer condition and the great pain I was enduring and she had a massive stroke on her way to visit me in the hospital. She was in the car with my brother and his wife. I went directly from the hospital to her funeral. So many trials and afflictions were in my path to travel during these months that it seemed at times they would overflow me but thus far I have not been destroyed.

I must wait patiently on the Lord. Will He hold out the golden scepter that I not get a death sentence? The words penned by David have been so precious to me, ***"The secret of the Lord is with them; and he will shew them his covenant. Mine eyes are even toward the Lord; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net. Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I am desolate and afflicted. The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of my distresses. Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins. Consider mine enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with cruel hatred. O keep my soul and deliver me; let me be not ashamed; for I put my trust in thee. Let integrity and uprightness preserve me for I wait on thee."***

How precious and how great is the name of Jesus to a child of God! Beautiful are the words recorded by Paul ***"that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ."***

Love in Christ,
Jeannette Robertson
March 3, 2008

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE LAMB

(A taped message to Bro. Wylie Fulton) (By Elder D. V. Spangler, Winter, 1978)

It seems a long time since we have visited with you, and we have thought of you many times also, Brother Aaron. I have been confined to the home for over a month with what is called heart failure, and I feel like I want to send you a message.

I want to speak to you about the lamb that we find in God's word. So many things are set forth whereby it is a picture of our blessed Lord. In the first part of the Bible, we find that God took coats or skins and clothed Adam and Eve. And here is the picture that all the salvation there would be for sinners is the Lamb, no doubt.

The first offering of men unto God as a sacrifice that we find is Abel bringing a lamb. At the same time we find his brother bringing the work of his own hands. God accepted Abel before He accepted the lamb. So we must be accepted in our Lord Jesus before any offering we make to God is acceptable. God rejected Cain and his offering. When Cain slew his brother, we are told that his brother's blood cried to God from the ground, and so the first cry we find in the Bible that goes to God from man was the cry of blood. Abel made by faith a more excellent offering than Cain. And so, throughout the ages, all the offerings that God has accepted are offerings He, Himself, has prepared and wrought. with faith in those who brought the offering to view by faith of the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

Throughout the Old Testament the picture of the lamb is a picture of humiliation, as the lamb, as an animal, is pictured as one who openeth not his mouth when led to the slaughter. I cannot but believe that God, in creating the lamb, created an animal that would have characteristics typifying Jesus, our Lord. It was not by accident the lamb was to provide both food and clothing, either.

A picture of the Lamb is most wonderfully presented in the twelfth chapter of the book of Exodus where the picture of our sacrificial lamb was presented. God instructed Moses to prepare this sacrifice and told him that this was to be the beginning of months with him. ***"Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall***

make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening." (Exodus 12:3-6) To me, here is a picture of the lamb that was to be the sacrifice and whose blood was to be put upon the lintel of the doors of the Gentiles, being partakers of the efficacy of the blood of Jesus.

There is something here that is hard to describe, that a single lamb could be presented and yet a whole congregation should slay the lamb, showing that all of God's people took part in the dying of the lamb as their sins were laid upon Jesus. And in the evening the lamb was to be offered. Christ was offered in the evening of the Law. Paul speaks of this when he said he was offered once in the end of the world for sin, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. ***"And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it." (Exodus 12:7)*** Here the lamb is connected with the door. Jesus said, ***"I am the door: by me if any enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." (John 10:9)***

"And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it." (Exodus 12:8) They were commanded not to eat of it raw or sodden with water, because our Lamb, the Lamb of God, could not be contaminated in any way. The lamb was to be roasted whole. Jesus is a whole saviour to a whole sinner.

Three elements were involved in this passover service - unleavened bread, the blood of the lamb, and bitter herbs. We are told that they were not to waste any of the lamb, and that what was left over was to be burnt with fire, thus showing that none of the precious blood of Christ would be wasted. The death angel from God passed over that night and in every home where the blood of the lamb was not found, their firstborn died, even of the cattle. But where the blood of the lamb was upon the lintel of the door, the death angel passed over that home. Truly, truly, Jesus is our spiritual Passover.

In Genesis 22 we see the lamb in a figure when Abraham was told to take his son, his only son, Isaac, and offer him at the place that God would show him. What a faith it was that God had given Abraham. He didn't delay. He, together with Isaac and two others, immediately starts to the place that God had told him to offer his son. As they journeyed, Isaac carried the wood, and Abraham carried the fire; and the Bible says, ***"They went both together."*** Oh, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge

of God. Here is a picture of God the Father, and God the Son in a journey of salvation; and They went both together. How beautiful in all the scriptures is the Lamb presented connected with the Father—with our God. Isaac raised the question as they approached the mount. He said, ***"Behold the fire and wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?And ; Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering:" (Genesis 22:7-8)***

We leave this picture and we move on to the lamb as a sacrifice on the Jewish alters. In the 118th Psalm we find this scripture, ***"bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar." (V. 27)*** The altars whereby the sacrifiies were offered had four corners, four horns, and to these horns the sacrifice was bound with cords. We see in this a picture of Christ being bound in an eternal covenant to die, but we also see a picture of a lamb who is willing to die. The great picture of salvation through the blood of the Lamb would not be complete if we did not see the Lamb opening not His mouth when being led to the slaughter, showing His willingness to die for us. We also see Him bound in a covenant with His Father to die, as the lamb was bound on the Jewish altar. In the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, (one of the most wonderful chapters of the Bible Christ is pictured as a Lamb brought ***".....he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a*** sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." (Isa. 53:7) Could God have shown in any greater way His love for sinners than by the Lamb being bound and the Lamb being led as a lamb and not opening his mouth? The Old Scriptures abound with the suffering of Christ and the glory that should follow, especially the 53rd chapter of Isaiah. In the New Testament, the lamb is mentioned three times, In John 1:29 the Apostle said, ***"..... Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."*** If the world under consideration is all of mankind then universalism is true. If the world he refers to is both the Jew and Gentile of the election of grace, then election is true. Jesus commanded His disciples not to go into any city of the Samaritans or into the Gentiles, but ***"go ye rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."*** When He rose from the dead, He commanded them to go into all the world, which refers to Jew and Gentile, and preach the gospel. John said, ***"He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world."*** This is believers, both Jew and Gentile.

Peter speaks of Jesus as being led as a lamb to the slaughter. Then we find the expression in Acts 8:33, ***"In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation?....."*** There was a hour and a moment

when God forsook His Son, when the Lamb could not refer to God as the Father, when He was made a perfect sacrifice for His people. His judgment was taken away. The only way He could be a perfect, satisfactory sacrifice was for God to leave Him momentarily alone. Then He said, ***"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"*** Finally, as He leaves the world, He could say, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit", thus addressing Him as Father, again.

In 1 Peter 1:18, 19, we read, ***"Forasmuch as ye know that we were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:"***

It is a wonderful thing to note that in the book of Revelation the Lamb is mentioned 25 times - more than in any other book of the Bible. In the fifth chapter of Revelation we find the Lamb whom God has highly exalted at His own right hand. ***"And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaimmg with a loud voice Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." (Rev. 5: 1-6)*** It is noticeable that the Lamb now was in the midst of the throne and in the midst of the elders. He is first called the Lion of the tribe of Judah to show His strength and His power, and then He is the Lamb as it had been slain, and we notice in the thirteenth verse of the fifth chapter, ***"And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."*** Notice, my dear brother, it was to him that sitteth on the throne and unto the Lamb equally, that power and glory were given.

The sixth chapter shows that the

Lamb has the power to loose the seals mentioned in the fifth chapter, and as we follow through and follow this Lamb throughout the book of Revelation, we find in the sixteenth verse of the sixth chapter that there will be a time when the enemies of Christ will say to the mountains, ***"Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb."*** Notice here, ***"he that sitteth on the throne, and from the Lamb"***. In the twelfth chapter and the eleventh verse, we behold a people with a power given to them by the Lamb, ***"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."***

In the fifteenth chapter we find the song that they were singing, ***"And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." (Verse 3)*** We often sing the words, ***"Awake and sing the song of Moses and the Lamb"***. In this we honor Moses the same as the Lamb, but in the Bible the distinction is made. They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb. There are two songs. In the seventeenth chapter we find that the enemy will make war with the Lamb. ***"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen and faithful." (Verse 14)***

In the thirteenth chapter of Revelation, the eighth verse, ***"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."*** They will worship the beast. Observe the expression, ***"The Lamb's book of life"***. And here we find it ***"the book of life of the Lamb"***, showing that throughout all the scriptures Jesus is the book of life of the Lamb, and the Lamb's book of life, and this book is presented to us in the 139th Psalm when David said, ***"and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." (Verse 16)***

In the nineteenth chapter of Revelation it says, ***"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." (Verses 7-9)***

In the twenty-first chapter, there is more said about the Lamb, probably, than in any chapter of Revelation. What a wonderful thing is pre-

sented in this chapter. It is the closing of the Bible. ***"And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." (Verse 22)*** This is the city that has the streets of pure gold. ***" And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." (Verse 23) "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." (Verse 27)***

(Conclusion of taped remarks)

"For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

To arrive at the object of the Apostle in giving this instruction to his brethren, we must give some attention to the connection in which it stands.

The subjects to whom the communication is made, and their preparation for the appreciation of it, together with the situation in which the Apostle then found his brethren to be, will require a passing notice.

And 1st, The subjects were those who constituted the Church of God which was at Corinth, to them that are sanctified (or set apart) in Christ Jesus. called to be saints, with all that is every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ; and 2nd, Grace was given them by Jesus Christ to enrich them in utterance and knowledge, and thereby the testimony of Christ was confirmed in them, so that they came behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, who should confirm them unto the end, that they might be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ; 3rd, He then refers them to the faithfulness of God, by whom they were called to the fellowship of his Son, and beseeches them to speak the same thing — that there be no divisions among them, but that they be perfectly joined together, in the same mind, and in the same judgment; 4th, For he had already learned that there were divisions among them, which had caused contention.

This contention seems to have originated in the preference that they had expressed for their respective preachers, a fruitful source from which contentions have arisen in all ages, and from which the preaching of Christ is well-calculated to save believers.

I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas ; and I of Christ. Here was the ground-work of the contention.

It appears likely to me that the means doctrine had obtained to some extent among the brethren.

and that, we know by experience, always causes contention, as the advocates of it are more disposed to look to the means or instruments, (as the preachers are called and as some claim to be) , than to Christ.

It is a bad state of things when our preachers get between us and Christ, and are so large in our estimation as to conceal Him from us. Hence the necessity of constantly and faithfully holding up Christ to view, and hence the great object and prime mission of the Apostle to preach Christ, not with wisdom of words, lest the Cross of Christ be made of none effect. We, therefore, are not to garnish with fine words — not to smooth over and palliate the preaching of the Gospel, so as to adapt it to the carnal mind, and thereby divert it from its legitimate use, the salvation of believers from error; *"for the preaching of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." "For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."*

Then, where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? Only the subjects of God's grace, in whom He has destroyed the wisdom and prudence of this world, and convinced them that neither their wisdom or prudence can avail them anything relating to their great salvation, can see where they are, nor can all the lore of human wisdom teach them their whereabouts, or save them from their errors.

Men, untaught by the Spirit of God, suppose that by their wisdom and prudence they can know God, and teach others to know the Lord also; but while thus deluded God hides the things of his kingdom from them, and reveals them unto babes. But when it pleases him to destroy the wisdom of the wise and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent, and thereby make foolish the wisdom of this world to his people, he prepares them to appreciate that preaching which is to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks (those who seek after the wisdom of this world) foolishness. Let us remember, however, that it is not until after that that the preaching of Christ can have any salutary effect upon them; and so the text reads *"After that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."*

There is not only a salvation or deliverance of believers brought to view in the text, but a final and irrevocable veto is stamped upon the proceedings of all those will-worshipers who are arrogating to themselves capacities to know God and teach a knowledge of him to others. If the graceless professors of religion could believe that text, and then would act with a commendable de-

gree of candor and honesty what a smash-up there would be in the Missionary Boards, Bible Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sunday School Unions, and the various other worldly and unscriptural combinations connected with them! They would not be endeavoring to "teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother , saying, Know the Lord," if they believed ***"the world by wisdom knew not God,"*** and would act consistently.

A knowledge of God is only attainable by those who have received the gift of eternal life, and then only by a direct revelation from the Lord. ***"No man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."*** Power was given to Jesus over all flesh, that he should give. eternal life to as many as the Father had given him, and this eternal life was given that they might know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.

Peter was convinced that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God; and said Christ, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjonah, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

How benighted - how miserably blinded by the god of this world must those be, who are engaged, as they say, in ***"christainizing the world."*** To christianize is to make christians, and the gift of eternal life is indispensible in that case.

In that work, ***"the flesh profiteth nothing,"*** said Jesus: ***"The words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life."*** A christian, then, possessing eternal life, is the highest order of being that inhabits this earth. How presumptuous, then, in poor, frail man, to arrogate to himself that nobelest work of God! It would be as easy for them to change the spots of the Leopard and make a sheep of it, or the Ethiopian's skin and make a white man of him, as to make christians of themselves, or of those whom they profess to be christianizing. But our God will not share his glory with such impudent aspirants - will not give it to another nor his praise to graven images. He alone can raise us up from the depths of sin and the domain of death; and the glory of his majesty is portrayed in the sublimity of the work. It crowns him with a regal diadem, such as earthly princes never wore - a crown of glory, rich, lucid and eternal - its brilliancy forever eclipsing all the glory of mortals who are professing to do his work and would rob him of his diadem, when if all their worldly wisdom was concentrated in one focus and all exhausted upon one subject, they could not make the meanest reptile that crawls upon the earth, and yet they boast of making christians, the highest order of God's beings that dwell upon the earth. ***"O! the folly of man !"***

Then ***"Crown him Lord of***

all," and let us unite with the Poet and sing :

"HE raised me from the depths of sin, The gates of gaping hell,

And fixed my standing more secure

Than 'twas before I fell."

But after God makes foolish the wisdom of this world in the estimation of his people, and enables them to *"believe according to the working of his mighty power,"* it pleases him to save them in a certain sense by the foolishness of preaching, or that preaching which is to them that perish foolishness. *"For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness."* Thus we are taught that it is to them that perish, and to them that seek after the wisdom of this world, and not after Christ, who is the wisdom of God and the power of God, that the preaching of Christ crucified is foolishness to, and no wonder. What use have they for Christ crucified? What do they want Him for? Not to get up their worldly institutions; they neither have his commandment or example for all that. Not to prepare them for their ministry, they can do that themselves. Not to furnish their outfit, the Missionary Board can do that sufficiently to enable them to compass land and sea to make proselytes. Not to teach them doctrine to promulgate, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men.

Now , if they can do all this, I repeat, no marvel that the preaching of the Cross is to them foolishness. *"But, unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God,"* and that preaching is calculated to save the believer from trusting in the wisdom of this world, or the power that it confers upon mortality.

The salvation here alluded to, is not that salvation which Christ completed when he laid down his life for the sheep. That salvation was exclusively *"of the Lord."* Said he, *"I looked and there was none to help, I wondered that there was none to uphold, therefore mine own arm brought salvation."*

But in addition to the salvation from sin and from its condemning power, we often need salvation from such divisions as were amongst the brethren at Corinth at that time, and other errors that the wisdom of this world invent, and upon which a worldly religion is based. Many such errors throng the pathway of the christian while here. A sound ministry, therefore, is a most important gift that the Lord has conferred upon his people to save them from division and false doctrine.

I have long observed that preachers who confine themselves to the doctrine of the Bible are not the most successful in multiplying members in the churches they

preach for; but those churches who are blessed with such a ministry are less subject to contentions and divisions, as a general thing. On the other hand, when the preachers are in the habit of exhibiting a system partly of grace, and intermingled with conditions to be performed by men to aid in the saving of sinners, so as to ensnare some of the children of God, who are taught by the Lord in their experience that salvation is by grace, and also to induce others to unite with the church who depend upon their own wisdom and prudence to qualify them for church membership, we see at once the foundation laid for divisions: and many of us have witnessed, within the last thirty years, the blighting consequences of this *"linsey woolsey"* garb, or sowing of *"divers seeds"* system, in the many divisions that have rent the churches within that period. The history of the church in all ages proves that it has not been the case that the greatest in-gatherings have been attended with the greatest blessings to the Church; but, as a general consequence, contentions and divisions have been the result.

But again: When she has presented to view an afflicted and poor people, trusting in the name of the Lord -when there was nothing in her external appearance to court the fancy of worldly religionists - when she has had to suffer reproach and persecution for the name of Jesus - when she has been; content with receiving such only as *"the Lord added to the church"* - when her watchmen have lifted up the voice together, determined to know nothing among them save Jesus Christ, and him crucified, they have been saved from these unhappy contentions, divisions and false doctrines, and peace has flowed among them like a river. This should encourage us not to be cast down and troubled from the fact that we present a strait gate, a narrow way, and that there are but few that find it.

Then, as we profess to have nothing to do with making christians, let us be satisfied with such as the Lord will have to be saved. And, as every true minister of the gospel knows that *"salvation (from sin) is of the Lord"* altogether, and that he is fully able to accomplish all that pertains to that glorious work, and will no doubt certainly and eventually raise every one of his believing children up at the last day; and further, as it has pleased him to give them eternal life, and thereby to qualify them to know the truth that makes them free, or liberates them from error and delusion- to bless them with capacities to receive and appreciate the doctrine of God our Savior, with all its wholesome lessons of instruction; and as it has further pleased him to prepare his servants for the work of the ministry, to feed the Church of God, he hath purchased with his own blood -to teach them to observe all things whatsoever he has commanded and

thus to ***"save them that believe"*** from the errors and inroads that their enemies are ever endeavoring to propagate and make among them, let us make full proof of our ministry in faithfully watching over the flock for their good. Brethren, do we really love the children of God? Surely, if we love him that begat, we love those also that are begotten of him. Let us, then, manifest our loyalty to our King, and our love to our brethren, his children, by faithfully laboring for their present salvation. It is reasonable to suppose that men will bestow the greatest amount of labor upon what they esteem most highly. We may mark this as a general rule; and I think it is a good one, by which to discriminate between faithful and false ministers.

When a servant is circumcised in heart to love the Lord, (and of course his people,) he will be found toiling among them, laboring for their good, and to save them from delusion. But when the love of the world predominates among the preachers, they will be heard whining for money to save the world, and endeavoring, by every available stratagem, to secure the friendship of the world, which is ***"enmity to God."*** We are then reminded of the expression of the Apostle, "The friend of the world is the enemy of God," and, measuring them by the Scriptures, we set them down as such; and when we weigh them in those balances, and find them wanting, we should judge and deal accordingly. The faithful shepherd, then, will be found doing the commandments of his Master, which are. ***"Feed my sheep," "Feed my lambs," "Feed the Church of God," "Feed the flock of God," "Seek; that ye may excel to the edifying of the church."*** In short, his labors will be confined within the church, among the children of God who are most to him, and be calculated ***"to save them; that believe."*** The false shepherd, or hireling, will be found laboring ***"without the church where there are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie,"*** and we must therefore judge them by the company they keep.

I submit the foregoing remarks first, to the consideration of Brother Beebe, And, if he thinks best to publish them, then to my much esteemed young brother Thomas, and to all my dear brethren and sisters who may think them worth their perusal; and still remain, as I trust, their humble servant, bound to them in the love and fellowship of the Gospel, though unworthy in myself, as the most unworthy amongst them.

(The above was written by Elder J. F. Johnson of Kentucky, and published in the Signs of November 15, 1859.)

"For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance."- I THESSALONIANS i. 5.

The Holy Ghost never comes into any poor sinner's soul, except through the medium of the gospel of the grace of God. Have you ever considered that point? You are praying, perhaps, that the Holy Spirit would teach you, and be in you a Spirit of revelation, a Remembrancer, a Comforter, Instructor, and Teacher. You pray for his gifts, and graces, and sanctifying operations; but have you ever viewed these graces in connection with the gospel of Jesus Christ? Now, if you want the Holy Spirit to come into your soul, you must keep firm hold of the gospel; you must not run away from it to the law or to self; but keep firm, fast hold of it, so far as you have felt its power, and have a living faith in it. If, then, you are tried, still hold the gospel. If Satan gets you into his sieve, still hold the gospel; if in the furnace of affiiction, still hold the gospel; if called on to wade through floods of sorrow, still hold fast the gospel. Let not Satan, if ever you have felt the power and the preciousness of the gospel, baffle you out of it, and drive you from it; but hold to the gospel, for it is your life. Indeed, where else will you find anything to suit your case if you are a poor, tempted, tried sinner? Will you go to the *law,* which can only curse and condemn you? Will you go to yourself; What is self? A heap of ruins. Where, then, will you go? After all, you must come to the gospel, if your soul is to be saved and blessed, and if you are to experience the consolations of the Holy Ghost, who alone can bless and comfort you. I want, with God's blessing, to impress this vital truth upon your conscience, that you may not be looking away from the gospel, and as Berridge says, ***"squint and peep another way,"*** but that you may keep your eyes firmly fixed on the gospel; for if you believe it, it can and will save your soul. Does not the Apostle say it is ***"the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth,"*** so that there is neither power nor salvation in anything else? Never, therefore, expect power, salvation, or comfort, but in, and by, and through the Holy Ghost preaching the gospel into your heart.

Elder J.C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 2009

Clara Osks, VA	5.00
Lois Ann Ferguson, VA	5.00
Mary Alford, NC	5.00
J.D. Neely, AR	5.00
Livie Thompson, VA	5.00
Priddy Shaw, VA	5.00
Frank Sizemore, WV	20.00

OBITUARIES

OBITUARY FOR SISTER BLANCHE SEMONES

Sister Blanche Semones, a member of Old Union Church entered into that peaceful rest on October 22nd. 2008, which is prepared for the elect bride of Christ, to await the second coming of Jesus in that resurrection morning.

Sister Blanche was born On May 14th., 1917, the daughter of Sherman and Margaret Hollandsworth. She was preceded in death by her first husband, Lawrence Gardner, and her second husband, Fred Semones, and one Granddaughter.

She is survived by one daughter and son-in-law, Thelma and Mike Maloney, one son and daughter-in-law, Charles and Beth Gardner. One step daughter and son-in-law, Frankie and Tyler Turner. Eight Grandchildren, five Great-Grandchildren and one Great-Great Grandchild.

Sister Blanche was baptized by Elder Larry Hollandsworth in 1977, placing her membership at Old Union Church, in Floyd County, Virginia. She loved the Church, the Brothers and Sisters of the Church and she especially loved the Lord Jesus Christ.

Her Funeral was conducted at Mayberry Funeral Home in Floyd, Virginia by her Pastor, Elder Larry Hollandsworth, and was laid to rest in the Jacksonville Cemetery in the town of Floyd.

May we be made submissive to God's Holy Will. One copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times, one to the family, and one copy for the church records. Done, by Order the church in conference on Sunday, January 25, 2009. Written in love and by request of Old Union Church by her Nephew,

Elder Larry Hollandsworth.

MATTHEW 10:29-33.

Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.

Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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THOUGHTS FROM "WHERE"

'Twas the dismal hour past midnight,
In a dream that is still just a blur,
A troubled mind was made to fear
Strange thoughts that came from "where."

The beginning of the Creation of God
Was in these thoughts that ran
In a mind that could only think
The vain things that be of man.

There was Eve, a type of the True Church, The Bride of Christ the Lamb,
And Adam, a shadow or figure
Of Him that was to come.

There in the first transgression
I thought, how could it be,
That Adam should give His precious life
For the fruit of an ordinary tree.

A thousand times, NO! I was rebuked
For Adam the Son of God,
Only for the Love of His glorious Bride
Would He give this affirmative nod.

As the Lamb of God for His Elect
Bride Came down from the courts above,
And required the fruits only She could give Joy, Peace, Faith, Meekness, and Love.

He died for His own and redeemed them,
And from the world set them apart,
With a wonderful change wrought deep within A broken and contrite heart.

We see the Arminian churches
Bring fruits of the works of man,
But the fruit Eve gave was Her very own
As only God's children can.

And in the Songs of Solomon
Wisdom's record has sealed
The sweetest fruits in all the world
In a Garden of Gardens revealed.

A Garden enclosed is My Sister,
My Spouse, A spring shut up, a fountain sealed;
Let my Beloved come into His Garden
And eat His pleasant fruits.

Roger B. White
Van, Texas

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EDITORIAL

For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. (Deut 32:9)

Elder R. H. Campbell

Throughout the bible there are little nuggets of truth, that are to the child of God, even as the handfuls of purpose, that Boaz told his reapers to leave, intentionally, for Ruth the Moabitish woman to glean among the sheaves. This one short and simple verse of scripture is such a nugget. It sets there among all of the other scrip-

tures, very quietly and yet it sets forth possibly the most basic point of doctrine that is to be found in the whole of the bible, and yet, is probably denied by more bible scholars than any other. It declares that there is a certain portion, of God's creation, that is his in a very special and loving way, and is described as Jacob the lot of his inheritance. The Lord's portion is not based on a, ***"whosoever will"*** or voluntarily basis, as the modern day religionists believe, but, as is recorded, ***(I John 4:19) "We love him, because he first loved us."*** And this love was with him before the world was formed and man was even created. This is the necessary food for the children of God, since it contains the doctrine that sets them apart from the religions of the world, and is the basis of their hope in things eternal. This is the only way that they can see why they would have been chosen out of all the nations of the earth, because it was certainly not because of any merit to be found in them. An Elder said, last Sunday, the current religions of the world have spent untold time and money trying to make Christians out of the natural man, never realizing that the election has already been made and the polls are already closed.

In the preceding verse, it had been declared in, ***(Vs 8) "When the Most High divided unto the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel."*** This is declaring that the bounds of the peoples of the earth were set, so as to specifically separate all of the children of Israel, Lord's portion, from those who were not of the chosen generation. The world cannot receive this doctrine because it is foolishness to them, and they cannot understand it, because it is spiritually discerned, and the natural man does not have the wisdom by which it can be understood. They maintain that this would not be fair and equitable to everyone else, but I have not found anywhere in the scriptures that it is based on a system of fairness to the individuals. If this were true there would be none saved because none are worthy of salvation, it is strictly based on the system of the grace of God being bestowed upon certain ones because he loves them and created them for his own good pleasure, ***(I Cor 1:21) "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."*** and as Paul had just said ***(Vs 18) "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness: but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."***

The scriptures quoted above, and many more declare that there is a very definite distinction between, the Lord's portion and all of the other peoples of the earth, and that this separation shall remain throughout

time, regardless of what man may claim; because it was established by God, and could only be changed by him. This is not going to happen, for the prophet Malachi said, *(Mal 3:6) "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed," and therefore their salvation is complete and assured, in spite of the claims of men that they are adding to the church daily by the means of their own efforts and ingenuity."* The apostle Paul declared, *(Eph 1:3-4) "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."* God's children are his because he formed them for his own pleasure, and predestinated them unto the adoption of children by Christ Jesus to himself, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made them accepted in the beloved.

The world has the opinion that it would not be fair for God to save some, and send others to hell without a chance of salvation. The scriptures do not indicate, anywhere, that the salvation of the Lord's portion is based on a chance system. All men were in a lost and undone condition because of the judgment placed upon Adam for his partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and therefore, the Lord saved only his portion of his creation, and did nothing for the others: all were worthy of hell and damnation, but by the grace of God being bestowed on the vessels of mercy, they were redeemed unto God by the sacrifice of his only begotten Son on the tree at Calvary. Christ was not required to die the painful and distressing death on the cross, that some might be saved. When he said it is finished, the salvation of the Lord's portion was absolute and complete, no chance system involved there, and it is for time and eternity.

This is a truth that cannot be altered by men, in the latter days, regardless of what theories may arise among those who, by these very scriptures, have already been segregated from the Lord's portion. They have no part in the covenant which God made with his people. God's covenant was a covenant made, by God, with man, and not a covenant between God and man, in the sense that it was by a mutual agreement, upon terms that must be acceptable to all. It is, however binding upon all of mankind, because it was established by God for his own pleasure and because it was for the good of his elect generation. I do not find anywhere in the bible where man contributed anything to this equation. There are many scriptures that refer to this, separation of the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, by the prophets and

writers of the scriptures in all ages, but none of them attribute any of the credit to the man formed in the days of creation. It is always the sovereign work of God, even as Jesus said, on one occasion, when asked by the people what they might do to work the works of God, his response was, ***"This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."***

The Lord's portion are referred to, in various scriptures as, (Deut 7:6) an holy people unto the Lord thy God, (Ezra 9:2) holy seed, (Mark 13:27) his elect, (Rom 9:23) the chosen vessels of mercy, (I Pet 2:9) a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation , a peculiar people, ***(Gen 25:23) "And the Lord said unto her, (Rebecca) Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people, and the elder shall serve the younger."*** This last reference was, of course, Jacob and Esau, the ones who in, (Rom 9:11) are used to definitely establish the fact that there are two manner of people, and that the election of God hath determined this. All of these references are to the same people, those who are called the Lord's portion.

This truth is declared many times in the scriptures, as holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, to prophecy of the Lord's work in the saving of his elect. When the prophets refer to Israel, as in the following verse, they are meaning the whole household of faith, not just Isaac's son. ***(Isa 43:1) "But now thus sayeth the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy one of Israel, thou Savior: I gave Egypt for thy ransom and Seba for thee."*** This scripture declares the extremes, and the drastic action to which God goes to protect and care for his portion, and the fact that he will never leave nor forsake them. All of these blessings do not refer solely to the man Jacob, who was named Israel by God, but rather the whole household of faith, which includes his children today, as well as those yet to be born. Jacob which, in the text above represents the whole household of faith, and are described as a particular people unto God, as Peter said, ***(I pet 2:9) "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous***

light." And he will be with them in all of their trials and afflictions here on earth. He found them in a waste howling wilderness; (of sin), he leads about, he instructs them, he keeps them as the apple of his eye; this is a very secure heritage I would say. They are, as Satan said, speaking to God, about Job, and why he served him, *(Job 1:10) "Hast not thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and all that he hath on every side?"* This was true of Job, and can be said to be equally about them all: God has indeed hedged them in, and set the bounds of their habitation.

David said, *(Psa 139:7-11) "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me."* God is ever with them, watching over them for good, and nothing can befall them that would alter their course, or cause them to lose their inheritance which was laid up for them, before time began. They have an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled and that fades not away, and has been reserved in heaven for them, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last day, and this is because God is their heavenly Father, and Jesus Christ is the sacrifice for their sin..

On one occasion, when speaking to Israel, God said, *(Deut 7:6-8) "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye are more in number than any people: for ye are the fewest of all people: But because the Lord loved you and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt."* The only reason given in the scriptures, as a reason why God chose his own special people, is because he loved them, and so much so that he gave his only begotten Son to redeem them unto himself, out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people. On another occasion, to support this point of view, and to advise them of the security that they have, the prophet wrote, *(Isa 54:17) "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the*

heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." This is another thing that is set in stone, for them because if God sets it, it cannot be moved or changed.

The world says that man must accept God as their own personal savior, for the promise to be applicable unto them. If, this were true, there would be no certainty of salvation for anyone, for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned and can only be known by revelation of the Holy Ghost. Why would man accept that that he is not aware of, or understands. As we stated above, the fullness of the power of the godhead is behind the promises made unto the Lord's portion, and it could not be stated more emphatically or assuredly than it was by the apostle Paul, when he said, ***(Heb 6:17-20) "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope that is set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. And which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."*** This is the final, seal of authority, upon which the hope of all of the vessels of mercy, is based: and it was sworn to by God and carries the full authority and integrity of the triune God by whom all things that do exist, were made. The scriptures declare that there is no other source of this assurance, ***(I Cor 3:11) "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."***

(Eph 2:8) "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourself: it is the gift of God:" and again, ***(Rom 8:38-39) "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord,"*** Either of these scriptures alone is ample evidence that salvation is of the Lord, and both of them makes it absolutely ludicrous to declare that the salvation of the chosen vessels of mercy, is by any other means.

Immediately following the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, regarding the faith of the saints; the apostle Paul summed it all up in one very profound and solemn statement; ***(Heb 12:1-2) "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about***

with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Looking to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." I understand that Paul was specifically referring to the evidences outlined in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, but all of the scriptural references quoted herein are also a great cloud of witnesses unto his children in this day and age. We have the bible with all of its truths, and which witness with our own personal experiences; the love and fellowship which we feel for those who have been brought to a knowledge of the same spiritual truths in the same way that we have, and who share the same faith in the validity of the scriptures, none of whom believe that they received it by human endeavor or intelligence. It was mysteriously given and the power that they speak of, which accompanied the knowledge, makes them believe that it is from God, the source of all power.

When Jesus said, *(John 17:4)* ***"I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."*** he was referring to the salvation of the Lord's portion, Jacob the lot of his inheritance, and the work that he had finished was the salvation of every heir of grace. In one sacrifice he hath forever perfected them that are his, nothing can be added to it, and nothing will be omitted from it in the covenant which God made with Abraham, *(Gen 17:7)* ***"And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee."*** This covenant forever assures that all who were chosen in Christ Jesus, before the world began, shall be with him in that city which Abraham looked for, which was built and will be inhabited by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, from before time began, or the earth was made.

When Jesus said, it is finished, that's it, nothing can be added to it, and nothing will be taken from it, and if you believe this, that is the greatest evidence that you will ever have, in this life, that you are included in the Lord's portion. May God bless all of his chosen vessels to acknowledge this hope that is within them, come out from following the things of the world and run with patience that race that has been set before them, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith.

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

4-2-09

Dear Tony:

I just got April Signs a few days ago I read all - so good to get the Signs every month good writers.

I was 100 years on Nov. 9th so I got to go to church.

I am sending check for year.

Elder Lambert on the Dove was good he was our pastor for a few years at El Dorado, AR. But we lost him in death so many years ago. He was so good.

I'll close, remember me when at the throne of Grace.

Jane Carroll

PROVERBS 4:22-26.

For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee.

Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.

Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.

VOICES OF THE PAST

UPTON, N. Mex., Nov. 8, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS :-The prophet said, ***"O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted." "O thou afflicted."*** The Bible says, Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. Again it is written, I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. These poor people are poor in spirit, they are all alike. The Lord says, I will give them one heart, and I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. God said to Eve, I will greatly multiply thy sorrows and thy conception. Then it is true we cannot prevent being full of sadness. Multiply thy sorrows and thy conception. One definition of conception is, ***"to form an idea in the mind."*** How often do these afflicted people form in their minds dire trouble for themselves in the future! How many times do they fear and tremble on account of their sins! Like David, who said, I will fall some day by the hand of Saul, so they think they will be destroyed because of their sinful flesh, and they cry out, ***"In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"***

"Dangers of every shape

and name: Attend the followers of the Lamb,

Who leave the world's deceitful shore,

And leave it to return no more."

You ask worldly people, Do you suffer? are you afflicted on account of your sins? They always answer, No; but the children of God realize this world is not their home, they are pilgrims and strangers in the earth. How many times have you been in a crowd when they were especially merry, laughing and enjoying themselves to the fullest extent, and your heart was breaking with affliction and sorrow. You could not take part in their joys, you are not like they are, you are like all Primitive Baptists, think like they do, talk like they do, feel like they do, sigh like they do, love the same kind of food spiritually, enjoy the same company, love the same people they do. My son wrote me to sell all I have and to see the wonders of this world and spend what I had made and enjoy life. I told him I would rather attend one Old Baptist meeting than go to Europe and visit all the curiosities of the world. Job said, Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. His flesh upon him shall have pain and his soul within him shall mourn. Tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope. The Savior said, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace.

"Affiictions, though they seem severe,

In mercy oft are sent

They stopped the prodigal's career,

And forced him to repent."

Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. Our sorrows and sufferings are for our benefit, and it is written, If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him. Your sorrows come and you cannot prevent them; they come when you least expect them. David said, Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts; all thy waves and thy billows have gone over me. When you were born of the Spirit you came in possession of a mind that could comprehend how unworthy and polluted you were, and how you justly deserved eternal banishment from God and the glory of his power, and you called to him for mercy. An unusual]y intelligent man is called a deep man. God is unlimited in wisdom, so he is indescribably wise, wonderfully deep. You called and said, *" God be merciful to me a sinner."* You said, like David, Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me. And I said, O that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away and be at rest. I

would wander far off and remain in the wilderness. But go where you would, still your burden remained, your affiiction was with you, and after you were relieved and thought the sin all gone and you were so overjoyed you never expected to have an enemy nor a sorrow, still you found you were mistaken, for the waves of sorrow and billows of distress came from time to time rolling, over your defenseless head, and you found your hand was too feeble to stay them; so now you can say, All thy waves and thy billows have gone over me. Weren' t these great sorrows painful and hard to endure? This text refers first to your blessed Savior. Deep calleth unto deep. Hear him in the garden: O my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me, yet not my will, but thine, be done. Listen as he cries On the cross: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? He said, I thirst, and they gave him vinegar to drink. You go to one of the world thirsty, and say something about your sorrows and thirstings, and they will give you vinegar to drink. They have told me when I was famishing for a cool draught of the water of life that I did not pray enough. The fact was every breath I drew was a prayer. Then you must go On and On in affliction greater or less until the time comes for God to call you home to rest. This is Zion, that is afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted, and the Bible says, Zion, the people of God. Jesus came to save them, and he did what he came to do. Thou shalt call his Name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins All your distress is for your good.

"In all thy distresses thy head feels the pain,
Yet all are most needful, not one is in vain
In love I correct thee, thy soul to refine,
To make thee at length in my likeness to shine."

"Tossed with tempest and not comforted." It takes wind to cause the waves of the sea to roll and toss about. When the bitter, briny waves of the flesh toss you; and when the winds of adversity beat upon you and you have no rest in your spirit, how awful is your distress; and when you try to find Him who is a covert from the tempest and he hides from you, then you say, that I knew where I might find him; I would come even to his seat. All through the dark, tempestuous night you look and listen and wonder and wish for the morning, and cry out, Is his mercy clean gone forever? Many a poor shipwrecked person has been on the sea looking, wishing, longing for a ship, and passed through long, dark nights, and may have perished for food. It is just as true that the children of God as they cross the rough sea of this life are tossed and long for a place to rest, and for comfort and the water of life. So Jesus said, Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they

shall be filled. Often I have said, God does not love me, or I would not be so forsaken, and I could not see how he could love one so sinful. When tossed I have said, God hates me, and he ought to. Many, many times have I waked in the morning so distressed I would say, O why did I ever wake again, Why could I not have slept on forever and forever! Why do I have to go out again in this old sin-cursed world to struggle with the affairs of this life! You, little children of God, started out like all other people: joyous, with high hopes, building castles in the air, enjoying; gay company, sailing along across the placid sea of this life with not a care, hardly a thought of trouble, but all at once the waves began to toss you and it grew dark and threatening, the lightning flashed and peal after peal of thunder burst above you and you thought, Surely I will be lost, and, like Jonah, for the first time in life you were made to say, I am the cause, my sins like mountains high appear to me. In Revelation it is written, Out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices, and you heard, The son that sinneth it shall die, the first time you had ever heard a voice say that. You may not have heard this in audible language, like we talk, but away down in your heart there crept a sadness you had never felt before, and you realized you must have help or sink. David said, They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, these see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep. For be commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths, their soul is melted because of trouble; they reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven. Little children, this is your experience. God commanded and raised the stormy wind, which lifted up the waves; they mount up to the heaven.

The waves of the sea are salty and slimy; so when God convicted you for sin the nice ballroom became sickening to you. Salt water makes you sick. These waves lashed over every place of amusement you frequented, and you became sick of them all. They go down again to the depths. Ah, yes, you were let down, down, and thought, Surely I am gone and none can help me. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them into their desired haven. Yes, you were tossed until you rocked to and fro and staggered like a drunken man, and got no rest until you went home to your friends and told them what great things God had done for you. So far as my case is concerned,

it took many a wave to cause me to be willing to go home to the church of God, which is a haven. And he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant. But I could not see this until God made darkness light before me and crooked things straight. He says, I will bring the blind by a way they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known. He does not say, I will leave it to you whether you come or not. Every thief, every murderer, every robber, every natural man, child and little and big ones who have not been brought by a way they knew not, that believe in a hereafter, will tell you the way just exactly like the Arminian preacher does. They all think they can and are going to get salvation some time, and that it rests with them whether they do or not, but the Savior said, No man can come unto me except my Father which hath sent me draw him, and I will raise him up in the last day. This tossing is experienced not only by the children of God individually, but is applicable to each church. Often the awful waves of contention arise in the church and it is terribly tossed, like the ship Paul was on when the storm struck it. That was a natural ship and a natural storm, but here is a lesson for us. Some of the sailors took the lifeboats and started to leave the ship, but Paul said, Except these abide in the ship ye cannot be saved. Possibly more churches are destroyed by division than any other cause. A house divided against itself cannot stand, so said the Savior. Forbear one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit. There is no unity of the flesh; all the discord, trouble and dissension comes from the carnal mind. James said, But if ye have bitter envying and strife among you, glory not and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth, not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. But the wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, &c. The prophet said, O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself.

"And not comforted," comes next. We all love comfort. Ministers whom God has called and sends sometimes comfort the weary pilgrim, but the greatest comfort we have is derived from the holy presence of the Savior. When he comes and rejoices over you it calms all your fears, gives you beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. The word says, *"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." The purpose of the gospel is to relieve the fears of the people of God. The first proclamation of the gospel after the Savior was born was by the angel of the Lord."* The Bible says, There were shep-

herds keeping watch over their flock by night, and the angel of the Lord came upon them and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. The angel did not tell them anything to increase their fears, nor try to impress upon them the necessity of getting religion, but said, Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people; for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. Not comforted You will be. It is written, Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Do you mourn?

Then you shall be comforted. Mourn because you are a sinner. If you had spiritual life you would not mourn nor even know you were a justly condemned sinner. If you had no life you would have no light, and if you had no light how could you see yourself a lost and ruined sinner? The Bible says, In him was life, and the life was the light of men. Nearly all my time is spent in sorrow; seldom do I see a moment free from deep sadness. Sometimes a little comfort comes into my spirit, but long and cold are the times of my journey; yet we sorrow not as others who have no hope, for if we believe in Jesus some day we shall leave all sorrow and sighing behind and go home to enjoy the glory that awaits the children of God. *"There everlasting spring abides, And never withering flowers; Death like a narrow sea divides. This heavenly land from ours."*

Not comforted. The prophet goes on in this chapter and tells what God is going to do for Zion who is not comforted. I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires, and I will make thy windows of agates and thy gates of carbuncles, &c. All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. Great shall be your peace, greater shall be your joy. Zion, said the Lord, hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me; but God says, *"Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb, yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me."* He will never leave, never forsake one of these afflicted ones. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

I have written too much and hope if the editors see any part or all of it to be of no profit they will throw it into the wastebasket and I shall be satisfied.

ISAAC R. GREATHOUSE.

2 THESSALONIANS II. 11, 12.

"AND for this cause God shall send them strong delnsion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

It seems from the reading of this letter to the church at Thessalonica, written by Paul, that certain men were troubling the church by teaching that the day of Christ was at hand. We understand by this that they were teaching that the end of the world was about to take place, and this teaching troubled the brethren. To substantiate this false idea they were even making use of letters purporting to have been written by Paul himself, but which were forgeries. ***"Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand."*** Paul then goes on to say in this letter that there are certain things to be fulfilled before the day of the Lord shall come, that there must first be a falling away, that there must be a full revelation of the man of sin, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped. It is quite evident that the revelation of the man of sin in all his perfidy had not been realized at the time; Paul wrote this letter, hence the day of the Lord, or the end of the world, could not be so near as these false teachers were declaring it to be. This declaration, then, was a delusion, and a strong one, as it had gotten hold disturbingly upon some in the church at Thessalonica. These false teachers were not established in the truth as it is in Jesus, they did not believe the truth, hence to make their ***"damnation,"*** or condemnation, manifest, God sent this strong delusion into them to separate them from the believing body of the church, that the church might be purified from these troublesome spirits, and that the occasion would demand from Paul and the apostles such preaching and writing as would clear up this point of doctrine and establish the true believers more thoroughly in the doctrine of God our Savior. This sending of strong delusion is one of the ways that God works in preserving his church from error and false doctrine and to take out of the visible church organization those who do not belong there. John, in speaking of these spirits of antichrist, says, ***"They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."*** Some doubter might say, Would it not be

more a proof of God's wisdom in taking care of his church to keep these false ones from ever getting in, rather than to plan a way to get them out after they have been in. To this, we answer that no man has a right to judge God's way of doing things. His way is ever best, no matter how it appears to human reason. Further, it is well for these delusions to come into the church in its travel through this lower world, rather than for them always to have been kept out. This is so for several reasons: first, because it is God's purpose, as we have said; second, the prevalence of error calls for clear and discriminating preaching, and, therefore, furnishes the occasion for some of the greatest preaching gifts the church has ever known; third, error troubling the church compels self-examination to make sure of one's standing, therefore brings about more Bible-reading and prayerful searching of the Scriptures than might otherwise be the case; fourth, the Scriptures have been opened up and understood more clearly than would have been the case, doubtless, had error never been circulated. We are confident that God has a use for error and ordains it to carry out his purpose whenever he pleases. All the false religion that is now in the world, and that has ever been in the world, never came here by chance or a mere happen- so. It is in the world now, and has been hitherto by God's express purpose. The devil makes a fine broom in the hand of God to sweep out the house whenever God sees fit to use him that way. The Scriptures plainly teach the doctrine of election, which means that some are destined unto salvation, while others are left to perish in sin. Since it is not God's plan to save all, it is a very wise provision of Providence that the unsaved believe something, even though it be false.

False religion teaches men are saved by their works, that every good deed is placed to their credit by the recording angel to offset wrongdoing that may have been committed. Such error as this, which holds such dominant sway in the civilized world today, serves to restrain men from outbreaking crimes, so that the social structure in the midst of which we live is outwardly decent, though it is inwardly a whited sepulchre. The restraint which error furnishes over the passions of men, in the providence of God, makes this world tolerable to the true people of the living God. Were not men kept in check by something such as this, persecution of the elect would be rampant and no true believer could ever have peace to live his own life according to the dictates of a living faith. Thus, it is honoring God to say that nothing, even error, is absent from the divine plan of things. Lights and shadows, good and evil, devil and saint, all find their place and their time in God's plan of salvation purposed in his Son before time began. The last chapter of Isaiah holds this declaration of the Lord: ***"I also will***

choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them." Thus both the Old and New Testaments warrant us in believing that error is sent not by chance or accident, but by divine intent. ***"Who may abide the day of his coming and who shall stand when he appeareth ~ for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness."*** One way in which the sons of Levi, in other words, the church, is purified in its visible organization here in the world, is in having these errors or delusions sent to act as a ladle or spoon to take away the scum which collects on the top of the silver in the crucible over the fire. Ahab was a wicked king over Israel in the days of old, and the Lord determined his death. To bring about this Iman's death in the Lord's way, Ahab was encouraged to believe he would be successful in battle against the king of Syria. Being thus made to believe he would be successful, Ahab went forth in battle and was killed. If anyone will turn to the eighteenth chapter of 2nd Chronicles they will learn there just how the death of Ahab was accomplished. It was accomplished by Ahab's being made to believe a lie. He was deluded, and this delusion was sent him by the hand of the Lord. The Lord said to the lying spirit, ***"Thou shalt entice him, [Ahab] and thou shalt also prevail: go out and do even so. Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil against thee."*** Thus we see how God saved Israel of old from a wicked king by sending him strong delusion, which accomplished his destruction. The case is not so very dissimilar from the way in which God has worked in more recent times to extricate his people out of dangerous errors. Sunday-schools, missionary societies, theological seminaries, and all other inventions of men to save souls, are very strong delusions, and they have a mighty hold on the people of this day and generation. Time was when the above inventions troubled the church, but not now. The damnation or condemnation of those advocating such things was made so plainly evident to the true church that there occurred a separation or sifting, which purified the visible organization at that time. Being carried away by strong delusions shows that one has pleasure in unrighteousness, and not in the truth. Belief in lies shows that one is in a state of condemnation; belief in the truth shows that one is in a state of justification. One believing a lie today may be brought to believe the truth tomorrow. In that case, one is passed from death unto life, and everyone of God's people has passed through such an experience.

The strong delusion to which

Paul had reference in our text was the teaching, that the day of the Lord, or end of the world, was immediately at hand. This delusion has persisted even to this late day, and prophets every now and then rise up claiming to be able to tell the exact date when the world will come to an end. Mosheim tells us in his history that a general belief prevailed in Europe toward the close of the tenth century that the year 1000 would witness the coming of Christ, the day of judgment, and the end of the world. As the time drew near a general panic seized the minds of men. Many abandoned their homes and their families and repaired to Palestine; others made over their lands to the Roman Catholic Church or permitted them to lie uncultivated, and the whole course of ordinary life was violently disturbed and deranged. But the year 1000 came and went and the world still stood, proving that it was all a delusion. Now it is not hard to find any number of people who believe the year 2000 will witness the destruction of this material world and the end of time. We are safe in saying, as Paul said, that the day of the Lord cannot come until there be first a full revelation of the man of sin. Who can say when this man of sin has been fully discovered? Furthermore, no man knoweth the day nor the hour when the Son of man cometh. The day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night. Does the householder know when the thief is coming? Neither, then, can any man fix the date for time to end. It is foolish to try to do so, and surely entangles in a snare any who pursue such delusion. Here in our own country in the year 1843 there rose up a man named William Miller, who figured out from Daniel viii. 14, that the end of the world would take place in 1843. This caused great consternation among multitudes of people, so that some sold their farms and houses, some cast their stocks of goods from their stores into the streets, to be taken by whomsoever they might, and others completely lost their reason. Notwithstanding all these prophets have been proved false by the outcome of events, the delusion still persists, and it is not hard to find persons who soberly claim to be able to tell just when the world will come to an end. It is easier to believe a lie than the truth. Our first parents proved this in the garden of Eden when they believed the words of Satan that they should not die, but would become as gods, knowing good and evil, though God had plainly said, Thou shalt surely die. The same nature in them that then believed the devil, now dwells in every individual of the human family, so that it is natural to follow a delusion and believe a lie, while it takes the grace of God to cause one to follow Christ and believe the truth.

Written at the request of brother Milton Maddock, Alvinston, Ont. L.

Elder H.H. Lefferts

OSKALOOSA, Kansas, March 31, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS :- By request, and also by my own wish, I am sending you this copy of a letter, which was begun by our late sister Nettie Porter, of Barber, Okla., and sent to me, after her death, by her parents, sister Elizabeth Garton and Roy Garton, of Lakemp, Okla. I read it with a solemn thrill, as a voice from the dead; then I thought, No, not from the dead, but the living, for Christ said, ***"Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."*** If it meets your approval please publish it in the SIGNS.

Unworthily,
MARY ELLISON.

DEAR SISTER IN HOPE:-If you will allow me to so address you after this long silence. I have thought of you, and , I hope, of all the dear kindred in Christ, often, but I am so slow to perform my duty that I have put off writing the letter which I know ought to be written. We are well and getting along very well, but I, as usual, am unthoughtful of God's goodness to me until I feel his presence in this cold and stony heart. I am very unprofitable in the things of God; I am never able to observe his kindness and, loving care until I feel that "something", which makes me thank him for the sunshine and beautiful day. I feel my heart overflowing this morning, hence this letter to you. Do not think I am always at the feet of Jesus, for I am not. Most of my path lies in shadows and doubts, and there are times when I fret and plan for tomorrow, forgetting there is One who has already provided for the morrow. This is my great grief, that I cannot always feel the assurance that he has provided a way. True, I believe it and think it, but when clouds gather and there is no light ahead I wonder how it is all going to come out-wonder how tomorrow is going to be provided for, when he has left so many assurances that he has us in his loving care. When I look back and count my blessings and think how unthankfully I have received so many of them, it makes me wonder at the unreasonableness of my own nature, and in my heart this morning I cry, and long to cry with my lips, O for a closer walk with God: My mind has gone back on the path I traveled when I first began to think on the things of God, and I remember how impossible it looked for me to ever own my God and Savior and live in peace at home. Then I remember how that still small voice urged me on, with a blessed assurance that all would be well. When things were the darkest, in my heart I was willing to give up all and go the way I felt drawn, and then the thought and the feeling would come that God was able to make all rough places smooth, and there would even be good in what then seemed hard to me. Now, when husband and I some-

times grasp a thing of God together, I recall my doubts and fears, also the suffering I then had to bear, and I think that the burden I then had to bear is nothing, and not to be compared with the grace and comfort provided for the morrow. This is my great grief, that I cannot always feel the assurance that he has provided a way. True, I believe it and think it, but when clouds gather and there is no light ahead I wonder how it is all going to come out-wonder how tomorrow is going to be provided for, when he has left so many assurances that he has us in his loving-care. When I look back and count my blessings and think how unthankfully I have received so many of them, it makes me wonder at the unreasonableness of my own nature, and in my heart this morning I cry, and long to cry with my lips, O for a closer walk with God: My mind has gone back on the path I traveled when I first began to think on the things of God, and I remember how impossible it looked for me to ever own my God and Savior and live in peace at home. Then I remember how that still small voice urged me on, with a blessed assurance that all would be well.

When things were the darkest, in my heart I was willing to give up all and go the way I felt drawn, and then the thought and the feeling would come that God was able to make all rough places smooth, and there would even be good in what then seemed hard to me. Now, when husband and I sometimes grasp a thing of God together, I recall my doubts and fears, also the suffering I then had to bear, and I think that the burden I then had to bear is nothing, and not to be compared with the grace and comfort I get out of God's word, and the unity of feeling that exists between my husband and myself. That is one of the blessings I thank God for, and feel ashamed of the doubts and fears I felt; but I thank him for the strength that enabled me to bear my burden. I recall how I wandered in darkness, and how I would carry some little portion of my burden to my husband, and how like Job's comforters he was, and I know it was only the blessed work of God, to plant my feet on a firm foundation, and every shred of hard feeling has long, ago left my heart, and I feel that spirit which prayeth, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. I can even say I am glad that it was so, for in it I can see that it was only a work to show forth the glory of God. There was always a desire to talk more with God's people about my travel before I came to the church, but there was always a something that kept me from it. I always loved the Baptist people; even when a child I loved the sound of their voices when giving thanks unto their God; but there was one thing that always grated on my nerves, even when a child, when I heard them tell of their

experiences, and they would in any way connect a dream. It always made it look queer and superstitious to me. When I was fifteen years old I began to be worried about death and the hereafter. I wanted so much to do what was right, and tried that hopeless task of trying to merit salvation. When I was in the most hopeless state of mind I dreamed that I was riding on horseback over a desolate, hilly country. The hills were bare of vegetation, and even the sun was hid behind a cloud. I thought the path I traveled was so rough I might be killed at any moment, and just as I thought I was about out of the bad country I came to the end of my path, or road. I was on the top of a high hill that there was no visible way of getting down and going ahead. There was a valley that commenced right at the foot of the hill, with beautiful green grass, and a beautiful stream of water that ran very smoothly and wound prettily through the valley. There were a few clusters of trees, and over it all the sun shone so prettily that it made me shudder with dread as I thought of turning back over the desolate road I had traveled. I awoke with that awful feeling of dread, and try as I might, and tell myself as often as I could that there was nothing in a dream, that dread and awful feeling stayed with me for seven years. Often I prayed to God to take it away, just to remove that dread and harrowing feeling. Once as I went alone out into the orchard I prayed for some kind of a token, to relieve my bruised and burdened heart. As I looked about me there came a feeling with these words: Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. The thought was in my mind that surely I could take hold of that, because I was hungering and thirsting after righteousness. For a few months I found relief from the awful burden, and thought it was gone, when it came anew and seemed much worse than before. For a year I wandered and sought God in vain; but one morning as I went about my household duties I "felt the loving-kindness of God, and I worshiped as one who has no hope himself when I stood in my kitchen doorway and prayed God if it were his will to take away my burden and remove the dread produced by the dream, and it came as a voice, though I heard no sound, O, have you not yet suffered enough to know that it is not on a high hill of pride where mercy is to be found, but low, low down at the feet of Jesus and the peace, the sweet peace of God, so filled my heart, that it shut out everything else, removed all doubt, all fear; even the horror of the dream, that had hung over me, went, never to fill a moment of my time again, lifted as a mist before the sun. I am sometimes in doubt and in trouble, but not the kind that lays hold.

Here the pen was laid aside, and

the hand of death intervened before it was lifted again. The beantiful song of praise was interrupted, to be resumed in the midst of the heavenly choir, before the throne of God and the Lamb, where throughout an endless eternity she will join with them in sweet anthems of praise singing, not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy Name be all the glory, because thou hast redeemed us by thy blood. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by his mercy he saved us. The dear sister died about the last of February, leaving, her husband, John Porter, and four little children, besides her parents and three brothers. I presume a suitable obituary notice will be sent to the SIGNS. Though rejoicing in such precious testimony of such a favored witness to the goodness, mercy and peace of God, which passes the knowledge and understanding of the worldly-wise natural mind, I am made to feel very humble and deeply sensible of my unworthiness to have been the recipient of this letter. Surely it is because He is of one mind, and none can turn him, that I am not consumed; and though I deplore the expression of even an implied doubt of his mercy and favor to one who surely is less than the least of all saints, yet I am tempted to say, if one at all.

Submitted. M. E.

"For we which have believed do enter into rest." - Hebrews iv.3.

We enter into rest by ceasing from our own works, and resting on Christ's; according to his words, ***"For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."*** Now when you can fully rest upon the finished work of the Son of God, and believe by a living faith that your sins were laid upon his head; that he bore them in his body on the tree; that he has washed you in his precious blood, clothed you with his righteousness, and is sanctifying you by his Spirit and grace, then you can rest. There is something here firm and solid for the conscience to rest on. Whilst the law thunders, whilst Satan accuses, whilst conscience condemns there is no rest. But you can rest where God rests. God rests in his love; in the finished work of his dear Son; in the perfection of Christ's humanity; in his fulfilment of all his covenant engagements; in the glorification of his holy law; in the satisfaction rendered to his justice; in the harmonising of all his attributes; in the revelation of his grace and his glory to the children of men ; for he is his beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased. The tabernacle in the wilderness, and afterwards the temple on Mount Zion, was a type of the pure and sacred humanity of the Lord Jesus. There God rested in a

visible manner by a cloud upon the mercy seat, called by the Jewish writers the Shekinah. This, therefore, was the place of his rest, as he speaks, ***"For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell for I have desired it"*** (Psalm cxxxii. 13, 14).

Elder J.C. Philpot

JULY 4TH MEETING
"TO BE HELD ON FRIDAY, JULY 3rd"

The annual July 4th meeting will be held, the Lord willing, this year at Valley View Church on Friday July 3rd. Directions to Valley View Church from Interstate 81--Take exit 114 south(Christiansburg/Floyd exit). At the end of the ramp turn toward Floyd on route 8. After about 4 miles you will pass Auburn high and middle school on your right, continue for .6 of a mile and turn left on to rustic ridge road. After .3 of a mile turn right on to Valley View Church road. The church will be on your right.

The meeting time is Friday July 3rd at 10:00 a.m. We invite our Brothers, Sisters and Elders to be with us.

Tony R. Horton

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held, the Lord willing, on the 5th Sunday in May at Dan River Church.

We invite all lovers of the Truth to come and be with us.

Especially ministers of our correspondence.

Church is located on Highway 700 between Eden, North Carolina and Danville, Virginia.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union meeting will be held at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, 708 South Main Street, Gretna, Virginia (Pittsylvania County) on Saturday before the fifth Sunday in May. The song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and we invite all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Marvin Brumfield, Mod.
Oscar Pickral, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 2009

Ron Wade, VA	30.00
Reidy Pickral, VA	25.00
James Pugh, AL	5.00
Eva Wyatt, NC	5.00
Pauline Jones, TX	10.00
Dan Clark Delp, VA	5.00
Mary Lee Hawkins, NC	20.00
Edna Graves, AL	5.00
Gene Ambrose, VA	5.00
Roland Allen, GA	5.00
Ronald Jacks, AL	10.00

OBITUARIES

4-18-2009

"In Memory of"
Charlie Anderson Morgan
Date of birth: February 5th 1926
Date of death: March 9th 2009
Making his stay on Earth
83 years 1 month and 4 days.

Brother Charlie was born to the late, Jesse Lee Morgan and Martha Nance Morgan. From this union, they were blessed to have seven children, Brother Charlie being the 5th of the siblings. Brother Charlie was raised In a Primitive Baptist home,after the passing of his parents, 2 sisters and 4 brothers. He resided with his brother Howard, in the home in Randleman, N.C. Brother Charlie earned his fare as a textile technician, he also served in the United States Navy. Brother Charlie was a humble and patient and honest man, all of his life on earth. In 1973 Brother Charlie asked for a home at, Rock Hill Primitive Baptist Church, he was received in full fellowship, he was baptized May 20th with love by Elder Sam Atkinson in Randolph Country. Brother Charlie was blessed to attend his church faithfully, also other Primitive Baptist churches of his faith and order. In Brother Charlie's conversations he was mindful of his soul. Brother Charlie professed to have a blessed hope. That he would be caught up in the arms of Jesus, to live forever with the Father of all creations. We at Rock Hill Church will sorely miss him, not only the members, also his friends. Brother Charlie's service was conducted at Rock Hill Church March 12th at 11 A.M. Elder Ralph Gaines officiating; Interment at Rock Hill Primitive Baptist Cemetery.

Written By:
A sister in Christ I hope,
Carolyn Gaines

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

SONG

Let all our tongues be one
To praise our God on high,
Who from his bosom sent his Son
To fetch us strangers nigh.

Nor let our voices cease
To sing the Saviour's name;
Jesus, th' ambassador of peace,
How cheerfully he came !

It cost him cries and tears
To bring us near to God ;
Great was our debt, and he appears
To make the payment good.

My Saviour's pierced side
Poured out a double flood ;
By water we are purified,
And pardoned through the blood.

Infinite was our guilt,
But he our Priest atones :
On the cold ground his life was spilt, And offered with his groans.

Look up, my soul, to him
Whose death was thy desert,
And humbly view the living stream
Flow from his breaking heart.

Watts.

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EDITORIALS

And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and in sin. (Eph 2:1)

Elder R. H. Campbell

This is the state in which all men are born into the world, they are dead to the things of the Spirit and would ever remain in that State if left to their own devices. The problem with that, as far as the man is concerned is that he is completely unaware of his condition, and has no realization of his need for a change. The apostle Paul describes this condition in the following verses. ***(Eph 2:2-5) "Wherein in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us together in Christ."***

The apostle describes his experience in this portion of his life which he spent in the Jewish religion, where he walked according to the traditions of the Jewish faith, persecuting the church, and blaspheming the name of Jesus. He said that he then received mercy, because he did all of this in ignorance and unbelief. This is true of all, until they are given eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand they too are in a state of ignorance and unbelief of the truth, until they too are quickened and called of God.

He then gives the only reason for his change when he said ***(Gal 1:15) "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him***

among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood; neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me, but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus." This same experience is common to all, when it pleases God to call them by his grace, they will follow him, for Jesus said *(John 6:44) "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day."* These scriptures deny the doctrines of the world now and in all ages of time, because they believe that they must originate the call upon God, and he is just waiting for them to call on him and he will bless them with all of the glory of the heavenly abode of Jesus and his sheep.

Jesus said, *(John 6:37-39) "All that my Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."* Paul's experience caused him to write the scripture that is the foundation of the faith of all, *Eph 2:8) "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."* This one verse has probably given more people, more comfort, than any other single verse of scripture. They all acknowledge that the truth of this one verse is the basis of their hope, for they admit that; in their case it was a gift, and not for anything that they did to deserve it. As they see, along their travels here in time, even after they have received this new hope and their love that they have for these things, they still cannot do anything worthy of such a gift. They will ever be dependent upon that same quickening to return and reveal the beauties of the kingdom wherein lies their hope of eternal life.

I once had an experience that, made me remember the truth of this verse, will these sweet remembrances ever make this truth especially precious to me. When, after several months or years, of the sweetness of this new found love that I had received, I begin to realize that it was beginning to fade somewhat. I begin to fear that I might lose it altogether. Then one day the thought came to me of this verse, and I was made to rejoice anew, for I realized that if he had indeed called me and revealed himself unto me, and I believed that he had, all when I was in a state of ignorance and unbelief of the truth, and I was neither seeking nor desiring him, then I did not believe that he would desert me now, when I needed him so badly, for he is now my whole life.

It is strange how you can read a scripture such as this and feel that it certainly has been your experi-

ence. and when they come again to your mind in your walk it brings a joy that will make you weep as you are blessed with the sweet remembrance of the feeling that you had back then. This is why I love to tell my experiences, for sometimes it brings back that feeling that you experienced originally. Paul wrote of his experiences many times, and I sometimes feel that this was his reason for doing so, he rejoiced with those to whom he was speaking with that special sweetness that he experienced when his love was new. I have heard the experience of some of my brethren many times and love to share in that special experience with them. This is because you are realizing all of the things that they have experienced being brought to that place, and as it is such a special place to you, you feel that it is also special to them.

These are the experiences that cause those who have been quickened, to desire to read the writings left on record by those in ages past. These are the same feelings that cause the writers to leave them on record for generations to come, and John expresses it best when he said, (1 John 1-5) which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes. which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life; (For the life was manifested, we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eterrial life, which was manifested unto us, that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write unto you, that your joy may be full." This was a witness who was present when those things of which he is testifying as to the authenticity of them were occurring, it was not hearsay evidence. which in many cases can be a distortion of the actual facts of what happened, and John, knowing this wanted to comfort and strengthen the faith of those brethren in ages to come, when in seasons of doubt they might tend to question the truth of their experiences and beliefs.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

VOICES OF THE PAST

A MYSTERY.

THERE was a mystery which was kept secret from the foundation of the world, hid in God, a mystery which was revealed to none of the sons of God before the gospel age, a mystery of which Paul alone of all the apostles was made a minister. This dispensation of the gospel was committed unto him, that whether he preached willingly or by constraint, still it had to be preached. Necessity was laid upon

him, and there was a woe unto him if he preached it not. The whole work of salvation is a mystery, and no part of it can be understood with the natural mind. But there was a special nature of this great work of salvation which had been hidden until the gospel age, and this special feature of the work of grace was given to Paul to preach unto the Gentiles. It was for the Gentiles sake that Paul was a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and while there were twelve apostles unto the Jews, we, the Gentiles, have Paul, who is the thirteenth apostle. This mystery of which Paul was made a minister he tells us about in his letter to the church at Ephesus. Now, the church at Ephesus was a Gentile church and Paul was a Jew, the same truth which was revealed in Paul was also revealed in these Gentile brethren. These Gentiles knew nothing about Judaism, and were strangers to that covenant which God gave Israel by the hand of Moses. This Mosaic covenant forbade the Jews to deal with the Gentiles. According, to that covenant no Gentile had any right to the feasts or the solemn assembly of the Jews; they could not partake in the temple service, nor in any of the sacrifices or holy things. From all these the Gentiles were shut out. He did not have the oracles of God, he did Dot have the prophets, none of the types or shadows, they were indeed barred from all the blessings and privileges of the Israelites. Consequently the Mosaic law constituted a barrier between Jew and Gentile, it was a "middle wall of partition" forbidding intercourse and fellowship between them. It was a handwriting of legal ordinances enjoined upon Israel for their obedience, carrying with it blessings for the observance and punishments for the breach. But none of these blessings or punishments could ever be the lot of the Gentiles, for the Gentiles were never under the Mosaic law. If Jesus, therefore, were made under the Mosaic law he would be the Savior of none but Jews, no Gentile could ever benefit by the shedding, of Jesus' blood. When the scripture says that Jesus was made of a woman, made under the law, it is not the Mosaic law which is meant, but the law under which Adam fell in condemnation, which fall embraced all the elect of God in Adam. This fall embraced both Jew and Gentile, for there was yet no difference between Jew and Gentile when Adam transgressed. The obedience of Jesus was not confined to the law of Moses, but his obedience was unto the law of God, of which law of God the law of Moses was but a faint shadow, portraying in the temporal blessings which fell to the lot of Israel the spiritual blessings which under the new covenant fall to the lot of spiritual Israel. Indeed, literally, Jesus did not keep the Mosaic law at all. That law forbade any work whatsoever on the sabbath day, and Jesus did pluck ears of corn on that day. That law said, Honor thy father

and mother, and Jesus never did honor Mary as his mother nor Joseph his father that law said that any man calling himself equal with God was a blasphemer and was to be put to death, and Jesus will say, I and my Father are one. All these, and other acts which Jesus did, were looked upon as literal breaches of the law. But in the spirit Jesus will keep the law, and fulfilled to every jot and tittle its Spiritual import; but he did far more, he obeyed the law and the will of God, so that his salvation is not confined to Jews, which it would have been had he obeyed merely the law of Moses, but reaches out and takes in both Jew and Gentile: all his people from the four winds of heaven and from the four corners of the earth, in every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue. Thus we see that the Mosaic law comprised a handwriting of ordinances which was against the Gentiles, being contrary to them, because they were barred from the observance of it and from the blessings or privileges or punishments of it. This Mosaic covenant made an enmity between Jew and Gentile. So when Jesus died it ended the old covenant. He took away the handwriting of ordinances, nailing them to his cross, thus abolishing the enmity. This expression, **"Having abolished in his flesh the enmity,"** and that other expression, ***"Having slain the enmity"*** by the cross, both found in the second chapter of Ephesians, do not refer at all to the enmity of the carnal mind and the mind of Christ, nor to the enmity between the flesh and the Spirit, but to the enmity between Jew and Gentile, which enmity arose from the makeup of the Mosaic covenant which excluded Gentiles from participating in it. This enmity, this old covenant, had to be abolished before Gentiles could come into the kingdom of God. This abolition Jesus performed by the death of the cross. Resulting from this death of Jesus comes the revelation of the mystery kept hid from the foundation of the world, and it is thus: the, church, or body of Christ, are composed of both Jews and Gentiles, all one in the kingdom of God. Having broken down the middle wall of partition Christ made of the twain one new man. The "twain" means two, and the two are Jew and the Gentile. Of these two he makes one, new man, or one new body, the body of Christ. All are members of his flesh and of his bones, all fitly joined together, growing unto a holy temple in the Lord, builded through the Spirit for the habitation of his honor and glory. The children of God are not destined to become perfect men and perfect women. No, never. The gospel holds forth no such promise, but we all shall, that is, all his people; from among both Jews and Gentiles; shall ultimately come unto the one perfect man, and that one perfect man is the measure of stature of the fullness of Christ. We shall all become as we already are, molded into one body, the body of our Lord.

Paul says somewhere in writing to the church at Corinth, Ye are all one bread. No loaf of bread can by any possibility be resolved back into its original grains of wheat. Each grain and all the grains lose their separateness when in the loaf of bread. Just so only infinitely more so, the body of Christ while composed of redeemed sinners of Adam's fallen race can never be resolved back again into the individual men and women whence it came. Now this is the mystery which Paul particularly refers to in his letter to the church at Ephesus: ***"That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body [with the Jews], and partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel."*** This doctrine of the new man that is, of the body of Christ, made of Jew and Gentile, a wholly new thing until the resurrection of Christ, that is the special dispensation which was committed unto Paul to preach. It was not in other ages made known unto the sons of men, but it is now in the Gospel age revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. In some of the prophecies of the Old Testament, to be sure, there is abundant evidence of the bringing of the Gentiles to the light of the truth. Especially is this true of the prophecies of Isaiah. But that One body, or one new man, was to be formed of the hosts of the redeemed from among both Jews and Gentiles, that both were to be quickened together with Christ and to be raised up together with Christ, and both to be made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ we say all this had been kept hid throughout all the ages here before to be revealed and made known in these last times, and was first made known in the ministry of Paul, the Gentiles' apostle, and was the special dispensation of the Gospel committed unto him. This, the unity of the whole church of God in the one body of the new man, Christ Jesus, is the ***"unsearchable riches of Christ"*** which Paul says he was especially called to preach among the Gentiles. This oneness of Christ and his people, whosoever they may be in the flesh, whether Jew or Gentile, bond or free, Greek or barbarian, is the gist and kernel of the whole gospel matter. It is the fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined, on which God feasts his children in his holy mount.

Elder Lefferts

ST. MATTHEW 11:28-30.

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

TWENTY-THIRD PSALM

My mind has been on the 23rd Psalm. I have used it as a text several times in my sixty-five years in the ministry: but never with the weight that it seems today.

Now, where did Jesus find his people? We do not entertain the thought that any were lost to Jesus; but it is written that Jacob was found in a waste howling wilderness, and the Lord led him about and instructed him. Likewise Daniel, who would not fall on his knees and worship the idol of King Nebuchadnezzar, when he worshipped only the true God, he was thrown into the den of lions, but he was not alone, for the Lord was with him. Also, when the three Hebrew children were cast into the fiery furnace, which was so hot that it consumed those that cast them in, they were not alone: one watcher, the king, looked in and saw four people. ***"Did we not cast in three men...Lo, I see four men loose...the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."***

"Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me." When Jonah was ordered to go to Nineveh and to cry unto her that within forty days the city would be destroyed, he went the wrong way: he took passage on the wrong boat; and there came up a terrible storm. The sailors were sore afraid; then Jonah confessed that he was the cause: ***"Cast me into the sea;"*** and they did. But the Lord had prepared a great fish, and it swallowed Jonah. For three days and three nights Jonah prayed. He learned a great lesson: ***"Salvation is of the Lord."*** He learned this in the belly of Hell. Then the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah on dry land; and Jonah started at once to Nineveh, and preached that in forty days the city would be destroyed. Jonah learned something in the belly of the fish that he could not have learned in forty years in any college of men. He learned that salvation is purely the work of the Spirit; that it cannot be purchased of men; it cannot be bought with silver or gold. It is the work of grace through faith, not of ourselves, for it is the gift of God.

The Bible records these things, to show God's power in all things. I do not want to talk to those who have not a hearing ear, nor to those who are ***"sure of heaven,"*** but to the many dear ones who come asking, ***"O God, be merciful to me a sinner."*** Not to those who are so self-righteous in their thoughts, but to those who have been in the fiery furnace with Jesus as a partner, and whose thoughts are about the Trinity, God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit. Remember, dear brethren, God the Father is the ***"powerhouse"***; Jesus Christ the Son and the sacrifice; and the Holy Spirit the Comforter of those who are born of the Spirit. And remember

that God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in Truth.

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." Jesus said, *"My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me: a stranger they will not follow."* Concerning the one led like a sheep to slaughter, was what the Ethiopian eunuch was muddled about; and Philip was sent to straighten him out: not to make a Christian, for he was already that. He was coming home from Jerusalem where he had been to worship. He was reading Isaiah, but did not understand what he was reading: *"He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb dumb before his shearers, so opened he not his mouth."* He asked Philip whom Isaiah was talking about, was it of himself or some other man. Philip did not answer him directly, but began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus - to the satisfaction of the Eunuch. And as they rode along, they came to water, and the Eunuch said, *"Here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized ?"* And Philip answered, *"If thou believeth with all thine heart, thou mayest."* And the Eunuch said, *"I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."* Then they both went into the water, and Philip baptized him, and they came up out of the water; and Philip was caught away of the Spirit, and the Eunuch went on his way rejoicing.

I have preached many funerals of non-members, and I had as good a hope for them as for anyone. My own dear father was never baptized by man, but gave a good evidence that he had been baptized of the Holy Ghost; and he was a great help to me when I began to preach. The old Elder who baptized me, when he led me out of the water said, *"Here is a preacher for you."* I hoped that nobody heard it; but it seemed they all felt the same way. Within a year I was licensed to preach. I was baptized on *"ground-hog day,"* February 2, 1896; and ordained January 10, 1900, to the full work of the ministry. And here I am in my 93rd year, still proclaiming that *"the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want."* I thought when I first started out, for I was rather timid, that after I preached a year or two, I would get over it, but in this I was sadly disappointed. After about 70 years, my knees shake and my heart throbs when it is announced that Elder Weaver will follow so and so on the stand. But I will say this, that of late, be there a dozen or five hundred, it is all the same to me; for I know none will hear me, except those who have been born again. The Lord has told me that his staff and his rod would comfort me. Many times the rod is used: I am yet a man, and when the Lord *"looks at me,"* then I remember, and go out and weep.

The Lord has been good to me.

His charity, which is love greater than faith and hope that abides in us, reminds me that I am still in the flesh. The Lord has showed us many things, and the prophet truly said, ***"There is nothing too hard for the Lord."*** The sun, moon and the stars that he placed in the heavens show his handiwork. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, and all things, and pronounced them good, and very good. He knows all things: to him all is an open book. One star that I used to watch when the sky was clear, was an exception to me: the Pole or North Star. No matter where I was day or night, it was always North. It is located by the two stars in the Big Dipper always pointing to it. The sailors of old used this star for guidance, until the compass pointing to the North took its place. Truly it is said, ***"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge."***

"The Lord is my shepherd," not a shepherd, but *my shepherd.* He is speaking to me; and I shall not want. He is speaking to all his chosen people. ***"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures."*** He talks to his sheep, and they hear his voice, and follow him. They know not the voice of strangers. One thing I learned about sheep when I was a boy on the farm: I was their shepherd, and they were not afraid of me or my dog. We usually had twenty-five or thirty little lambs, and they all played together. At nightfall I would call them, and they would follow me into a big shed. Sometimes one would run away from the flock, and I would tell the dog to bring him in; and sometimes he would have quite a time. Here I learned that sheep would not drink running water, but go to the still water.

"He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou are with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies : thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." What more do I want?

To my numerous brothers and sisters, may the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you. May he lift up his countenance upon thee, and give you peace.

Your unworthy brother,
Elder George L. Weaver,
3415 Westbury Road,
Shaker Heights 20, Ohio 44120

(The above is from a recording

sent by Elder Weaver since his eyesight is bad for reading or writing.

We were glad to receive it, and have edited it for publication.

(J. D. W.)

IS THE DOOR LOCKED?

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him. and will sup with him, and he with me." (Revelations 3: 20)

I hope the Lord will lead me in this undertaking. First, I will say, John was commanded to write to a certain people. Those that might believe the door was locked, and that Jesus was helpless to enter in, should read the entire chapter again: there may be some things overlooked that are very important.

We will find that John was commanded to write to the angels of the churches named, and not to the world which means, not to dead sinners. Those dead in sin cannot hear spiritually any more than the corporal dead can hear naturally - unless it pleases our heavenly Father to quicken the dead sinner into divine life, he will remain dead. ***"For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the son quickeneth whom he will." (John 5:21)***

Jesus holds not only the key of David, (Rev. 3:7), but the keys of hell and death, (Rev. 1:18), and certainly he is in possession of the key to his own kingdom; for He is the door of his sheep, and his sheep hear his voice, and they follow him: for they know his voice. ***"And a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." (John 10:5)*** The Lord's humble poor and afflicted know not the voice of the doctrine of men, who preach that the Lord Jesus is a beggar, and cannot enter in because they, the carnal nature of men, will not let him; and he has therefore utterly failed to accomplish the will of his Father who sent him.

In 1st Samuel 17:38, we find that Saul armed David that he should be prepared to meet the Philistine, and win the battle. But David could not go with such armour as a man could furnish. David knew in whom he trusted: it was the same God that delivered him out of the paw of the lion, and the paw of the bear, and, ***"He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine."*** The world today is still using Saul's armour to convert and make so-called Christians. ***"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14)*** But the poor and afflicted are trusting in the God who has all power in heaven and in earth, and

none can stay his hand, for they are drawn by the Holy Spirit. I feel certain that the elect family of God, chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, are drawn to Him through the Son and Spirit, not according to the will of man, but according to the will of God our Saviour. ***"Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1 :13)***

We read in the 3rd chapter of Matthew how that Jerusalem and all Judea were baptized of John; but seeing many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, ***"O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance."*** Dearly beloved, I believe it is impossible even for God's very elect to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, except it be by the working of the Holy Spirit; it being the work of God that they believe in Christ Jesus.

When one is pricked in the heart and wounded, he will certainly seek the great physician, and come truly and humbly confessing his sins to his God, and be made to trust in the Lord Jesus, who is the only one that can bind up his wounds, and give him a final resting place. These are the ones that truly bring forth fruits meet for repentance. In Matthew 5 ;20, we read, ***"Except our righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."***

Jesus comes to his bride, *the* church, because he loves her with an everlasting love; and through him the good news from a far country is brought: the Gospel. The bride looks for him: she loves him because he has loved her first, and has raised her up and paid the full redeeming price - his life, his blood, that some day she shall rest from all her labor and dwell with him in that eternal kingdom forever. This is her precious hope.

Oh, how often He comes to her knocking at her very heart, and comforts her with that love that flows from heart to heart, and breast to breast; and the Spirit and the bride say come: so we can be sure that as often as Jesus visits his bride, the church, he prepares her to receive him. ***"The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." (Proverbs 16:1) "He opens and none can shut, and shuts and none can open." (Rev. 3:7)***

How wonderful his love and power, that he comes and unfolds the beauty of his kingdom here on earth, to the precious ones who are the anointed, and called not according to their works, but according to his mercy and grace, and blesses them in sweet fellowship to meet together in that precious faith. ***"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart***

of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But he hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit."

If we love the Lord, it is because he first loved us, and gave himself for us. Jesus said, ***"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." (John 15:16)*** How wonderful it is when we are lifted up, to feel that blessed assurance of the precious hope abiding in us! yet we realize that we, as poor, helpless creatures, are dependent upon the Heavenly Father; and cannot always feel to be lifted above our many troubles here in this world of sin and sorrow. For there are many valleys of trials and afflictions and when we are down in those places, only the dear Lord of heaven can lift us up: He hears the cry of his humble, poor and afflicted ones; and these are they who are chosen in the furnace of affliction, and brought by the power of God to be united with the Heavenly Bride, the Lamb's Wife.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Dear kindred, have you not had a little feast along your journey, or just a few handsfull of purpose left for you, when you were blest to feel the very presence of a Saviour's love. certainly this is when He is standing at the door and knocking within the heart of his beloved. ***"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come and whosoever will let him take the water of life freely."*** This is a well of water springing up in you unto eternal life; for it is God that worketh in you of his own good pleasure. ***"So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy ." ~ (Romans 9:16)***

Dearly beloved in the Lord, if you are crossing many valleys, and the journey becomes so uneven, and the streams almost dry, press onward, for the sweet promise of our Lord and Master is that he will open rivers in high plantains in the midst of the valleys. How wonderful it is when we are given to rest in his sure promises, awaiting the coming of Jesus for his bride; with whom we hope to be united, to be with him in his likeness, and be forever satisfied.

In a precious hope,
(Elder) C. D. Turner,
Dunn, N. C.

PSALM 71:15-16.

My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof.

I will go in strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only.

AT OUR WIT'S END
(Psalms 107:27)

How often have you heard the expression, *"He is living by his wits?"* Have you heard of people that profess to be children of God, even Old School Baptists, that claim that they are living by their wits? If you hear of these, you may know that they have not made this trip down to sea. These people had their wits when they went down to sea. If they had been left alone they would have made a lovely voyage, and when they returned from it, they would have praised their skill as a pilot, and you would have never quit hearing about the prize ship that they were sailing.

Once upon a time there was a family of twelve brethren. They were not harmonious with one another. Ten of the brethren were jealous of their younger brother. They lived by their wits. At first they schemed together to slay their brother, and thus rid themselves of the dismal prospect of ever having to pay obeisance to him; but then it seemed profitable to sell him instead. However, they had to be witty about it because they knew that there had to be a falsehood told so as to have a plausible (witty) excuse for his disappearance. Their wits suggested a wild beast devouring the lad.

The fruits of their wit went along fine for a long time. There is not any doubt (when we read the history, as given by their father) about them gloating from time to time about how well their wits had payed off. As time has a way of doing, it brought about events that their wits were not a matter for. As it is in every case, so it was in this case, that a lesson had to be taught these brethren that they could not live by their wits. If there are among my readers any that profess the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, and they think that they are the life of a child of God by — their wits, I desire to warn you, (Colossians 1:28), that the time will come when you will come to your wit's end. Seemingly, the growing of a corn (wheat) crop would have little to do with them losing their wits, or coming to their wit's end. How little, how insignificant, are some of the things that the Lord has used to bring us to the end of our strength. Crop failure after crop failure came their way. The bread coffers all got bare. The need for bread became greater. Their wits did not avail anything. The hunger cravings got more intense. They could not whet themselves to face the man in Egypt, but anger forced them to go. If wits had served them, as they thought that they had served them in the beginning, they would not have gone. They were at their wit's end.

In the long ago the Lord had a servant. As to how faithful he had been previous to this experience, we do not know. We do know that he was a called prophet to prophesy to Israel; to go forth in the kingdom proclaiming to a nation that had set in darkness, that One drew near who would deliver them. No one

takes this honor unto himself save he that was called of God, as was Aaron. (Hebrews 5:4) His wits came to the forefront, and he put them into use. The command of God to go to Nineveh fell on rebellious ears, and on a man that had money. He paid his fare for another city. His wits were taking right nice care of him. But, as it is with every called man of God, there were things that his wits could not control. A storm came up. It did not come by chance. The Lord alone has the wind in his fists (Proverbs 30:4), and it is the Lord that brings and controls the wind. (Psalms 107:25; 147:18; 148:8) This was God's work in sending out this great wind, and it began a series of events that caused the prophet to come to his wit's end.

It is useless for anyone to tell us what ought to have been; also, it is useless to tell us what they would have done. I know what they would have done. When they came to their wit's end, as he came to his, and as all men will come when they set themselves in array against the Almighty and Holy One of Israel, they will do the best they can. Standing on the side lines and telling what a poor sinner ought to do; or telling, after a thing is over, what you would have done; or sitting in smug complacency and criticizing a sinner for what he did do, shows as little understanding of the nature of men as anything that could be done or said. Too, it shows as little mercy as a judge can show.

If my readers have ever one time come to the end of their wits, they will appreciate what happened to Jonah. I challenge any man to say that he could have done better under the same circumstances. O suppose someone would say, ***"Well, he got what was coming to him."*** Now let us turn that statement back. Have you always obeyed? Suppose that you get what's coming to you? At least this time, Jonah disobeyed. But God was with him. Do you mean to say that God was with him? O yes, I mean to say that again and again. Talk to me about saving ourselves; it is not logical, to say nothing about what is scriptural, to talk about a man saving himself when he is already lost as far as his wits are concerned. I would like to see the man's face that would say he could have saved himself out of this predicament; What is the result? God had gone before and prepared the great fish, and He either moved it to the right place, or it happened by chance to be at the right place. I pity the man that says it happened by chance to be right where the ship's crew threw Jonah overboard. Down into the sea he went. Where were his wits? Could he have saved himself? Could he have escaped his sea prison? At the end of his wits, he attributed his present salvation to the Lord. At any time we do not do that, we are still in possession of our wits; and being thus rich, salvation is still in our hands.

I look yonder across the vista

of the ages at a nation that has come to the end of their wits. Stop me if you have only heard this. If you have experienced it, it will be as new as it was in the beginning. People that have not seen this, and experienced this, do not know anything about coming to the end of their wits. If this is your condition, you will make sport of the people that all the time talk about the great deliverance at the Red Sea. To go on with this nation: They represent us today; that is, they do if we have come to the end of our wits. They are at the pass down to the sea. Behind them is the Pharaonic army. The mountain is on each side of them. What would you do? Do you think that you could have managed this set of circumstances and have gotten to the other side? Do you think, yea, would you dare say, that your wits would have pulled you through this predicament? And no sooner than you say it, you know better? What did take place? Who did rescue them? What part, if any, did their wits play in the rescue? Isn't it the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, that they had come to the end of their wits? Who acted? Who made the first move? As far as the Israelites doing something, what could they do? What did, they do? They came to the place that DEATH was staring them in the face. They came to the end of their strength, and they would have all perished had it not been for the Lord.

In the long ago, there was a man that had plenty of wits about him. He had made history because he had not a problem that he had not been able to solve. This was an envious record. The fame of this man had spread among those that had lost their wits. On a certain occasion he was about to spread havoc among those that had lost their wits. His wits were so active that he was going to put on a great display this time. His success had spread far, but he was not yet satisfied about the name that he had built for himself. He went to the authorities and got their blessing on what he was doing. His wits were active and watching for new glory and new conquests. Let us travel with him. As he had been breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the church so long, is it not to be wondered that as he travelled, he was still doing that? He was still in command of all his wits, and was certainly going to Damascus to further his conquest of the church of Jesus Christ. If a thing happens suddenly, but few people have the ability to be prepared for it and to withstand the fury of that first attack. As he journeyed, he suddenly lost his wits; he suddenly came to the end of his knowledge and ability. What then did he do? Since the power that was in the voice and the lights brought him to earth, he did not do anything. He fell. His wits were gone; he had come to the end of doing that which he pleased.

From that moment forward he

became a beggar, living on the bounties of Him that brought him to the earth. From that day until the day he died, he did not live by his wits. He lived by the grace of God. From that day forward he could not perform that which he desired. That which he desired to leave off, he found himself doing it. Before he lost his wits he led a happy, joyous life, going where he pleased, when he pleased, regardless of whose blood he shed, who he caused to blaspheme, what church he laid waste. After he lost his wits. he lived by the given faith of the Son of God; his laborings were not the work of one that lived by his wits. but they were by the grace of God. Before he came to the end of his wits. he caused much sorrow among the saints of God because he only had the mind to persecute. and did not have any hindering him in it. After he came to the end of his wits. he saw another law in his members warring against his mind and bringing him into captivity. After the losing of his wits, he was led captive. and the nature that had lived by its wits became in bondage and servitude to the stronger that had overpowered him. After losing his wits. there was a warfare set up within him. and he was not able to do as he had before he could no longer live by his wits.

My father had to span a continent in order to meet my mother. I do not know of any other way that I could have been. Do you? If so. your telling me about it would make interesting reading, although I would not believe a word of what you said. I did not come into the natural world by my wits. Did you? At just past the age of twenty my world came to an end. Sometimes I fear to say what brought it to an end; at other times I am fearless in saying that it was the work of God. This I do say. In all of these past forty-one years. things have never been like they were before that spectacular time in December. 1923. I can say of a truth that I thought that I was master of all that I surveyed. My destiny was in my hands. I am sure that I thought and believed that as much as Saul of Tar sus did. (Romans 7:10). At the outset I did not think too much about religion. and yet I had not calculated outside its domain. I first intended getting a place in the world and after that a place in religion. I think that I was a good example of those that go down to sea to set sail in ships of our own design and workmanship. Nothing common or little would get any attention from me. (Acts 10:14) I was rocked in the proverbial Old Baptist cradle, but I am sure that there has never been one brought from the rankest Arminian cradle that knew as little about what Old Baptists believed, as I did. I could have built a world as easy as I could have told that.

This December, 1923, was the coldest and bleakest time that I have ever passed through. I lost all sense of direction; I lost all of the ambitions that I had put so much stock in; I lost

all of the ability to think, much less do, those things that had been my life line, for I assure you that to live was to see these things realized. The things that had been so important to me that I thought I knew something about, were removed from me as the ruling passion of my life, but the power that I hope was ending my wits seemed to teach me that I knew less than nothing about it.

The only thing that I knew to do was cry and beg. This crying and begging was not a part of the life that I had formerly lived, for in that life I did not cry on anybody's shoulder. I had gone out and got what I wanted, or I had consigned what I could not get as being sour grapes and not worthy of my talents. The reason that I cried was because I was at my wit's end. I could not do anything; I could not reason out what to do. I had lost what I once had, and had not been given anything new. Do you know what I am saying? I came to my wit's end, but I did not gain new wits. The only thing that I had was lost, and I was lost with it. One wave would toss me fro; another wave would toss me to. This tossing wore me out.

It is my hope that I, too, was delivered across the Red Sea; that my wits came to an end, but that God delivered me in birth. I suppose that this is what people call eternal salvation. I have read about it and the more I read about eternal salvation being of God but time salvation being by works, the more disgusted I become. I travelled with the children from that great deliverance at the Red Sea. O the happiness we knew! O the joy and freedom from want and sin! We sang the song of Moses and the children of Israel. (Exodus 15) We expected to have flowery beds of ease to heaven's open door. How soon we latched hold on our crucified wits. The first thing that we knew there was Marah. Three days in the wilderness and then Marah.

Will our resurrected wits overcome this? Will conditional time salvation suffice here? No, once more we come to the end of our wits. It was God that supplied the drink. Three days from the Red Sea, and conditional time salvation failed. They were well watered for a number of days by the God of all grace. Then they begin to travel again. This time it was food instead of water. This is somewhere about forty-five days from eternal salvation, but twice already their wits have failed them. Salvation by the acts (wits) of the creature did not give them water and it did not give them food. (Exodus 16)

I look back and I see Isaiah and Jeremiah prepared for the service of God, (not by their wits, but) by the grace and power and mercy of God; I see Samuel choosing David as king, (not because of his wits, but) because it was God's direct command; I see all of the deliverances of Peter, and I am amazed that any could ever say that he delivered himself by his wits; I see Paul and Silas

delivered from the jail; from the Jews by a basket; from the shipwreck; from every conceivable enemy, and all of these deliverances, (not by his wits,) but by the providential power of God. Then as Paul goes forward in the kingdom he tells us that we walk, (not by our wits,) but by the faith given us. So much does the scriptures teach this, so much is my experience, (if I walk at all) , that I feel to say boldly that there is not a man living that can produce a conditional faith in the Bible. Then he further tells us that, ***"As you have received him, so walk ye in him."*** This would say, if you have received him by your wits, then walk according to your wits. Too, it would say, If you have received him by the grace of God, then walk in him by the grace of God. Now if it does not mean that, what does it mean? If those that live by their wits can tell us, I, for one, am all ears to hear it. Then as a capstone to his Christian experience he tells us, ***"By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace was not bestowed upon me in vain; but I labored more a bundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." (I Cor. 15 :10)*** This kind of grace is sufficient; this kind of grace saves; this kind of grace will take care when we have all come to our wit's end.

Elder W. D. Griffin

"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy. I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble Spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."- Isaiah lvii. 15.

O WHAT a mystery that God should have two dwelling-places! The ***"heaven of heavens"*** that ***"cannot contain him,"*** and the humble, broken, and contrite heart . But in order that the Lord of heaven might have a place in which he could live and lodge, God gives to his people gifts and graces; for he cannot come and dwell in the carnal mind, in our rebellious nature, in a heart full of enmity and wickedness; he therefore makes a lodging-place for himself, a pavilion in which the King of glory dwells, the curtains of which are like the curtains of Solomon. His abode is that holy, divine nature which is communicated at regeneration - ***"the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."*** Thus Christ dwells in the heart by faith; and is ***"in his people, the hope of glory."*** And this made Paul say, ***"I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the***

flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." This is the object of God's dealings-that the Lord God might dwell in his people; that there might be a union betwixt the Church and her covenant Head: *"I in them, and thou in me, that they might be perfect in one."* This is the unfolding of the grand enigma, the solution of the incomprehensible mystery, *"God manifest in the flesh,"* that the Lord God might dwell in his people; *"I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people;"* and thus glorify himself by filling their hearts with his grace and glory, as Solomon's temple was of old, and that they might enjoy him, and be with him when time shall be no more. This is the grand key to all the Lord's dealings with the soul, and all his mysterious leadings in providence,-that the Lord God might dwell in the hearts of his people here, and be eternally glorified in them in a brighter and a better world.

Elder J.C. Philpot

PROVERBS 3:1-2.

My son, forget not my law, but let thine heart keep my commandments:

For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.

HOPEWELL, N. J., August 28, 1918.

DEAR BRETHREN AND FRIENDS: - I feel like writing a few thoughts for publication in the good old paper, the SIGNS. I do not know what I may say, but hope it will be a thus saith the Lord. I am sure I can say one thing: that there dwells no good thing in me, that is, in my flesh, all polluted, a poor, trembling worm of the dust. When I would do good, evil is present; the good that I would I do not, evil thoughts crowding out good thoughts, as prone to err as the sparks are to fly upward. There is only one good, that is God; he is precious to them that love his name. The name of Jesus, how sweet, how lovely, how pure. Man in his best estate is but vanity, a lump of clay in the hands of the Potter. The Lord's portion is his people, chosen out of every kindred, tongue and nation; not many mighty, not many noble, but the poor of this world. Forty-nine years ago today I tried to tell the brethren here at Hopewell what great things the Lord had done for me. I could say but little about this wonderful salvation through grace, faith and hope through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior. I thought I must tell the brethren how worthy I felt, but hope I was made to see that there was no salvation in that way. I was received, and have been greatly blessed to have the privilege and to be able to be in my seat at the most of the meetings. Sometimes I ask,

Am I a child of God, or have I deceived the brethren? So many misgivings and failures to do the good I would. He said, There is none good, no, not one. That encourages me at times. The thief on the cross repented at the last moment and was saved. He is merciful, he will not chide, neither will he keep his anger forever. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. Whosoever confesseth me before men, him will I confess before my Father which art in heaven.

Whosoever denieth me before men, him , will I deny before my Father which art in heaven. We love to praise him and crown him Lord of all, giving him all the glory, honor, dominion, power and majesty. A poor babe found in a manger wrapped in swaddling clothes grew up the wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, and died that ignominious death on the cross. He was made a little lower than the angels, died and rose again for our justification. I feel that I can praise him for all his wonderful works and trust him for all that is to come. If I could only feel sure that I am numbered with his chosen ones. I fear at times that I have not been born again, forgetting spiritual things and clinging to worldly things. That good hope is an anchor of our souls, sure and steadfast; not like the anchor of a ship, but a sure anchor, a sure foundation, that will stand. My sheep hear my voice, I know them; not one shall perish. Other sheep have I, which are not of this fold. He gathers his sheep in his arms and carries the lambs in his bosom; he will never forsake one of them, they are his. Blessed are they that do his commandments; they shall have right to the tree of life and enter in through the gates into the city. Fear not, little flock, for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. We hear much about worldly inheritance, but we seek that inheritance which fadeth not away, but is from everlasting to everlasting. O the depth of the riches, both of the knowledge and wisdom of God! Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor' Is not God wiser than the wisdom of men' No flesh shall glory in his presence. The foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of men. Paul said, By the grace of God I am what I am. I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. He told his philippian brethren to rejoice in the Lord al ways; and again I say, Rejoice. ***"Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever***

things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." The mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but my loving-kindness shall not depart from thee. The words of the prophet were: Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed, neither confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame, for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember, the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy maker is thy husband, the Lord of hosts is his name, and thy redeemer the holy one of Israel. The God of the whole earth shall he be called. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy redeemer.

I fear I have written more than I should, so I will close, hoping that some one of the little ones may get a crumb of comfort from this poor letter. I wish I could write like other of my brethren.

From a poor worm of the dust,
D. L. BLACKWELL.

PROVERBS 8:17.

I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.

MEETINGS

GREENSBORO MEETING

The Annual Communion meeting will be held at Greensboro Church, located at Tate and Carr streets, on the 7th of June. Elder Ralph Gaines guest speaker.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator

BIG MEADOWS MEETING

The Annual Communion meeting will be held, the Lord willing, on the 2nd Sunday in June at Big Meadows Church.

Elder Cleo Robertson guest speaker.

Big Meadows is located about 20 miles below Graham, NC. Those traveling I-85 take the Pittsboro Graham exit and go 17 miles toward Pittsboro. After crossing Cane Creek bridge take first road to right at top of hill - go 4 miles to a cross - road and turn left - go 1 mile to church on right.

We invite all lovers of the Truth to come and be with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.

STAUNTON RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene for its one hundred sixty-eight session on July 11th, 2009 at Weatherford Church according to previous arrangements.

The church is located on State Roads 760 - 763 intersection (at intersection of Music Street and Weatherford drive).

The time of the service begins on Saturday July 11 at 9:30 a.m. We invite all brethren and friends of our correspondence and others that feast on the doctrine of salvation by the Grace of God.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

JULY FOURTH MEETING "TO BE HELD ON FRIDAY JULY 3RD

The annual July 4th meeting will be held, the Lord willing, this year at Valley View Church on Friday July 3rd. Directions to Valley View Church from Interstate 81—Take exit 114 south (Christiansburg/Floyd exit). At the end of the ramp turn toward Floyd on route 8. After about 4 miles you will pass Auburn high and middle school on your right, continue for .6 of a mile and turn left onto Rustic Ridge road. After .3 of a mile turn right onto Valley View Church road. The church will be on your right.

The meeting time is Friday July 3rd at 10:00 a.m. We invite our Brothers, Sisters and Elders to be with us.

Tony R. Horton

MOON'S CREEK MEETING

The Annual Communion service will convene with Moon's Creek Church on the 3rd Sunday in June. The Church is located about 1 mile east of Hwy 86 between Danville and Yanceyville on Park Springs Rd.

Elder Kenneth R. Key,
Moderator

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 2009

Mary Poff, VA 5.00
Mary Janney, VA 5.00
Ted McDaniel, VA 100.00
"In Honor of Sister Carrie McDaniel"
Dan Sokolovic, NC 5.00
Allen Gallimore, NC 5.00

OBITUARIES

IN MEMORY OF HERMAN SMITH WALTON

Malmaison Church has suffered a great loss from the death of Brother Smith Walton. He was blessed to join the church November 4, 1979 and was a devoted member of the church and a sweet and special brother to all of the church's members and friends.

Brother Smith was born March 30, 1926 in Blairs, Virginia, and was blessed by his God to join Him in Paradise April 19, 2009. He was predeceased by his parents, Brother Robert and Sister Mary Walton who were also members of Malmaison Church, and by seven brothers and one sister. Brother Walton leaves his wife Nancy and son Philip and other friends and relatives to grieve him.

Brother Smith's favorite hymn was *"When God revealed his gracious name and — changed my mournful state, My rapture seemed a pleasing dream the grace appeared so great."* I can see the sweet smile that was on his face when we sang this song. The second verse continues, *"The world beheld a glorious change and did thy hand confess:*

My tongue broke out in unknown strains and sung surprising grace."

Can't you dear saints feast on those days in your past when you first felt His amazing grace? Brother Smith shared his joy at being in God's house of worship by his attendance and brotherly love of us all. I believe he will be blessed in the resurrection to be joined with his blessed Savior to never know sorrow, pain or death and this will be better than any joys of this life.

Sister Nancy, I know that it was a swift and unexpected loss but try to remember that his sufferings are over and he is in a far better place than before his death we believe.

Brother Walton's funeral was conducted by his pastor Elder Mark Terry and burial was in the Walton family cemetery in Whitmell, Virginia

Written by a brother in hope of eternal life,
Burnell B. Williams

A copy of this obituary will be sent to the family to the Signs of the Times and also a copy will be preserved in the church records by our clerk.

PSALM 33:20-21.

Our soul waiteth for the Lord: he is our help and our shield.

For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

CHRIST MY STRENGTH.

I know I'm weak and sinful,
My very nature's vile,
But Jesus Christ will guide me,
And lead me as a child.

His special care engages
To be my strength and shield
Against the wiles of Satan,
In all the doubtful field.

My strength is often banished,
And I'm left alone to mourn,
But then I'm made to witness
The strength of God alone.

His strength is only perfect
When all my own is gone,
And I am less than nothing,
Bewildered and forlorn.

My sins will not allow me
To merit one kind word;
They make me know my weakness;
And rob me of all good.

I must rely on Jesus
For all things here below,
And all my hope of heaven
His goodness must bestow.

I stretch my arms to Jesus,
And crave supplying grace
To lead, uphold, support me
Till I have run my race.

J. G. EUBANKS.

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EDITORIALS

MERCY IS FROM EVERLASTING TO EVERLASTING

"O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever." (1 Chronicles 16:34)

Elder R. H. Campbell

The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, to them that have been called from nature's darkness into his marvelous light. This mercy is as old as God is, and is just as sure and certain to endure forever toward those who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, as the fact that there is a heaven prepared for those who love God. All the power of the Godhead is supporting each of these promises and they are sure and steadfast. The comfort of this mercy that endures forever is the most precious treasure that the children of God experience in this life. It will never forsake them, because without it they could not stand, and the evidence is that they shall all stand without the loss of one.

This is the same mercy that was extended to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden when they partook of the fruit of the forbidden tree. They had no legal right or just claim to the mercy that was shown to them in their hour of need, or the promise that was made unto their seed which would come after them. It was solely the mercy of God, and had it not been extended to them at that time there would have been no heirs to inherit that heavenly kingdom that was prepared for the saints of God. Then, as it has ever been, this mercy is the eternal refuge of the children of God, and then, as Moses said, ***"Underneath are the everlasting arms."*** What security the heirs of promise are blessed with. Heaven will not be populated because there are some who are worthy, but only because mercy endured when man could not. The first man could not endure the temptations which confronted him, and all of

those following are the same flesh, vain, weak, and as Peter said, ***"All flesh is as grass."***

Mercy was extended to Abram when he dwelt in the Ur of the Chaldees, and the Lord told him to get out of that country away from his kindred according to the flesh, unto a land that the Lord would show him. He promised Abram at the same time that in Abram all the nations of the earth would be blessed. At the same time that the mercy of God was extended to Abram, the promise was given also, as it is with each of his children. They realize that they have not received because of any worthiness within themselves, but at the same time cannot deny that they do have a hope in things eternal, and a kinship toward those who have been called out in like manner. This mercy followed Abraham all of his life, and we hope to see the fulfilling of that promise on down through history, even to the present day.

By promise an heir was given unto Abraham through Sarah, and according to nature that was impossible, yet it happened according to God's promise. Abraham rejoiced exceedingly and yet at the time appointed was made willing to offer his own son as a sacrifice unto his God. Mercy intervened and spared the son, but the trial was experienced in all its anguish by Abraham. ***"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements and his ways past finding out."*** This most assuredly must have been the feelings of Abraham as he experienced this trial of faith which all of God's people must pass through in some measure. As Peter wrote, ***"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:"*** It is all to the glory of God and sent in that mercy that endureth forever.

It was this same mercy that sustained Job in all of his afflictions and brought him through them praising his Creator. The same mercy that called David from following after his father's sheep and placed him upon the throne of Israel. The way in which this was accomplished was not in what would normally be considered a natural sequence of events. Saul was king of Israel and as such, according to nature, had the power to raise up whom be would and to kill whom he would, but on several occasions he would have killed David but something (mercy) delivered David out of the hands of Saul. On at least two occasions Saul was delivered into the hands of David, but the same thing that intervened and spared David's life, intervened so that David would not stretch forth his hand against the Lord's annointed. This same mercy followed David all of the days of his life. Mercy prevailed on behalf of David when Absalom, his own son, sought to take his life, and the most precious time in the life of David when this

mercy prevailed, was when in the lust of the flesh temptation overcame him and he sinned. This is true of each in their own travels, they are made to realize the weakness and sinfulness of the flesh and to know that unless mercy endures toward them they are eternally lost and without hope. This is why David was made to declare over and over, ***"the mercy of the Lord endureth forever."*** What comfort it is to the trembling heirs of promise to see David brought through all of his trials and then come down to the end of his natural life and be blessed, in spite of all this, to declare, ***"Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, for this is all my salvation and all my desire, although he maketh it not to grow."*** This is the testimony of all who have been brought this way. They acknowledge that although their standing before God does not warrant it, God hath extended mercy to them and all of their salvation and their desire rests alone in the mercy and in the promises made to those that possess it. They realize that it comes down to them sovereignly and majestically as the rain and snow from heaven and revives their trembling and fainting heart when it seems that they shall surely perish.

Daniel's life was an example of the mercy of God leading and directing the footsteps of His children in this life. By mercy Daniel was granted favor in the eyes of the keeper of the Hebrew children who were to stand before the king, By mercy he was given the interpretation of the dreams which was to raise him to positions of great authority in the kingdom of that day. Just as Joseph was in his day: These were times in which a great work was to be done for the Lord's people, and at such times one is always raised up to perform the work, Joseph was to save many people alive, and Daniel was to witness to the Lord's people in his day. They were what they were by the mercy of God.

The comforting thought is that this mercy is not bestowed upon the children of God because of what they are by nature, but rather in spite of what they are by nature. The Gadarene was a recipient of this mercy in the same way that David or Saul of Tarsus was, and that was by the grace of Almighty God. The Gadarene and Saul of Tarsus are typical of all of God's children before they have been quickened by the Holy Spirit and called with a holy calling into the manifest family of God. They were creatures of wrath, even as others, whether they dwelt among the tombs, as outcasts from the societies of this world or were profiting in the religions of the world above many. When it pleases God who separated them from their mother's womb to separate them from their state in nature and call them by his grace, it is this same mercy that is bestowed upon them. For the first time they are clothed and

in their right mind and they are shown what they are by nature and what they must be by grace. They are given to see that all flesh is as grass and the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field, and is profitable for nothing in spiritual matters. They all go home to their friends and begin to tell them what great things the Lord has done for them, and are surprised to find that their experience is not new to them. They had felt that surely their's was an unique case, and others did not require the same miracle of grace that they feel to have experienced. As they travel this new way unto them, they begin to see the sufferings that are also common to all in a greater or lesser degree, and are made to see their dependence on this mercy to sustain them on their journey. This is when scriptures such as the one above have such a special significance to each one.

This mercy extend's to all the Ruth's, Cornelius Syrophenician women, deaf, blind, halt, lame, poor and hungry for whom it was treasured in Christ before the foundation of the world, and every event will come to pass that is necessary for it to be manifested in their lives. According to nature, there are many times when it seems by chance but I believe that they are all the same as the Samaritan woman at the well, the scriptures state, ***"and he must needs go through Samaria,"*** speaking of Jesus as he left Judea and departed again into Galilee He must needs go that way because that is where this woman was, and the time had come when it must needs be made manifest unto her and others as they were chosen vessels, even though they were not of the Jews. This is true of the blind man to whom Jesus gave sight. He told his disciples this man was born blind, ***"That the works of God should be made manifest in him."*** No accident or chance there, just this mercy manifest that it does indeed endure forever to those who are predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.

As Paul recorded in Romans, ***"Who shall separate us from the love of God?"*** He then lists several things that comfort the children of God in this life, - things which without this mercy would indeed cause them to fall by the wayside, but this does not happen to any because the one that has begun a good work in them will not, yea cannot fail. They not only do not fall by the wayside but Paul says, ***"Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."*** He sets forth the extent to which this mercy endures on behalf of those to whom it is extended, and then says he was fully persuaded that nothing was able to separate them from the love of God which was in Christ the Lord. Paul was led along the pathway of life in such a way that he also was blessed to see that the mercy of God covers all of these situations that God's children

face in this life. It is comforting to read the writings of those who, we hope, have traveled the same way that we have been brought along, and find them ending their pilgrimage declaring that this mercy endures even unto death. Paul was blessed as he neared the end of his journey, to declare, ***"I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand."*** No fear of dying, no desire to remain in this wilderness of sin, no sorrow of leaving those he loved: just confident that the same mercy, which had been his constant companion since his experience on the road to Damascus, would sustain those who remained and bring them down to the end of their allotted time just as it had him. ***"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing."*** What a rich blessing of God"s abounding grace upon this aging Apostle to be given at this stage in his life such a comfort in the blessed assurance that this mercy endureth forever, and included the assurance of his having a part in the glorious resurrection of the saints. O blessed thought!

Down through the ages of time the vessels afore prepared unto glory have all received evidence of this mercy in their lives, as each is born into the kingdom of God. As Jesus told Nicodemus, ***"Ye must be born again."*** which makes them realize their great need of this mercy and grace of God in their life. They are made to see what they are by nature and what they must be by grace, and realize that there is such a great gulf fixed between these two extremes, and they fear what their end will be. They realize that they cannot attain to what they must be, and therefore plead for mercy, not justice, because mercy is the only thing that can span that great gulf. As they travel in this mercy and are made accepted in the beloved, they are given to say with David, Paul, Peter, James and John, ***"O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever ."***

This mercy is precious in the thoughts of all who have been saved and called with a holy calling. It has been their staff and their dependable friend, and is tailored to their individual need as they face the trials of life. It conquered all the Goliaths, quenches all the fires that would consume them, parts the waters that would overflow them, stops the mouths of the lions that would devour them, and overcomes the weaknesses and sins of the flesh which would cause them to fail to reach their heavenly abode. Isaiah recorded, ***"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgement***

thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the saints of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me saith the Lord." What a precious and glorious heritage belongs to those whom God loves; and this mercy is the constant reminder that comforts and strengthens them along the way.

Our hope and our prayer is that we have experienced some of these things along our life's way, and that they are evidences of this mercy in God's dealings with us. May they continue to be ours to experience and to meditate upon as we sojourn in this wilderness awaiting the time when, ***"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."*** O glorious thought! O precious hope! and this mercy endures through it all. It is just as sure and certain to endure to all of the saint's of God in all ages to come, as it has in ages past. It does not weaken or diminish with the passage of time, but is always sufficient unto the needs of the day for those to whom it is sent.

In bonds of love,
(Elder) Richard Campbell

VOICES OF THE PAST

A DAY'S JOURNEY AND A NIGHT'S DREAM.

(Genesis xxviii, 10-12.)
"AND Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran."

How far he went that first day we are not told. A man in the excited state of mind that he was in would walk rapidly, and starting early in the morning, as he undoubtedly did, by the time the sun went down he was a good distance from his father's house. It is with that first day's journey and the night that followed it that I have to do.

Jacob had obtained the blessing which his father intended for Esau. His father had also confirmed the blessing after he discovered the deceit which had been practiced upon him, and had sent Jacob away on his present journey to the former home of his mother to get a wife. So far we may regard the circumstances attending this journey as favorable, and such as would cause him to begin it with elation of mind. But other things tinge the circumstances with the blackness of night, and told to make this journey notable through all time for fear, self-reproach, shame and misery. Fear of his brother Esau, who felt that Jacob had wronged him, and who had threatened to kill

him, undoubtedly hastened his departure early in the morning, and caused him to make all possible speed. This threat of Esau caused fearful forebodings on the part of Jacob, both on this day, and on his journey home twenty years after.

But there was something for Jacob to think about much more fearful than this threat of Esau; his shameful lies to his old, blind father. How they must have come up before him in all their hideous monstrosity, and repeated themselves in his mind as he walked along until he was sick unto death with their loathsomeness. He had done Esau no wrong; for he had purchased the birthright and paid the full price which was asked for it. Esau of course wanted it back, and would have taken it notwithstanding the fair bargain he had made with his brother in disposing of it not as between him and Jacob he had no right to that birthright.

But the cunning deceit Jacob had used toward his father, and the bold, glaring lies he had told, in order to obtain the birthright blessing, how these must have stung him as they kept flying about like hornets in his mind, and made him cringe with shame and self-loathing as he walked along. Even if he did not yet feel the full sinfulness before the Lord of his base lies and deceitfulness, yet he must have felt that such things showed him to be a mean, contemptible man, utterly untrustworthy. How thoroughly base and ashamed he must have felt as he kept thinking over that never-to-be-forgotten interview between him and his father: ***"Who art thou, my son?" "And Jacob saith unto his father, I am Esau thy first-born; I have done according as thou badest me, arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me."*** And then, when his father asked, ***"How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son"*** with what shameful irreverence and hypocritical audacity he used the name of the Lord, saying, ***"Because the Lord thy God brought it to me."*** And the false covering of his hands and neck which met his suspicious father's hands when he felt of him to see,whether he was his very son Esau or not. It must have came up to his mind as he continued on his journey his shrinking, guilty, cowering attitude as his father said, while again he took his hand, ***"the voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau."*** What now if after all this deceitful work, his father should be given sight to see who it was that stood thus before him? He still shrinks and trembles as he walks along, thinking of that scene, although he has seen his father, and felt his hands upon him since he came to know all that had been done to him by his wife and son. Then again the blind father asked with increased solemnity, ***"Art thou my very son Esau? and he said, I am."*** Then after having eaten of the savoring meat of his

son, and drank wine from his hand, and smelled his garments, which were Esau's, and kissed him, he said what he could not have said of Esau, for it was not true of him, ***"See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed."***

The apostle says, ***"By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come."*** The faith of Isaac was not at fault, but his natural mind was. He thought he was blessing Esau, but his faith took hold of God's thoughts, and led him to use words that expressed God's purpose. And shall we say that in all of this transaction God's purpose was being fulfilled? Certainly. What else could we say? And shall we say that Rebecca's deceit and Jacob's lies were embraced in the predestination of God? Certainly. Were they not all links in the one chain of events? What part could have been left out of this chain? What part was predestinated, if all was not?Shall we say then that if God predestinated the sinful actions of men, then why should they be blamed and punished for them? Let Paul answer. After speaking of God's purpose concerning Jacobs and Esau, and concerning Pharoah, he says, ***"Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? for Who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" - Romans ix. 11-21.*** And again, ***"But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) God forbid. For then how shall God judge the world for if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner? And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just."- Romans iii. 5-8.***

We know that no lie is to be excused, much less justified. A lie is always sinful. All sin is hateful to God. Yet we know also that nothing can ever have transpired which was contrary to God's purpose; otherwise he would not be God. We are told that he "DECLARED the end from the beginning." We are told in his word that the wicked are his sword, and men of the world his hand, and that the wrath of all shall praise him. ***"Not Gabriel asks the reason why, nor God the reason gives."*** He says to us, ***"Your ways are not my ways, neither are my thoughts your thoughts."*** We cannot limit the Lord, nor charge evil against him.

So we will go on with Jacob as he plods wearily along toward that

"certain place" to which it was the Lord's purpose to bring him to spend such a night as he had never spent before. He has lost some of the strength and vigor of the morning, and the harrassed condition of his mind, and the shame and self-abhorrence that were increasing upon him, no doubt contributed to that weariness which rendered him unfit to travel any further that night. He had sinned grievously against his father, and against the Lord. He could not excuse himself by charging it against his mother. He was seventy-five year's of age at the time,and must bear the blame of his own acts.

What was said between him and his father at their last interview concerning his deceit we are not told. Both must have been deeply humbled before each other and before the Lord; Jacob because his blind father was now aware of all his deceitful acts and lying words, and Isaac, because it was now plain to him that his wishes and purposes had been contrary to the purposes of the Lord, and that what Jacob and his mother had done so wickedly had brought to light God's purpose, and contributed to its fulfillment. He had loved Esau because he did eat of his venison, but now he became aware that God had not loved him, but had loved Jacob. Rebecca had been told this before the children were born, and she loved Jacob. Isaac had learned this solemn truth when Esau stood before him with the savory meat after Jacob had received the blessing and gone out. *"And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? Where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it to me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed."* This was the time when Isaac knew that the Lord's ways and thoughts were not his, It was so with Abrabam; he said, *"O, that Ishmael might live before thee;"* but God had purposed that the free woman should have a son, and that in Isaac his seed should be called. Truly our ways are not God's ways. Esau's exceeding bitter cry availed nothing. His repeated a pitiful question and request, *"Hast thou but one blessing? Bless me, even me also, Only father,"* were touching, but they were the expression of only fleshly and selfish desires.

I remember when about fourteen years old wondering why Jacob, who was the one the Lord loved, was left to act so wickedly, and appeared to be more dishonest and sinful than Esau, and the answer that came to my mind then was, that it was to show that the elect of God were not any better by nature than the rest of mankind, that they were not chosen and loved because of any goodness or merit in themselves. I can see no other reason today.

So Isaac and Jacob are together the last time before Jacob's departure, and it must have been a most

solemn interview, as each one saw itself a short-sighted, sinful man, and saw with wonder and self-abasement the manifestations of the wonderful purposes of the Lord. Isaac seems to have no word of reproach for Jacob. He sees him as the one the Lord has chosen to receive the blessing of Abraham, and to ***"inherit the land in which he was a stranger, which God gave to Abraham,"*** and he pronounces that blessing upon him, and sends him away to his mother's native land and he can well leave him to the teaching of the Lord concerning his depraved and sinful nature.

And Jacob has come into ***"a desert land," and into "a waste howling wilderness,"*** where the Lord had appointed to find him. (Deut. xxxii. 10.) He represents all that people whom the Lord hath redeemed, who in their freshly nature we called Jacob. ***"For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion."-Jer. xxxi. 11, 12.*** The Lord brings all these with weeping, and leads them with supplication. They see enough of sin and vileness in themselves to cause weeping and supplication. They start out, as Jacob did, strong and courageous, in the morning of the natural day, with a definite and desirable object in view. They go forward with zeal toward the land that holds for them all they want. They seem to be traveling at their own will, and in their own strength, and to be urged on and animated by the desirable objects which they plainly see before them. But the Lord is leading them, and this first day's journey of Jacob represents the day's journey of all that greater Jacob, all the elect of God, when the Lord brings them away from the world, away from any confidence in themselves, and causes them to see themselves as justly condemned sinners in the sight of a holy God.

By the light of the natural sun Jacob traveled on until that sun was set; then he must tarry where he was. In that desert land he could find only stones for his pillows. ***"And he took of the stones of that place for his pillows."*** Now he is indeed alone and desolate. When his grandfather Abrabram sent his servant over this same road to get a wife for Isaac he sent him in such a state, and with such show of wealth, as became a prince. But Jacob is alone and poor. He has left all his worldly wealth behind him. Twenty years after this, when he was returning with wealth , a large family and many servants, he said, ***"With my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands."***

This day's journey of Jacob shows how the Lord brings all of his Jacobs to know that their sinful hearts are a desert and a wilderness, where no plant of righteousness grows, and ***"where beasts of midnight howl."*** He brings them to the

place where all natural light and wisdom fail them, and they can go no further. He brings them to see the law of God holy, and themselves condemned by it, and for good cause. He causes them to feel that the glory of God is manifested in *"the ministration of death written and engraven in stones."* The stones of that place are hard and uncomfortable pillows, but these lonely Jacobs have nothing else to rest upon but their attempts to fulfill the law *"written and engraven in stones."* They are in a sad and doleful condition; all is dark, and hope seems to have gone down with the sun; no light appears to show how a sinful man can be just with God. The wisdom of the world fails here; it cannot open up a way for a sinner to and access unto a holy God. There is no promise they can see that any tomorrow will ever rise upon this fearful night.

Then comes sleep, a broken, restless sleep. *"And he lay down in that place to sleep, and he dreamed."* Here is the time, and this the place when and where the Lord found Jacob, and where he finds all his people; when they have given up hope in themselves. *"In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed, then God openeth the ears of man, and sealeth their instruction."- Job xxxiii. 15.*

"And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it." In this dream the way of access unto the Father is presented in a glorious vision.

It is in a vision, in a figure, in a dream, that Jesus and his salvation are made known to men. It is my revelation always, and not my searching, that he is found out. The revelation is first given to Jesus, the man of God's right hand. *"The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass."-Rev. i. 1. " Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty."* I have exalted one chosen out of the people. Psalms lxxxix. 19.)

Those to whom this revelation is to be made are first prepared to feel their need of it, to feel their need of that help which is laid upon Jesus, by experiencing their utter lack of power in themselves to deliver themselves from the condemnation of the law and to come into the favor of God. Whatever the Lord has in store for anyone he will cause that one to desire, to seek for in vain by any power of his own, and to inquire of the Lord for. Jacob asleep, with the stones of that desert land for his pillows, represents all the Lord's people at the time when they have come to the end of their earthly strength, have fully felt the deprav-

ity of their hearts, and the righteousness of God's holy law, and are trying in vain to find some rest in the works of that law which is a ***"ministration of death, written and engraven in stones."*** Here is the revelation of Jesus Christ in a figure to those who have been brought thus far by the law as a schoolmaster, and have been prepared by that legal teaching for this wonderful revelation.

This ladder is not for Jacob to climb on up to heaven. I have read that not only must we climb up to heaven on that ladder, but that we must ourselves build the ladder for ourselves as we go up. But this ladder seems to be complete, its top reached to heaven; not to the natural heavens, which show to our sight and imagination myriads of stars infinitely distant from each other, allowed us to think of no point where the top of the ladder could definitely rest, but from the earth to the heaven where God reigns in eternal glory and blessedness; to the high and holy place where the high and lofty One dwells, who dwells also with him that is of a humble and contrite Spirit.

He to whom this ladder is shown is asleep at its foot, and sees it only in vision. It is not for him to climb upon, but for the angels or messengers of God.

So our dear Savior said, ***"Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."- John i. 51.***

While Jacob lies asleep at the foot of the ladder and cannot use it himself, it is for his sake it is there, and and its use is for his benefit. The angels of God are ascending upon it with his longings, self-loathings and supplications, and descending with sweet answers of peace and messages of love from the God of salvation to him. It is through Jesus, and through him alone, than any supplication can arise from a poor sinner's heart to the Lord. It is in his name Only that any one can find access unto the Father. He is the new and living way. ***"No man can come unto the Father,"*** Jesus said, ***"but by me."*** And also all messages from the Father to his chosen people are through Jesus. The angels or messengers of God descend upon that ladder to his people at its foot, with his messages to them. It is always through Jesus that the grace and truth and love and mercy of God come to them. It is through Jesus, and for his sake, that the Father says to them, ***"Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee."***

"The Lord God stood above the ladder," and gave the blessing of Abraham, and of Isaac to Jacob while he was still asleep and dreaming and he said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land hereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of

the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families (of the earth be blessed. ***"And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."***

What a wonderful, glorious scene this, and what glorious and blessed doctrine. The Lord God, who fills heaven and earth, and who inhabits eternity, standing above the ladder, and Jacob, the supplanter, the sinful but sorrowing man, asleep at its foot, with stones for his pillows. The ladder itself a wonder of wonders, set up on the earth, and its top reaching to heaven. Jesus upon the earth in the likeness of sinful flesh, With all the sins and afflictions and infirmities and temptations of his people upon him, and yet ***"holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." "Its top reached to heaven." " I and my Father are one,"*** he said.

This ladder could be seen by Jacob only when asleep, only in vision. When awake he could not see it. The way of salvation could only be seen in vision in a dream, ***"in slumberings upon the bed,"*** during all that legal dispensation. It did not openly appear until the gospel day, in the appearing of Jesus Christ in the flesh.

In the terms of the blessing which the Lord God gave to Jacob while thus in a dream, when deep sleep had fallen upon him, what absolute assurance and certainty are expressed No contingency, no conditious, are suggested. ***"I will keep thee in all places whither thou goest."*** Jacob, after he awoke, in the wonder and excitement of his mind, made a vow and some promises which appeared to be based upon conditions. There was truth expressed in his vow but he had not yet come to fully know the Lord and his way. That was to be fully taught him twenty years later, in another and more wonderful manifestation of God to him in another night, during all the dark hours of which he was to wrestle with the angel of God, and at the morning's dawn was to prevail, and to receive the blessing of the angel, and a new name, but with it the loss of his own strength. That was to be a time of rejoicing with Jacob, though he was never to walk again in his own strength, but always to halt upon his thigh. But this was to him a dreadful place, and he was afraid. He awoke that morning with all of his natural strength renewed, and was really to go on his journey, but his heart was filled with the terror of the Lord. He now knew that he had seen in the vision of this wonderful night the house of God and the gate of heaven, but instead of giving him peace and comfort, it made him afraid. But somehow he

seemed to see a great importance in the stone which he had taken for his pillows, and he set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon it, and said it should be God's house, and that the Lord should be his God, if he would do just what he had already declared to Jacob he would surely do.

And that Stone is the house of God; for all that was written upon it has been fulfilled by the dear Savior, and he is now in the gospel *"the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel."* Here is Bethel, the house of God, the sure resting-place for all his people. Under the legal dispensation this house of the Lord was seen only in figures and visions. Now under the gospel dispensation that beautiful house is seen by faith wherever two or three are gathered together in Jesus' name, and by faith and love we dwell together in him.

SILAS H. DURAND.

Southampton, Pa" Sept, 5, 1903.

PSALM 134: 1-3.

Behold, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the hour of the Lord.

Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord.

The Lord that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion.

COLOSSIANS III. 2-4.

Set your affection [or mind] on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God, When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory:

The security of God's people furnishes consolation for the tiding over many rough and stormy scenes this side the blissful state of eternity. If we had to look to anything belonging to the natural man for hope in the beyond I am persuaded that grace-taught children would be carried down so low in despair that they would cease to hope of ever seeing their Elder Brother, Jesus, and of ever being with him and like him. In this time, when even the camps of Israel are being turned from peace and joy, trusting and resting in the wrought out righteousness of Jesus, to a tossed to and fro crowd, hearing the lo here and lo there, do we find many interpretations placed on the Old. Some are telling us that we have the destiny of Zion and our own individual welfare in our own hands. We are commanded to place our minds on eternal things, instead of earthly thing's, because by so doing we may attain to large membership, active churches and all temporal things. But the eminent apostle does not tell us that. He gives a reason for doing this, but it is not for reward.

Let us digress a little, to get before your mind what is necessary for us to understand before we can heed the many scriptural admonitions. No man can of himself obey what is commanded. The word, as it is written by divine inspiration, does not put life or spiritual desires in the reader. Some of my best friends are people who seemingly are as destitute of the Spirit of God as any dead sinner can be, yet they can quote much Scripture. We must conclude that the Spirit alone teaches us to obey, because we would only be as foolish Galatians doing anything without the Lord. ***"This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are you so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain. He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"-Gal. iii. 2-5.*** Here is ample evidence that the Spirit is ministered unto us by the same One that begat us to a lively hope. (1 Peter i. 3.) He that began a good work in us will not desert us to our carnal desires, which are all evil, but we may rest assured that the same God, who cannot lie (Titus i. 2), promised eternal life before the world began, and will, for the perfecting of his glory and the bringing together of many heirs, perform it all to the day, of Jesus Christ. (Phil. i. 6.) ***"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."-Phil. ii. 12, 13.*** How any man can construe this language to mean time salvation is beyond me. These were little children being addressed and admonished by their undershepherd along duty's ways, They were obeying characters, having always done so. The apostle is being led by the Spirit to admonish them to continue doing so, but, like all God-called ministers, he knows where the life is, so he is leaving the performing of that duty to God, and comfortingly tells them that their salvation is of the Lord.

But let us desist just now on that, because it would seem that the things Jesus has in store for his elect are the result of his feeling all righteousness, and that their walking in him and his commands are the direct result of his having given them the will and working the do.

When the apostle wrote the Colossian brethren it was revelation from Jesus Christ. Set your mind on things above, and not on things of the earth. There must have been a reason other than a reward. Paul plainly tells that reason: ***"For ye are dead,"*** How is the quickened child of God dead? Before the life-giving

Spirit comes into their heart, teaching them what sinners they are, then they are dead in sin. Let us emphasize the fact that death has no degree.Anything that is dead *is* destitute of any of the life under consideration, Any one who agrees with Paul that the natural man is dead in sin must agree that the child born again is also dead and both deaths being complete. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the field by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. - Rom. vi. 1-4. Here is good news indeed to the poor sin-burdened souls, They no longer love sin, but they hate it, and the hateful things in their flesh cause much sorrow. *"I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inner man."-Rom. vii. 21, 22.* Oh, so many times have worldlings flung in our face, If I believed as you do I would do just anything I wanted to. Yes, and I am persuaded that only the fear of the law keeps them from It any way, because they still have the love of sin in their hearts. But with God's humble poor It is so different. They have their fill of sin and could they do the things that they would sin would be no more in their lives.

"Your life is hid with Christ in God." Lift up your drooping eyes, little way-worn pilgrims, for all is safe and secure. God In Christ, paid It all, and nothing can take the home away from his chosen people.

"Not all the pains that e'er I bore,
Shall spoil my future peace;
For death and hell can do no more
Than what my Father. please."

Our lives (if indeed he ransomed me) are hid in Christ and for one of the elect to be left must first dethrone God himself. *"My sheep hear my voIce, and I know them, and they follow me: and give unto them eternal life; [How can some believe that Christ would fail to keep those he gave eternal life, when the gift meant the sacrifice of his own blood ?] And they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all ; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one."-John x. 27-30. "And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone."-John viii. 29. "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me." "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."- John xiv. 10, 20.*

"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." What glad tidings of great joy! What wonderful love is this manifested to poor sinners! Nothing about them to merit the notice of the sinless child Jesus. but the fact that they are covenant children. and for that reason he takes them from out the wilderness, wherein there is no water, and makes them to drink of water everlasting. That was all wrought out by him alone, when *we* were as yet enemies to him, but having loved his bride with an everlasting love, he goes about to pay their debt, and while paying it he is establishing a righteousness that is all complete, leaving them holy and without blame before him in love.

But our Savior is doing more for us than to die for us. By day and by night he keeps us, even when we are not mindful of ourselves. By the still waters he leads us and makes us to lie down in green pastures. The dear old walls and bulwarks of Zion are maintained by him and daily he adds to his church such as should be saved and that he would own at his second coming.

Let us not stop our meditation here, for his watchcare is not going to end at the grave. For countless ages our dust may moulder away but his all-seeing eye never sleeps. When the Lord descends from heaven to gather his children home none will be left. They that are in the graves shall come forth; the sea shall give up its dead and those still living shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and all shall rise to meet him in the air. What more can we desire?

"God, my Redeemer, lives,
And ever from the skies,
Looks down and watches all my dust,
Till he shall bid it rise."

The years of my youth I thought much of the cold and silent tomb, and shuddered with much fear and anxiety at the thought that some time I must leave all the things of nature and lie down in death. But although still young in years, I trust that I have been shown the vain and frivolous ways of this time journey I am on, until I no longer fear to quit the walks of men as I once did. True, the natural man still dreads the sting of death, but the fiery darts that are hurled at poor wayfaring pilgrims, together with the unceasing trials and afflictions, mingled with a stubborn nature and hateful disposition, at times leave me in such a state that it would be peace to depart and be with Jesus. Just a little more and I am through.

As much as is in you, dear reader, take courage and press on a few days longer. Just a little longer on the battlefield and the war will be over. Then *we* that have a good hope in Christ shall die a natural death, trusting sweetly and assuredly in our Assurer that some glad

tomorrow he *"will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth ; even everyone that is called by my name."* Then shall the sheep enter into the Father's house, where there are many mansions, there to be with Jesus, and be like him, to know no more the aches and pains and the things of time, but to walk in his light that illumines the city of our God, and to sing redeeming love for ever and ever.

In a little hope,
W. D. GRIFFIN

FAYETTE, Alabama.

CASTLEWOOD, Virginia.

DEAR ELDER DODSON:-I have just read your good editorial in the June SIGNS OF THE TIMES and it so raised my poor drooping mind that I felt I must write and let you know how much I enjoyed it. I was feeling so cast done and lonely I thought of faithful Elijah (not that I am faithful) when he said, *"I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel [God's own chosen people] have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword: and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away ."* Then when I read your editorial I felt there was one more at least who saw the faith and doctrine as I hope I see it. Then I felt as I thought how good old Elijah felt when the Lord answered him by saying, *"I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him."* Especially was I tied close to you when you said in this editorial, *"We do not believe that Job meant he would see God in the flesh in the next life, for we are told that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."* Here, as you say, is where faith is needed: it shall not be required when the child of God gets to that glory world. Why my mind should be called so much along the following line of thought I am not able to say, unless there is a need for it. I greatly fear there is a falling away from the faith and doctrine *of* Christ and tbe apostles and too much zeal placed on what has and is going to be done with flesh and blood. If God's people did not first have eternal standing in Christ their eternal head, and a time standing in Adam, and manifested and developed in Adam, then I am at a loss to understand the Scripture of eternal truth. If it is the first Adam man that is born of the Spirit, and that is all, and nothing else, then might we conform to the holiness doctrine in the flesh? Then if there is nothing eternal about the Adam man until he is

thus born of the Spirit, and the Adam sinner could not go to heaven without this birth, would there be anything eternal about the Adam sinner man to go to torment? or at what time would this non elect Adam sinner be born a satanic birth? If it is the first Adam man that is born again, where is the origin of sin? Is there some tangible something or body besides the soul and body that thus brings forth sin? It is not that good ground and good tree that bring's forth sin, or evil fruit, or that which is born from above and of the Spirit that sins. John says, ***"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin."*** The Savior says, ***"A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."*** God gets to that glory Again, James says, ***"Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain yield, salt water and fresh."*** So I conclude if it is born again he does not sin, and if it be of the Spirit it does not sin. But here seems to me to be the warfare between the first man Adam, of flesh and blood, which is at enmity against the Spirit and the second man Adam, or soul, that is born from above and of the Spirit. It is claimed by some good brethren that it is the first man Adam that is born again, yet they say he sins after this birth, which the Bible is as silent on as the chambers of death. As I have written in a previous article that is now in the SIGNS office, which I suppose will come forth soon, how the dead are raised up in the resurrection at the last day, as I saw it. Paul says, ***"We ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redempion of our body ."*** As I see it, Paul was not waiting for the atonement of God's people, for he already had that and was not waiting for the adoption of our body to be redeemed from the corruption of the grave and raised a spiritual body and fashioned like unto his (Christ's) glorious body. Brother Dodson, I am getting old and very feeble in body and mind, I cannot get out in rough weather, but I receive good, comforting letters from the brethren and sisters, and love to hear from them often. I would like to answer them all were I able, but as I am not, I will say to all who have written so consolingly that their letters are held in the highest esteem. I am well along in my seventy-fourth year, and it is nearly thirty-seven years since I first opened my mouth in public address. I know it will not be long before I go hence and try the reality of these things and I want my brethren and sisters all to know where I stand. I hope this is written in love for the truth, and not to be hasty or over zealous in my views. There is a vast difference between rebuke in love for the truth's sake and the good of the cause and the brethren, and quarreling and vain jangling among the brethren. Paul says, ***"When Peter***

was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed." These were two eminent apostles. Peter loved Paul in another place calling him ***"our beloved brother Paul."*** These things should be done in love, as with Peter and Paul, and not to destroy the brother. While this is true, a brother in duty will not take shelter under this to name and to unduly and uncalled for criticise his brethren, as is sometimes done. It is as a brother said, This is no time for coldness among the brethren.

I hope, dear brother, you may be blessed to write on and on, comforting the household in the pure faith and doctrine, to the confirming of the strong and reviving the weak.

Your little brother in gospel bonds,

W.L.EDWARDS.

MEETINGS

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

Directions to the Pigg River Association to be held, the Lord willing, July 31st, August 1st, and 2nd. The meeting will be held on the grounds of Chestnut Church in Franklin County, Virginia.

Those coming from the North on 220 after passing Rocky Mount, at first stop light, turn left on 619; go 3.7 miles, turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Rd.), go 1 mile to church.

Those coming from the South on 220, go app. 13 miles from Bassett Forks, turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Rd.) App. 2 1/2 miles to church.

We welcome and invite the ministers of our Faith and Order, our Brethren and Friends to be with us.

Clerk: Elder Thomas Solomon

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union meeting will convene the Lord willing, Saturday before the 5th Sunday in August at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church. Song service begins at 10:00 A.M.

An invitation is extended to all our ministers, brethren and friends.

Peggy Wells, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The West Country Line Union meeting will will be held at Greensboro Church, located at Tate and Carr streets, on Sunday August 30, 2009 hosted by Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church.

We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Bro. Wayne Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 2009

Ira Bell, VA 5.00
Walter Griffith, NC 10.00
Randolph Plybon, VA 5.00
Gladys Quinn, VA 10.00
Grace Manly, AL 5.00
Philip Hash, VA 15.00
Margie Pettis Ray, LA 50.00
Memory of Geneva Pettis

PSALM 139:1-2

O Lord, thou has searched me, and know me.

Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.

OBITUARIES

OBITUARY OF SIS. ERNESTINE T. CLARK

We wish to render a tribute of love and respect to the memory of Sister Ernestine Turner Clark, who died on July 1, 2008 at the age of 79. Sister Clark was born in Henry County, Virginia on Dec. 4, 1928, a daughter of the late Edgar Lee Turner and Sister Lura Adams Turner.

She was united in marriage to Leonard Cecil Clark, who was a devoted husband until his death some years ago. Their union was blessed with one daughter, Karen Clark Cecil, who survives. In addition to her parents and her husband, Sister Clark was preceded in death by her beloved son-in-law, J. Kelly Cecil. Those who survive to mourn her passing include one brother, James C. Turner of Durham, N. C.; one grandson, Brian Clark Cecil, and his wife Angela; one nephew, Eric Turner and his family; and one niece, Mrs. Matt (Sharon) Davis, and her family.

Sister Clark was for many years a beautician by profession. When her aging or ill patrons could not come to her shop, she made house calls in order to serve them.

She joined and became a member of Liberty Church the first Saturday in August 1975. The next morning, she and her mother were baptized together by the late Elder Bennie Clifton; and that afternoon, were blessed to commune together for the first time.

Sister Clark's funeral service was held on Saturday, July 5, at Collins- McKee-Stone Funeral Home Chapel in Bassett. After a very touching eulogy by her daughter Karen, Dr. Joey McNeill (Karen's pastor) and Elder John Wingfield (Sister Clark's pastor) conducted the service. Her mortal body was laid to

rest beside that of her husband in Henry Memorial Park.

Words are inadequate to describe how much we loved Sister Clark and how much we miss her. Yet, we are consoled by the deep conviction that she lived and died in the faith of Jesus Christ, and therefore, she rests in hope of a triumphant resurrection and a glorious immortality in the presence of Him by whose grace she was saved.

Submitted by:
Elder John T. Wingfield Mod.
and Acting Clerk

OBITUARY OF SISTER BETTY JANE DILLON

By means of this writing we wish to record the life and death of, Sister Betty Jane Dillon. She was born in Henry County, Virginia on April 5, 1936 to the late George Cabel Dillon and Annie Spencer Dillon and died July 7, 2008 at the age of 72.

Her survivors include one brother, Pastor Jimmy Dillon of Greensboro, N. C.; one sister, Mrs. Iris D. Ziglar of Bassett; and one niece.

Sister Dillon packaged clothing as her long-time profession. She was employed by Bassett-Walker Knitting Co. for 43 years.

On the 4th Sunday in July 1974 Sister Dillon joined at Dan River Church to become a member of Liberty Church. She was afterwards received and baptized by the late Elder Bennie Clifton. For the rest of her life she lived a quiet and peaceable life among us. It was not her custom to attend on Saturdays and take part in our conference meetings.

For the last year of her life Sister Dillon was confined to a Nursing Home at Martinsville because of illness. We visited her several times during that period, and enjoyed talking with her and bringing her up-to-date on our church activities.

Funeral services for Sister Dillon were conducted at the South Chapel of Bassett Funeral Home by her brother, Pastor Jimmy Dillon, and her pastor.

Her mortal body was laid to rest in Old Center Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery just a short distance from her dwelling.

May the Lord in His mercy reconcile us to the death of Sister Dillon and comfort her family and friends who are left to mourn. We feel that she peacefully sleeps, awaiting the coming of the Lord from Heaven, by whose mighty power she will be changed, raised and carried home for the consummation of her hope. There we trust that one day we shall see her again.

Submitted by:
Elder John T. Wingfield Mod.
and Acting Clerk

OBITUARY OF SISTER MILDRED ADKINS THOMASSON

With a mixture of joy and sadness, we record the life and death of our sister in the faith, Mildred AdkinsThomasson. Sister Thomasson was born in the Figsboro community of Henry County, Virginia on February 22, 1916 and died in Martinsville Hospital on February 23, 2009, one day past her 93rd birthday. She was the fourth of six children of the late Grover C. and Mary Draper Adkins, and was raised on the family farm, not far from Camp Branch Church.

On June 30, 1942 Sister Mildred was united in marriage to the late Bro. Leon Thomasson, who preceded her in death around 25 years ago. To their union were born seven children, the first of which (a son) was born deceased. The other children are: daughters Marcella Dyer, Evelyn Eggleston, Brenda Bowles and Dale Burnette, and sons Jerry W. and Wesley D. Thomasson.

Throughout her married life, Sister Mildred was a homemaker, while Bro. Leon made their living in a local furniture plant. She raised a garden annually and sewed for other people to supplement their income. She was a devoted wife and mother; I heard her children "arise up, and call her blessed."

On the first Sunday in July 1966, Sister Mildred related her experience to Liberty Church and was received. She was baptized by the late Elder Bennie Clifton, who was our Pastor at that time. She attended regularly until some years after Bro. Leon's death, when she began having some health problems. She suffered several bad falls and spent considerable time in the hospital and rehab centers.

Her funeral service was conducted at Roselawn Chapel in Martinsville by her last Pastor, after which her mortal body was laid to rest beside that of her husband in the Roselawn Cemetery. Her survivors include one sister, Mrs. Edna Oakley; her six children, eleven grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren.

May all who knew and loved Sister Thomasson be made reconciled to the Lord's will in her removal from among us. We live in hope that, one day, we shall meet her again in the appearing of our dear Savior, Jesus Christ.

As is our custom, we agreed to prepare three copies of this memorial: one for our church records, one for her family and one to be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Submitted by her Pastor,
Elder John T. Wingfield

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

SONG

THOU great incarnate God!
Behold thy children stand;
Warmed with the fire of love divine.
They bow to thy command.

When buried with the Lord,
May they his presence find,
Proving that pleasures from thy throne
Are with obedience joined.

When rising from the wave,
Lord, show thy lovely face;
May sacred joy from heaven descend,
And glory fill the place.

Then may these happy saints
In thy commandments run,
Till they shall reach the realms of bliss!
And mount Emmanuel's throne.

There may they sit and sing
The once baptized Lamb,
And make the courts of heaven resound
With his beloved name.

With what ecstatic joy
They'll tune the Saviour's praise!
While millions join the sacred theme.
And swell the heavenly lays.

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EDITORIALS

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord," Hebrews 12:14. "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven. "Matthew 5:20. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matthew 5:48. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Hebrews 10:14. "And for their sakes I sanctify myself; that they also might be sanctified through the truth." John 17:19.

Elder J.B. Farmer

The longer I live, the less I seem to know, and the more wretched my case seems to be. The blessed apostle was given to say, ***"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."*** It seems that the letter and the location of the scriptures escape me more and more, even though the essential meaning seems to remain in my mind and heart. It seems that even though I have been kept from many hurtful things by the mercy of God, there is still an inward sense of sinfulness that is most often with me. The greatest enjoyment and peace I experience is when my mind is caught up in spiritual things sometimes when with the brethren, and sometimes when alone. And these seasons come and go as the good Lord has seen fit to bring them and to take them away. Job, when brought down to the earth in sorrow and great loss said, ***"Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."*** We are taught to cast all our cares upon Him, for He cared for us. He is our hope and strength.

My mind is being exercised

upon the subject of sanctification, which is but one aspect of the doctrine of Christ. We are taught that there is only one true doctrine, and that this doctrine has many facets that fit perfectly together into one glorious teaching of the sovereign grace of the God of heaven and earth. We know that there are many doctrines in the world, but they are the doctrines of men and of devils, and are contrary to the truth. Every doctrine outside of Christ shall be burned up and destroyed, but the truth is eternal and shall abide forever. May God be merciful and keep us in the truth for His praise and for our comfort and edification.

The word sanctification and its many derivatives are found throughout the scriptures. If not deceived, to be sanctified means to be made holy. To be made holy is to be set apart, cleansed, and prepared to serve the purpose of God. To be set apart is to be chosen of God in eternity, and to be separated from the world in this life, To be cleansed is to be purged of every sin by the blood of Christ and to be made righteous in Him. To be prepared to serve the purpose of God in holiness is to be given the Holy Spirit. From His Spirit faith, hope and love toward God and His children comes forth. Very early in the scriptures, we see all things pertaining to the Tabernacle and the Temple of God being set apart, being cleansed by washing with pure water, and being sanctified by the sprinkling of the blood of animals upon them. If natural things were set apart, cleansed, and made holy for use in the natural Temple by natural things, how much more shall be the children of God spiritually sanctified or made holy by the Spirit, word, and blood of Christ? By the grace and mercy of God, we must ***"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."***

Many come exhorting men to live holy lives by their own choices and voluntary obedience. They seem not to perceive that that would be impossible, since the carnal mind is enmity or opposite to the things of God. They seem not to know that God chose a particular people before He made the world in order to show forth His praises, and to be holy and without blame before Him in love. They seem not to understand that voluntary obedience, such as that of Cain and of Saul in the Old Testament, was rejected of God. For the things that are approved of men are abomination in the sight of God. Only those chosen of God, given His Spirit, and given a spiritual love for Him and His children can ever do anything that is approved of God and those things are done altogether by the grace of God through faith. Only those whom God has made holy have any part in His holiness.

For one to be sanctified or to be made holy, he must be without spot or blemish of sin. He must be altogether righteous. But how can a sinful man be righteous before the holy

God? Jesus said, ***"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven."*** The scribes and Pharisees did all in their power to strive for righteousness by attempting to keep the law of God perfectly. They failed miserably and became self-righteous, religious hypocrites, thinking they had done better than others in their pursuit of righteousness. But only perfect righteousness is acceptable unto the perfect God. Jesus commanded, ***"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."*** Of course this is impossible with men, but all things are possible with God. The perfect righteousness and obedience of Jesus was imputed to His saints, while their sins were imputed to Him. By doing this unsearchable work of mercy and grace God made Jesus, who knew no sin, to become sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

According to the eternal, sovereign will of God, Jesus offered Himself up without spot unto God as the sinless Lamb of God, a sacrifice pleasing to the Father. His blood was shed that it might be sprinkled upon the elect children of God to sanctify them and make them holy, and to atone for their sins, and make them fitting for His service. So, before one of God's little ones ever drew a breath, Christ stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. They were loved with an everlasting love. Their names were written in the Lamb's book of life. They were chosen in Him and given grace in Him before the foundation of the world. They were vessels sanctified - cleansed, and made holy - prepared for the Masters use. ***"For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."*** God made provision for those He loved. Those chosen in Christ were perfected forever by His one offering of Himself. No sin shall ever be counted against any one of them. They are as righteous in Him as He is righteous. ***"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."***

We also know that no man is without sin. According to the inspired apostle, ***"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."*** But if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous. According to the inspired apostle, ***"we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*** So, we see that God's little ones are being continually upheld by the perfect work of Christ, and that nothing may ever be brought against them - but they do sin. This is a great mystery. However, the children of God are taught that in the sight of God, according

to the Spirit, they are perfect, while according to the flesh they are imperfect. *"Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity."* God's children are a blessed people. They are in the world but are not of the world. They are pilgrims and strangers here, and go forth groaning until they shall be altogether delivered from their burdens they bear here.

The saints had been sanctified or set apart and made holy in the sight of God before they ever knew anything of the kingdom of God. When they were brought out of darkness into His marvelous light, as newborn babes, they began to be exercised in the things of the Lord. They began to fear and to cry. They began to hunger for the milk of the word. They realized their weakness and helplessness. They began to be taught the language of grace, and began to know and love their Father and Mother. As little children, they often stumbled and fell, and often came into trouble because of curiosity and stubbornness. While in the world they are being taught line upon line and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. They are little children growing in grace and the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. They are being led about and instructed and kept as the apple of God's eye while in the wilderness, as was Jacob. And even now they are being set apart from the world, and are being manifest to be the children of light. They are being cared for and instructed and nourished until they grow into adults, at which time they shall be given to strengthen their brethren, as was Peter when he was converted.

The saints are continually being sanctified or being set apart from the world and the things in it. As they are taught of God, they are made to see how unprofitable the things of the world are. For all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. The world is passing away and the lust thereof. The chosen of God are continually being washed and cleansed of all unrighteousness, as they are made to confess their sins and are forgiven of them. They are taught how great a price Christ paid, with His life's blood, to redeem them from all iniquity and from the curse of the law. As they view Him suffering upon the tree, they are made to hate the sins that He died to redeem them from, and to love Him for His goodness and mercy. They are not getting better and better as they are being sanctified, as some suppose; but rather see themselves worse and worse as the hidden corruptions of the heart are revealed to them. The change in God's children because of their sanctification in this life is in their heart. They are made tender in their feelings toward Christ and for their brethren and friends in Christ. They are made to hate the sins that cause them to mourn, and are given to know that this world is not their home - that they are only passing

through as strangers and pilgrims.

It is by the truth that the saints are set apart. The word of God abides within each one and by this word they are being sanctified. Jesus said, ***"And for their sakes I sanctify myself that they also might be sanctified through the truth."*** And He said, ***"You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free."*** The Truth shall set you apart and free you from the bondage of sin, from the fear of death, from the terrors of hell, from the curse of the law, from the love of the world, and the things in it. And as Christ sanctified or set apart himself from the world and to heaven and immortal glory so shall all saints be set apart by the truth. They are chosen vessels, made to fit in glory. They are vessels made up unto honor and unto eternal life. And all shall be brought to glory without the loss of one, for our God is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck one from His hand. God's children were all sanctified before the world was and were made holy unto God. And even now they are being sanctified. And all of God's children, in this perfect holiness wrought of God, shall see the Lord.

This was written in love and in hope of eternal life, I trust.

Elder J. B. Farmer
12-10-2008

CORRESPONDENCE

July 8, 2009

Mr. Tony Horton:

Enclosed is the check to renew my subscription for 1 year and use the rest as you see fit.

I am 94 years old and I don't know how much longer the Lord has for me on this earth. I have been in a walker the past seven years after I had a fall. My husband passed away in August of 2007. I never had children but I have a nice lady that lives with me so that I can stay home. I have one sister that lives in Oklahoma City, Okla. and some sweet nieces and nephews that are so nice to me. Since my health is so bad. I don't get to go to church very often. I look forward to the Times and read it through when I receive it. May the Lord bless the writers - I enjoyed the article about the preacher baptizing in the boat. The Lord does provide the way.

Thank you - Your Sister in Hope,
Lessie Smith

PROVERBS 4:18.

But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

VOICES OF THE PAST

June 30, 2009

Hello Elder Key,

It was such a joy chatting with you this morning for a few minutes. As I said, we take the Signs of the Times and I so enjoy reading the articles. I dearly love the section on "Voices of the Past." They are wonderful articles and I want to thank you for printing them.

As I said my Father, Grandfather, and Great-Grandfather were all "Old School" Primitive Baptist Preachers. My Dad was an Elder for sixty years. His membership was at Pine Level Church near Elba, AL and it was in the Claybank Association.

I talked with my older brother this morning also and he agreed that Daddy wrote this article in the early seventies or possibly the late sixties. We both believe strongly that it was in 1970. Here is a copy of his article entitled "WHAT IS TRUTH."

Maybe you can use it. I thank you for the consideration. You and the magazine will be in my prayers. And if possible when you pray, please remember me.

Wynette Allen Smith

"WHAT IS TRUTH"

by Elder M. J. Allen
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Good morning! Friends, and brethren, in the Faith of God's elect.

As we come before you this morning, the subject that we have been thinking on is What is Truth? The text may be found in St. John, Chapter 13, Vs 37, 38.

My friends, many have been the times that the question Pilate asked Jesus has been asked in this world, and many times myself also. And of course, it has been a pleasure, at all times to communicate what light we have to those who sincerely inquire after the truth. But it has frequently been the case, that some (especially the Arminians) who inquire after truth like Pilate of old, turn away without waiting for an answer.

The Arminian is right in his conclusion (naturally speaking) that the testimony of the scriptures is truth; but the bare testimony of the Bible does not fully embrace all that the questions implies. Christ is emphatically the Truth, and He *is* the truth of which the scriptures are a faithful record. The inquiry then ***"What is Truth? amounts to the same, when thus proposed to our fellowman, as that expressed in the words, What think ye of Christ?"*** We cannot give a full, appropriate answer to the one question, that will not with equal propriety apply to both. In reply, therefore,

we say to those that ask us (especially the unbelievers) it is our firm conviction and settled faith that Christ is witness, the eternal LOGOS or word, which was with God; the Word which was made flesh of God, He is the Truth of God, and that word by which regeneration is effected, by the communication made to them by the spirit of that light was in Him, and which was the life of men.

It would follow then that the second inquiry by the unbelievers would be, ***"What is duty?"*** We answer: To fear God and keep His commandments is the whole duty of men. In confirmation of this decision, read Eccl. 12:13. In point of duty then, it will be observed that all mankind is delinquent when measured by the commandments of God, which are exceedingly broad for in our depraved state is it written: ***"There is no fear of God before his eyes."*** And again, ***"All have sinned."*** And by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified. Because of these things, there can be no just grounds to hope for acceptance with God upon the performance of duties. ***"For vain are the works of the sons of men, for the letter killeth, but the spirit maketh alive."***

It is true, our Arminian friends remark that there is much difference even among professors of religion in regard to duty, as well as in relation to the doctrine of the scriptures; but every soul that is born of God is led by the unerring spirit of Truth to see himself a poor, lost, guilty, perishing, and helpless sinner, but cut off from any prospect of salvation by any power or exertion which he can possibly make. His former system of duty-religion can avail him nothing while under such circumstances. Duty-faith, duty-repentance, duty-prayers, and duty-works, all serve only to press him down to the gates of death. In short, he may labor and toil for a law of righteousness until the commandment slays him at the feet of sovereign mercy, where his legal hopes yield up the ghost, and there and there only, is he made acquainted with Christ as the Resurrection and the life, the way and the Truth. Christ's blood is applied for the remission of sins, and His perfect righteousness is applied for the justification of his soul, and he finds with joy and ecstacy of soul that transforming grace which makes him shout with joy, even as one of old who said, ***"I know that wherein I was once blind, I now see."***

At this time of his experience, he loses his burden of guilt, for all his sins and all his duties, and all of his own righteousness roll with Bunyan's Pilgrim's burden into the sepulcher, to return to him no more. Now old things with him are passed away, and all things with him have become new. He is now delivered from the law and there is, therefore, now no condemnation to him for he is now experimentally in Christ Jesus, and walks no more after the flesh, but after the spirit; for the law

of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, his Lord, has made him free from the law of sin, and death; for whom the Son maketh free is free indeed. The difference between the former and the present condition is: formerly he was under the law that convicted him of guilt, which required everything of him, but furnished him nothing; but now he is brought under the gospel, which required nothing as a condition but furnished everything that his or her poor soul could want to make him or her perfectly happy and absolutely secure. His or her whole soul is now made to rejoice in Christ whose love is richly shed abroad in him or her, as the case may be. Nothing can to them appear so lovely or so beautiful as their blessed Saviour; nothing so desirable as to be found glorifying Him in soul and body which are his. They cannot now be kept from following their Lord. They are not now inclined to study how to pervert his examples, or to evade his commands; they desire not to shun the reproaches of the cross, for they esteem them better than all the treasures of Egypt. And where Jesus leads them they are made by His sweet love to follow. *"For my sheep"*, Jesus says, *"hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me"* (being subservient to do his will). *"And a stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers" (St. John, Ch. 11).*

Now, it might be proper just here, to ask: What is Truth in relation to the decrees of God? We reply, in our opinion, all that God has said upon this subject, as well as all other subjects, *is* Truth; and he has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying *"My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure (Isaiah XLVI, V5. 10), and that he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will". Eph. I, Vs. 11.* These scriptures are sufficient to prove, and to establish the point that God governs and controls all things, and that his government of all events and things is in strict accordance with his fixed, immutable, and eternal purpose, counsel or decree, from the flight of a sparrow, the falling of a hair from our heads, up to the most important events which involve the destiny of kingdoms and worlds.

Did God ordain all events that have taken place, and are to take place? Yes, as certain as it is that he is God. If an event has ever transpired over which he had no government, then other such events may also take place independently of his government and if one such event can or has taken place, millions may follow, and by such an admission we should be hurled into absolute atheism; for if He is God, He is just such a God as He has declared himself to be, and has all power in heaven and on earth, governs and controls all things, all beings, all destinies, all events, and

causes the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder of wrath he restrains. He forms the light and creates darkness, makes peace and creates evil; he kills and makes alive, for He has said, ***"I the Lord do all these things"***, and all these things which he does, He works after, or according to the counsel or decree of his own will, as we have already proved.

And as many, or most (and I believe all) things occur or eventually through a course of means, did he also ordain the means? Things which are brought about in the providence of God, or by virtue of his universal government, bear an intimate relation to and are connected with each other, like the revolving heels in a complicated machine; and to the imperfect vision of poor finite mortals, these revolutions may seem to conflict, yet in the wisdom of God they work together in harmony.

Those things which to us seem most trivial are with God as important as any other of the events connected in the system of His government; and He who is the maker and builder of all things, who has declared the end or issue of all things has secured by immutable decree a revenue of glory in the result, or bringing to pass of all things which He will not give to another, nor His praise to graven images. What we call means, are THINGS, and belong to and are embraced in the ***"All Things"*** which he governs and controls. Hence, what we may call means are the results of the dccrees of God, as well as those things that are affected by them. For instance, the death of Christ was an event which, for magnitude, challenges in comparison, all other events. It took place according to the decree of God, as all are compelled or made to admit; and yet, that very death was a means connected with all other events to be affected by it. That by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first or Old Testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal life. (Heb. IX, 15). The treachery of Joseph's brethren was a means to induce them to murder him; their avarice, and the providential appearance of the Ishmalites, were the means which induced them to change their minds and their purpose and sell him. This sale was the means of his going down to Egypt; the wickedness of Potiphar's wife was the means of Joseph's imprisonment; his imprisonment was the means of procuring an opportunity of interpreting the dreams of the butler and baker; and this was in turn the means of his appearing before and interpreting the dream of Pharoah, which was the means of his laying up corn, and this was the means ultimately of bringing about the interpretation of Joseph's dreams, which had in the first place been the means of first moving the enmity of his brethren against him, and all this was the means of pre-

serving Jacob's family alive through the famine; and that preservation was connected as a direct means of a Saviour's visit to the world. And here again, we see all things working according to His, God's will, and for good to them that love Him. For here we see even those of a wicked intent, subservient to do His (God's) will. For in the conclusion of Joseph's trials, he said to his brethren, ***"You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good" (Ex. 30:20);*** for out of Judah came forth a deliverer, to turn away ungodliness from Jacob (Ro. 11:26). Can the worldly man, or any other being, tell which of these events were unimportant, or which, if any of them, might have been dispensed without breaking the chain of causes and results of means of the ends to be accomplished? If the results were ordained, (and they were) then it follows that the means were also equally ordained as the result of other means or causes which produced them.

Do means or conditions appointed by God, and by Him associated with the result in man, leave events neccesarily unfixed or uncertain with God? Certainly not. But why associate means and conditions in the statement of the question? There is no great affinity between them. Every event that has ever occurred from the creation of the world to the present day, has been an ordained means of bringing about other events, which in their turn, also are means bearing upon others; but conditions are very different things. When God sent Moses and Aaron with conditions of peace to Pharoah, saying, ***"Let my people, Israel go" (Ex. 5, 6 & 7),*** and threatening with judgments if those terms were not promptly compiled with, He told Moses that he would harden Pharoahs's heart, so that he would not let Israel go until he should execute His judgments on Egypt. So the statement of conditions in his case did not hide from God's eye the end or the result.

And when God gave a conditional covenant to the nation of Israel, embracing temporal blessings and curses on condition of obedience or disobedience, if we admit (and we do) that God is omniscient, we must admit that he knew precisely how theses conditions would be treated by, and what effect they would have upon those unto whom they were given; consequently it was impossible that they sould render the result indefinite or uncertain with Him. But let it be distinctly understood, that although the covenant which is now abregated, which was typical, and which provided only temporal blessings and curses, was conditional, but the covenant of salvation was and is ordered in all things and sure (2 Sam. 23:5); not yea and nay, but yea and amen to the glory of God by us.

There is not a condition stated or intimated in all the scriptures, either directly or indirectly, expressed

or implied, wherein God has offered, or proposed to save a sinner from the condemnation of the law, or from the just penalty thereof, upon any condition or any kind whatever; for all that are saved, or ever were or ever shall be delivered from the wrath and condemnation, are ***"saved, and called with a holy calling; not according to their works, but according to His (God's) own purpose and grace, which was given to them in Christ Jesus before the world began." (II Tim. 1:9).*** They are blessed with all spiritual blessings according as God has chosen them in Christ Jesus, before the foundation of the world; and He has predestinated them unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, unto himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, wherein He has made us accepted in the beloved (Eph.1). And on the other hand, He ***"hath made all things for himself; yea even the wicked for the day of evil"*** (Proverbs, 16:4), ***"and they shall never understand."*** (Dan. 12:10).

If Tyre and Sidon would have repented, had they seen the mighty works which were done in Chorazin and Bethsaida, is it possible that some who are now in the darkness of heathenism, might exercise the same kind of repentance, if the law of God, by which is the knowledge of sin, and the truths of the New Testament; through which God commands all men everywhere to repent, where declared unto them?

If things were otherwise or different than what they are, we confess our utter inability to say what would be; but of this we are fully satisfied, if one link of the cause and effects, which God in infinite wisdom has linked together, could possibly be broken, we should be in a deplorable condition; results unlooked for and unprovided for might surprise God himself, and world upon world might dash, until all would sink to utter ruin. The supreme theme of our devoutest joy is that the Lord reigns, but if we or any other conbination of power in heaven, earth, or hell, could, by sending a Bible or missionary or anything else into heathen lands (if indeed there be any other land to which that designation more appropriately belongs than it does to this land of Bibles and boasted light) could bring about the accomplishment of any event that was not provided for in the eternal unchangeable, and invincible decrees of God by the accomplishment of such work, we would disapprove all the record that God has given of himself. Why did not the same course which would have produced repentance in Tyre and Sidon produce that effect on the cities where it existed? And why was it not employed in those cities which for the absence of it were destroyed? or is it proper for us to inquire why God has made ***"one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonour?"*** Can the Armenians or the world, or

the social religions of our country, or any other country tell? No, for God hath blinded their eyes, stopped their ears, and given them a heart void of understanding, and for this cause they travel by sight and not by faith. But the church, which the living God gave to Christ before the world began, travels by faith, in the same like manner as all those faithful witnesses long since gone on before, and who being moved by faith, died in the faith, and they confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. Being also moved by this faith (that is the faith of God's elect) they subdued kingdoms, they wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens; and what shall I more say to the household of faith, who by the grace of God, have been clothed upon with the whole armour of God, which is having our loins girded about with the Truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and our feet shod with the gospel of peace, we are made able to take the shield of faith, and are thereby made able to quench all the fiery darts of Satan and the wicked, and having upon our heads the helmet of salvation, and in our hands the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God, and which was made flesh and dwelt amongst us, which is the truth of God that enables us to press forward to the mark of the prize of the high calling of Christ Jesus our Lord, which is eternal life.

Now unto the potentate, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, be power, glory and dominion, now and forever.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus rest upon all his humble believing children everywhere, is our humble, sincere and honest prayer.

In christian love,
Elder M. J. Allen,
Primitive Baptist Minister

Mr. & Mrs. H. L. Rogers

Dear Brother Dodson:

I would like to give my idea on the resurrection of the dead if it be the good Lord's will to bless me with words to express my thoughts

on this most important subject. I do not have any thought of destroying the ideas of any who may disagree with me, neither do I expect to convert anyone to my way of thinking. My only object is to leave on record just how I started on this subject so my brethren and friends and my children may know what I believe in regard to the subject when I am gone.

I sincerely hope that all the brethren who may disagree with me will not cease to have fellowship for me. I do not desire to impose my ideas on anyone who has different views as I may be wrong and if so, I earnestly pray that God will show me and set me right. I am only human and subject to error and know I do err in many things a starting point I will quote *Job 14:14, "If a man die, shall he live again? This is one of the most important subjects that ever occupied the mind of mankind from his formation since he entered into form on earth: shall he live again after he has returned to the dust? We will, if the Lord wills, consider first some things Job says, and Job is talking about the man that is born of a woman, not about a spirit or soul or some mystical part of man, but about the man that was formed of the dust of the ground."* He begins this 14th chapter by saying, *"Man that is born of a woman, is of few days and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. And dost thou open thine eyes upon such a one, and bringest me unto judgment with thee? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean if not one. Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass; Turn from him, that he may rest, till he accomplish, as an hireling his day."* Then Job comes to the resurrection and says, *"For there is hope of a tree if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not see. Though the root thereof old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; Yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant. But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up: So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep. O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldst keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldst appoint me a set time, and remember me!" Job 14 :1.13.* Then he says, *"If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Not*

exchange, if it is not this man that is born of a woman ihat is raised then it would be an exchange instead of a change. So Job goes on and says, For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." Job 19:25-27. Notice this, Job himself, not something about him, but he himself should see with his own eyes. I am impressed to believe that Job arose when our blessed Lord arose from Joseph's new tomb, and saw Christ on the earth. Our blessed Savior, in speaking through Isaiah, the prophet, says, Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead. Isa. 26:19, If we will turn to Matt. 27:52 there we will find this prophecy fulfilled. It says, ***"And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."*** How could language be plainer? It seems to me that this scripture should be enough, even if there was nothing more said about the raising of the body of the saints in the whole Bible, for the words were spoken by the inspiration of God and I believe they mean just what they say, If language has nothing to do with the Scriptures how would we know just what any of them mean, and if any portion of holy writ is not true would the whole of them be any better? Nevertheless, we will continue to consider some more of them for there is an abundance of scripture that treats on this subject. I believe the bodies of those saints came up in that resurrection as much as I believe Christ's body arose from the tomb. We would have as much reason to doubt one as the other, but we do not believe they came up a natural body as they went down, neither do we believe Christ's body was a natural body when He arose from the tomb. There seemed to be such a change in it that His apostles, who had been with Him before His resurrection, did not know him when he appeared. He arose with a spiritual body which, could appear among them, even into the room with the doors being shut. He appeared to His apostles after His resurrection, and demonstrated to them the resurrection of His body. And as they thus spake, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And He said unto them, Why are ye troubled? And why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold My

hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when He had thus spoken, He showed them His hands and His feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, He said unto them, have ye here any meat? And they gave Him a piece of broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And He took it and did eat before them. Duke 24 :36-43.

He told them to handle Him and see that it is I Myself, so I firmly believe that it is I myself that will be raised from the dust, not just something about me. It was Adam, the man, that was formed of the dust of the ground that was placed in the garden of Eden; it was he that God talked with there and not a spirit; it was he that God gave the law to; it was he that violated the law; it was he that was driven out of the garden; it was he that was alienated from God by transgression; it was he and not a spirit that the sentence of death was passed on saying, ***"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."***

So he is the one that dies and not a spirit. If there is any scriptural evidence anywhere in the holy Bible that anything dies and goes into the grave but the body, I have no knowledge of it. So if it is not the body that is to be raised from the grave, I do not know how there would be any resurrection, What else is there to be raised? It was the man that was sentenced to return to the dust, and not just a spirit or something about him. The spirit returns to God who gave it. As the preacher says in Eccl. 12:5-7 And desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets: Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl has broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it. We see from this scripture that nothing returns to the dust, or earth, but that which was taken from the earth. That spirit or soul that breathed into man's nostrils did not come from the earth or dust, neither does it return to the dust, but to God who gave it, so then there is nothing to be brought up from the dust but the man. Remember that God called him a man after He had formed him, even before He had breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and this is the same man that Job had under consideration and says if he die shall he live again. We will answer Job by the words of the prophet which we have already quoted above, Thy dead men shall live, together with My dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as he dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead. Daniel says, Thy, people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and

some to shame and everlasting contempt. Dan. 12:1-2. A. resurrection means a raising up or a revival of that which has visibly perished or died, and if there is anything else but the man or body that dies I do not know what it is. The Scriptures teach throughout that it is the dead that are to be raised. It seems that in the days of the apostle Paul there were some in the church that did not believe in the resurrection of the body; they seemed to think it was a soul or spirit, or some germ of life that was resurrected, so Paul begins by saying, *"Now if Christ be preached that He rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. (Is this not true indeed.) But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His calling."* 1 Cor. 15:12-23. Notice he says that every man! shall be made alive in his own order, if he fall the servant or seed of Satan, he will be made alive in that same order, or if he falls clothed with the righteousness of Christ, he will be made alive in that order as the preacher says, If the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be. Eccl. 11:3.

We notice that the tree has two directions to fall; one is upward, the other is downward, in opposite directions. In the place in which it falls, whether in the place of the wicked or in the place of the righteous, in that same order it will be raised up. Paul continues in this 15th chapter of 1 Cor. saying, *"But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: And that which thou sowest, thou so, vest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed his own body."* The grain of wheat or corn which we plant in the earth does not come back the same

grain that was planted, but comes up the same one changed in form or in body. So is the resurrection, it goes down a natural body, it comes up a spiritual body. It is the same natural body that went down that is made spiritual. It is like the water which Christ made wine. It does not say that He made wine out of the water, but He made the water wine; and the rib which God took from Adam made he a woman, that is he made the rib a woman, not a woman out of the rib. So I understand it, the natural body is made spiritual in the resurrection, made, like Christ's glorious body. Paul says, For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto Himself. Phil. 3:20-21. Notice how he says this, who shall change our vile body (not exchange it for the body of 'Christ' as some may think) that it (notice the it meaning the vile body which he is talking about) may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, ***"But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed his own body."*** We would like to notice the "his" here. As we understand it the "his" does not mean that He will give every seed Christ's body, as some also may think, because to take it that way would conflict with many other scriptures, even the several passages we have used above. We would not want to say that He gave the seed of Satan His body. We will consider some other scripture which is used under similar terms. In Matt. 12:33 we find, in speaking of the fruit of the tree, it reads, ***"Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit. You would not want to say that Christ's fruit was corrupt would you? So if this here means the tree, the above means the seed because it is used under the same terms."*** We will pass on to 1 Cor. 15:49, ***"And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. An image is a likeness of a thing. We are bearing the likeness of Adam's body here, but not Adam's individual body for it passed on thousands of years ago, but when we are raised from the dead we will be raised like the body of our blessed Savior, As Paul says, Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. What more could we desire is that not enough? It is we ourselves that shall be made like Him, not just something about us."*** So Paul continues by saying, ***"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot in-***

herit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." No, flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom because this kingdom is spiritual, and nature will not go beyond the grave, nature and all things that pertain to nature will cease at the grave. We will be made spiritual in the resurrection, and our body adopted by the spirit of adoption. As the apostle says, ***"Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Rom. 8:21-23.*** He continues in 1 Cor. 15:51-55 Behold, I shew you a mystery ; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory. At this time all nature ceases, all our natural affection and knowledge will be no more. We love our children here, our father, mother, brothers: sisters, and friends. Nature would love to think that they would meet them again in the heaven beyond and know them there as they know them here, but no, all natural relations cease at death. They will not be our children there, neither our father nor mother but will be all one in Christ. The question was asked of Christ regarding the seven brothers who married the same woman, whose wife would she be in the resurrection, Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. So do we err when we think we will know our natural friends there as we know them here. Christ continues by saying, ***"For in the resurreetion they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." Matt. 22 :29-30.*** So we will all be alike there; there will be no infants, neither aged ones, no crippled ones, no deformed ones, but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection of the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. Neither can they die any more for they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. Luke 20:35-36. We will know only the one Father there who is the spiritual Father of us all. We will all be His spiritual children being neither male nor female,

but all one in our blessed Savior. I once saw in a dream or vision the blessed Savior come in His glory. I heard the cry, the Savior cometh and his saint, taken up in the cloud of His glory, and heard the angry cries of the wicked as we were taken up from the earth. It seemed that we sailed around the throne of God in space, and all sang praises to His great name. Ye could only see the foundation of the throne which He sat on. We could not look upon His person because of His greatness. It was joy unspeakable. I am not able to describe the glory that I saw I am too weak. I cannot speak more. I hope I have not written anything that will be offensive to anyone.

It seems that my heart will melt, and my eyes wash away in tears. May God bless you all.

H. L. ROGERS

PSALM 133.

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;

As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descendeth upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.

"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and whIch entereth into that within the veil."- HEBREWS vi. 19.

ANCHORS, you know, are made of different sizes. You may walk in the Queen's Dockyard, and there you may see anchors for a boat, and anchors for a three-decker. Yet all anchors are made in the same way, and are designed for the same purpose; and the little anchor that holds the boat is as useful and as much an anchor as that which holds the three-decker. So spiritually, there is hope in the heart of the babe. But the hope in the heart of a babe is but as the anchor of a boat; yet it holds that babe as firmly as the anchor holds the boat to which it is moored. But as the Lord increases hope, he increases the size of the anchor; and as the vessel and its anchor always bear a proportion to each other, so when he enlarges the size of the anchor he increases the size of the ship. Nay more, as he increases the size of the ship, he increases its burden, for these two are proportionate. Thus hope takes a more vigorous hold within the veil; it enters more deeply into the presence of God; it takes a firmer grasp of covenant engagements, electing love, the immutability of God's purposes, and the un-

changeable nature of the great eternal I AM. Have you not felt at times your hope sweetly enlarged, So that it almost attained to the "full assurance of hope?" Scarcely a cloud remained between you and God; and you believed you should ride triumphantly into the haven of bliss and peace; and having these blessed sensations in your heart, you could part with life itself at that moment to fall into the embrace of God.

Elder J.C. Philpot

PSALM 89: 1-2.

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations.

For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens.

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will convene with North East Church on Saturday before the second Sunday in October. The dates are October 10-11, 2009.

The Church is located on Piney Green Road approximately one mile off US 17 North of Jacksonville, N.C.

We welcome and invite all who love the truth to come and worship with us.

Elder Gene Lupton
Association Clerk
252-745-7441

EASTERN KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The 2009 session of the Eastern Kehukee Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Flat Swamp Church located near Robersonville, North Carolina. The meeting will be held on Saturday, October 3 and Sunday, October 4. Preaching services will begin each day at 10:30 a.m.

Out of Raleigh, take US 64 East. Stay on this highway until you get to Exit 496. Take this exit and turn right at the stop sign onto Highway 13 and 11. Go to the second intersection and turn left on Big Oak Road. The church will be about 7 miles on the left.

We invite the ministers of our faith and order, our Brethren and all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

Naomi Coker
Association Clerk
252-823-0786

NEW RIVER ASSOCIATION

The two hundred and fifteenth annual session of the New River Association will convene the Lord willing at Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church. Located in Floyd Co. Va. It will be entertained by Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church.

Association will begin on Saturday before the fourth Sunday and will continue through Sunday the dates being September 26th and 27th, 2009.

Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church is located on Highway 787 in Indian Valley, Va. Those coming in by routes 221, 52 & 8 go to Willis, Va. Turn on route 787 go approximately 7 miles to the church on left.

If you travel by interstate 81 exit ramp 114 turn right on Rt. 8 go till you see a Small Drive Inn Rest. on the left. Travel approximately 15 miles to church on the right.

We invite all ministers of like faith and order, also brothers, sisters and friends.

Kenneth Hopkins, Moderator
J.B. Mitchell Jr., Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Smith River Association will convene, the Lord willing, at Long Branch Church on September 4, 5, & 6.

Long Branch Church is located on Rt. 40 in Franklin County, VA about 8 miles west of Ferrum and 14 miles east of Woolwine in the commmunity of Endicott.

Those traveling Rt. 57 east or west in Patrick County, turn on Rt. 346 (fairy stone lake rd.). Go about a half a mile and take left on Rt. 623 (Union Bridge Rd). Go about 7 miles and take left on Rt. 788 (Thompson Ridge Rd.) Go about 3 miles and take left on Rt. 40 west. (Franklin St.)

Go about 2 miles to church on left. We invite the ministers of our faith and order, our brethren and friends to be with us.

Tony R. Horton
Association Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing.

on Saturday and Sunday, September 26 & 27, 2009.

Rehobeth Church, located at El Dorado, Arkansas, 5 miles North on Hwy 7 and1/2 mile West on Hwy 335, will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
318-778-4217

Tiffany Leah Brinson of Reidsville, N.C. and Anthony Luis Brewer of Eden, N.C. were united in marriage at 5 p.m. Saturday, June 20, 2009 at Belmont Estate, Reidsville, N.C.

The ceremony was officiated by Pastor of the bride, Elder Kenneth R. Key, of Greensboro, N.C. and directed by sister-in-law of the bride, Becky Brinson of Charlotte, N.C. The bride was escorted and given in marriage by her mother.

The couple honeymooned in Hawaii, and now reside in Surfside, Fla.

They grew up in Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on Highway 700, Rt. 2, Ruffin, N.C. and Sister Leah is one of our most lovely members.

The groom received a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration from University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He is employed by Lowes Home Improvement, Pembroke Pines, Florida as manager.

Elder Kenneth R. Key

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 2009

James Shelor, VA 5.00
Cleo Underwood, VA 5.00
Richard Lawless, VA 5.00
Lowell Hopkins, VA 5.00
Elder Carl Terry, VA 5.00
Jerry Somers, VA 15.00
Lessie Smith, LA 35.00

OBITUARIES

SIS. PEGGY COLLIE OWENS WEST

On October 26, 2008 Sister Peggy was called from this world of sorrow and suffering. She was born on May 14,1935 to our precious Brother John Siddle Collie, Sr. and Sister Nellie Dix Collie, who preceded her in death. Those, who are left to mourn her passing, are Dan Ervin West, her husband, Jeffrey Alan Owens, her son, and daughter-in-law Rita, Angela Marie Owens, her daughter, and Deidre and Seth Owens, her grandchildren. Her brothers, Brother John S. Collie, Jr. (wife Nancy), David F. Collie (wife

Janice), Brother Bob R. Collie, and many nieces and nephews also mourn her passing.

Sister Peggy asked for a home with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on October 2, 1983. She was received and baptized along with her natural brother, Brother John Collie, Jr. Her parents were blessed to witness their baptizing. Sister Peggy suffered from many health problems. Due to her health she had to leave her job as Assistant Director of Nursing at Annie Penn Hospital in Reidsville. The Lord blessed her to use her nursing skills to help her precious mother with her medicine in Sister Nellie's later years.

Though she endured much physical pain, Sister Peggy always had a smile and a warm embrace whenever I was blessed to see her. My mom and I were blessed to visit with her once at Hospice before the Lord took her home. I'm thankful for that last visit with her.

Her funeral was held by Elder Haywood Wray at Wilkerson Funeral Home on October 29, 2008, and her body was laid to rest in Evergreen Memory Gardens to await the second coming of her dear Saviour. Elder Wray made the remark that he had been told that as she passed from this life, she had a smile on her face. This may best be expressed by the last verse of the hymn that was sung at her funeral:

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are,
While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

Sister Peggy believed in the lovely Saviour described so wonderfully in the following

two verses:

"Where must a weary sinner go,
But to the sinner's friend?
He only can relieve my wo,
And bid my sorrows end.
Thou art, O Lord, my resting place;
The promised land I see,
And long to live upon thy grace,
And lose myself in thee."

May her family and all of us who mourn her loss, especially Brother John and Brother Bob, be blessed with the comfort that she believed in an High Priest that can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities and who, as the Son of man, wept at the loss of His brother, Lazarus, and as the Son of God called him by name from the tomb and said *"Loose him, and let him go."* May we all be blessed to sorrow not as others who have no hope, but rather to be blessed with that witness from within as expressed in Ecclesiastes 7:1 the day of one's death is better than the day of one's birth. In all things may the Lord be praised

Humbly submitted by one who loved her,

Mary Hawkins

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

SONG

WELCOME, sweet day of rest,
That saw the Lord arise;
Welcome to this reviving breast,
And these rejoicing eyes!

The King himself comes near,
And feasts his saints today;
Here may we sit, and see him here,
And love, and praise, and pray.

One day amidst the place,
Where my dear God hath been,
Is sweeter than ten thousand days
Of pleasurable sin.

My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this,
And sit and sing herself away
To everlasting bliss.

Watts.

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Carry McDaniel
Lillian Clifton Wood

EDITORIALS

"And as He sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto Him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Matthew 24:3

Elder J.B. Farmer

Have you ever wondered about the second coming of Christ and about the end of the world, or the end of this age? The disciples of His day wondered, and they asked Jesus to tell them how to recognize the events leading up to that day. If we are of that same heaven-born generation as His disciples, we are also concerned with the same thoughts. We desire to be given wisdom in these matters so that we will neither be deceived by false teachers and their false doctrines, nor caught off guard as that day approaches.

Jesus was very specific in His answers to His disciples as were the prophets and apostles when they were inspired to testify about the same things. Jesus said to take heed that no man deceive you for many would come in his name, and would even claim to be Christ, and deceive many. He said that some awful things must come to pass which would precede the very end things. He called these the beginning of sorrows. Jesus said that there must be wars and rumors of wars, famines, pestilences and earthquakes in divers places. He also said that His disciples would be delivered up to be afflicted and killed and that they would be hated of all nations for His name's sake. He said that many would be offended and that some would betray and hate one another. He said that iniquity would abound and that the love of many would wax cold. We have records of these kinds of things all through history even to this present time. But the end is not yet.

Concerning the very end things, Jesus said that this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the

world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. He also said that the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet would stand in the holy place. The apostle Paul, when writing about the coming of Christ said that the day was not at hand or eminent but that two things must generate first. One was the falling away and the other was that the man of sin must be revealed, the son of perdition. John wrote of a beast that came up out of the earth, which had two horns like a lamb but spoke as the dragon. I am made to believe that the abomination of desolation, the man of sin and the beast with two horns are all the same person. Please read Daniel 11:34-45, Matt. 24:15-22, II Thes. 2:3, and Rev. 13:11. When that wicked one comes before the world proclaiming that he is God in the flesh and that he is setting up the kingdom of God upon the earth, the children of God will flee from him - knowing not his voice. The multitudes will be deceived, but the elect of God will not be deceived. I am made to believe that they are taught that Christ has already set up His kingdom in the hearts of His people, and that there will be no future kingdom set up here on earth.

Is it not apparent that we are in the period of the falling away? Some of the true churches have died out. Many have only a few members, and most of them are aged. Has there not been a great change in your lifetime? If these things are so, and it seems apparent that they are, the thing remaining before the Lord comes is the revelation of the man of sin. This man of sin will claim to be the Christ who has come to set up his kingdom upon earth, and he will deceive the multitudes. But Jesus said, ***"Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert, go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.*** Jesus also said, ***"For as the lightning that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part of heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day."*** The children of God are not looking for Christ to come again upon the earth, but the deceived are. The apostle John said by revelation, ***"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him."*** We do not know the day or the hour of His coming, but when these things begin to generate, we are commanded to look up for redemption draweth nigh.

We know that most of the so-called Christian churches, protestant and catholic alike, are teaching that Jesus is coming back upon the earth to set up a kingdom which will last for a thousand years. Dearly beloved brethren, I am made to believe that this is an impossibility. For Christ shall appear a second time without sin unto salvation. We are taught that when He comes, it will be in great power and glory. And He will come with His mighty angels in flam-

ing fire, taking vengeance upon them who know not God and who obey not the gospel. We are taught that when He comes, every eye shall see Him. We are taught that at His coming the dead in Christ will be raised first, and that those who are alive and remain will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and that they shall be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air. And so shall they ever be with the Lord. When the Lord comes, no flesh will be able to stand in His presence. The elements will melt with a fervent heat and the earth will be dissolved according to the scriptures. The wicked will be destroyed from His presence with an everlasting destruction. Since there will be no world left standing at the powerful, glorious coming of Jesus in that day, it appears that there will be no possibility of a kingdom being set up on the earth. I am made to believe that those who are promoting a thousand year reign of Christ to come upon the earth may be unwittingly preparing the way for the great deception and for the reception of the one who has been called the man of sin, the son of perdition, the abomination of desolation, the false prophet, and the beast who had two horns like a lamb and spake as a dragon.

The apostle John wrote of the thousand years reign of Christ along with his people in Revelation chapter twenty. John said, by the Holy Spirit, *"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath not power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went*

up on the breath of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

If God is willing, let us look carefully into this scripture and let us beg God to show unto us the truth of it. For we are fully assured that no one may know anything about the kingdom of God except by revelation from above. Speculation will do us no good here. The reasoning of a natural mind will always come to the wrong conclusion. The positions taken by the great minds of others are of no help. We must cast ourselves upon the mercy of God and ask for wisdom and understanding. It is certain that as God's little ones have a need to know the things of the kingdom, they will cry out to Him. And as a good father in nature that pities his children that cry unto Him and that gives them the things they need naturally, how much more will our Father in heaven supply His little ones with the things they cry for and have need of spiritually.

First of all, John saw an angel come down from heaven with the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. The angel took hold of the dragon, bound him with the chain, cast him into the prison of the bottomless pit, shut him up and set a seal upon him that he should deceive the nations no more for a period of a thousand years. Several question immediately arise. May God be merciful and gracious to give us the answers we need for our comfort and edification and learning.

What does the angel that came down from heaven represent? This appears to be none other than the great power of God, Who has all power in heaven and earth. He is in control of all things – events, men, the angels of heaven, and even the Devil himself. God formed the old serpent, the devil, with His own hand for His own purpose. Without a doubt, God has control of all of His creation, to do with it whatever He pleases. What was the purpose of the key and the chain and the bottomless pit and the seal? It seems abundantly evident that the purpose of God was to subdue Satan and to bind him and to lock him away in a place for a space of time where he cannot harm the children of God.

What is the thousand years period that the old serpent should be locked away? We are taught that with God a day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as a day. In other words, His ways are not our ways, and His thoughts are not our thoughts. His ways and thoughts are as high above ours as the heavens are above the earth. Where God abides is eternal day. There is no night there. God abides in His

people. The day of God's rule in the hearts of His people is as a thousand years. God has always been upon His throne. He has always ruled in the hearts of His people, from righteous Abel ahead to every heir of promise that has or ever will love His appearing. While God is ruling in the hearts of His little ones, Satan cannot come near. He has been subdued, bound, and locked away by the perfect sacrifice and resurrection from the dead of the Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. He destroyed the power of Satan, and He rules victorious over sin, Satan, death, hell and the grave.

Who are the nations that Satan should deceive no more until the thousand years are fulfilled? Who makes up the world of God's elect? The nations, or the world that is not deceived for the duration of the reign of Christ is not the whole world. But the remnant according to the election of grace makes up the number of those who cannot be deceived while God is upon His throne ruling in their hearts in His kingdom. One might think to say, ***"How can Satan be bound and shut away, since we see his work on every hand in the world?"*** Satan is bound as much as it pleased God even in this present world, for there is a measure of peace and order evident here. But we know that even though the whole world lies in wickedness, there is a much worse time coming. When Satan is loosed out of his prison, the measure of peace and order in the present world shall be replaced with hatred and violence as has never been experienced. But Satan is bound where the children of God are concerned, because the Spirit of God abides within them and keeps them from the devil's deception.

What is the meaning of the scripture, that after the thousand years are fulfilled, Satan shall be loosed a little season? I am made to believe that in the very end of time, in the last hour of the sixth day, that Satan will be loosed in the world. This appears to be the time that Jesus spoke of when He said, ***"For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."*** It appears that in that day the whole world shall erupt in violence. Not only shall every nation turn on the other, but also individuals will do the same. But the elect shall not be forsaken. Jesus has promised that He would be with His people unto the end of the world, that He would never leave them nor forsake them. It is impossible for Him to lie or to fail in a promise. So, no matter what comes in the very end of time, we may be assured that His presence will be enough to sustain us through every trial and suffering. But Satan shall not have the victory. The Devil

and all his angels will be destroyed from the presence of Christ with everlasting destruction when Jesus comes and brings all things into perfect completion.

What were the thrones that John saw? And who were they that sat upon them? They were, doubtless to me, the thrones of the kingdom, and the children of God through the ages that have ruled and reigned with Christ in His spiritual kingdom. They were those that were persecuted for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their hands. The people of God are the ones that suffer for the truth's sake in this world. They are the ones that cannot worship the beast, the devil, to gain his favor, or to escape his wrath. They are the ones that will not fall down before his image, which image stands for the supposed good works of the flesh. They are the ones who have not received the mark of the beast in their hands, which is the spirit of wickedness, that rules and reigns in the works of the flesh of all the children of wrath. The children of God, rather, have been given the seal of the Holy Spirit, which keeps them safe in this evil world. They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The children of God all lived and reigned and shall continue to reign with Christ in His kingdom from Old Testament times until the time when Christ came in the flesh, and even until He comes in glory. Many have already fallen asleep in Christ and many more shall do the same before He comes in great power and glory. And many shall be alive and remain until His glorious appearing.

"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Who are the rest of the dead? They, doubtless to my mind, are the ones that have fallen asleep in Christ. They are those that the beloved, inspired apostle called the dead in Christ that should be raised first. They are the ones that shall instantly be joined together with those that are alive and remain, who shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye at the coming of the Lord. Together, all the elect family of God from all ages shall be caught up together to the Lord in the air and shall ever be with Him. What does it mean that the thousand years were finished? To me, it points to the very end of time, when the world shall be destroyed. It indicates that day when Jesus shall appear in glory, and when all things shall be brought into completion. It means that great resurrection day. John said by revelation, ***"This is the first resurrection."*** To my understanding, this is the first and only resurrection to eternal life of the saints. There is also a resurrection of damnation for the wicked, which seems to me to be simultaneous with the first resurrection. This seems evident because of the words of Jesus. He said, ***"When the Son***

of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." It appears that all men, just and unjust shall stand before Jesus and be separated into two groups. Than shall it be truly manifested who are the children of God and who are the children of the devil.

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." Those that shall have a part in the future glorious first resurrection of the bodies of the saints are surely a blessed people that were given grace in Christ Jesus before the world was made. They are holy in that they were set apart by God and sanctified by the blood of Jesus Christ, and made to be vessels of honor unto God. There is a first death, which is a natural death, to which all men are appointed. But there is a second death, which is that eternal lake of fire, where shall be cast the devil, the beast, the false prophet, death, hell, and all whose names were not found written in the Lamb's book of life. This second death has no power on God's redeemed people. By one offering He has perfected forever them that are sanctified. Before the first resurrection, God's people shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. After the first resurrection they shall be with Him in eternity. Peter said, by the Spirit, *"Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."* They have reigned, are reigning, and shall reign with Him in His kingdom, which is set up in their hearts, which kingdom the world does not and can never perceive.

John said, *"And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up of the breath of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."* " At the very end of the world, or the very end of this age, when the thousand years are brought to completion, Satan shall be loosed out of his

prison. His release is for the purpose of deceiving the nations, which are in the four quarters of the earth, which in this case, I am made to believe, stands for the wicked or the world at large. Then Gog, who is Satan, and Magog, which stands for the innumerable group of followers of Satan, shall go out together with the purpose of totally destroying the saints of God. When they surround the beloved city, and all seems to be lost, fire shall come down from God out of heaven and shall devour them. Now, what is the fire that shall come down from God out of heaven, other than the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ Himself? For the inspired apostle wrote, ***"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe."***

Since this writing is getting lengthy, it must be brought to a close. So, what else John saw, the Lord willing, I will endeavor to mention only briefly, and this without further comments on the scripture. John said, ***"And I saw a great white throne and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."*** May each of His children be given an eye to see, an ear to hear, and a heart of understanding to the praise of the glory of His grace. May we be kept in the true faith once delivered unto the saints. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

This was written in love and
in hope of eternal life,
J. B. Farmer

PSALM 9:2.

I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.

CORRESPONDENCE

Signs of the Times,

Tony R. Horton,

My subscription to the Times expires this month so I'm sending $20.00 to renew my subscription for one year and the balance for a small donation to use as you see fit.

I am almost 84 years old and as long as I can see to read I don't want to be without it.

May God bless you all,
Ruby Queen

209-3105 S. Main
Penticton B.C.
Can. U2A 7H1

Dear Brother Horton,

Pardon my negligence for not sending my renewal on time. But the Signs is good news to us here in this spiritual desert land. Please renew for 2 years starting June 2009 and the remainder for the extra postage in making it to Canada.

Thank you,
Donald E. Ferguson

7-29-09

Dear Ones,

I am sorry about this I am 85 years old. So please forgive me. I am almost blind. Have to use a magnifying glass to read.

I love the Old School Primitive Baptist Churches so and go to church as often as I can.

The other $5.00 in memory of my late husband, Elder John Clovis Townley.

A little sister in Christ Jesus I hope.

Love,
Frances Townley Neal
301 Troutt St.
Denton, Arkansas
72019-2489

July 17, 2009

Tony R. Horton
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, VA 24343
Dear Tony Horton,

I have thoroughly enjoyed so many of the writings in the Signs, especially the Editorial section for the past several months. As I read them, it feels so good to know that there are others who believe as I do, and who express those beliefs in such a comforting way. I am so glad that the triune God is in control of all things. It makes all things OK. Romans 8:28 is such a comfort,

which says ***"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, the called according to his purpose".***

Please renew my subscription to the "Signs of the Times" for a year. Enclosed is a check for more than enough. Use it as you see fit. It has been such a blessing to receive my copies for many years now. Sorry I am late renewing.

My prayer is one of thanksgiving, because the Lord continues to bless each of his Elect each day that we are here in this low ground, and I have a hope that I am one of the Elect.

Humbly submitted,
Charles Mathew
P O Box 74181
Baton Rouge, Louisiana
70874-4181
(225) 775-8078

PSALM 89: 13-16.

Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand.

Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne; mercy and truth shall go before thy face.

Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance,

In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.

VOICES OF THE PAST

Mr. & Mrs. H. L. Rogers

"BUT HE, THAT ENTERETH IN BY THE DOOR IS THE SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP"

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." John 10:1.

It is probable that ninety per cent of the population of the people of the world is trying to enter into the sheepfold or into Heaven some other way instead of by the door, which is Christ. I suppose the reason is that the door is closed to them, so they are trying to climb in some other way. The door was closed against the goats or repro-

bates when God made the choice in Christ before the world was. It has been closed ever since and will be forevermore to come, so in trying to climb in some other way other than the choice and grace of God, they are seeking to steal and rob God of the honor of saving His people according to His own will and pleasure.

Christ did not come to earth to turn goats into sheep, there never has been a goat turned into a sheep and never will be; neither has there ever been a sheep turned into a goat. Goats were made goats in the creation, and sheep were made sheep also in the creation, as was everything else, for God decreed when He made the earth and all its inhabitants that everything shall bring forth seed after his own kind. He created His people or children in Christ as the seed of Christ. The children of the devil or Satan were created Satan's seed, and cannot be turned into children of God, being regenerated and born again is not the thing which makes them the children of God, but they are regenerated and born again because they are the children of God. They were the children of God in the creation, and by transgression fell under condemnation to the law of sin and became alienated to God temporarily, so He, God, sent His only begotten Son into the world to redeem them and reconcile them to Himself. Redeem means to ransom; from bondage, rescue makes atonement for, perform, recover that which is rightfully yours but has been temporarily lost from you by some illegal act or some other procedure. Christ continues in this 10th chapter, ***"But He that entereth in by the door is the Shepherd of the sheep, to Him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear His voice and He calleth His own by name and leadeth them out. And when He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them and the sheep follow Him, for they know His voice. When the Lord calls His people, they know His voice though they never heard it before. Paul knew the voice of the Lord when He called to him, though he never knew the Lord before, but when the voice spoke to him, he said, "Who art Thou Lord?"*** So when the Lord calls to His sheep, they always hear, answer, and obey. Paul took all his orders from the Czar up until this time; he had never prayed to the Lord before. ***"Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that come before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door, by Me if any man enter in he shall be saved and shall go in and out and find pasture. Christ, our blessed Lord, is the only door whereby anyone can enter into the heavenly kingdom; none can enter in through this door except those whom He calls in and not one of them called by***

Him ever refuses to enter, for He never calls any except those who were chosen and created in Him before the world was. I am the good Shepherd, the good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep," 11th verse. "I am the good Shepherd and know My sheep and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth Me even so know I the Father, and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring. (Notice how impressive He makes it, I must bring them) and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd." 14-16 verses. He here was talking to the Jewish fold and then other sheep; as I think were the Gentile people. Notice He says them also I must bring and they shall hear My voice. The bringing comes first; one must be regenerated and born again before he can hear His voice. Life must precede action or knowledge or feeling,

There seemed to be a division of opinion among the Jews as to whom this man was. Many of them, those unbelieving Jews said, He hath a devil, others said these are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind? The Jews gathered, *"round about Him, and said unto Him, How long dost Thou make us to doubt? If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you and ye believed not: the works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of My sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one."* So when He had thus said that I and My Father are one, then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. *"Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from My Father, for which of those works do ye stone Me? The Jews answered Him saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God."* As Christ said they had seen the many good works and miracles which He had done, such as raising the dead, giving sight to the blind cleansing the leprosy and walking on the water and many other wonderful works, but all of this did not convince the carnal minds of men that He was the Christ, nor did it produce in them any spiritual effect. How could material evidence be any stronger to the carnal minds of men that He was the Christ?

Does not this all prove what the apostle said, *"The natural man receiveth not the things of the*

Spirit of God: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned?" Christ on another occasion said to the unbelieving Jews, *"Why do ye not understand My speech? Even because ye cannot hear My word."* This is the reason the ungodly world has never and will never believe the truth; they can not hear the words of truth, ears they have and hear not, eyes they have and see not, hearts and understand not, and so they can not receive the love of the truth because they can not understand it and do not want to understand, for they hate it. The apostle says, *"And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they might all be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Thess. 2:8-12.* We find again that Christ in speaking to these same people says, If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill Me, because My word hath no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with My Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. They answered and said unto Him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye wouid do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to Him, We be not born of fornication, We have one Father even God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love Me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of Myself, but He sent Me. Why do ye not understand My speech? Even because ye cannot hear My word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of yours father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there was no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

And because I tell you the truth, ye believe Me not, which of you convinceth Me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God. John 8:36-47. Who would have the courage to say that Christ came to earth to suffer and die the cruel death of the cross for these children of the devil, and if He did not, why say that He died for every

man or to give every man a chance to be saved? The world tells us that the Old Baptists believe that some are born for heaven and some born for hell, and if that be true, God would be an unjust God, but I go back further than that even to the creation. God made the devil and made him a seed to serve him and to be cast into the lake of fire with him. Nothing ever changes into something different from what it first was. The seed of the serpent has never changed into the seed of Christ and vice versa. God made the two seeds in the beginning, the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman; the woman representing the Church, the seed of Christ; and decreed that the seed of the serpent shall bruise the heel of the seed of the woman and the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent and his seed; for He says, I will put enmity between the two seeds. Do we not see that enmity strongly manifested in our days?

We never knew a goat to turn into a sheep, neither a sheep turn into a goat, for God decreed, that everything shall bring seed after its own kind, whose seed is itself, and it was so. It seems that the seed of the serpent is much greater in number than the seed of the woman, for the bond woman hath many more children than she hath an husband.

H. L. Rogers

EDITORIAL WAR

"O wretched man that I am Who shall deliver me from the body of this death." (Rom. 7:24).

Methinks as I sit here at my desk and ponder the works of God, I am sure that no portion of Holy Writ contains more tragic pathos than this one does. I am likewise sure that it means nothing to him and her that has not experienced the wretchedness with which the apostle was beset. Too, one that has thus, from day to day, experienced this wretchedness will not be found denying the sovereign work of God in measuring to poor and wretched sinners the measure of faith and grace. What a hard and unbecoming doctrine it is to dangle before poor sinners the doctrine that their life is what they make it. The apostle tells the young minister what to speak. Now are we going by that, or are we going to hew out another way? If so, they may not hold water when we get them. (Jer. 2:13) The way of God's saving grace is a fountain of living waters. This fountain does not rise in the heart of God's children whether the old one, or the new heart. Or does it? If it does rise in the heart of God's children, it is high time that we get the fountain primed and flowing. If it does not rise there, to be consistent, it is high time for any of us not to say that we are able to bring more cleansing powers to the fountain, or

that we can stymie the amount of cleansing done by the fountain.

Does the sinner, dead in his own sin, bring this warfare about? Does he start the activity that causes his wretchedness? Far from it. He is in peace. There is not an opposing force operating against his will, against the law of his mind,-natural mind, which is the only one that he has or that he knows anything about. Again, if this opposing force is sent into him independent of his natural mind, has he then, by that natural mind, got to maintain the warfare?

Nay, isn't it true that the Lord, who undoubtedly sends this stronger force into this strong man, the One that maintains and finishes this work?

Now let us inquire: Have you been brought to this wretched state? Let us inquire a little further about Paul's experience: Who was it that brought the *"lest"* into Paul's life? Was it Paul or the Lord? Wasn't it the Lord that is inspiring Paul to say, ***"lest I should be exalted above measure, through the abundance of revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure."*** Here is one of the greatest mysteries that the child of God has ever met. Did God sit idly by and let Satan give this messenger? Let me look back across the vista of the ages and look in on another servant of the Lord. Did Satan discover the status of Job before the Lord? Was it the will of God for Satan to subject the servant of the Lord to all of the terrible conflict of soul and heart and mind? Ask yourself, Who spoke first about Job, Satan or the Lord? Did Satan seduce, captivate inveigle, outmaneuver the Lord into letting him send His servant through all of this hell?

I am not in the least afraid of what I preach and write. I am often carried into the depths of the slough of despondency as to my relationship with the kingdom of heaven; but the kingdom, never. It is a great mystery but no less the truth, that the Lord sent this terrible conflict on Job. Just recently I heard a man, in his preaching, say that God did not ever use the devil in saving His people. If ever a creature was used, God never used the devil in saving. How much difference is between Job's cry of despair and Paul's cry of wretchedness? Whose hand and power was it that set off the series of events that brought about the trial of each man? Do not be so naive as to suggest to me that it was, in either case because that they were disobedient servants. It was to purge them, try them, wean them, separate the vile from the precious in each of their lives. This trial, this purging is not for lack of fruit-bearing, but it is to cause more fruit to be on the plantings of the Lord. Ah, what a tormenting doctrine it was to poor old Job when his company of so-called friends, taunted him with

that sullied vague doctrine that his condition was because of the lack of fruit-bearing. Our dear Saviour said ***"every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." (John 15:2)***

The children of God have ever felt their sins. The more grace that was given them, the greater feeling of leanness and barrenness. Not the first carping critic can find fault with Paul's life after the Damascus road event, and yet no poor sinner was ready to confess his present sinful condition any more than was he. And Ah, that word, And yet. Go back with me a little ways in his life. At the time of his astounding conversion he was *yet* breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the church of God. At this time he had no conflict; he did not know the meaning of the Christian warfare; he did not know the first thing about wretchedness. But learned a great lesson all at once, and kept right on learning as long as he lived. The first lesson was from heaven, all subsequent lessons were from the same source. These lessons were not because he was disobedient. The warfare of the saints is not based on such cunningly laid fables as that. As he was "yet" breathing out the threatenings and slaughter against the church of God, "yet" after the cessation of this wasting of the church there is not an instance of his going back under that "yet". He did not outwardly live in sin anymore. No man had more sadness in his life than Paul; "Yet" the argument that our blessing and chastenings come to us according to the way we walk and talk falls to ground, and there is not enough logic to put that kind of spurious doctrine together again as it pertains unto the apostle.

His labors more abundant; in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths (among death) more often. This is the life and experience of the obedient Paul. He was blessed to live in the flesh (Christ living in him) in an honorable way, but instead of receiving greater blessings for it, he received more abundant, above measure, more frequent and more often the afflictions of the gospel, which is saying that his warfare waxing heavy and weighty, was not brought upon him because of his sinning more.

From the moment the Lord visited Saul on the Damascus road his warfare started. From that time his sufferings grew in intensity until his death. From that time his devotion, his obedience to the precepts and commandments of the law to Christ, were above reproach. How precious it is to know that the warfare is not a punishment, but that it is the way of the Lord in the trial of His saints. ***"Blessed be God even the Father, of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves***

are comforted of God, for as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the induring of the same sufferings which we also suffer." etc. (Cor. 1:3, 5). What glorious dealings are these. The apostle tells these brethren that his sufferings are (not because of his disobedience, but) for the salvation of others.

"It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I can not tell; or whether out of the body, I can not tell; God knoweth; such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) how that he was caught up into paradise, and he heard unspeakable words, which is not lawful for a man to utter, Of such an one will I glory: "yet" of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities. For though I would desire to glory, shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth; but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me, And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For (in behalf of, or because of) this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." (2 Cor. 12:1, 10; Rom. 5:3, 5; 1 Pet. 4:12, 14; Mat. 5; 10, 11). What a travail of soul that Paul is going through. It is not any wonder that David, in speaking of those that go down to the sea in ships, that they reel to and fro (Psa. 107:27); it is not any wonder that Job said, *"When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise, and the night be gone? and I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day." - (Job 7:4)* It is not any wonder that David, in telling his own travels, says, *"I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me. I am gone like the shadow when it declineth; I am tossed up and down as the locust." (Psa. 109:22, 23)*

What do you see? Do you see a

man that God has favored with abundance of revelations, and yet he is buffeted, smashed at from every direction, that war is raging in his mind, and his soul is in despair and Wretched. If you do, methinks that saving grace, the trial of your faith, the hardships of a soldier of Jesus Christ are strange things to you, and that, without the interceding work of divine mercy, you will never have a warfare, therefore will never have the victory bestowed upon you.

Dearly beloved readers, do not think that a strange thing is happening to you when this mighty chain of God's power comes upon and binds you. It is God at work within and upon you. Your reign of sin is ending as a reign. It has reigned supremely. There has not been any conflict betwen two waring powers. Peace and contentment has been your lot. When in nature we do not visualize a power of such force as coming upon us to disannul everything that we have said, nor are we able to comprehend a power that is able to make void everything that we have done. To that being (and if you and I are children of God, to us) nothing has ever happened to shatter his or her faith in our integrity. We are at home in the body, and have never been present with the Lord, thus being complete in our own resources. Do you remember, dear ones, the first inkling that God gave you that your house was not so with God? If so, as sad as it is, you are highly blessed and favored of God. If this has come upon you, it follows that you will never be the same any more. War has come to your house. Heretofore, if some saint had spoken in sorrow about being molested by Satan, you would not have known of what they speak. Now you know. Now heaven is dealing with you. This you had not known. You were at home in the body, and the kind of teaching that one at home in the body had taught you that a follower of the Lord would have a happy and serene life here and afterwards heaven and immortal glory. But the scenes are changing. The delusive vision is passing away. Your hand is often reached for the eyes to brush away that which impedes the sight, but repeated efforts to remove the sorrows of the way are a failure. The dust (we are dust) is thrown into a disarray by the clash of the armies, and the maze causes consternation.

This war, when it begins, causes everything to be disarrayed and out of order. We begin to try to restore things as we had been led to think we could at any time do. Now the taste of blood is to be had. What a shock, for it is our blood being shed. Devastation has come into our life. The things we had depended on will not buoy us up. The bread that had strengthened us has lost its taste and is stale; the drink in our cistern has lost its assuaging power of our thirst, and it is fast leaking out (Jer. 2:13) The clothing of our dexterous weaving will not cover our nakedness any longer. The dire necessi-

ties that arise when war is spreading over the land causes deep groanings.

As the stronger antagonist begins the steady dealing with the strong, his first act is to overpower and bind him. It would seem that all theologians agree that this is Christ dealing with a sinner. The first thing they read is the binding of the strong man. And they leave that reading, they leave what they have clearly in the letter seen, and at once they leave the spot and go forth telling sinners that they have things in your hands, that you are the master of your destiny, that you are a free moral agent, that you can please God by going to heaven, or you can displease him by taking the road to hell. You can do as you please, because it is up to you. That is not the experience that every strong person has been brought to that has been dealt with by the stronger man. He is first bound. Now have you been bound? Secondly, he will spoil his goods.

Now, dear reader, has yours been spoiled? He will disarm him and her of every weapon and tool that they thought they had. Has the fight been taken out of you? Have you lost your resistance? Have the things that you had depended on and trusted in, failed you? He will spoil your house. Has yours been spoiled? Do you now cry out in anguish that your house is not so with God. If so, to these things, the war has set in, and the ravages of it will last as long as you are in this vale of tears.

Warfare reduces the arms of every warrior if they are not replenished. These arms have been removed and wrest out of your grasp, and you are left to the greatest conflagration a sinner has ever experienced. The combat is between the works of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit. They both are in us, if so be that the stronger has come upon us. I am sure that if it were a ball game Paul was discussing, that each reader could give a clear description of it play by play. How many can give a description of the sorrow and anguish that is produced in the heaving bosom of everyone exercised in this way. Oh, they say, that is not a mystery. Anyone that can read, can instantly tell just what is under consideration. You may think that I am impugning the motives of million of Christians. But I assure that you I am not. I am taking the Bible as my only man of my counsel. Of Primitive Baptists I am sure, and they profess to believe that ***"we take the Scriptures of the Old, and New Testaments as the inspired words of God, and they are the only rule of faith and practice."*** If they live up to that well and good. If they do not, there is not anything good about it. By far the greater portion of them spend a lot of printer's ink in telling us that they can handle this situation of the works of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit being in them. But Paul denies that. He says, ***"The flesh lusteth against the***

Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye can not do as you would." I am sorrowful because of this. I would like to be able to do as I would, and if I am not badly mistaken, I have a desire to do good, but I am not able to do so. I fit the description of those that Paul gives of these Galatians. Do you? If so, the warfare is intense indeed.

This warfare is alike in every child of God. The intensity and degree may vary, but the warfare is the same. The hymn writer said,

> *Tis seldom I can ever see*
> *Myself as I would wish to be;*
> *What I desire, I can't attain,*
> *From what I hate. I can't refrain,*

and I am sure that this is the wailing cry of every sorely tried warrior in this warfare. It was the lamentation of Paul. Is it of you? Or can you attain to that which you desire? If so, can you refrain from what you hate? If so, the warfare has not started in your life.

"That which I do I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that I do. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members. Warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death. I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God but with the flesh the law of sin." (Rom. 7:15, 25).

My heart's desire is that it might be made manifest that our victory and deliverance comes through Him that led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men, and among those gifts was fighting the good fight of faith which saves and makes whole. (Mark 5:34; Luke 8:48; 7:50; 18:42)

W.D.Griffin

"Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end."- PROVERBS xix. 20.

WHAT lessons we need day by day to teach us any-

thing aright, and how it is for the most part ***"line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little."*** O what slow learners, What dull, forgetful scholars, what ignoramuses, what stupid blockheads, what stubborn pupils! Surely no scholar at a school, old or young, could learn so little of natural things as we seem to have learned of spiritual things after so many years instruction, so many chapters read, so many sermons heard, so many prayers put up, so much talking about religion. How small, how weak is the amount of grace compared with all we have read and heard and talked about. But it is a mercy that the Lord saves whom he will save, and that we are saved by free grace, and free grace alone, through the blood and righteousness of the Son of God. ***"He of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption;"*** so that if we have him we have everything, and if we have him not we have nothing. Where these things are felt they will cause exercise of soul, with many prayers and supplications to the God of all our mercies; and all this will strip and empty us of that light, superficial, and flimsy profession which seems so current in our day.

Elder J.C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 2009

Carlton Sumner, Va 5.00
Charles Mathews, LA 35.00
Henry Lanier, NC 5.00
David Pittman, VA 5.00
Ruby Queen, KY 5.00
Amy Heppler, AZ..... 5.00
Francis Neal, AR 5.00
(In memory of Elder John Townley)
Dorothy Callahan, NC 5.00
Don Ferguson, BC CAN 45.00
David Spangler, VA..... 5.00
Glenna Link, TN 20.00
Loy Rodgers, AR..... 5.00

OBITUARIES

SIS. OPHELIA "PHOEBE" BIRD

On August 16, 2009 Sister Bird was called from her suffering. She was born on March 5, 1924. She had many health problems, But now by the grace of God those tribulations have been removed.

She is survived by two daughters, Diane Caldarera , Laura Crowell and one son, Perry A. Bird, four grandchildren and three great Grandchildren, and a host of friends.

She attended the Primitive Baptist church for many years with her husband of 56 years, Miles Bird, before asking for a home at Pleasant Hope Primitive Church on April 23, 2006. She was baptized on May 27, 2006 by Elder C.C. Morris.

Sister Phoebe's funeral service was held at August Centuries Memorial Chapel.

Her favorite song was ***"There Is A House Not Made With Hands"***. A Song she called for at almost every meeting.

Miles T. Bird *(Husband)*

CARRY MCDANIEL

It is with a sad heart that I try to write an obituary of our sister Carry McDaniel.

As we were the last two members at Old Mountain Church.

She joined April 14, 1979 and was baptized May 19, 1979. She passed away Oct. 27, 2008 in the Danville Hospital after a lengthy illness.

She was trustee and treasurer of the church for a number of years Sister Carry was born in Pittsylvania County, Va. September 22.1926 to the late Robert Lee Brumfield, and Annie Maria Dalton Brumfield on September 18 1948. She was married to Gilmer Mc Daniels.

She was a graduate of Schoolfield High School and was retired from Dan River Mills. She has lived her entire life in Pittsylvania County ahd Danville, Va. And been in declining health the last two years.

In addition to her husband, of the residence she is survived by three sons. Ted Mc Macdanies and his wife Linda, of Winchester, Va. Alan McDaniels and his wife Deneta, of Danville. Va. And Dannie Mc Daniels of the residence, four grandchildren. Michelle Walls and her husband, Josh of Newport News, Va. Brian McDaniels and wife Miracle of Poway, Ca. Morgan McDaniels Winchester, Va. and Christopher McDaniels of Danville,Va. She also is survived by one great grand grandson, Jaden Walls of Newport News, Va. and one step granddaughter, Ivy Foy of Poway, Ca. She was predeceased by two brothers, Perrow Brumfield and Ollie Brumfield, and four sisters Mamie Brumfield, Doris Rowland, Sagester Hudgens, and Minnie Rowland. Memorial service was held Oct. 30, 2008 at Wrenn and Yeatts Westover Chapel by Elder Mark Terry. Grave side service was held at a later date.

Written by one who loved her,
Sarah Barker

LILLIAN CLIFTON WOOD

Our Heavenly Father has called from our midst another precious member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. It is with much sadness that I attempt to write a memorial for Sister Lillian Clifton Wood.

Sister Lillian was born on July 27, 1924 in Draper, NC. Her parents were the late Alga D. Clifton and Rosa Elizabeth Rakes Clifton. Her parents moved to the Vesta area when Sister Lillian was small. She lived in that community until she married.

On February 14, 1942 Sister Lillian married Brother Harley Wood. They made their home in Pelham, NC. Brother Harley served in Germany during World War II from 1942 to 1946. Sister Lillian was an excellent homemaker. She also worked for Burlington Industries for seventeen years.

Brother and Sister Wood were blessed with four wonderful children: a son, Danny, who died the day of his birth, a son Mark C. Wood, and two daughters, Brenda W. Spangler and Rita W. Paschal.

Sister Lillian was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace. She received a precious hope in Christ. She and her husband asked for a home at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on June 13, 1976. They were baptized by their pastor, the late Elder David Spangler. Sister Lillian loved her church and brethren. She would always greet her church family with a sweet smile and a gracious embrace. She attended regularly and gave her support as long as her health permitted. Her love for the church and interest in the welfare of Zion never wavered. Sister Lillian always inquired about the welfare of her brethren and her church. The last several years of her life she was unable to attend services. Sister Lillian departed this life on February 26, 2009. She is survived by a son, Mark C. Wood and wife Charlie Mae, daughters Brenda W. Spangler and husband Wayne, Rita W. Paschal and husband Irvin, six grandchildren, four great grandchildren, one brother, Bill Clifton and a sister Reva Reeves.

Sister Lillian was preceded in death by her parents, her husband, Harley Wood, an infant son, Danny Wood, a grandson, Anthony Paschal, two brothers and three sisters.

Her funeral was conducted at Dan River Primitive Church on February 28, 2009 at 11:00 A.M. by her pastor Elder Kenneth Key. Her body was laid to rest beside her husband, Brother Harley Wood, in Dan River Church Cemetery to await the Resurrection Morning when Christ shall come to gather his children home.

May God comfort and sustain her family and all who mourn the loss of our dear sister but we are made to believe by hope that our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by one who loved her,
Phyllis H. Stroud

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
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THE OLD BAPTISTS

They greeted each other with unconditional love
The kind that comes from God above.

They preached salvation, pure and sweet
Sometimes they washed each other's feet.

They took communion with bread and wine
Knowing it came from God's living vine.

They sang songs from Lloyd's hymn book
No music was needed, they had what it took.

They ended with the parting hand
Leaving with the hope of a better land.

They taught me all of these great things
And I learned what true salvation means.

I'd watch them sing, preach, and pray
I knew there was no other way.

Today when I go to church
I seek out the Old Baptists first.

Knowing they practice what they preach
Makes me want to be where they meet.

My mom and dad loved it so
No other place would they go.

So I'm following their lead
As I try to live my life.

And the "Hope of Salvation"
Will forever be my guiding light.

Written by: Wynette Allen Smith
In memory of my parents: Elder Milton J. Allen and Ruth Mitchell Allen November 1, 2008

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EDITORIALS

"GO AND SHEW JOHN AGAIN THOSE THINGS WHICH YOU DO HEAR AND SEE."

St. Matthew 11:4: "Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which you do hear and see."

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

As Jesus spoke these words, John was in prison. No doubt, John was in a natural prison; but I also believe that he was in a spiritual prison. Each of you who have been called out of nature's darkness and into His marvelous light can witness with John. I believe that John typifies the church. In your experiences have you not come to the place where you felt to be in prison. Where you felt that the Lord had turned His face from you; that He had completely forsaken you. And there was no one who could help you; that could reach your case. You felt that you had come to the end of the way.

My dear people, so much of my time is spent in prisons and dark places. So much of the time I feel separated from the people that I love so much and surrounded by the things of the world. I believe John

was in this condition. This was the same John that had leaped for joy in his mother's womb at the salutation of Mary, mother of Jesus. This was the same John who saw Jesus coming to be baptized and said, ***"Behold the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."*** This is the same John who baptized Jesus in the river Jordan and who saw the heavens opened and the spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon Jesus and heard a voice from heaven saying, ***"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."*** This is the same John of whom Jesus said, ***"Verily I say unto you among them that are born of women there has not risen a greater than John the Baptist, not withstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."*** Yes, even John had come to the place where he was made to doubt and to wonder and to inquire, ***"Art thou He that should come or do we look for another."*** My dear people, have you not come to the place where you inquired of Jesus through your groanings - Lord, is this the way? Lord grant some evidence that I might know that this is the way. Lord, have I been completely deceived in the whole matter. Grant a handful of purpose along the way.

Jesus was walking upon this earth at the time that John was in prison. He had the power that he could have presented himself there in person to John, but John had to learn the same lessons that you and I must learn. He had to learn to live in this life by faith. Jesus sent two unto John. To me, this is faith and hope that were sent to comfort John, just as in this day the Lord sends faith and hope unto every child that is called by His grace. Yes, when you feel that time and just in the right amount.

I also believe that this is setting forth the calling and qualifying of God's ministers. Today, there seems to be so many that are so anxious to be ordained as ministers; but my dear people, if God has not called them, what do they have to say that is comforting and edifying.

In the scripture Jesus showed these that He sent to John His power, His love, His mercy, and then He sent them telling them to ***"go and show John again those things which you do hear and see."*** John has to be shown again and again as you and I; for so often we find ourselves in prisons and in dark places. These ministers whom Jesus had sent had something to say that was comforting to John because Jesus had shown them and told them these things. They had been qualified by the Lord. They had to tell of those things they had heard with their own ears, seen with their own eyes and handled with their own hands.

"Go and shew John again those things which you do hear and see, the blind receive their

sight." There was a time when we were blind, that we thought we were as good as anyone else. We had heard the name of Jesus, but we knew nothing about Him. We had seen the church with our natural eyes, but it meant nothing to us. Then when we received our sight, we saw the terrible condition that we were in, We saw what great sinners we were. We saw how wretched, undone and lost that we were unless saved by the grace of God. We saw as Isaiah said, ***"In the year that King Uzziah died I also saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up and His train filled the temple."*** Yes, there must be a death for us to see the Lord high and lifted up. We saw also for the first time the beauty of the church, the Lord's people. We saw those who walked with bowed heads and heavy hearts; and though we desired so much to be one of them, we felt too vile and too unworthy. When I think of the blind receiving their sight and their eyes being opened as it were, I think of the old prophet Elisha as he was compassed about by a host of his enemies. ***"And his servants said unto him, alas my Master! how shall we do?"*** And the old prophet answered, ***"Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them, and Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man and he saw: and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."***

"Go and shew John again those things which you do hear and see and the lame walk." When one is lame, he cannot walk of his own power. When one is brought to realize that he is in a lame condition, he begins to look for any crutch that the world has to offer. A child of God is brought in such a way that he finds no crutch. He finally comes to what seems to him to be the end and is made to beg unto his God for help. There was a certain man who had an infirmity thirty and eight years lying on one of the five porches of the pool at Jerusalem. To me the five porches are as the five stones that David selected from the brook and used only one to slay Goliath. They represent the five books of the law. This man was under the law of sin and death and realized that no man could help him; for when Jesus said unto him, ***"Wilt thou be made whole?"*** The man answered, ***"Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me."*** Jesus saith unto him, ***"Arise, take up thy bed and walk."*** Only the Lord could help his condition. Yet, his bed of trials and afflictions must go with him.

"Go and shew John again those things which you do hear and see, The lepers are cleansed." Leprosy represents sin and

only through the shed blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is one cleansed of this disease. Only those that the Father gave Him of which He lost none are cleansed. How precious is the hope in our breast that we are included in that number that he suffered, bled, and died on the cross for.

"Go and shew John again those things which you do hear and see and the deaf hear." Wasn't there a time with you when you were deaf to the gospel. When you heard only words that had no meaning to you. Yes, a time when you could see the tears rolling down the cheeks of one with his head bowed and you wondered why. Yet, there came a time when you were given spiritual ears to hear, and the good news from a far country touched your heart. When Christ says, let those with a hearing ear hear, can any man close up this ear? Can you refuse to hear? No, this is the effectual work of a sovereign God who speaks and it is done and commands and it stands fast.

"Go and shew John again those things which you do hear and see; The dead are raised up." I believe in a God who has all power in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. I believe in one who can raise those who are dead naturally, but I believe the reference here is to those who are dead spiritually. There was a time when you were dead to the things that be of God. There was a time when you were too much a part of the world to have any interest in the things of the spirit; and yet, at the appointed time, it pleased this sovereign God to separate you from the world, showing you were predestinated to be conformed to the image of His son. Yes, it pleased this God to raise you up from the dead; and you were able to witness with David when he said, ***"He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay and set my feet upon a rock and established my goings and He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God."*** Your baptism was typical of the resurrection as you were buried in the liquid grave and raised again a new creature in Christ.

"Go and shew John again those things which you do hear and see: the poor have the gospel preached to them." Jesus said, ***"Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven."*** Here Jesus is saying that the poor in spirit are already blessed because theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, the poor in spirit are the elect family of God, and the scripture states that they have the gospel preached to them. Yet, the world through its self-works and self-righteousness is trying to send paid emissaries to every corner of the world for fear that someone will not be preached to; and therefore, will be lost. My bible says just the opposite. The poor *have* the

gospel preached to them and blessed are the poor, for theirs *is* the kingdom of heaven. It never ceases to amaze me to behold the effectual working of such a wonderful, merciful and yet powerful God that can bring one who is so opposed to the doctrine of salvation by grace, to the sound of the gospel being preached and to see the tears streaming down their face when they hear this wonderful news. There is no room for the works of man and for his doctrine. When one is poor in spirit, he sees just how small man is and just how unable man is to do anything of his own.

"Go and shew John again those things which you do hear and see: Blessed is he whosover should not be offended in me." Somehow, my dear people, I feel that those who have experienced receiving their sight, the lame walking, the lepers being cleansed, the deaf hearing, the dead raised up and the poor having the gospel preached to them, that they are blessed not to be offended in Christ. The world will try you seemingly at every hand. I have had complete strangers by nature to tell me that my clothes looked like an old Primitive Baptist, people I had never seen before nor had I been introduced to them, yet somehow it did not offend me; for I desire to be one of you, and I am not ashamed to look like you. I am not ashamed to be recognized as one of you, for I feel that the Lord has done something for you that you couldn't do for yourself. Yes, ***"Go and show John again those things which you do hear and see."***

Yours in hope,
Cleo D. Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editors of the Signs,

I wish to thank you so much for the Signs and for all the ministers who are so abled to explain the true meanings of scripture giving God's children so much love and the joy in understanding the words and expecially poor babes going through the travels giving them joy in understanding why these travels are necessary to understand. I am sending you a check for two years of the paper and a little more to be used as you need (I will soon be 90 years old, please forgive writing).

We had to close our doors in our church because, my brother Elder David Godwin who has been our main minister for many years soon will be a 100 years old and unable to keep it up, and there just are not many of our ministers left. We thank Elder David Godwin for staying this long. We miss it very much but thanks for the Signs and all the people who are keeping it going for only God's people can understand

the travels of the children of God and why it is necessary to be blessed to go there. God Bless and Keep it going for us poor sinners. I have read this book many years with joy.

If I know my heart written with love,
Katherine Mathews

September 14, 2009

Good Morning Elder Key,

Just want to say "Thank You" for printing Daddy's article on "What Is Truth." I thoroughtly enjoyed reading it again.

Enclosed you will find a poem I wrote in memory of my parents. I was going to send it with Daddy's article, but I forgot. I thought you might like a copy of it.

Thanks for printing "Signs of the Times" and please continue to do so.

In Christian Love,
Wynette Allen Smith

PSALM 33:20-21.

Our soul waiteth for the Lord: he is our help and our shield.

For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.

VOICES OF THE PAST

Mr. & Mrs. H. L. Rogers

SAVED BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH
Denton, Ky,

Dear Brother Wood :

It seems that I am impressed to pen a few of my thoughts on the following portion of scripture, and if you think they would be of interest to your readers, you may publish them; it not, cast them aside and all will be well with me.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves: It is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."-Ephesians 2:8-9

What a blessing it is for one to be a witness to this experience by feeling and understanding; and also by knowledge of the blessed truth

which is contained in this portion of sacred scripture. I very often wonder if many of the Lord's dear and afflicted people are given to seriously consider this portion of scripture in its fulness, and to see just what is contained therein. Please notice the first words of the sentence, ***"For by grace are ye saved"*** — not were ye saved only, but are ye saved, in the present tense. That is, if I understand just what the apostle meant, that the children of God who were chosen in Christ their blessed Lord by grace before the world was, and that that grace did not cease there, but follows on through time to eternity; so they are daily being saved from the errors of the world, and from their trials and temptations, and from the snares of their enemies, and the snares of Satan. They are daily preserved, and where sin abounds in them, grace does much more abound in them.

Webster defines grace as an unmerited favor and love of God. I do not know whether this definition of the word does justice to the word scripturally, or not. But, anyway, if we had to do as much as raise our heads and look unto the fillament of heaven in order to obtain this grace, it could not be said that grace was an unmerited favor; and so we have that much to boast of, but boasting is excluded. Before the saving grace was made known to us we were dead in trespasses and sins, and totally passive. But God who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved) ; and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Eph. 2 : 5-6. Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them to the end. God did not begin to love His people, neither will He ever cease to love them, for His love is everlasting: As He says, ***"I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."*** And we read, And you hath he quickened (given life) who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we all had our conversation in time past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath even as others.

So as far as nature is concerned, there is no difference between the children of God and the children of wrath; but as far as the Spirit is concerned, they, the Lord's people, have always been His beloved people, and preserved by His grace, unmerited on their part.

The next portion of our text which we will consider is faith. By grace are ye saved through faith. Webster defines the word faith as

belief; trust in the honesty and truth of another; the assent of the mind to divine revelation, etc. But it seems to me that this definition does not harmonize very well with the definition given by the apostle Paul. He says, Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. The substance of this faith, which is the spiritual; evidence which the hope of the people of God is founded on, has strengthened and given them courage to yield to the block, or be burned at the stake, rather than to recant the principles of the doctrine which they have been taught, and experienced by the revelation of the Spirit of their God. And through this faith they are saved here in time from the snare of false doctrine, and deceivings of the evil spirit. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it he being dead yet speaketh. Please keep in mind that it is said in the Holy Scriptures that, without faith it is impossible to please God: and it is also said that all men have not faith. And it is said that faith is the gift of God; and the fruit of the Spirit. So no man has this faith except those who have been regenerated and born of the spirit of God. Those who are dead in sins have no faith, therefore they cannot please God. But the children of God have by grace through faith been blessed to do wonderful things. By faith Noah being warned of God of things not seen, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by faith Abraham when he was called to go out into a place which he should afterwards receive for an inheritance, obeyed, and he went out not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, for he looked for a city which hath foundation, who's maker and builder is God. Through faith Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised; therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promise, but having seen it afar off and persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. To them Christ had not come in the flesh on earth, and had not suffered and died on the cross- had not, as far as they were concerned, redeemed them from the curse of the law which they were held under. Yet with God the work of redemption was already completed, for His beloved Son stood with Him as a lamb slain from before the foundation of the world. They had re-

ceived the promise which was made to Abraham their father, that Christ would come and redeem them from the bondage of the law; and so they staggered not at the promise, but firmly believing through this faith, which is the substance of the things they hoped for, that God would keep His promise. So by faith they had no fear of the misery of an everlasting destruction.

I heard a Baptist preacher say in his preaching that the old patriarchs went to heaven on a credit; and afterwards Christ, their surety, came and paid the debt which they owed and could not pay themselves. I do not know whether this was a proper expression and illustration of the redemption of our blessed Lord or not, but that was the way he put it.

By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: he that had received the promise offered his son, of whom it was said, In Isaac shall thy seed be called; accounting that God was able to raise him from the dead, from whence also he received him in a figure. This was a figure to those who were blessed by faith to see and understand their blessed Lord, who; was to come and be put to death for their sins, and raised again that they might live forever. By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith Jacob when he was dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph, and worshiped. By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave commandment concerning his bones. By faith Moses when he was born, was hid three months by his parents because they saw him a proper child, and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. By faith Moses when he was come of years, refused to be called the son of Pharoah's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible. Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of the blood, lest he that destroyed the first born should touch them. By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, which the Egyptians assaying to do, were drowned. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were compassed about seven days. By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she received the spies with peace. Time would fail me to tell all of these. Read the eleventh chapter of Hebrews.

All these things which were done, they were blessed by the power of God to do through faith: by grace looking forward to the coming of their blessed Lord, who is the substance of their faith and hope; which hope they had as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high

priest forever after the order of Melehisedec.

Let us now consider briefly the last portion of our text, And that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works lest any man should boast. We believe that the Lord's chosen people have good works to do as God works in them to will and to do of His own good pleasure. But they must first have life - life precedes all action so they must first be born again. (Not work in order to be born). And even after they are born again of the Spirit, they cannot do anything of themselves. Christ, our Lord, said, ***"Without Me ye can do nothing."*** So, if those who have been born again can do nothing, then why, oh why, should we think that a dead sinner who knows not God, could do anything to bring himself into favor with God.

There are five senses of life seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling and tasting; and so long as a man has even one of these senses, it cannot be said that he is dead. Before a man can have these senses he must be born into this natural world ; then he is capable of seeing, hearing, feeling, etc, the things of the kingdom which he is born into: he must be born a natural birth before he can see this world or kingdom. He is born with a natural or carnal mind only, which mind cannot go beyond this natural kingdom; and he knows nothing about this natural kingdom whatever before his birth. So, to have the spiritual senses of a spiritual life, he must be born again, not of corruptible seed, but by an incorruptible seed by the word which is the Son of God. But if a man has none of these senses of life; and only has a mind which is enmity to God, and not subject lo his law, neither indeed can be, how in the world could he; believe, or accept? Such a thing would be absurd.

We see from the above truth that no man can have a spiritual life except as a free gift of God; and it is to those to whom it pleases God to bestow it: which is a certain remnant of human family; as the apostle Paul says: ***"Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace."*** And if by grace it is no more of works - it is not part works, and part grace. The two belong to different covenants. If we had to believe, or accept, in order to be born again, that would be of our own works; and our salvation

I would depend on our believing and accepting, without which we would not be saved; and salvation would not be a free gift, but would depend on us: and if we failed to do that which is required of us, then God would fail to do or comply with His part of the contract, and so, no salvation. If all should fail (which they certainly would) then Christ died in vain, and (heaven would be empty; and the place called hell would not hold them. Grace would be no more grace. Paul continues by saying, ***"But if it be of works,***

then it is no more of grace, otherwise work is no more work. Meaning that if it is of grace, there are no works in it. If it be of works there is no such thing as grace in the matter.

Please remember the text, which reads, *"For by grace ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. Paul says in his epistle to Titus, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy he us saved by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost."* And in Romans 4:4, *"Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace but of debt; but to him who worketh not but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly his faith is counted for righteousness."* When he says, *"Them that worketh not,"* he means, as we think, he who is not expecting to receive eternal life by his own works; but who's trust and faith is wholly in God. If it were of works, it would be a debt which God would justly owe him for his work; a debt, it would not therefore be of grace. He also says, *"If Abraham were justified by works, he had whereof to glory, but not before God."* So man can glory in his own works before God. He may glory before men, but not before God. All of man's works of righteousness before God are but filthy rags: to be ragged looks bad enough, but to be ragged an filthy too, looks very bad indeed; and that is just what every man is before God. God only can take away man's filthy rags and clothe him with the righteousness of our blessed Lord; He only can change our garments and at His appointed time Zechariah says, *"And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said to Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan : even the Lord that hath chose Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel."* And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, *"Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment."*

He did not tell Joshua if he would believe or accept, or do anything, that he would cause his iniquity to pass, and give him a change of raiment. So God can, and does, give us a change of heart, and takes away our filthy garments without requiring anything in exchange for it. His grace is free to those of His choice: if it were not free, it would not be of grace. When God reveals to one of His little ones His lost and ruined condition, Satan always

stands by and whispers that God will not save unless he does something for God: that God does not save lives for nothing. He tells him the same falsehood that he told Eve in the garden of Eden: that God does know that ye shall not surely die, but that you have become as gods, knowing good and evil; and that it is up to you to choose between them; and except you choose the good, and do and be good, God will not save you. This causes him much anxiety and misery for a season, until his blessed Lord comes and reveals himself, and tells him to, Fear not little one, for it's your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. It is the gift of God - not of works lest any man should boast.

Yours in a blessed hope,
H. L. ROGERS

WHAT MANNER OF LOVE

"Behold, (observe with care)what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." I Jno. 3:1, 2.

In the foregoing, John, the apostle, and one of the twelve princes sitting upon twelve thrones, gives no occurrence of anything taking place, nor gives the least space of time between Christ's appearance and when we shall be like Him, and see Him as He is. Again Paul, the apostle, and one of the princes sitting on the twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, has the following to say in bearing witness to the same truth as John, *"Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall all be changed." (1 Cor. 15:51, 52).* Here again the apostle gives no occurrence of anything taking place between the sound of the trumpet, and *"the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall all be changed."* with the exception of, "In a moment, in the twinking of an eye.

Again, this apostle of the Lamb of God writes, *"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive*

and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (Thess. 4:13-18) .

Again this same apostle writes, *"For our conversation is in heaven from whence also we look for the Savior. the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Phil. 3:20, 21).* This change and fashioning our vile body is in accord with all the foregoing scripture; and indeed all the holy scriptures treating on the glorious resurrection of all the saints of God.

In speaking of the vile body, Paul said, *"...It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power ; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."* Therefore, *"We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. 15:51-58).*

All the foregoing scripture, and all the other scripture treating on the change and resurrection of the saints of God in Christ's likeness, have been and still are of great comfort to me; we have every reason to believe that they were to the apostles who were given the revelation to see, believe and write the scriptures. Furthermore, the apostles believed that the same teaching would be of great comfort to all the people of Christ's kingdom in this life, throughout the gospel

dispensation; otherwise they would not have exhorted them, saying, *"Wherefore, comfort ye one another with these words."* And these words were, as he had previously stated, *"by the word of the Lord."*

The prophet in reference to the redemption by the atonement Jesus made and accomplished for His people, writes "*Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath (past tense) received of the Lord's hand, double for all her sins." Isa. 40:1, 2.* So, likewise, just as the atonement Christ made for the sins of His people, is comforting to them, so is the doctrine of the resurrection of Christ, and of all His people, to be glorified in His likeness the very instant He personally appears unto them in all His glory, is of great comfort to them. And will be the fulfilling of their hope, and will be the fulness of joy, peace and rest in Jesus' likeness, to ever be with the Lord. For, *"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."*

Now, we believe with all our heart and mind both by experience and the teaching of the scriptures, that *"... the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all (all manner of) men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus 2:11-14).*

All of these good works are wrought in them by the same spirit of grace which teaches them; and its teaching includes correction, reproving and rebuking, the trying of their faith, though it be tried as by fire, but afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby.

After Paul had admonished the brethren, saying, *"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ: that everyone may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad,"* he followed it by saying, *"Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men."* Therefore we are persuaded that Paul not only knew the terror of the Lord by revelation, or the Old Testament, but by experience also, just as every child of grace knows it. For he most surely was one of these sons, *"whom the Lord loveth"* and chas-

tens and scourges. (Job 5:17; Heb. 12:5; Rev. 3:10). Likewise one of those sons which John speaks of, ***"But we do know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is,"*** and be one of the many sons which the Captain of their salvation will bring to glory. Surely, there is no greater evidence that a child of grace can have in this life that Christ loved him and atoned for his sins, than that He chastises and scourges him. ***"For if we be without chastisement, wherewith all (sons) are partakers, then they are bastards and not sons."***

The dear Lord of glory is not charging their sins to them by chastising them but simply bringing them to, and giving them repentance for the sins which He has (past tense) already atoned for. This is exactly what He (Jesus) is exalted a Prince and a Savior to do ***"to give repentance to Israel, and the forgiveness of sins."*** This is directly in accord with His promise which He promised in the New Covenant, swearing to it and sealed it with His precious blood, saying, ***"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."*** All of our righteousness of the flesh is as filthy rags in his sight, and therefore we are taught and convicted that we are poor, needy wretches of ourselves, and therefore can only be a spared vessel of mercy: which mercy the dear Lord has promised to His chosen people, and for which mercy they humbly and sincerely desire and pray for. Likewise, they hunger and thirst after righteousness, and have His promise that they will be filled therewith in the glorious resurrection in His likeness. Here we have an earnest hope, faith and assurance that there we will receive the fulness in Jesus' likeness; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

David ignorantly passed the sentence of death upon himself; but when the prophet told him. ***"Thou art the man,"*** he confessed, ***"I have sinned against the Lord."*** Nathan said to him, ***"The Lord also hath put away thy sin."*** But Nathan further told David, ***"...the sword shall never depart from thine house," etc. (2 Sam. 12).*** This is evidence that though the Lord had put away David's sin, charging them to Christ Jesus, yet he would be chastised of the Lord, and have to continually repent, begging for mercy and forgiveness: just as he testified to throughout his writings in the Psalms, saying, ***"Have mercy upon me, O Lord, according to thy lovingkindness; according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions."*** Thus David's entire writing is a mixture of joy and sorrow, repentance and praise, which was from his heart in the Spirit of Christ Jesus. If David had not had faith, hope and assurance that the Lord had put away his sin by the

sacrifice of Himself, but would remember his sin against him at a later date, then he would have been of all men most miserable without God or hope in the world. But instead, he did have these assurances, and could thereby say, ***"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."*** ***(Psa. 17:15.)***

The poor woman brought to Christ condemned by the law of Moses, yet no man was worthy to condemn her, except Christ; and He did not, saying unto her, ***"Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more."*** And, while Jesus could and did forgive this poor woman's sins, just as He forgives all His people, even the chief of sinners, simply because and upon the ground that He would meet and satisfy divine justice in their stead by His own sacrifice and atoning blood upon the cursed cross; being made a curse for them. However, neither this woman nor David, nor any other of the Lord's people can forgive themselves of their sins: for God only by the sacrifice of His own Son can forgive sins. Regardless of how much they may seek repentance as Esau did with tears, God only sovereignly holds the key of repentance of forgiveness of sins. He, and He alone prepared Himself an offering in the gospel Son of His true, darling, eternal Son, in truth and love. He was the offering, the only offering which He prepared for the redemption, sanctification, justification of His people. (Gen. 22:8; Heb. 10:5). And He (Jesus) being made perfect, who thereby obtained eternal redemption for His people, whereby nothing in time nor in eternity can be laid to their charge. Everything that Jesus did as a Redeemer and Savior of His people, He did it for them, and it is theirs by gift, set to their credit and benefit in the very presence and pleasure of the Majesty on high. And He is perfectly satisfied, reconciled and glorified, both in Himself and in His Son and in His people. And we truly, faithfully and sincerely hope that we believe that the triune Jehovah, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, are three persons, but one in the essence of the divine nature. And that all He has ever done or ever will do, it is in perfect wisdom, righteousness and judgment, without any variableness or shadow of a turn. We further believe that all scripture is given by divine revelation, and is the only authority given for our faith, order and practice: whether it be in nature or grace, natural or spiritual, earthly or divine. All of which we are wholly and completely dependent upon the sovereign providence and grace of the all wise, almighty, true and living God of heaven, earth and all deep places.

"Now to him that is able to keep you (us) from falling, and present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior be glory and Majesty,

dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen." (Jude 23, 25)

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PHILIPPIANS IV. 5.

"Let your moderation be known to all men."

First. It seems to us that this brief sentence is inseparably connected with the preceding verse, and with the two following verses, and that this was so in the mind of the apostle. The Holy Ghost has placed these admonitions together so that each one could seem to grow out of that which immediately precedes it. The one central thought in all these four verses is, first, trust in the Lord and then rejoice in him. The following expressions set this forth clearly: ***"Rejoice in the Lord." "The Lord is at hand." "Let your requests be made known unto God." "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds."*** The apostle reminds his brethren that theirs is a high and holy calling, that they serve the King of Kings, that in him there is safety perfect and entire, and therefore there is for them no need of anxiety, nor care, nor restlessness, but, on the contrary, that they may rest in full assurance that all is well. Men of the world may run to and fro, and here and there, seeking to build for themselves secure hiding-places and settled foundations; but to the brethren no such need existed, since God was himself their refuge and since he is always at hand. These are, as it seems to us, the general thoughts of this Scripture. These things all the people of God have need of, and of all these things it is good to be reminded, that our strife and restless seeking after that which we call good may cease, and that we may come to believe and rest in God. The things presented to the church at Philippi by the apostle are also needful for all who believe.

Second. Let us trace briefly the connection between the six special clauses of these four verses. First, always rejoicing in the Lord is enjoined; this must include all that pertains to him in his holy character and in his redemption. Believers rejoice because their Lord is their King, Lawgiver and Judge; because he is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him; because he so loved them that he gave his only begotten Son to die for them, and to justify them freely by his finished work upon Calvary; because he never leaves them nor forsakes them; because he is a defense round about them, so that no enemy can set upon them to do them harm, and because he supplies all their need through riches of grace in Christ Jesus. They are, all of them, poor, weak and sinful, yet they have

room to rejoice in him. Yea, just because they lack all things their rejoicing must be in him. All that can produce sorrow and shame is found in them, but though sorrowful they are always rejoicing in him, for in him are riches for their poverty, strength for their weakness, righteousness for their sinfulness and redemption for their lost estate. They are shut out of all room for rejoicing in self and shut up unto rejoicing in the Lord Jesus Christ. A sinner says, What have I to rejoice in? I am empty, wretched, blind, miserable, naked and lost. Yes, all this is true, but sinners are not bidden to rejoice in themselves. Is there not enough in the blessed Lord to cause rejoicing in the hearts of all such sinners? Nay, more than this, none save a lost condemned, perishing sinner ever can see anything in the blessed Lord to cause rejoicing. Jesus is the precious honeycomb. He that is full of self and of his own ways will loathe this precious honeycomb, according to the testimony, A full soul loathes the honeycomb. But if in our weakness we are persuaded of the riches of grace and glory in the blessed Jesus, then indeed must we rejoice in the Lord, and rejoice always.

Third. Among the things connected with rejoicing in the Lord will follow a spirit of moderation, according to the next verse. Rejoicing in the Lord, and moderation before men, abide in the heart together. This word *"moderation"* has in it all these following shades of meaning: that which is suitable, or fair, or reasonable, or gentle, or mild, or patient, or upright. The word in the original Greek bears all these shades of meaning. In the text substitute either or all these words for the word *"moderation"* and we shall do no violence to the meaning of the apostle. When the apostle said, *"Let your moderation be known,"* he said all that the above named words convey. Now, is it not apparent that if one has come to trust in God, and to behold such excellence in him as to rejoice his heart, there will follow the beginning and the growing up of all of these graces of the Spirit: uprightness, patience, mildness, gentleness, reasonableness, fairness, with all suitableness of life expressed by the word moderation? That which makes men unkind to each other, unfair in their dealings with each other, unreasonable in their judgment and language about each other, impatient either with their fellowmen, or with the circumstances that surround them, harsh and severe in their treatment of each other, and in short that which leads to that which is unsuitable to the profession of the religion of the meek and lowly Master, is want of trust in God, in the absence of which there can be no joy in the Lord. Rejoicing in God, and moderation before men, therefore, spring out of the same fountain, and will be found flowing together in the stream of the believer's life.

Fourth. The apostle enforces all this upon the minds of his brethren by reminding them that their Lord is at hand. He is always at hand. Not only shall he come the second time without sin unto salvation, to which glorious hope the believer looks, and looking, is encouraged to endure to the end, as seeing him who is invisible, but even today, right in the midst of trials, sorrows, weaknesses and temptations, he is at hand with them one and all. Clouds may obscure our vision, thick clouds may be his chariot, but it is sure that he does ride upon the clouds even though our eyes are holden. I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, he has said for our consolation. This is one of the reasons for rejoicing in him. He is not a God afar off, but he is nigh. The Lord is at hand. Though it be winter or summer, day or night, cold or hot, dark or light, with us still, through every changing season, the Lord, our Lord is nigh, nigh to all them that call upon him. In sorrow or gladness, loss or gain, sickness or health, temptation or deliverance, conflict or victory, he is never far off. Always he is a very present help in time of trouble. The apostle has not then laid upon his brethern an impossibile task when he bids them always rejoice in the Lord. What more is needed than the assurance that the Lord is nigh? How true to experience and to all the word of God was the testimony of Habakkuk: ***"Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olives shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places."*** And how appropriate the words that close this wonderful testimony: ***"To the chief singer on my stringed instruments."*** Joy and singing go together.

Fifth. Now, from all this, how natural the admonition that follows: ***"Be careful for nothing."*** Could this assurance that the Lord is at hand be with us and reign within us we should indeed be careful for nothing. We should be found then bringing all our affairs to the Lord, and then there would be that peace which passes all understanding, which would keep our hearts and minds from all that disturbs us. Then worry and anxiety would cease, and we should not be troubled about the future of our lives here below. These brethren at Philippi were among all the various trials that any of us ever have had; they were subjected to deprivations, dangers and losses, which we know little of in this day, because of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There was need for them to be reminded, as the apostle does remind them, that, after all, their Lord was at hand. Nothing could

then befall them without his presence, and nothing could possibly harm them, and nothing could beset them that he had not appointed for them. ***"The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it ?"*** This is no less true of the children now than it was of their Elder Brother. It is our mind that the apostle here is speaking of the life of his brethren in this world, rather than of the inward conflicts between the flesh and the Spirit, or of the temptations of the world and the devil, which so often cause doubts and fears as to whether we have come to know the Lord in salvation or not. The blessed Saviour said, ***"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."*** That is, all needed wordly provisions. And so here, as it appears to us, the apostle is presenting the truth that believers need not be anxious about temporal things when following the commandments of the Lord. ***"Be careful for nothing,"*** but bring all your desires before the Lord, and this they may do without delay, for he is at hand always.

Sixth. Returning to the words first quoted, ***"Let your moderation be known unto all men,"*** it seems clear to us that the apostle does not mean by this that his brethren shall go about publishing their moderation, their kindness, mildness, gentleness, &c., but simply live that way day by day. These things cannot be hid if they be indeed in our hearts and lives. It seems to us sure that if one loves the Lord he will not need to call to men from the street corners, Come behold my zeal for Him. He who has the love of God reigning in him will most probably be the last to feel sure that it is so with him. Perhaps he may not even think that the love of God has been shed abroad in his heart, but, on the contrary, many times feel very anxious lest it be not so though he will, with great longing desire that love, but there will be a making that love appear to all those who know him, by the quiet, humble, steadfast adherance to the faith that has been revealed to him, and by his quiet walk of obedience to the commandments of his heavenly Father. The more he loves God the less will he feel satisfied with that love. Indeed, this is one of the infallible marks of love, that one bemoans his lack of love. So will it also be with showing forth moderation.

In short, the apostle presents to the church the suitableness of all the things which belong to moderation, in all their daily life. Live before all men with equity, with gentleness and kindness, with mildness and patience. These are not loud-voiced virtues, they do not come before men with the sound of the trumpet heralding them, they belong to the humble walking before God of those who fear him and desire to live to his praise, but who yet so far fail that they never can be satisfied with what

they have done, and (least of all) satisfied with their state before the all-seeing eye of God. A servant might boast when among his fellow-servants alone, but hardly any servant would be found doing so in the presence of the master of them all. He who feels that he is the servant of the Lord first, and then the servant of his brethren for the Lord's sake, while he remembers this will not find room for boasting, or calling attention to his work. It is sure the inspired apostles never have urged a vain glorious display upon the part of the children of God; it must be, then, that the words, *"Let your moderation be known,"* simply signify that we are to live out that which the Lord has wrought within us. Is it a wonderful thing when the spirit of all that this word "moderation" signifies has found a place in the heart, and out of the heart filled with these things it is good that there should flow forth in word and in deed the suitable fruit. This the apostle enjoined upon those to whom he was writing.

Seventh. In conclusion we will say that by these words we are taught that believers are to strive to show forth all godliness, not only in the house of God, but before all men. For instance, we are to show all honesty toward all men. One of the meanings of moderaton as said, before, is reasonableness. This also is enjoined upon believers toward all men. We are to deal with them not only justly, but reasonably; that is, not even exacting what the law might give us, but using a justice beyond what any law can provide or demand, save the law of the love of God and the neighbor. The text means, so far as wordly affairs are concerned, that we are not to be axacting or grasping, but to deal with men kindly, mildly and gently. We have hope, and we say that this world is not our home, but that we seek a city above. We say that earthly treasures all perish, but that heavenly treasures endure. The apostle here enjoins that we live as though we possessed the spirit of the truth.

As we close these reflections it appears to us that after all the whole matter might as well be summed up and left in the one sentence, In all things let your moderation be known to all men.

(Editorial by Elder F.A. Chick, May 15, 1912)

PSALM 103: 17-19.

But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;

To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.

The Lord hath prepared his thone in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

CONTRIBUTIONS

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Kenneth Thompson, VA 5.00
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Donald Arne, SD 100.00
Douglas Hodges, VA 10.00
Katherine Matthews, LA 5.00

OBITUARIES

SAINTS REST PRIMITIVE
BAPTIST CHURCH
DALLAS, TEXAS

September 7, 2009

Whereas it has pleased our Heavenly Father, in his wisdom and holiness, on July 24, 2009 to remove from this life our dear Sister Essie Carter bringing sorrow to our hearts; and,

Whereas we believe that our loss is her gain and that she has been removed from this life to realms of glory, and from a world of trouble to a land of delight; we sorrow not as though we have no hope, but because we shall see her face no more. Nevertheless we believe what the Lord does is best.

Therefore be it resolved by Saints Rest that we bow in humble submission to His will, believing that when Christ shall appear, all those who are asleep in Christ shall be gathered up by Him in rlghteousness.

And be it resolved that we extend sympathy to her family and friends, in that we have lost a true friend. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Also be it resolved that a copy of this resolution be sent to her family, a copy sent to the Signs of the Times for publication, and a copy written in our church records.

Adopted by Saints Rest Church while in conference July 6, 2009.

Saints Rest Church, Dallas
Elder Carey C. Morris, Moderator
Deacon Dean G. Connell, Clerk

PSALM 150: 1-3.

Praise ye the Lord, Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power.

Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness.

Praise him with the sound of the trumpet; praise him with the psaltery and harp.

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"THIS LOVE TAKES CARE OF ME."

My Father knows that which is best
Whatever it may be;
And in this truth I sweetly rest:
His love takes care of me.
Through Jesus Christ my great high-priest, My Father works his will;
And though I am his very least,
I know he loves me still.
In Him there is no dark of night,
But only endless day:
I'm ever walking in His sight
I cannot lose my way.
My life is in His holy hand,
In Him I am secure:
All things are at his great command,
He is steadfast and sure.
My holy and righteous Father in heaven,
I know that of myself I could never merit thy great love and mercy; but, my Father, there is One in thy presence who has been made to be all things for me, and unto me: His precious name is Jesus my beloved Lord and Saviour.

Ethel Gilland
Panama City, Fla.

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EDITORIAL

FIVE LOAVES AND TWO FISHES

Mark 6:38, "He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes."

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

According to Luke 9:2, Jesus had sent His twelve apostles out to the towns to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. When they returned, they told Him all that they had done and they had not even had time to eat. Jesus, who knows all things, took them to a desert place to rest a while. People saw them going and ran ahead of Jesus and the apostles. Jesus was moved with compassion toward the people because they were as sheep without a shepherd. The good shepherd had come. He began to teach them many things. I believe the miracle that He performed with the five loaves and two fishes was to teach them things concerning Himself.

When the day was far spent and His disciples as well as the people had not eaten, the disciples asked Him to send the people away so that the people could go and buy bread to eat. Jesus doesn't send His little ones away and they can't buy the food with which He feeds His people. Jesus told the disciples, ***"Give ye them to eat."*** The disciples, knowing there was not enough food to feed the multitudes that were there, asked if they should go and buy bread. John 6:5-6, ***"When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Phillip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do."*** Jesus said unto His disciples, ***"How many loaves have ye? go and see."*** He was not asking to find out. He knew, but it was for their benefit. When they knew, they told him ***"Five, and two fishes."*** I believe

this was the perfect number that Jesus had before ordained to be there to show in a most wonderful and precious way who He was. The five loaves and two fishes total seven which sets forth the perfection and completeness of Christ. His command to ***"Give ye them to eat"*** is the same as the command He gives to all his ministers to ***"Feed my lambs. Feed my sheep."***

The scripture in John reads that Jesus said, ***"Make the men sit down"*** and there was much grass in the place. This brings to mind the 23rd Psalm when David wrote, ***"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures."*** When the Lord feeds His sheep, He makes them to lie down in the pasture of His grace and feast upon the green grass of His gospel. There is rest in His pasture as there can be no works of the flesh there. It is all of grace. The good shepherd had come to His sheep and would feed them with food they couldn't buy.

The five loaves are of one bread. In John 6:32-33 Jesus said,

The world referred to is the world of believers. He is the bread of life. The five loaves are five manifestations of the one bread. Isaiah prophesied, ***"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."*** Five loaves of the one bread. The Lord's elect are blessed to feast upon each loaf.

He is Wonderful. His little ones feed upon this loaf as they have experienced that He is indeed Wonderful. He loved them so much that He came down to this low ground of sin and sorrow, trials and afflictions, yet without sin. The divine justice of God's holy law required the death of a holy sacrifice. There was none, no, not one righteous. Therefore, God sent ***"his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."*** The words of Christ in John 15:13, ***"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."*** He is Wonderful, who suffered so greatly, took the sins of his people in his own sinless body, shed his blood, died and rose again to redeem you from your sins and the curse of the law and justified you. Jesus said he had come that they might have life and have it more abundantly. He is Wonderful, who comforts you in the midst of the greatest sorrow and gives you a peace that surpasses all understanding. He is Wonderful, who never leaves you nor forsakes you.

He is Counselor. He gives you understanding and guides you and

directs you. He leads you in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. When you feel that you don't know which way to go or what to do, He makes you to stand still and look unto Him who is the author and finisher of your faith. In Psalm 16:7, the psalmist wrote, ***"I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel."*** The psalmist also wrote the counsel of the Lord standeth for ever and that the Lord shall guide him with the Lord's counsel and afterward, receive him to glory. Christ was delivered into wicked hands to be crucified by the determinant counsel and foreknowledge of God. As the Apostle Paul wrote Timothy, ***"But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them."*** He is wisdom and gives His people understanding. He is our mediator and maketh intercession for the saints. Romans 8:27, ***"And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."***

He is the Mighty God. He has all power. He has not delegated any of His power to man. He has always been in control of all things and always will be in control. There is no variableness nor shadow of turning with God. He is the same yesterday, today and for ever. He created all things that are created and for His own pleasure. Revelation 4:11, ***"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."*** He had the power to lay down His life and the power to take it up again. No man took it from Him. He is The Mighty God. When Pilate said unto Him, ***"knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?"*** Jesus answered, ***"Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above."*** The Mighty God brought us down to the very black dust of the earth and showed us what a sinner we are as He did the Apostle Paul. We can witness with David in Psalms 22:14-15, ***"I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death."*** But, then you experienced with the psalmist in Psalm 40:2-3, ***"He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God."*** What a loaf to feast upon!

He is the Prince of Peace. Christ

said in John 14:27, ***"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."*** Also, His words in John 16:33, ***"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."*** His people have peace within their hearts because Christ is formed in them their hope of glory. The world thinks that He came to bring peace to all peoples of the world because at the birth of Jesus, the heavenly host was praising God and saying ***"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."*** They were proclaiming that the Prince of Peace had come to earth. Christ, Himself, said in Luke 12:51, ***"Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division."*** But to His little ones, He is their peace - the Prince of Peace. Peace is a fruit of the spirit and comes only from the Prince of Peace and passeth all understanding. Another precious loaf from the one bread.

The two fishes set forth grace and truth that came by Jesus Christ. How strengthening, edifying, and comforting when we are blessed to experience these gifts from the Lord! As the Apostle Paul writes in Ephesians 2:8-9, ***"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."*** This is a gift only to those He loved with an everlasting love and for whom He laid down His life. Sometimes we feel that the trials and afflictions are so difficult that we can't endure them anymore. But, as the Lord told the Apostle Paul, ***"My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."*** When we feel to be so weak and so low, His strength is manifested in us. He knows our condition as He told Moses, ***"I have surely seen the afflictions of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows."*** How wonderfully comforting that we worship God who knows our downsittings and uprisings and has promised never to leave us nor forsake us.

The Lord said, ***"I am the way, the truth, and the life."*** He also said, ***"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*** All His people shall know the truth before they pass from this life because as the Apostle Paul said, ***"We have the mind of Christ."*** You shall know the truth because the truth is in you and is revealed to you. This is the spiritual man within you, the new creature in Christ. He puts His laws in your mind and writes them in your heart. There is no in-

struction by the natural man for the carnal mind is enmity against God and not subject to His law. The truth sets you free from the bondage of the elements of the world in which we took pleasure being the servants of sin. Christ, who is truth, brings us out of the darkness of ignorance and unbelief into His marvelous light.

Grace, truth and the bread from heaven. What a feast! ***"And they did all eat, and were filled."*** They took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes. Twelve sets forth a full, complete number. God's grace, truth, love, and mercy has never become any less that it always has been. The Lord gathers His elect to His banqueting house where He has prepared a table at which they feast upon the food of the gospel. The banner over them is love.

There are many trials and much suffering for the Lord's people in this world, but you are blessed with such a love for Christ and the brethren that the joy of your hope far surpasses those things that beset you.

It is my prayer that the Lord will continue to keep us at our brethren's feet and as the Apostle writes ***"Let brotherly love continue."***

In bonds of love,
Cleo D. Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

Brother Horton,

I would like to renew my Signs for 1 year. I enjoy reading it very much. I am sending $20.00 use the other as you see fit.

A Friend,
Viola H. Davis
833 Orphanage Rd.
Danville, Va. 24540

Oct. 1, 2009

Dear Sir,

I am sending a check for $40.00 to catch up my bill and to renew my subscription for another year.

I enjoy getting the "Signs" and hearing from the folks.

Sincerely,
Mrs. H.W. Brinkley

JOB 33:15-16.

In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed;

Then he openeth the ear of men, and sealeth their instruction.

ARTICLES

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (Col. 3:1- 4)

This is an exhortation to those who have been born again, and who have tasted of the doctrine of Jesus Christ. The exhortation is to forget about things upon this earth and concentrate upon heavenly things that are beyond this world.

These Scriptures are a comfort. "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself." (Phil. 3:20-21)

Notice the sweetness in Col. 3:4: We think of this in the Second coming of Jesus: Christ shall appear, then ye also shall appear with him in glory. What a comfort to appear with Christ in glory!

"— and whom he justified, them he also glorified."(Rom. 8:30) "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God." *(Psalm 87:3)*

Notice the comfort in this scripture: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (1 John 3:2) What a comfort to look forward to in the future that our vile bodies will be like unto Jesus and to look like Jesus!

"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." (Psalms 17:15)

"A few more days on earth to spend,
And all my toils and cares shall end,
And I shall see my God and friend,
And praise his name on high,
No more to sigh or shed a tear,
No more to suffer pain or fear,
But God, and Christ, and heaven appear
Unto the raptured eye."

(Song no, 597, Lloyd's hymn book- 1st verse)

Elder W. W. Hudson, Jr .
105 Watson Circle
West Monroe, La. 71291

VOICES OF THE PAST

The following is taken from the book, "A Treasure of Hymns" by Amos R. Wells. Copyright 1945, W. A. Wilde Company.

The book contains brief biographies of one hundred twenty leading hymn writers with their best hymns.

"Sweet Hour of Prayer."
William W. Walford.

Not much is known about the writer of this favorite gospel hymn. He was a blind man, Rev. William W. Walford, an English clergyman. It is quite remarkable how many of our best hymns have been written by blind people who themselves sang "songs in the night." Fanny Crosby and George Matheson occur to us at once.

Mr. Walford preached, but not regularly, and he had a pair of skilful hands that made various little things of bone and ivory. He wrote our hymn probably about the year 1842, and recited it to Rev. Thomas Salmon, a Congregational minister of Coleshill, England, who wrote it down and brought it to New York, where it was published in *The New York Observer.* This seems to be all that is known about the hymn or its author.

Very few Christians know by heart the whole of this hymn, but it is all worth committing to memory. Mr. Walford's life must have been full of trouble, and we find references to it in the hymn; but we see also how his religion lifted him above his trouble. It will do the same for us.

Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer!
That calls me from a world of care,
And bids me at my Father's throne
Make all my wants and wishes known:
In seasons of distress and grief
My soul has often found relief,
And oft escaped the tempter's snare,
By thy return, sweet hour of prayer!

Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer!
Thy wings shall my petition bear
To Him whose truth and faithfulness
Engage the waiting soul to bless:
And since He bids me seek His face,
Believe His word, and trust His grace,
I'll cast on Him my every care,
And wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer!

Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer

May I thy consolation share,
Till, from Mount Pisgah's lofty height,
I view my home and take my flight;
This robe of flesh I'll drop, and rise
To seize the everlasting prize;
And shout, while passing through the air,
Farewell, farewell, sweet hour of prayer!

Submitted by,
Bro. Jerry Sommers

MATT. 8:1, 4; LEV. 14:1, 7

"When he has come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them."

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing: he shall be brought unto the priest: and the priest shall go forth out of the camp; and the priest shall look, and, behold, if the plague of leprosy be healed in the leper; then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds alive and clean, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop: and the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water: as for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water: and he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose in the open field."

Even to the carnal mind there is a great fascination in the beauty of the prophetical kingdom of heaven. Of times we are enraptured by the allegories, similes, comparisons, that the divine inspiration has used to clothe His language in, and to tell us of what is to come. But this carnal mind can not know Him that has done this gracious work for the benefit of those that love the name of The Lord Our Righteousness. The coordination and the correlation, while fields in which carnal professors excel, will never be seen by them until their mind is illuminated by the light of the Holy Spirit.

Leprosy is more to be dreaded

than cancer. Like cancer, if unchecked, it will eat away the human body. It will never be cured from within; in fact, it is doubtful that it has ever been cured from without, as it is doubtful if cancer has ever been completely cured. When once it gains a foot hold in the body it will get worse until death is the result. The ability to attack and rout it from the body from within is not known in medical science. How fitting is the disease to compare it with sin. As it is with sin, one may have it a long time without any realization of its presence in the body. It is as sneaky as sin, but not as deadly as sin, for, while leprosy may, and, without outside medicine, will, destroy the body, sin will, without outside cure, destroy both soul and body.

It is a good thing when it is discovered in the body. As soon as it is discovered, there is immediately a seeking for outside help. This help is not sought by those that do not have the symptoms of the disease. Just as sure as a sinner finds out that he has leprosy there will be a seeking set in, and it will continue as long as he has the disease, which is as long as he is in the body. The disease may show in a sinner before he becomes aware of its presence, that is, its presence and deadly work may be apparent to those that have already known the disease. As long as they do not know it, there will never be a seeking for cure; as long as they do not know its presence there will never be any anxiety about its devastating work. There will not be any seeking and anxiety as long as one does not have a knowledge of the presence of sin. (Rom. 3:11, 16; John 5:40), but when it is revealed unto sinners that they do have sin, there will never be a cessation of seeking, there will never be a time when free from anxiety.

At the time of the opening of the text a leper came to him. How my wretched and sinful heart is made to leap for joy at this news. One who has no communion with Israel because of his uncleanness; one who is an outcast, and that is ready to perish (Isaiah 27:13) , by the coming of Jesus, now has access to the dispensary of grace, there to receive all of that which cleanses. This disease was looked upon as God's displeasure, none had the right to heal it except God (2 Kings 5:7). They had been shut out from all religious and even civil communion from the house of Israel. As only the priest in type could come in contact with leprosy, cure it, and he be immune to its contagion, just so, in the same manner, could Jesus cure sin, and yet be immune to its deadliness fastening itself to him. This world "behold" is not put in the Book to make it larger, but it is put therein to call attention to the precious doctrine that the priest without beginning of days, nor end of life, is at hand to cure his people of all their sicknesses and diseases.

This poor sinner is the fit representative of every sinner that has

ever come begging for mercy. He that taught him that he had the disease has also taught him where to go. He has faith to believe in the power of Jesus as the One that cleanses his people. He is one that believes that whatsoever his soul desires that Jesus will do. There is not any doubt in the mind of this sinner about Jesus doing his will, but he also knows that he is not an object to be thus loved. The disease has come to light: it has brought with it the terrible odor of putrifying flesh; it shows the outcast condition of the leper; it brings out the terrible and grotesque features of one who has become a victim of the workings of this deadly disease. ***"If thou wilt, thou canst."*** Not any question in the mind of this sinner (as well as those that have been taught at the same source), that whatever His will is concerning him, that He is able to carry it out. Sinner reader, have you found out as much?

I am carried away in sweet meditation as I write to think that the Lord has given sinners the Lord Jesus Christ; that he has opened to them access to this grace, which access is operated by the faith of God's elect, which is wholly given them from the Lord, and is not predicated upon their exercising the faith, but that all of their enjoyment, and all of their access to it, is by and through them being exercised by the faith. Whatever a sinner asks God in the name of Jesus Christ, that sinner will get. The carnal mind will get impatient and ask, ***"Has he forgot, has he gone on a journey?"*** but not so with them that ask in Jesus' name. That which is asked for is received; no more, no less.

He has not asked in vain. As with other characters, his faith has saved him (Matt. 9:22; Mark 5:34; Luke 8:48; 17:19; 7:50; 18:42). Since the faith is the gift of God (Eph. 2:8), this salvation, this coming to Christ, this asking, is all to the praise of his grace. Immediately Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, ***"I will; be thou clean."*** Instantaneous with the reaching forth of his hand, he talked to him; equally so, the cleansing took effect. Unbelief would say what else needs to be done? Unbelief would say, if you are cleansed from sin, it does not matter from here out. Unbelief would say, that nothing more is required of them thus cleansed. Let us see.

If we love God we will keep all of his commandments. The throwing out this or that; ignoring this commandment or that; the substituting of the many chimney corner scriptures for the Bible, all of this shows whether we know much about leprosy (sin) or not. It shows whether we have come to him as the Priest or to a priest that we will have to visit again at the end of a year. The direction is simple but it is rigid and thorough. See that you do not tell a man. You do not have any right to talk to any in Israel until after you see the priest, and he has pronounced you clean.

Why did the Saviour tell him to show himself to the priest? why did He tell him to offer the gift that Moses commanded? We must remember that He honored Him to whom honor was due.

He came from His Father. While He was accused of breaking the law, he did not. The law was just and holy and good; it came from God. He came under the law. He did not come to break that law, but he did come to fulfil it. His sending him to the priest was in full recognition of that law. The commandment of Moses was in full force here, but it is reckoned as a gift. And such it is, if we are blessed of God to meditate upon it.

Have you seen the effects of sin in your members? Have you felt the infiltration of sin through and through every part of your being? If so, it has reduced you to despair, and revealed to you how helpless that you were, and how that you needed somebody to carry you to cure. Let us look in on this case. May it please God that we find ourself and find comfort for ourself. The law of a leper was that he be brought to the priest, not that he decided to come, but that One decide and bring him. This law, whether for leprosy as a disease, or for sin as its anti-type, has never been changed. It will be noted that this interview was outside the camp. The cure for leprosy can not be carried on in the camp of Israel; the cure for sin is not to be carried on in the church, for it is not a reformatory. The priest, whether under the law for leprosy, or under grace for sin, must, and always does, meet the victim outside the camp. There is not anything said about how far he is to go to meet the victim. Christ went far and near; he did not say anything about it being too far.

Precious reader, it attacks first in the hand. Have you found the sign in your palm? As you looked on what you thought was a hand showing good health, did it cause uneasiness to find that spot that betrayed you? Until this did take place you did not go to the priest. Not once did you go. Suppose that you had gone? What would he have thought? What would he have said? But when it showed in the palm of your hand that you had that dreaded sin, then you did go to the priest. Not one has ever failed to go; not one has ever been failed by the love of God in carrying them to the priest. He examines it. He looks with that keen perception. You feel the scrutiny of those penetrating eyes. You writhe under the gaze. You know what the verdict will be, for you have seen your hands as unclean; you have felt the inward ruination of the silent work. But wait a moment. Is he not going to condemn you? Is he not going to continue the separation? Is he not going to leave you to continue a victim of the dreaded malady? No, no, not that at all.

This cleansing, this cure, these miracles are more than a match for our tongue, our heart, our under-

standing. Everything is set in motion by the priest for the victim. The cure can not come from within, but it does come from without. In the offering there are several things. None of them are supplied by the victim. There must be two clean birds. Not one, not three, but two clean birds. O Lord give me grace to declare the predestination of God; to declare that he has declared the end from the beginning, even to the kind and the number of birds that are used in the figurative cleansing of a sinner. The kind of wood that is to be carried is as important as was the wood from which Noah made the ark. Wood is not enough; it must be cedar wood. But why will wood not do? Why cedar wood? Why be so exact? If any way will do in saving a sinner, no way will do just as well. Cedar wood in the church is most useful (S.S. 1:17). It is used in the foundation of this glorious building. But why is this used in the cleansing? To show forth the duration of the cleansing. One of the best characteristics of cedar wood is its ability to last under water. But why bring that up here? we are talking about one Lord, one baptism, one faith, one cleansing.

We are talking about that which would comfort a poor sinner. The dragon has ever been doing all that he could to engulf the woman in the flood of water that went forth out of his mouth. This water is flooding the earth ere this, but the beams of the church of God are imbedded beneath the earth into the rock. As Jesus was the Building and the Builder while here; he was subjected to all the temptations of his brethren, thus the cedar wood is used to denote the durability of this Building, this cleansing, this forgiveness. But why scarlet? For two reasons. May the Lord give us to drink deeply of each. Though our sins are as scarlet, they shall be white as snow. But how? by blood. That is the only way; no other peddler of just as good will be welcome here in this cleansing. By the blood of Jesus; by the power in his shed blood is a sinner cleansed. The piece of woolen scarlet is the sign of sin, and it is the sign of that which will remove sin. Our sin is as scarlet; his garments are dyed in his blood to remove our uncleanness.

But why hyssop? Why must that be carried? What importance is this? What bearing does such an item have in connection with our cleansing? How precious as I write are my thoughts. I look back and see my three sons as the woman in attendance washed them and anointed them with oil. What a sweet smelling baby they were to their mother and I. How wonderful it is that the fragrant odor of hyssop was to be noticed in this poor sinner after his cleansing.

Arise, poor sinner, and let us view the situation over. A sinner doomed to being outcast, to be denied communion with his people. A sinner such as we (or at least I) did

not have anything to offer for our cleansing. We would have never known about the malady had it not been revealed to us; we would never have gotten to the priest had we not been carried; we would never know what it would take for our cleansing. But Christ is everything to a poor sinner. May God enable us to leave off that which divides, that which confuses, that which subverts, and know among the people of God Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Your little brother, if a brother, through grace.

W. D. G.

SERMON BY
ELDER D. V. SPANGLER
AT THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION
AT ROANOKE, VA., 1964

Elder Turner told me this morning that there was an afflicted brother here who has hoped someone would' talk on the scripture which is found in the 30th verse of the fifth chapter of Ephesians: ***"We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."*** I am sure this is a wonderful text.

One of the things that stands out in the Scriptures, is that wherever God has brought his church to view, he has presented her as something complete. When he refers to the church of God, he speaks of that church being the bride, the Lamb's wife. And we find also that he tells us how, at some time in the future, he will present that church unto himself a glorious church, not having spot, wrinkle, blemish, or any such thing. When the Lord has brought Zion to view as the church, he presents her as a city set upon a hill, that cannot be hid. When he has spoken of the safety of this city, he has told us that salvation shall be her walls. Not the salvation that men talk about, but the kind that God Almighty appoints, for he said that salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.

When God brings Zion for his people to view, he brings her to view as absolutely complete in him; he brings her to view as being watered by the river of the water of life; and that stream, he tells us, makes glad the city of God. Now if your heart has ever been made glad as you heard the gospel of Christ preached, as you mingled with your brethren, it is evidence that some of the streams have reached you.

"Makes glad the city of God." I like to think about the effectiveness of this stream - that there has never been one too poor but that the stream will reach him. Last night, as we sat on the brother's porch, I talked about people going home to the church, for I feel in my ministry to encourage God's people: if they love His name, to stand up as God blesses them, and be counted with his people. And I saw a tear in a friend's eye; and I said, "My friend, there's room for you in the house." He said, ***"I'm unworthy."*** A very

acceptable answer, wasn't it?

We want to talk about the text, but we must first get to it. We want to show, the Lord willing, that we are a part of the body of our Saviour. And we are going to show, the Lord willing, that Jesus Christ did not come into the world to make a decision as to a single person going to heaven. Somebody has brought forth such false doctrine that they advance the idea that men are helping other men to go to heaven - to make a decision for Christ. Christ taught that he himself never made the decision while in this world, as to a single person who would be in glory. We find, in her earthly understanding of Christ, that a woman approached Him, and said that she had a request, that she had two sons and she would like for one to sit on his right hand and the other on his left, when he entered into his kingdom. And Jesus said, ***"Woman, you don't know what you ask; it is not mine to give."*** He didn't come into the world to decide who would go to heaven, but to make it sure to everyone that was chosen in him before the world began. He said, ***"It shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father ."*** If any man has advanced the idea that Christ went about upon the earth trying to save sinners, making decisions as to who would enter the kingdom, this scripture forever sets it at nought.

But he brings this matter to you and me, for it is said that we are members of his body, of his flesh, of his bones. There is a depth here that I doubt whether any minister has ever reached; there is a depth here wherein our Saviour, (I hope I can say, our), has taken our flesh and our bones. We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. As we look back at the wonderous work of grace, we find that when God created a man of the earth earthy, (and in a sense a type of our Lord Jesus Christ), the woman was in the man, and a part of the man, before she was ever taken from him; and that the law that God gave to Adam, was given him while Eve was yet a part of his body. That is why Adam said, ***"She is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh."*** That is why Paul, in his epistle to the Ephesians, said that a man has never hated his own flesh, but he nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the church. ***"This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church."*** In the preceding verses, how wonderfully he said, ***"Husbands love your wives, even as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it."***

There are a few things in my life that have been most humbling to me; one is, that God would love a sinner like I am; another is how brethren could love me. Another humbling thing to the minister is when God's people tell him, ***"You were blessed to preach the gospel to me."*** This never exalts one of God's ministers. Oh, no! but the devil does sometimes. He will some-

times tell one that he preached a wonderful sermon ; but a tear in a person's eye is more humbling than all the Devil has ever said to him.

He took the woman out of his side. The Bible doesn't say his side, but He took a rib, and that is where the side is; and He gave her to him to be a helpmeet. The side of Jesus Christ was torn when he hanged on Calvary's hill, when darkness covered the earth. The soldier pierced the side of Jesus. Why did he pierce his side? Two reasons:prophecy had said it would be; and the soldier didn't know what he was doing - he knew nothing about the purposes of God. Men today are living out the purposes of God blindly, but I assert that the purposes of God shall stand. If I didn't believe that, I would be afraid to start home this afternoon. Someway, I believe with all my heart that in our journey here, the angels of God have been our protection.

But, I want to talk about the text. ***"You are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."*** Eve received the law through Adam, and the Ark was the only thing that could weather the storm of the wrath of God, when his wrath for sin was poured out upon the world. The door of the Ark, the Bible says, was in the side. It didn't have two doors; it had one door, - in the side.

When Abraham sent his servant to seek a bride for his son, he caused him to swear that he would not go among strangers, but that he would go among his own kindred. What does it show? that Jesus Christ came into the world to save a people that already belonged to him - that were united with him. And the servant wanted a sign; and he said, ***"When I reach a certain well, have somebody there to draw water for the camels."*** And we find a willing Rebekah there. She even ran to meet him; and said, ***"Drink my Lord."*** And when the question arose, when the servant had told his business, ***"Will you go with this man?,"*** her parents said leave her a little while, and then she can go. But they left the answer with Rebekah; and she said, ***"I will go."*** I like a doctrine that brings about in the heart a willingness to do the will of God; that not only brings about a willingness, but makes every particle of His service a delight.

"You are flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bones." W e find in the wonderful works of grace that God Almighty has brought home to his people throughout the ages, two things clearly brought to view; One is, that he has saved them because he had an everlasting love for them; and the other is, that they are unworthy of everything that God has done for them.

I remember that when David went out to fight the battle for his brethren, he was just a lad; and his brethren rebuked him, saying that the naughtiness of his heart had brought him down to see the battle. Here is a giant! if we can't overthrow

him, we know you can't: Goliath, the giant of the Philistines. David was of the bone and the flesh of his brethren, wasn't he? And David said, *"Is there not a cause?"* yet they did not believe in him until he manifested to them his power to fight the battle. And that is when every sinner believes in Jesus Christ. David's brethren would scorn him, but he said that he would fight the battle; he would meet the giant; but he would not take the armor of Saul, for he had not proved it. David went forth saying unto Goliath, *"I come to thee in the name of the Lord."*

They were David's brethren, and nothing they could say would ever change his love for them; no rebuke from them would change him. Neither will anything, my friends, ever change the love of God for you; for Paul said, *"I am persuaded that neither death nor life, things present or things to come, principalities or powers, etc., nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

"Flesh of his flesh; bone of his bone." Let's find out more. Joseph was a beautiful type of Jesus Christ. We find him hated by his brethren - hated because he had a dream. Did the devil give him the dream? Oh, no! But it caused his brethren to hate him. God gave him a dream in which he saw his brethren bowing down to him. One of the things that Elder Helms spoke so clearly in his Introductory was that all things worked together for good to them that love God. The hatred and malice of Joseph's brethren would have done away with their brother; but it couldn't be. They put him in a pit; and but for the grace of God they would have left him there to die. But he had a brother to speak for him. The Midianite merchantmen come by, and he was sold for twenty pieces of silver. God took care of the situation. Sometimes in my mind I have seen that boy being led off, with his brethren watching, no doubt glad to get rid of him, thinking it was the last time they would see him. But then we find that there came a time when it was God's time to bring them to him - through famine and hunger, which God alone could bring and control. Someway I believe that every drop of water that falls on the earth, God sends it; every famine that comes, God sends it.

And, finally, I like to think of Joseph when he couldn't refrain any longer. He knew his brethren all the time: he knew them because they were flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone. They were a part of him. *"Come near me; I am your brother."*

Has the Lord ever drawn you near him? Have you ever felt the encircling arms of Christ ? I remember what dear Elder Gilliam said, when he was at the point of death for days: *" I felt those arms under me."*

I'm your brother - you thought evil - God meant it for good.

Now to reach our case He came all the way to where we were. Our Saviour must take our flesh, since, as the Scriptures say, the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he himself likewise took part of the same, that he might destroy the works of the Devil. How must the Lord Jesus Christ come into the world? He must be found under the law. Paul tells us in Galatians so clearly, that when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law. He took our flesh and blood as the Son of man, taking it in union with him as the Son of God - our very flesh and blood. ***"God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law to redeem them that were under the law."***

I like to think also that it is said that he took not the nature of angels; for an angel could never reach our case. But he took on him the seed of Abraham - our flesh and our blood; and we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones; and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in their likeness, he humbled himself. Men did not humble our Saviour - he humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross. Why? because from all eternity his people had a standing in him: they were chosen in him, and their life was in him before Adam fell. They fell in Adam, but they were safe all the time. To reach his bride, Jesus could not come as an angel, but must come as the Son of man. We are glad that he spoke so many times of himself as the Son of man - more than he spoke of himself as the Son of God.

I like to think of the expression of the Apostle that there is one Mediator between God and man. Talk about the Pope, talk about the Priests of the land being mediators between God and man, there has never been a greater lie preached under heaven than that. To believe that, you would have to burn your Bibles; to believe that doctrine, you would have to preach that Jesus Christ didn't come to save a people who were already his; and to take in union with himself the flesh and blood and bones of his people.

There is one Mediator! None of these preachers here are mediators between God and man; there's never been but one. Who is he? the man Christ Jesus. The one of whose body we are members. Think of it, my friends! People of God members of the body of Christ! the mystical body of Christ, of his flesh and of his bones. We never know the full force of salvation until we have known something of how low our Saviour came: If we only know of his humiliation, and not of his glory, it won't do us any good. I cannot speak of his glory, and know the wonderful love he had for us, unless I see his humiliation.

I went for years wondering what it means when it is said in the 8th chapter of Acts, ***"In his humiliation his judgment was taken***

away; and who shall declare his generation, for his life is taken from the earth." Then I saw it one day. I saw that God left his Son hanging in the body that He had prepared - the only body that would satisfy as a sacrifice. He left him hanging there, and turned his face away; and Jesus cried out and said, ***"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"*** If we are his people, every one of us was hanging there - represented in him. To be a complete sacrifice, he must be left to die.

Have you felt my friends, that He died for you? What a wonderful thing! ***"Gave himself," Paul said, "for me."*** I like to think of Him who took our flesh and blood in union with himself, when he was held up before the people of old: I like to think that every time the high priest went with the names of the tribes of Israel on his heart - with their names on his shoulder, he showed that the people of God were represented in him. I think of the high priest going once a year into the most holy place, making atonement for himself and the people, that he couldn't put away sin ; but I think of one who went into the most holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. The high priest couldn't feel the groans of his people: he hadn't experienced them. But, my brethren, today we have an high priest who can be touched. We have one who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was tempted in all points. I like to think that when Stephen was dying, he said, ***"I see Jesus standing on the right hand of God."*** standing, waiting to pour out his wrath upon the people.

What a blessing to have a great high priest in heaven, who is brought near as our brother, our very brother. We read that he who sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. These are my brethren; Who? He that doeth the will of my Father, the same is my mother, my brother, my sister. He is not ashamed to call his people brethren, because they are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. The only way there can ever be a people prepared for heaven whom God will not be ashamed of, is for he himself to prepare them.

The doctrine I am preaching to you today, will be preached on and on, until the Lord of glory comes from heaven; and the people I am talking to and about today have the grace of God wrought so perfectly in them, that God in heaven will never be ashamed of one of them.

We are told that Abraham, when he was called out, went not knowing where he went; that he sought a city which hath foundation, whose builder and maker is God. He was looking for a place where God is not ashamed to be called our God.

"We are members of his body, of his flesh, and his bones." He didn't come part of the way under the law; he didn't come just to make

an offering for sin, and leave the acceptance to men, but He came to redeem us from the curse of the law. The Scriptures say that he went to heaven, having obtained eternal redemption for us. Do you know why he is coming again; and who he is coming for? He is coming for his bride; he is coming for those who are members of his body, of his flesh, of his bones.

" As by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead." When Paul speaks in Corinthians of the resurrection of the dead, he said, *"Now is Christ risen and become the first fruits of them that slept."* When Christ rose from the dead, it was a promise that there was a crop coming: The people of God their bodies are going to be raised. Not like you are as I look at you now, but fashioned like His glorious body; and will be prepared to praise him.

When the priest under the law took the sheaf from the people and waved it before the Lord, it was saying, There is a crop like this. So is the resurrection of the body of Jesus Christ from the dead. He was the first fruits of his people; and they will be like the first fruits. The glorious day is coming - the day all the saints have looked for, the day of all days, when we will be taken home. I have been coming here almost forty years; most of the old ones who were here when I began coming, are sleeping somewhere. In a few years we will all be sleeping, laid away somewhere in the silent tomb; but, bless the Lord, He will not deny his own. When he comes the dead will be raised. It is the resurrection of the dead, not merely from the dead.

You that love his name it will be you that day. It will be the redeemed sinner; it will be one whose vile body is changed, and fashioned like the glorious body of Jesus Christ. Lift up your heads, my brethren; praise the Lord! No wonder when David started in the 22nd Psalm he said, *"My God, why hast thou forsaken me."* and said in the 23rd, *"The Lord is my shepherd."* Then in the 24th, he said, *"Lift up the everlasting doors that the King of Glory might come in. Who is the King of Glory The Lord of hosts is the King of Glory ."*

(The above is taken from a recording, and is somewhat condensed. - J. D. W.)

IMPRESSED TO EXPRESS HER FEELINGS

Rt. 3, Box 295, Ruffin, N. C.
Dear Brother Spangler:

I don't feel I can rest until I tell you that I believe the Lord blessed you to preach Christ tonight. When you arose to speak there was a sincere prayer in my heart that the Lord would bless you, and bless me to see Him whom my soul loveth. It seems of late that I go

through so many dry seasons, and that I feel separated from all that is holy and righteous. But tonight I felt elevated from the beggarly elements of this vile world and I could see my Lord in His glory . What a beautiful sight it is to behold this One who is my only hope of salvation.

The 53rd chapter of Isaiah has been a precious chapter to me for a long time, because I found Christ there. You spoke of searching the scriptures as a young boy. I too, Brother Spangler, searched the scriptures at an early age. There was a period in my life when I was as staunch an Arminian as anyone, for I was bent on working my way to heaven. This shows the natural tendency of the human nature, for I had attended no church save that of the Primitive Baptist, and yet I knew nothing of their doctrine. I remember well studying the scriptures and even learning some by heart. The first Psalm is an example of this. I learned it by heart, and was so blind as to believe that I could order my walk in such a way as to fit the description of that righteous man spoken of there. But thank the Lord, that He showed me that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Most importantly - though, He showed me that I did not have to depend upon my own righteousness, which is as filthy rags, but that salvation is by grace, free and unmerited.

Another scripture had a great attraction for me in that early period, and that was the description of Christ's baptism. I do not know if that attraction was due to the scripture itself, or the beauty of the language in which it was written. I do know that I thought it very beautiful and, if I have been led of the Lord, I believe He was even then bringing me to the knowledge of Him.

In high school I remember defending the doctrine of predestination of times in opposition to the whole class, except for a good friend who also felt inclined to defend the truth. And yet I am not sure that I had more than a head knowledge of this precious point of doctrine at that time. I am convinced that even though I would have told you that I believed in salvation by grace, I did not at that time know the meaning of salvation by grace in my heart.

You remarked tonight of your experience of first hearing the gospel and wanting to hear more. I remember well Elder John Lee Smith preaching from the text, *" All that the Father giveth me shall come to me and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."* This was at a union meeting at Pleasantville, and the first time I remember truly feeling that I had not just heard with my ear, but with my heart.

Not long after this I went to Pine Creek on the 4th of July for the first time, and you preached from the 12th chapter of Hebrews, dwelling on the second verse. As you were so wonderfully blessed to portray a Savior

"who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God," my heart was deeply touched, and I felt perhaps there was some hope that He died for me. I do not have the assurance that some have, and I know not whether I be embraced in that covenant, but I do know that if I have any hope it is Christ. He is the only door to heaven, and if I have Him, I need nothing else.

If not deceived, I trust the Lord has broadened my view of Him since I was baptized four years ago. I see Him as the great Mediator between God and man; and the Son of man and the Son of God; as the great High Priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; and the King of kings and Lord of lords; and as the Head of the church; as our Advocate; as a kind and gentle Shepherd; as the only true God and Father, our Lord Jesus Christ. What greater blessing could there be than to be numbered with the brethren of Christ and be a joint-heir with Him? What more could one ask, or even desire!

Brother Spangler, I hope I have not been tedious. I felt a great burden to express what was in my heart. So often I feel that I am as Sister Mary Parker remarked of herself: *"When I feel the most, then I am the most silent."* I would not be thus, but I cannot do that which I would. Please overlook my errors for good and bear with my weaknesses, as I am the least in my Father's house. Once again, I would express how very much your beautiful sermon meant to me. It is not often that I am blessed to rejoice as I have tonight.

May the Lord continue to bless both you and Sister Spangler. I love you both, I trust, with the unfeigned love of the brethren that I hope has been placed in my heart. If given a mind to, please remember me in prayer.

In bonds of love,
Mary Lee Hawkins

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene with Moons Creek Church on the 5th Sunday in November. The Church is located about a 1/2 mile east of Hwy 86 between Danville and Yanceyville on Park Springs Rd.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Sister Sue Blalock, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 2009

Carol Lansaw, VA 15.00
Viola Davis, VA 5.00
Florence B. Knight, NC 15.00
Ada Beeghly, VA 5.00
Judy Poindexter, VA 5.00
Earl Thurman, VA 5.00
Flay Mordecai, MS 5.00
Anonymous 100.00

OBITUARIES

JEANNETTE CURTIS ROBERTSON

I have been asked by Durham Primitive Baptist Church to write the obituary for my dear wife, companion, closest friend and sister in the church. Jeannette was born October 2, 1942 and departed this world of trials and afflictions March 30, 2009. Her parents were Eugene H. and Mildred King Curtis, both of whom preceded her in death. Her mother died just eleven weeks before Jeannette and was only two rooms from her in the same hospital. I took Jeannette directly from the hospital to the funeral.

There was no one in her parent's families who believed as she did, but that never bothered Jeannette. She knew what she believed and by whom it came. She never wavered.

Those of us who remain with sad hearts to mourn her passing are her husband, Elder Cleo Robertson; son, William A. Robertson; daughter, Kay Sokolovic and husband, Dan; grandchildren, Conner and Casey Sokolovic; brother, Eugene H. Curtis, Jr. and wife, Sally; sister, Kathy Blackley and husband, Gary; and sister, Ann Lewis.

Jeannette had many wonderful dreams and experiences before she was made willing to ask for a home with Durham Primitive Baptist Church. The Lord blessed the writer to baptize her the 3rd Sunday in May, 1991. She continued to be given many dreams and experiences that gave her much comfort and peace until her death. She wrote several articles published in the Signs of the Times on the understanding she was given of different scriptures as well as relating her experiences. The Lord gave her great faith for she had great trials to endure. Her faith failed not as she remained optimistic and joyful to the very end. Her hope was an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil. She was blessed to touch many people in different areas of the country as people who had never met her, but had heard of her, would call just to talk with her and receive some words of encouragement for their own condition. She and I were

blessed with almost 47 years of wonderful, precious discussions of scriptures and experiences.

The last church service that she attended was at Durham Church the 3rd Sunday in February, 2009. It was a rainy day and I asked her if she would prefer not going as she was in a wheelchair and her condition was not good. She insisted that she was going and I believe she felt it would be the last time. It was.

Over the past 10 years, she had endured much pain and suffering due to ovarian cancer. The last 90 days of her life were so severely painful, but as the Lord told the Apostle Paul, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. During the last couple of days of her life, the doctors increased her pain medication to the extent that her eyes were closed and she could not communicate. Her mouth was open laboring for breath and groaning from the pain. Her left arm was bent and immovable against her face. A few minutes past midnight on March 30, the nurse woke us and said Jeannette did not seem to be breathing. The nurse had not touched her. We got up and found that she was not breathing, but she had the most beautiful, pleasant, peaceful look on her face. There seemed to be a trace of a smile on her lips. Her arm was down and both arms were folded on her stomach as though she was resting. There was no trace of any pain. The Lord surely was with her that night for Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. At the midnight hour, she was set free from the prison of her earthly tabernacle and freed from all her pain and suffering. Sin was finished. She had entered into that rest reserved for the children of the heavenly King. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

At the funeral home, a dear elder left me a handwritten note that read, ***"She was beautiful in life and she was beautiful in death."*** Her funeral was conducted by Elders Kenneth Key, Larry Hollandsworth and Jerry Farmer at Brown-Wynne Funeral Home in Cary, NC on April 2, 2009.

Written by one who loved her and misses her.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Catherine Humbarger, Clerk

PSALM 26: 6-8.

I will wash mine hands in innocency: so will I compass thine altar, O Lord:

That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works.

Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

SONG

COURAGE, my soul, behold the prize
The Saviour's love provides:
Eternal life beyond the skies
For all whom here he guides.

The wicked cease from troubling there,
The weary are at rest;
Sorrow, and sin, and pain, and care,
No more approach the blest.

A wicked world, and wicked heart,
With Satan now are joined;
Each acts a too successful part
In harassing my mind.

But fighting in my Saviour's strength.
Though mighty are my foes,
I shall a conqueror be at length
O'er all that can oppose.

Then why, my soul, complain or fear?
The crown of glory see!
The more I toil and suffer here,
The sweeter rest will be.

Newton.

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EDITORIALS

"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." 1 Corinthians 2: 11-13.

Elder J.B. Farmer

It seems that each time I have been impressed to write on any spiritual subject, I have been first impressed with my own unworthiness, then with my great ignorance and inability to write anything of substance on my own. I am made to beg for wisdom and understanding, and for love that I may not give offense to any of God's little ones. It seems that writing gives vent for things shut up in my bones, and allows for things to be put in order that have been going around in my mind. It also seems to give some relief for the distress I feel inside. May God give understanding to rightly divide the word of truth, and may He give grace for His little ones to receive the truth as it is in Christ, and to reject all that may be in error - all for His honor, praise and glory.

The kingdom of God is without doubt a spiritual kingdom. In order to see that kingdom and to enter it and to know anything of it one must first have been generated from above. Apart from that spiritual birth, one may only see and know the things of the natural kingdoms of this world. God has made it so. Jesus said to Nicodemus, ***"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."*** And He also said, ***"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of***

God." And the apostle Paul, by inspiration, said, ***"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."***

We are fully assured that many natural things are made to represent spiritual things to them who are spiritually exercised, when they are blessed with understanding from above. For example, a natural kingdom has many aspects that have a counterpart in the spiritual kingdom. Each has a king that reigns. Each has laws that apply to itself only, which must be obeyed. Both have definite boundaries, certain locations and specific periods of existence. Each kingdom has enemies that would conquer and destroy it if they had their way, so each one must necessarily have a defense. Each kingdom has an economic system that is different from other kingdoms. Each one has a religion that is particular to itself. Each kingdom has a history and a heritage that the subjects know and warmly reflect upon that is not precious to others. Those born into each kingdom are automatically citizens of the one into which they are born. They speak a certain language that foreigners cannot understand. The subjects of each kingdom wear clothes that may look strange to others. The citizens partake of food and drink of which others have no taste. They each have customs that are unfamiliar to outsiders. Their thoughts and ways are alien to those of another kingdom. Every kingdom must always seem very peculiar to one that is a foreigner to it.

Only God's little ones are enabled to comprehend the things of His kingdom as they are enlightened. It is here a little and there a little, line upon line and precept upon precept. They are led about by the Spirit and instructed in the things of the kingdom, as was Jacob of old. The children of God are given to know that the Lord God Almighty rules in the army of heaven and amongst the inhabitants of the earth. They are given confidence that He works all things together after the counsel of His own will, and that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose. Those not of the spiritual kingdom of God have no confidence that God reigns over all. They think that God only can move or work at man's bidding or that they must help Him along. They think that God can only save one who allows Him to do so. They insist on the free will doctrine because they can do no other. Those in a carnal mind cannot know anything of the power and majesty of the God of heaven and earth, or anything else of His kingdom.

The laws of the kingdom of God are the laws of love. All the laws of God are summed up in two commandments. Jesus said, ***"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with***

all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." When one's heart is filled with love, there is no hatred for a brother or even for one who has related to him as an enemy. Love does nothing amiss to anyone, but rather seeks the good of all. We see the ultimate example of this in the life of Christ, Who went about doing good. He went to the extreme of laying down His life for His brethren, and offering Himself up without spot unto God – the Just for the unjust – in order to save His people from their sins. We see this same love in the lives of the prophets who laid down their lives for their brethren, not fearing the wrath of kings, nor loving their lives unto the death. We see this love in the lives of the apostles, who like Paul, were willing to spend and be spent for the brethren. And we see this love in our brethren, sisters and friends of the gospel, as they open their homes and hearts to one another and forego the pleasures of this world to be with their kindred in Christ. The worldly professor knows nothing of the kingdom of God as it pertains to the law of love. He lives for pleasure and desires to rule over others with force and cruelty, especially those who do not agree with him. The tree is known by its fruit.

The spiritual kingdom has definite boundaries and has a specific location and has a specific period of existence. If one is not born of God, he cannot see it, find it or enter it. Those that abide in the flesh may not enter. Jesus said, ***"Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven."*** Only those who have been converted from their old way of life and have been stripped of all self-righteousness and have been changed to be as little children may enter. Only those that have their hard and stony hearts replaced with tender hearts of flesh may enter. The wise and prudent professors are excluded. The Holy Spirit said by the apostle Paul, ***"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."*** The kingdom of God is invisible to the natural eye, but it is here and now with God reigning in the hearts of His people. It is no wonder that Jesus said, ***"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:***

neither shall they say, Lo here! Or, lo there! For behold, the kingdom of God is within you." The kingdom of God is an everlasting kingdom. Nebuchadnezzar the king, by inspiration said, ***"His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation."*** The religious professors who never are converted and made to become as little children, and who are dominated by sin and hatred are imposters that have not seen the kingdom of God.

The kingdom of God has many enemies that seek its destruction. Satan and his host are at the very walls awaiting and plotting its overthrow. But thanks be unto God, Jesus said, ***"Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."*** Those outside the walls throw their rocks and find their faults and watch for its downfall, but they shall be continually disappointed. Isaiah, the prophet of old was blessed to say, ***"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."*** There are many enemies, but God rules over all. The inspired Psalmist said, ***"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: and the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."*** The wicked may only go as far as it pleases the God of heaven and earth, but they shall never enter His kingdom. The end of all things is that God shall receive all praise, honor and glory – even over all the deceptive wickedness of the devil and his servants, even though they transform themselves and seek to appear as angels of light.

In all the kingdoms of this world, it is necessary to buy with money or to purchase with labor the things that one desires. But in the kingdom of God, all things are free and without charge or labor. Isaiah again was blessed of God to say, ***"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligent unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David."*** The religious world is money based and work based. They have a continual fund raising effort to keep themselves afloat financially. Take away the money and they will all suddenly sink to the bottom out of sight. They are trying to build a religious kingdom by their supposed good works. But the truth is according to the say-

ing of the Spirit by the Psalmist, ***"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."*** Their hearts cannot be right with God to think that spiritual things could be purchased with money or man's efforts. Man's work is outside the kingdom of God.

In the kingdom of God is a pure religion that is undefiled before God the Father. The true religion, according to the inspired apostle James is this: ***"To visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."*** Who are the fatherless and the widows spoken of here if not the children of God in this world? They are a poor and afflicted people that are pilgrims and strangers in this world. And who is it that desires to be kept unspotted from the world, but the child of God? The children of God do visit one another in their affliction. They do walk together in the light and speak the comfort of truth to one another in love. They do overlook one another's faults, knowing the weakness of the flesh. They do forgive one another's trespasses even as they have been forgiven for Christ's sake. The world does not recognize the fatherless and widows as being God's little children. They have no sympathy for them and have no desire to comfort them. The world is without knowledge of the identity of God's people and is without knowledge of the pure undefiled religion within the kingdom of God. They only have an empty form or a counterfeit copy of the pure and undefiled religion of God's people. And that false religion has no place in God's kingdom.

Within the kingdom of God is a spiritual book we call the Bible. This book was written by the Spirit of God, and was written in a mystery to the spiritual children of God. The same Spirit that wrote the scriptures is the One that must interpret the words in order for them to be profitable. Many have taken hold of the scriptures and have tried to understand the things written there with a carnal mind. It is a futile effort. Those things are as sealed to the natural man as much as the book of Life is sealed to all except the Lamb of God. This is why there are so many religions. However, there is a great effort in progress to bring the many religions together into one basic belief that may be shared by all false professors. Their main teaching is that man has a free will and that God will not violate that. It is a works system to which they all subscribe. They have arrived at a belief that is based upon carnal reasoning and which is as far from the truth as heaven is above the earth. It is outside the kingdom of God and there it must remain.

This Bible is a history book, but it is much more than that. It is a record of the life of God's chosen people in the world, and a testimony of the person of God as He has re-

vealed Himself to them. And it is an account of how He kept His people and delivered them all through the ages. It is a record of the eternal love of God for His people, Spiritual Israel, and the covenants that He made with them. It is the written manifestation of the outpouring of the hearts of God's little ones when under sore trials and temptations, and it relates their adoration of Him in their deliverances. It is the true record of the victories that God gave to His little ones over overwhelming hoards of their enemies. It is the story of the deliverance of God's people from starvation in the face of terrible droughts, and deliverance from famine, disease and oppression. Not only is it a natural history, but it is also a spiritual account that speaks of the coming of Christ, and the spiritual warfare of His little ones. It is a testament of the life experience of many of the children of God down through the ages, to which we may compare our experience. And when we see a little of our trials and deliverances there, we are given some hope that we have a part in the kingdom of God also. The Bible is the book of the kingdom of God, and only those of that kingdom ever really are given an understanding of its mysteries, and then only by revelation. It is a book of confusion for all others.

The citizens of the kingdom of God are so by birth for they are they ***"which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."*** They speak the pure language of grace that no natural man can learn. They are the only ones given to wear robes of righteousness of spotless white made so by the blood of the Lamb. Their food is the Bread of Life, which came down from heaven. Their drink is the pure water of life that springs up in them to eternal life. Their customs are of decency and order and honesty, and of giving no offence by respecting of persons or of partiality. They are blessed to love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. They are made to forsake father, mother, brother, sister, houses and lands in this life that they may serve the living God. They are given the Spirit of power and of love and of a sound mind. They have had the fear of men cast out of their hearts by God's perfect love. They are translated from the kingdom of darkness of this world into His marvelous light. It is manifest that they have passed from death to life because they love the brethren. It is no wonder the way they are described. Peter said as he was moved by the Spirit, ***"ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."***

May we be given grace to compare not only natural things to spiritual things, but also spiritual things with spiritual things to the praise,

honor and glory of the grace and mercy of God. We are made to compare our spiritual experience to the spiritual experience of the saints in all ages, from righteous Abel through the prophets and apostles, and to those that have gone before us, whom we have known and loved. When we see how righteous Abel was hated and persecuted because of the gift of faith given to him according to the grace of God, and we are made to believe that we have tasted a little of that, hope springs up. When we see Moses refusing to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with God's people than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, and we are made to think we have been separated from the world and caused to love God's people, we take heart. When we are given to look upon the lives of the apostles, and see their heartfelt love of the brethren and how they laid down their lives for one another, and are made to believe that we have been given a desire to do the same, we rejoice in hope of eternal life. When we remember the words of our dear brethren that have gone before us, how they were brought down into the depths of hopelessness because of their sinfulness, and how they were made to beg God for mercy, and how they were delivered from that darkness to light, and are given to believe we have been brought along the same path, we are made to think that our journey has not been in vain.

When we read in the old scriptures how that God found Jacob in a desert land, and in a waste howling wilderness, and how God led him about, and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of His eye, we trust that God shall do the same with each one of His little ones -even with us if we are His. When we see David defeating the giant, we see Jesus defeating the devil. When we see the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, we see God's people being delivered out from under the bondage of Satan and the power of sin. The old scriptures are full of promises to Gods children, and full of prophesies concerning Christ and his kingdom. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament are spiritual books and are continually compared to one another by the children of God. When understanding is given, perfect agreement between the two is obvious. Jesus declared what the scriptures were not, and what they were in just a few words to the Jews. He said, ***"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they that testify of me."*** They are not purposed to give eternal life as some have thought, but they are they that testify of Christ reigning in the spiritual kingdom of God, and they that testify of the spiritual experience of His people, who are bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh spiritually.

When reading of the creation of the world, Jesus, the living Word of God comes to mind, by Whom the world was made. When reading of Adam and Eve, Christ and His love for His bride the church seems evident. When reading of righteous Able that was slain by wicked Cain because God had respect unto Abel's offering by faith and no respect to Cain's offering not in faith, it seems to foretell the death of Jesus at the hands of the wicked. When reading of Noah and the flood, the prophesy seems sure of the coming destruction of the world with only a few elect souls saved in the ark, which signifies Christ and the safety in Him. When reading of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, their lives plainly appear to be the figures of the life of Christ, Who came in the flesh after them. When reading of Moses and Aaron, figures of Christ the intercessor are surely manifest. When reading of Joshua, who led God's people into the promise land, Jesus the deliverer of Spiritual Israel doubtless is revealed in a shadow. When reading of the Judges of Israel, time and again the work of Christ in delivering His people against overwhelming and oppressive adversaries is brought to mind. When reading the prophets, how could one of His people in the Spirit help rejoicing in the prophesies of the birth, life, suffering, death, resurrection and second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, even though these prophesies are hidden to the carnal mind? When reading of the good kings of Israel and Judah, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords seems to reveal Himself in their lives. There are many, many more examples that could be given if time and space would permit. But since this is becoming lengthy, it seems best to rest here. All the old scriptures, according to the words of Christ, testify in a mystery of Himself and what He has done for His people, Spiritual Israel, through the ages.

It seems good from time to time to reflect on the things that God has done for His little ones, and to be given a hope in the goodness and mercy of God. I know I am full of mistakes. If I were to be judged on the grounds of my perfections according to nature, I know I would be lost worlds without end, because I have none. Please forgive all mistakes and weaknesses and, if possible, please remember me before God the Father and His Son, Jesus, Christ. I trust this was written in love, and in hope of eternal life.

J. B. Farmer
October 11, 2006.

PROVERBS 3:1-2.

My son, forget not my law, but let thine heart keep my commandments:

For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.

CORRESPONDENCE

10-16-09

Brethren,

I enjoy my magazine and the experience reading what God does for his people. I'm 91 years old and live alone. He has taken care of me all these many years. And I believe He will until the end. God's my only hope of eternal life, my all and all.

Thank you for sending my magazine if I am behind.

Sisters Love Always,
Sister Lovie A. Thompson

Nov. 8, 2009

Dear Elder Key,

As always the Signs of the Times is always relevant, no matter when articles that are printed were written or tape recorded. I joy in reading each edition, cover to cover, and find comfort when I realize that others often feel as I do in my shortcomings and while being in the "dry seasons". It is so wonderfully welcome to have that "drink" for our thirsty bodies and souls and we always seem to receive it when we most need it.

I pray you are well and look forward to the next edition and I thank all of you for your faithful service for the Signs of the Times. Please renew my subscription for two years and consider the balance a contribution to use as you deem fit.

Sincerely,
Vicki Knight,

VOICES OF THE PAST

The following is taken from the book, "A Treasure of Hymns" by Amos R. Wells. Copyright 1945, W. A. Wilde

The book Contains brief biographies of one hundred twenty leading hymn writers with their best hymns.

"COME, THOU FOUNT
OF EVERY BLESSING."
Robert Robinson.

This hymn, which is one of the noblest ever written, was composed by Rev. Robert Robinson. Its writer was born in Swaffham, England, September 27, 1735, and died as he had wished to die, "softly, suddenly, and alone," being found dead in his bed on the morning of June 9, 1790.

He was a poor boy, the only support of his mother, " and she was a widow." At the age of fourteen, he became apprentice to a barber in London, where he seems to have

been none of the steadiest. At one time he made a gypsy fortune-teller drunk, and while she was under the influence of liquor she prophesied that the lad would "see his children and his grandchildren."

The prophecy made a deep impression upon the young fellow, and he decided to make something of himself, for the sake of these unborn descendants. He became a convert of the great preacher, George Whitefield, and at once began to preach on his own account. He joined the Baptists, and was made pastor of a small church in Cambridge.

In that university town he passed nearly all of the remainder of his life, honored even by the scholars of the place, since he was himself also a scholar by the power of his mind, though he had none of a scholar's training. He published several volumes, and his sermons are full of a quaint common sense. The great preacher, Robert Hall, who followed him in the same church, was his spiritual successor also, just as, in later years, the eminent Spurgeon became the disciple of Robert Hall.

Robinson was a practical man, and did not hesitate to take up farming to eke out his scanty income. He was a man of large and liberal temper, though a true believer in orthodox religion. For this reason I am inclined to doubt the anecdote of Mr. Robinson's conversation with a lady whom he is said to have met in a stage coach. She forced the talk to the subject of religion, and at last quoted his own hymn, "Come, thou Fount of every blessing," speaking of the blessings it had brought to her. Upon this Robinson is said to have exclaimed, "Madam, I am the poor unhappy man who composed that hymn, many years ago, and I would give a thousand worlds, if I had them, to enjoy the feelings I had then."

Mr. Robinson is not known to have written more than two hymns. One of these begins, "Mighty God, while angels bless Thee," and the other is the following hymn, which was composed probably in 1757.

Come, thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise.

Teach me some melodious sonnet,
Sung by flaming tongues above;
Praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it,
Mount of God's unchanging love!

Here I raise my Ebenezer;
Hither by Thy help I'm come;
And I hope, by Thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home.

Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God;
He, to rescue me from danger,
Interposed His precious blood.

Oh, to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be!
Let that grace now, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to Thee.

Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it;
Prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart; oh, take and seal it, –
Seal it for Thy courts above!

ROMANS IX. 21.

"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?"

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: - Some time back you requested me to write along the line of the above Scripture. I believe I promised to do so if my mind should be led out in that way, but I have put it off chiefly because of two reasons; one is you are so far my superior in these things that anything I can write about would be of no comfort to you or the dear readers of the SIGNS. I see your call to the work in the ministry very plainly verified by the Scripture, A man's gift maketh room for him and bringeth him before great men. These great men are God's people, whose hearts seem much drawn out after you. But I infer that you have also been on the rough billows and tried in the furnace of affliction.

I fear to make the attempt to write, lest it might only be of the flesh and will of man. But I will draw the bow at venture, hoping the Lord will direct the arrow, I hope you are able to try the spirits whether they are of God. I cannot tell you whether or not I will give you any part of the true import or meaning of the Scripture; I can only promise I will tell you what it means to me. I want to say in the beginning, I have but the two families, or generations, to write of. One is of the earth earthy, and its generation is of Adam, and the second man is the Lord from heaven, and his generation is the generation of Jesus Christ. If I can be made able to trace by the first fruits of the flock and show the eternal relationship and unity between Christ, the eternal head of this generation, and the church, his body, then I will feel I am well paid for writing this letter. I feel I am writing *"to wise men; judge ye what I say."* We see the old Scriptures stand in figures, types and shadows, and by following the shadows we can come to the substance. The trouble is that sometimes we

take the shadows and figures for the substance. In the first place, we find the clay of the same lump, all in the hands of the potter. This potter must be the Lord. No doubt but that Adam was a figure of Christ, and Eve, his bride, the church, and was called Adam until she was taken from man. Now let us take a glimpse at the first man, Adam, who was of the earth earthy, of which the whole earth is populated. Was he not a lifeless lump of his mother earth, altogether destitute of any of the faculties that go to make up the natural man, and lifeless, not able to transgress nor to be susceptible to either joy or grief or pain? This is the whole makeup of the created Adam man, and at that time was just as good and sinless as the dust, or earth, from whence he was taken. He was not eligible to anything until God *"breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul."* Was he a living soul before? He surely was not. But when the eyes of both of them were opened this living soul was able to realize and experience joy and sorrow and pain. Here we find the created earthly generation of Adam and the generation of Jesus Christ, which is not an earthly creation. Solomon tells us about the developing of the generation of Jesus Christ, saying, before the mountains were settled, before the hills, was I brought forth. Here is the bringing forth of the church, or generation of Jesus Christ, as spoken of in Matthew i. 1, and that *"while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world." - Prov. viii. 26.* Before the dust was made that the Adam man was formed of. This should suffice as to the origin of God's people. All in the lump of clay in the hands of the Potter. A vessel is that which is to hold what is put in it. It is no wonder that one vessel is made unto honor when it has the promised resurrection to these vessels of honor that Paul prayed that *"your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."* Then in Romans ix. 22, Paul says, *"What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction."* In the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth verses it is said, *"For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth. It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."* If the doctrine of eternal personal election and unconditional salvation by grace is not a Bible doctrine, then the whole Arminian world has got us fooled, because it is not part of one and part of the other. But I do not hesitate to affirm it is all of

grace, first and last, with all of its bearings. We hear some weakened fellows saying God would be unjust if he saved a part and sent the rest down to hell. We refer such ones to the twentieth verse, which says by inspiration, ***"Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"*** The Savior says, ***"But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elias the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman, the Syrian."- Luke iv. 25-27.*** Here the carnal mind would ask, Why was not Elias sent to all the widows of Sarepta to save them all alive, and why was Elias the prophet only sent to cleanse Naaman, while there were many lepers in Israel? All one needs to know the justice of all God's works is to be brought up in grace's school. Then he will not think foolishly and wickedly, charging God with being unjust. In Romans ix. 18, Paul says, ***"Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."*** This shows God is a sovereign God over all worlds, powers and dominions, and does not give any reason or account to anyone for what he does. The Lord says by the mouth of Jeremiah, "O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel."- Jer. xviii. 6. Paul says, ***"They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." - Rom. ix. 8.*** These are the promised children Paul spoke of: "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God."- Rom. viii. 19. It is a well known fact that the manifestation of a thing is not its 'beginning, but clearly reveals its identity. Not that they are eternal children, as we are so slanderously reported saying. We preach eternal children. But we say and believe biblically the eternal life substance that is in Christ, the eternal seed and head of the body, or church, and in the manifestation in the Adam man, in whom they had a time standing, they become children in the new birth. David said by prophecy in ***Psalms cxxxix. 15, 16, "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect [not as yet manifested in Adam as children]; and in thy book all my members were writ-***

ten, which in continuance [not to remain so were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." The definition of the word "fashion" is to shape or form, especially in dress. It seems the Lord was speaking by the mouth of David of the developing of God's people to a higher order, and as yet there was none of them as children manifested in the flesh. This Scripture spoken of by David is often used by good brethren to prove the nonentity, or nonexistence, of God's people prior to the Adam man of flesh and blood, but falls very far short of doing so. If such was biblical, and the truth, would not the Scripture have said something like this: that I Christ was the head, but as yet no body, but would some time in the future have a head of the Adam man of flesh and blood? But thanks eternal be to God, no such Scripture as this is found on the pages of eternal truth. Paul says, ***"And he [Christ] is the head of the body, the church." - Col. i. 18.*** Not going to be the head, but was then, in the present tense. And these members David spoke of, their names and life substance were there in this eternal Head, awaiting their manifestation as the sons of God, and in eternal vital unity with Christ their head. Jude says they were ***"sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ,"*** therefore in this sense are as old as Christ, because Wisdom saw their fall in Adam, and knowing these heirs would need a Savior, and he said, To this end was I born. So the remedy was prepared for them in the annals of eternity, and God's chosen ones are safe, no harm can befall them. David again speaks of these members, or life substance, saying. ***"A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation."- Psalms xxii. 30.*** This is the generation spoken of in Matthew i. 1. Therefore if my man be: in Christ he is a new creature. As I see it, this does not mean a new life substance, but new in the birth and manifestation of the sons of God. We have heard it claimed that there was nothing eternal about the Adam man of flesh and blood until the second, or new birth, that if there had been he could not be a new creature in Christ. This is denying the most positive covenant Scriptures, and denying God's people being given in Christ in the eternal covenant of grace, and also denying Christ's own words in his prayer to the Father, saying, ***"I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me." "Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition."- John xvii. 6, 12.*** Let us note the fact that the birth does not make the child, and is not it, origin or beginning, but only a change of element and manifestation of the child in the flesh. So, brethren, let us never faulter nor fear. Some also ignore in the same way the sixteenth chapter and seventh verse of Romans, where Paul says,

"Who are of note among the apostles; who also were in Christ before me," when it is very plain that Paul is here speaking of the new birth or manifestation in the flesh of the sons of God, but not of the eternal life substance that was given in Christ in the eternal covenant of grace. Then it is claimed by some brethren that these were new creatures in Christ before Paul. But this could not be if they had existed in God in eternity, thus by their own words denying that Paul ever was embraced in Christ in the eternal covenant of grace before the new birth. But when Paul comes to speak of his, and all the family's, eternal standing in Christ, he says, *"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world."- Eph. i. 4.* What can be any more positive? It cannot fail. We see by reason of the standing of God's people in Adam, their earthly representative head, they fell in him and became sinners, therefore needed a Savior, as I have here before mentioned. Paul says, *"For the creature [God's people] was made subject to vanity [in the transgression of Adam], not willingly, but by reason of him who I hath subjected the same in hope; because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."* - *Rom. viii. 20, 21.* And in the nineteenth verse, as I have here quoted, Paul says, *"For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God,"* As I see it, by the transgression of Adam, this earthly representative head, this creature, or life substance, died a spiritual death and was made alive in Christ, as I have before stated, and was made the recipient of a manifestation in the new birth, Those thus born of the Spirit do not sin, because they are born of God. The sin is all in the Adam man of flesh and blood, who is not of the children of God, while in the transgression of Adam, the "formed man," a corporeal or natural death was passed on his whole progeny, therefore two deaths in Adam's transgression, one a spiritual death to God's people, the other a corporeal or natural death to the progeny of Adam. I am sure we have not a few good brethren whom I love who think they believe that the whole makeup of the children of God is of the Adam man of flesh and blood and bones, when really they do not believe it, therefore I do not wish to use unkind words and harsh criticism, because if such be the truth, it follows as a fact that the kingdom of God after death will be populated with men and women of flesh and blood, male and female, which the Bible positively denies. Let us see what Job says about what becomes of the flesh and blood man: *"As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away; so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more."-Job vii. 9.* Here

is the end of all flesh and blood; it comes up no more. To this Paul witnesses, and says, ***"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."-1 Cor. xv. 50.*** Job again says, ***"So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep."- Job xiv. 12.*** Here the body goes down in the grave a weak, mortal body, ***"it is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."*** Not a body of flesh, blood and bone. As I see it, this spiritual body is the body Paul prayed for to be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, when this spiritual resurrected body will be reunited with both soul and body in the resurrection at the last day.

I feel sure the faith and doctrine I have here written of, though in a very weak way, it the faith of Primitive or Old School Baptists in all ages of the world. The enemy of this faith and doctrine has made many rash dives to drown it out and kill it, but thanks eternal be to God, he never has left himself without a witness that will ever stand on the walls of Zion and proclaim this glorious faith and doctrine as long as God has any purpose in the gospel being preached anywhere in this old world. It is a well known fact that all the factions that have gone out from the true Primitive Baptist Church have gone out objecting to the doctrine of election and predestination, calling us hard names, such as "eternal children," "two seeders," and "fatalists," the same as their forefathers have always done. But one thing is strange: that those brethren will borrow the Arminians' weapon to use as a battle-axe on their brethren. We should beware of borrowing, for we know what it has cost our people in all ages. Oh how our poor hearts are made to rejoice and glow with love when we think how God has ever loved and preserved his people through the many changes of this old world, from the very earliest dawn of time down to the present day, and will as long as he has any use for this old world, then he will call his people, the object of his love, home, there to ever be with the Lord. So, dear brethren and sisters, comfort each other with these words.

Brother Dodson, when at the throne of grace remember me, a poor sinner; pray that I may ever be found earnestly contending for the faith as it is in Christ, and that I may never be left to my ignorance and the will of the natural man in these sacred things of God. This is the desire of one of the least of God's people, if one at all.

W. L. EDWARDS
Castlewood, Virginia

MATTHEW I. 18-25.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is, conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall can his name Emmanuel; which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: and knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.

A brother has requested views on the foregoing. At this time we may not be able to go into the subject to the extent we would like, but we will express some of our thoughts for the consideration of those who may read. This Scripture involves one of the most fundamental phases of eternal truth to be found anywhere in the Bible. If it is untrue then the entire weave and fabric of the Scriptures must fall to the ground as the greatest myth of the ages. The Lord himself, however, promised before even the human race began to multiply upon the earth that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head which was prophetic of the fact that Jesus in the fullness of time would come in the flesh and through his sufferings, death and resurrection destroy him that had the power of death, *"and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."* In addition to the record of Matthew as to how the birth of Jesus came about, we also have the record of Luke, whose profession we understand was that of a physician, and who was especially taught and learned in such matters as those pertaining to births, etc. It was no mere accident that he, as one having authority, should *"have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us."* He continued with the further statement; that *"Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in*

order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed."- Luke i. 1-4. He then tells us Herod was king of Judea in those days, and gives us the details of the birth of John the Baptist, following which he relates the circumstances surrounding the miraculous conception and birth of our Lord. We will quote his exact words as recorded in verses twenty-six to thirty-five, inclusive: *"And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God, unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."* If this evidence is not acceptable and conclusive it is useless to attempt to adduce further proof from the Bible. This is not the first time or the only thing that has utterly confounded men, scientific and otherwise. They cannot tell us how God by the power of his word was able, in the beginning, to create the heaven and the earth; they cannot explain why the Red Sea should have divided to let Israel pass over dryshod. and then the same mighty waters closed in upon Pharaoh and his hosts destroying them to a man; they cannot unravel the mystery of the fiery furnace, the heat from which destroyed those who cast in the three Hebrew children and yet all that the fires could do to them was to loose their bands. The world still awaits an explanation from the wise men as to why it was not until the seventh day and the seventh time that Joshua's men encompassed the city of Jericho, that it came to pass, at the blast of the ram's horn, when the sound of the trumpet was heard, that the walls of the city should fall down flat, and the people should ascend up every man straight before him. Many

have contended that the narrative of the whale swallowing Jonah is absolutely incredible, but we would rather agree with the old colored brother who said that he not only believed what the Bible said about it, but that if the Bible had said that Jonah had swallowed the whale, he would have believed that, as well. The wise men, magicians, soothsayers, and the like, of Egypt were utterly dumbfounded and bewildered at many things which were made perfectly clear to God's servants by revelation. The same is true to-day. Science has for its foundation literally known FACTS. True religion has for its foundation FAITH. This is the gift of God, and without it no man can please God. ***"He that cometh to God must believe that he is [that he is verily God], and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."*** To all such, nothing is impossible with God; their faith staggers not at anything that pertains to him. By the mighty workings of his Holy Spirit in them they are enabled to believe, and they accept without one scintilla of reservation the inspired record as to the manner and purpose of the birth of Jesus as given not only by Matthew and Luke, but which was also prophesied beforehand all down through the ages by God's holy prophets. That a virgin should bring forth a son, and that his name should be called JESUS, which being interpreted is God with us, whose purpose in coming into the world was to save his people from their sins, and that he finished his work in every sense of the word, is the foundation of the christian's hope. The truth of this is well attested to by all of the holy Scriptures. We are well aware of the fact that the multitudes do not and cannot accept such doctrine, nor can they believe it until it is wrought in them by God's power, but this shall not in any way deter or prevent our proclaiming it from the house-top. Many times we are made to ask, if it be God's will, that he pity the unregenerate and have mercy upon them. At the same time we are made to thank him from the very depth of our poor, sinful heart for revealing unto us a knowledge of his truth, for according to nature we are no better than the vilest of the vile, and would most certainly have never desired to know him whom to know is life eternal had we been left to ourself.

Since our last editorial, which appeared in the May issue of our paper, in which we spoke of the clay and the potter, and tried to set forth God's sovereignty in making one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor, and his electing love in choosing Jacob and rejecting Esau, even before either were born, or had done good or evil, ***"that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth,"*** we have received three pages of scriptural references, unidentifiable as to date, address and signature, with re-

marks purporting to refute the doctrine of election. We stated in said editorial that *"Unquestionably, the doctrine of election is the most hated of all of God's blessed truths,"* so we are not surprised that we drew the blood of one who evidently does not know the truth. One of the first Scriptures to which our unknown friend refers as supporting his theory of God's inability and the creature's ability is 1 Timothy ii. 4, as follows: *"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."* Evidently he construed this to mean that God will have every individual of mankind to be saved, but because the creature is more mighty than his Creator, God will have to content himself with saving only such as will let him. If such doctrine is not blasphemy, we do not know what would be. As the last reference on his third page has to do with *"rightly dividing the word of truth,"* we would recommend that he take the trouble to ponder the first part of this verse, which says, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed," and take himself into hiding until he has some true understanding of what the Scriptures really teach. The twenty-first verse of Matthew one, which reads: *"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins,"* is sufficient answer for us to make at this time to his three pages of unsigned material, mailed at Winnipeg, Canada. Strange as it may seem, this same person also enclosed a leaflet entitled "A Religion of Four Letters," in which a "Christian Lady" said to one, *"There is a wide difference between your religion and mine."* The one to whom she was addressing said, *"Indeed, how is that?" "Your religion,"* she replied, "has only *two* letters in it, and mine has *four* *"What do you mean,"* said he, *"by two letters and four?" "Why, your religion," said the lady, "is D-O, DO; whereas mine is D-O-N-E, DONE."* Our friend apparently is of the former class, while we profess to believe that when Jesus said, *"It is finished,"* and gave up the ghost, *he* had fully accomplished what our text declares — saved his people from their sins. We would suggest that in the future he at least be consistent, and not send opposing kinds of literature in the same envelope.

Since our Lord and his disciples set up and established the true church on earth, Satan and his legion of hosts have done all within their power to destroy it, but Jesus told Peter that the gates of hell should not prevail-against it, so it is safe and secure for all time. It has been attacked in every age, but by God's grace it has survived. The Lord has not left himself without witnesses, for there has always been some who would defend to the death his precious truth. They have not al-

ways maintained the same name as a body, but they have held unswervingly throughout to the same fundamental principles. During the more recent periods of time, they have been known as Baptists, and more recently still as Primitive or Old School Baptists, to distinguish them from those who were really not of them and went out from them. Four years ago, in 1932, we were at the Black Rock meeting-house in Maryland, and took part in a service commemorating the one hundredth anniversary of the separation in 1832 between the Old School and the New School. At that meeting there was much read and spoken which savored of a historical nature, and well do we remember stating from the pulpit that we hoped there were none present who, because of the historical references, would conclude for one moment that the Old School Baptists, or their doctrine, were only one hundred years old, or that Elder Gilbert Beebe was the founder of the church. If this were true, it would mean that we are still only as old as one living man, since we have a dear brother in Hopewell, N. J., David Blackwell by name, who was born in the year 1832, and will be *one* hundred and four years of age if he lives until the latter part of this month. We would be in a very sad state, indeed, if we could not trace our spiritual lineage back farther than that, for there are many religious orders which antedate that period of time, but the doctrine which we believe and contend for goes back to the days of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. Some years ago, at a funeral in the State of Maine, a young man asked us who was the head of our church, and where were the headquarters. We replied that evidently he knew nothing at all about Old Baptists, and then we stated to him that the Lord Je*sus* Christ was the head over all things to the church, and that our headquarters were in heaven. Such, indeed, is the case if we are what we profess to be.

Having already made reference to the meeting at Black Rock, Md., in 1832, when there was a parting of the ways between the Old and New orders, let us emphasize here that the ten Elders and the ten laymen who were present and affixed their signatures to the proceedings which went forth from that place at that time, did not distinguish themselves by advocating and promulgating some NEW doctrine, to be adhered to by their own followers, but their memories are greatly esteemed because they stood immovably for the thing's which had been most surely believed by the followers of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ since the first true gospel church was established. These beloved and faithful brethren, like the apostle Paul, would not have any man follow them beyond what they followed Christ, and if we know our own heart we can truthfully say the

same today. Our earnest prayer is that God will cause us all to ask for the old paths where is the good way, and walk therein. We should stand firmly upon the foundation of which our text is a part, for other foundation can no man lay than that that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

R.L.D.

EXPERIENCE

Dear Brother Griffin,

You asked me some time ago at the Staunton River Association to write my experience for publication in the *Signs of the Times,* but I seem unable to find the right words to put on paper. I have loved the Old Baptists all ofmy life from the earliest of my years until the present time. I have faithfully attended the Old Baptist Churches, and I have loved these with a special love for as long as I can remember.

I cannot truthfully say I have always believed the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists, for as a child I did not understand it. When I did start to believing the doctrine of the Bible I cannot pinpoint that either. My parents would carry my brothers and sisters and me to church, and sometimes it seemed as though the preacher would stand all day. We children would begin to twist in our seats and I would say to myself, "I am not going to church on the next Sunday". But as always, the next Sunday would come and I was back on those hard benches. I could not understand what continued to draw me back to those meetings, but now I hope I do know.

Several years before I was brought to the church I would see other people join the church and wished I could be blessed to join, too. Then I would realize what a foolish thought I was thinking. No one would ever want to see a sinner like me in the church. I could look at the older brethren and sisters in the church and see how good and kind they were, and then think of myself. If I could have felt half as good as they, I would have asked for a home. I did not think that I could ever be as good as I thought one should be to join the church. For a number of years I sat far back on the back row and hoped that one day I would be worthy of uniting with the church. In my laboring mind I came to the conclusion that at seventeen I was far too young to join the church, and finally decided that I probably never would join the church.

Then this particular Sunday morning came and I went to church as usual. I did not have any plans of asking for a home with them that morning, but something inside of me would not let me sit still. I could not understand what was wrong with me, what was happening to me.

Many times in the past I had wanted to join but could not, and now I had said that I was not going to join, and I found myself making my way to the front of the church. Then, as now, words would not come to me to express my feelings. I could only tell the brethren of my love for them and wan ting to be a part of the Old Baptist Church. I was received into the church, and I was baptized that afternoon.

It has been nearly ten years since that cold and windy March afternoon. Many, many things have happened, many changes have taken place, and many dear ones have passed on. I only hope the good Lord will continue to bless me to believe in and to stand up for the truth as He has set it forth in Holy Writ. The church is my life and its people my family. I hope we will be blessed to live in peace one with another without so m uch friction and breaking of fellowship.

I had not planned to be so lengthy, but I had to write what came to my mind. I have only scratched the surface of what I feel in my mind in love and fellowship for the people of God. Should you find that this is not suitable for publication, I will understand.

May the Lord continue to bless us all.

A little sister,
Naomi M. Coker

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PSALM 100
A Psalm of praise.

MAKE a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.
Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.
Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.
For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

Approach, my soul, the mercy seat,
Where Jesus answers prayer;
There humbly fall before his feet,
For none can perish there.

Thy promise is my only plea;
With this I venture nigh:
Thou callest burdened souls to thee,
And such, O Lord, am I.

Bowed down beneath a load of sin;
By Satan sorely pressed;
By wars without and fears within,
I come to thee for rest.

Be thou my shield and hiding place,
That, sheltered near thy side,
I may my fierce accuser face,
And tell him, Jesus died.

O wondrous love! to bleed and die,
To bear the cross and shame,
That guilty sinners, such as I,
Might plead thy gracious name.

Poor, tempest-tossed soul, be still;
My promised grace receive;
'Tis Jesus speaks! I must, I will,
I can, I do believe.

Newton

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EDITORIALS

"Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, 'One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatever thou hast, and give it to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions." Mark 10:21-22

Elder J.B. Farmer

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and no prophesy of scripture is of any private interpretation. The meaning of scripture is always hidden from natural men, who are called the wise and prudent; and it is revealed unto spiritual men, who are called babes. What appears to be one way according to the conclusions of the natural mind is often shown to be otherwise by the Spirit of God. God has made it so. He has fixed things in a way which confounds the wisdom of men, and which brings glory and honor unto Himself. May it please the God of heaven and earth to reveal the things of truth to His little ones, and to me also, if I am one of His, to the praise of His wisdom, power and grace.

For the scripture to be meaningful and heartfelt, I am made to believe that it must strike a chord in our hearts. It must be applied to our life and experience, in order for it to bring any comfort and assurance to us. I am made to believe that this account of the young man who had great possessions, along with the parallel one in Matthew 19, is one of many, which God has given to His people for this very purpose. We, if we are His, are made to take a look at ourselves, and to see many things about ourselves relative to the kingdom of God.

With God's people, it seems to be a very urgent matter to have assurance concerning their case before Him. They greatly desire to see some evidence that they have a part in His kingdom. They are full of questions, which need answers; and fears, which need to be allevi-

ated. The young man came running to Jesus. I believe that he was typical of the little child of grace. He recognized Jesus as the very Son of God as was evidenced by calling Him *"Good Master,"* and by kneeling to Him. He was fully assured that Jesus could give him the needful answer, so he poured out his innermost question. ***"What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"*** His whole desire seems to be that he may inherit eternal life. The apostle said, ***"But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."*** Eternal life was his whole heart's desire, even as it is ours.

The young man had need to be taught that there is nothing which man can do to make himself worthy of the kingdom of God. It must have been shown to him that salvation is by grace alone, and not of works; that it is God who has wrought that great salvation for His own. None could help. If not greatly deceived, there was a time in my life that I thought I could do something to gain my salvation or to help it along. It was necessary for all hope in my flesh to be destroyed. It had to be made manifest to me that an outward keeping of the commandments does not bring salvation. This young man said that he had kept the commandments from his youth. In Matthew's account, the young man further said, ***"What lack I yet?"*** He knew that something was missing. He was not satisfied that everything was all right. ***"Then Jesus beholding him, loved him."*** This scripture, concerning him being loved by Jesus, has fully assured my heart and mind, that there before Him was a child of the heavenly Father. God has loved His own with an everlasting love. Man looks upon the outward appearance, but God looks on the heart. Jesus saw into him and loved him. He saw all his need, had pity on him, and was in the process of filling his need.

Jesus said to him, ***"One thing thou lackest..."*** He told him to go his way, to sell what he had, to give it to the poor, and that he would have treasure in heaven. And Jesus told him to come, and to take up the cross, and to follow Him. I am made to believe that Jesus spoke these things to him in the power of God, and that God, Himself, would perform

in him, the good works that He had commanded. I believe that all of God's little ones are brought along this same way. The children of God are taught, along with the apostle, that they must suffer the loss of all things in this world. They are commanded not to love the world, neither the things that are in the world; for all that is in the world, is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. They are taught to forsake father, mother, brother, sister, wife, children, houses and lands, and even their own lives, for His name's sake. By the grace of God, this is what they do. This world is not their home. They are strangers and pilgrims here. They are only passing through. I am fully persuaded that this young man did exactly what he was told by Jesus. He went his way, sold what he had, gave it to the poor, came, took up his cross, and followed Him.

Now we know that it is recorded that, ***"he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions."*** I am made to believe that he was sad and went away grieved because he didn't have knowledge or strength in himself to perform the things that he was instructed to do. The apostle said by revelation, ***"How to perform that which is good; I find not."*** The apostle didn't have it. The rich young man didn't, and neither do we. But God's strength is made perfect in weakness. If it were left to our strength to obey God, we could never do it. Aren't you glad that He didn't leave it up to us? ***"It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."*** Thanks be unto God that salvation is altogether of Him.

When Jesus indicated to His disciples how hard it is for them that have riches to enter into the kingdom of God, they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, ***"Who then can be saved?"*** I am made to believe that His answer is the heart of the whole matter. He explained to His disciples what they could not know of themselves. Jesus said, ***"With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible."*** Salvation is impossible for men to obtain by themselves. This is what the natural man cannot receive. He thinks that he has to have something to do with salvation. But the truth is that all are lost, world without end except for the love, grace, mercy, and power of God. Salvation is of the Lord. There is only one salvation for time and eternity and God is the author and finisher of it. ***"By grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works lest any man should boast, for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them."***

This rich young man, like all of God's children, must have been saved by the love, grace, mercy and power of almighty God. He must have been stripped of all his self-righteousness and humbled down under the mighty hand of God. Jesus knew exactly how to accomplish this in him by the word of His power, and He did it. Isaiah was given to prophesy by inspiration concerning God's word, ***"It shall not return to me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it."*** May the God of heaven and earth be praised, world without end.

Written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer
6.18.03

ROMANS 10:8-11.

But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

ARTICLES

NOVEMBER 11, 2009

I would try to pray that the feeling to write this article would be given from Above and that God would give me a spiritual mind for this attempt.

Genesis Chapter I, Verse 3 reads, "And God said, Let there be Light and there was light."

As I hope to give to the reader my desire to write this I will state some of the information found in the World Book Encyclopedia. *"The sun is a glowing ball of hot gases. The diameter is 865,000 miles. The temperature at the center of the sun is about 36,000,000 degrees F. The energy given to the earth is about 54,000 horsepower for every man, woman or child on earth. Yet this amount is only two billionths of the total energy of the sun."* (These words are man's estimates.)

I feel to believe that a power that has no limit has set this giant ball of heat for the benefit of all mankind through out the life of the earth. Can anyone imagine what would be the result if this tremendous, unending source of heat that God created was to vary for even an hour? What God has done will stand forever without variation or chance of change.

Now, if we can, let us try to compare the Son of this Great God to the greatest natural power any creature

can imagine. To begin, the natural sun will cease to shine when the Son of God shall appear in his glory to carry his bride to their eternal home and to forever share eternal bliss with the Son.

We have in the scripture proof that this Son was with the father before the world was created. Also, that he is the light of the world. He will never need any of the natural creation that was put here for man's benefit. The Son of God is as powerful as his Father. What can the creatures that are created by Him do to help this Son? Could all the power of this natural earth change the position or strength of the natural sun?

It is the height of foolishness to even compare the strength of man to the Son of God but there are people that believe that the Son of God needs help to save his people. Did God and his Son need help to create all of the miracles of creation found in Genesis? God accomplished all the work of creation before he made man. Where was man then?

He was still in the purpose of God to be created just as he is before the act of creation. Man was and is putty in God's hand. Man will never be anything except the created.

God says, *"I am God and change not therefore you sons of Jacob are not consumed."*

Can any combination of men's power overcome the power of God? Again the thought is foolishness. The thoughts are of man and not of the spirit of God.

I do not claim to have any sure knowledge of spiritual things and feel sometimes my hope that I have the revelation of God in these matters is mistaken.

Again, I feel that if my life was to be taken I would not deny my Savior and his mercy to sinners such as I. Praise His holy name! I hope you readers have witnessed the Son's power and his mercy and Grace as I have written. If not, then cast it all aside.

Hoping for that inheritance!
Burnell B. Williams

---

1 CORINTHIANS 2:7-9.

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

CHURCHES OF OUR FAITH

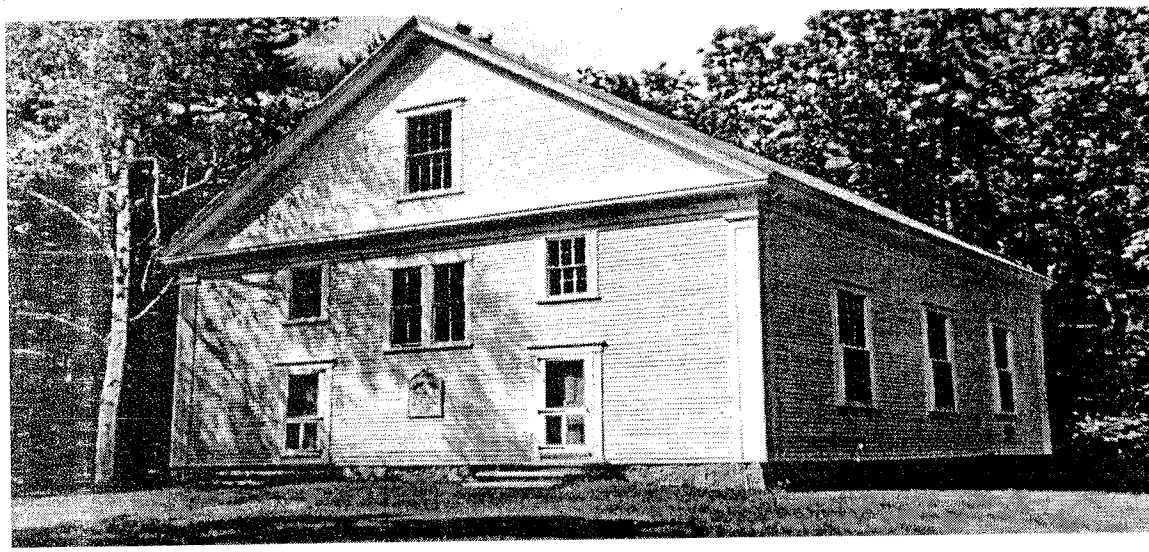

1852 - OAKWOODS CHURCH
Meeting House of the Second
Baptist Church of Berwick
Founded - 1803

Jan. 11, 2010

Dear Elder Key,

Christian greetings, I visited North Berwick, Maine a few months ago and took a tour through the old Oak Woods Church.

Elder Frederick W. Keene served as pastor for 25 years, many years ago. Today the old building sits idle. It's used for weddings and not much else. Built in 1852, it's as solid as a rock. The North Berwick Historical Society gave the building all the paint and repairs that it needed.

Perhaps some of the Signs of the Times readers got to hear Elder Keene preach in the 1930's. I'd be happy to hear from anyone who has recollections to share.

Sincerely,
Jim Cote
P.O. Box 391
Westbrook, ME 04098

Thanks to the the North Berwick Historical Society for their help and to Mr. Jim Cote for the picture and other information above.

Editor

VOICES OF THE PAST

IN THE CLEFTS OF THE ROCK

This is where the Lord's people are when the dear Savior makes his love known to them. ***"O my dove that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely."*** This also is their safe hiding place while they remain in this mortal state. But how may we know that we are in the clefts of the rock? What kind of an experience is this? If the gracious and loving words of Jesus to his dove are sweet to our souls, then it is sure that we are of those to whom they are spoken; but it may be far from sure to us at the time, because of our feeling of great unworthiness, and because we cannot see that we are in that secret, safe and sacred place, where the dove is said to be. The clefts of the rock, being the sure dwelling place of the dove, the bride of Christ, must be, as we think, a place most sweet and pleasant, free from trouble, and especially free from trouble on account of sin; and when we feel ourselves full of unrest, hedged in, afflicted, cut off from our desires, unable to do what we would, finding evil present with us when we would do good, how can we think that we are in the clefts of the rock, and that the dear Savior can find any sweetness in our complaining, supplicating voice, or see any comeliness in our sorrowful countenance?

I have had some precious comfort in some experiences and thoughts upon this subject of late, and have for some time felt a strong pressure upon my mind to express, as I may be enabled, some of these things for the comfort of those who have been tried as I have been.

Moses said unto the Lord, ***"If I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight."*** And again, ***"I beseech thee, show me thy glory.": — Exodus xxxiii. 13, 18.*** Such desires to see the Lord's way, and to behold his glory, are not from presumptuous curiosity, as we some times fear, but are the solemn actings of faith in the soul, preparing us for such revelations of himself as he designs to favor us with. He will hear all such questions, all such longings and pantings of the poor soul after him, and will answer them, but it will be ***"by terrible things in righteousness."-Psalm lxv. 5.***

"And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. And he said Thou canst not see my face:

for there shall no man see me and live. And the Lord said, There is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: and I will take away my hand, and thou shall see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen."- Exodus xxxiii. 19-23.

When all this took place (Exodus xxxiv. 1-7), Moses was alone with the Lord in that desolate mountain. *"And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." "What goodness and blessedness are here in this name, as thus far proclaimed! What a garden of delights, filled with most lovely flowers and richest fruits. What more could be desired by a poor sinner who hates sin, and hungers and thirsts after righteousness? Well might we say, if permitted to enter into this wonderful name, and enjoy its rich blessings, O how great is thy goodness which thou hast wrought for them that fear thee; which thou hast laid up for them that trust in thee before the sons of men."-Psalm xxxi. 19.*

But there is another syllable in this mysterious and glorious name, which a sinful man cannot hear and live, unless hidden in the cleft of the Rock, and covered by the hand of the Lord. *"And that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation."* This part of the Lord's name is full of terror, and is fraught with death to every guilty soul. It as surely bars every sinner from the safety and beauty of that holy name, as the flaming sword prevented the return of Adam and Eve to the Garden of Eden, and kept from them the way of the tree of life.

Whether Moses was literally put into a cleft of a rock or not, we have in this cleft a figure of the absolute safety that was given to him while the awful name of the Lord was proclaimed. The Lord's hand that covered him while his glory passed by, is not a literal hand, to be discerned by our natural senses, but expresses to us his sure and absolute protection from a danger which is not to the body merely, but to the soul.

As this great experience came upon him, *"Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped."-Exodus xxxiv. 8.* In the proclamation of this

terrible name Moses' prayer was answered. This name is the revelation of the Lord's way, of his goodness and his glory.

This rock represents Jesus. *"There is a place by me,"* the Lord said, *"and thou shalt stand upon a rock."* Here is the only foundation upon which a sinful man can stand before the Lord. That sacred Rock was smitten in order that the Lord's chosen people might be safely hidden while his name is proclaimed before them, and while his glory passes by. When Christ was crucified the guilt of his people was atoned for and removed, justice and judgment were executed for them, and the Lord's name was honored and glorified. That part of his name which declares that he will in no wise clear the guilty still remains, but it does not exclude his people any longer, for they are free from guilt, being crucified with Christ, and thus hidden in the cleft of the Rock.

When *"the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with his anger"* against sin, and *"his lips are full of indignation"* against the workers of iniquity, *"and his tongue as a devouring fire" (Isaiah xxx. 27-30),* none of all the sinful race of man can stand before him. No man can see his face and live. *"Who may abide the day of his coming?"* None but those whom the Lord has put in a cleft of the Rock, and covered with his hand. These were safe in Jesus while the wrath of that holy and terrible name was visited upon him. He was able to endure the stroke of the sword of justice, to die and rise again, and thus to *"finish transgression, make an end of sin,"* and by satisfying the law to take the sting from death, and destroy that terrible enemy.

And as the Lord's people were saved when the glory of his name was proclaimed in the crucifixion of his dear Son, by being in him in that death in a wonderful and mystical sense, so that they are dead with him to the law and to sin (Romans vi. 7-11), so ever after, while in this mortal state, his sufferings and death are their only safe hiding place. In their flesh they cannot stand before the Lord, nor endure the glory of his name, for in their flesh *"there dwells no good thing."* Those who have been quickened by divine life, realize that they cannot of themselves do one spiritual thing, any more than a dead man can do a natural thing; as the apostle says, *"If Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." - Romans viii. 10.* And, as he further says, it is only as the body is quickened, or moved, by the Spirit of him who raised up Christ from the dead, that any man can do anything that is acceptable to God.

The experience of being in a cleft of the Rock must therefore be always crossing to the flesh. It must be an experience full of sore trials and afflictions. We ask the Lord, as

Moses did, to show us his way; we beseech him to show us his glory. We want to see and understand more of his goodness. It seems to us that if he should be pleased to grant our desire, we should be at the height of bliss. How little we know of his wonderful ways. He does answer us, but it is *"in such a way as almost drives us to despair." "By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation."* We *"are shut up and cannot come forth."* We find ourselves more and more unable to do the good that we would, and we are left to doubt at times even whether we have a desire to do good. We are hedged in by our sinfulness and utter weakness, and by the judgments of God which seem to go out against us. We cannot do what we would in providence. Poverty holds us in its dire embrace. We cannot succeed in our work. We hate and dread to be in debt, but debt comes upon us, or danger of starvation for those dependent upon us. Or we do prosper in worldly affairs, and find wealth, but with it there comes leanness into our souls. There is a famine even in the midst of plenty. What we have will not feed our souls. We cannot enjoy the temporal prosperity that comes to us: If we would help others we fear our motives are base and selfish, and that we are only hypocrites. There seems to be a searching power within and about us, and we fear we are found wanting. A tempest is going by, and we tremble; yet cannot see what destruction it is working. We are like those whom the Lord had shut in the ark. They could feel the terrible power of the winds and waves, but could not see what it was. They felt the beatings and tossings and shakings of the ark, and afterward the quiet and peace, but could not know the meaning of it all until the cover was taken off the ark. Then it was all made plain, and the beauty and glory of the rainbow showed to those who had passed through the storm, and who now stood on Ararat, holy ground, a blessed purpose of God in the flood.

In the cleft of the rock, covered and held down by the Lord's hand, how terrible must have been the experience of *"Moses, the man of God."* Not another soul in all that desolate mountain. The Lord was there, but not visible to his mortal sight. How long he was in that cleft it is not material to know. The power of fear and pain is not measured by time. In a moment the soul may be overwhelmed with terror. In what way the power of that name came by, we do not know, whether there was a literal quaking of the mountain, with fire and smoke and thunder, as when the law was given, or whether the awful power of the Lord's name was felt only within his soul, we do not know. What we do know is that a cleft of a rock must be a most uncomfortable place to be in. We also know there must have been a terribly destructive power in the passing

of the Lord before Moses, if he must not only be put into that cleft, but must also be covered by the Lord's hand in order to be saved from destruction.

But O, what a blessed time that is when the Lord's hand is taken away, and we are enabled to see his wonderful works which he has done, and to behold the glory of his name which has already been proclaimed. We could not see his way before he had passed by in it. We could not know what he would do before he had done it. We cannot see his face as he comes toward us in his work of salvation. To see him coming in those *"terrible works in righteousness,"* by which he saves his people, would kill us with terror. But after he has passed by in the fulfillment of all that terrible work, by which his glorious name is honored, the law magnified, and his people saved, then it is joy unspeakable to see his back parts, to see the glory that follows him. We cannot see him working, but we see the work when it is done. Even then, while in that experience of fear, of inability to see, like those in the ark, what caused the great commotion; in that experience of sinfulness and condemnation, and utter inability to do any good thing, even then the secret of the Lord was with us, though we did not know it. We were far from the thought that this was God's work in bringing us to himself. We could not then have believed that this affliction, this inability to move in any way of righteousness, was because we were in a cleft of the Rock, because we were being crucified with Christ in our experience. We could not have believed that this tribulation in our souls was because the Lord had put his fear in our hearts, which *"is to hate evil."* But all this fearful exercise in our souls was the secret of the Lord, and when he removed his hand from over us, and showed us his covenant, then we understood that this was his wonderful work of salvation which he had begun in us, working in us *"to will and to do of his good pleasure." "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew unto them his covenant."-Psalm xxv. 14.*

Job was in that cleft of the Rock when he said, *"O that I knew where I might find him" "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right that I cannot see him."* The psalmist was there when he said, *"I am shut up, and I cannot come forth;"* and Jacob when he said, *"All these things are against me."* Jeremiah was there when he said, *"He hath hedged me about that I cannot get out: he hath made my chain heavy. Also when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer."- Lam. iii. 7, 8.* And Paul was there when he was blinded by the light from

heaven, and could see no man; and also when, long afterward, he said, *"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?"*

Those who are in the clefts of a rock all of the time can do no work upon the earth. They cannot run to and fro in the sight of men; they cannot join in work or worship with those who are not with them in the clefts. They are helpless for themselves, and they cannot extend help to any who are abroad upon the earth. They will often feel their confined, cramped, shut-in position so keenly, that it seems to them that they cannot endure it. They want to get out into the midst of the world and do something, do some good to themselves or others, do something to show that they are not altogether nothing. But if they seem to be able to get such desires gratified for a little, they are so utterly ashamed of their works that they want to shrink away out of sight. They find of themselves what the psalmist said of every man in his best state, they *"are altogether vanity."* Then, in the Lord's own time, they learn the blessed meaning of this sad experience. They have not really been allowed to go out of that safe dwelling place at all, though they seemed for a time as one in a dream, to be working with the proud and wise of this world. They have been all the time, and yet are, held firmly by the hand of the Lord, notwithstanding all the rebellious lustings of the flesh against the Spirit. Now and then the gracious hand which covers them, and holds them in that narrow, confined place, is taken away for a little time, and they see the Lord's way, and behold his glory, and gaze with rapture upon the rainbow beauty and brightness of the everlasting covenant. And how they thank the Lord, and praise his glorious name, for his preserving power and mercy. How glad they are that he has overturned their plans, and broken down their strength, and disappointed them in their earthly hopes, and shown them that their works are vain, and that their days are vanity, and are as a hand breadth. Now they are rejoiced to see that the works of Jesus are perfect, and that they are all-sufficient, and cover all the ground of their needs for evermore. O, how beautiful and glorious the Lord's works are! How thankful they are for the sure protection they have had in that secret place of the Lord, from the windy storm and tempest which has been abroad in the earth, while they were so eagerly struggling to get away from the controlling and restraining power of God. Now they rejoice in their afflictions, for they see that salvation was in those afflictions. Now they rejoice in the tribulations that made them murmur and complain at the time, for through them they have been brought to *"stand before the great white throne,"* from whence the river of the water of life proceeds, and have entered more and

more into the experimental knowledge of the kingdom of God. And now they are called by the sweet voice of Jesus. O, these blessed seasons, when faith prevails, when the hand that held and covered them is removed, and they see the back parts of the Lord, and realize the blessed effect of his passing by in his terrible works of righteousness, by which he has answered us. *"The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever."- Isaiah xxxii. 17.* And the soothing, comforting, joyful effect of that precious voice of Jesus, not heard by the natural ear, but felt in the heart; how sweet it is: *"O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock!"* His voice speaks not in vain. *"My sheep hear my voice,"* he says. When he speaks, then we know that we are his, and that we are dwelling in him, and he in us, and this by no work or wisdom of ours, but by his own power and grace. Those are the times when that voice of the Lord, which is powerful and full of majesty, is in our souls, that we can say, while our hearts throb and overflow with love, *"My beloved is mine and I am his."* The power of that voice removes our fears, and causes us to see that our afflictions have been light, and but for a moment, compared with the *"far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,"* which they have worked for us. We see now that these sufferings, which we sometimes felt sure were evidences of the Lord's wrath, were really the fellowship of Jesus' sufferings, and that to feel them was to be in the clefts of the Rock.

It has been truly wonderful to me, when I have felt adversities of every kind pressing so heavily upon me, and have been sure that they were evidences that God had turned against me, and that I must certainly lose the fellowship of the saints, if ever I had really had it, and must be cast out; when I have seen not only spiritual comforts gone, but all worldly prospects failing, and have felt not only physical strength failing, but have feared that the little mental ability I had was going, and that I was of no account, either in the world or in the church; when blankness was upon my life, and darkness was settling heavily down upon my spirit; at such a time how wonderful it has been to find some words of the dear Lord in my soul with power, and light, like the morning rising upon me, and to be shown in a moment that all this was but an experience of being in the clefts of the Rock, and a sure evidence that I was one of the Lord's hidden ones, crucified with Christ; that this was *"knowing him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and being made*

conformable unto his death."- Phil. iii. 10. To be assured that this is the way the Lord separates his people from the world and self; that this was *"bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh;"* dying with him, that I might live with him, even here; suffering with him, that I may reign with him, even while yet in the flesh, through the power of faith.

Then a constraining power is felt, making us turn our faces toward Jesus in love and praise, and causing our voices to *"break out in unknown strains, and sing surprising grace."* It is the voice of the Lord, which breaks the cedars of Lebanon, which divides the flames of fire, which maketh the hinds to calve, and discovereth the forests, and causes everyone in his temple to speak of his glory. (Psalm xxix.) It is the voice of Jesus, speaking with the holy, compelling power of his own unspeakable love, which removes the curtains of night, and lets in the morning upon our souls; which turns our thoughts and faces toward him in praise and holy expectancy, and causes us to make melody in our hearts unto him; for he says, *"Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely."*

Silas H. Durand
JANUARY 24, 1899.

ACTS XIII. 23, 26.

"Of this man's seed hath God, according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Savior, Jesus." Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent."

People are continually making promises, one to another. Sometimes promises are renewed, and when the appointed time for fulfillment of them arrives the one who made the promise is not able to fulfill it; things unforeseen have entered to thwart his plans. To be able to fulfill a promise one must have control of all things that would affect this promise. Men have never had this control, hence the Scripture says, If the Lord will, we shall live and do this or that. This is an expression we feel has been used more by those who believe in salvation by grace than by others, and may God give us grace to continue the same in the spirit of the matter. The promises of God are not as the promises of men. In Romans iv. 21, Paul says, *"And being fully persuaded that, what he had. promised, he was able also to perform."* Again, *Hebrews x. 23: "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)."* And in 2 Peter iii, 9, he declares, *"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some*

men count slackness." Hence his faithfulness (and ability) to perform his promises at times causes our hearts to rejoice as we are given to hope that we are included among those spoken of in Acts xiii. 26, that feareth God. The promises of God are received by faith, which the apostle says is the gift of God. God renewed his promise that he would send his Son, the Savior of his people, from time to time. We find Abel offering a Lamb as a sacrifice. *"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying. of his gifts: and by it he, being dead, yet speaketh."* This lamb Abel offered was a type of Christ. The promise of his coming was in his heart. When Abraham was called to offer Isaac, he said, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering. At that time there was no visible offering but Isaac, but he had the spirit of promise. In the shedding of blood, the burnt offerings, the lifting of the brazen serpent, the serving of the high priest, and many other ways too numerous to mention here, the Lord was renewing his promise unto Israel that he would send his Son, who would fulfill all his will, and would save with an everlasting salvation. This thought was kept before true Israel, and their rejoicing was in it. As the true believers received this promise, by faith, they looked beyond the literal sacrifices and saw the day of Jesus, and believed in his coming as much as if he had already come. When Solomon had completed the temple which the Lord had put in the heart of David to build, and the glory of the Lord had filled it, he could look back and see where the Lord had promised those things by Moses. He could truly say in blessing Israel, *"Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one Lord of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant."- 1 Kings viii. 56.* The giving of this promise to the prophets caused them to speak of the coming of Christ as if he was already here. Isaiah says, *"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."* Another prophet could say, I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. When Joseph hesitated to take the virgin Mary as his wife, a renewal of the promise was made: *"She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."* When the angel brought this word his fears were dispelled and he did as he was bidden. The Lord promised Simeon, by the Holy Ghost, he should not see death until he had

seen the Savior. When he saw the promise fulfilled he could say, Now let thy servant depart in peace, mine eyes have Seen thy salvation. Peter tells us that the promise is unto you and you children, to them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. The gospel proclaims that the promise of his coming has been fulfilled, that salvation has been accomplished, by one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified; that he has obtained eternal redemption for his people, and is made of God unto his wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Surely this is a finished salvation.

When the angel appeared unto the shepherds with the news, unto you is born in the city of David a Savior, there was no questioning the matter. A star shall guide you (the spirit of promise) Herod could not locate Jesus, because all are not Israel that are of Israel. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

Now we have the promise of the second coming of the Lord. His second coming is just as sure as his first coming was. We have his promise, I will come again, and receive you unto myself. These are precious promises. The fulfillment of our hope is the coming of the Lord, who shall change our vile body, and fashion it like unto his own glorious body. Then death will be swallowed up in victory. With the promise of God in his heart Stephen could recount how that God had fulfilled his promise to each generation, even to the sending of his Son. With these things in his heart he could say, I see the heavens opened, and I see the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. He prayed for his enemies, and his face looked like an angel. Paul said, I have finished my course, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.

Oh may we have these things in our heart, life, talk, and walk, that we may feel as we pass the door of death, his precious promise in our heart.

His promise is my only plea,
With this I venture nigh;
Thou callest burdened souls to thee,
And such, O Lord, am I.
If he is mine, I'll boldly pass
Through death's tremendous vale;
He is a solid comfort
When all other comforts fail,
O tell me, Lord, that thou art mine,
What can I want beside?
My soul shall at the fountain live
When all the streams are dried."

"God, willing more abundantly to shew: unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable

things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail." Only those who have fled for refuge, who have toiled all, night, who have felt the sinking beneath the righteous frown of God, are given to lay hold upon the hope set before us, and this after they have tried their own strength and failed. To them the promise of his enduring mercy, his inseparable love and his tender watch-care, is their only hope.

David V. Spangler

The following is taken from the book, *"A Treasure of Hymns"* by Amos R. Wells. Copyright 1945, W. A. Wilde Company.

The book contains brief biographies of one hundred twenty leading hymn writers with their best hymns.

"BLEST BE THE TIE THAT BINDS."
John Fawcett.

The author of this favorite hymn, one of the most commonly used of all our Christian songs, was John Fawcett, who was born on January 17, 1739, at Lidget Green, Yorkshire, England.

When he was thirteen years old he was apprenticed to a London tailor, and remained with him through his period of apprenticeship, which was six years.

At the age of sixteen he was converted by a sermon preached by the famous evangelist, George Whitefield, the text being John 3:14, and in 1765 he was ordained as a Baptist minister, and soon obtained a small church at Wainsgate in Yorkshire. Here he remained for the rest of his life, serving his people with great fidelity.

In 1772 he was called to become the pastor of a famous Baptist church in London.

He accepted the call, preached his farewell sermon, and had already placed his household goods upon wagons when the love and the tears of his people gathered around him prevailed, and he found it impossible to leave them.

It was within a week, while the memory of this affecting scene was fresh upon him, that he wrote this hymn of Christian fellowship, "Blest be the tie that binds."

Though his position gave him a salary of less than $200 a year, and though he received other invitations to fields that were more attractive from a worldly point of view, he accepted none of them.

In 1811 he received the degree of doctor of divinity from Brown University in the United States.

He died on July 25, 1817, at the age of seventy-eight. His last words

were, ***"Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly."***

Dr. Fawcett wrote many prose religious works, and six volumes of poems. In 1780 his address on ***"Anger"*** was presented to George III., and it found so great favor with the monarch that he offered to give the writer any favor he might ask.

Dr. Fawcett did not accept the kindness at the time, but later, when the son of one of his intimate friends was convicted of forgery, and, in accordance with the laws of the times, was sentenced to be hung, he besought pardon for him from the king, and in memory of his book he obtained it.

In 1782 he issued a volume containing 166 hymns. Most of these hymns he composed at midnight on Saturday to be sung after his sermon on the following day. Among the most famous of his hymns are, ***"How precious is the Book Divine," "Thus far my God hath led me on," "Praise to Thee, thou great Creator," and "Thy way, O God, is in the sea."*** Many think that he also wrote the hymn, "Lord, dismiss us with Thy blessing," the authorship of which is uncertain.

But of all his hymns by far the most famous is ***"Blest be the tie that binds."*** Instances of its use on notable occasions are very numerous. A famous example is the story of the missionary, Coffin, who, in 1860, left his station at Aintab, Turkey, to explore a dangerous and distant region of the Taurus Mountains. His loving Armenian converts, to the number of 1,500, expecting not to see his face again, gathered on the road over which he was to pass, and as their farewell sang, ***"Blest be the tie."***

When Moody was a Sunday-school superintendent in Chicago, one of his teachers who had a class of girls learned that he was threatened with a fatal disease and must leave the city.

Conscience-stricken because he had not sought earnestly for the conversion of his class, he got Mr. Moody to accompany him, and in a carriage for ten days they visited the girls, until finally everyone of them had accepted Christ.

The farewell meeting at the house of this faithful teacher was profoundly affecting, and as they tried to sing in parting, ***"Blest be the tie that binds,"*** they were all so moved that they broke down.

Probably the most notable occasion of the use of this hymn was at the famous gathering in Pittsburg in November, 1869, when the two divisions of the Presbyterian Church, the Old and the New Schools, came together after many years of separation. On the consummation of this union ***"Blest be the tie"*** was sung by the large assembly.

During recent years this hymn has been constantly used in the international Christian Endeavor Conventions. Almost always at some time during the Convention the American national hymn, ***"My coun-***

try, 'tis of thee," and the British national hymn, *"God save the King,"* are sung, and are immediately followed by *"Blest be the tie that binds."*

This sequence of hymns was most impressively sung at the World's Christian Endeavor Convention in London in 1900, and at the close of the Convention, when a large party of Christian Endeavorerl was received by Queen Victoria at Windsor Castle, after singing *"God save the Queen,"* the Endeavorers followed it with *" Blest be the tie that binds."*

In the church of which the founder of Christian Endeavor, Dr. F. E. Clark, is a member, in Auburndale, Mass., every Friday-night church prayer meeting is closed by the singing of the opening stanza of this hymn: —

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

Before our Father's throne
We pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
Our comforts and our cares.

We share our mutual woes,
Our mutual burdens bear;
And often for each other flows
The sympathizing tear.
When we asunder part,
It gives us inward pain;
But we shall still be joined in heart,
And hope to meet again.

This glorious hope revives
Our courage by the way;
While each in expectation lives,
And longs to see the day.

From sorrow, toil, and pain,
And sin, we shall be free,
And perfect love and friendship reign
Through all eternity.

Submitted by,
Brother Jerry Sommers

BOW IN THE CLOUD

I have been reading the *Signs* for several years, and I have had a desire to write some of my thoughts on the Scripture, but I know full well if the Holy Spirit doesn't guide my thoughts and my pen, and it is left to this poor sinner, I will have nothing that will be of any interest to the dear family of God.

I have been going among the Old Baptist for over fifty years. I love and rejoice in the doctrine of God our Saviour.

I love to read God's Word and His promises to His people. He made a covenant with Noah after the flood. *"God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him saying, And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed*

after you; And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth." (Gen. 9 :8-11)

God gave Noah a token of the covenant which He made. ***"And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it SHALL come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth." (Gen. 9:12-16)***

What a wonderful promise that was, and it stands just as firm today as it did when God spake to Noah. God told the Prophet J eremiah that He would make a new covenant with the House of Israel and with the House of Judah: The Writer of Hebrews also tells us about this New Covenant. ***"...Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah :" (Heb. 8 :8)*** This new covenant was not according to the covenant that He made with their Fathers when He took them by the hand to lead them out of the Land of Egypt. The New Covenant was established upon better promises. This New Covenant was made with the House of Israel (Spiritual Israel). ***"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: And I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:" (Heb. 8:10).*** This New Covenant is telling His people today ***"They shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." (Heb. 8 :11)***

This New Covenant is made of Wills and Shalls, and full of Mercy and Grace, for it says, ***"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. 8:12)***

Harry Ward

ROMANS 12:1-3.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun. (Eccl. 7:11)

The wise man of the world, is guided by his conscience to live morally right, and to walk uprightly before his fellow man. The spiritually wise, who are called foolish by the world, are guided by the Holy Spirit to walk uprightly before God. This spiritual walk of those guided by spiritual wisdom, is what we hope to discuss, God being our strength.

The children of Grace once walked as the foolish. Their eyes were blinded and they sought their joys in the decaying things of the world around them. They were very busy choosing whom they would serve among the little gods of the earth. They were wise in their own eyes, following the way that seemeth right to a man, and crooked paths of self-righteousness. The blind led the blind and walked after the counsel of the ungodly. Those who walk after the flesh, mind the things of the flesh and not of the Spirit. This is not a good inheritance, for the simple inherit folly, therefore they cannot inherit the kingdom of God, because they are flesh and blood. The things of the kingdom of God are spiritually discerned. Though they count themselves wise, in the light of spiritual wisdom and truth they are foolish and simple minded.

The question is, how can the blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, to find the good wisdom with an inheritance? ***"Where shall wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding?" "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil that is understanding."***

Dear reader, do you ever try to remember when the fear of the Lord entered your heart? When the scary tales of the devil and his cohorts took flight, as the evil spirits entered the swine and were choked in the sea? Do you yearn and long and try to pray, with me, that you actually experience Godly fear, and that you are one of the foolish things of this world, that He chose to confound the wise? Did you turn from your former life of folly and begin to fear God of your own free will? Did you lift your feet from the miry clay and place them upon the rock, the sure foundation? I think not. You were told in your heart to ***"Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord."***

Though we see through a glass darkly, and walk by faith and not by sight, if we are what we hope to be, the foolish things of this world have passed away, for us, and the inheritance that comes with spiritual wisdom is our meat and drink. Christ's sermon on the mount gives in detail the good inheritance; and those who will receive it.

Let us reread the text, ***"Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun."*** By it, there is profit. If we are wise in the fear of the Lord, and receive an inheritance (an unearned legacy) that profits us, the profit is as much a gift as the inheritance. Christ with whom we are heirs and joint heirs we hope, died to satisfy the law in our place, and gave us redemption from the law and salvation to life eternal. He took away our stony heart and gave us a heart of flesh. With this gift, he gave light, truth, and wisdom to understand there is no other way to enter the climes of immortal glory except by himself. He is the only door.

The new heart of flesh is wise to the source of its profit. It knows the roads it followed in folly. It knows the miry clay, the desert land, and howling wilderness from which it was rescued. This heart that now is lowly, meek, humble, poor, and wise to its own short comings, looks to the Giver of its inheritance, for wisdom, strength and comfort. It dwells in the wisdom that, ***"Man's goings are of the Lord, how can a man then understand his own way,"*** How do those who are wise in the fear of the Lord profit by this inheritance? They are filled with the needs of the inner man as dictated by the Spirit He knows and supplies our every need, but not the whims and fancies of the flesh. We are held down and made humble, lest we become puffed up, but He promised Paul ***"my grace is sufficient for thee."*** No matter what the problem, or thorn in the flesh, the child of God is hemmed in, and hedged about, by his promises, which are yea and amen.

They that mourn shall be comforted, the meek shall inherit the earth, the pure in heart shall see God, the merciful shall obtain mercy, and they shall sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. ***"With the lowly there is wisdom,"*** says David, ***"and the wise shall inherit glory ."***

Every good and every perfect gift is from above. The wise man knows himself to be lost and without hope, unless a power outside himself intervenes. All of his efforts have been fruitless, and judgment seems his doom. When Christ enters his heart and makes a new man within him, then can the little child of God say, ***"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."*** Even though, to himself, he feels sinful, unworthy and unfruitful, his brethren can see his new way, and his good and perfect gifts, shining *through* the old man. Faith, hope and charity are gifts that wisdom bids him use wisely and are profits from his inheritance. How wonderful to watch a Christian on the new road, as he is guided by

wisdom. He walks it by faith, also a part of the inherited gift. Even though it is strait and narrow and hard, and though he falter and fall along the way, he is never lost nor utterly cast down. Why? Because his way is in the light and he is one of them that sees the sun. His feet are planted and kept in the way of life by the wisdom of that sun shining in his heart; by the love and mercy of that one that neither sleeps nor slumbers. To a way worn sinner, who knows his own wickedness and vanity; who has been taught his own foolishness, and has been made to know it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, then to him, "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun."

As all scripture is written for a profit to the man of God, to the children of God instead of the whole world, so is the wording of this text written to a certain people: ***"To them that see the sun."*** Broken into segments it means: wisdom is good to them that see the sun, or an inheritance to them that see the sun, or profit to them that see the sun. So in reality, we have wisdom, which is the fear of God; inheritance, which is the promise of God; and profit, which is the comforting faith and hope in the fulfillment of those promises, all pertaining to this certain people that see the sun.

I believe ***"Them that see the sun,"*** are his people, chosen in Christ Jesus from the foundation of the world, and that the sun in this instance is God. ***"For the Lord God is a sun and a shield." (Psalm 84:11)*** He chose them as heirs of promise and set their hope and faith before them, as the path they must walk, on which they will continue until they come into full possession of the profit of their inheritance, within the veil.

These are thoughts, poorly presented, on a deep and wonderful subject. I hope that I have not been allowed to do violence to its meaning, and would love to hear some gifted, inspired brother proclaim its deeper meaning.

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Spearsville, La.

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POEM

THANK GOD FOR LITTLE THINGS

Thank you, God, for little things
That often come our way,
The things we take
for granted
but don't mention when
we pray,
The unexpected
courtesy,
the thoughtful,
kindly deed,
A hand reached out to help us
in the time of sudden need —
Oh make us more aware, dear God,
of little daily graces
That come to us with " sweet surprise "
from never - dreamed - of places.

Helen Steiner Rice

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EDITORIALS

"Now the Birth of Jesus Christ Was on This Wise" St. Matthew 1:18

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

The birth of Christ has always been controversial and always will be so far as the world is concerned. Many deny the virgin birth of Christ and are constantly seeking to prove that it did not take place. We see programs on television and articles in newspapers, magazines and books devoted to this purpose. There were those in the days that Christ was upon earth who saw Him and heard Him and yet knew Him not. He had never been revealed to them so they could not know Him. But, there is a remnant called out of nature's darkness into His marvelous light that has an experience of grace that testifies of His virgin birth. Isaiah prophesied that unto us a child is born and unto us a son is given. Every little child of grace experiences the birth of Christ in their heart. As the Holy Ghost came upon Mary and the power of God overshadowed her, she conceived and a holy child was born which was the Son of God. No works of the flesh were involved. Therefore, it was a virgin birth. So it is with each of God's elect. The Holy Ghost came upon you and the power of God overshadowed you and you conceived and Christ was born in your heart. No works of man were involved in this birth. It is a spiritual birth and is all of grace. Therefore, His little ones believe by faith in the virgin birth of Christ because they have experienced it.

We hear it set forth that there were three wise men who were kings from the east that came to worship the Christ child. First of all, we do not know who counted the wise men or ascribed a number to them because Matthew does not. He says only that there were wise men. These wise men set forth God's people and were as many as the Lord God called. They were wise, not with the wisdom of men, but rather the wisdom of God which is spiritual understanding. If this wisdom was of the flesh,

then King Herod and his counselors could have seen the star and understood what it was. By faith, these wise men were following a star they believed was the star of the King of the Jews and they had come to worship Him. God had given them understanding of what the star was and who the child was. Therefore, they are said to be wise men. There is no mention of them being kings. However, Revelation 5:10 says, ***"And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."*** In that spiritual sense, they were kings and priests unto God and so are each of you who have experienced the birth of Christ in your heart.

The star is setting forth the Holy Spirit which leads and guides the children of the heavenly King. It is from above and is manifested only to the children of God. No one else, with all their human learning, could see this star nor determine where the child was born. Even so today can no man by all the schooling of men know Christ nor where He is born-born in your heart the Hope of glory. The star, so high and so bright, led the wise men to where the child was. When they saw the star over where the child was, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. When each of you experienced the birth of Christ and felt the comfort and peace for which you had so longed, you too rejoiced with exceeding great joy. Your soul sang out and tears of joy ran down your cheeks. Your very being praised Him whom your soul loveth.

The wise men fell down and worshipped Christ and opened their treasures and presented unto Him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Christ said, ***"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."*** Their hearts were opened and the gifts manifested. There were three gifts and perhaps this is why the world thinks there were three wise men. The world believes that each one brought a gift. Why would the One who created all things need their gold, frankincense and myrrh? Christ said on one occasion that ***"the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."*** Though Christ created all things, yet in the world He possessed none of the world's riches. The Apostle Paul writes in *II Corinthians 8:9*, ***"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich."*** I believe these gifts were spiritual. Each wise man possessed all three gifts that they neither made nor purchased. These were not presents, but gifts and were free with no conditions. They were gifts given to the wise men by God and are manifested when Christ is born in your heart. They were faith, hope and charity. Every child of grace possesses these gifts from God and when one experiences the work of God in them, these gifts are

manifested. The wise men could not go back the same way they came, but went a different way. So every child of God has a different walk and travels a different path after they experience a work of grace. They hate the things they once loved and love the things they once hated. They have no desire to go back to what they once were.

There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. These shepherds set forth the ministers under the law. They were in darkness and only abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock during the nighttime of the law. They had no food with which to feed the flock. Then an angel appeared unto them and told them that he brings them *"good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."* By this sign, the shepherds would know that this was the Christ that was born. He was wrapped in swaddling clothes signifying that He was bound by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God to be delivered into wicked hands to be crucified and die. He was lying in a manger. No one would have expected the Son of God, the King of kings, to be in a manger but there was no more appropriate place for Him to be as a sign unto the shepherds. This was where the food for the animals was put and where they were fed. He is the food for those who hunger and thirst after His righteousness. Therefore, this was indeed a sign unto the shepherds who this child was. Christ said, *"I am the bread of life"* and *"the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world."*

A multitude of the heavenly host praised God and said, *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."* This did not mean that Christ had brought peace on earth to all mankind. You and I know that there has never been peace on earth among all peoples and nations for any period of time. For Christ said, *"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword."* Rather, the angels were proclaiming that Christ who is our peace had come to earth. Christ also said, *"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."* Good will toward men speaks of the will of God as it only Is good. Christ stated that He had come to do the will of His father that sent Him and the will of His father was that of all which His father had given Him He should lose none, but should raise it up again at the last day. According to the good will of

His father, He had come to earth to redeem those His Father had given Him from their sins and to satisfy the demands of His Father's righteous and holy law. Now, the shepherds had something with which to feed their flock. Day had come and the light of Christ shined forth. Grace had come and the day star had arisen and the Sun of righteousness arose with healing in His wings. The shepherds went preaching the gospel, telling those things which they had seen with their own eyes, handled with their own hands, and heard with their own ears. In other words, they preached that which had been revealed to them and which they had experienced-no man having taught them. God's ministers throughout all ages of time have been called and qualified in the same way. Men taught of man will preach the ways and works of man. Men taught of God will preach Christ.

May the God of all grace continue with each of you is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 3/10
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CORRESPONDENCE

Jan. 6, 2010

Tony Horton
1429 Howlett St.
Hillsville,Va.24343

Sorry I am late; I want to renew the signs of the times for two years. I am sending a check for fifty dollars.

The rest in memory of Dora Ellen Vick who passed December 17, 2009 who is Resting waiting to be gathered with all his people in their eternal home.

We enjoyed reading and discussing the beautiful articles written by our Brothers and Sisters in Christ I hope; for if I be one at all I feel to be the least of All. For I have been made to know that if I am one of his it is by the mercy and grace of God who rules in Heaven and in Earth not by any works that I can do,

For all my works are as filthy rags. I have a precious hope that keeps me pressing on towards the mark and prize of the high calling of our Lord and Savior Jesus. I feel so much of the time to be in a wildness looking for that home not made with hands, eternal in heaven, prepared for his children before the foundation of the World. I have been made to know that if I get what I deserve it will be eternal Damnation for all I have ever done is sin and come short of the glory of God.

In bonds of Love,
Garlon Vick

VOICES OF THE PAST

THAT WHICH THE LORD HATH PURPOSED SHALL COME TO PASS

For some cause my mind has been much exercised for several days upon the purposes of God. I do not know why I should be so constantly meditating upon this to me wonderful, deep and sublime subject yet it is so. A kind of irresistible impression seems to impel me to write notwithstanding my great weakness. I am fully aware of the fact that I am not able of myself to grapple with so deep and sublime a subject. Therefore it is with much fear and trembling that I approach it. I think it is with a heart-felt desire that the lord may direct my mind so that I may write so as to glorify His name and thereby edify His saints believing that when God is honored through our lord Jesus Christ, that the saints rejoice and are edified.

It was the purpose of God to speak the earth into existence. ***"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."*** Gen., 1:1. This proves a purpose to create. In fulfillment of His purpose He made the firmament that his handiwork might be shown. For ***"The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handiwork."*** That the dry land might appear, it is written, And God said, ***"Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so."*** Gen.1:9. ***"And God called the land earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he seas: and God saw that it was good,"*** 10th verse. This his purpose carried out. Take into consideration the fowls, the beast, the fishes, the herbs, etc. Then come to man, in his creation we see the plural used. And God said ***"Let us make man in our own image after our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air and over the cattle and over all the earth; over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."*** 26th verse. ***"So God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him. Male and female created he them."*** 27th verse. In their creation the male and the female. It is said that while they were in this state they were immortal. But God did not say so, and I shall not. It is also said that he was made able to stand but liable to fall. But God did not say so and I shall not, for I don't know. That he did transgress and fell is certain. If he had never transgressed and fell, I own that I cannot trace the purpose of God in the perfect work of salvation. For if the man had fallen, I own that I cannot see for the life of me why God should, from before the world have given any of the fallen race grace in Christ. ***"Who hath saved us and called us***

with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given in Christ Jesus before the world began." 2nd Tim., 1:9. This is an affirmation of the apostle, as the preceding verse shows. This grace which was given in Christ Jesus before the world began, consequently was before the creation of man. If this was according to God's own purpose before the world began, it seems to me there must of necesssity have been a purpose in the fall or transgression of the man, without which he never could have been the recipient of this grace; for none but fallen, depraved sinners stand in need of saving grace. I do not think that it is blasphemy to assert that as God purposed grace in Christ Jesus before the world began, that he also purposed that the sinner should stand in need of it.

I am not able to see how the Lord could declare the end from the beginning, and not see and know every event from the beginning. And he by the prophet declares, or commands thus: *"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done. Saying , My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isa.,46:9-10.* I am not able to see how he could declare things that are not yet done unless he purposed or predestinated that they should be done. To say that he permitted things to take place that he did not purpose, seems to me to contradict itself, and makes the creator no higher than the creature. Man purposes and plans, but his purposes fail, his plans are frustrated. Not so with God. He purposed and it comes to pass. *"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." Eccl., 3:1.* Is this not according to God's predestination? The Lord's will cannot be frustrated in the least by any event that takes place under the sun, because every event is according to his purpose and predestination, hence it cometh to pass. *"A time to be born and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted."* Eccl., 1:2. Who can put off his birth? Not one. If there is a time for man to die, and he by some chance is cut off before his time, who is to die at his time? Can he fill the time if he is cut off before the time? If he passes over time, then what? Who is to take him away after his time has passed? Seeing that he has passed his time, *"Yes,"* says the objector, *"but Hezekiah had fifteen years added to his days."* Yes, and if you admit that, then you can never kick against God's predestination, and are compelled to honor his purpose and will be compelled to acknowledge the chance system to be false. *"For,"* saith the preacher, *"I know*

that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever; nothing shall be put to it, nor anything taken from it; and God doeth it that men should fear before him." Eccl., 3:14.

We have seen that he declares that he will do all his pleasure. Then nothing can be put to it, and nothing taken from it. And it is clearly proven by this that all the idle cant about God being desirous to save all, and some will not let him save them, must be of the devil, and they that preach it must be the devil's tools. For the above is sufficient to show His sovereignty. ***"Every purpose of the Lord against Babylon shall be performed."*** See Jer. 51:29. If against Babylon, why not in all things? It is certainly taught in the counsel of his own will, and then we clearly see that nothing in the heights or depths comes to pass without his purpose - no, not the falling of a sparrow or the rustling of a leaf.

The saints are saved according to His purpose and grace. The apostle says, ***"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."*** Rom., 8:28, ***"For whom he did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren,"*** 29th verse. ***"Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."*** 30th verse. ***"But,"*** says the objector, ***"all good things work together, and not evil things."*** I answer, ***"He that purposed the good, also purposed the bad, and He controls both alike."*** ***"But,"*** says the objector, ***"this predestination, calling, justifying and glorifying, refers to the apostles only, and not to the saints generally."*** I answer, If so, then the apostles are all that are saved, because without these callings, justifying and glorifying, it certainly must follow that none could be saved or are saved. Besides, there were only twelve of the apostles, and the number saved, and consequently were predestinated , called, justified and glorified, is a great number or multitude, that no man could number. So the idea that it was only the apostles must be of the wicked one, and not of God. In the purpose of God, we are taught the principles of election very plainly in the following: ***("For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand not of works, but of him that calleth;) it was said unto her the elder shall serve the younger. As it is written Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated." Rom., 9:11-12-13.*** Are we to believe these verses and yet condemn God's pur-

pose, election and predestination? Surely not. Then we certainly are bound to reverence God's will of saving his people, or contradict his word. Are we to suppose that his purpose of election in the case of Jacob and Esau differs from his purpose with the rest of the children of men? It cannot be without denying his right to govern and dispose of his as seemeth to him good.

Again, read Ephesians 1:11: ***"In whom also we have obtained, an inheritance being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."*** I would ask who worketh things that are not after the counsel of his will? Since God worketh all things from whence cometh other things? I must confess that if there be things either in providence or grace that are outside of God's purpose, then am I a deceived mortal. I do rejoice that the saints have hope, ***"According to the eternal purpose which He (God) purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Eph. 1:11.*** For it does seem to me that if we ignore his eternal purpose, we are without hope.

I think there could be no quarrelling and wrangling among the Baptists if all would be strictly attentive to the scriptures. For they certainly do teach the sovereignty of God clearly. His eternal purposes, election and predestination, are stamped upon every page. Our exalted Creator certainly purposed all events, or else he purposed a part and left some to chance; and we know that if it is based upon chance, that it may or may not be. Far be this from God. There is no chance work in grace, not in providence. All things have fixed laws, and one law does not annul another, so far as it relates to the works of the eternal God.

"For this purpose the Son of God was manifest that he might destroy the works of the devil." 1st John 3:8. He did destroy the works of the devil , and thereby proved himself the Son of God. If not, then he has failed to prove his sonship. Then predicate the events of time upon chance, and to my mind we dishonor God, and make his Son out to be an impostor. I know carnal reason revolts at the idea of God's complete sovereignty. But we are to understand that carnality never believes in anything above itself. It is the spirit that reveals Christ as a complete Saviour. And that clearly proves the purpose of God.

Every purpose of God is for some wise end. When he says to Pharaoh, ***"Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee." Romans, 9:17.*** Evidently, the purpose of God according to what God in his foreknowledge intended or purposed was fulfilled in him. Certainly he would not purpose the cause of Pharaoh, and leave the rest of men to work by chance. No, no. He declared the end from the begin-

ning. Was not this the end of all things, acts or events? To deny it, it seems to me would be blasphemy. Then if man cannot fathom the deep things of God, none should ask why or what doest thou!

The Lord saith of the church, or at least to the Ephesians by Paul, ***"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of this glory of his inheritance in the saints." Eph., 1:18.*** Then the saints have the eyes of their understanding enlightened; therefore they alone can see a beauty in the purposes of God, and look for the fulfillment of them all, and God will not disappoint them; if so, then some things will work together for their ill, and not for their good. It is a comforting truth that God purposes, and none can frustrate.

Let us keep silent and hear the Lord speak of his purpose by the prophets: ***"The Lord of Hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass: and as I have purposed, so shall it stand. That I will break the Assyrian in my land and upon my mountain tread him underfoot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off his shoulders. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all nations. For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? And his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back? In the year that King Ahaz died was this burden." Isa., 14:24-28.*** Looking at this wonderful prophecy, who can doubt the fulfillment of all the wonderful purposes of God, or question his sovereignty, or deny his predestination? To mind, if in the wisdom of God, anything visible to mortals, or invisible of them, were to work contrary to the purpose of God, then all that was purposed in Christ would be likely to turn out to be a failure in what Christ purposed to accomplish. And should his purposes fail in one instance, it follows of course that all might fail, and that Christ hath died in vain.

Oh, how discouraging, how horrible, to think of even a remote possiblity of a failure in the complete and perfect salvation wrought out by Christ at such an awful and wonderful cost! What a howl of triumph would rise from the dark dungeon of hell if one purpose of God were to fail! All the demons of that awful abode would rise, and with demoniac yells make universal space resound with their shouts of triumph over the conquered Son of God. And we think Christ and all the angels of glory would stand trembling for the safety of the throne of God. If one link in the chain of God's purposes - election, predestination, or of the reign of grace through Christ - could be broken, then farewell to the whole race of man. For all would be

forever gone, eternally gone.

But to my mind all things were purposed by the eternal *" I Am."* And that his purpose is as sure to accomplish as it is sure that his throne stands. I cannot see, for the life of me, how his honor can be maintained if we teach a probability of the failure of the reign of his grace. And never, to my mind, has one single sinner been quickened to life only by the Spirit of God; and this, it seems to me, is because of the reign of grace. And this grace was given in Christ before the world began. And consequently was bound, in the very nature of things , to have been before there was a man made; and that must of necessity prove that God purposed to make man, and that man would need a Saviour, because of his death in sin. ***"Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgment, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his cousellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again ? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen." Rom., 33 to 36.*** Now, if in the wisdom of God all things are for him, it does seem that it is reasonable to conclude that all and every event that taketh place in the heights above or the depths beneath, or in the lengths, or breadths, either in earth, or hell, are under his control, and that he purposed and foresaw them, and overrules them to his own glory. Or else events are not things. Then, taking this view of the wisdom, power, mercy and love of God, I feel safe in believing and teaching that the God of salvation is a complete Sovereign , and therefore live in hope of His mercy, and that through the efficacy of the blood and righteousness of his adorable Son, that I shall yet praise him who is my ***"wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption ."*** See 1st Cor., 1:30. Then God forbid that we should glory save in the Lord.

Dear brethren, I have thrown these thoughts together under the most trying circunstances - with much fear and trembling - knowing that I am imperfect, ignorant and short sighted, often wondering can it be that such a creature as I am can be a child of God - saved by grace. I have written my own imperfect views , without consulting any man for his views. I alone am responsible for what is here presented. I desire that if this is published, that none will take offence because of it. I hope that I have had the honor of God in view, and trust that I have the mind of Christ. My race is nearly run. I shall soon go hence, and shall soon know the reality of these things. I am looking forward to the time of my departure . When I go I expect and believe that I shall meet a satisfied Saviour. My hope is to see the King in his

beauty, and the whole of the purchases of Christ's blood, which will be a train that shall fill the temple - not one left out for whom He atoned; if so, it will be because of his eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ before the world began. Then I shall be as the glorified saints, and me-thinks that all the hosts of heaven will be shouting *"Crown him Lord of all!"* Then I shall be completely happy, as I stand with the sanctified family of God.

And to His name be all the praise now and in a world which shall never end.

J .C. Hall
Gogginsville, Va.

ROMANS:35-39.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day the long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The power and wisdom of God is on my mind as a text, and hopefully His power is working in me as I attempt to write a few words to His praise, honor and glory, and for the comfort and edification of His saints.

There are gods many and lords many (Cor. 8:5), but the God I believe in and have a hope in, (if not deceived), is the God of heaven and earth, the true and living God, the God who created all things and absolutely controls all things - times, events, people, etc. He has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Isa. 46:10). And in the ninth verse He said, *"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me."* When God sent Moses to Egypt to deliver the Israelites from bondage, Moses wanted to know how to declare who He was to them; and God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. (Ex. 3:14). Brethren, this is the God that I desire to declare unto you today.

The world does not know this God: *"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."* And Christ crucified is what is preached.

Who believes the preaching of Christ crucified? Unto the Jews it is a stumbling block and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, it is the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Who are the called? ***"For whom he did foreknow, he did also predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified them he also glorified."*** From where were they called? From their dead alienated state and from nature's total darkness. ***"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sin."*** Jesus calls them and they always hear and live. Jesus said, ***"The time is coming, and now is , when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live."*** Jesus gave us several examples of his mighty power to raise the dead while he was on the earth . Not only will he raise them up when he comes again without sin unto salvation, but he also raises them up and gives them new life in this time world . God gave him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father gave him. ***"And this is eternal life, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."*** (St. John 17:2-3). If we know God and His Son we must first be given a new life or be born again, and then have a revelation from above. ***"All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him."- Matt.11:27).*** The world does not believe this, for they teach that if any man will only open his heart to Christ that Christ will come in and save him; that they have power to accept or reject an offering of salvation, Even if it was possible for man to open his own heart to God it would be a work; and salvation is not of work but of grace. ***"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny Him,"*** They cannot believe he has finished the work his Father sent him to do, and they believe they must do something to help him. To the worldly the Bible is only a recorded history of a man-child being born into this world, growing up here, performing a few miracles, and then being slain on the cross. This record is true, but if we do not understand, at least in part, the spiritual meaning of these things, then we have not been taught of the Father and we have nothing to base a hope upon.

When Jesus called Lazarus forth from the grave, and commanded he be released, Lazarus was bound in grave clothes and his face was bound with a napkin, The grave clothes represent, at least to

me, the law that he was under till the coming of Christ; and the napkin represents the vail over his eyes that kept him from seeing the glory that was to come. As I see it, Lazarus is a figure of the children of grace, They are kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which is to be revealed at the coming of Christ to them as individuals, Therefore the law is our schoolmaster until that time; but after we receive the faith of Jesus Christ, we are no longer under the law or schoolmaster for we die unto sin, ***"For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me,"*** Christ ***"died unto sin once: but in that he liveth , he liveth unto God, Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."*** I believe the death and resurrection of Lazarus is a type or figure of this death and new life. I repeat, ***"The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live."***

What a glorious thing it is to be given a hope that we are among those who have heard the voice of Christ.

Christ also opened the eyes of the blind, Bartimaeus being among those; and though this was a natural blindness, at least in part, we must see the spiritual significance for it to mean anything to us. We are not told when he received faith to believe in Christ, but Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole: and he received his sight and followed Jesus in the way, Because of his faith, no one was able to keep Bartimaeus from crying unto the Lord, and so it is with every child of grace. Our cries are heard, and in the appointed time they are answered ; for our eyes are opened to see Jesus Christ and what he has done for us ; and we are given a hope that we are among those chosen in him before the foundation of the world: and as sure as we receive that hope we follow Jesus in the way. The followers of Christ are called sheep; and Jesus said, ***"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."***

Brethren, this is a promise with holy power: this is power that the finite, natural mind of man cannot understand; but by God given faith we believe it.

There are those who contend that God has no power over Satan and that there is a constant struggle between them. In the book of Job, however, we find, ***"His hand hath formed the crooked serpent."*** Does not God have power over all that he created? Could He not destroy him as easily as he created him? Paul tells us in Romans 13:1, ***"Let every soul be subject to the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers***

that be are ordained of God." In Job 1:12 and 2:6 we find that God gave Satan power to afflict Job, but limited what Satan could do. Satan could not even touch Job until that time, for God had put a hedge about him. God also puts a hedge about his saints so that Satan cannot do more to them than it pleases God. There were many devils in the poor Gadarene, but Jesus displayed his mighty power by casting them out. Not only did they obey his command, but they had to ask for permission to enter the swine. We know that we have no power against the devils that besiege us from time to time, for they are much more powerful than us; but Jesus drives them out and puts us in our right mind. Then he commands us to go and shew our friends how great things God has done for us. How sweet and peaceful the feeling when we are enabled to do this!

Leprosy is a disease of the body and always breaks out from within, and in the scriptures it is portrayed as sin. Ten lepers met Jesus when he entered a certain village, and they cried unto him for mercy. Jesus sent them away to the priests, and as they went they were cleansed of the leprosy. Only one of them turned back and fell upon his face and glorified God and gave Him thanks. We know that God shows mercy unto all of His creatures and heals them of their natural afflictions as it pleases Him, but we are not told what became of the nine that did not return to praise God: but the one that returned had been given faith to believe, and Jesus said unto him, *"Thy faith hath made thee whole."* This indicates to me that not only was he cleansed of leprosy, but also of sin. What a lovely picture this is of the children of grace!

Brethren, though we have been made to see the wonderful work of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, there are many times that we are very doubtful and have great fear. We are not alone. John, who had seen the Lord in person and had seen the Spirit descending from heaven upon him like a dove after that God had told him that such a thing would come to pass, also had doubts while in prison, and he sent his disciples to ask, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. Brethren, this shows that we must be shown again and again these wonderful things, lest we forget. When Jesus said the poor have the gospel preached unto them he was not refering to the ones who have little or nothing of this world's riches or goods, but to those who are poor in spirit, for; blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Jesus preached to the poor

while here on earth, and now he calls, qualifies and sends forth his ministers to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to them through the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

What beauty, love and power is in this gracious promise!

Brethren, there is no end of this text. Remember this poor sinner when at the throne of grace, and may the grace and power of God rest upon you.

Clifford Wilbanks

WATER

Water is essential to natural life as well as spiritual. It is one of the greatest covenant or spiritual blessings mentioned in the Bible. It is likewise an essential in the natural realm of existence. It is necessary in both kingdoms. The inhabitants of either commonwealth must have it or they soon perish. It is not something that can be produced by either an inhabitant of the kingdom of heaven, or of the earth. To both earthly and heavenly citizens, it is a gift from a beneficient Benefactor.

It cannot be handled by the inhabitants of either country. Without it those that are spiritual and those that are natural will die of thirst. In connection with that thought, let me say no man can stay the terror of thirst in either kingdom, therefore, there is not such a thing as a conditionalist where there is not water to alleviate that thirst. Ever so often water, both spiritual and natural, is mentioned in the Bible. You can not do without it. Also you can easily drown in too much of it in a natural way. I am well aware that to an extent God gave man the ability to bring water under subjection to him. However, God also gave man dominion over tigers and lions, but do not try to carry that subjection too far.

In nature men have thought that they had control over water, being able, as they thought to make it do what they thought. They were not able to do so. A man does not have water under subjection in the ocean nor on the desert. Dry hole after dry hole has been dug. Many people have drowned in what was thought to be shallow water.

Jacob had a well used well of water. It was the only supply for a lot of people. However, the case that we wish to notice is a peculiar one. The Master met one of His sheep there. She thought to need that water, but her mind was distracted away from what she thought that she needed the water that she did not know existed.

The Saviour knew before hand why He had to go through the country where this well was. He knows the need of His people whether bond or free, Jew or Gentile. It is a joy to think that in His relation to His mother, to His people, that He became tired at the time that He did. He needed the natural rest, but a poor sinner stood in need of living water. His becoming tired when He did was because of His relationship with this woman, and because that He was the son of Mary as well as the Son of God. His arrival at the well before she did was purposed from all eternity, accidental though it may appear to men.

She came, as she thought, for natural water. According to covenant arrangements, she came for living water. She did not understand at the beginning, neither did any of us, but, if not deceived, we, as did she, receive that teaching that stems from heaven. The meeting of the two had been seen and declared before times curtain was let down. Here is conclusive proof that all of God's children are taught of the Lord to know Him whom to know is life eternal.

Happy is that people whose God is the Lord. Ah, how empty and barren we are as we go out, and how joyful we are as we are brought in. How full her time was in rites and legal ceremonies; how absorbed she was in going to Jacob's well when she left her home on that day, and how completely her day and her mind was changed when she met the Man at places of drawing waters that are so satisfying that she forgot home ties, legal customs, earthly drinking water, forgot her earthen pitcher, and yet was so carried away in the Spirit of Him that she had newly met that she was filled with an overflowing well of living water springing up into everlasting life.

Let us remember that we are writing about water in our life as a follower of the Lamb of God. There are, in our pathway, two kinds of water. There are bitter waters and sweet waters. These two are one over against the other. This is by purpose of He that calleth His children to take their cross and follow Him. These waters will be in the hands of the Shepherd, and they will become as His wisdom dictates.

This poor sinning woman had never been anywhere for water save to Jacob's well. After meeting the Saviour she had no need for this water anymore as a follower of the Man she met, for the water which He gave her, and which He gives all those that meet Him at Jacob's well, is in her, a living stream flowing upward, even springing up out of dry ground a living stream, as living waters, causing the tender plants to revive, the tender herbs to come under the night much of the time , but having the distilling quietness and strength of the dew.

Christ Jesus the Lord was baptized in water. I will never forget the day when I was blessed to follow my

Lord and Master in baptism. I have oftimes wished for brighter evidence of being an humble follower of Him in that lovely ordinance. To me, water is the only element in which a child of God can follow His Master in the ordinance. There is not any way in which a baptism can be finished except in enough water for the applicant to be carried down into the water, and raised up out of it. Any commandment of the Saviour must be full consummation to be complied with. Down into and up out of is in compliance; anything short of that is not water baptism, be it performed by whosoever takes it upon himself to perform it. The baptism of the Saviour was in keeping with gospel directions, all baptisms since then have been in compliance with the gospel rule, if thus complied with (We are dealing with only the mode). For a baptism to admit one into the church of Jesus Christ, there are other things necessary in order for it to be legal baptism. However, I am only dealing with water baptism, with the mode of legal baptism at this time. The Lord willing, perhaps later other phases of it will be considered). In passing , let it be noted that all of the water in the universe will never cleanse a soul from sin. Only the blood of Christ will do that.

The cleansing foundation of water was opened in eternity in the purpose of God. It was for sin and uncleanness figuratively speaking, and it is a spiritual work, and men do not have anything to do with its flowing. God opened this foundation, and He did not have a single contribution of help in time or money or creature effort . The manifestation of the opening of that fountain shall be at the time that the sword of justice shall be called upon to smite the shepherd. The time of the opening of this fountain ushers in one of the most important links in the history of salvation. First, it does away with prophets, and it does away with legalism. It comes with great wonders and things hard to be understood, and yet it comes as a new and living way, and it comes altogether as a gift of God. It is not the forethought of man; men have nothing at all to do with it coming. It was conceived in the eternal mind of a covenant keeping God, and its coming is to be attributed to Him that made heaven and earth .

Water is intermingled in many, if not all, of the acts of salvation. Sometime the waters are bitter, even mingled with gall; sometimes they are sweet to the soul, making the heart beat with joy and keen anticipation. There is not any question about waters flowing to every inhabitant of Zion. Let us begin with the 16th verse of the 34th chapter of Isaiah, Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read, no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate; for my mouth it hath commanded; and his spirit it hath gathered them, and he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line; they shall possess it forever;

from generation to generation they shall dwell therein. (now chapter 35), The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing, the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellence of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees, Say unto them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as the hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert (Isa. 34:16, 17 and 35: i, 6). There isn't any likelihood of any of these covenant blessings failing.

These promises are those of a covenant keeping God, and He will do them. As God blesses us with a retrospective review of His promises, let us remember His promise to Jacob. He finds every Jacobite in a waste howling wilderness, and in a desert land. Right in those two needy places the text takes on grandeur and beauty and everlasting hope for the poor and needy. If that is your status before God, do not hesitate, but let us, as blessed with faith to draw near in faith and to say, He is mine, and I am His.

Do not fear dear reader, this living water will be springing up as you travel heavenward. That is His promise. What does it matter what reformers say; what does it matter what challengers of your faith and of your order say. The Lord is on your side (Psa. 124). It is not a problem for earthly engineers to tanker with bringing in a well in a desert. God has engineered the whole order of business in saving sinners. He does not get angered at them and turn His back upon them, but He ever is at their side, and even though Peter denied Him, and Judas betrayed Him, and the woman at Jacob's well at first challenged Him to draw water when He had nothing to draw with, He still displayed mercy upon those that call upon His name.

The Lord loved Jacob. He loved him. Not with this kind of love that hangs to your coat tail one day, and persecutes you the next. Other people delight in a text (if it is man made), like unto that. But He is not a man as we are. God loved Jacob, not in six troubles, nor not even just in seven, but He loved Him with an everlasting love. But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be

burned; neither shall the flame be kindled upon thee.

I am not telling you that you will not have deep and threatening waters to wade through. No, no, my soul knows that right well our blessed Saviour measured the depth of those cruel waters of death, even measured the depths for an unbelieving bride, and unfaithful bride, for, as one has well said, No woman ever had as faithful a Husband as did the Church of God, and no Husband ever had as faithless a wife. Yet He measured His waters of sorrow, that had to be waded for you to arrive safe at home, and what a sad lonely walk it was that He had to go it alone, but how good it is to be up and about and physically able and a mind well enough to comfort you that He walked the depth of them for you alone that you might have Him to walk those waters of death with you.

I hope that I write in brotherly love,

Elder W. D. Griffin

ST. MATTHEW 11:28-30.

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

THE STRANGE WOMAN

"I have peace offerings with me; this day have I paid my vows." (The Strange Woman.)

How different the language of this strange woman from that of the Sister and Spouse of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose motto has ever been, ***"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." - Psa. xxiii. 1.*** Zion has ever delighted in telling what her Lord has done for her. ***"He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, and miry clay, and established my goings, and he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise to his name." "He brought me to his banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." "He is her refuge in distress, and a very present help in trouble."***

But not so with the strange woman. Her husband has gone a long journey, and has taken the bag of money with him, (as though he were a modern missionary,) and she is left to provide for herself; hence she is found, devoid of delicacy, in the streets at the twilight. She is loud and stubborn, and at every corner she seeks for lovers, and wishes with them to take her fill of love. She delights to tell of her own doings; for in truth she is a workmonger practically. She has decked her bed with tapestry, with carved works, and with fine linen of Egypt, (not of Zion.) She has paid her vows, and so of

course she has peace offerings with her. Having by her industry, in the absence of the good man, rendered her house so inviting, by her peace offerings, her carved works, perfumed bed, and her fine linen of Egypt, she is now seen in the black and dark night; for her feet abide not in her house; she goeth forth a diligent seeker and a sure finder of her deluded proselyte. Among the young men she espieth one void of understanding; she flattereth him with her words, and with her fair speech she causeth him to yield, yea, she forces him. He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks, till a dart strike through his liver, as a bird hasteneth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life. She telleth him that stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. But he knoweth not that the dead are there, and that her guests are in the depths of hell. She hath cast down many wounded, yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

Ye children of wisdom, tell us, is she not a daughter of her who sat upon a scarlet-colored-beast, who made the nations of the earth drunk with the contents of her golden cup, whose name is called Mystery Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots, and the Abominations of the Earth?

If Mystery Babylon, is written in legible characters on the forehead of Papal Rome, are not the features of the strange woman above described equally visible in her mystic daughter, the popular Protestant religionists of the present age? Hark ye! What do they say? We have peace offerings with us, alias, the means of grace, the issues from death, and means whereby to make our peace with God, and of saving our souls from hell, and of saving the souls of as many as we can by our fair speech force to turn in with us. Do they not profess to have peace offerings with them, when they undertake to reconcile the world to God, and when they upon the house-top proclaim that their benevolent institutions are efficient means of saving lost sinners. Do not the engineers of a Protracted Meeting, when they call their deluded dupes to the anxious benches, to participate in the efficacy of their intercession with the Lord, and when to encourage them to come, (or with their fair speech to force them,) they tell them that their compliance will advance them, one step at least, towards heaven. Do they not then declare that they have peace- offerings with them? Or when they declare that all that is necessary to establish their peace with God is to give their hearts to him, and that they have power to do this, do they not then say, We have peace-offerings with us? And when they have gone through the formalities of what is called getting religion, and have passed from the anxious bench to

the submission chair, and into the church, do they not say, *"This day I have paid my vows; I have given up my heart to God; I have received the healing virtues of the consecrated bench; I have joined all the benevolent societies, and what lack I yet?"* True, the popular religionists of the present time do profess to own Christ as their Husband. But it is equally true that they do virtually say that he has gone a long journey, and will return at the time appointed.

And that he has left her to supply herself with pastors, and arrange her house so as to render her accommodations inviting to those among the youths who are void of understanding; and having done all this, to go forth by her missionaries, agents, tract distributors, &c., to diligently seek for lovers, or converts.

Reader, can you discern the analogy? Beware, then, for her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death. The dead are there, and her guests are in the depths of hell.

Elder G. Beebe

THE OBJECT OF OUR PAPER

Our brethren of the Old School of Christ will bear in mind that this humble sheet is devoted to the Baptist cause, as we believe the Baptist cause to be the cause of God, and that its columns are designed to be used as a medium for the circulation of bible doctrine and general information.

The dear people of God who remain steadfast and unshaken in the apostles' doctrine are at this day greatly scattered through the country, and in many instances where one or more of them are found they are supposed to be the only ones remaining of the same faith and order. Indeed, they are often themselves driven to the conclusion of Elijah: *"They have digged down thine altars and killed thy prophets, and I am left alone, and they seek my life."* In their scattered situation it affords them peculiar pleasure to hear from one another. *"As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country."- Prov. xxv. 25.*

It is certainly good news to the scattered pilgrims to hear of the numbers in different parts of the land who still adhere to the doctrine and practice of the primitive church. In days of old, *"they that feared the Lord spake often one to another;"* and the exhortation of the apostle is, that we *"exhort one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching."*

Elder G. Beebe

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 2010

Elder Alan Terry, VA 15.00
Garlon Vick, NC 25.00
Raymond Adams, VA 5.00
Nellie Dalton, VA 5.00
Estelle Thompson, VA 5.00
Tilman Pullig, TX 5.00
George Hyslip, TN 15.00
Tommy Middleton, NC 5.00
Elder W.T. Conner, VA 5.00
Charles Alders, TX 25.00
Myrtle Thompson, VA 10.00
John Schulz, AR 15.00

MEETINGS

SOUTH QUACHITA UNION

The union meeting of the South Quachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, at Union Church near Marion, LA on April 24th and 25th, 2010.

The 2009 South Quachita Minutes stated that the union meeting would be held at Rehobeth Church in Eldorado, AR, but a change has been made and Union Church will host the meeting.

All lovers of the truth are invited to be with us.

Ned Barron, Association Clerk
(318) 778-4217

OBITUARIES

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

At His appointed time, God providentially answered our prayers to ease the suffering of our dear husband, Daddy, and Pastor, Elder Ronald Crouch, separating him into the blessed sleep of Jesus Christ on December 11, 2009; making his pilgrimage here 74 years, 6 months, 24 days. Dad was steadfast to the end that regardless of the tremendous suffering he was afflicted with during his stay on earth, none could compare with the suffering that his blessed Saviour had endured for him.

Brother Ronald was born in Spring Hill, Kanawha County, West Virginia May 17, 1935 the eldest of eight sons of Preston and Mildred Smith Crouch. His parents, four brothers, one grandson: Alan D. Stanley, and one great-grandson: Ivan Lannin precede him in death. He was united in marriage to Mamie E. Johnson August 30, 1956 after a three year tour in the U.S. Army. To this union was born five children: Ronald, Jr., Donald, Bonnie McCord, Lewis and Malinda Stanley. Besides his three brothers, wife and children, he also leaves to mourn his passing, ten grandchildren, eleven great-grandchildren, and a host of family, friends and church.

After many years of infliction of

spirit, Brother Ronald was blessed with the sweet hope of rest in Jesus Christ and was received into fellowship by baptism with Fairview Primitive Baptist Church on May 17, 1981 by the late Elder Allen Smith. He was then called to serve the church and was ordained an Elder on August 4, 1984. He was appointed to the station of Moderator and Pastor of Fairview Primitive Baptist Church at the passing of Elder Allen Smith in 1989. He faithfully discharged his duties according to the dictates of Holy Scriptures, attending to the feeding of the flock as a firm believer that salvation by grace is an unmerited free gift and not of the works of man's hands. Although we mourn this dear man's passing, it is not without the glorious hope of eternal reunion in the resurrection if we belong to God.

At the recommendation of his doctors to engage in light exercise, when weather and his failing health would allow, Dad spent many mornings on a local golf course with his grandsons. The time was also utilized to offer guidance to the young men to carry themselves with patience, truth and honor in all things. Services were conducted December 14, 2009 at 11a.m. at Allen Funeral Home, Hurricane, WV by Elder Harold Johnson and assisted by Elders William and Lewis Johnson. Songs were sung from the Gobel Hymnal: #233 (We shall Sleep, But Not Forever), #222 (Sweet Rivers of Redeeming Love), #175 (Amazing Grace), and #281 (O, Beautiful Hills of Galilee.) Graveside prayer was offered by Elder Harold Johnson, Amazing Grace was played on harmonica by Elder Lewis Johnson and Brother Willard Johnson. Grandsons then lined up and paid tribute to their mentor of manhood and teed off one last round of golf before he was laid to rest in Carpenter Cemetery, Putnam County, WV beside his beloved grandmother, Sarah J. Johnson Smith.

Therefore be it resolved: one copy for the church records, one copy retained by the family and one copy forwarded to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Written by request of the church by daughters and Sisters in Hope,

Malinda Stanley and Bonnie McCord.

Elder Harold Johnson, Moderator
Sister Mary Edwards, Clerk

PSALM 33:1-4.

Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright.

Praise the Lord with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings.

Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise.

For the word of the Lord is right; and all his works are done in truth.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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Hillsville, Va. 24343

SONG

Dear Shepherd of thy people, here
Thy presence now display;
As thou hast given a place for prayer,
So give us hearts to pray.

Within these walls let holy peace,
And love and concord dwell;
Here give the troubled conscience ease.
The wounded spirit heal.

Show us some token of thy love,
Our fainting hope to raise;
And pour thy blessings from above,
That we may render praise.

And may the gospel's joyful sound,
Enforced by mighty grace,
Awaken many sinners round
To come and fill the place.

Newton.

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EDITORIALS

Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgression, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. (Gal. 3:19)

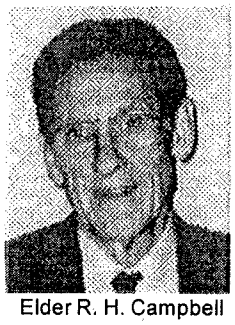
Elder R. H. Campbell

This is a subject that has been a mystery to the world because, many of them think of the law as being a blessing unto Israel and an integral part of their salvation, and this is not true, in fact it was a curse unto them. Paul said, (Gal. 1-11) ***"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for the just shall live by faith and the law is not of faith:" (Gal. 3:11) "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident. For the just shall live by faith and the law is not of faith, but man that doeth them shall live in them." "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us by his sacrifice of himself, and hath freed Israel from the curse of the law, by his being made a curse for us, for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. The blessing of the promise made unto Abraham came on Israel through Jesus Christ; that they might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."*** Therefore the law was in fact a blessing to no one, the salvation of God's children was not because of the law, but rather in spite of it. The promise was four hundred years before the law, and yet even as Abraham's belief in God's promise was accounted righteousness to him. In like manner, Israel's belief of the heirs of promise in that same law was accounted to them for righteousness, and it is fulfilled unto them when the seed came to whom the promise was made. The entering of the law did not void the promise, and therefore the heirs claimed their heritage according to God's original promise.

Another way of stating what Israel experienced, under the law, is

that it is even as a plane that is on a journey, and when he reaches his destination it cannot land because of the weather or some other hindrance. The plane is then held in a holding pattern until it is cleared to land the way that is cleared for it to land. The plane has reached it destination, but is made to circle the airport until everything is cleared that it might land according to the rules made for situations like this. All of this had nothing to do with its reaching its destination, even as the fact that the law did nothing regarding the salvation of the children of God, it is but a likely delay until all of the conditions are met, or as in the case of the Salvation of God's children it is when the seed should come to whom the promise was made. It is even as the apostle Paul said, (Gal. 3:19) ***"Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made,"*** (the holding pattern awaiting the arrival of the promised seed). Israel was held under the law, until the promised seed should come to whom the promise was made, (Christ) and then was ushered in the gospel day, even as the plane is cleared to land, when the way has been cleared. Jesus Christ, came into the world fulfilling the law, to a jot and tittle, but it was according to the original plans and could not complete its mission until all conditions were met, which was the arrival of the promised seed.

Israel was held there, under the law, until the law was abolished, in the death of the mediator, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain, one new man, so making peace. There were many objects to be involved in completing the plan, Christ must reconcile both (Jews and Gentiles) unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; and came and preached peace to you, which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. This was all accomplished by the promise made to Abraham, and it is being fulfilled daily because of Christ's death on the cross. This bypassed the law, as far as it's having any efficacy in the salvation of the saints of God, for this was accomplished only as the results of the death of Christ, (Eph 2:16-18) ***"And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were far off, and to them that were nigh; for through him they both must have access by one Spirit unto the Father."*** (Eph 2:8)

In fact, in Paul' s epistle to Timothy, (1 Tim. 1:8-11) ***"But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully: knowing this that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the un-***

godly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for men stealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust." It gave no rewards unto the righteous, only condemnation unto the ungodly, for their sins and was to make manifest the nature of man in the flesh, as stated above, (the law is not made for the righteous man, but rather for the lawless and the disobedient.) In other words, the mission was to make manifest which category the individual was in, even as the commandment given unto the disciples to, (Mark 16:15-16) ***"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned."***

The preaching of the gospel does not save anyone, (Rom 8:3) ***"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh;"*** it but makes manifest the work of grace in the hearts of the saints of God or the condemnation in the flesh. It makes manifest the difference in the heart of the individuals, by their response to it.

Jesus, was discussing the fact of the opinion of the Pharisees regarding Jesus, and Jesus asked them, (Math. 22:42-46) ***"What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he? They say unto him, he is the son of David. He saith unto them. How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions."***

The apostle Paul preceded, the above subject text, with the paragraph stating how the promise and the law were given to Israel, and then, he gives the reasons why they were so given. According to the text, the law was given because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made, which was Christ. Brethren, I speak after the order of men; although it is but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred years after, cannot disannul, that it make the promise of none effect, for if the

inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise, and the promise of God is sure and certain, and nothing can be added to it, nor taken from it, but, by God. He could annul or change it, but he is the one that made the statement, (Mal. 3:6) ***"For I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."*** So that settles that the fact that the promise is sure and certain to every heir of grace, it will not be changed because God is of one mind, and he changes not.

In the Apostle Paul's epistle to the church at Ephesus he reminded the Ephesians that they were Gentiles, who had been born of the flesh, were without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. But now, because they had been quickened, they are new creatures in Christ Jesus who is their peace by his breaking down the middle wall of partition, abolishing in his flesh the law of commandments contained in ordinances, that he might reconcile us both to God in one body by the cross, and came and preached peace to you that were afar off, and to them that were nigh. Christ abolished the law, and therefore made void the condemnation that his children had been subject to all of their lives, under the law, for where no law is, there is no transgression; therefore the law was of no benefit as far as the salvation of the saints were concerned. As we stated in the beginning the law was not a blessing to Israel but rather it condemned them as long as they were subject to it.

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews was devoted entirely to the trials and afflictions suffered by the Jews under the law and then Paul said, after all of the trials of faith that they endured they received not the promise. (Heb. 11:39-40.) ***"And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. The work of God is a perfect work and will produce the effect."***

A perfect illustration of the perfection of the works of God coming together to accomplish the desired results, (Eccl. 3:1-8) ***"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die, a time to plant, and time to pluck up that which is planted: a time to kill, and a time to heal, a time to break down, and a time to build up, a time to weep, and a time to laugh and a time to mourn and, a time to dance and a time to cast away stones and a time to gather stones together, a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away,***

a time to rend, and a time to sew, a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace. What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth? I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it." The writer then says, *"he hath made everything beautiful in his time, this applies to the major event in men's lives as well as the trivial, each piece is just as needful as any other, to make the perfect work, and God will have no less."* This is the reason that man's salvation is so sweet and precious to him; he has seen a little here and a little there, and they believed only the saints of God will ever see or understand any of the beauties of these things, as Jesus told a group on one occasion. As one of the men said to Jesus, (John 10:24-27) *"If thou be the Christ tell us plainly. Jesus answered him, I told you plainly and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe me not, because ye are not my sheep, as I said. My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my Father's hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."* The children of God believe that only the chosen vessels will see and understand the beauties of their salvation, and they cannot lose it because Jesus said no one can pluck them out of my Father's hand.

Solomon, a man of great wisdom, and understanding of the workings of God among the sons of men declares that there is a time for every season, every time, and purpose of all of the acts of God. Each act is a designed part of the whole, and as we said above all of the works of God are perfect and are according to God's design. Man would read this list of activities for which God has said that there is a time and purpose. We may not see the need for some particular but God says that there is. You can only see the wisdom and beauty in the work when you see the complete design. There is a poem, (The Weaver), in which the author understood this mystery. He is describing a needle point that he is weaving. The last verse says: The dark threads are as needful in the weaver's skillful hands, as the threads of gold and silver, in the pattern he has planned. This is true of all art, it takes the blending and colors properly applied to make a beautiful work of art; anything else is as the so called religions of the world, they cannot see, hear, talk, walk or perform any miracle or benefit whatsoever. In the first place, they are man made, and can only do those things that man

can do in nature.

The true and living God created the world and all things therein. He created a people for his own good pleasure and keeps them in his loving care. His promise unto them is, (Deut. 6:7-9) ***"For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God. The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye are more in number than any people; for ye are the fewest of all people: But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he hath sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt."***

The scriptures are referred to by many as a love story, a story of God's love for his chosen vessels, throughout the old and the new, testament, such as, (Eph, 1:1-6.) ***"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: Blessed by God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves is the gift of God."*** The above statement that the scriptures are a love story is a very good description of them. They certainly are to a specific people. (Eph 1:1) Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ, as well as many of the other epistles indicate that they are to his elect people, as Paul says here, the church at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus which indicates that this is to the faithful in Christ Jesus, wherever they may attend church. The world will read the epistles and believe that they apply to all who read them. They overlook the fact that they are indicated to a specific people. We read them and say that we believe as we do because the bible says so, but that is not so. Actually we believe them because we feel that the truth contained in them has been revealed unto us. This is the only way that anyone can believe them is by the revelation of the Holy Spirit, and we each have many points of evidence

that we are included; but it is because of these evidences that we cannot deny the hope which by all of his children are saved. May all who read these words have that precious hope in their bosom.

The apostle Paul, speaking of Israel's life under the law said, (Heb 11:37-40) ***"They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy;) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."*** Having suffered all of these afflictions, they could not be made perfect without us. What blessed things must await us and may we all be blessed to experience them, and we will, if we are one of the children of God. By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourself; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast, and may we worship God in Spirit and in truth realizing that it is by the precious grace of God, and because of his love for us, and in spite of our sinful; and undone condition.

Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, God was justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Lebanon, TN
Feb. 8, 2010

Dear Bro. Tony,

I enjoy this paper so very much. May God continue to bless this work. Please renew my subscription for 2 more years.

Gray R. Goodman
1127 Cedar Grove Rd.
Lebanon, TN 37087

2-6-2010

Bro. Horton,

I just noticed it is time to renew my subscription to the "Sign!" Enclosed is a check for $30.00. This is for 2 years renewal and the other to use as you see fit.

May the Lord continue to bless each of us.

Thanks,
M.L. Richardson
6907 Jolee Rd.
Panama City, FL 32404

2-9-2010

Dear Brother Tony,

I am enclosing a check for two years subscription to the Times plus a twenty-five dollar donation.

I have enjoyed the articles about the authors of the beautiful old hymns we sing. I hope we can have more of them.

Hope to see you soon.

Sincerely,
Banks Conner

VOICES OF THE PAST

EXCERPTS FROM A SERMON

(Excerpts from a sermon preached by Elder W. C. King at Bush Arbor Church, N.C., on December 13, 1959.)

Elder W.C. King

Recorded in the gospel according to St. Luke, 1st chapter, 37th verse, are these words: ***"For with God nothing shall be impossible."***

We find in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. There was no man to help or to hinder: there was no man upon the Earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep and God said, ***"Let there be light, and there was light."*** God divided the light from the darkness, and called the light day, and the darkness He called night. The things that would be impossible with man, are possible with God.

The Lord said unto Abram, ***"Get the out of thy country, and from thy kindred and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee."*** God told him that He would make of him a great nation, and that his seed should be as the sand of the sea. Abram was one hundred years old and his wife Sarah was ninety years old, when the Lord appeared unto him saying, ***"Sarah thy wife shall have a son."*** Sarah laughed, realizing she was old and stricken in age. But, according to God's promise, Isaac was born. The things that are impossible with men are possible with God. If I could, I would like this morning to point out to you some of the things that seem impossible with men but are possible with God: Knowing that He has all power in heaven and in earth, does all things after the counsel of His own will, having seen the end from the beginning.

Men by wisdom cannot understand how that Daniel could be cast into a den of lions and not be destroyed. Yet God had sent his angels and shut the lions' mouths that no harm should be done to Daniel; He having all power even over the beasts of the forest, the birds of the

air, and the fish of the sea. He could cause the raven to feed Elijah — to find him in his desolation and sadness, and feed him meat and bread twice a day. We know by nature the raven would prefer to feed upon his body, but God commanded the raven to feed Elijah. How impossible these things seem to man. God makes a way where there is no way.

When the Hebrew children refused to worship the false gods, King Nebuchadnezzar ordered that the furnace be heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated. He commanded the most mighty men of his army to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. The king arose early, and in haste said to his counsellors, *"Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? Lo, I see four men walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt. The form of the fourth is like unto the Son of God."*

We cannot understand with the carnal mind how these things can be: without even the smell of smoke upon their garments. No condition or circumstance is such that our God doesn't have complete power to save from every destruction. Many of the trials and experiences of God's little ones here in this world seem a miracle, yet in God's holy providence all provisions are made for their security and protection.

The angel from heaven appeared unto Zachariah when he was in the temple of the Lord about the duties and customs of the priest's office. When Zachariah saw the angel, fear fell upon him, and he was sore afraid, fear fell upon him, but the angel said unto him, *"Fear not, Zachariah: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John... For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall neither drink wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb... And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just: to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."* How impossible this must have seemed to Zachariah, knowing that his wife Elizabeth was old, and barren. He asked the angel, *"Whereby shall I know this?" The angel answering, said, "I am Gabriel that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings.*

And, behold, thou shall be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed." When Elizabeth's full time came that she should be delivered, she brought forth a son. When the cousins and neighbors heard how the Lord had showed great mercy upon her, they began to talk about a name for the

child. Some, of course, wanted to name him after his father, but his mother said, *"Not so; but he shall be called John."* They reasoned that none of their kindred was called by that name; and they made signs to his father how he would have him called, and he asked for a writing table, and he wrote, *"His name is John."* Immediately his mouth was opened, and his tongue loosed, and he spake and praised God.

Do you not sometimes challenge God, dear believer, by asking him to give you some greater evidence of his love and mercy to you, that you might have a greater assurance of his promises? Sometimes in our meditations and prayers we ask God to grant us certain things. I remember so well in my early experience, when I asked God just to spare my life until a certain time, and if He would do that, I would be submissive to what I felt to be my duty. But found that I was not able to keep my promise even to God when He had spared my life to see the time requested. My heart was as cold as ice. I was made to weep and cry unto Him for mercy, learning that I was not my own keeper: That without Him I could do nothing.

God sent an angel unto a city of Galilee to a virgin espoused to a man named Joseph. This virgin was Mary. The angel said, *"Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him she was troubled and the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus... He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." "Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." "For with God nothing shall be impossible."*

Then Joseph her husband being a just man and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privately. But while he thought on these things, behold the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream saying, *"Joseph thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost and she shall bring forth a son and they shall call his name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." "Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him and took unto him, his wife. Knowing her not until she had brought forth her firstborn son and he called His name Jesus."* How impossible

this seems to men; how preposterous for human reasoning to believe that a virgin should conceive of the Holy Ghost and bring forth a son; even Mary pondered these things in her own heart. ***"For with God nothing shall be impossible."***

Joseph and Mary went up from Galilee to Bethlehem to be taxed. While they were there the days were accomplished that she should be delivered, and she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

The angels of God made the announcement of the birth of the blessed Savior of sinners, to those humble shepherds who were abiding in the field keeping watch over their flock by night; saying, ***"Fear not for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior, which is Christ Jesus the Lord."*** I feel this morning that when the Gospel is preached it is good tidings of great joy, coming from a far country; so far that mortal arms can't reach it, yet so near that it can be felt in every heart that God has touched by the finger of his love.

There was no room in the city of Philippi, although God showed Paul by vision to, ***"Come over to Macedonia to help us."*** As great as this Roman city might have been there was no place for the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. We find Paul on the Sabbath going out of the city by the river bank, a place where prayer was wont to be made. The Lord opened the heart of Lydia, not only did she hear but she attended to the things she heard, and was baptized; and said to Paul, ***"If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there."***

I want to say to you beloved that there is a love, a power that binds the hearts of believers together that the world by wisdom can never know. They are hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. Just as these shepherds were made willing to leave their flocks and every session; they had to go to where their Savior was. No man will desire to go where their Lord and Master is until they have had his love in their heart. These wise men had the Star of Bethlehem to guide them. I believe that star is still shining. Every poor sin benighted soul has their eyes set on that star and the Lord Jesus Christ to lead and guide them to that City of habitation.

We don't know how many days it took them to travel the distance they covered. I don't know how many valleys they had to cross and how many mountains they had to climb. I don't think they turned either to the right or left. They had their eyes set on the Star of Bethlehem. It is Jesus Christ your Lord and Master that you have your eyes focused

on. Every poor helpless sinner has learned there is no where else to go. You can witness with Paul when he said it was better for him to depart. I am so glad he told us why it was better,— to be with my Lord Jesus Christ.

So these wisemen were so divinely sent; nothing could prevent them from where his child Jesus lay. They found Him in a manger wrapped in swaddling clothes. They presented to Him these treasures, gold, myrrh and frankincense. Herod had told them, "When you have found Him, come and tell me that I might go and worship Him." Herod no doubt thought he would dethrone him as king. Oh, how wonderful and past finding out is the great work of our God. He had the wise men to go back another way. You or I can never go over this road but once. How much you would like to have some of your experiences of God's precious presence with you over again! The things that are impossible with men are possible with God. It was never the desire of Jesus to be honored and praised by men for what He did. When men sought to praise Him and to make Him king, we find Him absenting Himself from the crowd, going to the mountains in prayer. The poor, needy souls He never turned away empty. The poor leper that came to Him (who knew he was doomed to be cast into isolation, and there to spend his last and expiring days) had faith to believe that Jesus could heal him. We hear him saying to Jesus, ***"If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean."*** Jesus had the power to cleanse the leprous. This morning do you not believe that He still has the same power to cleanse you from all sin; that your soul can be set free, that the Christ Child would be destroyed. How impossible that decree was, just as God had warned the wise men that they shouldn't return back to Herod, but go back another way. The Lord appeared to Joseph and told him to take the child and its mother and flee into Egypt. The Scripture tells us that they departed in the night! Oh, how much of our traveling seems so dark as in the night! The Lord appeared again to Joseph when Herod was dead saying, ***"Arise, take the young child and His mother and go into the land of Israel."*** The unseen power of the everlastng God was controlling every move to take care of this blessed child.

Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem at the Feast of the Passover every year, and they carried this child Jesus with them, who was twelve years old at that time. When they had fulfilled the days and started on their journey back, Jesus tarried in Jerusalem. After a day's travel they sought Him among some kinsfolk and acquaintances, but they found Him not. So they went back to Jerusalem seeking Him some three days. Later they found Him in the temple sitting in the midst of Doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. When they

saw Him they were amazed. His mother said unto him, ***"Why hast thou dealt with us? Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing."*** And He said unto them, ***"How is it that you sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"*** How strong and amazing it must have been to see this lad of a boy, the son of a poor carpenter, there in the Temple among the most learned and intelligent people of the land, asking and answering questions. Yes, He must be about his Father's business. God's business is a business so important that He can call men from the various occupations of life and cause them to leave all and follow Him.

The Scriptures have but little to say about Jesus from about the age of twelve until about thirty. ***"He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them, and Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."*** John says, ***"And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."*** We know the half will never be told. No power that could be formed could take His life until the appointed time of the Father. Every demand of the law must be fulfilled. The church of the living God must be cleansed from all sin by the one offering of our Heavenly Father, His only Son Jesus Christ.

How impossible it seemed to His own disciples when He began to tell them that He must go away, must leave them that the Holy Comforter may come. When He had eaten the last supper with them, He tells them that I am now betrayed and shall be crucified and put to death, and I shall rise again on the third day.

I want to say to you that every single soul that has ever come into this blessed fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ is brought there by His own glorious power and love. It is an impossibility that men in nature, or natural minds, can know this glorious truth as it is in Christ our Lord. No greater miracle can be performed than to see a poor sinful lost man or woman, that seemingly have had no love for heaven or immortal glory be touched by the finger of God's love and turned about by his Holy Spirit, made to come down in sackcloth and in ashes to beg God for mercy on their poor, sinful souls. What is more impossible than that to human reasoning? Confessing that by the grace of God I am what I am, having no confidence in the flesh. No man can resist successfully this blessed power. It subdues and brings you under subjection and wakes you willing in the day of His power; ascribing all power to His Holy name. You and I can't understand the great mystery of godliness unless they are revealed to us.

How impossible it must have

been for those who would comfort Mary and Martha, to believe that Jesus could raise Lazarus from the grave after he had been dead four days, Mary and Martha didn't believe that he would be raised until the resurrection of the last day, Jesus said unto, them, ***"I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth on me though he were dead, yet shall he live,"*** Jesus asked, ***"Where have ye laid him? They said, come and see."*** Jesus had only to say, ***"Lazarus, come forth,"*** and he that was dead came forth.

Oh! what grief and sorrow it brings to us when our loved ones are taken from us. It is impossible for us to call them back. Their spirits return to God, while their bodies rest in the grave to return to dust from whence they come, awaiting our blessed Savior to come again and call them to come forth. I can't tell you, my beloved, this morning how these things shall be, but I can assure you they will come at His command, without blemish, spot, or wrinkle or any such thing, to be made like unto His own glorious body.

His promise to His dear ones cannot fail. I believe with all my soul that He will come again. He told His disciples, before He was crucified: ***"I go to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am you may be there also."***

If I never address you any more on this side of eternity, I want to tell you that Jesus reigns. This child Jesus which was born in Judea in the City of Bethlehem is still alive. He is seated at the right hand of God making intercession for his saints upon the earth and that he will at His own time call the jewels of His mercy unto himself. There will not be one of the objects of His mercy that shall not hear His blessed voice to arise and come forth to be like unto His own glorious body.

As we approach this Christmas season we would if we could share our natural resources with those less fortunate, but we know there is a limit. We know we can do but so much, yet I can point you to the one whose eternal power and love is without limitation or bounds. He is able to reach the most remote parts of the earth and give a gift that far surpasses all the gifts that man can give. So I say to you this morning that the greatest gift that you have ever received or that you will receive as these days come, is the gift of His Holy Spirit in your heart as your Savior; who is the anchor to your soul both sure and steadfast. Anchored to that within the veil that shall never be severed. This gift will never be obsolete or out of date. I am persuaded that as the years go by and we grow older, these precious promises become brighter. We know our shoulders become stooped, our heads silver for the tomb, the time for our departure is near. His prom-

ise becomes more precious, that He will not leave nor forsake us, but will be with us always even to the end.

I want to assure you that all things are possible with God. Not one single blessing that God sees you stand in need of will be withheld from you; though He has left you here in a land of trials and afflictions, the eternal God is at the helm. He will do all His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and His church shall be,brought out from the world by His mighty hand and at last be presented to the Father a glorious Church perfect as Himself.

John saw the Holy City New Jerusalem coming down from God out of Heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ***"And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them and shall be their God. God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."***

What a glorious hope we have. What a blessed promise that some day we are going to move into this new house made not by hands, from this old house of clay. One day we are going to leave the cares and burdens of this sinful world to go home to God to appear in His likeness, to see Him as He is, to be like Him; where we can ascribe all honor and praise to His Holy Name forever. Momentarily here in this life we feel that our souls are lifted to the mountain top, soon to find we are again in the valley of despair. We are told that in this glory land there will be no shedding of tears. No sorrow can come, no death to separate us from loved ones. What a glorious Savior we have. One who has power to call us from the ways of this world, into the blessed fellowship of our God and with His saints upon the earth kept by the power of God ready to be revealed at the last day.

In conclusion let me say, May God bless you, keep and guide you in wisdom's ways, and at last deliver you securely and safely into the fold of God, where sickness, sorrow, and death and separation shall be no more.

"For with God nothing shall be impossible."

(— Signs of the Times, July, 1960)

Elder William C. King

Yesterday is History
Tomorrow is a mystery
Today is a gift
That is why we call it the
"Present"

"Rock of Ages."
Augustus M. Toplady.

ROCK OF AGES and "Jesus, Lover of my soul," are the two favorite hymns of most Christians.

The author of "Rock of Ages," Augustus Montague Toplady, was an Englishman, and was born November 4, 1740. His father, Major Toplady, died in the siege of Cartagena in Colombia, South America, while his boy was only a few months old. Young Toplady was converted when on a visit to Ireland by an ignorant Methodist preacher, a layman, who was preaching in a barn.

His mind was vigorous, but his body was weak, and soon consumption seized upon him. He fought it for two years before it conquered, and it was during this period that he wrote his immortal hymn. It appeared first in the *Gospel Magazine* for March, 1776 – a magazine of which he was the editor. It was in the midst of an article in which he tried to figure out the number of a man's sins, and then broke into this hymn, which sets forth our only remedy for sin:–

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee
Let the water and the blood
From Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and power

Not the labor of my hands
Can fulfil Thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and Thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring;
Simply to Thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for dress;
Helpless, look to Thee for grace;
Foul, I to the Fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die.

While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eyestrings break in death,
When I soar through tracts unknown,
See Thee on Thy judgment throne, –
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee!

Toplady's title for the hymn was *"A living and dying prayer for the holiest believer in the world."* The title fitly expressed the triumphant faith in which he himself passed away on August 11, 1778, saying, *"My prayers are all converted into praise."* He was only thirty-eight years old. The hymn was actually used as a dying prayer by Prince Albert, the beloved husband of Queen Victoria. It was sung in

Constantinople by the Armenians during the fearful massacre. When the steamship London went down in the Bay of Biscay in 1866, the last man to escape from the ill-fated vessel heard the remaining passengers singing this hymn; –

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.

The hymn was an especial favorite with Gladstone, who was often heard humming it in the House of Commons, and who translated it into Latin, Greek, and Italian. His Latin translation is one of great beauty. Major-General Stuart, the famous Confederate cavalry officer, sung this hymn as he lay dying after the Battle of the Wilderness. Of many other death-beds this hymn has been the solace and the crown.

The story is told of a Chinese woman who, for the purpose of "making merit" for herself with her heathen gods, had dug a well twenty-five feet deep and fifteen in diameter. She was converted, and a traveler speaks of meeting her when she had reached the age of eighty. She was bent with age, but she stretched out her crippled hands toward her visitor, and began to sing;-

Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling.

The noblest incident connected with this hymn is related of the celebration of the fiftieth year of the reign of Queen Victoria. On this occasion there came an embassy from Queen Ranavalona III., of Madagascar, and in the company was a venerable Hova, who expressed the desires of his people for the prosperity of the Queen, and then asked permission to sing. It was expected that he would render some heathen song, but to everyone's amazement he burst forth with

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.

It was a striking proof of the power of Christian missions.

"Rock of Ages" was often sung by the Armenians at Constantinople during the terrible massacres.

The hymn is given as Toplady wrote it, and it will be seen that it is often mutilated in our hymn- books. The second line of the last stanza is generally written: –

When my eyelids close in death.

Toplady's line refers to an old belief that, when a person dies, the "eyestrings" snap.

As to the thought of "Rock of Ages" it probably sprung from the marginal translation of Isa. 26: 4: *"In the Lord Jehovah is the rock of ages"* but Toplady doubtless combined that with such passages as *"I will put thee in a cleft of the rock"* (Exod. 33:22), *"Enter into the rock"* (Isa. 2:10), and *"They drank*

of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10:4).

Toplady wrote 133 poems and hymns, but nearly all are forgotten except this. One other, however, is – a hymn of great beauty, and is – cherished by many Christians:

Inspirer and Hearer of prayer,
Thou Shepherd and Guardian of Thine,
My all to Thy covenant care
I sleeping and waking resign;
If Thou art my shield and my sun,
The night is no darkness to me;
And fast as my moments roll on
They bring me but nearer to Thee.

Augustus M. Toplady.

PSALM 51:1-3

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

HEBREWS X. 23-25.

"LET us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering (for he is faithful that promised;) and let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching."

A member asked us about six months ago to write using as our subject the words: *"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is."* This member having observed some whose attitude towards attending their meetings seemed of more or less secondary consideration was rightfully deeply concerned. It is a matter which calls for self-examination on the part of each and every member of every true Old School Baptist Church throughout our entire country. The life of each member of the visible church should be as a lighted candle placed on the candlestick; it should not be put under a bushel, or submerged beneath the things of this world, all of which do but perish with the using. The kernel, or substance of the teaching of our Lord and Savior, both by word of mouth and the life that he lived while here in the flesh, was *"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness;*

and all these things shall be added unto you." In that great and wonderful address, his sermon on the Mount, the place where he had gone apart from the multitudes, when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his month, and taught them, saying, ***"Be not ye therefore like unto them [the heathen]: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him."*** How prone we are to forget that the hand of Providence supplies our temporal needs. We have to be reminded from time to time that the gold and the silver are his; that the cattle which graze upon a thousand hills are the Lord's; yea, the world and all that in it is, and that it is he who clothes the lilies of the field, whose hand feeds the lone sparrow upon the housetop; and, if not a sparrow can fall without him, will he not give his children bread? The great apostle declares in our text that he is faithful that promised. Do we really believe and act out the belief that the Lord is our shepherd? The good Shepherd will surely provide for his sheep; he will cause them to lie down in green pastures and lead them beside the still waters. But, those of us who profess to love the Lord in sincerity and in truth, are we holding fast the profession of our faith without wavering Do we show by a well ordered walk and godly conversation that we are the Lord's, or is our service only of the lip? Is it consistent to say, Lord, Lord, in the meetinghouse and then engage in worldly conversation and jesting until meeting time again? Do we live daily so as to prove that we have been with and learned of Jesus and that our treasure is in heaven? How searching and solemn should these questions be. And do we consider one another to prove unto love and to good works? The apostle says we should do these things. Jesus said, ***"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."*** What was under consideration was, ***"I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me."*** These things are accomplished among the saints when they are assembled together and communicating one with another, as those who receive can well testify, even though those who give or minister are unaware of it. The servant which Abraham sent to take a wife unto his son, Isaac, went questioning and praying, but when he was convinced that the Lord had prospered his journey, ***"he bowed down his head, and worshipped the Lord,"*** saying, ***"Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." "I being in the way,***

the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." This deserves to be repeated again and again. Only those who have been in the way and have experienced it know of a truth the joy which is inexpressible and full of glory that is witnessed by those who are raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord. Such characters were said to have been quickened, made alive; their affection was set on things above, not on things on the earth, and they were seeking, yea, as for hidden treasure, those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. The psalmist said, *"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."* Where such scenes are beheld there is no lack of the brethren assembling themselves together; meeting time does not come too often, but rather it seems Sundays are too far apart, even when they are privileged to have meeting every Sunday. Is not the true test of the fruit and provoking unto love and to good works? Let us pause for a moment and analyze the definition of the word "consider." Does it not mean that we are constantly, yea, every waking moment, as it were, thinking good concerning those we love and endeavoring in every way to show them kindness and manifest our affection? Such provokes unto love and to good works, for love begets love, and the brethren would do well to remember this and bridle their tongues lest they poison the mind of one another against a brother, at the same time walking so as not to offend a weak brother.

Paul says, *"Let us [the household of faith] consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is."* So we are not only told what to do, but what not to do, thus showing that the holy Scriptures, which were given by inspiration of God, throughly and thoroughly furnish unto all good works. While the manner of some is indifference, coldness, walking in the course of this world, the riches whereof choke out the good seed, the exhortation is not to be as they are, but rather to live righteously, soberly, to visit the fatherless and the widows and to keep ourself unspotted from the world. This, James says, is pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father. Old Baptists of all people, need to study to show themselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. They should search the Scriptures, to know what they teach, both as to doctrine and order, which go hand in hand. David said, *"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful: but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his*

law doth he meditate day and night." It is truly good to think and talk upon the things of the upper kingdom. One said, *"My heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue, Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am."* We often think of a band of brethren, three churches composing an association, where they have no regular pastor or minister, only a visitor usually once a year, and yet these brethren are very much alive; they assemble themselves together and talk and sing of the things of Jesus; the theme of their conversation is truly heavenly, and the Lord is wonderfully blessing them with an outpouring of his Holy Spirit, which has been evidenced by an ingathering of twelve during the past three years. This is referred to by way of encouraging churches that may be without under shepherds or supplies. By way of contrast, we would also call attention to another band of most lovely brethren, among them being (we think) a gifted brother, and yet they seldom meet. Is it not a mistake? Are they not forsaking the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is? This the apostle says they should not do. These things are referred to for the earnest consideration of the brethren. We like to see the brethren holding fast the profession of their faith without wavering. We can never tell what time or by whom the Lord will send a message. It is not always necessary for one ordained of men to be present. At best man is but an earthen vessel and the Lord must fill the mouth before it can speak forth his praise, and *"God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform."* Therefore let us be found in the way; who can tell but what the Lord will lead us to the house of our Master's brethren? Let us be found assembling ourselves together, exhorting one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching. If we rightly discern *"the Signs of the Times,"* there is no mistaking that these are the days prophesied of *"when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."* It is the time when God's called and qualified ministers should *"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine."* The true soldier must stand his ground and meet the enemies of truth; he must put on the whole armor of God that he may be able to stand the wiles of the devil. The warfare in which he is engaged calls for the helmet of salvation, the breastplate of righteousness, the girdle of truth, the shield of faith, and his feet to be shod with the preparation of the gos-

pel of peace, for the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; it is not by might, nor by power, *"but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."* Let us, therefore take "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," and go forth to victory. If we are ever brought forth more than conquerors it will be through him that loved us and gave himself for us. This is that *"new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh,"* that the apostle is writing to the Hebrews about in the chapter wherein is found our text. He begins his epistle by saying, *"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son."* He was the true substance of all the law had shadowed forth. It was not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin, so the Lamb of God was slain from the foundation of the world, in the purpose of God, as a propitiation for the sins of his people and by this *"one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."* This is all our hope and we are determined not to know anything *"among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."* Jesus said, *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life."* Again, *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber."* God forbid that we should be as Ananias and Sapphira, who *"kept back part of the price."* There are those in the world to-day who are professing to love the Lord with all their heart, &c., who declare boldly they have forsaken the world for the *"pearl of great price,"* and almost with the same breath contend that only eternal salvation is of God, and that salvation in time is of men. In the apostle Peter's day those who were guilty of such had to give up the ghost and were carried out and buried. These are perilous times and there are many who are departing from the way of the Lord, but the faithful in Christ Jesus will not be found among the number, they are to hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering. Therefore let the pastors be ensamples to the flock over which God hath made them... the overseers; let them be faithful in doctrine, in order, in practice, and shun not to declare unto them all the counsel of God. Likewise, members, be faithful in holding up the hands of your servant; support him in the manner set forth in the Scriptures and encourage him by your presence at meeting; let it be seen that you do delight in the law of God after the inward man. We can speak feelingly from experience and say that we thank God continually for having surrounded us with faithful brethren, who have not forsaken the assembling of themselves together.

Many, many times have we wondered that they should continue to come out, but therein their faithfulness has been manifested. We do not know how we could have gotten along thus far without them. Surely God has been better to us than all our fears. May he give us all to walk. worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Finally, brethren, Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhort one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching.

Elder R. Lester Dodson

MEETINGS

NEW DAN RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

New Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, located in Patrick County, Vesta, Virginia, purposes to hold a fifth Saturday meeting, the Lord willing, on May 29, 2010. The meeting will start with singing at 9:30am and preaching at 10:00am. The church is located on State Road 636 (State Shed Road) off US 58, approximately 3 miles east of the Blue Ridge Parkway and 12 miles west of Stuart, Virginia. We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially we would invite all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder J. L. Cassell, Pastor
James L. Shelor, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union meeting will be held at Canaan Primitive Baptist Church located on Mt. Cross Road (Route 844) in Pittsylvania County, VA on the Saturday before the 5th Sunday in May. Singing will begin at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30.

We invite our correspondents and visitors to the meeting.

Elder Mark Terry, Moderator
Fred Murphy, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 2010

Jean Moran, NC	5.00
Phil Pittman, TX	10.00
JoAnne Self, NC	5.00
Banks Conner, VA	25.00
M.L. Richardson, FL	5.00
B. Smith, VA	15.00
C.B. Richardson, VA	5.00
Anne Pearson, MI	10.00
Marie Vest, VA	5.00

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SONG

My soul lies cleaving to the dust;
Lord, give me life divine;
From vain desires and every lust
Turn off these eyes of mine.

I need the influence of thy grace
To speed me in thy way,
Lest I should loiter in my race,
Or turn my feet astray.

Does not my heart thy precepts love, And long to see thy face ?
And yet how slow my spirits move
Without enlivening grace!

Then shall I love thy gospel more,
And ne'er forget thy word,
When I have felt its quickening power
To draw me near the Lord.

Watts.

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EDITORIALS

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." Romans 11:25-27.

Elder J.B. Farmer

As with all Spiritual things, the truth in the above quoted scripture is in a mystery. To be in a mystery means to me that no one is able to understand it because it is hidden from all men, even the elect, until it pleases God to lift the veil and reveal His things to His own as it pleases Him. This puts everyone in a weak place, and there we all must remain. But we are taught that, ***"His strength is made perfect in weakness."*** How wonderful it is that God has fixed things so that no flesh can glory in His presence, even though the flesh tries so hard to do just that. If we begin to think we know something of ourselves, we become puffed up and begin to boast in the flesh. And we show just what kind of mind we are in, to our own shame and confusion of face. May God humble us and cause us to look to Him for all things to the praise of the glory of His grace. May God give us the understanding we need for edification and comfort, and may all things work together for the good of His little ones and for His honor and praise. May He cause us to ***"earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints."***

The beloved apostle Paul, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, wrote to the saints at Rome concerning the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. The

Romans in large part were Gentiles, although some Jews were there. Paul was given to explain many things to them that had been kept hidden for ages concerning the relationship of the Jews to the Gentiles in Jesus Christ and also their relationship to one another. It is evident throughout the scriptures that the Jews were God's chosen people. Most of the prominent people of the Old Testament were Jews. But most of the people with whom we have fellowship these days are Gentiles. Considering these things, several questions come to mind, which no doubt came to the mind of the Romans also. Since God primarily revealed Himself to His chosen people, the Jews, for thousands of years, how and where do the Gentiles fit in? Are the Jews still separate from the Gentiles, and have they a separate leading of God? Or have the Jews and Gentiles been brought together into one fold with one Shepherd?

We know that the worldly religions are agreeing together and are separating the Jews and the Gentiles in their teachings, which appear to me to be based upon carnal reasoning. They teach that God will deal one way with the Jews and another with the Gentiles. They are, I am made to believe, falsely teaching that the present believers (primarily Gentiles) will be soon secretly caught away from the earth, and then they say there will come a great tribulation to those remaining upon the earth, which they say will be followed by all of national Israel believing, which they say will be followed by a thousand year reign upon earth of Christ with the believing Jews and Gentiles. This false teaching, as it appears to me, has become increasingly popular with the worldly religions since it was first introduced. Now it seems to be almost universally believed among them. And from time to time it has even appeared among the Old Baptists.

But God's servants are not allowed to rely upon men's reasoning, or upon men's teaching for an understanding of Spiritual things. They are made to wait upon the Lord, and to individually beg to Him for wisdom and understanding, even if others hold them in low esteem for not consenting to or agreeing with man's scholarship. They are considered to be ignorant and are evil spoken of falsely for the truth's sake. The prophets and the apostles, and even those we have known who have gone before us had to regularly suffer such abuses that God might glorify Himself in them. It is necessary for God's people to suffer with Him if they are to reign with Him. There must be a fiery trial of their faith in order that God should be glorified through His miraculous keeping of them against all the forces of the devil. And they shall be kept by the grace of God. The apostle Peter was blessed to assure God's little ones that they ***"are kept by the power of God through faith unto***

salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Peter 1:5.

The blessed apostle Paul explained to the Gentiles the true relationship between the Jews and the Gentiles so they would not be puffed up against the Jews. It is plain from the scriptures that some of the Jews were the first people that were given faith in Christ. It is also plain that many of the Jews were not given that same faith. So, it was only a remnant of the Jews according to election that believed. It is also plain that as some of the apostles were sent to the Gentiles, many of the Gentiles believed in Christ. It is also plain that the majority of the Gentiles did not believe. So the same was true of the Gentiles as was true of the Jews – those that believed were only a remnant according to the election of grace. So it has always been. It has always been a little flock, a little city, a few, or a remnant that has been saved by the grace of God through faith, which is the gift of God.

This scripture seems to be central to the subject at hand. The apostle said, ***"blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved."*** It seems that this scripture commonly has been misinterpreted to say that in the end of time the whole nation of natural Israel shall be saved. But I have been made to believe that the true spiritual understanding is this: blindness in part is happened to [natural] Israel, until the fullness of the [Spiritual] Gentiles be come in. And so [in this way] all [Spiritual] Israel [composed of both believing Jews and Gentiles] shall be saved. I am made to believe that *all Israel* mentioned here is the whole household of faith including Jew and Gentile, which is Spiritual Israel. It seems apparent that the truth of this is also shown in many other places in the scriptures. In one place the Lord Jesus Christ said, ***"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; then there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." John 10:16.*** There were some of God's little ones, who were Gentiles, outside the Jewish fold when Christ said this. It seems plain, according to His own words, that He would bring both Jew and Gentile together into one fold of believers having one Good Shepherd.

Paul agreeably said to the Gentiles by the Spirit, ***"Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of***

Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace unto you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Ephesians 2:11-19. Jesus brought the believing Gentiles into the covenants of promise with the believing Jews. He broke down all barriers between Jew and Gentile. He made both Jew and Gentile one new man and made peace with both and reconciled both unto God and gave both access unto the Father by one Spirit, and made them fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God.

The same apostle said by the same Spirit to the Gentile Galatians, ***"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Galatians 3:27-29.*** According to the inspired apostle, the believing Jews now are not separated from the believing Gentiles. Not only is there no consideration for national heritage, there is no distinction made for earthly status, and not even for gender. They are all one in Christ. In Christ, both Jew and Gentile are considered together to be the seed of Abraham and heirs according to the promise. It is no wonder that it is written, ***"In Isaac shall thy seed be called,"*** since Isaac was the child of the promise. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, one fold and one Shepherd.

I am aware that the world hates the doctrine of the ***"one fold and one Shepherd."*** I have heard them throw off on the doctrine of the one fold as if it were something new. They called this teaching a ***"devilish doctrine."*** And they called it a ***"replacement theology."*** They said those who believe that the Old Testament promises spiritually apply to the church of Christ have wrongfully replaced the Jews with the church as the recipient of the promises. They take the promises of God to Israel literally, and that is why I believe they will not allow the Old Testament scriptures to be spiritualized. I am made to believe that they reject the true doctrine because it contradicts their false positions and their

carnal thinking. It opposes their false teachings concerning all the Jews being saved in the last days, and their false ideas about the so-called "rapture" of the saints. It also kills their false ideas of Christ's supposed earthly rule for a thousand years. It seems apparent that their doctrine prepares them to follow the man of sin, who is the antichrist, when he is revealed on the earth, claiming to be Christ, at the last time. May all God's children be delivered from darkness to light, for none of us know anything of ourselves.

It seems sure that the scriptures, both Old Testament and New Testament, were written to Spiritual Israel, which to me means all those that are in Christ – both Jew and Gentile - which are Spiritually Abraham's seed. Jesus said concerning the scriptures, ***"They are they which testify of me."*** I am fully assured that all the Old Testament is not only a history of the Jews, but also a veiled testimony of Christ and His kingdom and His people. Those to whom God has revealed His truth from time to time are given to see behind the veil and rejoice in the wonderful works of God and His precious promises to them – His one fold, which is composed of both Jews and Gentiles. How wonderfully rich and full are the Old Testament scriptures as they spiritually, in types and shadows, point to the coming of Christ and manifest the details of what He has done for His people, spiritual Israel. But the carnal mind seems to take many of the promises of God literally and apply them to natural Israel instead of the church. The answer of the whole matter to me is that one may only believe what he is given to believe, whether it is the spiritual truth or only a natural interpretation of the scriptures. In the Spirit, one believes the truth, and in the carnal mind one sees only natural things. May God keep His own by the Holy Spirit in the way of truth.

It is necessary for false teachings to be brought to the attention of the church periodically. Paul said, ***"For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be manifest among you." 1 Corinthians 11:19.*** And he also said, ***"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Acts 20:28-30.*** Carnally minded men have through the years brought in false doctrine in order to draw away disciples after themselves. They desired a following and desired to be lifted up above others, no matter what injury was caused to the flock

of God in the process. And Jesus said, *"It must needs be that offences come, but woe be to that man by whom the offence cometh." Matthew 18:7.* It truly is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. The ones kept of God are made to look to Him for all their needs. Those whom God has called into the ministry are tried every moment and made to examine themselves to see whether they are truly in the faith once delivered to the saints. They are given the food with which to feed the flock of God. It is much the same as when the disciples were given the loaves and fishes, which Christ blessed and broke and multiplied and gave to them to deliver to the multitudes that sat by. The disciples could only pass on what they were given. They had nothing of themselves. On the other hand, those of the contrary part through the ages have presented perverse things not given by Him, and have caused confusion and division. But there is a cause, which is *"that they which are approved may be manifest among you."* May God be praised in all things.

These are deep and wonderful things to me. May the Lord God lead and guide and teach His people the truth and may He reveal Himself to them and cause them to grow in grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ the Lord. May we be enabled to acknowledge Him in all our ways and may He direct our paths. May He deliver us from error and cause us to speak the truth in love. I fully believe what is set forth here is true, but I hope that any of God's little ones who may read this will be given understanding to examine whether this is the true doctrine of Christ or not, and that they will be given to cleave to that which is true and reject anything which might be false. Our God knows all things, even our hearts. If enabled, please remember me before the throne of God.

I trust that this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

J.B. Farmer.

PSALM 9:12-15.

When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them: he forgetteth not the cry of the humble.

Have mercy upon me, O Lord; consider my trouble which I suffer of them that hate me, thou that liftest me up for the gates of death:

That I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation.

The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken.

CORRESPONDENCE

Sorry I'm a little late. Enclosed is my payment for the Signs of the Times.

We don't have a church close by to go to church. The Signs of the Times have been enjoyed for several years to us.

Sincerely,
Jerry Morgan

I really did enjoy this month's Signs of the Times seems they get better all the time. I especially enjoyed the one Elder Cleo D. Robertson wrote on ***"The Birth of Christ."***

It brought back some special good things that came to me many years ago. So special I felt it was too good to be told yet I couldn't keep from talking to some and then I felt like I shouldn't because it sounded so much like bragging yet the Lord has been so good to me all the days of my life I have been through some rough times also because of the sins that so easily beset me, but I feel that whatever came my way was God's route for me to take. I believe that God has a travail for each one and it happens when and where he meant it to be but this one was told so well and I thank God for giving Elder Robertson the mind to put it into so many words of comfort.

I did not mean to get into this but I did, so I was supposed to, I need to let you know that I will be moving with my daughter in Danbury, Ct. in April - and as she also takes the Signs of the Times, you could just send one to us and send the other one to someone else who loves the Signs. Thank you for keeping this good book coming. Especially when they have no churh to attend which as far as I can tell will be our case. She doesn't know about a Primitive Baptist Church there. So many of our ministers have gone to meet the Lord, very few Old Baptists are with us these days.

Keep the good book coming and may God Bless all or your and when you are at your throne of Grace. Pray for a sinner like me.

Thank you,
Katherine Mathews

February 19, 2010

Dear Elder Key,

Enclosed is a donation to the "Signs of the Times" in memory of my beloved Aunt, Ruby McGuire who was a member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church before her passing in January.

She loved the "Signs of the Times" and being confined to a wheel chair and Nursing Home, this was the only means she had to enjoy her church doctrine. Thank you so much for providing her with this enjoyment.

I also enjoyed reading the "Signs" to Ruby each month, and I am enclosing a separate check as I would like to subscribe to the "Signs."

Thank you,
Esther Griffin
209 Buchanan St.
Eden, N.C. 27288

Feb. 27, 2010

Mr. Tony R. Horton
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, VA 24343

Dear Brother Horton,

I love receiving Signs each month. To open it is like having a cool clear drink of water. May the dear Lord bless each one who helps to get Signs out. And may He bless Elders, brethren and friends who write.

With love I hope to you and your family.

Reidy Pickral

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 5/10

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

VOICES OF THE PAST

GENESIS IX. 20-23.

"And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: and he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness."

DEAR KINDRED IN THE LORD: — My mind for some cause has been arrested by this portion of holy writ, and I humbly hope I have been given of the graciousness of my God to glimpse some *of* the sublime spiritual import, or essence, that it contains.

From scriptural authority I wish to say that this Scripture, nor any other portion, is spoken or used just merely to fill up space, neither does it cease to have its vital essence of meaning. For it is not declared that no Scripture is of any private interpretation, hence this Scripture did not have its meaning once, and then lose its essence, but what was true

anciently is just as true today. What is once truth never ceases to be truth. All Scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, reproof and correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God (not the man of the world) might be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work. Therefore I feel that the Scripture I have called your attention to yet holds its weight of meaning to the household of faith, to such as have had the eyes of their understanding enlightened.

If it be the will of the Lord to guide my pen and to create within me a clean heart and renew within me a right mind, I desire to notice a few things with reference to my subject, or text.

"And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard." We gather from this that Noah had not always been an husbandman. In Genesis vi. 8, we find this language: ***"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord."*** Notwithstanding that the earth was corrupt and filled with violence. Yet God in his mercy was pleased to elect, choose and give grace unto, and miraculously preserve in the ark, which was builded according to the pattern which the Lord did give, Noah and his wife, his three sons and their wives, and every beast, fowl and creeping thing after their kind, the clean and the unclean, in definite number, from the deluge which the Lord, in his righteous wrath, was pleased to bring upon every living thing wherein was the breath of life, with the exception of this choice, and the Lord shut him in. Did he not as freely, as righteously, shut all else out? Was it not surely destruction to all that were shut out, as it was salvation to such as were shut in? Is there ground here for the doctrine of free will? Nay, nay, a thousand times nay. Did not the Lord command and bring it all to pass? And was he not glorified, or honored, in both the destruction and the salvation? Of the union that prevailed in the ark, of the holding in check, or restraint, of the various natures of the creatures that were housed in the ark, the clean and the unclean, do not feel that I have the time or space to take up this phase, or portion, at this time, further than to say that God was there. While I do most earnestly believe the ark to be a type, or figure, of the church, I feel also that a careful examination of the types and figures as recorded here in Genesis proves positively the effects that discriminating grace has in the taming of the wild, yea, even the fierce and ferocious, to the extent that the lion did not prey upon the lamb, the elephant did not, tramp out the lesser beasts or creeping things. This is what their nature would suggest. I refer you to the sheet that was let down to Peter. Also, the pen of inspiration did record that in a great house are vessels of honor and vessels of dishonor; vessels of wood and vessels

of stone, etc. The unclean were just as surely preserved in the ark as were the clean, and while I have just briefly hinted along this line, I would love to come more directly to the subject matter to which I have called your attention. During all the time while the deluge of waters was on, while Noah was safely housed and shut in the ark by the hand of the Lord, I fail to observe the slightest reference that Noah began to be a husbandman there, or that he planted any vineyard at that time. But rather we find proof abundant that the Lord alone was husbandman, and that his vineyard (the inmates of the ark) he did well keep, preserved them, shut them in. Not until the waters had abated, and Noah and all that were with him in the ark had gone forth from the ark, had got back on the ground once more, the very element from which he was formed, do we find that he began to be a husbandman, and since it is said that he planted a vineyard we must of necessity conclude that he was in a place, or position, exactly suited to the planting he made. And as it is declared that Noah planted this vineyard I am of the opinion that this is a clear representation of the effort and works of the creature, and no doubt there were plantings of various kinds, such as creature efforts, duty religion, acting faith, trusting in the arm of flesh, and such like, all such as man can plant and such as thrive in such ideal ground, and such as yield and bear heavy crops of fruit in the eyes and estimation of men. But, dearly beloved, note the dire effects to Noah (the preacher of righteousness). After a harvest of the fruit of this vineyard had ripened, and been pressed and undergone the necessary stages of fermentation he became drunken from this very wine. A very similar likeness to that poor man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho who fell among thieves, etc. *A* man's enemies are they of his own house' (bosom). But thanks be unto God, Noah was uncovered within his tent, which implies that he, like Jacob like Abraham, had no lasting abiding place of habitation. A tent, naturally, literally being only a temporary place of habitation, bespeaking that he, like Abraham, was a pilgrim and a stranger in the earth, and here he had no continuing city. Oh, dear tried pilgrims, how many times have we, like Noah, planted our vineyard and become drunken from the vine of our planting. But oh how different the effects of the wine of His vineyard, God's vineyard, the wine of the kingdom. This wine never makes one drunken, but revives the weak, renews the faint, rescues him that is ready to perish, quenches the thirst of him who is delivered from the pit wherein is no water. But here we come to a different phase of the subject, and oh for grace to rightly divide the word. I wish to state right here that Ham was as much the son of Noah, was as much a vessel of mercy as Shem and Japheth were,

but most certainly was actuated by a different spirit. Ham, as I feel, being imbued with that holier than thou spirit, which is fleshly and degrading, was just in a right condition to not only see his father's nakedness, but also to tell it to his two brethren without, no doubt so blinded by this vain fleshly zeal until he felt quite certain that this was the right and proper procedure. At least this is what the flesh suggests, to tell it to the brethren without, without gospel procedure in an earnest endeavor to cover up the nakedness of the offending one with that mantle of love or that covering of esteeming others better than self. But Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward and covered the nakedness of their father, and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness. Those two brethren were; actuated by the law of love, brotherly kindness, bound together in it, thus producing unison of action, moving them backward with that garment of love (charity) which forgiveth all, went backward in their experience to the time and place where they were weighed in the balance and found wanting, made to see the beam in their own eye, made to review where grace divine revealed to them that they were helpless, undone sinners in the most holy sight of God, therefore their faces were backward and they saw not their father's nakedness.

In conclusion, let me say that the curse was placed on Ham's son, Canaan, which represents that fleshly begetting, or offspring of the flesh.

H. J. BIRD.

Elder Griffin's first article published in the "Signs" 1928.

"AMAZING GRACE"

"Amazing grace, (how sweet the sound,)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."

I have many doubts and fears that I have ever had grace made known to this vile and sinful heart of mine, and often fear I have been deceived and am deceiving the precious saints, and that my trust in the saving grace of Jesus is only a vain imagination of a vile and sinful heart. It is true that at one time I was as profane and wicked as it seems I could be, and that something did burden me, but a great deal of the time I fear that it was only my own imagination. A very few times in my poor life it seemed when under the sweet preaching of God's humble servants that I have been lifted up, as I hope, from the valley and my mind taken away from the perishable things and placed on Jesus. Just a

glimpse of his lovely presence when darkness comes again and I am made to doubt more than ever. But, dear ones, as fleeting as my little star of hope is, it is my all in all. It is my prop and stay while struggling here below, and as much as I am made to doubt I would not give the little hope that dwells in my poor aching bosom for all this world and its riches. Precious readers, I know that if Jesus ever did manifest himself to me that it was amazing to my poor burdened soul, and oh how sweet it seemed. If the Lord ever has found me, it was wonderful indeed, because I was the most sinful wretch that ever lived (and am yet) and it could not have been justice to display to me *"Christ and him crucified,"* but only his mercy. Surely, surely I was lost, and oh so blind. I believe I felt as secure as anyone; not a single trouble ever rolled across my breast. I loved to boast that I was as good as anyone, and I firmly believed that after I had had all the good times that go with youth I would turn to God and live a christian life. I held to that belief and I practiced it as fully as anyone ever could. I cursed much and it did not bother me at all, until in the spring of 1924. I am as unable to tell why it left me as I am to tell why, if not deceived, that God should manifest his everlasting love toward the chiefest of sinners. If, as I hope, the Lord did remember me on Calvary's cross, I was blind for some time (and still doubt whether I see or not) about the Bible. I was in a conditional country and they taught me that if I would join *"the church"* the Lord would bless me bounteously. They taught me that God was not limited in power and that he was a complete Sovereign, but they told me he did not work all things after the counsel of his own will, or, in other words, that the predestination of all things was not taught in the Bible, and that it was God dishonoring. I believed all this until I hope the Lord opened my eyes. I said the hardest things imaginable about the *"old absoluters,"* and it made me angry to tell me I believed what was to be would be. Even after I came back home and found they believed in predestination here, I was, as I thought, sorry I did not join while away. As time went on my burden got heavier and I began to read after some of the precious brethren who advocated predestination. The more I read the more I wanted to read and the more it all seemed to fit the little hope I possessed.

"Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

How consoling, dear reader, to know that you do not have your own way to make. It it not only grace that lifts your feet out of the miry clay and

places them upon firm ground, but it is grace that keeps them there. If poor weak mortals could keep themselves Christ's keeping would be useless, but if I were left to keep my own rambling feet I would not go wrong because I would already be wrong.

I started out to try and write upon predestination, but my thoughts are something I have never been able to control. For some time I have had the following words of Jesus on my mind, and try as I may I can't shake them off: ***"Father, the hour is now come." - John xvii. 1.*** If there was not another sentence within the lids of the Bible that sounded of predestination this one would be sufficient to prove there was a certain hour in which the crucifixion of the blessed Jesus was to take place. I am so ignorant and foolish (and as some people accuse us, unreasonable) as to believe he was put to death at an appointed and a fixed time. (Read Matthew ii. 45, and John xiii. 1.) If it was not a fixed time I am sure that it would have taken place much earlier. If it had been left to chance or ***"happen so"*** I verily believe that Herod's decree to slay infants would have left us without a Savior. It is useless to say that ***"good"*** men could have crucified the Lord. Since it was brutal and heinous to do this, what kind of characters did it take to do the work? Is it possible for men to say that the crucifixion of Christ was left to chance ? If so, then the salvation of the elect is left to chance, and if the salvation of the elect is left to chance then the coming of them into the world is left to chance and it is perfectly possible for not an elect to be saved. Away with such a thought! Inasmuch as God foreknew that Adam would fall he prepared before the world a ransom for sin. Since God foreknew that Adam would fall, it was a fixed thing for him to fall. (If, as some claim, he could have kept the law we could have been righteous until now.) Since it was a fixed thing for him to fall, it was a fixed ransom to redeem him from under the fall, and Christ proved that the sacrifice was to take place at a certain hour. Now let us go back to our question above: What kind of characters did it take to crucify Christ? We are all agreed that it was a brutal crime. If so, then they were brutal characters who crucified him. If it was predestination for the Savior to be crucified was it not predestination for these wicked men to do it? If one single act of it all was left to chance then that one act could make all of God's plans go wrong. But I believe that predestination was behind the whole plan from beginning of creation until time shall be no more. Nor do I like the word ***"permission."*** If you say that God permitted Adam to fall and Christ to be crucified, and all other events to take place because it is his will to do so, then that is all right, but if you just say that God permits, then add nothing, you leave us to think that he

permits just to be permitting. I do believe God permits things to come to pass, but because it is his divine will for them to do so.

When you have prayed for all others will you remember this poor burdened boy?

A poor beggar,
W. D. Griffin
KENNEDY, Alabama

"O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days."- PSALM XC. 14.

MANY of the dear children of God are tossed up and down on a sea of great uncertainty, doubt and fear, because they have not had sensible manifestations of Christ to their soul. He has not come into them in the power of his love; still they often say, ***"When wilt thou come unto me? O visit me with thy salvation; speak a word to my soul; it is thyself, and thyself alone, I want to hear, to see, and to know!"*** Now these are drawings of the gracious Lord, the secret beginnings of his coming, the heralds of his approach, the dawning of the day before the morning star arises and the sun follows upon his track. But when the Lord does come in any sweet manifestation of his presence or of his power, then he will abide where he has come, for he never leaves or forsakes a soul which he has once visited. He may seem to do so ; he may withdraw himself; and then who can behold him? But he never really leaves the temple which he has once adorned and sanctified with his presence. Christ is formed in the hearts of his people the hope of glory; their body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and Christ dwells in them by faith. Though we often mourn over his absence and do not feel his gracious presence as we would, still he is there, if he has once come.

J.C. Philpot

ISAIAH 58: 9-11.

Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity;

And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday:

And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.

MEETINGS

ORDINATION MEETING

Have you ever been lifted up from this world, together with a host of your brethren and friends, and blessed to soar on the wings of God's wondrous Love into the heavenlies? Have you ever witnessed the Power and Love of God permeating the atmosphere and filling each heart to overflowing with unspeakable joy and love? Have you ever been amazed with the sacredness and solemnity of each and every word spoken and act performed? Have you ever been in a meeting when it seemed that each and everyone who spoke was blessed to fitly speak the right words at the proper time throughout?

If not deceived, this was witnessed by the writer and those present at the Ordination Meeting held with Pleasant Hope Church near Atlanta, Texas, October 29th and 30th, 1955. This meeting was called for the purpose of ordaining Lic. Lloyd Wall, of Bivins, Texas to the officeship of elder.

This was truly an ordination meeting. It pleased the Lord to manifest His mercy and grace and make His power known throughout this meeting. The central theme throughout was the duties, qualifications, responsibilities, and importance of a god-called minister. No one sitting through this series of sermons could lightly consider the high and grave vocation of preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ and pastoring churches. This so impressed me that my constant prayer since has been, ***"Lord, qualify me for this exalted position and enable me to walk worthy of the vocation!"***

The appropriate climax was Sunday. Bro. Lloyd Wall was assigned to occupy the pulpit. He called upon Elder J. T. Everett to word the Introductory Prayer. Fitly spoken words stimulated by the powerful love of God flowed fluently from Elder Everett's mouth as he expressed thanksgiving to God for such manifestation of His loving kindness and earnestly beseeched the Lord for a continuation of His loving favors upon each and everyone especially to bless Bro. Lloyd Wall in his endeavor to speak in that trying hour. Bro. Lloyd Wall then arose and began giving an interesting account of his experience and call to the ministry. The Holy Spirit seemed to envelope him so that his countenance shined and his voice mellowed as he gave a detailed account of this wonderful experience. At the proper time he told how and when that his mother informed him that God had revealed to her before he was born that he would be a manchild and would preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.

When sufficient time had been

devoted to his experience and call to the ministry God blessed him to gracefully express his conscientious convictions and belief in the power and wisdom of God relative to the complete salvation of His people. He proclaimed that the wisdom of God was complete in eternity before time began, ordaining all things to fall out in their proper time and place so as to work together for good to them who are the called according to His purpose Bro. Wall was blessed to treat upon the fundamental principles of the doctrine beginning with predestination and closing with a full explanation of his belief and hope in the resurrection of these bodies into life immortal. When he finished speaking several minutes were used in making manifest the love, fellowship, and endorsement by the elders, deacons, brethren and friends present in clasping hands with Brother Wall.

When Brother Wall had taken his seat, we sang a hymn, and opportunity for membership was announced. Whereupon his wife, Ruby Wall, came forward asking for a home with the church. Amidst great rejoicing she was received as a worthy candidate for baptism.

I deem it proper here to insert some instances to prove that God was reigning in this affair and making manifest His providence. It pleased the Lord to make it known to a young son of a deacon that Sister Ruby would become a member of the church that day, before He revealed it to her. I quote two different conversations in order to prove this.

A little boy startled his parents at the breakfast table Sunday morning by saying convincingly, ***"Miss Ruby is going to join the church today."*** His parents inquired, ***"How do you know?"*** The little boy answered, ***"I dreamed it last night."*** Another conversation took place during the lunch hour at church. The baptism being scheduled so early in the afternoon my wife felt that Sister Ruby possibly came prepared for the baptism. She asked, ***"Ruby, did you bring your clothes, or will you have to go home for them?"*** Ruby answered, ***"I will have to go get them as I did not know I was going to do this."*** How mysterious is the working of God to prove that He is at the helm!

The elders and deacons present organized themselves into a presbytery to ordain Lic. Lloyd Wall to the office of elder immediately after Sister Ruby had been given the right hand of Christian fellowship. The ordination proceeded in an orderly manner including laying on hands and prayer, thus ordaining him to the full work of a gospel minister His father in the flesh as well as in the ministry, Elder T. A. Wall, calmly gave his son the grave charge including good advice and proper counsel relative to the walk and conversation becoming to a young minister, Elder T. A. Wall also warned his son of certain evils to be shunned and unpleasant experiences to be endured

as a good soldier.

At two o'clock the same afternoon Elder Lloyd Wall performed his first official act as an ordained minister when he led his wife, Ruby, down into the water and baptized her in the liquid grave. This was performed in such calm and graceful manner that it is agreed by all who witnessed that he performed as though he had baptized many.

I have assisted in the ordination of eight elders but this was the most inspiring and solemn occasion I have ever witnessed. Other young men are being brought into the ministry in this section by our God. He will not leave Himself without a witness. We shall not die. God has ordained that the true doctrine of salvation by grace through the merits of Christ will continue to be preached. Our enemies continue to say, ***"It will not be long until there will be none left."*** They wish it could be true but we CANNOT believe it.

E. J. Lambert

PSALM 57:1.

Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.

March 12, 2010

Good Morning Elder Key,

Hope this finds you well and in good spirits. Once again I want to say "Thank You" for your service and dedication to Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. We enjoy the Signs of the Times and look forward to our copy each month.

I have enclosed two ordinations, one being my husband, the other a very gifted young man from North Alabama.

Also a copy of a song that my Dad, Elder Milton J. Allen, wrote August 7th, 1979. Feel free to print any of this material.

A Little Sister in Christ, I Hope,
Wynette Allen Smith

Minutes of the Presbytery
of the Ordination of
Bro. John M. Smith
Saturday, October 18, 2008

At the request of Mount Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church of Dothan, Alabama, a presbytery met at Ramah Primitive Baptist Church in Cottonwood, Alabama, for the examination and ordination of Brother John M. (Micky)Smith.

All elders and Deacons present of our faith and order were formed into the presbytery:

Elders: Bro. Lloyd Simmons, Bro. R.H. Hale, Bro. Scott Sexton,

Bro. John Howard, Jr., Bro. Louie Hornsby, Bro. Ernest Brooks, Bro. Ben Roberts and Bro. Herb Hatfield

Deacons: Bro. Floyd Snell, Bro. John I. Smith, Bro. Robert Newsome, Bro. John Howard, Sr., Bro. Stacy Halverson, Bro. J.D. Jones, Bro. Donald Bass, Bro. R.Q.Carter and Bro. Roger A. Gregory

The presbytery organized itself by electing Elder Herbert Hatfield as moderator and Brother Roger Gregory clerk.

The moderator asked the members present from Mount Pleasant Church if they were still of a mind to proceed with the ordination of Brother Smith. The church answered in the affirmative and Deacon John I. Smith presented the candidate to the presbytery.

Elder Louie Hornsby was asked to open the presbytery with prayer. The moderator asked Deacon John Smith several questions concerning the character of the candidate and received satisfactory answers.

The moderator then began a question and answer session using the Articles of Faith from the Western Primitive Baptist Association as a guideline for questions. Many questions were asked of the candidate by the moderator and several members of the presbytery and satisfactory answers were given.

At the approval of the presbytery, the laying on of hands was performed and prayer was offered up by moderator, Elder Herb Hatfield. Elder Scott Sexton was appointed to deliver a charge to the candidate and did so with his text taken from I Timothy 3:1-7.

The right hand of fellowship was given to Elder John M. Smith by the members of the presbytery and a Certificate of Credentials was signed by all members of the presbytery.

All being satisfied Elder John M. (Micky) Smith was presented back to the church and the presbytery was dissolved. Elder Smith was then invited to speak, and he brought an encouraging message on the subject of "Love."

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Mountain Fork Primitive Baptist Church, Madison County, Alabama, a Presbytery met at Mountain Fork on Saturday, September 27, 2008, for examination of Brother John Howard, Jr., and if found qualified, to ordain him for the full work of the gospel ministry.

All Elders and Deacons present of our faith and order were formed into the Presbytery: Elders: R. H. Hale, Loyd Simmons, Herb Hatfield, David Mattingly, John Wingfield, Scott Sexton, Mike Stewart, Mike Rogers. Deacons: John Howard, Sr., Roger Gregory, Stacy Halverson, John I. Smith, Robert Newsom, John M. Smith.

The Presbytery organized itself by electing Elder R. H. Hale Moderator and Brother John M. Smith Clerk.

Elder David Mattingly was asked to open the Presbytery with prayer.

The Moderator asked if the church was still of a mind to proceed with the ordination of Brother John Howard, Jr. The church members answered in the affirmative and Brother John Howard, Sr. presented the candidate to the Presbytery.

The Moderator asked the candidate several questions concerning our faith and then asked the spokesman for the church several questions about the character of the candidate. Having received satisfactory answers to all questions, the Moderator then opened the floor to the members of the Presbytery. Elders Mike Stewart, Mike Rogers, John Wingfield, Herb Hatfield, R. H. Hale, and Scott Sexton asked questions and received satisfactory answers.

The Presbytery being satisfied, the laying on of hands was performed during the ordination prayer by Elder John Wingfield.

Elder Loyd Simmons was appointed to charge the candidate and did so with text from 1 Timothy 3: 1-16.

The right hand of fellowship was given to Elder John Howard, Jr. by the members of the Presbytery and a Certificate of Credentials was signed by all members of the Presbytery.

All being satisfied, Elder John Howard, Jr. was presented back to the church and the Presbytery was dismissed.

R. H. Hale, Moderator
John M. Smith, Clerk

"THAT LAND OF PURE DELIGHT"

We shall sleep, but not forever, there will come, a glorious dawn.

When our tombs, shall burst wide open, on the resurrection morn.

Then we'll all, go up to heaven, where the Son of God's the light;

We will sing, the song of Moses, in that land of pure delight.

In that great, celestial city , in that land, where comes no night,

We will sing, His songs forever, in that land of pure delight.

Yes we'll sing, the song of Moses, in our robes of spotless white,

Yes we'll sing, this song of Moses, in that land of pure delight.

On that great, and wondrous morning, when the saints, of God arise,

We'll be carried, to our man-

sions, far beyond, the cloudless skies.

There we'll walk, the streets of glory, which are all, of gold so bright,

Then we'll sing this song of Moses, in that land, of pure delight.

When we stand, before the judgment, and we see, God face to face,

We will hear the proclamation, you have won, the Christians race.

And now you'll sing, this forever, yes this song, that is so right,

Yes you'll sing, this song forever, in this land, of pure delight.

I hope to meet, you up in heaven, where the saints of God will dwell,

Where we'll sing, this song of Moses, and we'll never say farewell.

Yes, I hope to meet, you up in Heaven, where the happy, angels dwell,

Where we'll sing, this song forever, and we'll never say farewell.

Written by:
Elder Milton J. Allen
Opp, Alabama August 7, 1979
Submitted by:
Wynette Allen Smith

CONTRIBUTIONS

For March 2010

Donald Arrington, NC	5.00
John Smith, FL	10.00
J.D. Neely, AR	5.00
Graham Lovitte, NC	5.00
Frank & Polly Sizemore, WV	50.00
Lois Ferguson, VA	5.00
Billie Speir, LA	35.00
Livie Thompson, VA	5.00
Esther Griffin, NC	100.00
Elder Mark Terry, VA	5.00
Roland Allen, GA	5.00
J.M. Jones, NC	5.00
John Collie, NC	5.00
Jottye Newman, TN	35.00
Ruby Dyer, VA	5.00
Carmen Abernathy, NC	5.00

OBITUARIES

3/28/2010

Dearest Brother Kenneth,

Enclosed is Sister Rachel Wray's obituary for publication in the Signs. It was read at Pleasantville last first Sunday. I'm also enclosing a copy of the hymn, "His Mercy" which Sister Rachel was blessed to pen in 1951. I thought you might want to publish it in the Signs also.

May the Lord bless and keep you.

With much love and fellowship,
Mary

RACHEL PYRTLE WRAY

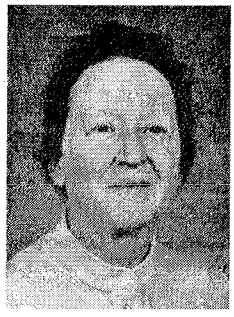
Sister Rachel Wray

Sister Rachel, our precious sister and mother in Israel, was taken from our midst on October 15, 2009. Her funeral at Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church was conducted by Elder Cleo Robertson followed by prayer at the cemetery by Elder Thomas Solomon. Left to mourn her are her husband of 68 years, Elder Haywood Wray; her son, Brother Philip Wray and wife, Vicki; two daughters, Linda Jordan and Marjorie Martin; one brother, Sam Pyrtle; three sisters, Dorothy Linden, Dixie Eaton, and Anne Pyrtle; five grandchildren, six great-grandchildren; and a host of dearly beloved brothers and sisters in Christ. Sister Rachel was born November 14, 1923 to Elder Dillard Pyrtle and Sister Grace Shepherd Pyrtle. We've often heard her humbly relate, *"We didn't have much of this world's goods, but Papa worked hard, and the Lord provided all that we needed."*

On April 12, 1941 Sister Rachel was united in marriage to Brother Haywood Wray in a marriage that was truly made in heaven. As young people, they both attended meetings, and the Lord blessed them to meet each other at church.

We believe that it was written in the will of God that they should be joined together spiritually as well as naturally. On Saturday before the second Sunday of November 1951, Sister Rachel asked for a home with Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church. At the water, on the following morning, Brother Haywood also asked for a home with the church. They were both baptized that day. That same month on November 7 in their home that Brother Haywood had built during the War, Sister Rachel was blessed with the words and the tune of a hymn entitled "His Mercy", which she hurriedly penned on paper bags, as she could not find paper on which to write. The first verse of that hymn:

"Oh the love that cannot die;
Does not weaken as time flies,
But is ever as a guide.
This is by His mercy,"

sums up the theme of her journey here on earth as each day brought her closer to that long sought joy of being with her Lord.

In May 1953, Brother Haywood was liberated to speak. Sister Rachel faithfully and lovingly, by the grace of God, filled the station of a minister's wife. We believe that she felt in her heart as the hymn writer penned, ***"The steps that I tread and the station I fill, My father determined and wrote in His will."*** She and Brother Haywood have been blessed for many years to travel and meet among the Lord's people. They've often been called on

to sing at funerals, which he conducted, two of her favorite hymns, *"Amazing Grace" and "Rock of Ages"*. Her lovely alto voice will be greatly missed in our meetings.

We thank our God that He blessed Brother Haywood to so tenderly care for Sister Rachel's every need in the last eight or nine years of her life as the disease of Alzheimer's took its debilitating toll on her natural mind and body. One, who wasn't intimately acquainted with Sister Rachel's demeanor and personality, would not have been able to discern the effects of this disease. Despite the fact that her natural mind was in the clutches of this disease to the point that she sometimes did not know Brother Haywood, her spiritual mind never wavered, and her love for her Saviour never diminished. She would often ask Brother Haywood to talk about the Good Shepherd, and he would as often as he was blessed to do so. Though she was unable to care for herself, she could often quote the remainder of a scripture that Brother Haywood was addressing and even comment and expound on it as well as sing the hymns of Zion. She never needed a hymnbook as the words and tune were etched in her spiritual mind and heart.

We believe, with all our hearts, that this was the work of God, and that she, even as her natural mind failed her, rendered praise unto her Lord. What comfort this is to us.

Just two hours before the Lord called Sister Rachel home, one of the writers was blessed to be with her and Brother Haywood and to witness the amazing grace of God in the life of our dear Sister. As she lay there unable to speak, upon hearing the first lines of *"Amazing Grace"* being softly sung, she softly sang those first two lines and perfectly carried the tune in the lovely alto voice, with which the Lord had blessed her to praise Him throughout her life. In sickness and in health, the Good Shepherd answered the prayer in the fifth verse of the hymn, she was blessed to pen:

"Hoping as I go along
In my heart to hear His song,
Sing His praises all day long
Telling of His mercy."

Our hearts go out to our beloved Brother Haywood and her family. May the Lord bless them to feel His everlasting arms beneath them, and may He bless them with the comfort that only He can give. For those of us, who have been so bountifully blessed with spiritual love and fellowship for Sister Rachel, may we be blessed to hold fast to the faith once delivered unto the saints, as she was so beautifully blessed to do. In all things may Christ "have the preeminence" for "holy and reverend is His name."

Humbly submitted by two who loved her dearly,

Mary Hawkins
Bob Collie

HIS MERCY

A hynm by:

Rachel Pyrtle Wray (Mrs. H.W.) (7776) November, 1951 R. P. W.

1. Oh, the love that cannot die; Does not weaken as time flies, But is ever as a guide. This is by His mercy.

2. By the streams and hills and dales, Where our shepherd tilled so well, Showing love that's not for sale; Shown in loving mercy.

3. Oh, these sheep still wandring home, Sometimes far away they roam. Sure He knows which are His own. That is by His mercy.

4. Oft I know that I have strayed, In my stumbling, wandering way, Knowing now it was His will. All is by His mercy.

5. Hoping as I go along, In my heart to hear His song,
Sing His praises all day long: Telling of His mercy.

6. Sweet it is, that song of grace, When He shows His smiling face; Thus the Spirit takes Its place. We are blessed with mercy.

7. There's the mercy seat I see, Where it was prepared for me. Tried by Thy ordained decree, I have found Thy mercy.

8. Help me do Thy will today. Keep me in this willing way, Giving me a heart to pray, Asking for Thy mercy.

9. There upon the mercy seat, Soul of mine heard music sweet. Precious was the Truth they preached, Knowing this by mercy.

10. Cast my lot, there at your feet; Love-filled tears you shared with me, Handshakes warm and smiles so sweet, Let us share His mercy.

God bless the singing of this hymn. Printed by a brother in Christ, Robert Lee, Turner - a Teaching Elder in the Smyrna and Wentworth Presbyterian Churches -P.O. Box. 25 Wentworth, N.C., For more free copies write the printer at above address 27375 or the author, Mrs. Haywood W. Wray whose husband is Elder Wray of the Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church near Reidsville - her address is: Mrs. H.W. Wray, Route 3, Box 387, Reidsville, North Carolina 37320.

The printer of the hymn gives these copies to the public in honor of the author and her husband, who have served so faithfully in the Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church, seven miles east of Madison, N.C. on highway 704; and in memory of the printer's mother, who was a member of Matrimony Primitive Baptist Church near Eden, N.C.

The poem on back to this folder is in honor of all Primitive Baptists, who depict in their kindly ways the feelings, the author of the poem believes, that are characteristic of Christians.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

Hillsville, Va. 24343

SONG

My business lies at wisdom's gate
Where needy sinners come;
And here I sue, and here I wait
For mercy's falling crumb.

My rags and wounds my wants proclaim,
And help from him implore;
The wounds do witness I am lame,
The rags, that I am poor.

My Lord, I hear, the hungry feeds,
And cheereth souls distrest;
He loves to bind up broken reeds,
And heal a bleeding breast.

His name is Jesus, full of grace,
Which draws me to his door;
And will not Jesus shew his face,
And bring his gospel-store?

Supplies of every grace I want,
And each day want supply;
And if no grace the Lord will grant,
I must lie down and die.

But, oh! my Lord, such news shall ne'er
Be told in Zion's street,
That some poor soul fell in despair,
And died at Jesus' feet.

Erskine and Berridge.

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EDITORIALS

THE SONG OF SONGS

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

The song of songs, which is Solomon's, Chapter 1, verse 1. Solomon was blessed to write a beautiful song describing the love between Christ and his bride, the church. This is a song sung not audibly from the words of a hymnal, but experienced in the hearts of his elect. To experience the love and mercy of the Lord causes your soul to sing forth his praises. The tears flow down your cheeks and you feel lifted out of this world of sin and sorrow as your very being is centered upon him. The words that we sing from our hymnals mean nothing unless the song of songs has been sung in our heart and soul. *Psalm 107:1-2, "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy."* Only the redeemed of the Lord have experienced his love and mercy and therefore, can say so. This is the song of songs, the song of grace.

John Newton experienced the song of songs in his own heart and was blessed to describe it in the following words:

Amazing grace (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the vale,
A life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine;
But God, who called me here below,
Will be forever mine.

Toplady also experienced the song of songs and wrote:

Nothing in my hand I bring!
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die!

Solomon wrote in verse 5, *"I am black, but comely,"* and again in verse 6, "Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me." The Lord, who is the light, looks upon a little child of grace and the light shines into every recess of the darkness of his or her soul. Nothing is hid from him who knows all things. All that we thought were covered are brought to light and we are shown what we are by nature and by practice. As recorded in the 22nd chapter of Luke, Peter, in the ignorance and arrogance and weakness of the flesh, told Christ, *"Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death."* Christ responded, *"I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me."* Peter indeed denied vehemently three times knowing Christ. But when the cock crowed, *"the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly."* The Lord did not just look at Peter, but rather looked upon him. That look penetrated to the very depth of Peter's soul. It showed Peter just how weak and black that he was. He experienced a godly sorrow as he went out and wept bitterly.

The law being spiritual, holy, just and righteous is a condemnation of death to us. For by the law is the knowledge of sin. By the law our sins abound to us so that all we see is our blackness of sin and our lost condition. O how could the Lord love one such as me and how unfit I am even to be among his people! We can only see the blackness of the

dust from which these earthen vessels are formed. We cry *"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"* But, there is a comeliness in the little child of grace that is not of the flesh nor the carnal nature of man. It is the spiritual life or the new creature in Christ which is Christ in one, the hope of glory. This new man after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Then in verse 10 Christ speaks to his love, his bride, and says *"Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away."* O my dear people, what manner of love is this! He addresses her in such a loving, precious manner. He acknowledges her as his love and describes her as his fair one, meaning that she possesses a beauty, the beauty of holiness. His beauty is manifested in her. *"Rise up and come away."* She was commanded to rise up from the cold state of condemnation and the darkness of unbelief and come away in the warm, comforting manifestation of his love and mercy. The song of songs was sung in her heart. She had asked her husband, Christ, where he feedest and where he makest his flock to rest at noon. Her beloved told her to *"go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents."* This is a little child of grace that the Lord directed to his flock where his ministers feed them with the gospel of Christ and there they find rest. Now the love of Christ is manifested as he tells her *"For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone."* The cold, dead, dark time under the law is over and gone. *"The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land."* It seems to one brought out of nature's darkness into his marvelous light that all of God's creation is praising him. This sets forth the resurrection from the dead state that every child of grace experiences under the law to a newness of life in Christ. A new day has come – the day of grace. II Corinthians 5:17, *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."* The flowers, singing birds and voice of the turtle are manifestations of a newness of life. During the winter, leaves on the trees die and fall off. Grasses die and turn brown. No flowers are blooming. The singing of birds cannot be heard. Only death can be seen. Now it is springtime and life appears as green leaves on the trees, green grass springing forth, flowers blooming and birds singing. Green is a sign of life. David wrote, *"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures."* The Good Shepherd makes his sheep to lie down in the pastures of his grace and feed upon the green grass of the

gospel. There are no works of the flesh there, only rest.

As a type of the Lord's people, the flowers blooming show forth his little ones manifesting the fruit of the spirit. There is indeed a beauty unmatched by anything of man in the flesh. When we behold one of God's elect who has experienced the song of songs, we see the beauty of Christ shining forth. His bride is as a lily among thorns in the world. The birds singing are as God's people singing his praises as the song of songs is sung in their hearts. They do not need song lessons because God tunes their hearts to sing his praises. As Isaiah wrote, ***"This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise."*** The voice of the turtle was heard in our land. I believe the turtle spoken of is the turtledove. The voice of the turtledove is never heard in winter, only in spring. It sets forth the children of God as they experience the newness of life and mourn over their sins, but praise God for his goodness and mercy. Their voices are only heard in our land, the land of the Lord's people who have experienced the song of songs.

He brings his bride to the banqueting house and the banner over her is love. There she feasts upon the bountiful table of his gospel. There are his wonderful, comforting promises such as ***"I will never leave you nor forsake you"*** and ***"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world"*** as well as ***"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."*** You are nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine as the Apostle Paul told Timothy. The banner over you is love signifying that you belong to Christ who is love. ***John 13:34-35, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."*** You are under the banner of love and thus protected and provided for. None can destroy you. The banner is that of Christ signifying that he is your defender when you encounter the battles of tribulations, afflictions and oppressions. The victory is his.

O, what a beautiful love song! This is an eternal love that had no beginning because God is love and he is eternal. God first loved his people before the world was created and nothing can separate one of his little ones from that love. That love is manifested to his children in time and that is when they experience love for him. Christ so loved his bride that he suffered and willingly laid down his life for her. He calls her his love and she calls him her beloved. There is no divorce in this

marriage. The world has no song that can compare with the song of songs.

Rejoice, the Lord is King;
Your God and King adore;
Mortals, give thanks and sing,
And triumph ever more!
Lift up the heart, lift up the voice,
Rejoice aloud, ye saints, rejoice.

Rejoice, the Saviour reigns,
The God of truth and love;
When he had purged our stains,
He took his seat above:
Lift up the heart, lift up the voice,
Rejoice aloud, ye saints, rejoice.

His kingdom cannot fail;
He rules o'er earth and heaven;
The keys of death and hell
Are to our Jesus given:
Lift up the heart, lift up the voice,
Rejoice aloud, ye saints, rejoice.

He all his foes shall quell;
Shall all our sins destroy;
And every bosom swell
With pure seraphic joy:
Lift up the heart, lift up the voice,
Rejoice aloud, ye saints, rejoice.

Rejoice in glorious hope,
Jesus the Judge shall come,
And take his servants up
To their eternal home:
We soon shall hear the Archangel's voice;
The trump of God shall sound, Rejoice.

In bonds of love,
Elder Cleo Robertson

ROMANS 1:15-19.

So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first. and also to the Greek.

For "therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall live by faith.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE HOUSE OF WORSHIP

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the House of the Lord." Psalms 122:1.

My soul leaped with joy from its fainted condition the other day when an Elder softly said to me, "Let us go into the house." I was within the city limits of one of the largest cities in our nation. Everyone on the streets and highways seemed to be in such a hurry. I was meditating upon the fact that things are so swiftly coming to pass that it is very difficult to believe such drastic changes are taking place I began to realize that I was so heavily involved in this great turmoil of swift and rapid events to such extent that my mind was in a whirl, my heart was troubled, and my soul was fainted; all because I could not keep up. What great relief of mind to enter upon the grounds of this house of worship and to be warmly invited into the house for the purpose of pausing in our hurryings to worship God. How good it is when you feel so cast down, unworthy, and unfit to be noticed by anyone, to hear them say, ***"Let us go into the House of the Lord."*** Aren't you glad that they even remember to invite you into such sacred place as the Place of Praises. Aren't you glad, also, that others have a desire to go into the House of Prayer and Praise.

Get your Bible and turn to the 122nd Psalm and read with us as we meditate upon some of the glorious expressions of the Psalmist. The second verse reads: ***"Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem."*** We recall that in Psalms 100 :4 it says, ***"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise."*** Jesus said, ***"ENTER ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."***

When I entered the door of this building and beheld such smiling peaceful expressions on the faces of those who so joyfully greeted me, I felt to be standing within the gates of the City of God with a number of its citizens. No one there needed to say to any other, ***"I love you."*** The love of God was so manifest in each and every face, word, handshake, and embrace that we all had a foretaste of Heaven. When we had settled down to singing hymns of thanksgiving to God even for the tribulations that had been ours to endure, I gazed at the open door through which we had entered. Then, I thought of the gates through which we had come to this place of joy and peace. I thought of the first gate that leadeth unto life, to wit:

tribulations. Peace, joy, and happiness cannot be experienced while in confusion, sadness and misery; but after being exercised by these tribulations, we experience the peaceable fruits of righteousness which are patience, faith, hope, love, and joy of life. *"Go through, go through the gates."* is an expression found in Isaiah 62:10. It must be through the gate of tribulations and persecutions that we learn to be submissive and to rely upon God for all things pertaining to God and godliness. This painful gate could be termed the gate of regeneration. You cannot climb over the wall to avoid this gate. If one gets into the position of indulging in special favors peculiar to the afflicted and poor people of God, this one would be classed as a thief and a robber. The walls are too thick to be penetrated; too high to be climbed over; and too strong to be overthrown. You must enter through the gate of tribulations which is the gate of regeneration. This is the evidence that brethren look for in listening to the experience of candidates for church membership. This being *"born again"* is manifest when their testimony proves that they have suffered to the extent of being brought into the knowledge of being unable to do anything of themselves to merit any blessing from God.

I went back into my experience and was given to relive for a moment the period in my life when it seemed the mountains of my many sins were crushing me to death. The gates of hell seemed to be opened unto me and that I was being swallowed into its clutches. Every straw to which I so greedily clung could not so much as slow down my descent into the depths of such horrible pit. I relived for a moment my cries out of the depth of hell. I remembered the groans, the fastings, and the awful miseries of hell itself with all the doors closed and locked fast. I could not open any door of faith or hope. How I did knock and seek and ask but I had no faith. I wept bitterly with no hope for mercy because my sins demanded that I should forever be in misery. While in this awful condition and after I had exhausted all of my strength and energy it pleased God in His gracious providence toward me to put it into the mind of one of my friends to invite me into a house of worship. He kept insisting against my wishes that I should accompany him to a place of worship to hear a certain minister preach. I had read the Bible: it had condemned. I had listened at preachers: they had condemned me. I talked to my close associates: they all thought I was crazy when I would tell them of my hopeless condition. I learned in the pit that God was sovereign and holy and that no man could come unto Him. I felt that I had blasphemed against God under the cloak of a gospel minister in declaring the power of man unto salvation to such extent that I could never have forgiveness here nor in the

world to come. This man who said unto me, *"Let us go to meeting,"* saw something in me that I could not see. This is why he kept insisting that I go. His care concerning my spiritual welfare astonished me. I shall forever be thankful to God for that man who kept insisting, *"Let us go to meeting."* I had thought that I knew how to read and interpret the Holy Scriptures.

God opened the second gate unto me when He opened the *"door of faith"* thru the preaching of the gospel of this minister that night. *"And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles." (Acts 14:27) "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching"* to set before me an open door. God opened this minister's mouth to preach this precious faith. God opened my heart to understand it. As soon as it was opened unto me I gladly went through it to such extent as to receive and embrace it with all my heart. I did not have to go to Heaven after it. I did not have to go across the seas and oceans to get it. You cannot open the door of faith yourself. It must be opened to you. Paul says, *"A great door and effectual is opened unto me." (1 Cor. 16:9)* When the door of faith is opened how devotedly we cling to the Lord Jesus Christ. The gate of faith being opened I saw the maneuverings of my Saviour. I saw Him come through the gate of Heaven. I saw Him descend toward the pit. I saw Him descend low enough to reach me who was the vilest of the vile. I saw Him wash me whiter than snow with His blood. I saw Him pay my penalty by His dying in my stead. I saw Him merit a home in Heaven for me with His life. I heard Him plead in my behalf before the Father. All of this led me to the door of Hope. In Hosea 2:15 we read of *" A door of hope."* On that memorable night for a fleeting time this gate of Hope was swung wide open and I was blessed to experience the entrance to that within the veil: *"Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." (Heb. 6:17-20)*

The opening of the gate of hope gave me to see that within the veil. The opening of the gate of faith gave me to believe in Jesus, the perfect and powerful Saviour of His people. The opening of the gate of hope gave me to trust that I was one of His people and that all of the ben-

efits He merited would be mine to experience in the future. These gates lead into the inner palace of the King. The most innergate, or door, must be the gate of Love. In the Song of Songs we read, ***"My Beloved put in His hand by the hole of the door." (Solomon 5:4)*** We read in Revelations. ***"After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven." (Rev. 4:1)*** When this gate of love is opened in Heaven to us our hearts overflow with this Love of God. Perfect love casteth out fear. O what joy, peace, and happiness we do experience as result of the foretaste of Heaven itself. It is too wonderful to tell. It is too much for poor earthly creatures to experience but for short seasons. I am made to believe that God has ordained these wonderful banquets of the King to be participated in most gloriously here in His banqueting houses of worship. God's children will travel thousands of miles to one of these banquets. God meets His people with the gifts of His love within these Houses of praises. Sometimes we hear the voices of angels coming from the mouths of men as we worship God together. While meditating in this meeting-house on the gates of tribulations, (or regeneration), faith, hope, and love, my question was, Are there any other gates? John gave me the answer in 1st John 4:16: ***"God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him."*** There is no gate beyond the gate of love.

When I came to the reality of my surroundings I felt that God had cemented everyone present in that congregation together so firmly with a heavenly mixture of grace and love that nothing could break fellowship. I felt that everyone there including the many young people were lively stones, made to be lively by the love of God and washed clean in the blood of the Lamb. I saw the manifestation of their labor of love as I gazed upon the newly finished walls, furniture, and fixtures of this House of Worship. I knew that it had taken many hours and dollars to bring this into reality. I said in my heart, ***"Thank God for such evidences of a God-loving people who will gladly sacrifice their bodies and earthly treasures in providing a meeting place for the members and friends to worship God together."*** Recall that the 3rd and 4th verses of the 122nd Psalms says: ***"Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together: Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord."*** A company of believers blessed to worship God in unison in prayer, praise, and preaching is a wonderful experience of being compacted together both in body and Spirit.

I saw the Heavens open unto me a book of remembrances of the testimony of God's love and mercy. I remembered the Ist Heaven which

was a paradise when the Lord first remembered me as related in this treatise. I called to remembrance the 2nd Heaven when a door was opened to me to be baptized and to be married to the particular church in covenant-relationship which holds to the Gospel Faith and Practice. I had been given the wonderful relationship to trust that God would providentially care for me and finally save me in that eternal abode because of His love and through the merits of Jesus Christ. Yet, I thought that I had so blasphemed His power to such degree that none would receive me into their fellowship here on earth. How glad I was when they received me and welcomed me into their fellowship. My joys in participating in the special privileges and ordiances allowed only to members of the church are considered as precious and sacred. Being caught up in the third Heaven for moments is enough foretaste to make me yearn to live there eternally with the redeemed of the Lord.

It is wonderful in this church relationship to be compacted together to mourn with those who mourn; to rejoice with those who rejoice: to be so united in affections one for the other that each one will be willing to make great sacrifices for the other ones' good. It is wonderful to be united in agreement upon religious beliefs. Being ***"Compact together"*** in love, belief, experience, and hope: all this causes a yearning to meet often together in worship of God for His benefits to us. All this causes the lovers of the truth to be glad when someone suggests, ***"Let us go into the House of the Lord."***

We go to the House of God in unison to give thanks for His wonderful works. We listen prayerfully as the minister of the Gospel gives testimony of the will of God, the word of God, and the simple commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ. The minister comforts us as he is blessed to speak of the sovereign God who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will. We experience a feeling of security as the minister brings testimony after testimony from the Holy Scriptures to prove that God's will of purpose is solely, wholely, perfectly, and completely worked by Him, to the praise of His own glory and to the completion of salvation of each and everyone of His children, without a hint of any jot or tittle of His will of purpose being disobeyed because He works it Himself; and, it embraces all times, events, words, thoughts, actions, and all creatures and things both visible and invisible. We are edified as the minister preaches the Word of God bringing a multiplicity of testimonies from the Book of books, proving that the will of God relative to the salvation of God's elect is because of God's great love for us through the merits of Jesus Christ, Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. We eagerly listen as the minister preaches to us

God's will of precept as he rightly divides the word of truth in warning the Lord's people of dangers and exhorting them to keep the commandments of Jesus, and to be fervent in charity.

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."

I wanted to praise Him publicly for His divine providence, amazing grace, gifts of the Spirit, His great love, and gospel of Jesus Christ. I wanted to participate in the ordinances of Jesus Christ and His Church. There are two kinds of extremists relative to public praise. One is the child of God who is fearful of man to the extent that he will not participate in public praise. The hypocrite will engage in public praise to be commended by men. The proper Christian is not fearful of the frowns of the world, nor is he a public worshiper in order to be commended by those who profess to be Christians.

David said, *"Give unto the Lord glory due unto his name: bring an offering and come into his courts."* You may ask, What shall we bring? Our strength will not help Him for He is all-powerful. Our wisdom will not direct Him for He is all-wise. Our God is so great that He does not require our wisdom to direct Him nor our power to assist Him. He owns all things; therefore, He does not require our wealth to enrich Him. He is so effectual in His works and so convincing relative to His greatness that He does not need our reputation to advance Him. What does He require of us? He requires us to fear Him because of His greatness, He requires us to love Him because of His goodness. *"What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits towards me?" (Psalms 116:12)* What offering shall I bring? The sacrifice that the Lord loves is a broken heart and contrite spirit. The word contrite means, bruised. Paul says, *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercjes of God, that you present your bodies as living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Romans 12:1)* God does not need our help in any way but we certainly need His strength and guidance in all of our affairs. It pleases Him that we are to help one another in word, deed, and prayer. Bring an offering of your material possessions for the support of the ministry, maintenance of house of worship, and the poor of the flock. The Scriptural rule for this is called an order to the churches which is plainly and simply stated in 1st Corinthians 16:1-3. (Read, if interested in giving according to rule.)

"I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving." (Psalms 116:17) I will thank Him for His deliverance from death; for His deliverance of me from the clutches of law and death; for His setting before me the open doors of faith and hope; and, for His love that flooded my

soul through the open door of Heaven. I will thank Him for Jesus Christ, my King, Saviour, Friend, Priest, Way, Truth, and Life.

When I come to the courts of the Lord and in the midst of His people, I pray that I will be given to remember my vows. May I be given to say as David when I am inside the place of worship: ***"I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all His people."*** David said, ***"God is the Lord which hath shewed us light: Bind the sacrifice with cords even unto the horns of the altar." (Psalm 118:27)*** Unless these instructions can be experienced, none of our sacrifices will be acceptable to God. All acceptable sacrifice is fervent constant confident devotion. That which binds is faith. Streams of God's love are the cords. The altar is Christ. Christ's merit and power are the horns of the altar. I find it to be more blessed to try and fail than not to try. I find that my conscience is more at ease when I go to the House of God and fail in my attempts at worship than when I fail to present my body. O that our people would more often say to their children, relatives, and friends, ***"Let us go into the House of the Lord."*** It is very encouraging to see parents bring their children to church meetings. A greater percent of our church meeting congregations are young people now than when I first united with the Primitive Baptist Church. Let us bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Let us teach them to obey their parents, speak, the truth, read good literature, to behave themselves conformable to high morals, and to respect the elderly. We know that it is God's work to regenerate and save eternally each and everyone of His people; yet, it is our obligation as Christian parents to discourage our children from becoming involved in religious organizations whose object is to work zealously to influence young minds to embrace their doctrines and practices: which you know to be false and erroneous. It is your duty to encourage them to consider the Bible as the Book of books worthy of their reading. It is your duty to encourage their attendance at the place where you go to worship. You consider your particular church of your membership as being more right in its doctrine and practices than any of the organizations whose main purposes are to convince the young and to convert them to their ideas and doings.

The minds of children are very easily impressed and they are prone to follow anyone who takes a great interest in them. Take care that your children be not as those referred to by David in his prayer: ***"Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood."*** May we do our duty and pray God: ***"That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth;***

that our daughters may be as cornerstones, polished after the similitude of a palace: that our garners may be full, affording all manner of store: that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets: that our oxen may be strong to labour: that there be no breaking in, nor going out: that there be no complaining in our streets. HAPPY IS THAT PEOPLE THAT IS IN SUCH A CASE; yea, HAPPY IS THAT PEOPLE, WHOSE GOD IS THE LORD." (Psalm 144:11-15) May we assemble ourselves together more often, and often say, ***"LET US GO INTO THE HOUSE OF THE LORD."*** MAY GOD BLESS YOU. AMEN.

Elder E. J. Lambert

A TREASURE OF HYMNS
Amos R. Wells

"GLORIOUS THINGS OF THEE ARE SPOKEN."
John Newton.

None of our hymn-writers has had a history so remarkable as that of John Newton, who wrote this noble hymn. He was born in London, July 24. 1725. His mother was a pious woman, who taught him the Catechism and many other good things; but she died when the lad was only six years old.

His father was a sea-captain, and could not supply the place of a mother. He took the boy to sea when he was eleven years old, and the young fellow learned to curse and blaspheme, and became very wild. After his father retired from the sea, the son made several voyages by himself. At one time he was forced into the navy, a war being expected, and he became a midshipman. But he was very restless and he deserted, was caught, stripped, whipped severely, and degraded to the ranks.

By this time he had become a thorough infidel, and was steeped in all kinds of sin. He fell into the hands of a slave-trader in Africa, and suffered all manner of hardships there, being continually insulted and almost starved. Delivered providentially from that terrible situation, after many strange and hazardous adventures he became a slave-trader himself, and made several voyages to Africa in that shameful occupation.

The reading of Thomas a Kempis, the fearful experiences of a storm at sea in which his ship was almost lost, his deliverance from a severe fever in Africa, these, and other experiences, at last awoke in the sinful man the memories of the religion his mother had taught him, and he turned from his sins with true repentance.

His conversion was so complete that he became a minister of the gospel. This was in 1764, when he was thirty-nine years old. He settled in Olney, England, and there it was

that he formed the beautiful friendship with William Cowper which has given to the world so many splendid hymns. Some think that it was with the desire to draw Cowper's mind away from his deep melancholy that Newton proposed that the two should compose a series of hymns together. Of the *famous collection that resulted, "The Olney Hymns,"* Cowper is said to have written sixty-six, while Newton wrote the rest of the three hundred and forty-nine. But more of Cowper's hymns than of Newton's have become famous. *"Safely through another week"* is one of Newton's hymns that is most often sung. Others are: *"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds," "Approach, my soul, the mercy seat," "Come, my soul, thy suit prepare," "For a season called to part," "Great Shepherd of Thy ransomed flock," "In evil long I took delight"* (which surely paints his own experiences), *"Jesus I who knows full well," "Lord! I cannot let Thee go," "One there is above all others," "Quiet, Lord! my froward heart," "Saviour, visit Thy plantation," "Sometimes a light surprises," "'Tis a point I long to know," "While with ceaseless course the sun,"* and still others that are found in most of our hymn-books.

But the greatest of all the hymns of John Newton is *"Glorious things of thee are spoken."* It is a noble description of the people of God, under the protection of their supreme leader. Newton wrote five stanzas, and you will like to see all of them. The last two, however, are inferior to the first three, and are seldom printed in our hymn-books.

Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God!
He, whose word cannot be broken,
Form'd thee for His own abode:
On the Rock of ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
Thou may'st smile at all thy foes.

See! the streams of living waters,
Springing from eternal love,
Well supply thy sons and daughters,
And all fear of want remove.
Who can faint when such a river
Ever flows their thirst to assuage?
Grace, which, like the Lord, the giver,
Never fails from age to age.

Round each habitation hov'ring,
See the cloud and fire appear!
For a glory and a cov'ring,
Showing that the Lord is

near!

Thus deriving, from their banner,

Light by night, and shade by day:

Safe they feed upon the manna

Which He gives them when they pray.

Bless'd inhabitants of Zion,

Wash'd in the Redeemer's blood!

Jesus, whom their souls rely on,

Makes them kings and priests to God.

'Tis His love His people raises

Over self to reign as kings,

And as priests, His solemn praises

Each for a thank-off'ring brings.

Saviour, if of Zion's city

I through grace a member am,

Let the world deride or pity,

I will glory in Thy name:

Fading is the worldling's pleasure,

All his boasted pomp and show:

Solid joys and lasting treasure,

None but Zion's children know.

"Olney Hymns" was published in 1779. In that year Newton became rector of a church in London, and died there December 21, 1807. Thus he had a long life after his conversion. It was a very useful life. Wesley and Whitefield were his friends. Among his converts were Claudius Buchanan, the great missionary to the East Indies, and Thomas Scott, the eminent Bible commentator. He preached almost to the time of his death, asking, *"Shall the old African blasphemer stop while he can speak?"* And he still preaches through his strong and spirited hymns.

MATTHEW XVI. 19.

"AND I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven."

The above was addressed to Peter by the Savior. *"And Jesus said unto them [the apostles], Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."- Matt. xix. 28. "Then said Jesus to them again [the apostles], Peace be unto you; as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith*

unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."- John xx. 21-23. It seems necessary to have all of the Scripture referred to in order to present what is upon my mind. Jesus said to Peter, ***"I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven,"*** &c. It would seem that Peter was placed in authority above the other apos-tles, but not so, for the apostles were to sit upon thrones judging Israeli that is, spiritual Israel, the new Jerusalem, the church. Each apostle has equal authority, or, as we speak of it, apostolic authority, this having been given them of the Savior. They have no successors to their thrones; because Jesus lives they live, and because Jesus reigns King of kings and Lord of lords they reign with him. It is an everlasting kingdom. The words, ***"I will give unto thee the keys,"*** &c., were fulfilled in part when Jesus had risen from the dead and breathed on them (the apostles) and saith unto them, ***"Receive ye the Holy Ghost."*** The Holy Ghost is the keys to the kingdom of heaven. ***"Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." "Upon this rock (revelation) I will build my church,"*** &c.

A key is used to lock and unlock. Heaven is known by those having the keys to unlock the things kept secret from the foundation of the world, things hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. The keys are the revelation of God through Christ Jesus the Lord, and are without number. Peter and the apostles received keys when the Savior said unto them, ***"Receive ye the Holy Ghost."*** Also on the day of pentecost, when the apostles preached; also when Peter preached at the house of Cornelius. Every manifestation of the Spirit taking of the things of Jesus and showing them unto them was a key given unto them of the kingdom of heaven, and unlocked the mysteries hid from the wisdom of this world. The epistles written by the apostles are for the church, the redeemed of the Lord, the called of God, and when their declarations as judges in Israel remit your sins, they are remitted, and when the apostles' declarations retain your sins, they are retained. There is no higher tribunal than the Savior, who is judge of the whole earth, and the apostles, who are judges of spiritual Israel. When the apostle Paul says, ***"Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is,"*** it is by apostolic authority. When James says, To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin, it is binding upon the household of faith. When Peter says to the elders, ***"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by***

constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage," &c., every declaration is binding upon every elder who has or will be set apart to the work of the ministry, and what the apostles have bound on earth is bound in heaven. When Paul said, *"By grace are ye saved through faith,"* it was by authority he declared it, for Paul was a chosen vessel unto the Lord. How often we have heard some sayings of the apostles as well as the words of Jesus having delivered some heavily burdened souls, the Spirit having taken of the things of Jesus and showed them unto them. So we believe it is the Spirit accompanying the words of Jesus, for the words of the apostles, that remits our sins or retains our sins; and if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemns us not, then have we confidence toward God. To sum up briefly, I would say that every one born of God, born in Zion, is given keys to the kingdom of heaven; they enter in and behold the King in his beauty, their eyes see and ears hear, their hearts understand; they can behold if they cannot tell it. Many things they behold are unlocked and opened up to them by the preached word, and every member, no matter how small, occupies a place in the kingdom and is under law to Christ. The apostles in their declarations have given every Deeded instruction to the church, and what they have bound on earth is bound in heaven. What they have loosed on earth is loosed in heaven. Whosoever sins they have remitted, they are remitted, and whosoever sins they have retained, they are retained.

J. M. FENTON.

CORINTHIANS XIII. 13.1

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:- I have felt impressed for some time to write on the above subject, but feeling my weakness and inability to write to the comfort of the saints, I have failed to do so until the present time.

This text is comprehensive, and embraces the whole system of salvation by grace. Faith, hope and charity are inseparably connected and abide alone with the heirs of grace and are the gifts of God. If so, how can the poor, helpless sinner obtain them by his own efforts? Men are now urged to believe in order to obtain eternal life. We believe a thing according to the testimony adduced. How can the poor, blind sinner believe without evidence? The sinner does not believe in order to obtain life, but because he has life. The apostle says, He that believe on the

Son hath life, so we must have life first, which is given us by the Holy Spirit, independent of means or the instrumentalities of man. Again, He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; not will be born. If we believe the evidence that the children of grace have is the Spirit of God bearing witness with our spirit, we are the children of God, and if children, then heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. We are now killed to the love of sin, and would shun it as a deadly poison. Dear child of grace, is this your experience? If so, you can rest assured that God has given you eternal life. He said, I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. A precious thought contained in the text is the word *"hope."* This is closely connected with faith, and follows after regeneration. The apostle speaks of it as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, which enters into that within the vail. How precious the word "hope" to the child of grace when he feels cast down, with not a ray of light from the presence of the Lord to comfort him; he then feels as did the psalmist when he asked himself the question, ***"Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me - Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him."*** The apostle says, ***"Hope that is seen, is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for- But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."*** These precious truths are written in the Bible for the comfort of all God's dear children, and O how thankful we should be for such a precious gift.

I will now call your attention to the word *"charity,"* which I think is the brightest jewel contained in the text, which is love. This love is pure, because God is its author. There is nothing, we can do to produce it, for it is the gift of God. All our efforts to do good, in giving to the poor and afflicted, will not be charity, unless we are impressed to do so by the Spirit of God. Some are giving largely to help the poor, and for the support of what they call charitable instituitions, when perhaps there is no Bible charity in it. The apostle says, Though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. The apostle tells us in few words the true principles of charity; he says, Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil. My dear brethren, have you this pure charity? I fear that I have not. Though I professed a hope when but a boy, and am now in my eighty-fourth year, and have been trying to serve God all that time, I must say with the apostle, that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing.

The text says the greatest of these is charity. This love existed with Christ in God before the world began. He says, I have loved thee

with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. This love embraces all of his elect people, chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and for whom he died. We need faith and hope in this life, but if we are permitted to enter that bouse not made with hands, and be like him, we shall not need faith and hope, but charity will abide forever, and we will all sing one song, and it will be to Him who loved us and washed us in his own blood; to him we will give all the glory forever. What a glorious thought this is! When I think of it I feel like the apostle did when he said, *"I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you."*

Dear editors, dispose of this as you think best, and all will be well with me.

SILAS WILLIAMS.
ALBANY, Oregon, Feb. 4, 1918.

PSALM 103:19-20

The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

Bless the Lord, ye his angels that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

ISAIAH XL. II.

"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."

This chapter of Isaiah is looking beyond the time of the Babylonian captivity to the restoration, to the time when Israel shall again realize the tender care of their God for them. Also, secondarily, this portion of Isaiah looks not only beyond the Babylonian captivity, but beyond that captivity which the whole people of God were under to the law of sin and death, which captivity was destroyed in the resurrection of Christ from the dead. The resurrection of Christ set the church free from captivity to the reigning power of sin and from its penalty, death. Looking beyond this great captivity of the whole church, our text has to do with the gospel life of the church of Jesus as it is now in this present dispensation. The Lord here likens himself to a shepherd and his people to sheep. This is a frequent figure found throughout the Scriptures, and is a favorite illustration employed by the Spirit of inspiration to set forth the attitude of Christ toward his people. It is not necessary for us to go much into an explanation of this figure of the shepherd and his sheep, for it is familiar to all our readers and a sub-

ject that has been frequently written upon through the columns of the SIGNS. *"He shall gather the lambs with his arm,"* signifies that his almighty power and omnipotent strength shall gather the little, tender ones of the flock. All must be lambs before they can be sheep. There is an infancy in grace as well as in nature; that is, a time when one does not see as clearly and understand the Scriptures and the doctrine as clearly as when one becomes older in grace and in experience. There is surely such a thing as growing in grace and in knowledge of the truth. When one has not attained to this growth in grace to the extent that older ones have, one is in the *"lamb"* state. Our text does not mean to imply that the lambs are the only ones of the flock that need the sheltering arm of omnipotence, nor does it convey the idea that the older ones, the sheep, can get along without this same care and this same almighty power; but the thought is that the lambs need not the care of the older sheep to make them become, in turn, sheep. The watch care and tenderness of the shepherd is what all the sheep and all the lambs need; none can dispense with it. Unless the lambs are properly cared for by the shepherd there will be no sheep. The strong arm of Jesus, the fullness of God's power embodied in him, is the salvation of every one of the lambs. The lamb aptly represents the helplessness of the child of God. Nothing but the omnipotence of God is sufficient to protect and shelter the helpless lambs in grace. *"Carry them In his bosom,"* means that they rest in his love. The new-born child of grace is brought from under the law into the sweet liberty and comfort of the gospel of Jesus.

Here he finds the true sabbath and rests in the perfect love of God. This is comprehended in the expression: *"Carry them in his bosom."* *"I Shall gently lead those that are with young,"* applies to the child of God who has been quickened by the Spirit but has not yet been brought to the birth; that is, has not been brought to the end of the law and delivered out into the liberty of the gospel. These have not yet brought forth Christ, Christ has not yet been manifested out of them. God's good work has begun in them by the operation of his Holy Spirit, but it has not yet been brought to a manifested end in the day of Jesus Christ. These are *"with young,"* and need to be handled gently. The Lord's dealings with these quickened sinners whose consciences have been made very tender and keenly conscious of every defect in themselves, are very tender dealings indeed. He is full of compassionate tenderness toward them, and he will lead them gently on until Christ be fully formed in them the hope of glory, until they are brought to the end of the law and

give birth to full faith and confidence in Jesus as their one and only Savior.

Elder H.H. Lefferts

"We must through much tribulation enter Into the kingdom of God." - Acts xiv. 22.

What are the promises? Are not all the promises suited to the Lord's poor and needy family? What are the promises of pardon, except to the guilty? What are promises of salvation, except to the lost? What are promises of consolation, except to the afflicted? What are promises of grace, except to those who feel themselves altogether undone? Thus it is *"through much tribulation"* we enter into the sweetness of the promises. Then they come with power into the heart; they are manifested with life and feeling to the soul; and we begin, like Jeremiah of old, to *"find God's word and eat it;"* and feel it to be the very joy and rejoicing of our heart. This is the effect of passing through tribulation in providence and in grace,– of cutting trials; of severe, harassing temptations; of frowns from the world; of blows from sinners and saints; of learning the workings of a heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; to lead us *"into the kingdom of God;"* and into those sweet manifestations of lovingkindness and tender mercy which alone can satisfy us whose consciences God's finger has touched. And I believe you that are honest, you that are sincere, you that fear to be deceived, you that know there is a secret in vital godliness, and long to know it more deeply, and feel it more powerfully; I am sure there is an inward witness in your soul that you never entered into any one mystery of the kingdom of God set up in your heart except through tribulation. Was it not through tribulation you understood the word, and felt it applied to your conscience by the power of God? And was it not by and through tribulation, through the medium of suffering, that you were made to value more and more the manifestation of God to your soul? and feel that nothing could satisfy you, nothing content you, but a blessed discovery of dying love?

Elder J.C. Philpot

PSALM 103:16-18.

For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;

To such as keep his covenant and to those that remember, his commandments to do them.

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene with Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church the 5th Sunday in May 2010. From 220 take 704 East to Pleasantville Church Rd. and turn left to church on left. From Reidsville take West Harrison Street / NC 65 toward Wentworth. 9.3 miles to NC 704 West. Go 2.7 miles and turn right on to Pleasantville Church Rd. - Church is on the left.

Ministers of our faith and order and all other lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Elder H.W. Wray
Elder Thomas Solomon

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 2010

Elder Gene Lupton, NC 5.00
Flora Vest, VA 5.00
E. H. Chandler, LA 5.00
James Knight, NC 25.00

PSALM 77:12.

I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.

OBITUARIES

ANDREW C. AGEE

It is with much sadness that I attempt to comply with Salem Church's request to write the obituary of our beloved deacon, whom we feel is at rest, waiting for the coming day of our savior, Jesus Christ. Brother Andrew believed in salvation by grace and grace alone.

Brother Andrew was born November 26, 1921 and passed away February 16, 2010. He was a member of Salem Primitive Baptist Church for 34 years and was ordained as a deacon on May 10, 1986. Brother Andrew was appointed a church trustee January 15, 2005, and he served our church humbly and walked softly among the brethren, taking his afflictions with much patience and manifesting that great love for his church and brethren. His work on earth is finished.

Brother Andrew was the son of Floyd and Katherine Agee and husband of Gladys Walters Agee. He had four daughters, Linda Agee Dickerson, Dianne Agee Kelly, and Carolyn Agee Perdue, with Bonnie Agee Kitts who is deceased. Five sisters, Ruby Dyer, Doris Hawley, Ora Guthrie, Frances Lewis and Madeline Bonham.

Brother Andrew's funeral was held at Salem Church on February 19, 2010 and he was laid to rest in the Restvale Cemetery. Elder Carl Terry and Elder Larry Hollandsworth officiated.

May we all be reconciled to His Holy will and comforted to feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

Written in loving memory of our dear deacon.

Carl Terry , Moderator
Mary Poff, Clerk

MARTHA LOUISE ALLEN

Sister Louise, 92, ofAlamance Health Care in Burlington, N.C. left this world and sorrow on March 4, 2010. Graveside services were conducted by Elder Kenneth Key on March 7 at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery.

Sister Louise joined Dan River Church on March 8, 1959 and was baptized by her pastor, the late Elder David Spangler. She came to church as long as she was able and had someone to bring her.

A native of Person County, she lived most ofher life in Rockingham County. She was the daughter of the late William and Martha Blackwell Allen. She was preceded in death by six brothers and six sisters. Surviving her are her loving niece and caregiver, Peggy Bradshaw of Graham, N.C. and several nieces and nephews.

She stayed in assisted living and nursing homes for over ten years, much over the last few years, but Romans chapter 8 verse 18 says, ***"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."*** In Romans chapter 8 verse 36, it is written: ***"For thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."***

Written by a Sister in Christ,
Gradie Strader

GALATIANS 2:15-16.

We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Signs of the Times

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POEM

How weary and how worthless
this life at times appears.
What days of heavy sadness,
what hours of bitter tears.
How dark the storm cloud gathers along the wintry skies.
How desolate and cheerless the path before me lies.

And yet those days of sadness
are sent us from above.
They do not come in anger, but in faithfulness and love.
They come to teach us lessons which bright ones could not yield,
And leave us blest and thankful when their purpose is fulfilled.

They come to draw us nearer
our Father and our Lord.
More earnestly to seek His face and lean upon His word.
And to feel if now around us a desert land we see;
Without the star of promise, what would the darkness be.

They come to lay us lowly and humbly in the dust.
All self-deception swept away, all creature hope and trust.

Our helplessness; our vileness, our guiltiness to own,
And flee for help and refuge to Christ, and Christ alone.

They come to break the fetters that here detain us fast,
And force our long reluctant hearts to rise to heaven at last.
And brighten every prospect of that eternal home,
Where grief and disappointment and fear can never come.

Then turn not in despondence, poor weary heart away,
But meekly journey on through the dark and cloudy day.
Even now the bow of promise is above thee, painted bright;
And soon a glorious morning shall dissipate the night.

Thy God hath not forgot thee, but when He sees it best
Will lead thee into sunshine and give thee longed for rest.
And all thy pain and sorrow shall be forever o'er;
Shall end in heavenly blessedness and life forevermore.

(This poem was sent to me by dear Sister Mary Ellison a number of years ago. Lillie Fridel)

From Zion's Landmark
Oct. 1973

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EDITORIALS

A GLORIOUS ONENESS

"There is one body and one spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling: One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, through all and in you all." (Ephesians 4:4-6)

In the above scripture the Apostle Paul sets forth the glorious truth of the oneness and unity that is taught in the Holy Scripture. There is one God and Father of all the elect family that has lived, and will yet live, in this world. He is their All in All, and the fulfillment of all their

hope, faith and desire since they have been made to behold His glory by the Spirit of Life, which has been placed within their very being.

The *One Body* is the whole household of faith from righteous Abel to the last heir of promise that will be born into this time world. The body is one, but there are many members; and God has placed each member in the body, and it fulfills that which is pleasing unto Him; and to the edifying of the body in Christ. As a natural body has many members, and each is needful to the well-being of the whole body, so is each of the members needful to the well-being of this whole body. The members are placed in the body so ***"that there should be no schism in the body: but that the members should have the same care one for another."*** As a man would not choose his right hand over his left hand, or his arm over his leg, but has the same desire for the one member as the other, even so God has the same love for all members of the one body. Each member is just as secure as any other, and each is just as necessary to have a complete body; and God will have no less.

As the members of the natural body are dependent upon the functions of the other members of the body, it is also true with this body. And Paul goes on to say, ***"And whether one member suffers all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored all the members rejoice with it."*** This is something that all God's children believe and have seen and experienced many times. They weep with a brother when he weeps and rejoice with him when he rejoices.

There is *One Hope,* and it is common among all the children of God that He is their Father. They do not feel to be worthy of being his children, but they cannot help but hope that by his grace and mercy they have been placed among those to whom all the precious promises are made, and that they are of those for whom Christ came into the world to save. They can surely see that they are sinners, and the scriptures say that He came to save sinners. They have been made to believe that there is one God, and that He has a people in every nation, kindred, tongue and people; that there was one sacrifice for the redemption of that people unto himself. Therefore they think of that people as a unit that cannot be divided from that unity of redemption. This seems to be what Paul was saying when he says, ***"There is one body."*** Their hope is that each member is just as secure as every other member: because, since God would only accept a sacrifice that was without spot or blemish, surely that which is redeemed by that perfect sacrifice will be perfect, whole and complete in every sense of the word.

There is *One Spirit,* and that spirit is the life of the one body. This spirit of life is that which is sent down from heaven and gives life to each

and every member of the body. It causes each member to function and perform that which is needful for the good of the whole body. As Paul says, ***"From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."*** Every member is therefore needful, and the Spirit of Life enables them to fulfill that need according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Their sufficiency is of Him; and regardless of how wretched and undone they feel to be, this spirit that has been placed within their very being, will cause them to stand and fill their place.

Jesus told Nicodemus, ***"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."*** This then is the way that the members receive the Spirit, and are made partakers of the inheritance and blessings of the body. This manner indicates the sovereign and holy work of God in bestowing this grace upon the heirs of promise. Even natural birth is above the power of man, and this birth is of an infinitely higher order than that. It is this birth of the Spirit which imparts the spiritual life to his elect and makes them members of the One Body.

Jesus Christ is the *One Lord* who is head over all things to the church, which is his body. He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending. He is the one who stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and was offered without spot and without blemish for the redemption of the Church, which is his body. He is the only Potentate, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He is the one who of God is made unto the body, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. He was made all things that were needful unto this body of the elect family of God. He is the foundation that was laid, and upon which all the building stands. Isaiah says, ***"Therefore thus saith the Lord, behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: that he that believeth shall not make haste."*** With this foundation, a sure foundation, and the power and wisdom that insures its eternal existence, the children have a blessed refuge and a strong consolation when they lay hold upon the hope that is set before them. This hope that is the anchor of the soul, is anchored in Jesus Christ the one Lord, who is the Shepherd and Bishop of their soul.

There is *One Faith,* which is the gift of God. This is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. This is given unto men whereby they behold the glory of the heavenly kingdom while in this time world. They cannot behold the fullness of the glory while in the

flesh, but they see as through a glass darkly by this eye of faith, and behold and experience things which the world knows nothing. Though at times it may seem weak, it continues to lead them, and will last through all their earthly pilgrimage. At other times they feel bold enough to say with David, ***"But I will hope continually and will yet praise thee more and more."*** Or with Job, ***"Though He slay me, yet will I trust in him."***

It is the same faith that moved Noah, that moves God's people today. This is the sense in which there is one faith. It is faith in the same power, and it is sent from the same source. These common experiences, and common faith in the same giver of the gift, cause God's children to have an abiding love and fellowship for one another.

There is *One Baptism,* and that is the baptism of the Holy Ghost; and this Is referred to at times as being born of the Spirit. It is One since it is to all the members of the body. It occurs in time to the different members when the Spirit is made manifest unto them; but the body stands as a unit in the mind and purpose of God, and was complete in his eyes before the foundation of the world.

There is *One God and Father of All,* who is above all, and through all, and in you all. Job said, speaking of God, ***"But He is of one mind and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth."*** This is a grand and glorious truth to those who have been given a reason to hope in His promises. This is the reason that all the other things are spoken of as being One. They are things that were determined by the One God who is of one mind, and changes not. Before the beginning of time the counsel was held, and all these things were determined as surely as though they had already happened. The One Lord was determined as the One Sacrifice for the One Body, (which included all the members), which is given the One Faith by the indwelling of the One Spirit, and baptized with the One Baptism. Since God is of one mind, and what his soul desireth even that He doeth, what can ever change or alter any of these decrees in any fashion, seeing that in Him is All Power. Paul said, ***"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."***

This is the heritage of all the redeemed family of God, and it is sure and certain to all those that were chosen in Christ Jesus, the Lord before the foundation of the world. There is nothing that can separate them from this love, and the loving kindness that has drawn them to Him. Moses said when telling the

Children of Israel of their blessings, ***"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."*** These everlasting arms are underneath upholding all His elect in all ages, and is sweet comfort to them when they see that but for His mercy, they would be lost world without end. These characteristics of God: eternal, everlasting Father, omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscience, are the towers and bulwarks that God's people observe and trust in as they walk about Zion beholding the beauties and glories of His kingdom.

The promises of God unto his children are so grand and glorious to the heirs of promise, that they are fearful to claim to have a hope in them. They see themselves as they are in nature, and, being made to see what they must be by grace, causes them to go mourning and bemoaning their wretched and undone condition most of the time. They go weeping and begging God, in spite of their sinful condition, to have mercy on them, and to show them more evidence that they are His. David spoke of this condition of God's people when he said, ***"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."***

Surely the precious seed is that spirit that has been planted in their breast, and the sheaves represent the harvest that they shall reap, which is the salvation of their soul. They go weeping now, but in hope; and they shall assuredly receive the fruits of the harvest, which is life everlasting. The planting, cultivating, and harvesting is all the work of God in their lives. It is to His glory and to their good, because, ***"It is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."***

God will bless each and every heir of grace with the hope of his calling sometime during his earthly pilgrimage. May it be His good pleasure for them to walk together in peace, love and fellowship one for the other. As Paul says, ***"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and in the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."*** When this is done, He will send his angels to gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. He will then receive them unto himself and present them unto God as his bride; and they will dwell in perfect bliss eternally as one.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

May 12, 2010

Dear Tony,

I would like to renew my subscription to the Signs for another year. Enclosed is a check for $20.00.

I do enjoy every issue and thank you.

God Bless,
Grace Manly

May 2, 2010

My dear Brother Horton,

I see I'm late renewing Signs and I'm sorry. Please renew Signs another year for me. Other day I picked up a few old Signs and began reading from the back. The obituaries were so sweet and kind. To me love was bright. Isn't it wonderful that God Himself reveals his work to poor creatures as it pleases him.

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickral

VOICES OF THE PAST

PEACE ON EARTH

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." (Luke 2:14)

Luke gives the words used by a multitude of the heavenly host in making a supernatural announcement of a supernatural birth. There are only fourteen of these words. Some of the ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of Angels said these words to the lowly shepherds almost two thousand years ago. What an impact they have had upon the earth! Millions and millions have quoted them since then. Volumes have been written about them, yet the meaning of these few simple words has not been fully and completely understood. They very beautifully express the simple principles of the new creation, the new covenant, and the new religion.

The first note of this very brief but sublime hymn is, ***"Glory to God in the highest."*** Christ's obedience to His Father's laws; His consecration to His Father's will; His prayers, teachings, and death: -Yea, His entire life focuses the spotlight upon God, the Father. He did it when He declared that none was good save the Father. He did it in the statement that none could come to Him except

the Father draw him. When He declared that He could do nothing of Himself, He glorified the Father. He did it when He made for Himself no reputation in order to reverence His Father. Yes, Jesus Christ fulfilled the announcement of the multitude of heavenly host by glorifying God in the highest.

The second phrase of the angelic anthem is, ***"On earth Peace."*** Here was the announcement of the appearance of the Prince of Peace. Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace as announced by prophecy in Isaiah 9:6. The Son of the King of creation, providence, and disposer of all things is rightly termed, *Prince.* Jesus being the author of peace as well as the *Son* of God fully manifested His name, ***"Prince of Peace."*** Jesus being born on earth verified the announcement, ***"On earth peace."*** Jesus made peace with God in behalf of His brethren by suffering in their stead the punishment due them for their sins, and fulfilling the law for them. Jesus made peace between the Jews and Gentiles by breaking down the bars, the ceremonial laws, which separated His people among them. He made peace between the men of high degree and the men of low degree by bringing down the exalted ones and lifting up the lowly. He unified the rich and the poor by proving the vanity of earthly riches to the wealthy as well as the importance of heavenly treasures to the beggar. He proclaimed the gospel of peace.

The angels of Heaven concluded this memorable song by saying, ***"Good will toward men."*** Four hundred years had passed since the prophet, Malachi, wrote: ***"But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings..." (Mal. 4:2)*** Such a long time of silence from Heaven!! It is no wonder that gross ignorance of God's laws was the state of the people of the earth. It must have been the time of ignorance that God winked at. See Acts 17:30. Spiritual darkness had covered the face of the earth for so long. God's people had transgressed His laws to such great degree that justice demanded a curse from God instead of good will toward them. This curse was stayed until His only begotten Son could bear the just vengeance and wrath of God. *Good will toward men* was brought to light in every thought, word, and act of Jesus Christ while here on earth. God's good will toward men is briefed by Jesus when He said, ***"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."*** Read

John 6:35-40. This good will begets good will toward God in the hearts of everyone who realize its goodness. God grant that we further meditate on the subject peace on earth in this article. Unity and concord are the closest synonym in the English language to the root word which was translated, *peace.* The simple definition: "PEACE", that state of mind in which persons are exposed to no open violence; "is" quoted from Buck's Theological Dictionary. Since peace concerns the state of mind of persons, we shall emphasize the importance, joy, and happiness of social, ecclesiastical, and spiritual peace. Social peace is mutual agreement one with another, whereby we forbear injuring one another. David said, ***"Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace and pursue it." (Psalms 34:14)*** What are we to pursue and seek? Unity plus concord equals peace. The Holy Spirit teaches us that we are in unity with evil. This is our first lesson. Secondly, it makes known to us that we *were* in concord or agreement with it, but the Spirit has changed our feeling so that we hate that principle we loved. This causes us to desire to depart from that with which we are connected. We possessed a false peace of mind while we were joined to evil and had pleasure in it. The result of regeneration is that we do not have a quiet peaceful mind. We find ourselves involved with something we hate. Having been regenerated, we need conversion. We find that we must depart from evil before we have peace of mind. Wisdom from above causes our minds to be in a terrible state of uneasiness which makes us fear God. This is regeneration. We then realize our great need for understanding. We pray for it. God answers our prayer by empowering us to depart from evil. This is conversion. Job quoted God as saying: ***"Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding." (Job 28:28)*** Wisdom plus understanding equals peace of mind.

Jesus made peace with God for all the elect by offering Himself. He is our only peacemaker with God, the Father. Jesus united all of the chosen of God with the Father. None can ever sever this union that Jesus perfected. All our righteousness is as filthy rags in God's sight. The imputed righteousness of *Jesus* only constitutes *peace toward God.* We must be born again AND BE GIVEN THIS FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST, before we can realize God's good will of *peace toward men.* When we are in realization of this we have peace of mind. This peace shall fully be realized in eternity. This is the good news to a sensible sinner. This is the Gospel of Peace! ***"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." (Heb. 10:22)*** When this peace with God is

realized in the conscience, all stumbling blocks are removed, and forbearance is easy. ***"Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them." (Psalms 119:165)***

Where is Peace? The United Nations is a unit composed of representatives from the different nations of the world whose proposed purpose is to achieve peace for the world. Even though they be together in body, their minds are far apart. Instead of concord there is contempt in all their maneuverings. Pride, envy, hatred, wrath, and strife are some of the stumbling blocks that prevent peaceful solutions of problems. These are all so manifest in the meetings of the United Nations that we must look elsewhere for peace. The same stumbling blocks prevent the Senate and House of the Congress of the United States from passing laws conformable to the Constitution. Our higher institutions of learning have been so scarred and battered with riots and confusion that we cannot find peace reigning there. We find states, communities, and homes in abundance where peace does not reign. We ask again, Where is peace?

Paul exhorts: ***"Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:6-7)*** To taste the peace of God is to realize that none but God through Christ Jesus, the Prince of Peace, can be the Author of Peace in our hearts and minds. We must admit that none but God can effect peace anywhere at anytime.

Peace on earth? Yes, but where? It is in the minds and hearts of all while they are blessed with faith in God, ***"Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."*** (See Eph. 1:11) Those who in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving make their requests known unto God, experience the peace of God. Peace is reigning in the individuals who do not offend others by their thoughts, words, or actions. Peace is the state of the minds of the people who think upon the things which are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report; seeking praise-worthiness and virtue in all things of which we think. (See Phil. 4:6) Wherever we find virtue, wherever we find praise: we find the peace of God which is of the God of peace. When our minds are so disciplined to think upon these things, our minds do not have time nor space to think upon anything else. I cannot so discipline my mind, but I KNOW WHO CAN!

When our minds are disciplined by God we are continually separating the precious from the vile. When our minds are disciplined by carnality we are prone to consider the vile

things as precious, and the precious as vile. The Holy Scriptures are able to make the child of God wise as to whether we are being disciplined by the old man or the new man in our dealings with our fellowman. Our wills change according to the spirit that prevails. We are in possession of a good will when the Holy Spirit is reigning. When lust reigns our will is evil. We find a warfare even in our minds. Do we find peace in our minds? Are our minds so quiet, calm, and undisturbed? My mind is not, because I find the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. I find a warfare within my own mind. There is a mixture of good and evil thoughts that require the judgment of my heart, or will. I am constantly making decisions by approving and disapproving. My will is forever judging the thoughts of my mind. If the judgment of the will were always the same, I would find peace in my mind. I find my judgments so unstable that I cry out as the Apostle Paul: ***"For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin." (Romans 7:14)*** This state of mind is relieved only while in diligent prayer to God to discipline me. I am made to plead for His grace and mercy. I cannot understand myself. How can I expect to understand others? When I realize my carnality, I hate it. I love it when I am unaware of its presence and damaging effects. There is such a clash of wills that I am unable to do the things I would. When there is such need of forgiveness even for our own thoughts, it is so easy to forgive others. While we condemn ourselves, it is easy to forbear others. While we question our own understanding, we do not condemn the understanding of others. Where can we find *peace*? We find it in the grace and power of Jesus *for* us, in us, and *to* us.

Where is Peace? Peace is whenever Jesus appears to us. Peace is wherever Jesus reigns. Peace is the appetizing flavor of the fruit of the Spirit. We read the last part of a sermon by Zacharias: ***"To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet in the way of peace." (Luke 1:79)*** This was spoken by John's father of Jesus. Peter said, ***"For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it." (I Peter 3:10-11)*** I have found in my search for peace that I can only find it in the Church. Jesus is Governor of His church. He is the Head, the church is His body. It is no wonder that David was glad when they said unto him, ***"Let us go into the house of the Lord."*** It is no marvel that he realized the necessity of his feet standing within the gates of Jerusalem which was builded as a city compact together. It was where the tribes of the Lord went up unto

the testimony of Israel to give thanks unto the name of the Lord. Peace be to that City of Peace. ***"Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity be within thy palaces."*** The City of Jerusalem, The House of the Lord our God, the house of prayer: yea, the Church of our Lord is where peace is found, enjoyed, and greatly appreciated. (Read the 123rd Psalm.) Peace is in the church and God is the author of it. It pleased God to set Zion upon a hill as the perfection of beauty. He would shine through the Church. Jesus lighteth every man that cometh into the church. Jesus bids them: ***"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5:16)***

Peace is the first word that Jesus commanded the seventy to say as they entered each house: ***"Peace be to this house." (Matt. 10:15)*** Paul prefaced every letter he wrote to both individuals and churches by imploring grace and peace upon them. (Of course there is no peace unless there is grace.) The first on the agenda of every conference of the Church is to inquire relative to the peace of the church. Among the first words of Christ's sermon on the mountain were, ***"Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God."***

Unity plus concord is peace. Jesus said, ***"Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. 18:19-20)*** The two together equals unity: to agree upon anything equals concord: thus, there is peace. The agreement is to be upon anything. I am pleased that the two do not have to agree on everything. Where two or three are gathered together, shows unity. When it is *in His name,* proves concord. Both unity and concord mean peace. This discourse of Jesus was in answer to the question: Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? Jesus Christ is teaching His disciples a very important lesson in this treatise: Forgiveness of offences. He teaches us the value of humility and the evil of pride. Pride is the great stumbling block and cause of contention among brethren. ***"ONLY by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom." (Prov. 13:10)*** Christ advises Peter in answer to his question relative to the number of times to forgive a brother of his sins against him: ***"...I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven." (Matt. 18:22)***

I have sinned against the Lord more than seventy times seven. I trust for Christ's sake, He has forgiven me. Should I not forgive a brother that trespasses against me

many, many, many times? If I be "Well-advised" I will continue to forgive him. I am not to forgive him for his trespasses against the *Lord,* for this is the Lord's business. He chastises, corrects, and takes vengeance upon whom He will in His way. It pleases the Lord to use the wicked as His sword, to render judgment even to His own. (See Habakuk 1:6, 12; Prov. 16:4; Psalms 17:13.) I have more tolerance for those who depend upon themselves to merit salvation, than I have for those who take upon themselves the responsibility to chastise, punish, or take vengeance against any whom they think offend the Lord. If we could be so well advised to know that He will take vengeance, chastise, correct; or have mercy upon His own offenders. Yes, He goes further than that: He takes vengeance in behalf of His people upon their persecutors. God has so ordained, and that right well, that He is the God of battles. He does our fighting for us. It would be foolish, and out of my jurisdiction, to say, I forgive this one of his offence to God. I am wise, I trust in my right mind, to forgive, have mercy upon, and forbear those who wrong *ME.*

I may differ with you on some theological point of doctrine, but if we have the same *faith,* we are agreed on the vital thing. Sometimes in pridish discussions we charge consequences. We say, if you believe *this,* you believe *that.* The other party answers, I believe *this,* but I do not believe *that.* If I want to prove to him that I am wiser than he, I further contend until it becomes contentious : If you believe *this* you are bound to believe *that.* We wrangle. I try to force the issue. I fail to get him to admit to my reasoning. My pride is so hurt that I tell him, You do not know what you believe. What have I done? I have charged consequences which is a violation of honorable controversy among men! I have offended him and ought to beg his forgiveness.

When I was a boy I got the idea that it was my job to discipline my younger brothers and sister in the absence of my father and mother. I was threatening to whip one of them one day when my father appeared on the scene. I well remember the scolding and lecture my father gave me. He made me to know that that was *his* business. I did not forget it. Sometimes we act as little children not only by trying to attend to the Lord's business, but also to delve into the secrets of God. We argue by using our vain imaginations about all that God did before the foundation of the world; why He did it; and how He did it. When we go beyond Scriptural revelation, we are trying to pry out the secrets of God. Since the Scriptures contain that which it pleased God to reveal to us and our children, Why should we quarrel over these things that are not simply expressed in the written word? ***"Secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto***

us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of the law." (Deut. 29:29) This should be sufficient for us to understand that there are no words of the law of the Lord to be considered unnecessary. The one who consoles himself with the idea: *"I shall have peace though I walk in the imagination of mine heart,"* puts himself liable to God's great curse: *"...And the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven." (Deut. 29:19-20) "Yes, it is under heaven that some have their part taken away out of the book of life, and out of the holy city." (Rev. 22:19)* This holy city must be the church on earth which is *under* heaven. The part that is taken out of the book of life must be that part which is to be experienced here. I do not want to be separated from the church here on earth. I want to live in peace with my brethren. I want to enjoy the happiness of salvation here. I want to be united with brethren of same faith here, and to strive for concord. I want to rely upon the precious promise quoted by Paul: *"Finally, brethren, farewell, Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you." (2 Cor. 13:11)*

Elder E. J. Lambert

"For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken." (John 19:36)

How greatly favored we are that God has seen fit to preserve His word down through the ages, that His dear children might see clearly that not a word was spoken by him in vain. We are told by inspiration, *"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Matthew 24:35)*

In looking through the scriptures to find the words, *"A bone of him shall not be broken,"* we turned to Exodus 12, where Israel was brought to the time when they were to depart from Egypt, when they were to take a lamb without blemish, a male of the first year, to eat for the passover; and Exodus 12:46 says, *"In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof."* Again in Numbers 9:12, "They shall leave none of it unto the morning, *nor break any bone of it."* And in the lovely *Psalm 34:20, "He keepeth all his bones; not one of them is broken."* Paul tells us in *2 Corinthians 13:1, "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established."*

Amongst the various types we see in the Old Testament, Joseph seems one of the most beautiful.

Loved of his father, hated by his brethren, and sold into Egypt when he was seventeen years old for twenty pieces of silver. Our Lord was sold a full grown man for thirty pieces of silver. The wonderful ways of God in Joseph's life were seen in his control of all things. His father had made Joseph a coat of many colours; his brothers slew a kid of the goats and dipped the coat in blood. Jacob saw the coat and thought an evil beast had devoured him. The coat, a type of the coat that Jesus wore, was not torn; and we read in John 19:24, the soldiers said amongst themselves, ***"Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, to see whose it shall be:"*** that the scripture might be fulfilled which saith, ***"They parted my raiment among them and for my vesture they did cast lots."*** Oh how can ignorant men read the scriptures and yet deny him who by his appearing as our Saviour Jesus Christ, by his own self, ***"Hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel?"***

Christ was to be born in Bethlehem, yet Mary and Joseph were in Nazareth over sixty miles away from that city; and to fetch them down there, a wicked emperor, Augustus, commanded the world to be taxed. And Joseph had to take Mary, his espoused wife, great with child, over hills and valleys to the place where Christ should be born. Angels heralded his coming, - man lodged him with the beasts. We mention these truths to show that God's word had to come to pass, for Jesus is the Word made flesh, and every word that was spoken by the mouth of his prophets concerning him since the world began, must come to pass as surely as He said, ***"Let there be light: and there was light." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us {and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)***

When Israel kept the first Passover, the blood of the lamb had to be taken and put upon the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses wherein they should eat it. Leaven, a type of sin, was not to be allowed in their houses. Unleavened bread was to be used, which was a type of the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. As we read in Exodus, it is wonderful that Moses took Joseph's bones and carried them with them. The loveliness of Joseph seemed never to have been marred by blacksliding as we see in other favored ones in God's word. He stands out as a beautiful type of Jesus our Lord: his bones, which set forth the strength of his body, were not broken. His coat of many colours that his *father* made him, sets forth the varied scenes through which Jesus passed as he travelled the path laid out for him by his Heavenly Father.

We have said that man lodged

Him with the beasts, but wise men, led by a heavenly light, came to Jerusalem, saying, ***"Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."*** Herod and all Jerusalem were troubled; and Herod gathered the chief priests and scribes and demanded of them where Christ should be born. They told him part of what Micah the prophet said, but like so many today, they did not tell it all. They said, ***"And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel,"*** but they left out, ***"Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."*** They are the ones who would break his bones; they are the same kind that cried ***"crucify him."***

That brings me to my subject, ***"A bone of him shall not be broken."*** The bones are the strength of the body which enables one to bear burdens; to run and not be weary , and to walk and not faint. Our Lord Jesus Christ, ***"Is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."*** Our Lord, being the Word of God, sustained his body under every load. We are told in ***1 Peter 2:24, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead in sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye are healed."***

To the church of the Living God, the Word is food: it is also that which gives strength to the body, it is that which, like the bones, enables one to walk in the heavenly way. All our help must come from Him, and without Him we can do nothing. The word of God, like the bones of the body, cannot be added to or anything taken from it. Could such a thing be, the body could not function correctly. Our Lord Jesus as a man was perfect. In Psalm 37:37, David saith, ***"Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."*** The end implies that for which he came into the world to do. He came to seek and to save all that the Father gave him before the world began; yet we are told in Hebrews 2:10 that, ***"It became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."***

Man by nature ***"Receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*** The Word of God created all things, and when the Word was made flesh, He, by his almighty strength, overcame everything that stood against those he loved; and when the Holy Spirit, by his Word, quickens a subject of grace, that

Word is effectual in convincing him of sin; and it also enables him in approaching God by cries and prayers, to come in the right and only way. We are told that ***"Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 10:17)*** Faith in Christ are the bones that cannot be broken, and it is by faith that the church of God has in all ages walked in him. Hebrews 11 describes how his people overcame; and in chapter 12:1, 2, those gone before are spoken of as a great cloud of witnesses; and we are told to ***"lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us... looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith."***

Let us not think for a moment that when the Lord speaks to a poor sinner it will puff such an one up, so that he will think himself somebody. Look at Gideon who threshed wheat by the winepress to hide it from the Midianites. ***(Judges 6:11) "The angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us from Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites. And the Lord looked upon him and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?"***

The account of dear Gideon and the Lord's dealings with him have been, and still will be, an encouragement and help to God's humble poor and afflicted people in this day. The Word was made flesh, and the Word is still made flesh in those who belong to the body of Christ; and they learn that God's strength is made perfect in their weakness, and that it is out of weakness they are made strong. They who walk the heavenly road will need the word of His grace every step of the way. Gideon learned a lesson every step that he took, that all the glory should be unto his sovereign God.

While Israel journeyed in the wilderness carrying Joseph's bones, how often their thoughts would go over the past: fed with bread from heaven and water from the rock, in a pillar of a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Surely they would think of God's constant protection and care; they had also the wonderful deliverance at the Red Sea, and saw Pharoah and his army overwhelmed while they were spared. The path that we travel today is not of our own making, nor can we, if we are His, walk in our own strength. Let us remember, ***"My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth."***

Elder George Ruston

FELLOWSHIP

Elder H. H. Lefferts

Fellowship between the children of God is of two kinds. There is church fellowship and there is Christian fellowship. Church fellowship exists between members of the church; that is, between baptized believers of the same faith and order. Christian fellowship is wider, and exists between all who are believers in Christ, whether baptized or not.

Fellowship is always between equals. It cannot exist between individuals of different standing or of different experience or condition. There must be equality of condition in order for there to be true fellowship. For instance, fellowship cannot exist between an unbeliever and a believer, because there is a difference of condition between the two which cannot be bridged. Further, there cannot be church fellowship existing between one who has been baptized and is obedient to the ordinances of Christ and one who, though a believer, has never been brought into subjection to his brethren. Here, too, is a difference in condition, and while there may be, and truly is, Christian fellowship existing in this last instance, there cannot be church fellowship.

This matter of fellowship does not come and go according to our will; it is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, and not to be controlled by the human will. When one has ever had real fellowship for another it cannot be forfeited.

To make our meaning clearer; if one is a member of the church and becomes guilty of some breach of church order, it may become necessary to set that one aside from the fellowship of the church, but if that one has ever been in the hearts and affections of the church he will still be loved, and for him there will still be Christian fellowship, even though he be cut off from partaking of the privileges and ordinances of the church.

Thinking of the church as the spiritual mother of us all, fellowship is the great, brooding, yearning motherheart that watches over all her children. If they stray from the fold fellowship goes after them, seeking to reclaim them. If they behave themselves unseemly, fellowship seeks their correction, not their destruction.

Mother-love is one of the most beautiful things in all nature. How insistently a mother will cling to an erring child, how longingly goes out her heart after the wanderer, earnestly desiring that he may realize his wrong and come back to her feet for forgiveness.

If spiritual things transcend the natural (and we all believe they do), then how patiently and prayerfully should the fellowship of the church go out after that one who, pursuing wrong, seems blinded to his course. The fellowship of the brethren will

long and gently labor with that one to endeavor to show him his wrong; they will pray the Lord to grant him repentance, that thus he may be saved to the church, and not be cast off from it.

Exclusion is an ugly word. The church should not have much use for it. It is never to be employed except as a very last resort to keep the house clean after all efforts at reclamation have availed nothing. The whole purpose of Christ and his gospel is to save, not to destroy.

Christ himself sought the lost sheep to restore them to the fold. He himself says he came not to destroy the world, but that the world through him might be saved. No one ever loved the sinner more, or ever served the welfare of sinners more wholeheartedly than the blessed Jesus. He bared his back to the scourgers for sinners, he even gave his cheeks to the spittle of his enemies, that sinners through him should be cleansed from sin, raised from the dead and restored to the glory of the Father which they had with him before the world began.

The gospel which Jesus sent his apostles to preach is filled with love and mercy and patience, and long-suffering to poor, erring creatures. By no means did the disciples have the patience with men which Jesus himself had. The disciples rebuked mothers for bringing children to Jesus that he might lay his hands on them. But Jesus quickly showed them their shortness of sight when he said to them, *"Of such is the kingdom of heaven."* Again when the disciples came across a man who was healing in Christ's name they asked Jesus to command the man to stop it. Jesus, however, told them to let the man alone, that he who is not against us is for us.

Thus we shall never while in the flesh be able to comprehend the great heart of Jesus. His love is high enough, deep enough, wide enough, to embrace sinners of every class and condition. Where once he bestows his love he loves unto the end. He never casts away. He does reprove our backsliding, corrects our ignorance, instructs us in righteousness and rebukes our sins. He chastens his children with his fatherly chastisements, but never with the rod of wrath or condemnation.

Following out the great principle of the gospel of Jesus, which owes its vitality to the eternal love of God and his inexhaustible grace, what use can the church have for exclusion? Certainly it is so harsh, and an instrument of such severe discipline, that never should it be employed by any church until every shred of patience has been utterly worn out in seeking the restoration of the erring.

If ever we need the mother-love of the church it is when we are weak and easily yielding to wrong. Should the brethren desert us in that cruel time of our deepest need, where then is the evidence that Christ is in their midst?

By all we have said we do not

mean to imply that the church should be slack in keeping its house clean, that it should cease to administer the discipline of the church to its members as laid down by inspiration. Of course all this must be done, but very many times churches are too quick to condemn a brother for a fault, without due examination into the matter; too quick to exclude without first laboring with the sinner and seeking to reclaim him or to save him to the church.

Fellowship is a precious thing. It is not to be tossed about like a rubber ball, as though it were something to be treated with lightness and insincerity, yet at times we talk of fellowship, and about taking it away from this one or that one, as though it were something that we could handle, like sugar or some other commodity. The Spirit of Christ can alone give us spiritual fellowship for another, and when so given cannot be taken away.

It has been our privilege to have this fellowship with the Lord's people, and we feel that no matter what they might do to us we could not cease to love them. It would be a shame could we not have like confidence that no matter what we might do the fellowship of God's people would still be ours. Nor does such confidence in the fellowship of the church encourage us to want to do wrong. No, but rather spurs us to maintain a good behavior, that we may, in some slight measure at least, be worthy of their love and fellowship.

Salvation is ministered through the fellowship of the brethren to each member of the church. Many things which one might do if one were not in the church, one does refrain from doing because he fears to offend the brethren. This fear is not because one fears exclusion, but fears to hurt the feelings of those one loves.

The more we reflect upon what fellowship means the more should we exercise great care and long suffering in dealing with transgressions against the order of the church. Too much patience there cannot possibly be, but too much haste there certainly often is.

As to what is the order of the church our people are not unanimous. Various constructions are put upon certain passages of the New Testament, which leads to variations in church order throughout the country. In view of this variation, whenever any one church is considering a matter of discipline or order, it is well to get the mind of the whole church before taking any radical action; not simply to be guided by the pastor, who is but a man and may err as easily as any, nor simply to be guided by a section of the church, but labor to get the minds and counsel of the whole church, and then in the light of such counsel proceed to act.

Part of a church might not see any given matter in its right light, but the whole church, if left to act with

perfect freedom, and without any coercion whatever, will seldom decide any matter wrongly. The Catholics have unbounded confidence in the infallibility of the Pope. We have no confidence in any man, but we do have confidence in the infallibility of the whole church, for the mind of the whole church is Christ himself. He never errs.

(Editorial of Elder Lefferts Feb. 1, 1921. Republished by request.)

HERNDON, VA., Nov. 14, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:- Enclosed find check for two dollars in payment of my subscription to the SIGNS another year. I would hardly know how to get along in this unfriendly world without the coming of the dear old SIGNS to my home. It seems to me that it gets better and better, while I seem to get worse and worse, yet I seem to cling to the doctrine of free grace, that grace which bringeth salvation to poor, lost sinners. I sometimes feel like writing for publication, and feel if I could write like many of the writers of your paper I would often be found writing to the saints of God; but O my leanness. Dear brethren, I can say this, that I cannot write a letter unless I can see Jesus and have an eye single to the glory of God; except I can see him by faith when I write, it will be nothing but *"a mess of trash."* I have no light of my own; I am in nature's darkness without him to direct and guide me by the way. I pass through many dark seasons of sadness and affliction a journey by the way, still when looking back over my past life, and remembering the hand of the Lord through it all, I am sometimes made to say, in the language of David, *"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord."* I am not sure that I know just what "the cup" denotes, but it seems to me that it is suffering, for Jesus said, *"O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me ! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."* It was at the time of great suffering when our Savior uttered those words, but he was made willing to take the cup for the sake of his bride, the Lamb's wife, the church, chosen in him before the foundation of the world. It seems to me, too, that David was personating; Christ in the expression, *"I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord."* I may be wrong in this, but set me right if I am. Dear editors, I did not expect to get into such deep water as this when I commenced to write; you could, no doubt, help me out by telling what the cup denotes, recorded in Psalms cxvi. 12, 13. I know that the Bible says we must suffer with Jesus that we

might also reign with him. But the cup that Jesus spoke of meant to be crucified, going into death. Paul meant suffering when he said, ***"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."*** O to say, ***"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."*** It is when viewing him by faith that we can enter in and be willing to suffer with him in partaking of that bitter cup which brings us to death and makes us say, ***"Not as I will, but as thou wilt;"*** but he comes ldown to our weakness, and it is for our good that he cried out, ***"O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me;"*** and again, ***"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me",*** Thus we see that the cup Jesus took brought salvation to all the elect of God, and in that sense we can call it ***"the cup of salvation."*** In David's suffering it refers to Christ's suffering; Jesus was made willing to take the cup, and David also was made willing to ***"take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord."*** It seems to me that David meant by taking the cup that he was made willing to enter into great suffering again for the Lord's sake, for he said, The Lord is good, and his mercy endureth forever.

But I must close, I did not intend to write in this way when I began. I am ignorant and unlearned in spiritual things, and trust you will measure me just as I am, for I am very small. Please cast the mantle of charity over all that I have said out of place.

Your brother, I hope,
J. F. OLIVER.

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."- 2 CORINTHIANS iv. 17.

O Ye suffering saints of God! ye tried and afflicted children of the most High; raise up your thoughts as God may enable you - lift up your eyes, and see what awaits you. Are you tried, tempted, exercised, afflicted? It is your mercy. God does not deal so with everyone. It is because you are his children, that he lays on you his chastening hand. He means to conform you to the image of his Son in glory, and therefore he now conforms you to the image of his Son in suffering. O but, you say, I cannot believe it is so! No if you could, it would not be much of a trial. This is the trial of faith-to go groaning on, struggling on, sorrowing on, sighing on; believing against unbelief, hoping against hope; and still looking to the Lord, though there is everything in nature

to damp the hopes and expectations of your waiting souls. Yet all will end well with the people of God. Their life here is a life of temptation, of suffering and trial; but heaven will make amends for all. And if our faith is now tried as ***"with fire,"*** it will one day ***"be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."*** In that day when the secrets of all hearts will be brought to light, the faith of thousands will be found to be little else than presumption; but the faith of God's dear family will then be crowned with ***"praise and honour and glory;"*** and they shall see the Lamb as he is face to face, when all tears are wiped away from all faces.

Elder J.C. Philpot

JOHN 12:24-26.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruiit.

He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

MEETINGS

JULY 4TH MEETING "TO BE HELD ON MONDAY JULY 5TH"

The annual July 4th meeting will be held, the Lord willing this Year at Old Center Church on Monday July 5th. Directions to Old Center Church in Henry County, Va are as follows. Those going west on rt. 57 A in Bassett, turn left at stoplight on Rt. 698 (Blackberry Rd.) Go about 3 miles to stop and take a right on Rt. 687. (Stone's Dairy Rd.). Go about one and a half miles to church On right. Those going east on Rt. 57 from Patrick Co. after crossing The Henry County line, go about one mile and take a right on Rt 687 (Stone's Dairy Rd) Go about 3 miles to church on left. The church is beside Howell's Garage.

The meeting time is Monday July 5th at 10:00 a.m. We invite our Brothers, Sisters and Elders to be with us.

Tony R. Horton

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 7/10 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

We invite our correspondents and friends to our one hundredeth sixty-ninth sitting of the Staunton River Association.

The 2010 session will convene the Lord willing at Weatherford Church, the usual meeting place July 10th and 11th with Canaan Church as host. Services begin 9:30 AM on Saturday. The song service will start at 9:00 AM.

We hope the Lord will bless all to attend and we pray for a blessed meeting.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

PIGG RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST MEETING

Pigg River Primitive Baptist meeting will convene according to previous arrangements on Friday before the 1st Sunday in August 2010 and 2 days following and Republican Church is the host.

The meeting will be held on the grounds of Chestnut Church in Franklin County.

Those coming from North 220, turn left on 724 (Goose Dam Rd.) go 2 1/2 miles to the church.

We welcome and invite all ministers of our faith and order; our brethren and friends to be with us.

Elder Thomas Solomon, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 2010

Bernard Cox, VA	30.00
Maxey Delp, VA	5.00
Francine Fortner, TX	10.00
Angie Cox, NC	2.00
Rasalie Walker, VA	5.00
Albert Davidson, LA	25.00
Edna Graves, AL	5.00
Reidy Pickral, VA	25.00
J.C. Carroll, NC	100.00
Armedra Taylor, LA	10.00
Grace Manly, AL	5.00
Walter Griffith, NC	10.00
Julian Rutrough, VA	5.00
Mamie Ferguson, VA	5.00

MATTHEW 22:1-4.

And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said,

The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,

And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.

Again, he sent for other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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1429 Howlett Street
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POEM

My God, in whom are all the springs
Of boundless love, and grace unknown,
Hide me beneath thy speading wings
Till the dark cloud is overblown.

Up to the heavens I send my cry,
The Lord will my desire perform,
He sends his angel from the sky,
And saves me from the threatening storm.

My heart is fixed; my song shall raise
Immortal honors to thy name;
Awake, my tongue, to sound his praise,
My tongue, the glory of his fame.

High o'er the earth his mercy reigns,
And reaches to the utmost sky;
His truth to endless years remains,
When lower worlds dissolve and die.

Be thou exalted, O my God,
Above the heavens where angels dwell;
Thy power on earth be known abroad,
And land to land thy wonders tell.

Watts.

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EDITORIALS

"By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." Psalm 33: 6-12.

How small we are made to feel before God and in face of scriptures such as these that speak of the wisdom and power and the counsel of almighty God. What poor worms of the dust we are before Him in our own sight. But God has shown a heart of love for His people, and has manifested that they are exalted in His sight. How can it be that He considers them to be kings and royal priests unto Himself? How is it possible that He views them as the righteousness of God in Christ, considering their vile nature? Why would He condescend to show any of His things unto such unworthy creatures as we feel to be? It appears that the answer to each question is God's love to His people. He set His love upon the poor earthly vessels which He formed and created for Himself. He loves and pities them better than a loving natural father loves and pities his own children. ***"For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."*** He knows your frame first hand. He took upon Himself a body of flesh that He should know by experience all your trials and sufferings. ***"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points***

tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, but being God manifest in the flesh, He never sinned. He is a faithful high priest, who knows all about your troubles and who is willing and able to comfort and console you. Therefore, you are taught to come to Him when you need help. And then you shall be blessed to enter into His presence to find mercy when in need of forgiveness, and to find grace to sustain you in all your trials and tribulations, and to find proper answers for the questions that concern you. ***"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him."***

It appears that the whole world, for a great long while, has been pondering and debating the question, ***"How were the galaxies of the universe and the sun with all its planets, including the earth with its lively inhabitants, brought into existence?"*** The people's answers show that they have been divided into two groups. One group says that the things that appear came into existence in a mysterious natural way by themselves. They cannot explain the mystery other than to say they do not believe in a Creator, therefore they think all things were not created. The other group says that it is a mystery to them also, but they cannot understand the beauty, precision and grandeur of the heavens and the earth apart from a Creator. The first group manifests that they have not the gift of faith. Their world is without God and without hope. The second group manifests that it has at least been given a head knowledge that everything was created. But how many who say they believe things were created are actually given to believe in God and to lovingly trust Him with the true heart of faith? And how many can only believe with the intellect without loving or trusting God, having not the gift of faith? ***"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of the things which do appear."*** On the other hand, ***"The devils believe and tremble."***

There are multitudes of people that say they believe God made the world. But God said His people were the fewest of all people. His people are the remnant according to the election of grace. What then about the many that say they believe? Do they really have faith or do they just say they believe without producing any evidence of that belief? The apostle James said, by the Holy Spirit, ***"Faith without works is dead."*** Lively faith in God results in lively good works, or the good fruit of the Spirit, which God has wrought

in His people. Dead false faith is accompanied by dead works of the flesh, or the evil fruit of the devil. Jesus said, ***"Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. And He said, "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."*** And he also said, ***"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."*** We are not judges of others, but we must judge ourselves that we be not judged. We are made to examine ourselves, whether we are in the faith. We are commanded to make our own calling and election sure. By grace we must take a real look at ourselves to see what kind of fruit we are bearing. If you are like me, you very readily see the good fruit of the Spirit in those you love in the household of faith. But you are made many times to wonder if you are a hypocrite and have been altogether deceived in the whole matter. If you are anything like me, you are made to confess that you love the brethren, and have a great desire to please God, but seem to always fall far short of your desire to do good. What wretched creatures we are in the bodies of this death. How totally dependent we are upon God for any righteousness, for we have none of our own.

God, by way of His holy scriptures, specified how He made His great creation. He said through the Psalmist, ***"By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth."*** It then seems no strange thing for the apostle John to agreeably say by inspiration, ***"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."*** How easy it is for one to believe this who has been given faith. And how impossible it is for one to believe it without the gift of faith. When you are made to consider the works of God in nature - their beauty and complexity, and the way all things of nature interact perfectly - how easy it is to believe that only God in His wisdom, perfection and power could have done such an amazing work. And even more - God gave His creatures breath to live and move and to come forth after their own kind continuously since they were created upon the earth. He has done all this, and it all seems so plain to one who has been given a heart to understand. But none can perceive or acknowledge any of it in truth without faith. Even though the multitudes say they believe that God made all things, most begin to deny Him when His doctrine is proclaimed. When it is manifest from the scriptures in truth that God made from one lump, vessels of honor and vessels of dis-

honor, and that the vessels of honor were prepared for glory and the vessels of dishonor were vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, they strongly deny that God made all things. Therefore, many who say they believe in God judge themselves showing that they really do not believe in Him since they do not honor and keep His commandments and his doctrine, which are parts of that which God has made. If one is truly blessed to love God and to trust and believe in Him, that one will stand in awe of Him and will fear before Him and by grace will obey His word. Jesus said, ***"If you love me, keep my commandments."***

Even though the inhabitants of the earth at large do not truly acknowledge God as the Creator of all things and do not fear Him at this time, a day is coming when the Son of God shall appear, and then all shall fear before Him and all stand in awe of Him. The beloved apostle was blessed to say concerning Jesus, the Word of God, ***"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."*** At the coming of Jesus Christ in the clouds in that day, all the inhabitants of the earth shall acknowledge that He is Lord. The wicked shall be terrified at His presence and shall desire the rocks and mountains to fall upon them to hide them from the wrath of the Lamb. But those that have been made to love and trust Him shall stand before Him in great exultation and joy as God brings all things into submission to Himself, and destroys the wicked with the brightness of His coming. The wicked, who hate God, His word and His people shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, according to the scriptures.

God has spoken the worlds into existence, and all things in them, and so they exist. He has declared the end from the beginning concerning all things - even concerning the righteous and the wicked. And the world began and will end just as He spoke it. He has commanded His people to obey Him, and the commandment stands fast. It shall surely stand for God has given them grace for obedience. And it is God who performs all His will in and for them. The wicked, with all their worldly wisdom and all their cunning deceptions, shall be brought to nothing. All their proud speeches, all their worldly wealth and respect of persons, all their wrath and hatred for God and His people and His word shall be consumed in an instant. ***"The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect."*** And what the Lord

has said and done shall stand forever. No man can add anything to it or take away anything from it. God is the Lord. ***"The counsel of the lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations."*** What a blessed gift God has given to His people to make known to them the thoughts of His heart. The world cannot receive it, but God has spoken and His word is true. He said, ***"Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."*** It seems plain that Jacob stands for the family of God and Esau stands for the wicked. God shall surely preserve the vessels He loved and made up for honor and glory. And He shall surely destroy the vessels He hated and made for the very purpose of destruction. This is a hard saying. Who can hear it? Only those blessed of God have been given ears to hear and a heart to understand. ***"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance."*** Surely the blessed nation is that people whom God loved with an everlasting love, and the one He chose in Christ before the foundation of the world. All the poor and needy, who are cast down but not destroyed, and who look to Him for all their needs shall not be disappointed. He shall come and save you world without end. That blessedness from God is with you and shall remain with you forever - now and in all eternity, for that is your inheritance. ***"For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast."***

This was written in love, I trust, and in hope of eternal life.

Elder Jerry B. Farmer
4-16-2007

CORRESPONDENCE

June 7, 2010

Please renew my subscription to the "Signs of the Times" for two years. Enclosed is a check for more than enough. Use it as you see fit. It has been such a blessing to receive my copies for many years now. Sorry I am late renewing.

My prayer is one of thanksgiving, because the Lord continues to bless each of his Elect each day that we are here in this low ground, and I have a hope that I am one of the Elect.

Several years ago I became interested in the question of who, or what, was Melchisedec. I came to the conclusion that he was God the Father. There are two reasons for my conclusion. One of his names is King of Salem, meaning King of Peace. In Isaiah, we read that one of Christ's names is Prince of Peace. So now we see who is the King and who is the Prince. Also, Christ was made a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec.

I submit that Christ would never be "after the order of" anything or anyone other than his Father. Just something to think about.

Humbly submitted,
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VOICES OF THE PAST

"LIKE A GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED"

"The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field; Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that tke birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." (Matthew 13:31-32)

Jesus spake many things in parables to great multitudes who came to Him on that day as He sat by the seaside. The multitudes gathered were so great in number that He went into a ship to speak. Matthew records the parable of the sower. Jesus closed with the words, ***"Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."*** Jesus did not explain the parables to the multitudes. The disciples did not understand the heavenly meaning of these earthly things related by Jesus until He explained them. These sayings were shrouded in mystery. He explained them to those to whom, ***"It is given you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." (V. 11)*** If you have been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, you yearn for explanation. If you have wisdom, you shall become wiser. If you have spiritual life, you shall have it more abundantly: ***"For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath." (Mat. 13:12)***

This could be called the time of the height of the popularity of Jesus' ***"Favor with man."*** I am convinced that all other men would have used such occasion to glorify themselves by enticing as many as they could to join them. It is natural with men to think that in numbers there is more power. All who follow this inclination will boast of the numbers they have persuaded to adhere to their pleadings. Power of God must be displayed, not the power of men. God's mighty work must be displayed in such manner that no group of men could take the glory. God's crowning work of His kingdom must be done secretly being hidden from men.

What contrast between the sight of the throngs of people on the sea-

side, and *a grain of mustard seed.* Should Jesus have told them that these great multitudes of people which you have just seen is very small compared to the number which now is the kingdom of heaven, it would have sounded more reasonable. What He did tell them in comparing the kingdom to the smallest of seeds must have been different than they expected.

Mark quotes Jesus: ***"And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it." (Mark 4:30-32)*** It is remarkable that just *one* grain of mustard seed was sown. One commentator describes the mustard tree berries as much smaller than a grain of black pepper, having strong aromatic smell, and a taste much like that of a garden cresses. If one berry is much smaller than a grain of black pepper, how small would one grain of that berry be? It is so insignificant in size. God sowed the kingdoms of the earth, and one grain of the smallest seed sown is *His kingdom.* The Son of man sows children in His kingdom. (See Matthew 13:37-38) The kingdoms of the earth grow rapidly and dwindle away but God's own kingdom grows slowly and shall ever increase. We read in ***Daniel 2:44 "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."*** We hear much of the decline of the Church. We cannot believe it in the face of so much scriptural proof otherwise. There shall be no end to the *increase* of Christ's government and peace in His kingdom because it shall not be left to other men. The *zeal* of the Lord of hosts shall perform this. Read Isaiah 9:6-7. Our zeal to help the Lord in this matter would result to a zeal of ignorance. Our unbelief in the Lord's perfect and complete performance in His secret way, sometimes inspires us to act foolishly by trying to speed up God's will. Abram tried to hurry God's promise which resulted in the birth of Ishmael. God's secret and extraordinary procedure resulted in the birth of Isaac at the set time of God.

A grain of the seed of the Holy Ghost through due process brought into being a little baby. Eternal life was in this seed. All of God's chosen people were wrapped securely in this seed. This seed became the only begotten Son of God which was born in Bethlehem. God blended Himself for the first time with any of

His creation when Mary was conceived with the Holy Ghost. All of His creation can call him *God,* yet none of His creation can call him, *Father,* but through Christ Jesus, the Son of God and the Son of man. Mary was highly blessed among women to give birth to this Son. Eternal Life was in the seed. It grew after it was planted. Mary's flesh did not produce any of this eternal life. She did not design the characteristics of this Son. God curiously and wonderfully wrought this work, as in all other births, that Jesus should come forth as a little babe. It was determined of God that men should see this baby wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger. This was *the sign.* It is yet *the sign "Unto us a child is born."* (See Isaiah 9:6)

There is no proof that Jesus experienced any extraordinary growth from His conception to His crucifixion in the *natural* sense. There was no difference in His natural appearance from ordinary men, because Judas had to point Him out by kissing in order to show which one of the group was He. If Jesus had begun His extraordinary ministry while yet a babe in nature, surely the Scriptures would have pointed it out. We have no record of his talking while a baby. We have no authentic record of His supernatural power being displayed in childhood. (We do have some very interesting stories under the title, *Infancy I* and *Infancy II,* recorded in the apocryphal books of the New Testament. These seem to be imaginative.) It was normal for him to grow in stature as other men. Luke records: *"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."* Was Jesus as wise when He was born as He was when He was crucified? Mark says He *increased* in these four things noted. There must be a gradual growth in Jesus to typify this Kingdom. It was normal that He should begin His remarkable career after becoming thirty years of age. The record does give us one incident when He was twelve years old proving His divine wisdom and knowledge of the fact that He was then launching upon the divine career: *"...Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"*

Eighteen years passed from the time that He astonished the doctors with His wise questions and answers before His baptism and public ministry. Why? He was under the law. Eighteen years intervened that must have been well used in fulfillment of the law. He must serve His time under the dominion of the law. When this service was fulfilled, Jesus was ready for baptism. This act of baptism was at the proper moment. This baptism meant something to Jesus. His status was changed. This was the crowning act of the fulfillment of righteousness: *"And Jesus answering said unto Him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then He suffered Him."* There had been silence from

Heaven concerning Him for thirty years. This silence was broken upon completion of Jesus' baptism. This Voice said, ***"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*** *(See Matt. 3:16-17)* Some may think that Jesus began immediately to preach but He must first be led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. This temptation must not come immediately but after forty days and forty nights of fasting. After the temptations: ***"Jesus began to preach, and to say; Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*** *(Matt. 4:17)* He then began choosing His apostles. His command to the two fishermen were: ***"Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."*** Jesus had served *God* through these thirty years *for* His people. Now, He could be of great service *to* His people. Jesus chose only twelve apostles to whom was given extraordinary powers. He sent them forth preparing a people for the kingdom. Jesus later sent forth the seventy assuring them that: ***"The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth the labourers into his harvest."*** *(Luke 10:2)* Surely there were those whose growth in the faith were ripe for the labourers. These seventy were not to prepare the people but to preach *Peace* to a prepared people. These seventy were not to gather in the young and unregenerated but to preach the Gospel to those whom the Lord had made ready to receive it.

Peter was the first to be chosen as an Apostle of Jesus during the natural life of Jesus. Peter was the first to be chosen to feed His sheep and lambs after the resurrection of Jesus during His sojourn before His ascension. Peter was the spokesman for the brethren during the time of their ***"Wait for the promise of the Father which ye have heard of me."*** Peter spoke to about one hundred twenty disciples relative to one who should take the bishopric of Judas. Peter spoke to the thousands gathered at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost after such wonderful demonstration of the fulfillment of the Father's promise. Yes, Peter was the first to preach to the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius and to witness the pouring out of the Holy Ghost upon them.

The church at Jerusalem must have been composed of about one hundred and twenty names because that was the record given of those congregated when Peter spoke to them relative to choosing a replacement for Judas. About three thousand souls were added to the church at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. This was the gathering of the harvest of the ripe ones into the fold. During this period the Gentiles began to be received.

Paul of Tarsus, which was over three hundred miles from Jerusalem, was Christ's chosen one to bear the Gospel to the Gentiles especially. We

find the first church of note composed chiefly of Gentile converts to be Antioch Church. Paul was a member of this church. The Holy Ghost separated Paul and Barnabas to the work of the ministry which was sanctioned by proper ordination. God knew how to control things so that Paul and Barnabas would ***"turn to the Gentiles." (Read Acts 13.)*** Differences in customs and traditions between the Jews and the Gentiles caused a rift between Jerusalem and Antioch Church. They did not isolate themselves from one another because of these differences but met together and agreed on a negotiated peace. Read 15th chapter of Acts. The same Holy Ghost, the same Father, and the same Jesus Christ were believed upon by both Jew and Gentile in both Antioch and Jerusalem congregations, or churches. Even though disputations and dissension abounded there was hope for negotiated peace for they desired fellowship, unity, and understanding. This is true of all children of God who have experienced necessary growth of the faith that was planted in their hearts; - though it was, ***"As a grain of mustard seed,"*** when first planted.

We wonder why local churches increase in growth, decrease, and finally fade away. God teaches us a lesson. The place of the church is only a candlestick, or candle holder. There is no light in the *holder.* A holder may contain several *candles,* but there is no light in the candle, unless Jesus has lighted it. He lighteth every man that cometh into the world. The world spoken of, of course, is His kingdom. Jesus is the life and light of His kingdom. When Jesus appears the light shines. When He absents Himself, How gross is that darkness! Is the candle always lighted? I have seen candlesticks with many candles but no light. The candle cannot light itself. I have seen natural candle holders with many candles, yet just a few lighted. The owner can light them, snuff the light out, and relight them at his will. A church, or church member, is no different from any other organization, or man, unless Jesus, the Life and Light is present. The candlestick may be removed, but not destroyed.

Anytime, or anywhere, that members of a local church become proud of themselves, and feel that they are above other people, it is evident that Jesus is not in the midst. The proud Jews stumbled. They fell. Did their fall disprove the promise of God that His kingdom should grow? Did their stumbling and falling result in the kingdom becoming smaller? NO. God's purpose and will in this matter was to enlarge His kingdom, and to make the Jews aware of the fact that His manifest favor was turned to another people. Let us hear Paul on this question: ***"I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come to the Gen-***

tiles, for to provoke them to jealousy ." (Rom. 11:11)

Should we bother the soil in which the seed of Eternal Life is sown? Should we probe a person to see whether or not the faith, ***"as a grain of mustard seed,"*** is evident? that is, before it is made manifest. Should we hear that a certain seed is planted at a certain spot, we would not stir up that soil to see how the seed was progressing. We would let it alone and let nature take its course. We would not be forever probing the spot. The Spirit works secretly in the growth of the faith as a grain of mustard seed. It is secretly hidden in the soil of the person to be manifest in God's appointed time and way. Its growth until the time of harvest depends upon God, Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will. All things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. Tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword, death, life, angels, principalities, powers, things past, things present, things to come, and all other creatures: - *all* are ordained for the good of His people, and for the increase of His kingdom.

This kingdom shall shoot out its branches into all parts of the world. Many saints shall come as heavenly birds being drawn by the sweet odor of prayers, humility, love, and unity. They shall lodge there, eating the manna from Heaven, under the shadow of the ordinances, ministers, and blessings of the church. Saints shall sing praises together as birds chirp and sing. One church may be far distant from another church as the ends of branches are far apart. One group of saints in one church may not even be aware of saints in other churches, but all should be consoled with the fact that all of their feastings are from the same source. When a group is busy with feasting, fellowship one with another, and praising God together, saints do not have time to be concerned with saints in faraway places. Saints may go from church to church as birds flit from branch to branch, yet they are in the same tree and borne by the same roots. As all sap must come from the root, so the enlivening spirit flows to each and every branch from and through the root, Christ Jesus. Some branches may be cut off by the Husbandman. Some branches may be grafted into the tree. This is the work of God and we should realize that a good tree is known by the fruit it bears. A good tree brings forth good fruits. A good live tree may seem dead in the wintertime but when the sap rises in the spring there is manifestation of life. Some churches may seem dead for awhile when Christ turns His back but will enliven when Christ favors it.

Take courage, brethren, for the kingdom of heaven is increasing by the mighty power of God. Isaiah prophesied this growth as God spoke thru him: ***"They shall not***

hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, the waters cover the sea." (Isaiah 11:9) It is no accident that - the Bible is the best seller of any other book in the world. We venture to say that the Bible is in more homes now than it has ever been. It is written in more languages and dialects than any other book. There have been more books written about Jesus Christ by composers than any other person. Christianity has experienced a slow but sure growth. Commentators will tell you of the rapid growth of modern Communism. They compare its growth with Christianity. They would have you believe that there is danger of Communism swallowing all who embrace Christianity. Believe them not. Many Ideologies have sprung up and experienced rapid growth through the centuries, but have just as rapidly declined and died out.

Sometimes we become heartsick because hope is deferred. We feel as the prophet of old: ***"Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life."*** God's answer to him was: ***"I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal." (See Rom. 11:3-4)*** Sometimes we become faint-hearted as Jeremiah: ***"The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." (Jer. 8:20)*** Instead of doing us harm, this sickness of heart is used by God to cause us to pray to Him for mercy and deliverance. Was the harvest passed? No. We are gathered into folds here after becoming ripe for the churches. We trust that when we shall be perfectly conformed to the Image of Christ, we shall be gathered into Eternity to enjoy endless life with God and the complete family of God.

May God bless us to be content with our lot, and reconciled to His will.

Elder E. J. Lambert.

HAVILAND, Kansas.
SANTA CRUZ, Cal.,
Jan. 21, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS: -This is to you, to the churches at Los Angeles and Riverside, and to the brethren everywhere. In the first place, I will say that I know I cannot write that which will instruct you in the things of the kingdom, but have promised to let so many hear from me that I take this method of doing so. I just want to have a little conversation with you, and if we cannot sit around a real fireside, I hope that we may be warmed by His love, and feel that we are brethren indeed in spirit and in truth. The editors give us their labor of love so abundantly and so unselfishly that I desire to thank them for what their writings have

meant to me, and to encourage them to continue, believing that God has placed them upon the watchtower to tell us of the. night, for the comfort and uplifting of his scattered children. I well realize that they have obstacles to overcome, that they have hardships to endure, that they have trials of which we know nothing, that the Spirit does not infiuence them at all times even as with us, yet they have to preach, and it is not an easy thing to do; but they remember that the sheep must be fed, that they have put their hands to the plow and must not look back, so they can only trust in God to give them a message. May they persevere in the things which they have learned and been assured of, knowing of whom they were taught. I believe all of us appreciate their faithfulness, but that does not compare with the *"Well done, thou good and faithful servant,"* which they will hear when they stand in the presence of their Lord and Savior. I pray every day that he may bless their efforts, that he may attend them throughout this year, and all the years to come, granting them all that is best and good. Recently my thoughts have been wandering more than ever to the dear ones at Bethlehem; it was there that I was led into the watery grave by Elder Badger, after traveling about three thousand miles, that I might have that privilege if they consented to receive me. I told so little, and with such a stammering tongue, that I wonder to this day why they added me to their number. How beautiful everything looked that morning; how lovingly they greeted me. Surely I looked into angel faces; if not real ones, the disguise was perfect. I know their ministrations were tender and sweet, giving me a foretaste of the glory of heaven. May God minister to them as they did to me; may he comfort them as they comforted me, and may their faith al ways be as firm and their trust as unwavering as mine was on that occasion. Since that time, seventeen years ago, I have visited them but once, yet the remembrance of it repays me for being deprived of hearing preaching during the intervening years. God had prepared a feast for me, and I ate and drank of the bread and water of life until I was lifted above the things of time and sense; I saw new beauties in all his works and sayings, and I thanked him that he had thus directed my steps. For the time being he was my all in all, and I was satisfied. Until the foregoing specified occasions I had been living in a barren country for twenty-five years; had met only one person who believed as I do, and had not heard a sermon. Later, Elder Hess, of Oregon, came this way, stayed two nights and preached each evening, once at my home to an audience of two, and again at the house of the brother just mentioned. He was a brother, though not a member of the visible church. He passed to the beyond more than a year ago, and died triumphant. Brother Hess

was gladly welcomed at both places, and we thanked God for leading him to this far away country; also that there were as many as three in company, for the promise is that where two or three are gathered in his name that he will be in their midst, and we realized the fulfillment of it. Again, during the year of the exposition, I answered the doorbell, and a gentlemen asked, "Is this Mrs. Mary E. Wright?" Something told me that he was a brother in the Lord, and it proved to be so. I think he was from Ohio, and that his name was Hudson. He was on his way home, and said that he could not pass without stopping to see me. Though he only stayed a few hours, I rejoiced that he thought me worthy to enter my gates, and I praised the Giver of all good gifts that he had been mindful of me. In the meantime I have been the recipient of many letters which I greatly prize; I believe I answered all of them, but could not keep up the correspondence owing to my many duties. It may be that I could have laid aside some of them, but I knew my replies would have been so inferior that I hesitated. Some who scan these times may wonder why I have so specifically mentioned the coming of those brethren, and the letters. Well, if any one of you have been compelled to live in the wilderness for forty years without hearing a familiar voice, you will know something about it. Their visits were like springs of water in a dry land, and I drank to the depths; more like the fragrance of sweet flowers, and it lingers with me yet. They talked of the things which had been taught me more than fifty years ago, and though it was the old, old story, it was so new to me, by reason of my isolation, that my heart was melted to tenderness and my eyes were suffused with tears. I realized how I had been watched over and cared for, when for months at a time I had been so indifferent and careless. I looked back over the path which I had traveled, and saw one as crooked as ever was made by a professed follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, but I remember that he can make crooked things straight, that his promises are yea and amen, and my mistakes were put behind me; I only saw his goodness and glory. Now I will take you to the churches in southern California. For several years I had read the notice of the meetings of Little Flock Church at Riverside, but it was nearly five hundred miles distant, and though my mind was continually on them, could not see the way clear to visit them. In July, 1916, my dear companion was taken from me, and the first of the following April I was on the way to visit a daughter in Los Angeles; I was getting nearer and nearer to the dear brethren, and it greatly lessened my grief. The thought of meeting with them, of hearing the certain sound once more, of the comfort of their fellowship, and of my need of their reproof and correction, gave me new life,

and I looked forward to the time with eagerness. I didn't know then that there was a Primitive Baptist Church in Los Angeles, but after arriving, there wrote to the church clerk of Little Flock and asked concerning a sister Dawson, whose name I had also seen in the SIGNS. He informed me that she was living near where I was stopping and the next day (Saturday) I went over to see her. To my surprise and delight found that there was a church (Liberty) within a few blocks of her home. The next morning I met with them. The outside of the house looked good to me as I approached, but when I was inside I was filled with love and praise, and I walked softly, for I felt that I was in a holy place. I wish I conld tell you in an entertaining manner what a trusting, faithful, humble, well-grounded people I found there. Some of them remembered my letters in the SIGNS, which gave me recognition, and they opened their hearts and their doors to me. I was no longer a stranger to them, but a poor, unworthy sinner, such as they; a sinner trusting alone to Jesus for salvation, as they were; a poorly taught sinner, but one who believed in predestination without any conditions attached, and I found a response from their hearts, genuine and true. From then on we were fellow-travelers, and every other Sunday I was numbered among them, spending there some of the happiest days of my life, and to each one I extend love and gratitude for their hearty handclasps, for their hospitality, and for the confidence they reposed in me. Their manifestations of love for each other, and their zeal for the cause, were to me evidences of their heirship to an undefiled inheritance; and furthermore, I had my great desire granted: that of going to Riverside, where I met the same kind of people, giving me, and all others who came in His name, a warm welcome. They told the same story of Jesus and his love; they worshipped in spirit and in truth the same God, counting it no shame to own his cause and to confess their sins. To them all I send greetings and ask that they remember me in bonds, as bound with them. Business brought me back here the last of June, but in October the call to return was so strong that I heeded it; received the same warm welcome and remained there until the last of December. Both churches were without a pastor, and I pray that God, knowing their need, will send them one who preaches the gospel in its purity; one who believes that God can and does save sinners without let or hindrance; that by and through the atoning blood of Jesus, and that alone, can they hope for salvation. Elder Mayfield, of Oregon, visited and preached at both places during my stay, and he spoke as one having authority. I had the opportunity of partaking of the bread and wine, which were blessed and offered in remembrance of Him whose body was bruised and whose blood

was shed, that those for whom he died might live forever. Several members at both places spoke to those assembled with great liberty and much feeling. It seems to me that God is preparing them for his use. I tried in my feeble way to arrange it for brother Lefferts to visit there, but as an Elder of Missouri had signified his willingness to do so for a few months, and they had agreed to it, I thought best, as did the few to whom I spoke, to wait awhile, but some day I hope to be one of the number who will welcome him to our midst. I am not one bit selfish in it, either; I want them to hear even as I have. When I was leaving, one of the brothers said, *"Write me something that will help and cheer me."* It had seemed to me that he was one whom God had greatly blessed, and I was astonished. He appeared to be sorrowful of heart but it is wholesome to be of a contrite spirit, and God loves just such; he will hearken unto them and be a present help in all their troubles. He believes with all his heart, and has been promised eternal life; he loves the brethren, an infallible test of his kinship; he has confessed his sins and his Savior before men, and will be confessed before his Father in heaven; he has ministered to the saints and walked orderly in his profession, and God will remember him in love and mercy. If he is working out his salvation with fear and trembling he is the better adorning his high calling, and it is that for which I pray daily. God made a covenant that he would put his laws into the hearts and minds of his people, and that he would remember their sins and iniquities no more forever. Then let us hold fast to our profession without wavering. Even down to old age his people shall prove his sovereign, eternal, unchangable love. Glorious things have been spoken to us. His greatness and goodness have been manifested in a satisfying, convincing, comforting way; then let us be still and know that he is God. I expect some of you will think I am too confident, or, How does she know that she is one for whom Christ died? I have told you all I know about it; the good book says so. All of us admit that God has a people, a peculiar people, that he loved them before the foundation of the world, and that Christ suffered and died that they might live with him in eternity. Moreover, they have been described so minutely, have been promised so much, being told of the glory that awaits them, and tjhat in his own good time he would reveal himself to them. The Bible testifies of him. Does it not testify of us? We feel and know that it does. For whom are the promises? To them that put their trust in the arm of the flesh, or to those who are taught in colleges and in Sunday-schools, whose god is their belly, and who are wedded to the world and the lust thereof? I do not think so. He draws the people of his choice by cords of kindness, and we have felt the drawing. He caused

us to see ourselves as he sees us, and we were led to call on him for mercy; moreover, he taught us to call aright. He caused us to hunger and thirst, then gave us the bread and water of life freely. He caused us to humble ourselves in his sight, then raised us to see him, to know and to commune with him. He told us of the glory that awaits us, until the veil intervenes but dimly between us. He has taken our stony hearts away and given us new ones, has put a new song in our mouths, even praise unto him. He found us too, when strangers to his commonwealth and led us in paths we had not known. He caused us to rejoice in a finished salvation, and to ascribe to him all honor, glory and power. We believe that no weapon formed against us shall prosper, and that he shall condemn every tongue that shall rise against us. If we believe these things, and the hundreds of others confirming the same, and constraining, us, let us conclude that we are on our way to the city of the everlasting God; that we are his predestinated children, and when compassed about with such a cloud of witnesses, let us hold fast to the truth which made us free, laying aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, seeing that we have been born again not of incorruptible seed, but by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. If I believe I am one of his children, it is not of my willing of running, it is of the will of God. Does it make me boastful, or make me feel better than others who see through a glass darkly. No, a thousand times no. It makes me feel more humble, more prayerful, more desirous of following in his footsteps, more sorrowful when I err, more deferential to my brethren whom I love so well. In fact the more of his light and glory I see, the more defect I see in myself, and if we humble ourselves he will exalt us in due time. I feel that I am the least of his children, and when we gather at the pearly gates, if there were such a thing as literal ones, I shall hesitate to enter until all those for whom he died have passed through; God, who knoweth the secret thoughts and intents of the hearts of men, being my judge.

I have written a great deal, but am afraid to no profit; know, though, that those I have met will be glad to hear that I am as well as usual and abounding in his love. And now may the God of all grace, who hath calleth you unto his eternal glory by Jesus Christ, after ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen and settle you.

From an unworthy sister, who asks your indulgence.

MARY E. WRIGHT.

PSALM 95:1.

O Come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us may a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

ISAIAH XXVI. 17.

"LIKE as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O Lord."

This presents the attitude of the church under the law looking forward by faith unto and eagerly hoping for the coming of the day of the Lord, which would bring salvation to Israel. All the patriarchs and prophets and all the holy ones of the old covenant period were like a woman travailing in pain, in birth to be delivered, because they were all longing for and earnestly desiring the coming of the Messiah, in whom the spiritual ones truly hoped for salvation from sin and from death. The people of God from ancient times have been as one body hungering and thirsting for the coming of Jesus. Therefore the church under the law was a woman great with child. This child was Jesus, and was the man-child brought forth by the woman. In all the types of the old testament, in all the sayings of the prophets, in all the experiences of the patriarchs, Jesus was presented or was the One brought forth or given birth to in all their testimony. The people of God were in this shape in the sight of the Lord. All their own efforts could bring forth nothing but wind or emptiness, but the Spirit of the Lord working mightily in them could and did bring forth Jesus out of them. The pangs of this spiritual travail grew more and more intense the nearer the day of Jesus approached, until at last he was brought forth upon the earth: the fruitions of all the hopes and longings of his people. If our readers will turn to the twelfth chapter of Revelation they will there see how the word of inspiration presents the church in the figure of a woman clothed with the sun (the glory of God), with the moon (the law) under her feet, upon her head a crown of twelve stars (the apostles).

"And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered." Down in the fifth verse it is recorded that the church gave birth to a man-child. This child is Jesus. This text in Revelation shows the gospel church raised above the law and clothed with the beauty of God's holiness bringing forth Christ. Christ is brought forth in all the teachings, in all the experiences, in all the ordinances, in all the order, of the gospel church. The text previously quoted from the twenty-sixth chapter of Isaiah shows how this was true of the people of God under the law: that they too were in pain, owing to the fact that they were wrought upon by the Spirit to look forward unto the coming of Christ, seeing themselves as poor, needy sinners Bud greatly in need of him to save them.

Thus all the testimony of the people of God, whether under the

law or under the gospel, is likened unto the condition of a woman in travail. The object that God had in all the fears and tremblings of his people, his purpose in all their trials and afflictions, was that Jesus should be brought forth out of all that pain.

We have written these two brief articles at the request of a sister who lives near Macon, Georgia.

Elder H.H. Lefferts

ROMANS 5: 1-2.

Therefore "being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

By whom also we have access by faith into this grace "wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held, the Lord willing, on the 5th Sunday in August at Big Meadows Church.

Big Meadows is located about 20 miles below Graham, NC. Those traveling 1-85 take the Pittsboro Graham exit and go 17 miles toward Pittsboro. After crossing Cane Creek bridge take first road to right at top of hill - go 4 miles to a cross road and turn left - go 1 mile to church on right.

We invite all lovers of the Truth and especially the Elders of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.

NEW RIVER ASSOCIATION (2010)

The two hundred and sixteenth annual session of the New River Association, will convene the Lord willing, at Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church located in Floyd County, Va. This session will be entertained by Flower Gap Primitive Baptist Church located in Carroll County, Va.

It will begin on Saturday before the Fourth Sunday. It will continue through Sunday, dates being September 25th and 26th, the Lord willing.

Indian Creek Church is located on Highway 787 in Indian Valley, Va. Those coming by way of Rt. 221, Rt. 52 or Rt. 8 come to Willis, Va. and turn on Hwy 787 go approximately 7 miles to church on left.

We invite the ministers of our Faith and Order, also Brothers, Sisters and Friends to be with us, Lord willing.

Kenneth D. Hopkins, Moderator
J.B. Mitchell, Jr., Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 154th Annual Session of the Smith River Association will convene with Salem Church on September 3, 4, 5, 2010.

Located in Floyd County, Virginia on Rt. 221 about 20 miles south of Rt. 419 in Roanoke, Va. past Copper Hill on the right for those coming from Floyd go North on 221 about 15 miles to church on the left past the Community of Check.

We invite the ministers of our Faith and Order, our Brethren and Friends to be with us.

Tony R. Horton,
Association Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union meeting will be held at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church located on business 29, 708 South Main Street, Gretna, Va (Pittsylvania County) on Saturday 28th, 2010 before the 5th Sunday in August.

Singing will begin at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30 a.m.

We invite all ministers of our faith and order, our brethren and friends to be with us.

Elder Marvin Brumfield, Moderator
Oscar Pickral, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 2010

Miles T. Bird, LA	10.00
Charlie Fox, AR	5.00
James Shelor, VA	5.00
Fred W. Murphy, VA	5.00
Coy Holley, VA	5.00
Alvis Beachem, NC	25.00
Charles Matthews, LA	25.00

PSALM 92:5.

O Lord, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep.

OBITUARIES

HELEN BURGIN PITTMAN

My precious mother, Helen Louise Burgin Pittman, fell asleep into the arms of her dear Savior on January 1, 2010 at the Highland Pines Nursing Home in Longview, Texas. Mom was born October 23, 1922 in Big Sandy, Texas to Grover Cleveland and Opal Harris Burgin and lived to be 87 years old. She was a member of Paron Primitive Baptist Church in Hawkins, Texas for almost 50 years. Mom was a strong believer in salvation by grace through the blood and righ-

teousness of Jesus Christ alone. Our dear Lord blessed her with a servant's heart as she spent most of her life helping those in need, especially those of the household of faith. Mom was loved both far and near and by young and old alike. She was one of the best mothers anyone could ever have.

Mom is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, Phil and Joyce Pittman, and three grandchildren, David, Karen, and Brian Pittman. She is also survived by her beloved sisters, Flora Stutts and Patsy Mitchell, her brother-in-law, Wesley Stutts, as well as a host of nieces and nephews. Funeral services were held at Beaty Funeral Home in Hawkins, Texas on January 3, 2010 with Elders Jimmy Hamrick and C.C. Morris officiating. Their kind and sweet remarks regarding Mom were very comforting to the family. Mom's body was laid to rest in Smith Cemetery to peacefully wait for the return of her blessed Savior to awaken it to immortal life through His merits and grace. May our dear Lord receive all the praise, honor, and glory both now and forever. Amen!

An unworthy son,
Phil Pittman

SISTER RUBY STRATTON MCGUIRE

On January 21, 2010, the Lord called our Sister McGuire from this world of sin and sorrow, we believe to a better place. To a place where there will be no sorrow, no pain and no dying. All will be peace and joy, in a place called Heaven where God Himself will be the light of that city. Sister McGuire was well thought of in the community. She had many that loved her, her family, her church family and friends.

She leaves to morn, her daughter Sandra Poindexter and husband Tommie, and Ester Griffin of Eden, son Jerry McGuire and wife Nikki of Ruffin, four grandchildren, and five great grandchildren. Sister, Myrtle Nelson of Eden, and brothers Tony Stratton [who has now passed away] of Ruffin and Gordon Stratton of Eden.

Sister Ruby joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church June 28, 1959. She was a member of this church for over 50 years. I remember years ago when she would come in church on Sunday. She, Brother Hopkins and Brother Hopkins wife would be together. This was back when the church would fill up. I believe God did something for her that man could not do, that was touched her heart with the finger of His love. ***Romans 8: verse 28 "and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God to them who are the called, according to his purpose."***

Also I believe she believed in a God of all grace. God sent his son into this world to save his people. In St. John chapter 17 verse 12 Jesus

said, speaking of his people, ***"while I was with them in the world I kept them in thy name. Those that thou gavest me I have kept and none of them is lost but the son of perdition that the scripture might be fulfilled."***

We at Dan River will miss her for we will see her face no more. We feel our loss will be her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted January 25, 2010 by Elder Kenneth Key at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. Burial was in the church cemetery to await the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I would like to thank Sandra, her daughter, for helping me with this information.

Written by one who is also looking for that day when we shall see Him, be like Him and be satisfied.

R. Allen Carroll

Valley View Primitive Baptist Church

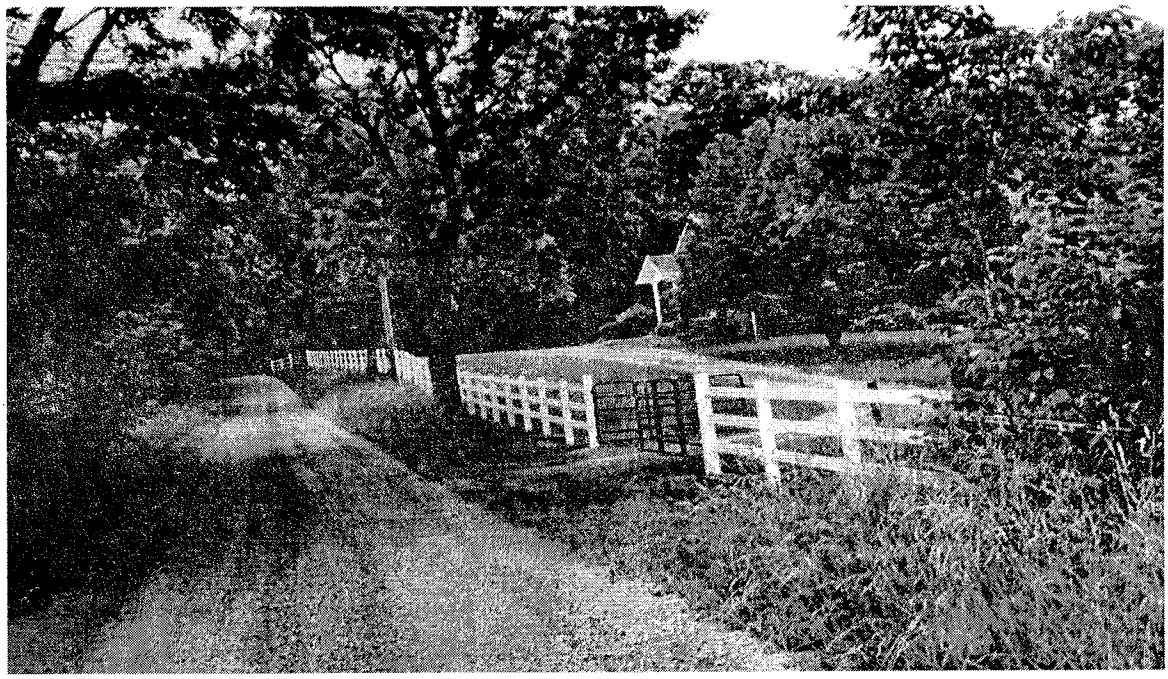

Picture of fence in front "Valley View Church" that Brother Thompson liked so well.

KENNETH GRAY THOMPSON

Valley View Church has lost a precious Brother who loved the church and was always willing and ready to do everything to see that the Brethren and visitors were comfortable. Also, he was interested

in and helped with the upkeep of the church. He was so pleased when the white fence was put up.

He loved to go with Brethren to visit other churches and fellowship with Brethren from other places. He was pleased when other brethren visited with us. He always stood by the doors greeting everyone as they came in the church.

He was a beloved son, husband, Daddy, Pawpaw and brother. He was peacefully called home on Monday, November 16, 2009 with his family by his side. He was born December 28,1933. He joined Valley View, Sunday, October 16,1994 and was baptized November 20,1994 in Little River by his Pastor, Elder Raymond Goad. He was preceded in death by his father, Gold Thompson, and a brother, Johnny Thompson. He is survived by his wife of 31 years, Faye Thompson, son, Monty Thompson and wife Lou Ann of Christiansburg, daughter, Tami Koury and husband Ernie, Jr, of Burlington NC; sons, Tony Hylton of Radford, VA and Greg Hylton of Christiansburg, VA. Grandchildren, Ellie Thompson, Erin, Elizabeth and Lauren Koury, his mother, Sister Irene Thompson, whom he had a special and wonderful relationship, and always took her to church most every Sunday and looked after her. Sisters, Corrine Vaughn, Betty Linkous and husband, CB; Winki Akers and husband Bud, and Mary Jones. His mother-in-law, Eavie Phillips and numerous nieces and nephews.

He was owner of Holiday Datsun, now New River Nissan. He sold the business in 1988 to enjoy his true passion of raising cattle on his grandparents' farm.

Funeral service was held with a very large crowd at 2 p.m. on Friday, November 20, 2009 at Valley View Church. Conducted by Elder Raymond Goad and Elder Larry Hollandsworth with interment in the Thompson Cemetery, asleep in Jesus awaiting his second coming. May the Lord reconcile us to his will and realize our loss is his eternal gain.

Written by Lena Duncan at the request of Valley View Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
Lena Duncan, Clerk
Naomi Agee, Assistant Clerk

Family information contributed by the Thompson Family

---

1 John 4: 4-5.

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

They are the of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

VOL. 178 HILLSVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER 2010 NO. 9

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

Dear Refuge of my weary soul,
On Thee, when sorrow rise,
On Thee, when waves of trouble roll,
My fainting hope relies.

To Thee I tell each rising grief,
For Thou alone canst heal;
Thy word can bring a sweet relief
For every pain I feel.

But O! when gloomy doubts prevail,
I fear to call Thee mine,
The springs of comfort seem to fail,
And all my hopes decline.

Yet, gracious God, where shall I flee?
Thou art my only trust;
And still my soul would cleave to Thee,
Though prostrate in the dust.

Hast Thou not bid me seek Thy face;
And shall I seek in vain?
And can the ear of sovereign grace
Be deaf when I complain?

No, still the ear of sovereign grace
Attends the mourner's prayer:
O may I ever find access
To breathe my sorrows there!

Thy mercy seat is open still,
Here let my soul retreat;
With humble hope attend Thy will
And wait beneath Thy feet.

Ann Steele

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EDITORIALS

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all of one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Acts 2:1-4.

Jesus had led the perfect life without sin. He had spoken the words of life that no other man had ever spoken, and yet had been hated, mocked, and scourged. He then was cruelly nailed to a tree and left there to die the death of a base criminal, yet he had done nothing amiss. Nevertheless, no man took His life from Him, but He laid it down of Himself to redeem those He loved. He took His life up again on the third day according to the scriptures, and appeared to His apostles and disciples for forty days. He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. About one hundred twenty of them were gathered together in an upper room in Jerusalem and continued with one accord in prayer and supplication. They, by grace, were patiently waiting for the promise of God that they should receive power after the Holy Ghost should come upon them, and that they would be witnesses unto Jesus in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

This was to be a special time in the history of the church when the prophesies of God should be fulfilled. It was to be the particular manifestation of God showing His power in and upon his people as the church was about to be established visibly. When this manifestation came, Peter said, ***"But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith***

God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions and your old men shall see dreams..." The true believers had been gathered from all parts of the world to experience this outpouring of the Spirit and to be sent back to their native places where the churches were to be established. These things they saw and heard, and they were empowered for the purposes of God to be accomplished in and through them.

We are given a true account of the things that transpired there. The question in my mind is this: does this account only give a report of the history of that day, or are there things hidden in it that are relevant and meaningful in our experience today? Only God is able to give us the true answer, which would be to His glory and to our comfort and edification. No man can do anything of himself. Everything about the heavenly kingdom is in a mystery that is too high and wide and broad and deep for us to know apart from the Holy Spirit. *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."* May the Lord open to us the hidden treasures of knowledge and understanding according to His will and purpose?

On the day of Pentecost, it was manifest that there were true believers gathered together in one place and in one accord in obedience to the Lord's commands. I am made to believe that this was an example given for the church to follow today. By the grace of God, His people gladly obey the Lord's command to forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is. By grace, they also seek peace and ensue it. They are blessed to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Their minds and hearts are knit together in love and truth. The Spirit of God in them causes them to bear the fruit of the Spirit, which is: love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance against which there is no law. We see, in all the true churches that we have been blessed to know, that the children of God are given to walk in the light and to be in one accord. And they are given to speak the truth in love by the Holy Spirit that is in them.

It is a grief to mention, but there are many people who gather together in many places who are not doing so in obedience to the Lord's commands. They take hold of His name but deny His word. Jesus said, *"Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"* The prophet of old said, *"And in that day seven women shall take hold on one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach."* So it appears today.

Many take His name to hide their wickedness, but eat their own bread (have their own doctrine) and wear their own apparel (have their own righteousness). There are many today who hate the doctrine of Christ. My family and I experienced it firsthand. Many years ago, when I was given to teach the doctrine election among them, they rose up against my family and me and hatefully cast us out from their midst. They vigorously deny election, true order, and the sovereignty of God. There are many who say that all men have faith, contrary to the scripture. There are many who say that God wants to save everyone, and that salvation is according to the choice of individuals, and that salvation is not altogether by grace. But these things must be in the world.

All in the upper room in Jerusalem were waiting upon Him to fulfill His promise. They were all powerless in themselves to cause anything to come about. Likewise, when we are brought together in meeting, it is mutually agreed, in the inward man, that we are weak and can do nothing of ourselves, and that we must wait upon the Lord. God's people have been taught to know that the preacher cannot preach without that power which comes down from above. All that are taught of God know that there are no 'able preachers' but rather 'enabled preachers', and that is only by the grace of God. They know that none can see, hear or understand anything unless their eyes are opened, their ears are unstopped, and their hearts made soft and tender to the things of the Spirit. They know that they must sit and wait upon the Lord for all things. I am made to believe it is much like the day when the Lord gave the loaves and the fishes to the disciples to distribute to the multitudes. The people who had nothing to eat were made to sit in groups and wait. The disciples had nothing to give to them except what the Lord blessed and broke and gave unto them to hand out. And they were commanded to take up the fragments after the people had eaten, and they took up twelve baskets. I am made to believe this was for the apostles' nourishment. It appears that the same is true of the preaching of the gospel. All must wait upon the Lord, for it all comes from Him. And the preachers are also nourished by the gospel that they are given to preach.

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all of one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at

Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language." As they were waiting, a great miracle occurred in their midst. They heard and saw and experienced things they had never known before. They heard the sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind. They saw cloven tongues like as of fire that sat upon each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. And every man heard them speak in his own language.

I cannot help believing that we have experienced a measure of this same grace of God from time to time. Can you not remember sitting and waiting upon the Lord in your meetings, longing and yearning for the blessed experience of feeling and knowing the Lord's presence and power? Can you not remember feeling such a great love for your brethren and friends in the faith that you felt to be altogether in one accord with them, having nothing against any one of them? Can you not remember times when your ministers were brought before you in such weakness and humility that you knew the Lord was near? Can you not remember times when you felt that your ministers were made to be a flaming fire in their preaching, and you believed surely the power of God in the Spirit was upon them? Can you not remember when your heart burned with the glowing fire of love for Jesus who gave His life for you and suffered for you in sorrow and grief unspeakable according to the gospel? Can you not remember times when you were made to believe and feel that He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, and that the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and that every stripe He received was for our healing? Can you remember times when you felt that the preaching was just for you, in the very language that you understood and that fit your experience and condition?

Was it not at times such as these that you were made to know the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom? Was it not at such times that you rejoiced to believe that Jesus is the Word of God and that the Word was with God and the Word was God, and in Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily? Was it not then when you looked upon the great creation seeing that all was the handiwork of God made for His glory and our good? Was it not at these times that you joyfully acknowledged that God loved His people with an everlasting love, that He saved them and called them with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world

was? Was it not then that you were made glad to rejoice in the gospel of grace, which says that He foreknew His people in love, predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son, called them out of darkness into His marvelous light, justified them from all sin, and glorified them?

I cannot help believing that when we are made to acknowledge the truth of the doctrine of God, it is because that fire is upon us and we are speaking in other tongues. A tongue is a language – not the gibberish of the false religions of the world. The Lord's people speak a pure language that the world cannot learn. They sing a new song in that language that only the redeemed of the Lord may sing. It is the language of grace without works. It is the language of a powerless people and an all-powerful God, whose strength is made perfect in weakness. The world hates it and tries to destroy it. This language shines the light on all the false doctrine, pride, hypocrisy, and the works of the flesh, and exposes those things for what they are. They hated Jesus for His words, and it is no surprise that they should hate you for yours. No matter what their circumstances, when the Spirit of God rests upon any of His people, much as the Holy Spirit did back there in the day of Pentecost, they cannot help but hear, love, rejoice, believe, trust, obey, hope, give thanks, and sing that new song of grace in other tongues as the Spirit gives them utterance. This is our portion here in this world of sin, persecution, and sorrow - and it is enough.

I trust this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

J.B. Farmer.
4-19-2010

CORRESPONDENCE

KENNETH G. THOMPSON

An experience of Kenneth G. Thompson of an accident while he was cutting down a tree. His wife, Faye Thompson, said it was written about 3 months before his death. She feels that since so many loved Brother Kenneth, the brethren would love to read of his experience. If you feel to print it in "The Sign of the Times" would be greatly appreciated. Sent by Brothers and Sisters at Valley View Primitive Baptist Church.

One beautiful Fall morning in late September I went about 2 miles from the house to cut and haul in firewood, while falling a tree it sprang to the side knocking me down and landing on my left leg. I was helplessly pinned to the ground with broken bones. Many thoughts came to mind. Never doubting that there was a purpose not an accident in this. With a prayer in my heart that it's working for my good.

After a while I heard a vehicle coming for I was located near a dead end dirt road along Little River. When the truck got near I cried out for help. This certain young man heard, stopped, and came asking what can I do to help you? After explaining the location where to lift the tree, this man, whose name is Marcus, climbed in the tractor and performed the task flawlessly.

After pulling me from under the tree, Marcus left to find a phone to call the rescue squad. When he returned he began telling how he was traveling from Floyd on his way to Christiansburg. While on Route 8 bridge had a sudden desire to drive up this road along the river, then he expressed these words - God moves in mysterious ways. Precisely my thoughts at the time.

I'm made to believe this young man, Marcus, was sent and enabled by our merciful God to perform all that was needed for my beginning the road to recovery.

The following day before going to the operating room, the surgeon warned that I might lose my leg, I was not excited, nor afraid but made reconciled that my God knows best and His will be done.

For several days while in the hospital and after returning to our house, I was overwhelmed by the kind deeds, the many visitors, phone calls and cards.

The Lord blessed me with the best of care from family, doctors, nurses, and my dear wife that knew what to do, how to do, and did do more for my comfort and well being than I could have even expected.

It seems I would be depressed having pain and being confined to a bed and was in this condition for a few short periods of time. Most of the time I was high on the mountain because of the fellowship, encouragement, and love I felt for those of like precious faith combined with comforting passages of scripture such as ***"we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren."***

Oftentimes at night with no one around I was given such a thankful heart for the blessings my Lord bestowed on me that I would tearfully rejoice in a savior's love for the events He blessed me with that day.

When it pleases God we glory in tribulation knowing tribulation worketh patience, patience experience, experience hope and hope maketh not ashamed. For the love of God that is shed abroad in our hearts is given to us.

6-15-2010

Please print my mom's name in your monthly booklet. She is 86 years old and recently suffered from a stroke.

This will bring a smile to her face.

Thank you,
Garry L. Cox

Ollie Carl May
3272 Pineapple Hwy.
Greenville, Ala. 36037

Signs of the Times, Inc.

Dear Sir,

I enjoy the Signs very much. Thanks for publishing the Signs.

Enclosed find $30.00 for 2 years of Signs. The other do as you need.

Thank you,
Ollie Carl May

VOICES OF THE PAST

1908 - THE TRAVEL OF ISRAEL AN EXAMPLE OF GOSPEL TRAVEL TODAY

Written by
William M. Smoot, March, 1908.

"And they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm trees and they encamped there by the waters." - Exodus xv, 27.

In the December SECTARIAN, last volume, we received a request from brother G. W. Barr of Dayton, Ohio, for our views upon this Scripture.

We are told in Romans xv. 4, that: ***"for whatsoever things were written were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."*** Hence we have multiplied evidence of Gospel travel in the Old Testament of that peculiar travel through which the Church passes today.

The connection of the quoted text gives account of the travel of Israel after their deliverance at the Red Sea. The deliverance was a wonderful display of Divine power, that it would seem Israel could not readily forget, and yet they had gone but a few days and ***"came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah; for they were bitter. ...And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?"***

In our early years before we had an adequate conception of Gospel Truth, we often thought in reading of the travel of these Israelites, how different our course would have been from theirs; but in later years we concluded that our Adamic, natural heart is as prone to wander as was theirs - we see in our earthly nature a reproduction of what was in these carnal Israelites: ***"the people sat down to eat and to drink and rose up to play,"***- Exodus xxxii, 6. Their travel illustrates the travel of Israel today; through storm, and in calm, like Joseph's ***"coat of many colors,"*** - Genesis xxxvii. 3,) for it was just after their experience with the bitter waters of Marah and they came to the wells of water and palm

trees of Elim.

It was but a few days after their departure from Elim that they came *"unto the wilderness of Sin,"* and here it is written *"the whole congregation murmured against Moses and Aaron: ....and said unto them, would to God that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full."* These words certainly sound familiar! We have heard them in different forms, but in identical substance again and again from professed children of grace at the very first appearance of a condition which required a walk *"by faith, and not of sight." "The fleshpots of Egypt"* (the money, ease, lusts and glamour of this present world,) is a fearful, and all-prevailing temptation to the carnal mind. There are Bethel and Elim spots scatted along the mortal pilgrimage of saints where they can rest: *"a covert from the tempest:"* a haven from storm, and from rain.

The word Elim signifies strength and security; and in this surely represents the secure hiding and resting place of the saints. Here is *"the shadow of the Almighty"*- (Psalm xci, 1) under which saints abide; and their place of defense the munitions of rock, (Isaiah xxxiii, 16;) the green grass of the desert upon which they sit down and into which they are led, and where they find rest unto their souls. - Matthew xi, 28-30.

The wells of water represent the Gospel, of which Jesus says, *"whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."*- John iv, 14. In numbers xxxiii, 9 these wells are called *"fountains of water."* The Gospel itself is the inexhaustible well or fountain; but here are found twelve wells, which probably more especially represent the *twelve apostolic gifts,* revealed in the proclamation of that Gospel.

Beloved saints of God, have we not often found such heavenly resting places, as we have come together upon some *"Elim spot,"* and the never-failing well has supplied our every need, *"spring up"* to our comfort, without work or effort on our part, for indeed *"the well is deep,"* said the Samaritan woman, and we *"have nothing to draw with."*- John iv, 11. The preached word has come to us, not in form nor yet in *"uncertain sound,"* but *"in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power."*

The *"threescore and ten palm trees,"* can represent the election and flourishing condition of Israel under the Gospel Covenant. It is noticeable that the number "threescore and ten," is the number that came *"out of the loins of Jacob,"*- Exodus i, 5, typifying *"the purpose of God, according to election"*- Romans ix, 11-13; and pointing to the particular and peculiar people who

alone were to rest; and become refreshed in these holy, consecrated, and sanctified places, as the anointed of the Lord: set apart for the blessing, and the blessing specially prepared and reserved for them.

The Palm-tree like the Cedar tree (Psalm xxix, 5,) is used in the Scriptures to typify the children of grace; as well as to show forth the enduring and sheltering nature of the Gospel Covenant, (Judges iv, 5; Song vii, 7,8.) In Psalm xcii, 12; it is written *"The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon."* The Church of the living God sheltered under the overshadowing wings of the Gospel is indeed a city of Palm - trees, revealed in holy symmetry in the work of the temple, where are carved *"cherubim and palm-trees"* (Ezekiel xli, 18- 20) in Gospel unison upon the wall, and in the work of that building which stands as a type of the Gospel Church.

We have then in our subject a beautiful figure of Gospel grace, of the refuge in which the dear tempest-tossed spiritual Israelites enter, assailed by foes without and within, and their own evil hearts as well. Elim is *"favorably located"* for such refuge with the *"bitter waters of Marah"* on one hand, and the wilderness of Sin on the other, while just beyond is located roaring, flaming Sinai with its terrific thunderings, its fiery darts, that disturb the peace, and pierce the soul of the trembling, awe-stricken tribes, who have fled for refuge from the destructive plagues of Egypt.

Beautiful indeed is the language! More expressive still the substance of the testimony of our text. Think, dear reader, of the force of the figure presented for our consideration: *"the twelve wells of water, threescore and ten palm trees"* of Elim. Think of the surroundings of the restful spot; and then think of the world with its bitterness, its envy and strife against the Truth, of its wilderness of woe, barren of a single green blade, or anything else calculated to afford *the slightest* enjoyment to the children of grace: you will see something of what our text presents for the comfort of the Israel of today.

In Proverbs xxv, 25, we are told that: *"As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country."*

"Waters from Salvation's wells,
Thirsty sinner come and draw;
Love's the fountain when it rose,
Who its heights or depth can tell?
Christ the channel whence it flows,
O'er the banks of sin to swell."

Some of our older members in this country (near Alexandria, Virginia) will remember an aged colored brother, Jacob Cooper, formerly a

member of the Hepzibah Church in Alexandria, but now long since gone, we humbly believe, to his immortal home. *"Uncle Jake,"* as he was familiarly called in those days, used to make the fire and clean up the office of certain lawyers in Alexandria. On one occasion as the winter had broken or was breaking, in order to have a little fun with the elderly man, one of the lawyers asked him. *"Uncle Jake, do you expect to go to the Springs, this year?" "Yes,"* solemnly answered Jake, *"I go to the Springs, sir, twice a year."* Somewhat struck by the sober earnestness of the reply the lawyer inquired, *"What Springs do you go to Uncle Jake?" "The Old School Baptist Association, sir,"* promptly replied the old brother, *"and it is the sweetest water that a poor sinner ever drank."*

As we write our memory turns to the reply of this old brother. We live over again the many precious seasons spent in the sanctuary of eternal Truth; the oases in life's trials, where we are permitted to greet our dear brethren and the friends of Truth eternal; to hear the Gospel preached in its purity, to realize the preciousness of Gospel fellowship, to lay aside for the moment the burdens of mortality; and to rest under the shadow of the palm - trees of our Elim and drink of its wells of living water.

When a boy in our native village during the Civil War, there came through the village one day a company of troops. It was a hot, sultry day, and the company reached the town about noon; foot-sore and weary they halted, broke ranks, and scattered under the trees for refreshments and rest. We have not forgotten how these tired soldiers appeared to enjoy the cooling shade of the trees and temporary rest. So with the children of the Regeneration in their travel through the wilderness of this world, as they reached an Elim spot where they can for the moment lay aside their travel-stained garments, and rest *"in the shade of the trees."*

But our subject in the fullness of its meaning implies something more than a moments' rest. It points us to the etemal character, and the abiding nature of rest in that Man, who *"shall be a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."*- Isaiah xxxii, 2. *"And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and His rest shall be glorious."* - Isaiah xi, 10.

The Scriptures abound with figures of the character under consideration, which point to, and center in Christ as the sure Refuge of saints. A striking one is found in Matthew xiv, 15, where the *green grass* of the desert is a beautiful figure of the Church in the desert of this corrupt world. The last clause of our

subject reads: *"and they encamped there by the waters."* This then for the time being was something more than a *temporary* rest. It was truly this, but it was also something more. It was an encampment of Israel. It was an epoch in their joumey. It was as when the *visible Church* has passed through some fiery trials, and she encamps for a time to rest and to meet similar conflicts. *"For she goes from strength to strength."* - Psalm lxxxiv, 7.

Did she not thus *encamp* after the Context of 1832; of 1852; of 1886-89, and these of later years? New developments are continually arising. New conditions developing, new issues, new perversions, new trials, new conflicts, greater apostasies which must be met in the onward travel of the Church, manifest new needful resting spots. And yet after all it is the same old and oft repeated story of some Israelite murmuring because of the hardness and stringency of the journey, the severity of the statutes of the Gospel; from a natural standpoint hankering after *"the flesh-pots of Egypt."*

"Seeking some easy path
To an inland shore."

But the Church moves onward, *"looks forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." "He couched, he lay down as a lion, and as a great lion: who shall stir him up? Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee."*- Numbers xxiv, 9.

The Scriptures are one vast volume of Christian experience, dealing more especially with the living scenes of today in the travel of saints. We live the Truth of God. *"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path,"* (Psalm cxix, 105,) as we pass through the turmoil of time to the peaceful scenes of rest unending.

"And here as travelers we meet,
Before we reach the fields above, To suit around our Master's feet, And tell the wonders of His love."

The cooling shade under which we rest here is but a foretaste of that which is eternal. The waters by which we camp in our mortal pilgrimage, flow from the throne of God, bearing us onward and upward in more joyous, more glorious revelations, as the streams are lost in the never-failing fountain, and become an impassible river (Ezekiel xlvii, 5,) *"and everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live. " Truly" spring up into everlasting life."*

Many of us have come to the *brink of the river. "By faith we look out upon the vast glories which blaze forth from the immortal throne. Our only and real enjoyment lies in the interest of the heavenly kingdom; the real plea-*

sure of our mortal pilgrimage is in its restful pursuits. It brightens our pathway through time, "as the shininq light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Through a rift in the cloud we catch a glimpse of the sublime splendors of the world to come, and hear *"the voice of harpers harping with their harps;"* rejoicing *"in hope of the glory of God;" "receiving the end of your (our) faith, even the salvation of (our) souls."*

"He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him. ...The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children." - Psalm ciii.

DOCTRINE VS. EXPERIENCE

"Give, ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak: and hear O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew; as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass."

Deut. 32:1,2. "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth, the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." Isa. 50:10.

Have you been among a number of the people of God-as they were discussing the preaching of various ministers? If so, you have heard them extolling the gift of one that was good at doctrinal preaching, saying that they did not come for experimental preaching. Then no doubt you have heard someone extol the gift of some other that was good at experimental preaching, saying that they did not know much, about doctrine, but that they loved experience.

I have titled this writing in a peculiar manner. I have intended just as I have titled it, so as to draw attention to our state. It seems just like that to me. Not in the inspiration of God but we have, drawn a line of difference between doctrine and experience, saying that one of them is good preaching, but that the other is not; saying that one of them is permissible, but that the other is not. We have placed doctrine in opposition to, or against experience, or vice versa. In our estimation, God gives us only doctrine to preach; that we have set up experience in opposition to God and that it is thus God sanctioned to preach doctrine, but that it is man made to preach experience.

Too much of the time those that like to hear doctrine preached (as they call it) have heard something

that was called experience, but that was foreign to the experience of a saint of God.

If we always had a correct perspective of what experience really is about we would be in a better condition to pass judgment on what is called doctrinal preaching or experimental preaching. For instance, much has been said about preaching the sincere milk of the word, meaning, as I take it, that little ones can digest milk better than strong meat. I agree with that. But I do not think about it as I have heard it explained. Preaching experience does not mean that the minister is preaching to nor about the natural man. He does not have any right whatever, nor any time whatever, to preach to nor about that. Nor does it mean that when a minister is preaching experience that he is preaching soft or conditional. Moreover, when a man is preaching doctrine, it definitely does not mean that he is doing good preaching, for I assure you that there are many doctrines of men being preached.

Personally, I believe all preaching is doctrinal. It is as much doctrine to preach that God leads the blind by a way that they knew not, as it is to preach that God loves His people with an everlasting love; it is as much doctrine to preach to the laboring and heavy laden to come to Christ, as it is to declare that God declared the end from the beginning. Furthermore, doctrinal preaching will never be profitable to the children of God unless it is experienced. Faith is the gift of God, but unless that faith exercises the child of God it is dead faith. Preaching that faith is a gift of God, and that having that faith means that the child of God is not active under the administration of that faith, is not true doctrinal preaching. The child of God is not active to get faith but when faith comes, when faith is given, he is then active, not in order to have faith, but he is active because that he is acted upon.

What people generally call doctrinal preaching is telling what God did in covenant before the world began. All of the purposes that originate in the eternal mind of God will never be worth anything to a sinner until such time as it is revealed to us, and that revelation is an experimental work in our heart and mind and soul. This is as much doctrinal truth as the purpose to do so. They cannot be divided; they cannot be separated one from the other. They both are received in an experience. Paul tells us that we glory in tribulation. Tribulations were appointed to us by our Savior just before He entered into His glory. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me peace. Both the tribulation and the peace are parts of the doctrinal dealings of God with His people. When we attempt to say that this is doctrine, but that this is experience, and attempt to allot each one as being good and better, we are subverting the written word as well as the gospel of our sal-

vation, I do not know of a harder, more austere doctrine than to say that God does not have anything to do with our tribulations, sorrows, sufferings, but how destitute our lives would be if we did not have His effectual workings in us in showing (John 16) us these sublime things. It is Jacob; if it is the best thought of minister; whoever it is, or whenever they say it, that tribulations are against us, or that they a r e not good for us, t h e n Paul (and the Romans, and thus you and I) are in something that ought not to be. We glory (boast) in tribulation. This is experimental, that is, it is presently in this life, but surely no one would attempt to separate the allotment of tribulations as not being a segment of the doctrine. And let it be noted in passing, that this glorying or boasting (for that is the meaning of this glorying) is not found in him or her that says, If a tree is falling toward you there is not any need to run, or that if a train is coming down upon you there is not any need to step out of the way, or if false teaching is creeping in upon the people of God there is not any need for a voice to be raised in protest by the spirit of him or her that is glorying in tribulations. That is an experience alright, but it is an experience of the deluding power of Satan, and it is just as false as my Arminian neighbors that tell me that God does not have anything to do with a storm destroying my home or of God having nothing to do with a car wreck in which some one is killed.

The children of God glory in tribulations, why? Because that they are now working for our benefit. I have been dealt with in derision because I have been ready to maintain that the only salvation I know anything about is time salvation. I would never have had a taste of living water; I would never have had a crumb of living bread, had it not been for the revelation of these things to me in time.

Tribulation, to men without God and without hope in the world, is the work of the devil; it is because that we are not acquainted with God (Job 22:21) ; it is because that either we or our parents have sinned (John 9:2). Job's miserable would-be comforters were condemned for their position that Job's sins had separated him from his Maker, and, even though they were disciples that suggested that either the blind man had sinned or his parents had sinned, they were put in their place by the Savior. All things work together for good. They are now doing that. They do that from the beginning of our experience to the end of it. But try to tell Jacob that and he replies, No, some things are not for my good; some things are against me. But search for Jacob after the deliverances of the Israelite family and listen carefully if that is his refrain.

Try to tell Jacob that before he knows God, and you will always get that answer, to-wit: bad things are against me; tell Jacob, or any dis-

ciple, then at home in the body that God's blessings come to us because of our obedience, and he and we will acquiesce to that, but let the same man, Jacob or you and I, be brought where John Newton travelled, and one and all will sing,

Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

Or, if lifted to the third heaven, one and all will declare boldly but humbly that it is by the grace of God (1 Cor. 15:10), or if anyone of us has been brought into the presence of God in the face of Jesus Christ, he or she, one and all, will declare to ancient Israel, or to spiritual Israel, that *"He is all my salvation, that He is all of my desire." (2 Sam. 23:5)*

How gracious are the dealings of the Lord with His afflicted people. Moses, being inspired of God, and looking forward with joy to a better kingdom, founded on better promises, and thus bringing better things, is moved to say, *"My doctrine shall drop as the rain."* God does not accidently drop it, but He turns it loose for a predetermined place or person. He turns it loose, it drops to its designated place. In His determination of the inheritance of the people of God. He set the bounds of their habitation, (v. 8, also see Acts 17:26) and thus they were at the precise place in the most minute detail for the dropping of the doctrine on them. No other power inherited; no wind of doctrine (or even of nature) caused the least variation as to when and where and how it fell on the designated people. That much is what you would call doctrine, is it not? That is what many of us want to hear (so we say), but there is more to it than that. It does not fall without purpose either to a designated person or people, it does not fall without purpose in their life, in their experience. It falls as the rain, that is it asks no let, it permits no hinderance. It is never void; it never fails to get to the designated end. But getting to the mark is not all, it accomplishes the will of Him that drops it upon the heirs of promise. It distils as the dew. That is as much the purpose of God as is the getting of it to the designated end. It distils as the dew; Have you ever walked out at night and heard the dew distilling? Have you? I am on forbidden ground, let him that is wise, come tell us what our souls are longing to hear. Have you ever heard the dew distilling? If you have not, and it drops sovereignly, please be cautious in running around the country telling our bankrupt sinners that they can command or countermand the coming down or the dropping down of doctrine. If you can even hear the distillation of the dew, certainly it would be distilled before you could prevent it reaching the designated

person or people or place. There is not any noise when a son of Adam is being translated out of darkness into light. (Isa. 33:20; Lam. 3:26; 1 Kgs. 6:7; 1 Tim. 2:2; 1 Pet. 3:4) ***"If you do not hear any sound of a thing being done, certainly you cannot help nor hinder. Please remember that this soundless condition is, experience."***

Another thing. The dew distils in the night time. Do you know the difference between the experience of God's people and that of the world? It is good, it is extensive, it is strange. From the standpoint of the children of God, they are walking in darkness. From the standing of an ungodly man or woman they are walking in the light, or in the day time. (Isa. 50:11,12) What an experience is this: One outside Christ, outside the kingdom and walking in the light. What need has she or he that is so much their own keeper? They kindled the fire that makes all of their sparks; all of their light, but what is to follow? What *of* them? What is to be their end? They shall have at the hand of the Lord a lying down in sorrow. But he or she feels to be walking in darkness, that poor tried soul has a wonderful experience. He that lets the doctrine drop as the rain; that lets it distil as the dew; that sends it forth as the drouth-breaking word on tender herbs, (little unwashed, unswaddled babes in Christ.) (Ezek. 16) It causes them to give off the sweet smelling fragrance of a newly washed, newly anointed little member in the midst of the church with Jesus as King and His subjects gathered around Him, will dwell by experience among men, that is, quickened men. In the same manner, from the same source, He that causes His "let" to bring light also causes His "let" to, be in the midst of the storm to hear no stroke of lightening, nor shift of clouds, no unknown power, no unseen enemy will hinder that dropping doctrine to get to the earth, causing it to give bread to the eater and seed to the sower.

When earthly pride is crucified in you, when you have seen and felt all light gone, when you have felt to be in gross darkness, when the treasures that you thought to have been stored up, lose all vitality and appeasing power, and thirst quenching waters are all dried up, will you remember a poor helpless sinner and beg the Lord to send forth His quickening Spirit in my life that I might be kept and blessed to rightly declare the word of truth, both as regarding what is called doctrine, as well as what is called experience, and to have no fear (of man) in doing it.

Elder W. D. Griffin

PSALM 32:10.

Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about.

"Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law."- Psalm xciv. 12.

We may observe in the words before us, that the Lord puts *chastening* before *teaching.* Is there not something remarkable in this? Why should chastening precede teaching? For this reason, We have no ear to hear except so far as we are chastened, It was so with the prodigal, Until he was brought to his right mind by strokes of hunger, he did not think of his father's house; he had no heart to return; but a mighty famine sent him home. So it is with God's children; as long as they are allowed to wander in their backslidings, they have no heart to return, But let the rod come; let them be driven home by stripes; then they have an ear to listen, while God teaches them to profit, instructs them by his blessed Spirit, and speaks into their heart those lessons which are for their eternal good,

"And teachest him out of thy law." "The law" in the Scriptures has a very wide signification; it means, in the original, instruction. The word is *Torah,* which signifies ***"teaching,"*** or ***"direction."*** Thus the word ***"law"*** is not confined to the law of Moses given in thunder and lightning upon Mount Sinai; but it includes also the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ- ***"the perfect law of liberty;" "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus;" "that law which was in the heart of the Redeemer, when he said, "I come to do thy will, O God; yea, thy law is within my heart."***

Now, as the Lord teaches his children, ***"out of the law,"*** strictly so called, so he teaches them out of the gospel; and to my mind, there is something exceedingly sweet and expressive in the words ***"out of the law."*** It seems to convey, not only that the law is a treasure-house of wrath, but that the gospel also is a treasure - house of mercy. And as those who know most of the law are only taught ***" out of the law,"*** and not the whole of the law, only a few drops, as it were, out of the inexhaustible wrath of God; so out of the heavenly treasure-house of the gospel, ***"the perfect law of liberty,"*** it is but a little of grace and mercy that in this life can be known. As Christ said to his disciples in promising the Spirit: ***"He shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you."*** He cannot take ***"all,"*** and shew it unto them; for none could live under the sight. The Spirit, therefore, takes *of* the things of Christ, and shews here a little, and there a little; some little blessedness here, and some little blessedness there; a suitable promise, a gracious testimony, a com forting text, an encouraging word, a sight of atoning blood, a smile of his countenance, a view of his Person, a discovery of his righteousness, or a glimpse of his love. This is taking of the things of

Christ, and revealing them to the soul. And thus, the man whom the Lord takes in hand, he teaches *"out of "* the gospel by making Christ experimentally known, and revealing his dying love. And thus he teaches each and all *"out of his law"* - both the law from Sinai, and the law from Zion.

Elder J.C. Philpot

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1 CORINTHIANS 2:5-9.

That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, of this world, that come to nought:

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

MEETINGS

EASTERN KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The 2010 session of the Eastern Kehukee Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Skewarkey Church located in Williamston, North Carolina. The meeting will be held on Saturday, October 2 and Sunday, October 3. Preaching services will begin each day at 10:30 a.m.

The church is located just off US 64E. Take Exit 514, turning left toward Williamston. Go about 1 1/2 miles and the church is on the left. It is a big white board building.

We invite the ministers of our faith and order, our brethren and all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

Naomi Coker
Association Clerk
252-823-0786

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 9/10

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 2010

Pearl Pendleton, VA	5.00
Clinton Barron, LA	5.00
Phyllis Hollandsworth, VA	5.00
Alvis Shelton, VA	15.00
Elder Junior Conner, VA	5.00
Ollie May, AL	5.00
Lessie Smith, LA	35.00
Steve Everett, VA	25.00
Elder Carl Terry, VA	5.00
Elder James Howard, AL	50.00
Melvin Cruise, VA	5.00
Vivian Underwood, VA	5.00
Larry Bird, NC	5.00
Angie Cox, NC	25.00

ISAIAH 5:1-2.

Now will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My well beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill:

And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.

OBITUARIES

RUBY MAE HEDGE DUNCAN

It is with heavy hearts and much sadness that we attempt to write the obituary of our dear friend and beloved sister in the church, Sister Ruby Mae Hedge Duncan.

Sister Ruby was born September 23, 1921 and passed away May 21, 2010 making her stay on earth 88 years. She was preceded in death by her husband Joseph Jackson Duncan; and her parents, Anderson Bentley and Ina Mazzie Meredith Hedge. Survivors include two sons and daughter-in-law, Jackson Bentley and Lynn Duncan, and David Phillips and Anne Duncan, all of Christiansburg; a granddaughter and her husband, Kim Duncan and Steve Wade, of Radford; a stepgrandson, Derek Oliver, of Christiansburg; two great-grandchildren, Jackson Lewis and Shannon Kathleen Wade; and brother-in-law and wife, Vance and Lena Duncan of Christiansburg.

Sister Ruby was a faithful member of Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church for over 57 years Sister Ruby, along with her husband Joe, asked for a home in the church at

Valley View Primitive Baptist Church on the third weekend in September, 1952 and were baptized the first Sunday in October, 1952 in Snowville "Little River" by their pastor, Elder Golden P. Harris. On October 25, 1952, they asked for their membership to be with Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church and were received into fellowship. Her husband, brother Joe, served the church as deacon for 18 years - 1957 to 1975.

Sister Ruby had a great desire to go to church and did attend as long as she was able. She had a beautiful alto voice that blended, so well, with our hymns.

Sister Ruby was a firm believer in "Salvation by the Grace of God". She was made submissive to her sickness and would often say "God's Will be Done". We had lots of good visits with her and the mention of her two great -grandchildren would bring a smile to her face. Her family meant so much to her.

Funeral services were held at Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Floyd County at 3:00 P.M. on Sunday, May 23, 2010 by Elder Kenneth Hopkins and dismissed, at the cemetery, by Elder Tommy Pegram. She was laid to rest, beside her husband Joe, in the Indian Creek Cemetery . We feel unworthy to write this and will miss this dear one, but find comfort that our loss is her Eternal Gain.

Done by order of Indian Creek Primitive Church in conference on June 26, 2010. Resolved, therefore,

That one copy be given to her family, one copy to the Signs of the Times, one copy to the church.

Elder Kenneth D. Hopkins,
Moderator
Harold J. Hollandsworth,
Committee
Phyllis S. Hollandsworth,
Committee

IRVIN RAMSEY HOLLEY

At the request of his daughters, I will attempt to write a memoriam for Irvin Ramsey Holley. Brother Holley was born Apri1 25, 1908 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, and was the son of Charlie Lester Holley and Susan Panana Brumfield Holley.

Brother Irvin and his lovely wife were married 74 years. Annie Davis Holley predeceased her husband Irvin on May 9, 2007. Brother Irvin is survived by three daughters, Boots Elliot, Shelby Shelton and Nancy King.

In Psalms Chapter 116, verse 15, you find: - ***"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."*** Brother Holley was a member of Danville Primitive Baptist Church for 49 years and was a deacon there for a number of years. His walk and life were lived in true example of a saint of God. At his 100th birthday celebration, the facility overflowed with brethren and friends, bearing a visual testimony of the love and esteem in which they held this dear brother.

A few days before his natural death, he told me that he desired to leave this natural life and his hope was to be carried to his heavenly home. I believe he is now resting in a peaceful sleep in the Paradise of God, awaiting the glorious resurrection of the body when the soul and body will be raised in the likeness of Christ and dwell with him in eternity.

His funeral was conducted by Elder Mark Terry and Elder Jimmy Gray March 8, 2010.

We shall miss his presence with us but he has been carried from his natural home to the eternal home reserved for the saints of God.

In loving memory of a
dear brother in the Lord,
Burnell Williams

Obituary of
SISTER IMOGENE A. QUESENBERRY

The Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church located in Indian Valley, Virginia bows in humble submission to our Heavenly Father, in the calling of our dear sister, Imogene A. Quesenberry.

Sister Imogene Quesenberry, age *93,* of Willis, Virginia departed this life for her eternal home on Monday, June 14th, 2010. She was born on September 28th, 1916 making her stay here some 94 years.

Sister Imogene was preceded in death by her parents, Kyle and Nora A. Phillips Akers, her husband Bro. Norman Quesenberry, and other family members.

Sister Imogene was married to her late husband some 66 years. To this union was born 4 children. Janice Quesenberry, of the home; Lorene Quesenberry and her husband, Kyle Bowman; Bennie& Margie Quesenberry Danny & Gail Quesenberry. Also, four grandchildren, two stepchildren, five great-grandchildren.

Sister Imogene Quesenberry joined Indian Creek Primitive Baptist church in June 27th, 1954 and was baptized by her Pastor Elder G. P. Harris on July 25th, 1954, She was a faithful member for 5 years. She firmly believed in Salvation by the grace of God. She loved her church family, and her door was always

open to her loved ones, church members, friends and neighbors. She loved to make beautiful quilts and share with others.

In the scripture we find, we are known for the fruits, well this sister showed her fruits by the love she had for her fellow man and love of her church.

Funeral services for Sister Imogene Quesenberry was held at her home church on June 16th, 2010 by her Pastor, Elder Kenneth Hopkins, and Elder Thomas Pegram. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery by her late husband to wait the coming of our Blessed Lord.

Elder Kenneth D. Hopkins,
Moderator
Bro. J. B. Mitchell
Sis. Jean Mitchell, *Committee*

ELDER CLARENCE D. STONE

God in His infinite wisdom and tender mercy has called to rest His faithful servant and dear brother in Christ, Elder Clarence D. Stone, age 75. He passed away March 31, 2010 while taking therapy at Memorial Hospital of Martinsville and Henry County.

Elder Stone was born in Henry Co., Virginia on November 9, 1934 to Perry Lee Stone and Majie O'Dell Stone who are both deceased.

He was a great-grandson of Elder P. A. "Xander" Cahill. Brother Stone is survived by his loving wife of 54 years, Sister Gloria Walker Stone; daughter and son in-law Sharon Stone Reynolds and Roger Reynolds and son and daughter in *law* Steven D. Stone and Tina Gillette Stone. His grandchildren Britney Reynolds, Courtney Reynolds, Luke Reynolds, Brett Stone and step grand-children Zach Gillette and Kaitlyn Pugh. Also a sister in law Barbara Stone; a brother and sister in law Ralph and Mary Lou Stone and a brother and sister in law Lewis and Ruby Stone. In addition to his parents Bother Stone was preceded in death by a sister and brother in law, Thelma and Norman Dodson, a brother, Perry H. "Hamp" Stone, and a grandson, Benjamin Reynolds.

Elder Stone served in the United States Army and worked at Fieldcrest Mills until becoming disabled. He suffered a heart attack in 1983 and again in 1993, and had a very delicate and complex heart valve surgery in June 2009. He had suffered so much in his mortal body, but we believe that he is now sweetly resting, awaiting the resurrection.

Brother Clarence Stone asked for a home and was received at Union Primitive Baptist Church, Nov. 22, 1986, and was baptized May 24,

1987 by Elder Leonard J. Brammer. Being burdened to preach the gospel of his blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, he was soon liberated by his home church. He was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, Nov. 26,1988. During his, servlce he pastored Sandy Level, Camp Branch, Knob and Chapel Churches and at the time of his death he was serving Rocky Mount Church and his home church, Union.

Elder Stone was wonderfully blessed; with the extraordinary gift that God bestowed upon him. We believe he bore the marks of the *"Lord Jesus"* and the fruit of the spirit: love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. We believe he proved this in his daily walk and godly conversation. He was blessed to preach the salvation of *God's* children is by the Sovereign Grace of Almighty God. He had a great knowledge of the scriptures, and I have remarked that *"Brother Clarence is a walking concordance, if you have a question about where to find a certain scripture just ask Brother Stone."* He was given of God to *"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."* (II Tim. 2:15) Also as we heard him often quote, *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."* (Rom. 1:16)

He visited the sick and shut-in and preached many funerals.

He was known near and far and loved to be with those of like precious faith. He loved and was loved and is sorely missed by his wife and family, brethren, neighbors and friends. But we believe our loss is his eternal gain. May it be our prayer to our Lord God that we all be reconciled to His holy and righteous will.

Funeral services were held at Union Primitive Baptist Church, Patrick Co., Va. with Elder Larry Hollandsworth and Elder Mark Terry officiating before a large and sympathetic congregation. His earthly body was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the coming of the Lord Jesus, when Brother Clarence and all the ransomed Church of God will be raised to be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus. Amen.

Written by one who loved him for Christ's sake,

Mark I. Terry

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

FRUIT OF ETERNAL UNION

Betroth'd in love ere time began
His blood-bought bride with Jesus see;
Made by Eternal Union ONE,
Who was, and is, and is to be.

Thus He became our Covenant Head,
Charg'd with her sin the Savior stands,
To do, and suffer in her stead
All that the righteous law demands.

Here justice and the highest grace
Met in the sinner's only Friend;
He freely took our lowest place;
Oh! Love that does all thought transcend.

When sunk in sin He'll not disown
Those sacred ties that made her His,
But claim this partner of His throne,
Thro' floods of wrath and deep distress.

Nor flood, nor flame, nor hell combin'd;
Shall from His heart the Church divide;
His blood the Eternal covenant sign'd
When for her sins in love He died.

Thus in His eyes she ever stood
From wrinkle and from blemish free;
Lov'd with the dateless Love of God,
And blest by the great Sacred Three.

LM THOMAS BRADBURY

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EDITORIALS

MERCY IS FROM EVERLASTING TO EVERLASTING

"O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever." (I Chronicles 16:34)

The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, to them that have been called from nature's darkness into his marvelous light. This mercy is as old as God is, and is just as sure and certain to endure forever toward those who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, as the fact that there is a heaven prepared for those who love God. All the power of the Godhead is supporting each of these promises and they are sure and steadfast. The comfort of this mercy that endures forever is the most precious treasure that the children of God experience in this life. It will never forsake them, because without it they could not stand, and the evidence is that they shall all stand without the loss of one.

This is the same mercy that was extended to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden when they partook of the fruit of the forbidden tree. They had no legal right or just claim to the mercy that was shown to them in their hour of need, or the promise that was made unto their seed which would come after them. It was solely the mercy of God, and had it not been extended to them at that time there would have been no heirs to inherit that heavenly kingdom that was prepared for the saints of God. Then, as it has ever been, this mercy is the eternal refuge of the children of God, and then, as Moses said, ***"Underneath are the everlasting arms."*** What security the heirs of promise are blessed with. Heaven will not be populated because there are some who are worthy, but only because mercy endured when man could not. The first man could not endure the temptations which confronted him, and all of those following are the same flesh, vain, weak, and as Peter said, ***"All***

flesh is as grass."

Mercy was extended to Abram when he dwelt in the Ur of the Chaldees, and the Lord told him to get out of that country away from his kindred according to the flesh, unto a land that the Lord would show him. He promised Abram at the same time that in Abram all the nations of the earth would be blessed. At the same time that the mercy of God was extended to Abram, the promise was given also, as it is with each of his children. They realize that they have not received because of any worthiness within themselves, but at the same time cannot deny that they do have a hope in things eternal, and a kinship toward those who have been called out in like manner. This mercy followed Abraham all of his life, and we hope to see the fulfilling of that promise on down through history, even to the present day. By promise an heir was given unto Abraham through Sarah, and according to nature that was impossible, yet it happened according to God's promise. Abraham rejoiced exceedingly and yet at the time appointed was made willing to offer his own son as a sacrifice unto his God. Mercy intervened and spared the son, but the trial was experienced in all its anguish by Abraham. *"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements and his ways past finding out."* This most assuredly must have been the feelings of Abraham as he experienced this trial of faith which all of God's people must pass through in some measure. As Peter wrote, *"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:"* It is all to the glory of God and sent in that mercy that endureth forever.

It was this same mercy that sustained Job in all of his afflictions and brought him through them praising his Creator. The same mercy that called David from following after his father's sheep and placed him upon the throne of Israel. The way in which this was accomplished was not in what would normally be considered a natural sequence of events. Saul was king of Israel and as such, according to nature, had the power to raise up whom he would and to kill whom he would, but on several occasions he would have killed David but something (mercy) delivered David out of the hands of Saul. On at least two occasions Saul was delivered into the hands of David, but the same thing that intervened and spared David's life, intervened so that David would not stretch forth his hand against the Lord's annointed. This same mercy followed David all of the days of his life. Mercy prevailed on behalf of David when Absalom, his own son, sought to take his life, and the most precious time in the life of David when this

mercy prevailed, was when in the lust of the flesh temptation overcame him and he sinned. This is true of each in their own travels, they are made to realize the weakness and sinfulness of the flesh and to know that unless mercy endures toward them they are eternally lost and without hope. This is why David was made to declare over and over, ***"the mercy of the Lord endureth forever."*** What comfort it is to the trembling heirs of promise to see David brought through all of his trials and then come down to the end of his natural life and be blessed, in spite of all this, to declare, ***"Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, for this is all my salvation and all my desire, although he maketh it not to grow."*** This is the testimony of all who have been brought this way. They acknowledge that although their standing before God does not warrant it, God hath extended mercy to them and all of their salvation and their desire rests alone in the mercy and in the promises made to those that possess it. They realize that it comes down to them sovereignly and majestically as the rain and snow from heaven and revives their trembling and fainting heart when it seems that they shall surely perish.

Daniel's life was an example of the mercy of God leading and directing the footsteps of His children in this life. By mercy Daniel was granted favor in the eyes of the keeper of the Hebrew children who were to stand before the king. By mercy he was given the interpretation of the dreams which was to raise him to positions of great authority in the kingdom of that day. Just as Joseph was in his day. These were times in which a great work was to be done for the Lord"s people, and at such times one is always raised up to perform the work. Joseph was to save many people alive, and Daniel was to witness to the Lord's people in his day. They were what they were by the mercy of God.

The comforting thought is that this mercy is not bestowed upon the children of God because of what they are by nature, but rather in spite of what they are by nature. The Gadarene was a recipient of this mercy in the same way David or Saul of Tarsus was, and that was by the grace of Almighty God. The Gadarene and Saul of Tarsus are typical of all of God's children before they have been quickened by the Holy Spirit and called with a holy calling into the manifest family of God. They were creatures of wrath, even as others, whether they dwelt among the tombs, as outcasts from the societies of this world or were profiting in the religions of the world above many. When it pleases God who separated them from their mother's womb to separate them from their state in nature and call them by his grace, it is this same

mercy that is bestowed upon them. For the first time they are clothed and in their right mind and they are shown what they are by nature and what they must be by grace. They are given to see that all flesh is as grass and the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field, and is profitable for nothing in spiritual matters. They all go home to their friends and begin to tell them what great things the Lord has done for them, and are surprised to find that their experience is not new to them. They had felt that surely their's was an unique case, and others did not require the same miracle of grace that they feel to have experienced. As they travel this new way unto them, they begin to see the sufferings that are also common to all in a greater or lesser degree, and are made to see their dependence on this mercy to sustain them on their journey. This is when scriptures such as the one above have such a special significance to each one.

This mercy extend's to all the Ruth's, Cornelius' Syrophenician women, deaf, blind, halt, lame, poor and hungry for whom it was treasured in Christ before the foundation of the world, and every event will come to pass that is necessary for it to be manifested in their lives. According to nature, there are many times when it seems by chance but I believe that they are all the same as the Samaritan woman at the well states, *"and he must needs,"* speaking of Jesus as he left Judea and departed again into Galilee He must needs go that way because that is where this woman was, and the time had come when it must needs be made manifest unto her and others as they were chosen vessels, even though they were not of the Jews. This is true of the blind man to whom Jesus gave sight. He told his disciples this man was born blind, *"That the works of God should be made manifest in him."* No accident or chance there, just this mercy manifest that it does indeed endure forever to those who are predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.

As Paul recorded in Romans, *"Who shall separate us from the love of God?"* He then lists several things that comfort the children of God in this life, things which without this mercy would indeed cause them to fall by the wayside, but this does not happen to any because the one that has begun a good work in them will not, yea cannot fail. They not only do not fall by the wayside but Paul says, *"Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."* He sets forth the extent to which this mercy endures on behalf of those to whom it is extended, and then says he was fully persuaded that nothing was able to separate them from the love of God which was in Christ the Lord. Paul was led along the pathway of life in such a

way that he also was blessed to see that the mercy of God covers all of these situations that God's children face in this life. It is comforting to read the writings of those who, we hope, have traveled the same way that we have been brought along, and find them ending their pilgrimage declaring that this mercy endures even unto death. Paul was blessed as he neared the end of his journey, to declare, ***"I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand."*** No fear of dying, no desire to remain in this wilderness of sin, no sorrow of leaving those he loved: just confident that the same mercy, which had been his constant companion since his experience on the road to Damascus, would sustain those who remained and bring them down to the end of their allotted time just as it had him. ***"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing."*** What a rich blessing of God's abounding grace upon this aging Apostle to be given at this stage in his life such a comfort in the blessed assurance that this mercy endureth forever, and included the assurance of his having a part in the glorious resurrection of the saints. O blessed thought!

Down through the ages of time the vessels afore prepared unto glory have all received evidence of this mercy in their lives, as each is born into the kingdom of God. As Jesus told Nicodemus, ***"Ye must be born again."*** which makes them realize their great need of this mercy and grace of God in their life. They are made to see what they are by nature and what they must be by grace, and realize that there is such a great gulf fixed between these two extremes, and they fear what their end will be. They realize that they cannot attain to what they must be, and therefore plead for mercy, not justice, because mercy is the only thing that can span that great gulf. As they travel in this mercy and are made accepted in the beloved, they are given to say with David, Paul, Peter, James and John, ***"O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever."***

This mercy is precious in the thoughts of all who have been saved and called with a holy calling. It has been their staff and their dependable friend, and is tailored to their individual need as they face the trials of life. It conquered all the Goliaths, quenches all the fires that would consume them, parts the waters that would overflow them, stops the mouths of the lions that would devour them, and overcomes the weaknesses and sins of the flesh which would cause them to fail to reach their heavenly abode. Isaiah recorded, ***"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall***

rise against thee in judgement thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the saints of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me saith the Lord." What a precious and glorious heritage belongs to those whom God loves; and this mercy is the constant reminder that comforts and strengthens them along the way.

Our hope and our prayer is that we have experienced some of these things along our life's way, and that they are evidences of this mercy in God's dealings with us. May they continue to be ours to experience and to meditate upon as we sojourn in this wilderness awaiting the time when, ***"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."*** O glorious thought! O precious hope! and this mercy endures through it all. It is just as sure and certain to endure to all of the saints of God in all ages to come, as it has in ages past. It does not weaken or diminish with the passage of time, but is always sufficient unto the needs of the day for those to whom it is sent.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

VOICES OF THE PAST

WHAT WONDROUS LOVE

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God, and everyone that loveth is born of God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for GOD IS LOVE." (1st John 4:7-8)

I cannot refrain from calling upon all those who fear the Lord to give attention while I tell what God has done for my soul. I must tell of the power of His wondrous love. I must tell of the changes it has wrought in my heart and mind. I must hint at the joy, peace, and happiness experienced, even amidst tribulations. I must tell you that LOVE does not do away with the Ten Commandments and the many other tributary commandments quoted in the Scriptures. The whole duty of man is to fear God and keep His commandments. Perfect love casteth out fear and causes one to LOVE God and his fellowman, and all these commandments become a right principle in his heart. I must tell you that this wondrous love changes duty into a privilege, and burden into desire. This love is the only thing that can change one's character, will, or life. It is the only thing that will cause one to love his enemies, do good to them who despise you and pray for those who persecute. I must

emphasize that LOVE is the Virtue of virtues as well as the Gift of gifts. It is GOD for God is LOVE!

"What wondrous love is this, O, my soul? What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dreadful curse for my soul ? When I was sinking down beneath God's righteous frown, Christ laid aside His crown for my soul." These words of the good old hymn have been flooding my mind and heart for several days. I want to bear this news and sing His praise to the children of men for the wonderful work of LOVE. It is the love of God, "Shed abroad in our hearts which is given us by the Holy Ghost," which causes us to *"glory in tribulations also."* The commandment of love was that which gave Paul the knowledge of his sins. This commandment killed the proud, mighty, and self-righteous Saul, the great. The commandment of love caused the new person, Paul, the little, to manifest opposite characteristics. This new man, Paul, confessed his sins and ignorance. He trusted no longer in himself but in Christ Jesus. He manifested humility, dependence, and trust. What Wondrous Love is this that changes a persecutor into a worshiper, a self- righteous man into begging for the mercies of God, and supplants the spirit of gentleness which subdues the arrogance already in us! Life void of love is a living death. Though rich in this world's material goods, a man without love is very poor. Though a man may be as a pauper naturally, if he be possessed with Godly love, he is very rich. Augustine said, *"Charity is patient in adversities, temperate in prosperity, strong in grievous sufferings, cheerful in good works; most secure in temptation, most expansive in hospitality; most joyous among true brethren, most patient among false ones."* What wondrous love is this which is the power of prophecy, the basis of knowledge, the fruit of faith, the riches of the poor, and the life of the dying.

How tender, soft, melodious, and meek must have been the tones of the voice of Jesus as He talked to the arrogant Saul while Saul was on the way to Damascus with warrants of arrest. It is true that a soft answer turneth away wrath, and that grievous words stir up anger. Jesus did not approach Saul in the dignity of the Creator giving authoritative commands. He approached him with a simple question, *"Saul, why persecutest thou me?"* Jesus gave an humble answer to Saul's question: *"Who art thou, Lord ?"* He answered, *"I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks."* These words caused Paul to fear and tremble. These words caused Paul to ask, *"What wilt thou have me to do."* The Lord said, *"Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do."* Paul experienced a drastic change

of characteristics. Paul was made willing to do anything that Jesus would have him do. The love of God inspires one to love God and his fellowman. One who possesses this love by gift of the Holy Ghost will not be trying to find excuses for not obeying the commandments of God, but will be diligently trying, and praying for power to do them. While love is on the throne of the soul, one will be so conscious of the depraved condition of his carnal mind that his best falls far short of the requirements of love. While love reigns in the soul, one is patient, kind, generous, humble, courteous, unselfish, sincere, and of good temper.

Many schools of training have been established for the purpose of transforming the will, renewing the mind, teaching morality, and making many rules for proper conduct. NONE of these institutions have succeeded. The wicked will do wickedly. The wicked cannot so polish their wills to reach beyond the realm of wickedness. It requires the baptism of the Holy Ghost, which is regeneration, to make a new person. It requires the *"Love of God"* shed abroad in the heart which is given us by the Holy Ghost, to transform the will, renew the mind, effectually teach Christianity, and inspire proper conduct in each and every circumstance.

God's School of Love is successful in its operation and objectives. A child of God cannot reach these supernatural objectives in this life but he will forever be doing his best and praying to be empowered to reach the goal.

There have been many ideas suggested relative to the *"tribulations"* Paul had under consideration in Romans 5:3-5: *"...We glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope; And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us."* We understand that *tribulation* is derived from the Latin *tribulum,* which was the threshing instrument, or roller, whereby the Roman husbandmen separated the corn from the husks; and *"tribulation"* in its primary significance, was the act of this separation. The love which is of God is the eternal good, or fluid, infused in the soul by the Holy Ghost. This love is the precious substance which shows up the impurities of the best in the minds of natural men. All the *"goodness"* of carnality appears to be the crust of vanity that needs to be separated from this love which is precious. It is not a pleasant experience to be on the threshing floor.

The purpose of God threshing His people is to separate the precious from the vile in each and every person. Sorrows, adversities, severe afflictions, heartaches, and sundry troubles are all used as *"threshing instruments"* in the hands of a loving God, to *"refine"* His people.

The greatest of these tribulations that I have experienced is a guilty conscience for having violated the law of Love. I undergo continuous threshings which make me to cry out, O wretched man that I am! I have never complained to God of any cruelty to me. I have felt that I deserved far more punishment, or chastisement, than has ever been administered. What wondrous love is this that causes one to even thank God for these tribulations; yes, even to thank Him for making us to know how stubborn, unruly and rebellious we are by nature. It is necessary that we be baffled, smitten, and scourged before we can realize how vain we are. The flail in the hands of the Thresher is used to bruise the sheaves and break out the wheat from the straw. Blows of pain, aches, misfortunes, and daily dying are used to divide the flesh and spirit. The breaking off the worldly crust is unpleasant while being experienced but afterward yieldeth the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who are exercised thereby. We do not have any idea how much chaff there is in our hearts before the threshing. I have more confidence in the person who feels to fail in all of his efforts in meeting the requirements of God's law of love than I do for those who feel they are the loveliest. The love of God causes the boaster to be aware of his boasting, the disobedient to be aware of his disobedience, and the ungrateful to be aware of his ingratitude. Our nature is to boast, disobey God's law, and to be blind to His goodness toward us. This love is the purest of the pure which show up our impurities.

Paul discussed the varied gifts of the Spirit in 1st Corinthians 12. He ended this chapter with, ***"But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet show I unto you a more excellent way ."*** He ended the 13th chapter by saying: ***"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three ; but the greatest of these is charity ."*** Paul proves by contrasting the grace of charity, the great love, with all other gifts, or talents, that void of charity, all is vain. He proves that the way of love is much more to be desired than the way of great accomplishments and display of many talents. We are to ***"Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts..."*** (1 Cor. 14:1) These gifts are good enough to be desired and coveted; yet, love is that which is to be followed. What wondrous love is this which causes one to prefer being rich in love and weak in faith, rather than being strong in faith, yet void of love. I had much rather hear a short simple loving sermon than to hear a long eloquent discourse on theology. I had rather hear one urge the necessity of following after love which make peace and unity, than to hear a lecture of one trying to prove that he is strong in the faith. I had rather see the disposition of love in a person that is weak in the faith, than to hear

words of great faith from a loveless individual. I admit my weakness in the faith as well as my disobedience to the law of Love. God help me! !

Paul's analysis of *charity* is brief yet reveals so much. Let us quote: ***"Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth ..."*** (1 Cor. 13:4-8) This wondrous love works patience and long suffering to the injuries which come from man as well as the afflictions suffered from God. This wondrous love works reconciliation to suffering and submission to God's will. It weans us from our own will and works contentment in our hearts to be content with our lot. The first ingredient of love is patience. The second ingredient spoken by Paul is kindness. Kindness is anxious not to give offense to any creature. Kindness watches for opportunity to assist anyone to be more comfortable. Christ's life was spent in doing kind things for the poor, halt, maimed, blind, diseased, and sinful. Someone said, ***"The greatest thing a man can do for his Heavenly Father is to be kind to some of His other children."*** Persons deserving love most, least need it; persons deserving love least, need it most. Try being kind to your enemies and you will be surprised and pleased with the results. Try a soft answer to the wrathful.

The third ingredient of charity is, ***"Envieth not."*** I can think of no word in the English language to use properly as an antonym to envy. Gladness, happiness, and rejoicing in heart when we see the good fortunes of others, certainly must be the positive way to put it. I suppose that envy is the basest of passions that make men most miserable. It is something that nothing but the love of God can abate. Envy causes us to feel uneasiness in the sight of another's possessions, or happiness. Envy causes us to dislike one because of his fortunes or happiness. It is the most difficult vice to hide. Am I irritated when another is praised? Am I hurt because another can write and preach better than I? God rid us of envy.

The fourth ingredient of charity is humility. ***"Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up."*** Love certainly crushes pride, makes it detestable, and dethrones it. Pride is the begetter of all wranglings, jars, and discords. We read in Proverbs 13:10, ***"Only by pride cometh contention."*** One has to learn through hurt pride that you can't push yourself ahead by patting yourself on the back. Love is the only thing that can teach us this truth. One in possession of this wondrous love learns that he can never get the right

"pitch" to sing his own praise. Deeds done and work accomplished thru love need not to be told by the doer. If love prompts an action you will not want to take time to tell about it. You will be interested in the next act. This wondrous love makes you use the time in praying that those without it use in boasting. God grace us to be HUMBLE.

The fifth ingredient of love is courtesy. Charity, ***"Doth not behave itself unseemly."*** Love begets politeness, good behavior, proper etiquette, cheerfulness, and good manners. This is a banner of love that draws attention from everyone with whom you come in contact. One with Love in his heart can act properly in strange places without special training. Courtesy prompted by love is the simple passport which enables one to mingle with any society, and enter even palaces from his own humble cottage. Behavior is a mirror in which everyone shows his true image. If one be filled with love his behavior will be proper in every circumstance. One without love may go through all kinds of training, yet his behavior will be irritable to others. My mother constantly reminded me to behave myself. May the wondrous love of God teach me good behavior.

The sixth ingredient of love is unselfishness: ***"Seeketh not her own."*** Love will make one willing to give up his own rights. A true lover will regard the rights of others and disregard his own rights. True love puts self in the background. The man void of love, loves himself supremely. Love does not cause one to demand his rights to the extent that it hurts or wounds his brethren or fellowman. Even though one feels that someone is due him an apology, charity will not seek it. If one be wounded without cause, love demands that he take it without a murmur. God grant that we sacrifice contending for our own rights and peculiar convictions which would tend to cause trouble.

The seventh statement concerning love is: ***"Is not easily provoked."*** This means Good Temper is one of the sterling characteristics of the possessor of this charity. Good temper is evident when a person cannot lead, he refuses to drive. One does not become fretful and impatient when accomplishments of his efforts are delayed, because delays are inevitable. The best of people have been often provoked to such extent that bad temper was manifest. It is common to hear the expression, ***"He would be very good if he could control his temper."*** Ill temper with high moral character means that the possessor is weak in love. Ill temper is the sin of the disposition of a person which is very common and hurtful to his influence. God grant that we be, ***"Not easily provoked."***

We can not do more than hint at some of the characteristics of love in this article. We shall speak of one thing this love does which is neces-

sary to bring into our experience all these characteristics. This is relative to all things: ***"Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."*** (1 Cor. 13:7) We bear all things because we are convinced that, ***"All things work together for good to them who love God."*** We know that the wrath of man can do no more against us than we deserve because: ***"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."*** (Psalm 76:10). We believe, bear, hope, and endure all things because: ***"The Lord hath made all things for Himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."*** We have strong consolation that God's purpose for the wicked referred to in Proverbs 16:4, is to use as His sword to render judgment and correction to His people for their good; as well as, to deliver their soul from the wicked. David prayed, ***"Arise, O Lord, disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword."*** What wondrous love is this that makes us confident in the statement: ***"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen."*** (Romans 11:36) Lovers are aware of the fact that they cannot love too much. Sometimes we are disappointed because our love to our fellowman seems to be without success. However, we believe that God surely will restrain love that is not God-honoring and helpful to our fellowman, just as surely as He restrains wrath and hatred which will not work for our good and His praise. Brethren, there is no danger of too much true love being lavished upon our fellowman and God! Let us rejoice in the Truth. We sorrow when iniquity abounds, - even in our own hearts. May love so flood our souls that we think no evil. When evil thinking comes into our minds, may LOVE arise and say, No, no, not that!

We close with the first expression of the text which heads this treatise: ***"Beloved, Let us love one another, for love is of God."*** What wondrous love is this, O my soul? which causes us to see how short we come in meeting these requirements. God has loved us so wondrously, may we pray that we be enabled to love our fellow man and our brethren just a wee bit. May our soul taste from time to time, a little bit of the sweetness to such extent that we may sing: WHAT WONDROUS LOVE IS THIS, O MY SOUL?

E. J. Lambert

PSALM 5:11.

But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.

HOSEA II. 14, 15.

"Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope; and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt."

God never forgets his people, but it cannot be said that they never forget him. They are full of waywardness and rebellion, which call forth his fatherly chastisements to reprove and correct them. It seems incredible that the people especially blessed with the presence of the Lord, and who had witnessed again and again his omnipotent power and omniscient oversight working in their behalf, could ever forget him or grow cold and indifferent toward him; not only so, but that they should give themselves over repeatedly to the foolish vanities and idolatries which they had before learned could bring them naught but shame and sorrow, seems far more incredible; but of all this was national Israel guilty at the time of the prophecy quoted above. This nation so singularly chosen of God from among all nations of the earth, whereby it pleased him to show forth his honor and glory, was seen lusting after heathenish idols, forsaking the law of her Maker and all his holy ordinances as prescribed by Moses, to seek the satisfaction of her natural inclinations in bowing the knee unto the gods of the Gentile nations about her. She had forgotten God's wonderful deliverance of her from Egyptian darkness and bondage, of his parting the Red Sea waters that she should pass through dryshod, and had entirely lost sight of his guidance of her, through the forty-year wilderness journey in the cloud by day and fire by night. In the time of great thirst be caused the rock to be smitten, that it should pour forth a stream for her sake; but it was forgotten, together with that time of great hunger when he sent manna from heaven for food. The service of the holy temple, the intercession of the high priest and the offering for sin were all forgotten. God brought her safely through Jordan's swelling flood into the promised land (Canaan) flowing with milk and honey, gave her the victory over her enemies and established her in that country which he gave her for her own. What more evidences could the require of his faithfulness? And how did she requite Him? Her answers were rebellion, pride, depravity and idolatry. At the time of the prophet Hosea, Israel was steeped in national corruption and was standing on the verge of the Babylonian captivity, and in all this was an ensample unto the Israel of the gospel age, not very far distant. These events of national Jewish history typify spiritual truths imparted

unto the gospel church at the present time. There is a proneness to wander felt by the child of God that often gives him great concern, and this very concern, so long as it is present, is in itself a safeguard against yielding to temptation, but when one comes to that state wherein his wanderings do not cause anxiety, he is treading very near Babylon's captivating lure. When in the christian experience one passes from law to gospel, nature to grace, first realizes a hope in the virtues of Jesus' blood and sings for the first time the new song of praise unto God, then in the ardor of his first love is lost entirely to view the weakness of the flesh which will later endeavor to ensnare him into yielding to its temptations. Were the new birth a change wrought in the old man of our Adamic nature, no such danger could exist, nor would one ever wander after the false gods of the flesh. The new birth is the coming into manifestation of a new creature, created in righteousness and true holiness, but it is not a renovation of the old creature of sin and depravity. This makes the subject of grace a dual being experiencing the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit. There are times in the experience of gospel churches, and of individuals, when there seems to be little or no response to spiritual things, and a coldness as of frost seems to nip in the bud every good and beautiful tendeney to higher and better things; accompanying this condition there is also no manifestation of anxiety or grief concerning the matter, but instead an inclination to worldliness is manifested in a careless walk or conversation unbecoming the profession of a disciple of Christ, and a disposition to use the principles of Bible doctrine as a cloak to cover one's actions or utterances. This condition of a church or an individual answers to the condition of national Israel in the type at the time of Hosea's prophecy. The remedy for this condition is not in our hands, but in God's hand, and he will distribute to us of reproof and correction that we shall be ashamed before him for all our ways, and confessing our sins, be brought unto repentance and forgiveness. The child of God that hugs some fleshly idol to his heart is sowing to the flesh; and will of the flesh reap corruption. Do any of us ever strive to lay up for ourselves treasures on the earth? Scarcely any are guiltless on this score, but labor and sorrow are all we get for our pains. This state of affairs cannot long exist with the Lord's people, for he is a jealous God and will not give his glory to another, nor his praise to graven images. *"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve,"* is a command that must be fulfilled, and as surely as God has determined it, so shall they most certainly be brought to serve him to the exclusion of all things else.

"I will allure her, and bring

her into the wilderness." To allure is to attract and entice. In being thus drawn into a snare one is not conscious of his danger, nor that he is being tempted. Our slight indulgences of fleshly impulses unconsciously lead to more and more ungodliness, until we are enmeshed in a web from which we are unable to extricate ourselves. The wilderness referred to in the text is the utter worldliness of Babylon, and represents the wilderness of total depravity. It is waste howling. " Waste" because it is entirely destitute of any spiritual qualities wherewith to satisfy the desires of the new creature, and *"howling"* because it is full of the wild beasts of our nature, prowling around seeking what they may devour. When dominated by the flesh a child of God is drawn away by the lusts thereof and enticed. He is led into the wilderness, but when, within him, the motions of eternal life manifest themselves, total depravity becomes a mightily oppressive burden; then one knows the panting of the soul after God and what it is to be as a pelican in the wilderness, or as a sparrow alone upon the housetop; this is the depth of woe and the pit of miry clay. One deeply questions whether the Lord has forgotten to be gracious, and if his mercy is clean gone forever. I trust I do no violence to the text when I say that our fleshly lusts are those principles which allure us toward Babylon, although the pronoun "I" in the text refers to God. Our heavenly Father not only takes cognizance of our fleshly wanderings, but ordains them, not as an end in themselves, but as evil out of which good shall come. We, his people, are not at liberty to do evil that good may come, but God has a perfect right to appoint such a path for us if he so chooses, and that without in the least impeaching any of his divine attributes. Whatsoever he does is right, because he does it. By causing his wayward children to realize the bitterness of the fruits of their idolatries, they are brought into that attitude of soul towards him of which he says: I *"will speak comfortably unto her."* Words able to comfort must be spoken by one fully acquainted with the needs of the case. Herein does the repentant child touch the Daysman, the Mediator, Christ Jesus, who was tempted in all points like as his people are, yet without sin, and is able to succor them when tempted, for he is touched with the feeling of their infirmities. He is the speaker of the comfortable words. Thus amidst the shattering of one's idolatries there arises a blessed communion with Christ as he comes near to comfort her who had wandered from her true Husband after false lovers.

"I will give her her vineyards from thence." The fruitfulness of the church arises from her realization of the vanities of the flesh and of the value of Christ to her. When mindful of her inherent weakness and infirmity, and aware that without

him she can do nothing, she is not in danger of being taken captive by unbelief, but treads softly and humbly, leaning upon the staff of his precious promises. It is in her high-mindedness and self-confidence that temptation lurks, and until the Husbandman prunes these dead twigs the fruit of the vine will not come to perfection. It is in being made to realize the utter spiritual destitution of the wilderness of the carnal mind and heart that the soul is prepared for the growth of those vineyards whose grapes are the fruits of the Spirit enumerated by the apostle Paul in his letter to the Galatian Church. (Gal. v. 22, 23.)

"And the valley of Achor for a door of hope." This is the valley wherein Achan, he that troubled the peace of Israel with his relics of Jericho's corruption, was stoned to death with all his house. It is the valley of purging or of purification, and is the place wherein we are made to fellowship the sufferings of Jesus, who purged away all our dross and tin and purified us of unrighteousness. The golden wedge of self-confidence is often buried in our tents, but when the light of Jesus' truth discovers its hiding-place, a sense of guilt fills us with anguish, and we are found crying, *"Lord, save us: we perish."* This is the fiery trial wherein is wrought the refinement of faith's gold and the destruction of unbelief's wood and stubble. This deep distress which serves to tear our idols from us and turns our faces toward the temple again, is the door of hope, or that by which hope enters anew and afresh into our souls. When we were drifting idly and calmly upon the smooth surface of fleshly security, we lost sight of our hope or any necessity for such an anchor. But in the midst of the storm its *"anchor pull"* is felt, for the severity of the tempest tests its security. If our hope were centered in some earthly thing, it could not endure the tempest's rage, but the christian's hope, though lost sight of in times of fleshly ease, is anchored in heaven above, in God's love and power and infinite mercy. The higher we are tossed on the billows of trouble, the nearer we approach unto our anchor (hope), which is never so precious as when earth and its idols perish.

"And she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt." She shall sing *"there;"* in that very place where has been witnessed her humiliation and distress she is made to sing; not in some other place, but there, where she has experienced so much hunger and thirst of spirit, shall she rejoice unspeakably. The very wilderness wherein her entanglement caused shame and sorrow shall be glad for her with the rising of the Sun of righteousness. The desert wherein her strength utterly failed shall blossom as the rose with the presence of Him, the Bridegroom of her soul. God does not need to

remove us from amid desolate conditions in order to make us happy in him. A prison is just as good to dwell in as a palace if Jesus dwells with us there. God does not wait until our bodies die to impart unto us the doctrine of the resurrection and its experimental comforts and benefits, but while yet in this time state we come forth from death in Adam unto life in Christ, and, like Paul, die daily, but nevertheless live by the life of Christ, which dwells in us. Though the experience of the wilderness causes repentance in sackcloth and ashes, yet it is where Jesus speaks comfortable words to his tried ones, and when he has revived their hope from the valley of trouble they find again that song in their heart which was theirs in the days of their spiritual youth, when in their first love and first enjoyment of a hope in the virtues of Jesus' blood. This song of praise, yea, even God's praise, testifies to the victory which God through Christ has given the church over all enemies of righteousness.

Unto all those that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, I affectionately tender the above message, I trust, in the fear of God.

Yours in gospel bonds,
HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

Warwick, N.Y.,
Dec. 11, 1907.

ROMANS VIII. 28.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God."

These words bring to our minds solemn thoughts and reflections, of the ground they cover, and the real true meaning of the words here spoken by the apostle, under the inspiration of the holy Spirit of God. How hard it is for poor insignificant creatures to understand or comprehend the working of his almighty power, as he (God) works all things after the counsel of his own will. As we contemplate the majesty and glory of our God in all his works let us ever remember that *"as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."* It seems to me that Paul was here contemplating the work of God from the beginning to the end, from creation to the final glorification of all the redeemed, and not a single link in the chain of God's providence could be left out and his most holy will and purpose accomplished for his dear saints and his glory. We poor finite creatures cannot sit as judges of what our God should do or not do, or divide between the good and the bad, from our viewpoint. It has often been said that God predestinated the good things, but not the bad. Who of us is able to sit as judge and draw the dividing line; place the

good things on the right, the bad on the left? Let us examine a few things left on record for our learning. God created Adam upright, a good created being, gave him a law. He broke that law and fell under its curse: sin and death upon all his posterity. Now we all know that our God could have made Adam strong enough to have withstood the temptation, but in the purpose of God, with an end in view in the far future, he made Adam just as he was. We would place this evil step on the left, not comprehending the thing to be accomplished: the glorification of our God and his only beloved Son Jesus, the Savior of sinners. But I want it distinctly understood that God is not the author of sin; man is wholly responsible for all his sins and misdeeds. We note again among the *"all things"* the selling of Joseph. Joseph had a dream. (Read the narrative.) Was it a mere chance dream, or did the God of heaven inspire it? He had a purpose in it, therefore it was a link in the chain. Joseph told it to his brethren and they put their interpretation upon it (and a correct one).

The evil of their corrupt nature arose and they conspired against Joseph and sold him to merchantmen, who carried him to Egypt, See the sorrow of poor old Jacob. Would we not all place this on the left, with the bad things, as old Jacob did when he said, All these things are against me Dear reader, how often have we said in our hearts as Jacob did, not seeing the end, But, reader, follow Joseph in all his career, shut up in the prison cell by evil intention, is this for good? Yes, in the purpose of God, though yet hid from mortals, Pharaoh dreamed a dream, Joseph was there to interpret it. Suppose Joseph had not been there, then what, But he was there to interpret the dream, Seven years of plenty, seven years of famine, Joseph finds favor with the king, and is made head over all, to save much people alive. God sent him there; the end is good, and when made known his brethren bowed to him willingly, and Joseph told them, Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. Again, the betrayal of Christ by Judas. Where in all the history of the world was there a blacker or more heathenish crime, yet it was all in the fixed, predestinated purpose of our God. Suppose there had not been a Judas; then what? The Scriptures would not have been fulfilled, nor the purpose of God. It is written, *"As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."* When Jonah took ship it was evil upon his part, but God meant it for good. He was to learn obedience by the things be suffered, The storm came. Was it by chance? certainly not. They cast lots, and it fell upon Jonah, the guilty one, and they cast him overboard. Then what? Our God was superintending it all, and had prepared a great fish to swallow him up and carry him to

the place appointed, ordained or fixed. Had our God control of that fish! Most assuredly he had, and when the three days and nights were up he was delivered. So they *"were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."* Now how any true believer can repudiate and hold up to ridicule this blessed doctrine I cannot understand. I am satisfied many are prejudiced by wrong interpretations of evil doers. I have heard of some, in trying to refute the doctrine of predestination, taking up some atrocious crime of murder, and holding it up in all of its most heinous nature, crying out with a loud voice, Tell me that God made that man do this awful deed ! Now that is a false statement. I have traveled extensively in twenty-two states, and Canada, and have never heard any one ridicule such an idea, and I could not fellowship anyone who did. God is not the author of sin, neither tempteth he any man, man of his own lust is tempted. I know of one man who thus tried to justify himself in an evil deed, but the church excluded him, and did right in so doing.

I have never favored setting this up as a standard in church fellowship, but have opposed it. I have full fellowship for those who do not see this as I do, and can stand hand in hand and fellowship with them, but cannot fellowship those who hold it up to ridicule. In all my travels I have met but one man who favored it as a standard. I opposed it, and do yet. For the elect's sake the world stands, and many of the dark scenes that take place, that are beyond our comprehension, will be among the *"all things"* in the providence of God, and in one was, though remote, be for the good of his people, individually or collectively. The wrath of man shall praise God, the remainder of wrath will he restrain. The wicked are his sword for the chastisement of his people. What a sweet comfort when we can rest all in his blessed hand and power, and know that the darkest scene is as necessary as the brightest one. Darkness and light are alike with the Lord. He dwells in the thick clouds; he maketh the clouds his chariot. Truly it is a day of darkness. Darkness has covered the earth, and it truly seems gross darkness the people, and I sometimes wonder why his wrath is not poured Out; but for the elect's sake will the world stand until the last one for whom Jesus died be made manifest.

"Chained to his throne, a volume lies, With all the fates of men,
With every angel's form and size, Drawn by the eternal pen."

What a blessed comfort to feel that

"The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,

My Father determined and wrote in his will."

Dear reader, I trust you may be favored to gather a few crumbs of comfort from these scattered thoughts, for there has been a little comfort to my soul as I have penned them, and a relief to an exercised and burdened mind. The dear Lord bless you all, and lead and guide us all in the pathway of peace and righteousness.

Yours in sweet gospel fellowship, though the least and poorest in my Father's house,

P. W. SAWIN.

SHELBYVILLE, Kentucky.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly In all wisdom." 1 Colossians iii. 16.

This surely means something more than merely reading the word in a careless, formal manner. It is "to dwell in us," that is, take up its firm and lasting abode in our heart, and that *"richly;"* not poorly and niggardly, but copiously and abundantly, unfolding to us and putting us into possession of the wealth of its treasures; and that in *"all wisdom,"* making us wise to salvation, opening up to us the manifold wisdom of God, and how it displays itself in the great mystery of godliness. Now we shall not attain to this rich and heavenly wisdom unless we search and study the Scriptures with prayer and supplication to understand what the Holy Ghost has revealed therein, and what he is pleased to unfold therefrom of the will and way of God for our own personal instruction and consolation. We very easily fall off from abiding in Christ; nor can we expect to keep up sensible union and communion with the Lord Jesus if we neglect those means of grace which the Holy Ghost has provided for the sustentation of the life of God in the soul. When we get cold, sluggish, and dead, to read the word of God is a task and a burden; but not so, when the life of God is warm and gushing in the soul. Then, to read his holy word with prayer and supplication, entering by faith into its hidden treasures, and drinking into the mind of Christ as revealed therein, is a blessed means of maintaining the life of God in the heart, and keeping up union and communion with Christ.

Elder J.C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 2010

Gerald Pickral, VA	5.00
Cleo Underwood, VA	5.00
Glenna Link, TN	20.00
Brandon Lane, NC	10.00
Gene Howard, AL	5.00
Ruby Queen, KY	10.00
Robert Newsom, FL	30.00
Douglas Hodges, VA	10.00

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION 2010

The Lord willing, the 180th session of the Contentnea Association will convene with North River Primitive Baptist Church located in Carteret County, NC on October 9-10, 2010.

The Church is located a short distance off highway US 70 on Gillikin Road in Otway, NC.

We invite all our Brethren and friends to come worship with us.

Elder Gene Lupton
Association Clerk
252-745-0441

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 25 & 26, 2010.

Union Church, located about five miles Southeast of Marion, Louisiana, will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
318-778-4217

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The Staunton River Union meeting will be held the Lord willing on Saturday, October 30th, 2010, before the 5th Sunday at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church.

Song service begins at 10:00 a.m. preaching at 10:30. An invitation is extended to all our ministers, brethren and friends.

Peggy Wells, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

Dan River Primitive Baptist Church will host the next West Country Line Union. The fifth Sunday, October 31, 2010. We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us. Especially ministers of our correspondence.

Church is located on Highway 700 between Eden, North Carolina and Danville, Virginia.

Love and Fellowship,
R. Allen Carroll, Clerk

PSALM 119:165.

Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.

OBITUARIES

SHIRLEY B. CARROLL

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to compose these lines of the obituary of my dear wife, Shirley B. Carroll. Shirley was born on the 31 st day of August in the year 1935. She departed this life on the 1st day of July 2010, at about 7:30 AM.

Shirley was received by Little Creek Primitive Baptist Church near Clayton, North Carolina and was baptized by the late Elder T. F. Adams.

I first met Shirley in 1966 and in a trance I believe that I was showed that I would marry a woman from the household of faith. That is the same faith that I have been given to believe. Shirley was a firm believer in the doctrine of unconditional election and predestination. Shirley was loved by Primitive Baptists from the mountains to the sea shore. Today would have been her 75th birthday if she had lived.

Shirley was born in Johnson County and her parents were Brother Joe Brady and Mrs. Ada Brady. They were from the Brogden community. They preceded her in death some years ago.

Shirley and I were married on October 15,1972, at the Little Creek Primitive Baptist Meeting House, where she was a member, by the late Elder T. F. Adams.

In May 1973, we moved our membership to Newport Primitive Baptist Church where Elder H. A. Young was pastor.

Shirley leaves to mourn a sad husband J. C. Carroll; a daughter, Linda Hallman of Pine Level, NC; a brother, Thomas O Brady of Princeton, NC.

Shirley's funeral was held at the Newport Primitive Baptist Church, Newport, NC, on Sunday the 4th of July 2010, by Elders Melton Lupton, Gene Lupton, Tom Thompson, Steven Lawrence and Virgil Davis. Her body was laid to rest in the family plot in Cedar Grove Cemetery, Newport, NC, there to await the second coming of Jesus who will call for the sleeping dust of his little children to come forth on that resurrection morning.

Shirley lived as a Christian and died as a Christian. For it is written ***"by their fruits, ye shall know them. I do believe that she will hear that welcome applaud" "come in ye blessed of my father and inherit the kingdom prepared from and before the foundation of the world."***

Dear Readers, when you are brought down to the throne of grace, please remember me.

Respectfully submitted,
J. C. Carroll

NANCY TATE WALTON

I feel that I am inadequate to write a memoriam of Sister Nancy Walton but as I have been requested to do so, I will attempt to comply. I realize God can qualify any human that is given a spiritual mind for any task according to his will.

Malmaison Church was blessed with a sister with a deep conviction of her faith in the Lord. During the last eighteen months of her life, she was affiicted with cancer and at times she, as well as her family and brethren, felt the end was surely at hand.

After she had improved enough that she could be at home, she related to me an experience of hers, when she was seemingly at the point of her death. She told me that she was feeling that she was dying, but she regained her mental state enough to call her, niece in her room, telling her to hurry and bring pen and paper. She wrote her funeral instructions to her family in great detail. Her niece told me about this at Sister Nancy's visitation at the funeral home. Her nephew also confirmed that he witnessed this, and he said that Sister Nancy's voice was so weak that she could scarcely be heard and that surely the Lord enabled her to do this.

Sister Nancy, telling me of this experience at her home months later, said that she was given to know that one could only leave this life at God's time, not when she felt it was the time to depart this world. Her belief in the total control of things for all times by God was certain. Only a visitation of the Lord's spirit to her at that time caused these things to happen, we both agreed upon.

She loved her church and the songs of our faith so much and was very gifted in her singing of the hymns. Her countenance showed how much she enjoyed the service.

Sister Walton joined Malmaison Church in September of 1983 and passed from our midst in July 2010. Her pastor, Elder Mark Terry conducted her funeral and her burial was in the Walton family cemetery in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. She was predeceased by her parents, four brothers, and her husband, Brother Smith Walton.

She leaves her son Phillip Walton and a number of other relatives to mourn her loss.

We at Malmaison Church will miss her greatly, not only her presence, but as our church Treasurer and as a gifted singer of hymns. We trust that our God will bless all of us to not grieve her loss as we would one that had not a sweet hope of eternal life. We feel her soul now rests in the paradise of God, never to suffer mortal pain again but to be awakened in his likeness to ever sing a song never heard by mortals, where all is peace eternally.

Written by, I hope, a fellow believer in Christ.

Burnell B. Williams

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
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SONG

Twixt Jesus and the chosen race,
Subsists a bond of sovereign grace,
That hell, with its infernal train,
Shall ne'er dissolve, or rend in twain.

This sacred bond shall never break,
Though earth should to her centre shake;
Rest, doubting saint, assured of this,
For God has pledged his holiness.

He swore but once, the deed was done;
'Twas settled by the great Three One;
Christ was appointed to redeem
All that the Father loved in him.

Hail sacred union, firm and strong!
How great the grace, how sweet the song!
That worms of earth should ever be
One with incarnate deity!

One in the tomb, one when he rose,
One when he triumph'd o'er his foes,
One when in heaven he took his seat,
While seraph's sung all hell's defeat.

This sacred tie forbids their fears
For all he is, or has, is theirs;
With him their head, they stand or fall,
Their life, their surety, and their all.

Kent.

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EDITORIALS

Genesis 2:9, "And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of Knowledge of good and evil."

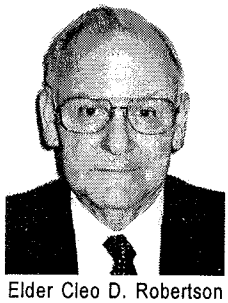
Elder Cleo D. Robertson

The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden. This was the planting of the Lord and sets forth His church here in the world. Man had nothing to do with the planting of these trees in this garden. These were particular trees and included every tree that was pleasant to the sight and good for food. Every child of grace is included in the Lord's garden.

They are pleasant to the sight. There is no greater beauty than that which shines forth from His little children because it is the beauty of Christ that is in them. It is the beauty of holiness. No other people possess this beauty and nothing of the flesh can compare with it. This beauty is manifested in their countenance, walk and conversation. One who has experienced the work of Christ in their heart manifests such a humbleness of feeling so unworthy knowing that they are weak and helpless. These are a poor and afflicted people who look unto the Lord for their help and strength.

These plantings of the Lord are good for food. The Holy Spirit in them produces the fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. Against such, there is no law. This is spiritual food that our very souls hunger and thirst after and nothing of the world can satisfy. No flesh can manufacture this food and no amount of money can buy it. The Lord freely and unconditionally gives this fruit of the Spirit unto each little child of grace. O, such comfort and peace that He gives unto His elect!

The Lord had not caused it to rain upon the earth, but there went

up a mist from the earth that watered the whole face of the ground. The world is watered by that which comes from the earthly man or flesh. However, the garden was watered by a river which went out of Eden. So the Lord's people are watered by that ***"pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."*** The very spirit of God waters His people this day as it always has. The river went out of Eden and became into four heads. I am made to believe that this sets forth the gospel that went into all the world of believers.

In the midst of this garden were two special trees. One was the tree of life and the other was the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God formed Adam from the dust of the earth and gave him a commandment or law before Eve was made from his rib. Therefore, the law covered all mankind that would ever be born into this world. The commandment or law was ***"Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."*** This was the law of sin and death. Sin is a transgression of the law. It is anything that is not of faith and it is all unrighteousness. God made man subject to vanity and He created Satan as the tempter. Satan was in the garden in the form of the serpent. Satan always seems to be present to tempt wherever the children of God are. In the book of Job, each time that the sons of God (His chosen people) came together, Satan came among them. After Christ was baptized, He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. So Satan tempts us; but thanks be unto the Lord, Christ put him behind Him. The church is in Christ and Christ is in His church; therefore Satan is behind it and tempts the Lord's people but cannot destroy them. The Lord made Eve who was a type of the church as she was the mother of all living. According to the Apostle Paul, Adam was a figure of Christ. Satan added one word, "not," to the commandment and the woman was deceived and was in the transgression. She took of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and did eat and gave to her husband and he did eat. Adam was not deceived; but because of his love for Eve, he went under the transgression with her. This presents a picture of Christ and His bride, the church. ***Romans 8:3-4, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."*** Christ came in the flesh, without sin, under the same law as His people to redeem them from the

curse of the law and from their sins. He suffered, bled and died because of the great love He had for His bride. He rose again the third day for her justification.

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil sets forth the law. For the Apostle Paul writes in ***Romans 3:20, "by the law is the knowledge of sin,"*** and again in ***Romans 7:7 "I had not known sin, but by the law."*** When Adam and Eve partook of the fruit of that tree, their eyes were opened and they knew they were naked. They had been naked the entire time but they did not know what nakedness was until then. They tried to do what all of His elect do when the law is applied to them. They tried to cover their nakedness (sin) by the works of the flesh. They made aprons of fig leaves. Their efforts or works were not sufficient to cover their sin. All of our works of the flesh were to no avail as Isaiah 64:6 says ***"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness' are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."***

The tree of life was in the midst of the garden and there was no law or commandment forbidding Adam and Eve from eating of this tree. But, they felt no need for this tree until they had experienced the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The tree of life was setting forth Christ. He is our life; but until we experience the law applied to our heart and indeed our very soul, we do not feel the need of Him. ***Galations 3:24, "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."*** As the tree of life was in the garden the whole time, so Christ stood a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. God provided the cure before the disease. Marvelous are His works and ways.

Adam and Eve heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the cool of the day and hid themselves from His presence among the trees of the garden. Was it not your experience when you were shown that you were a sinner and lost without hope that you felt so ashamed of yourself and did not want others to look upon you? You tried to hide as you felt surely those you esteemed as the Lord's people could see your blackness of sin and would want nothing to do with you. But, O dear child of the living God, He would not leave you nor forsake you, but at the ninth hour (the hour of prayer) He came to you in His love and mercy. Adam and Eve experienced the Word which was Christ that came to them in the cool of the day. You can't hide from God because all things are open before Him. The cool of the day is grace.

When the very presence of the Lord is manifested and felt, it is the cool of the day for grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. It is a time of rest and comfort. The Lord called unto Adam and said, ***"Where art***

thou?" He was not asking to find out where Adam was. The Lord knew where Adam was, but the question was for Adam's benefit. Adam confessed that he was afraid because he saw that he was naked and he tried to hide. The Lord said, ***"Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou should not eat?"*** The question goes to the very depth of one's soul. Who told you that you were a sinner? Could some man convince you that you were a sinner and lost? NO! Only the Lord applying the law to our heart can do that. The tree of knowledge of good and evil shows us that only the Lord is good and that all flesh is evil. Adam said, ***"The woman whom thou gavest me to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat."*** The Lord said unto the woman, ***"What is this that thou hast done?"*** Again, this question was for the benefit of the woman. She confessed that she was tempted and deceived by Satan and she sinned. There was a death that was experienced on this occasion but not a death of the body. As the Apostle Paul explains in Romans 7:9, ***"For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died."***

The Lord made coats of skins and clothed Adam and Eve. This sets forth a death and shedding of blood and points to Christ. Adam and Eve could not make themselves coverings or clothing sufficient to cover their nakedness. Only the Lord could do that and He did. His people have no" righteousness of themselves, but He cloths them with His righteousness. As with the virtuous woman which was a type of the church, she had no virtue of herself but it was the virtue of Christ. If we are children of the heavenly king, we have no virtue or righteousness of ourselves for our righteousness is as filthy rags. But His people have His righteousness for they have Christ in them, the hope of glory.

The Lord drove out the man and placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims and a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life. These were not to keep the tree of life, but the way of the tree of life. I am given to believe that this means the gospel of Christ that would go into the world of the Lord's people. Hebrews 1:7 states, ***"And of the angels he saith, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire"*** and Ephesians 6:17 ***"And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit which is the word of God."*** Also, Hebrews 4:12, ***"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."*** Therefore, I am given to be-

lieve the cherubims set forth angels and the flaming sword set forth the ministers preaching the gospel. It turned every way meaning the gospel went out to His people, wherever they are.

How comforting the words of Jesus when He said in Matthew 28: 18, *"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."*

Submitted I hope and trust in love,

Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

Enclosed you will find my check for $15.00 for 1 year subscription to the "Signs of the Times." I really enjoy J.B. Farmer's articles.

God Bless,
Elizabeth Webb

ROMANS 9: 15-16.

For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

ARTICLES

"And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the male factors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left, then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do and they parted his raiment, and cast lots." (Luke 23:33-34)

This question comes to mind: Was Jesus praying for all of those who killed him?

"I manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them. I pray not for the world, but for them which thou has given me; for they are thine" (John 17:6-9) This Scripture shows that Jesus did not pray for the world, but only prays for those that Almighty God had given him out of the world.

Let us quote from John Gill: "*Jesus's prayer was not for those*

who crucified him, but for those who were ignorantly concerned in it, as the next clause shows, even for his own elect, whom the Father have given him out of the world, which were among his crucifiers;for these, and not the world, he prays; and the fruit of this his prayer quickly appeared, in the conversion of three thousand of them under Peter's sermon on the day of pentecost." (See Acts 2:41)

Now let us quote Peter: *"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in they heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the holy ghost, For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." (Acts 2:36-39)*

"—It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." (Rom. 8:34) This means that Jesus is on the right hand of God and praying for his people. *"–He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God" (Rom. 8:27)*

May all the honor, praise and glory be given to Almighty God who has saved his people,

Elder W. W. Hudson, Jr.

VOICES OF THE PAST

The following is taken from the book, "A Treasure of Hymns" by Amos R. Wells. Copyright 1945, W. A. Wilde Company.

The book contains brief biographies of one hundred twenty leading hymn writers with their best hymns.

"Rock of Ages."
Augustus M. Toplady.

ROCK OF AGES" and "Jesus, Lover of my soul," are the two favorite hymns of most Christians.

The author of "Rock of Ages," Augustus Montague Toplady, was an Englishman, and was born November 4, 1740. His father, Major Toplady, died in the siege of Cartagena in Colombia, South America, while his boy was only a few months old. Young Toplady was converted when on a visit to Ireland by an itinerant Methodist preacher, a layman, who was preaching in a barn.

His mind was vigorous. but his body was weak, and soon consump-

tion seized upon him. He fought it for two years before it conquered, and it was during this period that he wrote his immortal hymn. It appeared first in the *Gospel Magazine* for March, 1776-a magazine of which he was the editor. It was in the midst of an article in which he tried to figure out the number of a man's sins, and then broke into this hymn, which sets forth our only remedy for sin:--

Rock of Ages, cleft for me.
Let me hide myself in Thee,
Let the water and the blood
From Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.

Not the labor of my hands
Can fulfil Thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone,
Thou must save, and Thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring;
Simply to Thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for dress;
Helpless, look to Thee for grace;
Foul, I to the Fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die.

While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eyestrings break in death,
When I soar through tracts unknown,
See Thee on Thy judgment throne,.:-
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee!

Toplady's title for the hymn was *"A living and dying prayer for the holiest believer in the world."* The title fitly expressed the triumphant faith in which he himself passed away on August 11, 1778, saying, *"My prayers are all converted into praise."* He was only thirty-eight years old. The hymn was actually used as a dying prayer by Prince Albert, the beloved husband of Queen Victoria. It was sung in Constantinople by the Armenians during the fearful massacre. When the steamship London went down in the Bay of Biscay in 1866, the last man to escape from the ill-fated vessel heard the remaining passengers singing this hymn;--

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.

The hymn was an especial fa vorite with Gladstone, who was often heard humming it in the House of Commons, and who translated it into Latin, Greek, and Italian. His Latin translation is one of great beauty. Major-General Stuart, the famous Confederate cavalry officer,

sung this hymn as he lay dying after the Battle of the Wilderness. Of many other death-beds this hymn has been the solace and the crown.

The story is told of a Chinese woman who, for the purpose of "making merit" for herself with her heathen gods, had dug a well twenty-five feet deep and fifteen in diameter. She was converted, and a traveler speaks of meeting her when she had reached the age of eighty. She was bent with age, but she stretched out her crippled hands toward her visitor, and began to sing;-

Nothing in my hand I bring, Simply to Thy cross I cling.

The noblest incident connected with this hymn is related of the celebration of the fiftieth year of the reign of Queen Victoria. On this occasion there came an embassy from Queen Ranavalona III., of Madagascar, and in the company was a venerable Hova, who expressed the desires of his people for the prosperity of the Queen, and then asked permission to sing. It was expected that he would render some heathen song, but to everyone's amazement he burst forth with

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.

It was a striking proof of the power of Christian missions.

"Rock of Ages" was often sung by the Armenians at Constantinople during the terrible massacres.

The hymn is given as Toplady wrote it, and it will be seen that it is often mutilated in our hymn- books. The second line of the last stanza is generally written:-

When my eyelids close in death.

Toplady's line refers to an old belief that, when a person dies, the "eyestrings" snap.

As to the thought of *"Rock of Ages,"* it probably sprung from the marginal translation of Isa. 26:4 : *"In the Lord Jehovah is the rock of ages,"* but Toplady doubtless combined that with such passages as *"I will put thee in a cleft of the rock"* (Exod. 33:22), 14 Enter into the rock " (Isa. 2:10), and *"They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ"* (1 Cor. 10: 4).

Toplady wrote 133 poems and hymns, but nearly all are forgotten except this. One other, however, is a hymn of great beauty, and is cherished by many Christians: --

Inspirer and Hearer of prayer,
Thou Shepherd and Guardian of Thine,
My all to Thy covenant care
I sleeping and waking resign;
If Thou art my shield and my sun,
The night is no darkness to me;
And fast as my moments roll on
They bring me but nearer to Thee.

2 KINGS V. 1-14.

WHEN we are reading, commenting or meditating upon any portion of Old Testament Scripture, we should not lose sight of the fact that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is for the children of God and for their instruction in righteousness, and that the Old Testament has the New concealed in it. As all the lines of the prophecy and type and shadow of the Old Testament converge upon the Son of God, so in the New Testament we see all lines radiating from him in wonderful beauty and glory. The things that were written afore time were penned for our learning, that through patience and comfort in reading the Bible we might have hope. As a diamond radiates light in various directions, the literal truth of the Old Testament often has more than one spiritual application, all in perfect harmony with the word of God. One historical incident of the old covenant history conceals some striking truth of New Testament application, so that it requires all the Old Testament to declare all that the New Testament demonstrates. A type, cannot be as perfect as the antitype, else it would cease to be a type, and no one incident or figure can set forth all that pertains to Christ in his dispensation of suffering or of glory.

The miraculous cleansing of Naaman the Syrian, captain of the hosts of Benhadad king of Syria, is rich in its typical signification of the eternal truth of God. Naaman was a man of blameless reputation, faultless in his moral life, honorable in all his dealings, loved by his soldiers, respected and trusted by the king, and doubtlessly envied by many in Syria because of his station in life. He was a mighty man in valor, and by him the Lord had given deliverance to Syria, but he was a leper. After attaining high and deserved rank, with so much naturally to live for, to hope for and expect in life, he was smitten with a foul disease, the dreaded and incurable leprosy, which seemed destined in due course to terminate his life in hopeless despair. As leprosy is so often used in the Bible to represent sin, it naturally follows that the leper represents the sinner. In connection with the foregoing thoughts, we are reminded of Moses when God commissioned him by the burning bush that was not consumed to deliver the Hebrews in Egypt from slavery under Pharaoh. Moses questioned his ability even with God's promise to perform this mission, and was commanded to cast his rod upon the ground. He promptly obeyed, and beheld a serpent before him from which he fled in fright. In obedience to the command of God, Moses seized the serpent by the tail and it became a rod in his hand. This was a sign from God. Then Moses was told to put his hand into his bosom. He complied, and when he withdrew it his hand was leprous, white as snow. Upon the command

of God, Moses again put his hand into his bosom, and withdrew it to find with astonishment that it was turned again healthy like his other flesh. In these two signs we see the serpent representing Satan and the leprous hand representing sin. As the leprosy in this case followed the miracle of the rod becoming a serpent, so sin followed the entrance of Satan into the Garden of Eden. God was in the midst of the burning bush which is a beautiful type of spiritual Israel, and by his power Satan was ordained to tempt our first parents that sin might come into the world, and through the wondrous working of that almighty power Satan's head was bruised by the death *of* Jesus Christ on the cross, which finished transgression and put an end to sin, as regards the election of grace. Leprosy was considered an unclean disease and resulted in the banishment of the leper from the camp, and the Israelite who was smitten with that disease was not permitted to partake of the holy things until he was cleansed, under the legal dispensation. Leprosy is an intrinsically loathsome disease and all that are aware of its nature shun the afflicted one. So one (and such must be a child of God to apprehend the exceeding sinfulness of sin) shuns sin and flees from it in feelings and effort, even if contaminated with it. When God shines in the heart of a poor sinner and shows him his wretchedness, he loathes himself. In this we see a similitude of leprosy to sin. Apparently it would seem to the natural mind that sin in Eden had a very insignificant beginning in the violation of one commandment. So leprosy is almost unnoticed in its origin. Sin gradually involved all mankind under the curse of a transgressed law, and so leprosy in its inevitable progress involves in time the person of the one afflicted with it. In the human being leprosy tends to make its victim to a large extent insensible of distress as it continues to spread, and so sin continues to make the sinner insensible of his real condition as viewed by God's holy law. Both sin and leprosy can be transmitted to offspring, and both are alike incurable by human means. Under the law given by Moses provision was made for the restoration of a leper to the camp of Israel, consisting of ceremonies in which sacrifices were offered, typifying the life, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, as given in detail in the book of Leviticus. As Israel's high priest had an important part in the ritualistic restoration of the leper, so we have indisputable proof of leprosy representing sin, the leper the sinner, and the high priest setting forth in type the work of Jesus in saving the poor sinner. In the case of Naaman, we find that he was incurably afflicted with the terrible leprosy, and that his morality, station in life, reputation, honor and wealth sufficed in no sense to alleviate his condition. And just as fruitless were the best efforts of the most skillful

physicians in all the realm of Syria. All the resources that King Benhadad could command were alike of no avail. Hopelessness and despair had seized him. So it is with a poor sinner condemned by the law of sin and death and guilty in all points as regards keeping the commandments of the decalogue. He finds when he becomes aware of his condition that human efforts will not mitigate the severity of the sentence he is under, deliver him from bondage or afford any relief. He feels that he is daily getting worse. As the doctors of medicine failed to help Naaman, so the doctors of divinity (so called) are powerless to aid the sinking, helpless sinner, who cries in vain and seeks in vain for help by human means. When at last ready to give up, a ray of hope came into Naaman's life from a source that had its origin outside of Syria, just as when the quickened sinner feels the grasp of spiritual death. Hope shines in his soul with a ray of mercy, and this comes from a source outside of and apart from himself. During a war between Syria and Israel, the Syrians had gone out in companies and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little Jewish maid, and she waited on Naaman's wife. Kindly treated by her master and mistress, and loyal in her captivity, this maid of Israel had an affectionate regard for her master, and said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy. And one went in and told his lord the words of the little maid. However, the king of Syria, when informed of the message of the servant in Naaman's household, manifested no direct interest in the prophet Elisha in Samaria, and did not even send a message to him, but instead wrote a letter to the king of Israel, to be delivered by Naaman himself, who took with him ten talents of silver and six thousand pieces of gold and ten changes of raiment. "And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy. And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? Wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me."- 2 Kings v .6, 7. In connection with Naaman's visit to the king of Israel, it should be remembered that the laws given by Moses were given unto the Israelites, and not to the Gentiles, that Naaman was a Gentile living in a Gentile country that had been at war with Israel, a foreign country, for the Gentiles were considered by the Israelites as strangers and foreigners, and that the Israelites did not send the maid who waited on Naaman's wife, and that no Syrian Gentile could have borne the message delivered by the little maid

of Israel. Naaman must leave his native land, Syria, and go to another country if he would get physical relief. In all this do we not see that Syria represents the flesh, the state in which we are by nature? Naaman worshipped idols. We have our idols when we are in the flesh, even if they are not idols of wood or stone, they are idols nevertheless. Money or its love is so often an idol. Human ambitions and the vain desires of the mind and the lusts of the flesh are idols in their nature. So in the flesh by nature we are no better than Naaman, which means pleasantness. We are enlightened with this world according to the flesh. But when the arrows from the quiver of the Lord of hosts pierce our hearts and trouble comes and we feel the wrath of God abiding in us and ourselves as fit food for hell, and our natural hopes blasted and sorrows encompassing us round about, we can say with Naomi, as recorded in the book of Ruth, ***"Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me."*** There is an evident relation in the meaning of the names Naomi and Naaman, both meaning "pleasant," and both characters experiencing pleasant things of this world to be later brought down and humbled in the sight of God. It is also true that when we first feel our sinfulness in a work of grace wrought by the Holy Spirit in our souls that we are at first legalistic and resort to attain unto salvation and resort to the works of the Jews. As Naaman found that his morality and honor and riches were of no avail to relieve him of his dread disease, we find that our morality, standing among men, works of righteousness under the law are worthless to save us. We have in spirit to leave the state we are in by nature, the flesh, and go to another realm to find deliverance from the leprosy of sin. Morality denotes man's relation to man and his duty towards his fellowman and himself. Piety denotes man's relation to God. One may educate the flesh and refine it and cultivate it as much as possible, it will be flesh still with all its inherited and committed sin. We have to get outside of natural self to get rid of the leprosy of sin. We seek therefore a better and a heavenly country. Like Naaman, we must leave this Syria of the flesh. But how do we learn of that other country, of that place or person to which or to whom we may go for relief? We remember that word came to Naaman through a captive maid of Israel. It was through a Jewish maid in the person of the virgin Mary that the Word of God came into the world by the miraculous birth of Jesus Christ announced by the angel voices. The land of Judea at that time was under the domination of imperial Rome, and the Jews were therefore in captivity, and Mary was among those who were subjects to Rome, she who was the mother of Jesus. We read in John: ***"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word***

was God." And in the same chapter of John we are told that *"the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."* God was the Word that was manifest in the flesh in Christ Jesus, for it is written, *"woman shall encompass a man."* Then through a Jewish maid by means of the Word assurance has come to us of our Prophet, Priest and King, our spiritual Elisha, who can heal the leprosy of sin and deliver them who all their lifetime are subject to bondage, and destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil. But we have noted that Naaman went first, not to Elisha, but to the king of Israel. It was Israel that received the law and was its custodian, and to my mind this represents the sinner at first resorting to the law as a means of salvation. We also note that the king of Syria sent him there. So our fleshly spirit, that which rules our carnal mind, sends us to the law for comfort and solace. But Jehoram, king of Israel, rent his clothes and confessed his inability to do Naaman any good or help him in anyway whatsoever, not withstanding all the wealth that Naaman had. So, regardless of our moral or other wealth, the law cannot save us. It can only condemn with unabated strength and power. I believe that Benhadad, the king of Syria, may represent the prince of this world, as Syria typifies the natural darkness of the flesh, from which the convicted sinner flees as he is apprehended of the Lord, but from which he can never escape as long as he dwells in a mortal body.

In considering the prophet Elisha, who succeeded Elijah after the latter's translation, we find a type of Christ suggested by the name Elisha, *"My God is salvation."* There is a sense in which the work of Elijah typified the ministry of Jesus Christ on earth under the law in the miracles wrought by Elijah. When Elijah's work was done on earth, he was translated to heaven and immediately Elisha succeeded him, receiving a double portion of Elijah's spirit. The word *"Elijah"* means *"My God is Jehovah."* This was exemplified in the honor that Jesus gave the Father in all his earthly ministry under the law. After Jesus finished his work on earth, he ascended to heaven, and in heaven at God's right hand he is our Mediator, Counsellor and Advocate in his Melchisedec priesthood, as he presents his church faultless before the Father in love, and gives salvation unto all believers. He is our antitypical Elisha, our salvation. *"Jesus is our great salvation, worthy of our best esteem."* The Melchisedec ministry of Christ in heaven follows his finished work on earth. The work of Elisha followed that of Elijah. So we see that when Elisha heard of the king's distress and his inability to help Naaman, he sent word for Naaman to come *"now*

to me." Christ sends the Holy Spirit into our hearts, and we are directed to Jesus, and not to the law as our refuge from the leprosy of sin. Having broken down the middle wall of partition that separates Jew from Gentile by his death on the cross, abolishing the handwriting of ordinances and nailing them to the cross, the Lord Jesus saves both Jew and Gentile alike and they are one in him. Naaman was a Gentile, and in his cure of leprosy we see a type of salvation extended to the Gentile. Naaman came and stood at the door of the house of Elisha, but the prophet did not come personally and minister unto him, but sent a messenger instead. May not this messenger represent the Holy Spirit? In the miracles of mercy which Jesus performed in healing the Gentiles while he was in the flesh under the law, he always healed at a distance. He was not in person present when the servant of the centurion was healed, nor when the daughter of the Syrophonecian woman was delivered from the torments of a devil, so in this healing of leprous Naaman, Elisha did not appear in person. So Jesus does not appear to us in this gospel dispensation in the flesh as he ministered to Jews in healing miracles before he went to the cross as the Lamb that taketh away the sins of all believers (the world in the sense of Jew and Gentile believers). Naaman stood at the door of the house of Elisha, and so every child of Jehovah stands at the door of the church, in which dwells Jesus, before he enters into a fuller knowledge of salvation in the revelation of Jesus Christ. Naaman was hidden to go and wash in Jordan seven times and be clean. But Naaman, like all sinners saved by grace, looked for salvation to come in a way of his or her own choosing. The Lord's ways are not our ways, and the more a subject of divine mercy leans upon self or the imaginations of the heart or the works of the law, the more he will be humbled. The carnal mind is ever at enmity with the law of God. So Naaman went away in wrath, in enmity. But this was only temporary. Persuaded by his servants, Naaman came to himself, and in obedience went to the river Jordan and bathed seven times, as the prophet had commanded, and found that his flesh came again, like the flesh of a child, clean and free of disease. The river Jordan has a significance in sacred history. It means Judgment or descender. Jesus was baptized in Jordan. He met the Judgment of God for the sins of his bride, for the whole family of God, and we that believe in him are baptized unto his death, and buried with him in baptism, and live in him in newness of life. But Naaman dipped himself seven times, and Jesus was only once baptized in Jordan. In considering the number seven, we must not forget that in Scripture it is often used to denote completeness, or perfection. God rested the seventh

day from all his work of creation, and blessed that day. The Old Testament Sabbath, or seventh day, was a rest for the flesh, and typified the New Testament Sabbath of rest for the soul, ushered in by the Lord Jesus through his death and resurrection. On the day of atonement blood was sprinkled once upon the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant in the holy of holies, but seven times before the veil. There are many applications of the number seven to denote completeness in the Scriptures, especially in reference to the sabbatic seasons under the law. So the fact that Naaman bathed, or dipped, seven times in Jordan may denote the perfection, or completeness, of his healing. The fact that his flesh came again as a little child is mentioned in the scriptural account of the miracle. It may signify that when We are born in the kingdom of God we must be as little children, for of such is the kingdom of heaven, humble, weak, willing to learn, desiring the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby. And the children of God do grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is here a little and there a little, line upon line and precept upon precept. Naaman seemed a new creature in his physical being, and so being born again of an incorruptible seed by the word of God, redeemed sinners are new creatures in Christ Jesus.

The foregoing article has been submitted in much fear and trembling, with the earnest desire that the reader cast over it the needful mantle of charity.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.
WEST HURLEY, N. Y,
June 8, 1937.

THE HEART AWAKE

As I write this heading several things throng through my mind, all bordering upon my subject, so that I scarcely know just how to begin. However, we will catch at one of these many threads and start to unravel our skein and see where it leads us. The years have rolled backward, and we stand on the wayside beside a country road in the land of Palestine, about the year 33 of our Lord. The road is one leading out of Jerusalem toward the setting sun, over the mountains of Ephraim, to a village situated some miles distant, called Emmans. Up the road toward us, coming from Jerusalem, walk two men with heads bowed down, speaking together almost in whispers, so that we can scarcely hear what they are saying. Occasionally they turn and look back toward the city whence they have come; now they point their fingers toward the east, in the direction of the Mount of Olives; again they halt, and with faces turned thither they silently stand, gazing toward that summit as though expecting someone. Altogether their actions are so mysterious that we join ourselves to them,

resolved to keep them in view and see what all this may mean. As they get farther and farther from the city their conversation grows louder, so we can now hear plainly all that they are saying. They seem to be discussing the events which have just transpired behind them, and conjecturing with regard to what it all may mean. It seems that they have been deeply in love with one who has proven himself many times to be their friend. They call this friend Jesus. They had expected this Friend to one day come to the throne of Israel and rule all the land wherein we now are. Contrary, however, to these expectations, his enemies through jealousy and hatred of him had contrived to gain the ascendency over him, and had hurried him into the presence of the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, who, though he could find no fault in the man, nevertheless delivered him over to his enemies to be crucified, which crucifixion had but just taken place. Our companions are much discouraged at the outcome of events, and seem inclined to doubt the good intentions of their Friend, and even seem ready to forget, if they can, many promises which their Friend made them while alive and walking with them; and now occurs the strangest thing of all this journey. These two men after a time cease talking with one another, and take to acting in a very peculiar way, and uttering very strange things. From their talk any ordinary mortal would think them mentally deranged, for now, instead of talking with each other, they seem to be communing with a third person whom we cannot see. They ask question after question and frequently they break forth in amens. Their faces shine, they look to be supremely happy. Thus talking and communing with this personage they come into Emmaus, and having come to their house they bid their companion abide with them, as the night is at hand. Thus constrained, he tarries with them, and even sits at meat with them. As he breaks the bread, instantly a look of remembrance mingled with surprise flashes over their faces, followed by a look bordering on disappointment, for their visitor has gone from them as mysteriously as he came. Now they doubt not, nor question with regard to the meaning of the events of the last two days, for they say, ***"Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scripture?"*** From this expression we comprehend that Jesus is their heart within them. The bride in the Song of songs, which as Soloman's, says, ***"I sleep, but my heart awaketh."*** The bride is the church; the heart of the church is Christ. What our heart is to our natural body, even that and more also is Jesus to his body, the church. If our natural heart should cease its action, our natural life would cease also. We may and do lie down upon our beds at night and lose ourselves

in slumber, but though our bodies sleep, not once through all the silent watches does the heart cease its action. There has never been a time in all the history of this old world of ours that the testimony of Jesus was not in the earth; the heart of the church is ever and will ever be awake. The church may be, and has often been, asleep, but not once has the eye of her Maker slumbered and slept. Through all the tortuous windings of Israel's backsliding way, Jesus had his witnesses in her, and though they persecuted them sorely and cast them into the dungeons, yet, was Christ preached. Even in those days, when God saw that wickedness had multiplied upon the earth, and it repented him that he had made man, even then Noah was a preacher of righteousness; and in those days of wicked Queen Jezebel, who put to death numbers of the Lord's prophets, Elijah was kept from her snares; he defied her in the name of his God, he triumphantly cast the lie in the teeth of the prophets of the false god and preached *"Jesus and him crucified,"* the immortal theme of all ages. Even though Israel forgot her God went astray again and again in the satisfaction of her lusts, Jesus, the heart of the church, was awake, his testimony was ever in her midst; he is her life, her sole dependence. She may grow weary many times, and fall asleep from sheer weakness of the flesh, but Christ never; he is always on the alert, and his prayers are for the prevalence of her faith. Though the night before the crucifixion the disciples might sleep Jesus in agony prayed for them. He knew their weakness, they were yet to learn it. I have heard individuals, believers in Christ, tell of being cold and indifferent to all spiritual things. It may be so, but their heart is awake. If this is not the case, I would like to know how they would know they are cold and indifferent? How could they thus pass judgment upon themselves if Jesus was not alive within them? Do you ever commit an act which you know to be wrong at the time you commit it, and yet you go right on and do it. In other words, do you ever sin *"willfully"?* I am sure you do. Well, how do you know you are doing wrong? Because your heart is awake. You yourself are asleep, and thus slumbering fall into temptation. But what about the time when you yourself wake up and find out where you have fallen to, then how do you feel? I will tell you: *"If we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."* Our organized churches sometimes fall asleep and yield to temptation, even though there may be evidence of their heart being awake. In such a church there may be one or two alert brethren who are much exercised about the conduct of the

church, who realize the danger ahead, but who are unable to cause the church to heed their warning. In these one or two alert brethren the wakefullness of Christ is evidenced. O that God would give us more such, and give us also therewith strength to heed their cry before the danger is upon us. When will we ever learn to behave ourselves in the house of our God? A church may become over confident as to her soundness, and then beware! Along comes a wolf in sheep's clothing, Satan as an angel of light; he gives us a strange mixture of gospel and law, so subtle that it soothes our senses, puts us to sleep, and though one or two stauch brethren raise their voice in alarm, we say, *"O don't be so foolish, he's all right."* But some day the church will wake up, and what then? there will come divisions, pain and great sorrow, repentance will come upon that church, the tares which sprang up in the night will be uprooted, but great will be the anguish of that purification. False doctrine is not the only thing to be feared, however. What a confusion it makes in the order of our little church to wake up sometimes and find a dear, good brother has joined a secret society. Instantly the question is asked, Why did he do it? Go ask him, he will doubtless say, as not aware this thing was contrary to your practice. He did it to increase his worldly prosperity. The brethren never told him they did not sanction such things, he never heard the Elder say a word about it, not a question concerning it was asked him when he joined the church. I wonder who is asleep in this case? The church, of course; it never mentioned such things because they were unimportant, non-essentials if you please; but thus it is always these non-essentials that cause the most of our trouble. However, the heart of the church is not asleep, and you may be sure that your sin will find you out. *"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."*

Much more might be said along this line, but because I cannot say it all I may as well stop now as any time.

Yours in desire of the "heart's" animations,

Horace H. Lefferts
Philadelphia, Pa.

St. Matthew 3: 16-17.

And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

"Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have (margin, let us hold fast) grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear."- HEBREWS xii. 28.

GRACE is the very foundation of the kingdom which cannot be moved. It is all of grace, from first to last. By grace we are saved; by grace we are called; by grace we are what we are. In order, therefore, to maintain our interest clear in the kingdom which cannot be shaken, we must hold grace fast; for directly we cease to do this, we lose our comfortable prospects of this kingdom, and of our own participation in it and its heavenly blessings. It is a kingdom of present grace and of future glory, therefore built wholly upon grace and not upon merit; wholly upon the favour of God and not upon the works of the creature. As long, then, as we hold fast grace, we hold the kingdom; for the kingdom stands in grace.

But why should this exhortation be needed? Is it not very easy to hold fast grace? Yes, very, when there is nothing to try it; and that is the way that most hold it – in the head, not in the heart. But the real partakers of the life of God are tempted on every hand to renounce their hold of grace, through the power of the world, the strength of sin, the subtlety of their unwearied adversary, the unbelief, infidelity, and despondency of their wretched heart. Thus sometimes we are tempted to look away from the kingdom which cannot be shaken, and descend to lower things; to stand either upon that earth which has been shaken under our feet, or that heaven, that Pharisee's heaven which has been shaken over our heads, and thus get lost and bewildered among the wreck and ruin of those things which have been shaken and are removed. The Apostle therefore exhorts us to hold fast that grace whereby in the first instance we came to have an interest in the kingdom not to be shaken; whereby we were introduced into an experimental knowledge and possession of it; and whereby alone we can maintain a firm hold of it to the end. Whatever you do, then, however low you may sink and fall, never relinquish your firm hold of grace. It will never be more precious than when clasped by a dying hand, and clung to with expiring breath.

Elder J. C. Philpot

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Oscar Pickral, VA 5.00
Elder Raymond Goad, VA 15.00
Glenford Sigmon, VA 5.00
Hazel Garland, MD 25.00
Billie Freeman, AL 25.00
Gradie Strader, NC 5.00
Elder Ralph Gaines, NC 5.00
Donald Agee, VA 5.00
Jim Campbell, CO 5.00
Jerry Somers, VA 10.00
Raymond Wimmer, WV 5.00
Doris Giles, VA 5.00

St. Luke 10: 21-22.

In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.

OBITUARIES

Pleasant Ridge Church is saddened by the death of Brother Dan Anders. Brother Dan was a devoted member of Pleasant Ridge Church and a supporter of all the churches of the Buttahatchie-Hopewell Association.

Brother Dan was born November 3, 1920 and passed away on September 10, 2010, being 89 years old.

Brother Dan served four years in the Army during WW II, nine years with Southern Natural Gas, 16 years with the Alabama Dept. of Agriculture, and was a life long farmer.

Brother Dan is survived by his wife of 64 years Sister Agnes Anders, who is also a member of Pleasant Ridge, two sons Dan (Connie), and Joe (Donna), four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren and one sister Merrill Rudowski (Russell).

Brother Dan was a firm believer in Salvation by the Sovereign Grace of God and the Predestination of all things.

Graveside services were conducted by Elder James Pugh at the Mt. Hebron Cemetery.

Brother Dan Anders will be missed by all of us, but we believe that our loss is his eternal gain. May God reconcile us to his will.

Elder James Pugh, Moderator
Sister Agnes Sullivan, Clerk

JAMES LEWIS (J. L.) CASSELL

At the request of the Smith River Primitive Baptist Association it is with much sadness, that I attempt to write an obituary of our friend and beloved brother in Christ, Elder James Lewis (J. L.) Cassell.

Brother Cassell was born at Vesta, Patrick County, Virginia, on July 8, 1922, to the late John Henry Cassell, Sr., and Penceanna Jane Conner Cassell. In addition to his parents he was predeceased by Sisters Eva Cruise and Evelyn Vaughn, and Brother Leonard Cassell.

He passed peacefully from this life on Monday August 16, 2010, after a short illness. He leaves to mourn, his wife of 65 years, Euna Harris Kemp Cassell, sons Carlyle Kemp, Doug Kemp, Jimmy Cassell, and daughter Frankie Martin. He also leaves one brother John Henry Cassell, Jr., 12 grandchildren 10 great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews.

He was a master carpenter in life. He built many homes in Virginia and other states. He was a charter and life member of the Cave Spring Rescue Squad in Roanoke, Virginia.

His funeral was conducted August 21, 2010, at Oakey's South Chapel in Roanoke, Virginia, by Elders Alan Terry, Junior Conner, and W. T. Conner. He had requested congregational singing from the Goble Hymn Book of #43, #189, #216, led by Elder John Wingfield and Elder Paul Hopkins. Also hymn #175 and #275 was sung at the cemetery. He was laid to rest at Cedar Lawn Memorial Park in Roanoke, Virginia, to wait the resurrection morning of the Saints of God.

I have known Brother J. L. all my life and having attended meetings at various Primitive Baptist Churches where I saw him in the congregation as a troubled man, carrying a burden, not knowing to what extent. After service at New Dan River Church on Sunday June 24, 1990, at age 67, he asked for a home and was warmly received.

Several years before, a friend of his, Perry Stone, told of a strange dream, in which he saw Bro. Cassell being baptized by two deacons. He pondered on this dream wondering under what circumstance this would happen. In 1990 New Dan River Church was found to be without a pastor and was setting as an independent church with two deacons. As the scripture relates, Phillip was a deacon when he baptized the eunuch.

The baptism was held on the fourth Sunday in July 1990 at 10 o'clock in the pond behind the New Dan River Church by Deacons Raymond Vipperman and Donald Scott.

On the fourth Saturday in May 1991, Deacon Raymond Vipperman asked the church if anyone objected to Bro. J. L. Cassell offering prayer and speaking to the church, no one

objected. After praying he related some of his experiences and those of his father and grandfather and how that they were connected. He spoke of his love for the church that had been with him for over 40 years, and was shown that he would have to stand in the pulpit and serve the church.

Shortly before his passing, Bro. J. L. Cassell related a dream to me, in which he found himself in a pit in front of New Dan River Church "I was near the road, and spring from where water was used in past years. Looking out of the pit at ground level I knew I couldn't get out on my own. I saw Elder Bennie Clifton coming toward me Elder Clifton was a strong man, who could have pulled me out of the pit by himself. I realized" Elder Clifton walked in front of the pit, that I had been lifted out, not knowing by whom. Elder Clifton tied a golden cord around my wrist and we walked up the hill and went into the church. I was led to the pulpit and Elder Clifton tied the other end of the cord around the pulpit. The next thing I realized was that I was in the pulpit looking out into the church.

The first few times that Bro. Cassell went into the pulpit he removed his shoes, for he felt that he was standing on Holy ground. He was shown that he had to be shod with the preparation of the Lord or he could not speak. The fourth Saturday in Jan. 1992, New Dan River Church granted liberty to Bro. Cassell to exercise his gift among our correspondence. At the time Dan River Church was associated with the Smith River Association.

The fourth Saturday in August 1993, the church called for a presbytery to look into the qualification, of Bro. J. L. Cassell, and if found qualified, ordained to the full work of the ministry. The date of the ordination was set for Saturday October 30, 1993, at 10 o'clock. After being questioned by the presbytery and answering to their satisfaction the laying on of hands by the Elders and Deacons was performed. There were 8 Elders and 18 Deacons that took part in his ordination.

During his life he visited many Primitive Baptist Churches and Associations in several states. He served New Dan River Church as Pastor and Trustee for 19 years.

He was given a gift with a deep understanding of the scriptures and the ability to present in a manner that was well received and understood. His family stated that he studied the bible, and had read it through 34 times during his life. He was given many dreams to show him the path he had to walk in serving God. He is and will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved him. May God reconcile us to His will in that our loss is Bro. Cassell's gain.

Written by one who loved him,
James L. Shelor

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SONG

Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove!
With all thy quickening powers,
Kindle a flame of sacred love
In these cold hearts of ours.

Look! how we grovel here below,
Fond of these trifling toys;
Our souls can neither fly nor go
To reach eternal joys.

In vain we tune our formal songs;
In vain we strive to rise;
Hosannas languish on our tongues,
And our devotion dies.

Dear Lord, and shall we ever live
At this poor, dying rate?
Our love so faint, so cold to thee,
And thine to us so great?

Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,
With all thy quickening powers;
Come, shed abroad a Savior's love,
And that shall kindle ours.

Watts.

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EDITORIALS

For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also In power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance: As ye know what manner of men we were among you, for your sake. (1 Thes. 1:5)

Elder R. H. Campbell

Paul, in this short verse of scripture, is describing his own experience of how he was brought to the knowledge of the truth, and declaring the way and manner that all of the saints of God are brought into the fold. It is accomplished not just by the hearing of the word, because the word even though it is the truth, is foolishness to the natural man and until this same special miracle of grace is wrought in their heart they cannot believe it. This truth was demonstrated, most vividly, to the apostle in his experience on the road to Damascus, and to a certain degree, in the experience of all as they are brought from out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of the gospel. Most all of the apostle Paul's writings are based upon his own experiences even as Jesus told him *(Acts* 26: 16) ***"But rise and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee."*** This is the complete foundation upon which the whole gospel, which Paul preached was based, and is because as Jesus told him *(Acts* 18: 10) ***"For I am with thee,"*** and therefore we know that what he preached was the truth.

Our gospel came unto you not in word only, but in power: You will remember, that he was struck down, blinded and heard a voice that came to him with such force and power, that this former blasphemer and persecutor of the way of truth, was astonished and made to tremble as he meekly asked, ***"Lord what wilt***

thou have me to do?" He was no longer the proud boaster of his heritage as a Jew: he no longer boasted that he was of the stock of Abraham, an Hebrew of the Hebrews: as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law blameless, because he was made to realize that these things had nothing to do with his change. On a later occasion he declared that he counted all of these things, which he had claimed as blessings in the Jewish religion, he counted but dung that he might know this one who was speaking to him, on this occasion. This is power that made him declare, in the above text, that it came to him, not in word only, but also in power, which power made him a different man when he arrived in Damascus, from the one who left Jerusalem. He later referred to this in his writings as being, a new creature in Christ, whose old ways are passed away and behold all things have become new, the natural had given way to the spiritual. (1 *John:4:4) "Ye are of God little children, and have overcome them (the antichrist) because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."*

I have always felt that, in this experience, the same lesson was being taught as when Moses was told to take his shoes from off his feet, at the burning bush, because he was standing on holy ground. God appeared to Moses, and told him that He was going to send him in ways that he had never traveled before, he was being called from being a shepherd, to contending with the Pharaoh over the captivity of the children of Israel, and who would eventually deliver the children of Israel out of the hand of the Pharaoh. He told Moses that he was going to lead the Lord's children out of their bondage in the land of Egypt. The apostle Paul was also being sent in a new direction, unto the Gentiles, to lead them in ways that they had not previously known, and teach them the things that Jesus had made known unto him.

A man's feet represent his walk, and Moses was being sent on a mission by God, to go and tell Pharaoh to let his people go, so that they might serve the Lord their God. Paul was to go unto the Gentiles; to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. This similarity is in the fact that Moses and Israel, and Paul and the Gentiles were made to experience a great change in their lives because of their calling of God. Moses' immediate response was that he could not do it because he was of a stammering tongue and could not speak to Pharaoh, he said, *(Exo.* 3:11) *"And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?"* This has been the response of all when they are called upon to serve

the Lord in a work which is beyond their abilities in the flesh: they do not feel up to the task, and in and of themselves they are not, but Paul was made to say because of the power of the Holy Ghost, (Phil 4:13) ***"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. " and he boldly proceeded to do as his heavenly Father told him to do, and this same power enables all of his children to perform deeds of greatness because of this same gift, the gift of faith."***

I have always felt that Jesus' washing the feet of his disciples denoted a change in their walk, as he said on one occasion, because I go unto my Father, and their way was to be in ways that they had never known. I know that Jesus' washing the disciples demonstrates humility, which is to be a basic characteristic of the saints of God, and that they are to serve their brethren, but I also believe that it goes further than that, in that he is cleansing their walk which is accomplished by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. Just prior to his leaving them, here on the earth, he told them *(Matt.* 28: 19- 20), ***"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."*** As we said above, a man's feet represents his walk, and Jesus is preparing them to go forth, and perform those greater works that he referred to in (John 14:12). He was cleansing their walk as they were to go forth, in the Spirit, proclaiming the gospel to all who were given eyes to see and ears to hear and hearts to understand. Their commission was not to go forth and make sheep, but rather, go forth feeding the sheep and the lambs, making manifest who are the sheep and who are the goats, and to comfort all that mourn because of their sins.

Our gospel came unto you by way of the Holy Ghost: (John 14:26) ***"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."*** If you have any understanding of spiritual matters it is because that it was given of God, and was not as a result of your studying, meditating on the scriptures, or making a decision to accept the scriptures as the word of God. A man cannot make a decision to believe a thing; for you to believe it, there must be solid evidence, over which you have no control, and in spiritual matters, this evidence must be given of God, by revelation. This is the results of the operation of the Holy Ghost, as Christ told his apostles, (John 16: 15) ***"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall***

not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

Jesus referred to this change as being born again into a new life, a spiritual life where there was no condemnation to them that are blessed therewith. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made them free from the law of sin and death, as Paul recorded in the eighth chapter of Romans. You will say immediately, well, I am afraid that this cannot be said of me, because I am still a sinner in this body of flesh. That is true, and you will still walk in sin, in the flesh, but you will not serve sin, because now your whole desire is to walk after the Spirit because that is the yearning of your whole heart and soul, and you mourn the weakness and inability of the flesh to accomplish this. You will never attain the state of perfection in this life that you desire, but you will always be seeking to follow along in the footsteps of the flock, showing forth your calling, and to be found rejoicing in the love and fellowship of those who are partakers of this same heavenly calling, walking after the Spirit.

Have no fear, or distress, over the fact that you do not attain your goal, in this life, because this is true of all. The apostle Paul, who was blessed above most men, in his experiencing and understanding the truth, left on record his own testimony lamenting this same fact in the seventh chapter of the book of Romans. He said that he was not able to walk as he desired, he said, (Rom. 7:22-23) ***"For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity of sin which is in my members."*** So you see, you are in good company, bemoaning the sin that is in your members, and this testimony was recorded, by the apostle Paul, after he had been made a preacher of the gospel of God. Now this should bring things down to the level on which you can relate, and he is the same one who later declared that he felt to be the chiefest of sinners, (sound familiar) but, then said that he was a pattern to them that should thereafter believe in God to life everlasting, so should we expect anything else. This enables you to rejoice and praise God, for what you believe has been done for you, in bringing you unto the knowledge of this blessed truth, and delivering you from the lost and undone condition, that you were made to realize that you had been in previously. And in much assurance: (Heb. 12:1-2) ***"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Look-***

ing unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith: who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God." We tend to see so much sin in our way that we cannot feel the assurance that we have, actually, in our hope of salvation.

The dark threads are as needful, in the weavers skillful hands.
As the threads of gold and silver,
In the pattern he has planned.

It is the complexity of the colors, shades and shadows, which make the weaving beautiful; and this is where you live for if it was all one color, or hue, there would not be the beauty that the whole weaving portrays: and so it is in the experience of the saints, the evidence is there, but you have to step back, with the leading of the Holy Ghost, and see how it all fits together. It is then that you can say, with the apostle Paul *"All things work together for good for them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."* The great cloud of witnesses, is the evidence that you have been given, first by your own calling and experience, and then by the empathy for those who have been so exercised in spiritual matters. You have a love and fellowship for them that you did not have before your calling, and yet, you may have known many of them in the flesh, for many years, but there was not the love and fellowship that you now feel. You did not create this love; it came with the calling out of nature's darkness into the light and liberty of the gospel. I believe that this is the one that God created in the beginning, separating the light from the darkness that had prevailed previously, before the light of the sun and the moon: it is the light that shined around the apostle Paul, on the road to Damascus; the light which Jesus told his disciples to let their light so shine that it gives light to all that are in the house, the household of faith that is. It is not seen by the world, because only those who have been given to experience the mystery, beauty and power of that light can understand why this doctrine is so sweet and precious to the saints.

You may spend much time in the darkness, and wonder if you have ever seen the light, but you still keep following along with the flock, because that's where your heart, and your treasure is. The darkness of nature is as perfect and complete, as the light of the liberty of life because they are both the work of God, and he is as perfect in all of his ways. This is true in the experience of those who have been traveling this path for many years, they are just as helpless in the matter as the novice, man does not exercise the gift; the

gift exercises the man. You will try, but, you will find that your best efforts avail you nothing, and then suddenly you are being exercised, and are amazed that you could not before, when you desired it so much. This is why the apostle Paul said in the above verse of scripture, ***"run with patience the race that is set before you"***, it is even as the children of Israel, at the Red Sea; they were in extreme trauma, at the time, and wanted help, right now, but they were told to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. At his own time, deliverance will come, *(Eccl.* 3:1) ***"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven"***, you cannot hurry it up, nor can you slow it down: so, even as they were told to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, so must you. This race must be run, with much patience, and endurance, but also, with the assurance that your calling is indeed of God, and that he that hath begun a good work in your life will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. (Psa. 27:14) ***"Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord."***

I knew a sister who followed in this path for sixty years, who had said originally, that if she remained firm in her faith, that she would know that it was of God, because, she was not able to keep herself, even in the things of nature, much less in spiritual matters. She walked by faith all of those sixty years, and was still fearful that she had run in vain, at the age of ninety. Walking by faith is not seeing your way clearly, for, that would be walking by sight; so, your continuing to walk by faith, exhibits the assurance that you, really have deep down in your heart and soul, that you are in the way.

Jesus said, ***"I am the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."*** And (Isa. 35: 8-10) said, ***"and an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be The way of holiness: the unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there: but the redeemed shall walk there: And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."*** The blessings of the redeemed, as describe by Isaiah, are contained in this scripture and were fulfilled in Christ and when he said, ***"I am the way,"*** Christ said, ***"I am the way"*** not a way, as being one of many, but the way, the only way, and that highway of which Isaiah was speaking, when he said, it shall be called the way of holiness, and nothing except the redeemed shall walk there in THE WAY. There is

nothing unclean, no lion nor ravenous beast shall walk there, and the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; there shall be nothing that offends, nothing of this world except the redeemed of the Lord, none of the sorrows, sighing and mourning endured because of sin, but rather joy and gladness of heart.

John describes this scene, as follows, *(Rev* 14: 1-3) ***"And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth."*** The only ones who can sing the song of deliverance are those who have been delivered, even as the children of Israel, who sang the song of deliverance when they saw Pharaoh and his army destroyed by the waters of the Red Sea. They were the sole beneficiaries of the deliverance, and therefore are the only ones who are entitled to sing the song.

This is the eternal hope of those to whom this gospel comes, and it certainly is not, just in word only, it is in power, because it will not let them go, and it is their assurance as Paul said, (Phil 1:6) ***"Being confident of this very thing, that he that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."*** I like to think of, (Heb 11:1) as saying, ***"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for,"*** and I do not think that it does any violence to the scriptures to say it this way. Faith which is given of God, is the blessed assurance that these things are true, and that they do apply to those whom it is given.

May God, through the comfort of his word, and by his mighty power, bless us to live out our lives, and die with the blessed assurance that we will be numbered among that one hundred forty and four thousand, who only can sing the song of deliverance.

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

NOTICE TO OUR READERS

With much sadness we report the death of our Associate Editor of 40 years, Elder Richard Campbell. Elder Campbell became Associate Editor of the Signs of the Times in 1970 and was blessed to write many comforting and edifying articles over the years. He was sound in the doctrine and order of our faith always

preaching and writing of the sovereignty, election and predestination as well as the love and mercy of our gracious Lord. His articles and sermons always abased man and praised God from whom all blessings flow. He was widely known, loved and respected among Primitive Baptists as he traveled to different parts of the country. We will miss him, but our loss is his gain. Our sincere condolences go out to his dear wife, Betty, as well as to all the family. May the Lord comfort those that grieve.

Editors

CORRESPONDENCE

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September 17, 2010

SIGNS OF the TIMES, INC.

Tony R. Horton
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
1429 Howlett Street
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Spiritual greetings in the most holy Name of our lord Jesus Christ, to the glory of our Heavenly Father, manifest to His children by the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Please find a check (*#2906*) in the amount of $35.00—$25.00 is to be applied to a 2-year subscription of the Signs of the Times—the remaining amount to be used as you prayerfully may find.

Even though I am not of your particular order ... but you may be surprised should we ever have a conversation ... almost 40 years ago I came among the Progressive (so-called) Primitives.

A dear brother, Elder James Poole from Salisbury, Md and pastor of the Welsh Tract Primitive Baptist Church. We never met in person, I talked only one time after his wife went home to be with the lord and treasure the number of years we corresponded and I have some of his sermons on tape.

Please forgive me for taking your time. May God continue to bless you and the "Signs." I pastor a relatively small congregation in Cooper City which gravitated from North Miami. Pray for us when you may think of us.

Sincerely in Christ,
James C. Young

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 12 /10

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

Dear Sir,

I enjoy reading the Signs. I have lots of old ones starting in 1914. My dad was W. T. Clayton; he was an old "Hard Shell" Primitive Baptist Preacher. He passed away in 1954 and I took the Signs until 1997. I am a "Young Boy" born 5-22-18 that makes me "29".

Thanks,
Raymond

Dear Brother Horton,

Please find enclosed my check for two years subscription to the Signs of the Times. I had requested back issues from January 2010 which I have received already. For the prompt attention given my request I give my thanks and will assume the small additional remittance will cover the cost of mailing.

I enjoy reading the editorials, sermons and announcements contained therein and am often struck by the dates assigned to some of the older writings as they seem so relevant to present circumstances.

I look forward to the next volume (November) as I have read the first ten and have passed them on to a brother to read. I hope this is acceptable.

In bonds of love and fellowship,
James A. White

Oct. 11, 2010

Dear Mr. Horton,

Enclosed is my check for 2 years renewal to the "Signs." It is a wonderful magazine and I enjoy reading all the articles each month. So many good editorials, and "Voices of the Past." I especially enjoyed the one by Elder Lefferts in the October issue.
May the Lord bless your efforts to choose articles which will continue to feed the children of the living God. They are sweet crumbs from the masters table for such as I feel to be.

In hope,
Caroline Martin

10-18-2010

Dearest Brother Horton,

Sorry I have let this subscriptions go over due. I sure enjoy the Signs of the Times. In the Signs the month of Oct. there was an article of the ordination meeting written by Elder E. J. Lambert he was my Pastor at Hawkins, Tx. for so many years when you put his articles in the Signs it always cheers my heart. He was so blessed to preach God's riches. Use the extra money for what ever.

Thanks so much,
In bonds of love,
Flora Stutts

VOICES OF THE PAST

As I WALKED along to my appointment yesterday morning I felt for a little while very clearly my earthiness, my separateness from spiritual things; not that my thoughts and feelings were sinful, foolish, lustful after worldly things, as at other times, but simply earthy. I was thinking of the relationships of this life with the anxieties, cares and pleasures that are connected with them, of sicknesses of dear ones with the dreads that attend them; of worldly needs and how they will be supplied; of the green grass in lawns and fields, and the beauty of flowers; of ***"the things that are seen"*** connected with churches, meetings and preaching, and of my own duty to preach that morning, the time of which was so near at hand, and whether I could think of a suitable text that I knew anything about, and whether I knew anything about any Scripture as I ought to know, and whether I could preach so as to do myself any justice, and whether I should be able to preach so as to interest the people, and even if I did interest them whether it would do them any spiritual good. And then it seemed as though all my thoughts and feelings were simply ***"of the earth earthy,"*** and that I was ***"looking at the things that are seen,"*** and not thinking of the glory of God, and that I had no power to think of that and desire that alone.

I saw that in nature the heavens touch the earth and communicate with it, and give to it of their blessings, the sunshine, the rain, the dew, and the elements of the air which call forth the herbs and grass and flowers and fruits, and I said in my mind, ***"Can the spiritual heavens ever touch me again and communicate with me, and give me to feel their power, and to receive of their goodness? Will they come down to me ever again?"*** Then I think my soul cried unto the Lord that the heavens might touch me, that I might feel their holy power controlling me, and that I might receive once more their pure and sweet communications. Thus the earth cried unto the heavens, where the blessed Sun of Righteousness has his tabernacle, (Psalms xix. 4,) and the heavens heard the earth, and sent down into my poor, darkened and hungry soul some precious healing and reviving beams of light, some sweet promises, and some of that doctrine which drop's like the rain, and this gave me spiritual power to hear the corn and the wine and the oil which God, I humbly trust, had long ago sowed within me, and now these tokens of heavenly blessing heard obediently "Jezreel," *(God boweth)* and came into manifestation for my present help and comfort. ***"And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth, and the earth***

shall hear the corn and the wine and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel."- Hosea ii. 21, 22.

"And I will sow her unto me in the earth." Thus it is in the flesh that our God is manifest, and down in what sometimes seems to be the dark depths of our hearts the wonderful and mysterious exercises go on, which are the experience of our betrothal unto Christ as our heavenly Husband. Thus we feel from time to time the vileness and nothingness of the flesh, and seem to hear the Lord saying unto us, ***"You are not my people."*** Then we cry and mourn, until in the Lord's good time the mystery which was hidden from ages and from generations, is anew made manifest unto us in the riches of its glory, which is, ***"Christ in you the hope of glory."***- Col. i. 27. So in the very place where it was said unto us, Ye are not my people, there it is said, Ye are sons of the living God. (Hosea i. 10.)

I read that morning to the people the second chapter of Paul's letter to the Philippians, and felt glad to see and to speak of how in this chapter, as in all the Scriptures, the inspired writer shows the heavens constantly and always touching and communicating with the earth.

Here in our flesh, in a world of sin and sorrow and sickness, in the midst of cares and pain and grief, the holy communications of heavenly favor and love come to us, the laws and ordinances of our heavenly Husband are felt to be over, around and upon us, as the heavens are over, around and upon the earth, and our responses to these sweet commands and promises and assurances of love are called forth in prayers and praises and thanksgiving.

Elder Silas H. Durand

WATER

Water is essential to natural life as well as spiritual. It is one of the greatest covenant or spiritual blessings mentioned in — the Bible. It is likewise an essential in the natural realm of existence. It is necessary in both kingdoms. The inhabitants of either commonwealth must have it or they soon perish. It is not something that can be produced by either an inhabitant of the kingdom of heaven, or of the earth. To both earthly and heavenly citizens, it is a gift from a beneficient Benefactor.

It cannot be handled by the inhabitants of either country. Without it those that are spiritual and those that are natural will die of thirst. In connection with that thought, let me say no man can stay the terror of thirst in either kingdom, therefore, there is not such a thing as a conditionalist where there is not water to alleviate that thirst. Ever so often water, both spiritual and natural, is mentioned in the Bible. You can not do without it. Also you can

easily drown in too much of it in a natural way. I am well aware that to an extent God gave man the ability to bring water under subjection to him. However, God also gave man dominion over tigers and lions, but do not try to carry that subjection too far.

In nature men have thought that they had control over water, being able, as they thought to make it do what they thought. They were not able to do so. A man does not have water under subjection in the ocean nor on the desert. Dry hole after dry hole has been dug. Many people have drowned in what was thought to be shallow water.

Jacob had a well used well of water. It was the only supply for a lot of people. However, the case that we wish to notice is a peculiar one. The Master met one of His sheep there. She thought to need that water, but her mind was distracted away from what she thought that she needed the water that she did not know existed.

The Saviour knew before hand why He had to go through the country where this well was. He knows the need of His people whether bond or free, Jew or Gentile. It is a joy to think that in His relation to His mother, to His people, that He became tired at the time that He did. He needed the natural rest, but a poor sinner stood in need of living water. His becoming tired when He did was because of His relationship with this woman, and because that He was the son of Mary as well as the Son of God. His arrival at the well before she did was purposed from all eternity, accidental though it may appear to men.

She came, as she thought, for natural water. According to covenant arrangements, she came for living water. She did not understand at the beginning, neither did any of us, but, if not deceived, we, as did she, receive that teaching that stems from heaven. The meeting of the two had been seen and declared before times curtain was let down. Here is conclusive proof that all of God's children are taught of the Lord to know Him whom to know is life eternal.

Happy is that people whose God is the Lord. Ah, how empty and barren we are as we go out, and how joyful we are as we are brought in. How full her time was in rites and legal ceremonies; how absorbed she was in going to Jacob's well when she left her home on that day, and how completely her day and her mind was changed when she met the Man at places of drawing waters that are so satisfying that she forgot home ties, legal customs, earthly drinking water, forgot her earthen pitcher, and yet was so carried away in the Spirit of Him that she had newly met that she was filled with an overflowing well of living water springing up into everlasting life.

Let us remember that we are writing about water in our life as a follower of the Lamb of God. There

are, in our pathway, two kinds of water. There are bitter waters and sweet waters. These two are one over against the other. This is by purpose of He that calleth His children to take their cross and follow Him. These waters will be in the hands of the Shepherd, and they will become as His wisdom dictates.

This poor sinning woman had never been anywhere for water save to Jacob's well. After meeting the Saviour she had no need for this water anymore as a follower of the Man she met, for the water which He gave her, and which He gives all those that meets Him at Jacob's well, is in her, a living stream flowing upward, even springing up out of dry ground a living stream, as living waters, causing the tender plants to revive, the tender herbs to come under the night much of the time, but having the distilling quietness and strength of the dew.

Christ Jesus the lord was baptized in water. I will never forget the day when I was blessed to follow my lord and Master in baptism. I have oftimes wished for brighter evidence of being an humble follower of Him in that lovely ordinance. To me, water is the only element in which a child of God can follow His Master in the ordinance. There is not any way in which a baptism can be finished except in enough water for the applicant to be carried down into the water, and raised up out of it. Any commandment of the Saviour must be full consummation to be complied with. Down into and up out of is in compliance; anything short of that is not water baptism, be it performed by whosoever takes it upon himself to perform it. The baptism of the Saviour was in keeping with gospel directions, all baptisms since then have been in compliance with the gospel rule, if thus complied with. We are dealing with only the mode. For a baptism to admit one into the church of Jesus Christ, there are other things necessary in order for it to be legal baptism. However, I am only dealing with water baptism, with the mode of legal baptism at this time. The Lord willing, perhaps later other phases of it will be considered. In passing, let it be noted that all of the water in the universe will never cleanse a soul from sin. Only the blood of Christ will do that.

The cleansing foundation of water was opened in eternity in the purpose of God. It was for sin and uncleanness figuratively speaking, and it is a spiritual work, and men do not have anything to do with its flowing. God opened this foundation, and He did not have a single contribution of help in time or money or creature effort. The manifestation of the opening of that fountain shall be at the time that the sword of justice shall be called upon to smite the shepherd. The time of the opening of this fountain ushers in one of the most important links in the history of salvation. First, it does away with prophets, and it does away with legalism. It comes with great wonders

and things hard to be understood, and yet it comes as a new and living way, and it comes altogether as a gift of God. It is not the forethought of man; men have nothing at all to do with it coming. It was conceived in the eternal mind of a covenant keeping God, and its coming is to be attributed to Him that made heaven and earth.

Water is intermingled in many, if not all, of the acts of salvation. Sometime the waters are bitter, even mingled with gall; sometimes they are sweet to the soul, making the heart beat with joy and keen anticipation. There is not any question about waters flowing to every inhabitant of Zion. Let us begin with the 16th verse of the 34th chapter of Isaiah, Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read, no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate; for my mouth it hath commanded; and his spirit it hath gathered them, and he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line; they shall possess it forever; from generation to generation they shall dwell therein. (now chapter 35). The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing, the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellence of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees, Say unto them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as the hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert (Isa. 34:16, 17 and 35: i, 6). There isn't any likelihood of any of these covenant blessings failing.

These promises are those of a covenant keeping God, and He will do them. As God blesses us with a retrospective review of His promises, let us remember His promise to Jacob. He finds every Jacobite in a waste howling wilderness, and in a desert land. Right in those two needy places the text takes on grandeur and beauty and everlasting hope for the poor and needy. If that is your status before God, do not hesitate, but let us, as blessed with faith to draw near in faith and to say, He is mine, and I am His.

Do not fear dear reader, this living water will be springing up as you travel heavenward. That is His promise. What does it matter what reformers say; what does it matter what challengers of your faith and of your order say. The Lord is on your side (Psa. 124). It is not a problem for earthly engineers to tanker with bringing in a well in a desert. God has engineered the whole order of business in saving sinners. He does not

get angered at them and turn His back upon them, but He ever is at their side, and even though Peter denied Him, and Judas betrayed Him, and the woman at Jacob's well at first challenged Him to draw water when He had nothing to draw with, He still displayed mercy upon those that call upon His name.

The Lord loved Jacob. He loved him. Not with this kind of love that hangs to your coat tail one day, and persecutes you the next. Other people delight in a text (if it is man made), like unto that. But He is not a man as we are. God loved Jacob, not in six troubles, nor not even just in seven, but He loved Him with an everlasting love. But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame be kindled upon thee.

I am not telling you that you will not have deep and threatening waters to wade through. No, no, my soul knows that right well our blessed Saviour measured the depth of those cruel waters of death, even measured the depths for an unbelieving bride, and unfaithful bride, for, as one has well said, No woman ever had as faithful a Husband as did the Church of God, and no Husband ever had as faithless a wife. Yet He measured His waters of sorrow, that had to be waded for you to arrive safe at home, and what a sad lonely walk it was that He had to go it alone, but how good it is to be up and about and physically able and a mind well enough to comfort you that He walked the depth of them for you alone that you might have Him to walk those waters of death with you.

I hope that I write
in brotherly love,
Elder W. D. Griffin

- Experience of -
Elder J. P. Helms

Dear Brother Berry: I believe the things I do, not because I willed it so, not because I was brought up in a Primitive Baptist home, and was taken to their services from babyhood. As I grew up, I respected them for their simplicity and honesty, but I verily believed they were wrong. I believed in the free will of the creature, and was in full accord with the doctrine that a man carved out his own destiny, and that Primitive Baptists would soon disappear from the face of the earth. As I read the Bible, I was more established in this way. I marked out my life, and of all of the things I would not do, I would never belong to the Primitive Baptist Church; for this was the church of the poor, and

was too far behind the times or me. I did not attend a Sunday School for two reasons. First of all, I was equal to any that did go, and much better than many of them. Second. I did not want to hurt my parents. I fully expected, and was determined to "get up" in the world, get all the education I could, and then acquire enough of this world's goods to be secure and then get right with God. This, to me, was a simple enough matter. All that was necessary was to join any church, but the Old Baptists, and then it was up to God to accept me, or He would be unjust. Then, if I would be particular and not fall, I would in the end, get to heaven. Was I the biggest fool that ever lived on earth? I would not argue this question.

So I lived, so I believed until I was seventeen years old. I was not disturbed; God is my witness, but as I lay in sleep, I saw the day of judgment, and in the east was a light, and in it, a Being who spoke and the graves gave up their dead. I stood amazed, for some were sheep and some were goats, and I was a goat. There was a smile on the face of this Being for some were sheep, and some were goats and I was in tears, and in fear. I saw that I was lost, for all I ever did, said or thought came up before me, and I promised prayerfully, and felt I was able to live a better life, and could, by so doing, please God. In other words, I could change myself from a goat to a sheep. I was very particular for some time, and was well pleased with my efforts. I was making progress, but all at once, my promises were broken, my good intentions gone. I had done worse than ever, making prayerful promises, seemed to help some, but all I wanted was another chance, and I could be a better man. Needless to say, I failed again and again, and I know I grew worse and worse. Still in all the years of my early life I was sure of one thing, that I would not be an Old Baptist.

These promises continued until my thirty-third year. I came to the end of promises. It came as part of me that I could not keep one promise, and there was only one thing that could reach my case. That was the mercy of Jesus. In all of this, I read my Bible, and finally every time I picked it up, I found something that condemned me. I finally saw clearly that I was lost. I had sinned away the day of grace, for I was not only a lost sinner; I was a blasphemer, and there was no forgiveness for me in this world or the world to come. I would plead my cause no more; no more prayer, no more promises. But in spite of all this determination, my cry by day and by night was for mercy. I decided that the end of life was near and that hell was my portion. Again, God is my witness, I confessed the justice of God in all things. I saw that God had determined the destiny of all men in eternity, and I knew that it was right and righteous, and that Jesus came a Savior and saved His people from

their sins with an everlasting salvation. But I am lost, I am a goat, was my cry.

Now I come to the year of 1914, and a day well marked in my life. As I lay on the floor at my home to die, as I believed. I went in the cabin from the field late in the day as the sun set, perfectly reconciled to die and meet my doom. Everything was covered with gloom, and there, while prostrate, I heard a voice speak: ***"I created heaven and earth, and I am your Savior."*** I say there was power in those words, there was life in those words. I was lifted to my feet, and I went out of the house, and Lo, everything had put on a new appearance. I know that it is unusual for birds to sing at sunset, but there were some there that evening, and they were singing. Then I started to the kitchen to tell my wife what had come to me, and then I heard this: Better not do this - you may be deceived. So I did not go. Then I cried, Lord, if I am deceived, undeceive me. On the third day following I had come to the place to say that I was deceived, that I was losing my mind, but all the time, crying and begging. I was alone in the highway near my home when something seemed to say. Wait. Of course, I stopped. I heard singing. It was coming from the east, and as it came closer and closer, I could hear the words of the song. It was, "How Firm a Foundation." The singing came to me, and then in me. At the words, ***"Fear not, I am with thee"*** I joined in the song. I suppose men would have said I was crazy. But I was so convinced then that I said, I will never doubt any more. But I did, and still do. The Old Baptists seemed different to me. Their doctrine was not so bad after all. But being a member of them or any other church was not in my mind.

Soon a burden came on me, ***"You go tell My people."*** I said, no as determinedly as anything of my life. Then I began to question, Who Are Your People. Some I knew living, and some who were dead; many I did not know, but all were dressed in white, and I was given to know that they were all Old Baptists, and I loved them. The same voice said, ***"These are My people."*** To this day, I believe I know where the true church is. I know where His witnesses are. But at this time I decided I would never unite with the Church. I would not preach. I knew nothing; it would interfere with my life; I could not make a living and preach and I would not. So I went for a few months. One Sunday afternoon. I went to my father's home. There were several Elders and members there on the porch. I remember placing my foot on a stone, and my mind was taken from me literally. How much time elapsed I cannot tell. What I said, I cannot tell. The thing I heard that brought me to my senses were the words of my grandfather: ***"I move we receive him in the Church."*** At that time I was glad and thankful that they could receive such

as I, but before I reached home, I vowed I would not preach, and poorfool! I finally decided I would die before I would even let anyone know anything about this matter, and I emphatically denied to the deacons and pastor that I was burdened to preach. But affliction came in my home, to my children, and I promised that if the Lord would spare the child I would go. This child was restored to health. Then I rebelled again. Then another of the children was touched, and again I was compelled to beg for mercy again, and to promise, and again the Lord heard me. Then it was different, I said, I will go, but Lord show me, lead me, instruct me. I don't know anything! I don't know anything about the doctrine. Soon afterward the deacons and pastor called me to the stand and there I was in the place I had declared I would never be! There I was a member of the Church I had declared I would never join, and there I am to this day, and I can say, ***"That I received it not of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."*** This is the cause of my belief, and I can assure you and all that I am set in this, if this is what Primitive Baptists believe, I am one of you. I know I tried to believe something else. I tried to be something else, and I tried to keep from preaching, and I failed in it all. What little I know of doctrine or order, I have experienced it.In no sense would I detract from the Bible, or the study of it; in no sense would I say that a church can live without gospel practice. But administer all you can unto me, in one dose, or in broken doses, of ***"You can if you will,"*** and it will not affect me. Have I learned of Jesus? Have I Christ, then I have all. For He is the teacher of His children, and He does all things for them. Some of the things that I have written have never been written of me before, a poor hint at best, poorly expressed, but I am not ashamed to tell all what I believe. I may be mistaken in the whole matter, but I say not to all, this is what Primitive Baptists ought to believe, and stand for in practice. Yes, the revelation of Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and honor forever and ever. Amen.

Your brother,
ElderJ. P. Helms

PSALM 104:1-5.

Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty.

Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:

Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind:

Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire:

Who laid the foundations of the earth, that is should not be removed for ever.

OUR INHERITANCE.

The Lord's people are endowed with a possession which belongs not to this world, it is the gift from our heavenly Father, by and through which we are made joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ in an inheritance of priceless value, which is eternal life. This inheritance embraces first the love of God, which he hath vouchsafed unto the children whom he hath chosen in his Son Jesus Christ. It is declared, ***"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."*** It embraces also all of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God. The apostle speaks in wonder and astonishment when he says, ***"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!"*** We also partake of the mystery of the divine nature, which mystery is wrought out and rules manifest in us through an experience of the grace of God, as we are exercised by the Spirit of holiness and righteousness unto all good works; this is the divine nature. The apostle Peter speaks of the inheritance on this wise: ***"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."*** Therefore the inheritance is secure for time and eternity.

The foundation which establishes our claim to the sure mercies of David, in our relationship to the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ; we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with his Son Jesus Christ because we are his children. Those who claim to be children of God because they have established certain reforms in their daily life, are sadly mistaken in their reckonings. One cannot make himself a child of God by anything that he can do, any more than one can make himself the child of a natural father. A natural father may disinherit his child, but the act makes him no less child. Our inheritance does not depend upon the uncertainties of a finite mind, or of the faulty temperament of an unwise father. ***"For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."*** His love toward us is an everlasting love, and like his promises, cannot be changed. In nature we are creatures of time, and all time things and time conditions are subject to change and decay; but when the promise of the Father that we shall inherit eternal life, has been fufilled in the Son, then with us time shall be no longer. Our inheritance is se-

cure, it is founded upon the wills and shalls of our covenant-keeping God. *"Yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure."* The most important chattel in the inheritance which comes to us is the love of God which is bestowed abundantly upon each one of the heirs. If by reason of weakness in the flesh, the lusts thereof temporarily superabound, then do we die, and as the salt which has lost his savor, *"It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out."* This is the beginning of great tribulation; the poor soul is lost to all the comfort and consolations of the gospel, he cannot go back into the world, he is trodden under foot of men: therefore is he stranded and stands alone, desolate and in despair; yet he is still a child, and the loving Father still loves him and is faithful in his love, and has provided some good thing for him. As the man who was traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among thieves, and was left half dead, was visited by the good Samaritan, (as he journeyed) and who helped him on his way, so to this poor, desolate, suffering child the Father sends the Spirit of his Son in answer to his despairing cry; oil is poured into his gaping wounds, and now where sin abounded grace doth much more abound, and the dear little one is ushered back into the family circle with his heart filled to overflowing with the love of God. Upon one occasion during the ministry of our Lord, a certain lawyer of the pharisees in order to tempt him, said: *"Master, which is the great commandment in the law. Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."* But now that we have entered richly into our inheritance, these two commandments are en graven upon our hearts; this precious love is the incentive and the principle by which we walk in the fear of the Lord. It is also the rule of our deportment in life, the subject and inspiration of our conversation, and a lamp to our feet. All the riches of our inheritance, the wisdom and knowledge of God are entwined about with the endless chain of God's boundless love. The children of the Most High also inherit the earth, for *"The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."* As joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, the earth is also ours and all its fullness, the world and all that therein is. All things in the earth and in the world work harmoniously together for the fulfillment of the whole way of salvation according as the Lord has appointed before the mountains were brought forth. Again, we inherit the earth, inas-

much as our natural bodies are of the earth, and are nourished and sustained thereby. Again, we inherit the earth in the sense that the church of Christ was planted in the wilderness place of this world, and in that wilderness does she travel throughout all time; for did not the Lord say unto Jacob when he arose from his pillow of stones in the wilderness, where he saw the heavens opened, *"The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed?"* Our inheritance therefore embraces all things, both the heavens and the earth. The experience of the saints which includes the travel both in the light and in the darkness. Tribulation is an essential part of the inheritance, persecutions also are our portion in this life. Jesus said, *"Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."* Notwithstanding the fact that trials and afftictions and persecutions are a part of the pilgrimage life of the saints, yet they gladly and willingly endure all things for the joy that is set before them.

Let us now concentrate our minds upon the source and fountain of our precious inheritance. Jesus, the beloved Son of God, is the gift of the Father unto his children; he is the author and finisher of our faith; he is our life; he gave his precious life-blood that we might enter upon the inheritance of the elect of God; he is the Mediator of the new covenant, by which we are made kings and priests unto God; he is the High Priest of our profession, by which we enter into the holy of holies by a new and living way, with whom we are bound together in the most holy bonds of husband and wife, and jointly possessing the inheritance. May we all sweetly enter into the earnest of our inheritance while here in these low grounds of sorrow.

B. F. COULTER.
Philadelphia, Pa., Feb. 13, 1905.

"Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" - ROMANS vii, 24.

If the Lord the Spirit has implanted that piteous cry in our soul, *"O wretched man that I am!"* this will follow as a necessary consequence - *"Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"* Where shall I look for deliverance? From what quarter can it come? Shall I look to the law? O no! that curses and condemns me, because I am continually breaking it. Can I

look to friends? They may pity and sympathize; but they cannot remove the body of sin and death; it is too fast linked on for them to remove. Shall I go to ministers of truth? I may hear what they say with approbation; but there is something more wanted to remove this chilling embrace of the body of sin and death. Shall I look to the Scriptures? They contain the remedy; but I want that remedy to be sweetly applied- ***"Who then shall deliver me?"*** What refuge can I look to? Whither can I go, or whither shall I turn? From what quarter can help or deliverance come? See the embarrassment! view the perplexity of an exercised soul - looking here, and looking there; turning to the right hand and turning to the left. Yet from one quarter only can the deliverance come. And thus, when the Apostle was brought here when he was sunk down to a low spot, and anxiously turning his eyes to every quarter to see whence deliverance could come God blessed his soul with a view of his precious Son. God the Spirit wrought in his heart that living faith whereby he saw Jesus, and whereby there was a communication of the blood and love of the Lamb to his conscience.

Elder J.C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTIONS

Mary Hawkins, NC 25.00

In memory of Elder Hale Terry

Flora Stutts, TX 5.00

Tim Barron, TX 10.00

Algie Martin, VA 5.00

Raymond Clayton, KY 5.00

Elizabeth Hedrick, VA 5.00

James White, AL 10.00

Elser James Young, FL 10.00

Caroline Martin, WA 5.00

OBITUARIES

DORA ELLEN HOLLAND VICK
January 6, 1938 To December 17, 2009

Dora Ellen was born in Johnston County to the late Gurney Leland and Peircy Davis Holland.

Surviving are her husband Elder Garlon Vick, one daughter Phyllis Jo Waiters, two sons Jeffery Vick, and Richard Vick, two sisters Udell Young and Edith Beasley, one brother Celion Holland, six grand children and three great grand children.

Funeral services were held Sunday December 20th at Minshew-Coley funeral home Chapel Elder Harold Pittman officiating. Other speakers were Wanda Gurley, Jake Star, and Elder Garlon Vick. Burial was in Evans Cemetery behind Pittmans Grove Church where she was a faithful member for 57 years. She was blessed to join Pittmans Grove in November, 1952 at the age of 14.

We were blessed to be married September 21,1956 by the late Elder W.E. Turner, her pastor at the time and until he passed away.

She had heart blockages in the 80's, cancer twice in the 90's and in April 2008 we were told she had ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. We knew that there was not any medicine that could help her, but we also knew that she had just as many days now as were given her in the beginning. She never asked why me Lord, but why not me from the day we were told. She said we are going to smile and laugh when we can, cry when we have to. She adopted smiley face pins to wear at all times. She wanted people to smile and not feel sorry for her when they came for a visit.

She was blessed to miss very few church meetings during her sickness. She was blessed to be with me at our home church on Saturday before passing from this life on Thursday to her eternal life. I was blessed to be with her when God called the breath of life from her. She died in my arms for which I am thankful. Her death was extremely peaceful as she just stopped breathing. I believe with all my heart she is resting in her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. She will always be a part of me. I can't tell you how much I miss her but I hope that I am truly thankful for our life together.

Written by Her Husband,
Elder Garlon Vick

TO THOSE WE LOVE

When I am gone release me and let me go to my heavenly home that I have a precious hope for. Shed tears if you must, but be happy that my trials and tribulations are over. Be happy for the many years we shared; the love I gave you and the love you gave me in happiness over the years. So grieve for me for a while then let your grief be comforted with trust in an all powerful God that holds all things in his hands. My journey is over but you have a while left on yours. Trust in God for he has promised never to leave nor forsake one of his children but will be with you to the end. My prayer would be that He might reveal some of the things to you that was reveal to your mother and I. We were blessed to have you and loved you so much.

God bless you

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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SONG

Jesus, before thy face I fall,
My Lord, my life, my hope, my all;
For I have no where else to flee;
No sanctuary, Lord, but thee.

In thee I every glory view,
Of safety, strength, and beauty, too:
Beloved Saviour, ever be
A sanctuary unto me.

Whatever woes and fears betide,
In thy dear bosom let me hide;
And, while I pour my soul to thee,
Do thou my sanctuary be.

Through life and all its changing scenes,
And all the grief that intervenes,
'Tis this supports my fainting heart,
That thou my sanctuary art.

Apace the solemn hour draws nigh,
When I must bow my head and die;
But O, what joy this witness gives,-
Jesus, my sanctuary lives.

He from the grave my dust will raise;
I in the heavens will sing his praise;
And when in glory I appear,
He'll be my sanctuary there.

Medley.

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EDITORIAL

"And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part me and thee." Ruth 1:16-17.

Elder J. B. Farmer

These are some of the sweetest words recorded in all of scripture to me. I wonder, what makes it so? Is it that these words are the words of my own heart? Is it that I have had a part in the feelings, desires, and hopes of one of the Lord's saints who lived so long ago? Is it that I have been given a deep and abiding love for the church, the people of God? I dare not claim any of these things for myself, other than to say I have a hope that it could be true. For I know that I am not worthy of any of all of the mercies, or any of all of the truth that God has revealed to His people. Nevertheless, I have been given a great desire to follow along after the children of grace wherever they are led – to rejoice with them and to suffer with them all the days of my life.

We see Ruth, the Moabite, in a situation where all her earthly plans and natural desires of a home with her husband and family had been dashed. Her husband, the son of the widow Naomi, had died and Ruth was childless. Her mother-in-law, that she loved so much, had heard that the Lord had visited His people in giving them bread, and was going forth from Moab to return to her home in Bethlehem. Naomi told Ruth and her sister Orpah to return to their people and their gods. We see Ruth torn between her natural love for her own natural family and her spiritual love for Naomi. In her father's house she would find acceptance and her natural needs met. But with Naomi, she had no certain dwelling place, and no promise of anything she would need. By grace, and against nature, Ruth chose to follow along after Naomi. We see her

made destitute of the world's goods, and of the world's protection, and altogether at the mercy of the God of heaven and earth. Nevertheless, she followed Naomi by faith and not by sight.

Ruth's sister in law, Orpah, whose husband had likewise died, at first said she also would cleave to Naomi. But when it was explained to her that there was nothing for her if she should follow Naomi, she returned to her father's house and her gods. I cannot help believing that she is typical of the worldly-minded persons. They seem to have a love for the true church, but when persecutions come, or when there is no hope for gain there, the natural mind prevails and they turn away to follow after the flesh. There is nothing in the true church that will satisfy the natural mind.

Ruth's experience makes me think of Moses when he was come to years, how he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh, but chose rather to suffer affliction with the children of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. He also by grace went against nature. It also makes me think of what the Lord said to His disciples. *"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and even his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."* I am made to believe that this is the true experience of grace for each of God's chosen people. This world is not their home, because they are strangers and pilgrims here. They are blessed to seek a city, not made with hands, whose builder and maker is God. And they by faith, which works by love, follow on after the Lord.

Ruth, being a creature made subject to vanity, as we are, could not see the future, or the great things that were laid up in store for her. She must have, by grace, pressed on by faith from day to day to find what was ahead, to the glory of God. Ruth and Naomi were brought safely along the way and came to the little town of Bethlehem. It was the beginning of the barley harvest. None of these things were by chance. The timing of the death of Naomi's husband, Elimelech, and the timing of the death of her sons were of the Lord. The timing of their departure from Moab and arrival at Bethlehem in the beginning of the barley harvest was perfect. And Ruth's hap to light on the part of the field belonging to Boaz, of the kindred of Elimelech was no accident. Everything came to be in such a way that the children of God through the ages would understand, without a doubt, that God had worked the whole matter for the good of Ruth and to His glory. We are taught that *"all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose."* And so it is, and so it is evident in the travels of this little one.

And it was no happenstance

that Boaz came to his field and noticed the damsel, Ruth, as she gleaned there. I am made to believe that Boaz was blessed with a great love for Ruth before he ever saw her face. I trust I have been brought along a little in this way of experience. I can remember, about forty years ago, when I first heard of the old Baptists and of their humble, honest and loving ways, how my heart burned with love for them. And I thought within myself, (but I hope and trust the Lord heard me) if only I could meet and know these people. Nevertheless, listen to the words of Boaz. ***"And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and how thou has left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust."*** I am made to believe that this is the true experience of grace. The Lord's people are given grace for grace. By grace, they are given faith to walk in the light, and by grace they are given to speak the truth in love. And by grace they are rewarded in their good works, as was Ruth. ***"O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."*** The children of God are not blessed for their good works, but blessed in their good works, which are of Him. ***"For all the promises of God are in him yea, and in him, Amen, unto the glory of God by us."*** There are no negatives in the gospel of grace.

I believe that Boaz was given a great love for Ruth that passes natural understanding. That love for Ruth was proven by the many manifestations of his care for her. He made her dwelling place sure. Boaz told her to glean in no other field, but to abide there fast by his maidens. He put his protection over her. He commanded the young men not to touch her. He made provision for her. Boaz commanded his young men to ***"let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not; and let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and reproach her not."*** I must believe that the Lord has blessed and will bless His people exceedingly abundantly above all that they are able to ask or to think, as He did to Ruth.

Because of the love Boaz had for Ruth, he desired to take her for his wife. In that day, upon a man's death, his possessions could be redeemed or claimed by a near kinsman. Naomi, the widow of Elimelech, and her daughter-in-law Ruth were eligible to be redeemed by the near kinsman in the family. To receive Ruth for a wife meant that Boaz had

to redeem the possessions of Elimelech, which included Naomi and all that pertained to her deceased husband. There was an obstacle for Boaz to overcome if he should marry Ruth. The nearest kinsman had first rights for the redemption, and Boaz was not the nearest. So Boaz met the nearest kinsman in the gate of the city, and took ten elders of the city for witnesses. Boaz made it plain before all that the nearest kinsman had first rights of redemption, but that Ruth, the Moabitess was part of the purchase. Boaz said that if the nearest kinsman would not redeem it, he would. Upon learning that Ruth was a Moabitess, the nearest kinsman refused to purchase the possession. Because to take her, since she was a Gentile, would mar his inheritance.

I believe there is a wonderful teaching here for the Lord's people. It appears that the nearest kinsman represents the law. Under Jewish law it was forbidden for a Jew to marry a Gentile. If one should do so, he would take a blemish to himself and be subject to reproach from the devout Jews. The Gentile was considered a sinner, who should not be touched, much less married. So, the nearest kinsman could not do his part. No flesh is saved or redeemed by the law, neither can it be. The law was not given to save, but rather to be the ministration of condemnation and death. But salvation is by grace. Jesus came to save sinners. He looked past national and cultural boundaries and saw the vessels of mercy that God had loved with an everlasting love. He loved them, sought them out, came unto them, gave Himself for them, made provision for them, redeemed them and took their reproach to Himself. He purchased His people from the curse of the law with His blood, and forever removed their sin from them, never to be remembered against them forever.

Ruth, who was despised by some because of her nativity, but beloved of others because of her faith, became the mother of Obed, the father of Jesse, the father of David. And we know that they were all in the lineage of the Lord Jesus Christ. We see that God, in His great wisdom has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty. He has done this so that no flesh should glory in His presence. It is written, ***"He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."***

This, I trust was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

J.B. Farmer
10-24-2010.

The Lord willing, I will mention a little experience I was given, that stayed with me for days until sitting down to write this. I was filling the bird feeder and became concerned about the birds that are ground feeders (mostly doves) that cannot get onto the feeder itself, but must

gather the little that falls to the ground while the other birds are feeding. Because of this, I dropped some handfuls purposely on the ground for the doves so they might find more when they came to feed. Then the scripture appeared concerning Boaz's instruction to let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for Ruth, who was gleaning in his field.

CORRESPONDENCE

Vera N. Potter
486 Hwy. 590
Ellisville, MS 39437
November 15, 2010

Tony Norton
1429 Bowlett Street
Hillsville, VA 24343

Dear Brother Horton:

Please extend my subscription for two more years. I enjoy reading the Signs, especially the experiences. Thank you and the editors for your efforts.

I traveled many years where there were no meetings of the predestinarian order and the Signs was a great blessing to me. It still is.

In hope,
Vera (Nell) Potter

ARTICLES

CIRCULAR LETTER
LITTLE VINE OLDE PREDESTINARIAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION
THIRTY-THIRD ANNUAL SESSION

In presenting a circular letter it is not our desire to present something new, nor to bring something forth that you have not already been taught by the Holy Spirit — the one that shows you the things of Christ — John 14:26. The scriptures remind us that there is no new thing under the sun — Eccl. 1:9. It is our desire however, that in this thirty third annual session of the association, that the spiritual rest, that is laid up in the finished work of the Lord and Savior, be manifest throughout. May God grant that our greetings and farewells be in peace and that the assembly, the order, and the words spoken be to the praise and glory of our God.

It is refreshing to experience the blessing of being gathered together with brothers and sisters of like faith and doctrine, desiring to again hear and speak of the wonderful works of our elder brother, the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the wonderful blessing that we know as *"fellowship"* — a word boundless in its meaning and beauty to those who experience it. It is the sharing of the things of our God and more. There is a sense

that our fellowship extends to every brother and sister in every location and in every age, But there is a special warmth in the personal fellowship of a congregation and the ingathering of brothers and sisters.

Yet this doesn't detract from the fellowship you often feel for those saints that were inspired to write the scriptures, nor even those ministers or church brothers who have already passed from this life. It is not unusual, in our quieter moments, to find ourselves feeding on sermons we have heard in the past or, reflect on the comforting words of a familiar hymn learned long ago or, brought up short in fondly remembering a gentle exhortation of a brother or sister who has already been called from this life. And we see the scriptural example, *"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer." Acts 2:42.*

But fellowship is considered primarily for the church in the present. There was a reason for the apostle exhorting the church in *"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is..." Heb. 10:25.* But the scriptures go even further than this exhortation in expressing the graces that are evidenced by our fellowship. The crowning beauty and fullness of our fellowship, one with another, is that it manifests our fellowship with God. See 1 John 1:3,4. *"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with the Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full."*

Elder Wayman Chapell

ST. JOHN 1:1-9.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The same was in the beginning with God.

All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

VOICES OF THE PAST

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 58.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

A sister in Ohio has requested that we write on the above Scripture. It is evident from her letter before us that she is distressed by the indifference to truth and godliness manifest among some professing, to be Old School or Primitive Baptists. God forbid that we should sit in judgment upon our brethren, or lightly esteem those for whom Christ died, for our most precious moments have been when sitting at the feet of the brethren and the banner over us was love. We have listened to the heavenly theme of salvation by grace, and have seen Jesus, exalted, and have loved the brethren so that we felt we could give our life for them. Then we felt our heart was fixed, and, like Ruth, we were steadfastly minded. We were sure these people were our people. Beloved brethren, ***"Charity suffereth long, and is kind;" there can only be true steadfastness where there is faith that works by love. Blessed souls they are who are possessors of this love: God's love. Such are easy to be entreated, and possess a willing mind. They want to be found in the Way, the good old way. This love constrains them, so that their walk and conversation are becoming; it "doth not behave itself unseemly."*** Where this precious love is shed abroad in the heart there is a right conception of truth and godliness, for it ***"rejoiceth in the truth,"*** and the word of God is their criterion. It beareth all things, believeth, hopeth and endureth all things according to the word of God. One with such love may be deceived for awhile by those who profess love to them, but the true test is, What think ye of the Beloved, and what is his word, his work, to you for do not I love them that love thee? We are not commanded to love everybody, nor to fellowship anything contrary to God's word. If there are brethren for whom we have professed love and fellowship there can but be a desire in our hearts for them and their welfare, and a questioning as to the spirit that we ourselves possess. Are we prompted by love? Has love through all our actions run? We hear of many up and down this land denying this doctrine or subscribing to that, but we never hear of a poor sinner who has suffered under the condemnation of God's holy law, and God's grace has reached him, lightly speaking of grace. We mean the grace of God that bringeth salvation and teaches the denying of ungod-

liness and worldly lusts. In the living of this grace there is a sure defence of the truth. Paul says, ***"Be ye steadfast."*** Where love is, there is the best ground for brethren to be rooted steadfast in the apostolic doctrine. ***"Unmoveable."*** There are many things calculated by Satan and his angels to move the child of God. Bonds and afflictions abide them, but Paul says, ***"None of these things move me."*** Faith looks beyond the things that are seen, it has respect unto Him who has promised knowing that he who has promised is able to perform. Some today are not asking for the old paths where is the good way, but rather are departing from them, and are inclined to try and remove the ancient landmarks, but the Lord still reigns, and in his purpose there has always been a sifting of his people. In that sifting the chaff will go, but not a grain of wheat will fall to the ground. Sometimes there is a shaking by various winds of doctrines but that which is steadfast cannot be shaken, therefore remains. The church is being sifted today; there are those in it who do not belong there, for by their fruit ye shall know them. While some are denying the doctrine, others hold the form of sound doctrine whose lives are unbecoming, and in some cases, we fear they appear to hide behind predestination. Remember the accountability ot men and devils is just as truly set forth in the word as the predestination of God. and he who would hide behind predestination in his wickedness is out of the secret. There is in this day in many places a conformity to the spirit of this world, and wherever this is so the understanding becomes dull in the things belonging to godliness. The conscience is less tender and the affections cold, sin is not the burden it once was to the soul, and there is little crucifying of the old man and his deeds. Again, in this day there is an absence of spiritual conversation as brethren assemble together, and often worldly topics, foolish talking or jesting take its place. Paul says, ***"Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."*** We are called to glory and virtue, and in learning of Christ there is of necessity a putting off concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.

But to return to our subject. Throughout the whole of the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians Paul is dwelling, upon the resurrection of the dead. There were some among the Corinthian Church who said there was no resurrection of the dead. Such denial, if true, would remove all ***"hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."*** Therefore Paul begins by declaring what he had delivered unto them, and states that his testimony was according to the Scripture. He makes mention particularly that he

had testified of Christ's burial and resurrection, and then mentions many witnesses, including himself, and he informs them that the greater part of the said witnesses were still living, while some had fallen asleep. From the substance of the whole chapter it is easy to discern that the closing verse is an admonition to the brethren to be steadfast in the doctrine, especially in the resurrection of the dead. To us the resurrection is a glorious, soul-cheering theme, too high for mortals to comprehend and too profound for controversy. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust, and while it doth not yet appear what we shall be, yet we hope we are not deceived when we say that there is that within us that says, like Paul, ***"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."*** There are two ways of denying the resurrection: one verbally, that is, with our mouths, and the other by our walk and testimony in divine things. From verses thirty-three and thirty-four we have reason to think there were those in the Corinthian Church who denied the resurrection in their corrupt and unrighteous walk. Whilst there are none to our knowledge among the Old School Baptists who deny the resurrection verbally, yet there are those who deny it in their walk and conversation. The scriptural record is simple, and is sufficient condemnation to any who might verbally deny the resurrection, but it is our intention in this article to warn the brethren against such who say that Christ lives, yet deny him in their lives. Paul says, ***"I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received."*** Has there been anything delivered unto us? Have we received the truth that Jesus died, and that he died for our sins, and that he was buried and arose the third day for our justification? If we have received this we have received the word of truth, the gospel of our salvation, and we have in us evidences of a new birth, also of a deliverance from the law and its penalties by the body of Christ. We have evidence of the resurrection powers, for we have risen by the operation of the gospel in us from under the condemnation of the law to the liberty wherewith Christ makes us free. The Scripture fits us then where Paul says, ***"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above,"*** and it can truly be said of us, ***"Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new,"*** so there is now a new man in Christ Jesus. There may be those who would say that the resurrection power manifest in this new man is all the resurrection he will know. Whosoever they are they certainly place themselves in the same error as Hymenreus and Philetus, who concerning the truth

have erred, saying that the resurrection is passed already, thus overthrowing the faith of some. There is a resurrection still ardently desired by the new man, which we hope to show as we proceed.

This new man is distinct from the old man, for it is a heavenly creation, created after God in righteousness and true holiness, yet it is the sinner that is born again, it is the sinner that is saved. Let us consider the new man *"according to the scriptures,"* for while our hope is that we shall bear the image of the heavenly, we do not yet see ourselves in this heavenly image. This new man has a mouth, for he says, Thy word was found, and I did eat it, &c. What is this mouth? it is not the mouth of the natural man. He has a nose with which he smells the heavenly fragrance of the vine with its tender grapes; it delights to smell the unction of grace. He also has eyes with which he sees Jesus crowned with glory and honor; he also sees his calling. He has an ear also that hearkens to the truth and hears the voice of the good Shepherd, but it knows not the voice of a stranger. He has a heart that is a new heart and it is with this heart that he believes unto righteousness. He has hands with which he gathers the handfuls of purpose that fall for him in the gospel field; he also clings to Christ, the blest angel of life, saying, I will not let thee go except thou bless me. He has feet that walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. With these feet he can run and not be weary, and walk and faint not. None of us can describe what this new man really is, but we know and can positively testify that as is the heavenly so are they that are heavenly (present tense), and we thank God it is written, As we have borne the image of the earthy (which image we have borne and are bearing), so shall we also bear the image of the heavenly. Lest any should say we have separated the new man from the sinner we will proceed further. This mortal body is the dwelling-place of the new man. Paul says we have this treasure in earthen vessels, also bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. By the quickening of our mortal bodies by the Spirit dwelling in us there is a painfulness, an anxiety, a questioning and a declaration, *"O wretched man that I am," &c.* Paul tells of an experience in which he saw things unlawful to be uttered, and he says, Whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell. Many of the saints have had experiences similar to Paul, but while here in this time state they are in the body. There are also joys experienced, so that our whole body is filled with praise, and our mouth utters what our heart feels, and our eyes shed tears of joy. All this is not an expression of the old man, but of the new, and the sinner is the new man. The old man is crucified, for they that are Christ's have crucified

the flesh with the affections and lusts. There is not one sinful inclination of the sinner but what the new man mourns over and would have it otherwise. This makes him long for cleansing blood, and he deplores his vileness, and will ever do so as long as he bears the image of the earthy. If the mind of man could be put in a beast it would not be satisfied, but would aspire to be equal with man, yet having the mind of man he would feel more humiliation because he had a beast's likeness, which humiliation would not cease until he was in the likeness of man. So it is with us, for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality, and until this comes to pass the saying that is written is but a "saying." But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the "saying" that is written, ***"Death is swallowed up in victory,"*** and this victory is through our Lord Jesus Christ. ***"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."***

Elder George Ruston

WHEELING, West Virginia.

DEAR BRETHREN: - I am sending sister Ellison's letter, subject to your approval. She sent it to me, but I had some fears of sending it to you, fearing it would take too much space. To me it seems a wonderful letter. I feel very thankful for the gift of the SIGNS. I find much good reading in it, and love it for the truth's sake. My life is a busy one, and I long for more time to read and write; indeed this is my whole desire. My Bible, Baptist papers and hymn books look very inviting, to me, but I cannot feel to let the necessary housework go undone, as far as my health will permit me to pursue it.

I am, I hope, your sister, although very unworthy,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

TOPEKA, Kansas.

DEAR SISTER: - I was so overwhelmed by distracting sorrow and distress I seemed to have forgotten the omnipresent God, and had no thought to call upon him as an ever-present help in time of trouble. But while so forgetful of him, he showed me, as I humbly hope, that he had not forgotten me, by speaking these words in my ear: As the days of a tree so shall the days of my people be. Then, in the midnight darkness and loneliness, in the midst of an

ever-changing throng of a speeding train, I lay back in my seat, and with closed eyes, oblivious to all about me, a picture was spread before me such as I have never been able to portray with tongue or pen. The winter just passed has been another continuous siege of distracting grief and tribulation, and my mind reverts to the view I then had, and I have wished I might express to those of *"like precious faith,"* and also of like trials and conflicts, some of the thoughts those words have brought to my mind. Being spoken to me as they were, I thought they were Scripture, but the only text I can find is in Isaiah lxv. 22: *"They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands."*

I have thought that the "tree" here spoken of represents Christ, who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and as his days so shall the days of his people be. As I lay back, with closed eyes, I seemed to see a little tree in all its verdant, springtime beauty, clothed with leaves and blossoms. In the warm sunshine and gentle breeze it waved and beckoned with its spreading branches, and how sweet to rest beneath its shade, enjoy its fragrant bloom, and reflect on the prospect of fruit to follow. So shall the days of my people be. Where is the similitude of the days of a tree and the days of the Lord's people Let us go back to the early experience of a child of God,

"When converts first begin to sing.
Their happy souls are on the wing;
Their theme is all redeeming love,
Fair would they be with Christ above."

Oh what lovely blossoms, and what a sweet savor of Christ they send forth as they call and beckon to us *"to come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." "Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein."* The trees of the field do clap their hands, the cedars of Lebanon (the older brethren) bow at his feet, and praise him in fullness of joy, resting in the blessed promise that the Lord will not leave himself without witnesses. Perhaps the little tree had stood unnoticed, apparently dead, until the little leaves began to grow and the signs of life involuntarily began to appear. What rejoicing, now that we see it is not dead, as it appeared, and now we hope to see the sweet fruits of the Spirit evidenced later on, for they shall take root downward and bear fruit upward. But, as the days of a tree, by

and by the sun does not shine so brightly, clouds appear, and oh how dark it becomes. A storm arises, and in the raging the poor little tree sways and bends, the lovely bloom is beaten off and swept away, or covered with earth. The storm passes, and the little tree is left standing, not so proudly, perhaps, but of a more sober dignity, as, the promising bloom gone, the fruit buds begin to appear, and as the fruit increases in the upward branches the root is taking deeper hold in the earth. So are the days of my people.

"It is not long before they feel,
Their feeble souls begin to reel;
They think their former hopes are vain,
They're filled with sorrow, grief and pain."

Cannot every child of God go back in memory to the time they thought they would always go on their way rejoicing in the bloom of their earliest love, believing the enemies of their carnal nature were all slain, and would never vex or annoy them any more. But alas, the little clouds begin to arise, vexations come, and the lovely bloom is beaten off as the sorrows of the world worketh death to the sweet spiritual enjoyment, perhaps leading them as far as Peter, to even deny the Lord, saying in doubt and unbelief, that after all it is only a delusion, and they were deceived and had deceived others. Where now is the blessedness ye spake of? The beautiful promising bloom which looked so pleasant is gone from their view, swept away and buried in the storm of earthly cares and sorrows that has so unexpectedly fallen upon them. *"But the root of the righteous shall not be moved."* The storm passes, and they find themselves still standing in the faith of God's elect, cast down, but not destroyed. Oh then the fruit buds begin to appear, as in humbleness they are brought to see that it is not in their own strength they stand. *"I am the root and the offspring of David."* This is the Root that extends downward in the earthen vessel of mercy. Each can say, O Lord, *"my goodness extendeth not to thee,"* but his goodness does reach down to every vessel of mercy. The strong downward Root holds firm, and will not let them be overwhelmed. They are made to realize that *"the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit,"* which is borne upward in praise and thanksgiving to God for deliverance from the storm. The many storms of affliction and sorrow, trials and tribulations, perils and persecutions break and beat upon the *"trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord,"* until they bow and bend, so shaken in mind they fear they cannot stand; no, not another day.

"I fear at last that I shall fall,
For if a saint, the least of all."

Yet when the storm passes, and the Sun of righteousness once more beams forth, then in this light, and not their own feeble sight, they see it is not in their own strength they still stand, but the Strength of Israel has held them. Not by works of righteousness which they have done, not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord. Much more of the cherished fruit is gone. But when blooming youth is gone, and old age comes on, we are made to realize that it is the bitter, gnarly fruit, of self-confidence and fleshly ambition that is being beaten off. It came from earth, and must fall back from whence it came, for *"Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up,"* but the *"tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord,"* its fruit shall remain. One by one we see every earthly hope and joy beaten off and swept away, but the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace and fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, oh nothing shall ever be able to separate us from that. How gladly we should have the gnarly, poisonous fruits of the flesh pruned away, so that we might shine forth as the morning, with not a cloud to intervene between us and our Rock, who shelters us in this weary land of storms and trouble. As the tree grows older, as the growth in grace and in the knowledge of truth increases, the poor tempest-tossed child of God seems to gain strength in the storms, often stands more firm, and is not so easily tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine; does not so lightly bow and bend to the heres and theres, but the sweet fruits of the Spirit are borne upward to him, the Strength of Israel, the Root of David, in the earthen vessel, has kept him from falling, and enables him to say, I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me. If it is his will that I shall weather another storm he will give the old trunk, stripped of all the foliage of youthful hopes and ambitions, every branch of earthly aspirations and joys broken off, strength to endure. But oh the weakness of the flesh. How we do shrink and dread when we see the storm coming, though there is a *"needs be"* for it all, and we know that

"Not a single shaft can hit,
Until the God of love sees fit."

How we do feel the need of the prayers of all saints, for it does seem at times that this flesh and heart will surely fail. Oh may he, by the power of his might, when the adverse winds do blow, give me strength to still stand in the way, ready for whatever is in the counsel of his will to come next.

"As the days of a tree." How

often have we seen the tall cedars, the sturdy oaks, beaten by the storms of many seasons almost to the ground, nothing left but their bare old trunks, and to all appearance have lived their time and served their purpose, yet they do not quite fall; not yet, their downward roots have not yet parted from the earth, they must wait the appointed time to fall. So shall the days of my people be. Old age is come, the bare old trunk is stripped of every alluring earthly joy, until there is nothing left to live for, and *"I long to lay my armor by, and dwell with Christ at home"* for,

> *"Surely like a withered tree,*
> *No fruit to me is found,*
> *Why do I live, O Lord, I cry,*
> *A cumberer of the ground?"*

> *"When a few more days I've wasted,*
> *When a few more scenes are o'er,*
> *When a few more griefs I've tasted,*
> *I shall fall, to bloom no more."*

But not yet. The downward Root has not yet parted from the earthen vessel, and though I often feel, especially in the heart-rending trials I have endured of late, that there is no fruit borne upward from such a withered and weather-beaten old trunk, yet all the days of my appointed time I must wait until my change come.

One night as I lay thinking of the trials and conflicts of the Lord's peculiar people these words came to my mind with force, *"I see men as trees, walting,"* and I thought how like a tree is the walk of the Lord's people. None can see men, nor the people of God, walking as trees, untilled out of the town, or world, as was the blind man, by God's own hand, and how short the time until made to see that as the days of a tree, so are the days of the Lord's people. He sometimes lays his hand heavily upon us, showing us what great things we must suffer for his sake, until we cry, *"Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me."* Whom he loves he rebukes and chastens, and it is his chastening hand that makes us look up, until we see clearly every man, every child of God, walking the same path, everyone enduring the same storms and afflictions, for if ye be without chastisement, then are ye bastards and not sons. There is no place of rest for us in the town, or world; we cannot go back there, or tell to any in the town of the things we see clearly. They know nothing of the reproach of the cross, and have no sympathy for the mourning people of God. But to our own house, there we may freely go, sure to find there the sympathy and fellowship we crave. There all speak the same language, weeping with those who weep and rejoicing with

those who do rejoice. Here we see men as trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, walking the same road, buffeted on every hand by storms without and within. The same storms that beat and bend one old tree beat upon all, and though one may feel that the storm has brought him a little lower than the rest ever get, yet all the rest feel the same way: less than the least of all saints. But in this is our fellowship and our love made perfect, and we often find the lowest tree bears the sweetest fruit, as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood. What a comparison. The low apple-tree is the one that bears the fruit. The ones that stand the highest are not always the most fruitful. But *"as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons." "Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly."* His loved ones among the sons of earth are lowly. A proud look he hates and abominates. The proud he knoweth afar off. But the fruit of his love on the lowly trees is sweet to our taste; yes, sweet, because when we are made to look up we see that his banner over us is love, and know that, *"Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me." "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."*

As the days of a tree, so are my people. As the tree falls, there shall it lie. It falls to earth, and returns to the dust as it was, and so shall it be until the bright morning of the resurrection, when the Lord shall bring again in power that which fell in weakness, and will clothe it again in the beauty of holiness, then shall we be satisfied. Every idol that now intervenes between us and our love will be swept away, and we shall see his face, and never, never Sin. No more storms of darkness and sorrow falling upon us, no more crying of pain and anguish, no more griefs and heartaches, no more trouble and mourning, no more losses and crosses, no more wars and fightings, the conflict will be over, our warfare ended, and God himself shall wipe the tears from off all faces, for, *"As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I "comfort you."* Then shall we see him as he is, and be like him. *"As the days of a tree [He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief] are the days of my people."*

Submitted to the discretion of the editors, and through them to the people of God, walking as trees, toiling, sorrowing, rejoicing, the half of which can never be told.

One of the least,
MARY ELLISON.

PSALMS 139:17.

How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!

FRAGMENTS

When God worketh in us to will, and has not yet worked in us to do, we are in a sad, desolate, self-loathing condition. Our desires then are to do that which is good and absolutely free from selfishness and sin, but ***"how to perform that which is good we find not."*** It may give us a little rest from trouble to know that the apostle Paul expressed the same condition concerning himself, but it will not drive the trouble away. The things that we would do, that we have a desire for, we do not think we have any right to do. ***"We would but cannot pray;" "we would but cannot repent."*** We feel not merely that we cannot say the words of prayer, but the words, in our mouth, would not be prayers. It seems that it is not our right to pray; it is not our right and privilege to repent; it does not belong to us to be baptized. We have no right to the promises and commands and blessings of the gospel. These things belong to the Lord's people. But when the Lord ***"works in us to do,"*** then we realize a sacred mystery. We have done these things, and yet have not done them. They have been done in and for us. We take the works of Jesus as ours; we walk in them; they are wrought in us, and it now becomes a blessed privilege to work them out, to manifest them openly in our walk and conversation.

How wonderfully the apostle here Comes along the road we have trodden, reminds us of our ***"consolation in Christ"*** in past days, of our comfort of love and of the mercies of God, and before we are aware we seem to be telling ourselves how we ought to be of one mind, seek the things of others, and not our own, and So manifest in what we say and do the mind that was in Christ Jesus, which the same apostle says we have. (1 Cor. ii. 16.) The humility of the mind of Christ is spoken of as it is manifest in his coming under the law, making himself of no reputation, and becoming obedient to all its demands against his people, even to the shameful death of the cross. Then his exaltation above every name, so that everything in heaven and in earth and under the earth bows the knee in acknowledging allegiance to his name and obedience to his will.

What power the sun has in the heavens, and what power the heavens have over the earth. Oh, that this great, broad, high atmosphere of the truth of God might Come down to Die and enfold me, and enlighten and enrich my soul with its holy power. Oh, that my thoughts and desires might continually reach up into the infinite depths of those gospel heavens, even to the Sun of Righteousness, whose circuit is from one end of the heavens to the other, and whose heat and light reach throughout its whole extent. My desire is that those heavenly powers and blessings might so control this

earthly nature of mine that holy things may grow out of it, and be manifest in my life; that the corn and the wine and the oil might come forth from the depths of my soul, where God, I hope, has sowed them, and so the life and blessings of Jesus be manifest in my mortal flesh; that I might have the assurance that God is working in me to will and to do, and so feel it my blessed privilege to work out in my daily life and walk my own salvation so graciously wrought in me, and so render obedience to his holy will.

What wonderful control the heavens have over the earth, which lies so helplessly, so quietly, so passively and obediently under their power. What precious fruits are brought forth out of the earth's bosom by the Sun, which has his tabernacle in them. As the earth lies under that glorious heavenly control, and is responsive to it, so the Lord's people, the new earth, lie under the power of Jesus, ***"whose glory covers the heavens." "He comes down upon them like rain, and as showers that water the earth."*** Then his sunshine warms them into sweet obedience, and the plants of his grace are put forth, and the flowers appear on the earth, and the precious fruits of the Spirit are perfected.

And they are ready to ***"do all things without murmurings and disputings,"*** working out their salvation with fear and trembling. There certainly are times when this vile, rebellious nature of ours is held under control by the Spirit, and we have a little rest from its troublesome disputings and murmurings. Much of our time we are mourning and worrying because we are so vile, or else because we cannot have our own way. With some this sad, rebellious winter state of the soul seems to continue much of their time. But there are times when they can feel that this command is upon this unruly nature: ***"The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him."***

Elder Silas H. Durand
MAY, 1903.

"And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope; and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt."-Hosea ii, 15.

Now the "valley of Achor" signifies the "valley of trouble." It was the valley in which Achan was stoned, And why stoned? Because he had taken the accursed thing; because his eye had been captivated by the Babylonish garment and golden wedge, and he had buried them in the tent. This may throw a light on what the " valley of Achor" is spiritually, Perhaps you have been guilty of Achan's sin; you have

been taking the accursed thing; have been too deeply connected with the world; have done things which God's displeasure is against, Let conscience speak in the bosom of each. The consequence has been, that you have got into the "valley of Achor!" Trouble, sorrow, and confusion are your lot, and you do not know whether the lot of Achan may not await you there.

Now it is in this "valley of Achor," or sorrow, confusion, and fear, that the" door of hope "is opened. But why" in the valley of Achor?" That we may cease to hope in self; that a sound and true gospel hope may enter within the veil as an anchor sure and steadfast, and there be no hope but in the precious blood of the Lamb, and in a sweet manifestation of that blood to the conscience. This is the "door of hope" through which the soul looks into the very presence of God; sees Jesus on the throne of grace, the sprinkled mercy-seat, and the great High Priest "able and willing to save to the uttermost." Through this" door of hope," by which Christ is seen, the soul goes forth in desires, breathings, hungerings, and thirstings after him; and through this "door of hope" descend visits, smiles, tokens, testimonies, mercies, and favours. And thus, there is "a door of hope," no longer barred, closed, and shut back, but thrown wide open in the bleeding side of an incarnate God. Here is a renewing of visits almost despaired of; of joys that seemed never to return; of hopes almost extinct; of consolations remembered, but remembered almost with fear, lest they should have been delusive. ***"She shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt."***

Elder J. C. Philpot

MEETINGS

SPRINGFIELD PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God, Springfield Primitive Baptist Church looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift. They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed November 13th, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, Gretna, VA, for the purpose of examination of this gift, Brother Bobby R. Pickral and if found qualified to be ordained to the full work and service as deacon.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together. The meeting opened by prayer by Elder Junior Conner, Elder Marvin Brumfield was elected as moderator and Elder Cleo Robertson to serve as clerk. Brother Oscar Pickral, acting as spokesman for the church, delivered Brother Bobby R. Pickral to the presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon was read as set forth in scriptures Timothy 3:1-13 by Elder Jimmy Gray. Examinations followed by Elders Raymond Goad, Junior Conner, Jimmy Gray, Marvin Brumfield and Cleo Robertson. The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of this candidate proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder Jimmy Gray. The charge was delivered to Brother Bobby Pickral by Elder Junior Conner. He was then delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted, a copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication and a copy to be given to Brother Bobby Pickral along with a certificate of ordination.

Presbytery was dismissed by Elder Cleo Robertson.

Elder Marvin Brumfield, Moderator

Elder Cleo Robertson, Clerk

Springfield Church Nov. 13, 2010.

Deacons present at Presbytery of Brother Bobby R. Pickral.

Brethren:

Fred Murphy
Randolph Wells
Richard Lawless
Ira Powell
Donald Agee
William Midkiff
Oscar Pickral

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 2010

Susan Shelton, NC 10.00
Patsy Mitchell, TX..... 5.00
Shelby Stratton, MS 25.00
Mary Lee, NC 5.00
Dorothy Holley, VA..... 5.00
W. H. Norman, NC..... 10.00
Chlonetia Thompson, VA 5.00
Meta L. Mills, AR..... 10.00
Vera Potter, MS 5.00
Emmie Grayson, AL 5.00

OBITUARIES

ELDER RICHARD H. CAMPBELL

Elder R. H. Campbell

On the way home from the annual meeting at the Bordeaux church at Nashville the cell phone rang and we were informed that the earthly pilgrimage of our beloved Elder Richard H. Campbell had ended about 1:30 p.m. This was Sunday afternoon November 7, 2010. The congregation at the Bordeaux meeting had been told of his serious condition at the beginning of services that morning, but it was still unexpected. He had developed pneumonia following a long bout with leukemia. Funeral services were held on Wednesday followed by military honors and burial at the West Tennessee Veterans, Cemetery in his home county of Shelby, near Memphis.

Brother Campbell was born October 25, 1923 at Hickman, Kentucky to Primitive Baptist parents—Brother and Sister Luther and Carrie Campbell. Although he was well acquainted with the formalities of church doctrine early in life he did not receive it experimentally until much later. He was baptized into the fellowship of the Memphis 1st Primitive Baptist Church in November 1957. His experience was written and published in the April, 1965 issue of the Signs of the Times.

He had a successful business career, which was primarily in sales, following his World War II experiences. He was a disabled veteran. Later in his career he and his family owned and operated a business establishment in Memphis—Arts East.

Elder Campbell was ordained to the full work of the ministry in August 1970 at the request of the Memphis church and was serving as pastor at the time of his death. He also pastored the Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church at Nashville for many years and was the current pastor of Cane Creek Primitive Baptist Church near Rives, Tennessee. During his ministry he traveled widely and was well received in churches across the south and through the lower midwest. He was well known both for his preaching as well as his articles in the Signs of the Times of which he had been an associate editor for forty years.

He is survived by his wife Bettye and daughter Derrie Lynn Hodges, two grandchildren, three great grandchildren as well as a brother and three sisters.

Written at the request of his Memphis home church, in conference. A copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times, requesting publication, and a copy to his wife Mrs. Bettye Campbell. A copy also to be recorded in the records of the Memphis church.

Written by Wayman Chapell and approved in conference.

Elaine Jones, Clerk

SISTER IRIS DOVE

Sister Iris Dove passed away Monday evening, November 15, 2010 at Richfield Nursing Center in Salem, Virginia. She was 80: born May 5, 1930 in Roanoke, Virginia.

She was the youngest of the five children of Brother Luther Dove and Sister Lettie Pickeral Dove. Both were members of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church.

Sister Iris was a premature baby with cerebal palsey and in all her 80 years never walked.

She was so glad God had spared her with normal intelligence.

She said the happiest day of her life was when God revealed to her that her soul was saved. A few days later she joined the church in August 1964.

We were blessed to visit her for approximately a half hour the day before her passing. It was very obvious she was dying and not able to talk. Yet she continually smiled, a sweet, meek and humble smile.

Her folks, old and feeble themselves, plan to have a memorial service later.

Written by one blessed to travel many miles with her and Sister Frances Robert Dove.

Sister Mamie Rose D. Ferguson

GLADYS HOLLEY STEGALL

I am honored, but do not feel competent, to write an obituary for Sister Gladys Stegall. Sister Gladys was born August 12, 1923 and was called home on October 5, 2010. She was the daughter of Brother Charlie Lester Holley and Sister Susan Brumfield Holley. She was the beloved wife of Brother Richard Stegall, who died July 16, 2002. Sister Gladys is survived by one daughter, Rachel Wimmer, a son-in-law, Mike Wimmer, one sister, Viola Davis, two granddaughters, Michelle Dison and Amy Parrott and three great-grandchildren, Kiera Dison, Micah Parrott, and Spencer Parrott.

Her funeral was conducted at Norris Funeral Services by Elders Mark Terry and Marvin Brumfield. Her body was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park in Danville, Virginia, October 7, 2010.

Some of my earliest memories include Brother Richard and Sister Gladys. They were like an aunt and uncle to my brothers and me. We spent so much time with them at church, listening to Sister Gladys's beautiful voice raised in songs of praise to her Lord. They joined Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church and were baptized together in August of 1962. They were faithful to attend the church services far and near. Brother Richard and Sister Gladys hosted visitors to the Staunton River Association and in-

vited the Brethren to their home for meals, song services and snacks throughout the year. I remember so many sweet visits in their home listening to them and their guests discussing the scriptures and speaking of the goodness and mercy of God. Sister Gladys missed Brother Richard so much, but she continued to attend church services and support her church in every way that she could. During her times of grief and poor health, she affirmed that God did not make any mistakes and always told us how good He was to her.

Sister Gladys was lovingly cared for by her daughter and other family members who helped her, but she was ready to go home. How her family, Malmaison Church, and all of her Brethren who loved her so much, will miss her! In spite of our loss, we do feel that God was merciful in taking Sister Gladys to Himself where pain and grief cannot disturb her

"Jesus, while our hearts are bleeding,
O'er the spoils that death has won
We would at this solemn meeting
Calmly say. "Thy will be done."

Tho' today we're filled with mourning,
Mercy still is on the throne;
With thy smiles of love returning,
We can sing, "Thy will be done.

"By thy hands the boon was given,
Thou hast taken but thine own;
Lord of earth and God of heaven,
Evermore, "Thy will be done."

Although we have suffered a great loss, we feel that it was such a blessing to have known and loved Sister Gladys. How thankful I desire to be for the love and fellowship of this precious Sister! May the dear Lord reconcile us all to His will and comfort all of us who mourn for her.

Humbly submitted by one who loved her,

Joyce Williams Pittman

ST. LUKE 17: 20-21.

And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:

Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

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SONG

How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
When those who love the Lord
In one another's peace delight,
And thus fulfil his word:

When each can feel his brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part;
When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart:

When free from envy, scorn, and pride,
Our wishes all above,
Each can his brother's failings hide,
And show a brother's love:

When love in one delightful stream
Through every bosom flows;
And union sweet, and dear esteem
In every action glows!

Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love.

Swain.

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EDITORIAL

1st Timothy 5:24, ***"Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after."***

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

The Apostle Paul writes unto Timothy who he felt to be his son in the faith and ministry and charges Timothy to ***"war a good warfare, holding faith, and a good conscience."*** As given to him by Christ, the apostle sets forth the doctrine and order for the church of Christ. There were those of that day preaching and following after fables and ***"desiring to be teachers of the law, but understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm."*** The same is true this day as it was in that day.

The prevailing and popular belief is that all mankind will stand before God in the end of time and give an account of their works. Those who have worked sufficiently witnessing to others of Christ and saving enough souls by getting them to accept Christ will have salvation and those who didn't will be put in hell. They believe that is when the judgment will take place for all mankind. But, the apostle writes that ***"some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment."*** I believe that this is an important and precious doctrine to the Lord's people. All mankind are sinners. Of this there is no question. Romans 5:12, ***"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."*** Even the Lord's people were by nature the children of wrath as others until the Lord quickened them together with Christ, for by grace are you saved and not of works. In your experience, the Lord showed you your sinful condition and it was all black and filthy. You could not see anything good. All was darkness and you felt to be the worst of sinners with not even a glimmer of hope. You felt that you were lost and that hell would be

your home eternally. O, such fear and despondency! You cried out with the Apostle Paul, *"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"* All the reading of scriptures was only condemnation. No one, not even your spouse, parents, or preacher could give you any comfort. You felt as Isaiah wrote in chapter 64:6, *"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."* But, the precious, wonderful Lord of grace, truth and mercy doesn't leave His people in that condition. He gives you faith to believe in Him and comes to you manifesting His presence in such a warm, loving, comforting way that you now are given a hope and peace that you would not trade for all that the world has to offer. As a part of the virtuous woman (the church of Christ), your price is far above rubies. With you it is the ninth hour, the hour of prayer, and you are blessed to behold Christ at the ninth hour on the cross as he bowed His priestly head and proclaimed, *"It is finished."* Your sins were opened unto you and gone before to judgment on the cross.

Judgment has already been rendered as evidenced by Romans 5:12 quoted above. Also Romans 3:23, *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"* and Romans 3:10-12, *"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."* Judgment has been rendered that all mankind is guilty. Now, the beautiful, precious truth to the elect is that Christ loved them so much that He willingly came down to where they were under the same law to redeem them from the curse of the law and to satisfy the judgment that was against them. Though He was righteous and holy and no guile was found in His mouth, He bore the sins of those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life in His own body on the tree of the cross. He, who knew no sin, was made to be sin for His elect. He paid in full the debt required of the judgment. The judgment against you, the elect children of God, has been completely satisfied. Christ was smitten with the sword of His Father's divine justice as He bore the wrath of God in the room and stead of His little children. Your sins were opened unto you and went before to judgment.

Not so with the ones who are not His elect. Their sins follow after. In this life they will never know the killing effect of the law applied to their hearts nor experience the awful burden of a sin-sick soul. They will never hear the merciful, comforting

summons to *"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."* The judgment of guilty is still unsatisfied against them. The execution of that judgment is yet to come. They will experience what John saw in Revelation 20:12, *"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."* Revelation 20:15, *"And whoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."* Those whose names were written in the book of life will not experience any judgment at this time because their judgment has been paid by their Lord, King, High Priest, Saviour and Friend. Those judged according to their works out of the books of the law have no one to pay their debt. The Apostle Paul writes in Galatians 3:10, *"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continued not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."* These workers of iniquity will experience that which Christ spoke in Matthew 7:22-23, *"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."* They will be cast into the lake of fire which is the second death.

Those that compose the bride of Christ, the church, will hear the sweet summons of the bridegroom, *"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."* For Revelation 20:6 says, *"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power."* The first resurrection is the resurrection of Christ. He said *"I am the resurrection."* He is the first and the last. His people are the body of Christ and therefore had part in His resurrection so that the second death hath no power over them.

"He which testifieth these things said, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Submitted, I hope in love,
Elder Cleo Robertson

PSALM 36 9-10.

For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.

O continue thy lovingkindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart.

CORRESPONDENCE

Nov. 30, 2010

Dear Brother Horton,

Enclosed is my check for 2 yrs. renewal to the "Signs" and you can use the other as you see fit. I really enjoy the Signs every month.

Thanks so much,
A Little Sister in Hope,
Sallie R. Hodges

12/10/2010

Dear Brother Horton,

Please renew my subscription for the "Signs of the Times" for the coming year. I am enclosing a check for $30.00 - $15.00 for the subscription and $15.00 for a contribution.

It is with sadness that I realize Elder Richard Campbell has gone on and will no longer be one of the "Associate Editors of the Signs", however, I believe that as The Signs continues to be published, we can and will continue to enjoy his writings in the section called, "Voices of the Past".

Elder Richard Campbell served as our Pastor and Moderator of The Bordeaux Church in Nashville for 30 years. We will miss him but realize that he has gone to a better place.

A brother in hope
George W. Hyslip

PSALM 1.

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

VOICES OF THE PAST

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

SAMUEL L. DOUGLAS - DEAR COUSIN: - For some time past I have been feeling very much ashamed of myself for not yet having answered your good letter, but I am a delinquent in letter-writing, as I am in many other things. Your account of the laying of the corner-stone in the new church building was very interesting. I have never witnessed one. It is strange that your name will probably be read hundreds of years hence. But as you say, it were far better that your name be written in the Lamb's book of life than in that corner-stone, and if in your new church Jesus Christ be preached as the chief Corner-stone, elect and precious, then all will be well, and those who believe on him shall not be confounded. You speak of being ***"sorry that one so lovable and gifted as my husband should be shackled by the narrow rules of church discipline."*** Well, I certainly cannot blame you, for I myself once thought the same regarding the church, and I know it is the general opinion of all other denominations. I shall not try to answer for him, for I have not the ability to do so, but he himself is ***"ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh,"*** and when you make your long promised visit to our home I know he will be willing to do so. But I thought it might perhaps be interesting to you to know why I am a Baptist. Well, as you doubtless know, my parents attended the church of England, to which of course we children went; also to the Sunday School, where I was taught that ***"in my baptism I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven."*** This, of course, like many other things in my childhood, was learned as a parrot might learn, neither understanding nor caring what I was repeating. But somehow as I grew older I began to think that this could not be exactly true. I had often seen little babies christened in the church, and I wondered how that the minister sprinkling a little water on the child's face could make it a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. Also my mother used to tell me if I would be a good girl, and obey my parents, and not do any bad things, I would go to heaven when I died, but if I was a naughty girl and did not do as I was told I would go to the bad place. Now I thought it was strange that I might possibly go to the ***"bad place"*** if ***"in my baptism I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven."*** But it said so in the prayer-book, which book I had always thought akin to the Bible, so I did not know what to think. However, these things did not lie very heavily

upon me. Well, as time went on I was told I was *"getting old enough to be confirmed,"* and the next time it was given out in the church that there was to be a *"confirmation"* at such a time, and that those who wished to be confirmed would meet in the vestry for instruction On certain afternoons, my mother told me I had better go, as I might not have another chance for some time, and I was *"quite old enough."* Even then I had my own ideas about confirmation, but as some of my companions were going, and as there was a prospect of a nice new dress for the occasion, I did not object, but went to the classes. After the confirmation was over we were told it was now our *"privilege"* to partake of the communion, but as I felt that too sacred a thing to be partaken of lightly I would not do so. I had yielded to confirmation, and thought that was bad enough, because I looked upon that ceremony as joining the church, which I felt should not be done by any except those who had been *"converted."* Now what that meant was to me very vague; I knew the signification of the word was *"changed,"* but changed in what way I did not know. I had heard people of other denominations speaking of some who had been converted and joined the church, so I felt it was something about which I knew nothing. I was a gay girl, and, like most young people, fond of fun and all sorts of amusements, going to parties and dances, of which I was particularly fond, though always taking care to keep in strictly respectable society. There came a time when all these things were vanity of vanities to me. One day one of my companions said to me: *"O Nellie, do you know that there is an Evangelist preaching in the city? and they say there are such crowds going there is often not standing room. I would like to hear what difference there can be in his preaching to draw such crowds, would not you?"* I said, *"Yes, indeed I would."* So we went that evening. After the preliminary exercises were over he took his text from Romans v. 7, 8: *"For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."* It seemed as though one of the Lord's arrows pierced my soul there and then. Before that time I knew I was a sinner, then I felt it. I was entranced, spellbound, conscious of nothing but the sermon, until it was over, feeling almost every word condemned me. I went home with a heavy heart, the burden of all my sins resting upon my shoulders. I was like Christian in the Pilgrim's Progress: my burden was too heavy to bear. I felt that if I did not get rid of it it would sink me to the ground (to hell), but how to get rid of it I could not tell. I went to every meet-

ing, hoping that in some way or other relief would come. At almost every meeting there were those who professed to be converted and would go on their way rejoicing, but not I. I felt that I must be more wicked than they, too wicked for the Lord to hear my prayers and sighs and groans, and the thought was continually with me, *"What must I do to be saved?"* I knew that the answer was, *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."* I thought I did believe. I had always believed there was a God, and a heaven, and a hell, and a Jesus who lived on this earth, and that everything in the Bible was true, but I knew that that *"believe"* must mean something different. I prayed to God to show me what it meant to *"believe,"* prayed earnestly, and I even made bold to ask him to show me before the year was out (it was in December). When I first felt the burden of my sins I tried hard to be good, thinking, if I were only good God would hear me and speak forgiveness to my soul, and each morning, as I awoke I would resolve to not break one of the ten commandments that day, all of which I knew well by heart. But alas, there never passed a day that I did not break them in some way or other, and I often felt that I was more guilty of so doing than when I had no care about it. But I had to learn by experience what Paul tells us in Galatians, that *"the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ."* Also, as we are told in Romans, that *"by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin,"* and also that *"Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth."* I have before mentioned, I had asked God to show me what it was to *"believe,"* before the year was out. It was on the 29th of December, as I retired to rest, feeling heartsick, weary, discouraged and well-nigh in despair, thinking that God had turned a deaf ear to my prayers, and that there was no forgiveness for me; I lay down and began thinking, of our meetings and the preaching, &c., then I repeated some of the hymns we used to sing. There were many that I loved, but it seemed to me there were two that I loved best, one of which seemed to be an answer to my soul's longing to know, *"What must I do to be saved!"* I did not know it then, but I have since learned that nothing or no one can give that answer to the weary, longing soul but God himself. Let me quote the hymn:

"Nothing either great or small,
Nothing, sinner, no;
Jesus did it, did it all,
Long, long ago.
When he from his lofty throne
Stooped to do and die,
Everything was fully done;
Hearken to his cry:

It is finished, yes, indeed,
Finished every jot;
Sinner, this is all you need,
Tell me, is it not?

Weary, working, plodding one,
Wherefore told ye so,
Everything was fully done
Long, long ago.

Till to Jesus' work you cling,
By a simple faith,
Doing in a deadly thing;
Doing ends in death.

Cast your deadly doing down,
Down at Jesus' feet;
Stand in him, in him alone,
Gloriously complete.
It is finished, yes, indeed,
Finished every jot;
Sinner, this is all you need,
Tell me, is it not?"

When I had finished repeating that hymn I was amazed. I suppose I had sung it hundreds of times, but

I had never before seen in it what I saw then: a complete salvation through the finished work of Christ, and Christ alone. I seemed to see him, with the eyes of my soul, hanging on the cross, bleeding and dying, and I felt that he was my Savior, and that he was dying for my sins, and I said, O Lord, is this what it is to believe on thee, Thou hast said, *"It is finished,"* I do, I do believe it, my trust is in thee, in thee; and I felt like Esther when she went in, unto the king: If I perish, I will perish trusting in thy word. A calm, restful, frame of mind came over me; I seemed to forget about my sins, and repeated that other beautiful hymn of which I have spoken; it is just as dear to me today:

"Just as I am, without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bid'st me come to thee;
O Lamb of God, I Come.

Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot;
To thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings within and fears without,
O Lamb of God, I come.
Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind,
Right, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need in thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,

For in thy promise I believe;
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down;
Now to be thine, yea, thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come."

I said to myself, Yes, I have learned by bitter experience that it must be just as I am or not at all. While thinking of those things I fell asleep. In the morning when I awoke the blessed sunshine was flooding my room and everything seemed different; I had had a beautiful, sweet sleep, such as I had not had for a long time, and I felt refreshed and happy. My mind instantly went back to the night before, and I thought, Can it be possible that God has answered my prayer, and that this is conversion, and that my sins are forgiven I hoped so, but was afraid to dare say it was. I then looked for the burden of sin that I had with me when I lay down, but could not find it, it was gone, gone I hope into the wilderness, a land not inhabited, where no human eyes can find it, carried there by our Scapegoat, our precious Jesus. O then what a delightful time I had praising, loving and trusting my dear Savior. I looked forward to those meetings as I had never done to my worldly pleasures.

" 'Twas a heaven below,
The Redeemer to know,
And the angels could do nothing more
Than to fall at his feet,
And the story repeat,
And the Savior of sinners adore.

On the wings of his love,
I was carried above
All sin and temptation and pain,
And I could not believe
That I ever should grieve,
That I ever should suffer again."

I supposed that this state of mind was to be always mine, but I was soon disillusioned, I found sin and sorrow, doubts and fears, temptations and persecutions were mine instead. I had had a Sunday School class for some time in the English Church, which I faithfully attended, although I did not attend any of the other services since I had begun to go to those meetings. When they learned I was attending the latter instead of the church, several of the officials called on me at different times and remonstrated with me, but when they saw they could not deter me I soon found I was given the *"cold shoulder."* If I met any of them, on the street they were generally very busily, engaged looking in at a shop window or over at the other side of the street, &c., and it was not until scarcely, a teacher in the school would speak to or look at me that I gave up my class. After

those meetings were all over I felt like a sheep having no fold and no shepherd. I longed to cast in my lot with the people of God, but my trouble was to know who they were. I went about from one denomination to another, one Sunday to one place and the next Sunday to another. I read the Bible and studied to try and find which was the nearest to the church of Christ in the days of the apostles, and the more I read the more I felt that the one above all others which I did not want to join was the nearest, and that one was the Baptist Church. I had heard many strange things about them, and when they were spoken of in my presence it was always in a slighting, sneering manner, therefore from my childhood I had been prejudiced against them, and even after I had been to their meetings very many times, and saw nothing either strange or wrong, I thought, Surely there must be something, which they are keeping back. I liked the Congregational minister very much, and went there quite often, and sometimes almost made up my mind to join them, but when I did there would be a misgiving of conscience. On one occasion I was there on communion Sunday, and when the minister invited *"all who loved the Lord Jesus Christ to remain and partake with them of the emblems of his death,"* I kept my seat, intending to accept the invitation, but by the time most all the congregation had gone out I felt I could not stay, and went out, too; they were not my people. After that I attended a Bible class in the Baptist Sunday School, and occasionally went to their meetings, but not regularly by any means, for I had not yet been *"fully persuaded,"* and did not wish them to have any suspicion of my thoughts. But the time came when I felt I could stay away no longer, and I told the Bible class teacher, who was a deacon, and I believe a truly gracious man, that I wanted to have a home with the people whom I believed were the people of God. He said, *"My dear child, I have been looking for this a long time; I knew it would come sooner or later, and I sincerely welcome you among us."* I went before the church and was cordially received and baptized, and felt happy in obeying my Savior's commands.

" O how happy are they
Who their Savior obey,
And whose treasures are laid up above!
Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

Some time after this I became acquainted with him who is now my husband, then a very young man, seventeen years of age. I had known but few religious young people, young men especially, and I was struck with wonder and amazement at the gracious words which pro-

ceeded out of his mouth. I felt that I knew nothing, that I was a babe, and he a man in Christ Jesus, mighty in the Scriptures, and I felt in my inmost soul that he was as truly called to preach the gospel as was Timothy of old, although at that time such a thing seemed almost impossible; but since then I have learned that the God who called Isaiah, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, Paul, Timothy and an innumerable host of others from the womb to be his servants, can also open up the way for his servants to preach the unspeakable riches of Christ, which I believe my husband has done, in season and out of season, through evil report and through good report, for almost thirty-five years.

Now, dear cousin, I have tried to relate the way in which I trust God has led me; of the many trials and changes through which we have passed since our marriage, and of the circumstances which led to our joining the Old School Baptist Church, I cannot here speak, as this letter is already much longer than I intended it to be.

With much love to yourself and cousin

May, I remain your affectionate cousin,

(MRS.) FREDERICK W. KEENE.

[THE above excellent letter from sister Keene bas been read by us with unusual interest, and we are sure it will be read with equal interest by the readers of the SIGNS. We hope she may very soon be impressed to give us an account of her coming to the Old School Baptists.-ED.]

REVELATION III. 20.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock."

At the command of Christ, the glorious One whom John saw in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, the apostle wrote a message to each of the angels of the seven churches which were in Asia. Everyone of these seven churches was a Gentile church. Therefore, the messages are especially adapted to the needs and conditions of the gospel church in this age of the world, an age in which the elect from among the Gentiles are being brought into the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. It seems to us, that these seven churches in Asia represent the seven ages of the gospel church, beginning at the end of the time of the apostles and extending down to the end of gospel dispensation, the last age being, the Laodicean period of the church's history. It is at the close of the Laodicean period that the bridegroom is to stand at the door and knock. Beginning with the message to the church at Ephesus, we have given us here a history of the church's travel throughout this day,

or age, of grace. If we had wisdom enough to tell just when the Ephesian age ended and the Smyrna age began, just when the Smyrna age ended and the next began, and so on down to the end of the Laodicean age, we could then tell the exact day and hour at which the Bridegroom shall stand at the door and knock. This can never be done by mortal man. No man, however wise, is able to take the centuries of history and divide them up into periods so as to exactly fit the prophecies of Scripture. To do so would enable such a man to tell at what moment the Bridegroom shall come, would enable him to date the appearing of Jesus to his people. That kind of proceeding would entirely displace faith and put the matter within sight. This can never be in the world, for the people of God must walk by faith, and not by sight. But while we cannot delimit the boundaries of the ages with such exactitude, we can, God helping us, glean some of the spiritual truth contained in these seven messages from Christ to his churches. To begin with, there have been but thirteen apostles, and there never will be any more than these: the twelve apostles to the gospel church, among the Jews, and the one apostle to the Gentiles. Some think that Matthias, chosen to take the place of Judas after his death, was merely a filler- in until Paul appeared, and that upon the coming of Paul into the apostleship Matthias dropped out of sight, thus making Paul the twelfth apostle. We cannot see the matter in this light. There were twelve apostles to the twelve tribes of Israel. Aside from these, there is one to the Gentiles, and Paul is that one. Now, it was not strange that immediately after the apostles' day certain men should arise claiming to be apostles, and claiming their right to legislate for the church in matters of doctrine and practice. These men were impostors, and there were those of God's people who were not deceived by any such representations on the part of these men. In the first message, which was to the church at Ephesus, Christ commends that church for detecting the false claims of the would-be apostles. *"Thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars."* There were other things about the church in that Ephesian age which were not to be commended. It had left its first love. This was regrettable, and Christ condemned this falling away from first love; but, on the other hand, the church in that age was endued with patience, it labored in the cause of truth, it did not faint nor become weary in welldoing and it could not endure them that were evil.

The message to the church of Smyrna plainly indicates that age of the church in which it suffered martyrdom for the cause of truth. *"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into*

prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I, will give thee a crown of life." The expression ***"ten days"*** is not to be taken as meaning, literally ten days of twenty-four hours each, as we count time, but it signifies a definite period fixed by the Head of the church (it may have been ten years or ten tens of years) during which the gospel church was to be persecuted and suffer martyrdom for the truth.

The message to Pergamos plainly indicates that age of the church succeeding the previous age of martyrdom, a time when the church ceased to be troubled so much by persecution from without, but a time when false doctrine reared its ugly head among the ranks of the professed followers of Jesus. ***"Thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam."***

"So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate:" It is a peculiar mark of church history that purity in doctrine coincides generally with those ages in which the church endured severe affiictions, laxity in doctrine, and the inroads of heresy coincide with those times in which the Church was at rest and more or less at ease.

The outstanding mark of the church in the Thyatira age seems to have been that the woman Jezebel was suffered to teach, that she called herself a prophetess, and that she seduced the ministry to commit fornication, and caused them to eat things sacrificed to idols. This was an age when the churches experienced great searcbings of heart by the Spirit of God, it was a time when those who could not be beguiled by this false woman and who could not receive her doctrine were commanded to hold fast that which they had already received by revelation from God, and to know nothing other than they had been taught by the Holy Spirit. This woman Jezebel does not simply mean a person or individual who was teaching at that time, but Jezebel is a generic name, signifying a diabolical false teaching abroad in the land at that time.

The especial mark of the church during the Sardis age seems to have been that she had a name to live, but was dead. This means that the church was professing to be the church of Jesus Christ, but that for many of them it was nothing more than a dead profession: a religion without a soul, faith without works. As the ages succeeded one another, the opprobrium which at one time attached to being called a ***"christian"*** wore gradually away, and it came in time to be a badge of respectability. Therefore many attached themselves to the church and professed to be christians who had never been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and who were utterly strangers to the actual life and experience of true religion. This was

the condition of things in the Sardis age. Many had the name, but were really dead. However, not so all of them. ***"Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy."***

This brings us to the Philadelphia age of the church. Like all the other ages which we have briefly and hurriedly outlined, we cannot tell what year it began nor what year it closed, but it was that age which was the cleanest and purest of all the church ages since the days of the apostles. In this period an open door into the sacred mysteries of God was set before the saints and there was such liberty of understanding and of utterance given the ministry of the Word as has not been the case since that day. It was a good time in which to have been alive, but it has passed and the Laodicean period is upon us.

The Laodicean period is the last age of the gospel church; that is, of the gospel dispensation. It is a period when the church is neither cold or hot, but is lukewarm; a time when the love of many waxes cold, when enthusiasm and zeal flag and when spiritual winter holds the church in its icy clasp. We are not a prophet, nor the son of a prophet, but it has seemed to us that the church of Jesus is passing through the Laodicean period right at this time. How long it is to last we cannot tell, but at its close the Bridegroom will stand at the door and knock. Then, and not until then, will the winter be over and gone and songs of praise and adoration ascend upward to the most high God of our salvation. ***"I sleep, but my heart waketh,"*** says the bride in the Song of Solomon. Being asleep, she is inactive, there is no spiritual exercise, life is dormant. She is not dead. Her heart is awake. Christ is her heart, and he never slumbers nor sleeps; but there are times when the saints of God sleep, times when they cannot talk nor think nor read of spiritual things, times when they have no manifestation of divine things, and no enjoyment in them. To be in such a case is to be right where the Laodicean church was. At such times only one thing can wake her up, that is the coming of the Bridegroom. At his appearing she awakens into activity. The singing of birds is come and the voice of the turtle, the speech of love, is heard in her land. She says, ***"Stir not up, nor awake my love, till he pleases."*** No power under heaven can ever stir up nor awaken spiritual animation in the church of the living God until the Bridegroom, Jesus, comes. Let him but knock at the door and instantly she is all aflame with love, wide awake, eager for his coming. Whatever business or cares she may have been engaged in, these are hastily laid aside, forgotten, all earthly cares and considerations drop away when he knocks at the door. ***"My beloved***

put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him. I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock. I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone." But, at the end of the lukewarm Laodicean church age, when he shall knock at the door, he will not withdraw himself and be gone. No, but then unto all who hear his voice and open the door, that is, unto all his elect people (for none others can hear, and none others can open) he will come in and sup with them and they with him. In other words, right here fits in the Scripture in 1 Thess. iv. 15-18: *"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord - himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we : which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."* Thus shall the Bridegroom come, and thus shall his saints when he knocketh open unto him, thus shall they sup with him, and he with them. At his appearing they shall appear with him in glory, shall see him as he is, and be like him. They shall be raised forever above the reach of all terrestrial things. There is but one really soul-satisfying experience which the saints of God have while joorneying through this world, and that, is the appearing of Jesus. At such times, *" or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Amminadib."* Such seasons, rare and splendid, are but foretastes of what is to come, of that glorious and wonderful time when we shall awake with his likeness, to be satisfied, not for a moment only, but forever and forever.

Elder H. H. Lefferts

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1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-3.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

The power and wisdom of God is on my mind as a text, and hopefully His power is working in me as I attempt to write a few words to His praise, honor and glory, and for the comfort and edification of His saints.

There are gods many and lords many (Cor. 8:5), but the God I believe in and have a hope in, if not deceived, is the God of heaven and earth, the true and living God, the God who created all things and absolutely controls all things --- times, events, people, etc. He has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.

(Isa.46:10). And in the ninth verse He said, ***"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me."*** When God sent Moses to Egypt to deliver the Israelites from bondage, Moses wanted to know how to declare who He was to them; and God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. (Ex. 3:14). Brethren, this is the God that I desire to declare unto you today.

The world does not know this God: ***"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."*** And Christ crucified is what is preached. Who believes the preaching of Christ crucified? Unto the Jews it is a stumbling block and—unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, it is the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Who are the called? ***"For whom he did foreknow, he did also predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also Justified: and whom he justified them he also glorified."*** From where were they called ? From their dead alienated state and from nature's total darkness. ***"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sin."*** Jesus calls them and they always hear and live. Jesus said, ***"The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live."*** Jesus gave us several examples of his mighty power to raise the dead while he was on the earth. ***"Not only will he raise them up when he comes again without sin unto salvation, but he also raises them up and gives them new life in this time world. God gave him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father gave him. And this is eternal life, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."*** (St. John 17:2-3). If we know God and His Son we must first

be given a new life or be born again, and then have a revelation from above. ***"All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him."*** (Matt. 11:27). The world does not believe this, for they teach that if any man will only open his heart to Christ that Christ will come in and save him; that they have power to accept or reject an offering of salvation. Even if it was possible for man to open his own heart to God it would be a work; and salvation is not of work but of grace. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny Him. They cannot believe he has finished the work his Father sent him to do, and they believe they must do something to help him. To the worldly the Bible is only a recorded history of a man - child being born into this world, growing up here, performing a few miracles, and then being slain on the cross. This record is true, but if we do not understand, at least in part, the spiritual meaning of these things, then we have not been taught of the Father and we have nothing to base a hope upon.

When Jesus called Lazarus forth from the grave, and commanded he be released, Lazarus was bound in grave clothes and his face was bound with a napkin. The grave clothes represent, at least to me, the law that he was under till the coming of Christ; and the napkin represents the vail over his eyes that kept him from seeing the glory that was to come. As I see it, Lazarus is a figure of the children of grace. They are kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which is to be revealed at the coming of Christ to them as individuals. Therefore the law is our schoolmaster until that time; but after we receive the faith of Jesus Christ, we are no longer under the law or schoolmaster for we die unto sin. ***"For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me and by it slew me. Christ died unto sin once: but in that he liveth he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."*** I believe the death and resurrection of Lazarus is a type or figure of this death and new life. I repeat ***"The time is coming, and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live."***

What a glorious thing it is to be given a hope that we are among those who have heard the voice of Christ.

Christ also opened the eyes of the blind, Bartimaeus being among those; and though this was a natural blindness, at least in part we must see the spiritual significance for it to mean anything to us. We are not told when he received faith to believe in Christ but Jesus said unto him Go thy way; thy faith hath made

thee whole: and he received his sight and followed Jesus in the way. Because of his faith no one was able to keep Bartimaeus from crying unto the Lord and so it is with every child of grace. Our cries are heard and in the appointed time they are answered ; for our eyes are opened to see Jesus Christ and what he has done for us; and we are given a hope that we are among those chosen in him before the foundation of the world: and as sure as we receive that hope we follow Jesus in the way. The followers of Christ are called sheep; and Jesus said ***"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."***

Brethren this is a promise with holy power: this is power that the finite, natural mind of man cannot understand; but by God given faith we believe it.

There are those who contend that God has no power over Satan and that there is a constant struggle between them. In the book of Job, however, we find, ***"His hand hath formed the crooked serpent."*** Does not God have power over all that he created? Could He not destroy him as easily as he created him? Paul tells us in Romans 13:1, ***"Let every soul be subject to the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."*** In Job1:12 and 2:6 we find that God gave Satan power to afflict Job, but limited what Satan could do. Satan could not even touch Job until that time, for God had put a hedge about him. God also puts a hedge about his saints so that Satan cannot do more to them than it pleases God. There were many devils in the poor Gadarene, but Jesus displayed his mighty power by casting them out. Not only did they obey his command, but they had to ask for permission to enter the swine. We know that we have no power against the devils that besiege us from time to time, for they are much more powerful than us; but Jesus drives them out and puts us in our right mind. Then he commands us to go and shew our friends how great things God has done for us. How sweet and peaceful the feeling when we are enabled to do this!

Leprosy is a disease of the body and always breaks out from within, and in the scriptures it is portrayed as sin. Ten lepers met Jesus when he entered a certain village, and they cried unto him for mercy. Jesus sent them away to the priests, and as they went they were cleansed of the leprosy. Only one of them turned back and fell upon his face and glorified God and gave Him thanks. We know that God shows mercy unto all of His creatures and heals them of their natural afflictions as it pleases Him, but we are not told what became of the nine that did not return to praise God: but the one that re-

turned had been given faith to believe, and Jesus said unto him, *"Thy* faith hath made thee whole." This indicates to me that not only was he cleansed of leprosy, but also of sin. What a lovely picture this is of the children of grace!

Brethren, though we have been made to see the wonderful work of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, there are many times that we are very doubtful and have great fear. We are not alone. John, who had seen the Lord in person and had seen the Spirit descending from heaven upon him like a dove after that God had told him that such a thing would come to pass, also had doubts while in prison, and he sent his disciples to ask, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed , and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. Brethren, this shows that we must be shown again and again these wonderful things , lest we forget. When Jesus said the poor have the gospel preached unto them he was not refering to the ones who have little or nothing of this world's riches or goods, but to those who are poor in spirit, for; blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Jesus preached to the poor while here on earth, and now he calls, qualifies and sends forth his ministers to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to them through the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. What beauty, love and power is in this gracious promise! Brethren, there is no end of this text. Remember this poor sinner when at the throne of grace, and may the grace and power of God rest upon you.

Clifford Wilbanks

MALACHI 3:6

"For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

The first verse in this book Malachi, speaks of the burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi the prophet. Surely the ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS word of the Lord has been, is today and will always be burdensome to the natural man. Rather than comfort, it condemns all of his ungodly deeds and thoughts.

All Israel we believe, are spoken to in this passage, but let us never forget, that all that are of Israel, are not Israel, although He has a people

in every nation, people, kindred and tongue. God' s promise of being with us, if His, all the way even to the end of the world, does not pertain to the non-elect, more so than He is everywhere present and no where absent. To His people He manifests His presence from time to time so that they feel His nearness that comforts and edifies.

This unchangeable grace of God is shown to all men in a natural way, or no one would survive, but saving grace is given only to His people, those chosen in Christ before the world began. Then we are made to hold to the above promise that states , "I AM The Lord". I think the "I AM", might well be noticed as this very declaration that was given Moses, to tell the people who had sent him . *" Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you."* This God that speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast, is the same today, yesterday and forever, for the I AM indicates an always present God, no past, no future, as with us in nature. Heb. 13:8, *"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever."*

The people of God can rejoice in every dispensation of time, that they worship a God that changes not. What if He did change for any reason, could you be comforted that He once loved His people, could you be reconciled that He chose a people, would there be joy in His promises? All of the worship of Him must, and let us stress must, rest in the belief that He changes not. Therefore the hope of His people is grounded, not in the fact whether He'll change, or not, but have they from before time, been chosen in Him.

Tim. 1:9, *"who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."* From before the world was until the Apostle Paul wrote these precious things was a long time, but not long enough for any change in God, neither is there any change yet, or will be till time is no more.

Already saved and called His people before the world was. Didn't wait to see their works, never waited for any effort on their part, could not ask their wishes or if they would accept Christ, as we hear so much of today. None but God was here.

Predetermined He would save His people, would call with a holy calling, not according to their works, but according to His own purpose and grace, causing them to walk in good works that He before ordained they would walk in them.

Can we not see then, if all of God's works are according to His own purpose we could never understand any of them or alter any for all were fixed before the world was or He is changeable.

Then does any work large or small, fit into the blessings God be-

stows on His people? If so, no blessing is certain until the creature acts. Does God wait for a person to act? If so He would have to change if the creature does. He determines the walk of all or the walk of none. He is no half way God nor can He be.

"For I am the Lord I change not," the blessings along with all other things pertaining to God must be certain.

"Therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed God will never change; but men will always change; daily hourly, minutely, because they are men" There would be no comfort to me if there was a chance of Him failing to accomplishing just one of His promises.

My destiny would have long ago changed if my actions changed the purpose of God. How do you feel?

My heart tells me I because He changes not and cannot because He is God, that all is well with His Kingdom.

Therefore because He controls all things the destiny of His people is secure as well as the destiny of the non elect is certain. As sure as there will be night and day these precious promises are true and His children shall see God for He changes not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

In hope of that City,
Elder J. R. Williams

THE OBJECT OF OUR PAPER

Our brethren of the Old School of Christ will bear in mind that this humble sheet is devoted to the Baptist cause, as we believe the Baptist cause to be the cause of God and that its columns are designed to be used as a medium for the circulation of bible doctrine and general information.

The dear people of God who remain steadfast and unshaken in the apostles' doctrine are at this day greatly scattered through the country, and in many instances where one or more of them are found they are supposed to be the only ones remaining of the same faith and order. Indeed, they are often themselves *driven to the conclusion of Elijah: "They have digged down thine altars and killed thy prophets, and I am left alone, and they seek my life."* In their scattered situation it affords them peculiar pleasure to hear from one another. *"As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country."-Prov. xxv. 25.*

It is certainly good news to the scattered pilgrims to hear of the numbers in different parts of the land who still adhere to the doctrine and practice of the primitive church. In days of old, "they that feared the Lord spake often one to another;" and the exhortation of the apostle is, that we "ex hort one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching."

Elder G. Beebe

"Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."- EPHESIANS i. I I.

By these words the apostle brings before our eyes God's omnipotent power as carrying into effectual performance the counsel of his own will towards the objects of his distinguishing favour. An especial blessing is couched in this. Next to a believing view of the purposes of God's grace, and a sweet persuasion of our interest in them, nothing is more strengthening and encouraging than a realising apprehension of the power of God to carry them into full execution. Feeling, as we do, our own miserable helplessness, sinking under the pressure of our daily weakness, mourning over continual failures, and grieving on account of perpetual backslidings, encompassed by foes, and distressed by fears, how strengthening it is to our faith, thus tried to the utmost, to believe that he who has purposed has power to perform. This persuasion of the almighty power of God was the support and strength of Abraham's faith, which bore him up in the face of seeming impossibilities, and whereby he gave glory to God (Rom. iv. 18-21). When, then, as walking in the steps of the faith of Abraham, we can look up believingly to the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, as we behold sovereign grace in his heart, and infinite wisdom in his mind, so we see almighty strength in his arm, and thus become sweetly persuaded that all which his loving heart feels, his infinite wisdom directs, and his omnipotent power can execute.

Elder J. C. Philpot

"The king's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework." - Psalm xlv. 13, 14.

THIS is a beautiful description of the bridal garments of the Church as the queen. The gold was to be wrought into her clothing, the raiment to be of needlework, intimating that her robe of justifying righteousness was wrought, as it were, as in needlework, stitch by stitch; yet that every thread was embroidered with gold. Here we have the thread of the humanity in union with the gold of Deity, and yet each in such close union that the thread is but one. In gold thread the beauty, the value is in the gold; yet how close the union. Gold by itself could not be made into embroidery, So Deity cannot suffer, bleed, or die; but humanity can in union with it. Thus, as our blessed Lord went through the whole work which the Father gave him to do, his Deity, being in union with his obeying, suffering humanity, stamped each successive movement, as he went through it, with all the value and va-

lidity of Godhead. It is this union of Deity with humanity which made the work of redeeming love so unspeakably glorious, and so meritoriously efficacious, As Hart says:

" Almighty God sighed human breath."

It is indeed a mystery; but *"great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh."* O glorious mystery !

" The highest heavens are short of this;
'Tis deeper than the vast abyss;
'Tis more than thought can e'er conceive,
Or hope expect, or faith believe,"

Elder J. C. Philpot

EPHESIANS 1: 2-4.

Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ., who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

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1 CORINTHIANS 12:7-9.

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

For to one is give by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit.

To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit.

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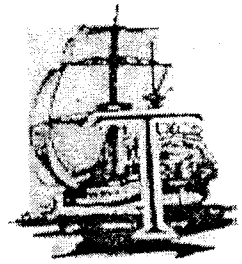

EN VOYAGE

There's a ship sailing on to a harbor,
To a haven of comfort and rest;
It's a ship of God's fashion and making,
And its voyage by Him will be blest.
It departed with silence and beauty,
With the Master, Himself, in Command;
As with dignity truly majestic
It sailed out of sight of all land.

There will always be clear skies above it;
There will always be calmness below;
There will never be storms to harass it,
For the Master is on it, you know.
And His wisdom will carry it safely
To the port of His infinite peace.
Where the light of His love will protect it
With a blessing that never will cease.

You have watched it sail onward and outward,
With a tear of regret in your eye. For a loved one was sailing upon it.
And there's grief when you're saying goodbye.
But your tears would be tears of rejoicing.
And your heart would be happy and free,
If you could look for only a moment
On that ship that is sailing to sea.

For the one you have loved is at leisure,
With no worry or trouble or care;
There's contentment beyond understanding,
In the way God's passengers fare.
And you'd know from your own observation
That the sailing was joyful-not grim,
For it means a new life and new living,
And a sweet, closer contact with Him.

Oh, the solace there is in the knowledge.
Life is life and it always will be,
And it's simply a change of direction
When we sail on His ship out to sea.

And the tears that we shed for our loved ones
Are in truth shed for us left behind.
For it hurts to give up to the Master.
Tho we know He is gentle and kind.

So believe in His great and good wisdom,
Trust in Him, as you patiently wait;
On His ship God is ever the pilot,
And the one you have loved is the mate.

Unknown Author
Sent in by Phil Pittman

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EDITORIAL

"Study to shew thy self approved unto God, a workman who needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Timothy 2:15.

Elder J.B. Farmer

Here is the commandment of God given to the inspired apostle and then to the true minister of the gospel, Timothy. It Elder J. B. Farmer was also left on record for His people from that day even down to this day. It is a great mystery how the God of heaven and earth revealed His truth

to the apostle and caused it to be received, believed and obeyed by himself and by Timothy and, we hope, ourselves. It is also a great mystery how any of us know anything of the kingdom of God. ***"The things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God." "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*** Therefore, if anyone knows anything of this mystery, it must be revealed to him by the Spirit.

Now, the Spirit says, ***"study"***, meaning not to be lax or presumptuous in nature, but to be diligent by the grace of God, ***"to shew thyself approved unto God"***, not to show yourself approved unto men, but to show yourself, by His mercy, approved unto God, ***"a workman who needeth not to be ashamed"***, not as one who works shamefully as a hireling for a wage, but one who labors honorably in the truth, by grace, desiring all to be to the glory of God and to the comfort of His people, ***"rightly dividing"***, not twisting for some kind of cover for wickedness or advantage, but rather by revelation, giving the correct spiritual sense of, ***"the word of truth"***, the holy inspired scriptures of truth given by God to His little ones for their instruction and comfort.

How can we know if, when preaching, we are rightly dividing the word of truth? Or, how can anyone, when reading the scriptures with a desire for understanding be sure he is rightly dividing them? Or how can one, when hearing or reading the word being divided by another, be sure that it is being rightly divided? This is another great mystery and only God is able to make it plain. He has hidden these things from the wise and prudent and has revealed them unto babes. He has given us assurance that He has a people in this world who have been given life in Him by the Spirit and who have had His spiritual law written in their hearts and have had it put in their minds. His Spirit and His holy law is in them. They have been given the mind of Christ by which they judge all things. It is no wonder He said, ***"examine yourselves whether you be in the faith"***, and ***"try the spirits whether they be of God."*** The children of God are made to examine everything they think, say, hear, read, and do. They are constantly standing before the judgment seat of Christ, receiving the things done in the body, whether they be good or evil.

So, in a sense, the little ones are constantly looking to God as little children, asking Him to render judgment about every matter which comes before or in them. They seek not the praise of this world but rather the approval of almighty God. They desire to know the truth even if it is against them. Job said, ***"though He slay me, yet will I***

trust Him." "They hear the words, "lean not to thine own understanding, but in all thy ways acknowledge Him and He will direct thy paths". When they come to a fork in the road of life and know not which way to take, they stop and ask for guidance of the One who knows all and cannot make a mistake. Then, at His direction, they step out in faith with the assurance that God has spoken and that He will go with them and keep them in the way, even when it is contrary to nature. So is it true when the children of God divide the word of truth or hear or read it as it is being divided.

When the true ministers of God are called to rightly divide the word of truth, they are not left to the strength of the flesh to perform this. The holy apostle said, *"how to perform that which is good, I find not,"* and also, *"He that has begun a good work in you shall perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ."* So then, the ministers of God and all the children of God find themselves to be inadequate for the task. They know not how to give the correct sense of it. But God is merciful and gives them to hear a small voice saying, *"if any man lack wisdom, let him ask God who giveth all men liberally and upbraideth not."* In the very hour or moment of need, the God of all power and of compassion appears and supplies all our needs. Therefore, the rightly dividing of the word of truth is the work of God, not the work of men. If we were left to ourselves, we would immediately err and follow nature. And we do err from time to time as our God teaches us what we are by nature. But if we be the people of God, we are not allowed to altogether follow nature but rather, we are corrected and kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. When the word of truth is rightly divided, it perfectly fits the spiritual mind and heart and renders all praise, honor and glory unto Him unto whom it is due. When it is this way, we have no doubt that it is the true doctrine of God and the true gospel of the grace of God which is given in power of the Holy Spirit.

This is written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer
12-4-2000

PSALMS 65: 10-12.

Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: thou settlest the furrows thereof: thou makest it soft with showers: thou blessest the springing thereof.

Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness.

They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness: and the little hills rejoice on every side.

VOICES OF THE PAST

2 TIMOTHY 1: 9, 10.

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

No subject has ever so much engrossed the attention of men as that of salvation; and if we had not some acquaintance with the blindness and ignorance of the carnal mind, we could not but wonder at the variety of, and conflicting sentiments of men in relation to it. But it must be admitted that God is of one mind, and none can turn him, and that his laws are immutably the same, and that the transgression of it in all ages is sin, and it condemns every transgressor of it, consequently there can be but one way of salvation from it. It is admitted, we believe, by all who admit the truth of revelation, that the way of life and salvation is taught in the Bibte. But different men construe the same Scriptures in different ways. But the portion before us is so plain and intelligible, and so perfectly free from all ambiguity, that we cannot conceive how common candor can give it but one and the same construction. In this epistle Paul desires Timothy to stir up the gift of God which was in him, and which was communicated to him for the purpose of comforting and instructing the saints in this only way of life and salvation. Paul said to him, ***"God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power , and of love, and a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, nor of me his prisoner; but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, according to the power of God; who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling."*** If we attempt to contemplate salvation in its true character, we must go back in our contemplations to the revelation which the eternal Jehovah has made of himself. And as nothing can have an existence without an origin, so must salvation have an origin, and that origin is God himself. And as we know nothing of him, only as he is pleased to reveal himself to us, may it be his pleasure to communicate that knowledge and wisdom unto us, that we may speak as becometh sound doctrine which cannot be gainsayed. If God is infinite in wisdom, and if salvation be his work, he must have known from eternity the whole arrangement, for it was his work, and so is the consummation of all the plan. We are

told that all the works of God were known unto him from the foundation of the world. And in relation to salvation, we are informed that the whole arrangement was made before any human being who would need salvation was formed. Jesus Christ was set up as the Savior before the dust of the earth, from which man was formed, was spoken into existence. Said Christ, in speaking under one of his titles, (viz, wisdom,) *"I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." "Rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men."* This language carries our minds back to the utmost stretch of human comprehension. It throws our contemplations into the boundless ocean of eternity, and that ocean we can neither fathom nor explore. But as far back as our comprehensions can go, so far back we can trace the salvation of God; and we must content ourselves to roam within that scope which God has been pleased to allot to us. If we inquire for what purpose Christ was set up, we are met with the answer, the Head, Mediator and Savior of the church. God gave him for a covenant of the people, a light to the Gentiles, and his salvation to the ends of the earth. Hence we read of the church being chosen in him before the foundation of the world. The elect of God, or those who were chosen in Christ, are those of whom Jesus said, *"And my delights were with the sons of men."* This truth is presented also by David, in that passage in which it was said by the Savior, *"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there were none of them."*- Psalm cxxxix. 15,16. Whenever we approach the subject of salvation we enter upon a theme as high as heaven, and as boundless as Deity itself. And the ever astonishing and wondrous plan of salvation which was established in eternity, and is fully developed and consummated in time, is what Paul in this epistle to Timothy is discoursing upon. But salvation cannot benefit any but the lost. None can be condemned by the law but those who have transgressed it, and none can be delivered from its curse but those who are under it. Hence Jesus came not to save the righteous in their righteousness, but he came to save his people from their sins. In the fullness of time, and after the creation of the world, God made man, and by transgression he fell, and in him all his posterity fell also, and they are all born into the world, yea, they are conceived in that depravity which Adam possessed after the fall. And let us here understand what it is that brings us into a state of condemnation. Some people

tell us that sinners are damned because they do not close in with overtures of mercy; because they do not believe the gospel, and improve the means of grace which God has spread before them. But there is not one word in all the Bible which will countenance this sentiment, but all the testimony of the sacred volume is in contradiction to it. Let us begin with the beginning of this subject, and endeavor to take our start in the channel of truth. What was it which caused the fall of Adam? Was it in consequence of his doing something which God had not commanded him to do? Certainly not, but it was his doing what God had forbidden him to do. It was what he had done which brought the curse. And so it is with all condemned sinners. They are not condemned for what they have not done, but it is for what they have done. They are condemned for sin, and sin is a transgression of the law. And this is the case also in law among men. No man was justly condemned by the law of his country because he had done nothing, but because he had committed some act which was a violation of the law of the land. And the sentiment called gospel condemnation, is entirely without foundation in truth, and in the Bible. But as all admit, Adam transgressed; he did that which God forbade his doing. And as his posterity were then all in him, and he had fallen under the curse, as he was, so are they all by nature, and are brought into their natural existence the degenerate plants of a strange vine. ***"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."*** Sin is the natural element of all the posterity of Adam, for they have descended from him since his fall, and they have his fallen nature, and like him are sinful. They inherit his carnal mind, and his carnal mind is enmity against God. Hence the fallen state of man is a lost state, for by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, consequently all the elect of God are by nature under the curse and condemnation of the law, and are without hope in the world. ***"Without holiness and perfect righteousness, none can stand before God."*** All mankind are condemned, and the wrath of God abideth on them. Alas, how deplorable the condition of man. The earth is shrouded in the sable mantle of gloom, and man is cast out of Eden's bliss, and is groaning under God's awful curse. Was God taken by surprise through the development of this sad state of things? Is he discomfited and disappointed in his purpose in consequence of something having occurred which was unknown to him before the creation? By no means. It is true that sin entered into the world; misery and death are here, but let all heaven rejoice, and earth be glad; let the mountains leap for joy, and the inhabitants of the rock

sing, a ransom is found. Before man was formed, or sin had entered the world, the God of wisdom and salvation had given his elect, grace in Christ, that where sin abounded, grace should much more abound. Jesus was set up before man was formed, to save him under the awful state of sin into which God was pleased to suffer him to fall, and from that dreadful death consequent upon it. Christ the Savior is declared, and of him it was said, He shall bruise the serpent's head. The serpent could only bruise the heel of the church, but Jesus shall bruise his head. The covenant engagements of Father and Son in the salvation of the family of God now begin to be developed. The great and eternal plan of salvation begins to be opened, and by manifestations, types and shadows, Jesus Christ is presented to the people.

The offering of the lamb by Abel, pointed to that salvation and Savior which were provided before the birth of time. Salvation was ratified in the eternal counsel, and now God begins to make that salvation known to the heirs of it. God saved his people with an everlasting salvation; but it requires the entrance of sin into the world, and the fall of God's children in it, with rolling time, and transpiring events, to reveal that God, to man, who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, and to fully manifest and apply this salvation unto them. The types and shadows all pointed to this, and prophets and righteous men desired to see the Savior. In the fullness of time, a multitude of the heavenly host was heard to announce his advent into the world. And as without perfect righteousness none can have peace with God, Christ himself is the peace of all the church. God has made him to be unto them wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. This is the salvation which is presented in the text. ***"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling."*** We have touched upon salvation as an act of God before man was formed, and now pass to take some notice of it, in the personal manifestation of it to, and the volition of it in, the heirs of glory. And the first thing in this branch of salvation is the calling already described in the text. But as there are various opinions upon the subject, it may be well for us to examine the Scriptures of truth, and hear what they say about it. Many suppose that the preaching of the gospel constitutes this call. That sinners, who are dead in trespasses and sins, and who sit under a preached gospel, receive this call, and that the volition of their will turns the scale whether they are benefited by it or not, or decides the event whether the call will be effectual or not. Now this position is not true, and finds no support in the Bible, for no man but he who has been regenerated or quickened by the Spirit of God, can hear the gospel. The sinner who is dead in tres-

passes and sins, possesses (spiritually) no living or spiritual capabilities. ***"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*** The preaching of the cross is, to them that perish, foolishness. Why is it foolishness to them? Because they possess no spiritual life which enables them to discover the Spirit and glory of it. The wisdom of this world can never attain to it, for God has hidden these things from the wise and prudent. The apostle, in his epistle to the Corinthians, has put this subject in a clear and decisive light, ***"But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and wisdom of God."*** Here the most sluggish mind must discover that the same preaching had a different effect upon different characters. To one it is a stumbling-block, to another folly, and to the third it is Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. What makes the difference, for certainly the message is delivered irrespectively to them all, so far as the act of preaching is concerned? The different effects are caused by that grace and Spirit which has made the hearers to differ. The seed sown on the rock, where there is no earth, will remain inactive, while that which is sown in good ground will germinate and bring forth fruit. Those to whom the gospel was Christ the power of God, and wisdom of God, had already been called with an holy calling, while those to whom the same sermon was a stumbling-block, and folly, had not been called. If this be not true, then the language of Paul to the Corinthians is contradictory in itself, and has no meaning in it at all, and is altogether abortive. Who will dare charge the Spirit of inspiration with this? This holy calling is a work beyond the power and control of man, and is one which God has never committed to the hands of man. Christ said, ***"He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."*** Yet he preached to those self-righteous pharisees, whom he came not to call, and on one occasion at least, those of them who heard him preach a sermon on sovereign grace, were all filled with wrath. If the preaching of any being could constitute this an holy calling, we should certainly suppose that the preaching of the Lord of glory would effect it, but this holy calling is the work of almighty power. ***"It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing."*** Said Jesus, ***"The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live."*** The elect of God by nature are dead in trespasses and sins, and must be quickened; but preaching cannot quicken them. How then are they to be quick-

ened? We will turn to Jesus Christ, for an answer: *"For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so [by the same almighty power, and in the twinkling of an eye] the Son quickeneth whom he will."* This is what we understand by an holy calling, a heavenly calling, or as men sometimes denominate it, an effectual calling. It is an holy calling because it calls them to holiness; they are called to the Holy God through Christ, and the life communicated in it is a holy life. It is the life of Christ communicated to them. The reason why they are called is, they are the saved of the Lord, and they are now called into the enjoyment of that salvation. *"Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling."* Salvation precedes the calling, and the calling brings the heirs of salvation to Christ, and they are put into the enjoyed possession of an existing, finished and eternal salvation. *"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints."* This calling is not to make them the heirs of salvation, but it calls those who are already heirs, into a knowledge of their heirship, and the enjoyment of their inheritance.

Many contend that something must be done by the sinner; some preparatory steps are to be taken by him; some righteous acts are to be performed by him, or the Lord will never save him. If he be an heir of glory, he is already saved, and in his unregenerate state, he possesses neither the power nor the will to perform any righteous act, for his mind is a carnal mind, and is enmity against God. But let us hear what the text says: *"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us: [when we began to be religiously inclined, and to seek the Lord, and to get religion? Nay, Verily, No such language ever stained the pages of holy writ, or divided the crown of Jesus]. But, according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."* This purpose is an eternal one, and this grace was given to all the heirs of glory in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, when they were chosen in him, and blessed in him with all spiritual blessings, and which were to flow to them in time; and this holy calling is one of these blessings, and it reaches them in consequence thereof. These things are embraced in the expressions, purpose and grace. If we ever had grace given to us at all it was before the world began for there is no succesion of grants from God. What christians receive from day to day, is the manifestation of the blessings of an original grant, or covenant. It was not in consequence of any

goodness which the Lord foresaw in any of the children of men, that he established the economy of salvation, but it was according to his purpose and grace from eternity. His own sovereign will decreed it, and death and hell cannot disturb it. There is a fullness in it, and a certainty of its being all accomplished. That God, who has numbered the very hairs of our heads, has not forgotten one blessing which will be for our good, and he who suffers not a sparrow to fall to the ground without his notice or permission, has not failed so to secure these blessings, that the devil shall never be able to rob us of one of them. What can be more comforting to the tempest-tossed pilgrims than a knowledge of this heavenly truth? What submission and patience it produces in us while being rolled and tossed hither and thither, to know that the Lord rules and reigns, and guides and governs all our affairs, and that all things work together for our good, and that they flow unto us under the controlling hand of God. This is grace, not to be thought of but with tears of joy, not to be mentioned but with shouts of pralse.

In inseparable connection with the foregoing, is the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. What is this appearing for? Is it to effect some new arrangement, or to establish some new purpose, to render man savable, and leave the event at the volition of the will of man? Now this question is answered by inspiration, and the answer will outride and shine amidst all the opposition and rage of men and devils in earth or hell. Jesus came to make manifest that salvation, purpose and grace, which were given the heirs of glory in himself before the world began. He came to make manifest and apply the salvation of God to his children, ***"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ."*** The appearance of Jesus Christ was in accordance with this salvation, purpose and grace, and it presents a theme of the most devout contemplation. In this appearing it is made known to the church of the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. What is his appearing? If we visit the manger, we will find a babe wrapped in swaddling bands, and there, in the appearance of a helpless babe, we see the Conqueror of death and hell. We see him in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead. But we here behold him, who in his mediatorial character is meek and lowly in heart, just entering into his humiliation. He takes not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, and unto us is born this day a Savior, which is Christ the Lord, and his name shall

be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. Here is fulfilled that prophetic strain of Isaiah: *"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."* Jesus is made under the law to redeem them that were under the law. He delivered them from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them, as it is written, *"Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree."* His people being entirely destitute of righteousness which would be acceptable to God, they being ignorant, unholy, and condemned, Christ was of God made unto them wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Daniel had foretold that the Redeemer should make an end of sin, bring in everlasting righteousness, and seal up the vision and prophecy. Some people talk about Christ's working out the righteousness of the saints. The Spirit of inspiration has said, *"This is the name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."* Our righteousness is Christ's righteousness, for he is our righteousness, and so far from his coming into the world to work it out, he came to bring it in. And as Daniel has said, he shall make an end of sin; prophetic annunciation! He has put away sin (from the church) by the sacrifice of himself. His people were under the law and he must go where they are, and as they are under the condemnation of it, and under the sentence of death, he must die to redeem them therefrom. *"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."* If we follow him to Calvary we will there hear him cry, *"It is finished!"* It is done! He bowed his head and died, and through his death the law is forever silenced, and powerless over the church, and through his resurrection from the dead the church is everlastingly justified. *"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."* He was the plagues of death, and the destruction of the grave. This is the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who hath swallowed up death. This is the testimony which Isaiah bore of him, *"And he shall swallow up death in victory."* He did not swallow it up in merely falling, but in victory; in his glorious and triumphant resurrection from the dead. He has abolished death in bowing to its requirements, or in laying down his life, and then taking it again. He triumphed over it. In that he died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God; death has no more dominion over him. But why has death no more dominion over him? He has abolished it, triumphed over it, taken

away its sting, and disarmed it of its power. At his command the massive bars retreat, and the grave gives way before him. Where was the life of the church when Jesus laid down his life? Is the life of the church in Christ? The apostle has told us that Christ is the life of every believer in him. In this light, we can easily comprehend him when he speaks of Christ's dying unto sin once, but now living unto God, and then turns his discourse to the saints, saying, ***"Also likewise reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ."*** And again, ***"If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him."*** The bodies of the saints must die, but in Christ they triumph over death, and are enabled to sing, ***"Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"*** Jesus had offered himself without spot to God, and by that one offering hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. He was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification. He laid down his life a voluntary sacrifice, and took it again, and through his resurrection from the dead, life and immortality are brought to light through the gospel. The church lives in Christ's life, and her immortality is in his immortality, and because he lives she lives also, and because he reigns she reigns with him. Her all and in all, is in him, and where he is there she is also. She is the heir of God, and joint-heir with Jesus Christ in all things, and if she suffers with him, she will be glorified with him, for all things are hers, and she is Christ's, and Christ is God's. And if we seek the living among the dead we cannot find him, for there is no life in the law, nor in a dead savior, but the life is in him who was dead, but is alive for evermore; lives at the right hand of God, where he maketh intercession for the saints, according to the will of God, and heaven and earth are appealed to in vain, to lay a single charge to God's elect, for God has justified them, and who then can condemn them? Christ has died, yea, rather, is risen from the dead, and he was delivered up for their offenses, and raised again for their justification.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.,
Sept. 1, 1854.

"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil."- HEBREWS vi. 19.

ANCHORS, you know, are made of different sizes. You may walk in the Queen's Dockyard, and there you may see anchors for a boat, and anchors for a three-decker. Yet all anchors are made in the same way, and are designed for the same purpose; and the little an-

chor that holds the boat is as useful and as much an anchor as that which holds the three-decker. So spiritually. There is hope in the heart of the babe. But the hope in the heart of a babe is but as the anchor of a boat ; yet it holds that babe as firmly as the anchor holds the boat to which it is moored. But as the Lord increases hope, he increases the size of the anchor; and as the vessel and its anchor always bear a proportion to each other, so when he enlarges the size of the anchor he increases the size of the ship. Nay more, as he increases the size of the ship, he increases its burden, for these two are proportionate. Thus hope takes a more vigorous hold within the veil; it enters more deeply into the presence of God; it takes a firmer grasp of covenant engagements, electing love, the immutability of God's purposes, and the unchangeable nature of the great eternal I AM. Have you not felt at times your hope sweetly enlarged, so that it almost attained to the *" full assurance of hope?"* Scarcely a cloud remained between you and God ; and you believed you should ride triumphantly into the haven of bliss and peace; and having these blessed sensations in your heart, you could part with life itself at that moment to fall into the embrace of your God.

Elder J. C. Philpot

"Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures."- LUKE xxiv. 45.

BLESSED opening, when He that hath the key of David puts in his hand by the hole of the door, and opens our heart to receive his own word. Then when we go to the Word of Truth, after it has come to us, our fingers drop with sweet-smelling myrrh upon the handles of the lock. It is said that ***"the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live."*** O, to hear the voice of the Son of God in our hearts. Surely it shall make our dead hearts, cold frames, withering hopes, drooping love, dying faith, languishing prayers, and fainting minds live; yea, revive as the corn and grow as the vine. What is all religion without a divine beginning, middle, and end, commencing, carried on, and accomplished with a heavenly power, supernatural life, and spiritual unction? Well may we be ashamed and sick of, and sorry for all our thoughts, words, and works, all our knowledge and profession that have not stood, or do not stand, in the power, teaching, and wisdom of God. All our talk has been but vain babbling, our prayers lip-service, our preaching wind and vanity, our profession hypocrisy, our knowledge the worst kind of ignorance, and all our religion carnal-

ity or delusion, if they have not been divinely communicated. Sir Isaac Newton, the wisest philosopher, is said to have remarked to one who congratulated him on his knowledge, ***"I have been like a little child on the sea-shore taking up a little water in a shell when the vast ocean of truth lay undiscovered before me."*** Much more may a spiritual man feel how little, how nothing he knows of the unsearchable riches of Christ, and the boundless stores of wisdom hid in them.

Elder J.C. Philpot

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Elder R. H. Campbell

I have read the above scripture many times, and each time I have wondered just what it meant. I know what it says, but what is the real every day meaning of it. I read it the other day, as I had many times in the past and was thinking about what it could actually mean, and as I did this thought came to mind; faith is the manifestation of the Spirit of God in the lives of his children. The Spirit is manifested in their lives as they are led and directed to fulfill the purposes that he has for them here in this time world, and they are unaware of its presence because it comes sovereignly and takes up its abode within them and they walk in a different path. The spirit is what produces the faith that his children have and faith is what motivates them to believe, enables them to understand the things of the Spirit and to do all of the other things that they do in the name of Christ and for his sake, whether under the law dispensation, or in the gospel day.

The Spirit was manifested in the lives of the Israelites, under the law, and directed them all the days of their life, but not in the same manner that it does the saints, in the gospel day. Under the law they were given priests to be a go between, God and the people; now Christ is the high priest and just before his death he told the disciples that he would send the Spirit which indwells man and leads him in ways that are pleasing unto God, but, it is by faith in either case. Under the law God gave them the gift of faith which caused them to follow those whom he had sent to lead them, but their faith was in God, not in the law, because they feared God. As when he spoke to them from the mount and they saw the fire and smoke and exceedingly feared the fire and smoke and the loud sounds and asked God to speak to Moses and let Moses speak to them as regarding the oracles of the law. They per-

formed the miracles and manifested their faith even as the apostles did before the day of Pentecost; by God giving them a special dispensation of power as he did when he sent them out to preach, but the Spirit did not indwell them until the day of Pentecost when they responded and fulfilled the prophecy of Joel as he spoke concerning this day.

Faith is what leads the saints in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake, it is that which enables them to persevere in the times of adversity, that which strengthens them in times of weakness and causes them to stand against the distressing wiles of the devil: whether it be lions, fiery furnaces, pharaohs or any of the other natural fears and weaknesses of the flesh when it is faced with the temptations that confront them in this world of sin. This world is Satan's domain, in which he wields havoc with the saints, in his war against God and all that is holy and good, but he does not destroy one of these little ones, with all of his fury. Faith is the armour which God provides for the chosen generation in their war against principalities and powers of this earth, and against the spiritual wickedness in high places. This armour can withstand the strongest onslaught of Satan because even he is under the dominion of God, and in all of his raging is but fulfilling the will of God, as are all of the other forces in existence.

Since faith is the manifestation of the Spirit in the saints, and they are the chosen generation, Satan is powerless to do anything but disturb, harass and afflict them. He can never destroy a single one of the saints because greater is the Spirit that is within them, than the spirit that is within Satan and all of his unholy angels; and this is because God, in mercy, has determined that it should be that way, to cause them to turn to him in faith.

Faith is bestowed upon the saints of God to make manifest that they are his very special beloved, the ones he had chosen before the foundation of the world as his own; he formed them for himself, named them, and promised that he would never leave nor forsake them. He has loved them with an everlasting love, and faith is the indestructible bond that assures them that they shall never fail nor finally fall away, regardless of the weakness and frailty of the natural man. By faith, David slew Goliath, when but a lad, by faith Abraham believed God and left his former life and country and went to seek the country that God had promised that he would possess; by faith Moses forsook Egypt not fearing the wrath of the king, looking to him that is invisible: kept the Passover and by faith led the children out of Egypt and to the borders of the land of Canaan. All of these examples of faith are demonstrated in the children of God, and are but the substance of the things hoped for, the great cloud of wit-

nesses that encompasses them, comforts and encourages them in their journey here in time, all are evidences of the working of the invisible spirit that was directing their way. They do not understand, nor can they explain this faith to anyone, other than to say that it is not of an earthly origin because the things that it causes them to believe defies all natural laws and reasoning and yet they cannot deny the existence of them.

Faith caused David to reply to his brother, when he reprimanded him for coming to the battlefield by saying, what I have now done, is there not a cause. I don't believe that even David understood the reason of this reply; even as the prophets who prophesied of the grace that was to come to us; they were searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify. God is the author of all scriptural truth, and is the instigator or motivator of all events, which come to pass, even though the prophets, or David, uttered the words or performed the deeds.

Israel had been given evidence of the Messiah that was to come for many generations, prophesies concerning the things that he would do in behalf of the chosen nation, and yet when all of the things that were foretold were fulfilled in their presence, they did not recognize him. This too, was in the plan of God from the beginning, even as sin and all of the other pitfalls that were placed in their path, they were ultimately for their good and were to teach them and cause them to turn to him in times of trouble, for he is the only source of help in their time of need, and this all because of this faith that Gods gives to the saints.

Through faith they understand the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. Now this precept is foolishness to the natural mind, as are all of the other miracles described in the scriptures; as Elder Ramar L. Biggs, a former pastor of the Bordeaux Church used to say, the truth is not reasonable, it defies all of the logic of man, yet, by faith, the saints of God believe that the miracles were actual events which occurred as described. After all, the greatest event that shall ever occur is the greatest of all miracles and all of the saints depend on the authenticity of that miracle for their hope of eternal life. Some people will say that they don't believe in predestination, and my reply has always been, ***"Well you had better believe in it, because only by absolute predestination of all things do you have any assurance whatsoever that there will be a heaven and immortal glory to hope for, in the end of the ages."*** The scriptures declare that there shall be, and the very foundation of the plan of salvation depends on the author of the scriptures being able to perform that which he has promised and to do all

that he has promised that he would do, and faith in the individual, is what enables him to believe that God is able, and shall do everything that he has promised to do, without the omission of a single event. If one event is omitted, it might be, ***"that heaven"*** that is prepared for them that worship God, and if that be the case, what is the point of it all? It must all be there for it to be the work of a sovereign, all powerful God who created the heavens and the earth and who said, my counsel shall stand and I will do all of my pleasure.

Paul said by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God, and this is from the beginning to the end, and it never fails; as is recorded in (Isa. Chap 46, vs. 11) ***"yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass: I have purposed it, I will also do it."*** It is not of the creature, but is the work of God in bringing every heir of promise into the fold, and it is in a way and manner that causes them all to acknowledge their unworthiness of this gift and to declare, with Paul, that though they feel to be the chiefest of sinners, the longsuffering of God was extended to them in their lost and sinful condition, raised them up and blesses them to sit together, with their brethren, in these heavenly places, where they can worship him in spirit and in truth, from a pure heart.

Able offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain because it was offered in faith; he was but returning unto God a small portion of that which God had given him, as an expression of his love, to show his appreciation for his many blessings, and to praise and honor his most holy name. God had respect unto Abel and his offering because it came forth from the heart that had been touched, and blessed to see the glory of the kingdom of heaven. By this faith he was impressed to shew forth his love in this manner. It was not of duty, but from an humble and contrite heart, as he was made to realize what he was in nature, as compared to what he should be before a Holy and Just creator. This knowledge comes by the revelation that is given with the faith when received; it is not engraved on tables of stone but on the fleshly tables of the heart, and cannot be erased.

By faith, the elders obtained a good report, and this is referring to all of the holy men of old who spake and responded as they were moved by the Holy Ghost to perform great deeds of valour as God worked in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. They were, but men, as are all of the saints of God, but faith makes the difference in what man can do in nature and what he can do by grace; as Paul said, (Phil Chap 4, vs. 13) ***"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."*** and faith is this strengthening power of Christ being made manifest in the lives of his

children. Faith enabled David to face Goliath, Daniel to face the lions den, the three Hebrew children the fiery furnace, Moses to face Pharaoh, and untold millions to suffer persecution at the hands of the world's, so called, religious leaders and the rulers of the nations but they have never been overcome yet. They may die, but, just as Christ who triumphed in his death, so do they, there is no recorded incident in the scriptures where the powers of Satan overcame the power of God in the salvation of one of the saints, and he never shall. In the world they shall suffer tribulations, but, even as Christ overcame the world, so shall they. They shall triumph and reign with him in glory in that place that he has gone to prepare for them, and as he told them to be of good cheer because he had overcome the world; well, he overcame it for them and their faith gave them the knowledge of that fact.

(Eph. Chap 2, vs. 8) ***"For by grace are ye saved throughfaith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."*** How then is this grace given, and how is it received by man, we have stated that it is by the grace of God, so the creature is not involved in the process, except as the receiver of a gracious gift, which is bestowed upon him by the sovereign and irresistible grace of God. The man is completely unaware of the circumstances surrounding the gift, and can only wonder in amazement that it has been bestowed upon him, after he has been made to realize what he actually is in nature. In the flesh he would have said, I am entitled to it as much as anyone else, I am as good as the next person, but by the grace that accompanies the gift he cries, Oh woe is me, I am undone, I am not worthy of this gift that has been given me, and his heart overflows with gratitude and thanksgiving unto the giver of the gracious and precious favor that has been shown him.

(Job Chap 33, vs. 14-17) ***"For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man."*** This scripture indicates that God alone is the author and the finisher of faith in man, he speaks to them and seals their instructions and they respond without even realizing when and where the faith which was imparted to them came from, until it is revealed unto them. They go to bed without it and wake up with it. This is, of course, over simplifying it but nevertheless all of the imparting of faith unto man is the work of God, they didn't have, now they do.

The apostle Paul started from Jerusalem professing the Jewish

faith and arrived in Damascus a believer in Christ and all that Paul did was to be at the place of the appointment, of God, which was made before time began, and of which he was completely ignorant. Paul did not see it coming, and did nothing to assist or deter the giving or the receiving of this faith, and so it is with all men. As Job said above, he does it this way, to withdraw man from his purpose and so that man has nothing to boast of in the work. Isn't this the same as the apostle Paul stated in Ephesians, by grace are ye saved through faith, not of works lest any should boast.

Yes, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of future things not seen, as yet. It is the most precious of the gifts of God to his children because, it in fact, encompasses all of their dreams and desires and causes them to ever be found pressing on to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, even though they cannot see nor prove it to someone else, that is unfamiliar with the process. It is however stamped indelibly in their minds and will influence them as long as they live in this world. It is a special gift of love to them from their heavenly Father, even as the coat of many colors which Jacob gave unto Joseph, and in like manner is a mark that they are of the most beloved of the Father.

By faith, they live, move and have their being in this world, and by faith they shall overcome and have their being in that world which is to come; that high abode of the angels where all mystery will be ended, they shall see God, face to face, know as they are known, and rejoice in a way and manner that they have never done before. Here they have the shadow, there they will have the actual substance. Faith will be but a memory of their earthly existence, for they will have the fulness of the things hoped for here in time, but til then, they will cling to this faith because it is the only real treasure that they have in these earthen vessels, which is where they must dwell, until the time appointed of the Father. Then will be the time when He comes to take his jewels home, to adorn that holy city the new Jerusalem, to the eternal honor and glory of his holy name. Faith, is the eye by which the saints of God see and understand the certainty and sure reality of these things that are to be theirs in that day, while they are still here in this time world.

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the spiritual knowledge that is given to every heir of grace, to see the things that are unseen by the natural eye, but which are more real and present in their spiritual eye and mind than the things that are visible to them here in nature. The things that they view here with the natural eye are temporal, but these things are eternal, and the possession of this knowledge is worth more, to them, than all of the wealth

of the world combined. Faith is their key to that city; that new Jerusalem, which shall come down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, the most precious of all the blessings of time and eternity, unto the children of the heavenly king. All of these things were prepared for them before time began, were preserved in Christ Jesus until the time of the end, at which time all mysteries shall be revealed and the fullness of the glory of God shall be known unto all of the saints. The grandeur and glory of these things cannot even be imagined with the natural mind, but they are the inheritance of the saints that is laid up for them when time shall be no more, and heaven shall ring with the songs of praise from the hearts of the saints who were redeemed by the precious blood of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, their elder brother.

In bonds of love;
Elder Richard H. Campbell

ROMANS 7: 24-25.

O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

"THE LORD WILL PROVIDE"

We are reminded of the sore poverty that some of the saints of God had to endure in a former generation.

Work was now very bad, and provisions immensely dear. We had three small children, and had lost one about six months before.

One circumstance that occurred about this time I think I shall never forget. One week we had a very scanty allowance of food, not sufficient to last us through. In the hope of getting my piece out [of cloth; he was a handloom weaver], if it were possible, by Saturday, I worked very hard; but this hard work and the want of nourishment, our food being principally barley, so exhausted me that I was obliged through weakness to leave off on Friday at the very time when we had not one morsel of food remaining.

Here was a gloomy scene, not a morsel of food for husband, wife or child; the wife, too, with an infant at her breast. If ever I prayed in my life, I did that night, that the Lord would take away our appetite and send us to bed satisfied. And I believe the Lord heard my cry, for the poor children wanted to go to bed, and said not one word about anything to eat, for which I felt thankful.

But my trouble was about the morning, for I could not leave the

morrow to take thought for the things of itself.

I rose very early the following morning, and worked till I was obliged to leave the loom, and could scarcely walk or stand, I was so faint and weak. My poor wife, who was as weak and sickly as I, burst into tears, and cried, *"O what shall we do? I cannot live. I am sure we shall die of want!"* and I was sunk so low, both in body and mind, that I verily believed it would be the case.

But what was the finishing stroke to my feelings was that my eldest child, who was about five years of age, looked up to me with tears running down its little cheeks, and cried, *"Father, give me some bread; O my father, do give me some bread."*

I thought my soul would have burst of grief. *"O," cried I, "are my children to die of want before my face, and I cannot help them?"*

I ran into a little place under the cellar stairs, fell on my knees before God, and entreated the Lord with all my soul to take away my life. *"O Lord, do take away my life; let me die; how can I behold the death of wife and children?"*

Whilst I was upon my knees entreating God to take away my life, these words came with great power and force into my mind: *"And they did all eat and were filled; and they took up the fragments that remained twelve baskets full."* And it was repeated again: *"And they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full."*

I did all I could to put it away. *"What,"* said I, *"can it have to do with me in our situation? It has nothing to do with me."*

I kept crying for some time, but the whole connection came so powerfully to my mind how the Lord had fed five thousand in the wilderness with five loaves and two fishes, and they were all filled. *"Well,"* thought I, *"He is as able to feed us now with fish and bread as He was then."* That precious text flowed into my soul with such light, life, liberty, power and glory: *"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and for ever,"* and my soul was so refreshed, and my faith so strengthened by it that I was as sure that we should have a supply as that there was a God.

I arose off my knees as strong as a giant in mind and body, and told my wife that the Lord would most certainly send us something to eat, and very soon. She wanted to know how and when. *"It does not matter,"* said I, *"about the how nor the when. I know it will be the case, and my soul can bless God for it before it comes."*

Just upon the back of this, a man knocked at the door, and I went and opened it to him. It was a gentleman's servant. *"John,"* said he, *"my master has bought some herrings to give to his factory*

people. I had no orders to leave you any, but I thouqht as I came alonq that I would leave you twelve, if you like to accept them."

I was so overpowered that I could scarcely speak to the man. The goodness, mercy and kindness of my dear Lord shone so brightly that I was quite lost in wonder. Whilst I was still wondering and admiring the goodness of God to a worthless worm, a neighbour sent two cakes of bread. I thought my very soul would have burst through my poor body, and taken its flight into glory unto my dear Jesus.

I withdrew into the little palace under the cellar steps, the very place in which, a few hours before, I had begged God to take away my life.

And O what a heavenly palace it was!

After returning, my God thanks, some of the fish were soon ready, and we sat down to the table all crying, together. ***"Come, my dears," said I, "we are now dining on the same food as Jesus and the five thousand dined on in the wilderness";*** and I do believe in my very soul that Jesus sat with us at the table.

O the sweetness of that fish and bread!

And how wonderful the goodness and mercy of the Lord appeared to me in sending, fish and bread as the food of the soul in promise, and then the first morsel of food to the body must be fish and bread also. The fish were so sweet and good that we soon made a breach into the twelve.

O how my poor soul was overcome with the lovingkindness of my dear Lord!

The remainder of the day was taken up with nothing but praises, thanksgivings, adorations and honours to my God for His wonderful deliverance.

From Mercies of a Covenant God by John Warburton (1776-1857).

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 2010

Tommy Wall, VA 5.00
Elder Woodrow Hudson, LA 5.00
Hattie Spencer, VA 5.00
Sallie Hodges, VA 5.00
Faye Brown, NC 15.00
Louie Clare, GA 5.00
James Carr, VA 25.00
George Hyslip, TN 15.00
Vance Duncan, VA 5.00
Jerald Hatchett, OK 50.00
In memory of Linda Joyce Hatchett
Jerry Mourer, AR 25.00
Eva Wyatt, NC 5.00
Charles Alders, TX 25.00
Helen Bailey, ME 10.00

CONTRIBUTIONS

SISTER AGNES ANDERS

Pleasant Ridge Primitive Baptist Church is saddened at the loss of our dear Sister Agnes Anders.

Sister Agnes passed away on December 25, 2010, being 86 years old. She and her late husband Brother Dan Anders were members of Pleasant Ridge Church. She along with Bro. Dan were supporters of all the churches of the Buttahatchie-Hopewell Association.

Sister Agnes not only supported the churches with her presence but also with good food and hospitality for all members and visitors.

Survivors include her sons Dan (Connie) and Joe (Donna) and four grandchildren and five great- grandchildren.

Graveside services were at the Mt. Hebron Church Cemetery conducted by Elder James Pugh. She was laid to rest beside her husband to await the glorious resurrection.

Our hearts are saddened at our loss but this, our earthly loss, is her heavenly gain. May God reconcile us to his will.

Elder James Pugh, Moderator
Sister Agnes Sullivan, Clerk

BROTHER RUSSELL RUDOWSKI

It is with sadness of heart that I write this in memory of Brother Russell 'Rudy' Rudowski. Although Brother Rudy was not a member of any of our churches, he was a supporter and lover of the truth. He professed a Hope that was none other than Jesus Christ and his finished work.

Brother Rudy passed away on December 4, 2010, at home.

He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Merrill Rudowski; daughter Martha Willingham (Elden); sons Frank Rudowski and John Rudowski (Sharron), two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

He was born June 21, 1924, and served in the army during World War II.

Graveside services were held at Mt. Hebron Cemetery by Elder James Pugh.

We will miss him greatly for he was faithful to attend as long as he was able. We believe that our

earthly loss is his heavenly gain. May God reconcile us to his will.

Elder James Pugh

ROMANS 8:28.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
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SONG

By the poor widow's oil and meal
Elijah was sustained;
Though small the stock, it lasted well,
For God the store maintained.

It seemed as if from day to day,
They were to eat and die;
But still, though in a secret way,
He sent a fresh supply.

Thus to his poor he still will give
Just for the present hour:
But for to-morrow they must live
Upon his word and power.

No barn or store-house they possess,
On which they can depend;
Yet have no cause to fear distress,
For Jesus is their Friend.

Then let no doubt your mind assail;
Remember God has said,
"The cruise and barrel shall not fail;
My people shall be fed.

And thus, though faint, it often seems,
He keeps their grace alive;
Supplied by his refreshing streams,
Their dying hopes revive

Newton.

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EDITORIAL

"...For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." I Cor. 5:7.

In the exhortation of the apostle Paul to the church at Corinth, he makes the comparison to what Christ has already completed for his bride with that historic event, recorded in Exodus chapter 12 where the children of Israel were delivered out of Egyptian bondage. ***"...it is the Lord's passover." Ex. 12:11.*** It is a pattern to be closely noticed.

Consider also, ***Rom. 15:4. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."*** This testifies strongly to the present comforts and benefits of the old writings where they are seen to point to the finished work of the Lord, as recorded in the New Testament and they were written for our learning. The apostle also points to the fact that all scripture is given by the inspiration of God (only the old testament existed then) and is profitable to the man of God. II Tim. 3:16-17.

With the above scriptures in mind what might be learned, or better yet what lessons are given; what doctrine, what reproof, what correction, or what instruction in righteousness does the Spirit bring forth in relaying the details of the passover in the night before the exodus from Egypt? Much of course, but for a few that seem clearest consider this: God told Moses that after the last plague was brought upon Egypt Pharaoh would not only let them go ***"...he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether." Ex. 11: 1.*** Does this sound familiar today? The world of religion would like to have everyone's service, as depicted by Pharaoh. But this is the nature of the carnal mind, and as expressed in ***Romans. 8:7, "...the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the laws of God, neither indeed can***

be." So, for the most part, a free grace doctrine will soon be pushed aside or endorsed with conditions.

Ismel must leave Egypt. But before they go the last plague upon Egypt must be carried out. ***"And Moses said, Thus saith the Lord, About midnight will I go out in the midst of Egypt: And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die..." Ex. 1 1:4-5.*** No exceptions or conditions are given—all of the firstborn.

It is hard to imagine the great cry that went through all the land from all the mourning of such a plague of death. But in contrast how great was the promise of God to the children of Ismel. ***"But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel." Ex. 11:7.*** However, lest the children of God boast of their standing the apostle Paul asks the question in *1 Cor. 4:7.* ***"For who maketh the to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"*** No, this difference, this electing gracae is not earned, nor are any of the graces. If they were earned it would not be grace, but due compensation for work performed—physical or mental.

Before the departure from Egypt the activities, for which the night takes it name, ***"passover"***, must be carried out. The activities, as instructed by the Lord, center around the sacrifice of a lamb of the first year, a male without blemish, all depicting perfections of the Lord and Savior. There was to be a lamb according to the size of the house—a lamb for a house. If the family was too small for the lamb to be eaten that night then a man and his close neighbor would take and divide the lamb according to the number of persons and what was sufficient for them to eat. The lamb, properly roasted with fire, was to be totally eaten by those in the house with none of the edible parts remaining until morning—none left over. The parts that were left (the inedible parts) were to be burned with fire so that nothing was left.

The blood of the sacrificed lamb was to be put on the two side posts and the upper door post of the house. After the blood was applied no one was to leave the house until the morning. The blood on the house was a token. When the Lord went through to smite the firstborn in the land of Egypt, as he had said, he would see the blood on the houses of Israel and passover and not suffer the destroyer to smite the house. (See the full text of Ex. Cha.11 and 12).

Several things can be derived from the actions and God's instructions concerning the passover or the parts of it outlined above. First, it would seem most evident that the

sacrificed lamb was a figure of Jesus Christ, the son of God, and that the protection provided by the applied blood was only applicable for those in the house. There seems to be no real evidence that the Egyptians knew anything of the coming danger nor of the remedy provided to Israel.

The provision of the sacrificial lamb was sufficient for the eating of those in the house. But, the instructions were also just as clear that there was to be nothing left over. The atoning blood was for those only in the house where the blood was applied and they were to stay in the house until morning. Therefore there was no passover lamb for the Egyptians.

The instructions for the eating of the passover were very restricted as to who could take part, for which a present day notice should be taken, for it relates to the Lords supper. The Lord ate the passover with his disciples and brought to light it's fuller meaning, in Him, (typical of his flesh and his blood) on the night he was betrayed. See 1 Cor. 11:20-29 and also Mat. chapter 26.

The Lord instructed Moses that in the ordinance of the passover, *"There shall no stranger eat thereof."* See Ex. 12:43-49 A foreigner and a hired servant shall not eat thereof but a bought servant, when he is circumcised, shall eat the passover. And when a stranger shall sojourn with you and desires to keep the passover all his males are to be circumcised. Then he shall come and keep the passover as one that is born in the land. The custom for Israel was for all males to be circumcised. Under the new covenant however, it is the circumcision of the heart that is the fulfillment of the fleshly token given under law. See Rom. 2:25-29. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." I Cor. 5:8. Here it should be pointed out the Feast of Passover was also known as the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

The point to be made here is to the care that is to be taken with the Lord's Supper, as instructed in the New Testament, since it is related directly to the passover of the Old Testament. *"...For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."* And the apostle Paul, in his first letter to the church at Corinth admonishes them, *"...flee from idolatry I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say. The cup of blessing which ye bless, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? The bread which ye break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" 1 Cor. 10:14-16.* And vs. 21, *" Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and the table of devils."* Therefore is it any wonder that devout church men before us held to the practice of closed commun-

and care would seem slack, and practices would be subject to changing as circumstances change. But in words that extend beyond the Lord's Supper Paul the apostle exhorts the church at Corinth thusly: ***"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" 2 Cor. 6:14***

Elder Chapell served as assistant pastor and is now chosen to follow Elder Campbell as pastor of Memphis Primitive Baptist Church.

Editors

CORRESPONDENCE

2-17-2011

Dear Brother Horton,

Enclosed you will find enough for another years renewal - use the rest as you need.

Thank the Lord for all of you. You do a great job.

Thank you,
In love and hope,
Carol L. Lawson

2-14-11

Dear Brother Horton,

The Signs expires very soon and I would thank you to renew my subscription another year. I enjoy reading the Signs very much. I hope the dear Lord will bless you and others to get the paper out and bless all writers to write or speak of the God of heaven and earth.

Many good wishes to you and your family.

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickral

Feb. 8, 2011

Dear Brother Horton,

Enclosed please find my check for $50.00, which I would like to be used to renew my subscription to "Signs of the Times" for one year and the other as you see fit. I really enjoy the paper.

I was saddened to read of Elder Campbell's death. I enjoyed hearing him at our meetings. We will miss him, but will enjoy reading his articles in your paper.

Sincerely,
Billie (Dunn) Speir

ARTICLES

February 1, 2011

Dear Brethren,

Each time I write for publication I feel it is my last. Who am I to relate experiences to you? I feel each of the Chosen of God have had beautiful times of rejoicing that the household of faith would enjoy reading. I hope you realize that I am not worthy of writing to you but my mind will not rest until I attempt to tell of some of my visions.

I hope they are of the true actions of the Holy Spirit upon this worm of the dust.

Recently, I was in my dreams when two of my nephews, Elder T. A. Stanfield's grandchildren, were discussing their grandfather's belief. It seemed that neither were convinced that he believed in salvation by Grace. I was, as I dreamed, listening, and I could not be quiet. I said, ***"I know what Elder Stanfield believed. He did believe in salvation by Grace as the only means of salvation."*** Then I compared Grace as a vessel of pure bleach. If it was any part of another substance, it would not be pure but contaminated and not fit for use. Then I said that the Grace of God is a pure river of water proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb (Rev 1:22). Our God will not share his Glory with another. If there is any conditions to being saved by Grace it is a polluted idea and would not be allowed by the God that causes and controls the natural rivers to flow. The nephews did not answer me at all but they did listen.

If any of God's creatures are blessed to relate the absolute perfection and purity of any of God's blessings, they are shown that no natural creature unless he is given revelations from above can see the glorious perfection of our blessings. They cannot be learned by all of the world's education. These, I believe, are the hidden things of God and these blessings are from a divinity that is not of this world that is so full of all kinds of pollution. Why would any natural mind be so blind as to believe a holy act of God can be duplicated by a weak sinful race? It is because it is hidden from all except to whom it is revealed. Who is to be compared to Him? Are you not thankful that his divinity is sealed from the world and will never be diluted by any act of the creatures he controls? And he does control all things both seen and unseen.

My precious companion and I have been so blessed to worship and to be members among you for 56 years and 54 years, respectively. What a glorious journey it has been! To be so loved and shown fellowship throughout our traveled times among them is indescribable. If these statements be true, can you even imagine what eternity will be?

We have only caught glimpses of what it shall be and if I am in that chosen race, then this world and all of its riches are of no value. Only to be carried to that eternity of endless bliss can the complete fulfillment of our hope be realized.

Have you dwelt on what is to come? It is not the natural mind but a spiritual one that can see any of the glories that await His people. My greatest evidence is that surely I do love my brethren. May His unpolluted pure Grace be with us all throughout the journey that is left for us. We sometimes wonder if we will be given to realize that He has promised to be with his people until the end and that will be our joy instead of dreading what the future holds. I have no doubt that a pure river of water that will flow to us from His throne will be sufficient to carry us to the glory land.

I love you saints in the pure name of our savior Christ Jesus.

Burnell Williams

Note: Elder Stanfield was my wife's father. He died in 1942. I remember him in my young days but I never heard him preach after I received a hope. He was a much-loved minister in the Upper Country Line Association of North Carolina. The strange part about all of these remarks about what Elder Stanfield believed is that I never heard him express these beliefs to me in real life. But I know what the called ministers have expressed in their remarks to be very sure it goes back through the ages of time and includes the Bible writings.

VOICES OF THE PAST

The Maine Old School Baptist Conference, convened with the church at North Berwick, Maine, September 2d, 3d and 4th, 1887, to the churches, and associations with whom she corresponds, sends christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST: — By the mercy of our all wise and all powerful God we have the high privilege once more to meet with our messages of love, relying upon him who has all power on earth and in heaven, and whose love never fails; and by the exercise of that faith which works by love, and purified the heart, and overcomes the world, we are made confident that all things work together for good to them that love God, and who are the called according to his purpose.

In sending this our annual epistle we have chosen for our subject the eternal, electing and unchangeable love of God to his people. Jeremiah says, ***"I have loved them with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kind-***

ness have I drawn thee." Dear brethren, before the sun mounted his dazzling throne, or the foundation of the mighty deep was laid, or dust was fashioned into man, this wondrous love existed. Paul says, *"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."*

Time and space cannot come between the infinite Jehovah and his people, for his love is everlasting, and with loving kindness does he draw them; and being King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, his power is above all powers. His omniscient eye saw the end, and Christ glorified, before time had its beginning, or his chosen bride had a natural existence; for he was as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world Hence the redemption of his people was secure before the breath of life animated Adam's dust. All alike, from Abel to the end of time, are saved by (and in no other way) the blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin. It was said to Jacob, *"I have redeemed thee; thou art mine."* The waters cannot overflow thee, the fire cannot burn thee; for the everlasting arms of the Redeemer are underneath thee. The panoply of his love is above thee, and no weapon formed against thee shall prosper. Christ says, *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."* Blessed words, *"Greater than all!"* No jewel from the royal diadem can ever be lost; for if God, who is *"greater than all,"* be for us, who can be against us? *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"* Our Father, who is *"greater than all,"* has made us more than conquerors over all these things through him who has loved us. *"For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."- Romans viii.*

"Hail, sacred union, firm and strong!
How great the grace! how sweet the song!
That worms of earth should ever be
One with incarnate Deity!

"One in the tomb, one when he rose,
One when he triumphed o'er his foes,

One when in heaven he took his seat,
And seraphs sung all hell's defeat."

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." And not only called the sons of God, but *"the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ,"* their elder Brother. How sweet the thought that a bond of sovereign grace exists between Christ and his chosen people which can never be broken. He their Head and they his body; and where he is, ere they are; and as sure as he lives, they shall live also. The kingdom of God is theirs; and what he has declared is as firm as his throne. Then shout, saints of God, for on Christ the solid Rock you stand, and he has bid you cast aside your fears, and rely apon him for wisdom, power and safety until the warfare shall end; and then around the throne shall your ransomed souls have everlasting rest.

Our meeting has been well attended, and the weather was as pleasant as we could wish for. Elders Purington, Chick and Campbell were with as through the meeting; but it was evident that there was but one preacher among us, and that he did speak through them all to the comfort and edification of all that had an ear to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. It was evident that their conversation was in the gospel heavens, so that we were made to sit together in a heavenly place in Christ Jesus our Lord. On Sunday, the last day of the meeting, it was thought that seven hundred people were there. We still wish to continue correspondence with you.

WM. QUINT, Moderator.
LEWIS BUTLER, Clerk.

Sent in by Jim Cote

MATTHEW XVII. 5.

"WHILE he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."

Various indeed, grand and sublime beyond description, have been the manifestations of Jesus to his disciples; and perhaps none of them have been more glorious than the one now under consideration. In the preceding chapter the Redeemer had been warning his disciples of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and had therein revealed to Peter something of the nature of his kingdom here upon the earth. He then gave them some instructions relative to his death, and resurrection from the

dead. And it is quite evident from the answer of Peter to him, that he was as yet in great ignorance of the true nature of the mission of Jesus into the world. The Lord was not pleased to let in the full blaze of the light of the knowledge of his glory upon the minds of his disciples at once, for they were not yet able to bear it. But he manifested the light in proportion as he strengthened and prepared their minds to receive it, and thus step by step he led them on from glory to glory, in the knowledge of himself as the Son of God, and Redeemer of the church. And when he had told them that he must be killed and raised again from the dead, Peter began to rebuke him; for which rebuke the Savior reproved him sharply. Shortly after this Jesus took Peter, James and John up into a high mountain apart, when this most grand and enrapturing scene described in the text occurred. We read that Jesus was transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. It was at this juncture that Peter proposed building three tabernacles, one for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elias. ***"While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them."*** Whatever this cloud was in itself, we believe we are correct in saying it was the symbol of the presence of the glory of the eternal Jehovah. The Redeemer had on different occasions manifested himself in the cloud, and in a way that those to whom the manifestation was made, were made to know that God was with them. When God blessed Noah, and established his covenant with him, that he would no more cut off all flesh with the waters of a flood, the cloud was his chosen emblem, in which he set his bow, the token of that covenant. The declaration was, and ***"I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of the covenant between me and the earth."*** And I will look upon it, and remember my covenant for perpetual generations. The covenant was made with all the earth, and the token is that which all the earth can see. And all the ages which have passed and gone, the rising and falling of Empires, with all the various and changing seasons and scenes, which have existed from that time until the present, have not removed the token, nor annulled the decree, and by it we are still assured that all flesh shall not any more be cut off with the waters of a flood, and to this day the token is seen, and through its soft and beautiful hues it is yet proclaiming to men the immutability, mercy and faithfulness, of the covenant and unchanging God. If we pursue this cloud a little farther, we will find it the emblem of another bright, merciful and luminous manifestation from the God of grace and glory.— We refer in this instance, to the cloud that attended the Israelites in their

journeyings from Egypt to Canaan. And by it God led Joseph like a flock, and Israel by the right way, that he might go to a city of habitation. But the question naturally arises, How did he lead them? Is God a man, that he should take Israel by the hand literally, and lead them forth? What shall be their unerring guide, and their unfailing protection through the wilderness, and over that trackless path with which they are altogether unacquainted, and which alone leads to their land of promise? Will God do anything more than to command them to the land of promise? Will he not leave them to guess at the way, and search it out for themselves, and leave them subject to the misfortune of missing the right way, dependent upon circumstances, and the direction of mortals? By no means; God led them. But how did he lead them? The language of the inspired writer is more full and clear upon this point, than any other can be. *"And they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness. And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: he took not away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people."* From the foregoing Scripture, we cannot fail to discover that Israel were led by the Lord their God. They were not only led by the cloud (the emblem of God's presence, power and glory, but it was also a protection to them from their enemies. When they were pursued by their enemies, this cloud stood between the two companies, and the Egyptians could not have reached the Israelites until they passed through the pillar of cloud, and thus we see them completely protected from the wrath of Egypt's king. This cloud, called the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them, and came between the camp of the Egyptians, and the camp of Israel, and while it was a cloud and darkness to them, it gave light to Israel. None, methinks, can fail to discover the fullness of the blessing of this cloud, for it was the leader and protector of Israel; the presence of their God with them, manifesting these mercies which could come from no other source. When God commanded Moses to make a tabernacle, he commanded him to make all things according to the pattern presented to him on the mount. The tabernacle was to accompany the Israelites in their journeyings through the wilderness, and on the day it was reared up, the cloud covered it, namely, the tent of the testimony; and at even there was upon the tabernacle, as it were, the appearance of fire, until morning. So it was always, the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night. And when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then

the children of Israel journeyed onward, and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents. From the foregoing we cannot fail to see the wisdom and sovereignty of God, in leading his chosen people into the promised land of their inheritance, and they could not lose their way, for God was with them in the cloud as their leader; neither could the enemy destroy them, for the Lord was their protection, and very present help in every time of need. The cloud bade them to march onward, and it commanded them to rest, and whither it moved they went; when it rested, they rested, and it then passed around and stood between the two camps. But these manifestations to national Israel, were but feeble glimmerings of the revelation of the glory of God in his church in the gospel. They were but the shadow of things to come; the body or substance of which is Christ. Our Lord said to his disciples, ***"Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."*** The legal ministration of the law was but a shadow, and all its glory was borrowed, as the light and glory of the moon are borrowed from the sun. And we are informed that the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, (which hope is Christ.) There was never a law given which could give life; the vail was over the law, and there was no looking upon it with open face. But in the gospel the apostle says, ***"We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."*** Here then, the superlative glory, the substance, that better thing, which God hath provided for us in the gospel, is revealed, and was declared out of that bright cloud which overshadowed the disciples at the transfiguration. But why did the cloud appear at this time, and at the ascension of our Lord to glory, and appear no more? To this, it may be answered, that Jesus was a minister of the circumcism, to confirm the promise made unto the fathers, and the types and shadows must remain until Jesus is glorified, and the substance comes in all its perfection, and swallows up all these things in its transcendent glory. When the cloud covered the tent of the congregation of Israel, the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle, and Moses could not enter into the tent of the congregation. And there is certainly no room for the law of Moses, or a conditional covenant, in the gospel of Christ. There can be no room for the ministration of condemnation and death, in the ministration of life; for it is covered and filled with Christ, its liv-

ing glory, its life, its all and in all. But it is said that this cloud is taken up, and has not been seen in that peculiar form and manner, in which it appeared to Israel, since the ascension of our Lord. And what is now to be the guide and protection of the church, and how are we to know what has the seal and authority of heaven, and what has not? How are we to know who the people of God are, that are walking in gospel truth and order, and what is the infallible rule by which we may distinguish them from those who are walking after the traditions and commandments of men? All claim to be right, but opposite directions and jargons assure us that some are wrong. And it is truly an important inquiry, how shall we distinguish between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not? The text affords us the infallible rule. That cloud prefigured Christ as its substance, and the last words heard out of it were uttered by the eternal God, and were, ***"This is my beloved Son; hear ye him."*** The cloud will no more guide the wandering Israelites, for the gospel kingdom is now to be set up, and Christ is King and Lawgiver therein; and he shall tell his subjects, not through the movable emblem of the vaporing cloud, but with his own words, what the commands of the gospel are, and wherein they shall walk. Moses and Elias talked together with Christ at the transfiguration, but Moses and Elias are now lost sight of, and swallowed up in Christ.

The Patriarchal and Jewish dispensations bore testimony to Christ, but now he has come, the testimony is swallowed up in Christ, the substance. The prophets foretold his coming in the flesh, and now he has come and fulfilled all that was written of him, and here all types, shadows and prophecies, have come to an end. The law and the prophets were until John, but now the kingdom of heaven is preached, and Jesus himself declared, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning him. Hence we are not to take the law of Moses for our guide. The law of Moses has no power over a gospel subject, for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every believer. Yet we are not without law to Christ; and in relation to this, the apostle said, "For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." But to return to the language, ***"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*** We cannot receive the idea, that God has any sons with whom he is not well pleased, or that there is any sonship out of Christ. But here, Christ the Mediator, (and the children of God were never without an elder brother and mediator,) is spoken of particularly. The prophet Isaiah spake of Christ, in his mediatorial character, as the cloud by day, the shining of a flaming fire

by night, and the defense upon all the glory of Zion. He also spake of him as the Son and Lawgiver, and the one upon whose shoulder the government should rest. God also declared that he gave him, a commander and leader to Israel. Now, if the government is upon his shoulder, and he is the commander and leader, it certainly can be nothing short of idolatry to follow in any other way, or establish anything as religious institutions which he has not commanded. The eternal God declared himself well pleased in Christ as Mediator, Savior and Redeemer of the church, and he is well pleased also with his children in him, for they are all accepted together in the beloved, and it is Jesus whom they acknowledge as their only Lawgiver, Lord and Christ. Agreeable with this is the commission itself. In this the disciples are to teach all nations (or the saints among all nations,) to observe all things which Christ has commanded them, and they have nothing to do with Moses, for he is dead. The Lord buried him, and even his sepulchre is nowhere to be found in the gospel. When we listen to the command, *"Hear ye him,"* (my Son) we are as gospel subjects to listen to, and obey God rather than men, and look to Christ, and turn away from Moses. And where can we find where Christ ever commanded a subject in the gospel to keep the law of Moses, and obey the conditions of the old covenant, as a means of salvation, or as having anything to do with the children of grace, under the gospel dispensation? Did he ever tell anyone that he had fulfilled a part of the law, and that the balance was to be complied with by man? Never. But he did declare that heaven and earth should pass away, but not one jot or tittle of the law should pass until all was fulfilled. He came to fulfill the law and the prophets; to pay all the requirements of the law; to die under its curse, and to redeem therefrom the bone of his bone, and the flesh of his flesh, and he was straitened until he had accomplished it. He bore the curse of the law for his brethren, and delivered them from that curse; he having been made a curse for them. Many people suppose that they have much to do to help Christ along in the great business of salvation. But all such have yet to learn the beauty and force of that saying, *"The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."* In the glorious plan of salvation, Christ does everything, and the church receives all things, and this excludes boasting, exhibits grace, exalts the Redeemer, and glorifies God. And all the commands of Christ are to the children of his kingdom. And these commands are simply to follow him. And how unlike they are to the commands of men. The subject is most beautifully illustrated in Acts XV. There were certain men which came down from Judea, which believed,

and taught the brethren, saying, Except ye be circumcised, and keep the law of Moses, ye cannot be saved. And when the apostles had assembled, there rose up certain of the pharisees which believed, saying that it was necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. And these pharisees were believers. In what did they believe? Just what Arminians believe in now, and what they preach and contend for: that it is necessary for man to do something; which something will amount to an obedience which God will accept as conditions of his salvation. But what said that judge in Israel, even the one to whom Jesus gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven? Peter said unto them, Why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon their necks which neither we, nor our fathers, were able to bear? Peter had received no authority from Christ to command the disciples among the Gentiles to observe these things. But what commandment had he received? We must now most certainly look for him to act in strict accordance with the authority and command given him by his Master. The apostles considered the matter, and sent a message to those brethren, whose hearts had been made sad by these false teachers. And it is still the duty of all the servants of Christ to lift their voice against every species of error, and present to their brethren the glorious consolations of the gospel. This consolation is found in the message already referred to, and which we will here transcribe, and will remark that the effect produced was the same that all gospel messages will invariably produce upon the entire household of faith. After the apostles had prefaced their message with a solemn declaration that they had given those judaizing teachers no commandment to lay this conditional system upon the disciples, they say, *"For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden that these necessary things: that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well."* And when the epistle had been read, they rejoiced for the consolation. The gospel of Christ is a message of consolation to the brethren at all times, and under all circumstances. It proclaims to them the fullness of their redemption, and the glory of that liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free. And all the commands of the gospel require nothing more nor less, than for its subjects to follow Christ, in the ordinances of it, through evil, as well as good report. They call upon none in heaven, or earth, to devise ways, make laws, or institute means for the salvation of men, or the furtherance of the glory of God. The eternal Father hath given Christ, a commander and leader to the people, and it is his to

command, and theirs to obey. And in this obedience they are not to lead, but are to follow Christ. And he has said, *"If ye love me keep my commandments."* They have nothing to do with Moses. They left him on the Pisgah of the law, and were led by Jesus into the Canaan of the gospel, and to him they are to look, and from him they receive all the commands which they are to obey; and in all this obedience they show forth his praise, and acknowledge him as their Redeemer and Commander, and the Captain of their salvation. They know no other commander, they have no-other leader; they acknowledge him alone as King in Zion, and it is he that they obey as the only Lawgiver in Israel. Let us then run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y., Sept. 15, 1854.

PSALM 78: 13-15.

He divided the sea, and caused them to pass through; and he made the waters to stand as an heap.

In the daytime also he led them with a cloud, and all the night with a light of fire.

He clave the rocks in the wilderness, and gave them drink as out of the great depths.

INFANT SALVATION.

We have been accused by the enemies of truth of preaching infant damnation, or of preaching infants in hell not a span long. We people, known as the Old School or Primitive Baptists, do believe and preach that both infant and adult are saved by grace, and both infant and adult are sinners. This was the mission of Jesus into this world, to save sinners. His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. Our enemies say that infants are not sinners until they pass a certain age. If they are not sinners they have no Savior until they reach a certain age and cross the line of accountability, as is claimed by them, then what about the thousands of infants that die before reaching the age for crossing the line of accountability? Is it not a fact that they would be without a Savior if such a theory be true as is advocated by the Arminian World? If the infants were not sinners they would never die. It is sin that kills. There is but one way from earth to heaven, and Jesus says, I am the way, the truth and the life. The infant and adult alike will praise Jesus for their redemption alone through. His atoning blood that he shed for them on Calvary's rugged cross. The enemies of truth claim that children from their natural birth to a certain age are fit subjects for heaven, as they are innocent and harmless. Now I fully believe after

one is born again, has passed from law to gospel, he is accountable to God for his waywardness after the promptings of the flesh. God never fails to correct his children. The rod of chastisement is applied and the child is corrected, and with Paul he can say, No chastisement seemeth good for the present, but afterwards it yields the peaceable fruit *of* righteousness to them that are exercised thereby. By experience I have some knowledge of his chastisement. Often I have bowed my head with shame for some vain or idle word spoken in haste.

"And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." Let us take notice of what he says next: *"Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein."* The total depravity of all creatures, both infants and adults, is taught in this lesson to his disciples. The adult is as helpless as the new-born babe, so there is a special interest by father and mother in caring for and looking after the little ones. John says, Ye are of God little children. It is not always infants that are termed as little children, but adult as well, because of their helplessness, being totally depraved. *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."* The carnal mind cannot comprehend the mystery of the new birth. *"The wind bloweth where it listeth [where it pleaseth], and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is I everyone that is born of the Spirit."* These words were spoken by our Savior to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

We hear David saying, *"Behold, was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."* Again, ye hear him saying, "The wicked are estranged *"from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies,"* So it is evidently clear that all of Adam's posterinty are born into this world sinners, and both infants and adults are saved by grace.

J. W. MCCLANAHAN.

PSALM 89: 24-26.

But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted.

I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers.

He shall cry unto me, Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation.

Yawkey, West Virginia.

Elder A. J. Mullens: - I have thought for some time that I would write you my experience.

Like many others, I was raised by parents who did not believe Baptist doctrine. They were Methodists, or were in my childhood days, but I will say that now in their last days their belief is far from that. I was sprinkled in infancy and was sent to Sunday School I never heard an Old School Baptist preach until I was sixteen years of age. I heard of them and heard people make fun of them. At the age of eighteen years I was married into an Old Baptist family. I never in my, life heard a gospel sermon preached until the day my husband was baptized. He was baptized by Elder J. H. Terry in July, 1898. Elder Terry's text was, *"O generation of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance."* That sermon seemed to give me some light on the Scriptures, but before that I had been blind to their meaning. I had set times; to do better, and thought that if I, was taken sick I would start right in and get religion. I truly thought I could get religion any time I wanted to. My people would say to me, Do not let your husband make a *"Hardshell"* of you. I would answer, You need not worry, he will never do that. I truly thought I never would be one, but God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. I had several dreams that made me worry. I dreamed of seeing the devil come with his chains to bind me. Before that time I was afraid of the devil, but I never was afraid of him after that. I became greatly troubled about my sins. I had a great desire to read the Bible. My desire to read was so great that I would stop work and read it. I would try to pray, but the thought would come that I was acting the hypocrite. I went on in this way for some time, trying to keep my trouble to myself. I did not want even my husband to know I was *in* trouble. My desire was to be away off in some lonely spot where I could not see anyone, or even hear the birds sing or the insects cry. My trouble was so great I wanted to be alone. One night I had a dream, or a vision rather, I thought I was in torment, where they were doing all kinds of meanness. I wanted to get away from there, and looked for a door, or a way to get out, but could find no way of escape. I thought I was doomed to stay there. I cannot describe my feelings, and when my hope was just about gone I heard a voice say, Come, follow me. I looked and saw Jesus and followed him. He lead me up the most beautiful staircase I ever saw. When I got to the top I beheld the prettiest place my eyes had ever seen. I saw two women sitting at a table. He asked me if I knew who they were. I said,

No. He said one was Christ's mother, but did not say who the other one was. I thought it was the most beautiful place I had ever seen, and I was very happy. I would haved liked to stay that way, but he disappeared from me. I was very happy for a time, but my trouble came back and I thought, That is only a dream, and I know there is nothing in dreams. About that time my husband began preaching, was licensed and there was talk of ordaining him. He said he did not want to be ordained. I told him that if he did not want to preach to just stop preaching. I did not want him to be a preacher and be gone from home so much. It gave me much trouble, and one night I had a dream that stopped my worrying about his ordination. I thought I went to the church-house door, but did not go in, for at that time I had not joined the church, and when I looked in the house and saw the church members all sitting there and my husband was not among them I asked where he was, and a voice answered me, and said, He is numbered with the preachers. I looked in and saw him in the upper end of the building with eleven other preachers, all dressed in white robes. I knew the faces of some and some I did not know, but believe I have seen them since that time. That was in the year 1911. About eight or nine years after that I went to an association held at the Liberty Church. After we got off the street car we had to walk some distance, and we overtook a man none of us knew. I told my husband that he was an Old Baptist preacher, and when he asked me how I knew I said, Because I have seen him before. You, brother Mullens, are that man. You are one of the eleven I saw with my husband in my dream, eight years before that time, and I knew you was one of those preachers I saw at that time. I was so overjoyed during that meeting that I could not talk with anyone. I heard you preach three sermons there that I have never forgotten. I have also met some others that I knew were preachers because I knew their faces from my dream.

Brother Mullens, I started this letter seventeen years ago. I found it today and thought I would copy it and send it to you, as I have thought much of writing you about my dream. I believe God showed me in that dream that his servants are chosen by him and not by mortal man. I have had many ups and downs since that time, and have heard you preach some sweet sermons and if I could have the confidence in myself that I have in you being a chosen servant of God I would not go groping in the dark begging the Lord to have mercy upon me a poor sinner, saved by grace if saved at all. Pray for me when at the throne of grace.

(MRS.) W. I. WADE.

"THUS SAITH THE LORD."

THE expressions, *"Thus saith the Lord," "Saith the Lord," "Saith God,"* and including the sayings of Jesus, occur at least one thousand times throughout the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Yet, despite this fact, there are to be found those who say the Bible is not the word of God. Indeed, beyond all successful controversy, it is verily the word of God. Jesus Christ himself is the living Word, the Scriptures of inspiration are the written Word. These two, the living and the written Words, do never contradict each other. They are in perfect harmony, the literal meaning of the Scriptures and the spiritual significance thereof, do never conflict. If at any time, any man thinks he sees contradictions and lack of harmony in the Word of God, the opposition is in the man himself. Everyone of us by nature are in opposition to God's word. The carnal mind is enmity against God and the natural man knows not the things of God. No wonder, then, that carnal minds and natural men charge the Scriptures with being contradictory. Every man's opinion, every man's views, all preaching, all philosophy, all meditation and all sentiment should be brought to the test of the written Word of God. If not in accord with the Scriptures, they must be cast aside and rejected, howsoever fair and plausible they may seem. Frequently we hear it said that one man says the Scriptures mean thus and so, another man says they mean quite something else: therefore, it is said the Scriptures can mean anything. This is absolutely false. When the Scriptures are taken and handled honestly with no attempt to deceive and with no personal bias which twists them to suit our personal notions, they can mean but one thing, and that one thing is the truth of God as revealed in and through Jesus Christ. God's people should not follow preachers only in so "far as the preacher follows the Scriptures. The Scriptures should be the man of our counsel. The brethren at Berea were more noble than the other christians because they searched the Scriptures daily to know whether the things said by Paul were so. (Acts x:vii. 11.) The brethren at Thessalonica were said not to have done as the Berean brethren did. We fear that in this present day there is entirely too little searching of the Scriptures by the brethren themselves and too much reliance placed in what the preacher says. If any man lacks wisdom, we are not told to go to our pastor about it, or to inquire of the preacher, but we are commanded to ask of the Lord and that thus inquiring sincerely of him, we shall receive. To go directly to the fountainhead of all Wisdom is vastly better than to inquire of one of the streams. No Scripture should ever be inter preted at variance with the context in which it occurs. If we pick out a verse here, another verse there, a word here

and a word there, the most fantastic and absurd conclusions may be arrived at; but this is not right and certainly is not honest. We fail to see how a man truly called of God to preach can conscientiously thus handle his Master's goods. What kind of an account will such a man give of his stewardship? We are commanded to study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen rightly dividing the word of truth and so needing not to be ashamed.

The word of truth needs no addition or substraction, but is to be properly divided. This the servant of God does by that same Spirit which has called and qualified him as a servant of God. If the calling of God be absent, no amount of study will do any good. It is not neccssary to study books about the Bible, but it is necessary to study the Scriptures themselves, compare Scripture with Scripture, spiritual things with spiritual. No amount of Bible reading will ever make a man preach the gospel, but one who is truly called to the work of the ministry will feel to make the Scriptures the man of his counsel and will desire to read and search them, asking the Spirit to direct him in his perusal of them. In any walk or profession of life, it is needful to have the tools to work with. Are not the inspired Scriptures the tool of the man of God? Are they not for his furnishing to all good works and for his instruction in doctrine? If we cannot give a "thus saith the Lord" for what we believe and preach, we had better quit. Nothing is worth anything unless founded on divine authority. Divine authorjty for doctrine is to be found in the inspired Scriptures of truth. True Baptists all down the ages have always required scriptural proof for their doctrine and practice. Anything not sanctioned by "thus saith the Lord," they let alone. It is interesting to know that the word "bigot" arose centuries ago in France. "Bigot" comes from "by God." Today this word means narrow-minded person and one who is very decided and uncompromising in his views, particularly on the subject of religion. In olden times, the Huguenots in France were called "by God" people, because they demanded the word of God as their authority. Whenever approached by their enemies and examined by them to know why they believed as they dld, they would refer their enemies to the Bible and declare that their faith was "by God," their doctrine and teaching was "by God," their practice was "by God," etc. Thus, it came to be that a "by God" person was one who demanded the Bible and the "thus saith the Lord" as his guide. This phrase "by God" has been by much use contracted into the word "bigot." Most people to-day hate to be called "bigots," but we who love the Scriptures should rejoice to have ourselves thus denominated, because when we know the origin of the word, it is complimentary

rather than defamatory, since it stamps one as being an upholder of the Word of God. When we come, in our reaching, to passages of Scripture which we cannot understand, let us await the Spirit's pleasure to unfold them to us: and as we thus wait, let us not deny them and let us not permit our imaginations to range wildly over them unduly spiritualizing them. Imagination, some one says, is the biggest "nation" in the "world. Surely it is, and further the Word says the imaginations of our hearts are nothing but evil continually.

H.H. Lefferts

CLIFTON SPRINGS, N. Y.,
Aug. 16, 1931.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS: - You will note I am here in the Clifton Springs Sanitarium. I came here last Thursday. I have not been well for a long time; almost a year continually going back. However, these people think they can do me some good. I hope they can. They are making a very rigid examination.

I have thought many times about your letter. You said the Lord must have put it in my mind to write you, as my letter came just when you needed it. It has always been hard for me to understand how a good preacher like you, with such a wonderful understanding *of* the Scriptures, could get so low down that a word from me could help you in any way. I have often felt that if I had the understanding you and others have I would not be down in the valley so much of the time but would be able to see things in the Scriptures that would lift me up, revive my hope, causing me to walk on a higher plane, and yet I know all the distinguished writers of the Bible had their lean times and felt their need of help. They were not always on the mountain praising the Lord, but were often found down in the valley, like Habakkuk when he said, O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years. He had a desire to see again the manifestation of God's power, his love and mercy, and that is the way with you and me, when we are down we want to see again some of the wonderful things we once saw. We want the manifestation of that mighty power that lifts a poor sinner up out of the slums of darkness, causing him to see and understand some of the wonderful works of God. God's people are like a calf in the stall, they must wait for their food. I often think how well the words of Malachi describe the travels of a poor sinner, one who is always destitute of the Spirit except when the Lord feeds him. It drops down as the rain and distils as the dew. No one can hasten it or stop it. It comes at the appointed time, just when it is most needed, and is always a surprise to the one receiving it. This food never comes to one when he is expecting it because of

any goodness in himself, for when there is any goodness left in a person he is not entirely destitute. Manna comes to the meek and lowly in heart, to the poor and needy, those who are down and cannot lift themselves up. The whole need not a physician, but they who are sick. Yes, sick of sin, feeling and realizing they are sinners, condemned before a just and holy God. One who has seen the light remembers the wormwood and the gall, therefore he has hope. His travels through the wilderness and desert, the byways and hedges, even in the prison-house down in the dungeon, and then for the Sun of righteousness to arise with healing in his wings, *is* as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast. This anchor holds you fast; it will not let you go. At times *it* seems very weak, only a thread to hold on, but at the most discouraging moment, when all *is* dark, the light of divine grace shines through the clouds and fresh food right from the throne of glory *is* given to the poor sinner in the stall. How glorious and refreshing! It builds him up in his most holy faith and he again basks in the sunshine of God's love and mercy, and, like David, is made to exclaim, The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. As he travels on the great highway of life he finds many low places; only now and then he gets on a hill or high elevation. I always seem to be down in the valley. I have great fellowship for those traveling the same road. They speak the same language. It comes home with power, for therein is the righteousness of God revealed *"from faith to faith."* Salvation by grace, and grace alone, is the only theme, the only kind that reaches a poor sinner in the dungeon of hell and leads him out into the light and liberty where the Sun of righteousness shines forth in all his glory. The Son of God has power to make the wilderness a pool of water and the dry land springs of water. His words they are spirit and they are life. He speaks to the dead and they hear his voice. I love to think of that mighty power that said, Let there be light. I love to think of that God who leads the blind by a way they knew not and into paths they have not known.

Your brother in hope,
C.V. HILL.

ST. LUKE 10: 21-22.

In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 2011

Bille Speir, LA	35.00
Tim Barron, TX	10.00
Phyllis Stroud, VA	5.00
Reidy Pickral, VA	25.00
Jane Mabe, NC	15.00
Carol Lansaw, VA	20.00
Alfred Ratliff, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

AGNES PAULINE TONY

At the request of the family this short sketch of the life and death of Sister Pauline Tony is recorded for those who knew her and loved her. Although this obituary is only a short biography of her life it is hoped that it will serve as a reminder of what she meant to those who knew her and loved her in her family, social, and spiritual life.

Her adventurous life spanned a little more than 82 years; from June 21, 1928 to July 12, 2010. She was the daughter of Elder George W. and sister Angie Jones of Delhi, Louisiana. Much of her life was spent in various places as she followed her husband, who was a career naval officer, and was later known to the church as Elder Harold Tony.

Following her husband's naval career they made their home in northwest Mississippi and began a regular attendance to the Primitive Baptist Church in Memphis. She was received into membership of the Memphis church, along with her husband, on April 10, 1960. Her travels became extensive again as she accompanied her husband, having later been ordained elder, as he visited and served churches throughout much of the south, southeast and southwest. He preceeded her in death.

Funeral services were conducted by her brother, Elder Theron Jones in Magee Mississippi, near her present home. The funeral service bulletin contained the words of Amazing Grace as well as the poem "The Weaver", by Grant C, Tullar.

She is survived by three brothers and a sister, Elders Theron and Preston Jones, Windall Jones and Carolyn Spence; By four children, Junior Tony, Carolyn Morriston, Gloria Lucas and Adrian Tony, as well as eight grandchildren.

Written and distributed by request.

Wayman Chapell

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

Hillsville, Va. 24343

We, the staff of the "Signs," are very saddened at the loss of our good friend and Editor, Elder Kenneth R. Key. Here is the notice of his passing from the Forbis & Dick Funeral Home in Greensboro, N.C.

KENNETH RAY KEY, SR.

GREENSBORO--Kenneth Ray Key, Sr., 88, passed away April 3, 2011 at Moses Cone Memorial Hospital. A 2 p.m. funeral service will be held Wednesday, April 6 at Forbis and Dick North Elm Street Chapel. Interment will follow immediately at Lakeview Memorial Park.

Mr. Key was born in Surry County on January 22, 1923 to the late Ransome Key and Ida Lowe Key. Upon honorable discharge from the US Naval Air Corps, he worked in the kitchen remodeling business for 30 years as owner and operator of K and W Custom Kitchens. His passion and real calling in life was spreading the gospel as an

Elder with the Primitive Baptist Church, a ministry he held for 60 years. During this time he served four churches. He was also editor of the "Signs of the Times" magazine which shares the message of the Primitive Baptist Faith.

Elder Key was preceded in death by his wife, Nellie Jobe Key. In addition, he was preceded in death by four brothers and sisters.

Survivors include two sons, Kenny R. Key, Jr. (Sharon) and Gary Van Key (Amber). In addition, he is survived by brothers Rueben and John Key and sister Minnie Jackson. Also left to cherish his memory are five grandchildren and numerous great-grandchildren.

The family will receive friends Tuesday, April 5 from 6 until 8 p.m. at Forbis and Dick North Elm Street Chapel.

PSALM 8 1-3.

O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who has set thy glory above the heavens.

Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings has thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained.

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Sister Phyllis Dalton Goad

EDITORIAL

"But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand. (*Isaiah* 64-8).

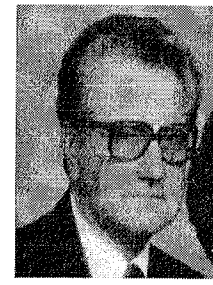
Elder Kenneth R. Key

Isaiah is speaking of those who through the new birth come to know their heavenly father. Jesus told Nicodemus ***"except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God.***

That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." The two scriptures above are to be considered as we think of the work of the Lord with his people.

Let us consider the potter. A potter takes a lump of clay and places it on the potter's wheel. As the wheel turns, his hand is always upon the clay and he has complete control of it. He molds the clay as he wishes it to be. The Lord being our potter is molding his people as he would have them to be and they would not ask why hast thou made me thus. It is God who is at the helm and reigning over his people. ***"O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Jer. 10:23. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. 2:13.*** Then Paul could say, it is by the grace of God that I am what I am. He was suffered of the Lord to go his own way. He went to a school and was highly educated and preached for some 14 years the works of man and verily thought he was doing the work of God. Then one day it pleased the Lord to show him a more excellent way. Paul fell immediately to the ground and looked up and said. Lord what will you have me to do. From that time forward and for the rest of his life he preached, we are saved by grace and not by works, lest any man should boast. Before thou people he confessed I come not with excellency of speech of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the power of God. The Lord is ever with his people even before the new birth. He has loved them even before the foundation of the world. When yet dead in trespasses and sin he loved them.

It is manifest to his people through the new birth that God is their father and they are his children. This is the work of the Father and if then his children, heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Nothing can destroy them or separate them from his love. What they do or what they do not do has no effect on their eternal salvation. The greatest desire of God' s children is that they can follow in the footsteps of their Lord. The apostle Paul who was a chosen vessel confessed that what he would not do, those things he did, those things he would do, those things he did not. When he explains that if I do those things I would not, then it is not I that does it, but sin that dwelleth in me. We can all relate to the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of satan that buffets us. I am glad satan's bounds are set, he can go so far and no further. Christ said that, that is within you, is greater than that that is in the world.

We find comfort that our heavenly father is the potter and our way is not our own because the carnal mind is not subject to the laws of God, neither indeed can be, one being emnity against the other. We can be confident of this very thing

that he who has begun a work in our heart will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. As the potter, he has hold of us and will not let us go. As long as we live the wheel will continue to turn until he has made us a fit subject of his grace and will one day carry us to a better world.

This will not be attained by any works that we have done but solely and completely by the work of our savior. Christ came to this world not to do his own will but the will of the father who sent him. That was to save his children from their sins. He came not to save the whole world , the whole adamic race, but to save those the father had given him in a covenant of grace before the world was. When he had finished his work, we hear him praying to the Father, saying, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou has given me; for they are thine. Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world. I pray that thou shouldest not take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

I believe this prayer is for all those who shall believe on the Lord. All whose names were recorded in the Lamb's book of life. When the Lord shall open this book and the roll is called, there will be no absentee's all will be there to hear him say, come you blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

I hope I have set forth above some of the things that are most surely believed among God's people.

May we never forget it is in the Lord that we live, move and have our being. We are helpless and have no power except it be given from above. Not even a sparrow can fall without HIM. The scripture doesn't say as we often hear it quoted, without his notice, but without Him. He is our all in all, our Prophet, Priest and King and only hope of eternal life.

Humbly submitted,
Elder Kenneth R. Key

ST. MATTHEW 18: 1-3.

At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

CORRESPONDENCE

February 26, 2011

Dear Brother Horton,

Please renew my subscription to the Signs for another year. Enclosed is a check for $15.00.

I enjoy reading the Signs every month regardless the articles that are printed. It's wonderful to find comfort and experience reading what God does for his people. We always seem to receive it when we most need it. God is my only hope of eternal life.

Thank you for sending my magazine if I am behind.

A Sister in Hope,
Gloria B. Reese

March 3, 2011

Bro. Tony,

Enclosed is a check for two more years for the "Signs.

God bless you all and for holding to what I believe to be the truth.

Pauline and Phil Jones
12555 F.M. Route 79
Sumner, TX 75486

VOICES OF THE PAST

PRIDE IS HUMBLED
Republished from Spiritual Law Counsel

The following incident is told as part of the unwritten traditional history of Elder John Leland:

During the latter part of his life Elder Leland traveled much over the country on preaching tours, on foot. On one occasion he had been warmly solicited in writing, by a widow lady, to visit the part of old Virginia in which she lived and preach, telling him to set his time and her house was at his service, both as a place of abode and also a place to hold his meeting. Mr. Leland replied to her by setting a day that he would preach at her residence at ten o'clock a.m. The lady was a wealthy planter, in Appomattox valley. She regarded herself as *one* of the most pious and exempliary persons to be found anywhere. She had been raised in the high circles of life and knew nothing about poverty, nor had ever associated with laboring classes. She was about thirty-five years of age and had been a widow two years, but knew nothing of the privations commonly attending the life of the widowed mother. She took much pains to appear pious, and her chief object in inviting Mr. Leland to preach at her house was, that she

might make a display of wealth, and thus have the applause of her associates; not only to show her wealth, but her piety as well; so she went to great trouble and expense in preparing for the meeting. The appointment had been spread far and near, pressing solicitations had been sent to numerous friends, to attend the meeting, no expense or pain had been spared, not only to have the best and finest of everything, but to the evening preceeding the meeting several carriages had already arrived to be in good time and enjoy the hospitality of the hostess. About sunset Mr. Leland came up to the mansion on foot. The day was quite warm and dusty when he made his appearance. The walk had caused a free perspiration, which ran down his cheeks making roads in dust which had settled on his face during his day's work. He walked up to the door of the large stone mansion, and his rap was answered by a black servant, of whom he inquired *for* the landlady, the servant ran down the broad carpeted hall to a door, which proceeded the sound of talking and laughing. In a very short time a lady, richly attired, made her appearance, walking briskly and lightly toward the door where Mr. Leland was standing. He had a fair view of her person, and at once read in her physiognomy and deportment something of her leading traits for character.

His intention had been to introduce himself, but before he had time to speak, or before she was near enough for him to address her, she spoke in rather a harsh tone: "Old man, what do you want here? I have nothing for beggars.

Mr. Leland, in a very soft and unassuming tone, said, "Please excuse me madam; I do not wish to beg for money, I am very tired from a long walk, and called to know if you would do me the kindness to allow me to stay under your roof during the night."

Viewing him hastily from head to foot, She very postively answered "No: I have company now, and tomorrow the Rev. Mr. Leland is to preach at my house; so I cannot take in poor stragglers."

Well, said Mr. Leland, I am too much fatigued to travel further tonight, will you allow me to stay in one of those cabins? Pointing to a row of negro houses, just outside of the mansion yard.

After a moment or two of reflection she said, "Yes you may stay there with the negroes if you want to."

He bowed a very polite thank you, and turned toward the row of huts. He proceeded to the furtherest one from the mansion before he found anyone to whom he could speak, to ask permission to stay, but came at last to the smallest, but neatest of all the huts, where he found seated at the door an old negress, who was fanning herself with the wing of a fowl. He spoke to her very gently. "Good evening aunty."

His greeting was answered with, "Good evening mosta." "Well aunty, said he, I have came to ask a very uncommon favor of you,"

"Bless de Lord, mosta, what can dat be, fo' please God, I'se got nuffin to give anyone?" "I am very tired from walking all day, I called at the house of your mistress. But she says she has no room for me in this great house. I am too fatigued to go further, and so I have come to see if you can allow me a shelter in your house.

"Bless de Lord, mosta I got no commodation for anyone; but fore a fellow mortal shall stay out doo's I lets 'em stay in my cabin so, ef da can put up wid my plain hut, Uncle Ben be in drectly den he keep ye company while I fixes you sumpen to eat, for you looks as do you had not eat a morsel for a long time," at the same time pointing to a three-legged stool by the side of the door saying, "set down dar and rest yourself, for you looks so wore out."

Mr. Leland took the seat as directed, saying at the same time, "I am sorry that I am compelled to put you to so much trouble as I have no money to pay you."

"Please God, mosta, Aunt Dilsey never charges anyone yit for sich 'commodations as I could give 'em; for God knows its poor enuff at best.

You say, mosta, you call on missus at de house dar, and she can't take you in? Well you must cuse her, for she's looking for a mighty heap O' company tomorrow; dar's a great man to be dar tomorrow, what's gwin preach in her house, an a good many folks done come a'ready an' heap mo' comin' tomorrow; so missus is mighty busy fixin' for 'em. But here's Uncle Ben she continued, as an old gray headed negro came around the corner of the cabin, muttering to himself about the carelessness of some other negroes.

This old couple, Uncle Ben and Aunt Dilsey, as they were familiarly called by all who knew them, both black and white, were an old couple who, from age, had for a long time lived in a small but snug cabin at the far end of the row of huts occupied by the younger and more active slaves.

Although Uncle Ben was not required to do any labor, yet he voluntarly took a kind of supervision over the farm, stock, etc. When he saw Mr. Leland he stopped short and gave him a scrutinizing look, when Aunt Dilsey spoke, saying:

Uncle Ben, don't stare your eyes out at a stranger; dis ole gentleman was out traveling', and come to stay in our cabin, kase missus she can't let him stay dar, as she's got a heap O' company now."

"Well, said Uncle Ben, we's commanded dat if a stranger comes along we's got to take him in an give him sich as we got to set before him.

While Aunt Dilsey was preparing supper Mr. Leland learned much about the lady of the mansion from

Uncle Ben; he learned, among other things, that they were a very religious family, but the hostess had been raised in the city of Richmond, and had imbibed all the fashionable ideas of religion, with but little of its true principles, and none of its humility. Soon after Mr. Leland had finished a very good, coarse supper, he told his host that he was very much fatigued from a very long day's walk, and would like to retire for the night and that he felt like he wished to return thanks to his Creator for the blessings of the day, and invoke his protection through the night; that if he would annoy them he would retire to some place out of doors,

"Bless God, said the old folks at the same time, we allers like prayin in our house, and neber goes to bed "thout one of us tries to pray."

Mr. Leland then took an old, wellworn Bible out of his little bundle, and read in a very solemn tone the one hundred and second Psalm. During the reading two blacks often said in a low voice, "Amen, bress de Lord." When the Psalm was ended Mr. Leland fell upon his knees, and poured out his feelings in such an outburst of reverential eloquence as was ever equaled, and never surpassed by mortal lips. His host and hostess were so affected by his reading and prayer that they could do no more or say no more than to fix their eyes on their guest, as though they felt that he was something more than a mortal man. He retired to a clean little pallet in one corner of the cabin, where he soon fell asleep. When morning came he was up early. Aunt Dilsey soon had him a good repast, after which he seated himself to read telling hostess that he felt too much fatigued to travel, and if she was willing he would rest there until afternoon anyway, and then if he felt better he would go on his way.

Aunt Dilsey said. "Yes, mosta., stay jist as long as you want to; we be glade to have you be with us a fort-night, if you can put up with our fare."

Mr. Leland seated himself under a shady tree in the cabin yard, and with his Bible, waiting to see what the finality would be.

About nine o'clock everything was in hustle at the stone mansion; the servants were called in to dress in their very best. Carriages began to arrive by the dozens until the hall and every part of the large and elegant building was crowded to overflowing, but to their dismay no preacher had made his appearance, for the last carriage that came in sight had been scanned to get a glimpse of the minister. No one in the large congregation had ever seen him, but all had heard of him. So everyone was full of anxious expectation, supposing that when he came he would be drawn by two or four fine horses, driven by a servant in livery.

Ten o'clock passed, half past ten, eleven o'clock was announced by the clock on the wall, and no min-

ister. The company had by this time become restless, and were about to disperse, when Aunt Dilsey went to her mistress and said.

"Bress de Lord, missus, why don't you git dat ole man who stayed in our cabin last night to come to de door and pray 'fore de folks all go home; he prayed in our cabin las' night and dis mornin', 'fore God, in all my born days I nebber heard sich prayin' afore. He's sit tin' right dar now, under de tall pine tree; and as de preacher's not cum, if you'll let him pray, I'll go right now and fetch him down."

The lady consulted with some of the company, the matter was talked of among the congregation when it was agreed to have the old straggler as they called him, come and pray before the congregation broke up.

So Aunt Dilsey went to where Mr. Leland was sitting, and said, 'Mosta,de folks all dispinted 'bout de preacher comin'; he am not cum, and da wants you to go down an' pray for 'em fore da all brakes up. Mosta I wants you to pray jis' like you did las' night."

Mr. Leland walked down to the front door and standing on the steps, repeated a short hymn by memory, sang and then engaged in prayer: by the time his prayer was ended all eyes were fixed upon him with amazement.

He then remarked that as there seemed to be a disappointment, that if it would not be assuming too much, he would talk to them a few minutes, and as a foundation or starting-point, he would read a short passage from the word of truth, which they would find by reference to the thirteenth chapter and second verse of Hebrews: ***"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for there by some have entertained angels unawares."*** When he had spoke for twenty or thirty minutes the hostess, who had refused him the hospitality of her house the evening before, became so deeply affected that she ran and fell prostrate at the feet of Mr. Leland, and would, if he allowed her to do so, have washed his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. It was said that she was so overcome and affected that from that time forward she was a changed and different woman so much so that she threw off all her finery and ornamental dressing, and became an humble and plain Christian. Though she was a professor before, her whole deportment underwent a complete change. Her house became a place of divine worship where she delighted in making all, no matter how plain or how poor, as happy as kind attention could make them; in fact, it was said that if preference had to be given to any, it was always in favor of the poor and needy.

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

I have read the above scripture many times, and each time I have wondered just what it meant. I know what it says, but what is the real every day meaning of it. I read it the other day, as I had many times in the past and was thinking about what it could actually mean, and as I did this thought came to mind; faith is the manifestation of the Spirit of God in the lives of his children. The Spirit is manifested in their lives as they are led and directed to fulfill the purposes that he has for them here in this time world, and they are unaware of its presence because it comes sovereignly and takes up its abode within them and they walk in a different path. The spirit is what produces the faith that his children have and faith is what motivates them to believe, enables them to understand the things of the Spirit and to do all of the other things that they do in the name of Christ and for his sake, whether under the law dispensation, or in the gospel day.

The Spirit was manifested in the lives of the Israelites, under the law, and directed them all the days of their life, but not in the same manner that it does the saints, in the gospel day. Under the law they were given priests to be a go between, God and the people; now Christ is the high priest and just before his death he told the disciples that he would send the Spirit which indwells man and leads him in ways that are pleasing unto God, but, it is by faith in either case. Under the law God gave them the gift of faith which caused them to follow those whom he had sent to lead them, but their faith was in God, not in the law, because they feared God. As when he spoke to them from the mount and they saw the fire and smoke and exceedingly feared the fire and smoke and the loud sounds and asked God to speak to Moses and let Moses speak to them as regarding the oracles of the law. They performed the miracles and manifested their faith even as the apostles did before the day of Pentecost; by God giving them a special dispensation of power as he did when he sent them out to preach, but the Spirit did not indwell them until the day of Pentecost when they responded and fulfilled the prophecy of Joel as he spoke concerning this day.

Faith is what leads the saints in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake, it is that which enables them to persevere in the times of adversity, that which strengthens them in times of weakness and causes them to stand against the distressing wiles of the devil: whether it be lions, fiery furnaces, pharaohs or any of the other natural fears and weaknesses of the flesh when it is faced with the temptations that confront them in this world of sin. This world is Satan's domain, in which he wields havoc with the

saints, in his war against God and all that is holy and good, but he does not destroy one of these little ones, with all of his fury. Faith is the armour which God provides for the chosen generation in their war against principalities and powers of this earth, and against the spiritual wickedness in high places. This armour can withstand the strongest onslaught of Satan because even he is under the dominion of God, and in all of his raging is but fulfilling the will of God, as are all of the other forces in existence.

Since faith is the manifestation of the Spirit in the saints, and they are the chosen generation, Satan is powerless to do anything but disturb, harass and afflict them. He can never destroy a single one of the saints because greater is the Spirit that is within them, than the spirit that is within Satan and all of his unholy angels; and this is because God, in mercy, has determined that it should be that way, to cause them to turn to him in faith.

Faith is bestowed upon the saints of God to make manifest that they are his very special beloved, the ones he had chosen before the foundation of the world as his own; he formed them for himself, named them, and promised that he would never leave nor forsake them. He has loved them with an everlasting love, and faith is the indestructible bond that assures them that they shall never fail nor finally fall away, regardless of the weakness and frailty of the natural man. By faith, David slew Goliath, when but a lad, by faith Abraham believed God and left his former life and country and went to seek the country that God had promised that he would possess; by faith Moses forsook Egypt not fearing the wrath of the king, looking to him that is invisible: kept the Passover and by faith led the children out of Egypt and to the borders of the land of Canaan. All of these examples of faith are demonstrated in the children of God, and are but the substance of the things hoped for, the great cloud of witnesses that encompasses them, comforts and encourages them in their journey here in time, all are evidences of the working of the invisible spirit that was directing their way. They do not understand, nor can they explain this faith to anyone, other than to say that it is not of an earthly origin because the things that it causes them to believe defies all natural laws and reasoning and yet they cannot deny the existence of them.

Faith caused David to reply to his brother, when he reprimanded him for coming to the battlefield by saying, what I have now done, is there not a cause. I don't believe that even David understood the reason of this reply; even as the prophets who prophesied of the grace that was to come to us; they were searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify. God is the author of all

scriptural truth, and is the instigator or motivator of all events, which come to pass, even though the prophets, or David, uttered the words or performed the deeds.

Israel had been given evidence of the Messiah that was to come for many generations, prophesies concerning the things that he would do in behalf of the chosen nation, and yet when all of the things that were foretold were fulfilled in their presence, they did not recognize him. This too, was in the plan of God from the beginning, even as sin and all of the other pitfalls that were placed in their path, they were ultimately for their good and were to teach them and cause them to turn to him in times of trouble, for he is the only source of help in their time of need, and this all because of this faith that God gives to the saints.

Through faith they understand the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. Now this precept is foolishness to the natural mind, as are all of the other miracles described in the scriptures; as Elder Ramar L. Biggs, a former pastor of the Bordeaux Church used to say, the truth is not reasonable, it defies all of the logic of man, yet, by faith, the saints of God believe that the miracles were actual events which occurred as described. After all, the greatest event that shall ever occur is the greatest of all miracles and all of the saints depend on the authenticity of that miracle for their hope of eternal life. Some people will say that they don't believe in predestination, and my reply has always been, ***"Well you had better believe in it, because only by absolute predestination of all things do you have any assurance whatsoever that there will be a heaven and immortal glory to hope for, in the end of the ages."*** The scriptures declare that there shall be, and the very foundation of the plan of salvation depends on the author of the scriptures being able to perform that which he has promised and to do all that he has promised that he would do, and faith in the individual, is what enables him to believe that God is able, and shall do everything that he has promised to do, without the omission of a single event. If one event is omitted, it might be, "that heaven" that is prepared for them that worship God, and if that be the case, what is the point of it all? It must all be there for it to be the work of a sovereign, all powerful God who created the heavens and the earth and who said, my counsel shall stand and I will do all of my pleasure.

Paul said by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God, and this is from the beginning to the end, and it never fails; as is recorded in ***(Isa. Chap 46, vs. 11) "yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass: I have purposed it, I will also do it."*** It is not of the creature, but is the work of God in bringing

every heir of promise into the fold, and it is in a way and manner that causes them all to acknowledge their unworthiness of this gift and to declare, with Paul, that though they feel to be the chiefest of sinners, the long-suffering of God was extended to them in their lost and sinful condition, raised them up and blesses them to sit together, with their brethren, in these heavenly places, where they can worship him in spirit and in truth, from a pure heart.

Able offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain because it was offered in faith; he was but returning unto God a small portion of that which God had given him, as an expression of his love, to show his appreciation for his many blessings, and to praise and honor his most holy name. God had respect unto Abel and his offering because it came forth from the heart that had been touched, and blessed to see the glory of the kingdom of heaven. By this faith he was impressed to shew forth his love in this manner. It was not of duty, but from an humble and contrite heart, as he was made to realize what he was in nature, as compared to what he should be before a Holy and Just creator. This knowledge comes by the revelation that is given with the faith when received; it is not engraved on tables of stone but on the fleshly tables of the heart, and cannot be erased.

By faith, the elders obtained a good report, and this is referring to all of the holy men of old who spake and responded as they were moved by the Holy Ghost to perform great deeds of valour as God worked in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. They were, but men, as are all of the saints of God, but faith makes the difference in what man can do in nature and what he can do by grace; as Paul said, ***(Phil Chap 4, vs. 13) "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."*** and faith is this strengthening power of Christ being made manifest in the lives of his children. Faith enabled David to face Goliath, Daniel to face the lions den, the three Hebrew children the fiery furnace, Moses to face Pharaoh, and untold millions to suffer persecution at the hands of the world's, so called, religious leaders and the rulers of the nations but they have never been overcome yet. They may die, but, just as Christ who triumphed in his death, so do they, there is no recorded incident in the scriptures where the powers of Satan overcame the power of God in the salvation of one of the saints, and he never shall. In the world they shall suffer tribulations, but, even as Christ overcame the world, so shall they. They shall triumph and reign with him in glory in that place that he has gone to prepare for them, and as he told them to be of good cheer because he had overcome the world; well, he overcame it for them and their faith gave them the knowledge of that fact. ***(Eph. Chap 2, vs. 8) "For by grace are ye saved***

through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." How then is this grace given, and how is it received by man, we have stated that it is by the grace of God, so the creature is not involved in the process, except as the receiver of a gracious gift, which is bestowed upon him by the sovereign and irresistible grace of God. The man is completely unaware of the circumstances surrounding the gift, and can only wonder in amazement that it has been bestowed upon him, after he has been made to realize what he actually is in nature. In the flesh he would have said, I am entitled to it as much as anyone else, I am as good as the next person, but by the grace that accompanies the gift he cries, ***"Oh woe is me, I am undone, I am not worthy of this gift that has been given me, and his heart overflows with gratitude and thanksgiving unto the giver of the gracious and precious favor that has been shown him."***

(Job Chap 33, vs. 14-17) "For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man." This scripture indicates that God alone is the author and the finisher of faith in man, he speaks to them and seals their instructions and they respond without even realizing when and where the faith which was imparted to them came from, until it is revealed unto them. They go to bed without it and wake up with it. This is, of course, over simplifying it but nevertheless all of the imparting of faith unto man is the work of God, they didn't have, now they do.

The apostle Paul started from Jerusalem professing the Jewish faith and arrived in Damascus a believer in Christ and all that Paul did was to be at the place of the appointment, of God, which was made before time began, and of which he was completely ignorant. Paul did not see it coming, and did nothing to assist or deter the giving or the receiving of this faith, and so it is with all men. As Job said above, he does it this way, to withdraw man from his purpose and so that man has nothing to boast of in the work. Isn't this the same as the apostle Paul stated in Ephesians, by grace are ye saved through faith, not or works lest any should boast.

Yes, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of future things not seen, as yet. It is the most precious of the gifts of God to his children because it, in fact, encompasses all of their dreams and desires and causes them to ever be found pressing on to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, even though they

cannot see nor prove it to someone else, that is unfamiliar with the process. It is however stamped indelibly in their minds and will influence them as long as they live in this world. It is a special gift of love to them from their heavenly Father, even as the coat of many colors which Jacob gave unto Joseph, and in like manner is a mark that they are of the most beloved of the Father.

By faith, they live, move and have their being in this world, and by faith they shall overcome and have their being in that world which is to come; that high abode of the angels where all mystery will be ended, they shall see God, face to face, know as they are known, and rejoice in a way and manner that they have never done before. Here they have the shadow, there they will have the actual substance. Faith will be but a memory of their earthly existence, for they will have the fulness of the things hoped for here in time, but til then, they will cling to this faith because it is the only real treasure that they have in these earthen vessels, which is where they must dwell, until the time appointed of the Father. Then will be the time when He comes to take his jewels home, to adorn that holy city the new Jerusalem, to the eternal honor and glory of his holy name. Faith, is the eye by which the saints of God see and understand the certainty and sure reality of these things that are to be theirs in that day, while they are still here in this time world.

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the spiritual knowledge that is given to every heir of grace, to see the things that are unseen by the natural eye, but which are more real and present in their spiritual eye and mind than the things that are visible to them here in nature. The things that they view here with the natural eye are temporal, but these things are eternal, and the possession of this knowledge is worth more, to them, than all of the wealth of the world combined. Faith is their key to that city; that new Jerusalem, which shall come down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, the most precious of all the blessings of time and eternity, unto the children of the heavenly king. All of these things were prepared for them before time began, were preserved in Christ Jesus until the time of the end, at which time all mysteries shall be revealed and the fullness of the glory of God shall be known unto all of the saints. The grandeur and glory of these things cannot even be imagined with the natural mind, but they are the inheritance of the saints that is laid up for them when time shall be no more, and heaven shall ring with the songs of praise from the hearts of the saints who were redeemed by the precious blood of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, their elder brother.

In bonds of love;
Elder Richard H. Campbell

ZECHARIAH 3:9.

Brother Beebe: -- As you are in the habit of expounding portions of the scriptures for the brethren, I would be glad if you will expound for me the text, Zech. iii.9. Please be particular on the *graving thereof,* and oblige yours.

Jacob Winchel, Jr.

"For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua, upon one stone shall be seven eyes; behold I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day."

In attempting a reply to Elder Winchel, we feel deeply sensible of our insufficiency to do justice on the subject. We profess to have no special light on the text proposed, more than what the words thereof will readily suggest to the mind of all who are taught of God. To us it is highly probable that brother Winchel's mind, having been particularly directed to the subject, a commentary from him might be more satisfactory than any thing we can write. Such views, however, as we have on the scriptures of truth, however weak and feeble, we have not felt at liberty to withhold from our readers when called on to give them.

The book of Zechariah the prophet abounds with sublime, and striking figures, many of which, to an ordinary mind, appear exceedingly abstruse, and like some of the writings of our beloved brother Paul, hard to be understood. The primary allusions of the figures used by Zechariah seem to have been directed to illustrate the astonishing display of the mighty hand of the God of Israel in restoring his people from their captivity in Babylon, the repairing of the city of Jerusalem, and the rebuilding of the temple of the Lord. But as all these things were typical of the redemption of the church of the living God, from bondage and captivity, and the upbuilding of the spiritual temple in the Lord Jesus Christ, they are serviceable to the saints of the present age in their spiritual and prophetic application to our Lord Jesus Christ, under the gospel dispensation.

Joshua was the high priest at the time of the restoration, and as such, he was, of course, a type of the great and glorious High Priest of our profession, the Lord Jesus Christ, whose priesthood is not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. By the stone which God had laid before Joshua we understand Christ the anti-type of Joshua to be intended. Not in the order of the time of manifestation in his flesh, but he was before Joshua in the same sense that he was before Abraham, David, and John the Baptist. He said to the Jews, ***"Before Abraham was, I am."*** David said he foresaw the Lord always before his face, etc. And

John the Baptist says, ***"He that cometh after me is preferred before me, for he was before me."*** His goings are of old, even from everlasting, and in his Mediatorial relationship to his people, He is before all things and by him all things consist. This is the Stone which God has laid in Zion for a foundation; and in laying this Stone for a foundation in Zion, it was laid before Joshua the high priest. And in this preeminence, in regard to his person and priesthood, God laid the stone before Joshua, showing that the priesthood after the order of Melchizedek should far surpass that of the order of Aaron. The epistle to the Hebrews very clearly sets forth wherein the High Priest of our profession excels the priesthood of Aaron or Joshua; and Zechariah the prophet had a very clear prophetic view of the superior excellency of the royal priesthood of Christ over the typical priesthood, and speaking by the Spirit, he said, ***"Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is the BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the Temple of the Lord; even he shall build the Temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne, and shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both" Zech. vi. 12, 13.*** In contemplating the superior priesthood of our great Redeemer, who is holy, harmless, and higher than the heavens, being assured that he knoweth how to succour them that are tempted, having in the days of his flesh been tempted himself in all points, as we are, and yet without sin, truly we may say, such a High Priest becomes us. For he is able to save unto the uttermost all who come upon God by him, seeing that he ever liveth to make intercession for them. The offerings made by Aaron and his sons could not purge the conscience from dead works to serve the Living God, nor remove the perpetual obligation of those for whom the offerings were made, to do the whole law or the dreadful penalty resting on them for failing to do all that the law required; but Christ has by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified. He has redeemed them from the dominion as well as from the curse of the law, having himself born their sins in his own body on the tree. He has redeemed them unto God with his blood and made them kings and priests unto God, and they shall reign with him forever. They are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood and a peculiar people; and they delight in shewing forth his praise.

This Stone laid before Joshua, unto all them that believe, is precious; but unto them that be disobedient, this Stone, which the builders refused, is the head of the corner, and a Stone of stumbling and a Rock of offense to them that stumble at the

word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed.

Upon one stone shall be seven eyes. This one stone on which should be seven eyes we understand to be the same stone which God had laid before Joshua; and although the eyes upon the stone, in the type, were engraven eyes, yet we find the signification of the engraving was to set forth the seven spirits of the Lord, which go to and fro in the earth. It is far beyond our ability to comprehend, or to define the seven spirits of the God of Israel; but whatever they signify must certainly be found in the person and priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ. If by seven eyes we understand the peculiar attributes of his eternal deity, they are displayed to men only in and through the priesthood of Immanuel. He is the brightness of his Father's glory and the express image of his person. And it pleased the Father that in him all fulness should dwell. The fulness of eternal Godhead, and the fulness of the church dwell in him bodily. The seven eyes descri bed in the type by the engraving on the stone are directly applied, Rev. v. 6, to Christ in his Mediatorial character, as being in the midst of the throne; and he is in that connection expressly called *"The Lamb,"* which title invariably refers to him in his Mediatorial character, as the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us unto God with his blood. He was thus identified by John the Baptist, *"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world."* This Lamb which had been slain from the foundation of the world, but which is now made known to them who by him do believe in God who raised him up from the dead, as seen by John in the midst of the throne, and of the elders, and of the four beasts, as a Lamb that had been slain, having seven eyes, and seven horns, which he informs us are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. Compare this, Rev. v. 6, with Zech. iv. 10. With those seven they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth, and no doubt can remain that Christ is the anti-typical Stone on whom the seven eyes, or spirits of the Lord, should be, and accordingly were displayed. The eyes, by Zechariah are simply called seven eyes, and we are told that they are the eyes of the Lord, etc., but in Revelation, John saw them in connection with the emblems of regal power and dominion after the exaltation of the slain Lamb to the midst of the throne. *"Having seven horns and seven eyes."* The number seven agrees with the number of the golden candlesticks and of the stars which were in his right hand, the seven churches, the seven seals, seven trumpets, seven vials, etc. It is regarded as a number signifying perfection; precisely enough, and nothing to spare. These eyes being represented as going to and fro, and as being sent in connection with the seven horns, forth into all the earth,

may be designed to signify Christ on the throne of his Mediatorial glory, going forth in the gospel to every kindred, tongue, and people under the heavens. His eyes denoting that in him is light, and that he is the fountain of all spiritual light reflected upon his people; for this light is identified with the life of this mystical body. In him was life and the life was the light of men. With his seven eyes he was able to look upon the sealed book, and by the power signified by his horns, he was able to take the book out of the angel's hand, and open the seals thereof. Habakkuk says, ***"His brightness was as the light, he had horns coming out of his hand, and there was the hiding of his power."*** The union of the eyes and of the horns set forth also the peculiar character of that priesthood which is after the order of Melchizedek, in distinction from that of Aaron; as a royal or regal priesthood. He sits as a Priest as well as a Ruler upon his throne; King of Salem and Priest of the Most High God, and the counsel of peace is embraced between them; (King and Priest) or between the eyes and the horns. As in him personally and relatively as Head of his body the church, he has all wisdom and all power to direct and accomplish the complete and eternal salvation of all his members; so also is he presented in the Gospel, sent forth into all the world, as Christ the wisdom of God, and the power of God. The church as his body can never be left in darkness, in her union to him as her Head, for all the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines in his face; nor can she ever be destroyed while the horns of his power embrace all the power of heaven and earth.

Behold I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts. In preparing the stones for the temple made with hands, mechanics and artists were employed to engrave such devices as were required to signify those things which they were intended to prefigure in the temple of the Lord's mystical body, which is made without hands. Although men were employed in the typical building, none but God himself is able to fashion and engrave the graving of the spiritual Temple of the Living God. The engraving of the seven eyes upon the Stone which God had laid before Joshua the High Priest, as we have understood the stone to represent Christ in his Mediatorial relation to, and connection with his church, and the eyes to denote the seven spirits, or the eternal perfections of the supreme Godhead, especially, the display of his wisdom and power, appears to us to express the idea that God would stamp the impress of his own perfections on the man Christ Jesus; by being himself manifested in the body of his flesh. That in the revelation of the Stone, laid in Zion for a foundation he would give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. And that Christ,

in his incarnation, and his priesthood should shine upon Israel as the brightness of his Father's glory and the express image of his person. Hence Christ in his revelation is God, manifest in the flesh, seen of angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. He is recognized by inspired witnesses as the image of the invisible God. By the term *image* in this place, we understand a visible, or tangible manifestation of the supreme God. Aside from this engraving, or manifestation, God is called the invisible God; but in Christ the Mediator, he is revealed, so that, if we have seen the Son, then have we seen the Father also, for the Father is in him, and he is in the Father. While independently of this revelation, no man hath seen the Father at any time, neither can any man come unto the Father but by him. That Christ is essentially God as well as man and Mediator, we fully believe,-have never for a moment doubted; but that he is man and Mediator as well as essentially God is equally clear to our understanding; and it is in Christ as Mediator that the eternal Godhead is revealed, admits of no disputation. Hence the revelation of the Messiah, as the Redeemer of Israel is the manifestation of the Stone which Daniel saw taken without hands from the mountain, which should grow and fill the earth, and break in pieces all other kingdoms, and continue forever.

And I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. The land spoken of is that mentioned in Chapter ii, and verse 12, ***"And the Lord shall inherit Judah his portion, in the holy land; and shall choose Jerusalem again."*** In the connection we are informed that the consecrated land of Judah had been defiled for which cause they had been delivered into the hand of the enemy, where they had been held in captivity three-score and ten years. But this seventy years of captivity being now accomplished, the Lord was about to restore them, repair the walls of Jerusalem, and rebuild the temple, etc., and remove the iniquity of the holy land. The ceremonial purification of the land of Judah prefigured the redemption of the chosen people of God from their iniquities by the blood of the everlasting covenant, and the return of the ransomed of the Lord with singing to Zion. None but the Lord could remove their iniquities; and he gave the assuring promise that he would do it in one day. The *one day* may be understood in a two-fold sense. First, in relation to the day of the atonement by our Lord Jesus Christ. When Jesus was delivered up for the offenses of his people and arose from the dead for their justification; having put away their sins by the sacrifice of himself; when he made an end of sin, finished the transgressions, and brought in everlasting righteousness.

Secondly, the one day may also apply to the whole gospel dispensa-

tion, during which all the people of God should be gathered in from the four winds, and receive experimentally the application of the Savior's blood and righteousness, for the remission of sin, and for their perfect justification before God. All this is the work of God, and in either application, the iniquity of that land is removed in one day.

If what we have written should be of any service to brother Winchel or others, we will rejoice. Let all who read examine the subject for themselves in the light of divine revelation, and if they find that what we have written is not sustained by the word and spirit of our God, reject it, and attribute the failure not to design, but to weakness and infirmity on our part. *"Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good."*

Middletown, N.Y., March 15, 1854

"That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. — Luke i. 74,75.

Holiness consists mainly of two points: 1. being made a partaker of the spirit of holiness whereby, as born of God, we are made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; set our affections on things above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God; have our conversation in heaven; put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him which created him; live a life of faith in the Son of God, and beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. To be thus spiritually-minded, to be thus brought near unto God through his dear Son, to walk before him in the light of his countenance, and to know something of spiritual communion with the Lord of life and glory as sitting on his mercy-seat in the fulness of his risen power, and in the heights, depths, lengths, and breadths of his dying love — this to taste, to handle, to experience, and to enjoy is to be made a partaker of true holiness, and to be sanctified by the Spirit of God as an indwelling Teacher, Guide, Advocate, and Comforter. And if we know nothing of these things, at least in some small measure, or are not looking after and longing for them to be brought into our heart by a divine power, we give but little evidence that the grace of God has reached our heart and renewed us in the spirit of our mind.

2. The second branch of holiness is a life, conduct, and conversation agreeable to the precepts of the gospel; and the one springs out of the other. *"Make the tree good,"* said our blessed Lord, *"and his fruit good, for the tree is known by his fruit."* Gospel fruit must

grow upon a gospel tree, and thus the fruits of a holy and godly life must spring out of those divine operations of the Holy Ghost upon the heart of which we have just spoken. Thus to speak, live, and act is to be ***"holy in all manner of conversation,"*** that is in our daily walk; and is a fulfilling of the precept which God gave of old to his typical people Israel, and quoted in the New Testament to shew that it is spiritually fulfilled in that peculiar people whom he calls by his distinguishing grace under the gospel.

Elder J.C. Philpot

ROMANS 8:1-4.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in hte likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing the Staunton River Union will be held at Canaan Primitive Baptist Church, located in Pittsylvania County, Va Mount Cross Road, the fifth Saturday in May.

The song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

Mark Terry, Moderator
Fred Murphy, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will meet, the Lord willing, on the fifth Sunday in May. This meeting will be held at Moons Creek Church. The church is located 1 mile east of Hwy 86, between Danville and Yanceyville, on Park Springs Road.

Elder Kenneth R. Key
Moderator

ROMANS 8:11.

But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 2011

Bernard Cox, VA 5.00
Anonymous, VA 100.00
Kendrick Jones, AL 5.00
Jerry Morgan, LA 10.00
Peggy Phillips, VA 5.00
Pauline Jones, TX 10.00
J.D. Neely, AR 5.00
Edward Ambrose, VA 5.00
Greg Webb, IL 25.00
Livie Thompson, VA 5.00
First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis - *In Memory of* Elder R. H. Campbell 1000.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER RUBY PARSONS ATKINS

Our Lord called home Sister Ruby Parsons Atkins January 6, 2011. Sister Ruby was born June 25, 1921, A daughter of Brother David and Sister Many Hamblett Parsons. She was married to the late Roger Carter Atkins.

Sister Ruby was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by experience and Baptism September 9, 1951. Sister Ruby loved the doctrine salvation by Grace. She attended and enjoyed services as long as her health permitted.

Those left to mourn Sister Ruby are sons Roger J. Atkins, Sr. and Donald J. Atkins, Sr and his wife Lynn; granddaughter Lisa Zimmerman husband Bill, Beth Atkins, Kimberly McComb and husband John, grandson Donald J. Adkins, Jr., Roger Atkins, Jr. and wife Tammy and ten great-grandchildren. A Sister Grace Mohr, Brother Fred Parsons, Courtney M. Parsons and wife Lena.

The family wishes to thank Diane Harris for her love and care for the past ten years.

Sister Atkins obtained a Masters Degree is Education from Longwood University. She committed her entire career to public education in Appomattox and Charlotte County. She retired as Principal at Charlotte Elementary in Charlotte Court House. She lived in Midlothian, VA near her family for the past sixteen years.

The family received friends at 1:30 January 10, 2011 at Oak view Presbyterian Church near Cullen, VA.

Her funeral was held by her Pastor, Elder Marvin Brumfield, January 10, 2011 at 2:30 at Oak View Presbyterian Church. Her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

May all be reconciled to God's Will.

Written by:
Carol R. Lansaw
Elder Marvin Brimfield.
Moderator
Oscar Pickral, Clerk

SISTER PHYLLIS DALTON GOAD

With much sadness and grief in my heart, I will endeavor to write a few words in memory of my dear Mother and your sister and friend. I pray we will be comforted with trust in the all-powerful God who holds all things in His mighty hand.

Mama was born in Pittsylvania County on December 16, 1935, a daughter of the late Brother Hubert Russell and Sister Gladys Hines Dalton. She was married to Elder Raymond Lewis Goad on March 26, 1954, and to this union two daughters were born Pamela Betterton and Stephanie Dawson, who survive her. She also leaves two sisters, Patsy Barker and Gail Crouse and two grandchildren, Lauren Dawson and Brent Dawson.

She was a strong believer in salvation by grace, faithful to attend her meetings and loved the Songs of Zion. Mama always was concerned for the welfare of Weatherford Church. She prepared meals to serve the visitors and kept them in her home as long as she was able. She also enjoyed visiting sister churches near and far. She and her companion asked for a home with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on July 25, 1965 and was received into the sweet fellowship and was baptized on August 8, 1965 by their pastor, Elder O. K. Tench.

I believe Mama was made reconciled to her condition. She never complained, she fought a good fight and has finished her course and has kept the faith and henceforth there is laid up for her a crown of righteousness which the Lord, their righteous judge shall give her at that day; not to her only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. She was taken from this world of sin and sorrow on October 23, 2010.

Her funeral was held on October 25, 2010 at 2:00 p.m. at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Marvin Brumfield, Elder Jimmy Gray and Elder Joe Sawyer and her body was laid to rest beneath an array of beautiful flowers in the Church Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Mama's trials and tribulations are over and we have sweet memories of the many years we were blessed to share with her. Her journey is over, but we have a while left on ours. God has promised never to leave nor forsake not even one of His little children. He never makes a mistake.

Written by her daughter who misses her.

Pamela G. Betterton

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

Hillsville, Va. 24343

Dear Readers of the "Signs":

As you probably know by now, our editor Elder Kenneth Key, passed away April 3 of this year. He served as editor for 28 years and we shall surely miss him. His obituary appeared in the May issue and I am sure there will be other obituaries from the churches he served.

As I have accepted the responsibility of editor, fearfully and feeling so inadequate, I ask for your prayers and support. This is your paper as it relies upon your articles and communications. The Lord has blessed this publication since 1832 as an advocate for sound doctrine to the comfort and edification of it's readers. We look to the Lord for His divine guidance and instruction. We pray that the Lord will continue to bless us to labor in the word and doctrine to His honor and praise.

In addition to articles expounding the scriptures, we would welcome your experiences relating the wonderful things the Lord has done for you. Any comments or suggestions will also be appreciated.

Humbly yours,
Cleo Robertson

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EDITORIAL

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

Many believe that the scriptures are literal and not spiritual. Those of us who believe that the scriptures also have a spiritual meaning are accused of being "spiritualists". When the carnal mind reads the scriptures, it can only see and understand that which is literal. Romans 8:6-8, **For to be carnally minded *is* death; but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace: Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.** When Christ came to the Samaritan woman at the well, He said unto her, **God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.** Contrary to the opinion of the world, no one in the flesh can worship God who is a Spirit. Therefore, the Spirit must be in us for us to worship Him and to have any understanding of Him. The Apostle also wrote that **"the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."**

The scriptures are more than a history of the nation of Israel and the Jewish people. From the very first verse of Genesis to the last verse of Revelation, Christ is set forth. In the Old Testament, there are many types and shadows of heavenly things. As the Apostle Paul wrote in Hebrews 8:4-6, **For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith He, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount. But now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.** It has been said that the Old Testament is the New concealed and the New Testament is the Old revealed.

Christ spoke in parables and His

disciples asked "why". Christ answered **"Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given."** Mark writes that He taught His disciples many things by parables. All scripture is a parable that the world cannot understand. Neither can we understand it of ourselves. This understanding must come by revelation from God. As Christ told Peter, **"Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee; but my Father which is in heaven."**

Christ is set forth in the scriptures from the beginning of Genesis to the end of the book of Revelation. If we are not given of God to see Christ throughout the scriptures, we have missed the very essence or substance of them. I believe that His people have the same desire as certain Greeks who came to worship at the Passover in Jerusalem and said unto Phillip, **Sir, we would see Jesus.** The very first verse of Genesis reads **In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.** The first verse of St. John reads, **In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.** Also, verse 3 of St. John says, **All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made.** The Word is Christ and He was in the beginning with God because He is God. The Apostle Paul writes in Colossians 1:16-17 concerning Christ, **For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.**

Genesis 1:4 **And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.** This was not the light from the sun, for the sun, moon, and stars were not created until the fourth day. This was not a created light as God said **"Let there be light."** This light was already there as it had no beginning and no end. It was manifested as it shined in darkness. When this light is manifested, it always separates. **"And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness."** When this light shined in the darkness of your soul, there was a separation between the spiritual man and the carnal man. It separated you from the world. **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord."** This light showed you that you were a sinner and lost. It showed you the very blackness of your soul. There was now a division between the darkness of the carnal man and the light of the spiritual man. John writes that **"In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."** John says Christ was that light.

When the serpent (Satan) deceived Eve and she took of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and Adam followed her in the transgression, God said to the serpent **"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou**

shall bruise his heel." The seed of the woman was Christ who was born of a virgin. For He came **"in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."** The tree of the knowledge of good and evil sets forth the law for by the law is the knowledge of sin. The tree of life is a type of Christ who is eternal life. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden from the beginning and there was no commandment or law against eating of it. But, they had no desire nor felt a need of it as they must first eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and their eyes were opened to see their nakedness. When the law is applied to our hearts, we see ourselves as sinners and lost. We cannot cover our sins by works of the flesh and we cannot hide from God. They heard the voice of the Lord walking in the cool of the day. This was Christ, the Word, who came to them in the day of grace. This was a cool, refreshing time and the Lord clothed them with coats of skin. This required a death and a shedding of blood and sets forth that Christ clothed them with His righteousness. We see Jesus as He suffered, died, shed His blood and rose again to save His people from their sins.

Christ is seen in the scripture concerning Cain and Abel. Abel was a keeper of sheep showing that there were no works of the flesh. He did not make them sheep, but was only a "keeper". He brought of the firstlings of his flock and the Lord had respect to his offering because the lamb offered set forth Christ as the Lamb of God. Christ stood a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. John the Baptist saw Him and proclaimed **"The Lamb of God"**. Abraham saw Him as the Lamb of God when taking his son Isaac to be offered on Mount Mariah. On the third day he saw the place afar off. Abraham was given faith to see Jesus as He would hang on the cross on that very mountain some two thousand years in the future. The third day sets forth the gospel day or the day of grace. Christ rose from the dead on the third day having finished the work the Father gave Him to do. That's why Abraham could tell Isaac, when he asked where was the lamb for a burnt offering, that **"God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering."** Abraham saw Christ as the Lamb of God. Cain was a tiller of the ground which implies action meaning that his offering was works of the flesh. He brought of the fruit of the ground which was of the earth earthy. God had not respect to Cain's offering. **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."**

Not only are there types or figures of Christ through all the scriptures, but He also appeared in other forms at times. When Abraham's nephew, Lot, was captured by the four kings, Abraham and his trained servants pursued and destroyed them. He rescued Lot and was returning home when someone met him. Melchisedec, king of Salem and priest of the most high God

brought bread and wine and blessed Abraham. Melchisedec communed with Abraham there. This man was Christ because His name means King of righteousness. He was also King of Salem, which is King of peace. These names, titles and description fit no one but Christ. This priest of the most high God had no beginning nor end and therefore Christ was a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. Christ came as Melchisedec to set forth that His priesthood was before the Levitical priesthood was ever established. The priesthood of Christ could not be after the order of any carnal man who is a sinner with a beginning and an end. How great this man was is evidenced by Abraham worshipping Him in giving a tenth of the spoils and by Melchisedec blessing Abraham. As the Apostle says, the less is blessed of the greater. Christ is the high priest of His people who are a royal priesthood because they are one in Him and therefore, clothed with His robe of righteousness.

On another occasion the Lord appeared unto Abraham as he sat in the door of his tent in the heat of the day. There appeared unto Abraham three men that stood by him. The Lord told Abraham that Sarah would have a son at the time appointed. He then told Abraham that He was going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. The one who talked with Abraham was indeed Christ, the Word, and the other two were angels sent to deliver Lot and his family and to destroy the cities.

In the New Testament, Christ came into this world born of a virgin and had a body of flesh as any other man except without sin. As Isaiah was blessed to describe Him so wonderfully, He had no form nor beauty that anyone should desire Him. He was despised and rejected of men. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. But He carried our sorrows and bore our grief. He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him and with His stripes we are healed. What suffering He endured and opened not His mouth! What manner of love is this! The fulness of the Godhead dwelled in Him bodily as He had all power. Men saw Him but could not know who He was because His body was a veil. Only those who were the elect were blessed to truly know Him. He was God in a body of flesh who had the power to lay down His life and the power to take it up again. No man took it from Him. He knew the thoughts as well as the intent of the hearts of all people. He knew the extent of all the suffering He would endure. He knew the very moment of His death and resurrection. It pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell. Not only the fulness of the Godhead, but also the fulness of the church and all blessings were in Him.

Don't you have a longing, a sincere desire of the heart, to see Jesus? The Apostle Paul said, **"For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."** As the Apostle wrote to the Philippian Church, **"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also**

we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself." The Apostle writes to the Corinthians that while we are at home in this body we are absent from the Lord for we walk by faith and not by sight. But he says we are willing to be absent from this body, and be present with the Lord.

It is my desire as long as we are in this body that the Lord continue to bless us in love and sweet fellowship.

Your fellow traveler,
Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

April 11, 2011

Dear Mr. Horton,

This is to let you know that my husband and I moved from our old address at:

2140 Cinook Ct.
Seven Bays, Wa. 99122

into Spokane, Wash. on April 1st of this month, please send my copy of The Signs of the Times to my new address:

Caroline Martin
1317 E. Everett Ave.
Spokane, Wash. 99207

Arlene Hole let me know of Elder Key's sudden passing. What a blessing for him, but a great loss to the ones left behind to mourn his loss - I was blessed to hear him preach back in Oct. of 2009 and have several tapes of The Staunton River Association meetings. I feel they are a blessing to me!

Yours in hope,
Caroline Martin

Dear Brother Horton,

Enclosed you will find enough for two more years.

Thank the Lord for all of you. You do a great job.

With Love,
Randolph Plybon
140 Lynch Dr., Apt. 103
Rocky Mount, Va 24151

April 7, 2011

Mr. Tony Horton,

It is time to renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times - I would never want to miss a copy. And look forward very much for it each month - use enclosed check for one year and the rest as needed.

I pray the Lord's richest blessing on the Times, all the Editors and Writers.

Thank you very much - a sinner saved by Grace, if at all.

Roland G. Allen
Son of the late - Elder M.J. Allen

ARTICLES

1st Corinthians Chapter 1:1-3,

Paul, called *to be* an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes *our* brother, Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called *to be* saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Paul identifies himself as the author of this letter and includes Sosthenes as the writer, both because he was well known to the Corinthians and because the letter itself was probably written by his hand as dictated by Paul. Paul further identifies his office as an apostle thereby giving the authority by which he writes. He makes it clear that his qualification as an apostle is without question. He was not an apostle because he desired or sought after the office, but rather he was called to be an apostle through the will of God. His calling was made known to him while traveling to Damascus with no thought of anything other than the persecution and destruction of the very people he is now writing to with such tenderness and affection. Nor is he an apostle by reason of his education, his knowledge of, or zeal for the law, or any other thing that might qualify him according to the flesh. Consider his testimony to the church at Philippi:

Philippians Chapter 3:4-8,

Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, *of* the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ,

According to the wisdom of men, his qualifications would be found in the very things he counts as dung. He gives no qualifications for his apostleship other than that of his calling and that it was according to the will of God. Without doubt, this calling of the Apostle Paul, though received on the road to Damascus, was in the mind and purpose of God from eternity. As God is an eternal being, all of his purposes are eternal. Paul writes to the Galatians that he was separated from his mother's womb for this express purpose. So then, there was nothing conditional about his calling. Neither was it subject to his willingness to submit. When God calls his servants they are called with an irresistible power that makes them willing. They are made willing in the day of that power by

a God that works in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

Next, the apostle identifies who he is writing to. This would seem foolish, if he were writing to the world and everyone in it. On the contrary, by identifying who he is writing to, he excludes everyone else. This letter is to "the Church of God at Corinth" but not to those who may be nominal professors simply having their names on the church ledger, but exclusively to those meeting the following qualifications.

First they are "sanctified in Christ Jesus." The word sanctified means to be separated or set apart. Clearly, if language has any meaning, the construction of this sentence leaves no doubt but what this is an act done to, and not by, the ones sanctified. One might ask, by whom and how is this separation made.

The apostle says it this way in his letter to the Church at Ephesus; "according as He (God the Father) has chosen us in Him (Jesus Christ) before the foundation of the world." It is therefore none other than God himself who has sanctified his saints. He did so when He chose them in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world. It is this separation that distinguished Cain from Abel, Isaac from Ishmael, Jacob from Esau, and separates the saints of God even to this day from the children of disobedience. This is a separation from among the sons of Adam that is solely an act of unconditional and sovereign grace.

Romans Chapter 9:15-16,

For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then ***it is*** **not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.**

This separation is made by an omnipotent and immutable God and "there is none that can stay His hand or say What doest thou?" What He has done is done forever and no powers exist that can disannul it. For "the foundation of God standeth sure having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are His." He knows them in time experimentally and has always known them in eternity. He chose them freely of His own will and has eternally purposed them to be heirs to His Kingdom.

The next qualification is that they are "called to be saints." In his second letter to Timothy, Paul identifies the calling of God's saints as "an holy calling." That is to say, as we understand it, there is nothing natural about it, neither the source nor the delivery of it. It is a calling that emanates from an all wise and all powerful God, and is sourced in that eternal covenant made before the foundation of the world between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. It is administered to each of God's individual saints by God himself in the person of the Holy Spirit. There is no calling to God's saints or manifestation of Jesus Christ, other than by revelation of the Holy Spirit. Flesh and blood does not reveal it to them, but their Father which is in heaven. The scriptures leave no doubt as to the way and manner in which God calls his children. This is not a general calling to the world inviting as many as may have a desire, to come. If such

was the case, there would be none to answer the call. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." Not only can he not receive them "neither can he know them." "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." How can any man have a desire for something that he does not know about? Had Saul of Tarsus received any other calling than one manifesting the power of the Holy Spirit and the revelation of Jesus Christ, he would have continued on his way, arriving in Damascus with the same intentions he had when he left Jerusalem. The calling of God's children comes with a spiritual power and they are just as helpless to resist it as the world is to receive it.

John Chapter 10:24-27,

Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

This calling of all God's saints is the same calling, of the same divine nature, coming from the same source as the apostle Paul's calling. The apostle says in 2nd Timothy, **not** that we are called with holy callings, plural, but rather "an holy calling" singular. God calls each of his children with the same "holy calling." It is imbued with the same power, having the same effect, but administered in the way and manner that is uniquely suited to each individual child of grace. Adam was called in the garden, Jacob in a dream, Moses in a burning bush, Matthew sitting at the receipt of custom, Saul on the road to Damascus. The circumstances were different, but the calling and the effectiveness of it was the same. When God's children receive their calling and Jesus Christ is made manifest as their Lord and Savior, they are given an eye of faith to see that which the natural eye cannot see, an ear of faith to hear what the natural ear cannot hear. "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear." To one called to the glorious light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the things of this world no longer hold the promise they once held and his heart is now set on the heavenly things that belong to his Master. Like the Apostle Paul, he sees things in a new light. Not that natural light that comes from the sun, but a light that shines down from heaven "above the brightness of the sun." His perspective is changed. All things are become new. Indeed, he is a new creature. In this new light he is given an unexplainable love for his brethren in Christ that cannot be understood any more than it can be denied. It was said of David and Jonathan that "the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." This represents the love that binds God's children together, for they are knit together by the Spirit of Christ that dwells within them.

The apostle continues identifying

who he is writing to by including all who in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ, and that not everyone who might call upon Him in a nominal way but only those to whom He is Lord, "Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours." By inference, those who are also sanctified in Him and called to be saints. To these he says, "Grace be unto you." First and foremost, above and beyond all else, God's children are made to know they stand in need of grace. They know they are not worthy of even the temporal blessings of this life, much less the Spiritual blessings that flow from their Lord Jesus Christ. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast..." Our works of righteousness are as filthy rags and it is by grace and grace alone that we have hope in eternal life.

Then, "peace from God our father and from the Lord Jesus Christ." This is not the peace that the world seeks. The natural man seeks an end to warfare between tribes, nations, and peoples. This is the only warfare he knows about. The child of God is engaged in a warfare that the children of this world have no knowledge of. It is a warfare that rages within them by reason of their dual nature. This is a continual warfare between the old, outer man of the flesh and the new, inner, spiritual man. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." The apostle describes this warfare in his letter to the Church at Rome; "For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, **warring** against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." In this continual warfare in the lives of God's children, they are from time to time blessed to experience the words spoken by their Lord Jesus Christ "Peace, be still." Only God the Father and His beloved Son Jesus Christ, by whom this peace was wrought, can speak peace to the soul tormented by sin. This is "peace that passeth understanding." and is that spoken of by the prophet Isaiah: "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her, warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned..."

We know we have but hinted at the beauties of the unchangeable truth of the

doctrine of God our Saviour, as set forth here and declared by the Apostle Paul. We are made to witness with the words of this same Apostle, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

In hope of eternal life,
Elder Kenneth R. Adams

VOICES OF THE PAST

SPIRITUAL SONGS ACCORD WITH GOD'S STRINGED INSTRUMENTS

My late visit with the editors and many readers of the Signs in Virginia, Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania and other places has stimulated me with a greater desire to write to the Household of Faith through this medium. The visit with the Welch Tract, Hopewell, and other historical meeting places of God's children through the centuries past has peculiarly affected me. It is inspirational to learn that the same principles of Truth has been loved, cherished and contended for by His people these hundreds of years in the same meeting place.

While attending Salisbury Association held at Delmar, Delaware, the text of this article began to arrest my attention. God willing, I shall use Isaiah 38:20, as basis for my remarks: **"The Lord was ready to save me; therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord."** We shall attempt to prove that the songs of God's people are their spiritual experiences and the stringed instruments are the harp of God, the hearts of His people, the Bible, etc. We want to show that a psalm or an hymn is not necessarily a spiritual song to one of God's people at all times. We expect to show that the stringed instruments under consideration are not pianos, organs, or any like instrument made and tuned by man - which will get out of tune but, that which God has tuned, strung, and prepared - which never gets out of tune.

Re-read the paragraph above and may it become fixed in your mind before we meditate further upon the text. Read Isaiah 38, and then prayerfully consider the following meditations.

The expression found in 20th verse was made by Hezekiah, King of Judah, after undergoing critical experiences brought about by the Lord dealing with him. Even though he be king he was brought low by the Lord. He was sick unto death, and word came to him from the Lord, **"Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die and not live." (Is. 38:1)** We read a similar command in Amos 4:12 to Israel: **"Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel."** I am persuaded a similar command comes to every spiritual Israelite in the beginning of an experience of grace. When we try to cope with the situation in trying to set our house in order in preparation to meet God, we find ourselves as miserable failures in the attempt. This forces us to pray to God for mercy. Surely Hezekiah's attempts were in vain to set his

house in order and he was made to depend upon God for this. We would all sink into death were it not for what the Lord adds unto our life. Our life is sinful, He adds holiness; our life is unstable; He adds stability; our life is earthly, He adds heaven; our life is ungodly, He adds godliness. We come to the end of our path, He leads us into a new path. We die, He adds life. Dear trembling child, has the Lord added unto your life? Our life is unstrung and untuned. He tunes and strings our hearts to sing His praise! This must have been Hezekiah's experience as he said, **"The Lord was ready to save me."**

We learn that we cannot save ourselves. It is not the question: am I ready for the Lord to save me? But, is the Lord ready to save? All things are so ordered and arranged, tuned and strung by the Lord that events so fall in perfect order and rhythm that a fixed time, place, and circumstance comes for the Lord's salvation to be made manifest to each and everyone of the trophies of His amazing grace.

Because the Lord was ready to save me - **"we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments."** We read in Ephesians 5:19, of **"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."** What were the songs Hezekiah had under consideration? Psalms and Hymns would include all compositions written with natural verse to be used in religious worship. When any hymn or psalm is in perfect harmony with our experience and feelings, it becomes our spiritual song. Paul says in **1st Cor. 14:15, "I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also."** There is a natural song and there is a spiritual song. There are experiences that are natural and there are experiences that are spiritual. The song that is natural is the old song and the song that is spiritual is that the Lord adds by putting into your mouth the new song. We would like to contrast the old song and the new.

The old song is sung in the key of man-man being the central keynote. The new is sung in the key of Jesus Christ, - He being the foundation key. If you want to hear a discord try singing the old and the new together. They will not harmonize, for the old song praises man and the new song praises God. The old sings of the ability of man and the new song proclaims man's inability. The old song utters salvation is hinged upon the volition and works of the creature, while the new bases the creatures' salvation upon the volition and work of the three-one God. The new song being opposed to the old prevents the harmonization of the two.

You will note that Hezekiah says, "my songs". This means his own personal spiritual experiences. Unless the Lord has added to your individual life you cannot sing these songs. There are more spiritual experiences than one; therefore more songs than one. Sometimes you sing, **"All things work together for good."** Sometimes you feel, **"All things are against me."** Sometimes you are asking, **"Is God gone forever?"** Sometimes you say, **"I know**

that my redeemer liveth." Sometimes you sing, **"Jesus, Lover of my soul:"** and at other times, **"I am a stranger here below."** Sometimes you ask, **"My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"** Sometimes you sing, **"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want."**

The stringed instruments these new songs perfectly accord with are the instruments God has prepared, strung, and tuned. The word "instrument" is translated from a word meaning "prepared". Our songs are sung to that that God has prepared. We find recorded in Proverbs 16:1, **"The PREPARATIONS of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord."** When the Lord strings and tunes the hearts of His people there is perfect harmony in their experiences. When your experience harmonizes with the experience of Hezekiah, Jacob, Paul, and others whose lives are recorded in the Bible, it is singing your songs to the stringed instruments. When your experience harmonizes with the fundamental principles expressed in the Scriptures, and held sacred by your brethren, it ACCORDS with the stringed instruments.

Pianos and organs are made, strung, and tuned by man. These may be damaged, get out of tune, and the strings broken. Natural musical instruments only give forth natural mechanical tones. The instruments under consideration give forth spiritual Godly melody. The command to the Church is to **"speak to yourselves, singing,"** - not, to play a mechanical instrument. The question should be, "Is our singing to accord with the mechanical instruments or spiritual instruments? Is our singing to be in accord with the piano, organ, or heart? I am persuaded the singing should be in harmony with our hearts that God has prepared, tuned and strung; thus, **"making melody in the HEART."** When brethren are blessed to come together and sing with the Spirit and understanding in sweet fellowship and harmony it is much greater and sweeter melody than the best of singing without the Spirit accompanied by the best mechanical musical instruments. The accompaniment of mechanical musical instruments is pleasing to the natural ear. The accompaniment of the Spirit and understanding is pleasing to the spiritual ear.

We read in the Psalms of the harps of God, and also in Revelations. According to Josephus and what we can find in the scriptures, these harps had ten strings. We can call your attention to Psalms 33:2-3 **"Praise the Lord with harp; sing unto Him with psaltery and an instrument of ten strings. Sing unto Him a new song."** We want to quote the following stanzas from the hymn:

***THERE IS A FOUNTAIN*:**

Lord, I believe thou hast prepared
(Unworthy though I be)
For me a *blood-bought free reward-*
A golden harp for me.
'Tis strung and tuned for endless years
And formed by power divine,
To sound in God the father's ears
No other name but thine.

Hezekiah stated in the same chapter from which the text of this article was taken - **"He hath BOTH SPOKEN unto me and HIMSELF hath DONE it." (Is. 38:15)** Here is a double. He commanded **"Set thine house in order ,"** and He performed the command Himself by setting it in order. He works both the will and the do. Children of God receive **"of the Lord's hand DOUBLE" (Isaiah 40:2)** Scores of doubles come to our mind that neither time nor space will permit us to mention. Suffice it to suggest that the harp of God consists of a number of double strings. If the harps used back at that time under the ceremonial worship had ten strings, the spiritual harp must have five doubles which results in ten. Let us turn to the 8th chapter of Romans to find these five principles of the doctrine briefly stated. As we read them let us keep in mind that He has both spoken and Himself hath done it. Now, **"For whom He did (1) FOREKNOW, He also did (2) PREDESTINATE to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also (3) CALLED and whom He called, them He also (4) JUSTIFIED: and whom He justified, them He also (5) GLORIFIED. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom.8:29-31)**

This foreknowledge is an intimate relationship with His people even before the manifestation of His decrees in time. He chose them in His Son. **"Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect and in Thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there was none of them." (Psalms 139:16).** He knew them in eternity; they shall know Him in time. He predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son. He has ordered, arranged, and fixed all things to fallout at appointed times and seasons so that all things work together for the fulfillment of this grand purpose. See Romans 8:28. He calls and they shall answer. He performs the double as the word that goes forth out of His mouth returns not to Him void, but accomplishes that which He pleases and prospers in the thing whereto He sends it. He decreed the justification of His people and He justifieth them by sending His Son into the world to pay the penalty for their sins, thus satisfying justice. The just bore the sins of the unjust that justice divine might be perfectly satisfied. He not only justified them but also glorified them through the divine righteousness of His own Son. **"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled** *(justified)* **to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved** *(glorified)* **by His life." (Rom. 5:10)** We are glorified by the imputed righteousness of His Son. These five wonderful things are both spoken and performed by God the Father, Son, and Spirit. These ten strings ring clear the melodious song of praise to Him. This ten stringed harp becomes ours when it pleases God to give it to us that we receive it with praise and thanksgiving. Then we are HARPERS HARPING

WITH THEIR HARPS. See Revelation 14:2. We have the harps of God. Rev. 15:2). We sing to the accompaniment of these harps in the "house of the Lord," Zion, the new Jerusalem, the Church, or with the children of God. We sing "all the DAYS of OUR life." Sometimes the day is gloomy because of the clouds of trouble and despondency which hides the view of the brightness of the Son of Glory. Sometimes the day is cold because of the felt sense of our unworthiness. We experience cloudy and bright days; cold and hot days; jovial and sorrowful days; but, they are all days because it takes the light to manifest the darkness that is in our heart and the coldness in our thoughts. Nevertheless the expression of days in the plural shows that there are night times in our experience.

We hang our harps upon the willows by the river, Babylon, during the nights of our experience. (Psalms 137) We have no use or regard for the Lord, nor Zion nor His people during the night. We are then resting in our own carnality and we are at ease. We do not think upon Zion nor his people. We forget Zion as is intimated in the expression, "We wept when we remembered Zion." (Ps. 137:1) When the dwellers in Babylon require of us in mirth to sing one of the songs of Zion, we are made to realize we cannot sing the Lord's song in a strange land. We must be brought again out of Babylon into Zion before we have any more use for the harp. It is not in the night that we feel unworthy, unfit, and so wretched but on dark and cloudy days. In the night we have no feeling, no sense of guilt, no deep concern over our spiritual welfare, neither any regard for His house. It is when we are awakened in the morning that we are made to weep because of our forgetfulness and unconsciousness of His providential care over us. It is when we are awakened by His Spirit before the rising of the Son of Glory. Thanks be to God, when the Son rises and we see the brightness of His face whose rays warms and calms our troubled breasts, fear is driven from our souls and love springs forth. Songs of praise again are sung to His matchless and glorious Name for His amazing Grace toward us.

You notice that Hezekiah says "OUR LIFE" in the text. It seems to the natural mind that he should have said, "my life" or "our lives" to have been consistent with the proper usage of language. Let us see. The Lord added unto his life. My life had its end as my life when the Lord added His life to my life. My natural life ended as only a natural life when the Lord added that that is spiritual to my life. The life of a child of God prior to regeneration (or the addition of the graces of His Holy Spirit) is only a lustful fleshly life. After God adds that that is spiritual it becomes our life. When the Lord adds his Spirit there is set up a dual character in one. This results in a warfare. The flesh lusts against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh so that you cannot do the things that you would, these being contrary one to the other. See Gal. 5:17. What the Lord adds is contrary to that naturally possessed.

One more thought and I shall close. The last night will be when death shall

come at the end of our sojourn here. Then will be the dawning of the final day when we awaken in His likness and shall be satisfied. There will be no night there but one eternal Day of perfect joy and peace. No cloudy and cold times to mar our peace. There will be no night nor river of Babylon. There will be no hanging of harps in the willows. We will all sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb harmoniously to the harps of God forever and forever.

Elder E. J. Lambert

BAPTIST

Brother Beebe:

This is a world of change, and its inhabitants are changeable. I sent you a notice lately, that my address was changed, by a change of my residence. I must now notify you of another change. I have sold my farm in Rush County, and located in Connersville, Fayette County, IN. Yourself and other correspondents, therefore, will address me at the latter place.

Now, having given notice of my address, I believe I will blot over my sheet with something for your disposal, as you may think proper. Almost every subject of revealed truth has been touched on, more or less, by some of your able and numerous correspondents; but I do not recollect of having seen anyone especially designed to set forth the claims of our denomination, above any other, to a divine origin. I will therefore, devote this little space to that point.

The name Baptist. The name John was given by an angel of the Lord to Zacharias, some nine months before he was born, and his mission fully described, as the fulfiller of Malachi's prophesy of the coming of Elias. See Luke ii, and Mal. iv. Hence, when the child was born and some dispute arose about his name, it was referred to his father, who wrote, "His name is John," for the angel had so named him. This John was to be, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness; prepare ye the way of the Lord." And he was to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. Make them ready for what? Why, for the visible kingdom or church of the Lord. They were first prepared for the Lord, by the regeneration of the spirit, and then made ready for the visible church by John, whom God had sent to baptize them with water. Christ, as king and founder of the church, was made visible to Israel by water, in his baptism, for he who had sent, said unto him, On whomsoever you shall see the Holy Ghost descend and abide, the same is he. When John baptized Jesus, the visible token was given, accompanied by the opening of the heavens, the visible form of a Dove, and the voice of God, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. John saw this demonstration and publicly testified that, "This is the Lamb of God," &c. John's baptism was from heaven, and not of men. God had sent him to baptize with water, and this being his divine mission, he faithfully prosecuted it, and so received officially,

the name of **The Baptist.** This name and title, also bears a divine sanction. Christ, and the divinely inspired evangelists and apostles, so called him. The public ministry of the Gospel, commenced with the Baptism which John preached. "The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into; it," or men of all the nations. The mission of John differed from that of any of the preceding prophets. They could speak of a king which was to come, but John could say that he now standeth among you, he has come, this is he. Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. John was, also to prepare the way of the king, and make ready a people, by the visible ordinance of water baptism, as the materials of his visible kingdom; so that they were ready for a visible constitution or organization on the day of pentecost. This mission of John, gave him such a preference over the former prophets, and yet he only made ready the materials for the visible kingdom, but died before its visible organization, so it is said. Of all that were born of women, there was not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; nevertheless, the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. I suppose that John was the Elias that appeared with Moses, and talked with Christ, in the transfiguration on the mount. This John was a Baptist, and authorized from heaven to baptize with water, and was visibly patronized by Christ, who was himself baptized by him, also by the Holy Ghost, descending like a dove, by the opening heavens, and by the audible voice of the Father, saying, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. If this is not enough to establish the name Baptist, what would be sufficient? John was a Baptist, and as such, he baptized Christ, the king. Then Jesus was also a Baptist; and the materials for his visible church were baptized by John, and thereby were made ready to be constituted a Baptist church, for the Baptists will admit of no other, even to this day. Hence we see that the Baptists have the divinely sanctioned name. We also see that God sent John, the first Baptist, with divine authority to baptize with water. And still further, we see that the Son of God, being baptized by a Baptist, became visibly a Baptist; and still further, we see by the opening heavens, the descent of the Holy Ghost like a Dove, and abiding on him, and the approving voice of the Father, a three-fold sanction from heaven was given. And the baptized King of Zion, having all power - namely, all legal power - all authority in heaven and in earth, extended the commission to baptize, to his disciples, and finally connected it with, and embraced it in the great commission which he gave to his apostles which was to be perpetuated, even to the end of the world, and carried out in all nations.

Now , in the name, in the practice of water baptism, in the order and place assigned for this ordinance, in making the materials ready for the visible church by water baptism, after the Lord, by his spirit had prepared them for himself, etc., in all these things the Baptists are identical with John the Baptist and with the primitive church. All these items give

to the Baptists a claim above all other denominations.

The Presbyterians have their John (Calvin); The Methodists, also, have their John (Wesley). We all have our Johns, but, in all candor, let me ask, where or when did all of their Johns or any other man, or set of men, except the Baptists, receive authority from heaven to administer water baptism in any way, at any time, to any person or persons, old or young, believer or infidel? If no such authority has been given to any of their Johns, or any other person or people but the Baptists (and if there has, let it be proved by Scriptural testimony) , then it follows of course, that, let the administrator be a good man or a bad man, and let him perform the action of baptism as he may, and as conscientiously as he may, he acts without divine authority, it therefore is based only on assumption, and cannot, therefore, be valid baptism.

Of all the sects which are called Baptists at this day, which, may it be asked, have the right to claim this preference? I answer, Only those who, in other respects, believe and practice according to the order and rules established by the King, for the faith and practice of his visible kingdom or church. The visible church is one body, have one spirit, and are all called in one hope of their calling, one Lord and law-giver, one faith and one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and in them all. They all, wherever they may be, or whatever may be the diversity of their gifts, are but different members of the same body, for there is one body and one spirit. This unit is the church, and the same spirit bestows all the diversity of gifts to qualify every member of the body for its respective office, so that no one member can say to another, I have no need of thee. Each is a member in particular or a particular member. Of course, then, they all believe and preach the doctrine of union. The union of Head and body, the unity of the spirit, with all its divine gifts fitly set in the church for the edification of itself in love. The church continues steadfastly in the apostles doctrine, and, of course, in the apostles fellowship, and in the fellowship of each other, in breaking of bread and in prayer. And the Lord adds to her visible members, such as shall be saved. Her banner is, Christ and him crucified, and that to the exclusion of all means, instrumentalities, conditions, terms, works, or anything else of our will or power. The true church and her ministers, are determined to know nothing, save Christ and him crucified. Her proclamation is, Salvation by grace. She acknowledges Christ as her king and only law-giver, by her habitual observance of the order and discipline of his house, whose house are ye. These are the Old Primitive Regular Baptists. We often hear it said, One has as good a right to his opinion as another. This may be true in matters of mere opinion, where evidence is equal, or absent; but where evidence the most weighty and unequivocal is presented, no man has the right to believe the reverse of it.

In this very imperfect sketch, I believe the evidence is abundant to sustain the claim of the old order of Baptists, that they are the visible church of

Christ, of the primitive faith and order.

Yours in Christ Jesus,
Wilson Thompson

(The above was written by Elder Thompson in 1857, and was re-published by request in 1957. Elder Thompson died May 1, 1866.)

WASHING OF REGENERATION

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved US, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." -Titus iii. 5.

NEW VERNON, N.Y., August 2,1841.

The salvation of Paul and Titus is the same salvation that embraces the whole election of grace; for there is but one method of salvation brought to light in the gospel. **"Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Acts iv. 12.** We therefore understand the salvation spoken of in this text in its application to all the redeemed of the Lord. The declarations of this scripture are as follows: first, God hath saved us- his people; second, that salvation is not according to or in consequence of any works of righteousness by us performed; but thirdly, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, and all in accordance with the sovereign mercy of God. Could we, with old Jonah, take a voyage to the secret channels of the mighty deep, and like him feel ourselves pursued by the sovereign hand of the omniscient God, on account of our rebellion against him, and, with that disobedient, peevish prophet be locked up in the *belly of hell* for three days and three nights, until we were perfectly convinced, as he was, of our helplessness, our total inability to deliver ourselves from our deplorable condition, we incline to the opinion that we would say, as he said, **"Salvation is of the Lord;"** and with Peter, as above cited, **"Neither is there salvation in any other."**By this sweeping declaration, however, the fallacy of all the popular institutions of the day, and of all other days, as having in view the salvation of the world, is laid bare. All such pretensions are therefore deceptive, hypocritical and vain; as

"None but Jesus, none but Jesus, Can do helpless sinners good."

"He saved us." In the past tense. The work is done; the salvation of God's people is complete. **"He hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." - 2 Tim. i. 9.** Many there are in these days of delusion and anti-christian rant, who say, "Truly the Lord saves us; there is salvation nowhere else; but"- but what? "God works by the use of means. We are not machines; we must use the means of grace; we must give up our hearts to God; we must sit on an anxious bench; or we must do something else, and then

we must say that God has done it." That must be, at best, but a lying system which requires that we should tell lies even in what is called *getting religion,* and it must certainly be a lie, if we have done anything in the work of salvation, to say that God has done it all.

But while we are upon this point, let us inquire a moment into New School consistency. They tell us there is something for the sinner to do; if we wait for God to work we shall die in our sins; they ridicule the doctrine of man's entire impotency and helpless condition, and command him to be up and doing; they tell him that the provisions of the gospel are such that if any sinner chooses he can secure an interest in the salvation of the Lord. With this theory for their platform, they hold protracted meetings, erect anxious benches, and perform many wonderful feats, and declare to the unregenerate that God is now offering them salvation, is knocking at the door of their hearts, wooing and beseeching them to comply with the terms of the gospel. They tell sinners, in so many words, if they will do these things they shall be saved; but if they refuse, they shall be damned. Suppose the sinner should be kind enough to consent to be saved, and to perform the prerequisites as instructed by these teachers, if by these means they obtain salvation, they are saved according to their works. These works are either works of righteousness or works of unrighteousness; if of righteousness, they cannot contribute towards the salvation of those by whom they are performed; and if of unrighteousness, they are sinful, and can only expose their performers to the curses of the law. Not by works of righteousness which we have done; and as in the parallel, **"Not according to our works,"** and again, **"Not of works, lest any man should boast; not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."- Eph. ii. 8, 9.** If by grace, it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace. The man who, in opposition to this array of scriptural testimony, would dare proclaim salvation as depending in part or entirely on works, whether good or bad, is an enemy to God and a base deceiver. Of all such men it is written, **"Their judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."**

Having shown, negatively; that; salvation is not according to our works, and consequently that the doctrine of all Arminian work-mongers is false, we pause to notice how this salvation is brought home experimentally to the heirs of promise. **"By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost; and according to his mercy."** By the *washing* of *regeneration* we understand the cleansing operation of the Holy Spirit in the work of regeneration. We have attempted to show, when dwelling on the subject of regeneration, that as the effect of being quickened into life we are brought to realize ourselves vile and polluted, and as no unclean thing can enter the kingdom of God, we require to be washed; and as no blood of goats, or other Jewish sacrifices, can cleanse from sin, we require a washing of far superior efficacy. Connected with regeneration there is a foun-

tain opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and uncleanness; and when the sinner is brought, by the Spirit, to the fountain of that blood, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel, he finds that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin; his heart is sprinkled from an evil conscience, and his body is prepared to be washed in pure water. The *renewing* of *the Holy Ghost* is that work by which a new principle is implanted, an incorruptible seed by which old things are passed away, and all things become new. And this work of the Spirit is wrought in the saints in accordance with a fixed and immutable standard. **"According to his mercy, not according to our works:"** But brother Fox may inquire concerning the character of this standard. His mercy it is sovereign. **"For he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."** Such is the mercy of God, sovereign, discriminating, immutable, and his own. It is according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

PSALM 62: 1-2.

Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him *cometh* my salvation.

He only *is* my rock and my salvation; *he is* my defence; I shall not be greatly moved.

***"Thou wilt cast all their sins Into the depths of the sea."*- MICAH vii. 19.**

When God takes all our iniquities with his own hand, and casts them with his own arm into the depths of the sea, they will never come out of those depths to witness against the family of God in the great and terrible day. Your sins now may seem to be all alive in your breast, and everyone of them to bring accusation upon accusation against you. This sin is crying out for vengeance, and that for punishment. This slip, this fall, this backsliding, this foolish word, this wrong action, are all testifying against you in the court of conscience. Do what you may, be where you may, live how you may, watch and pray how you may, keep silent and separate from the world or even from your own family how you may, sin still moves, lives, acts, works, and often brings you into guilt and bondage, not if God has had mercy upon us he has cast all our sins with his own hands into the depths of the sea, and those sins have no more eyes to look at us with angry indignation, have no more tongues to speak against us in voices of accusation, have no more life in them to rise up and testify that they have been committed by us, that God's law has been broken by them, and that therefore we are under its condemnation and curse. And there is no truth in God's word more certain than the complete forgiveness of sins, and the presentation of the Church of Christ at the great day faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

Elder J. C. Philpot

"O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days." - PSALM XC. 14.

Many of the dear children of God are tossed up and down on a sea of great uncertainty, doubt and fear, because they have not had sensible manifestations of Christ to their soul. He has not come into them in the power of his love; still they often say, **"When wilt thou come unto me? O visit me, with thy salvation; speak a word to my soul; it is thyself, and thyself alone, I want to hear, to see, and to know!"** Now these are drawings of the gracious Lord, the secret beginnings of his coming, the heralds of his approach, the dawning of the day before the morning star arises and the sun follows upon his track. But when the Lord does come in any sweet manifestation of his presence or of his power, then he will abide where he has come, for he never leaves or forsakes, a soul which he has once visited. He may seem to do so; he may withdraw himself; and then who can behold him? But he never really leaves the temple which he has once adorned and sanctified with his presence. Christ is formed in the hearts of his people the hope of glory; their body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and Christ dwells in them by faith. Though we often mourn over his absence and do not feel his gracious presence as we would, still he is there, if he has once come.

Elder J. C. Philpot

MEETINGS

FOURTH OF JULY MEETING

The annual fourth of July meeting will be held, the Lord willing at New Bell Spur Church in Carroll County, Va. the church is located on Terry's Mill Road (610).

From the Blue Ridge Parkway take the Exit at milepost 184.

From route 58 take Terry's Mill Road about 3.3 miles.

The meeting time is 10:30 Monday July 4, 2011.

We invite all lovers of the truth to be with us.

Tony Horton

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

We invite our correspondents and friends to our one hundred seventieth session of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association. The 2011 session will convene, the Lord willing, at Weatherford Church which is our usual location. Springfield Church will be the host church this year. Singing will start at 9:00 AM and preaching at 9:30 AM. This will be on Saturday, July 9th and Sunday July 10th. We hope the Lord will bless our meeting with good attendance and praises to His holy name.

Burnell Williams
Clerk of the association

Lower Country Line Association 1947 School at Roxboro, NC

Front Row left to right
Elder E. L. Cobb, Black Creek Assoc., Pastor at Durham
Elder J. V. Roberts, Contentnea Assoc., Farmville, NC
Elder S. Gray, Kinston, NC
Deacon F. D. Long, Roxboro, NC
Elder George Hill, Salem Assoc.,
Elder D. W. Topping, Balltimore, MD
Elder S. W. Walker, Mebane Church
Elder John P. Helms, Smith River Assoc.
Elder J. H. Herndon, Durham, NC (Blind)

2nd Row left to right
Elder Emmett Stone
Elder John W. Gilliam, Upper Country Line Assoc.
Elder H. D. Nash, Atlanta, GA
Elder W. J. Berry, Upper Country Line Assoc.
Elder Z. L. Rhue, Winston Salem, NC
Elder D. V. Spangler, Upper Country Line Assoc.

3rd Row left to right
Elder O.J. Croker, Harmony Church, Hiram, GA
Elder B. L. Godwin, Seven Mile Assoc.
Elder D. A. O'Bryant, Hillsdale Church
Elder A. B. Barham, Burlington, NC
Elder J.A. Chandler, Mt. Airy, NC
Elder L. L. Yapp, White Oak Assoc.
Elder J. T. Jones, Bear Creek Assoc., Marshville, NC
Elder Raymond Payne, Staunton River Assoc.

Lower Country Line Association 1947 School at Roxboro, NC

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 2011

Ronald T. Jacks, AL 15.00
Randolph Plybon, VA 5.00
Carlton Brown, NC 5.00
Marilyn Shaw, VA 5.00
Judy Raven, VA 5.00
Mary Poff, VA 5.00
Merrill E. Mabe, NC 5.00
Roland Allen, GA 5.00

OBITUARIES

Elder Kenneth Ray Key, Sr.

Elder Kenneth Key, 88, a prominent Primitive Baptist preacher and editor of "Signs of the Times," departed from this life on April 3, 2011 at the Moses Cone Hospital in Greensboro, N.C.

A native of Surry County, N.C., Kenneth was born January 22, 1923. The son of Ransome and Ida Elizabeth Lowe Key he grew up in a large family of five boys and three girls. Kenneth's parents were of the Primitive Baptist faith and his fondest childhood memories were of attending the various Primitive Baptist churches in Surry County with his parents. During Kenneth's early chifdhood the Key family was engaged in farming.

When Kenneth was in his early teens his family moved to Guilford County which they made their lifetime residence. As a young adult Kenneth married Nellie Mae Jobe and they made their home in Greensboro. Kenneth and Nellie joined the church at Greensboro and during his 60 years as a Primitive Baptist minister he ably served as Pastor of Greensboro, Dan River, Big Meadows and Moon's Creek churches. He also conducted numerous funerals and preached at many corresponding churches and associations. He was well-known among Primitive Baptists for his knowledge, insight, and wisdom and he will be missed as a preacher, a beloved pastor and a friend.

A widower since July 17, 2006, Elder Key is survived by two sons, Kenneth R. Key, Jr. (wife Sharon), Gary Van Key (wife Amber), five grandchildren and several great grandchildren. He is also survived by two brothers, John and Rueben Key and a sister Minnie Jackson.

A funeral service was held Wednesday April 6 at Forbis and Dick North Elm Street Clapel. The service was conducted by fellow ministers: Cleo Robertson, James Gray, Thomas Solomon and J.B. Farmer. In recognition of Elder Key's service in the US Navy a brief military ceremony was held at the grave site at Lakeview Memorial Park.

By Herbert Edwards

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

VOL. 179 HILLSVILLE, VA., JULY 2011 NO. 7

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

Hillsville, Va. 24343

SONG

Hungry, and faint and poor,
Behold us, Lord again
Assembled at thy mercy's door,
Thy bounty to obtain.

Thy word commands up nigh,
Or we must starve indeed;
For we no money have to buy,
No righteousness to plead.

The food our spirits want
Thy hand alone can give;
Oh! hear the prayer of faith, and grant
That we may eat and live.

Newton.

JOHN 6:35.

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that come to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

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EDITORIAL

Let all things be done decently and in order. 1 Corinthians 14:40.

Elder J.B. Farmer

This scripture is often quoted to express our understanding of the manner in which true believers, by grace, are to conduct themselves in Church matters, and in their daily lives. The devil is very deceptive, and has proven to be a liar from the beginning. If he could, he would deceive us and pull us to one side or the other out of the way of decency and order in which we have been placed. If the Lord were not our keeper, we would surely be deceived by the devil along with the rest of the world, and be led into everlasting destruction. A man stands or falls according to his master. If God is our Master, we shall surely stand. May we be blessed to understand and embrace true decency and order to the praise, honor and glory of the God our Father.

To one side of the narrow way of doing things decently and in order we see restraining legalism, which says, **"Touch not, taste not, handle not."** This manifests itself in proud self-righteousness, and the stirring up of the desire for that which is forbidden. And on the other side of the narrow way we see permissiveness, which says, **"Take thine ease, eat, drink,** *and* **be merry."** This manifests itself in an undisciplined, fleshly life. Satan presents both counterfeit views as ways of truth. But both of those views lie alongside, outside, and contrary to the path of the just. I am persuaded that God is merciful to deliver His people from Satan's devices and keep them in the way of righteousness.

The scribes and Pharisees, in the days of Jesus and the apostles, were typical of all those who have ever practiced a legalistic religion. They knew the scriptures, but understood the letter only and not the Spirit of them. They kept the commandments outwardly, in that they did not commit overt sins such as robbery or murder, or other things forbidden by the law. They also did their religious duties very painstakingly. They read the scriptures, attended the syna-

gogues, paid tithes, and made prayers – all to be seen by men. In their view, they walked decently and in order. They thought they were right, and despised others (like the poor publican) that were not as religious and righteous as they supposed themselves to be. Jesus brought their pride and hypocrisy to light, and they hated Him for it. There are many religious people today that walk by the same rule as the scribes and Pharisees. May God deliver us from that same deceptive, self-righteous pride that also lurks in our own flesh.

Many other religious people think they are under no law, and that nothing is to be withheld from them. They do not manifest the same grace of God that tempers the behavior of the saints. They think they are superior to others because they see themselves as being liberated and not shackled by old-fashioned ideas and customs. Their guide is their carnal mind. They allow most anything, and do not admonish others for unacceptable behavior because of their respect of men's persons. There is no suffering for them as they seek to escape the reproach of the cross. Those doing such things are just as full of error as the legalistic scribes and Pharisees, but are on the opposite side of the way of truth in their permissiveness.

The inspired apostle indicated the keeping grace of God for His children saying, **"All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient."** The children of God are not under the law, but under grace. But that does not give them license to sin. The saints are exhorted to abstain from even the appearance of evil. In declaring that all things are not expedient, the apostle was blessed to teach that those things that are not profitable are, by grace, to be rejected and avoided. The saints are exhorted to redeem the time, for the days are evil. May God deliver us from evil thoughts, self-will, and the fleshly respect of persons with which the devil ever tempts us. **"Happy** *[Blessed] is* **he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth."**

The way of truth is so hidden that it has never been detected by anyone in a carnal mind. Job said, **"***There* **is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen."** Your life in the path of righteousness is hidden to the world. **"For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God."** You have been placed in the way of true decency and order that has been shared by all saints in every age. We are taught that the just shall live by faith, and that faith works by love. The little band of true believers, unrecognized by the world, are kept walking in truth by this love. They are not ruled by self-righteousness, neither are they ruled by the pleasures of the flesh. Their chief desire is to please the true and living God, although they feel unworthy to speak His name. We are assured that **"without faith** *it is* **impossible to please** *Him*", and that **"all** *men* **have not faith."** But thanks be unto God, each child of God is given faith according to the measure of grace. **"By grace are you saved through faith."**

The world does not know who the saints are. Ungodly people, judging by

carnal reasoning, conclude that those who live in true decency and order are pretending, self-righteous, hypocrites. To them, there is no God, no true religion, and no true goodness. Therefore, the saints are under constant suspicion, and are hated by them. Also, since God's children are not outwardly religious, those practicing duty-religion condemn them. They judge them to be lacking in their idea of good works (which are actually fleshly works), which they falsely believe justify one before God. And the other religious professors, who are careless in their walk, judge the children of God to be too strict in their ways, since they will not walk with them or agree with them in their wickedness. There is no resting place in this world for the children of God among ungodly people, or among those that are legally religious, or among those that are loosely religious. The only rest for the household of faith is in the Lord, His finished work, and His righteousness. May He bless us to enter into that rest from time to time.

Misunderstood as they are in the world, the saints press on, not looking for the approval of men but seeking the approval of God. They must suffer many things for their God given faith, which faith causes them to walk decently and in order. We know that none are perfect in these things, but the desire of God's people is to do right. We always fail in our own strength, but God gives strength to those who love Him and wait upon Him. Knowing not how to perform that which is good, we are made to look unto God for wisdom, and to trust Him to keep us in the way. Jesus has gone before us in all things. He has suffered for truth's sake, and we must suffer with Him. It is our joy to believe we have been blessed to suffer some things for His name's sake. If we suffer with Him we shall reign with Him. This is the promise of God to His people, even eternal life with Him in Glory.

To my poor mind, the word **"Let"** in the scripture listed at the head of this article does not indicate an optional request from a man, but is a powerful command from God to His people. When God said, **"Let,"** that meant, "It must be". **"Where the word of the king** *is*, *there is* **power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?"** And with His command, He gives grace to obey, that His name should be glorified. It is as when God commanded the light to shine out of darkness. **"For he spake, and it was** *done*; **he commanded, and it stood fast."** He said, **"Let there be light: and there was light."** And when the apostle said by the Holy Spirit, **"Let all things be done decently and in order,"** he spoke as the oracles of God, or as the very utterance of God. The rightly dividing of this passage, I believe, is this: By grace and faith, all things must be done by the saints in decency and in order. The blessed ones are not left, as the rest of the world, to walk in darkness and disobedience in the strength of the flesh, but are given grace to walk in the light, and in the obedience of faith by the Spirit.

To do anything "decently", literally, in the apostle's language, is to do it in a well-schemed way. It means to do it hon-

orably, being well thought out. I believe that the Lord's people are blessed to consider well the ways of their goings. This means that when a Church matter or something of a personal nature requires their attention, they, by grace, are blessed to reflect upon the scriptures, and upon the example of the apostles, and upon the practice of faithful brethren that have gone before them. It means that they consider the consequences of any action they must take. And it means they must beg God for wisdom and understanding in order to please Him, lest reproach be brought upon His name. And by grace they hearken to that small, still voice that they might show forth His praise.

The opposite of doing a thing decently is doing it indecently. And to do a thing indecently is to do it in a way not honorable and not well thought out. That is the way of wickedness and confusion, not the way of righteousness and peace. The apostle said to the Church, **"But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak."**

To some, the word "order" means a set of evil, restricting, manmade rules devised to separate brethren. That sort of thing is not order but rather disorder. True order is given by the Holy Spirit to maintain unity and peace among true brethren. The word "order" actually means "regular arrangement". For things to be done in true order, they must be done in the proper sequence. This calls for patience and long-suffering, which are the fruit of the Spirit. Often, the saints are required to wait upon the Lord and to see His salvation. And we are told that, **"He that hasteth with *his* feet sinneth."** Consider Saul, of the Old Testament, when he grew impatient at the delay of the coming of the prophet Samuel, and presumptuously offered the sacrifice himself. His disobedience caused him to be rejected as king of Israel. Saul is typical of all those who have not grace to wait upon the Lord. Many, through the ages, to their own shame, have tried to take things into their own hands, not waiting for things to be brought forth in proper order. When things are done that way, they are done in disorder. In every situation, the saints are commanded, by grace, to look unto the Lord, and to wait upon Him for direction and keeping.

We are also commanded by the Holy Spirit through the apostle, **"Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath"**. And we are instructed to wait upon the Lord. I am persuaded that this is the way the orderly brethren in the true Churches have been blessed to conduct themselves through the ages, by the grace of God. They have been given the desire for all things to be done in the light, in kindness, in the proper sequence, not respecting any man's person. They desire all things to be done honorably to the glory of God. The Holy Spirit said through the apostle Paul unto the faithful, **"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."** The apostle Peter was also blessed to comfort us with these words. **"But the God of all grace, who hath called us**

unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle *you*. **To him** *be* **glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."**

Written in love and in hope of eternal life, I trust.

J.B. Farmer
1-11-09

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brother Tony,

I see it is time to renew my subscription to the "Signs of the Times". I do not want to miss a copy for I do enjoy reading it. So will you use the money for the renewal. I look forward to receiving it each month.

Best regards to all,
In love,
Edrie Clifton

5-9-11

Dear Brother Horton,

Enclosed is my check for $15.00 renewal for the "Signs."

It is with much sadness that I hear of the death of Elders Campbell and Key, but realize they are in a better place. I love getting the Signs each month. God bless all of you.

A sister in Hope,
Frances Brinkley

Dear Brother Tony,

I am sending a check for $30.00, renew the "Signs" for 2 years, use the other as needed.

You all do such a good job on the "Signs. I enjoy reading the editorials and experiences of our faith. A few sweet crumbs from the "Masters" table is comforting!

In Love and hope,
Mary Janney

VOICES OF THE PAST

The Maine Old School Baptist Conference, in session with the North Berwick Old School Baptist Church, in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, Sept. 4th, 5th, and 6th, 1891, sends christian greeting to the associations and churches with whom we correspond.

Dear Brethren: - Another year with all its vicissitudes has passed away, and we again have the high privilege of sending you this our annual epistle of love and fellowship; and in addressing you at this time we have chosen for our subject Christ comforting the weary: **"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."**

These words were spoken by the gracious Savior, on which the soul may confidingly repose and be at peace forever. How good to have the shadow of this great Rock in a present weary land.

Before the throne there is not one rippling wave; but Jesus assures his weary ones that even on earth there is a haven for the tempest-tossed, saying, **"Come unto me, and I will give you rest."** All other peace is shadowy, unreal. The eagle spurns the gilded cage as a poor equivalent for its free-born soarings; so the soul's immortal aspirations can be satisfied with nothing short of the possession of God's favor and love in Jesus. How unqualified, tender and loving is the command. If there had been one condition on entering this covenant, purchased with the dear Redeemer's blood, we must have been through eternity at the mercy of the storm, but all his dear people are alike warranted and welcome, and none more warranted than welcome, For the weak, the weary, the sin-burdened and sorrowing there is an open door of grace. Return then unto thy rest, O my soul. May the sweet cadence of these words steal on us amid the disquietudes of earth. Sheltered in him we are safe for time and safe for eternity. There may be and will be, temporary tossings, fears and misgivings, manifestations of inward corruption; but these will only be like the surface heavings of the ocean, while underneath there is a deep-settled calm. **"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee."** In the world it is care on care, trouble on trouble, sin on sin; but every wave that breaks on the believer's soul is calmed when the loving Jesus whispers, "I'll give you rest." All that befalls us, to the very numbering of our hairs, is known unto God. Nothing can happen by accident or chance. Nothing can elude his inspection. The fluttering of the insect, the waving of the angel's wing, the annihilation of a world, are all equally noted by him. Man speaks of great things and small things. God knows no distinction. How especially comforting to think of this tender solicitude with reference to his own covenant people, that he metes out their joys and their sorrows. Every sweet and every bitter is ordained by him. Even wearisome nights are appointed. Not a pain we feel nor a tear we shed but is known to him. What are called dark dealings are the ordinations of undeviating faithfulness. Man may err, his ways are often crooked; but as for God, his way is perfect. He puts our tears into his bottle. Every moment the everlasting arms are underneath and around us. He keeps us as the apple of his eye. He bears us as a man bears his own son. Do we look to the future? Is there much of uncertainty and mystery hanging over it? Trust him. All is marked out for us. Dangers will be averted, and bewildering mazes will show themselves to be interlaced and interwoven with mercy. He keepeth the feet of his saints; or, in other words, he equaleth them for every precipice, every ascent, every step, and every tangled thicket. He leads sometimes sorrowfully, and most frequently by cross and circuitous ways which we ourselves would not have chosen, but always wisely, always tenderly. With all its mazy windings and turnings, its roughness and ruggedness, the believer's is not only a right way, but the right way, the best which covenant love and wisdom could select. Although our great Counselor puts clouds and

sunshine round about him, he also promises an eternal and uninterrupted sunshine on the other side.Well may we commit the keeping of our souls unto him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator. He gave himself for us. This transcendent pledge of love is the guarantee for the bestowment of every other needed blessing. O blessed thought! Our sorrows are numbered by the man of sorrows; our tears are counted by him who shed first his tears and then his blood for us. He will impose no needless burden, nor exact an unnecessary sacrifice. There was no redundant drop in the cup of his sufferings, neither will there be in the cup of his people. **"These things have I spoken unto you, that ye might have peace."**

Dear brethren, if the foretaste of this rest and peace be so precious, what must be the glorious consummation! Awaking in the morning of immortality, with the unquiet dream of earth over, faith lost in sight, and hope in glad fruition, no more any bias to sin, no more latent principles of evil, nothing to disturb the spirit's deep, everlasting tranquility, the trembling magnet of the heart reposing where alone it can confidingly rest in the enjoyment of the infinite God.

"All hail the power of Jesus' name,
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all."

In conclusion we would say that our meeting has been very pleasant and interesting. Salvation by grace has been clearly set forth. The obligations of believers to walk as becometh saints have also been presented, and we believe that we have been mutually profited. We have gladly received your correspondence, and desire to continue the same.

We have appointed our next meeting to begin on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1892.

Wm. Quint, Moderator
Ivory Libbey, Clerk

THE CHURCH OF GOD.

New Vernon, N.Y., Nov. 23, 1832.

About eighteen hundred years ago, a Baptist Church was constituted at Jerusalem, under the immediate superintendence of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to an ancient prediction was born of a virgin, and came into the world to preside as Head over all things to the church, which is his body and the fullness of him who filleth all in all. Having manifested himself as the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, and the only foundation upon which his church could rest securely, he claimed the exclusive privilege of building and of governing his church in his own way; his language is, **"Upon this Rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."**

After the similitude "of a stone cut out of the mountain without hands," the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor left to other people; but bearing down all opposition, it shall stand forever. The eternal Father set his King upon his holy hill of Zion,

and to his Son he said, **"Thy throne, O God, is forever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom:"** and in an audible voice from the third heaven made proclamation, **"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."**

At an early period in the reign of the glorious Messiah, his authority was questioned by the high priests, scribes and pharisees: **"Tell us** *said they*, **by what authority doest thou these things, and who gave this authority?"**

The subjects of King Jesus were chosen in a furnace of affliction, and advised that in the world they should have tribulation, but in Christ they should have peace.

Tracing the history of the church from the morning of her visible existence, we find her constantly beset with enemies; presenting to our view the antitype of the burning bush which Moses saw in the wilderness. She has been constantly enveloped with the flames of persecution; yet, to the astonishment of all her cruel foes, she is not consumed. We behold her King taken, and led like a lamb to the slaughter, after bearing the reproaches of ungodly men for about thirty years, during which time he was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. He was scourged and crowned with thorns, and to finish the horrid picture, was nailed to the fatal cross, and between two thieves, on Calvary, crucified and slain, — not by the open and avowed enemies of God and man, but by the most learned and popular denomination of professors of religion on the earth, — not by an "inert or anti-effort class," but by those who had a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge; by men whose religion was a science, whose ministry was learned, and whose titles were honorary.

We cannot do justice to our subject and stop here. No, the cry of slaughtered thousands who were put to death for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held, ring in our ears, — who from under the altar cry with a loud voice, **"How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth."** These things have been done in the green tree, and they will be repeated in the dry. They have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, and they will much more call them so, who are of his household.

We know there are many in our day crying Peace! peace! and so there were in those times of bitter persecution above mentioned. The present is a time when men will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts they are heaping to themselves teachers having itching ears. Popular creeds are substituted in the place of the faith once delivered to the saints — the commandments of men instead of the gospel of Jesus Christ — human inventions take the place of divine ordinances — the work of the Holy Ghost, in gathering in and quickening the elect of God, is superceded by human contrivances. The holy scriptures are made an article of religious speculation; repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, are dispensed with, for a mere excite-

ment of the natural passions, and the peculiar virtues of an anxious seat. Four days, or protracted meetings, got up by men, are received as seasons of Pentecost, while the amount of money given in aid of the inventions of men, is made the standard of orthodoxy and the stepping stone to power. Instead of a strict adherence to the command of Zion's King, **"Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's,"** a profession of religion is urged as an indispensable qualification for civil magistracy. In short, by a general amalgamation of the world and the church, by the onward march of priestcraft, the cloud of persecution is gathering fast, and the impending storm is almost ready to burst with dreadful fury upon this unhappy land, and to stain the American soil with the blood of all such as will not worship the beast or receive his mark. Candid reader, we appeal to you, are things so, or are we deluded? Would to God we were; but alas! awful realities stare us in the face. Ye can discern the face of the sky, and can ye not discern the signs of the times?

We do not flatter ourself that this little sheet will be able to shut the floodgates of delusion; for the man of sin must and shall be revealed, whom the Lord will consume by the spirit of his mouth, and by the brightness of his coming. But we feel it to be our duty to "blow the trumpet in Zion," and to sound an alarm on God's holy mountain, and exhort our brethren, and so much the more as we see the day approaching.

In conducting this paper we expect to call down upon ourselves the indignation and wrath of those whom we oppose. We shall be greatly disappointed if they do not load us with reproaches and hard names; but it will be to us a privilege rather than a trial to follow our beloved Lord through evil as well as through good report. Our prayer to God is, that we may be governed by the same spirit which beautified and adorned the life and conversation of our Lord Jesus Christ in the days of his flesh, that when we shall be reviled we may not revile again.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

(The above article is just as true and applicable today as it was when written in 1832.)

WHY DO CHILDREN OF GOD SUFFER?
January, 1947

If we suffer, we shall also reign with him. — 2 Tim. 2:12

It is evident in all the experiences of the children of God as recorded in the Bible, that they all suffered in many ways. It is also evident in the experiences related by God's children in this age that suffering is yet common. They are all experimentally acquainted with grief, temptations, persecutions, tribulations and all manner of suffering. Job was afflicted in body and had all earthly possessions taken from him. All the Israelites suffered under Egyptian bondage. David was sorely oppressed and conscious of his great sins. Paul was beaten with many stripes and was made

to exclaim, **"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"** Yes, this suffering is necessary, but why?

We do not suffer in order to merit a home in heaven, because Jesus fulfilled the law to a jot and tittle for us. Therefore, it is solely upon His merits that we shall inhabit that place prepared for His saints in after life. He has merited our salvation in heaven by His obedience.

We do not suffer in order to merit blessings in time for these were included in the "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" that was given to us by the Father through the merits of Jesus. These blessings that we enjoy in time are not merited by us as Paul says, **"By grace are ye saved through faith; and** *[faith]* **not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should boast."**

We do not suffer to satisfy justice; nor to merit any blessing in time; nor to gain a home in heaven. We suffer because it was appointed unto us to suffer; God appointed to us this suffering just as He appointed Paul to suffer as an apostle, a preacher and teacher of the Gentiles (1 Tim. 1:11, 12). In 1st Thessalonians 3:3 we read, **That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.** So then, this suffering comes by the appointment of God. It was also appointed unto Jesus to suffer and as it was necessary for Him to have suffered so it is necessary that we suffer. Paul reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered (Acts 17:3). It was not only necessary that Jesus suffer because of our sins, but it was also necessary in order to learn obedience. Paul wrote to the Hebrews concerning Jesus, **Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.** (Heb. 5:8). So Jesus was taught obedience through suffering. We learn obedience by the things we suffer.

Paul told the Philippian brethren, **For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake** (Phil. 1:29). Even the suffering of God's children is a gift. It is a valuable gift for it teaches obedience. We are made obedient through suffering. Paul did not preach the gospel for filthy lucre's sake nor for any glory for He said, **For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!** (1 Cor. 9:16.) The sufferings that Paul experienced drove him to obedience. God is a perfect Teacher and will make His children obedient as it is said in Psalms 110:3, **"Thy people** *shall be* **willing in the day of thy power."**

How could we have believed that Jesus was the Christ had we never suffered? It took the suffering of trials, heartaches, disappointments, vexation of our natural spirits, and failures in all our undertakings to teach us that we were not capable of saving ourselves and to make us to cry to some power other than ourselves to save us. How could we believe in an all-wise sovereign God had we not suffered so many disappoint-

ments to teach us that we are at best but vanity and foolish, and to teach us that **"It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps?"** By these experiences God teaches us that there is a power that is sovereign and worketh all things after the counsel of His own will and no power is able to withstand Him.

It takes the sufferings that we experience to teach us daily that we are nothing — yea, less than nothing and vanity. This suffering is necessary to keep us humble and dependent upon the grace of God. This suffering makes us to be constant in prayer to the God of Israel for His mercies. We cry unto Him daily for His continued mercies, realizing that we do not merit anything but His hot wrath. If justice were meted out to us according to that we deserve, hell would be our doom.

Now we are comforted with this thought, **"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him."** Oh, blessed thought! Paul reckoned in his letter to the Roman brethren, **For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time** *are* **not worthy** *to be compared* **with the glory which shall be revealed in us** (Rom. 8:18). Now we experience sufferings; then, we shall experience glory. Now we experience death; then, we shall experience life. Now we experience sin; then, we shall experience holiness. Now we experience foolishness; then, we shall experience wisdom. Now we experience hope; then, we shall experience reality.

No other people suffer as the children of God suffer. No other people has experienced that pure heart that teaches that the best of man's righteousness is but filthy rags in God's sight. No other people are convinced that without Him we can do nothing. Other people conclude that they have some power vested in them upon the volition of their own will. They think that they can, at least, accept or reject. We would be of the same opinion were it not for the sufferings that we experience that teaches us otherwise. This lesson is learned through suffering. May God be praised for blessing us with suffering to keep us humble and submissive to His will and at each other's feet.

Elder E. J. Lambert

Zion shall be redeemed with Judgment, and her Converts with Righteousness Isaiah 1:27

Sometime ago, after using this scripture for a text, I was asked to write an article on it.

The Zion under consideration, must undoubtedly be the church of God, often referred to in the Word of God as such. **"Out of Zion the perfection of beauty, God has shined". "The Lord loveth the gates of Zion."**

"Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities; thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken."

These and many other passages show that the church is often referred to as Zion. Though there is a hill near

Jerusalem named Mt. Zion, it is a type of the spiritual family of God.

It will be noticed that the promise of God, by the mouth of the prophet is very definite. **"Zion shall be redeemed with judgment."** We are noted as a people as mentioning often the shalls of God, and such reminders is often a comfort to the ones who can rest in nothing less than the promises of an immutable God. One who is able, and will bring to pass every promise He has ever made. His word that has gone forth will not return to him void but will accomplish the things whereunto he has promised.

There can be no true comfort in the knowledge of this redemption until one has some understanding of what they are redeemed from, the kind of redemption they receive, and the one who perfects this redemption.

There can be no question as to who the redeemer is. He is spoken of as, **"The man Christ Jesus."** He was the offering that God prepared to forever put away sin. The only one that could perfect forever them that are sanctified; the body spoken of in Hebrew where it is said, **"A body hast thou prepared me".** The offering that only God himself could make.

Job saw him even before he was born of the Virgin Mary, and could say, **"For I know** *that* **my redeemer liveth, and** *that* **he shall stand at the latter** *day* **upon the earth.**

And *though* **after my skin** *worms* **destroy this** *body,* **Yet in my flesh shall I see God:**

Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another;

Though **my reins be consumed within me."**

There is a sense in which one might be redeemed from something, and be brought into bondage again and the debt have to be paid the second time; the price of their deliverance might only serve for a limited time, and they would find themselves again needing redemption. The first redemption would not secure the payment of all future debts.

Not so with the kind of redemption we here refer to. **But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;**

Neither by the blood of goats and calves, BUT BY HIS OWN BLOOD HE ENTERED IN ONCE INTO THE HOLY PLACE, HAVING OBTAINED ETERNAL REDEMPTION FOR US, Heb. 9:11-12. **"In whom we have redemption through his blood,** *even* **the forgiveness of sin." "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."** Hence we see that the kind of redemption perfected by our Lord Jesus Christ was eternal, and we can sing,

"Dear, dying lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved, to sin no more."

The next question is, what are the people of God, the chosen in Christ

Jesus, redeemed from. According to the word of inspiration they are redeemed from everything that would ever condemn them. **"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works;** Titus, 2-14.- Peter describes this redemption from our vain conversation, hence the people of God are redeemed out of every nation, from the curse of the law, from sin, from iniquity and from their vain conversation.

"Zion shall be redeemed with judgment." The prophet describes how this redemption shall be obtained. Christ was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we may be made the righteousness of God in him. He died the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God. The righteous execution of God's wrath because of sin fell on him as the sin bearer. God's holy law must be honored, and the demands of justice satisfied. He looked and there was none to help, therefore his own arm brought salvation. Help was laid upon one that was able to save.

Pardon alone for a sinner would not do; reconciliation must be made, and the handwriting of ordinances that were against us must be blotted out. The sins of all the chosen of God were imputed (charged) to Jesus Christ, and as their sin-bearer, the judgment of God must fall on him. He is made a curse, that he might redeem from the curse. As the Ark rose above the waters when God's wrath was poured out upon the world because of sin, as we see him, who knew no sin, made sin for us, hanging upon a tree, and hear him cry **"My God, My God why hast thou forsaken me."** The sun refuses to shine on this scene the earth quakes, and the Vail of the temple is rent. Here is the judgment of God that redeems Zion. One important question is in the minds of his dear people, Was I represented there? Was this great love for me? If one sin is left unatoned for, the one will forever banish us from him. Christ, Our blessed Saviour, suffered all the agonies of hell as he hung, as a curse. He trod the winepress alone. O, my soul, how great was his love, how tender was his pity, how enduring are his mercies.

The righteous indignation of God, and the execution of his wrath in his judgment was his way of salvation. It is called in his Word, The way of holiness. The Lion's whelp, (king of beasts) the vultures eye has not seen it, but the redeemed of the Lord shall walk there. This execution of his righteous wrath on one who has a perfect offering, one who could die under the stroke, and rise again from the dead, was the justifying of all his people, and being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

This judgment has ransomed them from the power of the grave, and they wait for the adoption, to-wit the redemption of their bodies, which is just as sure as their redemption from sin.

The judgment of all the family of God is already past according to the Word, **Some men's sins are open before-**

hand, going before to Judgment; and some men they follow after. 1 Tim. 5-24.

"On him almighty vengeance fell,
That must have sunk a world to hell:
He bore it for his chosen race,
And thus became their hiding place."
A few more rolling suns at most,
Will land me on that heavenly coast
Where I shall sing the song of Grace, And see my glorious hiding-place."

"And her converts with righteousness." Through his perfect work of atoning for sin, putting it away, Jesus became The Lord our righteousness. And the power of this righteousness is what brings all of Zions converts into the heavenly way, for **"The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."**

Elder David Spangler

ISAIAH 53:4-5.

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

But he *was* **wounded for our transgressions,** *he was* **bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace** *was* **upon him; and with his stripes we were healed.**

"BUT HE THAT ENTERETH IN BY THE DOOR IS THE SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP"

***Verily, verily,* I say *unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.* - John 10:1.**

It is probable that ninety per cent of the population of the people of the world is trying to enter into the sheepfold or into Heaven some other way instead of by the door, which is Christ. I suppose the reason is that the door is closed to them, so they are trying to climb in some other way. The door was closed. against the goats or reprobates when God made the choice in Christ before the world was. It has been closed ever since and will be forevermore to come, so in trying to climb in some other way other than the choice and grace of God, they are seeking to steal and rob God of the honor of saving His people according to His own will and pleasure.

Christ did not come to earth to turn goats into sheep, for there never has been a goat turned into a sheep and never will be; neither has there ever been a sheep turned into a goat. Goats were made goats in the creation, and sheep were made sheep also in the creation, as was everything else, for God decreed when He made the earth and all its inhabitants that everything shall bring forth seed after his own kind. He created His people or children in Christ as the seed of Christ. The children of the devil or Satan were created Satan's

seed, and cannot be turned into children of God, being regenerated and born again is not the thing which makes them the children of God, but they are regenerated and born again because they are the children of God. They were the children of God in the creation, and by transgression fell under condemnation to the law of sin and became ailenated to God temporarily, so He, God, sent His only begotten Son into the world to redeem them and reconcile them to Himself. Redeem means to ransom from bondage, rescue, makes atonement for, perform, recover that which is rightfully yours but has been temporarily lost from you by some illegal act or some other procedure. Christ continues in this 10th chapter, **"But He that entereth in by the door is the Shepherd of the sheep, to Him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear His voice and He calleth His own by name and leadeth them out. And when He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them and the sheep follow Him, for they know His voice."** When the Lord calls His people, they know His voice though they never heard it before.

Paul knew the voice of the Lord when He called to him, though he never knew the Lord before, but when the voice spoke to him, he said, **"Who art Thou Lord!"** So when the Lord calls to *His* sheep, they always hear, answer, and obey. Paul took all his orders from the Czar up until this time; he had never prayed to the Lord before. **"Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door, by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture."** Christ, our blessed Lord, is the only door whereby anyone can enter into the heavenly kingdom; none can enter in through this door except those whom He calls in and not one of them called by Him ever refuses to enter, for He never calls any except those who were ehosen and created in Him before the world was.

I am the good Shepherd, the good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep, 11th verse. **I am the good Shepherd and know My *sheep* and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold ; them also I must bring,** (Notice how impressive He makes it. I must bring them) **and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one fold,** *and* **one Shepherd.** 14-16 verses. He here was talking to the Jewish fold and the other sheep, as I think were the Gentile people. Notice He says them also I must bring and they shall hear My voice. The bringing comes first; one must be regenerated and born again before he can hear His voice. Life must precede action or knowledge or feeling.

There seemed to be a division of opinion among the Jews as to whom this man was. Many of them, those unbelieving Jews said, He hath a devil, others said these are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes

of the blind? **"Then came the Jews round about Him, and said unto Him, How long dost Thou make us to doubt? If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you and ye believed not: the works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of My sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one."** So when He had thus said that I and My Father are one, then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. **"Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from My Father, for which of those works do ye stone Me? The Jews answered Him saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God."** As Christ said, they had seen the many good works and miracles which He had done, such as raising the dead, giving sight to the blind, cleansing the leprosy and walking on the water and many other wonderful works, but all of this did not convince the carnal minds of man that He was the Christ, nor did it produce in them any spiritnal effect. How could material evidence be any stronger to the carnal minds of men that He was the Christ? Does not this all prove what the apostle said, **"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned?"** Christ on another occasion said to the unbelieving Jews, **"Why do ye not understand My speech? Even because ye cannot hear My word."** This is the reason the ungodly world has never and will never believe the truth; they can not hear the words of truth, ears they have and hear not, eyes they have and see not, hearts told understood not, and so they can not receive the love of the truth because they can not understand it and do not want to understand, for they hate it. The apostle says, **And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming:** *Even him,* **whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness,** 2 Thess. 2:8-12. We find again that Christ in speaking to these same people says, **If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill Me, because My word hath no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with My**

Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. They answered and said unto Him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But know ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to Him, We be not born of fornication, We have one Father *even* God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love Me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of Myself, but He sent Me. Why do ye not understand My speech? Even because ye cannot hear My word. Ye are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there was no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe Me not. Which of you convinceth Me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear *them* not, because ye are not of God. John 8:36-47. Who would have the courage to say that Christ came to earth to suffer and die the cruel death of the cross for these children of the devil, and if He did not, why say that He died for every man or to give every man a chance to be saved? The world tells us that the Old Baptists believe that some are born for heaven and some born for hell, and if that be true, God would be an unjust God, but I go back further than that even to the creation. God made the devil and made him a seed to serve him and to be cast into the lake of fire with him. Nothing ever changes into something different from what it first was. The seed of the serpent has never changed into the seed of Christ and vice versa. God made the two seeds in the beginning, the seed of the serpant and the seed of the woman; the woman representing the Church, the seed of Christ; and decreed that the seed of the serpent shall bruise the heel of the seed of the woman and the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent and his seed; for He says, I will put enmity between the two seeds. Do we not see that enmity strongly manifested in our days?

We never knew a goat to turn into a sheep, neither a sheep turn into a goat, for God decreed that everything shall bring seed after its own kind, whose seed is itself, and it was so. It seems that the seed of the serpent is much greater in number than the seed of the woman, for the bond woman hath many more children than she that hath an husband.

Elder H. L. ROGERS

PSALM18:30.

"As for **God, his way *is* perfect: the word of the Lord is tried: he is a buckler to all those that trust him."**

CASTLEWOOD, Virginia.

DEAR BRETHREN:-In a 1931 article of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is an article from the pen of brother J. I. Foster, of Texas, at the close of which he says, "I hope some one with more extended views on the subject may write, if the Lord so directs." This is a kind and reasonable request and should have a brotherly reply. Not that I claim for myself a better gift than brother Foster, but I feel to be quite subordinate to him, and fear anything I may write upon the subject might cause it to be asked, Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? or whether the impression I have to write upon this subject is duly of the Lord. The brother has given us many good, sound and consoling things in his article, however I failed to fully catch the thought the writer of this article meant to convey in regard to the sycamore tree Zaccheus climbed. It could be my weakness might have prevented me from so doing. I will say here, without keeping the reader in suspense as to what I *see* in this matter. This tree doubtless represents the law. I hope anything I am blessed to say may be in line with the thought the brother had in mind to convey. Zaccheus was not only chief among the publicans, but he was rich. A publican is an inn-keeper and a collector of tolls, yet he was a son of Abraham. Zaccheus has the experience of all God's children, they all climb Zaccheus' tree (the law). The very first thought and first step Zaccheus made to climb the tree to see the Savior manifested the work of salvation by grace in the heart of Zaccheus, because the Lord saw him before he saw the Lord, and by this awakening the sinner flies to the law of works for justification, but it thunders its sentence, the soul that sinneth, it shall die. No reprieve or mercy there. Paul said, **"Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth." "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."** How is that? Only by the purpose and predestination of God in the salvation of his people by grace, to the end that the sinner should scale the law to his very utmost for justification, and thereby wean himself and see he was a poor, condemned sinner and his only hope for salvation was at the feet of Jesus, and seek his all in him. Then Paul again said, **"But after that faith is come we are no longer under a schoolmaster,"** My experience and the Scriptures do not teach me that we ever saw Jesus by our own efforts, or deeds of the law, neither does Zaccheus tell us that he ever saw Jesus in a manifested sense before he made haste and came down, then he saw Jesus, because he had the witness in his soul that Jesus was richly abiding at his house and received him, joyfully. Therefore, Jesus says, I in you and you in me. Paul once climbed Zaccheus' tree. He said he was taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, but when from heaven a great light shown round about him and he fell unto the ground, as did Zaccheus, then Paul laid down his Pharisee religion and never took it up again, but confessed, and said, It is not of him

that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. Paul says, But even unto this day when Moses (by whom the law came) is read the vail is upon their hearts, nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord the vail shall be taken away. When Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she lighted off the camel (the law). Here was the figure of Jesus, the dear immaculate Lamb of God, and his bride. As Rebekah lighted off the camel or law, even So did Zaccheus, and Paul, and all the children of this eternal Bridegroom and bride. Paul said, Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. Here the sinner is slain by the law. He had worked himself out of timber and material, all his unrighteousness by the deeds of the law had failed him, his stronghold, as he thought, now gave way and he saw himself a poor, vile, wretched sinner In the sight of the just and holy Jesus. He is as the old poet: said, "When to the law I trembling fled, it poured its curses on my head." Here the sinner finds the doors of justice by the law bolted against him, no way to escape divine justice. He sees nothing but mercy can reach his doleful case, and cries, Lord, have mercy on me, a poor sinner condenmed to die. Here the Lord reveals himself, and says, **"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."** Then he makes haste and comes down, **"for today I must abide at thy house."** The poet says, "On the wings of his love I was carried above." To a feast of fat things well refined, where all is love. It is a memorable day of lifting up and refreshing with those who are blessed of the Lord to fully realize these things. The dear child of God thus led is no more a conditionalist, he no more cries do, but it is already done and completed in Jesus, and all his works shall praise him, and he has no confidence in the flesh. The prophet says, We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness is as filthy rags. I often think of what I heard of a poor Indian who wanted to tell his experience to the church but could not speak English very plainly, and to make the church know his feelings the Indian used a metaphor. He got a worm and made a ring of fire all around it. The worm crawled to all parts of the ring for a way of escape, but there was none, so it crawled to the middle of the ring and curled up to die, when the Indian reached over, picked up the worm and set it free. Here was a bright figure of the law and salvation by grace plainly manifested in that poor Indian. The law is holy and the commandment holy but cannot give eternal life or show mercy to its violators, only metes out the just sentence of death upon its violators. No one is able to keep the whole law. It is much like the slick sycamore tree. If he offend in one point he is guilty of all. This tree represents the law, and is a holy tree, and no one has been able, as I have said, to keep the law but Jesus. He kept it in all things and fulfilled it perfectly in the redemption and salvation of his people. **"Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." "By him, all that believe are justified from all things,**

from which *ye* could not be justified by the law of Moses." Paul said, Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ. The matter of Zaccheus makes a bright, picture in the experience of all God's people who have thus been brought up in grace's school, as was Zaccheus. They all flee to Zaccheus' tree, to get up where they can see Jesus. As I see it, this running to the law, or Zaccheus' tree, is as much a link in God's purpose and predestination in the salvation of his people as the Lord had in Jonah's going to Ninevah, and trying to go to Tarshish. When Jonah went down to the bottom of the sea he could cry, Salvation is of the Lord. Even so with the children *of* God, if they had not tried to climb Zaccheus' tree and had not done their very utmost to be justified by the deeds of the law they might have boasted, and said their own arm had brought salvation down to them. Paul said, What then, shall we sin because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. It is not while on elevation by deeds of the law that Christ manifests his love in the pardon of the sinner, but it is down, down all the time in the valley of humility, where the Lord found Jacob in a desert land, and in a waste howling wilderness; he led him about and instructed him; he kept him as the apple of his eye. Mary, the mother of the Savior, said, **"He hath put down the mighty from their seats and exalted them of low degree."** All know these things when they have experienced them, and to experience them is to love and embrace them, and we should give all praise to God in time and eternity for his great unspeakable love and mercy to poor worms of the dust.

Your little brother, if one at all, in gospel bonds,

W. L. EDWARDS

That I may see the good of thy chosen. — Psalm cvi. 5.

Did you ever see any good in God's chosen? Oh! **"how goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!"** Did you ever see what good God has blessed his people with, and how good it is to be one of them? All God's people see that there is a "good" in God's chosen family, peculiar to them, and that they sigh and long for. But some will say, Had David never seen it when he penned this psalm? Aye, surely; he had seen it. But did he not want to see it again? Yes; he had lost the sight of it, the sweet vision of it had retired, the old veil had come back, his eyes were dim, he wanted fresh "eye-salve." So with us; we have seen, we trust at times "the good of God's chosen," have felt our affections drawn towards them, and drawn up towards God, and have said, **"Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."** That was to enjoy the sweet foretastes of heaven. But all these sweet foretastes became clouded; fogs and mists rested upon them, and hid them from our eye. Fresh sin brought fresh guilt, and darkness and

deadness and doubts and temptations and fears and besetments came on of various kinds; and all these beclouded our sight. But we cannot forget the past; we cannot forget the solemn moments when we walked with God and talked with God, nor the sweet feelings that his presence enkindled. However dark, however dead, however disconsolate, however tried, harassed, and tempted, we cannot forget that. And having "seen the good of God's chosen," we want to see again the good sight, to taste again that heavenly banquet. "That I may see the good of thy chosen."

Elder J.C. Philpot

PSALM 128.

Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in his ways.

For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy *shalt* thou *be*, and *it shall be* well with thee.

They wife *shall be* as a fruitful vine of the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.

Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord.

The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days thy life.

Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, *and* peace upon Israel.

MEETINGS

Annual Meeting
First Primitive Baptist
Church Memphis

Plans are to hold the annual meeting of the Memphis Church, as usual, on the 2nd Sunday in August and the Saturday before — August 13th and 14th. The meeting house is at 7247 Andrews Rd. in Bartlett 38134, just off Hwy. 70. (In greater north east Memphis). Come and worship with us. Please call a few days ahead so we can arrange your accomodations — (901) 398-0741.

Wayman Chapell, Moderator
Elaine Jones, Clerk

2011
One Hundred Eighty-Six
Annual Session
of the Pigg River Association
to be held on Chestnut Church
Ground.

Commencing on Friday before the first Sunday in August, 2011. Starting time on Friday 10:30 Singing and 11:00 Preaching Starting time on Saturday 9:30 Singing and 10:00 Preaching.

Starting time on Sunday 9:30 Singing and 10:00 Preaching.

We invite all Elders & Brethren of our faith and order, and all Churches that we are associated with, to come and be with us.

Direction:

Going North on Route 220, about 13 miles past Bassett, Va. turn right on to Route 724. (Goose Dam Road) about 2 1/2 miles to church.

Going South on Route 220, past Rocky Mount, Va. turn left at first stop light on Route 619, go 3.7 miles, turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Road) 1 mile to church.

Skewarkey Union
(Eastern Kehukee Association)

Skewarkey Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union, the fifth Sunday in July 31, 2011. The church is located just off of Exit 514 from US 64 East. Preaching services begin at 10:30 am.

We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

ST. JOHN 1:4.

In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 2011

Edna Graves, AL	5.00
Ada Beeghly, VA	5.00
Pam Screen, TN	5.00
Elder W. L. Gardner, GA	25.00
Mary Janney, VA	5.00
Ted McDaniel, VA	100.00
Dan Delp, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER NOVALINE STEWART

Durham Primitive Baptist Church has asked me to write the obituary for Sister Novaline Sanderson Stewart. Unworthy though I be, I will do my best to follow the church's wishes.

Novaline died July 18, 2010 at the Britthaven Nursing Center in Nags Head, North Carolina. Novaline was born in Durham, North Carolina to the late Cassie (Wilson) and Clarence Sanderson on March 28, 1922.

She is survived by her daughter, Joann Stewart Rhew of Bahama, North Carolina; son, Charles Ronnie Stewart, Jr., wife Alice of Manteo, North Carolina. There were 8 grandchildren, 21 great-

grandchildren and 9 great-great grandchildren. She is predeceased by her husband, Charles Franklin Stewart, Sr.

Novaline was a devoted member of Durham Primitive Baptist Church. As long as her health permitted, she did all that she could to take care of the church's needs. She generously gave to provide for the sanctuary. One could say that she often did more than would have been her share for the church's upkeep. I am reminded of one scripture: II Corinthians, 9:7 — **"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart,** *so let him give;* **not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loved a cheerful giver."**

Other scriptures come to mind in thinking about Novaline. I read in Proverbs, chapter 31:30. **Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.**

II Timothy, 2:19 reads: **Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.....**

The first epistle of Peter, 1:3 reads: **Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.**

My thoughts about Novaline are that she was strong in the faith and enjoyed her time at church to the fullest. Endless scriptures would be examples of Novaline's hope in Christ. Her belief was strong and this was seen in her countenance.

My personal account of Novaline was her being Durham's song leader. I had the privilege of sitting behind Novaline. Her strong voice carried well. She was sorely missed when she was not able to attend.

Sometimes after services, I would hear her relate to our pastor regarding the sermon. She was blest to understand. She loved the church.

As I think about her, I recall the bounty of food that she brought to church for our lunches. She enjoyed providing for our church family.

Both Novaline and Charles were members of Durham Primitive Baptist Church. Novaline joined on June 20, 1976 and Charles on Novemeber 17, 1985. The absence of this precious couple has left a void.

It is a comfort to know that Novaline's faith carried her to the end. In Paul's writing in II Timothy, 4:7, **"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."**

Farewell, dear one.
Written by Betty McPherson

PSALM 134

Behold, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord.

Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord.

The Lord that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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Hillsville, Va. 24343

AMAZING GRACE

Amazing grace (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved:
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come;
Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the vale,
A life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forebear to shine;
But God, who called me here below,
Will be forever mine.

Newton

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EDITORIAL

Lucifer

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

Isaiah 14:12-15, "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! *How* art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most high. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit."

The most common use of the name, Lucifer, is in reference to Satan. The most prevalent belief is that this is an angel who turned evil and fell from the eternal heaven and became the devil. O dear people, if this were true, what hope would we have that the Lord could keep us! But, bless your heart, I want to emphatically say that God has never nor will He ever lose one of His chosen, man nor angel. **St. John 6:37-39, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."** I believe that God created Satan as He did everything else. He created him as an adversary and tempter of His people. **1 Peter 5:8, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." Matthew 4: 1-3. "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But He answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by**

every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Hebrews 2: 18, "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." Hebrews 4:15, "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are, yet* **without sin."** In John 8:44, Jesus said that the devil was a murderer and a liar from the beginning. There is no truth in him and there never was.

I do not believe Isaiah used the name, Lucifer, to refer to Satan. I believe Isaiah is referring to the king of Babylon as evidenced by **Isaiah 14:4, "That thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! The golden city ceased!"** Though he does not mention the king by name, I believe he is referring to Nebuchadnezzar. In the fourth chapter of Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar relates his experience. He dreamed of seeing a tree in the midst of the earth and its height was great. The tree grew and was strong and the height of it reached unto heaven and the sight of it to the end of all the earth. The leaves were fair (beautiful) and there was much fruit. There was meat in it for all. The beasts of the field had shadow under it and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs, and all flesh was fed of it. In his dream, Nebuchadnezzar saw a holy one come down from heaven and command to **"hew down the tree, cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit. Let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches. But, leave the stump of his roots in the earth."** Daniel interpreted the dream for the king and told him things he would have to experience to be taught that the most High rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomsoever He will.

Nebuchadnezzar conquered many nations including Judah when he invaded Jerusalem. He destroyed the temple taking items in it back to Babylon. He also took many of the inhabitants to Babylon as slaves. Daniel was one. Other nations and people were subject to his rule and were dependent upon him for their protection and livelihood. Thus, fulfilling his dream that **"the beasts of the field had shadow under it (tree) and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs, and all flesh was fed of it."** During his reign, Babylon was considered to be one of the most magnificent cities of the world and his palace one of the most beautiful. This fulfilled the description of him as the great tree in his dream. He was puffed up with vanity , pride, self-importance, and filled with the belief that he had all power, majesty and honor. He exalted himself like unto God as Isaiah prophesied, **"For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High."**

The Apostle Paul, before he was converted, also persecuted the saints of

God. He, too, was puffed up with vanity, pride, self-importance and thought he was doing God's service. Lucifer means "brightness" or "light." Nebuchadnezzar thought of himself as the brightness equal with God. He saw himself as the light of the world. Isaiah refers to him as Lucifer, not in a favorable way, but because Nebuchadnezzar thought of himself that way.

Now after twelve months (twelve sets forth completeness), the king walked in his palace in Babylon saying that by his mighty power and for his own honor, he had built such a great kingdom. In that moment, a voice spoke and declared, **"the kingdom is departed from thee."** The king was taken out of his palace and into the field to dwell with the beasts. Daniel 4:33, **"The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles'** *feathers,* **and his nails like birds'** *claws.*" The tree was cut down, but the stump of his roots was left. He was not destroyed, but he was stripped of all self-works and self-righteousness and shown that he had no power of himself. He could witness with **Isaiah 64:6, "But we are all as an unclean** *thing,* **and all our righteousnesses** *are* **as filthy rags," and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."** As Isaiah had prophesied, the King of Babylon was brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. Surely, Isaiah 14:16-17 describes the condition of Nebuchadnezzar, **"They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee,** *and* **consider thee,** *saying,* **Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms;** *that* **made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?"** He could cry with the Apostle Paul, **"O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death!"**

Nebuchadnezzar was in that condition until the fulfillment of God's appointed time *("till seven times passed over him")* and then, he was given to look up. My dear people, have you not experienced being brought so low and in such a horrible state that it was hell to you. There, you had your self-works and self-righteousness stripped from you and you were completely helpless and lost and felt surely hell was your home and justly so. Who drove Nebuchadnezzar from men where he could not look to the arm of flesh for support? This is the place where each of you is taken. A place in your experience where no fleshly man could reach your case. The scripture says, **"They shall drive thee from men."** It was not the army of Babylon nor of any other nation, but I believe the *"They"* was God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God worked in Nebuchadnezzar the "to do" of His good pleasure. God brought Nebuchadnezzar down from his heaven to the depth of hell in his experience, a place of great tribulation, a place where no flesh could help him. Nebuchadnezzar was taught that **"tribulation worketh patience; and**

patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." You, too, were given to look up and cry for mercy. You had been given to see yourself as a sinner in all its blackness. What a horrible sight. But, then Christ appears in love and mercy and gives unto you hope and peace that surpasses all understanding. The gift of faith is given so that you believe in one that you can't see nor touch.

Nebuchadnezzar says his understanding was returned unto him and he praised and honored Him that liveth forever. He came forth confessing that God's dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation; that all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; that God doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and that none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, what doest thou.

Daniel 4:37 reads: "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works *are* truth, and His ways judgment; and those that walk in pride He is able to abase."

I believe that each child of grace can in some measure witness with the experience of this king of Babylon.

In hope,
Cleo D. Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

June 19, 2011

Dear Brother Horton:

Please find enclosed a check for two years subscription for the "Signs of the Times", plus extra to help pay for the time my subscription has lapsed. When I received the June issue I realized I was behind on my payment. Thank you for continuing to send it to me. I enjoy reading each issue as it arrives.

I also am going to endeavor to write a little of my experience to be printed in the "Signs of the Times" as Elder Joe Sawyer has requested in the past, if you think it worthy.

Sincerely,
Ila Leary

1 JOHN 4: 13-16.

Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son *to be* the Saviour of the world.

Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

ARTICLES

Better *is* the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: *and* the patient in spirit *is* better than the proud in spirit. Ecclesiastes 7:8.

Such promises in the scriptures are a great comfort and encouragement when a child of God finds himself swamped in trials and tribulations; A comfort because of the greatness of the source of the promise, and an encouragement to forbear and press on because of the new brightness which lies ahead, though the road may be rough and poorly marked. And the strength is in the source. The strength of the promise is not in the words of the scripture themselves, but in the light and hope brought forth from them by the Spirit, which is the true source.

There are other scriptures in Ecclesiastes which frame a little wider picture and with just as great promises. Consider chapter three and verse one. **"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven."** Not only a Godly purpose in every thing, (If not God's purpose then whose?) but a time for everything that is so perfect and timely that it is called "a season" (an appointed time). This scripture is followed shortly in verse 11, by a scripture that would seem to encompass the whole doctrine of salvation by grace, if seen in it's fullness. **"He hath made everything beautiful in his time:"**

But alas, such scriptural words and phrases appear to be as idle tales when the soul is left in darkness. Even feeble attempts at prayer seem to fade away like the mist. When the natural mind can see no just reason for the troubles that flood in, then the question becomes, "why?."

And, like with Jobs' miserable comforters, there is no apparent answer at hand, and the question remains. Yet there is hope and a desire for meaning. **"For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will. sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; *Yet* through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant." Job 14:7-9.** In the 42nd chapter, verse 12, it is recorded that the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning. Though Job apparently did not see "the beginning" as a blessing, yet it is evident that **"Blessed *is* the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law;" Psalms 94:12.**

When troubles abound, a particular sought after answer may not be forthcoming; but a much better one may be provided, even in the midst of trouble. But even so, God is not required to answer. By the mouth of Elihu, God corrected Job: **"Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters." Job. 33:13.** Yet help is given. A still small voice within, a scripture understood anew, or the consoling words of a brother, can be the work of the Spirit to

enlighten and instruct the inward man. And the soul will confess that it is all of him when he gives a glimpse of his beauty and majesty. When granted such grace then the specific reason "why" of the troubles that persist, can be set aside with the understanding that the end of a thing is better than the beginning. **"For** *as* **the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Isaiah 55:9.**

"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God." 1 Cor.4:5.

Many other examples are found in the scriptures, both temporal and spiritual, that express to the child of God the trials and tribulations that precede the victorious end of a matter. Consider the severe trials of Joseph that were to be endured in delivering his father's house from famine. Or, the troubled path of Moses in leading the children of Israel through the wilderness to the promised land, and the stoning of Steven before he saw the heavens open and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. The Apostle Paul expresses it thus, in Acts 14:22,... **"that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."** And again in **Romans 8:18, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time** *are* **not worthy** *to be compared* **with the glory which shall be revealed in us."** The climax of the matter would seem to be expressed in the book of Habakkuk when his questions were answered in prayer, as recorded in chapter three. After beholding the mighty works of God, both in the lives of men and upon the physical world, he indicates that the power of God was not slack in bringing forth the victory. In the terms of a mighty warrior in the thick of battle he states, **"Thy bow was made quite naked,** *according* **to the oaths of the tribes,** *even thy* **word. Selah."** Then the purpose, expressed in verse 13, and an answer to "why?" is this, **"Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people,** *even* **for salvation with thine anointed;..."**

After receiving this answer Habakkuk was greatly astonished. "...rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble:.." Yes! Rest in the day of trouble and rejoice in Him, and understand how the writer could express the following:

"Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither *shall* **fruit** *be* **in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and** *there shall be* **no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God** *is* **my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds'** *feet*, **and he will make me to walk upon mine high places," Habakkuk 3:17-19.**

Thus with the second part of the above heading in mind, "the patient in

spirit" and the better promises for the end, the words in Hebrews 12:1-2 ring out clearly. **"...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset** *us,* **and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of** *our* **faith;..."**

Elder Wayman Chapell

9/2/2007 Sermon by Elder Haywood Wray

"And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Isaiah 2:4)

Those words came to me a few nights ago as we sat there in our room. I don't know when I had ever thought of these words, but it seems like they came and they left something in my heart. If we should take these words literally, we would come to the conclusion that the Bible is all wrong because it says that they should not learn war anymore and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks. In our carnality, it really doesn't make much sense, but our carnality doesn't have anything to do with understanding what the word says. Because the Bible tells us that the Scriptures are not given for any carnal interpretation....meaning that in our carnality, naturally speaking, we cannot enter into the understanding of the word of God.

To me, these words express our experience in the Lord and the ways of the Lord's people. Let me read it. **"And He shall judge among the nations and shall rebuke many people."** Now, those people, that He rebukes, are His people, because you'll never read in this Bible where God ever chastises or rebukes any other people except His own people. When you read what God does to the rest of the people in the world, you'll read of His wrath that He pours out among them, but God rebukes His people. You'll read in the New Testament that those that He loves, He chastises, that they may bring forth more fruit, and that's the difference, my friend. God rebukes His people, and He has from the beginning of time. Like He did Peter, **"Peter, Satan desires thee to sift you as wheat."**

All through our life, chaff somehow builds up in our carnality trying to have some part in this realm of salvation that we're talking about, but, it can't do it. That's the way it is with us. We often get rebuke and chastisement from the Lord, and the Bible tells us that those, that He chastises not, are bastards and not sons. That's the Word. That's why I bring out the fact that those people that He is talking about, many people are going to be rebuked. They are His people because He cares about them. We correct and chastise our children not because we hate them, but because we love them and find that our love teaches them

something. The chastisement of the Lord is a wonderful blessing to God's people, because it keeps them in the way. That's why He uses the word rebuke. He didn't use the word wrath...that I will pour out my wrath upon many people. He didn't say that, because they are His people. **"And I will rebuke many people and they shall beat their swords into plowshares."**

When we think about plowing, we think about how on the farm we used to take the plow and turn the land bottom upwards so we could plant something on it. **"And they shall beat their swords into plowshares."** What is the sword? It is the nature of the realms in human beings. Think about it, it's like a sword they have. It is against God. We're talking about something that is plotting against Him and they're continually warring with their swords. I'm telling you about my own experience also in this. When the Lord began dealing with me, there was nothing I wanted any less to do with than the place I'm in now. And I would come up with all kinds of weapons and excuses, and I would put them before Him and He would rebuke me. He labored and He labored and He labored with me. And I used my sword, my way. Our way is a sword against our Lord and Saviour...in the Bible one fights against the other. And we use that sword like Jonah. When the Lord told Jonah to go down into Ninevah and to preach to that city..... **"I am going to overthrow it",** Jonah was detennined that he wasn't going to have any part in that ministry. He was going to find a place where God didn't dwell. When he started on his journey, he was on his way down there all the time, and he didn't know it. That's the way God works. And Jonah used his sword, and when he comes to the end, he fulfills the scripture, **"They shall beat their swords into plowshares."** What does "the plowshares" mean? To me, it means God gives His people a spirit to dig and to search into the depths of the riches of God's grace and His words that He's left on record. He gives us a spirit, the Bible tells us in the New Testament, to search out the depths of the scriptures..... the deep things, and He brings them out.

Also, you'll read in the Bible in the New Testament, where Paul speaks of the three heavens, and he says the first heaven is passed away. What is the first heaven? The first heaven is when that life, naturally, is turned bottom upwards, when He has brought you to the end of your strength and made you to understand that you cannot trust your carnality in things pertaining to the salvation of God and the great wonders of God. Then the first heaven is gone. Here in this life, my friends, the life, that we live until the Lord quickens us and makes us alive in Him, is a heaven to us....to the carnality....to the human nature. It's a heaven to us. When He comes along and the warfare begins, that plowshare will just turn anything bottom upwards and that heaven is gone and behold the second is established. And what is that? It's the kingdom Jesus made when He came down. Behold the kingdom of God is within you. Oh, my friends, that's where you cannot take your sword with you in nature and hold to that which also

holds to the Word of God. You cannot hold to the worldly things and hold to Him too. It's impossible to do this. Oh, my friends, and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, meaning that after the Lord has destroyed their first heaven, He brings them into a banqueting house where His banner over them is love. Then there is love and mercy and grace, and for the first time in our lives we can sing.

I remember when the Lord convicted me, I went out and He made me to know what a great sinner I was by nature. Oh, I can tell you all the things I didn't do when I was growing up. That doesn't matter. When the Lord convicts one, they know they're a sinner in nature, my friend, just a sinner! I went out into a little garage, that I had built and where I would sit, and with tears rolling down, I knelt down and I began to pray to God to forgive me for all of my sins. I was made to know that he'd forgiven me though I didn't see how He could....a just God had forgiven me for all my sins and trespasses even as I had used the sword to have my own way against Him. and yet still be a just God. When I got through, I stood up. My friend, something happened, something had taken place that showed me the first heaven had been taken away. And, behold I saw something that I had never seen before. The first thing I saw was my Lord hanging on the cross and I felt like all my sins were on there. crucified. I've felt that way all my life and I felt so at peace. I slept so calmly. There was just something that came over me. My friends, I believe the Lord hears His people. Beat my shaft and my spirit and my sword into plowshares. Then He put something in my heart, and I wanted to understand more and more of the goodness and the mercies of God. Oh my friends, this is where we always have this feeling. If the Lord has begun a good work in you, He will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. That, my friend, is a wonderful thing to think about.

Then he goes on down and says, **"And they shall beat their spears into pruninghooks."** What does that mean? To you? I'm not only trying to explain what these words mean to me, but I hope they mean something to you, too, in your own experience in life. "And they shall beat their spears into pruninghooks....that spirit that God puts in His people. The Bible tells us that His Word is sharper than any two-edged sword. The Bible is filled with so many ways to teach His people to know Him. That's for sure. The spears shall be turned into pruninghooks. The spirit of God, my friends, will guide you and these are the pruning hooks that He gives you by His grace. You cannot do it by yourself. There's no way under the sun that we can prune ourselves from anything that we know in nature. It takes the spirit and the power of God to do this work. That's why He says, "those, I love, I chasten, that they may bring forth more fruit-He prunes them. He prunes His people the same as if you have an apple tree or a fruit tree or whatever, if you don't prune it, it'll go wild and grow nothing. If you prune it and care for it, it will continue to bring forth fruit and more fruit. That's the way it is with God's people - He knows how

to prune and He knows how to keep them in the ways of righteousness. By the grace and mercy of God, He will continue to prune them from time to time. That's what it means when Jesus told Peter, **"Satan desires you to sift you as wheat."** He has to prune him a little bit. The Lord used the devil to do it. Think about it. ..had to prune him. Oh my friends, I've thought so many times in my life if I had just enough understanding to know what was best, I could have avoided a lot of these prunings. But the Lord was giving me over to these. It was that way with Peter too. But, my friends, those He loves, He chastises, that they may be brought into more beauty and to more of this knowledge of the goodness and mercies of God.

I remember years ago when the Lord began to deal with me concerning the ministry, I continuously told Him that I could not do this thing. I had never even thought of it. I couldn't even speak a sentence and make sense out of it. I was so stammering in my thoughts and my tongue. Then He brought me to the point that I had nothing else that I could use against Him, and I had no strength to fight against Him. Then I learned that preaching the gospel was the easiest thing that a man had ever done, but "trying" (as I told a minister a long time ago) —"trying to preach" will kill you! That's how it is my friend. "I will give you a mouth," He says. Oh my friends, if He doesn't give His people a mouth and a tongue to speak of His greatness and His mercy that He has bestowed upon us all the days of our life, we will never sound one note of the gospel or one note of joy that the Lord has provided for us here in this world. But, let me tell you, those that He has rebuked for their sins and has forgiven them, my friend, they have a door opened before them and that door is Christ Jesus, our Lord. **"I have set an open door before you to understand and to see. I have opened your eyes to see and understand."**

We were just as blind to these things as these two men were when they heard that Jesus was passing by. They began to cry, "Thou Son of David have mercy on us." And the people said, "be quiet, Jesus is coming this way," and they cried the louder. They couldn't hold their peace. That's the way it is sometimes with us when we cry and our soul is in need of something. We cry unto Him louder and louder like the woman, that followed him, and cried "Thou Son of David, have mercy on me..... my daughter is grievously sick and nigh unto death..... just speak the word." But, Jesus went on His way like He never heard her. My friend, many times in my life I have begged for His mercy and grace, and it seemed like His ear was deaf to me, but yet I couldn't stop.

There was something within me that couldn't stop. It had to continue to cry unto Him; because there was something that made me to know that He was the only source that could reach my case. I believe that's the case with you. I believe that's the same thing that this writer, Isaiah, was speaking of here. **"They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks: Nation shall not lift up sword**

against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore." Literally, we would say well that's wrong. look at the wars all over the world. Let me tell you, we read in the Bible, **"my people shall be a willing people in the day of my power."** There's no more war, no more spears that we're going to take, no more swords that we're going to take, the Spirit of God will guide them. And, when we make a wrong step, the Lord will be there with His Spirit to do some pruning and He'll bring us back into the fold. Oh my friend, how great is His compassion and His love towards us. How can we measure the sufferings that He has shown us and how He has labored so with us all through our life? I feel like this is my experience. That He labored with me in such compassion and love that a normal person, he would have cast me overboard a long time ago. That's the difference, my friend. They shall bring forth fruit. **"My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power."** The Lord reconciles His people to the fact that His word is true, that His word is going to come to pass, whatever He has promised, it shall be done, whatever He says is going to be, it is going to be, my friend, and there are not powers enough in the world to keep it from coming to pass. This is what He has done inside His people to see and to understand that the road that they have to go through...the Lord has purposed every step!

In the New Testament, you find Paul saying, "The law is the school master bringing us unto Him." This is what this sets forth. There is a school master, the law, the school master that brings His people unto Him. Let me tell you something. None of us will ever graduate from this school. We'll always be in that school of grace, learning. Years ago when the Lord began to deal with me, and He had reconciled me to walk humbly before Him, I didn't have any more strength. I was just a little fellow in my feelings. One night, One appeared unto me and said "Do you want more knowledge and understanding?" I said, "Yes!" He said, "You know, it means more sufferings." I said, "yes, that's all right." And the next morning, I woke up and thought why did I say that. I can hardly make it now, because I had physical problems and had to make a way to support my family. I continued in that state for a while desiring to understand more and more of His goodness and mercy. I wanted to see more of the great wonders that He had performed from the beginning of time until to the end of time. I wanted to understand and believe His blessed Word and his mercy and forgiveness. He made me to know that too. So, I tell you, trouble after trouble after trouble, but all of them opened my understanding and it does yours. Your tribulations and your trials will open your understanding into the deeper things of the greatness of God's mercy and grace. **"I will not leave you. I will not forsake you. I'll go with you all the way even unto the end."** Oh my.

David was going to build a house unto the Lord, but God wouldn't allow it, because he was a bloody man, a man of war. He helped to prepare the timbers, but Solomon was the one who built

it. Any time that the enemy of the Israelites would show evil towards the children of Israel, David would realize that it seemed like war was ahead of him. There is a lot of difference between how it was then and how it is now. David would go to the Lord and say, "Lord, shall I go up against this nation?" and the Lord would answer him every time. When circumstances and problems arise in our church today, we seek the same God with the same spirit to guide us in the right way (His way). Think about it, my friend. He quietly and peaceably counseled David. He' s the One that never makes a mistake and never will. That's why He leads you, and I hope me, here in this life. Oh, my friend, let me tell you, in these things we can see the greatness of the wonders of God, and how He leads us on and rebukes His people, many people He shall judge. The time comes with us, when speaking of this, the enemy of the Israelites looked for a war to destroy them, but you know what? Let me give you a little bit of information. In the New Testament you will find where Jesus said, when you sow wheat the good man sows the seed and the wicked one sowed the tares, and they came back and said. the disciples said to Jesus, "the tares. somebody came along and sowed tares in the wheat. They said to the Good Master, do you want us to get the tares out of the wheat?" "No, He said, leave them alone let them grow together." That's the way it is in this world today. God's people are mingled with the tares of the world. They're like the Pharisees and the Sadducees (all unbelievers). He's talking about the ones that are not His people and never will be. And He said, let them grow together until the harvest and then when the harvest comes, there will be a separation. When the end of time comes, my friend, there will be a separation between the wheat and all the tares. He'll do the separation not man. Let them grow together. My friend, He knows what's best. He knows how to work all things for the good of His people. There is a warfare that will last us a lifetime. We read in the Bible, where the writer said, the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. And yet, what are these weapons that God has given you to use in your daily life, grace and mercy and love and compassion from Him, who has watched over us all the days of our life. These are the weapons that God has provided for His people. That warfare is peace in our heart believing that in all of our sufferings in this world, He will bring us through more than conquerors through Him that loved us and laid His life down for us. The love of God is precious. Oh, my friend, every time I think of that lovely old hymn, "Amazing Grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me I once was lost but now I'm found Was blind but now I see" No one will ever be able to measure the grace of God, because the more you meditate upon it, the greater it gets. Then we can sing the verse that we all can sing, "When we've been there ten thousand years Bright shining as the sun We've no less days to sing God's praise Than when we first begun". There is no end. God's people

are going to a place that is an eternal place, no end to it, no sorrow, no sighing. All the chaff, that represents all the people that will be cast down and there is no end to that place either, because it will be forever and forever. My dear hearers, if God did not chastise us from time to time, we would wonder if we are His or not. That's how it goes with all the elect of God. He saw the whole thing and nothing can go contrary to the will and purpose of God. nothing. He has a purpose for everything, everything. are we going to experience any of that? When He speaks the word, everything is "right and good" whether we understand the whole thing or not. That's why by the grace of God and by the mercy of God, you and I are blessed to see this day, that the world knows nothing of, for His people to congregate together and worship Him in spirit and in truth because of His goodness and His mercy and His grace that He has bestowed upon us all the days of our life. This takes me back again to the words my wife spoke, sometime ago, as I told you, and I never heard that expression before, "I am thankful to be thankful." Oh, my friends, much of the time she couldn't remember who I was, but she loved to talk about the Lord and I'd read some of the Bible to her and we would talk about the goodness and mercy of the Lord and it's the same way with us today. Someday, my friend, the time will come, at the appointed time of God, He will come again and gather all of His precious ones together to be carried home to Heaven. Oh, my friend, may God, in His mercy, be with you all, and I am confident that all of God's people have been blessed to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks. These things will lead us and guide us. So many times in life we say things and do things that are not becoming and must beg "oh, Lord, please forgive us." May God's grace and mercy be with us all and keep us humble in the Way that leads unto life eternal. We find that we need Him to be with us in all our sorrows and our tribulations in this life. May God's mercy keep us, and again "When we've been there ten thousand years Bright shining as the sun We've no less days to sing God's praise than when we first begun."

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ROMANS 8:27-28.

And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will* of God.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Many times I have felt an impression to tell, or write of my experience of the Lord's goodness and mercy to me. As a child, I grew up around many people of the Primitive Baptist faith. My maternal grandfather was Elder James G. Gaskill and my mother and daddy, along with several other relatives attended services (sometimes traveling great distances).

My parents never forced my brother, sisters, or me to go with them to church, and as a young child I attended the local Methodist church with my childhood friends. I remember once as a young child of about 12 years old, feeling a sense of doom and my sinful ways. I felt Hell was my due and fell on my knees begging that the Lord would take away my sinful acts and help me walk a better way. I got up from that prayer feeling no better than before. I knew my prayer had gone no further than my mouth. As the years went by, I would listen to all my relatives and preachers who visited our family. My dear mother cooked many meals for the visiting preachers. After the meals, they would speak about the scriptures and what they meant to them. Of course, as a child it all went over my head, but I still felt that they were wise in the interpretation of the scriptures.

Even as a teenager, I couldn't accept the notion that one must accept Christ and join some church or else all was lost. I always felt strongly that unless the Lord dealt with me in a personal and touching way, I couldn't do it of myself; and thus, while others of my girlhood friends joined the local churches I did not.

In 1965, I was married and we were blessed with two children, a son and then a daughter. I often took my two children to the local Sunday School in our community; but always felt out of place there. Later, I began going with my mother to the Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church in Lowland, NC, and felt more comfortable with the preaching I heard there.

After his high school graduation, our son left home and went into the Air Force. This would have been around June of 1985. On August 31, 1985, if not deceived, I had a dream like no other I had ever experienced.

I dreamed I was in the Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church waiting for the preaching to start. Though I was supposed to be at work, I desired to be there more than anywhere else. In the beginning, I saw my cousin who was sitting a distance away from me and who was in deep distress, I went to him and offered to get him a tissue from the front of the church. As I went to get the tissues for him, the front of the church turned into the front of the local Methodist Church I had frequented many times through the years. I went up to the front altar to get the tissues but when I took them to him they turned into a box of trash bags instead. Thinking about it afterwards, I believe this was showing me that the doctrine preached there was not the true doctrine. Then in the dream, my cousin disappeared and I remember sitting in the pew waiting for the preaching to start. I was in great distress and unable to be consoled by those around me. Seeing my distress, a man (who was a

stranger to me) tried to help me. He took me from my seat in the church and took me to a room much like the Sunday School classrooms of my youth. He spoke to me but nothing he said helped my distraught feelings. The next thing I knew I was back in my seat in the church listening to the preacher. I couldn't see the preacher in the pulpit but his words were filling up my thirsty soul to the point that I couldn't hold back the tears. I looked around me on the seat and my tears were running down my body onto the seat and onto the floor. My tears reminded me of a thick grease-like substance. The tears were flowing out of my eyes like a waterfall and I couldn't stop them. Suddenly a voice spoke to me. The voice said, "Those are not your tears, that's Christ blood he shed for you." That's when I awoke, but how I felt when I awoke is hard to say. I was crying when I woke up, just as I was in the dream and couldn't stop crying. My husband lay sleeping along side me with no idea what was happening to me. I got up and walked into the next room - still crying. He joined me then and was alarmed, thinking that I had heard bad news from our son in the service. After a while I was able to tell him what had happened.

Needless to say, I felt a great change in my feelings and felt my total unworthiness. I felt that I, of all people, didn't deserve such a blessing as I felt I had received. It was a Sunday morning, and I looked out our window and saw my mother leaving to attend services somewhere; and oh, how I wanted to tell her what had happened. Later that day, after she returned I did tell her and she said, "You'll have to join the church." But, though I went with her to the church, I still couldn't bring myself to join until much later.

In April, 1988 I finally asked for a home at the Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church and was received and baptized.

I will never forget that days, weeks, and months later after this experience I felt such bliss and an inner peace within in my everyday existence. My thoughts Would wander back to it and I would relive it over and over again. These thoughts also brought with them my thoughts of such utter unworthiness as I could see what, and who I was and felt to be such a sinner and so undeserving.

More often than not I can relate closely with the sweet hymn, "Sweet was the time when first I felt the Savior's pardoning love". Soon after this dream, "His praises tuned my tongue", and "His love was all my song". But to me now, these many years later I feel that I'm more often in darkness than light. I continually beg for mercy, for I believe I know above all others what my fate would be if I receive justice and feel to be in the valley more often than not.

I now attend the Eastern Kehukee churches in the area. I appreciate being able to attend these churches and these dear people allowing me to be among them.

Respectfully submitted,

Ila Leary

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

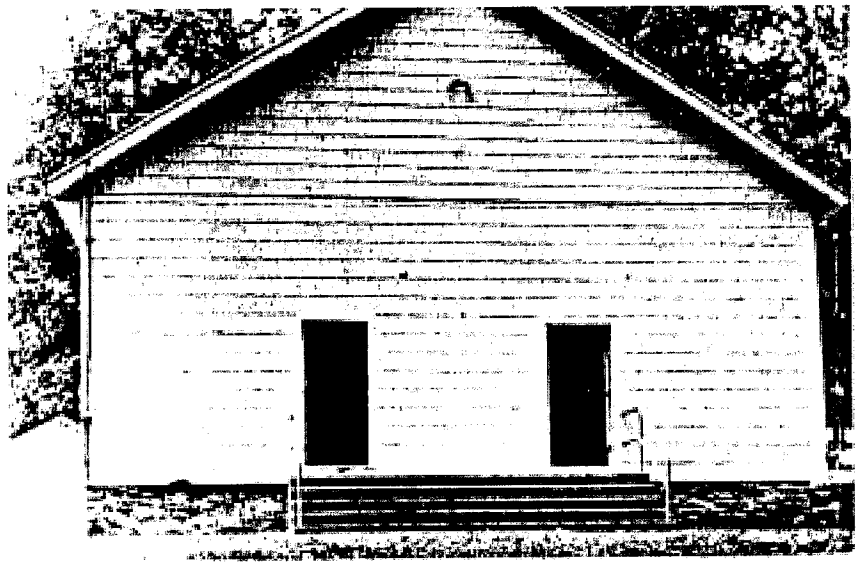

Salem Church

From The Floyd Press
August 16, 1979

According to Elder Roy Agee, pastor of the Salem Church, also called the "Head of the River Church," former president Abraham Lincoln visited the county church once every year.

"I heard that he tried to come the second Sunday in August. Following the Blue Ridge, he rode on his horse from Gettysburg and stopped at the church. His ancestors were Old Baptists, and he was very much a defender of salvation by grace—but as far as I know, he never united with the church," pastor Agee explained. Established. In 1784, the Salem Church, a Primitive Baptist church, has also become known as the "Head of the River Church," its location being near the heading of the Little River around the Copper Hill area.

Pastor Agee said some of the early history of the church was unknown since the old records to the church had been destroyed by fire. He does know that the old building, a log construction, stood back of the present building and housed a balcony where Negro members of the church sat. The white frame building which stands now was constructed in 1900.

An unusual tradition of the church, that was passed on to Pastor Agee and that can be traced back seventy-five to a hundred years, involves dual pastorates.

Pastor Agee reported that John C. Hall and Elder Roberson served as pastors at the same time until Roberson passed away. Then Elder Cole and Hall served together. After Hall's death, Cole and Elder S. L. Moran served, followed, after Cole's death, by Moran and Elder

B. O. Thompson.

After Moran died, Pastor Agee and Elder Thompson served together until Thompson's death in 1975, the year Agee began serving as the church's sole pastor.

The history of the Primitive Baptist denomination, Pastor Agee said, goes back to 1832.

"At that time, we were called Baptists. Then there was a division in 1928 until 1932. This is where missionaries got their start and called themselves the New School. We (Primitive Baptists) were called the Old School, "Hardshells," predestinarian — a name we liked. Now we're called the Old School Primitive Baptists," Agee commented.

He added, "The New School wanted to send their men to seminaries and to have a Sunday School. Our forefathers didn't want that. We believe if the Lord has called one, He is able to qualify him to preach."

The Salem Church, which meets the second weekend in each month, observes their communion outside the church building (when it is not raining) in a formation of a round ring. Preaching services are also held outside in good weather.

Pastor Agee cited the church's beliefs taken from the Articles of Faith:

1--We believe there is but one. true and living God and that in the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Word, or Son. and Holy Ghost, and these are One in essence, power and glory.

2--That the Scripture of the Old and New Testament are the written word of God, and the only complete and unerring rule of faith and practice.

3-- That God has always pursued His infinitely wise plans in all His works and ways, and that He will continue to do so; hence all things brought to pass by Him are but the result of His holy, wise and determinate counsel from eternity.

4--That Adam. was created upright, but he transgressed and became a fallen and totally depraved creature and all mankind with him,

5--The regeneration, santification, justification and salvation are by virtue of the birth, life, death, resurrection and mediation of Jesus Christ, and in no other way; and that all these graces of the Spirit are referrable to the Church of God. which He purchased with His own blood.

6--That all the saints were predestinated unto the adoption of children: elected to eternal salvation according to the foreknowledge of God, and they will be called with an holy calling and the righteousness of Christ imputed to them by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit, and that none of the heirs of promise will be finally lost.

7-- That all of the elect of God were chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, and that they should be holy and without blame before Him in love.

8--That baptism by immersion upon profession of faith in the name of the Sacred Trinity, and that by one duly authorized by the Church to administer ordinances. is gospel baptism, and that only; and all persons who shall continue

to walk circumspectly have a right to the Lord's Supper.

9--That the Church of Christ is a body corporate, possessed of full power to govern herself, her only rule. being the written word of God, She is. therefore, independent.

10--That it is the office of the Holy Spirit to apply Christ's righteousness to the souls of the children of men, and that the Scriptures alone are not sufficient to accomplish this.

11-- That there will be a resurrection. both of the just and the unjust. and that the happiness of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked will both be eternal.

12--That it is the duty of each member of the church to be jointly and severally engaged in every good work for the glory of God and the honor of the Christian Religion.

(A new building was built in 1984 and the first service was the funeral of the pastor, Elder Roy Agee. The current pastor is Elder Carl Terry.)

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1 John 5:1-3.

Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotton of him.

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." - Romans 5:21.

This is the mercy for mourning saints who are sighing and groaning under a body of sin and death, that God has decreed that grace not only may reign, but that it must reign. Were it left to us, we could not more rescue ourselves from the dominion of sin than the children of Israel could deliver themselves from the house of Egyptian bondage. But they sighed and groaned by reason of the bondage, and their cry came up unto God. He had respect unto his covenant, and looked upon them and delivered them (Exodus ii. 23-25). So God has determined on behalf of his people that sin shall not be their eternal ruin; that it shall not plunge them into crime after crime, until it casts them at last into the gulf of endless woe, but that grace "shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life." But it must reign here as well as hereafter, for by its reign here its eternal triumph is secured. It must then subdue our proud hearts, and never cease to sway its peaceful sceptre over them until it has secured in them absolute and unconditional victory. Now this is what every sincere child of God most earnestly longs to feel and realise. He

longs to embrace Jesus and be embraced by him in the arms of love and affection. As the hymn says,

"But now subdued by sovereign grace,
My spirit longs for thy embrace."

He hates sin, though it daily, hourly, momently works in him, and in him, and is ever seeking to regain its former mastery; he abhors that cruel tyrant who set him to do his vilest drudgery, deceived and deluded him by a thousand lying promises, dragged him again and again into captivity, and but for sovereign grace would have sealed his eternal destruction. Subdued by the sceptre of mercy, he longs for the dominion of grace over every faculty of his soul and every member of his body. "O," he says, "let grace reign and rule in my breast; let it not suffer any sin to have dominion over me; let it tame every unruly desire, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ!" Thus, he who truly fears God looks to grace, and to grace only, not merely to save, but to sanctify; not only to pardon sin, but to subdue it; not only to secure him an inheritance among the saints in light, but to make him meet for it.

Elder J.C. Philpot

PSALM 23:1.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

MEETINGS

LITTLE VINE OLDE ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the thirty-fourth session of Little Vine Olde Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association will be held at the Newfound Primitive Baptist Church meeting house located on Brier Creek Road in Wyoming county about 12 miles southwest of Pineville, West Virginia on the fourth Sunday in August and the Saturday before. The dates are August 27 and 28, 2011. Singing is scheduled to begin at 10:30 am and preaching at 11:00 am each day. It is our hope and trust that the Lord will gather together faithful ministers, brethren and friends to worship Him in Spirit and truth, and to show forth His praise. If anyone needs more particular directions or information about lodging, please call me at 606-474-4327.

J.B. Farmer

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The one hundred fifty-fifth annual session of the Smith River Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Union Church located in Patrick County, Va. on September 2, 3, 4 2011.

The church is located on Route 623. Traveling Rt. 57 in Patrick County, turn on Rt. 346 (Entrance to Fairy Stone Park). Go about a half mile and take a

left on Rt. 623 (Union Bridge Road). Go about 3.5 miles and the church is on the right at the intersection with Rt. 624 (Union Church Road).

We invite the ministers of our faith and order, our brethren and friends to be with us.

Tony R. Horton
Association Clerk

GALATIANS 3:18-24.

For if the inheritance *be* **of the law,** *it is* **no more of promise: but God gave** *it* **to Abraham by promise.**

Wherefore then *serveth* **the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made;** *and it was* **ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.**

Now a mediator is not *a mediator* **of one, but God is one.**

Is **the law then against the promises of God? God forbid; for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.**

But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* **unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.**

OBITUARIES

HERMAN SHELTON GUTHRIE

Salem Primitive Baptist Church is saddened again at the loss of another dear brother, Herman Shelton Guthrie, who passed away on Wednesday, May 25, 2011. He is survived by his cherished wife of 65 years, Ora Agee Guthrie; son, Herman Shelton Guthrie, Jr.; daughter, Judy Perdue; grandson, Doug Perdue; and a granddaughter, Anne McCroskey and husband, Eric.

Brother Herman was born September 7, 1915 in Floyd County, Virginia.

He loved to grow vegetables and fruits and gave his loved ones and friends the best of his crops.

Brother Guthrie's funeral was held at John M. Okey & Son Chapel of Salem, Virginia with interment at Sherwood Memorial Park in Salem. Mr. Don Edwards officiated. We believe that our loss is his eternal gain. May God reconcile us to his will.

Written in memory of Brother Herman.

Mary Poff, Clerk
Elder Carl Terry, Moderator

ARTHUR LENWOOD GEARHEART

It is with much sadness that I attempt to write an obituary for our friend and dear brother in Christ of the Salem Primitive Baptist Church. Brother Lenwood was called from this earthly home on March 18, 2011 He was born

July 16, 1921 and was preceded in death by his parents, Curt and Pearl Gearheart; sister, Ethelene Vest; and brother, Floyd Lewis Gearheart. Brother Lenwood was a lifelong resident of Floyd County, Virginia, a veteran of World War II and a member of the Salem Primitive Baptist Church.

Brother Lenwood is survived by his loving wife of 65 years, Grace D Gearheart; two daughters, Judy Britt and Kathy Boyd Blackwell, all of Floyd, Virginia; Three grandsons, Darin Britt, Tracy Britt and Logan Boyd; one granddaughter, Lori Schantz; two step-grandsons, six great-grandchildren and five step-great- grandchildren; one brother, Willie Wayne Gearheart of Pilot; one sister, Oweeda Conner of Pulaski; one brother-in-law, James Sweeney and several nieces and nephews.

Brother Lenwood always had a smile for you and a sense of humor always followed The arrangements were handled by Gardner Funeral Home. Elder Larry Hollandsworth and Elder Allen Terry officiated with the funeral held at Gardner Funeral Home and interment in the Jacksonville Cemetery. Graveside rites by Floyd VFW Post #7854 and American Legion # 127.

Brother Lenwood is and will be greatly missed by all who knew him. May God reconcile us to His will in that our loss is Brother Lenwood's gain.

Written for Salem Church
Mary Poff, Clerk
Elder Carl Terry, Moderator

A TRIBUTE TO ELDER KENNETH R. KEY

Since 1985, until his death, April 3, 2011, Elder Kenneth R. Key was our pastor at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, Highway 700, Ruffin, NC. During this same period, he also served Moon's Creek Church, Big Meadows Church, and Greensboro Church.

Through the years we at Dan River Church felt really blessed to have Elder Kenneth and Sister Nellie in the Church. Both were very personable and had very firm and strong convictions regarding salvation by grace. Their faith and trust in our Lord and savior was unmistakable.

Elder Key was a kind person and a real gentleman. He is greatly missed and his influence will be felt for years. I am just pleased I had the opportunity to know and worship with him through the years. What a wonderful experience!

Even though there is a big void without him at Dan River Church at the present time, I'm confident we will move on in the future the Lord willing.

We will always cherish the memories we have of Elder and Sister Key. They were faithful and trustworthy in their endeavors. This humble man will always be remembered for what he really was: God Fearing; honest; a loving and caring person.

God saw fit to use him as an instrument to further His Kingdom. Thanks be unto God he touched our lives in so many ways.

John Collie, Deacon
Dan River Church

REBECCA JEAN BLACKWELL MORAN

On April 13, 2010 our precious Sister Jean was called from our midst. She was preceded in death by her parents, Brother John Raymond Blackwell, Sr. and Sister Lelia Dix Blackwell. She is survived by her husband, Garnett "Morris" Moran; her brother, John Raymond Blackwell, Jr., who has since also been called home; her sisters, Dorothy Blackwell Callahan, and Barbara Blackwell Schaeffer. Her funeral was conducted by Elder Kenneth Key, Elder Haywood Wray, and Elder Thomas Solomon at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on April 15, 2010 after which, her body was laid to rest in the Church cemetery to await the second coming of her Lord.

Sister Jean was born April 25, 1937 and was such a good child that her parents feared she would be taken from them at a young age. On November 27, 1969 she asked for a home at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by her former pastor, Elder David Spangler. Having put her hand to the plough, she was so wonderfully blessed to never look back. As was stated at her funeral, when one looks at the life the Lord blessed her to lead, what can be said other than Amen. For many years she suffered from Parkinson's disease, but the Lord blessed her to overcome great obstacles and to lovingly and earnestly fill her seat at church. As was also stated at her funeral, the power of the love of God strengthened her and enabled her to face each day with a smile and an humble thankfulness for the grace and mercy of her Lord. When asked do you ever say "Why me?", she replied, "I'm not worthy to ask that." The below verses of one of her favorite hymns sums up her God given faith in the finished work of her Saviour:

"If to Jesus for relief, My soul has fled by prayer,
Why should I give way to grief, Or heart consuming care?
Are not all things in his hands? Has he not his promise passed?
Will he then regardless stand, And let me sink at last?
While I know his providence Disposes each event,
Shall I judge by feeble sense And yield to discontent ?
If he worms and sparrows feed, Clothes the grass in rich array,
Can he see a child in need, And turn his eye away?

The Church at Dan River is especially grateful to the Lord for blessing Sister Dot to bring Sister Jean to church. Many are the times that we've seen the tears flow down her cheeks as she rejoiced at the sound of the gospel. One of the last times was at Pleasantville Church when Brother Wray preached on the Good Shepherd. As we broke up that day, the tears were streaming down her face, and I said to her, "We're looking for a better place" and she nodded yes as she embraced me. For thirty eight

years, I've been blessed with the love and fellowship of this beloved Sister and have witnessed the love of God and the fruit of the Spirit shining from within her. Unworthy though I am, I am so very grateful to my God for the wonderful blessing she was in my life.

May the Lord bless and comfort Morris, Dot, Barbara, all of her family with the precious memories of her life and the comfort that only He can give. For those of us in her church family, may He bless us to realize that our loss is her eternal gain, and may He bless us all to " lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us. ..and run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. .." as our beloved Sister Jean was so wonderfully blessed to do in her sojourn on this earth. In all things may the Lord be praised.

Submitted by one who loved her deeply,

Mary Hawkins

REVELATION 21:3-4.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them *and be* their God.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall their be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

JULIAN HALL RUTROUGH

May we at Salem Primitive Baptist Church bow in humble submission to our lord in the passing of our dear brother in Christ, Julian Rutrough.

Brother Julian passed from this life March 19, 2011, at the age of 90 years. He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Eveleen Rutrough. His son, Eddie Rutrough, and two grandchildren Brian Cox and Kaitlyn Rutrough and many friends. His funeral was held on March 21, 2011 at Salem (Head of the River) Church, by his Pastor Elder Carl Terry and Elder larry Hollandsworth. He was laid to rest in Restvale Cemetary, Copper Hill, VA.

Brother Julian asked for a home with the church in August 1991, was received and baptized September 8, 1991. He was ordained as a deacon June 12, 1993. Brother Julian stood firmly for what he believed, Salvation by Grace. He was faithful to attend his church and others of like faith as long as he lived. His absence will be felt by all who knew and loved him.

May the lord comfort his family and all of us at Salem Church. We will miss him as a brother in Christ, deacon and friend.

By: Mary Janney, Assistant Clerk
Moderator: Elder Carl Terry

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SEARCH

I searched my soul and found me clothed
with ten thousand filthy rags
And all my shame and bitterness rolled
With tares that made the snags.

I searched the pot away down deep
It was hard for me to believe.
How all the dirt I'd done had heaped
I've never known a wretch like me.

Twas then I cried out for my Lord
Twas all that I could do
For fear and terror took my heart
And cold and hunger too.

But God came down to visit me
He lifted away my heavy load
He picked me up from the mercy seat
And beautiful things he told.

Affliction is so hard to bear
But, we'll be glad in time
When love has covered up the scars
And bitterness left behind.

Katherine Mathews

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EDITORIAL

"And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servants said unto him, Alas, my master! How shall we do? And he answered, Fear not: for they that *be* with us *are* more than they that *be* with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain *was* full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." II Kings 6:15-17.

Elder J. B. Farmer

Did you ever wonder about the angels of God, especially those angels who protect and preserve the elect children of God? We see pictures of what some think angels must look like. And we read of and hear of angels described as some kind of human-like beings with large white wings. Many times they are depicted in the female form. But do those images really describe the angels of God, or are those kinds of thoughts purely fanciful? We desire that God should be merciful and show us the truth of the matter, that we should not be led about with every wind of doctrine and that we should be kept from error. May the Lord help us to see and to understand the truth to the praise of God's mercy and grace, and for our comfort and strength.

Elisha and his servant dwelt in a city, which was compassed about by the Syrian army -- a host of seemingly invincible military men with horses and chariots. They had come to conquer and to destroy that city .The servant of Elisha, upon seeing the host, greatly feared for his life and looked to Elisha for comfort and instruction about what they should do. When we are overwhelmed, our nature tells us to do something, and do it quick. We are told by the carnal mind either to stand and fight, or to flee for our lives. But the Spirit, in that small, still voice tells us, **"Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord."** The Spirit calms us down and gives us a vision that we could not see on our

own. He comforts us by again and again teaching us that our God rules and reigns in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. He shows us by God given faith, which is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen, that our God is greater than all. He made the world and all that is in it, and He controls it and will surely bring glory and honor to Himself by keeping His children. When the servant's eyes were opened, he was blessed to see the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. There were more with them than there were with the enemy. He was in a safe place, because God had not forgotten him, and had made provision to keep him and to deliver him, even before the servant had any knowledge of God's powerful purpose to save. **"Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world." "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."**

Jacob, when fleeing from his angry brother Esau at the command of his mother and father, lighted on a certain place and tarried there all night, because the sun was set. Here is another child of God, afraid for his life, but still desiring to please his mother and father. He was out in the wilderness, seemingly alone, with darkness coming on and not knowing how things would come forth. It seems that he had nothing of this world to comfort him, because we are told that he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. But Jacob was not alone. He was like David who said, **"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou *art* there, If I make my bed in hell, behold thou *art there. If* I take the wings of the morning, *and* dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."** God was with Jacob. Jacob dreamed, and behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. Here is manifested the provision for one of God's little ones, even one in trouble. The angels, or messengers (for that is what the word angels means), were shown to Jacob in a dream ascending and descending on that ladder between earth and heaven. The messengers of God are continually coming down in that small, still voice bringing the good news, teaching, and encouragement from a far country. And the desires and prayers, sometimes in songs of praise and thanksgiving, and sometimes in groans, go up from God's children by way of those messengers to God. The apostle instructed the children of God to pray without ceasing. This they do as freely as they breathe — as freely as those angels ascend and descend that ladder. And the Lord appeared to Jacob in that dream and said, among other things, **"Behold, I *am* with thee, and will keep thee in all *places* whither thou goest, and will bring thee again to this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done *that* which I have spoken to thee of."**

God brought the sure word of comfort and strength to Jacob in time of need. And He made Jacob aware that His angels are continually ascending and descending for the benefit of God's little ones.

On the way to Rome in a ship, the apostle Paul was comforted by the presence of the angel of God when all hope of being saved was about gone. They had been exceedingly tossed upon the stormy sea by a tempest for many days. The storm bore heavily upon them, and neither sun nor the stars appeared for many days. It must have been something like a hurricane, in which they were caught. Paul and the shipmen had fasted long, for they perceived that unless God intervened for them all was lost. They were in such distress that they cast overboard the tackling of the ship and finally even the cargo in the vain attempt to save themselves. **"After long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of** *any man's* **life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Saying Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island."**

I cannot help believing that these things were written and preserved for the comfort and teaching of God's little children. These are not just historical facts or exciting stories to entertain us, but these historical details, given by the Holy Spirit, also speak of our experience. Can you think back on times in your life when all about you seemed to be in chaos and confusion? Can you remember when you were in such great fear and doubting about the outcome of the trial you were in that you thought you must perish in it? Can you identify with the apostle and the men of old when they were brought to their wits end and said, **"Lord save us: we perish."?** It seems that this has been my lot time and again since being set in this way. Yes, there have been many long and peaceful seasons, but from time to time, if not deceived, I have been brought to the end of my strength and made to look unto God, who only can deliver. There have been many sleepless nights and days of groaning and begging for mercy and wisdom. There have been times when I thought I would surely perish in the affliction. But God has been merciful through all. And many times, I believe He has sent His holy angel in that small, still voice speaking peace to my soul. In the midst of the trial, that voice speaks saying, all is well, God is in control, even this shall pass, **"and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to** *his* **purpose."**

God has promised never to leave us or to forsake us, and that He will be with us even unto the end of the world.

God cannot lie or fail in a promise. None who are given to believe His promises shall ever be disappointed. And all who are blessed to hear His word and to believe in Him whom God hath sent have everlasting life, and they have passed from death unto life. He has gone before us in all things, even in our afflictions. The way of salvation has been made. Christ suffered and died for our sins, and was raised up again the third day for our justification. God's children are now in a safe place — they are in His hand and no one is able to pluck them out of the Father's hand for He is greater than all. The Holy Spirit said through the prophet Isaiah, **"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old."** God is with us, and the angel of His presence is delivering us from moment to moment, and shall bring us to the end of our journey in peace. We are not alone. This is our hope and our confidence. We cling to it with all the faith and strength we are given.

Jesus said concerning the ones beloved of Him, **"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."** This is the extent of the care of God the Father for His children. He has appointed their angels in heaven to continually behold His face on their behalf. These messengers of God carry from you every burden, grief, sorrow, trouble, and joy directly into His presence always. And these same messengers return to you with assurances of His love and mercy for you. He pities you, and loves you, and cares for you. And He will deliver you out of your troubles and will bring you safe to heaven's shore without fail. Jesus said, **"Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give to you the kingdom."** God has loved His people with an everlasting love, and has determined to keep them while they are in the world. He has given them of His Spirit, which I believe is the messenger that continually communicates between them, while earth-bound, and the throne of God. There is never a moment when they are out of His sight and care, though sometimes we doubt it. Now, we have need of the angels of God to protect and to preserve us. But soon, His people will all behold the Lord God of heaven face to face. They shall see Him with their own eyes. As Job said, **"Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever! For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth: and *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body,* yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; *though* my reins be consumed within me."**

This was written in love, and in hope of eternal life.

J.B. Farmer
12-9-2007

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editors of the Signs,

I am about 92 years of age but in the years passed, I believe it was about 1967 or 1968, I had a most beautiful experience that I sent to you. It had happened before but it kept bothering me to send it to you so I did, then I worried about it because I didn't want any one to feel that I thought I was out of my mind. But this thing has kept on with me and now I wonder if this was so right to tell what the Lord had done for me and still doing the same wonderful things for me. I've had many troubles and heartaches, but never a day passed that I haven't thanked my Savior for His wonderful care for me. So I wrote through the years many poems that entered my mind as I went along the way. Now if you like, use them. If not then just throw them away.

I do not have a computer now but I can hardly see to write.

Katherine Mathews
Danbury, Ct.

Dear Brother Horton,

Please renew our subscription for two more years and use the remainder as you see fit. My wife and I enjoy receiving it and hope that God will continue to preserve it in the future.

Neal and Sue Reed

Monday, 6-6-11

Dear Tony & Family,

My sincere appreciation to you and all who help with getting the Signs out. I feel sure it is not a small undertaking. May all those, Editors and each one who helps, be blessed to continue. We so much need these Truths in these trying times.

Sincerely,
Arlene M. Hole

Use the extra for any needs.

Dear Mr. Horton,

Enclosed is my check for another year to the "Signs", and please use the rest where ever you need.

I enjoy reading the "Signs" every month, very much.

I thank you all so much and Bless you for the "Signs."

Thank you,
In Love and Hope,
Gladys Shelton

My mother, Jane Carroll would like to renew her subscription for one year. She enjoys your publication. Says a lot of the Elders she knew are gone.

She is in a nursing home but able to get around with the help of a wheelchair or walker. Her mind is good. She will be 103 years in Nov.

VOICES OF THE PAST

(The following article was sent to us by Hoyt Sparks)

THE CITY WITHOUT A TEMPLE

"And I saw no temple therein." Rev. 21:22.

We have read this morning from the inspired record a striking description of the city of God; the city of which we have heard, and read, and sung from our earliest childhood; but we have heard that it was far away above the skies; we have sung that it is among the stars; we have read in popular religious fiction that it is the place where good people go when they die. All these notions are no better than the various fabrications of heaven, and are foreign to the true location and nature of the city as the sensual paradise of Mahomet, or the happy hunting grounds of the American Indian. Our eyes have been so long blinded by tradition that we scarcely see the plainest facts of Bible truth; our ears have been so completely stuffed with fables from our early youth that we are deaf to the plain declarations of the inspired record; and our understanding is so darkened by material affections that it is indeed difficult for us to conceive the most prominent principles of the doctrine of Christ. May the God of all grace enlighten our eyes, unstop our ears and open our understanding this morning, that we may hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

First, let us have a proper understanding of the location of this city. It is not in heaven, for John saw it coming down from God out of heaven. It is declared to be the tabernacle of God with men; God dwelling with men, and not men gone above the sky to dwell with God. This city then is in the world, though not of the world; it is the present abode and inheritance of the saints, and not something they come in possession of at the close of their mortal pilgrimage. It is the new Jerusalem, arrayed in the splendor of the covenant of grace, revealed in living contrast with the old Jerusalem, clothed in the blackness of legal servitude. It is the gospel church revealed in the perfection of her living worship, contrasted with all humanly devised and conditional systems of religion.

The jeweled walls, sparkling, gleaming and glittering with all manner of precious stones; the new earth upon which it stands stretching away in all the beauty of its virgin landscape; the new heaven spread above like a tent of righteousness; the pure, peaceful, gladdening river; the tree of life in the midst of its street of gold, each furnishes a theme for a thousand volumes; but more significant to me than all these this morning, is the absence of the temple: **"I saw no temple there."**

What a novel sight to a Jew was a city without a temple! And what would a modern Arminian think of a city without a church? The religious prosperity, the state of morals, the degree of intelligence, and even the social and business advantages of a village, town, or city, are

all estimated by the number and height of its steeples; and if a community could be found without a church, the unfortunate inhabitants would be stigmatized as heathens, notwithstanding they may have attained to a high standard of morals, intelligence, piety and virtue. But the gospel church, walking in the Spirit, is the perfection of society; and the perfect society is revealed from heaven under the similitude of a city without a temple, or, in modern parlance, a city without a church.

The absence of the temple suggests, first the complete removal of the law of Moses. The temple was a symbol of the law, and an almost necessary attendant of all law worship. Jerusalem was the pride of the Jews; and the glory of Jerusalem was the temple. The carnal Jews were less boastful of their temple privileges as a mark of special distinction, than of their fleshly relation to Abraham. They saw nothing in the goodly stones of the temple but the gratification of their own pride; they saw nothing in the streaming blood and quivering of the evening sacrifice, but the things which Moses commanded; they beheld nothing more in the gorgeous trappings and imposing ceremonies of the high priest, than the pomp and splendor of an earthly priesthood. But to the remnant according to the election of grace **"who were born, not of blood, nor the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, but of God,"** the temple with all its service spoke a different language. They looked beyond the matchless pile of stones, to that temple that was to be thrown down and in three days raised up again; they saw beyond the blood that daily drenched the Jewish alters, the blood of the everlasting covenant that was to be shed for the remission of the sins of the many; they recognized in their high priest the type of him who should **"offer himself without spot to God, and by that one offering perfect them forever;"** they heard in the tinkling of the golden bells upon the high priest's garment the joyful sound of the gospel of their salvation.

They groaned under the bondage of temple service, and waited and longed for **"the consolation of Israel."** There was no hope for the flesh in the deeds of the law, and no rest for the spirit in the earthly Jerusalem. But God had provided some better things for them, and in the fullness of time the new Jerusalem was revealed from heaven, arrayed in bridal splendor, enshrouded in gospel glory , clothed in vestments of peace, with gates wide open to receive all those predestinated to enter its walls of salvation, its towers of refuge and palaces of peace.

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, spiritual Israel was redeemed from the law of Moses, having become dead to it by the body of Christ, and by him were led out of bondage, and brought with singing unto Zion, which is the new Jerusalem. They saw from afar the heavenly city. Joyous welcome greeted them, written above the gates in letters of gold, **"Come, ye blessed of my Father." "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden."** They gladly entered, and, to their increased delight, they find no temple therein. No

more sacrifices, no more burnt offerings, no more Sabbath keeping, no more observance of new moons, feasts and holy days. Even the sun and moon which mark times and seasons, days and months, are obliterated from the sky. No Easter celebration, no Christmas frolics. Every vestige of the law removed, and no temple to bring these buried things to remembrance. The justified inhabitants find themselves possessing what angels have desired to look into, and what the prophets of their fathers had searched diligently concerning.

The absence of the temple signifies the perfect deliverance of the elect Gentiles from every species of vain philosophy and esteemed and cherished idolatry. The Gentile Christians were under equally a galling bondage as were the Jews, although they owed no allegiance to the law of Moses. They were under the law of sin and death, and were by nature alienated from the life of God through their ignorance, and were brought into bondage by the lusts of the flesh and the wiles of their priestcraft. The temple is not only a symbol of the law of Moses, but is a universal attendant of every form of Gentile idolatry. Stupendous temples adorned the cities of Egypt five thousand years ago. These temples were the homes of Egypt's gods; sources of revenue to Egyptian priests, and the oppressors, enslavers and robbers of Egypt's people. Marble shrines of exquisite beauty brightened the cities of ancient Greece; massive temples of costliest design contributed to the imposing grandeur of the once mighty Rome; and gorgeous temples of gold, of fabulous wealth, dazzled the eyes of Spanish robbers in the far away mountain recesses of Mexico and Peru. The gigantic remains found in every quarter of the earth proclaim in tongues of crumbling stone, the universal reign of temple service over the benighted sons of men. The reign of grace has broken the reign of sin, and the Gentiles have seen the salvation of God. Grace searched the dark places of heathen idolatry , and brought forth to the light of the glorious gospel of the hidden objects of electing love.

Many of the saints at Ephesus had served in the bondage, in the temple of Diana; many of the **"washed, justified and sanctified"** ones of the Corinthian church had been gathered from the temples of Olympian Zeus, which adorned and burdened that opulent city; and many of the called saints of Rome had been led out of the temples of Jupiter. When Paul declared to the Athenians of Mars Hill that God dwelleth not in temples made with hands, some who worshiped at the altar of the unknown god clave unto him and believed. All the inhabitants of this city, whether Jew or Greek, bond or free, have learned that God dwelleth not in temples made with hands, but that he is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit. They have found to the joy of their hearts, that where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. The truly spiritually minded seek no temple, but God himself. In him they live and move and have their being, and in this gracious environment they enjoy all the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

The absence of the temple signifies the breaking down of the **"middle wall of partition between the Jews and the Gentiles."** The Jewish temple was the great objective distinction between the Jews and all other nations, and stood as an outward evidence of God's favor to the Jews and rejection of the Gentiles. But, as an outward evidence that God is not a respecter of persons, and that the Gentiles are "brought nigh by the blood of Christ" and reconciled in the same body with the Jews, the temple of Jerusalem was utterly destroyed, completely thrown down, so that **"not even one stone remained"** upon another, as Christ had said before it was done. In addition to this outward evidence, the new Jerusalem was revealed to the eye of faith with no temple in it, so that the believing Jew can no more be offended by bringing Gentiles into the temple. The grounds of dispute concerning Jewish prerogatives have been completely removed from the church under the gospel dispensation, and now representatives of every nation dwell together in unity in this spiritual commonwealth, each esteeming others better than himself, all hearts having been purified by faith which works by love. All have God for their Father, having been born again; all washed in the same blood, and all possessing one life, living together in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace.

The absence of the temple signifies the absence of priestcraft. There is but one city in which priestcraft is not to be found, and that is the city of God. Priests have sought to rule the world; and are still seeking. A priesthood is a necessary element of all formulated religions, whether Jewish, Mohammedan, Catholic or Protestant. The priesthood of all will-worshipping idolaters has always pretended to stand between the people and their gods, and that in some way or another they are instrumental in bringing about reconciliation between offending men and offended gods. This important element is common to all carnal religious systems; it is found alike in heathen, Catholic and Protestant, and is plain evidence of the common origin and common interest of all religious enterprises. The Catholic priest assumes to forgive sins for a stipulated sum, and pray souls out purgatory for wages. The different Protestant hirelings will not exactly promise to do this, but they are equally cunning, and as little to be trusted. They hold out that men cannot be saved unless they hear them preach, and believe them; and some even go so far in their blasphemous presumption as to say that the heathen cannot be saved, neither can God justly damn them, until they preach to them. They array themselves in hypocritical robes of false christs, and profess to be commissioned to evangelize the world and bring it to Christ. They even ascribe the salvation of their children to their incantations, to penny tracts and religious fiction. They have invented hundreds of schemes and tricks to delude the people, and meeting in conventions from year to year to devise new fables, to send out their agents with new demands for money.

The absence of the temple implies

the absence of all these workers of darkness and propagators of iniquity. The inhabitants of this city have been delivered from the base deception of both Catholic and Protestant priesthoods. They have learned that there is but one mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus. They are themselves a royal priesthood in Christ, prepared by grace to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. In this new creation they worship God in the spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh. They have no need of a candle, or the light of the sun or moon, all of which are emblems of worldly wisdom, as claimed by the carnal priesthoods; but the Lord God giveth them light, and the Lamb is the light thereof. Carnal worshippers seek a temple, but the spiritually minded seek no temple but God himself; the carnal worshipper delights in rites and ceremonies, but the spiritual seeks the secrecy of his closet; the carnal worshipper seeks the intercession of priests, but the spiritual is satisfied with no intercession outside of the unutterable groanings of the Spirit himself.

The absence of the temple signifies the absence of all fraud, deceit and violence. All the great temples of the world, from Thebes to Athens, from Athens to heathen Rome, from heathen Rome to Catholic Rome, from Catholic Rome to Protestant London, have been intimately connected with the blackest crimes of history; they have been the cradles of superstition, folly and vice, the nurseries of the antichrist in every phase and form, the despots of hypocrisy, the resorts of religious deceivers and oppressors; the sepulchers of liberty, prison house of saints, and the high seats of spiritual wickedness. The absence of the temple from the city of God is evidence that all the works of the flesh are unknown either to Jew or Greek in pure spiritual worship. This city is redeemed from all iniquity, and in this spiritual city, the true gospel church, no guile is found. The deeds of the body are mortified, and the fruit of the Spirit abounds. The inhabitants are blessed with good and upright hearts and are in possession of charity which thinketh no ill of his neighbor.

The contrast was no greater between this city and old Jerusalem, than between this city and the communities of carnal religionists now. This is an age of extravagant temple worship. The chief ambition of the different sects is to surpass each other in temple building. Religious societies in every place from the country cross-roads to the metropolis of the nation, render themselves a pest to their neighborhood and a disgrace to the name of Christianity, in going beyond their means to gratify the foolish, wicked, antichristian pride in erecting fine places of worship. The huge piles of stone and stained glass, thrown together in all the fantastic forms of heathen architecture that adorn our towns and cities, are regarded with quite as much reverence and admiration by their benighted votaries, as the temples of any of the ancient heathen nations.

This city is the whole election of grace, as they in one body worship the Father in spirit, as they stand holy and without blame before him in love. God himself dwells in them and with them,

and he is their temple, and they are his.

The glory of the city is seen only by faith; the carnal senses of the saints themselves have never seen it. But the time shall come when still more grace shall be brought to them. The city shall be unveiled until all shall see it plainly and all earthly cities with all their temples and idolatry shall be finally and forever overthrown, and the city of God shall stand a living, enduring, eternal monument to the love, mercy and power of God, and the victory of Christ over all enemies.

Elder H. M. Curry.
May 14, 1893

EPHESIANS 1: 1-5.

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:

Grace *be* to you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ:

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.

(The following article is the first editorial written by Elder Beebe for the "Signs" and is just as true and applicable today as when it was written in 1832.)

THE CHURCH OF GOD.

NEW VERNON, N.Y. Nov. 23, 1832.

About eighteen hundred years ago, a Baptist Church was constituted at Jerusalem, under the immediate superintendence of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to an ancient prediction was born of a virgin, and came into the world to preside as Head over all things to the church, which is his body and the fullness of him who filleth all in all. Having manifested himself as the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, and the only foundation upon which his church could rest securely, he claimed the exclusive privilege of building and of governing his Church in his own way; his language is, **"Upon this Rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."**

After the similitude of **"a stone cut out of the mountain without hands,"** the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor left to other people; but bearing down all opposition, it shall stand forever. The eternal Father set his King upon his holy hill of Zion, and to his Son he said, **"Thy throne, O God, is forever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom:"** and in an audible voice from the third heaven made proclamation, **"This is my beloved Son in whom I am**

well pleased; hear ye him." At an early period in the reign of the glorious Messiah, his authority was questioned by the high priests, scribes and pharisees: **"Tell us (said they,) by what authority doest thou these things, and who gave this authority?"**

The subjects of King Jesus were chosen in a furnace of affiiction, and advised that in the world they should have tribulation, but in Christ they should have peace.

Tracing the history of the church from the morning of her visible existence, we find her constantly beset with enemies; presenting to our view the antitype of the burning bush which Moses saw in the wilderness. She has been constantly enveloped with the flames of persecution; yet, to the astonishment of all her cruel foes, she is not consumed. We behold her king taken, and led like a lamb to the slaughter, after bearing the reproaches of ungodly men for about thirty years, during which time he was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. — He was scourged and crowned with thorns, and to finish the horrid picture, was nailed to the fatal cross, and between two thieves, on Calvary, crucified and slain, — not by the open and avowed enemies of God and man, but by the most learned and popular denomination of professors of religion on the earth,— not by an "inert or anti-effort class," but by those who had a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge; by men whose religion was a science, whose ministry was learned, and whose titles were honorary. We cannot do justice to our subject and stop here. No, the cry of slaughtered thousands who were put to death for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held, ring in our ears, — who from under the altar cry with a loud voice, **"How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth."** These things have been done in the green tree, and they will be repeated in the dry. They have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, and they will much more call them so, who are of his household.

We know there are many in our day crying Peace! peace! and so there were in those times of bitter persecution above mentioned. The present is a time when men will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts they are heaping to themselves teachers having itching ears. Popular creeds are substituted in the place of the faith once delivered to the saints — the commandments of men instead of the gospel of Jesus Christ — human inventions take the place of divine ordinances — the work of the Holy Ghost, in gathering in and quickening the elect of God, is superceded by human contrivances. The holy scriptures are made an article of religious speculation; repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, are dispensed with, for a mere excitement of the natural passions, and the peculiar virtues of an anxious seat. Four days, or protracted meetings, got up by men, are received as seasons of Pentecost, while the amount of money given in aid of the inventions of men, is made the standard of orthodoxy and the stepping stone to power. Instead of a strict

adherence to the command of Zion's King, **"Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's,"** a profession of religion is urged as an indispensable qualification for civil magistracy. In short by a general amalgamation of the world and the church, by the onward march of priestcraft, the cloud of persecution is gathering fast, and the impending storm is almost ready to burst with dreadful fury upon this unhappy land, and to stain the American soil with the blood of all such as will not worship the beast or receive his mark. Candid reader, we appeal to you, are things so, or are we deluded? Would to God we were; but alas! awful realities stare us in the face. **"Ye can discern the face of the sky, but can ye not *discern* the signs of the times?"**

We do not flatter ourself that this little sheet will be able to shut the floodgates of delusion; for the man of sin must and shall be revealed, whom the Lord will consume by the spirit of his mouth, and by the brightness of his coming. But we feel it to be our duty to **"blow the trumpet in Zion,"** and to sound an alarm on God's holy mountain, and exhort our brethren, and so much the more as we see the day approaching.

In conducting this paper we expect to call down upon ourselves the indignation and wrath of those whom we oppose. We shall be greatly disappointed if they do not load us with reproaches and hard names; but it will be to us a privilege rather than a trial to follow our beloved Lord through evil as well as through good report. Our prayer to God is, that we may be governed by the same spirit which beautified and adorned the life and conversation of our Lord Jesus Christ in the days of his flesh, that when we shall be reviled we may not revile again.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

(The following article was sent to us by Jim Cote, Westbrook, Maine)

January 26, 1916

Dear Brethren:- How unknown to those who know not God are those moments, given to the called of God, of nearness of access unto God. Here the soul pours forth its moans and longings, and adoration, and we are bowed in sacred worship at the throne of His grace. A few hours ago I sat reading the Scriptures, and found the word sweet, and my heart was stirred. Then certain persons came into my mind, my reading was suspended, and my heart went out in prayer to God for them. I mentally viewed their circumstances, burdens, temptations, and trials they were then enduring, and this was the burden of my prayer: Be merciful and gracious unto them, and let all these things work together for their good. As I sat thus in prayer to God my thoughts were turned to myself, and I felt in my heart, O that all things might work together for my good, and in an instant I felt, How can the great and holy God be good to me? How can He who worketh all things after the counsel of His own

will ordain that an things shall work together for my good? How can He have a thought toward me? How can He delight in me? In the twinkling of an eye I looked over my whole life, what I have been, all unrighteousness; what I am even now in my Adamic nature. I saw myself utterly unworthy. I saw myself as a very abject, unholy, unclean, vile transgressor, ungodly. O the immeasurable gulf I saw between the Holy One of Israel and me, a sinner! I saw myself base, to be despised, a fit object for the just condemnation of God, meet to be under the curse of the law. I found my heart much moved, so humbled under the sight, the tears came into my eyes, and under the dreadful consciousness of what I am in my vile nature I moaned and cried unto God, Do not abhor me, cast me not away. Then came with all graciousness the words to my heart, To them who love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. What! Can a vile, sinful being love the just and holy God? O, I feel I love God, and I love Him as revealed in the face of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Love I much? I've much forgiven;
I'm a miracle of grace."

Once I was altogether enmity against God, alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in me, because of the blindness of my heart, but the Lord has, I hope, called me by His grace; He drew me, a wretched, guilty sinner, unto Himself, brought me with a broken and contrite heart at His feet, crying for mercy , yearning for reconciliation and salvation. Surely He gave me a heart to know Him. (Jer. 24:7) As it is written, **"They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jer. 31:34)** And unto me Jesus became precious, and to this day He is most precious to my soul, and I, a poor sinner, love Him, yes, I love the dear incarnate Son of God; the Lamb of God, our Savior. **"To them who are the called according to his purpose."** Called by God's grace, called unto the fellowship of the incarnate Son of God, called to the inheritance of all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, called unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus. I was comforted as the blessedness of the gospel of God's grace was unfolded to my tried soul, and I saw in that moment my acceptance in the beloved Savior, the Head of the church, all according to the eternal purpose, everlasting love, and mercy and grace in Christ Jesus.

"O! wondrous grace, and mystery profound;
In God's eternal purpose I found;
His sovereign love, His grace, His deep decree,
In some mysterious way included me."

O these precious, sacred verities came to my heart with comforting power, and I was nourished by the consolations of our Beloved; and was ruled with joy and peace in believing,

"Whate'er thou deniest, O give me thy grace;
The Spirit's sure witness and smiles of thy face;
Indulge me with patience to wait at

thy throne,
And find even now some sweet foretastes of home."

Thus once more I feel I can say, I have known in my soul the gospel of Christ in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. And as the tribes of Israel of old worshiped God by the shedding of the blood of a lamb in the morning and evening sacrifice, so the spiritual Israel, the true worshipers of God, unto this day draw nigh unto God continually by the one offering of Christ, the Lamb of God. O children of God, the throne at which we worship is the throne of God and the Lamb. The Lamb in the midst of the throne. (Rev.5:6-14; 22:3) He once was slain, He gave Himself an offering and a sacrifice unto God for a sweet smelling savor, to wash away our sins in His precious blood; to obtain eternal redemption for us. But Christ Jesus the Lamb liveth again, He arose from the tomb, and ascended to heaven, and was received up unto glory, and He is set down on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. He is enthroned, He reigns, the Lamb in the midst of the throne, loved, believed in and worshiped by all the blood-washed church of God, the redeemed of the Lord, saying with a loud voice, **"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing, and every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing and honor, and glory, and power,** *be* **unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four** *and* **twenty elders fell down and worshiped him that liveth for ever and ever." (Rev. 5:12-14)** My heart is saying, "Amen," too. O the contrast between this scene and that portrayed in the next chapter! **"And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" (Rev.6:14-17)** O the comfort and delight of my yearning heart is to behold the Lamb in the midst of the throne, by faith to see the Lamb that was slain, and who liveth again, even Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor. For all my expectations of forgiveness, cleansing, righteousness, justification, salvation and of being brought unto glory, is by Him; From the throne of God and the Lamb even now, by faith, I blessedly realize there flows unto me the pure river of water of life, clear as crystal. (Rev. 22:1) Here I drink the river of His pleasures. (Psalms 36:8)

"I taste, delight succeeds to woe;
I bathe, no waters cleanse me so;

Such joy and purity to share,
I could remain enraptured there."

(Elder) Frederick W. Keene

Frederick W. Keene served as pastor of Oakwoods Baptist Church, North Berwick, Maine 1893-1919.

WHAT SHALL I CRY?

Please get your Bible and open to the 40th. chapter of of Isaiah and read the entire chapter. May the Lord now enable us to meditate together upon this scripture using the first part of the 6th verse as basis for our meditations: "The voice said, 'Cry', and he said, 'What shall I cry?"

Cry means to utter, proclaim, groan, shriek or speak. When you cry it is involuntary brought about by a stimulus that causes you to speak, proclaim, and say things that, were it not for this stimulating influence, you would not utter. We believe that the "Spirit of the Lord" is the stimulating influence that prompts God's people to cry. When the **"Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon"** us it prompts the opposite cry from that of the spirit of man. (See 7th verse) There is such a drastic change brought about by the direct operation of the Spirit that there always is a question. A question intimates that you do not know.

When the Spirit fell upon them on the day of Pentecost they asked, **"What shall we do?" (Acts 2:37)** When it arrested Paul on the way to Damascus he asked, **"Who are thou, Lord?"** and, **"What wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:5-6)** Those who were pricked at heart by the Spirit on the day of Pentecost did not ask what May we do? But **"what shall we do?"** Paul did not ask, what do you WANT me to do? But, **"What wilt thou have me to do?"** The one in the text did not ask, what MAY I cry?, but, **"What SHALL I cry?"** All upon whom the Spirit of the Lord has blown are made to realize that God has ALL power and that they have NO power. They are made to realize that **"He speaks and it is done; He commands and it stands fast."** When I was identified with another order of religion I outlined my sermons before-hand and delivered them according to outline. I knew what to cry because the Spirit had not withered my flesh and caused my goodliness to fade. I was certain, sure and proud of myself. Since my flesh withered until I have no power and the goodliness thereof faded until I have no self righteousness, I have been entirely dependent upon God to give me at the self-same hour light of thought and liberty of speech. I go groaning, wondering, **"What shall I cry?"** (I trust this has been brought about by the Spirit of the Lord blowing upon me.)

It has already been intimated that those who cry the Truth do so because of the stimulating influence of the Holy Spirit. They wonder what to cry because they have nothing of themselves to cry. When the voice says, "Cry", they know they MUST cry. I am persuaded that every time the Voice commands to cry the child of God does cry that which God puts in his mouth. Now, **"What shall I cry?"**

"All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass." (Isaiah 40:6-7) How is all flesh as grass? The grass withers. Therefore, all flesh withers. How is all the goodliness of the flesh as the flower? The flower fadeth. Therefore, all the righteousness of the flesh fadeth. What causes the flesh to wither and the righteousness thereof to fade? The Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it. Has the Spirit of the Lord ever blown upon you? If your natural power has so withered that you realize you cannot lift yourself up to the extent to be approved of God I am persuaded that the Spirit of the Lord has blown upon you. If all your righteousness has faded in beauty that it appears as filthy rags, I am convinced that the Spirit has blown upon you. **"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." (Isaiah 64:6).**

What shall I cry concerning all nations as a whole? Can they combine and unite their strength and accomplish anything of their own power? Let us see. All nations are "counted as the small dust of the balance." (Is. 40:15) The small dust upon the balances that the merchant uses in weighing his commodities are so insignificant that no purchaser would ask the merchant to remove the small dust from the balances before weighing in order that what he has purchased would weigh less. If all nations combined would be so insignificant, what would one man be? We are to cry that they are less than that! **(Isaiah 40:7) "An nations before Him are as nothing; and they are counted to Him LESS THAN NOTHING and vanity."** If all nations are counted to Him as nothing and less than nothing — what would one man be counted as ? Using the expression of the late Elder A. D. Wall, of Amity, Arkansas —: "Nothing split open and both halves thrown away, would be about the best way I know to express the size of one man's power as counted by God." Who can boast of the power and righteousness of puny man in the face of these startling statements! God forbids His people to boast of their righteousness and power because of the withering and fading effects brought about by the Spirit.

What shall I cry concerning God? **"It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants there of are as grasshoppers." "That bringeth the princes to nothing; He maketh the judges of the earth as vanity." (Is. 40:22-23)** He did this to Hezekiah though he was a king. Each and every one upon whom the Spirit blows (read v. 24) is brought to nothing and vanity whether they be king, prince, judge, rich or poor, bond or free, — regardless of their status in this world they are all brought to the same low level. What shall I cry concerning that which God does for those upon whom He hath blown His Spirit to wither and fade into faintness and weariness? **"He giveth power to the FAINT; and to them that have NO MIGHT He increaseth**

strength." (V. 29) When their life ends; He adds His Life. (See Isaiah 38:5) When their power becomes as vanity He gives His power. When they are weak then they become strong in the Lord. When the Lord is your strength you run and do not become weary because **"He is strong in power; not one faileth." (V. 26)**

What shall I cry to the Lord's people? **"Behold the Lord God will come with STRONG hand, and His arm shall rule for Him; behold His reward is WITH Him, and His work before Him. He shall feed His flock like a shepherd ; He shall gather the lambs with His arms, and carry them in His bosom."** I am persuaded that Jesus and the Spirit are the strong arm and hand that shall rule for Him in the lives of His people. He gathers, carries, and feeds those that are His. Jesus came to seek and save that which was lost. It is not left upon the volition of the creature to find God. This is the work of the strong arm and hand of God. He carries them in His bosom. They were chosen in Him before time began. They are bone of His bone. None of these shall fail for the Lord carries them and feeds them. **"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any** *man* **PLUCK THEM OUT OF MY HAND. My Father, which gave** *them* **me is greater than all; and NO** *MAN* **IS ABLE TO PLUCK** *THEM* **OUT OF MY FATHER'S HAND" (St. John 10:27-29)** We see the certainty of all the sheep of God hearing the voice, following after, and persevering unto Life Eternal without the loss of one.

What shall I cry to Jerusalem, God's people? **"Comfort ye, comfort ye MY PEOPLE, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to JERUSALEM, and CRY unto her, that her WARFARE IS ACCOMPLISHED, that INIQUITY IS PARDONED; for she hath received OF THE LORD'S HAND DOUBLE for all her sins." (Isaiah 40:1-2)** Take notice that the cry is to be made only to God's people. This cry is to be of comfort to the church or those whom He hath called out. God's ministry tell her that Jesus was the lone warrior who accomplished this warfare by fulfilling all the requirements of the law in her stead. He is a warrior in whom God was well pleased. He came to **"give eternal life to as many as thou hast given Him." (St. John 17:2). "And this is the record, that God hath given us eternal Life. and this life is in His Son." (1 John 5:11)**

Not only did he accomplish OUR WARFARE but also paid the penalty for our iniquity! He suffered and died that Holy Justice might be perfectly satisfied, the penalty for our sins fully paid; that we might appear before His judgment seat with a record without blemish. He did not stop by just accomplishing the law for us, which would have left us with our sins against us. Neither did He only atone for our sins, which would have left the task to us of strictly obeying the ten commandments with all of its supporting laws. But, He performed DOUBLE for us. He reconciled us unto the Father by His death, and He also saves us by His

life. (see ROM. 5:10)

We receive of the Lord's hand DOUBLE in all things pertaining to eternal life. He speaks and also does it. He commands and causes it to come to pass. Jesus is AUTHOR and FINISHER of our faith. He works in us BOTH TO WILL and TO DO of His good pleasure. He commands to repent, and gives you repentance. He says, **"Awake,"** and awakens you. He commands to live, and gives you life. He says, **"Come unto me",** and DRAWS you to Him. He says, **"Hear,"** and gives you a hearing ear. He says, **"Cry,"** and puts the words into your mouth to cry. He says to Zion, **"Get thee up into the high mountains,"** and sets them on high.

What shall I then cry concerning the salvation of God's people? I must cry that salvation is solely by the grace of God through the merits of Jesus Christ both in time and unto eternity. I must do as Jonah, acclaim that salvation is of the Lord. I must cry that it is certain and sure to each and everyone of the subjects of His amazing grace. I must cry that boasting is excluded. I must praise Him for His wonderful goodness to the children of men. In Him we move and have our being. The breath that we breathe belongs to Him. Even natural possessions are in His hand and He distributeth them to whomsoever He will. All the hairs of your head are numbered by Him and not even a sparrow falls without Him.

What shall I cry to the discouraged? God providentially cares for you and so sovereignly controls ALL THINGS that they work together for your good. God has a noble purpose for you to fulfill in life and He will so protect you and guide you that you will completely fulfill this purpose before He takes you from this sojourn of sin and sorrow. Even though you feel so insignificant, God's purpose in you being here is just as important as the greatest ministerial gift that has ever graced the pulpit. May God bless you to take courage with these thoughts and press on toward the mark of the prize of the high calling — looking unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of this precious faith. God has so arranged, fixed and decreed that we have need of each other and we do serve one another; thereby serving Christ. (See Matt. 25:31-40) We are made to do as Paul — thank God for the brethren.

What shall I cry concerning our conduct one toward another? Forgive a brother his trespasses as our heavenly Father hath forgiven us. Esteem a brother higher than ourselves. Do good unto all men; especially unto the Household of Faith. As much as in you is live peaceably with all men. Do unto them as you would have them do unto you. **"And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, even so, minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." (1 Peter 4:8-10) "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or *as* a thief or *as* an evil doer, or as a busy body in other men's matters — yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on**

this behalf." (1 Peter 4:15-16) As the body has need of each and everyone of its members, so the church has need of each other.

What shall I cry to God? **"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy Loving kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." Psalm 51:1-2. "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." (Psalms 51:10)** Perform for me that my walk and conversation may be godly in this life. **"Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion."** Cause strife and confusion to cease — if it be thy will — that God's little children may live together in sweet fellowship one with another. Cause us to be content with our lot and reconciled unto Thy will. Give us this day our daily bread. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Finally, save us in that eternal abode where and when all will be peace, love, joy, and fellowship forever and ever is the prayer that we beseech in the name of Jesus Christ who art Thy Son, and our redeemer. Amen.

Elder E. J. Lambert

PSALM 113: 1-2.

Praise ye the Lord. Praise, O ye servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord.

Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth and forevermore.

"And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried; they shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God." — Zechariah xiii.9.

It is a mercy to be in the furnace, and it is a mercy to be brought through it. The Lord's promise to the third part is, that he will bring them through the fire. They must therefore, according to his own word, be put into it, and yet not left in it. It is "through the fire" — right through it from beginning to end, whether it be a long and slow one or short and fierce one. The Lord knows exactly what we can bear, and it is not always the hottest fire which produces the most softening effects. Some metals indeed are so stubborn, and the dross is so deeply engrained into them, that they seem to require a hotter fire than others. But after the law has done its work, and the dross and tin have been purged away, the Lord does not usually bring again so hot a furnace. It is rather one of trial, temptation, sickness, family affliction, straits in providence, persecution, deep and daily discoveries of the body of sin and death, the hidings of the Lord's face, and denials of his presence which seem to make up that trial which tries every man's faith of what sort it is. By these trials and exercises there is a gradual weaning from the world, a hu-

mility, meekness, and brokenness of spirit before the Lord, a greater simplicity and godly sincerity, more willing obedience to the precepts of the gospel, and a greater desire to know the will of God and do it. O that these fruits of the Spirit might abound in us and all the saints and servants of God!

J. C. Philpot

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/11
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

PSALM 93.

The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, *wherewith* he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.

Thy throne *is* established of old: thou art from everlasting.

The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.

The Lord on high *is* mightier than the noise of many waters, *yea, than* the mighty waves of the sea.

Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever.

MEETINGS

EASTERN KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The 2011 session of the Eastern Kehukee Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Hancocks Church located near Ayden, North Carolina. The meeting will be held on Saturday, October 1 and Sunday, October 2, 2011. Preaching services will begin each day at 10:30am.

From Raleigh, take US 64 East. Then take the US 264 exit to Greenville. When you get to Greenville, take Hwy 11 South to Ayden. Turn left on Hwy 102 East. Go through Ayden and about two miles turn on the first paved road to the left. This will be Ayden Golf Club Road. Go about 1 1/2 miles and the church will be on the left.

We invite the ministers of our faith and order, our brethren and all lovers of the truth of meet with us.

Naomi Coker
Association Clerk
252-823-0786

REVELATION 2:29.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

NEW RIVER ASSOCIATION

The two hundred, and eleventh session of the New River Association will convene the Lord willing at Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church located in Floyd County, Va. This session will be entertained by Indian Creek (P.B.C.) located in Floyd County, Va.

Beginning on Sat. before the fourth Sunday and continue on Sunday with dates being Sept. 24th, and 25th, 2011 the Lord willing.

Indian Creek Church is located on highway (787) in Indian Valley, Va. Those coming by Route (221) or (52) or (8) come to Willis, Va. Turn on (787) go approximately (7) miles to church on left.

We invite the ministers of our faith and order also our Bro. and Sisters and Friends to be with us Lord willing.

Thomas Pegram, Moderator
J.B. Mitchell, Jr., Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 24 & 25, 2011.

New Hope Church, located at Spearsville, Louisiana will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and meet with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
318-778-4217

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 2011

Amy Heppler, AZ 5.00
Gladys Shelton, NM 20.00
Mamie Ferguson, VA 5.00
Buford Thompson, VA 5.00
Sarah M. Sidbury, NC 5.00
Arlene Hole, NC 5.00
Ila Leary, NC 5.00

FOR JULY 2011

Lowell Hopkins, VA 5.00
Glenna Link, TN 15.00
James Pugh, AL 5.00
Ruby Queen, KY 10.00
Florence B. Knight, NC 15.00
Ralph Dale, NC 5.00
Neal Reed, OH 15.00
Elder Larry Hollandsworth, VA 5.00
Vivian Underwood, VA 5.00
Walter Craft, WV 5.00
Lessie Smith, OK 25.00

OBITUARIES

LESSIE LOUISE LANCASTER

Sister Lessie Lancaster was born October 14, 1919 and passed from this life on February 12, 2011. A dear sister in Christ. having united with Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church August 20, 1948. enjoyed 62 1/2 years holding fellowship with those she loved.

There was an unusual circumstance prevailing at the time she was received into fellowship. Back in the days that she united with the church. it was customary for Pleasant Hill members and friends to meet on Friday before the August meeting to clean the house and grounds. Sister Lessie was there to help with the chores. After the work was done on this occasion. it was suggested everyone go inside and sing a few hymns before leaving. According to the church minutes they were not holding a formal church service and no official business was taking place. However, Sister Lancaster said all of a sudden she felt something telling her to move. She left her seat and went before those who had gathered for the worktime and let it be known she wanted a home with them. The group was called to order and they opened a conference after which they announced an open door of the church for the reception of new members.

Sister Lancaster was received and faithfully attended meeting there as long as she was able. Her health began to fail in 2001 and by 2003 she was rarely able to fill her seat. We at Pleasant Hill will continue to miss her and her soft spoken voice as she quietly moved among the congregation.

Preceding her in death were her father and mother, Thad Lancaster and (Sister) Nora Williams Lancaster; two brothers, James Lancaster and (Brother) Alvin Lancaster; one sister, Myrtle L. Proctor.

She leaves to cherish her memory three sons, Frank and wife Ida Lancaster; Tommy and wife Jo Rita Lancaster and John W. Lancaster and special friend, Sue Pierce; Four grandsons and a great granddaughter.

Her funeral was conducted graveside by her pastor, Elder Cleo Robertson and Elder Autry Pridgen at Pineview Cemetery in Rocky Mount, North Carolina.

Written at the request of Pleasant Hill Church by one who loved her and will miss her. Our hope is that she has inherited that eternal home where all is well and she would not wish to be back here.

The church agreed in conference that a copy of this obituary be placed on the church records, one sent to *The Signs of the Times* for publication, and a copy to the family.

Peggy V. Brake

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
J. Carroll Williams, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

LORD, HOLD MY HAND!

Lord, hold my hand! The way is rough and wild.
I stumble oft by self and sin beguiled.
Pitfalls and snares lie thick on either hand;
Unless thou dost uphold I cannot stand.
I grope in darkness, vainly seeking light;
Teach me to trust, and walk by faith, not sight.
I cannot hold thy hand - do thou hold mine,
And let thy love upon my pathway shine.
Though all unheeded, through life's devious way
Thine everlasting arms have been my stay;
And when I shrank appalled from sorrow's cup,
Thy hand unseen gave strength to drink it up.
Be with me still - I need thee every hour,
To shield and keep me from the tempter's power.
In crooked by - paths oft I wander wide;
If thou wilt lead no harm can me betide.
Thou who hast said, " Ye needy, come to me,"
Behold, I'm needy, therefore come to thee;
And though a beggar vile, ask nothing less,
The glorious robe of thine own righteousness.

ABBY G. CLARK.
SANFORD, Maine,
July 17,1888.

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Sister Agnes Viola Nichols Sutphin

EDITORIAL

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

Matthew 27:38, "Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left." Christ hung on the cross between two thieves. Have you ever thought why He was between the two thieves and not on one end? I do not believe that Pilate nor the Roman soldiers cared where He hung. The chief priests and others just wanted Him crucified. It did not matter to them what order the three were in. But, God had a purpose for Jesus to be between the two thieves and thus, it must be. The two thieves represented not just two individuals who had transgressed, but two peoples.

In Matthew 25:31-34 Jesus says, **"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations:**

And he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matthew 25:41, "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

I understand that Christ is speaking of the end of time when He shall come to take His elect to their eternal home. But, hanging on the cross between the two thieves manifested the separation or dividing of the two peoples, the sheep and the goats. It sets forth His suffering, shedding of blood, death and resurrection for one people and not the other. One of the thieves was a sheep and the other one a goat. There is no evidence that either thief had any knowledge of Christ before the cross. One of the thieves "railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." This thief, I am given to believe, hung on the left of Christ and was a goat. He was not given to believe on Christ and

mocked Him. This thief did not believe that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God. He could not believe because he had not been given faith. As Jesus told some of the Jews on one occasion, **"He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear** *them* **not, because ye are not of God."** Jesus never responded to him.

The other thief rebuked him saying, **"Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: But this man hath done nothing amiss,"** The thief on the right of Jesus confessed that he was a sinner and that his condemnation and punishment were just. The Apostle Paul writes that we all **"were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."** So every little lamb and sheep experiences the righteous and holy law of God applied to their hearts showing them their sinful condition. **"For by the law is the knowledge of sin."**

Galations 3:22-26, "But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* **unto Christ that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."** So then you are saved by grace through faith and not of works.

Then the little sheep hanging on the right of Christ cries unto Him, **"Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."** He had been given faith to behold the Son of God, his Lord, in a body of flesh, pure and holy, beside of him. He had said **"this man hath done nothing amiss."** How did this thief know that? The same way that Peter could say **"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."** Because the Father which is in heaven revealed it to him. There was no so-called witness or missionary trying to introduce this man to Christ and save his soul. His Lord was there with him in such a precious and comforting way. This thief beheld the one beside him as the King of kings and the Lord of lords. He was blessed to see beyond the vail of flesh to behold the fulness of the Godhead. He was given to understand by faith that death and the grave would not hold the Lamb of God. For he said unto Jesus, when, not if, thou comest into thy kingdom. O, his cry was, Lord, remember me. How many times we have cried unto the Lord to remember us!

Jesus did not respond to the thief that mocked Him. But this little one was a child of grace that the Father had given Him from the foundation of the world and He had said that He had lost none that the Father had given Him. So to this one Christ said, **"Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."** What comfort and peace that thief had been given! The

faith that he had been given was sufficient to endure the pain and suffering that he was experiencing. His Saviour was there with him. Any time that Christ is manifested to one, its paradise. To feel His love and mercy and His grace and comfort, there is a joy in the midst of the greatest sorrow or trial. We can't adequately describe it to someone else because it is for us.

Christ has promised never to leave nor forsake us. This includes through the severest trial, the deepest sorrow, the most hurtful persecution and even death itself.

May the Lord be with each of you, my dear brethren and friends, as you continue to **"press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."**

Your unworthy brother and friend,
Elder Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

8-8-2011

Dear Cleo,

I hope this note finds you doing good. Neal and I really did enjoy our visit at the Pigg River Association, and meeting once again with all those lovely people.

This is the Biography and Experience of Elder Frederick W. Keene that I was speaking to you about that touched my heart so deeply.

It is unimaginable for me to have had the privilege to read someone else's experience that was described so closely to the travels that I have gone through for many years. I believed, most times, I was undeserving, a deceiver, and most of all a hypocrite. But, when I was blessed to read Elder Keene's experience about a stricken deer, it was as if a bucket of water has been dumped on me. Reading Elder Keene's experience has helped me to feel that I have not been left abandoned in this condition. Please, excuse my many errors.

In Hope,
Sue Reed

ARTICLES

Having had some considerable meditation on the 4th chapter of the Gospel according to John and in particular his account of the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, I am of a mind to pen some thoughts on this passage of scripture in hope they will be found profitable. As the passage of scripture under consideration is quite lengthy, I will not include it in this writing, other than to quote certain verses that are of particular interest. I encourage the reader to stop here and read this passage from John Chapter 4: 1st thru 34th verse.

I will begin by noticing that Jesus was departing the area of Judea, where his disciples were baptizing in the river Jordan, and traveling to Galilee. If one looks at a map of the Holy Land, it

seems clear the most pleasant and direct route to Galilee would be north up the Jordan River valley. Indeed there were ancient trade routes on either side of the Jordan River that appear far more convenient than the route our Lord traveled. Clearly, if this were simply a journey taken by a natural man with no other purpose than to travel to Galilee, there would be no necessity laid on him to go in the way that Jesus traveled. Therefore, one must conclude there were far weightier matters under consideration than simply removing to another region of the country, for the scriptures say, **"He must needs go through Samaria."** If not deceived, the meeting that subsequently took place between Jesus and the Samaritan woman, and the circumstances of it, is an illustration of the relationship between Christ and His church and the way and manner in which He makes Himself known to each of His children. There was a work to be accomplished at a certain place and at precisely the time appointed, hence the necessity that He go through Samaria arriving at the appointed place, Jacob's well in this illustration, at the appointed time; "about the sixth hour" of the day. His purpose there was to do the will of his Father that sent Him and to finish His work. (see vs. 34). He arrived "in the fullness of time," about the sixth hour (prophetically referring to the sixth day), and was there "to seek and to save that which was lost." **"For in six days the Lord made the heaven and earth, and on-the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed."** The six days represent the time in which the Church labored in bondage to the law waiting for the coming of the Messiah and the completion of His work under that law, that being the redemption and justification of His bride (the Church). Jesus Christ completed that work declaring at the end of it, **"It is finished."** That work being accomplished He, who by virtue of his resurrection, is our, "bright and morning star", brought into being the advent of the Sabbath or Gospel Day wherein His children, having been delivered from under bondage to the law, would cease from their own vain works, and by virtue of His righteousness imputed to them by His grace, enter into His rest. **"For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from, his own works, as God *did* from his." (Hebrews 4:10)**

"There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water."

Now there are some things particularly to be noticed about this Samaritan woman with whom He had much to do. She was about the business of the day which entailed a journey from the neighboring city of Sychar to draw water from what was apparently the community well. We understand this well to be necessary -especially in this arid region of the world, in order to maintain life. As water is the primary substance of all living tissue, natural life cannot be sustained without it. When confronted by Jesus at the well, this woman was not seeking anything other than the sustenance of natural life. Her concern was for the things of this world only. Certainly this illustration holds true to everything the scriptures teach concerning the condition of God's children having natural life

only; and dead to things spiritual. **"And you** *hath He quickened* **who were dead in trespasses and sins."** Hence, she did not come to this well seeking a Savior, but rather, her Savior came seeking her.

Jesus' first words to her are, **"Give me to drink."** In order that she (the church) partake of the spiritual life that was hers in Christ, He must leave His heavenly abode and the glory He had with the Father, be made **"manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."**

"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." (Eph. 5:31-32)

Adam, because of the love for his bride, Eve, followed her in the transgression of the law. Christ, because of the love for his bride, the church, came under the same law she was under to fulfill it for her. **"For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." "For he hath made him** *to be* **sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."**

Now this woman, being a Samaritan, marveled that He would even speak to her much less ask her for water. Does this not fit the experience of God's children when overwhelmed by the exceeding sinfulness of sin, perceiving themselves to be altogether wretched and vile, wallowing in the stench of sin and death, when confronted with the righteousness and spotless purity of an high priest **"who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens";** do we not marvel that He would consider our case and undertake to remedy our undone condition knowing that in order to do so He must bare our sins in his own body on the tree, be wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, bear the shame of the cross, and pour out His soul unto death.

He tells her of *living* water and describes it thus:

"Jesus answered and said unto her, whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

She came to this well seeking the water that gives natural life which is temporary. Jesus tells her of water that gives spiritual life which is everlasting. Though she does not yet understand the things under consideration, nor who it is she is speaking to:

"The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw."

Here is the moment forever sus-

pended in time for all of God's children. Now is the time appointed when she must come to know this is not an ordinary man she is speaking to. Neither is He speaking to her of natural things. Indeed, she has met her maker, the light of revelation is about to shine upon her, and things will never ever be the same for her again.

But first there are some legal matters to be taken care of. **"Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither."** She has no husband. Jesus then reveals to her that he is well aware of her marital state, that she has had five husbands and is now in an adulterous relationship with one who is not her husband. Here, if not deceived, these five husbands are typical of the five books of Moses which represent the law. As she was married to these five husbands, so too was the Church entered into a marriage relationship to the law under the Mosaic covenant. That marriage relationship in covenant to the law typifies the bondage under which she was legally held. The Apostle Paul in writing to the church at Rome gives this account of the relationship God's children have to the law: **(Romans chapt.7: vs. 2 thru 4) "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to *her* husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of *her* husband. So then if, while *her* husband liveth she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ," that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."**

She (the church) was bound to the law as a wife is to her husband. Not only was she bound to the law, but was under condemnation of death under it, by reason of her adultery.

Judges 2:17 "And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a *whoring after other gods,* and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; *but* they did not so."

Jeremiah 3:2 "Lift up thine eyes unto the high places, and see where thou hast not been lien with. In the ways hast thou sat for them, as the Arabian in the wilderness; and thou hast polluted the land with thy *whoredoms* and with thy wickedness."

Jeremiah 13:27 "I have seen thine adulteries, and thy neighings, the lewdness of thy *whoredom, and thine* abominations on the hills in the fields. Woe unto thee, O Jerusalem! wilt thou not be made clean? when *shall it* once *be*?"

Countless scriptures can be quoted illustrating the adultery of the Church. Suffice to say that time after time the old covenant Church, personified by the nation of Israel, fell into idolatry (spiritual

adultery) and at the time of Christ's coming her idolatrous practices had taken the place of true worship. The temple was made a "house of merchandise" and they had made the word of God of none effect by their vain tradition. Natural, man-made religion had replaced the precepts of the law and true worship of the God who had given that law.

Jesus not only tells her of her five husbands and her state of adultery, but "all things that ever she did" Make no mistake about it. He was intimately familiar with all that she ever did, as He was going to the cross to answer for each and every one of her sins, and pay the full penalty of the law for them (which was death). Having fulfilled the law to the jot and the tittle by His perfect obedience to it in her stead; and then suffering the penalty of the law in her stead, He thereby satisfied all that was required by divine justice to remove her from under the condemnation of that law. Her Indebtedness to the law was satisfied by His death, for she being in Him and one with Him, through the death of His body would also become dead to the law, that she might be married to another, which is Christ.

As He begins to enumerate the sins of this woman, no doubt, they rise up before her as an unmovable mountain casting a shadow of death over her that she cannot escape. She is confronted with her sin in illustration of the way God's children are made sensible to the exceeding sinfulness of sin and are crushed under the burden of it. She now realizes this to be no ordinary man. She says to him, **"Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet."** Then later to those in the village; **"is not this the Christ?"** She has fallen into the hands of the living God. Her manner of speaking abruptly changes. Until this point in the conversation, she has scoffed at Him and seemed to be little more than amused. Now, she is suddenly concerned with the condition of her immortal soul, for she begins to inquire after the true place of worship. **"Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."** Here are the feelings of God's children when confronted with their sins; they seek a place of worship where sacrifice can be made. Dissatisfied with their own vain attempts at worship, they are made to know that Divine Justice requires the shedding of blood to pay for sin and except a sacrifice be made to appease the wrath of a Just and Holy God, they must surely die in their sins. Yet, they are made to wonder; can there be a sacrifice sufficient to take away such a great multitude of sin? Like Isaac they ask, **"where is the lamb for a burnt, offering."** True to the words of Abraham, **"My son, God will provide himself a lamb for burnt offering."** Hear the words of John the Baptist while baptizing in the river Jordan as he looked up and saw Jesus coming to him; **"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."** Then, do they see Jesus as the only sacrifice sufficient for their sin. Looking to Him, they are made to "stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." Jesus Christ is the Captain of their Salvation, the Author and Fin-

isher of their Faith, and forever more they will call Him "Lord and Master."

This woman now inquires after the Messiah, "the one called Christ."

"Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he." "The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?"

The work is accomplished. The change has been wrought. She leaves her waterpot behind, never again to thirst after the water that gives temporal life only. The Spirit of Christ which now dwells in her is become a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Henceforth she will hunger and thirst after the righteousness that is her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. No longer will the things of this world hold the allure they once held. Her affections are now set on precious things of a heavenly nature, that belong to her Lord. She goes into the city, for her desire is to tell her brethren of the things the Lord has done for her. But she can no longer fellowship the things of this world. She has passed from death to life and henceforth will go about seeking fellowship with those of like faith and experience.

Humbly submitted
in bonds of love,
Kenneth R. Adams

VOICES OF THE PAST

The following Experience of Elder Frederick W. Keene was first published in The Signs of The Times, April 1937 edition.

"I was a stricken deer that left the herd
Long since. With many an arrow deep in fixed
My panting side was charged, when I withdrew
To seek a tranquil death in distant shades.
There I was found by One who had Himself
Been hurt by archers. In His side He bore
And in His hands and feet the cruel scars.
With gentle force soliciting the darts,
He drew them forth, and healed, and bade me live.
Since then, with few associates, in remote
And silent woods I wander, far from those
My former partners of the peopled scene;
With few associates and not wishing more."

Cowper, "The Task," Book III

How blessedly is the story told of the work of the Spirit; of the favored sinner's experience who is called by grace; of the comforting revelation of salvation and the heavenly effects and fruits felt and brought forth in God's elect who know the grace of God in truth (Col. 1:6).

"I was a stricken deer that left the

herd long since." **"Thine arrows** *are* **sharp in the heart of the King's enemies;** *whereby* **the people fall under Thee" (Psa. 45:5).**

When God sends forth His arrows, he does not draw "a bow at a venture" (2 Chron. 18:33). Such a thought has no place in the doctrine of God our Savior, but has its place in "another gospel which is not another" (Gal. 1:6-7), proclaimed by men who know not the truth as it is in our precious Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

But thus the eternal counsel ran,
Almighty grace, arrest that man;
I felt the arrows of distress,
And found I had no hiding place.

When the set time is come it pleases God, not to propose but call by grace, Jehovah the Spirit sends forth His arrows like lightning (Zech. 9:14). Not an arrow misses its mark, for the Almighty is the Archer (Job 6:4). No armor that the sinner has arrayed himself in is of any avail. No matter how much he may have hardened himself in sin and has flattered himself he was proof against the lightnings of the thunder of God in the law (Ex. 19: 16). "Thine arrows are sharp in the heart." "They were pricked in their heart." (Acts).

"Deep are the wounds Thine arrows give
They pierce the hardest heart;
Thy smiles of grace the slain revive,
And joy succeeds the smart."

Who was more sinful, more hardened than I? With the herd, I ran in pursuit of fleshly lusts, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, a child of wrath even as others. But the Holy Ghost sent forth an arrow and hit me, the chief of sinners. Oh, what amazing grace! What divine love and tender mercy was this a proof oft Was the whole herd of mankind shot at? Was it a random shot that by chance struck me, and brought me down? Oh no! The work of the Lord is perfect. I was the one aimed at, and with no uncertainty does the Lord send forth the arrows from the quiver.

"I was a stricken deer." As I review all the dealings of the Lord of Hosts with my soul, how sovereign are all His acts of grace, how distinguishing His love and mercy to such a vile sinner like me. Oh that I could love and praise the precious and glorious name of God, my Redeemer for His marvelous loving-kindness to my soul. The Lord wounded me. His sovereign grace singled me out, and I truly found His "arrows sharp in my heart," and I felt in my soul, Oh what a sinner I am. A rebel, an enemy of God, a hell-deserving wretch, God is against me. **"The arrows of the Almighty** *are* **within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me" (Job 6:4).** As Job thus expresses himself, thus I found it.

That Scripture, **"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth," (Prov. 27:1),** dashed me to the earth. My contemplated life in the pleasures of sin was blighted. My sins so many and so great as sharp arrows of the law of God I found

to be unto death. It was the ministration of condemnation and death to me, a vile transgressor (2 Cor. 3:7-9). My sin taking occasion by the commandment deceived me, and by it slew me (Rom. 7:11). Sin revived and I died; the commandment which was ordained unto life I found to be unto death. "I was a stricken deer." Stricken by the Lord. I felt I must perish, for the arrows of eternal justice pierced me and the poison thereof drank up my spirit. They were indeed deadly arrows... Jehovah's holy and just condemnation convicted my soul of guilt. His terrors made me sore afraid.

Yes, I feared there was no escape for such a sinner. I said in my soul, Hell, the damnation of hell, is surely my destination and justly my portion. Oh, what pain and grief possessed my soul.

I remember one day, when in the midst of my distress, I sat in anguish of soul pondering over my awful condition. Oh so vile and abominable did I feel I was, such a mass of sin. I was well-nigh plunged into utter despair, and I felt there could be no mercy for such a vile transgressor. On every hand, I could see that which brought my sins to view and the law that I had transgressed poured forth its curses on my sinful head. What was I to do to assuage my wounded heart? Filled with anguish because of my sin, my soul fainted within me, realizing by the wonderful teaching of the Holy Spirit my lost and undone condition.

While in this state, little did I know the mercy, the rich mercy, in store for my soul. The wounds which God's truth made in my heart I could not heal, and I thought they were forerunners of my eternal destruction, and now the Lord was about to destroy me utterly.

"I was a stricken deer that left the herd long since." Yes, some sixty-five years from now past the Lord separated me from the herd. The work of Jehovah the Holy Ghost in my soul was such that I could not run to the same excess of riot with my companions in sin. The time past of my life sufficed me (1 Peter 4:3). I now loathed the paths of sin, and sought to find the way of holiness. Before I was a stricken deer I could run as eagerly as any of the herd in transgressions, in vile practices and filthy conversation. In all ungodliness I reveled and banqueted, taking my fill of sin. But when Jehovah's arrow wounded me, "I was a stricken deer." My heart was faint, the pleasures in the pursuit of sin languished and died. I had no heart to keep up with the herd. God's voice in the law gave me (so I felt) my death wound, and His gracious and divine work in my soul had implanted and begotten hatred of evil, and hungering and thirsting after righteousness (Matt. 5:6; Prov. 8:13).1 "turned from transgression" (Isa. 59:20). I wanted the companionship of the herd no longer. God's arrows within me distressed me and drinketh up my spirit (Job 6:4).

My sinful and perishing condition occupied all my thought, cut me off from the pursuit of the pleasures of sin, Others might run after vain and vile delights, but as for me, "I was a stricken deer," Jehovah's arrow had arrested me; forbade my continuance with the herd in their vile and wicked ways. I left the herd long since; yes, I shunned my former associates, their very presence and sin-

ful conversation aggravated my painful wounds. As I evaded them and secluded myself, some of them sought me, and inquired what was the matter with me, was I sick? What made me so sad looking and lonely?

After persistent inquiries I told them what was the matter with me, and how I could no longer run with them in sin. At this they laughed and jeered, and I became the laughing stock and the butt of many of their sinful jokes.

But "with many an arrow deep infixed, my panting side was charged." They were no skin-deep wounds God's arrows made in me, but "deep infixed." His arrows were lodged by His almighty power and love, and thus I entered into the experience of one who cried out, **"Thine arrows stick fast in me, and Thy hand presses me sore" (Psa. 38:2).** No creature power can extract the arrows of the Almighty. It is the Lord who says, **"I wound, and I heal" (Deut. 32:39; Job 5:18).** His own gracious hand removes the arrows and binds up the wounds. Truly, Thou art glorious and wonderful in all Thy works, O Lord. How surprisingly gracious, teeming with loving-kindness and infinite tender mercy have all Thy dealings been with a poor sinner like me. Oh that I could love Thee and praise Thy glorious matchless name.

"With many an arrow deep infixed my panting side was charged." All my attempts to draw forth these arrows lacerated my soul the more. God's barbed arrows pierced my heart, not one of which could I remove. Each day fresh arrows from Jehovah's bow were "deep infixed" in me, and oh what pangs and sorrows my soul underwent. I mourned and wept in solitude, distressed by my hateful, cruel sins, harassed by the devil, and the curses and arrows of the law drank up my spirit. "I was a stricken deer that left the herd long since, with many an arrow deep infixed, my panting side was charged," and in the depths of my troubled soul my agonized soul for mercy cried unto the Lord. Yet did I fear and feel myself too vile for God's mercy to reach me. "I withdrew to seek a tranquil death in distant shades." The stricken deer, with its life blood ebbing away, faint and exhausted, retires to die. "I was a stricken deer" in whom God's arrows were "deeply fixed." The sorrows of death encompassed me and the pains of hell got hold of me; I found trouble and sorrow. "Ready to perish," was I to die in my sins (Deut. 26:5; Isa. 27:13)... None but those who have been stricken by the arrows of the Lord know what are the sorrows of this death. Sin is the poison of the Almighty's arrow in the law. Sin drinketh up my spirit (Job 6:4). Sin is the sting of death (1 Cor. 15:56).

And when the Holy Ghost convinced my soul of sin by the arrows of the law I felt there was no hope for me. I was ready to die. How could I survive the sting of death? What could save me from my sin? **"Sin, taking occasion by the commandment deceived me, and by it slew *me*" (Rom. 7:11).**

Thus I was taught and thus prepared to know and confess to the praise of the Lord of hosts that "salvation is of the Lord" (Jonah 2:9). "There I was found by One who had Himself been hurt by archers." It was the Lord who found me.

As it is written, **"The Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; He led him about, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye" (Deut. 32:9-10).** Oh can I ever forget, ever unmindful be, of the wondrous acts of tender mercy to my soul? Oh what proofs of Thy eternal love hast Thou revealed to my soul's everlasting consolation. It passes knowledge, passes all telling, that dear love of Thine, O my God. A poor, vile, sinful worm am I, and yet Thou lovest me, and hast redeemed me from all my sins, from all my woes. Thou hast put gladness in my heart, and the earnest of Thy Spirit in my heart. I rejoice in hope of the glory of God, that I, a poor vile transgressor, with all the elect and blood-bought flock, shall be glorified with Thy dear Son, our Jesus Emmanuel.

"Immortal honors be unto Thy glorious name,
I would Thy praises evermore proclaim;
My soul all grace and power ascribe to Thee,
For Thou, O Lord, has saved a wretch like me."

When in a solitary way (Psa. 107:4), sick and wounded and ready to die, "There I was found by One who had Himself been hurt by the archers." Jesus sought me and found me. He is the great Shepherd of the sheep (Luke 15:4-6; Ezek. 34).

Well do I remember the time when in my soul's distress I first saw Jesus with an eye of faith. When He was thus revealed to my soul I saw He "had Himself been hurt by the archers." Never shall I forget the sight that the Holy Ghost gave to me, a poor, wounded, sin-stricken, ready-to-perish sinner, of Christ crucified. I beheld Him the anti-typical Joseph. **"The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot *at him*; and hated him: but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were, made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob" (Gen. 49:23-24).**

In grateful remembrance I now remember that night when "I was found by One who had Himself been hurt by the archers." For some time before this I had gone sighing in the anguish of my soul because of the arrows of the Almighty within me. At first I thought it was useless to cry for mercy, for I felt I was altogether too vile a transgressor; that there could be no hope for a wretch like me. The terrors of Jehovah's justice made me afraid, and I could see nothing before me but to perish in my sins. But at length the Holy Spirit spoke these words in my heart, "God is love." A little hope sprang up in my distressed heart, and in bitter anguish over my sins I cried, God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

It was the dear Lord who taught me thus to pray, and thus I became one of those whom He calls "My suppliants" (Zeph. 3:10).

Years have passed since first I cried unto the Lord in my distress, and to this day I am often found a suppliant at the feet of the Lord. Oh what marvel-

ous grace to me is shown! Yes, by the loving-kindness of the Lord I can sing, **"I love the Lord, because He hath heard my voice** *and* **my supplications. Because He hath inclined His ear unto me, therefore will I call upon** *Him* **as long as I live" (Psa. 116:1-2).**

When first my soul was exercised to cry to God for mercy, I felt indeed my need but I did not know, I did not see how mercy could reach me. How could the holy and just God pardon my sins? But when Jesus found me, oh what a revelation of mercy and salvation I beheld in Him. There in my grief and wounds, a stricken deer with many arrows deep infixed, I was found by One who had Himself been hurt by the archers. It was nighttime, in the darkness of the night, in my bedroom, imploring the Lord to have mercy upon my soul and to pardon all my sins, that Jesus the dear Savior was discovered to me. There was presented to my mind a vision of Christ crucified. Not with my natural eyes. There was nothing before my mortal sight in the midnight darkness in my bedroom. I saw Jesus, the dear Redeemer, on the cross, and while thus I gazed upon Him, a voice in my soul said, "Salvation is in My dear Son." Then for the first time it was revealed to my soul Jehovah's way of salvation. As one perishing, my heart went forth in cries and sighs and bitter weeping unto Jesus to save me. I saw indeed that He was the One who had Himself been hurt by the archers. In His side He bore, and in His hands and feet the cruel scars." Never shall I forget the sight that the Holy Spirit gave me of the crucifixion of the Son of God. Oh how hideous and hateful did sin appear, that Christ should so suffer. He, who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

For some time on bended knee that night, with cries importunate I besought the Almighty to show me mercy, and all the while I saw the dear Savior extended on the cross in agony and blood. "In His side He bore, and in His hands and feet the cruel scars." Yes, Emmanuel, our Lord Jesus Christ was the One hurt by the archers (Gen. 49:23-24). To save His people from their sins He came into the world. He, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but He took upon Himself the form of a servant. He came to do the will of the Father. He was made flesh, and made sin, and made a curse for the sins of His people, His elect, His bride. He bore our sins in His own body on the tree. Yes, when the "due time" was come (Rom. 5:6). He was smitten by the arrow of the Almighty. He was smitten of God and afflicted. For the transgression of My people was He smitten (Isa. 53:8).

Oh what a sacred awful sight, to view Christ crucified while the Holy Ghost opens up to the soul the unfathomable depths of Jehovah's justice and grace declared in the atonement made by the sacrifice and precious blood of Christ, the dear Lamb of God. While thus at the feet of the crucified One, longing for some word, some glance to heal my painful wounds and save me from my sin and misery, I thought the dear Redeemer looked down upon me from the cross with such compassion and tender love

in His countenance that it seemed to my soul that "He with gentle force was soliciting the darts" that lacerated my soul. I felt to cast my all on Him, to repose my soul alone in, His sufferings and blood to save me from my perishing condition, to heal all my wounds.

And this He did, for at length He looked with surpassing love upon me, and said in my heart, I suffered for thee; I did this for thee. The arrows that stuck fast in me, His own hand, His salvation, "drew them forth, and healed, and bade me live." Oh, what mercy to a vile sinner like me! What comfort and rejoicing filled my heart! My wounds were healed, my pain and anguish were gone. I believed in Him by the mighty power of God, believed He had suffered and died and was crucified for me, and had purged away my sins in His precious blood.

The remainder of that (to me) memorable night I spent in sacred, joyful meditation upon the wonders of mercy, love and grace revealed to me, a poor sinner . My ransomed, healed soul was filled with love and adoration, and I walked up and down that dark room in joyful praises. A brother of mine, who had been sleeping in the next room, cried out, "I wish you would hold your tongue and let me go to sleep." I did not wish to hinder him getting his sleep, so I tried to be quiet, but my heart was rejoicing in God's salvation.

"Since then, with few associates, in remote

And silent woods I wander, far from those

My former partners of the peopled scene;

With few associates, and not wishing more."

Jehovah's discriminating grace so wrought in my heart that I could no more associate "with my former partners of the peopled scene." Poor sinners saved by grace are those whom I now love to meet, and in sweet fellowship hold sweet converse upon the matchless, glorious and gracious works of the Lord our God in the salvation of sinners. Those who, like myself, can say, "I was a stricken deer," who have known the wounds that God inflicts (Jer. 30:14-17; Hosea 6:1), and who by the power and grace of Jehovah can say, With His stripes we are healed (Isa. 53:5). Such associates as these I crave. These in the gospel of Christ are my bosom companions (Psa. 119:63)... So precious is their companionship that I feel I owe a debt of gratitude to the blessed Jehovah Father, Son and Holy Ghost, that He has cast my lot where I am favored with a few such companions, some of the blood-bought flock of Emmanuel.

It is written that Lot was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked; for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds (2 Peter 2:7-8). So in some measure it is with all of "the taught of the Lord." The child of God soon learns that he is a pilgrim and a stranger in the world, and he need not marvel if the world hate him. But with those of like precious faith (2 Peter 1:1), they desire to walk and sojourn while in this present evil world.

"Midst scenes of confusion and creature complaints,
How sweet to my soul is communion with saints,
To find at the banquet of mercy there's room,
And feel in the presence of Jesus at home."

(Elder) Frederick W. Keene,
Raleigh, NC (about 1937)

A DEACON'S DUTIES

We have been requested by one of the brethren to present our views as to the duties of deacons, and will endeavor to do so with such understanding as I have. This is an Important church service, which is sometimes abused by those who hold the office — it is an important office in the church, when administered in accordance with the Word of God, and the Spirit of the Lord.

Our first thought in this matter is an inquiry in the Word of God as to the reason the church needed deacons. In the early days of the apostolic church, we find a unity in the church that has not been equaled since: "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul, neither said any of them that ought of the things he possessed was his own: but they had all things common. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostle's feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need." Hence it fell to the apostles to distribute to each one according to their several needs. It was part of the work of the ministry to administer to the needs of widows, whose whole support was probably from the treasury --- at least the aged ones who were unable to work. Among these widows were two classes: the Hebrew and the Grecian --- the Hebrews who lived in Judea, and worshipped in the synagogues at Jerusalem and vicinity; and those Jews who lived outside of Judea, and who were accustomed chiefly to the use of the Greek language, into which the scriptures had been translated. As the number of the disciples multiplied, we are told in the sixth chapter of Acts that, **"There arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples** *unto them*, **and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Phillip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: whom they set before the Apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them."**

Here we have the scriptural reason for the first church at J erusalem appointing deacons. The primary reason was to relieve the ministry of serving tables. We will do well to keep in mind that the reason these men were chosen was that the Apostles might give themselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

The qualification required by the Apostles was that the ones appointed be of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom. This was enlarged upon by the Apostle in his epistle to Timothy: **"Likewise *must* the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also, First be proved: then let them use the office of deacon, being *found* blameless. Even so *must their* wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus."**

The epistle to the Philippians is addressed to all the saints in Jesus Christ which are at Philippi, with the bishops {ministers) and deacons; showing that these were the only ones recognized as composing the church, and officers, at that place. And today, these are the ones that are recognized as the church and her officers.

The Apostle Peter made use of the expression "serve tables", showing that there was more than one table to be served by deacons. It has been considered in years past that there were mainly three tables to be served by deacons. First, the serving of the poor of the flock; which would embrace widows, and all others that might at any time be in need of help. Second, seeing that the minister is receiving from the flock the things that are necessary for him in a material way, that his hands will not be tied in his serving the church; that he will be free to visit the sick, and attend to any other duties that falls on him in his ministry. The deacons should know at all times what a church is doing in financial matters; and all funds, whether for the poor of the flock, or the help of the ministry, should pass through the deacon's hands, so they may know how much each one is doing toward relieving the needs of the church. A deacon cannot faithfully perform the duties of his office unless the church holds up his hands in his work; and this responsibility falls to the church. It is commendable indeed when deacons are favored to administer their office according to God's word: to remind the church of the duties of members; and to see a church responding to the requirements of the church, not from a dead letter but out of a ready mind, and in love one to another. "But whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him: how dwelleth the love of God in him." The third table is the Lord's supper: it falls to the deacon to administer this ordinance to the church from the hands of the minister.

We have tried to briefly set forth, first: the need of deacons; second, the qualifications of deacons; and third, the tables they serve. When summed up, we would describe a deacon as an office bearer charged with the temporal affairs of the church.

If deacons be filled with the Holy Ghost and wisdom, as required in the scriptures, then they are qualified to attend to any matter the church appoints them unto. Yet, we are to remember that they are servants of the church, and whatever work falls to them is by the voice of the church, and by reason of their office, when it relates to the fellowship and discipline of the church.

We will now show some of the things not required of deacons, and unscriptural for them to assume as power that belongs to their office: They have no power to dictate to a church, or usurp authority over the body; they have no power to call, or dismiss, a minister; they cannot act for a church in citing a member to the church unless the church authorized them to do so. There seems to be in the minds of some in some sections that their office is to rule the church —nothing could be farther from the Word of God than such a practice.

In 1st Timothy 5:17, it is said, **"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they that labor in word and doctrine."**

This "ruling well" has reference to the minister whose lot is to see that the order of the house according to the word of God, is maintained. He is forbidden to lord it over God's heritage, but is to be an example to the flock. He is required to be faithful as a steward in the house of God, and to serve in the sense that he is the servant of God unto them. No where in God's word does it say, the deacons that "rule well", but it seems that the rule is sometimes reversed.

The office of deacon is indeed a high office, and one of the great blessings to the church, when administered according to the Word of God. There is, indeed, a close tie between pastor, deacon, and church; wherein there should be mutual love and confidence, with all our service overshadowed by the spirit of humility and meekness, that the Lord's house be found the house of prayer and supplication.

He that has used the office of deacon well, has purchased to himself a good degree, and great boldness in the faith.

Elder D. V. Spangler

PSALM 67: 1-4.

God be merciful unto us, and bless us; *and* cause his face to shine upon us; Selah.

That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.

Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.

Corresponding Letter.

The Maine Old School Baptist Conference, held with, Old School Baptist Church of' North Berwlck; York Co., Maine, Sept. 9th, 10th, and 11th, 1859, to all with whom we correspond.

BELOVED BRETHREN IN CHRIST: — Through the abounding mercy and grace: of our unchangeable God, we have been permitted to assemble again according to our usual custom for another yearly meeting, to transact business pertaining *to* the order of God's lower house, and to mingle together in christian fellowship, and to, speak of the goodness of our God, and to talk of his power.

"While we are made sensible of our wicked and depraved natures, the total depravity of the human heart, its proneness to follow after sin; we acknowledge and rejoice that God is holy, and that in Him all fulness dwells; and from that fountain poor sensible sinners do receive grace for grace. Therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed. God has informed us in his word that he is love and he that loveth is born of God, and that we love God because God first loved us. How great then is the love of Him who perfected the plan of salvation by grace, that glorious plan which the ransomed of the Lord of all ages have delighted to dwell upon, singing the song of redeeming grace and dying love, which is known only by those who have been born again, not of corruptible, but of incorruptible seed, and have the assurance that God is their Father, Christ their Redeemer; and that his Spirit is their comforter. But we are often so burdened with the sinfulness of our corrupt natures, this body of sin, that we doubt at times our possession of the spiritual birth, and are led to abhor ourselves, and to exhalt Christ as a prince and a Savior that gives repentance and forgiveness of sin — for the word says: We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. We have the pleasure to inform you that peace and love dwells in our Churches, and we would tender our love to you, and hope that the best of Heavens blessings may rest upon you — that we may all as the beloved children of our Heavenly Father say, behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. What a happy thought to know that our sins are forgiven through the atoning blood of Christ, and. to have an, interest in that love which dwelt in the bosom of the Father ere time began. The Christian hope rests upon the promises of God. May we have faith to take hold of the promises, and grace to obey and keep his commandments, walk worthy of that high vocation with which we are called, giving glory to God with our bodies and spirit which are His.

Our meeting has been well attended, and the preaching throughout has been all of one piece, salvation by grace and not of works. Our next yearly meeting is appointed to be held with the church at North Berwick, York Co.,

Maine, and to commence on Friday before the second Monday in Sept., 1860; and to continue three days.

Elder William Quint, *Moderator.*
Wm. J. Purington, *Clerk.*

"Be thou in the fear of the Lord all day long. For surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off." -- Proverbs xxiii. 17, 18.

The Lord is here addressing himself to a soul labouring under temptation, and passing through peculiar exercises; and this is the exhortation that he gives it: "Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long;" watching his hand, submitting to his will, committing everything into his care and keeping; not hardening your heart against him, but looking up to him, and worshipping him with godly fear; "for surely there is an end." You may be tempted, exercised, and surrounded with difficulties, and see no outlet; but "surely there is an end;" and, when the end comes, it will make all plain and clear. This quiet submission, this watching and waiting, a man can never be brought to unless he has seen an end to all perfection; an end of his own strength, wisdom, and righteousness. To sit still is the hardest thing a man can do. To lie passive at God's footstool when all things seem to be against us; to have a rough path to walk in, to be surrounded with difficulties, and yet to be in the fear of the Lord all the day long, watching his hand, desiring to submit to his will, seeking only that wisdom which cometh from above, and trusting that he will make the way straight; not putting our hand to the work, but leaving it all to the Lord — how strange, how mysterious a path! And yet it is the only one that brings solid peace to a Christian; "for surely there is an end." Whatever sorrows and troubles a man may have to wade through, there will surely be an end of them. If we try to get ourselves out of perplexities, we are like a person trying to unravel a tangled skein of silk by pulling it forcibly; the more it is pulled, the more entangled it gets, and the faster the knots become. So if we are plunged into any trial, providential or spiritual, and we attempt to extricate ourselves by main force, by kicking and rebelling, we only get more entangled. The Lord, then, to encourage us to wait patiently upon him till he shall appear, says, "Surely there is an end." This is the universal testimony of the Scripture, that the Lord appears and delivers, when there is none shut up or left; and the experience of the saints agrees with the testimony of the written word: "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end."

J.C. Philpot

"A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished." --- Proverbs xxxii. 3.

Noah, warned of God, prepared an ark to the saving of his house. Lot, admonished by the angels, fled out of Sodom. So there is a fleeing from the wrath to come. How careless, how secure, and unconcerned are we till quickened with spiritual life! Solomon speaks of those who sleep on the top of a mast, where on jerk of the wave, or one turn of the sleeper may precipitate him into the boiling ocean. God's anger is gathering against a wicked world. Who will escape this fearful storm of eternal, unmitigated wrath? Those who flee to Jesus. Who flee to Jesus? Those only who feel their need of him. How are they made to feel their need of him? By the flashes of God's anger. Whence issue these flashes? Out of the thunder-cloud of God's holy law--- the revelation which he has made of his anger against transgressors. How necessary then to feel the application of the law to conscience, to experience what Job calls, "the terrors of God," that Jesus Christ, who is a "covert from the tempest," may be seen and fled unto! It is like the warning given in Egypt of the grievous hail: "He that feared the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his cattle flee into the houses: and he that regarded not the word of the Lord left his servants and his cattle in the field" (Exodus ix. 20, 21). Faith credits what unbelief derides. As is their nature and operation, so is their end. Faith ends in salvation; unbelief in perdition.

J.C. Philpot

Romans 8:4.

That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION 2011

The Lord willing, the 181st session of the Contentnea Association will convene with North Creek Primitive Baptist Church located in Beaufort County, NC on October 8-9, 2011.

The Church is located on highway NC99 between Bath and Belhaven, NC.

We invite all our Brethren and friends to come worship with us.

Elder Gene Lupton
Association Clerk
252-745-0441

SKEWARKEY UNION (EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION)

Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union, the fifth Sunday in October 30,2011. From US 64 take Exit 485. Go over the overhead bridge. At the second stoplight, turn right onto St. James Street. Go about one mile and the church is located on the right at the corner next to the railroad tracks. Preaching services begin at 10:30am.

We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order .

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union Meeting will be held at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, located on business 29, 708 South Main Street, Gretna, Va. (Pittsylvania County) on Saturday 29th before the 5th Sunday in October.

Singing will start at 10:00 am and preaching at 10:30 am.

We welcome all ministers of our faith and order, our brethren and friends to be with us.

Moderator: Elder Marvin Brumfield
Clerk: Oscar Pickral

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2011

Big Meadows Primitive Baptist Church will host the next West Country Line 5th Sunday Meeting on Sunday, October 30, 2011. Singing will begin at 10:00 am and preaching service at 10:30 am.

From I-40 take highway 87 south at Graham, NC towards Pittsboro, NC. Go 14.8 miles and cross Cane Creek. Turn right onto first road past Cane Creek which is Greenhill Road. Go 3.7 miles and turn left on Old Switchboard Road. Church is 1.3 miles on right.

From highway 64 take highway 87 north to Castle Rock Road and turn left. Coninue on this road to church on left.

We would welcome those of like precious faith who have been given a mind to be with us.

JoAnn Self, Clerk
Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator

ST. LUKE 10:21.

In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and the prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 2011

Henry Lanier, NC 5.00
Loy Rodgers, AR 5.00
Elder Barnabas Brammer, PA 5.00
Erma Sowers, VA 5.00
James Shelor, VA 5.00
John Ballard, TX 5.00

PSALM 69:13.

But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O Lord, in an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation.

OBITUARIES

8-15-11

Fellow Christian,

I would like to report to you the death of one of your faithful, Tillman Rupert Pullig.

Am enclosing an obituary and memorial tribute.

Thomas A. Pullig
(Brother)

In Loving Memory
of
Tillman Rupert Pullig

Born
December 13, 1922

Entered Into Eternal Rest
June 1, 2011

Graveside Services
2:00 p.m. - Saturday
June 4, 2011
Ramah Cemetery
Ashland, Louisiana

Officiating
Brother Carl DuBose
Brother Lynnwood Jacobs

Loving Family

Brother
Thomas Allen Pullig & wife Sandra

Sister-in-law
Louene Pullig

Also survived by
two nieces & two nephews.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF SISTER AGNES VIOLA NICHOLS SUTPHIN

If the Lord will bless me, I will attempt to write this obituary for our lovely Sister in Christ, Agnes Viola Nichols Sutphin, who fell asleep in Jesus on June 10, 2011 at the age of 86.

She was the daughter of the late Leonard and Maggie Nichols. She was married 43 years to the late Jessie J. Sutphin, and to this union they were blessed with three sons and a daughter.

Left to cherish her memories are Charles and Maggie Sutphin, Jesse and Diana Sutphin, all of Floyd, VA, Janet and Jerry Hunter of Salem, VA. One sister and brother-in-law Verla and Ralph Lawson of Lawsonville, NC. Five grandchildren, Debbie Sutphin (wife of the late Mark Sutphin), John Sutphin, Angela Hunter, Hannah Sutphin, and Mary Beth Sutphin. Three great- grandchildren, Corey Sutphin, Cameron Sutphin, and Jayde Dudley. Five step grandchildren, twelve step great-grandchildren and two step great-great-grandchildren. She was predeceased by her husband Jesse J. Sutphin, son Robert Dale Sutphin, and grandson Marcus James Sutphin.

Sister Agnes was a member of Paynes Creek Primitive Baptist Church for almost 50 years. She united with the church October 13, 1961 and was baptized by Elder Odell Thompson.

She spoke of her experience, the day she was baptized, she said, when she came up out of the water, the Brethren standing on the bank were the most beautiful flowers she had ever seen. They were her flowers from then on. She could relate many lovely spiritual experiences. She dearly loved her church, her pastors, and her brethren. She was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. She was blessed to know where all her help and strength came from.

Sister Agnes could light up a room with her smile. Her love and laughter was contagious. She was blessed with a wonderful family and many friends who loved her. The times we spent together were very special, she talked about her family, her life, her experiences, and she always found good in everything, no matter how bad the situation. We will miss her sweet smile and big heart. She was truly a gift from God.

Funeral service was held June 13, 2011 at 11:00 a.m. at the Salem Primitive Baptist Church (Head of the River) by her Pastor Elder Larry Hollandsworth, Elder Alan Terry and Elder Carl Terry. She was laid to rest in Restvale Cemetery beside her husband.

In her final hours on earth, blessed with her children by her bedside, she was still praising God. May God's name be praised above all other names. We feel she lived and died in the faith. May we be reconciled to the will of God.

Written in request of Paynes Creek Church.

Elder Larry Hollandsworth, Moderator
Karen Link, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

VOL. 179 HILLSVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER 2011 NO. 11

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

POEM

Lord, didst thou die, but not for me?
Am I forbid to trust thy blood?
Hast thou not pardons, rich and free?
And grace, an overwhelming flood?

Who, then shall drive my trembling soul
From thee to regions of despair?
Who has surveyed the sacred scroll,
And found my name not written there?

Presumptuous thought! to fix the bound,
To limit mercy's sovereign reign:
What other happy souls have found,
I'll seek, nor shall I seek in vain.

I own my guilt; my sins confess;
Can men or devils make them more?
Of crimes, already numberless,
Vain the attempt to swell the score.

Were the black list before my sight,
While I remember thou hast died,
'Twould only urge my speedier flight
To seek salvation at thy side.

Low at thy feet I'll cast me down,
To thee reveal my guilt and fear;
And, if thou spurn me from thy throne,
I'll be the *first* that perished there.

Cruttenden.

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EDITORIAL

"And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up unto the house of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord. And Hezekiah prayed unto the Lord saying, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, that dwelleth *between* the cherubims, thou *art* the God *even* thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth. Incline thine ear, O Lord, and hear; open thine eyes, O Lord, and see: and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent to reproach the living God. Of a truth, Lord, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations, and their countries, and have cast their gods into the fire: for they *were* no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them. Now therefore, O Lord our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou *art* the Lord, *even* thou only." Isaiah 37: 14-20.

Elder J. B. Farmer

Why is it that certain scriptures are made to be so precious to us, and cause us to rejoice with joy unspeakable? Is it because God has brought them unto us for our comfort, edification and strength? Is it because they strike our heart's chord and make us sing praises to our God? Is it because we feel some kinship with the ones being described in the texts? Is it because our hearts yearn to hear of the goodness and power of God as he looks over, and cares for, and delivers His little ones out of all their troubles? Is it because we also dwell in a strange land in which we are strangers and pilgrims, and are so troubled by the things we see about us? Is it because we feel to be so weak and vulnerable in ourselves, and not able to keep ourselves from harm and evil? Is it because we are made glad when the name of our God is exalted above all things in making His strength perfect in our weakness?

I am made to believe that these are a few of the reasons that we so love to hear the gospel, whether it be pro-

claimed from the stands to the congregations of the Lord's people; whether it be proclaimed in the written pages; or whether it be proclaimed directly and individually into our hearts while alone in the yard, in the garden, in the car, upon our beds, or wherever we might be when He visits us. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to them who believe. God is merciful to all His children to give them eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to understand. He causes them to look unto Him, who has all power and all wisdom. He has never failed even one of His children. And God blesses each one of them to be thankful for His mercies, and to show forth His praise, for He alone is worthy to be praised.

Have you ever been in a situation where all things seemed to be against you, and where you saw no earthly remedy or no way of escape? Have you ever felt to be so inadequate in yourself that you thought you would surely perish in the trial if something were not done for you? Have you ever heard the lying whisper of the devil saying, that not even God is able to get you out of this pit? I am made to believe that this is some of the experience of all of God's little ones from time to time. The Lord Jesus Christ spoke to the children of God through the apostle Peter saying, **"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."** Your God given faith must be tried in the fiery furnace of affliction, that when you are tried, you may come forth as gold, to the praise of the glory of His grace.

In Hezekiah's day, when the Assyrian king's host came through the land conquering and destroying all before them, the city of Jerusalem came to be their next objective. No doubt, it seemed apparent to anyone in a natural mind that the Assyrians could easily overwhelm and capture the city because of Assyria's greatly superior forces. They had already taken many of the cities round about and had even taken all the defenced cities of Judah. With more than 185,000 men, the Assyrians seemed to be invincible. They advanced and made their boasts, and told the men of Jerusalem that stood upon the wall not to trust in Egypt, not to trust in Hezekiah the king, neither to trust in their God. They said that no other people or no other god had been able to stand against them. They told the people to surrender and become servants to the great king of Assyria.

But king Hezekiah was a man that believed in God and trusted in Him. He was blessed to understand that the Lord is the God of all the kingdoms of the earth, and even more, that the true and living God had made heaven and earth. The God that had done all these things could surely handle an army of puny men, no matter how great their numbers or how seemingly impressive their military might. The God of heaven and earth has all power and all wisdom and does all His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. With

this belief in his heart, Hezekiah took the boastful letter that the great king of Assyria sent to him and read it. Then he went up to the house of the Lord and spread the letter before the Lord and prayed for deliverance, and that the Lord God should be glorified in all these things.

Is this not the pattern of all of God's little ones when they are overwhelmed by the enemy? They are blessed to trust not in the arm of the flesh, and to lean not to their own understanding. But they are made to trust in the Lord and the power of His might. And, in all ages, they found Him to be faithful and adequate to give them the victory . When we look back through the scriptures, we see many examples of the deliverance of the children of God when they were unable to help themselves. Jacob was returning home with his family at the commandment of God. And he was coming toward his brother Esau, who had purposed to kill him. Having been told that Esau had four hundred men with him, Jacob went to the Lord and begged for mercy at the Lord's hand. And Jacob said, **"O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me,** *and* **the mother with the children. And thou saidest, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude."** And God delivered him and his family and was glorified in the deliverance.

Remember the three Hebrew children, who would not bow down at king Nebuchadnezzar's command and worship his image of gold. The king threatened to cast all who obeyed him not into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Believing that God was able to deliver them, they said to the king, **"O Nebuchadnezzar, we** *are* **not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be** *so*, **our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver** *us* **out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."** The king in his fury had the furnace heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated, had the men bound, and had them cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. The king was astonished when he looked into the furnace and saw four men loose and walking in the midst of the fire, and that the form of the fourth was like the Son of God. When the three children came forth from the furnace at the king's command, it was found that the fire had no power upon their bodies, nor was a hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed upon them. God completely delivered them, gave them favor with the

king, and brought glory and honor to His great name.

Remember Daniel, who refused to hearken to king Darius's written command that no man should ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days. Wicked men had manipulated the king to make the command in order to entrap Daniel. But Daniel was not hindered from serving God. **"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime."** When the king realized that Daniel was found guilty of breaking his command, he sought to deliver him. But according to the law of the Medes and Persians, no law or decree, which the king had established could be changed. So Daniel was cast into the den of lions as punishment for breaking the law. God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths so they could not hurt Daniel. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God. **"Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he *is* the living God, and stedfast forever, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion *shall be even* unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions. So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian."**

We see this experience repeated over and over again in the scriptures. God makes a highway for His people when there is no way. Consider Joseph, when his brothers sought to kill him, and put him in a pit, and then sold him into bondage, then was taken into the foreign land of Egypt, where he was falsely accused and cast into prison and forgotten. Consider Moses and the Hebrew children at the Red Sea, with the army of Pharaoh pressing down upon them. Consider the lad David, in the face of the great giant Goliath. God delivered them all without fail. And he delivered Hezekiah from the Assyrians. God caused the Assyrians to hear a rumor and to return the way they came. **"Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the Lord. For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. Then the angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they *were* all dead corpses."** God saved His strengthless people and destroyed the bold and ar-

rogant Assyrians.

The promise of protection and care also continues to God's chosen people today. Concerning the church, Jesus said, **"Upon this rock I** *will* **build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."** He also said, **"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."** And He said, **"lo, I am with you always,** *even* **unto the end of the world."** To each one of His little lambs the Lord God promised, **"Behold, the Lord God will come with strong** *hand,* **and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward** *is* **with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry** *them* **in his bosom,** *and* **shall gently lead those that are with young."** And he said, **"Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne** *by me* **from the belly, which are carried from the womb: and** *even* **to** *your* ***old*** **age I** *am* **he; and** *even* **to hoar hairs will I carry** *you:* **I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver** *you.*"

"If God *be* **for us, who** *can be* **against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"** God loves His people with an everlasting love. Through all the ages, God has been mindful of each little one and has, as a loving Father, led them about, taught them, and kept them as the apple of His eye. His mercy endureth forever. It is impossible for Him to lie or to fail in a promise. And He has promised to save to the uttermost all who believe and trust in Him. He has given unto each one of His own the gift of faith. And it is by this faith that salvation is assured to all His people. According to the scriptures, ***"It is of*** **faith, that** *it might be* **by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed."** And we are taught that, **"For all the promises of God in him** *are* **yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."** And the beloved apostle was blessed of the Spirit to tell of God's continual deliverance of himself and others, **"But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver** *us.*" God has delivered His people from every trouble, He is now delivering them, and we trust that He shall yet deliver. May God be praised, world without end.

The last great enemy we must face is death. When we are brought to the end of our journey, we shall have the utmost fiery trial of our faith. All creature helps shall flee away. May we be blessed to be faithful unto death, believing in Him who promised us that He would not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but would with the temptation make a way of escape. May we be given to look continually to the Author and Finisher of our faith, and to trust Him even as we draw our last earthly breath. May we be given confidence that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has accomplished our warfare,

that He has pardoned our iniquity, and that we have the victory in Him, world without end. May God be glorified in all things.

This was written, I trust, in love and in hope of eternal life, which God has promised to His own people.

Elder J. B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

8-26-2011

Dear Brother Horton,

Please renew my subscription for two years. I enjoy receiving the Signs every month and read it most time before I go to bed.

Thanks,
Gradie H. Strader

Enclosed you will find my check for $15.00 for another years subscription to the "Signs of the Times." I enjoy it very much. I have had two miracles in the past year, so I really feel God is with me.

God Bless,
Elizabeth Webb

PSALM 64: 10.

The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.

August 22, 2011

Mr. Tony R. Horton
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va 24343

Dear Mr. Horton,

SUBJECT: SIGNS OF THE TIMES PUBLICATION

My mother, Edith Thompson, has enjoyed reading the Signs of the Times publication for many years. She is a member of the Dan River Primitive Baptist church in North Carolina. We have always lived in Pittsylvania County, Virginia and I remember many trips with my mother over those country roads to that church and several others in our area. She is now in Riverside Nursing Home in Danville Virginia and still receives the publication that you generously continue to send to her. I am writing to request an additional copy of the May 2011 copy that you sent to her. It was an especially good sample and I would like a copy for myself as my sister wishes to keep the copy you sent my mother.

I am enclosing payment for two years of the publication for my mother and an additional amount that, hopefully, will cover the cost of the copy that I am requesting. My address is 300 Hollyville Drive, Dry Fork, Va. 24549. You are currently mailing my mother's publication to her address at 1829 Tunstall High Rd. Danville, Va 24541, and my sister is delivering it to her in the nursing home. Thank you for all that you do. Receiving

this publication is a bright spot in my mother's life and she enjoys sharing with others.

Sincerely,
Kristi Abbott

ARTICLES

SPACEMEN FIND UNIVERSE'S LOST DAY-IN BEGINNING OF PROGRAM

Mysterious events in space exploration found a missing day on the universe to prove supernatural phenomena, reported in the Bible but classified as myths by many scientists and students of religion, according to a long-term space program consultant.

Space program consultants in orbital mechanics for 11 years - since the Mercury - Gemini program began, said God gave the missing day to Joshua and Isaiah.

Mysterious events took place as astronauts and space scientists in the space Astronomy Laboratory at the University of Wisconsin, checked positions; of the sun, moon and planets 100 and 1,000 years from now.

"WE HAVE TO KNOW THIS, so we don't send a satellite up and have it bump into something later on its orbits. We have to lay out the orbits in terms of the life of the satellite and where the planets will be, so the whole thing will not bog down."

Astronauts and space scientists reportedly ran the computer measurement back and forth over the centuries and it came to a halt, then the computer stopped and a red signal indicated something was wrong, either with information fed into the computer or the results as compared with the standards.

The service department checked out the computer and computer programming by the space team, then reported, "Its perfect."

Nobody was able to explain "a day missing in space in elapsed time," but a space team member referred them to Joshua 10: 12-13 in the Bible. The biblical reference tells of God stopping the onslaught of the nightfall to give Joshua "about a day" of extra daylight to help his army overpower the enemy.

SPACEMEN CHECKED the computers, going back into the time of Joshua and found their calculations were close - but not close enough. The elapsed time missing in Joshua's day was 23 hours and 20 minutes not a whole day.

The space consultant said astronauts and scientists remained puzzled and "still in trouble because if you can't account for 40 minutes in space science, you'll be in trouble 1,000 years from now; 40 minutes had to be found because it can be multiplied many times over in orbits." The space team was then referred to II Kings 20: 3-10 when God "Let the shadow return backward 10 degrees for Isaiah". Ten degrees is exactly 40 minutes. Twenty-three hours and twenty minutes in Joshua, plus forty minutes in II Kings make the missing, twenty-four hours the space travelers had to log in the log-book as the missing day on the universe.

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE LOVELINESS OF CHRIST

BELOVED IN THE LORD:

It is good to trace the dealings of God with his people as portrayed in the Holy Scriptures, and it is also profitable to contemplate those things which we ourselves are taught of the Lord that the things written in the Word, concerning his elect, his saints, become intelligible and of comfort to our souls. Now, while there ever remains ground for our abasement and contrition of heart before our God, yet it is in our low estate that our beloved Christ becomes more and more endeared, and he is extolled in our hearts as the chiefest among ten thousand and the One ***"altogether lovely"*** (Song. 5:16). So needful is he, so precious. I find it is a frequent grief to my spirit that I remain a sinful being. Often I am "weary of earth, myself and sin," and the only balm of my wounded spirit is Jesus' precious atoning blood. The blood of the Lamb cleanseth us from all sin. The apostle saith, **"Ye are come unto...Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than** *that of* **Abel," (Heb. 12:24).**

Ah! I am not always so sensible of my sinnership. There are times when this tenderness of heart is not felt. I am as if my heart were asleep, as if I had no heart, as if it had died within me. I am so dull, insensible of the depravities of my nature; I am hard of conscience, dull. Then how heartless are all exercises of worship, - how cold, formal, heartless are all my prayers, and the more the utterance of the lips, the more manifest is my lifeless estate. All acts of supposed worship appear as a shammere machine work, mere bodily exercise. I am in confusion, for all seems to be a mere pretense. I am then a wretched man-a form of godliness does not suffice. What do all external observances, all lip-worship amount to, if faith and love, sighs and cries and ardent longings, holy delight and peace and gratitude are absent? What a wretched state to be in! Ah, I sometimes see the state I am in, and find myself unmoved, hardened, as one destitute of heart toward the Lord. Truly, I am a base, worthless, lifeless thing without the ministrations of the Holy Spirit. But a crumb of mercy, a sip of the water of life, one kind glance from the Savior, one word from his mouth most sweet, and how changed is my estate. I sigh, I moan, I confess before him my dismal, sinful case. "He smiles and my comforts abound," and my heart, melted with gratitude, is favored for a few moments to hold communion with our fairest, sweetest, dearest Friend, Jesus, the Friend of sinners.

"I did know thee in the wilderness." Yes, the Lord our covenant-loving God, seeks us, finds us, binds up our wounds, speaks comfortably to us, speaks forgiveness, speaks of his mercy, and of his faithfulness. Then we are smitten, we chide, and loathe ourselves; we are broken and contrite in heart; we are meek over our past sinful-

ness, ingratitude, and unbelief. We in our hearts confess it all unto the Lord. Oh, it is wonderful! We find he will abundantly pardon, and we trust in him, believing in his grace; we lean upon our God; we embrace his promises; and leaning upon our dear Savior, we come up out of our straits, upheld by his gracious, omnipotent hand. Let me tell you, dear fellow-pilgrim, that in those sacred moments when Jesus restoreth my soul, quiets my fears, shames away my murmurings, and tells my heart that he is mine, my Savior, my unfailing Friend, then my heart is saying, "I love him." I rejoice in him; my heart sings his praises, and I am saying half aloud, "How lovely Jesus is; Oh, how dear is my Savior!" He satiates the weary , and replenishes every sorrowful soul. Oh, does not such pitying love to sinners, so vile, so unworthy, pass all telling? I sing:

"Up to the throne I soon shall go,
More of his loveliness to know.
Where ransomed millions shall declare,
He's altogether lovely there."

Some seek and have their portion in this life, in the world. Mine is not in the earth, and I do not want to seek an inheritance in this tinseled world; but I would be more and more drawn to seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. These are all my happiness, everlasting joy, my all.

Now it is but the earnest of the inheritance that I am tasting,- just now and then a crumb, a sip by the way; but when, as I hope, God shall receive me to glory then "***face to face,***" redeemed from corruption, conformed to the image of the glorified Savior, I shall be satisfied. Amen.

ELDER FREDERICK W. KEENE.

HUMILITY.

It seems very strange to me that my mind should be impressed to write on the subject of humility, when I cannot find one particle of it in myself, and when I firmly believe we cannot tell anything to profit except we have learned it by experience, and that the revelation of Jesus Christ as our Savior comes to us through the exercise of divine grace in our hearts, which is christian experience. Yet being impressed, I feel it a solemn duty. If I have an earthly master, and he tells me to do certain things, I have no right to question, and ask the reason why, but my duty is to obey. And now as I start out in this task I am already encouraged and comforted, because as I hope my Master has at this moment caused me to perceive that he does not require humility at My hands; that He is my humility , and he graciously and in mercy supplies every need and deficiency in me. If I have quit the service of my former master, whose reign over me was in darkness unto death wherein sin prevailed, calling forth every inch of the flesh, and have entered the service of him who reigneth in righteousness, then would I yield my "members servants to righteousness unto holiness." For the apostle tells us, "When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free

from righteousness." There is no fruit yielded in our service as servants under sin. The end thereof is death. "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life." Humility is not one of the results of any of the works of the flesh. "The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery , fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry , witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings and such like." Is it any wonder then when I search in my own flesh for humility , that I find it not! Every possible emanation from the flesh is in direct opposition to an humble and contrite heart. The natural heart is filled with pride and self-esteem. It is continually in conflict and in battle for supremacy. It even presumes to say that the arm of God is shortened that he cannot save, unless mighty man humbles himself and accepts the proffered salvation. When I deplore in myself the absence of humility , and grieve and mourn because of the presence of every opposition to it, I discover I am not looking tor it in the right direction. I want to do something that will ape humility , and try to deceive myself into thinking it is the real thing. In other words, I am trying all the time to get religion. and I am proud (not humbled to think how well I get along. I search out my brother's faults. and talk to others about him in an ugly way, saying, (if not in words) in my arrogance, if he would do as I do he would be above reproach. Is that humility? When the tree is corrupt, the fruit must of necessity be corrupt also. A clean thing cannot come out of an unclean. Of the olden time before the flood we read this Scripture: " And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." So also throughout all the Scriptures the same truth is set forth; that man is totally depraved. and in him is no good thing. Again it is written, "God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good. no. not one." Now when the children of God look to themselves for good deeds, looking away from Christ, and depending upon the deeds done in their body, they find the filthy self-righteousness of the proud spirit of the pharisee. Hide thy drooping head, O humility, thou hast no place there. And yet it is in this very proud Pharisaic heart that the sweet spirit of grace takes up its abode, and causes the lofty head to bow low, the proud body to fall prostrate in the dust in humble acknowledgment and gratitude to a covenant-keeping God for his gracious and tender mercy. When we discover the superabounding of grace where sin did abound. what a change has taken place. The poor child has had his fill of sin; that which he once loved he now abhors. He sees himself as he never saw himself before: a vile and depraved sinner. From the moment this work of grace begins, we observe the fruit that is yielded. The growth of the old, corrupt tree has ceased, its leaves faded, its beauty

gone, its force abated, "a corn of wheat" has fallen into the ground, an incorruptible seed "by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever." This seed takes root in the corrupt soil of the heart. The Husbandman careth for it in such a way that soon is manifested the upward growth: "First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." The foul growths and evil weeds so conspicuous before, are cut down and dug up by the roots, by the hand of him whose Spirit worketh grace in the heart. How interesting to watch the growth of the tender plants, from the time they begin the christian journey, and how anxious we are for them, and how careful of them when, they have entered the warfare. The nursing mothers in Israel bathe their scars, and pour oil into the bleeding wounds. And then we rejoice as we see tribulation working patience. The frequent conflicts cause them to endure hardness as good soldiers. Now the work of the Spirit in this earthly soil, what does it produce! The apostle tells us, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against which there is no law." But one might ask, Can a clean thing come out of an unclean! We answer, no, emphatically no. Well, that one may say, you have been comparing this fruit-yielding work of the Spirit to natural seed sown in the earth. Has the earth been changed, that it should bring forth "bread to the eater," when before it brought forth briars and thorns! No, the earth has not been changed, but it has been subdued, and the briars and thorns have been plowed under, and they die, and the soil is prepared and made ready for the sower. So this corrupt heart of ours. The plow and harrow of divine grace is set to work by the spiritual Husbandman, causing death to the unwholesome and corrupt works of the flesh. They are trodden under foot, they die. "Our old man is crucified with him, [Christ] that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Christ died; by his death the law which condemned us was satisfied. the sword of justice was removed from the way of the "tree of life." Christ arose from the dead. and all the Father had given him arose with him to newness of life. And this is what the work of the Spirit now makes manifest. The saints of God, as such, are pure and holy, as he is pure and holy. The bodies were prepared for the sowing of the seed. The incorruptible seed has been sown; it has taken root downward, and bears fruit upward. And now we enter the vineyard of our Lord, and eat his pleasant fruits. Again the apostle tells us, "The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth." Well, what of the production? The first thing we discover in this new conception and birth is, that the Lord has fulfilled his promise that he would "take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them an heart of flesh." They manifest a broken heart, which is an humble heart and a contrite spirit. So the very first result of fruit yielding in the new born soul is humility; and what did the man do toward bringing about that result? I will tell you what he did, he fought against it with all the power of all the pride of his natural heart.

But glorious news, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," Ever afterward when you meet and talk with that child, you will discover the meek and humble spirit. As the garden needs the hoe to keep down the weeds of evil growth, so also there is a needs be that the spirit be in continuous exercise. The law of God is written in our heart, and when we violate that law we are chastised, which chastisements in the end "yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby," Each one of us remembers the humility of soul we have felt after a spiritual whipping; how we were ready to crawl in the very dust to the feet of our brethren, imploring forgiveness. O humility, thou canst now raise thy bowed head, for now thy light shineth, and the angels of God rejoice. Wisdom tells us, "Before honor is humility ." Also, "By humility are riches and honor and life." And the apostle warns you to "Let no man beguile you in a voluntary-humility ," And he also admonishes you to "Be subject to one another, clothed with humility ." How rich the clothing, wrought gold, as the clothing of the daughter of the King. If you ask me if I ever knew a time when I realized that I was truly humble, I would answer, no, and I would tell you, too, that the times when I thought I was humble, I found it to be pride of the worst sort. The natural man for his own ends will sometimes sham humility; the truly penitent child of God never, The power of God which works humility caused the persecuting Saul of Tarsus to become Paul (the little). The same power also filled the mouth of the psalmist with these words: "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Now, O humility, blessed is thy condition; salvation has entered thy portals; thou art clothed with righteousness. The mighty man of war is brought low, behold him now, a child of peace. Jesus, clothed in thy habiliments, has set up his temple in the hearts of the inhabitants of Zion, and great is the joy and rejoicing in Jerusalem.

Elder B.F.COULTER.
Philadelphia, Pa., June 14, 1901

JOB 19: 25-27.

"FOR I know *that* my Redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; *though* my reins be consumed within me."

The book of Job is supposed to have been written by Moses, and is regarded as a most sublime and sacred poem, parabolically presenting the church of God in the person of Job, in all her various phases, in which her patience and integrity are subjected to the severest tests, and the end of the Lord, or design and purpose of God, in suffering Satan to afflict his chosen ones, is made to appear. **"Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen**

the end of the Lord."- James 5:11. Like all other parts of the holy Scriptures, this book of Job was written by inspiration of God, for as the inspired truth of God it is referred to and recognized by prophets and apostles. That there was a man that dwelt in the land of Uz, whose name was Job, is beyond all contradiction true, for God himself declares it, and that all that is written of him in this book is strictly true we have no doubt. But while such are our firm convictions, we still believe that, like David and others, what was written of Job was designed to allegorically apply to the church and people of God. As his name signifies patience, it is applicable not only to him as an individual, but is applicable to the patience of all the people of God. As Job's patience was sorely tried by afflictions, temptations, bereavements, physical and mental sufferings, by disappointment in those whom he had once regarded as his friends and confidential advisers, and by cruel persecutions, so also have all the people of God been tried in all ages. A poor and afflicted people, who trust in the name of the Lord. For if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution. Satan thought, and many of his ministers have fallen into the same error, that Job was what in modern times is called an Arminian; that he served God for pay, and from selfish motives, and not from the power and vitality of the love of God implanted in his heart, and hence his challenge: **"Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land: but put forth thy hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face."- Job i. 9-11.** How many such dialogues as are described in this connection have transpired in the experience of the children of God, by the Spirit of the Lord in the saints, and the spirit of Satan in the flesh. How keenly do the saints of God from time to time, writhe with pain from the envenomed suggestions of the devil, suggesting to them that their religion is only natural and selfish, and that their devotion and obedience to God springs not from the power of an endless life, but from the law of a carnal commandment. Now the end of the Lord, that is, the purpose of God in all the trials and afflictions of his people, is to prove the power of his sustaining grace, by the trial of their faith, and patience, and to show beyond all controversy that their righteousness is of the Lord and that their faith, patience, submission and hope are fruits, not of their carnal nature reformed, but of his own Spirit implanted in them. Now carefully review the whole experience of Job, and see if we do not find in it portrayed the general experience of all the children of God. Plunged in deep distress, stripped of his worldly subsistence, bereaved of his children, tortured with distressing, loathsome boils, surrounded with miserable comforters, who instead of condoling sympathy and words of comfort, reproach and taunt him, while he vainly appeals to them for pity, and to make his misery complete, the pres-

ence of his God is withdrawn, and in bitterness of spirit he cries out, O that I knew where I might find him. Under all this weight of sorrow and distress his faith in God shines out from his darkness like the bow of divine assurance painted in living colors on the lowering cloud, or as the rising sun in his radiant strength dissipating the lowering shades of unbelief. Faith triumphant over fear shouts the victorious victory, " I know that my Redeemer liveth." Although a sinner needing redemption, and without the least power of my own to make myself just with God, (Job ix. 1,) God has graciously provided for me a " Daysman," one who can lay his hand on both, who can secure all the honor of the throne of God, magnify and honor the divine law which I have transgressed, meet and cancel every demand of God's eternal justice, and yet deliver me from death, save me from hell, clothe me with the righteousness of God, and freely, effectually and forever justify me through the redemption that is in him. Such a Redeemer was seen clearly by the faith of the Son of God as exemplified in Job fifteen hundred and twenty years before the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ to our guilty world. This is the cheering language of faith, living faith, tried faith, and faith that overcometh the world. Dark, gloomy clouds may gather thickly around, tempests may spend their mightiest storms, and bellowing thunders shake the skies, but the undaunted faith of God's elect will surely reassert its conquering power, and bear its humble possessor safely through the final " wreck of matter and the crash of worlds." Esteemed friends, as in the case of Job, may withhold their tender sympathy in the time of our severest trials, and even load us with their cruel reproach, but as the lightning's brilliant flash upon surrounding darkness, our faith will disclose to us the cheering knowledge that our Redeemer liveth. Through the dim vista of more than fifteen centuries intervening between the day of Job and the incarnation of the Son of God, like Abraham at a still more distant standpoint, he saw the day, rejoiced in it and was glad.

"He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." This testimony of Christ was and is the spirit of prophecy. It was the Spirit of Christ in Job and in the prophets that in them did testify of his coming, of his sufferings and of the glory that should follow. So far as the first advent of the Redeemer is expressed in our text, it was fulfilled when the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. From the assurance expressed by Job that he should see him, and his eyes should behold him in the latter day, we understand him to be speaking of the second coming of the Son of God, as it is testified by Paul, Hebrews ix. 28: **"And unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."** When he shall come to raise the dead and judge the world at the last day. This application of the prediction seems in harmony wlth the assurance of the faith of Job that he should personally see him, and his eyes behold him, and in his flesh, even after his flesh

should be destroyed by worms, and his reins consumed within him. This seems to be in substance what Paul expressed to the Philippians, iii. 10: **"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings," &c.** As the faith of all the saints looks for a blessed resurrection and happy immortality, so Job, after conceding the weakness and mortality of his flesh, and all his fleshly powers, admitting that my property may perish, my children die, my earthly joys may all be blasted, and my skin and my body become food for greedy worms, and my reins, or all my vital fleshly powers, possessions, affections and interests must fail, and decompose in the grave, this, even this shall not disturb the purpose of God or hinder the fulfillment of his promises. " **I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another."** This faith was the same in the psalmist: **"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." - Psalms xvii. 15.** The deep afflictions through which Job was passing were breaking down his mortal powers and consuming his life, and wearisome nights were appointed to him, still, like the psalmist, he could say, My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever. Although to the grave I bow down my head and yield my flesh and say unto corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou art my mother and my sister, yet with the perfect assurance that I have a living Redeemer, who shall deliver me from death and bring, me forth at last in triumph from the grave.

MIDDLETOWN, N.Y.,
January 15,1867.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

BROTHER BEEBE-As I have to write to you on business, I feel that if my pen could be directed aright, that I should be glad to write a few lines for my brethren and sisters who read the *Signs of the Times.*

One thing I have noticed: about every piece that I have written for the SIGNS, some one of its readers have responded and given in that they have been some edified or strengthened in what I had written. This has been a mixture of joy and grief to me; sometimes feeling to thank the Lord that such a miserable creature as I should be an instrument in his hands of comforting any of the children of God in this wilderness world of sin and rebellion, on their heavenly journey; and then again I fear that I have deceived them - that I am not what they take me to be - that if they knew my inward corruptions, they would say that my words are no better than the sounding of brass or the tinkling cymbals. I find that it is out of my power to rise above those ups and downs, and yet I have no desire to stop, nor to go back, for that would be all death to my feelings; but there seems to be an irresistible power drawing me forward to action in the cause of God, contending for God's truth

and to try to encourage all who are engaged therein; so much so, that it is out of my power to enjoy myself in anything else. I think that I am fully satisfied of one thing, that if there was not any on earih that did talk the language of the Old School Baptists, that I should be alone, and I can't see anything that I should want to live any longer for on earth. It seems that since I have been here at North Berwick, I have been greatly blessed in this, that the church and society have been willing to bear with all of my inabilities and short comings, in every sense of the word; so much so, that there has not been anything to my knowledge transpired between them and me to cause any hard feelings. It has been eight. years since I came here to preach; - a large number of the church within that time God has taken home; so much so, that if we had not had some additions within that time, we now must have been reduced very small; but within these eight years we have added forty-nine by baptism, besides some others that used to belong to other churches before the division. There has not. been any time since I have been here, that our meetings have been more interesting than this season; some of the church have been much revived, and thirteen of the above number have been added this sealed by baptism. May the Lord continue to bless us with all the household of faith now scattered in this world. Yours as ever.

ELDER WILLIAM QUINT.
Jan. 1, 1858

THERE ARE MANY DEVICES IN A MAN'S HEART; NEVERTHELESS THE COUNSEL OF THE LORD, THAT SHALL STAND. Proverbs 19:21

A short time ago we used the above Scripture for a text. Afterwards we were asked to use the same subject for our December editorial. We shall endeavor to do so, hoping that He who is unerring may guide our pen.

When considering a point of doctrine, one of the first thoughts is, what is the scriptural proof of it. To find comfort in such things we must behold more than the scriptural proof, for we must see the relation of it to God's chosen people, in this pilgrimage journey here, as it affects their lives and glorifies God.

There has been in the past, is now, and there will no doubt be in the future many devices in the hearts of men. Some of these appear good and some of them bad, but whether they be good or bad, they shall not interfere with the counsel of the Lord. After the apostle Paul had visited Jerusalem on one occasion and been persecuted and beaten because of his defense of the gospel, the Lord stood by him one night and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul, for as thou has testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome." Following this experience, we see some of the devices of men; their scheming and planning to take the life of the apostle, but his life was not in the hands of men, and none could destroy him, because God had said, thou shall bear witness at Rome. Shortly after being told by God that he should go to

Rome, forty Jews bound themselves under a curse, saying they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. The devices of these men, although wicked, was the way ordained to start Paul on his trip. Their planning must fail because God was sending him to Rome. From this time until the apostle reached Rome he was a prisoner of men, but the gospel of Jesus, his Lord, was carried on the wings of persecution. In every instance, beginning with his defense of the gospel before Felix and his personal experience before king Agrippa, we behold the efforts of the Jews to convict him of some crime. If they could have done that his journey to Rome would have been stopped. This could not be. As Paul appealed his case from one court to another he was moving towards the place appointed unto him - to Rome. In all this he was from time to time seeing the hand of God in the matter, and he was to be assured that God was yet mindful of him. One of these times was when he was placed on a ship with other prisoners, and was sailing towards Italy. During the voyage the boat was overtaken by a storm, and the ones with him felt they were going to perish, but the Lord stood by Paul that night and told him that he had given him all that traveled with him and that none should perish.

God today remembers his people, and although they are all prisoners of hope, he assures them from time to time that all is well, saying, "Be not afraid, it is I." In God's own time and way Paul reached Rome and all the devices of men were only to the furtherance of the gospel of God his Savior.

We will briefly mention a few of the things connected with the life, sufferings, death and,resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ in which the devices of men were manifested, yet in the end we find that they worked only to the fulfillment of God's word and counsel. When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, Herod the king of the Jews began at once to seek his life, but Joseph was warned of God to take the young child and flee into Egypt, so the prophecy might be fulfilled which had said, Out of Egypt have I called my Son. The devices of the one who sought his life were to lead up to the things which had been promised before. When Herod was unable to find Jesus, he sent forth and had all of the children in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under slain, believing that in so doing he would certainly take the life of the babe of Bethlehem. In all this he was only fulfilling the prophecy of Jeremiah, which said "A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not. "All things written in the prophecies concerning him had to be fulfilled. The counsel of the Lord must stand, regardless of the devices of men. It was written of him, a bone of him shall not be broken, and when he had been crucified soldiers came to take down his body, and the bodies of those who were crucified with him, it not being lawful to leave them hanging on the Sabbath day. The legs of the two who died with him on the cross were broken by the sol-

diers, but when they came to Jesus they said he is dead already. Then his side was pierced with a spear, thus fulfilling the word which had declared, They shall look on him whom they have pierced. Those who did these things knew nothing of what had been promised before of God; they were only following their own plans and devices, but at the same time they were fulfilling the purpose of God.

When the Savior was crucified and buried, there lingered with the Jews a fear that something might happen to their plans and that his disciples might steal his body at night. Solqiers were, therefore, placed around his tomb and a great stone was rolled unto it, and the king sealed it with his seal. Everything was done that men could do to prevent his resurrection from the dead. We are glad it was so because there might be the manifestation of that power that overcomes all things to God's eternal glory.We could go on mentioning scriptures as proof of these things, the devices of men being worked according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, but we will just mention a few briefly to stir up your pure minds, God willing, and pass on. Haman a wicked man sought the life of Mordecai, and even prepared a gallows to hang him on, yet, when the time came for the hanging Haman himself was hung on it. The devices of the enemies of Daniel, and the three Hebrew children, caused them to be cast into the den of lions and the fiery furnace, yet it only served to the manifestation of God's delivering hand unto them. When God told Jonah to go to Nineveh and to cry against the city, he immediately set about to go another way; he paid his fare and started to Tarshish. He was yet to learn that, salvation was of the Lord; that God's counsel would stand, and although he had to go through the belly of hell, he was to reach Nineveh as God had told him. His devices must fail, whether they were good or bad. The planning of Joseph's brethren to do away with him, only carried him into Egypt to store up corn for the day of famine.

As to the day we live in, it is a dark and dreary day, and the devices of men are at work; Hitler seeking to rule the world. Planning and scheming has been going on for years, bringing us to the places and conditions in which we live; yet, we are sure, it is for a wise purpose of God. Not a dart of Satan can hit, except what the God of heaven sees fit. They are working together for good to them that love God. Oh, that we might have the assurance that we love him! We are sure that the wrath of man shall praise him and the remainder he will restrain. God's sword is hanging over the earth and we believe God's humble poor are being brought closer together. We know by experience that we are often thinking of our beloved brethren in the Lord, in their trials, hoping that we might be blessed of God to speak some word of comfort to them. Yet the minister must have like trials as his brethren before he can comfort them with the same comfort wherewith he is comforted of God.

May God give us grace to love one another freely, be affectionate one to another, gentle, forbearing, kind, manifesting a brotherly kindness, for if these things be in us we shall never fail.

Elder D. V. Spangler,
December, 1942

JUSTICE

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. (Gal. 2:16)

We know that the word justice has more than one meaning, but it is our intent to use it only as it applies to the law. Without justice under the law, the law would be dead: no one would benefit from it nor be punished by it: but God's law is holy, just and good, and justice must be rendered under it. The only plea is "guilty" and the only sentence "death". That all men are sinners and deserving of death and everlasting damnation we feel no need to prove here.

To be justified means that one has been freed from the law, and God's law does not free anyone until the penalty of transgression has been paid in full. There are many people today, as there has always been, who do not yet know that a man is not justified by the works of the law and are constantly striving to effect their own salvation. I have been listed among these people, and still have many friends there. But we know (I hope that I am included) that our justification is only in Jesus Christ in whom we believe. Jesus suffered shame, agony and death on the cross of Calvary that sinners such as you and I might live. He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us now ask the question, how is it possible for Jesus to satisfy the law and justice by dying in our room and stead? Is there a law anywhere that would allow an innocent person to be slain for the guilty one? If such a law exists, can it be just? If a man be executed for a friend who is worthy of death, would his friend be any less guilty or less worthy of death? Would justice be served by slaying the innocent? Would not the executioners be guilty of murder? I believe justice would be perverted in such a case, yet we see Christ dying for us, the Just for the unjust.

God created man in his own image. Male and female created he them. And he called the man Adam. Adam was a figure of Him or an image of him that was to come, or Christ. An image or figure is an exact likeness. It may be made of wood, iron, clay, dust or some other material, and it may be smaller or larger, but it must portray the true body exactly. Therefore Adam was an exact likness of Christ, and should be viewed in that perspective. Eve was created in Adam and is a type of the church, showing that

the church was in Christ before the foundation of the world. God took a rib from Adam and made it a woman, this representing the church being given to Christ for his bride. And Adam said, **"This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." The Church is the mystical body of Christ, "For we are members of his body, of his flesh. and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church." (Eph. 5: 30-32).**

Exactly as Eve was to Adam so is the church to Christ, for the image must be perfect. Eve, the church, was deceived by the crooked serpent, ate of the forbidden fruit, and fell under the curse of the law. Adam, the figure of Christ, was not deceived, for that was not possible, but because of his great love for her, he partook of the forbidden fruit. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. The first Adam had no power to redeem his bride nor himself from the curse, therefore they must die, for God had said, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Jesus Christ also loved his bride and would die with her, but in his Godhead he could not die, therefore he became incarnate. **"But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal. 4: 4-5). "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." (Heb. 2:14).** In his flesh, Christ could and did suffer and die to pay the penalty for his bride and redeem her from the curse of the law. Christ was righteous, he knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth and he kept the law to a jot and to a tittle, therefore the law had no claim against him, and in his righteousness he was the perfect sacrifice for his fallen bride. In a mystical sense she died with him and was buried with him by baptism into death. Jesus Christ, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens, the only begotten Son of the Father, took all our sins upon himself and suffered the penalty of death in our stead. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall

bear their iniquities." Read the whole 53rd chapter of Isaiah: it is so beautiful. Can any man comprehend the beauty of such a love as Christ bestowed upon his chosen people? Surely not! We may view it through a glass darkly, but we will never understand it fully in this sin filled life, because sin so dulls our vision.

"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident; for the just shall live by faith." If we could attain unto righteousness by the works of the law, then Christ died in vain; the old covenant would still be in force, and there would be no new covenant of grace; but God has made a new covenant with the house of Israel, saying, "I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." If we live, we must live by faith, and the law is not of faith. "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." If we are what we hope to be, we can witness to this with faithful Paul. We are told by many that all we need do is have faith. This is true, but faith is not something we can take hold on at our leisure, as they would have us believe; for faith is a gift of God. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." As our sins and iniquities were charged unto our Savior, so is his righteousness imputed unto us who believe in him.

"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Abraham believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and if we walk in that same faith, righteousness shall also be imputed unto us, for we are his seed. "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Why must it be by faith and not by the law? Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. We are no longer under the law, for Christ is the end of the law to all who believeth. Therefore righteousness is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed. Is this not beautiful? Can a poor sinner find a better promise than this?

Abraham was strong in faith, and was fully persuaded, that what God had promised, he was able to perform, therefore his faith was imputed unto him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.

Brethren, if we believe in Jesus Christ, then we are in him and he is in us, and we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world.

I realize that I have only touched this vast subject, and it seems that my thoughts have been very scattered, but I

trust they are of the Lord, and that he might use them to glorify his gracious and holy name, and comfort and edify some of his blessed little children. Charge all errors to my account, and when at the throne of grace, may it be God's holy will that you remember this poor sinner.

Clifford Wilbanks
Louisiana

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/11
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trlal whlch is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you."- 1 PETER iv. 12.

The "fiery trial," then, is not a strange thing which happens only to a few of the Lord's family, but is the appointed lot of all. Do we not hear the Lord saying to his Zion, " I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction?" All then that are chosen must pass through the furnace of affliction, and all know experimentally the fiery trial, for by it they are made partakers of Christ's sufferings. But this is indispensable in order to be partakers of his glory. " If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Thus they suffer with him, " that when his glory shall be revealed, they may be glad also with exceeding joy." And this suffering with and for Christ in the furnace of afflic- tion salts the soul, preserves it from corruption, communicates health, gives it savour and flavour, is a token of interest in the everlasting covenant, and is a seal of friendship and peace with God.

J.C. Philpot

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ST. LUKE 9:57.

And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain *man* said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

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SWEET FROM BITTER

Sweet from bitter. light from darkness,
Good from evil God can bring;
Over all the clouds of sorrow
He a glorious light can fling.

Walking on the angry waters,
Jesus Christ is often seen;
Thus the rolling waves or trouble
Messengers of peace have been.

Prayers of saints are often answered
By some trying providence,
God unto our faith appearing
Not unto our sight und sense.

The believer thus discovers
He is foolish, God is wise;
Man is born to pain as surely
As the sparks will upward rise.

Seek not then, my soul, a pathway
Pleasing to the carnal mind;
Ask for grace, that in the roughest,
Thou mayest peace and profit find.

Ask thy God that from the bitter
Sweet may come, and that the light
Issuing from the clouds or darkness
Show you how that all is right.

O let my trembling soul be still,
And wait Thy wise, Thy holy will!
I cannot Lord, Thy purpose see,
Yet, all is well since ruled by Thee.

Author Unknown

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EDITORIAL

TITHING

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

To many it seems that tithing is the very foundation of salvation. They preach it often and try by every means possible to instill it in their followers. Tithing is in fact the means of monetary support for their ministers, church staff, various programs, and missions. Tithe means tenth. So these are expected to give a tenth of their income to support their church. Certainly then, it is important to these people. However, is tithing a commandment to the church in the day of grace as many claim? If so, why do Primitive Baptist not believe in it?

When God brought Israel out of Egypt and formed them into a nation, He gave them laws and a priesthood with Aaron as high priest. The tribe of Levi was the priesthood and was not to receive any inheritance with the other tribes as far as any land in Canaan was concerned. The Levites were not to grow crops or raise livestock, but were to conduct the services of the Lord and minister to the other tribes. Therefore, God commanded all the other tribes to give a tenth of their crops and livestock to the Levites. **Numbers 18:20-21, "And the Lord spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them: I** *am* **thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel. And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve,** *even* **the service of the tabernacle of the congregation."** God told Moses that the Levites were to take a tenth part of the tithe, the best part, and offer a heave offering for the Lord and they were to eat the remainder. Hebrews 7:5 says, **"And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham."**

Thus, God commanded Israel to tithe or give a tenth part to the levites or

priesthood for the purpose of offerings to the Lord and to feed the priests. In addition, every third year there was to be tithe for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. This commandment was given to no other people or nation and was a necessary part of the Levitical Priesthood. This priesthood had a beginning and an end. It was under the first covenant or law covenant. The office of high priest of this covenant was filled by men who were sinners as you and I; by men who died and another would take their place; by men who could not atone for the sins of themselves or the people; by men who offered sacrifices and offerings that were only types and shadows of better things. If the first covenant had been faultless then should no place have been sought for the second. But, the first could not save anyone from his sins. Rather, it brought condemnation and the ministration of death. Therefore, the Lord said, I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. I will put my laws into their minds and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. Christ is the mediator of a better covenant established upon better promises.

The Levitical Priesthood made nothing perfect. It could not cleanse anyone. Therefore, it was necessary that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec and not after the order of Aaron. Christ is our high priest without beginning of days or end of life. He abideth a priest forever. Our high priest can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities and was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Christ, as our high priest, doesn't need to offer sacrifices daily as did the ones under the Levitical priesthood. He offered up himself once and it was sufficient. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Now, there being a change in the priesthood, there must also be a change in the law. Hence, the new covenant with God's laws being put into your minds and written in your hearts. Since there is a change in the priesthood and in the law, what need is there for tithing? What can you give Christ? Rather, it is he who gives to you. Would your money help spread the gospel? The scripture says that the word goeth forth out of his mouth and shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish that which he pleases, and shall prosper in the thing whereto he sent it. Tithing can't take the gospel anywhere. There is no precious little lamb of God that will be too far away or in such great affliction that the word of God cannot come to where he or she is. It came to the one thief on the cross in his dying moments. It came to the man with an unclean spirit dwelling among the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones. This is the experience of a child of God under the conviction of sin condemned under the law who sees only death. The word came and the man fell at his feet and worshipped Christ. He was now clothed and in his right mind.

There is no commandment in the new testament by Christ or instruction

by his apostles to the gospel church to tithe. The Apostle Paul speaks of it only in reference to the Levitical Priesthood and Christ mentions it twice and both times in relation to the scribes and Pharisees. The scribes and Pharisees believed that one must keep the law under the first covenant in order to obtain salvation. In Matthew 23:23, Christ said, **"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier** *matters* **of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."** In other words, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." The scribes and Pharisees claimed to be so religious and boasted of keeping the law, yet they could not any more than we can. They did not know Christ who fulfilled the law to a jot and tittle for his little flock. The second occasion that Christ spoke of tithing was Luke 18:9-14, **"And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men** *are,* **extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as** *his* **eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified** *rather* **than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."** People like to boast of all that they do for the Lord. However, it is "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." God's humbled poor would but cry: when did we do any of these things? The book of Hebrews mentions tithes only in reference to the Levitical priesthood.

Certainly, we are not to neglect those brethren who are in need of some natural assistance in this life, or the expenses of our ministers, or the maintenance of our church properties. The Apostle Paul admonished the Church at Corinth, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye." This collection was for the poor in Jerusalem. In Romans Paul says that we are to distribute to the necessity of saints. In his epistle to the Corinthians, Paul also says, "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" Our brethren are very diligent in caring for the needs of their brethren in this world, the expenses of their ministers, and repair of the church properties.

To summarize, tithing was commanded only under the law covenant for the necessity of the Levitical Priesthood. No where is it set forth for the gospel church. When the Levitical Priesthood ended, there was a change in the law. A

new covenant was given with Christ as high priest and therefore, a completely different priesthood. Our high priest doesn't need tithes and offerings. He has all power and authority ."He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?" The Lord said, "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry , I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof." Whose image is on all the money? Man's! As Christ instructed his disciples, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." If he needed our money or help in any way, he would not be the true and living God.

May the Lord keep us ever humble before him in love esteeming our brethren better than ourselves.

Elder Cleo Robertson

CORINTHIANS 12: 6-8.

And there are diversities of operations. but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit.

CORRESPONDENCE

Please renew my subscription for the Signs of the Times. I have been with my daughter for some time but now I am back in Louisiana at this address:

Katherine Mathews
2140 Airline Dr. - Apt. 142
Bossier City, LA 71111

I am sending a check for $30.00 for 2 years any left use it as you see fit.

Thanks so much - I love the Signs so much it keeps getting better all the time.

We have had to close our church doors - as my brother David Godwin, our minister is or will be 103 years of age but still God has kept his mind clear on scripture, and other things as well.

May God Bless you all at the Signs and just keep bringing us good true reading.

Katherine Mathews

October 3, 2011

Dear Brother Horton,

Please renew my Signs of the Times for 2 years.

I really enjoy reading my Signs and thanks for every one who helps with the Signs.

Thanks,
Sister Sallie Hodges

ARTICLES

"Sovereign Ruler of the skies,
Ever gracious, ever wise.
All my times are in His hand,
All events at His command."

I was awakened around 2 a.m. this night with the above lines running through my mind. I believe it is the first verse of a song. I lay there in the darkness, thinking about it and my feeble mind could not begin to grasp the depth and meaning of those words. Oh, how much is expressed in those four little lines. Truly, He is the ruler not only of the skies, but He created them, as well as everything else -the earth, land and waters, the rocks and mountains - everything that is in existence. The gentle breezes and the loud howling winds with their destructive powers are part of His handiwork. Nothing exists that He did not create or fix. Last of all He created poor puny man both male and female out of the dust which the winds blow around. He gave the man love for the woman which was created from man's rib and made the woman to cleave to the man.

Lying there in the darkness I tried to imagine the greatness of this God who fixed and ordained everything just as He would have it to be. If not, why not? He has all power over everything He created and each thing moves, acts, or turns at His will and purpose. He is so great He fills the world, the heavens and the seas, yet He is small enough to come into the heart of His chosen ones.

Truly, He is ever gracious, ever wise. The devil was in His mind and purpose through the serpent which was also His creation, put here for the purpose which he fulfilled.

This is too mysterious for my little mind to fathom. I can only get a glimpse sometimes of these things but when I try to express what I hope I see it leaves me.

I am so weak and helpless, depending on Him for everything, my every breath. He decreed who my natural parents were and the place of my birth. If I have a second birth it was also given by Him. All my trials, troubles and afflictions were appointed before the world was created, as well as my joys and my hope of Life Eternal. May I ever praise Him who doeth all things well.

By: Sister Edrie Clifton
Elder Bennie Clifton's Widow.
7-2-1999

PSALM 17: 7.

Shew thy marvellous loving-kindness, O thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust *in thee* **from those that rise up** *against them.*

VOICES OF THE PAST

NORTH BERWICK, Me., Nov. 8,1883.

THE following letter was read in our last church meeting, and the church was so much edified in it that it was their wish that it should be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I will now inform the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that on Sunday, the 4th of this month, I had the pleasure of baptizing her in the name of Christ. That morning it looked like it would be a stormy day, and as she lived seven or eight mites from, the meeting house, it looked very doubtful about her being there that day. But she ventured to start, and by the time she arrived at the meeting house the clouds began to break, and by the time meeting was out the sun shone bright and warm, so that we had a pleasant time in going to the water and in administering that gospel ordinance. We felt to say that not only the natural sun, but the Son of Righteousness did shine in its glory on us.

WM. QUINT.

NORTH BERWICK, Me., Jan. 3, 1884.

BRETHREN BEEBE: - As I have sent you a letter that sister A. G. Clark wrote, telling us the travel of her mind before she was baptized, I now send one that she wrote two weeks after she was baptized, and I think that the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES would like to read this one. Yours as ever,

WM. QUINT.

SPRINGVALE, Me., Oct. 8, I883.

ELDER WM. QUINT-RESPECTED FRIEND :-I dare not call you brother, because I know that I am not worthy. No doubt you will be surprised when you see the name of the author of this letter; but the desire to communicate with some one on the subject of religion must be my excuse. Please bear with me as patiently as you can, while I try to tell in my feeble way of the many and devious ways through which I have wandered, like one blindfolded; but please do not make it too public, for I do not wish to thrust myself into notice, but would rather shrink out of sight. Of course I am willing you should speak of it to my sisters, Mrs. Staples and Mrs. Chadbourne, although we have never talked on the subject. To begin with my childhood, I suppose I was rather a wayward, peculiar tempered child; but from my earliest recollections, at times, I have had awful and serious thoughts of the future, death and eternity, and what would be my portion in a future state. When a very small girl, attending school, I had such overpowering feelings come over me on the subject, that to get rid of them I have got excused from the schoolroom and gone out to run and play for awhile; but I never told anyone my feelings, and do not think they were suspected. At that time I did

not have any realization or sense of being a sinner, only in a sort of general way, as I had been taught that we were all sinners. But I had a strong desire to be a christian. I remember once reading a little book for children, in which the Savior was represented as a shepherd carrying the lambs in his arms, and I had such yearning to be one of his lambs; but still I had no strong conviction of being a sinner more than others. The Old School Baptists used to visit at our house, and I would hear them talking, and would listen attentively to their conversation; still I think no one ever suspected me of being at all interested in what they were talking about. And sometimes I heard some good old saint give an exhortation in meeting, and relate some of their own experience, and tell of going away alone to pray; and I would think that if they were christians, (and I never for a moment doubted it), perhaps if I would go away by myself and pray, I, too, might become one. And I have wandered away to some secluded place for that purpose, when it would seem to me to be almost blasphemous, and I would not even dare to fall on my knees; and if I did get as far as that, I neither knew how to pray nor what to pray for. I remained in this frame of mind until about the time I was fourteen years of age, when I went to Great Falls to work in the mill, and for a time attended the New School Baptist meetings. I have no recollection of any serious impressions at that time, only after a time I began to reason like this, that the Baptist doctrine was selfish anyway; that the Bible said, " Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters ;" and it seemed to me like chaining one who was starving, and placing food, just out of reach, and saying, Help yourself. After awhile I began to attend the Methodist meetings. and they seemed to be decidedly more generous. Still, if I became a christian according to their creed, I must work for it, and must attend all the "means of grace," as they call it.

And although I was fond of attending their meetings, I could not for many years get up courage to rise in public for prayers, which is part of their form of worship; and as it is not agreeable to my nature to be an object of public attention, it was a great trial; but at last I gave in. I was then living at Lewiston. One evening, at a prayer meeting, the invitation being given to those wishing to become christians to rise, I struggled to my feet. A few days after, the pastor called on me, and in the course of our conversation I related to him the foregoing narrative in substance; and I think I need not tell you that I was very much disappointed and surprised when he said to me that I had told a good christian experience. I did not believe it then nor do I now. I had not had one ray of hope, nor a taste of the peace that passeth understanding; indeed I do not think I had a true sense of my real condition as a blind, miserable sinner. But he addressed me as sister ever after, and requested me to attend the class-meeting, where each one is called upon to relate their week's experience. There was one held in an upstairs tenement, in the house where I lived, and I had sometimes stealthily crept out on the stairs

and listened to the praying and singing. So when they invited me to go in I did so; but when they called on me to tell of the dealings of the Lord with me during the past week, I rose to my feet, but my tongue refused to perform its office. The pastor himself was present, and came to the rescue by telling the class leader, "The sister has just found the Savior," whereas I had not found him at all. I did not feel his blood applied to me to cleanse me from sin. Although I did not doubt its power for others, it did not seem to be for such as I to receive. I attended class-meeting but a few times, and left the town, and then could not say anything like what seemed to me to be christian experience; but they all spoke to me as if they thought I was a christian, whereas I did not feel one whit different than I had for years, only that I had let people know that I wanted to be a christian. Shortly after this I was called away for a short time. After my return the minister talked to me, and told me that they were to have a baptism, and he wished me to go forward. I objected, as I did not feel that I was a fit subject. They had had a church gathering, and the candidates had given in their experience. He said he could present my case to the church, and I need not be obliged to relate an experience. I did not feel right about it, as I did not feel a sense of sins forgiven; but be urged and advised until I thought perhaps if I went forward I might feel better; so I allowed myself to be overpersuaded, and was "smuggled" into the church by sprinkling, a mode of baptism I do not believe in, and without a clear idea of its sacredness. But it made no difference with my feelings. I very soon found that I could not keep my religion, nor my religion keep me. About that time I left Lewiston for good, and went to Great Falls. They gave me a letter to the church there, and although urged to hand it in, I did not, and finally put it into the fire. Now comes the worst of this narrative. At that time there was a band of Spiritualists there, and I got hold of Spiritualism, or that got hold of me, and then for a few years I was a believer in that. Still I could not, as some of them did, ridicule the Bible or christians; yet I did say (and I tell it to my shame) that I thought that Christ lived our example, but did not die our sacrifice; and that has caused me more wretched hours than anything else. I said, too, that when I gave up Spiritualism I should not believe anything; but by strange circumstances I was released from that snare, and then truly for a long time I doubted everything, the Bible and christianity; and about everything good. Those were truly dark days. I had an awful sense of my guilt and condemnation all the time, with all my doubts. At length my belief in the Bible and the truth of christianity was restored, but my sins seemed ten times more heinous. I felt as if I had committed the unpardonable sin, and the fourth, fifth and six verses of the sixth chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews were all the time before me, and all that kept me from despair was the thought that although I had allowed myself to be drawn into the church, I had never "tasted of the heavenly gift." I cannot tell exactly how long I was in this frame of mind, but it was a long time. At length one day, two

years ago last January, I was sitting and running a sewing machine, and thinking of my sinful condition, when I began to sing a hymn which the Methodists sing in connection with the invitation to go forward for prayers, commencing,

"Come, humble sinner, in whose breast
A thousand thoughts revolve."

When I have got to the last verse, which reads,

"Perhaps he will admit my plea,
Perhaps will hear my prayer;
But if I perish I will pray,
And perish only there,"

I felt that I could do nothing, and that Christ alone could save me. At once a calm came over my troubled spirit. I seemed to feel that my sins were forgiven. Still I hardly dared to hope in his mercy, for I felt myself to be the chief of sinners. Yet for weeks I did truly and for the first time enjoy that peace that passeth all understanding. One year ago last September it was ordered so that I attended the yearly meeting of the Primitive Baptists at Oakwoods, and it seemed to me that I never had heard preaching betore; and this year I attended again, when I heard so much of my own feelings portrayed that I felt embolded to pen this. I hardly know why, only that I wanted to. I have many doubts and fears, and hardly dare hope, for it seems almost impossible that there can be mercy for so vile a sinner as me. Yet I never have felt a return of that feeling of almost despair, since I first felt the calm I have spoken of. But O! I do not want to deceive, nor be deceived. If my hope is genuine, to God be all the praise, for nothing but his almighty power has wrought the change. I might write more, but this perhaps is more than will be at all edifying; so I will close by subscribing myself a poor, blind, unworthy sinner.

ABBY G. CLARK.

P. S. - In looking this over I see I have omitted to speak of what I most wanted to. Sometimes I have had a strong desire to cast in my lot with the Oakwoods Church, but fear I am not worthy. My hope is so faint, yet I cannot give it up. I cling as a drowning man to a straw, yet I dare not ask the good men and women of the church to receive me as a sister, for I fear they would think it the height of presumption. Will you tell me candidly if you think my hope is well grounded? I know it will make no difference, but I feel so small and weak that I feel like calling for help.

Abby G. Clark
1826-1922.

SHAW'S RIDGE, Me.,
Nov. 18, 1883.

ELDER QUINT - KIND FRIEND: - Two weeks have passed since I was led into the water by you in the ordinance of baptism. At that time my sister wished to know the state of my mind after coming out of the water. I told her I could

hardly tell then, as I am not as impulsive as some in regard to my feelings. But I have since thought, perhaps it might be interesting to her, and others who so kindly gave consent to receive unworthy me as a sister in the church, to know something of the state of my feelings since that day. Of the day itself I can truly say it was peaceful. I felt that I was doing right. I had been led to suppose it must of neccesity be a great cross. But it did not seem thus to me at that time. It was what I had an anxious desire to do; and as the way was opened, I went steadily forward with no thought of what this or that one might say, so long as the church saw fit to accept me. The following day was one of the best days I ever knew. And finally, ever since I have had more than an ordinary degree of peace. But O what if I am deceiving myself! Before I had obtained peace or hope in Christ, all enjoyment in the things of this life was torn from my grasp, and I was left quite or nearly in despair. I thought it was decreed that there was no good thing for me, either temporal or spiritual. Still I felt that God would be just in casting me off. I know we read that "God is love;" but how can be love me?

It is my sincere prayer, in all humility, that I may never bring a reproach upon the church. But I have many fears at times that I may not be able to walk worthy of my profession; that I shall not be able to keep myself; forgetting for a time that it is impossible for me to do so, in and of myself. At such times the closing words of Jude have been very encouraging and soothing to my mind. Perhaps you may think it a strange passage to look to for help. But to one who has learned that they cannot keep themselves, are not the words comforting, "Him that is able to keep you from falling."

Abby G. Clark.
1826 -1922.

***"And the cup was found in Benjamin's sack." (Genesis* 44:12)**

The sons of Jacob had already been down to Egypt for corn, and had left Simeon there bound and in prison. When the corn was gone their father said unto them, "Go again, and buy us a little food." Judah assured his father that they could not possibly go unless Benjamin accompanied them. Jacob hesitated, for he had lost Joseph, and Benjamin, the only remaining child of his beloved wife Rachel, was very dear to him; but at last he bade them take of the fruit and carry it down to the man as a present. Also said he, Take double money in your hand, and the money that ye brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand, and take Benjamin; and Jacob concluded,"If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."

They returned to Egypt with Benjamin, and when Joseph saw them, he commanded the ruler of his house to slay and make ready, for these men shall dine with me at noon. The brethren were filled with fear because they were brought into Joseph's house, thinking that Joseph sought occasion against them. They communed with the steward

of Joseph's house regarding the money that was returned in their sacks, but he said, "Peace be to you! fear not." When Joseph came home they bowed themselves to him to the earth, and he lifted up his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his own mother's son, and said, "Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son."

Joseph made haste, for his bowels did yearn upon his brother, he sought where to weep, and entered his chamber and wept there. After he had washed his face and refrained himself, he commanded his servants to set on bread. His brethren were then seated before him, the first-born according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth; and the men marvelled one at another. And Joseph sent messes unto them from before him, but Benjamin's mess was five times as much as any of theirs. Then Joseph commanded his steward to fill their sacks with food, as much as they could carry, and to put every man's money in his sack's mouth; and to put his silver cup in the sack's mouth of the youngest, as well as his corn money.

When they were gone out of the city, and not yet far off, Joseph commanded the steward, "Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them,'Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good?" He overtook them, and spake unto them these words. Then took they down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack. The search began at the eldest and left at the youngest, "and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack."

Here we shall cease to follow the narrative, as our intention is to write of the cup in its spilitual significance; also of the characters with whom this cup is found. Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, bear him two sons: Joseph first and then Benjamin. Jacob loved Joseph more than all his sons, and Benjamin, being the youngest, was also greatly beloved, for it is written, Jacob's life was bound up in the lad's life. Joseph was therefore Benjamin's elder brother, and Joseph being a lively type of Christ, Benjamin, to our understanding, is a wonderful type of the church in the gospel dispensation. The steward is the servant of Joseph, and represents the gospel ministers, who are stewards of the manifold grace of God.

It was the steward who ministered to the brethren when in distress over their returned money. He said, "Peace be to you! fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks." He it was also who searched the sacks; he stood in Joseph's stead and spoke the words given him by Joseph. He also declared that they had the divining cup, and they denied it, for the thing was impossible with them. So wherever there are those whose iniquities encompass them around, they stand before their Judge self-condemned, depending entirely upon the mercy of him with whom they have to do. Such, in their confession, deny that they have the cup.

The cup represents the sorrows, travail and separation which Joseph experienced while passing through the afflict-

ions that were his lot according to God's purpose. The cup therefore was a type of the cup of our Lord Jesus Christ. He came down to the Egypt of this world where he was crucified, was sold by his brethren, and at Gethsemane he said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." He fell on his face and prayed, saying, "Oh my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! never-the-less, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

"How bitter that cup, no heart can conceive,
Which he drank quite up that sinners might live."

As Joseph partook of his cup, he divined the very things transpiring in his life to be according to the purpose of God revealed to him in the two dreams given him long ago. It was in a sense of loneliness he partook of that cup. It could not be shared with the Egyptians: he was alone. As our Lord partook of his cup, he divined, and could say, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." He had a full cup. "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." This blessed Person is none other than our Elder Brother , though we knew it not. We have seen him pierced, and we mourn for him; when brought into judgment, we expect chains and death, and say, "What shall we speak?" We know not what to say, nor how to clear ourselves.

The brethren on their second visit for corn, dined with Joseph; and it is written, "Joseph made haste, for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there. Whilst here on earth our dear Redeemer ate with publicans and sinners, and his bowels of love yearned over them. Often in the secret chamber of his solitary life, he offered supplication with strong cries and tears for them, and for all his brethren. It is said that Joseph took and sent messes unto all of them from before him, but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of their's.

The least notice or favor of our Lord to a poor sinner, is not according to good works, but according to his love, and love is the fulfilling of the law. While the brethren representing the Jews received the law, yet Benjamin (the gospel church) received five times as much: which signifies a fulfilled law. With those who are born of the same mother (Jerusalem above) the cup is found. They say it is not in their sack of life, yet they are grieved for the afflictions of Joseph: they are vile, sinful. When they would do good, evil is present with them. This is my cup. Yet when it is shown to them, they tremble, for they fear it is stolen, that they are taking that which belongs to another. They feel God-forsaken, are fearful of death and offer supplications with strong cries and tears; they hate sin, but find it in their members, and are made to cry out, "Not my will, but thine be done."

As the steward, or preacher, by the Holy Spirit's guidance, searches, the cup

is found: and it is in Benjamin's sack; that is, in his who is the smallest and least in the family. There is little Benjamin with their Ruler, partaking of the same cup. "And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders."

The rest of the brethren could return to their father, but Benjamin shall dwell in safety by him. Only in a realizing sense of our own weakness, is there safety, and then we know we have no righteousness; nevertheless our near kinsman Jesus the Lord shall cover us with his righteousness all the day long, and we shall dwell between his shoulders. What a safe piace for poor weak sinners: between his shoulders. He carries the lambs in his bosom. It is also written, "The government shall be upon his shoulder." As partakers of his cup, though babes, they yet divine and see things that are hid from the wise and prudent. They clearly discern what holy men of old wrote as moved by the Holy Ghost. To the Jews under the legal covenant, it was not revealed, but it is revealed unto us. In these things we have fellowship with God, and are partakers of his cup. Not one shall come short of his glory , for if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him. The father's life was bound up in the life of the child. Jesus, our Elder Brother, is God-man, therefore in him God's life is bound up in our life.

As Joseph made himself known unto his brethren, so does our Lord Jesus make himself known with the glory of a risen Lord, who, like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. He showed to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus that his going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it. His blessed presence gives joy and gladness; and the five changes of raiment given Benjamin, are but a faint type of the blessed raiment with which, from time to time, his bride, the gospel church is adorned.

Elder George Ruston

(The above Editorial by Elder Ruston was published in the Signs August 1, 1923. It was his first after his announcement that he would consent to be an associate editor.)

ROMANS 5: 1-5.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

And not only *so,* but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience.

And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

HOW LONG HALT YE BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS?

"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord *be* God, follow him: but if Baal, *then* follow him. And the people answered him not a word." - 1 Kings 18:21.

This text has been misinterpreted and misapplied by many worldly wise professors. Most of the people try to change this inlportant question that Elijah asked to WHY halt ye between two opinions, and they try to make it applicable to the whole Adamic family. This question does not even favor WHY but HOW LONG halt ye between two opinions? You will find by reading the context that the question does not apply to the entire Adamic race but specially to the children of Israel. I believe Elijah knew how long they would halt between two opinions.

He knew that they would halt between too opinions until God made himself manifest unto them that he was God. Then they would cease to halt between two opinions. I think that this text was for the specific purpose of showing Israel that the Lord was God; and to eradicate the other opinion that was possessing their hearts that Baal was God. Baal had 450 prophets and Elijah was the only true prophet at that time. The hearts of the children of Israel were halting between two opinions. Outwardly, Baal had 450 prophets to one of the Lord. False prophets today are about the same ratio and even the children of God, when left to themselves, wonder if there is something to their false doctrine — seeing that they have so many advocators. You will notice, in the text, that Baal's prophets were to choose between two bullocks. False prophets today make their own choice, they even advocate that the people may choose their Saviour and direct their own steps and seal their own destinies. This is a false opinion as we hear Jesus saying: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Yes, Paul wrote to the Thessalonians that "God hath from the beginning chosen you." Peter said: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood." Paul writes to the Ephesians: "According as he hath chosen us in him." This is the opinion as rendered in the Bible, which is different from the opinion as advocated by the false prophets. Thus here are two opinions; one is opposite to the other. False opinion: You are obliged to choose God. True opinion: God hath chosen his people. This false opinion will even be in the hearts of God's people until God sees fit to burn out this false opinion by making himself manifest. Baal's 450 prophets were to have the choice of the two bullocks, the first call to their gods and the heat of the day as well as the dry wood on the altar to prove their gods. They called loud and long and even cut themselves until blood gushed forth for their gods to answer by fire. At the time of the evening sacrifice, Elijah repaired the altar by building one of twelve stones and ordered great quantities of water to be poured on the wood and around the altar, so as to fill a trench. After doing this he prayed qui-

etly to the Lord to make himself manifest and to prove to Israel that he was the Lord God and that he had turned their hearts back again. **"Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that *was* in the trench. And when all the people saw *it,* they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he *is* the God; the Lord, he *is* the God." 1 Kings 18:38-39.**

Yes, our God is a consuming fire and it burned up every trace of man's work and left nothing. The false opinion had been burned from the hearts of this people and then (not before) did they cease to halt between two opinions.

Dear child of God, have you not experienced the consuming fire of Israel's God? Have you not experienced the burning that consumed every false opinion; all of your self-righteousness; every ounce of your seeming ability - in fact - everything, deed, or thought that you had ever trusted in in a natural way? Yes, our natural opinion is that we can direct our steps. The opinion as stated in the Bible is, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." How long will ye halt between the two opinions? Ye will halt between the two opinions until God the Lord makes himself manifest by proving to you that you cannot walk as you would. It is the opinion of the natural man that he can choose light; yet, the true opinion is that man chooses darkness rather than light. The opinion of man is that the natural man can receive the things of the Spirit and by studying and applying himself know them. This opinion is a contrast to the scripture; "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him : neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Man's opinion is, that surely, part of the way to heaven and eternal life is by the works of the creature. Yet, the opinion of the Bible is: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Peter was halting beteen opinions on the mountain of transfiguration when he said: "let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." I think Moses represents the law and Elias represents prophecy in that trio. Peter was halting between two opinions as to which should be given the most honor. He continued to halt between these opinions until Moses and Eljas disappeared and the Lord God answered from the cloud and said: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." The false opinion of the law having any dominion over God's children was eradicated. We hear Jesus saying: "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Then it is not part by law and part of grace but solely an unmerited favor through Jesus Christ. The opinion of some men is that they are enabled through the act of regeneration to perform or not to perform upon volition of their own will and receive blessings in this time because of their obedience and cursings because of their disobedience notwithstanding the scriptures which say: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until

the day of Jesus Christ." Also, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." And many other scriptures too numerous to mention which is in contrast to this false opinion. It is the opinion of man that he can live perfect in this present life. This opinion is not in accord with apostolic experiences, therefore, it is a false opinion that must be burned out. People of God will halt between these two opinions - opinion of man and opinion of God - until the opinion of man is burned out. The opinion of the apostle is plain: "when I would do good, evil is present with me." "For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I." And "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me." Also, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

So, we are hoping; and looking forward to the day when this corruptible should put on incorruption and this mortal shall put on immortality and this natural body shall be raised a spiritual body. Yes, we are awaiting the time when the creature shall be delivered out of the bondage of corruption unto the glorious liberties of the children of God, then we will cease from every false opinion.

(Elder) E. J. LAMBERT.

"The secret of the Lord *is* with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant." — Psalm 25:14.

We know of no other scripture that contains so much meaning, and is of such vital importance to the child of God. David speaks with much assurance as to the dwelling place of the secret of the Lord, and he also declares that, **"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Psalm 91:1.** We hope we have some feeling relative to the secret of the Lord, and being fearful of his wrath being poured out against us. The secret of the Lord was in the beginning with God, and some of the revealed things of God as recorded in the Bible are his love, predestination, election and the calling of the saints to glory through grace given in Christ Jesus, his Son. Strange as it may seem to the carnal mind, no one has learned this secret through tradition, or the keeping of the commandments of men, but "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and the secret of the Lord is revealed to the one fearing the Lord. It is God that is working in him both to will and to do of his good pleasure and the demonstration of spirit and power manifested makes every one fear him, but instead of his wrath he shows mercy which reveals the secret of the Lord toward a poor sinner. We recall the parable of the prodigal son spoken by Jesus to the scribes and Pharisees. All the time of his life the love of his father was a secret in the heart of his father until all his

substance was wasted; then he remembered his father's house with its abundance of everything necessary, but his unworthiness was realized which brought him to repentance, but the secret of his father's love did not fail which caused him to kill the fatted calf, put on him the best robe, a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet. The father treasured the secret of his love for his son all the time of his waywardness from him. Those that have the secret of the Lord shall rest or abide under the shadow of the Almighty, and he will shew them his covenant. God made his covenant with Abraham and fulfilled that covenant in the flesh; those that were exercised by the Spirit of God realized his power over their mortal flesh, but this is not the covenant David is referring to for he was led by the Spirit of God. We believe the covenant ordered in all things and sure is the covenant that is shown to those that fear the Lord. **"This** *shall be* **the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour; and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Jer. 31:33-34. "***Whereof* **the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This** *is* **the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and inquities will I remember no more." Heb. 10:15-17**, We quote from the apostle Paul as he continues in this chapter, **"Now where remission of these** *is, there is* **no more offering for sin, Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and** *having* **an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of** *our* **faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised); And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some** *is* **but exhorting** *one another*: **and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."** We have given you the quotation of Paul's exhortation to the brethren recorded in the tenth chapter of Hebrews. This exhortation is to those that fear God and have within their inward parts God's covenant, and all of like precious faith expect the fruit the spirit will manifest, and see them as Paul contending that they, by the blood of Jesus, enter into the holiest of holy. How sweet it is to meet with such precious ones, and hear them tell of the rev-

elation of God to them when they were so cast down, with no one to pity or hand to help, and when the riches of God's grace was opened to them they could see him pure, holy and undefiled, which caused them to exclaim, oh! I am so vile and unworthy to come into his presence, but Jesus says, **"Come unto me, all** *ye* **that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matt. 11:28- 29.** Those that fear God have in abundance hearts filled with groanings.

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire.
Unuttered or expressed;
The motion of a hidden fire.
That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh.
The falling of a tear;
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high.

Praver is the christian's vital breath.
The christian's vital air;
The watchword at the gate of death;
He enters heaven with prayer.

The last words in the above hymn says, "He enters heaven with prayer." According to me Scriptures we are made to question for the prayer of the saint has been answered, and he is filled with praise and caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, to ever be with the Lord. Then the fulness of the secret of the Lord will be revealed. As we write unto the household of faith expressing words of truth, we question whether these wonderful things are for a poor sinner like the writer, and it is while viewing these glorious things we feel they are for a sinner like we feel to be, but we feel assured they belong to the child of God those home is in heaven. We have had demonstrations proving that the salvation of a sinner is by grace and grace alone, and by the revelation of God through Christ Jesus and the Holy Ghost the gospel is preached and the flock of God fed and built up. It is written **"that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." Rom. 15:4.** The scriptures cannot give life, but being born again and passing through tribulation which worketh patience, and the spirit taking of the things of God written in the scriptures and showing them unto us, we have hope in the mercy of God, and the secret of the Lord is opened to every one that is taught of God. According to the measure of the grace of God given, they are made to live in the church of God militant, or in this time state, and fill the place in a living body, the bride of Christ, the pillar and ground of the truth, We truly hope everyone reading these lines will examine themselves as to whether they are in the faith, and are obedient unto the commandments given to them in

their heart to follow in the ordinances of the church of God as you feel one who is Christlike should walk. To us, who have made a profession before men and to the church of God, all the epistles are directed as much as if we had lived in the church to which it was written at the time it was written, and we should not put them off, saying they were for others and not for us, We have a secret in our own hearts of the sufferings for sin in ourselves but God knoweth our hearts, Submitted in love.

Elder C.W. Vaughn
July, 1945

The Old School Baptist Conference of Maine, assembled with the church in North Berwick, sendeth greeting to the churches composing the associations with whom she corresponds. (1901)

DEAR BRETREN, BELOVED IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST: - We much desire your peace and prosperity in the kingdom of Christ. We well know from divine teaching that our prosperity cometh only from the Lord, and the cry of the church is, "Send now prosperity." We need God's heavenly husbandry that we, his garden and vineyard may flourish in his sight. We need our gracious Lord to dress and keep the plants that his own right hand hath planted, then,

"Each moment watered by his care,
And fenced with power divine,
Fruit to eternal life shall bear
The feeblest branch of thine."

Our times in this world (like all the times that the church has experienced in the preceding ages) are such that we need to be well fenced with the loving-kindness of the Lord or else all they which pass by the way will pluck the vineyard and the boar out of the wood, and the wild beast of the field will waste and devour us. (Psalm 80: 12, 13.) It is written for our comfort, **"Thou Lord, wilt bless the righteous, with favor wilt thou compass him as *with* a shield."— Psalms 5:12,** and, **"He that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about."- Psalm 32:10.** Thus hedged in by our God, and nourished by his doctrine, the churches shall flourish to the praise of the Lord. There are indications that in some parts of our land, inroads in the vineyard have already been made by the wild beast of the field. Perverse disputers of the doctrine of grace have risen up teaching perverse things to draw away disciples after them, and bringing into bondage some of the blood-bought saints of God.

The members of Christ's body do not thrive upon erroneous doctrines, but the pernicious effects of the entrance of that which is contrary to the gospel of Christ will in due time be manifest in the blighted and wasted condition of the church. Seeing then, beloved, that we are so dependent upon the mercies of the Lord for our health and blessedness, it becomes us to cleave unto the Lord with full purpose of heart, and to beware of every false way, and all doctrines that would ensnare us away from the gospel of the grace of God. We are assured

"that they which receive abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." (Rom. 5: 17.) And this abundance of grace comes unto us not only when we were first called by grace and given to taste the blessedness of redemption and forgiveness of sins, (Eph. 1:7) but every moment since then we have continued so poor and needy and unworthy that we have only continued to this day by the ministrations of the Lord's abundance of grace. "He holdeth our soul in life and suffereth not our feet to be moved." "We shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." We shall be triumphant over all adversity, for our Savior who hath loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, will not suffer us to perish. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." We shall be more than conquerors through him that loved us.

We have appointed, the Lord willing, our next yearly conference to assemble with the church in North Berwick, Maine to commence on Friday before the first Monday in September, 1902, and continue three days, when we hope to receive again, your kind correspondence and messengers.

Elder Fred. W. Keene, Moderator
Joseph Hall, Clerk.

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Philippians 2:12-13)

Recently I have had a request to write an article on this subject. We have, especially of late years, been inclined to ascertain whether a scripture is addressed to a church of orgainized believers, to individuals as believers, or whether it has reference to those who know not the truth. We cannot truly expound a subject, unless we know to whom the scripture was addressed. Sometimes a scripture would apply to a church as regularly constituted the church of Jesus Christ, and we could not apply the interpretation to individuals: some portions of the word would apply both to individuals and churches.

The afore quoted portion of the word is part of an epistle to the church at Philippi, and was especially for their comfort, and instruction. If we examine the salutation, "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the Bishops and Deacon." Then the writers assure the church, together with the Bishops and Deacons, of their joy and confidence in them. The prayer of the apostle was that their love might abound, more and more, thus showing that they were a church blessed with the

fruits of the Spirit, and walking in the Commandments of the Lord. To try to apply this portion of God's word to unregenerated people would be a gross error, though this scripture is often quoted by work-mongers to try to prove that an individual is commanded to work out his eternal salvation.

The text first shows conclusively that Paul was addressing a people that were beloved. Second, that they were a people who were already obedient. The epistle was a letter of instruction and assurance, and they are assured that in the absence of the writer, they would have problems that would require the same obedience as that already manifested. Yet he exhorts them to work them out with fear and trembling. He has reference to things they will be called to meet as a church, Deacons and Bishops. Their own salvation has reference to the peculiar problems the church may have: the trials they may be called to undergo, and their church relationship one with another. All churches at some time or other have problems and trials, and this church had been blessed more than many to obey from the heart that form of Doctrine delivered to them, yet he knew sooner or later there would be in his absence their own salvation to work out. Paul had been present with them to counsel and advise, to admonish and exhort, and in his absence, he gives them explicit instructions of what they would need.

Work out your own salvation, (that which belongs to you as the church of Jesus Christ) with fear and trembling. How true this is that the only true mark of grace manifest in a church, is when they are favored to work out their problems, with fear and trembling. No church is prepared to transact the affairs of their body, and to judge matters among themselves, unless they are blessed with fear and trembling, knowing what a solemn thing it is to have the ordinances of God delivered to them. Surely it calls for fear and thrembling, as those so led know that worldly wisdom will not supply their needs: that they must look to God for guidance and seek to know, and do His will.

If they are blessed with fear and trembling, unwilling to look to their own wisdom for guidance, but to God, they have assurance that it is the Lord working in them both to will, and to do of His good pleasure. The Lord must work the will in us before the doing is acceptable in His sight. When a body of believers are found who, both laity and minister, enter into their duties with fear and trembling, it is evident that they are a God fearing people, seeking to honor Him who had called them out of darkness into His marvelous light. This fear and trembling is not the fear of men, but the fear of God. May God bless us to not look to self, or human wisdom, in our church affairs; not to the preacher, or any certain member; and to follow no man any further than he follows Christ, that we may be found among those who tremble at His word.

Elder D. V. Spangler

"The kingdom of God *is* not in word, but in power."- 1 CORINTHIANS iv. 20.

IT is through the word of God in the hands of the Spirit, that this kingdom is set up in the soul. All God's people are agreed on this point, that they have no more religion than they have inward power. And all the living family are sighing, each according to his measure and season, after the manifestation of this divine power in their souls. Those that are under the law, and toiling under heavy burdens, are sighing after relief, and for that relief to come in divine power-power that shall cast all their sins into the depth of the sea. Those who having tasted that the Lord is gracious have lost their first love, are at times breathing out their inmost desire after power to revive their souls. Those who are beset with powerful temptations, and struggling, often ineffectually, with base lusts, are crying after power to deliver their feet from the fowler's snares. Those who are hard, need power to soften; those who are doubting and fearing, need power to give them faith; the backsliding need power to return, and the sinking need power to swim. By power I understand something solid, real, substantial, heavenly, supernatural. How do we measure the capabilities of a steam engine ? We say that it has so many horse-power. But who in his senses would construct a steam engine of two hundred horse-power to break sticks and pick up straws ? We measure power by its effects. We proportion the one to the other. Now the Holy Ghost, the God of all power and might, would not put forth his mighty and efficacious hand to break sticks and pick up straws in the soul. No. His work is worthy of a God; a "work of faith with power," because springing from a God of power. The God of Israel is not a Baal that is sleeping and needs to be awakened, or gone a journey and therefore too far off to come when needed, but "a very present help in time of trouble." By this secret power false hopes are swept away, rotten props removed, creature righteousness brought to an end, and the soul is helped and enabled to lean upon the Lord. This power is not noise and rant; but the still, small voice of Jesus in the soul. The people of God want no outward voice, but they are seeking after that secret voice of atoning blood in their conscience, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. The inward whisper of heavenly love sounding in their soul-not the earthquake of terror, not the fire of divine wrath, but the still, small voice of pardon and peace-makes them bow themselves before the Lord, and wrap their faces in their mantle. The Queen of England need not shout aloud in her palace, to give her commands effect. Where the word of a king is, there is power, whether from an earthly monarch or from the King of Zion. We want therefore no noise, bustle, and excitement, no raving and ranting about religion; but we want inward feeling, the very kingdom of God set up in the heart.

J. C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 2011

Joyce Pittman, TX 10.00
Katherine Mathews, LA 5.00
Jerry Somers, VA 5.00
Chlonetia Thompson, VA 5.00
Sallie Hodges, VA 5.00
Margie Pettis Ray, LA 50.00
(In memory of Geneva Pettis)
Flay Mordecai, MS 5.00
Ruby Dyer, VA 5.00
David Pittman, VA 5.00

OBITUARIES

BROTHER CURTIS COBB

Brother Curtis Cobb, 86, departed from this life August 3, 2011 at Annie Penn Hospital. He joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church April 22, 1990 and was baptized by his beloved pastor, Elder Kenneth Key.

Brother Cobb was a faithful member and served as deacon for twenty years. As long as he was able, he came to church early on Sunday mornings to get things ready to have lunch after service.

His favorite song, I believe, was hymn 161, which he called for many times in his last years.

As on the cross the Saviour hung
And wept, and bled, and died.
He poured salvation on a wretch
That languished at His side.

His prayer the dying Jesus hears
And instantly replies:
"To-day thy parting soul shall be
With me in Paradise."

Born in Rockingham County, Brother Cobb was the son of the late David and Annie McKinney Cobb. He retired from Fieldcrest Mills after 40 years of service. Along with his parents, he was preceded in death by eleven brothers and a sister. He is survived by his brothers, Brooks Cobb and wife, Geraldine, of Brown Summit, N. C, Edward Cobb of Reidsville, N.C., his sister, Ethel Shreves of Reidsville, and numerous nieces and nephews. A graveside funeral service was held 10:00 A.M. August 4, 2011 at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery.

Written by Gradie Strader

PSALM 89:1.

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all ge

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Signs of the Times

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" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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Now, may the Lord reveal his face,
And teach our stammering tongues
To make his sovereign; reigning grace,
The subject of our songs.
No sweeter subject can invite
A sinner's heart to sing,
Or more display the glorious right
Of our exalted King.

This subject fills the starry plains
With wonder, joy, and love;
And furnishes the noblest strains
For all the harps above:
While the redeemed in praise combine
To grace upon the throne,
Angels in solemn chorus join,
And make the theme their own.

Grace reigns to pardon crimson sins,
To melt the hardest hearts;
And from the work it once begins;
It never more departs.
The world and satan strive in vain
Against the chosen few;
Secured by grace's conquering reign,
They all shall conquer, too.

'Twas grace that called our souls at first;
By grace thus far we're come;
And grace will help us through the worst,
And lead us safely home.
Lord, when this changing life is past,
If we may see thy face,
How should we praise and love at last,
And sing the reign of grace!

Newton.

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EDITORIAL

"Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where *is* the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." Jeremiah 6:16.

Elder J. B. Farmer

Before entering into any writing or speaking, desiring to rightly divide the word of truth, it must first be acknowledged that no man, of himself, knows or can know anything of the kingdom of God. These things are hidden and are not accessible to any in a carnal mind. They cannot be written, spoken, or read with understanding apart from the Holy Spirit. This causes us to fear and tremble to write or to speak in His name, knowing we are unworthy, according to the flesh, of the least of all His mercies and of all His truth that He has shown unto His servants.

The commandment of God is given unto the children of God in every age and in every situation. And we are taught that with His commandment He gives the power and the wisdom to His little ones that is needful for them to obey. It is grace for grace. For we know that without Him we would go away backwards and shrink away from the truth. Because with the truth comes persecution. And no one in nature desires to suffer. But the way of truth is the way of suffering for His people. And He has promised that all who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. And He also promised that all who suffer with Him shall reign with Him.

The Lord has commanded His people to **"stand in the ways."** What does it mean to stand in the ways? It has appeared in my mind that His people are all brought to the separation of the ways. There is the wide gate and the broad way that leads to destruction on the left hand, and there is the strait gate and the narrow way that leads to life on the right hand. We have been taught that many enter in at the wide gate and travel in the broad way that leads to death and destruction. And we have been given to understand that only a few shall be blessed to find the strait gate and enter there, and to walk in the narrow way that leads to everlasting life.

The Lord also commanded His people that upon standing in the ways, to **"see"**. What does it mean to see? It appears that the children of God are commanded to observe the two ways, and to consider their goings, and to seek a good understanding of the two ways. Can you think back in your experience to the many times you were made to halt between two opinions? Can you remember the many times that you seemed to be at a fork in the roads where you must either go to the left or to the right. And can you remember how the flesh prompted you to take the easy, pleasure filled way, and how you were condemned by your conscience upon entering the broad way? This broad way is that way of death from which the little children of God have been rescued.

Can you remember the many times when you were made to hate the deeds of the flesh and were given a desire to walk in a better way? Can you remember all your failures, and your broken promises to God to be a better person? I am made to believe that this is the experience of God's children being under the severe law of God that condemns and kills, and shows us just who we are – sinners, worthy of death. The law is holy and just and good, but we found that we were unable to keep it because of the weakness of our flesh. But the law is also our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ.

Can you remember when you first heard with a hearing ear that Jesus came to seek and to save sinners? Can you remember when it dawned upon you that those He came to seek and save were all in a helpless condition, guilty and condemned – just like you? Remember the woman taken in the very act of adultery, and the poor publican who could not even lift his eyes up to heaven, but smote his breast and said, **"God be merciful unto me a sinner."** They were forgiven and were placed in the narrow way, which leads to life. She was commanded to, **"Go, and sin no more."** And he **"went down to his house justified."** When these things are manifest to us, hope springs up within us that our sins also have been forgiven us.

The Lord commanded His children to **"ask for the old paths, where is the good way".** What does it mean to ask for the old paths, and what is the good way? The children of God have a desire placed in their hearts and minds to please God, and to seek His paths of righteousness for their lives. They begin to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness according to His powerful command. They begin to enquire about the lives of the old saints, and how they walked in the world. They begin to compare their own lives to the faithful in Christ Jesus to see whether they themselves are truly in the faith. They begin to see how the people of God suffered for the truth's sake, and begin to learn a little, by experience, about the suffering of the saints in the narrow way. They are taught first hand what is the good way. It is the way of truth, and righteousness and love.

The children of God are commanded to **"walk therein,"** that is, in the good way. It is the narrow way, the way of suffering, the way of love, joy, peace,

gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance, against which there is no law. The Lord's chosen vessels are taken from the broad way and placed in the narrow way, but they are not alone in it. He has promised that He will never leave you or forsake you, but that he will be with you even unto the end of the world. He will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will make a way of escape that you will be able to bear it. All is well with His children as long as He is with them, and He has promised to be with them and in them.

There are a multitude of examples throughout the scriptures showing how God took His people out of the broad way, and placed and kept them in the narrow way, and how they were made to be a willing people in the day of His power. Even though they knew not the future, and many times it seemed like they would perish in the trial, they were blessed to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. They were made to care not for their lives, and were given a desire to please God above all things. May we look at a few of them and see how they fared in the old paths.

Consider how the Lord dealt with Moses, the Israelite raised in Pharaoh's house with all its wealth and privileges. We are told in scripture, **"Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect to the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. Through faith he kept the Passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them."** Here is a child of God surrounded by every seemingly good thing that is in the world - those things pertaining to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. But the children of God are commanded to **"love not the world, neither the things** *that are* **in the world."** And they are told that the friendship of the world is enmity with God. So, Moses was separated from the world of luxury, and found himself on the backside of the desert tending sheep. After 40 years, the Lord appeared unto him in a burning bush, and he was commanded to go to Pharaoh and to tell him to let God's people go out from the bondage wherein they were held. Surely, this must have seemed like a death sentence to Moses, since he was a fugitive from justice in Egypt, and he was only one man against all the forces of the most powerful kingdom on earth. But Moses obeyed, by grace. The Lord was with him and kept him in the narrow way through all his trials and sufferings, and preserved him to the end of his journey in faith and love.

Consider Rahab the harlot. There was a woman, despised by the world, living on the edge of a large city of un-

believers. This city was about to be destroyed by the Israelites as they entered the promise land to possess it. This woman, a sinner, was a child of grace. The Lord knew His own and made provision for her and her family. Before destruction fell, spies were sent in to the city and they came to the house of Rahab. She feared God, and knew the city was about to fall. She recognized the spies as servants of God, hid them, and protected them from those of the city, who would have killed them. She made the spies promise to deliver her family and herself from the destruction to come. The spies told Rahab that she and her family must remain in the house during the destruction, and that she must display the scarlet thread or rope (which stood for the blood of Christ) in the window of her house upon the wall. When the walls fell, there was complete destruction of all the walls, except for the portion where Rahab and her family were housed. They obeyed God, by grace, and remained in the house, and were kept in the narrow way that leads to life. Rahab's name is found in the lineage of Christ.

Consider Esther, a beautiful young maiden who was taken into captivity with her people, the Jews, by the powerful king Ahasuerus. After the queen Vashti disobeyed the king and was deposed, Esther was chosen to be queen in her place. But the king knew not that she was a Jewess. Esther's older cousin Mordecai, who was as a father to her after her parents died, refused to bow down before wicked Haman, who was the king's servant. Haman hated him and sought to destroy him and all his people, the Jews, and set a date for their destruction. Esther was in the lap of luxury, but was made to put her life on the line in order to save her people. In those days, no one could come into the presence of the king if not called by him. Anyone doing so, according to the law, could be put to death. Esther had not been called, but it was urgent that she speak to the king and plead for the lives of her people. By the grace of God, she said, **"If I perish, I perish."** She went unbidden to the king, and he held out the golden scepter unto her, which was an indication that she was received by him and would not be destroyed. When the integrity of Mordecai was revealed, and the wickedness of Haman was manifest to the king, Mordecai was exalted and Haman was put to death, and the Jews were spared. Esther and Mordecai were kept in the narrow way that leads unto life by grace through faith, not caring for their own lives, and were preserved.

Consider David, a lad who kept his father's sheep. The Philistines came against Israel to dominate and destroy them. They had a great champion, Goliath, who was a giant. He defied the armies of Israel and proposed that Israel send out a man to fight with him. If Goliath was victorious, the Israelites would serve the Philistines. If the Israelites could send one that would kill Goliath, then the Philistines would be the servants of the Israelites. David's father sent him down to see how his older

brothers fared in the battle. When David heard the giant's proposal, and heard the promise of the king (great riches, the kings daughter and his father's house would be made free in Israel) unto any that would go and slay the giant, David said he would go and fight against him. You know how they tried to put armor on David and how he refused saying he had not proved them. And we know that he took up five smooth stones out of the brook and took a sling and his staff against the giant. The broad way would have been the way of safety, cowering with the others in fear, or to go in the strength of the flesh. But David was placed in the narrow way and given courage and strength and wisdom to slay the giant. **"David said, Who is this uncircumsized Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God." "So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, and smote the Philistine and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David."** That day David gave Israel the victory against their enemy, just as the Lord has prevailed over Satan to give us the victory over death, hell and the grave.

Remember Daniel and how he was delivered from the den of lions, and how the three Hebrew children were bound and cast into the fiery furnace, and how they were delivered from it. When the king looked in he saw four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like unto the Son of God. And the list goes on and on showing how the Lord has kept His children in every trial of life, and how He has gone with them and before them in all things.

Last of all let us consider Jesus, the night before he was nailed to the tree, and how he suffered. We are told that He sweated, as it were, great drops of blood in His agony in the garden. He prayed three times, **"O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou** *wilt*.**"** It appears that He stood in the ways, and saw the broad way that leads to destruction, and the narrow way that leads to life. He saw the good way and walked in it. He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. Yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. Jesus, the Lamb of God, gave His life, a ransom for many. Jesus said, **"I am the way, the truth and the life."** Those that are blessed to walk in Him, the Good Way, shall find rest unto their souls. Jesus said, **"Come unto me, all** *ye* **that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke** *is* **easy, and my burden is light,"**

May the Lord bless us to stand, and to see the Good Way that leads to life. And may He bless us to walk therein.

And may we count it all joy when we are blessed to suffer with Him for the truth's sake, and may we find rest unto our souls in Him.

Elder J. B. Farmer

NOTICE TO OUR READERS

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

With much sadness we must report the death of our esteemed Associate Editor and trustee of the Signs of the Times, Elder C.B. Davis. For the past number of months, he endured much affliction but the Lord blessed him with a peaceful passing. For "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Certainly we feel that he fought a good fight, finished his course, and kept the faith.

Elder Davis served as associate editor since 1989 and trustee since 1991. He was blessed with a depth of understanding of the scriptures and a wonderful gift for expounding them both in his preaching and his writings. He was called to serve several churches as pastor including his home church of Shiloh which he served for forty years.

Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to Sister Jeanette and all the family. May the Lord give them peace and comfort for the days and nights ahead.

Editors

CORRESPONDENCE

Nov. 10, 2011

Elder Cleo Robertson,

I feel compelled to write and express my sincere appreciation to you and your staff for sending the "Signs of the Times" to me. It has served as a source of comfort and has afforded me many hours of reading pleasure while sitting here within these four walls at this assisted living facility.

The staff here at Serenity Care is kind to me and care for my natural needs but there is no spiritual communion that one seeks for. I have received a great satisfaction and comfort while reading the wonderful articles printed in the signs. I commend you for the superb choice of material that is printed. I can in retrospect walk with those voices of the past as well as those who still live. It was a blessed honor to have known several of the old soldiers of the cross whose articles have appeared in you publication.

The old picture of the Elders that attended the Lower Country Line association in 1947 that appeared in the June issue (page 143) struck a cord in my heart as I personally knew a few of them. Highly esteemed brother, Elder H.L. Rogers whose article appeared in the July issue, was a personal friend of mine. I met him in 1947 when I attended an association meeting held at the Lost Creek Church in Kentucky. He at that

time was the pastor where Elder J.B. Farmer now serves. I have enjoyed brother Farmer's writings, especially the one from the book of Ruth. (January issue) I have also enjoyed your writings, Elder Robertson, especially your views on Lucifer. (Page 170 of August issue).

An article written by J.W. McClanahan (April Page 88) Took me back to my teen years when he spoke at the Valley Church during the Tygarts Valley River Association in Randolph County, W.V. He had a commanding voice that kept this poor sinner boy spell bound during his delivery. I didn't understand much of what he was saying but I was convinced that he knew what he was saying. His preaching had a lasting effect upon me as I feel that while under the sound of his voice I was awakened to a degree to the truth that is in Christ Jesus. We knew him as Jim "Click" McClanahan.

I knew Elder W. I. Wade but do not remember his wife whose experience appeared on page 90 of the April issue.

I have feasted on the wonderful articles that have been printed in the Signs since you started sending it my way and again I want to thank you for your kindness. Also I have a desire to thank almighty God for you. May the smiles of our Lord and Master continue to be yours to enjoy all of the days appointed unto you in this life.

Jesus said "My Sheep Hear my Voice and they follow me." And as our highly esteemed servant of the Lord, Elder Kenneth R. Key, stated in his article in the May issue (page 100), "There will be no absentees," "All will be there to hear him say, Come you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." These things are surely believed among us.

They make our hearts glad! Elder Robertson, aren't we glad it is that way?

In a precious hope of Life Eternal,
V. Linn
R.R. 6, Box 750
Buckhannan, W.V. 26201

Dear Tony,

Another year has passed and my subscription is due. I would like to renew it for 2 years.

I have enjoyed the Signs very much and I hope the Lord will continue to bless you and the Editors in your efforts to keep sending out this worthy publication.

Thank You,
B.B. Summer, Sr.

November 4, 2011

Dear Editors,

Please renew my "Signs" for one more year. Use the rest as needed.

May the Lord bless all who help with "Signs."

In bonds of Love & Hope,
Emmie Lou Grayson
229 S. Conecut St.
Greenville, AL 36037

James A. Lambert
2650 Kings Rd.
Meansville, GA 30256

Dear Bro.

I'm sending my dues and change of address.

We are renting a dairy farm here, there was no way to make a living in Newman.

We found this place and are milking 35 cows.

Sadly far from any Old Baptists except for Progressives.

We saw what looked like an old line meeting house and stopped and looked in the window and there sits a piano.

The papers are all in contention to Old Baptists.

James Lambert

ARTICLES

A PREPARED PLACE

"And they found written in the law which the Lord had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month": Nehemiah 8:14.

The Feast of Tabernacles (booths) was the last of the three great annual feasts in which the males of Israel were to appear "before the Lord thy God." This feast, also known as the feast of harvest, was to be at the end of the harvest season when the harvest had been completed. The other two great feasts were the Feast of the Passover, also known as the feast of unleavened bread, and the Feast of Pentecost, or also called the Feast of Weeks. Each of these three great feasts was given under the law and was a prefigure of spiritual blessings for the future time, when Christ would come and, with his finished work, present great spiritual blessings to his bride, the church.

When Nehemiah returned to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, following the Babylonian overthrow and captivity, those that had escaped the captivity and returned to Judah had apparently never heard the reading of the law. Ezra, the priest, brought the law before the congregation that was gathered and read the book of the law of Moses. They found, as stated above, that they should dwell in booths. They gathered branches from "goodly" trees and build booths in which to dwell for the seven days of the feast. The booths were not their regular houses or dwellings but built on the roofs of their house, in their courts, in the courts of the house of God, in the street of the water gate, etc.

"...And there was very great gladness." Nehemiah 8:17. This indicates the importance they attributed to the keeping of the law, in general, and to the building and abiding in booths.

It should be noticed that the children of Israel themselves were to prepare a place, with their own hands, to abide during the festive season of Taber-

nacles, which was not their normal dwelling place. Although this was according to the Law of Moses it would, by nature, seem to be an unusual and awkward thing to do; To live in booths made of tree branches, which was apart from their natural homes. Yet they did it with very great gladness. This is what the law commanded. Yet the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did (the better hope is in Christ); by the which we draw nigh to God. See Hebrews 7:19. **"...if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." Galatians 3:21.**

Looking ahead to the one that gives life, to the one that is prefigured in the feasts, as well as throughout the Old Testament, Christ is seen in John 14:2, that Christ tells his disciples "..I go to prepare a place for you." This is the one spoken of by Moses of a Prophet that God would raise up from the midst of the people, of their brethren him they were to hearken. See Deuteronomy 18:15.

This place spoken of, that Christ was to prepare, was not a booth or booths that would be made of tree branches in which the children of God would dwell for seven days. It was to be a spiritual place and would be that which would fulfill the type illustrated by the booths in the legal feast of Tabernacles. It would also be prepared by Christ alone and not by the work of mans hands.

The question then becomes where would Christ go to fulfill his promise and what preparation was to be made? The place where he was to go was the cross. There the price of redemption was paid. This is in contrast to that which was not accomplished by the many animal sacrifices rendered during the days of the annual feast which made nothing perfect. But now, with the perfect sacrifice at the cross, sin was no longer seen by the Father in the hearts of the elect, but was covered by the redeeming blood of Christ. Not only is sin put away but there is more; **"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Romans 5:10.** Thus sin was covered in His death, but spiritual life springs forth from his resurrection.

But what and where was the place that was to be prepared? It seems extremely unlikely that there was any preparation needed in the heaven of heavens where the children will abide in the presence of an eternal and unchangeable God. Perfection has eternally dwelt there. So it would seem that the preparation spoken of would not be in heaven. The scriptures seem to indicate that the place that was to be prepared is much closer at hand.

In Chapter 12 of Revelations a narrative picture, in figurative language, is written of the care given to the woman (the church) through the ages, including the life of Christ and the gospel age, following his ascension. In verse 6 it is recorded thus; **"And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days"** Also in verse 14 it is reinforced; "And

the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." Is not this the place prefigured by the "booths" in the legal Feast Of Tabernacles? And further, is not the present world a wilderness to the child of God, and is not the church militant in this wilderness?

Though the saints live physically in the world they are not of the world. This is the place, the church place, that has been prepared for his people here in time. It is not a place of bricks and mortar, nor a place with dimensions of width and depth. It is a spiritual place where love flows from breast to breast. A place prepared of God where rest is found and peace passes understanding. A place where prayers are expressed, the finished work of Christ is proclaimed and His name exalted. And there is very great gladness.

When is this prepared place to be occupied by the church? It is here in the spiritual hearts of his people now, in these latter days. Further, is this not the same time that the beast, or the antichrist, is given a mouth to speak great things and blasphemies; and power given to him to continue forty and two months? See Revelations 13:5. Notice that the period of time for the prepared place of the church and the time of the wrath of Satan are the same. They both equal a like period of 1260 days, which apparently is a figurative number given to the period of the last days. **"And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth." Revelations 12:15,16.**

The church, secure in the "prepared place", is not harmed by the flood of false doctrine spewed from the serpents mouth. The flood is swallowed up by the earth which has been deluded by the god of this world that has blinded the minds of them which believe not. See II Corinthians 4:4. And to the children of God, secure in the place prepared by Christ, the Spirit will reveal wonders yet untold of what He has done for sinners saved by grace.

Elder Wayman Chapell

ACTS 2: 1-4.

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

VOICES OF THE PAST

DEPRAVITY SEEN
PSALM 73:21-26
BY ELDER FREDERICK KEENE

"Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins. So foolish *was* I, and ignorant; I was *as* a beast before thee. Nevertheless, I *am* continually with thee; thou hast holden *me* by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me *to* glory. Whom have I in heaven *but thee*? And *there is* none upon earth *that* I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: *but* God *is* the strength of my heart, and my portion forever."

There are many deep and terrible experiences that the elect of God are made to know under the teachings of the Holy Ghost, and though humiliating, and our nothingness, vileness and helplessness are felt, yet how gracious are the fruits of all things unto the called of God. For the Lord our God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, in his dealings with us ever has in view the glory of his own name, and the welfare of his dear children, The psalmist had many experiences which he portrays in this Psalm. His steps had well-nigh slipped, he had been envious of the ease and prosperity of the wicked. "For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning." But the Lord mercifully directed his steps into the sanctuary of God, and opened his eyes to see some things he had not understood; and there he again tasted mercy from the God of his mercy. Reviewing, the many things he had passed through, and his present state, he retells the story, and speaks of his present blessedness, his portion as he is held in the hands of the Lord. He declares what is the ultimate height of glory, that is, his "earnest expectation" - Rom. 8:19.

"Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins." There are seasons with all the Israel of God "when every one shall know his own sore and his own grief"— 2 Chron. 6:29. There is that heart-grief that is ours when the Holy Ghost shows us our iniquities, and we, by his gracious operations, are moved to mourn over them unto the Lord, and there are many other griefs arising out of God's providential dealings, and then, as described in this Psalm, we are grieved in our cogitations over matters that we do not understand, for how frequently our conclusions are erroneous. Ah, some self-wise, shallow professors of Christ's name may say, The psalmist ought to have known better than to be envious; I would not have troubled myself in such matters; I would have walked, and have done better in all these matters than the psalmist. Enough said of these self-sufficient religionists. No one has more self-condemnation than a child of God when the merciful, gracious Lord shows him the vanity of his ways. "Thus my heart was grieved," whether there was a true foundation or not. "I was pricked in my reins." These were not

momentary pin pricks, but the spear, the arrows of conviction of God. Yes, and Satan's fiery darts wounding his soul also! I well remember the time when I first took notice of what is written in this Psalm. It was about twenty-seven years ago. I was riding in my buggy to attend a funeral, and was in a cast down state of soul. I said within me, What text of the Scriptures shall I preach from at this funeral? and I thought of the words, "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory ." I thought, That will do. Then I said within me, How, under what circumstances came the psalmist to come to this persuasion? So I mentally recalled the preceding verses, beginning at this twenty-second verse, Oh, I thought, is it such an one as this? I found tears coming into my eyes and flowing down my cheeks, for I felt I was just such a person myself. "So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee." People sometimes may think, and rather boastfully say, to be heard of others, What a fool I was. But this of the psalmist is no such self-eulogizing prattle. When the Holy Ghost shows a child of God the folly of his thoughts, and speech, and ways, it is humbling, it is graciously so, for we are made to be of a meek and lowly mind before the Lord our God. We see how unwise we were, how far astray, how we had wandered away from the paths of judgment, how erroneous were our conclusions, how stupid we were. "Fools, because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted" - Psalm 107:17. Such we see we have been, and so marvel that we were prey to all afflictions. We see now (that is, under divine enlightenment, after having received instruction in the sanctuary of our gracious God), that we belong to the foolish things, base things, things that are despised, things that are not, (I Cor. 1:27-28). "So foolish was I, and ignorant." So vile, so depraved, so astray from God and the truth, "I was as a beast before thee." Ah! to be thus before the Lord knowing that we are there revealed unto him exactly as we are, for in these sacred, dreadful moments we poor sinners know that our God is the discerner of the thoughts and intents of our heart, neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do (Heb. 4:12-13). **"The publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner" - Luke 18:13. "And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which** *am but* **dust and ashes" — Gen. 18:27.** Job exclaimed, "Behold, I am vile: what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my month." "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

"So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee." Ah it is no trifling matter to see one's self so foolish, so ignorant, so degraded that we feel that we are sunken lower than the human family. "I was as a beast before thee." Oh our God is the high and lofty

One that inhabits eternity, and what am I? Sinful, vile, foolish, I have to loathe myself. "I was as a beast before thee," humbled, prostrate in the dust before the Lord, and yet his grace so exercising our sinful hearts that we are meekened, and contrite in heart, confessing our transgressions, our folly and shame, and imploring his compassion, pleading for his mercy in Christ Jesus. But can he, will he, bestow his loving-kindness on such a foolish, vile, ignorant mortal, one who feels, "I was as a beast before thee"? Yes, he will have mercy upon us. He is the God of all grace, and we are bowed before the throne of grace, the throne of God and the Lamb (Heb. 4:16). Our God is rich in mercy unto all who call upon him in truth. When the Lord said, Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, was Jacob offended! Did Israel feel insulted to be named a worm?

Ah, no! We feel the Lord knows us exactly as we are, and each one says, I feel I am but a poor, creeping, sinful, helpless worm. The Holy One of Israel will be the help, the protector, the Redeemer of these worms. Did not Christ Jesus, the dear Lamb of God, in his humiliation exclaim, Behold I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people? Jesus, who in his own person was without spot, holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person, yet when he as the Surety, Redeemer of his own, bare their sins, when all the shame, the ignominy of his people was laid upon him, when he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, when he was made a curse for as, how humiliated he was, how crushed and smitten. Behold, and see if there is any sorrow like his. He cried out unto Jehovah the Father, "Save me from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns" - Psalm 22:21. So the thought, the hope, is put in our hearts that our precious Christ whom we have is not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

"I was as a beast before thee. Nevertheless I am continually with thee; thou hast holden me by my right hand." "Nevertheless." Notwithstanding I am all that is foolish and base, I am not spurned from thy presence, I am not cast out into outer darkness to languish and perish in my folly. Ah, I have many times had such a feeling sense of vileness of my Adamic nature, I have felt myself as a most loathsome reptile, too base to have being in the world, I have seen myself fit only for God's eternal reprobation, for the damnation of hell. "Nevertheless." Oh the exceeding riches of grace in God's kindness to us in Christ Jesus. We are miracles of God's grace. Again and again in the twentieth chapter of Ezekiel the Lord says, "But I wrought for my name's sake." He will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy. "Nevertheless, I am continually with thee; thou hast holden me by my

right hand." It is because of his own everlasting and immutable love that Jehovah holdeth fast unto himself his own elect, and such of them as he hath called, and hath so shown them their depravity and utter baseness will by his gracious operations in their souls feel to be as dust and ashes, and tell the Lord, So foolish am I, and ignorant; I am as a beast before thee. If such a worthless wretch can be loved of God, then it would not do to turn this one loose; he is not fit to go abroad alone, so foolish, so ignorant, he will get into all manner of trouble, take the wrong path, stumble into the ditch, be the prey of every snare, allured by every deceiver, robbed by spiritual thieves and robbers. "Nevertheless, I am continually with thee; thou hast holden me by my right hand." Held so lovingly, mercifully unto himself, who shall pluck us out of his hand? Saith our dear Savior, **"I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any** *man* **pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave** *them* **me, is greater than all; and no** *man* **is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and** *my* **Father are one"- John 10:28-30. "Yea, he loved the people; all his saints** *are* **in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet;** *every one* **shall receive of thy words" – Deut. 33:3.**

This is the important thing, not our hold on God, but that eternal God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost has hold of us. It is the great, almighty , gracious hand that has hold of "my right hand."It is the weak, tiny hand of the little child held in the strong, kind hand of the Father. The little toddling child holds on to the father, but the father has the outside grip. There is a verse of a hymn that reads, "Lord, I would clasp thy hand in mine," but I will alter it, and put it as the psalmist does,

> "Lord I would clasp thy hand in mine,
> Nor ever murmur or repine,
> Content, whatever lot I see,
> Since 'tis my God that leadeth me."

Can any power pluck us from the hand of our covenant God? Who shall ungrasp the gracious grasp of the Lord God omnipotent who reigneth? Oh it is blessedly wonderful to me a poor sinner. "Nevertheless, I am continually with thee." Sometimes I have thought he has loosened his hold of me, turned me adrift, given me up, tired of me, I am such a fool, need so much mercy and grace. Ah, I have thought, and have said in my infirmity, I am a castaway, so worthless, so unprofitable that God no longer holds me unto himself. I am all astray, a wanderer in the waste howling wilderness; I am so vile, so fretful, rebellious, perverse, not fit to pray, and no heart even to pray, and if I do he regards me not; when I cry and shout he shutteth out my prayer. Dear reader, I could go on and on attempting to tell of my times, of my wretchedness, dullness, hardness, my inward vileness, but cannot fully tell the dreadful story. "He restoreth my soul." Oh the blessedness of this blessedness. Oh the preciousness of our precious Christ. The clouds, are swept away, he lifts up

the light of his countenance upon me. The noise of Satan the roaring lion is hushed, the day dawns, the night is past, the devouring, howling beasts of prey have gone into their dens. Christ is mine and I am his Jesus' precious blood and righteousness is my comfort and glory. Then I find I am with my God, held unto him, never separated from him, he still holdeth me by my right hand. "My people have forgotten me days without number"– Jer. 2:32. Oh the shameful ingratitude, yet how assuringly the Lord speaks in Isaiah 49: 15-16, and in Isaiah 44:21. "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." If it were not that we are divinely kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, we would never be able to hold on our way. So the psalmist feels to confide in his God who has hold of him. In his faith he is so persuaded of the faithfulness, and the immutable graciousness of the Lord, that he says, "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." The believer in Christ needs a guide. The Holy Ghost, the Comforter, shall guide us into all truth. Many think because they have a better knowledge of some items of doctrine, and can talk about the truth, that they are all right, acceptable to God. But all this may be, and yet a person may in his heart know nothing of the truth of the gospel, and have never walked one step therein. What does anyone know of the Savior who never felt he was a perishing sinner? What does a man know of grace who does not feel altogether unworthy, helpless, a poor base thing, a nothing? (1 Cor. 1:28). How can any one know that Christ is the Lord our Righteousness unless he has been taught to see and feel that all his righteousness is as filthy rags? What know we of the precious, cleansing, sin-atoning blood of the Lamb of God? Oh we are made to cry, "Black, I to the fountain fly; wash me, Savior or I die." So with unnumbered sacred things of our God and Savior the Spirit of truth so teaches, so guides the elect and called of God, that they are made with all appreciation vitally and experimentally to enter into the truth. The difference between the mere professor appears at times to be slight; and the children of God may be deceived in these fleshly professors. Concerning hypocritical professors the Lord speaks of them to Ezekiel, **"Also, thou son of man, the children of thy people still are talking against thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord. And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee** *as* **my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love,** *but* **their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou** *art* **unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do**

them not"– Ezekiel 33:30-32. What avails all this mimicry of hypocrites? There is much head and tongue religion in the world, but what does my soul know of Christ, his precious blood, of his high priesthood, of him as my Advocate with the Father? To that poor sinner who has been made to confess unto the Lord, "So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee," how comforting is the persuasion in his soul that, "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel." In all my straits, in all doubtful matters, when blind guides would order my goings, when my own unwise heart would devise my paths, thou shalt guide me. Thy counsel, the blessed gospel of Christ, shall order my goings. The pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night. The Lord is so unchanging in his love he will ever counsel us. He so blessedly declares, **"I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye"– Psalm 32:8.** He will ever have his eye upon us; never for one moment are his chosen out of his sight. He sees us when we see not him, and the darkness and the light are both alike to him. The children of God are not carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease, but perplexities are their lot. Sometimes they are called to do business in great waters, and as the storm rages their souls are melted because of trouble, and they are at their wit's end. But through the floods and the fires the Lord is with his people. His rod and his staff shall comfort us in the valley of the shadow of death. Thou shalt "afterward receive me to glory." God hath called unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, and the elect of God whom he did foreknow, he hath predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, and, moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified (Rom. 8:30). The pilgrimage is ended, we are come through all the tribulations in our journey and our almighty Friend has held on to us, and guided us safely to the end, bringing us to glory.

"How cheering the prospect of glory to come,
And the bliss of eternity see;
To be with the Lord and his chosen at home,
Oh this will be heaven to me."

"Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." Oh, thou art more glorious and excellent than mountains of prey (Psalm 76:4).

Some people speak as though the pre-eminent attraction in heaven is to go to meet and to be forever with some precious much loved one of whom they have been bereaved. All this is mere human nature. Earthly kinships are not perpetuated in the realms of eternal glory .They belong to time, and to this world. When we depart this life, and are taken into heaven itself, it is true we shall then be forever at home with all the chosen in Christ Jesus, the household of God, but

it is to depart and to be with Christ, so shall we ever be with the Lord. "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" My God, my Redeemer, the Lamb in the midst of the throne, our eternal All. There is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. Christ is The Desire. In all the characters he sustains unto his people, he is the One so needed by us poor sinners.

"His presence disperses my gloom
And makes all within me rejoice."

Elder Frederick W. Keene
Raleigh, North Carolina
May 15, 1924

AN APOSTOLIC CHARGE TO THE ELDERS WHOM GOD HAS CALLED TO FEED HIS FLOCK

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." - (Acts 20:28)

This solemn charge was given in a most impressive manner by the apostle Paul to the Elders of the church at Ephesus, in the last interview he was ever to have with them personally in the flesh, for he knew that they would see his face no more. This was a most solemn and interesting time; when with the inspiration of a true prophet of our God, he foretold them of the sore trials they should be called to encounter after his departure, when grievous wolves should enter in among them, not sparing the flock; and what was still more appalling, of their own selves should men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. And after having faithfully warned and charged them, he closed his valedictory, commending them to God and to the word of his grace, and knelt down and prayed with them all. So affecting was the scene, the Elders all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him; sorrowing most of all that they should see his face no more.

We cannot for a moment believe that this charge is any less applicable to the Elders in the church of Christ today, whom the Holy Ghost has made overseers, than it was to those of the church of Ephesus, or that we have any less occasion to heed the admonitions and accept the charge. None but those whom the Holy Ghost has called, qualified and made overseers, have any commission from God to feed his flock, or church. Men may be qualified in the schools of men to feed the swine, and may, like the prodigal, hire themselves out to citizens of the world for that purpose; but our God has entrusted the feeding of the sheep and lambs which he has purchased with his own blood to none but those who are qualified by the Holy Ghost. It may be well for those of us who hold the office of Elders in the church of the living God to examine this apostolic exhortation, and to examine ourselves and our ministry, and to prayerfully inquire whether we are abiding steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship; for as far as we depart

from their doctrine and admonitions, so far do we depart from their fellowship.

The first of all we are charged to take heed unto ourselves. This charge was also given to Timothy, 1 Epistle iv. 16: "Take heed unto thyself," and to the doctrine, and to continue in them; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee. No man is to rush heedlessly and uncalled into the work of the ministry. **"And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." – Heb. 5:4.** Is it not to be feared that many even of God's children have heedlessly assumed the work unto whom God has given no ministerial or pastoral gift, and involved themselves and their brethren in much trouble and perplexity? But those have the most unquestionable evidence that they are called to the work, are to take heed that they obey the high and holy calling, and give themselves wholly to the work, and suffer nothing of worldly profit, pleasure or opposition to keep them from the faithful discharge of the work whereunto the Holy Ghost has called them.

Again, they should take heed that their life and conversation before the world and before the church be such as becometh the gospel of the grace of God. "For a bishop (Elder or pastor) must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, temperate, holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." -Titus 1:7-9. "A bishop then MUST be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, APT TO TEACH." "Not a novice, (or one who has come newly into the faith, see margin,) lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, HE MUST HAVE a good report of them which are without, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." -1 Tim. 3:2-7. No minister of Christ has a right to be heedless or indifferent in regard to these indispensable qualifications, or careless as to whether his calling, gifts, and deportment are in conformity with these rules.

By a heedless disregard of this solemn charge, a minister may so far forget himself as to attempt to feed the swine, the children of this world, or to bestow his ministerial labors in chaplaincies for armies, navies, legislative assemblies, or to regulate the politics and secular affairs of the world. A due attention to the divine rule will lead the ministers of Christ to "Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness," and in that kingdom they will find the flock of their special and exclusive charge. Not only are the Lord's bishops to take heed unto themselves, but they are commanded also to take heed to all the flock. If the Holy Ghost has made us overseers of the flock or church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood, how great is the responsibility which rests on us? Can we, like Paul, take the people of our charge to record or witness that we are pure of the blood of all men, and that we have not shunned to

declare all the counsel of God? Paul did not hold himself responsible for the blood of any but those of the church of God, and in the application of the figure, which he borrowed from the ceremonial dispensation, in which the watchmen whom God commanded to give due warning to the Israelites when their enemies were approaching, or to faithfully warn them when God had said they should die, &c; if they neglected to warn them, and through their neglect an Israelite perished, their blood was required at the watchmen's hands, or they were held responsible to God for the consequence of their heedless neglect. Paul had faithfully warned the brethren, publicly and from house to house, and had kept back nothing that was profitable for them; therefore he was free from any responsibility arising from their failure to be profited by his labors. He was pure from the blood of all men.

Having therefore the apostolic example as well as precept, how important it is that the ministers of Christ should in like manner "feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." The manner in which the ministers of Christ should take heed, is shown by the manner in which Paul had acquitted himself in his work. From the first day he came into Asia, or among these Gentile saints, his manner of life at all seasons and on all occasions had been an open epistle of instruction for all the saints to feed and feast upon. Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears. Not in heedless and vain jesting and trifling levity, as some of us in the present day are too much addicted to; but under all his many temptations, and the lying in wait of the Jews, watching to find occasions to accuse and harrass him, he was neither allured by flattery nor intimidated by fear of persecution and his indefatigable labors were unremitting in looking up and feeding the church of God, teaching them publicly and from house to house. And as a pastor after God's own heart, he fed the church of God with knowledge and understanding. - Jer. 3:15. Testifying to both Jews and Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Feeding all who were born of incorruptible seed by the word of God, on the sincere milk of the word.

In feeding the Lord's flock, constant care and unremitting heed should be taken that we feed them only such food as the great Shepherd and Bishop has provided. When they ask for bread we are not to give them a stone, or if they ask for an egg, to give them a scorpion. Timothy, as we have shown, was admonished not only to take heed unto himself, but also to the doctrine. It will not answer to heedlessly mix up our own vain speculations with the doctrine of Christ. Great care should be taken that we know nothing among the saints save Jesus Christ and him crucified. It is on his flesh they shall feed, and his blood in the New Testament they must drink; and they must live on every word that preceedeth out of the mouth of God.

The old man, or carnal nature of christians, may be fed on doctrines of men, and even on doctrines of devils. Their depraved nature will receive it greedily, and it will inflate and puff them

up with pride and vain glory. Their carnal passions may be excited by what is called emotional or sensational preaching, but such food is unwholesome and poisonous to the flock of God, and woe to heedless pastors who teach for doctrine the commandments of men.

The Savior charged his apostles to teach the saints to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them; no more, no less. His laws and ordinances are perfect and complete; they need no amendment, modification or improvement. Take heed unto the doctrine, and remember that Christ has said through the mouth of the apostle, **"But though we or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I again, If any** *man* **preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." - Gal 1:8-9.**

The great object of the gospel ministry is to feed the church of God; for this purpose all the gifts requisite are supplied to those whom the Holy Ghost has made overseers, according to the measure of the gifts of Christ. "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high he led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men. And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers," (and what were they given for?) "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." - Eph. 4:8, 11-13. This scripture defines the object and design of all the gifts which Christ received for and gave to the church when he ascended up on high and sat down upon his Mediatorial throne at the right hand of the Majesty on high. These gifts were none of them designed for nor given to the world, but exclusively to the church, which is the body of Christ, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. The Elders, in taking heed to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers should not heedlessly forget that their holy vocation is for the edifying of the body of Christ, to feed the church of God. The Holy Ghost has not made them overseers of the world, nor called them to feed the world. They are not qualified to give life to the dead, but to feed the living. The quickening power belongs to God, it has never been given to men; but when God by his Spirit has given life to the subjects of his saving power and grace, then let the ministers of Christ take heed that none of them be overlooked or neglected. "Feed my sheep, and feed my lambs," is the command of the great Shepherd and Bishop of Israel.

The solemn charge to take heed, implies a constant watchfulness that no part of the flock suffer through our neglect to feed them with the wholesome food of the gospel, rightly dividing the word, and ministering to each his portion in due season. Great care should be observed lest we as Elders, evangelists, pastors or teachers should heedlessly feed the flock on any other food than the provisions which God has abun-

dantly blessed, and with which he will fill his poor.

The necessity of a vigilant watchfulness is suggested by the warning given to the Elders, of grievous wolves and sad apostacies that should distress the flock or church in the last days, when many should depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. The faithful watchman may not sleep at his post. As Paul said to Timothy, so he says also to each of the ministers of the word, "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and good doctrine." (1 Tim. 4:6)

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe August 15, 1877)

ST. JOHN 1:9-13.

That **was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.**

He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* **to them that believe on his name:**

Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY DURHAM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God, Durham Primitive Baptist Church looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift. They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed Saturday afternoon, November 19, 2011 at 2:00 pm at Durham Primitive Baptist Church, Durham North Carolina for the purpose of examination of this gift Brother Larry Bird. and if found qualified, be ordained to full work and service as Deacon.

All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were: Elders Raymond Goad, Haywood Wray, Mark Terry, Thomas Solomon, Cleo Robertson, Jimmy Gray. All deacons present were asked to sit together.

The meeting was opened with song and prayer by Elder Mark Terry. Elder Cleo Robertson was elected as moderator and Elder Thomas Solomon to serve as clerk. Deacon C. T. Hall acting as spokesman for the Church, delivered Brother Byrd to the presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon were read as set forth in scriptures 1st Timothy, 3rd chapter by Elder Jimmy Gray. All present Elders were invited to participate. The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of this candidate proceeded with the laying on of hands and the Ordination Prayer was offered by Elder Raymond Goad. The charge was delivered to Brother Byrd by Elder Haywood Wray. He then was delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and approved. A copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication and a copy to be given to Brother Byrd along with a Certification of Ordination.

The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by: Elder Thomas Solomon

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Elder Thomas Solomon, Clerk

Elders Present

Raymond Goad
Haywood Wray
Mark Terry
Cleo Robertson
Jim Gray
Thomas Solomon

Deacons Present

R. Allen Carroll
J. Carroll Williams
Wayne Edwards
Randolph N. Wells
Herbert Edwards
C. T. Hall, Jr.

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union will be held at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church located on Malmaison Rd. in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. Saturday before the fifth Sunday in January 2012 the song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton
Assistant Clerk
Staunton River Primitive
Baptist Association

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 01/12
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

SKEWARKEY UNION
(Eastern Kehukee Association)

Hancocks Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union, on the fifth Sunday in January 29,2012. Coming into Greenville on US 264, take Hwy 11 South to Ayden. Turn left onto Hwy 102 East. Go through Ayden and about two miles turn on the first paved road to the left. This will be Ayden Golf Club Road. Go about 1 1/2 miles and the church will be on the left. Preaching services begin at 10:30am.

We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

PSALM 95: 1-5.

O Come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

For the Lord *is* a great God, and a great King above all gods.

In his hand *are* the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills *is* his also.

The sea *is* his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry *land*.

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

Dan River Primitive Baptist Church will host West Country Line Union meeting on Sunday January 29, 2012.

Singing will start at 10:00 and preaching service will start at 10:30.

The church is on highway 700 between Eden, N.C. and Danville, VA.

We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

R. Allen Carroll
Church Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 2011

Viola Davis, VA	5.00
Elder Alan Terry, VA	5.00
James Lambert, GA	5.00
Ardith Harris, FL	50.00
Wilton Sutphin, VA	5.00
Jennye Osborne, MD	10.00
Emmie Grayson, AL	5.00
Bodie Lankford, LA	15.00
Garland Ray Stanley, NC	25.00
Carlton Sumner, VA	5.00
Earl Thurman, VA	5.00
G.W. Weatherford, VA	5.00

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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THE POTTER AND THE CLAY

God is the Potter and we are the clay
And it's not up to us ever to say
Why did He ever make me this way
For we cannot change it, come what may.

God will have mercy on whom He will
And who with His love, will He reveal
And whom with His rod will He deal
And who with His secrets will He seal

God has chosen His elected child
But not one thing can the child decide
Whom He gives ears and eyes of sight
Called out of darkness into the light

God will have mercy on whom He will
Whoever His seed are to Him will reveal
His spirit and love and cause them to call
On His Name for mercy guidance and all

God is the Potter, we are the clay
And none can ask Him why he made me this way
For it all was His purpose and will to do
Whatever He pleases, for me and for you.

Katherine Mathews

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Deacon Claude Alton Fornes
Elder C. B. Davis, Jr.

EDITORIAL

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

For an editorial we thought it appropriate and hopefully edifying to publish the introduction or preface to the books of articles by Elder Gilbert Beebe. This introduction gives a concise history of events and actions taking place in the world at that time that lead to the establishing of the Signs of the Times, all according to the divine will and purpose of Almighty God. The Lord raised up a servant for such a time as that. This article will give you some insight into why the Signs was begun and the trials and persecutions encountered by the editor. As the Apostle Paul wrote, **"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose."** The Lord will have all praise.

Elder Cleo Robertson

From the early settlement of our country by the Puritans in New England, and the Church of England in the Southern colonies, whose religious supremacy was established by law in their several localities, the Baptists, and indeed all other dissenting orders, suffered great opposition by proscription and oppression from the dominant parties. The Baptists, perhaps, more than any other, were violently treated, and suffered the most cruel persecution. Disfranchisement as citizens, fines, confiscation of property, incarceration in prisons, and banishment for nonconformity, to which was added corporal punishments, public whippings at the stocks, cropping of ears, boring their tongues through with hot irons, tying their heads and feet together, and torturing them in the most barbarous manner for days and nights, and in many cases they were put to death for their persistent and inflexible adherence to the faith and order of the gospel by which they were distinguished from all other orders. In those days of trial there were no worldly inducements offered to attract the worldly-minded to connect themselves with our churches, and there was harmony of sentiment and uniformity of practice among the Baptist churches throughout the whole breadth of our country.

It is true that in those trying times,

the general principles of the doctrine of the gospel were not so clearly and fully preached and understood as at earlier and later periods in the history of Apostolic Baptists. As the bible doctrine and order of baptism held by them was the most objectionable to their adversaries, they were constantly called to defend the truth in relation to that ordinance against the assaults of their opponents. And when the violence of persecution began to abate, and by the interposition of the British Crown, and subsequently by the prevalence of more liberal views which were entertained by the patriots of the Revolution, the powers of the Puritans in the East, and of the Episcopalians in the South were so far curtailed as to prevent farther corporal severities; still for many years after the establishment of our federal and state governnments, the Puritans of the New England States were patronized by their state legislatures, and allowed to collect their parish taxes from all within their parish limits. Afterwards dissenters, by procuring certificates from religious denominations to which they belonged, certifying that they were paying to their own respective orders, were released from the burden of the parish taxes, and finally the whole legal distinction in favor of the Puritans was abolished. Under all the trials and persecutions thus far experienced, the Baptists were a humble, meek, loving and harmoniously-united people throughout our country. But as soon as this oppressive yoke was broken, Satan was ready with other elements of discord to bring trouble and divisions into our churches.

No sooner were the Baptists of America relieved from the galling yoke of Puritanic and Episcopalian priestcraft than the doctrines of Andrew Fuller were introduced, with the professed design to raise up the Baptists from the dunghill, to rank respectably with other religious denominations. All who were inclined to the doctrine of Arminianism, with many others who had been led but sparingly into an understanding of the cardinal doctrine of salvation alone by grace, were ready to embrace the plausible and deceptive views of Fuller, and became at once ambitious for the promised elevation.

At this period, which is still fresh in the recollection of the editor of the "Signs of the Times," there was not known among the Baptists of America a single organized institution in connection with, or under the patronage of the Baptists. Theological seminaries, on a very small scale, then began to be talked of, and a small school of this kind was started in Philadelphia, under the direction of Dr. Staughton, to give some grammar lessons to a few of our illiterate young preachers, and soon a college was founded in Washington City, and another educational and theological institution at Hamilton, N.Y., and similar schools began to spring up in various directions. Simultaneously with these, missionary enterprises were set on foot, both domestic and foreign, and Sabbath--schools and Sabbath--school unions, in which various anti-christian denominations were recognized as hand and glove with Baptists in building up these unscriptural nurseries for the

church, *as* they were modestly called. Then followed Bible Societies, to give a semblance of piety to the whole system of religious machinery, followed in turn by Tract Societies, Temperence Societies, Mite Societies, Magdaline Societies, Dorcas Societies, and a host of other equally unscriptural institutions under the name of Benevolence and Religion, until, to bring up the rear, the Abolition Society, which had for a time been struggling into life and power under the patronage of a few New England fanatics, was with due ceremony let in and adopted as a pet institution.

While these innovations were being made upon the faith and order of the Baptists, true enough, the Baptists began to rise, according to the prediction of Andrew Fuller, and soon came to be regarded as unsound and as respectable as any other of the worldly churches of this degenerate age. The Baptists were now no longer obliged to pray the Lord of the harvest to furnish preachers; they could supply themselves with a more refined and educated class from their own schools. Converts could now be made to order, and the churches supplied with members from their *nurseries* and other institutions. Their machinery was now so complete that grace was no longer needed to make their members orderly; for they were supplied with societies to keep them sober and benevolent; and if perchance many of them should lose their piety, their machinery was so ingeniously geared that they could be run through again, and re-converted and re-constructed as often as might be thought advisable.

It was during the prevalence of these abominations that the "Signs of the Times" was commenced. The new order of Baptists had many religious newspapers in the field, which without an exception advocated the institutions named in the foregoing, and the general impression was entertained that there were no churches or preachers left that had not enlisted in this new enterprise for worldly popularity and respectability. A few were found here and there, isolated and despised, who sighed and groaned on account of the prevailing abominations. Yet few as we were, and far between, we were denounced violently as illiberal, inert, slothful, behind the spirit of a progressive age, and enemies to the spread of the gospel and opposed to all that is good.

Feeling deeply the need of a medium of correspondence, and excluded from the columns of the so-called Baptist papers, after much deliberation it was concluded to attempt to make ourselves heard by our brethren scattered abroad, by publishing a paper devoted to the cause of truth, and through which we could enter our solemn protest against all the innovations, new theories and new institutions which, under the name of Baptists, had so greatly prevailed. With these objects in view, in the year 1832, we issued the following prospectus, viz:

Proposals for publishing a semi-monthly paper, to be called the "Signs of the Times," devoted exclusively to the Baptist cause, maintaining inviolably the following Scriptural sentiments:

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Im-

mutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfections of the Great Jehovah — the Revelation which God has given of himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. **"These Three are One."-1 John v. 8.**

2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.

3. Eternal, Unconditional Election.

4. The Total Depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the Elect only.

6. The Sovereign, Irresistible, and in all cases, Effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in Regenerating and Quickening the Elect of God.

7. The Final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God, by Grace.

8. The Resurrection of the dead, and Eternal Judgment.

9. That the Church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers — that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God.

10. That there is no connection between Church and State, and as touching the proposition for a marriage between them, the Hon. R. M. Johnson, in his Report on the Sabbath Question, has expressed our faith.

The "Signs of the Times" will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath Schools, &c., making war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of Institutions.

The violent opposition manifested by the New Order of Baptists, when our Prospectus appeared, was overruled to our advantage. Immediately on its appearing the batteries of our opponents were opened against us, through both the pulpit and the press. The papers of the New School sounded the alarm and warned the people to beware of the forthcoming paper; and in the Minutes of many Associations the churches were warned to withhold their support and countenance from us. In the ardor of their zeal, portions of our Prospectus were copied to show that we were hostile to their newly-invented institutions; and by this means, instead of retarding, as they designed, their efforts were of great service in letting those who were imprisoned among them know that such a paper was about to be published. The response to our Prospectus from all directions was liberal, so that we were able to proceed with our work. Thirty-five years have since elapsed, and thirty-five volumes of our paper have been published, and still the publication is sustained, and we are now enabled to greatly enlarge and improve it.

The publisher of the "Signs of the Times" has been, from time to time, charged with vacillation, changing his views, or departing from the principles formerly held. Let the readers compare the articles here re-published with the platform laid in the Prospectus, and judge for themselves, if there has been any departure from the principles *first* announced.

One important object in the compi-

lation of this book is to present, in as condensed a form as may be, the most important Editorial articles which have been published from the commencement, in 1832, whereby to show what has been sustained by the entire Old School or Primitive order of Baptists for so many years, and incidentally to embody such historical reminiscences as may be useful, not only to the present, but to succeeding generations. Many of the articles which we shall reproduce will necessarily allude to what the Old School Baptists have held, the manner in which they have asserted and defended their faith, and what they have encountered of reproach and persecution, and the divine support by which they have been sustained.

It is not claimed that all the supporters of the "Signs of the Times" are pledged to endorse all the articles which have been published, and are herein republished, for such is not the fact. Some of the articles may set forth the peculiar views of but a minority of the Baptists of our faith and order, and for whatever of error any of them contain, only the Editor is responsible. But inasmuch as the "Signs of the Times" was the first periodical paper devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause, and the only one of some twenty periodicals which have subsequently been started that has been sustained by the Baptists of our order, it must be inferred that it has faithfully reflected the general sentiments of that people, to the support of whose cause it has been humbly devoted.

We do not propose a reproduction of all that has appeared under the Editorial head of the "Signs of the Times," for there are many items of a local interest, bearing on what has long ceased to be of general interest. And some articles on the same subjects, which would appear tantologous and uncalled for. Still it is our intention, so far as possible, to condense, in such cases, the substance of the several articles on the same subject, so as to preserve all that is deemed of sufficient importance to be preserved.

Elder Gilbert Beebe.

CORRESPONDENCE

Brother Horton,

Please renew my subscription for two years – I am sending a check for $50.00; use the rest as you see fit in memory of my companion for 53 plus years, Dora Ellen Vick.

Thank you and all staff, who gets the Signs published.

Love In Jesus,
Gordon G. Vick

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 02/12

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

Nov. 30, 2011

Please use this check to catch up back dues and to pay forward. This is for Thomas Nichols. He is in Richfield Assisted Living. (The Oaks) in Salem. A visit from his brothers and sisters in Christ would be a Blessing.

Thank you
Audrey Cahill, Cousin

Dear Editors,

Thanks for sending "The Signs" to me each month. I look forward to each issue. May the Lord continue to bless each of you to write those things which exalt Christ.

In Hope of eternal life,
Ralph Dale
Concord, N. C.

12-12-2011

Dear Brother Horton,

I am renewing my subscription for only one year this time.

For if I live I will be 98 Feb. 4th.

I enjoy reading the Signs over and over again. Use the rest as you see fit.

In bonds of love,
Sarah Barker

Dec. 8, 2012

Elder Cleo Robertson
Signs of theTimes
111 Livingstone Dr.
Cary, N.C. 27513

Dear Elder Robertson,

Enclosed is the obituary of Deacon Dean G. Connell of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas for publication in the Signs.

In brotherly love,
Deacon Frank Richards, Clerk
817-239-2961

Sirs,

I finally sit down to order a subscription. As a child I remember my mother reading the Signs of the Times. I hope and pray I get a small portion of understanding and comfort as she did while reading.

Enclosed is a check for $20.00 for year 2012.

With a hope in Christ,
Jane Myrick

PSALM 45:1.

My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue *is* the pen of a ready writer.

Brother Tony Horton
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
Signs of theTimes

11/19/2011

Dear Brother Horton,

It is time for me to renew my subscription for the Signs for another year. I am enclosing a check for $30.00-$15.00 for the subscription and $15.00 for a contribution.

I have been receiving the Signs now for several years and always enjoy reading the entire contents. It is rewarding to be able to discuss what we have read with brothers, sisters, and friends, not only of the Old Baptist Faith, but of the many individuals of other faiths and denominations that read the Signs and tell us how much they also enjoyed it. May God continue to cause it to be published.

I believe that the Signs stands for the Truth and that The Truth will stand when all else fails.

A brother in hope,
George W. Hyslip

PSALM 133: 1-2.

Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is* **for brethren to dwell together in unity!**

It is **like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard,** *even* **Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments.**

VOICES OF THE PAST

SANCTIFIED AFFLICTIONS

When gazing on the cloud
That gathers o'er my head,
Dark thoughts within me crowd,
And fill my soul with dread.
My heart anticipates the worst,
Some fearful storm about to burst.

But O! How good and kind,
How faithful and how true
Is he who leads the blind
In paths they never knew;
He goes before, and makes a way,
Turns grief to joy and night to day.

When troubles and afflictions come upon us as stormy clouds, and we are enveloped in the darkness, there are times when our spirits are overwhelmed within us, and in the gloom of such dispensations we become fretful, rebellions (unless exceeding riches of grace are ministered to us by the Holy Ghost, the Comforter) and this but deepens our distress.

It is no easy matter when we are thus weighed down to see that all things work together for good; to think that in the faithfulness of our God that such afflictions are upon us. We are far from acquiescence, and it is not in our power to quell the disquietudes of our soul, and say, **"It** *is* **good for me that I have been afflicted" (Psalm 119:71).** But O! if the **"Sun of Righteousness" (Mal. 4:2),** will only break through, and

smile upon me. If our Savior will but shine upon the dark cloud of our distresses; then what fair colors, what inspiring gladness, discoveries of the attributes of Christ our Sun of Righteousness are seen in the clouds! The bow of the new and everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure. O what mercies, what compassion, what love, what long- suffering, what faithfulness of our God we are made to trace in our afflictions.

Often the clouds of deepest woe,
So sweet a message bear,
Dark though they seem 'twere hard to find
A frown of anger there.

"The bow shall be in the cloud" (Gen. 9:16). Our dear Savior has told us, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

And how blessed and assuring are the following: **"But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not for I have redeemed thee, I have called *thee* by thy name; thou *art* mine. When thou passest through the waters, I *will be* with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Isaiah 43:1-2).** Our afflictions are sanctified unto us in God's covenant love, and in them we are brought to seek His face for that sustaining grace to endure our trials and that we may glorify His name in the midst of the fires; and we cry also unto Him that He will bring us through our troubles that we may praise His name.

"In their affliction they will seek me early" (Hosea 5: 15). And, saith the Lord, **"I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord" (Zeph. 3:12).** And

"Should thou a moment's absence mourn,
Should some short darkness intervene,
He'll give the power, 'till light return,
To trust Him with the cloud between."

Frederick W. Keene, Raleigh, NC
The Lone Pilgrim, pages 85-87.

"ESTABLISHED IN THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAINS"
Denton, Kentucky

"The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of God from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation,

neither *shall they learn war anymore." (Isaiah 2:1-4)*

I venture into this subject with much fear and feeling of weakness, and except the Lord gives me strength and understanding, I cannot write anything that would be of interest to the household of faith: it would be only a mass of confusion and ignorance. We think the prophet here was, as he was inspired of God, speaking of the ending of the Mosaical law dispensation, and the coming of Christ and the setting up of the Gospel dispensation — the church here in the world.

The prophet says, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills: and all nations shall flow unto it." The Mosaic law was given only to national Israel: no other people were under that law. National Israel was figurative of spiritual Israel under the gospel dispensation. Israel under the law was continually at war with other nations of the world, and among themselves, with sword and spears: with carnal or material weapons. But Paul says, under the gospel dispensation, **"For though we walk in the flesh we do not war after the flesh (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.)" (2 Cor. 10:3-4)**

Let's keep in mind what the prophet says: that it shall come to pass in the last days, "That the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established above the hills: and all nations shall flow unto it." "The last days," as I think, was the last days of the law dispensation, and this house shall be established in the top of the mountains: above the low valleys of the earth; above all institutions of men, and is the highest ecclesiastical authority on earth. Out of her shall go forth the law, and the word of God from heaven. No authority on earth, nor institution of men, has any right to formulate any law or make rules for her. Her laws and regulations go forth out of her, and her preached word does not come from seminaries nor theological schools of training; nor by man's wisdom. But, as Paul says, **"For I neither received it of man neither was I taught *it,* but by revelation of Jesus Christ." (Galatians 1:12)**

"And all nations shall flow unto it." This house which shall be exalted above the hills: the church, this spiritual house or spiritual Israel, is composed of every kindred, tongue and people of the earth. "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountains of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem"; because Christ Jesus hath come in the last days of the law, and broken down the middle wall partition between the Jew and the Gentile, and made both one in a spiritual house. Paul says, **"Wherefore remember that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens**

from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us;* **having abolished in his flesh the enmity,** *even* **the law of commandments** *contained* **in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man,** *so* **making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner** *stone;* **in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." (Ephesians 2:11-22)**

"And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." A plowshare is the steel blade of the plow which breaks the soil and prepares the seed bed; and also cultivates the young plants. It is used by the husbandman for preparing and cultivating the growing vegetation: as God breaks up the stony heart, and prepares it for receiving of the seed as it comes down from heaven by the word of God. **"For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper** *in the thing* **whereto I send it." (Isaiah 55:10-11)**

Again he says, **"My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: Because I will publish the name of the Lord: Ascribe ye greatness unto our God.** *He is* **the Rock, his work** *is* **perfect: for all his ways** *are* **judgement: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right** *is* **he." (Deuteronomy 32:2-4)**

"And their spears into pruning hooks." A pruning hook is used in pruning out the dead and unfruitful branches. John says, **"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every** *branch* **that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." (John 15:1-2)** So God uses the pruning hook himself : he doesn't leave that to man. If it were left to falable man, he might

prune out some of the fruitful branches.

"Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore." So spiritual Israel has never warred with the sword and spear since the ending of the Mosaical law. All the law that they are under is the law which is written in their hearts and minds. Christ came in the end of the law — in the last days of it; in fact, his coming was the end of the law to his elect people. He came to establish a new covenant, a new and living way established on better promises; which covenant was spoken of by Jeremiah. He says, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, (after those days of the law) I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts (in the old covenant that law was written outwardly on tables of stone, but in this new covenant, it is written in their very lives). And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, Saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquities, and I will remember their sin no more. (Please notice the words here spoken by God, and compare them with the teaching of the religion that is being taught over the whole world by men of carnal minds: they teach in their sunday schools (in their spiritual ignorance) children to know God, as though God was not able to make himself known to whomsoever He will, without any of man's work or help in any way. They seem to have much pity of what they call heathen nations: so afraid that they will not find out there is a God, and consequently will all go to hell, if they do not send preachers to tell them there is a God, and how to prepare themselves to meet him. They do not believe what God says about it, but say we must teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother to know God. **"Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever. Thus saith the Lord: If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord." (Jeremiah 31:31-37)**

Maybe I have written too much, but have written as I have felt and thought to relieve my mind.

Elder H. L. Rogers

CHURCH ORDER

In setting forth some thoughts on this very important matter, we do so with no thought to dictate to our brethren, but with the thought in mind to present such things as we understand them to be the order of the Lord's house. I fully realize that anything we might say on the subject must be in accordance with his word, and the spirit of the Gospel of Jesus Christ if it is to be of profit to anyone. This is a very important subject, and the writer feels very sensibly his own dependence upon an unerring guidance in the matter, hoping that God will bless what is said to his glory, and a better understanding among our people.

Each Church a Sovereign Body

The meaning of the word church as we understand it is, "An assembly called out." It has generally been recognized by our people that each church is independent in matters of discipline, and I will here quote the 12th. article in the Articles of Faith of both the Upper Country Line, and the Lower Country Line Associations, and in many others, in substance. "We believe that every church is independent in matters of discipline, and that associations, councils and conferences of ministers or churches, are not to impose on the church the keeping, holding or maintaining of any principle or practice contrary to the churches judgment."

In the commands given unto the churches by the Apostle Paul, these commands were to the churches. Sometime the instruction was to a certain church, at other times it was in a general way, but always to the church. The instruction to one church as to their dealing with transgressions would apply in principle to all. **1 Cor. 4:17, "For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church."**

In the fifth and sixth chapters of First Corinthians, (Please read them) we notice that there were various offenses the Apostle referred to, and gave express command to the church as to how to deal with them. One of them was fornication, and the church was commanded to, "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ. To deliver such an one unto satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus." We would apply this in the same way as, withdraw from everyone that walketh disorderly.

The Apostle further writes upon the matter in the 5th Ch. 11th V. **"But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat."**

It appears that the church is forbidden to eat, (Commune) with such an one until such time that the flesh is destroyed. They are to be delivered unto satan for the destruction of the flesh; until such time repentance has been manifested by turning from whatever sin he has been committing. This destruction of the flesh

is to our mind the evidence in the life of one dealt with that the offense that led to their separation from the communion has been subdued by God's abounding grace, to their good.

The minister, as an overseer of the flock, is to reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering, and doctrine. He is to cry aloud when he sees something in the church that is dishonoring to the cause. If he fails to do so then he himself becomes a partaker of the sin. He is hiding that which should be exposed. Churches look to their undershepherds for advice, guidance etc. and if he tolerates the things that are expressly forbidden in the word, and fails to bring the matter before the brethren there is a loss of confidence to a certain extent in his guidance.

The question is often asked, What shall we do when a church divides over a matter, and cannot see eye to eye. In some church rules there is one that reads about like this. "If a minority be grieved at the action of the majority, they shall immediately make it known, and if satisfaction cannot be obtained, help shall be called in from sister churches." This is the substance of this rule, and is in many other church rules. This is a good rule, and if observed, we believe would help often in seeking a common understanding of problems. The majority should always be willing to seek counsel with their brethren when these conditions arise, and the minority be willing to also counsel with sister churches about such matters.

In divisions in a church or association it is often the case that both sides are more or less to blame. Rushing in by outsiders, and taking sides often lead to more confusion, and division. These matters should be confined to their immediate locality, and especially where no point of doctrine is involved. **"He that passeth by,** *and* **meddleth with strife** *belonging* **not to him,** *is like* **one that taketh a dog by the ears." Prov. 26:17.**

In briefly reviewing the matter there are a few things I believe we would do well to keep in mind. 1st. we are to recognize the sovereignty of each church, and its independence in matters of discipline, and when a man does not hear the church, let him be as an heathen and a publican.

2nd. when a man's conduct is such that it is offensive to other churches, and the church fails to carry out the plain teachings of God's word in the matter, that church should be left to it's own affairs and not communed with by other churches until such time that the plain command of God's word is complied with. Yet this church must be left to it's own affairs, hoping God will show them the error of their way.

3rd. All confusion should be left where it starts, arid not be meddled with by outsiders, nor sides taken quickly with either side in a division.

4th. Where division exists both sides will be willing to labor for reconciliation.

Now let us consider John's message to the seven churches in Asia, while he was in the Isle called Patmos. Though there was much fault found with them, yet the word of God to them was

to REPENT. Let us examine the salutation of John to them. "John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace from him that is, and which was, and which is to come: and from the seven spirits which are before his throne.

And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness and the first begotten from the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.

And hath made us Kings and priests unto God and his father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

I John who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the midst of the Isle called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.

Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and what thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia."

The language speaks for itself. Though there was conditions in the several churches that they were commanded to repent of, or turn from, yet he desire that they receive grace and peace from Jesus Christ, and they are warned that unless they repent the candlestick will be removed out of it's place.

Instead of declaring non fellowship for these churches, John is admonishing them through the spirit to repent. They are STILL THE CHURCHES of Jesus, and the spirit is speaking to them through the Apostle John.

Finally, brethren may we be given patience to wait upon the Lord: to be patient in tribulations; to be kind to one another, always remembering that as poor sinners in the flesh we need the tender watch care on each other for one another's good, and his glory.

Elder David V. Spangler

FALLING DOCTRINE

Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass; because I will publish the name of the Lord; ascribe ye greatness unto our God. *He is* the Rock, his work *is* perfect; for all his ways *are* judgment; a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right *is* He. (Deut. 32: 1, 4)

This doctrine belongs exclusively to our heavenly Father. Our precious saviour disclaimed it as being His and taught us so by His own statements. Far as Bible testimony goes, there is no source of saving doctrine save that which comes from God to poor sinful fallen men and women save this source. It is His, and He is the only source of it, and He initiated the only method of it being brought to us. I do not have any compromise to make about this doctrine getting to us. Furthermore, it not only is His doctrine, but he alone drops

it down to poor sinners. It is dropped on purpose to us. He alone can drop that which is His, and if I had the only doctrine, that is, the only saving doctrine that there is, I certainly think that I would turn it loose to fall on only those that I purposed to drop it on. You would do that wouldn't you?

There is not a source of rain save that which belongs to God. If anyone knows of another source of it I hereby yield to the one that has rain cached up somewhere, and that has a method of getting it to where it is needed by the owner. Unless I hear of such a source, I will know that I am on the right text. However, I am not expecting this fact. God is the only source of this doctrine, and He has the only absolute method of getting this doctrine to the desired point in the world, to silence the objectors to His sovereignty.

Just a few years ago the powers that be (I beg your pardon, they just thought that they were that powerful) thought that they could end droughts. They carried the rain making tools and ingredients unto the vast universe above us and found some dry clouds and they sprayed those clouds and made it rain. But complications arose. They were threatened with lawsuits from neighboring communities because that they had been deprived of rain that they should have gotten. Other complications arose, for tampering with God's sole prerogative of looking after the weather.

If you are a God fearing reader, I kindly ask you to consider that God's doctrine drops as the rain. This is also inclusive of the snow and sleet and hail— all of it comes from the same source. It only comes as God drops it, and sometimes it is in sweeping power that all men working together cannot form a successful barrier against it. There is not a sane person on the globe that does not know this. Another thing that they do not know, and that is that it comes so small and so smooth and so easy that we are not aware of it. This dropping of this moisture is so beyond the power and wisdom of men that it comes as a vapour and is distilled as dew while men of great power are sleeping and unaware of the falling from above.

How helpless is this great land of ours about rain? We are as helpless as new born babes for this falling rain. Every single man and woman in the United States, yea, for that matter in the world, are dependent for the dropping down of rain. Now the comparison brings us, each of us, face to face with the absolute and unconditional fact that all of us are dependent upon God for the doctrine of God to fall on us. If for just one year this necessary rain did not drop, what would be your picture of this world in which we live? It has done quite a bit of dropping down rain in the last twelve months, and yet look at the starvation that is rampant over the world. Just suppose that it not rain in the next twelve months? What would any of us do in that twelve months?

Likewise suppose that the doctrine of God does not drop down again in the next twelve months? He does His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabbitants of the earth. What would be

the consequences if the doctrine of God our Saviour did not drop any more doctrine of God? This is not any laughing matter. God would be just if He withheld rain from every human being. You ask me, why? And I am telling you why! Simply because that we are all guilty before God. However, God loves His children and His doctrine of saving grace falls on those that belong to Him. He has made them an unconditional promise that He would come and that He would save them that belongs to Him. God never ceases to love His chosen people. In fact, God does not change His mind about coming and saving those that the Father gave Him. That promise was made by an unchanging God, therefore, that promise was made by the God that never changes. The doctrine of God is established upon the unchanging love of God. The doctrine of God's unchanging love is based on His continued faithfulness.

The salvation of God is as sure as the rain. Neither the rain nor the snow, in themselves considered, bring salvation, but God's way of handling them is figurative of salvation. As the rain comes down, even so does salvation come down from God. As there is not any salvation save in rain coming down, even so there is not any salvation unless it likewise comes from God. We certainly realize that there is salvation in what comes from God. Let us take a tour through the work shop of God. My thoughts are not your thoughts neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. Let us pause here. Thus we have found out one, if not the greatest things about we frail creatures and our Creator. He does not think as we frail mortals think, and He does not do as we frail mortals do. He has His ways, and He does his ways. What would it be if we had our way? Let us ask ourselves once again that astounding question, What would it be if we had our way? In the sense in which it was created for, it is a good, yea, perfect world. Had we, as the human race, had our way, who knows the destiny of it now? Now let us continue, to wit, For as the heavens are higher than the earth. so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Let us pause again. Not only are His ways and thoughts above ours, but they have been that way all of the time. His first and ultimate ways and thoughts have been above ours. As our creator, as the Architect of the universe, He is, and has been, the Potter and Creator, the builder and upholder and disposer of all things. This creature, man, has been a created destroyer (Isa. 54:16), but God's way has been higher and thus a Builder (Heb. 11:10).

This Builder is God. Man is a destroyer. Every blade of grass, every drop of rain that falls upon the earth, every smile of a little child together with its hand clasped in the hand of its mother, together with her love for it, every blooming flower, every sunbeam that has lighted up our pathway, every star that has shined out of the universe above us, together with every eye blinking, every breath you have had, combined with every beat of your heart has been a gift from God.

God's ways are not our ways. God's ways are higher than our ways. They have not recently got that way. All things were made that way and they have remained that way. The nations bluster and destroy and persecute the poor of the earth, but all of them reckoned together have a mighty poor standing with God (Isa. 40:15).

God is rated in His Book as being love. This love, like the source of it, did not have a beginning. Immediately a clamor arises among men and nations, both of them, like all things else, being creatures of God, He being above them, higher than all of them, did not have their origin in themselves; their being subject to His, the divine Creator of all, chose His subjects, His children in One like unto Himself, has fixed or arranged or appointed or predestinated their station here and hereafter, arranged all things and all subjects of this grace, together with those who are not subjects of that grace, should be ruled by Him.

Those subjects of His in nature have never gained the mind of Him. He appointed the laws of nature in such a sublime way that everything that His wisdom dictated as being necessary for the benefit, for the lifting of His people on high was provided in His declaring of the end from the beginning. Everything for the preservation of His people both in a natural as well as a spiritual way was set in motion. This setting in motion these many wonders of nature embraced the falling of the rain as He dropped it from His hand.

"For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* **where to I sent it." (Isa. 55:10-11).**

Now I have dealt extensively with the fact that the weather comes from God. In every sense in which earthly creatures know to summarize the weather, it is all out of men's hands. Let me say to one and all what Napoleon said to a group of his generals. While on one of his noted campaigns, a group of his generals were in an argument about the question as to the extent of God's creation. He listened for a while in silence. In impatience he walked out of his office into the midst of his subordinate commanders, and sweeping his hand to the heavens he challenged them with, Gentlemen, who made all of this? He stalked back into the seclusion of his private quarters.

Dear brethren and sisters, who made this world and the fulness of it? Secondly, who did He make it for?

I have in my declining days dealt with the rain, and the wonderful way in which it fits into our lives. There isn't a human being on the face of the globe that acknowledges the Bible as the MAN of his counsel that can disannul the fact that God sends the rain when and where He pleases. Furthermore, that same sacred volume teaches us that the doctrine of God's saving grace is sent

from God out of heaven when and where He pleases and that the result is just as efficaciously distributed, spread out as the doctrine of God is dropped, God in His effective way of doing everything He pleases.

In the meantime, study God's holy distribution of the rain that it always gives seed to the sower and bread to the eater, and beseech the Lord in my behalf that He will give me an exercise of mind to explore the beauties of that grand and glorious doctrine.

Elder W. D. Griffin
September, 1985

" For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit."- Romans viii. 5.

None but those who are partakers of a heavenly birth feel heavenly realities to be their choice element, holy things their sweetest meditation, and the solemn worship of God their supreme delight. Look at this mark as a touchstone of divine life; for to be spiritually-minded a man must be spiritual, and to be spiritual he must have received the Spirit and been made a partaker of that kingdom of God which is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. (Rom. xiv. 17).

Have you never found in reading the Scriptures a sweet peace distil over your soul, as the glorious promises came forth one after another as the stars in the evening sky, each one brighter and clearer, and you felt a blessed persuasion of your interest in them ? When at the throne of grace, favoured with liberty of spirit and access to your heavenly Friend, have you never felt the peace of God to drop into your heart, and like oil upon the waves, to allay every rising of rebellion within ? Have you never found, in conversing with the saints of God, a sweet flowing of heart to heart and soul to soul, and felt that such conversation left behind a blessed fragrance upon your spirit? Have you never in the house of prayer had your heart and affections drawn up to the things of God; and as you sat and heard Christ, his Person and work, his grace and glory set forth, faith was drawn out to believe, hope to cast forth its anchor, and love and affection to flow, so that you experienced a spirituality of mind, a heavenly calm, and a holy peace that touched every spring of your soul, and watered it as the river that went out of Eden to water the garden?

J.C. Philpot

PSALM 96:1-3.

O Sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord, all the earth.

Sing unto the Lord, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day.

Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 2011

Mary Lee, NC	5.00
Thomas Nichols, VA	5.00
Lena Gray, VA	5.00
Marjorie Cook, TN	25.00
L.C. Hornsby, GA	5.00
Glenia Shelton, VA	5.00
Hattie Spencer, VA	5.00
Ralph Dale, NC	25.00
Jane Myrick, FL	5.00
Sarah Barker, VA	20.00
Raymond Joyce Jr., VA	50.00
George Hyslip, TN	15.00
Michael Williams, NC	15.00
Gordon Vick, NC (In memory of Dora Ellen Vick)	25.00

OBITUARIES

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT DEACON DEAN G. CONNELL

Brother Dean G. Connell, Deacon of Saints Rest Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas, was born July 29, 1930. He was our Church Clerk and treasurer since November 2, 1957. His earthly sojourn ended on August 30, 2011, after a lingering illness. He was 81 years old.

Brother Connell united with Saints Rest Church on July 3, 1954, and was baptized the following August 1. He was ordained to the office of deacon on July 19, 1964. His membership was uninterrupted for over 57 years. His lifelong character in the church and in the world was above reproach.

In the secular realm he worked for Gillette, which later became Western States Transportation, until that company ceased operations. He finished his professional career with. Roadway Transportation, Inc., working in these companies as an accountant and collection agent.

The Lord God gave Brother Connell a keen, analytical mind and an intensity of purpose in his soul and spirit to use his talents in the service of the church. As Church Clerk and treasurer, he kept the church's records exactingly, in a manner worthy of any major corporation.

From 1998, when The Remnant Publications first came under the aegis of Saints Rest Church, Brother Dean kept the records of all the income, expenses, book inventories, and incidentals for this publication until his passing.

In doctrine and practice Brother Connell was unshakable and fearless. Whether in matters involving a local issue in a church conference or in issues that affected churches and associations far and abroad, all could count on him standing firm on biblical principles. He was willing, if necessary, to stand alone on that which was right.

He is survived by his loving and de-

voted wife of 56 years, Sister Ettie Connell; one sister, Eldarie Shelton; and others related by marriage.

Brother Dean was a dear brother in the church, and much more; he was a faithful friend, a loyal confidant, and a trusted advisor and counselor. He was an integral part of *The Remnant Publications,* and he and his work will be sorely missed. Only time will demonstrate how valuable he was to Saints Rest Church, *The Remnant,* to the brethren at home and abroad, and certainly to Sister Connell. We miss him but would not bring him back to the sufferings of this life, which for him have ended in eternal rest in his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

May we always be given to say in times of our sorrow such as his parting has brought to us all, "The will of the Lord be done."

Written by one who yet deeply mourns our loss.

Resolved by Saints Rest Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church in conference on September 5, 2011, that three copies of this Resolution of Respect be prepared, to be distributed as follows: One copy for Sister Connell, one copy to be sent to *The Signs of the Times* for publication therein, and one copy to be retained in our church records.

C.C. Morris, Moderator
Deacon Frank Richards, Church Clerk

OBITUARY FOR BROTHER AND DEACON CLAUDE ALTON FORNES

On June 10, 2011, our Heavenly Father called our precious brother, Claude Fornes, home to be with him. I know we only have a hope that we will be with the Lord when we leave this world, but Brother Claude was one of the most faithful, humble, giving and loving men I have ever known. He is surely in heaven with his Lord and Savior.

Brother Claude was born and raised in Pitt County. He was born July 15, 1918. His parents were the late Ella Melissa Page Fornes and Henry Leon Fornes. He was a graduate of Chicod High School. He farmed and was also a carpenter for most of his life. He even worked as a carpenter during World War II at Cherry Point.

He married the love of his life, Eula Lee Mills, on December 20, 1940. On December 20, 1941, their first anniversary, their first born child, Sandra Lee, was born. They had a son, Donald Claude, born on June 12, 1949 and another daughter, Claudia Arlene, born August 21, 1955.

Brother Claude was baptized in July of 1978 along with Sister Eula by Elder Joseph Sawyer. He was a member of Red Banks Primitive Baptist Church until its closing. He and Sister Eula then joined Hancocks Primitive Baptist Church where he served as a deacon for many years.

Brother Claude is survived by his wife of seventy years, Eula Mills Fornes; daughters, Sandra Fornes Dixon and Leaky Dixon of Greenville and Claudia

Fornes Wainwright and husband, Dale, of Grimesland; son, Donald Fornes and wife, Jeanie, of Greenville; sisters, Louse Forrest of Greenville and Elizabeth Stanley of Farmville; grandchildren, Leaky Dixon, Jr. and wife, Rita, Kenny Dixon and wife, Barbara, Chad Fornes and wife, Lisa, Jason Fornes and wife, April, and Adam Wainwright; great-grandchildren, Gabriel, Cameron, Lee, Victoria, Jordan, Austin, Carrie and Chandler.

Brother Claude was a devout believer in salvation by the grace of God. He was so very thankful for everything the Lord had provided and never questioned the Lord's work.

He always believed the Lord had a purpose and a reason for everything and we were not supposed to question his works but accept it as "God's will". When I asked his son, Donald, what he would like people to remember about his dad he said, "How humble he was."

His youngest daughter, Claudia, wrote something about her dad during the time of his passing that she said I could share with his brothers and sisters in Christ and is as follows:

"My daddy, Claude Fornes, a simple man, a quiet man, a hard-working man, a loving man, a kind man, a giving man. I have watched my dad and learned what really matters in life — family, a good name, love of the Lord, being fair and honest. I have watched him with my mother as she has slowly lost touch with reality and at times not known who he was and learned what commitment means and what unconditional love really is in the way he has loved her, held her hand, been patient with her and prayed daily for her. Some may look at his life and think he never had much, but daddy was rich in all that really counts and he never wanted for anything. He was satisfied with his life, not because he was lazy or couldn't do more, but he truly was content and every need was always met. There was only one thing that he ever wanted that didn't come to pass -no amount of work or money could change it -and that was for mama to be healed physically and mentally and be restored to him and brought home. His faith never wavered and he always believed that God could do anything but realized that God's will may not be to restore her. He didn't question why God allowed this to happen but believed if fit God's plan and purpose for their lives and trusted the Lord through it all.

I have always been thankful to be his daughter and anyone that ever knew him respected him and knew him to be a man of honor. Many years ago when I was first starting out on my own, I went to a local fuel distributor and asked for an account in order to get heating fuel. The person I spoke with handed me paperwork and told me it would take a while to check my credit history, etc., but the owner overheard me say 'my daddy has done business with you for many years' and asked who my daddy was. I told him Claude Fomes and he told the person at the desk to set up the account and deliver the heating fuel — no questions asked, all because of my dad's good name.

I learned some valuable things

growing up from him, like when you are angry he said "if you don't say anything you don't have anything to take back", and if someone mentioned that he didn't talk much he always said "you learn a lot more by listening than you do talking" .He taught us to tell the truth no matter what and when you made a mistake he didn't rub it in or say "I told you so", he loved and stood by you as you worked it out.

He had a sense of humor and loved a good joke and to laugh. He always saw the glass as half full, not half empty. Instead of worrying about the "what ifs" he always said "cross that bridge if and when you get to it, and who knows you might not need a bridge!"

He farmed for many years and enjoyed being outside and being his own boss. He was also a terrific carpenter and worked in just about every house in the neighborhood at one time or another, and if daddy built it or fixed it, it was meant to last a lifetime. When he was urged to charge more for his carpentry work he just answered "live and let live — I don't want to overcharge anyone — they have to live just like I do". Sandra, Donald and I as well as some of the grandchildren all have touches of daddy in our homes. He helped build, remodel or repair all of our homes. He built beautiful wooden rocking horses and toys for grandchildren and great grandchildren.

In daddy's later years we saw him at 81 years of age endure daily baths and redressing when he was burned and he never complained. He thanked us for everything we did and was grateful it wasn't worse than it was. When he had emergency surgery for a tumor in his bladder he didn't question "why me Lord." He was just thankful they removed it and life went back to normal. When he had to have surgery for an aneurysm he went through it with flying colors and was thankful it was fixed. In each situation his only concern was not what was happening to him, but how it was affecting his family, especially mama. He said many times he wasn't worried about himself, just her. In all my years of growing up I can honestly say I don't remember daddy complaining about his life. He was never bitter or resentful.

Daddy wasn't perfect and that is not the picture I am attempting to paint of him, but he was a good man, a good husband, father, grandfather, brother and son. He was an honorable man who loved the Lord and his family. I believe with all my heart that on that morning he left this world he heard the Lord say those words we all long to hear one day ***" Well done my good and faithful servant'."***

Brother Claude was laid to rest on June 13, 2011 in Pinewood Memorial Park. Elder Joseph Sawyer officiated the ceremony. Therefore, be it resolved that a copy of this obituary be sent to the family, one recorded in the church book and one sent to "Signs of the Times" for publication.

Written by his niece, Janelle G. Vanhorne, who loved him dearly.

ELDER C. B. DAVIS, JR.
April 23, 1925 -November 18, 2011

In an attempt to comply with the request of Sister Jeanette, the widow of Elder Davis, I begin this obituary trusting in God for support.

Elder Davis died November 18, 2011 after several years of illness. He was born April 23, 1925, making his appointed life span on earth 86 years. He leaves a family of loved ones, Sister Jeanette, a daughter Barbara Phipps, three sons, Charles, Jimmy and Larry, and three daughters- in-law (the sons' wives), two sisters, ten grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. Brother C. B. had a son, Bobby, predecease him.

Elder Davis was a close personal friend of our family and he was respected and loved by all who knew him. He was blessed to serve the Lord and His people any time and place after he was ordained to preach the gospel in a willing and lovely way. The churches that he pastored were Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church in North Carolina, and in Virginia Cain Creek, Malmaison, Old Mountain, Danville and Bracy, and also Little Creek Church in Delaware.

He joined Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church in Roxboro, NC on August 15, 1954 and was their pastor for 40 years. He was ordained a deacon of Shiloh first Sunday in May 1959 and ordained a minister at Shiloh in November of 1971.

Brother C. B. and Sister Jeanette were married for 66 years. She stayed at his side throughout his illness, even at the hospitals where he was a patient. She sat with him night and day. Such love and devotion is rarely witnessed by anyone. She said that she was given the strength by her God.

We that are still in this life will miss Elder Davis but I rejoice that his trials and pain of his mortal life are over. For years Elder Jimmy Gray and Sister Emma Jean Gray were so close and loving to him and his family. Elder Gray said that once Elder Davis had been in a coma, and during this time he was reaching in the air. When he was again awake, he was asked what he was reaching for. He said that he was reaching for that hand that was reaching for him. Can you imagine what unspeakable joy it will be to see our God (I hope mine) and His Son face to face?

In this life, there will be pain, sickness, and sorrow with few if any days of real peace, but we are promised in that eternal city that God himself will wipe all tears from our eyes. I feel that the chosen of God have had a few times to look through that dim glass into eternity to see their home in heaven and that it will be joy unspeakable. We have seen and felt enough to long for the end in this vain world and to be carried to that perfect, eternal, glorious home to be with Jesus and have perfect peace forever.

His funeral service was conducted at Brooks and White Funeral Home on November 20 by Elders Raymond Goad, Marvin Brumfield and Jimmy Gray. The service was concluded at the gravesite by Elder Cleo Robertson.

Written in the love of God's faithful servant, Elder C. B. Davis
By Burnell Williams

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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SONG

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love!
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

Before our Father's throne
We pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
Our comforts and our cares.

We share our mutual woes;
Our mutual burdens bear:
And often for each others flows
The sympathizing tear.

When we asunder part,
It gives us inward pain;
But we shall still be joined in heart,
And hope to meet again.

This glorious hope revives
Our courage by the way;
While each in expectation lives,
And longs to see the day.

From sorrow, toil, and pain,
And sin we shall be free;
And perfect love and friendship reign
Through all eternity.

Fawcett.

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EDITORIAL

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that *it was* good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day." Genesis 1: 1-5.

Elder J.B. Farmer

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. When the deep things of the Holy Spirit are revealed unto His children, they fear and quake as did the children of God when the Lord spoke unto Moses in the mount. Our God is a consuming fire. We dare not presume upon Him to speak in His name, lest we be consumed in a moment. I am made to believe that this is why the Lord's ministers diligently seek assurance that they have been called and sent. This is why they do not lightly approach the stand. But stand they must. We are taught to **"preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine."** We are afraid to go, but more afraid not to go. And we are taught to **"study** (be diligent) **to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."** And God has commanded by His apostle, **"if any man speak,** *let him speak* **as the oracles** (utterances) **of God."** The Lord also commanded us to speak the truth in love. This we desire to do, the Lord willing.

The children of God were not made His children yesterday, and are not being made His children today and shall not be made so tomorrow, as many suppose. We are taught that the first thing God did for His people was to save them. It is written that the Lord Jesus Christ stood a **"Lamb slain from the**

foundation of the world." It is also written that He **"hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."** Some say that all are all alike until the Spirit comes upon one and makes him a child of God. But God has never worked that way. According to the scriptures, God had a people in the beginning of creation, and loved them with an everlasting love.

God did many things from or before the foundation of the world. And His ways and thoughts are as high above ours as the heaven is above the earth. He is not limited as we are. And He declared the end from the beginning. He knew and loved His children before the foundation of the world. The prophet Jeremiah said, **"Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee *and* I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."** And he said, **"The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, *saying* Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."** We read about the manifold works of God, **"the works were finished from the foundation of the world."**

The children of God were created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Their names were written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. They were given grace in Christ Jesus before the world began. God, that cannot lie, promised them eternal life before the world began. They were **"born again** (generated from above), **not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."** They are His seed. They are His children. They were generated by Him and created in Him before the world was. They have ever been in Him and shall ever be in Him. They are special because they are His.

When God said let there be **light**, I am made to believe, the children of God were created in Christ Jesus. The children of God were called **light** by the Lord. He said, **"Ye are the light of the world."** And He commanded, **"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."** The inspired apostle said, **"Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness."**

When God said, **"Let there be light,"** I believe the **light** He spoke of could not be the Lord Jesus, because He is the great I Am. He was not created, but is the everlasting God who inhabits eternity. The **light** spoken into being on the first day cannot be the sun or moon or the stars, because they were not created until the fourth day. It has appeared to me that the **light** that God made in the beginning, before He made anything else on the earth, was the whole spiritual family that He loved with an everlasting love. That **light** appears to me to be those that God foreknew. I cannot help believing that He knew them before He made any other thing that would in-

habit the world. The same ones He foreknew are those He predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first born among many brethren. They are the same ones He called, justified and glorified. God did all this before the world was. How can this be? It is written, **"I know that, whatsoever God doeth it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth *it* that *men* should fear before him. That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past."**

You were chosen in Him from the foundation of the world. And it is written, **"The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his."** As Eve was created in Adam and was bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh naturally, so were the children of God created in Christ Jesus and are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones spiritually. The beloved, inspired apostle said, **"For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."**

God also made the darkness, because it is written, **"I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these *things*."** It is also written, **"The Lord hath made all *things* for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."** God has a purpose for all His creation, even the wicked. We are taught that the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand. The apostle Peter, on the day of Pentecost, was blessed to preach the gospel and to show what wicked hands did on the evil day when the Lord of glory was crucified. He said, "Him, being delivered by the determinate council and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."

"God divided the darkness from the light." Many cannot have it, but God has made a difference between the light and the darkness. Those under a strong delusion falsely say that God loves everyone, and that God would save all if only they would accept His offer of salvation. But the truth is just opposite to what carnal minds have thought and said. He loved the light, and the darkness He hated from the beginning. He said, **"Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated."** Of one lump, speaking of humanity, God made vessels unto honor that would fit in glory, and made vessels unto dishonor that would fit into destruction. There is no agreement between darkness and light. When the light shines, darkness flees away.

"And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night." The children of God are called Day, and the wicked are called Night. Those generated of God are called out of darkness into His marvelous light. They are made to be a separate people, a peculiar people unto God. They love the light. They are drawn unto it even as a moth is drawn to the flame. I can remember saying within myself many years ago,

being in darkness and in much distress, "Lord, please show me the truth, even if it is against me." I am made to believe that the little children of God cannot resist the light. They are drawn unto the light, and by it their works are revealed to be wrought in God.

But the wicked hate the light because it exposes sin. They will not come to the light because it makes manifest that their deeds are evil. And they love darkness rather than light. Jesus said, **"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be manifest, that they are wrought in God."**

This explains so many things. It defeats the false doctrine of universal salvation. It makes plain why some love God and some do not. Aren't you glad that God is so merciful to make His purposes known to His little ones? Is it not a wonderful thing to be blessed to see what is actually causing men to do the things they do, and not to be at the mercy of all the vain philosophies of the world? Aren't you glad that it has pleased God to reveal the mysteries of His kingdom unto babes, and to hide them from the wise and prudent of this world? May our God be praised world without end for His goodness to His children.

Elder Jerry B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

131 Kayla So.
Shreveport, La 71105

Signs of the Times
1429 Howlett So.
Hillsville, VA 24343

Dear Bro. Horton,

Enclosed please find check for renewing my subscription to the Signs of the Times for one year and use the remainder as is needed. I enjoy reading "The Signs".

I was sorry to read about Elder Davis and know he will be missed.

Billie G. Speir

John Collie
1620 Hampton Rd.
Reidsville, NC 27320-8282
January 17, 2012

Dear Bro. Horton,

My subscription to the "Signs of the Times" expires 02-12. Please renew my subscription for two years. Use the "extra" as needed.

In bonds of love and may the Lord bless all who help with this publication.

John Collie

Mr. Tony R. Horton,

My dear brother I have been ill for some time and am ordering Signs a little earlier than usual. May the dear Lord bless His churches and brethren.

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickral

1-8-12

Dear Mr. Horton,

The Signs of the Times is a wonderful publication and a blessing to many especially the ones that are not physically able to attend church services. My Mother, Maedell Norman, was one that received a great benefit from reading the publication especially after she became disabled. My Mother felt a lot of comfort and enjoyment from reading the Signs. Thanks to all the staff for their work which was a blessing to my Mother.

Both of my parents passed away in 2011. Please cancel the subscription to my Father, W. H. Norman at 3221 Pleasant Ridge Rd., Summerfield, N.C. 27358.

I would like to subscribe to the Signs for two years. I have enclosed a check for my subscription fee and a contribution of $25.00 to the Signs in memory of Maedell Norman.

Please send the new two year subscription to my home address listed at the bottom of the letter.

Thank you,
Don Norman
6154 Lake Brandt Rd.
Greensboro, NC 27455

January 25,2012

Dear Elder Robertson,

We recently received a sweet letter from Sister Frances Cooper accompanied with her spiritual observation about the leaves of Fall. Her blessed insight was most meaningful to Sherry and me as it spoke of our experience of grace. I asked her if she would consent to letting me send it in to the "Signs" and she did. We hope you find it as precious as we did. We are including it with this note. Sherry joins me in sending our love to you and yours.

J .B. Farmer

I was vacuuming the carpet, and through the window I saw the pretty leaves falling. I stopped my work and looked at the beauty that God had given us. I stood in awe of His love for us. I then wrote down some of the thoughts that were presented to my mind and heart.

I watched the leaves as they were falling. Some had more brilliant colors than others. Some were from the large majestic oaks, many were from the lower trees. I did an intensive look and

watched as they twirled to the ground. All did not fall at the same time. They were left until their time comes. Their life was over, their shade isn't needed anymore, their time to let go is growing nearer. It was sad to see their beauty fade. Please let us thank God for the beauty that we see and enjoy in His creation. The beauty is our Brethren, the beauty in His firm doctrine and the love and mercy that He has given us. Like the leaves we too must fall, but oh what beauty we behold when we are blessed to behold, all that He has done for us. After all the splendor and beauty the leaves all fall low to the ground. They are all now together. It is gravity in action, God's work and love controls gravity. He is in complete control of everything. No matter how tall we stand, how we display our beauty, we all end up low to the ground. Our lives are so much like the falling leaves. Thank God for His love and mercy and hope to thank Him for everything.

Frances

January 24, 2012

Dear Brother Tony,

I want to renew the Signs, for a year. I enjoy reading them, as I don't get to go to church anymore. They give me much comfort. Give my love to sister Carla and all. Please send the Signs in my name.

Thank you and all,
Estelle Thompson

ARTICLES

Job 14:14 If a man die, shall he live *again*? all the days or my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.

It is an undeniable fact established by the Holy Scriptures and by thousands of years of human history; it is appointed unto man once to die. The sentence was placed on the first man Adam and consequently, on all of his posterity. **"...for dust thou *art* and unto dust shalt thou return."** We fear many things in this life. Many times our fears are unfounded and the things we fear never come to pass. However, so great is the certainty of death that the Apostle Paul says in his letter to the Hebrews Chapter 2 vs. 15 that we are "all of our lifetime in bondage through fear of death." He further declares both the certainty and the cause of death in Romans Chapter 5 vs. 12: **"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned..."** When the first man Adam sinned, his nature was corrupted. Such is the corruption of man's nature that God looked upon the wickedness of man and saw that **"every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually."** In scripture, the heart represents the very essence of man's being. It is the seat of his emotions and the source of all his desires. Jeremiah testifies to the corruption of man's heart

in Chapter 17 vs. 9; **"The heart *is* deceitful above all *things* and desperately wicked: who can know it?"** Even if he had a desire to, and he does not, man is totally helpless to recover himself from his fallen condition.

Not only was Adam's nature corrupted, but also his seed. Job, recognizes this and illustrates the hopelessness of man's condition when he asks in verse 4 of this same chapter, **"Who can bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean?"** The sad truth follows, **"not one."** God established the order of his creation in the very beginning when He declared that every living thing would bring forth after its own kind. Every oak tree that ever has or ever will grow from a seed was in the very first oak tree. Every child, excepting Jesus Christ, that has ever come forth from the womb existed in seed substance in the first man Adam and can have no higher state in creation than the creature he came forth from. God commanded Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply. They could do nothing more than multiply themselves in whatever state they were found to be in. Adam became a sinner possessed of a sinful nature. In multiplying, he could do no more than replicate himself. Christ bears witness to this:

Mathew 7:17 & 18: **"Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."**

Mathew 12:33: **"Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by *his* fruit."**

Luke 6:43: **"For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."**

After recognizing both the certainty of death and the inability of man to recover himself from it, Job then asks this most vital of all questions: **"if a man die, shall he live *again*?"** For Job, the question is rhetorical. Like all of God's children imbued with the hope of resurrection to eternal life, Job wrestles with doubts and fears. He seems to voice his doubts, **"So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens *be* no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep"**, then pleads with his maker: **"O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!"** Then declares his hope. **"all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands."** This blessed hope of a resurrection covers a multitude of sorrows and suffering for God's children. Though weary of the trials and tribulations of this world, trusting in the promise of resurrection to everlasting life, they are made to press on **"toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."** Indeed, without the promise of the resurrection, Christianity would be meaningless.

1st. Corinthians 15:14 **"And if**

Christ be not risen, then *is* our preaching vain, and your faith *is* also vain."

1st Corinthians 15:19, **"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."**

How then is this resurrection possible and what is the nature of it? Job points to the answer to both these questions, when he says, **"...till my change come."** An incredible change must be wrought. But how? **"Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots?"** With men it is impossible, but with God all things are possible.

We would remember that in the garden of God, standing in the midst of it, was the Tree of Life. After Adam sinned, God, speaking of Adam said; **"...lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever.** " God then drove Adam from the garden and placed east of the garden **"...Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."** This Tree of Life, provided from the very beginning, is the remedy for man's fallen condition. To partake of it is to escape the sentence of death and live forever. He has however, been driven from its presence and cannot freely partake of it. Notice however, that the Cherubims and flaming sword were not placed to keep man from the Tree of Life, but rather to keep the way of the Tree of Life. Herein is the promise of One that was yet to come proclaiming; "I am the way..." **"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."** The all that died in Adam were all that were in him, the entire race of man. The all that shall be made alive in Christ cannot be the same all that were in Adam, for He did not take on the seed of Adam, but rather, " He took on him the seed of Abraham." All that were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, both Jew and Gentile, are called the seed of Abraham in that they are the children of Abraham by reason of faith; "...that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also"

Mathew Chapter 1

Vs. 18 **"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost."**

Vs. 22 & 23 **"Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."**

Many professors of religion, schooled in the institutions of men, would have us believe the virgin birth of Jesus was a miracle performed by God in order to impress men and make them more inclined to believe He was indeed the Son of God. Still others, more modern, have pointed out that the Greek word translated "virgin", could also be translated as simply a "young maiden". This, I suppose, to be more agreeable to the cynics who want religious theory to conform to the science of human un-

derstanding. Neither could be further from the truth. The woman, who was saved in child bearing, was promised a seed. God's words to the serpent in Genesis Chapt. 3 vs. 15: **"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."** In the illustration of bruising the serpent's head, the seed of the woman was to have the victory over the serpent and his seed. The promised seed however could not be the seed of Adam as he was corrupted and all of his posterity in him. This promised seed, which was Jesus Christ, was an Holy Seed of Divine origination which was brought forth in the virgin Mary by the Holy Ghost.

Luke 1:30 thru 35: **"And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."**

This virgin birth was absolutely essential to the divine nature of the Christ child. For He must *be,* as Peter said; **"as of a lamb without blemish and without spot"** indicating that He was without sin, neither His own sin nor the imputed sin of Adam.

This same Christ came preaching to Nicodemus: **"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."** He further characterized this new birth as a Spiritual birth saying, **"Except a man be born of water and *of* the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."** Peter characterized the Elect children of God as, **"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."** This **"Word of God"**, according to the Apostle John, was from the beginning and was none other than Jesus Christ:

John 1:1 **"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."**

John 1:14 **"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."**

Many in this world have been deceived by the claims of deluded and spiritually depraved men insisting that they by the power and eloquence of their spoken words can persuade the children of men to "surrender all" and become Christians (if only they can raise enough money to spread the "word").

Inventing the unscriptural notion of "the utility of the Gospel", they claim the power of the preached word as having the ability to produce the effect of the new birth. The scriptures however bear out the truth; it is the Spirit of Christ in you that brings forth a "new creature".

Romans 8:9 **"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."**

Read again the words of the angel to Mary, **"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."** All of God's children are brought forth in the same manner. They are born again of that same incorruptible seed and by the same Spirit of God that brought forth Jesus Christ the **"first born among many brethren."**

This new creature born of incorruptible seed, is not the fleshly body that came forth from the seed of Adam any more than it is the old carnal nature that came forth from Adam. It does, however, dwell in that body along with the nature of the "old man" where there is a continual warfare between the two. Speaking of this warfare, Paul cried: **"O wretched man that I am I who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"** He then answers the question: Romans 8:11 **"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.**

Romans 8:20 thru 23 **"For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the** *same in hope*. **Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only** *they* **but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption,** *to wit* **the redemption of our body."**

The crowning glory of the work of salvation in Jesus Christ is the resurrection of the body. But it does not come forth in the corruption of Adam any more that the new creature has the corrupted nature of Adam.

1st Corinthians 15:42 & 43 **"...It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."**

1st Corinthians 15:49 **" And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."**

1st Corinthians 15:52 thru 57 **"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must**

put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. But thanks [be] to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Romans 11:33 **"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"**

Humbly submitted in hope
of the resurrection,
Elder Kenneth R. Adams

ISAIAH 51:6-7.

Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvations shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.

Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart *is* my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.

VOICES OF THE PAST

AM I A GOD-CALLED MINISTER?

You will NOTE from my autobiography that I came under the hands of two presbyteries—being ordained twice by man in each of two organizations to the work of the ministry. One of these acts must have been a mistake, maybe, both of them. The great question: am I a God-called gospel minister? Let us try these two calls by analysis and contrast to determine whether or not either be of God.

I was in my "teens" when hands were laid on me by the first presbytery. I was of the opinion that the plan of salvation was offered to everybody. Each and every one of the family who came to the "age of accountability" possessed equal and sufficient ability to "accept the plan" by complying with certain conditions and thereby earn Heaven as their home by their own merits. I consented to that ordination or "call" upon the following basis of reasoning:

1. I had accepted the "Plan."
2. I had complied with the requirements.
3. I was prepared to teach others these conditions.
4. I was able to speak fluently and interest the hearers.
5. My walk and conversation was more becoming than others.
6. This demanded their high esteem and great respect for me.
7. It gave me opportunity to build a

greater reputation by influencing others.

As the reader will note in my other writings relative to my experience, the time came when this was all proved to be vanity. I had greatly deceived myself and others. The thought that I had so vehemently spoken untruths completely banished from my mind any thought of ever again speaking publicly in the name of the One whom I had so greatly blasphemed!

The day I was received into the fellowship of Cedar Hill Primitive Baptist Church of Christ near Amity, Arkansas was one of the greatest surprises of my life because I realized myself to be the chief of sinners. I was worse than any other because I had used God's name in vain while wearing the cloak of religion from the pulpit! I had pretended to be something when I was worse than nothing! I thought this would forever bar me from such a sacred place as the pulpit. The high privilege of sitting silently with the brethren was too sacred for so great a sinner as I felt myself to be.

Soon after I was received into the fellowship of the Church, I was attacked with such despondent and depressed condition of mind that I felt to have but few more hours to live at most. This continued without a moment of relaxation for days and weeks that seemed to be ages. I was so burdened with an unbearable weight that I felt my life was being crushed. Many nights I went to my room convinced that I would never see the sun rise again. Such loneliness and heartache is indescribable. All my dreams were as vexing as my daily thoughts. Groanings and yearnings for God's mercy availed nothing. I was convinced one night that all this was upon me because I had deceived the people of God. I must have fallen asleep, for either in a vision or dream I was standing before a congregation of people preaching upon the text : "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." I received such joy in my confessions that I awoke rejoicing in mind for the first time in weeks and months. I immediately reached for the Bible and searched for some text of Scripture that would harmonize with that expression. I was somewhat surprised when I found it verbatim in Job 42:6. This was the first time the thought occurred to me concerning preaching with the Old Baptists. The thought caused me to shudder and I began to argue my disqualifications. "I am ignorant and my brethren are wise. Their walk is godly and my walk ungodly. They are content and I am disturbed." These arguments became so numerous that the idea of preaching was dispelled from my mind and I was again possessed with the same melancholy state of mind.

I recall one night that I tossed in my bed for hours and tried to pray that the burden be removed. When I became exhausted I was suddenly impressed with the thought, "There is something you MUST do." I asked, "What is it, Lord?" There was no reply, thus no relief. I began to reason. "I am unfit to be a member of the church. I have deceived these good people. I MUST frankly confess to them and ask them to exclude me from their fellowship." "Lord, if this be what I must do give me relief." Yet no

relief came! I asked the same question concerning many acts that came to mind. Still no relief. Frustrated to the extent of insanity, I felt I MUST die. The reality of dying in this condition so horrified me that I cried in exasperation, "Lord, anything!" The command came like a thunderbolt, "Preach Christ the Way." I answered aloud, "I will preach." Suddenly my body ceased its trembling. My aching heart soothed. My surging and throbbing breast was calmed. The terrible weight was lifted and the burden removed. I went to sleep praising God for the relief of a troubled mind that had tortured me for many days. I had the first hours of peaceful sleep that I had enjoyed in weeks.

I awoke the next morning as convinced that I would preach as any one has ever been impressed of something they must do. The relief did not last long. My disqualifications came to mind again. Finally I thought of one possible qualification: "You have experience in public speaking." This one sunk into oblivion when I considered:

1. Heretofore you have been sure of yourself concerning the subject matter and preparation; now, you are uncertain and unprepared.

2. Before, you felt to have more knowledge on the subject than your hearers; now you are more ignorant than any one of them.

3. Before, you felt they would listen because they esteemed you as their superior; now, you feel to be less than the least.

4. Before, you were without fear and boldly appeared before any congregation; now, you are even fearful of yourself.

By this time I was strolling down a country road and must have gone into unconsciousness, because when I became conscious, words were flowing with ease from my mouth and a peculiarly constructed pulpit was before me. Tears of joy were flowing from my eyes. I looked out before me for the congregation and could see nothing but a winding road in front and trees on both sides. I reasoned: "This pulpit is an imagination of the mind caused from the tears that beclouded my eyes. I dried my eyes, blinked them, looked again and the pulpit was still there. I was yet walking, but this last sight so excited me that I stood still, closed my eyes for awhile, opened them again, but the pulpit was still in front of me. Something said, "I will put thoughts in your mind and words in your mouth when you are behind the pulpit." Then, the pulpit vanished and I was trembling from head to feet. I was so weak I could hardly stand and was about four miles from home. While walking home I feasted upon this new experience and conclusion that God speaks through His ministers. I thought I would tell this experience to my brethren but soon it seemed so unreasonable that doubts began to haunt me and I have kept it until this day with this exception, once, while speaking for the first time in a meeting-house, I looked down and saw this peculiarly constructed pulpit in reality and paused in the discourse to say, "I have seen this pulpit before" Even though I have not told this, it has been a great encouragement to me many times when

going behind the sacred stand, feeling so unprepared.

A few days later, (September 1930), I attended an adjoining association near Eldorado, Arkansas. It was the first time I had been outside my home vicinity while among this people. They were strangers in the flesh but yet I felt drawn toward them. While there I visited in the home of Elder T. J. Evers where some visiting elders were scheduled to preach. My feeling of unworthiness would not permit me to be in the room during preaching but I listened from the outside. When they had finished preaching, someone called my name, came after me, ushered me inside, and informed me that I was requested to preach. I was never so shocked in my life as I thought no one had any idea that I would ever attempt to preach, especially to make my first attempt away from home among strangers. I had not hinted to anyone of such impression. I do not know anything I said that night. However, I experienced some relief of mind in the exercise. When I finished, I walked from that room into an adjoining room to be alone. I was shocked with the sight of gray-headed elders sitting in that room with their heads bowed. I thought, "What a fool I must be to attempt to speak in the name of the Lord in the presence of these great men of God." I was so ashamed of myself.

The next meeting at my home church I was called upon to introduce services with hymn and prayer. Since that time I have attempted many times to speak, accompanied with great fear and much trembling. My deep-felt sense of unworthiness and inability has been so uppermost in my mind that I have wondered much of the time, "Do I have the right to occupy such a sacred position and attempt to speak in the presence of God's people?"

I bored the listeners for months by using much of the time in trying to express my unworthiness and inability. My estimation of myself as being so sinful was so impressed on my mind that many expressions relative to this conviction were made each and every time I appeared before a congregation. It gave me relief but I was not aware of being so boresome to the hearers. God saw fit to use a sister to bring this to my attention. She told me of a conversation she overheard between a daughter and her father. The daughter announced, "Dad, I am going over to Oakland Schoolhouse today to church." Her father answered, "What? Do you want to hear that mean man tell of his meanness?" This caused much meditation. I have felt as unworthy, sinful, and unfit since then but have been cautious to brief my expressions concerning it. This conversation proved to be a great blessing to me and (I am persuaded) to those who have to sit under the hearing of my voice.

Many times in the exercises of speaking in the presence of this people I lamented much in the closing remarks upon how God had withheld His Spirit from me and that I had been given "no light" upon the subject under discussion. One day I heard an elder preach. His discourse melted my heart and I experienced exultant joy from the

beginning of his sermon throughout. His words were heavenly and the thoughts expressed were rapturous to me. He paused at the end of this glorious sermon and said, "I have had no unction of the Spirit while speaking. What I have said has been wholly formal and strictly mechanical." This was like pouring ice water on me. It made me shudder. Since that time I have not expressed these lamentations in closing—though I have felt it. It may be mechanical and formal as far as the speaker is concerned, but God is blessing the hearer with the unction of the Spirit. Since then I have been more content with the thought that God blesses me to the extent that it pleases Him and consecrates it to the hearers to the degree of His pleasure. Who am I to lament if He holds all joy from me and blesses the hearers with exceeding joy? Sometimes when feeling the coldest in delivery of a discourse, I have seen the Spirit manifested in the faces of the hearers. Could such a sermon be classed hypocritical, formal, and/or mechanical?

Praying in public was such a task for me. I felt it to be the greatest sin to utter words intended to be directed to God without feeling to be in the spirit of prayer. I refused to engage in public prayer many times when called upon because of this conviction. I recall once being in the predicament when I could not refuse even though I was convinced it would be formal and hypocritical! Words flowed fluently from my mouth but I was so cold that they seemed to mock me with the cry, "Hypocritical, hypocritical." When I arose from the form of prayer I felt to be the greatest blaspheming hypocrite in the world! I was greatly surprised and astonished when something very unusual took place. One man immediately arose, came toward me with tears streaming down his face, took me by the hand, and exclaimed, "What a wonderful prayer. You worded the yearning of MY heart!" I was then convinced that God was pleased sometimes to put the yearnings in one's heart and the words to express the yearnings in another's mouth. May I ask the reader, "Could this prayer be classed as an hypocritical prayer?"

Since that time I have not refused to engage in public prayer when called upon.

My wife was the first one that I baptized. Officiating in the ordinances of the church seemed too high for me. I felt so unworthy to officiate that I felt so weak I could hardly stand and was trembling when I led her into the beautiful Caddo stream near Amity, Arkansas to baptize her. I felt that I could not go through this ordeal. I shall never forget the calmness and strength I suddenly experienced when I began the baptismal ceremony. Some of the most glorious experiences I have had was in the act of putting beneath the water candidates for church membership. God has always come to my rescue and converted the fear into sublime calmness in my attempt to engage in this sacred ordinance.

It seemed to be the impossible for me to be used to comfort those who were bereaved because of a death in the immediate family. I shuddered at the thought of ever being called upon. If not

deceived, the Lord has taken care of that also. I have been surprised and astonished at the words that have come from my mouth that were appropriate on such occasions.

I have had like experiences in visiting, praying for the sick, encouraging those who were so low in spirit, giving solutions to baffling problems, averting brethren from detrimental procedure, and striving for peace among troubled brethren. In every case that my efforts have been successfully used, it has been beyond any question with me concerning the source of strength. In every case all false ideas of authority being vested in me have been burned out through fiery trials and God has revealed Himself as the Author of all good acts which are godly. When it pleases God to work the will in you, there is no shifting from His will to yours. His will has been so convincing to me that there has been no halting between opinions when it is placed in my mind. I have learned by sad experience that it is best to do nothing regarding a matter until you are made certain concerning what ought to be done. God has so thoroughly worked the do in me in many cases that I was unaware of what I was doing until it was already done. Could I give myself a pat on the shoulder and congratulate myself for doing something that had been done through me and I was unaware of it while it was going on?

I felt many times in years past that I ought to lay aside my encumbrances and dis-engage myself from the vocations of this world and devote what little strength and mind that God had blessed me with to the service of the churches who were looking to me as their pastor. Circumstances over which I had no control brought me into this position. I was forced to give up my worldly career. I receive no salary nor wage from anyone or ones. It has been so for years, but God has taken care to impress the hearts of friends and brethren to freely give of their means to us that we have not suffered in want of the necessary things of this natural life. Funds have come when needed without any solicitation to such an extent that I am fully persuaded that God controls the minds of the contributors even to the amount of contributions.

When I am given to review my life as a minister of God and pastor of churches, I feel that I have been very unprofitable. I have failed in many duties. I have fallen so far short of performing the duties incumbent upon a pastor that I am made to say, "I surely have been mistaken in it all." My brethren have been very tolerant toward me in bearing with my infirmities. Should they have been exacting I would have been severed from their fellowship long ago. I beg an interest in the prayers of each and everyone of you who reads this. After writing this imperfect treatise upon this question, it remains an unanswered question to me: *"Am I a God-called gospel minister?"*

Elder E. J. Lambert

JESUS THE AMEN

I was asked to write a sermon upon the word amen. Well, I may not be able to do that, but I will very readily pen some few thoughts upon it that has been comforting to me, and in which I have had some experience by the power of the Holy Ghost.

The first and most blessed thing is that Jesus Christ our Lord, our redeemer and everlasting friend, is "The Amen" Rev. 3:14. Indeed, there is no abiding blessedness apart from our beloved Savior. As He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely, He is also the fountain of living waters. In Him we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places; but all would be a failure, all our hope in things pertaining to God and to eternity would be a failure, if Jesus Christ were not the Amen.

This sacred name, like all the names he bears, is what He is unto His church. This name signifies that He is the constant one, the gracious, immutable Almighty friend, faithful and true. Rev. 3: 14. He is the one, who makes sure, and will bring to an all-glorious consummation all the eternal purpose which Jehovah the Father purposed in Him. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the head of the church, and He is the mediator and surety of the new covenant, and as our covenant head He is in delighted acquiescence with it. Even though in order to the removal of the sins of His people, to make atonement for their transgressions and reconcile them unto God, He should come and give Himself a ransom, a sacrifice for their iniquities. He said, Amen to it. So let it be, it shall be."**Lo, I come, in the volume of the book** *it is* **written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law** *is* **within my heart." Psalm 40: 7-8; Heb. 10: 4-10. "All the promises of God in Him** *are* **Yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."** 2 Cor. 1:20.

Oh what exceeding great and precious promises there are in Him for time and eternity. The new covenant was established upon better promises than those given unto Israel under the law, the old covenant. The gospel promises are in Christ's gospel; they are made unto the elect in Christ. Thus, by the communion of the Holy Ghost, who speaks to us, and shows to us, and glorifies Jesus Christ in our hearts, we have sacred assurance, and are in earnest expectation **"in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began,"** Titus 1:2. All the promises of God in Jesus Christ are yea, and amen, sure to all the seed. As our covenant head He said, amen to them all.

In His faithfulness, love and mercy, and omnipotence He will see that none of these promises fail. What God hath promised, He is able also to perform. Their gracious and glorious fulfillment is not based upon the creatures performance. Ah no! God will show His people His covenant in the incarnate Son of God. Psalm 25:14. **"Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed** *it* **by an oath: that by two immutable things,**

in which *it was* **impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which** *hope* **we have, as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered,** *even* **Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec."** Heb. 6:17-20. In all the characters that Christ sustains, and all the offices in the new covenant He fulfills, He is surely the amen.

The pleasure of the Lord prosper in His hand; the government shall be upon His shoulder. Isaiah 9:6; 53:10. Well, beloved ones in the Lord, as we meditate upon the glorious work wrought by our Redeemer, and see how He was faithful to Him that appointed Him, how He finished all the work of eternal salvation, and will surely bring His people home to eternal glory, faultless, and holy, and without blame, and with exceeding joy before the majesty in the heaven, truly we are comforted and our hope is sure and stedfast, for Jesus Christ, the word made flesh is the Amen. And we, like the four beasts, (living creatures) in Rev. 5:14 say, "Amen" to all that Jesus Christ has done, and to all that He, as our great high priest, in heaven is doing for His people. There He appears in the presence of God for us, and forever our beloved Redeemer, intercessor, our advocate with the Father. And when we offer up our feeble sacrifices of praise, when our hearts send forth our sighs and prayers unto the throne, they all come through Him unto our God Father. He says Amen to them, for they are all cleansed by His precious blood, perfumed by incense of His finished work upon calvary's cross, His sacrifice of Himself in our behalf, an offering, and a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savor unto God. Through Him, our Amen, we have acess into the grace, we are favored to worship God in the beauty of holiness, with reverence and Godly fear. Yes, our hearts say amen, so let it be, to all that Christ has done, and all that He is unto His people. When we are in sweet accord and our hearts are saying amen to Christs gospel, all sufficiency in self has been cast to the moles and to the bats, we are lowly in our own sight, we feel how naked and destitute we are in ourselves, we see we are poor sinners, and we have been taught under this bitter and humbling knowledge to look unto Jesus as the only ground of hope for perishing sinners. Yes, here must be God's own gracious teaching to humble such sinners, sinners who are enemies of God, alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their hearts. It needs such operations of the Holy Spirit in the sinner's heart to bring him to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," to bring him to see that all creature righteousness is filthy rags, and to submit to the righteousness of the God-man Christ Jesus, which is unto and upon all that believe. But every one that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me saith Christ, John 6:45. And in our precious Jesus our all-sufficiency salvation, righteousness, all grace and glory, and to everything in Him

we say amen. All is agreeable, all is needful, there is nothing lacking, all is finished, all is blessed, all is altogether lovely, all is to the glory of God, and to our everlasting consolation and happiness, in faith and love we say, Amen, so let it be. If the gracious operations of the Holy Ghost are so essential to bring our souls into accord with the gospel of Christ, and to say Amen to all the revelation of Jehovah's counsel therein: so also the same teachings of the comforter God and Holy Ghost, are needed to bring us to say, Amen, the will of the Lord be done in all His providences. We have surely learned, yes, we have had to learn it over, and over again; that without the continual ministrations of the grace of Christ how unreconciled we are to our lot, how cast down we are sometimes, how fretful, what inward murmurings, and how hardened we then become in rebellion. **"The rebellious dwell in a dry *land*."** Psalm 68:6. God's providences are high and deep— His thoughts, His purposes therein are not for us to fully understand.

"Deep in unfathonable mines,
Of never failing skill,
He treasures up His bright designs,
And works His sovereign will."

Job at one time could say Amen to the adversities and bitter afflictions to which he was subjected, Job 1:20-21; 2:9-10; but in the continuation of his deep and sore troubles he is found fretting at a great rate, and speaking hard things against God. But we see the end of the Lord: that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy, James 5:11. **"The Lord answered Job, and said, Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct *Him*? He that reproveth God, let him answer it."** Surely this severe reproof was nevertheless love's reproof! It entered Job's soul, subdued all opposition to the Most High, and brought him at the feet of the Lord. **"Then Job answered the Lord, and said, behold, I am vile: what shall I answer Thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further."** Job 40:1-5.

We have trials, afflictions, adversities, we have vexations, and things that are so contrary to flesh and blood. Our little plans are upset; our gourds are blasted, the flowers that delighted us wither, they are snatched away, cisterns are broken, and creatures all fail. Sickness, pains in ourselves and others we have to endure, we suffer bereveaments; and we encounter the enmity of the wicked, of hypocrites. How shall we say Amen, unto the Lord under the pressure of any or all these woes? When the Lord giveth us tears in great measure to drink, Psalm 80:5; if the bread of adversity and water of affliction be our portion, Isa. 30:20, is it possible to acquiesce, and say Amen to God? When the thorn in the flesh is rankling, and the enemy is buffetting us until we are at our wits end, shall we not cry out for the extraction of the thorn? We pray that the enemy may be forced to take departure from us, but if it is the will of God that the thorn shall still pierce us, and the enemy still assault us, can we then say unto the Lord,

Amen? We can, but only when our Heavenly Father says, — thou art my dear son;. thou art unto me a pleasant child. Jer. 31:20. Thou are beloved, lovely, all acceptable unto me in the beloved. Eph. 1:6. Drink the cup, my child! O then we can say, Amen, so sweetened is our cup with our heavenly Father's love in Jesus Christ our Lord. And, when He says, "my grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness," then we can say, Amen, and join with the apostle Paul and , say, **"most gladly therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."** 2 Cor. 12:9. Pharisees, the selfsufficient, the hypocrite may talk very smoothly, and say, we ought to say, "Thy will be done" to God's providences. But the dear child of God, who while in this world is compassed with infirmities, poor and sinful and tempted, finds himself so in need of grace that it is only by the power of Christ resting upon him, only as his preciousness is communicated and the spirit of truth glorifies our dear Savior in the soul, and thus sustains us in afflictions, and sweetens the bitter waters that we can say, Amen to all our Heavenly Father's will.

There, I have penned some thoughts upon the word, and, oh may such grace from the Lord be ours that we be in accord with Him who is the Amen.

Elder Frederick W. Keene
Raleigh, N. C.

RANDOLPH, Maine, Nov. 12, 1930.

My DEAR SISTER EMMA: - We were glad to hear from you and yours. I will say I am much better of my bronchial trouble.

You ask for my views upon John xii. 24, 25. It seems to me that, as you have been thinking of the subject, you are the one to write upon it. However, I hope I am willing to do anything within the bounds of my limited ability for the comfort of the household of faith of our blessed Lord. If, by his grace, I have ever been enabled to say or write anything to that end, all praise is due to him who never leaves nor forsakes his people.

The above mentioned text reads as follows: **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone : but if it die. it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal."**

While the corn of wheat remains in the bin wherein it is stored with thousands of like kernels it is lifeless, although there is a grain of life within, but when the wheat is taken from the storage bin and buried in the ground, then that grain of life is manifested. Little rootlets appear, and later the blade. But in the development of the plant the present kernel or grain has disappeared. And so Jesus has likened the natural life of a subject of God's grace unto the corn of wheat. **"But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."** As the husbandman has complete control over the wheat he puts into the storage bin, and later takes out

and plants in the ground, so the subjects of God's grace have no part in the new birth into Christ's kingdom. They are translated into a spiritual kingdom. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." They are in the world, but not of the world. As Christ and his kingdom increase in their view, so do they and worldly attactions decrease.

"He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal." The "heirs of promise" know by bitter experience that the old Adamic nature in them is not dead, but very much alive. Paul tells us, **"I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."**-Rom. vii. 21-23. So we see that while we have no active part in our transmission from nature to grace, yet God holds us strictly accountable for our acts and deportment here on the shores of time. "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."-Rom. viii. 13. **"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."**-Rom. vi. 12, 13. Here, then, is the pathway marked out for the followers of Jesus to walk in, and just in proportion as they by the grace of God are enabled to walk therein will the fruit of the Spirit of truth be manifest. It seems to me that verse twenty-five mentions the two classes of people living in the world, viz., believers and unbelievers. -The natural man loves the world and all that that implies. He has no love or desire for anything more than the world can offer. The natural life and the spiritual life will not mix any more than will oil and water. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Unworthily your brother,
J. E. HUBBARD.

MEETINGS

SOUTH OUACHITA UNION MEETING

The Union meeting of the South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, at New Hope Church near Spearsville, Louisiana on March 31 and April 1, 2012. All Lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
318-778-4217

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 2012

R. Smith, VA 5.00
M. Houston, NC 15.00
R. Rudd, NC 5.00
T. Middleton, NC 5.00
N. Dalton, VA 5.00
Elder W. T. Conner, VA 5.00
A.Lane, VA 5.00
D. Norman, NC 25.00
(In Memory of Maedell Norman)
B. Abernathy, NC 10.00
B. Speir, LA 35.00
R. Newsome, FL 25.00
C. Franco, TX 5.00
J. Collie, NC 5.00
E. Thompson, VA 5.00

OBITUARIES

IN MEMORY OF MARVIN AARON GILES

Our Lord called home, Brother Marvin Aaron Giles on September 17, 2011. Brother Marvin was born April 1, 1934 in Nattaway County. He was a son of the late Thomas Hugh Giles and Brazie Taylor Giles.

Brother Marvin was predeceased by one daughter, Deena Melissa Giles; one brother Cornelius Giles; four sisters, Gracie Scott, Elsie Scott, Essie Giles and Louise Mayhew.

Brother Marvin is survived by his wife of fifty-six years, Aleen Jeanette Moser Giles of the residence; one son Douglas Troy Giles of Gretna, Virginia; one brother Anderson and his wife Doris of Lynch Station, Virginia; one grandson Ricky Lee Giles of Gretna.

Brother Marvin was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. He was received by experience and Baptism, June 13, 2011. He was a faithful member and always enjoyed services and the fellowship of his Brethren.

Brother Marvin's funeral service was held by his Pastor Elder Marvin Brumfield and Elder Raymond Goad September 20, 2011. He was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park.

Brother Marvin will be sadly missed by his family and all that knew him. May all be reconciled to the Lord's will.

Written in love and hope,
Carol R. Lansaw
Elder Marvin Brumfield, Moderator
Oscar D. Pickral,Clerk

ST. LUKE 9:48.

And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.

HELEN MCDANIEL STEWART

Our dear Sister Helen Stewart was called from this wilderness of woe on May 1, 2010. She was born May 2, 1924 in Danville, Virginia to Joel and Mattie Roach McDaniel who preceded her in death. She was also preceded in death by her husband, Elder Lester Stewart, her brother, J. C. McDaniel, and sisters; Madeline Burnette, Margaret Barber, and Gladys Moschler. Surviving are her son, Ronald Lee Stewart and wife Shelia of Eden, her grandson, Brandon Lee Stewart of Wilmington, her sister, Shirley Vaughan and husband, Thomas of Texas as well as many nieces and nephews.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor and assistant pastor, Elder Kenneth Key and Elder Thomas Solomon on May 5, 2010 at Fair Funeral Home after which her body was laid to rest in Dan River Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery to await the resurrection morn. That lovely spirit, which dwelt within her, has returned unto God who gave it to rest in Paradise with Christ.

Sister Helen was a member of our people over 50 years. On September 26, 2009 she was accepted into membership at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on profession of faith. For the last couple of years of her life, the writer was blessed to travel with her to many church meetings. She loved her God, her church, and her family. As was appointed by her Lord, it was her lot to fill the station of a minister's wife. She was blessed to do that with much love and joy in caring for many of the Lord's little ones in her home.

Two verses of hymn 274, which she often requested from the Goble hymn book, best express the experience of our dear sister:

"I have sought round this verdant earth for unfading joy;
I have tried every source of mirth, but all, all will cloy;
Lord, bestow on me grace to set my spirit free;
Thine the praise shall be; mine, mine the joy.
I was brought to thy gospel, Lord, from folly away;
Made to trust in thy holy word, which taught me to pray;
Here I found release, here my wearied soul found peace,
Hope of endless bliss, eternal day."

Sister Helen's lovely smile and her warm embrace will remain etched in our memory. Her love for her Saviour and His dear people shone in her countenance. She is greatly missed, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. May all, who mourn her loss, be blessed with the comfort that only the Lord can give, and may all the praise, honor, and glory be His.

Humbly submitted by one who
loved her dearly,
Mary Hawkins

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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HYMN

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!
What more can he say than to you he hath said,—
You, who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?

In every condition, in sickness, in health,
In poverty's vale, or abounding in wealth,
At home, and abroad, on the land, on the sea,
As thy days may demand, shall thy strength ever be.

"Fear not, I am with thee; O, be not dismayed!
I, I am thy God, and will still give thee aid,
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand,

"When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of wo shall not thee overflow;
For I will be with thee thy troubles to bless
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress

"When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace, all-sufficient, shall be thy supply;
The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.

"E'en down to old age, all my people shall prove
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;
And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,
Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne.

"The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to his foes,
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake."

G. Keith

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EDITORIAL

Recorded in John 8:56-58 are the words, **"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."**

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

What manner of man is this? The prophet Isaiah said He had no form nor comeliness and no beauty that we should desire Him. He was despised and rejected of men. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. He bare the sins of all His people in His own body on the tree of the cross. Yet, He was God in the flesh, "for in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." He had all power. He knew all things that were to come to pass because He had purposed them and ordained them. He was the Word that was in the beginning, that was with God and that was God. He was the One by whom all things were made and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life. Even the wind and the sea obeyed Him. No man took His life from Him, but He willingly layed it down because of the great love wherewith He loved His elect. He had power to lay it down and He had power to take it up again. But His body of flesh, without sin, was a veil that the carnal eye could not penetrate nor the carnal mind comprehend. There were some such as Peter to whom this man was revealed as Christ, the Son of the living God. However, many of the Jews were not blessed to believe in Him and in fact, despised Him and desired to kill Him. But His hour had not yet come and they could not lay their hands on Him.

On the occasion of the above scripture, the Pharisees were contending with Jesus over who He said that He was and who His father was. They said that Abraham was their father and seemed to believe that this natural tie of the flesh entitled them to be the children of God. But Jesus told them that He knew they were the seed of Abraham; and He also

said, *"If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But, now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father."* Then, they began to profess that they had but one father, which was God. They had no understanding of this One who stood before them. No man can come to the Father, but by Christ and no man can come to Him, except the Father which sent Christ draw him. For the Father and Christ are one. Very bluntly, Jesus said that they were of their father, the devil. He was a murderer and a liar from the beginning.

Then, Jesus told them that Abraham rejoiced to see His day, and he saw it, and was glad. They had no idea of what He was speaking. They replied that Jesus was not even fifty years old and how could He have seen Abraham. They only knew Jesus after the flesh. They knew nothing of Him spiritually because He did not reveal Himself to them. The world today knows nothing of Him spiritually. They have never experienced His love and mercy. Psalm 107 says, "O Give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good: for His mercy endured for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy." The redeemed of the Lord are the only ones who can say the Lord is good because they are the only ones who have experienced His love and mercy. Jesus told them that before Abraham was, I am. God is under no law nor time. There is no past nor any future with Him. It is an eternal **now**. He is the eternal I AM THAT I AM. As written in Exodus 3:13-15, "And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, what is his name? What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM; and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations." Our finite carnal minds cannot begin to comprehend this name of God. He had no beginning and has no end. He doesn't age as we do. He is the same yesterday, and today, and forever. Therefore, in heaven, His people will not age, but dwell with Him in one eternal **now**.

When God commanded Abraham to take his only son Isaac (Genesis 22:2) whom he loved and offer him for a burnt offering, He gave Abraham the faith to believe God and that God would provide. So Abraham took Isaac and two young men and began their journey to this certain mountain. This was Mount Moriah upon which some 1,000 years yet to come Solomon would build the temple and yet another some 1,000 years Christ would hang on the cross. So it was not by chance or accident that Abraham was commanded to offer Isaac on this particular mountain, but by the divine purpose of this holy and all powerful God. On the third day, Abraham

lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off. I believe that Abraham saw more than just a natural mountain. The third day sets forth the gospel day, the day of grace. On the third day, Christ rose from the dead, having fulfilled the righteous, holy law of God to a jot and tittle. With the law having been fulfilled, the day of grace had come. Abraham was given an eye of faith to behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world as He hung on the cross on this very mountain some 2,000 years in the future. Abraham saw the day of Jesus Christ. He saw the place afar off. Therefore, he could tell the two young men to wait there and he and Isaac would go yonder and worship and would come again to them.

As Abraham and Isaac journeyed toward the mountain on which God had commanded him to offer his son, Isaac asked his father, *"Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Abraham answered, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering."* By faith Abraham was given to see the day of Jesus Christ and to proclaim that God will provide **Himself** a lamb for the offering. Christ stood a lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Revelation 5:6 and 13:8). The holy, righteous law of God required a holy, righteous sacrifice to satisfy it. No one of Adam's race was qualified. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." "There is none righteous, no, not one." Therefore, God sent His own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, to condemn sin in the flesh that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. As Abraham bound Isaac and laid him upon the wood on the altar and reached for the knife, the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven and said, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." When Abraham looked up, he saw a ram caught in a thicket by his horns. The ram was a type of Christ and I believe the horns set forth the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Acts 2:23 says that He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Abraham rejoiced to see His day and he saw it, and was glad.

You, dear children of the heavenly King, also rejoiced to see the day of your beloved Savior and you saw it, and were glad. When the Lord imputed His righteous, holy law into you and you were brought down in condemnation to see yourself as a sinner and the vilest of sinners, you felt your lost condition and were given to know that you could not keep the law. As the Apostle Paul said, "For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then, the Lord appears as the Sun of righteousness as He arises with healing in His wings. Therefore, you shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. You experience the warmth of His comfort and peace in His love and mercy. As calves of the stall, you are kept by the power of God through faith unto

mercy. As calves of the stall, you are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Works of the flesh are done away and grace has come. The Lord feeds you with the bread from heaven which is Christ, the bread of life. As you are calves of the stall, God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Having seen by faith the day of Jesus Christ, you can witness with Psalm 31:7, "I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy."

May the God of all grace continue with each of you is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

1-28-12

Tony Horton:

Enclosed is a check for $30.00. Please renew my subscription for another 2 years and use the rest as you see fit.

Thanks for all you do in getting the paper out to us each month.

In hope,
M.L. Richardson
6907 Jolee Rd
Panama City, FL 32404-4434

To Tony Horton:

Here is my subscription for another year of the Signs of the Times. Thank you so much for sending it.

Also, please change my mailing address to:

P.O. Box 132404
Tyler, TX 75713-2404

Sincerely,
Mollie Jones

2-12-12

Dear Brother Horton, and Elder Robertson:

Please forgive my poor handwriting. It will soon be time to renew my subscription. I don't even feel worthy to even receive these wonderful gifts each month. You both are so wonderfully blessed to be able to put these books together each month. We are blessed to receive these wonderful gifts each month. We see through a glass darkly while here in this life, one glad day if we be one of God's chosen, we will see all things in their fullness thereof. I hope I haven't bothered you too much. I hope one day we can be together and talk a little more. Please forgive my many mistakes. Remember this poor wretch, when at the throne of Grace, an unworthy brother, if one at all.

In bonds of love,
James Knight

January 29, 2012
Mr. Tony Horton
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, VA 24343

Dear Tony,

Please find the enclosed check for my subscription renewal for 2 years to the Signs of the Times. Please use the remainder as you see fit for the benefit of this wonderful publication.

Thank you,
Bruce Smith

Elder Cleo Robertson
111 Livingstone Dr.
Cary, NC 27513

Wayman Chapell
1598 Bonnie Dr.
Memphis, TN 38116

Dear Brother Cleo:

Here are some thoughts I have had on the the subject I have tried to cover from the standpoint of the Lookingglass that made up the foot of the laver in the tabernacle in the wilderness. Use it as you see fit. Since it is somewhat of an unusual subject I will understand if it doesn't fit with your needs, or feel it to be "offbase".

We appreciate your work on the Signs and taking the responsibility of gathering material as well as what I would suppose to be the greater job of screening. I am sure it is not an easy task.

Sincerely,
Wayman Chapell

2-16-2012

Dear Brother Horton,

It is time to renew my subscription for another year. I am enclosing a check for $15.00.

I have been receiving the Signs for several years, always enjoy reading it and looking forward to each issue.

May the Lord bless you and all staff in your efforts to keep sending this worthy publication.

With a hope in Christ,
Gloria B. Reese

ARTICLES

LOOKINGLASSES

In the making of the various items or objects of the tabernacle, in the wilderness, and placing them together, Moses is instructed thus of the Lord; **"And thou shall rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion thereof which was shewed thee in the mount." Exodus 26:30.** They were a pattern or figure of spiritual things in Christ who was yet to come. See Hebrews 9:8-11.

The things of the tabernacle were made from offerings unto the Lord of materials for the structure and furniture by those of a willing heart. Exodus 35:5. Although brass was a gift used in the making of several items of, and within, the tabernacle the emphasis to be considered here is the seeming unusual material composing the foot of the laver.

The brazen laver contained water where the priests had many washings in their service of the tabernacle. The foot of the laver (base or pedestal) seemed to have some particular significance in that it was made of the lookingglases (apparently polished brass mirrors) which were given by the women assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

There seems to be very little direct scriptural evidence to indicate the spiritual value or significance of the polished brass mirrors that made up the foot of the laver. Therefore, any thought or position, regardless of how reasonable it might seem, should not be held dogmatically without more spiritual evidence than seems to be available. Nevertheless several things come quickly to mind and all scripture is useful when guided by the Spirit. See 2 Timothy 3: 16-17.

Consider: A mirror, or lookingglass, is used primarily for vanities sake and for correction. Vanity is apparent because **"All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes." Proverbs 16:2.** But with spiritual eyes it is quickly recognized that **"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it." Jeremiah 17:9.** Then the situation of the troubled mind becomes fearful as did Isaiah when he saw the Lord sitting on a throne high and lifted up. Then he said, **"... Woe is me! for I am undone; because I** *am* **a man of unclean lips:...". Isaiah 6:5.** And then consider the seemingly impossible plight of the apostle Paul as expressed in Romans 7:15-24. Here, in part, he sees himself and says. **"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) - dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but** *how* **to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." (vs.18-19).**

When approaching the Lord's table to eat the Lord's supper this same apostle Paul admonishes the members to examine themselves, which is a mirrored experience, and would seem to be relating to their thoughts and actions **"For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." 1 Corinthians 11:29.** This would undoubtedly have the burdening conflict of a vexing ordeal when examining the actions and intent of the flesh. Yet it is an occasion of worship and praise when given to see that the victory has already been achieved and lies only in the finished work of Christ.

In Romans 7:21, the apostle finds a law that when he would do good, evil is present with him (the man of the flesh). Although he delights after the law of the inward man (the spiritual or born again man), yet there is another law in his members, warring against this law of the mind and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin, which is in his members. Is this not the experience of every child of grace? In self examination he rejoices in the evidence of a life in Christ and yet is plagued with the reality of sin.

The apostle in looking at his situation confesses that he, in his own strength, can not rise above the situa-

tion and cries out, **"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death" Romans 7:24.** The lookingglass of self examination is not flattering but condemning if this is all that is seen. But the apostle gives us more of his experience and which reveals the only answer that can give consolation to a yearning soul. **"I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Romans 7:25 & 8:1-2.** And further, speaking to the church at Corinth, the apostle Paul declares them to be the epistle of Christ, **"... written not with ink, but, with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshy tables of the heart". II Corinthians 3:3. "Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord *is* there *is* liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord." II Corinthians 3:17-18.**

This is a different view that is reflected to the child of God than when he is given to see only the vanity of the flesh. He is changed, and changed into the same image which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. See Colossians 1:27. There is now the view of being clothed, not with vain works, but with the righteous robe of the Saviour. Rather than shackled by the old law, he now can look unto the finished work of Christ as one looking into the perfect law of liberty. Being dead to sin and alive in Christ. Then with joy the view in the lookingglassses shows the children to be redeemed by the blood of Christ that they might receive the adoption of sons. **"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Galatians 4:6.**

The lookingglass, then it seems, gives a view of what we are by nature; depraved beings without understanding and absorbed by the vanity of life. But, now having some evidence of the new creature (the one born from above), and beholding the finished work of Christ, are made to confess that though we see as through a glass darkly, yet are made to hold fast to an earnest expectation of growing in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, **"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Romans 14:17).**

Elder Wayman Chapell

ST. MATTHEW 20: 1.

For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.

Joy Wrought By Pain

"Great writing is most often wrought from the throes of pain and suffering."

This is a quote from an interview I saw the other day of a songwriter. It touched me profoundly for it focused my mind, for a moment, on what biblical writings...scripture...is most often characterized by. And, it placed another beautiful image before my mind's eye...the image of the children of God embracing in scalding tears of adoration. Tears of thankfulness branded upon a contrite heart by a gracious and forgiving Savior.

The religion of the reprobate is filled with confessions of joy and happiness. For the most part, the message is that once you have accepted Christ as your Savior, peace shall be yours from that day forward. You should go forth and spread the word of a new found joy. That is the way the intellect reasons and the natural thought process of human beings.

But the Bible speaks of a far different experience for the child of God. "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling", "Hear my cry, O God; listen to my prayer. From the ends of the earth I call to you, I call as my heart grows faint...". These are the supplications of a sinner in need of a Savior. There is nothing lighthearted about the cry of desperation from one who has been convicted of his total depravity.

Deliverance...a beautiful word to the one who has been graced with the knowledge of his need of it. His cry shall be, deliver me oh Lord for I cannot deliver myself. If justice be meted out to this sinner, surely hell will be my portion. The fear is derived from the knowledge that all is naked before God and nowhere to hide anything. All is open and exposed to this all-seeing King. Yet fear is also a gift in that it is the by-product of wisdom that shows the sinner his profound need. His darkness is softened as he is allowed to see through a glass darkly.

My most coveted memories of church services over the last fifty plus years involved the moments when, individually or collectively, members of the congregation were made to melt in tears...even screams. I have been blessed to see a church filled with His children all removed from themselves and transported to an unspeakable place filled with His unspeakable riches for a short while.

Yes, the tears, the screams were for joy. And, thus, the duality of God's children was revealed in this solemn place. The flesh and the spirit...tears of grief and tears of joy...the feeling sense of His love and the separation from it. All these states manifest a unique relationship between God and His children as He brings them down and lifts them higher than the mountains. He refines them with fire and delivers them to a safe haven where their wounds are allowed to heal for a while.

But, for God's children there is no continuing city here. This warfare must rage within their hearts as long as their sentence continues until the end of their life here on earth. There is no other way for a sinner to be brought to the knowledge of what he is by nature and by practice and to be shown the riches of

the Father.

Great writing is often induced by pain and suffering, but so are the most precious of feelings and memories. His grace is sufficient, and He will perform a good work in His children as He turns their pain to never ending joy through the salvation of Jesus Christ.

Jerry T. Woodlief
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VOICES OF THE PAST

GIFTS IN THE CHURCH

The gifts of our Savior to the church have all been named in the Acts and letters of the apostles, and their order and purpose fully set forth. The apostles, first in order, had peculiar authority, which they made known to the saints on their first coming to them, claiming obedience to their judgments, not because of any superior merit in themselves, but because of their appointment as apostles "by the will of God." They were prepared by the inspiration of the holy Spirit to render infallible judgments, to declare the doctrine of God in the only form of words in which it can ever be expressed by men with absolute accuracy, and to set in order every ordinance of the Lord, and every gift given to the church, and all the forms of worship and service. They have taught, as Jesus commanded them to do, the observance of all things whatsoever he commanded them, so that nothing is lacking in the Scriptures of the New Testament that is necessary to show to every true seeker his place and privilege and duty in the church of God, and to regulate his conduct in the world.

In regard to every other gift, beside that of the apostles, the church is the judge. "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" No one but the apostles can say to the church, "I am sent to you by the Lord, and on this account it is your duty to receive and obey my words." In regard to all other gifts the judgment is with the church. Not only is the first recognition of the gift by the church, but also the call by which its character and exercise are to be acknowledged. The gift will often be seen by the church while the man in whom it is seen does not as yet know the nature and meaning of his own exercises, and he is often surprised and rebellious when informed of the mind of the church concerning him. Aside from the judgment of the church there is no reliable evidence of a gift.

The church is presented by the apostles as having possession and control of the members and gifts, not they of the church. The authority by which the gift is upheld is in the church, which is there shown, in figure, as a candlestick, upholding the candle. The gift thus recognized and upheld by the fellowship of the church reflects its light upon the body, and rules over the church with all the authority of the Word which has established and defined the gift and its order and province. The rule and authority are

in the office and in the word administered, not in the man as having superior qualities. Of this also the church is the judge as to whether the word is rightly administered and the office used well. The church set apart the seven. (Acts vi. 3.) The church, by the command of the Holy Ghost, separated Barnabas and Saul unto the Lord for a certain work unto which he had called them. (Acts xiii. 1, 2.)

To anyone who comes to the saints claiming to be sent to them of God they can say, "Tell us your message, and we will judge whether you are sent unto us from the Lord." Even in the peculiar work of the apostles there was a manifestation of their power and authority in the consciences of the saints, by which they were commended unto them as sent to them of the Lord. (2 Cor. i. 2; iv. 2; v. 11.) It is a man's gift, not his intellectual power, personal attractions or exalted position in the world, which makes room for him in the church of God, and "brings him before great men." This is true when one comes to the Lord's people in written communications, as well as when he speaks in their presence. We are to bear in mind, however, that there is no gift presented in the Scriptures whose ministration to the church is by epistolary communication except that of the apostles. There is much value in the written works of experienced men to edify and comfort spiritual readers; but the peculiar authority of a gift of Jesus to the church does not attach to that exercise. At least I find no intimation in the Scriptures that anything which has been written since the last of the apostolic writings has any such authority over the saints as do the inspired writings, and as does the proper exercise of the divinely appointed gifts in the church. For in the orderly meetings of a gospel church, and nowhere else, authoritative gospel work is done. Christ is in the midst of the church, even where two or three are gathered together in his name, and there is his judgment-seat.

The call came from Cornelius to Peter, not from Peter to Cornelius. Neither knew at first the purpose of God, who was directing each, but when Peter, who was an Elder as well as an apostle, had arrived, and each had recounted his experience, then Cornelius announced the authoritative conclusion: "And thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God."

And not only as to the gifts, but as to their proper exercise, the judgment is to be given by the church, not by the one exercising the gift. **"Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge." —1 Cor. xiv. 29.** No man or church can direct as to what message shall be delivered, but they shall judge as to its character and authority after it has been spoken. There is authority in the gift, but its exercise is in, and through, and with the faith of the saints, not over their faith.

The judgment of the saints when they judge angels is not the cold conclusion of natural wisdom and knowledge, but the warm experience of the word of truth in the new heart and in the cleansed conscience, coming "in power, in the

Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." It is a sweet and blessed privilege thus to sit in judgment of angels, and of their messages and work, if they are truly the Lord's messengers; for even when the message is one of reproof to the soul it is a sweet token of the remembrance of our faithful and loving God. But when the power is lacking, and there is no commendation of the word spoken to our consciences in the sight of God, it is a dreary and desolate time with the soul of the hearer.

Wherever errors are seen in the doctrine proclaimed by any with whom we stand in church relationship, or in their walk, I regard it as a duty to take such a course with regard to them as is directed by the Savior and his apostles. In the proper performance of this most solemn duty divine authority will be felt, and its effect seen. The conversion of the erring brother is the only right motive for approaching him on the subject of his faults, and the salvation of others from the error is the only valid reason for speaking of his faults publicly, when their public character has made that course necessary. It is only by *causing one to see his error* that he can be converted from it, not by an assumption of authority to declare that an error is held, or has been committed, and only a plain exposition of the error by the Scriptures, not by the decision of councils, will be effectual for good to the brethren.

The communications of a minister of the gospel with regard to spiritual things should and will receive careful consideration from brethren generally, because of his office, in which he is called to devote his life to attendance upon such things. Yet we must remember that what he says, either from the pulpit or the press, can only be commended to the saints by its own intrinsic value. The convincing power and authority with which it is given him to teach, rebuke and warn, will appear in the words spoken, as they are seen and felt to be according to the oracles of God.

To the above, which I find among my unpublished letters and fragments, I will add a few sentences. It seems to me very important that every member of the church of God should remember and feel his or her own individual place and responsibility as one of the members of Christ. While regarding all the gifts in the church as from the Lord, and esteeming them at their true value, and while humbly obedient to the gospel rule which the pastor has over the church, each member must stand before God in his own experience of Jesus as his life and righteousness. He is not lost, swallowed up, in any gift, but has an individual standing. He cannot take any sentiment or truth merely upon the assertion of another. He must have an experimental knowledge of it for himself, and whatever duty is laid upon his conscience by the Spirit he cannot throw off upon another, but must attend to himself. And in this sense there is neither male nor female, Jew nor Greek, but all are members of the body of Christ, and members one of another, and all one in Christ. When led by the Spirit they all dwell together in unity, each one profiting by the exercise

of all the gifts which the Spirit divideth to every man severally as he will, because by the same Spirit each member of the body is taught the same things which are embraced in the ministry of the various gifts. While regarding very highly every gift, and especially those that have the rule over us, we must each be faithful to our own consciences, and speak only what we can see as the truth. But while we can take no sentiment merely upon the assertion of any man, we must hold fast the form of sound words, which we have heard of the apostles, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. We cannot set up any sentiment of our own contrary to any word of inspiration.

JULY 6, 1904.
Elder Silas H. Durand

"A PEOPLE NEAR UNTO HIM"
Psalm 148:14

"How great and glorious is the Lord! Who, by searching, can find out God? Who can find out the Almighty unto perfection? His works are great, sought out of them that take pleasure therein. The heavens, the earth, the sea and all that are therein are the work of His fingers. He sitteth upon the circle of the earth and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers. He stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in. God hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out the heaven with a span and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance. Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket and are counted as the small dust of the balance. Behold, He taketh up the isles as a very little thing. Lift up your eyes on high and behold, who hath treated these things that bringeth out their host by number? He calleth them all by names; for that He is strong in power, not one faileth. He ruleth by His power forever. Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places. He sendeth forth His lightnings, He commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind, fulfilling His word. He ruleth the raging of the sea, He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou? Lo, these are parts of His ways; but how little a portion is heard of Him? But the thunder of His power who can understand? The Lord hath said, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure."

This God, O believer in Jesus, is our Lord forever and ever. He will be our guide even unto death. When we are led to meditate upon the eternity, unchangeable wisdom, the wondrous faithfulness of the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity , whose name is holy, O what is man that God should take knowledge of him, or the son of man that He should visit him? Why should the Lord take pleasure in, why should he love and behold with delight such poor worms, who in comparison to His infinite being glory and power are counted

to Him less than nothing, and vanity? (Isaiah 11: 17).

And can it be that you, dear reader, that I, that we poor, vile sinners, are included in the number of a people near unto Him? Who is this people? They are the Israel of God; they are the chosen of God; chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world— Eph. 1:4— eternally loved of Jehovah (Jer. 31:3). They are the portion which God has chosen Himself, and are peculiar treasure (Ex. 19:5). Do we not, dear children of God, when led to read or think upon the glorious and unspeakable mysteries recorded in the Scriptures, feel that these things are too wonderful for such poor sinful worms to be embraced in, the eternal love and delight of Jehovah?

But, "the things of Christ," though unknown, and exceeding all the powers of the natural mind to comprehend, are most sweetly revealed to the loved and chosen race by the Holy Spirit, who is the infallible Teacher of all the redeemed of the Lord of hosts.

"A people near unto Him." O how very far off am I by nature! The Lord is holy and pure, but I am so impure, so vile. When thy eyes are turned within, truly I am nothing but sin: Then, at the thought of the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, the Lord so high, and I a loathsome sinner, sunk so low. How can it be that I can be, that I can have hope that I am among "a people near unto Him?" Let us, dear children of God, take a glimpse or two into this precious subject as it is contained in the Scriptures, and I know you will agree that this can only be done unto edification by the leading and instruction of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost. O how blessed, how sweet, are those seasons in our life when we find in our souls to acknowledge our dependence upon our God, and are found longing for divine teaching, heavenly food and more and more revelations of the kindness and tender love of Jehovah to our souls. In the 8th chapter of Proverbs, Christ, "the wisdom of God," 1 Cor. 1:24, says, **"The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old, I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When** *there were* **no depths, I was brought forth; when** *there were* **no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When He prepared the heavens, I** *was* **there: when He set a compass upon the face of the depth: when He established the clouds above: when He strengthened the fountains of the deep: when He gave to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment: when He appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by Him,** *as* **one brought up** *with Him*: **and I was daily** *His* **delight, rejoicing always before Him; rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth: and my delights** *were* **with the sons of men."** This is that One whom the Father calls "My dear Son," speaking in the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, for the

Son of God is the surety of this testament. Before the world was the Eternal Son of God, who in the fullness of time, was made flesh, took into union with himself the Holy Child Jesus, born of the Virgin Mary , saw His seed, He beheld and delighted in the members of His body the church. Thus, in Psalm 139, speaking in David, He says, "My substance was not hid from Thee, when I was made in secret and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect, and in Thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there were none of then." "Christ's body, which is the church," Eph. 1:22-23, was given to Him in the everlasting covenant by the Father. "Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me." These are the elect of God, chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. They were chosen not as apart from Christ Jesus, but in Him their Head. "Behold My servant whom I uphold, Mine elect in whom my soul delighteth" (Isaiah 42.1). So, how blessedly the apostle sings, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love" (Eph. 1:3-4). O how precious is the thought that our life is hid with Christ in God; God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. If we are favored with the sweet evidence of this, then,

"More happy, but not more secure
The glorified spirits in heaven."

For, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory" (Col. 3:3-4).

No separation; from eternity to eternity one with Christ Jesus. Look at this wonderful record concerning the person of our Head, our Husband, our Redeemer, our All. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." Thus we who now are poor, vile sinners, who mourn because of our iniquities, loathing ourselves in our own sight, and find ever springing up hungerings and thirstings after righteousness were chosen in Christ Jesus, and in Him given eternal life, blessed with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places, and contemplating our fall in Adam, our earthly head, we, saith the apostle, "are saved and called with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Tim. 1:9).

The church of Christ therefore as viewed in Him, her Head, has ever been in eternal unity of life with the Word, who in the beginning was with God, and is God; for in Him was our life, and our precious Christ declares in John 17:24: "Father, Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world." And it is won-

derfully, blessedly true that all the elect, all the family of the Most High God, in heaven and in the earth, from the least unto the greatest, are in Jesus, the Word and made flesh, bound up in Him, the bundle of life with Jehovah, their God (1 Sam. 25:29). Therefore our Jesus says unto God, our heavenly Father, "Thou hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me; Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:23-24). "I was daily His delight" (Prov. 8:30). The Church and Christ Jesus are one; for in Him is her life, and thus she is in Him. Her name therefore is Hephzibah, Jehovah's delight is in her (Isaiah 62:4). "I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him." Yes, Christ Jesus, the Word, loved His Bride, loved the members of His body. He, the Life, in the everlasting covenant, rejoiced before the Father, "Rejoicing in the habitable parts of His earth, and My delights were with the sons of men."

"A people near unto Him." From eternity near unto Jehovah, in eternal life oneness with Jesus, the Word, the Eternal Son of God. This is the source from whence is derived the foundation upon which is founded every aspect in which we view the nearness of the elect unto God. "A people near unto Him." "For in the person of His Son I am as near as He."

"Before Thy hands had made
The sun to rule by day,
Or earth's foundations laid,
Or fashioned Adam's clay,
What thoughts of peace and mercy flowed
In thy dear bosom, O my God!
A monument of grace
A sinner saved by blood;
The streams of love I trace
Up to their Fountain, God;
And in His sacred bosom see
Eternal thoughts of love to me."

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God. Therefore the world knoweth us not because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God." Thus the Lord possesses "A people near unto Him." They are "the household of God" (Eph. 2:19). This revelation in the gospel of Christ, like all other things belonging to the household of faith, is hidden from the wise and prudent of this world. It is altogether beyond the thoughts of the natural man, and he cannot know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. Natural reason even of the saints of God would sometimes send forth the challenge. "How can a puny creature be a child of God?" How can a mortal man call the eternal immutable God "My Father?" It is all bound up in Jesus, the Son of God. He was with the Father before the world was—John 17 —and in the fullness of time, according to the everlasting covenant, "God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father" (Gal. 4:4-6). The will, the works of the creature, had nothing to do to bring this to

pass, but all proceedeth from the Lord of hosts, who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.

According, therefore, to His eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, whom He did foreknow (His loved, His elect), He predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved" (Eph. 1:5; Rom. 8:29-30). But you say, "I have felt and even now sometimes fear, that I am an alien, a stranger, a foreigner, and do not know that I belong to the house of God"; and others with no difficulty can say, "Our Father which art in heaven," I often feel this to be something too great for such a poor sinner like me. The popular religionists, who quite easily account themselves to be Christians, say in their doctrines that all mankind are the children of God, therefore it is the duty of every one to call God "My Father." But this is not agreeable to the doctrine of Christ, and is at variance with the experience of all who are the taught of the Lord. Among the first things that the sinner, taught of God, is brought to feel is that by nature he is an enemy to God by wicked works, that the carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; so that they that are in the flesh cannot please God. This bitter experience is learned by as many as are led by the Spirit of God, and such are the sons of God (Rom. 8:14). As outcasts from God, separated from the Lord by their sins, they feel they dare not call God their Father, they feel they have not the marks, that they have not the spot of His children (Deut. 32:5). It is in the power of the Holy Spirit alone that we can feel and cry, "Abba, Father" (John 1:12).

In the experience of each one of the chosen family there is a set time when they are born again, "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." They believe on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the working of His mighty power, and receive Jesus as the Christ, who is all, and in all, their hope, their salvation. Jehovah, their Heavenly Father, sends forth the Spirit of His Son into their hearts, crying, "Abba, Father." "Thou shalt call Me, My Father" and shalt not turn away from Me" (Jer. 3:19). This is experimentally realizing that God has translated us from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son. No more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God (Eph. 2:19).

Oh, what an entrance is this among the dear children of God! We are made nigh by the blood of Christ, we, who were some time alienated, and enemies in our minds by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, presenting us unblamable and unreprovable in the sight of God, and our Father. O when this is sealed home in our hearts by the Comforter (who takes of the thing of Christ and shows them unto us) then with what simplicity does the dear child of God approach unto the Lord and say, "Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name." We feel to be one with the

Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God—John 17:4-5—who said to Mary Magdalene, "I ascend unto My Father and your Father, to My God and your God." It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but all is settled, and my soul approves it well. "We are predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. We have received the spirit of adoption, and we are waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body (Rom. 8:19-23). God shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself (Phil. 3:21). In the resurrection we shall awake in His likeness; this mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption. We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. "A people near unto Him."

FREDERICK W. KEENE
Raleigh, N. C.

ST. MATTHEW 20: 2-4.

And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace,

Again he went out, about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.

PSALM 114

When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language;

Judah was his sanctuary, *and* **Israel his dominion.**

The sea saw *it*, **and fled: Jordan was driven back.**

The mountains skipped like rams, *and* **the little hills like lambs.**

What *ailed* **thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan,** *that* **thou wast driven back?**

Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams; *and* **ye little hills, like lambs?**

Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob;

Which turned the rock *into* **a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters.**

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 04/12

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

1907 - Out of Thee Shall Come Forth A Ruler
Written by
William Middleton Smoot
March, 1907

"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, *though* **thou be little among the thousands of Judah,** *yet* **out of thee shall He come forth unto Me** *that is* **to be Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth** *have been* **from of old, from everlasting." - Micah v.2.**

It has been the good pleasure of Israel's God to reveal His power, wisdom and preserving care over Israel from time to time, by reducing them in numbers, by bringing them to low and apparently impoverished conditions, from which no hand but His could deliver, and then to reveal His wisdom and power in gloriously delivering, sustaining, and, manifesting them as His own peculiar treasure. We have continued evidence of this in prophecy and in type, under the Old dispensation and in plain testimony under the New; and our own experience confirms the same truth.

The text under consideration is of this character. It was a prophecy made in the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah, and at the same time when Israel had been reduced in outward appearance to a very small remnant and it spoke of a still further reduction, that Israel should be brought low in order that she might be uplifted by Almighty power and to the honour and glory of His great name.

"But thou Bethlehem Ephratah, *though* **thou be little among the thousands of Judah."** In selecting the place that should mark the advent of the King of kings into the world, this small and apparently insignificant city is chosen out of one of the smallest tribes in Israel, emphasizing the fact that it should not be by worldly might, nor power that this kingdom should be established, but by the Spirit of God.

And as this should be the case with the manifestation in time of the King, so should it be the nature of the manifestation of His kingdom: as it is declared by the prophet: **"The stone cut out of the mountain <u>without hands"</u>- Daniel ii, 45.** A *very small remnant, a "little flock,"* and *&c.,* are the figures used to designate the outward appearing of this kingdom whose God is the Lord. *"This people,"* He says, *"have I formed for Myself; they shall shew forth My praise,* " and all of His dealings with them reveal His wisdom, power and glorious way of life eternal.

"*Yet* **out of thee shall He come forth unto Me** *that is* **to be Ruler in Israel. "** Wonderful prophecy! Manifesting the power and glory of the God of all time and eternity; His wise and mysterious manner of revealing His way in the development of His chosen people is crowned with glory .

The complete control and absolute predestination of Israel's God over all the surroundings of Israel; over all things in time as well as all things in eternity, is here exhibited in His selection of the place and manner of the incarnation of the Son of God.

It is useless to talk of Predestination that fails to cover <u>all</u>, whether in time

or in eternity, whether large or small events, whether righteous or unrighteous. That absolute decree that determines the coming of the Saviour must necessarily control all of the surroundings that pertain thereunto. And that predestination which decrees the development of the kingdom with each particular member thereof, must absolutely control all of the surroundings relating to that development. In order to do this He must control all events, circumstances, incidents and minutia; and to absolutely control them. He must predestinate them to come to pass exactly as He decreed it in His infinite wisdom. That

"Each opening leaf, and every stroke,
Shall fulfill some deep design."

This is true of the dealings of God with Israel in whole and in part, individually and collectively. Then from the little town of Bethlehem there came the **Ruler** exactly as He predestinated and revealed Him. He spake as never man spake.

He is and forever shall be the Ruler in Israel. And of *"the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end,* " upon the throne of David and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. " *The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."* - Isaiah ix, 7.

He rules in the hearts of His people. He governs in absolute control; and as surely as the kingdom shall not be left to other people (Daniel ii, 44,) so surely the princely power shall be ever held in the hands of this eternal and Divinely anointed King: "*and He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written,* ***King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.***"- **Revelation xix, 16.**

"*Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*" Daniel speaks of Him in somewhat similar strain: **"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment** *was* **white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne** *was like* **the fiery flame,** *and* **His wheels** *as* **burning fire."- Daniel vii, 9.**

Ancient of Days! Wonderful name! Co-equal with and co-equal to all days. Truly the goings forth of such a Character must have been" *from of old, from everlasting."* **"I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When** *there were* **no depths, I was brought forth; when** *there were* **no fountains abounding with water."- Proverbs viii, 23,24.**

Every revelation of the wonders of His will, (His goings forth,) has assuredly been from everlasting. Yes, when there were no (earthly) depths, before the mortal hills were formed. The deep laid ways of truth eternal must necessarily have been from "of old from everlasting," in order to outlive the transitory and fast-passing things of time.

It is said of the living creatures Ezekiel 1:18, that **"their rings** *were* **full of eyes round about them four."** They could certainly see backward as well as forward; backward to the fountain source, and forward to the grand consummation: hence a man claiming to be a Gospel minister shows the ab-

surdity of such a claim, when he fails to see backward, *i.e,* the eternal existence of the Church in Christ, the chosen seed thereof.

But we pass to the application of our subject in the travel of Israel to-day; **"for whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." - Romans xv, 4.**

Multiplied types have clearly revealed the same truth presented in the prophecy under consideration. We might quote almost without limit from type and from prophecy:

Amos says. **"O Lord God, cease, I beseech Thee: by whom shall Jacob arise? For he *is* small. "Amos vii, 5.** Again; **"Thus He shewed me: and, behold, the Lord stood upon a wall *made* by a plumb-line, with a plumb-line in His hand. " "He looked for a city which hath foundations, whose, Builder and Maker *is* God."- Hebrews xi: 10.**

The revelation of this heavenly building shall be to the honour, to the praise, and to the glory of God; to the debasing of every false way, to the setting aside of all earthly means, to the destruction of all mortal hope, and to the wreck and ruin of every vain mortal expectation. God alone shall be glorified. Hence He selected a time when Israel had been brought low, selecting a little city from among her larger ones, selecting a manger and not a palace, electing a carpenter, and not a worldly prince; that it might be by free and sovereign grace, and not by works; that it might be to the glory of God and not to the pride of man.

And as that King was thus made manifest so shall the subjects of His kingdom be made manifest. Hence from the lowest callings in life He selected His apostles, so it was said that *"they were unlearned and ignorant men.* " -Acts iv: 13.

And the same wondrous truth is shown in the calling of the subjects of this kingdom. **"Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom?"- James ii, 5. "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble *are called.* But God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea* and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are. "- 1 Corinthians 1: 26-28.** How comforting is this to those who feelingly find themselves poor in spirit, foolish, not wise, but base and despised for their faith *in* the Truth which is hid from the world and its religions? These are such that are glad that" *no flesh should glory in His presence.*"

Sweet in the contemplation of a "good hope through grace," the world of the despised and unlearned, the ignorant and yet well taught by that anointing, being numbered among those with

an unction and "needeth not to be taught" can rejoice in a free, full, and accomplished salvation.

In line with this wondrous and Divinely appointed way of developing His kingdom, it is His good pleasure to bring His people low, that He might manifest His saving power, and wondrous way without the help of flesh. **"And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people that** *are* **with thee** *are* **too many for Me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against Me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me." - Judges vii, 2. "I kill and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; neither** *is there any* **that can deliver out of my hand."- Deuteronomy xxxii, 39.**

Thus the children of grace are brought to praise the God of Israel, and look to His preserving care. It is written; **"Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God."- Isaiah lxii 3.** Again; **"Thou shalt no more be termed 'Forsaken;' neither shall thy land be termed 'Desolate:' but thou shalt be called Hephzibah and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married."** Assuredly is the church a *"crown of glory"* in the Lord's hand, for He keeps her in Gospel order and doctrinally purity. **"This people have I formed for Myself; they shall shew forth My praise." - Isaiah :xliii: 21.**

As brought down to the depths of spiritual poverty, despair, desolation, and death and raised to the heights of glory unfading; as a people exhibiting His unceasing preserving care, they are to His praise and glory and He has prepared them to sing the wonders of His grace. *"Let* **the high** *praises* **of God** *be* **in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand." Psalm cxlix: 6.**

"Filled with the delight of such rapture we view. "

The sorrows, and trials, and cares of this world,

A very small atom; and simply to show,

His wonders of love, and God's glory unfold."

"Let Israel rejoice in Him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King." - Psalms cxlix, 2.

William Middleton Smoot

MEETINGS

LOWER MAYO FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday only, April 29th, 2012. We hope to start singing at 10:00 A.M. and preaching at 10:30. Roaring River Church will host the meeting. Directions for those who do not know the location:

the meeting house is located at 10060 Austin-Trap Hill Road, Trap Hill, N.C. 28685. From I-77, Exit #93. Turn west on Zepher Road. Go about 3 miles and turn right on Mountain Park Road. Go through the 4 Way stop at Mountain Park. Go to the next stop sign and turn left on Thurman Road. Go about 200 yards and turn right on US 21. Go 4 miles and turn left on Trap Hill Road. Go 200 yards and turn left on Roaring Gap Church Road. Go to stop sign and turn right on Austin-Trap Hill Road. Go 1 ½ miles to church on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in salvation by grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

Skewarkey Union
(Eastern Kehukee Association)

Skewarkey Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union, the fifth Sunday of April 29, 2012. The church is located on Hwy 17 in Williamston, N.C. Preaching services begin at 10:30 am.

We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union will be held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church located at the corner of Weatherford Drive and Music St. Gretna, VA in Pittsylvania County. Saturday before the fifth Sunday in April 2012 the song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and expecially all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton
Assistant Clerk Staunton River
Primitive Baptist Association

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held at Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church, located at corner of Tate and Carr Streets in Greensboro, NC on Sunday April 29, 2012. Preaching service begins at 10:30 A.M.

We welcome and invite the ministers of our faith and order as well as our brethren and friends to be with us.

Brother Wayne Edwards, Clerk

Psalm 8:1.

O Lord our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 2012

Bruce Smith, VA	25.00
M.L. Richardson, FL	5.00
Raymond Adams, VA	5.00
Livie Thompson, VA	5.00
Alvis & Gay Beacham, NC	25.00
Mamie Ferguson, VA	5.00
John Schulz, WY	5.00
Phillip Hash, VA	10.00
Maxey Delp, VA	10.00
James Knight, NC	25.00
Elder Mark Terry, VA	5.00
Banks Conner, VA	25.00
Hewatt Fleming, GA	5.00
David Weber, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

ORA AGEE GUTHRIE

Again I attempt to write an obituary for another member of Salem Primitive Baptist Church, Sister Ora Agee Guthrie who passed away December 30, 2011. She is preceded in death by her husband of 65 years, Herman Guthrie.

She is survived by her son, Shelton Guthrie, a daughter, Judy Perdue, and grandchildren Doug Perdue and Anne McCrosby, along with her husband Eric McCrosby. She was born February 28th, **1915 to Floyd and Kitty Agee, and had 10 siblings: Elder Roy Agee, Roscoe Agee, Andrew Agee, Zora Adams, and Ruie Poff have preceded her in death. Surviving are Ruby Dyer, Doris Hawley, Frances Lewis, Madeline Bonham, and Floyd Agee, Jr.**

Sister Ora came to Salem Church in April of 2002, by letter. She believed in Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. Due to her health she hadn't been able to come to church for some time. She was 96 years old at death. God blessed her with a long life and lovely family.

Funeral Services were held at 11 a.m. Wednesday, January 4th, 2012 in the Chapel of John M. Oakey and Son Funeral Home in Salem, Virginia. Elder Larry Hollandsworth and Elder Carl Terry officiated. Internment followed at Sherwood Memorial Park.

We trust that our loss will be her eternal gain.

Written in love by:
Mary Poff, Clerk
Carl Terry, Moderator

Psalm 113:3.

From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the Lord's name *is* to be praised.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
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POETRY

FEBRUARY 1, 1898.

"THERE IS NO SPOT IN THEE."

Defiled though I am, and a sinner undone,
I have hope, and rejoice in the crucified One.
The blood of his cross speaketh thus unto me,
"Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee."

Often my heart aches o'er inward uncleanness;
I am wearied, I faint, I yearn for completeness;
Thy righteousness, Jesus doth say, is of me;
"Thy art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee."

In myself I'm all blemishes, wrinkles and spots,
I have comeliness none, I'm a mass of vile blots;
The Lamb's precious blood is my soul's only plea,
And Christ in my heart says,"There is no spot in thee."
A song I would sing to the Lamb on the throne:
Jesus suffered and bled, all my sins to atone.

How blissful, how sweet, is his sweet word to me,
"Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee."

O, I'm all imperfection, a vile, dark spot;
Unsightly, I am one of the "things that are not."
I'm sinful, I'm nothing, yet something I am,
Through the obedience, sufferings and blood of the Lamb.

Amidst my temptations, my trials and grief,
Let the truth of the gospel my soul bring relief;
O speak to my heart, to a poor worm like me,
"Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee."
O, 'tis all through exceeding riches of grace,
That I stand all complete 'neath the smile of God's face.
The voice of the Lamb is such music to me,
"Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee."
The accuser whispers, Thou art a dark spot;
I am pained, I am shamed, I can answer him not.
At the word of my Lord he nonplussed doth flee;
"Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee."

FRED. W. KEENE.
North Berwick, Maine.

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JOHN 3: 11-15.

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you *of* heavenly things?

And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that come down from heaven, *even* the Son of man which is in heaven.

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

EDITORIAL

"This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it *seemed* great unto *me: There was a* little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it: Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man." Eccl. 9: 13-15.

Elder J.B. Farmer

Here is a revelation of the wisdom of God unto a child of God. About 3,000 years ago Solomon was shown, and was blessed to write down in a figure, some of the great mysteries of God concerning His Son, His church, His people, Satan and his purpose, and finally the great victory of God on behalf of His own. God gave Solomon a vision and a hope in the finished work of Christ Jesus the Lord. These same things have been revealed unto the children of God through the ages even down to our time. We trust that, by grace, we are looking back to the manifestation of Jesus Christ the Son of God, who came into the world in the flesh to save His people, with the same faith and hope with which Solomon and others looked forward.

The children of God are taught that the people of God are the fewest of all people upon the face of this earth, that they are a remnant according to the election of grace. They are taught that these people are gathered together into a little city, which is the church of the living God. This little city is separate and apart from all the other cities of this world and has only a few men in it. **"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in there at: Because straight *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."** This is the City, which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. This city is built upon the Rock, which is Jesus the Christ. And Jesus, who cannot lie or fail in a promise said that the gates of hell would not prevail against it. And what He said must necessarily come to pass. **"For he spake, and it was *done;* he commanded, and it stood fast."**

This little City has been and now is under siege, and without are strong forces that have sought to destroy It, even Satan and his host. He has built great bulwarks against the walls trying to break them down and overcome the inhabitants. This is not a visible military force that is strong in the flesh, but rather is a mysterious working of iniquity that is only recognized by the children of God. And they only understand this according to the faith of the Son of God, which is given unto them. The blessed apostle said, **"We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against**

spiritual wickedness in *high* places." The devil works against the little city by way of doubts, fears, deceptions, evil thoughts and imaginations, lies and accusations along with the threats of death. But thanks be unto God, there was a poor wise man found within those walls, who by His wisdom was able to overcome all the wiles of the devil. That poor wise man is the Lord himself who dwells with His people, and who will never leave nor forsake them.

This poor man became poor that we might become rich. When one said he would follow Jesus, He said to him, **"The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay *his* head."** He had no earthly possessions. When He was being crucified, even the clothes He wore were taken from Him, and lots were cast to determine who should have them. The living Word of God, who made the heavens and the earth and all that is in them, put off His glory, left heaven and immortal glory, and came down to earth and lived in poverty to deliver His people from all that would destroy them.

The poor man's wisdom was not for Him to come as an earthly king with great power and authority, but Jesus came as the lowly Lamb of God. He was born of a virgin according to the prophesy that went on before Him. He took upon Himself the likeness of sinful flesh, yet He was without sin. Although He could have asked His Father, and His Father could have sent twelve legions of angels to deliver Him from wicked men, He did not. Rather Jesus said, **"My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight..."** He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and being found in fashion as a man became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. He took our sins unto Himself and was made to be sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. By His wisdom He defeated Satan, sin, death, and the grave.

The poor man's wisdom was to destroy the power of the devil by giving His life a ransom for many. Jesus willingly bore the wrath of God for the sins of His people that He loved with an everlasting love. By His death, He paid the price of redemption for His beloved bride, in order that no charge could ever again be brought against her. When Satan accuses her, Christ intercedes on her behalf showing that the sacrifice of Himself is sufficient to atone for her sins. Satan has no power to make his accusations stand.

The poor man's wisdom was to destroy the power of sin by placing His bride under grace, and not under the law. He fulfilled the law to the jot and the tittle by living the perfect life, and by canceling her sin debt with His life's-blood, and imputing His righteousness to her, thereby making His bride perfect in Him. It is written, **"For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."** No longer does the law have any power over the children of God, because they are delivered from its curse. They no longer operate under the principle of you must taste not, touch not, and handle not. They now live by the rule

that all things are lawful for them, but all things are not expedient or profitable for them. The grace of God has nullified the curse of the law.

The poor man's wisdom was to break the power of death, by His resurrection from the dead. No man took His life from Him but He laid it down of Himself and He took it up again according to His word. No man could touch Jesus until He willingly gave Himself over to them. He was raised after three days and nights in the grave, and after that He appeared unto His disciples and unto above 500 witnesses at once, then he ascended into heaven. Death could not hold Him. He is alive forever more, and because He lives, you shall also live. He is now in heaven where He ever lives to make intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And from heaven He shall appear a second time without sin unto salvation.

The poor man's wisdom was to take away the seeming victory of the grave. Many multitudes have gone into the graves before us, and we shall soon follow them if the Lord of glory does not appear before we die. Death seems so final to the natural mind. We hear many saying that this life is all there is. They say, "Let us eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we shall die." The worldly wisdom is to enjoy life to the fullest. The worldly mind seeks to gather all the wealth possible, to seek the approval of men, and to live in pleasure. But the children of God are exhorted to love not the world, neither the things that are in the world, for all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. This world is not your home. You are strangers and pilgrims here. You are only passing through. But it is appointed unto man once to die, and after that the judgment. We must all die, but there is a resurrection to life for all that have done good (by grace). And there is a resurrection to damnation for all that have done evil. The grave cannot hold your body any more than it held the body of Jesus. **"O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."**

No man remembered that same poor man. **"He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on His name:"** Men in nature do not see or know any spiritual things because they are foolishness unto them - they are only spiritually discerned. Men in nature worship the creature more than, or rather than, the creator. They worship men and the works of men, and never remember or know that same poor man who God hath highly exalted and given a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven and in earth and under the earth and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord

to the glory of God the Father. They do not see or know that He will soon return in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints. But all shall know Him when He comes in great power and glory. In that day, the wicked shall cower in fear and in dread of destruction, but the elect shall exult in God with exceeding great joy.

"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation; And has made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power *be* unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

But the wicked shall have quite a different experience. **"And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"** Every man shall stand or fall according to his master. If the Lord is our Master, we shall surely stand. **"Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand."**

I trust that this was written in love, and in hope of eternal life.

J. B. Farmer
3-25-2012

VOICES OF THE PAST

Dear Brother Hutchens:

As you see this is an old letter. It was published in a paper called "Zion's Witness", November 1887. As I read it, O what memories were stirred up in me, how all the sore, bitter trials, the adversities I then endured were remembered to me.

I have copied it out of a bound volume and it will make, I trust, good reading to some of the tried family of God.

This "Zion's Witness" was published by Arthur Wilcockson at Hull, England. It is not published now. He died about 1889.

I am yours in the Lord,
Frederick W. Keene.

Dear Brother in Christ Jesus:

This precious relationship, I hope, truly subsists between us. I feel that you have expressed in your letter that which I have realized in my own soul, and which I believe belongs only to the redeemed of the Lord. You speak of feeling often times as though you were as a partridge hunted in the mountains (1 Sam. 26:20), so that you are made to cry unto the Lord for salvation. This certainly is the predestined path that "the very elect" are appointed by their glorious and gracious God to walk in while in this world. "Ye shall have tribulation," is what our beloved Jesus has declared to be the heritage of those who are truly His beloved and His own, and if we are called to walk in this way, to bear the marks of His blood-bought flock, to follow our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, happy are we, and highly favored indeed!

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." Often my soul has been hunted and chased in the mountains. Satan has been a cruel hunter; and with his fiery darts, has often distressed my soul. Doubts and fears have often (and do still) pursued and harrassed my life. I am frequently weary, faint, and cast down.

For the last few months, O the trials that have been in my life, so many, so varied, and O the anguish, the trouble, the sore distress I have been called to endure! Even last night I was in the deeps, in painful darkness, and there came an insinuation into my mind that I was like Saul whom the Lord had forsaken, and whom He answered not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets. I thought this is very hard. But the enemy was not allowed to triumph altogether, for there was a still small voice which said, "Neither give place to the devil". This delivered me from this snare, but O, the trouble that I was still in, I could not pray! I felt to be overwhelmed (but, blessed be God, when I knew not where I was, or what would become of me, "Thou knewest my path" (Psalm 113:3). I could not sleep, because of my trouble, and while feeling my utter weakness, and plunged down in great discouragement and darkness, the adversary the devil, came in like a flood, and as with a voice of a roaring

lion, said: "Persecute and take him, for there is none to deliver him" (Psalm 71:11). So sudden, and sharp was this, that I cried out aloud. My dear wife inquired of me, "What is the matter? What is the matter? What made you cry out like that?" I was so filled with pain, so distressed, so cast down, that I could make her no reply. Today I have felt a little eased, and comforted in this blessed portion of the Scriptures of truth: "By this I know that Thou favorest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me." I cannot with pen and ink, dear brother, narrate the troubles of my soul. What trials I have passed through, especially in the last six years!

There is no creature to whom I can unbosom them-much is yet so dark, so very trying, but I have been wonderfully favored. The Lord has been very tender, and of abundant goodness to me, a poor sinner: and but a short time ago, the unchanging, glorious Lord said to my soul: **"The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry" (Hal. 2:3).**

In how many ways I have been led to trace the hand of the Lord leading me through cutting and cruel trials, and I have been brought into sweet reconciliation to the good pleasure of the Lord concerning me, and have proved the word true with which the Holy Spirit has often comforted my soul: " All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Your life, also, you tell me is much occupied in inquiring of the Lord. Like the Queen of Sheba you are constrained to come, being drawn by the Lord; and such is the pressing need you are made to feel that you find it in your heart to inquire of, and commune with a greater than Solomon, even Jesus, of all that is in your heart (1 Kings 10:2).

Many are your inquiries, and hard your questions, altogether above what you or any creatures is able to settle and determine. But our beloved Emmanuel alone can answer all our inquiries, and fill our heart with His own comfort and peace.

This inquiring of the Lord is a precious evidence that we are the seed of Jacob, and they shall not seek the face of the Lord their God in vain. When Rebekah was with child, "The children struggled together within her, and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the Lord" (Gen 25:22). How often, on account of the warfare between the old and the new man, the flesh and the Spirit, so bitter are the conflicts, so many questionings arising, are we led by the Spirit to inquire, "If it be so (that I am a child of God, if the object of Jehovah's love, special care, and infinite delight), Why am I thus?" Why thus plagued? and precious is the season with us when it is shown to us that it is in the Shulamite that there is to be seen, " As it were, the company of two armies" (Solomon's Song 6:13).

David sings: **"One *thing* have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple" (Psalm 27:4).** This is what in a measure has

been, and is, and will be the experience of the living family of God while here in this world of conflict and tribulation. All through the record in the Holy Scriptures this is declared to be a marked characteristic of the elect of God, to inquire of the Lord. Thousands of times has my poor soul been thus led, and O how very tender have been the dealings, the manifestations, of Jehovah's love to thy soul, but I have often ungrateful proved, often rebelled, but I have been brought down many times with sore travail, and cruel trials, and even now while I am writing this I feel to say, "Let the Lord do with me as seemeth good in His sight." Trials greater than I have yet known, await me, for the Lord has told me so. I sometimes shrink. I ask, "How shall I endure? Not so, my Father." Just now this word is whispered, I hope by the Lord, in my heart: "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass, and as thy days, so shall thy strength be." I would desire in my heart, O Lord, to say: "Thy will be done."

I am not fitted to write just now to you, and it seems strange that I, who have been down in the deeps, in such darkness, temptations and bewilderment of soul, should have written as much as I have. If it be the Lord's will, I should like to hear from you again, of your welfare in the things of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Yours in tribulation,
Frederick W. Keene
February 18, 1887

The Lone Pilgrim, March 1929,
Vol. 7, No. 71

SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

This article was distributed by Elder Stanley Phillips of Mississippi and we thought the readers of the "Signs" would enjoy it.

Editors

[It is likely the following Article was written by Jacob Winchel; the committee members that completed and recommended it was composed of Elders Gilbert Beebe, William Housel, Isaac Hewitt, John St. John and Hiram Horton. This Article is the Circular Letter of the Lexington Old School Baptist Association of New York, 1862.- SCP].

In accordance with our former practice, we address you this, our annual epistle of love, in which we desire to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance of things which you already know, and to exhibit from the Scriptures some of those things which tend to everlasting consolation and good hope through grace. In order to do this, we will ask your attention to Psalm lxxiv. 12:

"For God *is* my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth."

In the context the psalmist speaks of the desolate state of Zion: that the people of God were brought under the dominion of their enemies, who had broken down the carved work of the Sanctuary of God, and that God's people were made to howl, and to lament, in consequence. But in the midst of this desolation, a ray of hope was left them

"*God is* my *King* of *old,*" &c.

It is not infrequently the case that the children of God are brought to the test to know what their God is to them. The answer of faith assures them that all other gods are idols, but our God, the God of Zion, is in the heavens, and He is the King of old: He hath done whatsoever He pleased; He maketh the devices of the people of none effect. To claim that God is *our King*, is to claim that we are subjects of His kingdom, and to acknowledge our obligation of loyalty to His divine government.

All earthly kings and their subjects are alike mortal, for they must all die: but the subjects, or members of the kingdom of our God, shall live and reign with their King, forever; they shall never die. Our King is the self-existent Jehovah, God over all, and blessed forevermore. "I *will extol Thee, my King, and my God.*" He is of old, *"from everlasting and to everlasting He is God."* Our God is the Creator of the heavens and of the earth and of all things; He made the day and the night, the summer and the winter; yea, He *"hath made all things for Himself" even the wicked for the day of evil; and all His works shall praise Him,* " and all His saints shall bless His holy name. His dominion extends over universal nature — and all things, from the fall of empires to the falling of a sparrow, to the fall of an hair of our heads, are under His immediate and personal control; Therefore, the subjects of our King may confidently sing, for,

"Not a single shaft can hit.
Until the God of love sees fit."

This assurance lays the foundation of everlasting consolation and good hope through grace. Our King sits on no precarious throne, nor borrows leave to be; He *"worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."* Hell and death, and heaven, and earth, are all under His absolute power and dominion. With Him are the issues of life and of death; When He created the world, He spake the word and it stood fast -He commanded, and it was done. The heavens declare His glory and the firmament shows His handy work. All this is realized in the assurance that God is our King. All His works praise Him.

His sparkling glory shines in all our eyes behold, and causes us to desire to bow low at His feet and acknowledge His universal dominion. Who would desire to worship less? In all things, the less must yield to the greater, and so in His reign over nature, and in grace, *"He worketh salvation in the earth."* Our King is the God of salvation, neither is there salvation in any other. *"There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby* we *must be saved."*

God is my shield and my glory, and the lifting up of my head; He is the first and the last in salvation; He went forth in the eternal counsel of His own will, and in the everlasting purpose of His sovereign grace — made all the arrangements of the fabric of salvation, and in His own counsel wisely ordered all in the hands of our blessed Mediator, in whom the church of God had her eternal life, *"which was hid with Christ in God."*

All the rights of the eternal throne are secured in Jesus Christ, so that neither wicked men nor devils can effect

them. The very wrath of men shall praise Him, and the remainder of their wrath He will restrain; consequently all the subjects of His kingdom are forever secure from all their rage, and all their enemies shall loose their aim. To accomplish this, He bowed His heavens and came down-He rode upon a chariot, and did fly upon the wings of the wind; He appeared in a body of flesh, and manifested Himself as our Days-Man, who could lay His hands on both. With one hand He takes hold of the throne; the Father says to Him: *"Thy throne,* O *God, is forever and ever: the scepter of Thy kingdom is a right scepter."* With the other hand He takes the poor feeling sinner, draws him out of many waters, and all their sins and sorrows, their shame and disgrace, He bore in His own body on the tree, and He arose from the dead for their justification, and after forty days ascended up on high!

"Thence He arose, ascended high,
And showed our feet the way;
Up to the Lord our flesh shall rise
At the great rising day."

Christ is our Resurrection, and our Life: He is our King, and His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom!

"Jesus reigns, and heaven rejoices!
Jesus reigns, the God of love!"

The kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, and all dominions and powers shall serve and obey Him.

"Her walls are strength, and at her gates,
A guard of heavenly warriors waits;
Nor shall her firm foundation move,
Fix'd on His counsel and His love."

What a source of consolation is this to the children of grace! He that made Israel never slumbers nor sleeps! Let Israel trust in Him that made him, who rideth upon the heavens in her help, and in His excellency on the sky. The Eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath thee are the everlasting arms: This is the Mount Zion over which God, and His glory shall be seen over them. All His subjects speak of His power and talk of His glory. In His kingdom there are no deaths, nor sorrowings, nor crying — their peace is like a river, and their joy is like an overflowing stream. In this kingdom they eat the Bread of Heaven and drink of the rivers of pleasure. Here they all speak the pure language of grace, and all speak the same things, which no others can understand. No discordant notes are heard. They all sing the praise of their God and King. Their theme is and ever was salvation by the free and sovereign grace alone, which they ascribe wholly to Him that hath loved us, and chosen us, and predestinated us to the adoption of children, and preserved us *in Christ Jesus, and called us with an holy calling.* They have no confidence in the flesh. The shout of a King is amongst them. In this kingdom a King reigns in righteousness, and princes rule in judgment. The Law goeth forth from Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem which is above. Here the willing and obedient subjects follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. Here the ministry of the word and all the gifts for the perfecting of the kingdom of Christ

are found, and nowhere else. Their King is the King of peace, and King of righteousness and strength. Such is their Redeemer, the Lord of the whole earth.

"Then let our souls in Zion dwell,
Nor fear the wrath of Rome or hell."

Let the potsherds of the earth strive with the potsherds of the earth - let nations dash each other in pieces - let the earth be removed out of its place, and the sea roar with the swellings thereof, yet undismayed and undaunted we can look up to our God and King.

Dear brethren, this is our high and holy vocation. If the Lord be our King, let us make it manifest in our walk and deportment. Though times grow dark and terrors spread widely around the earth, let His name be our Strong hold in the time of trouble.

"God is my soul's eternal Rock."

Obey the King of Zion — exhort one another to love and good works. Be often at the Mercy Seat, humbled as in the dust, as becomes us. Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts - may He be your fear and your dread. And may a sense of what He has wrought in, and done for you, be the theme to move your tongues and inspire your songs continually, to sound His praise. Study the law of your King from day to day. Obey His precepts and walk in His ordinances. Think of the glory that is to be revealed in us at His coming, and the revelation of His glory, when He shall come with His mighty Angels to take vengeance on them that know not God and obey not our Lord Jesus Christ. When He shall come to be admired by all who love His appearing, and adored by all who believe, then God shall show who is the only and blessed Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light. Then shall He deliver the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all. Then shall we see Christ and be like Him. This honor will be conferred on all the subjects of His glorious Kingdom.

Loren P. Cole, *Moderator*

PROVERBS 24:13-19.

My son, eat thou honey, because it is good; and the honeycomb, *which is* sweet to thy taste:

So *shall* the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul: when thou hast found it, then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off.

Lay not wait, O wicked *man*, against the dwelling of the righteous; spoil not his resting place:

For a just *man* falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief.

Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth:

Lest the Lord see *it*, and it displease him, and he turn away his wrath from him.

Fret not thyself because of evil *men*, neither be thou envious at the wicked.

***"And it shall come to pass** that **whosoever shall call** on **the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.* "- Joel ii, 32.**

Eight centuries were to pass away before the accomplishment of this inspired prophecy, yet notice the assurance and absolute certainty with which the prophet speaks: *"And it shall come to pass."* The declaration is worthy of the great and sovereign power from whence it comes, for it is a message from the throne of God, it is as we are informed in the opening verse of the prophecy, **"The word of the Lord that came to Joel, the son of Pethuel."** The declaration bears the unmistakable evidence of sovereign power. Who but the eternal God of Israel could speak thus? No God who had left a single event to devolve upon *chance* could thus speak. It carries us back to the great Jehovah whose sovereign sway extends over all worlds, creatures and things, temporal or eternal, and the power of darkness as well as light. He is *JEHOVAH,* the self-existing God; and when we speak of Him as Omnipotent, Omniscient, and Omnipresent, we do not use such words for mere form's sake, or in an idle manner, but desire to convey our knowledge of His Infinite wisdom and boundless power, the God who is present everywhere, and nothing can be hidden from His all-searching gaze. The revelation that He has been pleased to make of Himself informs us, **"I** *am* **God, and there** *is* **none else; I** *am* **God, and** *there is* **none like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times** *the things* **that are not** *yet* **done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure."** The message that is delivered from His throne must therefore bear the unmistakable impress of His sovereign power. Joel, eight hundred years before, could speak with the same assurance as Peter, who in the opening hours of the fulfillment of this prophecy, declare: "*This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel.* "

"Firm are the words His prophets give,
Sweet words on which His children live;
Each of them is the voice of God,
Who spake and spread the skies abroad."

Not only were the events perceived in the text and its connection foretold, but the very time in which they were to transpire. Peter, quoting from this prophecy, informs us, *"And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God."* To this agrees the testimony in Ecclesiastes, that there is *"a time to every purpose under the heaven."* The purposes of our God will assuredly be accomplished, each in its proper and appointed time. The *"last days"* referred to by Peter were the closing days of the Jewish dispensation, when the legal heavens were to be rolled away. There is a peculiar solemnity in the expression, *"the last days."* The legal heavens, filled with just and righteous indignation, had long looked down upon a people who were

constantly engaged in violating the Law. Dark clouds had long been gathering, and all over the legal firmament were written the awful chastisement of the just and righteous God upon the people who had violated His law and trampled upon His covenant. The fountains of the great deep were about to be broken up, the windows of heaven opened, and the righteous anger of a just and holy God poured out upon the Jewish nation. **"And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and the remnant whom the Lord shall call." - Joel 2:30-32.**

"Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for *it is* **nigh at hand."** A "day of darkness and of gloominess; a day of clouds and of thick darkness." What strong figures are used here; what signs of awful importance are presented; the darkened heavens filled with fire and smoke, and a gathered nation trembling in the darkness of despair. This, Peter said, was fulfilled at the Pentecost's baptism of cloven tongues. We will turn for a moment from the fulfillment of these things in the closing days of the Jewish dispensation, to their fulfillment in the experience of every redeemed sinner.

The "last days" come upon his soul; the closing hours of the law-system's "do this and live." The legal struggle arrive. It is a time of midnight terror, the heavens are filled with awful fire, *"the pangs of hell gat hold of my soul,"* and signs of destruction, and he trembles before the revelation of the law's holiness and his own sins. Where shall he look, or whither flee? The storm in its fury breaks suddenly upon his guilty soul, sweeping away his every refuge, overflowing all his hiding places and excuses and bearing him swiftly onward upon the dark river of death. His urgent necessity and deep distress forces him to cry out for mercy! The conflict is often concealed from his nearest friends; they meet him in life's daily duties, sometimes with a forced smile upon his countenance, and little think of the fearful storm that is raging within his soul. But such an one rather seeks solitude, where the pent-up emotions of his heart find utterance in deep groans and cries unto God.

It is to such an individual as this that the promise of the above text belongs, **"Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered."** I desire to notice more particularly the *calling on the name of the Lord.* It is not the *cause,* but the *evidence* of life. Through the light of spiritual life eternal, the sinner is brought to see his true standing as a justly condemned sinner. He cries out under the bondage of sin. The felt-need of deliverance is itself the cry. *"Lord, save me!"* cried Peter, as he began to sink. It is said that a certain woman worshiped the Lord, saying, *"Lord, help me!"* These were but the expressions of what was *felt* within. It is the cry of the

soul to which I refer, and that cry is in the very need that one so sensibly feels of salvation from the throne of God. *"God, be merciful to me, a sinner,"* is the constant cry of his heart, while the burden of sin rests upon him, and gloomy terror spreads around him. He has been taught that *"vain is the help of man;"* has come to the end of all creature ability; has climbed to the top of the highest mountain of legal merit, and the waters have still overflowed him there.

Unknown to him, and step by step, the Lord has brought him on, until the appointed hour of His great deliverance has at last arrived. And now the strong tower of salvation by sovereign free grace opens to his view, the *name of the Lord.* This is the name that is *"above every name." "Neither is there salvation in any other;. for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe."* Through the heart-felt experience to which I have referred, the poor struggling sinner finds shelter in the *"name of the Lord."* Nor shall any who come to Jesus in this way ever be turned empty away.

"Such news shall ne'er
Be told in Zion's street,
That some poor soul fell in despair,
And died at Jesus' feet."

The assertion is positive, *"they shall be delivered."* The word shall is used five times in the text, and twice in this portion of it. In the first instance it is said, they *shall* call. It is not left to their choice or decision then. In the next place it is said, they shall *be delivered.* There is therefore no uncertainty about it. The matter is irrevocably fixed. Nor can the vile rantings of the ungodly, or the powers of hell below, prevail to break the eternal decrees of God.

I desire now to offer a few thoughts upon the *deliverance.* How great and glorious is the sight that falls upon the enraptured attention of the sinner delivered from the bondage of sin!

"Lo, from yonder opening skies
What beams of dazzling glory spread."

The burden of sin falls from his heart, the deep thunderings of Sinai are hushed, and the radiant light of the Gospel breaks through the legal heavens, filling his soul with the never ceasing song of praise. Having changed the scene! The terrors of midnight must give place to the joys of noon; bondage to liberty, and the sorrows of death, to the joys of life eternal love. I have, however, met with a number of lovers of Gospel Truth who are greatly troubled because their conviction has not been as deep, and their deliverance as bright as some others have expressed. They were troubled because of sin, and were unable to extricate themselves from the horrible pit, and have a perfect hope of previous deliverance. They had thought that they shall never be grieved again, but sin is yet a disturber of their peace.

Yet it is still Jesus who is made unto them as their Savior, for their daily exercise is the *fruit* of that revelation. The saints of our God spend much of their time in their after-experience in *"calling on the name of the Lord."* Their troubles

are *different* from what they were at first; but they come again into straitened places, from which the power of God can alone deliver them. They need His guiding presence ever. They call upon Him for counsel in their hour of need -and they are always a "needy people." They desire to live upon His word and lean upon His arm in all their temporal journey. When their soul faints within them they cry unto Him for help. When temptations arise and the plagues of their natural heart are exposed to their sight, to whom shall they flee but unto Jesus and His righteousness? When the sorrows of life fall upon them, and the fiery darts of the adversary disturb their peace, where shall they find refugee but in the tower of salvation! So in all of their distresses and temptations they call upon His name; *"for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said."* This clause of the text directs us to the great and only source from which deliverance or salvation flows. The deliverance of the text is confined exclusively to Mount Zion and Jerusalem; that is, to the church of the Living God. The psalmist informs us that "*There is a river, the streams thereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High."* The river does not pass through Babylon, but its healing streams are confined exclusively to the *"city of God."* So with the salvation of the text, it *shall be in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem.* The salvation of the redeemed family is in the death and resurrection of our exalted Redeemer. Living waters go out from Jerusalem, and burdened souls are made to relate to the chosen witnesses of our God. These chosen witnesses have ever been few, compared to the great number who know not the Truth as it is in Christ.

The Savior refers to His church as the *"little flock,"* and bids them to *"fear not."* But in the aggregate they are an "innumerable number that no man can number," *"of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues."* The Lord knows each and all of them. It is written that He has numbered the stars of the heavens and call them *by name;* hence it is a small matter that He has numbered His children and *"knows them that are His." "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are His.* He has declared that He will both search and seek them out, as a shepherd doth his sheep. In the text, they are spoken of as *"the remnant whom the Lord shall call."*

I desire to notice the principle upon which His call is based. We are informed in the letter to the Romans that those whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first born *"among many brethren."* Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called" - *i.e.,* the very same that He foreloved, He predestinated to be conformed to Jesus, and the exact same that He foreknew and predestinated to this conformity are the very ones that He called to life and salvation. We must note, that none others are so foreloved, predestinated to conformity to Jesus or called to salvation. We see by this, as well as many other declarations

of Scripture, that foreknowledge and predestination precede the calling to life and salvation. And that those, and only those, who were foreknown and predestinated *"to be conformed to the image* of *His Son,"* are called. Jude writes to *"them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called."* It is comforting to trace the way of salvation back to its eternal source, and contemplate the everlasting foundation upon which the salvation of the church rests. Here we see the broad Rock of eternal election which the gates of hell will not prevail. We find here that all the saints were chosen in Christ, and are informed this choice was *"before the foundation* of *the world." - Ephesians* 1:4. This, of course has reference to their spiritual existence in Christ. In the development of the church we find them manifested as sons and daughters of Adam's corrupt race, and each and every one of them in the appointed time of our God is called to the knowledge of this great salvation. They had from everlasting this salvation vouchsafe to them; and it was fully wrought out by the blessed Savior in His earthly advent for them. By His sacrifice they had a legal claim upon it, through they knew it not. But by this heavenly and unique calling, they are brought to the knowledge of what Christ has accomplished in their behalf, and this fills them with joy and endless praise to their loving Savior.

We see from the Scriptures that I have quoted that they were foreknown IN Christ, and predestinated to be conformed to His image -a spiritual image- and that the calling is the consequence of this precious blessing IN Christ and His work of love; that they were *"sanctified by God the Father,;* from eternity, and in that realm, they were *"preserved IN Christ Jesus,"* and eventually in time, they are *"called."* These are important points in the knowledge of salvation. But let us inquire whether or not the "calling" to which I refer is based upon our works or our decision.

If it rests upon the foreknowledge of God and His predestination, how can it be also resting upon the act of the corrupt creature? Where would be the predestination in that, unless it was also held that the *creature* was predestinated to obey, which is not at all the popular idea? Again, if based upon the works of man, and if, as the Scriptures inform us, *"every imagination* of *the thoughts* of *his heart is only evil continually,"* where are those works to come from? Certainly not from the heart *"that is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked."* Paul, in his letter to the Galatians (verse v. 19-21), informs us what the works of the flesh are. No one, I suppose, expects to be saved by those works he enumerates here. *"They that are in the flesh,"* says Paul, "cannot please God." -Romans viii, 8. The child of grace, instead of being saved thereby, hopes to be saved even *from* his works, too. It was his works that caused him to flee from self to find a hiding place from his bondage to sin and death. Eternity and time lie open to the view of Him with whom we have to do. *"Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?"* says the psalmist. *"If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there:*

if I make my bed in hell, behold Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me."- Psalm cxxxlx. 7-10.

But let us proceed to consider the *fruit* or *evidence* produced by this call in the experience of the redeemed sinner. Through it he is brought to realize his justly condemned condition as a sinner in the sight of God. He is made to groan and cry by reason of sin, and finds no rest from the plagues of his own heart. The sins of his past life are opened to his view, and beyond his constant transgressions is the depravity of his nature itself. There is written upon his heart the expressive line,

"Show pity, Lord; O Lord, forgive.
Let a repenting rebel live.
Are not Thy mercies large and free?
May not a sinner trust in Thee?"

He finds no rest in his own works of self-righteousness; they turn to ashes in his grasp. I am confident that no person has ever experienced the deep, distressing sorrow for sin of which I write, only a "redeemed sinner." The natural man knows nothing whatever of a heartfelt sorrow for sins, though a natural man with a natural religion may speak somewhat against it at times. When caught in the snare of his own evil doings, he may fear the consequences of sin; this however, is vastly different from the *hatred of sin* experienced by a redeemed and saved sinner.

Oft times the peaceful answer of his pleas to his God may seem a long time coming, but it will come at the proper time. Of course, the call of which I write is not an *invitation* tricksters imagine, as understood in the natural religious world. It is, as I have stated, the *sovereign, irresistible voice of God,* the mandate of Heaven, that falls with power upon the living soul of a living sinner. And the deliverance that he experiences in the Lord's holy mountain lifts his feet out of the horrid pit and the miry clay, causes him to breathe the pure air of Gospel liberty, and look with exceeding joy to the bright hour when he shall be delivered forever from the *"body of this death."* He has come *"unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels;"* while all over the Gospel heavens is written in living light, Liberty, Eternal Liberty, *from the bondage of sin, and Life forevermore.*

Yours in Gospel bonds,
WM. M. Smoot,
Occoquan, Va., Feb. 14, 1880

PSALM 86: 1-4.

Bow down thine ear, O Lord, hear me: for I *am* poor and needy.

Preserve my soul; for I *am* holy: O thou my God, save thy servant that trusteth in thee.

Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto the daily.

Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

THE TRANSFIGURATION ON THE MOUNTAIN

***Signs of the Times*, JUNE, 1938**

IN MY MIND the transfiguration on the mountain was the most beautiful scene to be witnessed by man on this earth. If it pleases God to enable me, I desire to write of some of the beauties I see in meditation upon the grand story. Jesus took Peter and John and James and went up into a mountain to pray. He chose the ones to go with him. He did not give a broad opportunity to the multitudes, disciples or apostles, with the invitation "whosoever will" but "took" a special three of his special twelve of the disciples. These three that He took with Him up into the mountain were the same three that He took with Him down into the garden of Gethsemane. Peter, John and James not only witnessed the most agonizing scene, when Jesus was agonizing in prayer and sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, but also witnessed the most beautiful scene of His transfiguration. The thought we get from this fact is that those who are destined to suffer the greatest afflictions and tribulations in the valley of distress are also blessed to experience the greatest joys and brilliancy in the mountain of gladness. Peter, John and James must have not been of the progressive type of Christians we have today, who seem to think Jesus needs help. Instead of helping Jesus pray they were "heavy with sleep" both in the garden of Gethsemane and also on the mountain of transfiguration. "As he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias."

The questions that come to mind are, Who was Moses, and who was Elias? We find that the law was given to Moses by Jehovah. The law is referred to in the Bible as "the law of Moses" (Ezra 7:6; Neh. 8:1; Ezra 6:18). The ten commandments on tables of stone, together with ordinances, were given to Moses, who taught the law to the people. We find Moses connected with the law all along, therefore we conclude that Moses represented the law in that trio of talkers on the mountain.

Who was Elias? Elias was that great prophet who predicted the draught to king Ahab (1 Kings 17:1). Elias hid at the brook Cherith and was miraculously fed by the ravens. He raised a widow's son and contested with Baal's prophet, by whom God manifested Himself as God. He later slew these prophets at Kishon (1 Kings 18) .God so blessed him and honored him that Elias ascended into heaven (2 Kings 2:11). He was the most honored of the prophets, therefore we conclude that Elias represented prophecy in that trio of talkers on the mountain.

The third in that trio was Jesus Christ. They spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem (Luke 9:31). In meditation, we hear Moses, representative of the law, giving the requirements of the law, that the law must be kept, and punishment for disobedience of the law must be meted out and justice satisfied. We hear Elias, representing prophecy, saying that these

requirements of the law, and penalty for disobedience, will be completed and justice satisfied. Then we hear Jesus saying, Think not that I am come to destroy the law (Moses), or the prophets (Elias); I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. Then Moses and Elias departed and Jesus was left alone. Peter said, Let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, one for Moses and one for Elias, not knowing what he said. In my experiences I have wanted to make three tabernacles. I have desired to live up to the law requirements of duty as we read in Ecclesiastes 12;18, "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Thus erect a tabernacle to Moses. I have desired to fulfill prophecy, in accomplishing the warfare and obtaining pardon for my iniquities (Isaiah 40:2). Thus erect a tabernacle to Elias. And at the same time I have desired to pay homage to that Scripture which reads, **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:8-10).** Thus erect a tabernacle to Jesus.

In my experience there was a time when I verily thought the law, prophecy and grace were contrary. As Peter, I could not see how the three tabernacles could be constructed in one. While Peter was in a confused state of mind the God of heaven spoke thus from the cloud, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him." It was needless to build three tabernacles. The law of Moses and the prophecy of Elias were being fulfilled by Jesus Christ. This command from the clouds (I verily believe) removes the seeming contradiction of the Scriptures. The requirements of the law must be met, and Jesus was the only One who did it. Prophecy must be fulfilled, and Jesus was the only One who did it. Therefore, pay no more heed to the law and the prophets, for they were fulfilled by Jesus.

"Jesus was left alone." Yes, He was sufficient to tread the winepress alone. He did not need Moses and Elias any longer. His services pleased the God of heaven. It so pleased the Father that this command from the clouds means (to me), pay no more attention to the law and the prophets, for they were fulfilled in Jesus Christ, therefore, "Hear ye Him." What do we hear Him saying? We hear Him saying, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." **"I am the door, by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture" (John 10:9). "No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:44).** We are made to realize we are not saved according to our power or works, but according to the power of God, who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began (2 Tim. 1:9). There-

fore, the law system has disappeared as Moses disappeared. This law system was not destroyed, but fulfilled by Jesus Christ. If I am one who was chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the law for me, and my account is so accredited. All the sins that I have committed, or will commit, were laid upon Jesus shoulders and He bore them on the cross and paid the penalty by shedding His precious blood for me.

Brethren, my mind has traveled faster than I could write, and I know this is very imperfect and scattering, but may God be pleased to enable us by His grace to feast upon some of the beauties contained in the record of the transfiguration on the mountain.

Elder E. J. Lambert

"IS THERE NO BALM IN GILEAD?" JEREMIAH VIII. 22.

From infancy we have been in the habit of hearing this passage referred to as implying a full provision in the gospel to meet the necessities of the Lord's people, and the Gileaditish physician has been supposed to mean the Lord Jesus Christ. That there are healing virtues in the gospel for all the complaints of God's people, there can be no doubt, and that Christ is a great, good and infallible Physician, is equally certain, but that the passage refers to the gospel as the balm of Gilead, and to Christ, as the Physician there, is to our mind by no means so clear.

The striking language of our text is used in a connection which seems rather to forbid that application of it. By the mouth of the prophet the Lord charged Israel with gross idolatry , and threatened to visit upon them the severest judgments, to break them up and scatter them as a nation, and surely to consume them. Under these circumstances the prophet Jeremiah takes up a lamentation over them, saying, "For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me." And then he demands, "Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" Balm was one of the productions of Gilead, and an article of commerce, from the time that Jacob sent balm to Egypt in exchange for corn; it possesses a medicinal property for soothing and healing diseases which are common to the children of men, and skillful physicians were in the habit of prescribing it successfully to their patients, for physical diseases. But those medicines which human science can understand, prepare and apply successfully in natural diseases, fail entirely to effect a cure for the depravity of the human heart, and are equally abortive in averting the judgments of God. The children of Israel, in their wicked departure from the Lord, like all Arminians, had relied on their own resources for com-

fort and deliverance from afflictions, and now in the time of their calamity, the prophet demands of them the reason why the hurt of the daughter of his people is not healed? Why they have not applied their balm, or why their physician had failed? How natural it is for us, when left to our own wisdom, to conclude that we have within our reach some power by which to secure the favor of God, some balm to cure us of the leprosy of our depraved nature, some medical skill to direct us in the application of our medicines, to make them effectual. But when taught by the Spirit to feel that we are condemned already, and the wrath of God abides upon us, we soon lose all confidence in our own balm, and in the skill of all human physicians. Miserable comforters are they all, and they are all physicians of no value. Then the text, Jer. xlvi. 11, seems more applicable to us: "Go up into Gilead and take balm, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt, in vain shalt thou use many medicines; for thou shalt not be cured." Thus are we taught to discard all our own plans, and schemes, balms and physicians, and being completely cut off from all our own reliances, to fall down before the Lord, exclaiming, "Lord, save, or I perish." There certainly is no balm short of the Savior's precious blood, nor any physician that can apply the healing medicine effectually to us, but Jesus Christ.

"There is but one Physician
That can cure a sinsick soul."

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y., Nov. 1, 1855.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 2012

Bernard Cox, VA	5.00
Eld. Gene Lupton, NC	5.00
Betty Loville, NC	5.00
Alvis Shelton, VA	5.00
Flora Vest, VA	5.00
Glenna Link, TN	25.00
Donald Arrington, NC	5.00

HEBREWS 12:1-4.

WHEREFORE seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of wittlesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us,* and let us run with patience, the race that is set before us,

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

OBITUARIES

MABEL LOUISE YORK RAY
Feb. 21, 1917 - Dec. 31, 2011

Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, Hwy 700, Ruffin, NC is saddened at the loss of our dear sister, Mabel Louise York Ray. She passed away December 31,2011 at ninety-four (94) years of age.

Sister Mabel and her late husband Brother Jesse W. Ray were both members of Dan River Church. He joined the church May 25, 1965 and died February 3, 1983. She joined the church May 24, 1964 and was a very special and devoted member - through the years. Because of her health situation, it was necessary during the past few years for her to live away with family; and therefore was not able to attend service very often. In October 2011 with the assistance of family and friends she was able to meet with the Brethren once again for what turned out to be her final service at Dan River Church.

Sister Mabel was the daughter of the late Elmer and Martha Lusadie Williamson York. She was born in Greensboro, NC on February 21, 1917 and is survived by a daughter, Martha Louise Ray Davisson (George Nelson) of El Cajon, CA; and a son Jesse Willard Ray, Jr. (Dianne) of Pelzer, SC. Also surviving is a host of grandchildren and great grandchildren. She was preceded in death also by a sister Hazel York Yow.

Sister Mabel was a strong and firm believer of the "Word". She was blessed as was her husband, to love and appreciate the Primitive Baptist Doctrine. Sister Mabel loved the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and enjoyed so much mingling with those of like precious faith. You could witness to the fact she loved her Lord and Brethren. What a privilege it was to have had the opportunity to know and be a part of this sister's life.

This dear sister lived a long and active life. Until her health declined she had many ties in this area. Home though was really the Greensboro area where she was born, lived, and raised her family.

Her funeral was held in Greensboro, NC at Lambeth-Troxler Chapel on Saturday January 7, 2012. The interment followed at the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery, 8864 Hwy 700, Ruffin, NC.

Elder Thomas Solomon, her pastor, conducted the service. Her body was laid to rest beside her husband in the Church Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

We will all miss this dear sister but realize this earthly loss is her heavenly gain. May God reconcile us all to his will.

It is requested that a copy of this memorial be sent to the family and that one copy be forwarded for publication in the "Signs of the Times."

Written at the request of the Church
John Collie, Deacon

DORIS SAWYER
(Wife of Elder Joe Sawyer)

On February 24, 2012 our Heavenly Father called my precious mother home to be with him. She was 83 years old. She was the sweetest, kindest and loving mother. My family and I loved her very much and will miss her every day.

Mom was born and raised in Pitt County. Her parents were the late Chester Arthur Avery and Martha Margaret Tripp Avery. She was a graduate of Winterville High School. She retired with 30 years with Proffitt's Department Store and came back and worked part time till she was 76 years old. After her years working with the public, she started making and selling delicious cakes and was called the Cake Lady.

Mom married the love of her life, Joseph Lee Sawyer on February 20, 1947. She and my dad celebrated 65 years of marriage on February 20, 2012, four days later she passed away. They had three children, Pete Sawyer, Billy Sawyer and Judy Harrison. Her family meant everything to her. Mom and dad loved each other so much and where you saw one you saw the other. My dad has always said that mom was his biggest supporter. She and dad had the kind of marriage that everyone wants. The love and devotion that they had was so very special.

Mom loved going to the Primitive Baptist churches and she loved all the church people. She was very dedicated to helping and cooking for the unions and the associations. She enjoyed having the church people come home with her. She always had a beautiful smile on Sundays when I would pick her and daddy up for church. She was very devoted.

I realize a mother's love is forever. As a child I couldn't comprehend or fully realize the meaning of my mother's love and how tender and wise she was. Her patience and forgiveness was part of everyday. The little things she did were so important. The older I get I realize her love and loyalty and other special things I hold so dear to my heart. Her memories will keep her so near to me.

It is so hard to lose someone you love but even harder when it is your mother whose place no one can fill. Even though it may not seem quite fair and though I may not understand, I will always think of all the times we had together and the joy it brought to me. I feel that God will wipe the tears from my eyes and my family's eyes and we will begin to go on with our lives, but we will think of her everyday. I feel that my mom has been carried to that perfect eternal glorious home to be with Jesus and she will have a perfect peace forever. I do feel that the Lord has a purpose and a reason for everything and we are not supposed to question his works but accept it as God's will.

Her funeral was conducted at Farmers Funeral Service in Ayden, NC on February 27, 2012 by Elder Raymond Goad, Elder Cleo Robertson and Elder Harold Pittman. The service was concluded at the cemetery at Hancock's Primitive Baptist Church by all three Elders.

Written by her daughter Judy Harrison on 3-20-2012 who loved her very much and will miss her.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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HYMN

Hungry, and faint, and poor,
Behold us, Lord again
Assembled at thy mercy's door,
Thy bounty to obtain.

Thy word commands us nigh,
Or we must starve indeed;
For we no money have to buy,
No righteousness to plead.

The food our spirits want
Thy hand alone can give;
Oh! Hear the prayer of faith, and grant
That we may eat and live.

Newton.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 6/2012 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

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EDITORIAL

THE WOLF ALSO SHALL DWELL WITH THE LAMB.

Isaiah 11:6 "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them."

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

There are many who believe that this prophecy relates to the second coming of Christ and that all people as well as animals will dwell together in peace. However, the context of this prophecy relates to the birth of Christ and His work in and for His people. The first five verses read "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins." The stem of Jesse sets forth David, the Branch is Christ, and the rod sets forth the kingship of Christ who shall reign in righteousness, as it is a symbol of power and authority. Revelation 19:15-16 says, **"And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."**

"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb." The wolf is the fleshly, carnal nature of humanity. While all humanity has the wolf nature, all humanity does NOT possess the lamb. Only the Lord's elect is blest with the lamb. The carnal mind

is enmity against God for it is not subject to the law of God and indeed cannot be. The Apostle Paul writes that by nature we were children of wrath even as others. He says that we were dead in trespasses and sins. We walked according to the course of this world having our conversation in the lusts of our flesh and fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind. We all have a wolf nature in the flesh. As Christ said to Nicodemus, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." As the carnal mind is enmity against God, so is the wolf against the lamb. By nature the wolf is the greatest enemy of the sheep. It seeks to destroy and devour sheep. Christ said in John 10:12 that the wolf catches and scatters the sheep. Also in Matthew 7:15 Christ says "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves." **Ezekiel 22:27 reads, "Her princes in the midst thereof** *are* **like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood,** *and* **to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain."**

There is no clearer example of this wolf nature than the Apostle Paul when he was known as Saul before his conversion. The scripture says that he was "breathing our threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord." He obtained letters from the high priest authorizing him to go to the synagogues in Damascus and bind men and women who were believers in Christ and bring them to Jerusalem. According to the scriptures, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house and dragged men and women to prison. His reputation was that of an evil man. This was a manifestation of the wolf.

But on the road to Damascus, a light from heaven shined round about him and he fell to the earth. He was brought down to the earth and shown that he was a sinner as black as the dust of the earth from which he was formed. Paul experienced the law being applied to him which was a condemnation of death. He says in Romans that he was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived and he died. O dear children of God, can you not witness, at least to some extent, with this man when you think back over your life?

A voice spoke to him, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" As Saul had done these terrible acts to the least of the Lord's little ones, he had done them unto Him. Saul said **"who art thou Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest:** *it is* **hard for thee to kick against the pricks."** The Lord had pricked the heart of Saul. Have you experienced these pricks and you began to wonder what was happening? You felt that maybe you were losing your mind! Saul trembled and was astonished at what had taken place. In his experience he would cry "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

The wolf had been revealed to Saul and now the lamb had come. He experienced the love and mercy of God, was filled with the Holy Ghost and was baptized. The Lord had told Ananias that Saul was a chosen vessel unto the Lord to bear His name before the Gentiles,

and kings, and the children of Israel for the Lord would shew Saul how great things he must suffer for His name's sake. Now the wolf dwelled with the lamb.

Christ is the Lamb of God as John the Baptist proclaimed. He stood a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. As Isaiah described Him, "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth."

You have the lamb within you. The Apostle Paul writes in **Romans 8:8-11, "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ** *be* **in you, the body in dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."** You are a new creature in Christ." **Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore if any man** *be* **in Christ,** *he* **is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."** The fruit of the Spirit describes a little lamb or sheep which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against such there is no law. Isaiah did not say there would be peace between the wolf and the lamb, but that they would dwell together. You know this is true from your own experience. This is the old man and the new man, the carnal or fleshly man and the spiritual man.

The same analogy is true for the other animals. Only the Lord's people bear this cross which is the flesh against the spirit. As Christ said in **John 14:16-18, "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;** *even* **the Spirit of Truth; whom the would cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you."**

"A little child shall lead them." Isaiah also prophesied **"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given."** This child is Christ. **Revelation 12:5 "And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and** *to* **his throne."**

As Christ said, you must be born again and His elect experience a virgin birth of Christ in them, the hope of glory. He leads His people out of darkness and unbelief into His marvelous light of truth and understanding.

As the Apostle Paul writes in **Ephesians 2:1, "And you** *hath he quickened*, **who were dead in trespasses and sins."**

A lowly, little beggar
Elder Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

Brother Tony,

I am a sister of Elder Julian Williams, deceased. My residence is at a retirement home in Danville. I do enjoy The Signs. Do you have any additional writings of Elder D.V. Spangler?

He was pastor of Malmaison Church when I was able to first understand the doctrine.

Also he attended my baptism as I had often seem him in a dream.

In love,
Naomi W. Houser

4-5-2012

Mr. Tony Horton,

I see it is time for me to renew to the Signs for 1 year – use balance of check as you see fit.

Continue to enjoy the Signs very much – especially the Editorials and Voices from the Past – Some of the letters I read over and over. Would never want to be with out the Signs.

May the Lord continue to bless.

Sincerely,
Roland G. Allen

3-27-2012

To Mr. Horton,

I wanted to let you know, my mother, Jane Susan Carroll died on March 16 at 103 years of age. She was buried in Ard Community in Yell county. Her service was in the funeral home Chapel. The Chapel was full with family and friends. We had a blessing to have her for so many years with a good mind. Her mind failed her in the last few days. We shall miss her. I know she's well and happy now.

She read her March issue of Signs of the Times. She looked forward to receiving it each month. She loved reading about people she knew.

Thank you,
Her daughter Janelle Tatum

April 5, 2012

Dear Bro. Cleo & Bro. Horton,

Enclosed find my check for $15.00 to renew my subscription for the "Signs of the Times".

I am so glad to get it each month. God bless all of you that send it out to us each month.

A sister in hope,
Frances Brinkley

4-17-2012

Dear Brother Tony,

Please renew my subscription for 4 more years. I know I've run a little bit late with this.

Please forgive I'm getting older and forgetful. I have always enjoyed this paper.

In Christian Love,
Gracy Goodman

Dear Brother Horton,

It is time to renew Signs of the Times, April, I went to Springfield Church on Saturday night, second weekend of April 1968 and told those dear people I hoped I loved them. They accepted me with love. On 4th Sunday in April I was baptized at Weatherford Church. I love to think on these things: the dear brothers and sisters and wonderful sermons praising God. I enjoy Signs very much. May He lead us in the path of righteousness and may God be pleased to continue blessings needful for the Signs of the Times.

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickral

Dear Bro. Horton, and Editors, of the Signs of the Times:

Enclosed find ck. In the amount of $30.00 for 2 years renewel, to the Signs of the Times. Use the rest as needed.

I enjoy reading the writings of the Ministers, and other able writers, who are blessed of the Lord, to write the truth as it is in our Dear Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

I feel to have been shown many times over, what a wretched sinful condition that I am in. And as the Apostle Paul said,in Romans, 7, and 24th. Oh wretched Man that I am. Who shall-deliver me from the body of this death? These words of the apostle seem to dwell with me a lot, in my travels here in this world of troubles, and sorrows.

Tis a point I long to know, am I His, or not. And if I be one of His chosen ones. The least of all, I feel to be. My hope that seems so small at times, and I am made to wonder if I have a hope. Yet I would not trade it for anything in this world. Blessed be the name of the Lord Jesus Christ; from whom all blessings flow. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts 4, 12.

Glorious things of thee are spoken, Zion city of our God, Wherein lies our hope, that when this mortal life shall cease, and time shall be no more, that We will be raised in His Glorious likeness, to ever be with Him, and be satisfied to praise and worship Him; In spirit and in truth.

Blessed be the God, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. To an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away reserved in heaven, for you Who are kept by the power of God; through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. First Peter, ch. 1, vs. 3 - 5.

These blessed scriptures of Holy truth, seem to get more precious to me, each time that I am blessed of the Lord, to think upon them. Praying that the Lord will keep me humble, In my walk, in this life ever looking to Him; the author and the finisher of our faith, for all things that pertain to life, and Godliness in this world, and the one to come.

Dear One's, please do with this as you see fit, and all will be well with me. If not in harmony, with the holy scriptures please discard. It is poor at best. With love in the truth.

C. Fox

VOICES OF THE PAST

"I REMEMBER THEE"

"Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land *that was* **not sown." - Jer. 2:2**

Unless you have a heart to know the Lord, the things declared in this chapter will be altogether unintelligible; you can have no spiritual apprehension of their significance.

But if we are of those who fear the Lord, there will be found in this chapter very sacred things, which when unfolded to us by the Holy Spirit, will move our hearts to throb with manifold emotions. I said in my heart a few moments ago, here are love's chidings, chastenings, pleadings and grievings. Then came the question, "Is the Lord in very truth such as He is declared to be in the Scripture?" And my heart said, "In very truth He is." Then the question comes, "How can I so confidently pen this?" And this is my answer, I hope, in very truth, I know the Lord. O, it is wonderful that any poor sinner should have the right to say this, and I feel it is only by a miracle of grace that I dare say, I know the Lord, or rather, am known of God (Gal. 4:9).

"Lord of my God, for Him again
With love intense I burn;
Chosen of Thee ere time began,
I choose Thee in return. "

"Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, say, Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee.

This is marvelous condescension, that Jehovah should have regard to sinful creatures, that He should reveal Himself in such near and dear relations. **"Who** *hath* **God** *so* **nigh unto them?" (Deut. 4:7). "For** *that* **thy name is near, thy wondrous works declare" (Psa. 75:1).** This may well excite the wonder and adoration of those who are made partakers of such distinguishing favor.

"Thus saith the Lord. I remember thee." As I look into the words, this gleams forth to my view: it is love's entreaty: it is the Lord declaring to His sinful, straying, ungrateful people that He loves them still, that He has never forgotten them, and cherishes remembrances of their love to Him. Thus He speaks, "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." This is the constancy of the love of God. But in contrast to this, look at these words: **"Can a maid forget her ornaments,** *or* **a bride her attire? Yet**

my people have forgotten me days without number" (Jere. 2:32). While the elect of God are dead in trespasses and sins Christ is unknown, undesired, we see in Him no beauty that we should desire Him. "At that time (saith the apostle) ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world" (Eph. 2: 12). As I just penned this quotation a sort of a shudder passed over me as I looked upon the dark and awful picture of man's unregenerate state. Ah, the whole world lieth in wickedness, pursuing its course in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and with no concern over their lost condition under the curse of the law, and no regard for the true and living God. "Without Christ," "having no hope," "without God in the world." Such were we, "by nature the children of wrath even as others, but God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." When God called us by His grace He awakened us and made us alive to our bondage to sin. Like Israel in Egypt, our life was unto us as in an iron furnace (Deut. 4:20); yes, we were in the furnace of affliction in very truth. We were alive to the knowledge that we were vile transgressors, and the frown and condemnation of the law weighed down our hearts. Like Israel in Egypt, we toiled in the field, but our hard labors were all insufficient to accomplish our daily tasks; we could not yield to the law what it in righteousness demanded. Every day we came short, and we were beaten with stripes, the yoke of the law was more than we wretched transgressors could bear (Acts 15:10). Then we fell down and cried in our affliction for mercy unto the Lord. The Lord did not despise nor abhor the affliction of His afflicted ones in Egypt, neither did He hide His face from them, but when they cried unto Him, He heard and came in power and all graciousness, and brought them out of the house of bondage. He bore them on eagle's wings, and brought them unto Himself (Exo. 19:4).

So the God of mercy comes to sinners whose souls He has quickened into divine life and called by His grace. Jesus comes to us, He is revealed by the Holy Ghost in us (Gal. 1:16). He shows Himself the Crucified One, our Saviour, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Poor, guilty sinners, we mused upon His sufferings, His wounds, His blood, we believed the story of our Paschal Lamb; His love, His sacrifice told to our sin-wounded mourning hearts good tidings, healing tidings, we believed the Gospel, we believed in Jesus; our loins girded, shoes on our feet, and with our staff in our hand we feasted on the Lamb of God, Christ our Passover, sacrificed for us (Exo. 12:11; I Cor: 5:7). The tribes of Israel went forth out of Egypt into the wilderness; they followed the Lord, who in the cloudy, fiery pillar went before them. He led them through the wilderness, through a land of drought, and the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt (Jer. 2:6).

The time of the soul's espousal to Christ is a sacred and memorable time. Have we forgotten? Christ has not; He will recall it to our minds; He will awaken the memories of this season of our "first love" (Rev. 2:4). "Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals." Jesus found us poor and wretched, in our rags and filth -so sin defiled. We were sinners feeling "ready to perish" (Deut. 26:5). There was none to help; no comforter to relieve our souls; no eye pitied us to do any thing for our salvation. We must have perished in our sins under the curse of the law; when Jesus came, He looked upon us, and we looked unto Him (Isa. 45:22). His speech was full of compassion. His Gospel was good news indeed. We saw in His wounds and blood that love moved Him to die for our sins. We were drawn to Him confessing our iniquities and pleading His forgiveness. His obedience even unto death became the refuge to which we, in faith, fled for deliverance from the law's condemnation. With sweet tokens of pardon and salvation Christ espoused us to Himself, and in our soul's love to Him, our heart's sweet song was:

> "Love moved Him to die, on this I rely;
> My Saviour hath loved me, I cannot tell why,
> But this I can tell, He hath loved me so well
> As to lay down His life to redeem me from hell."

Yes, we believe in the Son of God - we love Him. In those days our heart was ever kindly toward the Saviour - so desired was He. In His Gospel we caught glimpses of Him; and so longed for was the Saviour! Some sweet word of His Gospel was often brought by the Holy Ghost to us, and our sin-distressed heart said, Can such a kind word be for me? We were thrilled with longings, with hope it might be so. We sought the Saviour; we sent a secret petition to Him, asking, "Are such gracious words of Thine in the Gospel for me?" These were the days of our espousals -love letter days. He wrote to us, and in return our hearts moved us to send some poor, broken sentences to Him. Our letters were such a mixture of sighs and longings, trust and distrust. We told Him we were uncomely, and so unworthy of His regard, and after we had sent a letter to Him, we were ashamed of it. We said to ourselves, "It is just like myself- a poor, worthless sinner. He will see it is from an ignorant creature, and after a glance or two, He will cast it from Him into the fire. "I fear I shall never have another line penned by Him to me. His letters were so well written, so noble, so gracious, full of tenderness, that we could hardly believe they were written to us - so poor, sinful and ignorant - as we knew ourselves to be. Well, what do you think Christ has done? I will tell you. He did not throw these letters away, but He has kept them all, every scrap of them, locked up in His heart. "Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals." As I have intimated, this means He has treasured up all her love letters to Him-

self, and now He brings them forth from the casket of His heart, and reads them in her ears "Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem." Can you, O backsliding daughter of Zion, disown these letters? Did you not indict them? Are they not Zion's penmanship? Were they not addressed to Him only? Was there at the time of writing them any other in her thoughts? Can she deny her own signature? Take a glimpse of these letters written by the saints of God in the days of her spiritual youth; there are photographs of the blithesome and gay, happiness in Christ the Lord sparkles in every word; some are tear-stained, beseeching Him to come, and in His pity redeem her from her miseries. All these letters have a sweet smelling fragrance. Was it not her own hands, dropping with sweet smelling myrrh, that perfumed them? (Solomon's Song 5:5). O the wayward backsliding believer cannot deny these things, and when the Lord comes saying in our ears, "I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals," how we are stirred! We then remember, too, and we are ashamed and blush, and sigh beneath these memories of our early attachment to our Lord Jesus Christ. Then it was that "Jesus all the day long was our joy and our song; " then the heart flowed forth in its freshness, simplicity and fervor; then, O believer, thine heart was kind, and thoughts were tender toward the Lamb of God; thine eyes were often turned to Him with tearful entreaty and His smile was then thy heaven. Do you remember? In the days of our espousals to Christ we were hopeful and happy in Him, sin was atoned for, we were pardoned, and we had peace with God through Him. Such loveliness and desirableness had been revealed to us in Him, the suffering, sin atoning sacrifice, that we were drawn to Him (John 12:32).

"His loveliness hath won my heart;
Dear Jesus, let us never part;
I'll sound thy lovely name abroad,
My altogether lovely Lord."

Yes, in the love of our espousals we crowned Him as our,Husband, Shepherd, Saviour, King; Christ was our all. It was a time of reciprocal love and gladness. It was the day of the gladness of Christ's heart (Solomon's Song 3:11). He rejoiced over us with singing (Zeph. 3:17). His speech, His Gospel, was a gladsome song, and our happy, sin-pardoned heart in all kindness and love did sing, "He is altogether lovely, the Chiefest among ten thousand." "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." No stranger intermeddleth with the joy (Prov. 14:10), of Christ and the church in these espousal days. Of Jacob it is written, **"The Lord alone did lead him, and** *there was* **no strange god with him." (Deut. 32:12)**. All gods were utterly renounced and amished out of the land (Zeph. 2:11). They had cheated us, mocked us, in our distresses they gave us no sustenance, afforded us no help, they were lying vanities (Jonah 2:8), and we cast them to the moles, and to the bats (Isa 2:20). We now knew it had been very folly to say to the work of our hands, "ye are our gods" (Hosea 14:3). Now, in our espousals we could sing:

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness."

To Jesus we looked. He altogether satisfied us, and all things, and all others were now counted dung, that we might win Christ, and be found in Him, not having our own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith (Phil. 3:8-9). He, Christ Crucified, had attracted us, won us, and we would win Him who had won us. For there was no other one to save a poor sinner (Acts 4:12), and no other was there that we worshiped, trusted, loved: we were leaning on Him alone. Are you able to enter into this mystery? Christ and the believer, these two, espoused, no third one.

"I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown." Thus it was with typical Israel; forth from Egypt they came, the Lord, going before them in the cloudy, fiery pillar; after Him they went into the wilderness, a land not sown. Her God nourished them with bread from heaven (Exo. 16:35). He opened the rock, the waters gushed out to give drink to His people, His chosen. Israel was holiness to the Lord, a peculiar treasure unto me, saith the Lord, above all people. In the first happy season of the believer's espousals to Jesus, when He is saying, "My Saviour is mine and I am His," he thought, through a delightsome land I shall go with Jesus, my Redeemer, until He brings me into His palace on high. Israel having passed through the Red Sea as dry land (Heb. 11 :29), sang most joyously, "The Lord hath triumphed gloriously" (Exo. 15:1). From the Red Sea "they went out into the wilderness Shur: and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water. And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was Marah" (Exo. 15:22-23). Then and many times afterwards, "The soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way" (Num. 21 :4). Nevertheless a divine power drew them on; here and there they were led about in the wilderness; though unworthy and rebellious, "they found grace in the wilderness" (Jer 31:2). God kept them to Himself as the apple of His eye (Deut. 32:10), and at length He brought them into that land which is the glory of all lands (Deut. 11: 12; Ezek. 20:6). In our first days of blissful intimacy with our Redeemer we dwelt and walked where the flowers sent forth their fragrance, and birds were sweetly singing (Solomon's Song 2:12). These were sacred moments, for we were drinking the forgiveness of all our sins of Christ, our Fountain of Living Waters (Jer. 2:13).

"Tongues cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

One such, some time ago, said, "Master, I will follow thee withersoever thou goest. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of

the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." A believer, in "the kindness of his youth" feels altogether willing to go anywhere with Jesus, and sometimes in his soul's simplicity he sings:

> "Through floods and flames, if Jesus leads,
> I'll follow where He goes."

Ah, little does he understand what his loving heart is singing! Let me repeat once more that when Christ our Saviour betrothed us unto Himself (Hosea 2:19). He did not immediately take us to His palace, into heaven itself. No, the Holy Spirit gave us some pictures of it, and the "better country" (Heb. 11: 16; Isa. 33:17), we had foretasted of the heavenly felicity given us, and we were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, and in this comforting earnest of our inheritance (Eph. 1:14), by faith we journeyed on in hope of eternal glory with our dear Saviour. It was a terrible wilderness we came into shortly after our espousal to Christ (II Cor. 11:2). It was a waste-howling wilderness, and there were scorpions and fiery flying serpents. Ah, how often do we find that we are in this wilderness even to this day! While we have the felt companionship of our beloved Saviour, while we are walking in the highway with Him, for in the wilderness, "an highway shall be there" (Isa. 35:8), while we are following hard after Him (Psa. 63:8), all is well. He is our Guide and Protector; but, O, when we step aside from the highway, scorpions and fiery flying serpents abound, and fears and miseries, hunger and thirst plague our life. We thought in our youthful days our life henceforth as a ransomed, pardoned sinner was to be to live, to journey in a land of corn and wine, flowing with the loving-kindnesses of the Lord; but only for some little moments have we found our way to be such. We had to come into the knowledge of the dreary howling desert of the human heart. Our vile, sinful heart we have found to bring forth only briars and thorns; truly it is a land "not sown" with any good things (Rom. 7:18), consequently we can harvest nothing there from for our sustenance and spiritual comfort. Look back, O believer, to those days of the kindness of thy youth, and the love of thine espousals to the Lamb that was slain for thy sins. Was not thy heart all kindness toward Him? It was. But this coming into the wilderness astounded us, we did not know then that there could be such a horrible wilderness in us. We trembled, we blushed, we mourned, to the Saviour on whom we were clinging, we confessed it all to Him, and implored His compassion and salvation. Those fiery flying serpents, our sinful thoughts, are dreadful. A child of God cannot tell when or where they will attack him, and so he is often harassed and bitten and soul-sick indeed because of the plague of his own heart (I Kings 8:38). "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," and breeds the scorpions and serpents (Gen. 8:21; Matt. 15:19), and surely we need to be ever watchful and to have our healing balm near by.

"Precious is my dear Physician,

Oft I prove His power to heal;
Curing every sad condition
When He does His love reveal.
Precious Jesus,
Much I need thy healing power."

The world, its trials and temptations, are as a devouring waste to famish and shrivel up the ardor and blessedness of the love of our espousals; but through the rugged wilderness, through tribulations, the church of Christ must travel, and when our Lord is near, when we poor sinful ones are leaning on Him, we can hold on our way and tread temptations under our feet. Thus said the Lord, "I did know thee in the wilderness" (Hosea 13:5). Yes, dear Lord, thou hast owned us, pitied and succored us in all our dreadful straits. O, thou hast been pitiful indeed, so rich in mercy, ever revealing Thyself in all gracious intimacy to us vile, unworthy sinners. Though rough and thorny was the way, the kind words of Christ's Gospel revived our courage, creating for us here and there a grateful oasis. Out of the heart, wearying cares and conflicts of our pilgrimage, we entered these pleasant places of living green. The doctrine of Christ came to us in power in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. How transforming is the word that Christ speaketh to us! Then in the wilderness waters break forth, and streams in the desert; in fellowship with Christ, we drank of the brook in the way and our face was lifted up unto God (Psa. 110:7), and thus our scenes of desolation are made to become unto us as the garden of Eden (Ezek. 36:35). What though we are perplexed by Satan and our old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, weighs down our life in the dust, and with weak hands, feeble knees and fearful heart we are ready to halt (Psa. 38:17), soon all is changed when we are moved by the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, to look unto Jesus. In His atoning sacrifice, we see sin's destruction, our old man crucified with Him, Satan defeated, death and the grave swallowed up in victory. Yes, Christ is with the church in the wilderness (Acts 7:38), and through the world and all tribulation, with eyes of faith and love, she followeth Him to the realms of immortal love.

Read again with me our text: "Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown." Have you no recollections of it all? "Thou wentest after me in the wilderness," but saith the Lord, "Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? a land of darkness?" (Jer. 2:31). No, dear Lord, Thou hast not. "O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me" (Micah 6:3). Is there a voice in all the host of Israel to testify against the Lord? Not the first syllable is uttered, but all heads must be bowed with confusion of face before Him. O, there is not an instance in all our pilgrimage where Christ Jesus has been wearisome, a wilderness unto His people. Then why, O backslider, hast thou changed, become so degenerate, so cold, so indifferent to the things of

Jesus Christ? Why art thou so far removed from the fervor of thy First love? Why are thy blessings in the church of Christ so neglected? Come, dear brethren, let us not put away these searching questions. It is profitable to examine ourselves whether we are in the faith. Is Jesus Christ less precious, less needful, than in the days of the kindness of our youth, the love of our espousals? Is He not still the only Fountain of Living Waters? What are all things else, all others, but broken cisterns that can hold no water? Are you crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts? (Gal. 5:24). Are you seeking FIRST the kingdom of God and His righteousness? Are you seeking your carnal ease and pleasure, so greedy for money, so swallowed up with the things of time? Are you so looking upon the things that are seen, which are temporal, that your eyes are become bleared that you can scarcely see the things which are unseen, which are eternal? (II Cor. 4:18). Can it be that temporal things have become more weighty with us than things which are eternal, the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory? If so, then our scales in which we are weighing these matters are in a wretched plight, we are miserably deceived, and we are in a dreadful condition. Perhaps, notwithstanding our profession of the name of Christ, we are none of His. (Rom. 8:9)

"Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee." What, remember a sinner like me?

Frederick W. Keene,
North Berwick, Maine

SIGNS OF THE TIMES,
May 15, 1907, Vol. 75, No. 10.

For the Signs of the Times,
Cape Elizabeth, Me.,
March 29, 1855.

BELOVED AND ESTEEMED BROTHER IN CHRIST: - I wish to write a few words to you, although I am thrown upon a bed of sickness, which is to human appearance my last. I rejoice in the doctrine which your paper is established in, and have rejoiced for forty-seven years in the same; and yet it is new every morning; great is God's faithfulness. I am encouraged by your own short sermons which your paper contains. If one so unworthy might exhort you, I would say "Stand fast," and so you shall raise the drooping spirits of some weary child when I am no more. I had thought that if ever I were laid on a bed of sickness that naught but clouds and darkness would be my portion, but I find it far otherwise. I now can say I would not alter the purposes of God for he cannot do wrong; let him do what seemeth him good. My disease is a tumor growing in my left side, which causes much suffering, as I have to be tapped once in three weeks, and am expecting to be tapped again soon. I have no choice which way God takes down this earthly house of my tabernacle, his way is perfect; justice and truth are the habitation,

of his throne. Of all creatures I have the greatest reason to bless God for the hope which I am permitted to enjoy; it entereth, within the veil, whither Jesus has entered. I feel unworthy of the least of his blessings, although surrounded by all that is necessary for me; but because Jesus lives, his, people shall live also. Brother Beebe, do not faint in tribulation, God is faithful to his promise: I have been praying for my unconverted child, and had believed that I should see my desire before I went hence, although I was often sad because of hope deferred, the Lord is so good as to give me at this late hour my desire, and I can say, Lord, now let thou thy servant depart in peace, for thou hast made my lovely child to see thy salvation, and to rejoice in it. Brother Beebe, Jesus gave his life a ransom for many, and they surely come from the north and from the south, until the last jewel is made up, when the door of mercy will be closed. I have been sick about twelve months, although in this time I have had short respites from my sufferings, and been able to do my work and go abroad; in this time I have had enlarged views of God's plan of salvation, and of the Bride the Lamb's wife, such as I never had before. I can truly say, the comfort arising from them was worth more than a mountain of gold, or restoration to my former health. I have most of the time been confined to my bed, I have great reason, to bless God for his written word, and the precious promises it contains. Brother Beebe, do not doubt, do not doubt, I will repeat what he has said: and as thy days, so shall thy strength be. I had a desire to call in my thoughts, although I am very feeble, and send them to you for publication, hoping to encourage some one simularly situated, which I think: is the sole motive which now governs me. I love the Leader, and I love his people; I love him that begat, and I love them that are begotten of him. If it is not asking too much, I would be glad to see in the *Signs,* a short sermon upon 1st Thess. iv, 14. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Why I mention this passage or scripture is, it was forcibly brought to my mind, sometime within the last fortnight, with a good deal of satisfaction while meditating upon it. We receive our papers directed to Cape Elizabeth since the 15th of March; my husband joins me in sending love to you; he loves the precious cause of Christ, and wishes Mt. Zion well, whatever becomes of him. - I must now draw to a close, and I would say to my brethren and sisters scattered up and down the world, bring in all the tithes into the store house, and write for the *Signs;* your communications have been to me as cold water to a thirsty soul, for I have had no other preaching for many years. Brethren and sisters, if we forget Jerusalem, let our right hand forget her cunning; if we do not remember her, let our tongue cleave to the roof of our mouth, if we prefer not Jerusalem above our chief joy. This is the last communication from your afflicted sister, probably.

Rebecca Wilson.

1879 - Thanksgiving, Observation and Exhortations By William M. Smoot, December, 1879, SIGNS of the Times.

Dear Brother Beebe:- The closing hours of the swiftly passing year impart to me a desire to record an expression of thanksgiving and praise unto Him through whose kind and tender care my life has been preserved. It is well when we can feel a spirit of thanksgiving unto Him from whose kind hand the blessings of providence and grace are received. He is ever present with His people to guide, guard and keep them in His own right way. In fulfillment of the eternal decrees the years are gliding swiftly by, each of them accomplishing His purpose in its flight.

> "Each opening leaf, and every stroke,
> Fulfills some bright design."

In solemn awe and reverence we bow before His awful throne, and plainly trace His hand-writing upon the pages of the book of time. During the year now drawing to a close many precious brethren and lovers of gospel Truth have been called to their eternal home; their predestinated inheritance reserved for them in heaven. They have passed through all of the ordained dark shadows of the present life, and over the river of death, to rest upon the eternal shore. Our souls have been filled with sorrow in looking upon them for the last time, but our faith has looked beyond to their eternal and blissful home. What a theme of themes; a song of songs is that which presents the power of God in the salvation of poor, lost and perishing sinners.

> "Not softest strains can charm mine ears
> Like His beloved name;
> Nor aught beneath the skies inspire
> My heart with equal flame."

In common with many of your brethren, I have been deeply pained at the uncalled for attacks that have been made upon you and others during the past year for firmness in defense of the Truth. A falling away in sentiments so commonly held is strange. The battle is not yours, but the Lord's, and Truth is mighty and must prevail. The faithful servant of God has no compromise to make in such a war as this, but in a firm and unwavering manner to contend earnestly for *"the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."* We cannot, as others are, yield, no, not for a moment, when an attack is made upon the Truth of our God. The Lord will assuredly sustain you in all of your labors in His name, and the rich crown of everlasting life awaits your final entrance into the saints' eternal rest. What the opening year is to unfold is known only unto Him who presides over the destiny of nations, and governs all etemal and temporal things. Many of those who are now in active life will no doubt before its close be numbered with the congregation of the dead. Be this as it may, and whatever may be the scenes, sorrows, joys or trials reserved for us in the opening year, we rejoice in the knowledge that reigns.

"Like floods the angry nations rise,
And aim their rage against the sky;
Vain floods that aim their rage so high;
At Thy rebuke the billows die,"

Iniquity abounds, political and religious degradations prevail every where over our land, but in the true church of Christ we find peace and rest. She is as a field in the wood, the green grass of the desert, the bright shining of the clear light of heaven amidst the gross darkness and religious idolatry that spreads over our land. "*The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth, from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.* " It is certainly pleasant to behold the gospel order and unanimity prevailing among the churches of our connection in different parts of the country. The watchmen lift up their voice together; the churches dwell together in the holy joys of Gospel fellowship, and follow after the things that make for peace. How happy and divinely blessed are brethren in such a case! How strong and durable is the bond of fellowship that unites them. How pure and holy are the joys that flow from heart to heart. In these things we taste the *"powers of the world to come."* Let us as we may receive strength from above endeavor to show forth in our daily walk and conversation that we have been with Jesus.

In many respects it is a matter of but little consequence in regard to how much or little of worldly wealth or mortal dignity we may possess, but our standing in the Church of Christ is a matter of the greatest importance. Are we punctual in our accountabilities there? Or have we grown cold and careless? Do the passing years, filled as they are with the rich blessings of heaven, witness our lack of zeal in the Master's cause, from whose indulgent hand these blessings are bestowed? I hope not, but that the days of our temporal pilgrimage as they pass write in our heart a song of praise unto the Omnipotent God. He dwells in light, but the dark vial of mortality hides the perfect view of His glory from our sight. The streams of time are hurrying fast into the broad ocean of etemity, bearing in their final destiny the appointed generations of the children of men. The kind hand of God will soon roll back the curtain of life, and the unveiled glory of God and the Lamb will forever engage the enraptured attention of the redeemed; the boundless glory of the world to come; the final rest of the way-worn traveler, but beloved object of God's eternal choice. How full of rich comfort is the Truth of God! Here we see the crowning work of redemption in the resurrection of the bodies from the dead, and life in the world to come. Life and immortality are brought to light through the Gospel. The gospel does not bring the life and immortality, but it brings them to light. There is opened to our view the brilliant beauty of the eternal heavens, be spangled forever by the radiant light of the Sun of Righteousness, while the gathered host of eternity dwell forever in the presence and the eternal arches ring with shouts of sovereign grace.

As ever, yours to serve in Gospel bonds, Wm. M. Smoot, December, 1879, *SIGNS of the Times.*

HEBREWS 12:6

BELOVED ELDER BEEBE: - I would like to have you give your views on Hebrews xii. 6. I have never troubled you for your views before, knowing your time is taken up; but in our present bereavement we would be glad to have you write on that text.

THOMAS & MARY P. LEWIS.

REPLY

The text on which we are requested to express our views reads as follows : "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."

It seems so very natural for us, when smarting under the chastening hand of God, to conclude that he is angry with us, and in anger has withheld his tender mercies from us. The friends who visited Job in the days of his sore trials took this view of the subject, and added reproof and reproach to his over-burdened heart; and the heathen who saw the viper fasten his poisonous fangs upon the hand of Paul, thought it was in retribution for some dreadful crime that he had committed. The Jews also seemed to think that some unusual sin committed by the blind man or his parents was the cause of his having been born blind. Satan himself is ever ready to aggravate the distress of the children of God, when pressed down to the gates of death by trials and afflictions, by his cruel suggestions that their tribulations are in evidence that they have no part or lot in the love of that God whose power and grace are amply sufficient to have averted the evil that has come upon them. The passions of our carnal nature are moved to resentment or approval of the treatment we receive from others as indicative of their hatred or love to us: we express our love by acts of kindness, and our hatred by acts of retaliation; but God's dealings with his children, whether in stripes or healing mercies, are always in love, for he is infinitely above being excited by impulsive passions. It is very true, he visits the transgressions and iniquities of his children with his rod; but even then he chastens them in love, and always for their good and his glory. But all the trials, afflictions and bereavements to which the children of God are subject, are not to be regarded as punishment for our transgressions. The most willing and obedient of the saints, as well as the more wayward, must pass through fiery trials, for the trial of their faith, which is more precious than the trial of perishable gold; and God has kindly provided that his dear children shall all have the full benefit of the furnace in which he has chosen them. The apostle Peter has drawn a discriminating line between the suffering which God's children endure for their faults, and such as they experience for the trial of their faith, and warns the saints, saying, "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffers as

a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf." - 1 Peter iv. 15, 16. "Wherefore," he continues, "let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator."

Pardon the digression, if it be such, if we pause a moment to consider the apostle's admonition. Who is a murderer? "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." - 1 John iii. 15. Who is a thief? He who would dishonestly appropriate to himself that which belongs to another, or who would rob a brother of his standing and fellowship with the saints, or covet in spiritual or temporal things that which is his neighbor's. Who is an evil doer? He that perverts equity, or watches for the haltings of others, that that which is lame should be turned out of the way, and not rather be healed. Who is a busybody in other men's matters? He who is heedless of the beam that is in his own eyes, is quick to offer his service to remove an imaginary mote from his brother's eye. Such men, even if they are children of God, and do suffer, do not suffer as Christians who do the will of God, as his will is laid down in the examples and precepts of Christ in the New Testament.

But to return to our starting point in the twelfth chapter of Hebrews, in which we find so much, not only to admonish, but also to encourage the poor, afflicted, tried and tempted children of our God. Having in the preceding chapter spoken of the severe trials of the saints from the days of Abel down to the present dispensation, the writer arrays them as a cloud of witnesses, bearing testimony of the triumphs of faith, by which prophets and patriarchs endured as seeing him who is invisible, and admonishes the saints to lay aside every weight, and run with patience the race that is set before them. Looking unto Jesus, and recognizing him as the author and finisher of all genuine faith, as the author of that faith which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things which are not seen. With a single eye, a steadfast reliance on him for support and protection, and looking unto him as our pattern and guide. Look to the race which he so patiently, perseveringly, cheerfully and successfully ran in the great work of our salvation, the sorrows he endured, the enemies he encountered, the reproaches he bore, the patience he evinced, the unremitting progress which he made, never once faltering in the race, even though sin, death, and all the powers of darkness stood so terribly in his way. Yet for the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame. Ah, yes; with steadfast eyes look to him.

"Whose race forever is complete,
Forever undisturbed his seat;
Myriads of angels round him fly,
And sing his well gained victory."

See him now, exalted and seated at the right hand of the throne of God. And "consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your mind." What a wonderful protection from languor and weariness; what an antidote against fainting "His way was much

rougher and painful than mine?

Did Christ my Lord suffer, and shall I repine?"

The infirmities of our nature are kindly considered by him.

"Who drank the cup with stifled groan, And said, My Father's will be done."

He knows what are the feelings of our infirmities, and how to succor them that are tempted. He knows that his spirit that he has put within us is willing to go with him to the prison and to the death; and well he knows too the weakness of our flesh, and that unless we have our eyes on him we shall be weary and faint. But we can say,

"Had I a view of thee, my God,
Kingdoms and men would vanish soon;
Vanish as though I saw them not,
As a dim candle dies at noon.
"Then they might fight, and rage, and rave;
I should perceive their noise no more
Then we can hear a shaking leaf
When rattling thunders round us roar."

Considering him, and the crushing sorrows he endured for us when sweating what were as great drops of blood falling to the ground, will reprovingly remind us that we have not resisted unto blood striving against sin; and that while complaining of our light afflictions, which are but momentary, we have forgotten, or failed to heed, the exhortation which speaketh unto us as unto children, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Observe, this very exhortation and rebuke recognize those unto whom they are addressed as children; they are not addressed to them as aliens or as enemies, but as unto children or sons, as the counsel and parental admonition of our heavenly Father who loves us, and has our real welfare constantly in view. "My son," the development of that incorruptible and immortal seed, which is by the Word of God, that liveth and abideth forever. My son, in vital union with your heavenly Father, begotten of God, the Father of spirits, in Christ your seminal head, who is the first- born among many brethren. My son, and as a son, an heir of God, and joint heir with Jesus Christ. Heirs not only of his cross, but also of his glory. Loved of God your Father, even as Christ was loved of him. Not a mere prospective love, but with the same sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love with which your glorious and glorified Head was loved. "That the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me." -John xvii. 23. And in the next verse Jesus says to the Father, "For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." With the same love with which the Father loved his only begotten Son before the foundation of the world, has he loved all his members in him. Mark the present tense of the love of God, "For whom the Lord loveth." It does not read, For whom he intends to love at some future time; but whom he loveth. If God's love is immutable, it has always been precisely the same, from

everlasting to everlasting; for he inhabiteth eternity, and his name is holy. But if it is not immutable, though he may love to-day, he may cease to love tomorrow or hereafter. Many earthly parents who love their children, unintentionally injure them by too much indulgence; but God, who is infinitely wise, provides for his children that discipline which is for their good and for his own glory. When in former ages he winked at the abominable idolatry of the heathen nations, he severely scourged his chosen Israel for every disobedience and transgression of his law; and by the severity of his judgments clearly demonstrated his special regard for them as a peculiar people, chosen from all the family of mankind to be the type of the chosen generation, royal priesthood and holy nation which he had chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. And now while aliens, false professors and hypocrites are allowed to fill up the measure of their iniquities and to glory in their shame, the waters of a full cup are wrung out to his children; for all the day long they are plagued, and they are chastened every morning. But as their chastisements are in evidence of the special love of God to them, they are not to be despised, nor are the saints to faint when God rebukes them for their follies. None whom the Lord loves can or will escape his rod, for he scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. The scourgings do not make them sons, for sonship is a vital relation; but it proves that they who endure it have a life which was in their parent before they were born of his spirit; and the scourging proves that they are children, and that God is their heavenly Father. Nor does their being received of God make them his children. The prodigal was a son before he went astray, and when he was afar off, as well as when he returned, and his father received him because he was his son. The kind and gracious reception by the Father, while it did not originate the relationship, proves that it exists. Hence it is added, "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all (sons of God) are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."

So very essential then are our chastisements, we cannot have a reliable evidence that we are children of God or heirs of glory without them. We should not, therefore, despise or undervalue them, nor indulge the thought that we could do without them; and whether they be administered in sore bereavements, as in the case of our brother and sister Lewis, in the taking from us our Josephs, our Simeons, or our darling Benjamins, and making us feel as though they would bring us down in sorrow to our graves, or in stripping us of our earthly treasures, or exposing us to cruel persecutions, reproaches, and slanderous assaults of wicked men; or if it be by sending leanness and barrenness in regard to spiritual things, and allowing the tempter to hurl his fiery darts, or in causing us to walk in darkness and in the shadow of death for a season; still in whatever shape or form our chastise-

ments may come to us, they are in evidence that God loves us and regards us as sons, and all our affiictions are working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not on the temporal things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen, which are eternal, by faith "enduring as seeing him who is invisible."

Cease, then, ye chastened children of the Most High God, to fret and murmur , to weep and sigh and groan. Your tribulations are as essential to your spiritual prosperity, as your daily food is to the support and comfort of your earthly nature; we cannot do without them. At present they are not joyous, but grievous; but they shall afterwards yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness in them who are exercised thereby, and all the dear saints shall unite in the final ascriptions of praise, saying, "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." All of Zion's conflicts shall end in peace.

"But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." How very important, then, is this evidence of a sacred vital relationship to God. None but sons are heirs of God, none but heirs have any inheritance in God our Savior; and all who are not chastened of the Lord are bastards, and not sons. Shall we then despise or murmur at the chastenings which we receive from the kind, loving and gracious hand of our heavenly Father?

Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits? Our God is not the father of our flesh, or fleshly nature; but if we are born of his Spirit, God is the Father of that spirit which is born of him. We have had fathers of our flesh, fleshly fathers, for that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and the fathers of our flesh have corrected us, and as children of the flesh we have realized the benefit of their paternal discipline; and while we know they are liable to err in judgment, and to be controlled by their excitable passions, yet we have given them reverence; shall we not much rather submit to him who is the Father of our spirits, who is not subject to impulsive passions, whose wisdom, power and grace are infinite, who cannot err, but always chastens for our good?

Again, chastisement, whether it be from our Father which is in Heaven, the Father of our spirits, or of his spirit that is born of him, or from the fathers of our flesh, implies a discipline essentially different from vindictive wrath, or retributive vengeance, exacted only by the demands of inflexible justice: the former is a family discipline, administered in love for the good of the erring child, and in evidence of paternal love; while the latter is only in evidence of indignation and wrath, as in the case of those who despised Moses' law, who died without mercy. May we by grace be enabled in spirit to meekly say, Father in Heaven, thy will be done.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, May 15, 1880.)

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 2012

Reidy Pickral, VA	50.00
J. D. Neely, AR	5.00
Roland Allen, GA	5.00
Everette Goodman, TN	10.00
Lula Holley, VA	5.00
Charlie Fox, AR	5.00

OBITUARIES

ANGIE THOMPSON COX

Our most precious Sister Angie Cox was called from our midst on April 5,2011. Her funeral service was held at Fair Funeral Home on Friday, April 8, 2011, after which, her body was laid to rest in Ridgeview Memorial Gardens to await the second coming of her Lord. She was born January 21, 1924 in Floyd County, Virginia to the late William Jeffery and Virgie Lawrence Thompson. Her husband of more than 55 years, Thomas Monroe Cox, preceded her in death as did two brothers, Sherman and Harold Thompson. Along with a host of brethren and sisters in Christ, she leaves to mourn her passing two sons, Garry (wife Karen) and Barry of Eden; daughter, Becky O'Leary of Eden; brothers, Merlin Thompson, Bain Thompson, Brother Arlie Thompson all of Floyd and Breeman Thompson of Tennessee; six grandchildren, Christopher, William, and James Cox, Todd Wilson, and Joseph and Erin O'Leary .

Although Sister Angie had been among our people for many years, faithfully attending service and preparing lunch, she was not blessed to ask for a home in the church until September 22, 2002. On that fourth Sunday morning at the water as Sister Leah Brinson Brewer was to be baptized, Sister Angie asked for a home with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. She was received and the two of them followed their Lord into the liquid grave. It was a lovely, blessed morning in which all seemed to be in harmonious praise to the lord. later when Sister Lottie Minter, who was not able to be among us that day, was told that Sister Angie had asked for a home in the church, she said, "Thank the lord." Joy in her Saviour and love for her brethren and sisters in Christ were evident in Sister Angie's countenance. The words of the hymn writer best describe it:

"How did my heart rejoice to hear
My friends devoutly say
In Zion let us all appear
And keep the solemn day!
I love her gates, I love the road
The church, adorned with grace,
Stands like a palace built for God
To show his milder face
My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life or breath remains;
There my best friends, my kindred dwell,
There God my Saviour reigns."

Though we know that our loss is her eternal gain, her lovely smile and warm embrace are sorely missed.

May the God of all grace grant her family, most especially Brother Arlie and all of us, who miss her so very much, with His comforting Spirit that we might be blessed to feel that the lord giveth and the lord taketh away. Blessed be His Holy and Righteous name. In all things may the lord be praised.

Submitted by one who loved and esteemed her greatly,

Mary Hawkins

4-16-12

Elder Robertson,

Enclosed please find an obituary for Bro. Lesley Sullivan. He loved the truth and supported our churches, even though not a member.

If enabled I wish you would publish the obituary. His family would greatly appreciate the publication.

Thanks,
In Hope,
James Pugh

IN MEMORY OF BRO. GILBERT LESLEY SULLIVAN

It is with sadness of heart that I attempt to write this obituary for Bro. Lesley Sullivan. Even though Bro. Lesley did not have his name on any of our church books, he was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace and Grace alone and the Absolute Predestination of all things.

Bro. Lesley supported the churches of the Buttahatchie-Hopewell Association. Even though he was in bad health and could walk only with the aid of a walker, he was faithful to attend meetings when he was enabled. His sisters, Sue and Sister Agnes helped him in many ways by carrying him to church and to see that he was made comfortable. He loved the doctrine and what was considered his home at Pleasant Ridge Primitive Baptist Church, where his mother had belonged and his sister, Sister Agnes Sullivan, is now a member.

Bro. Lesley is survived by his wife, Mildred Hallman Sullivan, one daughter Sheila Foster (Steve), one son Gary Sullivan, three sisters; Jimmy Nell Oswalt, Sue Quarles, and Sister Agnes Sullivan and six grandchildren.

Bro. Lesley was born July 12, 1925, and passed away on March 8, 2012, being 86 years old. Services were on Sunday, March 11, 2012, at Sunset Funeral Home with Jerry Montgomery and Elder James Pugh with interment in Sunset Memorial Park.

Even though our hearts are saddened with the passing of Bro. Lesley, we believe that our loss is his eternal gain.

Elder James Pugh

PSALM 4:8.

I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
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SONG

GOD moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
He rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will.

Ye fearful.saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds. ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

Cowper.

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EDITORIAL

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come over Jordan into the land of Canaan; Then ye shall appoint you cities to be cities of refuge for you; that the slayer may flee thither, which killeth any person at unawares. And they shall be unto you cities for refuge from the avenger; that the manslayer die not, until he stand before the congregation in judgment." Numbers 35:9-12

Elder J.B. Farmer

These instructions were given from God to Moses for the benefit of the children of Israel in their day. But these things, no doubt, were also given to the Church from the time of her institution in the days of Christ until the day He shall come again. They were given for her learning and for her edification concerning the mercies of God toward His people as manifested in the testimony of the life of Jesus. Jesus said the scriptures are **"they, which testify of me."** Believing this to be true, we seek to know the deep, spiritual meaning hidden in this representation of the natural situation of Israel.

Being persuaded that the profound truth of the Gospel cannot be known apart from revelation, we must look unto the Lord to uncover His great mysteries for us, that we might be lifted up together into heavenly places in Christ, where we might show forth His praise for His many mighty works on behalf of His chosen people. May the Lord help us in our infirmities, for His ways and His thoughts are as high above our ways and our thoughts as the heaven is above the earth.

Six cities, three on either side of the Jordan River were appointed to give a convenient place for a person to flee, if he thought he should not be chargeable for his actions in the death of another person. If he had caused the death of someone without meaning to do it, the Lord was merciful to give him a safe

place to go. There, an impartial congregation would judge his case. The severe law was an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and a life for a life. But God, in His great wisdom and compassion saw exceptions to the law and made provisions for them. If a person willfully killed another, that was murder, and the murderer should surely be put to death. But if a person un-willfully killed another, he was considered a slayer, but not a murderer. And the slayer would be shown mercy.

Now we see a difference in a murderer, and a slayer. The murderer was filled with hate, which led him to kill another. The slayer had killed another unawares, or not meaning to do it, or not doing it through hatred. This shows the difference between the wicked, children of the devil and the children of God. The apostle Paul, when he explained how he found mercy after persecuting and destroying the Church, said that he **"did it ignorantly in unbelief."**

There are two kinds of offences. The one is deliberate and the other is not. The Lord said, **"It must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh."** This is a deliberate, willful, hateful offence that must be repaid in kind by the vengeance of God. But in another place it says, concerning the children of God, **"In many things we offend all."** These are the kinds of offenses that they give from time to time, either not thinking, or in a fleshly mind. These kinds of offenses shall be forgiven when the little one is blessed to acknowledge his error, and to beg for mercy.

In the day of Moses, the slayer fled to the nearest city of refuge and presented his case to the congregation. If they judged him to be a slayer and not a murdered, they protected him there from the avenger of blood. That one would be a friend of the deceased or some family member. The slayer was safe as long as he stayed there. But if he should go out of the city, and the avenger of blood should find him and slay him, the avenger of blood would be clear in the matter.

When the slayer continued in the city, there was evidence that he was not a murderer, because he was walking by faith according to the commandment given by God. But if he went out of the city, there was evidence that he actually was a murderer that had misrepresented his case. If he went out, he was not abiding in faith, but was walking unfaithfully. And he was worthy of death.

When David was driven from Jerusalem, and was in great weakness, Shimei, a hateful man, came out and cursed David and threw stones at him. One of David's servants enquired if he should go and kill the man, and was told that he should not. But before David died, he gave commandment to his son Soloman and instructed him not to let Shimei's hoar [gray] head come down to the grave in peace. David told Solomon that God would give him wisdom in the matter. After David died, Solomon called Shimei and told him to go to Jerusalem and build a house, and to stay in it. He told Shemei that if he should go over a certain brook, his life would be forfeited. Shimei agreed to all this.

Shimei stayed in his house for three years. Then two of his servants ran away to Gath. Shimei, thought it good to go after his servants, so he left his house and went to retrieve them. This broke the covenant he had made with Solomon. And when Solomon heard of it, he sent his servant and commanded him to fall upon Shimei and kill him with the sword. Death and destruction are the end of all willful unrighteousness and disobedience.

When the children of Israel were in Egypt, and the last plague was about to fall upon the Egyptians, the Israelite were commanded to kill a lamb, and to put its blood on the lintel and upon the doorposts, They were also commanded to stay in their houses and not come out until morning. They were protected from the destroyer when he passed over as long as they stayed in their houses. By faith, they obeyed God and were saved from the wrath of God that fell on all the Egyptians.

When Rahab the harlot received the spies that had been sent in to spy out the land before Jericho was destroyed, she made them promise to spare her mother, and father, and sisters and brothers and all they had. She was told that they must abide in the house until the destruction was past. If not, they would be destroyed with the rest of the inhabitants of the city. They obeyed by faith and were spared,

What is the common thread here? When destruction is about to fall, the children of God are shown a safe place to flee to and to abide in until the wrath of God is past. David spoke for all the elect saying, **"The Lord *is* my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, *and* my high tower."** David was also blessed to say, **"I cried unto thee, O LORD: I said, thou *art* my refuge *and* my portion in the land of the living. Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I."** And, **"Deliver me, O LORD from mine enemies: I flee unto thee to hide me."** The city of refuge for all those that fear God and fear the destruction that is about to fall on the whole world of unbelievers is Jesus.

The slayer, in the day of Moses, was told that he must abide in the city of refuge until the death of the high priest, After the high priest's death, the slayer would be free to return to the land of his habitation, In that day, the death of the high priest signified the wiping clean of the slate. Any offense of those taking refuge in the city would be remembered as long as the high priest lived. But when he died, there would be no remembrance of those former things. The slayer could then go on with his life as before the offense. His sin was forgiven. And the avenger of blood could not take revenge.

Jesus is the great high priest. The blessed apostle Paul, in the book of Hebrews made this plain. Speaking of Jesus, he said, **"Thou *art* a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and**

tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec."

"There *is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." If we are in Christ, we are in a safe place. The accuser of the brethren is cast down. He has nothing with which to condemn those for whom Christ died. The wrath of God has fallen upon Jesus instead of us. The penalty for sin has been paid. He is the high priest and the sacrificial Lamb, which took away the sins of the whole world of God's elect. It is written, **"By one offering, he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."**

We have noticed that some have come in among the saints from time to time, and have seemed to be satisfied with their ways and the things that accompany salvation, such as their love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, decency, order, fellowship and all the other blessings of the Spirit. After a while, for some reason, they become discontented and go out, and separate themselves, sensual. They may make excuse or point to some offense, but those things will not stand up. The apostle John was blessed to say, **"They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would** *no doubt* **have continued with us: but** *they went out* **that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."** May we be given grace to abide in the household of faith all our days in love and peace and rejoicing in hope of eternal life.

Elder J. B. Farmer
5-11-2012

CORRESPONDENCE

May 18, 2012

Mr. Tony Horton
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, VA 24343

Dear Brother Horton:

Enclosed is my check to renew my subscription to the "Signs" for another year. I look forward to receiving each issue and enjoy reading it. It is a joy to read the truths depicted in the older editions as I feel they are the same truths we hold dear to this day.

I feel grateful for the work that is done by all of you to get the "Signs" to all of us each month.

Use the extra for whatever is needed.

Sincerely,
Sarah Middleton Sidbury

VOICES OF THE PAST

1904—CIRCULAR LETTER THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CONFERENCE OF MAINE, TO THE ASSOCIATIONS WITH WHOM WE CORRESPOND. (Written by Elder Frederick W. Keene)

BELOVED OF GOD:

Once again we send you our annual epistle of love and fellowship in Christ Jesus. The year that is past, like the years that preceded it, has abounded in vicissitudes to those who fear the Lord, but amidst them all our consolation is this: all the times that pass over Israel, and over all the kingdoms of the countries (I Chron. 29:30), are only such as the Lord has ordained, and as we contemplate the character of our God, that he is just and holy, gracious and almighty , we may well bow in acquiescence to his ways, and sing, "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth" (Revelation 19:6). Happy are we when in such a state of mind. The saints in times past looked unto God and were lightened, and their faces were not ashamed, and shall we in our day look in vain unto the Lord our God? It cannot be, for with the seal of our mercy there is "no variableness, neither shadow of turning," and he loves his own with an everlasting love, His mercy endureth forever. God is the eternal fountain of all our mercies, he is the confidence of the church, and to him in these our times we would turn, saying with the congregation of old, "Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up forever" (Psalm 28:9). The Lord is the rock of our salvation. If this be so in truth it may well be said of us, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places." Our Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to save his people from their sins. He gave himself a sacrifice for our transgressions, and unaided, by himself, he purged our sins; Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. He has ransomed his people by his precious blood, ransomed them from the power of the grave, redeemed them from death, redeemed them unto God. He has gone into heaven itself, having obtained eternal redemption for us. This now is the hope of believers, and in his salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, they greatly rejoice, "though now for a season, if need be, they are in heaviness through manifold temptations." This is our rejoicing, beloved brethren, that Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded, world without end.

During our earthly pilgrimage no other Savior have we than he who hath loved us and hath washed us from our sins in his own blood. To him therefore our song shall be ascribing "salvation to

our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb" (Rev. 7:10). As then we view the children of God encompassed with temptations and adversities our hearts are moved in their behalf, and our prayer is, "Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance." The Lord has a people, as he says, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." They are his, for he hath chosen them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. They are his, for he hath redeemed them, and very blessedly speaks to them, saying, "Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." They are his, for he hath put his Spirit within them, and they are born again, born of his Spirit; his fear he puts in their hearts, that they shalt not depart from him. He will say, "It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God" (Zech. 13:9). The people of God need, while here below, continual salvation from the power of their enemies. The world, the flesh and the devil are all combined against them, and the saints endure much damage and affliction from their foes. So subtle are our adversaries that we are often ensnared and wounded, and cannot discern that it is an enemy that hath done it. Our foes put on a friendly aspect, we are allured and become their prey; Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Our natural heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. We read of the deceitfulness of riches, and of some coveting after money who have erred from the faith and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows (I Tim. 6:10). We need salvation from men of corrupt minds, who wrest the Scriptures, and by their perverse disputings would pervert the gospel of Christ. They privily bring in damnable heresies, and their words are as a canker eating away the health and happiness of the household of God. The churches, dear brethren, today are being tried. O Lord save thy people. Every day, also, we need salvation from the indwelling lusts of our flesh, that we may walk holily and unblamably, glorifying our Father which is in heaven, in our body and spirit which are his. Whatsoever distresses may befall the people of God, so dear are they to us that our cry shall be, O Lord, save thy people, cause thy face to shine upon them, and they shall be saved.

The psalmist continues his prayer, saying, "Bless thine inheritance." The world is God's, and the fullness thereof; all the beasts of the forest are his, and the cattle upon a thousand hills, the gold and the silver are the Lord's. But, "The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance" (Deut. 32:9). "The Lord hath chosen Jacob for himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure" (Psalm 135:4). This is a very gracious revelation, for did not the Savior say, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also"? (Matt. 6:21). Then if Israel be the peculiar treasure of the Lord, there is his heart also. O wonderful! Has he not said of Zion, "This is my rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it"? (Psalm 132:24). Yes, unto Solomon God said, "I have hallowed this house

which thou hast built, to put my name there forever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually" (I Kings 9:3).

"Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance." Bless thine inheritance with sweet peace and fellowship in the gospel. Send down, O Lord, a bountiful rain of thy loving-kindness to confirm thine inheritance when it is weary. Though all the powers of darkness curse them, "Let them curse, but bless thou" (Psalm 109:28). How light shall be their curse when the blessing of the Lord is our portion. Look, gracious Lord, upon their dry, parched places, and pour forth showers of blessing (Ezek. 34:26), then shall thine inheritance flourish as the garden of Eden, and thy land shall be called Beulah (Isaiah 62:4).

"Feed them also, and lift them up forever." This also is our prayer to God for the church of God. We need our God himself to be our Shepherd, then we shall not want, for we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. The church of God needs continual nourishment, and only the Lord can afford us that food upon which we can thrive. The flock of God which he hath purchased with his own blood craves the green pastures, and the Lamb in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and lead them unto living fountains of water. The Lamb of God is our Shepherd, and our Shepherd is our Husband, the Head of the church, our Mediator, our Sacrifice, truly he is our all. O, it is through him that there is revealed unto us all the glorious and comforting things of God; they shine forth in his face. He declares to us all the exellencies of the high and holy One that inhabiteth eternity. In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

> On His fullness in believing,
> Daily we receive supply;
> He, our glorious Head, is living,
> Sure His members cannot die,
> Precious Jesus, O how sweet to live on Thee."

Thus saith the Lord, "I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land" (Ezek. 34:29). Truly this is our Lord Jesus Christ, he is our food, the green pastures, the bread of life, his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed. The saints delight to feed upon the mercy and love of God, yea, all the attributes of God are to them most precious and nourishing to their souls in their meditations when the Holy Spirit feeds them. And where shall we find the green pastures of God's attributes? Creation affords us glimpses of God our Creator. His provinces over all his works excite the admiration of those who fear his great name, but O it is in the glorious doctrine of the gospel of Christ that all the fullness of God is made known. Here Jehovah in all his infinite and eternal excellencies is revealed, and here he feeds the people of his pasture, the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.

"And lift them up forever." Viewed in themselves the people of God are sinful and poor, and are often in consequence of their felt disabilities found abased in the dust. Sometimes so mini

shed and brought low are they through oppression, affliction and sorrow, that they are as those trodden down beneath the feet of the enemy, as the mire of the streets. Poor, sinful and unworthy, shall they be despised, neglected, forgotten? O no, for this is the word of the Lord: "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." "I will bring my people again from the depths of the sea." And the Holy Ghost shall inspire their hearts in faith to say, "Thou which hath shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth." Our God is ever mindful of his inheritance. "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory." O Lord, lift them up forever, lift them up above the condemnation of the law, exalt them in thy righteousness, O Savior, lift them up above the cunning craftiness of men who lie in wait to deceive, lift them up to the highway, above every false way, above all the heresies of men and devils, exalt them in thy truth, lift them up above their fears and unbelief, lift them up above the powers of Satan, above the cares and vanities of the world, that they may live unto Thee and set their affection on things above, and not on things on the earth. When faint and weary and ready to perish in their warfare with sin and Satan, shew them Thy victories, O Christ, our Redeemer, over our sins, over death and the grave, inspire their souls to believe in Thee, then shall they be lifted up, and by faith shall sit with Thee in heavenly places. Blessed earnest, blessed foretaste of the eternal exaltation of the church in everlasting glory. Then indeed shall the ransomed be lifted up above sin and sufferings, death and the grave, above corruption and mortality, and we shall be like our ascended and glorified Savior, for we shall see him as he is.

"Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up forever."

Dear brethren, it has been with pleasure that we have received your messengers and correspondence, and desire the continuance of your fellowship.

We have appointed our next annual conference to assemble with the church at North Berwick, Maine, on Friday before the first Monday in September, 1905, when we hope again to receive your messengers and correspondence.

FREDERICK W. KEENE,
Moderator
JOSEPH HALL, Clerk.

ST. MATTHEW 3: 16-17.

And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

JULY 23, 1970 THE CHATHAM NEWS

ALMOST 3,000 ATTEND MEETING AT BIG MEADOWS

By Mrs. Jessie R. Seagroves

Big Meadows Primitive Baptist Church was host this past weekend to the Upper County Line Association. Families began moving in on Friday in campers; also pitching tents to spend the weekend. Men in the neighborhood met several weeks ago to provide all necessary facilities to accommodate these campers: also for other visitors who attended the Association. In a grove of oak trees the outdoor arbor and benches had been erected. Huge galvanized water drums were located at several spots on the church grounds for the convenience of the almost 3,000 people present. Wires strung with electric lights were in abundance. There was much activity on the grounds of Big Meadows. It had been a long time since the Meadows (as many old timers refer to the church) had been vibrant and alive.

Big Meadows received its name from the large meadows back of the church. At one time there was a school there which was also called "Big Meadows."

Big Meadows was formed on April 8, 1843 with the parent church, Deep Creek Church, being located in Caswell County, which is now northern Alamance County. The church records reveal that charter members included such names as Buckner, Lewis, Stephens, Johnson,

Dinner on the ground

Some even camp out at the meeting

Dowdy, Baliff, Norwood, Hargrove, Jones, Richardson, all of whom have descendants scattered over the community.

Land for the Big Meadows Church was given by Peter Johnson. It is said the land was obtained by Martha "Patsy" Johnson who traded a woman slave to her brother, Elisha Buckner, for the 230 acre Johnson Plantation, three acres of which were deeded to the church. The first services,were held in a log structure which was near the present church. The log church was torn down in 1891 and the present church building replaced it. However, the present building was remodeled from a frame one to brick veneer, beginning in April, 1963. This was done while Elder Harvey Smith, Burlington, was pastor there. The church was a frame one without electricity. Elder Smith desired to see some improvements made. So one night in Sept. 1962, he, along with Van Thomas, Kenny Jones, Ulys Cook, Audy Jones, Seymour Johnson, Lee Johnson, Chesley Johnson, Casey Johnson, Mrs. R. G. Buckner, Mrs. W. M. Wright, Jesse A. Crutchfield, Mr. Rudd and Henry Jones, Burlington, met at Crutchfields Store. Plans were formulated that night for the remodeling of the building. Van Thomas was elected as chairman with Audy Jones, Chesley Johnson and Casey Johnson being the other members of the Building Committee, Mrs. Jessie Ruth Seagraves was elected treasurer. Donations poured in from a wide area once plans were made known. The church was remodeled to its present form. Elder Smith didn't live to see the church fully completed. Elder Kenneth Key, Greensboro, the present pastor, helped put the finishing touches, such as the carpeting, stained glass windows, etc. He also added the attrac-

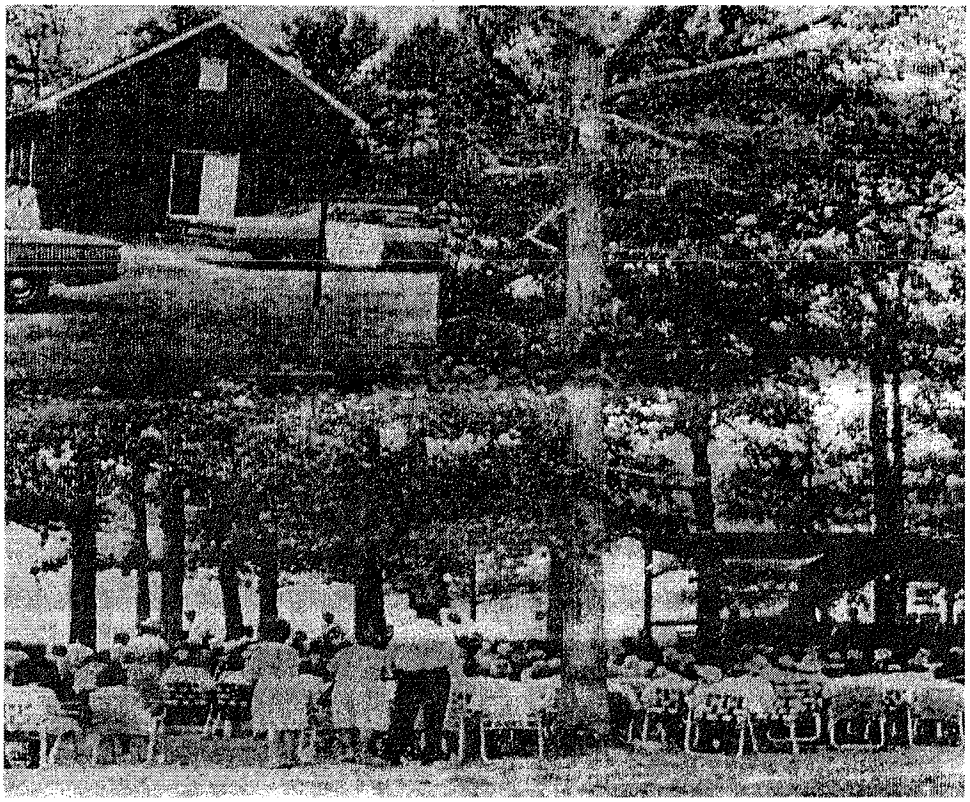

CROWD AT BIG MEADOWS

tive sign in front of the church which gives the date of the founding of the church. Elder Smith's dream came true. Many passers-by have remarked about the little church. It has a legend comparable to "the Little Church in the Wildwood."

This weekend the "grassy greens of the meadows" was a beautiful place to be. While thousands flocked to other places to find peace and love, those who came to Big Meadows found peace, love and serenity. There were approximately 25 ministers present from as far away as Texas; also Virginia, as well as from ail over North Carolina. One minister from Virginia was a doctor by profession. Elder W. C. King, pastor of Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church, extended the welcome. Elder King has sometimes been referred to as the "Dean of the Primitive Baptist Ministers." Elder King noted that this was his 53rd Upper Country Line Association meeting. Two of the late Elder Harvey Smith's sons were also in the group of ministers. They are Elders Wallace and Donald Smith, both of Burlington. Elder Smith's widow of Burlington was also present.

All age groups were represented from babies to residents of Lindley Oaks Rest Home. Many people brought folding chairs to sit in and would move them about "according to the sun." Highway traffic and parking were directed by Ulys Cook, his two sons, and J. R. Johnson.

Fellowship and informality were

SILER CITY, N.C. THURSDAY, JULY 23, 1970

A COOL DRINK OF WATER

prevalent among the people present. One gentleman was comfortable in a pair of overalls while many others were dressed in other fashions such as the popular "Mod style." (Double breasted suits, etc.) At the lunch hour the picnic table was loaded abundantly with food. Everyone was welcomed to partake. Families who camped out for the weekend had tables setup under tents. They did their own cooking. Clotheslines were swaying with towels, linens, etc.

It was truly a sight to see and hear. The Bible verse, "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" —Matthew 18:20 proved true, as Big Meadows has only two members. But the hundreds of people who attended services this weekend proved that there must be a true spirit of worship and fellowship among these people. Strains of such old fashioned hymns as "Amazing Grace," "How Firm a Foundation," and others filled the Meadows and countryside with a melody pleasant to the ears. As one person remarked, "It was truly good to have been here."

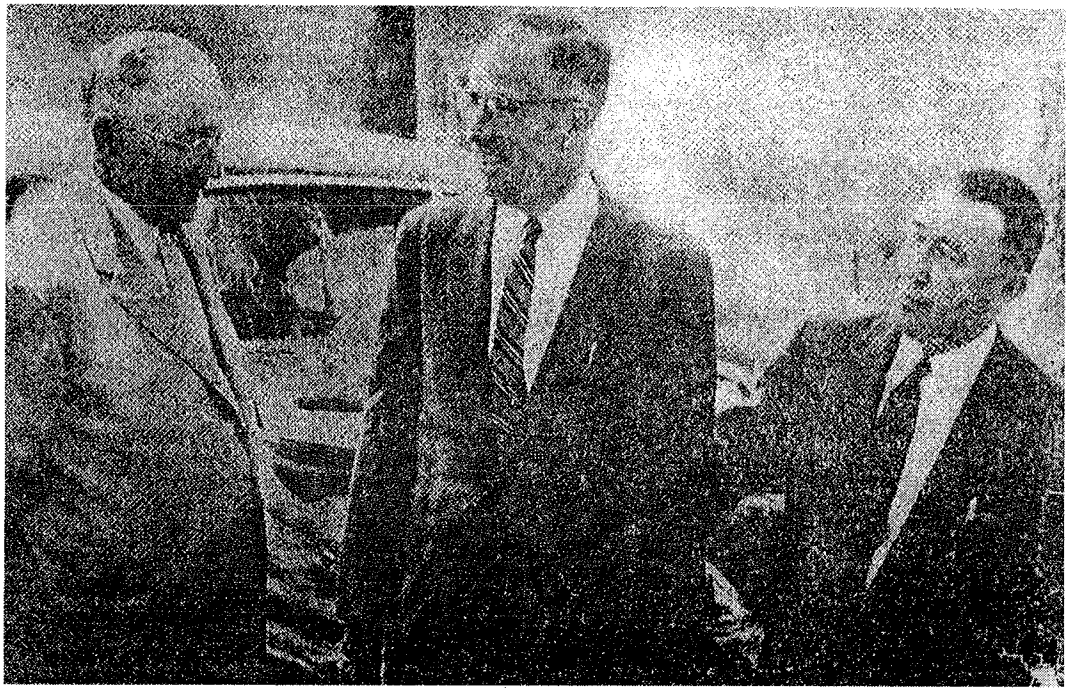

LEADERS OF ASSOCIATION GET TOGETHER AS PROGRAM STARTS
A. B. Ayers of Williamston; Elder W. Currie King, Greensboro; Clerk D. V. Spangler, Danville, Va.

1874 -THE WIND BLOWETH WHERE IT LISTETH
By
Wm. M. Smoot, July, 1874,
SIGNS of the Times

[The following was written as a private letter to me, but as I think it will be of general interest to the readers of the "SIGNS of the Times," I trust that brother Smoot will excuse the liberty I take to submit it to Elder Beebe's judgment. Yours, Benton Jenkins.]

Dear Brother Jenkins: - I am reminded of the promise that I made to you when we parted at Middletown (NY) on the 9th alt., the promise that I would write to you. I hope that an opportunity is presented to me upon this occasion to comply with that promise. I love to write to brethren, and to receive letters from them; but in writing I am led at times to mourn my barrenness, feeling almost entirely destitute of anything to communicate that will either interest, comfort or instruct. But these feelings, I believe, are peculiar to the saints of our God; we all have them to a greater or less extent. As this view of the subject enters my mind, there come with it the words of the Savior to Nicodemus, *"The wind bloweth where it listeth* (pleases), *and thou hearest the*

sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."- John iii, 8. The spiritual presence of our God with us in our after-experience is as it was in our first experience. Under a realizing sense our sins and our iniquities, we had vainly sought for salvation on either hand, by works of the flesh, or by decisionism, and had been brought eventually to a state of weakness and despair. When, at an unexpected hour, and in a way that we were not looking for it, the salvation of our God was revealed unto us. His life-giving voice was heard in our experience - *"Live!"* and we were enabled to rejoice in Him with joy unspeakable and full of glory. This calm and heavenly frame of mind, this rejoicing in the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, remains in the experience of some but a short time. Sooner or later, however, to a considerable extent it is gone! It is like the wind that springs up, blows for a time, and passes away. This is our first experience of the pardoning love, tender mercy and heavenly peace that flows from the spiritual presence of our God.

He comes unto us in the same manner in our after-experience. We have been mourning His absence perhaps for a long time. The evils of our depraved nature are now exposed to our view; we are better able now to see them; they stand forth in every form. The warfare between the law in our members and the law of our mind is now keenly felt, and in our experience we feel to exclaim with Paul, "O *wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"* We turn, and look at our past experience; our mind wanders back through the dark windings of the past, through the mysterious ways in which we have been led, and sweetly rests upon the precious seasons we have spent in the light of the countenance of our God. But will we ever experience another "first love experience" season again ? Are we not too far gone now ever to feel His soul-reviving presence again? " *Will the Lord cast off forever?"* and will He be favorable no more? This is our condition now. But, suddenly, there is a melting away of these dark and dismal feelings. The presence of the Holy Spirit is felt again! The wind is blowing now. It may be almost imperceptible at first; but gradually it increases. Darkness gives way to light. The great storehouse in which are stored the treasures of our God is opened unto us. Its bolts are thrown back, for the Spirit opens up. The precious treasures therein stored flow unto us. We feel that they apply to us. We rejoice in the light of the countenance of our God and bask in His smiles. Another burst of spiritual growth or revelation of other Truths are now sweet to us as we grow in grace and knowledge of His great grace. His banner of love is extended over us on every side. We think again, that we will stay the winged Spirit; we will hold it fast now. But here again we err, for we have no power to hold it at all. It is not within our grasp. It is completely beyond our control. And ere we are aware it is gone! Like the gentle summer breeze that springs up, we feel its refreshing presence as it passes by.

It blows for a short time and passes away. We can not tell where it cometh and whither it goeth.

There is a difference also in regard to the power of the wind at different times. Sometimes it blows with more power than it does at other times. So is the presence of the Spirit felt. At times it is felt more sensibly than at other times. We realize it today in the calm and heavenly frame of mind that we enjoy, while its fruits, love, joy, peace, &., are felt flowing from us and returning unto us. Tomorrow it is felt more forcibly. The wind blows with increased power. We feel the comforting assurance that our feet are placed upon the bright summit of the Lord's Holy Mt. Zion. The radiant and glory of the place are seen on either hand, while in our hearts and upon our lips we find a song of thanksgiving, praise and adoration unto Zion's King. Thus does every one who is actually born of the Spirit realize the Spirit's presence in his or her experience, refreshing and reviving them, and enabling them to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Each learns that the Holy Spirit, as the Spirit of God, is absolutely sovereign in the display of His grace. So often His children are without the *felt presence* of His love and grace; made to mourn in its Beloved's absence; and caused to question his interest in redeeming love. But such self-reflection creates a strong desire to experience Him again, even if he has not before. It is a living manifestation of one's real love toward the dear Savior of sinners - a longing to be with the Bridegroom of his hope. Much might be written upon this interesting subject. I have briefly glanced at it in a general manner. I have not now the time, nor would the limits of my letter permit me to speak of it in all of its vivid applications to us in our experience. But I must close now.

I reached my home in safety Monday following the fourth Sunday in June, after an absence of about six weeks while engaged in preaching. God favored me through the help of good health, and I yet enjoy to a considerable extent the same blessing. Many are the blessings, temporal and spiritual, bestowed upon me, and I feel myself to be altogether unworthy of the very least of God's favors. I hope that one of the leading desires that I have is to walk as becometh the followers of Christ, but I feel that I come far short of this. I feel it at times hard to deny myself and take up the cross. How to perform that which is good, I find not here in our experience. There is a continual searching for it, a reaching for it as hid treasure, but we find it not. Through all that we think, say or do, we behold the wretchedness of our depraved nature. Yet as strong and as firm as God's throne, the Truth of His declaration stands, that we *"are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready* to *be revealed in the last time."* May this blest assurance be ever present to sustain and comfort us throughout the journey of life, and finally may we be gathered around the throne of our God in heaven entering into the enjoyment of the inheritance reserved there for those who are thus kept.

Yours in gospel fellowship,
Wm. M. Smoot. 1875

OLD AND NEW MAN

"So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." - Rom. 7:25.

If Paul had in him these two opposite principles, and both so identified with his person that with the one he *himself* served the law of God, and with the other at the same time *he himself* served the law of sin, was he like all other Christians in these respects? Have all Christians in them a mind with which they themselves serve the law of God, or can any man be a Christian who has not such a mind? And have all Christians, like Paul, a principle or law in their members which is at war with this law of the mind, and with which they themselves serve the law of sin? Or is the flesh of some Christians so purified by regeneration that they are unlike Paul, and have no wicked propensities in their flesh whereby they serve the law of sin?

If all Christians are like Paul in these particulars, and like him serve the law of their God with the mind, and with the flesh serve the law of sill, are both of these opposites born of God; Or is that flesh in them which wars against the Spirit, only born of the flesh: or has it been born over again and made holy by a spiritual birth? And if it has, why does the apostle admonish Christians to crucify it with its affections and lusts, and how can the Christian with it himself still serve the law of sin? If in our flesh there dwells no good thing, and in that which is born of the Spirit there dwells no evil thing, if that which is born of God cannot commit sin, because his seed abideth in him, and *he* or *it* cannot sin because he is born of God, is it heretical or wicked for a Christian to believe that all the corruptions within him are born of the flesh, and none of them are born of God, and that all that is pure and holy within him, is born of God, and no part of it is born of the flesh?

Of this mind with which the Christian *himself* serves the law ofGod, the apostle says, "We have the mind of Christ," and another mind, or law, which he saw in his flesh he calls a *carnal* mind, which signifies a fleshly mind. With the mind of Christ he serves the law of God; but the *carnal* (or fleshly) mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. These two minds must be very opposite. One of them is not, and cannot be subject to the law of God, and with the other we serve the law of God. Are both of these minds born of God, or is that mind which cannot be subject to the law of God, born of the flesh? The carnal mind is enmity against God, while the law requires love to God, and love to our neighbor, and on these hang all the law and the prophets. Is that fleshly mind which cannot obey the law of love, born of God? Or is that mind which can and does love God, with all the heart, might and strength, born of that flesh in which there is no good thing?

We think all Christians will unite in the conclusion that all within them that is carnal, earthly, depraved and vile, is born of the flesh, and will continue to annoy them until they shall be by death delivered from these bonds of corruption,

until this earthly house or mortal tabernacle shall be taken down, dissolved and fall, and that our mortal bodies will not be animated with immortal life until God shall change them and fashion them like the glorious body of their risen Redeemer, and that change will not come until the resurrection, when if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in us, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken their mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwells in them. Then, and not until then, shall they be satisfied: when they awake in his likeness.

Strip the subject of all vain speculations, and all futile attempts to analyze the natural soul, body, or spirit of man, in trying to make out what we possess that is born of earth, or born from above, and it will be easy for every heaven-born child to perceive that all that we possess as identified with our persons in our present state that is born of God, bears the image of the heavenly, and all within us that does not bear the heavenly image is born of the flesh, and not of the Spirit.

With a clear understanding of their complex character, as now in an earthly body which clings to the earth, and lusts after the things of the earth, and wars against the spirit of their mind, and makes them groan, being burdened, and also clearly understanding that they also are the happy recipients through grace, of eternal, or immortal life, that Christ is formed in them the hope of glory that God has revealed his Son in them, that God has shined in their hearts to give them the light of the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ, they will be prepared to appreciate what the inspired apostles have said of the *old* man, and *new* man, the *outer* man, and the *inner* man, together with the admonition to put off the old man with his deeds, and to put on the new man, which after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness.

A clear scriptural understanding of this subject will serve also to obviate the difficulties which may harass their minds in regard to the nature of the Christian warfare. The saints are often tempted to doubt the reality of their own experience because they find in them so much of what is earthly, sensual and devilish, so much unreconciliation to God, so much murmuring, such vile affection, and strong propensities to depart from the living God, and to run into forbidden paths. If, say they, we were born of God, would it be thus with us? Can a nature which is born of God, grovel in the dust, and be so opposite to the spirit and purity of God? Certainly that which is born of God cannot commit sin, cannot disbelieve or doubt what God has said, &c. But when they hear an inspired apostle declare that it is no more I that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in me, that the new man in them only, is born of God, loves God, loves holiness, loves the brethren, and serves the law of God, and that with his flesh, or earthly nature, he serves the law of sin, and does the things which he would not, and leaves undone the things which he would do, it gives them sweet relief. "From whence come wars and fightings among you?" Thus the apostle James interrogates the saints. Do they

arise from that new man which is after God created in righteousness and true holiness? Certainly not. They cannot proceed from that in us which is born of God, for that cannot commit sin, for the seed abideth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. Whence are they then? "Come they not of your own lusts?" Our flesh lusts against the Spirit, and that which is born of the flesh is flesh. Here is the source of wars among Christians. But as that which is assailed by the flesh is Spirit, and is born of the Spirit, it wars against the corruptions of the flesh. The life, or animation in the Christian which is of the flesh, shall die, and if we walk after the flesh, as the body is death, and it is dead because of sin, ye shall die. There is nothing else in the flesh; but if ye through the Spirit (which is born of God) do mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live; for the Spirit is life, because of righteousness. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." Let us remember that if we walk after the Spirit, we shall not fulfill the desires or lusts of the flesh. If the saints could at all times walk after the Spirit, there would be no wars and fighting among them; that is, no biting and devouring of one another; they would lay aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speaking, and as new-born, heaven-born, spirit-born babes, we would desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby. This spiritual food is adapted to the child of the new birth; it will not nourish the child of the flesh. Our fleshly natures are of the earth, all their sustenance must come from the earth, and be obtained from thence by the sweat of the face. But that birth, which is of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever, must be sustained by the milk of that living and abiding Word.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.,
November 15, 1858.

PSALM 24: 1-8.

The earth *is* the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?

He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

This *is* the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

Who *is* this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.

Galatians 1:9-11.

"As we said before, so say I now again, if any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man."

The Apostle Paul begins this epistle by stating, he being chosen an apostle is, "not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead."

We are most sure, without a doubt whatsoever, that if Paul was called of God, which we have every evidence to believe he was, to preach, he was also called to write as both are directed by the power of God Therefore we have that certainty that whatever Paul is writing to the churches of Galatia is true in that day and is today.

Paul here is defending what he has preached and is preaching, as I believe each of God's called ministers delight in doing today.

We are taught in the above scripture as well as His law written in the heart of all true believers, that of all that preach; many men do preach another gospel, or one that isn't taught in the bible.

I think he is warning all that know the truth to beware of, to stay away from, notice the danger of, etc. making sure they follow not or believe, any other gospel than that Paul is setting forth or that they have heard, the Word of God verifying all.

We have heard and believe that which is the nearest the truth is the most deceiving. Follow not doctrine which has an uncertain sound, but weigh all matter as to correctness.

Paul says "do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? There has never been an age or time in the world that the true and pure doctrine of God was pleasing to the entirety of mankind or would be received of the unbeliever or anyone the truth had not been revealed to. His people shall know the truth and the truth shall make them free and that means in part, free from a doctrine of gospel that is untrue.

Do I seek to please men or God? should be a question in the mind of all that know the truth, especially those who are called to stand before a God fearing people, as all His people are. Notwithstanding we know not which are His, yet to please men or to seek to please men, would erase each from being a servant of God This is a serious matter brethren.

As God's minister stands, or is given to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, is pleasing those he is before foremost in his thoughts? or speaking that which is indited in his heart, the fear of displeasing God, who called him by His grace. I fear many times, is it thus with me, but trust by the grace of God, there have been times, I cared not what men might think or say, but spoke from the heart, if ever I have. I don't believe if

we were to try to please all that attend our assemblies we could preach the gospel of Christ.

We must declare He is of one mind, and changes not, the same today, tomorrow and forever. That all who ever know Him must be taught from above by His holy spirit. To know God is life eternal. Teaching we didn't choose Him but He chose us and called us into the knowledge of the truth at His appointed time. He looked down and there was none to help, His own arm, whom I believe is Christ, brought salvation.

Did not Paul declare as Jesus himself did while on earth, that all good and perfect gifts come down from above, from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness. neither shadow of turning. We see Him as knowing all things, then does He wait for us to ask for what we need before He knows? Are not all our blessings stored up in Him from eternity, not a possibility of us missing one blessing. We are being kept by His power as He brings us to desire many times the very thing He has determined to give. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." Do we believe this, or are we apt not to declare He doeth all things well and none can stay His hand? This should be our theme if we believe in Him.

If we please men we are not the servant of God. Then do we declare all we believe or withhold part to please men. We read of a day when every knee will bow and every tongue confess He is the Lord of glory. Have we been prone to water down the unchangeable gospel of Christ? If so, we have not or will not be His servant. A servant tries to please the one he serves. If he serves people, he is loyal to his employer, in fear of being discharged If a servant of God, expecting nothing as a reward, just made willing to serve God, in fear and trembling.

May we ever be found striving to declare that truth once delivered to the saints, giving His name all the honor, praise and glory for all time, trusting He will guide our hand to write, as well as our speech.

Submitted by,
Elder J. R. Williams

CORINTHIANS 12: 6-7.

And there are diversities of operations. but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will meet, the Lord willing, on the fifth Sunday in July. This meeting will be held at Moons Creek Church. The church is located 1 mile east of Hwy 86, between Danville and Yanceyville, on Park Springs Road.

Elder Jimmy Gray, Moderator

LOWER MAYO FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo Fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday only, July 29th, 2012. We hope to start singing at 10:00 A.M. and preaching at 10:30 A.M. Mayodan Church will host the meeting. Directions for those who do not know the location; the meeting house is located at 426 N. 2nd Ave. US 220 Bus. N., Mayodan, N.C. 27027 coming north or south on US 220, turn south on 220 Business to Mayodan.

Go 2 miles to church on right. Coming NC 770, turn south on Janet Road. Go 2 miles to 220 Business. Turn right and go 1 ½ miles to church on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in salvation by grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

PLEASANT HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

103 North Haley B
East Camden, AR 71701

Signs of the Times
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, VA 24343

Dear Signs of the Times,

Would you please run the following announcement.

Pleasant Hope Primitive Baptist Church (Huffines, TX) wishes to announce that effective May, 2012 the church will only meet on the 4th Sunday in May and October of each year.

Thank you very much
Annie Moore, Clerk

SKEWARKEY UNION (Eastern Kehukee Association)

Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of July 29, 2012. The church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albermarle Avenue in Tarboro, NC. Preaching services begin at 10:30am.

We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 2012

Edna Graves, AL 5.00
Rosalie Walker, VA 10.00
Sarah Sidbury, NC 5.00
Hoyt Adams, KY 50.00

OBITUARIES

OBITUARY OF BROTHER PERRY WRIGHT DILLON

Perry was born July 20th 1922 in Franklin County, Virginia, a son of the late Herbert Taze Dillon and Hettie Ann Holland Dillon. He passed away on January 3, 2012, at the age of 89 from a stroke.

Perry was twice married, first to the late Eva Holland Dillon and then to Eula Moorefield Dillon of the residence. In addition to his wife he is survived by his son, Ronnie Dillon and his wife, Betty of Danville; his daughter, Vanessa Coffey and husband, Steve of Evington; two step-sons, Charles Andrews and wife, Judy of Rockville, MD and Gary Andrews and wife, Barbie of Lynch Station; one brother Farest Dillon of Rocky Mount; eleven grandchildren and fifteen great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by three sisters, Zeddie Hudson, Jo Perdue and Edna Hubbard; and one brother Clarence Dillon.

Perry was an army veteran of World War II serving with the 99th Division Infantry .He was the owner of Dillon Construction but retired on disability due to arthritis of the spine. He built the building for the Hurt Volunteer Fire Department and was a very active member as long as he was able. He loved the Fire Department and all the members. He was made a charter and lifetime member. Perry was an avid hunter for many years and his garden was his hobby. He loved to plant and watch things grow.

Perry was gladly received into the fellowship of Union Primitive Baptist Church on May 2, 1990 on an experience of Grace. He was baptized by his pastor, Elder Raymond Goad. He was a blessing to the church and helped maintain the church, yard and driveway as long as he was able. When Union Church closed on October 3, 2010 he moved his membership to Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on the fourth Sunday in October 2010. Perry loved to go to church and always greeted everyone when he went in the door.

His funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on January 6th, 2012 by his pastor, Elder Raymond Goad, Elder Marvin Brumfield and Ronnie Dillon. His body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Altavista Memorial Park to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Perry was loved by so many people and will be greatly missed by his wife, family, church family and friends.

Written By His Wife,
Eula Dillon
And
Brother-In-Law,
Brother William Midkiff

ST. JOHN 5:39.

Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

In loving memory of our Sister; Veocie Mae (Bell) Goad

We at Mayodan Primitive Baptist Church desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our Lord, who called home our Sister, Veocie Mae (Bell) Goad on March 5, 2012 at age 99.

Sister Veocie was born in Washington County, Virginia on Sept.13, 1912 to the late Elder Rudy D. and Mary Emaline (Johnson) Bell. She was one of nine children and the last of her sisters and brothers.

She joined Mayodan Church on May 2, 1934 and married Roscoe Lee Goad Sr. To this union was born one son Roscoe Lee Goad Jr. She was a faithful member and loved her church very much and was the church clerk for many years. She traveled near and far to other churches and association and known as the Avon Lady in Rockingham County. As her health failed she couldn't attend church and later went into Jacob's Creek Nursing and Rehabilitation in Madison, NC. (Rock. Co).

Sister Veocie was humble, yet stood firm in what she believed was right and always defended the doctrine of predestination and election by the grace of God.

In addition to her parents; she was preceded in death by her husband Roscoe Lee Goad Sr. in 1970, seven sisters and one brother. Veocie is survived by her son Roscoe Lee Goad Jr. of Greensboro, NC and grand-daughter, Tiffany Goad of Marietta, Ga.

It is our sincere desire that God will be with her loved ones and comfort them from day to day. We at Mayodan Church extend our deepest sympathy to the family and our hope is God will reconcile all of us to his Holy and righteous will.

Sister Veocie loved this song:

How firm a foundation,
ye Saints of the Lord.
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!
What more can he say, than to you he hath said.
You, who unto, Jesus for refuge have fled.

A memorial service will be held at a later date.

Be it therefore resolved that 3 copies of this obituary notice be made. One is for the family, one for the church record, and one for publication.

Elder Tommy Pegram is our pastor.
Done in order of our church in conference, Mar.18, 2012.

Elder Tommy Pegram, Mod.
Sister Georgia M. Thomas, Clerk

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 7/2012 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

'Tis winter in my soul; my sins
Like clouds o'erspread the sky;
While wailing winds and dreary rains
To me all joys deny.

My heart lies hopeless of relief,
And filled with deep alarm,
Like the cold earth, benumbed with grief,
Under the pelting storm.

I try to look to God, but sin
Forbids to lift my eyes;
My cries and prayers are all in vain,
Guilt will not let them rise.

O weary winter of the soul,
How sad and full of gloom !
The heavy hours, how slow they roll,
While griefs my heart consume.

And must I thus fore'er remain?
Will the sun shine no more?
May I not hope that yet again
His beams will warmth restore?

Turn my captivity, O Lord!
Once more to thee I call;
And let thy sweet forgiving word
Make summer in my soul.

Then shall the streams of joyful praise,
Loosed by thy gracious hand,
To thy blessed name flow all my days,
In my heart's southern land.

Silas H. Durand

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EDITORIAL

"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Genesis 3:15.

Elder J.B. Farmer

Here is a great and profound mystery, too high and wide and deep for the carnal mind to understand. As with all mysteries, we must wait upon the Lord, hoping and trusting that He would make His word plain, that we might not be in confusion concerning it. For the scriptures to be of any benefit, they must be rightly divided, or opened up and laid out in truth. Only the Lord is able to do this. Beginning to write on this subject causes great fear within, because of the weakness of the flesh. But we must press on trusting that God will guide our thoughts to His praise, honor and glory. If anything is set forth contrary to the doctrine of Christ, it must be chargeable to me. But if anything is set forth in truth it is because God has been merciful to keep us in the way.

The Lord God made all things that were made in heaven and in earth, including the man, Adam. **"And the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."** And God made Adam a help meet, Eve, that he should not be alone. The subtle serpent, which the Lord God had made, tempted Eve to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He contradicted the commandment of God, and told Eve that they would not die, but that their eyes would be opened and that they would be as gods knowing good from evil. **"And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her and he did eat."**

The devil was deceitful, telling half-truths and appealing to the fleshly desires of the creature. He set up in Eve the desire for what was forbidden, and tempted her to venture out and disobey God. He told her they wouldn't die - and they didn't fall down dead that day, but they would die in another way. They would die to their ignorant bliss and unknowing presumption. And the serpent told her that their eyes would be opened, and they were, but not in a way that they had thought. Their eyes were opened to their guilt and shame, concerning their disobedience and fleshly existence.

What does all this mean spiritually to us today. It wouldn't be of much benefit to us if it were only a story of what happened to two people some six thousand years ago. The apostle Paul was blessed to bring the meaning forward to bear upon his life, and to bear upon the lives of all those that would believe after him. He said, being inspired by the Holy Spirit, **"What shall we say then?** *Is* **the law sin? God forbid** [It must not be.] **Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence** [desire for that which is forbidden]. **For without the law sin** *was* **dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which** *was ordained* ***to*** **life, I found** *to be* **unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew** *me*."

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil surely stands for the law. It is beautiful to look upon, and one might think its fruit would be profitable for the increase of knowledge about the world and about the meaning of life. It seems that it would be a good place to go to gain comfort and peace. **"The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good."** But it was not put here for the purpose of giving life. Rather it was purposed to be the ministration of condemnation and death. And it also serves as the schoolmaster that brings us to Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that is blessed to believe.

God formed Adam of the dust of the ground, and Adam was, from the beginning of his existence, a creature made subject to vanity just like all that would come after him. This means that Adam was not some angelic being or spiritual creature. He was a person just the same as we are today. Before he was brought into the knowledge of the law and of good and evil, he went about doing fleshly things. The blessed apostle said, **"...we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind..."** But before the commandment was given to Adam, there was no law to transgress, therefore, there was no sin and no knowledge of sin. And after the law was given, and after they disobeyed God, Adam and Eve were condemned by the law. They were shown the truth about their fleshly lives and disobedience. And now they knew they had disobeyed the Lord God

their Maker, and that they were in need of mercy. Then, they were killed by the law. They were not killed naturally or spiritually, but were killed to their former way of thinking and doing, just as the apostle Paul was killed, and just as we were killed, if we indeed have a part with all saints.

The serpent used the commandment of the Lord God to bring forth in Eve the desire for that which was forbidden. Accordingly, the apostle said he was alive once, but when the commandment came sin revived and he died. Now, how did the apostle die? He didn't fall down dead naturally, neither did he die spiritually, but he was killed to his old way of life. No longer could he pride himself in his accomplishments, or his good deeds, or his supposed self-righteousness. He was killed to any thoughts of salvation by fleshly works. Is not this our experience? Were we not brought under that same law, and made to see that we are sinners with no hope of salvation by anything we could do? Was it not this knowledge by way of the law that brought us as a schoolmaster to Christ, helpless and in need of mercy? Only then could we look to Him as our Savior, the only Way of Salvation.

After the disobedience of Adam and Eve, the Lord God gave a pronouncement to the serpent, because of his deception of Eve. **"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."** This scripture has stood from the time of its utterance until today to proclaim the relationship between the devil and the woman, and between his posterity and her posterity. There is disagreement, and animosity between them, and it shall continue until the Lord comes and casts the devil and his host into the lake of fire.

Eve was made to hate her disobedience and the one who tempted her and led her in it. She was called the mother of all living, which means she was the mother of all those who were the natural offspring of Adam and herself. But spiritually, it appears that Eve stands for the Church of the living God. All her children are alive in Christ. All her posterity has been given enmity against the devil and his children. And the devil and his children have enmity against the Church and her posterity.

The devil does have children. This is plain because Jesus identified some of them saying, **"Ye are of your father the devil and, the lusts of your father ye will do."** How are they the devil's children? They are controlled by the spirit of wickedness, which brings forth every evil work. How are the saints the children of God? Not by natural generation, but by spiritual generation. **"Which were born** [generated], **not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."** They are controlled by the Spirit of God, which brings forth the good works that they were before ordained to perform, by grace.

The Lord God said that the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent, and that the serpent would bruise His heel. This stands out as a wonderful prophesy concerning the mysterious birth of Christ by way of the vir-

gin Mary , and as a sure prophesy of the ultimate destruction of the devil by the Lord, and as a fitting description of the crucifixion of Christ.

It pleased God in His great wisdom to send forth His Son into the world in a certain way. **"But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."** God provided the remedy for the sins of His people in sending His Son into the world, in the likeness of sinful flesh, yet without sin. God and not man was His Father. Jesus, in a great mystery that is beyond our reason or our speculation, was verily God and verily man. The virgin, Mary , was a chosen vessel, but was as much in need of the mercy of the Savior as any of the other children of God. She was not a person to be worshipped, and neither to be thought of as the mother of God, as many do. But she holds a special place in our hearts as a humble, loving saint who God used to carry out His eternal purpose of the salvation of His people – part of which was to be born of a virgin. Jesus surely is the fulfillment of the prophesy of the seed of the woman that would bruise the head of the serpent.

In the book of Revelation, we see one of the seven heads of the beast, as it were wounded unto death, and his deadly wound was healed. The seed of the woman, Jesus, bruised the head of the serpent and wounded it unto death. The power of Satan was broken when the Lord laid down His life to atone for the sins of His beloved people. The devil no longer had any way to condemn the saints, since their sin debt was paid. This was a deadly wound to him relative to his being able to condemn the saints. And when the Lord gave His Holy Spirit to His children, the devil could no longer deceive them. This killed the serpent In his purpose to draw them away after himself.

But we see that Satan is still in the world deceiving and being deceived, and seeking whom he may devour. His deadly wound was healed in that he is still active in the world. But his time is short and he knows it. Because of this he has great wrath toward the children of God, and their mother, the Church. But Jesus has promised that the gates of hell should not prevail against His Church – which includes all her members.

The Lord God said that the serpent would bruise the heel of the seed of the woman. Jesus suffered from the serpent and his posterity, many insults, cruel mockings, and was finally scourged and nailed to a tree, where he gave up His life willingly for those He loved. There are many pictures and sculptures of what artists supposed were accurate depictions of the crucifixion. But as with the truth of the gospel, and the doctrine of Christ, unbelievers have never been enabled to know the truth. Jesus said, **"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up."** We see that the brazen serpent was put upon a pole in the days of Moses, and was lifted up. This was done, at the Lord's command, so

that all who looked upon the serpent in obedience would be healed of the deadly bite of the fiery serpents that had been sent among them because of their sin. Likewise, Jesus also was fastened to a pole and lifted up, so that all who looked upon Him, by the gift of faith in their Lord and Savior, would be delivered from death and destruction.

It appears from certain natural evidence and from the scriptures that those in ancient times who were crucified had their heels pierced by nails; one to either side of the pole. Ancient archeological evidence exists in Israel of part of a man's foot with a nail still in place passing through the heel. Evidently, he had been crucified. And we have the scripture in Genesis saying the serpent would bruise His heel. And we have Job prophesying of the Lord, **"Thou puttest my feet in the stocks, and lookest narrowly unto all my paths; thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet."** All this evidence, especially the scripture evidence, causes me to believe that the Lord's heels were actually bruised by the serpent in fulfillment of the scripture as He was nailed to the tree. This seems to be the true representation of the circumstances of death of our Lord, rather than what the world sets forth.

There are other things that are connected to the account of the garden of Eden that are wonderful such as the coats of skins, the tree of life, and the flaming sword. **"Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them."** Before the Lord God sent Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden, He made coats of skins and clothed them. Mercy and compassion was shown to them as they were about to be sent forth into the world. To be clothed with coats of skins required the death of an animal. Jesus offered Himself up without spot unto God to secure eternal redemption for His people. He took their sins upon Himself, and gave them His robe of righteousness instead. They were made the righteousness of God in Him.

"And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." This makes it plain that salvation is of the Lord. It cannot be taken hold of by anyone, contrary to what the multitudes say. The tree of life surely represents Christ, and the flaming sword, the Sword of the Spirit. Jesus said, **"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."** God has fixed it so that if anyone would glory in truth, he must glory in the Lord.

God is true and cannot lie or fail in a promise. His scripture is also true and contains all we need for our instruction, edification and comfort in spiritual matters. How merciful and kind He is to have

left on record for us the things that so warm our hearts and satisfy our minds about the things of the kingdom of heaven and His righteousness. May He lead us into all truth and keep us in the way of love and joy and peace.

I trust this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

5-3-2012
P. O. Box 787
Gretna, Va.

Brother Tony,

Please renew my subscription for one year. Use the balance as you need.

It is so good to receive the Signs. I didn't fully realize how precious it is until I could no longer go to services due to my husband's critical illness.

Brother Oscar and Sister Nellie Pickral called to check on us and we always get around to talking about the love and grace of the Lord. It is so uplifting to a weary heart.

Thank you all for all the hard work in getting the Signs out.

A sister in love and hope,
Carol R. Lansaw

PSALM 8:9.

O Lord our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth!

6-7-12

Mr. Tony Horton,

Please renew my subscription for another year. Use the rest as needed in memory of my brother Charles Hatchett.

I thank you and all your staff for The, "Signs of the Times." I enjoy it very much every month.

Thank you all,
Gladys Shelton

ARTICLES

GOOD AND PERFECT GIFTS ARE FROM ABOVE

"Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: (Eph. 1:3) "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2: 10).

These two scriptures, taken from separate places in Ephesians chapters 1 and 2, express a strong foundational doctrine that runs throughout the scriptures and should never be discounted or diluted. In addition they are strengthened and amplified with many necessary admonitions and exhortations **"...that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom.12:2).** With this in mind there is an urgency seen in the question of the apostle Paul to the He-

brews; **"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard** *him;* **(Heb. 2:3).**

This question by the apostle does not in any way imply that the sovereign will or determinate council of God is changed by human action or the neglect of it. It does point to an earnest need for godly diligence in the believer, the strength of which comes from the Spirit. The admonitions and exhortations, when laid upon the heart by the Spirit, and carried out, are as necessary for the fulfilling of God's purpose as are any other scriptures. They are a part of the interlocking chain that binds together, in one perfect pattern, all the incidents of God's providence. Consider that the scripture, where the apostle Paul exhorts the Philippian church, **"...in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." ...Philippians 2: 12.** It is immediately followed in verse 13, telling in what, or whose, strength it is done. **"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of** *his* **good pleasure."**

The nature of the flesh demands that no good work can begin in the flesh, **"Because the carnal mind** *is* **enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." (Rom. 8:7).** Yet, the vanity of the flesh, if left unchecked, will be quick to claim credit and wants it's reward for obeying the scriptures. It is blind to see and understand the words of **Rom. 7:18; "For I know that in me (that is, in the flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but** *how* **to perform that which is good I find not."** This is the same Apostle Paul that instructs the church at Ephesus; **"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (Eph. 4:31,32).** Does this not at first seem to be a contradiction?

The answer to the problem, if there is one, is that the admonitions and exhortations given are to the man of God and not to the world at large; To the inward man, and not the flesh, and likewise for good works. This strength of the inward man is only from above, "...*there is* **none good but one,** *that is* **God:" (Mat. 19:17). "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17).** Therefore the admonitions and/or exhortations of a brother should not be shunned, but carefully considered and judged on scriptural principals. Consider the Jews at Berea. They received the word of Paul and Silas with all readiness of mind and searched the scriptures daily on whether the things they heard were so. (Acts 17:10,11). With such God given caution and understanding, it should be remembered that the scriptures are heavily laced with instructions of things for the child of God to do and not to do, and all to the praise of him who supplies both the "will and

the do." And **"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do *it* with thy might;..." (Eccl. 9: 10).**

The Apostle John exhorts the saints; **"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." (1 John 3:18).** There is no room in the doctrine of predestination for the rationalized philosophy of the stool of do nothing", considering that the "will and the do" is from above. But it is understood of words and deeds, however intended, do not benefit God. He needs nothing that saints can supply. In the words of David; **"...my goodness *extendeth* not to thee; *But* to the saints that *are* in the earth, and *to* the excellent, in whom *is* all my delight." (Psa. 16:2,3).** Though the scriptures exhort the saints; **"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men* especially unto them who are of the household of faith." (Gal.6:10).** And further, Paul expresses to Timothy that a servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle to all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. (See 2nd Tim. 2:24,25).

It is clear that the goodness shown and expressed from saint to saint does not originate in the "will and do" of the old man, but is from God. Neither will it return to him void.

Therefore, **"Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; (for he *is* faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." (Heb. *10: 23-25).***

Elder Wayman Chapell

VOICES OF THE PAST

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER E. J. LAMBERT
***Signs* of *the Times*, JANUARY, 1938**

Elder W. D. Griffin
Dear Brother in Bonds:

I received your very comforting letter about a month ago, and was certainly elated over the contents, but wonder why anyone would stoop so low as to even notice such a wretched character as I am.

Brother Griffin, I feel to hope that we have a few things in common. Your age exceeds mine only about four years. In relating your experience you gave the "waymarks" so plainly that I believe we were brought over the same road. We are both members of the same faith and order. We have both been placed under the same yoke of the ministry. Having so many things in common, I am impressed to relate to you by pen some things of my experience along life's way if it be God's will. I have never attempted to write it before, but have been blessed to tell it in public a few times. It seems

so different from the experience of most people that I very often doubt it being an experience of grace.

I was reared by very religious parents, my father being an ordained minister of the "Church of Christ" (Kelly division of Missionary Baptists). Very few Sundays did I miss Sunday School and church services. I was reared in an Arminian atmosphere. I do not remember ever hearing the term "Primitive Baptist," or ever meeting a, "Hard Shell," until I was grown. I was taught that there were a very few ignorant, devilish people, who lived in the backwoods, who were called, "Hard Shell," whom I was to shun as a wild beast. Of course, I did not want to even meet one. At a very early age I, too, joined the organization of my parents. Being termed as one of the best "kid speakers" in our community, I was solicited to take part in the testimony meetings. When I was sixteen years of age, I obtained a teacher's license, and began to teach both literary and Sunday School. This, of course, helped me "practice up" on public speaking. Being first in the school-room, first in the Sunday School class, and first in the other community socials, gave me a good case of, "Big I," and the foremost symptom of self-righteousness. Then I was solicited to preach, and having such a good opinion of myself, and seeing so many of my fellow men falling so far short of me, I also thought it prudent that I should be clothed with the authority to tell them of their wicked ways, and admonish them to, "get right." Therefore, I was ordained, and zealously pursued my task, and went along smoothly for a while.

Now dear brother, the saddest, most heart-rending and serious part of my experience I am about to tell. The thoughts of it even now make me shudder. One certain night, during a protracted meeting in our community, I was called by the "big preacher" from the city, to take full charge of the service. He called me the night before, and spoke thus: "Brother Lambert, I have been preaching here every night for almost a week with no results. No mourners have come forward. Tomorrow night I want you to make the altar call after you have preached." Of course I was elated over the opportunity to try my luck. The next day I studied the proposition seriously. I decided on the theme, "Sinners in the hands of an angry God," using "Thou shall be cut off, and that without remedy," as a text. That particular night I must have been blessed with rhetorical eloquence, for when I made the altar call, old men, old women, boys and girls began at once to flock to the altar. Dear brother, I suppose you think I should have been somewhat overjoyed. Naturally I would have been, but alas! there seemed to be an audible voice which spoke, "Who are you, that you should invite?" This would not have been so bad if the answer had not come immediately by the same voice, "You are a sinner vile and needy." I wanted to run out at the door and hide from everyone. As soon as I could, I went away from there. Oh how miserable I was! On that night I saw myself a sinner for the first time, and I went about to right myself. The more I tried to do the deeper in sin I sank. I tried until I

could try no more, and gave it up as a hopeless task. Of course I gave up trying to preach, but I was still in possession of my credentials.

Some little time after that, I drove into a little town quite some distance from home, about sundown. Some of the people there knew I was coming, but did not know I had given up trying to preach, and had given out an appointment for me that night. As I drove in town the church bell began to ring, and I asked the one that I was stopping with what it meant, and he informed me that I was to preach that night. I told him I could not do it, but he informed me that it was too late to back out then. I saw the trap I was in. I was in a strange community, so decided to act the hypocrite and get up one of my old themes and texts and raise a reputation for myself in that community. But alas! I could not think of a thing. I tried to think of some Scripture and to take some of my Sunday School knowledge, but that had all sunk into oblivion. I know I tried to think soberly on the Scriptures, but I could not. I could think of nothing except how sinful I was, and I knew it would not do to tell them that, for instead of giving me a reputation I would lose it. A great audience was in front of me when I went behind the pulpit, and I was as blank of thoughts of the Bible as any one could be. If I ever prayed I did then. I groaned, "Lord, have mercy on me a sinner." I became unconscious of action or thought, and when I became conscious I was exhausted and was standing there feasting upon the power, holiness and wisdom of God. I left that place thrilled to the highest, still feasting upon several of the attributes of God. I was driving home in my car that night by myself, still feasting, when the train of thought was turned. I saw myself the blackest of black sinners, and then glimpsed God as the holiest of holies. I saw myself as most foolish and God as all-wise. I saw myself unable to perform anything, and God as having all power. What a great gulf there was to be spanned between my condition and the requirements of the law.

I went along groping in this predicament for quite some time. Finally the sweetest of my experience came. I was teaching school in the community where I had witnessed that glimpse of God, when one day a neighbor came to the place where my wife and I resided. He suggested that we go to a home that night to preaching. He said Elder A. D. Wall, of Amity, Arkansas, would preach. I asked if they were "Hard Shells," and told him if they were I did not care to hear them, because they believed that a man was justified in killing another because God predestinated it. He answered thus: "I just supposed you would be interested, for if I ever heard a Primitive Baptist sermon you preached it here last year." I answered, for curiosity's sake, "I will go." I have never been able to recall anything that I said that night, as I seemed to be in a subconscious state, and have often wondered what I did say. Therefore, I consented to go for the first time, to hear a "Hard Shell" preach, and I was glad I did go.

I accused Elder Wall of being a mind reader that night. He was blessed to take up each question that came to

my mind and to thresh it out to my satisfaction. That night I was blessed to see another attribute of God: that of mercy. I saw the character who was able to span the gulf between my sinfulness and God's holiness; my inability and God's power, my foolishness and God's wisdom, I saw Jesus, who was verily God and man, with one foot on God's side of the gulf and the other on puny man's side. I saw Him, as it were, pick up sinful men, whom God had chosen, and cleanse them with His blood and place them safely on the other side, without spot or blemish, to bask in the sunlight of God's eternal love and power forever on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance. Jesus died in my low room and stead, tread the winepress alone. In my stead (as I hope) He kept the law to a jot and tittle. The keeping of this law by Jesus was accredited to my account, my sins were laid on His shoulders and He bore the penalty. His life's blood was shed while hanging on the cross of Calvary for the remission of my sins, as I hope.

This experience was so consoling to me that I thought my troubles were over. But my lot seems to be akin to Job's. The last of my experience told was at the dawn of the year 1930. I will tell briefly some of the things that took place with me that year. Three cars were wrecked for me, a son was born to us and in about a month my wife died with pneumonia. I lost my position and health. I had to give up teaching because I was not able to meet the requirements for license. Of course, with all this, and doctor bills, funeral expenses and other things, I suffered a nervous breakdown. In that year I was received in Cedar Hill Church. In September I was visiting the South Ouachita Association, among strangers in the flesh. I was so nervous and burdened down with something that I could not face anyone. One night, at the home of Elder J. R. Evers, a sister (who was a total stranger to me) requested I be called in, and God blessed me with the light and liberty of unloading that burden. In the course of time I was licensed to preach. Then, against my protests of not being qualified, called for my ordination, which was carried out while South Arkansas Association was in session, in September, 1934. I met and married my second wife in that year, and God blessed me with the privilege of baptizing her last year.

Brother Griffin, I have tried to give you some marks of the road I was forced to travel. I am glad that God blessed you to come to Arkansas, and hope that we may meet again. If you receive any comfort from this give God all the praise. Pray for me at the throne of grace.

Hoping in Christ for my soul sufficiency, I am your brother,

Elder E. J. LAMBERT

PSALM 63:6-7.

When I remember thee upon my bed, *and* meditate on thee in the *night* watches.

Because thou has been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.

LIVING WATER

Jesus told the Samaritan woman who had come to Jacob's Well to draw water, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, 'Give me to drink'; thou wouldest have asked of Him and He would have given thee LIVING WATER." (John 4:10) The woman evidently did not know either the gift of God or who He was because she began to reason with Him on procuring natural water from a deep natural well. Her reasoning and questions were based on the same principles as that of Nicodemus as recorded in the first part of the third chapter of John relative to being born again. Nicodemus thought Jesus was speaking of being born again naturally. The woman thought He was speaking of natural water. Our natural finite minds can only conceive of that which is natural. Until we are born of the Spirit we cannot conceive that which is spiritual. I am thoroughly convinced that when Jesus told Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of WATER and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;" He was speaking of this same LIVING WATER that was under consideration in His conversation with the Samaritan woman. What is this LIVING WATER? What is its source? Through Whom does it come? What does this LIVING WATER do for its beneficiaries? These are a few of the questions in my mind. May God give us the answer in sweet meditations while we work through this treatise.

Jesus said, "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a WELL OF WATER SPRINGING UP INTO EVERLASTING LIFE." (John 4:14) This well of water is placed in the individual. It springs up. Sometimes in our experience we may feel that it has dried up to the extent that our hopes are blasted - then, it SPRINGS UP to revive us again, which strengthens our faith, and our hope is renewed. Have you not experienced many times the SPRINGING UP of this well of water?

We read in Isaiah 12:3 "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the WELLS OF SALVATION." "This LIVING WATER comes from the wells of salvation. It brings joy and gladness to those who drink it. The Psalmist said, *"There is* **a river, the streams whereof, shall make GLAD the City of God, the holy** *place* **of the tabernacles of the most High." (Ps. 46:4)** This LIVING WATER makes glad the grieved heart and brings joy to those who mourn because of their sins. It saves us from despair and gives relief to our parched soul. This water is soothing and enlivening. It is that Fountain that is opened to the Lord's people for sin and uncleanness. (See Zechariah 13:1) It proceeds from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Has God ever showed you what He showed to John as recorded in Revelations 22: 1-2? Have you seen this pure river of water of life flowing from the Throne of God through the Tree of Life ? If this Tree of Life stood in the midst of the street of that River and on either side of it — surely, the river flowed through the tree. Every stream of mercy that has ever reached you came through Jesus Christ who is our Life. Yes, this LIVING

WATER, or water of life, comes from Heaven. These gifts of His grace come down from the Father through the Son to us. Every comfort received by the child of God is because of this LIVING WATER.

We have concluded from our meditations upon this subject thus far that this LIVING WATER gives to us the glorious and joyous portion of our experiences of grace. Many of the Lord's people who have been born of the Spirit have not yet rejoiced in these wonderful revelations. The first experiences of those born of the Spirit are grievous and condemning. Jesus cited two facts that must be revealed to an individual before they would ask Him to give them to drink. These two facts are that the person must know what is the gift of God and that Jesus Christ is His Son and Saviour of His people. A person learns much through tribulations after He is born of the Spirit, before he experiences these joyful experiences. A child of God must be born of the Spirit before he can SEE the kingdom of God. He must be born of the WATER before he can ENTER into the kingdom of God — before he can really experience the joys of Eternal Life Jesus said, **"Strait *is* the gate and narrow *is* the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matt. 7:14)** It is a painful entrance i n t o life. It is through much tribulations that we enter the kingdom. As the new-born babe comes forth into the natural realm crying; so, the new-born spiritual babe comes crying and lamenting into the spiritual realm. What does it require to constitute ETERNAL LIFE? Let us ask Jesus what is Life Eternal and listen at His answer as recorded in His prayer to the Father in St. John 17:3 - "And this is LIFE ETERNAL, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." There are two lessons to be learned in this ordeal of ETERNAL LIFE. The first lesson brings the bitter experiences; the second lesson reveals the sweet. We learn the vengeance of an Holy God upon an unholy creature in the first lesson; we learn of His mercy and grace in the second lesson. We stand condemned creatures before a righteous Judge in the first lesson; we are freed from this just condemnation in the second lesson. We learn in the first experience that we are unable to lift ourselves from the pitfalls of sin into which we have fallen; we see Jesus lifting us out without any effort of our own in the second experience. We are tried in the fiery furnace and suffer great tribulations before we come to the position to ask Him, "GIVE US TO DRINK?"

Our first lesson has been such an ordeal that we are indeed THIRSTY. We have been made willing to be a beggar at His footstool and plead to Him for mercy and grace — for LIVING WATER to cool the fiery indignation! Hungry and THIRSTY our soul faints in us. Then, we CRY to the Lord in our troubles, and He delivers us from our distresses! (See Psalms 107:5.-6) How soothing is that first LIVING WATER experienced by a parched soul! Do you not remember when you plead with Him, "GIVE ME TO DRINK?" Do you recall the first time you experienced that sweet inviting command, "Ho, everyone that thirsteth,

COME YE TO THE WATERS, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price?" We learn in the first lesson that we have nothing with which to buy, barter, or trade. The imputed righteousness of Christ becomes that with which we buy wine and milk without money and without price.

Let us turn to Isaiah 40:6-7 for a scriptural explanation of the effect of the Spirit so that we might better understand the need for this LIVING WATER. "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass WITHERETH, the flower FADETH: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass." The Spirit of the Lord causes our flesh to wither and our goodliness to fade away. There is exceeding dryness experienced by everyone upon which the Spirit of the Lord comes. It withers the works of the flesh to such extent that we have no confidence in it. Our faith in our merits is so withered that we can see no evidence of life. Our righteousness fades to such degree that instead of righteousness the very best becomes as filthy rags. This is the proper and appointed time for us to beg of Jesus, GIVE ME TO DRINK."

Have you ever looked upon grass and pronounced it dead because of its withered condition? A shower of rain comes and you behold greenness and see its drooping blades begin to raise up. Life is manifested in that which you thought and considered to be dead. This LIVING WATER enables you to lift up alms that hang down. It steadies the feeble knees. It causes the lame to walk. This LIVING WATER gives power to the faint, and to them that have no might, it increaseth strength. It causes His people to run and not be weary; to walk and not faint.

When we are blessed to drink His righteousness it revives our drooping spirits. What a blessing to drink down greedily the streams of the Lord's mercies and to realize that the fountain can never run dry but endures forever! Yes, we drink His blood to cleanse our sin-sick soul. We drink the wine of the kingdom which stimulates us to press forward regardless of difficulties, and run with patience the race set before us. We desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby. Drinking from this fountain of LIVING WATER causes us to GROW in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour. It saves us from despair and from sinking into oblivion.

Never shall I forget the hour that I was made to vehemently cry, "Give me to drink." My faith in self was shattered and my hopes were all blasted. I felt that I was forever doomed with the off-casts of the earth. I felt that hell was my eternal abiding place. One night God was pleased to bless one of His ministers to give me just one small ray of hope when he was blessed to preach Jesus as a complete saviour. I immediately grasped at the straw and began to plead to the Lord to have mercy upon me. I began crying, GIVE ME TO DRINK. The Lord had mercy upon me and showed me that His Holy arm was so mighty that it could reach down into the terrible pitfalls of sin and rescue a vile sinner like me, make

him holy, and safely secure his final abode with redeemed sinners! He showed me that His right hand was sufficient to keep secure from all harm so that nothing could pluck me from His hand. His minister was blessed to WATER so that my hope became anchored in that which was sure and steadfast. I trust that I drank many times from that Fountain through His ministers while they were being blessed to preach the comforting doctrine of the Love and amazing grace of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We read in 1 Corinthians 3:6, that "Apollos watered." Seeing that it is God that gives the increase through the minister it must be this LIVING WATER coming from the throne of God and the Lamb. Your thirst has been quenched many times under the dripping of the sanctuary while feasting upon the preaching of a God-called minister. Were it not for the grand experiences of drinking this LIVING WATER while speaking from the pulpit, I feel, I would die in despair. It is an unspeakable wonder to see Heaven opened, to hear the Voice of the Son, and to feel the soothing effect of this LIVING WATER as it is calmly and sweetly applied to your soul. Oh how it does lift our drooping spirits and encourages us to persevere on our journey. Even though we feel to be lone pilgrims trodding in a desert land where there is no water — the Lord is gracious to us sometimes in directing us to an oasis where there is LIVING WATER for us. Could we enjoy these precious drinks as much as we do if this water could be at our command each and every step of our pilgrimage? It is glorious when all of us can drink of the same spiritual drink — when we can drink of that spiritual Rock, Christ Jesus.

I am persuaded that it has pleased the Lord to bless us often with this LIVING WATER when we are congregated together in church capacity to worship God. Could that be the reason the Lord's people are so anxious to meet together regularly with one another in their church meetings? I have seen them from several states convened together in associations eagerly drinking that LIVING WATER as it flowed from the mouths of His ministers in such grand meetings. Such love and joy can only be experienced by the Lord's humble poor who are made to depend upon Grace for salvation to be experienced here and for eternity. I praise God that He has so arranged that His children can meet together from the different parts of the United States and worship together the King in such a demonstration of the power of the Spirit of God in these associations. God forbid that anything shall come among us to mar the chain of correspondence that exists with our people interlinking them together with the whole of the United States and the British Isles.

I appreciate very much the love manifested for me by the Lord's children from the rivers to the ends of the earth. My interest is in the remote places from Canada to Florida — from Washington to California –All over the globe where those of like faith and order resides.

Please pray that this LIVING WATER will be enjoyed by me and mine as the Lord sees fit to distribute it to us. My

wife asks an interest in your prayers. The churches of my pastorate need your prayers. If you could stoop so low as to remember an insignificant thing like me — remember me when you are at the throne of God's Grace from which this LIVING WATER flows!!

Elder E. J. Lambert

PSALM XXXI. 15

"My times are in thy hand."

DEAR BRETHREN: — As a traveler upon a journey often when he reaches a mile-stone will pause and look back over the way his feet has trodden, and then forward, if perchance he may gain some view of what yet lies before him, so it seems natural that when the yearly mile-stones of our lives are reached we should reflect upon the past, and think of the future, and of what may lie before us in our journey. This is true of all men in every age and clime; but it must be specially true of the christian pilgrim. He has so much more than unregenerate men to reflect upon in the past, and so much more to anticipate in the future. But whether he thinks of the past or of the future, the believer sees one thing along every step of the way that no one else sees, and that is the hand of God guiding and the will of God ordering his steps. His journey has been no uncertain wandering of a blind man groping in the dark, but the ordered pathway of a father safely, wisely and lovingly guiding or bearing his child. The Bible teaches us that no more surely is it true that God appoints and controls all the coming and going and changes of the natural elements of the world, as the seasons, day and night, cold, heat, clouds, storms, sunshine, appointing to all their times and places, than it is true that he is equally sovereign in all the providences of our lives, and what is still more precious to be believed, in all the spiritual mutations through which we pass.

It is sure that the child of God has a providential pathway in which to walk, as well as a spiritual travel. It is equally sure that his God has appointed the one for him as well as the other; and we have but to read the life of David, together with his Psalms, or the life of Paul in connection with his letters, to see how our providential life is bound up with our spiritual life. God has ever made the former subservient to the latter; and in the latter no more than in the former does his sovereign will and eternal purpose appear.

I have felt moved for a few years past to insist upon a "God of providence" as well as a God of grace, because there has seemed to me to be a tendency to ignore this side of the matter, to throw out of the calculation our providential surroundings, doings, willings and sufferings, and to present exclusively our spiritual exercises, wherein God leads us with sovereign wisdom and power. It is sure that holy men of old counted it joy to believe in a God of providence as well as of grace. In their view his providence entered into and appointed the minutest step of their lives. Naturally as well as spiritually they

believed that they lived, moved, and had their being in God. No matter by what channel sorrow or joy came to them, they always said, "It is the Lord." Now it has seemed to me that we are in danger of drifting away from this. Instead of seeing God in all our lives, both providential and spiritual, we are prone to put him far off, and consider him not. Holy men of old rejoiced that the God whom they worshiped had ordained all their paths for them, and why should not we?

At this end of the old year I have been looking back and striving to look forward. I see much that looks dark and devious in the past, and much that seems threatening in the future. Personal trials in the past, personal anxieties for the future; and what is worse, church trials in the past, church trials for the future. Now it has seemed to me that underneath the throne of God I can see nothing to rest in; but by faith beholding the divine rule I can rest. **"The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let, the multitude of isles be glad** *thereof."*— **Psalm xcvii.** I do not know what may be in all the future of God's providence *or* grace toward me, but I am sure that he-his will, purpose, love and grace — will be everywhere. "Not a sparrow falls to the ground without him;" and surely if, as the Lord said, we are of more value than many sparrows, we cannot take one step without him. Whatever may be unexpected to us, we may be sure that nothing is unexpected to the God whom we serve; for "known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world." So that from the beginning our God has not done one thing that from the beginning he had not appointed. With him there are no new purposes caused by changing and unforeseen circumstances. In this we may rest. We seem to be tossed by varying winds upon a restless sea; but he holds the winds in his fists, and "the sea is his, and he made it." In the midst of these various reflections upon the past and present, called up by the advent of this new year, my mind has been led to these words of David, "My times are in thy hand," and they have made me glad; and through these words I have been led into some reflections which I desire to pen down and submit to you.

First, these words of David are not only the expression of his personal faith, but are the words of divine inspiration as well. They are not only the expression of that which David most certainly believed, but are the words of God to us, so that we may count them as being most certainly true. They are the expression of the sovereign, over-ruling and faithful care of Jehovah for his believing child David every moment of his life. They declare that God has appointed the variety and number of his times, and that they are measured out to him according to the one supreme will. This affirmative implies a full negative also. Our times are not in our hands. It is not ours to bid our seasons come and go at will. We cannot command the darkness nor the light, neither can we influence their coming or going. Who can bind either leviathan or the sweet influences of Pleiades? Let it be borne in mind that I speak here more especially of the providence of our God, but let it also be re-

membered that this is all true of the spiritual life as well.

Now, secondly, David speaks these words as though he were glad above measure. It seems to be a sort of exultant cry. The words are not the language of one who submits to the inevitable, to which he is opposed, but they express a great joy. David must have learned two things ere he could utter these words as he did. He must have learned that he could not guide his own feet safely, that he could not be trusted to measure out his own times, that he had not to look to blind chance in this matter; and on the other hand, he must have learned some things about the God whose sovereign appointment he confessed and rejoiced in. Many of the heathen believed in a blind fate; but it was David's joy, and it is ours also, to believe in an all-seeing and all-ruling and all-appointing God. In order to rejoice and exalt that he-his times — were in the hand of God, David must have learned that here was to be found almighty power, supreme wisdom, infinite love, and unchangeable purposes. Leave out any or all of these things, and there could be no room for rejoicing that "his times" were in the hand of God. The word teaches us that our minds are finite, while all the attributes of Jehovah are infinite. The finite cannot comprehend the infinite, and at best it can but dimly apprehend infinite things. How much we must believe of which we can see but a dim outline or shadow! So omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, eternity, holiness, heaven, are all words expressive of truth which we must believe, and yet we do not begin to grasp the meaning of one of them; and yet it is such a Being who reigns, and of whom David could rejoicingly say, "My times are in thy hand." Right here I am reminded that another and a greater than David, "he who was David's Lord," also said, "The Son of man indeed goeth as it was written of him" (Mark), or "as it was determined."- Luke. This he said specially of his betrayal. His God had determined the fact, and the time and the way of his betrayal. Jesus confesses this, and declares that all must be as it was written in the prophets. Jehovah had decreed this time for the dear Savior, and that Judas should sell his Lord just then; and yet Jesus said, "Woe to that man by whom he is betrayed. It were good for that man had he never been born." Concerning this I will only remark further that two things meet us in the text, viz., that God had determined beforehand that Judas should betray Jesus, and that Judas was condemned for doing this act.

But Satan may take hold of the natural unbelief of our hearts, and tempt us after this fashion. David was a great man, and he had a great work to do in the world, and therefore his times were of vast importance, and therefore God held his times in his hand, and measured them out to him; but I am but a worm, a babe; I am of little use in the world; it matters little whether I live or die; and I cannot suppose that what was true of David is true of me. But this is truly a temptation of the evil one, and is met by the testimony of Jeremiah when he said, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that

walketh to direct his steps." This is true of all men; and so by this testimony we learn that the times of the very least as well as the greatest are in the hand of God.

But now the question comes up in my mind, What does David include in this expression? Does he leave anything out? Does he say that any of his times are not in the hand of God? Who would venture to say that David made any exception? Who could point to any period in David's life and say, That time was not in the hand of God? From the time when he kept the flocks safely from the bear and lion, to the time when God called him home, was there one spot when it could be said, This did not come from God? The words of the text might present to our minds the picture of a child who stands waiting with expectancy the appointments of a father or guardian. All that this child can hope for or dread, that guardian has in his own control; but the child has no fear, and is well content, for he has learned to believe that his guardian is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. So he comes or goes, studies, works or plays, eats such food and wears such apparel as his guardian appoints; and because of his faith in and love to his guardian, he confidingly and joyfully confesses, "All my times are in his hand. He orders all my ways, and I must and do leave it all with him." So our sovereign Guardian and Friend holds our times, of whatever sort they are, in his absolute control. O that we may, like David, have a heart to praise God that it is so!

If we turn to this Psalm, we learn (verse 4) that men were covertly seeking David's overthrow, (verse 7) that he had been having trials and adversities, (verse 8) that he had been assailed by enemies, and (verses 9 and 10) that he was filled with trouble and grief. Such times as these he had met with, and of them he said, They are in God's hand. Also, all through the Psalm he prays for deliverance and salvation; and these times of deliverance are also in the hands of God. David by this could learn submission under the afflictions, and patience while waiting for relief. Once he said, "I was silent, because thou didst it." And Job said, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken a way; blessed be the name of the Lord." So we learn that our times of trial, ill whatever garb they appear, are all in the control of the Almighty. He measures them out to us at his will; and so also the joy comes when and how he pleases. Nothing in our lives is left to chance. With Jehovah there can be no contingencies. "Known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world." He does nothing that he did not purpose to do ere time began. He works "all things after the counsel of his own will;" all things, without exception. Unless David had believed all this he could not have said, "My times are in thy hand."

How exactly similar to this confidence of David is the language of Paul in portions of the eighth chapter of Romans. In verse twenty-eight of that chapter we hear him saying most confidently,

"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Paul here takes strong ground: "We know." He takes broad ground: "That all things." He takes comforting ground: "Work together for good." He takes discriminating ground: "To them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I have just said that Paul takes broad ground. He says, "All things." Down in verse thirty-seven, in this same eighth chapter of Romans, he s a y s precisely the same thing in other words. He enumerates tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and the sword; and then he says, "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." We are "more than conquerors." That is, we turn even enemies into our service; and thus all things work for our good, as he said in verse twenty-eight. God works secretly, and often we cannot see his hand, and still oftener we cannot trace out how good is to result from many providences; but his word says it all does work for good, and can we not believe his word, and trust him even when we cannot trace him?

To the sick ones this applies. Much is said in these days about health and cure-alls, mind cures and faith cures not excepted. Much is said also about the care of our bodies, and sanitary regulations for houses and cities; but I notice that men suffer and die everywhere alike. After all is said and done, it still is true that our times of sickness are in his hand. If there be sickness, it is from his hand; and the same hand makes us well again. Each in its place and time is fulfilling the purpose of God, and working for good to his loved ones. In this faith, patience and cheerful resignation are to be found ; but if sickness does not come from the hand of God, and is not meant for our good, then it is vain to speak of resignation, for we have a right to murmur at what comes from the devil, or grows out of our own folly. May God help each sick one to say, "My times are in thy hand." The faith of Job is the best faith. In his losses and afflictions he saw neither Sabeans, nor Chaldeans, nor wind, nor fire, nor Satan himself, but only God himself. My brother or sister , whatever your afflictions may be, and however long they may endure, "it is the Lord." All is in his hand.

To those who are passing through the sorrows of bereavement these words apply. A dear sister whom I know had lost an only child. While the child lay dead in the house she was filled with great bitterness, and would not be comforted, and could not weep. As the hour of burial drew near an uncle came to her as she sat alone in her room, and said to her, "Think who has done it." Her heart responded to this, and all the bitterness gave place to submission at the thought, "The Lord has done it." This time of her trouble was in the hand of God.

This word suits those who are persecuted or slandered, or whose names are cast out as evil; those who are poor and needy and distressed. On the other hand, if we are well and happy and strong, if we have friends and prosperity, if a good name and riches be ours, these words are still just as true as be-

fore. Our times are in the hand of God; and if we believe these words we shall not be in despair when sorrow comes, and neither shall we be exalted above measure in the day of our prosperity. We receive either one or the other according to the sovereign will of God.

Our circumstances may change, but there is no change with him. With him there is nothing new. He has no new knowledge, no new purposes, but all was fixed in the infinite mind from vast eternity. He who created the ponderous world also created the mote that we see floating in the sunbeam; and so he who set bounds to nations also ordained the feeble steps of such finite worms as we. Just as carefully and omnipotently as he struck out the track of worlds in space, so accurately and omnipotently has he from the beginning struck out our pathways of joy or sorrow. Our times are in his hand.

I said in the beginning that I had been striving to look into the future, but I am glad that I cannot pierce that vail. I am also glad that all my ways of word or thought or deed, all that I shall do or suffer or enjoy, are in God's hand.

"The steps that I take, and the station I fill,

My Father determined and wrote in his will."

My brethren, I send this as a sort of New Year's greeting. I wish for you all, if it be God's will, a Happy New Year.

As ever, I remain your brother in hope of life,

Elder F. A. CHICK.

Reisterstown, Md. Feb. 1, 1888.

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith uinto the churches. -- Revelation ii. 29.

These words extend the message beyond the church to which they were spoken, and address themselves to everyone to whom the word comes, and to whom an ear is given to hear and receive it. Thus each message sent to the churches becomes a message sent personally to us. If we have a spiritally circumcised ear, he speaks to us in every message as personally and as distinctly as he spoke to each individual church. It is indeed an unspeakable blessing to have this ear given to us that we may receive in humility, simplicity, and godly sincerity what the Lord speaks in the word of his grace. It is by his word that he knocks at the door of our hearts; and what a blessing he has pronounced on the man who hears his voice and opens the door when he hears the knock, like a fond and affectionate wife when she hears the knock of her husband at the door of his house: **"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Rev. iii. 20.**

J.C. Philpot

ST. MATTHEW 5:8-9.

Blessed *are* **the pure in heart: for they shall see God.**

Blessed *are* **the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.**

MEETINGS

LITTLE VINE ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the thirty-fifth session of the Little Vine Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association will be held at the Newfound Primitive Baptist Church meeting house, located on Brier Creek Road, in Wyoming county, about twelve miles southwest of Pineville, West Virginia, on the fourth Sunday in August and the Saturday before. The dates are August 25 and 26, 2012. Singing is scheduled to begin at 10:30 A. M. and preaching at 11:00 A.M. each day. It is our hope and trust that the Lord will gather together faithful ministers, brethren and friends to worship Him in Spirit and truth, and to show forth His praise. If anyone needs more particular directions or information about lodging, please phone 606-474-4327.

Sherry Farmer,
Clerk

2012

One Hundred Eighty-Seventh
Annual Session
of the Pigg River Association
to be held on Chestnut Church Ground
Starting time on Friday
Singing 10:30 and 11:00 Preaching
Starting time on Saturday
Singing 9:30 and 10:00 Preaching
Starting time on Sunday
Singing 9:30 and 10:00 Preaching
Commencing on Friday before the
First Sunday
in August, 2012

We invite all Elders & Brethren of our faith and order, and all churches that we are associated with, to come and be with us.

Going North on Route 220, about 13 miles past Bassett, turn right on to Route 724 (Goose Dam Road) about 2 1/2 miles to church. Going South on Route 220, past Rocky Mount, turn left at first stop light on Route 619 go 3.7 miles turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Rd.) 1 mile to church.

Elder Thomas Solomon. Clerk
255 Morgan Clay Drive
Glade Hill, VA 24092

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The one hundred fifty-sixth annual session of the Smith River Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Paynes Creek Church located in Floyd County, Va. on August 31, September 1st and 2nd, 2012.

The church is located in Floyd County, Virginia off the Blue Ridge Park-

way between mileposts 150 and 151, about 18 miles north of Rt. 8. Church is on Rt. 639 (River Ridge Road) and in sight of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

We invite the ministers of our faith and order, our brethren and friends to be with us.

Tony R. Horton
Association Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 2012

Faye Brown, NC 15.00
Gladys Shelton, NM
(Memory of Charles Hatchett).... 25.00
Raymond Wimmer, WV 5.00
Carol Lansaw, VA 10.00

OBITUARIES

NOTICE OF DEATHS

It is with much sadness that we report two deaths of ones well-known to most Primitive or Old School Baptists. The first is that of Elder John Moses Newborn or J.M. as he was more widely known. The Lord called him from this life on March 17, 2012 at the age of 79 years. He was a member of Mewborn Primitive Baptist Church near Snow Hill, NC for over 56 years and served as pastor for some 36 years. During his ministry he pastored several other churches including Willow Springs Primitive Baptist Church which he served for some 38 years. In addition to serving these churches, he was the owner and Editor of Zion's Landmark for over 38 years. He leaves to mourn his dear wife of almost 54 years, Susan Turlington Mewborn as well as children: Cynthia Eason, Lydia Smith, John Moses Mewborn, Jr., and Suzanne Campbell. Also, there are three grandchildren, one brother and one sister.

The second death is that of Zion's Landmark. This Primitive Baptist paper was established in 1867 and set forth the doctrine and order as believed and contended for by the Primitive Baptist for 145 years. The 2012 Winter Edition was the final issue due to Elder Mewborn's poor health and subsequent death. We feel certain that the longtime readers of Zion's Landmark feel as though it is the death of a family member.

It is our prayer that the Lord comfort and reconcile all those who mourn these two deaths.

Editor

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 8/2012

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

VOL. 180 HILLSVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER 2012 NO. 9

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All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Tony R. Horton, 1429 Howlett Street, Hillsville, Va. 24343. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Cleo Robertson, 111 Livingstone Drive Cary, NC 27513.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

WHILE winter's gloom was still o'er spread,
And on my spirit lay,
The voice of my Beloved said,
Rise up and come away.

For lo, the winter's past, the rain
Is over now and gone;
The flowers appear, and songs again
Of praises are begun.

The power and sweetness of that voice
Wrought wondrous change in me;
Made my poor, drooping heart rejoice,
And fears and sorrows flee.

In sweet amazement I came forth;
What wonders met my eyes !
Spring's glorious beauty on the earth,
Her radiance in the skies.

Grace fills the garden of the Lord
With blooming joys from heaven;
The warm south wind is in that word
Which shows my sins forgiven.

'Tis this makes winter clouds depart,
And gives me brighter days;
The sweet spring time is in my heart,
And I am filled with praise.

What heavenly rest from cold and pain
In these soft airs that come
With blessed thoughts of Jesus' name,
And breathing rich perfume.

Thanks that the weary days are o'er;
Thanks for spring's gentle sway;
Thanks for the love that says with power,
Rise up and come away.

Silas H. Durand.

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EDITORIAL

Isaiah 43:1&2, "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called *thee* by thy name; thou *art* mine. When thou passest through the waters, I *will be* with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shall not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

This chapter is very beautiful and very comforting. The Lord speaks through his prophet Isaiah concerning His work of grace. Jacob sets forth the fleshly or natural man and Israel sets forth the spiritual. When Jacob wrestled with a man all during the dark night, it was the spiritual manifestation of God applying the law to Jacob. For Jacob could say "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." The Lord touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh and it was out of joint. Jacob would no longer walk as he once did relying on his own strength. But, the Lord was his staff that he would lean on and be his strength and help. As the light of day began to break, Jacob asked to be blessed. The Lord said unto Jacob "What is thy name?" Jacob had to confess my name is Jacob. I am a sinner. I am a deceiver. I am a supplanter. Then the Lord said, "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." The nighttime of the law had past and the light of the day of grace, the gospel day, shined forth. The Lord blessed Jacob there.

How comforting the word of the Lord to His little children of grace, "Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." O how wonderful that with God there is no uncertainty, no chance, no leaving salvation to the fleshly man. With the Father of lights, there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning for the foundation

of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His." By His shedding of blood, death and resurrection, He redeemed His elect from their sins. They are His. He knows their name and calls them out of nature's darkness into His marvelous light. He said that of all the Father gave Him, He should lose none but should raise it up at the last day. He said He was the good shepherd and knows His sheep and am known of them.

"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee." The waters set forth the trials, troubles and tribulations that His people must go through in this life. He doesn't say "if" thou passest through the waters, but "when." He has promised you tribulations as He said "In the world ye shall have tribulations: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Though you will experience many trials, troubles, tribulations and sorrows in this world, He, who cannot lie, promised to be with you. He did not promise to take you out of the tribulation, but to be with you through it. The Apostle Paul besought the Lord three times to remove the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan that was buffeting him. This experience of Paul was purposed by God to keep him humble and meek lest he should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations. So the Lord did not remove it, but He told the Apostle "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Through your trials you are made to look unto the Lord and beg for His strength, mercy love and grace.

"And through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee." Do you ever feel that the rivers of false doctrines, lies from high places, persecutions and all the calamites of the world spewing forth from the mouth of the serpent are about to overflow and destroy you! The Lord speaks to you in that small, still voice, "Fear not, they shall not overflow thee." As David said in **Psalm 27:5, "For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion: in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me; He shall set me up upon a rock."** David also said, **"He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock** *and* **established my goings."** You, my dear people, have been set on the foundation which is Christ and you cannot be washed away or destroyed. How do you think Stephen felt when he was being stoned and gnashed on with teeth because he set forth the truth in Christ and those non-believers were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake. So they accused him of speaking blasphemous words against Moses and against God. These stirred up the the people, the elders and the scribes against him. The Lord filled him with the Holy Ghost and he, through an eye of faith, looked up into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. Stephen saw Jesus as the Son of man who had suffered more than he was suffering; who had shed His blood, died and rose again. What great comfort! Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints. Stephen, called upon God, say-

ing, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." And then "he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep." I believe the Lord gave Stephen such peace and comfort that it was as though he just went to sleep. With his eye of faith beholding Jesus, I do not believe he was even aware of what was happening to him. You cannot see Jesus and the world at the same time.

"When thou walkest through the fire, thou shall not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." Peter said, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings: that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." **Isaiah 48:10 says, "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction."** As gold is tried in the furnace of fire, so you must be tried by fire. The more gold is tried by fire the brighter it shines. So with you, the more you are tried by the trials, troubles, tribulations, sorrows, afflictions and persecutions the manifest is the fruit of the Spirit which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. The three Jewish men who refused to worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar set up were cast into a furnace of fire that was heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated. The flame of the fire slew those men who took up the three men of God. But these three were completely clothed from head to feet. So the Lord clothes His people with the whole armour of God before they ever experience the fiery furnace. Therefore, you shall not be burned and neither shall the flame kindle against you. Your loins are girt about with truth. You have on the breastplate of righteousness. Your feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. You have the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God. You go praying with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit. The three Jews were not harmed in the fiery furnace and there was a fourth like the Son of God walking with them. So with a child of grace tried by fire, the very image of Christ is manifested.

Isaiah 43:13, "Yea, before the day *was* I *am* he; and *there is* none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?"

Isaiah 43:21, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise."

May the Lord be with each of you and bless you with peace and comfort.

A little one in hope,
Elder Cleo Robertson

PSALM 75:1-2.

Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks, *unto thee* do we give thanks: for *that* thy name is near thy wondrous works declare.

CORRESPONDENCE

July 2, 2012

Dear Tony Horton:

Enclosed is my check for the (50.00) renewal of the Signs of Times for 1 year. Use the rest as you see fit. I was 97 years old in March, so I don't know how long the Lord has for me on this earth. My eye sight is poorly but I want to read all the "Signs" when I receive it. Thanks for all the writers.

A sister I hope
Lessie M. Smith
6942 Indian Wells Rd.
Sanger, Texas 76266

Dear Tony Horton,

I see it is time to renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times again. Enclosed find check to cover cost plus a donation. Use as you see fit.

The Signs has always been in Praise, Honor, and Glory to God, may it always continue to be.

Sincerely,
Ruby Queen

July 11, 2012

Editors of Signs,

Sorry I am late with subscription. It is so good to see you are keeping with the Old Baptist ways. It makes one sad to see so many drifting away from Absolute Predestination. It seems the number that holds fast to the Old Baptist are becoming fewer each day; in Romans 11:5 we read of a remnant, according to the election of grace.

Mrs. C. H. Elledge
563 FM115
Scroggins, Tx. 75480

July 16, 2012

Elder Robertson,

This is the obituary of Sister Eloise Turman. She was the mother of Glenna Terry and a member at Indian Creek (PBC). Please put it in the Signs of the Times when you have the space. Hope you and your family are well.

Thomas Pegram, Moderator
J.B. Mitchell, Clerk

1800 Arendell Street
Morehead City, NC 28557

July 9, 2012

Please renew my subscription to Signs of the Times for four years and use the rest as needed.

I am always happy to see it arrive in the mail and cannot wait to read and re-read each issue. I never discard any and actually have old issues from many years back from my mother and grandmother's subscriptions. The ar-

ticles never grow old, because the scripture remains unchanged.

Nancy Pollack

June 29, 2012
Tony R. Horton
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, VA 24343

Dear Brother Horton,

Please renew my subscription to the "Signs of the Times" for two years. Enclosed is a check for more than enough. Use it as you see fit. It has been such a blessing to receive my copies for many years now. Sorry I am late renewing.

My prayer is one of thanksgiving, because the Lord continues to bless each of his Elect each day that we are here in this low ground, and I have a hope that I am one of the Elect.

I am sure you will receive an obituary regarding my uncle Elder David Godwin, of the Oak Grove Primitive Baptist Church (near Reidheimer, Louisiana), but I just want to say something in advance about him. He passed away June 19, 2012 at the age of 102. He and I had several talks over the years, and I am familiar with many of his experiences. The one thing I wanted to mention at this time is that, about 2 years ago, he told me that he had seen the Light twice in his lifetime, that it was the most beautiful thing he had ever seen, and that he would see it one more time before he died.

Humbly submitted,
Charles Mathews
P O Box 77166
Baton Rouge, Louisiana
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JOHN 1:1-10.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The same was in the beginning with God.

All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John.

The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all *men* through him might believe.

He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.

***That* was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.**

He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

VOICES OF THE PAST

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION

Mr. Beebe:-In a former letter I requested your views on the absolute predestination of all things. I asked for information, and for nothing else; but I will excuse you for not answering me, for I know that I am not worthy of notice, but I am a poor unworthy worm of the dust.

Your unworthy friend.
R.S.

Reply. — We assure our friend R.S. that our apparent neglect of this request was not owing to any want of respect for him, nor to any unwillingness to give him such views as we have on the important subject of his inquiry. Those who truly feel sensible that they are poor unworthy worms of the dust, and yet have a desire to be informed in regard to the universal government of the supreme God, of his prescience and irrevocable decrees, are the very persons above all others, whom we desire to serve to the full extent of the ability God may be pleased to give us.

Predestination, as a highly esteemed writer in the *Signs* once remarked, does not require to be qualified by prefixing to it the word *absolute*, as the predestination of God must of necessity be absolute in every particular. Jehovah is an absolute God, and all that he purposes or performs must be absolute. There can be no fiction nor anything merely nominal with him. Predestination is destination beforehand, and as nothing can be beforehand, or subsequent with him, the term as it is used in the scriptures is used in reference to our finite state, as creatures of time; or rather as creatures of God, but for the present, in the time state of existence. God inhabits eternity, and all things are present with him. The progression of time and development of events can add nothing to his stock of knowledge. We his creatures may and we certainly do, live and learn. He has himself called our attention to the fact that he has declared the end from the beginning, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. This declaration of the end from the beginning proves his prescience, so conclusively, that but few are so hardened in infidelity as to openly and in so many words, deny his foreknowledge of all events; for if he were deficient in knowledge he could not with unerring certainty declare the end from the beginning and from ancient times, the things which are yet to transpire. But there are those who while they admit what is called the foreknowledge of God, deny that his knowledge is based upon his own purpose and determinate counsel. They urge the following objections to predestination. It is fatalism, it destroys man's free-agency, and his accountability, and makes God the author of sin; and some there are who go still farther and say if the doctrine of predestination be true, God in predestinating the events of time, etc., has transcended his right and is unjust.

Our friend R.S., we think, will agree with us, that it verily becomes poor sinful dying mortals thus irreverently, not to say blasphemously, to question the eternal right of God to do what seemeth to him good, in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, or to set up their standards of justice and denounce their creator if he does not abide by their decisions. Let all such first meet the searching interrogative of the inspired apostle, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, to form one vessel to honor" etc.? The holy prophet of Jehovah, by inspiration, has informed us that God is the potter, and we are the clay. Hence we must acknowledge his eternal right to dispose of all things, all events, and of all worlds according to his own pleasure. Let this be admitted and all murmuring against his predestination will cease. It is not our purpose to meet the objections urged by men to the doctrine of divine revelation, and by logical argument to put them to silence; nor do we design to attempt to make the doctrine palatable to the natural mind of man which is enmity against God, for all such attempts are without the least prospects of success. The enmity of the carnal mind is fully demonstrated in the objections which they bring, but we design rather to search out and call the attention of our inquiring friend to what God has revealed in the scriptures on the subject, and this we will do, if God permit, whether men will hear, or whether they forbear.

The term predestination, as we have intimated, has reference to the order and succession of events in time, by which the eternal designs of God are brought to pass. And, so far as God's providence is concerned in bringing his designs to pass, predestination simply signifies that God had purposed, decreed, ordained, or destined the accomplishment of those things before they were, in order of time brought to pass.—Hence to us, it is pre-destination, with God it is destination, because his infinity connects and comprehends the end with the beginning, for he is himself the First and the Last, the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending.

Having, as clearly as we are able, defined predestination, we pass to enquire whether it be a Bible doctrine. If it be a Bible doctrine, we must admit it, or reject the Bible as a record of infallible and eternal truth, and take the open ground of infidelity. And who can trace the sacred pages of the holy book and say that it contains no testimony in support of the doctrine? In the absence of predestination how was it that the prophets of Jehovah foretold the events of ages, thousands of years before those events were actually fulfilled? Who, or what directed the prophetic vision of holy men of old, to look down the vista of intervening centuries, and in the name of the Lord Jehovah predict the things that should come to pass down to the end of time, and even the resurrection of the slumbering dead, and the judgment of the last day. If these things were not before determined of God, how were they known, and if they were unknown to God and man how were they foretold? And if they were foreknown of God, and he inspired holy men to foretell them, that

knowledge and decision of God was what the Bible calls predestination. But we have no need of ifs in this investigation. The scriptures do most clearly and emphatically declare that "Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"; that God spake to the fathers by the prophets, and also that the spirit of Christ, which was in the prophets, did testify beforehand of his sufferings and of the glory that should follow. This was and is predestination. God spake by the prophets, saying, "It shall come to pass." Do not these words imply a decree when uttered by him who speaks the word, and it stands fast, who commands, and it is done? How harmoniously do both testaments agree in this fundamental doctrine. Throughout the first, or Old Testament, God, by his prophets, declared the things that should come to pass. Apostles and inspired evangelists in the New Testament respond, saying, "And it came to pass." But perhaps some may demand, What came to pass? We reply, all that God by the prophets said should come to pass. First, in reference to the advent of the blessed Saviour, for he himself declared that all that was written of him in the law, and in the prophets and in the psalms must be fulfilled, and when dying on the cross of Calvary he exclaimed, "It is finished!" and in awful confirmation the retiring sun, prevailing darkness, the quaking earth, rending rocks, opening graves, rising dead, and rending vail gave ample demonstration. Daniel, in harmony with all the other prophets of the Lord, had predicted that at a specific time the God of heaven should set up a kingdom that should never be destroyed, that the Messiah should come, should be cut off, should make an end of sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness. The whole New Testament is a record of the faithful fulfillment of these predictions. Long had the prophet slumbered with his fathers, before the accomplishment of his seventy weeks, but the word of our God could not die, it liveth and abideth forever.

The predestination of our God also embraces all the heirs of immortality. "For whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justifed, and whom he justified them he also glorified."- This predestinated people is blessed with "all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he (God) hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated them unto the adoption of children, according to the good pleasure of his will. In whom we have received an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after (or according to) the counsel of his own will."

There are those who admit the doctrine of predestination, so far as it applies to the coming of the Savior, the work which he was to perform, the sufferings which he was to endure, and the glory which was to follow; and also in relation to the good works which God

before ordained that his people should walk in; but reject the idea that his purpose and foreknowledge extends to the wicked acts of men and devils. But for ourself, it is our firm conviction that if a single event could possibly transpire from the creation of the world to the end of time, from the rise and fall of empires, to the falling of a sparrow, or a hair of our head to the ground, that such unforeseen and consequently unprovided for events would unavoidably endanger and render uncertain the execution of what is admitted to be ordained and decreed of God. How could it be otherwise? Can we consistently believe that it was predestinated that Christ should suffer on Calvary to redeem sinners, and yet that he did not foreknow that there would be any sinners to save? Did he decree that his dear Son should be delivered into the hands of wicked men; and yet not contemplate in that decree, either the existence of wicked men, or what they should do in condemning and crucifying him? But aside from all human reasoning, or vain speculation on the subject, God has informed us, by his inspired apostles, that Jesus was delivered by his determinate counsel, and foreknowledge, and put to death by wicked hands. And again, the inspired apostles break forth in praise to God, in devout acknowledgement both of the decree and of its accomplishment, that, "And when they had heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is; who by the mouth of the servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontious Pilate, with the gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." (Acts iv. 24-28). Here let it be observed the holy apostles of the Lamb did not start back with horror, and exclaim, fatalism! this makes God the author of sin! or this destroys the accountability of man! They saw nothing in all this reflecting unfavorably on the character or purity of the supreme God; but they saw such harmony in the purpose, decrees, and actual accomplishment of the designs of God, as led them simultaneously and with one accord to lift up their voice in devout adoration and praise to the Most High God, whose providential government was so clearly manifested in controlling all events. The things which they now saw brought to pass were distinctly spoken of by David in his day, and pointed out by the slaughtered lamb which Abel, by faith, offered to God. some four thousand years before any of the actors in the crucifixion of Christ, were born. God had not only decreed what they should do, but he had also decreed what they should not do. "The enemy should not exact upon him, nor the son of wickedness afflict him." "A bone of him should not be broken." "He should not be holden of the pains of death." His soul should not be left in hell, nor should his flesh see corruption. Nei-

ther death nor hell could go beyond the purpose and decree of God. None but Judas could betray him, without involving a contradiction of the purpose and decree which was recorded in the scriptures; the pieces of silver for which he was betrayed were numbered and recorded in the decree of God, as published by the prophet hundreds of years before Judas was born. The parting of his raiment, and casting lots for his garments, was all a matter of ancient record, together with all the minute circumstances which occurred; all of which we are informed were done that the scripture should be fulfilled. The murder of the infants by Herod, brought to pass the decree published by the prophets six hundred years before. "Thus saith the Lord, A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children because they were not. (Jer. xxxi. See also, Matt. ii.18.) The case also of Joseph and his brethren is a very clear and striking illustration of the overruling government of God, as embracing all events. And who shall dare to charge God with unrighteous-ness, because he retains in his own hand a supreme control of all beings and of all events; because he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Who has a right to infer that God is the fountain of sin or unholiness; when we are informed that men with wicked hands, do whatsoever his hand and counsel before determined should be done? Paul when declaring what God had said of Pharaoh, that for this purpose he had raised him up to make his power known in him, etc., anticipated the blasphemous out breakings of the human mind in opposition to the predestination of God. "Thou wilt surely say unto me, Why doth he yet find fault," or hold man as a responsible being, "for who has resisted his will?" But the apostle did not forbear to declare this doctrine because men resisted and blasphemed it; but says the apostle, "Nay, but who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?" etc. When the enmity of the human heart is subdued by the quickening power and grace of God in regeneration, then the heaven-born child is reconciled to God, and loves to contemplate the power and glory of Jehovah. Then is he prepared, with the inspired psalmist, to rejoice that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth; that all power in heaven and in earth is vested in the blessed Savior. But if left to doubt his all-prevading power and providence for a moment, now sinks his spirit at the fearful thought that some wheel in the vast, and apparently complicated machinery of nature might be suffered to revolve unbound by the wisdom and foreknowledge of God. If one of the wheels could work without the power and providence of God, its effects might be to ungear the whole system of divine government, and worlds on worlds be dashed in irretrievable ruin. When the enlightened mind of God's dear children contemplates the glory of this subject, they fall down before God in admiration, and with the four beasts, and four and twenty elders, cry Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord, God, Almighty. They are filled with the most profound reverence for, and confi-

dence in the God of their salvation.

One reason we have thought why some of the children of God have seemed to be unreconciled to this doctrine is that they have failed to discriminate between the overruling power and providence of God and the effusions of his Spirit. "Let no man say when he is tempted, that he is tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted, neither tempteth he any man." When men are tempted to sin they are tempted of their own lusts, and by the devil. But how hopeless and desperate would be the condition of all who are tempted, if God had not the power and providence to control the temptation, and overrule its effect according to his eternal purpose and pleasure for the good of his tried and tempted children, and for the glory of his own great name. Our every temptation, though they flow not from God, are directed, and restricted and made serviceable to his saints, by him, is absolutely certain. Hence Peter assured the saints that God would control this matter. He will not suffer you to be tempted beyond that which ye are able; but will also with the temptation make a way for your escape. That glorious High Priest which becometh us, was himself tempted in all points as his children are, and knows how to succour them that are tempted. Soon after he was baptized, he was led up by the Spirit, unto the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. He was not led there by the devil; but by the Holy Spirit of the Lord God which was upon him. Neither was he tempted of the Spirit of God which led him into the wilderness; but he was tempted of the devil. The devil could neither afflict poor old Job, nor even drown the herd of swine, until he received permission of the Lord, and it is hard for us to think that any of the saints, however shy they may seem to be of the doctrine of predestination, really would wish or be willing that God should have less, or that sin or Satan should have more power. It is a blessed reflection to us that

> "Death and hell can do no more
> Than what our Father please."

Volumes have been written upon this subject, and volumes may still be written. It is too rich and boundless ever to be exhausted, but after all that we can say, it is the Spirit of the Lord alone who can present it in its beauty to the sons of men. He, the Spirit of the Truth, whom the world cannot receive, can slay the enmity of our carnal mind, and give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ. May that spirit in all its quickening power and grace be with our friend R.S. and all others who earnestly desire a knowledge of the true God and eternal life.

Middletown, N.Y., Feb. 1, 1854
Elder Gilbert Beebe

PSALM 108: 4-5

For thy mercy *is* great above the heavens: and thy truth *reacheth* unto the clouds.

Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: and thy glory above all the earth.

Luke 2:14: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

These words are a portion of that heavenly song of "a multitude of the heavenly host" sung at the birth of Jesus Christ.

"Glory to God." These are the first three words in the song. Is it not this very language of all the manifest elect of God? Others may glory in men, in their wisdom, might and riches (Jer. 9:23). They may glory in their own blasphemous doings, in their missionary societies to save souls, theological colleges, Sunday Schools, means and instrumentalities. They compass sea and land to obtain converts to their religion, and never fail to perpetuate the practice of those of whom the prophet Habakkuk writes, **"They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag: therefore they rejoice and are glad. Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion *is* fat, and their meat plenteous."** But the taught of the Lord are cut off and saved from such doings. In themselves how can they glory? The Holy Spirit is pleased to discover to them what they are in themselves: poor, loathsome sinners, and under divine tuition they see, and learn that vanity is stamped on all earthly things. They have the same spirit of the psalmist when he cried, **"Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, *and* for thy truth's sake" (Psalm 115:1).** Having had revealed to him something of the majesty and excellent glory of the Holy One of Israel in the condemnation of transgression in the law, and justification most sweetly realized in the blood and righteousness of Jesus, the believer is prepared and does in spirit cry, **"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal. 6:14).** The heavens, and the earth, the deep places, all proclaim the glory of God. Oh what wonderful works are to be seen in the creation of God. "The ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious." Therein the holiness, the terrible majesty, and eternal justice of God are made known and felt in the hearts of the Israel of God. But the glory of the ministration of righteousness, the ministration of life doth exceed in glory (2 Cor. 3:7-10). In the gospel of the grace of God is that glory that far outweighs and outshines all other manifestations of the glory of the King of glory, it is "the glory that excelleth."

"Glory to God in the highest." It overtops all others. Oh, the surpassing infinite riches of the glory of the blessed God, which shines forth in the face of our beloved Emmanuel. The sun, the moon, the stars, the sky, the earth, and all that is therein, shall fade, and crumble, and be no more; and all the pomp and glory thereof shall pass away. As it is said of the law, the ministration of condemnation, so of all things else, they have "no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth" (2 Cor. 3:10). The

glory of the Lord in the universe is but transient, but for time, but in the Word, the Son of God made flesh, in Jesus, Emmanuel, is the eternal, immutable, superlative glory of the everlasting God. In this unfathomable mystery is the fulfillment of the eternal, immutable counsel and oath of Jehovah (Heb. 6:17-18). When the Word, the Son of God, came into the world, was made flesh, born of a virgin, made under the law, the covenant head of all the chosen and loved of God, the Mediator of the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, then was fulfilled the word of God by the prophet Micah: **"Thou, Bethlehem Ephratah,** *though* **thou be little among the thousands of Judah,** *yet* **out of thee shall he come forth unto me** *that is* **to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth** *have been* **from of old, from everlasting."** This had been promised and foretold in the prophets, had been signified in the types and shadows under the law, and now "the due time" is come, and the Son of God in the joy of his heart, in his eternal love to his bride, the church, and in loving covenant obedience to God the Father cries out;! **"Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me. In burnt offerings and** *sacrifices* **for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God" (Heb. 10:5- 7).**

"Glory to God in the highest." The will of Christ was to do the will of him that sent him, and to finish his work, and in fulfilling the "all things," (oh blessed be the name of the Lord, not in one jot or tittle did Jesus fail) ordered in the everlasting covenant (2 Sam. 23:5), all the attributes of the eternal Godhead in glorious, sweetest harmony were declared, **"God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (I Tim. 3:16).** The Lord Jesus Christ went forth for the salvation of Zion, and in his obedience, suffering and blood he wrought salvation, brought in everlasting righteousness, redeemed his people from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them, saved them from their sins, justified them in his precious blood, and reconciled them unto God. He traveled in the greatness of his strength, mighty to save. Jesus Christ, our dear Redeemer, "being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:6-8). Thus Jesus went forth for the salvation of his people. **"God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he had horns** *coming* **out of his hand: and there** *was* **the hiding of his power" (Hab. 3:3-4).** It is in salvation that the eternal excellency of Jehovah is revealed. The justice and mercy, grace and love, yea, every per-

fection of God is declared to the eternal glory of the blessed God of Israel (Rom. 9:23; Rev. 1:6). This song which "a multitude of the heavenly host" sang at the birth of Jesus has never ceased to be sung. Even today it is the song of the believer in Jesus. While time shall last, and all eternity, all the loved, chosen and redeemed of the Lord will be praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest" (Rev. 4:9-11; 5:12-14).

"On earth peace." Oh what welcome, soul-cheering tidings is this to the distressed and oppressed child of God. What disorder and discord does the enlightened child of God behold among mankind. In that knowledge that flows from the operating of the Holy Spirit what a terrible and sad condition they realize themselves to be in by nature. It is their bitter experience to feel that "the carnal mind is enmity against God," though they labor most diligently to have it otherwise. The enmity still remains without abatement, this desperate and horrible plague rages within. It is their experience, and language, as recorded of the woman in **Mark 5:26: "She was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse."**

Those ministers of Satan, transformed as ministers of righteousness "in preaching" another gospel, which is not another (Gal. 1:6- 7), urge poor sinners to make their peace with God. Oh what a task! How utterly impossible for a vile transgressor ever to accomplish! Oh what conflicts with sin and Satan, what tossings to and fro, what unrest, what anxious thoughts possess the poor quickened sinner. His sins are as an army of bitter foes in cruel war against his soul, for the manifest child of God, called by God's grace, being made a partaker of the divine nature, being born of incorruptible seed, cannot be at peace with sin, but possessing Spiritual life he hungers and thirsts after righteousness, and the longings of his soul are for entire freedom from sin, to see, to feel, to know that all these hateful foes are forever annihilated. No sooner does the poor sinner experience the quickening power of God, then the warfare begins between the flesh and the Spirit (Gal. 5:17). The new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, and the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; there can be no agreement, no concord between them. Wherever these two are found there must be war. The sinner, therefore, in whom the Lord has begun his work of grace feels and fears there is no peace between his soul and the mighty and holy God. Oh how troubled is the poor soul amidst the aboundings of his iniquities. The adversary, the gates of hell, fight against the loved ones of God, and there can be no peace between the seed of Christ and the seed of the devil.

"On earth peace." Such is the song of the multitude of the heavenly host. Jesus, of whom they sing, is "the Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). He is the Mediator of the covenant of peace (Isaiah 54:10). "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." The dear Lord is our peace. Oh at what a cost he procured it. He made peace through the blood of his cross **(Col. 1:20). "The**

chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5). God hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, in the body of his flesh through death, to present us holy, unblamable and unreprovable in his sight. Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed. Oh, our precious Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, in his obedience and blood vanquished and made an end of all our foes; and the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, reveals in the heart what Jesus is, and what he has wrought in our behalf, then we joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. All our enemies, all our transgressions are purged in Jesus' blood; death and hell are overcome in the blood of the Lamb. The law, which is holy, just and good, has received at our Surety's hand full payment of all its righteous demands, and the vessels of mercy in whom the Holy Spirit has revealed the wondrous doctrine of peace with God can indeed with the apostle Paul exclaim, **"Who shall lay a thing to the charge of God's elect?** *It is* **God that justifieth. Who** *is* **he that condemneth?** *It is* **Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."** Oh what sweet tranquility flows into the soul when the poor troubled sinner is experimentally put in possession of the atonement of Christ. It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul (Lev. 17:11). It truly is a peace that passeth all understanding, keeping the heart and mind through Christ Jesus. It is "perfect peace" (Isaiah 26:3). It cannot be bettered. There is no contingency therein. It is ordered in all things and sure. The covenant of peace shall not be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy upon thee (Isaiah 54:10). How comforting, O believer in Jesus, is this enduring, eternal peace, that not all the powers of sin and hell can ever mar. Thy warfare is accomplished, thine iniquity is pardoned (Isaiah 40:1). What! mine? Perhaps some poor soul is saying, So I at one time thought my sins were all gone, every voice of accusation was silenced, the devil and all his hosts fled when Jesus in his power and love and blood was revealed unto me, and in my heart his voice was most sweetly heard, saying, thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee. But oh what trouble, what wars and conflicts have I encountered since then. The evils in my heart; my sweet comfort and peace in Jesus has been most cruelly disturbed, and now there is warfare. I find I still have a carnal mind which is enmity against God. The old man is not gone, but is lively, and is so corrupt I fear that I shall be utterly overcome by indwelling sin, and prove a castaway. Oh what a mystery is the life of a child of God. The apostle Paul exclaims, **"I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).** It is by faith that we now experience peace with God. And "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." The Lord

Jesus has saved his people from their sins in his death. He died unto sins once. We rejoice to know that Jesus rose from the dead, and dieth no more. He rose for our justification, and is now within the vail for us, the Lamb as it had been slain (Rev. 5:6) in resurrection glory. O, dear people of God, we have hope that we shall be like him, though now sharp conflicts with sin and Satan are our lot. In these things we have a taste of the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ, and if we suffer we shall also reign, when, in the resurrection, we appear with all the ransomed of the Lord. We shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. The Lord Jesus Christ shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself (Phil. 3 :21). Then no more will the carnal mind, the old man, the lusts of the flesh, plague and distress us. Our conflicts will all be over, for Jesus, in his precious blood, has destroyed all our foes, and this by faith, of the operation of God, we believe. And in the power and goodness of the Lord, even now, by faith, we can sing, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" We shall overcome at last (Gen. 49:19). "On earth peace." When God giveth us quietness, who then can make trouble? (Job 34:29).

"Good will toward men." "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" yea, he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will" (Eph. 1:11). "He will save" (Zeph. 3:17). Who or what then shall hinder? "Good will toward men." This is "the good will of him that dwelt in the bush" (Deut. 33:16). Everything provided in the good will of God is precious. There is no lack, nothing faulty. Oh how good! It cannot be frustrated. It contains mercy (Rom. 9:18), grace (Exod. 33:19), eternal life (John 6:40), righteousness (Isaiah 62:1). Yea, all that the elect of God need for time and eternity is found in the good will, the covenant, testamentary will of God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "Glory to God in the highest."

Elder Frederick W. Keene

Mr. Benton L. Beebe- Dear Brother in Christ:- We have learned with deep sorrow of the death of your beloved father. A cloud of sadness rests upon our churches, and awakens within us deep sympathy for your bereaved family, and tender recollections of the past, when we have mingled together with him in the holy service of our God. A faithful and war-worn veteran of the cross has fallen upon the field. He was found throughout his ministerial life in the front rank of the champions of sovereign grace Truth, earnestly contending for the faith *"once delivered unto the saints."* Nor was his contention for Truth a mere "war of words." No! but with a zeal inspired from on high, we ever found him in the hottest of the conflict, a mark for the merciless assailants of Zion. Denounced as a heretic, his name cast

out as evil, his motives misconstrued, his views misrepresented, we find him with holy boldness and faithful firmness making *"full proof"* of his ministry unto the end. None of these things moved him, *"neither counted he his life dear unto himself; that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry that he had received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God.* "He was, as our dear brother Wm. S. Montgomery once remarked in my hearing, "a pioneer in the investigation of Truth, frequently reaching far beyond his brethren, soaring in the sublime height of revealed Truth." I have heard many of our able brethren dwell upon the wonders of free and sovereign grace, but I have never heard one yet who, to my hearing, excelled Elder Gilbert Beebe, when at liberty, in presenting the eternal perfections of Deity and the glory of His grace. With heavenly power I have heard him, many times, dwell upon the eternal, underived, unbegotten Godhead of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. To think that he should have been accused of preaching a "created Christ!"

Base indeed is such a charge. But while our hearts are filled with deep mourning at the death of this dear brother and father in Israel, let us look beyond the watchman, to Him who keepeth the city; for, " *Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.* "Again," *Behold,* He *that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep."* That all-seeing eye looks upon every shifting scene of time, and guards His people well. He will continue to raise up, qualify and send forth His ministers as it seemeth good in His sight.

The eternal Truth of our Great God is not built upon the ministry. The eloquent voice, the cherished form, are seen no more, but the eternal Truth of our God remains, and must abide forever. "*Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God."* How expressive of this point of Truth is the closing expression in the autobiography of the deceased, published in the *Daily Press.*

"My voice," says he, "will soon be silenced in death, my pen will pass into the hands of another, and, I hope, abler writer; but the eternal Truth for which I have so long contended will be lasting as the days of eternity. And when the deceptive and luring doctrines and institutions of men shall be exposed, and all who have trusted in a refuge of lies shall bewail their folly and call for rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the presence of the Lamb, those who know and love the Truth shall in the Truth rejoice forevermore."

But we will pass from the consideration of the death of Elder Gilbert Beebe to another important matter intimated connected with it, the future of the SIGNS of the Times. From the brethren in all parts of our country an earnest, fervent cry arises, may we hope to the throne, that the same kind, guiding Hand hitherto manifested in its preservation

may continue to guide the course of the SIGNS of the Times. Without Him we can do nothing. The SIGNS has become to be "our family paper" and we are deeply interested in its welfare.

With the doctrine contended for in its columns we are in hearty accord. May the mantle fall upon him whom the Lord has chosen. Reference has already been made through the columns of the SIGNS to our dear brother Elder William L. Beebe in this connection. I am confident that this selection would be entirely satisfactory to our brethren in this vicinity, and believe that it would be to the readers of the SIGNS in all parts of the country. But as you have already announced, act as the Lord may seem to direct. May He guide your choice. With whomsoever you may feel called upon to associate yourself as assistant or assistants, I desire to continue to render all of the aid in my power to assist in the circulation of the SIGNS. May the rich blessings of heaven fall upon its future, and the bereaved family and sorrowing churches be led to the great Rock from whence all of the streams of strength and consolation flow to the tempest-tossed pilgrims upon earth's barren way.

Yours in Gospel fellowship,
Wm. M. Smoot. May, 1881.

Sanford, May 14, 1855

Brother Beebe: — Having read with much satisfaction a letter written by Sister Mary H. Lawson, of Augusta who is located about one hundred miles distant from the North Berwick Church, of which she is a member, and believing it would be read with much interest by the readers of the Signs, I herewith send you a copy of said letter for publication in the Signs.

Nehemiah Butler,

Augusta, Maine, April 30, 1855

Brother Butler — I received a letter from you last week for which I feel very grateful. Situated far from those who are near and dear to me by christan ties, I esteem it a great privilege to hear from the brethren and sisters, although I feel my own unworthiness that I do it. I feel that I am poor and needy, sinful and polluted, possessing a heart which is naturally averse to all that is good, deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, and were it not for the free, sovereign and electing grace of God, I should despair of salvation. I have no works of righteousness to recommend me; nor any merits of my own, through which I can plead for redemption; but it is alone through the blood of Jesus Christ, that I can hope for pardon, and forgiveness of my sins. Truly we have great reason to rejoice that there is a way provided for the eternal salvation of God's chosen people. He finds them in a waste howling wilderness, enstranged from him by wicked works, choosing darkness rather than light, dead in trespasses and sins, and without hope, and without God in the world. How strikingly is the power of God, and the utter helplessness and depravity of the sinner brought to view in the words of Paul. And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins. It seems that this alone is sufficient to show us that nothing short of the irresistible power of God can prove effectual in calling one sinner from darkness, into his rich and marvelous light. Surely the plan of redemption is indeed glorious and worthy the praise and adoration of all the Lord's people.

Through this they attain an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. They are no more strangers and foreigners but fellow-citizens with the saints. and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. It is a sure foundation I and all the powers of hell and earth together shall not be able to prevail against it or destroy the hope of one of those who are built upon it. "The foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Although the children of God may at times be tried and tempted and ready to sink into a state of despair and despondency, in view or their sinfulness and unworthness, they still have an Advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the Righteous. He has promised to be with his children at all times, to comfort, sustain, and direct them through all the trials, perplexities, and changing scenes of life, and give them strength equal to their day. As it regards myself, I find that I am making little or no advancement in the life of a christian; but rather, (as you remarked in regard to yourself) as if I was going back. I find that I have a sinful heart, which in continually leading me astray, and causing me to disobey the commandments of God, and had the Lord dealt with me according to my deserts, I should ere this time have been, cut off as a cumberer of the ground; but the Lord who is rich in his mercy, has spared my unprofitable life, and I am still numbered with those concerning whom there is hope. Surely the mercy of the Lord endureth forever, I hope I shall have an interest in your prayers, and those of the brethern and sisters of the church. Please remember me to them all.

May the Lord comfort and sustain you, and grant you a double portion of his presence while you sojourn here below and eventually save you in his kingdom above, together with all the redeemed of the Lord.

Yours in hope of eternal life.
MARY H. LAWSON.

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will convene with Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church in Holly Ridge, NC on October 13-14, 2012. From Highway US 17 turn east on Sound Road for approximately 3/4 mile to Stump Sound Road, turn left, the Church is located at end of road.

We welcome and invite all who love the truth to come and worship with us.

Elder Gene Lupton
Association Clerk
252-745-7441

ORDINATION OF A DEACON

On Saturday morning, September 15, 2012 at 11:00 o'clock, at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in Eden, NC, a presbytery will convene for the purpose of examination of Brother Jerry Somers, and if found qualified he will be ordained to full work and service as Deacon.

Allen Carroll

EASTERN KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The 2012 session of the Eastern Kehukee Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Tarboro Church located in Tarboro, North Carolina. The meeting will be held on Saturday, October 6 and Sunday, October 7, 2012. Preaching services will begin each day at 10:30am.

From Raleigh, take US 64 East. Travel about 65 miles out of Raleigh and exit off at Exit 485. At the stop sign, turn left. Go over the overhead bridge and turn right at the second stoplight (St. James Street). The church will about about one mile and sits next to the railroad.

We invite the ministers of our faith and order, our brethren and all lovers of the truth of meet with us.

Naomi Coker
Association Clerk
252-823-0786

LOWER MAYO FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday only, September 30th, 2012. We hope to start singing at 10:00 A.M. and preaching at 10:30. Haynes Creek Church will host the meeting. Directions for those who do not know the location; the meeting house is located at 3995 Rosebud Road, Loganville, GA 30052. From I-85, exit on Georgia 20 South. Go through Lawrenceville to outskirts of Grayson. Turn right on Rosebud Road. When Rosebud Road crosses Hwy 78, continue for 1½ miles to Church on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in salvation by grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

NEW RIVER ASSOCIATION

The two hundred and twelfth session of the New River Association will convene the Lord willing at Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church, located in Floyd County, Va.

This session will be entertained by Flower Gap (P.B. Church) located in Carroll Co., Va. Beginning on Saturday before the fourth Sunday and will continue on Sunday with dates being (Sept. 22nd & 23rd) 2012, the Lord willing.

Indian Creek Church is located on highway 787 in Indian Valley, Va. Those traveling on (221) or (52) or Route (8) come to Willis, Va. Turn on 787 go (approx.) 7 miles to church on left.

We invite the ministers of like Faith and Order also Brethren, Sisters and Friends to be with us the Lord willing.

Elder Thomas Pegram, Moderator
J. B. Mitchell, Jr., Clerk

SKEWARKEY UNION (EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION)

Hancocks Church will host the next session of the Skewarkey Union, on the fifth Sunday of September 30, 2012. The church is located on Ayden Golf Club Road, near Ayden, North Carolina. Preaching services begin at 10:30 am.

We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order .

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 22 & 23, 2012.

Union Church, located about 5 miles Southeast of Marion, Louisiana will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and meet with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
318-778-4217
1067 Spearsville Rd.
Spearsville, LA 71277
August 6, 2012

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union will be held at Canaan Primitive Baptist Church located on Mount Cross Road/Highway 844, Danville, VA in Pittsylvania County. Saturday before the fifth Sunday in September 2012 the song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton,
Assistant Clerk, Staunton River
Primitive Baptist Association

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

Sunday, September 30, 2012

Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church will host the next West Country Line 5th Sunday meeting on Sunday, September 30, 2012. Singing will begin at 10:00 AM and preaching at 10:30 AM.

The Church is located at 150 Pleasantville Church Road, Madison, N.C. From Reidsville, N.C. take NC65 west through Wentworth, N.C. Stay straight on NC704 for 2 to 3 miles to Pleasantville Church Road on the right. From Madison, N.C. take NC704 and travel 6 to 7 miles to Pleasantville Church Road on the left.

We welcome all lovers of the truth, who are given a mind to do so, to be with us.

Elder Haywood Wray, Moderator
Mary Hawkins, Clerk

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 9 / 2012

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 2012

Roger and Faye Holdren, VA 5.00
Elder Junior Conner, VA..... 5.00
Elder Raymond Goad, VA..... 5.00
Oscar Pickral, VA..... 5.00
Carol Cruise, VA 10.00
Pamela Screen, TN..... 15.00
Nancy Pollack, NC 50.00
Charles Mathews, LA 25.00
Lessie Smith, TX..... 35.00
Larry Byrd, NC..... 5.00
Sylvia Dixon, NC 10.00
Vivian Underwood, VA 5.00
Ruby Queen, KY 10.00
Gene Howard, AL..... 5.00
Ned Barron, LA 5.00
James Shelor, VA 5.00
Jim Cote, ME 25.00
(In memory of Elder J.M. Mewborn)

OBITUARIES

ELDER DAVID GODWIN
Bassier City, LA

To all you lovely people at Signs of the Times, June 18, 2012.

My sweet brother Elder David Godwin passed away and I am sorry that it took me so long to get this to you, but he was so very special to me and it was hard to get around to doing this. I loved him so much, but actually he had wanted to go much sooner – but it wasn't God's time. He had told me so many times that he wanted to go home, they took him to his home and he said yes, this is my earthly home but I want to go to my heavenly home.

He preached the most beautiful sermons I ever heard, and loved his Lord so much. And I believe I know, he is where he wanted to be.

He preached the good Old Primitive Baptist belief for well over 50 years. And believed every bit of it. He would have been 103 years old had he lived until November 5th this year.

He had a beautiful service. Elder Joe Asbell did a beautiful job – so many of our old ministers have already gone home. And we were so pleased to get him. I know brother would have been so well pleased with this minister's words.

God Bless all of you,
I love you all,
His sister, Katherine Mathews

EDITH ELOISE TURMAN

Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church bows in humble submission of the will of our Lord in the calling home of our precious sister, Edith Eloise Turman, ending her trials and troubles and gained eternal rest forever.

Sister Turman was born November 4, 1918 and departed this life June 11, 2012.

She was highly blessed, by the Lord, after losing her husband in World War II and having to raise three small girls thru those hard times. It is the Lord that supplies all our needs In hard and good times. She was a true believer in Salvation by the Grace of God.

Sister Turman joined Indian Creek Church March 27, 1949 and was a faithful member for 63 years until the Lord called her home. Her funeral was conducted at Maberry Funeral Home in Floyd, Va., by her pastor, Elder Thomas C. Pegram. The burial followed at William Quesenberry Cemetary. Singing was done by family and friends while the grave was being filled, "an old custom in these parts".

She leaves to mourn her church family along with three daughters: Nellie A. Vass and husband, Brad; Glenna T. Terry, Lena T. Gray and two grandsons, six granddaughters, thirteen great grandchildren and six great-great grandchildren and one brother, Reif Bond and one sister, Odetta B. Terry.

Though unable to attend church in her later years she never wavered in her faith. A few months back, a few of the church members went to her home and she sang along with us the "songs of zion". This scripture comes to mind when thinking of sister Turman; 2nd Timothy, chapter four, verse seven " I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith". Be it therefore resolved that three copies of this obituary notice be made, one for the family, one for church records and one for publication in the Signs of the Times.

Done by Indian Creek Church
J. B. Mitchell, Jr. Clerk
Jean Mitchell

JOHN 16: 24-28.

Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that you joy may be full.

These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.

At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:

For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

SOVEREIGN Ruler of the skies!
Ever gracious, ever wise I
All my times are in thy hand, —
All events at thy command.

His decree, who formed the earth,
Fixed my first and second birth:
Parents, native place, and time, —
All appointed were by him.

He that formed me in the womb,
He shall guide me to the tomb;
All my times shall ever be
Ordered by his wise decree.

Times of sickness, times of health,
Times of penury and wealth;
Times of trial and of grief,
Times of triumph and relief:

Times the tempter's power to prove;
Times to taste a Saviour's love:
All must come, and last, and end,
As shall please my heavenly friend.

Plagues and deaths around me fly;
Till he bids, I cannot die:
Not a single shaft can hit
Till the God of love sees fit.

O thou Gracious, Wise, and Just,
In thy hands my life I trust:
Have I somewhat dearer still?
I resign it to thy will.

Thee, at all times, will I bless:
Having thee, I all possess:
How can I bereaved be,
Since I cannot part with thee

Ryland.

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EDITORIAL

"And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it *shall be* for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err *therein.*" Isaiah 35:8.

Elder J.B. Farmer

How shall we begin to write of the things concerning the kingdom of God, knowing they are as high above us as the heavens are above the earth? We must begin by acknowledging the truth: How to perform that which is good, I find not. The minister of the gospel is charged with rightly dividing the word of truth, and this we desire to do, if the Lord has been pleased to place us in the way of wisdom, and has purposed to keep us there. But how to rightly divide the word of truth, I know not. God alone knows, and He alone is able to perform it.

There is a narrow way that the world or the carnally minded person has never seen, nor walked upon, and can never see nor enter into. This way can be entered into only by way of the strait gate. This gate is so strait or confining it is impossible to get through. To pass through it would be like a camel going through the eye of a needle. It cannot be done. Jesus said, **"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."** His disciples asked, "Who then can be saved?" And the Lord said, **"With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible."** We must confess that salvation is altogether of the Lord. It is by grace through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.

This strait gate leads to the narrow way that leads to life. And few there be that find it. This is the way the prophet described. It is a highway that God has made in the wilderness. He has placed it there for the redeemed of the Lord to walk in. The wilderness is a hostile place. It is dry and hot and there is no water, nor anything to feed upon. That is how the world is unto the child of God, natu-

rally. In the book of Revelation, there is a woman (the church) described being persecuted by the dragon (Satan). And the dragon cast a great flood of water (false doctrine) out of his mouth to carry away the woman. And the earth (unbelievers) swallowed the flood and helped the woman. But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle (the Holy Spirit) to fly away into the wilderness to a place God had prepared to nourish her for a time, times and half a time (I am made to believe this hearkens back to the three and one half years of drought in the day of Elijah, which, to me, indicates the whole time of the church in the wilderness, until the time of the coming of the refreshing rain, which to me, is the coming of the Lord in great power and glory). This highway was made through the wilderness to lead the Lord's children safely along, and to bring them home. This world is not their home. They are strangers and pilgrims here, and are just passing through. They are looking for a city, which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Those placed in the world to preach the gospel are given the commands of what to do and what to say unto God's poor and afflicted elect children that are upon the highway in the wilderness. **"Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them** *that are* **of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come** *with* **vengeance,** *even* **God** *with* **a recompense; he will come and save you."** And the children are shown the promises of the Lord unto them. **"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame** *man* **leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each** ***lay,*** *shall be* **grass with reeds and rushes."** The gospel is good news. The word gospel means good news. Those in a dry inhospitable place need good news that cannot fail, and can be depended upon. They are taught that it is impossible for God to lie or to fail in a promise. So. the little ones believe the promises of God to the saving of their souls. They hope and trust in Him to come, and to deliver them out of all their troubles. And when He comes they receive Him and follow Him, just as the sheep follow the shepherd they love and trust.

The Lord found Jacob **"in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of His eye."** The Lord was his Shepherd. He also is your Shepherd. Jesus said that He is the good Shepherd that cares for His sheep. He said of the good shepherd, **"And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers."** The Lord Jesus, the good shepherd, loves his sheep to the extent that He laid down

His life for them. He said, **"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again."** He loves the sheep and they love Him. We know that a loving shepherd spends time with his sheep. He handles them, and examines them for any wound or disease or anything that would cause them discomfort. He treats any place that needs attention. He carries those that are not able to walk on their own, until they are strengthened. His sheep love his touch. They love the sound of his kind voice. They trust him because he has always done them good. He has always led them to good pastures and plenty of water. When threatened, they run to him for their protection because they know he is strong and that he always watches over them, and drives away or destroys any beast that would hurt them. They know the good shepherd would never leave them nor forsake them. He is there with them, and is seeing to their every need.

The loving shepherd is with his sheep in the way that he leads them. The prophet was blessed to say, **"And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness."** According to this, we know that there shall be an highway there, but what is the way referred to? There is a way in the highway. I am made to believe that the way is the Lord himself. Jesus said, **"I am the way, the truth, and the life."** There is Jesus, the Way, in the path of rightness with the sheep, leading them along their journey to its end, which is eternal life. It is written, **"The path of the just *is* as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."** This is according to experience, and is so sweet to meditate upon. How precious it is to be given to hope and to trust in the Lord who is that light, and to be assured that He shall shine more and more all the days of our life. David was blessed to say, **"Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."** The living Word is that lamp and that light. And David was given to say in full assurance of faith, **"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."**

I would like to relate a dream about a white way that I trust was given to me for my comfort and strength in a time of great trouble. Some do not believe in dreams, and that's all right with me, but I cannot deny that which has been of so much help to me. I had been very ill with a heart attack, and was very weak and not able to do much. I could only walk a little way, and then would have to stop and rest. I didn't know what the outcome would be, whether life or death. But one night I dreamed that I saw a straight and narrow way. Everything was pure white— the road, the grass, and everything in my sight was white. The road was paved with smooth stones, and there was grass on either side. The road was on a slight incline that went up and over the top of a distant hill. And I thought that if I could just get to the top, where it went over the hill, I would be able to see over into the heavenly city, and go down into it for my eternal rest. But I had no strength for it. I was exhausted and sit-

ting down. Then a voice said unto me, "Just take a few steps and then sit down and rest." And the voice came again saying, "And then take a few more steps and sit down and rest again, until you reach the top."And I was encouraged to press on, in my great weakness, toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. I was blessed to think that a way had been made to bring me to the end of my journey in peace, to my great comfort and joy.

The way the prophet spoke about was a way of holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it. This way is not for the world, nor for those drunk on worldly religion, nor for the self -righteous, nor for those who say they are working for the Lord. But it shall be for those, the wayfaring men. Wayfarers are travelers. They are constantly on the road. They are men without a home in the world. Jesus said, **"The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air** *have nests*; **but the Son of man hath not where to lay** *his* **head."** The Way is leading the wayfarers through a strange land to their eternal home. You are in a strange land. You are like Lot who vexed his righteous soul from day to day with the unlawful deeds of those in the world about him. You have a vision of a better place where there is no more death, nor sorrow and crying, no more sin and disappointment, no more pain and suffering, no more weariness and exhaustion, no more fear and dread. Even though you feel to be so ignorant and Unworthy and unfit for the least of God's mercies and truth, this Way is for you. And you will not err in it. Why not? Because the Lord is with you. He is your helper, and your guide, and your strength. He is all and all to you. David said, **"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou** *art* **with me."**

The prophet was blessed to say of the way, **"No lion shall be there, nor** *any* **ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk** *there:* **And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting Joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."** What a blessed hope, what a blessed promise, what a blessed assurance. What is the most desired thing of your life? Is it not that you might be blessed to be faithful unto death that you might receive the crown of life? Is it not that you may behold the Lord of glory face to face, that you may see Him as He is, and be made in His likeness, and be satisfied? Is it not that you may be found at His right hand and hear His words? **"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."** Jesus also said, **"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."** He has loved you with an everlasting love, and is pleased to keep you unto the end. Jesus said, **"My Father, which gave** *them* **me, is greater than all; and no** *man* **is able to pluck** *them* **out of my Father's hand."** And He said, **"For I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of**

him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but shall raise it up again at the last day."

"The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Those redeemed by His precious blood, who were given to Him by the Father, who are born of that eternal Spirit shall return to their home, heavenly Zion, the perfection of beauty. For this they have yearned, ever since they were given a hope in the perfect, finished work of the Lamb of God. And it is all joy. To you, all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him amen. Even though in the flesh we must have tribulation, in the Spirit it is all joy. You shall come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon your head, you shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Thanks be unto God for His goodness and mercy toward His little ones. May He ever be praised, world without end.

I trust this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer
8-20-2012

PSALM 40:8.

The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

CORRESPONDENCE

1052 Middleview Dr.
Forest, VA 24551
July 31, 2012

Dear Brother Tony,

Enclosed is my subscription renewal to the Signs of the Times for another two years. The balance you may use as you see fit for expenses. I do not know adequate words to express what the Signs have meant to me down through the years and if not deceived I hope that love is even more fonder today. I can read an edition of the Signs that is 150 years old, and then read the latest edition today. The doctrine is still exactly the same: Salvation by grace and grace alone, and the Absolute Predestination of all things. Why anyone would desire to love any other way I do not understand.

If I have any love at all, I hope it has been shown to me by Divine Providence. I have no worthiness, but I feel a constant desire to be among the Old Baptists and I hope I am numbered among them. If not, it has still been a precious walk while in this time world. Please remember me when the Lord gives you a desire to pray.

Love,
Steve Everett

8-21-2012
8118 Jamison Pl. Ct.
Charlotte, NC 28227

Dear Tony Horton,

Please subscribe me to the Signs of the Times. Enclosed is a check for 2 years and use the rest as needed.

I grew up with the Signs of the Times in my home and would see my dad reading and enjoying them as well as my mom and myself.

I was visiting Mary Ruth Moody and Elder Jim Moody at the rest home and saw she had the July copy and it reminded me of this paper and I had a desire to subscribe.

May God bless you all,
Janet Taylor

7/25/2012

Dearest Brother Cleo,

I'm enclosing a copy of the letter Brother Spangler wrote in regards to Sister Mildred when she lost her finger. It was published in the November, 1940 Signs.

I asked her permission to send it to you and she agreed.

I hope this finds you doing well. Please remember me at the throne of grace when given a mind and heart to do so. May the Lord bless and keep you, my precious Brother.

With much love and fellowship,
Mary

VOICES OF THE PAST

Danville, Va., March 11, 1940.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: — I have had a mind to write you a line for some time, but have put it off from time to time. I appreciated your thoughts of me in regard to my father's death. It was a great shock, though we expected it sooner or later. I miss him very much, - especially at service, as he was with me very often at Dan River and Cascade. Many things happen in the course of a year, and the last year has brought both sorrows and joys, yet I have realized that one is set over against the other.

We had a very peculiar thing happen last year. Our oldest daughter, Mildred, who is nineteen years of age, came down to the store one morning to get the morning paper. When she started out the door she caught her class ring on the strike of the door lock on the door facing, and when she stepped down her weight was thrown on the ring and it stripped the meat and muscle entirely off her finger, throwing It half way across the room: I had dreamed the night before of seeing a snake bite her, and told her of it at the breakfast table, telling her to stay out of the weeds. As she is in college, it seemed that the thought of having to have this finger amputated would almost kill her. I carried her to the hospital, and they did not give me any encouragement in regard to saving the finger, but agreed to put the meat back on and try it until Mon-

day. This was Friday. This was done to pacify her more than anything else. Between Friday and Monday I was brought through one of the greatest trials of my life, seeing her suffer so severely over the thought of losing her finger. I knew she had been exercised in a spiritual way more or less, and often defended the doctrine of grace, but she would not talk of these things very much. On Sunday night when I left the hospital she said to me, Father, pray for me tonight, that I will not lose my finger. She knew the decision would be made in the morning. That was a dark night, the moon and stars hidden, prayer was gone. Oh the anguish, the wrestling I had! The next morning when she went to the operating room she was crying aloud. She said to me when she started, You did not pray for me, did you? God would not give you a prayer. She said, I tried to pray, but could not. When she began to awake after the finger had been removed, the first words she said were, Daddy, God held my hand. He stood by my bed. His face was so bright. He said to me, I will go with you, and I will he with you the rest of your life. God loves me. He told me he did. I have been afraid to die, but I am not afraid to die now. What is a finger compared with God? What is a hand compared with God? I think she repeated a dozen times, or more, He is a gracious God. He is a wonderful God. She went back to the time when she was eight years of age, and told of a conviction of sin, and the day, etc. I shall never forget that time. My grief was turned unto joy. I then could sing as I had never sung it before,

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!
What more can he say than to you he has said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge has fled?"

Well, it seems I am writing mostly about myself, but I just felt I wanted to tell you of this experience.

I hope you have been well and enjoying God's felt presence. I have been favored to turn in a number of subscriptions to the Signs of late. I think that brother Roy Smith has done some good writing. I have heard a number of favorable comments on your and his articles.

Elders Lefferts, Westbrook and Cobb plan to be at Gooch Memorial the second Sunday in May, at the yearly meeting. If you plan to be down this summer, please try to arrange to be here on second Sunday, if possible, and visit Gooch Memorial with me.

With best wishes to you and yours, yours in fellowship,

D. V. SPANGLER.

[As the good news contained *in* brother Spangler's private letter to us, regarding his daughter, far outweighs the sad, we are taking the liberty of sharing it with our readers, feeling assured they will both sympathize and rejoice with them both. — R. L. D.]

The brethren and Churches of the Maine Predestination Conference, assembled at North Berwick, Sept. 5, 6 and 7, 1856, to the brethren and churches with whom we correspond, send Christian salutation:

BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD: — Through the providential care of Israel's God, who is the sole arbiter of all events in heaven and on earth, we have been permitted to enjoy another yearly conference, according to our usual custom. For this privilege, no less than for all the hopes and blessings of the Gospel, we would acknowledge our obligations to the God of all grace. We are conscious that by reason of sin and transgression we have ruined ourselves, and had we been dealt with according to our works, we should long before this time have been cut off among hypocrites and unbelievers, where light and hope never could have reached. And we do, moreover, confess, that in this, our just condemnation, God's law would still remain holy, just and good. Our only hope, therefore, of *eternal salvation* from sin to holiness, is in Christ, who saves his people and calls them with a holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus, before the world began - 2 Tim., i. 9. We yet believe - although there are gods many and lords many, held forth in these last days - that there is but one true and living God, who is eternal and immutable; who is the God of purpose, and who will do just what he has purposed to do, and whose power is equal to his will. Possessing, thus, almighty power, he meets with no disappointment, but "works all things after the counsel of his own will," Eph. i. 11. We are yet firm in the belief of the total depravity of mankind in a state of nature, they being destitute of spirituality, and dead in trespasses and sins. The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned - I Cor., ii. 14. A man must be born a spiritual birth before he can be spiritual, or enjoy anything that is spiritual for that which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born of the spirit is spirit, John, iii. 6. We believe that Christ is the only way given under heaven and among men, whereby we must be saved; for he declares that his Father had given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as he had given him. We further believe it to be the duty, of all that are heaven-born, to repent and be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, for the remission of sins, Acts, ii. 38. Also, to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which in them, works both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.

In our faith and practice, as respects the order of God's house and in his worship, we recognize only one Missionary Society, as from heaven, and that was organized over 1800 years ago. Under that constitution the gospel was preached to the Jews first, and afterwards to the Gentiles; and so the Gospel is now preached to the poor under the same organization, and will continue

to be preached as long as any of God's poor and afflicted people remain in the flesh. Neither do we recognize but one Sabbath School, as from heaven, and that was constituted of Christ and the Apostles over 1800 years ago. Under that organization we meet together from time to time to teach and to be taught the lessons recorded in the Bible, which is the only book used in this school, under the direction of the spirit, which takes of the things of Christ and reveals them to his people. That in this school we may continue to be taught, and grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, is our earnest prayer.

We have been comforted by the brethren who have visited us, and by your letters, and desire the continuance of your christian correspondence. Our next annual Conference will be held with the church at North Berwick, on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, after the first Monday in September, 1857.

WM. QUINT, Moderator.
LEONARD COX, Clerk.
North Berwick, Maine,
Sept. 9, 1856.

ROMANS 8: 26.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

1877
THE CHILDREN'S FOOTPRINTS
By
William M. Smoot, March 23, 1877.

Dear Brother Beebe:- I recently received a letter from an esteemed brother, in which occurs the following language: "Dear brother, my sheet is now full, and I have said nothing worth your trouble to read; and if you think that you discover any of the footprints of a child of God in all I have said, when you write again (which I desire you soon) tell me where they are for I am still a great mystery to myself." I have felt like offering some thoughts upon these "footprints," which are seen along the way over which the believer travels in his earthly pilgrimage.

It is impossible for him to see these "marks by the wayside," only as the light of God shines in his heart and upon the way, for there are times when he is led into the dense forest, through the dreary wilderness, and the thick gloom of distress and darkness, where the howling of beasts is heard as "night sets upon him," and he feels himself entirely forsaken and lost. Yet whether in the wilderness, in the valley, or upon the mountain, as the light of God falls here and there upon him and over the way, he sees the footprints of those dear saints who have passed on before him, who have crossed the river telling the triumphs of their King, and resting forever in the presence of their God.

He finds the "Slough of Despond," and "Doubting Castle" with its "Giant Despair," then comes the "Delectable

Mountains," and in the dim distance he occasionally sees the pearly gates of the New Jerusalem, while the voice of eternal victory as the echo of a distant melody falls upon his ears. The traveler may come into a dark place, where for the time he feels entirely alone in his experience; none have ever been there before him, his is a "peculiar case," some "strange thing has happened unto him," "I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life to take it away ." But after a while, in the dim shadows of returning light, he beholds, it may be, a solitary track, and what joy and gladness springs up in his heart, as in the light of returning day he sees everywhere around him the footprints of fellow-pilgrims who have gone on before him.

When in thick darkness, a lonely wanderer in "a solitary way," how refreshing, encouraging, and with what comfort and joy does he receive a promise sent from God. It comes as a footprint in the sands, a day of bright light in the darkness of midnight, a cup of cold water from the clear, crystal river, to cheer the weary , thirsty soul.

But I had some thoughts of presenting from the written word the experience of holy men of God who have passed on before us, to present their experience as footprints in the pilgrim's way, that we through a correspondent experience may have comfort and hope. The word contains the measuring of a Gospel experience, and that experience which does not correspond with the word is evidently false, and worse than none. A great number of the religionists of the day will tell you in substance: "I found that God had done part of the work, and I had to do the rest, so from our united efforts I was able to get out of the pit." Or, "God is not going to do for you, what you can do for yourself," believing that one had far more *ability* than dead men really have. We look into the word and find that "Salvation is by grace." "He brought me up also out of a horrible pit." "Salvation is of the Lord." (Jonah 3:9.) Sometimes we hear a different view than this, that, "Eternal salvation is of the Lord; but time salvation is left to our duty." The latter view is built upon the "works principle;" and we lay this rule down on the aforementioned experience, and it proves that the experience will not do at all! There is too much of it; and when we come to test it in the crucible, the word of God, we find that it is not composed of the proper material. - See Romans 11:6. These people talk about going as far as we do, and "a little further, too." The Mohammedan comes as near the Truth as that! Says he, "There is but one God." This much will do; but then he goes further, and says, "Mohammed is His prophet." The modern Pharisee will talk about salvation by grace and then talk of "salvation by works, too." He will tell us of the "sovereignty of a God that does not predestinate anything in this "time world." He adds the fallacious theory of Free Agency" to his do-do precepts. Is not this a "linsey-wolsey" doctrine? The religious theory of these people is something like the heathen god, Dagon, with a head like a man, and a tail like a fish.

But I may be digressing. I spoke of the experience of brethren in other days

as "the footprints" in the pilgrim's way. We hear them complaining of feeling destitute, and poor in spiritual things, and tell of their trials and darkness, with now and then seasons of comfort, which come as refreshing showers from heaven, and as the dew "that descended upon the mountains of Zion."

How truly and clearly does this present to us the experience of the believer to-day! His Beloved is like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains. For a moment it appears to view, and is again lost sight of in the surrounding forest. Yet the faint view, the momentary sight which the believer has of that lovely form, sufficiently and more than compensates him for the earnest seeking, the anxious watching, the toils and trials of the way. Everywhere in the word of our God is found the experience of His people. Patriarchs, prophets and apostles have spoken upon this subject with an unerring testimony. Let us consider some of these marks of eternal life, and diligently inquire whether or not there is any corresponding thereto in our own experience.

"But I am poor and needy." - Psalm lxx. 5. "O that I were as *in* months past, as *in* the days *when* God preserved me; when His candle shined upon my head, *and when by* His light I walked *through* darkness." - Job xxix. 2, 3. "I am the man *that* hath seen affliction by the rod of His wrath. He hath led me, and brought *me into* darkness, but not *into* light." - Lamentation iii, 1,2. "From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, *even* glory to the righteous. But I said, My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me! The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously." Isaiah xxiv. 16. "For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but *how* to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" - Romans vii. 18-24. "Entreat me not to leave thee, *or* to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go, and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people *shall be* my people, and thy God my God."- Ruth 1:16. "Behold, my family *is* poor in Manasseh, and I *am* the least in my father's house." - Judges vi. 15. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." - 1 John iii. 14. "All these things are against me." - Genesis xlii, 36. "Blessed *is* the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried; he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him." - James 1:12. "Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies?" - Psalm lxxvii. 9. "O Lord, how long shall I cry, and Thou wilt not hear! *Even* cry out unto Thee *of* violence, and Thou wilt not save!"- Hab. i, 2. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God." - Psalm xlii. "My

soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God."- Psalm lxxxiv, 2. "Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise Him, *who is* **the health of my countenance, and my God." - Psalm xlii. 11.**

I have quoted from the word an experience of poverty of mind, of great darkness and trial, and a calm, abiding hope in God for deliverance, with a heart united to His people in the strongest of ties. Let me pause and ask the reader here, Have you ever felt any of these things? Dead men do not feel. Do these strong declarations from persons of undoubted experience find an echo in your own? Have you felt with the psalmist that you were "poor and needy," to cry with Isaiah, "My leanness, my leanness," and to feel with Gideon that you were the least in your "Father's house?" Have you ever felt to cry out with Jeremiah, "I am the man that hath seen affliction;" and with the psalmist, "Hath God forgotten to be gracious?" to realize with Paul a perfect knowledge that in your flesh "dwells no good thing," and how to perform that which is good you "find not;" on the contrary, the good that you would you "do not," but the evil which you "would not," that you do? Has that bitter, agonizing cry of Paul, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Ever been felt in your experience? Yet in the midst of all this, while sensibly realizing your unworthiness of their fellowship and esteem, can you lift your hands toward the people of God, and in your heart imploringly cry with Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee," or to return from following after thee? I am confident that there is not a child of God under the broad canopy of heaven whose heart has been opened to receive and understand His truth, but who has felt the power of these strong expressive declarations. These mark "the footsteps of the flock." I have quoted but a few of the many in the word of God.

I might continue to quote until the columns of the SIGNS were entirely filled, and still there would be many more. In all of this experience we read our own. But the quotations that I have made present seasons of severe trial and great darkness; as before stated we find this experience interspersed with moments of comfort and great joy. We might quote from the word declarations of this nature strong and expressive, and as applicable to Christian experience as those already made. We might speak of the psalmist, who filled with exceeding joy could call upon his soul to "bless the Lord," and all that is within him to "bless His holy name;" of Paul, who, "caught up to the third heaven," "heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter;" of Jacob, who, wrapt in holy vision, beheld the ladder upon which the angels of God were ascending and descending, and who was made to exclaim, "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." We might speak of the spouse in the "Song of Solomon," who sat down under the shadow of her Beloved with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to her taste, who was brought to the royal banqueting house of her God, and "His banner over me was love;" we might

speak of that people to whom Peter writes, "who rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory;" and again come to the psalmist, and hear him exclaim with rapturous joy, "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness." We might continue to quote, and yet there would be more.

In our travels we experience the joys as well as the sorrows. There are moments of exceeding joy which stand out as bright spots in the dark past, oases upon a dreary desert, seasons of refreshing from the presence of our God. The things of which I write are footprints along the way over which we travel onward and upward to a higher and nobler life. They follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. They may become faint when the way is dark and dreary, but the Lord renews their strength, and they press on with unabated zeal.

"Through flames and floods, if Jesus lead,
I'll follow where He goes."

"Though the outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." We trace them on as strangers and fellow-pilgrims, hated by the world of the ungodly, "everywhere spoken against," persecuted unto prison, and ridicule. But the walls of salvation are around them, the banner of love over them, and the everlasting arms underneath. Time, the great book upon whose pages are written the irrevocable decrees of the unchangeable God, unfolds His purposes– His eternal counsel before us, each in its appointed time, place and circumstance.

"Each opening leaf, and every stroke,
Fulfills some deep design."

*"To everything there is **a season,** and **a time** to **every purpose** under the heaven."* The sands of time are swiftly passing away, and though thousands of years may be to come, yet but a few more days, months or years at most remain for us. The bounds of our habitation are appointed that we cannot pass. Every trial is measured by the rod of His love, and all of our times are in His hands. We can securely rest in this Truth. The prospects of final deliverance from this" *bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God,* "animates us with heavenly joy, *"while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen."*

Then may the Lord, if it be His will, guide us through all our changes, and at last receive us into endless rest, in the glory of that city to which the footprints of the pilgrims are leading. In the unclouded realms of perpetual glory, where

"The saints of all ages in harmony meet,
Their Savior and brethren transported to greet;
While the anthems of rapture unceasingly roll,
And the smile of the Lord is the feast of our soul."

Yours in Gospel fellowship,
WM. M. Smoot,
Mar. 23, 1877

"GET THEE OUT" (Gen. 12:1-5) "COME" (Acts 7:2-3)

It has pleased our God, the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity , whose name is Holy, to give to his people, in the person of Abraham, an example of his eternal, electing, covenant grace. Abraham was called, and led and taught of the Lord, and faith was wrought in him to confide in God; he was taken into such nearness, such amiability with the Lord (though Abraham confessed himself to be but "dust and ashes" (Gen. 18:27), he was called the "friend of God" (James 2:23; Isaiah 41:8). Our precious Christ declared, " Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad" St. John 8:56. Who and what was Abraham? Before the Lord called him by his grace he was by nature a child of wrath even as others of Adam's race. He did not know God, but was with his fathers, a worshipper of idols in Ur of the Chaldees (Joshua 24:2). All the particulars of what he was in his darkness, ignorance and alienation from God need not here be portrayed, but look yourself, child of God, unto the rock whence ye were hewn, and the hole of the pit whence ye were digged, and that will suffice (Isaiah 51: 1-2). Oh the heights and depth of the sovereign graciousness of God to us vile, wretched transgressors, who walked according to the course of this world. Oh the corruptions in the hearts of Adam's race! The hole of this horrible pit is deep and foul, the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it? Poor sinners quickened by the Holy Ghost are in a measure feelingly made to know how vile they are, and to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" The Lord hewed Abraham from the rock, and digged him out of the hole of the pit, and established his goings. Others who lived in Ur of the Chaldees were left in their abominable idolatries, dead in their trespasses and sins. "I called him alone, and blessed him" (Isaiah 51:2). "God caused me to wander from my father's house" (Gen 20:13). His journeying, then, from his father's house was not of his self-determination, but God moved him to go. The Lord was the gracious cause. So it is with all Zion's pilgrims who are journeying to the better country, that is a heavenly, to the city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God. The very first step in this path, and all the steps of our faith, are wrought and caused by the gracious operations of the Holy Ghost. The Lord called Abraham alone and blessed him, and he obeyed and went out, but he did not go forth alone. For Stephen, just before he was stoned to death, declared, "Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, ***"Get thee out"*** of thy country, and from thy kindred, and ***"come"*** into the land which I shall shew thee" (Acts 7:1-3). What power was in this voice! How kind, how assuring was this voice! Abraham knew this voice was not the voice of any devils, the idol gods (Lev. 17:7), which he had been worshipping, but a voice of gracious, commanding,

persuading power. It took hold of his heart, and he obeyed and went forth with the invisible, blessed God of glory. For that word ***"come"*** signified, I will be with thee, I will show thee the way, and show thee the land. "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him; and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran, and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came" (Gen 12:1-5). God brought him to see the land and was his upholder and defense, his counselor and friend. The Lord was mindful of his gracious covenant with him, and as he went from one nation to another he suffered no man to do them wrong. Yea, he reproved kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm (Psalm 105 : 13-15). Abraham walked by faith in fellowship with God. And if we are of faith of our father Abraham (Rom. 4:12), then truly our fellowship will be with God our Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

As we remember all the way wherein thus far we have come surely we must acknowledge that his abounding mercies have been our sufficiency. We have been poor sinful mortals all the way, frail and worthless nothings, often wayward, inconstant, backsliders in heart. I need not attempt to tell the story of our sinfulness and nothingness. Our father Abraham confessed unto the Lord that he was but "dust and ashes" (Gen. 18:27). But, by the gracious operations of the Holy Ghost, we have continued to cleave to the Lord, to yearn for his presence to be with us in our pilgrimage to the heavenly country, the promised inheritance of eternal glory with our dear Savior, our much loved and worshipped Head and Husband, our Lord Jesus Christ. Abraham went forth not knowing whither he went, and we do not see what steps we are to take today, or what shall be on the morrow. But to the end of our journey our path will only be as our all-wise God and father has ordained; this we know that the Lord hath said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee". That sweet word *"come"* tells us so. The Lord said to Jacob, **"Behold, I** *am* **with thee, and will keep thee in all** *places* **whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave Thee, until I have done** *that* **which I have spoken to thee of (Gen. 28:15).** There will doubtless be rough places before us, temptations and afflictions. It is not the purpose of the Lord to carry us to the skies on flowery beds of ease, and it is not for us to determine how it shall befall us. But if tomorrow there are floods for us to pass through, or fiery trials to endure, no strange thing will have happened unto us, for tribulations have ever been the lot of God's elect and redeemed people while in this

world. Jesus saith, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). Our gracious God saith, "I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." Jonah, when in the belly of the whale, exclaimed, "I am cast out of thy sight," but he was mistaken. Ah! how many mistaken thoughts of God have arisen within us. But though the Lord may be often out of our sight, and we may be saying with Job, **"Behold, I go forward, but he is not** *there;* **and backward, but I cannot perceive** *him:* **on the left hand, where he doth work, but cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see** *him,"* but we are never out of his sight. The Lord sees us in the deepest darkest dispensations of his providences that we are passing through, for the darkness and the light are both alike to him, and all our portion, our lot, is such as is ours in the counsel of his own will. Truly it is wonderful, the love of God our Savior unto his chosen. They are accepted in the Beloved, and in him have obtained an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away.

And now, believers in Christ Jesus, we are journeying unto the place of which the Lord hath said, I will give it thee (Num. 10:29). We can only endure and hold on our way as we are found leaning upon our Beloved (S. Song 8:5). Christ, in his espousal of us unto himself, said, ***"come"***, and we were so drawn to Christ crucified, so leaned upon him, that we went after him in the wilderness (Jer. 2:2). And it is our comfortable hope that he will bring us home to our Father's house on high, we shall enter into the King's palace in eternal glory. Oh, we shall be like him in immortal beauty, our whole spirit and soul and body glorified, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Frederick W. Keene,
501 Cleveland Street, Raleigh, NC
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CHARITY
MAY, 1947

IT IS ALARMING to me when I am given to meditate upon the strife and confusion that exists in Zion today! It is heart-breaking to find brethren trying to devour and subdue one another. It makes me shudder to note the coldness that seems prevalent in our own midst. All this perplexity of mind has made me to inquire of the Lord for an understanding of His Spirit of love. May He define charity for us and make manifest that spirit in us.

Let us now consider the 13th chapter of Ist Corinthians where Paul was inspired to write to the Church at Corinth on this grand subject. I realize the modern usage of the word is the giving of alms, but the 3rd verse of this chapter states the possibility of bestowing all goods to feed the poor, yet be destitute of charity. I am persuaded to believe that charity is the love of God, love of Christ, and love to saints. God loves us with a godly love. This same love is recipro-

cated and also includes Christ and the brethren. We love God because He first loved us. God's children do love one another. I think that Paul in the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians was blessed to treat upon the greatness of charity and its properties. He says, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal." To be enabled to speak with the tongues of men is a natural gift from God, but to be able to speak with the tongues of angels is a spiritual gift from God. Man naturally cannot learn the language of the truth as pertaining to God and the holy Scriptures. Though a man be spiritually blessed to speak fluently and eloquently of the doctrine of God our Savior and have not charity, he is as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. If a person be blessed so that he can understand all mysteries and knowledge and have all faith both believing and doing miracles and have not charity, he is nothing. Paul does not mean that these gifts are nothing but that the man possessing these gifts is nothing, destitute of charity. If I bestow all my goods to feed the poor in order to gain the reputation of men or for the purpose of obtaining eternal life it would be no profit to me. These deeds must be motivated by love to God or to Christ or to the saints before they could be rightly considered as profitable for me.

Now let us consider the properties and characters of love as Paul was inspired to note them. "Charity suffereth long." The person blessed with charity is patient. He is slow to anger, and not hasty to revenge. He is enabled to bear much; has the grace of forbearance, and is blessed to forgive. "And is kind." He does good to all men, even to his enemies. "Charity envieth not." He that is possessed with this wonderful grace of God's love does not envy the temporal happiness of others. He rejoices when he beholds a brother is blessed with gifts both temporal and spiritual. He does not envy the happiness of others even though they are decidedly more blessed than he. Joseph's brethren were not charitable when they envied Joseph because he had a greater share in the affections of their father. The charitable person does not envy one of God's children whose usefulness and success in spiritual undertakings are decidedly greater (seemingly) than his. "Charity vaunteth not itself." He does not boast of either his natural or spiritual wisdom or possessions. He does not boast of what he does as his motive is love and not for the applause of men. "Is not puffed up." He is not swelled with pride but is humble. "Doth not behave itself unseemly." He is not unbecoming in his conversation or actions and has due respect for the aged and those of authority. "Seeketh not her own." He is not seeking to promote his own selfish ambitions and desires but his care and concern is to the glory of God and to the children of the kingdom. "Is not easily provoked." He is not easily offended. "Thinketh no evil." Not that he is free from evil thoughts such as are sinful and vain, for testimonies throughout the holy scriptures affirm to the contrary. God's children are forever desiring to be delivered

from these sinful thoughts that are daily experienced. But I think that this character will forgive a brother his trespasses and will not try to find some way of revenge. He thinks not upon how to *get even* with someone who has wronged him.

"Rejoiceth not in iniquity." He mourns because of his own iniquities. He is grieved because of the sinfulness of professors. He is troubled when he meditates upon the profanity and immorality of the world. "But rejoiceth in the truth." He rejoices in the doctrine of God, our Savior, he is pleased when God is praised and man is set forth as nothing, yea less than nothing. Salvation by grace is his meat and drink. "Beareth all things." He feels that all things work together for good to them who love God, even the suffering, persecution, and *affliction is* not in vain. He bears *them* without complaint, feeling that if *justice* were meted out they would be more intense. He does not feel that he should revenge wrong doing. "Believeth all things." Everything that exists is according to the decrees of God. All things are for the praise of God and for the perfecting of God's saints. None of the things existing is by chance. "Hopeth all things." All things yet future is predetermined so that nothing will frustate any of the promises of God from being fulfilled. Endureth all things." He is confident that all things are embraced in the eternal decrees of an all-wise and all-powerful God. He endures all the afflictions and persecutions for the elect's sake and for Christ's sake. The last to be endured is death.

"Charity never faileth." It may fail in the lively exercise of it. Selfishness and the cares of the world may be prevalent at times, but the love of God will not permit a child of God to fall finally into perdition. Charity is everlasting. It is ever the same. Prophecies will be fulfilled then cease to be prophecy. Hope will become a reality thus cease to be hope. Faith will terminate into a reality. Charity will be charity in the beyond the same as it was before the beginning of time. Every object of God's love is just as certain for heaven and immortal glory as before time began. There is no change in the love of God for His people.

Now, I feel that the Lord has blessed us with a few sweet thoughts on the properties and characteristics of God's love as made manifest in brethren. Permit me to say, By their fruits ye shall know them. I wish to suggest to the citizens of Zion, that you beware of imposters. Beware of those having a form of godliness but not manifesting the grace of charity. I believe the time has come to watch as well as pray. May God grant us the grace of charity and the eye of watchfulness.

Elder E.J. Lambert

ST. JOHN 20:26.

And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: *then* came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be with you.

EXERCISES ABOUT PREACHING

On the 14th of August I heard a man preach in the Presbyterian Church where my membership had been. The congregation was large. I wanted to get up and tell the people not to believe what he said, that if they knew the truth concerning that text it would comfort them. I thought if they felt as I had felt before my hope came he was distressing them greatly. I could hardly keep my seat. I went home with my head down. As I entered my room I spoke aloud, as though another had spoken in me, "I must preach." Then I was startled. I wanted to go to the ends of the earth to tell everybody that salvation was by grace, and that what that man preached was not true. But the word "preach" was too great a word for me.

Soon after that I wrote to Elder Beebe, telling him of that wonderful experience, and asking what it meant. In his reply he said the brethren had thought I had a work to do in the church, and were waiting till the Lord should let me know it, and that they had appointed a certain night, September 4th, for me to exercise my gift. Then I was afraid. It did not seem possible that I could preach; and I could not yet think it possible for me to leave my business. This caused me great anxiety and some distress of mind. I find in my diary of August 14th, the evening when I had first had the thought that I must preach, this sentence: "I am certain I must engage in another work than the law."

A few days after this, a large coal operator came to my office and asked me to take charge of the legal work connected with his business. I looked it over, and took time to think of it. All that day I worked hard and enjoyed the work. Much business was brought to me, and during the day I hardly thought of anything but the work. During the past winter I had done but little, having been much with my two brothers, one in Washington and one at my father's home, both very sick. Since my baptism I had not cared much for legal work, only to do my duty. And this was really the first day in many weeks that I had been devotedly engaged in work. All other things were put out of my mind, and the thought of preaching was gone, so far as I can remember. I had during all of my practice been preparing for the line of work which appeared now to be coming to me in such measure as to animate me much. I must, however, have remembered my thoughts about preaching, for I told the coal operator that possibly I might not stay there, and if I arranged to go away I would turn the business over to a friend, H. W. Palmer. He said that man would be his next choice.

That night I went into my room with very peculiar feelings. I had spent evening after evening there with the Bible, the hymn book and the "Signs," in unspeakable comfort. Now, as I entered the room, I realized that something was lacking. I looked around and the room seemed empty. I took the Bible, but there was nothing for me. I was not at rest. I sat down but instantly rose again. Unrest! It was terrible, distressing. It seemed almost as though I were going to die. All at once I thought of the

day just closed, and the work I had done, and the enjoyment of it. Then I said to myself; "On Sunday night you felt that you must go to the ends of the earth and tell the glad tidings of salvation by grace, and what have you been doing today?" Then I said, whether aloud or only in thought I cannot tell; "If I were sure of making fifty thousand dollars by the end of this year I could not and I would not stay." Oh, what a sweet peace and rest and a feeling of holy solemnity came into my soul. From that day to this, nearly forty-four years, there has been no going back in my mind from that decision. I have still had times when it seemed impossible for me to preach; one so unworthy, so poor in spirit, so ignorant. Qualification has seemed utterly lacking, but the thought of business and money has never since been a hindrance to me. It seemed the words were sweetly given to me by the dear Saviour: "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." From that day to this my *needs* have been all supplied, and I am sure they will be to the end, but not all my *wants*.

One night about this time these words were in my mind all night : "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." All night the meaning of them kept unfolding in my soul. and the inexpressible sweetness of them was tested in my spirit. Whether I slept I do not know. I did not need to sleep. I had a more satisfying rest than sleep could give. Not long after this I was at a conference meeting at Vaughan Hill, perhaps Sunday, August 28th. On that day my next older brother James was baptized by Elder Schoonover. My next younger brother Warren had been baptized in July, when I was not present. Both had been extremely ill during the past year, and both had received a hope, each in a most wonderful manner. At the conference referred to I spoke concerning the words of the dear Saviour which had been so blessed to me during one whole night. After this they seemed to pass away from my mind in a manner, though not by any means forgotten.

Now I began to think with trembling to try to prepare myself for the trial of my gift at Middletown at the meeting appointed for the evening of Sunday, September 4th. I thought if I could preach at all I could preach from those words: "Come unto me, etc." So I carefully laid them up in my mind for that occasion, occasionally thinking them over, and arranging my thoughts concerning them. The Sunday came and I was present at the Wallkill Meeting House in the morning. It rained and few were out. Elder Beebe said I must preach. I was in consternation. I had but one text and that was for the meeting in Middletown at night. Elder Beebe and all the rest insisted that I must go forward. Just then I remembered the peculiar language of Isa. 29:11, 12 and 18 about the book which the learned could not read because it was sealed, and the one that was not learned because he was not learned, but the deaf shall hear the words of the book, etc. I spoke a little about that, and one of the deacons, an old man, said he was edified by what I said. I looked at him sadly for I thought

he had said what was not true in order to encourage and comfort me. I knew it could not be that what I had said could have been of any benefit. But perhaps at night I might preach. Elder Beebe was called *from* the morning meeting to attend a funeral and told me I must preach at the afternoon meeting in Middletown. I urged and begged to be let off from that; said I could not do it. The thought of trying to preach in the afternoon was frightful, and especially as I had only the one text, and that I must use at night. When I found it was inevitable, I looked around in my mind and finally thought of the text *used* by the Presbyterian preacher the night I felt such a strong desire to contradict him, and when afterward I, for the first time, thought I must preach: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made *alive.*" But to use that I must speak upon the subject of the resurrection, and I knew that one prominent person would be present who had told me she did not believe in the resurrection of the body in the same way that some of us did and I feared I would offend her. My mind was in a tumult. However, the time came and I tried to tell what I thought of the text, and declared the resurrection of the body. Though I will say here that I did not then, and do not now, believe that the body, which is sown a natural body, is raised a natural body and then changed into a spiritual body; but "it is raised a spiritual body." Well, I got through the afternoon, and was spoken to very kindly by the one referred to, as well as by the rest of the friends. I did not, however, in my own mind, call it preaching. But if I could preach at all (which I began to doubt very much) I thought I could do it at night. My text I had kept laid away, and neither in the morning nor afternoon had I interfered with it.

At night there came together a large congregation, and I took my text. But what work I made. I talked, it is true, for near forty minutes, but I felt as though I had my hands full of dead, dry leaves, rattling them. There was no life or light or feeling, except a feeling of self-abasement, helplessness and distress. One followed me, the one I have already referred to, who afterward left us, and said some surface things in a smooth, cold manner, with no help or interest to me. I had tried to get down into the depth and sweetness of the text. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," and I could not. I felt that I had absolutely said nothing, and worse than nothing. The church gave me license to preach, but I am convinced they could not have seen any gift in what I said that night. If it had not been for the morning and afternoon meetings, and what they had heard before, they could not have thought I had a gift.

The night was a distressing one to me. I tossed sleeplessly till morning, writing bitter things against myself, feeling sure that I had made the church mourn on my account; that I had no gift, and that I ought never to have allowed them to have an appointment for me. How my soul cried unto the Lord for mercy, that he would direct me and uphold me in the right way. Toward morning I became somewhat quiet, and promised myself that if the Lord ever

had anything for me to say I would try to say it if he would give me ability, but that I would never lay up a text again, nor try to arrange beforehand what I should say. I had been humiliated greatly and my pride had been broken down, and now I did feel humble. But I have not kept my promise. Many a time I have tried to arrange a sermon for a future occasion, and have as often been shut up, and three or four times during the first year I had to stop and sit down.

The next week I went in company with several brethren to the Lexington Association, and enjoyed the meetings and the preaching very much. I was called upon to speak, and felt very much at liberty in my soul. It seemed to me then that preaching the gospel was an easy and most delightful work, but I soon found that it was so only when the Lord filled my soul with the comfort of his love and gave me to feel at the time the power of his word. But when left to myself to depend upon the power of my own mind, preaching is the hardest work I ever did.

When my sister Bessie received a hope ten years before I was brought into the church, she received in her own mind an assurance that I would have to preach. When I wrote her that I had united with the Presbyterian Church, she was so deeply affected that for a time she almost lost her power to breathe. Soon, however, the remembrance of the power with which that assurance had come to her that I must preach quieted her, and she rested. I knew nothing of this until the church had liberated me to preach.

I still have times of soul searching, and of crying unto God as a little child, that he will lead me and guide me in the path of duty, and uphold me by His spirit, and I must acknowledge with humble gratitude and thanksgiving that the dear Lord has not been unmindful of my petitions. And I would love, if enabled by his grace, to recount some of his blessings, and tell of his goodness to me. I can say with the Apostle, "Having obtained help of the Lord, I continue unto this present, trying to preach as with the ability that God giveth, the unsearchable riches of Christ."

The terrible afflictions of soul I cannot describe. I cannot tell of the sorrows on account of sin in thought and word and deed, of the going down into the depths, when deep has called unto deep in my soul, when I have felt that "the bars of the earth were about me forever." But so far the Lord has showed me his delivering power and grace, and out of everyone of these deep and heavy afflictions the Lord has brought me into some deeper and more glorious understanding of his goodness.

Elder Silas H. Durand

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POEM

(This poem was composed about two o'clock one morning, after being pressed in spirit to arise and pen these thoughts. I have had several requests to re-publish it.)

When the moon in all it's glory,
Cast it's brilliance o'er the earth,
Then I thought of Jesus, Saviour,
And about his humble birth.

Soon I saw him in a manger,
Glory shining all around;
By a heavenly host surrounded,
Shouting, glory to his name.

Then I saw him meek and lowly,
Walk the earth in grief and shame,
All to save poor, wretched sinners,
Who will ever praise his name.

Next he bows inside a garden:
Sweat like drops of blood flow down;
All the earth about him silent,
As he kneels upon the ground.

As he prays in solemn anguish,
For the cup to pass away;
Yet he knows that he must drink it,
To prepare the glorious way.

Then upon the scene most softly,
Came an angel dressed in white,
Touched him gently, said, look upward,
Soon the darkness will be light.

Soon the scene of darkness changes;
Darkness breaks, the light appears –
Heaven opens to receive him,
Never more to bow in tears.

He appears in heaven for sinners,
Who were purchased with his blood:
All his intercession for them
Is because his life is love.

Then dear God, may all his suffering,
Guide me on this heavenly road;
May I never, never murmur,
As I think about my God.

Though my soul is oft in sorrow,
Soon these things will pass away.
Sickness, sin and all my trials,
Will be over in that great day.

Then our garments will be spotless
As we gaze upon his face.
We will need the Moon, no never,
For the Sun will take it's place.

When his children all shall meet him
On that bright and shining shore,
Where our sorrows, pains and trials,
Will be over, ever o'er.

Soon, my brethren, we shall meet him,
May his love be all our guide,
And his grace and tender mercy,
Land us safe on Heaven's side.

Sept. 1954 D. V. Spangler

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EDITORIAL

"How is it then, brethren? When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying." 1 Corinthians 14:26.

Elder J.B. Farmer

The worldly religious professors cannot examine their beginnings to see whether their faith stands in the wisdom of men. They cannot study their history to see if their faith and practice has been or is in accord with that of the church that Jesus

built upon the Rock, which is Himself. They are not enabled to trace their line to see if some man or woman came up with some idea contrary to the gospel, and wrote it down, and published it, and sent it out in order to draw away disciples after themselves. They cannot discern, since their religion is money based, that it would immediately fail if the money were withheld. They are deceived and cannot even ask if they have a lie in their right hand. They go on in the traditions and teachings presented to them, and seem to be satisfied in them. Many don't even realize that they call Jesus, Lord, but deny His plain teachings. Jesus said, **"And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"**

It is not so with those who were foreknown of God and predestinated to be conformed to His image. It is needful for them to know whether they are in the faith of God's elect. It is needful for them to know whether they are being held in the practice of the ancient church. It is needful for them to know whether they are being kept in the true order of the saints. It is needful for them to know whether this is the true love of God wherein they stand. I am made to believe that only the children of God are concerned about such things. Nothing false will satisfy them. By the discerning Holy Spirit that is within them the faithful children are made to examine all things-external and internal - and to reject that which is false and cleave to that which is true. Jesus said, **"If you love me, keep my commandments."** And He said, **"By this shall all *men* know that you are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."**

God has left on record His written word for the benefit of His people. **"All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."** His written word is conclusive evidence for His children as to what is the true faith, practice, and order of the saints. I must believe that God's little ones are constantly seeking evidence that they are not deceived, and that they are truly in that narrow way, which leads to eternal life.

Some seek to prove that the Primitive Baptists are directly linked to the original church that Jesus established by examining church histories written by men. I am made to believe that approach to the truth will always be unsatisfactory. This is because the true churches were so small and despised that they were not recognized by the historians. I am made to believe that the true history of the faith is found in scripture, by the example laid down there. The inspired apostle said to Timothy, **"Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."** We see from the scripture that spiritual things were committed from faith to faith. The faithful apostle committed these things to faithful Timothy,

who was commanded to commit these things to faithful men, who shall be able to teach other faithful men also. The apostle has shown us the pattern over four generations, and I must believe that God who made heaven and earth did sustain that true pattern from the beginning unto our day and shall sustain it unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. What God has done is forever, and is unchangeable.

Yes, I cannot help believing that the doctrine, order, practice and love, which we experience has come to us unbroken from the beginning. If you are blessed to trace your spiritual heritage back from faith to faith for several generations, you may be assured that this is the true grace of God wherein you stand. If you are blessed, without doubting, and in full assurance of faith, to say in truth that you love the brethren, you are in the narrow way. Some may think these statements are too bold, but God has assured us in the scriptures, **"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."** If you are blessed to truly say in your heart that your greatest desire is to please God, you have evidence that you are walking in the light.

If we are blessed to test the practices of the churches which we walk among, and are blessed to find them in accord with what the apostles practiced in the beginning, we may have confidence that we are not deceived about them being in the ancient way. The apostle Paul was blessed to lay out the practice of the church in the brief scripture listed at the head of this article. He listed a psalm, a doctrine, a tongue, a revelation, and an interpretation as those things that were brought during their meetings. May we examine our practice by these things.

When we come together, we begin our services with the singing of spiritual songs and hymns. We understand that some of our hymns are based upon the psalms of David. All are spiritual and edifying.

And we find our ministers humbly setting forth the sound doctrine of Christ, and rightly dividing the word of truth. The doctrine has many parts such as the sovereignty of God, the deity of Christ, the virgin birth, salvation by grace through faith, election, the bodily resurrection of the saints to glory, the bodily resurrection and judgment of the wicked to condemnation, the second coming of Christ, the present reign of Christ in His kingdom, the total depravity of the flesh, the warfare between the outward man and the inner man, the certainty of salvation for the elect. And the list goes on and on.

A tongue is a language. And we know that there are foreign tongues or languages with which we are not familiar. If one should speak to us in a foreign language, we would not understand anything he said. The scriptures were originally written primarily in Hebrew and in Greek. If one would read to us from the original, we would need an interpreter to know what was read. And we know that some of our sound brethren have, from time to time, interpreted an

original word, either in the Hebrew or in the Greek, to help explain the meaning of a passage of scripture. This is one kind of tongue. Another tongue that is spoken among us is that pure language of grace, which cannot be understood by the world, but is perfectly clear to the household of faith.

The apostle also listed a revelation. This is in line with what we believe about all truth. It is hidden to all unless it is revealed. It is forever hidden from the wise and prudent of this world, but is mercifully revealed to God's little ones as they are enabled to receive it. Sometimes a dream is given, and for it to have meaning to us there must be revelation. In the prophet Joel and in the book of Acts it is written, **"Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions."** One time Elder Kenneth Key told me what he thought that meant, and I didn't seem to understand it at the time. He said he thought the old man was the outer man, and the young man was the inner man. Since that time I trust that this passage has been given a deeper meaning to me according to experience. I have had natural dreams that were very unusual and mysterious. After meditating upon them, it seems that they had a spiritual meaning. And sometimes I was given to tell others what they meant, or another would tell me what they thought they meant. The dreams were natural according to the outer man, but the visions were the meditations and the revelations of the meaning, and the prophesying was the telling of the meaning. God is still working in and among His people today.

The blessed apostle also listed an interpretation. This does not speak of a guess, or of an opinion, or of a position that one has taken about the meaning of a scripture. But it speaks of the rightly dividing of it. We are taught that if any man should speak unto the children of God about spiritual things, he must speak as the oracles of God. or the utterances of God. He must not speak maybe this and maybe that, but rather, thus sayeth the Lord. When one is blessed to speak the truth, he is speaking the things of the kingdom with the full assurance of faith. It is written, **"Knowing this first, that no prophesy of scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophesy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake** *as they were* **moved by the Holy Ghost."** It is no wonder it is such a fearful thing to stand before the Lord's people to speak. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

And the apostle concluded the list of the practices of the churches by saying, **"Let all things be done unto edifying."** Whether it be singing a song, teaching the doctrine, or explaining a tongue, or relating a revelation, or giving an interpretation of the scripture, it must be to the building up, strengthening, comforting, and good of the Lord's people. And **"Every good gift and every perfect gift comes down from above, from the Father of lights in whom there is no variableness nei-**

ther shadow of turning." Thanks be unto God for His many mercies to us.

I trust this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer

ROMANS 8: 27-28.

And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of* God.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

CORRESPONDENCE

Elder & Mrs. James C. Young
1218 N. Park Ave APT #5
Tifton, Ga. 31794-3973
IN GOD WE TRUST

Please find enclosed check 1157 in the amount of $50.00 for four (4) subscriptions for "The Signs of the Times".

I no longer "work" fulltime or as pastor – we have moved to Tifton, GA. I thought as long as I have some funds I do not want to have my subscription to expire.

Our gracious, Sovereign Lord has provided for me for many years. I have enjoyed it for more than 35 years. I am not of your order but I am a Particular Predestinarian Baptist.

I had a stroke 7 years ago and have deteriorated as you can tell in my scribling – Please forgive me.

Brother Jim Poole is a gracious friend.

Thanking you and may our Lord bless you and your efforts.

Elder Jim Young

Sept. 11, 2012

Elder Cleo Robertson,

In reference to your editorial in the September issue of the "Signs" (Isaiah 43:1-2.) I must admit I shed tears of joy as I read the words from your pen that expressed the Truth that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. I believe the Lord laid the same spirit of truth upon your heart that was laid upon the hearts of those patriarchs of old as they spoke to the ancient Hebrew families.

Aren't we glad, Elder Robertson, for the "FEW" that still stand on the foundation of Christ and the prophets that spells out Salvation is by the free and unmerited grace of God?

I believe we are now living in the time Paul the apostle had reference to when he wrote the second epistle to Timothy, Chapter 4 "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine etc." In the question asked in the eighth verse of Luke 18 – "Neverthe-

less when the son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" Thanks to almighty God I believe that question was answered in Paul's 1st Epistle to the Corinthians when he wrote in verse 51– Chapter 15 "We shall not all sleep" etc. There will be some still believing and preaching the sovereignty of God when Jesus returns to take his children home.

You and your staff are to be commended for the selection of material printed in the oldest Primitive Baptist Periodical in America.

In his grace,
Elder Velden B. Linn

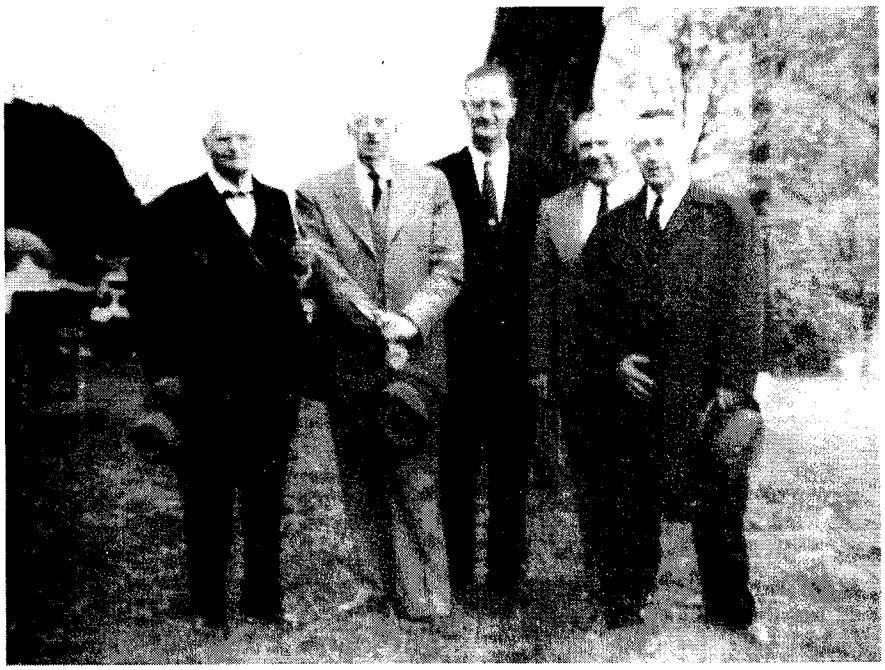

Elders at New Valley Church

August 27, 2012

Dear Elder Robertson,

I wonder if you or some of the readers of the "Signs of the Times" could help me in identifying the Elders in this old photograph?

On the back of picture is written the following: "Oct. 1956 Virginia corresponding meeting New Valley Church."

I recognize two of the men. The slender man in the middle is Elder E. J. Lambert and man on the far right with the overcoat on is Elder David Spangler. The identity of the other 3 men I do not know? I also would like to know the location of New Valley Church.

You are welcome to publish this picture in an upcoming edition of the "Signs" if you feel it would be of any interest to others.

I also have a number of other photographs much older than this one, of

various Primitive Baptist Elders, which are all identified.

Would you consider publishing some of them from time to time if I sent some copies to you for consideration?

My humble thanks to you.
In hope of eternal life.
Steve Everett

In response to Steve Everett's request to identify the Elders in the picture he sent, we agree that he is correct in identifying Elders Lambert and Spangler. Also, the second from the left is Elder John Wood. If anyone can identify the first one from the left and the fourth one, please let me know. We are always interested in pictures of old Elders and churches. The only information that we have on New Valley Church is to take Hwy 15 from Leesburg, Va. towards Lucketts, Va and turn on New Valley Road. We appreciate the picture and your correspondence.

Editor

Elder Cleo Robertson
111 Livingstone Drive
Cary, NC 27513

Dear Brother Cleo:

Here are some thoughts I have tried to put together concerning Israel and the crossing of Jordan. Rereading this, it seems to be rambling at best, but here it is. Use it as you see fit. If it seems unsound, or unclear to the point of being misunderstood then it is much better as trash.

We understand that Elder Farmer as well as Elder Bradshaw plan to be with us at the annual meeting of Soldiers Creek on the 2nd Sunday in August. In recent years it has just been a one day meeting but very enjoyable never the less.

As you should know you have a standing invitation to come and be with us at any time. We have a meeting somewhere most every week.

Sincerely,
Wayman Chapell

ARTICLES

YE HAVE NOT PASSED THIS WAY HERETOFORE

When the children of Israel came to the river Jordan, and before they passed over, they were told; "When ye see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the priests and the Levities bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place and go after it" Joshua 3:3. They were to follow the ark (sign, or symbol of divine presence) into the Jordan river and thus into the promised land of Canaan which was a fearsome trip. They were to stay about 2000 cubits (3000 ft.) behind the ark that they might know the way, but come not near it. This was a totally new experience. They did not know the way and neither had they ever been that way before.

This whole episode of the crossing of Jordan seems, in many ways, to pre-

figure the travels of a child of God, under grace, when called out of darkness into his marvelous light. "...I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight." Isaiah 42; 16.

When there is no other way to go, and though the way may seems rough and perhaps uncertain the indwelling instructions are clear "Follow Him." Wonderful and fearful things are happening in a deliverance that the natural mind can not fully comprehend, much less understand. It is a wonderful deliverance from natures darkness into the kingdom of God.

"And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overflowed all his banks all the time of harvest,) That the waters which came down from above stood *and* rose upon heap... And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground..."Joshua 3:15-17.

As sin seems an impossible hindrance in the path of a believer, when first made to see what he is by nature and what he must be by grace, so was the deep waters of Jordan to Israel. But as the Jordan was rolled back when the priests feet were first dipped in the water so is the unquenched guilt of sin rolled away when a child of God is brought to understand that the blood of Christ is all sufficient.

Though the river bed was now dry ground it does not take much thought to understand that doubts and fears must have been part of the journeys experience as they moved forward. They could say, "The Lord God is my strength and he will make my feet like hinds feet, and he will make me walk upon mine high places." Habakkuk 3:19. And so is the assurance of a child of God. Yet, the experience and testimony of the father, as recorded in Mark 9:17-24, who had a son that had a "dumb spirit", seems to ring out when things look impossible to the natural man. When told by Christ that if he could believe that all things were possible to him that believed, the father quickly responded, "...Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." Notice that the dumb spirit came out of the son showing that the father's faith was helped. (All spiritual faith is the gift of God.)

Israel had not passed this way before and the way was no less fraught with doubts and fears than are those of a child of God when gripped by the heart felt desire to follow the Savior. With the promised land of Canaan now in sight, (A home in the fellowship of the saints) troubles would seem to be over. Now, in the fellowship of the church, the spiritual substance of the promises that were given to Abraham, concerning the bounty of the land, can now be enjoyed—or so it was thought. **"And it shall be, when the Lord thy God shall have brought Thee into the land which he sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham , to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou**

buildedst not, And houses full of all good *things*, **which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full;** *Then* **beware lest thou forget the Lord, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage." Deuteronomy 6:10-12.** Though the land of promise was now in sight it was soon to be felt that the road ahead was not an easy one. As when Paul and Barnabas, preaching the gospel at Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, went about... **"Confirming the souls of the disciples,** *and* **exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." Acts. 14:22.** The land and the blessing in the land had been promised and were there, yet there were many spiritual lessons to be learned and many battles to be fought. And, such it is with the child of God as he grows in grace and the knowledge of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The experience of the Jordan crossing was not lost to those who may later ask what these things mean. The Lord spoke to Joshua telling him to take a man from each of the twelve tribes and each would take a stone from the midst of Jordan from the place where the priests' feet stood firm in Jordan. They took the stones over with them to where they were to lodge the first night. The stones were a sign that when the children ask of their fathers the meaning of the stones they were to be told that it was for a memorial of how the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord when it passed over. It was to be a memorial to the children of Israel for ever. And such are the interests to the children of God as they follow in this way which they have not been before. The spiritual experiences of brothers and sisters, though no two may be exactly the same, can be a great consolation when doubts and fears arise.

One of the last chores for Joshua, before leaving the dry river bed of Jordan, was to set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests stood, which bore the ark of the covenant. These were not the same stones that were carried over to Gilgal (the place of the first nights lodging) by the twelve men and for a different purpose.

The text seems to indicate that the twelve stones set up by Joshua were on dry land in the middle of the Jordan river bed and then were covered by water, when the river returned, and ..."are there until this day"... Though not seen any more by the natural eye, the stones and the crossing that they represent, were surely impressed firmly on the mind of Joshua and would, in the trying times ahead, serve as a witness of what God had done in their deliverance through Jordan. In a somewhat similar way, or in like manner, are the early experiences in the spiritual life of a believer. They are often memories by which courage is made strong and faith strengthened when doubts and fears arise. And there is a growing understanding **"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be**

found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." 1st Peter 1:7-8.

Elder Wayman Chapell

VOICES OF THE PAST

For the Signs of the Times.
North Berwick, Me., July 9, 1855.

BROTHER BEEBE: - As God's people have but one heavenly Father, all being born in God's spiritual kingdom, they are all of one family, brothers and sisters in Christ, and as they are united together, with the cords of God's eternal love, they of course are always ready to listen to any account that they can receive from each other, especially when they are much scattered, in a dark cloudy day, and surrounded by a multitude of enemies who are saying all manner of evil about them, and prophesying that they soon will become extinct, and are doing all within their power for the same. I will say that we, the Old School Baptist church of this place, having obtained help of God, continue until this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things then those which Moses and the prophets did say should come; for we think that we can see that the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. The foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone. And as we believe this foundation stone to be the rock of eternal ages, we have no desire to trust in, or to lay any other foundation than that, which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. And as men in these last days have studied out, and formed (what they call) soul-saving institutions, to bring people on to this foundation, we have no confidence in them to accomplish any such thing; but our whole confidence to accomplish this, is in that soul saving institution which was established by Christ himself, over eighteen hundred years ago, for Christ said, "On this Rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." We can see no cause why we should leave the bible to follow after the commandments of men. But I will close by saying, we yet continue an afflicted and poor people, and much interested at times to hear from our brethren and sisters who write for the *Signs,* for they tell our feelings better than we can ourselves. I will also inform you that on the 6th of last May I had the privilege of baptizing two candidates in fellowship of the church, and yesterday I had the privilege of baptizing two more, so the Lord is good to us.

WILLLIAM QUINT.

GALATIANS 3:22.

But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

GOD CALLS AND SENDS HIS SERVANTS

967 Maxey Street,
Memphis, Tenn. 38111

Dear Brethren:

"The gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

When Jesus called to himself his twelve disciples, who were called Apostles, he gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. (Matt. 10:1) They were commanded where to go to preach, which was to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. God's servants today are called and sent as they were then, to preach the gospel, bearing good news to them that 'are called to hear the gospel: which is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also the Greek; for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith."

We understand that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. There are many gifts but all of the same Spirit; and as many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God, and just as many as are ordained unto eternal life believe in God. To believe in God is the work of God by Him whom He hath sent. Christ was sent to them that were lost. **"He came unto his own and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God,** *even* **to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:11-13)**

I do believe that the ones Christ comes to are the very elect of God, which were chosen in Christ before the world began. The Apostle Paul told Timothy that God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and a sound mind, and we should not therefore be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of Paul his prisoner; but partakers of the afflictions of the (2 Tim. 1:7-9) gospel according to the power of God. **"Who hath saved us and called** *us* **with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."**

Today the ones who have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, and have the sound mind given them, are humble creatures and desire to be at the feet of their brethren, and abound in love towards their brethren as much as is in them is. They look not at the things of this life, but unto Him who is the author of their faith by which they walk. We study to show ourselves approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. We think much of our time that we are unprofitable servants, and cannot think of anything good we have ever done. I believe that when I would do good evil is always present, and can say

with the Apostle, That which I would do, I do not, knowing that in me dwells no good thing.

Sometimes, brethren, I try to rest in the thought of being one of God's elect; and if I am one it is because everything has been done for me, and not by me. Grace is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, and not in our heads. I believe in heart-felt religion, and it is the work of God that we believe this. Jesus said, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." Now he that believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God; and he that is born of God is made a new creature in Christ Jesus. "Except a man be born of water "and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

We have asked ourselves, have we been born again, and wonder how this is and how it comes: we know that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and this I wonder about; but I know that I love my brethren, if I know anything at all. We know that God loved his children before they loved him. He is all in all, upholding all things by his power; and every soul is subject to God. There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Now we understand that the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly but by reason of him who subjected the same in hope. Doesn't this show the power of God, that we creatures go as God directs, as his disciples and apostles had to go. God will never leave himself without a witness. Those that are called will go where he leads them. He goes before his sheep; He feeds his flock: they find rest at noontime, and the kids are fed by the shepherd's tents.

God speaking by one of the prophets, said, "I leave in your midst an afflicted and poor people." These are the people God raised up for himself, who shall show forth his praise. They are poor in spirit, but rich in faith. James says of these people, "Harken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" So the promise is to them that love him, and it is eternal life that is promised them. "God is not slack concerning his promise as some count slackness; but is long suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Brethren I believe the same doctrine is being preached and taught today among His people that Christ taught his disciples to preach to the edification of the brethren in that day; and which we enjoy as good news from a far country. This good news strengthens our hope, which we have as the anchor of our souls sure and steadfast. If our hope did not go beyond this world we would be of all men most miserable. We hear some say that their hope is so little, and we don't like to hear this, for our hope is in Christ Jesus the Lord of glory, and this hope cannot be measured. Aren't you glad that your hope is felt so plainly sometimes that you have to say, I know I have a hope in my God, and he will give me everything I need.

Brethren, we are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. (Romans 8:24,25)

In hope of eternal life,
Elder Herbert R. Prince
September, 1968

ACTS 3:1-11

Of all the signs and wonders that the apostles did through the power of God, only those are recorded in the scriptures that are needful for the instruction of the children of God in righteousness and the confirmation of their faith. The first eleven verses of the third chapter of Acts relate an incident in the apostolic ministry of Peter and John that occurred soon after the descent of the Holy Ghost and the establishment of the visible church on the day of Pentecost. Peter and John visited the temple at Jerusalem at the ninth hour of the day, a special time of prayer, and saw a lame man that had been carried daily and laid at the gate of the temple, that is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that came to the temple for worship, and who was about to ask alms of the two apostles. Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." Peter then took the cripple by the right hand and lifted him up, and the bones of his ankles and feet received strength. The cured man leaping, stood and walked and entered with them into the temple, praising God. Those who witnessed the miracle were filled with wonder and astonishment at that which had happened to the lame man, who held Peter and John, as they ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

Peter and John were witnesses of this demonstration of the mighty power of God. Out of the mouths of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. These two apostles were thought to be the oldest and the youngest of the apostles respectively. It seems appropriate that they should participate in this miracle, for it is by a miracle of grace that every child of God enters savingly into a knowledge of the truth, from the time that the first one of the family of the redeemed tasted that the Lord is gracious, until the last one finds a place in that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Peter and John went together into the temple, denoting that blessed fellowship that the children of God have together in spiritual companionship when they sit down in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Peter and John were together at the trial of Christ, they ran together to his sepulcher, and they came to the temple together, not to offer up the sacrifice of lamb or bullock on a Jewish altar, but to attend to prayer and to offer spiritual sacrifices, also to preach to the Jews who assembled in numbers at the ninth hour, which was three o'clock in the afternoon.

This was one of the hours observed for prayer and sacrifice by the Jews. It was the ninth hour when Jesus Christ on the cross commended his spirit to God

as he gave up his life, saying, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Prayer is the christian's vital breath, his means of communication with God. A sigh, a cry for mercy, a groan because of sin from a burdened soul is prayer, is indited in the heart by the spirit of God and is heard and registered in heaven. When the high priest under the law dispensation made intercession for Israel, he took a live coal of fire from the brazen altar of sacrifice and placed it upon the incense on the golden altar. As the fragrant incense vapor ascended, perfuming the place of worship, the high priest offered prayer. When a child of God, one of the priesthood of believers, prays, there is a work of the Holy Spirit in his heart, convicting him of sin and teaching him the justice of his condemnation and the righteousness of that fiery law that went forth from the hand of the Lord at Sinai. It shows him his lion in nature, and in its application consumes all the combustible material of creature effort and legal works. The law burning in the bosom of the convicted sinner as holy fire shows him the vileness of his heart and causes him to groan within himself and to cry for mercy. The creature was born in sin, and to live unto God, must die to sin and realize his need of Christ.

As the ninth hour was observed as an hour of prayer in Jewish worship, there is in this a spiritual signification. It denotes judgment in the sense that when a sinner prays for mercy, he acknowledges the righteous judgment of God for his sins. It was not far from the ninth hour when the first passover lamb was offered up at the time of the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt for the promised land. This lamb died typically in the place of and for the Israelites, and by the sprinkling of the blood of this passover lamb on the lintels of the door posts of the houses of the children of Israel, they escaped the wrath of God and became a nation. Jesus met the judgment of God for his bride, the church, at the ninth hour of the day. He suffered for her and in her stead all the penalty that she would have had to endure if he had not been a propitiation for her sins. By his death and resurrection the church became a holy nation and a peculiar people of the Lord. At the very hour Jesus died, the high priest in the temple was about to slay the passover lamb when suddenly the earth shook, rocks were rent, many graves were opened, and the veil of the temple was rent asunder from top to the bottom, showing that the way into the holiest was now made open, that the type had ceased, as Christ the true passover lamb fulfilled the requirements of the law and made the observance of ceremonial rites no longer necessary. At the ninth hour Jesus died with a prayer upon his lips as he commended his spirit to the Father. When we enter the church, which is the true temple of God, it is through prayer and supplication; it is because of the merit of the sacrifice of Christ; it is through a sense of guilt having lain heavy on our conscience and our inability to lighten the burden. We can not stand or walk in our own strength before God. The man who was healed in the miracle under consideration could neither stand nor walk. He was lame

from his mother's womb. All mankind is conceived in sin, born under its curse, unable to meet its just requirements and under its condemnation. This man had been carried daily to the temple that he might receive alms. This shows he could not stand or walk or live of himself, and that no man could relieve his infirmity. Vain is the help of man to relieve the sinner.

The word certain is used by the Holy Spirit to designate this man from all other individuals and shows him to be a representative character. A subject of grace is distinguished from all other individuals not receiving God's favor. This man represents a sinner who is convicted of sin and is slain by it. Such a character is separate from the world. This man had no strength or means by which he could relieve himself and was fully aware of his physical infirmity. He had to be brought to the gate of the temple to which reference has been made. It is the law that brings a subject of God's redeeming love to a realization of his need, for the law is the schoolmaster of believers unto Christ that they might be justified by faith. The decalogue manifests the wound of sin and the ceremonial law points to the remedy, but is powerless to apply it. The law therefore is a ministration of death. Sacrifices under the law dispensation were offered daily, but could not take away sin. The repetition of these sacrifices day after day and year after year emphasized their impotency to purge the conscience or cleanse forever the foul stain of sin. The daily presence of this invalid at the temple to beg alms proved the gravity of his condition. He was incurable by any aid of man.

Peter and John bade this man to look upon them, not that they could of themselves effect a cure, but that through their ministration he might look to Jesus who is the fullness of grace and truth. Peter bade the afflicted one in the name of Jesus of Nazareth to rise up and walk, stating that he had neither silver nor gold to give him, gifts that perish with the using. Jesus had resided a considerable time as the word made flesh in his holy humanity in Nazareth. So the lame man was bidden to rise and walk in the name of Jesus Christ, the Godman, the holy one who had left the shining courts of heaven's effulgent glory to assume holy human flesh, that he might bring many sons to glory. When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his son, made of a woman and made under the law to redeem his church, which was under the law. The children of God being partakers of flesh and blood, Jesus likewise partook of the same that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, and deliver them that all their lifetime are subject to bondage. The law of God required obedience in the flesh, therefore Jesus was manifest in the flesh. In Christ dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily. In the matchless name of Jesus the lame man was bidden to rise up and walk. Peter then took the afflicted one by the right hand, which denotes acceptance, fellowship. Those that enter into fellowship with the Son of God are placed at the right hand of Christ when the Lord shall come with His angels and sit upon

the throne of his glory. Immediately the lame man was lifted up, his feet and ankle bones received strength and he was able to leap and walk and to praise God.

The poor child of God who has felt the plague of his own heart, and to be without hope in the world, leaps in a spiritual sense when his burden is removed, when peace is spoken to his soul, when he discerns Jesus as his great salvation, when he is lifted up from law into grace, when he enters into manifest life in Christ, and his soul magnifies the Lord and rejoices in his Savior. It is then that he walks, not after the flesh, but after the spirit. It is stated that the healed man entered into the temple. When the child of God is lifted up above the condemnation of the law, he enters into that rest prepared for the people of God and has his place in that antitypical temple of lively stones built up for a habitation of God through the spirit. The lame man, fully restored, resorted to Solomon's porch, one of the precincts of the temple that then was. Solomon typifies wisdom as well as peace. In the spiritual temple the subject of God's grace learns that wisdom that is from above, and which is pure and peaceable. Jesus Christ is made unto his people wisdom, righteousness, santification, and redemption. By nature we learn wisdom from man, which is foolishness with God, but through the healing power of the Great Physician of our souls, we are taught the wisdom of God. The lame man did not enter the temple until he was healed, and the little ones in Zion do not learn the wisdom that is from above until they are made alive spiritually. It was in the temple that the healed man praised God. It is in the true church that God's redeemed family praise him. Of such it is written: "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." The lame man was cured without the use of silver or gold, which emphasizes the truth that all the gold, that all the natural wealth of men poured into societies and organizations of men, whether at home or, abroad, can not suffice to save a single soul from bondage to sin and death. Only from Jesus comes the priceless blessing of eternal life.

(The above was written by the late Elder Arnold H. Bellows and appeared in the Signs of March, 1943.)

PSALM 89:1-5.

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations.

For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens.

I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant,

Thy seed will I estabilsh for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah.

And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.

THE ONE TALENT
(Matt. 15:24, 25)

Brother E. McKinney, of Missouri, desires our views on Matt. 25:24, 25, **"Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I know thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo,** *there* **thou hast** *that* **is thine."** These words are part of a parable which was spoken in connection with the several parables of servants left in charge of their Lord's household, to give them their meat in due season, the parable also of the ten virgins, and of the sheep and the goats; all of which, we think, were spoken in admonition to the disciples and especially to the servants of the household of our Lord, who were about to be left by our Lord to rule, and feed the members of his house in due season until he should return from his journey. A special application is probably had to the time of his being delivered up to be crucified, and extending to the period when he should, by his spirit, return to them, as he did by his spirit on the day of Pentecost. This was a time of peculiar trials, in which they did not know at what hour their Lord would return to them. These servants, according to chapter 14: 42-51, were his, Christ's own servants, on whom he had bestowed gifts qualifying them to feed and watch over the household; and those of them who should at his coming be found in the faithful discharge of the duties enjoined on them were pronounced blessed; but if any of them should say in their hearts, My Lord delayeth his coming, and should begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken, the lord of that servant would come in a day when they looked not for him, and cut them asunder, and appoint them their portion with the hypocrites; and there should be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

We do not understand this to mean that these unfaithful servants should be sent down to hell; but that in the wholesome discipline of the church and kingdom which was to be set up, they should be cast out from the fellowship of the saints, and mingle with hypocrites; for within the walls of the holy city is the tree of life, and they are blessed and happy who do the commandments of Jesus, that they may have right to the tree of life — to the privileges of the church of God; for without are dogs, sorcerers, hypocrites, etc. — Rev. 12: 14,13.

Then, at that time, when the king should return and sit in the throne of his Mediatorial glory, shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins; for the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods, and to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability, and straightway took his journey. Observe these recipients of the talents were not only servants, but they were his own servants. They were of different capacity or ability, but all alike as his own servants, and the gifts were distributed

according to their several ability. Even so has God set the gifts in the church which is the body of Christ, as it hath pleased him. He knows the several ability of all his members, and has wisely varied the gifts which are for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ, so as to accomplish his design; and he that has but one talent, has as much according to his capacity as he that has five, and is under no less obligation to be actively engaged in the use of it as he would be if he had five. It may be thought an easy matter to say that this slothful and wicked servant was an alien. But has our Lord ever bestowed any gift for the feeding and edifying of his church on any but his own servants? And may we not press home to ourselves a still more soul-stirring inquiry, Have we not ourselves complained almost in the very words of this wicked and slothful servant? Have we always been free from murmuring when paddling our little canoe so near the shore, while we have witnessed the superior gifts bestowed upon those of greater capacity bounding over the raging billows of the broad ocean with safety and ease? Nay, have we not concluded, and said in our heart, Our gift, if it be indeed a gift, is too small to be of any use, we will hide it in the earth; for if the Lord requires us to occupy a gift, he is a hard master, reaping where he has not sown? If our Lord would give us five talents, and make us equal in point of gifts and ability to the most gifted, then we would be satisfied that he had sown, and had a just right to reap; but as he has not, we are afraid, and think it more prudent to hide or conceal what little we have, and return it to him at the day of reckoning.

This wicked slothfulness is not peculiar to those who are called to the work of the gospel ministry. Some of the newborn children have said in their heart, My hope, which I cannot quite throw away, is so small that I am afraid, and will keep it hid, in the earth, in the secret chambers of my earthly heart, and wait until the Lord shall give me as clear an evidence as I think he has given to others, then I shall not be afraid, and will no longer hide it. I will then go and tell the church what the Lord has done for me. Our Lord is entitled to a revenue of praise for every gift however small it may appear to us, and if we cannot use it to any great profit and edification of others, we should at least put it in the bank, or church, where it would be appreciated by the saints and through the saints produce usury, of praise to God.

At the time of reckoning, the slothful servant of the one talent is severely reproved, and chastened. The enjoyment even of his little hope or talent is taken from him, and given to him who has ten talents, and the slothful servant is cast out from the light and liberty of the faithful, into darkness, and in company with hypocrites where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." If we understand correctly; it is the chastened child of God who for his disobedience is cast into outer darkness who weeps, for none but God's own dear children weep when cast into that darkness which is the element of the ungodly. They truly weep when

they remember Zion, and the privileges which they once enjoyed. But it is the company into which they are cast who gnash upon them with their teeth. Derisively their enemies require of them to sing the songs of Zion in the strange land; for without are dogs, sorcerers, hypocrites and scoffers.

May we all be admonished by the application of these parables, especially those who are called to feed the church of God, when allured by the delusive vanities of the world to drink in the intoxicating doctrines of men, and to smite their fellow servators — or to neglect the gift that is for them, however small it may be, for, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Nor would we have the little trembling ones who feel afraid because they have not as great an evidence as others, fail to ponder well the application of the admonition of this parable. Small as their talents may seem, it is the Lord's, and in the improvement of it they shall be enlarged; and shall enter in through the gates into the Holy City, and have right to the tree of Life. But with their Lord's money hidden, they must have for their associates the scoffing enemies of the cause of God. "Joy is sown for the righteous," and "The willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land;" but the disobedient shall be beaten with many stripes.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

PSALM 71: 1.

In thee O Lord, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion.

"PREACHED UNTO HIM JESUS"

"Then Phillip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus." (Acts 8:35)

Jesus and what He has done for his own people, (who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world,) is all there is to preach. We find that Jesus was prophesied of even in the Garden of Eden, and that all the prophets spoke of him. Isaiah said, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

When the eunuch asked Phillip, " ... of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or some other man," then Phillip preached unto him Jesus.

When Mary was found to be with child before she and Joseph came together, he was minded to put her away privately; but while he thought on these things the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." (Matthew 2: 20, 21)

Then we have the testimony of Simeon when Jesus was brought to Jerusalem, to be presented before the

Lord. Simeon had understood by revelation of the Holy Ghost that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ; and Simeon came by the Spirit into the temple, and took the babe up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, "Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people: a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

And when it came time for Jesus to be baptized, John saw him coming, and said, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." After John baptized him, he came out of the water, and the heavens were opened, and the Spirit like a dove descended upon him, and there came a voice from heaven saying, "Thou art my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

Then Jesus chose his twelve disciples to bear record of the things he did and the things he said; and he performed many miracles, such as raising the dead, opening the eyes of the blind, causing the lame to walk and the deaf to hear, as well as healing all manner of diseases, and casting out devils. He associated with publicans and sinners, and began his work among the lower classes who were dispised by the proud hierarchy of the day. He made it plain that he came to seek and to save that which was lost; to give his life a ransom for those the Father gave him. After he had performed all that the Father had assigned him, even the fulfilling of the moral and legal law, He lifted up his eyes unto heaven, and said, "Father the hour is come, glorify thy Son that thy Son also may glorify thee... I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do... I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were and thou gavest them me."

Jesus was condemned by his own people: the Jews carried him before Pilate, who delivered him back to be crucified. He was crucified between two thieves; and when he had suffered all the pain and abuse that was His to suffer, the just for the unjust, he bowed his head, and said, "It is finished." The ransom price had been paid: the salvation of his people was then secured. He died for the offenses of his people, and arose for their justification. He was laid in Joseph's new tomb, and remained there three days and nights; then arose. Then, after being seen of his disciples forty days, he commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem until they be endued with power from on high. And after he had spoken these things, and while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight; but they were given definite assurance that the same Jesus would come again.

When the day of Pentecost was fully come, the disciples all being present, the Holy Ghost from heaven came suddenly as a rushing mighty wind, and filled the whole house, and they began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance: manifesting the assurance of the promise that Jesus had made to his disciples, saying, "It is needful that I go away, but I will pray the

Father and he shall give you another Comforter... he shall take the things of mine and shew them unto you." There were Jews dwelling at Jerusalem, devout men of every nation under heaven, who were amazed that they heard these Galileans speaking so that every man heard in his own tongue. But some mocked, saying that they were full of new wine. Then it was that Peter, in obedience to the command, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven," spoke, saying, "Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and harken to my words: for these are not drunken, as ye suppose... But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel." etc. And, having the keys of the kingdom, Peter began expounding unto them the sacred truths concerning Jesus: how that they according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, had taken and by wicked hands had crucified and slain, "Whom God hath raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this. which ye now see and hear ... Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Many were pricked in their hearts. and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said unto them, "Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." And about three thousand gladly received his word and were baptized.

Later Peter, being commanded by the voice from heaven, went to the house of Cornelius a Gentile, and preached unto them the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ and him crucified; and that God raised him up the third day. And while Peter was speaking the Holy Ghost fell on all those which heard the word, and they were baptized in the name of the Lord.

Thus the infant church was established. And we find the Apostle Paul writing to the Ephesians, "Blessed by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." And in the second chapter, he says, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved,) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus..."

Before he went away Jesus told his disciples, "I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am ye may be also." He is now seated at the right hand of the Father making intercessions for us; for in Him is our identification, our justification, and our hope. It gives us courage to press toward the mark for the

prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, looking for the coming of our Lord and Saviour: when we will enter into the full benefits of that inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith ready to be revealed in the last time.

"Then Phillip opened his mouth and began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus."

In the language of Paul, " And now, brethren, I commend you unto God, and the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified." Amen.

(Elder) J. A. Tew
Rt. 1, Box 268,
Dothan, Alabama

MEETINGS

CERTIFICATE OF ORDINATION

This is to certify that on 9-15-2012 at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church a Presbytery composed of Ministers and Deacons of Old School Primitive Baptist examined Brother Jerry Somers and found him qualified to fill the office of Deacon. The Presbytery then proceeded by laying on of hands with prayer. Brother Jerry Somers was delivered back to the Church an ordained Deacon of the Primitive Baptist Church. Done by order of Presbytery this 15 day of September 2012.

Elder Thomas Solomon, Mod.
Elder Cleo Robertson, Clerk

Ministers present:
Elder Carl E. Terry
Elder Raymond Goad
Elder Jimmy Gray
Elder Mark Terry
Elder Thomas Solomon
Elder Cleo Robertson

Deacons present:
R. Allen Carroll
Tony R. Horton
Herbert Edwards
Wayne Edwards
Larry E. Byrd
Randolph N. Wells
Fred Murphy

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 2012

Elder Ralph Gaines, NC 5.00
E. H. Gunter, NC 10.00
Dan Sokolovic, NC 15.00
Hazel Garland, MD 25.00
Elizabeth Hedrick, VA 25.00
Jerry Somers, VA 5.00
David Pittman, VA 35.00
"In memory of Elder Julian R. Williams"

OBITUARIES

Dear Elder Robertson,

With sadness in our hearts, I am enclosing the obituary of the death of one of our precious brethren at the Newfound Church that Elder Jerry Farmer moderates. It is the church members' wish for brother Frank Belcher's obituary to be published in the Signs of the Times.

A sister, I hope
Sue Reed

FRANK J. BELCHER

Hear me cry , O God, listen to my prayer; from the end of the earth I call to you when my heart is faint. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

Frank J. Belcher, 85, passed away Thursday, September 6,2012 at Raleigh General Hospital.

Born March 21, 1927, he was the son of the late John and Nancy Jane O'Neal Belcher.

Frank was a member of the Newfound Primitive Baptist Church for many years. He loved to work on electronics and enjoyed gardening. He was very kind and considerate. He was dearly loved and will be greatly missed by everyone.

In addition to his parents he was preceded in death by his son, Eric Belcher.

In addition to his wife, Patricia Lee Belcher, he is survived by four daughters, Priscilla Belcher and fiance, Andrew Trent of Rhodell, Eve Lester and husband, Denver of Alpoca, Sherry Mullins and husband, Ricky of Alpoca, and Ann Bell and husband, Allen of Princeton; four sons, James Belcher and fiance, Terrika of Alpoca, Lonnie Lester, Jr. and wife, Sherry of Covel, Ricky Shrewsbury and wife, Denise of Alpoca, and Buster Shewsbury and wife, Tammy of Princeton; grandchildren, Destiny and Jacob Lester of Alpoca, James Jr. and Tareska Belcher of Alpoca, Rickey Jr ., Tyler and Justin Mullins of Alpoca, Lonnie III and Kody Lester of Covel, and Joe O'Neal of Skygusty , Samantha McBride of Covel, and Julie Humphrey of Delmar, MD; and one great-grandson, Aiden Lester of Skin Fork.

We are sad, according to nature, to report the passing from this life of our dear friend and faithful brother, Frank Belcher. He was a constant and true member of the Newfound Church for about 35 years. He will be greatly missed, but we know he is gone from the troubles to come and that all his trials and afflictions in this world are finished.

We are happy to believe and trust that he was one of the little lambs of God, and that he is now resting in the bosom of Abraham.

Written by Sister Sue Reed.
Elder Jerry B. Farmer, Moderator

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

VOL. 180 HILLSVILLE, VA., DECEMBER 2012 NO. 12

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
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PSALM 23

The Lord *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 12/2012

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

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EDITORIAL

"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit." Hebrews 6:1-3.

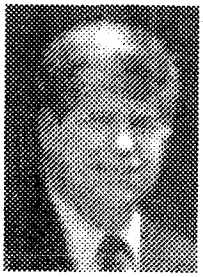
Elder J.B. Farmer

The apostles were given the keys to the kingdom. Jesus said unto His disciples, **"Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."** In the language of the apostles it was, "Truly I say unto you, the things which you shall bind on earth shall be, having been bound in heaven. And the things which you shall loose on earth shall be, having been loosed in heaven." What the apostles would set down as the unshakable commandments of God given to His people on earth had already been fixed in heaven. And what they would set down as the areas of liberty to the church on earth had already been established in heaven. The apostles were given heavenly wisdom to write down scriptures that would stand for eternity. They were blessed to write down all the things that the saints would ever need to know concerning the doctrine, church order and discipline, and the way their lives were to be conducted in the world. The apostles were given authority the like of which has never ever been given to any others.

There have been many, since the days of the apostles, who have said that they are apostles, and have said that they have authority to set down new rules and commandments. Many men and some women began to speak perverse things in order to draw away disciples after themselves. This is the reason

there are so many denominations and factions and heresies of religion. But these things are also necessary, as all things are appointed of God. Those in the false religions, to me, are represented, in the book of Revelation, by the earth that swallows up the flood of false doctrine, which helps the woman, who stands for the church. They who attempt to take the apostle's authority to themselves are all liars according to the scriptures. The risen Jesus said to the church at Ephesus, **"I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars."** The children of God, even today, are still examining all things, trying the spirits, whether they be of God. They are holding to that which is good, and rejecting that which is evil, according to that holy faith they have been given.

The apostles set down the first principles of the faith, that the little children of God might be established in the doctrine of Christ. This is the milk of the word. Those who are called to stand and preach to God's little ones are commanded to speak as the oracles of God. This, to me, means to set forth the very utterances of God — thus saith the Lord. This, by the grace of God, is to rightly divide the word of truth. This is to give the sense or understanding of the scriptures in truth. This is to depart neither to the right nor to the left, but to remain in that narrow way which leads to life. The first principles of the oracles of God are these, according to the apostle: repentance from dead works; faith toward God; the doctrine of baptisms; the laying on of hands; the resurrection of the dead; and the eternal judgment. After these principles are established in the hearts of God's children, then they may go on to perfection, or to understand more and more of Christ, and what grace is all about. They must grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Once the saints are established on any point of doctrine, no one is able to move them from that rock that they have been founded upon. What God has taught you is unshakable. What He has done is perfect and forever, no man can add anything to it or take anything away from it. Who could convince you that God did not create the universe, the world, and all the things in it? Who could convince you that God does not rule and reign over all His creation? Who could convince you that Jesus is not the Son of God, or that the fullness of the Godhead is not in Him bodily? Who could persuade you that God did not love His elect children, or that He did not give them grace in Christ Jesus before the world was? Who could convince you that Jesus did not pay the sin debt of His people? Who could make you think that even one who Christ died for would finally be lost? Who could compel you to deny the resurrection of the body, and the eternal happiness of God's little ones? None can undo or change the work of God in your heart.

The first principles of the doctrine are also firmly established in the hearts of the saints. All have been made to repent from dead works, or to turn away

from thinking that any natural man can save himself by anything he could do. He is made to know he is a sinner, and in himself, that is in his flesh, there dwells no good thing. He is taught that salvation is altogether the work of God. He (The Lord) looked and there was none to help. And His own arm brought salvation. The lambs are blessed to believe the words of the apostle, **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves:** *it is* **the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."**

All the little ones have been taught concerning faith toward God. They are given to know, beyond a doubt, that faith is the gift of God. They know that all men have not faith. They are assured that all saints are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. They believe that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Faith is the foundation for your hope. Faith is that which enables you to view that heavenly city afar off, and to view the Son of God upon the throne, and to see His glory and majesty. Faith is that which keeps you pressing on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus the Lord.

The little lambs are taught concerning the doctrine of baptisms. There are only two baptisms that I know anything about. One is a submersion in and a lifting up out of water. The other is the immersion in the Spirit. Those that God has purposed to become members of His visible church submit to water baptism. Some believers are not blessed to be baptized in water, and are not blessed to become members of the visible church. We know this because the thief alongside Jesus at His crucifixion was a child of God and had no opportunity for water baptism, or to ask for a home in the visible church. We are assured he was a saint because Jesus said unto him, **"To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."** Water baptism is a figure of death to the old life, and resurrection to newness of life for all saints. When Jesus came to be baptized of John the Baptist, John at first refused. But Jesus said to him, **"Suffer** *it to be so* **now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness."** Then John baptized Him. In my understanding, all believers who were never baptized in water in their lifetime were baptized in water, in Jesus, when He was baptized. He fulfilled all righteousness for all of His people.

All of the saints of God are baptized in the Holy Spirit, whether or not they were ever physically baptized in water. Baptism of the Spirit is essential for all saints. To be baptized in the Spirit is to be killed to your old way of wickedness, selfishness, self-righteousness, arrogance and pride. It is to be raised up with a lively hope of eternal life. It results in putting off the old man, by the grace of God, and putting on the new man. Its effect is to be blessed to walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Its outcome is to cause one to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. The result of being baptized in the Spirit is that the child of God is now blessed to walk in the way of holiness, for without

holiness no man shall see the Lord. The baptism in the Spirit is similar to water baptism in that you are helpless in it, and have nothing to do with the performance of it. You are completely passive in it. It is done unto you and for you.

The lambs are taught about the laying on of hands. We see those who have been called to serve in the ministry as deacons and elders having hands laid upon them. This is a very solemn occasion, as these chosen of God, are humbled before the gathering of the saints, having the hands of the highly esteemed, and faithfully proven elders placed upon them. This is done before the congregation, just as Moses laid his hands upon Joshua, showing that this one was surely approved of God to stand before the living God as a servant to His people. Some in the past have insisted upon laying hands upon all who came asking for a home and were received. I am made to believe they did this in imitation of the apostles. But the apostles have passed, and their wonderful gifts have passed with them. This practice is not observed among the old Baptists today according to my understanding.

The resurrection of the dead is part of the foundational doctrine for all saints. Some have denied the bodily resurrection. They think that when one dies, his spirit returns to God, and there is no need for the body to be raised. Their logic is that when one, in spirit, returns to God, he is happy and blessed and complete. But that logic will not stand. A child of God is a whole person, body, soul and spirit. And a spirit without a body could not be a participant in anything, but only be an observer. But the saints in glory are whole. They shall be altogether spiritual, body, soul, and spirit. They shall fully participate in gathering around the throne to sing eternal praises to the Lamb that was slain to redeem them from all sin and wickedness. We have the entire fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians affirming the bodily resurrection of the saints to life eternal. The apostle said, **"But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then *is* our preaching vain, and your faith *is* also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith *is* vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept."** And another scripture given by God through the apostle in the book to the Romans speaks of vessels made unto honor. He said, **"And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."** The vessel is the outer part. In one place it is written, **"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."** This earthen vessel

shall be changed and made spiritual, and shall be joined to the soul and spirit, that the child of God may be preserved, body soul and spirit — a whole spiritual man, with nothing lacking.

The last part of the first principles given by the apostle is the eternal judgment. Many say that at the end of time all shall stand and give an account unto God for all the things which they have done while here in this world. This may be true for the wicked, since they are judged out of the books. But this is not true of the children of God for several reasons. First of all, their sins have been forgiven and put away. The apostle said, **"There *is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."** And David said, **"As far as the east is from the west, *so* far hath he removed our transgressions from us."** Jesus has given Himself up, the perfect sacrifice, **"For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."** Another reason that their sins shall not be brought against them is that they have been blessed to confess their sins and have been cleansed from all unrighteousness. They, as dear children of the Father, have been chastened and corrected all their days for their sins. As the apostle was blessed to say, **"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad."** I am made to believe that this occurs not at the end of the world, as some say, but day-by-day and moment-by-moment. Can you not remember times when you were made to gasp and groan when thoughts of what you have said, done or thought are brought to mind? Can you not remember the many times you were made to cry out within yourself, God have mercy upon me a sinner? The world knows nothing of this correction, or chastening of God, so it must assume that the judgment will be at the end of time.

If we are children, we are taught precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little. May the Lord almighty give us grace to be established in these first principles that we may grow in Him, and follow on to know the Lord, and the power of His resurrection.

Trusting that this was written in love and in hope of eternal life,

Elder J. B. Farmer
8-22-2012

CORRESPONDENCE

Use the rest of the money for your use.

Thanks so much I enjoy the Signs very much. May the good Lord bless all who has a part in this Signs of the Times.

Thanks so much,
Flora Stutts

October 15, 2012

Dear Brethren,

Please renew my "Signs" for another year, use rest as needed. May the Lord bless you, in each new day.

In bonds of Love & Hope,
Emmie L. Grayson
229 S. Conecut St.
Greenville, Al 36037

Dear Brother Tony Horton,

Enclosed is my subscription renewal of the Signs of the Times for 2 years. Please use the rest of the balance as you see fit for any other expenses. I do deeply appreciate getting the book and enjoy the articles.

Thank you,
Ruby Kincaid

Vera N. Potter
486 Highway 590
Ellisville, MS 39437

October 24, 2012

Signs of the Times, Inc.
1429 Hewlett Street
Hillsville, VA 24343

Dear Brother Horton:

Please renew my Signs for another 2 years.

I appreciate the edifying articles in the Signs and have for close to 40 years. I especially enjoy the articles of saints' experiences. It gives a hope that I may have traveled the same road as some of them have.

We are living in perilous times now and we need the fellowship of believers more than ever even as we see the numbers declining in all our congregations. May God have mercy on us and our nation and give us strength to overcome what may be headed our way.

Thank you for all you do! I hope the Lord enables you to continue until He returns.

A Sister, I hope,
Nell Potter

VOICES OF THE PAST

BORN UNTO YOU THIS DAY A SAVIOR.

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not, for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy; which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. - Luke ii, 8-12.

According to our computation of time, near two thousand years have passed away since the heart-thrilling notes of this heavenly song were first heard by the humble shepherds upon that ever-memorable night. Years have rolled into centuries, and centuries have been lost in the ever-flowing stream of time, which has borne generations after generations, like billows upon the river's surface, into the boundless ocean of a never-ending eternity.

[Shepherds were tending their flocks, guarding them by night, which clearly attest that the season was not during the dead winter months. Thus, a lie has been born by religious tradition to sully the beauty of this "good tidings of great joy."]

By faith we go back through the long dreary years of the past, and behold again the startling scenes in and around this little city of Bethlehem, scenes long foretold by the prophet of the Lord: **"And thou Bethlehem, *in* the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule My people Israel."** I hope that I have had a faith's view of the glorious scenes attending the dawn of this never-ending Gospel-day. The night season was the time selected of the Lord to pour upon a darkened world the glorious light of the eternal morning. Truly it was a night season in more than a literal sense, for darkness covered the earth, and "great darkness the people." "The people," said the inspired writer, "sat in darkness," and "in the region and shadow of death." This was and is an awful condition. No mortal tongue or pen can paint or tell the horrors that surround the pathway of the sinner dead in trespasses and sin. This awful cloud of the darkness of death it is said "covered the earth." In its high and low places, in all of its conditions of society, in its temples of religious idolatry , and its low places of immoral crime, then as now the darkness of death reigned supreme. It covered the mind of brightest intelligence, as well as the feeblest lunatic, holding its deluded votaries in its grasp, and bearing them swiftly down to final and irretrievable woe. This was the condition of the earth that night, and is still the awful condition of all whose sins were not laid upon the blessed Jesus, "by whose stripes we are healed."

Look abroad upon the scenes of earth to-day. The heart is saddened at the sight. Degradation reigns supreme in every avenue of life. Confined for a moment this view to the political, social and religious condition of our own highly favored land. See the "temple of liberty" desecrated by the presence and crimes of the most worthless of men, who, in the corrupt and degraded state of public opinion, attain to the highest positions in political life. Mark the development of the "mystery of iniquity," the dark doings under the garb of religion in the idol temples that cover our land like so many tomb-stones to mark the dwelling places of these congregations of the dead. Tell me no more of Pagan days or Pagan temples, in a land where such unhallowed institutions as the self-styled "Plymouth Church" on "Brooklyn Tabernacle"

give force to public opinion, and the religious rantings of the deluded creatures that occupy such pulpits are quoted from one end of the country to the other, as worthy the credence of a Christian public. Nor do we find a better state of things in the social system of our country. The honorable barriers that should ever stand around a proper social intercourse, to a great extent, have been rudely torn down in many instances by the ruthless hand of that archenemy of all righteousness, the pharisaic religion of our day. What mind, unfettered by the terrible chains of religious superstition and darkness, but could mourn over the spectacle presented to our country a short time since, when the streets of many of our villages and cities were desecrated by bands of "praying women," marching from one bar-room to another in an unholy crusade against the liquor traffic, mingling among the low, course rabble ever found about such wretched places; and then to be informed that these misguided women were gathered from what are falsely termed the "best circles of society." How expressive of this system of religion is the language of Solomon in describing the" strange woman," (antichrist): "She is," says he, "loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house. Now is she without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner." I refer to these things as unmistakable evidences of the fact that darkness reigns over our own society as well as other lands in the present century, notwithstanding the arrogant assertions regarding its so-called "enlighten." The Lord has so decreed, and thus it must continue.

Long before the memorable night referred to in the text, the prophet had foretold this Gospel dawn; "Arise, " says he, "shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Again, "The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up." The place selected by our Lord for the dawn of this wonderful display of His great goodness and mercy was the "field of Juda," which represents, I suppose, the church of the living God, the cultivated "good ground," of the Lord's planting, enclosed by the bulwarks of sovereign grace. The individuals elected to hear the holy strains of this immortal song were the humble, faithful shepherds quietly feeding their flock. The word "flock" is used in the singular, and, I presume, represents the" one fold," comprising the saints of every age and clime. "And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them." "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Here was a "song as in the night, when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the Lord, to the mighty One of Israel." Light broken upon the darkness of the night, a light that Paul

afterwards declared was "above the brightness of the sun;" while the immortal strains borne from the eternal throne by the "heavenly host" fell upon the enraptured ears of the highly favored shepherds. The quietude of night had never before been broken by such a wonderful scene! No wonder that the fear of God fell upon the startled shepherds. The heavens are opened, and the scenes of earth are banished.

"From the heavenly plains
Are borne the songs that angels know."
"Glory to God in the highest."

What thought can reach the immortal theme? And through the succeeding centuries the heavenly music of that immortal song has soothed the sorrows, softened the cares and healed the wounds of those divinely taught to know "the joyful sound." The glory of the Lord has shone round about His people, a light to guide them in the pathway of Truth.

But the heavenly angels encouraged the trembling shepherds with the joyful message, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." "The Lord hath anointed Me," says the Savior, "to preach good tidings unto the meek." Here are the clear, ringing notes of the Gospel, "good tidings of great joy." Truly the tidings are good; the battle is fought, the victory won, the joy is great.

"..... Angels raise
Fame's eternal trump of praise!
Let the earth's remotest bound
Hear the joy-inspired sound."

There are times in our experience when the eternal hills seem near, faith draws back the curtains of time, and the boundless glory of the heavenly world chains our undivided mind. The music of heaven stills our earthly passions. Sin and self are lost sight of in the glory of God. Such, I presume, was the effect upon the occasion mentioned in the text. And these good tidings it was said "shall be to ALL people." That is, to the Gentiles as well as the Jews, to people in all classes and conditions of society. The number of this people, and their election to this salvation, is distinctly declared in the first chapter of Matthew: "And thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins." Notice the assertion that this salvation is for "His people. " The text, as stated, refers to them as among the Gentiles and Jews, and in all conditions of society. "For the grace of God," says Paul, "that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men." We know that is not in the absolute sense, for all men have not had salvation brought to them. The text also declares that this salvation shall be to them. There are no conditions here. It shall be, says the Lord. "He spake," the psalmist declares, "and it was done; He commandeth, and it stood fast." How absurd the popular idea, and inconsistent with the eternal perfections of God, to suppose that the God of heaven should send His Son into the world to suffer and die the awful death of the tree, and then leave all of this

great work to be finished and made effectual by a poor, blind, ignorant and impotent mortal, whose very breath is held in the hands of the Omnipotent One!

"Shall mortal worms presume to be
More holy, wise and just than He?"

This is an awful presumption, totally outside of the perfections of our God; yet this is the very foundation upon which the Antichristian structure of modern religion rests. It all turns upon the act of the creature, which creature is "dead in trespasses and sins." It was this principle that led the Pharisee to boast in the temple and pray "with himself;" that led Cain to become "very wroth" when he found that the works of his hands were rejected; and that culminated in the crucifixion of the blessed Savior, And the declaration of the text is one of the many that the preachers of this dark system attempt to distort from their original meaning to prove that black is white in religion. These things cannot be too clearly and constantly kept before the saints, that we should shun the ways of the "strange woman" "in the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night, for her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death."

It is inconsistent with our profession to give countenance, secret or open, direct or indirect, in any possible manner to this system of religion; for he that thus bids antichrist "God speed" "is partaker of his evil deeds," and upon him in the Lord's own time and way must fall the chastisement of a just and righteous God.

But I will consider the closing verse of the text: "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." This was the cause of all their joy. Aside from this there could be no joy in the Christian's heart. It is the source from whence all their songs of joy flow. Truth is written in the personal experience of the saints. "Unto you," was the message, is born a Savior. The sinner is brought to know that he is the sinner. It is written, "in every imagination of the thoughts of his heart." Salvation in Jesus comes to him with power, and that mighty name is exalted above every name in his experience. There are times in his experience when he is made to see that Jesus died for him, even him, poor, weak and worthless as he is. And that auspicious hour of the Savior's birth was selected, with all of its attending circumstances, before the world was, when the heavens were to be lit up with the glory of God, and the quietude of night broken by the immortal strains as they fell from the heavenly throne. Our brethren in prophetic days looked forward as we look backward to the Savior's birth, each of us receiving the inspiration of his song from the wonderful event that broke the stillness of that eventful night. A Savior was born! He was not "offered," or to offer salvation either! But to **bring** salvation to His people. His people had always been "His people," even before He came. "He shall save His people from their sins," was spoken even before Mary gave birth. No uncertainties clothed His mission - failure would never be entertained! **"For I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but**

the will of Him that sent Me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." - John vi. 38, 39. A Savior was born; not a Failure was bom! Not in a gilded palace, surrounded by mortal pomp, but in a manger. "Ye shall find the babe in a manger. " What a rebuke to the vain show that surrounds the earthly religion of our day; no gilded papal palace; no lavish cathedral! More becoming is this vanity, these unnecessary trappings, these gilded Sanctuaries, this silver and gold, for Belshazzar's feast, than for the kingdom of Jesus. He robs not the poor to plaster the walls and ceilings of His places of worship. Upon these things antichrist has fixed his throne. The name of the Savior given from above is, "Christ the Lord," announced the angel. The name represents His sovereign power as "Lord over all." "For thy Maker is thy Husband; the Lord of hosts is His name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall He be called." He is not a Savior of limited power. He does not have to beg His way into the reprobate's heart. His "arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies." His is a word of triumph, and the crown of victory adorns His brow. "All power," He says, "is given unto Me in heaven and in earth."

Thus He goes forth to conquer. "And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords." He "was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." "His dominion is an everlasting dominion" and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. Time sweeps earthly thrones away, nations and governments rise and fall, but the kingdom of God endures. It shines in spotless splendor through the ages and nations of time, clothed in the righteousness of its exalted Redeemer. "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever," sang the inspired David. Our soul has been touched with the power of the song. We have seen the King in His glory, in the "ivory palaces" of His grace. It is not only once a year, on Christmas, or once a week on Sunday, that the saint is reminded of the Savior's birth. Through all his mortal pilgrimage Jesus is the strength of His life and his portion forever. "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides Thee." The glory of the Savior's presence gilds the pathway of life, soothing its care and sweetening its toil. It is one perpetual worshiping mom, one everlasting Sabbath day to him, while he rests in the arms of Jesus, and listens to the gracious words that fall from His lips. "The powers of the world to come" are upon Him. The glory of that eternal song banishes sorrow and care, lifting the enraptured soul in the highest heavens of praise. "Glory to God in the highest!" When the storms of life are over, in the peaceful scenes of the eternal heavens the ransomed Church shall be divinely qualified to sing the praise of God in the highest, while His glorious presence shall make one perpetual feast in the never-ending day.

We stand in the opening of another year (1881). What it is to unfold is known only to Him who presides over the des-

tinies of nations and individuals. We rejoice to know that it can bring nothing but what He irrevocably fixed before the world began. Many now in active life will no doubt be borne to their final destiny. "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice." From His all predestinating hand falls every event that can possibly darken the pathway of time, be it small or great, important or seemingly indifferent. In this fact we sweetly rest. Our God is over all- "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance." Thus our days are determined, the number of our months is with Him; He hath appointed our bounds where we live and move that we cannot pass.

We are much pleased with the management of the Signs. May it continue to come among us a bold, fearless and uncompromising advocate of Truth. There is not a single point of doctrine or order of the Gospel that we can afford to yield. All must be held dearer than life itself. May we cleave to these things with unwavering fidelity through the year and through life.

Sincerely hoping that the Lord may pardon our innumerable sins, and grant us grace in the Redeemer's name, I remain, as ever, yours in Gospel fellowship,

Elder W. M. Smoot,
Occoquan, Va.,
January 4th, 1881.

HOW LONG HALT YE BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS?

JANUARY, 1946

"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions, If the Lord *be* **God, follow him: but if Baal,** *then* **follow him. And the people answered him not a word."-1 Kings 18:21**

THIS TEXT has been misinterpreted and misapplied by many worldly wise professors. Most of the people try to change this important question that Elijah asked to why halt ye between two opinions, and they try to make it applicable to the whole Adamic family. This question does not even favor why but how long halt ye between two opinions? You will find by reading the context that the question does not apply to the entire Adamic race but specially to the children of Israel. I believe Elijah knew how long they would halt between two opinions. He knew that they would halt between two opinions until God made Himself manifest unto them that He was God. Then they would cease to halt between two opinions. I think that this text was for the specific purpose of showing Israel that the Lord was God; and to eradicate the other opinion that was possessing their hearts that Baal was God. Baal had 450 prophets and Elijah was the only true prophet at that time (as they thought). The hearts of the children of Israel were halting between two opinions. Outwardly, Baal had 450 prophets to one of the Lord. False prophets today are about the same ratio and

even the children of God, when left to themselves, wonder if there is something to their false doctrine, seeing that they have so many advocators. You will notice, in the text, that Baal's prophets were to choose between two bullocks. False prophets today make their own choice; they even advocate that the people may choose their Savior and direct their own steps and seal their own destinies. This is a false opinion as we hear Jesus saying: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Yes, Paul wrote to the Thessalonians that "God hath from the beginning chosen you."

Peter said: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood." Paul writes to the Ephesians: "According as he hath chosen us in him." This is the opinion as rendered in the Bible, which is different from the opinion as advocated by the false prophets. Thus here are two opinions; one is opposite to the other. False opinion: You are obliged to choose God. True opinion: God hath chosen His people. This false opinion will even be in the hearts of God a people until God sees fit to burn out this false opinion by making Himself manifest.

Baal's 450 prophets were to have the choice of the two bullocks, the first call to their gods and the heat of the day as well as the dry wood on the altar to prove their gods. They called loud and long and even cut themselves until blood gushed forth for their gods to answer by fire. At the time of the evening sacrifice, Elijah repaired the altar by building one of twelve stones and ordered great quantities of water to be poured on the wood and around the altar so as to fill a trench. After doing this he prayed quietly to the Lord to make Himself manifest and to prove to Israel that He was the Lord God and that He had turned their hearts back again.

"The fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God" 1 Kings 18:38, 39.

Yes, our God is a consuming fire and it burned up every trace of man's work and left nothing. The false opinion had been burned from the hearts of this people and then (not before) did they cease to halt between two opinions.

Dear child of God, have you not experienced the consuming fire of Israel's God? Have you not experienced the burning that consumed every false opinion; all of your self-righteousness; every ounce of your seeming ability— in fact, every thing, deed, or thought that you had ever trusted in a natural way? Yes, our natural opinion is that we can direct our steps. The opinion as stated in the Bible is, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." How long will ye halt between the two opinions? Ye will halt between the two opinions until God the Lord makes Himself manifest by proving to you that you cannot walk as you would.

It is the opinion of the natural man that he can choose light; yet, the true opinion is that man chooses darkness rather than light. The opinion of man is

that the natural man can receive the things of the Spirit and by studying and applying himself know them. This opinion is a contrast to the scripture; "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Man's opinion is, that surely, part of the way to heaven and eternal life is by the works of the creature. Yet, the opinion of the Bible is: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves ; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. "

Peter was halting between opinions on the mountain of transfiguration when he said: "Let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." I think Moses represents the law, and Elias represents prophecy in that trio. Peter was halting between two opinions as to which should be given the most honor. He continued to halt between these opinions until Moses and Elias disappeared and the, Lord God answered from the cloud and said: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." The false opinion of the law having any dominion over God's children was eradicated. We hear Jesus saying, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Then it is not part of law and part of grace but solely an unmerited favor through Jesus Christ. The opinion of some men is that they are enabled through the act of regeneration to perform or not to perform upon volition of their own will and receive blessings in this time because of their obedience and cursings because of their disobedience notwithstanding the scriptures which say, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Also, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." And many other scriptures too numerous to mention which is in contrast to this false opinion.

It is the opinion of man that he can live perfect in this present life. This opinion is not in accord with apostolic experiences; therefore, it is a false opinion that must be burned out. People of God will halt between these two opinions—opinion of man and opinion of God-until the opinion of man is burned out. The opinion of the apostle is plain, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." "For that which I do I allow not; for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I." And "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. "Also, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

So, we are hoping and looking forward to the day when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality and this natural body shall be raised a spiritual body. Yes, we are awaiting the time when the creature shall be delivered out of the bondage of corruption unto the glorious liberties of the children of God, then we will cease from every false opinion.

Elder E.J. Lambert

Brunswick, Maine, Oct. 31, 1861

Dear Brother Beebe:

Will you gratify me, your unworthy brother, by giving your views on **Rev. 22:14 "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the holy city."** More particular on the city. What city? Where is it? And when do we enter it? yours, as ever,

HIRAM CAMPBELL.

Reply-The names and description of the city as given in the connection, leave no room to doubt that the city mentioned in our text, is the Holy City, New Jerusalem - which descended from God out of heaven, and is a presentation of the Church of the living God, which is also called the Bride, the Lamb's Wife. It is also called the tabernacle of God, with men, in which God dwells, owning the citizens as his people, and manifesting himself to them as their God; wiping away the tears from their eyes, and shielding them from sorrow, crying, pain and death. In this case we have a singular combination and blending of figures. A city, a Bride, a Wife, a tabernacle, &c., all of which are elsewhere in the scriptures used to represent the Church of God in her union with and subjection to our Lord Jesus Christ. We should not forget that figures familiar to us, are employed by the Spirit, to set forth and illustrate to us things of a spiritual and heavenly character. The figure of a city, presents the subjects of grace, as a congregation of the Lord, in their congregation capacity, as fellow citizens, in the Church or City of God, and of the household of faith, and all under the regulations of a well disciplined community, under the same government, protected by the same walls and bulwarks which fortify and defend all who have the privilege of citizenship.

And in this City, are the common provisions which are so amply provided, for meat and drink, for light and comfort; for protection and safety. In this City the laws of naturalization exclude dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers and idolators, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie; admitting only those who are blessed of the Lord, and who as a manifest evidence that they are blessed, cheerfully take Christ's yoke on them, and show their allegiance to him by doing his commandments. As he has said, "Then are ye my disciples indeed, if ye do whatsoever I command you:" and for a more manifest token to all, if they obey his new commandment: for, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another." As Citizens they all have certain rights of citizenship; such as the right to the tree of life, which is in the midst of the street of the City, and on either side, which bears twelve manner of fruits, and yields her fruits every month; the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations. Instead of being forbidden, and kept back from the tree of life, by the cherubim and flaming sword, which turneth every way to keep the way of the tree of life, as under the legal dispensation, in the earthly paradise, or in the Jerusalem which is in bondage with her children in this New

Jerusalem, all who are written among the living in Jerusalem, whose names are registered in the book of life, have a right to the tree of life, and to the pure river of water of life, which is clear as crystal, which proceedeth out of the throne of God and the Lamb. For unto all such the Spirit and the Bride saith, Come: and they have the privilege of taking of the water of life freely.

While as citizens, they are a multitude which no man can number, as the Bride, the Lamb's Wife they all make but one Bride, one Church, one Body. For ye are all one in Christ Jesus. There is one Body and one Spirit, even as ye are all called in one hope of your calling. Here then, is identity, Christ himself is the Head of the Body, the Church, and the Church is his body and the fulness of him that filleth all in all. As the Bride of Christ, her creation was in him, as the creation of Eve, in the figure, was in Adam. She is one with him, They twain shall be one. Bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh; and she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. She is not merely the bride, but the married wife of the Lamb. For thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name, and thy Redemer is the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called. The testimony of John the Baptist, when he identified and pointed out the Husband, saying, Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, was, He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom standeth without and rejoiceth because of the bridegroom's voice; thus my joy is fulfilled. This City is the City of God, and Ezekiel says (xlviii. 35) The name of the City shall be, THE LORD IS THERE. And God has said, by Isaiah, And they shall call them the Holy People, the Redeemed of the Lord. And thou shalt be called Sought Out, A City not forsaken, Isaiah 62:12.

From this last mentioned passage, we learn that the city is composed of the Redeemed of the Lord, whom the Lord has not only redeemed, but whom he has sought out; he found this people as he did Jacob, is a waste howling wilderness, and led him about and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of his eye. These are redeemed from among men, out of every kindred and tribe of mankind; and they are redeemed into God, and made priests and kings, and they shall reign with Christ in immortal glory. They shall all of them come with singing to Zion, the Holy City, and they shall sit down in the kingdom of God, with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and they shall sing this song. We have a strong City; Salvation will God appoint for walls and for bulwarks. God himself is a wall of fire round about; and the glory in her midst. This is the city of which God has said, Here will I dwell forever; for I have desired it for an habitation. He will abundantly bless her provisions, and fill her poor with bread. The Lord God is her Sun and her Shield; He will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved. God will help her, and that right early. Truly, glorious things are spoken of thee, O, City of God: Not one of her stakes shall ever be removed, not

one of her cords shall ever be broken.

Much more might be written in answer to the first enquiry of brother Campbell, What City? But we trust enough has been said to show that we understand the City mentioned (Rev. 22:14) to be the Holy City, New Jerusalem, which John saw in his vision, coming down from God out of heaven, and which he describes in and throughout the last two chapters of the New Testament; and which is designed to describe her in her gospel organization, and primitive purity, as the spiritual kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Second. Where is it? We reply, it is where two or three are gathered to gather in Christ's name. It is in all places where God has recorded his name. It is in the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. Of her locality the Psalmist has said, Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the North. Her locality is marked by stakes that shall never be removed, and confined by cords that shall never be broken. The sacred records of eternity show that God has been her dwelling place in all generations. She dwells in the secret place of the Most High, and abides under the shadow of the Almighty. Her life is hid with Christ in God. Her place of defence is the munitions of rocks. The Eternal God is her refuge, and underneath her are the everlasting arms. We find her in the Eternal, Immutable love of God; she is found in his decrees; wrapped up in the bundle of Eternal life, which is in his Son. She has her place in the Eternal purpose of God, which he purposed in himself before the world began; which purpose shall unshaken remain, when the world shall be no more. She is found in the Election of grace, chosen of God in Christ before the foundation of the world. She has her standing in the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, and in his justifying righteousness she outshines the Sun, is more fair than the moon, and terrible as an army with banners. She inhabits the Rock, is in the secret places of the stairs, and she sits in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

But in regard to the house of her pilgrimage, God has chosen her in a furnace of afflictions. In this world she has tribulations, but in Christ she has peace. The place assigned her by the world, is as the off-scourings of all things, unto this day. Hated by the world, tried and tempted by the devil, opposed by the flesh, a jest and a by-word to all the children of the bond woman. But her home is in Jesus Christ, and in the earth she has no abiding place nor continuing city. As to her sorrows, trials, persecutions and her triumphs and victories, she is sometimes encompassed about by the armies of Gog and Magog; but sometimes she is seen upon Mount Zion, with the seal of God indellibly marked in her forehead, or on the sea of glass, which is mingled with fire, singing a song which none but the redeemed can learn or sing. She has had a place prepared for her in the wilderness, to be nourished and protected from the serpent, for twelve hundred three score and six days; and if the writer of this article is not mistaken, that period is about to run out, and to be succeeded by three days and an

half, in which the witnesses shall be slain and be trodden under foot in the streets of the Great City which is spiritually Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. But whatever of sorrow, affliction, persecution or tribulation may be appointed for her here below, she has the asurance that she shall ultimately triumph through the blood of the Lamb and the word of her testimony. For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Third. When do we enter the city? As we view the whole church of God, existing in Christ, and chosen in him before the foundation of the world, according to Eph. 1:4, we regard the citizens as natives of the holy city. Sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called. Jude 1, Who hath saved us and called us, with an holy calling; not according to our works; but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. 2 Tim. 1:9. Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. Gal. 4:26. And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her; and the Highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people that this man was born there. Psa. 87:5, 6. Judicially the saints entered when they were quickened together with Christ, in his resurrection, when they were raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places. For they are risen with Christ-and are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the First Born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men, made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. - Heb. 11:24-26.

But in what we regard as the immediate sense of the text proposed, (Rev. xxii. 14.) the saints come when they do his commandments; and thereby manifest that they are blessed of the Lord. This coming in through the gates, is an experimental matter. Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God; and Except a man be born of the water and of the spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. - John 3:3, 5. The city in which the tree of life yields her fruit is a spiritual city, and can only be entered by the gates which are called *Praise.* — *Isa. lx*, 18. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. — Psa. 87:2. David says, **"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord, Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together; whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord." — Psa. 122 :1-4.**

As the tribes of *Israel* went up to the Old Jerusalem to worship, and entered the city by the gates of that city, so the tribes *of the Lord* go through the gates of the New Jerusalem, experimentally in their devotion, to worship the Lord in his

holy temple in the spiritual Jerusalem. As the names of the tribes of Israel, are written on the angels of the gates — Rev. 21:12. — we learn that the ministry of praise — embracing gospel experience, gospel doctrine and ordinances, and all gospel privileges-belongs to the tribes of the Lord, to the children of God, and to them exclusively. The gates of Zion, which are called Praise, are used to signify wisdom, honor, power, counsel, and peculiar privileges. And when the hearts of God's people are led by the Spirit in their heavenly exercises, of worship and praise, they enter into the spiritual privileges of the kingdom into the counsels of wisdom, and contemplate the glory of their Redeemer's kingdom, and talk of his power. **"In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city, Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." Isaiah 26:12.** The gates of the Holy City are only open to the *righteous nation,* for who else can enter by the gates of Praise'! They are not accessable to those who love and make a lie, but to the righteous nation that keepeth the truth.

"Those holy gates forever bar Pollution, sin, and shame,
None shall obtain admittance there,
But followers of the Lamb."

"Blessed are they that do his commandments." The commandments of him who says in the preceding verse, "I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last." Who also says, in verse sixteen, "I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you, these things in the Churches, I am the Root and Offspring of David, and the bright and morning Star." He is the King of Righteousness, the King Eternal and our only wise God and Savior. His commands are proclaimed from his throne in the Holy City, and are applicable to all who are under the law to Christ. Their faith and obedience are the evidences that they are his disciples, and that they have a right to the tree of life, and to enter in to their peculiar privileges through the gates of the city; for the gates are open to the righteous continually, and his blessed people who know the joyful sound of his voice, shall go in and out and find pasture. They have right to the tree of life, and may eat of its fruits freely, and live forever; for their right is a birthright — it is their inheritance, and it is their Father's good pleasure that they shall inherit the kingdom.

There is a manifest entering into the holy city, by the gate of christian recognition and fellowship; not only when the new born babes in Christ declare in Zion what God has done for them; and when they publicly espouse his cause and take on them a profession of his name, and by the gate of baptism, declare their allegiance to Jesus as their King, but throughout their whole course it is by their obedience to the Lord Jesus that their feet are to stand within the gates of christian fellowship.

Should any of the citizens walk disorderly, and neglect to observe and to

obey the commandments of Christ, the order and discipline which he has instituted, will dispute their right to the privilege of Church fellowship, until God shall give them repentance; and while shut out from communion and fellowship of their fellow citizens of Zion, they will be associated with dogs, and sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers and idolators, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. And they shall weep when they remember Zion; for how can they sing the Lord's songs when in a strange land?

Finally, whenever the saints are enabled to worship God in the spirit, to rejoice in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh, in their social songs of praise, their prayers and supplications, in their love of fellowship, union and communion, in walking in the ordinances and order, the doctrine, discipline of the house of God, then we conclude they enter in through the gates, and enjoy their right to the tree of life.

We have been somewhat lengthy in our remarks, and perhaps have failed to meet the wishes of brother Campbell; but if any of our readers are edified or comforted in what we have written, our labor will not be in vain.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe Nov. 1, 1861)

PSALM 112:1.

Praise ye the Lord, Blessed *is* **the man** *that* **feareth the Lord,** *that* **delighteth greatly in his commandments.**

"From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the rock *that* **is higher than I." – Psalm lxi. 2.**

There is something in this expression in our text, "rock," which seems, to my mind, to throw a sweet and blessed light upon what Jesus is to the poor and needy. The rock must go down to the bottom of the deep waters, as well as rise out of them, to be a sufficient place of refuge for the shipwrecked mariner! If the rock did not go to the bottom of the deep, it would not be firm; it would be but a quicksand. Is not this agreeable to the Spirit's testimony concerning the humanity of Christ? How deep that went into all our sorrows, into all our sufferings, into all our sins, into all our shame! However deep the waters may be, the rock is deeper than all; however deep the sufferings, sins and sorrows of the Church may be, the sufferings, sins, and sorrows of the Church may be, the sufferings and sorrows of "Immanuel, God with us," were infinitely deeper. But the waves and billows beat in the vain against the rock; they cannot move it from its place. So it is with the rock, Jesus. All the sins, temptations, sufferings, and sorrows of the elect, with the wrath of God, and the fury of hell, beat against that rock, but they never moved it from its place. But this rock is spoken of in our text as "higher that I." There we have the Godhead. For if Jesus were not God as well as man, the

God-man, what support could he be to the sinking soul? what efficacy could there be in his atoning blood? what power and glory in his justifying righteousness? what suitability in him as a Saviour to the utterly lost? But being God as well as man, yea, the God-man, the great and glorious Immanuel, he could descend in his human nature into the very depths of the fall, and rise up in his divine nature to the throne of the most High; and thus, like Jacob's ladder, the bottom of it was upon the earth, but the top exalted to the clouds. Then will not, must not, this be ever, as the Lord is pleased to raise it up, the cry of our soul, "Lead me to the rock that is higher that I?" No salvation anywhere else; no peace anywhere else; no consolation anywhere else. Buffeted by the waves, and well-nigh drowned by the billows, away from that rock; but if led there, brought there, kept there by the blessed Spirit, finding it a safe and sure standing for eternity. And what else but such a rock can save our souls, or what else but such a Saviour and such a salvation, without money and without price, can suit such ruined wretches?

J. C. Philpot

---

1 John 4:7-10.

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* **the propitiation for our sins.**

MEETINGS

LOWER MAYO FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday only, December 30th, 2012. We hope to start singing at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30 a.m. Flower Gap Church will host the meeting. Directions for those who do not know the location; the meeting house is located at 3481 Flower Gap Road, Cana, VA 24317 from US 52, turn west about 5 miles north of Mt. Airy, NC, on Flower Gap Road, #691, at the foot of Fancy Gap Mountain, go about 3 1/2 mile to church on left.

We invite the ministers, brothers, and sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to come and be with us during the meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

SKEWARKY UNION EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of December 30, 2012. The church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albermarle Avenue in Tarboro, N.C. Preaching services begin at 10:30 a.m.

We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

Springfield Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Staunton River Union meeting, the fifth Saturday of December 30, 2012.

The church is located on Business 29 (708 South Main St.) Gretna, VA in Pittsylvania County.

The song service will start at 10:00 AM. We extend welcome to ministers of our faith and order, Brethren, Sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace, to be with us.

Elder Marvin Brumfield, Moderator
Oscar Pickral, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The fifth Sunday meeting purposed to be hosted by Big Meadows Church in December has been cancelled. However, Big Meadows Church, Lord willing, will host the fifth Sunday meeting in March. We regret this cancellation, but hope to see all of you in March, Lord willing.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Joann Self, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 2012

Lois Dalton, VA 5.00
Mamie Ferguson, VA 5.00
Chlonetia Thompson, VA 5.00
Flora Stutts, TX 10.00
Algie Martin, VA 5.00
Ruby Kincaid, OH..... 75.00
Mary Lee, NC 5.00
Jerald Hatchett, OK..... 50.00
"In memory of Linda Hatchett"
Jerry Mourer, AR 50.00
Doris Giles, VA 5.00
Emmie Grayson, AL 5.00
Vera Potter, MS 5.00

OBITUARIES

It is with a feeling of unworthiness and inability that I attempt to comply with the members and friends at Flower Gap Primitive Baptist church to write a few lines in memory of our brother and sister. However, we bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father in their passing from us.

Brother William (Billy) Dee Nichols Deacon at Flower Gap Primitive Baptist Church.

In loving memory of Clifford Harold Hawks

To those who knew him, he was a man that God had given a humble heart. Always giving, and feeling unworthy to be among God's humble poor. Clifford loved the churches, and I believed bore much good fruit by the grace of God. Born September 10th, 1940, making his stay here on earth 71 years. He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Bonnie Hawks, 10 sons, 2 daughters, 19 grandchildren, and 4 great grandchildren, and his brother Billy Hawks. Preceded in death by his parents William and Pearlie Hawks, grandchildren Aiden Nichols and Layla Mae Hawks, sister Shirley Hawks, brother Reavis Hawks. The funeral services were conducted at Flower Gap Primitive Baptist Church June 11, 2012. Officiating services, Elder Carlton Brown, followed by Elder Tommy Pegram, Elder John Lyons, Elder Lowell Hopkins. Brother Clifford Hawks was united with Flower Gap Primitive Baptist Church on March of 2002.

Bleva Hall Sumner

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove this sister of the cross from our midst; a mother in Israel. Belva Sumner was born May 23, 1920. She had been blessed to live for 91 years. A sister who dearly loved all the churches and the word of God. Precious to all that spoke with her. The word and the church was everything to her. Belva Sumner passed from this world on November 16th, 2011. She was a member of Flower Gap Primitive Baptist Church, joining October 7th, 1990. Seeing this sister deny her medicine so that she could go to church and to hear her witness of a merciful God was a blessing from on high. Belva Sumner was survived by five children, Maxine Felts, Bonnie Hawks, Wilma Dalton, Donald Sumner, Ima Morris, half sister Ida Chappell, 17 grandchildren, 27 great grandchildren, and 5 great great grandchildren. Preceeded in death by her parents Rufus and Lelia Harriman Hall, and Husband Claton Phillip Sumner. Officiating services Elder Carlton Brown and Elder John Lyons.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS"

The existence, sovereignty, immutability omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah - the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistable, and in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers - that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 01/2013
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.**

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EDITORIAL

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

As we begin a new calendar year, we see nation rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. We see famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. These are the beginning of sorrows. We see as in the days of Noah "that the wickedness of man is great in the earth and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually." For they are eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage. We see parents killing their children and children killing their parents. The gay lifestyle is becoming more widespread and accepted by more people. Several states have approved marriage of a man with a man and a woman with a woman. The drug culture is becoming more acceptable and even legal in at least the state of Washington. The Lord's people since Abel have been persecuted. Christ said "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." The enemies of Israel are becoming more aggressive and determined in surrounding this little country and in their avowed intent to destroy it, if it were possible. The doctrine of election and predestination is despised and its enemies would like to silence those who unabashedly proclaim it. The second beast prophesied of in the book of Revelation has come up out of the earth which is Islam with its Shariah law and its stated purpose to "cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed." The earth from which this beast came was Mohammed and the two horns represent the two factions of Islam, Sunnites and Shites. This beast tries to present its self as a lamb, but it speaks as a dragon.

Now, where is any comfort, peace or consolation? Jesus said, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Daniel said that wisdom and might are God's. He removes kings and sets up kings. Nebuchadnezzar proclaimed that "all the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing: and He doeth according to His will in the army of

heaven, and *among* the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou?" He is our comfort, our peace, our consolation.

The angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph and told him not to fear to take unto him Mary his wife because that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. The Lord chose Mary to be conceived in her not because she was righteous or holy as she was a sinner as all of Adam's race, but because it pleased Him to do so. So the Holy Ghost came upon her and the power of God over shadowed her. It was a virgin birth as there were no works of man involved in it. All the worldly scholars have never been able to understand what took place, but God's elect understand because they have experienced that spiritual birth.

The angel told Joseph that he shall call the child's name Jesus. The Lord did not leave the name to Joseph or Mary or anyone else. This name was for no one else but Him because it means Saviour for He SHALL save HIS people from their sins. How comforting that God determined, ordained, predestinated all this to come to pass. All in the purpose and will of Him with whom we have to do. Everything with God is sure and certain. There was no uncertainty nor any chance in the proclamation that He shall save His people from their sins. There was no choice left to man to accept or reject. Man doesn't have that power. God chose [elected] His people before the foundation of the world as stated in **Ephesians 1:3-7, "Blessed** *be* **the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly** *places* **in Christ: According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace."** So He came to earth to redeem His people from their sins. Therefore, His people are safe and secure eternally because they have Christ who is eternal life.

God, speaking through His prophet Isaiah, said that when you pass through the waters He will be with you; and through the rivers, they would not overflow you. He also promised that when you go through the fire you shall not be burned neither shall the flame kindle upon you. He did not say that He will take the trial or tribulation away, but He will be with you through it. His grace is sufficient for you. His strength is made perfect in your weakness. He says **"Fear not for I am with thee." "I,** *even* **I,** *am* **the Lord; and beside me** *there* **is no saviour."**

O, you are a blessed nation in Christ for **Psalm 33:12** says **"Blessed is the nation whose God** *is* **the Lord;** *and* **the people** *whom* **He hath chosen for His own inheritance." His people are that blessed nation.**

"Who can lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth."

The words of Christ in **Luke 21:26-28, "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."** His people are looking for that day and they have a precious hope that they will hear those most wonderful words "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" and to have their vile bodies changed that they may be fashioned like unto His glorious body.

As The Apostle Paul wrote, **"Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given *us* everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work."**

"Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; (for He *is* faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works; Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

May the Lord be with each of us as we see the day approaching.

Elder Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

November 7, 2012

Brother Tony Horton,

Since the Zion's Landmark has closed, some of our people are without good, sound communications. I recommend them to subscribe to the Signs of the Times, as I have received this paper for several years and find it's pages to be sound and uplifting to the wayfaring pilgrim. Please enter a two year subscription in the following name.

Nan Wilson
95 McElroy St.
Winder, Ga 30680

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins

Oct. 28, 2012

Dear Mr. Horton,

Enclosed is my renewal for another two years of the Signs, the balance to be used as you feel best.

I so enjoy the many good articles from "Voices of the Past", and Elder

Farmer's October editorial was a special blessing to me.

May the dear Lord continue to bless all who work to publish it every month, as it is a blessing indeed to all those who lived in far - away places with no one of like faith near by to fellowship with.

Yours in hope, by God's grace alone,

Caroline Martin

11-7-12

Dear Brother Tony Horton,

Sorry, I am late. Things just keep popping up and I put off what I need to do. I am sending a check for two years use the rest as you see fit. I have been blessed with 86 birthdays. I have in my day experienced some good times in the Old Baptist Church.

In the October issue, 2012 Signs of the Times, I remember a lot of Elders that have passed on. I will mention two. Elder D.V. Spangler was my pastor for many years. I've been blessed to be a member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church for 61 years. I also remember Elder E.J. Lambert. Many years ago He and His wife spent the night at my mom and dad's home. They were also blessed to be a member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. I could almost tell you Elder E. J. Lambert's experience. When he first started preaching for another faith. Then he was led to the Primitive Baptist Church. He was blessed to travel for miles and miles in different states preaching the gospel of salvation by grace.

Thanks to the editor, Elder Cleo Robertson, the associate editor, Elder Jerry B. Farmer and circulation manager and treasurer Tony R. Horton and all who have a part in getting this paper out each and every month. It is a source of news of meetings and comfort to God's Little Ones.

Love and Fellowship,
R. Allen Carroll
120 Gunn Road
Reidsville, NC 27320

November 5, 2012

Brother Horton,

Enclosed is a check for $50.00. Please extend my subscription for two years and use the rest as needed. I look forward to receiving the Signs each month. Since God's truth doesn't change. I can depend upon the Signs as a regular source of inspiration and sound doctrine.

Would it be possible to feature a church of the month from time to time - perhaps with a picture of the building and/or the pastor(s)?

Please keep up the good work and don't be "weary in well - doing."

Your brother in hope,
Jim Carr

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE NEED FOR, THE PROSPECTUS, AND THE OBJECT OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Feeling deeply the need of a medium of correspondence, and excluded from the columns of the called Baptist papers, after much deliberation it was concluded to attempt to make ourselves heard by our brethren scattered abroad, by publishing a paper devoted to the cause of truth, and through which we could enter our solemn protest against all the innovations, new theories and new institutions which under the name of Baptist, had so greatly prevailed. With these objects in view, in the year 1832, we issued the following prospectus, viz:

Proposal for publishing a semimonthly paper, to be called the "Signs of the Times," devoted exclusively to the Baptist cause, maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal perfections of the Great Jehovah -the Revelation which God has given of himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These Three are One." -1 John 5:8.

2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.

3. Eternal, Unconditional Election.

4. The Total Depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the Elect only.

6. The Sovereign, Irresistible, and in all cases, Effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in Regenerating and Quickening the Elect of God.

7. The final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

8. The Resurrection of the dead and Eternal Judgment.

9. That the Church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers - that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament, that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God.

10. That there is no connection between Church and State, and as touching the proposition for a marriage between them, the Hon. R.M. Johnson, in his report on the Sabbath Question, has expressed our faith.

The "Signs of the Times" will be decidedly opposed to Bible Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath Schools, &c., &c., making war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of institutions.

Our brethren of the Old School of Christ will bear in mind that this humble sheet is devoted to the Baptist cause, as we believe the Baptist cause to be the cause of God and that its columns are designed to be used as a medium for the circulation of bible doctrine and general information.

The dear people of God who re-

main steadfast and unshaken in the apostles' doctrine are at this day greatly scattered through the country , and in many instances where one or more of them are found they are supposed to be the only ones remaining of the same faith and order. Indeed, they are often themselves driven to the conclusion of Elijah: "They have digged down thine altars and killed thy prophets, and I am left alone and they seek my life." In their scattered situation it affords them peculiar pleasure to hear from one another. "As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country." Prov. Xxv. 25.

It is certainly good news to the scattered pilgrims to hear of the numbers in different parts of the land who still adhere to the doctrine and practice of the primitive church. In the days of old, "they that feared the Lord spake often to one another;" and the exhortation of the apostle is, that we "exhort one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching."

Elder G. Beebe

ECCLESIASTES 5:17-18.

All his days also he eateth in darkness, and *he hath* **much sorrow and wrath with his sickness.**

Behold *that* **which I have seen:** *it is* **good and comely** *for one* **to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it** *is* **his portion.**

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was *faithful* **in all his house." Hebrews 3:1-2**

My mind has been exercised recently on a particular portion of the above scripture, namely, "Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." Therefore, in this article the writer hopes to dwell on these particular words.

The apostle Paul (a believer) writes to believers about the superior excellency of Christ, to angels and men, and the superior excellency of the priesthood of Christ Jesus and his sacrifice, to the Levitical priesthood and its sacrifices. What a wonderful exhortation to believers to "Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus"!

In the first two chapters of Hebrews Paul sets forth the dignity of Christ's person, his assumption of human nature, and suffering in the room and stead of his people. In the third chapter Paul exhorts believers to consider Christ Jesus, to pay attention to him, to have faith in him and to be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

Paul uses the word "wherefore" to mean "for which reasons" (which are set forth in chapters 1 and 2) holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, should consider Christ Jesus. Paul believed that they were holy

brethren because they were of the same spiritual relationship with him. They had the same Father, they were the adopted sons of God, they were the brethren of Christ, they were of the same family and Jesus was their elder brother. They were holy because they were sanctified by the Holy Spirit. They were so by profession because they had professed their relationship in the family of God as he had done. They had given a reason of the hope that was in them with meekness and fear. As well, Paul refers to believers as partakers of the heavenly calling. This calling is a call from heaven to come out of nature's darkness into his marvelous light, a call to the enjoyment of the blessings of grace here and to glory hereafter. These, as all believers, are partakers, that is, they are called as are all believers by God. Paul says, **"Who hath saved us, and called** *us* **with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began". 2 Tim. 1:9.**

Paul (a believer) writes to believers, to consider. Jesus was sent of God to do the will of his Father; to preach the gospel, to work miracles and to obtain redemption and salvation for his people. The high priest among the Jews was considered an apostle or messenger on the day of atonement. So, Christ Jesus is spoken of here as the Apostle (spelled with a capital to set forth "Christ Jesus", particularly) of our profession which should be made both in word and deed. The word "apostle" literally means "one sent forth".

We should note that High Priest is also capitalized in the King James version and rightly so. This sets forth the particular one, Christ Jesus.

In 1 Tim. 2:5-6, we read, "For *there is* **one God, and** ***one mediator*** **between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."** The word mediator means intermediary and intercessor. When we consider "one mediator" we should consider Christ (meaning the anointed) Jesus as Prophet, Priest, and King. Prophets, priests and kings were anointed when they were vested with their offices. These offices seldom if ever met in one person. Paul says Christ Jesus was faithful to him that appointed him as also Moses was faithful in all his house. Christ Jesus was counted of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. Moses was faithful in all his house as a servant, but Christ as a son over his own house; whose house we are, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

Christ Jesus is Prophet, Priest and King. God's children are ignorant, and blind and need him as **the Prophet** to enlighten them and instruct them and make known unto them the will of God. God's children are sinful, guilty creatures, and children of wrath by nature even as others and need **the Priest** to make atonement for them. God's chil-

dren in their state of nature are enemies of God and need him to subdue them. In their converted state God's children are helpless and weak and need **the King** to rule over them and defend them.

In this particular article the writer will confine remarks to that of Christ Jesus as Priest, because of space. The Lord willing, Christ Jesus as Prophet and King will be considered on another occasion.

Christ Jesus has executed, is executing, and will continue to execute his priestly office. To this great work he was verily ordained before the foundation of the world.

In Hebrews we find many descriptions of Christ Jesus as the High Priest. The reader would do well to read Hebrews when making a consideration of Christ Jesus, as the High Priest of our profession. Only a few considerations will be mentioned here. He took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. It behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. In that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. He was faithful to him that appointed him, that is to God. Christ Jesus was faithful as a son in his house (whose house we are) while Moses was only faithful as a servant. Christ Jesus is a great high priest that is passed into the heavens. He is a high priest which can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and he was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Christ Jesus glorified not himself to be made an high priest but God called him, said unto him, "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec".

Christ Jesus was a son yet he learned obedience by the things which he suffered. Being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. Christ Jesus was made a priest not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. Christ Jesus, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. He is able, also, to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. He is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. He needeth not daily to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. Christ Jesus is such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. Christ Jesus hath obtained a more excellent ministry than Moses, in that he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. "This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God,

and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Hebrews 8:10-12. The high, priest, under the old dispensation, went into the holiest of all, alone, once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people, but our High Priest by his own blood entered in once into the holy place (even heaven), having obtained eternal redemption for us. Now he appears in the presence of God for us. So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto Salvation. "After he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, he sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool, for by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Hebrews 10:12-14. Surely, Christ Jesus is the High Priest over the house of God (whose house we are, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end).

Christ Jesus was, is, and will continue to be the High Priest of our profession. As High Priest he **has made** the sacrifice for his people, he **is making** intercession for his people and will continue to make intercession for them and bless them. Often the following questions are deep in the bosom of this poor sinner: Has the High Priest laid down his life for me? Is he making intercession for me on high? Has he blessed me in the past and will he continue to bless me? Sometimes the words of the hymnwriter,

"His love in times past, forbids me to think,
He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink,
Each sweet Ebenezer I have in review,
Confirms his good pleasure to help me quite through."

Let me examine his sacrifice, his intercession and his blessings which I hope by faith and hope I believe are for me. When Jesus said on the cross "It is finished", this one who often feels to be poor in spirit, believes that he did indeed lay down his life for all of his friends, not one more and not one less. He shed his precious blood for the remissions of all of the sins of all of his friends. Was this sacrifice for me? When he brings to my remembrance whatsoever he has taught me I am made to remember the burden of wrongdoing, the depths of wickedness of my heart and the troubled days and sleepless nights. When the burden was lifted what joy I found in the words of the hymns:

"Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song,
The joy of my heart, and the boast of my tongue;
Thy free grace alone, from the first to the last,

Hath won my affections, and bound my soul fast.

Thy mercy in Jesus exempts me from hell;
Its glories I'll sing, and its wonders I'll tell;
'Twas Jesus my friend, when he hung on the tree,
Who opened the channel of mercy for me."

The lines of another hymn, "'My saviour's obedience and blood, Hide all my transgressions from view" have been a wonderful strength to me. As I look back over the twenty and more years there have been many doubts and fears as to whether Jesus did indeed die for me. About two years ago when everything was as dark or darker than ever before or since as I lay awake tossing and turning and failure in everything seemed uppermost in my mind, the words as found in Job. 16:19 came to me, "My witness is in heaven, and my record is on high". Are not these precious to us? Sometimes we have in remembrance many precious moments of communion with him. Other times we search and seemingly find none.

Has the High Priest made and is he making intercession for me? Again my mind goes back over the years. As Paul said in Romans 8:23, "Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" and Romans 8:26-27, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what to pray for as we ought; but the Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is in the mind of the spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." How precious to me is the scripture found in Hebrews 4:15, "For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin". We often sing the 58th Paraphrase:

"Where high the heavenly temple stands
The house of God not made with hands,
A great High Priest our nature wears,
The guardian of the righteous appears.

Though now ascended up on high,
He bends on earth a brother's eye;
Partaker of the human name,
He knows the frailty of our frame.

Our fellow sufferer yet retains
A fellow-feeling of our pains ;
And still remembers in the skies
His tears, his agonies, and cries.

In every pang that rends the heart,
The Man of sorrows had a part;
He sympathizes with our grief,
And to the sufferer sends relief.

With boldness, therefore, at the throne,

Let us make all our sorrows known,
And ask the aids of heavenly power,
To help us in the evil hour."

Also, I often ask, "Has the High Priest blessed me?" How wonderful is the scripture in **Ephesians 1:3 etc., "Blessed** *be* **the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly** *places* **in Christ, etc."** Many are the blessings of the High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. Some particular hymns and scriptures come to mind to illustrate some of the blessings which I hope I have received from Christ Jesus. I believe that,

"There is a period known to God
When all his sheep, redeemed by blood,
Shall leave the hateful ways of sin;
Turn to the fold, and enter in."

The realization that we are dead in trespasses and in sins and that we have been quickened by his holy spirit is a wonderful blessing. He and He alone changes the heart, renews the will and turns the feet to Zion's hill. We see our righteousness as filthy rags. It is said of Abraham "He believed in the Lord ; and he counted it to him for righteousness", Genesis 15:6. Paul says in Romans 5: 1 "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ". This faith to believe is a gift or blessing of God. "Hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Romans 5:5. The two mites of faith and hope are sufficient for commendation by Jesus as they were with the widow when she cast them into the treasury.

There are other blessings which follow quickening and belief. When we receive the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, " Abba Father" and the spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God, we can then say, "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name".

Christ Jesus blesses us with his spirit, even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him but we know him for he dwelleth with us and in us. He maketh the storm a calm and we realize the peace that passeth understanding. His grace is sufficient for us, His strength is made perfect in weakness. Amazing grace is what we are given to sing. **"Blessed** *is* **the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance". Psalm 89:15.** Holy brethren and partakers of the heavenly calling know the joyful sound of the Gospel, the good news from the heavenly country. Israel knew when Aaron went into the holy place before the Lord, and when he came out because they heard the bells on the hem of his garment. So, spiritual Israel hears the gospel that Jesus has gone into heaven, the holiest of holies, and we shall hear and know the sound

when he comes again. Another great blessing is the desire to be baptized, even as he was, and to partake at the Lord's table. Sometimes it takes years before our desire is fulfilled, after much meditation and prayer. As we look back upon this uniting with his friends, our friends, it is a great strength and blessing to us.

One of the sweetest scriptures that is often in my mind was spoken by Simon Peter in St. John 6:68, "Lord, to whom shall *we* go? thou hast the words of eternal life". The desire for eternal life is often uppermost in our minds. The foretastes of our heavenly home are precious. Are these not wonderful blessings of our High Priest? All of the blessings of our High Priest are covenant blessings, spiritual, irreversible and eternal.

Aaron was to bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart when he went into the holy place for a memorial before the Lord continually. So with our High Priest.

"My name from the palms of his hands,
Eternity will not erase;
Impressed on his *heart* it remains,
In marks of indelible grace."

Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.

(Elder) D. Alex McColl
June, 1976 Issue of "Signs"

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." (Titus 2:11-13)

The entire second chapter of Titus must be read for the context of the above verses. Also, note that the reason for the admonition or exhortation by the Apostle is plainly set forth in the first chapter, where he wrote, that "A bishop (elder) must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers...whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake... Wherefore rebuke them sharply that they may be sound in the faith ... They profess that they know God, but in works they deny ***him***."

"But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine." Because there were many who did not speak sound doctrine, but were unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, the Apostle

said, "whose mouths must be stopped." That is, their preaching should not go unrefuted, since they were preaching things contrary to sound doctrine.

Titus, and all other gospel ministers, were exhorted to hold fast the faithful word which they had been taught: which was one of the qualifications of a bishop which Paul enumerated in the first chapter. When Paul wrote to Timothy his second epistle, he said, "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."

Sound doctrine and sound words, we conclude, are the same. It would be impossible to preach sound doctrine without using sound (or proper) words expressing that doctrine.

There were many in that day who were not contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. Paul knew this from his own experience. He had been there himself once, but was now brought out of that darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God; and he knew as well as any man the difference between light and darkness. The things the servants of God were to preach and teach were the things they had been taught by the working of the Spirit of God in their hearts: things which were revealed in them pertaining to the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

Each one should recognize that to be a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, one must preach and contend earnestly for the very things Jesus taught, which also the apostles set in order among the brethren and churches, Jesus having commanded them: "... teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

In our early days of coming before the brethren, we remember that our chief concern was to uphold the doctrine of predestination and election. We still do this with such ability as we are given, for we know that the gospel cannot be preached if these things are left out or glossed over.

How well we remember first reading the text at the beginning of this second chapter of Titus, with understanding: "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: that the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience." And to exhort the aged women, the young women, young men, and servants, as we read in the second chapter. The Apostle called this sound doctrine and admonished Titus to so speak in his preaching to them.

But our main desire now is to consider the eleventh verse to the end of the chapter. When the Apostle wrote, "For (because) the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men..." he meant not an universal appearance, but to all classes and conditions of men. Note that Titus was to speak to old men and old women, young men and young women, and servants; for of these the whole household of faith consisted. And they were the ones that the grace of God appeared unto. It would be entirely inconsistent with the Apostle's language and intent, to consider "an men" to mean every man of the Adamic race.

Then the Apostle hastens to say that this grace teaches us something. It is when this teaching is manifested in "us" that we have evidence. that the grace of God has appeared to us, for this evidence always appears powerfully and never unto any but those who are saved, for it always manifests salvation to whomsoever it comes. It never appears without making a great change in the person's life from then on as long as he lives. He is taught that, "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, he should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." In this appearing and bringing salvation, as with Saul of Tarsus, there is a turning away from old things, for the enjoyment of old things has passed away. The wonderment of God's grace instills the denying of ungodliness and worldly lusts to such an extent that he ever desires to live soberly, righteously and godly his remaining days in the world.

When we see these things in the brethren, as manifested in their walk and conversation, talking of their blessed hope, and of their looking for the glorious appearing of their God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for them, that he might redeem them from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, it is sure and certain evidence that they have been taught of God and that his grace has appeared unto them. This means that they have the witness within and testify to what they have seen, felt and handled of the word of life.

Exhortation in the mouth of a servant who is in the hands of God, the persons exhorted being also in the hands of God, has its effect. Otherwise it is vain and empty.

Elder John Wood,
September 1969

I BELIEVE THAT JESUS CHRIST IS THE SON OF GOD

Is this too much for a poor sinner to say while begging for guidance along life's way.

I search the Scripture to sustain what I believe is true; I believe in Him who said I will never leave nor forsake you.

I believe that I am but a creature God created, and I hope predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son.

If not deceived, I love the Church and the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace. I have believed this from the days of my youth to be the blessed truth.

I do not understand the work wrought of God upon man. I get my Bible and look; I find the Lord said to Jeremiah, write thee all the words I have spoken unto thee in a book.

I believe I have heard in the middle of the night that tender voice within me say, get up and write.

My parents were kind. They taught me to mind, but unto God I believe I learned obedience by the things I suffered; and I must obey my master's command hoping He will bless my

trembling hand.

I believe He gives me grace to praise His Holy name, when I feel I should hide my face in shame.

My earthly friends tell me it is left with man to stand or fall; that Jesus came to save all, but I find there is a remnant whom the Lord shall call.

I believe I have been taught to know I am a sinner here below, and to the grave I soon must go; for life's evening sun is sinking low.

One of the nicest times I know is the cool and calm of the evening. The day is spent and that restful sleep is nigh, and we are ofttimes given to praise the Lord on high.

When my soul was troubled and I could find no rest, I felt the eagle had stirred up my nest. In a dream I was carried beside the still waters and the grass so pretty and green, it was so peaceful I wanted to remain but the Lord knew best.

My field became a wilderness, and I became wearied with my journey in the night. I believe I found His truth to be my shield and my path to light.

I believe I received a precious hope of being numbered with that great host and baptized with the Holy Ghost, before I was baptized in the waters of the river, the lowest place around. This does not save, but typical of the grave, before we can be resurrected, we must go down.

I have felt that upon me there must be a woe. I feel so unworthy and misfit wherever I go. I hear the voices of my Brethren sing, and I do not know how to take a part, though I feel to sing praises in my heart.

There have been many trials and troubles along life's way, but it has not been all sorrow. I believe I have been taught to be thankful for my blessings today and boast not of tomorrow.

Ofttimes I am made ashamed to complain, for the joy I have found is beyond words to explain. I have no great riches to decay and rust, though I hope I have been given in God to trust.

I have many earthly ties, though I am not worldly wise. I am dependent upon the Lord whom I believe hears my cries. I believe that in weakness I shall die, but I hope to be raised in power from on high.

I believe the Gospel is comforting 'tis true, and an awaking power too. It comes as the rain and by it I heard that Isaiah saw the train, and I was awakened to a dream I could not explain. My pastor, Elder W. C. King, made it plain.

In the darkness of the night I saw a vision so bright, the cross that reached from one end of the earth to the other. Sometimes I believe it has been upon me since I was born of my mother, and it reached from earth to Heaven, pointing to him whose name is Holy and Reverend.

When I think of things so precious, I humbly try to thank him who has been most gracious. I ofttimes feel, who am I, these wondrous things to see, do I bear the cross in me.

The Temple I have seen in a dream its beauty untold, the door in the side of pure gold, the garments of the Saints

were pure white, and the gracious Lord was the light.

I believe those included in the election of grace, their affection for one another will show in their face. I believe in good works wrought upon us by Him, and we do walk in them.

I see things that are not pleasing, a people enjoying sin for a season. I cannot rejoice in this. I have a sin sick soul; that is my reason. I know the precious things I hold so dear is but foolishness to them, for they have not been taught to fear.

I believe that to all things there is a time and place, and I do not appreciate foolishness concerning the Lord and His Grace.

These are some of my experiences, if indeed I know, for ofttimes I walk with a bowed head, feeling so very low.

The fear of the Lord is to hate evil and pride, from such His goodness he will hide.

May my last moments on earth be spent praising Him whom our gracious God has sent. All honor and praise I give to thee, whom I hope saved a wretch like me.

When the graves give up their dead, he will reveal for whom His precious blood was shed, for by Him only was the Lamb's Book of Life read.

I believe that Jesus Christ is the chief corner stone; and when He comes without sin unto salvation, we will know even as we are known; and He will change our vile bodies like unto His own.

To each of His flock will be given a white rock. In the rock will be a new name written, and I believe it will be me if my soul is blessed to see that Heavenly home, but I will not be presented to the throne of God and His Son, as Clifton Robertson of Route 1, Reidsville, North Carolina. Lord have mercy on me.

Clifton Robertson
Rt. 1, Reidsvile, N.C.

"OH THAT I HAD WINGS LIKE A DOVE"

The taskmasters in Egypt made the lives of the children of Israel very bitter with cruel bondage, Ex. 1:13-14, and the sinner convicted by the Holy Spirit of his sins under the law, finds to his soul's grief that he cannot meet the laws demands. He consents unto the law that it is good, and its requirements righteous. Oh, he would be righteous, but finds himself the servant of sin, a poor, condemned sinner. How willingly he would fly away from his wretchedness, but he has no wings; and where shall he flee from his sins and the felt displeasure of the Almighty God against whom he has sinned. The Psalmist David, in his sore oppressions when encompassed by his cruel enemies in his overwhelming afflictions, exclaimed, **"Oh, that I had wings like a dove,** *for then* **would I fly away and be at rest. Lo,** *then* **would I wander far off** *and* **remain in the wilderness Selah. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm** *and* **tempest," Psalm 55:6-8.**

"When the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham," Acts 7:17. The very year of God's redeemed had come, Isa. 63:4; the outstretched arm of the Lord brought forth the tribes of Israel from their Egyptian bondage. The Lord had his decreed way for their exodus, their redemption, their deliverance from the "iron furnace", Deut. 4:20. Israel found Egypt to be a terrible furnace, and the sinners called by grace, while in his sins, while under the curse of the law, find themselves melted because of the iron furnace. From the right hand of the Lord there goeth forth a fiery law, Deut. 33 :2, and the convicted sinner fears in his conscience that he will be utterly consumed by his sins under the burning displeasure of the Lord.

The Passover Lamb was very significant unto the families of the house of Israel. They were to take the blood of the Lamb and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses wherein they shall eat it, and, saith the Lord, the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are. And when I see the blood I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you when I smite the land of Egypt", Ex. 12:7-13.

Shall I say the blood of the Passover lamb gave them the wings of a dove to fly away out of Egypt, and against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, Ex. 11:7. "Thus saith the Lord, They shall tremble as a bird out of Egypt, as a dove out of the land of Assyria; and I will place them in their houses", Hosea 11:11. They have made their flight out of bondage and captivity and their hearts flutter with hope and in gracious expectation of the loving kindness of the Lord. Oh, what happy moments are they when on the wings of faith and love we fly to the bosom of Christ and him crucified. Thy wings I believe in Christ Jesus are covered with silver, and thy feathers with yellow gold, Psa. 68: 13.

O beautiful sweet dove, with thy silver, golden wings, thou flyest in the heavens for Jehovah is thy help, and the sun of righteousness shineth upon thee. O how radiant thou art. Thou shinest in resplendent glories. Though in thy Egyptian slavery thou hast lain among the pots, now thou fliest to thy windows of the Lord's graciousness in the everlasting covenant, to the bosom of Emmanuel, thy Redeemer, the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely. O fair and sweet Dove, I am delighted to see thee fly.

"In the ark the weary dove
Found a welcome resting place;
Thus my spirit long to prove—
Rest in Christ the ark of grace."

FREDERICK W. KEENE,
RALEIGH, NC

PSALM 84:5.

Blessed *is* **the man whose strength** *is* **in thee; in whose heart** *are* **the ways** *of them.*

ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:25)

Yesterday we tried to speak from this Scripture, and as our mind is on the matter yet, we will try and pen a few thoughts in connection with it. The apostle, in addressing the church of God at Rome, uses the expression, "And we know," showing that the knowledge he speaks of is not known by him alone, but also by those he was addressing, as he says in another place, We do not tell you these things because you do not know them, but because ye know them. Amidst a world of confusion and strife, where nations are falling right and left, where men's hearts are failing them, where fear is in the hearts of man, it is a comforting thought that God is Lord of heaven and earth, and all things are in his hand, from the falling of a sparrow to the heart of kings, and are in his hands as rivers of water and he turns them whithersoever he will. God works all things after the counsel of his will, and none can stay his hand. If we could feel as sure that we are the ones who love God and are the called according to his purpose, as we do that he works all things for the good of such ones, it would suit our feelings better, but God has so arranged that our walk should be a walk of faith, and not by sight. No doubt the apostle Paul, as he reviewed his journey from Jerusalem to Rome, could certainly realize that all things had worked together for his good. God appeared unto him before he started from Jerusalem to go to Rome, and told him that he should bear witness of him at Rome. When we examine the journey to Rome we find Paul traveling in the hands of his enemies. They were carrying him to Rome to preach the gospel. yet they did not know what purpose the Lord had in the matter. Today wicked men, and the wars that are raging, are fulfilling some wise design, and all these things shall work together for good to the chosen of God, yet the wicked know not anything about his wise purpose, and their wickedness shall fall upon their own heads. God punishes not only his people for sin, but also nations, and often the wicked are used as a sword to punish them. His people often need purging and humbling. We are often brought in these times to repeat the hymn,

"When thou, my righteous Judge, shalt come
To fetch thy ransomed people home,
Shall I among them stand?
Shall such a worthless worm as I,
Who sometimes am afraid to die,
Be found at thy right hand?

I love to meet among them now,
Before thy gracious feet to bow,
Though vilest of them all;
But can I bear the piercing thought,
What if my name should be left out?
When thou for them shalt call."

No doubt the reason men reject the idea that all things are being worked together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to his purpose, is because they only see the act, and cannot behold the purpose.

"Blind unbelief is SURE to err,
And scan his works in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

His providence unfolds the book,
And makes his counsel shine;
Each opening leaf, and every stroke,
Fulfills some deep design."

Even the apostles of our Lord when he was being crucified did not understand the purpose of God in it. They did not know it was necessary that Christ must suffer and enter into his glory. They had earthly hopes of the restoration of an earthly kingdom. It would appear to human reasoning that with the prophecy concerning the suffering of Christ, the prophets declaring before his birth the place of it, the foretelling the manner of his death, that a bone of him should not be broken, that they should look on him whom they had pierced, that for his garments they should cast lots, etc., that they would have understood these things. But the Holy Ghost must reveal these things. Many to-day are trying to foretell the outcome of the present war, but unless God has revealed it to some one, no one knows. The reasoning of the carnal mind is always contrary to truth. Peter was a stronger predestinarian on the day of Pentecost than he was in the judgment hall, and so are we all. As he stood in the judgment hall and bitterly denied that he knew the Lord, he knew not the purpose of God in the matter. The Savior had told him that before the cock crow this night thou shalt deny me thrice, yet it took the completion of the denials for him to remember the word of the Lord. All this was working together for his good. He had declared that he would not forsake the Lord, even though others did. Now he had learned how weak he was, and had been converted, and sifted as wheat, so that he could strengthen the brethren with the doctrine that, You are kept by the power of God. through faith, unto salvation. None know their weakness as those God has left to try themselves. and have found they are not their own keepers, Through such experiences we learn that our only

hope is that underneath are the everlasting arms.

From the creating of the garden of Eden, placing man there, giving him a law, unto the crucifixion of Christ, or in other words, all things in time, from the beginning to the end, work for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose, and God so worketh all things that his word declares, Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shall thou restrain.

As we close this article, we would say unto the beloved of God, you unto whom his word is precious, that in every dispensation the darkest times are always before the dawning of a new day. We know not how much trouble is in store for us, how many heartaches and sorrows the world of strife may bring to us, yet if it does we need them. Lift up your heads, for your redemption is drawing nigh. May we as a people, separate from all the people of the earth, seek the welfare of one another, the things that edify one another, and love one another with pure hearts fervently.

Elder D. V. Spangler

PSALM 136:8.

The sun to rule by day: for his mercy endureth for ever:

"Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." - HEBREWS xii. 2.

No one can ever run the race set before him, except by looking unto Jesus. He is at the head of the race; he stands at the goal, holding the crown of victory in his hand, which he puts upon the head of the successful runner. And we can only run on as we view Jesus by the eye of faith at the right hand of the Father opening his blessed arms to receive us into his own bosom at the end of the race. Nor indeed can anyone really look to him but by the special gift and grace of God. He must be revealed to the soul by the power of God; we must behold his glorious Godhead and his suffering manhood by the eye of faith; and we must view him as the incarnate God; the only Mediator between God and man. We must see the efficacy of his atoning blood to purge a guilty conscience; the blessedness of his obedience to justify a needy, naked soul; the sweetness of his dying love as an inward balm and cordial against all the thousand ills and sorrows of life. We must see his glory, as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; his suitability to every want and woe; his infinite compassion to the vilest and worst of sinners; his patient forbearance and wondrous long-suffering of our sins and backslidings; his unchanging love, stronger than death itself; his readi-

ness to hear; his willingness to bless; and his ability to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him. Thus the heavenly runner looks not to the course however long, nor to the ground however rough, not to his own exertions however multiplied, nor to his own strength whether much or little; nor to applauding friends nor condemning foes; but wholly and solely to the incarnate Son of God. Jesus draws him onward with his invincible grace. Every glance of his beauteous Person renews the flame of holy love; every sight of his blood and righteousness kindles desires to experience more of their efficacy and blessedness; and every touch of his sacred finger melts the heart into conformity to his suffering image. This is the life of a Christian, day by day, to be running a race for eternity; and as speeding onward to a heavenly goal, to manifest his sincerity and earnestness by continually breathing forth the yearnings of his soul after divine realities, and to be pressing forward more and more toward the Lord Jesus Christ, as giving him a heavenly crown when he has finished his course with joy.

J. C. Philpot

PROVERBS 24:10-13.

If **thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength** *is* **small.**

If thou forbear to deliver *them that are* **drawn unto death, and** *those that are* **ready to be slain;**

If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doeth not he that pondereth the heart consider it?and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know *it*? **and shall** *not* **he render to** *every* **man according to his works?**

My son, eat thou honey, because *it is* **good; and the honeycomb,** *which is* **sweet to thy taste:**

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 2012

Caroline Martin, WA 10.00
Jim Carr, VA 25.00
Allen Carroll, NC 5.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER EULA LEE MILLS FORNES

On July 29, 2012, our Heavenly Father called our precious sister, Eula Lee Mills Fornes, home to be with him. Sister Eula had spent her last couple of years on this Earth in a nursing home with Alzheimers Disease. I truly believe that she is at home now with the Lord and her dear and faithful

husband, Brother Claude Fornes, who died on June 10, 2011.

Sister Eula was the daughter of the late Tucker Zeno and Eva Edwards Mills and a nature and lifelong resident of Pitt County. She and Brother Claude were baptized in July of 1978 by Elder Joseph Sawyer. She was a member of Red Banks Primitive Baptist Church until its closing. She and Brother Claude then joined Hancocks Primitive Baptist Church.

Sister Eula married Claude Alton Fornes on December 20, 1940. They were blessed with three children. Their first child, Sandra Lee, was born on their first anniversary. They had a son, Donald Claude Fornes, born on June 12, 1949 and another daughter, Claudia Arlene, born on August 21, 1955. They were married for seventy years.

Sister Eula is survived by her two daughters, Sandra F. Dixon and husband Leaky of Greenville and Claudia F. Wainwright and husband Dale of Grimesland; a son, Donald Fornes and wife Jeanie of Greenville; five grandchildren, Leaky Dixon, Jr. and wife Rita, Kenny Dixon and wife Barbara, Chad Fornes and wife Lisa, Jason Fornes and wife April and Adam Wainwright; eight great-grandchildren, Gabriel, Cameron, Lee, Victoria, Jordan, Austin, Carrie, and Chandler; two sister-in-laws Helen Mills of New Bern and Clarice Mills of Chinquapin.

Sister Eula was a home maker and never desired to work outside of the home. She was a wonderful mother and wife. She loved her family very much and kept in close contact with them. She would call her sister and her brothers every week to make sure they were well. She also loved her neighbors and was right there to help or carry food to them if they were sick. Her daughter Claudia remembers her fixing several neighbor's and family members' hair.

Sister Eula was an excellent seamstress and cook. She won many blue ribbons at the Pitt County Fair. She was famous for her pecan brittle. Her daughter, Sandra, remembers wearing dresses that Sister Eula made for her out of feed bags. She said they were pretty and she was "proud to wear them to school."

Sister Eula loved going to church and seeing her brothers and sisters. She cooked and carried many ham biscuits, corn fritters and batches of pecan brittle to church dinners through the years.

Sister Eula Fornes was laid to rest in Pinewood Memorial Park beside her beloved husband, Claude Fornes, on July 31, 2012. Therefore, be it resolved that a copy of this obituary be sent to the family, one recorded in the church book and one sent to "Signs of the Times" for publication.

Written by her niece, Janelle Vanhorne, who loved her dearly.

ROXIE ANN BILLINGS STRADER

Our dear Lord gathered unto Himself one of His most precious lambs, Sister Roxie Strader, on March 23,2012. Sister Roxie was born March 10, 1925 to the late Dorsey Robert and Mary Bell Reynolds Billings. She was preceded in death by her husband of 55 years, Brother Ira G. "Pete" Strader and her brothers, Arthur Thomas and Franklin Billings. Left to mourn her passing are two sisters-in-law, Lorine Tate and Opal Strader; her brother-in-law, Numa Reid Strader, Sr.; several caregivers, numerous nieces, nephews, and great nieces and nephews as well as those of us, who were blessed to walk with her in love and sweet fellowship for almost 30 years.

Sister Roxie was blessed to ask for a home with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on September 12, 1982. Brother Pete was blessed to ask for a home with the church on September 25, 1982. The two of them were baptized together along with six others on September 26, 1982 by Elder David Spangler. Sister Roxie loved her God, her church, and her family. The Lord so graciously blessed her to faithfully fill her seat on Sunday and to inquire into the welfare of her brethren and sisters and to let others know when there was one, who was sick or had suffered loss. Prior to her passing, she had only been home about three weeks from extended care. The writer was blessed with many lovely times of traveling to and from church with her. After her return home, she was blessed to attend church two of the following three Sundays and was so thankful to be back home and to be able to go to church. The Lord blessed her to sit in her favorite chair in her natural home, fold her hands, and fall asleep in Christ with a lovely, peaceful expression on her face. There is comfort in the scripture, Psalm 116: 15, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Thomas Solomon, at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on March 26, 2012. That spirit, which the Heavenly Master placed in her, has returned unto God who gave it and her body laid to rest to await the resurrection morn and those lovely, most welcome words, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." We sorely miss her lovely smile, warm embrace, and her kind, loving countenance, but we trust that the Lord might bless us to witness with Job, "...the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." May the gentle Shepherd bless her family and all of us, who miss her so very much, with the comfort and reconciling peace that only He can give. In all things may the Lord be praised.

Humbly submitted by one who loved her dearly,

Mary Hawkins

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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PRAYER

Psalms lxxxviii. 2.

Weary of life, and care, and sin,
Dear Lord, where can I flee?
Thou alone dost a refuge prove,
I long to rest in thee.

The world and all its lauded charms
Can never give me rest;
I long alone to feel thy love,
And then I will be blest.

Give me some token of thy love,
Some word my soul to cheer;
No eye but thine can see my need,
Thou hearest my heart-felt prayer.

I beg for mercy, in the name
Of thy beloved Son;
His righteousness my only plea,
For I myself have none.

When thou dost give a heart to pray,
Wilt thou not heed my moan?
I wait on thee—renew my strength,
The praise shall be thine own.

Flossie I. Faulkner,
In Signs 1931

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EDITORIAL

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah: And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. And I will fasten him *as* a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons. In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that *was* upon it shall be cut off: for the Lord hath spoken *it.*" Isaiah 22:20-25.

Elder J.B. Farmer

It seems always a fearful place to be, when given a mind to set down some thoughts concerning the scripture. For we know that no prophesy of scripture is of any private interpretation. And we fear we might inject some of our opinions, which are worth nothing. But the servants of the Lord are commanded to **"study to shew thyself approved of God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."** Those who are blessed to study (or to be diligent) to speak as the oracles of God give evidence that they are led of the Spirit. But the rightly dividing must be given by revelation. The deep, hidden mysteries are not given to the wise and prudent, but are revealed unto babes. This is one of the ways that God holds men back from boasting, and makes sure that all honor and glory is rendered unto Him alone. For only God, the creator of heaven and earth, is worthy to be praised.

The prophet, being moved of the Spirit, prophesied of things that would come to pass about 800 years in his future: **"And it shall come to pass in that day,"** That day is surely the day

of the Lord, the day when Jesus would come as **"Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."** The Lord laid aside His glory, which He had with the Father, and took upon Himself the form of a servant. And being found in fashion as a man, humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. For the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. In **'That day'** the Lord came and wrought salvation for His people, the elect of God.

The prophet also declared by the Spirit of God: **"that I will call my servant Eliakim"** (which name means the God of Rising). Jesus said to Martha, **"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."** And Jesus also said, concerning His life, **"No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."** By His resurrection, He was victorious over death, hell and the grave, and has given His people the victory in Him. Because He lives, you shall also live, and never die. The second death has no power over you.

The prophet also declared by the same Spirit that God would call Eliakim **"the son of Hilkiah** (which name means the God of Portioning). The One called the God of Rising is the Son of the God of Portioning. Jesus, the Resurrection and the Life, is the Son of God, who portions all things, or controls all things, to His own glory and honor. **"For the Lord's portion** *is* **His people; Jacob** *is* **the lot of his inheritance." "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof** *is* **of the Lord."** Men think and do wickedly, but God frustrates their purposes and brings good forth from the evil they intend. And the wickedness they would do, which does not suit the purpose of God, He restrains or holds them back from doing it. Consider Joseph, who was hated by his brethren, and how they sought to kill him, but rather sold him into Egypt, that he might go before them to preserve life according to the wisdom and power of God. **"Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee: and the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."**

And the prophet continues, **"And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah."** Jesus was clothed with the robe of perfect righteousness, was strengthened with the power of God, was given the administration of the government of His holy nation, and became a Father to all the family of God. Jesus was altogether righteous. No man could ever convict Him of sin because there was no sin in Him. He is the spotless, sinless, Son of God. All power was given to Jesus. He said, **"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."** By Him were the heavens and the earth created. **"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word**

was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made."

According to the Holy Spirit by way of the prophet it is written: **"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of** *his* **government and peace** *there shall be* **no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."** This same Jesus came into the world as a little baby, grew into a man, and offered up Himself, the perfect sacrifice unto God, that we might be redeemed from all sin. The government of His kingdom is sure, for he directs and upholds it by His almighty power. None can stay His hand, or say to Him what doest thou? He looked and there was none to help. By His own arm He brought salvation. When Philip asked Jesus to show them the Father, Jesus said, **"He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." "Believe me that I** *am* **in the Father, and the Father in me."** The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one God. And He (Jesus) of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. He indeed is all in all and **"a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah."**

"And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open." The Lord alone has determined who should be the inhabitants of His kingdom. It is open to the lame, the weak, the poor, the naked, the blind, the diseased, the broken-hearted, the fatherless and the widows, the babes and little children, the debtor, the distressed, the discontented, those who mourn, those who labor and are heavy laden, the ignorant and the fools, even to all them who are made to know that they are vile sinners, and who are blessed to believe in God. But it is closed to all who are righteous in their own eyes, to all who walk in pride, to them who glory in the flesh, and to all who say in their hearts there is no God.

"And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house." Jesus is the Nail, the one secure place for the trust of all that are blessed to believe in God. **"The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."** He is the glorious throne, He is the sure foundation, which no man can lay, He is the glorious chief corner stone upon which His glorious house is built. He is the glorious covering for the saints. He is the hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. We are in a safe and secure place under the shadow of His

wings.

"And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons." Upon that nail fastened in a sure place, even Jesus, depends all the vessels of honor prepared for glory. All praise, honor and glory is unto Him in that He alone brought salvation to His elect by redeeming them unto God with His own blood. You are not your own, you have been bought with a price, even with the life blood of Jesus. All your trust is in Him, and He shall not disappoint you, He will hold you up. **"For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."**

"In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the Lord hath spoken it" In that day, Jesus was removed, cut down and fell. He was delivered up to be crucified by wicked hands according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. In His death, the burden that was placed upon Him, even all our sins, was cut off forever. He bore the wrath of God and made payment in full for all of our sins. He was made to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. All our sin was imputed to Him, and His righteousness was imputed to us. He gained the victory over the devil, and made an end of sin for the saints, in that all their sins have been atoned for and washed away forever by His blood. This is an absolute certainty, for the Lord hath spoken it.

I know that I have only hinted at the deep meaning of this prophesy. May you be given the wings of an eagle to soar up into heavenly places to see and understand many more of the heavenly things hidden here and in other places. Jesus, the perfect Lamb of God, was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, revealed Himself to be the Son of God, spake as no man ever spake, fulfilled the law and the prophets, yielded Himself up to God as the perfect sacrifice, bore the wrath of God for His chosen people that they might not only be forgiven of their sins, but should be made righteous by His imputed righteousness. He destroyed the work of Satan, in that the devil has nothing with which to condemn the Lord's people. Their sins are now removed from them as far as the east is from the west, never to be remembered against them forever. And He was also raised for our justification that we might also be raised up with Him at His coming, and be made in His likeness. He is your nail in a sure place, and all your confidence rests upon Him. He is governing in His kingdom, and His word is sure. **"Where the word of the king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?"** The Lord has promised that the gates of hell should not prevail against His church, and that is sufficient to quiet our troubled spirits. **"For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be**

saved."

I trust this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder Jerry B. Farmer
7-24-2012

CORRESPONDENCE

Tony Horton,

Ollie Carl May
3272 Pineapple Hwy.
Greenville, ALA. 36037

Dear Sir,

Sorry I am late sending my subscription for Signs of the Times thanks for sending it anyway.

Had a birthday which was 88 yrs. old. I can't do or think like I used to.

I love the Signs. I hope to keep them coming for rest of my life.

Enclosed is $30.00, $25.00 for Signs and other as you see fit.

I haven't been able to go to church for over a year. The Signs sure come in good.

I love all the church of God!

Love you,
Ollie Carl May

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 02/2013 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

Bro. Cleo Robertson,

I have enjoyed reading the Signs of the Times for many years. Thanks to you, and all who have part in it publication. I submit to you an article, if you feel it could profit your Readers then you can include it in "the Signs." Thanks and may the Lord continue to bless you and "The Signs" and all who receive it.

Ralph Dale

Elder Robertson,

Please see the attached letter that was written to Elder Tench in 1952. Sister Willis was a member of Springfield Church and was the mother in law of Ann (Dad's wife). Daddy said he thought we should send it to have printed in the Signs. Ann does not think the letter was ever sent to Elder Tench.

If you have any questions, please email or give me a call.

Thanks,
Pam

PSALM 9: 1-3.

I will praise *thee*, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all they marvellous works.

I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.

When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence.

ARTICLES

"O Lord, I know that the way of man *is* not in himself: *it is* not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jer.10:23)

I trust that the Lord will direct my thoughts as I attempt to set forth some comments on this text. It seems that these words of Jeremiah, when considering the verses that follow, are a prayer of the prophet to the Lord. In verse 24 of the same chapter, Jeremiah prays "O Lord, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing." Only God's children know the terror of the Lord and that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Only God's children have the fear of the Lord in their hearts and it is because the Lord has put it there. Only God's children know, because they have been taught of the Lord, that it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed. This prayer of Jeremiah "O Lord, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing.", brings to mind David's prayer **"O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure" (Psalm 6:1).** Jeremiah, David, and all God's children know and feel themselves to be sinners and justly deserving of God's anger and displeasure. Their constant prayer to the Lord is that He would show mercy to them. What a great comfort it is to us to be blessed with a hope that God, whom we have sinned against, does indeed have mercy upon His people and forgives and pardons their sins, not because there is any merit in us, for we have none, but for Christ's sake. (Eph. 4:32)

The children of God often stand in need of correction from the Lord. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth (Heb.12:6). God loves His children with an everlasting love, and He will never cease to love them. He deals with them as with sons. "For what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?" The Lord chastens His *own* children, and this chastening is for their profit that they might be partakers of His holiness. "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." It appears that I have digressed from the text at the heading of this article, however, it is true, I believe, that every one who is taught of the Lord will confess as Jeremiah "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

In Hope of God's mercy,
Elder Ralph Dale
2508 Governors Pointe Ct
Concord, N.C. 28025

VOICES OF THE PAST

Dear Brother Tench,

I feel like I owe to tell you of what I saw and what did not see following my baptism, but first I want to thank you so much for baptizing me. I have thanked God so many times, and you too. You don't really know unless I tell you at that Saturday's meeting when I walked to the alter to be with those that I love, it was such a relief to me when I heard one of the brethren say "I move to receive her in the church". I thank them all. After the meeting was over we came home talking about the baptizing to be the next morning and said we guessed it wouldn't be a very big crowd there. I have a sister in law that lives in Draper, N.C. and I said I know she would come if she knew about it, but we didn't see anyway of her hearing about it so at last I said, as for my part I don't care if there isn't anybody there but the preacher and me. I said to Guy well I would like for you to be there if you will.

Brother Tench, if you remember it was a beautiful sun shining morning. I had been baptized before but I didn't see or feel the spirit of God within or around and about me, so after a time to come I had become miserable and in my poor way of knowing how I had asked God many times to show me the right way of true salvation and I do believe here at this place he did.

When I was lifted from beneath the water I heard you say "Amazing Grace", I heard the sound of their voices, but not a word, and when I got to the bank I just could see one of the brethren reach down his hand for me. From then on all that I saw was hands one at a time as smooth as satin and as white as snow reaching out for me. Everything was just as still and quiet as could be and it seemed that there was one walking by my side but I did not see anyone, just those beautiful smooth white hands reaching out shaking with me. Until at last my natural eyes was open in the face of the sister in law that I mentioned above and I was made to cry aloud and say oh I'm so glad to see you.

She is a sweet sister to me, of this precious faith. The thought of this seems to me as the twenty third Psalm of David, it seems just as plain to me now as it did that day. So I hope I haven't been mistaken in what it means to me, sometimes I wonder if I have but it seems a precious hope to me.

Written by: Sister Una Mae Willis
Member of Springfield Primitive
Baptist Church
Received & Baptized
October 12, 1952
Died: June 3, 1990
Submitted by her daughter in law:
Ann Willis Goad

ELDER W. P. O'NEAL, EXPERIENCE

When I was a small child I had many fears. I was afraid of the sun, I was afraid of the darkness and I was afraid that the world would come to an end. When I stayed all night with my grandparents, I would cry because I was afraid. They would ask me what was wrong and I would tell them my belly was hurting.

When my troubles first began, I decided to go to church. I was hunting for the church. I went to many churches and everything I knew of that called itself a church. All were killing to me. They would come to the house and say that if I didn't accept the Lord that He would not give me another chance.

I was told to pray for the Lord to appear to me and that he would talk face to face to me. I would cry all night until my pillow would be wet with tears. I finally begged for the Lord to appear unto me and one night while begging for him to appear, a white lacy form appeared to come down from the ceiling and began hovering around me. I was so afraid that I jumped out of bed and ran from the room. I never had a desire to ask the Lord to appear to me again.

I would go to work at night and I was in trouble all night and all day. I got in such a fix I thought my wife and baby had turned against me. I would lay in the bed at night and try to talk to my wife but a deep sleep had been placed upon her. I did not know at the time that she could not help me. This burden was for me to bear alone. I cried day and night.

I got to having dreams. I had not read the Bible, but would wake up quoting scriptures, begging the Lord to show me the true church. I dreamed I was in a trench and there was no way out. I saw a red horse and a man riding on it. The red horse had smoke and fire coming out of its mouth. I thought that if I would get out of this trench that the man on the red horse would get me. The earth was boiling with a red heat that I cannot describe. I could not go back to my wife and child but had to go on through this trench to my grandfather who was an Old Baptist preacher. (When I was a child, my grandfather had told certain ones that some day I would be with the Old Baptists.)

Another time, I dreamed I was in a wilderness, in thorns, thistles and barbwire. I was going up a mountain. I was talking to someone and told them that I must go to the top of the mountain and when I got there everything would be as white as snow. When there, I saw a garden with all kinds of fruits and vegetables and the Old Baptists lined up at the table.

In another dream, I saw two trees. On one side I saw several denominations. The bark of their tree was slippery and swift growing. The apple was red delicious. These people were enjoying themselves and eating this fruit like it was so good. Someone gave me an apple, but it was the bitterest thing I ever ate. The other tree was on the right.

It was old, the bark *was twisted* the fruit was shriveled. I climbed up in the

tree and tasted the fruit. It was the sweetest fruit I ever tasted. I thought this was the true doctrine.

In another dream, I was going up a hollow through brush, thorns and thistles. I saw an old man coming down the hollow with a long beard. We shook hands and the man said, "Brother O 'Neal, you ain't one of them. I said "No, I'm Old Baptist", and went on.

In another dream, a light appeared in the east in the shape of a rainbow and it lightened all the earth. I saw free wills, holiness and pentecostals, and they were under a graveyard. They were trying to pray and were working with their hands to try to find out what that light was. I saw an old brother (Elder Otto Tilley) at a table (which stretched as far as I could see) and I went to them and Elder Tilley shook hands with me and called me Brother O'Neal and I sat and ate with them. One said to me, "I will tell you what that light is. It is Jacob's well appearing in the east."

Sometimes, in the night, I would get up and crawl behind a cook stove and read the Bible by the light of the street lamps. I would be crying and wetting the pages with my tears. I got to where I did not want to see anyone. I thought people would think, if I went into the church, it would be just to hide my meanness.

I had a desire to go to the Old Baptist meeting at Bud. I tried to get my uncle to go with me, but he would not go, so I went on alone. I caught the bus to Bud, not knowing where the meeting house was. When I got off the bus I saw two little boys. I *asked* them where the meeting house was. They pointed across the hollow to the next mountain. I got close enough to hear the singing but could go no farther. I looked up and down the road. I thought, if anyone would come by, I would go down into the woods and hide. I thought I would try to pray. I went into the woods and stopped, but I was afraid someone would hear, so I went farther into the woods. I kept going and finally I knelt down to pray. When I came to myself I was kneeling by an old burnt log. I was praying "Lord, have mercy on me, a poor sinner." When I went back home, I didn't go into the house. I went up under the porch. My wife came to the door and asked where I had been. I said I had been after a load of wood. She asked me what was the matter and I said "nothing." I lied I was trying to keep my troubles hid.

I finally went to church. I remember going in and sitting down. I don't remember what happened after that, but when I came to myself, the church had accepted me. I still do not know what I said. After this I had a strong desire to be baptized. I thought I could not wait until the next meeting on the fourth Sunday. I came to meeting and sat down on the floor. When they got done with meeting I sat there and cried. After meeting they took me and bapitized me. Next, I wanted to go to the communion meeting.

I would wake myself up at night preaching. At meeting, when preachers were off talking, I was there too, talking scriptures. One day, after meet-

ing, the Elders were standing outside talking. They said, "What are we going to do with Brother O'Neal?" I heard this and went out into the outhouse and listened to hear what they would say. I was afraid I had done something and that they were going to take me up in the church. One said, "We are going to have to put him in the stand." I feared then that they would put me in the stand right away, but they did not. In three or four months I was asked to open service. I said, "I can't," but they insisted. Elder Otto Tilley said to "pick a song and if you can't continue, I will." I chose Amazing Grace. I stood and cried. I could not sing. When the song was finished, I knelt down to pray. I don't know if I made a sound, but what was on my mind was "Lord, have mercy on me, a poor sinner." After this Elder Tilley got up and went on in the stand and, preached. Every now and then I was called into the stand.

Another time I was called to stand and I thought that I made such a mess that I vowed I would never go back in the stand. Some time after this, I was working in the coal mine and a huge rock fell from the roof and pinned me under it. It broke my back and paralyzed me for a time. I prayed that if the Lord would spare me I would go back into the stand. After the rock fall and the hospital stay, I was made willing to go back into the stand. I am satisfied that the Old Baptist is the true church. But to tell you that I am one, I cannot do. They are the most honest and the humblest people that I have ever known in my life.

In another dream, I was in a multitude of people. There was a woman in front. I thought she was the most beautiful woman I had ever seen. This multitude of people was dressed in white and followed the woman. She went around by a big rock and then went into the rock. Everything inside was as white as snow. All were clothed in white. I looked back and saw my wife May following along. When I looked back the second time, I didn't see her again. This worried me. I was told by Brother Mosely not to worry, that when in heaven, all would be alike. There will be no marriages in heaven. This seemed to satisfy me. I haven't worried about it since.

I joined the church May 25,1947, was baptized on the fourth Sunday in June by Elder Otto Tilley and was ordained April 22, 1952.

Elder William Patten O'Neal

Note: Elder W. P. O'Neal was Moderator of the Newfound Church in Wyoming County, West Virginia, where meetings are held on the third Sunday of each month. The Newfound Church is in the Little Vine Olde Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association.

PROVERBS 4:25.

Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

What greater power, knowledge and wisdom can any being have? Certainly there was no man to advise or question Him. God spake and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast. The finite mind of carnal man can in no wise comprehend such a thing, and only by faith can one believe it. There are people in this world today who have read or heard the first verse of the Scriptures many times and yet are searching diligently as to how the earth and the heavens originated and also the origin of man. Some believe (but I am sure they have no proof) that the heavens and the earth were formed when some tremendous planet exploded, and that man evolved from some creature in the sea. I have often wondered if any of these people ever ask, Who or what created that huge planet and the creature that supposedly evolved into man? I am sure they have never considered the bible a true source of information concerning this, but it is not my intention to discuss this any further, God being my necessary guide, but to talk of God's power, wisdom and knowledge to His elect children. The non-elect can never understand in truth what the Scriptures say: neither can anyone else until they are opened to him of God. Jesus taught his apostles and disciples many things while he was on earth in the flesh, yet they understood not until he opened their understanding (See Luke 24:45). To the others Jesus always spake in parables. One of the apostles asked, Why?, and Jesus said, "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but unto them it is not given." In another place Jesus said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven, and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and the prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." All spiritual things are hid from the wise and prudent because it pleased the Father. "For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (1 Cor. 19-21). And the 18th verse says, For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. "Brethren, isn't it wonderful to feel the power that gives you hope that you are one of the us that are saved? I do not know that I am included in that blessed number, but at times I seem to have a hope that is ever so sweet. Who are the ones saved? Are they not the ones chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love?

God said, "Let there be light, and there was light." He divided the light

from the darkness and called the light day, and the darkness night. God spake to the earth that it should bring forth grass, and herbs, and fruit trees, etc. and the earth did as commanded. God spake to the waters that they should bring forth abundantly every moving creature that hath life, and fowl that fly above the earth. God commanded the earth to bring forth all the living creatures, and it was so. In other words all living things upon the face of the earth and in the seas were brought into existence by the word of God's power. Such power and wisdom the finite mind of natural man can in no wise comprehend. Neither can he understand how God made man from the dust of the earth, breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul. But God is an infinite being and he has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done. He is the Alpha and Omega.

When God made man he made him exactly as it pleased him and it pleased him to create man in his own image; male and female created he them, and he called their name Adam. Although the man God formed from the dust was only one outwardly, yet Eve was in him and so was all his posterity. Therefore he is the federal head of all mankind. In other words he is the father of all people born of the flesh, save Jesus Christ, whose Father is God.

The first man Adam was a figure of him that was to come, Jesus Christ. In type Eve represents the bride of Christ, which is the church. She was in Adam just as the church was in Jesus Christ, who was chosen in him before the foundation of the world. When God took a rib from Adam and made it a woman and gave her to Adam, he said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man." Paul tells us that we are the members of the body of Christ. "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Therefore we see that we were in him as Eve was in Adam.

God placed them in the garden of Eden and gave them a commandment that they should eat of every fruit of the garden except the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil. God knew that his law would be broken, he said, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." He did not say, "If thou eatest," but, "In the day thou eatest thereof." Sin would enter the world by this man, but the cure was already prepared, for Jesus stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. The serpent was in the garden of Eden. This serpent is the Devil or Satan, and he was there by the will of God. Nothing is done outside the will of God. When he entered the garden we are not told, but he was there for a very specific purpose — to deceive. He was a liar from the beginning and the father of it. "He was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made." Job said, "His hand hath formed the crooked serpent." These two verses should silence any who contend that God did not make the

Devil, but I don't believe they will. They will be twisted or ignored as are many of the other Scriptures. God saw that every thing he made was good: it is good for the purpose which he made it. We know that Satan was there and that he deceived Eve: and he is still going to and fro in the earth and walking up and down in it, seeking to devour who he may. And I will say that he is seeking to devour only the children of God, for all the rest are his. But God has put a hedge about his children as he did about Job, and Satan can go only as far as God permits, for Satan has only the power God gives him: there is no power but of God. All the powers that be are ordained of him.

Being deceived, Eve ate of the forbidden fruit and then gave to her husband Adam, and he did eat.

Being a figure of him that was to come, Adam was not deceived; but because of his love for his bride he ate the fruit. He had no power to bring her back, therefore he went to her. To be with her he must pay the debt that was incurred. Death is the only penalty or debt for sin. The debt of the wife is always charged to the husband, therefore sin has never been charged to the church, the bride of Christ, for all her sins were charged to him and his righteousness was imputed unto her, and because of his great love wherewith he loved her he came into the world and laid down his life to pay the debt that God's holy justice demanded. He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Had not Christ been raised from the dead we would still be dead in trespasses and sin and have no hope of heaven and eternal life. Christ is our life, and in him we live and move and have our being. And as surely as he lives we shall also live.

When Adam disobeyed the commandment of God he fell from his upright, pure, innocent state, to a state of sin, condemnation and death, and all of his posterity fell in him, for they were embodied in him. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." In the flesh we are only Adam multiplied, and as Paul said, " For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." Though death has passed upon all men Jesus Christ has already paid the penalty for his chosen people: the just died for the unjust. How can justice be satisfied with this? We know that God is holy and perfect in all his attributes. His love, mercy, laws and justice are all equal: one cannot outweigh or override the other. We also know that he hath loved us with an everlasting love and that he has shown great mercy upon all. His love and mercy are the cause or reason for saving his elect people, yet it is not love and mercy that saved them, for his righteous justice must be satisfied, and without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. Therefore Jesus shed his holy blood on the cross of Calvary. As our High Priest he offered himself a sacrifice unto God and by this one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. The

blood of sacrificed animals could never accomplish this, but the sinless blood of Jesus Christ did, and we are freely justified by the grace of God through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ , for God set him forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." To whom is this free grace given? Not to the entire world, for if it were thus so then the entire world would be saved. It is to the elect of God, those he chose in Christ before the foundation of the world those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life, and as mentioned before they are flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones. We read in Ps. 139, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." What a marvelous declaration this is, for he is talking about the body of Christ. If we be the body of Christ then did God see us before we were ever born into this world. The body of Christ was not imperfect, but unperfect — being not yet fully manifested or developed. It will only be completed when the last member is brought into the world.

Christ is the head of the body and therefore he must control all of it. Without the head the body is nothing; it has no life. Therefore when Christ died on the cross we died in him. (I say 'we' only in hope for myself). Now justice can demand no more. Jesus suffered the pain and agony for us, but yet in a mystical sense we also died. We were buried with him and we arose with him; now therefore we are free from sin and condemnation. The debt has been paid, we have been ransomed. Had not Christ arisen we would still be dead in trespasses and sins, but he was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. This was the first resurrection, and if we had a part in it we are greatly blessed, for, "Blessed and holy is he that hath a part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years." Those who had no part in the first resurrection and whose names were not found written in the Lamb's book of life will be cast into the lake of fire with death and hell. This is the second death.

How wonderful, how marvelous, how beautiful! how greatly we are blessed when we are given eyes to see, ears to hear and a heart to understand and feel at least a portion of God' s power, wisdom and knowledge. I feel that I have been greatly blessed to rejoice in hope as I have written these things unto you, and it is my prayer that God will also bless you likewise or more so. And if it be the will of God I will write more on this subject later. Right now my mind seems to be

full of Scriptures concerning this, and I know that the subject can never be exhausted if he gives us grace to write the rest of our lives.

May God bless the truth and pardon all my errors.

Submitted in love and hope,
Clifford Wilbanks

I spoke some months ago on some of the marks mentioned in the scriptures as they relate to the Lord's people and have been asked to write my thoughts on the subject.

(1) In Genesis chapter 4 a portion of the 15th verse reads, "*And the Lord set a mark upon Cain" etc.* This mark is a type we all have in nature. It is the mark of disobedience and death we have inherited from Adam and Eve. We have in reality committed murder because our sins brought about the death of Christ. We did by our misdeeds make it necessary for Him to be crucified and His blood cries on our behalf to God as the blood of righteous Abel cried. We so often hear the statement "They crucified Christ " but my beloved it was the sins of the Church that crucified Him. Now we see the mark of sin and condemnation of ourselves sent Him to the sufferings of the cross and not the world. Those who remain the descendants of Cain have no part in our hope of salvation through His redeeming blood.

Man cannot with self works erase the mark of sin anymore than he can change his height, or to refer to the word, "anymore than a leopard can change his spots." We carry this mark of nature until death brings an end to sin. The corruption then (mark) will be destroyed as the body returns to dust. We have hope beyond this death that through Christ we shall live again without the mark of sin and death because His words is to present us without spot, wrinkle, blemish in perfection. We then shall have received the mark of glory and faith and hope will have become reality. We will then have been made perfect in love in order that we may dwell in His presence forever. The mark has been exchanged through Christ for a portion of heir to His throne. Praise God!

(2) Job writes in Chapter 22:15 "*Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden*?" This way is surely marked in the minds of each of us as we remember the way we have come. We as the wise men of old have no desire to return again to the old way. It was a way we were satisfied with until such time as Christ was revealed and then we saw it as the way to the depths of hell. It is the same way David expressed as a horrible pit and miry clay and he would praise God that He had lifted him from such. We must render all praise to Him whose arm of grace is long enough to reach to any depths that one of His has fallen to. The old way is marked by our own remembrance that Christ has removed the joys of the circumstances of our sins in order that we not forget what we have been drawn out of. Those of the world are never concerned about this

way because they don't know the difference (have not been taught) and are known by their fruits (actions and pleasures).

(3) We find in Psalm 37:37 "*Mark the perfect man and behold the upright for the end of that man is peace.*" There has never been but one perfect man and He is marked in our minds with His indelible blood. The marks of His laws in our hearts and minds holds us steadfast to His truths. We did not, nor can any man under the heavens bring these marks to be in or on another person, even our kinsmen by nature. These marks are of grace and thus not of works lest any should boast. We can behold the marks of grace on our brothers and sisters in Christ but not upon ourselves. This has been fixed thus in order we not become puffed up and exalted above measure.

The death of Christ not only brought peace to himself but also for us. He was taken out of this world that had been pain and humiliation for Him. He was indeed ready to die (willing) to and return to the father in glory from whence He came. We rejoice now that in Him and through Him we died too that we be separated from the condemnation of our sins. We also are comforted with the promise that as He burst forth from the grave we shall also when His voice calls with a shout of victory.

We see, in His coming to His death the perfect submission to the will of God. His humility caused him to accept in silence the marks of His body to obtain humility and submission for us. In the 53rd chapter of Isaiah some of the marks are noted. "*He was bruised for our iniquities*," "*By His stripes we are healed*," *and "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him.*" We will not suffer these wraths of God because He hath suffered them already for us. The world wonders after all these things why we trust and praise Him as our all in all Isaiah also writes "*He saw of the travail of His soul and was satisfied.*" Then He had fully obtained peace for Himself, for us and for a dying thief when He said "*its finished.*"

(4) In the gospel of Luke 14:1 we find this, "*And He put forth a parable to those that were bidden, when He marked how they chose out the chief rooms etc.*" We see this mark on many today along our journey. These are the ones who dote upon selfworks and choose for themselves an elevated place in so called Christianity. We hear oft - times some say they know God has a high palace for them because of what they have done. We are reminded that there will be no big I and little you in the climes of Glory. This same thought is under consideration in the completion of the verse for Christ reminded them that there could come one greater than they who had chosen the highest room. He also tells them that he who thinks himself greatest will be abased and he who considers himself least shall be exalted. Thus beloved we who consider ourselves least in His kingdom shall be exalted and stand before Him justified.

In keeping with this parable we should mark (not judge) how a member conducts himself or herself with

their brothers and sisters in Christ. We should mark what their conversation is and their humility. We should note (mark) how they conduct themselves in the house of the Lord. These expressions reveal *the* marks of *the strength* of their hope and faith and from whence it comes.

(5) In Psalm 48:11 -14 and especially note verse 13. It reads *"Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell the generation following,* David is speaking of Zion *and* reminds us to mark *her bulwarks which are the defensive strengths of the* Gospel. These strengths tell us that Christ was marked for death before He was born, in the will of God the father. We find John writing in the 18th chapter verse 37, "To this end *was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth, (The* gospel, the bulwarks of Zion.) He came to fulfill the will of His father and obtain for us a place of safety within *the* bulwarks of Zion. He thus fulfilled to a jot and tittle the law for all who had been marked by election and predestination before the foundation of the world.

We now declare that all who were predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ desire to hear the bulwarks of Zion are secure and its the duty of all God called ministers to assure them their hope, faith and salvation are eternal security within the realm of Zion. We who walk about Zion (among the churches) discern the marks of order and discipline she has. The marks of the true bulwarks of Zion embody the virtues of Christ for He is the complete body of Zion (the Church).

We consider the palaces of Zion as the places where Christ is manifest to His own. The poet writing *"Prisons would palaces prove if Christ would dwell with* me *there."* Historically palaces were considered places of comfort and safety and a home where peace prevailed. Is this not *a* true description of the Church? Thus anywhere we find Him *revealed is for* a *moment* a *palace and its as close as we come to the* palace of eternity in this time world.

Christ marked the way to Mt. *Zion by His sufferings and the trials* the scribes and Pharisees placed upon Him. They scorned and derided Him because they felt they had the answers and not He. He has marked us in such a way that we are turned away from the world (even our relatives in the flesh) to follow *the marks* of *the strait and narrow* way. These marks embody salvation expressed in this world and eternal life in that world (palace) to come. He has blessed us with the marks of love, fellowship and communion in order that His name be praised on the bulwarks of Zion and palaces within.

We should treasure all the marks of afflictions and trials as well as the marks of His love. These are a part of the travel toward Zion. When we plan a trip (naturally) we choose a way that seems best and nearest to arrive at our destination. Thank God we do not (cannot) choose the way to glory for the

carnal mind is enmity toward God our best thoughts (choosings) as filthy rags. Christ Himself said "I am the way, the truth and the life." In first Corinthians 12:31 Paul writes "But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way." The many marks He has given us are indeed gifts for we have not (cannot) obtained them by works. These marks are the fulfillment of the promise, "My yoke is easy and my burden light." They are just mileage marks along the road to glory.

In Psalm 27:11 David writes, "Lead me in a plain path, etc." The path of the preserver of Zion is plain to His people yet hid from the world because it pleased Him to hide these things from the wise and prudent and reveal them to babes. We then are commanded to tell these things to the generation following. We note the word generation is singular and not plural in any sense. This expresses the fact that there is but one generation of Christ. We became kinsmen of that generation because kinsmen of that generation because of the marks of the whip, spear and nails upon the body of the son of God.

The natural body has the mark of dust and death upon it for from dust was it made and in death to dust shall return. We can be assured that the spirit within has the mark of eternal life and returns unto God who gave it. It is that spirit of life that shall call (Christ) to the sleeping dust and shall deliver that new body to Zion's palace in order that we see Him for ourselves and not another.

May we praise His holy name along the way (on the bulwarks) and feel in some marvelous way as did Paul when he wrote in Philippians chapter 3 verse14, "I *press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."* Oh what a mark to receive and what joy to possess. Praise God!

Elder C. B. Davis, Jr.

***I* am *the way, the truth and the life*: no *man cometh unto the Father but by* me.**

These are the words of Jesus to his disciples in the final hours that he was with them here on earth, shortly before he was to be betrayed unto the Jews by Judas Iscariot. It was a very crucial time in his ministry and his words have a special urgency as he began to tell them of the things that would come and the effects that these things would have on their lives and the lives of all of his chosen people in the generations to come. They are the most assuring and inspiring of all his teachings as he began to reveal the spiritual aspects of his ministry, how it would be manifested in their ministry and how and why it must be this way. In the scripture above Jesus sets forth, in one sentence, the complete sovereignty of God in the salvation of every heir of heaven, also, the complete inability of man even to approach unto the Father of their own initiative or strength.

Just prior to this time Jesus had told his disciples, "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will return again and receive you unto myself: that where I am, there ye may be also." Jesus was referring to the fact that he was on the way to the cross where he would make the sacrifice necessary to take away their sin; then come forth from the tomb victorious over death, hell and the grave so that as he had triumphed over them, all that were chosen in him before the foundation of the world would likewise come forth and reign with him in the kingdom of heaven throughout eternity. The law required this sacrifice for sin and Jesus was the only one that could make the sacrifice since it must be perfect no spot nor blemish. No one else could make it and man could not be instrumental in it in any way.

Jesus said, "I am the way." Under the law sacrifices were made continually of bulls and goats but they could not put away sin; rather it was just a yearly reminder of sin pointing to the time of the perfect sacrifice that would put away sin for all time. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak in flesh, God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us." This is the way, the only way that a sacrifice would be acceptable before God and that was that it be the body that was prepared for this one special event. Just as no man helped Jesus to do anything during his ministry here on earth previously they could not help, In any sense of the word, on this occasion; therefore Jesus said, I am the way, not a way but the way and the only way. The way of all is the same, it is the Christ. This Is the only way that man can be turned from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God , receive the forgiveness for sin, become heirs of salvation and be blessed to be able to look forward to receiving an inheritance among them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus. Man speaks of many ways of salvation based on many necessary ingredients but Christ simply says, I am the way. "He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." And again, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture." All of these words, and many others, spoken throughout his ministry leaves no room for doubt but that all that his Father gave him before the foundation of world shall come to him and all that cometh to him he will In no wise cast out. No man, of their own ability knows Jesus, for the scripture states, " All things are delivered unto me of my Father : and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son , and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him ." Oh, the blessedness of those, in the fold, who hear his voice call unto them, by name, and who follow him in the way that leads to life eternal. They will not follow the voice of a stranger because they have not the words of life. This is the way that

all must come to God and all of it is in Christ who is the way of salvation to all that believe on him unto life eternal.

Jesus said, "I am the truth." All scripture is given by inspiration of God unto his servants for the edification of the church during its pilgrimage here in time: They are absolutely true and are profitable for doctrine for all who have been given the ability to discern the things of the spirit. The scriptures are a record of God's dealings with his elect people down the corridors of time as he made manifest his truths to them here in time and they are taught to fear him. "The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom." All of the elect learn this lesson well as they are made to see what they are by nature and what they must be by grace, and see the great gulf between the two extremes and realize that they can never bridge this great gulf by their own efforts. This is where they are made to see their need of a savior and at the same time are given a hope that Jesus, the Son of God is their savior. This truth and knowledge which come as a package are the gift of God that enables them to know and to understand the word of truth: the word of truth that was made flesh and dwelt among them full of grace and truth. Only the recipients of this faith fellowship the mystery which has been treasured in Christ from before the foundation of the world but is made manifest in the Appearing of Christ to them at the time appointed by the Father. This truth and their love for it separates them from the world and their love for it, as in former days, and make them see and realize the vanity and foolishness of the things in nature when compared to the glory of the spiritual realm. This causes them to desire more and more to explore the depths of the wisdom and knowledge of God: to search out his ways and his judgements and find the ways that lead to life eternal. They realize that the truth is the only thing that is sufficient for their need and since Jesus, whom they know says, I am the truth, they will hear and follow him alone and trust him for salvation in time and in eternity.

"I am the life, Jesus said this many times during his ministry here in the world and each time that he said it he was speaking of that spiritual life which all must possess before they can have a hope of eternal life; before they can come to him and be healed; before they see the kingdom of heaven. They must have this life before they can believe as Paul wrote, "for he that cometh to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." When they receive this life, which was treasured in Christ, they are a new Creature, old things are passed away, behold all things become new. Their walk and their talk take on a new direction, their food and drink is the flesh and blood of Jesus, the flesh being the word of God and the blood the life thereof. Jesus said, "who so eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. This change in the lives of the followers of Jesus is the outward

evidence, to the saints, of the inward work of grace that had been done in the heart of the new believer. This is the life that radiates the light that shines before men, which cannot be hid, and gives light to all that are in the house, (household of faith). This miracle of grace causes rejoicing In the hearts of all who behold it, and they render praise to the giver of this perfect gift of life as a manifestation of his presence in their midst and evidence that he is still adding to the church daily such as should be saved. This life produces action, just as it does in nature, and the individual goes forth in the strength of the Lord manifesting his calling to all that have eyes to see. This was demonstrated in the lives of all of the Apostles and disciples in Jesus' day and if the calling is from God it will be in this day for the calling is for a purpose with a designated end to be accomplished. There are many callings and all are of equal importance, there are no insignificant callings, for they are for the good of the body, the church, of which they are a member and they are to the Glory of God the Father. As Paul wrote, " I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." You have been given this gift of spiritual life that you might fight a good fight of faith and finish your course having kept the faith in a pure heart as much as in you is. This is all that is your duty to do, and do it as the spirit enables you to and being diligent in all things as unto God.

"No man cometh unto the Father but by me." Jesus had told Peter and the disciples, shortly before this, that where he was going they could not go now, but that they would go afterwards: Peter said why cannot I go now? I will lay down my life for your sake. Jesus answered, wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow til thou has denied me thrice. At this point in time Peter was willing and wanted to go with Jesus even unto death, but, when the time came to do it he denied vehemently that he even knew Jesus. This is the flesh; always subject to circumstances and very much interested in self preservation. "To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven."

There was a certain time and way in which Peter was to leave this world and God had much to be done by Peter prior to that time; Peter did indeed lay down his life by crucifixion, as Christ did, but at the time and place appointed by God. Peter could not go unto the Father but by Christ and at God's time not Peter's. All who go to the Father must go in Christ. God only prepared one place for those that he formed for himself; only accepted one sacrifice as an atonement for their sin; only had one plan of salvation whereby all of his elect would be secured to himself and all of this was in the obedi-

ence of Jesus Christ to his Father's will. In Jesus' prayer to his Father he said, " Father the hour is come: glorify thy Son that thy Son may also glorify thee."

The glory of the Father and the Son rested in the accomplishment of the designed goal, the salvation of the saints by the death burial and resurrection from the grave of Christ. Then Jesus said, "I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." The plan is executed, completed and successful and therefore the eternal abode of all the saints in Glory is absolutely assured. All who are in that number came to God by Jesus and those who climb up some other way will be judged out of the books at the final day.

In completing the work Jesus had taken away the first and had established the second; he had fulfilled the law, taking It out of the way and nailing It to the cross, and he had established the covenant of grace which was established on better promises than that of Moses. He had established a new and living way through the veil, that is to say the flesh, whereby each subject of grace might come boldly to the throne of grace and Commune with the Father in *spirit* and in truth: come having their loins girt about with truth, having on the breastplate of righteousness, feet shod with the preparation of the gospel the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit which Is the word of God. As Paul said, "wherefore take unto you the whole Armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand. All of this Armor is defensive by design and is to thwart the attacks of the principalities and powers, resist the ruler of darkness and discern spiritual wickedness in high places. No offensive armor to help the Lord to resist these forces: He has already overcome them and thereby provided his children with these defenses.

O' the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out. The depths can never be completely searched out, in this life, but the joys of searching and the treasures that the saints do find as they walk about Zion and study the word makes all the efforts worthwhile. It is sufficient to occupy the rest of their lives; it is the pearl of great price, the treasure that was hidden in the field; the handfuls of purpose that they find as they glean among riches of their inheritance here in this time world, the fullness of which will be realized when they enter into the joy of their heavenly home. The value of these things, to the wayfaring pilgrim is worth more than all of the wealth of the world. Their desire is to understand more and more of this mystery and obtain more and more evidence of their participation in this plan of salvation.

They would only be satisfied with certain knowledge but this they will never have in time: this is what keeps them pressing to the mark, for the mark of the prize of the high calling of God which is treasured in Christ who is the way, the truth, and the life, and by whom all of the heirs of grace approach unto God.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

"For we are his workmanship." --- Ephesians ii. 10.

Consider what is here declared of those who are saved by grace through faith --- that they are God's "workmanship" — the fruit and product of his creative hand. All, then, that we are and all that we have that is spiritual, and as such acceptable to God, we owe to the special operation of his power. There is not a thought of our heart, word of our lips, or work of our hands, which is truly holy and heavenly, simple and sincere, glorifying to God or profitable to man, of which he is not by his Spirit and grace the divine and immediate Author. How beautifully is this expressed by the Church of old, and what an echo do her accents find in every gracious heart: **"But now, O Lord, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand" (Isa. lxiv. 8.)** How suitable, how expressive is the figure of the clay and the potter. Look at the moist clay under the potter's hand. How soft, how tender, how passive is the clay; how strong, how skillful are the hands which mould it into shape. As the wheel resolves, how every motion of the potter's fingers shapes the yielding clay, and with what exquisite skill does every gentle pressure, every imperceptible movement impress upon it the exact form which it was in his mind to make it assume. How sovereign was the hand which first took the clay, and as divine sovereignty first took it, so divine sovereignty shapes it when taken into form.

J. C. Philpot

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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SONG

Awake, my soul, in joyful lays,
And sing thy great Redeemer's praise:
He justly claims a song from me!
His loving kindness, O how free!
His loving kindness, loving kindness,
His loving kindness, O how free!

He saw me ruin'd in the fall,
Yet lov'd me notwithstanding all;
He sav'd me from my lost estate;
His loving kindness, O how great!

Though num'rous hosts of mighty foes,
Though earth and hell my way oppose,
He safely leads my soul along;
His loving kindness, O how strong!

When trouble, like a gloomy cloud,
Has gather'd thick and thunder'd loud,
He near my soul has always stood;
His loving kindness, O how good!

Often I feel my sinful heart
Prone from my Jesus to depart;
But though I have him oft forgot,
His loving kindness changes not.

Soon shall I pass the gloomy vale,
Soon all my mortal powers must fail;
O! may my last expiring breath
His loving kindness sing in death.

Then let me mount and soar away
To the bright world of endless day,
And sing, with rapture and surprise,
His loving kindness in the skies.

Medley

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EDITORIAL

CAIN AND ABEL

Genesis 4:1-2, "And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord. And she again bore his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground."

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

Eve conceived and bare the first child born into the world. I believe that Cain and Abel are figures of the natural and the spiritual, of the lost and the elect, of the non-believer and the ones of faith. Cain was first. The Apostle Paul writes in **1 Corinthians 15:46, "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural."** Other examples are the sons of Abraham, Ismael and Isaac, as well as the sons of Isaac, Esau and Jacob.

Abel was a keeper of sheep. He was a shepherd. There were no works of the flesh involved as he did not make the sheep, but merely watched over them and cared for them. As such he was a figure of the Lord's ministers. By faith he offered the firstling of his flock and of the fat thereof. This was pointing to the suffering, death and shedding of blood of Christ. Revelation speaks of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. John the Baptist saw Christ and proclaimed "Behold the Lamb of God." The Lord had respect unto Abel's offering because it was offered in faith that the Lord gave him. The Apostle Paul wrote "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh." Faith is a gift of God given only to the elect.

Cain was a tiller of the ground which shows action and sets forth works of the flesh. He tilled the black dust of the earth of which his natural body was composed. He planted; he harvested. He offered the fruit of the earth, works of the flesh, unto the Lord. He had no faith as he knew nothing of the love and mercy of God. His offering was of the flesh, by the flesh and for the satisfaction of the flesh. His

works were evil. The works of the flesh are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like. The Apostle added "that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." John writes that Cain was of that wicked one (Satan) and that his works were evil. **1 John 3:10-12, "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain,** *who* **was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous."** So Abel was manifest as a child of God and Cain was manifest as a child of the devil. Abel was the first child of God persecuted and slain because of his faith. That was the beginning of the persecution of the church. Christ promised His little ones that they would have tribulation in the world, but also told them to be of good cheer for He had overcome the world. The words of Christ as recorded in **Matthew 23:34-35, "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and** *some* **of them ye shall kill and crucify; and** *some* **of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute** *them* **from city to city: That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barochias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar."**

God had not respect for the offering of Cain because his works were evil. **"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh: but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded** *is* **death; but to be spiritually minded** *is* **life and peace. Because the carnal mind** *is* **enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."** Cain, filled with anger and wrath, rose up and slew his brother, Abel, and then lied about it.

Now, I believe, God presents a picture of that which will take place at the end of time. Revelation 20:12 reads, **"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is** *the book* **of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works."** Cain, based upon previous scriptures, will face this judgment in that time, but he experienced it in a measure at this time. He stood before God, not in love and mercy, but it judgment and the power of God. The Lord said unto Cain, **"where is Abel thy brother?" Cain answered "I know not:** *Am* **I my brother's keeper?"** The Lord said unto Cain, "What hast thou

done? the voice of thy brother's blood cried unto me from the ground." The Lord wasn't asking Cain to find out, but the Lord was rendering judgment. Cain was guilty of murder, lying, and hatred of his brother. His works were evil. **Proverbs 6:16-19 says "These six** *things* **doth the Lord hate: yea, seven** *are* **an abomination unto Him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood. An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness** *that* **speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren."**

Now judgment was executed, The Apostle Paul writes in **II Thessalonians 1:7-10, "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day."** The Lord told Cain that he was cursed from the earth. When Cain tills the ground, it will not produce. He would be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth. No more would Cain be in the presence of the Lord. Cain said that his punishment was greater than he could bear. The Lord set a mark upon Cain that he should not be killed. Therefore, he must endure this hell on earth until he died. He still must face that eternal judgment and punishment at the end of time.

The doctrine of election is set forth as God chose one to eternal life before the foundation of the world and not the other one that the purpose of God according to election might stand. As the Apostle wrote to the saints at Rome, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" Judgment has been rendered that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. There is none that doeth good, no, not one. There is none righteous. We are all sinners and guilty. But the Lord's people have their names written in the book of life which is Christ. He came to this earth under the same law His people are under to satisfy the demands of His Father's holy law for them and to redeem His people from their sins. He suffered, shed His blood, and died to satisfy the judgment against them. He paid their debt in full as He said on the cross "It is finished." He rose from death and the grave to justify His elect. Therefore "who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect for it is God that justifieth." The Lord's elect will not stand before God in that day to be judged out of the books of the law according to their works. Rather, they will be blessed to hear that command, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

May the gracious Lord bless each

of you with comfort and peace that surpasses all understanding.

A little one in Hope,
Elder Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

January 16, 2013

Mr. Cleo Robertson, Editor
Signs of the Times
1429 Howlett Street
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Re: Subscription for 2 years

Enclosed is my check for $25.00 for 2 year subscription to Signs of the Times. While in a conversation with Harold Pittman, he indicated that an article written by my Grandfather, Elder B.S. Cowin was in your paper. He has sent a copy which I appreciate and value. I was not aware of your paper and want to receive future editions. I am very thankful for my Primitive Baptist background.

Thank you very much,
Rebecca H. Boyd

Dear Brother Horton,

I want to renew the Signs for one year. Sorry I'm a little late. I find myself more forgetful as I am getting older. I enjoy reading the Signs and look forward to getting them.

Hope you and your family are doing well. I send my love to all. Please look over mistakes.

A little sister in hope,
Estelle Thompson

ARTICLES

"O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things. and to enter into his glory." Luke 24:25, 26.

These are the words of Jesus after his resurrection when he joined himself to the two disciples after they left the others at Jerusalem and were on their way to Emmaus. He first appeared to them only as another traveler that was curious of their conversation. After hearing their concern and astonishment of what certain women of their company had reported, that they found not the body of Jesus when they visited the tomb. Jesus seemed to act in astonishment and said, in effect, that this is what they should have expected— and more.

The question is; "Why did they not understand what the prophets had spoken?" They had trusted that he was the Messiah that would redeem Israel in a political sense. They thought he would be the one to throw off the yoke of the Roman government, which they were under, and restore the temporal kingdom again to Israel. See Acts 1:6.

But the thought of a spiritual kingdom was apparently not at all in their understanding much less their expectations. Though it may seem to be an overstatement to attribute such a dullness to the two disciples, yet is this not the experience of a child of grace when left to his own reasoning, when first confronted with the seeming unreasonableness of the gospel? This man, whom they did not know, that walked with them on the road to Emmaus, seemed to imply unreasonable things to their natural minds and that these things that had happened to Jesus were necessary and that they should have known them.

Then, without revealing himself, Jesus began to expound, to their natural understanding, the things in the scriptures concerning himself, beginning at Moses and all the prophets. Yet he did not reveal himself and took pity on their dullness **"For he remembered that they** *were but* **flesh." Psalm 78:39.** When they arrived at their abode he made as though he would have gone further, yet the crowning purpose of his presence had not yet taken place. But now the time had come to make himself known to the two and he went in as if to lodge with them for the evening. As they sat at meat Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. The things he had spoken earlier they now understood. Though they knew only in part of the glory they had witnessed, it was more than enough. How wonderful to have had a personal experience with the risen Christ.

Dear child of God has your heart not burned, as that of these two disciples, when looking back to when the scriptures were first given to you in a meaning beyond that of interesting history and moral stories. and you began, for the first time, to see a heavenly purpose and the out shining of his glory. Your reasoning was given a spiritual dimension and you saw Jesus Christ as you had never seen him before. Now, Proverbs 3:5 had a newness of meaning. **"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding."** He had never revealed himself to you before and now your world was turned upside down. Sorrow was turned to joy, and despair turned to an earnest expectation of things yet to come. And, like the two disciples, your desire was to be with others of your brothers and sisters and to speak and hear more of the things of the Lord.

Returning to Jerusalem the two disciples found the eleven apostles and other disciples with them and they too were saying that the Lord is risen indeed and had appeared to Simon. The two that had returned from Emmaus then told how Jesus had appeared to them on the road and how he was known to them in the breaking of bread as they sat at the meal. And as they spoke of these things Jesus himself stood in their midst and spoke to them, "Peace be unto you." Being yet in the flesh they were frightened (no, terrified), thinking that he was a

spirit. And in a somewhat like manner as with the disciples on the road to Emmaus he challenged their lack of understanding.

He then invited them to **"Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see me have." Luke 24:39.** He was proving to the yet unbelieving disciples that he was the Jesus that they knew and with whom they had fellowship.

He also shows himself to be the same Jesus that they had seen crucified, and not some mystical spirit, as they may have at first imagined. He was yet in the flesh and had not been glorified, as mentioned in **John 7:39, ("...for the Holy Ghost was not yet** *given* **because that Jesus was not yet glorified.")** and **John 12:16., "(...but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him...)"** His change had not taken place, but seems to have been at the time of his ascension, which would prefigure the manner of change of the saints at the last trumpet, recorded in **1 Cor. 15:51,52, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."**

Following the appearance of Jesus to the disciples he asked if they had any meat, and he ate and reminded them of what he had previously told them of the scriptures relating to him. And he apparently told them again of the scriptures that were about him in the law, Moses, and the prophets and that all must be fulfilled. These are the scriptures of the Old Testament to which he referred and not the New Testament. The New Testament had not, at that time, been written.

"Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures." Luke 24:45. It might be asked: How were the scriptures revealed to these disciples when the Holy Spirit had not yet been given? But Christ was there and that was all sufficient, **"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power." Col, 2:9, 10.**

Christ explained again of the necessity of what had been done and what was taking place, Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, **"And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things" Luke 24:47,48.** It appears, from Mat. 28:16 and Mark 16:14, that these last remarks and the commission was addressed to the eleven apostles only. They acted, **"And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with** *them,* **and confirming the word with signs following. Amen." Mark 16:20.** This is further evidenced by the apostle Paul, **"...and** *be* **not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which you have heard,** *and* **which was**

preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minster;" Col. 1:23. Even though the apostolic command may have been carried out then, nevertheless, in the words of Jesus in **Mat. 24: 14** it is recorded, **"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."** Therefore, is it not evident that there will continue to be ministers called and spiritually qualified to preach the gospel, even to the end? Not apostles, but godly men (disciples), called and qualified in a similar manner, for example, as Silas, Barnabas, Timothy, and others. Able men, ministering the holy scriptures **"...which are able to make thee wise unto"** (to, or about) **"salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." 2 Tim. 3:15.** Also, **2 Tim. 1:10,** The salvation and calling of his people **"...is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."** The scriptures are not then the initiating factor in salvation, but are the manifestation of that salvation that has taken place in the heart. Salvation is by grace, free and sovereign grace alone, which rests in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The last of the instructions given by Jesus was for them to wait in the city of Jerusalem until they were endued (provided with) power from on high. Jesus had earlier said, **"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;** *Even* **the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." John 14:16,17.**

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind and it filled the house where they were. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost as the Spirit gave them utterance.

This was the answer to the prayer of Jesus. The Spirit was now in them and not just dwelling with them as had been the situation before. And thus it has been since Pentecost, with the children of God. The Spirit dwells within; **"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and** *that* **the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" 1 Cor. 3:16.** Also; **"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Rom. 8:16.**

Jesus had been with them, revealed himself, and instructed them after his resurrection. Then, having gone as far as Bethany with them he blessed them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. Now they had seen, by revelation, what they had not understood before. He was Jesus Christ the son of God; The one who ... **"sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law**

might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom. 8:3-4.

Elder Wayman Chapell

EXPERIENCE

12 Country Manor Apts.
Mebane, North Carolina
June 18, 1983

Dearest Brother Spangler,

I just received the news of Sister Blackwell's death today from my grandmother. She has always been a lovely sister to me and I truly believe that she lived her belief. As I think back over the years since I was blessed with a home in the church, eleven years in July, I think of the many precious brethren who have departed this life. It is a very humbling thought to realize that the Lord would allow me to be numbered with His people. I do not know that I am among that blood-bought number who will someday be with Christ and be forever satisfied, therefore, to attempt to pen what I hope is an experience of grace is a fearful thing. As I begin, my prayer is that whatever I write might be in keeping with the truth and if it is His most holy will, that it might be to His glory.

I remember, as a child, going to church with my grandparents and thinking, sometimes, that the day was very long. Whenever they would ask me to go, I usually would go even though I didn't really understand anything that was said. I did begin to do some reading at an early age which caused me to begin to have some concern about death and thereafter. For Christmas one year, I requested a bible story book which my mother bought for me. I read this before I ever started reading the Bible. One of my favorite chapters was the one about Joseph. I remember distinctly thinking as I read how Joseph treated his brothers with kindness, that I wouldn't have done that. What a blessing that the day did come when I trust that the Lord showed me that Joseph is a type of Him and that if He has not that compassion for me, then my soul is doomed to hell and His righteous law approves it well! Shortly thereafter I did begin reading in the New Testament, mostly in the first four chapters because they seemed easier to comprehend than some of the latter chapters especially Revelations. I think during this time I started to become a very staunch Arminian, which is the natural tendency of the carnal mind. I remember asking my grandfather one day, as he drew water from the well, if he thought the Lord heard all prayers. His answer was that if it is a prayer from the heart, then the Lord hears it. I thought my grandfather's answer had solved my problem because it was at this time that I had begun to fear hell and I wanted desperately to find a way to avoid it. So I felt that surely if I read my Bible and abided by the commandments there and prayed earnestly, that all would be well with me. I went through a period of time when I thought

I was doing that. I allotted a certain amount of my time every day to reading the Bible. One of my favorite passages of scripture at that time was the description of Christ's baptism particularly the words, "And lo a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Whether my attraction to that scripture at that time was of a spiritual nature or simply a recognition of the beauty of the language in which it is written, I know not. I also found myself drawn to the first Psalm:

"Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

But his delight *is* in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

The ungodly *are* not so: but *are* like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish."

What a different view of this scripture I came to have! I at this time, thought it a description of how I must be to inherit the kingdom. The day came, however, when I trust I was blessed to see the Lord there, that it is He and He alone who has fulfilled the requirements.

My readings at this time also included the *Autobiography of Elder Wilson Thompson* which you and Sister Spangler gave me at the age of thirteen. It, along with an old copy of *Pilgrim's Progress* which my grandmother had, made a distinct impression on my mind and later, I hope, on my heart. I remember remarking in a high school English class that I had read and enjoyed *Pilgrim's Progress* after which a visiting college graduate remarked that she didn't see how anyone could enjoy it. Well, she's right, they can't if they're not given to understand.

Many times in high school, a friend, whose parents are members at Dan River, and I would defend the beliefs of the Primitive Baptists in the face of the opposition of an entire class and the teacher. I don't know if either of us at that time fully understood what we were defending, but I do know that even then I recognized that the Bible unquestionably supported these beliefs and that the scriptures when properly interpreted are evidence that the Primitive Baptist beliefs can not be refuted.

It was while in high school that I first had an exercise of heart, if indeed the Lord has dealt with me. My grandfather became ill and had to go to the hospital. It was the first time I ever remember his being in the hospital. To me this is an example of how the Lord knows exactly how to deal with indi-

viduals. Had I been touched bodily with an illness, it could not possibly have hurt me to the very heart as it did to see my grandfather in that hospital bed. I began to fear that I was being punished for not asking a home in the church and I tried to pray diligently that the Lord would bring my grandfather back home to us. During this time I attended a union meeting at Pleasantville Church. Elder John Lee Smith used the text, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

This was the first time that I felt any strand of hope, any bit of assurance that the worthless worm of the dust that I saw myself to be, might be included in that number who had found grace in His sight. I visited my grandfather that day at the hospital. Before I left, you arrived, Brother Spangler, and you greeted me with such warmth. I remember feeling the desire to stay and listen to you talk and the fear of staying and telling you what I had felt that morning. So I left. My grandfather told me later that you had told him that you didn't think it would be long before I asked for a home in the church.

The Lord did bring my grandfather back home to us and it was one of those blessings in my life that I have never felt I have been able to be thankful enough for. As for going before the church, I still did not go. At this time in 1972 I graduated from high school and I remember your making a point of telling me that you and Sister Spangler would not be able to be there because one of your grandchildren would graduate the same night. It meant a great deal to me that you cared enough to tell me and at the same time because of the wretch I knew myself to be, it was very humbling to me to think that you would even consider coming. I'm a very shy person by nature and I was very nervous that night as I arose to deliver the valedictory speech, but I distinctly remember seeing Brother Coley Strader and Sister Mildred and other Dan River members in the audience and I felt no nervousness or fear while speaking because I felt that my friends and I hope my brethren were there. In that speech I quoted the scripture, **Psalms 30:5, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy** *cometh* **in the morning."** Little did I know that the time was drawing nigh in which I would feel the inexpressible joy of going home to my brethren.

On the fourth of July, 1972, I went to the Pine Creek meeting for the first time. It was a very beautiful day for me. Your text that day was **Hebrews 12:2, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of** *our* **faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."** I was overwhelmed with the picture of Christ that the Lord blessed you to portray-such compassion and such love and I felt some hope that perhaps He had compassion on me, because I knew at that point that there was no other way.

That very same month I attended the Upper Country Line Association with my grandmother—my grandfather

was unable to attend. The preaching touched my heart to such an extent that I desired to go before the church but felt surely I could not in such a multitude of people. We went home Saturday evening as we were riding with Brother Boyd Minter. I asked my grandmother to go back with me that night and we did. The next morning I could not control my tears as the different ministers spoke. That afternoon as the service was ending and we were singing "How firm a foundation", you announced an open door of the church and you looked at me and then you cast your eyes downward. I could not hold back any longer. I don't remember everything I said, but I do remember calling on the words of Ruth to plead my case, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." I felt then as I feel now that it would have been perfectly understandable had the church seen fit to deny my request for membership. I was not then what I would desire to be, and I'm not any closer to it in my carnal nature now. If there is any reason for me to believe that I might someday see the Lord as He is and be satisfied, then it is He and only He.

At the time I asked for a home in the church, I was seeing a young man whose mother was very much against my associating with Primitive Baptists. But that day I cared not what others thought. I felt that surely if he chose to turn his back on me when he learned that I had joined the church, that it mattered not, because I knew what was most important to me. As it turned out, he did make an effort to accept the fact that I believe as I do.

One of the precious memories of that third Sunday in July is of a precious Brother who was the first to address me as Sister Mary, a word that I feel very unworthy of having precede my name even now. That was Brother Tilley. I'll never as long as I live forget the smile on his face as he shook my hand. Later on when I was in college at East Carolina, I was at home on a fourth weekend and Brother Tilley was in the hospital after suffering a heart attack. I drove back to Greenville that Sunday feeling surely he was going to be all right as there had been good reports. However, my grandmother called to let me know that the Lord had taken him. I drove back home for the funeral on the day before exams for that quarter. It was late when I returned to Greenville that day so I did little studying for the English history exam scheduled for the next day. I've always believed that a person should not waste what the Lord has blessed him with, particularly the mind. And for that reason, I felt badly because I knew my work on that exam was not up to the previous work in the course, and yet, I had no regrets for making the trip home. I had to go because of my love for Brother Tilley. I wrote a note on the exam and apologized to the instructor for not doing as well as I should have and I told her that I had gone home for a funeral. I feel the Lord softened her

heart and she had compassion on me because my grade could have been much lower than it was. But, had I failed, I feel I still would have had to go the same way if I had it to do over again.

On the fourth Sunday in July, 1972, I was baptized. The young man, of whom I wrote earlier, was there and I remember seeing tears in his eyes as I went into the water. Not long after that we agreed to be married and, as you know, we asked that you perform the ceremony but that you not mention it to anyone as we didn't feel our parents would agree to it since we would both be starting college in the fall. As it turned out later on, however, we both agreed that we would not be married because he was unable to accept my beliefs. Though that was a difficult time for me, I feel the Lord blessed me in not making a serious mistake. I was made to feel that I could say with the hymn writer:

"Father, whate'er of earthly bliss
Thy sovereign will denies,
Accepted at thy throne of Grace,
Let this petition rise.

Give me a calm and thankful heart,
From every murmur free;
The blessing of thy grace impart,
And make me live in thee.

Let the sweet hope that thou are mine,
My life and death attend;
Thy presence through my journey shine,
And crown my journey's end."

For the two years after I was baptized, I attended Rockingham Community College and was able to attend meetings regularly. Those were two of the best years of my life. I feel that the Lord blessed me to grow in the knowledge of Him during that time. There were so many beautiful themes in your sermons and in the sermons of others. The portrayal of Christ as the Son of Man and the Son of God was one of those themes that has been precious to me. He must be the Son of God to redeem His people and yet He must be the Son of man to be "Touched with the feeling of our infirmities." I think also at this time that it amazed me how plain it became that the scriptures unquestionably support the doctrine of predestination even in the very first chapter of Matthew where the lineage of Christ is given and Esau is not mentioned.

When the time came to choose a university, the overriding factor was where can I go and still be with the Lord's people. I attended East Carolina University and met with the Lord's people in that area for two years. I can never be thankful enough for the many kindnesses shown me while I was there especially by Brother Mark and Sister Grace Garner. Surely, I was a stranger and they took me in. The time spent in Greenville also taught me how thankful one could be to be able to attend meetings and to be with the Lord's people.

After completing college, I worked

for two years in Caswell County. During that time I met my husband. I remember the day I came to your home to ask that you perform the ceremony and you said to me that I must follow my heart in the matter when I told you that I knew that some of the brethren were concerned about my marrying someone who did not believe as I do. As I left that day Sister Spangler said to me, "Remember, Mary, that we've always loved you, since you were just a child." Tears still come to my eyes when I think of the look on her face when she said that. It was very humbling as I have always esteemed the two of you very highly.

I'd like to mention one last experience that occurred not long after John and I were married. I was driving to Mebane from Yanceyville because the snow and ice caused the school officials to close the schools early. Just outside of Mebane I skidded on the ice and I knew right away that the car was going to flip over. I remember feeling very calm and thinking that if this were my last day, it would be all right. I also remember trying to remember if I had told John I loved him that morning. I feel very strongly that it's important to let those people, whom you care for, know how you feel, because when I breathe my last, I want to feel assured that even though I may not be able to say good-bye, the people whom I love will know that I love them. The car did turn over in the air and landed back on the tires. An approaching car from the other direction just missed being hit by my car. I was unharmed. The Lord surely was with me, but I thank Him most for that calmness which He granted because only faith in Him can cause a person to be prepared for death.

Mary Hawkins

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VOICES OF THE PAST

1848 – THE TWO ADAMS
BY
ELDER WILSON THOMPSON

Harrisburg, Ind., Sept. 15, 1848

Beloved Brethren: – When visiting the churches which compose the few associations which I attended on the east of the Alleghany Mountains, *viz.,* the Baltimore, Md., Delaware, Del., Delaware River, N. J., and Warwick, N. Y., I was delighted in beholding their order, and the steadfastness of their faith in Jesus Christ. At the sessions of these four associations I became acquainted with many others, both ministers of the Word, and other faithful brethren and sisters from Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland. The churches and five of the associations west of the mountains, *viz.,* the White Water, Lebanon and Conn's Creek, in Indiana, the Salem, in Owen County, Ky., and the Miami in Warren County, Ohio. These were all attended by vastly large assemblies; seasons were solemn and impressive. The correspondence and visiting ministers at these nine associations were from the scat-

tered sections of Zion, from Maine to Missouri; yet although so widely scattered, and habituated to all the varieties of custom, climate, habits, and fortune, their messages were the same, and their manner of delivering and defending the Truth so similar that no discord could be detected, but one unbroken chain of testimony was presented by all the ministers (about fifty in number) of these nine associations. This condensed body or "cloud of witnesses," must be confirming to the saints, and comforting to those who *"feed the flock of God."*

The health of myself and wife throughout our long journeys this season has been unusually good; and finding all the churches and associations in such perfect peace and Gospel fellowship, all speaking the same language, and all minding the same things, has been truly refreshing to us. Our Western brethren from regions afar off, with some who are near, having joined with the brethren at the East in requesting a letter from me on some subject calculated to edify, if I could believe myself capable of writing for their edification, and for the comfort of the dear sheep and lambs of the Good Shepherd, I should esteem it a great privilege to contribute, if it were but a mite, to their advantage. I will, the Lord being my helper, try to write a few things of the subject of **"the two Adams."** And in what I shall write, the respective families of the two Adams will be included, of course.

The apostle (1 Cor. Xv. 45) says, **"The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit."** These two Adams are distinguished in their order, *first last*; also in their natures, *soul* and *Spirit.* The order here observed is doubtless, not in point of existence, but in the order of *manifestation,* in all the tangible and corporal substances of the actual animal man in this mode of being. Although Christ was *"brought forth,"* and His goings forth were of old, from everlasting, yet in the visible creatureship of this world, Adam, the living soul, was first; and many generations of his offspring had peopled this world before "Adam, the quickening Spirit," literally appeared in this mode of being. It is in this sense the order *of first last* to be viewed. When God created this first man, Adam, in this order he was formed or framed, in all his corporal parts, of the dust of the ground, and by direct application of air, by the Agency of the Almighty , this first man, male and female **(Genesis 1:27, 28) "so God created man in His** *own* **image," "and God said unto them," "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."** This universal dominion over all created things, in this order, was given to Adam, the living soul, and this Adam was both male and female, with the blessing of God on them, and **the seed of them,** and the legal authority, or command of God, to be fruitful, *&c.* All this was in the **one** person of Adam, the living soul. In this

one man was the male and female, and the seed substance of all the human family; not *virtually,* in *purpose,* as some have said, but ***really and actually;*** for the man was a "living soul," and the seed, to be fruitful and multiply, was as actually created in this first man, as was his flesh or his bones. In this manner, he was truly in the likeness and image of his Maker. Here, then, in one man did God create all men, male and female, to dwell upon all the earth, and *"He hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."* - see Acts xvii: 25, 26; and Malachi ii: 10.

After all were created in one man, all men blessed in one man, and dominion over all other things, in this order, was given to this one man, all other living things were named by him; the law of his Creator was given to him, and he was placed in the garden of Eden, to dress it, and to control, subdue, and replenish the earth. Thus all nations of men, male and female, actually created in one man, and the earth, sea and air, with all their hosts, were put under his authority, or made subject to him.- Psalm viii: 5-8. This man in all this authority, with all men, male and female, **actually created IN him, was the *first* man, Adam,** and he was made a living soul. To him, as such, the law was given, and this law was binding on all the men, male and female, and seed, all in one Adam the first. After all this, the female was so separated as to take a distinct form, in person, but not essence; she was still "*bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh,*" as really so as when she existed a rib in his side. Therefore Adam said, "*She shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man.*" - Genesis ii: 22-24. This union was not only now perfect as before, but was to **continue indissoluble forever;** and for this cause, the indissoluble oneness, *"shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be **one flesh.***" This test of true affection, and God's imperatives, and man's acknowledged obligation to cleave to his wife, were soon tried by a severe ordeal; for the woman, being deceived by the serpent, was in a great transgression; but Adam, the man, was not deceived, yet he cleaved to his wife, even in death, and thus complied with the above *shalls,* and left all, and followed her. These *shalls* showed his obligation; the unity justified the *shalls,* and his willingly partaking at her hands showed the strength of his love, as he was not deceived. By this one act of this one man, in cleaving to his wife, *"sin entered into the world and death by sin; and so death has passed upon all men (upon the whole seed created IN him,) for that all had sinned. And so judgment unto condemnation came upon all men;*" the male and female and seed were all involved.

This man being set over all created things in this order, the earth and all that God had formed out of it was cursed for man's sake. Many strange speculations have been indulged in as to what this first man Adam was in his nature; some contend that he was *spiritual,* and that, in his fall, he died a spiri-

tual death. But this we know was not the case; for the apostle says, in positive terms, that he was not spiritual, but natural. -1 Cor. Xv: 45-48. This text speaks of Adam, as he was made, *a living soul.* He was truly a *very good* natural man, placed in a very good natural place, and invested with authority to rule over a very good natural world; and to him was given, by his Creator, a very good law, with liberty and proper prohibition, touching good natural things. Man, in this state, was possessed of a capacity for endless duration, but was subject to vanity; but he had no immortality, or death could never have passed upon him. God only *"hath immortality dwelling in the light;"* and Christ, in His resurrection from the dead, first brought it to light, or made a manifestation of it through the Gospel. Man had a *natural* soul, a *natural* mind, and rational faculties, and a strength of *natural* affections. God only required of him the proper exercise of the power that he possessed, either in the law respecting the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, or in the larger edition of it, as given later by Moses. To love the Lord God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might.- Deut. Vi: 5; and Matt. Xxii: 36-39. This was required of man, and this was no more than every *natural* man has; for he has a HEART, A SOUL, A MIND, AND A MIGHT, AND God requires the exercise of no other heart, soul, mind or might but that which He gave him. Man by sin is now already condemned to death, and his heart, soul, mind and might have become alienated from the love of God; the mind has become carnal, and is enmity against God: it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. This relation between God as a Creator, and man as a creation, is that upon which is founded all *natural theories of religion:* The natural powers, natural senses, natural exercises, and *means* to operate through and upon the natural organs and natural susceptibilities.

God, as our Creator, is claimed by some as the "Father of us all," and His pity and sympathy for His poor, frail children, is argued by every teacher of natural religion. The apostle, so far from preaching salvation on this premise, shows universal condemnation, rather that universal salvation, — and that there is no possible salvation by any mediation in this relation; not a victim, not a priest, not a brother or a kinsman, nor an intercessor, possessed either the worth, the innocence, or the right to redeem either himself or his fellow. In the absence, then, of another relation, and another order of things, salvation is utterly impossible for any of the human race.

Adam, the living soul, by creation, in the order of creatureship, was the son of God. — See Luke iii: 38; Gen. i: 26. As the whole seed, male and female, was in one man, the sonship embraced them all, so in the order of creation we are all the sons of God; but while our accountability, natural obligations, guilt and condemnation, result from this relation and man's unreasonable rebellion in it, we must look

elsewhere for salvation. In illustration of another relation in which alone salvation is revealed, the apostle shows us that Adam, the living soul, was a *"figure of Him that was to come; even of Him as the last Adam, a quickening Spirit."* — Romans v: 14.

We will now consider the force of this *Figure*. First, Adam was, by *natural creation* the son of God; Christ, by a *spiritual creation,* is the beginning of the creation of God, and His Son; the first born of every creature, in the *spiritual order.* — See Rev. iii: 14; Col. i: 5.

Second, Adam was made a living soul, possessing all the natural parts and mental faculties of *a very good natural* man; Christ possessed all the *spiritual* parts and powers of a *"quickening Spirit."* — Col. i:18,19; Eph. ii: 1. Adam was the first man of all *natural* men; Christ was the first of all *spiritual* men. Adam, with all natural men actually created in him, as a seed, was blessed of God with all natural blessings in earthly places; Christ, with all the spiritual family, actually created in Him, as a seed, was blessed of God with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. Eph. 1:3, 4. also ii: 10. This **seed** shall serve Him, and He shall see it and be satisfied. Adam's seed, though actually IN him, was dormant (undeveloped) except by his action; Christ's seed, which was actually eternally in Him, was also dormant except by His action. Adam received the blessing and the law of God in reference to all *natural* things, before Eve or any of his seed were separated from his person. Christ received all *spiritual* blessings and the law of the Lord God, before the church or any of His spiritual *seed* were separated from the *unity* of His Person. When every blessing and every natural faculty, with every prerogative to govern the natural world, and every right and every prohibition was given to Adam, his wife was IN him, as an *actual* part of his composition, and she was as perfectly bound and as accountable as he. So also was the wife or church IN Christ, when every spiritual blessing promise, gift, divine faculty, prerogative to govern all things in the spiritual kingdom, and when every right and prohibition was given, she, as a vital part of Him, was as perfectly bound and responsible as He. Adam was bound to leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife, after she had taken her distinct personal mode of existence, although she was still *"bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh."* Christ was bound to leave Father and mother, and cleave to the church, after she had taken her distinct personal mode of existence, though she was still in the spirit, identified as His body, His flesh had His bones. — Eph. v: 20-33; 1 Cor. Xii: 27. Adam's wife was deceived, and was in the transgression, and Adam was involved by her act, and bound to have his father, God, and his honorable station with his mother, earth, and cleave to his wife; and this he did of choice, for the union could not be dissolved. Christ's wife, the church, was also deceived, and in the transgression, and Christ, the *last* Adam, was involved by her act, and legally bound to lay aside

the glory which He had with the Father before the world was, and cleave to His wife, the church. This, Justice required, and the *unity* legally bound Him to do; and He willing, through His love to her, not being deceived, did.

Cleaving to her, Christ came forward to suffer the curse, and bear her sins. The seed which was created in Adam was afterwards developed by natural generation in a multiplication of distinct forms, or persons; but still was and ever must be the very same seed that was first created in Adam. The spiritual seed, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, was afterwards by spiritual generation, or regeneration, being born again, by an incorruptible seed, by the Word of God (Christ,) developed in multiplication of distinct forms, or persons, but still are, and forever must remain, no more nor less than the seed which was first created and chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.

Much more might be said on this Figure, but this must suffice. In the natural Adam, the living soul, and in all the relations in this order, there is ***nothing spiritual.*** Natural powers, natural susceptibilities, and natural obligations, all of which are properly required to be in subjection to God, our Creator, as our reasonable service, and this obligation grows out of our relation, as the creature of His creation; but in this relation we have all become sinners, and under the reigning power of death, without one ray of hope for salvation to cheer the gloom that shrouds us in the darkness of eternal night. All the religion and religious schemes that are based on this relationship, with all the means, money, tracts, Bibles, preachers, works and schools, with every other engine and power, mental or physical, that ever was or ever can be brought to bear upon any of our natural organs, senses, powers or sympathies, nor all the zeal, logic and pathos of others in our behalf, can ever produce one vital spark or spiritual motion. Just as sure as it is that nature cannot produce an effect above itself, so sure it is that all the compunction of soul, penance, repentance, reformation, fear, duty, sorrow, hope, joy, zeal or obedience that can arise from this natural relation, or that can be produced from any of the resources of it, upon any of our natural faculties, can never result in anything more than natural religion; and all belongs to the *first man, Adam,* which was not spiritual, but natural only. It therefore remains an irrefragable Truth, that we must be born again, or we cannot see the kingdom of God. We must be born of an incorruptible seed; not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, but of God, before we can see or have one single spiritual sensation or emotion.

The children of God IN Christ, from of old, or eternity, in their spiritual relation are *wholly of a right seed,* but when put forth in Adam, they became *partakers* of flesh and blood, and here they stood in both the spiritual and natural relations. In the spiritual relation they are one WITH Christ, and in

the natural they are one WITH Adam. Christ, to whom all these children of God had been given (John 17), seeing them now in the flesh and blood, lost, and legally condemned, willingly took part of the same flesh and blood; and with the whole seed of Abraham upon Him, was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.

Here, then, was a full flesh and blood relationship, legally tangible and capable of suffering the legal penalty, and of obeying the precepts of the law. Sin was a transgression of the law; the penalty was legal; Christ was made under the law, to legally fulfill it by a legal righteousness for our legal justification. This was the righteousness wrought out by Christ; and as to His spiritual, personal righteousness, that was always their's, as they were always one with and in Him. He that was "brought forth," "set up," "ordained," and "appointed Heir of all things," and given to be the Head over all things to the church, which is His body, was in the fullness of time made manifest in the flesh, for us, in a nature capable of obeying and suffering legally all that the law could demand. "*He bare our sins in His own body on the tree,*" and put them away by the sacrifice of Himself; and through death destroyed death, and him that had the power of death, the devil. Therefore He could not be holden of death; but risen again, has brought life and immortality to light. (not the old, natural life of Adam, but immortal life.) The suffering body now becomes a glorious spiritual and immortal body; and here the resurrection of the bodies of all the saints, to a glorious, spiritual and immortal state, is clearly and fully established.

This long letter contains only a hint at the two Adams and their respective families. Our evidences that we are of the natural Adam are, that we are born of the flesh, and feel the effect and fruits of that relationship; so too, our evidences that we have a standing in the spiritual Adam are, that we are born of the Spirit, are led by the Spirit; that we bear the fruits of the Spirit, and that we worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh, nor in any fleshly or natural system of religion. May these fruits of the Spirit be in us all, and abound.

Wilson Thompson. 1848.

PSALM 95; 1-5.

O Come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock or our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and meake a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

For the Lord *is* a great God, and a great King above all gods.

In his hand *are* the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills *is* his also.

The sea *is* his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry *land.*

MEETINGS

HIGH POINT PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

The High Point Primitive Baptist Church will have a fifth Saturday meeting on March 30, 2013. Would you announce it in the Signs? The meeting will start singing at 10:30 and preaching service at 11:00 o'clock. We invite all our brethren to come and meet with us. We would like to send a special invitation to our preaching brethren.

Those coming business 85, take Main Street north to State Avenue, turn left and go about 1/4 mile to church. Those coming south on 311 (Main Street) take a right on State Avenue go about 1/4 mile to the church. Those coming interstate 40 take exit 210, take 68 south to 311 (Main Street) south to State Avenue and turn right go about 1/4 mile to church.

Elder Jimmy Gray, Moderator
Brother Dan Medlin, Clerk

NOTICE

The Signs will still publish a church of our faith. Please send a picture and brief history to the attention of Elder Cleo Robertson, 111 Livingstone Dr, Cary, NC 27513.

Editor

LOWER MAYO FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo Fifth Sunday Meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday, March 31st, 2013. We hope to start singing at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30 a.m. Thomas' Grove Church will host the meeting. Directions for those that do not know the location: the meeting house is at 1390 Morning Dew Lane, Floyd, Va, 24091. Coming north or south on Va #8, turn north on Blue Ridge Parkway at Tuggles Gap, go about 1 3/4 miles. Turn right at Soapstone Hill Sign. Immediately turn left on Morning Dew Lane (no sign). Go 200 yards to church on left.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

ROMANS 8: 6-7

For to be carnally minded *is* **death; but to be spiritually minded** *is* **life and peace.**

Because the carnal mind *is* **enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.**

SKEWARKY UNION
(Eastern Kehukee Association)

Hancocks Church will host the next session of the Skewarky Union on the fifth Sunday of March 31, 2013. The church is located on Ayden Golf Club Road, near Ayden, North Carolina. Preaching services begin at 10:30 a.m.

We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

Due to the weather, Staunton River Union Meeting was cancelled, at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, December 29, 2012.

The Lord willing, Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, (Route 29 Business,) 708 South Main Street, Gretna, Va. will be host of the Union Meeting, March 30, 2013.

Singing will start at 10 o'clock AM.

All ministers and brethren of our faith and order are invited to be with us; as well as friends.

Elder Marvin Brumfield, Moderator
Oscar D. Pickral, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

Big Meadows Primitive Baptist Church will host the fifth Sunday Meeting on March 31, 2013. Singing begins at 10:00 AM and preaching service at 10:30 AM.

From I-40, take Hwy 87 South at Graham towards Pittsboro. Go 14.8 miles and cross Cane Creek. Turn right onto first road past Cane Creek which is Greenhill Road. Go 3.7 miles and turn left on Old Switchboard Road. Church is 1.3 miles on right.

From Hwy 64, take Hwy 87 North about 7 miles and turn left on Castle Rock Road. Church is about 5 miles on left.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Joann Self, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 2013

Gorman Perkins, AL 5.00
Eunice P. Soyars, NC 5.00
Estelle Thompson, VA 5.00
Nellie Dalton, VA 5.00
Charles Alders, TX 25.00
Tommy Wall, VA 5.00

OBITUARIES

BOBBYE LOU JONES

Sister Bobbye Lou Jones was born February 13, 1937, and left this life on October 18, 2012. Sister Bobbye was a dear sister, a caring and thoughtful woman who was kind to everyone, and a loving wife, mother, grandmother, and great grandmother. Everyone who knew her said she was dear in spirit, compassionate, considerate, and helpful to all. She will be missed by all.

Sister Bobbye joined Union Primitive Baptist Church in 1990. She and her beloved husband, Elder Theron Jones, later moved their letter to Mount Olive Primitive Baptist Church of Ringgold, Louisiana, where he was co-pastor.

Sister Jones leaves to cherish her memory Elder Jones, her husband of fifty-seven years. Together Elder Jones and Sister Bobbye traveled many miles to serve our surrounding churches.

Also left to grieve her passing is her son Randy Jones and his wife Reba; Sister Bobbye's daughter Judy Wilson, with her husband Ray Wilson; one brother, Billy Clark; two sisters, Betty Houston and Elaine Graham; one grandson, three granddaughters, four great-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

Sister Jones funeral was conducted by Elder C. C. Morris and Elder Truman Bradshaw. Our Lord gave us a beautiful day for our last goodbye.

This is written at the request of her husband, Elder Theron Jones, at the hand of one who loved her.

Patsy Lankford, Church Clerk
Union Primitive Baptist Church
Union Parish, Louisiana

PSALM 118:28-29.

Thou *art* **my God, and I will praise thee:** *thou art* **my God, I will exalt thee.**

O give thanks unto the Lord; for *he is* **good: for his mercy** *endureth* **for ever.**

ELDER JAMES CLETUS TURNER, SR.

We bow in humble submission to the will of Almighty God in the passing of our beloved Pastor, Friend and Father in Israel, Elder Cletus Turner. Brother Cletus, fondly known as the pumpkin scotcher preacher, was near and dear to all that knew him. He joined Spoon Creek Primitive Baptist Church and was found looking out for the welfare of the Church. The Church saw this gift and he was ordained a Deacon. His love for the Lord, the Church and the Brethren was manifested to the end. While sick in the Martinsville Hospital, he received a command to "Preach" and "Comfort My People". He was Ordained an Elder in

1991 and served as pastor of Spoon Creek, Aarons' Fork and Russell Creek Churches along with serving as moderator of the Lower Mayo Primitive Baptist Association. He often spoke from the 40th Chapter of Isaiah, his favorite scripture, to the edification of all that heard him. God gave him true humility and this was recognized wherever he was blessed to travel. He traveled many thousands of miles to visit God's humble poor and enjoyed every mile. When Spoon Creek Church disbanded, he moved his membership to Russell Creek Church. We miss him greatly, but feel our loss is his eternal gain.

Elder Turner was born May 1, 1917 to the late Sam and Pearl Joyce Turner. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his first wife, Dovie Harbour Turner; two sons, Sonny Turner and Sammy Turner; one daughter, Judy Durham; one grandson, Jeff Mays; one brother, Ed Turner and three sisters, Aileen "Teeny" Smith, Lucy Gibson and Dorothy Helmstuttler. He retired from Bassett Industries, built and ran Turner's Grocery in Bassett. He died November 10, 2011 at the age of 94.

Elder Turner is survived by his second wife, Marie Stowe Turner of the Landmark Center in Stuart, Va.; two daughters and a son-in-law, Mary T. Fulcher of Stuart, Va., Marie and Frank Foley of Bassett, Va.; one step daughter, Martha Ann Martin of Stuart, Va.; 10 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren; two brothers, Harry Turner of Bassett, Va, and Wayne Turner of Church Road, Va.; five sisters, Frances Nelson of Martinsville, Va., Mae Turner of Southern Pines, North Carolina, and Jean Chitwood, Nancy Edwards and Annie Crotts, all of Bassett, Va.

Funeral services for Elder Turner was held on Sunday, November 13, 2011 at Moody Funeral Home in Stuart, Va. with Elder Lowell Hopkins and Elder Mike Young officiating. His body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers at Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church cemetary, there to await the call to "Come you blessed of my Father and inherit the kingdom that was prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Farewell Brethern, Farewell Sisters, Till We All Shall Meet At Home.

Resolved that copies of this obituary be made for the Church records, the Association Minutes, the Signs of The Times and for the family.

Committee: Donald Moore
Lowell Hopkins

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 03/2013
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

Hillsville, Va. 24343

Hymn

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love!
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

Before our Father's throne
We pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
Our comforts and our cares.

We share our mutual woes;
Our mutual burdens bear:
And often for each others flows
The sympathizing tear.

When we asunder part,
It gives us inward pain;
But we shall still be joined in heart,
And hope to meet again.

This glorious hope revives
Our courage by the way;
While each in expectation lives,
And longs to see the day.

From sorrow, toil, and pain,
And sin we shall be free;
And perfect love and friendship reign
Through all eternity.

Fawcett.

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EDITORIAL

"Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I *was* no prophet, neither *was* I a prophet's son; but I *was* an herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit: And the LORD took me as I followed the flock, and the LORD said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel." Amos 7:14-15.

Elder J.B. Farmer

Sometimes a scripture appears which takes hold of my mind and causes me to stop and take notice. We do not know if it is of the Lord or not, but it seems to have such power and meaning that assurance is given that it surely must be from above. Sometimes the scripture appears to be in such agreement with our experience, that we rejoice in thinking that we may have tasted of those things that the saints of old were blessed to have experienced. Jesus told His disciples to rejoice because they would partake of the same things that the prophets did. He said, **"Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you,* and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."**

Amos was an ordinary person. He was not a religious man, as many think of religion. In his day there were many who called themselves prophets, and they had followers that were called sons of the prophets. I think the things of that day must have been similar to the things going on in the Lord's day, and to the things we see today. There have been and are religious organizations, where religious men train other men to be religious as they are. They teach them just how to interpret their scriptures, and how to behave themselves in order to command the respect of others. And they are taught how to attract crowds, and how to get their financial support. They are taught just what to say and do and think. They have a certain way of dressing, and a certain way of speaking, and a certain way of deceiving the simple. But they are convinced that they are right. Nev-

ertheless, they cannot even examine themselves and ask, "*Is there* **not a lie in my right hand?"**

In the day of the Lord, Jesus, some of the men who did such things were called scribes and Pharisees. He said to them, **"But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in** *yourselves* **neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves."** In this day they are called free-will or works Christians, Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, etc. They all have an outward religion with certain carnal rules and ways — all based upon the works of the flesh.

Amos was not this sort of a person. He was minding his own business, and earning a living as a herdman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit. Evidently he had noticed the so-called prophets and sons of prophets of his day because he separated himself from them. He said, **"I** *was* **no prophet, neither** *was* **I a prophet's son; but I** *was* **an herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit:"** He made it plain that he was not one of them. And while he was attending to his regular occupation of following the flock, the Lord took him.

At this point we begin to see the parallels to our own experience. We were regular people doing regular things, when the Lord came to us. It has ever been this way. Think of Adam in the garden, when the LORD God came to him and spoke to him after he had transgressed the commandment. Think of Noah, when God came to him and commanded him to build an ark to the saving of his house. Consider Abram, to whom the Lord came and said unto him, **"Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee."** Think of Moses on the backside of the desert, when the Lord came to him and spoke to him from the burning bush to reveal unto him His purpose. Think of Jacob whom the Lord found in a waste howling wilderness, and whom he led about and instructed, and kept him as the apple of His eye. The list of those humbled saints who the Lord found, called, led and taught goes on and on.

Amos said, **"The Lord took me."** We are assured that the Lord made all things for Himself, and that He owns all things, but in His time He takes possession of His things in a particular way, and uses them in a particular way. The Lord took possession of Amos. And the Lord, Jesus, Christ took possession of His disciples, and He took possession of you, and I hope and trust He took possession of me. He came unto us and found us before we ever called upon His name. We would not

even have known to call upon Him if He had not made Himself known unto us. He called his own out of darkness into His marvelous light. He called us to be a separate people, to come out of Babylon, and to touch not the unclean thing that we might be His people and He might be our God. There is no going back. What the Lord has done is done forever.

Amos said, **"The Lord took me as I followed the flock."** The Lord's people are found following the flock. How was it with you when the Lord came unto you and took possession of you? I can remember many, many years ago, before I ever knew anything of the old Baptists, someone made mention of a group of backward, ignorant, people that were so poor they only had one song book. And one had to read a verse, and then the others would sing it. This was said to mock them and to diminish them, but my heart went out to them, and a great desire was given me to know them. Was I following the flock in my heart and feelings when the Lord took me — even before I knew them? Was not the love of God spread abroad in your heart for the Lord's people when the Lord took you, and set you upon a way that you knew not? This is the Lord's work and not man's. His ways are not our ways and His thoughts are not our thoughts. His ways and His thoughts are as high above ours as the heaven is above the earth.

The Lord said unto Amos. **"Go, prophesy unto my people Israel."** What a great shock it must have been for Amos to think he must go and speak in the name of the Lord to the Lord's people. How impossible it must have appeared unto him to go and do this thing he had never done, and to do this thing for which he felt to be totally unqualified and unworthy. I am made to think of Moses, and what he said, and what the Lord said, when Moses was commanded to go and speak to Pharaoh. **"And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I *am* not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I *am* slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say."**

And when the Lord came to Jeremiah and revealed unto him that he was foreknown of God, sanctified and ordained a prophet, Jeremiah tried to escape. He said, **"Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I *am* a child. But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I *am* a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I *am* with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord."** So it has always been with those called of God. They feel to be little children, unprepared, unqualified, and unworthy. But no matter how one tries to avoid the calling, there is no other way than to go. God has purposed it, He has ordained it,

and it must come forth as He has already seen it. **"For he spake and it was** *done;* **he commanded, and it stood fast."** And His people are made to be a willing people in the day of His power. When Isaiah was called, he was blessed to say, **"Here** *am* **I, send me."**

Moses went, Abram went, Amos went, Jeremiah went, Isaiah went, the disciples and apostles went, and so will you go when the Lord calls you and sends you. Some may think that the calling is just for prophets or for apostles or for ministers of the gospel, but all of the Lord's people are called to serve Him, and to show forth His praise. **"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate** *to be* **conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say unto these things? If God** *be* **for us, who** *can* **be against us?"** His calling is powerful, irresistible and sure. He does His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. It is not up to puny man to fulfill His will and purpose. The Lord God's own almighty arm has brought salvation. All praise honor and glory is due unto Him who alone is worthy.

I trust this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

10-2-12

Dear Elder Robertson:

While trying to find in our attic here at home some of the old copies of the Signs, I found some articles that I would like for you to republish if you think well.

Page 138 an article on the resurrection is described the most wonderful that I have read. (June issue 1976)

Also the article of Sister Mildred Dykes of Salisbury Maryland is very good reading.

I met her when my wife and I traveled with the Spanglers in the 1960's I think. She was very blessed to explain her belief in a precious way.

In Christian love,
Burnell Williams

Dear Brother Cleo,

Hope this finds you well and enjoying the season. We have had quite a bit of snow so far.

We have lost two of our members recently so I'm sending you their obituaries. They both have been in the nursing home for quite a long time. The Lord is our shepherd and He knows best.

May God bless us all as time goes by.

Sending my Love,
Mary Poff

VOICES OF THE PAST

BOUGHT WITH A PRICE

In a little group sometime ago, a young sister asked just what the apostle meant by his statement "And ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price," stating she knew we are bought with the blood of Jesus, but what, exactly did it mean in *her* life? Several comments were made, one being that she thought of it as in the days of slavery, when a plantation owner bought a slave, although the slave lived a fairly normal life, he belonged to his master, to serve him in whatever manner pleased him. Someone remarked "But I am not a slave."

This morning, confined to the house because of illness, I've been blest to meditate at some length on "the unsearchable riches of Christ" and the verse "Ye are not your own, etc" has kept coming back to me with a sweetness I am unable to describe. My mortal life is mostly spent and my natural vision is largely gone and at this moment, before it is too late, I would like to leave on record, providing the editors care to publish it, a little something of what this precious verse means to me.

I do not, I cannot know how others feel, but as for me, let me be a slave to Christ, let me be His servant, His prisoner, His anything or His nothing, only let me be His—His to command, His to direct my every step, my every thought, my every breath, His to shower with benefits or His to humble and afflict, according as it is good in His sight. How delightful it is when blest to "cast all our care upon Him" and then to see that according to His riches in glory, He has supplied, He does supply and we trust He will yet supply our every need as promised in Philippians 4:19.

It means to me that my life and my body are not my own, therefore if I abuse or misuse these gifts, I am not abusing or misusing my own property, but the property of Him who paid so dearly for my redemption and preservation.

It means to me that I am not faced with the responsibility of making my own decisions. My Blessed Owner made them for me before time began and I have only to walk in the path which my Master lays before me. Unbelievers would say what a terrible way to live, but not so with the Lord's people to whom it is a sweet servitude and a blessed privilege.

It means to me that although violence pervades the land and satanic forces are rampant; that although satan "goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour," I do not need to fear what men or satan can do to me because my dear Owner's eye is ever upon me to protect me. I am convinced that no harm or no evil can befall me apart from His direct, eternal decree. "He shall give His angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways; they shall bear thee up in their hands lest thou dash thy foot

against a stone," is the promise of Him whose promises are, like Himself, immutable.

It means to me, as the apostle stated, that "I am crucified with Christ": that I "bear about in my body the dying of the Lord Jesus, "that, though I walk in the flesh, I do not walk after the flesh," therefore, sinful as I am, and I'm more aware of my sinfulness as time passes, "sin shall not have dominion over me," "The cross of Christ crucifies the world unto me and me unto the world," I do realize I am speaking with much boldness—I hope not with presumption, but "in the liberty whereunto Christ hath made us free."

It means to me that fear of death and the grave, probably the most universal of all human emotions, has been removed, because my dear Master went before me into death; He lay in the grave, but came forth in triumph, thus robbing death of its sting and the grave of its victory.

"I would not live always, oh welcome the tomb

Since Jesus has laid there, I dread not its gloom."

It means to me that my faithful Master has provided for me "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled WHICH FADETH NOT AWAY, RESERVED IN HEAVEN", an inheritance which I can never assign, mortgage, sell or waste. Although this inheritance is reserved in heaven for me, He sends me supplies of it every day of my life, which neither detracts from nor adds to that which is reserved in heaven. Moreover, the testator of this inheritance will not have to die in order for me to receive it, for in His own words He assures me "I am He who liveth and was dead. Behold, I am alive forevermore" and He holds the key to my inheritance in His hands.

But I think the pinnacle of what this precious truth means to me lies in the last part: "for ye are bought with a price." It lies in the matchless love which motivated the payment of such a price. Love is the strongest of all motivating forces. I am told that demonstrations of love are just as important, indeed just as necessary for the proper growth and development of a baby as is food itself. This crumbling, sin-cursed world has been spared to this moment because its creator loves and protects the members of His elect who remain. It was wondrous love that formed the covenant among the members of the Godhead to pay this unspeakable price. Even in the affairs of men, the purchase price of an object is determined largely by the intensity of someone's desire to possess it. No such price was ever paid as that paid for our salvation.

As Jesus approached John the Baptist, he exclaimed "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." Oh, that by faith we may behold Him as He unveiled His deity in humanity, leaving for a while "the glory which He had with the Father before the world was," taking the form of a servant humbling Himself, making Himself of no reputation and became obedient unto death, even death by crucifixion, the most shameful of all

deaths. May we behold Him going forth to meet those who would crucify Him. May we behold His agony of soul as He hung on the cross, and beholding Him, be crucified with Him. May we behold Him as He drank the bitter cup, containing every particle of the loathsome, putrid filth of sin which each of His chosen ones were and are guilty of. Even His holy person must be "made to be sin" that sin might be condemned in the flesh. He was mocked, ridiculed and smitten of men, He was bruised and forsaken of the Father, but He bore it all without a murmur; "He opened not His mouth." He knew He was paying the price that God's holiness demanded for the remission of sin. The purchase price must be paid and it could be paid by no other. This is the awful price with which we are bought. "Ye are bought with a price." I do not think the human mind is capable of conceiving the magnitude of this price. It "passeth understanding." But when we are blest to meditate upon His determination to obtain and possess us, it brings us to His feet in adoration and praise. It creates within my very soul a depth of gratitude which I cannot describe, that He is the potter and I am the clay. May I ever be clay in His hands to mould as it pleases Him. Apart from my dear Redeemer, I'm nothing but clay anyhow. I was formed of the dust of the earth and dust is simply dry clay. "He knoweth our frame and remembereth that we are dust." But when it pleases God to implant even a little faith within this dust, we are sometimes given a glimpse of our Lord "as He looketh forth at the windows, showing Himself through the lattice." (S. of S. 2:0). At such times, there wells up within my heart a surging wave of response to "His great love wherewith He loved us" and with humble heart and flowing tears, I thank my God that before I was conceived in my mother's body, I was "bought with a price", which divine love alone could afford.

With fellowship for everyone, everywhere who love His dear Name.

Mildred V. Dykes
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

"Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." (1 Cor. 15:51)

Dear Brother Hutchens:

The article in the September number of the Lone Pilgrim on the subject of the resurrection of the dead, by Eld. W. M. Shoemaker, was read with much interest on my part, and to my mind the position he has taken he has fully supported by Scripture testimony, and so can not be confuted by anyone from a Scriptural standpoint.

A few thoughts relative to the same subject, while and since reading his letter, have to some extent occupied

my mind, which I feel inclined to submit to your consideration.

There have been, no doubt, ever since the days of Hymeneus and Philetus, those who have disputed the future resurrection of the dead, and say it is "past already," with all who have died, and they Will never know any more resurrection of the dead. I have heard the doctrine assailed by reason and by ridicule. But such I take to be the "vain babblings" Paul the apostle speaks of, when he admonishes Timothy to "shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a canker; of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some." (2 Timothy 2:18)

There is no fact of the Scriptures more clearly and positively stated than that Jesus came into the world to save His PEOPLE from their sins. It is His people that have sinned. It is His people that have died, and do die, and "the wages of sin is death." If His people are not raised up out of death, out of their graves, then they are not saved, but lost. And the word of Jesus when He said, "They that are in the graves shall hear His voice; and shall come forth," is not true. Paul, the inspired apostle, to the Thessalonian church said, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." (1 Thes. 5:23, 24) Now it would be just as much to dispute the word of the apostle, to contend for the annihilation of one of those component parts of the believer as another.

Again, to the Corinthian brethren the same apostle said, "And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will (not "hath" nor "doth") also raise up us by His own power. Know ye not that your BODIES are the members of Christ?" (1 Cor. 6:14, 15) Then if these bodies are never raised up, the members of Christ are perished. Death and the grave have the victory. "But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord," they shall be raised up, not any more to "bear the image of the earthy, but the image of the heavenly," for in this resurrection "they shall be changed" (not exchanged) from mortal to immortal ; for this mortal shall put on immortality. This corruptible is to be made incorruptible. As Paul says, "this corruptible *must* put on incorruption." (See 1 Cor. 15:53, 54)

Again we read from the same apostle, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself." (Phil. 3:21) It is just as foolish and unscriptural to claim that in the glorified state beyond this life, the saints will be as they are here, knowing each other as fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, parents and children, etc., and to deny the resurrection of

the body at the second coming of Jesus. Both positions are a denial of the teaching of inspiration. Jesus said to the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection of the dead, "The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage; but they which shall be counted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage. Neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."

When we go down in natural, or corporeal death, our relationship to this world, to the things of this earthly life, are forever dissolved, and we will never live in our Adamic relationship any more, but our heavenly relationship can never be dissolved. It is in this sense that the believer cannot die; but in Adam all must die. But "For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are His at His coming." 1 Cor. 15:22, 23... As Christ the "firstfruits" went down in death, through the tomb, rising again, all the other fruits that follow must do likewise. So Paul says, "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead SHALL ALSO quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." (Rom. 8:11) I do not understand that the saints die as a penalty, for a violated law, for "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." (Gal. 3:13) But death is a necessary part of that change from mortal to immortal, from corruptible to incorruptible, etc.

It is true that the saints die, and are the subjects of that final resurrection of the dead, when Jesus shall appear the second time "without sin unto salvation." (Heb. 9:28) Again, it is true that saints or believers do not die. Jesus said to Martha, "I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." John 11:25, 26. Paul said also, Acts 26:10, speaking of what he had done as Saul of Tarsus, "And many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them." Here, the saint or believer bears relationship to two headships: the earthly Adam, his seminal head and representative in nature; also to Christ, his spiritual and covenant Head. In the one he dies; in the other he does not die. After being begotten and born from above, there are two in-dwelling lives and natures. Beyond this sphere of action there is only one. By the power of that life from above (Jesus is their life), they are destined to be conformed to the image of Jesus, for "whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren." (Rom. 8:29)

Jesus Christ is said to be "the first-

born from the dead." (Col. 1:18) He could not be the "firstborn from the dead without others to follow. Paul said, when arraigned before Felix by his persecutors, "But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets. And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead both of the just and the unjust." (Acts 24:14, 15) When arraigned before Agrippa, Paul asks the question, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" (Acts 26:8) Further down in the same chapter, in his defense Paul said, "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come. That Christ should suffer, *and* that He should be the FIRST that should rise from the dead," etc. Verses 22, 23.

Death to us is but a sleep in the Lord. Jesus said of the daughter of Jairus, Luke 8:52 & 53. "Weep not: she is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed Him to scorn, knowing that she was dead." Again, He said of Lazarus, John 11:11-15, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of his sleep. Then said His disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit, Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that He had spoken of taking rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead." Paul, testifying to the resurrection of Christ, and of His appearance among the disciples afterwards, after mentioning several other witnesses, said, "After that He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once: of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep," or, are dead.

While the word "sleep" is put for other things sometimes, as in 1 Thes. 5:6, 7, yet in the places referred to, it clearly means literal death. It has been asserted that the word as used in 1 Thes. 4:13 is to be understood in the same sense as in 1 Thes. 5:6, 7. But to my mind, a very slight examination of the connection ought to show to any unbiased mind, that it is not used in the same sense. The words "death" and "sleep" are used interchangeably, and evidently mean the same, in the following quotation: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever

be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thes. 4:13-18) How plain this blessed language. Why a "Hymenaeus and Philetus," or any others, should want to spiritualize, or otherwise explain it away, I can not understand. I know it is a wonderful mystery, and will be a stupendous miracle. But is not Israel's God "equal to the occasion"? He spoke the universe into existence out of nothing. He who created and formed the first man Adam of the dust of the ground into a natural existence, is He not able to raise up a multiplied Adam from the dead into a spiritual existence? "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with us that God should raise the dead?" Just as sure as God's Word is true, Jesus is to appear in this world "the SECOND TIME," and this time, "without sin," and some of His people are going to be living here in the world, and they shall be changed as those that are dead. For says inspiration, "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep; but we shall be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death! Where is thy sting? O grave! Where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. 15:51-55.)

It has been said that our visible, material body, when dead, is not a mortal body, and Webster is quoted to show that the word mortal means something subject to death, and so substantially argued that the word could not apply to our body when dead. But let us remember that Paul wrote this to the living, telling them of a most wonderful change that awaited them, whether they were living when the appointed time came, or dead. The living must be changed (die to this life, and awake to the other), as well as the dead. Every one must be changed, the mortal being made immortal; that which is vile and corruptible must be made pure and incorruptible. What a glorious fruition of hope it is to awake in the likeness of our blessed Redeemer. Many times through life we are experimentally raised up, and realize a blessed union, or oneness with our Saviour and Redeemer, but shortly to lapse back into a state of carnality. But in this final resurrection and change, there will be no more laspsing back; carnality is no more. Mortality is swallowed up of life.

The Psalmist said, "As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Thy likeness." (Psalm 17:15) The Apostle Peter said, "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day," and "For David is not ascended into the heavens," etc. See Acts 2:29-34. Now it is evident that David has ever been with the Lord in

spirit. But David, the person, the individual, was in Peter's day still in the sepulcher, not yet "ascended into the heavens," and was yet to awake in the likeness of His Lord.

The Apostle John, 1 John 2:2, said, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."

In our finite state here in this life we can not see, nor understand what we shall be, or what heaven is like. We live not by sight, but by faith, and hope to see and know in that sweet day that the Lord has appointed for us. Like Abraham of old, we "look for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God," a glorious habitation, where everyone is in the image of Jesus, the risen and glorified Savior and Redeemer.

In a little hope of that glorious resurrection and change, I hope I am "your brother and companion in tribulations, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ."

Elder H.B. Jones
(From The Lone Pilgrim December, 1929)

PSALM 40:3.

And he hath put a new song in my mouth, *even* praise unto our God: many shall see *it*, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.

LETTER TO ELDER E.C. STONE BY ELDER FREDERICK KEENE

Dear Brother in the Lord:

Yours came this morning and as I have been pondering over its contents I have thought how similar have been your cogitations, and judgments of things with my own. I never more so than at the present time have seen and felt the difference between the flesh and the spirit, and the mere letter of things, and the excellency and power of the things of Christ. As to the letter knowledge and external observance of matters pertaining to Christ's gospel, there is an amount of it in my possession. I am sufficiently acquainted with the Holy Scriptures to see standing out in all clearness this and that point of doctrine: That God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are all-mighty, all-wise, immutable, working all things after the counsel of God; Jehovah the Father, Son and Holy Ghost in their persons three, eternally so, and yet in a sublime mystery our One eternal Jehovah; Jehovah's election of the church in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, His predestination, His redemption, His sanctification of the elect, their resurrection to immortality and incorruption, and ultimate eternal glorification with Emmanuel. All these matters, and all associated divine matters, as I have already mentioned, I can see very clearly taught in the word, and in my mind, and if need be with my tongue I can trace them, and declare them.

All this can be in me, with me, in the letter, but the excellency, the power, the divine blessedness therein, is altogether another matter. I cannot bestow this blessedness upon myself, I cannot manufacture it, and it is impossible to impart it to another. It is still, abidingly needful that the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth shall glorify Christ unto my soul, and take of the things of our precious Lord Jesus and show them unto me (John 16:13-15).

I would live in communion, in fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. This is written, wrought in my heart, indelibly so and yet I find it to be no easy matter to so live, and walk with God.

The world from without, all that pertains to my natural life, satan, my corrupt nature, all are hindrances, are opposed to, are in conflict with, and would, were it possible, extinguish the life of God in my soul.

There is with me a daily conflict. I have no time to lay my armor by, for it is so needful, my heart, at times, says, I will not yield, God forbid it. Oh let me continue to press toward the mark for the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus, let me fight the good fight of faith laying hold on eternal life. All self-sufficiency, and self-praise will again and again be obliterated in our lives; for we are ever learning that in all things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us (Rom. 8:37).

The tribes of Jacob of old went into the battle with music and song (Psalm 68:1), and let me quote the language of one of the songs that my heart (put in tune of the Holy Ghost) sometimes sings: "I am persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Though I am sometimes cast down, but I am not destroyed, for he who has begun, as I hope, in me a good work, will do the performance of it until the day of Jesus Christ.

I am given streams in the desert, I drink of the brook in the way, there are times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and mine head is lifted up above mine enemies round about me, and sometimes such is my confidence (not in the flesh, Phil. 3:3) in Christ Jesus that like the daughter of Zion I despise all mine enemies, the world, the flesh and the devil, in oneness with Christ my immortal, immutable Friend, I see them all defeated, underneath my feet, I shake my head at them and laugh them to scorn (Isaiah 37:22).

Of late I do not mean the last few days, or months, but for a few years, I have had peculiar support, consolation, encouragement and sweet satisfaction in my soul in the immutability of Jehovah: The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, our Eternal GOD; The Lord God Omnipotent who reigneth. I am so mutable, my soul through many changes goes; His love no variation knows.

In my complaints, and inabilities I am made to cry out some times,

"Changes and war are against me" (Job 10:17). But Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever (Heb. 13:8). All the promises of God in Him, are yea and amen and unto the glory of God by us (2 Cor. 1-20). Our gracious God is in one mind, and who can turn him, and what his soul desireth even that he doeth (Job 23:13). And God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have the hope set before us (Heb. 6:17-18).

"Will He now His grace deny,
Lay His wonted kindness by?
Will He, can He, say, depart
To the humble, contrite heart?
NO, our Christ is still the same
Endless blessings on His name."

I see, I feel myself so mutable. At times I feel, as though by the power of the Holy Ghost, I am swallowed up in the things of Christ. I am rejoicing in Him, in communion with the Lord, Christ liveth in me (Gal. 2:20); in my heart by faith (Ephes. 3:17); and I talk and walk with God. But like Abraham so it is with me, all appears to be withdrawn, suspended, and I am soon in a barren land. I am then burdened, distressed, tossed about, in a multitude of conflicts, dried up, I am a very wilderness, there is no water in me to drink, nothing in me to eat, remembrances of former banquets and the king's table does not feed me. The smiles of his face are hidden by the clouds that have come between (Job 36:32). "And the Lord went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham, and Abraham returned unto his place" (Gen. 18:33). But notwithstanding all the vicissitudes of my soul, all the changing scenes that in God's providence are mine, I am often found triumphing in our precious Christ and am singing,

"I to the end shall endure
As sure as the earnest is given,
More happy, but not more secure
The glorified spirits in heaven."

With love to you, and our sister Stone. I am yours in our sweet Lord Jesus Christ.

ELDER FREDERICK W. KEENE,
Raleigh, NC, June 2, 1924
THE LONE PILGRIM, December 1924, Vol. 3, No. 15

PROVERBS 24: 12-14.

If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider *it*? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth *not* he know *it*? and shall *not* he render to *every* man according to his works?

My son, eat thou honey, because *it is* good; and the honeycomb, *which* is sweet to thy taste:

So *shall* the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul: when thou hast found *it*, then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off.

HABAKKUK 1:12, 13

Signs of the Times,
JANUARY, 1940

My MIND is now being exercised on some wonderful truth expressed by Habakkuk in the first chapter. The first paragraph expresses "the burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see." The burden was why he beheld grievance, spoiling and violence, and why there were those who raise up strife and contention. It is evident that the wicked doth compass about the righteous and wrong judgment proceedeth. We are sometimes made to wonder with Habakkuk why these things exist. Some would have us believe that this is the work of the devil over which God does not exercise control. But that god is not Israel's God. Our God works all things. We hear Him saying, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isaiah 46:9,10). "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? (Dan. 4:35.) We see the fact revealed in the second paragraph of the first chapter of Habakkuk that the raising up of the "Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwelling-places which are not their's" is the work of God. God declares through the prophet that the heathen will not believe this though it be told them. The heathen of today will not believe that the raising up of the bitter, hasty and wicked people is the work of God. In relating the characteristics and actions of this bitter and hasty nation he also makes plain that, "their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves." They are not forced to do these things, but do them of their own accord. This is their nature and delight. This thought is in harmony with James 1:13,14, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." Nay, the Chaldeans could not charge their wrong judgment and actions to the predestination of God, because it was their desire to do what they did do. Neither can man charge God with being the cause of his sins, even though the predestination of God embraced them, for man "is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:14,15). Yes, God created the waster to destroy, and the waster has pleasure in destruction. God also created the wicked for the day of evil, and the wicked hath pleasure in wickedness.

The twelfth and thirteenth verses of the first chapter of Habakkuk give sufficient explanation of the purpose of God in raising up the bitter and hasty

nation that deals treacherously and oppresses the righteous. God is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look upon iniquity, therefore it is not for the sake of evil and iniquity that these things are prevalent, but "O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and O Mighty God, thou hast established them for correction." They are established and ordained for judgment and correction of the chosen of God. The wicked are the sword of the Lord, and they are raised up for that purpose. God hath a noble purpose in all things, and, as Paul states, We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. I believe it takes the wicked, the waster and all other things opposing godliness (even our carnal minds) to make up the furnace of affliction in which God's people are chosen. Ye are refined, but not with silver; ye are chosen in the furnace of affliction.

Now let us quote the complete twelfth verse of the first chapter of Habakkuk, "Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord, my God, mine Holy One? We shall not die. O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction." The first part of this verse is an interrogative affirmation, ascribing all power to God. As He is from everlasting, and beside Him there is none else, let us conclude that nothing has transpired without His establishment and ordination. In the phrase, "We shall not die," "we" embraces all those whom, they, oppose. There are two classes of people under consideration in this chapter. "They" include the wicked and "we" include the righteous, or children of God. Even though the righteous are oppressed and persecuted by the wicked (whose aim is to harm and destroy the righteous), God hath even established and ordained their wicked acts to the good of His children. He plainly states it is for judgment and correction. Instead of being for the destruction of His people (as the wicked aim) God hath established and ordained them for the judgment and correction of His chosen. "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of His correction: for whom the Lord loveth He correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth" (Prov. 3:12,13) (See Job 5:17). "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Heb. 12:6). "But if ye be without chastisement . . . then are ye bastards, and not sons" (Heb. 12:8). In Psalms 136:10-15, we read that God smote Egypt in their first-born and brought out Israel from among them with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, and divided the Red Sea into parts, and made Israel to pass through the midst of it, but overthrew Pharoah and his host into the Red Sea. God was using Moses to lead the children of Israel, and the enemy to drive them. The Egyptians were zealously pursuing the Israelites, with a motive in mind different from the purpose of God, which was to drive them to deliverance. Just as soon as Pharoah and

his army had completed the purpose God had in raising them up (to push the Israelites to deliverances) they were drowned. This brings to mind these two Scriptures: With lovingkindness have I drawn thee, and, as with the horns of an unicorn Ephraim shall be pushed to the ends of the earth. The Israelites were drawn by Moses and the cloud, pushed by the enemy and hedged in by the walls of water.

I know this is considered hard doctrine by carnal reasoning, and does not give any credit or praise to man, but it pleases God to use the furnace of affliction to reveal this fact to God's children. Thus they are, "driven to the ends of the earth." They are driven to the end of their own ability and made willing to comply with that effectual command of sweet deliverance: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa. 45:22). The journey to the "ends of the earth" is extremely unpleasant, and the "furnace of affliction" well describes this process of the new birth. But this well qualifies the child of God to deeply appreciate the paradise which is the result of the remembrance of Jesus Christ being made manifest unto them.

Elder E. J. Lambert

ROMANS 8:17.

And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

HEBREWS 2:15.

And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

We confess that we have no special light upon the text proposed. From the context, however, it will be seen that the text relates to the object of the incarnation and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. He did not visit our guilty world, and suffer on the cross, without having an object to accomplish, and that object was, to deliver those who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. In order to do this, he took on him the seed of Abraham. Not the children of the flesh, for Paul says, Romans ix. 7, 8, "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called: that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." "Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might* be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all. As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations."-Romans iv. 16,17. "And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

The seed of Abraham therefore, thus defined, were taken on the Redeemer when he came in the flesh, and for them he suffered on the cross. They are spoken of in the connection of our text, as his "many sons," which he was

to bring to glory, and for whom, "by the grace of God he tasted death." And they are also in this connection called "the children," and "his brethren." These were subject to bondage through fear of death. For the wages of sin is death, and they had all sinned, and had just cause to fear the execution of the sentence which was against them. The object of Christ's coming and suffering, was to save them from their sins, to bear their sins in his own body on the tree, and to put them away by the sacrifice of himself, by tasting death for everyone of them. And thus was he, through death, to destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

In this work of redemption and deliverance, he hath triumphed gloriously; and upon this ground the spirit, not of bondage, again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father. And they are exhorted to "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and be not again entangled with the yoke of bondage." — Gal. v. 1. The perfect love of God commended in the gift of his dear Son, and communicated to the saints by regeneration, casteth out fear. Fear hath torment, but the perfect love of God shed abroad in his children, overcomes it, and casts it out. The object therefore of Christ's life in the flesh, and under the law, and of his death and suffering in the flesh, is attained. The great trumpet is blown; the jubilee proclaimed; the prison doors are opened, and the prisoners are brought out of their prison houses. And there is therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Rom. viii.)

"Jehovah has triumphed, his people are free!"

"Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." And we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the free woman. (Gal. v. 28.) "Loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion."-Isa. iii. 2.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y., Nov. 1, 1855

"Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world."- 1 John ii. 15.

THIS is a very wide sentence. It stretches forth a hand of vast grasp. It places us, as it were, upon a high mountain, such as the Lord stood upon when tempted of Satan, and it says to us, "Look around you: now there is not one of these things which you must love." It takes us, again, to the streets of a crowded city; it shews us shop windows filled with objects of beauty and ornament; it points us to all the wealth and grandeur of the rich and noble, and everything that the human heart admires and loves. And having thus set before us, as Satan did before our Lord upon the high mountain, the kingdoms of the world, it says, not as he did, "All this will I give you," but, "All this I take from you. None of these things are for you. You must not

love one of these glittering baubles; you must not touch one of them, or scarcely look at them, lest, as with Achan, the golden wedge and the Babylonish garment should tempt you to take them and hide them in your tent." The precept takes us through the world as a mother takes a child through a bazaar, with playthings and ornaments on every side, and says, "You must not touch one of these things." In some such similar way the precept would, as it were, take us through the world, and when we had looked at all its play-things and its ornaments, it would sound in our ears, "Don't touch anyone of them; they are not yours; not for you to enjoy, not for you even to covet." Can anything less than this be intended by those words which should be ever sounding in the ears of the children of God, " Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world?"

J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The Union meeting of the South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, at Union Church near Marion, LA on April 27th & 28th, 2013. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
(318) 778-4217

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 2013

Glenna Link, TN	50.00
Polly Sizemore, WV	25.00
Peggy Phillips, VA	5.00
John Ballard, TX	5.00
Gerald Pickral, VA	5.00
Frances Brinkley, GA	5.00
Phillip Jones, TX	10.00
Connie Franco, TX	5.00
Anne Pearson, MI	10.00
Marcus Vickers, FL	5.00
Jerry Cornelius, NC	5.00
Ada Beeghly, VA	15.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER GLADYS AGEE

We at Salem Primitive Baptist Church (Head of the River) bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father who in His divine wisdom and mercy removed from our midst our dear beloved Sister, Gladys Agee, 83, of Salem, Virginia. She passed away peacefully in her sleep on Sunday, December 30, 2012. She was a faithful church member, filling her seat as long as she was able.

Her favorite hymn was number 19 in the Goble book, "Sons we are, through Gods election." She deeply believed that salvation was by the grace of God and Him alone. Her membership at Salem Church was 27 years.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Andrew Agee; daughter, Bonnie Agee Kitts; sisters, Lilly Jenkins, Ora Nolley, Mildred Walters and Louise Austin; brothers, Henry, Earl, Jack, Guy, and Everette Walters.

Surviving are her children: Carolyn Agee Perdue of Roanoke, Va., Linda Agee Dickerson and husband Ray of Dublin, Va., Dianne Agee Kelley and husband Bob also of Roanoke, Va.; grandchildren: Penney Britt, Lucas Duncan, Jimmy and Brian Kitts, Scott and Toby Duncan; step-grandchildren: Ro Dickerson, John Kelly II and Seth Kelly; 20 great-grandchildren; and one sister, Garnet Rose of Salem, Va.

Funeral services were conducted at 11:00 am on Thursday, January 3, 2013 at Head of the River Baptist Church by Elders Larry Hollingsworth and Carl Terry. She was laid to rest in the Restvale Cemetery. Her work here on earth is finished and we will miss her greatly but we bow in humble submission to His will.

Written by:
Mary Poff, Clerk
Carl Terry, Moderator

MARGARET B. COKER

June 29, 1927 – January 2, 2013

It is with a feeling of sadness and joy that I attempt to write a memorial to our dear friend, Margaret (Blow) Coker. A sadness knowing we see her no more here on earth; a joyous feeling to remember that God is supreme and makes no mistakes. What a beautiful thought when we can just think of the hope we had for Margaret. I can only have a feeling that she quietly drifted off into the arms of the Savior where she is in a deep peace that we can't explain.

Margaret never united with the militant church, but I am among the many that recognize how much she supported the Primitive Baptist, how much she enjoyed meetings with the brethren and friends, how much she expressed her love for the church by caring for the brethren and friends, how many times she made arrangements to take care of guests overnight who came from far and near to attend meetings, and how many meals she has prepared and graciously fed numbers beyond measure. Her home was just a haven of peace and rest. Yes, we all would have enjoyed calling her sister but that does not hinder the fact that we feel she is safely in the arms of Jesus and He recognized her as a sister in faith, hope, and charity; One of His own is our hope and belief. Rest on Sister Margaret, we loved you, but He loves you more.

She was a keen listener of the

doctrine. Oft times when visiting with her, days after any given meeting, she might ask, "Do you believe that (any given thought she had heard) means (whatever she had heard or thought). That's all it took to get a conversation going. It could have been a point that she did not believe or understand, or perhaps a point she so strongly believed. Whatever the situation might be she got it hashed out to her satisfaction. She just simply was a strong "Old Baptist" and a lovely sister.

Her greatest joys were being with her family and the brethren. Her last week among us was filled with her kind of pleasure. A union meeting of the Eastern Kehukee Union was held at the Tarboro Church, that she loved so much and then she immediately began looking forward to the next Sunday and getting ready for the scheduled meeting time at the Tarboro Church. With the help of a very supportive family she had no problems. Then came New Year's. There was a family tradition whereby all the family, who could, would be in her home on New Year's Eve together with some of the brethren who joined them. At midnight, they met around her tables for breakfast for the family fun and brotherly love.

Her out of town guests left on New Year's day to go home and all was fine. She enjoyed the rest of the day with family coming and going. Then on January 2nd all was fine until bedtime neared. A daughter called on the phone and when she got no answer she immediately alerted other family members who came forward. So sad, when they arrived they found her slumped in her chair and they had no success in reviving her.

Margaret was married to Brother John H. Coker for 57 years He was a deacon of the Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church in Tarboro, North Carolina. She was a true supporter of him in his calling to serve for 52 years before his death in 2002.

Surviving her is one son, John H. Coker, Jr. and wife, Ann. Four daughters: Rebecca Coker, Naomi Coker, Sallie C. Denny and husband, Ricky. Frances C. Liverman and husband, Stanley. Grandchildren: Tracy Winkler and husband, Matt; Julie Mullaly, Kristy D. Roberson and husband Chris, Chad Denny, Stan Liverman and wife, Heather, and Ashley Liverman. Also surviving are five great grandchildren.

Her funeral, with standing room only, was conducted at Carlisle Funeral Home in Tarboro, NC by the pastor of the Tarboro Church, Elder Marvin Brumfield assisted by Elder Harold Pittman. Interment was beside her husband in Greenwood Cemetery, Tarboro, NC, with a throng of acquaintances surrounding the gravesite.

At a family request, this feeble attempt has been done by one who loved, admired and respected Margaret Coker for over 61 years. We shall long miss her.

Respectfully Contributed by,
J. Carroll Williams

BROTHER JOHN S. COLLIE, JR.

On August 23, 2012 the Lord called our dear Brother, of 1620 Hampton Road, Reidsville, North Carolina, from our midst. Brother John was born December 5, 1932 to the late Brother John S. Collie, Sr. and Sister Nellie Dix Collie. He lived in Rockingham County his entire life. He was also predeceased by a sister, Sister Peggy Owens West. Brother John is survived by his wife of 58 years, former Nancy Ellington of the home. He is also survived by two sons, Steven Collie and wife Carmon of Tryon, N.C., Brian Collie and wife Barbara of Pfafftown, N.C., and one daughter, Carol Collie Raiger and husband, David of Kernersville, N.C. There are six grandchildren who survive: Shannon Collie of Charlotte, N.C., Lauren Collie Birdno and husband, Jared of Inman, S.C., Tyler and Laura Collie of Pfafftown, N.C., and Taylor and Adam Raiger of Kernersville, N.C. He is also survived by two brothers, David Collie and wife, Janice of Blairsville, Georgia and Brother Bob R. Collie of Summerfield, N.C.

Brother John's major interests were family and Church, camping with family, woodworking and crafts. He served in the U.S. Navy for 19 months. Brother John graduated from Ruffin High School in 1951 and was valedictorian of his senior class. He attended Appalachian State University and graduated from Elon University with an AB degree in Business Administration. He also completed one year at the University of Tennessee School of Social Work.

Brother John joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on September 25, 1983. In 1984 he was elected treasurer. In 1997 he was ordained as a deacon. He served as a trustee on the cemetery fund at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. He was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Signs of the Times, the oldest Primitive Baptist periodical in America. He served all of these offices well.

Brother John was a believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. I will use this scripture in Ephesians chapter two verses eight and nine, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast." Brother John and I traveled many miles together going to church. One day we were on our way to Moon's Creek Church in Caswell County. He asked, "Don't you think I have been Treasurer long enough?" I hesitated for a few minutes and then I thought, he is handicapped but he still has a good mind. He was walking with two canes. I would walk beside of him until he was seated in church. I also knew that his wife, Nancy, helped him print out records on paper with the computer. After having all of these thoughts, I answered him. I said, "No, I do not think you have been Treasurer long enough." He was Treasurer when he passed away.

Also, on Monday before Brother John passed away on Thursday, Elder Thomas Solomon, his wife, Sister Louise, and I went in to see Brother John. He was very talkative. He said something has happened to me, it may be the progress I have made is back sliding. On Tuesday Elder Jimmy Gray asked me if I would go with him to see Brother John and I did.

Funeral services were held on Sunday, August 26, 2012 at 3 P.M. at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church with Elder Thomas Solomon officiating. The burial was at Mt. Carmel United Methodist Church Cemetery there to await the coming of the Lord. In first Thessalonians chapter four verses sixteen and seventeen are as follows: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord." We believe our loss is Brother John's eternal gain.

Written by:
R. Allen Carroll,
Church Clerk

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 04/2013 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF ANNA LEE WALTON CONNER

If the Lord will bless me, I will attempt to write the obituary of our sister in Christ, and my sister in the flesh.

Anna was born December 16, 1927 to the late Alonzo and Mamie Walton. She fell asleep in Jesus, January 6, 2013, making her stay on earth 85 years. She was predeceased by her husband Clyde Richard Conner, and her only daughter Anita Dawn Conner.

Left to cherish her memory is her beloved grandson Jared Johnson, his foster parents Jay & Elizabeth Taliferro, and her brothers and sisters: John Walton and wife Joyce, Ezra Walton and wife Jane, Jean Walton Rorrer and husband Sebert and Mary Walton Janney and a special friend Alfred Ratliff.

After a beautiful funeral service by her pastor Elder Carl Terry and Elder W.T. Conner, she was laid to rest at Wilson Cemetary in Floyd County.

Anna was a member of The Primitive Baptist faith for more than 40 years. Most of her life was a struggle, with many afflictions, which she accepted with grace and dignity.

We feel she is now resting in that perfect peace. No more sickness, no more pain and suffering. Our merciful God delivered her out of it all. May we bow in humble submission to His will.

In request of Salem (Head of the River Church).

Written with love,
By: Mary Janney

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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HYMN

I AM a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again.
When I experience call to mind,
My understanding is so blind,
All feeling sense seems to be gone,
Which makes me fear that I am wrong.
I find myself out of the way,
My thoughts are often gone astray;
Like one alone I seem to be;
Oh! is there anyone like me?
'Tis seldom I can ever see
Myself as I would wish to be;
What I desire, I can't attain;
From what I hate I can't refrain.
So far from God I seem to lie
Which makes me often weep and cry,
I fear at last that I shall fall;
For if a saint, the least of all.
I seldom find a heart to pray,
So many things come in my way;
Thus filled with doubts, I ask to know—
Come, tell me, is it thus with you?
So by experience do I know
There's nothing good that I can do;
I cannot satisfy the law,
Nor hope nor comfort from it draw.
My nature is so prone to sin,
Which makes my duty so unclean,
That when I count up all the cost,
Without free grace, I know I'm lost.

Primitive

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EDITORIAL

REVEREND OR ELDER

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

Reverend is a title commonly given to ministers by many other faiths. Other titles include The Very Reverend, The Right Reverend, The Most Reverend and even Holy Father and Rabbi. The best that I can determine these blasphemous titles started with the Catholic Church and became accepted by other faiths. They are not scriptural and indeed are blasphemy against God. Only God is reverend, righteous and holy. Reverend is in the scriptures only one time and is the Lord's name for Psalm 111:9 says **"... holy and reverend** *is* **His name."** No prophet, apostle, minister or any other person in the scriptures, other than Christ, is ever called holy or reverend. In Matthew 23:5-10, Christ tells His disciples concerning the scribes and Pharisees, **"But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master,** *even* **Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no** *man* **your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master,** *even* **Christ."** In Job 32:21-22 Elihu says, **"Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man. For I know not to give flattering titles;** *in so doing* **my maker would soon take me away."** Isaiah 57:15 says, **"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy..."**

The faiths, denominations or organizations that use this designation for their ministers do not believe that one is truly a minister if that person does not have reverend before his name. It has become so universally accepted that most of the world believes this also. These highminded titles are to appeal to the carnal, fleshly natural man in an effort to elevate the

importance and prestige of the titled individual. No title has ever made one a minister.

In the Old Testament "elder referred to age. These were older men who were heads of families or tribes. They were considered experienced, mature, wise and leaders. They were not novices and they ruled well their own houses. God told Moses in **Exodus 3:16-18, "Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me saying, I have surely visited you, and** *seen* **that which is done to you in Egypt: And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey. And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God." In Numbers 11:16-17, "And the Lord said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee. And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put** *it* **upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear** *it* **not thyself alone."** I believe these elders were performing the work of a pastor/bishop. They cared for their people. Elders would sit in the gate of the city and the people would bring their problems to them for counsel and judgment. This title or designation was brought forward into the new testament for the Lord's ministers.

In the new testament "elder" refers to the gospel minister. Those of the Primitive Baptist faith use "elder" for their ministers because it is scriptural. **1 Peter 5: 1-4, "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight** *thereof* **not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over** *God's* **heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."** The Apostle John refers to himself as an elder in his second and third epistles. Paul and Barnabas ordained elders in every church in the cities of Lystra, Iconium and Antioch according to the 14th Chapter of Acts. And in **Acts 15:23, "And they wrote** *letters* **by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren** *send* **greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia."**

Acts 16:4-5, "And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily." In the 20th chapter of Acts Paul called the elders of the church at Ephesus together and admonished them to feed the church of God as the Holy Ghost had made them overseers. Revelation speaks of the four and twenty elders seated round about the throne of God. The Apostle Paul wrote Titus to ordain elders in every city as he had appointed him. According to the Apostle, elders and bishops are the same. He wrote to Timothy and Titus giving the qualifications as follows: blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, not selfwilled, of good behavior, not given to wine, not greedy of filthy lucre, lover of hospitality, sober, just, apt to teach, not soon angry, no striker, patient, not covetous, ruleth well his own house, not a novice, has a good report of them which are without, holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. You will notice that the qualifications do **NOT** say the wife of one husband and since Christ did not have any female apostles and neither do the scriptures mention any females ordained as elders, we believe that only males are to be ordained as ministers. I certainly fall so short. Of myself I can do nothing. But my comfort is that with God all things are possible. He is our help, our strength, our refuge, our all.

Your unworthy servant,
Elder Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

2-15-2013

Dear Bro. Tony,

Am sorry to be late sending in my subscription to "Signs of the Times." Thank you for sending it anyway. I enjoy it and I feel like it keeps me in touch since I don't get to go to church anymore.

Use the other money as you see fit.

Love in Christ,
Frances Brinkley

To whom it may concern,

Enclosed you will find a check for $50.00. I would like to renew my subscription for the Signs of the Times for 2 years for $25.00 the remaining $25.00 is my contribution to the church.

I would like to request that you print the full version of Amazing Grace with all verses included.

Thank you,
Sister Polly Sizemore
2805 Turkey Ca. R. Hand Fork
Brenton, WV 24818

February 9, 2013

Dear Brother Horton,

Enclosed is a check for $15.00 to renew my subscription of the Signs for another year.

I look forward to receiving this special paper each month.

Since God's word is sure and doesn't change, I can depend upon the Signs as a regular source of inspiration and sound doctrine.

May God bless you and all who work to publish this worthy word of truth each month.

With hope in Christ,
Gloria B. Reese
File: Violet M. Barton 3/13

Dear Brother Horton,

My precious wife, Pauline Jones, passed away Sept. 31, 2012. We have been receiving the Signs for quite a few years and I would like to continue.

Enclosed is a check for two more years, use the rest however you see fit. It is a great comfort to me to know there are still God's people out there that still hold to the old path's. May God bless you and all the staff that print the Signs and all that write for it.

Phillip Jones
12555 Farm Rd. 79
Sumner Texas 75486

P.O. Box 209
Pelham, N.C. 27311
March 14, 2013

Dear Elder Cleo,

I have written an obituary for Sarah Barker and would appreciate your putting it in the Signs of the Times.

Sarah was well known all over the country because she traveled a lot with Elder Spangler.

Do hope this finds you well,
Love & fellowship,
B. G. Pryor

Dear Sir,

Please renew my Signs for two years and use the rest – the way you choose. I may not need for two years but someone can. I will be 95 years old 5-22-13.

My Dad was Elder W.T. Clayton, a good old Primitive Baptist Preacher. I read his Signs for years. He passed away in 1954.

I have some Signs back to 1913 – I love to read the old Signs too.

May the good Lord bless and keep you and yours and all of God's children.

This is 32 days later I fell feeding my cats. I got tangled up in some cables and hit some tables and fell on concrete and hurt my leg and arm so I couldn't walk.

I have three boys and one girl. They or one of them stays with me at all times – they have spoiled me. My

wife passed away five years ago, we lived together for 66 years and three months, sure miss her.

My kids are giving me a birthday party on 5-5-13 in Providence, Ky. Seniors Building and all is welcome. And don't send me a Birthday Card unless you really want to.

Love, Raymond Clayton
561 Clayton Rd., Dixon, Ky. 42409

(Sorry about my spelling, writing and thinking, hearing and seeing, and you won't either when you are almost 95 years old.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF BELL SPUR CHURCH
In the Smith River Association, Va.

September 3, 1860

We, an arm of State Line Church in the Mayo Association, being extended to Bell Spur meeting house for the purpose of receiving members by experience and by letter, this day we constituted into a church by a presbytery of Elders as follows: Samuel Arrington, Claborn Plasters, Daniel Comer. This presbytery was ordered by the Mayo Association.

The members were as follows: Isham Barnard and Sarah, his wife, Willian Blanchett and Statia, his wife, Bartlett Smith and Helen his wife, Jackson McGrady and Hannah his wife, James M. Blanchett and Sarah his wife, Susan M. Mabry, Isham Pack, Gabrial Sandfer, Rachel Bowman, Rachel Arrington, Polly Bowman, Luwina Stanley, Susan Sandfer, Elizabeth Jane Epperson, Polly Smith, Elizabeth Blanchett, Elitha Barnard, Eliza (colored woman), Lemuel (colored man). Claborn Plasters was chosen Moderator and James M. Jancett, Clerk for the present time. It appears that from reading the old records that there was no special Moderator called until April, 1861, when Elder James Thompson was chosen Moderator and Elder Samuel Arrington his assistant. The records show that prior to this time Elders Samuel Arrington, Claborn Plasters, James Thompson, and Allen Thomas served as Moderator. In October following, James M. Blancett and Bartlet Smith was set apart for the office of deacon, and were ordained in May following. In April 1861 the church was received into the Mayo Association in August 1865.

James Barnard and Jackson McGrady were set apart as deacons, Jan., 1866. The church chose George Smith as clerk. In Sept., 1866 the church joined the Smith River Association. At this meeting (Sept.) Janie M. Blancett was licensed to preach, and in August, 1867 was ordained to the full function of the ministry. At this same meeting Charles Barnard was ordained a deacon. In July 1875 Richard Thompson and I. N. T. Barnard was ordained deacons. In May 1879 James M. Blancett was chosen Moderator; June, 1881 Sister..... was excluded for

bringing a suit against one of her brethren. In September, 1883 the church called for a presbytery of Elders to ordain James M. and Elijah M. Barnard, if found qualified to the ministry, and also E. P. Barnard, deacon. In November, 1902 E. P. Barnard was ordained to the ministry; Oct., 1903 Yancy H. Jessup and Daniel Quesenbury were ordained as deacons. Jan. 1911 A. T. Jessup was chosen clerk. June 1912 our Moderator being old and afflicted asked the church to appoint Elder E. P. Barnard to assist him. May 1915 Elder E. M. Barnard was chosen to serve equally with Elder James M. Barnard to which he agreed to serve for a short time only (Elder E. P. Barnard having been called from the shores of time) and Elder C. A. Vipperman was called as an assistant. October 31, 1915 our beloved Moderator, Elder James M. Blancett passed away at the age of 84. He served the church at Bell Spur 41 years as Moderator and was serving four churches at death. The church then chose Elder C. A. Vipperman and Joel E. Marshall to serve jointly. Aug. 1921, G. B. Terry and T. W. Banks were ordained as deacons. Elder C. A. Vipperman served the church faithfully for 14 years, died Feb. 18, 1930 at the age of 63. His membership was at Dan River Church, Patrick County, Va.

During this time the doctrine of conditional-time-salvation and limited predestination was being advocated by the Moderator, Joel E. Marshall. 9 of the members, including the two youngest deacons and the clerk stood against these things. At the July meeting, 1932 the majority refused to appoint messengers to the Smith River Association and dismissed their meeting, while the minority, kept their seats and prepared a letter and appointed messengers as usual, and was received by the Association at Bell Spur Church in order. The church property was lost to us, and as we had no place of worship, nor a moderator, we continued to meet in a home, and a stand was erected in a grove. All went to work and built a small but comfortable house. The first sermons were preached in the new house on first Sunday in November, 1932 by Elders J. P. Helms and John D. Wood. At our January meeting, 1933 the church by motion gave to Brother S. E. Terry the right to exercise, a public gift. May 5, 1934 J. Sam Hill was appointed Moderator for 12 months. June 6, 1936 J. Sam Hill was reappointed for 12 months. Oct. 31, 1936 Brother S. E. Terry was ordained to the ministry by a presbytery of Elders and deacons as follows: Elders J. P. Helms, J. D. Wood, S. L, Moran, D. P. Helms, E. R. Bryant, G. B. Gunter, J. G. L. Hash, D. P. Jefferson, C.E. Turner, F. T. Sowers, and Deacons P. E. Vipperman, G. W. Wright, T. W. Banks and G. B. Terry. May, 1938 J. Sam Hill chosen Moderator and S. E. Terry assistant. July 1, 1939, Elder S. E. Terry was appointed Moderator. December 15, 1940, our beloved brother, A. T. Jessup passed away. He had faithfully served the church as clerk for twenty-nine years. February 1941, G. B. Terry was ap-

pointed church clerk and T. W. Banks assistant clerk.

The meeting house is now located in Carrol County, just off the Blue Ridge Parkway. We have many seasons of rejoicing. We also entertained Smith River Association in 1948, which was one of the best meetings in the history of the Association.

Approved by the church while in conference on February 5, 1949.

Elder S. E. TERRY Mod.,
Brother G. B. Terry, Clerk

(Present pastor is Elder Alan Terry and the church meets on the 3rd Sunday each month)

North Berwick, Maine, Dec. 31, 1871.

BROTHER BEEBE:—The following letter was written by a young brother, who lives about twelve miles from this place, who was baptized by me last month. Please give it a place in the "Signs," that thousands, as well as myself, may have the privilege of reading it.

WM. Quint.

Acton, Maine, Dec. 24, 1871.

Dear Eld. Quint:—I will try to pen you a few lines, although I feel unworthy to write to one of the servants of God, or to even call one of God's elect a brother. I often fear that you have been deceived in me, for I feel that I am so great a sinner that I fear you think me better than I am. Instead of growing any better, it seems to me I grow worse every day. When I try to do good, evil is present with me. It makes me feel unworthy of a place among you. I fear that if you knew me as I know myself, that I should have a place among you no longer, for how could you hold in fellowship such a sinful worm of the dust as I am? And yet I must plead for a place among you, for it seems almost a heaven to me to be counted worthy to be called one of your number. I do not know what you see in, or hear from me, to cause you to accept of such a one as me. But I do love to be one among you, and to sit under the sound of the gospel, for it is truly nourishing to me. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

I hope I feel thankful to God for such a people, and for such doctrine as is preached among them; for no other could save so great a sinner as me. If the popular preaching around us be true, and it were left to me to secure my own salvation, by my own faithfulness, or else be lost, then truly there would be no hope for me; for I have already done enough to sink me so low that I could never see the light of my heavenly Father's face. But I cannot believe that he will leave me to sink thus low. I am not afraid to trust all to him; but may his will be done, whatever my lot may be. I would like to tell the church the love I have for them in expressing their fellowship for me, and giving me a place among them, if I could find words; but I cannot. I have always loved them from the time I first learned of them; but to know that that they love me! how different.

Horatio Grant

1857- CHILDREN OF GOD AND ANTICHRIST

Connersville, Indiana,
December 16, 1857.

"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God; every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." – 1 John iv: 2 3.

Brother Beebe:- By request of sister Charlotte Herrick, in the *SIGNS* of the 15th of November last, I am induced to give my views on the text above. This subject is copious, and opens up a wide field for remarks. John is here writing to the children of God whom he addresses as *"little children."* Little children are the most helpless and dependent of all the animal creation, and therefore the most suitable to illustrate the condition of the children of God, of any, and so they are often called. John, being an old man, and an old preacher, and a teacher of babes, may with great propriety, also claim them as his little children, for whose benefit, information, learning and comfort, he was laboring. To them, he says, "*Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world.*" The many false prophets being prompted by the spirit of error to oppose Christ in various ways and in many things, and by many false prophets or teachers, I suppose is the sense in which it is called *many spirits.* All the different operations and diversity of systems invented by this spirit and propagated by all the false prophets influenced by it, diverse as they may seem, yet they are all against Christ. They are all in the world and of the world, and many of them, from time to time, have for a season had a name in the church; but the church is not their home. They *"have gone out into the world."* The little children would very naturally enquire, How shall we clearly know these two spirits, and be prepared to clearly distinguish between them, so as, in all cases, to know the spirit of Truth from the spirit of error?

John promptly and in plain words answers this enquiry -" *Hereby know ye the spirit* of *God; every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is* of *God;"* and on the other hand, *"every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not* of *God.* " This rule is short and easy to apply, and every way suitable to the capacity of little children who are born of the Spirit of God. The spirit that prompts the teacher or prophet will show of what sort it is, by the teaching of the prophet or teacher. Therefore, every teacher or prophet that does not, in his doctrine confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God. *"And this is that spirit* of *anti-christ whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world."* The world is its place, it is of

that world, and the world will hear and love that which is its own.

Now a few points are presented for our special remark. *First,* What Jesus Christ is, which has come in the flesh? *Second,* What is that antichrist whereof they have heard, &c.? And, *thirdly,* How are the little children to know and overcome the world and this spirit of error, which even now is in the world?

First, Let us ascertain correctly who, or what that Jesus Christ which is come in the flesh, is? "Jesus" signifies a Savior, and this name was, by the Angel, given to the babe of Bethlehem, because He should save His people from their sins. The name "Christ" signifies the Anointed, the sent, the appointed One. The Messiah of the Old Testament is the same as the Christ of the new Testament, and both contemplates a character subordinate to God, in one sense, as the "Anointed," the appointed, the sent, the cut off, &c., yet fully, properly and equally God, as the Father. This character or personage, was not the flesh, but it was that Jesus Christ that is come in the flesh. This Jesus Christ dwelt in the bosom of the Father, before He came to earth and was born of Mary. He was brought forth before the mountains were, or ever the earth was. His goings forth were from of old, even from everlasting. He often appeared in personal form and was visible, as man, to the fathers, to the prophets and saints, and was by them called a "man," a "messenger" or an "angel," and He recognized the truth of the *name.* This was the *"man* of *God's right hand,"* even the *"Son* of *man,"* whom God had made strong for Himself -Psalm lxxx. 17. This is the man that spake the promise to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. This man appeared to Manoah and Manoah's wife; and this man, as the Captain of the Lord's host, stood before Joshua with a drawn sword in His hand. Against this man the sword was commanded to awake, and smite, (not God,) but *"the man that is* My *fellow, saith the Lord* of *hosts."* Who stood then, as now, legally the Shepherd of the sheep? In this heavenly man, the second Adam, it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell, and He is properly the Head over all things to His children; as man, but not as flesh, and bones, and blood, but as man, pure, sinless, undefiled; man in essence or nature, the whole fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily in Him, and for this heavenly man a body was prepared, as a victim for His offering; and when this man came in His flesh, or body, which God had prepared Him, God was manifest in this flesh which this man, Christ Jesus, came in. The Jews denied that the promised Messiah had come in the flesh, and were antichrist; that is, they were against Christ. So atheists, deists, and all who teach that Christ was an imposter, or He was not the Son of God, all are against Christ.

The world of the ungodly, who know not God and who obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, are all against Christ; but the text seems, more especially to refer to such as makes a profession and claim to be a

church, or churches of Christ, or such as individually claim to be believers of the Gospel, and still do not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. Some of these will confess that the flesh and bones and body of the son of Mary, is the Jesus Christ in whom they believe, and whom they preach; and they teach that Jesus Christ, as such, never had any actual existence until He was conceived and born of Mary. Here they start the actual existence of the Mediator, the man Christ Jesus, and claim that flesh alone, as their only Christ Jesus, and do not confess that the Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, ever came in the flesh; but the flesh is all the Jesus Christ that they will or do confess existing between God and man. They say that He never existed until He was conceived and born of Mary, therefore they do not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. They contend that He was the flesh, and not that He came in the flesh. But the Spirit that is of God, teaches that *"Forasmuch as the children are partakers* of *flesh and blood, He,* (Jesus Christ,) *also Himself likewise took part* of *the same,* or in like manner took part of the same. The spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God. Others again, with most of those already described, deny that Jesus Christ was ever either in heaven or the flesh, or anywhere else. They apply the name to a mere phantom of their imagination that the Scriptures know nothing of, either in heaven or earth, in the flesh or out of it; a Jesus Christ who *tries to save* all of Adam's race, and fails to save even the half of them; and of Himself alone fails to save any, and the salvation of one and all must forever fail, after all that He has ever done or ever will do, unless the sinner himself secures his own salvation by some mighty works of his own. This phantom, the false prophets call "Jesus Christ," and they say that it is the Son of God, and that the Father is equally as impotent and dependent as the Son, and quite as liable to fail, unless man will lay to the helping hand. This is really denying the true God, and the true Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent.

Of course, these do not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This spirit is not of God; this is that spirit of antichrist, of which ye have heard that it should come, and is even now in the world; *in* the wisdom, learning, speculations and institutions of the religious world.

Second. We are to enquire who, or what this antichrist is, of whom ye have already heard that it should come, and is even now in the world. Ye have heard of the coming and working of this spirit of antichrist, this man of sin, or son of perdition, this mystery of iniquity, by the old prophets and by the apostle Paul, and by the other apostles who had written to these little children, before John wrote this letter. And some say that this letter was not written until after John had written the book of Revelation, in which the coming and reign of antichrist is so fully discussed. At all events, these little children had heard that such a spirit of

opposition should come, and that it was now in the world, and would be more fully developed by an host of false prophets or teachers who should compass both sea and land to make proselytes. All expositors are apt to look to Rome, and when they have found this antichrist so fully displayed in the papal See, they have seemed to have almost forgotten that the same spirit of error that prompted the Romish clergy to all their ambitions and bloody opposition against Christ, in His doctrine, in His government, His ordinances, His people, and His coming in the flesh, and all worldly pomp, power, wealth, learning and pretended benevolence; the various schools, missions, and means of money, &c. All this is as fully exhibited now by the Protestant antichrist, as ever it was in Rome, wherever the law will give them the power, and when that stays the hand of violence and blood, deception, fraud, slander, gimmicks and lying in wait to deceive, is resorted to. All this is the multiform working of the same spirit of antichrist, or against Him, against His Eternal Godhead at one time and place, and against His existence at any time previous to His conception and birth by Mary. Against His being absolute and unconditionally a Savior - Against the justification and cleansing virtue of His blood; for they say that all depends at last on conditions performed by men. This is again against Christ. Their doctrine, ordinances, discipline, and their worldly combinations and amalgamations with the world, show that they are in the world and of the world, and the world loves and hears them, because they are its own. All these are not only against Christ, but they prove themselves to be antichrist, according to the test that John gave to the children of God in our text. In the world they are heard, loved, received, approved and sustained, and like the world, they confess not that the true and Scriptural Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.

Some may ask, Are not some of God's little children deceived by these false " teachers? This is not for me to decide; if they are, the Lord is saying to them, *"Come out of her, My people."* A plain test is given in the text: and they should try the spirits and obey the Lord. But be this as it may, it makes neither the spirit nor the false prophets or teachers prompted by it, any the better; but if some, even of the children have, for a season, been, deceived by its fair speeches, feigned humility and will-worship, and by its intrusion surely the balance of the little children should, the more promptly and constantly consider and apply the test which is given them in the text, which is short and easily applied.

Thirdly. A few words as to how the little children are to know this spirit and overcome the world, and this spirit which is in the world. On this momentous subject John says, in the verse following the text, "Ye *are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.*" If God, who is love, is in these little children; if His Spirit of Truth is in them; if Christ

is in them the hope of glory, surely God will keep them by His power - the Spirit of light and Truth will lead them into all necessary Truth; and Christ, their Shepherd, Husband, Prophet, Priest and King; their Way, their Life, their Shield, their Righteousness and their Salvation - surely thus furnished, even the *little* children who are of God, have in days past, do at this time, and will finally overcome all the spirits of anti-Christ, that are now, ever have been, or ever will be in the world with the world to help them. Not by any motive, power of their own do they persevere or overcome, but because greater is He that is in them than he that is in the world!

Now, my sister Herrick, and your husband and daughter, both of whom I baptized at the last meeting at which I ever saw of you, as I had baptized you many years before, I have given you some of my views on the text which you selected; and I present them for the consideration of all God's little children. While you, and all of them, in your widely scattered situation — far from your former homes, and your old brethren and sisters, ministers and places of worship, feel lonely, like the little children weaned from the breast and thrown among strangers, and in such an inhospitable region, you hear the howling of the spirit of anti-Christ, crying, "Lo here! Lo there!" you have often heard of this opposing spirits being in the world. Yes, you have often witnessed that these false prophets did not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh; and you have often applied the test in the text. But then you know your friends with whom you could mingle in mutual faith, hope and love; where you could hear the Truth, and join in the songs of Zion. If sorrows, manifold temptations, darkness, doubts, fears or unbelief gather over you, and as a thick cloud, hid the smiles of the Savior from your view for a season, still you were among your brethren and sisters, whose company and edifying conversation, and familiarity with such trials, would often comfort and encourage you on your dubious and dreary way. But now, far, far away from those old and long-tried friends, cast among strangers, knowing not who will really confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh - the howl of the prophets of Baal and of the Groves around yea, and no known, tried, confidential brother or sister to confer with, it is then you think of bygone days. But still when, by the strength of Him that is in you, and with you, the clouds are again dispersed and your way is made plain, you find that you are not alone: still you have a Comforter, even when all earthly comforts have failed. My brother and sister, you, like many others of the little children, have constant need to apply the test which is in the text, to all you hear: for in one way or another, every spirit of error and every false prophet and false teacher will preach and teach against Christ, and labor to whittle down His power, His dignity, or His grace, and to exalt man's power, free-agency and works, and they confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the

flesh. But the true ministers who are separated to the work by the Holy Spirit of Truth, will come to you with Christ's test, and Christ as All in all, and such will be determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. This Gospel of His sovereign grace, of His Kingdom, and your salvation, is sweet to the taste of the little children; therefore, *"Eat, O friends; yea, drink abundantly, O beloved."*

Yours in Christ,
Wilson Thompson,
December 16, 1857.

GOD IS ABOVE SATAN - TRUTH IS STRONGER THAN ERROR

When I was about 16 years of age I found among the books in our home one very elegantly bound volume. I began reading it, was interested; I might say I was charmed with its beautiful thoughts. I did not at first discern the pernicious tendency and purpose of the whole volume, and even when I did begin to see the drift of this venomous composition, out of curiosity I continued reading to the end.

It was Volney's "Ruins, Reflections upon the Revolutions of Empires" — a notorious classical infidel writer. I thought when I had done reading that it had done me no harm. Indeed in those days I began to think I was so well grounded in the doctrine of Christ, so scripturally fortified in all points that all the arguments of infidels and atheists, and also American religionist could make no impression whatever upon me. But about six years afterwards I suffered much from these pernicious writings. I was passing through some trying providences, and I was in a very low condition spiritually. The Bible was as a sealed book to me; not a morsel of food, not a word of good cheer could I read. I prayed, and prayed, but the heavens over me were as brass. I became wretched indeed, then hardened, and all the past of my life as a believer appeared as a dream. I doubted its reality, its divine origin. I thought to myself it has all been fanaticism; I have myself made it all, and now it is all at an end. I sighed over it all, just a sigh. Then I became dreadfully harassed with the hellish darts of Satan, who hurled at my soul challenges, and insinuations. "Where is now thy God? If there were a God, would He not hear your prayers? Where is your precious Jesus that you have professed to know, and to be in such intimacy with? It is all a farce, a delusion; the Bible is only cunningly devised fables; there is no God. Christ crucified is all foolishness, like all other religions." Then Satan hurled at me and tormented my soul with sophistries of that cursed book of Volney's. I had no heart and I found no words to pray. I felt they were useless; for how did I know that God is and that Jesus Christ ever liveth to make intercession for transgressors? I found that all my reasoning powers were not sufficient to repel the arguments of Volney, so I was

as one thrust through, cast down in the battle and trampled under the feet of my foes. But I sighed and moaned over my condition, O, sometimes I sighed and moaned unto God, yearned after Jesus. Yes, there would spring up thoughts in spite of satan, in spite of Volney, in spite of all my vileness, hardness of heart, and unbelief, that surely God is, Jesus is, surely my past hope and comfort in Him as my Savior and Friend was not a delusion. I would say to myself, Surely it was a gracious power beyond what is mine beyond all the power of creatures that so wrought in me, moving me, a vile sinner, toward God with a broken contrite heart; and that also wrought such blessedness in me of forgiveness, justification and hope of eternal life through the knowledge of Him, the precious Savior, Jesus Christ. But in a few moments I would sink again in the deeps, bemoaning myself; just about hopeless. I was in this condition about three months. All this time I constantly read the bible, for hours, every day, and I was preaching every Sunday. Some one may ask, How could you do it? I can now see that it was surely of the Lord that I did so. I preached what the Holy Scriptures taught; I declared things according to my past experience; but I was plagued all the time with dreadful fears that there was no divine origin to it, that it was imaginary; an idle tale. To tell all the particulars of this battle, and how out of weakness I was made strong, and was triumphant over all my foes, Volney included, would occupy too much space; but I must tell you a little of it to the praise of the glory of Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever.

One day as I was walking along a street in the city where I lived, burdened and cast down, I began thinking about what were the scriptural evidences of divine life in the soul. In a sort of theoretical way I scanned the subject. Then I questioned myself.

What proof have I of any such evidences? I said to myself, I have none. All that I can discern are a few faint sighs, and once in a while a few feeble longings after Jesus the Savior. I thought that if there is any spiritual life in my soul it is very low. But would there be, though ever so weak, any sighs and longings after the living God if there were no life? And in the twinkling of an eye my answer was, I am not dead in trespasses and sins. I almost shouted the words out. Then I felt my heart to be warming with fervent longings toward Jesus, the dear Lamb of God; my hardness was gone; I was broken and contrite in heart before the Lord, confessing my vileness, telling Jesus my wretchedness. O my trust was in the blood and righteousness of Christ. This was my breastplate, and for my helmet the Holy Ghost put upon me the precious hope of eternal salvation. I felt God pardoneth all my iniquities; He is my God, my Friend, my Rock, my All; I know that He is, and that He is my Salvation.

I stood and faced my foes. Where were all my sins, all the tauntings of the Devil, all the cunning craftiness, and mighty reasonings of the infidel?

They were fled, they were scattered as the chaff before the wind, they were trodden under my feet; for Christ and His everlasting gospel were now in me, not in word only, but in power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. A little while after this I espied in the bookcase the elegantly bound Volney's Ruins, but its elegance stirred no pity in my heart; I took hold of it, and into the fire it went. About nine months ago some unknown person sent me about forty volumes of religious works, all in excellent bindings, and some of them costly books. I glanced through them, that was enough. I burnt and thus destroyed them every one. Could I not have sold them, given them away? No! They were full of false teachings, heresies.

Some of the brethren long ago had a bonfire of books (Acts 19: 19—Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.).

FREDERICK W. KEENE
THE LONE PILGRIM,
March 1925, Vol. 3, No. 30

PROVERBS 18: 21.

Death and life *are* in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.

"And grieve not the holy spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." (Ephesians 4:30)

We have been requested by a friend in Chester County, Pa., to give our views on the above text, through the Signs of the Times. The popular sentiment of Armenians workmongers in general seems to be that the children of men, even in their fallen condition, have power to inflict upon the eternal and unchanging God, the Holy Ghost, disappointment, sorrow and grief; they have therefore supposed that the above text was desired as an exhortation to unregenerated sinners to beware of their liability to grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by obstinately refusing to be quickened by his divine operation. They hold that God, the Holy Ghost, operates to some extent upon all hearts, and strives with all sinners to regenerate them; but some sinners are so hardened or careless that the Spirit becomes grieved with them, and gives them over to hardness of heart and a reprobate mind, etc. If by any fair construction of the admonition of the text under consideration, we could arrive at any such conclusion, we would be compelled to yield the ground we occupy in regard to salvation being of the Lord alone, and in this surrender yield also the doctrine of the immutability of God, and of the depravity and consequent inability of men. The absurdity, however, of such notions will sufficiently appear, at least to such as are divinely enlightened,

when we present the true meaning of the subject.

In the discussion of this subject, we take the position that neither the above text or any other part or portion of the epistle was addressed to unregenerate sinners. The whole epistle, by authority of the Holy Ghost, was addressed to the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus; such as were blessed with all spiritual blessings, according as they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; predestinated to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. (Ephesians 1:1-5) Such as were quickened by the Holy Spirit, from a state of death in trespasses and sins; raised up together with Christ, and made to sit together with Christ, in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 11:1-6) Paul having fully identified the subjects of address, as the blessed, chosen, predestinated, redeemed, called and quickened people of God, organized into a gospel church, as one body, in one hope of their calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in them all; beseeches them to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called. Had their calling, like many professors in modern days, been of men, then to walk according thereto would require them to follow the traditions, doctrines and inventions of men; but their vocation or calling was of God, and that according as he had chosen them in Christ before the foundation of the world; saved and called, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in him before the world began, (2 Timothy 1:9); therefore to walk worthy of such a heavenly calling would require that as they had received Christ Jesus the Lord they should walk in him. Suffer us here to remark, when men exhort unregenerate sinners, they have to present selfish motives, such as their eternal destiny at stake. The terrors of damnation on one hand, and the prospect of eternal happiness on the other, or their exhortations avail nothing; but to the living children of God the apostle would present no more powerful incentive than the nature of their vocation; the eternity of God's love toward them in Christ Jesus, their election, safety and identity with Christ Jesus as the Head over all things to his church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. (Ephesians 1:23)

If by the Holy Spirit of God, whereby we are sealed, etc., we are to understand God himself, as a Spirit, infinite, eternal, independent and immutable, or the Holy Ghost as God, we would be compelled to consider him susceptible of grief, sorrow, disappointment, etc., which things are quite incompatible with what we have been taught of God; but our Lord told Nicodemus, "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit," as that which is born of the flesh is flesh. So in this text, the Holy Spirit of God appears to mean the spirit of the renewed mind, otherwise called the "New man, which after God

is created in righteousness and true holiness." - verse 23, 24. This Spirit of God, whereby the saints are sealed, is called the spirit of promise, and is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory. (Chapter 1:13, 14)

This spirit then we understand to be the spirit of life; the incorruptible seed by the word of the Lord that liveth and abideth forever; the seed that remaineth; the spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead, and which dwells in all that are born of God. It is here called the spirit because it is born of the Holy Ghost; it is called the Holy Spirit, for that which emanates only from the Holy Ghost must necessarily be holy; it is called the holy spirit of God because it is of God. That spiritual life which was given to the saints in Christ before the world began is called, when received by us experimentally in the new birth, "Christ in you the hope of glory," for in him, the eternal word, was life, and that life is the light of men. When we receive it we receive Christ; for Christ is our life. "He is the Resurrection and the Life; and when he who is our life shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory." That life which was given us in Adam, and which the apostle here distinguishes from the spiritual by the appellation, "the old man", which is corrupt and carnal, standing connected with law, sin, condemnation and wrath; but this holy spirit or new man is spiritual, incorruptible, undefiled and cannot fade away; for it was and is reserved in heaven for you who by him do believe in God; and earnest of it is given us when quickened, or after that we believe. As the first operation of the Holy Ghost on our hearts bring us to belief, or in other words, convinces us of sin; of the spirituality of the law; of the impossibility of salvation by works of righteousness that we can do; so after this is effected by the exceeding greatness of his mighty power that brought again our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, the struggle, the labor, the travail of regeneration gives place to deliverance of the new man, which, not after Adam is created a natural, carnal or corruptible man, of the earth earthy; but is created after God (Christ) in righteousness (Christ) and true holiness (Christ). By this renewing of the Holy Ghost a spiritual life is communicated to the child of God, which is the spirit of promise (in distinction from law) and whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be made partakers of the divine nature. (2 Peter 1:4) This spirit in our hearts exerts a transforming influence, by it the saints are sealed. This metaphor teaches two things; first, as the seal makes its full impression on the wax, and which cannot be counterfeited, so the indwelling life born from above makes an inimitable impression upon believers, conforming them to the image of Christ; and secondly, as the seal makes the instrument, covenant, will, testament or promise valid, so this incorruptible seed implanted in the saints is an earnest of their divine inherit-

ances in glory.

This seal of God, instamped on his children, is to serve as an earnest or assurance to his saints, until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory; or as in our text, until the day of redemption. That is, as long as the saints are to live by faith upon the Son of God.

The day of redemption in this text means the same as in the first chapter and 14th verse, viz: the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory. The possession which Christ purchased with his blood is the flock or church of God. "The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." The purchase of this possession was a redemption purchase; not effected with such corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, etc. The day of their redemption, in this case, means their final deliverance from corruption, depravity and death; but our apostle says, even we ourselves, who have received the first fruits of the Spirit, do groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit: the redemption of our body. (Romans 8:23) Until, therefore, these mortal bodies of the purchased flock of Christ are arrayed in spotless immortality, until these corruptibles shall put on incorruption, and the saying is fulfilled, "Death is swallowed up in victory", and the saints prepared to sing the triumphant anthem, "O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?", this holy spirit, as the signet of our God, shall be to us an earnest evidence and assurance that when this earthly house shall be dissolved, and fall, we have a building of God; a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Until that illustrious day shall dawn on us we shall need this earnest, but no longer; for

"When from the dust of earth we rise,
To take our mansion in the skies",

we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known. Until then may it be our inexpressible happiness, through grace abounding to the chief of sinners, to stand upon Mount Zion with the hundred and forty and four thousand, and the innumerable multitude redeemed out of every nation, kindred and tongue; having the seal of our Father God deeply impressed upon us in heart, in life, and in practice.

But the solemn admonition of our subject demands our special attention. "Grieve not the holy spirit." While the eternal God is infinitely above being moved by any such passions as grief, sorrow or disappointment, being of one mind, and none can turn him, that spirit begotten in his saints, which is an emanation from him, can be grieved. In Noah it strove with a world lying in wickedness, and devoted to awful destruction. In Lot, his righteous soul was vexed with the ungodly deeds of those among whom he dwelt in Sodom. This holy spirit, as it has existed in all the holy prophets since the world began, has been resisted by the generation of vipers, who do always resist the Holy Ghost; they fight against God, resist

God, etc., but they cannot grieve nor change the immutable God, for he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, and God will hold them in derision; but the spirit begotten of God in his people can be grieved, burdened and sorrowful. For example, witness the case of our blessed Lord in incarnation; he rejoiced in spirit, he groaned in spirit, etc. In all the saints also may be found the same spirit of God which was in Christ, and that susceptibility to sorrow and grief implied in our subject. From the world the saints expect persecution, and in the world tribulation; it does not grieve them when they realize such opposition from that quarter; but they rejoice and give thanks to God that they are accounted worthy thus to suffer for the sake of Christ. The exhortation in our subject is not therefore to the men of the world; let them rage and waste the fury of their spite; but the spirit of God in the hearts of all his saints is grieved when they witness the departure of their brethren from the simplicity of the gospel of Christ; they are deeply afflicted when they see any in whom they have had confidence as Christians giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; or when any who profess to know and love the truth depart from a gospel walk and correct deportment. Christians too frequently inflict deep wounds upon the hearts of their brethren by an unbecoming course in life and deportment. Indeed, examples have not been lacking within the last twenty years in the church of Christ. An awful disregard of the admonition before us has marked the course of very many who have now gone out from us, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. Christians are often grieved in spirit with the corruptions of their own natures, indwelling sin; and perhaps this is the most prolific source of all their grief.

To avoid grieving the holy spirit, in the sense of this admonition, requires that all the saints should walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. That we be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive. That we walk no more as other Gentiles walk — in vanity of their mind. That ye put off concerning the former conversation, the old man which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts. And putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath, neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouths. By indulging in any of those things discountenanced by the apostle, or by neglecting anything enjoined, will necessarily grieve the holy spirit of God, whereby they are sealed unto the day of redemption.

O that the Lord may enforce this

important admonition on all his dear children! We feel our need of its special application to our heart, and we would, in the language of the apostle, beseech our brethren to attend to these things.

Let all our arrows be hurled at Babylon, and our artillery thunder against the hidden things of dishonesty; let us fight the good fight, and never, under the pretension of divine influence, cease to contend against principalities and powers, and spirtual wickedness in high places; but while valiant for the truth, and ever hostile to the spirit of compromise with Zion's foes, let brotherly love continue among all those whose calling is by a vocation from God, to one hope of our calling. And as the apostle closed this chapter, so close we this article in his words; (not that we pretend to write by inspiration as he wrote, but because we wish to be guided and directed by apostolic precept and example;) "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice, and be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, June 1, 1840.)

ISAIAH 12:3.

Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

LUKE XIII. 34.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen *doth gather* **her brood under** *her* **wings, and ye would not."**

A brother in southern Virginia asks our views on the foregoing.

The same language with very little variation is found in Matthew xxiii. 37. This is Jesus speaking. He addresses the scribes as Pharisees, characterizes Herod as a "fox," and so He embraces in this speech the ruling ecclesiastical and civil authorities in Jerusalem who exercised religious and governmental sway over Israel. It was never the will of these ruling powers that the truth of God should be preached in their midst, and persecutions and martyrdoms were the lot of those true servants of God who throughout the generations of Israel's history had faithfully preached the word. Nevertheless, God had in every age his faithful remnant in the midst of Israel despite the fact that those in authority had no use for this believing elect number. If the human will of these authorities could have had their way about it, they would not have allowed a single Israelite at any time to have believed the truth of God. But God's will is never frustrated by the opposition of man's will. It *is* the will of God to gather his people, and he unfailingly

does this gathering by and through Jesus Christ his Son, unto himself. Not a single child of God has ever been prevented from coming to the knowledge of the truth, no matter what the persecution and opposition waged against the child of God might be. While it was never at any time in Israel's history the will of the natural man that God should select his believing remnant from among them, yet he unfailingly did it. A hen gathers her chickens under her wings because they are her chickens, and not to make them hers. The chickens run to cover under the mother's wings at the approach of any danger, not to make the hen their mother, but because she is their mother. Likewise throughout the generations of Israel's national life, those who were Israelites indeed by reason of spiritual circumcision and regeneration ran by faith into His name and were safe, not to make Jehovah their God, but because he was their God; not to make themselves his children, but because they were his children by God's own will. All that the Father has given the Son shall come to him, no matter how much the powers that be try to prevent it. The human will, either of individual or of nations, can never thwart the purposes of God in the salvation of his people. Any nation today which arrays itself against the truth of God, against his revealed Lord and against his people will unfailingly reap in due time national desolation and disaster, even as did Israel for their opposition to Jehovah and his children. This is the lesson taught in this Scripture.

Elder H. H. Lefferts

"But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."– 1 JOHN ii. 27.

Have you ever had a solitary drop of this holy anointing oil fall upon your heart? One drop, if it be but a drop, will sanctify you for ever to the service of God. There was not much of the holy anointing oil used for the service of the tabernacle, when we consider the size and quantity of what had to be consecrated, for Moses had to anoint therewith the whole of the tabernacle of the congregation, as well as all the vessels, with all their various appurtenances. When he went through the sacred work, he touched one vessel after another with a drop of oil; for one drop sanctified the vessel to the service of the tabernacle. There was no repetition of the consecration wanted; it abode. So if you ever had a drop of God's love shed abroad in your heart, — a drop of the anointing to teach you the truth as it is in Jesus; a drop to penetrate, to soften, to heal, to feed and give light, life, and power to your soul,— you have the unction from the Holy One; you know all things which are for your salvation, and by that same holy oil you have been sanctified and made meet for an eternal inheritance.

J. C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 2013

Helen Bailey, ME	10.00
Marjorie Cook, TN	25.00
J.D. Neely, AR	10.00
Raymond Clayton, KY	10.00
Livie Thompson, VA	5.00
Mary Poff, VA	5.00
Judy Ravan, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

HENRY CLINTON LANIER

Asheboro: Henry Clinton Lanier, age 91, of Asheboro, passed away Saturday, November 24, 2012 at his home. Brother Lanier was born July 6, 1921 in Seagrove, N.C. the son of Nathanial (Nate) Lanier and Louise (Lou) Buie Lanier. He was a native of Randolph County and served in the U.S. Army during World War II. He was stationed in the Panama Canal Zone where he earned the rank of T-5 Corporal. He was a member of Rock Hill Primitive Baptist Church where he served as a deacon, trustee and clerk. He retired from Union Carbide Corp. after thirty five year of service. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his Brothers, Clifford Lanier, Phillip (Jack) and Newman Lanier.

He is survived by his beloved wife of 66 years. Rachel Trogdon Lanier, Son, William N. Lanier and his wife Trudy of Asheboro, N.C.; Grandsons and their wives, Bradley and Kristen Lanier of Charlotte, N.C., Jeremy and Sarah Lanier of Asheboro, N.C. Great-grandsons, William and Weston Lanier of Charlotte, N.C.: Sisters, Alma Trucker of Seagrove, N.C., Ruth Benbow of Denver, N.C., Wanda Lee Slawter of Cartersville, Ga. He was laid to rest in Oaklawn Cemetery, Elder Ralph Gaines, Elder Jimmy Gray officiating. To know Him was to love Him. May God comfort his family.

A sinner saved by Grace I hope,
Carolyn C. Gaines

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 05/2013 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

HEBREWS 11:6.

But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

SARAH WALTON BARKER

After ninety-nine years and twelve days our dear Lord gathered unto himself one of his most precious lambs, Sister Sarah Barker. Weary of the nursing home she was anxious to join her heavenly friends in the heavenly home.

Born February 4, 1914 in Anson, NC, she was a daughter of the late Thomas and Betsy Harward.

She retired after 34 years from Dan River Mills, Inc. where she was the last surviving member of Old Mountain Primitive Baptist Church.

Sarah was blessed with many talents that she enjoyed sharing with others. She had a love of flowers, gardening, basket weaving, painting and quilting, becoming known as the "Quilt Lady" of Callahans Hill, having quilted more than 300 quilts.

I was privileged to have her go with me to the Association of Primitive Baptist in Memphis, two times. We bonded a great friendship from these trips. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord".

On November 25, 1939 she married Quincey James Walton, who died August 6, 1966. She later married Ballard Barker who predeceased her November 27, 1975.

Sarah is survived by a son, Dr. Geary Walton, wife JoAnn of Hickory, NC; four daughters, Darlene Bass, and husband Ray of Chester, VA, Florence Giles, and husband Russell, of Danville, Nancy Carpenter, and husband Tim of Danville, and Sarah Welch and husband Steve, of Blairs, VA; a daughter in law, Sandy Walton of Colonial Heights, VA; a sister Nancy Vannoy, of Hudson, NC; a sister-in-law Lillian Powell, of Whitmell, VA; 15 grandchildren, Jim Walton, Shanna Miles, Brad Giles, Greg Giles, Jeff Giles, Tim Carpenter, II, Joe Carpenter, Kathy Oswald, Sandy Rubin, Kevin Walton, Michelle Crain, Chas Bass, Andrea dough, Misty Brown and Scott McBride; and 26 great grandchildren.

In addition to her husbands, she was predeceased by a son, Albert Walton, 9 brothers and 3 sisters.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, February 19, 2013 at 2:00 p.m. from the Wrenn-Yeatts Westover Chapel with Dr. Geary Walton and Minister Hershel Stone officiating. Interment at Danville Memorial Gardens.

We surely miss her, but that Spirit, which the Heavenly Father placed in her has returned unto God who gave it and her body laid to rest to await the resurrection morn and those lovely most welcoming words, " Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

May the gentle Shepard bless her family and all of us who miss her so much.

Humbly submitted by one who loved her dearly.

B.G. Pryor

Signs of the Times

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" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

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HYMN

AMAZING grace (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved:
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the vale,
A life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine;
But God, who called me here below,
Will be forever mine.

Newton.

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EDITORIAL

"And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free: then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him forever." Exodus 21:5-6.

Elder J.B. Farmer

There is one book above all books, which is the Bible. It is given to the family of God for instruction, edification, learning, comfort, and the knowledge of Spiritual things. What would we know of the Creator, the creation, the kingdom of God, or of the life, suffering, death, resurrection, and second coming of the Lord and Savior Jesus, the Christ without the Bible and His revelation of it? What would we know of heaven or hell? And, apart from the written word of God, what would we know of ourselves and what kind of creatures we really are? We would know nothing, as we ought. But God has been merciful to His children to leave His word on record that traces His works through all eternity. And it has all been to His praise, honor, and glory as it should be, for He alone is worthy to be praised.

Over time there have been multitudes that have spent their lives trying to enter into and take hold of the things of God, but it has all been in vain. **"They are ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."** God has hidden His things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes, because it seemed good in His sight. The things of the Holy Spirit are given only to those who God loved with an everlasting love, and are given only by revelation. Jesus said, **"It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but unto them, it is not given."** He told the Pharisees, who stand for all the false religious professors of all ages, **"Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me."** The scriptures were given to His elect people to testify of Jesus, His finished work, and His kingdom.

The scripture listed at the head of this article is the account of a servant being brought into the master's house. And after having served an allotted time, he was given opportunity to go out free if he so desired. But if he had been given a love for his master and his family, he would be received into the house as a member of the family to serve his master for the remainder of his life. But upon his declaration of love for them and his willingness to stay with them, he must be brought before the judges and to the door and door post. He then must suffer his ear to be bored through with an awl by the master. This would serve to all as a visible sign of his being accepted into his master's house and a sign that he would be a loving and willing servant forever.

Since the scriptures contain Spiritual meanings hidden in the natural description of events, may it please our Heavenly Father to open to us the mysteries of His written word, and of His eternal kingdom? Knowing that these things are too high for mortal men to grasp or to understand, we beg for wisdom and understanding to be given in order that the word of truth might be rightly divided, to the praise and honor of our God, and to the comfort and edification of the Lord's people.

The servant under consideration was bought for a price and brought into the master's house to serve him for a period of six years. In the seventh year he could go out free according to the judgments that God gave to Moses. Here we see the figure of one brought into the Church, not at first as a member, but as an observer. Many come to the Church and watch and listen and judge for a period of time. After they have taken in as much as possible, they are either convinced of their love for God and His doctrine and order, and their love for His people and their holy ways — or not. If they are not drawn by cords of love and captured in the net of love, they may go out free, with no obligations for what they have witnessed. But they are without excuse, having heard and rejected the gospel. The apostle said concerning some, **"They have judged themselves unworthy of eternal life."**

But if one is overwhelmed by the love of God, and the love of His Church, and is given a desire for a Spiritual home with them while on earth, that one may remain in the house as long as he lives. This heavenly love is evidence that one is of the elect family of God. **"Hereby ye may know that ye have passed from death unto life, because ye love the brethren."** This love of God, His people, His doctrine, and His order gives us much assurance in the things of the Spirit. It causes us to hope and trust that we have not been deceived, but have actually been brought out of darkness into His marvelous light.

This natural servant, I believe, was given as the figure of a Spiritual child of God. The natural master, I believe, stands for the Lord and Master Jesus, Christ. The wife given to the servant by his master, and children of the ser-

vant, all belonged to the master according to the law given unto Moses. This seems a strange thing in our natural thinking. We would naturally assume that the wife of a man and his children would be his, and not belong to the Master. But this shows us our inability to reason out the truth by nature. Each one in the House of the Master actually belongs to Him regardless of their natural relations. And those in the house of the master indicate, to me, the members of the Church.

The servant, having been given a love for his master and his master's family, must plainly make his love known to all by his own confession. **"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation"** And Jesus said, **"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven."**

And the servant must also plainly say that he would be a servant of the master forever, and that he would not go out free. The children of God, after having been shown the true Church, have no desire to go back into the world, and to be once again entangled with the wickedness and confusion of it. They are given a desire to abide with the people of God in love and peace all their days. Those who separate themselves indicate their true identity. The apostle said, **"They went out from us for they were not of us, if they had been of us they no doubt would have continued with us."** Rahab the harlot and her family were commanded to stay in the house when Jericho was destroyed that they might remain safe. And they did, and were spared. This is an example for all saints.

Then the master shall bring the servant to the judges, which I believe, also stand for the members of the Church, who shall witness all that is said and done. And he shall bring the servant to the door, or unto the door post, which I trust is a type of Christ, who is the door of the sheepfold, and the door of eternal life. And his master shall bore his ear through with an awl. The yielding to the boring of his ear, to me, manifests the servant's willingness to suffer with Christ all that must be endured through life. **"If we suffer with Him we shall reign with Him."** And the scar left by the boring cannot be erased. It shows that the servant shall be a servant forever.

The servant was given a visible sign that he is no longer free in the world, and that the world is not his home, and that he has been given a great desire to become a loving and willing servant forever. The visible sign given to all Church members is baptism. When a servant is blessed with the experience of the elect, he is given a desire for baptism. He, by grace, must submit to it, even as the servant submitted to having his ear bored through with an awl. As the servant manifestly became a member of his

master's house when his ear was bored through, so when one is baptized in truth, he manifestly becomes a member of the visible Church upon earth. That one then has a part in all the privileges of Church membership. That one may now fully participate with the family of God in all its joys and sorrows while here on earth, and also have hope of eternal life in the world to come.

And being a servant to the Master is no evil bondage, but a willing service in love and adoration. The Lord's people are made to be **"a willing people in the day of His power."** What a blessing it is to love, and to be loved. What a blessing it is to walk with a people who's whole purpose in life is to show forth the praise of Him who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling. And our service of love is forever — beginning in this life and continuing eternally in the life to come.

Some saints live and die with the people of God, never having been blessed with a home in the visible Church. Their names are also written in heaven with all saints. Part of their suffering in this life is that, for whatever reason, they cannot be numbered with the saints by Church membership. But if they have been given a hope in Christ and His finished work, they shall not be disappointed in the day of His appearing. What about their baptism? When Jesus came to be baptized of John, and when John said he had need of being baptized of Him, Jesus said, **"Suffer it to be so for now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness."** I cannot help believing that Jesus was baptized in water on behalf of all his people, even those who had no opportunity to be baptized in this life. May all true believers be blessed to confess with David by the Holy Spirit, **"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house or the Lord forever."**

I trust this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J .B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

4-6-2013

Mr. Tony Horton,

Dear Sir,

I see it is time to renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times. I continue to enjoy every issue very much, and would never want to miss a copy.

Renew me for 1 year and use balance of enclosed check as needed.

May the good Lord of all mercy and grace continue to bless the Times, Staff, Writers and all His people everywhere.

Sincerely,
Roland G. Allen
4235 3rd Ave.
Columbus, Ga. 31904

Dear Bro. Horton:

Please forgive my tardiness and renew my subscription to the Signs for two years. Use the additional money at your discretion. I have especially enjoyed the articles by Elders Farmer, Robertson, and Chappel that have been published in the last few issues. Please encourage these gifted Elders to continue with their endeavors to feed the flock.

In hope,
Kenneth R. Adams

4-4-13

Dear Mr. Horton,

I will need to ask you to discontinue my Signs. I will be moving into the home with my daughter to help me be able to stay at home. My eye sight makes it very hard to read these days, but I want to thank you for the years of faithful reading you have given me.

I wish you all the blessings of our Lord. We surely need them more than we ever have in my 81 years. I have not been able to go to the Primitive Baptist Church I attended for many years since we moved 20 years ago so your book has been a real blessing.

God bless you all.
Jean Brown

4-1-13

Dear Precious Ones,

The Signs are so precious to us. Thanks be unto God for its publication and for all of you who extend your labor of love. Please renew the following for two years each:

Mrs. Mamie D. Ferguson, Mr. & Mrs. Larry Ferguson and nephew Jackie Jr., Mr. & Mrs. Jackie Paul Ferguson Senior and Lois Ann Ferguson.

May the good Lord help us forever,
Sister Mamie Rose D. Ferguson.

3-30-2013

Dear Bro. Tony,

Please find enclosed check for $25.00 as payment for a continued 2 year subscription to the Times.

As attendance and membership in the visible church declines, publications such as the Times serve to keep members and believers in touch.

May it be God's will that this good work continues.

Yours in Christ, we hope,
Max & Rhonda Nichols

PSALM 56: 3-4.

What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.

In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

4-5-13

To the dear ones at the Signs of the Times,

I have for some time now been receiving the monthly, my mother signed us up for our subscription, some time back. She has now gone on to be with our Lord, last Sept. 8, 2012.

It was a glorious event. Our dad, myself and four of my sisters were with her as she was ushered into His very presence, and that quite obvious.

Just prior to that, many days of good conversation and wonderful singing the hymns and praises of our Lord, with Mother, before she went home, for that eternal rest.

She was and is the Mother of eleven children and wife of nearly 55 years to John Sr.

Please renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times, it has been such a blessing to me and my wife Shannon, to read the truth as it is set forth, especially Voices from the past!

Perhaps you can help a few others with their subscription dues if there is such a need, as this money is for ours and for others, to help.

In the love of our Lord,
John & Shannon Schulz
159 Bear Creek Rd.
Cody, Wyoming 82414
307-272-1300

ARTICLES

JOHN NEWTON – AMAZING GRACE

In an effort to comply with the request of Sister Polly Sizemore, we present the information we could find.

The Baptist Examiner of June 29, 1974 had a concise history of John Newton which was printed in the October, 1999 issue of the Signs of the Times. This article included 10 verses of Amazing Grace, but did not include 2 verses found in our hymnals. We found on the internet 13 verses of Amazing Grace which included all the verses in Baptist Examiner's article as well as all verses in our hymnals. It is said that this was a poem by John Newton and that this is the full version. Therefore, we are printing the brief historical information from the Baptist Examiner and all the verses from the internet.

Editor

THE ORIGIN OF THE HYMN, "AMAZING GRACE"

John Newton, the celebrated English preacher and hymn writer, realized that he was a trophy of divine grace. A while before his death, a brother minister came to have breakfast with him. Family prayers followed the meal. Mr. Newton's sight had almost failed him, and he was unable to read. He sat and listened to his friend

as he read the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians. When the tenth verse was read, "By the Grace of God I am what I am," Mr. Newton began to speak: "I am not what I ought to be. Ah! How imperfect and deficient! I am not what I wish to be. I abhor what is evil, and I would cleave to what is good. I am not what I hope to be soon. Soon I shall put off, with mortality, all sin and imperfection. Though I am not what I ought to be, nor what I wish to be, nor what I hope to be; I can truly say that I am not what I once was, a slave to sin and Satan, and I can heartily join with the apostle, and acknowledge, by the grace of God I am what I am."

John Newton could say that with conviction and joy. What had he once been? When he was seven years old, he lost his mother. A little later, he went to sea with his dad and learned all the evils of the seaman's life. Still later, he was forced into the Navy. He deserted, but was caught and stripped and beaten until the blood flowed from his wounds. He had now become a hardened infidel. He fell in with African slave traders. He went from bad to worse until he himself was sold as a slave. It was a Negro woman who bought him, and she gloried in her power over him. She made him depend for his food on the crusts she tossed under the table. He had fallen to the depths of human degradation. And yet the grace of God found him, and delivered him, and made him one of the greatest ministers of Christ, and a writer of hymns that have stirred the hearts of men the world over. Truly, he could say, *"I am not what I once was."* And truly he could say *"By the grace of God I am what I am."*

Knowing this do you wonder at John Newton's message in the grand old hymn:

"*Amazing grace! how sweet the sound.*
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found.
Was blind but now I see."

As you will notice, the 13th verse is the same as the last verse of "Jerusalem, my happy home."

Amazing Grace (All the verses)

A poem by John Newton expresses the atonement and its effect on one man more than any other. It has become one of the most well known hymns of all time. This is the full version of that song:

Amazing Grace

Amazing Grace! How sweet the sound!
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind but now I see.

In evil long I took delight
Un-awed by shame or fear;
'Til a new object met my sight
And stopped my wild career.

I saw One hanging on a tree,
In agonies and blood
Who fixed His languid eyes on me
As near His cross I stood.

Sure, never 'til my latest breath
Can I forget that look.
It seemed to charge me with His death
Though not a word He spoke.

My conscience owned and felt the guilt,
And plunged me in despair;
I saw my sins His blood had shed,
And helped to nail Him there.

Alas, I knew not what I did,
But all my tears were vain;
Where could my trembling soul be hid,
For I the Lord had slain.

A second look he gave which said,
"I freely all forgive!
"This blood is for thy ransom paid,
"I die that thou mayest live."

Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come.
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home!

The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be,
As long as life endures.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess within the veil
A joy of life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine,
But God who called me here below
Shall be forever mine!

When we've been there ten thousand years
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun!

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER JOE SAWYER

I hope the Lord willing, I can tell some of the things that brought me to the Old Baptist Church and what I say may be to the praise and honor of God, who has paid the price for His people. I was born in Pitt County, North Carolina, the oldest of four children. I had three sisters. We were raised on a tobacco farm. We didn't have a lot of the natural things of this world, but we lived well in that day. I didn't go to church when I was young. I remember going once with my grandfather, Elder Tillman Sawyer. My parents and old-

est sister were members of the Primitive Baptist Church. One sister loved our doctrine and the other two loved the doctrine of salvation by works. Two of my sisters and my parents are now deceased. While living on the farm, the Lord blessed us to have the things we needed.

My experience of being brought to the Primitive Baptist Church would take a long time to tell. Many things have taken place in my life. I stayed home and played when I was a little boy and didn't go to church. After Doris and I got married, I became concerned about what was going to happen to me. Things just caved in more or less, and I went and joined an Armenian Church. I didn't go there long because I felt it wasn't right. I continued to fight against the Old Baptists and read the scriptures to condemn what they believed. I just couldn't believe that God loved one and hated the other. God made me know along the way that I didn't choose to go among the Old Baptists and I certainly didn't choose to become a preacher. I hope God is the One who brought me to the Old Baptist Church. I tried a long time to prove to my daddy that salvation is by works, not grace. I left the church I first joined and went to Greenville. Experience has been a great part of my life. I couldn't talk before a crowd. I was shy and wouldn't say anything. I wanted to farm with my mama and daddy more than anything else, but things didn't work out. I had to leave the farm and go to the city and get a job as a salesman. I had a wife and three children to support, so I learned to talk to make a living. I didn't know this was working for my good. I thought it was the worst thing to happen in my life, but I had it to do. I learned how to talk and to meet people. It was a great experience. I was still down on the Old Baptists. I didn't think they were right, but my daddy did. He always believed it, but I thought they were wrong. On the fifth Sunday in March 1958, my parents and my wife's parents invited us to go to Hancocks Church to a union meeting. I had been in a world of trouble and didn't know I was wrong. I had been taught I was a sinner. I knew I had to stand before God's people. I begged Him not to choose me for I was not qualified. I was nothing. I couldn't speak to the Lord's people who I felt were the wisest people in the world. I felt to be a poor sinner and could not speak to His children. I had taught Sunday school that morning, but I told my wife I would go. I continued to criticize that they had the ugliest singing and they thought they were the only people in the world who were saved and everyone else is wrong. When we got to the church, preaching was over and they were singing hymn 322 in the Lloyd's Hymn Book, "Glorious things of thee are spoken." As I sat on the back seat, A voice spoke to me and said, "This is My church, this is My people." I want to tell you something brethren, when that voice spoke it brought tears to my eyes. I thought they were the prettiest people I had ever seen in my life and I wanted to be a part of them. I had thought they were wrong, I had fought

so hard not to be a part of it. God opened my eyes and he showed me this was his people. He didn't tell me I was a part of his people, but He told me that this is My church and My people. When God shows you something, you will never forget it. It is just as plain to me today as it was that day. I assure you the things God brings about in your life you won't need encouragement from man, He will make you willing. God will bring His people in His way and time, not ours. God brought me in this way to show me just what I was by nature and what I must be by the Grace of God. I was blind and couldn't see until He opened my eyes. I fought as hard as I could not to be a part of the Primitive Baptists, but when He showed me that they were a beautiful people; I wanted to be a part of them, if they would have me. I thought, above everything else, that these people must be right. They believed salvation is by the grace of God, it is free and something man can't give you. This comes only from God. You can't get any help for it. None of my children, nor my wife, belongs to the Primitive Baptist Church. I've never encouraged any of them, although some of them believe it. I never told my wife she should join, although I feel she believes this truth. God must persuade them, not me.

In my experiences over the years, if I have had any, the Lord has showed me just how helpless I am. I don't know if I'm a preacher or not, but I sure fought not to become one. I'm not sure if I have ever said anything to praise God, but when it's my time to stand before the church, I always try to beg Him to put something in my mouth to praise Him and if not, to just sit me down. We didn't have a car when we first got married and we didn't have a whole lot when I joined the church, but there was a great change in my life from that day forward. I went back to the church I had been a member of and told them to take my name off for I had joined another church. They wanted to know where I had joined and I told them I had joined a Primitive Baptist Church. They said that was the nearest nothing they had ever heard of. I told them I would tell them some of my experience why I went to the Old Baptists, but I didn't feel they would understand.

I asked my name be removed and I never went back. I believe the Lord's people are a separate people and I don't believe they uphold the things that are not right. If we do, we are going to have to pay for it down the road.

All things work together for good to them who are the called according to His purpose. We think sometimes it is working against us, but it is working for our good. I was a route salesman for Frito-Lay for about 15 years. On one occasion I was asked to be a district manager. This position would allow me to have better benefits and my retirement would be better also. I didn't know what to do. I went to Greensboro to talk with the regional manager and the sales manager. I walked into the office that day and told them I hoped to be a Primitive Baptist minister and would that have any effect on

me having the job. I asked if either one knew anything about the Primitive Baptists and Tommy Thompson the regional manager from around Goldsboro said, "that I do Joe. All my family belong to the Primitive Baptist Church, except me, and I belong to the Presbyterian Church." The sales manager said he didn't think much of "jack leg" preachers, they won't work. Tommy told him, "Yes they will work. Old Baptists do what they say they are going to do." So the Lord took care of me there. He has taken care of me all the days of my life. He has watched over me and kept me. I have had some beautiful dreams and experiences and I believe God will continue to give His people more experiences as they live here in this life. Without those bethel spots in my life, I wouldn't even have a hope. Sometimes I get down low, real low, and I'm like David when he said, "is his mercy clear gone forever?"

Having to leave the farm and getting a public job was all working for my good and I didn't even know it. I dreaded the change. I would read the bible to prove to Daddy that he was wrong. I felt the letter would prove him wrong. I would read the bible until two or three o'clock in the morning and learned to quote the scriptures. I thought I could prove the Primitive Baptists to be wrong, but instead I was showed they are the right people. That's why I'm in the Old Baptist Church today, because I trust He brought me. I told God to get anybody to preach but me, I wasn't qualified. God can make you willing to do anything. This is something between you and your God. As far as preaching in the church of the living God, that's the most sacred thing in the world. To walk among God's people, a people that He has loved and separated and made different is most sacred. We are different by His grace and by His goodness.

My daddy and I were baptized together. I joined at Farmville Church and he joined at the water. It was a rejoicing day. Elder A. P. Mewborn baptized both of us. Elder Mewborn never said anything to me about becoming a preacher. I'm a lot like that. I don't think you should encourage people to be anything in the church. If they are not believers, you will just have a world of trouble. Daddy was a deacon at Hancocks Church and my grandfather was an elder. This is not the reason I became a minister. It has been said that some people only join the Primitive Baptists because their parents did, but I don't believe that. We believe the doctrine because God has given us the faith to believe it and thats why we love it. One of the first experiences I ever had before joining the church was in a vision or dream. I thought the Lord or someone had placed me on the straightest highway I had ever seen in my life. I was in a cart like you used to hitch a mule to and I couldn't get out. I had no control of where I was going. On the dirt walked a black man; he didn't walk on the highway. All of a sudden I was carried into this deep pit of water. I fought with all the energy I had to keep from dying. I finally gave up

and said that I'm going to die and there is no way I can get out of this place. There were high walls and I couldn't get out. I was trying to cling to little pieces of driftwood to hold me up, but that wasn't helping. That was my works and works won't hold you up. An arm and hand reached down and lifted me out of the water and dried me off. I believe it was the arm of Jesus that lifted me out. I was doomed to die and there was nothing I could do about it. I was helpless and we do become helpless when we become God's children and He reveals the truth to us. We have always been His children; we just didn't know it. I asked someone what the dream meant and they couldn't tell me. Over the years I believe the Lord has showed me what it meant. I was depending upon my own works and I was going to die. God lifted me out and gave me the faith to believe that His works would stand and mine would never stand in that world to come.

All the things that have taken place in my life has been a great mystery to me. God has blessed me beyond measure in so many ways. He has left many little purposes along the way for me. There has been some of joy, some of happiness and some of heartache. There have been a lot of trials and tribulations. I think about what the apostle said, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." Pharaoh will always try to destroy the Lord's people if he can. He is still trying to destroy them today, but God will protect His children. I often think about the scripture, "If God be for you, who can be against you?" I didn't volunteer to become a minister. I used to fall down on my knees in the cornfield and beg the Lord not to choose me I wasn't qualified to be anything, but I didn't have a choice. The apostle said, "Woe unto me, if I preach not the gospel." I want to tell you, He brings you down and makes you willing to be anything in His church.

I asked a home with the church at Hancocks, the second Sunday in May 1958. In August of 1959, I began to speak on the floor at my home church for about a year. I was liberated and spoke among the associations for about 3 years. In August of 1963, I was ordained as a minister. Back then we had a lot of ministers. I never thought I would see it as it is today. We don't know what the future holds. God is able to fill up all the Old Baptist Churches again. It has to come from Him, for anything we bring into the church wouldn't be anything in the first place. I believe all the persuasion we ever need, will come from God. In my experience and calling as an elder if I am one, was by the grace of God. He had spoken to me on many occasions. I can't tell you all that has taken place with me since He first spoke to me at Hancocks Church that day. I know that voice. It will make you afraid and to fear Him. The one I seek to please is God, not man.

That is vanity and altogether nothing. If He has called me to be an elder, I'm just a servant to Him and to the churches in which I've been chosen as

pastor. I didn't choose to be a pastor, He did the choosing. He gives the church a mind to elect whom He has chosen to be there. I believe the pastor will be given something to say and it will be to praise and glorify God.

This is a little bit of the experiences I have had. I've had a lot more, but it would take too long to tell everything that has taken place with me over the years. I want to say hope I love the Lord, love His people and love the things He has put into the hearts of His people. He has written His laws into their hearts and printed them in their minds and they don't need anybody to tell them what to do, but God. He is the leader and teacher. He is everything and He does His own choosing. If I had a choice, I wouldn't have united with the Primitive Baptist Church; would have gone somewhere else, certainly wouldn't have chosen to become a minister. Flesh likes to be someone, to be looked up to, and the Lord's people are just plain and simple. I hope by the grace of God, I have been made to love the church and to love the things It stands for. I believe these things will stand in that world to come. So may God bless you and I hope He will take me one day to a better place. I don't deserve it by anything I've done. I've done all the sinning and He has done all the saving, but just hope He loves me.

Elder Joe Sawyer
3186 Speight Seed Farm Road
Winterville, North Carolina 28590
June 24, 2003

VOICES OF THE PAST

(Excerpts from a sermon preached by Elder W. C. King at Bush Arbor Church, N.C., on December 13, 1959.)

Recorded in the gospel according to St. Luke, 1st chapter, 37th verse, are these words: **"For with God nothing shall be impossible."**

We find in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. There was no man to help or to hinder: there was no man upon the Earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep and God said, "Let there be light, and there was light." God divided the light from the darkness, and called the light day, and the darkness He called night. The things that would be impossible with man are possible with God.

The Lord said unto Abram, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee." God told him that He would make of him a great nation, and that his seed should be as the sand of the sea. Abram was one hundred years old and his wife Sarah was ninety years old, when the Lord appeared unto him saying, "Sarah thy wife shall have a son." Sarah laughed, realizing she was old and stricken in age. But, according to God's promise, Isaac was born. The things that are impossible with men are possible with God. If I could, I would like

this morning to point out to you some of the things that seem impossible with men but are possible with God: Knowing that He has all power in heaven and in earth, does all things after the counsel of His own will, having seen the end from the beginning.

Men by wisdom cannot understand how that Daniel could be cast into a den of lions and not be destroyed. Yet God had sent his angels and shut the lions' mouths that no harm should be done to Daniel. He having all power even over the beasts of the forest, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea. He could cause the raven to feed Elijah to find him in his desolation and sadness, and feed him meat and bread twice a day. We know by nature the raven would prefer to feed upon his body, but God commanded the raven to feed Elijah. How impossible these things seem to man. God makes a way where there is no way.

When the Hebrew children refused to worship the false gods, King Nebuchadnezzar ordered that the furnace be heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated. He commanded the most mighty men of his army to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. The king arose early, and in haste said to his counsellors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? Lo, I see four men walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt. The form of the fourth is like unto the Son of God."

We cannot understand with the carnal mind how these things can be: without even the smell of smoke upon their garments. No condition or circumstance is such that our God doesn't have complete power to save from every destruction. Many of the trials and experiences of God's little ones here in this world seem a miracle, yet in God's holy providence all provisions are made for their security and protection.

The angel from heaven appeared unto Zachariah when he was in the temple of the Lord about the duties and customs of the priest's office. When Zachariah saw the angel, fear fell upon him, but the angel said unto him, "Fear not, Zachariah: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord and shall neither drink wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. ...And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just: to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." How impossible this must have seemed to Zachariah, knowing that his wife Elizabeth was old, and barren. He asked the angel, "Whereby shall I know this?" The angel answering said, "I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings. And, behold, thou shall be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed." When Elizabeth's full time came that she should be delivered, she brought forth a son. When the cousins and neighbors heard how

the Lord had showed great mercy upon her, they began to talk about a name for the child. Some, of course, wanted to name him after his father, but his mother said, "Not so; but he shall be called John." They reasoned that none of their kindred was called by that name; and they made signs to his father how he would have him called, and he asked for a writing table, and he wrote, "His name is John." Immediately his mouth was opened, and his tongue loosed, and he spake and praised God.

Do you not sometimes challenge God, dear believer, by asking him to give you some greater evidence of his love and mercy to you, that you might have a greater assurance of his promises.

Sometimes in our meditations and prayers we ask God to grant us certain things. I remember so well in my early experience, where I asked God just to spare my life until a certain time, and if He would do that, I would be submissive to what I felt to be my duty. But I found that I was not able to keep my promise even to God when He had spared my life to see the time requested. My heart was as cold as ice. I was made to weep and cry unto Him for mercy, learning that I was not my own keeper: That without Him I could do nothing.

God sent an angel unto a city of Galilee to a virgin espoused to a man named Joseph. This virgin was Mary. The angel said, "Hail, *thou that art* highly favored, the Lord *is* with thee; blessed *art* thou among women. And when she saw *him,* she was troubled and the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus...He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." "Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." "For with God nothing shall be impossible."

"Then Joseph her husband being a just *man* and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privately. But while he thought on these things, behold the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost and she shall bring forth a son and they shall call his name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." "Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him and took unto him, his wife. Knowing her not until she had brought forth her first-born son and he called His name Jesus." How impossible this seems to men; how preposterous for human reasoning to believe that a virgin should conceive of the Holy Ghost and bring forth a son; even Mary pondered these things in her own heart. "For with God nothing shall be impossible."

Joseph and Mary went up from Galilee to Bethlehem to be taxed.

While they were there the days were accomplished that she should be delivered, and she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

The angels of God made the announcement of the birth of the blessed Savior of sinners, to those humble shepherds who were abiding in the field keeping watch over their flock by night; saying, "Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior, which is Christ Jesus the Lord." I feel this morning that when the Gospel is preached it is good tidings of great joy, coming from a far country; so far that mortal arms can't reach it, yet so near that it can be felt in every heart that God has touched by the finger of his love.

There was no room in the city of Philippi, although God showed Paul by vision to "Come over to Macedonia to help us." As great as this Roman city might have been there was no place for the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. We find Paul on the Sabbath going out of the city by the river bank, a place where prayer was wont to be made. The Lord opened the heart of Lydia, not only did she hear but she attended to the things she heard, and was baptized; and said to Paul, "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there." I want to say to you beloved that there is a love, a power that binds the hearts of believers together that the world by wisdom can never know. They are hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. Just as these shepherds were made willing to leave their flocks and every possession; they had to go to where their Savior was. No man will desire to go where their Lord and Master is until they have had his love in their heart. These wise men had the Star of Bethlehem to guide them. I believe that star is still shining. Every poor sin benighted soul has their eyes set on that star and the Lord Jesus Christ to lead and guide them to that City of habitation.

We don't know how many days it took them to travel the distance they covered. I don't know how many valleys they had to cross and how many mountains they had to climb. I don't think they turned either to the right or left. They had their eyes set on the Star of Bethlehem. It is Jesus Christ your Lord and Master that you have your eyes focused on. Every poor helpless sinner has learned there is no where else to go. You can witness with Paul when he said it was better for him to depart. I am so glad he told us why it was better, to be with my Lord Jesus Christ.

So these wise men were so divinely sent; nothing could prevent them from reaching where this child Jesus lay. They found Him in a manger wrapped in swaddling clothes, They presented to Him these treasures, gold, myrrh and frankincense. Herod had told them, "When you have found Him, come and tell me that I might go

and worship Him. Herod no doubt thought that he would dethrone Him as king. Oh, how wonderful and past finding out is the great work of our God. He had the wise men to go back another way. You or I can never go over this road but once. How much you would like to have some of your experiences of God's precious presence with you over again! The things that are impossible with men are possible with God. It was never the desire of Jesus to be honored and praised by men for what He did. When men sought to praise Him and to make Him king, we find Him absenting Himself from the crowd, going to the mountains in prayer. The poor, needy souls He never turned away empty. The poor leper that came to Him (who knew he was doomed to be cast into isolation, and there to spend his last and expiring days) had faith to believe that Jesus could heal him. We hear him saying to Jesus, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Jesus had the power to cleanse the leprous. This morning do you not believe that He still has the same power to cleanse you from all sin that your soul can be set free, that the Christ Child would be destroyed? How impossible that decree was, just as God had warned the wise men that they shouldn't return back to Herod, but go back another way. The Lord appeared to Joseph and told him to take the child and its mother and flee into Egypt. The Scripture tells us that they departed in the night. Oh, how much of our traveling seems so dark as in the night! The Lord appeared again to Joseph when Herod was dead saying, "Arise, take the young child and His mother and go into the land of Israel." The unseen power of the everlasting God was controlling every move to take care of this blessed child.

Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem at the Feast of the Passover every year, and they carried this child Jesus with them, who was twelve years old at that time. When they had fulfilled the days and started on their journey back, Jesus tarried in Jerusalem. After a day's travel they sought Him among some kinsfolk and acquaintances, but they found Him not. So they went back to Jerusalem seeking Him some three days. Later they found Him in the temple sitting in the midst of Doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. When they saw Him they were amazed. His mother said unto him, "Why hast thou dealt with us? Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And He said unto them How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" How strong and amazing it must have been to see this lad of a boy, thought to be the son of a poor carpenter, there in the Temple among the most learned and intelligent people of the land, asking and answering questions. Yes, He must be about his Father's business. God's business is a business so important that He can call men from the various occupations of life and cause them to leave all and follow Him.

The Scriptures have but little to say about Jesus from about the age of

twelve until about thirty. "He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them, and Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." John says, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." We know the half will never be told. No power that could be formed could take His life until the appointed time of the Father. Every demand of the law must be fulfilled. The church of the living God must be cleansed from all sin! by the one offering of our Heavenly Father, His only Son Jesus Christ.

How impossible it seemed to His own disciples when He began to tell them that He must go away, must leave them that the Holy Comforter may come. When He had eaten the last supper with them, He tells them that I am now betrayed and shall be crucified and put to death, and I shall rise again. In the third day.

I want to say to you that every single soul that has ever come into this blessed fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ is brought there by His own glorious power and love. It is an impossibility that men in nature, or natural minds, can know this glorious truth as it is in Christ our Lord. No greater miracle can be performed than to see a poor sinful lost man or woman that seemingly have had no love for heaven or immortal glory, be touched by the finger of God's love and turned about by his Holy Spirit made to come down in sackcloth and in ashes to beg God for mercy on their poor, sinful souls. What is more impossible than that to human reasoning? Confessing that by the grace of God I am what I am, having no confidence in the flesh. No man can resist successfully this blessed power. It subdues and brings you under subjection and makes you willing in the day of His power; ascribing all power to His Holy name. You and I can't understand the great mystery of godliness unless they are revealed to us. How impossible it must have been for those who would comfort Mary and Martha, to believe that Jesus could raise Lazarus from the grave after he had been dead four days. Mary and Martha didn't believe that he would be raised until the resurrection of the last day. Jesus said unto them, "I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth on me though he were dead, yet shall he live." Jesus asked, "Where have ye laid him? They said, come and see. "Jesus had only to say, "Lazarus, come forth," and he that was dead came forth.

Oh! What grief and sorrow it brings to us when our loved ones are taken from us. It is impossible for us to call them back. Their spirits return to God, while their bodies rest in the grave to return to dust from whence they come, awaiting our blessed Savior to come again and call them to come forth. I can't tell you, my beloved, this morning how these things shall be, but I can assure you they will come at His command, without blemish, spot, or wrinkle or any such thing, to be

made like unto His own glorious body.

His promise to His dear ones cannot fail. I believe with all my soul that He will come again. He told His disciples before He was crucified: "I go to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am you may be there also,"

If I never address you any more on this side of eternity, I want to tell you that Jesus reigns. This child Jesus which was born in Judea in the City of Bethlehem is still alive. He is seated at the right hand of God making intercession for His saints upon the earth and that He will at His own time call the jewels of His mercy unto himself. There will not be one of the objects of His mercy that shall not hear His blessed voice to arise and come forth to be like unto His own glorious body.

As we approach this Christmas season we would if we could share our natural resources with those less fortunate, but we know there is a limit. We know we can do but so much, yet I can point you to the one whose eternal power and Love is without limitation or bounds. He is able to reach the most remote parts of the earth and give a gift that far surpasses all the gifts that man can give. So I say to you this morning that the greatest gift that you have ever received or that you will receive as these days come is the gift of His Holy Spirit in your heart as your Savior; who is the anchor to your soul both sure and steadfast. Anchored to that within the veil that shall never be severed. This gift will never be obsolete or out of date. I am persuaded that as the years go by and we grow older, these precious promises become brighter. We know our shoulders become stooped, our heads silver for the tomb, the time for our departure is near. His promise becomes more precious, that He will not leave nor forsake us, but will be with us always even to the end.

I want to assure you that all things are possible with God. Not one single blessing that God sees you stand in need of will be withheld from you; though He has left you here in a land of trials and afflictions, the eternal God is at the helm. He will do all His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and His church shall be brought out from the world by His mighty hand and at last be presented to the Father a glorious Church perfect as Himself.

John saw the Holy City New Jerusalem coming down from God out of Heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. "And I heard a voice out of heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them and shall be their God. God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying. Neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."

What a glorious hope we have. What a blessed promise that someday we are going to move into this new house made not by hands, from this

old house of clay. One day we are going to leave the cares and burdens of this sinful world to go home to God to appear in His likeness, to see Him as He is, to be like Him; where we can ascribe all honor and praise to His Holy Name forever. Momentarily here in this life we feel that our souls are lifted to the mountaintop soon to find we are again in the valley of despair. We are told that in this glory land there will be no shedding of tears. No sorrow can come, no death to separate us from loved ones. What a glorious Savior we have. One who has power to call us from the ways of this world, into the blessed fellowship of our God and with His saints upon the earth kept by the power of God ready to be revealed at the last day.

In conclusion let me say, May God bless you, keep and guide you in wisdom's ways, and at last deliver you securely and safely into the fold of God, where sickness, sorrow, and death and separation shall be no more.

"For with God nothing shall be impossible."

Elder W.C. King
(Signs of the Times, July, 2000)

---

1 JOHN 4:4.

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

EAST PITTSTON,
Me., Jan. 13, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE: - As the time has arrived for me to renew my subscription for the SIGNS, I thought I would write a few lines for its pages, if you should see fit to publish them. I do not know where to begin. I have taken the paper, off and on, since 1869; besides when I was a girl at home, my elder brother, John F. Little, took it, and I would sometimes read articles that seemed good to me, but thought that I must not think that it was of any importance, as I had always heard this doctrine slanderously spoken of. That was before I was brought to a knowledge of the truth. How glad I am that the dear Lord in his mercy has established me in the truth. It seems strange to me that some Old School Baptists have no relish for that soul-cheering doctrine, the predestination of all things. Why, it just buoys me up as I travel on my way in this world of sorrow and trial. I love the truth as it is in Jesus, our Lord. I think I can say honestly, that I love the Zion of our God, that I prefer Jerusalem above my chief joy, that I wish . Zion well, whate'er becomes of me. I love the assemblages of the saints. I do so enjoy the associations. Why should anyone think that harm could come out of such joyful meetings? We are so glad to see each other's faces, and grasp each other's hands. The most of the time is taken up in talking about what the Lord has done for us, and how he saves his people from their sins, and

what a help he has ever been in times of trouble. Why, it does me good to look around and see the hungry children eating and drinking, while the dear servants of God hand out the bread of life, and the water that comes from that river whose streams make glad the city of our God. Some of the happiest hours of my life have been spent at associations. The Whitefield church, where my membership is, has but few members, but they are strong in the Lord. We try to get together once a month in conference, and during the warm weather Elder Beal comes to us nearly every month, and the past two years, Elder Keene has come in October, right away after our association, and has stayed a few days with us, and we have enjoyed it much. I will not trespass longer on your time and patience. I have not written what I have been thinking of writing. I ought to have known better than to have tried to write, but dear brother Beebe, be faithful. If it is not fit for publication, burn it. Those who are gifted in writing do not know how to appreciate it.

From your sister,
ANGIE MOODY.

[WE greatly appreciated this letter, for its defense of associations. The experiences such as our sister's, at these meetings, are all the defense that they need. We know of hundreds who are like sister Moody, of spiritual mind, who feel the same way with regard to them. At least, it is sure that God has blessed them to many of his children. We have seen ourselves great good grow out of them, in building up and encouraging the churches. We want to add that we have been intimately associated with the brethren in Maine all our life, and we do not know of any who are, and have been, more steadfast in the faith, than they, or who are more strict and orderly in their walk. They are living witnesses that belief in the unlimited predestination of God, does not lead to a careless life. Though we have lived long away from them, our heart is yet with them in the bonds of the gospel.

Elder G. Beebe

Every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him." — 1 John v. 1.

Where there is love to Jesus, there will be love to those who are his by redemption, his by regeneration, and his by personal possession. The more, too, that we see and the more that we know of the beauty and blessedness of the Lord of life and glory, the more we shall love his image as we behold it visibly marked in his dear people, and the more we shall cleave to them as being Christ's with tender affection. It is our dim, scanty, and imperfect knowledge of God the Father in his eternal love, and of the Lord Jesus Christ in his grace and glory, which leaves us so often cold, lifeless, and dead in our affections towards him; and with the declension of love towards the Head comes on de-

cay of love towards his members. If there were more blessed revelations to our soul of the Person and work, grace and glory, beauty and blessedness of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is impossible but that we should more and more warmly and tenderly fall in love with him; for he is the most glorious object that the eyes of faith can see. He fills heaven with the resplendent beams of his glorious majesty; and has ravished the hearts of thousands of his dear family upon earth by the manifestations of his bleeding, dying love. So that if we love him not, it is because we know him not. If, then, to those who know him he makes himself precious, it is evident that just in proportion to our personal, spiritual, experimental knowledge of him will be our love to him.

J.C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 2013

Ted McDaniel, VA	100.00
John Schultz, WY	400.00
Elder Kenneth Adams, KY	25.00
Dan Delp, VA	5.00
Gene Ambrose, VA	5.00
Marilyn Shaw, VA	5.00
Edna Graves, AL	5.00
Mary Janney, VA	5.00
Roland Allen, GA	5.00

MEETINGS

LOWER MAYO FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo Fifth Sunday Meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday, June 30th, 2013. We hope to start singing at 10:00 A.M. And preaching AT 10:30 A.M. Russell Creek Church will host the meeting. Directions for those that do not know the location: the meeting house is at 242 Moorefield Store Road, Stuart, VA. 24171. Coming North or South on VA #8, turn east on Ayers Orchard Road, # 653. Go 1 Mile to Moorefield Store Road, # 631. Turn Right, Go 1/4 Mile to church on right. Coming east or west on US # 58, Turn south on Southfork Farm Loop, # 827 to Ayers Orchard Road, # 653. Go 3 miles to Moorefield Store Road, # 631. Turn Left, Go 1/4 Mile to church on right. Coming West on NC # 704, turn North on VA-Line Road, # 1730. Go 1 mile and turn left on Moorefield Store Road, # 631. Go 2 1/2 miles to church on left.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In Bonds of Love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

SKEWARKEY UNION
(Eastern Kehukee Association)

Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of June 30, 2013. The church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albermarle in Tarboro, NC. Preaching services begin at 10:30 am.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

April 21, 2013

Elder Cleo Robertson
111 Livington Drive
Cary, NC 27513

Dear Elder Robertson,

Please print the following in the next issue of the Signs Of The Times:

There will not be a Staunton River Primitive Baptist Union in June.

STAUNTON RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will be held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church located at the intersection of Music St. and Weatherford Drive, Gretna, VA in Pittsylvania County. The second Sunday and Saturday before in July 2013 the song service will begin at 9:30 a.m. with service at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton
Assistant Clerk Staunton River
Primitive Baptist Association

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

Dan River Primitive Baptist Church will host the fifth Sunday meeting on June 30, 2013. Singing will begin at 10:00 am. Preaching service at 10:30. Church is located on Highway 700 between Eden, N.C. and Danville, VA. We extend a welcome to all ministers of our faith and order, and all that have a desire to come and be with us in this meeting.

Elder Thomas Solomon
Moderator
R. Allen Carroll
Clerk

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 06/2013
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

Signs of the Times

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All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Tony R. Horton, 1429 Howlett Street, Hillsville, Va. 24343. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Cleo Robertson, 111 Livingstone Drive Cary, NC 27513.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

GOD shall alone the refuge be,
And comfort of my mind;
Too wise to be mistaken, He,
Too good to be unkind.

In all his holy, sovereign will,
He is, I daily find,
Too wise to be mistaken, still,
Too good to be unkind.

When I the tempter's rage endure
'Tis God supports my mind;
Too wise to be mistaken, sure,
Too good to be unkind.

What though I can't his goings see,
Nor all his footsteps find,
Too wise to be mistaken, He,
Too good to be unkind.

Medley.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 07/2013 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

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EDITORIAL

"One woe is past; *and,* behold, there come two woes more hereafter. And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen *were* two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them." Rev. 9:12-16.

Elder J.B. Farmer

These are perilous times in which we live. These times must be no surprise to the people of God, since they were prophesied by the prophets and apostles, and by the Lord Himself. And these times have been proclaimed to the Lord's children by the true ministers of God through the ages. As the end approaches, and as the family of God has a need to know, surely they will be shown, by revelation, the deep things of the scriptures necessary for their well-being.

Across the world today we see continuing and mounting unrest among the people. In many places, we see rioting in the streets, hatred displayed in violence and bloodshed, and anarchy on the rise. People are against government and any kind of authority, and seem to be glad at calamity. We must be prepared to see such things, since they were foretold in the scriptures. The apostle said by revelation, **"Evil men shall wax worse and worse."** And he said, **"The whole world lieth in wickedness."** And he said, **"The love of many shall wax cold, that they would not endure sound doctrine, but would heap to themselves teachers having itching ears."** And he said that they would be proud, blasphemers, boasters, without natural affection, despisers of government, haters, disobedient to parents, that they would call good evil and evil good. This wickedness has always

been in the world, in a measure, since the fall of Adam, but seems to be getting worse or at least more visible in these last times.

The Lord spoke of such things coming. He explained to His disciples when they asked Him about the signs of His coming and of the end of the world or age, **"You shall hear of wars and rumors of wars." "Nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. There shall be famines, pestilences, earthquakes in divers places, but these are the beginning of sorrows. But the end is not yet"** Then He spoke of the man claiming to be God, who He called **"the abomination of desolation which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet",** and the awful destruction which must follow. He said that the world had never known such a time in all its existence until this time should come.

These last days seem to be approaching. Many through time have prophesied the end of the world on certain days, and they were all found to be false prophets. The Lord said that no man knows the day nor the hour but the Father. But Jesus told His disciples, **"When ye see all these things coming to pass, look up for your redemption draweth nigh."** And when some were saying in the days of the apostles that the resurrection was already past, Paul explained that those days shall not come except there first be a **falling away** and that **the man of sin must be revealed.** The falling away from decency and sound mindedness is rapidly increasing around the world. And we see a falling away in sound doctrine and in the numbers of Church membership as time goes on.

It now seems evident that way is being prepared for the **man of sin** to be revealed. We know not when the revelation of him shall be, but multitudes are now being made ready to receive him. Most all the carnally minded people that claim the name Christian are falsely saying that Jesus could come at any time and set up His kingdom upon the earth, and that He will reign over the world in it for a thousand years. They are looking for a man who says he is God to gather them together into an earthly kingdom. Similarly, the religious Jews are looking for a Messiah to come and rule the world, and to set up a kingdom for them on the earth. The Muslims are also looking for a man (they call him the twelfth Emam) to miraculously appear and set up a kingdom to rule the world for them. This **man of sin,** I believe, will be so persuasive and deceptive that he shall be enabled to deceive all carnally minded religious people (and there are multitudes of them) into believing that he is God who has come to rule the world for them in a religious kingdom, no matter what their religious preference.

But the fewest of all peoples have been given a different idea about the end of the world or the end of the age. They are not looking for a kingdom to be set up on the earth, because the kingdom of God is already set up in

their hearts, and the Lord of Lords is already reigning in it. They are looking for this world and all in it to be altogether destroyed at the coming of Christ by the brightness of His glory. They are waiting for the manifestation of the children of God at His coming, hoping and trusting to have a part in the resurrection of life. They desire to be changed and to be made like Him, and to be caught up together with all saints, to meet the Lord in the air at His coming, and to ever be with the Lord in heaven and immortal glory.

The children of God have been warned against the anti-christ or false-christ. Jesus told His disciples, and it is on record for us, **"Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold he is in the secret chambers; believe it not."** For when the Son of man appears in the clouds every eye shall behold Him. He shall be like the lightening that shineth from the east to the west. The deception of the anti-christ shall be so strong that if it were possible the very elect would be deceived. But it is not possible because Christ, the Hope of glory, is in them and is keeping them by the power of God through the gift of faith, unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

May the Lord give us understanding of the scriptures concerning the three woes that must have come upon the earth. According to the scripture listed above one woe is past and two more woes are to come. What is a woe, and what is the woe that is past, and what are the two woes to come? In a general way, I believe a woe is a time of great anguish, sorrow, fear, pain, destruction, and loss. There is no way of escape for the wicked, and there are no prospects for their relief. But the Lord has made a way of escape for His own people, that they should not be tempted above that which they are able to bear. When the Lord explained to His disciples the events preceding His second coming, I believe He laid out the three woes. And I must say the woes shall fall upon all people except the elect, who have the seal of God (the Holy Spirit) in their foreheads.

The first woe appears to me to be the horrors of war, natural catastrophes, and the persecution of the saints through the ages. These troubles seem to increase and abound as time rolls onward. But these things are only the beginning of sorrows. The next two woes to fall upon the inhabitants of the earth shall be unbearable for all except the saints of God, who shall be kept through all in mercy and grace.

The second woe appears to me to be the destruction brought about at the revealing of **the abomination of desolation** in the very last days. According to the Lord, it shall be a time of great tribulation, such was not since the beginning of the world to this time. It shall be so bad that no flesh should be saved except those days be shortened. But the Lord shall be merciful and shorten those days for the sake of His people.

This second woe, I am made to believe, shall be precipitated by the loosing of the four angels bound in the

Euphrates. **"And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen** *were* **two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them."** After preparation is made, they are released to do their destruction in the world. The Euphrates is the river that runs through the heart of the land of the Muslin religion. Certain of their leaders have openly expressed a desire to eliminate the nations of Israel and America and have proclaimed that they will conquer and rule the world by force. I believe the four angels being loosed represents their coming worldwide attack upon the north, south, east, and west parts of the globe. And I believe this will be the great tribulation that the Lord spoke about. This is also, I believe, the time that the **man of sin** should be revealed, even **the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet.** And when those days are at last shortened, they shall be shortened by the Lord's coming in power. The Lord has commanded that this destruction not fall upon those who have the seal of God in their foreheads.

The third woe to my understanding shall be the coming of the Lord in great power and glory when the great day of his wrath is come. This scene is described in Revelation chapter six. **"And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"** The children of God need not fear the woes to come because God will be with them until the end, and bless them to be faithful unto death that they might receive the crown of life. But the devil and all his angels and all who obey not the gospel shall be taken and cast into the lake of fire, where their worm dieth not and the fire is never quenched.

Jesus told us to fear not because He has overcome the world. All power in heaven and earth has been given to Him and no man is able to pluck the least one of His children from His hand. When destruction falls it shall not come near to the household of faith. It shall be as when the death angel passed over Egypt. Every house covered by the blood of the Lamb was spared. It shall be as when Rahab and her house were saved at the fall of Jericho. It shall be as when the family of Noah was saved in the ark while the whole earth was destroyed. The Lord will never leave nor forsake those He loved with an everlasting love. He said **"Lo, I am with you always,** *even* **unto the end of the world."**

Elder Jerry B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brother Tony,

I'm sorry for being so late sending my remittance for extending my subscription. I enjoy the publication and the historical significance. I believe the divine power is involved in the preservation of this help for the little ones who may not be able to travel among the saints of like precious faith.

May God Bless,
James (Butch) White

Enclosed is check for $20.00 to renew my subscription of the Signs for another year.

I look forward to receiving this special paper each month.

Since God's word is sure and doesn't change.

May God bless you and all who work to publish this paper.

Keep up the good work.

May God Bless,
Randolph Plybon
140 Lynch Dr. Apt 103
Rocky Mount, Va 24151

5-26-2013
The Signs of the Times
Elder Cleo Robertson, Editor
111 Livingstone Drive
Cary, NC 27513

Dear Brother Cleo,

Enclosed is an obituary for Deacon Donald Scott, as requested by New Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in conference, April 28, 2013, to be written by the clerk. It was approved in conference, May 26, 2013, to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication. I hope it meets with your approval. Also hope to see you at meetings in the near future.

James L. Shelor, Clerk
Elder Alan Terry, Moderator

May 6, 2013
Elder Cleo Robertson
111 Livingstone Dr.
Cary, NC 38115

Wayman Chapell
1589 Bonnie Dr.
Memphis, TN 38116

Dear Brother Cleo:

Here is another effort that you may or not find suitable for the Signs. It seems that every time I reread there is something that needs changing. So, as always, look it over and feel free to use it as you see fit – or not at all.

I appreciate the way you are handling your job as editor and enjoy the articles you are selecting from the past writers.

Sincerely;
Elder Wayman Chapell

ARTICLES

THE MIND OF CHRIST

There were problems in the church at Corinth to which the apostle Paul had been made aware. There were such contentions that he wrote in chapter three that "...I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, *even* as unto babes in Christ." And though the letter was one of chastisement it was, in a greater sense, a letter of love and strengthening of doctrine.

In the 2nd chapter the apostle points out, to these same Corinthians that he had chastised, and yet calling them brothers, a vital point of doctrine **"...Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have , entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." 1 Cor. 2: 9-10.** And contrary to this; **"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. 2:14:** The sum of which seems to say conclusively that the work of the Spirit is without any assistance from that of the natural man.

As amazed as the church at Corinth may have been at Paul's news, and still considered by the apostle to be carnal, at least to some extent, and having heard the apostle say he was glad he had not baptized any of them, but Crispus and Gaius, he closed the second chapter by including himself along with them in this statement of love and fellowship: "But we have the mind of Christ".

It seems obvious that the apostle did not mean that the saints at Corinth, or anywhere else, had the fullness of knowledge and wisdom of the one by whom the world and all that is in it was made, nor the one that has been given all power in heaven and in earth. Mat. 28:18. Nevertheless there is a sense in which the children of God are blessed to have the mind of Christ.

Under the legal covenant, given by Moses, this was obviously not accomplished. **"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Gal. 3:10.** Even so there is a change in the relationship brought about by the application of the finished work of Christ, and with it is given the "mind of Christ". Evidence of this change is seen in the words of Christ in **John 15:15, "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known to you." "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But**

after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." Gal. 3:24-26.

When the relationship is changed for the child of God, from servant to friend, he is not left to wonder what has happened to him or what manner of person he is. In John 14:15-17 Christ instructs his disciples thus: **"If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;** *Even* **the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you".** The manifestation of this change from "with you" to "in you", seems most clearly expressed on the day of Pentecost when there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind that filled the house where the apostles were sitting. See Acts 2: 2-11. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Jews, from every nation, that were gathered in Jerusalem, came together when they heard this amazing thing and were astounded when they heard them speak the wonderful works of God in their own native language. And thus was fulfilled the words previously spoken of Christ; The Spirit of truth "...shall be in you". This is also the one spoken of by Christ in the 16th chapter of John; verses 13 and 14; **"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear,** *that* **shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew** *it* **unto you."** He will show you a new law — the law of Christ. This is nothing other than the new covenant whereby the law is to be written, not on tablets of stone but: **"...I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them." Heb. 10: 16.** This is a better thing than the law given by Moses. **"God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Heb. 11:40.** This better thing provided is his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ and is immeasurable better than the law of Moses. This is; **"...Christ in you, the hope of glory." Col. 1:27.** But how is this seen and what evidence is available?

This manifestation that gladdens the heart is all of God. **"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to** *give* **the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." II Cor. 4:6-7.** Then should not an examination of this earthen vessel give evidence of what is contained therein? Even when the church comes together to eat the Lord's supper there is the admonition that an individual should examine himself; and so is it here. A self examination is needed.

There is, or has been, a change of what is contained in this earthen vessel of the child of God. This change may be observed, at least in part, by what may be evidenced by seeing and considering a reflection of what is now, as in a mirror, and what was in the past times when nature's darkness prevailed. Consider again the words of the apostle to the church at Corinth; **"Now the Lord is that Spirit and where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there *is* liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord." II Cor. 3:17-18**

By using the imagery of gazing into a mirror consider what may be seen: The first object to appear will likely be that of the old nature with all of it's vanity and pride. But a deeper look will show that something has been added. A new image has been superimposed on the old and the whole of life has been given a new meaning. The veil of darkness has been removed and what in the past had been pleasure now is vanity and vexation of spirit. What had been thought to be good works now appear as filthy rags. The doctrine of free and sovereign grace, scoffed at by much of the world, now appears most dear and lovely. The doctrine, that may be called hard by some, does not seem hard at all. To the contrary a child of God, though fraught with doubts and fears and plagued by the nagging image of the old nature, does not want, and can not "not believe". The witness is too strong, even; **"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God". Rom. 8:16.** The name of Jesus has become most dear.

So, the change that is seen in the glass now reflects the glory of the Lord, revealed by the Holy Spirit, as he shows you the mind of Christ. This change that is seen in the mirror is not the work of man, but of Him that has put a new thing in the heart. **"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord". 1 Cor. 1:30-31.**

Elder Wayman Chapell

PSALM 23.

The Lord *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

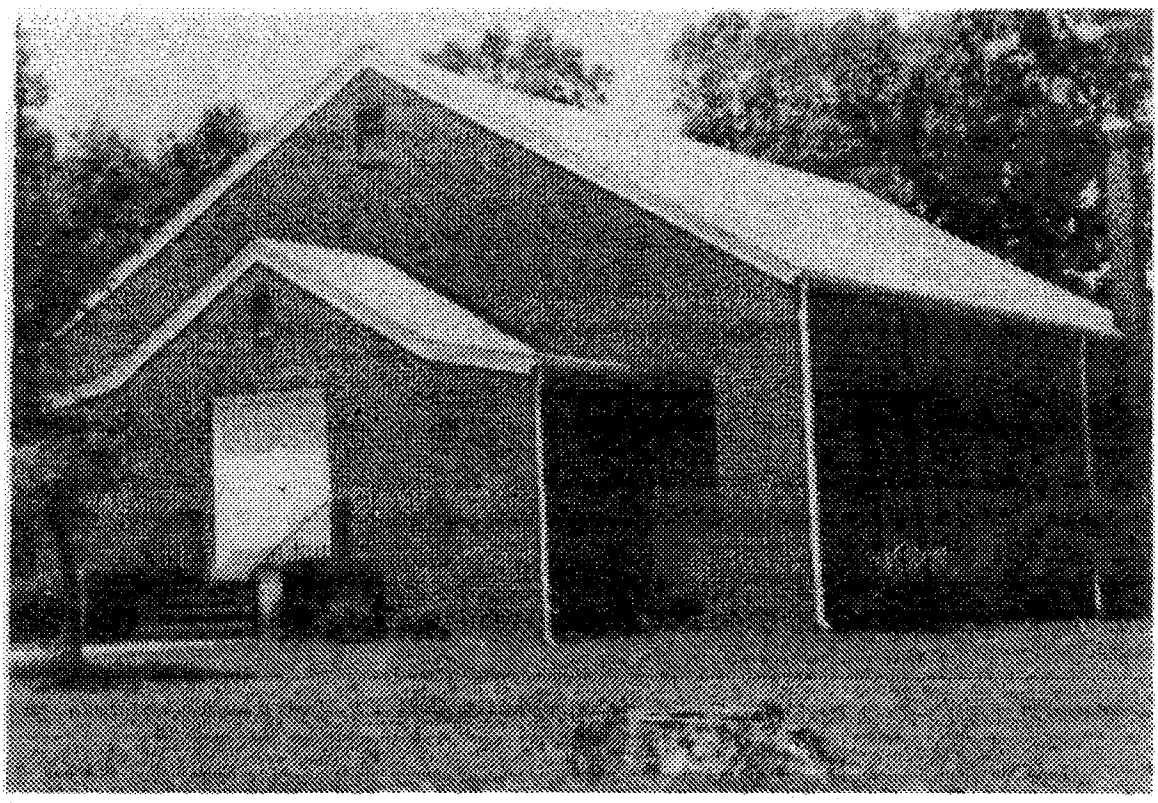

Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church was constituted June 11, 1884. It is located on 704 near Madison, N.C. Their meeting time is the first Sunday of each month. Their present Pastor is Elder H.W. Wray who has served the church for 62 years. Elder Thomas Solomon is Assistant Pastor.

PSALM 5: 11-12.

But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.

For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as *with* a shield.

VOICES OF THE PAST

SALEM DEPOT, N. H., Aug. 15, 1934.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: — I am reminded that your last kind letter, was not replied to. Not that I can write anything of value, but just feel a want to express feelings of gratitude for the opportunity of hearing the gospel's joyful sound once more in the old meetinghouse at North Berwick, Maine. We miss some faces as the years go by, but cannot wish them back, as we believe they see and gaze on that dear face that was spit upon for them that they might go free. I feel each year increasingly a delight to be in the company of those dear people at North Berwick, the savory conversation and the hunger for the truth is so noticeable. Though they confess they are sinners, yet how all their hope centers in the dear Redeemer.

Last Sunday morning I trust I heard comfortingly, but oh how much more satisfied I would be for the sweet assurance that I am one of the characters the apostle Paul was writing about in the epistle from which your subject was taken. One cannot take things for granted the word says, so we are told, Take God at his word. No, nothing but a revelation of his love within will completely satisfy. This I crave. The way to Zion is not an easy road some of us find, that is, if we are really in the way.

"While here I walk on hostile ground;
The few that I can call my friends,
Are like myself with fetters bound,
And weariness our steps attend."

This pathway, Elder, I think you know something about. The word declares; We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.

I do love the people of God and love to be in their company, but sin is so deceptive. We read of many who did unwell and fell away, the root of the matter not being within them. My prayer is, Lord, if I am deceived do undeceive me, make me clear in these solemn matters. How quickly the day slipped away and the farewells for another year had to be said, but already I am looking forward, if spared, to meet again. My dear friends (new friends I call them who came for the first time) were much impressed with the kind hospitality of the friends. One said to me, "It was 'better than home." I believe they had a good hearing time.

Now, dear Elder, I will stop, for you are a busy man, with little time to read long letters with little in them, but I felt I must again let you know how glad some of us are for such opportunities of hearing the blessed gospel of free grace. You are quite willing, and oh so glad, that He shall have all the glory, and so is.

JOHN H. DUNKLEY.

ISAIAH 22:22-25

"And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open and; none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. And I will fasten him *as* **a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons. In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that** *was* **upon it shall be cut off: for the Lord hath spoken** *it*."

"And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder." There can be no question as to whom the prophet has reference to. The prophecy of Isaiah is a wonderful book, for there is given to you and to me the beauty of Christ. This prophet was one among the many who presented, even before the birth of Christ, Christ in his humility and Christ in his glory. The gospel of Christ would be incomplete, wherever preached, if we did not present Christ both in his humiliation and in his glory. Those who fail to preach a fullness of the doctrine of salvation by sovereign grace, fail to present Christ in his glory — in his glory in the sense that when he entered heaven it was with a finished work. Among the last words the Saviour uttered before he died, as he bowed his head on the cross, were, "It is finished."

In the courts of the land it is customary to accept the testimony of dying people: much more would we accept the testimony of the Son of God when he was dying. Whatever he had under consideration when he bowed his head and said, "It is finished", was finished. In another place Jesus said, "I have finished the work thou gavest me to do"; and the work the Father gave the Son to do, was to save his people from their sins.

I awoke this morning with this scripture: **"He shall save his people from their sins"** — a message brought to a fearful person when Joseph was questioning about taking the virgin Mary as his wife, knowing she was a virgin, and with child; for God sent an angel to Joseph, and said, **"Fear not Joseph to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."** So the work of Christ was to save his people from their sins; and, if there had been one sin against any for whom he died that was unatoned for in his redemptive work, his work would not have been finished, and he would not have saved his people from their sins.

Here the prophet presents him as having the key (not keys, but key) of the house of David upon his shoulder. This was an important key, wasn't it? the key to the house of David. It was

said, "In that day," speaking of the day of Christ when he should come, "In that day shall there be a fountain opened to the house of David" the same house we are talking about here. A fountain shall be opened for sin and uncleanness. The fountain that is spoken of to be opened to the house of David for sin and uncleanness, was the blood of Christ that was to be shed on Calvary's cross: wherein the fountain would be opened, opened to the house of David, to the Church of God, to the ones for whom Jesus came into the world to redeem. It is the same fountain mentioned in the hymn: "There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emmanuel's veins; and sinners plunged beneath that flood, lose all their guilty stains." Isn't that the kind of salvation we long for, rejoice in, and glory in? It is the kind wherein Christ has been presented, and is presented, as the one who has the key to the house of David laid upon his shoulder.

In this same prophecy Isaiah views the work of Christ (before Christ was born) as if it had actually been accomplished. He said, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." The son was given before the child was born, for Christ existed from all eternity: ever one with the Father. "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace." Isn't this a wonderful description of Christ? Do you know anywhere in the Bible where there is any description that exceeds this discription which Isaiah gives of him even before he is born? "Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace."

I think that if we could just read that in the scripture sometimes, you and I, it would help us. Wouldn't it?-that the Son of God was all this. The prophet doesn't stop there, but says, "The government shall be upon his shoulder." The government of his people shall be upon his shoulder and he has never divided that authority. "And of the increase of his government there shall be no end." This same prophet, in speaking of Christ with the key of the house of David on his shoulder, said he shall not fail or be discouraged till he sends forth judgement unto victory. No, Christ was to never fail or be discouraged until he sent forth judgement unto victory. These things are described of him before he even took a body of flesh.

In the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, the prophet brings to us Jesus in his suffering and in his glory. "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" Christ is the arm of God; for God has made bare his arm, and has said in his word, "Mine own arm shall bring salvation." Then he describes Christ in which he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, as a root out of dry ground to his own nation; that, when they should see him, there was nothing about him that they should desire him. He was despised and rejected of men, but he said again that it pleased the Lord to bruise him. "He hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all". Laid on whom? on Jesus Christ. "And with his stripes we are healed."

And that is the only thing I have ever known that would heal our great disease of sin — the stripes of Jesus Christ.

"All we", the prophet said, "like sheep have gone astray; everyone turned to his own way; and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all." He does not leave him there, but he shall see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied; and by his knowledge shall he justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities.

"And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open and none shall shut; and shall shut and none shall open." I wonder how often you and I, in our daily life here, pause to think about the greatness of the power of Jesus. I wonder how often we realize that Jesus Christ has the keys to death and hell; but on this as this prophet present Christ, it is as God laying upon Christ the key — laying on his shoulder the key to the house of David. A key is something by which we obtain an entrance into a building. And the key to the house of David (there is only one key) , man has never had. It has never been laid upon the shoulder of a man; but this key was laid upon the shoulder of Jesus Christ. What do we mean by the expression, the key was laid upon his shoulder? we mean that all the power to open salvation to lost and ruined sinners, rested on the shoulder of Jesus Christ. He said in the word of God, that God looked, and of all the people there was none to help: Not that he needed any help, but there was none to help because God had plenty of help. Therefore, he said, "Mine own arm has brought salvation; and my fury has upheld me."

Should not each of us have in our heart this morning the deepest interest in one who has the key to salvation; who has the key to death; who has the key to hell? The prophet is speaking here of salvation, when he said "I will lay upon his shoulder the key of the house of David." No one has entrance into that house only as is provided by the one who has the key; and he shall open and none shall shut — he is the only one who shuts this door, and he is the only one who opens it. He is just as sovereign in one as he is in the other. If God has purposed salvation for a sinner, no power under heaven can prevent that sinner from having that salvation; for he shall open and none can shut. "I am the good shepherd of the sheep." "The good shepherd layeth down his life for his sheep. "He doesn't only have the key to the house of David upon his shoulder, to open and none can shut, and shut and none can open, but he himself is the door into the house of David.

"And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place." I have seen people drive nails into the wall of the home, and sometimes they don't find a piece of solid timber to place the nail. Put a little weight on the nail, and down comes whatever is hung upon it. For a nail to support a burden, the nail must be fastened in a sure place. And God said of Jesus Christ, "I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place." I will fasten him as a

nail where I can hang all the glory of heaven upon him. What a wonderful thought! I will fasten him; I will fix it so that he will support all that I lay upon him: I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place. I will fasten him in such a way that not one whose salvation depends upon him will ever fall. I will fasten him in such a way that every sin of his people shall be completely put away in his atonement. Have you seen Christ as that, my friend? Has God given you a faith to see all you need in this world; to keep you; to guide you; to save you in heaven in Jesus Christ?

I like to preach Jesus Christ. I have been trying it a long time. I feel to those who are called, that time is too precious for us to talk about anything but the Lord Jesus Christ. I want to preach him; I want to sing to him; I want to pray to him. "I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place." I will fasten him in such a way that he will support all I lay upon him. God has determined that wherever salvation comes to a sinner, it comes from a sovereign God, and is given him graciously, gloriously through the merits of Jesus Christ. I would like to talk about a few of the things set forth in the scriptures wherein Christ is fastened as a nail in a sure place.

Do you remember when Jonah was commanded to go to Nineveh and to cry against the wickedness of that city? Jonah in his trip to Nineveh, was to be a type of Jesus Christ; for Jesus said in the 12th chapter of Matthew, "Ye wicked and adulterous generation, ye seek after a sign, but no sign shall be given you but the sign of the prophet Jonah, and as Jonah was in the belly of the whale three days and three nights, so must the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights." Jonah was a type of Christ: the type whereof Jesus referred to even before he died and went into the grave; but as he said Jonah was in the belly of the whale this number of days and this number of nights, so must the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth this number of days. You know that when Jonah started to Nineveh, he had decided he would go his own course. He had decided that he wouldn't go to Nineveh where the Lord had commanded him to go; and he entered a ship, and God sent a great storm upon that ship; and the waves tossed the boat to and fro. Why was the storm sent? because Jonah was there; and Jonah was to be the deliverer of all the people upon that ship, wasn't he?

The first thought of these people when the storm overtook them, was that we will just toss out the heavy material on the boat, and we will be all right. There are a lot of people who feel in the first work of grace, that if they just had time things would be alright: they'll live a better life, they'll accept the Lord Jesus Christ, they'll turn over a new leaf; but if Jonah's people travelling with him could have taken the heavy things out of the ship and lightened it, and taken care of the situation, it wouldn't have been like it was. But they lightened the ship, and it did not take care of the situation, for God's

eye was upon Jonah. Finally, when they couldn't take care of the situation, they cast lots to see what the trouble was; and, you know, the lot fell on Jonah — and it didn't fall by chance, either. Jonah is a type of Christ. The lot fell upon Christ to die for us: I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; I will lay the key of the house of David upon his shoulder — and there the lot falls upon Jonah. He's fastened as a nail in a sure place. They looked for Jonah, and he's asleep: he wasn't worried; and they awoke him. You know Christ was asleep on the boat when his disciples were on the sea of Galilee, and they awoke him, and said, Master, don't you care if we perish? And he just rebuked the waves, and there was a calm. They ask Jonah, "Who are you?" "And he said unto them, I am a Hebrew; and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land." I'd like to say that truly in my heart this morning, (and you would more than anything you know), I fear the Lord; I fear God. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom; and people who have the fear of God, have some knowledge of God. He's a type of Christ; and he said I'm causing all the trouble on the boat, just pitch me overboard: The storm couldn't cease until he went overboard.

"For I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place." Peace couldn't come to us until Christ goes down into the deep; until the grave received him. Until death receives him, no peace can come to you and me. He must go overboard before the winds will cease blowing, and the tempest is calmed. He said, Put me overboard, and it was calm. "I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place." He fastened Jonah there in the right place. He handled all the situations: everything was in the hand of God. It even tells us that he had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah; and as Jonah went down into the deep, so Christ our Lord went into the grave three days and three nights.

"And he shall be for a glorious throne in his father's house." It is not natural for us to think of a throne as being a person, is it? We think of a throne as a place where the king sits. But Christ is presented here as a nail fastened in a sure place: he shall be for a glorious throne to his Father's house; and I will hang upon him all the glory of his Father's house. Whatever the Father's house is, and wherever it is, God has said in his word that he would hang all the glory of that house upon Jesus Christ. If this could be divided between him and men, then he would not have all the glory of his Father's house. The gospel of Christ — wherever men preach it, he is preached as the one who has accomplished the work his father gave him to do; he is preached as the one who has accomplished a finished salvation, and entered heaven: been crowned with glory and honor, and been seated at the right hand of God. "And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his Father's house."

"In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in a sure place be removed, and be cut down,

and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the Lord hath spoken it." There was a day that that nail was to fall, and was to deliver all that hung upon it; and that day was when Christ died upon Calvary's cross. He was cut down, and all that hung upon that nail, all the depended upon it, are delivered from condemnation. No wonder, then, the prophet could say, "I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place."

If a man owned ten thousand dollars, and he paid every penny of that ten thousand dollars but one dollar, he would still be in debt. If Christ redeemed his people from every sin except one, that sin that is left unatoned for will sink us into hell. It's either eternal redemption accomplished through the blood of Christ, or there isn't any redemption. It's either a doctrine that Christ has saved somebody, or nobody is yet saved. Which doctrine do you believe? Do you believe that Christ has made an atonement and an offering for salvation, and nothing is sure about it yet? If you believe that doctrine, I want somebody to tell me what glory he has in heaven. Tell me what glory the Son of God has in heaven, if nobody has been completely saved yet: if his blood hasn't atoned for sin; if he hasn't put away sin. Suppose we started out to do a job of some kind, and it took fifty years to do it; and after forty-nine years the job was given up. The work is as incomplete, in one way, as it was when we started it. But, "I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place."

There are only three theories in the world that men accept religiously: that Christ has completed a complete atonement for the sins of his people and put them away with the sacrifice of himself, and is in heaven and has been crowned with the glory of a conquering king; or that sin has not yet been atoned for; or that if He saves sinners, they will be saved if they accept his work of atonement. If you believe a doctrine like that, then all the blood of Christ was shed in vain, and that not a single sinner would ever be saved in heaven. The gospel of Christ presents him in his glory. "And I will lay on him the key of the house of David, and he shall open and none shall shut, and he shall shut and none can open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place-" He shall be cut down; and when he is cut down those who hang upon his atoning work, are delivered from bondage.

I want to exalt his name, and you who have been taught of him, you want to feel the preciousness of his love in your heart. You want to feel that assurance that he died for you. You want to feel that renewal of your blessed hope that he has given you, day by day. You want to feel what the world cannot give you, and that's the peace that he sent.

When we shall come to quit the walks of men — we don't know when it will be. When we see each other here, we don't know we will see each other any more. How often it is when I go to church, and before I go again, someone is gone. But, my friend, let me say this to you: you will fall where it is the Lord's will to take you, and when it's

his will; and if you have that blessed faith, that blessed hope in him, all is well. If your soul is resting alone in the merits of Him, nothing shall harm you.

(Sermon by Elder D. V. Spangler, Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, February 22, 1959.)

Sent in for reprint by
Burnell B. Williams

– Experience of –
Elder J.P. Helms

Dear Brother Berry: I believe the things I do, not because I willed it so, not because I was brought up in a Primitive Baptist home, and was taken to their services from babyhood. As I grew up, I respected them for their simplicity and honesty, but I verily believed they were wrong. I believed in the free will of the creature, and was in full accord with the doctrine that a man carved out his own destiny, and that Primitive Baptists would soon disappear from the face of the earth. As I read the Bible, I was more established in this way. I marked out my life, and of all of the things I would not do, I would never belong to the Primitive Baptist Church; for this was the church of the poor, and was too far behind the times for me. I did not attend a Sunday School for two reasons. First of all, I was equal to any that did go, and much better than many of them. Second. I did not want to hurt my parents. I fully expected, and was determined to "get up" in the world, get all the education I could, and then acquire enough of this world's goods to be secure – and then get right with God. This, to me, was a simple enough matter. All that was necessary was to join any church, but the Old Baptists, and then it was up to God to accept me, or He would be unjust. Then, if I would be particular and not fall, I would in the end, get to heaven. Was I the biggest fool that ever lived on earth? I would not argue this question.

So I lived, so I believed until I was seventeen years old. I was not disturbed; God is my witness, but as I lay in sleep. I saw the day of judgment, and in the east was a light, and in it, a Being who spoke and the graves gave up their dead. I stood amazed, for some were sheep and some were goats, and I was a goat. There was a smile on the face of this Being for some were sheep, and some were goats and I was in tears, and in fear. I saw that I was lost, for all I ever did, said or thought came up before me, and I promised prayerfully, and felt I was able to live a better life, and could, by so doing, please God. In other words, I could change myself from a goat to a sheep. I was very particular for some time, and was well pleased with my efforts. I was making progress, but all at once, my promises were broken, my good intentions gone. I had done worse than ever, making prayerful promises, seemed to help some, but all I wanted was another chance, and I could be a better man. Needless to say, I failed again and again, and I know I grew worse and

worse. Still in all the years of my early life I was sure of one thing, that I would not be an Old Baptist.

These promises continued until my thirty-third year. I came to the end of promises. It came as part of me that I could not keep one promise, and there was only one thing that could reach my case. That was the mercy of Jesus. In all of this, I read my Bible, and finally every time I picked it up, I found something that condemned me.1 finally saw clearly that I was lost. I had sinned away the day of grace, for I was not only a lost sinner; I was a blasphemer, and there was no forgiveness for me in this world or the world to come. I would plead my cause no more; no more prayer, no more promises. But in spite of all this determination, my cry by day and by night was for mercy. I decided that the end of life was near and that hell was my portion. Again, God is my witness, I confessed the justice of God in all things. I saw that God had determined the destiny of all men in eternity, and I knew that it was right and righteous, and that Jesus came a Savior and saved His people from their sins with an everlasting salvation. But I am lost, I am a goat, was my cry.

Now I come to the year of 1914, and a day well marked in my life. As I lay on the floor at my home to die, as I believed. I went in the cabin from the field late in the day as the sun set, perfectly reconciled to die and meet my doom. Everything was covered with gloom, and there, while prostrate, I heard a voice speak: "I created heaven and earth, and I am your Savior." I say there was power in those words, there was life in those words. I was lifted to my feet, and I went out of the house, and Lo, everything had put on a new appearance. I know that it is unusual for birds to sing at sunset, but there were some there that evening, and they were singing. Then I started to the kitchen to tell my wife what had come to me, and then I heard this: Better not do this - you may be deceived. So I did not go. Then I cried, Lord, if I am deceived, undeceive me. On the third day following I had come to the place to say that I was deceived, that I was losing my mind, but all the time, crying and begging. I was alone in the highway near my home when something seemed to say. Wait. Of course, I stopped. I heard singing. It was coming from the east, and as it came closer and closer, I could hear the words of the song. It was, "How Firm a Foundation." The singing came to me, and then in me. At the words, "Fear not, I am with thee" I joined in the song. I suppose men would have said I was crazy. But I was so convinced then that I said, I will never doubt any more. But I did, and still do. The Old Baptists seemed different to me. Their doctrine was not so bad after all. But being a member of them or any other church was not in my mind.

Soon a burden came on me, "You go tell My people." I said, no as determinedly as anything of my life. Then I began to question, Who Are Your People. Some I knew living, and some who were dead; many I did not know, but all were dressed in white, and I was

given to know that they were all Old Baptists, and I loved them. The same voice said, "These are My people." To this day, I believe I know where the true church is. I know where His witnesses are. But at this time I decided I would never unite with the Church. I would not preach. I knew nothing; it would interfere with my life; I could not make a living and preach and I would not. So I went for a few months. One Sunday afternoon. I went to my father's home. There were several Elders and members there on the porch. I remember placing my foot on a stone, and my mind was taken from me literally. How much time elapsed I cannot tell. What I said, I cannot tell. The thing I heard that brought me to my senses were the words of my grandfather: "I move we receive him in the Church." At that time I was glad and thankful that they could receive such as I, but before I reached home, I vowed I would not preach, and poor fool! I finally decided I would die before I would even let anyone know anything about this matter, and I emphatically denied to the deacons and pastor that I was burdened to preach. But affliction came in my home, to my children, and I promised that if the Lord would spare the child I would go. This child was restored to health. Then I rebelled again. Then another of the children was touched, and again I was compelled to beg for mercy again, and to promise, and again the Lord heard me. Then it was different, I said, I will go, but Lord show me, lead me, instruct me. I don't know anything! I don't know anything about the doctrine. Soon afterward the deacons and pastor called me to the stand and there I was in the place I had declared I would never be! There I was a member of the Church I had declared I would never join, and there I am to this day, and I can say, "That I received it not of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." This is the cause of my belief, and I can assure you and all that I am set in this, if this is what Primitive Baptists believe, I am one of you. I know I tried to believe something else. I tried to be something else, and I tried to keep from preaching, and I failed in it all. What little I know of doctrine or order, I have experienced it. In no sense would I detract from the Bible, or the study of it; in no sense would I say that a church can live without gospel practice. But administer all you can unto me, in one dose, or in broken doses, of "You can if you will," and it will not affect me. Have I learned of Jesus? Have I Christ, then I have all. For He is the teacher of His children, and He does all things for them. Some of the things that I have written have never been written of me before, a poor hint at best, poorly expressed, but I am not ashamed to tell all what I believe. I may be mistaken in the whole matter, but I say not to all, this is what Primitive Baptists ought to believe, and stand for in practice. Yes, the revelation of Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and honor forever and ever. Amen.

Your brother,
Elder J.P. Helms

HEBREWS X. 26.

We understand that this admonition, like that in Hebrews vi. 4-6, was addressed to the saints, which were recognized by the inspired writer of the epistle, as "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling." As he had told them in chapter sixth, that if they should fall away, it would be impossible to renew them again to repentance, according to the manner of the Levitical priesthood, seeing that such a renewal would require Christ to be again sacrificed, so he tells them again in this text, "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." When the priest under the law made atonement for the children of Israel, and the Israelites again sinned, there remained farther sacrifices for their sins; the sacrifice was to be repeated continually; but Christ has made one offering for sin, and but one, and there remains no more. But to the professed disciple of Christ, who has sinned willfully, after that he has received a knowledge of the truth, there remains a certain looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour-what, the saints? No, the saints can never be devoured, for Christ has by one offering perfected them forever, and he has given his word for it, "They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." What then shall be devoured by the "judgment and fiery indignation," which the willful offender is fearfully looking for? "The adversaries." The adversaries of the cause of God and truth shall truly be devoured; but says the apostle, "We are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak." And again, in the close of this chapter, he says, "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." If a professed disciple of Christ, willfully transgresses the laws of the kingdom, is it strange that he should fear that he is only an adversary? and even if he is not, he feels afraid that he is, and looks for that judgment which awaits the adversaries.

This whole subject is an admonition to the saints. Moses' law could not be transgressed by an Israelite with impunity. The offender died without mercy, for the law of Moses knew no mercy for its transgressors. But as Moses was but a servant, and Christ is a Son over his own house, the offender who hath dishonored Christ, trodden underfoot the Son of God, by despising his law, counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace, he hath committed far greater offense, and is worthy of a sorer punishment, and if judged by the law of Moses, would be subjected to a sorer punishment. But he is, if a christian, under law to Christ, and a copy of that law is written in his heart, and it reads thus, notwithstanding the offender's deserts, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more." It is certain, however, that he will visit their

transgression with a rod, and their iniquities with stripes, and they shall know that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

May we listen to the admonition of our subject, and may God grant us grace whereby we may serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire.

Middletown, N. Y., Nov. 1, 1855
Elder Gilbert Beebe

MEETINGS

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

Direction to the Pigg River Association to be held, the Lord willing; the first Sunday in August, Friday and Saturday before August 3rd, 4th, and 5th. The meeting will be held on the grounds of Chestnut Church in Franklin County, Virginia.

Those coming from the North on 220 after passing Rocky Mount at first stop light, turn left on 619; go 3.7 miles. Turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Rd.) Go 1 mile to Church.

Those coming from the South on 220, go App. 13 miles from Bassett Forks, turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Rd.) App. 2 and one half miles to Church.

We welcome and invite the Ministers of our Faith and order, our Brethren, and Friends to be with us.

Elder Thomas Solomon, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 2013

Randolph Plybon, VA 5.00

James White, AL 15.00

Tim Barron, TX 10.00

Elder W. L. Gardner, GA..... 25.00

OBITUARIES

As requested by New Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on April 28, 2013, with the guidance and grace of God, our Father, I shall attempt to write an obituary for our Brother, Donald Scott.

It is written that when the body dies it returns to dust from whence it came and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

On March 19, 2013, Donald Winston Scott was called from his station in this life to continue the journey of God's elect. Brother Donald believed in election, predestination, and salvation by the grace of God.

In the covenant from before the foundation of the world, the children of God were chosen in Love by God the Father and the Word. Throughout the generations they receive that natural birth and at God's time in this life they are brought forth from nature's

darkness into the marvelous light of that spiritual birth.

February 13, 1940, was the beginning of life for Brother Donald. On March 19, 2013, he rested from the trials and labors of this life, making his stay on earth 73 years, 1 month, and 6 days.

From my earliest memories, I have known Brother Donald, as our parents attended New Dan River Church and visited the Sister Churches. As children, when not sitting on our parents lap, we sometimes played over the church grounds during associations and communion meetings. We did not realize then that God was preparing us to become part of the membership of this church. From then until his death, there was never a cross word between us.

Brother Donald was a quiet man, of few words and many talents. Having grown up on his parent's dairy farm, he knew about hard work. He loved raising a garden and was a great handyman. He used those talents in caring for the needs of New Dan River Church.

On March 10, 1962, he was married to Thelma Bernice Rakes. To this union was born two children, a daughter, Patricia, and a son, Douglas. He retired from East Hampton Rubber Thread Company in Stuart, Va., after 37 years of service.

He was predeceased by his parents, Dan Kelly Scott and Mary Ethel Vipperman Scott Belcher. He leaves to mourn his passing, his wife of 51 years, Sister Thelma Scott, of Meadows of Dan, VA, a daughter, Patricia Vaughn and husband, Brian, of Rocky Mount, VA, a son, Douglas Scott, of Meadows of Dan, VA three grandchildren, Charles Vaughn, and Daniel Vaughn, of Rocky Mount, VA, and James Vaughn and wife, Beth, of Clarksville, TN, a sister, Zella Bellina, of Cana, VA, and a host of friends and Brothers and Sisters in Christ.

When his wife, Sister Thelma, joined the church and was to be baptized on the fourth Sunday in August 1974, Brother Donald asked for a home with the church at the water, and was received by experience. They both were baptized by Elder Bennie Clifton.

In conference on the fourth Saturday in July 1977, it was moved, seconded, and passed that Brother Donald Scott be elected to serve New Dan River Church as Treasurer, a position he held until his death. The members respected his opinion and trusted him to handle the business matters of the church.

On the fourth Saturday in December 1980, Brother Donald was elected to serve as Trustee of the Cemetery. On the fourth Saturday in October 1981, a presbytery was called to look into the qualifications of Brother Scott for the office of Deacon. He was found qualified and ordained as a Deacon by a presbytery of four Elders and six Deacons.

Brother Donald graciously served the church in many ways, never expecting praise in any manner. He had a love

of God's people and visited many of our Sister Churches, serving as Deacon in their communion services.

He suffered through the years with cancer and back problems, having to endure many treatments and surgeries. I was able to visit him some while in the hospital. He was not one to complain about his lot in life and never failed to fulfill the duties he had been given to serve in the church. For years he had taken care of the mowing of the cemetery and the church grounds, even when his health was declining.

His funeral was conducted Friday March 22, 2013, at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church by Elders Alan Terry and Thomas Solomon. He was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, when the children of God will be raised in his likeness. Brother Donald had a blessed hope that on that day he would be found in the number.

He is and will continue to be missed by New Dan River Church and among those near and dear to him, May our loss be Heavens gain. Written by one who loved him, on May 11, 2013.

An unworthy Brother,
James L. Shelor

PEARL IRENE THOMPSON

Valley View Primitive Baptist Church is saddened at the loss of our dear Sister Irene Thompson. She passed on peacefully in her sleep on Thursday, November 29, 2012. She was born on December 20, 1914. We were all looking forward to celebrating her 98th birthday. She was a member of the primitive Baptist for 64 ½ years. She loved her church. The last time I visited her, she said she wished she could come to church one more time. She was preceded in death by her husband, Gold Thompson, two sons, Kenneth and Johnny Thompson and daughter, Mary Jones.

Her family was so special to her. Her three daughters gave her such loving care and saw that her every need was met. Her son, Kenneth, took her to church with him as long as he lived. She loved to go with him.

She is survived by three daughters, Corrine Vaughn, Betty and C.B. Linkous, Winki and Bud Akers, daughter-in-law, Faye Thompson, 15 grandchildren, 29 great-grandchildren, 2 great-great grandchildren, sisters, Virginia Altizer (decreased since Sister Irene passed), Imogene Teel, Ida Mae Bishop, Jackie Shelton.

The funeral service was held on Sunday, December 2, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. at Horne Funeral Home Chapel with her Pastor, Elder Raymond Goad officiating, Interment followed in the Thompson Family Cemetery.

Written by request of Valley View Church by one who loved and will miss her.

Lena Duncan, Clerk
Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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HYMN

There is a house not made with hands,
Eternal and on high;
And here my spirit waiting stands,
Till God shall bid it fly.

Shortly this prison of my clay
Must be dissolved and fall,
Then, O my soul, with joy obey
Thy heavenly Father's call.

'Tis he, by his almighty grace,
That forms thee fit for heaven,
And as an earnest of the place,
Has his own Spirit given.

We walk by faith of joys to come,
Faith lives upon his word;
But while the body is our home
We're absent from the Lord.

'Tis pleasant to believe thy grace,
But we had rather see;
We would be absent from the flesh,
And present, Lord, with thee.

Watts.

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EDITORIAL

"Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." Matthew 10:16.

Elder J.B. Farmer

The kingdom of God is spiritual, and may only be seen and understood by the spiritual man. The natural man, as hard as he may try to enter into it and understand it, cannot do so. He will always err in his way. This kingdom comes not by observation, and is not of this world. Everything about it is a mystery to the carnal mind. It is only as it is opened and revealed unto us that we may see it, embrace it, and rejoice in the truth of it. **"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed** *them* **unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."**

God is wonderfully merciful to reveal unto His little ones the things of His kingdom, and the things He has prepared for His elect children. They are blessed to grow grace in and knowledge of the Lord Himself, and in the knowledge of the things of the kingdom. But all these things are hidden unto those who are wise and prudent, and who are confident in their abilities to sort out the truth for themselves.

Satan has a counterfeit kingdom. Every part of the heavenly spiritual kingdom is mimicked by the devil. He presents himself as God. He has a man, yet to be revealed, who is the fleshly embodiment of Satan, who is the very antichrist. He has ministers who transform themselves into angels of light. He has servants that obey him. He has false churches, which are actually the synagogues of Satan. He has a counterfeit gospel, which is so close to the true gospel it is mistaken for truth by all who are not led of the Holy Spirit. Satan's kingdom is like counterfeit money, which only those who have been trained in its detection are able to identify. The kingdom of Satan is of

this world, and appeals to all who love this world and are at home in it. And only the children of God are given the wisdom to see it for what it is, and to reject it as false, and avoid its pitfalls.

As the Lord sent forth his disciples into the world with all its dangers and snares, so you also are sent. But he has promised to never leave you or forsake you, and that He would be with you even unto the end of the world. His little ones have always, from the beginning of the world unto the present, been found in an apparently weak way compared to those surrounding them. They are like sheep among wolves. We know that a sheep is defenseless against wolves. It is not equipped to fight. It cannot help itself, and would certainly perish if left alone. But the sheep are not left to fend for themselves. They have a Shepherd, and He is mighty to save. He is much stronger than the wolves, and very well able to drive them away, and to protect His sheep. And He has always kept His sheep, and always will. They are the ones **"Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."** And the blessed apostle said, **"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."**

Since the sheep are only a remnant, and are so weak in comparison to wolves, they must walk in a certain way to survive. They are made to be watchful, and to look to the shepherd for their help and protection. King Solomon, by the wisdom given to him said, **"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil."** The sheep are bound to their shepherd as the disciples are bound to Jesus. When many were offended at the words of Jesus, and walked with Him no more, He asked the disciples if they would also go away. And they replied, showing their dependence upon Him, **"Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."** We have nowhere in this world to look for help, but unto Jesus, who made the world.

The sheep are commanded to **"be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves"**. The wisdom of God's children is to wait upon the Lord, and to look unto Him for all things. To be wise as serpents is not to be wise like serpents in their wisdom, but it is to be aware of the devices of the devil. It means, by the grace of God, to be alert and watchful. It means, by the grace of God, to **"examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves"**. It means to examine, by the Holy Spirit, every thing you say, think, read, hear or see. This is, in accordance with the commandment of God to His children to **"try the spirits, whether they are of God"**. We are to **"earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints"**. "We are to reject that which is false and to cleave to that

which is true. We are not to follow what some say. They say, "If we differ, let us differ in love." This is not agreeable to the teaching of the Lord and His apostles. By the grace of God, we are to labor to say the same things according to the true gospel.

The beloved apostle was blessed to leave on record for us these words. **"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace..... Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."** Every man is not to go his own way, and not to have private interpretations of any prophesy of scripture, and not to have his own opinion, and not to take his own position, and not to defend it against all opposition. No. If we lack wisdom or have differences with our brethren in understanding of the scriptures, we must **"Ask of God, that giveth to all** *men* **liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him."** We are to seek peace and ensue it. And when one goes his own way, and will not be persuaded, but insists on proclaiming false things not believed among the saints, after the first and second admonition, he is to be rejected according to the scriptures. These are those who cause divisions. And the children of God are commanded to mark them, to avoid them, and to keep no company with them, neither bid them Godspeed, lest we be partakers with their evil deeds.

God's little ones are not only to be wise as serpents, but are to be harmless as doves. Did you ever know of a dove harming anyone or anything? I have watched them at our bird feeder. They will bluff another bird if it gets too close, but I have never seen one attack and seek to destroy another bird. It is not in them to do that. The saints are made to be truly humble and lowly according to that Spirit that is in them. Jesus said that He is **"meek and lowly in heart".** As He is, so are His own. Their principal thought is not to separate anyone who walks disorderly, but is rather to restore that one in unity. Their hearts are hearts of love and compassion, being blessed with much longsuffering. Many times when I am in the presence of the children of God, I am struck with their genuine love for one another. There is no harm there. Many times when, fearfully, I have been brought to stand before the saints, I have looked out upon them, and have seen the gentle faces of love, and have thought, there is no harm here.

When the Lord commands His little ones, He gives them grace that they might be enabled to obey. We are taught that, **"He which hath begun a good work in you will perform** *it* **unto the day of Jesus Christ."** The steps, the thoughts, the words, and the deeds of the sheep are ordered of the Lord. He who commanded His little ones to go forth into the world, also promised

to be with them and to see to their every need. He who made them sheep is their good Shepherd. He in whom they trust for their very lives has never failed or lost one. All that the Father has given Him are safe in Him. The wolves fear Him and flee from Him. The same One who commanded His little ones to be wise as serpents, has given them the mind of Christ. By this spiritual mind they are blessed to examine all things, to test all things, and to judge all things. And the One who commanded them to be harmless as doves, has taken out their hard and stony heart and given them hearts of flesh. These are tender hearts of love, with a desire to please Him with whom we have to do.

Through all these things the Lord glorifies Himself, in that He is able to keep His own in a hostile world against all threats, traps, deceptions and fears. And He is able to do that which He has promised: to bring all His own down to the end of their lives in faith, rejoicing in hope of eternal life. And every tongue shall praise Him, of things in heaven, and of things in earth, and of things under the earth, in that of all the Father has given to Him, He has lost nothing, and shall raise it up at the last day. All praise and honor and glory must be rendered to Him, for He alone is worthy.

I trust this was written, in my own weak way, in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J. B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

Bro. Horton,

Enclosed is a check for one year of the "Signs".

I would like you to send it to my daughter at the address below.

May God bless you all for writing the truth.

Phil Jones

Paula Hill
1480 Lil Ave. N.E.
Rio Rancho, N.M. 87144

Dear Mr. Horton,

Enclosed is my renewal for one year. Please use the rest for what you feel best.

I enjoy getting Signs of the Times very much each month.

Thanks to all who have a part in getting the Signs out every month. May God Bless you all.

Gladys Shelton

PSALM 121: 1-2.

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

My help *cometh* **from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.**

ARTICLES

Experience of Elder Carl Terry
(Recorded as told to Elder Mark Terry, Nellie Terry, Edrie Clifton, Naomi Coker, Inda Wingate, Billy Wingate, Eva Cruise, Carole Cruise, and Bill and Judy Poindexter
On the Evening of August 3, 2001)

I feel like the Lord began working with me at an early age and many of you have heard me relate hearing that voice, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people sayeth your God, " when I was only four or five years old, before I was old enough to read anything, and that has stayed with me all these years.

Another experience that most of my kin know about but they don't know the preciousness of it — when I was fourteen and riding on the back of Dad's truck and sitting in a chair on the flat bed lumber truck and he went around a curve and I was thrown off that truck. I went down beside the rear wheels of that truck thinking that the wheels would get me. When I hit the road I was still holding onto the chair and the top post of the back of the chair was what hit the road first, which showed the indent of the gravel that hit that chair. Then I rolled a number of rolls there on the ground or the road, probably 40 or 50 times and when I stopped rolling I got up and I heard a voice say, "Walk", and I started walking back in the direction I came from. "No, go the other way." so I picked the chair up and I had cut the tip end of one of my fingers off and it was throbbing real hard.

In the meantime, while all this was going on, knowing how children like to pick and tease each other — my sister, Rosalie, was in the front with Dad and Mom and there were some girls on the side of the road just out of sight of where I landed in the road — Rosalie picking on me, or thought she was, turned around to ask me if I wanted to get off there with those girls. When she turned around she saw that I was gone. In the meantime, the Lord gave me to pray and I believe that was the first time that I really prayed to the Lord, and I have to say that I believe I did pray. But I was not praying that He would save my life or save my soul from hell, I was praying that He would show them that I was not on that truck and actually that was about the time I was praying. They turned the truck around and headed back and they saw me walking. I had my hand up over my head because that finger was throbbing so bad, and I was carrying the chair in my other hand. Mama told me she felt like I had broken my arm because I was holding it up like that.

Anyway getting on with the better part, not long after that (probably a couple of weeks) we were gathered in at Grandpa's and Grandma's and all the grandchildren gathered in then, there were probably 40 or 50 of us. All the grandkids were out in the yard playing and the older folks were inside talking about good things. Well, I didn't feel

like playing. I wanted to hear what was being said - Uncle Sam, Uncle Joe, Uncle Ben and different ones were talking spiritual things and I remember just as good as if it were yesterday, Grandma turned to Daddy and said, "Herbert, we would love to hear from you." Daddy just hung his head and couldn't say a word. She turned to you and said, "Edrie, we would like to hear from you and you couldn't say a thing. There I sat over in the corner and I wanted to tell it so bad that I felt like the Lord had given me to pray but I couldn't tell it. I wasn't asked. Children were taught to be quiet.

So I've been made fun of for being thrown off that truck many times by my cousins but it wasn't anything to make fun of. I was skinned from head to toe and I will have to say this, the Lord saved my life in that he gave me to hold onto that chair. If it had not been for that chair and me going off that truck like that, showing that the top part of the back of the chair hit the road first, that would have been my head and would undoubtedly have crushed my skull, but that wasn't God's will. So that is one incident that had taken place. Many others and I don't have a thing in the world to boast of either. It is just the Lord's mercy.

On after I got out of the Navy, I was given feelings I didn't know which way to turn. Our families had split and part of them went one way and part another. In my young mind it upset me greatly. I got out of the Navy in 1952. In the year of '53, I was working with my Father-in-Law saw milling and I could carry you to the very place where this happened. I was doing the logging and I was on a crawler tractor and I could hear the, not the wheels, but the track, and I had a load of tree-length logs swung up on the logging cart behind the tractor and I was going out down a hillside. And naturally when a load is pushing an engine, the engine will make a different sound from when it is doing the pulling, but that day the engine made a different sound from that. It was singing, "Amazing Grace," going out down that hillside. That is another time that was made precious to me.

In 1954 I had tonsillitis in July. I used to have tonsillitis real bad and I was laying on the bed and I can't tell you whether I was in a trance, delirious or whether I was dreaming or what, but anyway my sins rolled up before me as a mighty wave on the ocean, and I have seen many large waves. Many of you have heard me speak of this in the pulpit. But those waves were coming in and just mounting up like big mountains and coming down to crush me. But my sins was that wave. It was my sins that were about to crush me and it had already gotten to the climax of it and was starting to break and fall down on me and I cried out to the Lord, "Save, or I perish." And I heard a voice that said, "Thy sins, though they are many, are forgiven thee." And certainly I rejoiced in that, but yet I continued to sin. But what I saw was all my sins, I believe my future sins were included and it was a mighty mountain like a wave and if it had not been for the love of God

and His mercies, surely they would have crushed me and cast me into hell.

So while I was in the Navy I developed a very bad habit. You have all heard the term, curse like a sailor. Well I was a typical sailor and even after that experience, I was unable to keep from it, using God's name in vain and all that. In the spring of 55, in March, while working at Stanley Furniture, I dreamed, or whatever it was. It was at night on my bed and I was being pulled into that lake of fire by a power that I could not get out of or get control of. I have explained it that it was as a piece of magnet that you would take and stick to a piece of metal and it would draw that metal to the magnet. That was the feeling that I had of the power that was leading me into that lake of fire. I was fighting it with all my strength but I could not resist it. And I got close enough I could feel the heat of it and I could see the bodies already in that lake all crisscrossed up and I could hear them groaning and it was a horrible place and I cried out to the Lord again, "Save, or I perish." And I got deliverance from that. There was a mighty hand that came down, about that much of a hand (from just below the elbow) and it caught under me and carried me away. I woke up. The cursing and taking God's name in vain was taken away from me from then on, but that is not saying that I am a good person or able to control my temper. That is some of the things I have gone through.

Another - A little later than that in the same year, Grandpa Terry died and I was real concerned and upset and all the feelings I'd had and I begged the Lord to show me the right way to go. I had a dream right after Grandpa died. He died the 5th day of July and just a week or so after that, I dreamed that I was at a church and saw this big communion ring like they used to have, except it was a ring and I know I haven't told it in the pulpit. But there was Uncle Sam, (Elder Sam Terry), and Elder Cecil Turner was in the dream and my Mama and my Mother-in-Law was in the dream. And in this dream Uncle Sam and Elder Turner were on their knees begging my Mama and Mama-in-Law to forgive them and somehow or other I was made to feel like Dan River Church (they used to set seats out there above the church and it was so lovely) and to me I felt that was the evidence to me to know which way to go since the others were begging them to forgive them, so at the water at the baptizing at Dan River, when they announced the doors open to receive members, I couldn't stay back. I asked for a home and they received me. I went on into the water the same day. It was a joyous time. That was communion day at Dan River. It gave me much comfort. I have never forgotten those precious times. The night before I was received, I dreamed of going into the water with the other three, so when we got ready to go to the church that morning I packed my clothes, not that I could make it happen, but in case it did. I wanted to have clothes to change and I did. There have been many joyous times.

(Inserted by Edrie Clifton) The night before my husband had a dream and in his dream he looked down at his arm and there were four gashes cut in it. He went to that water to do the baptizing fully convinced that there would be another one. He didn't know who, but just as he was getting ready to go into the water, when he opened the doors of the church and I heard somebody say, "Wait" and I looked up and it was Brother Carl with his hand up making his way through the crowd.

(Inserted by Nellie Terry) I carried my clothes to be baptized that day, too, but I didn't go. It wouldn't have been four if I had went. It wasn't my time to go. The others baptized were Charlie and Mattie Sue Moore and Gladys Craddock. And Frank Pegram was supposed to have been but he was sick. So Carl was the fourth one instead of him. It was about two years before I joined.

The following year, (that was the 4th Sunday in September 1955) and the following year about a year later our third child was born. It was born on the 25th of September and there was something wrong, it wasn't right. It was a blue baby and after the baby was three days old they sent Nell home but the baby stayed in the incubator. We would check on the baby each day and it gradually grew worse. When it was six days old they said something would have to be done and they couldn't do anything more for it at Martinsville so they recommended that we carry it to the University Hospital in Charlottesville. We had to carry it up there in an ambulance and we had to stop several different places on the way to get oxygen for the baby to breathe on the route. I had never gotten to hold the baby until the morning that they sent him to Charlottesville and I let the doctor know that I wanted to hold my baby. He let me hold it for just a few moments and I cherished those times. Anyway, we got to Charlottesville and checked him in and signed all the necessary papers for them to do whatever they thought necessary to take care of him. We didn't have a telephone at that time and I gave them my Mother-in-Law's phone number so they could reach us. We lived a few hundred yards from her house. I got back to the house that night and a little after I got home one of Nellie's baby brothers came out there and said I had a phone call from Charlottesville and they were going to call back in 10 minutes. So I went out there to get the phone call and the doctor from up there was calling to make sure that I still wanted them to go ahead and do whatever was necessary. He said he had gotten progressively worse since we checked him in, so I gave them oral permission again to do whatever they thought was necessary and I went back to the house and laid down, and laying there crying and talking about it and all this. I was given the feeling of needing to pray.

In the meantime the burden to stand before God's children had been working on me and I guess a lot of people would call me crazy or stupid

or whatever, but in my prayer to God that night, I bargained with God for my child's life. I told Him that if He would give me my baby back normal and healthy and not being afflicted and all these things, that I would not refuse him to go and stand before His people. God kept His end of it, but I fought with hands lifted high not to keep mine.

Anyway the doctor was to call back the next morning. So along about 11:00 o'clock that night, I had never been in an operating room or anything like that and didn't know a thing about what they were like, but I was given a vision of an operating room and the big light overhead and the operating table. And I saw the baby laying on that operating table and I saw them take back almost to his backbone and start cutting him open following between two ribs and they come on up about one-third of the way in to, was about what the incision was. I saw that laying there on my bed that night. I could see the doctors and the nurses in the room 165 miles away from home. I saw them take something - the only way I can describe it is something like they use in a tire shop where they spread tires open with to look on the inside of a tire on a miniature scale - and they opened up that baby's ribs so they could get between the ribs and get in there to work on it. What they found in there was that the baby had a hole in the diaphragm and his liver was sticking up through that hole pressing against his lungs and heart and that was what was making him blue. He was not getting enough oxygen.

Well, let me tell Nellie's part on that. I told her what I had seen and we lay there and cried and finally dropped back off to sleep. Then along about 3:00 a voice spoke to her and told her the operation was over with. She told me that and we looked at the time. When the doctor called the next morning we already knew that everything was all right. He said the operation was successful and the baby was doing fine. The time we saw what we saw was the time the operation started and the time it was over with coincided with our time. So that was when the baby was six days old was when that took place. We would check on him each day and when the baby was twelve days old they told me I could come and get him. We brougnt him back in the car. What I saw in the vision was exactly the way he had been cut. And all that incision in six days time was healed except where they had a drain hole for the fluid to drain out from the incision and they had a Band-Aid over that.

Well, there is more to it than that. We were to carry him back in three months for a check up to see that everything was going okay. In the meantime we hadn't received a bill or anything for the operation. I had paid for the ambulance trip and all that, but when we carried him back, they x-rayed him and checked him over real good and made a $6 charge for that, and we paid that. I told them we wanted to start making arrangements to pay the bill. We did not have any insurance and just a very modest job not making big wages. They informed me the bill

had been paid for and we didn't owe anything. You cannot tell me God doesn't take care of you. That is just little of what has transpired with me.

Like I said, God kept His end of it, but I fought from keeping mine. He is now 45 years old and that part has not given him any trouble. He has had other problems, but he was pretty healthy growing up.

These are just some of the things I have experienced.

VOICES OF THE PAST

North Berwick, Maine, Jan. 5, 1859.

Brother Beebe:—As I have to write to you on business, and have not any composition of my own to send for the Signs of the Times, I send you a few lines, copied from a letter written by brother Hiram Campbell to a sister of our Church.

WILLIAM QUINT.

Sister Perkins: I have thought much about you and your interesting family, since I have had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with you, and of your firm belief in what I believe to be the gospel of Christ; although I have not had the happiness of spending but a few days in company with you, and the rest of my dear brethren and sisters in Christ in North Berwick and Wells — yet I find my heart is bound to them with a threefold cord. First: because they, hate every doctrine which dishonors the doctrine of free, sovereign grace. I often think about the happy moments that I spent in their company: and sometimes I cannot help contrasting those few pleasant hours with the many wearisome, and lonesome months, which I have to spend here in Brunswick, with scarcely any one to converse with, but those who are good, or can be at any time that they set about it in good earnest. I find but a few in this place who will acknowledge that they have a carnal mind which is is enemy itself against God. If I go to meeting, I hear nothing but the works, means and instrumentalities of the creature held forth, as conditions for the creature to perform to obtain eternal salvation; but this will not do me any good now; for such husks will not satisfy hunger and thirst after Christ. I once found myself in that county, and fed swine on such; and then tried with all the power I was master of to satisfy my hungry soul with the same the swine did eat; but alas! I found that there was no longer any nourishment in such for me, there was a great famine in the land, and I was in a starving condition for the want of that kind of bread which could not be found there. I had spent all of my substance with riotous living, and had got in debt, so you can see that I was in very poor circumstances, and especially to purchase that living bread that I stood so much in need of.

I expected nothing but death, but in an unexpected time one of God's watchmen upon the walls of Zion saw me in my poor ragged and starving condition, and told me that there was

bread enough and to spare in our Father's house. I knew that I must die if I continued in that strange or barren country, and I could but die if I left. How I could find my Father's house was more than I comprehended. But in an unexpected moment, when all hopes had fled, of my ever being delivered from my hungry, starving condition, I was met by the Prince Immanuel, who is the friend of publicans and sinners, and he fed and clothed me, and I set down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste, and he brought me to his banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.

HIRAM CAMPBELL.

SERMON BY ELDER J. P. HELMS AT THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION 1965

Again the Pigg River Association has met according to appointment. By rotation I stand before you for the purpose of trying to introduce by what is known as the Introductory Sermon. No man ever stood before you less qualified for this task than I. I realize to some measure that this is the last time I shall ever have the privilege of addressing you in this capacity. During the association here in Rocky Mount seventeen or eighteen years ago, my mother passed away on Friday. I have been blessed to attend all the associations that have been held with this church.

My desire is, above everything else, I have your prayers that God might bless me to proclaim the riches of His grace as I feel it was proclaimed when this association was organized at little Creek Church in the year 1825.

I have been trying to think of something that I might read to you this morning. Recently I heard a man read a portion of the 4th chapter of Paul's letter to the church at Rome, and who began speaking by saying that he wanted to tell us what God would do, and what he would not do. That amazed me, because I have been made to believe, and I desire to earnestly contend for what God has done: and to affirm that what He has done, is done forever.

Last Sunday afternoon our present moderator, Elder Turner, was blessed to preach, and he spoke of one thing that has rested somewhat on my mind; and I will turn to the 5th chapter of Romans, and read one verse: **"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."** If I could be blessed to affirm and to bear record of this eternal truth, I would be blessed of the Lord of heaven and earth, to proclaim the riches of what He has done for his people.

The world is crying what He will do, if we will let him. But I want to lift up my voice here at the opening session of the old Pigg River Association, concerning what He has done — not what He will do, but what he has done for poor, unworthy worms of the dust. Here stands a living witness of his

amazing mercy, because if justice had been dealt out upon me, I would not be here on this occasion.

In my early days in the ministry I remember something in particular in reference to this scripture. I had found where it reads, "Being justified by his blood," and I thought the Lord blessed me in a little measure, to preach the atoning blood of Christ for his people. The following week something attracted my attention and I turned to this scripture I have read; and it didn't read to suit me. I wanted to punctuate it differently, for this wouldn't do; but I found out soon that I was the one that needed punctuating, and not the scripture.

I have read to you, "Therefore being justified by faith." We might pause, and ask, How far reaching is that? Farther than ever the tongue of an individual will be able to tell; farther than the mind of an individual sinner will ever be blessed to fathom. Justification is a doctrine that belongs only to God's humble poor. You know that the head of the government in the State of Virginia, or our national government, can pardon a criminal, and the criminal will come home free from the law; but, let him be a rogue or a murderer, the stain of that thing is in him, for he comes home a pardoned rogue or murderer. But here is something that makes one as clean as though nothing had ever stained him. In other words, something that has cleansed us entirely, and brings us into a wonderful condition. I confess that I can only say I hope that He was born for me; I can only say that I hope He lived for me; I can only say that I hope he died for me — and not only died for me, but arose for me. And from time to time over a long period, he has visited me, and assured me that he had finished the work he came to do; and that when he bowed his head upon the cross and said, "It is finished," salvation in its entirety for the here and hereafter, was wrought out for every one of his children. This is so far reaching that it embraces all of his children whether infants or aged, whether in the Old School Baptist Church or some other denomination: all of his children are embraced in it.

What is under consideration when the word Faith *is* used? I know it is often spoken of as something we can cultivate, something we can add to, or lose, as though it were a commodity. But let me assure you that if you had all the wealth in the universe you couldn't buy enough faith to put out a chigger's eye: and you know how much that would be.

What is faith? The best definition I have ever found, is contained in this Scripture, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen;" and then tells the effect of faith when it is granted to an individual. I tell you that it will make him believe in God. By faith the first man that ever fell under the sentence of death at the hands of his brother, offered a more acceptable sacrifice than his brother. Why? it says, by faith. How did Abraham believe God? by faith. That faith that is once delivered to the saints, is not offered but given

you: When the Babe was laid in the manger; there was the gift of God in its entirety. Paul said in the 4th chapter of Romans, **"Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed."** It is impossible to find hope where there is no faith. If we have faith, the Lord has us; we haven't got him.

I want to talk to you about something we don't get ourselves. Long ago a colored man said, "If you can get something, you can also lose it." So I want to tell you that my hope is that the author and finisher of faith, the first and the last, the Alpha and Omega found me, (not that he did not know where I was), as he did one of old, in a waste howling wilderness, and brought me by his own hand; brought me to the place I was made to cry unto him, because all of my own works had failed. And I was made to know that faith is the gift of God in its entirety. No wonder the Apostle Paul, in bearing testimony here and there, always adds it to grace: By grace through faith. It is impossible to have one if the other isn't there, for every gift, every good gift, every perfect gift comes down from above in the person of the Lord of glory; and he takes up his abode in your heart. He illuminates in such a way that he gives you eyes to see, and a heart to understand. Don't tell me you have to believe to have faith, for belief is the effect of faith; and not the cause of it, by any means. Faith is the gift of God, it is not of works lest any man should boast. This certainly ought to set and seal all the work mongers in the universe.

I might say here that in my first going to the association as a messenger from old Republican Church, there were between twelve and thirteen hundred members of this association; now there are not quite eight hundred. What took place? Have the witnesses that God chose to stand and bear record failed? No! for there is no failure with Him. God's purpose is being carried out in this association, as it is everywhere. Sometimes I have been made to think, and to point my finger at myself, and say, you have failed. Yes, I admit I am a failure, but I am so thankful that I can tell you of one that never has, and can never fail; and that one is the author and finisher of every bit of faith that has been or ever will be here upon the earth.

The God that created the universe, who was made manifest and laid in a manger, when it was said to those on the hill that night, "This shall be a sign unto you, you will find him wrapped in swaddling clothes, laid in a manger." In him was all the gift that God had ever promised throughout all ages to his people. What more do we need today, than Him? He is the only one that ever said he would bring his children from the North, and say to the South keep not back; and that he would bring his sons and daughters from afar, even from the ends of the earth.

I know I have been among you for a long time. When I was ordained there were seventeen Elders above me on the list, and now I am at the head of the

list—seventeen have gone on before; and soon according to nature I will be called to quit the walks of men. But the outstanding thing among our people has always been, and will always be contained in the language of Revelation, "The Lord omnipotent reigneth." Not only does he reign over this or that, he reigns and rules over all things that are. And sometimes I can bear record, because I am given an eye to behold it: that not a leaf has ever quivered, not one has ever fallen that isn't in keeping with and according to the eternal will of God. God has appointed the coming of every one of his children into the kingdom, for there is only one way to come, and that is by the new birth: not by being born naturally, for that which is of the flesh is flesh, and that which is of the Spirit is Spirit.

"Being justified." This man that stands before you has a hope that he is justified fully from everything that ever has, or ever can come against him. In the 8th chapter of Romans it is written, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect; it is God that justifieth." Who, therefore, can bring any charge before the court of heaven against you. God doesn't look at you as men: my hope is that he looks at me through the Lord Jesus Christ. All of my righteousness: every bit that I can lay claim to as mine, is as filthy rags. Unless our righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the hypocrites and Pharisees, we are gone. How then are we to escape? By faith: "Therefore being justified by faith." Justified before whom? before God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Doesn't he hold everything in his own hands? Is there anything you can think of that is not under his control? Has he ever been surprised? Has he ever come short one iota of his eternal will being done? I feel that if anything has been wrought in me, it is, That God has all the power there is in his own hands. Don't undertake to tell me to fear the Devil — I have long since learned that he doesn't hold the keys to his own kingdom: he can't do anything without the God of heaven and earth. If it is according to God's will, it is going to be done; and if it is not according to his will, it won't be done.

So Jesus came, born of a woman according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. It was according to God's will that he was crucified: he was crucified between two thieves, and gave up the ghost. He was laid in the tomb three days and nights, all according to the counsel of a covenant keeping God. Don't say that man had anything to do with it. We see a movement in Rome, trying to free those from the charge of crucifying the Lord of Glory, as though man was the author of it. But I want to tell you that, regardless of what you may think or say, all of it was according to the eternal will of God. Without his crucifixion, without his death and resurrection, where would you and I be? By him we live, and by faith stand justified before God.

It is more than I can understand; and I go with my head bowed down

most of the time: if I could only know,— if I could have more evidence, has been my cry all these years. I realize that I soon must pass into the great beyond with a little hope which I received long ago in a cabin close to the Town of Rocky Mount. I am resting and abiding upon this one thing: that He came to me where I was. I had finished my work — all of it, for I had come to the place where there was no more praying, no more promises — I had failed in everything. I have tried again and again to tell about it; and I think of what my old grandfather, in his last hours, told me: "I must go into the great beyond with a little hope which sometime I have been ashamed to tell." Here stands another one who must go and face his Maker, with the hope that the Lord of Glory suffered for me — fulfilled every law and all of its demands for me in such a wonderful way; that I stand today, (not will be tomorrow; but now,) justified by faith; so that in the sight of God I stand as pure and holy (not in the flesh, but) in the Spirit as the God of heaven is, Can you receive that? Oh, I know your groans, I know your fears: I know all about them; but nevertheless when we can see Jesus, we see him making an offering for all of our sins, not part of them: putting them away by his own death upon the cross; and being raised for our justification, assures us that our hope is not in vain. God has appointed so many hills for us to climb, so many ravines for us to go into the depths, but in the end the glory land is awaiting for you — already prepared.

So away with the idea of telling what God will do and what he won't do. I want to tell you that everything is made ready for you; and you with all of your vileness according to your own judgment, will find where Paul gloried in suffering persecutions: and doubts and fears were his portion. Yet in spite of all that, he was justified fully and freely: so he stands justified before God. So, Old School Baptists, in spite of all that you are surrounded with, in spite of all that you may think or do, if God is for you, nothing can be against you.

Last Sunday Elder Turner was blessed to bring a message to me that lifted me clear up, and made me to realize in a measure, that in spite of all that I am, God loved me, and gave himself for me. He didn't send anybody else — he came himself in the person of his Son: by whom we stand justified— not tomorrow, not some day that is coming, but justified now freely from all sin and iniquity.

If we could only be given to realize this eternal truth, the nights wouldn't be so long sometimes: I wouldn't have to roll and tumble so much; nevertheless you many rest assured that your salvation and everything is prepared for you. Sometimes we can get a little comfort out of the scripture where He said, "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

So God has made everything ready for you; and in all you are doing here, he is making you ready for it. I

often try to tell Old School Baptists what is expected of them. This grace, this faith given you does not make you a boastful character of what you have done; never makes you boast of anything you have ever done or thought of in your life. But when we are given to think aright, we cry, "Glory to God in the highest." Yes, we glory in God, and we are glorified in him; for whom he did predestinate, all them he called; and whom he called he justified; and whom he justified he glorified. "What shall we then say to these things, if God be for us who can be against us."

Let it be remembered by everyone of you, that I stand in your presence, the presence of deacons and elders, and plead my inability, but tell you that God is able, not to do something, but has done it: has finished it, and prepared heaven with all of its glory for you—and is preparing you for it day after day. Oh, if I could preach like I thought I had learned almost fifty years ago, I would be something; but instead of getting bigger, I am shrinking up; instead of knowing more, I tell you ministers I know less than I knew long ago. The growth in grace and knowledge of the truth, brethren, never has exalted one to know more than the least of you, but it brings us all down on one level. I stand before you trying to preach to you the riches of God's grace, when I feel deeply that you know more about it than I do. I am going to give way here, but I would leave this thought with you: God is not going to do anything more for one of his children. When he yielded up the ghost upon the cross, and said, "It is finished," the atonement was made; and when he arose from the dead, he sealed it. Not only did he seal it, but he is attending to his own affairs today: There is not a home in the mountains of Franklin County that he is ashamed to come to, or ashamed to introduce himself to you and make you know what a vile wretch you are — and what a glorious Saviour he is. How well I know this! I could go now, though the cabin is gone, to the very spot — if I could only feel what I felt that day, and hear what I heard that day, there wouldn't be so much doubt with me: I heard a voice, and it affirmed that He created heaven and earth; and that He was my Saviour. There was life in that word — there was power in it; and for a little while there was no doubt in me.

But it wasn't long before something else came: doubts arose; and doubts have been my portion, it seems, all these years. But I affirm to you, children of the most high God, that the sacrifice was made long ago: you don't have to make it; you don't have to help. It is not by a little grace and a little works: it is either all grace, all grace by faith, or there is none.

Where is He now? He is seated at the right hand of God. What is He doing now? He is making intercession for us. Oh, how often I feel the need of his intercession: He still stands between us and the judgment, the righteous judgment of God; He stands between Him and us, and nothing is ever charged against us.

(The above was the Introductory Sermon by Elder J. P. Helms at the

Pigg River Association, held with the church at Rocky Mount Virginia, in August, 1965. It was recorded, and is edited for publication.)

PLEASANT WORDS

"Pleasant words *are as* **an honeycomb,sweet to the soul, and health to the bones." (Proverbs 16:24)**

None but those who have experienced bitterness of soul can fully appreciate the sweetness of the doctrines of the Gospel. All of you who have been made to know your own weaknesses can truly rely upon the strength of God's love and power. If you have been sick unto death because of your many sins; then, words of grace and mercy are the only tonics to bring good health. If God has worked mightily in your soul in giving you eternal life your taste has been so changed that words of worldly wisdom have lost their sweetness to you. Words gleaned from the Holy Scriptures which proclaim God's sovereignty, love, unchangeableness, promises, mercy, and grace; all have a peculiar sweetness which the unregenerated cannot taste. If you be so richly blessed that you possess a soul sweetened by the spirit of God's love; then, only pleasant words will flow from your mouth. Let us read the 23rd verse of the same chapter of Proverbs: **"The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips."** According to Proverbs 16:21— **"The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the SWEETNESS OF THE LIPS increaseth learning."** Both bitter and sweet does not flow from the same fountain. If the heart has been sweetened, sweet words will flow through the lips. If a sinner has been shown the greatness of his sins, and has tasted the sweetness of God's grace; he will speak words of mercy to other sinners instead of words of condemnation. Whatever is in the heart usually comes forth from the mouth. If the heart be bitter, the words flowing from the mouth will also be bitter. Jesus said, **"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things." (Matt. 12:34-35.)** Words are like arrows from a bow, they never return. Jesus said **"That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."** If you have this wisdom in your hearts, you will be very careful and cautious in speaking that you do not offend anyone. If you be angry, sin not. It is better to refrain from speaking when angry than to speak grievous words which will stir up anger. It is better to be silent when you cannot think of pleasant words to say. Bad words have wrought more evil than plagues, pestilences, battles, and diseases all put together. You may mend any possessions you keep near you; you may heal outer wounds of the body; you may change

your apparel; but, you cannot take away the sting that has disheartened some poor soul caused by a few careless words spoken by you.

There are words spoken which have done more separating than the wielding of swords. We ought to be very careful in our speaking, writing, and conversing.

When Christ sent forth the seventy into every city and place where He would come, He instructed them specifically and exactly the first words to be said upon entering a house: "PEACE be to this house." Even though these words might not be received by the occupants; yet, they were to be said by His ministers. You cannot think of a more pleasant blessing to be invoked than PEACE. No other word is more satisfying and pleasant than the word, PEACE. His ministers were not to wait until they obtained evidence that everything was in order and that they would be wholly received before they said anything. They were instructed to say upon entering the house, "PEACE be unto this house." Pleasant words were to be said which would be received into the souls of those who really desired peace. Yet there are those who do not seek after peace because they are satisfied with their own righteousness and their soul is full. This agrees with Proverbs 27:7, **"The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet."**

Pleasant words are as an HONEYCOMB. As my mind is dwelling upon the labors of a gospel minister in his constant search for the sweet nugget of precious truth so that he may be able to fitly speak words in season to the weary; my prayer now is —, Make me as one of Thy honeybees. As the bee goes from flower to flower in gathering honey, may I be enabled to gather sweet gospel truths from the sacred Scriptures. As the bee deposits the honey into the honeycomb set in the hive, may I be able to feed wisdom words of knowledge and understanding into the empty souls which hunger for the truth in the church. As the bee especially gifted in gathering, processing and depositing honey, may I be endowed with special gifts to gather, properly speak, and store in the church special honey-drippings of God's spiritual sanctuary, the Word of Truth. The honey-drippings of the honeycomb is sweet to the taste of a natural man; so is the gospel truth sweet to the spiritual taste of believers. The sweetness of the gospel to the believer is the only thing we can think of that is said in the Scriptures to be sweeter than Honey. See Psalms 19:10. The tongue of the bee is peculiarly fitted to lap the nectar of the flowers, and the bee is considered to be the wisest of insects. The tongue of ministers is just as peculiarly gifted to speak the choicest of Scriptures and to lap from them fitting phrases to suit the need of hungry hearts in most-wisely dividing the word of truth. As bees abound in almost all parts of the natural world; even so ministering servants are found in almost all parts of God's spiritual kingdom. As bees cling to the queen-bee and

make her dwelling place to be theirs the fruitful children of God cling to the church, Christ's bride, and bring their treasures, spiritual gifts, into the church. When I speak of God's ministers, I am including even those of least esteem of all laboring children of God.

God has ordained the growth and spread of the churches as He ordained the multiplication of the bees, and their habit of some leaving the home hive and establishing other dwelling places. Churches have flourished from a very small beginning and have so multiplied that new churches are continuing to be established. Some from one colony will leave their home place and establish a new colony. When members are constantly added to the church and new local churches are being constituted it shows a healthy state.

It is true of churches as is also true among bees. Sometimes poison is brought into the hive by bees, which will result in the death of that colony. Sometimes unscriptural doctrine and practice is initiated into a local church which will result in that local church dying. Sometimes ants or other in- sects will invade a colony of bees and kill them to such extent that they no longer exist. Sometimes enemies of the truth find their way into a local church and destroy it until it can no longer function. May God cause us to take inventory of our condition. God's work prospers. His Church grows. The Lord adds to His Church. Either the church of your membership is growing or becoming blighted or poisoned. Interest is either on the increase or decreasing. Faith of God's children is as a mustard seed. How is it like a mustard seed?? It grows!!! Movement is the sign of life. Good works are the evidence of faith. Is the honeycomb dry? Is there no honey or sweetness when you come together? Sweet doctrines and practices, as well as sweet experiences are brought to the center, which is the church, where all feast together. Sweetness in fellowship, communion, and worship enriches God's storehouse where the saints gather. Is this true where you attend? I had rather be with a few where there is growth than to be with thousands where there is a decline. I prefer leaving a full house and begin in a new place where there is room for honey to be stored. When a family has been completed and children have become grown, one by one they leave their former places of dwelling and take on the responsibility of beginning new homes. There is progress in every realm of God's work. The same law of growth and multiplication works both in the natural and spiritual realm. When the Lord raises up leaders in His churches; when they become of age, they go out into new places to assume their ordained place and position to plant other churches. If it be of the Lord these new churches will prosper and grow. God's supply of Honey will never be exhausted. Hungry and thirsty souls shall ever increase so that there will always be room for it to be deposited. As long as we go forth in the right way, the work of the Lord's chosen ones whom He hath ordained to glorify Him shall prosper.

His gospel shall be preached. There will ever be ears blessed to hear and hearts to understand. The sweetness of God's rich providence and amazing grace shall be measured and dropped into hearts that have been prepared to receive it.

I suppose that there is no other natural sweetness besides honey that comes to man already refined. Other sweets have to be condensed to make it sweeter and richer. The doctrines of the Scriptures are like honey. The Holy Sacred Scriptures are already condensed and refined. Try condensing honey further by burning and you get an unpleasant odor. Try condensing the Scriptures of Truth by leaving some out and overemphasizing others and it becomes unpleasant even to a soul desiring truth in its purity. God does not use ministers to lessen the importance of any scriptural teachings, but rather to rightly divide the word of truth. None is left out if the whole is rightly divided. There is a curse pronounced upon those who attempt to take away. Some might want to weaken the true teaching of the scriptures by adding the puny work of sinful man to make it coincide with opinions naturally believed. When this is attempted it is not pure doctrine. The doctrine relative to the sovereignty of God is sweet when positively affirmed and proved by the Scriptures, that God works all things after the counsel of His own will. Yet, when the duty of man to fear God and keep His commandments is made less obligatory in stressing the point, it is over-emphasized, thus losing its sweetness and purity. On the other hand, preaching the duty of man to fear God and keep His commandments cannot be over emphasized unless God's sovereignty is limited to stress the point. It is not rightly dividing the word of truth when one undertakes to proclaim that man is in no way accountable, responsible, or obligated to keep God's law, in order to prove that God is sovereign. On the other hand, it is not rightly dividing the word of truth when one proclaims that God does not work all things after the counsel of His own will, in order to emphasize the duty, obligation, and responsibility of man. May God's ministers continue to preach both the sovereignty of God and the duty of man. I know full well that without HIM we can do NOTHING; yet, I know that we CAN DO all things through Him Who strengtheneth us. It is sweet to know that the prayers of His saints are not in vain. It is sweet to feel that He hears and answers prayers. It is sweet to believe not only that HE IS; but, He also is a REWARDER OF THEM THAT DILIGENTLY SEEK HIM.

Pleasant words are as an honeycomb; sweet to the soul, and HEALTH TO THE BONES. The wholesome words of our Lord are not only sweet to the soul in making it happy, but also heal the sick mind and bind up the broken heart, as well as, healing broken bones. These pleasant words give courage sufficient to go from faith to faith, and from strength to strength. They cause the inward man to be

strengthened as honey causes the outward man to be built up. Written articles of faith and church covenants are made healthy by members who adhere to them and abide by them. The structure of church organization could not be healthy unless godly zealous gracious followers of Christ were the constituents. The structure may be well-founded but it will become unhealthy without the Spirit.

As God pours words of eternal life into our hearts and minds and makes us know the sweetness of His mercy and love, we should, also, pour words of comfort and encouragement into the ears of poor struggling sinners, making manifest mercy and grace to them. Jesus Christ died for sinners because He loved them; yet, He hated their sins. If we be Christ-like — and we are if He be born in us — we will even love those who persecute us; yet, hate their sins. If one goes into error we are to help save the erring brother; yet, help kill the error. We are to call no man unclean; yet, we are not to partake of his unclean deeds. We are commanded to speak softly, not angrily; pleasantly, not harshly; reasonably, not contentiously; and, we are commanded to love one another but not to hate.

If I had to choose one word in defining God and could use no other, I would choose the word LOVE. John said God is love. If I had to choose three words in summing up God's commandments, I would choose THOU SHALT LOVE. Jesus quoted two commandments upon which all the law and prophets hang. The second was like unto the first in that they both began with: Thou shalt love. Love is a pleasant word. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor. Where there is love there is peace. Where there is peace there is ease of conscience. Where there is ease of conscience there is happiness. Where there is pure happiness there is Heaven. Where there is Heaven there God is. We taste it now and then. We experience such sweetness in these foretastes of Heaven that our desires are greatly encouraged with the hope that some sweet day after a while, we shall be wafted into our eternal home above where we can feast forever upon those sweets which are SWEETER THAN HONEY. May God add His blessing!

AMEN. Elder E.J. Lambert

ROMANS V. 3-5.

Agreeable to a desire of sister Peck, we offer a few remarks in regard to the working of tribulation, &c., in harmony with all other things, for the special good of God's people, and the glory of His own great name. The inquiry is made, "How does tribulation work patience, and patience experience, and experience hope that maketh not ashamed?" In reply, suffer us to ask, What could christians know about the grace or the action of patience, if we had not trials or tribulation? Suppose that we were placed in circumstances of perpetual joy and ease, we should know

something of gratification, but in that condition we could never become acquainted with patience. Nothing short of tribulation can call forth into exercise the principle and grace of patience, and it is on that account the apostle says, "Tribulation worketh patience," and in the same connection, of one of the graces of the Spirit working in harmony with all the other graces, that "patience worketh experience." This was illustrated in the case of poor old Job. The apostle says, "You have heard of the patience of Job, and seen the end of the Lord." The end, or design of the Lord, in Job's tribulation, was that in the final issue, Job might have occasion to record his experience of the dealing of the Lord with him, throughout that dreadful conflict. "I have heard of thee, by the hearings of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee." This is the difference between theory and experience. He had heard before, but now he had actual experience. And it is so with us; our patience in tribulation stores our mind with rich experience of the divine goodness. Jeremiah also had tasted the wormwood and the gall, and had, like David, waited patiently for the Lord, and this had given him experience which strengthened his hope. My soul, said he, hath them still in remembrance, therefore, I have hope. Thus his tribulation worked patience, and patience experience, and experience, hope. But what kind of a hope would we have if we were destitute of experience? We remember our experience, and all the way the Lord our God has led us, and our hope is revived, and we say with the poet,

"His love in times past, forbids me to think
He'll leave me at last, in trouble to sink;
Each sweet Ebenezer still rising to view,
Confirms his good pleasure to help me quite through."

This hope being well grounded, and supported by actual experience of the loving-kindness of our covenant God, will never fail, or make us ashamed. The makers of idols shall be ashamed, and they shall all go to confusion together. But they that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion. They shall not be ashamed nor confounded, world without end.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.,
September 1, 1856.

MEETINGS

LITTLE VINE OLDE ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the thirty-sixth session of the Little Vine Olde Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association will be held at the Newfound Primitive Baptist Church meeting house, located on Brier Creek Road in Wyoming County, about twelve miles southwest of Pineville, West Virginia, on the fourth Sunday in August and the Saturday before. The dates are August 24 and

25, 2013. Singing is scheduled to begin at 10:30 A.M. and preaching at 11:00 A.M. each day. It is our hope and trust that the Lord will gather together faithful ministers, brethren and friends to worship Him in Spirit and in truth, and to show forth His praise. If anyone needs more particular directions or information about lodging, please phone 606-474-4327.

Sherry Farmer, Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The One-Hundred Fifty Seventh Annual Session of the Smith River Assciation will convene, the Lord willing, with Old Union Church located in Floyd County, Virginia, August 30, 31 and September 1, 2013.

From the intersection of Route 8 and 221 in the Town of Floyd, take Route 221 South for 11.7 miles through Willis, then take a right on Route 787 (Indian Valley Road). Go 5.7 miles and turn Left on Route 622 (Indian Valley Post Office Road). Go 7 tenths of a mile and take a right on Route 754 (Macks Mountain Road). Go 2.1 miles to Church on the right.

We invite the ministers of our faith and order and brethren and friends to be with us.

Tony R. Horton
Association Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing on Saturday and Sunday, September 21 & 22, 2013.

New Hope Church, located at Spearsville, Louisiana will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and meet with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
318-778-4217

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 2013

Dorothy Dotson, VA	5.00
Gladys Quinn, VA	25.00
Ila Leary, NC	5.00
Arlene Hole, NC	5.00
Gladys Shelton, NM	35.00
Roscoe Reed, OH	10.00
James Shelor, VA	5.00
Bernard Cox, VA	5.00
Sarah Sidbury, NC	5.00
Martha Smith, FL	25.00

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HYMN

My dearest friends, in bonds of love,
Whose hearts in sweetest union prove,
Your friendship's like a drawing band,
Yet we must take the parting hand.

Your company's sweet, your union dear,
Your words delightful to mine ear;
Yet when I see that we must part,
You draw like cords around my heart.

How sweet the hours have passed away
Since we have met to sing and pray!
How loath we are to leave the place
Where Jesus shows his smiling face!

O could I stay with friends so kind,
How would it cheer my drooping mind!
But duty makes me understand
That we must take the parting hand.

And since it is God's holy will
We must be parted for awhile,
In sweet submission, all as one,
We'll say, our Father's will be done.

How oft I've seen your flowing tears,
And heard you tell your hopes and fears!
Your hearts with love were seen to flame,
Which makes me hope we'll meet again.

I hope you'll all remember me
If you on earth no more I see;
An interest in your prayers I crave,
That we may meet beyond the grave.

O glorious day! O blessed hope!
My soul leaps forward at the thought,
When in that happy, happy land,
We'll no more take the parting hand.

John Blair.

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EDITORIAL

Elder J. B. Farmer

"Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites *are*: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to the Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen *do*: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is in* heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* upon your lusts." "...Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou *wilt*." "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in

heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth *it,* that *men* should fear before him. That which has been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past." "Remember the former things of old: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else; I *am God,* and *there is* none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things that* are not *yet* done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." "But he *is* in one *mind,* and who can turn him? And *what* his soul desireth, even *that* he doeth." "For I *am* the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose." "What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

What is true prayer? Some think and say that it changes the mind of God, or that it changes things. Nevertheless, since God is in one mind and cannot be turned, it is impossible for anyone or anything to change His mind. And since God declared the end from the beginning, nothing that God declared can fail to come into existence. Since He is unchangeable and since all His works are certain, where does prayer fit in? And what does prayer accomplish? Some might conclude that prayer is useless, since all things are fixed with God, and since there is no possibility of changing anything. Others are blessed to know that prayer is a necessary part of life.

I am made to believe that true prayer is the very spiritual breath of the child of God. The little one, having no certain dwelling place here in the world, and being made to feel and know his great weakness in the flesh, and his vulnerability to the powers that rage in the world, must look up for strength and wisdom to run the race that is set before him. He is made to look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of his faith for courage to press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. The world is not his home, and he is an alien here, and he is misunderstood and hated because he is different. Many times he is fearful that he might perish along the way, because of his weakness and because of the strength of the adversary. He presses on often repeating the prayer of the publican, **"God have mercy upon me, a sinner."** And He finds himself repeating the prayer of Peter, **"Lord save, or I perish."**

I am also made to believe a true prayer is a heartfelt wish or need of a little child of God directed toward the only true God and Father of us all. Sometimes one cannot express his

deep innermost feelings of sorrow, or fear, or suffering; but God helps his infirmities with groans that cannot be uttered. That little one is comforted in the inward man. Many times one feels to be so sinful that he feels to be unworthy even to come into the presence of the Lord, or to speak His name. Then he hears the words, **"Will you also go away?"** And the answer is given, **"Where would I go? Thou hast the words of life."** I am made to believe that the little one is drawn to the throne of grace by the powerful cords of God's love and mercy, and that he is blessed to trust in the mercies of a forgiving and loving Savior. And I am made to believe that he finds forgiveness and peace there. **"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee."**

So what is availed by the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man? I am made to believe the changes that are wrought are not in God, for He is immutable, but the changes that are brought about are in those that are blessed to pray. If we ask for those things that are unprofitable, our request is refused. But if we are blessed to ask anything according to His will, we shall certainly have our request. So the change is made in us. We are taught to pray, "Not our will be done, but may the will of God be done in earth and in heaven." If we are given to pray, in truth for one who is sick, and if it is the Lord's will to raise him up, to the glory of God, it will be so. If we are blessed to pray in the Spirit for something we actually stand in need of, we will have our request. The Lord already knows what we need and will not deny it. This communication between God and His children is their lifeline and their strength in this foreign land. It is like a parent leading a little child by the hand through unfamiliar territory. It is the small, still voice that we hear saying, **"This is the way, walk ye in it."**

I am made to believe that prayer is a two-way communication between God and His children. When we pray in truth, we are given confidence that He hears us. We are not talking to ourselves. I believe it is as it was with Jacob when he fled from Esau and took stones for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. **"And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it."** It is sweet to me to think that the thoughts and desires of our hearts are carried to heaven by the angels. And the answers to our prayers are carried, by the angels, to us from the heart of God in glory .I believe this is a picture of the fulfillment of the command to pray without ceasing. It is not our work, but the work of God in us.

Many times the true prayer is offered up in secret. No one on earth sees or knows that the prayer is going up. It may be in thanksgiving for the many mercies of God, seen and unseen. Or it may be in praise to His name for the manifold works of His creation. Or it may be a groan of felt unworthiness because of some remem-

bered sin or shortcoming. Or it may be asking for direction or protection in a difficult way. The lips may not even move, but the lips of the heart are crying out to God. The Lord commanded His disciples to enter into the closet, and then to shut their door, and then offer their prayer in secret. I believe the closet is our heart, and that the door is that which shuts us in from the world and its demands upon us - even the Lord Himself. No matter where we are, for a little space of time, we are alone with Him. The lips of the hypocrite confess Him, but their hearts are far from Him. Sometimes the lips of His servants may not even move, but their hearts are near Him and confess Him in truth.

God loves His little ones much more than we are able to love our children. Every individual thing that comes to be here in this world, is being worked together for the good of His people. Even the things that seem to be against us are for our good. And likewise, every good gift and every perfect gift that God has purposed for us shall come down from above to us without fail. God proved His love in a way that is undeniable. **"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"** Knowing and believing these things, we have full assurance of faith that God hears our heartfelt prayers and will give us our desire when we ask according to His will.

Prayer is the Soul's sincere desire,
Unuttered or expressed;
The motion of a hidden fire,
That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh;
The falling of a tear;
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer, the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high.

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath;
The Christian's native air;
The watch-word at the gate of death;
He enters heaven with prayer.

From the D. H. Goble Hymn Book
This, I trust, was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder Jerry B. Farmer

II CORINTHIANS 2:14-16.

Now thanks *be* unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:

To the one *we are* the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who *is* sufficient for these things?

CORRESPONDENCE

Bro. Robertson,

Hope this note finds you and yours well. Thank you very much for your work in publishing of the Signs of the Times.

Regards,
J.B. Mitchell, Jr.

July 20, 2013

To: Elder Cleo Robertson

From: George W. Hyslip, Church Clerk
The Bordeaux Primitive
Baptist Church

Dear Elder Robertson,

Enclosed is a copy of the obituary of Brother Tracy Jacks. He passed away May 12, 2013.

Brother Jacks travelled extensively to many parts of the country to attend the Primitive Baptist Churches, greeting friends, visiting, and fellowshipping with the brethren. He was a member of The Bordeaux Church in Nashville, Tennessee which he attended faithfully until declining health forced him to remain at home. Those who knew him will miss his love for, and presence in the Church family.

Please publish this obituary in The Signs of The Times when you can.

A brother in hope,
George W. Hyslip

Dear Brother Tony Horton,

Enclosed is a check for $50.00 for contribution as you see fit. I enjoy reading the Signs of the Times and hope to believe what I read. As I write this my heart feels heavy and at times I feel I want to shout and praise my Heavenly Father.

I believe God gave you and Brother Cleo Robertson and Brother Jerry Farmer a very special gift and talent putting the Signs of the Times together for his little children. Brother Tony I believe we need each others prayers. I am asking for your prayers for me and my family. God bless you. I feel unworthy at times, but when I feel him in my heart and soul I have a hope inside me.

A Sister in Hope,
Ruby Kincaid

July 8, 2013

Tony R. Horton,

I have a change of address. Although I have not moved to another location the county found it necessary to change some addresses.

My new address:
V. B. Linn
Serenity Care Home
269 Little Sand Run Rd.
Buckhannon, WV 26201

I have enjoyed reading the "Signs of the Times". It has proved to be a source of comfort to me while living my sunset years at this assisted living facility.

The staff here at Serenity are kind to me and render a service sufficient for my natural needs but there is no spiritual communion that can only come from one that has been taught of the Lord.

I thank God for the excellent choice of material that the staff has so faithfully selected for their readers. The editorials submitted by Elders Jerry Farmer and Cleo Robertson and others have served as an answer to a need to this poor and undone beggar of God's mercy.

I pray that our Lord and Master will continue to smile down upon those that have a part in publishing the oldest Primitive Baptist periodical in America.

In a precious hope,
V. B. Linn

EPHESIANS 1:4-6.

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

VOICES OF THE PAST

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS

(The last article on the subject by Elder Gilbert Beebe, written not long before his passing — published in the Signs October 1, 1880.)

The Old School or Primitive Baptists in former years have been very definitely identified and distinguished from all other religious or ecclesiastical organizations as PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, and as such have borne reproach and vituperation from those who hold more limited views of what we regard as the absolute and all-pervading government of God over all beings, all events, and all worlds. With deep solicitude and painful concern we have witnessed in the preachings and writings of some of our brethren a disposition to so yield or modify the doctrine as to limit its application to such things as the carnal mind of man can comprehend or the wisdom of this world can approve.

While some will concede that all things that they regard as pure and holy are ordained or predestinated of God, they deny that the absolute government of God does dictate by absolute decree the wicked works of wicked men and devils, for that, they say, would make God the *author* of *sin.* They therefore set up their judgment, and set bounds for Infinite Wisdom to

be restricted to, and beyond which limitation he must not extend his government, without subjecting himself to their censure as an unjust God and the author of sin. But how lamentable is the infatuation of poor, blind mortals, when

> "The vain race of flesh and blood
> Contend with their Creator, God;
> When mortal man presumes to be
> More holy, wise or just than he."

There are undoubtedly many of the dear people of God who feel jealous for the glory of God, and who, without any aspiring ambition to be wise above what is written in the sacred scriptures, from inability to comprehend the two great parallel mysteries of *godliness* and of *iniquity,* have felt a commendable concern lest in our weakness we should impute to God aught that would reflect on his adorable perfections, or withhold from him that which he has ordained for the manifestation of his glory. It certainly becomes us, as finite beings, to speak of him and of his government with fear and trembling. He is the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, and his name is Holy. His attributes are veiled in that infinity which no finite being can by searching find out.

He keepeth back the face of his throne, the place and power of his government, and spreadeth his cloud upon it. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts higher than our thoughts. The standard of infinite purity and holiness is the will of God. There can be no higher law than the will of God, for only to the standard or counsel of his own will and pleasure does he himself conform. He **"worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." - Eph. 1:11. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times** *the things* **that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." - Isa. xlvi. 10.**

In this connection he says, **"I am God and there is none like me."** And in the revelation of the Lamb in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells. **The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." - Rev. iv. 10, 11. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable** *are* **his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again! For of him, and through him, and to him,** *are* **all things: to whom** *be* **glory for ever. Amen." – Romans xi. 33-34.**

When God created the heavens and the earth no other power than his own was employed, no wisdom but his own was consulted, nor was there any

other than his own will to dictate what honor for what purpose anything should be created. As a potter has power over the clay, it is his right to form his vessels as he pleases; and if he forms of the same lump vessels to honor and vessels to dishonor, who shall dispute his right to do so?

The prophet says God is the potter and we are the clay; then, *What* **if God, willing to shew** *his* **wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." - Rom.ix.22 23.** Dare any of us poor, finite worms of the dust dispute the sovereign right of God to do all his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth? **"Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"**

How appropriate and forcible are the words of Job, **"Hell** *is* **naked before him (God), and destruction hath no covering. He stretcheth out the north over the empty place,** *and* **hangeth the earth upon nothing. He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them. He holdeth back the face of his throne,** *and* **spreadeth his cloud upon it. He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end. The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof. He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud. By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these** *are* **parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand ?"- Job xxvi. 6-14.**

Can we contemplate the awful majesty, profound wisdom, deep and unsearchable counsel, infinite goodness, unerring workmanship in all that he has condescended to let us know of his great and marvelous works, from the spreading abroad and garnishing of the wide heavens, down to the formation of the crooked serpent, and still stand in doubt of his predestinating power and unrestricted government over all beings, all worlds, and all events?

Are death and hell and all things naked before him, and destruction uncovered to his all-seeing eye, and yet unlimited by his power and wisdom? Has he stretched out the north, and balanced the earth upon nothing, without any design, purpose or decree concerning their subsequent destiny? Has God bound up the waters in this thick cloud, and **"given to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment," (Prov. viii. 29,)** and yet left all to the vagary of chance? When he set his throne above the heavens, was it to be the place of no power in controlling the destiny of all things in heaven and earth and hell? For about six thousand years the sun, moon and stars have with exactness filled their respective orbits, and with-

out the variation of a second of time from their creation made all their revolutions, in obedience to the decree of the Creator. Is it by chance that "The heavens (thus) declare the glory of God, and the firmament showing his handiwork?"

But, say some to whose minds the doctrine of the universal government is obscure: We admit that God has predestinated some things, but do not admit that he has predestinated all things which come to pass. Let us see how this partial or limited government would accord with the divine record. Suppose that in what we have been contemplating of the heavens, we should find the sun and moon, and all the stars but one, held firmly to their orbits by the irresistible will and decree of God, and that one solitary star, without any fixed orbit, is allowed to range the infinity of space, wandering with more than lightning velocity, guided only by chance; where would be the safety of all the other stars? what would become of the predestination of those heavenly bodies intended to be preserved from hazard by the decree of God?

To us it has been a comforting thought that God has set the bounds of our habitation on the earth, and the number of our months is with him, and our days are appointed to us as the days of an hireling, who cannot pass his bounds; but what assurance of safety would that afford, if he has left murderers and blood-thirsty men or devils unrestricted by his predestinating decree? To our mind, either everything or nothing must be held in subjection to the will and providence of God. Even the wickedness of ungodly men is restricted by predestination, so that "the wrath of man shall praise God, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain."

> "Pains and deaths around us fly-
> Till he bids us we cannot die;
> Not a single shaft can hit
> Unless the God of heaven sees fit."

For death and hell can do no more than his hand and counsel have determined shall be done. Does this make God the author of sin? or, in other words, does this make him a sinner, or charge on him an imputation of impurity? By no means. Against whom is it possible for God to sin? Is he amenable to any law above himself? If so, by what law can he be indicted, in what court can he be tried or convicted? How preposterous! It is his eternal right to do all his pleasure, "Nor give to mortals an account, of his actions or decrees."

It savors of atheism to deny that he is the self-existent, independent God who has created all things for his own sovereign will and pleasure. And if it be admitted that he had a right to create the world, and all worlds, it must then be also admitted that he had a right to create them according to his own will and pleasure. Worms cannot charge him with error because he did not assign them a more exalted place in the creation, or for creating them

worms instead of men. Men cannot justly charge him for not creating them angels, nor angels because he did not make them Gods. The world, with its infinite variety of living creatures, from the minutest insect to the most huge monster, as well as man, were all made for the pleasure of their Maker, and all must subserve the exact purpose for which they were made.

Even the crooked serpent, as well as the harmless dove, all were pronounced good in their respective places; not good in the sense in which God is good, but because they were precisely what he intended or predestinated them to be. Had the serpent been straight, or the dove crooked, or if the things made has been different from what the Creator intended, there would have been a defect in the workmanship. We cannot, with such exalted views as we entertain, think that God has ever failed to secure the perfect accomplishment of his own design or purpose in anything he has ever done. The entrance of sin into the world, and death by sin, which by the offense of one man has passed upon all mankind, was no unprovided–for event with him, to whose eyes sin, death and hell have no covering. The eternal purpose which God had purposed in himself before the world began was sufficiently perfect and comprehensive to include all that could or can possibly transpire, or he would not have declared the end of all things from the beginning. **"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." Acts xv. 18.**

But there are many who admit the foreknowledge of God, and yet deny his determinate counsel, on which the certainty of all the events of time depends. Men may have a limited foreknowledge of things which God has made certain by his determinate counsel and irrevocable decrees, as it is said, The living know that they must die; but God's foreknowledge depends on nothing outside of himself, for he has challenged the universe to tell with whom he has taken counsel, or who has instructed him. To us it seems perfectly clear that nothing could be foreknown that was undetermined, and that the foreknowledge and determinate counsel of God are inseparable.

It is also generally admitted that in the salvation of his people, **"Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate** *to be* **conformed to the image of his Son," (Romans viii 29);** but that the well beloved Son of God was delivered into the wicked hands of men to be crucified by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, is not so readily admitted. The wicked works of those who crucified the Lord of glory were not foreknown by his murderers; but it was foreknown and determined of God.

Peter said, to those whom he charged with the wickedness of killing the Prince of life, **"I wot that through ignorance ye did** *it*, **as** *did* **also your rulers. But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." - Acts iii. 17, 18. "For of a truth against thy**

holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." - Acts iv. 27, 28.

The wickedness of men in betraying and crucifying our Lord had been positively predicted from the days of Abel, in what God spake to the fathers by the prophets, and by what was signified by all the offerings which were made under the former dispensation. The pieces of silver for which he was betrayed were counted and declared hundreds of years before Judas was born; and the dividing of his garments, and the lot cast for his seamless robe, was determined of God and declared by the prophets. The history of Joseph, and the wickedness of his brethren, was in fulfillment of his dreams, and in accordance with the purpose in which Joseph said, God meant it for good.

It has been said by some that these great events which God has overruled for good were ordered of the Lord, but that the smaller matters, and the wickedness of men, were not predestinated.

Our Savior has informed us that the determinate counsel of God in his all-pervading providence numbers the hairs of our head, so that not a hair can fall to the ground without him; even the little sparrows are protected, and the ravens are provided with food by his determinate counsel. And Paul assures us that "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

It seems to us unreasonable, as well as unscriptural, to say that the government of God directs and controls some things, and that other things are left to the control of men or devils. If God's government extends only to deeds of men, then is his absolute government totally excluded for **"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one." - Rom. iii. 10-12.** We would not limit the government of our God, nor, because we cannot comprehend his designs, dare to say he has no designs.

"He in the thickest darkness dwells,
Performs his works, the cause conceals;
But, though his methods are unknown,
Judgment and truth sustain his throne.

"In heaven, and earth, and air, and seas,
He executes his firm decrees;
And by his saints it stands confess'd
That what he does is always best."

Men act voluntarily when they commit sin; they have no more knowledge of or respect for the purpose of God, than Joseph's brethren or Poti-

phar's wife had in his case, for there is no fear of God before their eyes. It is even so with the princes of this world; if they had known Jesus, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But it was needful that Joseph should be cast into prison, and it was expedient that Christ should suffer; therefore that knowledge was withheld from the persecutors of Joseph and of Jesus, until they should fill up the cup of their wickedness. And it is thus in the wisdom of God that the world by wisdom shall not know him. Yet such is the wisdom, power and righteous government of our God that he can and does set the exact bounds by which the wickedness of men and devils is limited, and beyond which they cannot go. Satan is bound a thousand years with a great chain, and after the thousand years he shall be loosed for a short time. With all his rage and malice he is restricted by the supreme power and decree of God, to do no more nor less than what God will overrule for the good of his people and for his own glory. And thus also, "God" willing to shew his wrath" and to make his power known" endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," as in the case of Pharoah and the Egyptians, hardening the heart of Pharoah until all the plagues and judgments were accomplished, and his own almighty power and glory were then made known in delivering the Hebrews, and in overwhelming Pharoah and his host in the Red Sea. **"Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have** *mercy*, **and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed** *it*. **Why hast thou made me thus? - Romans ix. 18-20.**

The apostle, fully aware of the disposition of the carnal mind to cavil and reply against the sovereignty of God in the execution of his pleasure, did not attempt to apologize for God, or so to modify the doctrine as to render it less objectionable to the carnal mind; but he called attention to the infinite disparity, between the infinitely wise, holy and omnipotent God, who holds our everlasting destiny, and by whose long-suffering we are permitted to live, and poor, finite, depraved, short-sighted man, and the daring presumption and extreme folly of questioning the justice or wisdom of God in working all things after the counsel of his own will. We regard it as a very serious matter to charge that God cannot govern the world, by his own determinate counsel wisdom and power, according to that eternal and immutable design or purpose purposed in himself before the world began, without subjecting himself to the charge of being the author of sin. Sin is the transgressions of a law under which the transgressor was justly held amenable, and to the penalty to which he is subject. But we have endeavored to show that God is under no law but that of his own will and pleasure, and therefore he doeth his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of

earth. He could by no law be held under obligation to leave the affairs of this world or any part of them to be governed by chance, or be the will of men. As he is in one mind, and none can turn him, his purposes are eternal, like himself. His decrees being perfect from everlasting, admit of no improvement or change. If he had not the right to predestinate all things pertaining to the events of time before he created the world, we ask what right has he acquired subsequently to execute the orders of this throne? If it had been his pleasure to have prevented sin from entering into the world, can we doubt his power or wisdom or ability to have done so? If sin has entered this world in opposition to his will, or because he had not the wisdom and power to prevent its entrance, what assurance have we that it will not also enter the world to come? But it is to our mind far more consistent with what God has graciously made known to us of his being and attributes, to believe that God had a purpose worthy of himself, however inscrutable to us, in regard to the entrance of sin, as well as in regard to all things else. He bids us "Be still, an know that he is God." To our feeble mind the conclusion is unavoidable, that the predestination of God either controls all things or nothing.

We look at a vast complicated machine, with its ten thousand wheels. We cannot comprehend or understand its workings, but we are told that the machinist has a perfect knowledge of all its parts save one; there is a definite use for every wheel and spring, but one is held in the machine which has no certain motion or definite use. How long could that machine run in safety, with the unruly part liable at any moment to throw the whole into confusion? We cannot see how any part of the government of God can be absolute and secure, if God has not the undivided government of the whole in all its parts; and if he has today the full control, had he not the same control yesterday and forever? If he has not the full control today, is there any certainty that he will have tomorrow or at any future period? If we admit that God absolutely governs all things according to the counsel of his own will, and that he is immutable, then we must admit that he has determined what shall and what shall not transpire in time or in eternity. But to deny his universal control of all things, including all principalities and powers, thrones and dominions, things present or to come, whether they be visible or invisible, is to deny that he is the God of the whole earth, and virtually deny his eternal power and Godhead. If he has not the power and wisdom to determine events, how can he cause all things to work together for good to them that love him?

But while we hold that he is supreme in power, and that he works all things after the counsel of his own will, we are certain that he reigns in righteousness, and that there is no unrighteousness with him. To admit the universal government of God, is to admit the predestination of all things, from the falling of a sparrow to the dis-

solution of a world. In the absence of predestination, with what certainty could the Holy Ghost inspire the holy prophets and apostles to foretell all that should ever come to pass? If it were undetermined in the purpose of God, how could the apostles tell us of perilous times that should come in the last days, of apostasy from the faith, and spiritual wickedness in high places?

But we will submit these remarks to the consideration of our readers, and desire that what we have written may be carefully tested by the infallible standard, the scriptures, and received only so far as they are sustained by the word and spirit of our God.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe—October 1, 1880.)

BATH, Maine. June 7, 1931.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:- I have wanted to write you a long time, to tell you how I enjoy your writings in the SIGNS. I like to read of what you think of the happenings around us. I often wonder at them, and ask myself why this and why that, and as far back as February, 1930, I felt I must tell you how I liked the editorial. I wish I might be given words to tell you some of my thoughts of how I think we are affected by things around us. I know it is so, however hard I fight it. When I read what Paul wrote in Romans it is a great comfort to me: "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." There are times when I am very much dissatisfied with the life I live. I would like to be good, but when I look within I find much that is evil and bad. It makes me ashamed, and I know I cannot do one good act. But I have a very bright place to look back to, and I know the sermon Elder Dodson preached was for me. My sins all rolled away and everything was peace and joy; that was a wonderful time. I am a great lover of nature, the outdoors has a great fascination for me. I was reading about the trees of Lebanon, they were of God's planting. I was at Fort Popham the other day and watched the waves roll in, and thought of how they came just so far, and no farther. What a mighty hand held them, and the other night when I saw the rainbow I thought of God's promise. All those things are wonderful, and when I look into the heavens and see the stars and think how they are held in place, and think of this wonderful world, I have a feeling of awe come over me.

How I would love to be with you all at the Association. It brings sad thoughts to me, for sister Agnes and I had planned much on this spring, but it was not to be. She was a good sister to me, but my loss is her gain. I hope I can say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord," but it is with a sad heart. We have met at Sister Attie's for meeting as there are so few of us. God's ways are mysterious and past finding out. As long as God keeps my hope

and gives me patience to wait all will be well.

May the Lord bless you and keep you, give you food to eat that will enable you to feed his flock, and give you strength to stand by the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

With fellowship and love for the truth you speak and write, I hope I am you sister,

Rachel Beal Potter.

IMPORTANT THINGS

Each of us use the expression, "I believe."

Do we, however conscientiously ask ourselves why we believe what we believe? Or do we believe – or profess to believe, certain things without substantial ground for believing? The things we believe and practice in everyday life are important; while the things we believe and practice in our religious life are much more important.

Are you a member of an organization called a church? If not, do you lean toward one, or another? In either case do you know what the doctrines of your organization are? Do you know your Articles of Faith? Does your church actually believe and practice its creed? Have you ever inquired into the facts of the history of your organization?

Though there are many organizations, known by different names, there is but one Church of God. There is but one foundation – Jesus Christ. The doctrine of the Church is such as He and His apostles taught; and these only, which He has caused to be recorded for us. Names mean little except to historians; while the truth means much, or should mean much to each of us. Doctrines firmly held and practiced is the test of a gospel church.

The history of each organization should show how and why it came into existence, and who was its founder; it will show whether its beginning was an attempt to reform an existing organization; whether it was the result of a "new" revelation; or whether it is founded upon rational principles, or upon the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Men have long since ceased to blush at the name "Christian." Though first given in derision to those who believed and followed a "crucified Christ," the stigma has been removed for the "ordinary professor" by the keeping alive of "smooth things, and discarding "hard' sayings. It was not so at the beginning, and it is not so now. For believers then believed all things which Jesus taught; and believers, true believers, still believe and hold fast to those same things. These things have no variations, or different shades; they are not subject to alterations to suit particular times or notions. They are eternal; — they are right for all times or conditions. Believers are conformed to them, rather than they being conformed to believers.

If all "believers" knew the truth, and if "truth" did not take on so many variations in the professions of men, it would not be necessary to "try the spirits." But the chimericals of much of pro-

fessed truth make it necessary to "beware of every wind of doctrine," and to hold fast to that only which fits the original perfectly. A searching, if prompted of the right spirit, will lay aside the "doctrines of men:; for "he that hath an ear" will hear only what the Spirit says. The Spirit displays the truth in its mysterious splendor; and at the same time brands all its would-be kindred as false.

The Scriptures contain all that God has been pleased to reveal of His eternal will and purpose. Inspired men recorded them; and the same Spirit that inspired acts also to reveal and confirm them to whomsoever they pertain. No further revelations have been made, nor are necessary for the doctrine and order of the church, despite the claims that men make.

The simplicity of the true worship of God, — the worship in Spirit and in truth, has no attractions for "wise and prudent" men. Only babes in Christ are able to understand and rejoice in the completed and fulfilled type and shadow manner of worship, which was formerly proper, but is now comprehended in the "Simplicity that is in Christ." 2 Cor. 11:3.

We call attention to these things. If any are exercised in them they might well hear the apostle Paul when he says, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." 1 Thess. 5:21.

Elder John Wood

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will convene with Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church in Lowland, NC on October 12-13, 2013. As you enter Lowland, take the first road on the right and the Church is located a short distance on the right at 144 Middle Prong Road.

We welcome and invite all who love the truth to come and worship with us.

Elder Gene Lupton
Association Clerk
252-745-7441

EASTERN KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The 2013 session of the Eastern Kehukee Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Tarboro Church located in Tarboro, North Carolina. The meeting will be held on Saturday, October 5 and Sunday, October 6, 2013. Preaching services will begin each day at 10:30am.

From Raleigh, take US 64 East. Travel about 65 miles out of Raleigh and exit off at Exit 485. At the stop sign, turn left. Go over the overhead bridge and turn right at the second stoplight (St. James Street). The church will be about one mile and is located on the corner next to the railroad.

We invite our ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

(Our association was originally scheduled to be held with Skewarkey Church, in Williamston, NC. Due to the illness of the dear brother, it was agreed they would not try to have the association this year).

Naomi Coker
Association Clerk
252-823-0786

LOWER MAYO
FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday, September 29th, 2013. We hope to start singing at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30. Roaring River Church will host the meeting. Directions for those who do not know the location; the meeting house is located at 10060 Austin-Trap Hill Road, Trap Hill, N.C. 28685 From I-77, Exit 93 turn West on Zepher Road. Go about 3 miles and turn right on Mountain Park Road. Go through the 4 way stop at Mountain Park. Go to the next stop sign and turn left on Thurman Road. Go about 200 yards and turn right on US 21. Go 4 miles and turn left on Trap Hill Road. Go 200 yards and turn left on Roaring Gap Church Road. Go to stop sign and turn right on Austin-Trap Hill Road. Go 1 ½ miles to church on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

LOWER MAYO ASSOCIATION

The Eighty-First Annual Session of the Lower Mayo Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, at Russell Creek Meeting House, on Friday and Saturday before the first Sunday in October, 2013. Dates being October 4 & 5, 2013. Location: 242 Moorefield Store Road, Stuart, Va. 24171. Coming North or South on Va. #8, approximately 8 miles south of Stuart, Va. Turn east on Ayers Orchard Road, #653. Go 1 mile to Moorefield Store Road, #631. Turn

right, go ¼ mile to church on right. Coming East or West on US #58, turn south on Southfork Farm Loop, #827 to Ayers Orchard Road, # 653. Go 3 miles to Moorefield Store Road, #631. Turn left, go ¼ mile to church on right. Coming West on NC #704, turn North on VA – Line Road, #1730. Go 1 mile and turn left on Moorefield Store Road, #631. Go 2 ½ miles to church on left.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters, and all believers in Salvation by Grace to join us for this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

NEW RIVER ASSOCIATION

The two hundred and nineteenth session of the New River Association will convene the Lord willing at Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church located in Floyd County, VA. This session will be entertained by Indian Creek (P.B.C.) located in Indian Valley on (787) Highway in Floyd, Co.

The Association will convene on Saturday before the fourth Sunday and will continue on Sunday date being 21st & 22nd of September, 2013, the Lord willing.

Indian Creek Church is located on Highway 787 in Indian Valley, Va.

Those coming by way of Route 221 or 52 or Route 8 come to Willis, VA. Turn on to Highway 787, go approximately seven miles, church is on left side of road.

We invite all Ministers of like Faith and Order, also Brothers and Sisters, and Friends to be with us.

Thomas Pegram (Mod.)
J.B. Mitchell (Clerk)

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 09/2013
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

SKEWARKEY UNION
(Eastern Kehukee Association)

Hancocks Church will host the next session of the Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of September 29, 2013. The church is located on Ayden Golf Club Road, near Ayden, North Carolina. Preaching services begin at 10:30am.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethern and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union will be held at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church located on Malmaison Road in Pittsylvania County, Virginia on Saturday before the 5th Sunday in September, 2013. The song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

Elder Mark Terry, Moderator
Sister Peggy Wells, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held on the fifth Sunday in September. September 29th, 2013 at Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church, located at corner of Tate and Carr Streets in Greensboro, NC. Preaching service begins at 10:30 A.M.

We welcome and invite the ministers of our faith and order as well as our brethren and friends to be with us.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Mod.
Brother Wayne Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 2013

Greg Webb, IL	25.00
Loy Rodgers, AR	5.00
Eld. James Howard, AL	5.00
Cleo Underwood, VA	5.00
R. E. Biano, TX	5.00
Jimmy Tucker, NC	5.00
Lena Gray, VA	5.00
Amy Lane, VA	10.00
Mary E. Poff, VA	5.00
Judith Ravan, VA	10.00
Ruby Kincaid, OH	50.00

OBITUARIES

ALVIS GOLD "SAM" BEACHAM

Brother Sam was a true Friend and Brother at North Creek Primitive Baptist Church. He loved coming to Church and when he came in the door his face was like sunshine on a cloudy day. He loved the hymns that were sung. Upon asking for a home with the Church on May 28, 2011, he was received with open arms. He was born November 17, 1923 in Cape False, Virginia and passed from this

life on May 25, 2013 at his home in Kitty Hawk, NC. Brother Sam was a graduate of Kitty Hawk High School, owner of Outer Banks Contractors, an original member of the Kitty Hawk Fire Department and developer of Kitty Hawk Landing Subdivision. A veteran of WWII, he served his country honorably in the U. S. Coast Guard. He also served in a number of civic and community organizations. During the last five years of his life, Brother Sam fulfilled a longstanding goal by building a custom 32ft boat in his workshop. He was a loving husband, dad and granddad, dedicated to his family and community.

Brother Sam is survived by his wife of 66 years, Gay Dowdy Beacham. Also surviving are three sons: Mike and wife Wanda, Tim and wife Loui and Ricky plus seven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

A celebration of life was held at Austin Cemetery in Kitty Hawk on Monday May 27, 2013 by Elder Milton Lupton, Elder Gene Lupton and Mr. Brad Bradshaw.

Be it therefore resolved that three copies of this obituary notice be made, one for the family, one for the Church record and one for publication in 'Signs of the Times'.

Elder Milton Lupton, Pastor
Sister Gail Twiddy, Clerk

GEORGE FRANKLIN BLALOCK

George Franklin Blalock 90, of 2532 John Oakley Road died Sunday June 23, 2013 at Alamance – Caswell Hospice following several years of declining health.

He was born in Prospect Hill September 26, 1922, to James Weldon Blalock and Mary Hasseltine Oakley Blalock, both deceased.

He served for 38 months in the U.S. Army as a medical technician. He retired in 1979 after thirty two years from Western Electric in Burlington. He was a volunteer with hospice and Palliative Care of Alamance–Caswell County.

Survivors include his wife Susan Edwards Blalock of the home, a daughter, Sharron B. Mansfield, three grandchildren Temesia L. Jackson, John R. Mansfield, Jr. and LuAnne C. Mansfield, two great grandsons, one brother Joseph Blalock and one sister Nannie Lou Blackard.

He was predeceased in death by his first wife Louise Simpson Blalock, an infant son George Arnold Blalock, five sisters, Sallie Aldridge, Allie Clayton, Frances King, Margaret King, Lizzie Pritchett and one brother William Blalock.

A funeral service was held at 2:00 p.m. Wednesday June 26, 2013 at Harrelson Funeral Home Chapel in Yanceyville, NC with Elder Jimmy Gray officiating. Burial was in the Blalock Family Cemetery.

Franklin was a person you could count on to help when you had a problem. He will be greatly missed by his brethren, family and friends. A scripture from Revelations 14:13 seems appropriate for Franklin. **"Blessed** *are* **the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."**

Written by request of Moon's Creek Church by one who loved him.

Wayne Edwards

IN LOVING MEMORY OF OUR SISTER MERTICE S. EVANS

We at Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church bow in humble submission to the will of our Lord, who called Sister Mertice Evans home on July 14, 2013. Sister Evans was born in Pickens County, AL on February 5, 1941 to Benson & Beatrice Stokes.

Sister Evans was a retired nurse of 42 years and a member of Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church.

Sister Evans was preceded in death by her parents; a son, Gregory Dale Evans; and two brothers. She is survived by her husband of 52 years Bro. Kenneth Evans; a daughter, Tracie (Dale) Holliman; a son, Timothy (Stacey) Evans; four grandchildren, Tyler Holliman, Zack Holliman, Ross Evans, Bailey Evans; and one sister, Laudice Rushing.

The funeral was conducted at Dowdle Funeral Home in Millport, AL by Elder C.C. Morris and Elder James Pugh.

Sister Evans was laid to rest at the Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

Sister Evans will be greatly missed by all. She went to many meetings around the country and kept many visitors in her home. Her great love for the truth could be seen in all that she did for the comfort of all our visitors.

May all who mourn her loss be reconciled to the will of God who makes no mistakes.

Elder James Pugh - Moderator
Sister Jackie Pugh - Clerk

ELVA SNIDER CROTTS GURNEY

God, who is perfect in all His work, removed Sister Elva Snider Crotts Gurney from this world on April 8, 2013. She was born January 14, 1912 making her life here 101 years, 2 months, and 25 days.

Sister Elva was the daughter of Jim and Alice Shoaf Snider of Churchland, N.C. She has seven younger brothers all of whom prede-

ceased her. In her youth, the family attended the Churchland Primitive Baptist Church.

She and her first husband, John Hoyle Crotts had two children, Jackie Cates of Durham, N.C. and John Hoyle Crotts, Jr. of Chesapeake, Virginia. Survivors also include four grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, and seventeen great-great-grandchildren.

Sister Elva and her husband, Hoyle moved to Norfolk, Virginia in 1951. She joined the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized in 1962. Sadly, Hoyle died in 1966 after which three years later, she married Hix Mitchell.

Upon moving to Durham, Sister Elva was received into membership of Durham Primitive Baptist Church on June 20, 1993 by letter from Salem Primitive Baptist Church of Copper Hill, Virginia. Her family expressed that she loved and enjoyed the years that she lived in Durham and how she cherished the church.

Her funeral was held at the First Baptist Church of Welcome, N.C. by her minister grandsons, John Crotts and Jeff Crotts and by Elder Cleo Robertson, Pastor of Durham Primitive Baptist Church. Elder Robertson's remarks came from the Song of Solomon from which he lovingly spoke. From remarks gleaned from her grandsons, it was abundantly clear that Sister Elva was a strong believers in salvation by grace and that she had made an impression on her grandsons concerning election and predestination.

Her favorite Bible verse was from **Ephesians, Chapter 2, Verses 8 & 9. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves:** *it is* **the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."**

Sister Elva was not able to attend services at Durham in her later years due to the distance to the church from her home where she lived with family.

We will continue to miss her fellowship and believe that her spirit has returned to God who gave it.

Written by Brother Larry Byrd at the request of Durham Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Sister Betty McPherson, Clerk

BROTHER RONALD TRACY JACKS

Brother Ronald Tracy Jacks of Mt. Olive, Alabama departed this life on May 12, 2013 after an extended illness due to cancer. He was 71 years old. He was born June 23, 1941 in Madison County Alabama to the late Brother Rufus and Sister Wilma Jacks. He is survived by his loving wife Betty Jacks of 51 years, two daughters, Rhonda Jacks Moore and husband Don, Betsy Jacks Harris and husband Bobby, brother Clay

Jacks and wife Sherry, two sisters Carol Holder and husband Jimmy, and Brenda Underwood, three grandchildren, Hunter, Lillie, and David Harris, and many nieces and nephews.

The funeral was held at the Spry Funeral Home in Huntsville, Alabama. His pastor, Elder James Howard, and Elder Jerry Farmer of The Little Vine Olde Association officiated. Internment was in The Miller Cemetery in Madison County near Plevna, Alabama.

Brother Tracy asked for a home with the Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee on October 7th, 2001 and was ordained to the office of deacon on November 4, 2007. He traveled extensively attending meetings and associations of The Old Baptist Churches, He dearly loved to be with and visit the Brothers, Sisters and Friends of the Churches. He was well respected and loved. He will long be remembered and missed by those who knew him.

He retired from The Norfolk Southern Railroad in March of 2000, He loved the game of baseball and took great joy in working with the youth programs in his community. He also enjoyed gardening and continued to pass on his skills for growing an abundance of fresh food to his grandchildren.

Written at the request of The Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church while in conference. One copy to be sent to the family, one copy to The 'Signs of The Times' for publication, and one copy for the church records.

George W. Hyslip, Clerk

ROBERT E. LEE MOORE

In loving memory of our Brother; Robert E. Lee Moore.

We at Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church bow in humble submission to the will of our Lord, who called Brother Robert Moore home on July 3, 2013. Brother Moore was born on September 30, 1919 in Moore's Bridge AL.

Survivors include his wife of 67 years, Charlean Moore; his daughter Vanessa (Cronin) Davis; his sons, Steve (Cynthia) Moore and Stewart Moore; his grandchildren, Christina (Jeremy) Howton, Brandon(Melissa) Moore, Sidney Simmons, and Kayla Moore; and his great-grandchildren, Josie Perkins, Hunter Harkey, and Macie Moore.

He was born and raised in the Moore's Bridge community and was a deacon at Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church. He served in the 4th Infantry Division during World War II. Brother Moore was on the first wave that hit the beaches on D-Day.

Services were held at Pleasant Ridge Primitive Baptist Church by Elder James Pugh and he was laid to rest in the adjoining cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

Brother Moore was a firm believer of the truth and the absolute predestination of all things.

He will be greatly missed. May the Lord reconcile us to his will.

Elder James Pugh - Moderator
Sister Jackie Pugh - Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

VOL. 181 HILLSVILLE, VA., OCTOBER 2013 NO. 10

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

WE travel through a barren land,
With dangers thick on *every* hand;
But Jesus guides us through the vale;
The Christian's hope can never fail.

Huge sorrows meet us as we go,
And devils aim our overthrow;
But vile infernals can't prevail:
The Christian's hope shall never fail.

Sometimes we're tempted to despair,
But Jesus makes us then his care:
Though numerous foes our souls as-
sail,
The Christian's hope shall never fail.

We trust upon the sacred word,
The oath and promise of our Lord;
And safely through each tempest sail:
The Christian's hope shall never fail.

Gadsby's Col.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 10/2013
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

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EDITORIAL

JOB

Job 1:1-2, "There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name *was* Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil. And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters."

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

Based upon the scriptures and the experience of Job, I am made to believe that he typifies the Church of Jesus Christ. His name means "hated or persecuted." So the Church of Christ is hated and persecuted as He was. It always has been and will continue to be as long as it is in the world. It is in the world, but not of the world. As Christ prayed to the Father for His apostles in John 17:14-16, **"I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."** Then, in John 17:20, He includes all His elect, **"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word."** He tells us **"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before** *it hated* **you." The command is "come out from among them, and be ye separate." To eschew evil is to "keep away from or avoid evil."** The Lord's people have no desire to associate with or follow those who would do evil once they have tasted the Lord is gracious. The Lord keeps and directs His little ones. Psalm 108:105, **"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."**

Job was perfect and upright. The perfection or righteousness was not of Job in the flesh. He was a sinner as all of the progeny of Adam are for "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "There is none righteous, no, not one." "For all have sinned, and come short

of the glory of God." We all were by nature children of wrath even as others. All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags in the sight of a righteous, holy God. The perfection or righteousness is Christ in His people, their hope of glory. For "out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God had shined." Christ is their righteousness which is their perfection of beauty. Romans 8:10, **"And if Christ** *be* **in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit** *is* **life because of righteousness." "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."** Where is this kingdom? Luke 17:20-21 says, **"And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, He answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! Or, lo there! For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you."** He is the king of kings. He rules and reigns even this day in the hearts of His people. He has brought down every idol you have setup as He will have no other gods before Him. You are His subjects and He has written His laws in your heart and put them in your mind. He will be to His people a God, and they shall be to Him a people.

The scripture says "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them." I am made to believe this day was a gospel day. The sons of God were His ministers. When His ministers, anytime, come before the Lord's people to preach, they present themselves before the Lord because He is in His people. Many times when we feel so blessed and feel so lifted up in the Spirit to experience such joy at being with a portion of His people in love and fellowship and hearing the gospel preached, it seems that Satan comes among us to bring us down again.

The Lord said unto Satan, **"Hast thou considered my servant Job, that** *there is* **none like him in the earth..."** Satan responded that the Lord had made a hedge about him, and about his house and all that he had. "But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face." The Lord told Satan, that all Job had was in his power, but Satan could not touch Job. So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord. Then, there was a day when Job's children were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house. A messenger came unto Job and said that the oxen and asses were stolen, servants were killed and only he escaped to tell Job. Immediately, there came another messenger who said that the sheep were burned up as well as the servants and only he escaped to tell Job. Immediately again, another messenger came and said the Chaldeans carried away the camels and killed the servants and only he escaped to tell Job. And while he was yet speaking, a fourth messenger came and said that a great wind from the wilderness smote the four corners of the house where his sons and daughters were and the

young men were killed and only he escaped to tell Job. No mention is made of Job's daughters. I am persuaded to believe these messengers were of Satan. They were Satan's messengers and their reports were lies to tempt and try Job. Christ said that Satan was a liar, abode not in the truth and that there was no truth in him. Therefore, it is impossible for Satan to tell the truth. Satan, in the form of a serpent, lied to Eve in the garden.

The Apostle Paul experienced the messenger of Satan buffeting him as a thorn in the flesh. The Lord told Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Consequently, the messengers were not telling the truth. Job experienced great sorrow and distress but he did not charge God foolishly and so sinned not in all his grief.

Again God told Satan that Job was in Satan's hand, but save his life. God set the bounds of Satan and he could not go beyond those bounds. So Satan smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his feet unto his crown. He suffered severe tribulations. The Apostle James writes, "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." As the Apostle Paul wrote, "we glory in tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Christ said that in the world you shall have tribulation. But He also said "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." He has already gone through more than we will ever experience and He has overcome all of it. Job said "But He knoweth the way that I take: *when* He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

Job's wife told him to curse God and die. Job said she spoke as one of the foolish women. Whether she was a child of grace I do not know, but she was not of the same faith as Job. She is not mentioned again in the book of Job.

Job's three friends heard of all that he had gone through and came to mourn with him and to comfort him. Job's grief was very great. These friends were not of the same faith as Job and therefore were miserable comforters. They began to tell Job what he must do to receive the blessings of God. Have you experienced miserable comforters? They tell you of all the works of the flesh that you must do before God will do anything. In this day and time they also think it is comforting to assure you that you will again see and be with your departed loved ones in heaven. They are not of our faith and there is no comfort in that. If we are His, we look forward to seeing our Lord and being with Him. Elihu seems to have been sent by the Lord to set forth the truth, as a gospel minister.

The Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning. The latter end of a child of God is from the time the Lord established his kingdom in their heart and they are brought into an understanding of the truth. They are brought out of nature's darkness into His marvelous light. The Lord is their hope of glory. To experience the love and mercy and His grace is far better than the beginning of one's natural life.

In the latter end of Job his children were seven sons and three daughters, exactly the same as in the beginning. So it is with God's elect. Seven is a complete number. God chose (elected) a certain number that constituted the bride of Christ, His body the church. Their names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life which is Christ. Not one can be lost and not one can be added. It is complete. Christ said that "this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which He hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." John 10:29, **"My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand."** How comforting to a child of grace.

His daughters describe the children of God. In all the land were no women found *so* fair as the daughters of Job. In the Song of Solomon 1:8 Christ the bridegroom calls His bride the fairest among women. There is a beauty in His people that far surpasses anything of this world. It is Christ, the beauty of Holiness. "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, the Lord doth shine."

In Christian love,
Elder Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

Aug. 23, 2013

Dear Bro. Tony,

I see it's time to renew our "Signs". May God bless all of you who have a part in publishing this wonderful periodical. May it be His will to raise up devoted brethren in the future as in the past that it can continue.

In love and hope,
Peggy and Randolph Wells

8-16-2013

Tony,

I am sending a check for 2 years renewal to the Signs. Use the rest for what you think best.

I look forward each month to reading it. Sometime I see a hope for me.

Gradie Strader

8-16-2013

Mr. Horton,

Thanks for helping to get the good news out. I enjoy the Signs and the extra is for what you ever.

Rose

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE REFINING POT.

"And it shall come to pass, *that* **in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off,** *and* **die: but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say, It** *is* **my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God." - Zech. xiii. 8, 9.**

"He shall sit *as* **a refiner and purifier of silver." - Mal. iii. 3.**

God's dealings with national, typical Israel are of very much interest to the church of Christ. Therein is discovered to us the attributes of the Lord, and in this nation we have a portraiture of the manifold vicissitudes that pertain to the children of Zion even to the present day. This people were exceptionally favored above all the nations of the earth. To them were committed the oracles of God; blessings peculiar and abundant were their heritage. At times they worshiped God in grateful praises for his sovereign graciousness unto them, but ah, how soon they forgot his works, they corrupted their ways, debased themselves in their forgetfulness and wandered treacherously from the Lord. They knew what it was to flourish beneath the smiles of the Lord, and to fade and die beneath his rebukes. How often the Lord wrought for his name's sake, (Ezek. xx. 9,) shewing them mercy and delivering them from their adversities. In reading the history of Israel we see that severe indeed were the fiery ordeals they were subjected to. Look at this: **Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross: all they** *are* **brass, and tin, and iron, and lead; in the midst of the furnace; they are** *even* **the dross of silver. Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore, I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem.**

As **they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt** *it;* **so will I gather** *you* **in mine anger, and in my fury, and I will leave** *you there,* **and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the Lord have poured out my fury upon you."** Ezek. xxii 18-22. Ah, though the furnace was so severe there were ever some silver, some that were precious in the eyes of the Lord, a remnant according to the election of grace. So in Zech. xiii 8, 9, **"Two parts therein shall be cut off,** *and* **die; but the third part shall be left therein."** This third part are his very people, and they confess the Lord to be their God. By fiery trials the Lord separated them from their idolatries, uncleanness and

witchcraft. He purified them by the spirit of judgment and of burning from all the foreign mixtures that had become mixed with the pure worship that God had ordained among his people when he redeemed them from the house of bondage. Moab was the Lord's washpot, (Psalms lx. 8,) and Babylon was also the refining pot for Israel. Seventy years they were in that fiery furnace to purify them from idolatry. Though the fires of exile and captivity were painful, their songs were hushed, and in sighing and weeping they spent this long night of affliction, yet all worked together for good. There they bemoaned themselves, and sighed and wept, but the morning came, and they came forth with singing (Isaiah xxxv. 10,) and laughter; yes, the bright shining silver sang, "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." Are "the third part" his people? Are they silver and gold? Then he will refine them as silver is refined, and try them as gold is tried. In graciousness and faithfulness, for his own glory and their good, the Lord will bring the third part through the fire.

It Is not my intention to recite the narrative in particular, in which is told the fulfillment of this prophetic word in typical Israel, but, the Holy Spirit enabling me, I will present some glimpses of the subject as have ever been and are now experienced by those who are in truth the people of God. "I [Jehovah of hosts] will bring the third part through the fire." "He [Christ, the Word made flesh. the messenger of the covenant,] shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver." By these declarations of the Scriptures the Refiner is no other than God. This being so it is our comfort, as believers in God, to be assured that he Is not trifling or experimenting with his people; he is not using them as playthings when he turns his hand upon them (Isaiah i. 25,) and puts them in the refining pot. The little that we know of God persuades us to believe that he is holy and wise, gracious and almighty. All his ways are judgment, just and right is he. When his saints come forth of this and that, and all the fiery furnaces that the Refiner puts them into, will they not be to his praise and honor and glory? In very truth they will; my soul is exultant in truth they will; my soul is exultant in the thought. It is so sustaining and uplifting to have right thoughts of God. The Refiner is the Lord of hosts, the silver is his own elect, his redeemed and regenerated people, whom he hath eternally loved and hath predestinated unto eternal glory. The silver is owned by the Refiner. Who then shall question his sovereign right to do with his own as seemeth good in his sight? The sorest chastenings of our heavenly Father are for our profit. (Heb. xii. 10.) Our Refiner knows that there is much dross mingled with the silver in his people; we think we know it, too, but he better knows it than we, and what is more, he knows just exactly what fire and what degrees of fiery trials will separate this and that alloy from the silver, bring it to the surface, and that only his own hand that put us in the cru-

cible and melted as can purge away the dross. Have you not prayed, dear child of God, that you might more brightly shine in the beauties of the Savior? Yes, you say,

> "I asked the Lord that I might grow
> In faith, and love, and every grace;
> Might more of his salvation know,
> And seek more earnestly his face.
>
> 'Twas he who taught me thus to pray,
> And he, I trust, has answered prayer;
> But it has been in such a way
> As almost drove me to despair."

O, there is much chaff to be burned up, and tin and dross to be purged away all the days that we are in the earthly house of this tabernacle. Well, child of God, how many times have you been in the refining pot? What fires have you been brought through? and in what furnace of affliction are you now being melted? To tell all your answer would be a long account. The Lord has many fires, and fire after fire to bring his chosen through; some of his dear children are seldom out of the melting pot. The furnace of affliction in which the Lord has his chosen may be, in his providence, some outward earthly trial. It may be the blasting of our temporal prosperity; we are called upon perhaps to see nothing but shattered hopes and blighted expectations. Perhaps by God's dispensation we find our bodily health declining, and wearing and painful sickness is our lot. Then how sore to meet with bereavements, when strong ties are rent and torn. But there are living troubles which are as a living fire; some such afflictions are never breathed to any other, but are as a continuing furnace to the soul. Then, when it pleaseth the Lord, he can so kindle a fire to melt us that the common cares of life are a daily furnace to us. Or our Refiner's fire may be the fiery darts of the wicked, the buffetings of the messenger of Satan, the devil's cruel insinuations and accusations. What a harassed life some of God's dear children have; all their surroundings are such that we wonder they endure such fiery trials. O they are not utterly consumed, the Lord, the Refiner, loves them, and his invisible and gracious hand sustains them. A child of God cannot always say with Job, **"I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet, trouble came."** - Job. iii 26. Our circumstances may have been very different when trouble came. Trouble came; unsent? Never. Let us not believe such atheistical stuff. Trouble came, the fire burns, the child of God is in the crucible, and soon he is melted because of trouble. The affliction of the silver is not to destroy the silver, but to refine it. The bush that Moses saw burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed; and Moses said, **"I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt."** Exodus iii. 3. And I am sure if we have eyes to see the elect of God in the refining pot, if we have a heart to enter somewhat into the intimacy between the Refiner and the silver, if we

can view the scene taking place in the crucible, we shall say, This is a great sight, such a sight which if once seen can never be altogether obliterated from memory's vision.

To a right apprehension of what is to be witnessed as we contemplate the children of God in the fire it will be borne in mind that all is not silver in the pot, there is dross there also. The child of God has two natures, one pure silver, the other all alloy, veritable dross, though some of it may very much resemble silver. The silver is the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, and the dross is the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. (Eph. iv. 22-24.) Having this well understood I would that we together might look into the crucible and see the tribulation of the silver therein, and let us know that while we are obtaining some glimpses therein that there is One who sees far more and deeper than we, One who sees all; the Lord, the Refiner, sitteth near by, his heart and his eyes are there perpetually. (1 Kings ix. 3.) He has dominion over the fire, and in wisdom regulates its intensity; nothing is taking place in the refining pot without him. By the heat of the fiery trial the child of God begins to be moved, as silver he is troubled; the varied alloys of our carnal nature also are agitated in affliction's furnace. That one and the selfsame person should be agitated by such contradictory emotions is a mystery. In the refining pot the child of God becomes melted; yes, the new man is molten, and is moved like melted, boiling silver in the refining pot, and the dross also is put in motion by the fiery ordeal. What strugglings what warfare is experienced by the tried soul. As the silver and the alloy are boiling, at certain stages they are so mixed, there is such confusion of the substances, that the child of God cannot himself determine what is silver and what is of the flesh. O this he learns, that he is frail and sinful. So mixed sometimes are the silver and dross that the poor soul in the furnace cannot determine whether he is a child of God or a child of the devil. "When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path." - Psalms cxlii. 3. So our Refiner ever distinguishes, ever knows the sighs and yearnings of the silver. **"The fining pot *is* for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the Lord trieth the hearts."** - Prov. xvii 3. While the child of God is in the crucible he is being tested indeed, for consider what darkness he is in much of the time. The providences of the Lord are often as an impenetrable cloud, and blind unbelief, that foul, God-dishonoring dross, comes the surface, and our tried souls are entombed in its dismalness. Ah, yes, there boils up out of the depths of our sinful hearts murmuring and rebellions, and we pray, but all our prayers are not silver prayers, there are dross prayers, peevish cries; we pray, Take us out of the fire, but we are still kept in, the fire still burns, our Refiner blows upon it and it becomes the hotter. Yes, in affliction's furnace the believer will find thoughts bubbling

up, imaginations of the carnal mind, and in passing through these fiery trials the Lord purposes to separate the dross thoughts from the silver thoughts. Many have been and are our thoughts of God, of his providences and of things that we imagine to be the truth; we cherish them as silver, but they are base alloy. Ah, what misconceptions we are liable to; we sometimes think that God is altogether such an one as ourselves. Silver thoughts are ever according to the testimony of the holy Scriptures, and those that are not sustained by the word of God, no matter how pretentious, no matter how we have gained them, no matter how they appear to shine, no matter how much we hug them to our bosom, they are nothing but very dross and scum, and in the refining pot we shall find it to be so to our soul's discomfiture. God's fires are where the wood, hay and stubble, where heresies are consumed. The false, the counterfeit, that religiousness that originates in our flesh, the erroneous ideas which we thought were right, and were friendly to Christ, are now in the furnace discovered to us to be opposed to that true and vital knowledge of God, (2 Cor. x. 5,) and all such by sore tribulations are separated from the faith which is of the operation of God. Yes, the refining pot is the place for the destruction of inherent Arminianism. Self-righteousness is only wood, hay, stubble, and affliction's fire will burn it up. As the dross comes to the surface we look into the refining pot, and nothing but this offensive scum is seen. We say, Is this a child of God? Look at Jonah in the refining pot in Nineveh and its vicinity; he is exceedingly displeased, and very angry and even in the face of God he spits forth this: "I do well to be angry, even unto death." As we stand by and look upon this, depicted in the fourth chapter, do we not blush and feel ashamed that such behavior should be in any creature? Surely this is dross. Is there any silver in Jonah? Yes, look beneath this shameful scum, look at him in the belly of the whale, in the second chapter, and there the precious grace of God, the silver, is seen. The Lord of hosts sits as a refiner and purifier of silver, and as the dross comes to the surface it is his work, because of his great interest in the silver, to remove all the base scum away. Let us not overlook this one thing as we consider the elect of God in the furnace of affliction, that amidst all the severity of their trials they are given to prove the unfailing mercifulness of the Lord their God. Our Refiner loves his own, he ever has compassion for his silver. He, the Captain of our salvation, was made perfect through suffering when he was put to perfect grief for the atonement of our transgressions. He saw the travail of his own soul and was satisfied; yes, for the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. So he sitteth as a Refiner and witnesseth the travail of soul of his tried people, his beloved silver ones, in the refining pot. He sees the end, that they shall come forth to his praise, they shall very

gloriously reflect his own image.

"I feel at my heart all thy sighs and thy groans,
For thou art most near me, my flesh and my bones;
In all thy distresses thy Head feels the pain.
Yet all are most needful, not one is in vain.

Then trust me and fear not, thy life is secure;
My wisdom is perfect, supreme is my power;
In love I correct thee, thy soul to refine,
To make thee at length in my likeness to shine."

The Refiner takes away from time to time the upboiling dross; he has no pleasure in this scum, for it mars the divine excellence of his silver. Yes, tried one, thy Refiner will take away the dross from the silver, and thou shalt come forth from the fires a vessel well pleasing in his eyes. (Prov. xxv. 4.) Though in your trials you find so much that is not pure and gracious and Christlike, though your melted soul is feelingly buried in this all upboiling scum, and your heart aches to find there is so much of it, thy loving Refiner will purely purge away thy dross and take away all thy tin. (Isaiah i. 25.) By divine teaching, errors are swept away, for God's word, his truth, is like fire. The gracious teachings of the Spirit of truth (John xvi. 13,) separates us from our mistaken ideas of doctrine, and we are made quite willing in our fiery temptations to have all heresies carted away to the dunghill. The people of God are glorified in the truth, but errors dim the lustre of the faith of God's elect. O the grievous scum of the depravity of our flesh, what shall cleanse this away? Only the hand of the once crucified One can purge it from thy aching conscience. Yes, the dear Refiner who sitteth near by will put forth his hand, and the voice of his pierced hand removing the scum will say to the heart of his silver underneath, This is my blood shed for the remission of sins. O blessed removal of the dross by the precious blood of the Lamb! At such a moment as this, the silver, though still in affliction, can look up with smiles unto the face of the Refiner, saying, I have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. Scum, vain imaginations, delusions, heresies, murmurings, unbelief, atheisms, all such are not evidences of the grace of God; they are not to be exhibited, looked upon or mentioned as evidences presenting us as the children of God; such is in all mankind. Such things are vile, they are not precious, and to be as God's mouth we must in our testimony take forth the precious from the vile. (Jer. xv. 19.) Sin in its every aspect is to be loathed, to be refused, to be condemned; we are not to smack our lips over it as though it were enjoyable, good to eat. O Lord, **"thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity."** - Hab. i. 13. And shall we feast

our eyes on sin? Surely If we are of God, born again, born of God, if we are silver, our heart-aching prayer will be, Take away all iniquity, and we shall be ashamed, and mourn, and loathe ourselves for all our iniquities. Can such an one whose conversation is not chaste be found mingling among the saints; who tells, with a grin on his face, an obscene anecdote? Shall I by word or look, or in any other way, be a partaker? God forbid. O God, have mercy upon me. How dare such a person profess the name of Christ? How dare they invade the society of believers in the Lamb of God? Child of God, let that one whose life is such be unto you as a leper; keep no company with such. O pray to God to keep thee from this walking pestilence. O flee, in thy heart, to the pavilion of thy God, in the secret of his tabernacle thou shalt find a refuge, and there pour out thy sighs in the hour of temptation. Thy merciful, succoring God **"shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth** *shall be thy* **shield and buckler."** - Psalms xci.4. It is so gratifying, moving our souls in thanksgiving to God, that his grace was so sufficient for the apostle Paul that he could write, **"Ye are witnesses, and God** *also,* **how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe."** - 1 Thess. ii. 10.

Many are the conflicting thoughts and the prayers of the elect of God while being brought through the fire, for in the Refiner's fire, of whatsoever nature it may be, we are melted and sink down in the crucible, and wonder why it is that we have fallen into such temptations. In gloom because of the uprising dross, and agitated by our trials, we know in truth that no chastening is joyous, but grievous, and it is not easy for us to understand that any God-glorifying fruits can come out of such distracting, heart-burdensome, burning dispensations. Look into the refining pot and see the children of God therein; you say, I do, and I see some of them have hard thoughts of men, of things and of God; they murmur, and some in rather loud tones express their peevishness. This surely is dross and scum. Yes, but if you have good hearing incline your ear over the refining pot, and from underneath all this scum you shall hear the sighs and prayers of the melted silver. **"How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?"** - Psalms xiii. 1. **"Why standest thou afar off, O Lord?** *why* **hidest thou** *thyself* **in times of trouble?"** - Psalms x. 1. The very time when he is so much needed we fear he has withdrawn, and has taken away his mercies from us, and amazed and disconsolate we ask, **"Will the Lord cast off forever? and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? doth** *his* **promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?"** - Psalms lxxvll. 7-9. Do not these complaints very clearly declare that the Lord is the One so needful, so desired? Look at Job when he was in the fur-

nace, you may see the dross. Ah yes, he spake "words without knowledge." In the day of his grief and desperate sorrow his speech was as the speech of one that was desperate. (Job vi. 26.) The dross came to the surface, but let the dross be taken away from the silver and how affectionately we look at the molten silver, at Job in his afflictions. His bereaved soul cries out, "O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!" "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." And then so nourished was his faith and hope in God that he says, "He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." What a comprehensive view he had of God's providence, and how gracious was his soul's acquiescence to the afflicting dispensations of God when he exclaimed, **"What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?"** - Job ii. 10. All afflictions and chastenings endured by the chosen of God are for their good, and the fruit of it all is God-glorifying; so even while in the fire the silver is found to glorify the Lord God. For however inconceivable to the carnal mind, the child of God spiritually thrives in affliction. Melted in the fires we are separated from fleshly dependencies.

"Trials make the promise sweet,
Trials give new life to prayer,
Trials bring me to his feet,
Lay me low and keep me there. "

"O Lord, by these *things men* **live, and in all these** *things is* **the life of my spirit."** - Isaiah xxxviii. 16. "They shall call on my name, and I will hear them." That is, the melted silver shall call upon the Refiner, I, the Lord, will hear them. He is so near the refining pot.

"He knows how deep their groanings are,
And what their secret sighs declare,
And for their comfort has expressed
That all such mourning souls are blest."

In trouble they visit their God and pour out a prayer while his chastening is upon them. The word prayer here means "a secret speech, a whisper." Yes, the cry of the tried heart is only for the ear of the Lord. So very gracious is our God that when the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I, saith the Lord, will hear them, I the God of Jacob will not forsake them. Prayers, silver prayers, from that heart prepared by the Lord are the forerunners of his decreed mercies. Such prayers are not tin prayers; silver prayers are not asking amiss, but asking according to the will of the Lord our Refiner.

"They shall call on my name, and I will hear them." In our affliction we are moved by the Holy Spirit to seek the Lord. No other one can afford us help. Ah, it may be before we were brought into trials we were careless,

wayward ones; but now in our tribulations where shall we go? to whom shall we look? "When he slew them, then they sought him; and they returned and inquired early after God: and they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer." Listen to the silver praying, **"Take away all iniquity."**- Hosea xiv. 2. Take away this hateful dross that darkens my life, mars my peace and shuts out from view the face of my Redeemer. In the chastening fires we are brought into implicit reliance in the atoning blood of Christ, more and more endeared to us becomes the hope of the gospel, and we look with all desire to the merits of our Savior, and when the Comforter applies the blood of Jesus to our sin-aching hearts, then the scum is gone, and the silver face looks up to the face that looks down, and that look of the Lord, the Refiner, says, Thou art mine, my delight, my Hephzibah, and the happy silver says, The Lord is my God. Many are the sighs and cries of the tried saints for resignation to the divine will, and that they might as dear children bear the indignation of the Lord, endure reproaches for the name of Christ, and that they might be kept ever worshiping the everlasting God. The furnace of affliction most surely brings the children of God into more intimate communion with the Lord; here their faith is purified, errors are purged, and they are brought into the necessity of a deeper and more extended knowledge of the characters that Christ sustains to his own. If passing through the fire is to burn up the dross, then let the Lord do with me as seemeth good in his sight. Unlike material silver from which all alloy has been purely purged away, and is then pure silver, the child of God becomes while in the world again and again mixed with dross. **"How is the gold become dim!** *how* **is the most fine gold changed!"** - Lam. iv. 1. Ah, it becomes tarnished, corroded with earth's defilements. The dross accumulates, it grows up from our depraved nature and mingles itself with the silver. Ah, some of the dear family of God are only out of the furnace for little moments. These little seasons are quietness and joy, and radiant in gratefulness, they reflect the smiling face of God. Then if needs be the Lord puts them in the refining pot again. Surely his purposes are wise and gracious. Though the silver be tried in a furnace of earth and purified seven times, (Psalms xii. 6,) will the silver In the end find fault? will there be a murmuring thought over any or all the seven fires? O there will be perfect acquiescence, there will not be a lisp of complaint, but this shall be the heart's sweet song: My Jesus hath done all things well. The Refiner in all graciousness clears away the dross, and looking into the furnace he sees the melted silver, sees in his tried ones his own image, and he says, It is my people, and the silver's heart responds, The Lord is my God. Would you see a child of God brought through the fire? then look at this picture. There stands Simon Peter in the palace of the high priest warming himself at the fire. Ah, Peter, the Lord has put you into the refining pot, and underneath satan

kindles a fire, for he has desired to have thee that he may sift thee as wheat; he has insinuated that you are nothing but chaff, and you have thought you are the finest of wheat, all wheat and no chaff, for you have said, Although all should be offended, yet will not I. The fire is kindled, and Peter In the crucible will soon begin to be dissolved by the vehement heat of temptation, and we shall see what silver and what dross he is composed of. The Refiner is near by. "A damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee." This was a hot fire, and Peter is melting hot within, the silver and the dross are all in commotion, and up to the surface comes the dross, and Peter "denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest." Another who saw him "said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man." What, do you think that an oath for confirmation will end the strife, silence your accusers and cause them to believe your lies? Ah, sinful Peter, this is very dross. The fire still burns, and Peter is boiling with emotions; yes, the silver is in motion and the dross is in motion. About the space of one hour another accuser came, and his accusations and questionings were as a vehement flame under the refining pot. This accuser confidently affirmed, saying, of a truth this fellow also was with him, for he is a Galileean, (the accuser was one of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman, whose ear Peter cut off,) and he saith, "Did not I see thee in the garden with him?" O Peter, where is thy vehement courage now? will you cut him down with your sword? Ah, the once brave Peter is now a very coward. "Then began he to curse and swear, saying, I know not the man." What, lying, swearing, cursing? Whom was he cursing, himself, his accusers? Was it that he was cursing Jesus? O execrable scum! This is the very scum of scum. Can there be any silver in the refining pot? Yes, for our Savior told him before he was put in the furnace, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." While he was lying, while he was swearing to confirm his lying denials, yes; even while he was cursing, Peter knew, the silver knew, Jesus; the silver ached, the silver sighed, the silver was ashamed. The silver, deep down in the crucible, hidden from all human view, blushed and dared not lift up its face to the Lord. (Ezra ix. 6.) Three horrible boilings up of vileness; once, twice, thrice, enough: "Thou shalt deny me thrice." Not four times. "And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice." Look into the furnace, and there to our view is Peter, and we say he is all dross, all depravity, he exhibits the very scum of the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. This is all that is outward of Peter in the crucible, and we say, O Peter, thou art so unlovely. "The Lord

turned and looked upon Peter." It is the moment, the set time for the Refiner to skim away the odious scum. Christ looked, O that look! He looked upon Peter, he looked and looked and looked all the dross, all Peter's dense, corrupt scum away, and Peter is transformed. Jesus looked upon him with eyes of injured love; that look said, I have prayed for thee. He looked in such compassionate forgiveness. O that look was the look of the suffering Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, and thus Jesus the Refiner took away the dross from the silver. The Refiner looked upon the silver, and Peter (not scum and dross Peter, but silver Peter,) looked upon the Refiner. Who can tell the story of what transpired in the soul of Peter when his eyes met the eyes of the suffering, compassionate Jesus? The lying, swearing, cursing Peter Is transformed. The Lord with his eyes, which are as a flame of fire, so looked into the crucible that all the dross was cleansed away, and Peter went out and wept bitterly. O thou art silver Peter. Thy bitter weeping is sweet to us. O Peter, thou art lovely, thou art all fair, there is no spot in thee, nothing but silver now is seen. The broken-hearted, melted silver is all aglow with the likeness of the Lord, the Refiner, who himself is a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Jesus turned and looked upon Peter, and he went out and wept bitterly.

Elder Frederick W. Keene

THE LAST EDITORIAL ARTICLE WRITTEN BY ELDER GILBERT BEEBE THE CORNER, NAIL, THE BATTLE, BOW AND EVERY OPPRESSOR

Dear Brother Beebe: — Please give your views on Zech. 10:4, "Out of him came forth the corner, out of him the nail, out of him the battle bow, out of him every oppressor together". I do not recollect of ever having heard any of the brethren preach from this text, and would be glad to have your views upon it, if agreeable to your feelings to give them and oblige.

Your unworthy brother in gospel bonds,

Jno. R. Martin

Franklin Co., Va. April 4, 1881

REPLY

It would afford us great pleasure to comply with the request of our highly esteemed brother, if we were sure that anything we can say would clearly explain the meaning of the Spirit in the use of the figurative expressions employed in the text. There is danger of running into vain and imaginary speculations when we attempt to elucidate some of the dark metaphors which the Holy Spirit has employed in the scriptures of divine truth. The parables and dark sayings of our God are evidently designed to teach us our dependence on him to reveal to us the hidden treasure which they conceal from the wise and prudent of mankind, that we may the more fully realize our dependence

on him to open the scriptures to our understanding.

The prophet Zechariah was contemporary with Ezra, Nehemiah, Joshua, Zerubbabel and others who prophesied the deliverance of Israel from her seventy years captivity in Babylon, their return to Jerusalem, and restoration of their city and rebuilding of their temple, in all of which the spirit of prophecy evidently pointed to the coming of the Messiah and the setting up of the Redeemer's kingdom under the gospel dispensation. In the chapter preceding the one in which our text is found, the cheering prediction is proclaimed in these words: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass". This prediction is applied directly to the coming of Christ—Matt. 21:1-11 and John 11:15. At the time when the prediction should be fulfilled, the Lord by the prophet adds, "And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall speak peace unto the heathen; and his dominion shall be from sea even to the sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth". All this seems to look forward to the breaking up of the old Jewish dispensation, the breaking down of the wall of partition which had separated the Jews and Gentiles. The time indicated by the Lord in these words: "When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man. And the Lord shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south."

The whole connection of this prophecy seems to present under many metaphors, first, the literal purging of Judah from her idol shepherds and abominations, and the cutting off from Ephraim and Jerusalem the horse and chariot, battle bow, and all the idolatrous defenses in which they had trusted, drive out all their oppressors, and to restore them their city, temple and privileges, and in doing this figuratively set forth the redemption of his spiritual or antitypical Jerusalem from her captivity and bondage.

NOTE: Here the pen that for nearly fifty years had not wearied in its labors of consolation, admonition, and instruction, was laid down never to again be taken up in its editorial labors. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord". And may he enable us to be still and know that he is God.

PSALM 89:1.

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations.

1836 - SONSHIP OF ALL THE SAINTS
Circular Letter, White Water Regular Baptist Association of Indiana

The Regular Baptist Association, called White Water, convened with the Church on Pleasant Run Creek, to the Churches composing our body, sendeth this epistle of love:

Dearly Beloved Brethren in the Common Faith: - So many subjects have been presented as the basis of our former circulars, and so narrow are the limits assigned us, that we do but little more than touch the theme, and leave it for your improvement. In this brief way, we shall now invite the churches of our body, and all the members of them, with all who hope for immortality, to a few thoughts on the SONSHIP OF ALL THE SAINTS. This is an all absorbing subject — in every way suitable for contemplation and gratitude, and we hope that all the children of our Heavenly Father may derive great strength and comfort from a true and sensible knowledge and enjoyment of this filial relation.

Jesus Christ is declared in Scripture to be "the only begotten Son of God, in whom the Father is well pleased." This declaration" excludes all others, for He is the only begotten; or as in eternity, the lone, or solely begotten of the Father; yet all saints are owned of God as His children as being found IN Him, and are taught to invoke Him in the endearing relation of Father. Christ, as Mediator, being brought forth from everlasting ere the earth was, and the elect church with all its members, and graces set up, chosen, and given in Him, as their Covenant, or Executor of their Father's testament or will. The purpose, covenant or will of the Father, ordained Christ the Mediator, Surety, and only Performer in fulfilling all the stipulations and terms of this will or testament. He stood bound in this relation to meet every demand, pay every debt, and sustain the whole cost that might accrue in executing the Will or Testament of God. Hence, in Him every heir was chosen, in Him every grace was given, to Him every promise was made, in Him they were all "yea and amen to the glory of God," on Him the law had its full power, and Justice claimed its whole demand; for He was appointed of God to execute His Will in behalf of all the heirs.

This covenant relation between the Mediator of the Will of God, and the chosen heirs in this Will, constituted all His legal acts in their behalf valid and binding, and so was a lawful and final acquittal in their behalf of all demands. But in addition to this Testamentary relation, Jesus was born of a woman, became man, was made under the law and took on Him, not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham. This seed of Abraham was all the members of the elect church — all the heirs of the Will of God — all the children which God had given Him — all the sons He was appointed to bring to glory. In this relation He is One with them, one Son, one Seed, one

Heir, one Life, one Man, one Head with its proper bodies and members. Here is not the doctrine "of seeds, as of many," but as the promise runs to One, "and Thy seed which is Christ." "Now if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise." In this relation all the seed are one body in Christ, and members one of another. He was the only begotten Son of the Father, and they have their son-ship in Him; He is the Son of God, the seed of Abraham, the Heir of all things, and He is formed in them, "the hope of glory," the incorruptible seed by which they are born again. They have their son-ship, their portion, their life, their light in Him. The Holy Ghost overshadowed Mary, therefore that holy thing which was born of her, should be called the Son of God. This holy child being formed in each saint, and they receiving His Spirit, His image, His nature and fullness, are distinguished as the "sons of God" by Christ. As He was set up from everlasting in this relation to them, and they were all chosen in Him, ordained and foreknown in Him, so He was the Image into which they were predestinated to be conformed, and this conformity is effected by the Holy Spirit which forms the image of Christ in them, which is the pledge, token and seal of their sonship. He is, therefore, the only begotten Son, and they have their sonship in Him, and His Spirit in them is the testimony, pledge and seal of this filial relation. Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts crying "Abba Father."

Now, as they were predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ, so they were also predestinated to the adoption of children by Christ, and the Spirit of Christ is the "spirit of this adoption." So their son-ship is in Him, and He, as the only begotten Son of God, dwells in their hearts richly by His Spirit, which is the spirit of their son-ship or adoption, by which they cry (the Spirit cries) "Abba Father," Father, for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God, and if sons then heirs — heirs of God and joint heirs with Him.

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, hath richly and gloriously made known His will, revealed His grace and Truth in the person and gift of His only begotten Son, and proclaimed it to all nations in the Gospel of their salvation. In this Will or Testament, the eternal purpose, appointment, council and knowledge of Jehovah, which were all purposed in Himself, hid in Christ, and ordained to the glory of the Church, "now made known by the appearing of Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." This Will was immutable and eternal with God, well ordered in all things and sure in Christ the Mediator; and the promise and oath of the Eternal confirmed the immutability of this council, for the strong consolation of the heirs of promise. This promise is made sure to all the seed, and this immutable Will with all the stipulations, conditions, terms, heirs, guarantees and blessings in it,

were all purposed in Himself before the foundation of the world; they were all IN Christ, in whom the heirs were chosen from eternity, the blessings given, the inheritance bequeathed, and the son-ship confirmed. He was verily ordained before the foundation of the world as Heir of all things; He was to fulfill all things required in the Will, and unfold it to all the heirs of promise. He was manifested in these last times for this purpose. He who came to do the will of God — He to whom all its promises were made — He in whom all its heirs were chosen and blessed with all spiritual blessings — He is the rich Fountain of grace and glory in whom they find their filial relation to God and all their heavenly portion. This Will or Testament, fulfilled in the blood of Christ its Mediator, and published in the form of Testament or Covenant, is the Gospel of the grace of God. — The glad tidings of God's Will is herein revealed, its conditions fulfilled, its guarantees confirmed, its heirs saved, its blessings flowing, its Mediator reigning, its promises free and absolute, its inheritance sure and eternal. The Gospel is a proclamation of the Will of God to the heirs, and by it they are encouraged to come and enjoy all the blessings it reveals, and feast eternally on the rich bounties it bestows without money and without price. Grace is here bestowed to the unworthy, mercy is flowing to the suffering, life is given to the dying, pardon to the guilty, living water for the polluted and thirsty, food for the hungry, rest for the weary laborer, and salvation for the lost.

The Spirit of the only begotten Son of God is sent into the heart of the heirs of promise, and begets in them a filial longing for God, and a godly sorrow for sin; they pant for the living water, they hunger and thirst after righteousness, they confess their sins, renounce their own righteousness, die to the law, are crucified to the world, and come as bankrupt and guilty petitioners to God. They are encouraged thus to come by the Gospel which shows them Christ the Way, opens His fullness to supply all their needs, sets before them the rich bounties of a feast, and says, "eat, O friend, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." This Gospel proclamation of Christ having perfectly fulfilled the Will of God as the appointed Mediator, Surety and Sacrifice, is the Word of faith or of the message to be received by all the heirs. The Spirit of Christ forms His image and nature in their hearts, reveals to them their sonship in Him, or reveals the son of God in them, and seals them as the heirs of the grace of Life. The Gospel furnishes them with all needful instruction, encouragement and testimony. Faith is a fruit of the Spirit of Christ which, enlisting all the power of the soul of the heirs, enables it to take hold of Christ and His righteousness; and the Gospel is a sufficient warrant to the most unworthy sinner to come to, and trust in Him. This faith wrought in Christ when He fulfilled the law and bore the curse, when He died to sin and rose to God; and now this "faith of Christ" works in His members and brings them to Him, and in them claims His obedi-

ence in their behalf, and a portion in the Will of His and their Father. As this "faith of Christ" wrought in Christ in their behalf, it is the substance of things hoped for, and as it testifies in them and brings them to Him; it is the evidence of things not seen. — Faith is the Spirit's evidence which it bears in the soul of us being an heir of New Testament, by which the heir comes to Christ the Mediator, and claims its portion in the Will of God. In this view of our son-ship, we see Jesus exalted as Head over all things to His church, that in all things He might have the preeminence. He is our elder brother, our Mediator and Surety, our Righteousness and Life; in Him we have our son-ship as the children of God. — in Him we are acknowledged as the heirs in His Will — in Him we receive our portion and our crown; by the faith of the Son of God we live, for He liveth in us, and in us and for us He overcomes the world, and gives us the victory.

Now, dear brethren, while such rich grace is so freely bestowed on such unworthy sinners as we are, how humble and thankful we should feel! Why was I made to be an heir of such immortal bliss? O, let all our hearts be dissolved into contrition, and love; let every tongue be vocal in His praise; let every eye be looking to Jesus, and every foot be running the race set before us; let holy devotion, like a hallowed flame, burn on the altar of every renewed heart, and a deep sense of the unparalleled riches of saving grace, call up every ransomed power of our soul to praise the God of love. This is the work we are called to do, not to save ourselves, or to make ourselves heirs of life, nor to fulfill the conditions of our acceptance, but to serve, adore, and praise "Him who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began." In this Gospel plan, the poor, the naked, the helpless, the lost, the guilty, vile and polluted, may take encouragement to come to the Savior with all their crimson sins and guilty stains, and claim the promise of His grace and pardoning mercy; for the Gospel is a sufficient warrant to the most ungodly sinner to come and trust in Christ; and only as such, can any sinner come with acceptance. Our limits forbid us to proceed further.

May we all contemplate this amazing and love-inspiring theme, till the heart of the mourner is filled with joy, the feet of the lame leap as an hart, Zion's pilgrims become inspired with heavenly zeal in their journey, until the tongue of the dumb sing, till the ears of the deaf are charmed into attention; and all the sons of God rejoice in hope of His glory, till the vestment of a glorious immortality adorn the mystic body of Christ, and celestial glories expand every redeemed power to swell the creed of the heavenly throng — "not unto us, not unto us, but unto Thee be the glory for ever and ever." Amen.

Elder Wilson Thompson, 1836.

LUKE XIII. 34.

"O JERUSALEM, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen *doth gather* **her brood under** *her* **wings, and ye would not."**

A brother in southern Virginia asks our views on the foregoing.

The same language with very little variation is found in Matthew xxiii. 37. This is Jesus speaking. He addresses the scribes and Pharisees, characterizes Herod as a "fox," and so He embraces in this speech the ruling ecclesiastical and civil authorities in Jerusalem who exercised religious and governmental sway over Israel. It was never the will of these ruling powers that the truth of God should be preached in their midst, and persecutions and martyrdoms were the lot of those true servants of God who throughout the generations of Israel's history had faithfully preached the word. Nevertheless, God had in every age his faithful remnant in the midst of Israel despite the fact that those in authority had no use for this believing elect number. If the human will of these authorities could have had their way about it, they would not have allowed a single Israelite at any time to have believed the truth of God. But God's will is never frustrated by the opposition of man's will. It is the will of God to gather his people, and he unfailingly does this gathering by and through Jesus Christ his Son, unto himself. Not a single child of God has ever been prevented from coming to the knowledge of the truth, no matter what the persecution and opposition waged against the child of God might be. While it was never at any time in Israel's history the will of the natural man that God should select his believing remnant from among them, yet he unfailingly did it. A hen gathers her chickens under her wings because they are her chickens, and not to make them hers. The chickens run to cover under the mother's wings at the approach of any danger, not to make the hen their mother, but because she is their mother. Likewise throughout the generations of Israel's national life, those who were Israelites indeed by reason of spiritual circumcision and regeneration ran by faith into His name and were safe, not to make Jehovah their God, but because he was their God; not to make themselves his children, but because they were his children by God's own will. All that the Father his given the Son shall come to him, no matter how much the powers that be try to prevent it. The human will, either of individuals or of nations, can never thwart the purposes of God in the salvation of his people. Any nation today which arrays itself against the

truth of God, against his revealed word and against his people will unfailingly reap in due time national desolation and disaster, even as did Israel for their opposition to Jehovah and his children. This is the lesson taught in this Scripture. Will the nation heed? If not, they, too, shall be desolate.

Elder H. H. Lefferts

"Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him." — Psalm lxii.8.

Have we not sometimes been enabled to pour out our hearts at a throne of grace, and tell the Lord what we really wanted, what we really asked for, and tell him that nothing but that which he alone could give would satisfy our souls? There have been such times of access to the God of grace. And afterwards perhaps we have forgotten the things we told him of; we have been heedless of the prayers we laid at his feet; and though very earnest at the time in seeking after certain blessings, we left them at the Lord's feet and forgot them all. But the Lord does not forget them; they are treasured up in his heart and memory; and in his own time he brings them to light, and gives the fulfilment of them. But before he does it, he will bring us into the spot where we want them again; and then we have to tell him, and supplicate and ask him again, ashamed of ourselves perhaps that we should have asked the Lord for these blessings and been as heedless of them as though we did not care to receive them at his hand; but still, under trouble, under soul necessity, under grief, we go and tell him again. And then the Lord, in his own time and way, brings about the very things we desired of him; opens up ways, lifts out of trials, removes burdens, makes a way in the deep, which no eye but his could see, and no hand but his could open, leads the soul into it, brings the soul through it, - and then hides all glory from the creature, by making us fall down before his feet, and ascribe glory and honour and power and thanksgiving and salvation unto God and the Lamb.

J.C. Philpot

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HYMN

What wisdom, majesty and grace,
Through all the gospel shine!
'Tis God that speaks, and we confess
The doctrine most divine.

Down from his shining throne on high,
The almighty Saviour comes;
Lays his bright robes of glory by,
And feeble flesh assumes.

The mighty debt his chosen owed,
Upon the cross he pays;
Then through the clouds ascends to God,
Midst shouts of loftiest praise.

There he, our great High Priest, appears
Before his Father's throne;
There on his breast our names he wears
And counts out cause his own.

Stennett.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 11/2013 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

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EDITORIAL

"And it shall be when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What *is* this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage: And it came to pass, when Pharoah would hardly let us go, that the Lord slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my children I redeem. And it shall be for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes: for by strength of hand the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt." Exodus 13: 14-16.

Elder J. B. Farmer

Having been given a mind to set down some things, I would love to be enabled to write a little about the good news of redemption to the household of faith - the Lord willing. How to perform this, I find not. The wisdom and ability for rightly dividing the word of truth does not reside within my flesh. Every good gift and every perfect gift must come down from above, from the Father of lights in whom there is neither variableness nor shadow of turning. If there is any light or understanding of the doctrine of Christ, we must wait upon the Lord and trust Him to provide it. We are weak but He is strong. Men have varied opinions and positions regarding the doctrine, but His word is truth and abides forever. May He open our eyes and give us understanding.

Most people that are acquainted with scriptures know the story of the children of Israel who were in cruel bondage in Egypt, and how God raised up Moses to deliver them from their oppressors. God appeared to Moses in a bush that burned with a flame but was not consumed. There, God commanded Moses to put off his shoes for the ground he stood upon was holy. After God appeared to Moses in His great love and power, which was manifested by the flame of the Spirit, Moses was a changed man. He was like Peter and those who were gathered together on the day of Pentecost. They were empowered by the Holy Spirit af-

ter the flame of His presence came upon them, and they were forever changed. God took away their fears and gave them the spirit of power and of love and of a sound mind, even as He has done for His children through the ages until this present day, and shall continue to do until He comes in glory.

God commanded Moses to go unto Pharaoh and to tell him to let God's people go. But Pharaoh refused until God brought many grievous plagues upon Egypt, the last one being the death of the firstborn of man and beast. Then, Pharaoh consented to let the people go. But before God brought death upon the firstborn of Egypt, He caused the children of Israel to sacrifice a lamb and put its blood upon the doorposts and lintels of each house. God promised that when He passed over to smite the Egyptians and saw the blood, He would not suffer the destroyer to come into their houses to smite the firstborn, which I am made to believe stands for the elect. God redeemed His chosen people by the blood of the lamb. He purchased their lives with the life of the lamb. The Passover is a reminder unto us of the way in which the lives of the people of God have been spared by the pure and holy sacrifice of the spotless Lamb of God.

There are many other pictures of redemption of God's elect by sacrificial blood found in the scriptures. Isaac, God's chosen one, the firstborn of Abraham and his wife Sarah, when he was about to be sacrificed by Abraham according to the command of God, was spared. God gave a ram that was caught in a thicket to die in his stead – a life for a life. We see mercy extended in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve sinned and were driven out. They were given coats of skins to cover and protect them, which to me stood for the righteousness of Christ, which only is given by virtue of the shed blood of the Lamb of God. We know that no animal skin may be removed without the shedding of blood and the death of the sacrifice. Rahab the harlot and her family were spared when Joshua came to destroy Jericho. There was a scarlet thread or rope placed in her window, signifying that she and her household believed in redemption by the blood of the Lamb. These examples of the deliverance of the Lord's chosen people by virtue of shed blood all stood as figures of what should come in the day that Christ was sacrificed upon the tree – the Just for the unjust.

He laid down His life willingly. No man took it from Him. He kept and fulfilled the righteous law of God to the jot and tittle. He fulfilled the prophesies of God in His life and work. He satisfied the wrath of God against sin in that He that knew no sin (Jesus) was made to be sin for us that we should be made the righteousness of God in Him. He bore the wrath of God in place of God's little children. He was led as a Lamb to the slaughter. He offered Himself up unto God, a Lamb without spot or blemish, in order that He might justify and redeem those that God so loved. And by this one offering He perfected forever them that are sanctified. He re-

deemed His own. He purchased their pardon with His own blood. He gave His life for ours, if we are of that blessed family of God.

According to the scriptures, God's little ones have also been redeemed or purchased out from under the curse of the law. What is the curse of the law? We know that the law is righteous and holy and good. How then can a curse be associated with it? According to the scripture, **"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, cursed *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."** The law is not cursed, but those under it that do not keep it are cursed. They are condemned and are under the just sentence of death. Since all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, all under the law are under the curse - all are guilty before God. How then, in principle, are God's children redeemed or purchased out from the curse? If we are His, Christ fulfilled the law and satisfied the justice of God on our behalf, and set us free. His children are no longer under law but are under grace.

How does being redeemed from the curse of the law manifest itself practically? According to the blessed apostle, instead of saying, "touch not, taste not, handle not," as was taught under the law, those under grace are taught, "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient." We know, according to experience and according to the scripture, there is a thing called concupiscence. It is this tendency of the carnal mind in the body of flesh that leads one to desire that which is forbidden. But since the law is now fulfilled, and since no longer is anything forbidden, the child of God is set free from that tendency. Some would say that if nothing is forbidden, then that would lead one to sin. That is the carnal mind speaking, which knows nothing of grace. It is actually sin taking occasion by the law that leads one to sin, and it is grace that leads one away from sin. The apostle was blessed to say, "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." And he was also blessed to say, "Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceedingly sinful." But it is grace that redeems one from the curse of the law, both in principle and in practice. "By grace are ye saved through faith..." Those under grace are led of the Spirit and walk after the Spirit and have been given a desire to please God with all their heart. And at the same time they know they are helpless sinners, and that they are powerless except He is their guide and strength.

The word redeemed also means to be loosed. Those purchased by the blood are also redeemed by being loosed from certain things in this life. God, through the apostle, spoke to us of Christ saying, "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a pe-

culiar people, zealous of good works." What does it mean to be redeemed or loosed from all iniquity? God has commanded his people to come apart from the world and be a separate people. With His command, He gives grace to obey. "It is God who works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." It is God who chose His people and called them apart to His service. It is God who redeemed them and purified them by His own blood. It is God who made them to be a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation and a peculiar people and a particular treasure to Himself. It is God who created them in Christ Jesus and before ordained their good works that they should walk in them. So God has loosed His people from the bondage of Satan and sin. He has loosed them from the fear of death by which they were kept captive. He has loosed them from the desire to please men. He has loosed them from all iniquity, and has given them the desire to please God by virtue of the inward man, which is Christ in you the hope of glory.

We know by experience that we still are in a body which is weak and subject to all kinds of doubts, fears and temptations, but thanks be unto God we have been given confidence that He is able to keep that which we have committed to Him against that day — even our very lives. Even though we have been redeemed or purchased by the blood of the Lamb, and even though we have been redeemed or loosed from the curse of the law and from all iniquity, we still groan because of sin, waiting for the adoption (which literally means son placement), which is the redemption of our bodies. The redemption of our bodies is the complete fullness of the redemption of the mighty God. When Jesus told His disciples what would be the sign of His coming, He said, "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." When this redemption comes, there shall be no more weakness, doubting, fears, temptations, and sins. There shall be no more sorrow, and pains and tears. There shall be no more suffering and death. This redemption shall be the culmination of all things, which is the complete revelation of the great salvation of our God. Even though we cannot now know the fullness of the meaning of it, God has been merciful to give us a little glimpse of what it shall be. The saints shall be raised up in His likeness in incorruptible, glorious, powerful, spiritual bodies. They shall at last see Him as He is and realize the fulfillment of the words spoken by David through the Spirit, "I shall be satisfied when I awake in His likeness." This is that eternal redemption.

"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us

the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain, in the Lord."

I trust that this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Board and the Editors of 'The Signs of the Times' are pleased to announce the completion of the digitizing of the entire publication of this Periodical from its beginning in 1832 through 2012. This is a total compilation of every issue for about 180 years. There is also included a prospectus, a history chart, a short written history, and a collection of the brief biographies of the editors.

This material is the sole property of the 'Signs of the Times, Inc.' and neither may be changed, nor annotated, nor copied and sold for profit. Please note that this material may be accessed only on a PC with a disk drive and/or a USB port.

These digitized Periodicals are now being made available at our cost of copying and mailing. The postpaid costs are $40.00 for a copy on a single flash drive, or $53.00 for a three-disk set. Please note that the flash drive has the advantage of faster speed of access, and the capability for future updates to be added. The cost for either format is subject to change as the costs of future printing and mailing change. Requests may be submitted to Brother Tony Horton, Circulation Manager and Treasurer, 1429 Howlett Street, Hillsville, VA 24343. Please be sure to include your complete mailing address.

We would like to express our appreciation for all the help we have received from individuals who have located and supplied to us the issues needed to complete the set, and to the Primitive Baptist Libraries at Carthage, IL and at Elon, NC for their assistance and support.

CORRESPONDENCE

Sept. 4, 2013

Dear Bro. Cleo

The Memphis Church requested me to forward this ordination record to you for publishing in the Signs if it is satisfactory.

Pardon my hand printing. My computer printer is on the "blink."

Elder Wayman Chapell

Tony R. Horton
1429 Howlett St.
Hillsville, Va. 24343

Sept. 11, 2013

Please find a check enclosed in the amount of $30.00 for a 2 year subscription for Gary Whaling.

My wife and I enjoy reading The Times - it brings great comfort to us while traveling through this unfriendly world.

May God shower you with many Blessings. We have a hope!

In Christian Love,

Gary Whaling
598 Laurel Creek Rd.
Valley Fork, WV 25285

Dear Brother Horton,

Please renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times for 1 year use the balance as needed.

Thank all of you for all the hard work. It means so much to be able to receive The Signs each month.

A sister in love and hope.
Carol Lansaw

PSALM 136:1.

O Give thanks unto the Lord; for *he is* **good: for his mercy** *endureth* **for ever.**

VOICES OF THE PAST

You will find recorded in the 19th verse of the 7th Chapter of Hebrews this reading: **"For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope** *did;* **by the which we draw nigh unto God."** The 25th verse reads: **"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."**

I believe I attended the last Association which was held here in 1924. A man who had been a member of this church signed my credentials. He was the clerk of the church at Spray, North Carolina, A. T. Robertson.

The Lord willing, I would like to speak to you a short while on the subject of the laws of the Bible. Though I have been speaking many years, I do not remember ever speaking on the Ten Commandments until last Sunday. Seems like I would have gotten around to that in all those years, doesn't it? And the various laws I would like to present to you and the purpose of God in these laws. Whatever law is under consideration that I have read, Paul said, it made nothing perfect. This is in accordance with the scripture in the Bible where it is said that if there had been a law given that could have given life, righteousness would have been by the law. Paul has reference in this scripture to the ceremonial and sacrificial law, the law that the priest and

the high priest administered in the House of God. Yet, in all the hundreds of years of legal service, all the lambs that were offered on Jewish alters or ceremonial services rendered by Israelites, nothing was made perfect by them. But Paul said, "The bringing in of a better hope did."

What was the better hope? Christ was the better hope, something better than all legal services has ever been able to accomplish. And the effect of this bringing in of a better hope was that we might have an approach to God in the name of our Lord "by the which we draw nigh to God." This law was effectual in two ways. One of them was, it was renewal every time the high priest went into the most holy place that they were still sinners, the other purpose was, the promise that a saviour was coming and God compelled and required this of the Israelites to continue year after year, and the comers thereof were not made perfect.

And we take the first law that God gave man, in the Garden, when He placed him in the Garden and gave him right to every tree of the Garden except one, the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and Adam violated that law. The violation of that law made every person that's ever been born in the world a sinner. People don't talk much about original sin any more. They are rather hesitant. I think we should talk about it because it removes man out of the picture.

By the disobedience of one man, sin entered into the world and death by sin for they all have sinned. Every human being who has been and ever will live sinned in the first man and fell, and man has never been able to redeem himself from that condemnation. Somebody said, did that include everybody? Some of you tell me one that was left out of it. All have sinned, not all will sin. All have sinned. YOU sinned in Adam, and YOU sinned in Adam, and YOU sinned in Adam. And YOU FELL.

And Paul in the 8th chapter of Romans said, what the law could not do in that it was weak, God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to redeem his people. From Adam to Moses death reigned, the Bible says, over all who have not sinned after similitude of Adam's transgression. All of them from Adam to Moses were dead sinners, falling in Adam, lost and ruined, not able to extricate themselves from a lost and ruined state.

The Ten Commandments portrays two things: Mt. Sinai portrays, what does it speak to you of. It speaks of God's justice and His holiness. When God called Moses upon Mt. Sinai to deliver unto the people — God prepared the stone and He also prepared the writing on it and delivered it to Moses. It was a terrible place to stand, at Mt. Sinai, smoke covered the mountain. A man could not touch, or a beast couldn't touch the mountain unless it had to die. God's justice and His holiness were being brought to view. These laws were given and written by the finger of God. Moses returned from the mountain and he found the people he had left worshiping a gold calf. Somebody said: Was that God's

people? If I had an opinion I'd tell you all of them weren't. Some of these brethren might disagree with me but I read in the Bible where all are not Israel that are of Israel. So to tell you that all of those people were God's chosen people in the realm of grace, I can't do it. It was a mixed multitude. That's what it was.

But for the grace of God we wouldn't have a God to worship today. None of us. None of us! Moses took the first tables of stone and he threw them down, THREW THEM DOWN. What does it represent? The first covenant. A broken covenant. He was full of righteous indignation, I might call it. And God called him back upon Mt. Sinai, a terrible place, and then told Moses to take the tables of stone and I'll do the writing on them; and then you take these two tables of stone, the law which is called in the Book of Corinthians the administration of condemnation and the administration of death, that's what it's called, the law of Moses, written on tables of stone. And God had a place for them when Moses returned, there was an ark they were to be placed in and that ark is a type of Jesus. Moses didn't break the last one, did he? And God put them in a safe place for keeping too, didn't he! The side of Jesus was opened for our sins.

Noah entered, the door of the ark was in the side, and God had Noah to prepare the ark for his own protection — from God's own wrath, that's what it was. There were seven days from the time that Noah and others were brought into the ark until it started to rain. Somebody said, that looked foolish didn't it. He had said, Noah, come thou and thy house into the ark. Our God's word, and hope I received it when he said to me "come", and if He never says "come" to us we'll never come. And if He says "come" we will come. Come thou and thy house into the ark. And the Lord SHUT HIM IN. Seven days! Why would the ark stand there seven days and it not raining? It shows the safety of God's people in Christ before they need it. That's what it shows. They were just as safe when God closed the door and sat there seven days — and then it begins to rain. It didn't just rain down from heaven, the depths were broken up, water was everywhere. Talk about stopping it, we can't start it and we can't stop it. But God opened the windows of heaven and He opened the fountains of the deep. And the earth was swallowed up. And there did come a time when upon all that vast water nothing could be seen but a lone ark-floating there.

There was a time my friends in the judgment of God when He judged our sins in His own Son, when none could be seen except Him before the Father, who died in our room and stead. I'm sure that as the Israelites journeyed the most precious possession they had was their ark, the type of Jesus. I remember when Eli died — when Eli the priest died, he had two sons in battle and they brought Eli the word that your sons are dead and what happened. It grieved Eli that his sons had been killed in the battle but when they told

him the ark had been taken he falls over dead. The ark was more important to him than his sons. If Jesus isn't more important to all of us today, where will we land when we leave this world? My Prophet, Priest, my Lord, my King.

I remember one night waking up singing the hymn—

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole,
And calms the troubled breast;
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary, rest.

When I came to that verse where it said—

'Till then I would thy love proclaim
With every fleeting breath;
And may the music of thy name
Refresh my soul in death.

I woke up weeping loud, I couldn't stop.

What is it that takes care of the law of sin and death? Has man ever taken care of it? Has he redeemed himself? Is there any law that man can perform of works that will save his soul from hell? Any? Then if righteousness came by the law, Christ is dead in vain. The law of the spirit of life in Christ. What was that spirit that did such a wonderful work? The law of the spirit of life in Christ, the Bible said, has made me free from the law of sin and death. If Christ left one sin of yours unatoned for, hell will be your home when you die. If you transgress in one point, you are guilty of the whole. He stood in the judgement of God for us. To me there will be no judgement for YOU, and YOU, and YOU, after death if Christ stood in the judgement for you. How many sins will it take to land us in an eternal woe? Only one! Only one! But, He has redeemed His people by His precious blood.

He fulfilled the law while He lived. He obeyed every precept and the one blessed thing in it all: His obedience was a delightful work of His. I like to think, a poor sinner like I am, that it is as much pleasure for Christ to save me and joy as it will be for me to be in heaven, for I've sinned. Do you believe that? That's the way it is, my brethren.

And another thing I want to tell you, I don't think I'll ever stand in this association again. If we have been taught and reared by the spirit of Almighty God, God will be glad to receive us in heaven because it is the work of His Son, who lived in our room and He died in our stead. It took both of them. And He could say, I delight to do thy will, Oh God. The law of the spirit of life — life in it was what it was — made us free from the law of sin and death. Law is a rule or judgment and God said in His Word when he was to administer His justice, He said, Judgment will I lay to the line. What did He mean? He meant what He said. He meant that every sin must be atoned for, for one

will land us in hell. That's what He meant. He lays His judgment to the line in His own Son.

The laws of God. Paul had a law that he had learned and he didn't learn it from men. I delight in the law of God after the inward man. You couldn't delight in it unless there is an inward man.

The laws of God. The law made nothing perfect but the bringing in of a better hope whereby we draw nigh unto God.

Jesus is the better hope — maybe I just as well quit. I want to leave you with this thought. I shall soon close my eyes in death. Whatever I have preached stands for itself. I have no apologies. I have preached a sovereign God as best I could, who brings the administration of the law to the life of His people to show them their just condemnation and in His own way He rolls away the burden of sin by giving us a view by faith of Christ's blood and that faith that He alone can give us.

Transcribed from tape of sermon preached by Elder David V. Spangler at Smith River Association, Sept. 3, 1983

ROMANS 8:5-6.

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

For to be carnally minded *is* **death; but to be spiritually minded** *is* **life and peace.**

Raleigh, North Carolina.

BELOVED IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD: - You are all pursuing that path that leads to eternal glory. It is a path which none know but the ransomed of the Lord, and they only walk therein by faith, and not by sight. That faith which worketh by love, and which is of the operation of God, clings to, rests upon and walks in the new and living way which Jesus has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. The obedience and atoning blood of the Lamb is the glorious highway through this wilderness to the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. I, saith Jesus, am the way. As I contemplate the life of the righteous, and muse upon their blissful and eternal inheritance of glory with Christ, the Head of the church, I find longings flowing forth from my soul, and I join with one of old, saying, **"Remember me, O Lord, with the favour** *that thou bearest unto* **thy people: O visit me with thy salvation; that I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance."** I gladly admit that our God grants me seasons when I sing with gladness of heart for Jacob. **"For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of** *him that was* **stronger than he."** But oh, at other times I am so beset with enemies, so tossed with internal conflicts, and my sins as a very plague seem to isolate me from the commonwealth of Israel. I am as one

thrust forth from thy tents, O happy Israel! The fretting leprosy of mine iniquities causes me to wander as an outcast from the holy people. Ah! well I know my uncleanness unfits me to associate with the clean. I feel my presence would defile the tents of the beloved nation. Therefore when any of the family of God would draw nigh to recognize and to embrace me as a brother, I inwardly cry outward to forbid their drawing nigh. I am unclean, unclean; I am not fit to be taken into fellowship and companionship with the ransomed of the Lord. And when, notwithstanding my inward protestations, tokens of fellowship have been bestowed upon me by God's dear children, this so humbles me, I feel so contemptibly mean, so vile, so unworthy of their esteem, that I have gone before now in secret to sigh and to weep. I need thy precious blood, O Lamb of God, to cleanse my guilt away. "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." The blood of thine atonement apply to my diseased soul. Oh give me the evidences that thou did die for me, and then I shall be clean in thy sight. "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." This shall raise me up from the dust to rejoice in thy salvation. "He sent his word and healed them." This is what I need; not the bare theory of the doctrine, with its proof texts set in array in my natural understanding, but the glorious truth sent by the Lord's gracious power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. When the Lord sends the word it prospers in the thing whereunto he sends it. This I know, for then his speech distils as the dew upon my soul, and I am refreshed. His doctrine sent to my heart calms all the tumults that my sins and the devil create, and I have peace through the blood of Emmanuel's cross. Sometimes I am as one famishing, and I pine away for want of the fruits of the field. My soul craveth Jehovah's sweet mercy, I yearn again to taste his pardoning love, but the Bible cannot afford it, the letter of the Scriptures cannot bestow it. t have no power to suck honey out of them. Those who can go to the Scriptures and always get what they need, and can close the book well satisfied with what they have got, are altogether different from poor, sinful, helpless me.

I can no more help myself to food out of the Holy Scriptures than a very babe could feed itself at a well laden table spread with all manner of sweet tasting and nourishing food. I well know that the concentration of the natural study yields no sustenance to the quickened soul. By our natural powers we may acquire a natural knowledge that the Bible teaches the doctrine of predestination, election, salvation by grace, etc., and by the application of the natural mind to these subjects in the perusal of the Bible a person may be well versed, as the saying is, and be able to prove his points, to preach the doctrine in the letter. He may be quite competent to debate with the opponents of the doctrine, and secretly if not openly, pride himself in this line. But what of it all? It may all be, and that man's soul be utterly destitute of the grace of God that bringeth salva-

tion. I have been harrassed with thoughts that I was just such an one, that all I know is the result of natural study of the scriptures, and fears have invaded my heart that after all I know nothing of the anointing of the Holy Spirit. I have been brought low and with great searchings of heart. I have fallen at the feet of the Lord so troubled, so weakened, so dismayed at the thought that the secret of the Lord was not with me. Perhaps someone who is fully six feet tall according to his own measurement, may hold one like me in very contempt, and think one like me by this time should be a man, and no more a child. Well, perhaps there are times when I am a man, strong indeed in Christ Jesus. I grow up by faith, by the abundant ministrations of the Spirit of Truth into Jesus Christ in all things. I am strong then in our Redeemer, and the arms of my hands are made strong indeed in Christ by the mighty God of Jacob. Then I can vanquish the foe, and tread down my enemies as the mire of the streets, but my triumphing, and all the exploits are altogether by faith, which is the fruit of the Spirit, in the love, and mercy, and faithfulness of God, in the blood and righteousness of God, in the blood and righteousness of Jesus. These are rare times, when I can in truth experimentally triumph and glory in Christ Jesus. But, I am as a sickly babe sometimes, so weak, defenseless, I feel as it were to be dying for the need of some one to care for me, feed me and clothe me, and that one, that only One that can do these things unto me is the glorious everlasting God. "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." Sickly and faint and ready to die in the filth of my own heart, the Lord in his tender pity has placed me in the arms of Zion, she has borne me upon her sides and carried me in her bosom. I have been dandled upon her knees, and she has drawn out the breasts of her consolations to me, there I have suckled, and have been satisfied with the abundance of her glory. They have breasts in some places that they call "conditional time salvation," but from the description that some of them give of them I am fully satisfied they are not the breasts of the free woman, but the breasts of Hagar the bond woman. However the children of the bond woman may thrive upon Hagar's breasts, Isaac will do well by being suckled at the breasts of the everlasting covenant of grace, even the sure mercies of David. Those who want to suck at the breasts of "conditional happiness," of conditional time salvation, can do so, and they are welcome to all the happiness that they derive therefrom. There is a vast amount of fleshly religious happiness in the world that is of no kin to the joy of the Lord. People may perform their supposed duties, and render their supposed obedience unto God, and compass themselves about with their sparks, and walk in the light of their fire, and in the sparks that they have kindled, but I rather walk in the dark with God than walk in their light. (Isaiah 50:10-11). I am pained to think that such teachings are being taught among our people,

teachings wherein the precepts of the law of liberty are mingled and confounded with the precepts of the covenant that gendereth to bondage. The obedience of faith, and commandments of Christ's gospel, are handled in such a way that the joyous, captivating sound of them cannot be heard as they come forth from the lips of conditionalists. Their sweetness, freshness and beauty are departed, and grace, the grace of God, cannot be discerned in the obedience required, and the gracious and almighty operations of the Holy Ghost exercising the hearts of the elect to the obedience of faith are altogether in the background, in the doctrines that are being promulgated in this distasteful phraseology, conditional time salvation. True gospel obedience flows from the constraining love of Christ. A part from the love of God in the soul there is no obedience in the gospel. *"If ye love me, keep my commandments."* The Lord delights in that which his Spirit inspires. In order to the true worship of God we need the ministrations of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, to revive our faith, and hope, and love, praises and supplications, then obedience to the Lord will be the fruit. **"I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart." - Psalms cxix. 32.** Oh, what are all the best services that we have ever rendered unto the God of our salvation? To this day I have to say to Jehovah's sovereign grace I owe above what the fiends have in hell. I desire from my very soul to walk holily just and unblameably before the Lord and his people, but I have not attained unto this. I see very plainly that vanity is stamped upon all that I engage in, the vileness of my flesh is so manifest to me, it intrudes itself, mixes itself with and defiles all that I put my hands unto. That others may not be so beset with sinfulness so polluted I allow, for I see it is only by a miracle of grace that I can be saved, and grace is the only fountain that yields supplies to one like me. I can with all my heart join with Hart, who sings,

> *"Jesus gives us pure affections,*
> *Wills to* do *what he requires,*
> Makes us follow his directions,
> And what he requires, inspires.
>
> All our prayers, and all our praises,
> Rightly offered in his name,
> He that dictates them is Jesus,
> *He that answers is the same.* "

"Love is the fulfilling of the law." Thus that dear child of God, that invalid, that deaf and dumb paralytic, when by the sweet communion of the Holy Ghost is instructed and comforted, and filled with love to the Redeemer, is as much obedient unto Christ as any of the ransomed family. That strength and grace by which the believer walks in the commandments of the Lord our Redeemer, is not an ability that we have inherent in us as subjects of the new birth, which it is in our power according to our will to put into exercise, and thus, apart from walk obediently, it is the obedience of faith,

and this comprehends that God's grace is made to abound unto us, and this is our sufficiency. (2 Cor. ix. 8) I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Thus the apostle, knowing that believers have no stored up, inherent ability, in themselves, to do the will of their God, says, **"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom** *be* **glory for ever and ever. Amen."- Heb. xiii. 20, 21.** Though I am, I hope, a subject of Jehovah's grace, and born of the Spirit, and if so even such an one, yet with me there are many times when I have no strength, I am as it were dead, I have not the power to put forth a sigh, or groan; to cry, to pray to God seems impossible. I am so hardened, so frozen up, so stiffened and numbed by the deceitfulness of my sins, and an evil heart of unbelief, that I find it beyond my power to think a thought. Ah, I know by humbling experiences that apart from the unremitting ministry of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, I have no might to worship God. Those who can always sigh over their sins, and pray unto the Lord for his pardoning love, those who can praise God any hour of the day they appoint to do so, are not like me. But I have proved that our God is very pitiful, and his long suffering with such a miserable, unprofitable worm as I am is a wonder of wonders. **"He giveth power to the faint; and to** *them that have* **no might he increaseth strength."** He visits my soul in his love, he chastens me with his rod, he shows me when I am smarting under his reproofs, that mine iniquities have exceeded all his chastenings. (Job xxxvi. 9.) He maketh my heart soft, he gives under this discipline a humble and contrite heart, he smiles with pardoning grace upon me, he speaks kind promises to my soul, he gives me glimpses of the riches of his grace, displayed in the works and merits of Jesus our covenant Head. Oh, then I sigh, then I weep, then I pray, then I praise, then I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

> *"I can do nothing without thee,*
> *My strength* is *wholly thine;*
> *Withered and barren should* I be
> *If severed from the vine."*

I find, dear children of God, that I have to be learning over and over again that **"Christ** *is* **all, and in all. — Col. iii. 11.** Oh, that name Jesus, Savior, is so sweet! In him are such transcendent excellencies, and so suitable to a needy sinner like me that at every view that is given me by the Spirit of truth I fall deeper and deeper in love with our altogether lovely Savior. And when his love is shed abroad in my heart I find myself saying within me, He loveth me still, he loveth even me, and what proof of his love I see in his fulfilling all the gracious relations that he sustains unto his people, as the lov-

ing Kinsman, our Brother, our tender, faithful Husband, our Almighty Friend and Redeemer. When the Holy Spirit, who takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto the elect, shows them unto me, how can I help loving him and praising and adoring the King in his beauty? Ah, then it is that I would not in word only, but in deed and in truth love him who hath loved me with an everlasting love.

> *"Love moved him* to *die, on this I rely;*
> My *Savior hath loved me, I cannot tell why;*
> *But this I can tell,* he *loved me so well.*
> *As to lay down his life,* to *redeem me from* hell."

Elder Frederick W. Keene

BAPTISM

The subject of baptism has been a subject of great controversy throughout the centuries. Many false and erroneous theories have been advocated which have tended to confuse the minds of God's little children. This is due to the fact that theologians have attempted to supplant a theological meaning to the term that is foreign to the classical meaning in order to prop up their false theories in trying to hinge salvation on the volition and work of the creature. This has narrowed the conception of the term, baptism, to that ceremonial use of water to admit members into an organized body here upon earth termed the church. I do not believe the term is so narrow in its scope. When I think of baptism I like to meditate upon the classical meaning instead of the theological use of the term.

To baptize is to immerse, submerge, envelope, overwhelm or sink; to dip, wash, or drench; to consecrate; to completely subdue. This is the essence of the classical meaning. Even theologians who advocate sprinkling as the proper mode of baptism admit this. I think that baptism in literal water is figurative and typical of the baptism that is essential unto salvation. The baptism in Jesus Christ and into his death is essential unto salvation. No man is able, empowered or authorized to do that. This is the work of God.

I want to call your attention to one scripture that will conclusively prove that water baptism is not meant every time the term is used in the scriptures. Jesus said as recorded in **Luke 12:50 — "But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!"** The word STRAITENED means PAINED. He was undoubtedly speaking of his baptism in death. He was speaking of the time when death would envelope him, when he would be overwhelmed with suffering and submerged into death. This statement was made approximately two years after his baptism in Jordan. (I think his baptism in Jordan was pointing to and figurative of his baptism in death.)

Now, let us consider **Romans 6:3 "Know ye not, that so many of us as**

were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" Paul did not say or hint at water in this expression. If Paul had said; know ye not that as many of us were baptized in WATER were baptized in Jesus Christ and into his death; then, the modern theorists, would have something to base their arguments upon. Since he did not say this let us take for granted that he said what he meant and meant what he said. He said, "were baptized into Jesus Christ." Can any man immerse one into Jesus Christ? We may baptize in water in the NAME of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost but man cannot baptize into Jesus Christ. I believe that God chose his people IN CHRIST in the annals of eternity before time ever began. **"According as he hath chosen us IN HIM before the foundation of the world." Eph. 1:4. "Whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." Rom. 8:29.** The entire family of God was baptized into the body of Christ by God, our father. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many are one body: so is Christ. For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body." Cor. 12:12-13. "We are his workmanship, CREATED IN CHRIST JESUS." Eph. 2:10. If we were chosen IN HIM, created IN HIM, and are baptized IN HIM WE WERE MYSTERIOUSLY IN HIM being bone of his bone as he accomplished the law to a jot and tittle while he sojourned in this world of sin and sorrow. I believe that as Jesus performed the law to a jot and tittle Jehovah could see the entire family of God performing it as they were members of his body, being baptized in him. The ONE BAPTISM spoken of in Ephesians 4:5 is that performed by God, the Father in the Son through the operation of the Spirit upon his children. This baptism is essential unto salvation but cannot be performed by man.

Yes, God's children were "baptized into his death." They went down with him into death because they were chosen, created, and are baptized in him. If we be children of God we paid the penalty of death IN HIM! We satisfied the just demands of the law IN HIM! But thanks be unto God we arose victoriously over death, hell, and the grave IN HIM! This being true, justice is completely satisfied IN HIM for each and every child of God. Nothing can be charged to them.

We have touched upon the subject of baptism relative to all the family of God being baptized at once together into Jesus Christ and into his death. Now, we want to meditate upon the experimental phase of baptism. We want to consider the individual personal baptism that is experienced by each and every child of God. This experimental phase of baptism is progressive in its application as we shall see, the Lord willing. It begins in regeneration and ends in the immortalization of the body. John preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins as recorded in Mark 1:4. All those who made manifest that they were in pos-

session of this baptism by confessing their sins he baptized in the river Jordan, (Mark 1:5) which was an outward manifestation of being in this condition. The rule is according to the words of Jesus as recorded in **Mark 16:16, "He that believeth and IS BAPTIZED shall be saved."** The form of the verb used shows that it is not water baptism that is under consideration. The present tense of the verb shows that it is a condition they are NOW in. They are overwhelmed, immersed, submerged, or enveloped NOW. Are they NOW enveloped in water by the administrator? No, they are NOW enveloped in repentance by the Holy Ghost! This being submerged in repentance affects the cry for deliverance or salvation from their sins. This salvation is promised in this statement by Jesus. The hope of each child of God, who is so baptized in repentance by the Holy Ghost, is salvation from their sins, through the merits of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. When one is baptized in water he outwardly manifests this condition and hope through the grace of the Father, the merits of the Son, and guidance, operation, and revelation of the Holy Spirit.

"John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." St. Luke 3:16. The effect of the Holy Spirit baptism is regeneration. The SOULS of God's people are baptized into death and resurrected unto life here in time; and, the BODIES of God's people shall be baptized into death and resurrected unto life immortal into the great beyond — the end of this sphere of time. This is that for which we patiently wait and hope.

The natural soul trusts in natural man being inspired by the natural carnal spirit. This is the soul that sins. It shall die. (Ezek. 18:4) All people are born naturally in this condition. When it pleases God to baptize the soul of one of his people by the Holy Spirit he kills and makes spiritually alive the soul. Yes, the soul is overwhelmed, immersed, and submerged into death and resurrected into a new life. The soul that has been so wrought upon by the Holy Spirit shall never die. It is a new creature. According to Psalms 107 the experience of the redeemed is — **"Hungry and thirsty, their SOUL fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses."** This is brought about by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We read in **Luke 3:3 "And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the BAPTISM OF REPENTENCE for the remission of sins."** This does not say baptism of water but of REPENTANCE. This means that you must be overwhelmed, submerged, and immersed with repentance. It *is a* godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of. (2 Cor. 7:10) When you are overwhelmed with repentance you abhor yourself: you repent in dust and ashes. When you abhor yourself you die to the love of self.

You sink into despair; you are immersed in trouble and distresses. As he did not leave Christ in the grave he does not leave your soul in despair but raises it up a new soul. This is verified in **Psalms 23:3, "He restoreth my SOUL."** You are then a new creature motivated by a spiritual soul. The mortal soul which is subject to death, has been baptized with immortality. This makes the soul immortal. Now, you are an immortal soul dwelling in a mortal body. This body has not yet been baptized with immortality. That will be the crowning work of the Holy Spirit.

Paul says in **Romans 7:24 — "Oh wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"** Paul realized the sinfulness and mortality of his body. All God's children are possessed with the thorn in the flesh and infirmities of the flesh. Our bodies are subject to weaken and die. We cannot do the things we would because of the evil that is present in our fast decaying bodies. The body becomes lame and tottery with age. Our bodies become weak because of disease. Our natural eyes become dim and our natural ears deafen. Our memory fails and our ability to comprehend is affected. Our natural minds fail to function as they once did. I feel that as we experience these things we become more and more desirous of the immortalization of the bodies. **"Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Rom. 8:23.** Yes, the bodies of the saints shall be baptized into death and shall be completely submerged, enveloped, swallowed up, or baptized with immortality. **"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory." 1 Cor. 15:54.** This will be the answer to the prayer as recorded in **1 Thess. 5:23 — "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole SPIRIT and SOUL and BODY be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."**

The baptism in water is figurative of this baptism that is essential unto salvation. This is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a GOOD conscience toward God: which is a figure of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, See 1st Peter 3:21. There are two kinds of conscience. There is a natural conscience and there is a Holy Spirit conscience. A good conscience is a Holy Spirit conscience. I believe that God's people are wrought upon by his Spirit and are made anxious to follow Jesus in baptism. They are desirous to outwardly manifest this faith in the Father baptizing them in the Son by the Spirit by submitted themselves to baptism in water in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. As the candidate for baptism is passive in the hands of the administrator in the act of baptism in water, so he manifests that he is passive in the hand of God in Holy Spirit baptism which is essential unto salvation. He manifests his faith in being in Christ

as he went down into the grave and came up out of the grave. As baptism into Jesus Christ and into his death is the door of entrance into the church which is the one invisible body including all the children of God, so baptism in water is the door of entrance into the church in its organized form upon this earth.

John required those whom he baptized to bring forth fruit worthy of repentance. I believe such characters are the only ones worthy to be received into the organized church. When one comes confessing his sins and considering himself as the chief of sinners and less than the least of all saints, speaking of his unworthiness, my heart goes out to him and I am given to fellowship him. When such an one comes testifying that his hopes for salvation from sins is solely based on the grace of God and the merits of the Lord Jesus, I consider him as a proper subject for baptism in water into the fellowship of the organized church. None but those who have been baptized with repentance would come bringing such testimony from the heart desiring a home with God's people. The church receives such into their fellowship and one properly ordained will gladly administer the ordinance to that character.

I realize that I have just hinted upon this grand subject. These thoughts are my earnest and conscientious convictions. If they be true-may God be praised. If they be false-charge them to my ignorance and vain imaginations. May God bless this to your comfort and edification, if it be his will, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Elder E.J. Lambert

NORTH JAY, Maine, Feb., 1879.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST: — If So I may be allowed to call you, as I feel unworthy a name among the children of God; for I see and feel myself vile, sinful and imperfect, polluted from the sole of my feet even to my head, and abhor myself, and feel less than nothing, and vanity; less than the least of any who have been born of the Spirit, like a bubble that will soon pass away, and the places that know me shall know me no more forever.

But blessed be the name of the Lord, who has prepared a place for all who love him. Truly the name of Jesus is sweet, and his words are precious to his tried, tempted and persecuted people, who are persecuted for righteousness sake. There has been a time when it seemed that I was persecuted and afflicted, and I was led to read with comfort the fourteenth chapter of John; and I felt every word to be like the voice of Jesus to me, especially where he said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you," &c. **"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." – John xvi. 33**. How precious did my blessed Saviour appear

to me in the application of these words. Truly he is the Rock of my salvation, in him I trust that my sins are forgiven; and I feel a witness within that it is so, that Jesus died a bitter death for the redemption of all those who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and he has given me a hope that is as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast — a hope that maketh not ashamed.

It is a hope which the world cannot give or take away; for it reaches beyond the grave, and affords me peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. I trust the Lord gave me this precious hope about sixty-four years ago. O what shall I render to the Lord for his goodness and mercy, which have followed me all the days of my life? I trust in him still to keep me from the *evil* that is in the world, until he shall call me hence; then my sorrowing and sighing will be done away, and I shall dwell forever with the Lord, and sing hallelujah to God and the Lamb forever. There in heaven we shall enjoy sweet rest for the weary and heavy laden, who believe in and love our Lord Jesus Christ, and drink of the wells of salvation which he has provided, and to which the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall lead them who are born of the water and of the Spirit. Now if Christ be not in us the hope of glory, we are without hope and without God in the world.

How precious are the words of Jesus, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also."

How consoling! The Bible has been a precious book to me.

"Give me a bible in my hand,
A heart to read and understand,
And I desire no more."

The able communications and editorials in the SIGNS afford me strength and comfort. I am not afraid or ashamed to stand as a witness for the truth which it proclaims. I would say to the valiant soldiers of the cross, Fight on the good fight of faith; fear not, nor be discouraged. Jesus is your Captain and Commander; he will go before you, and give you the victory. He will keep you safely in the hollow of his hand, and protect you as the apple of his eye. May our Lord make you wise as Serpents and harmless as doves, and give you a clear understanding of his word, and enable you to pass through the deep waters of affliction in triumph through the Redeemer.

What I have written looks to me broken and disconnected; but if you think best to insert it in some corner of the Signs, please correct all mistakes. Have patience with me, dear brother Beebe, this time, for I may never trouble you again, as I am almost seventy-seven years of age, and in a few more days or years I hope this mortal will put on immortality. May you, dear

brother, be strengthened in the inward and outward man, and long continue to wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon; and may God grant you all needful blessings, is the desire of one who feels to be the least of all who are of the household of faith.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
SOPHIA MACOMBER.

The Maine Predestinarian Baptist Association, assembled with the Church in Bowdoinham, Sept. 18th, 19th and 20th, 1857, send christian salutation.

BELOVED BRETHREN:- As we do not print our Minutes, we send this our annual epistle to sister Associations, churches and individuals with whom we correspond and are in fellowship through the *Signs of the Times.*

Another year has rolled around and we have continued tokens of Sovereign management and overruling hand of our God, not only in the dispensation of his new covenent blessings, but in his management and control over all worlds and all men causing the wrath of man to praise Him. The Lord has been mindful of us within the past year, and caused our hearts to rejoice by adding a few to our number who have been thoroughly tried and they have come forth as gold. This is the "Lord's doing: and it is marvellous in our eyes." In view of the wonderful works of God in humbling the pride of all men who are made to acknowledge the truth of God as declared in the scriptures, we are more and more confirmed in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, and the fallacy of the doctrine generally proclaimed among men at this day, that it depends on their own voluntary acceptance, or the will of the creature.

Our meeting has been one of special interest attended with some manifest tokens of the Lord's favor and blessing. We were made in some degree to rejoice in the God of our salvation. The preaching was all of a piece, and we believe in strict accordance with scriptures of eternal truth. We are greeted with the presence of visiting brethren from the Maine Predestinarian Conference which was a source of satisfaction to us. We have the pleasure also to acknowledge the reception of Minutes from the Baltimore, Delaware, Delaware River, Warwick, and Corresponding Associations. We sincerely desire the continuation of your correspondence both by Messenger and Minutes which we will endeavor to reciprocate as far as in our power.

Our next annual meeting will be held with the church at Jay, Me., commencing on Friday after the second Monday in September, 1858.

J. L. PURINGTON, Moderator
WM. QUINT, Clerk

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis, a Presbytery met at First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis on Sat. August 17, 2013 for the examination of Brother Jeff Young if found qualified in accordance with the written word of GOD, ordain Brother Jeff Young to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The Presbytery was called together consisting of all ministers and deacons, of our faith and order in good standing.

The Presbytery was organized with the election of Elder C.C. Morris as moderator. The Moderator appointed Elder James Pugh as Clerk.

The Moderator asked First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis if they were still of a mind to proceed with the ordination of Brother Jeff Young and Church spokesman, Elder Wayman Chapell, answered in the affirmative and presented the candidate to the Presbytery for ordination.

Elder Truman Bradshaw opened the Presbytery with prayer.

Elder Kenneth Adams questioned the spokesman regarding the qualifications for the office of Deacon. Brother Kenneth Evans questioned the candidate regarding the articles of faith of the church and his calling.

The laying on of hands was performed by the Presbytery and the ordination prayer was worded by Brother Wayne Baines.

Elder Wayman Chapell gave the charge to the candidate about the duties and responibilites of the office, and the trials and problems that he would be called on to moderate in the position as a Deacon.

The Moderator asked the Presbytery if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery which was unanimous in the affirmative.

The right hand of fellowship was given to Deacon Jeff Young by all members of the Presbytery.

The ordained Brother was delivered back to First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis as an Ordained Deacon.

First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis gave Deacon Jeff Young the right hand of fellowship.

Elder C.C. Morris, Moderator
Elder James Pugh, Clerk

Ministers Present
Elder C.C. Morris
Elder Truman Bradshaw
Elder Kenneth Adams
Elder James Pugh
Elder Wayman Chapell

Deacons Present
Wayne Baines
Roy G. Howard
Hewatt Fleming
Kenneth Evans

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 2013

Lowell Hopkins, VA 15.00
Glenford Sigmon, VA..... 5.00
Donald Arne, SD..... 100.00
Elder Jimmy Gray, NC..... 5.00
Marcus Vickers, FL 10.00
Gary Whaling, WV 5.00
Jane Myrick, FL..... 25.00
Nancy Pollack, NC 25.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER MYRTLE MURPHY THOMPSON

September 1, 2013

Our Lord called home sister Myrtle Murphy Thompson. She passed from this life August 12, 2013 at the Chatham Health and Rehab Center.

Sister Thompson was born May 9, 1921, a daughter of the late John William Murphy and Hattie Doss Murphy. She was married to Geames Garnett Thompson who predeceased her. She was predeceased by two brothers, George Murphy and Percy Murphy and three sisters, Bertie Craddock, Connie Jefferson and Merkley Giles.

Sister Thompson retired from Dan River Inc. in 1993, where she worked as a battery hand in #1 weave room. Sister Myrtle was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by letter Nov. 12, 2006. Sister Thompson was a faithful member and attended church as long as her health permitted.

Sister Thompson is survived by one brother, Fred w. Murphy of Danville, Va; one sister Frances Murphy Giles of Chatham, Va.; stepchildren Linda Reid of Burlington, NC., Ann Knight and Neal Thompson of Danville, Va.

Sister Thompson was laid to rest in the Danville Memorial Gardens, Danville, Va. Aug. 14, 2013 at 11:00 A.M. The service was held by her pastor, Elder Marvin Brumfield.

May all those left to mourn Sister Myrtle be reconciled to the Lord's will.

Written in love and hope by,
Carol R. Lansaw

Elder Marvin Brumfield,
Moderator
Oscar Pickral, Clerk

HEBREWS 5. 9.

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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LUKE 2:7-21.

And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

And when they had seen *it,* they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

And all they that heard *it* wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

But Mary kept all these things, and pondered *them* in her heart.

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 12 / 2013
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

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EDITORIAL

"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it." Isaiah 55:11

Elder J. B. Farmer

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." The living Word of God is the Lord Jesus Christ. All things were made by Him. They were made by Him and for Him. In Him we live and move

and have our being. He is God and there is none else. He is the alpha and the omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. There is no other God, and there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. What a great God He is. He does all His pleasure in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can hinder Him or, in truth, even question Him about anything He has done. His thoughts and His ways are as high above those of men as the heaven is above the earth.

According to the purpose of God, the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth His handiwork. And God made man of the dust of the ground for a purpose — even to show forth His praise, for God alone is worthy to be praised. Of one lump of clay, He made vessels of honor to fit in glory, and He made vessels of dishonor to fit into destruction. Men in nature will not have this teaching, but it is no wonder, since none are enabled to know anything of the truth of God apart from the Spirit of God. His word is spiritual, and can only be understood by the ones quickened by that same Spirit. His people show forth His praise as they believe in Him and trust Him and follow Him. They show forth His praise as they are blessed to be separated from the world of wickedness, and walk in His light and love. They show forth His praise as they are blessed to endure every trial and not charge God falsely, as Job was blessed. They show forth His praise as they worship Him in Spirit and in truth. And they shall show forth His praise in Glory.

The wicked show forth His praise as they fulfill His purpose here upon the earth. They show forth His praise in their wrath. "The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he shall restrain." Glory and honor is brought unto God when the wicked are restrained and cannot carry out their evil will and purposes. God is glorified when we are blessed to think of the great destruction of Pharaoh's army as they pursued the children of Israel into the Red Sea where they were destroyed by the same waters that had been held back from harming God's children. When Jezebel, Ahab's wicked wife, sought to take the life of the prophet Elijah, we see that she could not carry out her will, and in the end was herself killed and eaten of dogs. Again and again all through the scriptures we see God frustrating the purposes of wicked men and even the devil, to God's honor, praise and glory.

Jesus said to Peter, "Satan hath desired to have thee that he may sift thee as wheat, but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." Peter seems to be typical of us in our great weakness. Satan is much stronger than we are according to nature, and he would have his way with us except for the keeping power of God. The children of God have overcome the world in Christ. Jesus said, "Fear not little flock for I have overcome the world." He also said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." God has

put His children in the midst of a wicked and perverse people that He might be glorified in them. His people must have trials and tribulations. They must suffer persecution in this life. If there were no sufferings and persecutions, there would be no victory over the world, and no reigning with Him. Without these fiery trials of their faith, there would be no evidence that they are His. He said, "All who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." And, "If we suffer with Him we shall reign with Him."

God sent forth his Word, Jesus Christ, to accomplish that which He pleased, even the salvation of His people. This great salvation began with God in eternity when He chose His people, and loved them with an everlasting love, and gave them grace in Christ Jesus the Lord. All this was before the foundation of the world. God purposed to save a remnant according to election, and sent out His Word to fulfill His purpose. His Word did not return to Him void, or empty. Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost, and He did it. Jesus said, "I came to do the will of my Father and his will is that all that the Father hath given me, I have lost nothing, and shall raise it up at the last day." This great salvation continues as His children are brought out of darkness into His marvelous light. It is manifested as He keeps them from the destruction of the devil's traps and pitfalls. His salvation is evident as the little lambs are filled with faith and trust, even unto death. Their faith fails not because Jesus keeps them all their days. Jesus accomplished that which pleased God when He gave His life a ransom for many, when he shed His blood to atone for the sins of His people, and when He came forth from the grave victorious over death, hell and the grave. Jesus accomplished that which pleased the Father, when He presented His bride to Him without any spot or blemish, altogether lovely.

Jesus prospered in that which the Father gave Him to do. He never sinned. He never spoke falsely. He always spoke the truth. He never respected men's persons, regardless of their wealth or position. He went about doing good. He healed all manner of diseases. He forgave the sins of those he loved. He called men to forsake the world and to take up their cross and to follow Him, even unto death. He raised the dead. He pressed forward and was not hindered in anything the Father sent Him to do. He always did the will of the Father. Jesus did not return unto the Father void, but brought with Him the whole family of God. He is the captain of their salvation. Of course the resurrection is yet to come, but God has already seen it, and it is a finished work with Him.

In one place it is written, **"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obe-**

dient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* **in heaven, and** *things* **in earth, and** *things* **under the earth; and** *that* **every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ** *is* **Lord, to the glory of God the Father."** This shall be the consummation of all things. Then shall every tongue praise Him world without end because He did the Father's will to perfection.

I trust this was written in kindness and faithfulness.

Elder J. B. Farmer

VOICES OF THE PAST

IT IS FINISHED
By Gilbert Beebe, 1837

When the beloved Son of God hung on the accursed tree, — when His soul was poured out unto death, when frighted rocks were burst asunder, the heavens in sackcloth were veiled, when the rugged bars of death were loosed, and tombs of marble resigned their sleeping tenants, when by the rending of the veil of the temple the ark, and cherubims, and mercy seat were all disclosed, while, nerved with malice, Jews and Romans mocked, while racking pains and most tormenting smarts were inflicted on that blessed Lamb who bore our sins, when justice drew its flaming sword, and vengeance struck the dreadful blow, when hell exulting in her hour of darkness, amidst the awful grandeur of that dreadful scene, the voice of triumph, from the expiring Saviour's lips shook the creation to its very centre; stern death, in dreadful terror clad, af-frighted, paused and felt the thunder of that voice which in all the power and majesty of the Eternal God-head shouted, ***"It is finished."***

With due humility and that reverence which becomes the ransomed of the Lord, let us inquire what was finished? From the sacred record of eternal truth we learn that all was finished that the glorious Mediator had begun; love was not finished, for the love of God had no beginning. Election and predestination, with all the perfections of Jehovah which shine forth, in the economy of salvation were not finished, for these were without beginning, and can never, never end.

But something was certainly finished by the Saviour when he in triumph gave the victorious shout; nor has our Lord left this important subject in the dark. **"He who runs may read."** He finished transgression, made an end of sin, and He Himself has declared that he has finished the work that his Father gave Him to do. We eagerly inquire, what then was the work that his father gave Him to do? The Son of God responds, **"I come to do Thy will, O God."** I am come to do the will of My Father who sent me, and to finish the work. **"And this is the will of Him that sent me, that of all**

that he has given me I should lose nothing; but should raise them up at the last day." And the Father has given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. A shining messenger from the world of glory came down from heaven to earth, to announce the work that Jesus was to perform,viz: *"His name shall be Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.* " He finished the redemption of this people agreeably to the prediction of the Psalmist: *"The redemption of the soul is precious, and it CEASETH forever."*

First. He has finished the redemption of His people, and it ceaseth forever.

Second. He has finished, or made an end of sin, as far as it relates to those He represented -

Third. He finished the *law* as far as it relates to its demands in reference to the election of grace and the fulfillment of its divine requisitions. *"Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfill. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but one jot or tittle of the law shall not pass until all is fulfilled."* He is the end of the law for righteousness unto everyone that believes.

Fourth. He has finished transgressions; for his blood cleanseth from all sin. He has given himself for his church, that he might redeem it from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.

Fifth. He has finished the curse, having borne our sins in His own body on the tree; and being made a curse for us, as it is written, *"Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."*

Sixth. He has finished the covenant of works, having blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which are against us nailing them to the cross.

Seventh. He has finished the work of making sacrifices for sin. *"There remaineth no more sacrifice for sin."*

Eighth. He has given a finishing stroke to the perfection of his people, for by one offering he has perfected *forever* them that are sanctified.

Ninth. He has finished death, having destroyed death and him that had the power of death, which is the devil.

Tenth. He finished the work of his sufferings, being now baptized with that baptism for which He was straitened until it was accomplished. When deep called unto deep, and the billows of divine wrath went over Him; deep waters came into his soul.

Eleventh. He finished the complete pattern which he set for his children to walk in. Let no presumptuous wretch dare attempt to change the pattern of the things in heaven.

Finally. He has completely finished all that was written of Him in the law, in the prophets, and in the Psalms; and all that was necessary to secure the eternal salvation and justification of His people, and left them to challenge wicked men and devils, to declare,

"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; It is Christ that died. " He was wounded for their transgressions; He was bruised for their iniquities, and the chastisement of their peace was upon him; and with His stripes they are healed. He sees of the travail of His soul, and is satisfied.

Reflection. Is it finished? Or, is something remaining to be done by the redeemed, in order to secure the blessed objects of the death of Christ? If something remains to be done, whether it be *using means,* or giving our hearts to God, or our money to modern institutions, or sitting on anxious benches, or anything else, much or little, then is the work not finished, and the words of the expiring Lamb of God are contradicted. But be assured, dying reader, whatever relative duties are enjoined on the disciples of Christ, there is among them nothing to *be* added to the finished work of the Redeemer — nothing to render His redemption efficient, or effectual, or to extend its benefits to any for whom God did not eternally intend it; so far indeed from it, all the good works of the people of God are the immediate results of the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing can be added to or taken from the work which Christ finished when He yielded up the ghost and bowed His head unto death. *"It ceaseth forever."*

Here then the Old School Baptists find a sure foundation to build upon, and hence we preach Christ crucified, and proclaim a *finished salvation* in His worthy name — a salvation completely suited to the case of the poor, the needy, the halt, the lame and the blind; a salvation suited to the condition of every hungry, starving soul, who by grace is made to feel his wretchedness, and mourn his sins; but by no means suited to the case of the whole, who need no physician. The Pharisees of eighteen hundred years ago, rejected this finished work and from that day to the present it stands rejected, despised, opposed and slandered by all the work mongers who have flourished in our sinful world. But tell us, reader, how do you view the perfect work and finished salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ, for be assured if you despise this doctrine you are yet in your sins; but if you love the doctrine and can feed on it, you are not far from the kingdom.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

THE INCORRUPTIBLE MANHOOD OF CHRIST

"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (1 Tim. 3:16).

"The Word was made flesh." This is the eternally glorious act of God. It has no parallel; indeed all other acts of Jehovah, as creation and providence, and in the gospel, redemption and regeneration, and the ultimate glorification of the elect of God are only relatively glorious. I feel it to be the

deepest, the highest, the sublimest in all the revelation of God; and I desire to write upon the subject with reverence and godly fear.

"The angel Gabriel was sent from God, unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, *thou that art* **highly favored, the Lord** *is* **with thee; blessed** *art* **thou among women. And when she saw** *him,* **she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary; for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elizabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her" (Luke 1:26-38).**

"And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn" (Luke 2:7). This child was not a corruptible child, who would grow up to be in his manhood a corruptible man, such as a child of hers would be by natural generation. The angel had said unto her, that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. That Holy Thing is in distinction from a child she might conceive and give birth to by having known a man. **"The Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman** (the virgin Mary) **shall compass a man** ('geber', mighty man — not 'enosh', a thortal)" **(Jer. 31:22).** The virgin wrapped him in swaddling clothes, he sucked the breasts of his mother (Psa. 22:9), as she held him in her arms. **"Upholding all things by the word of his power" (Heb. 1:3).** He was verily her child, the Son of the Highest; and thus she rejoiced before she brought him forth; **"My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden; for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy** *is* **his name" (Luke 1:46-49).**

Abraham, David and the virgin

Mary, like all the fallen race, were corruptible human beings. But the Son of God in taking upon him the seed of Abraham and being made flesh in the womb of the virgin, and partaking of flesh and blood partook of no corruption of the Virgin Mary. Jesus her first born son was distinct and separate from her in this. She was corruptible, and he, her very son, conceived in her womb by the Holy Ghost and born of her, was incorruptible. How can this be? This is one of the glories of the mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God.

The manhood of the eternal Son of God was indefectible, immeasurably full of grace. Christ **"is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature; for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether** *they be* **thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all** *things* **he might have the preeminence. For it pleased** *the Father* **that in him should all fullness dwell." "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 1:15-19, 2:9).**

There was no taint, or stain, or germ of Adamic sin, mortality and corruption in that Holy Thing born of the virgin. Our Lord Jesus Christ in his Godhead is the **"uncorruptible God" (Rom. 1:23),** and his manhood from the moment of its conception in the womb of the virgin was ever meet to be taken into union with himself, the Son of God. **"***It is* **not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared** (fitted, adjusted thoroughly to) **me" (Heb. 10:4-5).** I shrink from the thought that when the Son of God came delighting to do the will of his Father, saying, "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God," "A body hast thou prepared me," that God prepared a corruptible body, that such a body was "fitted, adjusted thoroughly" to the uncorruptible Son of God. If the body of Christ was corruptible as Abraham's and the virgin Mary's, then his body was sinful, mortal and corruptible. These three are inseparable in human beings. But Christ was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens (Heb. 7:26).

His manhood was absolutely sinless. Jesus saith, **"The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me" (John 14:30).** This could not be said, if his body were corruptible (subject to decay, destruction). When the prince of this world cometh to us, he findeth in our Adamic natures something indeed — the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; but there were no deceitful lusts in Christ's flesh. The Apostle Paul writes, **"We all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of**

wrath, even as others" (Eph. 2:3). Jesus was not such. He was not by nature a child of wrath; but in his nature, in his manhood he was such that his conversation among men, and unto God was ever in that which is incorruptible. And all the desires of his flesh and mind and his fulfilling the same were ever in the sight of God of great price, and well pleasing unto the Father. **"I do always those things that please him." "Thy Holy Child Jesus"** never had thought or desire but what was delightful unto God the Father, whom he calls, **"Holy Father," "O righteous Father" (John 17:11-25).** The bodies of sinners are mortal and corruptible; and the apostle says to the children of God, **"If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Rom. 8:13).** There were no deeds in Jesus' body to mortify, no affections and lusts to be crucified; for Christ in his manhood was not a corruptible man. (Rom. 1:23).

Have we liberty to say the soul of Christ was incorruptible and his body, his flesh, corruptible? Never! The bodies of the saints are mortal (Rom. 8:11), corruptible (1 Cor. 15:54), vile (Phil. 3:21). Christ's body was not such.

If Christ's body had been corruptible, his flesh subject to decay, to destruction, then (apart from his covenant engagements as the Head and Surety, Redeemer of his people), he must necessarily have died, even as Abraham and David. Sinful, mortal, corruptible, pertain to sinful human beings who are under inevitable subjection to death. If Christ's body were corruptible, then he must of necessity have died, and his death was not voluntary.

The body of Christ was capable of dying, and did die. But the death of Christ was by the power of his own eternal Godhead, and was his own voluntary act. According to the exceeding riches of the grace of God unto the elect, he tasted death for them. The good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. Jesus saith, **"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (John 10:17-18).** "He through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God." This power no corruptible man has. The man Christ Jesus was not a "corruptible man". If the manhood of Christ had been corruptible, he would have had need, as other human corruptibles, of redemption and regeneration.

We read in Rom. 8:3 of "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh." Did God's own Son in partaking of flesh and blood in the womb of the virgin partake of her sinfulness? Was the flesh of that Holy Thing that was born of her, "sinful flesh?" David exclaims, **"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psa. 51:5). "Christ our Lord was made of the seed of David according to the flesh" (Rom. 1:3).** Abraham's flesh was sinful, David's flesh was sinful, and the virgin Mary's flesh was sinful, but of him who was David's Lord, and David's son (Matt. 22:45), it would be very blasphemy to say of him, of that Holy Thing that was conceived in the vir-

gin Mary of the Holy Ghost, and born of her, what is recorded in Psalm 51:5. The Son of God was in the likeness of sinful flesh as to "form" and "fashion" as a man (Phil. 2:8); but his flesh was not sinful, but sinless, impeccable. The Holy Ghost came upon the virgin, the power of the highest overshadowed her, and she conceived in her womb that Holy Thing. "A body hast thou prepared (fitted, adjusted thoroughly) me," saith the Son of God. Thus the manhood of Christ was shapened and conceived, and not as "his father David (Luke 1:32), according to the flesh," says in Psalm 51:5 that he was.

The scriptures explicitly teach that Jesus Christ in his manhood was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens (Heb. 7:26). The first man Adam, as he came from the hands of his Creator, was declared to be good and "very good." But the manhood of Christ, of the Lord from heaven, the last Adam, hath the preeminence of the first man Adam, even when contemplated in his upright, unfallen estate. For the human nature of Christ held in indissolvable union with the Son of God was ever in consequence of this union impeccable (exempt from the possibility of sinning) and so indefectible and incorruptible. The first man Adam was not impeccable. This was manifest in the garden of Eden, "For by one man (the first man) sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12). Christ in all things hath the preeminence; he is fairer than the children of men, grace is poured unto his lips. He is the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely, and made higher than the heavens. And all this because he is "the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts." Our Lord Jesus Christ is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting, Amen (1 Tim. 6:15-16). And I will again declare that if he, the Lord's Christ, had not been in his entire manhood, in his soul and in his body, too, all the days of his flesh impeccable, indefectible and incorruptible, but had been as Abraham, David, and the virgin Mary corruptible, he would have been ineligible to have been the offering and sacrifice for the sins of his people. Immanuel in his own person was the High Priest, the altar, the offering and sacrifice for the sins of his church. And as High Priest, he needed not to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins. Consider this also of the apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, that he was not as Aaron, a mortal man who could not continue by reason of death, but in his very person as Godman he was made the High Priest of the church after the order of Melchisedec, after the power of an endless life.

As the atoning sacrifice, the Lord laid upon Christ, the iniquities of us all. God made him to be sin (by imputation) for us, "who knew no sin." He bore our sins in his own body on the tree. All the days of his flesh in which he was the antitypical scape-goat of his people,

and while in Gethsemane, and on Calvary he was immutably holy, the sinless, spotless sacrifice. "He offered himself without spot to God." An offering and a sacrifice for a sweet smelling savor. Our sins that were laid upon him were not of a sweet smelling savor. Ah no! They were an abomination, hated, a stench. But our blessed Saviour put them away by the sacrifice of himself. The sacrifices offered upon Jewish altars could never take away sin. They were only types and shadows of Christ's offering, yet in them it was taught that the offering must be clean and without blemish. And dreadful was the denunciations of all hypocritical worshipers who presumptuously offered "a corrupt thing" (Mal. 1:11-14). Christ is the "pure offering," he is not a corruptible. By the will of God we are sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all (Heb. 10:10). This offering was not a corrupt thing. Christ's body was impeccable, sinless, incorruptible.

The apostle Peter declares, **"ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things,** *as* **silver and gold, from your vain conversation** *received* **by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18-19).** But if Christ's human nature had been corruptible, if it had been more corrupt, more vile than corruptible silver and gold, he could not have been the lamb of God without blemish and without spot, and he could not have given himself a ransom for our sins. Had his body once offered for sins been corruptible, the blood of his corruptible body would have been sinful, corruptible blood, and could never have had blessed designation, "the precious blood of Christ," as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

We sometimes sing,

> "There is a fountain filled with blood,
> Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
> And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
> Lose all their guilty stains.

"Feed the churches of God which he hath purchased with his own blood." The blood of Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God cleanseth us from all sin. And, let it be our contemplation that every breath he breathed, all his thoughts, and words, and acts, yes, all his sighs, and groans and tears; his bloody sweat, the sorrows, the agonies of Christ were not as of a man separate from the eternal Son of God. "The second man is the Lord from heaven" (1 Cor. 15:47). This man never had any being separate from the Lord. In the moment that the Holy Ghost came upon the virgin Mary, and the power of the Highest overshadowed her, and she conceived by the Holy Ghost that Holy Thing, that Holy Thing was taken hold of by the Word, the Son of God, and held in unspeakable, indissolvable union unto himself. So all the thoughts, desires and acts, of the flesh and mind of Christ were the thoughts, desires and acts of the Word made flesh, the God-man, our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Almighty God, sighed human

breath,
The Lord of life experienced death;
How it was done we can't discuss,
But this we know, 'twas done for us."

The flesh of Jesus slept in the tomb three days and three nights in incorruption. It could never, even at the last moments of those three days be said of Christ's body, "By this time he stinketh." Christ saw no corruption (Acts 13:37).

The sacred body and soul of Christ were separated when Jesus died upon the cross.

But that Holy Thing, that impeccable, indefectible, incorruptible manhood was not separated from the Word, the Son of God; it was still held by the Word, the Son of God in ineffable, undissolvable union unto himself. There could be no dissolution of that union; not for a moment. It was immutable, eternal. The eternal Son of God held unto himself in eternal wedlock that Holy Thing that he took upon him, unto himself in the womb of the virgin Mary.

"Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Acts 2:27). "But he whom God raised again saw no corruption" (Acts 13 :37). The doctrine cannot be read in the scriptures, Thou wilt not suffer my corruptible flesh to see corruption, for the man Christ Jesus, of the seed of David according to the flesh was not a "corruptible man" (Rom. 1:23). The Apostle Paul saith, **"I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."** He showed himself alive after his passion, infallible proofs being seen of chosen disciples forty days. He ascended into heaven, he was received up into glory, and sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high. **"And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:10-11).**

Christ shall come the second time without sin unto salvation (Heb. 9:28). **"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive** *and* **remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (I Thess. 4:16-18).** We look for our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ from heaven, **"who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Phil. 3:20-21).** Christ's body was never vile.

"Behold I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall

all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:51-58).

Elder Frederick W. Keene,
Raleigh, NC

ST. JOHN11:25-26.

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association met with the Church at Black Rock, May 19th, 20th and 21st, 1858, to the Churches connected therewith.

Beloved Brethren: — Permit us to address you on this occasion on the Present State of the Church of Christ. That the Church is at this time surrounded with darkness in a peculiar manner, is generally admitted; it is like the plague of darkness of Egypt, a darkness that may be felt; it is a wintry state of the Church. The sun occasionally shines, but its shining has not that warming, enlivening and cheering influence upon the plants as at other times it has had — and it is soon obscured by cold bleak clouds.

There are clouds rising from the mists of this world, from the various agitations in the world at this time, politically and otherwise, which much darken the hemisphere of the Church and saints, and produce a corresponding chilliness. There is not that liveliness in our love to the brethren, nor to the truth and ordinances of the Gospel, nor that engagedness in religious exercises, and in religious conversation, and meditations, as have at other times been felt.

As in night and wintry seasons beasts of prey crowd round the settlements of men, to raven; so it is with the Church at this time. There are those around the saints and among them, that would persuade or scare the sheep from their fenced folds to ramble with them in

the wild ranges of human wisdom, and to repose with them in their dens that they may prey upon them, and no doubt they have bewitched some of the sheep. There are others again who would persuade the children of God that they ought not to follow or receive the light which God has given for their continual guide, the Scriptures and blessed teachings of the Spirit, but to be guided in their belief and practice by the mixture of light and shade which is found in the writings of eminent men of past ages; and as these are various, so as they are followed they produce differences of views and dissensions among the saints. Again, Satan takes the advantage of this darkness, to assault the saints with temptations. It is an old complaint with the children of God that,

"Temptations everywhere annoy,
And sins and snares my peace destroy."

How it may be with the brethren generally at this time we know not, but some are peculiarly tried with temptations. Satan so stirs up their passions, appetites, &c., that they think it is altogether themselves. And indeed it is their own vile nature that thus shows itself; and what is a worse annoyance to them, the old man when left to act itself loves as much as ever it did, the indulgence of itself in its corruptions, and hence under this wildness and darkness, or, in other words, not having the spiritual man in lively exercise, we are led on under the influence of our corruptions, till we are on the very brink of acting them out; and were it not for the faithfulness of God who has promised that with the temptations he will make a way for our escape, we should plunge into actual sin. Though the escape is brought about, we know that it is not of ourselves, but that the sin is ours, though we were not left to carry it out; then arises the trying doubts, whether, if we loved God and his cause and believed the declarations of his word, &c., we could be led on thus contrary to his word and to the exposing of his cause to reproach. We are sometimes thus tossed upon the billows of temptations, until like Jonah, we become exceedingly displeased, and angry, and pray the Lord to take away our life, thinking it better for us to die than to live, yea, with Job, our souls, those souls which others tell us are made heavenly in regeneration, choose strangling and death rather than life. Again, as in wintry seasons, clouds have heretofore at times gathered over the Church, but at this time they appear to be gathering thicker than ever, as though preparing to burst in a storm upon us.

But, brethren, it is with the Church now as it was with Israel during the plague of darkness in Egypt. All the children of Israel had light in their dwellings. So we think the churches of the saints have at this time as clear light in the great truths of the Gospel as in any former period; and it is more distinguishable from every false system then formerly as it makes manifest the darkness without, by being so contrasted with it. The ministers of Christ, although frequently on account of the wintry darkness when going to their appointments,

feel more as though they were going on some worldly concern than to deliver a message of grace, yet are enabled generally to preach the gospel with much clearness, to feel, while preaching, the vast weight of their subject, the precious fullness and freeness of the gospel of salvation, and the importance of contending earnestly for the faith, and of preaching Christ as the only way of salvation. Private members are as well established in the truth, and have as clear a discerning spirit to distinguish between truth and error when preached, as at any former period; and whilst complaining of many doubts, fears and temptations, are as well established in the truth that their whole salvation is in Christ Jesus as in any former period, and manifest as much anxiety to know the Scriptures, and to be in all things conformed to them.

The inquiry is frequently made, What can be the reason of the Church's being in this dark wintry state, and whether it is not owing to the unfaithfulness of the Church that this has come upon her? The inquiry is also made whether the Church cannot adopt some course, whether some measures cannot be taken to bring the Church back to more sunny seasons, and whether individuals by proper efforts, by prayer, &c., cannot deliver themselves from their coldness? Some few have urged the making certain exertions to relieve the Church and saints from this unpleasant situation. Brethren, does not the same God reign in the heavenly kingdom as in the earthly? Does he not reign as supremely in the one as in the other? Does not the declaration of the Lord, "I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create evil; I the Lord do all these things" apply as fully to the spiritual world and its government as to the natural? Try your powers, brethren, in mid-winter to clear away the storm clouds, to avert the long, dark cold nights and to bring the sun back to his summer solstice, and if ye can do this, then may ye hope by your efforts to hasten on again the period when in reference to the Church ye may sing, "For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land," and not till then. We know, brethren, that all this coldness and darkness and the corruptions, that cause us to doubt and fret, and are the materials for Satan's temptations to act upon, are in us. We cannot say with our Lord "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me." No, the evil is all in us, and when we rightly feel, we take all the shame and blame to ourselves. But can we shake off or overcome these evils of ourselves? No, the more we feel the evil of these corruptions and coldness, we feel the more our entire impotency to relieve ourselves from them, we cry for God to interpose his grace or we must fall under them. It is true, that amid the severest colds and storms of winter, if God in his providence provide us with shelter, with fuel and clothing we may keep from perishing, so under all these dark and wintery seasons spiritually, God's grace will be sufficient for his people to secure that their faith fail not. He will keep them

by his power through faith unto salvation, though he may leave them, for more humbling of themselves, and for the trying their faith, to fall into the mire.

The people of God, are likened to sheep. Sheep are feeble, defenseless creatures of themselves, very simple in providing for their defense against their enemies, or in providing for, and protecting themselves and their young from perishing in the wintery storms. They need the constant care of a shepherd to provide food and shelter for them, and to protect them by keeping them embosomed, or by watching over them, or they will wander off, get scattered and devoured. The people of God are equally as dependent upon the care of their Shepherd. But David personating Christ in his body, the Church, says, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul, &c." So that even the souls of the children, get off at times from the simplicity of gospel truth and order and need to be restored by the great Shepherd. This does not look like the souls of saints have been changed into heavenly souls.

As to the reason why the church is in this dark and wintery state; we would say, it is not that the Shepherd is unfaithful to his charge; not because he has not power to preserve his sheep in perfect peace, and to keep them in the constant enjoyment of light; nor because they are left to their own care; but because he has seen it best for the church to be in this state. In a word, because it is so written, and the Scriptures must be fulfilled. The present dark and cold state of the church, will no doubt be more for the glory of God, more for a manifestation of the power and exceeding riches of his grace; more fully display to the admiration of saints and angels, the divine efficacy of the blood of Jesus to cleanse from all sin, and that perfect fullness there is in him to present the vilest sinner without spot or blemish before the throne of God, than would the church's being kept in the constant exercise of that faith and love and zeal such as characterized the lives of Peter, John and Paul. Because now it appears so manifest that it is all of grace that they are saved and kept, all of Christ in which they will appear with acceptance before God, and shine in glory.

Let us then, Brethren, amidst all the darkness around, rejoice in the power and faithful care of our Shepherd and may we be found walking as children of Light.

Elder Samuel Trott, Moderator
Jas. Blizzard, Clerk

(The above Circular Letter of the Baltimore Association appeared in the Signs of July 1, 1858.)

REVELATION 1:7.

Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* **which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.**

"Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" - ROMANS vii, 24.

If the Lord the Spirit has implanted that piteous cry in our soul, *"O wretched man that I am!"* this will follow as a necessary consequence - *"Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"* Where shall I look for deliverance? From what quarter can it come? Shall I look to the law? O no! that curses and condemns me, because I am continually breaking it. Can I look to friends? They may pity and sympathize; but they cannot remove the body of sin and death; it is too fast linked on for them to remove. Shall I go to ministers of truth? I may hear what they say with approbation; but there is something more wanted to remove this chilling embrace of the body of sin and death. Shall I look to the Scriptures? They contain the remedy; but I want that remedy to be sweetly applied. *"Who then shall deliver me?"* What refuge can I look to? Whither can I go, or whither shall I turn? From what quarter can help or deliverance come? See the embarrassment! view the perplexity of an exercised soul looking here, and looking there; turning to the right hand and turning to the left. Yet from one quarter only can the deliverance come. And thus, when the Apostle was brought here when he was sunk down to a low spot, and anxiously turning his eyes to every quarter to see whence deliverance could come God blessed his soul with a view of his precious Son. God the Spirit wrought in his heart that living faith whereby he saw Jesus, and whereby there was a communication of the blood and love of the Lamb to his conscience.

J. C. Philpot

ST. MATTHEW 5:17-18.

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

BROTHER BEEBE: — Having finished the business part *of* my letter, I will write a few lines to inform you, in part, how I get along in spiritual matters; for it is but in part that I can write or tell how I get along. I must acknowledge that I get along at a poor dying rate. My heart is so cold and hard it seems to me that I have no feeling nor realizing sense of how I do get along. The most of my time I am in a cold, lifeless state of mind respecting spiritual things. Sometimes Christians are the ones I long the most to see, and at other times I shun them for fear they will speak to me. I think,

if I am not deceived, I have been brought to see the end of all perfection here below— that there is no help in an arm of flesh — for I would not have raised one finger, if I could have secured the strivings of the whole human family in behalf of my salvation; I was satisfied that nothing short of the power and mercy of God could effect my salvation or do me any good. At that time I could see no way that God could be just and save such a sinful mortal as I viewed myself to be; for I was justly condemned by God's righteous law, and that law was as holy as God himself; and I had no desire for that law to be marred, let what was would become of me. I think I was made willing that God's will should be done. My burden at that time did not consist in the fear of being punished and tormented to all eternity, but it consisted in having a view of my unholiness, impurity, sinfulness, depravity, and rebellion against God, and the enmity of the carnal mind. My desires were to be rid of everything unlike God; to be pure and holy as God himself was all I desired; and would not that have been enough? But I was under the law and under its curse, and must there have remained eternally had not the great I AM provided a plan in infinite wisdom, ere time began, to rescue fallen man. He gave his only begotten Son to come into this world and take upon him the sins of all that the Father gave him in the covenant of redemption, and bear them in his own body on the cross. He magnified the law and made it honorable, cried, "It is finished!" gave up the ghost, and opened up a way whereby God could be just and save such sinful mortals as you and I. And if we are ever saved, it must be in a different way from that which seems right unto man; for inspiration informs us that there is a way that seems right unto man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. Men take light for darkness, and darkness for light; they call bitter sweet, and sweet bitter; and the carnal mind is enmity against God, not subject to his law, neither indeed can be. I do not know what the natural man possesses but what is carnal, and I know of no way that we can be cleansed but by an application of the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ; for his blood cleanes from all sin, and it is in and through his merits and righteousness that we are accepted of the Father, if we are indeed accepted of him. I believe that every one that was given to Christ in the covenant of redemption will be prepared here in time, and made meet temples for the Holy Ghost to dwell in, and eventually be received at the Father's right hand to sing praises to God and the Lamb in a never-ending eternity. I have a hope that I shall one day arrive there although I am so vile. I will not say that my hope is small, but I can truly say that I look small to myself, for I can see nothing in self that looks like a Christian; and if I am one, why am I thus? It appears to me, if I am a child at all, I am the least of all. I frequently hear brethren and sisters call their hope a little hope, and frequently see it thus expressed in the Signs and Messenger, by brethren and sisters. If I was writing for the press, I would ask brethren and sisters what our hope is, if

it is not Christ formed in the soul the hope of glory? I so understand it. And if so is our hope small? I think every one that has this hope has a big hope, and it is that they would not exchange for worlds like this.

Brother Beebe, I thought when I commenced writing I should write a little of how I get along in spiritual things; but you see how my mind runs away with my pen, so I may as well stop writing. I will just say that the *Signs and Messenger come* regularly, and they are welcome messengers to me, for they are laden with good news; they speak a language that no mortal man can understand except he has been taught by the spirit of God.

But I will close lest I intrude upon your patience. And may grace, mercy and peace be and abide with you, and the Israel of God, now and forever.

Yours in affliction,
NEHEMIAH BUTLER
Sanford, Maine, April 7, 1856.

Richmond Me., June 3, 1855.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE: — I feel inclined to write & few lines after a long silence, feeling stimulated thereto by the many communications appearing in the *Signs* and *Messenger,* not that I expect to add anything essential, but to show the medium through which I receive nearly all the Gospel instruction I have; not having heard it preached since last October. I am surrounded with a do and live kind of preaching in an abundance, and wonderful things have been performed through the winter and spring past, but it is all an empty sound to me; these words have passed frequently through my mind," But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

When I look back through a long series of years and behold the path in which the Lord hath led me, that I might grow in grace and knowledge, I am struck with humility and astonishment at the wonderful plan of salvation by grace.

My mind is frequently drawn towards the brethren in your region of country.

I cannot forget the season of enjoyment I had at the Warwick Association two years ago. I had flattered myself through the winter that I should attend this year if providence made the way plain; but as time rolled on, the way seemed to close up, and I became satisfied that it was my duty to stay at home. Whether I shall ever again visit the brethren in your vicinity is to me very doubtful, but I feel a comfortable degree of resignation to the will of God, and a strong confidence in his word, that He will never leave nor forsake his people.

I do not write, expecting to instruct brethren, but by way of remembrance, and encouragement to such as are capable of writing to edification, to perse-

vere. I find that many names that formerly used to appear in the *Signs,* are rarely now seen. This is a natural consequence as time moves on; nevertheless, I would say to elderly brethren, do not unreasonably neglect; it is getting common for brethren and sisters to write out their experience which is very consoling. I hope it will be continued as the Lord shall dictate; but in this as in every other point, true humility is necessary. In the course of my long life, I have seen a vain ambition manifested in this as in all other strains of conversation. Oh the depravity of human nature! The heart of man is evil, and desperately evil, who can know it? I will stop scribbling my thoughts, with a prayer that the Lord may be with you at the Warwick Association, and in all other places.

HEZEKIAH PURINGTON

PSALM 57: 6-11.

They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down: they haved digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen *themselves*. Selah.

My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise.

Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I *myself* will awake early.

I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations.

For thy mercy *is* great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds.

Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: *let* thy glory *be* above all the earth.

MEETINGS

LOWER MAYO FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday, December 29th, 2013. We hope to start singing at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30. Mayodan Church will host the meeting. Directions for those who do not know the location: the meeting house is located at 426 N. 2nd Ave. US 220 Bus. N., Mayodan, N.C. 27027. Coming North or South on US 220, turn South on 220 Business to Mayodan. Go 2 miles to church on right. Coming NC 770, turn South on Janet Road. Go 2 miles to 220 Business. Turn right and go 1 ½ miles to church on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952 -2098

SKEWARKEY UNION
(Eastern Kehukee Association)

Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of December 29, 2013. The church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albermarle Avenue in Tarboro, NC. Preaching services begin at 10:30am.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will meet, Lord willing, on the fifth Sunday in December 2013. This meeting will be held at Moons Creek Church. The church is located 1 mile east of Hwy 86, between Danville and Yanceyville, on Park Springs Road.

Elder Jimmy Gray, Moderator

ROMANS 8:1-2.

There *is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 2013

Glenna Link, TN	25.00
Hazel Garland, MD	25.00
Arleen Giles, VA	5.00
Earl Thurman, VA	5.00
Thomas Pegram, VA	15.00
Wilton Sutphin, VA	5.00
Chlonetia Thompson, VA	5.00
Flay Mordecai, MS	5.00
Mary Lee, NC	5.00
Charlie Fox, AR	10.00
Marie Southern, NC	5.00
Bodie Lankford, LA	5.00
Gerline Weatherford, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

BROTHER HASSEL D. ALLEN

Brother Hassel Denny Allen died at his home in Edgecombe County, NC on September 14, 2013, after several years of declining health. He had celebrated his 89th birthday. Brother Allen was born in Pitt County, NC on May 8, 1924, the son of Brother John I. and Sister Hattie Joyner Allen. He was the last survivor of their eight children. He was named for two Primitive Baptist ministers: Elder Sylvester Hassell and Elder S.B. Denny.

During World War II, Bro Allen served with the U.S. Army in Italy and North Africa. He was awarded the Com-

bat Infantry Badge and Bronze Star for his heroic service. It was fitting that a military honor guard was present at his burial service to pay tribute to one of "America's Greatest Generation".

In 1946, Brother Allen married Ethel "Peggy" Keel, to whom he was married for 63 years before her passing in 2009. They were the parents of three children: Brenda Allen Colombo of Greenville, NC; Denny Allen of Rocky Mount, NC; and Delores "Dee" Allen of the home.

The Allen family lived in Rocky Mount, NC from 1949 until 1972. Brother Allen was employed as a salesman with Procter & Gamble Company for 30 years, retiring in 1979. After his retirement, he raised a large garden and angus cattle on his farm. He sold his vegetables at the Farmers Market and from the yard of his home near Bethel, NC.

Brother Allen joined Flat Swamp Primitive Baptist Church in 1961 and was ordained a deacon several years later. He was also the clerk of the church for almost 40 years. He served the church faithfully and was a strong believer in, and defender of, the faith, doctrine and order of the Primitive Baptist. With the passing of time he became the last member of Flat Swamp Church, but with the help of members of the other churches, services were held there each first Sunday until Brother Hassel was physically unable to keep up the building and grounds which he had maintained almost singlehandedly for many years. The last service was held at Flat Swamp Church in August, 2011. Brother Allen then joined Skewarkey Primitive Baptist Church in Williamston, NC and attended there as long as his health permitted.

Brother Allen served as Clerk of the Skewarkey Union for seventeen years (1978-1995). When the Kehukee Association divided in 1981, Brother Allen and others undertook the organization of the Eastern Kehukee Association, and he served as it's Clerk for four years (1983-1986) and it's Moderator for twenty-three years (1988-2011).

A few days before Brother Hassel died he told his daughter that he was "very tired and ready to go". The words of the Apostle Paul are appropriate: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing". (II Timothy 4:7-8)

Brother Allen passed peacefully in his sleep on Saturday morning, September 14. His funeral was conducted at Wilkerson Funeral Home in Greenville, NC by Elder Marvin Brumfield and Elder Joe Sawyer. His body was buried with military honors in the Bethel Cemetery beside his be-

loved wife, Peggy, where it will rest until the day of the Resurrection when the dead in Christ shall be raised with a spiritual body. We believe he will answer the call of the Saviour: **"Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world". (Matthew 25:34)**

There, in that kingdom, his faith will end in sight and his hope in possession of that **"... building of God an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens". (II Corinthians 5:1)**

Written at the request of the Eastern Kehukee Association.

Charlie D. Alston

SISTER PEARL TURNER DYER

Our hearts was saddened by the loss of our beloved Sister Pearl Turner Dyer on May 5, 2012 when the good Lord saw fit to call her home. We feel our loss is her eternal gain. Sister Pearl was born March 2, 1936 to the late John and Betty Turner. She was blessed to share her life with her husband of 45 years Mr. Edwin Dyer. You always saw them together. Devoted to each other and their family, they supported each other and their home churches. Both were devoted and faithful members until illness kept them from church. The Lord blessed their union with two children, Mr. John Dyer and Mrs. Betty Waggoner (Tim). As their family grew they were blessed with five grandchildren whom sister Pearl always had pictures to share along with a beautiful and proud smile. Sister Pearl is also survived by her siblings and spouses: George Turner, Marie Nester (Nelson), Nancy DeLancey (Wilfred), and Thomas Turner (Sylvia).

Sister Pearl served as a faithful and devoted member at Long Branch Primitive Baptist Church. We will sure miss her beautiful smile and sweet spirit. She was received by the Church at Long Branch on December 5, 1954. An excerpt from the 4th Church record book reads:

"Sunday December 5, 1954 after services by Amos Issac Hash, Miss Annie Pearl Turner, was received by experience for baptism. On Sunday January 2, 1955 Amos Issac Hash, Miss Annie Pearl Turner, was baptized by Elder J. G. L. Hash amid much rejoicing. Praise ye the Lord for His mercies. Elder J.G.L. Hash Mod."

Funeral Services were conducted 2:00p.m. Tuesday May 8, 2012 at Flora Funeral Chapel by her Pastor Elder Carl Terry and Elder Junior Conner. Her body was laid to rest in Republican Church Cemetery. We feel blessed to share the time we had with Sister Pearl on this earth. Praise ye the Lord for His mercies.

Submitted in love and humbleness
Sister Betty Walker
Long Branch Primitive Baptist Church

This writer apologizes for delay in sending to have published.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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HYMN

When marshalled on the nightly plain,
The glittering host illume the sky,
One Star alone, of all the train,
Can fix the sinner's wandering eye.
Hark! hark! to God the chorus breaks,
From every host, from every gem;
But one alone the Saviour speaks,-
It is the Star of Bethlehem.

Once on the raging seas I rode,
The storm was loud, the night was dark,
The ocean yawned, and rudely blowed
The wind that tossed my foundering bark.
Deep horror then my vitals froze,
Death-struck, I ceased the tide to stem,
When suddenly a star arose,
It was the Star of Bethlehem.

It was my Guide, my Light, my All,
It bade my dark forebodings cease;
And through the storm and danger's thrall,
It led me to the port of peace.
Now safely moored, my perils o'er,
I'll sing, first in night's diadem,
For ever and for ever more,
The Star, the Star of Bethlehem!

Henry Kirke White.

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EDITORIAL

"Now the Birth of Jesus Christ Was on This Wise"
St. Matthew 1:18

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

The birth of Christ has always been controversial and always will be so far as the world is concerned. Many deny the virgin birth of Christ and are constantly seeking to prove that it did not take place. We see programs on television and articles in newspapers, magazines and books devoted to this purpose. There were those in the days that Christ was upon earth who saw Him and heard Him and yet knew Him not. He had never been revealed to them so they could not know Him. But, there is a remnant called out of nature's darkness into His marvelous light that has an experience of grace that testifies of His virgin birth. Isaiah prophesied that unto us a child is born and unto us a son is given. Every little child of grace experiences being born again by the Spirit which is Christ in them, the hope of glory. As the Holy Ghost came upon Mary and the power of God overshadowed her, she conceived and a holy child was born which was the Son of God. No works of the flesh were involved. Therefore, it was a virgin birth. So it is with each of God's elect. The Holy Ghost came upon you and the power of God overshadowed you and you conceived and Christ was born in your heart. **Galatians 4:19. Also 1 Peter 1:23 says "being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."** No works of man were involved in this birth. It is a spiritual birth and is all of grace. Therefore, His little ones believe by faith in the virgin birth of Christ because they have experienced it.

We hear it set forth that there were three wise men who were kings from the east that came to worship the Christ child. First of all, we do not know who counted the wise men or ascribed a number to them because Matthew does not. He says only that there were wise men. These wise men set forth God's people and were as many as the Lord

God called. They were wise, not with the wisdom of men, but rather the wisdom of God which is spiritual understanding. If this wisdom was of the flesh, then King Herod and his counselors could have seen the star and understood what it was. Who told these wise men that the Son of God had come to earth? The Spirit of God revealed it to these men. By faith, these wise men were following a star they were blessed to believe was the star of the King of the Jews and they had come to worship Him. God had given them understanding of what the star was and who the child was. Therefore, they are said to be wise men. There is no mention of them being kings. However, Revelation 5:10 says, **"And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."** Also 1 Peter 2:9 **"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."** In that spiritual sense, they were kings and priests unto God and so are each of you who have experienced the birth of Christ in your heart.

The star is setting forth the Holy Spirit which leads and guides the children of the heavenly King. It is from above and is manifested only to the children of God. No one else, with all their human learning, could see this star nor determine where the child was born. Even so today can no man by all the schooling of men know Christ nor where He is born — formed in your heart the Hope of glory. The star, so high and so bright, led the wise men to where the child was. When they saw the star over where the child was, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. When each of you experienced the birth of Christ and felt the comfort and peace for which you had so longed, you too rejoiced with exceeding great joy. Your soul sang out and tears of joy ran down your cheeks. Your very being praised Him whom your soul loveth.

The wise men fell down and worshipped Christ and opened their treasures and presented unto Him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Christ said, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Their hearts were opened and the gifts manifested. There were three gifts and perhaps this is why the world thinks there were three wise men. The world believes that each one brought a gift. Why would the One who created all things need their gold, frankincense and myrrh? Christ said on one occasion that "the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Though Christ created all things, yet in the world He possessed none of the world's riches. The Apostle Paul writes in **II Corinthians 8:9, "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich."** I believe these gifts were spiritual. Each wise man possessed all three gifts that they neither made nor purchased. These were not presents, but

gifts and were free with no conditions. They were gifts given to the wise men by God and are manifested when Christ is formed in your heart. They were faith, hope and charity. Every child of grace possesses these gifts from God and when one experiences the work of God in them, these gifts are manifested. You can not separate these gifts. Every child of grace is given all three. The wise men could not go back the same way they came, but went a different way. So every child of God has a different walk and travels a different path after they experience a work of grace. They hate the things they once loved and love the things they once hated. They have no desire to go back to what they once were.

There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. These shepherds set forth the ministers under the law. They were in darkness and only abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock during the nighttime of the law. They had no food with which to feed the flock. Then an angel appeared unto them and told them that he brings them "good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." By this sign, the shepherds would know that this was the Christ that was born. He was wrapped in swaddling clothes signifying that He was bound by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God to be delivered into wicked hands to be crucified and die. He was lying in a manger. No one would have expected the Son of God, the King of kings, to be in a manger but there was no more appropriate place for Him to be as a sign unto the shepherds. This was where the food for the animals was put and where they were fed. He is the food for those who hunger and thirst after His righteousness. Therefore, this was indeed a sign unto the shepherds who this child was. Christ said, "I am that bread of life" and the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world of His people.

A multitude of the heavenly host praised God and said, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." This did not mean that Christ had brought peace on earth to all mankind. You and I know that there has never been peace on earth among all peoples and nations for any period of time. For Christ said, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." Rather, the angels were proclaiming that Christ who is our peace had come to earth. Christ also said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Good will toward men speaks of the will of God as it only is good. Christ stated that He had come to do the will of His father that sent Him and the will of His father was that of all which His father had given Him He should lose none, but should raise it

up again at the last day. According to the good will of His father, He had come to earth to redeem those His Father had given Him from their sins and to satisfy the demands of His Father's righteous and holy law. Now, the shepherds had something with which to feed their flock. Day had come and the light of Christ shined forth. Grace had come and the Day Star had arisen and the Sun of righteousness arose with healing in His wings. The shepherds went preaching the gospel, telling those things which they had seen with their own eyes, handled with their own hands, and heard with their own ears. In other words, they preached that which had been revealed to them and which they had experienced-no man having taught them. God's ministers throughout all ages of time have been called and qualified in the same way. Men taught of man will preach the ways and works of man. Men taught of God will preach Christ.

May the God of all grace continue with each of you is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

PSALM 112: 1-2.

Praise ye the Lord. Blessed *is* **the man** *that* **feareth the Lord,** *that* **delighteth greatly in his commandments.**

His seed shall be mighty upon eath; the generation of the upright shall be blessed.

CORRESPONDENCE

Oct. 31, 2013

Elder Robertson,

Enclosed is an obituary of Elder Willard Ray Bird with a request that it be printed in the Signs where you have space.

I have certainly enjoyed your editorials as well as Elder J.B. Farmer's. I thank God for enlightening those that contribute the sound writings each month. They are a blessed comfort to us oldies that still seek after a crumb from the Masters table.

May the Lord continue to smile down upon you and your working staff.

V. Linn

November 11, 2013

Dear Editors,

My year does pass by quick. It is a joy to receive the Signs. How sweet it is to have a precious hope in Christ, "He is mine."

Please renew me for one year. Use the rest as needed.

In Bonds of Love and Hope,
Emmie L. Grayson
Greenville, Al. 36037

November 8, 2013

Dear Brother Horton,

I have moved from Richmond to:
Carolina House
Apt 204
611 S. Brook Street
Wake Forest, NC 27587

My nephew, John M. Berger, said he would order Signs for me from you. I have received September and October issues of the Signs. I'm hoping to receive November and following issues until next April. In April I hope the dear Lord shall bless me to order the full year of Signs.

I have been in hospital and Rehab for a few months. The Lord has blessed me to be much better and I hope to be thankful. I miss brethren and meetings. I keep hoping I will hear of a meeting near this place.

I hope God shall continue to bless you and those who help in the distribution of Signs to the readers.

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickral

Brother Tony R. Horton,

Here is a check for $50.00 for contribution to the Signs of the Times.

I do enjoy reading the Signs and look forward to getting it every month.

Thank you all for putting the Signs together.

A sister in hope and love,
Ruby Kincaid

Dear Elder Robertson,

With sadness in our hearts, I am enclosing the obituary of the death of one of our precious sisters at the Newfound Church that Elder Jerry Farmer moderates. It is the church members' wish for Sister Letha Louise Sizemore's obituary to be published in the Signs of the Times.

A sister in hope,
Sue Reed

Brother Tony Horton
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
Signs of the Times

11/19/2013

Dear Brother Horton,

It is time for me to renew my subscription for the Signs for another year. I am enclosing a check for $25.00 - $15.00 for a one year subscription and $10.00 for a contribution.

I have received the Signs for several years and I always enjoy reading the entire contents. It is comforting to know that not only we of the Old Baptist Faith are able to discuss and enjoy what we have read, but also that individuals of other faiths and denominations that have read the Signs tell us how much they also enjoyed it. May God continue to cause it to be published.

I believe that the Signs stands for the Truth and that The Truth will stand

when all else fails.

A brother in hope
George W. Hyslip

Please renew my subscription to Signs of the Times for 2 years ... $30.00.

I look for the Signs of the Times and enjoy it so much. Use what is left as you wish.

Thank you,
Arleen Giles

Mr. Tony Horton,

Enclosed find my check for $50.00 to renew my subscription for the Signs of the Times, I'm glad to get it each month. God bless all of you that sends it out each month.

Love,
Glenna Link

Oct. 11, 2013

Hello Tony,

Hope all are well. We enjoy reading Signs of the Times.
Thanks for the good work you do.

We love you all,
Wilton and Thelma

Really look forward to each issue. Five extra dollars is for contribution.

Flay Mordeci

Dear Mr. Tony Horton,

My name is Katherine Mathews and I wish to thank the Signs of the Times for the piece in Signs of the Times, the peace of the "Refining Pot". The writer told so much more than I could tell and it was so much of my life for many years ago. It explains so much of my past years, but so hard to put into words. It really meant much to me for someone to spell it out for me.

I am Katherine Mathews and for years have had such things going through my feeble mind but always hard to explain my feelings and still dealing with such things.

Thank the Signs so much for me and I know others also that were happy to see these writings in the Signs of the Times.

I am sending my payment as it is due now $25.00 for two years.

Thanks so much,
Katherine Mathews

Gentlemen,

I enjoy Signs and have learned a lot about the Primitive Baptists. Enclosed is my check for two years. Keep up God's work.

May you be blessed,

Sister Wilma Sewell
Salem Church
Panama City, Fl.

Copper Hill, Va.
November 18, 2013

Dear Brother Cleo,

Hope this finds you well and enjoying the lovely fall days. For me I'm doing good, just thinking of God's blessings that He has given to me. I have tried to put on paper the wonderful blessings He has given to me this year. I'm sending you a copy for your consideration for the Signs. I'm not a writer that's for sure but I have a deep desire to tell of His goodness to me, His love, power and peace passes all understanding. From time to time I have felt these down through the years, but I think this year has been the greatest.

Sending my love,
Mary Poff

ISAIAH 9:2.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

ARTICLES

GOD'S MIRACLE

Brethren and friends, as I try to put on paper the Heavenly Father's miracles given to me in the year of 2012 through 2013, which I hope He will guide my pen and my thoughts, blessing me to tell of His power and His grace that He has showered me with. It is hard to believe that He would bother with a sinner like me, but He has! In July of 2012 I was told that I had myeloma cancer of the bones and they wanted to put me on a pill as treatment. I told my doctor that I didn't want to take treatment, that I was ready to go any time my lord was ready for me. God has blessed me with a good life, a good husband, and five lovely daughters. We all had been blessed with good health until recently. My doctor did not pressure me to take the treatment. Instead he hugged me and said it was nice to be ready.

On March 13, 2013 I fell out of a car as I was trying to get out, and landed on my legs and feet. I had fractured a bone in the left ankle with a bad sprained ankle and foot. The right leg was hurt from thigh to the big toe. They told me that I had a crushed bone in the knee and wanted to do surgery. Again I said no, for I didn't want them messing with my bones since there was cancer in my bones. I was looking

to my lord to help me through all of this. My daughter Judy thought it was her fault that I got hurt, but no way was it her fault. I told her that this was to be and we had to look to the lord to bring us through this. The hospital wanted to keep me a few days but my daughters and I decided to go home and take care of it there. Four of my daughters live close by me so they took turns staying with me 24 hours a day for 2 months. I couldn't put any weight on my right foot and very little with the left. They put a big old shoe on it up to my knee so that gave support for my left foot. The right leg had a brace from ankle to upper thigh. As I look back now, it is worth all of the pain and the inconvenience that I went through. I wouldn't change a thing if I could.

My youngest daughter, Candy, wanted to bring her pastor to see me. So I told her yes if he wanted to come. A few days later she came in with her pastor, his wife and two children. We all had a lovely little visit. When they got ready to go home, they gathered around my chair and had prayer. During the prayer I felt 3 little pricks go down my right leg which I was so worried about and then there was a prick in my heart. I said in my heart, "Thank you lord," for your love and peace for I knew He was taking care of me. Sometimes the things that seem the worst turn out to be the best. For which we cannot understand why things happen as they do, the one who hangs the rainbow in the sky, has His own will for us, which is good for us in many ways.

I can feel from the depth of my heart that, "I know my Redeemer lives;" What a comfort this sweet sentence gives! He lives, He lives, who once were dead, He lives, my ever loving Head; He lives to bless me with His love, He lives to plead my case above, He lives my hungry soul to feed, He lives to help in time of need. This song has given much comfort to me. I can sing from the depth of my soul that my Redeemer lives! He lives all glory to His name. He lives, my Jesus, still the same. Oh sweet the joy this sentence gives, "I know my Redeemer lives."

As time went by, I was able to take my first step and that was so wonderful. I began to improve a little faster and soon I was able to fill my appointment with my cancer doctor, which gave me a surprise I will never forget. He said to me "your myeloma cancer is gone." Only God's hand could do that for me. I truly felt that song we sing; from every stormy wind that blows, from every swelling tide of woes; there is calm, a sure retreat, Tis found beneath the mercy seat. I felt to be beneath the mercy seat. Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

We had such wonderful preaching at the Smith River Association, I was rejoicing greatly and I wanted to tell of His goodness and mercy to me. My knee has healed nicely along with all

of the other injuries. I can't praise Him enough but hope there is a day that I can. I'm just living in hope that God will continue to smile down upon this poor sinner. He does perform miracles today!

Written in bonds of love and
in hope of eternal life.

Mary Poff

Dear Beloved in Christ Jesus: I have a desire, if it be the Lord's will, to leave on record, a few thoughts, concerning peace love, and fellowship, in the house of the Lord, if the Lord would bless me in a spiritual way. And at the same time feeling a deep sense of unworthness to make the attempt. I do so knowing that I won't be able to do justice to the subjects as I would like, but want to try to convey my thoughts as best as I can, the Lord being my helper, I hope. Not that I have a desire to turn anyone's attention in my direction, nor do I want to interfere with the thoughts of anyone who may have different views from mine. If I be blessed of the Lord to write anything concerning these things, I hope that it will be to his glory. And not for any other purpose. Ever looking to the Great I AM: who does all things well, and needs no help, from anyone, or anything, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him what doest thou. Blessed be His Great, and Holy Name, now and forever. How sweet the name of Jesus sounds, in a believers ear. It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds, and drives away his fears.

When we are blessed with peace, it causes us to rejoice in the truth, of God our savior. But when the peace is taken away it causes our hearts to mourn, for there can be no true worship in the house of the Lord with confusion. Then we are called on to examine ourselves, to see where we might have erred in judgement. We are weak, and subject to error. But the Lord is strong and mighty, in power, and judgement, to the pulling down of strongholds. The Lord: is Not the author of confusion, man is. I believe that all these things happen for a reason, but how they do hurt when the door is opened to such things. Is it for our learning?, for our good? We hope that is the way it is. Jesus said, if ye suffer with me, ye shall also reign with me. We read in the scriptures of holy writ, that offences will surely come at the appointed time and place. They have always been and they will be, until our Lord and saviour returns to gather his children home, where there will be no more troubles, sorrow, or confusion, but all will be well there. If I be one of his little ones, the least of all, I feel to be.

We read in the Apostle Paul's writings, in **1st. Corinthians, 2, & vs. 1-3, "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and**

him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling."

I believe that the ministers, and deacons, of the Church of God, have a duty to help in the keeping of peace and order in all of the meeting houses where they have been placed by our Lord. And I believe that the ministers were put here to feed the Little Flock, whom the Lord hath made them overseers of, in whatever place that they may be blessed of the Lord, to meet together, for worship service, that they serve with love, and tenderness, towards the little ones, seeking the peace and fellowship of the church, declaring the unsearchable riches of God's grace as the Lord gives them utterance. Nothing else is fit for sheep food.

In the book of Romans 8:28, We read, **"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose."** And as surely as we live, we are born into a world of trouble and sorrows, may we be blessed of the Lord to look to him for our help. No other help I know, except the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the great shepherd of the sheep. He said my sheep know my voice and they follow Me, and another they will not follow, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Fathers hand.

The scripture says in one place, that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God: and in this world, ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. We have to be brought down time and time again, in order that we may be taught what we are in nature, poor helpless worms of the dust. If we be the Lord's children, we are bought with a price by the precious blood of the Lamb, our blessed Lord and saviour, Jesus Christ. He said in another place, except ye suffer with me, ye will have no part with me.

There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. The Lord Jesus said I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man can come unto me except the Father, which hath sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day. It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. If we belong to the Lord, our steps are ordered of the Lord. Who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Dear ones do with this as you see fit, and all will be well. I submit these thoughts with love in the truth, I hope.

C. Fox

ECCLESIASTES 7:1-2.

A Good name *is* better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.

It is **better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that *is* the end of all men; and the living will lay *it* to his heart.**

THOU HAST KEPT THE GOOD WINE UNTIL NOW

In the miracles performed by Jesus many demonstrated the supremacy of the new covenant to that of the old covenant, even as the waterpots, used in the purifying the Jews, were used by him, in the beginning of miracles, when the water put into the pots was made wine. John 2:6-10. That good wine speaks of the spiritual experience that flows to the children of God during this present age of grace, which is the new covenant.

In like manner, and speaking of Christ, in **Heb. 8:6. "...but now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises."** While the promises under the old, or Mosaic covenant were, in a large part, temporal and to the natural man, the promises under the new covenant, or covenant of grace, are spiritual and are to the new or, born again man. Not withstanding both, temporal and spiritual blessing are all from the gracious hand of God, The emphasis however, is that the promises, under the new covenant of grace; are better than those promises of the Mosaic covenant, which was a covenant of works.

How were the promises under the new covenant better? In many ways. Moses was the mediator of the old covenant, which was of works, while Christ is the mediator of the new covenant which is by grace. The old covenant was between God and man, with Moses as the mediator; and man was unable to keep it, **"And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifice which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God;" Heb. 10:11-12.** The everlasting covenant was not between God and man, as was the Mosaic covenant, but between God the Father and God the Son where the Son agreed to pay the redemption price for his people by coming in the likeness of sinful flesh, fulfilling the law and satisfying the justice of God by the pouring out of his own blood.

Unlike in the old covenant, the new covenant had a different mediator and had a more excellent ministry, which was the ministration of eternal life. **"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption** *for us*." **(Heb. 9:11-12).** Christ was not only mediator of the new covenant but also the surety for his people.

The Mosaic rites and duties, as well as the structure of the tabernacle, were primarily typical.

As concerning the tabernacle and the many services performed, they were basically types and they were to be followed precisely. **"Who serve unto the example and shadow of**

heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount." Heb. 8:5. (See also Heb. 10:1)

Not only was the pattern, given on the mount, to be followed in detail, but other instructions and commands also had their representative and/or prophetic meaning. It is interesting to notice, in Exodus 16:34, that God commanded Moses to lay up a portion of Manna before the testimony (in the Holy of Holies) to be kept. And the children of Israel did eat Manna, during the wilderness journey, until they came to the border of the the land of Canaan. Although the followers of Christ seemed to credit Moses with providing the daily manna, this food would last for only a short while and was temporal, but the true Manna from heaven is eternal. Although the followers of Christ seemed to credit Moses with providing the Manna, Christ corrected this error. **"Then Jesus said unto them, verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." John 6:32-33.** This last "Manna" is much preferred and eternally greater than that provided in the wilderness.

Aaron's rod that budded was also placed in the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle and was used to identify the tribe of Levy as the priestly tribe through Aaron. In the test given to identify the priestly tribe, the rod not only budded, but it also blossomed and bore almonds, which seems to indicate the development of the priesthood, or rather it's bringing forth of the priesthood from the old covenant to the new. Consider that the priestly office of Aaron, as the first of the priestly designation, and thus is represented by the budding of his rod. The rod also blossomed which would seem to point to Christ as the flower of the priesthood. He is the Rose of Sharon, The Lilly of the Valley and here displayed as the Almond Blossom. And in addition, there was the fruit of almonds which seems to prefigure the spiritual priesthood of all saints. (See 1 Pet. 2:9).

The tables of the covenant were also placed in the Holy of Holies, inside the ark. This is the two tablets of commandments given by God to Moses on the mount when he gave him the law. They were made of stone and placed in the ark of the covenant and beneath the mercy seat. But under the new covenant the storage place is much different. Contrary to placing the new covenant items in a box, such as the ark of the covenant, God places the items, or law directly into man, **"For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Heb. 8:10.** Thus indicating

that the new covenant, being placed in the mind, by God, is, by the Spirit, a reasonable thing to the spiritual mind. In like manner the law being placed in the heart indicates it is also emotional in the lives of those who are born again. A heart felt experience and an enlightened mind is far superior to the rules and commandments of the old covenant.

Consider further that the full expression of the Holy Spirit often seems vague and shadowy under the Mosaic covenant. However, he is brought into fuller view in the new covenant, even as in Christ. **"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Col. 2:9.** And Christ says, in **John 14:16, "And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter." "But the Comforter,** *which* **is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John 14:26**. The Spirit brings forth the peaceful fruits of righteousness and makes them a sought after vocation for the child of God. **"...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." Gal. 5:22-23.** Please note that the verb "is", before the word "fruit", in this quote is singular and not plural, This indicates that the items named are not each exclusive to themselves, but a part of the whole. For example, an apple is a fruit but contains many individual parts such as pealing, core, stem, seed and etc.. But, when you get a single apple you get the whole thing. In like manner the fruit of the spirit does not come in pieces and parts, but is a (single) fruit. Some items may appear to come in a greater measure than others, but each has its place in the life of a child of God.

It is easily concluded that the promises fulfilled, and the "good wine" tasted during this present age of grace, far exceeds the blessing of the legal covenant. They do, from time to time, brings forth those refreshing spiritual periods of "...peace of God which passeth all understanding...", as the child of God reflects on the precious hope that rests in the often troubled breast.

Elder Wayman Chapell

VOICES OF THE PAST

SPIRITUAL INVENTORY
MAY, 1946

Wherefore the, rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fail. — 2 Peter 1:10

THIS LANGUAGE is addressed "to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior, Jesus Christ." It is not addressed to any other than the children of God. None can receive these sayings save

the called and elected. Those who are the called and elected were so solely because of the righteousness of God and our Savior, Jesus Christ. Let us now proceed in our meditations to make our calling and election sure by using the same formula advocated by Peter in this same scripture. I have termed this formula a lesson in Spiritual Mathematics.

First, he says: **"Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make** *you that ye shall* **neither** *be* **barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:5-8).**

All these that we are to add must be of the same denomination and we must be in possession of them before we can add them. If we can determine the source of faith then we must conclude that these other things are from the same source in order to be of the same denomination. "By grace are ye saved through 'faith'; and that not of yourselves: it [faith] is the gift of GOD."

Faith is the gift of God, so all these other things we are to add must be gifts of God. If the virtue and these other things be good they must be gifts of God. James says: "Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." So all these are good — thus gifts of God, and we must be in possession of each of them before we can add them.

So, in this problem of Spiritual Mathematics, it does not concern any works of righteousness that we may perform but our pure minds being stirred up by way of remembrance of these wonderful gifts that God hath bestowed upon us. When we are so enabled by the Spirit to study to show ourselves (as being) approved unto God: we make our calling and election so sure in our minds that we are enabled to rejoice and not fall into despair. In working out our own salvation by recalling all the things that we have experienced we fear and tremble. We wonder has God been so gracious unto us as to work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

Now in solving this problem for our own consolation, we must now consider: do we have faith in God and Jesus Christ as our Savior? If we find that we have any trust or confidence in ourselves for any part of salvation, to such extent we are void of faith in Jesus Christ; but if we find that our experience teaches us that we must be saved solely upon the merits of Jesus and have no confidence in ourselves then we may conclude that we are in possession of faith.

Next, let us consider virtue. We fear and tremble now because in our flesh we can find no good thing. We are but sinners, vile and needy. Sin is mixed with all we do. We are comforted with this thought, surely it takes virtue to reveal to us our sinfulness. Were it

not for this virtue we would be righteous in our own eyes. Surely, then, God hath given to us this virtue. This pure heart or virtue enables us to see ourselves as we are. It enables us to behold that sin is mixed with all we do. We see that in us (that is in our flesh) dwells no good thing.

Next, we are glad to add knowledge. His children grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. God has taught us through experience more and more of our depravity and dependence upon grace and more and more of the meritorious, complete work that Jesus has performed, is performing and will perform for God's chosen. Surely knowledge may be added in the meditations of the pure mind concerning our experience.

Next, we are to add temperance. Have our experience and belief tempered our actions? Have we not been restrained in some degree from thinking and acting as we have thought and acted heretofore? Are we not more sane minded in our estimation of others as well as ourselves? Have we not been restrained from trusting in ourselves? This peculiar experience has tempered our actions and even our associates and ideals are not the same. Now we see temperance added to the list in our meditations.

Next on the list is patience. Paul said: "We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience." Through much tribulation we have learned to patiently wait upon the Lord. We have been taught by that great Teacher that we are depraved and have no ability to lift ourselves from this condition, but God has been so merciful unto us that when we were deepest in despair He has reached us many times. These experiences have wrought in us a degree of patience. We now see that God has blessed us with patience.

"And to patience godliness." God has been so gracious to us and has blessed us in so many ways. There is such vast difference between us and God. No comparison, but what a contrast! We are incapable; God is all powerful. We are foolish; God is all wise. We are sinful; God is all holy. We are creatures of time; God is eternal. We are finite; God is infinite. We are mortal; God is immortal. It is with reverential fear and amazement that we are made to bow to the shalls and wills of Jehovah and trust through Jesus Christ the God-man that His abundant mercy may even reach us. May we not add godliness to the list being possessed with this reverential awe and fear?

To godliness, brotherly kindness. Once my earthly father, who was an ordained minister in another religious organization, accompanied me to a Primitive Baptist Church. While we were enroute home I noticed tears trickling down his cheeks as he said, "I would to God that the brotherly love you people have one for another was practiced by us." I asked him why he made such a remark, and he said, "Everyone can see that you folks love one

another, the lovely smile, the warm hand clasp and the smiling countenance on your faces shows that you really love one another. In our church, there is confusion, strife and pride displayed in a big way."

Even the heathen can say, "The Lord hath done great things for them." They can see the brotherly love that exists between brethren. When a brother rejoices, the brethren rejoice with him. When a brother mourns, the brethren mourn with him. Surely brotherly kindness may be added to our characteristics.

"To brotherly kindness, charity." Do we possess charity, which is love? We love God because He first loved us. We love the brethren with that godly love. This love is not akin to natural love. The same love God loves us with goes back and loves God and goes out and loves the brethren. We cannot be so selfish as to retain this love but it is efficacious — reciprocates — it loves God and the brethren and enables us to do good to all mankind, especially to the household of faith.

Now, we have worked out our own salvation with fear and trembling. We have added each of the gifts that God has so graciously blessed us with. We have made our calling and election sure by the Spirit stirring up our pure minds by way of remembrance of the things that we have experienced. We will not fall in despair; our minds have been gladdened and we are made to rejoice over our experience that God has so graciously blessed us to enjoy. Now we praise His holy name for His goodness to the children of men.

Elder E. J. Lambert

GENESIS 28:12-14
Jesus is the Ladder between God and His People

The same is plain from His appearing to Jacob in a vision, recorded in Gen. 28, beginning at the 12th verse. **"And he** *[Jacob]*, **and behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold the Lord stood above it, and said, I** *am* **the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread** *[or break forth]* **abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."** In this vision Jacob saw a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, and the Lord God of Abraham and Isaac spoke by the way of the ladder, or from the top of it to Jacob, in the language of prophecy; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on the ladder. These angels were **"ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation," Heb. 1:14**; and

the ladder was the **"Son of man."** See John. 1:51, **"And He** *[Jesus]* **saith unto him,** *[Nathaniel]* **Verily, verily, I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."** This ladder was, therefore, the of man; and the angels ascending and descending upon it; God was at the top of it; Jacob, an heir of salvation, at the bottom of it; the ladder reaching from earth to heaven as the way of communication from God to man. This ladder was the Son of man, or the Mediator between God and man. The term Son of man is only applicable to Christ in human nature, and in the nature of man He is the ladder or Way to the Father. By the way of this ladder a prophecy was delivered to Jacob, and the Mediator under the figure or use of a ladder, was brought to view; not to show that there should be such a Mediator brought into being some time subsequent, but that He then was in being, and the prophecy then made to Jacob proves that He was then in His prophetical office. We all agree that it is through the mediation of Christ alone that any communication of grace or peace is possible between God and men since the fall, and that the human nature of Christ is proper to Him as Mediator, or to His mediation. Then as the ladder was the way of communication, His human nature was necessarily the ladder which Jacob saw, and must have existed ever since God communed with man in a way of mercy. Jacob seems to have been of this opinion, for when he awoke he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not; and he was afraid, and said, how dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, this is the gate of heaven. "Christ as man says, "I am the way;" "I am the door;" "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me, ... Here the ladder was the way to the God of Abraham; and Jacob says, "This is the gate of heaven" - gate, way, and door are used in the same sense, and mean the same thing; and Christ as man is intended. Thus we see that ever since there was a way to the God Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the man Christ Jesus has existed, and ever since He communicated the mind of God to men, He has been in His prophetical office. The same thing is plainly taught in chap. 31:11-13. I might point to many places where God appeared in human form to His people of old, and spake as a Prophet to them, and was called a man, as well as God, and I can see no better reason why the old saints called Him both God and man, than because He existed in both the nature of God and of man, and if this be the fact, they called Him man properly, because He was man; and they called Him God properly, because He was God; but if as man, He had no existence, they must have called Him man very improperly, and as there is a vast disproportion between God and men, it must be a disparagement to the character of God to call Him a man; but if the Mediator in the nature of man, without the dishonors of the fall, was in the bosom of the Father, in all the glories of His mediatorial character, and in the offices of a Mediator, reveals a God of grace to saints in prophetic

and in the offices of a Mediator, reveals a God of grace to saints in prophetic strains of peace and love, the name "man" is proper, and instead of a disparagement to God, His grace and glory is revealed to men, in the Mediator as man; but as the reader [if he has ever read the Bible once through] must be convinced that God, in the form of man, and under the name man, and was by the saints called man, did appear as a Prophet to teach His people; I shall take it as granted, that all who believe as the patriarchs did, will not fault me for believing the man did exist, and that they did see Him, according to their word, for I dare not contradict them, and they have declared it. I shall next notice the Mediator in His Kingly office, and show that as man He existed in this office under the former dispensation.

Thirdly, This Kingly office also is connected in His character as Mediator. Then if His human nature be necessary to Him as Mediator, it must have existed ever since He was Mediator, and as we have seen in Scripture language, that both as God and man, He was seen in His Priestly and Prophetical offices; so I shall proceed to show, that as both God and man, He existed in His Kingly office under the former dispensation. God has plainly manifested Himself, in the human nature, or as man, in all the mediatorial offices of Christ, and in the works and doctrine which we have upon record; as we have seen already, as well before the birth of Christ at Bethlehem, as since, and we have also seen that God did appear in the manhood long before the conception of Mary, and therefore the man in whom He was seen did then exist, or He could not have been seen, for that which is not in existence cannot be seen by men. God is a King universal, according to Psalm 47:2, 7-8. This is His undisputed right, as the Creator and Disposer of all things; but He is called in a particular sense, and in distinction from His universal dominion, **"King of saints." Rev. 15:3, "And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, great and marvelous** *are* **Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true** *are* **Thy ways, Thou King of saints."** The victorious saints are singing the conqueror's song, and it is called the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb; the name Lamb denotes the human nature of Christ, for it was His human nature that was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, [Isa. 53:7], but this Lamb to whom they ascribe their victory, was in existence when the children of Israel crossed the Red Sea, and existed as man. See **Exod. 15:3, "The Lord** *is* **a man of war: the Lord** *is* **His name."** The man in the text was in existence, and His name is the Lord; and as the Lord in the man conquered all the Egyptians, they sung, "the Lord is man of war;" but as though divine power in the man had delivered them, they said, "The Lord is His name." So likewise in Revelation, they sing "the song of the Lamb," referring to the human nature which by death conquered death, and by whose blood they had overcome the

Beast, but they own His divinity to be the LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, and both natures in one person is King of saints. This truth is evident by comparing Rev. 19:11-16, inclusive. Here He is described as being "faithful and true" - called "the Word of God" "clothed with a vesture dipped in blood," etc. His being called the Word of God, a faithful and true witness, and being clothed in a vesture dipped in blood, must be spoken of Him as man, and His Kingly office is brought to view by the "sharp sword that goeth out of His mouth " and from His having "on His vesture and on His thigh a name written KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." Mark it well, this name which is above every name, was written on His human nature - His thigh, that is on His vesture and on His thigh, even on the vesture dipped in blood, and it must be given up, by every discerning Christian, that His human nature is here described, and on Him as man this exalted name is written in large capitals, to show that God is in the man, and so He is both God and man, but one King of saints.

Elder Wilson Thompson

PROVERBS 3:4-6.

So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

For the Signs of the Times.
Athens Pa., May 11, 1855.

BROTHER BEEBE: - Having for a few days past had my mind exercised with enquiries as to the nature of a hope within, which should be as all anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and also having the words of our Savior, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me," unusually impressed upon my mind, I feel inclined to pen down a few reflections although I am aware it will be in a feeble manner. What evidence have I that I am I a follower of the Lamb? Am I not resting on a false hope? If one of the fold, why so much taken up with the cares of this world? Why so much allured with the unsatisfying, things of earth, that so many of my thoughts are occupied therewith!

If I follow thee my Savior and King,
What meanest this straying? this heart wandering?
This rambling mid thorns, this clinging to earth?
This leaning on self, this season of dearth?"

If ever a poor soul amid its temptations needed a "Father at the Helm" it is mine. But there are times when I do rejoice in a finished salvation. Jesus' dying words on the cross, "It is finished," are precious words to me. Well do I remember when they first arrested my attention, and I trust by the Spirit's influence led me to search

after the precious doctrine of grace. Step by step I was enabled to rejoice in the efficacy of the atonement, in an all sufficient Savior, in the eternal unchanging purpose of an unchanging God, till the great plan of salvation seemed replete with glory. The happy words of the psalmist to his Lord were on my lips. "All my springs are in Thee." Since then I have felt how much I need daily support, guidance, and protection to keep me at the feet or Jesus, and from the temptations of an ensnaring world. Like a tottering child I need the watchful eye of a parent or I meet with many bruises. There is a beautiful sentiment in a late number or the *Signs,* which meets with a warm greeting in my heart. It is this, "But without renewed manifestations of the pardoning love of God, first experience affords but poor satisfaction to the soul, and though we take encouragement from the experience of the past, the soul can no more feed upon it, than the body can sustain its health and vigor from the food of yesterday." Tis true that past experience encourages us onward. But we want to feel that in our travel we are leaning on the arm of our beloved, we want an evidence within that in Christ we live, and move, and have our being, and that as he lives we shall live also. We trust we have in times past walked in the light of his countenance, and still we need the Spirit's soul-cheering presence to enliven our too often desponding hearts, sustaining grace to buoy us up far above self, and its vain imaginings; for as soon as we lose sight of Jesus, we are tampering with self, looking within for satisfaction, and the more we seek the more we stir up the corrupt fountain. Faith grows weak, we almost if not quite forget that *seamless robe of righteousness, and* fear that we have been deceived. Or we are lulled to sleep with the enchantments of the world, we grow careless and indifferent. The bible becomes a sealed book, the closet is unfrequented, and unless a ray from the Sun of Righteousness pierces through the gloom, we must remain in darkness and stupor. I can say from sad experience we cannot too much dread this sleepy carnal mindedness. But the Lord knoweth our feeble frame, he hath compassion on our infirmities. "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings so the Lord alone did lead Jacob," and will continue to lead his people, for "the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." Hawker, in one or his works noticed the peculiar manner in which the eagle carries her young on her wings, so that an arrow cannot harm them without first piercing her, so he says is the Lord's care for his children. If we could but realize in whose hands we are, if we were not so prone to forget the protecting care of God, if in our infirmity we leaned more on our precious staff we might walk more cheerfully. May all of us who have felt that the Lord is precious strive by divine grace to recognize the goodness of God in all his dealings with us, in adversity rely upon his all wise care, in prosperity serve him with fear and

trembling, in weakness forget not the strength of Israel, in darkness pray for the dawning of the Sun of Righteousness in our hearts, forgetting not to hail the precious promises of the gospel. May our ears be opened that we may hear the voice of the Shepherd, and with joy speak of his praise and talk of his power, and walk as his humble followers.

MARIANNE MURRAY.

"Thou gavest also thy good Spirit to instruct them, and withheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst."- NEHEMIAH ix. 20.

WHEN we are thoroughly emptied of ourselves — when our knowledge is shewn to be ignorance, our wisdom folly, our righteousness filthy rags, and our strength weakness- then we begin to long after the teachings of the blessed Spirit. We must be purged and tried before we can value and receive the treasures of grace. When we are well exercised and tried in our souls, then we begin to long after the teachings of the Holy Spirit, that he would shed abroad the love of God in our soul, visit and guide us, overshadow us with his holy presence, and drop into our hearts his secret unction. Before we are brought here, we know not the personality of the Holy Ghost. We have no evidence in our conscience that he is God; we cannot worship and adore him as the Third Person in the blessed Godhead. But when we are brought to this spot, that we know nothing without his teaching, feel nothing without his giving, and are nothing without his making — this makes us pant and sigh after his teachings and leadings; and we are brought to wait in the posture of holy adoration and still quietness for the dew and unction of the Spirit to fall upon our conscience.

J.C. Philpot

ST. MATTHEW 5:3-5.

Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted,

Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 2013

Nancy Wilson, GA 5.00
Carlton Sumner, VA 5.00
Frank Williams, VA 150.00
Garland Stanley, NC 25.00
Steve Terry, VA 10.00
Ruby Dyer, VA 5.00
Ruby Kincaid, OH 50.00
Emmie Grayson, AL 5.00

OBITUARIES

ELDER WILLARD RAY BIRD

It pleased our God of heaven to remove from our midst our dearly beloved pastor and yoke-fellow to the church, Elder Willard Ray Bird on September 6, 2013 at the age of 88 years. May we be granted a heart of submission from a God of all grace who does all things well. His will be done, "as in heaven so in earth."

Elder Bird was born March 3, 1925 to the late Joseph Addison and Malinda Mae (Spears) Bird.

Elder Bird is survived by his beloved wife of 63 years, Anna Lee (Wood) Bird; daughter Lisa Stout; two grandchildren, Matthew Bird and Seth Stout, four great grandchildren as well as countless nieces, nephews, and friends.

He retired from The Columbia Gas Company in 1984 with 38 years of service.

Elder Bird united with the Providence Church on Turkey Creek, WV and was baptized on May 26, 1968 by Elder V.B. Linn. He was received by relation into the Hopewell Church in Cross Lanes, WV on September 4, 1977. He was appointed assistant pastor and moderator on June 30, 1979. On September 5, 1987 Elder Bird was appointed pastor of the Hopewell Church and served in that capacity until his death. He also served the Sarah Church in Boone as their pastor, appointed in September 13, 1987. He served as moderator of the POCA Association from 1988 until it was dissolved in 2005.

I, the writer met Willard for the first time the day he asked for a home with Providence Church when He requested that I lead him into the baptismal water in Turkey Creek. He proved to be a life long friend in the ministry and we were blessed to travel many miles together in the sweet communion and hope of Eternal life by the Grace of God, for which I have been made thankful.

Funeral services were held at 11:00 AM Tuesday, September 10 at the Allen Funeral home, Hurrican, WV with Elders Harold and Lewis Johnson officiating. Burial followed at Mt. Mariah Cemetery.

Now as another page is turned in God's providential purpose we are reminded of the words of our Lord and Master, "Well done thou good and faithful servant."

Submitted in love,
V.B. Linn

ST. LUKE 1: 78-79.

Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us.

To give light to them that sit in darkness and *in* the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

SISTER LETHA LOUISE SIZEMORE

Our mild, lovely, and gentle Sister in the faith passed from this life on May 23, 2013 at the Bowers Hospice House in Beckley, West Virginia after an extended illness. She was born April 12, 1921 at Bud, West Virginia, and was the daughter of the late Ralph and Rebecca (Mitchem) Lester. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her loving husband of 62 years, William Fred Sizemore; a son, William A. Sizemore; an infant brother and sister; brothers, Elzie, Lacy, and Jimmy Lester; and sisters, Susie Miller, Vada Wiles, and Viola Dickerson.

The family members left to cherish her memory include her son, Calvin Sizemore and his wife, Sylvia of Shady Springs; her daughters, Loretta "Mary" Lawson and her husband Bob of Lester, with whom Sister Letha lived for the past six years, and Kaye Dunn and her husband, Lynndall of Bud; a brother Luther Lester, and his wife Nancy of Bud; a sister, Polly Sizemore of Turkey Creek; a daughter-in-law, Florina Sizemore; four grandsons; five granddaughters; three step-grandsons; seven great-grandchildren; twelve great-great-grandchildren; and a host of nephews, nieces, family and friends.

Sister Letha was a constant, faithful, member of the Newfound Primitive Baptist Church and served as the clerk for many years. She was brought to meeting by her husband, Fred; then by her son, Calvin; and then by her grandson, Anthony Dunn, who were all very attentive to her needs. She attended her meetings faithfully up until the last year or so of her life, and was given a desire to attend up until the end. She was sound in the faith, and was hospitable to the saints, receiving and providing for them in her home. She was a warm and friendly person, deeply loved by all who knew her in truth. She was loved by her brethren and sisters in the church, and was also widely known and loved by many across this country, who came to know her as they visited the Little Vine Olde Association, of which the Newfound church is a correspondent.

We miss seeing her smiling face, and miss visiting with her. Our sadness is turned to joy when we are made to hope and trust that her Spirit is now in the presence of her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and when we are made to understand that her labors and trials on this earth are finished. "To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord." And we love to think that nothing is able now to disturb her peace, or to cause her any sorrow or pain. God is good and merciful and kind. "Blessed in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

It was agreed in conference of the Newfound Church on September 15, 2013 to include this memorial in the Church record and to send a copy to the "Signs of the Times" for publication.

J.B. Farmer, Moderator
Sister Sue Reed, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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HYMN

Now, may the Lord reveal his face,
And teach our stammering tongues
To make his sovereign, reigning grace,
The subject of our songs.
No sweeter subject can invite
A sinner's heart to sing,
Or more display the glorious right
Of our exalted King.

This subject fills the starry plains
With wonder, joy, and love;
And furnishes the noblest strains
For all the harps above:
While the redeemed in praise combine
To grace upon the throne,
Angels in solemn chorus join,
And make the theme their own.

Grace reigns to pardon crimson sins,
To melt the hardest hearts;
And from the work it once begins,
It never more departs.
The world and Satan strive in vain
Against the chosen few;
Secured by grace's conquering reign,
They all shall conquer, too.

Twas grace that called our souls at first;
By grace thus far we're come;
And grace will help us through the worst,
And lead us safely home.
Lord, when this changing life is past.
If we may see thy face,
How should we praise and love at last,
And sing the reign of grace!

Newton

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EDITORIAL

"For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he *who was* of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman *was* by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, *thou* barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him *that was born* after the Spirit, even so *it is* now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free." Galatians 4:22-31

Elder J.B. Farmer

In these few words, the inspired apostle Paul opened up a great mystery that had been hidden from the beginning. These things cannot be received and understood by the carnal mind, because they are spiritual. According to scripture, **"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned."** Happy are you, if you are given a mind and heart to receive these things. They are hidden from the wise and prudent, but are revealed unto babes. May the Lord guide our thoughts and may we be given eyes to see, ears to hear and a heart of understanding.

The apostle was wonderfully blessed to explain this hidden truth per-

taining to election, and to the plight of God's people in the world. It identifies all men who ever had or shall have an existence in this world. They are separated into two groups: those born after the flesh, and those born after the Spirit. One's understanding of the doctrine of sovereign election affects the way he sees himself and all others. It affects the way he understands the scriptures. It affects the way he thinks of God. The two opposing views about election and God's sovereign love in the choice of His people in election, seems to divide the thinking of the carnal and spiritual minds of all men upon the earth. One view is according to the Spirit, and the other according to natural understanding.

God, in His written word, manifests this difference in the account of Sarai and Hagar. Since Abram and Sarai were well stricken in age had no son of their own, Sarai thought she could never have children. She, in a natural mind, thought she might obtain children by her handmaid. So she gave her handmaid, Hagar the Egyptian, to Abraham. When Hagar saw that she had conceived, her mistress Sarai was despised in her eyes. (Abram was 86 years old when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram and Sarai was 76.) We see here the beginning of the hatred of one people for another — the hatred of the bondwoman for the freewoman.

When Abram was 99 years old the Lord appeared to him. And the Lord made an everlasting covenant with Abram and his seed. The Lord told Abram that he would be a father of many nations, that his name would no more be called Abram but rather Abraham, that He would give him the land of Caanan, that Abraham and his seed should keep God's covenant of circumcision, that Sarai would now be called Sarah, that Sarah should bear Abraham a son called Isaac, and that He would establish an everlasting covenant with Isaac and his seed.

The Lord at this time also made a covenant with Ishmael. He declared that He had blessed him, and would make him fruitful, and multiply him exceedingly. The Lord also declared that Ishmael should beget twelve princes, and that He would make him a great nation.

We see that God here made two distinct covenants. One was an everlasting covenant involving Abraham, Sarah the freewoman, Isaac the child of promise, and his spiritual seed after him. I am made to believe that this covenant represents a figure of spiritual things. The other was a covenant involving Hagar the bondwoman, Ishmael the child born after the flesh, and his natural seed after him. I am made to believe that this covenant manifests a figure of natural things. The blessed apostle was given to describe the bondwoman Hagar as the Jerusalem which now is and is in bondage with her children. I am made to believe that this manifests the whole fleshly family of unbelief. And he was blessed to describe Sarah as the freewoman, the Jerusalem which is above and is the mother of us all. I am made to believe that this indicates the whole spiritual family of God.

The apostle said by inspiration,

"Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." This is our hope and trust, that we are the elect of God, chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. We hope and trust that we are included in the everlasting covenant of grace, which secured eternal life for all the saints by virtue of the finished work and righteousness of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Our hope and trust is that we are not the children of the flesh, held in the natural covenant of Hagar and Ishmael, that walk after the flesh, whose end shall be misery and destruction.

The apostle, by the Holy Spirit declared, **"But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him** *that was born* **after the Spirit, even so *it is* now."** From the beginning to this day, and down until the end of time, the one born of the flesh has persecuted and shall persecute the one born after the Spirit. The Lord made it plain that if they hated Him, they would also hate you. But He said, **"Blessed** *are* **they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when** *men* **shall revile you, and persecute** *you* **and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great** *is* **your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."** He also said that if you were of the world, the world would love you. And He said, **"Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! For so did their fathers to the false prophets."** But we hope and trust that we are not loved by the world.

Isaac was born, and after eight days was circumcised. And after Isaac was weaned, Abraham made a great feast. **"And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking. Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son,** *even* **with Isaac."** Here we see evidence of the hatred of the son of the bondwoman for the son of the freewoman. And the Lord caused Abraham to hearken to the voice of Sarah, even though it was grievous in his sight, and after giving them bread and water, he sent them away. But God saved Hagar and Ishmael from death in the desert, and Ishmael became a great nation according to the covenant of God.

The seed of the bondwoman has continued to persecute the seed of the freewoman even to this day. In the last book of the Bible, the book of Revelation, there are two women described in figurative language. They are a great wonder and a great mystery. The one woman described in Revelation 12 is clothed with the sun, and the moon is under her feet, and has a crown of twelve stars upon her head. The other woman described is in Revelation 17. John saw her sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her

fornication: And upon her forehead *was* a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth. And John saw the woman drunken with the blood of saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

I am made to believe that Sarah, the Jerusalem which is above and free, is represented by the woman clothed with the sun, having the moon under her feet. And I am made to believe that Hagar, the bondwoman, is represented by the other one that John saw sit upon the scarlet colored beast. The one is altogether lovely, holy and blessed. The other is full of abominations and filthiness. The one is of the everlasting covenant of grace. The other is of the covenant of death and destruction. The one is persecuted by the great red dragon, which is the devil. The other sits upon the great red dragon and is part of the persecution. The one was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. By the hindering mercies of God, the hateful woman is kept from carrying out her evil intent to destroy the freewoman.

It is impossible that the son of the bondwoman, that was born after the flesh, could ever be heir with the son of the freewoman, that was born after the spirit. The son of the freewoman was loved with an everlasting love, chosen in the covenant of grace, foreknown of God, predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, called, justified and glorified in the sight of God before the world was. The son of the bondwoman was never loved of God, but was a vessel of wrath fitted for destruction. He was a vessel created of God for a purpose — to be used to bring a fiery trial of faith to try the children of God. After the purpose of God is finished for that vessel of dishonor, that vessel shall be taken and destroyed.

After explaining the wondrous and mysterious workings of almighty God down through the ages, the inspired apostle gives much assurance to the children of God and says, **"So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free."** None deserve to be counted as children of the freewoman, for it is all of grace. The only way one could be a child of the freewoman is by birth, by being born of the Spirit. And we know that no one has any part in his birth process. It is altogether passive. So, if you have been given a hope of salvation based upon the kindness and goodness of God our Savior, Who came and suffered and died for your sins (and I hope and trust mine also), and Who by the power of God took up His life again, you are not a child of the bondwoman, but of the free. You have been born from above, and are an heir of the promise of eternal life in Christ Jesus, the Lord. Praise, honor, and glory are due unto our God forever, Who alone is worthy.

I trust that this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer.

CORRESPONDENCE

131 Kay Loop
Shreveport, LA 71105
Dec. 18, 2013

Signs of the Times
1429 Howlett St.
Hillsville, NC 24343

Dear Brother Horton,

Enclosed, please find check to renew my subscription to "Signs of the Times" with some extra to be used as needed.

"The Signs" is a comfort to me and I enjoy and appreciate it.

Sincerely,
Billie Owens Speir

Tony R. Horton,

I see that my subscription is running out with Dec. issue. I am sending check for two years renewal. Do with the rest as you see fit. I enjoy reading the Signs and hope I have been given a love for all of God's people.

For by grace are you saved by faith: and that not of yourselves: it is a gift of God; not of works lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Garlon Vick

Dear Brother Horton,

I have learned that the Signs of the Times are now available on a flash drive. Please send me one flash drive, for which I am enclosing a check for $40.00.

My grandfather was Elder Harold M. Bennett, from Mardela Springs, Maryland. I have some of his papers, including several photographs of a number of O.S.B. ministers. I have put them on a CD in JPS format. Would you like to have a copy? Some are identified but a number are not. And the quality varies, but most are fairly good.

Thank you for digitizing these copies of the Signs.

Sincerely,
Sylvia Bradley

Bro. Robertson,

I continue to enjoy reading "The Signs of the Times" sent to me each month. The articles are very uplifting and profitable to me. Thanks for all you and associate Elder Farmer do in selecting the articles for publication.

Christ our hope,
Elder Ralph Dale

P.S.

I wrote this short article, if you would like to publish it.

PSALM 131:1-3.

Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty; neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me.

Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul *is* even as a weaned child.

Let Israel hope in the Lord from henceforth and for ever.

ARTICLES

"Sirs, what must I do to be saved." (Acts 16:30)

This question was asked by the Philippian jailor to Paul and Silas. It was evident by his question that he was ignorant of the way God saves sinners by His free and sovereign grace. The self-righteous, unlike the Philippian jailor, assume that they KNOW what to do in order to be saved and have a home in heaven. The Philippian jailor, although ignorant of salvation by grace, was taught of the Lord of his need of salvation. Paul and Silas did not chide him for his ignorance but instead proclaimed the gospel to him. **"And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house" (Acts 16:31-32).**

The jailor had been prepared by the Lord to receive the word of the Lord spoken by Paul. **"The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, *is* from the Lord" (Proverbs 16:1).** Paul did not preach to him that he must do something. Paul preached to him the Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of sinners, for none but Jesus can do helpless sinners good. The Philippian jailor believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. He believed on Christ because God gave him the gift of faith. We believe, Paul writes, **"according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead" (Eph. 1:19, 20).** Salvation is of the Lord. **"To the praise of the glory of His grace" (Eph. 1:6).**

Elder Ralph Dale

FELLOWSHIP

Fellowship with and among the Lord's people has been on my mind very much for years. To me, the word fellowship means fellows on the same ship traveling to the same port or destination. They are as Noah and the people shut up in the Ark so far as their being in captivity to, and with, their God. I have never felt worthy of the fellowship shown to me these 42 years that I have been a member of Malmaison Church. It has been the most precious feeling about my journey in life with my Breth-

ren, to feel the mutual bond of love with a handshake or a face to face talk of our experiences of grace. The most sorrow and hurt has been the ease with which it seems that Brethren are willing to part with this precious fellowship when disagreements confront us. Except for a departure from our doctrine, I have always felt that every avenue of reconciliation should be explored-even if it takes much effort and talks among the Brethren. I have heard it said "Oh we don't have fellowship with a certain association or church" but that is a natural human failing-it could not be of the Holy Spirit because there was no guile found in Jesus' mouth and He did forgive all of our sins.

Our Christian fellowship is not with natural man as we hate the acts of the flesh and have been taught that all of our righteousness is as filthy rags in the sight of God. A song in the Goble Hymn book reads "From all that's mortal, all that's vain, And from this earthly clod, Arise my soul, and strive to gain Sweet fellowship with God". If we are given to feel fellowship with our Brethren, it is surely that this is a gift from God as He states that He is in His people and they are in Him and He is in His Father.

How precious is this Christian fellowship when felt and how alone we would feel if our Brethren were to forsake us. If they saw myself as I do, I'm sure they would turn away but my deepest desire is to live in peace and love with my dear Brethren, never wanting to offend but to live at their feet as I journey, I hope, to a better world. This life is very short as we grow old and look back on our past life and there are so few days to be with our Brethren in a lifetime. Our sweet meetings are only for a few hours but the time spent together and our mutual worship of the Lord is what keeps us hoping we have not been deceived in our expectation of a never ending fellowship as we journey together on that ship to the promised land.

In hope of eternal life,
Burnell B. Williams

(Elder Wray is 92 years of age and is pastor of Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church near Reidsville, North Carolina.)

ELDER HAYWOOD WRAY'S EXPERIENCE

From cassette tape recording

There have been many people over the years who have asked me to put my experiences on paper or tape one. I will endeavor by the help of the Lord to put it on tape. I hope the Lord will bless me to bring it out as God revealed it to me. In 1951 in November my wife and I joined the church at Pleasantville Church. About a week before I was baptized, I had a dream. I dreamed that when I was baptized as I came out of the water, there was a flint rock about a foot wide. As it went out from the bank it went way out right close to the bank of the water, and I couldn't understand what

that meant. When we went home, some of my wife's people went with us home. Something got wrong with my shoulders. There was a weight of some kind on my shoulders, and I couldn't get rid of it. Nothing I did would help it. I would get up and go in the other room thinking maybe that would help a little bit, you know. I'd come back, and it didn't help a bit. So, instead of it getting better, it got worse. I went to the deacons at my home church and told them, "I don't want to be a deceiver." I said, "All of the people that I've heard of being baptized, they felt so good and lifted up after being baptized. That has not been my case. There is something badly wrong. You just are going to have to take my name off the church book. There is one thing I don't want to do and that is to be a deceiver to God's people." The deacons helped me a whole lot. They said, "Brother Wray, we understand." I continued on. Then I began to have dreams, and all the dreams that I had were a message to me from God. I began to dream about birds. I dreamed of one bird one night. I was standing by a well, and a big bird lit right in front of me. It was so humble. My heart just went out to that bird. I loved that bird. It wasn't a pretty bird, but I loved it. It wanted something to eat. It wanted me to feed it. I looked at my hands, and I didn't have anything. I remembered that there wasn't anything left that night from supper, you know. All of my big family ate it all. All at once there was the prettiest bread I've ever seen appeared in my hands, and I began to feed that bird. He ate it with such joy. So then before the bird left and flew away, it blessed me. I knew the bird was on a long journey. He was on his journey, but he had to have something to eat. I pondered that a long time.

Then, I remembered I had a dream of another bird. I was standing in the door of our house and a dove fluttered around. I knew it was on a journey — and I didn't have anything for it to eat. I held my hands out to it. He came and looked down at them — and he fluttered away. Oh, my heart went with it. Then all at once a Bible appeared in my hand, and I held it out to him. The bird came back and he looked at that Bible. He nestled himself down in that Bible just like a bird on a nest. You could hardly see it. Then I knew. The next morning when I woke up, "Now I know that there is nothing in man's hand that is worth feeding to put before His people to feed them. It takes the Word of God, His love, His mercy, His grace." And, my heart felt good. The bird sat there. Oh, I felt like the Lord was planting something in my heart, but I didn't know what. But, I was enquiring and telling the Lord, "I just can't do this. I can't preach. I just can't do it." My speech was stammering and stuttering. I couldn't even make a sentence without stuttering. "I can't do it, Lord. I know you're perfect, but you just made one little mistake." But, that didn't stop Him. Then, He appeared to me one night in the figure of a man, and He said, "I'll give you a mouth." Well, that satisfied me for about a day, and I was right back telling Him again, "Lord I can't do this. I can't do it."

So, then one day I was at work in line in the cafeteria to get my lunch.

There was a voice that spoke that sounded like thunder. It said, "You're going to die, you must die." I thought, Lord, have mercy, everybody in this whole place knows all about it. I looked around, and nobody heard it. But, that was the worst earthquake that I think anyone has ever witnessed. My whole body shook. "You must die." At the same time in a flash, it showed me where I had to go. So, after I got off of work, I started on. But, I had to go about a half mile to where we lived, and I begged of the Lord to let me go home and tell my family good-bye, but He wouldn't allow it. I had to go to that little four acre tract of land that we had. I went on down. When I got to the point, as I got out of the car, I left my keys in the car so they would find it anyway. I went on down, and when I got to that place something just struck me to the ground. I couldn't move. I was just paralyzed. I couldn't move a thing. And, I felt like the Lord just raised me up for me to be a feast to the wild animals, but I couldn't blame Him. I couldn't blame Him. Then, there was a big hand that passed over my head and on down, down, around, all the way to my feet. I received strength and sat up. When I did, I heard voices in heaven, talking and it was concerning me. At the time it was going on, I understood what they were saying. But, when they finished, it was all sealed up. I couldn't remember, I can't today, one word that was said, but it was concerning me. So, I went on home. The Lord had taken everything away from me, in that span of time, my family, my children and everything I had. I could witness with Job. He took everything Job had away from him. So, I went on home, then. I went on in the house, and in my soul, I was just crawling on my knees. I went in the house and I had to hug and kiss my wife. I was so glad. I had to hug my children. My blessings from God were magnified. I felt to be the richest person on earth. He had restored everything He took away. Only, I could see His great blessings even more. So, that went on. We were baptized in November 1951 and then the following May, we went to a meeting at Pleasantville, and the pastor asked me to come to the stand. I was just sitting on pins and needles. So, I got up and went up the step just like they are now. I told them, "If there was any way possible, I would keep my seat, but it's not possible." So, I began to speak, and they all seemed to witness with me. They could, it seemed, feel what I was saying. So, oh my, I felt that during those months from November to the following May that I had lived at least a hundred years of what the Lord had brought me through. He had pruned me down. I had the feeling, before all of this began, that I was going to be somebody big. I was going to have a lot of money. I was taking the correspondence course in air conditioning/refrigeration. Oh, I was going to be somebody. One thing, the Lord knows how to take things away from you. He struck me down with a physical problem in my stomach and He just kept whittling and whittling. I had to give up this and give up that. "Well, I can hold on to this." But, He whittled that away too. So, I didn't have anything to hold to except Him. The Lord said, "My people shall be

a willing people in the day of my power." And, I felt I understood that.

Then, after they liberated me to speak, some folks from the Baltimore Church heard me speak one day. They all insisted that I come to their church. I said, "I can't do that. I'm just liberated." They said you're liberated to speak any where there is an ordained deacon or minister? I said, yes. They said, "Then you can come." Well, my wife and I talked about it and we decided to go. So, we did. And after that, I was up there every other month for a long time. And, they wanted me to move up there. The Lord never put it in my heart to do that. So, we didn't, but I continued to go up there. Then, I remembered a dream that I had when I was baptized. I came out of the water and the rock was narrow where you came out and then from the water's edge it just spreadout wide. It didn't go way out yonder and spread out a little bit. It just spread out wide, and I often thought about that rock. Then, after I had been speaking a while, I wanted to know what my life was going to be ahead of me. It just stayed with me. I wanted to understand what I was going to have to go through. It just lingered and lingered. One night I had a dream. I saw Moses in the edge of a field in a body of woods, and he was just pacing up and down that field wanting to know what his life was going to be. And, I looked up and saw his whole life written up there in gold way up there in the air. I said, "Well maybe I can read it and tell him." And, I looked at it, and I couldn't read a word of it either. So, all that left me. I knew I had to live it just as all other ofGod's people live it day by day. So, I was reconciled. He reconciled me to it. Well, the wonderful dreams and they all had a purpose in them. The Lord had reconciled me to endeavor to speak, but I still thought I couldn't.

One night a figure of a man appeared to me, and he said, "Do you want more wisdom and knowledge and understanding?" My soul just leaped for joy. I said yes, yes. My soul was talking. Yes, yes. "It's going to mean more trouble and trials." I said, "That's all right. I can take it." The next morning when I got up on my way to work, I was just sick. "Why did I have to say that?" That was me talking, for I had to learn what that meant too. The deeper we go into troubles and trials and tribulations, the greater our understanding is in the Lord and in His word.

So as time lapsed, I continued to wrestle with this matter and the Church called for my ordination and that I considered it very much because I didn't know. I had a dream before the ordination. I still had a great desire not to be a deceiver among His people. I begged of the Lord if this is true that He had called me that He give me a sign to let me understand for sure that He was the one doing the work, you know. So He gave me a sign. One night I had a dream that an angel came and poured some kind of ointment on my head and it didn't run off. It went down into my heart and that was the greatest feeling I think I have ever witnessed. And then I was still doubtful. I said, "Lord, give me a sign that in the ordination when they lay hands on me let me have that same feel-

ing." So, there were three ministers at my ordination back then. So the first one laid his hand on me, and I didn't feel a thing. The next one laid his hand on me, and I didn't feel a thing. I wanted to tell them to just stop this thing right now that there was nothing to it. But I didn't say anything and the third one laid his hand on me and I felt the same feeling that I did when that angel poured that ointment on my head and it went all down into my heart. Oh what a comfort it was! Oh how the Lord has been so wonderful to me even with all my rebelliousness against Him! They went ahead with the ordination. By that time the people in Pennsylvania wanted me to come up and visit with them. I did and visited up there for quite a while. They wanted me to move up there, but the Lord didn't put it in my heart. And then as time lapsed, I had an invitation from Canada. The folks up there had never heard me and didn't even know me. I couldn't understand why I got that invitation. But, my wife and I discussed it. So we decided we would try to go. We went up there from 1958 until about 1985. They were asking me to move up there. They were very devoted people up there, lovely people. The Lord works wonders.

I would like to now go a little further in my experiences in the ministry. I want to speak to you for a little while concerning the highlights of my ministry over the years. I have had a lot of lovely experiences beyond the comprehension of man how that it took place.

I know I had worked hard all that day and I came home late in the evening and I was so tired. I was just looking forward to sitting down and resting. And my telephone rang and I answered and it was a daughter whose mother was in the hospital. She said the doctors had given her up and it was just a matter of a short time. She was an elderly lady. But, she said that she had been calling for me all day long. So, she told me that she had asked the doctor was it all right for her to call me and he said yes. So, she called me and I told her that as soon as I could get cleaned up, I would come on down. So then I had a great dread. I felt I was in no condition to have prayer. The more I thought about it, it looked like the further away prayer had gotten from me and I knew I couldn't pray. It was impossible. I even had the thought that I would ask her to pray for me. I thought good Lord I couldn't do that. So, I went on down dreading it with the worst dread because I knew that I could not pray. So I went in the door at the hospital where she was and all of the family was there. When she saw me come in the door, she said, "I'm glad to see you. I want you to pray for me because I'm ready to go." So I walked around to the head of the bed with that same feeling what am I going to say. I can't pray. It's impossible for me to pray in this kind of frame of mind. And, when I bowed my head, something met me right there. I began to pray and when I got through, she raised her head clean off the pillow and said, "thank you, I feel better." I looked around and the family was all in tears. So, I talked to them for a while. When I got ready to go, she insisted that I come

back the next night. So, I said all right I will come. I still had the feeling that I could not pray. When I went in that room, after that, I could feel the presence of something in that room. It just goes all over you. I could feel it just as plain as anything. I went around and had prayer again. I looked around and the family was in tears again and she was feeling so much better. So, I stayed and talked with them a little while and then came on home. Thinking about her on the way home one night from the hospital, I found tears running down my face. The thought came to me, "Why are you rejoicing?" She may be dead by now. That continued on for about four nights in a row. She got better and she went through a serious operation and she went home. After she went home and had been there for a week or two, I told my wife, "Let's go up and see her and see how she is doing." So we went up and knocked on the door and she came to the door and opened it. She said, "Come in. I have something I want to tell you." So we went in and sat down, and she began to relate to me what went on. The first night, she said, the head nurse was standing at the door and heard the prayer and said after I left she came in and said I have never heard a prayer like that. The next night, she said, all of the nurses on the floor were standing there at the door and heard the prayer. It was that way all the way through. She said the nurses told her that even the patients across the hall would ask for the door to be open so they could hear the prayer. I couldn't comprehend it, but she got better, went through a serious operation, got better and went home and lived for several years after that. I learned and heard someone tell me that the doctors in the hospital there then told all the family when they had someone there in a serious condition to call your pastor. So, I thought then what did I say in those prayers. I don't know. I couldn't remember a word that I said in all those prayers. The Lord sealed it up. The prayer was just for her not for anybody else. That's the way the Lord works. And over the years I have had so many highlights. Visiting the sick has been some of the highlights of my ministry.

I know we went to see some of our folks, one that was a member of a church I served over in Virginia. We went to this sister's home and the daughter came to us and said, "I'm glad to see you all, but my mother will not know you. She hasn't known me in three weeks." So we went in and we were all standing around. Some of the other brethren and sisters had gone with us and were there that day. We were all standing at the foot of her bed and that sister didn't even recognize the fact that anyone was there. I told the daughter to get me a chair. I could hardly walk at that time. I said put it at the head of the bed. She did and I thought, good Lord, I have done nothing but make a fool of myself. My heart was empty as a dry bucket. Nothing and I never was a person to try to make up something. So, I sat down in the chair and just sat there not saying a word. I was just beholding her. And all at once, "Amazing Grace" came down through

the top of that house and landed in my heart. I didn't say a word. I just started singing, "Amazing Grace" and the others joined in and I saw her eyes flicker quick as lightening. When she did, she began to sing "Amazing Grace" and you could hear sometimes her voice above our voices singing " Amazing Grace. " We saw the power of God. We saw the love of God. We saw and could feel the grace of God that He has upon His people right there, right before your eyes. When we left, we had prayer with her before we left and talked with her a good while. After we left, she told her daughter to call a member of the same church that she thought so much of and so she did. They talked for a long time and she told her about our coming and how much she enjoyed it. She lived a good while after that and stayed alert. Then she slipped back in it and the Lord took her. Seeing things like that — that no man can do — is beyond our comprehension — how God works and how He can in a moment's time show His power, His love, His mercy. That man can't do. So, we came on home after that long round that day.

I remember I had promised to go to the Pigg River Association that year and about two weeks before the Association the Lord just took me down. I went down. I felt like I was in the valley of the dry bones. I said I can't go like this. There is no way I can preach or speak in this kind of condition.

I was in the same boat that I was when I went down to see the sister in the hospital. The voice spoke to me and said, "Well, you promised to go." yes, I'll go, but I can excuse myself. So we went. And, to my surprise, when I got there, the brethren just came and shook my hand and I thought, if they knew me, what kind of condition I'm in, they wouldn't do that. They would go the other way. But, they went on and started the service and they put me up to speak. I got up and said a few words and was ready to excuse myself and something happened.

I began to speak and the Lord lifted me up. In speaking I could hear little limbs popping off the trees in the grove where the stand was that year. I looked and there were no limbs falling. I knew it was the power of God there. I continued to speak and I continued to hear little limbs popping off the trees, you know. Oh what a joy it was! I continued to speak and when I got through, I sat down and I said to myself I will never tell a soul what I heard while speaking. After the meeting the brethren came to me and said, "Elder Wray, I know that the power of God was with" you because I heard the limbs popping off the trees." My soul melted. On my way home I had to stop and pullover. I couldn't see where I was going for the tears. I was saying, "Thank you, Lord for bringing me this way and blessing me to see thy hand, thy mercy, thy grace, and thy power." There is nothing He can't do. Nothing is impossible with Him. That I know because I have lived it.

(To be continued in next issue.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

DOCTRINE TO WHICH WE ARE PLEDGED IN OUR PROSPECTUS, New Vernon, N. Y., January 2, 1833.

In our prospectus we are pledged to maintain inviolably the several scriptural sentiments embraced in the respective items which were named. We intend to notice them severally in the order in which they were presented.

The first that comes under consideration is "the Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfection of the Great Jehovah — the revelation which God has given of himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost." **"These three are one." — 1 John 5:7.**

That God exists, we need no further demonstration than what is presented to our view in creation and in providence. In the former "the heavens declare his glory, and the firmament showeth forth his handy work." In the latter, "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge."

The well established laws of summer and winter, of seed time and harvest, the waxing and waning of the moon, the revolutions of the earth and the planets, all proclaim the existence of the Great First Cause of all causes– a supernatural power; and we taught by divine revelation that that first cause, that supernatural power, is God. But as the existence of God is seldom denied, we will pass on, and with the most profound reverence consider some of his perfections. And first, *God is a Sovereign.*

By the term sovereign, as it applies to God, we are not to understand an arbitrary or tyrannical being, but quite the reverse; an all-wise disposer of all events, an independent, self-existent, and omniscient God; one who holds the eternal destiny of his creatures in his own almighty grasp, working all things after the counsel of his own will, even as he has ordained all things for his own glory; and being independent of and superior to all beings in heaven or on earth, has an incontestable right to do his pleasure in heaven and among thy inhabitants of the earth; having a right to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor; to have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will to harden; to reveal his gospel unto "babes and sucklings," and to hide the same from the "wise and prudent;" to love Jacob and to hate Esau, to save his people with an everlasting salvation, and to turn the wicked into hell, with all the nations that forget God.

In view of the sublime doctrine of the divine sovereignty, the inspired writer inquires, **"Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or,** *being* **his counsellor, hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and** *who* **instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?" — Isaiah xl. 13, 14.** The full display of this attribute of the Deity would require a develop-

ment of all his perfections, but particularly that of his independence and omnipotence, of which we shall have something to say hereafter. But first we will consider his right to dispose of all events according to the pleasure of his own will. And who is prepared to dispute this right? "Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"

"Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker. *Let* **the potsherds** *strive* **with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say unto him that fashioneth it, What maketh thou? or thy work, He hath no hands? Woe unto him that saith unto** *his* **father, What begettest thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth?" — Isa. xlv. 9, 10.** If then we admit that it was God's sovereign right to create a world, we must acknowledge that it was his right to determine what kind of a world to create, and for what end it should be created, or else we must conclude that he was not absolutely independent; and to form such a conclusion would certainly be a great derogation from his divine perfections. If while we gaze with admiration and delight upon the beauties of creation, we should believe that God was bound by some law or power independent of and superior to himself, to create all things in the exact order in which they are and were created, we could no longer enjoy the delightful reflection that our God is the Most High. We must therefore conclude that it is his sovereign and eternal right to do his pleasure in heaven and on earth, or we must say with the fool, "There is no God." But the more resplendent is the manifestation of the righteousness of God, when we contemplate him in connection with his independence. "He is before all things, and by him all things consist." Thus, for instance, in imagination, strike from the scale of existence every created object, and what would remain? Nothing but God alone, and inasmuch as he existed before all things, he must have existed independently of all things, and we must deny his immutability, or admit that he continues to be the same independent God now that he was before the highest parts of the habitable world were made. He is self existent and self-sufficient. He speaks the word and it stands fast, he commands and it is done.

The extent of God's sovereignty is commensurate with his infinity. It is displayed in all his works of creation, providence and grace. In creation serpents as well as doves were made — some men and some angels — all were not made alike, nor for the same end. In providence, we see the beggar raised from the dung-hill to the throne, and the proud monarch hurled from his royal seat down to the most abject state of wretchedness and misery. To some men God has given riches, and to others poverty, to one sickness, and to another health. "There were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah," in the time of severe famine, &e. "But unto none of them was Elijah sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow."

To make known to the king of Babylon this divine sovereignty, the Lord drove him from his palace and from

the society of men, to range with the beasts of the field till seven times were passed over, until in providence he should learn that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, and as a sovereign giveth the kingdoms of this "world unto whomsoever he pleaseth. The display of divine sovereignty in the kingdom of grace is most striking. The election of his people in Christ Jesus before the world began, unmoved by any regard to their virtues or good works. **"Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."- 2 Tim. ii. 9.** And in further testimony of God's sovereignty we hear an inspired apostle say, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." **"Unto you therefore which believe** *he is* **precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same** *is* **made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence,** *even to them* **which stumble at the word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed." — I Peter ii. 7, 8.** "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault who hath resisted his will? Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?"

God is immutable. **"For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore, ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." — Mal. iii. 6. "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth that he doeth."— Job xxiii. 13. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever." — Heb. xiii. 8. "The Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." — James 1:17.** Farther testimony to establish the doctrine of God's immutability seems to be quite unnecessary; were we for a. moment to suppose God to be a mutable being, like unto ourselves, "we might then say with the fool, " There is no God." In giving up the immutability of God we would give up all; for if it could be proved that God ever changed it would prove the forfeiture of his truth. He says, "I change not;" and could his truth fail, his holiness could not remain unimpaired, his wisdom would stand impeached, and his glory forever be eclipsed. Again, if God has changed, or ever should change, that change must be either for the better or for the worse; if for the better, he was once imperfect, and if for the worse, he is now imperfect. The awful absurdity and blasphemy of the doctrine is enough to make one tremble.

God is Omnipotent. By the Omnipotence of Jehovah we understand that universal and almighty power which is essential to his being as God, and that this power is an attribute peculiar to himself. This divine perfection of the Godhead was manifested in the creation of the world. He said, "Let there

be light," and there was light. And also in providence, as exemplified in the entire history of the children of Israel, in their elevation above all other nations under heaven, in their redemption from Egyptian captivity, in their passage through the Red Sea, in the miraculous manner in which they were fed with manna, and supplied with water, and in the signal victories given them over their enemies. Nor is the manifestation of omnipotent power confined to any particular event, or train of events. It shone in dreadful majesty from Sinai's flaming top, nor with less grandeur from Mount Calvary, when the meridian sun was dressed in sack-cloth, the rocks were rent, the dead were raised, the vail of the temple was rent asunder, and the most holy place exposed to *view* while frighted nature, as with a voice of mighty thunder, proclaimed the doctrine of God's omnipotence. If a further illustration or demonstration of the almighty power of God were necessary, we might advert to the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, when "God went up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet."

In the economy of salvation, too, God has made ample display of his omnipotence. The fulfillment of the holy law, the perfect satisfaction rendered to divine justice, the opening of the prison doors to them that were bound, and the emancipation of the prisoners, the conquest of our beloved Lord over death, hell and sin, the destruction of death, and him that had the power of death, which is the devil, the regeneration and quickening of his elect, together with their preservation in grace unto eternal glory, the resurrection of their bodies in the likeness of his own glorious body, and the consummation of their everlasting happiness in the world to come. The man must surely be a stranger in Israel who cannot trace the power and Godhead throughout the whole work of salvation, from the foundation to the top stone.

The perfections of God are eternal. It cannot reasonably be expected of finite beings that they should be able to comprehend the eternity or infinity of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? We are therefore able only to contemplate the divine perfections of Jehovah, as far as they are revealed to us by his word and Spirit, and if through the abundant revelation made we could vie with the brightest prophets and inspired men of God in our conceptions of the Holy One, or with the tongues of men or angels, could set forth our views of God, we would be with them constrained to say, "Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him; but the thunder of his power, who can understand?" That God is a being of infinite and eternal perfection, but few in our age are bold enough, in so many words, to deny. But yet while many will admit this truth in general terms, they will deny it in all its particular bearings on the redemption and salvation of sinners. Many very zealous pro-

fessors of religion will form in their own imagination a standard of right and wrong, and then say, if God should vary from their standard he would be unequal, unjust or imperfect. But we know of no higher standard of perfection than God himself, hence all that is done or decreed by him is perfect, because it is done or: decreed in accordance with his own mind and will, and must therefore be compatible with his nature. It cannot be the prerogative of creatures of yesterday, whose breath is in their nostrils, to set up a standard of human wisdom by which to scan the perfections of their Maker. If it be admitted then that God is perfect, it needs no more than the admission of his immutability to establish the doctrine of the eternity of his perfections. As far as God has been graciously pleased to reveal himself unto us, we have been constrained to pray that he would conform us to his will, and by his sovereign grace, which is treasured up in Christ Jesus our Lord, conform us to the image of him who is the "brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person." The above brief statement of our views of the "existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah," &c., are sentiments which we hold dear to our heart, and such as we stand solemnly pledged to inviolably maintain in this paper. The doctrine is neither strange nor new to the Baptists of the school of Christ.

In the revelation of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. "These three are One." — 1 John i. 5, 8. On this important point of doctrine our views are happily expressed in the above scripture, quoted from the apostle John, while all human language utterly fails in setting forth the mode of God's existence. We rejoice that the record which he has been pleased to give of himself in the bible contains all necessary information on the subject; at present we shall for want of room omit giving our views at large on this point; we will only say that we shall cautiously avoid all such doctrines as do either deny or refuse to acknowledge the eternal power and Godhead of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

"This God is the God we adore,
Our faithful, unchangeable friend;
Whose love is as great as his power,
And knows neither measure nor end."

Elder Gilbert Beebe

ISAIAH 41:9-10.

Thou **whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou** *art* **my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away.**

Fear thou not; for I *am* **with thee: be not dismayed; for I** *am* **thy God: I will strengthen thee: yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.**

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."

At this time of year we often look back and remember the happenings of the past year, if they were happy or sad. We weigh what we have done, places we've been and wonder could it have been otherwise.

I am convinced that our travel from day one to day last, has already been fixed, and He who fixed it knew what each day would bring and the results it would determine.

This brings me to the Signs and the status thereof. First we would desire to thank each subscriber for their support in renewing, in sending in articles to publish, along with the many donations, but above all favorable comments. We are given encouragement when we receive letters telling how many of you look forward to its coming each month and feast on the doctrine contained in the Signs.

Now we go to that grace stated in the above heading, left on record in the Bible, but we feel left on a permanent record in our heart. But for the grace of God where would we or the Signs be this year or in the many years of the past.

I don't believe grace just pertains to our eternal destiny but this grace has given us today and believers in the past days, and years to trust for a reason known only to Him that this publication must and would continue.

As we start volume 168 next year as planned, we can see that grace has led us thus far and trust it will lead us on. There have been times since I've been co-editor with Elder Key, for these 20 years, which seemed the end was near, as we lost many subscribers but always new ones would come along. Years ago it seemed money to publish was a year or two away, but God's grace caused those to leave the Signs gifts that keep us still publishing this book.

We have about one third the number we had 20 years ago, but isn't the membership in the churches also that way.

Then we are made to believe His grace and our faith will be sufficient for us and the paper as long as it shall last. If the articles contained herein is food for His people or a portion there of, then we think it will last a while longer, for His promise is *"my people shall be fed."*

The promise wasn't how or at what time of day or night, though we know and read in His recorded word that my people shall be fed. I believe this has been one of the ways and trust it will continue to be as long as there is, this will be part of the feed for His sheep.

If I could pray, I would pray, may He continue to over shadow us with His grace.

In hope,
Elder Julian R. Williams

GIFTS

The Scriptures of the New Testament present the gospel church in her perfection, as the workmanship of God. Her doctrine and order are plainly shown there to all of her children, as they are also revealed to each in his experience, so that the word and the experience witness together to all that is of God. We are to look only to the inspired Scriptures of truth to decide concerning any point of doctrine, or any ordinance, or any gift to the church of God; and there alone shall we find the proper order of those things of God, as arranged and established by his authority.

Whatever assumes to belong to the church is to be tried by the pattern shown to us in the Scriptures of the New Testament, and if not found there it must be discarded by every lover of the truth. The gifts of Jesus to the church are named by the inspired apostle in his letter to the Ephesians: "And he gave some apostles, and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers." The object of these gifts is also there stated: "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Any professed gift that is not included in this catalogue and description, must not be recognized as of God; and anyone who claims to have work to do as a gift of God to the church in behalf of any but the saints, or in order that any may become saints through his work, is clearly not manifesting the character of a gospel gift, for all of these gifts are declared to be exclusively for the benefit of the body of Christ, to which they themselves belong as "joints and bands" which minister nourishment to the body. (Eph. iv. 11-16; Col. ii. 10.)

Elder Silas H. Durand

PROVERBS 24:11-14.

If thou forbear to deliver *them that are* **drawn unto death, and** *those that are* **ready to be slain;**

If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider *it?* **and he that keepeth thy soul, doth** *not* **he know** *it?* **and shall** *not* **he render to** *every* **man according to his works?**

My son, eat thou honey, because *it is* **good; and the honeycomb,** *which is* **sweet to thy taste:**

So *shall* **the knowledge of wisdom** *be* **unto thy soul: when thou hast found** *it*, **then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off.**

THOUGHTS IN SICKNESS

After twenty-six days of sickness I am just able to sit up a little. Compared with many, my sufferings have not been long nor severe. It is of some exercises of mind under them that I wish to write a little to the readers of the "Signs," to whom I have communicated freely for thirty-six years. I know I can tell but little of what I have experienced, but I write to those of like precious faith, who will understand more than I can tell.

After seventeen days of painful suffering, a surgical operation was performed for a erysipelas swelling in the neck. There was relief, but with great weakness. Until the operation there had appeared no favorable prospect, but when the surgeon had done his work a cure seemed assured. My quiet of mind had continued, but there was a feeling of unspeakable solemnity as I appeared to be in the presence of the Lord, in a special sense, and great were the searchings of heart that I experienced. Every apparent ground of my hope seemed to be subjected to great searchings, and to almost disappear, yet my hope remained. My heart was filled with the constant prayer, "O God, be merciful to me." When there was hope of recovery, I felt a gladness with my quietude, and then the searchings became deeper and sterner, for I feared my gladness was only natural, and not true thankfulness to the Lord, nor submission to his will. Do I really desire and seek the glory of God? This was the burden of my anxious inquiry.

After preparing, the surgeon said, "Now I am going to hurt you." My strength to bear would have been the strength of an infant, but the greater strength was at hand. When his work was done I said, "How can you bear it, doctor?" "It is you that bear it," he replied, "not I ; I would not have borne it so well." "Not that," I said, "I mean how can you bear to see the suffering in the faces of those you must hurt daily and hourly, to do them good?" All that night I seemed to see the great Physician, the dear Savior, bending over his dear ones, with his tender, pitying, but firm expression, hurting them deeply, even to the piercing of their hearts, and causing them to feel the pains of death, thus bringing them to know the fellowship of his sufferings, that they may know the fellowship of his joy.

Elder Silas H. Durand

ST. MATTHEW 7:13-14.

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 2013

Jerry Somers, VA	5.00
Raymond Joyce, VA	50.00
Ardith Harris, FL	100.00
Hattie Spencer, VA	5.00
Jim Carr, VA	25.00
Garlon Vick, NC	25.00
Billie Speir, LA	10.00
Williams Family Foundation VA	500.00

OBITUARIES

RUTH HASH JONES

October 6, 1924 — October 27, 2013

On Sunday morning, just 21 days after we celebrated Ruth's 89th birthday, I received this text message, "Ruth's sweet spirit has left her body around 9:25 a.m." She will be greatly missed by her family and all who loved her.

Ruth was born the 9th child of Elder James "Jim" Goode Hash and Nannie Snead Hash. Uncle Goode was ordained to preach in 1917 and served several churches in Franklin, Patrick and Floyd counties over 40 years. Ruth was very much a "Daddy's girl." She told many stories of walking the mountains or riding on the horse behind her Dad going to church with him. She loved going to church with him. Of course, if you asked her, she would probably say something like, "I was no dummy, if I stayed home, I would have to work."

Being a public school teacher in the Franklin County School System for 40 years, she didn't talk about her religious beliefs; but, she lived them. She showed her students love, caring, discipline when needed, and how to believe in themselves and in a higher being. Her students loved her and she loved them. She set an example for them.

When she retired from public education, she didn't retire from work-she just expanded it to the community. She spent over 20,000 hours volunteering with the Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital Auxiliary, many hours with the Ferrum Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary, Blue Ridge Dinner Theater (Ferrum College) for 25 years, Franklin County American Red Cross Blood Mobile, Salvation Army (bell ringing), and many others. She loved people and she loved helping people.

Like many of us, Ruth had her hardships. In April of 1947, she gave birth to Roger Cordell Jones. He weighed 5 1/2 pounds and lived almost 3 days. She had no other children; however, she gave her love to many nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, even great-greats. She made each one special. Aunt Ruth was the one that would ride on the back of a motorcycle, fly in a hot-air balloon, go tromping through the woods and fields "cemetery-hunting" with Lane "chasing dead ancestors"; even go to Australia to visit a great-niece that was a "wee-bit" homesick while spending a year in college there. She didn't forget to send birthday cards, anniver-

sary cards, graduation cards to each one. Each month she would have a stack of cards that she was mailing. They didn't forget her either. Many of them sat by her side during her last days in the hospital. Others that were in Maryland, Texas, California kept in touch by emails daily.

Her husband, Beverley B. Jones, was a barber until his death while cutting wood at the Hash's home place in 1973. Here again God provided someone to fill the void in the house. Lisa Whitlock came to live with Ruth in 1976. Many would say, "Why are you taking on a troubled teenager?" But Ruth saw the "diamond in the ruff." She saw what a jewel Lisa would become. Lisa was good for Ruth, and Ruth was good for Lisa. Most of the time Ruth identified her as her daughter, and for the next 37 years, Lisa was with Ruth.

Although she always loved God and loved the church; God didn't tell her to take the next step until Sunday, June 6, 1999, when she asked for a home at Long Branch Church. She was received as a candidate for baptism and on Sunday afternoon, June 27, 1999, she was the first person to be baptized in the new baptismal pool. Sister Betty Walker joined her at the water. Up until her eyesight began to prevent much reading, she would read the bible through from cover to cover each year.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Carl Terry and Elder Mark Terry at Flora Funeral Chapel at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, October 30, 2013. The body was laid to rest beside her dear husband in Maple Grove Cemetery, Ferrum, Virginia.

I think if Ruth were to give us words of wisdom from her spiritual journey, she would say look at the words in her favorite hymn. Hymn 306.

Gentle Shepherd, gently lead us,
Guide us through this earthly maze;
When in devious paths we wander,
Lead us in thy peaceful ways;
When the dark clouds round us gather,
Shutting out the light of day,
Dearest Savior, guide our footsteps,
Lead us gently in the way.

Gentle Shepherd, lead us onward,
Thro' a world of toil and strife;
Cheer us with thy glorious presence,
On the battle-field of life;
Should some vision o'er our pathway,
Turn our erring feet astray,
Blessed Guardian, be thou near us,
Lead us gently in the way.

Gentle Shepherd, lead us ever,
In the way that we should go;
Turn, O turn our wand'ring footsteps,
From the paths that lead to woe;
And when earthly light is fading,
Into light of heav'nly ray,
Gentle Shepherd, lead us over,
To the land of endless day.

Oh, Ruth, my cousin, my BFF (best friend forever), I am going to miss you.

Ruby Brogan

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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HYMN

How tedious and tasteless the hours,
When Jesus no longer I see;
Sweet prospects, sweet birds, and sweet flowers
Have lost all their sweetness to me:
The mid-summer sun shines but dim;
The fields strive in vain to look gay;
But when I am happy in him,
December's as pleasant as May.
His name yields the richest perfume,
And sweeter than music his voice;
His presence disperses my gloom.
And makes all within me rejoice:
I should, were he always thus nigh,
Have nothing to wish or to fear;
No mortal so happy as I.
My summer would last all the year.
Content with beholding his face,
My all to his pleasure resigned,
No changes of season or place,
Would make any change in my mind;
While blessed with a sense of his love,
A palace a toy would appear;
And prisons would palaces prove,
If Jesus would dwell with me there.
Dear Lord, if indeed I am thine,
If thou art my sun and my song.
Say, why do I languish and pine,
And why are my winters so long?
O drive these dark clouds from my sky;
Thy soul-cheering presence restore;
Or take me unto thee on high,
Where winter and clouds are no more.

Newton

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EDITORIAL

"For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. This *is* a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation." 1 Timothy 4:8-9.

Elder J.B. Farmer

Some sweet and precious things have appeared that seem to be connected with this scripture. Having been given a mind to write a little, I hope the Lord will guide my thoughts and give the liberty required to set forth the doctrine of Christ in love while rightly dividing the word of truth. For we are assured that no man is able to search out or understand the deep things of God. The things of the kingdom of God are hidden in a mystery, which no man can know apart from revelation. God has fixed all things so no man can truly glory in anyone or anything other than God and His perfect work. He said, "I will not give my glory to another."

The blessed apostle wrote to Timothy, his beloved son in the faith, many things which have been preserved for the whole household of faith even to this day. And every scripture is true and beneficial for His people. It is written, **"All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."** God has been so good and kind to us to leave on record the things we need to keep us in the true way of life and supply us with His comfort and edification.

In the opening scripture used here, the exercise of the child of God in the things of this world is set over against his exercise in the spiritual things of the kingdom of God. The bodily exercise or natural endeavors of the child of God are necessary and have a little profit as far as nature goes. The things God's children participate in to provide for themselves or their families, such as holding a job, keeping the house, raising a garden etc. are profitable for their natural needs. But these things are all temporary, and are understood by God's

children to be the necessities of strangers and pilgrims in a foreign land. They are blessed to confess, as strangers, that this world is not their home — they are only passing through. They are also given to confess, as pilgrims, that they seek a better city, whose builder and maker is God. But while here in the world, the children of God have many things to walk in according to nature.

The blessed children are not only exercised in natural things, in which they are given to be faithful, but are also exercised in ***godliness*** in the spiritual kingdom. ***Godliness,*** according to the language of the apostle, means ***good-reverence.*** It indicates a holy reverence toward God. Those chosen of God, called out of the darkness of unbelief into His marvelous light, given to truly believe in Christ and His finished work, and given hope of eternal life in Him, are humbled under the mighty hand of God. No longer can they go boasting about what they have done. No longer can they trust in the flesh of men -- their own or that of any others. They are given to see with the eye of faith and trust from the heart the One and only true and living God, the Creator and upholder of heaven and earth. They are blessed with a holy fear before Him in love. They are given a soft and tender heart in place of the hard and stony one they once possessed. Their hearts are turned by love toward God and His children. This work of God in them sets them upon a new way that they had not previously known. **"Behold all things are become new."** This way of holiness and reverence before God is called ***godliness.***

The inspired apostle, in comparing the natural and the spiritual exercise, made it plain that there is some small profit in the natural endeavors of the natural life, but that the spiritual exercise is profitable in every way. **"Godliness is profitable unto all things."** Then he was enlightened to explain a little more deeply. He said that ***godliness*** is **"having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."** This promise of God of the abundant life for His children now, to my understanding, secured for them the blessed life of faith, hope and love here in this world. And His promise to give them everlasting life secured eternal life for all the elect family of God in the world to come.

In another place it is written, **"Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."** God has promised His children that a good and long life shall accompany the honoring of our natural father and mother. I am made to believe that a long life indicates a full and abundant life. And those who are also blessed in their walk of ***godliness,*** to honor their spiritual Father, God, and their spiritual Mother, the Church, not only have the promise of abundant life here in this world, but also the promise of everlasting life in the world beyond. Their blessing is now and forever.

Jesus said, "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall

inherit everlasting life." Those strangers and pilgrims that have been made to understand that natural things are secondary to spiritual things are also given to know the truth of this scripture by experience. Even though one's natural family may reject him, and even though one is made to turn his attention away from his natural ties and possessions, the child of God is given these things spiritually an hundredfold here in this life. Each of God's children have been given a spiritual family, much larger and much more loving than any natural family. And wherever they are led, they find houses and lands which are given over to them for their use according to the grace and wisdom of God. On the day of Pentecost and following, we find the saints had all things common, with none suffering any lack. This is the same generous Spirit which prevails today among the faithful in Christ.

The widow in the days of Elijah had very little family, and very few possessions. She was destitute, but gave over what little she had to the prophet. And she was sustained by God through the drought together with the prophet, and they had no lack. In the earthly days of Jesus, the widow cast into the temple treasury her last two mites, and she was commended by the Lord. No doubt she was also sustained of God. The all-knowing, almighty God ever has his eyes upon the righteous and will not allow them to suffer anything beyond His purpose for their good. He provides for their every need in nature and in spirit. Throughout the scriptures, it is recorded how He sends His people to one another to comfort one another as their situation requires. He caused David to say, 'Once I was young and now I am old. And I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor thy seed begging bread.' Although God's little ones are as foreigners in the world, they are never forgotten, nor forsaken by Him. They are pitied and loved of God. Jesus said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you, behold I shall go with you even unto the end of the world." Jesus also promised to send His Holy Spirit to each of His people. He said, **"If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever."**

The blessed children of God have been given the abundant life. It has been manifest in all their travels in all places and in all ages. The abundant life they experience is the life of joy and peace and love. By grace, you love God and you love His children. And by grace, they love God and they love you. Its no surprise that Jesus said, **"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me."** His children, by grace and with love, have always participated in the comforting of the afflicted little ones. And if they ever did it unto one of the least of these His brethren, Jesus said they did it unto Him. This holy reverence toward God, called ***god-***

liness, manifests itself in the care of the children of God for one another. This faith that they have been given works by love. Jesus said **"And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold *water* only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."**

The Lord, through the apostle, pointed out particular actions of the faithful which indicated their walk in ***godliness.*** When Paul was instructing Timothy about the care of the widows, that were widows indeed, he indicated certain conditions that the blessed widows were found in and the things they did, by grace. These widows were found to have been: destitute, trusting in God, continuing in supplications and prayers night and day, well reported of for good works; to have brought up children, lodged strangers, washed the saint's feet, relieved the afflicted and diligently followed every good work. This world was not their home. They were trusting in God for every need. They were blessed to be faithful in ministering to the saints in every good work. Their gracious manner of life was shown to be a wonderful example of ***godliness*** by the apostle. The faithful in Christ have always walked in that same ***godliness,*** by the grace of God.

After each one of the chosen generation has finished his course here on earth and kept the faith by grace, there is a crown of righteousness laid up for him, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give unto him. I am made to believe that the crown of righteousness is the crown of eternal life, which Jesus promised unto all His seed. It is grace for grace. By grace, God has blessed His people to receive the promise of the abundant life in this world. And by grace, He shall give them eternal life in the world to come. God cannot lie or fail in a promise, so the promise of abundant life and eternal life is secure to all His people. God said by the apostle, **"Therefore it *is* of faith, that *it might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed."**

Here is the blessing and the promise that abides with and upon all of God's little ones. It is written, **"Blessed *be* the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ,**

both which are in heaven and which are on earth; *even* in him: in whom we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ." Ephesians 1:3-12.

Praise His holy name forever and ever. Amen.

Elder J.B. Farmer

ST. LUKE 9:48.

And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.

CORRESPONDENCE

1-4-14

Brother Horton,

I am enclosing a check for $75.00. Please renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times for two years.

The remainder of the money is a contribution to your excellent publication. Thanks to all of you for all you do and may our wonderful God bless you.

Wayne Oxley

January 18, 2014

Dear Brother Horton,

Enclosed is a check for $15.00 to renew my subscription of the Signs for another year.

I enjoy reading the Signs and look forward to getting it each month.

The sound writings are a blessed comfort to the ones who still seek after a crumb from the Master's table.

I hope God continues to bless you and those who help send it out each month. Thanks for the good work you do.

With a hope in Christ,
Gloria B. Reese

Dec. 31, 2013

Dear Kind Brother,

I'm sending my subscription late I never thought the time would come it would be hard to come by the price of the paper.

But we must live out those glory lives that were right for us as well as the fairly severe. The paper is about the only luxury I have and brings much pleasure.

Please use the extra as needed.

J.A. Lambert
P.O. Box 113
Ideal, Ga 31041

Jan. 11, 2014

Dear Brother Cleo,

As I was getting ready for bed last night, my thoughts were of you. Since you have space to fill in the Signs of the Times, maybe some words of thought of me might work. We are blessed to have such a paper and the brethren and our precious borders, and the ones that believe in salvation by grace should support it if they are able.

The date was August 20, 1961 and Valley View Church was having a baptizing on the river bank. I'd been going about three years desiring to join the Church but when I talked to Lena she wanted to go on like we were. The worse thing about it, I thought I would hurt the people I become to love, and could not walk in a way the brethren would like.

I was standing on that day back behind the people, didn't bring any changing clothes. And when Elder Odel Thompson asked if there was any one else, old shy and bashful me thought I felt some power.

I walked through the crowd and to the bank and asked for a home with the church and let them decide if I was worthy.

I thought it was a secret but our Deacon at the time, W. M. Graham spoke up and said I've been expecting this. Maybe there is a little hope for me.

Now it don't take a big crowd for me and I appreciate all the gifts that our Heavenly Father sends us. And to meet together with songs, preaching, and fellowship that flows from heart to heart and breast to breast.

One thing I say when I lay my head on my pillow each night is, Heavenly Father leave a handful of purpose along the way that I may endure until the end.

The least if one at all,
Vance Duncan

P.S. I ought to say I love you, and the brethren as I'm working on 87 years old.

ARTICLES

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER HAYWOOD WRAY
(Continued from previous issue)

During this time I came down with something wrong with my legs. They had to retire me from my work on disability. And yet the people called on me for funerals and for sickness. My wife would help me get the wheel chair in the car and I would still go. Often they called at night to to the home where sickness or death was. But the Lord was with me and made me to have to go. And to witness these things — it has been worth all the sufferings, all the things the Lord has brought me through in life. It has been for my good and as that boy said to me to have more knowledge and wisdom and understanding of Him, it means more troubles and sorrows in this life. That is the school He takes you to,

brings you through, and you don't ever graduate. Out of all my years in the ministry, the Lord has put something in my heart to desire more and more a glimpse to see more and more and to have more understanding of Him. And He has, He has. These things are things that man can't do.

In the years that I was going to Canada, I will show you my rebelliousness. I heard a voice one Night when I was sleeping. It said, "Come and help." I woke up wide awake and I said somebody is in need. So, I laid there for about an hour and I stayed awake. I said well the phone didn't ring. So, I said well, I have to go to work in the morning so I'll just go back to sleep.

Well in a few days I got a letter from Canada to come and be with them. So, I said no, I've taken my wife and family up that road one time and I know what's best for me and my family too. So, I'll just tell them I can't come this time, I'm sorry. Every time I would go to write that note, death would stare me in the face. I couldn't write it. As the old boy up here in the head said, "Well I will get him anyway, I'll be smart. I'll just catch him when he's off by himself and I will write right quick." I tried it, but every time I tried to write that note, He was right there. I couldn't write it. And in my soul I got into such trouble I couldn't live. And I stood up in the floor and told my wife, "I'll go. I'll go" and all that just took wings and flew away. And we went and after that it just seemed like all those miles up there and back were just only around the corner. I often said if the Lord ever sent me anywhere, he did on that trip and brought me back. Out of all the miles that we've traveled over the years I never had a flat tire and none of us ever got sick, no car trouble. I could see the hand of God in it all. Oh my.

We travel this road with prayers and supplications in our heart — that little path only the sheep go up. I had a dream about the goats and the sheep. I was going down a wide highway and I heard a noise behind me and I looked back. It was full of goats and sheep. They were walking together down the road. I looked in front of them and there was a fork in the road and a great man standing in between them with a great staff in his hand. He didn't even speak, and I stepped aside. I wanted to make sure that I took the right road. The one that went to the left was wide and smooth and the one that went to the right was a very narrow path but it lead to the top of the mountain. Every goat went the wide way that looked good and all the sheep went up that little narrow path that was winding and rough but it went up. So, then I said I know that no man would choose that way but God has led His people that way. That was a great comfort to me. In this life they all walk together down the wide road but some are still sheep and some will remain goats. There is a way that seems right unto man, the Bible tells us, but the way thereof is death.

I remember years ago Elder John D. Wood asked me to come up above Manassas, Virginia to be with him at his meeting. So I accepted and during the time about a week before we went, I had a dream. I dreamed I went in this big

building and I looked around and there was a big balcony. So I said good Lord, what am I doing in here? I got to get out of here. I went out and that was the end of my dream. They sent me instructions on how to get up there. We went when the time came to the deacon's home to spend the night and we had to pass right by where they told me the church was. So, my wife and I got there and I told her, "The church ought to be right in here somewhere. There is a big building there, but it doesn't look like a church." I said, "I'm going to find out anyway." I pulled up in the yard and went in the building and I got about halfway down to the pulpit. I was going to see if there were any papers stating that it was the church I was looking for. I got about halfway down to the pulpit. It looked like something just stopped me and I looked around and there was the identical balcony that I had seen in my dream. I didn't go any farther. I turned around and went back out to my car. I told my wife, "This is it." The Lord works wonders. It surpasses our understanding.

Then, one day I was at work and I went to the washroom on my break. When I opened the door, this is not a dream, I opened the door and went in and I never heard such a racket in all my life. There were about 10 or 15 in there and they were all trying to talk above the other one. They saw me come in and one of them said, "Well, here is the preacher. He can tell us what is right." I said, "Good Lord, I don't even know what you're talking about...it is such a racket." They all got quiet. Some of them said, "Some of them believe it's a sin to water your crops or your garden or your tomato plants and others say it's not. Which is right?" I said, "Lord, help me." My heart just cried out to the Lord, "Help me", and He did. So, my answer to them was this. I said, "Some countries have to put water on the land to survive; some countries have to pump water off the land to survive." And, I said to them, "Now you decide which one is the greater sin." That put a stop to the whole thing. They didn't have another word to say about it.

This is not a dream either. It is a reality. I lived it. Years ago shortly after we joined the church, I had never asked the blessing at the table — never had. I kept hearing a voice — at home I would hear it in the top of the trees around the house, "Haywood, pray." It just went on for days. At my work I would hear that voice, "Haywood, pray." I thought well Thanksgiving was coming and I'll have prayer at the table. I'll ask the blessing. It just kept on, "Haywood, pray." My soul became so disturbed that on Thanksgiving Day I told my wife, "I'm going to get my gun and go down into the woods about a mile from home and go squirrel hunting." I thought maybe that might help. So, I got in my car and drove down to where these woods were. I went on in the woods and I saw squirrels just running all around. It looked like they weren't even afraid of me, but I never shot at one of them. I thought good Lord that's what I came down here for but I can't shoot. I was getting in bad shape in my soul. I said well this is doing me no good. So, I started out of the woods and I got to the edge of the woods where there is a field

and there was a huge oak tree right at the edge of the woods. When I got under that tree, something just struck me to the ground. And when I came to what I was doing, I was down on my all fours praying to the Lord, just praying to the Lord. I was praying out loud. When I got through praying, all that troubled soul just took wings and flew. So, I picked up my gun and walked on out of the woods and everything I saw was praising the Lord. My soul was too, just praising the Lord. Then I have endeavored to ask the blessing at the table — not only that but pray daily unto the Lord.

In a dream I saw Jesus, and He was enclosed in a big glass all around. I thought He was a little baby. Somehow I had to get through there to get to Him. I had to do something for Him because I loved that baby more than anything. Some of them standing around saw me trying to find a place to get in and they told me, "You can't get in there. Many have tried it and they have died." But that didn't cause me to hesitate. I had to get in there. And, then I appeared in there beside of the little baby. I asked what could I do, and the baby looked up at me and blessed me. There was nothing I could do for Him, but He did a whole lot for me. Again, I saw Him and I was walking along beside Him. I thought I was just a little child in the dream. We were talking and oh, my heart just went out to that man. It was such a joy and a peace just to be with Him and to hear Him talking to me. And then all at once He began to rise up off the ground going straight up. I began to cry unto Him, "Don't leave me. Don't leave me." I felt I would be in the world all alone — not a single soul. But, He kept going up and a cloud separated me and Him. And He was riding on that cloud. Then, He leaned His head over and looked down at me and smiled and then He was gone. He was gone. That was the end of my dream.

Again a dream — I thought in the dream I was walking around a huge building and I knew there was something precious on the inside that my soul desired. I didn't know what it was, but I knew it was something that I felt my soul needed. I walked all the way around the building looking for a door and there was no door. My soul began to sink, and then my eyes lifted up - way up to the eave of the building and there I saw Jesus hanging there crucified. I said Lord there is no way I can get up there. I felt I must get inside and then all at once I appeared inside.

I saw a huge table — the old, the maimed, the halt, and the afflicted all sitting at that table eating. I knew that what they were eating was that which man had never handled. It was food that had come down from heaven. They were eating and the tears were just rolling down their faces. I looked and the table was full. There wasn't room for me. I said, "Oh, if I could just sit at that table and eat with them." And, then I appeared at the table and I was eating too and tears were running down my face. What a joy it is. God feeds the old, the maimed, the halt and those that He loves — there is always room at the table.

Again, another dream — I dreamed I was walking down an old farm road

where the wagons rode and the tobacco sleds went through. I looked over on a little grade ahead of me and there was a crowd of people standing over there. I could see they were disturbed about something. When I walked up, I asked what the problem was. They told me, "We are thirsty. We must have some water." So, I began to walk up toward the well where they were standing around. They said, "You can't draw any water out of that well. We've tried and the rope is not long enough and we're thirsty." I continued on and I began to let the bucket down in the well. It kept going down and kept going down until it hit the water and then I began to wind the bucket up until it came up and it was full of water — the prettiest water. Where the cup came from I don't know, but I tasted of the water before I gave it to any of them. It was the sweetest water I have ever tasted. So I gave it to each one of them — all of them there. They were so thirsty and the water tasted so good. And, they all went away rejoicing and so did I. That was the end of the dream.

I dreamed of seeing Jesus again. I was in an upper room with Him and the room was filled with the glory of God. I saw Him as I entered the room, His back was to me. I knelt down at His heels behind Him. I endeavored to ask Him that when He went back to heaven to take me with Him, but I could not open my mouth, could not say a word, could not even make a sound. I felt like that was the end of me. I tried everything to just make a sound, "Please take me with you." I couldn't make a sound, but after a little bit, He got ready to go. He turned around and saw me on the floor on my knees. He smiled at me and said, "I'll be back." I went running down the street — leaping like a roe — it was the easiest thing I had ever done. I was speaking to the top of my voice saying, "I have been with Jesus. I have been with Jesus." I woke myself up crying like a baby that I had been with Him.

One night I had another dream when the Lord was dealing with me showing me where I had to stand. I dreamed one night that I was standing in the pulpit in my home church, Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church. I was standing up at the book board and there was a figure of a man standing behind me and I thought I was speaking but the figure of that man standing behind me was doing the talking and the words were only coming out of my mouth that He was giving me. I hope that has been the way it has been all through my ministry — almost 60 years now. Because I know that man in all his education and learning in books doesn't qualify him to preach the gospel or to be able to see the beautiful things that one can experience in their life here on earth in the hope of the glory of God that he will see Him some day.

Years ago while I was working, I believe I made mention of it, that they had to retire me on disability because my legs gave out. I got to the point I could hardly walk at all before they got better. I was like that for 10 years. Then I got so weak I thought I wasn't going to make it at all and I'd be gone in a few days. But that was all right. The Lord reconciled me to it. One morning I got up and made it to my lift chair. I was sitting there and

there was a light that appeared on the wall. All the doctors had given me up from Duke all the way down. They didn't know what was wrong with me, but the Lord hadn't given me up. While sitting there in the lift chair, I saw the light shining on the wall. It was the most beautiful light I have ever seen — the glory of God. So I sat and stared at it for a long time until it began to just gradually decrease and go out. When it went out, I continued to sit there and stare. I knew it was a message from heaven, but what message I did not know. I pondered and pondered. I think the Lord settled it in my heart that I was going to get better shortly or either I was going to be gone in a few days. By the help of the Lord, I was just as willing and I could say and told my wife, "I've had a message from heaven and whether I'll be gone in a few days or whether I get better — one way is just as good as the other — made me just as happy. In three weeks after that, I laid my crutches down, I laid my cane down and during that time I had lost my voice. I could talk. I knew and now I know that there is nothing impossible with God.

After a good many years past that I went on my way. My wife came down with Alzheimer's, and I kept her at home for 10 years and looked after her myself except for a little help twice a week for two hours a day. That gave me time to get the groceries and take care of other matters. I was on 24 hour duty for 10 years. I begged of the Lord to give me what I needed, to give me understanding, to give me patience, to give me the Spirit to look to Him, and He did. In all that time I could see the hand of God each day and night — how that He was with us and provided. Then she passed away October 15, 2009. So, I'm still here by the help of the Lord and still serving my home church. I have a lot to be thankful for. Until we go down into the depths where we have to suffer and we're put in positions where we have no choice but to look to Him — He's the only source of help we have — we're made to realize that. He has been my helper all these years and provided. He's kept me. I'm now 90 years old and I'm Haywood Wray. That's my name. They gave me a title to bear almost 60 years ago — the name of Elder Haywood Wray, which I never felt I was worthy of that name, but by the help of the Lord, I have endeavored to set forth the doctrine that we read of and is set forth in the Bible -the doctrine that will stand when this world is no more. I believe God's word when He said He made heaven and earth and the fullness thereof. He created all things every creature on the earth and He made man out of the dust of the earth. I believe the word not what man says about it. I believe the word of God when He brought forth Jacob and Esau that the doctrine of election might stand indicating that God made a choice among people and wrote their names in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world. And in due time He manifested Himself unto them and quickened them by His Spirit made them alive to understand and see the great wonders of God. This is the

God I believe that He has put in my heart to set forth to the people of God. This is the word of God and it shall stand. Man has all kinds of ideas, but God's people have one mind and that's the mind that the writer said, "Let this mind be in you which is also in Christ Jesus our Lord." This is the mind, the divine nature that God has given to His people to live by, to walk in, and to find joy in, and find peace in in time of trouble and sorrow. It gives us something that the world will never know and never understand out of all their scientific knowledge. God's people are wiser than them all because they know Him. I often think of the scripture that Paul said, where he said his whole desire was to know Him and the power of His resurrection. That's all that we need to know of Him now is Him and His love and kindness towards us -the One that has kept us and has blessed us to go down into the deep places of life and bring us through and make us to see again the hand of God with us, the manifestation of His love and grace. I often remember the words which my wife said when she didn't know anything naturally. I had fixed our lunch and we were sitting down at the table eating and she said to me, "I am thankful." I said, "Yes, I hope I am too." And then she said, "I am thankful to be thankful." I said, "Where did you get that?" She said, "I don't know. I just got it." I said, "I've never heard it. I've never read it anywhere." You can't get it any better than that — not in my heart and understanding. So, I hope I have been blessed to be that way - thankful to be thankful and to look to Him for all things in life. I am thankful for the dear brethren and sisters on my 90th birthday — to go to the extent they did to have a birthday dinner for me. It was so wonderful to know that so many of the brethren and sisters hadn't forgotten you. But still their love is alive and the life of that love brings us together to where we can walk together in the fellowship and the love of God and can understand each other's language and to praise Him — whether it's two or three or whether it's a house full. It's our desire to praise Him from whom all blessings flow. These are the things that God has made me to believe and to live by. I thank the Lord for the mind that He has given me that I can remember His wonderful works to a poor sinner as I am. We have to go down and He leads us down there and brings us up again that we can say thank you, Lord, for bringing me this way.

For without that I could never see the greatness of thy love and mercy and kindness. May God bless all of you and continue His mercy upon us all. Though miles may separate God's people from one another, it doesn't separate us from Him or us from one another because we walk together in the same faith and in the same Spirit and in the same love and the same desire to give me more understanding of thy greatness toward us, to lead us and to guide us. May God bless all of you and keep you in His name regardless of the trials and tribulations of this life. They only make you take root

deeper into the faith and into the doctrine and into the love of God. That's what these tribulations, God sends, is for — to make you go deeper into these wonderful things that God has in store for us. May His loving kindness rest and abide with you all and keep you as an apple of His eye. May God bless you all.

Elder Haywood Wray

(Editors note: On March 8, 2014, Elder Wray will be 92 years of age.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

FAITH AND HOPE

I have had an impression in mind for many days, and I hope this impression is from the Lord. I would like to express a few thoughts on it for the prayerful consideration of the beloved brethren who believe in salvation only by the grace of our sovereign God.

Faith and hope must go together in a child of God. Without faith to believe in the eternal salvation accomplished by our Lord Jesus Christ we can certainly have no hope; and without hope of heaven and immortal glory when this life is over faith would be of no value to us. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." The Armenians tell us that all we have to do to be saved is to have faith. This is true, but whence cometh faith? Carnal man cannot produce this needed faith, for, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." This faith is applied to our time life, not our eternal salvation, as the non-regenerated believe. They tell us that if we will only ask God to give us faith he will do it. How can anyone call upon One whom they do not know? Paul tells us, "the carnal mind is enmity against God." Enmity is hatred. Would anyone call upon God if they hated him? Neither can they know him until born again of the Holy Spirit. **1 Cor. 2:14, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."** For one to become spiritual he must be born again: the Spirit must live in his heart. **Rom. 8:9, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." If one is not his he cannot believe, for Paul tells us, "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Jesus told some Jews, "It is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."** Since it is the work of God that we believe, it is utterly impossible to believe without His work in us. It is by the grace of God that we receive faith, as quoted above, and he does not let this faith lie dormant. Faith without works is dead faith. Works cannot produce that faith that is the gift of God, but when God imparts his faith in the life of the believer he will not let it lie dormant: it must show or prove itself by works. When the Spirit of God is in operation, faith shows or proves itself outwardly by works: "For it

is God which worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure." The Old School or Primitive Baptists are accused of not believing in works, but this is a false accusation, for we surely do believe in works: not works to bring about salvation, but salvation that brings about works. We believe the bible teaches that good works are the effect of grace; but we do not believe that works brings about grace, for grace is the free unmerited gift of God. **"And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."Rom.11:6.** It is the Spirit of Christ that works in the believer, and, "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, etc." If our works do not display this fruit, then our faith is a dead faith. We may confess by mouth that we have faith, but works will always speak louder than words and can easily be discerned by a true believer. The apostle James says, "Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." One may display his faith and yet never confess it before the church and ask for a home with them. The members of the church recognize this faith, but are powerless in persuading anyone to join the church. We should always extend the opportunity, but God is the One who adds to the church such as should be saved. Should we attempt to do this we may drive such a one away. I believe I have known some who had saving faith and hope in Christ Jesus who left this life without ever being members of the militant church, and I believe I know some now. Both have justified or proved their faith by works, not before God, but before the brethren. We are justified in the sight of God only by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ **"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."** In the 2nd chapter of James he gives us examples of how we are justified by works. In verses 21 through 24 we read, **"Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the alter? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."** He also gives Rahab the harlot for an example. **"He (Abraham) staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Rom. 4:20-25.** In the 3rd chapter of

Galatians 2-9 we find Paul chastising them because they had fallen back to the works of the law and left their faith. He said unto them, **"This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if** *it be* **yet in vain. He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you,** *doeth he it* **by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham,** *saying,* **In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."** Brethren, if we be blessed with Abraham we are not under the law but under grace, for "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." **"For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world,** *was* **not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law** *be* **heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is,** *there is* **no transgression. Therefore** *it is* **of faith, that** *it might be* **by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all."** Jesus Christ **"was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."**

Yes, dear brethren, as I said before, faith and hope must accompany each other; and by the grace of God we are given both. "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

All of us are creatures of vanity: we are full of it. But Paul tells us, "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope..." And he tells us, "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Those who attempt to procure their own salvation by the works of the law have no need of hope, for they say that they know they are saved, and to them this 'being saved' they consider to be their eternal salvation. I am sure of this statement, for I lived with them for many years and believed the same things they believe. They can no more help believing

the things that they do than we can help believing the way we do, for it is hid from them and revealed unto his babes. Jesus rejoiced in spirit and said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." God is too wise to err and to good to be unkind; therefore why should any man complain? Who is puny man to say unto God, Why hast thou made me thus? Paul said of this, "Hath not the potter power (right) over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" Surely God does have this power, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren."

For anyone to receive faith and hope from the Lord they must be born again, for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. In the flesh we are carnal, sold under sin, and have only a carnal mind. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. We must be spiritual, for the carnal mind is enmity against God. It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But we are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwells in us. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. If Christ is in us it is a mystery, "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but is now made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. " To receive hope and faith we must first be justified in the sight of God. Jesus Christ justified us, for it was he "who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification, therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Why is charity the greatest? Is it not that our faith and hope will be finalized, but charity will endure eternally? May God bless the truth and pardon my errors.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

HEBREWS 5:9.

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 58.

"THEREFORE, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. "

The power and force which scriptural words carry with them is due to the Spirit, which takes of the things of Jesus and revealeth them to him who readeth, and in whom grace aboundeth, and it is only by the exercise of the Spirit in us that we are enabled to eat and be comforted by the revealed word. Again, in order to attain unto that which is in the mind of the inspired writer, we dare not detach a sentence or a verse from that which goes before or which follows after , but search the written word, for we have the precious instruction which fell from the lips of Jesus: "He that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." God is not the author of confusion, but of peace. "Therefore." This word is used by the writer, referring to the things of which, he has been speaking, as a reason for the admonition which follows, and which brings to our faith's view the weighty and precious things which the gospel sets forth to our gladdened hearts, namely, "How that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he, was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." We must know the one, to follow the other. The word "therefore" is important, for if the things of the gospel "be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." Therefore to follow Jesus we must know Jesus. "My beloved brethren." This expression of the blessed relationship of the saints of God is not a mere salutation, as men of the world use the word "brother," carrying with it simply a meaningless expression, but these words came out of the apostle's heart, and not merely from his lips. The words, filled with their proper meaning, would say, Because you are in my heart to live and die with you, because with me you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope is the same hope, our hearts are joined together with the cords of that love which God the Father bestowed upon his Son, and upon all who fear his name and look for his appearing, therefore you are my brethren beloved. Now the things which are in my heart I say unto you: "Be ye steadfast," firmly fixed and established in the belief of the truth that Christ died for your redemption and arose again for your justification, and that he ever liveth and sitteth at the right hand of the Father, continually making intercession for you. He who is steadfast listeneth not to the voice of a stranger, to enticing words nor evil devices, but contendeth strenuously and firmly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. He looks well to the anchor which steadfastly holds his frail

vessel which rideth the waves in safety because of the anchor (Christ Jesus). To be steadfast the eye must be single to the glory of God, knowing none other gods, save the God of salvation, pressing forward, turning neither to the right nor to the left.

"Unmovable." This is a strong word and implies strength. The winds of false doctrine may blow with all their power and force against an unmovable child of grace, but cannot turn him from the way his mind and heart are set. He standeth upon the foundation of all truth (the rock Christ Jesus). He knoweth the security of the place of his feet. How refreshing to meet a brother or sister who is not ashamed of the gospel of Christ under any circumstances, and who is proud to be numbered with the sect everywhere spoken against, and who is weaned from the milk, drawn from the breasts of mother Eve. When we remember that God is faithful in performing all his promises, that his faithfulness faileth not, that he remembereth us in mercy, that his love is an everlasting love, that he doeth his pleasure in heaven and in earth, that all his ways are goodness and his paths are paths of peace, that he is the Potter and we are the clay, that he maketh us vessels of his own pleasing, and what he does is right, that the righteousness which is in his Son he has imputed unto us, remembering, I say, all these things we become strong in the Lord, recognizing the power of his might. Thus are we "unmovable," firmly fixed and built up on our most holy faith. "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter," walking in all the beauty and order of the house of God, walking no more by sight, but by the faith of God's elect in the secret of his love.

"Always abounding in the work of the Lord." To abound is in every case to manifest life, therefore in order to abound one must necessarily be alive; in the life of the children of the kingdom sin abounds, and also grace, the one in conflict with the other. Now you will ask, What is the work of the Lord, to which we are admonished of the apostle? Belief in the Lord Jesus Christ is the work of the Lord in us, and causes us to suffer because of the abounding of sin in our mortal bodies, and these are the sufferings of Christ, for it is the work of the Holy Ghost which causeth the conflict and bringeth about the suffering. So the apostle says, "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation, also aboundeth by Christ." The belief in the Lord Jesus Christ that a man once lived who was called Jesus Christ, does not make a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, but your belief must be wrought out and made manifest in your mortal bodies, which work is by the Spirit of Christ in you. It is not sufficient to abound once in a while in the work. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him," and our peaceful reign in his kingdom with him is the consolation which aboundeth by Christ. This is a continuous work in the life of faith.

"Forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. " The knowledge of the truth of God in you makes you that you are "steadfast,"that you are "unmovable," and that you do abound in the work of the Lord. The Apostle is attesting to that which already exists in you: love for the brethren, a desire for holiness, a conviction of sin, a fear and trembling in coming before the throne of grace, a knowledge of our poverty, wretchedness, blindness and weakness; all these build us up in the faith which is set before us, showing us that it is the work of the Lord in us, and that it is not in vain, because it leadeth us to his mercy-seat and to the house of our Master's brethren. We also know that our labor is not in vain, because the power and sweetness of the gospel lead us into an earnest desire for heavenly things, and turn us away from the things we once loved. It shows us, too, that it is truly the work of the Lord in us, for we know that we could not do this work of ourselves, it is in opposition to every desire of the carnal mind, for it humbles our pride and makes us to be despised in the face of a vain world, for our garments are humility, and our ornaments "a meek and quiet spirit. " These things fulfill the law of God, and not the law of the flesh. May the love of God and the knowledge of his truth so occupy our hearts that all our labor in the Lord may be to the glory of God, and to the lifting Jesus on high.

Elder B. F. Coulter

"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."— John xvi. 13.

There are two grand lessons to be learned in the school of Christ, and all divine teaching is comprehended and summed up in them. One is, to learn, by the Spirit's teaching, what we are by nature; so as to see and feel the utter ruin and thorough wreck of self, and the complete beggary, weakness, and helplessness of the creature in the things of God. This is the first grand branch of divine teaching. And we have to learn this lesson day by day, "line upon line, line upon line, here a little, and there a little." Through this branch of divine teaching we have almost daily to wade, depraved nature. And the other grand branch of divine teaching is, "To know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent." To know who Jesus is, and to know what he is; to know the efficacy of his atoning blood to purge the guilty conscience, the power of his justifying righteousness to acquit and absolve from all sin; the mystery of his dying love to break down the hardness of heart, and raise up a measure of love towards him; and to see, by the eye of faith, his holy

walk and suffering image, so as to be in some measure conformed to him, and have, his likeness in some measure stamped upon our souls.

J.C. Philpot

PSALM 133.

Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is* **for brethren to dwell together in unity!**

It is **like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard,** *even* **Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;**

As the dew of Hermon, *and as the dew* **that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing,** *even* **life for evermore.**

MEETINGS

LOWER MAYO FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo Fifth Sunday Meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday, March 30th, 2014. We hope to start singing at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30. Haynes Creek Church will host the Meeting. Directions for those who do not know the location; the meeting house is located at 3995 Rosebud Road, Loganville, GA 30052 from I-85, exit on Georgia 20 south. Go through Lawrenceville to outskirts of Grayson. Turn right on Rosebud Road. When Rosebud Road crosses Hwy 78, continue for 1 ½ miles to church on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in salvation by grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952 -2098

SKEWARKEY UNION
(Eastern Kehukee Association)

Hancocks Church will host the next session of the Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of March 30, 2014. The church is located on Ayden Golf Club Road, near Ayden, North Carolina. Preaching services begin at 10:30am.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

REVELATION 1:7.

Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* **which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.**

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union will be held at Canaan Primitive Baptist Church located on Mount Cross Road/Highway 844, Danville, VA in Pittsylvania County. Saturday before the fifth Sunday in March 2014 the song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton, Clerk
Staunton River Primitive
Baptist Association

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

Sunday, March 30, 2014

Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church will host the next West Country Line 5th Sunday meeting on Sunday, March 30, 2014. Singing will begin at 10:00 AM and preaching at 10:30 AM.

The Church is located at 150 Pleasantville Church Road, Madison, N.C. From Reidsville, N.C. take NC65 west through Wentworth, N.C. Stay straight on NC704 for 2 to 3 miles to Pleasantville Church Road on the right. From Madison, N.C. take NC704 and travel 6 to 7 miles to Pleasantville Church Road on the left.

We welcome all lovers of the truth, who are given a mind to do so, to be with us.

Elder Haywood Wray, Moderator
Mary Hawkins, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 2014

Eva Wyatt, NC	5.00
Raymond Clayton, KY	5.00
Don Norman, NC	25.00
Nellie Dalton, VA	5.00
James Lambert, GA	5.00
Wayne Oxley, WV	50.00
Norvell Godwin, LA	10.00
Elder Gene Lupton, NC	5.00
Michael Williams, NC	10.00
Hewatt Fleming, GA	5.00
I.C. Hornsby, GA	5.00

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 3 / 2014

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

OBITUARIES

MARGARET FRANCES BRINKLEY

We bow in humble submission to the sovereign will of our heavenly Father in the passing of our dear sister in the Church, Margaret Frances Brinkley. The Lord, in His love, mercy and grace, brought Sister Frances into the fellowship of Durham Primitive Baptist Church on January 20, 1952. She was baptized by the pastor, Elder J.W. Gilliam.

Sister Frances was a faithful member as long as her health permitted. Into her 80's with failing health, she and her husband, Brother Deacon Woods Brinkley, moved to Gainesville, Georgia near their daughter. She battled bladder cancer for several years prior to her death on August 7, 2013. She was born March 30, 1917 making her age 96 years. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Cleo Robertson, at Little and Davenport Funeral Home chapel, Gainesville, Georgia and burial was in Durham, N.C.

She was predeceased by her husband, Brother Woods Brinkley. She is survived by her daughter, Linda Daly and husband Jerry of Gainesville, Georgia: sister, Dorothy Brinkley of Fortville, Indiana: 3 grandchildren; and 8 great grandchildren.

We feel that our loss is her gain. Her suffering and trials are over. We believe she has entered into that eternal rest. May the Lord comfort those who mourn.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Sister Betty McPherson, Clerk

SISTER FOYE WHITEFIELD COLE

God, who has ordained all things according to his will and purpose, removed our dear Sister Foye Whitefield Cole from our midst on October 3, 2013. She was born on April 24, 1921 in Person County, NC, making her life here 92 years, 5 months, and 9 days.

Her parents were the late Thea Wellington Whitefield and Ester Pearl Wilson Whitefield. She married James Woodrow Cole whom she lost suddenly in death on Christmas Eve in 1965. She was also preceeded in death by an infant son David Thomas Cole and more recently by 23 year old grandson Zachary Ladd. Sister Cole was well-acquainted with trials and tribulation.

The loss of her husband left Sister Foye with three young children for whom to provide and care for, a task which required hard work and careful management. These surviving children are daughters Ruth Ellen Cole Boone of Pittsboro, N.C., Rebecca Mae Cole Dalton of Timberlake, and son James Richard Cole of Timberlake. Also surviving are seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Other survivors include her brother Clarence Whitefield of Chapel Hill, sisters Iva Pearl Godwin of Okeechobee, Florida, and Lois Barringhaus of Northbrook, Illinois.

In her natural life Sister Foye was a willing and industrious worker. She began work at a young age as a sheet sewer in a textile factory and eventually worked into the administrative offices of Burlington Mills where she did payroll and other office work. After officially retiring, she continued to work part-time past 80 years of age. Even in the midst of her busy life, she managed to support her children and community by being active in the school P.T.A., Extension Homemakers, and Girl Scouts of America.

She was also known for having a garden where she tended a variety of vegetables each year. Many hours were spent harvesting and preserving her bounty and later preparing them for family, friends, and especially for church gatherings. As long as she was able, she always prepared food for lunch each third Sunday at Durham Church as well as meals for other church meetings, a work that she especially loved and enjoyed.

Sister Foye joined Durham Primitive Baptist Church on March 15, 1959, making her a member for over 54 years. She was baptized by her pastor the late Elder David V. Spangler. On October 14, 1972, she was elected Treasurer of the church, serving past 40 years and was known to be especially careful and accurate in this office.

She visited widely to many churches in North Carolina, Virginia, and occasionally to other states, sometimes traveling a long distance in a single day. She was well-acquainted among the Brethren and Sisters in various locations and loved visiting with them. Upon returning, she enjoyed telling about these visits and the joy and fellowship she experienced while there.

Sister Foye was an exceptionally strong believer in foreknowledge, election, predestination, and salvation by grace. On one occasion, she commented that "you can't make a sheep out of a goat."

Her funeral was conducted at Durham Primitive Baptist Church by her Pastor, Elder Cleo Robertson assisted by Elder Jimmy Gray. Elder Robertson spoke from Psalm 46 and made several references to Sister Foye's unwavering belief in the doctrine, strong faith, and the absolute power of God. Elder Gray's remarks were from Psalm 23 from which he drew parallels from various verses to Sister Foye's life and experience. Sister Foye was laid to rest beside her husband at Maplewood Cemetery in Durham to await the second coming of our Lord and Savior. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Written by Brother Larry Byrd at request of Durham Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Sister Betty McPherson, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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1429 Howlett Street

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HYMN

Awake, my soul, in joyful lays,
And sing thy great Redeemer's praise;
He justly claims a song from me!
His loving kindness, O how free!
His loving kindness, loving kindness,
His loving kindness O how free!

He saw me ruin'd in the fall,
Yet lov'd me notwithstanding all;
He sav'd me from my lost estate;
His loving kindness, O how great!

Though num'rous hosts of mighty foes,
Though earth and hell my way oppose;
He safely leads my soul along;
His loving kindness, O how strong!

When trouble like a gloomy cloud,
Has gather'd thick and thunder'd; loud,
He near my soul has always stood;
His loving kindness, O how good!

Often I feel my sinful heart
Prone from my Jesus to depart;
But though I have him oft forgot,
His loving kindness changes not.

Soon shall I pass the gloomy vale,
Soon all my mortal powers must fail;
O! may my last expiring breath
His loving kindness sing in death.

Then let me mount and soar away
To the bright world of endless day;
And sing, with rapture and surprise,
His loving kindness in the skies.

Medley.

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EDITORIAL

THE VAIL (VEIL)

Exodus 26:31, "And thou shalt make a vail of blue, and purple, and scarlet..."

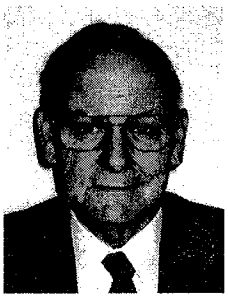
Elder Cleo D. Robertson

The Lord commanded Moses to make the tabernacle and the things in it according to the pattern showed to him by God in the mount. All of these things were types and shadows of heavenly things. **Hebrews 8:4-5, "For if He were on earth, He should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith He, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount."** The Apostle Paul wrote that the first tabernacle had the candlestick, the table and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. This first tabernacle "was a figure for the time then present in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation." The priests of the tribe of Levi always went into the first tabernacle to perform the services. The first tabernacle had ordinances of divine service and a worldly sanctuary. This tabernacle was setting forth the first covenant or low covenant. These priests were not permitted to enter the second tabernacle which was called the Holiest of all.

The second tabernacle contained the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold. Within the ark was the golden pot that contained manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the ten commandments or law covenant. The ark had two cherubims over the mercyseat. The ark was a beautiful type of Christ and the tables of the law covenant being inside

the ark set forth that Christ fulfilled the law and put it away. He did not destroy it. Only the high priest went into the second tabernacle once a year and always with blood which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people. This tabernacle was setting forth the covenant of grace. There was a vail that separated the two tabernacles and hid that which was in the Holiest of all. When Moses came down from the mount with the tables of the law and his face shined, he put a vail on his face that the children of Israel could not look to the end of the law. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." The Apostle wrote that even unto this day when Moses is read the vail is upon the heart. But, the vail is done away in Christ.

The vail of blue, purple and scarlet points to Jesus coming in the flesh. He came down from heaven, born of a virgin, and took upon Himself a body of flesh without sin. **"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," Romans 8:3-4.** This body was a vail that concealed or hid that within. For the fulness of the Godhead dwelled in that body. The blue color sets forth heaven from which He came. He was God in the body of flesh. The purple color was between the blue and scarlet or red because it takes blue and red to make purple. From the blue, purple signifies that He was royalty, for indeed He was and is the King of kings and Lord of lords. He walked upon the earth. He had all power. He spake and it was done. He commanded and it stood fast. His elect are referred to as a royal priesthood because they are of Him.

From the red, purple signifies His sufferings, persecutions and trials. Isaiah prophesied that He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; was wounded for our transgressions; was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; with His stripes we are healed; was oppressed and afflicted; and brought as a lamb to the slaughter. At the cross He was scourged or whipped, spit upon, smote on the head with a reed, had a crown of throwns put on his head, nails into his hands and a spear pierced His side. The red color sets forth the shedding of his blood and his death.

On the cross when he died, the veil of the temple was rent from top to bottom signifying that the access to the Holiest of all (Heaven) was accomplished by His death and shedding of His blood. The gentiles were brought in. He fulfilled the law to jot and tittle having finished the work His Father gave Him to do. As the Apostle Paul wrote in **Ephesians 2:11-18, "Wherefore remember, that ye** *being* **in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who we called Unincumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands: That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens**

from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us;* **Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments** *contained* **in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man,** *so* **making peace; And that he might reconcile both** (Jew & Gentile) **unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."**

Jesus kept his promise when He said, **"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold,** *and* **one shepherd."**

May the most merciful Lord bless you with much peace and comfort in the days ahead.

In love for Christ's sake,
Elder Cleo Robertson

---

1 JOHN V. 7.

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one."

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Tony,

Please renew my subscription for 2 more years and use the rest as needed. I enjoy the Signs and look forward it each month. It is like having a good friend come by to visit. There is nothing more pleasant than sitting on the front porch in my rocking chair on a nice spring or summer morning and reading the Signs.

Yours truly,
Ronnie Rudd

2-5-14

Dear Ones @ Signs of the Times,

Please use this money as you fit. May our Lord continue to bless your efforts as you publish your monthly. It has been such a blessing to me & my wife.

Its getting more difficult as time goes by, to find the truth set forth!

Thank you for your faithfulness in that regard. May the Lord's continued blessing be upon your endeavor.

Please continue my subscription and my father's –

Mine – John W. Schulz
159 Bearer
Cody, WY. 82414

My father's – John F. Schulz
950 Sleeping Child
Hamilton, MT 59840

Thank you and may the Lord
bless us and you!

2-7-14

Tony Horton,

Enclosed, please find a check to renew my subscription for 2 more years.

I enjoy and look forward to getting the "Signs" each month.

Thank you for all you do in getting it out each month.

A check for $30.00 is attached, use the other as you see fit.

In hope,
M.L. Richardson
6907 Jolee Rd.
Panama City, FL. 32404

02-16-14

Dear Brother Horton and Brethren:

Just a short note of thank's for your continued efforts in keeping the Signs going through our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. You all are a true perfect, free gift to us all. It is time to renew our subscription. Please renew for two years and use the rest for whatever you feel the need for. The good Lord willing, I hope to see you soon. Remember this dear wretch, when at the throne of Grace, an unworthy brother, if one at all.

In bonds of love,
James Knight

February 15, 2014

Elder Cleo,

Enclosed is the obituary of John I. Smith. His family both in the Church and of this earth, would appreciate it, should you have the room in a future Volume of the Signs of the Times, to print it. Many of us thank God for your tireless effort in your endeavors to serve the God of all creation.

Your brother, I hope
John M. Smith

PSALM 66: 16-20.

Come *and* hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.

I cried unto him with my mouth, and he was extolled with my tongue.

If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear *me:*

***But* verily God hath heard *me*; he hath attended to the voice of my prayer.**

Bless *be* God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.

VOICES OF THE PAST

WHO ART THOU
RUTH 3:9

LETTER FROM ELDER HATCHER TO BROTHER FISHER

Dear Brother:

Your short letter received, and was glad to hear from you. Your letters are so good that I watch for them in every Lone Pilgrim. I am a poor Gentile, and I wish to write on the subject of Ruth. "Who art thou?" Ruth 3:9.

If there ever was a subject that I believe, it is the eternal sovereignty of God over all worlds, creatures and things. It is the framework woven within and without. All of grace. It is an immeasurable subject that none but God's elect people can know, and God has so fixed it that they can not know only as in a hope of the promise which God made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The truth has been the truth before there was a Bible printed, and lay in God the Father in boundless eternity. It does not lie only in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the spirit. The mystery is so great that the wisdom of the great religious divines can not penetrate the one-millionth of a hair's breadth in this solid Rock of Eternal Ages.

Right here I must set my compass, which points to God, the First Great and Only Cause of all causes. It was in this first cause that God chose out of Adam's race, both of Jews and Gentiles, before these smart divines were born.

"Who art thou?" says the humble Boaz, who was "a mighty man of wealth," and a near kinsman of sweet little Ruth. It may be some time before I get back to the text, but you bear in mind that the basis of this subject is built upon the eternal decree of the Sovereign, unchangeable God concerning all things, both visible and invisible. This is God's house built upon the Rock of Ages.

There was a type of the Gentile church down in the land of Moab. A heathenish country full of idol gods. Out of all those Moabitish women there was but one that was chosen to type the Gentile church. What was the Gentile Ruth doing down there? Was she doing something to get the First Great Cause to cause her to follow Naomi, the type of the Jewish church in the land of Bethlehem — Judah? No, she was worshiping her gods in the land of Moab. Did God send Naomi down there to convert her? No, she "went out full," but when God's time came, "He brought me home again empty." Don't we know that if a crowd of mission folks had gone down there and converted a lot of the Moabitish heathen, they would have boasted? And that is no way to "have confidence in the flesh." I tell you, when God hits one He strikes them d-e-a-d, dead. And not until one is dead, can he speak the "wonderful works of God".

The Apostle Paul was struck dead and God made him a preacher, and he preached to the Gentiles the gospel of grace. "Not of works, lest any man should boast." All boasting is excluded

by the "law of faith". "It is of faith that it might be by grace, to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed." Here are two "mights" in this passage, but there is not an Arminian under the sun that can make these "mights" conditional on the part of God's church, either Jew or Gentile, for they are both "One in Christ".

The spiritual and wealthy Boaz, Jesus in His death has "slain the enmity thereby". This enmity was the "law of commandments contained in ordinances," under which the Gentiles did not belong. So He put no difference between the Jews and Gentiles, purifying their hearts by faith. Now, enough on that.

Every chosen Jew and Gentile was in the original decree of God, and in His eternal mind and the covenant of grace. "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren." So, "Ye are not under the law but under grace." The law condemns, but Christ was made of a woman, made under the law to redeem them that were under the law. Boaz and Ruth were in the generation of Christ, and when God hit His only Son with the stroke of justice He died and though dead ever liveth and the work is finished. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone, but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." "A wake, O sword thou that sleepest, smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn my hand upon the little ones." Did He remember the typical Gentile Ruth? Yes, she was in Naomi the typical Jewish church and both one in typical Boaz of our dear Lord.

I will just glean along the line of thought as contained in this Book of Ruth, for I can not tell it all, but a certain man (not a chance man) of Bethlehem-Judah, and he was a Jew, and he went to sojourn in the land of Moab. He and his wife and two sons, Mahlon and Chilion.

Mahlon married Ruth, and Chilion married Orpah, two Moabitish women, and in process of time, Elimelech and the two sons died leaving three widows. Naomi had been there about ten years. Now you have the characters, as I quote from memory.

We will now come to little Ruth. Naomi had heard, even down in the land of Moab that the Lord had visited His people with bread, so she starts to her home land of Bethlehem-Judah and the two daughters-in-law start with her. Please note that Naomi did not even invite them to go with her, but advised them to return to their own people and to their gods. But Ruth clave to Naomi and said, "Intreat me not to leave thee, nor return from following after thee, for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge, thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Orpah never said this. She seemed to have only a natural love for Naomi and only a kind of a voluntary humility, feeling she could do this way or, that way, and gave her mother-in-law a valedictory kiss and went back to her gods. But sweet little Ruth clave to Naomi and came with her to the land of Bethlehem-

Judah (O I can't tell it). Naomi was poor and empty and had no inducements to offer Ruth. When she came to Bethlehem, all the city was moved about them and said, "Is this Naomi?" Said nothing about Ruth, but is this the remnant of our people that has been gone from us about ten years? Naomi is humbled and said, "Call me not Naomi, call me Mara (Bitter), for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full (of the law of works) and the Lord hath brought me home again empty". Lovely Ruth is with her and says: "Let me go to the field and glean ears of corn in whose field I shall find grace". Yes, a field of gospel grace I shall find it in going after Boaz in type, and Christ in substance. Boaz inquires, "Whose damsel is this?" One of the reapers told him, "It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab." Boaz calls her "My daughter." Kinship is here manifested in this expression of Boaz. A supreme fellowship and kinship. Mortal tongue would fail to tell it. See the risk or rather triumphant faith in this lovely little Ruth in leaving the land of her nativity and die with a people whom she knew not heretofore. Boaz tells her to go not in another field to glean but abide here fast by my maidens. Yes, by my Jewish maidens. Abide here, this is my field. It is the gospel field. The field of grace. Do not go in any other field for all others are law fields, and no grace there. Abide here; I have charged the young men that they shall not touch thee. When thou art athirst go unto the vessels and drink of that which the young men have drawn. Vessels of mercy for thirsty souls. Also Boaz tells her to come at meal time and eat of the bread and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And Boaz reached her parched corn and she did eat and was sufficed. Jesus was that Bread from heaven, and He did drink the vinegar. Now Boaz told the reapers to let some handfuls fall of purpose, that she may glean them and rebuke her not nor reproach her when she gleans among the sheaves. Ruth was bountifully blessed, and the words of the wealthy Boaz humbled her and she fell on her face and asked why she, a stranger, should find such grace in his sight. He tells her, "It hath fully been shown me all thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thine husband, and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother and the land of thy nativity and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. I must skip many thoughts here. According to Naomi's words she went to the threshing floor of Boaz and in the evening, she marked the place where he lay, and went and uncovered his feet and laid her down. She came softly and uncovered his feet and laid her down. He has called her his daughter, and he recognized him as a near kinsman, and being a type of the church it was no harm for her to lie at the feet of the type of the Savior. "For all the city of my (the Lord's) people doth know thou art a virtuous woman." So she is at his feet to wait till the shadow of the law flee away. She tarried at his feet until midnight. The period, between the law of works and the gospel of grace. Boaz turned himself from the law to the gospel day and he beheld. "A woman lay

at his feet." Now comes our text, "Who art thou?" She answers, "I am Ruth, thine handmaid." A Gentile maiden not under the law, but grace, for the law of works will not cover me; "Spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman." The skirt of righteousness will cover me.

She tarried all night at his feet, and it was in the morning that the inheritance was purchased, and the promise to purchase the forfeited inheritance that had been sold for debt. No way to redeem it but to satisfy strict justice; and the wealthy Boaz had to satisfy this justice. The possession must be purchased by Boaz in type-by Christ in substance.

We will come on down to the substance now; the grave of Jesus was marked, and He must die. He must bear the dreadful stroke; and when He fell into the heart of the earth, in three nights He came forth and ascended at God's right hand. It is through this faithful Priesthood that the much fruit is brought forth to a Spiritual life in ultimate glory. This was all known, decreed, and declared in eternity. The whole chain of events must stand. Not one link can be broken. As Boaz purchased Ruth to be his wife by satisfying justice, so Christ purchased His Bride by bearing the curse of the law in her stead. "All power on earth ordained of God, fulfils His firm decree." The very paths we have trod were thus ordained to be. "In heaven and earth God does His will, restrains the wrath of man, then let it rage and thus fulfill, His great eternal plan."

How could Ruth, the poor Gentile have known how to have guided her footsteps from that heathenish land of Moab down to the decreed time of her death, and reached the climes of glory? The Lord brought Naomi home again empty, and she was cared for with all the glory and power of our blessed Lord, made in the fold of Jesus.

Christ, the Great Shepherd of the sheep, died and rose again, and ascended to heaven. The saints must come forth in His likeness, and all the saints will be seated around His unshakable throne in one sweet union, freed from all sin.

Let me refer you to the hymn, "A child of Jehovah, a subject of grace." I feel fearful that I am not worthy to use the personal pronoun; yet my hope is that "I'm of the seed royal, a dignified race." Read the hymn, I feel it is sound truth.

Salmon begat Boaz and Boaz begat Obed (of Ruth) and Obed begat Jesse and Jesse begat David. "For unto you is born this (Gospel) day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." In speaking of David as a prophet it is said, "Therefore being a prophet and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that out of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne." And again: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Isaiah 14:24. And in the 27th verse clinches the nail; "For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and His hand is stretched out, who shall turn it back?" This purpose was purposed upon the whole earth and it is bound to stand un-

til all things are consumed, and all enemies put under His feet, and the last enemy to be destroyed is death, but beyond death lies the life of all God's saints in the Lord.

Victory has triumphantly reigned over death, hell and the grave. Beyond this victorious resurrection, the saints of all ages shall come into the city of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and the church of the First Born, which are written in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect. God hath promised by His sworn oath that once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven, yet once more signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as things that are made, that those things that can not be shaken may remain. It is then that the saint shall receive a kingdom that can not be shaken. They shall return and come to Zion with everlasting gladness and sorrowing and sighing shall flee away. The hope of the saints will burst forth into sight and the ransomed of the Lord will be planted in the garden of grace. This is the Lord's crop. The Lord's wheat gathered into the gamer. Freed from all enemies, death and sorrow. O brother, if I am wrong correct me. This is a poor letter to write to you, my highly esteemed brother, but it is the best I can do. It is scattering, but if it is plain enough to get my thoughts, you will see that ALL things lie in the eternal purpose of our God, and men nor devils can not disannul the Almighty oath of God.

The Lord be with you, my brother, and guide every step you make. If you ever feel inclined to write to me, do so.

In love and united kinship and fellowship I close.

Elder J. R. Hatcher, A. P. S.
Lyles, Tenn.

THE LONE PILGRIM, SELMA, NC,
DECEMBER 1929, Vol. 7, No.84

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

"What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under Grace? God forbid. Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? – Romans 6:15,16

BEFORE regeneration we were the servants of sin. Our lusts were reigning over us. We loved it to such an extent as to be in full agreement and unity. In this cohabitable state lust is conceived and brings forth sin, and sin, when it is finished bringeth forth death. In regeneration it pleased God to take from us this stony heart, which was so enticed by lust, and to give us the heart of flesh, which has no affection for lust. It pleased Him to write His laws as commandments in this new heart which makes manifest this sin. "The commandment came, sin revived and I died" stated Paul. I believe Paul died to the enticement of this lust. After this time he

no longer served sin willingly but loved righteousness. Yet sin dwelled in him. He was no longer so enticed by lust as to love it with his whole heart. His desire was to live righteously but he was conscious of the presence of sin; for he expresses himself in Romans 7:17-20, "Now then it is no more I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me; for I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: For to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me."

We delight in the law of God after the inward man but we still bear about the body of death. We serve the law of God with our minds but with the flesh we serve the law of sin. This presence of sin in our mortal bodies is made manifest to us by the Spirit. The Spirit causes us to realize our wretched condition and enables us to pray for deliverance. When it pleases God to work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure we are made to realize it is solely by grace and we are blessed to be thankful to Him for these blessings.

Thence, after regeneration grace reigns over its subjects to produce the fruits of the Spirit. The greatest of these fruits is love, — love of God, love to God and love to the brethren. This same love that God loves us is reciprocal. It causes us to love Him with this same love. It also embraces the brethren. God's people do love one another. How can you love God whom you have not seen if you love not your brethren whom you have seen? Another fruit of the Spirit is joy. None but sinners who have experienced the exceeding sinfulness of their sins and their inability to extricate themselves from its penalty, power and consequences, can appreciate and realize the joy of being delivered from sin by God's amazing grace. What a joy for a chief sinner to be remembered and loved. It is joyful for brethren to meet together.

That Spirit produces peace. There is such rest experienced by that troubled soul which has been calmed by the still small voice that whispers sweet peace. What blessed peace to be remembered so graciously. One who has been convinced so thoroughly that hell would be his just abiding place realizes when a ray of hope of deliverance shines in his darkened and troubled soul. This peace flows from one to another. God's people strive for peace and are peacemakers because they realize the undesireableness of troubles. Those who are wrought upon by God's Spirit are longsuffering. They esteem each other higher than themselves, thus forbear one another's weaknesses. They forgive each other his trespasses realizing that God has forgiven so much. If God has been so gracious as to forgive me of my many transgressions how can I not forgive a brother his trespasses, seeing his trespasses are so little and insignificant compared to my sins?

God 's Spirit produces gentleness. God's people are kind to each other and to all with whom they come in contact. They are not harsh in conversation or dealings. They are not offensive even in rebuke. A soft answer turneth away

wrath, but grievous words stir up anger. It were better that a millstone be hanged about your neck and you be drowned in the sea than to offend one of these little ones. May God grant us to be gentle and kind to each other.

When it pleases God to work in His people both to will and to do of His good pleasure they are good. Their walk and conversation are godly. They walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called. Their conduct is upright and commendable, even though that it does not so appear to them.

This spirit produces faith. We are confident that God will fulfill His promises. We feel that God will finally save us in heaven. We trust in the efficiency of the atoning blood of Jesus Christ and His righteousness. We have confidence in brethren of their sincerity and fidelity.

God's people are meek. They had rather yield than to cause trouble or confusion. They do not ride some particular hobby-horse or opinion of their own that they feel might bring discord among brethren. I do not like the expression, "I will "stand alone before I will submit to such." That spirit is not akin to meekness. A "holier than thou" attitude is not characteristic of God's people. Their life is tempered with these graces. They are not fanatical in practice or conversation and in their dealings moderation is practiced.

Paul instructs the church at Ephesus in Ephesians 5:3,4, "But fornication and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you as becometh saints: neither filthiness nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks." Is it then godly that our conversation run along these lines? May He awake us out of sleep and bid us rise and walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise!

Elder E.J. Lambert

THE SOUL OF MAN

Brother Beebe: Why is the soul or spirit of man immortal? Or, in other words, why did it not die when the body dies? Be assured, I remain yours with my best wishes.

Wesley Spitler

Reply – The question proposed by our esteemed brother involves mystery quite beyond our depth. We have never been able to define the soul of man, nor to tell the whys and wherefores of its interminable existence. Aside from divine revelation, very little can be known of the soul or spirit that distinguishes the human family from the rest of the animal part of the creation of God. But the scriptures supply to us that instruction which human physiology is altogether incompetent to afford – "God breathed in man the breath of life and man became a living soul." And Paul has testified that the first man Adam was made a living soul. Again we are instructed by the words of inspiration in regard to the spirit of man that goeth upwards, in distinction from the spirit of the beast that goeth downward. However

impossible it may be for us to comprehend the soul and spirit of man, we all feel a consciousness that we possess both, but why the soul shall survive the dissolution of the body and continue to be in happiness or misery forever and ever, to our limited mind admits of no satisfactory answer short of the light of divine revelation. God has condescended to inform us of the composition of man as a mere human being, of distinct elements of his composition. The material substance of the man was made of the dust of the earth, but it was not until God breathed in his nostrils the breath of life that man became a living soul. As the union of these elements constitute us living beings, or living souls, so the separation of these component parts is called death; but not, as we understand it, to signify the cessation of existence of vitality only in relation to the body which is composed of the dust of the earth. When the Redeemer died on the cross he committed to the hands of the Father his spirit, and as he said to the dying thief, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise," we conclude there could have been no suspension of vitality in the soul or spirit of either Christ or the penitent thief to whom this consoling assurance was so graciously given. The soul identifies the man, for man became a living soul, and in the common language of the scriptures, men are called souls. The assurance to the thief could not relate to the body of the thief, for his body was not laid with that of his Redeemer in the new tomb, nor was it preserved from seeing corruption. It was therefore something apart from his body that was with Christ in paradise. The body being of a material substance, we can trace it to its silent resting place in the bosom of its mother earth; we can watch the process of decomposition until the perfect accomplishment of the decree, "To dust shalt thou return." "We see it so perfectly returned that it can no longer be distinguished from its kindred dust. Were it not for the light of revelation we should there bid it an eternal farewell, without any hope of its resurrection. But the departed soul and spirit we can, by nature's light, trace no farther than the time of its separation from the body, and were it not for inspired instruction, we might conclude that it dies with the body, ceases its vitality and discontinues to be. But, God be praised, the words of truth assures us that the spirits of the just are made perfect, that they are with the Redeemer in the paradise of God. Paul when speaking of his departure from the body spoke of departing to be with Christ. That there is really a separation of soul and body in death we are certain from many declarations of the scriptures — among others the words of our Lord concerning the rich man. To him it was said, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee!" "Fear not him that can kill the body, but after that have no more power; but fear him who is able to cast both body and soul into hell." The material bodies of the guilty sons of Sodom were probably consumed with material fire which God in righteous judgment rained from heaven upon them, but these very inhabitants of Sodom are now suffering the vengeance of eternal

fire. From all of these considerations with many others presented in the scriptures we conclude that in death there is not only a separation of soul and body, but that the soul immediately on its separation enters a state of paradise, or sinks to a state of interminable woe and misery. The spirits of just men are made perfect in glory, and the spirits or souls of the wicked are cast into hell.

Brother Spitler and our readers, permit us to remark that the scriptural word immortal with its derivatives, as used in our version of the Bible are not used in the scriptures simply to express the idea of interminable existence. The wicked must continue to exist in hell under the wrath of God, where the smoke of their torment shall ascend forever and ever, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched; but still this state of their existence is denoted by another word of very different and opposite meaning from that of immortality, which in scripture is synonymous with the words eternal life, and Christ only hath immortality, dwelling in the light, and it is only in him that the saints have immortality.

For this is the record that God hath given us of eternal life, and this life is in his Son. This is the true God and eternal life. This life is hid with Christ in God, and they unto whom it is given shall never perish, but because Jesus lives, they shall live also.

The order of the final resurrection of the bodies of the saints at the last day presents a strong conformation of the position we have taken. For when Christ shall descend from heaven at the last day to raise the dead and to judge the world, according to the scriptures, he shall be revealed personally, from heaven with ten thousand of his saints; that is, as we understand it, with all the spirits of his saints now made perfect." "For when he who is our Life shall appear," says Paul, "then shall we appear with him in glory." The dead in Christ shall rise first, and those saints who shall then be living on the earth shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye, and these raised up bodies, raised with spiritual and immortal life shall meet them in the air and so shall they be ever with the Lord. These are the children of God which are born of incorruptible seed by the word of the Lord that liveth and abideth forever. "He that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and he that liveth and believeth on me shall never die. Believest thou this?" So spake Jesus to Martha.

On another occasion he said, "He that eateth this bread that came down from heaven shall never die." There is that then in Christians that cannot die, cannot cease its vitality, but that something is not the vile body, or the mortal body, or the Adamic nature born of the flesh, for all flesh must die, and return to the dust. But that which is born of God is incorruptible and secure from death. The earthly house of our tabernacle must be dissolved and fall; but the children of God have a house which is not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. The outward man decayeth; but the inward man is renewed day by day.

In regard to the bodies of the wicked, it is sufficient that our dear Lord has told us not only that the saints shall rise, that he will raise them up at the last day, but he has also said that the hour shall come in which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and they shall come forth, they that have done good to life eternal, and they that have done evil to a resurrection of damnation. And God will judge the world in righteousness at the last day, by that man whom he hath appointed, and that according to Paul's gospel.

We would not be understood as confounding the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, with the natural soul of man; for all men have natural souls, as we have attempted to show, but all men have not the new man described above. All who are born of God in the new birth receive an implantation of spiritual and incorruptible life. But the soul which is quickened by this implantation and the life implanted in the soul are distinct things in their nature and origin, but identified in the person of the regenerated, in whom Christ is formed, the hope of glory. So at least the subject appears to us. If we are right, may the Lord have all the glory; but if we err, may he forgive us, and may our brethren be blessed with patience to bear with our weakness; for if we know the desire of our own heart it is to utter only the truth as it is in Jesus Christ our Lord. Brother Spitler and brethren, in our experience we feel an internal consciousness that we have a soul that must survive this poor frail body, and that it must exist after the earth and seas shall have passed away. This soul, as well as this body, we found, to our sorrow, was defiled with sin. But the holy law of God spake in thunder when it said to us, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." And until Christ was revealed to and in us we were in bitterness of soul in view of our guilty, helpless and as it seemed to us, our hopeless condition. But—

"When God revealed his gracious name,
He changed our mournful state."

Then great joy and gladness sprang up in our heart, and our sorrowing and sighing, at least for a time, fled away. We have seen the time that we would gladly have believed that we had no soul to live after the death of the body; but as well might we seek for repose and comfort on a bed of embers, as for a release from the strong conviction that we had a soul all stained with guilt, that must suffer the righteous judgments of God, when time shall be no more, unless God should reveal a way that his justice and truth could be maintained and salvation abound to the chief of sinners. But why it is so that the soul must so exist in wealth or woe forever, we can only solve upon the ground that it was even so because it so seemed good to our Creator to organize us. It is now enough to know that it is so, and to rest assured that God in making man a living soul had an object worthy of himself. And however dark and mysterious the footsteps of our God may seem to our very limited understanding; we desire to be still and

know that he is God. May we be preserved from vain speculation on this and on all subjects; may we rejoice in all that has been revealed, and trust him for all that he hath seen fit to withhold from our understanding.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y., June 1, 1854

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT NOAH

Noah was preacher, head and priest. In these things, we may say without offense to the Scriptures, that there is a striking likeness to Jesus the Christ, who is preacher, head and priest in an infinitely greater sense than Noah ever could have been. Nevertheless, Noah is a shadow of the character of Jesus, and it may be worth our while to spend a few moments in pursuing this likeness. In 2 Peter ii. 5, Noah is declared to have been a preacher of righteousness. We have heard it said by Arminians that Noah went about the antediluvian world warning people of the coming flood, and exhorting them to repent of their sins that God might turn from his wrath. This is not so, and there is not one word in the Bible in support of such an imagination. We have not on record any sermon that Noah ever preached with his lips. His preaching consisted in that he, through faith, believed in Jesus and worked in the building of the ark strictly in accord with God's commands. Every act of Noah in this work on the ark was an expression of faith and trust and hope in God. He added nothing to nor took anything from the word of God as it came to him, ordering him as to every detail in the shaping of the vessel that was to be their security from the flood.

The greatest sermons ever preached are often not those that come from the lips, but those which are preached with the hands and feet, that are lived out of the life of the believer. This is the kind of preaching Noah did. Could all of us let our lips and lives express the holy gospel we profess, then all would be preachers. We doubt not that everyone who believes in God through the divine gift of faith is a preacher to the extent that faith moves them. Whose righteousness did Noah preach? Not his own, but the righteousness of Jesus. Abel, in offering the sacrifice of the lamb, was showing forth the righteousness of Jesus, the Lamb of God. He, by his offering, preached the righteousness of Christ. So Noah in building the ark with its three stories, with its window in the top and with its door in the side, all made of gopher wood pitched within and without, was preaching the all-sufficient righteousness of Jesus, who is the ark of salvation in whom all the elect of God are saved. In this Noah is a shadow of Christ, who is the great Preacher of all preachers. "I have preached righteousness in the great congregation." As Noah preached not his own righteousness, but the righteousness of Christ, so Jesus declared not his own righteousness as a man, but the righteousness of his Father, the Almighty God. As Noah did his preaching more in his living (that is, in his doing) than in his merely saying it, so Jesus' every act and every

work and every step were a profound preaching of the righteousness of that Father who had sent him into the world to do his will. The great congregation in which Jesus does his preaching is that great body of the elect effectually called to hear his word out of every nation under heaven. By his Holy Spirit it reveals his power and his truth in the hearts of his people, wholly unaided by the many devices men have set up for the regeneration of mankind. Man can never preach the gospel of the grace of God except as he is called, and sent forth by the great Preacher.

Noah was the head of all that were saved in the ark, he was head over family, and over all the beasts and other living things that were there, all were subject to him. Here, again, is a shadow of Christ, who is head over all things to his church. (Ephesians i. 22.) All the church, both of the Jews and of the Gentiles, God's elect everywhere, are subject to the dominion of Jesus, the head of the church. All the life of the body, every member, comes from the head; all her power and direction come from the head. From Christ is delivered to the church her doctrine, her order, her ordinances: all her government and discipline. Even the apostles themselves could not add to nor take from the gospel rule as delivered to them by Christ himself. Even they were not lords over the heritage of God, but servants of God to the church, having no dominion over the faith of the members.

Noah was a priest in that, when the ark rested upon Ararat, he came forth and made a sacrifice to the Lord. In this sacrifice he used nothing but clean things. He took of every clean beast and of every clean fowl and offered it as a sacrifice. This sacrifice was a sweet smelling one unto the Lord, because it was the fruit of Noah's faith. Without faith no one can please God. This faith is the fruit of God's Spirit, and God never fails to recognize the work of his own Spirit, and to accept the work his Spirit produces, but he will not accept the offerings which men make of themselves and in their own fancied merit. Noah offered what he did in the faith that God had wrought in him. For this reason it was a sweet smelling savor to God, a fragrance given off by the faith that was in Noah's soul. As a token of his covenant which God made with Noah in acceptance of the sacrifice which he offered, God promised not to curse the ground again for man's sake. Noah in his work here as a priest is a shadow of Jesus the great High Priest of our profession, the Priest after the order of an endless life. Jesus offered to God a clean sacrifice for the ransom of his people. This clean sacrifice was not the blood of beasts, but his own spotless body, which he took as Priest and offered upon the altar of Calvary for the sins of his people. Jesus combined in himself both Priest and offering. Such a thing was never seen before, nor ever will be again. No man took his life from him, but he laid it down of himself, which act it became him to do as the Captain of our salvation. In view of the clean sacrifice which Jesus has made of himself God has declared he will never count our sins against us any more. That is, there shall

be no more curse. There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. They are delivered from under the curse of the power of sin, from under the condemnation of the law of sin and from the captivity of death, the wages of sin. All the flood of God's wrath against sin was poured forth upon the Ark of our salvation. He endured it all. He paid all the debt we owed.

We try faintly to portray the wonderful offices of our Saviour in his relations toward his God and his people, but we can only glimpse the glory of his being, and words are futile to set forth all he is to his people, for he is their all in all.

(Editorial by Elder Lefferts
July 15, 1919)

Luke 1: 76-80.

And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;

To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins,

Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us,

To give light to them that sit in darkness and *in* the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

GOD'S OMNIPOTENCE

I sometimes tremble greatly when I am given thoughts upon the omnipotence, omnipresence and omniscience of God. What greater power and wisdom and knowledge can there be? He is everywhere present, for he inhabiteth eternity, and there is no beginning of days or end of time with him. He spake and it was done, commanded and it stood fast. In the beginning he created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them by the word of his power. This he did in six days, and on the seventh day he rested. **"And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, It was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day." Gn. 1:31.** All that he created and made were for his own good pleasure. **"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." Rev. 4:11. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and Invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him." Col. 1:16.** God has his holy purpose in all things for he hath said, **"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there Is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isa. 46:9-10.**

Sin is not a created thing, for sin is the transgression of God's holy law. 1 In.3:4. God hates sin with a holy hatred, yet he has a purpose for it being in the world. Surely he had the power to keep it out or his power would not be perfect. The preacher tells us, **"Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."Eccl. 7:29.** It was from this upright innocent state that Adam fell into a state of sin and death. These inventions allude to sinful and evil things. When God placed Adam in the garden he was innocent and upright, knowing neither good nor evil: only after they transgressed were their eyes opened to know good and evil. Though Adam was made upright, he was also made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Rom.8:20. There are many who claim that God was unjust in making man subject to vanity .How unholy they be, and how just, holy and righteous is our God! Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another to dishonour? Rom.9:20-21. After God had created every thing else, he took dust of the earth and formed man, breathed into his nostrils the breath of life;and man became a living soul. And God created man in his own image. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them. " He blessed them and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth. Therefore all men born of flesh and blood are only Adam multiplied. God took a rib from Adam's side and made it a woman, and gave her to him. And Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." "And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living."

We have heard it said by some that the first man Adam was at least partially spiritual, and that was the position from which he fell. But the Scriptures say otherwise. "**And so it was written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last man Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven." 1 Cor. 15:45-47.** Man must be born again to ever be spiritual. Jesus told Nicodemus, **"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. " John 3:5-7.** Surely no one will claim that the first Adam had been born again. God was not surprised that Adam partook of the forbidden fruit, for he had purposed it, and said, "In the day thou

eatest there of thou shalt surely die. " He did not say "If ye eat of it." God had a holy purpose in it. and he did four things that brought it to pass, and in no way did this make him the author of sin as some claim. Neither did God tempt Adam to sin. **"Let no man say. when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. " James 1:13**. As we said before, God made man subject to vanity according to his own will and purpose, he placed the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden and gave to Adam a commandment not to eat of it, and the crooked serpent which God had formed with his hand was there to deceive Eve. Adam was not deceived, neither could he be, for he was a figure of him that was to come, Jesus Christ. If anyone of these four things had not been done then sin would not have entered the world. **"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom. 5:12.** If sin had not entered the world by Adam and Eve they would have never died. They would still be in the flesh and could never enter heaven and immortal glory. The holy, righteous purpose of God would have been destroyed, and we know that this could never be. His beloved, only begotten Son stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and he would come into the world and destroy sin and save his people from their sins.

I have believed, and often said, that Adam ate the forbidden fruit which Eve gave him because of his love for her. This I believe is true, but I have been given to see that there is more to this than I had seen before. Why did he love her? Because she was one with him, as Adam said, **"This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man." Gn. 2:23.** This shows another part in which Adam was a figure of Jesus Christ, for the bride of Christ, the church, was ever in him, chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Let us read **Ephesians 5:28-33. "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church... for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let everyone of you in particular love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."** Adam willingly went into death for his bride, but had no power to bring her back. This Jesus did also, but he had power to raise her up again with himself. Jesus said, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it

again. This commandment have I received of my Father." When Jesus died on the cross of calvary his bride died in him, for he is the head and she is the body. The head cannot die without the body dying with it. She was buried with him, and she arose with him on that third day. "**Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized Into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin." Rom. 6:3-7.** What a wonderous doctrine this is to those who have been given grace to believe in God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. It is impossible for the natural mind of carnal man to comprehend the power, knowledge and wisdom in the marvelous works of our sovereign, eternal, omnipotent, omniscient God, **"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Isa.55:8-9.** And, "**For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." 1 Cor. 1:21** These things are hidden from the wise and prudent, but by the almighty grace of God they are revealed by faith unto babes. I have hope that I am included among the ones who have received this faith, for our blessed Saviour is coming again to receive his bride whom he hath redeemed. **"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." 1 Thes. 4:16-18.** I pray that all who may read these words will be comforted of God. I desire that you remember this poor sinner when at the throne of Grace.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 4 / 2014

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

"So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."- Rom. 7:25

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 2014

Banks Conner, VA	25.00
S.J. Sullivan, AL	5.00
Elder Barnabas Brammer, PA	5.00
Marion Meeks, NC	5.00
Ronnie Rudd, NC	5.00
Connie Franco, TX	5.00
M.L. Richardson, FL	5.00
John W. Schulz, WY	700.00
Elder Mark Terry, VA	10.00
Faye Brown, NC	25.00
James Knight, NC	25.00
Bruce Smith, VA	10.00
Pamela Screen, TN	5.00
Elder W.T. Conner, VA	5.00
Robert Newsome, FL	50.00

OBITUARIES

NOLA WILLIFORD DAY

With much sadness, we acknowledge the passing in death of our dear sister-in-Christ, Nola Williford Day. Sister Nola was born September 29, 1919 and died January 26, 2014 making her 94 years of age.

She was a long time resident of Durham, NC but she was born in Granville County to Lester and Lillian Dean Williford who preceded her in death. She was married to Thomas Jones Day, Sr., who also preceded her in death. She is survived by her son, Thomas Jones Day, Jr. and wife, Tammy of Roxboro, NC; grandchildren, W. Samuel Day and Elizabeth Day; as well as many nieces and nephews.

Sister Nola was received into the fellowship of Durham Primitive Baptist Church on September 16, 1984 and was baptized the following month by her pastor, Elder Cleo Robertson. She was the first person he baptized. She was dressed all in white and looked like an angel as she came down to the water.

She was faithful to attend her meetings and brought food as long as she was able. She possessed a beautiful spirit manifested in her countenance and love for her brethren. This was the beauty of holiness which was Christ in her, the hope of glory. "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined."

Her funeral was conducted at Durham Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Cleo Robertson and burial was in Surl Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery, Timberlake, NC. May the Lord reconcile and comfort those who mourn for our loss is her gain.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Betty McPherson, Clerk

BLUMA GLASS "B.G." NEWNAM PRYOR

Our Heavenly Father has called from our midst another precious member of Dan River Church. It is with much sadness that I attempt to write a memorial for Sister B. G. Pryor. Sister B.G.,as she was lovingly called, was the youngest of seven children born October 31, 1925 to Edgar and Beulah Newman in Pelham, N.C. She lived in this community all of her life. She attended Woman's College in Greensboro, UNC Chapel Hill and graduated from Averett College in 1944 with a Degree in Education. She taught school in Caswell County for about two years.

In December 1944 she married Hugh Pryor. Soon she began working in his general mercantile store in Pelham. Later they opened a second store which she operated. A laundry mat was added a few years later at this location. Sister B.G. and Hugh had three daughters: Rebecca Parks of Memphis TN, Donna Echols and Bonnie Adkins of Pelham, NC. Sister B.G. was very active in her community .She served on the Health Department Board of Caswell County. Also she was instrumental in organizing the Pelham Community Center and played a major role in securing federal funding for the center.

Her hobbies were gardening and fishing. Each year she raised a large garden and shared the fruits of her labor with family, neighbors and friends. Often times I found fresh vegetables on my back steps and I knew Sister B.G. had come by. When her health permitted she was often seen fishing at the pond on her farm.

Sister B.G. was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace. She received a precious hope in Christ. She joined Dan River Church April 22, 1990 and was baptised by her pastor, the late Elder Kenneth Key.

Sister B.G. was devoted to her church and loved her brethren. She was a faithful member and filled her seat until her health failed. She supported her church in every way. She prepared delicious food to bring to church each month, especially her turnip greens and deviled eggs. Sister B.G. was blessed to travel widely among our churches and different associations. She was loved and respected where ever she visited.

Sister B.G. died September 21, 2013. She was predeceased by her parents, her husband, a daughter and a grandson. She is survived by her daughters Donna Echols and Bonnie Adkins of Pelham, NC, a sister Susie N. White, numerous grandchildren, great grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

Her funeral was conducted at Dan River Church on Wednesday , September 25,2013 by her pastor, Elder Thomas Solomon and Mr. Wayne Wallace. Her body was laid to rest beside her beloved husband in Dan River Cemetery to await the resurrection morn when Christ shall come to gather his children home. May all who mourn the loss of Sister B.B. be reconciled to God's Holy Will. We feel our earthly loss is her eternal gain.

Written by one who loved her dearly,
Sister Phyllis Stroud

BROTHER JOHN I. SMITH

Brother John Irvin Smith was born August 14, 1928, in Hartford, Alabama, and died August 7, 2013, at age 84, in his home surrounded by a loving family, in Panama City, Florida. His funeral and burial was at his home church, Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, in Dothan, Alabama, and was conducted by his Pastor and son, Elder John M. (Micky) Smith and Elder Ernest Brooks. His funeral was attended by Elders R.H. Hale, Loyd Simmons, Scott Sexton, John Howard Jr., James Donaldson, and Deacons Robert Newsom, Don Stinson, Buddy Bryan, Jimmy Johnson, Don Bass, J.D. Jones, and Tom Gilbert.

Brother John met his future wife, Bertha Avery, at Mt. Pleasant Church in 1948. They were married August 8, 1948, and to their union were born five children. In 1952 John and Bertha asked for a home at Mt. Pleasant and they were baptized together. He was set aside and ordained as Deacon in 1956 and served faithfully until his death. In 1968 he was preceded in death by his second child, Douglas, at age 16. He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Sister Bertha, and four children, Micky (Wynette), Tommy (Anita), Patsy, and Serena, one grandchild, Amy, and one great-grandchild, Dax, one sister, Sue, and many, many beloved brothers and sisters in the Church.

Brother John was elected to serve as clerk of the Western Primitive Baptist Association in 1982 and served faithfully in that capacity until his death. He shared a wealth of knowledge with new members and gave guidance to new Deacons and Elders. Brother John was very strong in faith and visited many churches in Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, Tennessee, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia. He loved the Lord, his earthly Church, and his church brothers and sisters, and his family very much.

Brother John will be greatly missed by all that knew him, both in the Church and without. Brother John had no fear of death as it approached, taking solace in Jesus and His victory over death, trusting totally in Him for all things, especially his Salvation. His gain is our loss, and we hope to join him in singing praises in eternity to GOD, our LORD!

Submitted by his son and Pastor,
Elder John M. (Micky) Smith

ROMANS 8:27-28.

And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of* God.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

Resistless Sov'reign of the skies,
Immensely great! Immensely wise!
My times are all within thy hand,
And all events at thy command.

His great decree, who form'd the earth,
Hath fixed my first and second birth:
My parents, native place, and time,
Were all assigned to me by him.

'Twas God that form'd me by his pow'r,
'Tis he sustains me every hour;
And all my times shall ever be
Order'd by his all-wise decree.

My times of sickness and of health,
My times of penury and wealth,
My times of trial and of grief,
My times of triumph and relief;

Yea, times the tempter's pow'r to prove,
And times to taste a Savior's love;
Must all begin, and last, and end,
As best shall please my God and friend.

Though plagues and death around me fly,
Till he commands I cannot die;
Though men or devils aim to kill,
They can't exceed my Father's will.

O thou tremendous, wise, and just,
In thy kind hands my life I trust:
Yea, have I somewhat dearer still,
It shall be thine, and at thy will.

May I at all times hold thy hand,
And still to thee surrender'd stand;
Convinc'd that thou art God alone,
May I and mine be all thy own.

Thee, Lord, at all times will I bless,
For, having thee, I all possess;
Nor can I e'er bereaved be,
Since I can never part with thee.

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EDITORIAL

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with yoke of bondage." Galatians 5:1.

Elder J.B. Farmer

We have been given to walk with the lovely, orderly, sound, and faithful children of God in the church family for many years. They have made their calling and election sure to us, as they have been blessed to bear the fruit of the Spirit. We have witnessed the love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance among them, which, according to the scripture, is that fruit. From the beginning of our walk with the Lord's people, and even very recently, we (if I am able to claim a part with them) have again heard shocking accusations brought against us from some outside of our fellowship. They condemn all associations as man-made organizations, and say that they all are divisive, controlling and unscriptural. And they characterize the members of the associating churches as being weak and submissive to those they call 'controlling moderators'. They charge that the members inside the correspondence are not allowed to visit others outside the correspondence. And they complain that ministers outside the correspondence are not allowed to fill their stands and preach. They say that those who take part in associations are in chains of bondage, and that they put up bars against others. Since we participate in associations, we are included in their condemnation.

These sobering and weighty charges have raised some very serious questions, and have caused me to beg for wisdom that I might be enabled to set things in order, at least, for my own peace of mind. We are commanded to examine ourselves, whether we are in the faith, and to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Here are a few of the questions that, I am given to believe, need an answer: Is there any substance to their accusations? If not, why are they being leveled at us? Should we answer them? If so, how must we make our defense? May

we look unto the Lord to give us the answers that one cannot gainsay or resist in truth.

Are all associations unscriptural, man-made, divisive, and controlling of churches as they say? We are commanded that we should be "not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is." We are not only commanded, but it is our holy desire to meet with those we have been given to love for the truth's sake. We love to meet with our home church, and with other churches that are walking in the light. And we love to meet together yearly with several churches at one time that are located a great distance from us. This is the only opportunity we have to see some of our brethren. When several churches come together for fellowship in the gospel, in order to avoid confusion there must be some arrangement made so that things may be done decently and in order. In this lovely setting, things are done so as not to respect any man's person, and not to prefer one above another. This is the same way the church conferences are carried out, and the same way the associations and union meetings are conducted. This has been my experience over many years. It is scriptural to "Let all things be done decently and in order." This principle is not man-made, but of God. It is not divisive, but uniting. And it is not to control or to dictate, but that God may be exalted in all things. We have the liberty to come together in decency and in order for our church conferences, associations, union meetings, etc., all being holy and undefiled as they are carried out in love. And we are taught to stand fast in that liberty.

Are the moderators of our associations controlling as some accuse? Because one is blessed to be careful about good order, that does not make him a controller. Are the church members weak and submissive to the abuses of controlling moderators as they say? I have never seen such things among these dear people. These are the wisest and most humble people in the world. And they are strong in the Lord, in the power of His might. There may have been some abuses in some church conferences, associations or union meetings that I have heard about, but those who caused them have failed or are failing. We know that the Lord has never suffered His little ones to be lorded over. Any moderator or any person that has ever attempted to dominate God's children must necessarily fail. I am made to believe that any who would abuse the Lord's people come and go. And when they go they take away the chaff with them. And I am made to believe it is the Lord's doing. The gates of hell shall not prevail against the Lord's church. The Lord is keeping it in its purity and holiness. His church has always been a very small remnant according to the election of grace.

Are we too strict in the way we relate to others as they charge? I am made to think of the ancient walled and gated cities, and how they were managed. The walls were built to keep those out who sought to destroy the ones within. There has always been evil in the world, and evil must be watched against. The gates were open by day and closed

by night. When the gates were open, the elders of the city sat in them and observed all who came and went. The elders knew the inhabitants of the city, and they went in and out freely. Those coming into the city, unknown, were questioned by the elders about where they came from, and about what business they had there. These were legitimate questions since it was necessary to know the specifics about any stranger about to enter the city, in order to maintain the peace and safety of the city. Also, each day and each night, men were set upon the walls to keep watch for the city, and to sound the alarm if necessary. This watch-care was a life-and-death matter and was undertaken most seriously. In a similar manner, the churches are constantly being watched over by those appointed of God. Even so, the Lord's people are blessed to know that, **"Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh *but* in vain."**

Are our members hindered from visiting those outside our correspondence as some claim? I know of no rule prohibiting our members from visiting others who are not of like faith and order. The apostle Paul was blessed to say, "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any." In scripture, the false churches are likened to harlots. In my mind, for one to knowingly visit with those promoting false doctrine and walking in disorder would be similar to a man going into the homes of indecent women. It may not be wrong for a man to go there, if he had a good reason, but it surely would raise questions in the minds of those who saw it. But if he should become intimate with them, it would certainly be wrong. We are taught to "abstain from all appearance of evil." Are we in chains of bondage as some accuse us? Or is it just the opposite? Are we bound to our brethren by golden chains of love that hold us back from doing anything that might bring reproach upon them? It is not that we are forbidden to go outside the correspondence, but that we have been given no desire to go, and have no desire to become entangled in the troubles of others. If one should insist upon going outside our correspondence in order to participate with and encourage the disorder and false doctrine of others, that one would be considered to be in disorder with them. This is not just my idea, but I believe this is the understanding of the many.

Are our pulpits shut against other Primitive Baptist ministers as some assert? Do we set up bars against them? I am made to believe that the sound and faithful children of God have no desire to hear false doctrine, and that they are blessed to guard against it. Also, they are made to hold to decency and order, and are not inclined to allow those who have disobeyed the gospel to stand before them and preach as though nothing were wrong. I am made to believe that the true brethren have not shut their pulpits against any, but that the unsound and unfaithful ones have shut the pulpits against themselves. If a minister comes among us who is known for unsound doctrine and unfaithfulness, or walks with

others that are such, he is not invited into the stand. But if a minister comes among us, and is shown to be sound in the doctrine, orderly in his walk, and lovely in his manners, he is welcomed with open arms - that is, if he does not hold fellowship with others that are disorderly and unsound. He cannot be received until he is separated from those who trouble the household of faith. This also is not the rule of one person, or even a few, but the consensus of the many. These things are observed, not according to man-made rules, but according to the scriptures. The apostle Paul, by the Holy Spirit said, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."

Why are we falsely accused of all these things? The apostle Paul, in his day, had to contend with those he called "false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage." They falsely accused the churches in the day of the apostles in an attempt to persuade them to their limited ways of thinking, and to bring them back under the law, which says, "touch not, taste not, handle not." But the apostle, was blessed to stand against them, and to prevail against their false doctrine. And Jesus said, **"Blessed are ye, when** *men* **shall revile you, and persecute** *you,* **and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake."** According to His word, we know that these offences must come, and that blessings attend them. You are blessed in that you are given evidence that you are His if you suffer with Him. Jesus said, **"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before** *it hated* ***you."*** I am made to believe that some of the accusers have seen many disorders and abuses among the people that they have walked with or knew about, and assume it is the same way everywhere, but it is not. Some have not experienced the ways of the Lord's true children "who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." Some have been separated from our fellowship because of disorder or false doctrine, and may feel animosity toward us. Some are envious of others who have something that they do not have. Cain slew Abel because his works were evil, and Abel's works were righteous. Some are of a different spirit than the saints. Some never see the good. The apostle Paul was blessed of the Spirit to say to Titus, **"Unto the pure all things** *are* **pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving** *is* **nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny** *him,* **being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."** The Lord knows what is in every man's heart.

How do we make our defense against those who, if they could, would take away our liberty, and bring us back

into captivity under the law? My first thought is of king Hezekiah, who was challenged by the powerful king of Assyria. King Sennacherib sent his representative, Rabshakeh, to Jerusalem, thinking to capture the city, and to take the inhabitants into bondage. King Sennacherib's power was seemingly overwhelming, as he sent about 185,000 soldiers to do his bidding. He had captured the surrounding defenced cities of Judah, destroyed their gods, and boasted of what he thought to do unto Jerusalem. Hezekiah knew that he and the people of Jerusalem needed help. And he did the following as he was blessed, according to the grace of God:

"And Hezekiah prayed unto the Lord saying, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, that dwelleth *between the* cherubims, thou *art* the God, *even* thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth. Incline thine ear, O Lord, and hear; open thine eyes, and see: and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent to reproach the living God. Of a truth, Lord, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations, and their countries, and have cast their gods into the fire: for they *were* no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them. Now therefore, O Lord our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou *art* the Lord, *even* thou only."

"Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent unto Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Whereas thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib, king of Assyria: This *is* the word which the Lord hath spoken concerning him; The virgin, the daughter Zion, hath despised thee, *and* laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee... Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the Lord. For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake and for my servant David's sake. Then the angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they *were* all dead corpses."

Hezekiah trusted in the Lord, and brought the matter before Him. And the Lord was merciful to deliver Jerusalem from her enemies. The Lord sent them back by the way they came and destroyed Sennacherib's army. Those who bring false accusation against the Lord's people for the purpose of bringing them into bondage, bring reproach against the living God. And they must suffer the consequences.

We cannot save ourselves from those that are stronger than we are — speaking naturally. So, we must bring our matters before our God, and beg Him for mercy and for deliverance. We cannot condemn those that accuse us.

They may not even realize what they are doing, or how wrong they really are. They didn't know what they were doing when they stoned Stephen to death. And if they had known the wisdom of God they wouldn't have crucified the Lord of glory. Nevertheless, we know that there is a wide chasm that divides between them and us - between their understanding and ours. There is a great gulf between works and grace, and between bondage and liberty .We can only say to them, "The Lord judge between thee and me." And to the Lord we must beg, "God be merciful unto me, a sinner, and keep us in the narrow way of truth, and deliver us from error."

I trust this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer

PSALM 135:1-6.

Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the name of the Lord; praise *him,* O ye servants of the Lord.

Ye that stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God,

Praise the Lord; for the Lord *is* good: sing praises unto his name; for *it is* pleasant.

For the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, *and* Israel for his peculiar treasure.

For I know that the Lord *is* great, and *that* our Lord *is* above all gods.

Whatsoever the Lord pleased, *that* did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.

CORRESPONDENCE

3-18-14

Brother Robertson,

I m enclosing a hymn from the Beebe's Collection that is in the Baptist Hymn Book printed in the year of 1850. This book was used in The Leading Creek Church and all other churches in the Tygart's Valley River Association until the late 40's. We could not get the old shattered books replaced. It contained 1311 hymns. I have in my possession the book that laid on the pulpit for the minister's use.

Psalms 31:15 furnished the inspiration for the worlds.

Use at your discretion.

Elder V. Linn

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451 W. Olive Rd.
Clayton, NC 27520

Dear Mr. Horton,

The Signs of the Times has held much pleasure for me. Reading old and new experiences and editorials and voices of the past are very comforting to me.

My husband Richard Olive enjoyed the Signs of the Times until his death in 2006. I have kept them and now I'm reading them since I have retired. Being 83 years old and living alone they are very much enjoyed by me.

Richard was a true beloved believer and he enjoyed the Times for he was in very bad health for several years. He went among the Old Baptist as long as he was able and loved the Brethren. He was ever faithful. I'm enclosing a check for $100.00 in rememberance of him and if he owed for any subscriptions.

Thank you and keep the Times for the ones who love it.

Sincerely,
Nola Olive

Dear Mr. Horton

On March 7, 2014 my dear sweet mother, a firm believer in this faith, passed from this veil of tears to her reward. She enjoyed so much this publication and continued to share it with her beloved children. The March addition was received and its editorial message on 1 Timothy seems to have been sent from the Lord to comfort our hearts.

I would like to request two additional copies of the March 2014 issue and to begin receiving the Signs of the Times publication at my home address.

I have enclosed an amount to cover my subscription for two years and the cost of two additional March issues. The remaining amount I wish to donate to the cause of this publication in memory of my dear mother, Edith Davis Thompson, born November 10, 1923, died March 7, 2014. She was a kind friend and mother to her children and she will be missed so much. We are grateful to believe that she now rests in the everlasting arms and is finally home.

My name and address:
Kristina T. Abbott
300 Hollyville Drive
Dry Fork, Virginia 24549

Thank you,
Kristina T. Abbott

ARTICLES

Daddy's Vision
March 27, 2014

"Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* our life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. James 4:14

On the afternoon of March 16, 2014, I was pondering over visitors of the day while a patient at Riverside Rehabilitation Center in Danville Virginia. I was blessed with the most beautiful picture of the resurrection of God's people. I do know that I was not asleep. I am sure that many of you have seen the Niagara River and the falls. In my mind I pictured the huge river, that feeds the falls full of the people. All of the people in my vision were nearly touching and completely immobile and this great number were approaching the falls. I believe these people were in the grave because it was to me so strange that they were

seemingly still and calm when sudden destruction was at hand. There were all sizes and ages of people sitting upright and they had different colors of clothing. After they all plunged over the falls there was a great vapor, as is there at all times, but through the vapor some of the people were lifting their arms upward as they viewed what I feel was Christ coming for them in the clouds. Not all of the people lifted their arms upward, only a portion, which to me meant that only a portion are going to see Christ as the river of death continues its course.

I believe that what I was shown were terrestrial bodies; as celestial bodies are spiritual and while in the flesh we cannot see the spiritual body of God and his Son (1 Corinthians 15:40) or his people. But I believe, and it is my hope, that scenes such as I have attempted to relay to you, will be viewed in our spiritual, heavenly body when resurrected from the grave. Oh! Can you imagine what a consuming, joyful, eternal day that will be! That spiritual body that the scriptures describe in 1 Corinthians 15: 45-55. And our spiritual bodies will be raised and our arms outstretched to Jesus who giveth us the victory.

I do not feel worthy enough to write of this vision. I am sending this to the Signs of the Times because I feel when we are shown such heavenly scenes that it behooves us to share this with our spiritual family. It has been a great blessing to be allowed to be a member with you in this hope of an eternal life.

I am sure that all things that God created are of a permanent nature but man's life is as a vapor when compared with His creation and eternal nature. I hope I love the Lord and his people more than I can tell about or hint at.

Burnell Williams

Elder Cleo Robertson,

As I am again reviewing the articles penned down in the March issue of the Signs of the Times, I feel duty bound to express my thankfulness to you and your staff for the choice of material you have furnished your readers.

The nearness I feel with those that furnish the material speak my language when they express their experiences while traveling in this time world. They seem to introduce themselves as my kindred in Christ. I am not worthy to claim kinship outside of the binding love of God and the finished work of Jesus.

It is by the effectual work of God in us that we become fellow citizens with the saints and the household of God: and are built (we don't do the building) but are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom "ALL" the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. Yea! and no more strangers and foreigners. Brother Robertson, aren't we glad it's that way?

The editorial written by our precious friend, Elder Jerry Farmer, was filled with soundness in doctrine that seemed to

distil as the dew as the proper quotes presented evidence of one that has been taught of the Lord. These are quotes from God's doctrine and it is believed and preached by the people I love.

They take good care of me here at "Serenity Care Home," an assisted living facility. They are kind to me and make sure I get my pills on time but I receive not communion in fellowship that I receive from reading the "Signs", letters from my kindred and the King James version of the bible.

I keep my door shut most of the time as I find comfort in being hedged in with my thoughts. It is written in **Job 3:23** *"Why is light given* **to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?"**

In November issue of the "Signs" Sophia Macomber wrote –

"Give me a bible in my hand
A heart to read and understand,
And I desire no more."

Although it was written February 1879 it is just as up to date today as it was when it was written. It found a lodging place in my heart.

Let me mention an article written by Burnell B. Williams on "fellowship" in the February issue of the "Signs." Yes brother Burnell, all the Lord's people are traveling home on that old "ship of Zion." Having spent a lot of time aboard ships from 1939 to 1945 during WWII, I can attest to your gift of pointing to things that we by the spirit of God can view in the promise of our eternal God. Your article was a great comfort to this poor undone sinner in the sight of God.

Elder Robertson, I know that I'm getting carried away and probably taking your valuable time but I find relief in writing my thoughts and you may dispose of this letter as you feel to do.

After your February issue I found myself anxiously awaiting the continued portion of the experiences of Elder Haywood Wray. I could say to him, my dear friend, in so many ways our traveling has been similar, and you were telling me my experience in so many ways. When your dear wife said, "I am thankful to be thankful" took me back to a short time before my companion of 63 years was called from this life. She died in my arms at 7:40 AM 2006. She was a war bride and had to travel from Washington, D. C. where she was working at the time to meet me in San Diego, California to be married on Dec. 24, 1943. I had been relieved for a period of time from my duties as a signalman in the south Pacific war zone to teach school in a quarter Master school in S. D.

Elder Roberton, I had to shed tears when I read pages 71 and 72, the obituaries of Margaret Frances Brinkley and Foye Whitefield Cole. Tears are not shed concerning the blessed saints of God whose welfare has been established in a living hope in Christ but I know by experience how those old soldiers of the cross will be missed in your church. The Lord's people are swiftly being called home. Yes, we feel the loss but are made glad in the knowledge of that blessed sleep from which they will be awakened on the resurrection morning. When our Lord and Master said, "My

sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me; we can feel assured they will follow him into the sky when he returns.

I feel that this old adamic man will benefit in the resurrection but not with carnality as the carnal mind is in action against God. "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." We love the words of David in Psalms 17:15.

"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."

Our God is sovereign in all things, times and events of times. None can stay his hand or say, "what doest thou?

We love our Lord and Master, our Elder Brother, with the same love that he loved us with. Jesus said, 1st John 4:19 "We love Him, because he loved us."

Much of our traveling is in the shadow of Heavenly things but we know that if we only experience the shadow that the sun is shining some place.

My dear Kindred in Christ, we have been taught that our deliverance, and our salvation is of the Lord instituted by the Free and Unmerited Grace of God. It is of no wonder that in the morning of time when God laid the foundation of the earth that the morning stars sang together, and ALL the sons of God shouted for joy. I love you for Christ's sake.

Elder V. Linn

Serenity Care Home
269 Little Sand Run Rd.
Buckhannon, WV 26201
March 18, 2014

VOICES OF THE PAST

1880 — Comfort In Affliction. By Elder William M. Smoot, August 3, 1880

During the past few months I have met with several cases of deep affliction among our brethren which have awakened within me a desire to write a few thoughts to the poor and afflicted in Zion. This undoubtedly includes all in Zion, yet there are frequently cases of deep affliction that awaken within us the strongest sympathy. The Lord's people are ever an afflicted and poor people. The afflictions are among the bright evidences by which they are known to each other and in the record of His word. They are channels of sorrow through which the river of everlasting love flows, full of the wonderful goodness of God. But how keen are the pangs of sorrow and distress that fill the soul of the tempted saint. How many and varied are the sources from which these tides of sorrow roll upon him. We are living in the land of the dying, and the daily scenes around us impress this upon the mind of the saint. The dreadful effects of sin, sickness and sorrow, disease and death, are seen everywhere about us. Our life in this world is a pilgrimage in a land of sorrow, and the way-marks along the route plainly trace the way over which the saints of all ages have traveled. **"They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered**

about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy) they wandered in deserts, and *in* mountains, and *in* dens and caves of the earth."- Hebrews xi. 37, 38. We are constantly reminded that we have no abiding rest this side of the eternal world. The sore trials and conflicts that are experienced by our brethren, as well as by ourselves, remind us that it is improper for us to build too much upon the transitory things of time.

The ties of earthly relationship and the pleasure of this life, with all that pertains to time, must soon pass away. "The fashion of this world," says Paul, "passeth away." Is it wise that the saints should build upon these earthly things, to the neglect of their spiritual good in the way of Truth? Is it like the wise man who dug deep and built his house upon a rock? Besides teaching them the transitory nature of all earthly vanities, the temptations and afflictions experienced by the saints bring them near the throne and in sweet communion with their God. The strong cries and supplications for mercy poured forth from an afflicted heart are so many evidences of life and grace. It is in this furnace of affliction that the sweet lessons of humility are learned, and the poor and needy in Zion shine in the beauties of holiness. The bitter bud bears fruit in the opening flower, to the honor and glory of the Lord's great name. But how dark is the way over which we are frequently called to pass. "How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!"

"Could we see how all us are right,
Where were room for credence?
But by faith, and not by sight,
Christians yield obedience."

It is a comfort to witness the calmness with which the tempted saint frequently endures the fiery ordeal through which he is brought, by the grace of God. The pathway of affliction is brightened by the radiant light of the eternal world. The sorrowing saint is lifted above his dark surroundings and made to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only are his trials blessed to his own good, but also to the good of his brethren. They enter into his feelings, and in a measure feel the weight of his burden. **"And whether one member suffer, all members suffer with it." "It *is* better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that *is* the end of all men; and the living will lay *it* to his heart." (Ecc. vii. 2.)** There is a purpose, yes, an eternal purpose of God in all that transpires in our pathway from the cradle to the grave. The events in our earthly journey are so closely connected, interwoven one with another, that it is impossible that a single one should fail. All move on in fulfillment of the eternal decrees.

"Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never failing skill
He treasures up His bright designs
And works His sovereign will."

The tempted saint may struggle against, and earnestly desire relief from the tribulations of the way, not knowing

"that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." In the dark hour of conviction for sin, how he struggled for relief from that burden; how little he then knew of the glorious light that was so soon to break upon him. And in his experience afterward he is frequently found fighting against the ways of God.

"Not knowing that the least are sure,
And the mysterious just and true."

He doubts not but what the purpose of God toward him will be accomplished, but he does not as yet see the great benefit that is to flow unto him through the accomplishment of that purpose. Little did the disciples seem to know at the crucifixion of Christ that the great and glorious purpose of redemption was accomplished in that, to them, dark and trying scene. They saw nothing at the time beyond the dark trial through which they were passing. So too, it is with the believer of today in the way over which he is led. He frequently sees nothing beyond the circumstances that surround him. But the Lord's great purpose is accomplished over all of our struggles, murmurings and complaints, and we rejoice that it is so. "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways and My thoughts."

"He gave me a will to receive what He gave,
Though I was averse to His purpose to save;
He wrote in His will my repentance and faith
And all my enjoyment for life and for death.

My trials and sorrows, my conflicts and cares,
The spirit of prayer and the answer to prayers;
The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in His will."

May the afflicted in Zion find refuge at the throne, ever leaning upon the strong arm of their God, and rejoicing in hope of His glory.

Yours in fellowship,
Elder WM. M. Smoot,
August 3, 1880.

PROVERBS 25:11.

A word fitly spoken *is like* **apples of gold in pictures of silver.**

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 5 / 2014
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

A FIRM FOUNDATION

"Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars."

The above scripture is found in the ninth chapter of Proverbs and if you will read the entire chapter you will find that two houses were under consideration. One house was the product of wisdom, and the other house was of the foolish woman. I think wisdom's house is figurative of the Church of Christ, and the other represents the false church. All has been done to make the Church of Christ secure and firm, but the foolish will fall by the wayside. I believe this house to be composed of all the children of God as chosen in Christ before the world began. It is not our desire to consider the house at this time, but to consider, the foundation upon which this house is built. Surely the foundation is Christ Jesus and all who were chosen in Him will finally be blessed to view the seven pillars or principles of the doctrine of God, our Savior. The abstract of the faith of God's elect may be summed up thus: **1. Sovereignty of God. 2. Total depravity of man. 3. Unconditional election. 4. Limited atonement or special redemption. 5. Irresistible or efficacious grace. 6. Preservation of the saints. 7. Resurrection or complete immortalization of the saints.** I believe these phases of the doctrine are experienced in the order named. The first six are experienced here in time and the seventh is to be experienced in the beyond.

This first lesson to be revealed to the child of God is His sovereignty. We are thinking in terms of seven so we think of God as eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, holy, loving and triune. Yes, He is eternal. One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. He is of one mind. He has never learned anything new nor has He forgotten anything. Everything that has ever taken place, is taking place, or that ever will come to pass is just as present and vivid in His mind as if it were (at this very moment) taking place. Things that we experience are past, present and future with us because we are creatures of time and finite, but all things are as present with God. We wonder what the future holds for us and forget things that are past, but God being eternal sees it as now transpiring.

The second part of the first pillar of this firm foundation is the omnipotence of God. He is all-powerful. God says through the prophet, "I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, Saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass."

In the Scriptures it is said of God; "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" God spake this world into existence. He only had to say, "Let there be light: and there was light." "As I have

thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." He is God "who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."

God is omniscient. He is wise to the extent that His knowledge embraces all things because He has decreed them and is abundantly able to bring them to pass. There is not a thought or act of man that God does not know about. "He is before all things, and by him all things consist." Though the world seems to run at random, and events huddled together in blind confusion to our finite minds, God is so wise that He knows the outcome of all causes and effects, and so governs them that He makes perfect harmony out of all those seeming jarrings and discords. He is so wise that all things praise Him.

God is omnipresent. He is present at all places at the same time. He is at all times at the same place. There is no possibility of hiding from God. In Him we live, move and have our being. He fills the universe.

Another characteristic of God is His eternal love. God is love. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." He loved His people even when they were dead in trespasses and in sin. This love of God is the basis of their salvation. It is the characteristic that is planted in the hearts of God's people by the Holy Spirit.

God is holy. "The Lord *is* **righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works" (Psalms 145:17).** There is no unrighteousness with God. He is of purer eyes than to behold evil and canst not look upon iniquity, therefore He consecrates the wicked acts of men to His own glory and praise and to the good of His chosen people.

The seventh phase of His sovereignty is that He is triune. God, the Father; God the Son; and God, the Holy Ghost. God the Father, chose His people unto salvation before the foundation of the world. God, the Son, accomplished this salvation by performing the requirements of the law, and suffered the penalty of sin and satisfied justice by shedding His precious blood on Calvary's tree for the remission of their many sins. God, the Holy Ghost, operates upon them here in time by taking from them the stony heart and giving them a heart of flesh; reveals to them the truth as it is in Christ Jesus; comforts and consoles them in this life; and will (in the resurrection) baptize them with immortality.

Now let us consider the second pillar of this firm foundation. According to my experience, I was given a glimpse of the sovereignty of God. This was the stimuli that made manifest the fundamental truth of the total depratity of man. Job had a similar experience as recorded in **Job 42:5, 6, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor** *myself* **and repent in dust and ashes."** Isaiah speaks likewise in **Isaiah 6:5. "Then said I, woe** *is* **me! for I am undone; because I** *am* **a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." God,** first, revealed Himself to each of

these causing them, secondly, to see their depravity.

What a contrast! God is eternal; I am timely. God is all-powerful; I have no ability. God is all-wise; I know nothing as God knows. God is everywhere at all times; I can be nowhere at any time upon volition of my own will, for I find myself a victim of circumstances over which I have no control. God loved us even when we were dead in trespasses and sin; I naturally love no one but myself. God is holy; I am unholy. God is triune in complete agreement; my natural desires war against the Spirit. I find myself totally depraved, not able to extricate myself from this terrible state. This experience agrees with **Jer. 13:23. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?** *then* **may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil."** Jesus expressed this incapacity of man to recover himself from this fallen state he is in when He said as recorded in **John 6:44, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."** As long as the skin of the Ethiopian is black and the leopard is spotted there is no reason to expect goodness to spring from man. It is just as possible for the Ethiopian to change his skin or the leopard its spots. We must look to some other source than ourselves for anything good. We are so naturally constituted that we will trust in our own ability until God sees fit to reveal to us our true condition by His Spirit. Then we are made to "cry unto God, the most high; unto God that performeth all things for me." In this state of mind it is with pleasure and heart-felt thanks to God that we view the third pillar of this firm foundation, *unconditional election.*

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4) Paul trusted in the power and amazing grace of God as stated in his letter to Timothy, **II Timothy 1:9, "Who hath saved us, and called** *us* **with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."**

Thus, it is not according to our works. Our finite minds would argue that surely it is according to our will even granting that it is not according to our works. The Spirit teaches us contrary to natural reasoning so let us see what Paul has to say about it in **Rom. 9:11-18. "(For** *the children* **being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then?** *Is there* **unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then** *it is* **not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharoah, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up,**

that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will *have mercy,* **and whom he will he hardeneth."**

Jesus said to His disciples, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." So we are unconditionally elected according to the good pleasure of God's will.

Let us further view this foundation by noting the fourth pillar or principle of truth, limited atonement. God's people were chosen in Christ Jesus. Christ's life and death must have been for them only. Concerning Jesus before His birth the angel said, "And she (Mary) shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." The work of Christ was for God's people, not for the entire Adamic race. Christ said in **John 10:14,15, "I am the good shepherd, and know my** *sheep* **and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep."** Christ died for the sheep, not for the goats. Christ said in His prayer to God as recorded in **John 17:9, "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine."** Christ did not pray for the entire Adamic race. Paul tells the ministers of Ephesus in **Acts 20:28, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."** His blood was shed for the church, not for the world. Christ said in **Matt. 20:28, "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."** He gave His life for many, not for all.

The fifth pillar is that of irresistible or efficacious grace. The teachings of the Scriptures is such that we must say that man in his natural state is radically corrupt. He is spiritually dead and must be saved by Christ if at all. He does not desire God; therefore, must have a new disposition before he can love God. He loves sin, therefore can never desire to be redeemed from it until he is wrought upon by the effectual working of God 's mighty power. Jesus said, **"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the (kingdom of God" (John 3:3).** This inward change wrought by supernatural power is termed in the Scriptures as "Called out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9) A passing out of death into life (John 5:24); a taking away of the heart of stone, and a giving of the heart of flesh (Ezek. 11:19); and the subject of the change is said to be a new creature (2 Cor. 5:17).

We had nothing to do with our physical birth but received it as a sovereign gift of God; we likewise have nothing to do with our spiritual birth but receive it also as a sovereign gift. Each occurred without any exercise of our own power, and even without our consent being asked. We no more resist the latter than we did the former. Consequently, salvation to whomsoever it may be granted is entirely of grace. The ones so wrought upon are made to see,

"Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, "(Heb. 12:2). There is no such thing as a "self-made man"; the highest type man agrees with Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am." God said through the prophet, **Isaiah 55:11, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper** *in the thing* **whereto I sent it."** When God says repent, you repent; when He says come, you come; when He says go, you go.

The doctrine of election and efficacious grace logically implies the certain salvation of those who receive these blessings. Therefore let us consider the sixth pillar, to wit: *t*he perseverance of the saints. Those who have been brought to Jesus for refuge have a firm foundation upon which their hope of eternal life is established. The iniquities of their own hearts together with all the Satanic influences will never cause them to fail. The same amazing grace that has brought us thus far will lead us home. Paul said in **Rom. 8:29, "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."** It is an evidence that God has predestinated the recipients of these gifts to be like Him in character, destiny and glory and that He will infallibly carry out His purpose. **"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform** *it* **until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6)**. This day of Jesus Christ will be the crowning work of immortality in the resurrection. **Psalms 138:8 reads, "The Lord will perfect** *that which* **concerneth me: thy mercy, O Lord,** *endureth* **forever."** Paul states that "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." So God's dealings with His children are never ending, but will finally save them in heaven without the loss of one.

In this life God's people may experience a close view of the six fundamental principles or pillars of this firm foundation as God sees fit to reveal to them, but the seventh, or that of the immortality or resurrection of the saints, is yet to be experienced in reality. Now we see as through a glass darkly but then face to face; now we know in part but then we will know as we are known. Now we look forward with deep anxiety and precious hope toward the reality of the seventh principle, the resurrection, which is to be the crowning work of salvation and is yet to be experienced actually and really by all the children of God. I desire to close this treatise by quoting **1 Cor. 15:51-58, "Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal** *must* **put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death,**

where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. But thanks *be* unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." Amen.

Elder E. J. Lambert

DECREASE OF THE OLD SCHOOL.

"Will the editor of the " Signs of the Times" tell us how he accounts for it, that the people whom he represents, and whose faith it has been his peculiar privilege to defend, has been for years decreasing in numbers' Is the true church of God to be soon annihilated." - Eastern Baptist.

ALEXANDRIA, D. C., February 1,1839.

OYES. To be sure we will tell the editors of the Eastern Baptist all about it; especially when they ask it with such an air of candor. Had that people, the true faith of whom it is our peculiar privilege to defend, been satisfied in all ages of her existence, with that increase only, which is of the Lord, there would not have been at this time, so great necessity for her decrease; but such has not been the case. At various periods since the apostolic age, the church has discovered too much anxiety to enlarge her borders; but at no time has she manifested a more adulterous lusting after worldly popularity and affinity, than during the last half century. Under the influence of an ambitious and worldly spirit, so repugnant to the spirit of 'truth and holiness, who could wonder that she should have heaped to herself teachers having itching ears, and through their instrumentality have compassed sea and land to make" proselytes, and, by their means, have brought into a nominal connection with herself such graceless persons as are in scripture language emphatically pronounced corrupters. In her rapid advances in humanly devised expedients, the church had condescended to submit to schemes and tricks which at an earlier period would have made her blush; but having indulged in this wanton course and treated the dignity and authority of the great Head of the church with so much contempt, God, in his righteous judgment, has caused his children to feel the bitterness of their sins, and the folly of their departures from the law of the Lord, by causing them be filled with their own ways. When sufficiently humbled under the mighty hand of her covenant God, the Lord in great mercy has displayed his holy arm in bringing again the captivity of his people.

The manner in which the Lord has displayed his hand in purging his church within the year, mentioned in the interrogative of the Eastern Baptist, is forcibly illustrated in the type going before, in the case of Nehemiah when he came to Jerusalem to build up the waste places, and to restore the ancient order of things in that city. To execute the work

of restoration, there was necessarily a great decrease of those children of mixed dialects, corrupted by an unhallowed affinity with Moab, Ammon and Ashdod; these illegitimates were put away from the Jews, and as they decreased, the return of the Jewish captives to their ancient city and order of worship bear a strong analogy to the present decrease of those churches, thrice blessed of the Lord, which he has visited in great mercy. God is, and has been for some years, scourging out the Ashdod kindred, and at the same time is bringing from a sore state of bondage and bitter captivity not a few who had been taken down to Babylon (confusion) in consequence of their departures from the law of the Lord.

This, gentlemen, this is the true cause of the apparent decrease of the church of Christ; she is only cutting loose from the mass of corruption accumulated in consequence of her inordinate anxiety to increase her numbers. There is not the least danger of her being annihilated, Mr. Waller's prediction that the Old School Baptists will be annihilated in the next century to the contrary, notwithstanding. Her Savior has given her eternal life, and she shall never perish, neither shall any pluck her out of his hand.

It may be proper, while on the subject, to inform the inquiring editors that an apparent diminution of the number of the people of God is by no means peculiar to the present state of the church. When the heathen nations of ancient times witnessed the judgments of God in reducing the numerical strength of Israel, it may have been common for them, like these eastern editors, to conclude the people of Israel would soon be no more; and when Gideon was called to display to the vast host of Midian " the sword of the Lord," &c., the Lord required him to greatly reduce his already feeble army. but the result will show that God by no means intended to annihilate his people. When the gospel church was first organized at Jerusalem, the axe was laid at the root of the trees, and there was a great reduction of the number of the nominal people of God; yet the apostle says,

" God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew."- Rom. xi. 2. And in his language we will at this time say to our inquisitive editors, "Wot ye not what the scriptures saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars, and I am left alone, and they seek my life." But what saith the answer of God unto him? "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men who have not bowed to Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace: and if by grace, it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace."

The editors may do well to read the whole chapter; if they have a capacity to understand the divine testimony, they will discover that Israel, who, like our New School antagonists, were seeking the blessings of salvation by works, did not obtain that which they sought for; but, glory to God in the highest, the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded; according as it is written, " God

hath given them the spirit of slumber; eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, unto this day: and their table or pulpit, or places where they feed their carnal proselytes, has become a trap, a snare and a stumbling block unto them; their backs are bowed down always, and their eyes are darkened that they cannot see.

Again, we might refer our friends to the times of papal persecution. How were the churches reduced in number when they took their stand against the corruptions of the Romish anti-christ, and were followed into the wilderness by the anathamas of the Pope. How easily might the Papists have used the same taunting insinuations in regard to the little, despised and persecuted band which had fled from their wrath into the valleys of Piedmont; and when they were butchered by thousands, human reason might conclude they were on the verge of annihilation; but to their mortification, God had his reserved ones then, even as he has a remnant now. Let us never forget that it is the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom to a little flock.

After all, the Old School Baptists, as such, are not on the decrease. It is true some churches which have taken the stand have cast out the bond woman and bond children; but the children of the free woman are as numerous now as ever they were. There are at this moment probably ten churches occupying a decided stand against all the humanly devised plans and schemes of anti-Christ where there was but one ten years ago; and our eastern editors may depend that in equal proportion with the increase of the new inventions and abominations among the New School Baptists shall be driven out from their congregations by their abounding corruptions, until their New School churches shall be exhausted; exhausted we mean in regard to heaven-born souls; their house will be left unto them desolate, not one of the redeemed of the Lord shall remain with them; and as soon as this shall be accomplished, the New School Baptists, with an their new inventions, sorceries, witchcrafts, proselytes, merchandize, doctrines and moneyed institutions, will go down with old Babylon, like the millstone, and rise no more forever.

In turn, may we not inquire of these editors, Where will you be, gentlemen, when Babylon sinks? What will become of all your labors, your New School machinery for executing what God has never given you to perform? What will then become of your multitude of humanly contrived religious institutions-your presidents, vice presidents, directors, life members, D. D.'s and Reverends? Where will that multitude be found who are now boasting over the saints, of their numbers, talents, wealth, worldly respectability and human learning? We have no disposition to boast, or to give a judgment that is not fully warranted in the New Testament; but the saints shall judge the world. And if there are any saints on earth, they may be found among the Old School Baptists, and there they are known as a humble people, ascribing all their salvation to the adorable plan of grace in the eternal purpose of God, to the ultimate glory that shall be revealed in them when all

the saints shall reach the consummation of their everlasting happiness, and all their adversaries are plunged in endless night.

"The editor of the "Signs of the Times" is talking about giving up his paper. We really hope he will not; for we doubt whether there be another periodical in this whole land that does answer, or could answer, the ends secured by the "Signs." - Eastern Baptist.

For the consolation of the conductors of the Eastern Baptist, we assure them that the " Signs of the Times" will not be given up at present; and although the hopes of the wicked shall be cut off finally, yet in this case these Yankee editors, with their Arminian brotherhood, will still be presented with a target to shoot at; and we are quite willing they should blaze away at us-we stand in no dread of their pop-guns.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

COME AND DINE.

THESE words, spoken by Jesus to his disciples after he arose from the tomb, you will find in the twenty-first chapter of St. John, a portion of the twelfth verse. A few days ago I sent some thoughts I had on the same Scripture to another brother, but feeling left out many things I decided to continue the subject, knowing that there are so many good things set up in this last chapter of St. John that I might try time and again and yet there would be many good things left out. Indeed we can tell but little, not half, as the queen said, for they are glorious to behold when we can see them. We are so dependent upon the Lord for light, knowledge and wisdom, to know them. What precious words: "Come and dine," spoken at that time by Jesus to those who had toiled all night and had caught nothing. Now when the light of another day had come, and Jesus stood on the shore, and had bread and fish on the coals of fire ready to eat, at the time when his loved ones were almost ready to faint, hungry and tired from their night's work, we know in some degree how they must have felt.

To think of it in a deep sense, does not the Lord always feed us? What have we that we did not receive? Not only the kindness of the Lord is shown here, but the wisdom also. He could tell what to do to catch fish, why had they failed? They were fishermen by trade, but Jesus can look into the deep and tell them how and where to fish. When we think of poor helpless man, how ignorant he is, to be so close to the fish and yet not know how to catch them until told by Jesus. Can man take up fishing or hunting and by studying it learn to be successful every time he goes out for game? We know none would fail to catch them if they knew how to succeed, so we see that we need the Lord's help, and we see here that he is able and does help in time of need. What great power, wisdom and mercy are shown here! Brethren and sisters, do we worship the God set up here? If we do, then I believe we shall be fed, that seed time and harvest will continue to come, for we have this promise by the Lord.

Now, after Jesus had fed them he told Peter three times to feed his lambs and his sheep, but I do not understand that he meant here to feed them with natural food, such as bread and fishes, but to feed God's children with spiritual food, and we know that must come down from heaven, so I believe we are taught here that we are fed by our Lord and Master, both with spiritual and natural food. Knowing that all things were created by God and that all things belong to him, how safe are the children of God. What comfort a good hope in Christ brings to his loved ones. Oh may we thank God for the light to see the need of these things, and may they some day be ours to enjoy, is my prayer. Amen.

Elder R. L. Dodson.

"Thou hast delivered my soul from death." -- Psalm lvi.13.

You may have been delivered from death, as much as David was, but not so fully in the assurance of the deliverance. God may have quickened your soul into life divine; he may have communicated his grace to your heart, and yet you have many doubts and fears whether it be a real work of grace upon your soul. It is not every child of God who has been delivered from death by regenerating grace who can use the words with the confidence expressed here: "Thou hast delivered my soul from death." But I will shew you when he can. When God is pleased to bless him with a sense of his pardoning love; when Jesus is revealed to his heart, and manifested with power to his soul; when the blood of sprinkling is applied to purge his conscience from guilt, filth, and dead works, to serve the living God; when the Spirit of adoption is given, and he is enabled to cry, "Abba, Father;" when he feels the presence of God, and a sweet flowing forth of love and affection he can say in the sweet confidence of faith, "Thou has delivered my soul from death."

J.C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 2014

Phil Pittman, TX 20.00
Tommy Middleton, NC 10.00
Graham Lovitte, NC 5.00
Estelle Thompson, VA 5.00
J. D. Neely, AR 5.00
Nola G. Olive, NC 100.00
(*In Memory of* R. F. Olive)
Reidy Pickral, NC 40.00
Bernard Cox, VA 25.00
Alvis Shelton, VA 15.00
Kristina Abbott, VA 75.00
(*In Memory of* Edith Davis Thompson)

OBITUARIES

BETTY J. BAINES

Our hearts are saddened by the passing of Sister Betty Baines. Her name may not have been on any earthly church book, but she had received a Hope from our lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Sister Betty was born on March 25, 1939 in Lamar County, AL to Brother Charlie and Sister Mertie Baines. She passed on March 12, 2014 at Noland Hospital in Tuscaloosa, AL.

She was preceded in death by her parents, 3 sisters and 4 brothers. Survivors include her brother, Brother Wayne Baines and Sister Mary Charleen Watkins.

Sister Betty attended Bethel Primitive Baptist Church and the other Churches of the Buttahatchie-Hopewell Association. Her brother, who is a member and deacon of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, was so faithful to bring Sister Betty to church every time she was able to attend.

Sister Betty enjoyed church, family gatherings and Sacred Harp Singing. Her favorite song was 361 in the Lloyd Hymnal. She often called for us to sing "Angel Band".

Her funeral was held at Dowdle Funeral Home on March 16, 2014 by Elder James Pugh. She was buried at Bethel Primitive Baptist Church cemetery.

We believe that this, our earthly loss is her heavenly gain. May God reconcile us to his will.

Elder James Pugh, Moderator
Brother Wayne Baines, Clerk

BOBBY GENE MOORE

Bobby Gene Moore, 78, died on February 5, at Raleigh, North Carolina. Bobby was born on November 21, 1935 in Rockingham County.

Bobby lived with Glenda, his wife of 52 years, in Summerfield. He was the father of two children, Blake and Vickie and was the Poppy of three grandchildren.

His favorite activity was working, especially for the past 30 years at Vulcan Materials. He was blessed with many friends and he will be greatly missed.

Bobby was a member of High Point Primitive Baptist Church. His funeral

was held on February 9 Hillsdale Primitive Baptist Church in Summerfield with Elder Cleo Robertson and Elder Jimmy Gray officiating.

Written by Faye Medlin
Elder Jimmy Gray, Moderator
Dan Medlin, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

Hillsville, Va. 24343

Hymn

Awake, my soul, in joyful lays,
And sing thy great Redeemer's praise;
He justly claims a song from me!
His loving kindness, O how free!
His loving kindness, loving kingness,
His loving kindness, O how free!

He saw me ruin'd in the fall,
Yet lov'd me notwithstanding all;
He sav'd me from my lost estate;
His loving kindness, O how great!

Though num'rous hosts of mighty foes,
Though earth and hell my way oppose,
He safely leads my soul along;
His loving kindness, O how strong!

When trouble, like a gloomy cloud,
Has gather'd thick and thunder'd loud,
He near my soul has always stood;
His loving kindness, O how good!

Often I feel my sinful heart
Prone from my Jesus to depart;
But though I have him oft forgot,
His loving kindness changes not.

Soon shall I pass the gloomy vale,
Soon all my mortal powers must fail;
O! may my last expiring breath
His loving kindness sing in death.

Then let me mount and soar away
To the bright world of endless day.
And sing, with rapture and surprise,
His loving kindness in the skies.

Medley.

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EDITORIAL

"And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." Luke 16:9.

Elder J.B. Farmer

This scripture is part of Jesus' teaching connected to a parable that He gave, which parable has long been a great mystery unto me. I have read the entire passage again and again over the years without revelation. In a case like this, the scripture must be left alone until it is opened unto us, if ever that is to be. Logic is no help, and the opinions of others are of no use. So we must wait upon the Lord, trusting that He is merciful to give us those things we need. His thoughts and His ways are as high above ours in nature as the heavens are above the earth.

As recorded in the sixteenth chapter of Luke, Jesus gave a parable about a certain rich man who had a steward that had wasted the rich man's goods. When the rich man was made aware of the steward's unfaithfulness, he called him to give an account of his stewardship. The steward, knowing that his stewardship was about to be taken away, began to think what he should do. He said he could not dig, and to beg he was ashamed. Then he resolved what to do, that when he was put out of the stewardship, others might receive him into their houses. He called every one of his lord's debtors and had them to falsely reduce their debts. And when his lord knew of his unfaithfulness, he commended the unjust steward because he had done wisely, according to wicked worldly wisdom.

The steward proved to be wicked because he wasted his lord's goods and falsified the records of those who were indebted to his master. These things he did in order to make his way easy in the world. The debtors proved to be wicked in that they were willing to falsify the records to benefit themselves. The rich man also proved to be wicked in that he commended the steward's unfaithfulness. These things appear to show us that the whole world lies in wickedness, and that the wicked accommodate one

another in their wickedness.

Then Jesus began to unravel the mystery further. He said, "For the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." The world has a wisdom that is an abomination in the sight of God, and in the sight of those who love Him. Jesus said in another place, "That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." We find down through the pages of scripture how that the children were called apart, and made to be a separate people unto God, and given a hatred for the ways of the world. In the second letter of Peter it is recorded how that God, "Delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with *their* unlawful deeds.)"

The wicked have a wisdom that the children of light cannot receive. Even though the children of God are sore tempted by the world and the things in the world, and even though they sometimes stumble, they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In the thirteenth chapter of the book of Revelation it is recorded that John **"beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.... And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name."**

The wicked receive a mark in their right hand (which signifies works), or in their foreheads (which indicates thoughts). This mark is the sign of ownership of the beast and is the spirit of wickedness, which manifests itself in the evil works and thoughts of the wicked. This mark in the wicked appears to be the counterpart to the seal that God has placed upon the foreheads of His people. God has sealed His people with the Holy Spirit of promise, showing His ownership of them. So we see that the wicked must do wickedly according to the spirit that is upon them. And the righteous must do righteousness according to the Spirit that is upon them. The righteous cannot buy or sell, or traffic in the ways of the wicked. They can have no part in their economy, since they have not the mark of the beast. John said, "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning."

After the parable Jesus gave in Luke 16, He began to instruct His children. He said, **"And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations."** I am made to believe that the mammon of unrighteousness refers to the natural things of this world. The unjust steward made friends by dealing unfaithfully with natural things in order to make himself a place when he failed in his stewardship. As the unjust steward wickedly

made friends with natural things, conversely the children of God are commanded, by grace, to make friends by dealing faithfully with natural things. This, I am made to believe, is for them to make friends even of the unrighteous mammon of this world.

Being made to believe that the children of God are different from those of the devil, I must believe also that their deeds and thoughts are manifestly different. In one place it is written, "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some *men* they follow after. Likewise also the good works of *some* are manifest beforehand and they that are otherwise cannot be hid." It is apparent that some men have their wicked works exposed while in this world and are brought to judgment — some paying fines, some being incarcerated, and some even being put to death. But there are some who are never exposed in this life and think they have escaped paying for their misdeeds. These are the ones whose sins follow after, and who shall stand before God in judgment and condemnation and shall receive their just punishment. God is not mocked. Whatever a man sows, that he shall also reap.

Some of the good works of the children of God, whose good works are wrought in them by God, are apparent to other children of God, who give thanks on their account. But some of their good works are in secret, whether purposeful on their part, or whether they do not realize that they have even done a good work. These secret good works shall be manifest when Jesus separates the sheep from the goats, putting the sheep on His right hand and the goats on the left. Jesus shall say to the sheep on His right hand, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat. I was thirsty and ye gave me drink: I was naked and ye clothed me. I was a stranger and ye took me in. I was sick and ye visited me, and in prison and ye came unto me. Then said the sheep on his right hand, When saw we thee an hungered and gave thee meat, or athirst and gave thee to drink, or naked and clothed thee, or a stranger and took thee in, or sick and in prison and visited thee? And he shall say unto them inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

The life of the child of God is characterized by good works — not by the works of the flesh, neither by the works of the law, but by the good works which God has before ordained that they should walk in them. They were given grace in Christ Jesus before the world was. They were set here in the world to show forth His praise. They were created in Christ unto good works. The blessed apostle Paul made it plain that no one is justified by the works of the law or of the flesh, but that the children of God are justified by faith. Now faith is the gift of God, and good works necessarily follow faith, for faith without works is dead. If there are no good works present that are wrought by God, there is no true faith manifest. According to the scripture, faith works by love, and God

is love. If Christ is in us, the love of God is in us, and the love of God causes us to love Him and to love His children. And this love causes the children of God to "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." It causes them to practice pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, which is to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction and to keep themselves unspotted from the world.

Jesus said, "And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." For the children of God to make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness is for them to deal faithfully with the things and circumstances of this life by the grace of God. It is to do all things as unto the Lord. It is to be in the same mind with the beloved apostle when he said, "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you." It is to be in the same mind with the widow when she cast into the treasury her last two mites which was all her living, and with the widow who prepared a cake for the prophet Elijah of the last meal and oil she had. It is to be of the same mind with the rich young ruler who went away sorrowfully to sell all he had and give it to the poor, then willingly and gladly, in the day of God's power, would come and take up the cross of Christ and follow Him to the end of his journey here on earth.

Jesus said, "That, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." What did He mean by saying 'when ye fail'? I am made to believe it means to fall of the strength of the flesh, and to fail in all our ties to nature, even to come to the end of our course, which we have run. When we come to the finish line, our strength, our will, our friends, our wealth, our doctors, our family cannot sustain or keep us any longer. We must cast all our cares upon Him who loved us and gave Himself for us, trusting that He will carry us over to the other side — victorious and more than conquerors.

What is the 'they' that may receive you into everlasting habitations? I am made to believe the word 'they' here represents the good works of God's little children that He has wrought in them by the gift of faith. Those good works of faith go before them and follow after them and cannot be hid. Jesus shall make them known at His glorious appearing, when the secrets of every man's heart shall be revealed. The apostle, by revelation, said, "To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; But glory, honor, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: for there is no respect of persons with God."

What are the everlasting habitations? It seems apparent that the everlasting habitations are the eternal abiding places for the little children of God. Jesus called it the kingdom of heaven

and the kingdom of God. The apostles called it eternal life. We call it heaven and immortal glory. They all have the same substance of meaning for me.

Jesus said, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true *riches*? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

Jesus also said, "Be ye faithful unto death and I will give to you a crown of life." And the inspired apostle Paul was blessed to say, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."

May we be given hearts of love whereby we may serve Him with all meekness and holy fear, and may we have grace to depart from iniquity. May we be kept in the narrow way that leads to life. And may we be given lips of praise and thankfulness for His goodness toward us all our days. May we be given to rejoice in hope of eternal life with all saints. And seeing we are encompassed about by so great a cloud of witnesses, may we by grace lay aside every weight and the sin which does so easily beset us, and may we be given faith to run with patience the race that is set before us looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. And may we finish our course with joy, to His honor and praise and glory. And may we be received into His very presence and see Him as He is, and be satisfied when we awake in His likeness with all saints.

This was written in love, I trust.
Elder J.B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

4-10-2014

Mr. Tony Horton,

It is now time to renew to the Signs. I don't ever want to miss an issue. I enjoy it so much, feel I receive a great blessing from every article. May the Good Lord continue to bless the Times and all who help to get it out each month. I especially enjoy the Editorials and Voices from the Past.

Roland G. Allen
4235 3rd Ave.
Columbus, GA 31904

Enclosed check for 1 year with a little extra.

Dear Mr. Horton,

I am writing to inform you that my mother, Ina Messenger, who received the Signs of the Times, is deceased. She passed away in July of 2010. I have been waiting for her subscription to expire, but your periodical has continued to come each month. So I thought that I should let you know by letter, you can remove her from your mailing list. I am enclosing a donation you may use for needs of your publication, as you see fit. My mother's mailing address was P.O. Box 87 Calloway, VA 24067. She attended Pigg River Primitive Baptist church in Callaway, VA. She was not a member, but loved the church all of her 96 years. I still attend Pigg River Church.

Thank you to all that make your periodical possible. May God bless you to do that which is his will, and proclaim the truth in Jesus' name.

Thank you,
Sincerely,
Alan Messenger
P.O. Box 87
Callaway, VA 24067

EPHESIANS 5: 1-2.

Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

VOICES OF THE PAST

(Reprinted by permission)

March 1836.
THE LORD REIGNETH.

"The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth between the cherubims; let the earth be moved." — Ps. xcix. 1, 2.

He reigneth over every dispensation, King over all, blessed for evermore; he reigneth throughout the works of creation, the Maker and Preserver of all things. He reigneth in providence over all men, ordering their concerns as he sees fit. But over his children he reigns in a more especial manner: they are the peculiar subjects of his kingdom, the people of his choice, made willing in the day of his power. His ways are in their hearts, and they are girt about with his armour, to fight the fight of faith on earth. He himself leads them on, guides, directs, and strengthens them. He is their King, and rules over them with parental tenderness, ever watchful to do them good.

When he first commences his reign in the hearts of his people, — hearts that were stubborn, self-willed, wicked, and altogether opposed to his dominion, the poor sinner begins to tremble and waits upon the Lord earnestly, with fear and trembling, apprehensive that he is not included in the covenant of grace, until he who put the cry into his heart shall be graciously pleased to answer it, and

bring the poor soul into gospel liberty.

When he reigneth in the fulness of his power, convincing of sin and of righteousness, the loathsomeness of self and preciousness of Jesus, then his people rejoice and tremble — tremble at the awful depravity of their hearts at the chambers of wickedness that continually open upon their view, where they find all manner of idolatry and wretchedness. Every good wish, and every perception of spiritual things with which a reigning Lord favors his people, tends the more and more to prove how deeply we are fallen in sin, and how far even our best thoughts are below these things which it becometh the people of God to esteem.

"He sitteth between the cherubims; let the earth be moved." This is grievous work for flesh and blood, to be separated from all its joys, the vanities of the earth; and the opposition the pour soul meets with often makes him conclude that it shall one day perish. But it is all to wean us from the world, und draw us to himself. It is but the sacrifice of the trifling vanities of time to matters of everlasting happiness — terrestrial woes to eternal bliss.

When he sits upon the mercy-seat, sprinkling the blood of atonement upon the consciences of his people, and bringing home joy and peace to their souls, then the earth is moved. All earthly things give place to him, and become as dross and dung in his presence. Everything in which our fallen nature delighted is cast away as of no account; the mountains of sin are removed; the hills of pride are laid low; the lofty trees of a sinful imagination are cast down; every stream of sensual pleasure is dried up; yea, the whole earth is moved at the presence of the Lord, and a foretaste of heaven takes possession of the soul, making it a holy temple unto the Lord. But let his presence be withdrawn, and the soul flags beneath its burden of clay, and groans in its prison of earth, and seems to want the will to will that which is good. A weight is put upon the heart, and a lock upon the lips, so that the poor thing cannot talk of the things of God, nor enjoy the sweetness of what others say. The soul is cast down and disquieted, and asks, " Why am I thus?" Well, over such trembling souls the Lord reigneth. He hideth his face in love, and portions their sorrows in the best of affection; and though for the present it is grievous, yet it shall yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness. The soul will so thoroughly sicken of earth, that it shall long for its removal before the presence of the Lord, and cry continually, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death?" Then the coming of the Lord will be truly acceptable, and the removing of the earth be received with joy.

O Lord! Do thou be pleased continually manifestatively to move the earth in our souls. Shake off its hold from our minds, and draw them to thyself. Make us especially a peculiar people, zealous of good works, through Jesus Christ. And if it please thee to work this by crosses, give us feelingly to know that thou reignest, and enable us to resign ourselves and our all to thy will. Amen.

London, December. 1835.
VERICULTOR
Gospel Standard Magazine

1847 – THE "NEEDS BE" IN TRIALS AND AFFLICTIONS

Dear Brother Beebe:— The conflicts which beset Zion's pilgrims in the deserts of this world are often heavy; and when the clouds of adversity are gathering around us we are apt to say as old Jacob did, "All these things are against us;" but, like him, we often see in the end "that all things work together for good" as they always do, "to them that love the Lord, &c." I am more and more confirmed in the belief that no trial or temptation has or will ever befall any of God's children but when there is a real need be for it, and that these are as necessary in the great family of God, as those bright days and golden moments in which we so greatly rejoice.

Peter was well prepared from painful experience to speak on this subject, and after pointing out many items of the glorious system of grace, in which the saints greatly rejoiced, adds, "Though now for a season if needs be, ye are in heaviness, through manifold temptations, for the trial of your faith, &c. These hard trials which cause so much heaviness for a season, like all other tribulations, "work patience and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed." Trial may not in all cases be exclusively indispensable in regard to the very individuals on whom it directly falls, but much of its benefits are realized by others of the spiritual family, perhaps very remote. Few modern Christians but what have felt their faith and hope increased by reviewing the sore trials of the ancient saints, and seeing the immutable faithfulness of God in their behalf. I am glad that Daniel was cast into the den of lions, and the three into the fiery furnace; I am glad that Paul and Peter were cast into prison, and Jonah into the sea, and the fish's belly; not because I love to hear of their tribulations, but of the goodness and faithfulness of our heavenly Father; and I know not how He could have given such striking evidences of His never-failing care over His people to settle our faith and warrant our confidence in Him, if such extreme cases of trial had never been experienced by His people. If God spared Noah and Lot, who had been vexed with the sins and unlawful deeds of the wicked; and showed us the end He had in view in the afflictions endured by Job, we may thereby learn with gratitude that the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and reserve the ungodly to be punished justly for their deeds. If no bear, lion, or Goliath had ever attacked David, we should not have had such evidences as we have in these cases of the Omnipotent power, ever present to help and defend His servants in the very time of trouble. Time and space would fail to mention all the cases of trial and temptation which befell the ancients, which were not only needful for the strengthening of their own faith, but were necessary also for us; for these now compass us about as a cloud of witnesses to establish our confidence in God so that we may not faint in our minds, but be strong to run the race with patience looking to Jesus for such aid as we may need under all our needful trials. With all these trials He makes a

way for our escape, and gives us strength, not over and above, but equal to our day, therefore, we should count it all joy when we are called to bear divers tribulations, for Paul had learned to joy in God, and to joy in tribulation also.

I am not sure but the servants of God learn as many and as useful lessons, when under sore trials, as ever they do in any other department of our heavenly Preceptor's school, and perhaps none are longer remembered by the pupil. We are so prone to trust too much to ourselves and our own wisdom or to take some favorite member or preacher for our guide; and from our confidence in such an one we are too easily led off from Christ, and follow our favorite into error more or less. When such a favorite falls into any great error, or vile sin, what a sore trial such an admirer feels and how hard and long he will cling to his old hold, and often get himself more or less bedaubed with the filth of his friend! And when he has to let him go, the trial is great, but it is necessary, for under such trials we learn to cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils; and from all undue confidence in the flesh, our own or others, and learn to only esteem men for the work's sake, and follow them only as they follow Christ.

I always feel reluctant to mention myself as an example, or an illustration of any Christian exercise; but if I may be allowed so to presume at this time I will venture to say that I have passed through many heavy and severe trials, which I could not see at the time could ever in any possible way be for my good or any profit to the Church or any body else; yet I have afterwards found such trials have been among the best lessons of my life. I have too often leaned to myself and to my own plans of operation, until trials showed me their weakness and imperfections, and my own selfish ignorance and reconciliation to God, and then I could more fully comprehend that wisdom which is perfect, and makes foolish the wisdom of man. Again, I have often found my partiality strongly preferring one of my ministering brethren above the rest, but I have often found the very men in process of time the worst enemies I have ever met; but when I had to drop them from my bosom, O! what a trial I had! I have learned by repeated trials of this kind, to esteem all men alike, as men, and when I find my partiality beginning to grow toward one more than another, I begin to feel alarmed. My brother, can you not now look back and remember some whom you once delighted to meet in the solemn assemblies as fellow-laborers? But where are they now? Perhaps among the worst persecutors you have. How hardly you gave them up! What a trial you had! And how much you have learned by it! Well, by such introspection, you may learn something of my recent wounds, which are still fresh and bleeding enough to lick, Is this my greatest foible, to have my favorites? Or, why is this trial repeated? There is a "needs be" for it all, and time must more fully reveal it.

In the thirteenth year of my age, I was baptized on the profession of faith in Christ, and I then thought, I was entering on a smooth, calm sea, where pleasant weather, good health, and bountiful

provisions, and brotherly kindness would make the voyage very profitable and pleasant; but alas! The storms, the head-winds, the quicksands, rocks and whirl-pools — aye, and the strangers with their jargon of speech, half Ashdod and half Canaan, who would sometimes complain of weak eyes like Leah, and grin like Esau, they had the charity of Judas, and the benevolence of Jezebel to feed the prophets of Baal, and yet their words were fair. They said their eyes were too weak to look at the sun, and they could not see afar off and especially backward, or into deep places; they talked much about practical goodness, and godly living, and I soon found that by this they meant a strict attention to the traditions of men, Moses' law, and abhorrence of doctrine. About this time, they would often speak of the "essentials" and "non-essentials." Moral suasion, as "faith," was one of the essentials, but it was, according to them, the act of the creature, and not much odds what it embraced, Repentance, also, was one of their essentials, and this too was the act of the creature; and many other outward acts of the creature were their essentials; but faith in eternal election, predestination, and union of the Head and His members, or Life and the body — the eternal unity of Christ and His church, which clothed Him with the legal right of Redemption, special and complete Atonement, effectual vocation, and the final perseverance of the saints might or might not be true, but they were at least unprofitable, and not safe to preach. They, with nearly all the gifts of God and His grace independent of our own will or works, were laid aside as useless lumber — non-essentials. This class of passengers manifested great zeal, especially for Moses, and had more to say than all the crew besides, for so little of their language was understood by the children of promise that they could scarcely decide whether to answer yes or no; and on this account were often silent; and sometimes ashamed. Such company I had not believed were in the vessel of honor; they warned me of the danger of what they called, "antinomian rocks" which they said lay close on the north side of the Truth, where many vessels of honor had been broken. They never showed me any wreckage, but insisted this was so. I soon found the most popular current was their choice, and they depended much on their oars for getting along. These were "spots in my feasts," for I soon found they complained of all the choice food that I relished, but they seemed to get fat on such food as I loathed and rejected. I tried to eat what they did, and work as they did, and lay aside their" non-essentials;" take the popular current and work at the oar. Many others of my comrades on board, I could see looking pale and sickly, and seemed very languid and faint. I observed them often reading the old faded chart; and their color would come and go alternately. They said as I approached them, "We are near Babylon, or to the great city which is spiritually called "Sodom and Egypt" where our Lord was crucified." I looked at the old chart and found it even so. I began to warn the crew, but many said, "He is

fighting;" I never love to hear that. Others said, "He has no charity." Some said, "He has got the antinomian rock." I told them to sail with the sun in their eye, &c., the chart in their hand, to throw down their oars, and unfurl every sail to the gentle breeze of the Spirit; for no gallies (ships) with oars or gallant ship should pass safely; for the place of broad rivers and streams, and the glorious Lord was all these to His chosen people. When this was resolved on, the weak-eyed began to complain of the strength of the sun; others said the waters were too deep to venture without oars. Some said we did not understand the old chart, and others said it was good, but was to be modified according to the fashions, customs, and refinement of the different ages and nations, and not always to be one thing regardless of circumstances. Their murmuring continued until they broke out into a rupture and in a great commotion they left us, and manned a galley and plied the oars for Babylon; and we found in the chart that they had left us because they were not of us.

Many such conflicts I have seen, and at each of them great trouble and dismay has afflicted the children of Zion; and some old or young favorites have gone in the gullies; and O! how I have lamented, and like many others, I have thought, the church is divided, the cause is wounded, and the Lord is dishonored in the house of His friends! But when all was over, and none left but the children who were taught of the Lord, I found that they had great peace, they loved the Lord, they loved and prized His Word, the laws of His house, and they loved one another. They sat at one table and fed on the same food, they all read and practiced the same chart, and spoke and understood the same language of sovereign grace, and felt such confidence in each other; and now they were glad that the tribe of the Ashdodites was gone off, for now their strength was much greater though few in number when all united, than when the company was large and divided that one strove against another. Then I remembered the Shepherd had said, "Fear not little flock for it is your Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom. "And I heard one say, " Moab is My washpot;" so I found that the heart-aching we felt about these divisions were principally owing to our own ignorance of what was going on; for what we thought was a division of the church, was only the cleaning of it, and now she appears like "a flock of sheep coming up from the washing, each one bearing twins and not one barren among them." Then I could plainly see, that there was a "needs be" for all trials, and not one was in vain, although for a season we were in heaviness.

Our inward conflicts are also often so severe, that we are ready to say, "O wretched man that I am!" "My heart and my flesh faileth, my tongue cleaveth to the roof of my mouth, " and my faith and hope seem like a lamp flickering in the socket; but when we have again and again exhausted all our supposed store and all our plans have proved abortive, we, as poor pensioners fall for want of strength at the feet of our Savior, we find He is our strength and our song, He is our salvation, in Him shall all the seed

of Christ be justified and shall glory. Then we look back and see these inward conflicts which we so often endure come not by chance, but there is a "needs be" for them all.

"By thee trials I daily pass through
I am taught my own weakness to know;
I am taught what my Shepherd can do,
And how much to His mercy I owe.

While I dwell in an enemy's land
Can I hope to be always in peace?
Tis enough that my Shepherd's at hand,
And now shortly this warfare will cease."

Yours in the Gospel of Christ,
Elder Wilson Thompson,
Apr., 28, 1847.

---

1 PETER V. 7.

"Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you."

The children of God often find themselves utterly at a loss to understand or comprehend the ways of divine providence and grace, and can only say as one of old, His ways are past finding out. It is he himself that teaches that he ruleth in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? They confess this, and at times are thankful it is so, for is there not comfort and security in such a doctrine? In it we see that not a dog can move his tongue, or a devil either, unless it be subject to the will and purpose of him that worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Men are also subject to him, even the rulers of this world, for when Pilate said to Jesus, "Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." He is before all things and by him all things consist. An understanding of such a doctrine, imparted to us by God himself, is of great comfort to the soul, but few are able to travel long in the path of life, reconciled, with a calm and thankful heart, from every murmur free. God has ordained a furnace of affliction, and if he gives faith that believes that he who has promised is able to perform, he will try that faith; and just so, when we, as we hope, by his Spirit, have been taught to trust in his name and to rejoice in the truth that not a single shaft can hit, until he, the God of love, sees fit, we find the question asked, Do you believe God had anything to do with the sinking of that vessel, or the burning of that family and home? How has God anything to do with the sickness of this man? or with the death of his wife at such a time as this, when he needed her so much? Thus we ask ourselves many questions, and are asked many such questions by others, and often such questions, when asked in the face of terrible trials, and what men call accidents, are almost staggering, especially if we are ourselves affected by the trial. If a terrible bereavement comes upon us we find it not so easy to

live the doctrine, yet Job, sorely afflicted, did, when he said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."— Job xiii. 15. He has said, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father. Fear ye not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows." Again, be saith, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed as one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" It is the trial of faith that will show to us how little faith we have, and how little we truly believe the doctrine to which we have subscribed. There is not one of us but has his, or her, trials; some hard to be borne, and we do well to consider that

"Whatever cross lies at thy door,
It cometh from the Lord."

It is a crook of the Lord's making, and as long as he sees fit for it to be, none can straighten it. It may be to bring down our pride, to "hide pride from man," or to show us wherein our strength lies, or to make us of comfort to the saints, or to prove to men and devils, as in the case of Job, that our religion is not a fair weather religion, but that it can stand fire and flood; and in all these trials, and many others, too numerous to mention, the presence of Christ is seen, as he was in the furnace of old, thereby proving that he careth for us. In all the ages the Lord has proven his care for his people in the furnace of affliction; such a way is needful or it would not be. He raised up a wicked Pharaoh who knew not Joseph, and he set over Israel task-masters, to afflict Israel with burdens, but the more they were afflicted the more they multiplied and grew. The Egyptians made their lives bitter with hard bondage, yet the Lord still cared for them. Moses was born, and was hidden three months by his mother, who feared not the wrath of the king, and when she could no longer hide him she took for him an ark of bulrushes and laid it in the flags by the river's brink, the very river where the wicked Pharaoh had commanded them to drown their sons, yet God cared for him there. He was taken by Pharaoh's daughter and nursed by his own mother in the house of Pharaoh, the very man who wished to destroy all the male children of Hebrew origin. From this we can take this lesson: that the church of God nurses her children in the furnace of affliction. They are strengthened in the doctrine; the more they are afflicted the more they are trained up in the nurture and admonitions of the Lord. In the word of God there are many instances that seem just happen so, mere chance, yet when we trace the chain of circumstances connected with the particular case we find a wonder-working Providence governing all things: as, for instance, the Syrians had gone out by companies and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid. Who can describe the terror and abject loneliness of that little maid? Think of the parents, her mother, if mother she had,

wringing her hands, sighing and pining for her little daughter. Many would there be in Israel then who would say, Tell us, did the Lord have anything to do with that? Thank God there were some then, and doubly thankful we ought to be, there are some now, who unhesitatingly would declare, It is the Lord. Some who by faith could see the companies of Syria going just so far and doing just whatsoever God's hand and God's counsel determined before to be done. The child must leave the arms of the parents, must go into a strange and foreign land, and must go into Naaman's house. God cared for that little captive maid; he had a purpose. In Naaman's house she witnesses to the truth, and her testimony was for one whom God cared for, though in God's purpose he was held by a more relentless foe than even the captive maid. He was none other than Naaman, the captain of the host, but he was a leper. Yes, he cared for Naaman. He cared for Saul of Tarsus, even while he went about breathing threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord. Saul did not understand, he had no eye to see, the Lord using his persecution for the furtherance of the Gospel. It is written, "As for Saul, be made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and hailing men and women, committed them to prison." The following verse declares the result in the purpose of God. It says, **"Therefore they that were scattered abroad, went every where preaching the word."** Thus a persecuting Saul of Tarsus, in the purpose of God, did more then than all the missionary boards can do today, although they claim to be on the Lord's side, for there has never been a preacher of the word sent by man, anywhere. Why is it that Saul of Tarsus, Naaman and his companies, Pharaoh and his host, or the devil himself, can do nothing other than God's hand and his counsel determined before to be done? The simple reason is, **"He careth for you."** For God's dear saints there is a covenant, ordered in all things and sure, and in this covenant

"Jesus is engaged to save
The meanest of his sheep,
All that the heavenly Father gave
His hand's securely keep.
Nor death, nor hell can e'er remove
His favorites from his breast."

They are loved with an everlasting love. God has predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. As this is his purpose he will care for us along the line that we must travel. I might predestinate my trunk to go from here to New York City by railroad. To bring that about, the track must be there, the sleepers in their place, the station, the signal boxes, the men, the engine, coal, steam, and all other requirements must be there or ever my trunk can safely be delivered to its destination. Thus we believe Pharaoh was in the purpose of God, foreordained to that very condemnation, as was the devil himself, and as were the companies of Syria, and if the word be true, that God has created the waster to de-

stroy, and these wasters of Israel were in Israel's life of old, in the life of the captive maid, yes, and in the life of our blessed Lord, who shall say they will not be in our lives? Peter tells the scattered saints of old of a fiery trial that was to try them, and it is true to-day. God's dear scattered saints are a poor and afflicted people, having fiery trials; yet Peter by inspiration says, "Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you." There comes before our mind one dear sister, over eighty years of age, whom we once saw lying on her couch under terrible distress. Trouble had come upon her in her advanced age and was crushing her to earth: we said, Why should these things be? Faith answered, "He careth for you."

"Blind unbelief is sure to err
And scan God's work in vain."

He is a very present help in time of trouble.

"The flame shall not hurt thee, I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine."

We have seen another, younger in years, afflicted in body so that she could hardly move a limb, given up by earthly physicians, having little to look forward to but death and that which is beyond, and to the honor of his name we have seen that he careth for her. Is he not the helper of the helpless? We visited such an one one day, and while there she said, "Sing Rock of Ages." We sang that and "Father, we'll rest in thy love," and as we got in our car we heard the afflicted one singing by herself in the house, and all we could think of was, "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God." Later we asked why she sang when we left her a few nights before, and the reply was, "Because I was happy." It is because "he careth for you" that the theme of Jesus and his love makes the captive's portion sweet. It is his care that made David say, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." His care for Israel of old was wonderful. He brought them from under Pharaoh's yoke with a high hand and an outstretched arm and led them through the sea, gave them bread from heaven, water from the rock, a cloud by day and pillar of fire by night, their shoes did not wear out, nor their clothing decay, all because "He careth for you," for were they not a type of Israel today? They rebelled and we rebel, too. There is nothing that brings out the spirit of rebellion more than trouble. "The trial of your faith." It is easy to say, "Thy will be done," but his will is a cross, and under the trial he sends we kick like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke. It is galling and so humiliating, especially if it affects our personal reputation, we feel ashamed to be seen among the brethren, we ask the reason why. Pride must he abased. He made himself of no reputation; we would be his, yea, be like him, but it is unpleasant to die daily, to take buffetings. Oh the strugglings and strivings we have to be freed from the yoke!

Paul prayed very regularly to be delivered from a thorn in the flesh, but his request was not granted, and there is not a doubt in our mind the reason for it was that "He careth for you." All these trials, crosses, losses, thorns and snares we must and shall endure in this life are for the lifting of Jesus on high. They are to show us, as we are exercised thereby, how base and vile, unworthy and helpless we are, and, like Paul, we are taught of him to know that when we are weak, then are we strong, and we glory in our infirmities (that are made plain to us in the furnace) that the power of God might rest upon us. Thus his care is such towards us that we shall at last confess, as did Israel of old, that the Lord delivered us and that "there failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass." — Joshua xxi. 45.

Elder George Ruston,
March, 1929

"FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE." (1 JOHN III. 14.)

There is a class of professors who talk about loving the brethren, and thus proclaim themselves to be passed from death unto life. But, do they declare that Christ is precious to them? Do they tell how he became dear and precious to them! Have they seen and felt themselves to be base, things to be despised, vile transgressors? Is Christ Jesus the Lord that altogether lovely One, whom having not seen they love, in whom they rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory? Do they always manifest they have ever felt themselves to be poor lost sinners, that with a broken and contrite heart they were brought to Jesus' feet, and there in the crucified Lamb of God they found forgiveness, justification and hope of eternal salvation? God hath called his own unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, and in due time Christ is revealed in them, he dwells in their hearts by faith. "Christ liveth in me," saith the apostle. (Gal. ii. 20.) Do I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me? Oh this is the all-important question, a vital matter with a poor sinner like me. I know the apostle John speaks of the love of the household of God, one toward another, and speaking of the family of God he says, **"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." - 1 John iii. 14.** We have been taught of God, our heavenly Father, to love one another. But this love of the brethren is not apart from Christ and him crucified, but it is the fruit of, and flows from, our divine nearness to the Father, and to Christ, the Son of his love, our precious Savior. If we look into this epistle we find who they are that the apostle John is speaking of when he says, "We "know," &c. They are the very family of God, they are fellows, the household of God, who are such in vital knowledge and experience of the things of the Father and of Christ, and that thus in this fellowship, this kinship, this union and communion, they love one another and so they are passed from death unto

life. Let us hear the apostle declaring this matter: **"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with his Son Jesus; Christ." - 1 John i. 1-3.** What ministrations of the Holy Ghost have been our portion to bring unto us this divine fellowship? Christ saith, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." - Matt. xi. 27. Jesus saith, " I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." - John xiv. 6. In the times decreed in Jehovah's counsel the Holy Ghost quickeneth the elect who by nature are children of wrath even as others, dead in trespasses and sins. He convinceth them of sin, to know themselves to be under the curse of the law, he leads them to Jesus, to the crucified Savior, he takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto them. And into the teachings and guidance of the Spirit of truth, into the truth of Christ's gospel we are led graciously yearningly into the blessed fact that we most be redeemed from under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons. (Gal. iv. 5, 6.) So in this fellowship of the gospel we have fellowship one with another. In the beginning of the knowledge of Christ the called of God have repentance given, a humble, contrite, supplicating heart, and that precious cry is put forth in their heart, "God be merciful to me a sinner." And oh when in Jesus it is ours to taste we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, what union then we have with our Savior, what fellowship! And, joined to Christ we are one Spirit with him. We have the Spirit of Christ, we are his, and he is ours, our dear Savior, and by his gracious Spirit in us we cry, "Abba, Father." Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. Without this union with Christ no sinner can be in truth of the household of God, and consequently can have no knowledge of kinship to the family of God. We must be born of God to love God, and to love the brethren. (1 John iv. 7.) For he that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. (1 John v. 1.) Beloved of God, this love of the brethren is more than mere lip love, for there have ever been carnal men among the people of God, who, as the Holy Spirit describes them to Ezekiel, **"They sit before thee as my people, and they bear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their cove tousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not."- Ezek.**

xxxiii. 31, 32. "Love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." — 1 Peter iii. 8. If we have passed from death unto life, and in this life love the brethren, our love will be more than words, there will be love's deeds. **"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." — 1 John iii. 18.** The carnal religionist with his superficial profession of love of the truth and to the brethren knows nothing of the work of the Holy Ghost in his heart, he has never known the burden of his vile transgressions, has never been ready to perish in his condemnation under the curse of the law, he knows nothing of repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ; he has never mourned unto God over his iniquities, was never prostrated at the feet of the Lord with a humble and contrite heart. Neither has he tasted the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works. Oh blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. (Rom. iv. 6-8.) If through grace I am a believer in Christ what a favored sinner am I.

> "Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
> My beauty are, my glorious dress,
> Midst flaming worlds in these arrayed,
> With joy shall I lift up my head."

If Christ and him crucified be not in the heart's experience our consolation, our hope, our glory, then all this talk about loving the brethren, believing certain points of doctrine amounts to nothing and will be found of no account before the throne of God. These matters are of eternal importance, and that counsel of the apostle is not to be tossed aside as though we were beyond such counsel. **"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates." — 2 Cor. xiii. 5.** If Christ be in us, and we are his, then, **"They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." — Gal. v. 24.**

Elder Frederick W. Keene
Raleigh, North Carolina
January, 1929

PSALM 150.

Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power.

Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness.

Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp.

Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs.

Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.

Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.

MEETINGS

LOWER MAYO FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday, June 29th, 2014.

We hope to start singing at 10:00 am and preaching at 10:30 am. Flower Gap Church will host the meeting. Directions for those who do not know the location; the meeting house is located at 3481 Flower Gap Road, Cana, Va 24317. From US 52, turn west about 5 miles north of Mt. Airy, NC on Flower Gap Road, #691, at the foot of Fancy Gap Mountain. Go about 3 ½ miles to church on left.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters, and all believers in Salvation by Grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

ISAIAH 30:18.

And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the Lord *is* a God of judgment: blessed *are* all they that wait for him.

SKEWARKEY UNION (Eastern Kehukee Association)

Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of June 29, 2014. The church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albermarle Avenue in Tarboro, NC. Preaching services begin at 10:30am.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

May 5, 2014

Dear Elder Robertson,

Please print the following in the next issue of the Signs of the Times:

There will not be a Staunton River Primitive Baptist Union Meeting in the month of June.

STAUNTON RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will be held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church located at the intersection of Music St. and Weatherford Drive, Gretna, VA in Pittsylvania County. The second Sunday and Saturday before in July 2014. The song service will begin at 9:30 a.m. with service at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton, Clerk
Staunton River Primitive
Baptist Association

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

Big Meadows Primitive Baptist Church will host the fifth Sunday Meeting on June 29, 2014. Singing begins at 10:00 AM and preaching service at 10:30 AM.

From 1-40, take Hwy 87 South at Graham towards Pittsboro. Go 14.8 miles and cross Cane Creek. Turn right onto first road past Cane Creek which is Greenhill Road. Go 3.7 miles and turn left on Old Switchboard Road. Church is 1.3 miles on right.

From Hwy 64, take Hwy 87 North about 7 miles and turn left on Castle Rock Road. Church is about 5 miles on left.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Joann Self, Clerk

ST. LUKE 10:21.

In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 2014

Charlie Fox, AR	5.00
Donald Arrington, NC	5.00
Roland Allen, NC	5.00
Daniel Sokolovic, NC	5.00
Charlie Alston, NC	5.00
Flora Vest, VA	5.00
Glenna Link, TN	20.00
B. L. Abernathy, NC	5.00
Maxey Delp, VA	10.00
Alan Messenger, VA	50.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER LARRIE HARDY BOWLER

With much sadness I will endeavor to write a few words in memory of our dear sister and friend. I pray we will be comforted by our God who never makes a mistake.

Sister Larrie was born in Pittsylvania County on June 4, 1923, a daughter of the late Haney L. Hardy and Sister Cora Dalton Hardy. She was married to the late William F. Bowler and to this union their daughter, Brenda Bowler Chism was born. She is survived by her daughter and her husband, Roger

Chism, granddaughter, Tonya Simpson Correal, and two great-granddaughters, Lillie Grace Correal and Allison Rose Correal. She was predeceased by two brothers, Herman Hardy and Harold Hardy; and three sisters, Sister Belva Gibson, Sister Alice Gibson and Sister Lera Vasser.

Sister Larrie was a believer in salvation by grace and faithful to attend her meetings as long as her health allowed and prepared meals to serve the visitors. She enjoyed visiting sister churches near and far. She asked for a home with the church on May 8, 1976 at Springfield Church and requested her membership at Weatherford Church. She was baptized on May 22, 1976.

Sister Larrie was made reconciled to living at the Gretna Health and Rehab for the last few years of her life. She fought a good fight and has kept the faith. She was taken from this world of sin and sorrow on February 27, 2013.

Her funeral was conducted on March 2, 2013 at 11:00 a.m. at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder Raymond Goad, and her former Pastor R. G. Rowland and her body was laid to rest beneath an array of beautiful flowers in the Gretna Burial Park to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Sister Larrie is greatly missed by her church family, family and friends but our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by,
Pamela G. Betterton

ELDER JOHN THERON JONES

It has pleased our Heavenly Father, to remove from our midst our Beloved pastor, and Friend. Elder John Theron Jones, who passed away on Monday, June 21, 2013 in Shreveport, LA. His funeral Service was conducted, at Hill Crest Memorial Chapel Monday, June 23, by Elder C.C. Morris, and Elder Truman Bradshaw. He was laid to rest beside his wife, in the Hill Crest Memorial Park, who preceded him in death by several months. May we bow in humble submission to the will of our Dear Heavenly Father, who doeth all things well. He will be sadly missed by his family, and by all who knew him, of the three churches that he served. May the Lord bless and comfort all who mourn the passing of their pastor. He has finished his course here. We feel that He has gone home to rest in the paradise of God; to await the glorious resurrection of the saints, to ever be with our dear Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ; in that world that shall never end eternal in that great city whose builder and maker is God.

He was born April 10, 1932 making his stay here 81 years. He was preceded in death by his parents, wife Bobbye Jones, son Ricky Glen Jones, brother Gerald Jones, and sister Pauline Tony.

He is survived by his daughter Judy Wilson, and husband Ray of Princeton, LA, son Randy Jones and wife Reba of De Berry, TX, brothers Windell Jones and Preston Jones, sister Carolyn Spence and husband Truett, four grand-

children and three great grandchildren.

Elder Jones, was the Pastor of Mount Olive Church, Near Ringgold, LA. New Hope Church, Spearsville, LA, and Rehobeth Church El Dorado, AR.

Members and friends
of Rehobeth Church
By a very unworthy one,
C. Fox, Clerk

PSALM 9: 1-2.

I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.

I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.

GRADIE OLLIE HALL STRADER

On August 30, 2013 our precious Sister Gradie Strader peacefully fell asleep in Christ as her beloved family stood by her side. Sister Gradie was born in Stokes County October 15, 1926 to the late George W. and Emma Murphy Hall. She was preceded in death by her husband, Brother Percy Strader, Sr., eleven brothers and sisters, and her little grandson, Tommy L. Strader, Jr. Left to mourn her passing are her three sons, Percy Strader Jr. and wife, June, Tommy Strader and wife, Nancy, George Strader and wife, Lillian, seven grandchildren, eleven great grandchildren, one great great grandchild, and her twin sister, Gracie Strader, many nieces and nephews along with a host of beloved brethren and sisters in Christ.

Sister Gradie and Brother Percy asked for a home with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church at the fourth Saturday night meeting June 27, 1959. Sister Ruby McGuire joined the next morning at the Sunday meeting. They were all baptized on the fourth Sunday of July, 1959 by Elder David Spangler. She was blessed to be a faithful, loving member for 54 years. In her later years she resided at Eden Estates assisted living facility. She continued to go to church as often as she was able most particularly to her home church at Dan River. The time came when she was only able to attend her home church. Her last meeting was in August prior to her passing. On that day, our young Brother Tony Brewer was blessed to ask for a home in the church. As she sat in her wheel chair, she motioned for him to come to her so that she could embrace him. Although she was not with us at his baptizing in September, she rejoiced greatly that the Lord had brought him home to the church.

In the months leading up to the end of her journey here on earth, she shared with the writer some of her experiences. She said as a little child, she remembered walking to church with her mother. At that time the ladies wore hats and sat together in church. She said I remember seeing those beautiful ladies and thinking, "I hope I will be one of them someday." In talking of the time when she and Brother Percy joined the church, she said, "Percy was such a good per-

son, and I felt so unworthy." She also told of a dream that she had when her youngest son, George, was a baby. She dreamed of being lifted up on a cloud, and she said, "I knew that I would never again know that peace unless I'm blessed to be with Christ." About two months before the Lord called her from this world, she was in Morehead Hospital. The writer and those traveling with me from a meeting at Reid Creek Church stopped to see her. As we left, when asked if there was anything we could do for her. She said, "Pray for me." When we replied that we had been doing that, she said, "No, pray that the Lord will make me willing with whatever His will is for me." One day she called and said, "You may think I'm crazy, but I asked the Lord today if He had room for me." My reply was that I felt certain He had prepared room for her. During those last months she would often request the hymn, "Wait, my soul, upon the Lord."

Her funeral was held on September 2, 2013 at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. Her pastor, Elder Thomas Solomon had prayer after which, Elder Haywood Wray, with whom she had walked together in sweet fellowship for more than 50 years, was blessed to speak comfortingly from Romans 8:37-39. He also read the following poem which she had written June 20, 1989 and had been found in her Bible:

"Blessed Saviour, make me humble
Take away my sinful pride.
In myself I'm sure to stumble
Help me to stay close by your side.
No garment is more becoming
To a child of God than a cloak of humility."

As Brother Wray stated that day, she had been blessed with that cloak of humility and had walked humbly and softly during her sojourn in this time world. Psalm 50 verse 2 reads, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." Christ, the hope of glory, shown from within her so beautifully. We sorely miss her gentle, kind ways, her lovely smile, and her warm embrace. For this writer, she was not only a dear, precious Sister in Christ, but also a beloved Mother in Israel. It has been a wonderful blessing to travel with her and to talk of heavenly matters. May the Lord bless her family and all of us who feel so keenly the loss of this precious one with the comfort that only He can give and to witness with the hymn writer:

"By thy hands the boon was given,
Thou hast taken but thine own;
Lord of earth and God of heaven,
Evermore, 'Thy will be done'"

Written by one who loved her dearly,
Mary Hawkins

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 6 / 2014
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

Now to thy praise, eternal King,
Be all my thoughts employed,
While of his precious truth I sing-
Cast down, but not destroyed.

Oft the united powers of hell
My soul have sore annoyed;
And yet I live, this truth to tell-
Cast down, but not destroyed.

In all the paths thro' which I've passed,
What mercies I've enjoyed!
And this shall be my song at last-
Cast down, but not destroyed.

When I in heaven with God appear,
There shall I him adore;
Destroyed shall be my sin and fear,
And I cast down no more.

Primitive.

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EDITORIAL

"Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Corinthians 5:17.

Elder J.B. Farmer

The inspired apostle Paul admonished the saints of God, **"That we *henceforth be* no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."** And the beloved apostle Peter, in his second letter to the saints said, **"But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him *be* glory both now and for ever. Amen."**

It is needful that the children of God grow in grace and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is also needful that they are established in the doctrine of Christ as it has pleased God to set them on a firm foundation. Nonetheless, we have been taught that we can do nothing spiritual of ourselves, that is, according to the flesh. But we also have been taught that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us, that is, according to the Spirit. So to grow or to be established in the things of the kingdom of God is altogether the work of God. Therefore, we find ourselves waiting and desiring that the Lord would nourish us upon His word, and that He would strengthen us by His Spirit for our walk in this world. For without Him we would be blown out into the midst of the sea, and in confusion and doubt we would perish there.

It is recorded one place that the saints are taught precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little. We are first taught to fear the Lord, for that is the beginning of wisdom. We are taught that we are sinners in need of a Savior. And we are condemned under the righteous law of God as deserving the punishment of death for our sins. And that same law that condemns us also kills us to all thoughts of self-righteousness, and it is mercifully used of God as the schoolmaster that brings us to Christ. Christ reveals to his people

that He is verily the Son of God and verily God having come in the flesh to save His people from their sins. He shows His people that He made the world and that in Him is all power in heaven and earth, and in Him is Light and Life. He manifests His love to them. He shows them that His broken body and shed blood, and the laying down of His life and taking it again the third day wrought the eternal salvation for all the elect family of God. The Lord has promised that He would be with his little ones and keep them safe through their journey here on earth. And He promised that at last He would come again in great power and glory to raise all the family of God to Himself, and would change their vile bodies to be like His own glorious body. God cannot lie, and He promised that His own people would forever be with Him in glory. He gave David to say, "I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness."

Those in nature know or understand none of these things. These things are foolishness to them. These things are revealed to babes, but are hidden to the wise and prudent of this world. How are these things revealed? One cannot see or know any of these things unless he has been generated from above. Unless one has been born of the Spirit of God, the things of the kingdom of God seem to be idle talk of things that do not exist. They seem to be hateful to those in the flesh because the truth condemns sin in the flesh. It is no wonder the children of God are misunderstood, despised and rejected by the world, even as they hated the Lord of glory.

When the little child of God is brought to the Spiritual birth, he begins to see and hear and understand the things of the Spirit of God. As the baby in the womb is shut up in darkness before the birth, so is the Spiritual child of God in darkness concerning the kingdom of God until his Spiritual birth. We know that in order for a natural baby to be born alive, there must be life before the birth. The birth does not give life, but the birth manifests the life that was hidden from view. So it is with the Spiritual child of God. His early days in the flesh are in darkness and he is fulfilling the desires of the mind and of the flesh according to the scriptures. He is dead in trespasses and sins according to the flesh, but the living Spirit of God is in him, though not yet manifest to him. This is part of the great mystery of Godliness.

We know that every natural child ever born had an earthly father, except one, the Lord Jesus Christ. He was born of the virgin Mary, according to the wisdom and power of God. His generation was of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary in order that there must be no sin in Him that was passed down from Adam. He was truly God and truly man, and that without sin. Every child of God also has a heavenly Father, even God Himself. His earthly father is manifest to be Adam, and his heavenly Father is manifest to be God. How can this be? How can a man have two fathers? This is also a great mystery, yet the children of God are given to hold it in a pure conscience, with nothing doubting. They are blessed to believe that the God of heaven and earth is the Father of the inward spiritual man.

So, the child of God is one person consisting of an outward man of the flesh, and an inward man of the Spirit.

The blessed apostle was given to open up the mystery a little unto us. He, on the one hand said, "I am the chief of sinners." This is according to the flesh. And on the other hand he said, "By the grace of God I am what I am." This is according to the Spirit. And one place he said, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." There is a Spiritual treasure residing in the natural bodies of the children of God. The creature of God was made subject to vanity according to the scriptures. To be made to be subject to vanity is to be given a fleshly tabernacle in which to abide. This natural body is subject to pain, sorrow, doubt, sin and death. The child of God was made this way, "not willingly [on his part], but by reason of Him who subjected the same in hope, that the creature also might be delivered from the bondage of corruption unto the glorious liberty of the children of God." This earthly vessel of the child of God was not made to be destroyed, but was made up for the purpose of glory and honor, even though its beginnings were of the earth earthly. "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another to dishonor?" The body of the child of God shall be raised up in the last day — a powerful, spiritual, incorruptible, glorious body, according to the sure promise of Christ. These things are all great mysteries that no one could ever know or understand apart from the revelation of God.

The apostle John made it plain that there are two men in one. He said, "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him." The inward man, the one generated of God, cannot sin. John also said, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." But the outward man, the man of flesh can only sin. The apostle Paul said, "For I delight in the law after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." There are two men in one and they are at war. But thanks be unto God, "Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world." And "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

To be a new creature, to me, means for one to be made to be something altogether different than what he once was. If one is in Christ, it is manifest to him by the Spirit of God that he is no longer the same. He no longer can have any confidence in the flesh. He now hates the sins that cause his mourn. He glories in the finished work of almighty God. He now has a hope of glory and of eternal life. He has been given a love for God and for his children. He now is in a warfare that he never knew before. He has been given a desire to grow in grace

and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He has been given a desire to be established in the faith, and for his heart to be established in grace. He has been given a desire to please God in his thoughts, words and deeds. He has been given a desire to seek first the kingdom of God and the righteousness of God. He is no longer afraid of what man may do unto him. He glories in tribulations and persecutions on behalf of Christ. He longs for his heavenly home, where earthly sorrows cannot enter. All these good desires, and this knowledge and experience of Spiritual things are worked in him by the mighty working of the power of God in the inward man. **"Therefore if any man** *be* **in Christ,** *he* **is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."**

The outward man, the man of nature and flesh, may trace his life back to its beginning in earthly Adam. That life has come down to him in continuance through many natural generations. The inward man, the man of the Spirit, may trace his life back to its beginning in Christ. It has come down to him through one generation, that is, directly through Christ. We have the testimony of scripture saying, "We are created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God has before ordained that we should walk in them." In another place it is written, "We were given grace in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world." And it is written that God loved us with an everlasting love, and that God has foreknown His people. I believe that this foreknowledge of God's people is in His eternal love, and that it goes all the way back to their creation in Christ Jesus before the world was. Their names were written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world.

As Eve was created in Adam, so were the children of God created in Christ Jesus. As Eve was bone of Adam's bone and flesh of his flesh naturally, so are the children of God bone of Christ's bone and flesh of His flesh Spiritually according to scripture. It is confirmed unto us that, "He has been our dwelling place in all generations." And "In him we live and move and have our being."

The whole world of religious professors teach that the beginning of spiritual life is in this world when one decides to trust in their god. They teach their followers how to get born again — if they will just believe, their god will give them a new birth. They actually think they can save others by bringing them knowledge of salvation. They tell them that their god is obligated to save them because they, of their own free will, had faith in him. They teach that every man has faith, and it is up to the man to use it. They say that their god wants to save every one, and that he has made an offer of salvation to all. According to them, it is up to each one to take advantage of the offer. And they say to take their god up on his offer will keep them from the fires of hell. They go so far to say their names are written in the lamb's book of life when they believe. As evidenced by their money-based religions, they think that gain is godliness, and boast of their natural prosperity being evidence of

their god's approval. All these things are in direct contradiction to the doctrine and faith of Christ, which faith has been given unto the saints. We are taught to "earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

By the grace of God. and by His wisdom and power, His people are delivered from these false doctrines of men and of the devil. Because they have been generated from above and born into the heavenly kingdom, they have the Spirit of discernment, by which they are blessed to examine all things. By this Spirit, they believe and embrace the truth and reject error, to the praise and glory of His grace. The old man, or the outward man, is bound up by the stronger man, which is Christ. And the house of the outward man is then spoiled in that he cannot do the things that he would. If God had not been on our side, we would have been defeated on every hand. But He has given us the victory .He has overcome the world, and we have overcome the world in Him. All praise, honor and glory be unto Him throughout all ages, world without end.

I trust this was written in kindness and faithfulness.

Elder J.B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

May 14, 2014

Tony R. Horton
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, VA 24343

Dear Mr. Horton,

Please renew my subscription to the "Signs of the Times" for two years. Enclosed is a check for more than enough. Use it as you see fit. It has been such a blessing to receive my copies for many years.

Humbly Submitted,
Charles Matthews
8110 A Elliot Rd
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70817
(225) 456-2062

ARTICLES

MY DAD
ELDER JOE SAWYER

As I looked at you Easter Sunday something told me it would be the last time you would be preaching God's word to the faithful members seated around me. I had thought when you wanted to go it would be too much for you but you insisted and I gave in. You stood there so weak and frail but the Lord gave you strength and the words that you needed to deliver from your

heart just like He had so many times before. That day I listened more closely because the words you spoke were the most beautiful I have ever heard, all the while a little voice was telling me it would be the last time you would deliver a sermon in this church but this one was the most beautiful heartfelt sermon I could ever remember. I could see and feel the strength of the Lord in every word. The next day was when you got so sick and we took you to the hospital. As I sat there in the hospital looking at you struggling to breathe and begging to be free and to go home, I prayed the Lord would take you home to that glorious city where there will be no more suffering. As you looked at me and told me you were ready to go I knew it was time for you to leave but I wanted you to stay and be well and come home because I knew how lonely we would be without you. As the days grew longer I knew it would soon be time for you to go be with our Heavenly Father. As I sit here now with tears rolling down my face I know you are at peace and in a much better place. In my heart I know I took the best care of you and mom as I could. It will be so hard for us to be without you but I pray the Lord will give us strength to accept his will and a hope we will all be together again someday. Dad always said "God Don't Make No Mistakes". With the strength from my family and grace of God we will get through this. We will miss you Popie beyond what words can say and I hope one day soon the ache in my heart will lessen but until then I will continue to pray for my own peace. I thank the Lord I had such a loving and wonderful mother and father. They were more than I could have hoped for. I love you Popie. You were the greatest dad that anyone could ever have.

Your daughter
Judy

VOICES OF THE PAST

ELECTION
John Kershaw (1792-1870)

THE NARRATIVE

It will be seen from the following narration that when I first heard of election I was upon old covenant ground. One Sunday evening I went with my father and my mother's brother to the Independent meeting in Rochdale to hear Mr. Roby, of Manchester. As we returned home, these two pilgrims were wonderfully pleased with the sermon, saying that he had preached election very clearly and strongly. Election was evidently the joy and rejoicing of their souls; sweeter to their taste than honey or the honeycomb.

I wondered what this election could be that they were so delighted with. I could not at that time make free to ask what it meant; but the next day I went to the house of a cousin who had formerly lived with my father, and was a member of the Baptist church at Rochdale under the pastoral care of Mr. Littiewood, for the purpose of inquiring as to this important subject.

When I got to his house, he was just

taking down his basket to go to the market, and I went with him. As we were walking towards the town, I said, "Last night you heard Mr. Roby." "Yes," he replied, "and a very good sermon he preached."

As we were going home, I then said, "Your father and mine were well pleased that he had been, as they termed it, exceedingly strong and firm upon the doctrine of election, and I am come on purpose to ask you what this election means." He said, "Do you not recollect that in the New Testament you read of the elect; that no flesh shall be saved, 'but for the elect's sake'? 'And if it were possible, the false Christs and prophets would deceive the very elect'? 'And shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them'? 'Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?' 'Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father;' 'That the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth; Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace;' 'But the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded;' 'Knowing, brethren beloved your election of God;' 'And God will send His angels, with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from the one end of heaven to the other'?

"Yes," I said, "I have read all these texts many times; but I did not know what they meant, and I wish you would explain them."

He answered, "The elect are God's people that He hath loved and chosen in Christ from before the foundation of the world, and ordained them unto eternal life and salvation through Christ; and He has done this according to His good will and sovereign pleasure, as He has said to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and compassion on whom I will have compassion.' 'So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.' Thus, you see, it is those whom He has loved and chosen and ordained to eternal life that will be saved, and none else; as Paul says in Romans 11:7: 'But the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."

As I looked at the doctrine as thus laid down, I shall never forget the hatred and indignation that rose up in my carnal heart against it. I said within myself, "It is the most unjust, unreasonable doctrine that ever could be broached. I may read and pray, and go to the chapel and do all the good I can, and if I am not elected, be lost after all. It does not even give a man a chance to be saved. I neither can nor will believe this election."

Just as I was about to open my mouth against it, and utter with my lips the horrid feelings of my heart, this thought came into my mind: "There must be something in this election that I do not understand; for if there be two good men in this country, living to God and for another world, it is my father and my uncle, and they glory in it. Mr. Roby is a good minister of Jesus Christ, and highly esteemed, and he believes it, and preaches it, too. I will say nothing against it till I know more about the matter." Thus

I was mercifully prevented from lifting up my voice against the God-glorifying, soul-humbling and heart-enlarging doctrine of election.

There is no branch of divine truth left upon record that has been so bitter and galling to my mind as God's election; yet I can truly say there is no doctrine recorded in all the Bible that has been so sweet and blest to my soul. But more of this anon.

My cousin saw that I was much confounded and perplexed in my mind about it, and spoke very kindly to me, saying he was sorry I did not hear Mr. Gadsby the other day at Manchester, as he opened it up so clearly, and proved it from the Word of God that there were thousands of God's elect unborn, that lay in the loins of their ancestors, that must be brought into existence, called by grace, and landed safe in glory; and that when the Lord had gathered in the number of His elect, the world would be at an end. There appeared something so solemn in this statement that it rather tended to fill my mind with awe. He told me if I would go again to his house, he would lend me a book which would more fully and clearly explain these things, and he wished me to read it carefully over, and make it a matter of prayer to the Lord to guide and direct me into the truth. He moreover exhorted me in reading to have my Bible by me, and examine by it the proofs that the author brought forward.

I had no rest in my spirit until the book was in my possession. It was "Elisha Coles on God's Sovereignty." I began to read, and prayed to be guided right, referring to the proofs in the Word of God, and such light shone into my mind that I was astonished. I saw that election shone like a sunbeam from Genesis to Revelation, and many were the hours that I spent in this manner. Like the noble Bereans, I searched the Scriptures daily, and found that election was the solemn truth of God, and can never be overthrown, either by men or devils. And one strong proof of its divine authenticity is, the carnal, proud heart of fallen sinful man hates it, and fights against it, as mine did.

Finding that election was the truth of God, the question then with me was: "Am I one of them that the Lord hath loved with an everlasting and electing love, one that Christ has redeemed from amongst men by His blood?" I could not, however, find that evidence within me, that I was one of God's chosen people, which my soul longed for.

One night I went into the wood to pray that I might know my election of God. My mind was dark, hard, miserable and wretched. I feared lest I should be a reprobate. My carnal, wicked heart boiled with enmity and rebellion against God that ever He gave me a being; blasphemous thoughts against Him were working in my mind as I was kneeling before Him. I shuddered at what I felt, and as I went home that night, the enmity of my carnal heart was so stirred up that I had even to lay my hand over my lips to keep these vile thoughts from breaking out in words. O how my spirit sank! I was ready to call myself a thousand bad names, that ever I should have such feelings against the God in whose

hand my breath is, and against whom I have sinned and done evil in His sight, even as I could.

Strange as this may appear, it was to teach me that God had neither loved nor chosen me because of my goodness, but for His great love wherewith He loved me, even when dead in trespasses and sins. The apostle Peter says, "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure." I was, however, led to see that if I could prove my effectual calling by grace, it was true evidence of my election. I was therefore led to look "unto the rock from whence I was hewn, and to the hole of the pit from whence I was digged." I knew that it was not my own will nor power that had brought me out of the world of the ungodly, for instead of putting a helping hand to the work, I had long fought against Him.

Another question arose in my mind, "Why was it that the Lord singled me out from the rest of my father's house, and from amongst my sinful companions?" It could not be because I was either better or more deserving than they, for I was one of the worst; but it was "the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush" that I should be effectually called and formed for Himself to show forth His praise. I was let to ask myself what obligation had I the Lord under to save me and have mercy upon me — what demand I had upon Him for His mercy and favour. I felt in my inmost soul that I had no demand upon the Lord, that should the Lord mark my iniquities I could not stand before Him. I knew that He had not dealt with me after my sins, nor rewarded me according to my iniquities, and that it was of His mercies that I was not consumed, and because His compassions fail not. Thus I found that He would be just and righteous in my condemnations. My mouth was stopped, and I could say with Dr. Watts:

> "Should sudden vengeance seize my breath,
> I must pronounce Thee just in death;
> And if my soul were sent to hell,
> Thy righteous law approves it well."

I felt that if I was saved, it must be by grace, through faith, and that not of myself, it is the gift of God, "Not of works, lest any man should boast."

Since this period, the Lord has been graciously pleased at sundry times to shed His electing love abroad in my soul, as I shall state hereafter; and it has filled me with holy wonder that ever He should have thoughts of love and mercy toward such a vile wretch as myself. Many times, with sweet and solemn pleasure and tears of joy, have I united with the dear people of God at the Lord's Supper in singing the following lines:

> "While all our hearts and all our songs
> Join to admire the feast,
> Each of us cry, with thankful tongues,
> Lord, why was I a guest?
>
> "Twas the same love that spread the feast
> That sweetly forced us in
> Else we had still refused to taste

And perish'd in our sin."

For many years past, when we have an addition to our number, I have given out the hymn that contains the above verses. When the Lord, by His Holy Spirit, says to the poor sinner, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee," it draws him from sin to holiness; it enlarges his heart, and his feet run with a sweet and solemn pleasure in the way of His commandments. I am a witness for God that election made known to a poor sinner will never lead him to sin but to love, honor and obey the Lord in the precepts and exhortations of His Word.

As it respects election not giving a man a chance to be saved, I have proved that had it been left to chance, as they call it, upon the ground of my own free will, I should have been lost forever. My free will as a depraved sinner would have left me on the broad and downward road that leads to destruction, and so would it have been with all Adam's fallen race. Not one soul would ever have been saved. It is the eternal purpose of God in our election, which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, that inevitably secures the salvation of countless millions of Adam's fallen race: "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified." This scripture has with great propriety been called the golden chain of salvation, and is so firmly put together by our Triune Jehovah that one link of it can never be broken, either by men or devils, the world or sin, death or hell. Paul exults in this saying: "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:37-39).

I was brought up amongst the sect calling themselves Independents, so that all my earliest attachments were to that people. The ordinance of baptism I was taught to believe was that of infant sprinkling. After my cousin, above mentioned, left my father's house, he began to attend the Baptist chapel at Rochdale, and I heard that he and some others were to be baptized by immersion. Moved by curiosity and attachment to my relative, I went to see the ordinance administered. I got there in good time, and had a seat where I could see the whole of what was attended unto.

Mr. Littlewood preached upon the ordinance, proving that believers are the proper subjects, and that immersion was the scriptural mode of its administration. He was an able advocate for the doctrine, though what he said had not the least effect upon my mind in convincing me it was right. After the sermon he left the pulpit, and a hymn was sung, during which time my mind was filled with anxi-

ety. The minister and candidates for baptism came out of the vestry, and standing by the water-side, the minister delivered a short address. They then, like Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, "and he baptized them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." As I sat and looked on, my mind was greatly affected. I said within myself, "This is the baptism of the Bible." I thought of John baptizing at Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there, and of Jesus being baptized by John in the river Jordan.

From this time I became a decided Baptist in principle, and nothing that I have ever heard or read against it since has in the least tended to move me from it, but rather to establish my mind in the truth of the doctrine. The arguments raised in support of infant sprinkling, I conceive, are founded upon supposition, drawn from circumstantial evidence, viz., supposing that there were infants in those households that were baptized in the apostolic age without having one "Thus saith the Lord" to build on....

MY SOUL SET AT LIBERTY

Leaving for a time the historical part of my narrative, I return to the more immediate dealing of the Lord with my soul. In a former part of my memoir I have stated how I was led to see the way of salvation by Christ Jesus under the ministry of Mr. Hurst, and the question with me was, "Is He my Saviour and Redeemer?" Feeling so much darkness of heart, coldness, deadness and barrenness of soul, darkness of mind, and the workings of sin within, I often said, "If it be so, why am I thus? Why this dull and lifeless frame?" Fears and temptations crowding in upon me, the enemy telling me the good work of grace had never been begun in my soul, that I had never repented right, and that my prayers were so poor and half-hearted, such wanderings of affection when on my knees, I could not be a child of God, nor a friend of Him I attempted to worship.

In this state of mind I went one Sunday evening to a prayer-meeting. One of the friends took a new hymn book out of his pocket, which he called "Rippon's Selection." It was a book I was entirely unacquainted with, being always accustomed to Dr. Watts' psalms and hymns. He give out that hymn of John Newton's:

"Tis a point I long to know," etc.,

He read the hymn through. I stood and listened with the deepest attention; every word of it had a place in my heart and soul. It was such an opening up of the feelings and exercises of my mind which, if my salvation had depended upon it, I could not have described so well. This was a great help and encouragement, knowing that others of the Lord's family had travelled in the same path before me, and that I was in the footsteps of the flock; and that "as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." My regard for this hymn, and that of Cowper's:

"The Lord will happiness divine
On contrite hearts bestow.
Then tell me, gracious Lord, is mine

A contrite heart or no?"

is such that I hope never to forget them, and the benefit I derived from them, as long as I live. I have great union of soul to all who labour under the same feeling and exercises of mind; but I can feel no union of spirit to those who can pour contempt upon such hymns, and say "they ought never to be printed."

I knew a minister of the above description who said "he never had a doubt or fear of his interest in Christ for twenty years;" but his end, alas! proved that he had mistaken a presumptuous confidence for a tender conscience and fear of the Lord. "For as the body without the soul is dead, so faith without works is dead also." With all such professors I wish to have no intercourse. "Poor worm Jacob and the men of Israel," Christ's "little flock," who knew what Paul meant when he said, "Without are fightings, and within are tears," I would choose for my companions in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.

My heart was so hard and obdurate that I could only repent as the Lord gave me the grace of repentance, blessed me with a broken and contrite spirit, and laid me low at Jesus's feet. I felt, too, that I could only believe savingly and feelingly as the Lord gave me faith, and I proved experimentally that true saving faith which brings peace, joy, and rest into the soul is not of ourselves; "it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. "

Hearing Mr. Gadsby, in one of his monthly visits to Rochdale, describe the marks and evidences of a heaven-born and Spirit-taught child of God, helped me much. The Saviour said to Nicodemus, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit ye cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The truly converted soul becomes like the new-born babe spoken of in Ezek. 16: "But thou wast cast out into the open field, to the loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born." In this new-born babe I saw an emblem of myself. It was cast out into the open field; so was I cast out from all my former connections and sinful ways. It was weak and helpless; it could neither wash, nor clothe, nor feed, nor guard, nor protect, nor defend itself. All that it could do was to cry and bewail its indigent, pitiable state. Its very crying was sighing and crying to the Lord. I saw and felt that I was polluted with sin, and stood in need of being washed in the blood of the Lamb, that I was naked, and stood in need of the robe of righteousness, and to be clothed with the garments of salvation. As a new-born babe desires the breast of its mother, so did I desire the sincere milk of the Word. Oh the many hours that I spent in reading the Word of God! I stood in need of being guarded, protected, and defended from the curse and condemnation of the law, the assaults and fiery darts of the devil, the pleasures and allurements of this vain and sinful world. I saw that the Lord did all for this poor helpless infant it stood in need of, and I felt He must do all for me; for without Him I could do nothing but add sin to sin, and sink myself deeper and deeper in the horrible pit and miry clay.

I had a confidence wrought in me by the blessed Spirit that Christ was able to do all these things for me, and indeed I entreated His blessed Majesty that I might be saved by Him, washed in His blood, and clothed in His righteousness. Nothing could satisfy my poor longing soul short of knowing that I had "redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." Though I did not receive the blessing of pardon as soon as I wished it, I was sometimes "helped with a little help" by the way, with a little softening of spirit, a sweet savour in longing and thirsting after the Lord, and sometimes a little encouraged under the ministry of the Word. At other times I was greatly discouraged, tempted to believe that I had prayed in vain; that though I sought the blessing it would forever be denied.

Unbelief put up its head, and told me the Lord says, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you;" yet you have been asking; seeking and knocking for many months, and you have not found the blessing, that peace and pardon your soul longs for. The promise cannot be true, or you have not sought it in the right way. Rebellion began to work in my heart and the enemy said, "Pray no more; it is all in vain." My spirit sank. I staggered in my mind like a drunken man, and was at my wits end. The things that I had to contend with, both from within and without, made me so miserable that I was weary of my life, shut up as in a prison, bound in affliction and iron; under the preached word miserable and wretched, in the company of the people of God agitated; as David said, my soul "refused to be comforted."

Those around me could see in my countenance that I was in a very low and distressed state, and were afraid of me committing the horrid crime of suicide, watching me in order to prevent it. I was sorely put to it for some time, such thought haunting me that I cannot find words to express the misery and bitterness of soul I felt.

One Lord's day, in this state of mind, I went to the house of God. The people all appeared happy and comfortable; the minister preached the truth, but it had no effect upon my mind, only to make me more miserable. Like the poor prisoner who through a grate "sees others walk at large," so it increased my misery and distress. After morning service I followed the people to the house, where some of them dined. They all appeared cheerful and happy in their souls, whilst my mind was torn to pieces with sin, guilt, fears and temptations. I could not stay among them. The enemy said, "Dost thou not see how happy and comfortable these people are? They are the people of God, enjoying the blessed presence of the Lord, but thou art a castaway, a reprobate. Thy prayers are all in vain. It is of no use thy appearing amongst them. Thou art but a deceiver. Put an end to thy miserable existence, and try the worst of it."

With these feelings I left the house and went to the townbridge, where I stood for a few minutes, my mind greatly confused. I, however rambled on towards the wood, through which the river

ran, and where there was more depth of Water. I entered the wood, when these thoughts rushed into my mind: "It is a solemn and awful thing to go out of time into eternity. I will try to pray." I climbed up into the wood and leaned on a fence, trying to pour out my soul to the Lord, but could not. I felt so shut up and rebellious. I came down towards the spot whence I previously thought of jumping into the water, but when I got to the brink I stood trembling before the Lord. Turning around to look if there was anyone in sight, I saw a large tree higher up in the wood, and the thought came across me that I would kneel down behind it. I had not kneeled under the fence, and fancied that if my knees were bent to the earth the Lord might peradventure hear me.

I went and fell down before Him, and He was graciously pleased to break into my soul. My hard stubborn heart began to soften, and my darkness to flee away, and I was blest with a contrite and humble spirit whilst confessing my sins before Him, and had nearness of access in pleading with Him for mercy on such a rebellious wretch. I thanked Him for keeping me in the hour of temptation, beseeching Him that He would never leave nor forsake me, but guide me in all my ways.

How long I was in this frame of spirit, confessing my sins and pleading with the Lord, I cannot tell; for when the Lord appears, time goes on swiftly and sweetly. The first thing that called my mind from this delightful communion was a man standing near the water, looking up into the wood, who called out, "A Methodist, a Methodist, praying behind the tree!" I made no reply to his taunts, but returned to the town, thanking the Lord that my soul had escaped as a bird out of the hand of the fowler, for the snare was broken and I had escaped.

This kind interposition of the Lord was very seasonable, because much needed; yet not that deliverance from guilt and condemnation my soul longed for. The temptation, however, did not return with the same force, but the joy I then felt soon declined, and my soul sank lower than ever. Oh the sighs and groans, with strong crying and tears! The agonies my poor soul has endured I cannot describe. I did not want company, but wandered alone, pondering things over in my poor soul. There was nothing that I could lay hold of to bring comfort and rest into my wearied mind. Looking to Mount Sinai and the Law of Ten Commandments made me tremble. If I looked to my past life, I was ashamed and confounded. If I looked within, I could find no good thing. The buffetings of Satan, a conscience laden with guilt, bowed me down greatly. These were my constant companions. I would fain have gotten rid of these feelings, but I could not. Like David, "I roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart." To tell me that it was in my power to act Spiritual faith and relieve myself from the burden, tended only to increase my misery.

I could say, as John Newton sings:

"O could I but believe,
Then all would easy be;
I would, but cannot; Lord, relieve me;

My help must come from Thee."

If David could have delivered his soul, he would not have needed to cry so earnestly, "O Lord, I beseech Thee, deliver my soul." Whoever they are that can believe when they please, their faith stands in their own wisdom and power, and not in the wisdom and power of God, and, consequently, is not the faith of God's elect, but of the stony-ground hearers, who have not the root of the matter in them; who for a while believe, and appear to receive the Word with joy, but in time of temptation fall away. The Lord's living family are not of them that draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul being kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation. That faith which has not Jesus Christ for its author and finisher will never stand the test, bear the soul up in the swellings of Jordan, nor land it safe in glory.

The nearer my deliverance approached, the greater was the burden and distress of my soul; and so it was with the children of Israel before God brought them out of Egyptian bondage, and they were never to forget the memorable night of their deliverance.

I hope never to forget the night the Lord brought my soul out of bondage into the glorious liberty of the gospel. It was on a Lord's day evening. I went in the morning to the house of God in a very distressed state of mind, and remained so all day. The preaching only tended to increase my misery, the enemy telling me that, like Simon Magus, I had neither part nor lot in the matter. Having attended three services, I was returning home (it was a fine summer evening), in my feelings worse than when I set out in the morning. So sinful, miserable and wretched did I feel myself that I was ready to give all up for lost, the accuser of the brethren harassing me with his temptations, saying it was of no use going any more either to chapel or prayer-meetings. It was folly and presumption to read and pray, for the more I attended to these things, the more wretched I grew. My soul gave way under these temptations, and I said within myself, "I will give all my religion up, for it is nothing but a stench in my own nostrils. What must it be then to the Lord of Hosts?"

So engaged was my mind that I stood in the road, when this question arose within me: "What am I to do? Go back into the world, I cannot. I have tried again and again to do this, and found their society more and more distasteful." I then concluded that I would have nothing to do either with the world or the people of God, but be a kind of go-between, or as the sparrow alone upon the house-top, moping and solitary as a dove or the crane in the wilderness, and try to make myself as easy as possible in my present outcast condition; but alas! There is no comfort for a guilty sinner in such a state of mind.

Whilst pondering on these things, the following words came with such power upon my mind, as though I had heard them spoken by an audible voice: "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death?" I was so struck with their import

that I stood amazed, saying to myself, "These are the words of St. Paul in the seventh chapter to the Romans. He was a good and gracious man, a minister of Jesus Christ, and the great apostle of the Gentiles. If he had thus to complain of sin and wretchedness, who can tell but I may be a child of God after all my fears and temptations?"

The later part of the chapter flowed in my mind like a river. I could truly say, "For that which I do I allow not, for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that I do. For the good that I would I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do. I find then, that when I would do good, evil is present with me."

My soul was greatly encouraged. I found I was a brother and companion with Paul in this path of internal tribulation and Christian experience. I hastened home to get my Bible, in order to examine the chapter through. I read it with such light, power and comfort, as I had never felt before; so pleased and blest in my soul that I began to read the next chapter, commencing thus: "There is therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

As I read these words, their blessed contents were brought into my soul with power and glory. I saw and felt that I was in Christ Jesus, saved with an everlasting salvation. The burden of sin was removed, my conscience cleansed by an application of the precious blood of Christ. I felt the sealing testimony of the Holy Spirit of God that I stood complete and accepted in the Beloved. I read the chapter through with a joy I cannot describe. I now knew my election of God, and that no charge could ever be brought against me, because Christ had died for my sins, and was raised again from the dead for my justification, that He ever lived to make intercession for me, and would receive me into His kingdom of glory. The love of Christ was shed abroad in my heart; I saw and felt that nothing could separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. How precious and glorious were the truths contained in this chapter to my soul on that memorable evening; and often, in reading and preaching, when I have cited portions of it, I have felt a little of the same sweetness and savour. Thanking the Lord for the great deliverance He had wrought for me and in me with the joy of salvation in my soul, I retired for the night, but so ravished was I with the beauty and glory of Christ as my Saviour and Redeemer that sleep departed from me.

Many restless nights had I previously endured with a guilty conscience, a broken law, an evil heart, a tempting devil, crowds of doubts and fears and carnal reasonings; but all had now departed. The year of jubilee was come, the prisoner was brought out of the dungeon into the banqueting house, and the banner over him was love.

I well remember this question passing across my mind: "Where are all my sins, that have so long been a burden and plague to my soul?" I saw by faith that a precious Christ had put them all away by the sacrifice of Himself, and made an end of sin; as it is written: "In

those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none, and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found; and I will pardon whom I reserve" (Jer. 50:20). My sins had appeared as scarlet and crimson, but were all washed away in the blood of atonement. As I stood in Christ, I was white as snow or as wool. Such was the joy of my heart in the dead of the night, the family asleep around me, that I sang in my soul-feelings:

> "See, here an endless ocean flows
> Of never-failing grace.
> Behold, a dying Saviour's veins
> The sacred flood increase.
>
> "It rises high, and drowns the hills,
> Has neither shore nor bound;
> Now, if we search to find our sins,
> Our sins can ne're be found.
> "A wake, our hearts, adore the grace," etc.

Bless the Lord, this song has been sweet and precious to my soul many times since the memorable night of my deliverance, and I hope will be until I join the everlasting song, "Unto Him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever, Amen."

All my doubts and fears were now removed by that perfect love which casteth out fear. I felt assured that the good work of grace was begun in my soul, and, with Paul, had a confidence "that He which had begun it would carry it on until the day of Christ Jesus." No fears of my sins standing against me, nor of the curse of the law, nor of death or hell. I saw that all my foes were vanquished. My soul could now joyfully sing, "Behold, God is my salvation. I will trust and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation." These were the things I had long been praying for; and now proved to the joy of my heart that there is a prayer-hearing and a prayer-answering God.

I lived in the sweet enjoyment of the liberty of the gospel for many months. The word of the Lord was more precious to me than gold; yea, than much fine gold. I saw the declarative glory Of the Lord shine forth in the sacred pages, which were once as a sealed book unto me. My delight was in the word of the Lord, and in His law did I meditate day and night. My soul took delight in approaching to God, as my covenant God and Father in Christ. Christ and His finished salvation, all of grace, was the joy of my heart and the boast of my song. The Holy Spirit was in my soul as a Spirit of praise and thanksgiving, constraining me to say with David: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy Name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies,"

JOHN KERSHAW

CALL TO THE MINISTRY.

NEW VERNON, N. Y., May 15, 1840.

MR. SANDS, through his *Herald,* has attempted a description of a call to the ministry; the concluding part only, we have read; and from the specimen which we will give, we conclude it may pass as a call to the New School ministry; but the ministers of Christ are very differently taught of the Lord. He says:

"It is sometimes urged that the apostles were illiterate men. Never was a grosser error entertained. The epistles of Peter, John, James and Jude, are standing monuments of *its* falsehood."

Upon the subject or ministerial qualifications, Mr. Sands is at issue with the scriptures of truth. Compare the above bold assertion with Acts iv. 13. "Now, when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled: and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." We are aware of the manner in which the advocates of *scientific divinity* dispose of this text. They tell us this was the testimony of wicked men; that it was a slander on the apostles, &c. But is this the testimony of wicked men? By no means; it is the testimony of the Holy Ghost. We are not informed that the priests, captains and Saducees, called them unlearned and ignorant men; but we are informed expressly, that they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men. Therefore, who art thou, O Sands, that repliest against God? contradicting the express declaration of God, and saying that a grosser error was never entertained, than that which God himself hath spoken. Had these ungodly Jews perceived that Peter and John were graduates from some far famed college, and that they were well versed in all the sciences of human knowledge, that they were powerful logicians, and fully capable of managing any cause, they perhaps would not have marveled so much, and certainly could not therefrom arrive at the conclusion that they had been with Jesus. The whole testimony of the scriptures upon this subject, is in perfect harmony. Paul came not to the churches in excellency of speech, or in the wisdom of this world; for God hath made foolish the wisdom of this world; and it has pleased him to ordain that man by wisdom shall not know him, or find him out. And why? That the faith of the saints should not stand in the wisdom of men; but in the power of God. Thus in the example above, no splendid display of human erudition had dazzled their eyes; no astonishing developement of worldly wisdom had overbalanced their prejudices; but what was by far more remarkable, that two ignorant and unlearned fishermen, having been divinely taught, having been with Jesus, could put their wisdom and power at defiance, and that God had given such signal evidence that these were truly his approved ministers. They had been with Jesus. But why? Never man taught like Jesus.

"He calls the fools find makes them know

The mysteries of his grace;
To bring aspiring wisdom low,
And all its pride abase."

He has hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes; even so; for so it seemed good in his sight. They took knowledge that they had been with Jesus; for Jesus had himself often surprised the learned Jews in the same manner; and when but twelve years old, and on many other occasions, they were astonished, mortified and confounded, that all the talent, wisdom and knowledge of their greatest, wisest and ablest men could not stand before the divine wisdom of him who requires no letters or human science to establish his cause, accomplish his designs, or prostrate his opposers. Could Mr. Sands, or any other person, succeed in proving the position which he has taken, and which the New School have generally taken, they would prove the scriptures unworthy of our confidence ; but thanks be unto God, we have not followed cunningly devised fables.

How frequently, even in modern times, do we have examples of the same kind. Take, for instance, the young graduate who has served seven years in a classical and Theological School, fully equipped, and duly set apart to the work; he appears in the consecrated desk, a "reverend divine;" his gestures, how graceful! Service commenced, he says his prayer with eloquence; calls on the god of missions, of Sabbath Schools, and tells him in grammatical language what to do, how to do it, and when. His prayer finished, he draws his profound sermon from his pocket, or perchance his hat; the production of mental labor, hard study; yes, his week's labor is comprised in the sheet he has prepared. He squares himself in the pulpit, adjusts his gold spectacles, and then begins to read. His sermon (for so he calls it) is made up of feathers plucked from various birds, His voice is soft and oily, for their lungs are always weak; the clock tells thirty-five minutes, and the farce is over. The lesson is read, the preacher is admired, and all the learned and polite take knowledge of him that he has been *at school.*

But we have listened to the preaching men of a very opposite description. We have heard a Van Velsen, brought up at hard work, laying stone fence; which honest calling he still followed, for the support of his family, for years after he commenced his ministerial labors; he could scarcely read, write or speak a sentence according to the rules of grammar; but we have heard the truth of heaven thundered in awful eloquence from his lips; before him the learned ministers of the city of New York have quailed in amazement; not one of them could stand before him in the discussion of gospel truth; his hearers perceiving that he was unlearned and ignorant, took knowledge that he had been with Jesus. Time would fail us to speak of a Warren, a Mead, a Choat, and a host of others, some of whom have never spent one week in school. Brother Mead (if we do not mistake) informed us that he had never spent but half a day in school in his life; yet who that knows the man, as a preacher, does not know that he has

been with Jesus. Not all the flowing tide of *moon-shiney* nonsense, taught in the halls of human science, and learned by the studious school-boy, can ever feed a heaven-born soul, as God is often pleased to feed his hungry children, through the gifts which he has bestowed on such unlearned and ignorant men as we have named.

Mr. Sands says he will never term anyone illiterate, who can embody his thoughts in writing with the accuracy and force of the apostle Peter. Has Mr. Sands the audacity, in the face of heaven, to ascribe to human literature, the accuracy and force of the gospel that Peter wrote by immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost? Does he not know that holy men wrote and spake as they were directed by the Holy Ghost? We are particularly informed by our Lord himself, where Peter received his knowledge of the Son of God. "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjonas, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee; but my Father which is in heaven." Painful as it is, the conclusion is unavoidable, that all who embrace the theory of Mr. Sands and his brethren on this subject, are strangers to the teaching of the Holy Spirit, and are therefore left in the blindness of their minds, and in the gross darkness of human wisdom, to worship their drag and burn incense to their net. They are ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

April, 1945

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure." Phil. 2:12-13.

I have been solicited to give my views on the above scripture that it might appear in the *Signs of the Times.* This scripture has been interpreted in such a way as to cause much confusion and contention among us, but I am, in giving my views, offering nothing that I think to be infallible and with no thought to engender strife, but offering you only my opinion, which I believe to be true. We have heard that the creature was passive in regeneration and active in obedience, but I must say, no, to this declaration, and affirm that the creature is passive under all circumstances to perform any of the things demanded of him, that is right or righteous; so when the expression is used that we work out what God has worked in, cannot be true for we are helpless and dependent upon Jesus at all times for all things. This has been and is now true, and this truth cannot be assailed successfully. But now to the scripture; that the apostle Paul established the church at Philippi in person is, I think, generally accepted, and he continued to remain with them for sometime and baptized these people himself, or someone that was with him, and declared the doctrine

of God our Savior to them, and they were established in the doctrine of grace fully; and Paul also set up the order of God's house, not only as to the doctrine, but order and discipline — in other words, what to do and what not to do. Read Phil. 2:1-2-5, and see the apostle's instructions to the church, not as to one individual, but to all the church, so that fellowship might continue. See chapter 1, verse 1, that the church in its entirety was being addressed as he here includes laymen, deacons and bishops; and from verse 5, chapter 2, to the 12th verse, we can all agree that here we see Jesus being declared the captain of our salvation and the head of the church. Then after the apostle Paul departed from Philippi and these brethren that constituted the church in its entirety, he writes this letter to the church in its entirety, and begins the 12th verse by saying, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed;"— note the word "ye" was used instead of you — again the whole church. This does not say that the church has obeyed Paul, but had obeyed those things that the apostle had declared, him being inspired by the Holy Ghost; and this church not only obeyed in Paul's presence "not us in my presence only" but had been more careful in his absence, for when Paul was with them, they, no doubt depended on his advice to a great degree; but after his departure, they were more careful in who they received into the church; more careful to maintain the order and discipline that they had received at the hands of Paul; and although, all of this was known by the apostle, as he had heard from them, and this church had been mindful of Paul's natural needs, and had been faithful in ministering to these matters, so now comes this, "work out your own salvation." To my mind, in all scripture that is written, nowhere is there any clearer authority for church sovereignty than this. Don't consult this man, or that set of men — don't ask the Association, but attend to your own affairs; the church alone has the right to say who can come in and who must go out; the only one to say what is order or what is disorder, — but in attending to this, "work out your own salvation." How is this to be done? This is the way the apostle says, "with fear and trembling" — not in a boisterous manner, not because the pastor says so, not because the deacons may say so, not because you have the authority on your side, but "of one mind." Chapter 2, second verse, — attending to all things in meekness and in reverence to our Master, and fearful of doing or saying something that will cause the fellowship to be disturbed, "for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." We see here just why the church has lived through the ages, we see here why it lives and who keeps the church; it was not the apostle Paul who built the church at Philippi, but God, who through Christ, worked in the hearts of all these men and women to come in fear and trembling, and were received and baptized in his great name, into the fellowship of the saints. Now then, how are these things maintained? Do we have to look out and get us a popular preacher, or get us a lot of active deacons and let them tell us what to

do, and let them dictate the course and us follow? No, "it is God which worketh in you" in the midst of the church — gives the church the preacher and the deacons, and has never made a failure or a mistake, works in the heart of each member of the church. "Worketh in you," not telling you what you ought to do, but must do, not that he has given us the will, and you must perform the do, but has put a burden on this church, and they must do. Now can the church act in such a way as to cause God to act? No, you can perform all your ritualistic services, make all the efforts you can, but we are told here that God does his good pleasure. The good pleasure of God is enough for us, without it what can be done. In this we live and grow and maintain the good old way. Now brethren, if you can find in your hearts to receive this, do so; if you cannot, I can assure you that I grant you that right, but this is true to me. It may be badly presented but truth will remain. Consider this and may the Lord keep us in fellowship with one another.

(Elder) J. P. HELMS.

PROVERBS 2: 6-7.

For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth *cometh* **knowledge and understanding.**

He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: *he is* **a buckler to them that walk uprightly.**

TAKE YE AWAY THE STONE.

Brother T. H. Travis requests my view of John 11:39, **"Jesus said, Take ye away the stone."**

When they took away the stone it was clear to all beholders that Lazarus was dead. The enemies could not say he was not dead.

Jesus did not command them to take away the stone in order to aid Jesus at all. But when the stone that covered the dead man was removed it was clear to all that Lazarus was dead.

There are many people that deny that the sinner is dead in trespasses and sins; They contend that if the sinner will do his part then the Lord will help him. They say, the sinner must make the first step, must do something, must pray, or make a start. But when the stone is taken away then what appears — a dead man, one dead in trespasses and in sins. When you know that one is dead what do you tell him to do? If you are honest you know he is not able to do a thing, not move, pray, or breathe, or do anything.

If one is dead in trespasses and sins is he any more able to quicken himself from the dead, or move, or hunger, or thirst after righteousness, or pray than a man literally or naturally dead is able to move, or do anything at all?

The stone is a type of the law which was written on tables of stone, the covenant of works, the ministration of death, represented by the grave, and the stone that lay upon it.

The preaching of the servants of God set forth the condition of the sinner dead in sin, and that Jesus Christ raises the dead, and that no man can aid him at all in this work.

Men that exalt the creature, or that think they do by preaching the power of the creature, claim that as Jesus told those standing by to take away the stone that means there is a work for the dead sinner to do, or there is a work to be done for him by those standing by, and hence there is a work now for man to do in order to raise the dead. But they never can tell what it is that man can do and must do.

When those that stood by removed the stone did that help Jesus in raising the dead man? Was it done for that purpose? No. But when Lazarus lay uncovered in the jaws of death none could deny that he was dead. Nor could any one present say that he had done anything to raise Lazarus, nor that rolling away the stone was to help in his resurrection.

An honest confession that man is dead in trespasses and in sins in nature, and that God who is rich in mercy has quickened us together with Christ, ascribing salvation to be by the grace of God, does honor or gives glory to the Lord where it belongs.

Elder P. D. Gold
Zion's Landmark
February 1, 1915

MEETINGS

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

Direction to the Pigg River Association to be held, the Lord willing; the first Sunday in August Friday and Saturday before August 1st, 2nd, and 3rd. The meeting will be held on the grounds of Chestnut Church in Franklin County, Virginia.

Those coming from the North on 220 after passing Rocky Mount at first stop light, turn left on 619; go 3.7 miles. Turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Rd.) Go 1 mile to Church.

Those coming from the South on 220, go App. 13 miles from Bassett Forks, turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Rd.) App. 2 and one half miles to Church.

We welcome and invite the Ministers of our Faith and order, our Brethren, and Friends to be with us.

Elder Thomas Solomon, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 2014

Billie Speir, LA	50.00
Frank E. Williams, VA	75.00
Vivian Underwood, VA	5.00
Charles Mathews, LA	5.00
Marcus Vickers, FL	5.00
Edna Graves, AL	5.00

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee!
Let the water and the blood,
From thy wounded side which flow'd,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.

Not the labors of my hands
Can fulfil thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring!
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die!

While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eyelids close in death,
When I soar to worlds unknown,
See thee on thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee!

Toplady.

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EDITORIAL

Psalm 30:5 "...weeping may endure for a night, but joy *cometh* in the morning."

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

This is part of this verse and I believe it applies to the experience of a child of grace. During the night of darkness under the law, a little child of God experiences a time of weeping. Weeping over their sinful condition. The law has been applied to their hearts and all they can see and feel is that they are the worse of sinners and lost with no hope. They cannot feel the love and mercy of the God of grace. The law is holy and spiritual, but they are carnal, sold under sin as the Apostle wrote. For by the law is the knowledge of sin. In this most wretched state, they empathize with the Apostle Paul when he wrote, **"For I know in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not."** Romans 7:18.

It seemed that every word of scripture we read, every word we spoke, every sermon we heard, and every way we turned was condemnation. How could such a holy, righteous God possibly love and be merciful to such a one as we feel to be. Surely a just God would condemn our soul to everlasting damnation! "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? We can see only the dark of night and the black dust of the earth from which we were formed. There is much weeping. We have nothing with which to plead our case and feel that we have no one to intercede for us. We feel to be so helpless and hopeless. As the Apostle Paul described in Ephesians 2:12, **"That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."** To be so separated from everyone even those closest by ties of nature, we can only cry as the publican not worthy to lift our eyes to heaven, Lord be merciful to me a sinner. Having nowhere else to turn, we cry out to the one who suffered more than we will ever suffer; the one perfect and

holy who hung on the cross, shed His blood and died for the sins of His elect and rose again for their justification, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." As I stood by the baptism pool in such a low condition with clouds blocking the light of the sun and looking like rain any moment, the words of the most merciful Lord came into my mind and filled my very soul, "today shalt thou be with me in paradise." Ephesians 2:13, **"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."** He is our peace.

The clouds parted and the sun shined through and joy came in the morning. For the first time I felt such a joy in my heart and soul as I was buried in the liquid grave and raised, I hope, to a newness of life. O dear ones, as necessary as it is for each of His elect to experience the weeping that endures for a night, the Lord doesn't leave you in that condition forever, but He manifests His love and mercy in the morning of His grace and you experience such joy that you can't even describe.

107th Psalm reads **"O give thanks unto the Lord, for** he is **good: for his mercy** endureth **for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say** so, **whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy." No one can say the Lord is good and merciful except those who have experienced His mercy, the redeemed of the Lord.**

In this vile, sinful world with the wickedness of man rampant throughout the earth, it seems a dark night of weeping. But the Lord's people with the faith, hope and love that the Lord has bestowed upon them are looking for the morning of the resurrection with joy in their hearts. The reality and fulness of this joy will be when they hear that summons, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

In Brotherly love,
Elder Cleo D. Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

Brother Horton,

I am so sorry I did not notice my expiration date on my subscription. Thanks for your kind and dedicated services.

Christian Love and Fellowship
Unworthy One In Hope,
Calvin L. Plybon

Enclosed is check for 2 years 11-13/11-15.

June 19, 2014

Dear Brother Tony,

May the Lord continue to bless you and the editors in sending out The Signs of the Times to those who are unable to attend the church meetings along with those who enjoy reading what the editors are blessed to write. With God's blessing we are comforted

and find fellowship with those we have never met.

With this note is a check to renew my subscription for two years. Use the rest as you see fit.

In hope and love,
Junior Conner

Elder Junior Conner
524 Doyle St.
Salem Va 24153

ARTICLES

Dear beloved ones in Christ:

There is an almighty friend that sticketh closer than a brother. His name is Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The Prince of Peace. At the appointed time of our dear Heavenly Father, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ shall return to redeem his beloved church, the church of the first born, His bride, for He said that He would come the second time without sin unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Though we reel to and fro, in this low ground of sin and sorrow, twill be but a short time compared to what awaits those who are kept by the power of God. The one who said that He would never leave nor forsake His little children, for He is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. In the book of Hebrews: 9:27-*28.* **"And as it is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."**

"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory," 1st Timothy 3:16. No man by searching can find out the secrets of these great mysteries known only to God except the Lord be pleased to reveal them. It says that the others are ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. These great mysteries that the Lord God has put in his own power. How un-searchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out.

I love the voice of love and mercy, for it is the voice of the Almighty one; the one who inhabits eternity. His voice is as the thunder from heaven. When I hear the thunder, I know that it did not come from man. Many times I have heard it thunder before or during rain or a shower. It would cause me to rejoice in the Lord God our savior. I know that it is from him and of him. I have also heard loud claps of thunder many times in my life. He said in Hebrews 4:12. **"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and** *is* **a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."** When he speaks his perfect will is accomplished. Some call it an act of nature. To them it may be a dreaded

sound. But to those who know the joyful sound, it is music to their ears because they know that the Lord has spoken, and they also know that his will shall be accomplished. They know that He is also able to destroy both soul and body in hell, if that be his will. It causes us to fear him of whom we have to do. In the proverbs 9:10 it reads, **"the fear of the Lord *is* the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy *is* understanding."** Because, he has all power in heaven, and in earth, and in all deep places. Hark the voice of love and mercy; sounds aloud from Calvary, see it rends the rocks asunder, shakes the earth, and veils the sky.

I would like to tell of a dream that I had recently, I dreamed of being outside of a building. There was a table out front and there was a man sitting at the table on the left side. He was in the dark but I could see him well enough to know that it was the figure of a man. I was standing to the right side of the table a step or two from the table. And to my right and up there appeared the face of a woman. Her face was lighted. I could see her face well. She was looking straight forward the way that I was standing. She looked very meek and humble and she called my name twice. The man at the table then said to her, you may have looked better when you were younger, but you do not look good now. I answered the woman and told her that I did not say that, and that I wanted no part in what the man said. I started walking toward her. When I got close I asked her name. She said that it was Paul, and she repeated it again saying that her name was Paul, and then she disappeared from my view. I believe that I was shown that the church has always had Satan to buffet her in this time world below. It causes us to look for a better home, far away, and not of this world. A world where no storm clouds will ever gather, where there will be nothing to spoil her future happiness. For our dear Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be the light of that great and eternal city whose builder and maker is God. Dear ones do with this as you see fit, and all will be well. May my feeble scribbling not crowd out better writing. I hope and trust that what I have written is in love and truth.

C. Fox

PSALM 112:3-7.

Wealth and riches *shall be* in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever.

Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: *he is* gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.

A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth; he will guide his affairs with discretion.

Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.

He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.

VOICES OF THE PAST

ACTS XX. 32.

"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

What a doctrine! What a merciful God that would bestow such wonderful things upon sinners! Sometimes, when we are given to ponder over salvation by grace, it seems too much that such worms as we sons of Adam know ourselves to be, are freely given Christ as our Surety, whereby we are called sons of God. Believing in the harmony of divine testimony, we find John calling the attention of the children of God to this same doctrine: **"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."**- 1 John iii. 1. This "manner of love" caused the old apostle to write to Ephesus the language of our text. It caused him to be bold as a lion, wise as a serpent and yet harmless as a dove, to write that christian's theme, We know that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them that are called according to his purpose; to fight the good fight of faith; to instruct them that needed it, and to rebuke the unruly.

We hear much about preparing ourselves to preach, but God prepared Paul for his preaching and writing. One, if not the chief, reason we have so many isms in the church to-day is because of man's preparation to preach. Paul, prior to his miraculous calling from nature to grace, believed in keeping the law for life and salvation. God brought him out of this step by step, making him testify all along to God's children that it was due to grace. Some people, many of whom are wearing the name Old School Baptist, do not like to speak of God making his children do things. But in no other way could Paul leave this admonition with the church at Ephesus. Love, this kind that is peculiar, insomuch that when it is bestowed upon the heirs of promise the world no longer knows them, as it did not know Him, must efficaciously be shed abroad in the hearts of his dear children, and it produces fruit. It is strong as death, and none of these modern workmongers are able to withstand death. It seizes upon rich and poor, high and low, bond and free, and they answer the call. To illustrate: We have recently been in the limelight in Alabama, because a poor miner's wife gave birth to quadruplets. They were lifted from obscurity to prominence, from rags to riches. The town in which they were located was enjoying thousands of dollars of tourist trade. But in the midst of this wild celebration disease seized upon one of the babies and laid it low in death. Everything was done for it that money and medical skill could offer, but it had to die. So love, being as strong as death, when it is shed abroad in the hearts of the children of God, it produces obedience; it honors and glorifies the Creator instead of the crea-

tures; it causes them to lose confidence in the flesh, and last, but not least, it causes them to fall out with the frivolous things of this world.

Believing that we have a foundation for whatever the text contains, let us look into its beauties. Let us remember that we must have grace to go into these things, and I do hope, if it is His will, that I may have an unction from the Holy One as I make the attempt. "And now, brethren, I commend you to God." Why do that, Paul? Why not tell them that they have matters in their own hands, and that they are able to have a prosperous church and live above trouble while in this world? We might imagine the amazement of the apostle to call in question his statement. Every genuine Old Baptist knows that God is all we have to look to. Paul had lost everything that was precious to the natural man, including friends, position and money. Something had to be given him of more magnitude, power and wonderfulness to make him write as he did: **"Yea, doubtless, and count I all things *but* loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death."** — Phil. iii. 8-10. Watch that man as the Lord brings him on the way. Oh how we cling to our own power, the things of this world and our own righteousness! But Paul was made to renounce all things as but dung. Oh what are riches without Him? What are families and friends when we are in the gloom? Yes, the text is a good one, and I feel that the apostle was well qualified to commend the brethren to God "and to the word of his grace." Many people who have never been brought into the saving power of this Word of grace are ready to say that this is the written Bible, but, dear brethren, Paul commends and points us to something more wonderful than that. To the word of his grace. Ah, methinks I see him as he lays aside his glory and comes to his brethren, manifest in the flesh. This is the One that admonishes this grace of God. We hear him as he forever puts a seal on salvation by redeeming grace: I came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. This living Word of this grace is not bound and waiting for men to act first (to do so would not be grace, but works), but as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, so the Son quickeneth whom he will. (John v. 21.) Furthermore, the Word of this grace is all we have right now. He is a living Savior. He is a present Savior. No wonder the apostle wanted to commend to the brethren the Word of His grace. He had found him such a refuge in time of trouble (Heb. vi. 18; Psalms xlvi. 1) that he could well commend the brethren to him.

"Which is able to build you up." Let us praise such a wonderful Being. The world cannot understand why we are such sticklers for grace. None but those

who are grace-taught can read this language right. Learning cannot see this statement as one coming from One who is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent, but rather they all hinge salvation on conditions. Ah, poor, wayworn Old School Baptist! Here is something that was spoken to the church. The Builder of the kingdom is an able builder, even a masterbuilder. He cannot fail to keep this city set upon a hill. Our persuasion *is* that no power will ever pull it down. But, brethren, the apostle is not treating upon the bringing in of new material altogether, but rather let us cherish the idea that He is able to build us up. Us, we who are, as we hope, already in the kingdom, need building up.

As I pen these lines to the poor and afflicted Old School Baptists who are scattered over land and country, I meet them in my mind, in union and sweet fellowship, each sighing and groaning as they look back in retrospection upon the rough journey they have so far come. Ah, with what shame must we confess that so many times we have builded on sand. So much of the time have we tried to walk in our own strength; so many times have we hewed out cisterns of our own, only to find that *they* are broken; so many times does the poor old minister fear that he has run when he did not have the unction from the Holy One. But, dear brethren and sisters, be of good cheer, He is able to build us up; yea, he will perform all the purposes connected with us.

Let us look for something besides those places of shifting quicksands. It is bitter contrast and warfare to the christian, and just as sure as we see so many scenes where we have builded by our own efforts, on a sandy foundation, we are sure to see spots that are like unto a Bethel to our poor souls. As said, He is a wise Masterbuilder. He knows we are ofttimes ready to despair and he builds us up at the proper time. I shall never forgot when I had builded high ambitions in an educational field, and believed that I was all right. Oh what a scene when Paul was turned from what he chose to be to that the Lord chose and called him to! Ah, the very elements were shaken and all nature seemed to be sad in sympathetic pose because I was dying. Dying, did you say? Ah, yes I was dying to the stability of my own building and workmanship. But I cannot forget that time, so precious and full of consolation, when the Lord showed me another building, and even gave me a boon, that troubles and unfitness have not removed, that I was part of the building.

I have doubted much as to my call to the ministry, as by birth, name and life have been peculiarly connected with circumstances of other people. I have lamented that I felt that if I had not been caught in a whirl of circumstances I would not have been connected with the church as I am, and that I feel that I was deceived and deceiving others. Several times in the midst of these soul-searching times I have I received that building up by this same Word of his power. This same Builder is the chief corner-stone of the building. Every member of this building is fitted in as it pleases the Builder. To all the Old School Baptists

who feel they are nothing, and not worthy to be among such people, let me say that every member is a particular member. Then every blessing is yours. He will build you up.

"And to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Oh, poor soul, why art thou cast down? You have an inheritance that the Lord will give you among the sanctified. It is sweet here sometimes to enjoy the "earnest" of this inheritance, among his dear children here, in a church capacity, but in that day we shall see Him that was slain for our sins, and shall look fondly on him.

I do not expect to meet many of the SIGNS readers, but I want to commend you to God, and the Word of his grace, who is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among the sanctified, At that time I hope to meet you.

Submitted in love,
W. D. GRIFFIN
FAYETTE, Alabama.
January, 1941

ISAIAH 48:12-13

Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I *am* he; I *am* the first, I also *am* the last.

Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: *when* I call unto them, they stand up together.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD SEPTEMBER, 1835. AN HOLY CALLING.

"Who hath saved us and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." — 2 Tim. 1:9.

Here we find salvation stated before calling by grace; and, indeed, if we take a proper view of the subject, it was so in the mind and purpose of God. God the Father saved, or secured, the elect in Christ before the foundation of the world. Hence, Jude says, "Sanctified by God the Father;" that is, set apart by God the Father, as the people of his holy choice, and so made the special care and charge of Christ: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure *of* his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." (Eph. i. 4-6.) And though the elect fell, with the rest of mankind, in Adam the first, they never fell as considered in Christ; but, as the Holy Ghost says by Jude, they were "preserved in Christ Jesus and in God's own time they are called.

It is the believer's blessedness that each glorious person in the Godhead has a glorious hand in his salvation. God the Father saved, chose, sanctified, or

set him apart, in Christ, before the world was; God the Son took humanity into union to his personal Godhead, and thus became incarnate, lived a holy life, suffered, bled, died a solemn death, rose again from the dead, ascended up on high, having led captivity captive, and is now exalted at the right hand of the Father, ever living to make intercession for him. Thus Christ has meritoriously saved the elect by his life, obedience, death, resurrection, exaltation, and intercession: as it is written, **"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?—Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth. Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."** (Rom. viii. 32-34.) Thus the blessed Redeemer "was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification" (Rom. iv. 25); and, bless his precious name, he has been the destruction of death, hell, and sin. (1 Cor. xv. 55-57.) The gloriously-blessed God-Man Mediator" gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous or good works." (Titus ii. 14.) So that, before the world was, the church was saved purposedly by God the Father; in time, meritoriously by the God-Man Mediator, who now lives above to make intercession for them; and, in the day of God's power, they are saved manifestatively and vitally, by the "washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." (Titus iii. 5.)

Now, not a particle of this is either *for, or* according to, their works; for it is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us;" or, as our text has it, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works."

What an indescribable mercy it is that salvation is of the Lord; yea, that God himself, as the God of Zion, is our salvation. Blessed, triumphant faith, under the sweet power and unction of God the Holy Ghost, can at times sweetly sing, **"Behold, God *is* my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah *is* my strength and song, he also is become my salvation."** (Isa. xii. 2.) This salvation contains a complete deliverance from every foe, and soul-damning danger, and it is a complete salvation to every real good. We have all spiritual blessings in Christ, all bliss and blessedness secured in him; for it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell. He is full of grace and truth; and of his fulness we receive, and grace for grace. All things are the real believer's, for he is Christ's, and Christ is God's; and, as I said before, this glorious salvation is all of grace, not of works, lest any man should boast. (Eph. ii. 8. 9.)

Now, my text says, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling." This call is the solemn, soul-quickening, heart-rending call of an holy God; not a mere call to hear the word preached, nor to attend upon public means; many are called to these things whom God never chose in Christ: but this is an holy call-

ing from death to life, from darkness to light, from the power of sin and Satan to the living God. This can makes the sinner feel his own guilty and ruined condition as a sinner against an holy God. He is called to see Sin in the light of God's countenance, and to feel its awful plague, and tremble before God on the account of it; and he is called to feel that his case is too desperate for him to help his own soul. The more he tries and toils, the deeper he sinks in a feeling sense of his own ruin and misery. Help himself! He finds he can as soon create a world as do it. Therefore, with heart-rending groans, he is called to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" But he is effectually called to feel and see the emptiness of creature goodness, and to thirst for the living God; nor will anything short of Christ, and a full and free salvation by and in him, satisfy his quickened soul. Hope deferred, often makes his heart lick; but still the divine power by which he is called keeps him to the point, and the issue shall prove that he is called to have fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ, with his love, blood, sufferings, and obedience; to hold sweet converse with him, as his own Lord and Redeemer; and sweetly say, **"My Beloved *is* mine, and I am his."** (Cant. ii..l6.) (Editor's note – Solomon's Song.) For "God is faithful by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." (1 Cor. i. 9.) All the blessings couched in this glorious, endearing character, God has called the real believer to the fellowship *of;* and, in the Lord's own time, he shall share in the sweet enjoyment of them.

O, the wonders of God's love to his people! Come, poor, sin-oppressed, guilt-smitten, law-wrecked, world-despised, Satan-hunted, self-condemned, heart-tortured, self-loathing sinner, hope thou in the Lord; for, with all thy fears and faintings, misgivings, staggerings, stumblings, sighings, and groanings, by and by thy dear Lord will manifestatively put his arms of everlasting love under thee, and say. **"Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon: look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards. Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck. How fair is thy love, *my* sister, *my* spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices!"** (Cant. iv. 8-10.) (Editor's note – Solomon's Song.) Thus the real Christian is called to be made partaker of Christ's holiness, and to hope in him as the God of hope; yea, to believe in him as the glorious Resurrection and the Life; and in the end feelingly to say. "O Lord, thou art my God, and I will praise thee." He is called to receive a full and free pardon through the blood of the Lamb, and to feel the soul, cleansing efficacy of that blessed fountain. In a word, he is called to hope In Christ, believe in Christ, trust in Christ, glory in Christ, teem out all his complaints unto Christ, confess with abhorrence his vileness to Christ, and supplicate his throne for daily grace and mercy; to live

for Christ, and to live to Christ, and to be daily concerned to honour and glorify him in this world. Christ dwells in him, and he dwells in Christ, and they are manifestatively one. Holiness is his delight, and sin is his burden. His sweetest and most heavenly moments are when he can hold intercourse with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, when the world drops its charms, and God is all and in all. He is, in the Lord's own time, called to feel that Christ has made him free, and he is free indeed; and with holy solemnity he exclaims. "What then! shall I sin that grace may abound? God forbid! Shall I sin because I am not under the law, but under grace? God forbid!" (Rom. vi. 1, 2, 15.) Thus, he is called with an holy calling, by an holy God, to holy things; and at last he shall be called to heaven, when it shall be fully made manifest what he is called to an holy end.

A few more struggles, poor, burdened believer, and thou shalt see all is well. Expect no good from corrupt nature. God has called thee to feel that in thy flesh dwells no good thing. Why look for the living in such a dead, corrupt mass? God help thee to flee to, rest upon, and live in, Christ. Thou art called to be partaker of his holiness, not thy fleshly works, but to flee from them, and daily to twine round and hang upon Christ. There may thy soul be staid, for in him thou art complete, and no where else.

Well, this salvation, and this holy calling, are not according to our works, but according to God's purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Salvation, in all its bearings, is according to God's own purpose and grace, secured in Christ before time. Thanks be to God for that. All we feel and fear; all our sins and woes; an our darkness and deadness; loathsomeness and vileness, cannot alter God's purpose and grace, which is secured in Christ. Remember, poor, tried, tempted, tossed-about sinner, it is of God's grace, yea, God's purposed grace. Thy miseries tend to prove that this glorious salvation, this holy calling, are just what thou needed — just suited to thee; and it is God's own purpose to call thee to the sweet participation of them. They are thine by the solemn purpose and free grace grant of a covenant God; and each glorious Person in the one undivided Jehovah takes pleasure in putting thee in possession of it. The time will come when thy Lord will say to thee. **"Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephaibah, and thy land Beulah; for the Lord delighteth in thee; and thy land shall be married. For as a young man marrieth a virgin, *so* shall thy sons marry thee: and *as* the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, *so* shall thy God rejoice over thee;" "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee *is* mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will rejoice over thee with singing."** (Isa. lxii. 4, 5; Zeph. iii. 17.) The glorious marriage of the Lamb and his wife will very soon be consummated in everlasting bliss and

blessedness, and **"Blessed *are* they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb."** (Rev. xix. 9.)

That the Lord may from day to day be graciously pleased to grant to his saved, called children much of his presence and love, is the prayer of

A SOLDIER. August, 1835.

(Continued from previous issue.)

JOHN KERSHAW'S BAPTISM

Having the love of Christ shed abroad in my heart, and as one of His sheep, I heard His voice saying unto me, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." I had been a Baptist in principle from the first time I saw it administered, as mentioned in a former part of my narrative. I now felt it to be my duty and privilege to follow my Lord and Master in that solemn ordinance. The nine persons who were separated from the church in Town Meadows, under the pastoral care of Mr. Littlewood...agreed to be formed into a church. As my heart and soul were more united to them and Mr. Gadsby than to Mr. Littlewood and the people who remained with him, though I loved them much, and felt it a trial to leave them and the place where I had thought to have been buried, I resolved to join their little community. They were my most intimate companions. I attended their meetings, to consult what steps we should take, there being several individuals who had not been baptized who wished to unite with them. A special meeting, therefore was appointed to hear their experience.

The Lord laid it upon my mind that I must attend. I had much exercise of soul respecting this affair. My father was rather against it; not that he was opposed to the ordinance itself, but in consequence of my youth. Not being yet seventeen, he had his fears lest I should be drawn aside by sinful lusts and pleasures, and he wished me to defer it until I was older. What he said had its due effect, knowing in some measure my own weakness, and that I had fallen into sin before; so that I was much cast down at times when I thought of being baptized. I saw it was according to God's word, and I knew the Lord had done great things for my soul, whereof I was glad. I loved Him too, and had it in my heart to honour and obey Him by bowing to His scepter in attending to the ordinance of His house.

The day came when the experiences of those who wished to join should be heard, and such were the feelings of my soul that I could not keep away. Before going I went into a barn to pray that the Lord would go with me, and if it was His blessed will that I should join His people, He would be with me to keep and preserve me from evil, so that I might not bring reproach upon His cause, which He knew lay nearer my heart than either father or mother, or even my own life.

I found the friends assembled. The meeting commenced with singing and prayer to the great Head of the church for His blessing to attend us as a people uniting together in church fellowship. Along with the rest who were to be baptized, I gave a reason of the hope that

was in me with meekness and fear, but had not that liberty which I expected in declaring what the Lord had done for my soul. The friends agreed to receive us, but said that Mr. Gadsby, who was to administer the ordinance, wished to hear us relate the dealings of God with our souls. We should, therefore, have to meet him at a certain time appointed for that purpose. I trembled at the thought of having to be examined by so excellent a man.

When the time came, he brought a minister with him from London, who also wished to hear what we had to say. My turn came. Like Ephraim, I began to speak tremblingly; but the Lord was graciously pleased to shine into my soul and upon the path wherein He had led me, so that I had sweet liberty and enlargement of heart in declaring the things which the Lord had taught me. When I had finished, Mr. Gadsby asked me several questions upon the doctrine of grace, and my views respecting the ordinances of God's house, baptism, and the Lord's Supper. I well remember the last question, which was this: "John, you are very young, and you will be exposed to many snares and temptations. Do you think you can stand your ground, and not bring reproach upon yourself and the cause of God and truth?"

I replied, "Yes, the Lord keeping and preserving me; as Paul said, 'I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." He smiled and said to his London friend, "Have you anything to ask this lad?" He replied, "No; there is everything in him that can be desired. I am well satisfied that the good work of grace is begun in his soul."

The 24th of May, 1809 ... was the appointed day for baptizing and planting the church. As we had neither chapel nor baptistery, the question arose as to where the ordinance was to be administered. One of the friends, a farmer, said he had a small stream of water running through one of his fields, which could be made use of for the purpose. This was agreed to. When the day came, nearly 2,000 people were assembled. Professor and profane were gathered together to witness the ordinance of baptism by immersion. Mr. Gadsby stood on the bank of a reservoir, which served as a kind of gallery where many sat, the great body of the people being before him in the field. He preached from John 5:39, "Search the Scriptures," etc. At this time he was about thirty-six years of age, and such was the power of his voice that the sound of it was heard nearly a mile off, but not to distinguish the words. After his sermon he baptized six persons. In an hour after, we met together in the farmhouse, were formed into a church and partook of the Lord's Supper. This was similar to the apostolic custom, when the churches met in private houses for breaking of bread and prayer.

I have a sweet and solemn remembrance of the day when fifteen souls were thus united together. They have all long been gone but myself. Many have been the changes I have seen since that day. But, having obtained help of God, I am still continued. Bless the Lord, O my soul, for He has wrought wonders amongst us. Three churches have sprung from us. In each case I have or-

ganized them, by the mutual consent of our church, it being done for the furtherance of the gospel, that Zion's cords might be lengthened and her stakes strengthened. We have also had removed by death at this time (1866) 170 members, many of whom have left a blessed testimony behind them that they died in the Lord, and about the same number remain as members.

After I was baptized I had a flood of persecution to wade through; even my own relatives did not like the idea of my joining the "sect everywhere spoken against." If I went out on matters of business, my being "dipped," as they called it, was thrown in my face by way of derision, so that I proved the truth of these words: "They that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." I was, however, enabled to rejoice and be exceedingly glad, knowing that "so persecuted they the prophets."

Before the formation of the church, we had met on a Lord's day for some months in a schoolroom, where we had regular preaching, John Warburton being our principal supply; and we had to enter into a weekly subscription to support his coming amongst us to labour in word and doctrine.

When I left Hall Fold Chapel, and was determined to go amongst the Baptists, my father was so grieved that he would not allow me anything for my Sunday dinner, so that I was forced to go without, having no friend's house to go to. I used to ramble about until one o'clock, and then went to the Methodist chapel service at which in those days commenced at that time. At length, however, when my father saw that I was determined not to go with him, he agreed to allow me threepence per week for my Sunday dinner. Some of the people from the country, whose conversation I much valued, went to a place during the intermission where each had to pay threepence. For the benefit of their company I went too, and by so doing I was still deprived of food for the body. Some time afterwards my father allowed me sixpence, which gave me great pleasure, as I could give threepence per week towards the subscription for the minister, which still left me without dinner. Many times have I left home on the Lord's day morning and never tasted any food for the body until I returned about nine or ten o'clock at night.

I never told my friends the state I was in, for the preached word at times was exceedingly precious to my soul; so I did not live by bread alone, but by the word of God. No thanks to me that I was enabled to bear privations, for had the Lord left me to myself and my sinful inclinations, instead of pinching my appetite to support the cause of God and truth, I should have been wallowing in sin and doing my poor body much more harm than occasionally going without a dinner. My soul says, "Not unto me, not unto me, O Lord, but unto Thy Name be all the glory." For, "By the grace of God, I am what I am."

Directly after the formation of the church, we gave Mr. Warburton a call to become our pastor, and in November of the same year he accepted it, and was dismissed from the church at Manchester, where he was a member, in order

that he might come. The Lord greatly blessed his labours.

While I thus speak, I feel very much for a man of God in the ministry who has a large family, a poor people, and a heavy chapel debt. Such have many errands to a throne of grace, and much work for faith and patience. The Lord will stand by them, as He did by His servant John Warburton, and make a way for them in the wilderness, both in providence and grace. Their enemies, too, shall be clothed with shame, who watch for their halting. Thus when we were in our great difficulties, and could not see our way, the Lord opened the say as it is written "The valley of Achor for a door of hope."

John Kershaw

1882 - THE PHILIPPIAN JAILOR
February 16, 1882.

"And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself: supposing that the prisoners had fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house." - Acts xvi. 25-32.

The text and its connections present to us one of the many instances in which the ministers of Jesus were presented in primitive days for the Truth's sake, and on this occasion Paul and Silas had been cruelly whipped. They had been guilty of no wrong, but a tumult had been raised against them, and without benefit of any investigation whatever, "the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes" and commanded to beat *them*. "Popular opinion was against them, and the magistrates, if they had any disposition to do so, did not withstand it. There has been no age of the world in which the church and minister of Jesus have been popular with the world of the ungodly. "The friendship of the world," we are informed, "is enmity with God." A tumult was raised against Jesus, which Pilate, before whom He was brought, was not given strength to withstand; and although Pilate declared that there was no cause of death been found in Jesus, yet He was crucified. This same restless spirit of antichrist is in our land to-day. There is nothing that those under its control fear more than the steady glare eternal Truth. It dares not approach the light of impartial investigation in a court where the

church of Jesus sits as Judge, and the Bible is the acknowledged standard governing all decisions. It would obliterate all such tribunals from the land had it the power, as it crucified Jesus; but the God of heaven and earth has irrevocable fixed the bounds of its habitation. The welfare of our country is constantly disturbed by the insidious workings of this restless, serpentine spirit.

A great tumult has recently been raised in this state (Virginia) against the use of wine or whisky, and an "Alliance," whose designs are regulations would exclude from its membership the Savior of sinners Himself, has been formed, in order to "educate public opinion," and swell the tumult upon this subject. Self-styled "reverend men" (may the Lord have mercy on them) are seen everywhere in its proceedings. Not a particle of Scripture can be quoted in its published preamble and constitution, but the appeal is to the public, not to the Bible, for endorsement. We must not be guided by misguided public opinion in regard to these things. We have a "more sure word of prophecy" whereunto we do well enough to take heed, "as unto a light that shineth in a dark place." We cannot follow where Jesus does not go. The Bible path is the only safe path.

The Scriptures condemn the abuse, but not the temperate use of alcohol, and inform us that "every creature of God is good," and to be received with thanksgiving. It is always safe to refuse to join a movement of any kind by worldly religionists, because the spirit that prompts every movement of antichrist is a "lying spirit," and must therefore be always opposed to Truth. But I will not dwell here longer.

After "public opinion" had been somewhat satisfied by this cruel whipping of these two faithful men, they were cast into prison without charge, and the jailor charged to keep them safely, "who, receiving such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. " How deep and mysterious are the works and ways of God. My soul, I hope, has been made to leap for joy in contemplating the bright displays of His power upon the pathway of His people in predestinating and overruling all things for their good.

> "Great God of Providence! Thy ways
> Are hid from mortal sight."

It was this very jailor, who was so careful to fulfill the cruel order of these vile persecutors, to whom Paul and Silas were to preach. Our God in His wisdom had selected all these circumstances to bring the jailor to the foot of the Tree, to prepare him to receive the "word of the Lord."

Midnight cast its sable mantle around the gloomy walls of the prison, and the quietude of the night was broken by an unusual sound there. The Lord was with His chosen, faithful ministers, and they "prayed, and sang praises unto God, and the prisoners heard them." We have no reason to suppose that such solemn service had ever been heard within those gloomy walls, and perhaps not one of the prisoners who listened to the solemn notes had ever heard such

sounds before. We know not how many ways the Lord might have blessed this imprisonment to the good of His children. Solemn indeed must have been the sound of prayer and praise that claimed the attention of the prisoners within those prison walls. It also presents the fact that

"Prisons would palaces prove,
If Jesus would dwell with us there."

His presence dispels the deepest gloom, sustaining us in the darkest hour, and lifts the head bowed with the keenest sorrow. We cannot rove or rest beyond His presence. The penetrating voice of the Son of God will search His sheep and find them out. I am reminded of the lines written by the late Elder Robert C. Leachman while confined in prison in Washington, D.C., during the recent war:

"Though in this prison cast,
A gloomy loathsome place,
His Truth sustains and holds me fast,
And Jesus shows His face.

"Within this prison wall
He gives me food and rest;
And makes me hear His heavenly call,
To tell me I am blest."

But another and startling occurrence changed the appearance of the scene: "Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed." Jesus comes in unexpected ways and times to bless His people. As when He came on the day of Pentecost, suddenly, so on this occasion He comes to the relief of His ministers. The walls of the prison were shaken, the bands loosed upon the prisoners, and the doors of the prison were opened. Our God could have sent an earthquake, had He so designed, to have entirely destroyed the prison or city, but that was not His purpose. He would make the prison tremble under the weight of His power. He would shake it as a leaf is shaken by the wind, yet securely preserve its inmates from harm. "And the keeper of the prison awakening out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword and would have killed himself supposing that the prisoners had been fled." But another astonishment awaited him, for "Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here." An unseen hand had kept them securely in the prison, though the doors were open and their bands loosed. In some respects this may present a wonderful miracle. There is no prison in this world whose prisoners could be trusted under such circumstances, the doors open and their bands loosed, an open way to liberty! Yet not one of this number had left the prison. To have done so, the guard would have been executed in their stead. But the thrilling record of this wonderful miracle deepens in interest and beauty. For now the jailor "came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said,

Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" An earthquake of divine power had broken his soul, shaking the foundations of legal merit upon which he was resting, causing him to tremble under the knowledge of his condition as a sinner. What a wonderful change in circumstances was wrought in this man! A few hours before we find him securing Paul and Silas in the stocks, but now falling down before them confessing his sins. A great storm of guilt swept over his soul, and in that dark hour of deep despair all else was lost sight of. Pierced by the arrows of conviction for sin, he cries in the deepest agony, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

Where shall I go to escape the just judgment of a righteous God? "What must I do?" [An Arminian's first response!] It was a wail of despair from a soul apparently sinking without remedy into endless woe, a cry in the dark, legal night of a bewildered soul lost in the great wilderness of sin! The Pharisee has never felt the power of such a cry. Salvation, he proclaims, is within the grasp of all men alike; he thinks that he knows what to do. But the storm-tossed sinner upon the great deep of total depravity, and in the dark night of conviction for sin, can find no refuge in an earthly decision or plan. The terrible thunderings of that awful storm pierce his soul with the keenest agony, while the waves and billows of divine wrath roll over his guilty head. The legal dispensation, curtained with the frowns of a sin-avenging God, obscure for the time the glorious light of salvation from his view. That eternal light shining in the face of Jesus Christ can roll away the darkness of the awful night, and hush the wild storms that sweep over his soul. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

None but Jesus can do him good, and this he learns through the experience of which I am speaking. Through this experience also the jailor was prepared to hear the word of the Lord. Our God must prepare the heart of a sinner first, before he can receive this word. All of the circumstances surrounding each and every proclamation of the word of the Lord are under the divine control, and unalterably fixed. This was the appointed way through which Paul and Silas were to preach to this jailor. And as soon as the Lord had opened the heart of the jailor to hear, a door of utterance was given to them to preach. Had they, like the ministers of unrighteousness in the present day, depended upon written sermons, here would have been a bad arrangement. But we do not find them requesting the jailor to wait until they could prepare a sermon to suit his case; or until they had opportunity to examine and select one from their "book of sermons," or "sermon outlines." No; but as soon as a door had been opened in his heart by the power of God, they were prepared by the same power to preach to him.

Notice the character of their preaching. They did not preach to him that he had something to do; but, differing radically from all the work-mongrel systems of the world, preached Jesus, the Sav-

ior. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." Suppose belief was here presented as the condition of salvation; would that bring salvation within the reach of creature effort? Certainly not. It is absurd to claim that belief is an act of the dead-alien sinner- a creature act. It is not in natural things. We cannot believe as we want to. Can we believe in summer that it is winter, at night that it is day, when penniless that we are worth millions and make it so? Such ideas show the absurdity of carnal reasoning upon divine things. "Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, etc., - John 12:39; And again, **"But ye believe not because ye are not of My sheep." - John 10:26.** It is a greater folly to suppose that a natural man is capable of controlling a belief in the Spirit. The fact is, that evidence always precedes belief. It is so in nature and it is so in grace. Our God must give the sinner faith to lay hold upon Jesus as his Savior. Again, it is said that we believe "according to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead." This informs us that it takes as great a power to make a believer in Jesus as it did to raise Christ from the dead; and yet poor, deceived and feeble men talk about performing this work.

The convicted sinner would give worlds to believe that Jesus is His Savior, but this he cannot do until that belief is wrought within him by the power of God. Belief, however, is not the condition, but the evidence of salvation. When the jailor "rejoiced, believing in God," it was the evidence graciously given to him that Jesus was his Savior; and in this instance it is said that all of his house rejoiced with him as believers in Jesus. It is not unusual at the present day to find a household of this nature, all of whose members have received an evidence of salvation.

But I will call attention now to the word of the Lord, referred to in the closing verse of the text. "And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house." "In the beginning," says John, "was the Word," - not "words", "and the Word was with God," "and the Word was God." And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." It is "the Word," not words, or a Word, implying a plurality of Saviors. The triumph of this living and exalted Word is referred to in Revelation: "And His name is called, The Word of God." "And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations; and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords." Again, in the prophecy of Isaiah it is written, "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater: so shall My word be that goeth out of My mouth: it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

In the face of this bright array of

Scripture proclaiming beyond controversy the triumph of Jesus, the living Word of God, men are found claiming the ability of the creature to successfully resist this Word. The psalmist informs us, " He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision." It was the Omnipotent Word proclaimed to the jailor, and the Lord confirmed it as preached by His ministers. That Word, is" quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two- edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart," which can be seriously claimed for any words of preachers, or of the Gospel itself; for "This is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you." This living Word had found lodgment in the jailor's heart, bearing fruit in his ardent love to the very men whom he had previously assisted in persecuting. "And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his straightway." The holy zeal that inspired him would admit of no delay. At once he desired to be found walking in obedience to the Redeemer's commands, to bear the toil and endure the pain. And it is said in conclusion, "And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." The love of the brethren was manifested here. The jailor desired to give evidence of his love to these ministers by entertaining them at his own house." He set meat before them. "His time of rejoicing had come."

How frequently have I seen this desire wrought among our brethren, a desire to enjoy the privilege of entertaining their brethren at their home, of ministering to their temporal needs, and this they esteem a blessed privilege. Thus we see the effectual work of the Lord in the jailor's experience. The dark hour of mourning followed by the bright dawn of glorious joy. God had moved "in a mysterious way His wonders to perform." A great display of His power had been seen; and the fact had been manifested that no mortal power could bind the "Word of the Lord." There is power in that living Word to loose the bands of the prisoners, and to break in pieces the strongest prison." Remember, " says Paul to Timothy, "that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my Gospel: wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound." "And when it was day, the magistrates sent the sergeants, saying, Let these men go." "But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? Nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out. And the sergeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans. And they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city." The text and its connections record also an evidence of the never ceasing care of our God toward His children. "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people." He keeps them "as the

apple of His eye." The darkest trials are frequently full of the most instructive and comforting lessons of free grace. In these dark hours of affliction the Truth of our God bears fruit in our experience in patience and resignation to the sovereign will of the Lord. And the end of every trial, as it manifests the Savior's power, records a renewed evidence of His constant, loving care. The pathway of obedience may be full of keen temptations to test that faith which keeps our feet in it, but the delivering hand of the Lord is seen in the end. In the darkest dungeon of sin and trial the tempted saint realizes strength to wait upon the Lord. Faith lifts the gloom of the darkest trial, and this "key of promise" in the Christian's breast unlocks the door of the strongest prison of sin and death.

May the Lord graciously lead us to lean upon Him, in sickness or in health, in persecution or in seeming prosperity, in life or in death, to cleave unto what He has enjoined upon us as the mariner clings to the life-boat of his wrecked vessel, when the waves of death roll high, and "night and the tempest close upon him."

Wm. M. Smoot, Occoquan, Va.

EPHESIANS 5:2.

And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.

"Perstcuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." 2 CORINTHIANS iv 9.

You may be cast down by many doubts and fears, and lose the sense of the Lord's love to your soul, but you cannot lose the reality, nor is your faith destroyed by the hottest flame. It is like gold; the fire melts away and separates the dross and tin, but never touches the gold. In your hottest trials your faith will not have lost a particle. Neither will your hope be destroyed, however you may be cast down about your state or standing; for not a particle of hope, or of any one Christian grace can ever be lost. They may seem to suffer diminution as the apostle speaks, " If a man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss " (1 Cor. iii. 15) ; but it is no real loss, - it is merely the dross taken away, that he may come forth a vessel for the finer. The work of the Holy Spirit is as indestructible as the work of Christ; and thus every grace which he implants in the soul remains there untouched, unharmed in all its divine integrity. Love, patience, submission, and humility all remain unhurt in the flame, though the dross which is mixed with them is taken from them that they may shine all the brighter. Thus though you may be plunged into the hottest fires, you will not be destroyed, any more that the three children were destroyed in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, or Jonah in the belly of the whale.

J. C. Philpot

MEETINGS

LITTLE VINE OLDE ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the thirty-seventh session of the Little Vine Olde Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association will be held at the Newfound Primitive Baptist Church meeting house, located on Brier Creek Road in Wyoming County , about twelve miles southwest of Pineville, West Virginia, on the fourth Sunday in August and the Saturday before. The dates are August 23 and 24, 2014.

Singing is scheduled to begin at 10:30 and preaching at 11:00 A.M. each day. It is our hope and trust that the Lord will gather together faithful ministers, brethren and friends to worship Him in Spirit and in truth, and to show forth His praise. If anyone needs more particular directions or information about lodging, please phone 606-474-4327.

Sherry Farmer, Clerk

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 8 / 2014

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

LOWER MAYO FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday, August 31st, 2014. We hope to start singing at 10:00 A.M. and preaching at 10:30 A.M, Thomas' Grove Church will host the meeting. Directions for those that do not know the location: the meeting house is at 1390 Morning Dew Lane, Floyd, VA. 24091. Coming North or South on VA #8, turn North on Blue Ridge Parkway at Tuggles Gap. Go about 1 ¾ miles.Turn right at Soapstone Hill Sign. Immediately turn left on Morning Dew Lane (No Sign). Go 200 yards to church on left.

We invite the Ministers, Brothers, Sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In Bonds of Love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

SKEWARKEY UNION (Eastern Kehukee Association)

Hancocks Church will host the next session of the Skewarky Union on the fifth Sunday of August 31, 2014. The church is located on Ayden Golf Club Road, near Ayden, North Carolina. Preaching services begin at 10:30 a.m.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION
158th Annual Session
September 5, 6, 7, 2014

The 158th annual session of the Smith River Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Shady Grove Church at Old Center Church.

Directions to Old Center Church in Henry County, Va. Are as follows. Those going west on rt. 57 A in Bassett, turn left at stoplight on Rt. 698 (Blackberry Rd.) Go about 3 miles to stop and take a right on on Rt. 687. (Stone's Dairy Rd.)

Go about 1 1/2 miles to church on right. Those going east on route 57 from Patrick County Co. after crossing the Henry Co. line, go about 1 mile and take a right on route 687 (Stone's Dairy Rd.) Go about 3 miles to church on left. The church is beside Howell's garage. We invite our Brothers, Sisters, Elders and Friends to be with us.

Tony R. Horton
Association Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next Staunton River Union meeting will be held at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, located on 708 South Main Street, Gretna, VA., Pittsylvania County. Saturday before the 5th Sunday, August 30th, 2014.

The song service will begin at 10:00 am. We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters, and all believers in salvation by grace to come and be with us during the meeting.

Elder Marvin Brumsfield, Moderator
Oscar Pickral, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

Dan River Primitive Baptist Church will host the fifth Sunday meeting on August 31, 2014. Singing begins at 10:00 A.M. and preaching service at 10:30 A.M.

The church is located at 8684 Highway 700, Ruffin, NC 27326, between Eden, NC and Danville, VA.

We invite all to come and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Thomas Solomon, Moderator
R. Allen Carroll, Clerk
(336) 939-7893

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 2014

Gladys Shelton, NM 50.00
James Shelor, VA 10.00
Elder Junior Conner, VA 5.00

PSALM 5:11-12.

But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.

For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as *with* a shield.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

VOL. 182 HILLSVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER 2014 NO. 9

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

While sorrow encompass me round,
And endless distresses I see,
Astonished, I cry, can a mortal be found
Surrounded with troubles like me?

Few minutes in praise I enjoy,
And they are succeeded by pain;
If a moment in praising of God I employ,
I have hours again to complain.

Oh! when shall my sorrows subside?
Oh! when shall my sufferings cease?
Oh! when to the bosom of Christ be conveyed
To the regions of glory and peace?

O may I, prepared for that day,
When Christ shall descend from above,
Be filled with his presence, go shouting away
To the arms of my heavenly love!

The spirit to glory conveyed,
My body laid low in the ground,
I wish not a tear on my grave to be shed,
But all join in praising around.

No sorrow be vented that day,
When Jesus has called me home,
But, singing and shouting, let each brother say,
"He's gone from the evil to come."

Payton.

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EDITORIAL

"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation *of the gospel is* **committed unto me." 1 Corinthians 9: 16-17.**

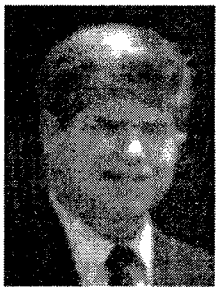
Elder J. B. Farmer

The weakness and unprofitableness of my flesh must be acknowledged at the outset in order that the truth should be made plain. The natural or outward man always opposes the truth when not restrained. It is only by the grace and mercy of God that any truth has ever been or will ever be proclaimed by any person. The blessed apostle was thankfully given to say, "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." And he was also blessed to say, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." We can do nothing of ourselves, but all things through Christ.

The great majority of people upon the face of the earth think that every man has a voluntary free will, which cannot be violated. They also think this free will is partly what makes one human, and sets him apart from the animals. This teaching of the so-called "free will of man" is firmly implanted in the carnal mind, and cannot be uprooted, overthrown, and destroyed apart from the power of God. Every person will go to his grave with this false notion about free will unless he is born from above and given to know something of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. May God reveal His truth in and to us.

All men in nature love to boast about themselves, and to set themselves above others. That is just the normal way of human nature. They see themselves as voluntarily doing certain things in more abundance or better than others, which they think should make others look up to them. They also think that they should be appropriately rewarded for their labors in this life, and many suppose they have a deserved reward in the life to come. Some go so far as to say that they will have a larger crown or a larger heavenly mansion than others based upon their supposed greater

good works toward God.

But the carnal mind is enmity or opposite against God and the things of God. And only a remnant according to the election of grace have ever been given to escape the carnal, worldly way of thinking. God's little ones are taught, contrary to nature, that every good gift and every perfect gift comes down from above. They are made to believe that one may only truly boast in what God has done and not what man has done. They are shown that there are no volunteers in the service of God. All are chosen, called, and separated from the world by God Himself for a particular work here on earth. Each little one is placed here to show forth His praise, to be the salt of the earth, and to be a light in the darkened world. They, by grace, are blessed to speak the truth in love out of the abundance of a tender broken heart of love when they are empowered and moved from above.

It is no wonder then that the apostle wrote as he did concerning the preaching of the gospel. He made it plain that he did not volunteer to preach the gospel, but that necessity was laid upon him. I am made to believe that all of God's true preaching ministers have been given to know and to acknowledge this truth. All those called to this ministry have felt altogether unworthy and incapable of fulfilling it. The way was seen to be too high, too narrow, and even impossible for them to walk in it. They all made their excuses and tried in vain to run from that calling. Moses said he could not speak, Jeremiah said he was a child, Gideon said that he was the least in his father's house, and Jonah rose up to flee from the presence of the Lord. But necessity was laid upon each of God's chosen people to do His works. None of their excuses ever prevailed. God is greater than all.

The principle manifest here of not being a volunteer in the service of God, to my understanding, encompasses more than just the preaching of the gospel. It includes believing the gospel, asking for a home with the Lord's people in the church, submitting to water baptism, submitting to be ordained a deacon or an elder, and every way of walking in obedience to the gospel. All these things are involuntary on the part of God's children according to nature. This is not to say that they do not willingly do these things by the Holy Spirit, for indeed they do. We are taught that even though God's people are not volunteers, that they are made to be a willing people in the day of His power.

No one believes the truth voluntarily, for that is impossible. Jesus said, "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." And the inspired apostle said that you may know, "what is the exceeding power to us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power." So we are made to believe by the working of His mighty power. And the apostle also said, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Therefore we see that the gift of the Spirit and of faith must be given in order for anyone to believe, receive, and know

anything of the kingdom of God.

No one has ever joined the church of the living God. Contrary to many things we have heard and may have even said, the truth is that the church cannot be joined. For, if one could join, he would be a volunteer. But we are taught that, "...the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." After Ananias and Sapphira lied to Peter and to the Holy Spirit, and had fallen down and had given up the ghost and had been carried out, great fear fell on all them that heard these things. According to the truth, it is recorded in the scriptures, "And of the rest durst [dared] no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women." None joined, but multitudes were added.

No one can walk in obedience to the Lord's commands apart from the power of the Holy Spirit. All who submit to baptism, thinking it will secure a place in heaven for them, as many do in the worldly religions, I believe, will be sadly disappointed when the Lord appears. Any who volunteer for the office of elder or deacon will be found to be unfit. All who read the scriptures with a carnal mind, and not under the influence of the Holy Spirit, will misunderstand their meaning. All who volunteer their prayers in order to be seen of men have their reward, as do those who give their offerings before men to receive praise. All who attend religious meetings thinking to make some show of their religion or to do their duty are not there to worship the true and living God. They only make a mockery of true religion and undefiled before God the Father. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him."

If one could volunteer for a work, he could rightly expect a reward. He could rightly glory in what he had done, especially if he had outstripped others. He could rightly boast and lift himself up in pride. But God has fixed it so that no flesh should glory in His presence. God will not give His glory to another. So it is plain that boasting is excluded, glorying in the flesh is excluded, and rewards for volunteer work is excluded. There are many who think they have prophesied, cast out devils or demons and done many mighty works in God's name. But when Jesus comes to separate the sheep on His right hand from the goats on His left, "Then shall he say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." The volunteer will be left without a crutch.

But the apostle said he preached the gospel involuntarily in that necessity was laid upon him. He had no choice in the matter. He said that a dispensation was committed unto him. His preaching was a gift from God to the church. Even so he preached the gospel willingly by the Holy Spirit as he was empowered. So it is with all God's little ones. Everything they do spiritually is involuntary according to the flesh, but is done willingly and joyfully according to the gift of faith given by the Holy Spirit. Whether one preaches, believes, asks for a home in the church, is baptized, submits to be ordained a deacon or elder, reads the scriptures with understanding, attends

the meetings and worships in Spirit and in truth, prays in the Spirit, secretly gives of his substance to help another, or does any other spiritual thing, all must be done involuntarily according to nature, and willingly in the power of the Spirit to the glory of God the Father. If we are given to walk in these things it is because we have been given a dispensation of the gospel - it is a gift. All our boasting then is in God - none in man. All true good works are actually the good works of God, which He before ordained that we should walk in them. All praise, honor and glory must be given unto God world without end. Every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

I trust that this was written in love and in faithfulness and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J. B. Farmer

PROVERBS 3:3-6.

Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart;

So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

CORRESPONDENCE

Signs of The Times
Brother Tony R. Horton
Circulation Manager & Treasurer
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, VA 24343
June 29, 2014

Dear Brother Horton,

I am sending you a contribution and a request for Signs of The Times to come to me at the address below. Please send me the copies beginning with January of 2014. My husband's OB is in the April 2014 issue. I am a member of Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, Dothan, AL I have been since 1952. I am interesting in back copies if anyone would like to send them to me.

My Husband, Son, Grandfather, Grandmother, Mother, Earthly Father, Step Father, Great Grandparents and many of my Uncles, Aunts as well as cousins etc. are buried there.

I do believe God will let us continue with our little Churches as long as the Earth stands. I can only Hope I will get to see the Lord and be at his feet praising him in eternity, singing our Beautiful Hymns. God's Blessings to all.

Thank you very much,
Bertha M. Smith
3215 N. East Avenue
Panama City, FL 32405-6722
Use extra money as needed.

VOICES OF THE PAST

ISAIAH 26:19
Elder I. R. Greathouse
THE LONE PILGRIM, SELMA, NC
MAY 1929, VOL. 7, NO. 73

Dear Brethren:

In these dark, cold, lifeless days we are living in, there is hardly ever a spiritual impulse to move, say, or do one thing in spiritual service to God. Still I have a faint desire to write a little on the text: **"Thy dead** *men* **shall live,** *together with* **my dead body shall they arise." Isaiah 26:19.**

Many have understood this to refer to the resurrection of our vile body. Paul says, **"Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." Phil 3:21.** There is not a particle of the final resurrection of the people of God from the grave in this, but the prophet has the deliverance of all the people of God from the curse of the law under consideration.

When the Savior comes again to call His children's natural bodies from all places where they are, He will not come in a dead body, for Jesus is alive, and His body went up, and many saw Him go up. There was not a bone left in the tomb, and not one particle of flesh that was not raised from that tomb. When He arose from the tomb, He said, "Go, tell My brethren I am risen." Again, He said, **"Handle Me and see that it is I; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have."** Again, in Acts 1:10-11: **"And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel: which also said: Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven."** His body was alive as He went up. Listen at the Savior. Would you believe what He says? Rev. 1:18. **"I** *am* **He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen."** Then when He comes from heaven with a shout, and the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, He will be alive, not a dead body. Elder Gilbert Beebe took the position that this referred to the resurrection of the people of God from under the law. First book of editorials, pages 527, 528 and 448.

How came these dead? Paul, says, Rom 5:12: **"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."** Again, **"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But, even man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming."** 1 Cor. 15:22-23. In this chapter it seems to me Paul is talking about the resurrection when Christ comes the second or last time. The next verse in this 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians, the 24th, says, **"Then** *cometh* **the end."** Then it is true. These that died in Adam shall live, "together with His dead body

they arose from under the law, long before the most of them were born." Then when it pleases God to make known to them the glories of His salvation, Jesus gives them Spiritual life, and they see their deep depravity, their lost and ruined condition, and begin to cry like the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner." This is not when they please; but, when it pleases God to make it known to them, for Paul says, **"When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called** *me* **by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, — immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood."** Gal. 1:15-16.

The Savior says: **"Verily, verily, I say unto** *you,* **the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."** John 5:25. This is the experimental part, when the Savior gives His people eternal life. "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." You thought before this you were all right. Careless and unconcerned. When I was in this condition I used to use the "Signs of the Times" for gun wadding. My mother would grab them out of my hands and say "don't you take my Signs." I would laugh and thought it funny she thought so much of them, but the time came when I was so distressed I did not know what to do. The Missionary Baptists said I was going crazy. I belonged to them at that time. One Sunday I picked up the Signs and read Elder J. F. Johnson's experience. How his experience did console me. Another time I read another article in the Signs, again I was relieved of my distress. I never had heard an Old Baptist preach up to that time. I was like the shepherds who were keeping watch over their flock by night. Luke says in second chapter: "And there were in that same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." That is the purpose of the gospel, not to scare the people of God; but to comfort and relieve their fears.

I know this by experience. The time came with me that I wanted to pray, but when I would go to get down in the dark, or in a place where no mortal eye could see me, as quick as a flash I would realize God was there. God, holy, righteous, wondrously bright and pure, and I was so black and filthy and sinful; and he looking at me, right there before Him. I could not get down on the ground. I had to plod along sore afraid. On and on I went. I would inquire about the Old Baptist. My mother had been a member and took the Signs, but the church had long since become extinct, and after about 30 years she joined the Missionaries, and I knew nothing else but to join them, but I would ask about the Old Baptist. They would tell me they were all going to hell for what they believed, that God sent dark delusion on them to make them believe a lie that they might be damned, and that they were the most

ignorant people on earth, and that their preaching made the people worse, and made more infidels than everything else. And they could not come out where the light shines, and they did more harm against Christianity than all the bad influences in the world. And they preached there were infants in hell not a span long.

I listened to the Arminians preach, and found I could not do what they said I must do or I would go to hell. Do you wonder I was sore afraid? Me, just a green country boy, who had spent his Sundays fishing and hunting and running foot races on the sandbar of the Ohio River, and had gone for years at a time and never went to any kind of a meeting house? I did not know but all of this was true. A man lived on my mother's farm, and I asked him about the Old Baptist. He made it rougher for me. He said he was raised among them, and their preaching made the people bad, but he went and got two Methodist preachers, and they converted everybody nearly in his neighborhood, and they had a nice Christian community after that, and one man who had been an Old Baptist in belief was converted, and he went from town to town, and went up and down the streets preaching, telling the people he would have gone to hell if he had continued to be an Old Baptist. I never could find anyone who heard this man.

The man that told me all of this seemed to be a good man. I never heard him use any bad words. I had to plod along. David said in Psalm 107: **"They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way."** Solitary means alone. **"They found no city to dwell in, hungry and thirsty their soul fainted in them,"** I was starving, actually starving, and did not know how to get relief. Fainting, sore afraid, fainting, no one to tell me where Jesus fed His flocks. My cry was, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flocks to rest at noon." I know what that is naturally. I have herded cattle out on the wild prairies in New Mexico. I have seen the cattle lie down at noon in the winter and rest in the sunshine. I have laid my overcoat down on the grass and rested while they lay down and rested.

I would beg God to show me who was His church, and every time the answer would come, "Go to the Old Baptist." How could I think this answer was from God, when the people had told me such horrid things they were guilty of? But the Psalmist says in the same 107th Psalm: "Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He delivered them out of their distresses." I cried unto the Lord, and plodded on sore afraid. My uncle told me to go to the Missionary Baptist Association, and talk and laugh with the brethren and I would get well, that I had read too much. I went and the first man they put up was preaching when I got there. I looked at him and listened. I thought he has no religion. I got so I could not stay where they were. I went out in the woods walking around suffering. God only knows how much I was burning up. I said, if night would only come, so I could lie down and rest, then I thought what good would that do, I suffer more at night than I do in the daytime. I then said when it gets dark I am going and if necessary try to pray all

night until I get an answer that some other church is the church of God and not the Old Baptist. I went and got down. All at once God poured out His wrath on me until I thought I would be consumed. I had to stop. I did not try to ask God again where His church was, I was afraid, I was sore afraid. David says in Psalm 107:7, **"And He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation."** God says, **"I will bring the blind by a way *that* they knew *not;* I will lead them in paths *that* they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."** Isaiah 42:16. God always leads His people in the right way. He knoweth the way, knows what is best for us. It may seem hard to us. It may cause you great distress of mind, may cause you many bitter tears, but it will finally work for good and the glory of God, and you someday will know God was wise enough, and strong enough to lead you in the right way. **"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy *cometh* in the morning."** If I am not mistaken the Lord led me through the snares, and deep dark places, and finally to a city set upon a hill. I will omit much, and say, I finally heard an Old Baptist preacher preach, and it was to me just exactly what the angel said to the shepherds, "fear not." I was so overjoyed I suppose I cried all the time he was preaching. The others had told me I would have to be good or be lost, which I learned by sad experience I could not be, but his text was, "Of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

This Old Baptist preacher told us we were ignorant, but Jesus was our wisdom. He told us we were sinners, but the righteousness of the Saviour was imputed to us, that He was our righteousness, and had redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; as it is written, "cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." This did not entirely relieve my fears. I was still sore afraid when in the dark especially. I finally joined the Old Baptists, and have always wished I had waited five or six year, and suffered a lot more for I was not fit to join them, and not fit to be one. When I was to be baptized, I said if God sent me to them, when I came out of the water I will come singing, "Am I a soldier of the cross," but if I am going to hell for joining them I will feel bad. As soon as I came up from under the water I felt awful bad. If God had handed me a card and on it printed, "You are going to hell," I could not have believed it any stronger. I went to the meeting house terrified. They said I was as white as a sheet. This was Christmas week. I was so cold, I could not warm. Alvis Moore, of N. C., was our pastor. I was licensed to preach the day I joined them, to take effect as soon as I was baptized. Elder Moore said, "Come on Brother Greathouse and go into the stand." I thought what is the difference where I go now, I am going to hell anyway. As soon as I stepped into the stand I never felt more pleasant in my life. One old brother said to some of the others while I was at the

stove trying to warm, "It is no use putting Brother Greathouse in the pulpit in the fix he is in." I picked up the Bible after we sung, "*Come Thou Fount of* Every Blessing." I never expect to sing that song like I did then, again in this world.

I opened the Book at the 8th of Romans, read nearly all of the chapter without looking at it, never could do that since. I talked a little, sat down and thought the Old Baptists are right and everybody else is wrong. I don't mean not Christians, but wrong in what they teach. I found the war had just commenced. Samuel said when he hewed Agag, the king of the Amalekites, to pieces, 1 Samuel 15:33, **"As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal."** And in Exodus 17:15-16 we find: **"And Moses built an altar and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi: for he said, Because the LORD hath sworn** *that* **the LORD** *will have* **war with Amalek from generation to generation."** Meaning there shall be war between the house of Israel, and the house of Amalek forever. War between truth and error and those who preach truth and error; and **"the flesh lusteh against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."** Gal. 5:17.

I am not sore afraid that the Old Baptists are not the church of God, but, am I His or am I not? Am I become dead to the law by the body of Christ? Did I rise with Him when He rose from the tomb?

Elder I. R. Greathouse
Selma, N. C.

Deep convictions of sin will not spring from rational consideration. No man can work them on his own; they are the arrows of the Holy Ghost. And when He sends them they stick fast.-Berridge.

WAVERLY, Pa., July 27, 1896.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES — DEAR BRETHREN: — Inclosed you will find a letter from sister Alice Ford of Maine. Though short, it expresses much of what I call my experience, most especially of feeling so very natural most of the time. I have her consent to send it to you to publish, if it is in harmony with your judgment.

Your very bad brother,
Elder D. M. Vail.

SANFORD, Maine, Feb. 9, 1896.

ELDER MARVIN VAIL— DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF LIFE: — I cannot get away from the thought that I must write to you tonight. I do not know what I shall write. Surely no one was ever more devoid of anything spiritual. We did not go to meeting today, as it has been storming all day. I always feel disappointed when I cannot go to meeting. I wonder if it is because I love to listen to the gospel, and to meet with God's people, or because of a natural pride I have, that people may not call me care-

less. I was thinking of that this morning, and of all the blessings that have been mine. Reared, as I have been always, among friends, I cannot even sympathize with those isolated ones, away from their kindred in Christ, and, it may be, with even the members of their own household against them. Should I be faithful? I know that unless the Lord were with me I should not be. "When my father and mother forsake me, then will the Lord take me up." We are promised strength according to our day; and God's promises are yea and amen. It is indeed a comfort that his promises are sure. Poor, weak, rebellious children, always going astray. "The Lord is good; his mercy endureth forever." "He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." So the Lord pitieth. Our earthly friends may be ever so dear to us, but they can never know our sorrow, nor how the tried heart longs for comfort, for some place of rest. But the Lord knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust. Of all God's creatures it seems to me I have most cause to be thankful. Why was I given a home with his people? Why all the blessings of my life? Surely not for anything that I have done or can do.

"'Tis even so, Father, I ever must say,
Because it seemed good in thy sight."

I was so glad when Lydia and Rosa came to the church. I felt it would be just as much a blessing to them as it has been to me. It is a wonder to me at times that God has given us such a pastor, fearing not to declare the whole counsel of God, and rightly dividing the word of truth. Again I might quote, "He hath not dealt with us after our sins," &c.

If I could find expression I might write on and on, for of Jesus and his love we never grow weary. But when I read my fetters they always seem filled with self. Father and brother John wish to be remembered in love and fellowship. John is not so well this winter as he was a year ago. The rest of us are in usual health. If you can find time that might not be better employed than in writing to me, I would be very glad to hear from you; but I know you have many duties to take your time, and I do not wish to be a burden. With love to you and all your family, I will say, Good night. May God's blessing rest upon you all.

Yours in hope,
Alice M. Ford.

JEREMIAH 9:23-24.

Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise *man* glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty *man* glory in his might, let not the rich *man* glory in his riches:

But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I *am* the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these *things* I delight, saith the Lord.

F W Keene: Writings Volume 3
CHAPTER IV
SEEING EYES

"I was once blind, and in my blindness declared I could see (John 9:40, 41). I had my eyes opened and then confessed I was blind, so very blind that I begged for sight and cried for light, and now my language is, 'Whereas I was blind, now I see.' My speech, my dear companions, may appear to be a riddle, but if you will listen to my story I think it will be well understood."

The speaker was a person of manly appearance, and had such beautiful, lustrous eyes that his whole countenance was glorified.

My father and mother were blind, my grand-fathers and grandmothers were blind, and though I search my genealogy back many generations, I still find they were all blind. I was born blind. My former name was Blindheart (Eph. 4:18), but a new name has been given me, and now I am named in Israel, Seeing Eyes (Prov. 20:12).

I was born blind and I knew not the true light. What I thought was light in me was darkness, and when I tell you about it you will all say how great was that darkness (Matt. 6:23). Now, when I was in my native blindness I could get about well enough in my old haunts, and in the blindness of my heart I was so ignorant that I declared I could see as well as anyone ever did, as well as any of my associates. In part this was true, for all my fellows were like myself, stone blind. I dwelt with them in gross darkness (Isaiah 60:2). I was blind to my blindness and blind to the path of life; I was blind to my filthiness and deformity, I was blind to the loveliness of the heavenly country, to the beauty of the King of glory and the glorious majesty of his kingdom. I had no eyes capable of seeing such transforming glories (2 Cor. 3:18). As I was blind I loved darkness (John 3:19), my times were spent with my fellows in the dark places of the earth (Psalm 74:20). Here I dwelt like the mole in the dark subterranean passages of my blind heart, and esteemed it my home, my palace; for here I reigned, and reveled and banqueted in the dark lusts of the flesh. My foolish heart was indeed darkened and I knew it not (Rom. 1:21).

As I grew older I became more and more vain in my imaginations, for when I came to what is called, in the kingdom of darkness, the age of accountability, I was put to school. I became a diligent scholar under my tutors, who bore the family name of Rebel-against-the-light (Job 24:13). As all that these instructors knew was darkness, that was all they could impart to their disciples. They put on an air of wisdom (Isaiah 5:21), and constantly affirmed, 'We see' (John 9:41); but all their words were in the dark, turning the truth of things upside down (Isaiah 29:15, 16). They called evil good, and good evil, they put darkness for light and light for darkness, and put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter (Isaiah 5:20). You can imagine, my kindred, what kind of a stock of learning I stored up in those days. I was now confident in my blindness that I could see the way to everlasting happiness. I could talk at great length upon the beauties of our own righ-

teousness, but remained blind to the fact that all such righteousness was filthy rags. I descanted most eloquently upon the free agency of man, but was all the while blind to the fact that I was altogether the slave of darkness. I was so confident I counted myself a capable guide of the blind, a light to them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish and a teacher of babes (Rom. 2:19).

I was so blind! What I called my sight was only vain imaginations; I was vainly puffed up by my fleshly mind, for in my vain imaginations I pictured castles in the air, I stretched forth heavens to my fancy and a god like unto myself (Psalm 50:21). I declared I could see it all with as good a vision as anyone possessed, and yet all the while I was stone blind. I should have gone on in my blindness until I had fallen into the ditch of everlasting perdition had not the Dayspring from on high visited me.

One day as I was living in my self-satisfied estate, I felt in me a power, my heart began to ache, and I said, Woe is me, what is this that aileth me? I now know what it was, it was life divine, life from God, and sight, the light of life (John 1:4). For some time I could not tell what it was. I felt God's everlasting displeasure is my portion. I began to see. I saw not the light, but I began to see that all was dark, and that I was darkness (Eph. 5:8), and that all my dwelling-places and all my ways were in gross darkness. I looked at my clothing and loathed it (Ezek. 20:43). I viewed what I thought was the path of life, and could see that it led to the regions of eternal night. Now I began to see the hideousness of my abodes, those underground chambers of imagery (Ezek. 8:10). There, in the vain imaginations of my foolish, blinded heart, I thought I was the much welcomed, much admired worshiper of God. Now I had eyes to see I had been worshiping my own pride and self-will, that I had been offering oblations to my own net (Hab. 1:16), saying to the work of my hands, 'Ye are my god.' I saw the imagery of it all portrayed upon the walls, and the deeper and farther I searched these dismal caverns of my blind heart the greater were the abominations that pained my sight. Then that carnal fairy land that I had pictured, and had called it the heavenlies, was now engulfed in blackness, and I knew it was all nothing more than the illusive vision of my blind imaginations. Then the horrors of the darkness would creep over me and fears would invade my soul that for me was reserved the blackness of darkness forever (Jude 13).

I said to myself, I must get out of these regions; O, I can dwell here no longer. My soul renounced the hidden things of darkness (1 Cor. 4:5), and I began to grope my way out. Ah, I sighed, I cannot see the way out. I am blind; O for light to lighten me out of the realms of this darkness. I turned away from the darkness (Isaiah 59:20), and my face was turned toward the faint dawnings of day. I came up from contemplating the dark chambers in the earth with yearnings for light, and for visions of beauty and glory. One thing I longed for now was to behold the beauty of the Lord, and that while I feasted my eyes on his glories, I might be glorified in his beauty. I said, I

know the Lord must be beautiful, he must be, he is pure, and gracious and glorious. O, let the beauty of the Lord God be upon me. I cried out for the light, and yet felt, I am blind, I am so blind. But in spite of all the obscurity (Isaiah 29:18), I was in, there was a power leading me on in a way I knew not, and in paths that I had not known. I groped my way along by aid of a staff, (the Word of God) and when I diligently made use of it I could creep along in comparative safety, for with my staff I could trace the footsteps of the flock, and while I was in their tracks no evils befell me.

But I began to find enemies all along the way. Enemies! Who would be so heartless as to be the enemy of a poor blind man? You may well ask the question, for I found them cruel, cursed enemies (Deut. 27:18), though some of them professed themselves my very friends. That ruler of the darkness of this world put stumbling-blocks in my way, for he was not willing I should turn my back upon his kingdom. I was halted by these stumbling-blocks, for in my blindness I could not see how to get them out of the way, or to get over them, or around them. These stumbling-blocks appeared at times to entirely block the way, and to say there was nothing for me to do but to turn back to my former haunts of darkness. Sometimes I so suddenly came upon these stumbling-blocks that I stumbled, and was badly bruised in falling. Let me give you the names of some of these obstacles the adversary cast in my way: Eat and drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die! No heaven! No hell! No God! Annihilation. O, this was enough to stumble poor me, who felt to have scarcely a ray of light to illumine my way. I was much bewildered and pained, I bemoaned my blindness, saying, O, that one would take pity upon me and lead me in the way everlasting.

Then there came to me one saying, 'Are you blind?' I told him I thought that indeed I must be, for I could not find my way to the realms of light, and if I had sight at all it was very dim. I told him there was one thing I could see, that all was darkness around me, and that I was black within. He replied, 'You are to be pitied, poor blind man, take hold of my hand, never mind about your staff now, I can see, I know the way, I will lead you out of your darkness.' So I gave him my hand and on we went. O, that I had known who he was; he was more blind than myself, a stone blind guide, as self-confident as I had been in former times. He said, 'This is the way out of the kingdom of darkness. I have led thousands out before you, come along, quicken your pace, never fear, we will turn off here and make a short cut instead of going in that old fogy rut, that roundabout way, where you were sighing and weeping, and stumbling all the time.' I thought, This is truly an up-to-date guide, who knows the easiest and shortest way to the realms of light. So off we started at a good pace. As he drew me on he discoursed eloquently upon the excellencies of this easy highway, which he called, 'The King's be-up-and-doing highway.' I certainly did the best I could to keep up with him, but it was still dark, and I felt, I am still blind. Soon my feet began to sink in miry places (Ezek. 47:11), and I cried to

my leader, Is this the highway to the realms of day? But before I could get his answer we both fell headlong into the ditch (Luke 6:39).

"What became of this blind guide I do not know, I was too much occupied with the filth of that horrible ditch to take any thought about how he fared. I cried, 'I sink in deep mire where there is no standing.' But I struggled hard and got up out of the ditch and was in a vile, abominable plight. I was covered with uncleanness, it was in my eyes, in my nostrils, and in my mouth. O, the stench of the filth! I learned that the filth of that ditch was the defilements of mankind (Matt. 15: 18). I knew such defilements were mine; I was the unclean one. O, how humbled was my spirit and how I loathed myself, and my soul mourned, and now I cried, 'I need the cleansing fountain, I need a true guide,' and I yearned for sight and light.

Then I heard a voice saying, **"I will bring the blind by a way *that* they knew not; I will lead them in paths *that* they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."** (Isaiah 42:16). This voice took hold of me and led me forth out of the miry places, and the voice said, 'Take away the filthy garments from him,' and then in a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness I was washed and was clean, and then so graciously the voice said, **"Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment."** (Zech. 3:4). In a moment there fell from my eyes as it had been scales (Acts 9:18), and I was in the realms of marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9). I marveled indeed, for marvelous things had been wrought in me and for me, and my precious eyes were feasted and delighted with comforting, ravishing visions. I beheld the Sun of righteousness (Mal. 4:2), and the heavens and the earth shined with his glory (Ezek. 43:2). I said, 'The Lord God is my sun, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon me' (Isaiah 60:1). But O, I cannot tell you all the comforting, ravishing sights mine eyes have seen. I have seen the rainbow of the new covenant (Rev. 4:3). I have seen the King in his beauty (Isaiah 33:17), crowned with glory and honour (Heb. 2:9). Mine eyes can see afar off (2 Peter 1:9), and I have had visions of the far off heavenly country. I have seen the red rose of Sharon and the spotless white lily of the valley (Song of Solomon 2:1), and I have seen Zion, the city of God, out of which, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Beautiful Zion! Thy God is thy glory" (Ezek. 1:1)."

Thy name may well be called 'Seeing Eyes,' and hereafter we shall all think of you by the name of 'Blessed Eyes' (Matt. 13:16). Have you ever had any trouble with your eyes since you first had the heavens opened to see such visions of God? (Ezek. 1:1).

"Ah, indeed I have, and only that eternal life is the sight and light of my eyes (John 1:4), my sight would have perished, and I should again have been stone blind, and have perished in my

darkness. This injury of which I speak happened on this wise: I was one day in the field in sweet meditation (Gen. 24:63), when I saw in the distance what looked like a sower going forth to sow. As he approached I watched him at his work and asked him what he was doing. He replied, 'I am sowing light for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart' (Psalm 97:11), but he was a cursed deceiver, as I found to my bitter cost, for as I stood watching him he threw a handful of what he called light into my eyes, my precious eyes. Instead of increased sight I was nearly blinded, for the so-called seed he was sowing was nothing but cinders and sand, a mixture of the doctrine of men and devils. I cannot describe the anguish I was in; I now had to grope at noonday as in the night, as if I had no eyes (Isaiah 59:10). O, I mourned for my eyes, I went mourning without the sun. Those cruel cinders! I could not get them out, my eyes became inflamed, I could not open them, and I feared that on my eyelids was the shadow of death. But there came to me our great Physician, and in compassionate tones he said, 'I counsel thee to anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see.' And I replied, 'I have no eye-salve.' Then from his bosom he took a box of ointment, and with his own kind hand anointed my eyes. They were cleansed and healed, and once more, in his light, I beheld the loving, smiling face of Emmanuel, our Messiah."

Elder Frederick W. Keene

THE PATH OF THE JUST

Elder William M. Smoot
The Sectarian, Vol. 18, No. 8
Occoquan, VA, September 1907

"Broad is the road that leads to death,
And thousands walk together there;
While wisdom shows a narrow path,
With here and there a traveler."

May I at all times hold thy hand,
And still to thee surrender'd stand;
Convinced that thou art God alone,
May I and mine be all thine own."

"The path of the just *is* as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Proverbs 4:18.

We are told in Isaiah 5:20, that there are some who "put darkness for light, and light for darkness." While this has direct bearing, we suppose, upon religious falsehood, it can surely be applied to the false estimate made of themselves by the present vile and degenerate age.

We hear repeated harangues from every class of present life regarding the improvement of the present age over all of its predecessors, in every art and science, and righteousness as well; and yet the cold naked facts in every man's face, give the lie to such "buncombe."

In every department of present life wickedness is rampant, injustice triumphs and truth and righteousness appear to have fallen in the streets.

It is not only among the lowest, but more so among the highest classes of earthly life, robbery often under the forms

of law, prevails. Money is the watchword. Principle is the last and smallest factor in the calculations of this generation.

The ring of a dollar is the most attractive sound to which they can listen; and for money they will, with but few exceptions, sell principle, life, soul anything else, formerly held naturally sacred.

This is a fearful picture, but one vividly true to every close observer of the present trend of mortal life; and one which fulfills the Divine testimony of what shall be in the end of time.

The word does not hold to the theory that met in their course shall be better.

But it is the part of wisdom to know, the children of the regeneration must not forget, that the God of heaven reigns, and **"doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and** *among* **the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand."** Daniel 4:35.

In the presence of such Divine assurance we do well to take heed to the subject which we propose to discuss, "Hear ye children," says the inspired testimony in the opening of the chapter from which our text is taken, "the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding. For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law."

It would be a reflection upon the God of heaven to suppose that he has not today living witnesses of truth eternal, children who obey the instruction of their father God, who maintain his doctrine, and forsake not his law. "Wisdom," he says, "is the principle thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding."

We regard understanding as the application of the "principle thing" (Wisdom). "Forsake her not," says the testimony in the connection, "and she, shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee." Here is an appeal that is utterly at variance with all the maxims of earth. "The LORD is on the side of the heaviest battalions," said Napoleon Bonaparte, and so says every department of mortal life, in our own, and in every other nation on the globe today.

Bonaparte simply meant that the heaviest battalions would win the day without regard to truth, or justice, and so the world goes today.

Money, fame, worldly power, duplicity, or anything else but truth, are the world -- worshipped gods to be regarded in all earthly calculations. But in the church of God, on the holy hill of Zion today as in every age past or future, "Wisdom is the principal thing." "Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her."

To these children, chosen in God the Father, God begotten, and Spiritually born, Spiritual children as God himself is Spiritual, and holy as God himself is holy; only capable of heavenly instruction; "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." To these children, we say, of grace and of glory, the admonition of our subject (read Proverbs chapter 4,) applies; **"Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil** *men*."

Assuredly do we find that they alone of all earthly classes are kept from the

evil ways of earth. The wisdom given is something more than instinct, it is the lamp unto their feet, the star of life and of light, enabling them to avoid and pass by the broad road that heads to destruction; and turns to truth and righteousness as the star turns to the North Pole.

"The path of the just." It is not the broad road that leads to destruction, where the careless and unconcerned walk heedlessly into the gates of death. But "the path," with here and there a traveler. **"The path" "which no fowl knoweth, and which the vultures eye hath not seen."** Job 28:7. The path which the wisdom of this world can neither know nor trace; and those who walk upon that path are the just of God, as justified in the blood and righteousness of the dear Redeemer: for **"whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified."** Romans 8:29-30.

This path is as *"the shining light."* In Matthew 13:43, we are told: **"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."** They shine not by borrowed or reflected light as the moon, but in the inherent native light of the sun, whose light is in itself.

Says the Saviour in Psalm 40:8; **"I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart."** So the law of life is in the life being of the children of grace; and they shine in the light of its life, are controlled and kept by its inherent power, are directed and led by its Spirit; **"for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death."**

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Romans 8:1.

Is not this a shining light in a dark and wicked world; and what save Divine power could ever keep a people in such an age, and make them bear witness to truth eternal; the light within them manifesting the indwelling power of gospel grace and glory, and developing the witnesses to gospel truth and order.

"Whose spirits look to God alone."

But this light we are told "shineth more and more unto the perfect day." It does not decrease. The Divine warrant is not that the travelers upon this path shall be more numerous, but that the light shall shine more and more, **"for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."** Isaiah 11:1-9. It is the clear shining of truth eternal manifested in these earthen vessels to the honor and glory of the great name of Israel's God; and that it shall be manifest *more and more;* clear, and yet more clear "unto the perfect day."

"The Perfect Day" may have more direct reference to the gospel day, after the legal night had passed, but must refer in its grand consummation to the day of all days, or the bright glory of immortality in which all these streams of light are forever lost, the boundless ocean from which they all proceed, and to which they all return: the perfection of the eternal glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

The work of God is perfect in whatsoever light we regard it, whether in time or in eternity. The doctrine and order of the gospel is perfect, whether we attain to that perfection in our profession or not; and in our attainment thereunto we realize the enjoyment of the perfection in our Lord Jesus Christ, and are enabled to shine as witnesses of truth. More clear and perfect shall this testimony be made manifest as we "grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."

In this glorious life of grace are made manifest the chosen children of God; misrepresented, abused, persecuted, and hunted to death by the wickedness of the world. And in an age like this how beautiful the lives of this people who cannot be bought or driven from **"the path of the just."** To them are applied the closing words of the connection upon which we write: **"Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder** *the path* **of thy feet, and let ALL THY WAYS BE ESTABLISHED. TURN NOT TO THE RIGHT HAND NOR TO THE LEFT: REMOVE THY FOOT FROM EVIL."** Proverbs 4:25-27.

Elder William Smoot

PSALM 3:2-3.

Many *there be* **which say of my soul,** *There is* **no help for him in God. Selah.**

But thou, O Lord, *art* **a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.**

HOPE

September, 1946

For some reason I am impressed to write a short article on the subject of hope. I desire to use Romans 8:24, 25 as a scriptural basis of reasoning. **"For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not,** *then* **do we with patience wait for** *it*.**"**

Before treating directly on this subject, permit me to state that I believe the Holy Scriptures are to the children of God who have been born of the Spirit of God. Restating in other words — the Bible can be received only by those of God's children who have been born of the Spirit of God. When Paul speaks using the present tense of a verb it is experienced in time by those who have experienced this call to be saints. When he speaks using future tense it is yet to be experienced. When Jesus said, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they be comforted," I think he meant that God's children are mourners in this present world after they have received this pure heart, but shall be completely comforted after their sojourn here in time.

According to Webster, hope is a "desired expectation." According to Paul, the things you have experienced is not a hope but a reality. Hope looks to the future. We do not hope for that we are experiencing, but these experiences enliven within us a hope for something that is yet future. Paul reasons that we have the first fruits of the Spirit in this

present life. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. All these proceed from the new heart that God has given His children. We yet bear about the body of this death. This pure heart enables us to see the vileness of our sin-polluted bodies. This pure heart reveals to us our awful condition and makes us to cry unto the God of heaven for deliverance from this sinful state. Although we are in possession of the first fruits of the Spirit, the creature itself is yet in the bondage of corruption. It is yet natural and thus subject to sin and death. We expect deliverance from the bondage of corruption solely upon the merits of Jesus in accordance to God's amazing grace. We desire this deliverance because the new God-given heart has made us to hate sin and love holiness.

Paul said, "The body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." This is our state of being if Christ dwells in us. The creature that sins is the body of death that the child of God bears about in this present world. These sins cause the child of God to groan within himself waiting the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. This will be realized when "the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." The word "also" in the above scripture means in addition to that which has already been experienced by us, to wit, the change of heart. Those who are in possession of God's Spirit are new creatures in Christ but have not realized the redemption of the bodies. He comforts us with this grand hope, "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." A quickened mortal body would be immortalized, thus would never die. I do not think God's children experience this immortalization of the body in this present time. This promise inspires us to patiently await this grand change. Paul did not expect it in this life as he said, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." So this hope goes beyond this life. He anticipates this change when he says, "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

Death and the grave are things that we cannot converse with triumphantly until the grave has given up its victim, to wit, this body of death. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know now that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him." This is the reasoning of John and should suffice for us." As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness" (Psalm 17:15). I am not concerned over the question of whether we will know each other there, or any speculation concerning things yet to be experienced beyond that which is written. My only concern is, will I be among the number to enjoy eternal life

wherever and whatever it is?

May God grant that we who have this hope implanted in us be enabled, by His grace, to dwell together here in time, in sweet communion and fellowship with and for each other. May He grant us the spirit of forbearance and humility. May He enable us to strive for peace and edification instead of strife and destruction.

Elder E. J. Lambert

"Brethren, farewell." — 2 Corinthians xiii. II.

To fare well, spiritually understood, is to have everthing that God can make us happy in. All God's people will eventually fare well. They all stand complete in Christ: nothing can touch their eternal safety; for they are all complete in him, "without spot, or blemish, or any such thing." In this point of view, they must all in the end and for ever fare well.

But when we come to the matter of experience, we often find that those very times when God's people think they are faring ill, are the seasons when they are really faring well," and again, at other times, when they think they are faring well, then they are really faring ill. For instance, when their souls are bowed down with trouble, it often seems to them that they are faring ill. God's hand appears to be gone out against them: he has hidden his face from them; they can find no access to a throne of grace; they have no sweet testimonies from the Lord that the path in which he is leading them is one of his choosing, and that all things will end well with them. This they think is indeed faring ill, and yet perhaps they never fare better than when under these circumstances of trouble, sorrow, and affliction. These things wean them from the world. If their heart and affections were going out after idols, they instrumentally bring them back. If they were hewing out broken cisterns, they dash them all to pieces. If they were setting up, and bowing down to idols in the chambers of imagery, affliction and trouble smite them to pieces before their eyes, take away their gods, and leave them no refuge but the Lord God of hosts. If you can only look back, you will see that your greatest sweets have often sprung out of your greatest bitters, and the greatest blessings have flowed from the greatest miseries, and what at the time you thought your greatest sorrows: you will find that the brightest light has sprung up in the blackest darkness, and that the Lord never made himself so precious as at the time when you were sunk lowest, so as to be without human help, wisdom, or strength.

So that when a child of God thinks he is faring very ill, because burdened with sorrows, temptations, and afflictions, he is never faring so well. The darkest clouds in due time will break, the most puzzling enigmas will sooner or later be unriddled by the blessed Spirit interpreting them, and the darkest providences cleared up; and we shall see that God is in them all, leading and guiding us " by the right way, that we may go to a city of habitation " (Psalm cvii. 7).

J. C. Philpot

GALATIANS 1:8-12.

But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

As we said before, so say I now again, if any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

But I certify you, brethren that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

MEETINGS

EASTERN KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The 2014 session of the Eastern Kehukee Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Hancocks Church located near Ayden, North Carolina. The meeting will be held on Saturday, October 4 and Sunday, October 5, 2014. Preaching services will begin each day at 10:30am.

From Raleigh take US 64 East. Then take the US 264 East exit to Greenville. When you get to Greenville, take Hwy 11 South to Ayden. Turn left on Hwy 102 East. Travel through Ayden and about two miles from the town turn on the first paved road to the left. This will be Ayden Golf Club Road. Go about 1 1/2 miles and the church will be on the left.

We invite our ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

Naomi Coker
Association Clerk
252-823-0786

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 9 / 2014 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

LOWER MAYO ASSOCIATION

The eighty-second annual session of the Lower Mayo Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, at Russell Creek meeting house, on Friday and Saturday before the first Sunday in October, 2014. Dates being October 3 & 4, 2014. LOCATION: 242 Moorefield Store Road, Stuart, VA. 24171. Coming North or South on VA # 8, Approximately 8 Miles South of Stuart, VA., Turn East on Ayers Orchard Road,

#653. Go 1 mile to Moorefield Store Road, #631. Turn Right, go 1/4 mile to church on right. Coming East or West on US #58, turn South on Southfork Farm Loop, #827 to Ayers Orchard Road, #653. Go 3 miles to Moorefield Store Road, #631. Turn left, go 1/4 mile to church on Right. Coming West on NC #704, turn North on VA – LINE Road, #1730. Go 1 mile and turn left on Moorefield Store Road, #631. Go 2 1/2 miles to church on left.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all in Salvation By Grace to join us for this meeting.

In Bonds of Love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

NEW RIVER ASSOCIATION

The two hundred twenty annual session of the New River Association, will convene the Lord willing at, Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church, located in Floyd Co., Va.

This session will be intertained by Flower Gap Church, located in Carrol Co., Va. But will be held in Indian Creek Church in Indian Valley, Va.

The association will be held on Saturday before the fourth Sunday dates being 27th, 28th September 2014 Lord willing.

Indian Creek Church is located on Highway (787) in Indian Valley, Va. Those coming by (Route 221) or (Route 52) or (Route 8) – come to Willis, Va. Turn on Highway (787) go approximately (7) miles church will be on (Left). We invite all Ministers, of like Faith & Order, also Brothers, Sisters and Friends to come to be with us.

Thomas Pegram, Moderator
J.B. Mitchell, Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing on Saturday and Sunday, September 27 & 28, 2014.

Union Church, located near Marion, Louisiana will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and meet with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
318-778-4217

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 2014

Sylvia Dixon, NC	5.00
C.N. Barron, LA	5.00
Shelby Stratton, MS	35.00
Ruby Davidson, LA	25.00
H. L. Knight, NC	25.00
Gene Howard, AL	5.00
Melvin Cruise, VA	10.00
Inda Wingate, NC	25.00
Bertha Smith, FL	175.00

OBITUARIES

JOSEPH LEE SAWYER, SR.
December 2, 1926 - April 30, 2014

Our Lord called brother, Elder Sawyer, home on Wednesday, April 30, 2014, at Vidant Medical Center in Greenville, North Carolina. Joe was born on December 2, 1926 in Pitt County, son of the late Tom and Minnie Sawyer.

Elder Sawyer faithfully served as pastor of Hancock Primitive Baptist, Skewarkey Primitive Baptist, Red Banks Primitive Baptist, Flat Swamp Primitive Baptist and Otters Creek Primitive Baptist Churches for over 55 years, rarely missing a service. Some of his favorite scripture was found in Romans Chapter 9.

Elder Sawyer married the love of his life, Doris Avery Sawyer, on February 20, 1947 (she predeceased him in 2012). He grew up in a farming family which made him no stranger to hard work. He served in the U. S. Armed Services, worked as a bread salesman and then retired from Frito Lay as a District Sales Manager after 26 years of service. Retirement afforded him the opportunity to discover his passion of woodworking which he continued until his eyesight began to fail him due to macular degeneration. Joe's pastimes included spending time with his family and church members, reading his Bible, church activities, and listening to good country and blue grass music.

Elder Sawyer was blessed with two sons and a daughter, Pete Sawyer and wife, Vickie of Winterville, Billy W. Sawyer and wife, Diane of Greenville, and Judy Sawyer Harrison and husband, Steve of Winterville, who survive him. He is also survived by five grandchildren, Melinda Sawyer of Greenville, Jason Thomas of Winterville, Chad Sawyer and wife Angela of Winterville, Joseph Sawyer and wife, Ashley of Grimesland, and Scott Manning of Virginia; and two great grandchildren, Dylan Reed Sawyer and Paisley Rae Sawyer; three special nieces, Sue Ann Joyner, Lydia McKeel and Amy Sweeney; and sister-in-law, Bettie Sue Joyner and husband, Ed of Greenville.

Elder Sawyer was laid to rest in the Hancock Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery. May the host of family and friends left to mourn Elder Sawyer be reconciled to the Lord's Will and cherish his memories in their hearts forever.

Written in love and hope by the Sawyer family.

Elder Jimmy Gray, Moderator
Inda Wingate, Clerk

ISAIAH 26:2-4.

Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.

Thou wilt keep *him* in perfect peace, *whose* mind *is* stayed *on thee*: because he trusteth in thee.

Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah *is* everlasting strength.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
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HYMN
The mercy seat.

From every stormy wind that blows,
From every swelling tide of woes,
There is a calm, a sure retreat —
'Tis found beneath the mercy-seat.

There is a place where Jesus sheds
The oil of gladness on our heads;
A place of all on earth most sweet —
It is the blood-bought mercy-seat.

There is a scene where spirits blend,
Where friend holds fellowship with friend;
Though sundered far, by faith they meet
Around one common mercy-seat.

Ah! whither could we flee for aid
When tempted, desolate, dismayed?
Or how the hosts of hell defeat,
Had suffering saints no mercy-seat?

There, there on eagles' wings we soar,
And sin and sense seem all no more;
And heaven comes down our souls to greet
And glory crowns the mercy-seat.

O let my hand forget her skill,
My tongue be silent, cold, and still;
This bounding heart forget to beat,
If I forget the mercy-seat.

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EDITORIAL

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come." Romans 5:12-14.

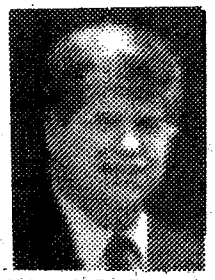
Elder J. B. Farmer

This scripture is being considered with much fear, knowing that so many different things have been said and written about it — and knowing that all men are subject to error, including myself. Nevertheless, this fear has been overwhelmed by the felt need, I trust from love, to set down in order certain thoughts that continue to stir up my mind. Please compare anything that may be written here with your experience and understanding of the scriptures, and reject anything if it does not agree with the true gospel of grace. The right view of this scripture seems to be necessary to the proper understanding of who Adam was; of our relation to Adam before God, in experience; and of the manner in which all things shall be brought to conclusion at the end of the age. What others have said or what we may think must be no substitute for the truth of revelation, which only God is able to supply. We are commanded to rightly divide the word of truth, but we know that is impossible for men in nature. May we be led into the truth and held back from the error of fleshly thinking.

God, in His word, testified that He formed Adam, the last of His creation, of the dust of the ground, and created him in His image and after His likeness. And God said that all His creation, including Adam, was very good. And God said that He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. The first question that arises is this. What kind of being was Adam?

This, to me, is not just a passing interest or a curiosity, but is essential to know. If we misjudge at this point, and are left to our own reasoning, we would be led into many false assumptions that will necessarily result in confusion and false doctrine about Adam, ourselves, and the consummation of all things.

I doubt that many would deny that to be formed of the dust of the ground is to be made to partake of an earthly existence in a body of flesh. This means that Adam was of the earth earthy, and if taken from the earth, to the earth he must return. For we are taught that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. But it is obvious that a man is more than just earth, or even just flesh and blood. A man also has life and has a mind. This indicates that Adam and all men, because they are his offspring, must have consisted of body, soul, and spirit.

But in what sense was Adam made in the image and likeness of God. We know that some take this to extreme and say Adam was a god, or an angel, or a perfect being in the beginning. And some say when Adam sinned, he was reduced from his perfect first estate to something different. I heard one, who was speaking the belief of many, say that in the beginning Adam consisted of three parts: body, soul, and spirit; and after he fell he consisted of only two parts: a body and a soul. This says that the spirit was taken from him. Those who hold this view also maintain that men now might be perfect again by willfully receiving the Spirit of God. According to this view, they would once again be body, soul and spirit. This teaching is false, to me, because it indicates that a man may lose his salvation and then gain it again — all according to his own supposed free will. This truly is impossible because what God has done is forever and eternal.

If Adam was not a god, or an angel, or a perfect being in the beginning, what was he? I am made to believe that he was just like you and me, except he had not yet been made to know that his actions were sinful before God. He was living a life of ignorant bliss, not realizing he was doing things that were displeasing to God. How can anyone say such a thing? The apostle said by revelation, "For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law." Sin is not imputed or charged, when there is no commandment to disobey. Sin was in the world but it was not imputed, since the commandment was not yet given. A child cannot be justly rebuked for wandering from the yard, if it has never been commanded to stay in the yard. But once the commandment is given, the child is chargeable. Adam, as long as he was under no commandment, was free from condemnation for sin. His actions were not chargeable to him. But when the commandment came, and Adam disobeyed, he came under judgment. It is no wonder the apostle said by the Spirit concerning his own experience and the experience of all saints, "I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died." Here is the principle revealed in great simplicity.

If then Adam was just like you and

me, what does it mean to be made in the image and likeness of God? I am made to believe to be made in His image and likeness is to be made to have similar characteristics to God himself. It is to be made with much more knowledge and with many more capabilities than any of the other creation. Man has been given a sense of right and wrong. He has been given an ability to think about things past and to speculate about the future. He has been given the ability to contemplate heaven and hell. He has been given the ability to think that all things have a purpose and have a Creator. Man even is taught to know that he is mortal and to reflect upon eternity. Even though man is much superior to the other creation, he still is greatly inferior to the One that made him.

What does it mean to say that God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and that man became a living soul? Did God's breath of life impart natural or spiritual life? Some have taken this to mean spiritual life. But then all men would be spiritual if this were true. But we know that all men have not the spirit of God. But Adam was the father of all living, and of this one lump was made up vessels of glory and honor, and also vessels made to dishonor and for the purpose of destruction. So the life of Adam that is common to all that should come after him is natural life. And no other can duplicate this natural life that God imparted. God also spoke of this breath of life being in the animals. God said, **"And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein** *is* **the breath of life, from under heaven;** *and* **every thing that** *is* **in the earth shall die."** In the creation of earthy Adam, I am made to believe that the breath of life was natural. To those created in Christ Jesus, I believe that the breath of life given to Adam is also a figure of spiritual life given to the saints.

What then does it mean to become a living soul? In the case of Adam, I am made to believe that it simply indicates that Adam became a living person. Many times in the scriptures, the word soul simply means person. Before the breath of life was given, he was a lifeless and mindless earthly formation. After the breath of life was breathed into Adam, he became a living person that consisted of a natural body, a natural life or soul, and a natural spirit or mind. And all his posterity, being Adam multiplied, were made the same way. To the saints, Adam becoming a living soul is figurative of the children of God being given eternal life. These things are in a great mystery, and many things cannot be explained by us, but we trust that we will be given to hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

The blessed apostle said, "...death reigned from Adam to Moses..." What is significant about the period of time between Adam and Moses? Is this not speaking of the time between the sin of Adam, which brought death into the world, and the giving of the law unto Moses, written on tables of stone? Is this not referring to the fact that men died during that period even though the law of commandments was not given on stone? If death came by sin, and if sin is

not imputed without the commandment being given, how could they have died? I believe that the truth is that the law was given to Adam in the tender heart of flesh, and that law was continually passed down to all his seed. Actually, the law must have been in force before the commandments were written on stone, or men could not have died.

Some say that at the end of the world or the age, the world shall be purged of wickedness and shall once again be as it was in the days of Adam before sin and death entered the world. They apparently think that this is where the saints shall reign with Christ on the Earth. It seems that this view is held, in part, because of the erroneous understanding of Adam and the Garden of Eden, before sin and death entered. Of course I may be wrong in my understanding. I may be deceived, and would not know it if I were. So, this makes me very hesitant and careful to say others are wrong. However, I believe the truth must be maintained for glory of God and for the edification of the household of faith. I am made to believe the antichrist shall come at the end of this age, claiming to be God, and will gather many after himself saying he is about to set up an eternal kingdom on the earth. Many will believe a lie and be damned with him. But Christ shall come in the clouds and every eye shall behold Him. **"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive** *and* **remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."**

Elder J. B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

July 30, 2014

Dear Elder Robertson,

For years now I've been compiling the history of the Primitive Baptists in Maine, and have put some scrapbooks together.

Does anyone have a photograph of Elder Williams Purington (1823-1894) that can be copied? If so I'd like to hear from you.

Elder Purington served the Primitive Baptist Church in Hopewell, New Jersey, and preached in Maine many times as well.

Sincerely,
Jim Cote
183 Brackett Street
Westbrook, ME 04092

September 6, 2014

To: Elder Cleo Robertson

From: George W. Hyslip, Church clerk
The Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church

Dear Elder Robertson,

Enclosed is a copy of the obituary of Sister Christine Ramsey. She passed away July 24, 2014. Sister Ramsey had travelled extensively to many parts of the country and also overseas during her husband's, William A. Ramsey's Naval career. She enjoyed attending the Primitive Baptist Churches, greeting friends, visiting, and fellowshipping with the brethren. She was a member of The Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee which she attended faithfully until declining health forced her to remain at home. Those who knew her will miss her love for, and presence in the Church family.

Please publish this obituary in The Signs of The Times when you can.

A brother in hope,
George W. Hyslip

EPHESIANS 5:1-2.

Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children:

And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour.

ARTICLES

Dear Beloved Ones in Christ:

I am a stranger, and a sojourner, in a strange land. Some times, I am up, but most of the time, I am cast down, with a feeling that I have caught the shadow, and missed the substance of those things most surely believed among the Lord's people. If I have had an experience of grace, it must have been a little here, and a little there. I am not able to tell it like most of the dear ones that I have read of, in the Signs of the Times, that tell such beautiful and heart warming experiences, that is a delight to read and re-read. But if not deceived in my poor heart, I feel that the Lord has shown me some of the most wonderful things, in my life, and especially in the past few years that I have been made to rejoice in over, and over again. I am made to feel the need to try in my weak way to pray to the Lord, to thank him for all of the blessings, that he has seen fit to shower me with in this life although I feel not worthy of the least one. He has so many times delivered me from things that I could not see any way out, but thanks be unto his great and holy name, He made a way where there seemed to be no way. If not free grace, then I am lost world without end. For nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling. As the apostle Paul said, **"For the good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do,**

now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwells in me." Romans 7, 19-20. I feel a lot of the time, as one alone and am made to wonder, am I his or not, do I love the Lord, or not, if one, surely the least of all. O dear ones, is there anyone like me? A sinful, and wretched worm of the dust who has been led, by a way that I knew not, and if not deceived in my poor heart, given a sweet and blessed hope in a God that cannot fail nor be discouraged, our dear lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This is what keeps me pressing on toward the mark, for the prize, of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ. For there is nothing else in this sinful world, which is full of hate, and destruction, that I have any desire for. It seems sometimes that death would be the sweetest thing. But it is then that the thought comes to mind, am I his, or am I not. May the God of all grace bless us with patience to wait until our time comes to lay our armor down, and rest in peace at home, in our great God, and our savior Jesus Christ, is my blessed hope, if not deceived.

It is through much affliction, sorrows, and troubles that a child of God must pass through while traveling through this world, for it is appointed unto them, for our dear Lord and savior has gone before them, and suffered as none other has, for the sins of His people, for He said except ye suffer with me ye will have no part with me. I am a poor helpless beggar, not for this worlds perishing things, but for the Lord's mercy, and for the spiritual things which are not of this world, things that be of the Lord Jesus Christ: that shall never decay as this old fleshly body surely will, for it is of the earth earthy. But the things that be of God are eternal and everlasting, and shall not fade away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God, and shall not come into condemnation. For is says, **"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit, for the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Romans 8, 1-2.** Dear ones, just a few scattering thoughts. It may be good for nothing but the waste basket.

Written with love, in the truth I hope.
C. Fox

ROMANS 8: 16-20.

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

For the creature was made subject to vanity, no willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope.

VOICES OF THE PAST

September 1935
A TRIED SINNER.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

Sirs, — As the apostle of old said, so I must say, — "Such as I have, give I unto you." At the best, it will be too much mixed with sin; for I daily find it as Paul said, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." Ah, sirs! could you but see what a nest of unclean things there is in this heart of mine, I am sure you would say, "Thou art vile indeed!" I sometimes think that so vile a wretch as I feel myself to be, cannot belong to that happy people of whom it is said. "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Nevertheless, at other times I hope that I have a precious Christ, more precious than I can describe to you. Then again, such coldness, such indifference, such unbelief, such callousness, do I feel within, that I often fear all that I have felt and rejoiced in has not been a reality. If the apostle felt but half what I feel, he might well exclaim, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death?" The little hope that now and then springs up seems ready to sink into oblivion under doubts and fears. I used to despair almost altogether, because I thought if I were a Christian, I should feel the sweetness of the precious promises made to disconsolate sinners in the word of God; whereas, often did I read them, and as often had I to close them again, not being able to feel that they were for me: till a short time ago, as the poet sweetly expresses it,

> "——— I heard my Saviour say,
> Come hither, soul, I am the way;"

in the last verse of Isaiah liv.: "No weapon formed against thee shall prosper." O what a mighty support it was to my sinking soul. It raised me out of the horrible pit, and out of the miry clay. I could then say, "Enough, my gracious Lord!" O, sirs, it was such a weapon for me that I cannot in any way describe to you. Could I but have left this wilderness, and this vile body, and died with it on my tongue! Satan could not then bring me in guilty; but it was too sweet to last long; yet it has left a sweetness behind that now and then enables me to rejoice, though in the desert.

If, sirs, you think this may be felt and enjoyed by a carnal man, do tell me so, through your valuable work. Often do I tell a precious Saviour what hardness I feel within; but almost as often does Satan break in, at some point or other, and mar my sweetest moments. Many a time do I groan, being burdened with guilt and misery. Dear sirs. I cannot describe it to you, but I think at times I could bear it a deal better were I assured that I belonged to that happy people, redeemed out of every nation, kingdom, people, and tongue; for I feel that if His precious Majesty should see fit to send me to hell, I could not but acknowledge

he had done right. Bless his precious name, where shall I go? Without him I can do nothing. O that I could but enjoy him and feel my union to him. I know he died for sinners, and where is there a greater sinner than I am? I can truly say there is nothing to compare to him — that my soul, when in her right mind, desires to have short of him; and whether these are the feelings of a hypocrite or not, they are my feelings; yet part with the little hope I have, I cannot, no, not for ten thousand worlds. He is precious to such a worthless wretch as I. I want to be found in Christ, to live in him, to die in him, and to stand in him at the bar of God; and this is my petition, if I know how to pray at all. But often when I attempt to address him at a throne of grace, is my too prone heart wandering after some forbidden object. I cannot tell you of all the various ways and turns that Satan takes to rob me of my joys; for should my soul be warm in the wrestle with the God of Jacob, scarcely are the last words out of my mouth, ere pride says it is well done. O this cursed pride! This is one part of my bondage and grief. I must and can hope in nothing short of a whole Christ; for it my salvation were to be left to myself, my very feelings tell me I should perish eternally. But it is some consolation to me to know that it is through much tribulation the saints must enter the kingdom; not that I like the way, but that the dear Lord has marked it out for his family.

Another course that Satan takes to overcome me with is, he says that I have sinned against the Holy Ghost; and you know, sirs, as well as I do, that such a sin can never be forgiven, neither here nor hereafter. I cannot say that I know what kind of sin that is, and I often think I had better not know, lest, if I did, I should the more easily commit it, if I have not committed it already. Dear sirs, do tell me whether you think I had better know; for I often fear if I do not know, I shall be kept in bondage until death.

Being afraid of wearying you with my crooked ways, I must conclude. Yours, (I wish I could, without wavering, say, in the bonds of grace,)

Manchester, Aug. 12, 1835.

JOHN.

NORTH BERWICK,
Maine, Sept.,1895.

ELDER F. A. CHICK — My DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE: — Ever since our yearly meeting I have felt a desire I to write to you. Some days, when too busy to write, I have had you in remembrance, and as I went about my work it seemed I was talking to you.

I would I might write of some of the meditations which I had, but it is all gone from me now. Of one thing I feel sure, if I am led by the Spirit of Christ in what I may write it will be well, but if it is only of self it will amount to nothing. O! so much of the time I feel afraid that I am none of His. What evidence have I that I am born again? I have a name and place among God's people, but have I any right? It seems I am a stone, hard, hard, hard. I go to meeting Sunday after Sunday, but where is my mind? Wandering. Some-

times some of the dear brethren and sisters will meet me after the meeting, and ask me, " Was not that good?" Why, it seems I can see in their very faces that they have been feeding, while I have been like one dead. I cannot tell them how cold and indifferent I have felt, how my mind has been so taken up with earthly vanites that I could not even listen to the preaching, and I have answered, "Yes, it was good." Then I feel that I have deceived them; I have given them reason to believe that I have been comforted and strengthened even as they. It troubles me, and I think I have made a mistake in it all. I have only grasped at the shadow. I go back overall the way I have come, and find that however dark it may have been, away down beneath all the darkness there is that little something I cannot let go. Sooner or later (it may be days, it may be months) some little word is spoken to my heart, and I find rest. To-day that hymn came very sweetly to my mind,

"Does the gospel word proclaim
Rest for those who weary be?
Then, my soul, put in thy claim,
Sure that promise speaks to thee.

Marks of grace I cannot show,
All polluted is my breast,
Yet I weary am, I know,
And the weary long for rest."

It seems sometimes that I know I am weary, so weary of all the discord and confusions of life, so sick of self and sin, and I long for rest. I trust that yesterday I was brought to one of those resting places. Our season of conference seemed sweet to me yesterday. I felt I would not have missed it for anything this earth can afford. It seems to me I have been signally blessed of late in regard to these things. A few weeks ago, when our dear sisters Rosie and Lydia came to us and told of their hopes in the Savior, it seemed I that my heart was melted. O that I might learn of him who was so meek and lowly in heart. We enjoyed meeting with those dear brethren and sisters who visited our meeting. I believe their coming among us has been a blessing to us. We missed you, dear brother. I think this is the first year since my memory that you have been absent. I felt to sympathize with you and dear sister Chick. All our expressions of sympathy seem so cold, but there is One who can give comfort. "He doeth all things well." How good it is when we can rest in that assurance.

All join with me in love and desire for your welfare. I hope I have not wearied you. Yours in hope of a blessed Savior,

ALICE M. FORD.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 10 / 2014

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

PREACHING GIFT.

Dear Brother Gold: — Feeling so cast down, and not able to get out to my meetings, I thought I would drop you a few lines.

My health has been going down since I saw you last, so that a part of my time I have been confined to my bed, but am now at this time some better.

It is a great cross to me to be shut off from my brethren. When I could labor I was not so lonely. My affliction has not been very painful. My greatest desire is the welfare of Zion.

Brother Gold, the best thing I ever have done is my feeble effort to serve God. Oh that men would praise God for his goodness to the children of men,

When I was young I had a cross in going to serve the churches. Many times I preferred to stay at home and labor, not feeling able to preach as I wanted to, besides being so anxious to carry on my work. Yet being taught by his chastening rod to fear God I was fearful not to go. And always when I would go I was glad when I went, and never in all my goings have I ever had to regret in trying to serve God. But now I want to go in the service of God and am sorry when I cannot go.

This world has no charms for me now. I feel I have to lay my armor by, and that God has been pleased according to the riches of his grace to give me some evidence of his love to me, a poor, vile sinner: so that I am made to hope in Jesus Christ, and believe that he is my Saviour. I was made to taste his love when I was a condemned sinner before a just and holy God, when I saw that his will would forever decide my everlasting destiny. When my soul was begging God for mercy at a time unexpected to me the clouds of darkness were removed, my burden was gone, and Jesus was revealed to me as my own dear, loving Saviour. Here I was taught to love God because he first loved me, and had saved my soul from death.

Right here I vowed to God that I would cheerfully do anything he required of me for his great name's praise. Right here I learned that I was not able to pay my vows. I was afterward taught that I was awfully deceived in myself, and I was condemned in a vow that God never required me to make. God afterwards taught me that my body was dead, that I could not trust it any longer. When he revealed to me that he required me to preach Jesus Christ I was not the man, I could hear so many people talking against the Baptists and the doctrine I thought I never could, ignorant as I was, attempt to preach the doctrine of election and predestination, and I wondered why the brethren ever thought such a thing of me. I never said anything about my feelings to any one. But they would ask me to take part in the service; but I would not consent to do it, and I got to feeling so bad over the matter I thought that God would not let me live if I did not serve him. So one night before preaching the next day I was wonderfully exercised in mind. I went to sleep, and rested well until about day. I was startled to find myself right on the brink of a bottomless pit. I did see things going into it, and I knew they were forever going down-

ward, felt if moved I would go into that pit. While in that condition this word flashed through me, as the lightning that lighteneth from one end of the heavens to the other, so is my word in the earth. At this moment the whole place was filled with flashes of lightening, and I felt that God was going to consume me for my disobedience. I cried out, if he would spare my life I would serve him. Another vow. That day I wanted to go to church, but afraid to go for fear I would be called on to take part. I tried to shun the preacher; but he was too fast for me, and asked me to take part in the service, and the spirit of the devil entered me in a moment, and I became angry and said to him, I can't. I had lied to God and felt that day that I was condemned. I did not feel fit to live or to die.

But on my way home that evening in the lonely woods and by myself I was wonderfully and mysteriously arrested. I was standing still and looking upward. I was filled with the love of God inexpressible. Tongue would fail, language would not describe that love that I felt in my soul that most memorable day of my life on earth. I never did feel before such a glorious visitation of the Holy Spirit of God. Nor do I expect it this side of heaven. But the lesson I learned that day. I was regenerated, and had tasted the great love of God. I rejoiced in the doctrine of grace, but had never been delivered from this old body of flesh until that day; and I never had the power again to say I can't serve God. But I did learn without him I cannot do anything, but through him I could do all things which he required of me to be done. I know that God is not dependent on man for anything, but does rule man according to his will.

With this divine teaching I have been battling on my weak and imperfect manner for forty-three years, and yet I have never learned how to preach. But I have learned for these many years to try to offer my body in the service of God as often as his Providence and grace has enabled me to do; and I have learned that preaching the gospel of Christ is of and through the Spirit of God, and not of the preacher; yet when the preacher is blest with the Spirit, and Jesus is gloriously set forth all rejoice together; and some think there is perfection in the preacher. But it is only given to him by measure of the Spirit that gives to everyone according to their several ability.

But I am now about to finish my course. I don't feel like saying I have fought a good fight. I have to regret that I have not lived as devoted to the cause of Christ as I ought to have done, Hence I am an unprofitable servant at best, Yet there is more pleasure for me in the service of God than anything on earth at present.

I see Brother Gold, in your statement you were married January 22, 1863. I was married October 5th, 1863, so we are not far apart in our married life. But I feel that if my life could have been spent as well as yours has been I could say with dear old Simeon, "Now let thy servant depart in peace."

The doctrine of Jesus Christ, which you have been proclaiming so ably for so many years does identify the children of God with each other. It calls them

with a certain sound to witness the things of the Spirit of God which his Spirit has planted in their hearts.

Time and tribulations, losses and crosses, so cover up his Christian hope that he doubts whether he has the hope or not. But God sends the gospel to them to tell them again the things of the Spirit that God gave them way back in the past life. This gospel is the healing word. It heals the wounded spirit, comforts the mourning soul, and is rest for the weary.

I hope I do rejoice in Christ Jesus. I have no confidence in the flesh, for it but dust. All men in their best estate are but vanity.

I close with petitions to God for his blessings to rest and remain with his people now and forever, that his grace may continue to uphold and sustain you to the end of your days.

Elder Thomas Bell,
Wampee, S. C.
Zion's Landmark
February 1, 1915

PROVERBS 2:6-8.

For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth *cometh* **knowledge and understanding.**

He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: *he is* **a buckler to them that walk uprightly.**

He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.

GOD CALLS AND SENDS HIS SERVANTS

967 Maxey Street,
Memphis, Tenn. 38111

Dear Brethren:

"The gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

When Jesus called to himself his twelve disciples, who were called Apostles, he gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. (Matt. 10:1) They were commanded where to go to preach, which was to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. God's servants today are called and sent as they were then, to preach the gospel, bearing good news to them that are called to hear the gospel: which is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also the Greek; for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith."

We understand that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. There are many gifts but all of the same Spirit; and as many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God, and just as many as are ordained unto eternal life believe in God. To believe in God is the work of God by Him whom He hath sent. Christ was sent to them that were lost. **"He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the**

sons of God, *even* **to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1: 11-13)**

I do believe that the ones Christ comes to are the very elect of God which were chosen in Christ before the world began. The Apostle Paul told Timothy that God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and a sound mind, and we should not therefore be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of Paul his prisoner; but partakers of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God. **"Who hath saved us and called** *us* **with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."** (2 Tim. 1: 7-9)

Today the ones who have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, and have the sound mind given them, are humble creatures and desire to be at the feet of their brethren, and abound in love towards their brethren as much as is in them is. They look not at the things of this life, but unto Him who is the author of their faith by which they walk. We study to show ourselves approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. We think much of our time that we are unprofitable servants, and cannot think of anything good we have ever done. I believe that when I would do good evil is always present, and can say with the Apostle, That which I would do, I do not, —knowing that in me dwells no good thing.

Sometimes, brethren, I try to rest in the thought of being one of God's elect; and if I am one it is because everything has been done for me, and not by me. Grace is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, and not in our heads. I believe in heart-felt religion, and it is the work of God that we believe this. Jesus said, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." Now he that believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God; and he that is born of God is made a new creature in Christ Jesus. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

We have asked ourselves, have we been born again, and wonder how this is and how it comes: we know that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and this I wonder about; but I know that I love my brethren, if I know anything at all. We know that God loved his children before they loved him. He is all in all, upholding all things by his power; and every soul is subject to God. There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Now we understand that the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly but by reason of him who subjected the same in hope. Doesn't this show the power of God, that we creatures go as God directs, as his disciples and apostles had to go. God will never leave himself without a witness. Those that are called will go where he leads them. He goes before his sheep; He feeds his flock: they find rest at noontime, and the kids are fed by the

shepherd's tents.

God speaking by one of the prophets, said, "I leave in your midst an afflicted and poor people." These are the people God raised up for himself who shall show forth his praise. They are poor in spirit, but rich in faith. James says of these people, "Harken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" So the promise is to them that love him, and it is eternal life that is promised them. "God is not slack concerning his promise as some count slackness; but is long suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Brethren I believe the same doctrine is being preached and taught today among His people that Christ taught his disciples to preach to the edification of the brethren in that day; and which we enjoy as good news from a far country. This good news strengthens our hope, which we have as the anchor of our souls sure and steadfast. If our hope did not go beyond this world we would be of all men most miserable. We hear some say that their hope is so little, and we don't like to hear this, for our hope is in Christ Jesus the Lord of glory, and this hope cannot be measured. Aren't you glad that your hope is felt so plainly sometimes that you have to say, I know I have a hope in my God, and he will give me everything I need.

Brethren, **"we are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?**

But if we hope for that we see not, *then* do we with patience wait for it." (Romans 8:24, 25)

In hope of eternal life,
Elder Herbert R. Prince

GIVES A CERTAIN SOUND

Rt. 87, Box 126,
Shady Spring, W. Va. 25918

Dear Editors of the Signs:

You will find enclosed $5.00 for one years subscription.

Now a brief note about the doctrine advocated by your good paper, which gives a certain sound. As you well know, certain instruments were used in bygone days to warn the people to gather to battle. It is giving God the praise, honor and glory, for the wonderful works of mercy, love and truth he visits on the elect vessels of his mercy afore prepared unto glory; yes, even before time flapped its naked wings in the cradle of infancy, God forsaw, predestinated, decreed, and ascertained what would transpire when the event of time would come into a reckoning state. Then it is no small wonder to me that God had a purpose worthy of himself, which cannot be destroyed; for God is Sovereign, having all power in heaven and earth, and he made everything for the glory of his name — it is fulfilling its functionary part, or what it was created for; and it is all to His glory, even to the falling of a sparrow.

Death and hell are naked before

Him, and destruction hath no covering. Lo these are parts of his way, but how little a portion do we hear of them. This is in harmony with your good paper, and it will stand when the world is on fire.

So write on in the Signs, and may the Lord of heaven bless each of you good editors. I especially like the doctrine advocated by Elders Beebe, Curry, Phillips, Wood, Griffin, Ruston, and Spangler.

An unprofitable servant,
Elder Wallace

JOHN 18:10
"I am glorified in them."

There is much that passes for religion in the present times that has nothing in it but the glorification of man; it finds its beginning in man and ends with man. It is not the work of God and therefore does not glorify him. Man may be sincere in what he does, but that does not make what he does right. Saul thought he should do many things against this name, which things he did, but it was when a work of grace was begun in his heart that he found that the things he thought were unto life were unto death.

The words leading up to our text in the tenth verse declare that "All mine are thine." That is, all that belong to Christ, for whom at the time he uttered the prayer recorded in John 17, when he was about to be crucified, were the Father's, they belonged to him and were given to the Son by the Father. God the Father and God the Son were united in purpose and choice, so they were chosen by God the Father and preserved in Christ Jesus. All that the Father gave to the Son, the Son redeems, and he is glorified in them. Not one of them but was lost and ruined, without hope and without God in the world. Nor did any of them by nature have the ability to come to him. He came to them. He concluded them all in unbelief, for there was none good, no, not one. This is Bible truth, but God's children are made to know it in a living way by the operation in them of God's Spirit, who convinces of the truth of those things that are written in the word. The Spirit does this, not because they have prayed for it, but because they belong to God and Christ, and they are not their own, nor can they do the things that they would. They are a number that no man can number, belonging unto God and Christ, to be called out from the race of mankind for God's own purpose, and for each of them there is an appointed time. One wrote, in hymn number 240,

> "The appointed time rolls on apace,
> Not to propose, but call by grace;
> To change the heart, renew the will,
> And turn their feet to Zion's hill."

We believe that all creatures and worlds were created for the glory of God. David saith, "The heavens declare the glory of God," etc. - Psalm 19. Prophets and seers declare his glory, but to see it we find that even Moses must be placed in the clift of the rock by God himself (Exodus 33: 22) , and God told him, "I

will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy." Saul was a persecutor, but it was God who called him by his grace and revealed his Son in him, and so great was the change, that when men who loved the truth, saw and heard. "THEY GLORIFIED GOD IN HIM." "Consider the lilies, how they grow," said Jesus, yet "Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, for one star differeth from another in glory, so we find the moon, or law, had a reflected glory. It set forth Christ, the Sun, and the prophets, or stars, varied in quantity of light or glory, but it was Christ, the Sun, when he arose with healing in his wings, who eclipsed the stars and moon by a glory that excelleth. He is ever in the midst of his people. The tabernacle was an evidence of his glory, and as the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud, so we find the innumberable cloud of witnesses all spake of him, of his suffering and the glory that should follow. Take Jesus away, and the glory is departed, just as when the ark of God was taken by the Philistines, the mother called her son Ichabod, saying, The glory of God has departed from Israel. (1 Sam. 6:21) No wonder then that Paul said, "We preach not ourselves (as though we were anybody), but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."

When Martha had said unto him, "Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" It is his glory to raise the dead, for as the first Adam was a living soul, so is the second Adam a quickening spirit, and just as the natural man reflects Adam's shame and dishonor, so the new creature in Christ Jesus reflects Jesus Christ, for Jesus Christ is glorified in him. When the saints were to appear before princes and governors they were not to take thought what they should say. He would give them a tongue, the tongue of the learned. What a glory there is in the tongue giving utterance to the things of God. How unfit one is of himself to utter such glorious truth, as unfit by nature as Balaam's ass was to speak with the voice of a man. (Num. 22:28). To the glory of Christ and the power of his truth, the truth of God, his saints face an ungodly frowning world. How boldly these humble men faced their enemies, those who had crucified their Lord, and preached the love and power of a Christ that saves unto the uttermost. The power of love and its constraining and restraining influence is clearly manifest in the union and fellowship of the saints of God, who, led by the Spirit, and walking in the Spirit, do not fulfill the desires of the flesh, but rather esteem others better than themselves, and bear one another's burdens, and by an humble submission to the will of God encourage each other to bear their own burdens. In such who walk in love we see the image of Jesus, and we love them for Christ's sake and glorify God for the grace given to them. The presence of Jesus in such has an humbling effect upon the soul, and sin becomes exceed-

ing sinful, so that there is a self-loathing, and often there will be a laying of one's mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope, and we know that it is of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed because his compassions fail not.

"They are new every morning, great is thy faithfulness." The faithfulness of Christ is such that he never leaves nor forsakes us. The presence of the glory of God in the cloud, his glory as set forth in the tabernacle, the priest, and the offerings, and above all in the ark itself, was to Israel an evidence not manifest to any other people, of God's goodness and mercy unto them, and when those evidences were taken from them, and the house left unto them desolate, the glory of God departed from them. But there is a house of God, a building not made with hands, in which the people of God are living as lively stones, and are built together a spiritual house, and it is in this house that Jesus is glorified. He of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, that if any man glory, let him glory in the Lord. Paul tells us that the head of every man is Christ, and that every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoreth his head. Every man, or servant of God, praying or prophesying in the spirit, is ever zealous not to cover up the head, Christ Jesus, but is ever forward to declare his work with rejoicing, while the church, as a woman, is ever covering herself, never telling what she has done for the Lord, but confessing in herself as having nothing to glory in but the cross of Christ, so that she, like Paul, glories in her infirmities" that the power of God might rest upon her. Thus as the woman covered is a sign that she is under the power of her husband, so the church, walking conscious of her own infirmities, and glorying therein, realizes the power of God resting upon her, enabling her to glory in her Lord.

The first man Adam is the figure of him that was to come, but through disobedience and death that likeness was debased, and Adam had children debased, conceived in sin, but these children could not possibly know how debased they were except through the second Adam, who is a quickening Spirit. All that belonged to God and Paul also says, "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Thus gracious men and women have received the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father, but they, like Paul, are still waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. Here they bear in their body the marks of the dying of the Lord Jesus. They have the Spirit of Christ, but they groan in the likeness of Adam, yet faith, the result of God's word shining in their heart, gives them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It is in these earthen vessels that he is glorified here, for being common clay of the same lump, and being insufficient to even think a good thought, they show forth his power and his glory. They, as a people, are the house of his glory, and

he has declared that he will glorify the house of his glory. What more can he do for his people than he has already done? Will he not change our vile body and fashion it according to his glorious body? Christ's body was more marred than any man's through sin. He died and rose again and ascended into heaven, the same body, now glorified, "decked with resplendent wounds." Once subjected to death, now the first begotten from the dead, possessing immortality, which immortality he has brought to light through the gospel.

Thus we have a hope of eternal life, and we would remember here that hope that is seen is not hope, but under the humiliation of this body which is dead because of sin, we patiently wait for our Lord, who shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and when we see him as he is, we shall be like him, GLORIFIED. In this body of flesh they are declared to be children that will not lie; that is, they show forth the praise of Christ, who has called them out of darkness into his most marvelous light. How much more so when he, who is a quickening Spirit, shall quicken our mortal bodies, and all we have to possess and enjoy to all eternity will redound to the praise and glory of him who loved us and gave himself for us. If the mind of a man was put in a dog he would not be satisfied to live with dogs, he would want to rise to the level of the mind he possessed. When at that level he would be humbled because he had the likeness of a dog. The mind of Christ is put into a subject of grace, which causes him to no more be content with those things that please his fellowmen, but to rise above them, for he is an object of God's mercy, but he carries about a body of this death, a body that is dead because of sin, just like his neighbors, but having the mind of Christ, he loathes that which is of the flesh and wants the likeness of his Lord. It was this experience that made David say, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness," and it is the like experience that makes us long for the day when we shall behold his face in righteousness, and awake with his likeness.

Elder George Ruston

PSALM 23.

The Lord *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of death, I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

REVELATION XXII. 16, 17.

"I JESUS have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come: and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

All the testimony of Jesus in the churches is under one of the above things, and the gifts in the ministry are exercised by the Spirit according to the measure of the grace of God given to them. The work of God is perfect, and his flock is fed with the sincere milk of the word. The gifts of the ministry are proven to the churches by these things being' testified of to them of which the churches are witnesses, which proves the gift.

"Mine angel." Sent unto you to bear tidings relative to the doctrine of salvation by grace, and I am he of whom it is spoken by the prophet, the Messiah that was to come, I am the root from which the life of David sprang, and all the members of the church of God manifest the same life. The experience of David as expressed in the Psalms is the experience of every child of God, They can read the Psalms and find their own hearts bearing the same tidings and speaking the same thing, which binds their hearts in one bundle of love, The bearer of these tidings comes with fear and trembling, realizing his imperfections and unworthiness to claim such riches to be his, which causes him to feel cast down and exclaim, Oh wretched man that I am! The brightness of the glory is Jesus they see, and they feel the ushering in of a new day, which his angel shall testify of unto you, and you shall walk in the light and see and behold wonderful thing's revealed to you by Him, and when this light is not realized darkness is felt, and blindness covers our sight, that we cannot see afar off, and not even a star to be seen.

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come." The Spirit says, Come. As we take this phrase into the things his angel testifies of the Spirit we like to consider what the Spirit is, which is God. Now as the Spirit says come it is God that is speaking, and how do we come? We sold ourselves for naught, and are held in that bondage until the ransom price is paid and the captive set free from the bondage of sin and death. Jesus is the only price that can make a poor sinner free from that bondage and give the strength to come. God was in Christ endorsing the work of his Son in the salvation of all the elect, and by this work, or this way, sinners come to God and are saved with an everlasting salvation. This is the calling of the Spirit, and everyone that hears the voice of the Spirit saying, Come, are directed in this way. Jesus (the conception of the Holy Ghost) says, "I am the way," and "no man cometh unto the Father but by me."- John xiv. 6. Which is hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes, and no man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Men often point out a way

and say, This is the way, walk ye in it, but the way thereof is death, and they know not the way of life.

The bride will testify of how she had been kept, fed, given water and clothed and brought up out of the pit and given a new song to sing, which is the song of the redeemed, and no man can learn that song by the teaching of men.

The church of God with the Spirit of the living God says, Come, and the manifestation of one coming in this revelation brings joy to the entire body, so we feel the rejoicing is unity in the Spirit with the bride. The bride receives every one who comes in the name of her Husband and she can see his life manifested in them. They are all clean, having been washed in clean water, and all their garments are clean white linen, which is the righteousness of the saints.

"And let him that heareth say, Come." And him that hath ears to hear let him hear what the Spirit saith, unto the churches, and everyone that hath ears heareth the things the Spirit proclaims, which gives testimony of the demonstration of the Spirit, and faith comes, and is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, then with patience we wait upon the Lord. there is a two-fold expression in this phrase, for the friend of the Bridegroom sayeth, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly," and the Bridegroom sayeth, come unto me. But this was given to John after the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, which gives us to conclude the angel testifying these things in the churches is addressing the subjects of grace.

"And let him that is athirst come: and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." The evidence we derive from being thirsty is the heat, and power of evaporation of the water we have in our bodies, and spiritually speaking, the Son of righteousness is risen upon us and we are assimilating the food of the Spirit, which makes us thirst after righteousness, or the water of life, to masticate the bread of life. The thirsty soul cannot draw water from wells in the earth to quench this thirst, for his thirst is for living water, which is in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. (John iv. 14.) The water of life freely taken would be with a realization that there was no weight lodged against the one receiving it by way of debt, and the refreshing virtue was free.

After we have commented on these things as they are set forth in the record of Revelation by the Spirit, and we fully realize the expressions we have offered to our readers of the SIGNS for their faithful consideration are according to God's word, and belong to the children of God, and we know of a truth we have had realizations as we have described, but to say we know we are what we hope we are is beyond our ability to affirm. We often feel we can say this one or that one is a child of God, but we do not know, only as they bear the fruit, as we are given to understand. All these things are the work of the Spirit, and are manifest by those born of the incorruptible seed by the word of God, and these marks are sure testimony of their sonship. As we compare individuals to distinguish between those who are heirs and those

who are not we must know the relationship which proves their worship. Those who worship God worship in Spirit, and those who worship him not worship according to the dictates of the carnal mind, and they cannot behold the things Jesus sent his angel to testify in the churches, and to converse with one who has not heard this testimony delivered by his angel there is no difference to them, which proves the blindness or sense of perception in which there is no understanding in the things of the Spirit.

We feel after expressing our feelings relative to these thing's we ourselves come short of the standard of truth, and only have hope to point to as our reasons for our salvation by grace. David declared that all who know the joyful sound are blessed, They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. (Psalms lxxxix. 15.)

We are concluding our correspondence with you, dear readers of the SIGNS, with this issue for the year 1935, and we hope we have not given out expressions that are not according to God's word, and also that perhaps some have had exercise of mind and comfort of soul in what we have in our weak way tried to convey, and we hope more of you may be encouraged to write for the SIGNS and give your support to strengthen its publication. We extend to all our best wishes, and may the peace of God, which passeth understanding, rest upon all the household of faith. Amen.

Elder C. W. Vaughn

"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."- John xvii. 21.

The Apostle declares, "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit" (1 Cor. vi. 17). If, then, we are joined to the Lord, in other words, have a union with him, this is the closest of all unions. A man and his wife are one flesh, but Jesus and the saint are one spirit. If possessed of this we are one spirit with him; we understand what he says; we have the mind of Christ; we love what he loves, and hate what he hates. But out of this spiritual union flows communion with him, intercourse with him, communications from him, and the whole of that divine work upon the heart whereby the two spirits become one. The Spirit of Christ in his glorious Person and the Spirit of Christ in a believing heart meet together, and meeting together as two drops of rain running down a pane of glass, or two drops of oil, kiss into each other, and are no longer two but one. Now if you have been ever blest with a manifestation of Christ, your spirit has melted into his, and you have felt that sweet union and communion with him that you saw as with his eyes, heard as with his ears, felt as with his heart, and spoke as with his tongue.

J. C. Philpot

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will convene with Hadnot Creek Church on Saturday before the second Sunday in October. The dates are October 11-12, 2014. The Church is located on Peletier Loop Road off Highway 58 just West of Cape Carteret, NC.

We welcome and invite all who love the truth to come and worship with us.

Elder Gene Lupton
Association Clerk
252-745-7441

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 2014

C.W. Wood, VA 25.00
Ada Beeghly, VA 5.00
Elder Raymond Goad, VA 5.00
Mary Hawkins, NC 25.00
Lula Holley, VA 5.00
Richard Lawless, WV 5.00
Larry Byrd, NC 5.00
Douglas Hodges, VA 5.00
Sallie Hodges, VA 5.00
Rose Dunn, NC 5.00
Charlie Fox, AR 10.00

OBITUARIES

KATHERINE (GODWIN) MATHEWS

Katherine (Godwin) Mathews, 94, passed away peacefully on August 5, 2014 at Hancock Hall in Danbury, Connecticut. She was the wife of the late Eugene Mathews, and she was the personification of the virtuous woman. Katherine was born September 6, 1919 in Chestnut, Louisiana. She was the daughter of the late David M. Godwin and Delma E. (Finley) Godwin. Katherine is survived by her sons Charles Mathews of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Jimmy Mathews and wife Glenda of Pearland, Texas, daughter Barbara Millard of Danbury, Connecticut, sister-in-law Mary Pullin of Jonesboro, Louisiana, and brother-in-law by marriage Nathan Keen of Panama City Beach, Florida. She was greatly loved by her 7 grandchildren, 12 great grandchildren, and her numerous nieces and nephews. Katherine was predeceased by her son Harold Gene Mathews.

She humbly asked for a home at Oak Grove Primitive Baptist Church in Chestnut Louisiana many years ago, and was received into the church which her brother Elder William David Godwin pastored until he passed away on June 18, 2012 at the age of 102. Mother was the church clerk, but the doors to the church were closed approximately 10 years ago, when Uncle David became unable to preach due to age. Mother dearly loved her blessed Jesus Christ

and the church. She so missed her church when its doors were closed! She loved to attend Little Band in St. Augustine, Texas pastored by Elder Jacobs several years ago. Another favorite of hers was Elder Lloyd Wall's church in Texas, so very long ago. She wrote several articles, experiences, poems, letters, and one song that were published in the Signs of the Times during her lifetime.

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. (Ps. 116:15). May we draw comfort and peace in the love that the triune God promised to His Elect.

Written by her son,
Charles Mathews
8110A Elliot Rd
Baton Rouge, LA 70817
(225)892-0974

SISTER ELLA CHRISTINE UTLEY RAMSEY

Sister Ella Christine Utley Ramsey of Huntsville, Alabama departed this life on July 24, 2014, after an extended stay in "The Regency Skilled Nursing Facility" in Huntsville, Alabama. She was born in Tuscaloosa County in Alabama and lived to be 95 years old. She had lived in several locations during her husband's Naval career including Alaska, California, Rhode Island, Newfoundland, and Mississippi.

She was preceded in death by her husband, William A. Ramsey; brothers Lee Utley, Theron Utley, and Howard Utley; and sisters Agnes Hocutt and Viva Poe.

She is survived by her son, Donald Ramsey (Marj Feese) of Richardson, Texas; daughter, Geraldine Bledsoe (Larry) of Huntsville Alabama; grandsons, Keith Bledsloe (Patricia Collados) of Winchester, Tennessee and Zachary Ramsry (Diane) of Midlothian, Texas; granddaughters, Lynette Bledsoe Boyer (Andy) of Knoxville, Tennessee, Sarah Ramsey Ward of Atlanta, Georgia; four great-granddaughters; four great-grandsons; and several nieces and nephews.

The funeral was held at "The Sunset Funeral Home in Northport, Alabama on July 28, 2014 with internment in "The Sunset Memorial Park". Elder James Howard of "The Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church" officiated.

Sister Christine asked for a home with The Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee on July 2, 1995 and was baptised on August 5, 1995. She attended church faithfully until declining health forced her to stay at home.

Written at the request of The Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church in conference Sunday August 3, 2014. One copy will be sent to the family, one copy to The Signs of The Times for publication, and one copy for our church records.

George W. Hyslip, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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HYMM

O, for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heav'nly frame;
A light to shine upon the road,
That leads me to the Lamb!

Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I saw the Lord?
Where is the soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus, and his word?

What peaceful hours I then enjoyed!
How sweet their memory still!
But now I find an aching void
The world can never fill.

Return, O holy Dove! return,
Sweet messenger of rest!
I hate the sins that made thee mourn,
And drove thee from my breast.

The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from thy throne,
And worship only thee.

So shall my walk be close with God,
Calm and serene my frame;
So purer light shall mark the road
That leads me to the Lamb.

Cowper.

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EDITORIAL

"Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: and sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready." Luke 14: 16-17.

Elder J. B. Farmer

How blind are our eyes when it comes to seeing into the scriptures, unless sight is given. How hard are our hearts and incapable of being softened, unless they are worked upon by the Spirit and made tender with love toward God and the brethren. How deaf are our ears from hearing the gospel, unless they are unstopped by a miracle of Christ. How lame are our feet to walk in the truth, and how withered are our hands to do anything good apart from the mercy, grace and power of God. It seems to be too much to think that anything should ever be done for such an unworthy creature such as I see myself to be. Nevertheless, I beg for mercy.

Also, since the scriptures may be understood only with a spiritual understanding, it is impossible that they should be pried into or unraveled by our natural mind. Even the things that seem so obvious on the surface, cannot really be understood with any depth of knowledge apart from the gift of God. So we are made to commit ourselves unto Him for keeping us in the faith and for the things required to understand and rightly divide the word of truth. May He open up our understanding of this parable and make us to rejoice in truth and in hope of eternal life.

In this parable, Jesus presented a man who made a great supper and invited his acquaintances to have a part in it with him. He sent his servant out to tell them that the supper was ready and to bid them to come. Each one gave a reason not to attend and begged to have himself excused. One said he had bought a field and needed to go and see it; one said he had bought a yoke of oxen, and that he went to prove them; and another said he had married a wife and could not come. Their own cares had

taken the attention of each one, and their desires were not for the supper.

In my young days, among those of another belief, I heard this parable set forth in an endeavor to prove that men, of their own supposed free will had refused the invitation of God to have a part in His kingdom. Back then, that seemed to me to be a logical interpretation. But after much anguish of mind, over a long period of time, I trust that I was taught that the Lord, God of heaven and earth does all of his will in the army of heaven among the inhabitants of the earth. I was shown that man does not have a free will, as they assert, but is subject to the sovereign will of God. Their natural and false interpretation of the scriptures, no longer was of any use to me.

I am now made to believe that the truth of the matter is that God rules and reigns. As those men made excuse because they had no interest in the supper, so also the world has no interest in the things of God. Those in nature have never tasted of that kingdom to know that the Lord is gracious. The healthful food of the doctrine of Christ is an abomination to them. The company of those who enjoy spiritual things is not desired by them, and the love abounding among the guests is not shared by them.

So the servant returned and showed his lord these things. The master was angry and told the servant to go quickly into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in the poor and the maimed and the halt and the blind. And the lord told his servant to go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in, that his house may be full. And the lord said to his servant that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of his supper.

In the worldly religions, they use this parable to teach that they, themselves are to go out and aggressively win others to Christ by forceful methods. They teach that if they do not pursue and win others, they will be forever lost and end up in hell. What a futile and frustrating religion it must be which says the things of God may be accomplished by the works of the flesh. But Jesus made it plain about such works of men. He, speaking of those who desire to make disciples to themselves said, "They compass land and sea to make one proselyte, and when they have made him, he is twofold more the child of hell as they are themselves."

The truth, if not deceived, is that the servant in the parable represents the Holy Spirit, which is sent out of God to His children, the poor, the maimed, the halt and the blind. The Holy Spirit finds the poor in spirit, those who have been maimed by the world's religions, those that cannot walk in their own strength, and those that are blind of themselves to see anything of the Spirit. These are compelled to come into the kingdom, which they do in the power and wisdom of God according to His purpose and grace. The Spirit searches out every one and brings him in, and so the Lord's house is full and complete. Not one of God's little ones has ever been overlooked or lost.

Concerning the ones to be called to supper, Jesus said, "When thou

makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor *thy* rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame and the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

I have wondered about this saying of Jesus for years. I always thought that I was doing just what Jesus said not to do. Any time we made a feast at home, it seemed that we always called our church friends or relatives together. But it seems that I had looked upon this only with natural eyes and a hard heart. I was judging by nature what is actually spiritual. It appears now that the dinner or supper or feast that Jesus spoke of is spiritual — that it is the spiritual church meeting of God's little ones. Who is it we desire to be with in meeting? Are they not the saints, who are the poor and maimed and lame and blind spiritually? Who are they, who cannot repay the kindnesses that are extended to them, except those that are the destitute and crippled in this world; the ones who are misunderstood, mistreated, shunned because of their weaknesses; the ones who are pilgrims and strangers here, that have no certain dwelling place because the world is not their home? Is it not the family of God?

Along the same lines, Jesus spoke of a king which made wedding feast for his son. Jesus said, "And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away and cast *him* into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few *are* chosen."

We understand that those who are called into a wedding feast are those that are brought together to celebrate the upcoming marriage of the bridegroom to the bride. In the days of old, it appears that the guests were clothed with particular garments proving that they were the ones chosen to attend the feast. Anyone found without that certain kind of garment was uninvited, unwelcome, and was expelled.

This may seem cruel to those of the worldly religions, since they invite all without discrimination. The wedding garment is to them of no consequence. But it is essential to the King of Kings, that all who attend the wedding feast He prepared for His Son are clothed with the white robe of imputed righteousness of Christ washed in the blood of the Lamb. Those who come any other way than by the shed blood of Christ and in His righteousness are uninvited impostors. Those who come boasting of what they have done have on their own polluted garments. They shall be dealt with without mercy, because they showed no mercy in their lifetimes.

The ways of God and His thoughts are as high above ours as are the heavens above the earth. His ways are not our ways and His thoughts are not our

thoughts. It is no wonder that the things of God are all in a mystery, so that no one is able to intrude into the things of God. God confounds the wise and prudent of this world and brings their best and worst purposes to nought. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: and the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." May He be praised in all things world without end.

This was written in love, I trust, and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J. B. Farmer

ARTICLES

Matthew 11:28-30, "Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

I believe this rest is for the soul that dwells within us. Rest, we need from worry about the church. Sleepless nights, we all have on our earthly minds are the things going on in this life. The soul is in a constant warfare with our earthly minds. He will put His love in our hearts and give us to understand everything is in God's control. **"Every word of God *is* pure: he *is* a shield unto them that put their trust in him," Proverbs 30:5.** How can we put our trust in him if we are not drawn in of God? Jesus said, **"No man can come to me, except the Father which that sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day," John 6:44.** We have a precious hope that the God of heaven has drawn us out of this world of darkness and into that marvelous hope of eternal life. God told the prophet Isaiah, **"Wherefore the Lord said, forasmuch as this people draw near *me* with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men."** We hope and pray that we are not deceiving our people. We also hope the Lord God will not turn the devil loose in our hearts, but will keep us with a pure and loving heart with love and fellowship one to another. We hope that He will **"Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; (for he *is* faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works," Hebrews 10:23-24.** If God gently leads us through the world and guides us and changes our hearts to love Him and one another, we will love Him and one another by the grace of God. God leads His people in a way that is pleasing to Him and not in the way we would go following after our earthly hearts. God's love comes far above everything of this world. Jesus said **"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light," Matthew 11:29-30.** It is a true blessing when the Lord puts this in our hearts. Then we truly feel His love for a moment in time.

I hope with the love of God,
Elder Jimmy Gray

VOICES OF THE PAST

"GREAT MEN ARE NOT ALWAYS WISE"

"But *there is* a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding. Great men are not *always* wise; neither do the aged understand judgement." (Job 32:8-9)

This scripture is the first of many wonderful testimonies given by Elihu unto Job and his two friends, setting forth the power, wisdom and majesty of God. He always ascribed all the praise and glory unto the Creator, who made all things for himself; and whom no man can call in question, or say unto him, What doest thou? Elihu spoke after the others had ceased speaking unto Job, because Job was righteous in his own eyes, and refused to be comforted by them. They had tried to console Job in his afflictions, but he told them that they were miserable comforters to him. They could not comfort Job because the whole of their advice to him could be summed up in this one statement: "If thou wert pure and upright, surely now he would awake for thee and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous."

The reason that this message was of no comfort to Job, was because his defense to them had been to maintain his own integrity. He said, "I will say unto God, Do not condemn; shew me wherefore thou contendest with me. Is it good unto thee, that thou shouldest oppress, that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?" Also, "Not for any injustice in mine hand; also my prayer is pure."

This is not the testimony of one that sees himself a justly condemned sinner. Job was righteous in his own eyes; and as concerning the righteousness that is in the law, he was blameless. God's statement to Satan was, "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, and one that feareth God and escheweth evil." Evidently there was something else that Job needed to have taught to him regarding God and his dealings with the sons of men. This is the lesson that all must learn, if they are children of God. And God alone is the one that teaches them. Saul of Tarsus said that he was a Hebrew and as, "touching the righteousness which is in the Jaw, blameless," prior to his conversion. Elsewhere he testifies that the things that he did before Christ was revealed unto him, he did ignorantly in unbelief. Neither of them had had their understanding enlightened by the inspiration of the Almighty; and after they did, they both spoke the pure language of the children of God that the Lord promised in Zephaniah. They were each shown that it is not by the works of the creature that man gains favor with God.

This is true of every one of the children of God before they are given an understanding of things eternal. They are walking in ignorance and unbelief, regardless of how intelligent they may

be in worldly wisdom. In each instance the understanding is given unto them in a display of the sovereign grace, mercy and love of God for them while they are dead in trespasses and sins. How much more evidence could be given to one that it is of God that sheweth mercy, and not the works of sinful men. This understanding is placed lovingly, but firmly in the heart of the individual, and not just suggested to the natural mind. This is the law that is written upon the fleshly tables of the heart, and cannot be erased or changed. It cannot be erased because he who has placed it there, is God who changes not: therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed. The preparation of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord. It is everlasting, and will lead them in all the paths that are their's to tread. It will cause them to persevere in the face of all opposition, according to the will of him **"Who hath sealed us, and given the earnest of the spirit in our hearts." (2 Cor. 1: 22)** If it has been sealed by God the Father, it is everlasting and sure.

Elihu had refrained from speaking sooner because he was younger than the others. He said, "Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom." He found that this was not necessarily true, because these men were older, and should have been wiser. And yet they did not show evidence of the understanding of the Almighty in their conversation. He therefore spoke even though he was younger: and in so doing, testified with David, "What have I done? Is there not a cause?" David was younger than the warriors, yet he was one that the Lord had raised up for that hour, to stand in the defense of Israel. The Lord uses the things that please him to accomplish his purposes regardless of whether it seems right to man. Elihu had many other things to say that gave evidence that this understanding had been given him, such as, "When He giveth quietness who can cause trouble? And when He hideth his face who can behold him? Whether it be done against a nation or against a man only." And, "Harken unto this, O Job, stand still and consider the wonderous works of God." The conversation of Job and his friends had been about what Job had, or had not done to bring this great trouble upon him. What a difference in that and the testimony of Elihu!

With the understanding comes faith in that which is understood. You cannot understand a thing to be true, and yet have no faith in it. The understanding and the faith are the gifts of God by his Holy Spirit, which quickens one into spiritual life when given him. This has ever been true: as it was in the case of Cain and Abel. Abel's sacrifice was made with an understanding of the true meaning and purpose of the offering. It was offered from the heart, which was prepared of God, in praise and adoration to his heavenly Father. We have the testimony that by faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. The understanding and faith came from the Almighty since he had no example to follow.

Abraham left his home and went into a strange land because he had faith that he who had promised a land of milk and honey, was able to fulfill that which

he had promised. By faith he offered his only son Isaac upon the altar, understanding that God was able to restore his son to him, even though he slay him. This is a beautiful demonstration of how the understanding of the power and majesty of God, and faith in his mercy and grace work together for good to those in whose heart it is implanted.

Joseph was given an understanding above his brothers in the flesh, and it caused him much trouble and sorrow in his life. He was hated by them because he told them things that they did not understand. He was shown in a dream that he would have pre-eminence over them, and it caused them to be jealous of him and desire to kill him. There is a similarity in this with the experience of every child of grace. They are given to see things that the world does not understand. They are looked upon as ignorant, dreamers, old-fashioned, and anything else that is hurtful or unpleasant that can be said about or to them: and all because they are blessed to see the truth. All of this is done unto them because they have been given the inspiration of the Almighty implanted in their hearts; and it is manifested in their conversation and walk, and causes the world to hate them because they do not understand it.

These experiences are repeated many times in the scriptures in the lives of those whom we have the testimony that they are the children of God. In each instance it causes a separation from things, people, and paths with which they have been closely associated in the past. It would seem evident, therefore, that this understanding which is given unto man, is not of the world: because it turns his mind away from the things of the world, and he no longer runs after those things in which he once delighted. He is indeed a new creature: old things have passed away, behold all things have become new.

"The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceful, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits; without partiality and without hypocrisy." These are the things which now fill the hearts of those who have been blessed with this understanding. Their desire is to live peacefully with their brethren in love and sweet fellowship, and to be delivered from the evil and strife that is this earthly life, as they now see it. They realize that they cannot accomplish these things of themselves, and each time they feel the evidence that they are blessed, their praise and adoration goes up to their Heavenly Father for his mercy and loving kindness on such as they see themselves to be.

"And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, even his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life." This again is but another testimony of the love and mercy of God for his children while they sojourn in this low ground of sin and sorrow. They feel to have been given an understanding of things they had not known before; and then this scripture states that this understanding is given that we may know him; and that this is the true God and eternal life. These build line upon line, precept upon precept,

here a little and there a little, but all pointing toward one and the same truth. Every time that understanding is expressed it is given from the Father of lights in whom is no variableness nor shadow of tuning. Therefore if one has ever been given an understanding of these things from the Almighty, he will just as surely receive all of the other blessings that are promised; and in the end eternal life. They will then experience the fullness of the peace, love, and glory of that home the Saviour has prepared for them.

"All scripture is given by the inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and instruction in righteousness, that the of God may be perfect throughly furnished unto all good work." If we know our heart, our desire is to be given an understanding of the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make one wise unto salvation through faith which is in Jesus Christ. We hope that we have been given to see and experience some of these things as we are led in ways that we know not. May the inspiration of the Almighty ever be a light unto our pathway and a lamp unto our feet. When so blessed, we are being led in paths of righteousness for his name's sake, according to the great and precious promises of God who cannot lie.

Job's testimony after God spoke to him out of the whirlwind, is a far different language from what he was saying before. His total testimony then was, "Behold I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken, but I will not answer; yea twice, but I will proceed no further." And again, "I know that thou canst do every *thing*, and *that* no thought can be withholden from thee. Who *is* he that hideth counsel without knowledge? Therefore have I uttered that I understood not: things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak; I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee; Wherefore I abhor *myself* and repent in dust and ashes." Compare these few statements with the chapters of testimony that he had given before this time. It seems that he had a completely different understanding of God and his ways versus man and his accomplishments. He saw that in the sight of God, "All flesh is grass, and the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass." Man's life is but a vapor that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away, and the deeds of the flesh vanish with the life, but the things of the Spirit endureth forever: and this is Job's acknowledgement.

May the God of all grace bless all his children with this understanding, (and he will at his own appointed time,) to comfort them therewith as they travel along in this veil of tears. This understanding leads them in all of their joys and sorrows, seasons of doubt and seasons of confidence, times of peace and times of trouble, periods of weakness and periods of strength, and into all of the things that contribute to the total experience of every child of God. They are all the things that work together for their

good; and all are brought about by the understanding being given, or withheld, according to the divine will and purpose of Almighty God, to teach them their utter dependence on him for all things.

As Peter says, "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertaineth unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." Yes, this knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord is given unto each of his children, and is all that they need; and includes all things that pertain unto life and godliness. The realization of the magnitude of this precious gift being bestowed on one, keeps him humble before Him in love. What grace and peace is theirs when blessed to stand still and behold the wonderous works of their Creator God! What joy when blessed with faith in, and understanding of, the triumph of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ over the sins of his children! And then to have evidence that they are included in that number. This Jesus Christ, "whom having not seen ye love; in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."

This is the whole desire of his children: to be given the understanding and strength to press on by faith to the time when they will receive the end of their faith, and realize the fulness of the salvation of their souls: the salvation which is treasured alone in Christ Jesus their High Priest, who has entered the holiest of holies for them, that they too may enter in because of him, when their earthly pilgrimage is ended.

What a precious legacy for those to whom the inspiration of the Lord has given understanding by measure to strengthen them along the pathway of their earthly journey — strength sufficient for the day.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell,

SERMON OF ELDER KENNETH KEY - 1984 STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

In the 25th verse of St. John, the 5th Chapter, you will find these words: **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."**

He is speaking of that day - Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when they that hear the voice of God shall live and we believe that it is, this day, the now is, that they are hearing the voice of the Son of God.

As you have sat here on this hillside throughout this day and throughout this meeting, have been hearing the voice of the Son of God as He spake to you through his ministers that He had called and qualified and brought and filled their mouths with words that would be com-

forting unto your soul: The hour is coming; the hour is coming and now is for every heir of God which hear His voice. As you heard, as He speaks to his sheep: they hear my voice and a stranger they will not follow. We know there are some who say that you don't hear the voice of God, but I believe with all of my heart that He speaks to his sheep and they hear his voice. It might not be an audible voice as you are hearing me this afternoon but it could be a small still voice that He speaks to you. And when He speaks to you I believe you know his voice. I believe you know the One that is speaking to you. I believe that every heir of promise, everyone whose name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life, that sometime between the cradle and the grave they shall hear His voice and I believe that they will heed that call. We who were born in sin and trespasses, we who were lost in trespasses and sin, children of wrath even as others; we who this day profess a hope in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, there is a reason this afternoon that you have a profession of this hope. There is a reason that you come to believe in Him. There is a reason that you look unto Him as your Shepherd. There is a reason He has stirred up your pure minds. He has manifested within you that spirit that has given you life, that spirit that has given you to hunger and to thirst for righteousness here in this world, that spirit that has caused you to drive for many, many miles to come and be with those of like precious faith that you might speak one to another, that you might hear the experiences of those of your brethren, that you might find that you have something in common with them that you might know that you are not traveling this way alone, that you might know that there are fellow travelers traveling along with you.

This afternoon, dear beloved, the time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God. I believe that every heir of promise does hear this voice and they do follow Him. I believe you will leave whatever you are doing when He says. "come and follow me." "Take up the cross and follow me."

If we are partakers of the spirit of God, if we are one of the heirs of promise, we must partake of the suffering of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We must take up the cross with Him, we must suffer with Him here in this world if we are to reign with Him in that world to come. And it is our precious hope this evening, as we heard the dear father who stood before you standing and trembling, coming as it were down to the end; the sunset of life, yet triumphant in that faith, speaking of how good that God has been to him, He had fought the battle for him.

Oh dearly beloved, haven't you learned already that you don't have to fight these battles; that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, that they are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. He fights the battles for his children. Aren't you glad this afternoon you have been taught that you were out of tools and timbers, that we have nothing to fight with, that we stand as little children, that we come humble, that we come cast down, sometimes, but

thanks be unto God we are not destroyed. That precious hope that He that has begun the work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. What a glorious way it is. How thankful we are this afternoon for the blessed hope that we feel is given us within our breast, that He stirred up our pure mind, gave us to feel that He is our heavenly Father, caused us to seek that which is food for our hungry souls, given us to hunger and thirst for something that is better than this time world could ever give, given us to hunger and thirst for something that can only come from His storehouse of mercy and aren't you glad this afternoon that the provisions have already been made for you, stored up in this storehouse of mercy, His grace sufficient for all your needs while here in this world. He that has called you from nature's darkness, brought you into the fellowship and the light for His precious sake and taught you to know that He has there every needed grace that you will stand in need of here in this world.

Haven't you learned already, as He said unto the Apostle Paul: My grace is sufficient. Haven't you learned already these things? How gracious and how good God is? And that His mercy is from everlasting to everlasting. Through every trial you have ever had in this world He has been there with you to comfort you: A VERY PRESENT HELP IN THE TIME OF NEED. What a gracious heavenly Father we have this afternoon. How thankful we are that He has promised never to leave us, never to forsake us, to be with us always, even unto the end of the world. Isn't it a precious promise, dear mothers and fathers in Israel, this afternoon that He has promised these things and you who have lived longer than some, how you have been made to know these precious truths, how fulfilling they are to you when you come to travel through the valleys, the shadows of death, and to feel His presence with you, the power to lift you up when you come to the end of your way when you felt there was no way to turn, that you couldn't go on, the burden is too great, you just couldn't stand up. And yet, in some miraculous way you felt strength, you felt at ease, you felt that peace that passeth all understanding.

Yes, I believe the time is coming, and now is, when the children of God shall hear His voice and they know from whence it comes, and they will be given to trust in Him as they journey from day to day as One who would go with them. Oh, how wonderful it is, I want to tell you if you are His, you are not walking alone because He is with you. He ascended back to the Father. He said it is necessary that I go away but if I go away I will send the holy Comforter and he shall abide with you always. Oh, what a blessing this is. As we journey we journey along, the older we get the more we realize that this world — the dear brother said a minute ago, this world is not my home. Dear beloved, the older we get the more we realize that this world is not our home. That man born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble and we are journeying through a desert land while here. We are suffering with Him if we are to reign with him. And dear beloved, as we journey on, as the trials and

afflictions of life rain upon you, and as the times come when you feel you can't stand up and you can't go on, this is a God who makes a way for you when you think there is no way.

We find Mary and Martha as they went to the tomb to see the Saviour, as they went along the journey no doubt they pondered in their minds: Who shall roll the stone away? It just seemed like there was a big stone there in the way, they couldn't roll it away. Sometimes that burden becomes so great that we wish we could roll the stone away, we wish we could roll the burden away, but when tomorrow comes we find the way has been opened up.

This God of heaven who promised never to leave you and never to forsake you knows all of the circumstances. There's nothing that we can acquaint Him with that He doesn't already know. You, who may be feeling that surely there is no one like you, that your trials and your afflictions and your sorrows are greater than any. And you begin to worry with old Gideon of old. If indeed I have found grace in thy sight, why have these things befallen me? And yet we feel to know that if we are to reign with Him we must suffer with Him. And in this life He said ye shall have trials and tribulations. I don't want to preach to you, I would love to, but the Bible doesn't teach it, and I haven't learned it from experience, that this would be an easy way for He said, in this world you shall have trials and tribulations. He said that your bread, the bread I will feed you is the bread of adversity. Ye shall drink the water of affliction. That is your food, that is your drink as ye journey here. But it is not all sorrow, it's not all down in the valley but there are times of being upon the mountain top. There are times when we want to sing praises unto His great and matchless name for the things that He has done for us. Oh how good He is!

And as we have heard this morning, He doesn't withhold any good thing from Israel. Sometimes our greatest blessings come in the trials of afflictions. If we are never brought down, if there is never a famine in our lives, I doubt if we would be here today, I doubt if we would know any of the joys of the fellowship and the love of God's children. But through these trials, through the afflictions, through the famine that we have to come to, we are brought down to the feet of Jesus and from there we can look up and praise His great and matchless name and know it's from Him that every good and every perfect gift comes.

When you are down, when you were cast down, when you became stirred up in your pure minds, when you didn't know, maybe, what was the matter with you, you didn't know and you went from day to day. One brother, I believe he said he went for three years under the burden of the ministry.

That was my experience. I went for three years under the burden that some day I would have to come and to stand before God's people and it came to me, it started in a dream at night and I could see myself standing before the pulpit speaking to God's people and the text that He gave me then was "Fear not him that is able to destroy the body, but to fear Him who is able to destroy both

body and soul." I woke up then troubled. Troubled, troubled was I. I was never, never was there anyone who felt as unworthy as I was. I was so bashful in my boyhood days. I couldn't stand before my school class and speak unto them. It just scared me to death. And when this came unto me I felt that I couldn't go. Surely this dream will pass and I can find relief. But it didn't pass. It was on my mind every day. Every hour. I tried to get involved in work. I tried to pass it away. I tried to think of everything else but it would come back again. It troubled me.

I can tell you this afternoon some of the experiences of Jonah as I had to go down to the depths as he went. This went on for several months and the Lord, I hope it was the Lord, visited me again in a dream and it stirred me up even more. And I began to get sick, I began to be troubled. I began to go to doctors. I didn't seek the help of the Lord. I didn't cry unto Him. It seems that I was seeking the help of man. I went to many doctors. I went to a chiropractor doctor for nine months for three nights a week. Someone told me that they would be good for your nerves, that they could help you but the last trip I went I left his office as miserable as ever before. As I found no temporary relief, I finally decided I was going to a medical doctor and I told him: I have no physical pain, I have no physical pain, but I feel I am going to die. I feel that I can't live. He told me that this is something that you have inherited. You will just have to live with it.

How many nights I have had to rise from my bed and sit in the living room by myself in a chair, just sitting and waiting to die. This is a miserable, this is a horrible pit. These trials, we learn obedience to Him and time passed on but I got no relief. I got worse and worse. My wife would have to get up at night and carry me to the doctor. I hope you can bear with me. I want to tell of these blessed things that have been precious to me. As I look back upon it, as you've heard so much here today as the dear elders have looked back in their Book of Remembrance that the Lord has written for them to talk of these things, to tell you just a little bit of the journey and the way that we've come.

And as time went on and finally one night, after a period of three years, I was awakened in another dream. But before this time, if you will bear with me - I felt that I didn't know the letter of this Book (resting his hand on the Bible). I didn't know anything about the Bible and I knew that our people didn't believe in seminaries. They didn't believe in going to school (to learn to preach). I just thought: if I could just slip out at night I would attend this biblical college here. I would learn the letter and if it pleases God He could reveal it to me.

And in a few nights another dream was given to me. And this time I awoke, my pillow was wet with tears, I had been crying. I saw myself again standing in this place. And the scripture that was given to me for a text that night: And they shall all be taught of the Lord, they shall all be taught of the Lord. And I had been begging for more evidence as I went along in this trial of three years I begged for more evidence and finally I went to my pastor, I told him of my troubles and I told

him of the experiences I had been having. And he said, I appreciate your coming to me but we have been looking for you for a long time-! He asked me if I would come and take a part in the next service. I told him I couldn't do so, I want more evidence, I want more evidence, I want to be more sure of this thing. I don't want to do that yet. Let's just wait a while. And that's when the dream was given to me: They shall all be taught of the Lord. And I woke up. And the congregation was singing! "How Firm a Foundation Ye Saints Of The Lord." When they came to the verse in the song: "What more can he say than to you he hath said," it was like a record stuck. It was over and over. What more can he say than to you he hath said? And it kept over and over. I awoke from my dream and it was then I was given to go talk to my pastor.

And a few months after that the deacons came to my home. They wanted me to open service next meeting. And I said, No, no, I want more evidence and finally one day when our pastor was away and we had a visiting elder, Elder Ingram was there, and they called on me again. They didn't ask me if I would take part, but the deacons asked me to open service. Elder Ingram invited me into the stand with him and I went into the stand with him and there attempted my first time to speak in praise and honor to the God that I feel I was made to love to this very day. And from that time until now that burden, that burden that I was dying, was taken away from me. My nerves were strengthened. I have had no more trouble with it until this day, but I don't thank the doctors because I believe I know from hence my help comes.

I believe I know that my help cometh from the Lord. Before this came to the end I was at the Association and the old elder was speaking from the 121st Psalm where David is saying, that I will lift mine eyes to the hills from whence cometh my help and I believe if I've ever heard the voice of God, I believe it spoke to me and it was like a voice saying, you've been going to the wrong doctor and if I've ever tried to pray in my life, I believe I tried to pray then, but it was to a different doctor. It was to the heavenly Physician. One that is able and does heal all manner of sickness. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

If you hear these blessed truths, if you've been taught in your heart, and these things have been written in your mind, you shall live. Jesus said I give unto you everlasting life and ye shall never perish. You are cast down but you are not destroyed. You are in a safe place as you've heard today, that our lives are hid in Christ, God. It's in a safe place. And He knows your circumstances here in this life and He'll be with you all of the way. I believe I know from experiences these things, that I can testify to you, and if I had only read of these things or someone had told me of them I'd be a false witness as I stand before you. I believe these are some of the things that God has shown me, that God has taught me and I believe that they that hear the voice of the Son of God SHALL LIVE. I believe the children of the world

don't hear His voice. I believe they are the ones that make fun when you try to tell them of your experience. I believe they are the ones who these things have been hid from and it pleased the heavenly Father to do so. We don't understand it, we don't know why these things are hid from them, but He said, "I thank thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

Dear beloved, you have something this afternoon. It's a precious thing, it's worth more to you than all the gold of Ophir, all the cattle of a thousand hills. It's worth more than all of the money in this world. It's the only thing you've got that doesn't perish with the using.

This everlasting life, this is something that is with you through this life. It's an anchor to your soul both sure and steadfast. It's with you here for all of your needs. It's a stay, it's a rod, it's something to hold you up. It's something to keep you pressing on through all afflictions. It's something that's precious, and it gives you fellowship one with the other. It gives you that love that flows from heart to heart and from breast to breast. Oh what joy it is! Yea, it's not all in sorrow, it's not all in distress, it's not all cast down. But there are times of joy when we can rejoice together as we talk of these blessed truths. This heavenly Father who has called us with an heavenly calling. Oh, how precious it is, AND THEY SHALL HEAR THE VOICE OF THE SON OF GOD AND THEY THAT HEAR SHALL LIVE, and then He says: Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice." Yes, the time is coming when they that are in the grave shall hear His voice. If in this life only you had hope you would be of all men most miserable.

But dear beloved, there is something better waiting for you. Here you have had only a little taste, it's been sweet to your taste, and you desire more of it and you would get more of it if you could but He gives it to you daily, that daily bread — that which He would have you to have. He drops it down as hands full of purpose. It's not accidently that you get it, but it's by purpose that you get it. Every child of promise is going to get everything that God has in store for him. It's going to come down as handsfull of purpose so as we journey – Oh, may He give you grace to press on and as you've heard you will receive little tokens along the way. You'll receive a little more evidence here and there to keep you pressing onward and upward toward the mark of the prize of the high calling. Oh, how wonderful it is that He is with you and that He gives you a little sign here and there to give you to know that this is the Christ and besides Him there is no other.

I want to tell of a little experience that I had a few days ago as we stood one night in the bedroom of this loved one. He seemingly had a few days to live and is now passed on. He asked that we have prayer together. And while we were there in prayer in this room I witnessed there a light with my eyes closed — that room lit up brighter than any light I have ever seen. I asked my wife and those that were with me when we

left this home, Did you see any light? Was there a light turned on while I was bowed in prayer? There was none they said. But it was the brightest light that I've ever seen and I believe surely that He was present there with us.

Oh, how these things humble us, how they cause us to fear and to tremble. It's a fearful thing to fall in the hands of the living God. Just a few days after that he was called home.

These blessed things, these little experiences we have, they are they which keep us pressing on through all of the trials and all of the troubles that you have here. They are nothing to be compared with that which God has in store for you. May He continue to be with each of you, grant unto you every needed blessing and every day that you might be given to say, The Lord is my shepherd. May He give you these things to comfort you and to keep you pressing on. We wouldn't ask Him to change that which He has ordained or purposed. No, it's never been my prayer to have Him lay all these qualities aside. I want to suffer with Him, I want to suffer with Him because I know we must if we are to reign with Him. And it is our precious hope that we some day shall see Him, be made like unto Him and there be satisfied. May God continue his blessings upon you and as you journey on, comfort you from day to day.

And the time is coming that they that are in the grave shall hear. One day He's going to call those from the sleeping dust wherever they are. The final end of time and when that resurrection day comes He's going to call all of those and it's going to be the ones I believe John saw on the Isle of Patmos. He said those that he saw he inquired who they were, they are those that have come through great trials and tribulations. Dear beloved, you have to go through them. There is no detour. There's no way around them. Those who have come through great trials and tribulations and their robes have been washed in the blood of the Lamb and made white as snow. It is our hope this afternoon and through the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ that we do have this precious hope. If the grave had been able to hold Him we would have no hope beyond the grave, BUT HE AROSE FROM THE GRAVE. He arose, ascended back to the Father and is there making intercession for you and He knows everything that you need and He will not withhold any good thing from you. May God bless you, may He give you encouragement to press on when your troubles come. Don't think it's because He has forsaken you because your Saviour suffered for you, He paid the redemption price, He suffered, He was acquainted with grief, He knew sorrow. May God bless you and keep you, may we continue to journey in that oneness of faith, in that oneness of unity of the spirit, and may we continue to enjoy that sweet fellowship and the desire that we might meet together from time to time, one with another.

SERMON BY ELDER W. C. KING AT THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION 1960

I read from the 31st chapter of the prophecy of Jeremiah, beginning with the 31st verse:

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

If there is any part of this that would claim my attention more than another, it is the last part of the 33rd verse: "I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

I have listened attentively to the preaching this morning, and have been much elated; and have rejoiced that I am permitted to be in your midst again, to behold your faces, and renew the blessed fellowship that has been so precious to me through the years.

I desire most of all that I might be endued with wisdom from on high, that I might be able to rightly divide the word of truth, and set forth the things in order that are believed among God's people. I do not desire to bring something new to you, something foreign to your experience, if you have an experience of grace. If God would bless me, I would comfort the Lord's people, and, "Speak comfortably unto Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, and that she has received double at the Lord's hand for all her sins."

I feel it is such a great privilege and such a great blessing that this great concourse of people could be gathered here from all over the regions around about; that we might come for one purpose, with one desire in our hearts: that we might worship God in spirit and in truth.

The prophet spoke concerning the coming of this great day, — of the gospel era that was to come; this covenant that God was to make with his people; this covenant of the Lord Jesus Christ— how that it should be written in their hearts, and put in their inward parts. We feel that this was so perfectly done that it has never failed in any sense of the word. For where God has begun this work in the heart of a poor sinner, he will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ.

Now there may be periods in our lives — certainly when we have first been brought into the knowledge of this glorious truth, that we have been made to inquire, "Is this the way; is this the Christ?" With much anxiety, and much prayerful thought, these things have come. Notwithstanding, I feel that I can

say that when this deliverance has come, and you feel that you can point back to a place and time when the Lord translated you from the kingdom of darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God, and you were made to rejoice in a blessed hope in the Lord Jesus, you may then have felt that you would never have another doubt about a hope in the Lord; but I believe that your experience has taught you that time and again you have been made to ask, "Is this the Christ, or shall I seek another?" "Is this the way?" You desire that you might have greater knowledge; you desire that you might have a clearer conception of this blessed hope. Yet you would not exchange it for anything in this world. I asked a dear, precious sister a few days ago when my wife and I visited her in her sickness, and she began to tell of someone who had such good evidence of a hope, and that if she had such experience she felt she wouldn't have a doubt; I asked, "Would you exchange the hope you have for your sister's hope? Would you exchange your hope for anybody's?" And she replied, "No! I would rather have my hope than anybody's I know of."

So I want to say to you, my beloved, that your hope may seem small at times; you may feel a leaness and poverty of soul at times as you travel in this low ground of trouble and sorrow, for this world is not a place of ease for the church of the living God. "In this world ye shall have tribulation." Jesus told his people that just as surely as he told them that they would have peace. It is just as necessary for the church to have trials and afflictions, as it is for them to have peace. But I want to assure you that God will never suffer more to be placed upon you, than he will give you grace to bear. He will never suffer what he has placed in your bosom, which has been an anchor sure and steadfast to your soul, to be removed forever. I feel just as sure of that, as that I stand before you today; and I am confident that he will continue to manifest his love to you, and his mercy to you.

The Scriptures tell us how He led Israel as a father when He led them by the hand. We think of such compassionate love, and such care and thoughtfulness, as an earthly father caring for his own children as he leads them by the hand. How many times have you had that experience? You know that if a child would grasp your hand, he would have no more strength than that which he possesses; but if you grasp the child's hand, then you can bear the child over many of the rough places of life, because you have sufficient strength to care for it.

So, my friends, if you were left to grasp the hand of the eternal; if you were the one who had to hold the hand of God in order to be securely carried over the pitfalls, you would fall by the wayside. But the blessed arm of the eternal Father is underneath his people: that one who cannot fail, that one who never sleeps nor slumbers, and is ever mindful of the cries of his people. There has never been a time when the child of God has been out of reach of the Father's notice. Though they walk through the valley of the shadow of death, they are made to feel, "I will fear no evil." Why? Because,

"Thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

Beloved, if our Father did not go with us in these places, wouldn't there be weeping and wailing? But as we are made to feel that his precious presence is with us, and he gives us grace to bear every thorn, and grace to bear every opposition that comes, we are made to say that we know that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

How blessed, indeed, is this: "I will be their God." Sometime ago, as I read this scripture, I thought how perfect it was that first things were put first: that God said, "I will be their God." He did not say that if we would be a people unto him, he would be a God unto us. He didn't place it that way; but he placed first things first, that, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

So, my beloved, we would not have that allegiance to God; we would not have faith to trust him; we would not have power to believe in him, if he did not first manifest himself to us. He loved us — he manifested himself unto us. We love him because he first loved us: that's the reason why. You would still be in the world; you would still be yonder in some place of amusement, where you could find diversion for your carnal and sinful mind, if it were not for the grace and mercy of God.

But God stirs you up: he found you somewhere along life's highway and there caused you to be concerned, as the fire that burned in the bush and consumed it not. There was something that caused your attention to be turned, and God hasn't failed to make things attractive to you. And we might ask ourselves why we were attracted to the Old Baptist Church; why we were attracted to this people, of whom it has been said so many times that they will all soon be dead — all soon be gone.

This morning someone told me that this church (Chestnut Church — Ed.) was organized in 1828, and as I thought of this span of years, I wondered how many ministers have labored here. And as I came here today and beheld the order of this crowd, and saw their attentiveness, I saw their steadfastness and their faces turned toward Zion, and was made to rejoice that God is still alive, and still stirring up the pure mind of his people. Therefore He could say to them, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." There are shalls here. They are brought into this sweet relationship with God; and I don't believe that it is possible for you to turn back into the beggerly elements of this life: I don't believe you even want to. God works the in you: both the will and the to do of his own good pleasure. He establishes that will there, and you are made willing in the day of his power.

God's people are not brought into this relationship against their will. They come humbly, feeling their unworthiness. They come to the church feeling their unprofitableness to the church of God. But notwithstanding, they see the church as a city set upon a hill; they see her in her beauty and her glory, and they long to live with her, and be tied together with the cords of His love. They desire that fellow-

ship; they desire the ordinance of baptism — they want to go down in the liquid grave as their Lord and Master went. They want that: I just believe they do.

How many times have we seen the hungry sheep around the fold — on the outside, hungering for the word of God, thirsting and panting as a hart panting after the water brook. When God removes everything out of the way, it is removed. How many times have we seen the saints of God, and hear them express themselves that they would like to go to the church, but feel they can't go. But one day something takes place that removes these obstacles, and they are made willing to go home to the church and tell them what great things the Lord has done for them, whereof they are glad.

My beloved, God is reigning above just like he is on the earth. He sends his showers, his blessings, and they are all from his bountiful hand. We have a blessed hope that one day we shall be gathered together in one innumerable host, and be brought into that sweet relationship with our Lord and Saviour, to see him as he is, and be like him and be satisfied forever.

So, if we are separated to meet no more here, I feel that in that bright and glorious day our ship is going to land in that peaceful port, where peace and joy will be forever; where neither sickness and sorrow nor death will ever come; and where we shall be able to ascribe honor, and praise, and glory to Him forever. May God bless you.

(The above is from a recording and is slightly condensed for publication. — J.D.W.)

HOSEA VI:I.

"Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up."

The languaage of Ephraim and Judah in the text, implies a confession that they had departed from the Lord, and had gone into idolatry, and that the Lord in covenant faithfulness had humbled them by sore chastisement. As he had said in chapter v. 14, "For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah; I, even I, will tear and go away; I will take away, and none shall rescue him." These fearful judgments had been felt, and being thus abased before the Lord, their language is, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord." They acknowledge that the hand of the Lord had been upon them, and that he alone could heal them. In the prophetic import of the subject, Judah and Ephraim appear to represent the church of God in her gospel organization, who, like the type, manifests a strong inclination to run into idolatry, by departing from the Lord in doctrine, in practice and in the discipline and order of his house. In all such cases, God is faithful to the provisions of his covenant. He will, and he does, visit the transgressions of his children with a rod, and their iniquities with many stripes, until they feel suitably humbled, feel a contrition of heart for their follies, and a desire to return to the order of the gospel. Then their language will be like that of Judah and Ephraim, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord." They understand that

afflictions have not arisen up out of the dust, nor their troubles come upon them by chance. The Lord has torn them, and he alone can heal the breach. When churches forsake the laws and ordinances of the gospel, depart from the simplicity of the doctrine and practice which he has laid down and enjoined, they soon become tom, divided and scattered, they lose that heavenly love and unity, so far as the sensible enjoyment of it is considered, and they are made to feel the folly of their course. With deep repentance they are then heard to say, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord," for it is his hand that is upon us, and he alone can heal us. An assurance springs up in their heart; faith in them revived, lays hold of the new covenant promise that he will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities he will remember no more.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y., Jan. 1, 1855.

MEETINGS

SKEWARKEY UNION
(Eastern Kehukee Association)

Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of November 30, 2014. The church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albemarle Avenue in Tarboro, NC. Preaching services begin at 10:30am.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

LOWER MAYO
FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday, November 30th, 2014. We hope to start singing at 10:00 a.m and preaching at 10:30 a.m. Russell Creek Church will host the meeting.

Directions for those that do not know the location: the meeting house is at 242 Moorefield Store Road, Stuart, Va. 24171. Coming North or South on VA #8, turn east on Ayers Orchard Road, #653. Go 1 mile to Moorefield Store Road, #631. Turn right, go 1/4 mile to church on right. Coming east or west on US#58, turn south on Southfork Farm Loop, #827 to Ayers Orchard Road, #653. Go 3 miles to Moorefield Store Road, #631. Turn left, go 1/4 mile to church on right. Coming west on NC#704, turn north on VA-Line Road, #1730. Go 1 mile and turn left on Moorefield Store Road, #631. Go 2 1/2 miles to church on left.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union will be held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church located on corner of Weatherford Drive and Music Street, Gretna, VA in Pittsylvania County. Saturday before the fifth Sunday in November 2014 the song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton, Clerk
Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held the fifth Sunday November 30th, 2014 at Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church, located at corner of Tate and Carr Streets in Greensboro, NC. Preaching service begins at 10:30 A.M.

We welcome and invite the ministers of our faith and order as well as our brethren and friends to be with us.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Mod.
Brother Wayne Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 2014

Beth Mansfield, ME 60.00
"In honor of Helen Bailey"

Exie Vanvactor, KY 5.00

Donald Agee, VA 5.00

Steve Everett, VA 25.00

Jerry Somers, VA 5.00

Oscar Pickral, VA 5.00

Dale Richards, TX 50.00

Judy Poindexter, VA 5.00

Lois Dalton, VA 5.00

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I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

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Signs of the Times

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" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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HYMN

Isa. 8:24.

JESUS, before thy face I fall,
My Lord, my life, my hope, my all;
For I have no where else to flee;
No sanctuary, Lord, but thee.

In thee I every glory view,
Of safety, strength, and beauty, too:
Beloved Saviour, ever be
A sanctuary unto me.

Whatever woes and fears betide,
In thy dear bosom let me hide;
And, while I pour my soul to thee,
Do thou my sanctuary be.

Through life and all its changing scenes,
And all the grief that intervenes,
'Tis this supports my fainting heart,
That thou my sanctuary art.

Apace the solemn hour draws nigh,
When I must bow my head and die;
But O, what joy this witness gives,-
Jesus, my sanctuary, lives.

He from the grave my dust will raise;
I in the heavens will sing his praise;
And when in glory I appear,
He'll be my sanctuary there.

Medley.

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EDITORIAL

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son..." Hebrews 1:1-2.

Elder J. B. Farmer

My mind has been employed from time to time over the years concerning the ways that the Lord God has communicated with His children through the ages. It seems evident from the scriptures that the Lord spoke in a certain way with Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and with others such as the prophets of the Old Testament, and another way with the apostles while He was bodily here upon the earth, and still another way with the saints after His death and resurrection.

We have noticed that the scriptures were being given as the Old Testament saints lived their lives. Meticulous records were kept of their births and deaths and their troubles and joys, and of the way the Lord led them and preserved them from their enemies. It seems that these accounts were shared in the chosen families and preserved. And then God gave the law unto Moses, and the pattern for the tabernacle, and the instructions for the priesthood; and all things were done accordingly. But how did the other children of God receive their teachings in the days before Moses?

We read how that the Lord spoke individually to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden and gave them commandments concerning what they must and must not do. And we read how He spoke directly to Noah to give him the commandment to build the ark, and how He established His covenant with him. We read how the Lord visited Abraham and told him he must get out from his country, his kindred, and his father's house, and that he must go to a land that the Lord would show him. We read how He spoke to Moses from the burning bush on the backside of the desert at Mount Horeb, and sent him to Pharaoh to bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt. The Lord spoke directly to them and His prophets that followed them, and they

instructed the others around them as the Lord gave them commandment.

After the tabernacle was built, and the priestly service was established, the people had a definite place to go to worship and to be instructed in the teachings of God. According to scripture, there were over six hundred thousand men, not counting women and children, who were brought out of Egyptian bondage. When the women and children were added to the number, there must have been several million people in all. The people must have been spread over an immense expanse of land, and some would have been living a great distance from the tabernacle that was located at the center of the twelve tribes. In the days of Jesus and the apostles and even before then, there were synagogues, or remote meeting places, positioned conveniently for the people who were at a great distance from the temple (which had replaced the tabernacle), and who were not able to make the journey there. It seems that convenient meeting places also must have been established for the people in the time of Moses.

Also, since the tabernacle could not possibly have held all the people at one time, it seems that for all of them to have been instructed in the law, conveniently located meeting places such as synagogues would have been in order. What was a synagogue like? How was it set up, and who officiated in the meetings, and what was the service like? We have some information about them from the days of Jesus and the apostles as they went into them to take a part in their services. And we have historical information from their day that describes both the physical layout and the order of the service.

The interior of the meeting place was simple with a bench facing the congregation for the elders to occupy. It was located on the far wall opposite the entrance. There was a box or ark in front of the bench containing the scroll of Scripture where the speaker stood. The benches for the congregation faced the elders. The men in the congregation sat on one side of the building and the women sat on the other side.

The ancient service consisted of reading the scripture, prayer, singing, and preaching or giving the sense of the scriptures. The officials of the synagogue were these: The moderating elder was charged with keeping order and explaining the scriptures. There was one that was appointed to read the scriptures, some to sing, and one to lead the prayer. A few of the male members were charged with taking care of the meeting place and the distribution of material goods. Any visiting elder was invited to speak. Some of this sounds very familiar to Old Baptists. Their order has very ancient roots.

What was the doctrine from the very most ancient times? Did it ever change, or is it eternal? The doctrine we find from the beginning of creation is the sovereignty of God and His love and mercy to His elect people. We find the old saints looking for the coming of the Savior to the earth to redeem them from their sins and transgressions. We see the saints being encouraged in mercy and truth, in love and forgiveness, and in honesty and

integrity in their walk and talk. These things have never changed. Even though the law was severe toward unbelievers, there was never a time when there was no mercy for the believing children of God. Faith in God, and love, and hope of eternal life has always been central to their religion through the ages.

The fathers were given dreams and visions for direction, and so were the apostles in the time of Christ on earth. The prophets also were blessed to prophesy of the coming of the Lord and of His rejection and suffering, and even of His resurrection from the dead. But when the Lord came in the flesh and revealed Himself to the sons of men, He spoke to them face to face. He showed them the heart of the loving and merciful God. He showed them the perfect life, and lived without sin or the respect of men's persons. He showed them the power of God in that He healed all manner of disease and sickness, and even raised the dead. He showed patience, long suffering, mercy, and grace. It was made plain that in Him dwelled all the fullness of the Godhead or Deity in His own body. All power was given Him in heaven and in earth. Jesus said to His disciples, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father."

The Lord showed the ultimate love of God in that He laid down His life willingly to atone for the sins of all the elect children of God. He showed the power of the living God that was in Him in that He took up His life again and arose from the dead. He showed that He is the true God in that He ascended into heaven in the sight of them all. He showed His care for His little ones in that He sent His Holy Spirit, the Comforter, into the hearts of His people to keep them and to teach them the things of the Spirit of God until He would come again to receive them to Himself. He gave them the gift of faith to believe upon Him and to trust in Him, and He gave them an abiding Hope, which is Christ in you the Hope of glory. And He gave them a tender heart of love toward God and His children.

The Church, when first established, had only the Old Testament for scriptures. They were written primarily in Hebrew and translated into Greek, which was the common language of the people in that day. Through them, believers were instructed in the truth by way of the Holy Spirit. At that time the scriptures were kept in the synagogues, and individuals didn't have copies as we do today. After the Resurrection of Jesus, the four eye-witness accounts of His life were made accessible to the believers in the Churches so they might know of His words and deeds. The book of Acts followed documenting the Lord's dealing with the apostles up until the time just before the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem. Also, the epistles or letters of the apostles came into the possession of the Churches after they were copied and distributed. These were all written in Greek. All the individual books of the scriptures were not compiled into the Bible, as we know it, until after the time of the apostle's deaths. Since then, the scriptures have been translated into almost every language of the world. There have been no scriptures written

since then, although many deceivers have claimed that they produced inspired writings.

The Lord spoke directly to the ancient fathers, and after that spoke to the people through the prophets up until Christ came bodily into the world. Then Christ spoke to men face to face until He ascended to heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father. Since then He has spoken to His people by way of His Holy Spirit, to teach, comfort and keep them from the evil of this world until He returns.

Where then does the preaching of the gospel fit in? The gospel is foolishness to them that perish, but it is the power of God to them who believe, both Jew and Greek. True preaching is given of God and is used of Him to stir up and bring to the mind of the saints the truth that God has embedded in their hearts. God has always dealt directly with His people whether it was through prophets, Old or New Testament scriptures, dreams, visions, preaching, or by way of touching their hearts individually without any other influence. We may say He has always dealt directly with each one of His children because the work is altogether His, and is not at all of men. If we have tasted that He is gracious, if we have been given a love for Him and His children, and if we have been given a desire to please Him, we may have much assurance that we have heard Him speak, and that we have passed from death to life.

All praise, honor and glory is due to Him who has condescended to make myself known unto the sons of men. His mercy endures forever. **"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son..."**

I trust this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

10-7-14

Dear Brother Horton,

Please renew my subscription for 2 years.

I enjoy reading the experiences of the saints and the old writers. I especially enjoy Thompson and Smoot.

May God bless you all with the strength and knowledge to continue publishing the Signs. The truths therein are much needed and appreciated in these perilous times in which we are living.

In hope,
Vera Potter
486 Hwy 590
Ellisville, MS 39437

Brother Tony Horton,

Perhaps the wise words of Solomon as recorded in Proverbs 25:11 best express how I feel concerning the "Signs of the Times." "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

It is indeed an overwhelming joy to still be able to receive the "Signs of the Times" in all likelihood one of the only still sound Primitive Baptist publications still in print. I can only speak for myself when I say a great void would be in my life if it wasn't for the "signs." I'm sure countless others feel this way also.

With that said, please find my renewal enclosed for the next two years, with the remainder to be used as you see fit for the continuance of the paper.

Humbly submitted with kind regards.

Steve A. Everett
1052 Middle View Dr.
Forest, VA 24551

Sept., 2014

To Whom It May Concern,

Please remove Elder V. B. Linn from your mailing list for the *Signs of the Times.* Elder Linn was the pastor of the Leading Creek Primitive Baptist Church in Montrose, WV. His personal address was Serenity Care, 269 Little Sand Run Road, Buckhannon, WV 26101. He asked that we send you a copy of his obituary for publication in the *Signs of the Times.* A copy of his obituary is enclosed.

I would like to have only four copies of that particular edition with his obituary. These copies will be given to his children, I being one of them. I have enclosed a $10.00 check for those copies. I hope that this amount will be sufficient to cover the cost. Thank you.

Benny Linn
181 Suzanne Street
Washington, WV 26181

October 20, 2014

Mr. Tony Horton,
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Virginia 24343

Dear Brother Tony,

Enclosed is a check in the amount of $40.00 for a flash drive of the digitized "Signs of the Times." I spoke with you concerning obtaining the flash drive at the Smith River Association meeting, and I have been remiss in getting the request to you. This is partly because my computer has been out of service.

May God continue to bless you as you serve in the capacity as Circulation Manager and Treasurer. I look forward to receiving my copy each month.

I send my regards to your family and trust that things are going well with Austin here at Guilford College.

In love and hope,
Sarah Sidbury
1436 Talbot Rd.
Pleasant Garden, NC 27313

Dear Tony,

Enclosed you will find my check for renewal of my subscription to the Signs of the Times for two more years.

May the Lord continue to bless you and the Editors of the Signs in your efforts to send out the truths of God's messages to his hungry children.

With Love,
Carlton & Ruby Sumner

VOICES OF THE PAST

A PRAYER FOR OUR COUNTRY.

Almighty God, who has given us this good land for our heritage, we humbly beseech Thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of Thy favor and glad to do Thy will.

Bless our land with honorable industry, sound learning, and pure manners.

Save us from violence, discord and confusion; from pride and arrogancy, and from every evil way.

Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people the multitudes brought out of many kindreds and tongues.

Endure with the spirit of wisdom those whom in Thy name we entrust the authority of our government, that there may be peace and justice at home, and that through obedience to Thy law, we may show forth Thy praise among the nations of the earth.

In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust In Thee to fail.

All of which we ask through Jesus Christ, our Lord, AMEN.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Zion's Landmark - Summer 2011

Elder William Quint
Please consider fom reprint.

Although this was written 160 years ago it certainly speaks to us in 2014 does it not?

Jim Cote

Nov. 1, 1854

The Maine Predestinarian Baptist Conference, in session with the North, Berwick church, York Co. Me. To the several associations, churches and brethren, embraced in our correspondence, send our usual expression of christian love and fellowship.

Dear Brethren: — Amidst the Convulsions of the nations in foreign countries, and political commotions in our own country, and a vast array of mingled opposition which darkens the religious atmosphere apparently on every side, and while death is performining its office upon its victims daily and hourly, we are still preserved in the land of the living, and the revolving wheels of time has brought us to the enjoyment of another privilege to meet in our annual conference in September 1854. The great Head of the church still smiles upon us in love and mercy, the plan of free, sovereign and distinguishing grace in Christ Jesus is our theme, and our

only hope of salvation, from sin, death and hell. We occupy the same position substantially, and practically in doctrine, in the ordinances of God's house and in the ordinances of the visible church, that we have advocated, and observed for a long series of years. We do not consider the enemies of the cross of Christ to be competent judges of what constitutes a gospel church in gospel order, but the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in them that believe the gospel, and have felt its happy and glorious effects, will enable them to judge understandingly, agreeable to the testimony of the prophets and apostles. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, God has ordained praise. And from the revelation of the Father, And of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, the only wise God our Savior, there can be no such a thing as a gospel church walking in gospel order upon earth. The experimental testimony given by every child of grace, of what God has wrought in him, is calculated to abase the creature, and to exalt the Creator of all things. Any other kind of religion than that which is known by revelation, is counterfeit and spurious and leads to creaturely boasting and self exaltation, and to a perversion of the scriptures. Our course is onward, steadfastly looking by faith to him who is the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Almighty. We have the sentence of death in ourselves, not to trust in ourselves, but in God, who raiseth the dead. We grow weaker in ourselves, but stronger in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. It is a source of consolation that the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.

Our meeting was interesting and very well attended. Our next annual meeting will be held with the church at North Berwick, York Co. Me., commencing on Friday after the first Monday in Sept. 1855.

Elder William Quint, Moderator.
Joseph Perkins, Clerk.

AN ALMIGHTY HELPER.

"The Lord is my helper." Heb. xiii. 6.

The children of God, who in themselves are poor, needy, weak, and helpless, with foes more and mightier than themselves to contend with, stand continually in need of help from one that is mighty to save, which they have in their God, through whom they can do valiantly. He is one that doeth as he will in the armies of heaven and of earth, and none sayeth, What doest thou? His word spake creation into being, and shall again dissolve it into nothing; this prowess, terrible to his enemies, he uses with a father's tenderness for the good of his children. This might, that formed the mighty universe, protects even the hair of their heads, and though his works are marvellously great, yet he despiseth not the day of small things; and though he is omnipotent, his every attribute is engaged to save the meanest of his sheep, and for one of them to be lost would be an undeifying of his Godhead.

With such a Helper, no harm can happen unto us. Though we pass through the valley of the shadow of death, he will be with us; and when, by reason of our own darkness, we do not see him near, may we be enabled to believe that he is not far off, that he is still the Unchangeable, the same yesterday, today, and for ever; and that having once loved us, he will ever love us with an everlasting love, and that he will never forsake us, but cause all things (according to his promise), to work together for good to those that love his name.

At every momentary point of our existence, we have need of the Lord to be our helper. We are at all times dependant on his will; never so happy as when sensible of it, and receiving all things as immediately from his hand; and never at so low an ebb in spirituality, as when we conceit ourselves capable to do something (however trifling it may be) of ourselves, and saying of his assistance, we need it not.

He helpeth at all times, as much when he chastens with the rod of correction as when be delivereth from trouble. In adversity, he lowereth all our towering thoughts of self; he proveth that all dependance on human merit is leaning upon a broken reed that giveth way and pierceth him that leaneth thereon for support; he bringeth to light, by the shaking of the flagon, the lees of our old nature that had settled quietly to the bottom, all to make us sick of self and fond of him; and he holdeth up to our eyes the ragged tatters of creature righteousness, to convince us of the depravity of our hearts, and to endear the imputed righteousness of the Saviour to our souls, by its need being made more apparent; and yet, however convinced we may be of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, we can form no idea of its horrible deformity in the eyes of a holy God, whose eyes are too pure to behold iniquity: and yet he loves us, notwithstanding all our sins, and even in the midst of them, as bought with blood; which sins even we ourselves, now that he has created a new principle within us, cannot look upon without horror, for they are enough to sink us into endless misery, were not the Lord our helper.

He helpeth with mercies new every morning, as he fed the children of Israel with daily manna in the wilderness, and though he giveth us only a sufficiency day by day, yet it shall never fail; the miraculous manna, and the widow's cruise, failed not, until Israel had entered Canaan's land, and the earth brought forth her fruit abundantly: so neither will our heavenly Father let any good thing be lacking us in this wilderness state, but will provide daily a constant supply or his mercies, until he lands us safe in the realms of bliss.

He is near at hand, and that to help us, often when we are unconscious of it, as he was with his disciples as they travelled to Emmaus, leading our thoughts gradually to the meditation of heavenly themes, until, by the burning of our hearts within us, we find we have enjoyed the presence of him who is the chief among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely; and he is also often present, and that to help us, in the storm we feared

would be our ruin, when wave called unto wave, and we were afraid at the noise of his waterspouts; and even his first appearance adds fear, until he says, "Fear not, it is I," and then the storm is still. O Lord; in every storm give us to hear that voice to recompense our tribulation with consolation.

He is our helper in casting out all evil thoughts from our minds, that he has chosen to be living temples for himself, as he cast the buyers and sellers out of the temple of old, and how often do we make our living temples dens of thieves, filling them with unholy thoughts, and the vain imaginations of our hearts, so that at the very time we attempt to hold communion with him in prayer, our hearts are filled with other things, and we could never get them right again, did he not enter with his scourge, and, driving out all unholy things, take possession for himself.

He helpeth us in every trouble, giving us grace equal to our day, and where sin does abound, there grace does also superabound; an increased knowledge of sin, with a godly sorrow on account thereof, bring an increased spirituality of mind; therefore, Lord, if needs be, afflict, to draw us closer unto thee, and give us greater blessings; do as shall seem best to thy unerring wisdom and parental love, giving us in all things resignation to thy will, knowing that all things must be well when we have the Lord for our helper.

London, September, 1835
VERICULTOR.
The Gospel Standard
November, 1835

EXODUS 13:17,18

"And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not *through* the way of the land of the Philistines, although that *was* near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt: but God led the people about *through* the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. And the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt."

When God delivered the Hebrews from the house of bondage and broke the Egyptian yoke of their captivity, his wisdom as well as power was most strikingly displayed. Such is the unlimited power of God that he could have released his people from bondage by the waving of his hand, or the utterance of a word; he could have instantly crushed the power of Egypt, and stripped the imperial throne of Pharaoh of all its regal strength, or he could have softened the heart of Pharaoh as easily as he could harden it: but his wisdom, as well as his omnipotence was to be demonstrated before the world. And having humbled Pharaoh and effected the release of the Israelites, he was able to conduct them in what way he pleased to their final destiny in the promised land. Having all power and all wisdom he was abundantly able to execute his design in any way that seemed good in his eyes.

But in the redemption of Israel from the house of bondage, and then conduct

through the wilderness, and their ultimate possession of the promised inheritance God evidently designed to show forth the redemption of his chosen people from the bondage of the law and their ultimate entrance into the glorious liberty of the gospel. He therefore chose to lead them about. Instead of selecting the shortest route, or that in which the least impediments to their journeyings would require to be encountered, it was his pleasure, for a purpose worthy of himself, to lead them about in a circuitous and meandering course, which would constantly require the display of his power and wisdom, his cloud by day and his fire by night, to guide and protect them, and to show their entire dependence on him in every step of the way. Thus setting forth in the figure, first, that the salvation of his chosen people was in a way by him ordained, and their redemption from the curse, the bondage and dominion of the law, from the guilt, pollution and consequences of sin, and from the powers of death and hell, was together above the wisdom and power of men, and in a way in all respects baffling the wisdom and humbling the pride of the sons of men; showing that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

Second, agreeing with the experience of all the saints, every saint can witness with the inspired psalmist that when God broke their yoke of bondage and released them in a spiritual sense, from the grasp of Pharaoh, and set them free from their bondage; when he took them up out of the horrible pit and miry clay, and put a new song in their mouth, and set their feet upon a rock, that he also established their goings. Had he allowed us to choose our own way, perhaps we would have desired to be conveyed by the nearest way, and on flowery beds of ease, immediately to the mansion of glory. Perhaps all the saints have struggled more or less against the way the Lord has been pleased to lead us about, especially when he has led us by the hand of Moses by the way of the Red Sea, hemmed in on every side, the sea before us, the enemy in hot pursuit behind and towering mountains at the right and left. We, too, have murmured when led to the bitter waters of Meribah, and we were terribly afraid when he led us near to the mountain that might be touched only on pain of being thrust through with a dart, or destroyed. Like the Hebrews, we have feared that we were brought thus far to be destroyed, but still God has led us in a way which we knew not, and in paths we had not known. Truly he has found us in a waste howling wilderness, like Jacob, and he has led us about and instructed us, and yet he has kept us as the apple of his eye.

"God led them (the Hebrews) not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although it was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war and they return to Egypt." The Philistines were a people with whom Israel was never on good terms of friendship, they were enemies, and always on the alert to draw them into difficulty and bore about the same relation to Israel that the Arminians do to the church and people of God; and although, according to the natural geography of

that country, a straight line from Egypt to Canaan would cross the land or territory of the Philistines, it was not the pleasure of the Lord to lead them that way, as it was a way of temptation too strong for the resistance and fidelity of the Hebrews, therefore to avoid the influence of the Philistines on the Israelites which God foresaw would have a tendency to ensnare them, and to bring them again into bondage, he led them by another way. How happy for the children of God is the lesson here taught that God has established the goings of his redeemed people, and that he knows exactly what amount of temptations his grace shall enable us to bear, and orders our course accordingly. So it is said of the saints, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."-1 Cor. x. 13.

God provides against all peradventures, chances or uncertainties, in all the provisions which he has made for the deliverance and salvation of his people. This form of expression cannot imply that there are peradventures or uncertainties with God, but that he has provided infallibly against them. He knew, as he only could know, what would have been the consequences if he had led them through the land of the Philistines: they must have seen war, and they would probably have been tempted to repent that they had left Egypt, and inclined to return thither. So in the way of life and salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, God has ordained that none can come to him but by Christ, who is the way; there is salvation in no other way. Men cannot be justified in God's sight by any works of righteousness which they have performed, by any obedience to the law which they have or can render. When they are delivered from bondage and the yoke of their captivity is broken, the saints frequently show an inclination to lay their course through the land of the Philistines, that is, they have in them a natural inclination, after having received the Spirit, to be made perfect by the works of the flesh. The Arminian conditional system presents to their inexperienced eyes a smoother path, a shorter distance, and there are many allurements to draw them into the popular thoroughfares of the legal system, but God by his Spirit never leads his people in that way. Paul said to the Galatians, "This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you." If for any purpose God suffers his children to become entangled with the yoke of bondage, and to sojourn in the land of the Philistines, they always see war; for as certainly as the Spirit of truth is in them, they will find a principle of opposition to the corrupt principles and works of the flesh, and all the hosts of the Philistines will oppose the law of the Spirit of life which they possess, and all the powers of their flesh will adhere to the legal tendencies of the Philistine or Arminian doctrines, and as the poet has very justly remarked, they

> "Strive with a Do this and live,
> To drive them to Egypt again."

"But God led the people about." He leads them, it is no! his method to drive them. When he putteth forth His own sheep, we goeth before them, and they hear his voice, and they follow him, but a stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers. As God led the Israelites from Egypt, and through the wilderness, going before them in the cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, so he goes before his spiritual Israel, by day and by night. Instead of scaring or lashing them along, after the Philistine or Arminian fashion, uncapping hell, and showing them the horrors of the dammed, to urge them on, he goeth before, and causes them to behold in him such irrisistible attraction that they feel sweetly constrained to follow where he leads. He gives them such confidence in his wisdom to lead them, that they desire no other leader, and their experience enables them to say, He leadeth me into green pastures, beside the still waters, But he leads them by the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea, not because that way is the nearest, or smoothest, or most flowery but because in that way he will be glorified, and his people shall be taught many important lessons which they could not so well learn in any other way. What important lessons did he give them in the wilderness and at the Red Sea? How was his mighty power and discriminating grace displayed, when he made a path for them through the Red Sea, on dry ground, and when the same miracle by which their deliverance was accomplished, destroyed all their ememies? As he led the Hebrews, so he leads his spiritual people, often into wilderness trials, where the beasts of the forest prowl, and where their howlings sometimes alarm them, and to the sea where their way seems, to all human sight, cut off, the enemy advances, and they are hemmed in, and they think there is but a step between them and death, but how seasonably his help comes; his rod is extended, the sea divides, the way of escape is opened, and a song of deliverance breaks forth from then joyful tongues.

"The children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt." Not in the panoply of military warfare, for God himself fought their battles, and gave them victory. The manner of their harness is described in Exodus xii:11, "And thus shall ye eat it (the passover); with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste; it is the Lord's passover." In this manner of harness they ate the passover, and immediately left the land of Egypt, and their harness did not become old, or require to be repaired or replaced during the forty years of their pilgrimage in the wilderness. Here again we have a vivid figure of the way in which the Lord strips his people for the race, and in which he harnesses them for the christian warfare. They are not clad in the armor of men, in coats of mail, nor armed with implements of carnal warfare, for they are not to fight against flesh and blood; the warfare is a spiritual warfare, and their weapons are spiritual, and mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strongholds. They are well harnessed at the outset, for they have on the whole armor of God, having

their loins girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness, and their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, and, above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith they shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked; and the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. (Eph. 6:13-17.)

As the Israelites went up out of Egypt harnessed, and wore the same harness all the way in which the Lord their God did lead them until they had accomplished the whole journey and entered the the promised land, so the redeemed family of God whom he has redeemed from sin, death and hell are called to be marshalled under the banner of the great Captain of their salvation, and all their armor is of God, their weapons are spiritual and mighty through grace, and they cannot decay or wax old, nor will they ever require to be superseded by any newly invented armor. As the Hebrews went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt, we may rest assured that not one of all the sons of Adam shall ever go up out of the land of Egypt, or be delivered from the house of bondage, in any other harness, nor without this harness. True, men may make profession of religion, they may display much zeal and courage, they may impose on the saints, but until God breaks their yoke, and puts on them the harness, they have no discharge from bondage, and can never know experimentally the glorious liberty of the sons of God; they are all Ishmaelites, and under the covenant that gendereth unto bondage.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
March 1, 1862)

IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD

"For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God." (Ephesians 2:8)

What a wonderful gift from God! The Apostle Paul is telling the brethren who have been quickened and born of the Spirit, where their religion came from; and how they came by it. Yes, by grace, a favour of God, — an unmerited favour from God. With this grace or favour from God comes faith, and love, and a new creature whose eyes are opened and his ears unstopped. With this grace the lame are able to walk, the dead sinner is made alive, and his sins are cast into the land of forgetfulness, to be remembered no more; and the saved sinner is before God the Father without blame in love.

Just think of it: what a wonderful arrangement God has made for his little children! It is all a work of his own for his own. Our weapons are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, — the flesh and the carnal mind. We are told that his children are made willing in the day of His power. Paul said that sin revived and he died— he became dead to sin and could live

no longer therein: he became alive to God.

What we are trying to show is that everything in the way of salvation for the saved sinner is the gift of God; hence when one's ways have been established, and the gift of God's love through faith has been imputed to him, he can then say, "The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want." "The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear ? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?" (Psalm 27:1) And he will also say that the Lord is my refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. And by this grace the little child of God can say that he is "begotten again unto a lively hope, (a living hope, or a hope I live by), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith, unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." Through this saving grace the little child can say, as one of old, "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings, and hath put a new song in my mouth even praise unto our God."

What a wonderful arrangement to have our goings established by the God of heaven, by his gift to be sure, and our feet placed upon Christ the Great Rock, which none can move or destroy; and to be brought out of the horrible pit of sin, and the love of it, and by His power to have a new song placed in our mouth: a song of praise to God for all of our many blessings. How many times do we sing with the poet

"The steps that I tread and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will."
"My cross and my crown are both willed by my God."

from the hymn, "A Child of Jehovah." The songs of the New Man are the teachings of the Holy Ghost and are not of ourselves. This gift of God lifts up the hands that hang down, and confirms the feeble knees, and enables the child of God to go leaping and praising God. Though one may not move a hand or foot, his mind and thoughts are heavenward, praising and leaping with joy. **"Many, O Lord my God,** *are* **thy wonderful works** *which* **thou hast done, and thy thoughts** *which are* **to usward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee:** *if* **I would declare and speak** *of them*, **they are more than can be numbered." (Psalm 40:5)** Is it not true that whoever has an eternal home in heaven with Jesus, it will be a gift of God. **"The wages of sin** *is* **death, but the gift of God** *is* **eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23)**

"For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God."

(Elder) A. J. Slauson

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Delaware Association of Old School Baptists, in session with Welsh, Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, May 13 and 14, 1961, sends Christian greetings to those brethren whose chief concern is to remain in gospel faith and order, and those with whom we correspond, and with whom we unite in prayer for grace to be kept faithful in things pertaining to God and godliness.

Dear Brethren: We address you in our Circular Letter with the desire that we may be mutually drawn together in thanksgiving and praise to the great and only God for his abundant grace and mercy in preserving us in the truth of the gospel, so that we do not seek confederacy with those of dissimilar doctrines and practices.

We are aware that we are few in number, and that the number of voices to preach the unsearchable riches of God's grace, are few in these parts, yet we are no less desirous of maintaining what our brethren have maintained in the churches of this association for many score years; for we are convinced that what they maintained is the doctrine of God our Saviour, the faith once delivered to the saints; and we earnestly pray that, if God wills it so, we may be preserved in our course in these matters; and that we might continue to be mindful not only of the doctrine, but the order as well. We know that this is necessary for the preservation of the distinctive and true doctrine of God's revealed word; and we would be admonished that the full sense of Apostolic teaching was to preserve the bonds of fellowship among brethren, by endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. This we would strive to do; and this is what is done when disorder is not condoned.

It is no secret that there have been many departures because of one thing or another, since our brethren stood together at Black Rock, and other places, during the early years of the nineteenth century. Our position is that those things believed and maintained by the brethren then, are the same that should be maintained by us today, in order that our distinctive doctrine and order be not different from our staunch brethren of years ago; in order that we continue steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer; and in order that our distinction of Baptists of the Old School be not lost in the maze of conflicting doctrines and practices. Upon these primitive things we are standing today, and would not be removed from them.

It has been with much concern that we have read and heard of disorders and departures before our day, and have sometimes observed them for ourselves. We are pained that these things should be, but we know that in human experience passions are often unbridled even by those in the church; and that often brethren follow men who, for the moment, are unrestrained in their quest for notoriety and leadership. And we know also that sometimes there has been an easing of membership requirements, so that men untaught of grace

have had influence in churches, and finding the tenants of the Old School not to their liking, have undertaken to reform, much as prior to 1832, which has resulted in retaining the name, but untempering the doctrine and order, to make a show of love for men not authorized by distinguishing grace.

To these probably many other things could be added, but these suffice to show that there has not always been a "taking heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine"; not always an examining of ourselves whether we be in the faith; and not always seeking the mind of the Spirit in the affairs of the church.

These things are recognized and acknowledged, but we are convinced that the truth is still in our midst, and is not departed from the earth; that the Lord is yet calling his people out of darkness into light; that there are many, many places where the Lord is worshiped in spirit and in truth; and that there are many of his called servants who are blessed to preach with power and demonstration of the Spirit, making no compromise for personal advantage.

We are therefore glad to say that all is not gloomy; that all of our joys of faith are not at an end, for our God yet reigns over all of his work. False brethren, false doctrine, much disorder, or many divisions, have not changed the course of God's purposes concerning his church. Have we not seen revivals where it seemed all was dead? Is there not a closer knitting together of brethren when the causers of trouble are departed? Have not the Lord's servants been drawn closer together when persecutions and divisions have caused them to stand up as one man in defense of the truth?

As we are reminded of these things, and as some of us are assembled here in this meeting, is there not a solemnity; is there not a felt sense of the Lord's presence; is there not a reverence when we come together where prayer is wont to be made? And is there not a feeling of awe when we remember how greatly we are blessed with the love of God's truth, and with the love and fellowship of His people; and with the desire to stand firmly in the only God honoring and God given faith that has ever been in the world?

Our address to you is a reminder of our ancient heritage of God's mercies. As we remain steadfastly in the faith once delivered to us, so do we uphold the honor and glory of our God in the midst of much error and ungodliness; and so do we testify against doctrines contrary to the teaching of the Spirit. Outside of these things, the church would have no distinguishing marks, and nothing to indicate that she is a kingdom not of this world.

As we see departures from the faith, and idolatry rampant throughout the world, may we have the spirit of prayer indited in our hearts, to pray for Zion as Habbakkuk did for Israel in his day, "O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of

the years make known; in wrath remember mercy."

Elder John D. Wood
Elder Arthur R. Warren, Moderator
Reese S. Jarmon, Clerk

JESUS THE AMEN

I was asked to write a sermon upon the word amen. Well, I may not be able to do that, but I will very readily pen some few thoughts upon it that has been comforting to me, and in which I have had some experience by the power of the Holy Ghost.

The first and most blessed thing is that Jesus Christ our Lord, our redeemer and everlasting friend, is "The Amen" Rev. 3:4. Indeed, there is no abiding blessedness apart from our beloved Savior. As He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely, He is also the fountain of living waters. In Him we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places; but all would be a failure, all our hope in things pertaining to God and to eternity would be a failure, if Jesus Christ were not the Amen. This sacred name, like all the names he bears, is what He is unto His church. This name signifies that He is the constant one, the gracious, immutable Almighty friend, faithful and true. Rev. 3:14. He is the one, who makes sure, and will bring to an all-glorious consummation all the eternal purpose which Jehovah the Father purposed in Him. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the head of the church, and He is the mediator and surety of the new covenant, and as our covenant head He is in delighted acquiescence with it. Even though in order to the removal of the sins of His people, to make atonement for their transgressions and reconcile them unto God, He should come and give Himself a ransom, a sacrifice for their iniquities. He said, Amen to it. So let it be, it shall be. **"Lo, I come: in the volume of the book *it is* written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law *is* written within my heart." Psalm 40: 7-8; Heb.10: 4-10. "All the promises of God in Him *are* yea, and in Him amen, unto the glory of God by us." 2 Cor. 1:20.**

Oh what exceeding great and precious promises there are in Him for time and eternity. The new covenant was established upon better promises than those given unto Israel under the law, the old covenant. The gospel promises are in Christ's gospel; they are made unto the elect in Christ. Thus, by the communion of the Holy Ghost, who speak to us, as shows to us, and glorifies Jesus Christ in our hearts, We have sacred assurance, and are in earnest expectation in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began. Titus 1:2 All the promises of God in Jesus Christ are yea, and amen, sure to all the seed. As our covenant head He said, amen to them all.

In His faithfulness, love and mercy, and omnipotence He will see that none of these promises fail. What God hath promised, He is able also to perform. Their gracious and glorious fulfillment is not based upon the creatures perfor-

mance. Ah no! God will show His people His covenant in the incarnate Son of God. Psalm 25:14. **"Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed** *it* **by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which** *it was* **impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which** *hope* **we have, as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered,** *even* **Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." Heb. 6:17-20.** In all the characters that Christ sustains, and all the offices in the new covenant He fulfills, He is surely the amen.

The pleasure of the Lord prosper in His hand; the government shall be upon His shoulder. Isaiah 9:6; 53:10. Well, beloved ones in the Lord, as we meditate upon the glorious work wrought by our Redeemer, and see how He was faithful to Him that appointed Him, how He finished all the work of eternal salvation, and will surely bring His people home to eternal glory, faultless, and holy, and without blame, and with exceeding joy before the majesty in the heaven, truly we are comforted and our hope is sure and stedfast, for Jesus Christ, the word made flesh is the amen. And we, like the four beasts, (living creatures) in Rev. 5:14 say, "amen" to all that Jesus Christ has done, and to all that He, as our great high priest, in heaven is doing for His people. There He appears in the presence of God for us, and forever, our beloved Redeemer, intercessor, our advocate with the Father. And when we offer up our feeble sacrifices of praise, when our hearts send forth our sighs and prayers unto the throne, they all come through Him unto our God Father. He says amen to them, for they are all cleansed by His precious blood, perfumed by incense of His finished work upon calvary's cross, His sacrifice of Himself in our behalf, an offering, and a sacrificies of a sweet smelling savor unto God. Through Him, our amen, we have acess into the grace, we are favored to worship God in the beauty of holiness, with reverence and Godly fear. Yes, our hearts say amen, so let it be, to all that Christ has done, and all that He is unto His people. When we are in sweet accord and our hearts are saying amen to Christ's gospel, all sufficiency in self has been cast to the moles and to the bats, we are lowly in our own sight, we feel how naked and destitute we are in ourselves, we see we are poor sinners, and we have been taught under this bitter and humbling knowledge to look unto Jesus as the only ground of hope for perishing sinners. Yes, here must be God's own gracious teaching to humble such sinners, sinners who are enemies of God, alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their hearts. It needs such operations of the Holy Spirit in the sinner's heart to bring him to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," to bring him to see that all creature righteousness is filthy rags, and to submit to the righteousness of the God-man

Christ Jesus, which is unto and upon all that believe. But every one that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me saith Christ, John 6:45. And in our precious Jesus our all-sufficiency salvation, righteousness, all grace and glory, and to everything in Him we say amen. All is agreeable, all is needful, there is nothing lacking, all is finished, all is blessed, all is altoghter lovely, all is to the glory of God, and to our everlasting consolation and happiness, in faith and love we say, amen, so let it be. If the gracious operations of the Holy Ghost are so essential to bring our souls into accord with the gospel of Christ, and to say amen to all the revelation of Jehovah's counsel therein: so also the same teachings of the comforter God and Holy Ghost, are needed to bring us to say, amen, the will of the Lord be done in all His providences. We have surely learned, yes, we have had to learn it over, and over again; that without the continual ministrations of the grace of Christ how unreconciled we are to our lot, how cast down we are sometimes, how fretful, what inward murmurings, and how hardened we then become in rebellion. **"The rebellious dwell in a dry *land*." Psalm 68:6**. God's providences are high and deep — His thoughts, His purposes therein are not for us to fully understand.

> "Deep in unfathonable mines,
> Of never failing skill,
> He treasures up His bright designs,
> And works His sovereign will."

Job at one time could say amen to the adversities and bitter afflictions to which he was subjected, Job 1:20-21; 2:9-10; but in the continuation of his deep and sore troubles he is found fretting at a great rate, and speaking hard things against God. But we see the end of the Lord: that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy, James 5:11. "The Lord answered Job and said, Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct Him? He that reproveth God, let him answer it." Surely this severe reproof was nevertheless love's reproof! It entered Job's soul, subdued all opposition to the Most High, and brought him at the feet of the Lord. "Then Job answered the Lord, and said, behold, I am vile; what shall I answer Thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken; but I will proceed no further." Job 40:1-5.

We have trials, afflictions, adversities, we have vexations, and things that are so contrary to flesh and blood. Our little plans are upset; our gourds are blasted, the flowers that delighted us wither, they are snatched away, cisterns are broken, and creatures all fail. Sickness, pains in ourselves and others we have to endure, we suffer bereavements and we encounter the enmity of the wicked, of hypocrites. How shall we say amen, unto the Lord under the pressure of any or all these woes? When the Lord giveth us tears in great measure to drink, Psalm 80:5; if the bread of adversity and water of affliction be our portion, Isa. 30:20, is it possible to acquiesce, and say amen to God? When the thorn in the flesh is rankling, and the enemy is buffeting us until we are at our wits end, shall we not cry out for the extraction of the thorn? We pray that the

enemy may be forced to take departure from us, but if it is the will of God that the thorn shall still pierce us, and the enemy still assault us, can we then say unto the Lord, amen? We can, but only when our Heavenly Father says, "thou art my dear son;" thou art unto me a pleasant child. Jer. 31:20. Thou are beloved, lovely, all acceptable unto me in the beloved. Eph. 1:6. Drink the cup, my child! O then we can say, amen, so sweetened is our cup with our heavenly Father's love in Jesus Christ our Lord. And, when He says, "my grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness," then we can say, amen, and join with the apostle Paul and say, "most gladly therefore, will rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." 2 Cor. 12:9. Pharisees, the self sufficient, the hypocrite may talk very smoothly, and say, we ought to say, "Thy will be done" to God's providences. But the dear child of God, who while in this world is compassed with infirmities, poor and sinful and tempted, finds himself so in need of grace that it is only by the power of Christ resting upon him, only as his preciousness is communicated and the spirit of truth glorifies our dear Savior in the soul, and thus sustains us in afflictions, and sweetens the bitter waters that we can say, amen to all our Heavenly Father's will.

There, I have penned some thoughts upon the word, and, oh may such grace from the Lord be ours that we be in accord with Him who is the Amen.

Elder Frederick W. Keene
Raleigh, N. C.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 2014

Mary Lee, NC 5.00
Cleo Underwood, VA 5.00
Carlton Sumner, VA 5.00
Algie Martin, VA 5.00
Faye Brown, NC 15.00
James Campbell, CO 5.00
James Lambert, GA 5.00
R. E. Biano, TX 5.00
Vera Potter, MS 10.00
Doris Giles, VA 5.00
Jerald Hatchett, OK 50.00
"In memory of Linda Hatchett"
Lois Ferguson, VA 10.00
Billie Freeman, AL 25.00
Charles Mathews, LA 100.00
"In memory of Mother Katherine Godwin Mathews"

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 12 / 2014

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

OBITUARIES

CLAUDE TIPP "C.T." HALL, JR.

With much sadness, we acknowledge the death of our dear brother-in-Christ, Claude Tipp "CT" Hall, Jr., whom the Lord called from this low ground of sin and sorrow on July 1, 2014. Brother CT was born in Person County, North Carolina August 26, 1922 to the late Claude T. Hall, Sr. and Addie Jones Hall. He was also predeceased by his sisters Madeline H. Eaker and Huldah H. Berryhill as well as his brothers Moses H. Hall and John L. Hall. Survivors are his sister Nancy M. Hall of Winston-Salem, NC; niece Dr. Claudia K. Berryhill and husband Lacy W. Winstead; nephews Eugene C. Berryhill, Jr. and wife Susie; Joe B. H. Berryhill and wife Nancy and David B. Eaker; four grandnieces, five grandnephews, a great grandniece and a great grandnephew all of Roxboro, NC.

Brother CT served in the US Navy from 1944 to 1946 after which he returned to the family farm to manage the farming operation. After his father's death, he managed the family property in Roxboro. He also served many years on the Agriculture Stabilization Conservation Board.

Brother CT was a member and deacon of Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church for some sixty years. He also served as trustee and clerk. After Pastor Elder C. B. Davis died, he became the song leader. Not only was Brother Hall a strong, dedicated deacon to his home church, but also could be depended upon to help with the needs of the Durham Primitive Baptist Church when it had no deacon.

As he lay in the hospital barely able to speak just a few days before he died, he whispered "how horrible it would be to stand before the Lord and hear Him say depart from me for I never knew you. But I have a precious hope to hear Him say come, ye blest of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

His funeral was conducted at Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church by Elders Cleo Robertson and Jimmy Gray. Burial was in the church cemetery to await the resurrection.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator

ELDER VELDEN BENTON LINN
Tribute & Message from the Family

Velden Benton Linn, age 93 years, a former resident of Parsons, WV more recently a resident of Buckhannon, WV and a well-known Pastor of the Leading Creek Primitive Baptist Church at Montrose, WV departed this life Tuesday afternoon, September 23, 2014, at the Serenity Care Home at Buckhannon, WV with his family by his side.

He was born Monday, May 2, 1921, at Hammond, Marion County , WV a son of the late Samuel Wesley and Bernice Mae Murphy Linn. On December 24, 1943, at San Diego, CA he was married to the former Drexie Patricia Booth, who preceded him in death August 18, 2006. Surviving are four children, Sharon Dianne Ryan and husband Dennis of Elyria, OH, Patricia Kay Pistilli of Brockway, PA, Velden Benton "Benny" Linn II and wife Marlyn of Washington, WV, Marcia Elayne Milton and husband Gary of Greensboro, NC; ten grandchildren, Denise Ryan and Dayne Cork of Jackson Heights, NY, Michelle Ryan of Elyria, OH, Peggy McCoy and husband Jason of Dubois, PA, Heather Ryan and Floyd Hunter of College Point, NY, Rebecca Pistilli and husband Jeff De La Cruz of Fountain Valley, CA, Debra Ludens and husband Justin of Galloway, OH, Beth Pistilli and husband Cole Gibson of Salisbury, MD, Velden B. Linn III of Lewis Center, OH, Kyle Milton and Jamie Milton, both of Greensboro, NC, and nine great grandchildren, Emily, Gage, and Ella Norris, Makena Raymond, Benton and Gavin Ludens, Alexander Ryan-Cork, Kai De La Cruz, Jordan Hunter, Jared, Ian and Abbie McCoy.

He was the last surviving member of his immediate family. Preceding him in death are two brothers, Archie Reynold and Jonah William "Thad" Linn and one sister Sylvia Fern Chase.

He was a graduate of Elkins High School with the Class of 1939 and joined the U.S. Navy Reserves the same year. He was called into active duty in 1940, where he served for six years, seven months and six days, which included all the war years of World War II. He served as a Signalman on the USS Milwaukee and the USS San Diego, having had the honor of hoisting the American Flag for the first time on the USS San Diego when she was commissioned on January 10, 1942 in the Boston Navy Yard just after the Pearl Harbor attack.

Mr. Linn had resided in Buckhannon since 1965 and was active in serving on the Industrial Committee with the Buckhannon Chamber of Commerce, which contributed to bringing new business to the area. He also served as President of the Buckhannon Chamber of Commerce as well as various other offices and was also President of the Buckhannon Rotary Club.

He worked for the Monongahela Power Company for 36 years, having filled various positions and retired June 1, 1986, as supervisor of the Buckhannon / Weston District.

Mr. Linn also served as clerk and later as moderator of the Tygart Valley River Primitive Baptist Association. He was called as Pastor of the Leading Creek Primitive Baptist Church of Montrose, WV in July 14,1951, and served the church in that capacity until his death.

The family of Velden B. Linn would like to thank Karen Woody, owner, and the Serenity Care Home staff for their assistance and care provided to him during his stay at Serenity.

The family will receive friends at the Lohr & Barb Funeral Home of Elkins from 5 to 8 PM, Friday. Final Rites will be conducted at the funeral home, Saturday, September 27, 2014 at 11:30 AM. Elder Troy Simpson, Elder Lewis Johnson and Elder Hubert Sears will officiate, and interment will follow at the Leading Creek Primitive Baptist Cemetery at Montrose, WV where the United States Navy will present the American Flag. The family suggests that expressions of sympathy be in the form of contributions to the Leading Creek Primitive Baptist Cemetery Fund, in care of Bob Wilmoth, Treasurer, 110 High Street, Elkins, WV 26241.

ALFRED LEE RATLIFF

We at Salem Primitive Baptist Church bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father in the passing of our beloved brother and deacon, Alfred Ratliff. Brother Alfred passed peacefully from this life on August 30, 2014, surrounded by his loving family. He was born April 29, 1926, making his stay on earth 88 years.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Willie Mae Ratliff, daughter, Patricia Umberger and grandson, Scott McBride. He is survived by his daughter and care giver, Alfreeda Cadd, sister, Blanche Walsh, Brother-in-law, Banks Conner and wife Opal. Grandson, Stephen McBride, granddaughters, Bonita Ingram and husband, Wes, Mindy Campbell and husband, Jared. Five great-grandchildren and one great great grandson and his companion and special friend, Mary Janney, many nieces, nephews and friends.

His beautiful funeral service was held at Salem (Head of the River) Church, September 2, 2014 by Elder Larry Hollandsworth. His body was laid to rest under a beautiful mound of flowers in Rest Vale Cemetary.

Alfred United with Salem (Head of the River) Church in August 1991, and was ordained as a deacon June 12, 1993. He had that precious "hope" in his breast and was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace. He was a faithful member, and served his church in many ways, always willing to help in any way he could. Nothing pleased him more than to have several of us members ride with him to churches far and near. He loved people and never met a stranger. His friendly ways and sense of humor will be remembered by all who knew and loved him.

He will be missed by his family, friends and church members. May we take comfort in **Psalms 147:3. "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds."** He is gone from our sight; still with us in memories; Gone from our touch, but still in our hearts.

May the Lord comfort all of us in our time of sorrow. We feel he is now resting in that perfect peace, awaiting the second coming of our Lord and Savior, when we shall meet Him in the air, be like Him and be eternally satisfied.

Written with love,
As requested by the Church
Mary Janney

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

Abide with me! Fast falls the even tide;
The darkness deepens, Lord, with me abide!
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me!

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see;
O thou, who changest not, abide with me!

I need thy presence every passing hour,
What but thy grace can foil the tempters power?
Who, like thyself, my guide and stay can be?
Thro' cloud and sunshine, O abide with me!

Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee!
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me!

H. F. Lyle,

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EDITORIAL

Romans 8:1-2, There *is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

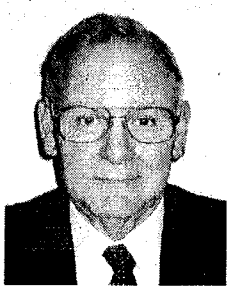
Elder Cleo D. Robertson

According to the scriptures, "sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4). "All unrighteousness is sin," (1 John 5:17) and "whatsoever is not of faith is sin," (Romans 14:23). The Apostle Paul writes that the wages of sin *is* death.

The law of sin and death that the Apostle speaks of was set forth to Adam in the beginning before God made Eve. Therefore, it covered every person that would ever be born, Jew and gentile. When the Lord God formed man (Adam) from the dust of the earth, breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man because a living soul, God planted a garden eastward in Eden and put the man in it. In this garden God planted every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. These trees typified the children of God, His elect. In the midst of this garden was the tree of life (typifying Christ) and the tree of knowledge of good and evil (typifying the law). "By the law is the knowledge of sin." The Lord God gave Adam a commandment or law that "of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shall surely die." They were not to even touch it lest they die, the same as with Mount Sinai. This was the law of sin and death that covered all mankind from the beginning of time to the end of time. The law said that you sin, you die. This was the law that Christ came to satisfy and from which to redeem His people. It required a perfect, holy sacrifice.

There was no commandment or law against eating of the tree of life, but Adam and Eve felt no need of this tree until they first experienced the condemnation of death by eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Christ

stood a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, but you experienced no need or desire for Him until the law was applied to your heart and you saw and felt yourself a sinner and lost.

Satan tempted Eve and she was deceived and was in the transgression. Adam was not deceived but followed her in the transgression because of his love for her. As the Apostle writes, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Can you witness with the Apostle when he said that he was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and he died? What commandment or law was he talking about? He also said that he had not known sin, but by the law for he had not known lust except the law had said, thou shalt not covet. The Apostle is referring to the law written in the hearts of the Lord's elect and put in their minds.

The Lord God wrote ten commandments on tables of stone with His finger and gave them to Moses for the nation of Israel. When Moses came down from the mount, the people had made a golden calf and had corrupted themselves. Moses became very angry and cast the tables down and broke them. Of ourselves in the flesh, we cannot keep these commandments. The "carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." So then "to be carnally minded is death." The Lord called Moses back to the mount and told him to hew two tables of stone and He wrote upon them the ten commandments. These commandments were on tables of stone for the natural nation of Israel. They were not given to any other nation or people. In a figure or type this was pointing to God writing His commandments in the hearts of His elect. **"(For not the hearers of the law *are* just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another:)** Romans 2:13-15.

These commandments are not given or written in the hearts of anyone but His people. They condemned you as you had not known sin until they were applied to you. They are written in your heart and put in your mind and cannot be lost or taken out. They instruct and guide you in your worship of God and your walk in this life. The Lord prepares you for these commandments. As the tables of stone were hewed, so are you. He takes away the hard and stony heart and gives you a heart of flesh which is a heart of love, understanding and compassion. He promised or made a new covenant with the HOUSE of Israel (His church, elect of Jew and Gentile) to be their God and they shall be His people.

Ephesians 2:11-17, "Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision (Gentiles) by that which is called the Circumcision (Jews) in the

flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of petition *between us*; Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace; And that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off (Gentiles), and to them that were nigh (Jews)." So the elect of the Jews and the Gentiles are one fold in Christ.

The first and greatest commandment is that you love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. The second is like unto it that thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself. As Christ said, all the law and the prophets hang upon these first two commandments. Your neighbor is your brother in Christ for you are one in Christ. As John wrote, "We love Him because He first loved us. If a man say I love God and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also." 1 John 4:19-21.

The Ten Commandments from Exodus 20:7-17 are:

1. **"Thou shalt have no other gods before me."** The kingdom of God is within you. There the King of kings rules and reigns and tears down all the little gods that you established, loved and followed after.

2. **"Thou shall not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness that is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath or that is in the water under the earth."** There are many who make graven images to which they pray and worship. Our God is Spirit and Truth and by a Godgiven faith we believe in Him and worship Him.

3. **"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."** Holy and Reverend is His name. Vain meaning irreverent, worthless, to no avail. His people are chastised and feel condemned when they take His name in vain.

4. **"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy."** The sabbath day is a time of rest. It is the day of grace, the gospel day. To keep it holy means that there are no works of the flesh involved.

5. **"Honour thy father and thy mother."** You honour your father and mother by showing your love for them, by respecting and esteeming them and by being obedient to them. The Apostle Paul says this is the first commandment with promise that it may be well with you.

6. **"Thou shalt not kill."** Certainly His people have no desire to kill another human being nor to inflict injury to anyone because you have the love of God in you.

7. **"Thou shalt not commit adultery."** In Matthew 5:27-28 Jesus says "ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Our very thoughts are evil and we are chastised for them.

8. **"Thou shalt not steal."** The Lord keeps His people in such a way that they have no desire to take something that doesn't belong to them. If we do, we are chastised.

9. **"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thou neighbor."** The Lord has put into the hearts of His people the principle to tell the truth regardless of the consequences. If we do not, we are chastised.

10. **"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house."** The Apostle Paul said he had not known lust except for this commandment.

Without the law sin was dead and we were alive. But as the Apostle experienced, when the commandment came, sin revived, and we died. That which we would do, we do not and that which we would not do, we do. So we find that it's the sin that dwelleth in us and that no good thing dwelleth in our flesh. **"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Romans 8:3-4.**

The Apostle Peter wrote that Christ "His own self bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." Though the wages of sin is death, the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. The day of grace has come. Now the Apostle Paul can say, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Grace) hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

Humbly submitted in love,
Elder Cleo Robertson

PROVERBS 3:1-2.

My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:

For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Board and the Editors of 'The Signs of the Times' are pleased to announce the completion of the digitizing of the entire publication of this periodical from its beginning in 1832 through 2013. This is a total compilation of every issue for about 180 years. There is also included a prospectus, a history chart, a short written history, and a collection of the brief biographies of the editors.

This material is the sole property of the 'Signs of the Times, Inc.' and neither may be changed, nor annotated, nor copied and sold for profit. Please note that this material may be accessed only on a PC with a disk drive and/or a USB port.

These digitized Periodicals are now being made available at our cost of copying and mailing. The postpaid costs are $40.00 for a copy on a single flash drive, or $53.00 for a three-disk set. Please note that the flash drive has the advantage of faster speed of access, and the capability for future updates to be added. The cost for either format is subject to change as the costs of future printing and mailing change. Requests may be submitted to Brother Tony Horton, Circulation Manager and Treasurer, 1429 Howlett Street, Hillsville, VA 24343. Please be sure to include your complete mailing address.

We would like to express our appreciation for all the help we have received from individuals who have located and supplied to us the issues needed to complete the set, and to the Primitive Baptist Libraries at Carthage, IL and at Elon, NC for their assistance and support.

EDITOR'S NOTE

It was brought to my attention that we made an error in Elder William Quint's article on page 272 of the December issue. 18 lines down on the left reads "and from the revelation of the Father." It should read "aside from the revelation of the Father." As editor any error is my responsibility alone and I apologize. It was not the first and I am sure it will not be the last. But, I do appreciate your bringing any error to my attention.

Editor.

CORRESPONDENCE

November 2, 2014
120, Gunn Road
Reidsville, N.C.

Dear Brother Tony Horton,

This is November so that makes me behind. I am so forgetful. Enclosed you will find a check for two years subscription for the Signs. Use the rest as you see fit.

Brother Tony, I have been blessed to see my 88th birthday, also I have been blessed to be a member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church for

63 years, I suppose you could say I am one of the old timers. I remember many precious ones that have passed on. They had that little hope in their breast, just enough to keep them pressing on. In Romans chapter 8 verses 24 & 25, **"We are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not,** *then* **do we with patience wait for** *it*.**"** In Hebrews chapter 6 verse 19 we find these words "which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entered into that within the veil." I believe that this hope is when the Lord Jesus comes again that they will hear his voice saying come ye blessed of my Father inherit a kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. In that place called heaven there to forever be with all God's little ones forever and forever. No more dieing, no sickness, no pain. All will be peace. In hope of eternal life.

Love and Fellowship,
R. Allen Carroll

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 01 / 2015

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

Oct. 27, 2014

Dear Mr. Horton,

Enclosed is my renewal for two more years of "The Signs of the Times". Please use the extra for however you deem best.

I do so enjoy the good articles from "Voices of the Past" along with the editorials by Elders Cleo Robertson and Jerry Farmer.

My hope is that God will continue to enable you to keep The Signs coming to those who are blessed and fed by the dear Lord through its pages.

One in hope, and in the ties that bind, I trust.

Caroline Martin

Signs of the Times,

I have noticed my subscription has expired 8-2014. I am sorry I haven't sent this in on time. I enjoy the Signs very much. Hearing the sermons of people in the past is so great. Elder E. J. Lambert was my pastor for about twenty-five years. He baptized me. He was a wonderful, blessed minister preaching God's Grace. Enjoy the signs and all who participate in it. I am sending $75.00 keep the rest. Thanks so much for spreading the good news of our Lord and Savior.

May God Bless you all,
In sisterly love,
Flora Stutts

Elder Robertson,

Please find enclosed the obituary of Brother Charles M. Moon. I hope you find all in order and will kindly give consideration to publishing this in the "Signs." I hope you are well and the Lord will in His providence make a way for me to see you again here in this world. And if not, in the world that is yet to come. Make God continue His blessings upon you is my humble prayer.

Your servant,
Elder Kenneth R. Adams

ARTICLES

Dear beloved ones in Christ Jesus:

Oh that I could write something, that would be in praise of our dear heavenly Father, that I could worship him the way I ought, that I could write something that would be edifying to the saints of the most high God. But it seems so far from reality in this poor mortal being to do so, and find when I would do good, evil is present. What a sad state of affairs. I seem not able to have a thought, much less to write anything most of the time that would be of any worth or comfort to anyone concerning those precious things that be of God and his righteousness that is loved among the saints of God.

If the Lord would bless me though, I would like to write a little concerning the Church. But know I can't except the Lord would bless me in a spiritual way.

There is but one true church, and that is the church of Jesus Christ. I hope to be speaking of that church that our Lord and savior purchased with his own precious blood, and died on the cruel tree of the cross, and arose again on the third day for her justification that he might be the first born among many brethren. He will raise her in the resurrection, as he arose from the tomb, victorious over death, hell and the grave. So will he raise up his bride, his wife, to ever be with him in that eternal world that never shall end. Jesus said I am the resurrection and the life. No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him.

In the Song of Solomon 2:1-4. **"I am the rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the valleys. As the lily among thorns, so *is* my love among the daughters. As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so *is* my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit *was* sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me, *was* love."** His love for the church is an everlasting love, for he said that I am God; and I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob, are not consumed.

As the Lily among thorns, the lily is a tender plant that grows in the garden

of love. She, I believe to be the church. The lily is a tender plant compared to the thorns, many plural. I am the lily of the valleys, the bright and morning star. When they crucified our blessed Lord and Savior, they plated a crown of thorns, and put on his head. He being the head of the church, He suffered for his bride as none other has. The lily is singular, among the thorns, which I believe to be the tares of this world. As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. This tree is in the midst of the garden, for it is the tree of life in the paradise of God. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. How sweet and precious when the little ones are blessed to rest and feed under his shadow on the sweet morsels of his holy word. His flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed to all of whom have tasted that the Lord is gracious. And his banner over me was love. Yea I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee. He brought me to the banqueting house. When he is pleased to bring the little ones together in peace and love to feed on the precious fruit that he has prepared for those who love his appearing, will he appear the second time without sin unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last days. Valleys, meaning low places, this is where the Lord's people find themselves in, a lot of the time. **"For the Lord's portion *is* his people; Jacob *is* the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." Deut. 32:9-10.**

This love that is spoken about in the above scripture is a spiritual love. It is an everlasting love between Jesus Christ and his beloved church of whom she gives him all the praise and glory for he is the head of the church in all things, and by him all things consist that is on earth and in heaven. For all things were made by Him and for Him and without Him was not anything made that was made. He made her to be partaker of that heavenly gift that He has instilled in His little children. He feeds them with that holy manna which He has prepared for them when they are brought forth to the banqueting house of love, where they are made to feast on the delicious fruits of his holy words of life. Nothing else will satisfy a hungry soul who is seeking the truth as it is in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Dear ones do with this as it may seem good to you. If there be anything that does not ring true, please cast it aside and all will be well.

With love in the truth, I hope.
C. Fox

LAMENTATIONS 3:24-26.

The Lord *is* my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.

The Lord *is* good unto them that wait for him, to the soul *that* seeketh him.

***It is* good that a *man* should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.**

PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ELDERS PRIOR TO 1901

Place and date of photo unknown. Photo belonged to Ethel Holloway Johnson of Maryland. **Standing left to right:** William Grafton of Forest Hill, Maryland, Moderator of the Baltimore Old School Baptist Association; Elder T. M. Poulson of Massey, VA; Elder F. A. Chick of Hopewell, N.J., one of the early editors of the "Signs of the Times"; Elder Silas H. Durand of Southampton, PA. He and Elder P.G. Lester compiled Primitive Baptist "Hymn and Tune Book"; Elder Frederick W. Keene of London, England. **Seated left to right:** Elder Ephriam Rittenhouse of Delaware, Salisbury Association; Elder S.M. Anderson of Garfield, Georgia, Moderator of the Upper Canoochee Association; Elder William L. Beebe – Elder Gilbert Beebe's son; Elder J.W. Fairchild of Urbanette, Arkansas; Elder Jenkins; Elder George D. Roberson of Robersonville, N.C.

Dear Elder Robertson,

I am enclosing a copy of a photo I have of Primitive Baptist Elders of the latter 19th Century. You are more than welcome to publish it in the "Signs of the Times" if you feel it would be of interest to it's readers. I have several other photos of this era should there be an interest. Thank you.

Humbly submitted,
Steve Everett

VOICES OF THE PAST

New Vernon, N. Y.,
September 1, 1841

OUR MOTTO

When the hosts of the alien were encamped around about the little trembling band of Israel like grasshoppers for multitude, and all human prospect of escape from captivity had fled, the despairing tribes were reduced to the necessity of looking alone to God for deliverance. The manner in which it pleased the Lord to give deliverance and victory to Israel, was the very opposite to what human wisdom would have suggested.

The Lord would neither suffer Gideon to go with his thirty-two thousand, nor with his ten thousand men: "Lest Israel should vaunt themselves against the Lord, saying mine own hand hath saved me." The first work of preparation for the onset was the reduction of the strength of their numbers, and to convince them that the work would be accomplished by the mighty arm of the Lord. How effectually did the Lord stain the pride of men in removing from them all on which they would be inclined to rely! And when they were brought down sufficiently, Gideon was instructed to advance with his three hundred men, divided into three companies, with directions to take their positions round about the enemy, without a single implement of war, excepting a trumpet in every man's right hand – with no weapons, offensive or defensive, no sword, nor shield, nor bow; but relying on the Lord as their Shield and Buckler, their High Tower and their defence.

Every man was to carry his empty pitcher covering a lighted lamp in his left hand, and to await the signal from their leader, at which every pitcher was broken, the united light of three hundred lamps at once flashed forth upon the surprised enemy, attended with the simultaneous shout of three hundred voices, crying as in one breath, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!"

How dreadful was the consternation of the Midianites at this display of the arm of the Lord! More dreadful to their ears was the sound of the name of the Lord than all the thunder of the battle clash; and more terrific to their eyes the radiant flame than the glitter of a million spears! The dreadful majesty of the God of Israel shining around them, and the terror of his name echoing from the trumpets on every side, filled their hearts with dismay and their ranks with confusion.

We are inclined to believe there is something in this figure analogous to the manner in which the Lord is conducting the conflict of his people at this day, with the host of their opposers. The numerical strength of those who contend for the primitive order of the house of God, is greatly reduced; and they are taught by very many important admonitions, that they are not to rely upon human wisdom nor human might; their pitchers (mere earthen vessels) are empty of themselves, and only to be broken in the contest, while the light of that

treasure which our God has committed to earthen vessels, is to shine forth with the united declaration of our sole reliance upon the sword of the Lord and of our glorious leader Jesus Christ, from every one whom God has honored with a place and rank among the very few by himself designated to follow their illustrious Leader into the field.

Not the sword of human power, of human wisdom, literature, science or fame; but the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. While the motto of our enemies is, "Attempt great things, expect great things," which motto truly expresses their confidence in their own skill and perseverance; the confidence of the people whom God has chosen shall be expressed by the shout of Gideon's little army whose reliance was restricted to "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." And although the sword of the Lord and of our Leader is at this day invisible to the enemies of Zion, as was the sword in the days of Midian, yet its glittering blade shall flash upon them in as unexpected a moment as is the case of their prototype, and shall be as effectual as on that memorable occasion.

A few words, then, of admonition to those who can lap water like dogs, may be seasonable. Brethren, remember the charge that was given to the three hundred men: "And he (their leader, who, in this particular at least, was a figure of the Captain of our salvation,) said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise; and behold when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be, that as I do, so shall ye do; when I blow with the trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of the camp, and say, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!"

It is of the utmost importance that the little company whom God has preserved from bowing to Baal, should keep their eye fixed upon the Author of their faith, and imitate his divine example. We are to cry, The sword of the Lord! and rest assured that God will use it effectually in defence of his Israel and the discomfort of his enemies.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

Sunday April 29, 1984

Dear Bro. Key,

I enjoyed the Union meeting this weekend very much. I feel we had a wonderful meeting. The preaching was so uplifting for me. I feel the sermons were surely as the voice of one man. I can't be thankful enough, unworthy as I am, to be allowed to be numbered with such dear people. I love them all. The words spoken were the things I love to hear (and needed to hear this weekend). I'm glad I was able to tape a portion of it so I can enjoy it again.

Bro. Key, I had mean't to write you all week but didn't get it done. When looking through some of my things, I ran across the attached poem which my dear Mom wrote some years ago. If you find it worthy of publication, I would like to share it with her many friends and family who read the "Signs of The Times." It is a treasure to me, but then she was

very dear to me. For some time before God called her home, at the meetings she would ask for the Hymn 517 on page 206 of the Hymn and Tune Book - "Why should we start and fear to die, what tim'rous worms we mortals are! ...

On the 18th of June, 1983 the summons came from on high. She told me "I'm not going to make it... Goodbye." She then closed her eyes to this world and I feel she surely "rested her head upon His breast and breathed her life out sweetly there." She left us very quietly and peaceably. Though I miss her so very much, I know my loss is her eternal gain. Some time before she departed this life to be with her Lord, the words it is "joy unspeakable to be with the Lord," were given her one night. When she would ask a table grace, she would almost always ask the Lord to prepare us for what the day might bring or for what he had in store for us. She asked him before breakfast that last morning and I feel he surely prepared her.

I'm sorry to take up so much of your time but I felt I wanted to share this with you all. May God continue His blessings on you.

Your unworthy sister in Christ, I hope,
Jean Moran

Dear precious brethren in Christ
I want to talk to you
To try to tell in my simple way
Of the trials I've been through.

I cannot name a definite place
Nor a specific date,
When Christ began His work in me
As some of you relate.

When I was a little girl
Under six years old,
I began to worry deeply
About the welfare of my soul.

I felt to be so sinful,
The worst child my mother had;
While the others enjoyed childhood,
I was cast down and sad.

I thought that I was going to die,
And hell would be my doom.
I wondered why I was ever born,
Since I had to die so young.

I know I worried my dear Mother,
With questions that I asked.
But little did she know the trouble
That was raging in my breast.

She was oh so very patient
And consoled me as best she could.
But as my thoughts go back to the time and place,
I think, and feel she understood.

I could not know that Jesus cared,
The devil and hell was all my dread.
But after awhile this seemed to pass,
And I had other interests instead.

I then passed through a period,
Seemingly unconcerned,
Til gradually in the future
Those tormenting fears returned.

I would go to the movies
And wish I hadn't gone.

Because I didn't want to be found there
Should Jesus call me home.

When I was twenty-eight years old
I lost my only son.
Our family circle on earth was broken
But I hope in Heaven had begun

One day when I was so very lonely,
Feeling in the sight of God condemned,
I, in search for consolation,
Tried to find a certain hymn.

I was searching for assurance
That the promise was to me.
That He would never leave nor forsake me
But forever with me be.

But on opening my hymn book,
My eyes fell upon the following verse,
Then instead of finding comfort,
I felt my condemnation just.

"Oh, Lord, it has seemed good to Thee
To take my infant dear.
I hope it will work good for me
And cause me Thee to fear."

"To show me that I should not prize
Nothing on earth so high,
As Thee the Sovereign Lord of all
Who rules the earth and sky."

One night I dreamed I saw my mother
Just as happy as she could be.
She and all the saints were singing,
"Rock of Ages cleft for me."

Then one night I saw my Saviour
As he hung upon the tree;
This was witnessed by my pastor,
Several others, and by me.

I no longer fear the devil,
Tis my precious Lord I fear.
I feel he has my sins forgiven
And tenderly keep me in His care.

Now when my Savior calls me home,
This is my sincere prayer.
To rest my head upon His breast
And breathe my life out sweetly there.

Lelia Blackwell

Reuben Davis
March, 1984

Dear Brethren:

Somehow I have been impressed to write a few things. My mind goes back to happenings in my life which to me is evidence of a supreme power that rules all things, both natural and spiritual. When I was about sixteen, I quit school and stayed at home with my Mother and Dad. We lived on a small farm and we had to strive to make a living. That was just after World War I.

I was born on October 1, 1905 in Henry County, Virginia. My Dad and Mother were not church members, but when Elder J. W. Wyatt or Isaac Jones would come through anytime in the week, he would make a special effort to go over to Axton to the Church to hear them. I would go with them and I would notice a lot of the time in their preaching that my Dad was enjoying the sermon so much

that tears would be streaming down his cheeks. I just couldn't understand his feelings, not only him, but a lot of others were so enveloped with the Spirit, it was very clear how happy they were. I went to Sunday school attended the Revival meetings of other denominations but, to me, their worship was not as heartfelt nor as impressive. I wondered and I read the Scripture especially to debate with my Dad on the subject of Predestination and Foreknowledge of God, while we were working together in the fields. I was looking for definite proof that a natural man could acquire favor with God by his own conduct or if he was his own free agent to do a lot of meanness or not. But in my reading of the Old Testament, Moses chose rather to suffer afflictions with the children of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. This tells me that he was so enveloped with the spirit of Almighty God that the natural man, being so enticed by the sins of the flesh, was compelled by the Spirit not to follow the way of sinful flesh. Here we see the spirit working against the flesh, but all of those who have been born of the Spirit will come out more than conquerors by Him who loved us and gave His life for us. We read, blessed are those that walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. They are blessed not nor will be if they do certain things. Therefore, the natural man deserves no praise for the blessings he receives here in this world, be they spiritual or natural.

My mind goes back to my life at home with my parents. In the twenties or early thirties, I followed the dancing and music crowd throughout the whole community, enjoying all the natural pleasures for a season. I was about twenty-four or twenty-five years old and had saved a little money. I had an Uncle who moved to town in the late twenties and rented his farm to a family who lived in town at the time. They moved down on this farm, about one mile from where we lived. As it was a general custom to visit a new family in the community, our nearest neighbors had been down. I asked one of the boys about the family. He said there was one young girl about fifteen or sixteen who seemed to be very quiet and not too happy with the situation (moving from town). She had three younger brothers and two older brothers, there at home. It seemed that a feeling of compassion was aroused, why I didn't know. I had not seen the young lady at that time. But when I did, her appearance appealed to me very much. Our courtship began and continued on for probably one year and in the meantime, my Uncle, who owned this property, decided to sell it.

This was in the early thirties. He authorized another one of my Uncles to sell it for him. So he came by and told me about it. He was asking $3,000 for it. I told this Uncle I would give him $2,500 for it. Time rolled on about two or three months. After that, the same Uncle came by home and said he had decided to take my price. I had to borrow $500, as it must be cash. We made the deal that day, July 19, 1931, Depression Days. I was still very interested in the daughter that lived there. That fall, they moved to another farm about four miles west of Ridgeway, Virginia, about twenty miles

from where I lived. We weren't engaged, and I was past broke (financially owed $500 and had no way of traveling unless I caught a bus), so I decided to just forget about her. About six months passed and I didn't see her. But my love for her could not be quenched. Especially when I walked down on the farm that I bought. It had two good houses on it. Somehow, a feeling went over me that "this is where you all will live." The feeling was so strong that I decided if I ever saw her again, I would ask her to marry me. So I was fortunate enough to see her about once a month for about another year. We planned to marry and did in the fall of 1933 on Nov. 18th. In the year before that, my Aunt passed away. They lived about two miles from us. The funeral was at the home. They had a young preacher who stood in the hall and I was standing very close to him. I had never seen him before, but his countenance shined and the words he said were precious to me. I inquired as to who he was and was told he was David Spangler and that he operated a store in Cascade, Virginia. It dawned on me that if I ever got married, I wanted him to perform the ceremony. So, as my plans matured, a friend of mine took me to see him at Cascade and made the appointment to be at his home on Saturday afternoon November 18, 1933. We were happy and loved each other but I well knew that, without the blessings of Almighty God, our lives would be miserable. But He smiled on us with blessings untold. I will never forget that, in 1941, I planted my crop early, and had an especially nice tobacco crop. Sometime along the last of June, the County Agent came down and wanted me to work for him a few weeks. I refused at the time. I felt that I had excelled all of my neighbors with a nice early crop. I was preparing to save tobacco on the seventh of July, this being the afternoon of the sixth of July. A small cloud just overhead began to make a noise and thundered in within a few minutes. It began to hail, the wind whirled, and in minutes, my tobacco crop was beat into the ground. I had a boy hired by the month and I also had a sharecropper who had three acres of tobacco here on the place. After the cloud passed, we went up into the fields: the tobacco was beat to the ground. My sharecropper was shedding tears, but it seems that I couldn't grasp just exactly how serious it might have been.

On the morning of the eighth, I decided that I and the boy I had hired would cut the stalks off and turn out a sucker (new leaf growths on tobacco stalks). We had cut off a few rows when several of my neighbors, older farmers than I, as well as my Dad told me I was foolish it was too late in the year. As a result, we quit The young man I had hired said he wanted to try to get another job. I told him to wait until tomorrow and we both would look for work.

Late that night (perhaps in the early morning)—I don't know if I was awake or asleep,— I "saw" the tobacco fields in a beautiful crop about a shoulder high. I woke my wife and told her to get up and cook breakfast I was going to get another hand or two and cut the tobacco off. She said, "You quit yesterday." I answered "Yes, but I am not quitting today."

Only I knew how I felt we cut it all off that day. I told the hired boy just to continue on as before.

In a few days, we began to leave the best suckers. The weather was dry for about three weeks — it looked very discouraging, and I didn't hear many encouraging words. My faith got very small, but it began raining the first of August and it rained almost every day for nearly three weeks. By that time, those suckers were all in top. I got some extra help and we topped every plant anywhere from twenty-four to twenty-eight leaves. This was about the first of September on Sunday morning after we had topped it. It was a beautiful crop. I walked up on the Ridge to look at the crop, and the picture I saw that night (before I began to cut the stubble off the second time) came to me so perfect—even to the shapes of the edge of the fields. As I stood there, it seems that a chill went over me as much as to say that the Lord took it away and He has given it back. It took just that to teach me whose earth I was using, just where all my strength and knowledge came from, and just how helpless and dependent we all are. Sometimes, we can pray with thankfulness in our heart, but how often we are like the hog eating apples off the ground, and never looks up to see just where they came from.

As time moved on from this time onward, I was deeply interested in going to hear men preach—especially the Old School Baptist. Once in a while on Sunday morning, I would walk around and look at the growing crops, and a feeling would so envelop me, I would hurry to the house to get ready to go somewhere to hear someone speak on the Great and marvelous things of God. I went to hear several different factions of the Primitive Baptist Church. Some of them said things that I didn't believe. But as the poet said, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear—it soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds, and drives away his fears. It makes the wounded spirit whole and calms the troubled breast, Tis manna to the hungry soul, and to the weary, rest." Sometimes, my spirit was aroused about as much what the Preacher didn't say as what he did. This drive to go and hear something only happened three or four times a year. It seems that most of the time, I was too deeply involved in natural things. A few years passed like this and I decided to build a fish pond—and did. I stocked it with fish and charged each person one dollar per day to fish. Also, I built a concession stand and sold candy, ice cream, canned goods, and cold drinks.

This project worked very well for several years (moneywise), but I didn't have time to go to church. In the year 1958 (about the first of May), the fishing business was very good—especially on Sundays. Cold drinks were very important. One Sunday morning, my drink box had conked out, and the drinks were hot. I had it repaired, and the next Sunday, it was "out" again. That week, I got a repairman: He said all it needed was some more gas in it, so he put gas in it. It worked a few more days and quit again, so I didn't have cold drinks that weekend. The following week, I bought an-

other box from one of the drink companies—it worked very well.

However, on Saturday evening of that week, my youngest son, who was about nine years old, didn't eat any supper. He was complaining with his side. I called our family doctor—he said to bring him to his office. I carried him and he examined him. He said he didn't think anything much was wrong, probably a slight upset stomach. We came on home. The next morning, I got up early, about 4:30 a. m. , as a lot of the fishers would come in early. At about eight o'clock, my other son, who was about fourteen years old at the time, came up to the pond and said, "Mama wants you to come to the house as Clark (the youngest son, who was complaining the evening before) is very sick and walking bent over." I went down and called the family doctor who had seen him the evening before. He said for me to bring him to the emergency room and that he would meet us there. When we arrived, the doctor called in another doctor, who was a surgeon. He said that he had got appendicitis and must be operated on at once. They began to prepare him for the operation. By ten o'clock, he was in the operating room. It was about two hours before the doctor got through — Ordinarily, an operation of this kind wouldn't last over twenty minutes. I was restlessly waiting to hear why it took so long. The doctor came to me and told me that his appendix had erupted but that he had "cleaned" him out the best that he could. Also, he said that, with Clark being young, he felt that he would make it through this illness. To me, it was a serious report. I went to his room and saw all of the tubes in his nose and they were putting something in his veins, so I left the hospital. About four o'clock (on the way home), if I ever tried to pray, it was then. In my discourse, it seemed that a voice spoke to me very eloquently and impressively: "You are operating a fish pond on Sundays and not going to church. Neither of you have been baptized." I bargained with that spiritual approach as much as to say, "Lord, if you will just spare my son, I will walk differently." I came home and told my wife the sad story. I told her that there would be no more fishing on Sundays. The following week (I guess about Wednesday), this being about the last of May, 1958, an old black man (whom I knew very well, and who lived about 6 or 7 miles from me with his son) came down to see if I had any tobacco plants. We were through planting, so I told him "yes" and I carried them to the beds and told them to help themselves. I went back to the house to hear from my son. When my wife came back from up at the hospital, she said that they thought he was a little better. Then, I walked back up to where the old black man and his son were drawing plants. I said, "Uncle Dillard, if you don't get enough here in this bed, on the other side over there are some more beds." This old man stood up and took off his hat and said, "Mr. Davis, I told my wife before I left home that if anyone had any plants to spare, it would be you. You have been blessed in all of your farming activities. What church are you a member of?" Why did he ask such a question? — He didn't know that my son

was seriously ill at that time. I told him that I wasn't a member of any church at this time. He said, "Mr. Davis, you ought to join the church of your belief and be baptized." That hit me so hard that I was speechless for a minute or two. I had to agree with him. But when and where to go, I didn't know. I was in deep trouble. I began to go to different factions of the Primitive Baptist Churches, but when the doors of the Church were open for the reception of members, I couldn't move. This fearful condition went on with me for a month or two. But since I had closed the fishpond on Sundays, a friend of mine asked to baptize in the pond on a Sunday morning during this period.

That Sunday morning, while they were baptizing, I went up there. My wife didn't go, and when I came back, it seemed that I could see a difference in her. That night, sometime in the late hours, I missed her. The house was dark, and I wandered and began to search. I found her sitting on the back steps, crying. I asked her what was wrong and she said, "I think I am sure for Hell, I have sinned against the Holy Ghost." All of this loosened chords around my heart. I could see that my prayers were being answered as I had so many times tried to pray In my feeble way that she could see the things that I had been blessed to see: The mighty and mysterious works of the Lord and how He rules and guides His people and causes them to see their sinful and helpless state, and that then and only then will they call for mercy, and that that all-seeing eye which never sleeps nor slumbers reaches out His loving arms of Grace and Mercy, giving them a desire to follow their Lord in baptism. What a great comfort to feel and hope that, some sweet day, you will rest with Him in glory when the trials and troubles of this world are over.

Back to the following Sunday after this had taken place with my wife. It being a fourth Sunday, I understood that David Spangler preached at Dan River on that day. I began to get ready to go and my wife fixed two of the children, but she wouldn't go — she said she didn't feel like it. So, I and two of our children went. I didn't know that they were having a baptizing out at the pool. The people were standing all around. We stood on the outer edge of the crowd. David Spangler stood up on top of a cement step at the pool edge and began to speak on the greatness and mercies of God. It seemed to me that his faced shined and that everything he said was directed to me. He said, "The doors of the church are now open, and if any of you feel a burden, to unite with the church and follow your Lord in baptism, now is as good a time as any." I gave my hat to my daughter and said, "I've got to go." I went through the crowd and up to Elder Spangler and told him I had put this thing off as long as I could and it was my desire for a home with the Church and to be baptized. Anything else I said, I don't remember. They accepted me. He asked me who I was, as it had been

twenty-five years since he had united me and my wife in marriage (of course, he had forgotten, since he hadn't seen me since then), I told him, if it be the Lord's will, I would like to be baptized the next fourth Sunday. So the - following week, Brother Deacon Gold Minter came up to see me and it was a great pleasure to talk to someone who understood the way my travels had been. My wife was so glad when I came back and told her that I had united myself with the church. She embraced me and we shed tears of joy together.

The following week, Elder Spangler came to see us and we were glad to see him and his wife. My wife was anxious to ask him some questions and tell him portions of her experiences. His talk to her was a lot of comfort. So the next fourth Saturday night, my wife offered herself to the church and was accepted.

On Sunday morning, Elder Spangler baptized us both. This was in 1958, the fourth Sunday of September.

We well realize we have enjoyed many precious blessings in the last twenty-five years. Of course, we have had some natural disappointments - (and I realize these struggles in life are good for us to make us realize from whence all of our help comes — both Spiritual and natural) and I hope we thank the God of all mercy for our many acquaintances who have had experiences such as ours as it is a lot of comfort to witness such evidence along the way.

Reuben Davis

For the Signs of the Times.
North Berwick May 13, 1855.

To the children of the living God, that God who doeth all things according to his own will.

Dear Friends: - I feel a strong desire at times to write a few lines to you if I could write anything that would be interesting to anyone to read. When I see and hear of the persecution the little flock of Christ has to meet with here in this world, I feel as if I want to be found among them. I feel as though I want to show what side I desire to be on. But I am unfit to be numbered among the saints of God. I have been a constant reader of the *Signs* these many years, and if not deceived have enjoyed much comfort in reading them. And at times have felt a strong impression to write a little, but viewing my inability have delayed until the present time. But where there is but little given there is but little required, and if my talent is small I ought not to be ashamed of it, such as I have give I thee. I was born in North Berwick, Maine, December 28th, 1815. My parents never made a public profession of religion, but were Old School Baptists in their belief. I was taught to regard morality; but not that it was spirituality. I had a natural taste for learning, and when I attended school, calculated to be first in my class; thus I went on, lived the life of a Pharisee, thinking myself better than others, (having outdone most of them) until I was almost fourteen years old. I had attended school through the

summer, the school closed, and one week from the day the school closed, a little child who had attended the school was numbered among the dead. I attended the funeral, and when the minister read his text which was, "Remember now thy Creator." &c. I thought to myself I had remembered my Creator, I thought of a number of my schoolmates who I thought had not remembered their Creator. But before the sermon ended, I was made to see and feel that I had not remembered thy Creator. I felt as I never felt before; I wondered that my life had been spared so long; time looked short with me. I thought I was not fit to live and I was not fit to die; what to do I did not know. I thought of the most wicked and profane persons of my knowledge, but their case was better than mine; they had showed out their wickedness, but mine was inside. I went from place to place seeking rest, but finding none. I read the Bible, but it condemned me in every line. I thought the brute creation were better off than me. I spent my days in anguish, no pleasure could I see. The world had lost all its charms for me.

Lord I am vile conceived in sin,
But thou canst cleanse and make me clean,
Show pity Lord, O Lord forgive,
Let a poor sinful rebel live.

Followed me by day and by night, but I kept all these things to myself. My mother would often call me to attend to my work, and ask me what ailed me, that I did not work. I told her nothing. One day while lamenting my sad condition these words came to me, Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners unto repentance. It appeared that it must surely be for me; for no one was so great a sinner as I. There seemed to be a little hope that my sins were forgiven. Christians appeared as the excellent of the earth; I thought or a uncle of mine who was a deacon of a church, if I could see him I should like to tell him how I felt. But Ah! I soon got into doubting-castle. I thought these feelings were all imagination, and how glad I was that I had never told my feelings to anyone. I tried to throw hope away, hoping I might have a better one; but never have been able to do it. Thus I got along almost two years; my little hope increased a little gradually; there was a revival of religion in the vicinity where I lived, and quite a number were added to the church. Baptism appeared beautiful but I was not fit for the ordinance; but at length I was constrained to follow the Savior down in the water, then I felt that which is better felt than expressed. But I have had many ups and downs since that time, most of the time I am on the down hill side. Can one who is a christian have such a heart as mine? I fear I never felt the effects of love divine. I am willing to confess, I do not adorn my profession with a well ordered life, and godly conversation.

"Prone to wander Lord I feel it."

But I will draw my scribble to a close; time would fail me to write all; perhaps I have written too much already. I think brethren and sisters are too back-

ward about writing for the *Signs,* if our talent is small, we ought not to hide it. We are a little despised company, but if Christ is the captain of our salvation, we shall come off conquerors. May the Lord guide us in the right way, and support us under all our trials and affiictions and when done with all things here below, may we have a seat at God's right hand.

J.C.S.

EPHESIANS 3:15-21.

Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

May be able to comprehend with all saints what *is* the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us;

Unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

PSALM 19:7-9.

The law of the Lord *is* perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord *is* sure, making wise the simple.

The statutes of the Lord *are* right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord *is* pure, enlightening the eyes.

The fear of the Lord *is* clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord *are* true *and* righteous altogether.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 2014

Caroline Martin, WA	10.00
Tommy Wall, VA	5.00
Chlonetia Thompson, VA	5.00
Peggy Phillips, VA	5.00
Allen Carroll, NC	5.00
Esther Griffin, NC	25.00
Estelle Thompson, VA	5.00
Elder Jimmy Gray, NC	5.00
Flora Stutts, TX	50.00

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1 JOHN 5:7.

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one."

OBITUARIES

OBITUARY OF ALLEN DILLARD MCBRIDE

I will attempt to write the obituary of Brother Allen Dillard McBride. Allen was born December 14, 1922 in Draper, N.C, son of late Charlie Lee and Tida Gertrude Hall McBride. He was a World War II US Navy veteran and a proud member of the Navy Seabees. Allen served in the South Pacific and other islands during his tour of duty. On September 18, 2010 he was on the Triad Flight of Honor to Washington, D C with other World War II veterans. He was a retiree of E. I. DuPont in Martinsville, VA.

He is survived by his wife of almost 64 years, Charlotte Thomas McBride of the home; two daughters, Denise Hill of Eden NC and Linda Lipford of King NC; three grandchildren, Sandy Stroud, Kevin Lipford and Kory Lipford; two great-grandchildren, Ryan and Peyton Todd; and brother Evenor "Mac" Lee McBride of Stoneville.

In additional to his parents, he was preceded in death by his brothers, Arlie O'Neal "Feet" McBride and James T. "Toody" McBride.

Funeral services was Friday, May 23, 2014 at 2:00 p.m. at Fair Funeral Home Chapel by Elder David Minter. Church members and friends sang two of his favorite hymns, Amazing Grace and Rock of Ages and Rose Mary Martin sang, When I can read my title clear.

He was buried at Overlook Cemetery in Eden NC. Pallbearers, Kevin Lipford, Kory Lipford, Ryan Todd, Danny McBride, Amos Hill and Earl Sexton.

Allen was baptized September 22, 1985 as a member of Sardis Primitive Baptist Church by Elder David Minter.

He was ordained as a deacon for Sardis Primitive Church on February 22, 1986.

He was a faithful member and deacon of Sardis Primitive Baptist Church in Madison, NC. Brother McBride was always present at all meetings if possible. Brother Allen assisted in many baptizing and always assisted in communion service. He and Charlotte traveled many miles to hear the good word of God and have fellowship with so many Churches and people far and near, also many miles were traveled with Elder David Minter. They were best of friends. I can see Brother Allen shaking hands, smiling to all he met, he never met a stranger. What stands out so strong in my mind, was how serene he became when he heard the Good Word of God. He would shed tears of joy. Many times I have seen Brother Allen shake hands with the preacher while the preacher was preaching. When his health started failing he could not travel as much and could not come to Church on a regular basis. He missed that very much, but he never lost the desire to go to Church to heard the Word. He was humble, lovable and spoke to all he came in contact with. Allen was loved, respected and will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

Approved by Sardis Primitive Bap-

tist Church, Madison, NC in conference on November 22, 2014.

It was requested to send one copy to The Signs of the Times for publication, and one copy to be recorded in the church book.

Elder David Minter, Moderator
Julia Minter, Church Clerk

To: The editors of the Signs of the Times

With great sorrow, we mark the passing from this world of our dear friend and brother in Christ; Charles M. Moon. Brother Moon came into this world September 8, 1926 and departed it on September 30, 2014 making his earthly pilgrimage a span of 88 years and 22 days. His parents, Martin and Ruth Moon, were members of Boaz Chapel Primitive Baptist Church where, at the appointed time in 1987, Bro. Charles also asked for a home. Brother Charles Moon and Sister Ramona Chappell Moon, were married in July, 1950. To this union were born three children; Mark Moon, Marta Moon Coleman, and Jennie Moon Rudolph. Brother and Sister Moon attended the church faithfully, two of their children also asking for a home at Boaz Chapel. Brother Moon was an educated and respected man in his community, but was never proud or boastful; the kindest and most humble man this writer has ever known. Brother Moon served his church not only as clerk, but also as deacon.

We sorrow that we must now carry on in this world without his humble spirit and steady hand. Yet we do not sorrow as those who have no hope. Our sorrow is mixed with rejoicing when given to consider the exceeding great and precious promises that were fulfilled and realized by our dear brother as he passed from this veil of sin and sorrow into the glorious presence of his Lord and Master. Whereupon, If not deceived, Brother Moon was carried on the wings of angels to the throne of God where he joyfully awaits that great and notable day when the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, the graves will be opened and the purchased possession, the redeemed bodies of the saints, that was sown in corruption, weakness, and dishonor will be raised in incorruption, glory, and power! And so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Written by order of the Boaz Chapel Primitive Baptist Church while in conference, October 19, 2014 and humbly submitted.

Sister Ramona Moon, Clerk
Elder Kenneth R. Adams, Moderator

JOHN 4:13-14.

Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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HYMN

Tune-MANOAH, page 205. - C.M.

JERUSALEM, my happy home,
Oh, how I long for thee!
When will my sorrows have an end?
Thy joys, when shall I see?

Thy walls are all of precious stone,
Most glorious to behold;
Thy gates are richly set with pearl,
Thy streets are paved with gold.

Why should I shrink at pain and wo,
Or feel at death dismay,
With Canaan's goodly land in view,
And realms of endless day?

Reach down, O Lord, thine arm of grace,
And cause me to ascend
Where congregations ne'er break up,
And Sabbaths never end.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the Sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun.

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EDITORIAL

"Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price *is* far above rubies." Proverbs 31: 10.

Elder J. B. Farmer

Solomon, the wisest man that ever lived upon earth, other than the Lord Jesus Christ, repeated this prophesy, which consisted of the words of king Lemuel, which were taught to him by his mother. This prophesy was no doubt given to her by inspiration of God. Like all words of prophesy, the understanding of them must come by revelation, if indeed any understanding is given. In mercy and love the prophesy is revealed to "babes" and hidden from the "wise and prudent."

The scripture listed above causes many questions to come to mind. Who is the *virtuous woman?* What does the word *find* actually mean? By *whom* was she found? What does the word *price* mean? What is the *price that is far above rubies?* Who paid the *price* for her? And what is her *virtue* and how did she attain it?

May we be lifted up above the natural world and be made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ. May we be given to view some of the mysteries of the Spiritual kingdom in their beauty and holiness. May we be given to render unto God all honor and praise for all things, which He has done on behalf of His chosen people.

We know that there are many women who have been seen to be virtuous through the ages. We may even look to our own experience and think of a beloved wife, or mother, or child, or some other relative or friend that we would call virtuous. But according to this Proverb, "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all." There is one woman who excels all others. She is the Church, the bride of Christ, Zion the perfection of beauty. She excels all others in that there is no spot or wrinkle or blemish or anything to mar her beauty. She is spiritual and has been lifted up to heaven and found to be accepted in the beloved. She was made perfect before God in the righteousness of Christ.

To find the virtuous woman is not just

for her husband to locate her, but also for him to claim her and to take her to himself. The husband of the Church is the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. He found her in a waste howling wilderness, where there was no food or water to sustain her. He claimed her for His own, knowing that she had been given to Him by the Father. As Jacob labored for his bride, the Lord Himself did a work much greater than that of Jacob in order to secure the Church to Himself. He paid the supreme price for her. The price was far greater than rubies or any other thing of value in this world. The price was the life-blood of the Savior. He laid down His life for her that she might live and not die. When the Father saw the travail of His soul, He was satisfied — His justice was satisfied. **"For He hath made Him** *to be* **sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Cor. 5:21.** The sins of the members of the body of Christ, the Church, were all taken away and forgiven. They shall never be remembered against them again forever. And in the stead of those sins, the righteousness of Christ was imputed to them. Now, she is altogether lovely.

This loveliness of the Church is seen in her virtue, which was wrought by the Spirit of God in her. The fruit of the Spirit is the virtue in her: "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." Gal. 5:22.

Here is the way the Church is characterized in the scriptures of Proverbs. She is trustworthy: "The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life." She is diligent because she is made willing in the day of His power: She is made to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. And she is made to walk in the good works, which God has before ordained that she should walk in them. "She seeketh wool and flax and worketh willingly with her hands." She seeks the good news from a far country. Her household is fed from the manna, which is sent down from heaven. "She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar." She walks by faith and not by sight. Even when all seems darkness, the Church is made to hold on her way and to provide for her own. "She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens." The just shall live by faith. And good works follow faith, by the grace of God. "She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. She perceiveth that her merchandise *is* good: her candle goeth not out by night. She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff." She is compassionate toward children of God, who are the poor in Spirit and the ones standing in need of mercy. "She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy." She is not fearful for her household, for they are all washed in the blood of the Lamb, and their garments are made white by that

same blood. She is clothed with the garments of salvation suitable for those who have been made kings and priests unto God. "She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet. She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing *is* silk and purple." Her Husband is Lord of Lords and King of Kings. He has the love, honor and praise of God's people, who are the wisest people upon the face of the earth. "Her husband is known in the gates, when He sitteth among the elders of the land." She proclaims the righteousness of Christ and His almighty power to all without price. And though she endures much suffering in this world, she shall rejoice world without end in glory. "She maketh fine linen, and selleth *it* and delivereth girdles unto the merchant. Strength and honour *are* her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come." She is wise and kind, according to the Holy Spirit within her. "She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue *is* the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness." She is highly esteemed for the truth's sake by all who have been given eyes to see and ears to hear and hearts to understand. "Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband *also,* and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favor *is* deceitful, and beauty *is* vain: *but* a woman *that* feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates."

The Lord loved His bride, the Church, to the extent that He came to her in her weakness and sin. He purchased her pardon by giving His life for hers, and He cleansed her from all unrighteousness by His own blood. He gave her of His Spirit, by which she loves Him in turn and desires to please Him. By the grace of God she walks in the light and speaks the truth in love as she is led in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. She is altogether lovely and virtuous in Him. She looks forward to the day when her Husband the Good Shepherd of the sheep shall come again. Then the sheep, who are the elect vessels of mercy, even the Church, shall be set on his right hand and He shall say to them, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." She shall be manifest to all as that virtuous woman, whose price is far above rubies, who has been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.

Written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J. B. Farmer

Romans 8:10-11.

And if Christ *be* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

VOICES OF THE PAST

CAVE ADULLAM

Elder G. Beebe's Sons — Dear Brethren in Christ: — A man who is now past his three score years, in his youthful days used to hear and sometimes read the remarkable story of one David, who "escaped to the cave Adullam, and when his brethren and all his father's house heard it, they went down thither to him, and every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him, and he became a captain over them, and there were with him about four hundred men." This same old man learned in early life from some source that Adullam meant "their witness" or testimony, but what meaning there could be in such a statement he could not imagine, for such a class as were described as gathered themselves to David, seemed to him to be a class of persons wholly unprepared to testify to anything but their own wretchedness, although he had read in a book, called the New Testament, the following description of certain characters: "Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place, and labor with our own hands; being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer for it; being defamed, we entreat; we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day. I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you." What possible connection there could be in these declarations, and the characters described as being in the cave Adullam, could not be seen so as to be understood.

When this now old man was about eighteen years of age, a strange something took hold of him, and he became convinced that everything between him and his Creator, God, was wrong on his part, and then it required no elaborate argument to convince him that he was a sinner, justly condemned by the righteous law of God, and it needed no learned disquisition to convince him that there was a state of existence beyond this world, where all the race of mortal men would still have a being in either weal or woe. After seeing such to be the case, he immediately went to work to change his condition, not knowing that the fountain within was totally depraved, and that nothing but corruption could issue from such a source; though there were times that there seemed to be some relief, but soon the matter seemed worse than ever. Some two years or more passed, and he found himself to be "in distress, in debt, and discontented," and in some unaccountable way to him, he found himself in the cave Adullam, mingling with persons having exactly the same kind of trouble. After being in the "cave" sometime, their captain, David, made him a personal visit, and that lovely, sweet and charming countenance can never be forgotten while reason remains upon the throne, for he truly appeared "the chiefest among ten thousand," and the one alto-

gether lovely. When those heart-cheering words were uttered, "Because I live, ye shall live also," the distress, poverty and discontent seemed gone.

Soon followed the words from that precious Captain, "If you love me, keep my commandments." Then the man remembered that it was written, "For it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings," and so sweetly and powerfully were those declarations applied to him that he clearly saw why David was the captain over them in the cave Adullam.

He read in the New Testament the following: "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." So powerfully were the circumstances connected with the baptism of the Captain of our salvation, by his servant John, applied unto that man at times, that a glory indescribably great appeared to surround and envelop that awfully sublime scene, and three important things were clearly seen as connected with that baptism of Jesus, viz: A proper mode; a prepared administrator of the ordinance; and the true character, for in that ordinance was set forth by that man Christ Jesus not only the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, but every member of his body.

But the man who saw such glory and majesty in the ordinance of baptism had at times an anxious desire to obey his glorious Captain by following him into the "watery grave" as soon as he felt "good enough", but after waiting a long time and finding no improvement whatever in the principles dwelling in his flesh, and that he had not got far removed from the cave Adullam, the words of the apostle Peter, which declare that baptism is "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God," had such an effect on him that he was constrained, out of love, he hopes, to obey his Lord, by being baptized by a servant of the church, "in the name of Jesus Christ," which act he has never regretted, but has been made sad and gloomy very, very many times, on account of his shortcomings and his wanderings in forbidden paths, and although he has had a hope in the mercy of God toward him through Jesus Christ about forty years, and has been a member of the visible church over thirty-six years, he finds that he has not improved his fleshly passions and lusts any during that long period of time, and he still finds himself in distress and discontented, at times, fearing that he must be mistaken in the great matter of salvation, and he is often made to say, "Woe is me that I

sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar."

During the forty years he has had a hope that Jesus died for him, one great, important and fearful lesson has been taught him, and that is, not to trifle with what the inspired apostles have written, nor to seek to evade any of their positive declarations, for he has found measurably, at least, what a short-sighted, ignorant, erring mortal he is, and the awfully momentous truth recorded by Paul when he said, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not," he finds true. How trifling those words of the apostle appeared to the man when he was a wild, giddy and foolish boy, but since he was brought "down into the cave Adullam" he has found that the apostle penned the truth, for forty years has not removed out of his flesh, covetousness, wrath, malice, revenge, jealousy and evil surmisings. Those "vile serpents" are all alive, but sometimes more quiet than at other times, but not any of them are dead, and at times, when disturbed, their "hissing" is frightful, but reigning and abounding grace can and does chain them down. The closest and most profound examination shows to this man the certain truth of what the apostle recorded concerning his flesh; and if they were quiet there would not be such a strife, but they are active; hence the same apostle says, "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man, but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."

Upon another occasion the same apostle said, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." These principles are not only in the flesh, but are active ones, and since this man has seen himself in such distress, involved in such a debt, and so discontented, and found himself with such a class in the cave Adullam, he has had no desire to shun the company of Paul, by improving what he said concerning the warfare. During the time this man has had a hope, he has heard thousands of sermons, and sometimes he felt elated, and at other times depressed, cast down and gloomy, feeling that he lived undesired, and should die unlamented. It has seemed generally to be more interesting preaching to him when the trials, sorrows and afflictions of God's dear children have been dwelt upon, and the full, complete and finished salvation, in Christ Jesus, for just such poor, helpless, wandering creatures, has been clearly set forth, than simply to be dwelling on the duties of obedience and "right living" of God's children while here in the flesh, especially when it has been urged that their blessings depend upon those deeds, as such, for that position is antiscriptural because it puts effect for cause. The church, in all her members, is already blessed, according to the following divine declarations: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus

Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will."

These declarations positively show that the members of the body of Christ are already blessed; therefore instead of creature obedience being the means of obtaining the blessings, the blessings bestowed by the Father of mercies and God of all grace and consolation, cause the true obedience. How often has this man listened to preaching, and his mind has been like the "fool's eyes," rambling far and wide; yet he was present, filling his place among the members of the church, but had a "lean time;" therefore he has learned the just meaning of the following declarations: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure," and this man is so childish as to receive these important declarations just exactly as the apostle has penned them, and the reason his beloved brethren had always obeyed was because God gave them the will and the power. Then was their obeying the cause of the will and the power, or was it the evidence and result! The thought has often been given this old man, concerning the spiritual blessings, about as follows: "If great and precious blessings were given a child of God in Jesus Christ before time began, and those blessings were to be given or bestowed according to the obedience of that child, while here in the flesh, and such child should be so disobedient as not to merit one of the blessings, what confusion there must arise in the divine arrangement, for there are surplus blessings given in Christ, according to the carnal theory, you do and then you will be blessed. But how anyone who has been in the cave Adullam, and had a view of the great, the wise, the glorious, the infinite and righteous Captain of our salvation, can advance the carnal view that our blessings depend on personal obedience, when the record made by inspired penmen teaches exactly the reverse; but our God, in his infinite love, boundless mercy and endless compassion, has seen fit to give "credit," as it were. to his dear children, in some places recorded in the Bible, for that which they are absolutely debtors; but this "ignorant" man so understands the matter, and. according to what the apostle James has written, everything for the good of God's people comes from him, for he says, "*Do* not err my beloved brethren. Every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning;" therefore all the children of men ever have done, are now doing, or will ever do, has not even caused the shadow of turning with Jehovah, if the testimony of the apostle James is to be received and believed; but if it is to be "improved and

changed," woe be unto them of his children who countenance such a thing.

In the New Testament it reads, "We are fools for Christ's sake;" and this man, who has been in the cave Adullam, as he hopes, is so foolish in the eyes of the "wise and learned" of the present day, that he is willing to take the New Testament just as it reads concerning the choosing of the members of Christ's body in him before the foundation of the world, the vital unity between Christ and his people, the efficacy of the atonement for the sheep, the spiritual birth, the ordinance of baptism, the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, the office work of the ministry, the deep mystery of the resurrection of the bodies of the saints, the description given of the invisible God, the final glorification of all the elect in the world of immortal glory, and the everlasting punishment of all the non-elect; all of which matters are as fixed and sure as the eternal throne of God, and can no more be changed than God can cease to exist. He closes these remarks, wishing Zion well, and that our God, if it be his will, will keep his dear people from carnal theorizing and vain speculations, and cause all to be childlike and simple, being willing to take forms of expression that inspired apostles have left on record, and not attempt to suit them to "the favor of the learned world of mankind," by modernizing them, thereby attempting to accommodate matters with worldly religionists. May God apply the following declarations with sweetness and power: "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

SIMPLICITY

(The above originally appeared in the Signs November 15, 1884, and was written by Elder Wm. J. Purington; of whom Elder Chick wrote, "Than whom there has not been an abler gifted minister of the gospel since the days of the apostles."

We believe and advocate today the same principles which were maintained by Elder Purington.

Elder John D. Wood

LETTER FROM A MINISTER TO HIS FLOCK.

November 1835

To the Church of Christ meeting for the Worship of the most glorious Three-One God, in the Baptist Chapel,

Dearly Beloved, — May grace, mercy, and peace from our covenant God be with you.

Since I saw you in the flesh, and broke the bread of life unto you, I have, to all human appearance, been within a few minutes of my journey's end; but my dear Lord has greatly restored me, and I hope it is for the good of the church, and his own glory.

Dear brethren and sisters, I wish above all things that your souls may prosper, and that you may drink deep

into the deep things of God. Soon, very soon, we must bid a final adieu to this world, with all its glare and show, yea, and with all its care and woe too. O for daily intercourse with God the Father, in his eternal, free, sovereign, electing, unchanging, almighty love; and with God the Son, in his eternal, free, betrothing, redeeming, sympathizing, heart-melting, soul-ravishing love; and with God the Holy Ghost, in his eternal, watchful, soul-quickening and enlightening, spirit-reviving, teaching, prayer-indicting, love-communicating, sealing, anointing, confirming, supporting, and gratitude-and-praise-giving love. May we in very deed have communion with this glorious Three-One God, as our own God, and Father, and Husband, and All and in All. Then come what will, all will be well. When my soul sweetly enjoys these glorious things, I am willing to spend and be spent *for* the good of my dear Lord's family, and his glory, or to be laid by and make room for another, as will most end in the honour *of my* dear God and Saviour.

My dear Brethren, strive together *for* the faith *of* the gospel, and endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Let all self-seeking, self-thinking, and self-acting give place to the well-being of the church and the glory of God. Remember, one is our Master, even Christ, and we are all brethren, bought with the precious blood of the God-Man Mediator, the Lord, our loving Husband and lifesaving Head,— one family, yea, one body, in him; for by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, and have been made to drink into one Spirit. God grant we may daily and deeply drink! O the glorious mysteries of God's grace! We are made members *of* the body, the flesh, and the bones of Christ. (Eph. v. 30.) The Lord the Spirit enable us to put on the whole armour of Christ, that may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. See Eph. vi. Read the whole. We live in a day of dreadful blasphemy and rebuke, when the glorious sovereignty of God is despised and set at nought, and charged with having a licentious tendency. May it be your happiness so to live as to give the lie to their malignant slanders. "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ, that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel, nothing terrified by your adversaries, which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God." (Phil i. 27, 28.) May you live in the Lord, and for the Lord, and daily fetch blessings from the Lord, by faith and prayer. Trials you must expect — a smooth path long together is not the lot of the family of God, nor would it be for their real good. We are called upon to rejoice, inasmuch as we are made partakers of Christ's sufferings: "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you." (1 Peter iv. 13, 14.) Remember, Christ suffered from the sins of his people, from the world, from the devil, and from false brethren, and we must expect a share of the same; but God forbid that we should suffer as evil-do-

ers, &c.

The Lord be with you all, and bless you with a spirit of prayer, and much of the enjoyment of his love and presence; and do, my dear brethren, pray for me; and if the Lord bring us together again, may we meet in the Spirit and power of the Lord Jesus Christ, and may our souls be filled with the fulness *of* God, is the prayer of your loving pastor in the Lord, and for the Lord's sake.

London, Sept. 26, 1835.

THE RESURRECTION

1 Corinthians 15:41-46 — "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for *one* star differeth from *another* star in glory. So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam *was made* a quickening spirit. Howbeit that *was* not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual."

If you have leisure, please give me your view on the Resurrection, from the scripture found in 1 Cor. 15:41-46, and oblige an — EARNEST ENQUIRER.

REPLY

Although we have no secrets upon the doctrine of God our Savior, or disposition to withhold from earnest enquirers after the truth such views as we have on any religious subject, we do feel some hesitancy, with our very limited understanding, in agitating a subject on which there is so much controversy and vain speculation as there is at this day on the subject of the resurrection of the dead. That there is an hour coming in the which all that are in the grave shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation, can't be denied without directly contradicting the express declaration of our Lord Jesus Christ, John 5:28-29. In this fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians, we understand the apostle to dwell upon the resurrection of Christ from the dead, as the first fruits of them that slept, and as the certain pledge that all His redeemed people shall be finally raised in like manner from the dead, in their proper order, namely, "Christ the first fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at His coming." All this is established beyond all successful contradiction, by positive scripture testimony. In treating upon the certainty of the resurrection of the saints, after cautioning the saints to "be not deceived," the apostle fortifies them

against deception on this vitally important subject, by advising them of some of the speculating devices of men, which would have a tendency to deceive them. He says, "But some men will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" Such questions he brands as foolish, for he says, "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." The figure of sowing grain, such grain as *thou* (men) sowest in the earth, whether of wheat or any other grain, cannot vegetate and produce a crop except it die. "And that which THOU sowest, (of wheat or of other grain) *thou* sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain." But this grain which is so sown is the seed, it is not the harvest, or product of the bare grain which is sown. That which you have sown dies in the ground, but in its coming up you shall see first the blade, and finally the ripened harvest, in a new body which God gives to it. This is true in the development of the wheat, and of all kinds of grain: the wheat will not produce a harvest of rye or barley, for in the process of vegetation God gives to every seed his own body. If wheat be sown, wheat will be the harvest. A man totally ignorant of the order of nature in raising grain, should he see the husbandman sow his wheat broadcast into the earth, might enquire, How is it to be raised and with what body shall it come? If he supposes that the same grains which are put into the earth are to be in the same state picked up again after a given time, he may well be perplexed to understand how it can be; but those familiar with the laws of vegetation know that what they sow they shall see no more; it shall die in the earth, but from the germ of the seed shall arise its legitimate production. But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed, or kind of grain, his own body: wheat will produce wheat, and barley will produce barley.

The same reasoning is also applicable to different kinds of flesh of men, of beasts, of fishes or birds, as of wheat and other kinds of grain. So also of celestial and terrestrial bodies, and the glory of these bodies, as of the sun, moon and stars, among the heavenly, or of the earth, seas, etc., of the terrestrial bodies, and the glory of these bodies differ according to the difference of the bodies to which they severally belong — the glory of the sun will not be seen in the moon or stars, at least to the same degree.

These figures, thus explained, the apostle now applies to the illustration of the resurrection, saying, "So also is the resurrection of the dead." But how? Why, "It is sown in corruption." What is sown in corruption? The natural body of the saints; for if it were incorruptible, it could not die or be sown at all. It goes down into the ground to decompose, a mass of corruption, which would not be buried at all if it could be preserved from decay, decomposition and corruption. But what do we look for in its resurrection? Will it be raised a corruptible mass of decaying flesh? Certainly not. Thou sowest not that body that shall be-But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed his own body. The saints whose bodies are sown in

corruption, will not lose their identity so as to be raised bodies of the ungodly. Paul's body will not be given to Judas, nor shall the body of Judas be given to Paul or Peter; but to every seed his own body. The corruptible body goes to corruption, and so it is sown; but God will change this vile body in the resurrection and fashion it like unto Christ's glorious body. It is raised in incorruption." It will not only be raised up from under the corruption in which it is sown, but incorruptible; no more susceptible to corruption. "This corruptible shall put on incorruption," and corruption shall have no more power to contaminate it, for it shall be free from corruptibility. "It is sown in dishonor." "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "For the wages of sin is death." — Rom. 5:12; 6:23. "Man being in honor abideth not; he is like the beasts that perish." — Psa. 69:12, 20. In the humiliation and dishonor of our depraved earthly nature, we are in death remanded to the dust of the ground out of which we were taken as the just demerit of our transgression in the earthly Adam, so we are sown. But in that dishonor and pollution the saints shall not be raised. In the dishonor of our earthly relation to the first Adam, it is sown; but in the resurrection and immortal glory of the second Adam, it shall be raised. "For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first born among many brethren." — Rom.8:29. How amazingly glorious must be the change! how astonishing the contrast! All that is corruptible, earthly, sensual, unholy or like the earthly Adam, left behind, the children of the Resurrection shall be like the risen Jesus. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him."-1 John 3:2. The saints shall be satisfied when they awake with His likeness. — Psa. 17:15. And they can well afford to wait all the days of their appointed time until their change shall come.

"It is sown in weakness." If men had power to resist and repel the power of death, but few would yield to its chilling embrace. Death reigns with resistless power over all flesh; none of the sons of Adam have power to withstand, when the appointed hour arrives, "It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power." Not in its own power, for if it had power it would not be sown in weakness; but it is raised in the power of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the power of His endless life. The exceeding greatness of God's mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, shall be demonstrated in the resurrection of all His members. It will be the final and crowning display of the Mediatorial power of the Son of God, when the last enemy with which He shall grapple shall be destroyed and put under His feet.

"It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." On this last proposition the apostle gives an explanation, in which we are informed as to his precise meaning in his use of the words, natural and spiritual. In doing this he refers to what is written of the two Adams from

whence the natural and spiritual bodies severally emanate. "The first man Adam was made a living soul; "for when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, "man became a living soul." This man, — this living soul, Paul says was not spiritual, but natural. This man which when inspired with vitality was a living soul, the apostle says was an earthly man. "The first man is of the earth, earthy." Until he was inspired with natural life he was inanimate, and incapable of action or intelligence; but when animated and a living soul, he was commanded to multiply and replenish the earth; and in the book of his generations the first record of him is given in these words: "In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day that they were created." — Gen. 5: 1- 2. This, as to the order of time, was the first Adam; and although he was made a living soul, yet the Holy Ghost by the apostle informs us that he was not a spiritual man. "How be it that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterwards that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second Man is the Lord from heaven." These are the two progenitive, or seminal heads of their respective progenies; the one natural, the other spiritual; the one of the earth and earthy, the other from heaven and heavenly; and their respective families partake of their respective natures." As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." "Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and he begat a son in his own likeness, after his image, and called his name Seth. — Gen. 5:3. Seth was like his father, a natural man, a living soul; but like his father in nature, and so are all the posterity of Adam; all are natural, and all have his likeness, and all bear his image. All have sinned in him, and death has passed on them all, for that all have sinned. By this irrevocable decree, mortality is stamped upon the children of the first Adam. This Adamic nature is born of the flesh, and is flesh; but all the children of the second Adam are born of the spirit, and are spirit. The children of God are brought forth into manifestation by being first born of the flesh, and afterwards being born again, of the spirit. In the first, like Seth, they bear the image of the earthy Adam, and by the second they are manifested as the sons of God, and predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son of God. And although in their inward man or spirit which is born of the spirit, they are "after God created in righteousness," still "it doth not yet appear what they shall be," when in their resurrection their vile body shall be changed, and fashioned like the glorious body of Him whom they shall ultimately see as He is, and be perfectly conformed to His image. For, "As we have borne the image of the earthy," and do still bear it in our Adamic nature, and shall, until it be sown a natural body; in its resurrection it is raised a spiritual body, when it shall bear the image of the heavenly. In confirmation of this, the apostle settles another controverted point, by informing the brethren, "That flesh and blood cannot

inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." If our flesh and blood were born of the spirit, then it would be spirit, and could not die, or be sown a natural body; for they who are born of the spirit, are born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. That which is born of incorruptible seed cannot be corrupted, or sown in corruption, or in weakness, or in dishonor. The inheritance of our flesh and blood is from Adam; it is sin and death. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see," and certainly cannot inherit the kingdom of God. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. The natural is sown, or goes into the grave, returns to dust. The spiritual is born of God, and shall be as fully developed in the image of Christ in the resurrection, as it now is in the image of the earthy body. Inheritance is founded on legitimate relationship. By our relation to Adam, all that is born of the flesh inherits death and corruption. By relation to Christ, all that is born of God shall inherit eternal life. The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God. In that flesh which is born of the flesh dwelleth no good thing: while these two antagonistic natures shall continue in us, the flesh will war against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and to that degree that we cannot do the things we would. The natural is born of the flesh; the spiritual is born of the spirit. All that is born of the flesh is natural and is called the natural man, the old man, the outward man, etc., and that which is, or shall be sown a natural man, is raised a spiritual, immortal, incorruptible and heavenly man. While all that of the spirit of God within us, now is spiritual and holy, incorruptible and immortal; but not yet fully developed; for it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know, for God hath so informed us in His holy word, that when He who is our life shall appear, we shall see Him as He is and be conformed to His image. "Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall [not have already been] be changed. " We have not put off the corruption of the natural, fleshly Adamic body, as that has not yet been sown; but it shall be sown corruptible. But in its resurrection, "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying, that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Elder Gilbert Beebe

The Signs of the Times,
October 30, 1871.

"ESTABLISHED IN THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAINS"

Denton, Kentucky

"The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Isaiah2:1-4)

I venture into this subject with much fear and feeling of weakness, and except the Lord gives me strength and understanding, I cannot write anything that would be of interest to the household of faith: it would be only a mass of confusion and ignorance. We think the prophet here was, as he was inspired of God, speaking of the ending of the Mosaical law dispensation, and the coming of Christ and the setting up of the Gospel dispensation — the church here in the world.

The prophet says, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills: and all nations shall flow unto it." The Mosaic law was given only to national Israel: no other people were under that law. National Israel was figurative of spiritual Israel under the gospel dispensation. Israel under the law was continually at war with other nations of the world, and among themselves, with sword and spears: with carnal or material weapons. But Paul says, under the gospel dispensation, **"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.)" (2 Cor. 10:3-4.)**

Let's keep in mind what the prophet says: that it shall come to pass in the last days, "That the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established above the hills: and all nations shall flow unto it." "The last days," as I think, was the last days of the law dispensation, and this house shall be established in the top of the mountains: above the low valleys of the earth; above all institutions of men, and is the highest ecclesiastical authority on earth. Out of her shall go forth the law, and the word of God from heaven. No authority on earth, nor institution of men, has any right to formulate any law or make rules for her. Her laws and regulations go forth out of her, and her preached word does not come from seminaries nor theological schools of training; nor by man's wisdom. But, as

Paul says, **"For I neither received it of man, neither** *was* **I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Galatians 1:12)**

"And all nations shall flow unto it." This house which shall be exalted above the hills: the church, this spiritual house or spiritual Israel, is composed of every kindred, tongue and people of the earth. "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountains of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem"; because Christ Jesus hath come in the last days of the law, and broken down the middle wall of partition between the Jew and the Gentile, and made both one in a spiritual house. Paul says, **"Wherefore remember that ye** *being* **in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition** *between us;* **having abolished in his flesh the enmity,** *even* **the law of commandments** *contained* **in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man,** *so* **making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.**

Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone;* **in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." (Ephesians 2:11- 22)**

"And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plow shares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore." A plowshare is the steel blade of the plow which breaks the soil and prepares the seed bed; and also cultivates the young plants. It is used by the husbandman for preparing and cultivating the growing vegetation: as God breaks up the stony heart, and prepares it for receiving of the seed as it comes down from heaven by the word of God. "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the

eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* **whereto I sent it." (Isaiah 55:10-11)**

Again he says, **"My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: Because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God.** *He is* **the Rock, his work** *is* **perfect: for all his ways** *are* **judgement: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right** *is* **he." (Deuteronomy 32:2-4)**

"And their spears into pruning hooks." A pruning hook is used in pruning out the dead and unfruitful branches. John says, **"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every** *branch* **that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." (John 15:1-2)** So God uses the pruning hook himself: he doesn't leave that to man. If it were left to falable man, he might prune out some of the fruitful branches.

"Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore." So spiritual Israel has never warred with the sword and spear since the ending of the Mosaical law. All the law that they are under is the law which is written in their hearts and minds. Christ came in the end of the law — in the last days of it; in fact, his coming was the end of the law to his elect people. He came to establish a new covenant, a new and living way established on better promises; which covenant was spoken of by Jeremiah. He says, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt ; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, (after those days of the law) I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts (in the old covenant that law was written outwardly on tables of stone, but in this new covenant, it is written in their very lives). And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquities, and I will remember their sin no more. (Please notice the words here spoken by God, and compare them with the teaching of the religion that is being taught over the whole world by men of carnal minds: they teach in their sunday schools (in their spiritual ignorance) children to know God, as though God was not able to make himself known to whomsoever He will, without any of man's work or help in any way. They seem to have much pity of what they call heathen na-

tions: so afraid that they will not find out there is a God, and consequently will all go to hell, if they do not send preachers to tell them there is a God, and how to prepare themselves to meet him. They do not believe what God says about it, but say we must teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother to know God. **"Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, *and* the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, *then* the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever. Thus saith the Lord: If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord." (Jeremiah 31:35-37.)**

Maybe I have written too much, but have written as I have felt and thought to relieve my mind.

Elder H. L. Rogers

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 02 / 2015 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

MEDIATOR OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

"And for this cause He is the Mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament *is,* there must also of necessity be the death of the testator." (Hebrews 9:15-16)

To bring out the beauty and comfort that is contained in this subject, our minds must be directed upon Jesus Christ and Him crucified; by whom, and by which way, the people of God are given to know there is a Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus. Paul's word to Timothy, 2nd Chapter, 5th verse; **"For *there is* one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus."** The first good thought is that we believe, and it stands true with our doctrine, that there is none other way to obtain the promise that was promised to our father Abraham, Genesis 22nd chapter, verse 18. **"And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed My voice",** but through this one Mediator Christ Jesus. And without controversy, great is the mystery of Godliness: "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into Glory." Without

controversy seems to mean to me, as Webster has it, without dispute or debate. Paul was sure of it; that great was the mystery of Godliness. Luke, in his gospel Chapter 8, verse 10 says Christ's words to his disciples are, **"And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God; but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand."** To me, the mystery of Godliness, or the understanding of eternal life, (As to how it is made manifest in these last times for you, "who by Him do believe in God that raised Him from the dead, and gave Him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God"), is through the One Mediator, the Man Christ Jesus. The understanding of Godliness, or the mystery of Godliness, is certainly from God by a revelation. As the scripture says, "But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

Now we take under consideration the work of this Mediator, the Man Christ Jesus. First of all is that it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of His people. As it is written, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." By means of death was this done because of our transgressions under the first covenant or testament. As we now think of those that were, and now are, as we see it, under the law of Moses in which there is no mercy, nothing but condemnation because of guilt, then is it not good to think of the Mediator, or the Spirit, as we might say with Paul in Romans, "And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God"? Again, as we consider the work of the Holy Ghost, Comforter, or the Mediator, in the execution of the Father's will, or testament, that they which are called might receive the promise of eternal life, (for it was willed to them because of the love He had for them before they ever came into this material world) through election or adoption, for ye have not received the Spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba, Father.

How glad are we to know our salvation is in this way, and not of works under the law! Also it is good to know we have an High Priest which can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. It seems to set forth in the last part of the first verse of our subject, that there would be a calling, and that through this calling they might receive the promise of eternal inheritance, by which their conscience should be purged from dead works to serve the living God.

I would like to call your attention to one thing very important, as is written in the last verse in the subject, "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator." The

question is, do we believe that Jesus died and rose again. If so, it is very evident that the calling has come and was effective. Therefore, we do not sorrow as others which have no hope, but are confident of this very thing that he who has begun a good work in his people will perform unto the day of Jesus. Now we see that which we expected to receive by our works, was only the way (our school master) unto Jesus. As He said, "I am the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth." At the end of the law is first death, or condemnation, because of our sins, but, "There is therefore now no condemnation, to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." So as Jesus appears being the end of the law to them which believe, having made them free from the law of sin and death, there can be no condemnation, for He hath appeared unto them without sin unto salvation, which is by the grace of God, having been made known today by the death of the testator to you that believe.

Another scripture comes to mind. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." Again Jesus says, "Search the scripture for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they that testify of me."

These thoughts I have presented on the above subject I hope may be of some comfort to those that believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as the testator or executor of God's will for his heirs. His heirs are his children, and his children are those that are born of Him. The apostle Paul says this about them: "For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God, again, and if children, then heirs: heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Now as touching upon the sufferings, Paul clearly brings that to our attention when he said. "I am crucified with Christ nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me."

We think of the crucifixion, or the sufferings and the resurrection of Jesus Christ by which way he was glorified, and we hope we have been glorified in the same manner, that we may have access to the throne of grace and be made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. I feel to say here if I know anything about the sufferings and being glorified together with him, it was by the appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, at the end of the law, making known unto me the way, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament. In this we are comparing our experience with a portion of the subject we took, therefore we hope we can say with Paul, (Phillipians, third chapter, third verse) "For we are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

May the spirit of God continue to dwell in us is my prayer. Amen.

(Elder) H. M. Bennett

"Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling Savour." (Ephesians 5:1-5)

It is interesting to notice the number of times the Lord's dear people are addressed as children by Jesus, and also by the apostles. The Saviour often referred to his followers as little children, and declared to the apostles, when they disputed as to who was greatest in the kingdom, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children; ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

The Apostle Paul and John both speak of those of like precious faith as little children, showing the tender love and care for them as God's people. This shows the everlasting tie that binds together the minister and the children of God who have been called out of the world, and given to receive the things of the Lord as little children.

What a lesson this should be to us who profess to be the followers of the meek and lowly one today. Does it not become us to be as children in dealing with each other; and would we not all do well to heed the admonition of the Apostle to the Corinthians: "Be not children in understanding; howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men"?

The desire of the apostle toward his brethren was that in understanding the things set forth they might be men, and not as children tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine; that their hearts might be established with grace and the knowledge of the Lord, that they might grow thereby, if so be that they have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

In dealing with one another, he says, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, and all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." These are the things he has reference to when he admonishes them to be ye children in malice.

In the things concerning the doctrine of God our Saviour, we are commanded to be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. When we are brought to understand the principles of grace, and the heart has been established with grace, to the extent that we know that all our salvation is of the Lord, if we fail to observe His teaching in our relationship with each other, we are not adorning the doctrine we profess.

The apostle, in his epistle to the Ephesians, refers to their following the Lord as dear children; and as a basis for this he refers them to the work of Jesus for them: " And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour." Nothing stirs the heart of these dear children like a reminder of God's goodness and mercy to them. The fountain from whence flows all true obedience to him is the knowledge of him, and his sacrifice for us.

When Joshua spoke to Israel the last time, he recounted to them the many things that God had done for them, saying, "And I have given you a land for which ye did not labor, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them; and of the vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not do ye eat. Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerety and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord."

It will be noticed that the words both of Joshua and Paul (one an Old Testament writer and the other a New Testament writer) directs, their minds to the mercies of God toward them; and then admonishes them to put away certain things, and refrain from certain practices. "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you as becometh saints. Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient; but rather giving of thanks. For this we know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them."

May God give us grace to take heed to these things: to walk worthy of the vocation wherein we are called in all meekness, esteeming our brethren as the dear children of God.

Elder D.V. Spangler

"O wretched man that I am!"- ROMANS vii. 24.

Now, these feelings which the Apostle groaned under are experienced by all the quickened family. Blessed then be the name of God most High, that he inspired him to trace out and leave upon record his experience, that we might derive comfort and relief from it. What should we otherwise have thought ? We should have reasoned thus: ' Here is an apostle perfectly holy, perpetually heavenly-minded, having nothing but the image of Christ in him, continually living to the Lord's glory, and unceasingly enjoying communion with him! We should have viewed him as a perfect saint, if he had not told us what he was; and then, having viewed him as a perfect saint, we should have turned our desponding eyes into our own bosom, and seen such an awful contrast, that we should despair of ever being saved at all! But seeing the soul conflict which the Apostle passed through, and feeling a measure of the same in our own bosom, it encourages, supports, and leads the soul on to believe that this is the way in which the saints are called to travel, however rough, rugged, and perplexing it may be to them.

Be assured, then, if you have never cried out from the depths of your soul, "O wretched man that I am!" you are dead in sin, or dead in a profession. If internal guilt, misery, and condemnation never forced that cry from your bosom, depend upon it, the life and power of God is not in your soul. But if there has been, and still is, from time to time, this

cry in your breast, forced out of it by the pressure of sin and guilt, you have a testimony that the same Lord who taught Paul is teaching you.

J.C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 2014

John Schulz, WY	1000.00
J.B Mitchell, VA	5.00
Vance Duncan, VA	5.00
Ardith Harris, FL	100.00
Frank Williams, VA	500.00
Jim Carr, VA	25.00
Charles Alders, TX	30.00
Eva Wyatt, NC	5.00

ISAIAH 63:9-10.

In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

But they rebelled, and vexed his holy spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, *and* he fought against them.

OBITUARIES

GRACE D. GEARHEART

May we, at Salem Primitive Baptist Church, bow in humble submission to our Lord in the passing of our dear sister Grace Gearheart.

Sister Grace passed from this world on October 26, 2014. Funeral services were held at Gardner Funeral Home Chapel. Officiating the service was Elder Alan Terry, also Brother Logan Boyd and grandson Darin Britt. Interment was held in the Jacksville Cemetery, Floyd Virginia.

She was survived by two daughters and sons-in-law, Judy and Robert Britt, Kathy Boyd Blackwell and Kenneth Blackwell; Three grandsons and spouses, Darin and Carla Britt, Tracy Britt and Logan and Ciera Boyd; One granddaughter and spouse Lori and Dan Schantz; Two step-grandsons and spouses, eight great-grandchildren; Five step-great-grandchildren; One brother James Sweeney and several nieces and nephews.

Sister Grace was blessed with that cloak of humility and walked humbly and softly during her sojourn in this time world. We sorely miss her gentle, kind ways. Her loving smile and her warm embrace. Sister Grace will be greatly missed but we believe she is at rest. Our loss is her eternal gain. Written with love by the request of Salem Church.

Mary Poff, Clerk
Elder Carl Terry, Moderator

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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HYMN

When the storm in its fury on Galilee fell,
And lifted its waters on high,
And the faithless disciples were bound in the spell,
Jesus whisper'd,

"Fear not, it is I."
"Fear not, trembling one, it is I."
"It is I, it is I,
Fear not, trembling one, it is I,"
In the midst of the storm.
In the midst of the gloom.

The storm could not bury that word in the wave,
'Twas taught through the tempest to fly,
It shall reach his disciples in every age,
Saying, "Be not afraid, it is I."

When the spirit is broken with sorrow and care,
And comfort is ready to die,
Then darkness shall pass, and the sunshine appear,
By the life-giving word, "It is I."

When death is at hand, and this cottage of clay
Is left with a tremulous sigh,
The gracious Redeemer will light all the way,
Saying, "Be not afraid, it is I."

Rev. I. Baltzell.

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Linda Joyce Spangler

EDITORIAL

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnations; but is passed from death unto life." John 5:24.

Elder J. B. Farmer

The Lord of glory, the Creator of heaven and earth, the One in whom the fullness of the Godhead dwells, cannot lie or fail in a promise. He spoke as no other man ever spoke. He speaks and it is done. He commands and it stands fast. He spoke the heavens and the earth into existence, with all the things that fill them. Through His word and by His Spirit, He has made known plainly the things of His kingdom that had been hidden from the beginning of the world. He caused His doctrine to be recorded in His scriptures for the learning and comfort of the family He loved with an everlasting love. But He hid His kingdom from the wise and prudent of this world that loved the present world and trusted in themselves for righteousness.

No one would ever have known the mind of God if He had not condescended to reveal it to His little ones. No one would have ever realized that he himself was a sinner, condemned to death by the righteous and holy law of God, and that he was in need of a Savior, had not God enlightened his heart. No one could have imagined, in the carnal mind, the remedy for sin, which God manifested in His great salvation, which He ordained before He made the world. The natural mind could not attain to the heavenly way of mercy and grace, which God alone had made. It is impossible that one should think in His nature that God, Himself, would come down to earth and take upon Himself the form of a man; and as a man, even God in the flesh, should fulfill the righteous law of God on behalf of His people; and that He should take upon Himself the sin of His people; and that He Who knew no sin should be made to be sin for us, that we should be made the righteousness of God in Him. No one could have understood, of themselves, that Jesus should impute his

righteousness unto those He loved. No one could have thought, in the loftiest of human reasoning, that Christ could die and be raised from the dead as the first-born of many brethren, justifying and giving hope of eternal life to the little ones who were blessed to believe in Him and to hope in His finished salvation. No one could have ever calculated in the natural mind that God would send His Holy Spirit into the hearts of His little ones to keep them from the evil of this world and bring them safely to the end of their journey. Neither could one have imagined that Jesus Christ should appear in all His glory at the end of the world in flaming fire bringing vengeance upon all that know not God and obey not His gospel. No one would ever have known that God would destroy the world, raise the dead, and carry the changed, resurrected saints home to be with Him forever, if God had not shown these things unto His own. The scriptures were given unto God's children and were revealed to them by the Holy Spirit that they might understand, know, and be comforted by these things.

None of these things could ever have been understood if Jesus, the living Word of God, had not written them in the hearts and minds of His people. The things we are blessed to believe are sometimes referred to as the faith of the Son of God, or the doctrine of Christ. How then is one brought to believe this faith or doctrine? The apostle was blessed of the Spirit to say that "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." So we are made to understand that to believe a thing, one must first hear it. Now, we know that in order to hear, one must have an car with which to hear. Jesus said, "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit sayeth unto the churches." Some, indeed have been given this ear of hearing spiritual things. But truly, everyone has not an ear to hear. We notice how the Lord, in His great wisdom made the serpent. The serpent, unlike most other creatures which God created, has no ears. It cannot hear anything at all. All its communication with its surroundings must come by sight, smell, feeling vibrations, heat etc. It is no wonder that the devil, Satan, is referred to as the unpersuaded one. He, nor his seed, the wicked have ever heard with understanding one word concerning the spiritual kingdom of God. The devil and his followers have never understood the doctrine of Christ, for they have no means of knowing it. They have not an ear to hear and Jesus said that His word has no place in them. Jesus said unto those who hated Him, "Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world, I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins."

But God's little ones – weak as they are in nature, like sheep are weak – have all been given a hearing spiritual ear. The hearing of spiritual things comes only by the living Word of God. All men have not faith, but faith is the gift of God unto those He loved. So, by the Holy Spirit indwelling God's children, they are all given the gift of faith, by which they hear the word of God. Jesus

said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand. I and *my* Father are one."

It seems that I am always desiring more evidence that I am in the way of Christ and not deceived. When I look within my nature, all I see is selfishness, corruption and pride. I see no evidence there that I have part in God's kingdom. The apostle was blessed to say, "I know that within me, that is in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing." And we know that sin abides in the flesh. So, our assurance comes not from the flesh, but rather from the Word of God. The apostle was blessed to say, "He has sent His Spirit into our hearts crying Abba Father." And Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." The question then is this. Do we hear His word, and do we believe on Him (God the Father) that sent Him (Christ the Son)? Do you love to hear the words of Jesus, even when they seem to be contrary to everything in the world? Jesus said, "Except you eat my flesh and drink my blood, you have no life in you." When he said this, many, taking the words literally, were repulsed and turned away and walked no more with Him, saying, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" But when Jesus said, "Will you also go away?" Peter said, "Where shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." If we believe that Jesus is the Christ and that He gave His flesh an offering for sin, and that He poured out His life's blood unto death for the atonement of our sins, we are eating His flesh and drinking His blood spiritually. To believe these things is to receive them. And the doctrine of Christ is our meat and drink.

Do you believe that the sovereign God, of one lump of clay (all mankind) made vessels of honor and vessels of dishonor? Do you believe the vessels of honor were made up for glory, and that the vessels of dishonor were made for destruction? This teaching is according to the scripture and according to the doctrine of Christ. The world rejects it and cannot believe it, saying that it would be unjust for God to do such a thing. They say today, as they said in the apostle's day, if these things are true, how can God find fault? The apostle was rightly given to say, "Who art thou, O man that repliest against God?" One cannot bring the God of heaven and earth to account for His works. The carnal mind, which is enmity against God, always resists the truth. But God's little ones, by the Spirit, hear His word and believe it and rejoice in it, regardless of how contrary it seems to the natural mind.

And if one desires more evidence that he has a part in the kingdom of God, God has given it. He said through His apostle, "Hereby ye may know that you have passed from death unto life, because you love the brethren." Now, here is a big question. Do we indeed and in truth love the brethren? Have we heard His commandment that above all things,

we have fervent charity one to another? Anyone saying that he loves the brethren, but does not continually seek their good is deceiving himself. One walking after the flesh and in a carnal mind stirs up strife by bearing tales. He seeks to cause divisions and separate chief friends by introducing doubts about one to another. He makes one the object of a joke or of some foolishness and tries to excuse himself by saying he was only kidding. He boasts in the flesh and exalts himself above others. He tries to humiliate them and rule over them. He holds grudges and will not be reconciled to another, who he thinks may have offended him. He respects men's persons and hold them in high esteem because of wealth, natural learning, position, family, or some other natural thing. He despises others because they seem to lack these worldly things. He meddles in the affairs of others and does not faithfully see to his own things. If one hates his brother he abides in death.

We know that we are all subject to do such fleshly things and surely have done them and would continue in that way of death unless we were brought out of it and kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. The blessed apostle said, "Love not in word, but in deed and in truth." True love seeks to walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh. It seeks the good of his neighbor; it holds its tongue about rumors, accusations and opinions until every word is established. Love put away foolishness and pride and arrogance; it humbles one and causes him to be sober and compassionate. Love is kind and forgiving and desires peace with honor. Love seeks no ill to its neighbor and to be faithful in all things. Love respects no man's person. It makes him condescend to men of low estate. We are called to examine ourselves, whether we are in the faith. The children of God are tried every moment and go about begging for mercy. They go seeking wisdom and mercy and grace. They find themselves saying, "Lord save or I perish."

The Lord has assured us that those who hear His word, and who believe in God the Father, who sent His Son into the world to save His people, already have everlasting life. And He promised that they shall not come into condemnation – that they should not perish. He also made it plain that His little believing, loving, trusting ones have passed from death unto life. This means that there is no going back into that death. If one has passed from death into everlasting spiritual life, he will never die. Jesus said, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Jesus also said, "Verily, verily I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given the Son to have life in himself." The Lord speaks to each of His little ones. He gives life to them that they may live and hear. And He gives them the gift of faith to believe not only upon the Father, but also upon the Son. Then He gives grace and love to them in order that they should take up their cross daily and follow Him down to the end of their journey here on earth.

The Lord has also assured us that there is coming a day at the end of the world when He shall come to receive His own to Himself, that they should see Him as He is in glory, and should be like Him in a glorious spiritual body. For this to take place there must be a change made for those that are living at His appearing, and a resurrection from the dead for all who have died previous to His coming. Jesus explained it like this. He said, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." And the Lord spoke through the apostle saying, "The dead in Christ shall be raised first, and those that are alive and remain at his coming shall be changed in a moment in a twinkling of an eye." Those that had been blessed of God to walk after spirit, both these that were alive at His coming and those dead in Christ, shall be changed and raised in His likeness, and shall be received into glory. Those who have walked after the flesh and hated God, His Son, His people, His commandments and all that is good, both those living at his coming and those dead, shall be made to stand before Him and enter into damnation. The ones that are taken to glory are those vessels of honor, made up to glory. The ones that enter into damnation are those vessels made to dishonor and destruction. God is both merciful and just. He said he would have mercy upon whom He would have mercy, and that He would harden whom He willed. This is a hard saying to most, but it is the gospel of the salvation of the sovereign God that does all His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

If His word is precious to our hearing; if our heart overflows with love toward God the Father, His Son and His poor and despised remnant of people; we may have great assurance that we have everlasting life; that we shall not come into condemnation; that we shall never perish; because we are in His hand and have passed from death unto life; and that we shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever with all saints. May His glorious name be praised, world without end.

Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love.

This was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J. B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

January 2015

Dear Elder Robertson

Christian greetings from Northern New England. The enclosed article is probably the best one ever. I can't send you the Signs of the Times copy because the print is too difficult to read. So here's a typewritten copy that I made.

This is certainly worth considering for reprint.

In Christian hope,
Jim Cote

Jan. 5, 2015

Dear Kind Brother,

I am sending this obituary of Brother Donnie Robinson from the minutes.

I thought his son wrote a nice piece about him the Signs readers would enjoy.

I got to go back home Mar. 4th and I got to go to Holly Springs to meeting.

They did not have no gas at Poplar Springs so they came on to Holly Springs. I got to hear him preach not knowing it would be the last time I would hear him preach. He said his cancer had come back. It got him before I ever got back to North, Ga.

I do enjoy the Signs.
In hope,
Brother J.A. Lambert

January 9, 2015

Gentlemen:

Enclosed is the obituary of Elder Wayman Chapell that I have written to be published in The Signs of the Times. I have also enclosed a check in the amount of $500.00, in memory of Elder Chapell.

Elder Chapell was very faithful to our church and it congregation. We miss Bro. Chapell very much.

Please forward a copy of The Signs of the Times to Bro. Chapell's widow, Ms. Elizabeth Chapell, 1671 W. Southfield Circle, Memphis, TN 38016.

Thanking you in advance,
Elaine Jones, Clerk

Memphis Primitive Baptist Church
Andrews Road
Bartlett, Tennessee 38133

VOICES OF THE PAST

Sanford, Maine, March 8, 1899

Elder F. W. Keene – Dear Brother In Christ – It has been on my mind much of late to write to you; whether I can write anything worth your perusal seems doubtful. I will write you some of my past experience, and I hope it is of the Lord, and not self.

In the fall of 1894 they were holding revival meetings at the Baptist church in this place, and my husband went a few nights, and then I thought I would go. I went to these meetings feeling I was a sinner, and would come home feeling nothing bettered, but rather worse. Iwent, but there was not any food there for my hungry soul. I saw myself such a vile sinner, and they all talked as though they were sure of heaven. I got so that I could not sleep at night, and my daily work became a burden to me. Then I would go into company to try and drown my thoughts, but I could not. I was poor company for myself or for any one else.

At length I told my husband that I would like to go down to the Oak Woods church, and he said, "We will go." And the first Sunday that we went, as I listened to your preaching, it seems that I heard what I had been wanting to hear for a long time, and I felt to cry unto the Lord, "God be merciful to me a sinner." But after this Sunday I looked forward to the Sundays with great anxiety to go to the gathering at Oak Woods, for it seemed to me I felt I should get food for my soul. The first time you came and spoke to me, and asked me how I enjoyed the meeting, I could not tell you how much I enjoyed it. It seemed such a privilege to be there and hear our Saviour exalted above all others. How blessed it was to me! I had thought for some time that I would like to have a home with the people of God, and follow our Savior in the ordinance of baptism, but I felt myself so unworthy there could be no hope for me, for I was a poor, lost, undone sinner. The Sunday morning that we went into the conference meeting that was held before the services for preaching, sister Roberts, at whose house we stayed the night before asked me if I would like to go to the conference meeting. I told her that I should, and I enjoyed hearing the brethren talk very much. When you asked my husband if he felt like speaking to the church, and the church received him for baptism, I thought I must sink, for I thought if you should ask me to speak of the Lord's dealings with me I could not, but it seems that I had strength given me to say a few words, I hope it was of the Lord, and not of myself. But how could the church have fellowship for me and receive me for baptism, seemed a mystery. The next Tuesday when you called at our home you asked me if I was sorry for the step I had taken last Sunday! I replied, I did not know, I felt as if I was acting the hypocrite, and deceiving the people of God; but O, I cannot deceive him who knows all our thoughts. It did seem to me when next Sunday came that I was afraid of what the people were going to say about my being baptized, and thus making a profession of the name of Christ. But when I got to the water's side that fear all left me, and everything looked lovely; it was such a happy day to me, and when the brethren and sisters came along and shook hands with me, calling me their sister, I thought, How can they fellowship such a poor, unworthy creature like me. But since I have been one of your number, I have had some very trying times. It seems at times that I have nothing of the grace of God, and what little hope I have is about extinguished, and then this passage of Scripture will come to my mind, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren," and that gives me a little hope.

There is no place I enjoy myself as I do meeting with the people of God; I have not had that privilege the past year because of my sickness. It seemed to be very hard at first to be thus deprived of this privilege, but the Lord knows what is for our good. He will not put upon us anything but that we are able to bear. Pray for me that I may be reconciled to the Lord's will.

I will bring my scribble to a close, as I think it will try your patience to read

it. Please do not let any one see this.

From you unworthy sister,
Mrs. Anson Quint

Sanford, Maine, April 26, 1899

Elder F.W. Keene – Dear Brother in Christ: I have been so sad and gloomy for the past two weeks, it seems as though I must write you a few lines to let you know the state of my mind. It seemed last Sunday morning as though I could not be reconciled to not have the privilege of meeting with the dear saints of God. O, I felt so rebellious against God, indeed, I could hardly realize that there was a God. My husband said he thought I was one that used to have good courage, but it seemed to me now to be all gone. It is such a great blessing when we can put all our trust in our Savior, and feel to lie passive in his hands.

There is no company that I enjoy so much as I do the people of God, and hear them talk of Jesus and the blessed things of his kingdom, yet how ignorant I am of any spiritual knowledge of these things. I find myself so cold and lifeless, pertaining to the things of God, that I wonder I have ever been made to hope in the salvation of the Lord. Yet at other times that hope is so precious to my soul. It seems that I have felt more dependent upon the Lord since my health has been so poor. I feel at times it is for my good to be afflicted, that it brings me nearer to my God. I have had a great desire that I might be reconciled to the Lord's will concerning me.

I feel it is a great mercy that we do not know what is in store for us, the Lord's ways are not our ways. If I am ever saved, it will be by grace, and grace alone, not by anything that I have done.

I did not sit up last week, as my health is so poor, but I suppose it is all for the best, that is the way I feel now. Come and see me when you can, it is such a great blessing to hear you talk of spiritual things, and the preciousness of our Savior.

From you unworthy sister,
Mrs. Anson Quint

(Mrs. Anson Quint died April 25, 1900 so that is why Elder Keene sent her letters to the Signs of the Times.)

REMARKS ON MATT. XVIII 10

"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

Although we have on a former occasion expressed such views as we had on this text, yet at the request of brother Elias Newkirk, we will offer a few remarks further on the subject.

An ambitious spirit, unbecoming the followers of the meek and lowly Lambof God, had been detected in the disciples, in agitating the question of their comparative greatness, and as they could not settle the matter to their mutual satisfaction, they appealed to our

Lord for a decision; whereupon Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, "Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." In this connection our Lord gave them such instructions and rules for their social government as should always be applicable to his church and people throughout all time. We shall not attempt in this article to comment on all the rules of order enjoined upon the members of the church of Christ in this chapter, but dwell particularly on what we understand to be embraced in the text proposed for consideration. In doing which we will call attention to the solemn admonition given to all the disciples, to take heed that they despise not one of these little ones. The command to take heed implies that through inattention, thoughtlessness or without direct design, the error against which they are warned may be committed even by Christians. Care, and close and constant attention, is required, that the little ones be not overlooked, or their place and importance in the house or kingdom of God be not underrated. Aspirants for distinguishing positions will be apt to bring themselves into notice; but those who are more diffident and childlike may, unless great heed to be taken, be overlooked, neglected or forgotten, or they may come to be regarded as of less importance in the church of God.

Two causes may tend to this result. First, the humble and childlike humility of the little ones make them unassuming and retiring; for they feel themselves to be less that the least of all the saints, and willing to be servants or door-keepers, and to let others whom they esteem better than themselves occupy more conspicuous or exalted places, and secondly, the fleshly pride and vanity which is too frequently betrayed, unless closely watched and promptly checked, will predominate, as in the example presented in the first verse of this chapter, and in its ascendency tempt us either to think more highly of ourselves than we ought, or be attracted by the splendid appearance of some others, so that the humble, quiet, childlike little ones fail to be appreciated. Where the little ones are wantonly thrust aside, and that which is lame is turned out of the way, by the arrogance or wantoness of any one, God will avenge the oppressed; but woe to him by whom the offence cometh.

But while Christians are here in the flesh, the utmost vigilance is required to watch over our prejudices and partialities, lest, even undesignedly, we despise one of these little ones. It is not enough that we may say we have not wounded the feelings, disturbed the peace, or disregarded the expressed wishes of such. It may well be presumed that many a wound has been keenly felt in the heart of an humble child of God which has festered, unseen by any eye but that which watches over these little ones, causing grief untold and perhaps unutterable, leading the wounded child to reason thus: O that I were worthy of the esteem of those whom I so dearly love, but while they show strong appreciation of the society, the gifts, or the conversation of others who are so far my

superiors, they treat me, as I deserve, as though they have little or no confidence in me. We are commanded to be kindly affectioned one towards another, and to be especially careful in regard to those who are weak and tender; what care should we take lest we despise one of these little ones.

But, Who are these little ones? All who enter into the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. This truth is not only declared by our Lord in the third verse of this chapter, but it is fully implied in his declaration to Nicodemus. John iii. 3, 5.) "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." All who are born again, of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, become "new born babes." – 1 Peter i. 23, and ii. 2., and in that birth not only are they manifested as children, but as very little children. Whatever may be their age in the flesh, or whatever may be their capacity, strength, physical or mental, if they are born again, that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and among the fruits of that spirit will be found childlike humility; like little children, very small, they are dependent, reliant, and desire the sincere milk of the word that they may grow thereby. No other growth is compatible with their heavenly birth.

All who enter the kingdom of our God must enter as little children, and the more they learn, experience or know of God and of spiritual things, the smaller they will feel themselves to be, and the smaller they are in their own esteem, the higher they will stand in the estimation of their brethren. When Christians become vain in their imaginations, heady and high-minded, God will provide a way to humble them. They become sensitive, and if their importance is not acknowledged, they are mortified and offended. A gospel course, in such cases, will be very apt to offend them. But woe unto him who shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Jesus. "It were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

As a consideration calculated to impress the solemn admonition more deeply on the minds of the disciples, Jesus added the following emphatic declaration: "For I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." The words their angels are the same in signification as their spirits. For spirits, when spoken of in distinction from the bodies, are called angels, as in the case of Peter when he had been delivered from prison, he came to the house of Mary, and knocked for admittance. When the damsel affirmed that Peter was at the gate, they thinking it impossible that he could be there in his body, concluded that it was his angel, or spirit, or ghost. In the same manner the word was used by the Saddusees in denying the resurrection of the dead, &c.

God's presence is heaven to all who are born of him, and although our bodies are dead because of sin, the spirit within us, which is born of the Spirit of God, is life, because of righteousness, and although flesh and blood can-

not inherit the kingdom of God, yet we worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. "In heaven," in the spiritual presence of God, the spirit, or angel, of the child of God is in communion with God, in his presence, enjoying his presence, and behold his face, for he reveals himself unto them as he does not to the world. No man hath seen the Father at any time, but the Father reveals his face to the faith of his elect, and everyone that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father also; but not with their mortal eyes or natural perceptions. Only to their faith, spirit or angels, is he revealed. Always when in heaven, or in a heavenly frame, they behold his face, and derive all their consolation from his presence, in which they have fullness of joy, and at his right hand they have pleasure forevermore.

Seeing then that these little ones which believe in Jesus are in spirit held in communion with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, how presumptuously wicked for us to despise or offend them. God will avenge them, as his own elect who cry unto him day and night, and they shall certainly triumph over all their enemies.

Elder Gilbert Beebe,
February 1, 1868.

PSALM 36-7.

How excellent *is* thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

THE GOSPEL MINISTRY
By Elder William Smoot

"No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as *was* Aaron." – Hebrews 5:4.

Some years since, concluding in No. 5, Volume vi, of The Sectarian, we wrote a series of articles upon this subject, but since the death of Elder Zinn, have felt somewhat impressed to again notice the subject, more especially as many of those readers to whom the first series of articles were addressed, have passed away; and to some extent a new membership occupy the places of those who have gone before. The subject is one of great moment to us who of all religious orders (professedly Old School or otherwise,) rely alone upon the God of heaven to supply us with ministers.

In claiming obedience to this commandment, Anti-means Baptist alone of all religious orders hold to it as a fact; with us it is vital, with others it is merely formal. The Gospel ministration is spiritual and to spiritual subjects; it is a ministration whose benefits are confined to the kingdom, hence it is called **"the Gospel of the kingdom" (Matthew 24:14).** It is not a ministration to the world of mankind for this would be **"casting pearls before swine" (Matthew 7:6).** The men (not women – see 1 Timothy 2:11-12) who are called of God to the work, are qualified and sustained by Him in their work.

In ordination we simply say that we believe the Lord has called and sent

such a one to the work; ordination is simply a recognition of the work of the Lord in calling one to the ministry. In former years our churches have been often mistaken; and we presume that we may be yet in years to come. It is absolutely essential that we pay keen attention to the Divine order and requirements given. It is very easy to move too fast; it is very difficult to move too slow in our judgment of a matter so vital to the peace and harmony of the church. Unquestionably the church is the judge of the gift of her members (1 Cor. 6:3) as she is moved by the Holy Ghost (Acts 13:2), to separate them to the work, and sustain them in their labour. The testimony, however, recognizes the church to be in the Spirit, her judgment is a spiritual judgment, she does not reach it through the channels of natural reasoning; but it is an exhibition of the Divine Presence, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The mind of the church must be clear upon the Gospel qualifications of a ministerial gift. Those qualifications are given and are clearly defined, relative to the external criteria for the office. (1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9). We cannot afford to make a mistake, if it can possibly be avoided, upon a matter of such moment; the time must be ripe for the call (to ordination,) and it will find the church and gift ready for the work. Hasty action injures the usefulness of the gift, by pushing its recipient forward into positions and responsibilities which he is not qualified to occupy.

When Absolem was slain, Ahimaaz was very anxious to run with the message but Joab restrained him, sending Cushi instead. So anxious, however, was Ahimaaz to go that he over-persuaded Joab who finally gave him permission, and it is said that he "ran by the way of the plain and over Cushi." Yet when he came to David he came with a confused message of a great tumult; and finally had to stand aside and let Cushi tell the truth; a clear, pointed message, unpalatable 'tis true personally to David; but the note of signal victory and deliverance to Israel (2 Samuel 18:19-32).

Moses started out some years before the time (Exodus 2:11-12, and Acts 7:25,) to deliver Israel; but when the time came (Exodus 4:1-16,) he was not at all anxious to go. We might add on general principles, that a preacher seems somewhat like a wasp, larger when first hatched out than at any other time.

Paul says; "If I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, a dispensation *of the Gospel* **is committed unto me. What is my reward then?" (1 Corinthians 9:17-18.)** And speaking of his labour the apostle well says: **"If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 9:2).** Here is certainly clear illustration of the manner in which the Lord works. He raises up the minister to the work, assigns him to his field; and seals the evidence of that work, as the apostle again testifies; **"For what** *is* **our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing?** *Are* **not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are our glory and joy" (1 Thessalonians 2:19-20).**

Now admitting these things to be true let us pass to another very important consideration. The Saviour said on a certain occasion **(Matthew 9:37-38,) "The harvest truly in plenteous, but the laborers** *are* **few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers into His harvest."** It is frequently quoted that "he send forth more laborers;" but the word "more" is not in it, and to our mind would destroy the force of the testimony. We can depend on Israel's God to send laborers into the ripened harvest fields, when ripened. We dare not put our hand to the ark. But we must wait **"for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I** *say more than* **they that watch for the morning." (Psalm 130:6).**

We cannot hasten the morning's dawn; we cannot hasten that preparation "of the heart in man, and answer of the tongue, which is from the Lord." "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." "When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb to call me by His grace, I conferred not with flesh and blood," etc. If the vision tarry, "wait for it; because it will surely come." For the vision is yet for an "appointed time," but "at the end it shall speak, and not lie" (Habakkuk 2:1-3). Do we think that we need more laborers? This thinking against the Divine testimony that laborers will be sent under the Divine guidance, and at the appointed time and place. Are we disposed to follow the course of Abraham in an effort to fulfill the Divine promise? Then we can expect a mocking Ishmaelite to come at our call.

The greatest monuments of earthly power and skill shall crumble and fade; the strongest governments of human greatness shall perish; and the towering waves of oblivion shall roll high over the proudest monuments of human empire, but "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength" (Isaiah 40:3). They shall show forth life and zeal, when time's greatest, strongest powers shall fail; when those whose trust is in man shall perish in the perishing things of time, that man or people whose hope the Lord is, "shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water" (Psalm 1:1-3).

The way over which (personally or collectively we travel) may seem dark and inscrutable to mortal minds; the path intricate and beset with difficult; and infidel reasoning fill the carnal mind; but faith points with unerring precision to the promise of God, and clings in deathless embrace to the cross of Christ. In His own time and way the laborers shall be sent, bright clouds overshadowing the Gospel church, through which the Lord will speak. They may not seem to our carnal reason sufficient in number, but faith assures us that their number is now, ever has been, and ever will be complete.

Israel's God knows where each and every one is to labor, the extent of their field; and He sustains them in their work. One may feel like Elijah alone, and an outcast; but at the proper time, and in the appointed manner the Lord will reveal His presence, and sustain the work of His hands. The travel of the church, records continual instances when of our

own selves men have arisen "speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:30). This condition must continue that the Divine order be fulfilled: "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you" (II Peter 2:1). And this condition generally if not always arises from carelessness or inattention on the part of the church to a matter so vital: the ordination of men to the work of the Gospel ministry. It was with fasting and prayer the first seven men were ordained under the Gospel church. The solemn warning is given in Ezekiel 44:5; "Mark well the entering in of the house, with every going forth of the sanctuary." We must wait upon the Lord for our ministers, as for our members; no stress of circumstances can justify an effort on our part to supply the places of those who are called away from their field of labor, or for additions to our numbers. A church can get along very well without a preacher if she is in the spirit of travail; but she never can get along with one that she has made to order, without continued trouble. **"Why hast thou *then* broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her? The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it" (Psalms 80:12-13).** As the wild boar of the wood will root up, trample upon, and otherwise destroy the most valued treasures of the garden, so does such false teachers trample upon the most sacred rights and principles of the Gospel vineyard.

If Samuel with all of his godly knowledge, Divine zeal, and reverence for holy things, came so near making a mistake (1 Samuel 16:6-13), in anointing Eliab, the noble (from a natural standpoint) looking son of Jesse, as king over Israel, instead of David; how important that we should be careful of the Divine unction in even licensing, (first proving) and so manifold more, in ordaining. It was said to Samuel on that occasion: "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." The "outward appearance" is frequently deceptive. The "outward appearance" may indicate that we need a preacher in a certain locality; but the fact of the matter may be that this is one of the last things that we do need. And above all else he must be the gift of God; "Wherefore He saith, When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. *** And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:8-12). **Each gift is exactly suited to the field it is to occupy; the particular character of the work which it is to perform.** "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him" (1 Cor. 12:18).

It looked very much like Peter and the rest of the disciples (about a hundred and twenty) concluded that it was necessary for them to select one in the place of Judas. They finally concluded to decide the matter by lot, thus they selected Matthias (Acts 1:15-26) which was the last that was ever heard of him.

The prophet has well said that the Lord's ways are not our ways; "For as the heavens are higher than the earth," is the declaration, "So are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:9). A church may be slow, in recognizing a ministerial gift; but will surely come to the right decision at the end, when proper time is given, and she is guided by the Divine Spirit, without which her judgment amounts to nothing. Both the church and the gift can quietly wait, whether it be a matter of months or of years until the hand of the Lord is recognized; "The Holy Ghost Said" (Acts 13:1-2).

In a ministry of 40 years we have never heard of either a Church or gift being injured by moving too slow; but we have heard times without number of the church being imposed upon, by going too fast. It is written, **"A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men" (Proverbs 18:16).** Again, **"Lay hands suddenly on no man" (1 Timothy 5:22).**

As the chosen witnesses of high heaven in a day of great wickedness, dense ignorance, and blasphemy, O may we be enabled to heed the Divine injunction: **"See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more** *shall not* **we** *escape,* **if we turn away from Him that** *speaketh* **from heaven: whose voice then shook the earth: but now He hath promised saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this** *word,* **Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear; For our God** *is* **a consuming fire" (Hebrews 12:25-29).**

Elder William Smoot,
The Sectarian, Vol. XXII,
April, 1911, No. 4.

MORE THAN CONQUERORS THROUGH HIM THAT LOVED US

Dearly Beloved in Christ:

Tonight, as I sit here listening to the rain steadily falling upon the roof, rain steadily falling upon the roof, somehow there is a desire in my mind to jot down a few thoughts for your consideration in connection with some scripture which for some reason known to God, has been lingering in my mind for several days.

I am fully aware, that unless God should be pleased to undertake for me my effort like myself will be a failure to begin with. Realizing, (I hope) my utter helplessness, and inability to see, understand, or write anything that would comfort God's humble poor, unless guided by the divine light of the Holy Spirit. I do not wish to set forth anything new, God forbid that I should ever write,

or speak, anything that would cause confusion or unrest among the household of faith. But hope to give my views clearly, and without sophistry, or criticism to anyone who might see, or believe otherwise. The apostle tells us that, all scripture is given by inspiration of God; and that there is no private interpretation of the scripture, for holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. All scriptures harmonize together, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and instruction in righteousness, that the man of God, might be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Before going further, dear reader, I hope you will get your Bible, turn the 8th chapter of Romans, and read the entire chapter. You will find that this is a letter written by Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, and addressed to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, and called to be saints, as found in chap. 1; verses 1 to 7. Now, may we be given grace to meditate upon a portion of the 8th chap. Beginning with the 37th verse, where the apostle says, **"Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."**

We have already observed, that the apostle was addressing the beloved of God, those that were called to be saints. In other words, he was speaking of the family of God, those that were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. (See Eph. Chap. 1) The apostle could embrace himself in the number, because he wrote by inspiration, as moved by the Holy Ghost. Therefore, he could say, Nay, in all these things WE are more than conquerors through him that loved us. What all things did he have reference to, and what was meant by the words MORE THAN CONQUERORS? I am sure that there is something rich and wonderful in these words. Something that is sweet and precious to every child of grace, when given to see the hidden mysteries contained therein. Hidden from the wise and prudent, but revealed unto babes, even babes in Christ.

Now, let us go back to the 28th verse and see if we can find what the apostle had reference to, and what was meant by all these things. He says here, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God before us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us ALL THINGS? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercessions for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or

nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Ver. 28-39).

As I understand this, the apostle was not just referring to the good things (as some believe and advocate) when he said, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose." But when he said all things, I believe he meant ALL THINGS. All things both good and evil. Another witness to this is found in Hebrews, 2:10. "For it became Him, for whom are ALL THINGS, and by whom are ALL THINGS, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." The apostle also tells us in Colossians 1:16-17. "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in ALL THINGS HE MIGHT HAVE THE PREEMINENCE."

So if he has preeminence in all things, no wonder Paul could say, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." What is it to be more than Conquerors? If it is not that the evil things in which we are so often beset, are made to work together for our good. If you could overcome an enemy, you would be a conqueror, but if you could turn that enemy into a friend and have him minister unto you, you would be more than a conqueror. I feel that Paul meant for us to understand that all trials, temptations, and sorrow and affliction are working together for our good. For he says in 2 Cor. 4:17, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Also we hear David saying, "It was good for me when I was afflicted, then I remembered the Lord." This is contrary to nature, because in carnality, in the flesh, none of us likes to suffer, none of us can rejoice in sorrow, affliction, trials and tribulation. Because "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceful fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

"We should always keep in mind that it is only THROUGH HIM THAT LOVED US that we are more than conquerors, only through him, and by him, that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are he called according to his purpose.

Paul goes on to state why he can be so sure in this matter; he proceeds to state reasons why is it so, and why it MUST be so. He says that God has fore-

known, predestinated, called, justified and glorified his people. He has done all these wonderful things for them; He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for them all, and shall he not with him also freely give them all things. Who has the power to charge anything to God's elect, it is God that has justified them. Who is it that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercessions for them. Will Christ condemn them after shedding his precious blood on Calvary's cross, suffering in their room, and dying in their stead, that they might have life and have it more abundantly? No, we hear him saying, "Their sins, and their iniquity I will remember against them no more. They shall not rise in time to shame, nor in judgment to condemn. It he will not condemn them, who can? Certainly he will not withhold any lesser good, nor suffer anything to harm them. Whatever then befalls them though it be, as he says, tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword, they are more than conquerors through him that loved them. For he says, neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Instead of the "all things" referring especially to what he has named in the 29th and 30th verses to wit; foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification, and glorification of the beloved, they rather are brought in as things in addition to what he has named before, and which he proceeds to name. Indeed it would not have been needful to say to his brethren, all these things work together for your good, because this truth would be apparent to them all. But it is not so apparent that trials and afflictions, and even the very slips and falls of believers, were among the things which should be for their good; so the Apostle includes this in his writing to them, that they may not be over burdened by their trials, nor be in despair when they are made to realize their inability to keep his holy law. It would be needless to say, that all good things work together for their good, but many things which are really for their good, do not seem good to them, so the apostle uses the term, "All things."

Our slips and falls work for our good in that they show us our weakness and vileness, so that we learn the truth about ourselves, that in our flesh dwells no good thing. And they work for good in that they do but drive us nearer to the Lord for grace and strength to overcome.

The poet, speaking of God's humble poor, is another witness to this.

"Poor and afflicted oft they are,
Sorely oppressed with want and care,
Yet he who saved them by his blood,
Makes every sorrow yield them good."

We find another witness to this glorious truth in Isaiah, 54:17. "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise

against thee is judgment thou shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."

Yes dear saints, all your righteousness, is of the Lord, for Paul says, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, whom of God, is made unto us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. His righteousness was imputed unto you." "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." No wonder the apostle could say, "Nay, in all these things we are more that conquerors through him that loved us.

In 2 Cor. 11:23-28, Paul proceeds to name some of these things, saying, **"In labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prison more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty** *stripes* **save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been** *in* **the deep;** *in* **journeying's often,** *in* **perils of waters,** *in* **perils of robbers,** *in* **perils by** *mine own* **countrymen,** *in* **perils by the heathen,** *in* **perils in the city,** *in* **perils in the wilderness,** *in* **perils in the sea,** *in* **perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watching often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."** Not withstanding all this, the apostle says, **"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."**

This is the doctrine which I love, and have been trying in my weak way, to contend for, for the last twelve years. Whether I am one of his or not, I believe with all my heart, that "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose, and that they are more than conquerors through him that loved them.

Humbly submitted
Elder C. D. Whitley
Albemarle, N.C.

MEETINGS

LOWER MAYO 5TH SUNDAY MEETING

The next 5th Sunday Meeting will be held, The Lord Willing, Sunday, March 29, 2015. Roaring River Church will Host the meeting. The Meeting House is located at 10060 Austin-Trap Hill Road, Trap Hill, NC 28685. From 177, Exit #93/west on Zepher Rd. Go about 3 miles and turn right on Mt. Park Rd. Go through 4 way stop at Mt. Park. Go to next stop sign and turn left on Thurman Rd. Go about 200 yards to stop sign and turn right on US 21. Go 4 miles to sign and turn right on Austin-Trap Hill Rd. Go 1.5 miles to Church on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation

by Grace to meet with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association Union Meeting, to be held with Union Church, has been changed from April 11 & 12, 2015 to March 28 & 29, 2015. We invite all lovers of the truth to visit with us.

Ned Barren
Association Clerk
318-778-4217

SKEWARKY UNION
(Eastern Kehukee Association)

Hancocks Church will host the next session of the Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of March 29, 2015. The church is located on Ayden Golf Club Road, near Ayden, North Carolina. Preaching services begin at 10:30 am.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union will be held at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church located on Malmaison Road, Blairs, VA in Pittsylvania County. Saturday before the fifth Sunday in March 2015 the song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton, Clerk
Staunton River Primitive
Baptist Association

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will meet, Lord willing, on the fifth Sunday in March, 2015. This meeting will be held at Moons Creek Church. The church is located 1 mile east of Hwy 86, between Danville and Yanceyville, on Park Springs Road.

Elder Jimmy Gray, Moderator

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 2015

Hazel Garland, MD 25.00
Nellie Dalton, VA 5.00
Billie Speir, LA 50.00
Dale Richards, TX 100.00
John Beckham, LA 50.00
Memphis Primitive Baptist Church
(In Memory of
Elder Waymen Chapell) 500.00
Jim Cote, ME 14.00
Nathanial Borach, NC 5.00
Jerry Moure, AR 100.00
Margaret Doss, MS 5.00

OBITUARIES

ELDER WAYMAN CHAPELL

Our hearts are saddened by the loss of our beloved Pastor, Elder Wayman G. Chapell who passed away on September 5th, 2014 in Memphis, Tennessee. The funeral service was held at Forest Hill Funeral Home East and presided by Elders Kenneth Adams and Jerry Farmer.Elder Chapell was born on December 3, 1927 in Detroit, Michigan to Flois A. and Ruth Collier Chapell, who predeceased him; as well as a grandson. He was raised on a dairy farm in Martin, Tennessee. Elder Chapell attended a two room school house in Martin, Tennessee; received a Bachelor of Science degree at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville and pursued graduate studies at UT in Martin. He served in the United States Army in occupied Japan at the end of World War II. He was the owner of Southern Farm Management and Manager of Farmers National Company and Doane Agricultural Service.

Elder Chapell was survived by his wife of 61 years Elizabeth and 5 sons, Gordon, Gary, Bryan, Jeffery and Shannon; one daughter, Cynthia Maestri, one sister Ramona Chapell Moon, seventeen grandchildren and twelve great grandchildren.

Elder Chapell served as Pastor of the First Primitive Baptist Church in Memphis as well as other churches in Kentucky and Illinois.

This obituary was written by the Church Clerk, Elaine Jones at the request of the First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis.

ELDER DONNIE ROBINSON

From: Poplar Springs Primitive Baptist Church

Our dear brother, Elder Donnie Robinson, born November 13, 1939, was called home July 9, 2014, by our heavenly father at the age of 74. He was ordained in 1980 as a Primitive Baptist Minister at Poplar Springs Primitive Baptist Church. He will be greatly missed by all that knew him. His son Terry Keith Robinson preceded him in death. He was survived by his wife, Sister Mary King Robinson and his three children, Amanda Robinson Hendrix, Kerry David Robinson and Kennie Ray Robinson. In addition, he was survived by his son-in-law, Timothy Scott Hendrix and two grandsons, Landon Scott Hendrix and Harrison Grant Hendrix.

A tribute to Donnie Frank Robinson
Written by Kennie Ray Robinson

Turkey heaven Mountain November of '39
Born at home on the old lush place

Third son of a sharecropper in really hard times
Was picking cotton in a pillow case when he was 5
At 10 behind a mule pulling a plow
Quit school then winter of 8th grade
Didn't have any shoes and he was made fun of
His momma made him wear hers that day
He never went back it hurt him so much

Escaped from that life when he was 17
Had to join Uncle Sam's Army to get away
His oldest brother, Junior co-signed for him
Junior and his dad had the same name
Met a woman named Mary while he was home on leave
They were married within a couple of weeks
By a Primitive Baptist minister and his wife
Outside Heflin, Alabama on the side of the road

In '68 Daddy and Momma lost their middle son
Thank God I had another brother
People gave us some money
I spent most of mine on a 10 dollar Timex watch that still runs
In '74 my sister was born and a true god send
In 1980, daddy was ordained
A Primitive Baptist Minister at Poplar Springs
He preached Jesus every time he stood in the stand
I knew as a child I'd be a member there someday

In '97 his first grandson was born
2001 the second grandson came along
He loved em' both dearly with every bit of his heart
And Momma just 16 days shy of 55 years
Donnie Frank Robinson. A man that I've proudly known
One to be remembered as one you could always count on
His love for family, little children and less fortunate ones
I'm honored to be a son of Donnie Frank Robinson

In loving memory of
Donnie Frank Robinson
July 9, 2014

LINDA JOYCE SPANGLER

Once again our Heavenly Father has called from our midst another precious member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. It is with much sadness I attempt to write a memorial for Sister Linda Joyce Spangler.

Sister Linda was born on September 8, 1950 in Riverside, California, Her parents were David M. and Joyce Spangler. They resided in California while her father was in service. Her family moved to Danville, Virginia in 1953. Sister Linda grew up here and attended local schools. She was a graduate of the University of North Carolina with a BA Degree in Art. She was a talented artist. Many of her works of art are displayed in galleries in North Carolina and Virginia. Also she was an avid NASCAR fan. Sister Linda's occupation was an administrator in the healthcare field. Her jobs required her to work in various cities away from Danville.

At a young age Sister Linda came under conviction for her sins. She traveled in this condition for several years feeling she would surely die without God's knowledge of her. One day when she felt to be at the end of her wits, she thought she would burst open. She felt her life was totally unbearable at that moment. All of a sudden a complete peace and joy came over her; her worries and anger were gone. Sister Linda knew instantly it was God's love and grace. She was made to see what a wretch she had been by nature and what a precious Savior God is when he was revealed to her.

Sister Linda attended Durham Primitive Baptist Church on third Sundays to hear her grandfather, Elder David Spangler, preach. On several occasions she was blessed to witness with his preaching as it seemed he was preaching her experiences.

Sister Linda asked for a home at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on Saturday May 23, 1982. She was baptized the following day by her grandfather, Elder David Spangler. Sister Linda was a quiet, private person. She was blessed with a cloak of humility. She walked humbly and softly among her brethren. Sister Linda attended services whenever her work schedule allowed her to be there.

Sister Linda died Monday, October 27, 2014 after a brief illness at her dad's home in Danville, VA. She was preceded in death by her mother, Joyce Spangler, earlier in 2014. She is survived by her father, David M. Spangler, and a sister Beverlee Beale and her husband Burgin Beale, Jr. along with many aunts, uncles and cousins.

It was her request for a graveside service and in lieu of flowers contributions be made to Dan River Primitive Baptist Cemetery Fund. Her pastor, Elder Thomas Solomon, conducted her graveside service on Wednesday October 29, 2014. May our Heavenly Father comfort all of us who mourn the loss of our dear sister. We feel she is now resting in that perfect peace awaiting the second coming of our Lord and Savior when we shall meet him in the air, be like him and be eternally satisfied.

Written in love and fellowship,
Phyllis Stroud

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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HYMN

Jerusalem, my happy home,
Oh, how I long for thee!
When will my sorrows have an end?
Thy joys, when shall I see?

Thy walls are all of precious stone,
Most glorious to behold;
Thy gates are richly set with pearl,
Thy streets are paved with gold.

Why should I shrink at pain and wo,
Or feel at death dismay,
With Canaan's goodly land in view,
And realms of endless day?

Reach down, O Lord, thine arm of grace,
And cause me to ascend
Where congregations ne'er break up,
And Sabbaths never end.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the Sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun.

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EDITORIAL

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

Revelation 20:11-15, **"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."**

John, the servant of Jesus Christ, was in the isle called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. The isle of Patmos was a hard, rocky isle surrounded by water where the worst criminals were imprisoned. John was experiencing a great trial as he wrote to the seven churches in Asia saying that he was their brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. But he was there by the will and purpose of God for the revelation of Jesus Christ of things which must shortly come to pass.

John saw a great white throne setting forth power, judgement and absolute authority. It was white setting forth the purity, righteousness and holiness of it as well as its beauty. He that sat upon it had such glory that all things of this natural world fled away and there was no place found for them. Christ says in Matthew 25:31, **"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory."** We cannot begin to envision or comprehend the brightness and powerfulness of His glory that nothing of this natural world could be seen in His presence. No natural eye could withstand the brightness of His glory.

John saw the dead, small and great, stand before the judgement throne of God. And again the words of Christ in Matthew 25:32-33, **"And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth HIS sheep from THE goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left."** Then John saw the books opened and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works. These were the goats who were dead to Christ; who know not God; who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; and whose sins follow after them. Now, they find themselves standing in the presence of the King of kings and Lord of lords in all His glory. O, how fearful! These are not natural books, but are setting forth the law. These dead ones are as the Pharisee who stood and prayed with himself, "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess." But Christ says in Matthew 23:23-28, **"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier** *matters* **of the law, judgement, mercy and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.** *Thou* **blind Pharisee, cleanse first that** *which is* **within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead** *men's* **bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."** We all have heard many say that they knew they were going to heaven because they had done so many works worthy of salvation in their work for Christ. Galatians 3:10-12, **"For as many as are of the works of the law and under the curse: for it is written, Cursed** *is* **every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God,** *it is* **evident: for, the just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, the man that doeth them shall live in them."**

Judgement on all mankind has been rendered and all are guilty. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." "As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." The judgement against those who are not the elect of God has been rendered, but not executed. John saw the execution of that judgement. As the Apostle writes in 1 Timothy 5:24,

"Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgement, and some *men* they follow after." John saw those whose sins follow after them. As these stand before the presence of God, they know for the first time that there is truly a God and that He has all power. They know for the first time that they are sinners and their works and righteousness are as filthy rags. These are cast into the lake of fire. Matthew 25:41-46, **"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungered and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these** (sheep), **ye did *it* not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."** He told the goats to depart from Him as He never knew them in love and mercy.

What is the lake of fire? Many say that it is an actual fire. Some say the fire burns the ones to ashes and others say the fire burns them everlastingly. I am persuaded that the Apostle Paul explains this lake of fire in II Thessalonians 1:7-10, **"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day."** To be in the presence of God in all his glory and then to be banished everlasting is a fire that can't be quenched (Mark 9:43). Cain was guilty of killing his brother, Abel, and was judged guilty by God and punished from the presence of God. Cain said his punishment was greater than he could bear.

John also saw the book of life which is Christ in whom all the names of the elect are written. As Christ said in Matthew 25:34, **"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." "Blessed and holy *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power."** The first resurrection is the resurrection of Christ on the 3rd day. All of the Lord's elect had part in His resurrection. Therefore, they will not be cast out from His presence forever, but will inherit that eternal kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world.

Humbly submitted in love,
Elder Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

Phyllis Stroud
1732 Westover Drive
Danville, VA 24541

Signs of the Times
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, VA 24343

Dear Brother Tony,

It is time to renew my subscription to the Signs. It is a wonderful periodical and I look forward to receiving mine every month. Enclosed is a check for two years. Also I would like to buy a flash drive for $40.00. I'm excited to have all the copies and the other valuable information which is included on the drive. May God continue to bless you in your future endeavors.

Sincerely,
Phyllis Stroud

January 20, 2015

Dear Brother Horton,

Enclosed is a check for $15.00 to renew my subscription of the Signs for another year.

I enjoy reading the good articles from "Voices of the Past" and the editorials by Elders Cleo Robertson and Jerry Farmer. The Signs is the only comfort I have in this sinful world to keep me pressing on toward the mark, for the prize, of the high calling of our dear Lord and Savior Jesus.

May our Lord bless you and all who help send it out each month. Thank you very much.

With a hope in Christ,
Gloria B. Reese

VOICES OF THE PAST

CHURCH ORDER BY ELDER F. A. CHICK RE-PUBLISHED FROM JANUARY, 1905, SIGNS

From the first volume of the SIGNS to the present one it has been a custom followed by successive editors to present to our readers some reflections especially called out by the beginning of a new year and a new volume. We have no wish to omit the custom now. It seems but natural that at the beginning of a New Year and volume we should have many reflections concerning the past, and many thoughts regarding the future. There are occasions in the lives of men, and in the history of nations as well, when the past and the future will crowd themselves upon the thoughts of men with special force.

There are such seasons in the life of believers and in the history of the church of God. So now we can but remember the past record of burdens, trials, crosses, reproaches, cares, and

anxieties, on the one hand, and of helps, comforts, encouragements, and victories on the other hand which have been along the pathway of the Signs more or less thickly scattered during all the past seventy-two years, and with the remembrance of all these things we can but praise the goodness and mercy of God for his unfailing grace manifested to all who have been connected with the management of the Signs, supporting them in their anxious labor all along through the years. From all this we can but look forward with hope, and a measure of confidence to the future, remembering that

> "His love in time past forbids us to think
> He'll leave us at last in sorrow to sink."

The solemn words of the apostle come to our mind as we write these words: "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come." And remembering the past goodness of God, we are encouraged for the future and are led to trust that as the Signs has been blessed to very many in all these past years, in that troubled hearts have been made glad, and downcast souls have rejoiced, and the tempted have been given the victory through words written for the Signs, so will it continue to be the messenger of good news in the time to come to very many of the tried and distressed children of God.

For all these past mercies, and for all that we hope for, would we give all praise and thanksgiving to God? Whatever may be the service which we render to him in serving his little ones, let it always be remembered that to him belongs all the praise. Paul once said, "I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." All praise to grace then for all things. From the God of all grace comes down every good and perfect gift. He gave the Signs to his people at a time when it was needed, and he has continued it because it has been needed, and he gave grace to all the former editors, and to all who have been moved to contribute to its columns, and he gave every word that through its pages has ministered to his people in every way, and he has spoken the word of admonition, of exhortation, of reproof, of warning, of consolation, of comfort; in short, every word that has edified in any way his needy children. God forbid that any of us should take one atom of praise to ourselves for any of these things. If we have labored, after all it is not we, but the grace of God.

It seems well at this time to call attention to some of the things that pertain to the order of the house of God. We mean the general principles of that order as laid down in the New Testament. We say the New Testament, for only in the New Testament Scriptures can we find that order laid down. The ceremonials enjoined upon Israel under the old covenant have no place in the order of the house of God under the gospel; they were shadows of things com-

pleted in Christ; they are not the rule of outward life to the church now. We need not pause to argue this here, supposing that all our people are well settled in this one thing as least, yet it is well to call attention to it now and then, since we are all so prone to forget.

In the New Testament, however, our God has seen fit to lay down that order which will be to the good of his people and to his glory in this gospel day. In its place to know this order is just as important as to know that salvation is by grace. We all dwell much upon the travel of the child of God under the law and in the gospel; we also dwell upon the obligations of believers toward the church, and in all the relations which they hold in life; we dwell much upon the strong doctrine of salvation through Christ with each principle of that doctrine, and this is all well and needful. It is also our solemn obligation to ask after the order of the church, what it is, as a body ordained of God to administer the affairs of his kingdom on earth.

One thing we desire to call special attention to here. This one thing is that each special body of believers stands by itself, subject to no other body, and subject alone to God and the world which he has revealed in the Scriptures. This has ever been the ground occupied by the Baptist churches in all ages past. So much has this been the case that for centuries it was never questioned among them; and ever since we can ourselves recollect, this has been one thing continually maintained among all Old Baptists whom we have known.

The people of God have been very jealous regarding this one thing, because they have believed that the glory of God, the relation of the church to Christ her Head and Lawgiver, and all that simple, plain, spiritual service which God requires of his people could be fulfilled in no other way. Baptists have recognized but one Head and Lawgiver, and so have been zealous that nothing should obtain a place in their order that would come in between them and their one King.

It is but reasonable to believe that our God would not leave his people uninstructed with regard to their order as to his house on earth, and in fact he has not, for in the New Testament all that is needed is revealed. It is ours to come up to that rule, and not to go beyond it. With reference to this one thought, the dependence of each body of believers upon God, and their independence of each other so far as maintaining the order of the church is concerned, we desire to appeal to the testimony of the word itself.

In the Acts of the Apostles, and in all the epistles, we shall look in vain for one word that would imply that each church was not sufficient unto itself for the transaction of all its affairs. In all the exhortations of the apostles to the churches regarding what we call discipline or order there is not the slightest intimation that any other church was even called upon for advice or counsel in any matter. They all had one Counselor, one Guide, and one Judge; each church ought to appeal unto him. It was not only true that if any man lack wisdom he should ask God, but the same was

true of any church as well.

Many things required setting in order in the church in Corinth for instance, but there is no intimation that they should call in the church at Ephesus, or at Rome, or at Jerusalem, for help, or even for advice in any of their differences. We know that they were divided in feeling, and that dissensions existed among them, but still they were all to look alone to God, and all such matters were to be dealt with among themselves, subject alone to the apostolic authority. The only reference recorded in the Bible of church differences or misunderstandings to any other body of men, is that recorded in Acts fifteenth chapter. This was beyond controversy to the apostles alone. To the apostles alone ought we still to go in all matters of difficulty.

If we should be so presumptuous as to say that God has not or will not give wisdom to any one church in the administering the order of the church, or in dealing with any matter of difference, it is equally uncertain, to say the least of it, that he will bestow upon a church at a distance that wisdom whereby they shall judge righteously. The longer we have lived, and the more we have seen and thought upon all such matters, the more we have been convinced that the great lack in all cases of difficulty unsettled or unhealed, has been that the church involved spent more time discussing the matter among themselves than they did in looking to God for guidance as to the meaning of his word, and for a proper spirit to dwell in their midst while considering the difficulty.

The dear Lord has said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst. Has the church come together in his name? Is the important consideration. If so, he is with them, and if so, wisdom is there to deal with all that may present itself. To undertake to refer questions that may arise to another body of the disciples of the Lord, is to say that we do not believe that our God will be with us and give us wisdom, or that we are not his disciples gathered in church order.

But we need not pause to reason or argue the matter, it is enough that in the New Testament there is no record of any church, or minister, or body of believers of any kind, being chosen to administer the affairs of the churches, or to settle any difficulties. This is enough for all who believe in the perfect wisdom of God, and that the people of God must not be wise above what is written.

We are here writing in this way because it is always needful that our pure minds should be stirred up to remember all that pertains to the cause of God and truth, and surely this is one of those things, if anything is. Another reason is, that we have seen it intimated that in some sections of our country there is a move on foot to destroy this plain, simple order of the church, and substitute a sort of federal government in its place, a government of a few men who shall be a sort of court of last resort to settle all questions and difficulties that may come at the last, before them, and whose decisions shall be final.

First, we have no fear that when the attention of the God-fearing children of

God is called to the unscripturalness of this move they will not give it their indorsement at all; yet the watchmen are to watch, and to give warning, for there are always unwary ones who yet do love and fear God, and whose desire is to glorify him, but who may be ensnared before they know it.

Second, like Israel of old, the church of God is a theocracy, and must acknowledge no sovereign but her God. This proposed plan would turn the government of the church into an aristocracy instead. It is proposed in this way to furnish a way to heal all dissensions, whether in doctrine or practice. We do not here judge the motive of those who are making this move. It may be that they are truly grieved at all difficulties and dissensions and truly desire to do what they may to heal all such things as annoy and grieve the children of God, but we must say that it is a poor way to strive for peace by methods which are in plain violation of the law of God in Zion. Can strife among the brethren be healed by rebellion against God? And this proposed plan is rebellion if anything is.

If the law of Zion has been broken can that break be healed by causing a still more serious break of that law? The streams may have become polluted in many places; will that pollution be cleansed by visiting the very fountain with a still worse pollution? Such a federal government will do for Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcopalians, Romanists, and even for New School Baptists, but it will not do for the simple, humble-minded children of God, who know no king but Jesus, who respect the authority of his word alone.

But suppose that such a move should prevail us, who would be chosen to sit as a court of final resort? If, for instance all the churches in one or more States or sections of the country should adopt this place, who among them would admit that upon him had fallen the mantle of judgment above his fellows?

Not the truly humble among them. If any were proud and desirous of occupying the highest seats, such would no doubt seek the honor, but the humble would not, and what if more, could be brought to believe that they were wiser than any of their brethren, or more capable of judging righteously in any matter. Such humble ones would not so sin against God as to either seek or accept such a place. Then if, still further, all these various sectional boards should have over them one national board, as we understood has been contemplated, the matter would still be worse.

Is any brother, any minister in all our land, who has been known as an Old School Baptist, willing to come forward and say, I will accept such a position? If so he is presumptuous and self-willed, heady and high-minded, and not fit to judge anything in the church. Still further, when such boards in sections, and such a board in the nation, shall have been appointed, when and where shall they meet and by what machinery shall difficult cases be laid before them? Who is to pay for time and for expense that must be incurred by such gathering?

Brethren, let any such plan be adopted, and soon we shall have all the elaborate machinery in use among all

the different denominations of people named above. Wherein then will our order differ from theirs? We are sure that it will differ from the plain, simple government laid down in the New Testament, as much as night differs from day or truth from falsehood; as much as the nations in the olden time who were governed by despotic kings, differed from Israel when they had no king but acknowledged the Lord alone as their Ruler and Judge.

Thus far it has been in our mind to speak here, and here we will leave this matter for the present, at least. We have written in a general way, desiring to call attention to the truth that each church must attend to its own affairs, subject alone to him who is their Lawgiver and Judge.

Now, in conclusion, we desire to express our gratitude to God, and to our brethren for their kind forbearance toward us, especially during the past year, since our beloved brother Benton Beebe was removed from his work in the conduct of the Signs; and we ask that the brethren will remember during this coming year that we still shall need much forbearance and help from them.

We hope that such matter will come to the office for publication as will edify the readers, as has been the case in the past. May the blessing of our covenant keeping God be with us all, those who conduct the Signs, and those who are correspondents, and those who are subscribers. May all strive for the things that make for peace, and the things whereby one may edify another. All this, with every needed blessing, our God will bestow for Jesus sake.

"When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple." (Jonah 2:7)

In the experience of God's little children they learn that they do not cry unto the LORD when things are well with them. When they are high and lifted up; when in a blissful state of being raised up and given to meditate joyfully and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus and blessed to eat, drink and feast they feel no need. In such a state and condition they, of course, are in no distress. They are not hungry and thirsty. They are filled, hence no occasion to cry. They feel no need to pray. I believe it is when they are down; when they are in the valley, depressed, in the slough of despondency, hungry and thirsty; brought by their bitter trials and tribulations to the knowledge of their insufficiency of themselves; made to know how helpless they are in their own strength; made to know their need and made to know that "without me ye can do nothing," is when, and not until then, that they cry unto the LORD from whence cometh their help. That is when, and only when, they can in Spirit and in Truth say; **"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help."** (Ps. 121:1)

The LORD'S people are brought to pray. They are made to cry. They learn

obedience by the things they suffer. They do not cry until they have to. I believe this truth is confirmed by the experience of every heaven born soul. It is when they are brought down to need that they are taught that they are poor and needy and also taught their inability of themselves to supply their need. Then their souls faint and they cry. **"They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble,** *and* **he delivered them out of their distresses."** (Ps. 107:4-6) They are not only given to cry unto Him when in trouble and distresses, but when brought and enabled to cry, He delivers them. If they were able to deliver themselves, they would not cry to Him — would not need to do so. He not only hears their cry and makes the delivery, but He leads them the right way. **"He led them forth by the right way." "He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation."** (Ps. 107:7).

"*The righteous* cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles." (Ps. 84:17) **"The Lord** *is* **nigh unto them that are of a broken heart** (That are —already—not may or will be) **and saveth such as be** (not will be) **of a contrite Spirit. Many** *are* **the afflictions of the righteous; but the LORD delivereth him out of them all."** (Ps. 34:18-19) It is wonderful to be given to meditate upon the testimony where it is said; **"Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly, and said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I,** *and* **thou heardest my voice."** (Jonah 2:1-2)

If the LORD'S little children were able of themselves they would never need to cry to the LORD. Fact is, if it were left to them and they had the power to carry it out they would never be in distress. Never be afflicted. Never suffer any trials and any need. They would be on the mountain top, surely they would, if in their power rejoicing instead of being in the valley. If sufficient of themselves, surely they would never have to cry out of the belly of hell. We understand that Jonah was cast into the sea. **"So they took up Jonah and cast him forth into the sea and the sea ceased from her raging."** (1:15) **"For thou hadst cast me into the deep, into the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about; all thy billows and thy waves passed over me."** (2-3) **"I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal;"** (Deut. 32:39) **"For he maketh sore, and bindeth up; he woundeth, and his hands make whole."** (Job 5:18-19)

How comforting it is to his children that it is said; "Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah." (1:17) This great fish the LORD had prepared, seems to me, among the many things it represents and denotes, it most surely is figurative of the LORD'S love, mercy and grace in having prepared a way of escape for his children out of the dangers, pitfalls, snares and temptations and for their delivery out of all their troubles. **"There**

hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God *is* **faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."** (1 Cor. 10:13) **"And the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land."** (2:10) **"Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."** (1 Pet. 1:5)

We do not praise the LORD when we are in trouble but instead we cry unto him. **"I cried unto the LORD with my voice: with my voice unto the LORD did I make my supplication. I poured out my complaint before him; I shewed before him my trouble."** (Ps. 142:1-2) David was in trouble crying unto him. He had to pray for deliverance. He could not deliver himself out of his trouble. I believe he was led and enabled what he should pray for. **"For we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."** (Rom. 8:26) When delivered out of our troubles and distresses then we praise Him, for He has done something for us that we could not do for ourselves. David was given to praise Him. **"Praise ye the LORD, O, give thanks unto the LORD; for** *he is* **good: for his mercy** *endureth* **forever."** (Ps. 106:1) **"For I know that the LORD** *is* **great and** *that* **our LORD** *is* **above all gods. Whatsoever the LORD pleased;** *that* **did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places."** (Ps. 135:5-6) **"All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD; and thy saints shall bless thee."** (Ps. 145:10)

The LORD'S people are taught by the Spirit through the things they experience that salvation is of the LORD. Hence, Jonah declared; **"I will pay** *that* **that I have vowed. Salvation** *is* **of the LORD."** (Jonah 2:9)

Elder W. A. Speer
Box 315
El Dorado, Arkansas

The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the First Church, Roxbury, Sept. 5th and 6th, 1888, to the associations and meetings of our faith and order that feel an interest and fellowship with us, sends christian love and salutation.

Beloved Brethren:—Through the tender mercy of him that has promised that "As thy days, so thy strength shall be," we have been permitted to meet in the capacity of an association, for the first time since our organization; and we have great reason for gratitude to him who hath preserved us in the love and fellowship of the gospel, and blessed us with some precious meetings during the year that has passed, where his people have been privileged to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, acknowledging him as their King and Ruler, who worketh

all things after the counsel of his own will, to his own glory, and for the good of his people. He has comforted our hearts from time to time by sending those that he has called to stand upon the walls of Zion, to preach for us; and they have come preaching Christ and him crucified, in meekness and love. Some of the churches of our association have been made to rejoice by the gathering in of those that have been standing without, who have been found in a waste, howling wilderness, led about and instructed, and a new song put in their mouths, even praise to his great name. The churches composing our association are all at peace with each other, looking unto Jesus for wisdom, strength and direction, who is the author and finisher of our faith. We would desire to rest upon the oath and promise of him who has declared the end from the beginning, saying that his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. We would say to the associations and meetings with whom we have been in correspondence formerly, while connected with the Lexington Association, that we still desire your correspondence and fellowship, trusting that we have been taught in the same school, and learned that our dependence is in the same Lord, and our interest in the same Redeemer, with you. We hope our messengers appointed to bear our Minutes to you will be received with that brotherly love and fellowship that flows from no other source but the Giver of every good and perfect gift. Those from your associations who have attended our session, we have been very glad to meet, and have listened to the preaching of the gospel from your ministers with joy and satisfaction to our souls.

The next session of our association is appointed to be held with the church of Andes, Delaware Co., N.Y., where we hope to meet your messengers in love, peace and fellowship.

J.D. Hubbell, Mod.
Ezra Mead, Clerk.

ON THE REIGN OF CHRIST

Circular Letter: The Baltimore Association of Old School Baptists, convened with the church at Black Rock, Md., May 18, 19, & 20, to the churches of which she is composed, greeting.

Time like some mighty whirlpool will sooner or later engulf all that floats in its channel. Every returning period tells of many that have already been swallowed up, and we too are hastening to the vortex. But while upon the surface we would indulge another opportunity afforded us of communicating with those we love of the things that make for our peace, as children of the same family, and things whereby one may edify another. Considering the uncertainty and many changing scenes of time, the thousand allurements and great oppositions that are in the world, the wily arts of the Devil with his armed legions, the lust of our flesh with its propensity to evil, and above all the rapid strides and boasting threats of the man of sin, it is thought

there is no subject we can contemplate with greater pleasure or profit than that of the Reign of Christ. He is that king that Isaiah said should reign in righteousness and whose princes should rule in judgment. The prophets universally ascribe sovereignty to God, and David says, Psa. 62:11, **"God has spoken once; twice have I heard this, that power** *belongeth* **unto God."** Christ, not as the essential God, but as the head of His church and the executor of the Father's will possesses a delegated power, conferred upon Him for a special purpose and for a limited period, and the question as to how far that power extends or what it is made to effect, is one that forever separates between Christ and antichrist, or the children of God and the children of the Devil: the one believing it to be omnipotent, the other that it is limited; the one, that He does His pleasure and none can let Him; the other, that it is dependent for its execution upon the co-operation of His creatures; and while the saints are hailing Him as King of kings and Lord of lords, and rejoicing that there is one possessed of all power that careth for them; the whole antichristian brood are very busy in taking care of their little idol, which they call Jesus, and transporting him from one country to another. Now, in all the little that we may write upon this important subject, we wish to take divine inspiration as our guide, and in order to render the subject intelligible, we will briefly consider it in three branches, namely:

Its extent, its nature and its duration.

In considering first the extent of the reign of Christ, it is needful that we take into consideration the object for which it is conferred upon Him, in order to ascertain how far it was needful that power should extend. That object is declared in scripture, and that by Himself, to be that He should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given Him. These are in the world, have to do with the things of the world, stand connected with the rest of mankind, and have a frail and evil nature in common with all the human family. It therefore became necessary that Christ, in order to secure to them eternal life, should have unreserved control over all things that stand in the least degree connected with them, as it is written, **"As thou hast given Him power over** *all* **flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given Him"** John 17:2. Nor does He simply possess a power in earth and over flesh, but He informed His disciples after His resurrection from the dead that All power was given unto Him in heaven and in earth, Mt. 28:18; by which we may learn that the eternal power of the Godhead, and whatever power the Prophets and the Psalmist speak of as belonging to God is involved in the mediatorial reign of Christ. Old Testament scriptures are therefore as applicable to define the power of Christ as those of the New, for "it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell." It is not to be expected that we should find in the scriptures an express declaration that the power of Christ embraces this, that, and the other particular thing or occurrence; it is enough that

we find evidence of its extending to all things in all worlds. We have already shown that it embraces heaven and earth, as Peter says, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him. It now remains to show that it extends over hell and the power there. He is regarded by us as the mighty angel that John saw descend with a great chain, and lay hold of the dragon, and bind him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up. The apostles having fulfilled their mission and returned on a certain occasion said, Lord, even the devils are subject to us through Thy name. This power is not only declared but acknowledged, for, said the devils to the seven sons of Sceva, Jesus we know and Paul we know, but who are ye? We might here make a number of other quotations to the same import, but these are deemed sufficient. Here let us ask what comfort or enjoyment could Christians feel in view of the storms and tempests that are howling around them, did they not know that in Jesus dwelt a power that rules the raging of the sea and still its angry waves. What security could they feel in a world of opposition, did they not know that He made the wrath of man to praise Him, and restrained the rest. In short what hope could they have of final blessedness, but in the belief that Jesus holds the keys of hell and death, controls all the angry passions of their natures, and every being, everything, and every act; whether standing in opposition or needful to be employed for their comfort. So they can unite their voices with, and make up that great multitude, many waters and mighty thunders spoken of in the book of Revelation, saying, Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. He reigns over Heaven, earth, and hell. The winds and the seas obey Him. The sparrows in their flight are moved and directed by His care, and not one of the countless hairs that deck our heads can fall or remain unmoved but by His government. His is a power to wound and a power to heal, a power to kill and a power to make alive, this is the King that saves His subjects and destroys their foes.

In the second place we are to consider the nature or character of this reign, and wish it borne in mind that there is no reign but His, for the kingdoms of this world are become "the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ," and Solomon says, Proverbs 8:15-16 – **"By me kings reign and princes decree justice. By me princes rule and nobles,** *even* **all the judges of the earth."** It is also written in the New Testament: There is no power, but of God. The powers that be, are ordained of God. We wish it also borne in mind that He reigns for the exclusive good of his people, His chosen. Isaiah has characterized His reign as a reign in righteousness. Whether we consider Him, then, as dethroning kings, or exalting to scepters base and blood thirsty tyrants; whether as sending wars with all the evils that follow in their train, or causing the clarion of peace and good will to men to be blown, still His reign is in righteousness, because so it seems good in His sight. **"Righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are thy judgments,"**

Psalm 119:137. He governs the world by a power which they neither see nor acknowledge, and to describe it fully, would be beyond the capacity of angels. It is to His reign in Zion, where His power is both felt and acknowledged, that we would confine ourselves in treating upon this branch of our subject. It is there that He has laws, or more properly, a law, which is unchanging as His own eternal throne, and extending to all the subjects of His kingdom in all time and eternity too. It needs no fire and fagot, no sword or bayonet to enforce it; it exerts no tyrannical influence, holds to view no terrors; promises no rewards. It is not recorded upon tables of stone or pieces of parchment, and deposited in the archives of some moldering edifice; nor is it subject to abrogation or amendment like the laws of men. This law is the law of love. The promptings of this law are recorded in the New Testament; but let this be obliterated, let bonfires be lighted up with the pages of scripture, still the law is in their hearts and will teach them the way that they should go. Whilst then in the precepts and commandments of the New Testament, we have a transcript of the mind and will of God, they furnish us also with an expression of Christian desire. They delight to do the will of God; a service called forth by any other law, either looks for a reward or dreads punishment; but this is all performed for the sake of Him who hath loved them and given Himself for them. If a man preaches truth and does not love it, he is no better off than if he had preached error, and he that practices morality and loves iniquity, is no better off than if he practiced iniquity. Self love has a governing influence over us in nature; but here: "the love of Christ constraineth us." But whence this love? Paul in his letter to the Romans informs us that it is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. So that, as Solomon says, If a man should give all the substance of his house for love, it would be utterly contemned. As it exists independent of the creature, so it operates independent of his mind and will. It extends to all the family of God and no further. It is therefore no marvel that Christians cannot love those that give no evidence that they love God.

But we now pass to the consideration of the third and last branch of our subject, which is, the duration of this reign. While we are utterly unable to find any limit to the extent of His reign, the scriptures justify us in fixing a period to its duration and this is no other than the full completion of all that work for which His power was conferred upon Him. Viewing Him as Jehovah the scriptures speak of Him as reigning for ever and ever, but in His mediatorial character they figuratively speak of Him as reigning a thousand years. When that thousand years shall expire no man can tell; but certain it is that He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. When He shall have called up the slumbering bodies of His saints from their graves, and thus taken the prey from the mighty, then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when He shall have put down all rule and all authority

and power, See 1 Cor. 15:24; and when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all; verse 28. And now brethren, may we not rejoice in the universal power of Christ, since being controlled by His power no weapon that is formed against us shall prosper and every tongue that shall rise up in judgment against us we shall condemn. May we not confidently look for the complete glorification of all the election of grace since it is His will that they may behold His glory, and all power is His to execute that will. May we not rejoice in the nature of His reign, since, all His works being done in righteousness, all things work together for good to them that love God and are the called according to His purpose. Being by the law of love, we have nothing to dread from our many short comings and repeated wanderings; He heals our backslidings and loves us freely. He holds no threatening judgments over us; nor spurns us from His face.

"The poorer the wretch, the welcomer here."

Lastly, may we not rejoice in the termination of that reign, since with its end will be the eternal overthrow of the kingdom of antichrist, the complete destruction of all enemies including the last, which is death, and the raising up of His church, both soul and body, to dwell with Him in bliss forever. Finally, brethren, farewell; the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Elder Samuel Trott 1848.

Lillie, Louisiana

The Signs of the Times, and the Household of Faith Everywhere:

I have had a mind to write you for the past several months. I do not know whether the desire to write is of the flesh or not, but I hope it is from a sounder and more loving source than that. If so, I am sure it will be made manifest.

If I know my own poor heart and soul, I love you dear brethren and believing children of God; and it would pain my very soul if I was to be made to see that I do not love you, for Jesus has said, "He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love." (1 John 4:8).

Oh, dear brethren, what have we to hope for, and to look to, if we love not one another? Truly we are deceived and are deceiving others, if we love not each other; because God's true Bible description of his people is, that they love one another. I would not have you think that this love that I have introduced is of an earthly or worldly source: not at all, but it is that love of God which is shed abroad in our hearts. So then you can see what encouragement, hope and rejoicing that the true evidence of this love brings to the children of God. John says in another place, "We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." Now I would call attention to the fact that John did not show

that we have a perfect knowledge of this fact, but he said we know it if we love the brethren.

Dear brethren, do you know beyond any doubt that you love them with that true and godly love? If so, then you can know that you are passed from death unto life because of that fact. Oh, how do I believe and hope that I love them, which is equivalent to saying, How I do believe and hope I am one of them who has passed from death unto life. Yet we will have to view this matter in the light that we are still mortal, imperfect, weak and very much subject to vanity through the flesh. I think this is the reason Paul in 1 Corinthians, eighth chapter, said, "And if any man think he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing as he ought to know." Read also the next verse, "But if any man love God, the same in known of him." So I am afraid to boldly stand up and say that I know these sacred things. My depraved nature is such that I often see nothing in myself that would warrant me standing in such desirable assurance as loving the Lord's people without a doubt. There is no doubt in my mind but that John the Baptist knew what he was talking about when he said, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." But later, when he was put in prison, he sent his disciples to ask Jesus, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another." So I am afraid to be too strong in saying that I know that I love God's people, John and others in the Holy Bible greatly doubted things which no doubt they had been taught of the Lord.

Jesus, our Saviour, was made to cry out on the cross, My God, My God, why has thou forsaken me? Think dear ones, what agony he was going through: and he was sinless and righteous. In contrast, we are sinners. I feel that all the children of God experience a being forsaken of God: they feel it, and they are greatly troubled and dismayed; they grope in the dark, and they weep and mourn. But, as Jesus was immediately strengthened and was raised the third day, and ascended into heaven, and highly exalted after being brought so low, so dear humble, weeping child of God when we are brought into such great trouble and dismay, darkness and trial, we too, as his children, will be lifted up and made to rejoice in him. I believe that the Father taught his Son by the things he suffered; so all our sufferings, afflictions and trials are for our good and learning. Remember that when the Israelites were journeying through the wilderness, they were on their way to that land which flowed with milk and honey, and only Jordan separated them from it.

So dear brethren let us look up; for the evidence is that the children of Israel when traveling in the wilderness, were nearing the border of Canaan Land, that land of promise that flows with milk and honey. And let us remember that Jesus said that it was through much tribulation that we should enter into the kingdom. (Acts 14:22).

Now, it seems so clear and convincingly strong that the greatest scriptural evidence we could possibly have that we are the children of God, would be to love the children of God, as he has commanded. This point is very clearly brought out in the language of the Saviour when he said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to the other." (John 13:35). So

dear brethren, let us search our hearts as to this most important question. Is there not a great yearning in your heart to find this priceless jewel of evidence? Do you not feel drawn to those who have the evidence of a deep felt sense of unworthiness before God? Is it not a fact that when you hear and observe the Lord's trembling ones express their longings for the Lord, his true gospel truth, his great love, and his great and everlasting salvation, that you cannot keep from loving them, whether you have ever seen or heard of them before or not?

Is it not a fact that just to read the writings of those who are in the trend and leadership of the Spirit of God, dealing with their heart throbs and longings after God, that you are made to feel that love, through you have never heard their voices or seen their faces? Yet there is a love in your heart for them that is inexpressible, and reaches far above every earthly love and affection. This, dear ones, is the greatest evidence that you could be blessed with that you are one of His, that you have this great love for them. It is evident that it is the love of God which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given us. (Romans 5:5).

Those to whom you are thus drawn through that kindred spirit, would you not do anything for their welfare and comfort? Do you not yearn in your hearts for their welfare and for their prosperity, both naturally and spiritually; and do you not long to be with them who are filled with this sacred love? And do you not long to communicate with them of the precious truth? I am sure that we (if I be one) long to be with each other, and to hear spiritual testimony of this love of God which is shed abroad in our hearts.

Then, if these things are felt and truly realized in our hearts, O, how careful it should make us want to get along with each other, and not to offend one of the least of these little ones. Can we afford to abruptly and intentionally mistreat or offend them? Jesus tells us on this subject that it would be better that he who would offend one of these that a millstone be placed about his neck, and be cast into the sea. Yea, it would be better that such offenders had never been born, than to offend one of these little ones.

Then, dear brethren, let me urge you and admonish you to take it to heart, and live and strive not to offend God's little ones. It is certainly admonished and exhorted in the scriptures that we admonish one another as brethren, and to reprove and even rebuke with all longsuffering and doctrine. Brethren, I had rather be debased and even excluded from the Old Baptist church, as much as I love you, than to wrongfully offend one of these little ones. I desire, if I know my heart, to build you up, comfort and strengthen you, and cause you to be strong in the faith; yea, I long after you, and desire your edification and establishment in the glorious Gospel of God our Saviour. I had rather suffer, than to see you wounded; I had rather endure wrong, that to see you falsely accused and persecuted wrongfully. I would to God, dear brethren, that it pleases the Lord that I be spared from offending any of the Lord's little ones; but I would comfort them.

Love is the fulfilling of the law; and John deeply exhorts and commands,

"Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God and everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God." O, what a great consolation this is, to bear the evidence of loving one another; and if so, then we are born of God, and knoweth God. (1 John 4:7)

Then if all this is true, you are forever and eternally His, and you are secured by every drop of the shed blood of our Redeemer and Saviour; and everything is fixed and set for your good, and every obstacle is done away with in Christ for you. Even though you may suffer want, and have trials and tribulations, darkness and great distress, you are born of God. What a consolation, dear brethren, to those among poor sinners who are thus born of God: John says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin because he is born of God." (1 John 3:9). Then, regardless of the seeming complication to our poor, weak and incapacitated minds, there is a sense in which such who are born of God do not and cannot sin. I had rather know that I am in that class that does not, and cannot sin than anything I can think of.

Dear mourning, cast down child of God, even though you are a sinner in your flesh and carnal nature, yet in the sense that you are born of God, in the sense that you are blessed to love the Lord and your precious brethren and sisters, you do not sin; but to try to show you the consistent truth on this subject, John says in 1 John 1:8, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." So, we dare not say we have no sin; but in and through that incorruptible seed which remaineth in us, we do not commit sin. Now Paul said I know that in me, that is my flesh, there is no good thing. This should at least show us that our flesh, as such, is not born of God; but as Paul in Hebrews says, in speaking of the church (and I think he speaks of the children of God here in this earth), "But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven; and to God the judge of all, and to the SPIRITS OF JUST MEN MADE PERFECT." Notice it was the Spirits of just men made perfect. So, in this spirit that is perfect, they cannot sin, and do not sin; but as long as we live in this tabernacle of flesh there is sin in the flesh. In that sweet day of the great and glorious resurrection, these vile bodies will come forth like unto our Lord's glorious body, and then we shall be like him, and see him as he is. What a wonderful day; I long to be away from sin in every sense of the word; I long to dwell with my precious Saviour whom my soul loveth, and with the dear saints of God in heaven. I long to praise him with that perfection of immortality in the presence of all the mighty and holy angels.

Then, dear brethren, if we love one another, may the Lord keep us that we watch over one another for good and not for evil; may we be free from tattling, and talebearing, and sowing seeds of discord; may we be ready to consider each other's weakness, and forbear one another in love. And may we not engage in envy, jealousy and strife, which the holy and precious word of God says comes from our own lust. I quote James 4:1,

"From whence cometh wars and fighting's among you? Come they not hence even of your own lusts that war in your members." So we know where they come from. There is so much of this this very day and time among those who love one another, or should love one another if we are what we hope to be. If we are born of God, we do love one another.

May God bless, sanctify, keep and comfort you, and save you and be with you in every trial and affliction, and cause you to look to Him for every blessing, for they all must come from Him. Please pray for me, and cast the mantle of charity over me in my weakness, mistakes and many imperfections. Farewell in the Lord.

Your very unworthy brother in hope,
Elder R. W. Rhodes

THE MINISTRY—II.
(Extract of a Letter.)

My dear Brother in Jesus, — It has pleased the Lord for a long time to afflict me with a very distressing, lingering disorder of stomach, by which I have been much reduced in flesh, strengh, and spirits. I have not been confined to the house, nor hindered from preaching, at least once on a Lord's Day; but the state of my health has been distressing far beyond what I can express. Add to this, it has pleased him also to visit me with great darkness of soul, to withdraw from me the sweetness of his salvation, and to hide from me his face. "He brought me into darkness, and not into light, and when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer." I have been brought at times so exceeding low, that I could adopt the most painful language of Ps. vi., xiii., xxxi., and lxxvii. Indeed, unless it should please the Lord to manifest himself to me, I cannot go on to preach, but shall certainly faint. (2 Cor. iv. 1.) My head, however, has been kept above water, I know not how; and I have been enabled at times to believe that when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. I have had deeper discoveries of my own hardness, vileness, and weakness, and a further insight into some parts of the word; but I want to know and enjoy Jesus, to roll myself in his salvation, and to be happy in him. Here I know I cannot help myself; but "I wait for the Lord; my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope." I find but few that can at all enter into my case, or comfort me; but I know that you, dear brother, have been in these and greater depths. I therefore court, not only an interest in your prayers, but a few lines of comfort in truth.

Yours sincerely in Jesus.
The Gospel Standard
L—, Jan. 8, 1836.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 2015

Jerry Cornlius, NC 25.00
James White, AL 15.00
John Smith, FL 25.00
Eunice Soyars, NC 15.00
James Preston Jones, LA 5.00
Phillip Jones, TX 10.00

OBITUARIES

RUTH FAUCETT ALLEN

Our Heavenly Father has called another precious member from Durham Primitive Baptist Church. We are saddened to report the passing of our dear Sister Ruth Faucette Allen. She was born January 14, 1919 and departed this life December 25, 2014 just a few days before her 96th birthday.

Sister Ruth was the daughter of Samuel Fred Faucette and Vera Forsyth Faucette who predeceased her. Also predeceasing her was her husband Charles Henry Allen, who died in February 2006; two sisters and five brothers. She is survived by her daughter Martha A. Jones and husband Gerald of Mebane, N.C.; son Ron Allen and wife Paula of El Cajon, CA; four grandchildren, eight great grandchildren; and brother James Faucette and wife Swanny of Durham, N.C.

Having joined Durham Primitive Baptist Church in September 1951, she was a member for 63 years. It was always a joy to talk with her and to see her bright smile each meeting day.

The 23rd Psalm was especially precious to Sister Ruth. In January of 1981, she sent a letter to her Pastor Elder Cleo Robertson expressing how she was still rejoicing from the sermon on the 23rd Psalm which he had delivered the previous day. Describing the discourse as sweet, wonderful, and a gift from God, she proclaimed that "The Lord is my Shepherd" is so precious and is "one of my staves in my my bundle of hope."

In her letter to Elder Robertson, she told of a time about two years previous, while working alone in her home, a sermon on the 23rd Psalm came into her mind. She wrote that words were not audible but the message came to her mind sentence by sentence followed by the meanings of the verses. She was greatly rejoicing because the sermon she received while working at home two years previous was the same as the one Elder Robertson delivered the previous day. The words, she said, were not the same but the message with the verses and meanings were the same and it was received in the same way both times. She wrote that tears fell that Sunday and it was like "Joy in the Morning."

We know that God works both ends of a sermon. One is blessed to give it and one is blessed to receive it. God moves in a mysterious way – His wonders to perform.

On an earlier occasion, Sister Ruth described waking up from anesthesia in a recovery room and saying, "The Lord is my Shepherd." Even though groggy, she said to have felt the Lord's presence at that time.

In her last several years, Sister Ruth suffered from a form of dementia. She was unable to speak audible words but could make various sounds and would show different facial expressions. When-

ever Elder Robertson and others would visit, her face would light up with a familiar bright, sweet smile and appeared to show loving recognition to her visitors.

Her funeral was conducted at Maplewood Cemetery in Durham, N.C. by her Pastor Elder Cleo Robertson and grandson-in-law Scott Carter. In her letter to Elder Robertson, she expressed that God had been so good to her all the days of her life. We feel sure that she had a strong, lively hope that she would dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Written by Larry Byrd.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Sister Betty McPherson, Clerk

CATHERINE MASSEY HUMBARGER

It is with sadness that Durham Primitive Baptist Church reports the passing of our dear Sister Catherine Massey Humbarger. Sister Catherine was born August 3, 1924 and departed this life on December 17, 2014 making her sojourn here 90 years, 4 months, and 14 days. She was predeceased by her parents Walter C. Massey and Mala Vickers Massey, her sister Annie Ruth Massey, and brother Walter Tharon Massey.

She is survived by her daughter Ann Copley of Durham, N.C., her niece Sharon Massey Throop of Efland, and nephew Walter J. Massey of Collegeville, P.A. A native and lifetime resident of Durham County, she had worked at American Tobacco Company for 43 years.

Sister Catherine joined Durham Primitive Baptist Church in September 1949 making her a member for 65 years. She was elected Church Clerk on December 19, 1964 and served until October 16, 2010.

Love of the church, firmness in the doctrine, and the decency and proper order of the church were very strong attributes of Sister Catherine. She spent many hours in the care of the church much of which was general physical labor. A generous amount of food was brought out by her for most every third Sunday service for many years and for as long as she was able.

Near the end of her life, she had to endure about three years of severe health problems. She had a hip replacement that became infected and required a second replacement. For more than a year, she was unable to walk. Knowing that this was God's will, she was reconciled to her condition. While confined, she as especially grateful to see visitors and expressed her love to them. Whenever her health allowed her to attend church, her face seemed to shine with delight and joy and expressed thankfulness at being able to be with us.

As the end became closer, she said that some things are worse than death and I believe that she was ready

to depart. Her funeral service was conducted at Woodlawn Memorial Park on December 22, 2014 by her Pastor Elder Cleo Robertson. He spoke boldly from several scriptures concerning the power of God and the predestination of God's elect and emphasized that he was confident that this was what our dear Sister Catherine most surely believed.

Blessed be the name of the Lord.
Written by Larry Byrd.
Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Sister Betty McPherson, Clerk

EULA INA UNDERWOOD HARDISON QUINN

Eula Ina Underwood Quinn, age 84 departed this life on earth on October 11, 2014. She was the daughter of Isaac Jefferson and Dillie Mae Trail Underwood. She was the mother of Janice Faye, Gene Gray, Ina Mae, Susan Kaye, William Ray and Amanda Ann. She leaves behind her children and Husband of 48 years Luke Quinn, along with her step-children Margaret, Sonny and Jean. She was blessed with many grandchildren and great grandchildren whom she dearly treasured. She was also 'the other mom' to the many friends her family brought home.

Ina grew up attending Long Branch Primitive Baptist Church with her parents and siblings. She was given a love for Gods little children in the Church. One love was that of 'Papa's song-hymn 212 – 'How tedious and tasteless the hours.' She was given the gift to serve them and helped her sister prepare many meals at the Schoolhouse. Providing nourishment, comfort and many stories over a cup of coffee, to all that came to visit, eat or spend the night.

Ephesians 2:8-10 "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

Sister Ina asked for a home with Long Branch Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized on September 9, 2000. She was a faithful member until her health declined and kept her at her home.

Her Funeral was held on October 15, 2014 at Flora Funeral Home Rocky Mount, VA and her body was laid to rest at Endicott Hill Cemetery Ferrum, VA. Elder Mark Terry officiated.

Written by request of Long Branch Primitive Baptist Church and submitted in love and humbleness Sister Betty Walker.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 04/2015
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

PSALM 37:3.

Trust in the Lord, and do good; *so* shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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HYMN

How tedious and tasteless the hours,
When Jesus no longer I see;
Sweet prospects, sweet birds, and sweet flowers
Have lost all their sweetness to me:
The mid-summer sun shines but dim;
The fields strive in vain to look gay;
But when I am happy in him,
December's as pleasant as May.

His name yields the richest perfume,
And sweeter than music his voice;
His presence disperses my gloom,
And makes all within me rejoice:
I should, were he always thus nigh,
Have nothing to wish or to fear;
No mortal so happy as I,
My summer would last all the year.

Content with beholding his face,
My all to his pleasure resigned,
No changes of season or place,
Would make any change in my mind;
While blessed with a sense of his love,
A palace a toy would appear;
And prisons would palaces prove,
If Jesus would dwell with me there.

Dear Lord, if indeed I am thine,
If thou art my sun and my song,
Say, why do I languish and pine,
And why are my winters so long?
O drive these dark clouds from my sky;
Thy soul-cheering presence restore;
Or take me unto thee on high,
Where winter and clouds are no more.

Newton.

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EDITORIAL

"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse; because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." Romans 1:20:21.

Elder J. B. Farmer

There are so many questions that go around in my mind about the deep things of God that sometimes I find myself in great confusion as to what to think or to believe about those things. I wrestle with a multitude of thoughts and grow weary in my struggles. The wisdom of the world is no help, since it has been proven again and again to be untrustworthy. Logic also always comes short in helping me to understand the wonderful mysteries of God. I find that even the scriptures are of no help to me unless it has pleased the God of heaven and earth to open them and to set them in order in my mind and understanding. It is my desire that the truth should be made plain, and that the confusion and doubt should be taken away. May God give His people the understanding of the scriptures to His praise, honor and glory. And may this understanding be brought forth to the edification of His little ones.

It has long troubled my mind to know what sort of creature I am, and to know what is the difference between the child of God and the wicked man. We are taught in the scriptures that God made up vessels of honor and vessels of dishonor of one lump of clay. The question now in my mind is this: what is the difference between the two kinds of vessels? In the beginning of time, according to the scriptures, God made Adam from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul. All natural men were generated from him, and therefore they were like him in their natural makeup. We are assured that there are some few men generated from Adam that truly have been blessed to believe in and trust in the living God, but there are many that have not. In the beginning of the life of each man that comes into the world, did he know the living God? If

so, why do some cling to Him and why do some turn away? Having no confidence in the flesh, I must cast myself upon the mercies of God and beg to be shown. We have the full assurance of faith that God's word is true, even though every man in nature may be found in error.

It seems plain that the vessels of honor and the vessels of dishonor are identical in their construction – both are made of the earth and are earthy. They have been given the same breath of life, and the same natural mind to understand the things of man. And according to the scripture above and in other scriptures, they both knew the eternal power and Godhead or divinity of God in the beginning of their lives. But the one retained the knowledge of God, and the other retained it not. Through the ages, many philosophers and religiously wise men have tried to explain with carnal minds why this is so. But they have failed miserably. The overwhelming majority of them have always attributed the outcome to the so-called "free will" of man. They say that some decided to believe in God and some decided against believing in Him. But Jesus said, "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." We are taught that only the true and living God actually has free will, and that He is the One who does His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. Since the will of God is supreme, it must be that it is the Lord's will for the chosen to retain the knowledge of God and for the wicked not to retain it.

But why then did the wicked reject the knowledge of God? They gladly went through the wide gate into the broad way, which leads to destruction. They willingly began to pursue every pleasurable and fleshly lust. According to the scriptures, they glorified God not as God, neither were they thankful. They became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. They professed to be wise and became fools. And we know that it is written that, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." And we are taught that God gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts. And that God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient. Their conscience has been seared, and they have not the fear of God before their eyes. They willfully and blindly rush on toward destruction as they seek to please the fleshly desires. The light shines in darkness, but the darkness comprehended (retained) it not.

What about the children of God? Were they also found in the broad way, which leads to destruction—and would they have continued in it if it had not been for the grace of God? I am made to believe the scriptures and the experience of God's little ones prove that they were in that broad way and would also have continued in it and would have perished with the wicked, except for the mercy of God. Consider Lot when the angels of God came to destroy the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, where Lot and his family dwelt. After Lot was warned of the coming disaster, he lingered. And only by the mercy of God was Lot and his family led out by the hand of the angels and spared. But even though Lot

and his family walked in the broad way for a season, they were brought out of it and brought into the little city, which I must believe represents the kingdom of the living God. All of God's children shall be brought out of darkness into the marvelous light of God's spiritual kingdom by being born from above. It seems plain that this birth has been accomplished by the power and wisdom of God, not the will of man. Jesus, the Light of the world, came into the world that we might have life, and have it more abundantly. John wrote of Him, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." And he said, "*That* was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, but of God." So, the fact that the child of God retains the knowledge of God is not according to the so-called "free will" of man, but according to the will and foreknowledge of Almighty God. Beyond any man's control, the children of God were born of God, and were made to become the sons of God. And they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. They are blessed to cling to God in faith and in hope of eternal life until the end of their lives. They shall not be disappointed, world without end, but shall be given the crown of life – even eternal life.

If I am not deceived, the righteous ones are blessed to retain the knowledge of God by the gift of faith, by which the Holy Spirit keeps them in the way of life. But in the absence of this gift of faith, the wicked like not to retain the knowledge of God. Some may say that there is unrighteousness with God for Him to show mercy by giving faith to one and not to another. This cannot be. God may do with His own creation according to that which He pleases. According to the scriptures, the wicked are without excuse for rejecting the knowledge of God. God said through the apostle, "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will *have mercy*, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed *it*, Why has thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? *What* if God, willing to shew *his* wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?" God shows Himself to be merciful because He has shown mercy to His chosen people, who are the remnant according to the election of grace, whom He loved

and determined to save from the foundation of the world. He is not unmerciful because He left the wicked to justly perish in their sins.

The conclusion of the matter, to me, is that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. All stand guilty before the perfect law of God. There is none good, no, not one. Every man has turned to his own way and has been shown to be a justly condemned sinner. Salvation is altogether by the grace and mercy of God. Those not saved are the vessels of wrath fitted unto destruction, which were made for that end, and which liked not to retain God in their knowledge. The ones saved are the chosen vessels or the elect of God, which were afore prepared unto glory and honor, and given the gift of faith. They are those loved with an everlasting love, and whose names were written in Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." And it is written, "Let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord." All praise and honor and glory are due only to Him that is worthy. Man deserves no praise, for it is all by grace. "For by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." This great and wonderful gift of faith that God has given to His little ones justifies them and brings them through every trial and tribulation without fail. It brings them down to the end of their journeys safely and delivers them from every pitfall and danger along the way. To the end, it causes them to hope in Him and to trust in Him who gave Himself for them, that they might have eternal life. Without this faith, it is impossible to please God. Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift of His Son Jesus Christ, the Lord, and for the gift of faith by which all the little ones believe, and trust and live. The just shall live by faith.

This was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J. B. Farmer

ARTICLES

Dear Beloved ones in the Lord Jesus Christ:

May the love of God; and the sweet fellowship, of the gospel of Jesus Christ, Be the reason for my thoughts, on whatever I may be blessed to write, if anything good is to become of it, it must come from above, and not from me.

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, *even* **to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the**

book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame, *and* **everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."** Daniel 12:1-3.

And as we can surely see these things coming to pass in this day and time in leaps, and bounds, and we have read and know surely that they are upon us now. **"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come, 2nd"** Timothy 3:1. And also all of these things mentioned in the 24th Chapter of Matthew and other places in the Holy scriptures of truth that shall take place before the end. But it says to be ye not troubled, for these things must need be. But for the elects sake those days shall be shortened. And that is a great consolation to a little trembling child of God; knowing that all of these things will and must come to pass. But also knowing that if we are what we hope to be in the Lord Jesus Christ that we will not be alone for the Lord our God will see us through to the very end. Blessed be His great and holy name. It causes us to look forward to that day, when the Lord's children will be delivered from this evil world to that bright and eternal world wherein shall be blessed peace forever in that great city that is not made with hands eternal and in the heavens. Jesus said in St. John 5: & 25. **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."** And in Luke 21: vs.28. **"And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."**

The Lord's little children are often cast down in the world of sin, sorrows, and troubles, but they are not destroyed. It is only for short seasons of time. The Lord is ever with them. He does not leave them in that condition for he said that he would never leave nor forsake them. His chosen people are those that he will not forsake, for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which he hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2nd Ch. vs. 10. Those are the ones that he foreknew, in covenant love with his dear Son, Jesus Christ, even before this time world was ever made, and before the wheels of time was ever put into motion. He knew them. There are just two classes of people in this world, those who are the Lord's children, and those who are (not) his.

In the 110th Psalm, and verses 3-4, **"Thy people** *shall be* **willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou** *art* **a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."** He is prophet, priest, and king, our dear Lord, and savior, Jesus Christ. Our hope, our salvation, our savior, our all in all.

In 2nd Timothy 3:13, it reads. **"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."** The wickedness of

man is great in the world today, even as it was in the days of the old world. They were eating, drinking, marrying and giving in marriage until the flood came and destroyed them all except Noah, his wife, and his three sons, and their wives, eight soles in all according to the will of God.

We read in second Peter, 2nd Chapter, beginning in verse 4-8, **"For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast** *them* **down to hell, and delivered** *them* **into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth** *person*, **a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly. And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned** *them* **with an overthrow, making** *them* **an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; And delivered just Lot, vexed with filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed** *his* **righteous soul from day to day with** *their* **unlawful deeds;)"**

There is a big difference between the willing and the non willing or the elect and the non elect. The non elect are the ones that will cry for the rocks to fall on them to hide them from the face of the Lord Jesus Christ at His second and glorious coming. They are the ones who will be caught unawares at his second coming. **"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements will melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."** 2nd Peter 3:10. They are the ones, who are (not) looking for the second coming of Christ the King to redeem his elect from the four winds of the earth. The ones chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. They are the ones who have been given a blessed hope in the Lord Jesus Christ and are watching and waiting for his second and glorious coming to forever be with him, and be like him and be satisfied, to worship and praise their great God and king in that eternal world that shall never end.

The scripture says in Mark, 13:33 to watch and pray, for we know not when the time is. But I believe that we are living in the last days that are allotted for this earth to stand. Only the Lord knows for it is all in his power. In the resurrection of the saints, the dead in Christ shall be raised first, according to the holy scriptures of truth. And the ones who are still alive on the earth, that are his, will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, from a corruptible body to an incorruptible body, from a natural body to a spiritual body, to meet the Lord in the air, to ever be with their Lord in glory. The Lord knoweth them that are his. But the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand.

In the Psalms 111: vs. 1-5. **"Praise ye the Lord. I will praise the Lord with** *my* **whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation. The works of the Lord** *are* **great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. His work** *is* **honorable and glorious: and his**

righteousness endureth for ever. He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the Lord *is* **gracious and full of compassion. He hath given meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant."** Dear ones, I am afraid that I have written too much. Please do with this as you see fit.

In love and truth, I hope.
C. Fox

VOICES OF THE PAST

REPENTANCE

Many, La., July 19, 1874

Elder Beebe: You will confer a special favor on poor me, by explaining how it is that men in a state of nature, or rather in our fallen state, are required and commanded to repent, and still they cannot do so unless enabled by divine power. Please grant my request through the "Signs," and you will oblige one who feels that his lot is cast in an isolated place.

E. Duggan

REPLY

Much confusion, we apprehend, results from confounding the various kinds of repentance of which the scriptures speak, without discriminating between legal and gospel, natural and spiritual or that which is required of all men everywhere, (see Acts xviii. 30) and that which is the gift of God, and inseparably connected with the forgiveness of sins. The scriptural meaning of the word repent, or repentance, is to turn away from some principle, practice or thing, and embrace, pursue or practice something opposite, or in another direction. As for example, "It repented the Lord that he had made man upon the earth," which is explained in the same connection to mean, that God had determined to destroy man whom he had created from the face of the earth.— Gen. vi. 7, 8. Also Jonah iii. 10, **"And God saw their works,** (the men of Nineveh) **that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that he had said he would do unto them, and did it not."** And yet in the sense in which the word is applied to man, we are assured that **"God is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent."** — Num. xxlll. 19. In all his attributes, God is immutable, and with him there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. In the dispensations of his providential government, he forms the light and creates darkness; he makes peace and creates evil. He sends blessings and judgments, as seemeth him good.

Legal repentance, if we may be allowed thus to discriminate, is the turning away from any transgression of the law, and doing that which is lawful and right. As in the ceremonial law, Israel was commanded to **"Cease to do evil, and learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, and plead for the widow."**— Isa. i. 16, 17. **"Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one ac-**

cording to his ways, saith the Lord God. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord; wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye."— Ezek. xviii. 30-32. There was a legal repentance required of the Israelites who had transgressed the law that they were under, and sin offerings prescribed in their law by which a ceremonial atonement was made, and the delinquent Israelite was restored to the temporal blessings of peace, prosperity and security. This was commanded. But when the law in its spiritual application is applied, then sin revives and the sinner dies.

No legal repentance, no bleeding victims, no rivers of oil, nor cattle of a thousand hills, can remove from us the guilt of our transgressions, or make for us a new heart, or give us a new spirit. But the demands of the law are inexorable, and heaven and earth shall pass away, but no jot or tittle of the law shall pass away till all is fulfilled. Thus by the law is the knowledge of sin, and when convinced of sin by the law, we are made to know that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified in the sight of God. We cannot put away our sins from us; We cannot make us a new heart or a new spirit; therefore without something more than what the law can do for us, we must be held under its wrath and curse forever more. But what the law could not do for us, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. — Rom. Viii. 3, 4. Compare the demands of the law as stated, Ezek. xviii. 30-32, with what God himself has promised to do for his people, Ezek. xxxvi. 25-27. **"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes; and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people; and I will be your God."**

That repentance which is unto life, and needeth not to be repented of, as will be seen by the above written scripture, is the gift of God, wrought in the hearts of God's people by God himself, and is always inseparably connected with eternal salvation. The testimony of the Son of God himself on this subject is conclusive. **"Then opened he their** (the apostles) **understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead**

the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." — Luke xxiv. 45-47. **"Then Peter and the other apostles said, We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses of these things; and so also is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him."** — Acts v. 29-32. This evangelical, or gospel repentance, is a change from death to life, from sin to holiness, from condemnation to justification, from a legal to a gospel state. It is no where in the scriptures demanded of any man; but it is a free, gracious and saving gift, bestowed upon all the heirs of God.

The repentance preached by John the Baptist was addressed exclusively to a people prepared of God for that change which should bring them out from Judaism, to believe on him who was to come after John. If John had commanded all the Jews to repent, he would not have demanded of the Pharisees and Sadducees, who had warned them to flee from the wrath which was to come upon the Jews. It was not enough that they had Abraham to their father; for all whom John recognized as the subjects of the baptism of repentance, were such, and only such, as brought forth fruits meet for repentance.

Repentance also is a word used to signify the reclamation of any of the children of God who have erred either in faith or practice. **"If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him."** — Luke xvii. 3. Repentance here as in other cases means a change, recantation, a turning away from that wherein he has erred.

Thus, to the angels of the churches in any error it is said, "Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly," &c. — Rev. ii. 5 & 16. When Paul stood on Mars' Hill, and preached to the Athenians against their abominable idolatry, he told them that although God had in former ages of the ignorance of the Gentile world, winked at their idolatry, he now commands all men everywhere to repent; that is to desist from worshiping idols— or from ascribing to the works of their own lands such honors as belong only to the true and living God. Because he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.— Acts xvii. 30, 31. That appointed judgment day was ushered in at the resurrection and exaltation of Christ, and his inauguration into his Mediatorial glory, as the Judge of the quick and the dead. He is now seated in the throne of his glory, and before him all the nations, Jews and Gentiles, are gathered, and he is now separating them, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats, and setting his sheep on his right hand, and the goats on his left, and saying to those on his right hand, Come, ye blessed, and to those on his left, Depart,

ye cursed. — Matt. Xxv. 31-46.

Our inquiring friend, E. Duggan, will perceive that we have not, in the foregoing remarks, attempted to reply to his inquiry in the order in which he stated it, as we have been led rather to treat on the subject as the word is variously applied in the scriptures. It is not true that God has commanded all mankind to exercise or possess that repentance which is unto eternal life; for as we have proved, that saving repentance is the gift of God, the work of the Spirit, and the evidence of eternal life already in possession.

In regard to God's commanding what men have no power of themselves to perform, we hold that it is his sovereign right to do so. When Christ commanded the lame man to take up his bed and walk, and the man with a withered arm to stretch it forth, they had no power to do so, only as he gave them the power. When he commanded Lazarus to come forth from his grave, what power had Lazarus to leave his tomb except the power conveyed with the word? When God commanded Israel to advance, they had no power of themselves to divide the Red Sea, or to cause Jordan to roll back his waves. Indeed if we speak of the commands of God in his law to Israel, he commanded them to do what they had no power of themselves to perform. So when our exalted Prince and Savior calls sinners to repentance, his quickening power attends his word, and he speaks the word and it stands fast, he commands and it is done. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." The dead have no power to quicken and raise themselves, but at his command they shall come forth; for the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.

Many have seemed to regard the word repentance as only meaning sorrow or regret for something done, but Esau was sorry, and deeply regretted that he had sold his birthright, but could not recede from the contract; he could find no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears. He could be sorry, but he could not repent. Those who were pricked in their hearts on the day of Pentecost were greatly alarmed, and cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" But they had not repented, or withdrawn from their connection with Judaism, by baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus; therefore they were commanded to repent. The terrors of death and hell may fill the natural mind of men with remorse and sorrow for their sins, but only the love of God can lead to evangelical repentance. The sorrow of the world worketh death; but godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of. — 2 Cor. vii. 10.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, September 15, 1874.)

PSALM 112: 1.

Praise ye the Lord. Blessed *is* **the man** *that* **feareth the Lord,** *that* **delighteth greatly in his commandments.**

THE NEW BIRTH
by
THE LATE
ELDER GILBERT BEEBE

"Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." — John 3:7.

At the conclusion of our article on "Regeneration" in Number 17 of the current volume, we proposed to give a more full expression in a subsequent number, on the subject of the New Birth. This we have felt inclined to do in order to correct the impression entertained by some of our readers that we have changed our views on this vitally important subject.

The very emphatic manner of our Lord's declaration to Nicodemus forbids the thought that any one of all the race of Adam can ever see the kingdom of God except he be qualified for such perfection by a spiritual birth. Our natural birth capacitates us only for a knowledge of natural things, but cannot qualify us for an understanding of things beyond the sphere of nature. If it were possible for the natural faculties and perceptive power of a natural man to be so improved by education, moral, intellectual or religious culture, as to enable him to see the kingdom of God, or comprehend, receive or know the things of the Spirit of God, our Lord would not have thus positively declared its utter impossibility. Nor would the Holy Ghost, by the inspired apostle, have corroborated the testimony, as in I Cor. 2:14: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." By a natural man we understand is intended a man that is born of the flesh, or an earthly man, possessing all the natural elements and properties of a man. Adam, both before and after his transgression, was a natural man. The qualifying adjective is used in a scriptural sense to distinguish a man who is made of the dust of the ground, and inspired with vitality and intelligence, from a spiritual man who is born of the Spirit. The distinction between the natural man and the spiritual is fully set forth in the two distinct headships, from whom the two distinct natures are derived. These two distinct progenitive heads are called, as such, the first and the second Adam, the one of the earth earthy, the other is the Lord from the heaven. The first was made a living soul, the second Adam is a quickening Spirit. From the first or natural Adam emanates all our natural or earthly being; from the second Adam emanates all that spiritual, holy, heavenly and eternal life in which we are manifested as the sons or children of God. As our natural life, or natural man, or nature, descended from the earthly Adam, by natural generation, was developed by a natural birth wherein we were born of the flesh, even so our spiritual, eternal life is developed and brought into manifestation by a spiritual birth. That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. As we were totally ignorant and unconscious of all that was transpiring in this world in the development of the things of nature until we were born of the

flesh, so that it could in truth be said of us, except we were born of the flesh we could not see or know the things of nature, so it is most positively declared of all who are born of the flesh that "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." If without a natural birth we could not come into this world nor see the things of this world, must it not follow that a birth of the Spirit is an indispensable perquisite to capacitate us to either see or know the things of the kingdom which is purely a spiritual kingdom, which flesh and blood cannot inherit. Then, let us not marvel that Jesus has said, "Ye must be born again." As neither spiritual life or spiritual capacity can be born of the flesh, so neither can natural life and natural capacity be born of the Spirit. No amount of spiritual gifts can change, enlarge or perpetuate our natural man, or shield the earthly man from hunger, thirst, disease or death: neither can any development of our natural powers, either physical or mental, contribute in the smallest degree to our spiritual life, perception or enjoyment. That nature in the Christian which is born of the flesh must, as well after the new birth as before, subsist on the productions of the same earth out of which our mortal bodies were fashioned, and that spiritual life or nature which is born of God must subsist on bread that cometh down from heaven, from whence that life proceeded. If spiritual consolations would sustain our earthly nature, Stephen would not have died in the full and rapturous view of the opened heavens, and of his exalted Savior; and if earthly comforts could sustain our spiritual nature, no child of God would ever despond while abounding in wealth and luxury. In contemplating the gospel doctrine of the new and spiritual birth we should not confound the birth either with redemption or remission of sins. As transgressors of the divine law we could not possibly be saved from sin and wrath without redemption, but even redemption by the blood of Christ, and the forgiveness of all our sins, would not supply the place of being born again. Redemption has met the demands of eternal justice, borne the pains and penalties which are due to our transgressions and so secured for us the remission of our sins. All this was accomplished for us, if we are interested in it, many centuries ago, but still, until we were born again we could not see the kingdom of God, or feel the joys of his salvation, or know anything about the things of the Spirit of God. If it were even possible for us to put away from us all our transgressions and perfectly obey the holy law of God, that would free us from condemnation, but could by no means make us any more spiritual than we were in Adam before sin entered into the world. For we are expressly informed that the first Adam was not spiritual, but natural; but the second Adam is spiritual. It is true if we were not sinners we could not leave this present world, for the sting of death is sin; we could not be sinners if we were not subjects of God's government, for sin is a transgression of the law, and where there is no law there can be no transgression. Hence we are told, "The strength of sin is the law." Nothing short of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus

could deliver us from the power or strength of sin but a power fully equal to that sin, and that must be equal to the law which is the strength of sin, therefore if we are saved we may well exclaim in the inspired language of the apostle, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Redemption has removed the insuperable impediment which forbade our exemption from everlasting wrath, abolished death, opened the everlasting doors which were closed upon us, and bade the everlasting gates of life and immortality be lifted up, and thus wrought immortality to light through the gospel. All this belongs to our redemption, but to qualify the redeemed of the Lord to come to the heavenly Jerusalem, and see the kingdom of God, and to behold the King in his beauty, and feel the power of the resurrection of the Son of God, and to enter into his resurrection life and immortality, we must be born again. The question has been repeatedly asked and urged, What is it that must be born again. We would not dare attempt to improve on the words of our Lord: "Except a man be born again." The man that has been born of the flesh and is flesh cannot see the kingdom of God except he be born again: this necessary, not to make him a man, nor to change him from a man to an angel, but to bestow on him a new spiritual, immortal and eternal life, which he never before had, and which he could never have without being born of the Spirit, as he had been before born of the flesh. That man who was chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and consequently before he was manifestly the subject of any birth, before he was born either of the flesh or of the Spirit. We think it will not be disputed by any intelligent Christian that all the children of God were personally elected or chosen of God in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, according to Ephesians 1:4. If this be admitted, it must follow that they all had a personal identity and existence as members of the mystical body of Christ before Adam's dust was fashioned to a man, and therefore prior to their first or second birth. The developments of time have demonstrated to us that it was the purpose of God that every one of his elect should, in the fullness of the dispensation of time, be born first of the flesh, and then be born again of the Spirit. Both of these births were ordained and provided for by the wisdom and decree of God, not to give them being or identity, for these they had in Christ before the world began. By the first birth they were to be developed in their earthly and fleshly nature in common with the whole natural posterity of the earthly Adam. This first birth was necessary, that they might see and know the things of nature, for except they were born of the flesh they could never have known the things of the flesh. "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" In the stupendous mystery of the hidden counsel and purpose of God this fleshly birth and identification of God's elect with the family of mankind was indispensable to the development of the great eternal purpose which God had purposed in himself before the world began, that in the

first Adam they should all die, and in Christ they should all be made alive. If we admit that God has saved us and called us according to his purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, then we cannot consistently deny that the purpose and grace provided for our being born of the flesh, and identified with all the rest of Adam's posterity, and with them sink into death by the transgression of Adam, and be quickened from the dead, and raised up from condemnation and wrath, be washed, cleansed and purified, and freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Whether brethren can agree with us, that the absolute purpose and immutable decree of God embraced our fallen state and condition, as well as our salvation from sin, death and hell, through his dear Son, or whether they regard our fallen condition as an afterthought, occasioned by some unavoidable failure of his purpose, if it be admitted that our redemption from sin and death was predestinated, we must also and unavoidably (we think) admit the indispensable necessity for the fleshly birth of all the children of God which were from everlasting identified and personally chosen unto salvation in our Lord Jesus Christ. By our natural birth then we enter into and become a part of this world, are capacitated to see it and to sojourn in it until like an hireling we shall have fulfilled our allotted number of days; but our first, or fleshly birth, while it capacitates us for a knowledge of the things of nature, can supply us with no capacity for anything beyond bounds of this world, and hence the necessity that we should be born again in order that we may see the kingdom of God and know the things of the Spirit of God. In being born again, then, this man, who was chosen of God in Christ before the foundation of the world, and born of the flesh since the foundation of the world, must, at some period still later than his fleshly birth, be born again, or he cannot see the kingdom of God; must be born of water and of the Spirit, or he cannot inherit the kingdom of God. As our first or natural birth belongs to and results from natural generation, so our being born again belongs to and results from regeneration. The seminal life of all the posterity of Adam was created in him, in the day when they were created. So the spiritual eternal life of the generation of our Lord Jesus Christ was given and secured to all the children of God in Christ when he was given to be the head over all things to his church. The words of our Lord which we have placed at the head of this article were addressed to one who was already born of the flesh, and they are applicable to such only as are born of the flesh. A birth can only develop, or bring forth into manifestation, the same nature of which it is generated and born. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh ; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The first birth brings forth that life, flesh and nature in which we were created in the earthly Adam, but the second birth brings forth into manifestation that life, spirit and immortality which was given to us in Christ Jesus, as the second Adam, and the Lord from heaven.

Having thus briefly considered the subject doctrinally, we will now offer some remarks on the personal experience of this birth by the children of God, and point out some of the prominent evidences by which we know that we have experienced it, if indeed we are of that happy number. These evidences are discovered by comparing and contrasting the state, condition, capacities, elements and exercises of those who are, with those of them who are not born again; as also by the peculiar exercises produced by the birth, while under the quickening operation of the Spirit in our passage from death unto life. First. Before we were born again we were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein we walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, among whom we all had our conversation, in the lusts of the flesh, and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath even as others. (Eph. 2 :1-3.) In the full possession of all the elements of a carnal, depraved and sinning nature, and totally destitute of any spiritual life or knowledge. The carnal mind, which was all the mind we had, was enmity against God, our selfish depraved propensities, with every imagination of our hearts, were evil, and only evil continually. Possessing at the same time exalted views of our own imaginary virtues, and of our ability to commend ourselves to the favor of God, and to secure for ourselves an inheritance of glory by our own works. Held under chains of darkness and strong delusion, believing lies, and sporting with our own deceivings.

Every ray of divine truth shut out from our mind totally incapable of receiving, appreciating or even desiring a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus; hating that truth, and hating all who love or contend for it. Condemned already, and the wrath of God abiding on us, yet boasting of our goodness, and holding that God was obliged in justice to view things as we viewed them, and to save us on such terms as we proposed. In love with sin, at enmity against holiness, at war with heaven, and in league with hell, calling light darkness, and darkness light; truth error, and error truth; and altogether ignorant of our real condition. In this wretched state we all were by nature, and nothing belonging to or emanating from our earthly birth could by any possibility comprehend or know the condition we were in. By the new birth a new life is implanted in us, and that life is light. The nature of that light is to make manifest the things which by the power of darkness had been concealed from us before. Quickened by Christ, the second Adam, w h o is a quickening Spirit, we are made to see and feel our sinfulness, and our lost and helpless condition. We are alarmed that we are much worse than we had ever before supposed. The law enters, and sin revives, the purity as well as the inflexible severity of the divine law appears, and the same light which reveals this also shows us the enormity of our guilt, the justice of our condemnation and the impossibility of salvation by the law. All our boasted abilities to save ourselves are withered and vain. Lost, helpless and

despairing our legal hopes yield up the ghost. The commandment came, sin revived, and I died. The incorruptible seed by the word of God is deposited in our heart, and all that is felt of conviction and despair are but the legitimate consequence. The light of life now begotten in us reveals a holy God, a righteous law, and a poor guilt-stricken, helpless and despairing sinner justly sinking into everlasting perdition. All this is, however, the effect of life. All this is a struggling for deliverance. As the birth into liberty draws near the conflict becomes the more intense. "God be merciful to me a sinner," is now uttered in the most terrible earnestness, as quivering under the unsheathed flaming sword, which justice has raised to strike the derisive blow, when lo, the birth reveals the almighty Savior, who has died for our offenses and arisen for our justification. The fiery sword was quenched in his blood. Surely he has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. Lo, now the guilt is all removed, the terror is gone, the darkness vanquished by bursting light and refulgent glory. God's method of saving sinners now appears, and the sinner is born again. This is the birth, and that which is born is spirit. It is not flesh. It is born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Being begotten and born of God, it manifests not only a new life, but a new relationship. The life which is manifested by this birth is not a revision of our Adamic life, but it is the life of the Father, by whom it is begotten and it is the vitality of that which is born, hence in this new and heavenly birth we are made partakers of the divine nature. Christ who is our life, is formed in us, and his sonship, his heirship, his inheritance of glory and immortality is born in us, and we are one with him, even as he is one with the Father. From this heaven-born spirit flows all the fruits of the Spirit, which testify that we are born of God. As we have shown what are the works of the flesh which characterize the fleshly birth, so the new and heavenly birth is demonstrated by all the fruits of the Spirit of Christ which is given to us. Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, temperance, brotherly kindness, charity, &c., are some of the living fruits of this heaven-born child, this new man, which after God (not after Adam) is created in righteousness and trill' holiness. Now in the man who is born again, two natures appear. The one is born of the flesh, and is flesh, full of lust, and in opposition to holiness, warring against the Spirit, and constantly performing the works of the flesh, as described by Paul, Galatians 5:19, 20. The other is born of God, and yields the fruits of the Spirit, as described above. A conflict between the old man and the new, between that which is born of the Spirit, a love for holiness and hatred of sin, a love to God and loathing of self, a love for the truth and aversion to error, a love to the saints and desire to be in company and communion with them, an appreciation of the beauty of the ordinances of Christ, baptism and the Lord's Supper, a veneration for the order and laws of the kingdom of Christ, and a

desire to walk in them, with a deep sense of our own unworthiness, an ardent desire for the peace of Jerusalem and prosperity of the church of God, with a relish for the doctrine of the gospel, and willingness to suffer reproach for defending it, these are all of them scriptural, and therefore reliable evidences that those who possess them are born of God, and heirs of immortal glory, and joint-heirs with Christ to an inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that cannot fade away. As our earthly nature which is born of the flesh is depraved and sinful, nothing pure and heavenly can proceed from it, and so that life which is born of God is pure and heavenly, no evil can proceed from it. It cannot sin, because it is born of God. The conclusion is inevitable, that all that is unholy and sinful in us is of the flesh which is born of the flesh, and all that is spiritual, pure and heavenly in us is born of God, born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. No man can therefore glory in the flesh, for in our flesh dwelleth no good thing. He that glorieth must glory in the Lord, in that which God hath done for us. Every spiritual emotion, aspiration or thought, is of that spirit which is born of the Spirit, by which we are qualified to see the kingdom of God.

"Then give all the glory to his holy name,
To him all the glory belongs;
Be ours the high theme, still to sound forth his fame,
And crown him in each of our songs."

Middletown, N. Y.,
October 15, 1868.

THE MOTE VS THE BEAM

"And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye. (Luke 6:41-42)

The above has been on my mind of late, and, if the Lord will direct my train of thought, and guide my hand, I hope to write some of my views on the subject.

First, I call attention to the five senses of the human body: The seeing; the hearing; the taste; the smelling; and the touch or feeling. Without life in the human body, none of these senses function. If we have been born again, that is, born of the Spirit, we possess the spiritual senses. Without these we cannot see the kingdom of God.

In my endeavor to present my thoughts, it is not my intention to reflect on any person. First, The question is asked, "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye?" There has to be a mote in, I will say, my eye in order for my brother to behold it. The mote in my eye represents my faults, my sins, my imperfections. But why should my brother see the mote that is in my eye. If he had an eye single to the glory

of God, would he be looking for, or trying to find fault in his brother? Or would he not be looking over his brother for good, and not for evil?

We will note that the brother who wants to pull the mote out of his brother's eye, has a beam in his own which prevents him from seeing clearly how to pull the mote out of his brother's eye. The brother with the beam has a much worse problem than the brother with the mote. To illustrate: I remember when I was but a small child, my mother used to card cotton for the spinning wheel, and for quilting. And, as she would place the cotton on the cards, she would find motes in the cotton; and she would have to remove them in order for the card to work properly, and for the cotton to turn out a perfect roll or bat, whichever was desired. Now the mote is very small, but has a bad effect. A beam is a much larger object, and can do a lot more damage than the mote. However small the mote it has its effect, and represents sin. And when one of the Lord's people is brought to a knowledge of the truth as it is in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the mote (sin) in the flesh causes anguish of soul, and great fear. Deep sorrow overwhelms the heart and soul. This is the way the Lord brings his little ones to repentance. With this knowledge, the child of God feels his or her condemnation is just, but it makes them cry out to God for mercy.

Now the brother who has a beam in his eye which obstructs his vision, is disqualified to pull the mote out of his brother's eye, for he cannot see clearly. In other words, he is at least partly blind; and if the blind lead the blind, shall they not both fall into the ditch? Then there is another thought that comes into my mind concerning the beam. Those who are experienced in carpentry know something about the beam (a strong piece of wood or iron) set into a wall of a building over a large door or opening. It has to meet certain specifications in size and length, to have the proper strength to support that part of the wall that it is to rest thereon.

Now I know this is only a natural illustration, but have we not sometimes seen some come into the church, or fold of God, who, when they have been in the church only a little while, begin to try to dictate to the church, or set out to run the business of the church; when it seems he needs to do some house cleaning at home. Oh, my brethren, if it is pleasing in the sight of God, may he bless us to love and pray for each other, forgiving one another's short comings. If we love one another, even as Christ our blessed Saviour has loved us, we will not be found trying to pull the mote out of our brother's eye, but will be concerned about our own greater sins and faults.

Oh, Lord our God, our heavenly Father, make us to see and to know ourselves; make us to love each other, and to watch over each other in love.

Love covers a multitude of sins. Brethren, we may say we love the brethren; and, if we do love them, may we show our love and our faith by our works: works produced by faith; the faith of Son of God which maketh not ashamed.

Yours in hope,
(Elder) W. B. Barnes
R. F. D. 1,
Stantonsburg, N. C.
July, 1961

Sanford, Maine
September 17, 1854

Dear Brother Beebe: — I have felt a strong impression to write to you for nearly two years, and at times have even resolved that I would. But something has prevented until the present time. I am apparently just on the brink of the grave. I still feel a desire to write some of my feelings. When quite young I had very many serious thoughts on the subject of death. I could not enjoy the company of my playmates, and I thought myself a strange being. I often read in my little books about good children who always did right, and died very happy, and were carried to heaven. I sometimes tried to live perfect, but alas! I could not. When about twelve years old, I was so distressed in my mind that I thought myself the most unhappy being on earth. I began to ask myself, what is the matter, why cannot I enjoy life as well as others? The answer was, because I know I must die, is there no remedy! All must die, yet all are not so miserable as I am. Some think nothing about it. Would I could forget it. But there is a class of people that have a remedy for this fear. I thought that I could be a Christian! I used often to have the privilege of hearing Christians talk, and I loved them, and loved to hear them. I heard one say that none but a regenerate soul ever has such feelings as he had just spoken of. They had been my own feelings and I was astonished, but at length concluded I was an exception. I saw the vanity of all earthly things, and I felt no evidence that I had any title to heavenly things. When about twenty five years old I was alone one day weeping over my sad condition, when suddenly I felt a perfect resignation to the will of God. I felt such love to God and his people that I longed to see some of them to unbosom my feelings. I did unbosom my feelings with my God and Savior. And for a few weeks, I enjoyed a calm peaceful state of mind which nothing in this world can afford. The subject of baptism was presented to mind but as there was no stir in the church, I had not courage to go forward. About two years afterwards there was a number added to the church, and I was baptized by Elder Wm. Quint, and united with the Old School Baptist church in North Berwick. I never was so powerfully wrought upon as some, but I desire to thank God that I have any hope, and I sometimes feel as if that hope was sufficient for a dying hour. Brethren and sisters who read this, my desire is for your peace and prosperity, and that we may meet where the inhabitants shall no more say I am sick, and enter into that rest which remaineth for the children of God, and go no more out forever.

Your unworthy sister,
Mary C. Chadbourn

MEETINGS

LOWER MAYO 5TH SUNDAY MEETING

The next 5th Sunday Meeting will be held, The Lord Willing, Sunday, May 31, 2015. Haynes Creek Church will Host the meeting. The Meeting House is located at 3995 Rosebud Rd., Loganville, GA 30052. From I-85, Exit on GA 20 South. Go through Lawrenceville to outskirts of Grayson. Turn right on Rosebud Rd. When Rosebud Rd. crosses Hwy. 78 continue for 1.5 miles to church on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to meet with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

SKEWARKEY UNION (EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION)

Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of May 31, 2015. The church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albemarle Avenue in Tarboro, NC. Preaching services begin at 10:30 am.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union meeting will be held at Canaan Primitive Baptist Church located on Mount Cross Road, Route 844, in Pittsylvania County, VA on Saturday before the 5th Sunday in May. Singing will begin at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30.

We invite our correspondents and visitors to the meeting.

Elder Mark Terry, Moderator
Fred Murphy, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

Sunday, May 31, 2015

Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church will host the next West Country Line 5th Sunday meeting on Sunday, May 31, 2015. Singing will begin at 10:00 AM and preaching at 10:30 AM.

The Church is located at 150 Pleasantville Church Road, Madison, N.C. From Reidsville, N.C. take NC65 west through Wentworth, N.C. Stay straight on NC704 for 2 to 3 miles to Pleasantville Church Road on the right. From Madison, N.C. take NC704 and travel 6 to 7 miles to Pleasantville Church Road on the left.

We welcome all lovers of the truth, who are given a mind to do so, to be with us.

Elder Haywood Wray, Moderator
Mary Hawkins, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 2015

Estate of Agnes Reid Pickral, NC	2000.00
Livie Thompson, VA	5.00
Dan Delp, VA	10.00
Phil and Joyce Pittman, TX	25.00
Elder Barnabas Brammer, PA	5.00
Edward Ambrose, VA	5.00
Marilyn Shaw, VA	5.00
Bernard Cox, VA	5.00
Tim Barron, LA	15.00
Ardith Harris, FL	100.00

OBITUARIES

MARION N. MEEKS

Marion N. Meeks, 84 of 168 Lovelace Road, Pelham, N.C. passed away on Thursday November 6, 2014 at Hospice of Rockingham County.

With much sadness in my heart I attempt to write this obituary. Brother Meeks was my friend also we were brothers in the church. Brother Meeks and I traveled many miles together going to churches in North Carolina and Virginia. He is one that will be missed. He was a member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. He asked for a church home on October 24, 1971. He was received into full fellowship of the church.

He was born in Rockingham County on March 22, 1930 to the late Numa Meeks and Lelia Price Meeks. He was a loving husband, father and Grandfather. Along with his parents he was preceded in death by his Children, Ronald and Mark Meeks. Siblings, Lynn Meeks, Rodger Meeks, Gary Meeks, Donald Meeks, Cornelia Meeks, Martha Foster and Gloria Bray.

He is survived by his loving wife of 63 years, Madelean Meeks of the home. They had their anniversary October 27, 2014. He is survived by his son Joe Meeks and wife Ginger of Ringgold, Virginia, his daughter Carolyn Meeks of Pelham, his daughters-in-laws, Sylvia Meeks of Madison, N.C. and Sanora Meeks of Pelham. Six grandchildren, eight great grandchildren. Brothers Raymond Meeks of Newport News, Virginia and Charles Meeks of Eden, N.C., sister Nellie Strader of Pelham, N.C. and numerous nieces and nephews.

We feel that our loss will be his eternal gain. His funeral was conducted at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on Sunday November 9, 2014 at 3 p.m with Elder Thomas Solomon and Mr. Avery Marshall officiating. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Written By
R. Allen Carroll

OBITUARY OF BROTHER WILLIAM MIDKIFF

The Lord willing I will try to write a few words in memory of our dear Brother Deacon, William Lester Midkiff, Sr. It pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst Brother Midkiff on June 14, 2014 at the age of 88.

Brother Midkiff was born September 25, 1925 the son of the late James W. Midkiff, Sr. and Hester Robertson Midkiff. He was married to Mildred Moorefield Midkiff who survives.

He was predeceased by a son, Bill Midkiff; five brothers, Jessie, Charlie, Haywood, Howard and James and four sisters, Pansy Joyce, Essie Shelton, Alma Hall and Fannie Gibson. He is survived by his daughter, Janet Hall; grandson, Josh Midkiff and wife, Jennine and granddaughter Julie Hall.

Brother Midkiff united with Union Primitive Baptist Church and served as deacon until the church closed on October 3, 2010 and he moved his membership to Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church where he served as deacon until his death. He loved his family and his church.

His funeral was held at 2:00 p.m. on June 17, 2014 at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by his pastor, Elder Raymond Goad and Elder Marvin Brumfield. His body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Gretna Burial Park to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will be greatly missed at Weatherford Church, but most of all by his wife, Millie and family. May all that mourn be reconciled to God's Holy Will and be blest to say "Thy will be done".

Written by: Pam Betterton

Elder Raymond Goad - Moderator
Elder Marvin Brumfield - Assistant Moderator
Pam Betterton - Clerk

February 20, 2015

I feel unworthy to attempt to write the obituary of Sister Agnes Reid "Reidy" Pickral. She was the daughter of the late John Thomas Pickral and Maude Yeatts Pickral. Sister Reidy was born May 6th, 1924 in Gretna, VA. She lived many years in Richmond, VA. Sister Reidy passed away January 27, 2015 at Transitions of Life Care Center in Raleigh, NC. Sister Reidy was predeceased by a sister Virginia P. Berger. She is survived by a nephew John Berger and his wife Donna of Raleigh, NC, a grandnephew Michael Berger, a grandniece Jennifer Ball and her husband Andrew, and three great grand nephews.

Sister Reidy worked for the State of Virginia for forty years. Working first in the Highway department and the last 33 years for the office of Attorney General of Virginia. She enjoyed making quilts, cooking and baseball, especially the New York Yankees.

Sister Reidy was a faithful member of Springfield Baptist Church. She was received by Experience and Baptism April 13, 1968. Sister Reidy supported her church in so many ways but she never wanted any praise.

She drove many miles to hear the gospel and to fellowship with her brethren and sisters.

Graveside services were conducted at 11 am Friday January 30th, 2015 at the Gretna Burial Park by her pastor Elder Marvin Brumfield. Sister Reidy will be sadly missed by all who knew and loved her. May the Lord Bless us all to be reconciled to his will.

Written in love and hope,
Sister Carol R. Lansaw
Elder Marvin Brumfield, Moderator
Oscar Pickral, Clerk

IN MEMORY OF SISTER META SIMPSON DALTON SHELTON

It pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst Sister Meta Simpson Dalton Shelton on March 7, 2014 at the age of 95.

Sister Shelton was born September 29, 1918 the daughter of the late Morgan Simpson and Minerva Goad Simpson. She was twice married, first to the late Brother Clay Dalton and then to the late Brother Robert B. Shelton. She was also predeceased by a brother Joel Simpson and five sisters, Edna Yeatts, Agatha Simpson, Velma Moore, Carrie Myers and Annie George.

Sister Shelton is survived by one daughter, Jeanette Hughes and husband, John of Hephzibah, GA; one son, Morris Dalton and wife, Carolyn of Gretna, one sister, Vonnie Custer of Gretna; three grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Sister Shelton asked for a home with the church on July 24, 1949 and was baptized on August 28, 1949, always filling her seat as long as her health permitted.

Funeral services were conducted at 11:00 A.M. on March 11,2014 at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder Raymond Goad. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

May all that mourn her be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father who does all things well and never makes a mistake.

Written by Pam Betterton

Elder Raymond Goad - Moderator
Elder Marvin Brumfield - Assistant Moderator
Pam Betterton - Clerk

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 05/2015
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

Jerusalem, my happy home,
Oh, how I long for thee!
When will my sorrows have an end?
Thy joys, when shall I see?

Thy walls are all of precious stone,
Most glorious to behold;
Thy gates are richly set with pearl,
Thy streets are paved with gold.

Why should I shrink at pain and wo,
Or feel at death dismay,
With Canaan's goodly land in view,
And realms of endless day?

Reach down, O Lord, thine arm of grace,
And cause me to ascend
Where congregations ne'er break up,
And Sabbaths never end.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the Sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise,
Than when we first begun.

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EDITORIAL

"I am the good shepherd, and know my *sheep* and am known of mine." John 10:14.

Elder J. B. Farmer

When one in a carnal mind attempts to describe the life's journey of the child of God, the pilgrim's efforts and choices are always emphasized, rather than the saving grace and watch-care of the One that constantly delivers him from all danger and harm. It is my desire, the Lord willing, to be blessed with a spiritual mind in order to write down something of the true experience of God's elect, manifesting God's goodness and mercy, and giving Him all praise, honor and glory, which is His due.

The sheep is the best example I know, of any creature according to its nature, that depicts the life and needs of a child of God. And the sheep has been referred to many times in the scriptures for that very purpose. I desire to set down a few observations of the way a shepherd and his sheep get along.

It is almost defenseless against its predators, and is in constant need of watch-care by the shepherd. If left by itself it would soon perish – if not by a ravenous beast, then surely by hunger and thirst, or by disease. So, it is necessary to have a wise and strong shepherd in order for the weak and dependent sheep to prosper and survive.

The sheep is a very special creature indeed. It has many characteristics similar to those of a person. It is basically gregarious, and does not do well when isolated. It does best when surrounded by the flock. Nevertheless, it does sometimes wander off by itself. It is capable of love, trust, fear, anger, and even presumption. These attributes are quite noticeable upon pondering their day-to-day activities.

Little lambs are helpless when they are born, and totally depend upon their mothers for all their needs. After they grow a little, and notice others of their own age, their main desire and greatest pleasure is to romp and play with them.

Sheep naturally fear strangers. They will not approach anyone they do not know. And if a stranger should call to them, they will ignore the call, and if they

feel threatened will run the other way. But the shepherd has been proven to be harmless to the sheep, and has earned their trust over time. Because they trust him, they will follow him. Jesus said, **"And when he** (the shepherd) **putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers."**

When a sheep is subdued, it gives up without a fight. Its only recourse is for the shepherd to come and rescue it. Many hireling shepherds allow the sheep under their charge to be separated from the flock and to be destroyed. But the Watchful Shepherd never permits even one of His own to be ultimately lost, because He has the power and wisdom to keep it. And above all, He loves it more than His own life.

Sheep come in several colors such as brown, black or white, or some combination of these colors. But many goats are colored much like sheep. So, a sheep can never be differentiated from a goat strictly on the basis of its color. Other features or characteristics must be taken into account to discern a sheep.

A sheep may become irritated and show it by butting, but never by biting. It may injure a person or another animal, but it does not set out to destroy. They may vent their anger, or seek to prove their dominance, but they do not rip and tear. Even though they sometimes get rambunctious, the wise shepherd knows just how to humble each one.

At a very young age the sheep know nothing of the shepherd, but after they mature a little they begin to notice him. Being constantly with him, the sheep learn to trust his kind presence and tender mercies. They begin to know his gentle voice and respond to its sound. When being thoroughly examined for, and cured of, any parasites, skin diseases, or cuts and abrasions, they learn not to fear his touch. And when he carefully shears from them their dirty, hot and heavy wool, how refreshing it is to be relieved of this burden in its season. When needful, they are gently tapped to keep them traveling in the narrow way.

The sheep actually learn to love the shepherd – because he first loved them. They watch for him, and listen for his voice, and do not shun his touch, for they have been taught from long experience that the shepherd only seeks their good. The sheep follow him, wherever he leads. They know not the way to the good pasture or to the still waters. But the shepherd knows the way, and they trust him to bring them there and to keep them safe at all times.

The sheep are named, and the shepherd knows exactly how many are in his flock. If one wanders off, the shepherd, without fail, goes to find it and brings it home again. And the shepherd puts his sheep up at night in a secure fold, away from all harm and danger. The shepherd is the door of the sheepfold. And if an enemy of the sheep should leap over the wall in order to tear and destroy, the shepherd will promptly drive it away or kill it. All the sheep are kept secure under his protective care.

While considering the ways of a good shepherd with his flock, and the nature of the sheep, it has caused me to remember some details of my own travels. It is my hope and trust that you will also be given to see yourself in some of these things. I desire, if it is the Lord's will, to be blessed to set down a brief narrative of the life and experience of a sheep from its birth to death --particularly one that is loved by a gentle shepherd.

The lamb is born into the world knowing nothing except to hunger, to cry for help, and to trust its mother. It looks to her for all its needs. But it knows nothing of the shepherd, who keeps it and also keeps its mother. It begins to see the wonderful world with all its enticements and pleasures. And little by little it launches out in wider and wider circles from its mother. It finds other little lambs with which to run, jump, bump, and climb upon any high place. It sees no danger or harm, even when it climbs very high or bumps its playmate much too hard. The other suffers, but the offender goes on, not feeling any pain. It bounces along looking for another one to crash into, or for another rock pile to climb.

The lamb grows and becomes stronger, and no longer depends upon its mother. Now, it eats solid food and has no desire for milk. At this time, it knows not the need of the shepherd, although it does recognize his voice. It presumes that it can fend for itself. While greedily looking toward the ground for more and better feed, it gradually wanders farther and farther away from the safety of the flock. Then slowly, almost imperceptibly, night settles in. The young sheep finally realizes it is completely alone. There are no more familiar sounds of the bleating sheep, or of the kind shepherd's voice. Now, silence, darkness and fear begin to reign. The shepherd is unseen, but is already on the way to reclaim his sheep.

Then unfamiliar sounds begin to reach the ears of the little lost sheep. They are those of the vicious and pitiless wolves. At first they are distant howls on the wind. After a time, low muffled growls are heard growing closer. Fear fully sets in, and the terrified sheep runs swiftly away as fast and as far as its strength will take it. But the wolves quickly close in. The little sheep finds itself surrounded by the snarling wolves with teeth bared as they move in for the kill (much like our sins, when they find us out). Death and fearful destruction seems to be certain to the young sheep.

As the wolves attack and begin to tear, the helpless young sheep cries out in deepest distress. Then it hears the voice of the seeking shepherd calling its name. What a wonderful sound. Hope springs up, and the strong shepherd directly appears, and he is mighty to save. He quickly dispatches the cowardly but destructive wolves with the rod in his powerful hand, and carefully takes the little injured sheep in his arms. The shepherd gently carries it back to the sheepfold where the other sheep are safely kept. He patiently and lovingly cleanses it and binds up its wounds. He

watches over it and nourishes it with every needful thing until it becomes strong again.

After this life changing experience, the wounded little sheep has a newfound love and trust for the shepherd. Its desire now is to be constantly near him and to hear his comforting voice and to feel his loving touch. The recovered sheep is now content to follow the shepherd, and is careful to abide peaceably within the flock. If any sheep should push or shove another, the wise shepherd quickly and quietly settles any disturbance in the flock. The trusting sheep now keeps an eye and an ear continuously toward the shepherd, and considers its safe place in the flock.

The Good Shepherd cares for the sheep all the days of its life, even down to old age. In its final days, when the sheep is too weak to keep up with the flock, the Shepherd picks it up and carries it like a lamb in his bosom. And its journey through the wilderness peacefully ends there as it began -- under the watch-care and tender love of the Good Shepherd. And during its whole life, even when unaware -- underneath were the everlasting arms. Jesus said, **"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any** *man* **pluck them out of my hand."**

This was written in love, I trust, and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

My parents Bryant and Annie Lee Paschal were members of New Hope Primitive Baptist Church in Reidsville, N.C.

Respected in their community, they were to me the best parents in the world, and loved their friends and neighbors. I truly loved and miss them both so much. We enjoyed and looked forward to receiving the Signs of the Times each month. Thanks to each one that works so hard to get it out each month. Thanks again to our heavenly father for all he's done for us.

Living in hopes to be one of God's chosen,

Eunice P. Soyars

3-3-15

Dear Bro. Tony,

Please renew our subcription to the Signs for two more years. In this present day and times when attendance and membership in the Old Baptist churches is declining, word from our brethren and sisters in a far country is more precious. I believe this is one means whereby God brings some comfort to believe of sovereign grace.

A payment of twenty-five dollars is enclosed.

I hope it is God's will that you can continue to publish this periodical.

Yours in Christ, we hope
Rhonda and Max Nichols

3-31-15

Dear Elder Robertson,

Sorry I am so late in renewing my subscription. You have graciously continued to send me copies of which I greatly appreciate.

I was sick for a long time but am well
And of my great God and King I would love to tell
I was five years of age when God first came to me
A small child I was filled with terror when God first came to me

From that day to this I have always known there was a God
There is nothing new and nothing old with my God
He is the same God today as in the days of old
His word still stands today as in the day of old

What He set to be will come to pass
He was the first and He will be the last
The fiery furnace will burn out the need for man
God's word is the only word that will ever stand

Many years ago I set out to have my way
Thank God He saw fit to change my way
I was struck down at a very young age
This world became a strange place at a very young age

Try as I would I could not fit in
The depths of hell soon became a familiar place to me
God is patient, true, loving and kind
He is the Creator of all mankind

For everything there is a season and a time
With my God there is no time
The bible became my only book
From my sickness out of man's school I was took
At thirteen years old I was flat on my back
Many times throughout my life I was flat on my back

I always knew who to beg to
All my life and I still know who to beg to
I am not ashamed to own my Lord
For all my help has come from my Lord

When he speaks it is done
In that one thought it was already done
Tho age has come I am but a child
In life's rushing tide I am but a child

God drew the universe without a pen
Tho life may take one door He will always win
When God is in it man is out
The whale could not fold Jonah and he threw him out

God owns the day and He owns the night
He is the way the Truth and the Light
When all seems wrong and nothing seems right
He is the captain of our ship and our guiding light

When one is stripped down to their soul
Only God can dry the tears that roll
Paul said look one another over for good
If the truth be told only God is our good

Thank God His amazing grace is free
Thank God for all His mercies He has bestowed on me
When one becomes weak God becomes strong
A child is helpless but God is strong

In God's Heaven all His children are the same
The book of life was sealed and He knows them by name

May I someday reach that Heavenly shore
When troubles and trials shall be no more
May I be blessed to never forget
To my God I am heavily in debt

Thank my God his son paid the price
He gave His life and paid the price
It just don't matter what man will say
Only God can bring the coming day

The Truth will stand when his world's on fire
God never sleeps nor slumbers nor does He tire
He will come on eagles wings one sweet day
Come blessed of my Father He will say

Man will say as they do today
I've done all this and that like they do today
God is the only good His will ever know
He is the only true love His will ever know

If God don't wed there is no marriage
For man made words do not make a marriage
God's elect are His bride
He is the Husband and His children are His bride

I've said what I've said and I am what I am
By the grace of almighty God I am what I am
God made man from the dust of the earth
Beside Him there is none in Heaven nor earth

Tarry with me oh my Savior
Be my all and all my only Savior
And when my eyes do close in death
May I just make it home when I breathe my last breath

This world has never been my home
God showed me early everything is just a loan
May God grant us all peace and love
May the road we travel be paved with His love

God lives in the heart and this is true
God searcheth the heart and this is true
God knows the desires of the heart and this is true
When one can't pray God makes a way and this is true

God said man will fall and this is true
God said He was the cornerstone and this is true
God said my sheep hear my voice and this is true
God said a stranger they will not follow and this is true

God said a house divided against itself will not stand
Time and time again it's been proven it cannot stand
God is the preacher and the only preacher
God is the teacher and the only teacher

Oh ye of little faith He said to one
God will add to the church daily as He sees fit
Man can never stop what He sees fit
God is the only rightful judge and I knew I was not fit

I wrestled with God for over a month
Told Him I would not join for over a month

I was ridiculed for telling my experience
God knows all I have is my experience

I may never reach my Heavenly home
But at least I know there is a Heavenly home
At least I know my God is my all and all
He has picked me up more times than I can recall

No one needed to tell me I was not fit
I already knew I was not fit
When God speaks it will stand
He does not adhere to any man

The falling away has come to pass
God is still the first and He will be the last
To wait on God is a lesson learned
To suffer disobedience is a lesson learned

God is the potter and we are the clay
The Potter has all power over the clay
Oil and water simply will not mix
It's a situation only God can fix

So I'll close and may God bless you
May your blessings be many and your troubles be few
For to our God all praises are due
Every breathe we breathe belongs to God and this is true

Somewhere there is a home of pure delight
Somewhere there is a home where God is the only light
For above His beautiful blue sky
A blissful home on high in the sweet bye and bye.

Janet Taylor

VOICES OF THE PAST

JONAH'S QUALIFICATIONS

R.F.D.2,
Elon College, N.C.

My Dear and Precious Ones in Christ Jesus:

Before Jonah was prepared to preach salvation is of the Lord, and that deliverance can come from none other, Jonah had first to learn this for himself; he must have it :first-handed. It seems there must be something to be delivered from, or there will be no need of deliverance. We must first be made partakers of the sufferings of Christ before we can hope to be made to enter into the comfort, joy, and sweet assurance of deliverance, and to know whom we have believed, and be made willing to pay that which we have vowed, that, Salvation is of the Lord.

The true servant of God can't preach with power and conviction of soul, some thing he has not first been made partaker of. When he knows of Jonah's hell, and what it is to be carried down to the bottom of the mountains where the floods compassed him about, and the billows and waves passed over him; and, like David, brought to his wits end, then, and not before, can he pay his vow unto the Lord, and before His people, that Salvation is of the Lord.

"Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah, the son of Amitti, saying,

Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me." Instead of acquiescing and obeying the word of the Lord, Jonah, like the Lord, must learn obedience by the things he suffered. (Hebrews 5:8) Jonah couldn't preach deliverance from hell and destruction to the Ninevites without first knowing something of the power of God, and that nothing was to baffle the will of God; and that he holds the winds in the hollow of his fist, and that his sovereign power extends to the winds, the billows of the seas, the great fish, and that all things else are at his command, and He does his will in heaven above, and the earth below, and in all deep places.

When Jonah said, "I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed, Salvation is of the Lord," the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land. Jonah was now prepared to preach that salvation (deliverance) is of the Lord. He was now qualified in the school of God's grace to preach the kind of preaching God prepared Jonah to preach to the Ninevites. And, under the power of Jonah's preaching, the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth (mourning) from the greatest of them to the least of them. Even the king laid aside his robe and sat in ashes (mourning) . This old king seemed to manifest a trustful fear before God, for he said, "Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?"

Nineveh was a great city; God knew how large the city was, and how many persons therein (six score thousand), that could not discern between their right hand and their left hand. The king and the people were brought down in mourning. Jonah's preaching, under the convicting power of God's Spirit, had caused this people to turn from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that he said that he would do to them, and did it not.

God's people have been declared to be the salt of the earth by their God. The apostle tells us that God is not slack concerning his promises, as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. His second coming is no less sure today than then; and God's good will and purpose to wait to gather in his last precious jewel, is no less certain and sure.

From reading of how Jonah was displeased, and seemed disappointed that God had spared Nineveh, he seemed to overlook that everything is in the hand of God; and that God is God at all times and in all places; and that in providence we may not understand his doings. But that His will is done, and must be done, we have no question. He raised up the gourd for a shadow over Jonah's head, to shield him in time of grief; and God said to Jonah, "Dost thou well to be angry for the gourd?" Jonah had pity on the gourd, but was displeased that God should spare Nineveh.

This matter was in my heart this morning, and I lay in my bed and wept at the merciful providence of our Eternal

King, and at the tender, and loving, and compassionate hand of our precious Redeemer and Friend forever.

With love to all the household of faith.

In sweet hope,
Elder J. W. Gilliam

THE LAST WRITING OF ELDER S. L. MORAN

I want to relate some of the things I have seen in mercy; and this is one of them.

I was living at the place where I first bought land, and there were no Baptists living near me, except two sisters. My wife's father lived close by, but he had no use for the doctrine the Old Baptists contended for; so I was there between two walls, and felt that someone would buy the farm which was on the other side of me.

I was attending Pine Forest Church, and on coming home one Sunday evening, as I turned in at my gate, my father-in-law came into my mind with great force, along with the desire that he could believe just what I did; and with this feeling there came forcibly the words, "He will believe". These words sank within me. I went into the house and asked my wife, "What would you think if your father believed like we do?" She said, "If there is anything impossible, that is. "And I replied, "There isn't anything impossible with God; and if he doesn't believe, I have no hope."

Time went on, but it wasn't long until he went to Laurel Creek Church. His habit was to sit near the door, and if anything was said that he didn't like, he would go outside. This time he came halfway down the aisle. I was on the stand, and, of course, he came into my mind. When preaching began, I could tell he was hearing, for tears were flowing freely. Words cannot tell my feelings at the time. He went home with his cousin, and told her that he had been going to meeting all his life, and was 60 years old, and had just heard his first sermon.

There had been a stand built where Mountain View Church now stands, where they met for worship. When the invitation was given, he came and asked for a home with the people whose doctrine he had thought wouldn't stand the test. He was received into the fellowship of the church; and I haven't seen anyone more established in the faith. He would relate things that were wonderful, which gives me great assurance that what I had seen was not my imagination.

I would like to mention also W. E. Eanes buying the farm adjoining me. I was sorry when he came; and I told my wife that I wished that some Old Baptist had bought it. Once, as I was passing his house, he stopped me, and said, "Why don't you come to see me?" I told him that it wasn't any farther over the hill to my house, for him to come see me; and he said he would soon.

In a few days, as I went out to work, a scripture came into my mind with force: "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand, for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they

both shall be alike good." This was continually with me during the morning. At 12 o'clock I said to my wife that I thought I would go over to Mr. Lawrence's, as he wasn't expected to live. I started to go, and as I had to pass near Will Eanes' home, I thought as he had asked me to visit him, I would go by. Then the thought came, "You will have an argument if you do." And I turned to go away. Then another thought, "I can keep quiet about religion." So I went to the house.

He said that he was glad I had come; and all the time that scripture was on my mind, and I could not think of any thing else to talk about. So I said to him, "Will, we work together. I know we don't believe alike, and I don't want an argument. I will make you a proposition: I am going to tell you a few things that I have been made to believe, and when I am through, you can talk all you want to, and I will not disturb you."

I began talking and as soon as I began, I felt the power of the Gospel, if I know anything about it. I saw that he was receiving every word I said; and when I was through, he came to me in tears, and said that people might think this foolish, but I know it is the truth. I then said to him, "Now tell me what you want to."

He said, "A wonderful change has taken place in my heart. When I asked you to visit me, it was not just asking, I felt if you would come, you could take a burden off of me; and you have come, and have done just that. You don't know how glad I am, and pleased, that we can believe alike, for I thought there was no one like me." I told him that I could baptize him on what he had told me. He said, "You know how my people believe: they have no use for Old Baptists. I have to look to them to do my work, and I don't guess I can ever join the church." And I replied, "I will not persuade you to join the Baptist Church."

I went back home, and told my wife that I had a good meeting, and we had one of God's humble poor to live by, for he gave me a good reason of a hope. I want to say that I have been taught something in these things that no man can teach. I can say in truth, as the prophet, "Oh Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Not long after this I was taken ill, and he came to see me; and when I had to go to the hospital, he came to the car and said that he hoped I would come back. And I said that if the Lord had any more use for me, I would be back; and if not, I am as ready as I will ever be.

The Lord willing, I will try to give a few more hints of some things I feel He has shown me: In a vision or dream I had in the year 1908, as near as I can remember, I went to bed feeling as well as usual, and that night I saw two women standing over me; and they were dressed in white, with white caps on their heads. I had never seen anyone dressed like that, since I had never been to a hospital at that time. They laid a cloth over my mouth, and it seemed to take my breath, for I felt it going out; and I heard a noise, saying, "All right." And I awoke; and behold, it was a dream. I told my companion I had seen something that I guessed meant my death. I was shown it meant something to me.

I went on thinking about it for sometime, and then it left my mind. But one morning as I went out to work, a deathly pain struck me in my stomach, and the dream come back forcibly to my mind. We went to the house and told my wife I was sick, and that the dream I had had eight years ago is going to take place. The end of this was that I was taken to the hospital, and the next morning to the operating room; and there were the two nurses I had seen eight years ago. They placed a cloth over my face, as I had had in my dream. I knew it was the same, for it had the same effect on me; and when they thought they had me asleep, the doctor said, "All right". It was the same voice I had heard in my dream.

What I saw in this was the merciful hand of God on a poor old sinner. When I got home, this neighbor came, and said, "I want to go to your next meeting, and if you will have me, to join your church. It makes no difference what my people say or think." He came, and was received; and later ordained a deacon of Mountain View Church. If I am a judge of a deacon, he was a God called servant and served until his death, which was about twenty-five years. His memory lingers with me in love.

These things may not be worth anything to those who read this, but it has been strength to me: to behold the merciful hand of God in his love and kindness to an undeserving sinner. I feel that He has been so merciful to my unworthiness, and has not remembered my sins against me. If he had, I would have long since fallen by the wayside. I have had a desire to write this for publication when I am gone.

Elder S. L. Moran
Check, Virginia
(January 19, 1959)

DEATH IN ADAM — LIFE IN CHRIST

Dear Brother Beebe:

A brother Parker, in Indiana, wrote me some time ago for my views upon the text, **"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. 15:22)** I neglected replying with his request until now. I send a discourse delivered upon that subject in the Old School Baptist chapel in Lebanon, Ohio, on the second Sunday in May, 1894, which you may publish if you think proper.

My mind seems to rest upon this portion of the inspired word: and I shall endeavor, as God may give me ability, to speak words of comfort to the brokenhearted, a word in season to him that is weary, and point out springs of water to them that are thirsty, and rivers of milk and honey to them that are hungry. May the children all have ears this morning to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

This passage of the written word has been relied upon by false teachers to prove their vain imaginings and unholy speculations concerning the salvation of men. The Arminian ignorantly resorts to this quotation to hide the gross-

ness of his schemes and give some face to his free-will absurdities; but when his Universalist brother puts in his claim for it, to bolster up his plan. The Arminian is forced to yield the ground to his more logical claimant, who, as the strong man armed, keeps his goods in peace until a stronger than he comes. This occurs when one who is skilled in the word of righteousness, whose understanding has been opened to understand the Scriptures, takes it in the light of the testimony of the Spirit, and presents it in its true relation to all other Scripture, to the faith, experience and knowledge of those who have been taught of God. It is then clearly seen that it is stolen goods in the hands of all those teaching a conditional system of salvation, and will not fit their scheme.

"As in Adam all die." I shall first briefly discuss the word "all", for upon this word mainly rests the perversion of this text, as well as that of many other portions of the Scriptures. This little word has been made to shoulder very weighty responsibilities. Many an elaborate discourse, many a zealous sermon, many a stirring exhortation, has been delivered solely at its expence. We have often heard men who have more zeal than knowledge, whose fanaticism out weighs their thoughts, and with whom logic is at a discount, and any conclusions at a premium, in their bursts of enthusiasm and blind rage against the truth, assert in the most self conceited triumph that, a-l-l never spells part. They consider this a knock-down argument against unconditional, personal election, that fundamental principle of all Bible truth. They deem this foolish, meaningless assertion sufficient proof against the doctrine of particular redemption, special calling and final preservation, and hold it as an elenchus of the doctrine of offered mercy, offered love and offered salvation; but such puerile, empty, sweeping assertions can never be taken as argument by a mind that is accustomed in the least to think on these things. All does frequently and almost without exception spell part. A-l-l men in Ohio are but a part of the men in the United States; all the men in the United States are but a part of the population of the American continent; all christians are only a part of the people of the world. It is clearly seen that while this word always means all of something, it invariably means at the same time, a part of something. I have thus briefly spoken of the word "all" in a general way; let us now make the application to it in this test.

"As in Adam all die." In regard to the all that die in Adam, there are but two positions possible: first, that all the human family die in him; and second, that all the saints of God die in him. So far as the fact of dying in Adam is concerned, the first proposition is true -- all the human family die in him; and if the first be true, then the second is necessarily true, for the Saints are a part of the family of Adam, and what is true of the whole, is true of every part of the whole. Now, to arrive at the truth of what is taught here, it remains only to determine which of these positions is embraced in the text. The Apostle has under consideration here, the resurrection

of the just, and their final deliverance from this bondage of death. He is treating of the resurrection of the Saints in their order. He modifies the expression, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," in the next sentence by saying, "Every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." Here he stops short: not a word said about any one except Christ and them that are his. This clearly sets a limit to the word "all'. As all that are Christ's die in Adam, so all that are Christ's shall be made alive in Him. But suppose that all does mean all the human family, which is true as a fact, but not necessarily true from this text, this argues nothing for the Arminian or Universalist, as there is none made alive in Christ but them that are His. As in Adam, all that are in Adam die, even so in Christ, shall all who are in Him be made alive. Even then if the first "all" does mean the whole human family, there is nothing in the wording of the text which teaches that the same "all" who die in Adam, are made alive in Christ. This must be proved, if it can be, from some other source.

The death of the saints in Adam, is their inheritance from him. By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death hath passed upon all men, for all have sinned. The dissolution of this mortality is only the consumation of that death which hath already passed upon us. We are not simply under the sentence of death, waiting the execution, but death itself hath already passed upon us in reality. There is no power of will, no moral reform, no religious conjuring, no medical skill, that can deliver us from this death. Death reigns absolute, so far as his subjects are concerned; and his dominion is a broad one. The whole human family, the lower animals and vegetable kingdom, are territories where none disputes his sway or disturb his reign. There is no one so noble as to escape the common lot, none so ignoble as to be slighted, none so rich as to buy a reprieve, none so poor as not to be worth the taking ; but all are swept away struggling, shuddering, resisting, pleading, by the merciless hand of death.

"The glories of our mortal state
Are shadows, not substantial things.
There is no armor against Death;
He lays his icy hand on kings.
Sceptre and crown
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

"Some men with swords may reap the field,
And plant fresh laurels where they kill;
But their strong nerves at length must yield—
They tame one another still.
Early or late
They stoop to fate,
And must give up their murmuring breath
When they, pale captives, creep to death

"The garlands wither on your brow;
Then boast no more your mighty deeds,
Upon Death's purple altar now
See how the victor-victim bleeds!
All heads must come To the cold tomb:
Only the actions of Christ the just
Smell sweet and blossom from the dust."

Death seems to be a necessity both in nature and in grace. Not that God was under necessity to so arrange, but that it seemed good in His sight to have it so. Its all prevading, irrestable, irrepressible reign throughout all countries, all ages and all departments of nature is enough to start the question in the thoughtful mind. Does not death serve some great economy in God's universe? Is it a mere interloper that God would not have here? Is it not a provision of His own wisdom for carrying out His own design in creation?

Death is a necessity in the vegetable kingdom; for "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (John 12:24) This is a specific statement, setting forth the principle of reproduction in the vegetable world. Everything that lives is an evidence that something died. The giant oak, adorning the majectic forest, is a living monument that marks an acorn's grave; and the inscription read in every leaf and written in every bough is, "An acorn died." Every speck of grass that gems the lawn, every flower that brightens and perfumes the garden, every crimson laden tree of the orchard, proclaims that something died.

The holy Apostle, in treating upon the resurrection of the dead, brought to his argument this universal fact of nature. "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." The Saviour, in speaking of the necessity of His own death, and the glory that should follow; used the same fact as an illustration in the words, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." Death precedes quickening in the vegetable kingdom, and is essential to it. This same mysterious principle in a deeper and more hidden manner extends into the animal kingdom, and even reaches the kingdom of grace. The Saviour opened the door and gave us a glimpse of this mysterious chamber when He said, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." (John 12:24) He applied the universal principle of reproduction in the vegetable kingdom to himself. He here gives us to understand that the process of reproduction exemplified in plant life was in some way wrapped up in him; and the principles of His death and our redemption by His blood are in some way illustrated by the death and quickening of a grain of wheat. Now this same saying may with propriety and truthfulness be transferred to Adam, for he is the figure of Christ. Except Adam had died, he would have abided alone, and the world would never have been peopled through him. Adam begat no children until death passed upon him in the sentence, "Dying thou shalt die." This is strange indeed; but what is not strange when properly thought upon? Its being strange is no evidence against its truthfulness. Truth is always stranger than fiction sure enough. The process cannot be explained, the reason cannot be given, yet it is true. We are warranted in carrying this fact into the animal kingdom by a strictly scientific basis. The principle of reproduction, growth and repair, is found alone in vegetable life; it does not belong to the order of animal life. The dif-

ference between the tree and the animal is not that the animal does not possess vegetable life, but that the tree does not possess animal life.

The order of vegetable life endows the animal with the power of reproduction. When a bone is broken, it is the power of vegetable life that causes it to knit together again; and the same principle heals the wound that is made in the flesh or muscles of the body, and causes the hair to grow again when cut or plucked out, and the finger nails to grow again when trimmed. Animal life endows its possessor with the power of locomotion and instinct; but without vegetable life, there would be no reproduction growth and repair. Then, so far as the reproduction of his kind is concerned, it is found alone in the order of vegetable life, which is mysteriously combined with animal life, to make up an animal organism, or a human personality. Hence the same principle of death and quickening which is essential to plant reproduction lies deeply hidden in the fact and process of all animal procreation; hence it was necessary that Adam should die. It should be noticed again that death is not simply the dissolution of this mortality, but that this dissolution is but the consumation of that death which has been at work in our members from the time of our birth.

Now, the saints of God in their mortal state, in their natural personality, were created in the earthly Adam; and when death passed upon him, it passed upon them. They are the production of a body of death; consequently they must die. This death, with all its attendant circumstances, its prodigious economy in all nature, cannot possibly be the accident of a day, the result of the mistake of free-will, or anything of that kind. This would be the blindest fatalism, the sternest doctrine of chance. Death plays too stupendous a part in all the affairs of this world, both in the physical and moral spheres, and shines too bright in the everlasting covenant, to be a mere interloper in God's universe. Faith looks upon it as a provision of infinite wisdom, a gracious providence, ordained by the Creator to fulfill His own eternal purpose, both in providence and in grace. The whole process of Christian experience is a struggle between life and death, sin and holiness, corruption and incorruption and the whole summing up of Christian hope is that we shall one day be delivered from this bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

"Even so in Christ shall all be made alive."The "all" referred to here, are clearly they that are Christ's, the whole election of grace. The resurrection of the saints as here brought to view, is in Christ. This resurrection is but the triumphant consummation of something long gone before. It is the harvest of grace, sown in Christ before the foundation of the world. It is "the divine far-off event to which the whole creation moves." Death in Adam and life in Christ is the fundamental idea of the New Testament Scriptures, the golden text of the gospel of grace, the masterkey to christian experience. In treating upon the same theme, the same inspired writer has recorded, "As by the disobedience of one

man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."Men are made righteous by the obedience of Christ, upon exactly the same conditions upon which they were made sinners by the disobedience of Adam.

Adam's sin and disobedience reached us by virtue of our vital relationship to him. Upon no other condition could we possibly have been made sinners by his disobedience. If we had not been in him, virtually in him, of the same life with him, then this disoedience would not, could not, have reached us at all. Upon exactly the same condition the obedience of Jesus reaches His people and makes them righteousness. When the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, He took upon Himself the seed of Abraham, the election of grace. They were made members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones in His incarnation, by virtue of the grace and life that were given them in Him, according as they were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before God in love. He was the ark of God's covenant and when he struggled with temptations; when he suffered for sins; when he died upon the cross. when He descended into Hell, they were safely housed in him, and brought safely through it all. They paid tithes in Him, became dead to the law by His body, reconciled to God by Him. By virtue of this oneness of life, this vital relation to Him, His perfect obedience, His suffering and triumphant resurrection, are all accounted unto them, and reaches them most effectually, and shall make them all righteous.

As to the certainty of the Saints all being made alive, is just as certain as their death in Adam. Who can question the certainty of death? Is it not this certainty that strikes terror to the heart of all living? Are there any conditions between us and death upon which death can be brought or stayed? There is no way of escape. According to the inspired record of eternal truth, there is no reason to doubt the certainty of life in Christ. In as much as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. The one is just as certain as the other. Jesus himself said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me. And this is the father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

It is not the will of our heavenly Father that any of these little ones who fall asleep in Christ shall perish. All our sins have been put away by Him, and He has redeemed us unto God by his blood. By the one offering He hath perfected us forever. We are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God; and when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall appear with Him in glory. He hath loved us with an everlasting love; He hath chosen us to salvation; He hath appointed us to glory; He hath ordained us to eternal life; He hath predestinated us to be conformed to the image of His Son; He hath laid down His life for us; we are reconciled to God by His blood; we are washed, sanctified, justified, in the name

of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. Our destiny is indissolubly linked with the destiny of Jesus. How can this incomprehensible work of grace fail? Faith embraces it all, and rests in this finished work of our Redeemer, and looks forward with joy and gladness to the final consumation of it all. The resurrection of the dead is the crowning result of the work of Christ and God's purpose of salvation. Then shall be brought to pass the saying, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?" "I will redeem them from death, I will ransom them from the power of the grave." Death will be swallowd up in victory.

May God give us grace to trust Him, and to walk humbly before Him, and in patience and hope await the great day of our final, eternal deliverance.

Elder H. M. Curry
June 20, 1894

II CORINTHIANS 2:14-16.

Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:

To the one *we are* **the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who** *is* **sufficient for these things?**

THE CHURCH OF GOD, WHAT IS IT?

How indefinite and vague is the popular idea of the church of the Living God; and how various are the applications of the word church in the parlance of the learned and unlearned theologians of the present times. A building erected for the convenience and accommodation of religious convocations, by almost universal consent, is called a church; and by that name, with great ceremony, is frequently consecrated, and with much parade given to the Lord! A church made of wood, or of bricks and morter, so consecrated is by many regarded as a most holy place. Others with scarcely less absurdity apply the term to all religious organizations; as the Catholic church, the Methodist, Presbyterian. Episcopalian, or Mormon church: and these with very many other religious bodies are very generally regarded as churches of God, but of different denominations, alike entitled to be known as churches of God, and all in their different ways, real worshipers of God, and alike acceptable to him. But the Scriptures of truth can only recognize the church of God, as one body, having but one head, built upon one rock, by but one builder. The inspired apostle Paul says. "There is one body, and one spirit; even as ye are called in one hope of your calling: one Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Will this apostolic description of the church of God apply to all the discordant and conflicting organizations which claim the

name, but deny all the essential characteristics which divine inspiration has shown to be indispensable to the church of God? Do all these towering piles of brick, or lumber which men call churches, stand vitally united to Christ as their hid? Have all the various denominations alluded to above, kept the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace? Have they all but one Lord, one faith, and one baptism? Are they all one body, having but one spirit; and do they all even profess to be called in one hope of their calling? They certainly do not.

If then these great popular denominations, when weighed in the balance, are found wanting, and when tried by the Scriptures are rejected; does it not become us, who profess to be Old School, or Primitive Baptists, most carefully to examine, in the light of divine revelation whether we possess the marks by which the holy Scriptures identify the church of God?

When the rising Savior brought the immortality of his church to light; when he had vanquished death and finished transgression, made an end of sin, having obtained eternal redemption for all his members; he ascended up on high; went to his Father and our Father, to receive the kingdom which the Father had appointed him, and his coronation as King of Righteousness and Priest to the Most High God; he was raised up far above all principalities and powers; and all thrones and dominions were made subject to him; and he was given to be Head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. In evidence of all this He sent the Spirit down, as he had told his disciples he would, which came like a rushing mighty wind, immersing all who, obedient to his command, were in the house, and recognizing them as the only body vitalized by his Spirit and baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. On this occasion the church appeared in the first disclosure of her gospel organization; and was expressly recognized as the church, unto which God continued to add such as should be saved. The constituents of the church of Christ are, first, Our Lord Jesus Christ himself, as the Head, the King and only and blessed Potentate, the Prophet and Priest, the Way, the Truth and the Life. In whom is vested exclusively all legislative power. Second, the Apostles of the Lamb, seated, by the special command of Christ, on twelve thrones of judgment, not of legislation, immediately inspired by the Holy Ghost to rule in Judgment, as infallible expounders of the laws, ordinances, doctrine and order of their Sovereign. Next to the apostles, are Evangelists, and pastors and teachers. These are solemnly required to recognize, and be governed by the laws of Christ the King, as laid down and expounded by the enthroned apostles; with express instructions to be governed by the laws and institutions of Christ, without presuming under any circumstance to alter, revise, add to or diminish from the decisions made and recorded by the apostles. Deacons, exhorters, helps and every gift as found in the apostolic rules, are to be recognized precisely as it has pleased God to distribute them among the members of Christ's body for the

profit and benefit of all the church.

All the members which the church has power to recognize, must come in by the door; all who would climb up some other way, are thieves and robbers, who come in only to steal, to kill and to destroy.

As all the laws of the church of Christ are immutable and irrevocable, the same rule which was observed at the day of Pentecost for admitting to fellowship are in force throughout all ages in Christ's church; and any community claiming to be his church that does not recognize them is an harlot and not the church of God. This declaration may seem uncharitable; but let those who fear God beware how they controvert it.

We hold, first, that Christ has no church in earth or heaven over which he does not positively preside. Second, there is no church existing over which Christ presides except where his apostles rule in judgment. For he himself has said, When the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory; (his Meditorial throne is the throne of his glory) then shall ye also set upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. We know that the apostles are not here now in the flesh, nor is the Savior now here in the flesh; for hence forth know we them no more in the flesh. But all their doctrine, order and decisions are here in every church or branch of the church where Christ presides as the King; for Christ has farther said that whosoever rejects his apostles rejects him also. They cannot be separated in the organization of his kingdom or church.

Now then, Let the laws of Christ, embracing all the doctrine which he established, as settled forever by the decisions of the holy apostles, as left on record in the New Testament, be regarded as the infallible standard or test by which the church of Christ is identified, and, it must follow that all who are deficient in these essential and indispensable points are weighed in the balance and found wanting. This cannot be the case with the church of Christ; for she is the Ground and Pillar of the Truth. She is the perfection of beauty. She is the workmanship of God, and all his work is perfect. It therefore follows inevitably that all who profess to be the church of Christ, and reject him, his apostles, his doctrine, his ordinances, or his government, are base imposters.

In view of these well-defined principles, let us look well to the order established by the apostles, for the reception of members to church fellowship and membership. Of those who were received on and about the day of Pentecost it is written, that the Spirit was poured out in a most astonishing manner, in fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, by virtue of which many heard the preaching of the apostles, so that they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Thus quickened by the Spirit and made to feel and know their lost and helpless condition, their minds were directed to the apostles for instruction, and when the way of life and salvation was opened to their understanding, and the word applied to them by the Holy Ghost, they gladly received the word. A wonder-

ful change was wrought in them; insomuch that the word which had no attraction, and of the spirit and power of which they had always been so profoundly ignorant before, now seemed to them as apples of gold, in pictures of silver: as words of life, peace and comfort to their hearts. The apostles' doctrine which so recently they could ridicule and reject with scorn, was more to be desired than all the glories of the world. Without reluctance now, they gladly received the word. It was perfectly adapted to their renewed state; for now being born again of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, they desired the sincere milk of the word, that they might grow thereby. Hitherto they had despised and hated the apostles and their doctrine; but now by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit which God had poured upon them, they not only received, but gladly received the word, and according to the word as preached to them by the apostles they were baptized, and added to the church. That is, they were brought manifestly into the fellowship of the apostles, and the apostolic church. And they continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine; having gladly received it, they continued to be perfectly satisfied with it. The record given that they continued steadfast in the apostle's doctrine, implies that they encountered opposition; which they certainly did, for it was a time of severe persecution. But so deeply were they rooted and grounded in the truth, that neither the bitterness of cruel persecution, nor the specious allurements of new doctrines zealously promulgated by Judaizing, or other teachers, could shake their confidence in the apostles' doctrine. The apostles' doctrine and the apostles' fellowship are so joined together that they cannot be separated. If steadfast in the one we are equally so in both. But if we depart from the one, we cease to enjoy the other. In departing from the apostles' doctrine, we may secure the fellowship of the world, or of anti-Christ; but we cannot depart from their instruction, and still retain their fellowship.

Thus, quickened by the Holy Ghost, recipients of the doctrine of the apostles, baptized on profession of faith in obedience to the command of Christ, fully recognizing Christ as the Head over all things to his church, and the apostles as divinely authorized and qualified exponents of all the laws, order, ordinances and doctrine of his kingdom, we have described the Old School, or Primitive Baptist Church, built upon the foundation of the apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone. And being thus steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, they will be steadfast also in prayers and in breaking of bread; and they may confidently expect the Lord will add to them such as shall be saved. How very different in all respects is the church of the First Born, from those humanly constructed religious organizations which have become so numerous and diversified in these times. However much they may differ from each other in some characteristic peculiarities, they are all alike in adopting the spirit of the proposition of the "Seven women, who shall take hold of one man, saying, we will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy

name, to take away our reproach." Isa. iv. 1. They dislike to be called anti-Christian, or false churches, as that would be too humiliating: but to live on every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, by no means suits their taste. They have no relish for the apostles' doctrine, nor do they desire their fellowship; they desire rather to make a figure in the world, and be at liberty to believe whatever doctrine they please; conform to such rites and ceremonies as they please; get religion when they lease, of whatever kind or quality they please; keep it as long as they please, and lay it aside or exchange it when they please. Such churches as they presumptuously call themselves churches, are fond of receiving such members as will find themselves, having self-righteousness enough to live upon and only desiring to have a name to live while they are dead. For them the apostles' doctrine is quite too stale; it is behind the age of progression in which we live; it is too slow, it waits for God to add to his church such as shall be saved; while their plan is to add themselves such as shall not be saved; or such as give no evidence that they shall be saved.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, March 15, 1866.)

ROMANS 8:27.

And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

MEETINGS

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, August 29 & 30, 2015. These dates have been changed from September 26 & 27, 2015.

New Hope Church, located at Spearsville, Louisiana will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
318-778-4217

PSALM 36:7-8.

How excellent *is* thy loving-kindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 06/2015 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 2015

Charles Taylor, NC	50.00
Edna Graves, AL	5.00
Dale Richards, TX	25.00
Mary Janney, VA	5.00
Mamie Ferguson, VA	5.00
Connie Franco, TX	5.00
Ted McDaniel, VA	100.00
Charlie Fox, AR	10.00

OBITUARIES

BILLY J. HOLE

Billy J. Hole 1933-2015. On March 28th, 2015, my husband of 59 years, passed from this life into that peaceful rest. He was in his favorite chair, at home and surrounded by his family. It has been a sweet consulation to have observed him so peaceful in his last hours. The day before he passed I was sitting by his side, holding his hand and the most beautiful smile came over his face. I believe that is when he accepted death and saw something far better than this life of trials and tribulations.

Two weeks before he passed I was shown a vision in which appeared to me a picture of two outstretched hands holding a lamb. I felt the Lord was telling me that he would be called from this life soon. Bill enjoyed attending the many churches and associations over the years but he was never given to place his name for membership. I do feel his name was recorded in the Lamb's book of life from and before the foundation of this world. That was his Hope.

Over our life together we were blessed to travel many miles to churches in GA., S.C., N.C., and VA. We met many people and made many friends. Some have passed on and some remain. I have received many phone calls and cards and I appreciate each and every one of them.

Billy is survived by his wife, Arlene, two children, Jonathan and his wife Colleen, Jennifer and her husband, Jimmy, three grand children, two step grandchildren and 5 step great grandchildren, one sister Barbara H. Neal, one brother-in law U. T. and wife Carla, one sister-in-law Garnett H. Moore.

A beautiful funeral service was held at the Burlington Rich and Thompson Funeral Chapel on March 31st, with Elders Cleo Robertson and Harold Pittman officiating. Interment was in the Snow Creek Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery at Lawsonville, N.C., with Elder Luray Smith presiding.

Arlene M. Hole
4/10/2015

BRYANT "POO" ODELL PASCHAL

Brother Bryant "Poo" Odell Paschal, 91, passed away on May 20, 2014, at Hospice Home of Rockingham County.

A funeral service was held at 3:00 PM on Saturday, May 24, 2014, at New Hope Primitive Baptist Church with Elder William Knight officiating. Interment followed in New Hope Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery.

Brother Paschal was born on October 7, 1922, in Rockingham County to the late Eddie D. and Mattie Tate Paschal. He married Annie Lee Williams on November 11, 1939 in Danville. He was a lifelong resident of Rockingham County and a member of New Hope Primitive Baptist Church. He was a farmer all of his life and later in the 1990's he worked for Harris-Teeter. He loved farming and gardening and also his many friends from church. He was a very loving husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather.

Along with his parents, Brother Paschal was preceded in death by his brothers, Allie, Elwood, Stover and Clyde Paschal, his sister, Jettie Sutton and his son-in-law, Donald W. Soyars.

Survivors include his wife, Annie Lee Paschal; daughter, Eunice Paschal Soyars; grandchildren, Randy W. Soyars and wife Carla and Karen S. Garretson and husband Denzil, great granddaughter, Kayla N. Soyars and numerous nieces and nephews.

By New Hope Primitive Baptist Church.

ANNIE LEE WILLIAMS PASCHAL

Sister Annie Lee Williams Paschal, passed away on December 19, 2014, at home.

A funeral service held at 2:00 PM on Monday, December 22, 2014, at New Hope Primitive Baptist Church with Elder David Minter officiating. Interment followed in New Hope Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery.

Sister Paschal was born on March 11, 1922, in Rockingham County to the late Joseph Jefferson and Annie Elizabeth Thacker Williams. She married Bryant Odell Paschal on November 11, 1939 in Danville. She was a lifelong resident of Rockingham County and a member of New Hope Primitive Baptist Church. She enjoyed farming and gardening. She really loved to quilt and loved her cats very much. She was an excellent cook and shared her cooking with her friends and church family. She was a very gracious and loving wife, mother, grandmother and great grandmother.

Along with her parents, Sister Paschal was preceded in death by her husband, her brothers, George, Walter and Joseph Williams, her sister, Louise Williams Knowles, a nephew, Lonnie and her son-in-law, Donald W. Soyars.

Survivors include her daughter, Eunice Paschal Soyars; grandchildren, Randy W. Soyars and wife Carla and Karen S. Garretson and husband Denzil; great granddaughter, Kayla N. Soyars and numerous nieces and nephews.

By New Hope Primitive Baptist Church.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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HYMN

MATT. 6:28-30.

Behold the lilies, how they grow
They toil not, neither do they spin
Yet Solomon could never show
Such raiment as God clothes them in.

And you, poor souls, who weep and mourn
Because your works cannot supply
That spotless robe that must be worn
By all who dwell with God on high.

Blessed are you if you strive in vain,
And all your works no comfort yield;
For when you cease to toil and spin,
You are as lilies of the field.

And he who richly clothes the flower,
Which passes almost as a breath,
Will show his richer grace and power,
In you, O ye of little faith.

Infinite wisdom, power and love
Prepared the robe that you shall wear,
And in the realms of bliss above
Twill shine forever bright and fair.

As sun and dew afflictions come,
Making the heavenly lilies grow
And bringing forth a lovelier bloom
Than all the fields of earth can show.

Through trials thus prepared to wear
The robe of righteousness, they prove
Their heavenly Father's tender care,
And reach the fullness of his low.

Silas H. Durand

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EDITORIAL

THE RAINBOW

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

We all, at sometime, have seen a rainbow in the sky. We have marveled at the brilliance of its colors and joked about a pot of gold at the end of it. But, have we seriously considered what is manifested both naturally and spiritually by the rainbow?

On our journey home from the church in Salisbury, Maryland, several years ago, my wife and I passed through Virginia Beach immediately after a storm. There appeared the most beautiful rainbow I had ever seen. The colors were so radiant and they all seemed to be so gloriously displayed. I felt to be close enough to just reach out and touch it. My thoughts were upon it for a number of days and weeks and, finally, I was given to speak concerning it.

Genesis 9:8-17, "And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; And with every living creature that *is* with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there anymore be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, This *is* the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations; I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud; And I will remember my covenant, which *is* between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that *is* upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the

covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth."

Because of the exceeding sinfulness of man, God destroyed the earth and all flesh upon it, except for the eight souls of Noah and his family, by the great flood. God had commanded Noah to build an ark into which he had commanded them to come and God shut them in that they would not be destroyed. The ark was a type of Christ and bore the wrath of God that was poured out. Though tossed to and fro, Noah and his family were safe and secure. When the storm was over and the waters receded, they came forth from the ark and worshipped God through their burnt offerings on the altar. Then, God made a covenant between himself and all the earth that the earth would never again be destroyed by the waters of a flood. As a token of his covenant, God set the rainbow in the cloud.

The rainbow has seven colors. Seven sets forth that which is complete. There are many scriptures in both the Old and New Testaments concerning the number seven. Joshua had seven priests blow seven trumpets as the Israelites marched around Jericho for seven days. On the seventh day, the people marched around the city seven times, the priests blew with the trumpets, the people shouted, and the walls of the city fell down. The Apostle John wrote to the seven churches in Asia and he saw seven candlesticks and seven stars. Christ is the fulfillment of the number seven. He is perfect and complete and the church in him is perfect and complete.

The colors of the rainbow are violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, and red which are the same colors that are in the sun. Malachi refers to Christ as the Sun of righteousness who shall arise with healing in His wings. The primary colors are red, blue and green from which are produced the other four colors. When the seven colors are combined, they produce one color, white. Then we see the righteousness, holiness and perfection of God manifested. Also, the three primary colors set forth Christ as the way, the truth and the life.

Red manifests the blood of Christ and sets him forth as the way. Our precious redeemer shed his blood to cleanse his people from their sins; to pay the price demanded by God's divine justice; to redeem them from the curse of the law. He is the way and not just a way. There is no other way for a lost sinner to be saved and to hear that blessed proclamation, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." O, dear child of God, have you tried all the ways of the world and found that they only lead to despair and death? Then, to hear a small, still voice speaks with such authority and peace, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Blue sets forth Christ as the truth. The color blue was in the curtains of the tabernacle, in the vail, in the hanging for the door of the tent, and in the garment that Aaron wore. As we look up, we see

the blue sky and are reminded that truth came down from the climes of glory. The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. The world knows not the truth because it knows not Christ. You know the truth because Christ dwells in you, the Hope of Glory. The Father has revealed his son to you and you can proclaim with Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." The truth sets you free from the ignorance of unbelief.

Green signifies life. When the grass and leaves turn brown, we say they are dead. But, when we see them tum green, we know there is life. Winter is over and spring has come. David wrote that "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." Not just any pastures, but green pastures. There would have been no comfort, no rest, no nourishment except in green pastures. God provides the green grass of the gospel in the pastures of His grace for his sheep. He maketh you to lie down (rest) in the green pastures and there, he feeds you. There can be no works of the flesh because it is of grace. There is life, not death, in his green pastures.

Violet is purple and signifies royalty. Kings wore purple to show that they were royalty. Mark wrote that when Christ was brought before Pilate, they clothed him with purple and put a crown of thorns on him and said, "Hail, King of the Jews." They mocked him. They did not understand that this man was truly the King of kings and Lord of lords. Indeed, royalty such as they never knew stood before them. This king has subjects who love and worship him. They follow him, and another they will not follow. His kingdom is not of this world. No man or army can overthrow him or take his kingdom. He has all power and none can stand before him. Even King Nebuchadnezzar confessed, "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?" Not even Solomon in all his splendor can be compared to our king.

Indigo is deep, dark blue and sets forth his sorrows and sufferings. He was despised and rejected of men. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, being beaten and mocked, but never opening his mouth. In the garden, Christ was withdrawn from his disciples about a stone's cast signifying his death. Under the law, those who committed certain transgressions were stoned to death. Though Christ had committed no transgressions, he was to bear the transgressions of his people on the cross. He went a stone's cast farther than his disciples or anyone else could go. There, in the garden, he prayed "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done." There was never any doubt that he would drink of that cup, for it is written, "Then said I, Lo, I come, (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God." And again he said, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." In the garden, an an-

gel from heaven appeared unto him, strengthening him. Christ was in an agony because he knew exactly what he was about to suffer. No man has ever suffered to the extent our Lord suffered as he bore your sins and I hope mine. He endured all that suffering as well as the crucifixion on the cross because of his great love for his people. As he was verily the Son of God and therefore, royalty; so also, was he the Son of man who must suffer and die.

Yellow, as gold, signifies the richness of his love for his people whereby he laid down his own life to pay the debt of their sins and to redeem them from the curse of the law. "Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends." His love is pure and unconditional. As John wrote, "Behold, what manner of love the father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." We love God because he first loved us. The Apostle Paul said "And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." By nature, we all were children of wrath. However, the Apostle recorded for our comfort and edification, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ." "Faith worked by love" wrote Paul to the Galatians.

Orange is a symbol of power. Jesus said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." He also said that he had power to lay down his life and he had power to take it again. No man takes his life from him. "Where the word of a king is, there is power." By the effectual working of his power in you, he quickened or made alive you who were following after the course of this sinful world, taking pleasure in all the ways of the world, and were dead in trespasses and sins. A change occurred within you that no man could bring about. You saw everything differently. The eyes of your understanding were enlightened. You saw yourself as wretched and lost without any hope of eternal life. By his power and grace, he lifted you up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay and set your feet upon a rock (which is Christ), and established your goings. And he put a new song in your mouth, even praise unto our God.

The natural rainbow is for the natural man. Man in the flesh can see it with his natural eyes and know with the natural mind that the storm has passed and the earth has not been destroyed. He knows that it takes drops of moisture and rays of the sun to produce the rainbow. But, man in the flesh cannot see and understand any more than that.

To a little child of God, the rainbow is more than just a natural phenomena. When the storms come that try you so severely, you cannot behold the rainbow.

As Job said, "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him." There seems only darkness and the fearful thunderings and lightnings. You feel so helpless and alone. Yet, dear child of the Heavenly King, you have been given faith to believe that in the end, all will be well. For you believe in a God who rules and reigns and has promised that none can pluck his little ones from his hand. As with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." As surely as he has given you faith, it is being tried. But, when he hath tried you, you shall come forth as gold. When the storm passes, you see the beautiful rainbow and know that all is well. When the trial or sorrow passes, you see that Christ was with you the whole time, but you just couldn't see him. Now, you behold his beauty that far surpasses that of the natural rainbow. A beauty of holiness that includes his love, grace and mercy. You then understand that you were put into the cliff of the rock with his hand over you so that you could not see his face. But, you now see his hinderparts.

What is the face of God? God is a spirit which no man can see as the scripture says that Christ was the image of the invisible God. God doesn't have a form as we do. He knows all things and has seen the end from the beginning. There is nothing new to him and there is no past or future with God, but only the present. As Christ said, "Before Abraham was, I am." To me, the face of God sets forth all that he sees and knows. He knows and has seen that which is to come because he has purposed it. That includes all the wrath that will be poured out and the evil that is to come; all the severe trials as well as death that we will endure; the ones who are elected to eternal life and will hear that blessed summons, "Come, ye blessed of my father and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"; and those whose names are not written in the lamb's Book of Life who hear those dreadful words, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Is it any wonder, then, that he said no man can see my face and live? We could not withstand such knowledge. It would indeed destroy us in the flesh. We see his hinder parts-where he has been and what he has brought to pass.

His covenant of grace is not with all flesh, but with those that he chose before the foundation of the world and predestinated to be conformed to the image of his son. This covenant says that he will put his laws into their minds and write them in their hearts. Their sins and iniquities he will remember no more. He will be to them a God and they shall be to him a people. They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for all shall know him, from the least to the greatest. He will be merciful to their unrighteousness. When we behold

Christ, we can say, regardless of the outcome of the storm, all is well.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Hope this is worthy of publishing as tribute to Elder Spangler's daughter. If not, OK.

Signs of the Times

It is with sadness that I read in March 2015 issue of the passing of Elder Spangler's granddaughter, Linda. My parents Deacon Ralph Hocutt, Sr., mother Agnes, daughter of Elder Walter Roe Utley and wife and as I was 16 years of age, I drove all to various Primitive Baptist Churches throughout Southeast and Southwest USA (Dallas, Tx., Mississippi, Alabama, Tennesee, NC, SC and Ga.). I have a picture taken by my mother of about 15 PB preachers (Payton, Spangler, W. D. Griffin, Lambert of Memphis, Tn. I can't remember other names or find the picture today, but all names are on back of picture.) Even though I was 12 years older than Linda, she enjoyed walking in a creek about 5 inches deep on their property and the Spanglers allowed me to accompany her. She was an intelligent young lady as article reflects and did well, accomplishing much in her short lifetime. Always enjoyed lunch on the grounds at Associations, so many meats, vegetables, —good country cooking. Met my future wife at Shady Grove P.B. church. Located up a mountain between Jaspar, Ala and Smith's Lake — had to cross a creek on a wooden covered bridge. My future wife's family, also PB, was from Atlanta, Ga. They liked Elder Biggs of Madison, Tn. and hoped their 13 year old daughter, Beverly Jean Clay and Elder Bigg's son Kenneth would be impressed with each other. When asked, Beverly said he is O.K., but the chubby guy with him is funny and makes me laugh. That was I. Beverly and I have truly been blessed by our Lord. Three children, 5 grandchildren and one great grandson. Our PB minister Elder Hornsby age 90 still makes a 220 mile one way trip twice a month for PB church in Dothan, Ala. And Doerin, Ga. (Bethel PB Church) He is blessed and so knowledgeable of Bible. I bought Elder Beebe's books because of him.

After I started working at Social Security Administration in B'ham, the 3rd Army Corp in North B'ham, I started making trip on 2 lane Hwy to Atlanta to see Beverly. After courtship, stormy at times, she accompanied my family to Chicago, them to B'ham to look at houses. We found one, bought it on her birth month and day in 1959 (Feb. 20). Since them every house we've had since B'ham, St. Louis, Mo., second house in B'ham, house in Albany, my parents house next door and our 720 sq. ft. mountain cabin outside Blairsville, Ga she considers them all hers. When she worked as a Nurse, everything in my

name. She retired, we had everything put in her name. She told me I would be head of house and she would be the neck. Realized head can't do anything without the neck, so that makes her the one deciding what head does, therefore the real head of the household. June 20, 2015, we will have been married 56 years.

My grandfather usually preached 1 1/2 hours and told the deacons that if he stood too long to let him know. Well I felt he was there too long and it was pass noon and I wanted to eat. Said "Grandpa, you have been preaching too long!" Mother spanked me, Dad used his belt on me. (By today's accepted standards, that would be child abuse.) End this by again sorrow on Linda's passing.

Elder Ralph Hocutt

ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God ..." Romans 8:28.

This verse in Holy Writ I see,
Has very often puzzled me.
And many have been led to doubt
Just how this could be brought about.
How trouble as a blessing could
Work out for our eternal good
Was more than sight of man could know
And yet Ifelt it must be so.

"All things" include both dark and bright,
It means the sunshine and the night
It means my sickness and my health;
My poverty as well as wealth.
This world is full of toil and care,
Both joys and sorrows have a share
But one there is a present friend
Who knows my life from start to end

Should He permit dark clouds someday;
To cast a gloom upon my way,
I know it is my Fathers' will
I'm in His care... He loves me still,
My feet may press a world of care
But I may breathe a purer air,
An atmosphere from heaven above
Fragrant with the Fathers' love.

Someday when I've arrived at home
And view the road o'er which I've come;
I'll see the battlements of light
And know he doeth "all things" right;
For then will be revealed I know
A picture of my way below;
Some things I had not understood
I'll realize were for my good.

I'll see from where I then shall stand,
That "all things" were within His hand
He knew just where and when to send
A shadow with the light to blend
My Father has in view a plan
Far deeper than the mind of man
And since he n'er forgets His child;
I'll trust Him and be reconciled

The past is gone; the present hour
Is mine with sunshine or with
shower;
The future days of weal or woe
Are veiled ... I'm glad He wills it so.
"All things" ...this comprehensive phase
Will lead me on through lifes' short days;

And In a better world of rest,
I'll see more clearly, God knows best.

...Selected
Submitted by Sister Edith Thompson
(Her obituary in this issue)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever." (Hebrews 13:8)

Sometime ago we received a request to write on the above scripture. I realize my inability to write to His glory, and the comfort and consolation of people, unless guided by our dear Lord.

Our correspondent seemed to have certain questions in mind relative to discipline in the gospel church, by the teaching of Jesus and his Apostles. We would do well to read the preceding verse that we may have a clear view of what the apostle had reference to: "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." (7th verse) And then, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever."

The expression, "Yesterday, and today, and for ever," refers to the past, the present, and the future. How important it is to be blessed to see Him in every dispensation: whether it be the Law, the Prophets, or the Gospel; or the hope of his second coming in glory, to raise the dead. In every generation Jesus has been seen in his own light: even as a man sees the natural sun in its own light. A God given faith centers every Hope, Anticipation, Joy, and Consolation in the same Person, regardless of in which generation. In the first chapter of Hebrews, Jesus is brought wonderfully to view as the one by whom God has spoken to us; as the one that was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

This presentation of Jesus in person, was not contradictory to the prophet's presentation of him under the Old Dispensation: It was bringing fully to view Him who had been prophesied of in types and shadows under the law: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."

The apostle throughout the epistle to the Hebrews, shows the pre-eminence of Christ, our great High Priest, over Aaron, the priest under the law, (who was a type of Jesus,) by His entering heaven once by his own blood, with eternal redemption; whereas the high

priest under the law went year by year into the tabernacle made with hands, offering the blood of the various sacrifices - which was a remembrance of sin from year to year. Jesus our law keeper, who offered himself without spot to God, purges the conscience of his people from dead works, to serve the living God, by the application of His atoning blood to the sinner; but the ceremonial and sacrificial law made nothing perfect.

Jesus the mediator of the New Covenant, which was established upon better promises than the Old Covenant, obtained a more excellent ministry than all the ministers under the law, and brought in everlasting salvation for his chosen people, by honoring the law in his life, keeping it perfectly for his people; and dying under its just demands in our room and stead. Thus the New Covenant is manifested, and His laws are written in their hearts and put in their minds; and he says, "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."

My dear readers, the question may arise whether Christ appeared under the law dispensation less glorious and beautiful to his people, than he did to his disciples while he was upon the earth. My answer would be, No! A God given faith has always viewed Him as the only hope of hell deserving sinners. This lovely hymn expresses this sentiment; and the faith of God's humble poor acknowledges it:

"Faith is the brightest evidence
Of things beyond our sight;
Breaks through the clouds of flesh and sense,
And dwells in heavenly light.

It sets time past in present view,
Brings distant prospects home,
Of things a thousand years ago,
Or thousand years to come.

By faith we know the worlds were made
By God's almighty word:
Abra'm to unknown countries led,
By faith obeyed the Lord.

He sought a city fair and high,
Built by th'eternal hands;
And faith assures us, though we die,
That heavenly building stands."

Abraham saw the day of Jesus: he saw the day of Jesus and was glad. How wonderful it was that God's servant Abraham could behold all the beauty of Jesus by faith! He saw the gospel day, and beheld the Lamb of God: he viewed all the merit of Jesus as his salvation. This view caused him to seek a different kind of city — different from any he had ever known: a city which had foundation whose builder and maker was God. Throughout the ages all the people of God, being called out of the world and by faith given a precious view of Jesus, have manifested that they seek a heavenly country: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God.

The only way there can be a people in heaven of whom God is not ashamed,

is by He himself providing the way: bringing salvation to them by their redemption in Jesus Christ, and revealing this salvation by the Holy Spirit, keeping them by his own power, and preparing them for heaven and immortal glory.

How wonderful and effectual was the work that caused Moses to forsake Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: He endured, as seeing Him who is invisible. Moses did not see Jesus as others saw him while he walked upon the earth, but he saw him by faith. Jesus was the fourth one with the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace. That is why the hair of their heads was not singed, and there was no smell of fire upon their clothing.

The Lord's servant Job saw him as his redeemer who would stand upon the earth at the latter day. This glorious view of him by faith caused him to say, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." We follow our dear Saviour to that passage in the last book of the Old Testament, Malachi, and hear the assurance of God as it related to the perfect salvation through Jesus ; and hear him saying to his people, "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." The anti-type cannot be less than the type. When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. In full accord with the covenant promises of God given under the law, a virgin conceived and brought forth a son. The message that Joseph received of the angel, was that Mary would bring forth a son, and his name would be called Jesus: for he should save his people from their sins. He took not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham. He was described by the Apostle Paul as the only Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. He took part of the flesh and blood of his people; and being born of a woman, he came under the law with his people to redeem them from its curse.

Though Christ's glory was veiled in human flesh when he made his advent into the world, his glory and power was seen and felt by those who were called to follow him. It was not necessary for him to die and go to heaven, to have his glory and power manifested to his own people. When he entered into Jerusalem, those whose eyes had been opened to see the King in his beauty, spread their garments in his pathway, "crying, blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord." His mission was aptly described in the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah, where he speaks of his work: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day

of vengeance of our God: to comfort all that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness: that they might be called the trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified ...

As we follow him here, we follow one who was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief ; yet we behold one whom the wind and the sea obeyed; one who said, "All power is given unto me, both in heaven and in earth." And, "Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him... In giving them eternal life, Jesus manifested his wondrous power. No poor sinner that was called to him, ever questioned his power. The devils obeyed him; they had no power beyond that allotted them.

Jesus called men to preach his everlasting gospel. The same power that called them also qualified them. He said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you... It was never necessary for anyone who was called to preach the gospel, to attend schools of men. The things they were to preach, were revealed to them by the power that called them. Thus Paul determined to know nothing among those to whom he preached, save Jesus Christ and him crucified. He counted all things but loss because of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.

We hear Jesus crying out on the cross, "It is finished." When he hung on the cross, forsaken of God and men, in his precious body prepared by the Father, to pay our dept, we hear him cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

"Twas then the Father gave the stroke, That justice did decree:
All nature felt the dreadful stroke, When Jesus died for me."

In a few moments the Father appears again: His sufferings are over, and heaven is in view; and he said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."

I cannot leave my dear Saviour here --- he has only paid the debt: He was delivered for our offences, but he must be raised for our justification. We must be freed from the power of the grave by his resurrection. Though all the powers of men were arrayed to thwart the resurrection of Jesus — the king's seal was placed upon the tomb, a great stone rolled there, and soldiers placed to watch the scene — when the appointed hour of his resurrection arrived, the soldiers became as dead men, and the body of Jesus arose from the tomb. The soldiers were instructed to report that his disciples had stolen his body by night: those who would deny his resurrection in the same body could be classed with the Roman soldiers. Jesus arose from the dead in the same body in which he died; and his body saw no corruption. He talked with his disciples after he arose, was with them forty days, and ate with them; and said to them, "... handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have He appeared to them on different occa-

sions after his resurrection, and was seen also of above five hundred brethren at once.

Now we arrive to where we await the adoption, to-wit the redemption of our bodies. That will be when He comes again, without sin unto salvation. The last record we have of his presence among his disciples, was when he was taken up into heaven, as recorded in the first chapter of Acts: "And while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

This is the same Jesus yesterday, and today and forever; the same one mentioned in Thessalonians, where his second coming is described as, "... the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God ..." "To them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." To lay aside the personal coming of Jesus for his people, would destroy every vestige of hope a believer has. In Revelation we read, "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen." Whether we receive the doctrine, the order, or discipline from God's word, it is the same Jesus. Paul could tell the church that he laid the foundation as a wise master builder; but in the same breath he says that other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. All the doctrine and order of the church of God was given by Jesus, delivered by his chosen vessels. Jesus could tell Peter that he was giving him the keys of the kingdom; but he also showed him that he himself must be kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

So, we are exhorted when listening to men delivering the word of God, to consider the end of their conversation, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever. Paul wrote, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Such as preach any other gospel, we are commanded not to receive them neither bid them God speed.

When we follow the faith of those who have spoken unto us the word of God, the gospel of the Son of God, we find that Jesus is the same yesterday, and today, and for ever — the same in every dispensation unto his people.

Elder D. V. Spangler

PSALM 130: 3-4.

If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquites, O Lord, who shall stand?

But *there is* **forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.**

WHOM HE MAY DEVOUR

Frederick W. Keene, 1932

It is our comfort to believe that it is not in the power of our wicked adversary, the Devil, to devour us.Our God will not suffer him to destroy one of His elect. The Devil may not, he cannot, he shall not devour one of Christ's flock.

Satan is wicked enough to eat up the whole human race, and does what he may: what God suffers him to do. Our God, the Lord Omnipotent reigneth! He hath the Devil chained; and the roaring lion, though ever so vicious, roar ever so loudly, shall not devour or destroy any of the loved, elected, and redeemed of the Lord. Though our adversary, this roaring lion, is chained, we do not always see that he is.

The Devil roars and we tremble, Oh, sometimes we have not only trembled, but have felt that we were given up to him as his prey, in his clutches, held in the claws of this lion, bitten, torn and mangled by his fierce insinuations. How we are buffeted and feel to be without power to deliver ourselves from the snare of the Devil! What then? The apostle Paul when so buffeted by the messenger of Satan besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from him. (II Cor. 12:8) What a mercy it is to have a mind to cry unto the Lord in our distresses. When by the lion we are torn in pieces and there is none to deliver, (Psa. 7:2) the Lord graciously moves us to cry unto Him in our troubles.

Though we feel to be in the very belly of hell, carried off in the teeth of our adversary to his den and he roareth over us as though we were his lawful prey, O children of God! do we not learn, and in our very souls, know that "salvation is of the Lord"?

Jehovah is the Shepherd of Israel. Therefore, "Thus saith the Lord, as the shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or the piece of an ear, so shall the children of Israel be taken out that dwell in Samaria, in the corner of a bed, and in Damascus in a couch." (Amos 3:12)

Ah! we sometimes feel that our legs are gone, that unbelief and the Devil have torn them off, that we cannot walk, we cannot run, and we cannot even creep away out of our soul's miseries. We feel that we are the helpless prey of our fears, of sin and Satan, but the Lord our Shepherd is omnipotent! He hears the bleatings of the sick, torn and helpless ones of His flock. He seeketh out His sheep and delivereth them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. (Ezek. 34:12) Oh, He is gracious! He works miracles of grace in, and in behalf of His flock. He cometh to us while we are buffeted, while we are torn and bleeding, "two legs and the piece of an ear" in the mouth of the lion; and when He speaks in our heart saying, "Whom resist steadfast in the faith," then our faith is revived, nourished and increased by His gracious power in our souls. We are turned to the Lord, we are given to contemplate His counsel and doings, and our hearts go out unto His everlasting Covenant of grace, ordered in all things and sure. Then our faith in His everlasting love is strengthened. We are steadfast in our

faith in Christ crucified, in Jesus' blood and righteousness, in God's exceeding great and precious promises.

Oh, if this in some measure is wrought by the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, in our souls; if in some of the gracious manifestations of our God in Christ's Gospel our souls are confiding-then we begin to triumph over our adversary the Devil, and all adversities. What! Shall a poor, half eaten sheep, be made strong, wax valiant in the fight, and so, in faith in Christ, looking to Him, resist the Devil that he will flee away from one of Christ's lambs? Well, though you have not heard of such a case in natural history of a roaring lion fleeing from a lamb; nevertheless, this is no fable, for unnumbered miracles of grace are wrought by our God in Christ's kingdom. We read, "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for He is the LORD of lords, and KING of kings; and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful." (Rev. 17:14) It is in this One, with Christ the Lamb, who goeth forth conquering and to conquer, that we triumph. (Rev. 12:11)

When by faith of the operation of God we are enabled, like the apostle Paul, to sing; yes, to challenge the whole world, and say, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us," (Rom. 8:33-34) then the mouth of all iniquity is shut, and the Devil, the roaring lion, cannot roar over us. "Through faith they stopped the mouth of lions." (Heb. 11:33).

Nevertheless, O our God! deliver us from presumption; let us not be carried away with vain confidences, but in the riches of Thy mercy grant us Thy grace that we may be sober, and vigilant, because our adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.

May we be enabled to resist him steadfast in the faith.

Raleigh, NC.
Elder F. W. Keene.

ROMANS 8:1-6.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

For the law of the Spirit of life is Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

For to be carnally minded *is* death; but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace.

MATTHEW 23

In writing, as in all acceptable service to the Lord and to his people, there must be an unction from above. This unction gives knowledge where bestowed (1 John 2:20), and it seems that if I have a gift of the things of God it is so small that I fear that this unction has not been applied to me. However, if I have a little and my brother is in need of a little, I am as unfaithful in this small matter as one who is in possession of greater gifts would be in withholding from the brother.

This chapter is abounding in food for thought. Meditation upon the mighty works of God is precious to those who are exercised thereby. There is much good instruction laid down for the followers of the Lord, and there are many rigid rebukes for the unbelieving scribes and Pharisees. The instruction is as good today as when uttered; the rebukes of the unbelievers are as much in force now as when spoken. The things that Jesus spoke to both were things that would endure; time and usage and distance would never detract the force away from that which was said.

Sometimes a zeal will arise in the Old Baptist church to avoid being like anybody and this zeal will often take us into things that are as abominable as what we would try to avoid. The Saviour enjoined upon believers that they do all that the scribes and Pharisees commanded. There is nothing wrong in doing right, if it is done for righteousness sake. Just because that the self righteous Jews talked a lot about their righteous acts does not mean that believers are not to do righteous acts. You must not say that you do these good works and then act like the unbeliever, do them not. The motive that is enjoined on God's children is a heavy burden, whereas the faithful service of his people is done in love. The difference in a burdensome service and one which is a labor of love is the difference between law and grace. One is prompted by hope of reward or escape of suffering, the other is prompted by the love of God being shed abroad in their hearts, and the only thing that is set before them is the banner of his love. They would, through the power in the blood, be good soldiers, following him wherever his command directed, and they would not count it a sorrow but a joy and a rich gift to be counted worthy in Christ to be his follower. Another difference between the serving under the banner of love and that of law, is shown in the mutual feeling of the servants. They, of the scribes and Pharisees, will add to the burdens of God's children without a helping hand, without a kind word of encouragement, without any condolences or sharing in their feeling of despair; the admonitions to walk in the more excellent things by the children of God are accompanied by the companionship of the one giving them; there is a giving of a helping hand, a reaching to one another of that which each has been given.

These scribes and Pharisees have a system that will keep them in the foreground. Their name is ever before men for they design it that way; they must be seen of men or they soon perish and die;

they must pray on street corners so that many will see their piety; they must have the high seats at the social feasts as well as in the church services; they will call attention to themselves by hailing one another in public markets and referring to one another as Rabbi, which today we hear Reverend So and So.

These scribes and Pharisees have not been confined to the Jewish race, as we have them in all kinds of orders and it is greatly to be feared that their number and kind has infiltrated the followers of the Lamb. He or she that is born of God loves God and godliness. It is not a Sunday love and forgotten on Monday; it is not a display in the crowded hall to be laid aside when alone. These desire to be known as walking in his footsteps, and their way is by showing how many of the airs and mannerisms of a supposed follower of Christ they can put on. The ancient kind of scribe and Pharisee enlarged their phylacteries for carrying portions of the law, and the modern brand have many improved ways for displaying their knowledge and ability in regard to the law. We see so much on the streets and public conveyances, advertising by spectacular garments their adherence to the things of their religion.

The religion that has got to be advertised by raised voices, different types of clothing, special addressing of one another, and all other things that will call for notice is not a religion of the Lord Jesus Christ. His religion, when bestowed upon a sinner, causes that man or woman to take the low seat (See Luke 14:8, 11). They do not feel capable of teaching, therefore they do not relish being called Rabbi nor Master nor Father, but realize that they need to sit at the feet of Jesus and learn of him. This abasing of one's self is not an act that is put on in order to be exalted, but it is the nature of he or she that is a new creature in Christ.

I am not sent, if I am sent of God, to preach damnation, therefore, the many woes and denunciations of these serpents, generations of vipers is not mine to hurl at folks. They are not part of the gospel of peace, but belongs to those that know not the Lord. I suggest that you read these denunciations as they were hurled upon these scribes and Pharisees. Read carefully the searching question, to wit, How can ye escape the damnation of hell? The question has in it all of the fury of God against those that know not the saving grace and imputed righteousness of his Son, Jesus Christ the Lord. Suffice it is to say that this is a terrible (and yet how truthful) description of those that believe a lie.

A profession is worthless unless it is accompanied by action in keeping with it. Unless what I say is well fortified by a 'thus saith the Lord' and accompanied by a walk that is parallel with the profession, it may cloud the issue under consideration, but it will never edify. The charges and denunciations hurled at these would-be-teachers and leaders are enough to condemn before the tribunal of justice; coming from the lips of the Saviour they will satisfy the people of God. Everything must be tested that none will have the right to hurl anything at Christ. This test is not for the purpose

of God learning something, but it is to confirm the elect in the precious truth that by their fruits ye shall know them, and to take away all words of the gainsaying generation of vipers.

God's ways are higher than ours, and we will see his hand of providence and grace all the way. Hear this people boast; listen at them as they mock poor Isaac at the breast of that aged woman; hear them tell about piping in the streets, about paying tithes, about fasting, about all kind of benevolences. Are they like this? Is their profession from the heart or the lip? Does their holiness and piety before the Lord stem from a heart made pure by blood or is it the outward walk of one whose aim is policy? Let us see; let us have the whole truth revealed by the work of the Lord. Behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them ye shall scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city. What has become of their goodness and piety and holiness? What has happened to cast a shadow upon their profession? They have said, but done different ; they paid tithes of small matters, but have neglected the weightier; they have had the outside of the cup and the platter clean, while we now see how vile and filthy it is on the inside; they have been bearing themselves as dead to sin, this being shown by whited sepulchres, when inwardly they were filled with dead things.

Watch these vipers as they hound the servants of the Lord; watch them as they slay the Lord of glory. The blood of saints and martyrs have run as rivers, as this professing bunch of religious fanatics have acted out what is in the heart. Every religious order under the sun has punned at the others that they were guilty of this, when they themselves are black as night with this guilt hung upon them. As a people the Old School Baptists have not persecuted others, but at the blood we have shed in persecuting one another, in backbiting and devouring one another. In what name has it been in ? What has been our excuse for doing it? Oh, how sad to relate that it has been as lame as the general argument of the unbelieving Jew in crucifying the Lord of glory. How truly the words, For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel (Rom. 9:6).

Now we come to one of the Scriptures that has mystified the followers of the Lord. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." Is the language addressed to the same person as in Isaiah 40:1? Is this Jerusalem, with her blood shed, rioting, clamoring, the same Jerusalem that shall be seen as a quiet city (Isaiah 33:20) Are these inhabitants of Jerusalem the same ones upon whom the Lord is going to pour the Spirit of grace (Zech. 12:10)? No, indeed not. These are vipers, hypocrites, serpents; these are they that cannot escape the damnation of hell; these are they that killest the prophets and stonest them that were sent unto them; these are they that put the Lamb of God to death. These are

the ones that are being addressed. But the question keeps coming up, Why does He address them in this way? We all admit that no man nor set of men nor hell with all of its fury has ever kept the almighty Spirit of God from gathering his chosen people together. All Egypt stood in array against the God of Israel, but He brought every Israelite out on dry ground. All the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar was engaged to bring men to worship the golden image, but Israel's God preserved the helpless Hebrew children. Saul and all the Jewish courts were engaged in putting to death God's humble poor, but one ray of light and one sentence from above ended all that. We are fully persuaded that God manifest in the flesh did not make a stirring plea to Jerusalem to let him gather together the children of Jerusalem. Let us note some things that was not said, to wit: He did not say, How often I would have gathered Jerusalem, and she would not; He did not say, How often I would have gathered thy children, and they would not; He did not say, How often I would have gathered you, and you would not, but what he did say was, How often would I have gathered thy children, and ye would not. How clearly and implicitly the Saviour is leaving these in the middle of their perverseness. These are the same ones that heard him on another occasion, to wit, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father you will do" - and on this occasion they would have stoned him (John 8:44, 59).

That Christ manifested his human relationship cannot be disputed. He was a Jew and he loved them as a nation. He was in the flesh with a human nature. God the Father and Creator never manifested any relationship with his chosen people. Not so with Christ, for not only did he love after the flesh, but he was sorrowful unto death. He was grieved by the neglect and indifference of those that followed him. On one occasion a young man came to him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? The Saviour reminded him of the law. His reply was that he had kept all that. Christ loved him, but if the love was anything more than one national for another, it is not shown, for the young man did not show any knowledge of sonship, and his going away grieved, brought Christ to say, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven. He could not have loved him as a child of God, seeing that he was not in the kingdom. At another time he wept over the city of Jerusalem, not because it was filled with his brethren in the Lord but filled with his people after the flesh (Luke 19:41). How that he could be touched with the feeling of our infirmities and not experience our infirmities has not been explained, so I will, as blessed of the Lord, continue to say that he was tempted as we, but that in the nature which we fell under the temptation, that he stood, thus being able to succor us at all times.

How often we look at his record, and as often amazed that he sorrowed as man sorrows; how often we find him burdened under the many vicissitudes of his life, and how glad we are of One that understands of our frailties. The divine will of God does not come and go

as the ebb and flow of a stream, but is constant from all eternity; the will of Jesus toward Jerusalem was one of oftimes. He often would have gathered them, and as often they would not. How forcibly this shows the human will of our Saviour, which will was subject to the divine will. We must note whom he would have gathered, and who would not. We also must remember that he did gather them, but it was not those that would not, but it was that Jerusalem which is free, is from above, and is the mother of all the children of God. How marked is the distinction between this city which is stubborn and murderers and stoners of the messengers of God, and that blessed number of the children within the city that our Lord defends and gathers together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings. As the day of extinction for this city gathers in the impending doom how he did warn, as a hen warns he; little ones; how he did communicate to them the dangers of remaining in the city marked for destruction; how far reaching his repeated warnings to flee the city that has always been noted for its viperous nature. It is in perfect complacency that I rest: 1st. That the children were all removed before that city fell. 2nd. That the legalists fell with the city, still determined that he would not gather the children. 3rd. That the city was left desolate to those that would not, but that the children were all brought out to a new and living way; to a city of habitation, wherein dwelleth righteousness; to a city where the brethren are all ways and always welcome, being given bread instead of stones, things pertaining unto life instead of being dealt death; to a city that is quiet and in which no gallant ship ever passes nor rowing is ever known, but, to the contrary every vessel is less than all the others, and all of them have their being in Christ, live and move in his sovereign and efficacious will, which will is that none of them be left there anymore (Ezek. 39:28). 4th. The city is still desolate to the viper minded, and will continue to be so until the day comes in which they shall say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Elder W. D. Griffin
October, 1961

PETER 1:8-12.

Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.

Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you:

Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

MEETINGS

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

Direction to the Pigg River Association to be held, the Lord willing; the first Sunday in August, Friday and Saturday before July 31st, August 1st and 2nd. The meeting will be held on the grounds of Chestnut Church in Franklin County, Virginia.

Those coming from the North on 220 after passing Rocky Mount at first stop light, turn left on 619; go 3.7 miles. Turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Rd.) Go 1 mile to Church.

Those coming from the South on 220, go App. 13 miles from Bassett Forks, turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Rd.) App. 2 and one half miles to Church. We welcome and invite the Ministers of our Faith and order, our Brethren, and Friends to be with us.

Elder Thomas Solomon, Clerk

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 07/2015
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

STAUNTON RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will be held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church located at the inter section of Music St. and Weatherford Drive, Gretna, VA in Pittsylvania County. The second Sunday and Saturday before in July 2015. The song service will begin at 9:30 a.m. with service at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton, Clerk
Staunton River Primitive
Baptist Association

HEBREWS 9:22-24.

And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

It *was* **therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.**

For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* **the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.**

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 2015

Arlene Hole, NC 5.00
C. Wayne Oxley, WV 25.00
James Neely, AR 5.00
James Pugh, AL 5.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER BESSIE MAE COX

It was the Lord's will to call Sister Bessie Mae Hollandsworth Cox into that sweet rest that was prepared by our dear Lord and Saviour on November 21, 2014. She was born on May 18,1927, the third child of twelve children, born to Brother Wilburt Clive and Sister Ruby Quesenberry Hollandsworth. She and Brother Bernard J. Cox were blest with 69 years of marriage. They were blest with four children, fourteen grandchildren, thirty great-grandchildren, two step grandchildren and four step great grandchildren. She was baptized by Elder Hale Terry in 1980, a member of Old Union Primitive Baptist Church. Her love for the Church was manifested by the labor of love, always improving and maintaining the meeting house and the facilities of the church. Brother Bernard and Sister Bessie spent much of their own money and a lot of labor improving and making things a comfort for our meetings. Her funeral service was conducted at Valley View Primitive Baptist Church on November 25, 2014, by Elder Raymond Goad, Elder Larry Hollandsworth and Dr. Joel Burroughs, her grandson. She was laid to rest In the Cox family cemetery, on part of their farm. Our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by:
Elder Larry Hollandsworth,
(Her Brother)

SISTER WREATHER PILGREEN

Our dear sister and friend, Wreather Canterbury Pilgreen, passed from this life on January 12, 2015. She was born on August 5, 1 919.

Sister Wreather was preceded in death by her son, Marvin L. and husband, Brother Frank Pilgreen. She asked for a home with Union Primitive Baptist Church in 1966. Sister Wreather and Brother Frank traveled to many churches when they were able and were loved by many Brothers and Sisters. She was blessed to be a devoted member and helpmate to her husband who was a deacon.

Sister Wreather leaves to remember her love for them; two daughters, Mrs. Lizzie Price and husband, Bob,

Mrs. Louise "Tiny" Towns and husband, Dennis, six grandchildren, twelve great grand children , eight great-great grandchildren and two sisters, Mrs. Lizzie Reppond and Mrs. Christine Fowler.

Her funeral was conducted January 1 7, 201 5 by Elder C. C. Morris and she was laid to rest in Union Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery. She is greatly missed, but we hope to be submissive to Almighty God's Will.

Written by one who loved her dearly.

Patsy Lankford
Church Clerk
Union Primitive Baptist Church

Patsy Lankford
1711 Dean Haile Rd.
Marion, LA. 71260

SISTER EDITH DAVIS THOMPSON

Our precious Sister Edith Davis Thompson was called from our midst on March 7, 2014. A graveside service conducted by Elder Mark Terry was held on Monday, March 10, 2014 in Danville Memorial Gardens, where her body was laid to rest to await the Resurrection morn and those most welcome and lovely words, "Come ye blessed of my Father and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world". Those left to mourn her passing include her son, Michael Thompson and wife Kay; two daughters, Judy Overstreet, and Kristina T. Abbott and husband Curt; four grandchildren, Joshua Thompson, Jennifer T. Payne, Jacob Thompson, and Page Overstreet; and three great grandchildren, Hunter Payne, Shelby Thompson, and Haylee Payne in addition to many brethren and sisters in Christ.

Sister Edith was born November 10, 1923 and lived on a farm in Axton, Virginia with her parents, a sister, and two brothers, one of which was Brother Reuben Davis. She shared with her daughter, Kristi, that when she was growing up, she and her father had many talks on the Bible and that she enjoyed those talks so much. Sister Edith was blessed to walk humbly and softly among our people for over fifty one years. She asked for a home with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on October 14, 1962 and was baptized by Elder David Spangler. Having put her hand to the plough, she never looked back and was a faithful, loving member, who attended her home church until her health prevented her from doing so. Her loving family continued to take her to Canaan Primitive Baptist Church, which was near her home, for as long as she was able, and then her daughters would take the *Signs of the Times* to her in the nursing home and read it together, which brought her great joy.

Sister Edith's sojourn on this earth was not an easy one, but she was blessed to hold firm to her belief in a sovereign, immutable, unchangeable God. In the January, 1988 *Signs,* there was a poem which she had selected and submitted on Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for

good to them that love God..." The second verse of that poem portrays beyond a doubt what Sister Edith was blessed to believe:

"All things include both dark and bright,
It means the sunshine and the night
It means my sickness and my health;
My poverty as well as wealth.
The world is full of toil and care,
Both joys and sorrows have a share
But one there is a present friend
Who knows my life from start to end.

One of her favorite hymns was "Awake my soul in joyful lays..." which is often referred to as the loving kindness hymn. This hymn was sung at her graveside service. Her last words to her daughter, Judy, were "Trust in the promise." The writer believes this was evidence that the last two verses of this hymn were made real for her by her Lord in her last moments:

"Soon shall I pass the gloomy vale,
Soon all my mortal powers must fail;
O! may my last expiring breath
His loving kindness sing in death.

Then let me mount and soar away To
the bright world of endless day,
And sing with rapture and surprise,
His loving kindness in the skies."

One of her favorite scriptures was the thirty first chapter of Jeremiah from which Brother Mark spoke at her graveside service. We believe the promise of which she spoke is found in the thirty third verse, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people" and also in the third verse, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."

Thoughts of Sister Edith bring to mind the lovely countenance, gentleness, and kindness with which the Lord so richly blessed her, and all who loved her will sorely miss that, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. Psalm 50:2 reads "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." We believe that our dear, precious Sister was blessed with that beautiful Spirit within and that it did shine in her countenance. May the Lord bless her precious family and all of those who were blessed to know and love her as a Sister in Christ with the comfort that only He can give and to witness with Job, "the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." In all things, may all praise, all honor, all glory be ascribed to His great and holy name.

Humbly submitted by one who loved
and esteemed her greatly,
Mary Hawkins

PSALM 134.

Behold, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord.

Lift up your hands *in* the sanctuary, and bless the Lord.

The Lord that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion.

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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HYMN

A child of Jehovah, a subject of grace,
I'm of the seed royal — a dignified race;
An heir of salvation, redeemed with blood,
I'll own my relation, my Father is God!

He loved me of old, and he loveth me still;
Before the creation he gave me by will,
A portion worth more than the Indies of gold,
Which cannot be wasted, nor mortgaged nor sold.

He gave me a Surety, a covenant Head,
To live in my name, and to die in my stead;
He gave me a righteousness wholly divine
And viewed all the merits of Jesus as mine

He gave a Preceptor infallibly wise,
And treasures of grace to be sent in supplies;
Yea, all that I ask for, my Father hath given
To help me on earth, and to crown me in heaven.

He gave me a will to accept what he gave,
Though I was averse to his purpose to save;
He wrote in his will my repentance and faith,
And all my enjoyments for life and for death.

My trials and sorrows, my conflicts and cares,
The spirit of prayer and the answer of prayers,
The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will.

My cross and my crown are both willed; by my God
He swore to his will, and then sealed it with blood;
"Tis proved by the Spirit, the witness within;
"Tis mine to inherit; I'll glory begin.

Ananias Davisson.

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EDITORIAL

"Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner *stone, a* **sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place. And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it. From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you: for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night: and it shall be a vexation only** *to* **understand the report. For the bed is shorter than that** *a man* **can stretch himself** *on it:* **and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself** *in it.* **For the Lord shall rise up as** *in* **mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as** *in* **the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act." Isaiah 28:16-21.**

Elder J. B. Farmer

This scripture concerning *the bed and the covering* was brought to my attention by a dear brother, and I have been given a mind to write a little concerning it. I have read it many times and heard it preached upon, but have never really been given to focus upon it or to beg for understanding about its deep meaning. I confess that I have no wisdom of my own. But God has commanded them that lack wisdom to ask of Him, and promised that He would give them liberally and not upbraid them. In the fear of God, I trust that I am begging for wisdom and understanding, that the word of God might be rightly divided to the comfort and edification of God's little ones, and that all should be to His praise, honor and glory.

It seems good to look also at the scriptures surrounding the mention of *the bed and the covering.* The first thing that comes to mind is that salvation is altogether of the Lord. It is impossible

for men to obtain this great salvation by their own works or merit. But what is impossible with men is possible with God. It is God alone who has wrought this great salvation according to His mercy and grace, which was given to His people in Christ Jesus before the world was. God has an elect people that He loved with an everlasting love. He has a people He determined to save from every deceitful trap, false doctrine, persuasive temptation, and the cruel bondage of the devil. He has determined to save them from every evil thought, sin, death, hell and the grave, and anything which would tend to destroy them from His presence and glory.

"Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner *stone,* **a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste."** God's salvation is sure - it is not now, has never been and shall never be up to men. David said by the Spirit, "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." God has laid the sure foundation upon which the church of the living God is built. It is a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a foundation that cannot be moved. It is verily Christ Himself. "The foundation of God standeth sure having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his." Those that God loved from the beginning, even those to whom is given the gift of faith by the Spirit, shall surely believe on Him and love Him and shall not be ashamed at His coming. Those little ones that God has built on that sure foundation shall not make haste, which is to say, they shall not be left to the flesh with all its fears and anxieties. But they, by grace, shall be given to wait upon the Lord and see His great salvation.

"Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place." In this great salvation, God shall work His perfect judgment and justice with righteousness. The sins of all of God's children have been judged in Christ. The penalty of death for sin has been paid and the justice of God has been satisfied in the suffering and death of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Jesus, the perfect, spotless, sinless Son of God took upon himself the sin of His people and suffered the wrath of God in their place. He imputed His perfect, spotless, white robe of righteousness to the chosen of God making them righteous in the sight of God. "By one offering, be has perfected forever them that are sanctified." "He who knew no sin was made to be sin for us, that we should be made the righteousness of God in him." All our refuge of lies concerning man's supposed free will, and our former hiding place of supposed good works of the flesh have been forever swept away by the hail and overflowing waters, even as the Egyptians were swept away and drowned in the sea as they pursued God's children to try to destroy them.

"And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trod-

den down by it. From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you: for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night: and it shall be a vexation only *to* **understand the report."** Can you remember the time, before you were given a hope in Christ, when you thought death and hell would be your final estate? I can think back to the time when I was brought down to the very bottom and given to think that there was no hope for me. I thought I was so bad that such a case as mine was hopeless and could not be reached. This dread was upon me constantly, morning and night, until Christ finally appeared to replace my fears with a blessed hope in His finished work of righteousness.

Until He came there was no place of rest, no refuge, no peace --- only distress, labor, and no place to run to escape the wrath of God. This trouble that God sends is overwhelming. And I thought that surely when I died I would go straight to hell. And I was made agreeable with it, because I was convinced that it was the end that I deserved for being such a wretched sinner. But God has made it plain that He is greater than man, or the covenants and promises and determinations of men. And He will not let the covenant of man stand.

"For the bed is shorter than that *a man* **stretch himself** *on it*: **and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself** *in it.*" The bed is normally a place of rest and comfort --- a place to enter into greatly desired and needed sleep. But this bed under consideration is too short to find comfort, and the covering is too narrow to give the desired protection from the elements. I am made to believe that the Lord's people are the only ones who will ever know anything about this bed. And God blesses them to know it by experience. This great salvation, which brings true rest and peace to the elect is no place for the wicked. There is a rest unto the saints that others can never know or understand. There is a straight gate and a narrow way of tribulation that leads to life, and there are but few that find it. There is a wide gate and a broad way of pleasure that leads to destruction, and many go in thereat. God's little ones, even those He loved, have been placed in the narrow way, which no man can enter by himself. It would be easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man (a man in nature) to enter the kingdom of God. With men it is impossible to be saved, but with God all things are possible.

This bed is a bed of suffering and discontent with the ways of the world - a place of vexation of the spirit to those who are born of God. It is a place where one loses his life that he might find it in Christ. The blessed apostle wrote of glorying in his many afflictions for the sake of the gospel, and the Lord said that in this world you shall have trouble. John saw a great multitude coming up out of tribulation. Job said that a man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. And Paul was blessed to say, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death." The whole creation groans and travails, waiting for the appearing of the Lord of glory. And Jesus told the rich young ruler, whom

He loved, "Go and sell what you have and give it to the poor and to come and take up your cross and follow Me," which I am fully persuaded that he did. And Jesus said, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." The true disciples of Christ are made to forsake all and to follow Him. All who live Godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, and all who suffer with Him shall reign with Him, world without end.

Isaiah wrote of a strange work, which the Lord would do. **"For the Lord shall rise up as *in* mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as *in* the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act."** The word Perazim means "breaking forth". This work that God has done comes unexpectedly upon one like a thief in the night. He takes you into the depth of the sea, as He did with Jonah, and you are kept there until you are taught to say, "Salvation is of the Lord." What then is this strange work that the Lord said He would do? He will do all His will regardless of what men think about it. He will overthrow all of man's wisdom and put man in derision. He has worked, and is working, and will work His great salvation and none of the wicked will ever understand. God is not a man as some suppose, but His ways and His thoughts are as high above ours as the heaven is above the earth. "God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform." Many think they can find out the mysteries of the kingdom of God through study or reason, but they are sadly mistaken. Men in nature can only think natural thoughts. Therefore, they can never see or know anything about the heavenly kingdom. They are limited to think that God's ways are like man's ways. They think a man has a free will and that God will not violate that free will. They think that a man has a choice to believe in God or not. They think that man has a choice whether to obey God or not. They think that every man has faith and it is up to him to use it. They think that their salvation depends upon the exercise of their faith. If these things were true, God's work would not be a strange work — it would be a familiar work, which men could readily understand. But God has said that He has hidden His things from the wise and prudent of this world and revealed them unto babes.

In the book of Joshua, we read that when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done unto Jericho and Ai, they feared the Lord God, and came and requested that Joshua make a league with them. Joshua and the children of Israel had come forth to destroy the inhabitants of the land, but they made peace with Gibeon, even though the men of Gibeon were deceitful. And the princes of the congregation of Israel honored their vow to the men of Gibeon, which they made by the Lord God of Israel, and refused to smite their cities. So the people of Gibeon became bondmen, and hewers of wood and drawers of

water for the house of God. And in due time the Lord protected Gibeon from the five kings who came to destroy them, and God did a strange work in their midst. At the word of Joshua to the Lord, the sun stood still and the moon stayed about a whole day upon Gibeon, until the people avenged themselves upon their enemies. Now this is a strange work indeed, that the sun stood still and the moon stayed still for a whole day. We know that this is impossible from man's viewpoint, but it is not impossible with God. Men in nature cannot believe in miracles, but men in the Spirit are blessed to believe that all things are possible with God. The Spirit overwhelms the carnal mind of unbelief and causes the child of God to acknowledge the work of God in heaven and in earth, even though carnal men deny the things that God has done by His power and wisdom.

It seems good now to relate what I am made to believe that God has given by revelation concerning the spiritual meaning of the sun standing still and the moon staying in its place for a whole day. It appears that this is a prophesy of what it shall be in the day of the Lord — in the day of the Lord's coming. John saw a mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire. John said, "And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: "When the Lord comes to put all things under His subjection, time shall cease to be. There will no longer need to be any sun or moon by which to tell the times and seasons. And when He comes, according to the faithful apostle, it shall be like this: "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power: when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe..." As in the days of Gibeon when all their enemies were destroyed, so shall it be in the day of the Lord for all God's people. God shall destroy the wicked with an everlasting destruction.

All of God's works are contrary and strange to the carnal mind. It is a strange work to men, that the Maker of heaven and earth should come unto His own but not be received by them; that the One who made and owned all things should not have even a place to lay His head; that the best man that ever lived should be hated, mocked, spit upon, beaten and crucified by wicked men; that He who knew no sin should be made to be sin for us, that sinful creatures should be made the righteousness of God in Him; that the fullness of the Godhead should dwell in a man; that the only Righteous One should die for the unrighteous; that He should become poor that we should be made rich in Him; that He who pos-

sessed all power in heaven and earth should meekly submit Himself to sinful men to be killed; that He had power to take His life up again in the resurrection; that He is now at the right hand of the throne of God making intercession for His people until the times of refreshing come. He did, is doing, and shall do this wonderful and strange work of salvation that His little ones might enter into His eternal rest.

It has been said by some that if they didn't like the bed they found themselves in they would just go and find another bed. But all who are taught of God are made to know that there is only one place of rest for them, and that is in Christ. Jesus said, "Come unto me all who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." And the inspired apostle said, "He of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption." He is our all in all. In Him we live and move and have our being. Although the little ones find the bed too short for natural comfort and the covering too narrow, they are made to be content with such things as they are given, and to praise God for His goodness, mercy and grace, and to rejoice that they were counted worthy to suffer with Him.

I trust that this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J. B. Farmer

PSALM 147: 5.

Great *is* our Lord, and of great power: his understanding *is* infinite.

CORRESPONDENCE

May 2015,

Mr. Tony R. Horton,

I am Ralph A. Hocutt Jr., the son of Deacon Ralph A. Hocutt Sr. and Agnes Utley Hocutt. Mother was daughter of Elder Walter Roe Utley and Bama Poe Utley. I met my future wife at Shady Grove Primitive Baptist Church outside Jasper, Alabama, when she was 13. Her parents had come over to the association, hoping their daughter Beverly would be impressed with Elder Biggs's (Nashville, Tn.) son Kenneth. I was with Kenneth and must have impressed her more as we married 20 June 1959 by Elder Huff, crying throughout the ceremony.

From age 16, I drove my parents and grandparents to associations in Mississippi, Tennessee, Georgia, Kentucky and N.C. & S.C. until we moved to St. Louis, MO for 1965-1968 due to transfer of function of Federal Government. The P.B. churches in MO and ILL, I considered as "Soft Shell" or Missionary.

Throughout my 77 years I have heard many P.B. ministers (Elder Lambert of Memphis, Elders Spangler& Poynter of Kentucky, Elder Adams of N. Georgia, Elder Adams of California, Elder W.D. Griffin of Fayette, Ala., Elder H.C. Moon of Cullman, Ala., and Elder Louie Hornsby who at age 97, still makes 220 miles away on 2nd, & 4th weekends to preach at Dothan, Ala., on

Fridays and Doerun, Ga., on Saturday and Sundays. We attended Bethel P.B. Church in Doe Run, Georgia.

Elder Griffin appeared to always be looking at me when preaching and every sin of mine came forth as if he could read my mind. Yes, each and every time, regardless of when he preached. I was present when Elder H.C. Moon, who had polio as a child; left his crutches in the stand outside Jasper, Alabama.

My mother was always taking pictures at church meetings/associations. Had a problem getting her to write names on back of pictures. I have her photo album dedicated to P.B. preachers only and multiple photo albums dedicated to those who attended P.B. meetings. One picture she had was of sixteen preachers and I have identified all but one.

A new subject now. I realize obituaries in the Signs are submitted by church clerks or relatives. If I had not attended some of the churches, I wouldn't know what state/city is involved. Also "announcements of Meetings," if I had not attended some of the churches, I wouldn't know what state and of course Dan River Church is known because I have attended it.

My late grandfather, Elder William Jackson Hocutt passed an old Signs of the Times through my parents and I received it and he had given $2.00 to Signs in about 1903.

When my mother passed away, she had 27 boxes of the Signs accumulated by Dad and Mom, my grandparents. Each box had 2 stacks of Signs in the box and box was about 2 feet tall. My wife and I must have spent a year reading these Times, keeping articles that touched us. We read the sermons, experiences of various Elders when they realized they could not resist their calling, even when they felt unworthy.

I look forward to the Signs each month, love donated funds in memory of parents/grandparents and even anonymously.

Once my grandfather Elder Walter Roe Utley was preaching before noon hour and told the deacon if he gets to rambling etc. to let him know. I was about 6 years of age and it was past noon. I said Grandpa, it's time to stop, its past noon, he didn't stop and I got spanked by my parents.

The Signs is the Primitive Baptist periodical, even older than the Remnant of Elder C.C. Morris. Hoyt Sparks took my parents to many churches while we were in St. Louis, Mo., for 3 years. I have purchased just about every book/pamphlet he sells (or got from my parents – Elder Beebe's complete sets). Even have some we get from Mr. Sparks that are no longer in print.

Respectively,
Ralph A. Hocutt, Jr.

Still a sinner, but a believer since my parents started taking me to church (loved lunch on grounds, etc.). However, even though believer, my wife and I have never joined a church, any church, as we feel unworthy, but look forward to being with those who are members.

Continue the Signs of the Times,

many who no longer can attend church for various reasons, can receive joy and "peace" with God by reading the Signs.

Ralph Hocutt,
God Bless the Signs, its
contributors, editors and readers.

Dear Brother Horton,

It is time to renew my subscription to the, "Signs of the Times," for another year. I look forward to getting it every month. May God bless all of you who have a part in publishing this periodical. The check is for 1 year subscription. The rest for whatever it is needed.

In Love and Hope,
Gladys Shelton

VOICES OF THE PAST

ETERNAL LOVE.

Gospel Standard – 1837.

O Love! eternal, rich, and free!
My *s*oul delights herself in thee;
A boundless ocean, without shore,
It was and is, for evermore.

Twas love that gave my soul a place
In Christ, ere time began its race;
Secured in him, and free from blame,
Whilst in myself I'm sin and shame.

'Twas love that moved the eternal King
To take from death its cruel sting:
He bore its pangs— what matchless grace
For sinners vile, and rebels base.

'Twas love designed to set me free
From law, from death, and misery;
And taught my soul her dreadful state,
And made me fear destruction's fate.

'Twas love that pierced me to the heart,
And for my folly made me smart;
Yet bound my wounds, and made me see
What wonders love had done for me.

"Twas love that then made Jesus sweet,
And brought me to his lovely feet,
With glowing heart to weep and tell,
That Jesus had done all things well.

"Twas love that made him hide his face,
That I might further goodness trace;
That, though I'm changeable, yet he
Remains the same eternally.

"Twas love that caused me then to grieve,
And wonder why he did me leave;
Which made me long to hear his voice,
And in his mercy to rejoice.

"Twas love that caused him to appear,
And free my soul from slavish fear;
And taught my faithless heart to see
His banner still was over me.

"Tis love that leads me here below,
Through deep distress and unknown woe;
My path is dark, my foes are strong,
That I can scarcely move along.

"Tis love that does my needs supply;
Yet still I often have to cry,
Is this the way thy children go,
Oppress'd by sin — that cruel foe?

'Tis love that makes me feel its power,
That I should prize my precious Tower;
And lean upon an arm Divine,
And on his mercy e'er recline.

"Tis love, beyond expression great,
That I attempt now to relate;
Yet find I'm lost, and never can
The depths of love eternal scan.

Yet love so great my soul delights;
Unknown in lengths, in depth, in heights;
O when shall I unceasing tell
The love of my Immanuel.

Soon shall I leave this vale of sin;
Dear Jesus, then O take me in;
And fill my soul with love Divine,
And make me sing this love of thine.

Woodhurst, Huntingdonshire.
A Traveller.

HEBREWS 10:15-17.

Whereof **the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before,**

This *is* **the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;**

And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

I PETER 3: 8

"Finally, *be ye* **all of one mind."**

This eminent apostle of our Lord Jesus Christ, in common with all the other apostles of the Lamb, was invested with divine authority to establish in the church of God every principle of faith and order which can ever be lawfully entertained in his kingdom. No religious organization can ever be recognized as a church of Christ, or a branch of the church of Christ, unless standing in the apostles' doctrine, conforming to their decisions, listening to their instructions and accepting all their decisions in judgement on all parts of the law of Christ. The apostle John lays down this rule of judgment, this infallible and everlasting test of fellowship, and criterion by which the saints of God shall know, without the least shade of uncertainty, who of all the professing world are of God, and who are of the world, and not of God. He says, **"We** (that is, the apostles, and the apostolic church, which holds the apostles' doctrine and order,) **are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." "They** (that is, they whose spirit and doctrine are not of God,) **are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them."— 1 John 4: 5, 6.**

To hear the apostles, in a scriptural sense, is to receive their instructions, accept and abide by their decisions in

all they have said, and to obey their injunctions and heed all their admonitions. He that is of God will do all this, and if any who profess godliness do not in this sense hear the apostles, it is because they are not of God, but are of the world. This decision is infallible, whether applied to individuals or to churches. By this rule the church is commanded to "try the spirits," and by it they are to discriminate between truth and error; between the Spirit of God and the spirit of the world, or of antichrist.

In conformity with this unerring rule let us examine the admonition of Peter, which we have placed at the head of this article. It is given as a finality, admitting of no amendment, of no abridgment, of no alteration. "Finally." This word is used not only to express in this place irrevocable decision, but also legitimate deduction from the instructions contained in the context, in which the duties of all the saints to God and to men are distinctly and authoritatively laid down; as citizens of the world, to kings and governors, magistrates and rulers, of wives to husbands, children to parents, and of servants to masters. These are the instructions immediately preceding, and the "finally" of our text is expressive of the general summing up of what they amount to, or the unanimity of consent with which they must be accepted by all who are of God; all who are to be held in fellowship as "elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience," &c.

"Finally, be ye all of one mind." Unanimity of sentiment is indispensable to church fellowship. Of the church, in her original organization at Pentecost, we are informed that her constituents gladly received, or heard, the doctrine of the apostles, that their union was so perfect that they were of one heart and one soul. They on whom God had poured out his Spirit were pricked in their hearts, gladly received the word of the apostles, were baptized in that faith and order continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. They could not possibly be in the latter, if not in the former, for if they were of God they would hear the apostles, according to the infallible rule copied from the apostle John, and if any one of them stood not in the apostles' doctrine, his spirit was of the world, and not of God. No one was allowed to dissent from the apostles' decisions on any one of those positions taken by them, on the plea that he had a right to his opinion independent of the apostles, or of the church of God in which apostolic rule and order are maintained. The apostles have not so decided, that if any man teach otherwise from their instructions that it is only a matter of opinion, and he has a right to such opinion, and his brethren and the church should tolerate such independency. No one is to be recognized as being of God who does not yield every opposite opinion, and bow to the decision of the holy apostles. Paul says, If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, &c., he is proud, knowing nothing; that is, knowing nothing of the things of the Spirit of God. How can he,

if his spirit is of this world, and not of God? No man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man that is in him; even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. They are spiritually discerned, therefore the natural man cannot know them, and consequently he knows nothing, and in his blindness and ignorance he dotes about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, &c. From all such the command of God through the apostles is, "Withdraw thyself," and all who are of God will hear this last, as well as all other of the apostles' commands and decisions, admonitions and exhortations.

As all the fraternity of the household of God are required to be of one mind, as our apostle has decided, then it follows, of course, that no member of the brotherhood has a right, or can be tolerated by the church, in holding sentiments or opinions discordant with the mind of the church, which is based upon the decisions of the apostles. How can the church of God be distinguished from the world, or from antichrist, if there be no unity of faith, no unanimity of senti ment, no agreement in doctrine and practice? It is indispensable to the existence of an orderly gospel church that all her members should be of one mind, and to be of but one mind; it is equally indispensable that all should be of one spirit. If all are born of the Spirit, and led by the Spirit of God, then all will have the mind of Christ, and in that mind there is unity. That mind is always in perfect harmony with all the teachings of the apostles, and will recognize their high authority, as inspired judges of the spiritual tribes, to establish for ever the order of the church of Christ.

But, one demands of us, Have I not a right to my own opinion? Must I pin my faith on the sleeve of another? While we believe that all intelligent beings must have settled convictions and opinions of their own, and as members of the human family no man or set of men has a right to domineer over the conscience or judgment of his or their fellowmen; and while as citizens of states and nations freedom of thought and independence of opinion is the inalienable right of every man, so far as relates to the authority of his fellowmen to control his thoughts, provided, however, that he, in his freedom of thought, does not infringe upon the equal rights of others, by entertaining unwarrantable thoughts or malicious feelings against his neighbors. Yet, while admitting all this independence of thought to men of the world, we at the same time hold and contend that, as a member of the body of Christ, no one has a right to entertain thoughts or opinions independently of the faith of the church to which he belongs. This point the apostle has settled in our text: "Be ye all of one mind." When called out of the world we were commanded to renounce the world and its doctrine, spirit and opinions, and on the profession of faith of Christ we professed to gladly receive the doctrine of the apostles, to take on us the yoke of Christ, to learn of him, and to take his word as the man of our counsel, the standard of our faith and

the rule of our practice. In short, we relinquished all claim to an independent position, and by his will to one another, were baptized into one body, surrendered our individuality, became all one in Christ, a perfect unit; no more our own, for we were bought with a price; members of Christ, and members of one another. No reservation of rights which we did not hold in common with the church of the living God. As to the right of thought, take for example the case of Peter with Simon Magus. How terribly sharp was his rebuke: I perceive that the thought of thy heart is not right. Repent of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.

Upon the plea of independence and right to think differently from the doctrine of the church, how is heresy to be detected and disposed of? The divine rule enjoins on the church to reject an heretic after the first and second admonition. Heresy is understood to be thoughts and words which are opposite to, or not in harmony with, the doctrine of Christ, as laid down by the apostles and held by the church. They were heretics who resisted Paul, as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, and Paul describes them as being of the sort which creep into houses, who lead captive silly women. He says they are heady, high minded, and lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power (or authority over them) thereof, and he adds, From such turn away. Timothy is commanded to "shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness; and their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some." There are many such examples of heresy recorded, and the peremptory command in every case is, "From such withdraw thyself."

Now it must be seen that the church of God has no right to tolerate a diversity of sentiments or opinions on any matter of faith or practice which has been established by the authority of Christ, through his holy apostles. While on every matter only involving personal interests or rights we are admonished to be lenient, kind, forbearing, long-suffering and gentle, we are not allowed to trifle with the order of the church as positively established by divine authority. Those who are unwilling to yield their own independence, or who claim the right to dissent from the rules and authority of Christ in his church, should never be admitted to membership. Except they become as little children they cannot truly enter the kingdom of God; this is an indispensable prerequisite to membership in the church of God. No church can be all of one mind where the rule is not strictly adhered to.

It has been thought by some that there are exceptions to these divinely established rules; that the church has no authority over our worldly matters, such as belong to our domestic or political re lations with mankind. If that be so, why did our Lord require that we render to

Caesar the things that belong to Caesar, and to God the things that belong to God? The apostles have laid down rules which are binding on all christians, to regulate an their social, civil, political and domestic relations in the church and in the world. This fact is overlooked by many, and quite repudiated by others, but it is nevertheless true. They have given no rules for the world to be governed by; the world is not responsible to the church, nor the church to the world; the kingdom of Christ is not of the world, nor are the governments of the World of the church; they are quite seperate and distinct. The apostles only sit on their twelve thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. "Them that are without God judgeth. "All within the precincts of the kingdom of Christ are in their social relations to associate only as the apostles have directed. This department embraces the social relations of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, people and magistrates, rulers and ruled, and we hold that the apostles have clearly laid down and explained to the church of God the laws of Christ, commanding christians to be governed by them. By this law the christian can have but one wife; the parent must provide for those of his household, or he denies the faith. Children must honor and obey their parents; servants must honor and faithfully serve their masters, and every christian, by the law of Christ, is to submit to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king, as supreme, or to the governor, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers and for the praise of them that do well, and every soul is to be in subjection to the higher powers. They are commanded to pay tribute, and, as good law-abiding citizens, render honor to whom honor, and tribute to whom tribute is due.

Therefore if any man seeks to evade the laws of the house of God by denying the right of the church, or of his brethren, to meddle with his politics, or his secret lieges, or oath-bound covenants, it is an evident mark of disloyalty to the King of Zion, and a virtual repudiation of the authority of Christ in his church over his members. Can the admonition of our text be duly regarded if conflicting views be entertained by her members? Is it possible they can all be of one mind if a portion of the members are allowed to deny responsibility to the church, and regard any part of their walk and deportment as being beyond the jurisdiction of the church to which dissenters profess to belong? Can two or more walk together except they are agreed? To be all of one mind in the church, as the divine law requires, can only be practicable where all the members are required to receive and continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, withdrawing from all who depart from the faith.

We cannot repudiate the apostles' instructions, decisions, admonitions and exhortations and still be a church of Christ, nor can we tolerate in our churches such as the apostles command us to withdraw ourselves from, without re-

pudiating them and their doctrine; nor can we repudiate the apostles, as enthroned in judgment over the church of Christ, and still retain Christ as our King; for when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, then shall his apostles also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. If the apostles do not sit over us in judgment, then neither does Christ preside over us as members of his spiritual kingdom.

The church of God is the body of Christ. The necessity of unity in the body, harmony in all the members, is strikingly set forth in the figure of a perfect body. A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways, and if the members of Christ be not all of one mind, where is our stability? If in the body one hand claims to be independent of the body, not moved by the same volition, but by some spasmodic or rebellious impulse, it cannot work in harmony with the other. If one foot resolves to journey southward and the other northward, the rebellion of both against the government of the body would prevent the travel of the whole body. Or, if to compromise the matter, the feet be each in turn to have its way, the unstable body alternately swayed by its refractory members would, like the pendulum of a clock, vibrate back and forth, and make no progress. But the rule to be applied in case of such disorder and schism is, If thy foot offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee; or if it be thy hand, or the eye, or any other member, and let all be of one mind.

Let those who are refractory, if they cannot by gospel rule be reclaimed, go to their own company, where they can enjoy their independence of the body among their kindred spirits. Of the church it is said, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye (all her members) are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe November 1, 1865.)

1834

Brother Beebe: --- I want to write much, but the crowd of business, and the want of firmer health forbids at present. I think the plan of your paper as stated in the prospectus was, first. Jesus Christ set forth. Second. Anti-Christ, exposed.

Now I confess for myself I have some fears, seeing we are yet in the flesh, and considering its weakness; lest through the abundance of smoke, and virulent opposition; we should partially lose our way, and not manifest so much of the disposition of him who was meek; and when he was reviled did not revile again, as we ought towards them that add their inventions to the testimony of God.

I wish, if I know my own heart; to keep at equal distance from seeking to

please, or giving any other than a gospel ground of offence to men: to keep equally clear from using carnal weapons, as turning aside from the truth for fear of them.

I want to present Christ to the view of my fellow men; and I know that when the Pharisees, Sadducee, Essenes, Herodians, and learned Greeks, or the wise scribes and disputers of this world, see him, they will hate him: as he said, **John xv, 24 "but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father."** And the more I am like him, the more they will hate me. — He is the stumbling stone, and rock of offence to his impenitent foes.

He is the man that is an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. An hiding place from the wind of false doctrine. A covert from the storm of persecution, when our foes are very tempestuons round about.

When God's people dwell in a thirsty land, where no water is — where they have been scattered in a dark and cloudy day — when they wander in a wilderness — in a solitary way, hungry, & thirsty, their soul fainting in them; then they cry unto the Lord, and he delivers them.

Christ is to them as rivers of water in a dry place; he gives drink to his people, his chosen. He saith, I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed and my blessing upon thine offspring, and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses.

As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land; when the pilgrim wearied with a long, fatiguing journey, passing through this unfriendly world to the city of God; surrounded with temptations, and dispised by the world, frequently fearing, and often struggling with fleshly lusts, and outward difficulties, feeling his own weakness full of wounds, and sometimes feeble and sore broken, realizing his just desert of wrath as a transgressor of God's flaming law, and often negligent in duty, enduring the hiding of the Father's face for a season. O how sweet, refreshing, and comforting to the soul, to rest under the shadow of Christ. He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Keep me as the apple of thine eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings from the wicked that, oppress me, from my deadly enemies who compass me about. How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God! therefore the children of men at their trust under the shadow of thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; thou shalt make the drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light we shall see light; yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be over past. I will cry unto God Most High; unto God that performeth all things for me. He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up. God shall send forth his mercy and his truth. Christ is the life, and the light of his people. He is their strong habita-

tion whereunto they may continually resort, he hath given commandment to save them, for he is their rock and their fortress; He is their strong refuge: O let my mouth be filled with his praise all the day long. My mouth shall know forth his righteousness, and his salvation all the day, I will go in the strength of the Lord God, I will make mention of his righteousness, even of his only.

Let Christ be my meat, my drink, and my dress,
My portion my all, and my pure righteousness;
Though I dwell among lions, or by ravens am fed,
I can live in the tire while Christ is my head.
My bands will burn off, not scorching a hair;·
The nobles may scoff, while I am in prayer,
In passing the sea, or in Jordan's high stream,
Or the wilderness way, my strength is in him.

I would say to them that are trembling with fear, walk about Zion, and go round about her; tell the towers, thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; for this God is our God forever and ever, he will be our guide even unto death.

We have a strong city: salvation is appointed for walls and bulwarks; the walls are called salvation and the gates praise. For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her.

Your brother in tribulation.
Hezekiah West

THE PRESENT SALVATION OF THE CHURCH

The Lord's people are commanded to pray for daily bread. The type in wilderness holds us to the fact that what we had yesterday will never do for today. To use the type in our preaching means that everything happening to them on that wilderness journey is, in some wonderful way, applicable to us today. Who gave them the manna? If we know who gave them the manna, then, if the type is applicable to us today, we know who gives us our food, spiritually speaking. If they devised, or helped after another devised, then we have a pattern for the church today. If the Lord blessed them, independent of them all, then he likewise blesses us today. The pattern holds good whichever way it was.

It doesn't matter what men say about it, whether those men are in or out of the Old School Baptist church. All of the assertions of men will never produce one scintilla of evidence in the highest court of time, to wit, the church of the

Lord Jesus Christ, that our present salvation is one way or the other. It takes Bible evidence to prove things before this court. Everyone taught of God must have a "thus saith the Lord" for their evidence. What men think will not do. The irrational raging of men against the truth will never satisfy a soul that is exercised in the things of God.

That pattern is given for all time. The things written aforetime were written for our learning. Whose learning? Those that we could reach? No, my God, not that flimsy doctrine. Those that we could proselyte? No, no, none of the proselyting doctrine which would make us twofold the inhabitants of hell. But the things written aforetime were written for our present day learning. This learning belongs to the children of God, and, primarily, it belongs to the Old Baptist people. If we have not learned, both from the written word, and from experience, that the Bread which feeds our hungry souls comes from above, we have not been taught very far by the Lord.

God gives the spirit of prayer, but that is not all that he gives. We likewise have the answer given to our prayer. I do not mean that all our petitions are answered, because they are not all prayers from the Lord. The daily begging for bread is daily answered with Bread. The answers may not seem in mercy sent, but somewhere they will be made clear. If our present salvation was in our hands, and God answered our prayers accordingly, many of us that write and read these lines would not be here to do so. It is certainly a great blessing that God answers the prayers that his Spirit enables us to pray, but it is a great blessing that he does not answer the ones that come from carnal longing.

As I sit here in ponderation on the present status of my own fragile barque and the condition of my dear people, the Old School Baptist, I am made to look in astonishment at the saving grace and marvelous power that has subdued my carnal nature and brought me, as I humbly hope, in meek submission to his prevailing will. In the first place, I would never have been (if I am) an Old Baptist. I did not know how to be one; not knowing what they believed, nor why they believed it; not knowing how to act like one, nor why they acted as they do, if I had or tried to be, I would still be stumbling around trying to mimic the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. But that helplessness is not confined to the beginning of my experience. The warfare has been a daily conflict since its inception; I have had to endure its raging charges from day to day, and from moment to moment, knowing that the next would end in my utter abandonment to the wiles of Satan. Being reduced to desperation and destitution I could never have stemmed the tide, had not the sovereign and eternal Spirit of Almighty God been enlisted on my side, leading, directing, encouraging. That was true yesterday; it is no less true today. With John Newton, it is my soul's delight to sing:

> "Through many dangers, toils and snares,

I have already come:
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far
And grace will lead me home."

And John Newton had the same grace in mind all the way through the hymn. It was sovereign grace that brought him from the drunkard's tavern to the house of the Lord, and it was the same grace that kept him there.

It was the sovereign work of the Lord Jesus Christ that gave Peter in his day, together with the elect family of his time and times to come, a lively hope. This living hope was given them by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. If we have this hope today, it is given us by the same power. We believe today, if we believe, in the same way, and from the same source, that the brethren at Ephesus did (Eph. 1:19, 20), and there isn't a man or woman living, or that has lived, or will yet live, that had the first septillioneth part in their believing. It came about by the same power to these at Ephesus, and to all the elect in Peter's day, as well as in our day. It doesn't differ about the time element; the two thousand years since Christ arose from the dead has not diminished from the power of that resurrection. Christ is as much alive now as he was when he said, **"I *am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forever more, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." (Rev. 1:18)**

To them literally and spiritually, and to us spiritually, there has never been an equal to the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is an experience that Paul and Peter kept referring to. What sweetness and joy and keen anticipation there is in the soul cheering doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. As I write again and again of the dismal scene; as I preach again and again of the trying time through which these dear saints passed; as I blend it all again and again in my picture drawing of the tryst of the soul in its bitter anguish of an absent Lord, I do hope that the trembling jailors and weeping Marys among my many readers may be given to pause in the mad rush of the age in which we are living and to come hither and look into the present beauties of Beulah land.

All the tongues and pens of dull mortality are not sufficient to describe the anguish of the two as they walked to ward Emmaus, or of Mary as she viewed the empty, gaping tomb, thinking that His precious body had been removed by the gardener; or, for that matter, Peter and all those that had travelled with him as He went ministering, giving them to believe that, through His coming into the world, Israel would be restored, or, for that matter (and most importantly) we poor ruined sinners today, as we feel the bitter anguish of our soul after having known and felt the dear Saviour, and then to feel His absence. What a ruined, destitute assembly that turned towards home after his burial. Ah, dear reader, young and old, rich and poor, high and low, how awful, how dreadful it was when Jesus was first absent from your soul.

Did it not have the same effect on you, as it did on the two that walked toward Emmaus, as it did on Mary when He revealed himself to her, as it did on Peter when he sent forth that living epistle? **"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you," 1 Peter 1:3-4.** That hope was in lively exercise at that time. We, the strangers scattered wherever they may be found, have now at this present moment this hope. We have it one day the same as another, all coming about through the power of Christ's resurrection. Well may the Church sing in triumphant praise:

"Who can faint while such a river
Ever flows their thirst t' assauge;
Grace which, like the Lord, the giver,
Never fails from age to age."

And this has been the keynote of the songs and supplication of the dear saints of God down the steeps of time, and it will be our present salvation along this whole journey through, for we shall continue to sing with John Newton,

"The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures."

And, furthermore, if our salvation is of the Lord, as John heard the heavenly hosts singing that it was, and as our daily experience has shown us, we will soon cross the dark river of death, but in that bright and celestial city of God, we will not change songs when we arrive there. We may have learned it, as did Jeremiah, by fire being shut up in our bones; as did Jonah, in the belly of hell with seaweeds around our neck; as did the whole household of faith, with Pharoah behind, the sea in front, and the mountain walls on each side; as did Peter, after finding that his thought of being able to save, not only himself, but Christ; as did Paul, when he counted, one by one, all his vast stores of earthly riches off as dung that he might be found in Christ, but whatever the crucial through which we are brought, our testimony and our song will be,

"It is finished, O what pleasure
Do these charming words afford;
Heavenly blessings without measure,
Flow to us from Christ the Lord;
It is finished, it is finished,
Saints the dying words record."

And the hand of Christ, the footsteps of the flock, the loving letters of

Paul and Peter and John and James and Jude will be in our hand and mind, joy shall be on our countenance, our tear dimmed eyes will be lifted heavenward, and our footsteps will be wending our way toward Him in whose strength and salvation we now are travelling.

Elder W. D. Griffin
July, 1961

ROMANS 8:24-28

For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

But if we hope for that we see not, *then* **do we with patience wait for** *it.*

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* **the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to** *the will of* **God.**

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* **purpose.**

MEETINGS

LITTLE VINE OLDE ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the thirty-eighth session of the Little Vine Olde Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association will be held at the Newfound Primitive Baptist Church meeting house, located on Brier Creek Road in Wyoming County, West Virginia, about twelve miles southwest of Pineville, West Virginia, on the fourth Sunday in August and the Saturday before. The dates are August 22 and 23, 2015.

Singing is scheduled to begin at 10:30 and preaching at 11:00 A.M. each day. It is our hope and trust that the Lord will gather together faithful ministers, brethren and friends to worship Him in Spirit and in truth, and to show forth His praise. If anyone needs more particular directions or information about lodging, please phone 606-474-4327.

Sherry Farmer, Clerk

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 08/2015

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

LOWER MAYO 5TH SUNDAY MEETING

The next 5th Sunday Meeting will be held, The Lord Willing, Sunday, August 30, 2015. Flower Gap Church will Host the meeting. The Meeting House is located at 3841 Flower Gap Rd., Cana, Va. 24317. From US 52, turn west about 5 miles north of Mt. Airy, NC, on Flower Gap Rd. #691, at foot of Fancy Gap Mountain. Go 3.5 miles to church on left.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to meet with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

SKEWARKEY UNION (Eastern Kehukee Association)

Hancocks Church will host the next session of the Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of August 30, 2015. The church is located on Ayden Golf Club Road, near Ayden, North Carolina. Preaching services begin at 10:30 am.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION 159TH ANNUAL SESSION SEPTEMBER 4, 5, 6, 2015

The 159th annual session of the Smith River Association will be held, the Lord willing, at Old Center Church, with Riverside Church as the host Church.

Direction to Old Center Church in Henry county, Virginia.

Those going west on route 57 A in Bassett, turn left at the stoplight on to route 698 (Blackberry Rd.). Go about 3 miles to the stop sign and take a right on route 687 (Stones Dairy Rd.). Go about 1½ miles to the Church on the right. Those going east on route 57 from Patrick county, go about 1 mile after crossing the Henry county line and take a right on route 687 (Stones Dairy Rd.). Go about 3 miles to the church on the left. The church is beside Howells garage.

We invite our Brothers, Sisters, Elders and Friends to be with us.

Tony R. Horton
Association Clerk

PROVERBS 16:23-24.

The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.

Pleasant words *are as* **an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.**

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union will be held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church located on corner of Weatherford Drive and Music Street, Gretna, VA in Pittsylvania County Saturday before the fifth Sunday in August 2015. The song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton, Clerk
Staunton River Primitive
Baptist Association

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

Big Meadows Primitive Baptist Church will host the fifth Sunday Meeting on August 30, 2015. Singing begins at 10:00 AM and preaching service at 10:30 AM.

From 1-40, take Hwy 87 South at Graham towards Pittsboro. Go 14.8 miles and cross Cane Creek. Turn right onto first road past Cane Creek which is Greenhill Road. Go 3.7 miles and turn left on Old Switchboard Road. Church is 1.3 miles on right.

From Hwy 64, take Hwy 87 North about 7 miles and turn left on Castle Rock Road. Church is about 5 miles on left.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Joann Self, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 2015

Posey Potter, VA	5.00
Jane Myrick, FL	5.00
Dorothy Dotson, VA	5.00
Gladys Shelton, NM	35.00
Mary Poff, VA	10.00
James Shelor, VA	5.00
Louie C. Hornsby, GA	15.00
Nancy Pollack, NC	10.00
Sarah Sidbury, NC	10.00
Garland Stanley, NC	10.00
Greg Webb, IL	25.00

OBITUARIES

BROTHER DEACON TALMADGE FRANKLIN VAUGHN, JR.

I will attempt to write the obituary of Brother Talmadge Vaughn, Jr.

We at Sardis Primitive Baptist Church are saddened by the passing of a dear Brother Talmadge Vaughn.

Brother Talmadge was born June 10,1930 to the late Talmadge Franklin Vaughn, Sr., and Edna Shelton Vaughn. Talmadge was the founder and owner of Vaughn Motors, where he remained an active and productive part of the business. One of his pride and joys was

his 1964 Mustang convertible, he spent 13 years restoring.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a sister, Doris Ann Snyder.

He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Jean Wilson Vaughn; sons Talmadge Franklin "Frank" Vaughn and wife Kelly, Todd Wilson Vaughn and wife Lisa; daughter Vicki Vaughn Boyer and husband, Richard; grandchildren, Lori Warren and husband, Bradley, Bradford Gulla, Lauren Vaughn, Taylor Vaughn, Morgan Vaughn, Nick Vaughn; great-grandson, Vincent Warren and a brother, Rev. Phillip Vaughn and wife, Nancye.

Funeral services were held Tuesday February 3, 2015 at Sardis Primitive Baptist Church by Elder David Minter and Mr. Phillip Vaughn. Interment followed in the church cemetery.

Brother Talmadge asked for a home at Sardis June 26th 1988. He was baptized July 24, 1988 in Cascade Creek by Elder David Minter and Brother Deacon Allen McBride assisting.

The Church will miss his strong and inspirational voice singing out the treasured Old Baptist Hymns. He enjoyed singing, but most of all he enjoyed hearing the Word of God. He loved Sardis Church, he was known to go to the Church alone during the week and pray. He said it gave him so much peace.

Brother Talmadge will be missed for all the support and work he did for the Church, the members and whatever needed to be done he was there.

In the last few several years his health was declining, he never gave up. He was at Church as long as his health would let him. Lots of meetings we could see he did not feel good; but like a good soldier he kept pushing forward.

Brother Talmadge was Blessed with wonderful dreams. Shortly, before he passed, he shared a beautiful dream with several people. In the dream, he saw a bright light, as bright as the sun. In the center of this light he saw Christ. The image of Christ spoke and said "I come in peace."

Brother Talmadge was dedicated to his family. He loved his family with all his heart. Brother Talmadge will be greatly missed by his Church, family and friends.

It is, therefore, resolved that a copy of this obituary be sent to his family, one to the Signs of the Times for publication, and be recorded in our church record.

Done by order of the Church in conference May 23, 2015.

Elder David Minter, Moderator
Julia Minter, Clerk

ISAIAH 12:5-6.

Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things: this *is* known in all the earth.

Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great *is* the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
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HYMN

From every stormy wind that blows,
From every swelling tide of woes,
There is a calm, a sure retreat;
'Tis found beneath the mercy-seat.

There is a place where Jesus sheds
The oil of gladness on our heads, —
A place of all on earth most sweet;
It is the gracious mercy-seat.

There is a place where spirits blend,
Where friend holds fellowship with friend;
Though sundered far, by faith they meet
Around one common mercy-seat.

Ah! whither could I flee for aid
When tempted, desolate, dismayed?
Or how the hosts of hell defeat,
Had suffering saints no mercy-seat?

There, there, on eagle's wings to soar,
And sin and sense molest no more;
And heaven comes down our souls to greet,
And glory crowns the mercy-seat.

Stowell.

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EDITORIAL

"In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." Zechariah 13:1. "And it shall be in that day, *that* living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one." Zechariah 14: 8-9.

Elder J. B. Farmer

What is that day, referred to by the Prophet? The true answer must come down from above. For, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." None is able, of himself in nature, to know anything about God's spiritual kingdom. Many think they may find out these things by study and reasoning, and cannot acknowledge the necessity of revelation, which would be to the glory of God. Those in the flesh only seek their own glory, but God has promised that He would not give His glory to another. But God's little ones, like little children, desire that God may be exalted above all, and are made to look to Him for all things. They are taught that He, Jesus, of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. He is all in all to His people.

That day spoken of by the prophet, I am made to believe, is the day of the Lord Jesus Christ when He yielded Himself to wicked men to mock, scourge, spit upon, beat, torture and crucify Him; the day when He poured out His life's blood unto death, and laid down His life for His beloved bride; the day when all the types and shadows, and the prophesies concerning Him and His great sacrifice were fulfilled; the day when the law was fulfilled to the jot and the tittle, and the day the justice of God was satisfied. That is the day when Jesus offered

Himself up to God as the sinless spotless Lamb of God, and the day when, by that one offering, He perfected forever them that were sanctified. That is the day when the earth trembled, the rocks rent, and darkness covered the face of the earth in shame. That is the day when Jesus destroyed him who had the power of death, even the devil. That is the day when Jesus completed the work of salvation in atoning for all the sins of all of God's elect that ever lived or would live on this earth; the day that all their sins were forgiven, and all their unrighteousness was cleansed. The day that their sins were removed from them as far as the east is from the west, never to be remembered against them forever. Surely the fullness of that which He did for His people could never be fully expressed if one were given to write down the details of them forever.

One hidden prophesy of what God would do on that day was expressed in the book of Genesis in the very beginning of creation. The Lord God said to the serpent, "For I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed; and it shall bruise thy head, and thou shall bruise his heel." I am made to believe that the serpent is Satan, the woman is the Church, the seed of Satan is his offspring, the seed of the woman is Christ, and that Christ shall bruise the head of Satan with a deadly wound, and that Satan shall bruise the heel of Christ with a deadly wound. We see this fulfilled on that day when Jesus finished the work that His Father gave Him to do, which is this: of all that the Father gave Him, He should lose nothing. Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost, and to redeem them with His own precious blood. **"In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness."**

Jesus is the fountain, and His blood is that which came forth from the fountain, and the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem are those to whom the fountain was opened. But who does the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem represent? Many say this is speaking specifically of the nation of the Jews who shall believe on Jesus as a separate people from the Gentiles. How can this be true when the apostle Paul, being moved by the Holy Spirit declared this? "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye *be* Christ's, then ye are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." The house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem are Abraham's seed, and all who belong to Christ (no longer separated by nation, status or gender) are Abraham's seed, so the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem must refer to all the saints of God in all generations. There is one fold and one shepherd. The fold is comprised of all the elect saints, whether called Jews or Gentiles, and their one shepherd is the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

Another prophesy of the opening of the fountain, I must believe, is the account of Moses striking the rock in the wilderness. The people gathered them-

selves together and chode against Moses and Aaron because there was no water for them and for their cattle in the desert. And Moses and Aaron went to the Lord, and Moses was told to take his rod and to speak to the rock, and that the rock would give forth his water. "And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also." Instead of speaking to the rock, Moses, in disobedience, smote the rock with the rod. Consider the scene of the crucifixion of Christ, and the event of the piercing of His side. The soldier did this to ascertain if Jesus were truly dead. When he thrust in his spear, there came out both blood and water. Having seen how blood so easily mixes with water, I have often wondered how one could detect both water and blood if they were mixed together, and were coming forth at the same time. We see that Moses smote the rock twice. Could it be that the soldier did the same? One thrust would have brought forth blood, and the second would have brought forth water.

The blood is for atonement, for the forgiveness of sins. Water is for cleansing, for the purging of uncleanness. One place it is written, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." We have need not only of the shed blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of our sins, but also of His living water to cleanse away all our filthiness of the flesh. This is what Jesus came to do, and He did it upon Calvary's tree.

Another prophesy concerning Jesus and His living waters is found in the 47th chapter of the book of Ezekiel. Ezekiel the prophet was brought to the door of the house, and saw waters issuing out from under the threshold. I am made to believe that the house is the throne of God, and that the waters are living waters that flow to all the household of faith. **"And it shall be in that day, *that* living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be."** The former sea, to me, represents all the saints that would ever live after the death of Christ; and the hinder sea represents all the saints that ever lived before Jesus laid down His life for his people. Summer and winter, to me, represent all times during His reign in the hearts of His saints. Ezekiel was brought through the waters that were at first to the ankles, then to the knees, then to the loins, then it was a river that he could not pass over. The grace of God is greater than all our sins. And Ezekiel was told, "And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh." The living waters come to the children of God, and all that are touched by the living waters shall live and be healed. Jesus always came

and sought out His own, and everywhere He found them, He healed them and gave them life, even eternal life.

"And the Lord shall be king over all the earth:" Many say the Lord is not now reigning over all the earth. They say that if we would only look around, we would see wickedness abounding in the earth. They say that the devil is having his day now, but that there is a day coming when his kingdom shall be defeated, and only then shall the Lord be king over all the earth. They go on to say that the day is coming when the Lord shall establish His literal kingdom here on earth, and finally reign. Those who say these things do not see the work of God in their midst. God has never been defeated. He has never been frustrated. He has always done all His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and shall ever do it. He and His people are reigning over their enemies spiritually now. God is being glorified in their midst. His kingdom comes not by observation, but the kingdom of God is within you. Jesus reigned from the beginning, and reigned even while nailed to the tree, and shall reign forever.

"In that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one." When Jesus suffered and died, He broke down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile and made of both one flock. None may boast, in truth, of his national heritage or standing in the world, because in Christ those things are meaningless. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Written in love in hope of eternal life, I trust.

Elder J.B. Farmer,

VOICES OF THE PAST

CALL TO THE MINISTRY
Elder Peter Branstetter
Curryville, MO June 13, 1887

Dear Brethren:

I will now give some of the exercises of my mind, and impressions made on my poor heart to preach the gospel, and to tell poor sinners that Jesus is a precious Savior.

The thought of preaching gave me trouble for a long time, because the impressions were not made visible, but only in a vision of the night, when the Lord spoke to me, not in an audible voice, but by His Spirit. But we are informed in God's word that "In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men".

"Then He openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction.–Job 33:15-16." This and many other Scriptures have given me much comfort, when I have been made to doubt whether the Lord had ever pardoned my sins or not.

Yet looking back to the time when faith presented Jesus to me in all His divine glory, I have been encouraged to try to tell a dying world that Jesus is the Savior of poor, lost sinners. And the

glory, power, wisdom, love and mercy of God were so suitably adapted to the condition of poor sinners, that it filled my soul with reverential fear. But then difficulties presented themselves, and my mind would return from those heavenly thoughts and take a view of my sinful self, and I would say, "No, God never called such a creature as I to preach his gospel." I was very poor, had a small family to support, and nothing with which to do it except my own labor, and nothing to be expected from the brethren. The majority of the old preachers were rich and preached against the brethren helping the minister in any way, which was to their own injury and the injury of the church.

Brethren and sisters, read the ninth chapter of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, and see if you have done your duty to the ministry.

As poor as I was, the Lord blessed me with a Testament, which I carried in my pocket daily, reading at every interval, while at work. And I read where Paul says, "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise." The obligation would return with double force to my mind until sleep left me at night; my pillow would be wet with tears, and my very soul heave with groanings that could not be uttered. Yet I felt that I could not be the man, for I was too ignorant and illiterate.

By this time six years had rolled around, and in order to get rid of my trouble in this matter I concluded to go to California. So in the spring of 1850 I got my outfit and, with my Bible in my pocket, started, leaving my loving wife and three little children behind. Every day I traveled, for over four months, brought more and more to my view the divine power and wisdom of God in the creation of the world, and of His discriminating grace and mercy to the sons of men, in giving them a hope in Christ of a glorious inheritance, incorruptible. Then I saw the bustle of men after the riches of this world, and the depravity of the human heart developed in every perceivable way, and in the midst of all this confusion the very breathing of my soul was, "Lord, have mercy on me, and deliver me from the evils of this world," for I felt that I was a runaway from God.

When I was alone in the mountains, and retired for a night's repose, with my head on a rock for a pillow, under the green boughs of the lofty cedars, the wild beasts prowling around and with their hideous cries making the night still more gloomy — with these surroundings the lovely Jesus was presented to my view more glorious than ever before, in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, (His church) holding the seven stars (His ministers) in His right hand. His power was their protection, His grace their strength, and His mercy their comfort. I was made to cry out in the language of Thomas, "My Lord and my God." I felt then that I could do all things through Jesus, and I promised the Lord that if He would preserve my life until I returned home, I would love, serve and honor Him in every duty presented.

For me to have commenced to

speak of Jesus there, it seemed, would be presumption, for preaching was not so much as heard of there, and I was easily lulled into a disposition of procrastination. In July 1851, with my pack on a mule, I started for home, and crossed the rugged mountains and lonely plains under the protection of that God whose love and mercy never fail to those that fear Him. On reaching home, September 14, I found my family all alive and well, at which my poor soul was made to rejoice. I felt that the Lord had answered my prayer in permitting me to return home; and I felt under ten thousand obligations more to discharge my duty in the house of God, still the way was not yet clear.

I had been at home only a few days when I learned that the two preachers belonging to our church had gotten into a difficulty which threatened the dissolution of the church. As there were only a few members and I was young, it was too great an undertaking for me to attempt anything like preaching there, so I concluded to call for a letter of dismission and go back to the church where I was baptized. The letter was granted and the church dissolved without settling the difficulty.

This circumstance gave rise to another close investigation of myself. To see brethren in the ministry, whom I so dearly loved, and under whose preaching my soul had been filled to overflowing, bring reproach upon themselves and the cause they had professed, even to the scattering of the flock, caused me to have many serious and bitter reflections.

I came to the conclusion that the impressions I had had to defend the gospel were produced by the pride of my natural heart, and that in the future I should be content with what the Lord had given me, that is, the pardon of my sins. And in order to wear off my impressions to preach Jesus to sinners, I concluded to hold my letter, and read my Bible, thinking that I could worship God at home as well as anywhere else. Much to my sorrow I blundered along for five years.

Sore temptations, trials, afflictions and doubts attended every step of my way. Out of the communion of the church, from under the watch care of the brethren, I became much depressed in spirit. I had about come to the conclusion that I had been mistaken in the whole matter.

Elder William Davis had an appointment to preach at my father's, and my wife and I went to the meeting. But the preaching did not make much impression on my mind. He had an appointment also in the evening, near us, and he continued the subject of the forenoon. He commenced with the Christian's exercises of mind, and ere I was aware I got so full I could hardly keep my seat. He then pointed out the hopes and prospects of the children of God, and spoke of the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, and of their incorruptible inheritance. I felt as though the very doors of heaven were opened and the glory of the Lord burst upon us with Jesus in the midst; every face was wet with tears. I then realized the language of the Apostle Paul —

"Whether in the body, I cannot tell," and I realized things that my broken language has never been able to express. I arose to my feet, took Brother Davis by the hand and told him that I was a runaway from God and could stay away no longer.

My wife had a hope before we were married, but her people all being. Presbyterians and bitterly opposed to the Primitive Baptists, she had never united with the church. At the next meeting, when the opportunity was given to any who wished to unite with the church, my wife and I offered ourselves, and we were received. I then felt like talking, and did talk of Jesus and His salvation, how He had brought me through the fiery furnace and the deep waters of temptation and affliction.

Yes, dear brethren and sisters, "The eternal God is our refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms," and the poor, little child of God can never finally fall and be lost. For by one offering the blessed Jesus hath perfected forever them that are sanctified from the world, by the quickening power and influence of the Spirit, and made us lively stones, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto God by Jesus Christ. And there are diversities of gifts, but all by the same Spirit; and every gift is made manifest to the church by the discharge of the duties the Spirit points out for the members to do.

Notwithstanding my weakness and ignorance, my duty was so impressed upon me that I could think of nothing else, day or night; and when opportunity was given, or I was called upon to open or close the meetings and I refused, it would give me trouble, for I had promised the Lord that I would try to glorify His name in my body and spirit which are His. When I went forward it was in fear and trembling, but the Lord knows our weakness; and when I had thus gone forward I would leave the meeting house with a calm resignation to the will of the Lord, feeling joyful in spirit that I had given vent to my feelings.

On the fourth Saturday in February 1859, the church licensed me to exercise my gift, and in a few months there were solicitations by brethren and friends from every neighborhood for me to come and preach, and with reluctance I would consent for them to make appointments for me. I soon found myself perfectly absorbed in trying to proclaim the everlasting gospel of the Son of God, traveling far and near. I felt that I was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, not to the dead sinner. The apostle says, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." The gospel then, being spiritual, must be received in the light of the Spirit; for "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

The man that preaches the gospel is made to do, even as was Paul; "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shinned in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge

of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." And having this qualification, the man called of God is ready for the work of the ministry, without the aid of theological schools, or taking a test oath as I was forced to do, which was imposed on ministers of Christ by men of corrupt hearts.

In the commencement of my ministry, I found myself amid the din of war and the clash of arms, but this did not turn me to the right or to the left. I was cast into prison three times by the Federal forces, and once dragged out of the stand, menaced with cocked revolvers and carried away to prison. But all this did not deter me; I felt that God was my protector. I believed that if He had a work for me to do, all the infernal powers of Satan could not frustrate it, nor destroy me.

In April 1864, I was regularly ordained to the gospel ministry by Elders William Davis, William Priest and T. P. Rogers. Amid all the strife and persecution God has preserved my life, and enabled me to face all the opposition that has ever been brought to bear against me. "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name," for His mercy to me, a poor sinner.

Elder Peter Branstetter
Curryville, Mo.,
June 13, 1887.

CHARACTER SKETCH of Elder Peter Branstetter

There is no task, perhaps, more difficult and yet more pleasant than to undertake to present in words the history of man's life, even if it be but to note a few of the many incidents by which the real character is to be understood. In the fear of the Almighty God, I hope not to say anything that would lead the reader to believe or think of this truly great man, of whom I am writing, above what he ought to think, or to leave anything out that would lessen the admiration that so illustrious a man as Elder Branstetter justly merited, and in which he was held by those who knew him.

It is a sad mistake in the judgment of men, when only those are called great who are brought into notice by their own pretenses, endeavoring to immortalize themselves. While it is right for every man and woman to strive to be the most useful in all the many relations of life that may surround each of them, yet if such acts are for no other purpose than to gratify a desire for fame and wealth, they cannot be said to be Christian works. Such works lack that spirit of self-denial which was so prominent in the whole life of our dear Redeemer, and has been followed by His children through all the trials and troubles of this life.

In this particular it may be said that none of God's children in this age followed more closely the example of Christ than did Elder Branstetter. The writer has often heard him say, in speaking of the difficulties of the Christian life, that we should not murmur with the prom-

ises of God before us of a blessed immortality, and with the gracious evidence in our poor hearts that in a short time all our troubles would be over and we would enjoy that rest which God has provided for His children — the purchase of the blood of Christ.

I never knew a man who was a stronger believer in the sovereignty and immutability of God than Elder Branstetter. We are often told by conditionalists that if they believed in the doctrine of God's sovereignty and predestination, they would take their fill of sin. This idea was not true in the case of Elder Branstetter. Neither do I believe it is true in the case of any truly converted soul.

Elder Branstetter had very limited opportunities of attending school, and grew to manhood illiterate. After he received a hope in the forgiveness of his sins, he was very anxious to become acquainted with the scriptures and to know what the Redeemer said in reference to the salvation of His people. It was with great difficulty that he began the task of reading the word of God, but with a dictionary to aid him in pronouncing, he slowly, but surely, acquired an extensive knowledge of the Bible. He believed, and often said, that the Bible contained everything that was necessary for the church to know, both in faith and practice.

Elder Branstetter, in his public speaking, was very positive, and some thought him a little rough. This, however, was a mistake that grew out of not being acquainted with his disposition. He was one of those earnest, zealous, kind of preachers who tried to get every Christian to understand the doctrine of Christ, which he believed to be necessary to peace and fellowship in the church.

A difficulty came up in the Cuivre-Siloam Association in the year 1875, which finally resulted in a division of several of the churches. Elder Branstetter was chosen moderator of the association that same year. He had often said to the writer that he plainly saw some of the preachers and lay members in the association were leading off into false doctrine, which would finally bring division.

So he set to work with all his power to explain and show the churches the difference between the doctrine of Christ and the new "Means" doctrine of antichrist that was then being preached in some of the churches. But in spite of all he could say or do, the separation came and the scriptural truth was demonstrated that they (the Means Baptists) "went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us." He often said that this trouble in the churches was one of the greatest trials of his life — to see brethren and sisters in whom he had the utmost confidence, going off after strange doctrine.

But in taking a different view of the matter, he said that it was all right; that God had told us there should be false teachers in the last days who would draw away disciples after them. His faith was unshaken in God's promise that he would save his people from their sins.

Elder Branstetter's travels in the ministry were very extensive, and his

endurance in this direction showed him to be a man of wonderful constitution as well as determination. He might have said with the eminent Paul that what he found to do with all his might.

At one time he had quite a trial of mind in reference to a church called Sand Run, Lincoln County, Missouri, of which he was then pastor. He lived on a farm, had quite a large wheat harvest and was very hard at work, being scarce of hands, and he began to think that he could not leave his work to go to meeting. This caused him much trouble. Having a very faithful wife, he told her his conclusions. After he went to the field she rode out on horseback and found a hand to work in his place. So, late Friday evening he started to the meeting, which was forty miles away. He traveled until late at night and on Saturday morning resumed his journey.

When within five miles of the church his horse was taken very sick. After doctoring him for some time he decided that the horse would die. He tried to hire a horse from a man who lived nearby, but failed. Feeling determined to fill his appointment; he resumed his journey on foot, and was there in time for the meeting Sunday morning. To his surprise his horse got well and was brought on to the church, and he was able to reach home by midnight.

This is only one of many such instances that occurred during his ministry of over thirty years. I speak of this particular case to give the reader some idea of the self-denial and fortitude of this man of God. He did not wait for some church to promise him a salary, or give him a reward for his services, but trusting in the Savior's power and promises, he felt that all would be right, and that God blessed His children to discharge of their duty. He did not believe that God ever called hirelings to preach the gospel, and he was very prompt to warn the churches everywhere against those religious hirelings that Christ called "wolves in sheep's clothing."·

He often said that the greater part of all the troubles in the church of Christ was caused by false teachers getting into the fold of God who were prophesying for reward and divining for money. At the same time he frequently told his churches that it was their bounden duty to look after the temporal needs of their ministers.

He frequently complained of the negligence of the churches toward their preachers, not in reference to himself, for he was blessed with plenty, but for those faithful preachers who were very poor and very willing to make every sacrifice for the truth's sake. The writer had often conversed with Elder Branstetter on this subject, and he said that the ministers of Christ were placed in a very peculiar position. They had to guard the churches against intruders and money hunters on the one hand, and exhort them to their duty to the true minister on the other. And he believed it to be the duty of the servants of Christ to do both.

In his last days Elder Branstetter frequently said that he could see quite an improvement among the churches of his acquaintance in their liberality to their preachers, as compared with what it

was when he began preaching, and that he hoped the time was near at hand when the Primitive Baptists would come fully up to the Bible rule in this important matter.

He did not think that indolence or extravagance was becoming in a preacher, and thought every true minister should labor with all the ability he possessed to promote the cause of truth in whatever way God would enable him, whether by privations, or troubles, or necessities, and that his motto should be the same as was Paul's - "I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ," being assured that he who had Christ possessed the true riches, an inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled and that fades not away. He often said in his preaching that he would not give his little hope of salvation through Christ for all this world.

How very different was the preaching of Elder Branstetter on practical religion, and the preaching that is so common in this age of the world, in which sinners are told that they must serve God in order to become His children, while they are yet dead in their sins. He exhorted all saints to obey God because they were His children, and that Christ required them to follow Him. He often declared that the dead sinner could no more change his heart by good works than the apple tree could be changed by the fruit it bore. While good works were an evidence of a change of heart, they did not produce that change. In this particular he thought the Arminians had the cart before the horse.

I wish to make a reference to a sermon the writer once heard Elder Branstetter preach on the watch-care that every Christian should have over himself, and especially those in the ministry. In the course of his remarks he said, by way of comparison, that a cracked jar never afterwards rang clear; so with the Christian who gives over to the flesh and falls a victim to false doctrine or bad habit. While they may see their error and turn from it, yet full confidence is seldom, if ever, restored. This being true, he insisted that all of God's children should heed the admonition of the apostle in which he said to the church — "Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." The remark that a cracked jar never rang clear any more should rest on the mind of every Christian.

Elder Branstetter was very much opposed to Baptists joining any of the many, secret orders that are now in the world, and some have thought that he was a strong enemy of those societies. This was not true, so far as the world was concerned. He has often said to the writer that if the world wanted such things let it have them, but he thought Primitive Baptists should take the Bible for their guide, and that all such things are positively forbidden. He thought that the church was enough for every one of God's people, and that by joining such societies no Christian can keep himself unspotted from the world. He often said that if the intention of such societies, as some would claim, was for protection in this life, it showed lack of confidence on

the part of Christians in that God who owns and controls the earth and all that is in it.

His strongest point in preaching was on the sovereignty of God, and to this point he would direct the minds of his audience in speaking of temporal blessings as well as spiritual, man being dependent upon God, not for his eternal salvation only, but for every earthly blessing; that the scriptures directed the saint to look to and trust in God for every good as well as every perfect gift. This was one reason why he claimed that the doctrine of humanly devised means was contrary to the scriptures, and could not be true from the fact that the blessing of God's grace in the salvation of poor, lost sinners was not dependent upon the act of fallen man; that for this reason, if no other, the gospel was good news to those who had realized that they were destitute of anything to commend them to God and His love.

No man, perhaps, ever lived who rejoiced more in the gospel than Elder Branstetter. He seemed to fully realize that the gospel of Christ presented a full and complete Savior, a kind Protector and a rich Benefactor, who could bless and none could curse, and could sustain and protect His children in all the privations and trials they had to meet in this life. This faith, I think, was what enabled this worthy man of God to stand firm against all the strong opposition with which he had to meet during his entire ministry.

S. A. Elkins

Middletown, Mo., December 1891.

1876 - Blessed Are The Poor In Spirit

By WM. M. Smoot, December, 1876

"Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Matthew v. 3.

In the midst of numerous and varied thoughts, exercises of mind, and points of experience, the condition presented by this language of the Savior is from time to time forcibly realized by His people. While the Scribes and Pharisees of our day, as in other days, are rich in their own works, and boast of them with pride and without shame, the poor, despondent, tempest-tossed, troubled and afflicted saint is brought to the place where the words of the Savior reach him, to raise him from the dust and sit him with princes.

How often in our temporal travel do we feel the utter barrenness and poverty presented here; incapable in and of ourselves of thinking a single good thought, with no good thing dwelling in our flesh, we are taught to know that we are nothing and less than nothing, and altogether vanity. Yet when the Lord brings one low He will lift him up. He declares "I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand."

One is brought to find that he is altogether vile, unholy and unclean; and yet, **"As the hart planteth after waterbrooks, so planteth my soul after Thee, O God."**

In traveling among my brethren I meet with many who, while they love to hear their brethren talk, complain that

they cannot talk, they are too poor in fluency of speech to talk to the comfort or instruction of their brethren. I have received many letters from brethren which are rich in Christian experience and instruction, who complain of their poverty of mind, and of their (as it appears, to them) inability to write. Indeed, this seems to be the feeling generally among brethren with whom I correspond. I received a letter some time since from a very dear brother in Missouri, in which is the following expression: "My sheet is about full, such as it is, and I will close, hoping will receive it as a very poor epistle from a very poor one." Is not here one of the "poor in spirit?" We seem to come so far short of our privilege, the life that we live is contrary to what we think the life of a Christian should be, it appears to us so often that there is an utter absence of spiritual good in all that we say, do and think.

One attends meeting; it appears to him that he is in such a cold and barren state, and that the word does him, good, he goes out among his brethren, he is so poor and unprofitable that he cannot talk to them, he takes his pen to write, and finds that it is so hard for him to express what he thinks that he lays it down in despair. Brethren seem to be so far ahead of him in knowledge, in faith, in love, and in all of the fruit of the Spirit. He does not know how to learn; he turns to the Bible, and it appears that he knows nothing in it as he ought to know, while it is often to him a sealed book. Vile, weak, helpless, ignorant and blind, he is a beggar poor at mercy's door for every temporal and spiritual good.

The Savior in the text declares this class of people "blessed;" [not will be blessed if; but already blessed,] "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." This explains the reason that throughout our acquaintance among them, and in all their writings, we find them to be "poor in spirit." Have we not here a comfortable hope that from this source flows that feeling of poverty, barrenness of mind, unprofitableness in the service of our God, that is so often and continually experienced by us? If so, it is a blessing thus to feel. Though "poor in spirit," the kingdom of heaven is theirs. It is a kingdom which is not of this world, and its blessings are eternal; the feast which God has prepared upon His holy mountain for them that love Him, the "fat things full of marrow," "the wine on the lees well refined," the joys of everlasting life. the glory of the eternal God. "The poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind," are brought from "the streets and lanes of the city," the wanderer "in the highways and hedges" is compelled to come, "even as many as the Lord our God shall call." The bright portals of eternal glory open before them, and the light of heaven shines upon them forever. "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe all tears from their eyes."

Yours in Gospel fellowship,
WM. M. Smoot

Occoquan, Va.,
December 19, 1876.

"WHOSOEVER WILL"

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." - Revelation xxii, 17.

This portion of the inspired record is often cited as sustaining the doctrine of the freedom of the sinner to accept or reject the grace of God; which according to that system only offers conditions of salvation which are not effective without the consent of the sinner, who must at least accept the offered favor. If this theory is sustained by even one passage of that testimony which God has given, then it is true, and all opposing doctrines are overthrown. But if it is not thus supported, then no sophistry of men can make it true. It can be of no advantage to hold any false sentiment, for it will not become true by age; nor yet can skillful argument and devoted zeal remedy its falsehood. Therefore, let the text be considered in its connections as written by the immediate direction of the Holy Spirit, and may the grace of God enable us and every reader to hear with submissive reverence what the Lord speaks; and in the discussion of this subject "Let God be true, but every man a liar."

It must not be forgotten that all this wonderful revelation which is written by John is the testimony of Jesus Christ, which is the spirit of prophecy. — See Rev. xix. 10. Then it has its proper application to the body of Christ, which is his church, redeemed out of every nation; and any interpretation of its figurative language must be erroneous if it is not consistent with the plain record of divine truth in the Bible. But it will only be necessary at present to candidly consider the immediate context to see the error of the application of the expression in the text as appealing to dead sinners to "come," either to the church or to any other place. Twice in the preceding portion of this chapter the Lord announces (in verses seven and twelve) that he comes quickly. Then in verse sixteen he gives the seal of his own name, Jesus, to signify the genuineness of the message. To this the Spirit and the bride respond in the words of the text.

There is always perfect harmony with the will of God in the prayer indited by the Spirit; therefore the Spirit says, "Come." There is nothing which can afford to the church (which is the bride in this text) such fullness of joy as the coming of her Lord. Hence, she always responds as here written, and repeated in verse twenty, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." It is worthy of special observation that the Spirit and the bride speak with one voice in saying "Come." There is no discord, and no argument is necessary to convince the bride that his coming is desirable. In all the fervor of glowing love she responds to his word with the rapture of his holy Spirit, "Come." This is the language which peculiarly characterizes the bride, the Lamb's wife.— See chapter xxi. 2, 9.

"And let him that heareth say, Come." In this expression the Spirit and the bride agree. The liberty is freely ac-

corded to everyone that heareth to unite in this effectual fervent prayer. Throughout this book a very special peculiarity of those addressed is stated in the fact that an ear to hear is given them, and only he that hath an ear is commanded to hear the message of the Spirit to the churches. As none can hear but such as are made alive by the quickening power of the Spirit of God, only they who are led by that Spirit are included in this expression. In a natural application this language would not include one but such as are alive, so the distinction is clearly marked in the spiritual application; none but such as hear are authorized or permitted to say, "Come."

It is God that worketh in every one that hath an ear, not only to will, but also to do of his good pleasure. Everyone who hears the voice of the Son of God, in that hearing is made alive; for he is the Lord from heaven, a quickening Spirit; and the words which Jesus speaks are Spirit and they are life. Only such as are thus made alive have that eternal life which Jesus gives to his sheep; and they alone have the will to pray for the coming of the Lord. Hence, it is evident that the Spirit of Christ dwells in any one who really desires his coming. This is in harmony also with the assurance given in Hebrews ix. 28, "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." It is enjoined upon him that heareth to say, Come; and every hearer feels that all his salvation and all his desire is embraced in that prayer for the manifest coming of the Lord, because "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." — Col. iii. 4. They who hear the life-giving word of God are all made thus to unite in the longing and urgent petition of the bride, the whole church of the redeemed, in praying the Lord to come. They have learned by sore experience that they cannot come to Jesus in their own strength or by will. Their only gleam of hope is that Jesus will come to them, as the Samaritan in the parable came to the half-dead sufferer. — Luke x. 33. It would have been cruel mockery to exhort this poor man to come to a hospital which was at Jerusalem. He could not get there. But his benefactor "came where he was," and brought relief.

So Jesus comes to the poor and needy and saves them when they "were yet without strength." Then when life and power have been given to the dead sinner, he has the will to unite in earnestly praying the Lord to come in the fullness of sovereign grace and evermore abide in his heart. In this expression of the text there is not only liberty given to every hearer to say, Come, but it is enjoined as the duty of all such thus to pray. If that desire is in the heart of any one, it is because he hears the voice of Jesus; and all such have received life. — John v. 25.

"And let him that is athirst come." Here, again, a specific character is expressly defined, and it is precisely the same whom Jesus called in the last day of the feast of tabernacles, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.– John vii. 37. The thirsting is certainly a living one, for the dead do not thirst. But this direction discriminates still more

closely; for there are none even of the living included in its address but such as thirst. In a literal sense it would be manifest folly to claim that anyone can control thirst by his own will.

How gladly would the fainting wanderer in the burning desert refrain from thirsting if he could? And it is equally impossible for one to be thirsty when he has taken a full supply of water. Just so it is only the living one who can be subject to this thirst; and the fact that he feels thirst is positive proof that he is alive. His thirsting does not give life, but only makes it manifest. This hungering and thirsting character needs not the terrors of torment to drive him to the throne of divine grace; it is the longing desire of his heart that he might have liberty to come.

That permission is included in this commandment of our Lord, and the assurance of its certain fulfillment is found in the word of Jesus, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."- John vi. 37. This is that fountain of which the Alpha and Omega says he will give freely to him that is athirst. — Rev. xxi. 6. It is in strict accordance with this promise that the thirsty are commanded to come; and they are brought by the almighty power of that word. While no others can even desire to come, all of his redeemed are made willing in the day of his power. They who are not athirst are not called to this fountain; but:

"Poor, hungry, thirsty, fainting souls
Are freely welcome here;
Salvation like a river rolls
Abundant, free and clear.

Come, then, with all your needs and wounds,
Your every burden bring;
Here love, unchanging love, abounds,
A deep celestial spring."

"And whosoever let him take of the water of life freely. It would seem needless to call attention to the particular character here described as authorized to take freely of the water of life; but many who boast of their intelligence insist that this language includes those who have not the "will," which is here specially presented as identifying those to whom the command applies. For such as have not the love of God in their hearts, there is no liberty here given to then to take of the water of life. Having only that carnal mind which is enmity against God and cannot be subject to his law, they are as destitute of will as they are of power to come and freely take of this living water. Our Lord Jesus says, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." John vi. 44. This one declaration settles the fact that the will of God is sovereign in the display of his amazing grace unto the salvation of sinners who were lost. Again he says to the unbelieving Jews, "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." — John v. 40. This positive assertion of the enmity of the natural man against the sovereign grace of God not only proves the utter falsehood of every form of doctrine which presents

the will of the sinner as the cause of his salvation, but it establishes beyond the possibility of mistake the truth that everyone who has desire (or will) to take freely of the water of life is led by the Spirit of God; and all such are born of God as living children, and are joint heirs with Christ.

They who have the seal of the Holy Spirit of promise being the only ones who have this will, it is certain that all who have this will are so sealed. If the tried and tempted child could rest in this assurance, it would lift him above the darkness of many hours of doubt; for however conscious unworthiness may involve him in fears, he cannot be deceived in his will to take freely of the water of life. Knowing his utter destitution of merit in himself, his only hope for salvation must be in that grace which is freely given to the chief of sinners.

The heart of man has never conceived of such a gracious salvation as that which is given in Christ Jesus. That conviction which causes the sinner to hunger and thirst after righteousness is the assurance that the divine blessing rests upon his broken and contrite heart; that trembling desire which longs for the water of life is the "will" by which everyone is identified whose right it is to take of that water freely. All others wish to purchase their interest in that living water by their own righteousness. Only the destitute have the will to take of that water "freely." Hence there is strong consolation to the afflicted and poor people of God not only in the abundant supply of this living water, but also that in the "will" wrought in them by the grace of God they are accurately described in this text as the very people who are authorized to freely take of the water of life.

The illustration here used does not represent the offer of life to the dead, for they can have no will to authorize them to take. The figure implies that the willing character is already alive. None but the living can thirst. Then the very thirst by which the sinner is made to desire this water of life gives assurance of life already existing in the willing one. The dead have no thirst, and consequently they have not the will to take of the water of life freely. The efforts of carnal idolators to persuade or drive dead sinners to have this "will," are manifestly inconsistent with the literal figure. One who is not thirsty might say that he wants water, but that would not change the fact. So it is not true when those who trust in their own righteousness profess to thirst after this water of life.

The psalmist sung of this wonderful water, **"There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High." – Psalm xlvi.4.** These living streams are all found in the city of God, and they flow nowhere else. Therefore none but "they that do his commandments," and "they which are written in the Lamb's book of life," have access to this water, since no others enter into the city. — See Rev. xxi. 27; xxii. 14. To every one of them the water of life is freely given, not offered; and they are the only people that know the voice of Jesus as the joyful sound. These living subjects of the grace of God have need of the water of life to sustain them

in the weary desert of this world of sorrow; and to every one of them it is freely given. It would be useless to offer it to those who do not feel the need of it. The awfully impressive testimony of Jesus which immediately follows this text must cause deep and heart-searching self-examination in every reader who fears the Lord.

If the Spirit of Christ dwells in any one, his desire is expressed in the text, both in regard to the coming of the Lord, and the welcoming of every thirsting and willing one to come to this fountain which is opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And every one is a subject of salvation who feels to respond to the announcement of the Lord's coming in the language of the Spirit and the bride, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

(Editorial of June 1, 1885).

THE STRANGE WOMAN

Elder Gilbert Beebe

NEW VERNON, N. Y., April 2, 1834

"I have *peace* offerings with me; this day have I payed my vows" — (The Strange Woman) Proverbs 7:14.

How different the language of this strange woman from that of the Sister and Spouse of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose motto has ever been, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want"— Psa. xxiii. 1. Zion has ever delighted in telling what her Lord has done for her. "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, and miry clay, and established my goings, and he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise to his name." "He brought me to his banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." "He is her refuge in distress, and a very present help in trouble."

But not so with the strange woman. Her husband has gone a long journey, and has taken the bag of money with him, (as though he were a modern missionary,) and she is left to provide for herself; hence she is found, devoid of delicacy, in the streets at the twilight. She is loud and stubborn, and at every corner she seeks for lovers, and wishes with them to take her fill of love. She delights to tell of her own doings; for in truth she is a work-monger practically. She has decked her bed with tapestry, with carved works, and with fine linen of Egypt, (not of Zion). She has paid her vows, and so of course she has peace offerings with her. Having by her industry, in the absence of the good man, rendered her house so inviting, by her peace offerings, her carved works, perfumed bed, and her fine linen of Egypt, she is now seen in the black and dark night; for her feet abide not in her house; she goeth forth a diligent seeker and a sure finder of her deluded proselyte. Among the young men she espieth one void of understanding; she flattereth him with her words, and with her fair speech she causeth him to yield, yea, she forces him. He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks, till a dart strike through his liver, as a bird hasteneth to the snare, and knoweth not that

it is for his life.

She telleth him that stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. But he knoweth not that the dead are there, and that her guests are in the depths of hell. She hath cast down many wounded, yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

Ye children of wisdom, tell us, is she not a daughter of her who sat upon a scarlet-colored beast, who made the nations of the earth drunk with the contents of her golden cup, whose name is called Mystery Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots, and the Abominations of the Earth?

If Mystery Babylon, is written in legible characters on the forehead of Papal Rome, are not the features of the strange woman above described equally visible in her mystic daughter, the popular Protestant religionists of the present age? Hark ye! What do they say? We have peace offerings with us, *alias,* the means of grace, the issues from death, and means whereby to make our peace with God, and of saving our souls from hell, and of saving the souls of as many as we can by our fair speech force to turn in with us. Do they not profess to have peace offerings with them when they undertake to reconcile the world to God, and when they upon the house-top proclaim that their benevolent institutions are efficient means of saving lost sinners? Do not the engineers of a Protracted Meeting, when they call their deluded dupes to the anxious benches, to participate in the efficacy of their intercession with the Lord, and when to encourage them to come, (or with their fair speech to force them,) they tell them that their compliance will advance them, one step at least, towards heaven. Do they not then declare that they have peace offerings with them? Or when they declare that all that is necessary to establish their peace with God is to give their hearts to him, and that they have power to do this, do they not then say, We have peace offerings with us? And when they have gone through the formalities of what is called getting religion, and have passed from the anxious bench to the submission chair, and into the church, do they not say, "This day I have paid my vows; I have given up my heart to God; I have received the healing virtues of the consecrated bench; I have joined all the benevolent societies, and what lack I yet?"

True, the popular religionists of the present time do profess to own Christ as their Husband. But it is equally true that they do virtually say that he has gone a long journey, and will return at the time appointed. And that he has left her to supply herself with pastors, and arrange her house so as to render her accommodations inviting to those among the youths who are void of understanding; and having done all this, to go forth by her missionaries, agents, tract distributors, etc., to diligently seek for lovers, or converts.

Reader can you discern the analogy? Beware, then, for her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death. The dead are there, and her guests are in the depths of hell.

THE CRY OF A WATCHMAN ON A DARK CORNER OF ZION'S WALLS.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

Holy Brethren, made such of God, by the workmanship of the Holy Spirit, and the blood and word of a holy Lord Jesus Christ, who took upon him our nature, and hath given us his own, to present us holy without spot, unblameable, and unreproachable, without fault, before the throne of his Father in glory for ever.

You remember that Hezekiah, King of Judah, wrote a piece of humble thanksgiving to the God of his mercies, after he had been sick and was recovered. Allow me to do the same, as I feel a little gratefulness in my heart to the God and Father of all my mercies, for his great love and kindness to me, a poor wretched man, under similar circumstances.

It pleased the Lord to lay me on a bed of affliction, and to afflict me with such acute pains in the flesh, and slavish fears in the mind, as I cannot fully describe; and for several weeks in succession I could not fully close my eyes with sleep, so that with the continuance of the pain, so sharp and so long, I lay and roared quite out, and could not refrain, and thought I should have lost my senses; and although I had hardly strength enough to get out of the bed, the pain was so great that I could not lie; but at midnight, and night after night, all the long night, I have been staggering about the room, and crawling from corner to corner, to try to pray for relief, but could not find it; and I now know what Hezekiah meant when he said, "Like a crane or a swallow so did I chatter, I did mourn as a dove, mine eyes failed with looking upward; O Lord I am oppressed, undertake for me." My pains were so sharp and perpetual, that my prayers became all hurry and confusion, and a mere chatter, and as I thought, nonsense; and at last, when I could articulate no longer, it became one continual roar of anguish. At last I began to feel my wrath rising in me against God, and had hard work to keep from blaspheming his glorious and holy name; but then I considered that the thought of it in my heart was as bad as doing it, as "the thought of foolishness is sin." Then I trembled and began to grow wild, so that I thought one corner of the chamber was like hell, and I hardly knew who I saw, or what I did in the room. O, what most the eternal state of the damned be! shut up in black despair, endless pain, and eternal enmity against God! And for some time after it pleased the Lord to relieve me, I felt afraid to go in that room again, and have felt a kind of cold damp and trembling come upon me, when I have looked at that corner of the room, which I thought had appeared like hell to me. Poor Job was in a similar, or worse state, if possible, when he said, "My sighing came before I eat, and my roarings were poured out like water." But, O the sufferings of Jesus! Hezekiah's, Job's, and my sufferings must fail, even in comparison with his in the garden, and on the cross; he sweat drops of blood before the fountain of his blood

was opened on the cross, and there I believe he shed every drop of his blood for our sins, till there was no more to come from his dear heart or veins, and then came forth water; and the blood was shed for the atonement and purification of his church, and brings pardon, reconciliation, and peace to the conscience, when applied by the Spirit, and shall be experimentally felt in all the family, in taking away their sins. "There are three that bear witness in the earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood." But the pure and holy body of Jesus rose from the tomb without being corruption, and went to heaven in immortal triumph, having vanquished sin, Satan, death, and hell, and for ever sat down on the right hand of God.

The saints have found some support and relief in their sufferings; but Jesus found none. He saith, "My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring." He was so burdened with our sins that he cried out, "While I suffer thy terrors I am distracted." He poured out strong cries and tears unto God, and his precious blood was poured out for our sins, but he even poured out his holy soul unto death, and was numbered with our transgressions.

Brethren, allow me to return my feeble, yet, I hope, humble and hearty thanks to the God and covenant Father of all my mercies, for his great love and abundant kindness to me. For he of his own love and good will raised me from a death of native sin, without asking him to do it, and delivered me from the terrors, curse, and condemnation of his holy law, under which I thought I must have been cast to hell at one time; and now, of his tender and multiplied mercies hath delivered me from my sharp sufferings of flesh and spirit, and given health again both of body and mind; and hath, "in love to my soul, delivered it from the pit of corruption, and cast all my sins behind his back."

Dear brethren, unite with me in my humble thanks to our God and Father, for all his great mercies to me; for though I cannot see all your faces, I can speak to you by my pen, and the Lord knows what I have said is true, and you can help me to praise him with your tongues. For this cause I desire to give a public thanksgiving to God in your pages, and to praise the Lord and bless the Lord for ever and ever. "For praise is comely for the upright." Hallelujah! The love of my Saviour hath gotten the victory. Amen.

A WATCHMAN ON THE WALLS.
Dunmow, Essex, Nov. 24th, 1836.

ISAIAH 45: 7-8.

I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these *things.*

Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the Lord have created it.

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will convene with North East Primitive Baptist Church in Jacksonville, NC on October 10-11, 2015. The Church is located at 1637 Piney Green Road in the north east section of Jacksonville.

We welcome and invite all who love the truth to come and worship with us.

Elder Gene Lupton
Association Clerk
252-745-7441

EASTERN KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The 2015 Eastern Kehukee Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Tarboro Church located in Tarboro, North Carolina. The meeting will be held on Saturday, October 3 and Sunday, October 4. Preaching services will begin each day at 10:30 am.

Tarboro Church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albemarle Ave. From Raleigh, take US 64 East. Stay on the bypass until you get to Exit 485. Take this exit and turn left at the stop sign. Go over the overhead bridge and turn right at the second stoplight. This will be St. James Street. Go about one mile and the church will be on the right, next to the railroad tracks.

We invite the ministers and lovers of the truth to meet with us.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

NEW RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Two Hundred and Twenty First Annual Session of the New River Association will convene the Lord willing at the (P. B.) Indian Creek Church located in Floyd County, VA.

This session will be entertained by Indian Creek (P. B.) Church, located in Floyd Co., Va and will be held at Indian Creek (P. B.) located in Indian Valley, VA.

The association will be held on Saturday before the Fourth Sunday on dates being, 26 & 27 of September 2015 Lord willing.

Indian Creek Church is located on Highway (787) in Indian Valley, VA. Those coming by Route (221) Route (8) Route (52) come to Willis, VA. Turn on Highway (787) go approximately (7) miles to Church on (left). We invite all ministers of like faith and order, also Bro., Sisters & Friends to come and be with us.

Thomas Pegram (Moderator)
J. B. Mitchell (Clerk)

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 2015

Lena Gray, VA 25.00
Vivian Underwood, VA 5.00

OBITUARIES

SUSAN ETHEL EDWARDS BLALOCK

Susan (Sue) Ethel Edwards Blalock died Monday April 20, 2015, at her home after several years of declining health. She was born May 29, 1920 in Vesta, Va. to Thomas Franklin and Mary Ann Rakes Edwards, both deceased.

Sue was the wife of the late George Franklin Blalock for 47 years. She retired in 1976 from Sears Roebuck, in Greensboro, NC, after almost 29 years. She was a member of Moon's Creek Primitive Baptist Church and attended meetings as long as her health permitted.

Sue loved, and was loved by her family, friends, and church family. She is survived by stepdaughter Sharon B. Mansfield, three step grandchildren: Tamesia L. Jackson, John R. Mansfield, Jr. and Luann C. Mansfield, two step great grandchildren; four brothers, Howard Taft Edwards, Clarence Herbert Edwards, Robert Curtis Edwards (wife Mary) and Kenneth Wayne Edwards (wife Bonnie), and many nieces and nephews.

Sue was predeceased by four sisters: Sarah Agnes Wilson, Bertie Lucinda Shough, Ida Ruth Hooker, and Audrey May Edwards; and two brothers Joseph Albert Edwards and William Lee Edwards.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, April 22, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. in the Harrelson Funeral Service Chapel in Yanceyville, NC with Elder James Gray officiating. Burial was at the Blalock Family Cemetery.

The family wishes to thank Hospice of Alamance County and caregivers Cynthia Barrett, Betty Mihopoulis and Sue Reaves for their love and care during the last few months of Sue's life.

On the day before Sue's passing she was visited by her Pastor Elder Jimmy Gray and wife Emma Jean, Sister Jeanette Davis and Bonnie and Wayne Edwards. Sister Davis suggested, since it was Wayne's birthday, that we sing Happy Birthday. It was then decided that we sing Amazing Grace. Sue's eyes lit up and she mouthed the words along with us. Elder Gray offered prayer and Sue seemed very elated to meet with us this last time.

Sue was a generous and loving sister whom the Lord provided for all her life. Although we will miss her dearly, to depart and be with God is far better. The Lord giveth and Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord.

Written by her brother Wayne Edwards at the request of Moons Creek Church.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
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HYMN

Am I a soldier of the cross,
A follower of the Lamb?
And shall I fear to own his cause,
Or blush to speak his name?

Must I be carried to the skies
On flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize,
And sailed through bloody seas?

Are there no foes for me to face?
Must I not stem the flood?
Is this vile world a friend to grace,
To help me on to God?

Sure, I must fight, if I would reign;
Increase my courage, Lord!
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by thy word.

Thy saints, in all this glorious war,
Shall conquer though they die;
They see the triumph from afar,
And seize it with their eye.

When that illustrious day shall rise,
And all thy armies shine
In robes of victory through the skies,
The glory shall be thine.

Watts.

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EDITORIAL

"What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou has put all *things* under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, *and whatsoever* passeth through the paths of the seas, O Lord our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth." Psalm 8:4-9.

Elder J. B. Farmer

Many questions enter our minds about the deep, mysterious things of the kingdom of God. This is necessary that we might grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the knowledge of His kingdom. According to the scriptures, God's little ones, the ones generated of His Spirit, are taught precept upon precept, and line upon line, here a little and there a little. They must be brought to the birth spiritually to see and to believe in the Lord. They begin as lambs and can only receive the milk of the word. And after they have been nourished and have grown a little, they are enabled to take in some solid food. They are first taught the fear of God, and given to know their sinfulness and unworthiness. And then, after they have suffered a while, the love and mercy of God is revealed unto them in their Savior, who came to reconcile them to God by His blood. Then they are blessed to walk about in the heavenly kingdom and to observe and hear and wonder, "What are the meanings of the things that are now before them?"

If we are of that heavenly family, we are like little children in nature, and must ask our parents to explain to us the things that we wonder about. The Lord said by His apostle James, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." We are blessed to trust our Heavenly Father to entertain our questions, and to give us

the proper and timely answers we need concerning spiritual things. We are also given confidence that He will not rebuke us for asking, and will not humiliate us for our lack of understanding. Sometimes He answers immediately in our minds and hearts. Other times, if we are not ready or able to receive it, we must wait for it. Sometimes the answer may come in a dream, or it might come when we are reading the scriptures, or by way of preaching, or when reading a spiritual writing, or while we are in deep thought. Or it may be given unexpectedly while we are not even thinking upon anything spiritual. However it comes, the satisfactory and nourishing answer is of the Lord. And many times an answer is given before we even know to ask. Isaiah, the prophet, was blessed to say, "And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." And only God is worthy of praise for His goodness in giving the answers to us according to our need.

The first question that comes to mind is this: What is the distinction between "man", and "son of man", as used in the Psalm? We understand that a man, in the days of scripture, being 40 years old was considered to be mature, and able to answer for himself. A man younger than 40 was considered to be in subjection to his father, and was called the "son of man", or the son his father. The name "son of man" was given to the prophets, and Jesus referred to Himself as "the Son of man". If one is a child of God, the title "son of man" also seems to be fitting for him since he is in subjection to his Heavenly Father (this also applies to the believing women who have the hidden man of the heart).

Have you ever wondered what kind of creature you are, and why things are with you as they are? David wondered about this, as is evident in the Psalm listed above. And it seems that this is a common experience with all of God's little ones. The Lord was merciful and kind to answer these deep things, and recorded them for us in the scriptures. Part of the answer to "What is man, and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" is found in the very next verse, "For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. God made man (and the son of man) higher than the animals, in that he was given many faculties that the animals were not given, and that He put the animals in subjection to him. But man (and the son of man) was made a little lower than the angels, in that he was made subject to the vain things of this world, to which the angels are not subject. And he was crowned with glory and honor, in that he was given dominion over all the works of the hands of God, including the living creatures.

In the first part of the book of Genesis is given the account of God bringing man into existence. It is recorded, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created

he him; male and female created he them." And it is also written, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." The first man Adam was not an angelic being, but was made a person just like us.

To be made a little lower than the angels, to my understanding, is also to be made in the image and likeness of God. But man, a created being, was only made similar to God in certain aspects. So then, in which ways was the first man made like God, and in which ways was he made unlike God? He was given many attributes of God such as: a will; an ability to relate to things in the past, present and future; a sense of right and wrong; a concept of heaven and hell; a knowledge of the mortality of the creature; an ability to conceive of eternity; and many other attributes which the animals do not possess. But man was made unlike God in that he was made weak, and ignorant of many things, and subject to the vain things of this world. But God is all-powerful, and has all knowledge, and is subject to nothing. He is Lord of all, and rules and reigns over all.

What does it mean that man was formed of the dust of the ground? He is of the earth, earthy. His substance is dust, and he will return to it when his life is spent. What kind of breath did God breathe into Adam's nostrils? Some think that breath was the Holy Spirit. But it seems rather that it was that breath which gave the dust the mysterious natural life, since all men have not the Holy Spirit, but each has a natural life. This natural breath, to me, is a figure of that Holy Spirit which was to come giving eternal life to His people. This natural life comes only from God, and is found in all the creatures on earth in which is the breath of life. When this breath is withheld, the creature must die a natural death. What does it mean then that man became a living soul? I trust that it simply means that Adam, the first man, became a living person, with all the faculties of a natural man having an eternal soul.

Since we see in ourselves a tendency toward pride, selfishness, and fleshly pleasure, from what source do these things spring? Looking again to the first man, Adam, we see that God made him good, with no wickedness in him. God pronounced His creation good and very good. According to the Holy Spirit, by way of the Apostle Paul, "The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who bath subjected the same in hope." So, what does it mean to be made subject to vanity? Does it not mean to be subject to make selfish and vain choices? Adam was commanded not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and was told, "in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Adam chose to disobey God and eat the fruit, in that he might not be separated from his wife, Eve. He did this rather than follow the honorable commandment of God. So Adam was not forced to sin, but he corrupted himself, and found himself under condemnation and the sentence of death because of his disobedience.

He plunged all humanity into death, as all his generation was in him when he sinned. We are Adam multiplied. After this disobedience, man was found in a wretched condition. "Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." The blessed apostle cried with us, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

What about Eve, was she forced to sin? She knew the commandment of God, and being tempted of the serpent, she was deceived and hearkened to him, and disobeyed God. Does the temptation and deception excuse Eve of her transgression? Not by any means. She was guilty of being lifted up in pride and fleshly desire to do the thing that was pleasing to the flesh. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." Adam and Eve both corrupted themselves, and were condemned, and came under the sentence of death. I am made to believe that the difference between Adam and Eve in the transgression is that she was deceived by the serpent, but Adam was not deceived, and transgressed willingly.

Some have raised the question, "If the creature was made subject to vanity, how can the Creator find fault with it, for who has resisted His will?" The inspired apostle was given to answer this objection by saying, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why has thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another to dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared to glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?" No one can rightly question the work of God. "He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand or say unto Him, "What doest Thou?" His ways and His thoughts are as high above ours as the heaven is above the earth. He made man as it pleased Himself. And, of course, God knew before what man would do, and in His foreknowledge He fixed all future events.

There is another part of the death of Adam and Eve that, I believe, is a figure of what we have experienced in our lives, and shows us who we are. When Adam and Eve took of the fruit and ate of it, they came under the law, and immediately knew they were naked. By the law is the knowledge of sin. If we have been brought under the righteous law of God, we are made to know that we are sinners, worthy of death. Adam and Eve were killed to any thoughts of any goodness in themselves or of any self righteousness when they were given to see themselves as sinners, as are all the saints. The blessed apostle Paul said, "I was alive once without the law, but

when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." The law, which is the ministration of death, killed Adam and Eve and all those of faith, including the apostles. And it has also killed us to our old and prideful way of thinking, and showed us we have no ability in ourselves to do anything good. The same apostle, by the Holy Spirit said, "How to perform that which is good I find not."

Adam and Eve were driven from the Garden of Eden where they had enjoyed living, even as we were driven from our former life of ease and pleasure. But God was merciful to them, and gave them coats of animal skins, even as we were given a covering for our nakedness of sin, by way of the imputed righteousness of Christ. And then Adam and Eve found themselves in the wilderness, even as the Church of the living God is found in a place prepared for her in the wilderness. Here she now dwells, walking by faith, and looking unto God for protection and nourishment until He comes for her, to deliver her from this vain world of sin, sorrow, and pain and death.

Adam and Eve were drawn away of their own lust and were enticed, and sinned. No one can rightly say that God caused them to sin, or that God is the author of sin. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither he tempteth any man: but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Do not err, my beloved brethren." And no one can rightly say that God's children believe that He is the author of sin, or believe that there is any wickedness in Him, as some falsely accuse them of doing. Rather, the children of God are made to ascribe greatness to their God, and to ascribe sin to the sinner. They are given the full assurance of faith that says, "He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he. They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of his children: they are a perverse and crooked generation." Deuteronomy 32:4-5. "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth." Psalm 8:9.

Elder J.B. Farmer
1-2-2012

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Cleo Robertson,

With sadness in our hearts, I am enclosing the obituary of the death of our precious sister, Polly Frances Sizemore in the Newfound Church that Elder Jerry Farmer moderates. It is the church members' wish for her obituary to be published in the Signs of the Times.

In Love and Hope, a sister
Sue Reed

James A. Lambert
P.O. Box 113
Ideal, GA 31041

Dear Bro. Robertson,

I wanted to write you I had a very pleasant experience Thursday. My son got some tree work in Culpepper, VA and had to go immediately. He missed his train connection in Atlanta so we had to carry him. We drove all night Wed. We stopped at a rest area Thursday morning and a sign said Eden, NC. I thought that was near Dan River meeting house. I asked the lady there and she said it was only a few miles down the road. I asked them to take me by to see it. I had read so much about that place in the Signs and in the Old Faith Contender.

We found the meeting house and had to turn in the cemetery and we were right at Elder Spangler's Grave, and his daughter's grave and I had read about her losing a finger and it was his granddaughter's grave I just read about in the Signs.

My daughter in law took a picture of me and my Granddaughter. If you ever see any of those dear ones tell them a load from GA, and as the old song says viewed the landscape over, stopped by. My granddaughter asked why we stopped at the cemetery up there. I told her Bro. Spangler sent my yellow paper she gets out of the mailbox for many years.

I was sad we didn't go Saturday as I saw they would meet there, but I guess I'm not worthy to meet with the Brethren but was glad to see where we read of them meeting for so many years.

I told my son it would be no farther to take me to meeting as it was to take him to get work.

I always wanted to meet Bro. and Sister Berry but only got to meet them in writing correspondence. I do enjoy the Signs.

My granddaughter asked me when we was walking to town if we had a church. I told her we have a meeting house and a cemetery back home but when maw maw and paw paw and her daddy sit down it's at the County Line church.

For some reason the bounds of our habitation is away from the meeting house. It would be the same where ever we are.

All those dear ones of the forever house, as Elder Berry put it in his farewell address, have been carried to their long sought home. I don't know how much she understood but she seem satisfied as we come on home.

A Sinner,
James A. Lambert
Ideal, GA

May God continue to bless Signs of the Times and the folks that put it together.

It's a pleasure and blessing to receive The (Signs) in these days we feel to be the end days.

Living in Hope,
Bob

ARTICLES

MEMORIES OF SISTER MILDRED SPANGLER GRAHAM

On November 20, Sister Mildred Graham was called from our midst. She was a dear, precious sister in Christ and a beloved mother in Israel. Sister Millie, as she was affectionately known to the writer, was born on October 9, 1920 to Elder David and Sister Nannie Spangler.

As a baby, she was brought in her mother's arms to Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, which her father served for over 60 years. The Lord blessed her with a love for Him and for this church from a very early age. In relating her experience of grace she spoke of the time when she and her siblings were so very young and their mother had to be hospitalized for a long period of time as it was thought that she had tuberculosis. During this time, they lived with her maternal grandparents and two aunts. Her aunts were of a different belief and even as a child, Sister Millie would get upset when Primitive Baptists were spoken of harshly. She said, "Even though I did not then know the meaning of the word, I was called a hardshell." As a child, the Lord blessed her to see and to feel the love among the Lord's people and to feel drawn to them, we believe, by the cords of His love. On one of the visits to see her mother, she said they were driving down the mountain and Brother Gold and Sister Lottie Minter were with them. They all felt so sad, and Sister Lottie embraced her and her siblings and said, "It's going to be okay." This was comforting to her as a child. Although this was one of the trials and tribulations appointed to Sister Millie, the Lord blessed them and kept them and Sister Spangler was able to return home. She said, "We were all so thankful to have our mother back home."

When she was 19 and in college, Brother Spangler dreamed of seeing a snake bite her. He told her about it at the breakfast table and told her not to go in the weeds. She went down to the store to get the morning paper and as she left, she caught her ring on the lock on the door facing. As she stepped down, all of her weight was thrown on the ring and it stripped the meat and the muscle entirely off her finger. This was on a Friday. At the hospital the doctor agreed to put the meat back on the finger and try it until Monday but gave her parents little hope that he would not have to amputate the finger. Brother Spangler described that weekend as one of the most trying experiences of his life. As he left the hospital that Sunday night, Sister Millie asked him to pray that she would not lose her finger. He described that night as a "dark night, the moon and stars hidden, prayer was gone." When she was being taken to the operating room the next morning she was crying aloud and said to her father, "You did not pray for me, did you? God did not give you a prayer." She said, "I tried to pray but could not." When she began to awake, she said, "Daddy, God held my

hand. He stood by my bed. His face was so bright. He said to me, 'I will go with you, and I will be with you the rest of your life. God loves me. He told me He did. I have been afraid to die, but I am not afraid to die now. What is a finger compared to God? What is a hand compared to God?" According to a letter written to the Signs by Brother Spangler, she repeated a dozen times, "He is a gracious God. He is a wonderful God." She then related to her daddy that at the age of eight she had felt a conviction of sin. This was such a joy to Brother Spangler, who at the time had recently lost his father, Elder Jacob Spangler. She often talked of this experience and rejoiced in it.

Years later, the Lord blessed her to ask for a home with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on June 23, 1957. As she related the events of that day, she said that her dad announced an open door for the reception of members and they began to sing a hymn. As they sang, Sister Viola Walker turned and looked at her. She said, "I could not hold back any longer. I had to go forward and ask those dear people if I might have a home with them." In relating this, she spoke of feeling so unworthy and yet feeling a great need to be with them. She was received into fellowship and her father baptized her.

Having put her hand to the plough, she never looked back. She was a faithful, loving member for 57 years and never wavered from her firm belief in salvation of grace. There were many trials and tribulations in her life, but through them all, she was blessed to look to the "Kind author and ground of my hope" as described in the words of her favorite hymn. The last verse of that hymn was particularly dear to her heart:

> "I muse on the years that are past,
> Wherein my defense thou has proved:
> Nor wilt thou relinquish at last
> A sinner so signally loved!"

Although there is an immense sadness for us in the loss of this precious one, we know that she looked forward to and had a blessed hope of being called from this world to rest with Christ in paradise and on that resurrection morn to hear the King speak those most welcome words, "Come ye blessed of my Father and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." We will sorely miss her, but we would not, could not wish her back. The Lord blessed her in such a way that we feel she could witness with the writing of Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." She was blessed with a kind, gentle, loving spirit, and we feel that we could see Him shining in her countenance and thus fulfilling the scripture, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." We are so thankful for her love and fellowship over the years and feel we must say with the hymn writer:

"By thy hands the boon was given,
Thou hast taken but thine own;
Lord of earth and God of heaven,
Evermore, 'Thy will be done.' "

This was written, I trust, in love for one of the Lord's most precious saints. Scripture says that "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints" and we feel that surely the blessed promise she was given at the age of 19, that He would be with her all the way even until the end, was fulfilled as He so graciously promised. In all things, may the Lord be praised.

Written by one who loved her from
the depths of my heart,
Mary Hawkins

(Sister Graham's obituary to follow in November issue)

VOICES OF THE PAST

EPHESIANS 2 :10

"For we are kis workmanskip, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

The epistle in which our text is found is addressed "to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus," and embraces all those of every name and locality, of every kindred, and throughout all time, which were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, predestinated to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, unto God, and made acceptable in the Beloved. With these the apostle includes and identifies himself in the pronoun we. "For we are his workmanship."

As well in the apostle's day, as at the present time, men were found contending for salvation by works; and those who expected to be justified by the deeds of the law, and accepted ac cording to their own righteousness. In branding this heresy, and to settle this matter forever, the holy apostle, inspired by the Holy Ghost, has said in the preceding connection of our subject, most emphatically, "For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." And then follow the words from our text, "For we are his workmanship," &c. Being the workmanship of God, we cannot be our own workmanship, nor the workmanship of men or of angels. This workmanship embraces and includes all the work, from first to last, that has any bearing on our salvation, or the good works which he has before ordained that his people shall walk in. The creation, formation, manifestation, as well as the inscription of the names of all the saints in the Lamb's book of life before the world began, must necessarily have been the work of God himself. Therefore he says, "Bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth: even ev-

ery one that is called by my name ; for I have created him for my glory." "This people have I formed for myself ; they shall shew forth my praise. Thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name. But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name ; and thou art mine." The workmanship of God plainly appears in their creation and formation, and also in their redemption, "For I have redeemed thee." Their Redeemer is the holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth. The whole arrangement of the covenant of grace and salvation was the work of God alone. He loved them with an everlasting love. He elected them, as he has declared, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." It was his work alone to "Bless them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." "He hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works; but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

In all this the exclusive workman ship of God is indisputable. Nor is this all, their regeneration and heavenly birth are also the work of God. Of his own will begat he them; and they are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; not of a corruptible seed, but of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever. Hence the men of God, inspired by the Holy Ghost, most devoutly acknowledged that God has wrought all our works in us, that it is God that worketh in us, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. No man can come unto God but by Christ, and no man can come unto Christ except the Father draws him. No man knoweth the Son, but he unto whom the Father shall reveal him. Simon Barjona was blessed in this, that flesh and blood had not revealed to him the Son of God, but the Father which is in heaven. And Paul also testifies the same. When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, to reveal his Son in me, straightway I conferred not with flesh and blood. Again, God, who commanded the light to shine out of the darkness, hath shined in your hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.

Each of these Scriptures, separately considered, prove beyond all successful controversy that the saints are exclusively the workmanship of God, and all of them collectively confirm the same important truth. Of this truth every one that is born of God and taught by his Spirit, has a witness in his own experience, and as soon as he is born of the Spirit, he begins to lisp it forth in language like this: "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul; he hath taken me up out of an horrible pit, and out of the miry clay, and he hath established my goings, and put a new song into my mouth," &c. The workmanship of God is inimitable. Neither men nor angels can create within us a clean heart, nor re-

new within us a right spirit. When men attempt to convert sinners, make min isters, direct the course of the gospel, or to protect the church, they make wretched work; their base imitations may be received by the world, but they are easily detected by those who are taught of God. "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord, God, Almighty." Truly he is a wonder-working God. "All his works are perfect." But none of the works of men are perfect. And this is the work of God, saith Jesus, that ye believe on me, for faith is the fruit of the Spirit, and it is the gift of God.

"Created in Christ Jesus." As our natural creation was in Adam, so our spiritual creation is in Christ. What we understand by our creation in Adam is, that God gave us an existence in the person of Adam, which was to be developed in the proper time, by ordinary or natural generation; and so it is our understanding of the Scriptures on this subject, that God gave his people their original spiritual life in Jesus Christ, who is the second Adam and the Lord from heaven, and that all spiritual blessings were given to the church in him, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. And as the apostle John has said, And this is the record, (or divine testimony) that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. The Son of God is the life of his people, as it is written, When he who is our life shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory. The life given to the church is called eternal life, and that which is eternal is with out beginning of time or end of duration; yet it is spoken of as a creation in our text. What then are we to understand by the term, in its application to the spiritual existence of the church of God in Christ Jesus the Lord? To help our infirmities, we being finite creatures, God has in his word pointed us to natural things, as figures of things which are spiritual. Thus the natural creation of the world is illustrative of the creation of the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. But while we trace the instruction given in the figure, we should be careful to observe that the figure is natural, but the things signified are spiritual. As, for instance, in the new birth, allusion is made to a natural birth, but not to signify that the new birth is a natural birth, but as in the natural, a new production or manifestation of natural life is developed, so in the second birth, a new and spiritual life is brought forth and made manifest. All we know of the natural creation of the world is, that God spake the word, and it stood fast; he commanded, and it was done. All things were spoken into existence, which did not previously exist, and this calling things into existence was called creation; formation is another thing. But in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and all that in them is, and all the years that fill up the space from the creation to the great burning day, are required for the development of what was in the beginning created.

The spiritual existence of the church is also attributed to the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. And it

is thus set forth, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; the same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him." That is, by the word, which was with God, and which was God." "And without him was not anything made that was made." "In him" (that is, in the Word which was with God, and which was God) "was life, and the life was the light of men." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." John bore witness of him, and cried, saying, "This was he of whom I spake. He that cometh after me is pref erred before me. And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." Thus as the existence of the natural world was embraced in the word of God's power, and sprung forth into development when that word of power was spoken, so the spiritual existence of the church, or the life of the church of God, was in the Word, which was with God, and the Word which was God. This Word in which was life, and grace, and truth, is the same that was made flesh and dwelt among us, and whose glory was seen by the saints as that of the only begotten of the Father. The relative appellation of Son, applying to Christ in his mediatorial position, is based on his being the only begotten of the Father, and begotten full of grace and truth. His being the begotten Son of the Father, shows that his existence was in the Father, and one with him, and that his being set up as the mediatorial Head and life of his people, in eternity, is what we understand to be expressed by the terms begotten, set up, brought forth, sent, &c., together with every other term implying derivation or subordination, which is in the Scriptures applied to him, except such as apply to the flesh which he assumed, or was made, when made of a woman, and when he took part of the same flesh and blood which his children are partakers of. Thus, as in the creation of the natural world, God spake all things into existence by the word of his power; so, in the spiritual creation in Christ Jesus, he spake the word and it stood fast. He spake, and said of Christ, "A seed shall serve him, and it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this." Our hope of eternal life, therefore, rests upon the promise which God, who can not lie, made before the world began. And hence it is affirmed that God hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

The third and last point to be considered is, Unto what end were we created in Christ Jesus? Our text informs us that they were created unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Many portions of the Scriptures express substantially the same thing. Peter says, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous

light." And Paul says, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." The psalmist whose words we have quoted, says, "A seed shall serve him," &c. "They shall come and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this." The good works in which God has ordained that his people shall walk are also ordained of God. God has said, they shall shew forth his praise. They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness, and to this end were they created in Christ Jesus, and to secure this end he has not only taken them up out of the horrible pit, but he has established, or before ordained, their goings, and put a new song in their mouths. It is not in them that walk to direct their own steps, for God has before ordained that he will lead them in a way that they knew not, and in paths that they have not known, and put his fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from him, and he will not turn away from them to do them good. This people he has formed for himself, and they shall shew forth his praise, for he has before ordained it. No works are good in his sight, but such as he has before ordained for them to walk in, and of these the New Testament is replete with instruction, and the man of God is thoroughly furnished unto all good works. All works which he has not ordained are evil. In no other works than those which he has ordained can we glorify God in our body and in our spirit, which are his.

In our fleshly nature we are fallen and depraved, and the whole fountain of our carnal hearts and minds are pollutted and wicked, and "Who call bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" Not one. From our creation in Adam we have a nature which is totally depraved, in which there dwelleth no good thing. In that nature, "There is none that seeketh after God; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." But in our spiritual creation in Christ, we are constituted members of him. His Spirit is put within us; his law is written within our inward parts, and we are redeemed from the law, and become dead to it by the body of Christ, that we should be married unto another, even to him that is risen from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. By vital union with Christ we have our fruits unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. But as the branch can not bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, neither can we bring forth fruit to the honor and glory of God, except we abide in Christ; for he is the true vine, and we are the branches.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe April 15, 1856.)

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 10 / 2015

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

ELDER GILBERT BEEBE'S EDITORIAL ON ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY AND CHURCH CREEDS

Signs of the Times, Middletown, N. Y., August 15th, 1881

It is important for us to know to what extent the history of the past, in regard to religious events, and the uninspired creeds which have been written, may be beneficial to the people of God at the present day. We know that the inspired psalmist "considered the days of old, the years of ancient times." He says, "I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search." But this solemn retrospection was not to subserve an idle curiosity or vain ambition to acquire that knowledge of past events which serves only to inflate the mind with pride; for his mind was sorely perplexed with the soul-trying inquiry, "Will the Lord cast off forever? and will He be favorable no more?" "Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies?" It was when under these trying circumstances that he said, "I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High. I will remember the works of the Lord: surely I will remember Thy wonders of old. I will meditate also of all Thy work, and talk of Thy doings" (Ps. 77:5-12). He was not searching for some record of what he had done for the Lord, nor of what he had done for himself, nor yet for what men or angels had performed. A knowledge of what men or angels had done or could do could not reassure his faith that the mercy and truth of God were built up forever, and his faithfulness established in the very Heavens (Ps. 89:2). For these blessed assurances are not found among the uninspired records of men, but in the sacred archives of the eternal counsel of God, and revealed by the Holy Spirit to the sons of God and heirs of eternal glory. To look back to the rock whence they are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence they are digged, is confirming to their faith and confidence in the God of their salvation. As the ancient patriarchs and saints sometimes set up monuments and Ebenezers as reminiscences of God's special favors towards them, so it is profitable for the children of God at the present time to remember all the way in which the Lord their God has led them, and with gratitude and praises to acknowledge that His goodness and mercy have followed them all their days. But while we fully appreciate God's wonderful works of old to usward, and to the children of men, we should rely alone on what the Lord has taught us by His word and Spirit, and read with great caution the religious history of uninspired men.

Since the Apostles of the Lamb have finished their course with us in the flesh, no history of the church of God should be allowed to lure us from the doctrine which they taught, the judgments they have recorded, the ordinances they have enjoined; nothing is to be added nor aught diminished from the perfect standard of faith and order they established, which is confirmed by all the valid authority of earth and Heaven. What they have bound on earth is bound in

Heaven, and what they have loosed on earth is loosed in Heaven. The question with us now is not or should not be, What was believed or practiced in the church one hundred or a thousand years ago? but rather, What was the faith which was delivered to the saints? We are not now to ask, Are our ministers by succession of ordination, through the dark ages of papal abominations, traceable to the Apostles? but rather let it be asked, Are they such men as the Holy Ghost commanded the church to separate to the work whereunto He had called them?

Much is said at the present time, both by Catholics and Protestants, of what they claim to be a regular succession from the Apostles, as establishing their claim to be the true church of Christ. But the fallacy of their vain boasting is clearly apparent when we compare their faith and order with that by which the primitive church was distinguished in her original organization at Jerusalem. The constituent members of the church at Pentecost were such as had by the outpouring of the Spirit and the preaching of the word been pricked in their hearts and made to feel their wretched, guilty and helpless condition, and gladly to receive the word, and to repent, or turn away from their former delusions, and be baptized and added to the church, and of them it is said, They continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers (Acts 2:37-42). This church of the First-born was built upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord (Eph. 2:20-21). They held no other doctrine than that of the Apostles, aspired to no other religious fellowship, rested on no other foundation or chief corner stone; but these all, to Christ the Lord coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious, were, as lively stones, quickened by their immortal and life-giving foundation, built up a Spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up Spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.-(1 Peter 2:4-6). In seeking for the kingdom of God and His righteousness it is expedient for those who are called by grace and born from above (as none but such can see it) to look as far back as to the description of the church as faithfully given in the New Testament. Not even in the history of the first century of the gospel church are we to look for a perfect rule for our faith and practice as disciples of our Savior Jesus Christ; for while the Apostles were still in the flesh carnality was detected in the church at Corinth, heresy and witchcraft in the churches of Galatia, and dissensions at Antioch; and in the days of the Apostle John there were many antichrists which went out from the church because they were not of them. And Paul, Peter and Jude admonished the saints that many should depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. And even of the Elders who wept and fell on Paul's neck; because he had told them they should see his face no more, should men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after

them. The primitive saints could only abide in the Apostles' fellowship as they continued steadfastly in their doctrine; they were allowed to follow no man only so far as they followed Christ. Can it then be safe for us to accept of the usages or traditions of the church, or of any organization claiming to be the church, as a standard of faith or rule of practice, which have existed since the time the Apostles were in the flesh? If in the days of their sojourn on earth no church was perfectly free from defect, at what period from that to the present time have any of the churches surpassed the primitive churches in purity? We have a more sure guide and directory. The doctrine, examples and precepts of God our Savior, as given us in the New Testament, and written by the Holy Spirit in the heart of all who are born of God, alone are reliable. To them only are we exhorted to give heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns, and the day star shall arise in our hearts. A faithful record of the history of the church of God through the intervening ages which have elapsed since the Scriptures were written, could such a history be produced, would only be valuable in showing the long-suffering, tender kindness and boundless faithfulness of our covenant keeping God in being merciful to our unrighteousness, and in warning us to beware of and avoid every error or departure from the divinely inspired rule, into which the church has been lured or betrayed at any time. In no age or period of the existence of the church has it been any less expedient to test her faith and practice by the unerring rule than at the present time. Individuals and churches have perhaps as frequently been drawn into error by tradition as by any other influence. Things which have been held as sacred by pious parents, esteemed preachers and learned instructors, are too often accepted by the unsuspecting disciples for truth, which will by no means bear the scrutiny of investigation in the light of the Scriptures. The saints can only be redeemed from their vain conversation, received by tradition from their fathers, by the cleansing blood of Christ; and even those who by Him do believe in God, and have purified their souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, are admonished to stand fast: "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning" (1 Peter 1:22; 2 Peter 2:20-21). We cannot obey the truth if we give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; and all spirits are seductive which would divert us from following our Lord, and tempt us to accept any other religious oracle than the Holy Scriptures which He has given as our infallible guide; and all religious doctrines or practices that are not approved by our Lord Jesus Christ and authorized by Him, are doctrines of devils. All that He has taught and commanded is obligatory on His disciples, while all that He has not taught or commanded is forbidden.

Written creeds also, as embodying the opinions of men, or the decisions of prelates and councils on religious sub-

jects, are to be treated with the utmost caution, and accepted only so far as they are sustained by the inspired Scriptures. A brief statement or summary of what we believe is taught in the Bible may be useful in distinguishing the church of God and children of His kingdom from others who profess to believe the Scriptures, and yet reject what we believe them to establish as the truth of God; but when such professions of faith assume the form of edicts, of improvements upon the Scriptures, or as infallible interpretations of them, or as an absolute standard of orthodoxy, their tendency cannot fail to be pernicious. If they claim to be more plain, clear or reliable than the Scriptures, they are sacrilegious and blasphemously insulting to the infinite wisdom of God. To receive them as anything more than a belief of what the Scriptures teach, is to ignore the Scriptures and take the open ground of rank infidelity. However sound and orthodox written creeds or articles of faith may be, they can only express the convictions of uninspired men, who are liable to err; and when written only to express our convictions or understanding of the Divine testimony, we should explicitly state that nothing in them shall be construed as in any wise binding on the saints, only so far as by a close and prayerful investigation they shall be fully sustained by the Scriptures. While therefore we give an expression of what we believe is taught in the Scriptures, great care should be taken lest we make our views or understanding of them the test of fellowship, instead of the Scriptures themselves. It is true the saints are admonished to be of one mind and one judgment, to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and any palpable departure from the faith of the gospel must unavoidably affect our fellowship; but such a departure must be ascertained and determined by the unerring standard of the Scriptures, and not by any humanly-devised creed, for every written creed or abstract of the faith which we may have accepted, as well as the questionable theory to be settled, must be tested alike by the Scriptures as the only reliable and infallible standard. If we set up our creeds or traditions above the inspired word, we make ourselves wise above what is written, and may fall under the rebuke of Him who charged the Jews with making void the law of God by their traditions, and of whom He said, "In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:9). The repudiation of long cherished traditions, or the ignoring of creeds, can only amount to heresy so far as the repudiation or ignoring party can be convicted of departure from the doctrine and precepts of our Lord and His Apostles, as given to us in the New Testament.

In more than three score years of our labors in the gospel ministry we have never demanded or required of any candidates for baptism that they should sign any pledge to adhere to any other standard of faith or practice than that which is given in the Scriptures. We have said to them, "If thou believest in the Lord

Jesus Christ with all thy heart, thou mayest." After hearing from them a satisfactory relation of what we believe to be a genuine experience of the new birth, we have usually asked them if they believe the doctrine and order held and preached by the Old or Primitive Baptists, so far as they understand it, and if their experience is in harmony with it. Upon receiving an affirmative reply, we bid them welcome to the ordinance, and hold ourselves ready, if need be in the same hour of the night or of the day, to administer that sacred ordinance. We know of no Divine authority for delaying the administration for a more convenient season, or to first bury a father, or take leave of those we are to leave behind us. As every one who is born from above, and who loves the precious Savior, is commanded to take His yoke, bear His cross and follow Him, and as baptism is the first act of obedience of the Heaven-born child, no other duty or religious privilege can be in order until this is performed. But upon this subject of baptism we may hereafter write, if the Lord shall so permit.

[As this is the last editorial left by our dear father, and written but a few days before he was called home, the one contemplated in the last sentence was not written. May not this fact imply a reproof to those who love and hope for salvation through our Lord Jesus, yet wait for something more than His plain command to urge them to obey Him in following His great example? — G. Beebe's Sons.]

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose." Romans 8:28.

Whether this is the time or a likely subject for thought I know not, but as there seems to be a burden for me to express my feelings on the above, I'll attempt to write as my mind leads, if not directed.

I believe we with the apostle Paul at times do see all things working together for good to His people. Let us notice this *all* which denotes to me nothing under God's creation that is not included, and also working, not happening. As much as natural work requires effort on the creature, God is the source of all the energy that makes the all things come into play or action, the moving force that brings the working together of all things.

We know that all things could be working, and not together, or working together but not for good. Can we not see His hand a must in all this from beginning to end according to his purpose and pleasure. Whom does it effect, but them that love God, the called according to His purpose. The called will surely declare that all are not called therefore this work is good only to those intended.

Them who will dare deny that He yet rules and reigns in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. What could be beyond His control, if this scripture is true, and it is, but we as carnal

beings can't see the good or even the working together for good to any things or person, yet we know it is or the record would be incorrect.

Did not all the travels of the children of Israel work for their eternal good, even down in Egypt the burdens laid on by the taskmasters made them willing to leave at the appointed time of God. As also the apostle Paul being struck down, Job's afflictions, Jonah's travels, Naomi losing her Son-in-laws and so many other instances. These all working together for good.

It took every happening, no more or less to bring about the purpose of God in the end.

We believe that is the case today. We are made to act as all events are constrained, to bring about the working together of all things for good to them that love God, whether we be one of that number this work is for, we know not.

The strongest bond of this text seems to be that its all based upon them who are "the called", not just a called group but the called according to His purpose, let us realize that all of the foregoing comes about to accomplish the determined purpose of God for His people.

We know not at the time or even of the many trials and sorrows among those that show the mark of being His people, why they have to be, other than we truly believe to accomplish His purpose which in the end, if not at present, working together for good to you, if you are one of the Elect.

Even the work of death on these bodies, will bring the uniting of His people with Him, which is good.

Elder J. R. Williams

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 2015

Glenford Sigmon, VA 5.00
Raymond Wimmer, WV 5.00
Anonymous 100.00
Ila Leary, NC 5.00
Donald Arne, SD 250.00
Amy Heppler, AZ 10.00
Caroline Martin, WA 10.00

OBITUARIES

ANNIE MEEKS BARBER

Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church is once again saddened by the passing of a dear member, Sister Annie Meeks Barber. Sis. Barber was received into the fellowship of our church May 3, 2003. She was faithful to attend her meetings as long as health permitted. Born in Rockingham County, N.C. Dec. 14, 1919, she was the daughter of the late Daniel Woodson Meeks and Daisy Mae Harris Meeks and passed from this life

March 30, 2015, at Roman Eagle Health and Rehab. Center.

Survivors include daughter Gloria Robertson of Danville, Va., son John Barber of Richmond, Va., seven grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, a sister. In addition to her parents she was predeceased by her husband Morton J. Barber and a daughter Kate Janice Barber.

Funeral services were held at Barber Funeral Home Chapel with her pastor Elder Jimmy Gray officiating. Interment followed in Danville Memorial Gardens. We believe she is resting in the paradise of God to await the glorious resurrection of the saints.

Humbly submitted,
Peggy Wells, Clerk

ELDER TRUMAN BRADSHAW

Paran Church was deeply saddened by the loss of our devoted pastor, Elder Truman Bradshaw, whose membership was a Pleasant Hope Church in Atlanta, Texas. Elder Bradshaw died September 9, 2014. He had served us faithfully since December of 2009. He was always willing to come even when we only had two or three gathered together and said that he enjoyed talking to us about the goodness and mercy of our Sovereign God. (Brother Bradshaw was also serving Union Church in Louisiana at the time of his death. He had served as pastor of Mt. Zion Church in Cash, Texas and Prospect Church in Simms, Texas as long as they were able to meet.) We were so thankful for the effort he put forth to come each month. He continued to come even after his health declined and we had to insist that he sit down to preach so he would not pass out. After his open heart surgery, he wanted to come and preach for us again. We so hoped he would recover, but that was not God's will. We desire to humbly bow in submission to our dear Lord who knows what is best. We do not understand why he was called from us, but we do feel that His spirit returned to God who gave it and is in paradise awaiting the resurrection of his body.

Elder Bradshaw leaves to mourn him his wife of 54 years, Sister Geraldine Bradshaw of Linden, Texas. He is also survived by two daughters and their husbands, Tammie and Hart Townsend of Donaldson, AR and Lynn and Kevin Yawn of Linden, TX and one son and one daughter-in-law Michael and Sarah Bradshaw of Castroville, TX; two brothers and sister-in-law, Ernest and Jackie Bradshaw of Linden, David Bradshaw of Linden; sister, Mary Beauchamp of Linden; eleven grandchildren, Jessica Burns, Kelly Yawn, Shelly Yawn, Chris Rushing, Candace Rushing, Timmy Rushing, Haiden Wiley, Claire Bradshaw, Elias Bradshaw, Jessica Townsend, Kim Tompkins; eight great-grandchildren, Anakin Burns, Scarlett Burns, Mila Cloutier, Chloe

Cloutier, Tucker Rushing, Aurora Sisco, Ryko Tompkins, Kylin Tompkins; twelve nephews and nieces; numerous great-nieces and great-nephews; and many extended family and friends.

Elder Bradshaw is preceded in death by one son, Timmy Bradshaw; his parents, Thurman and Mary Ellen Bradshaw; and two sisters, Bobby Mason and Sharon Cherry.

Funeral services for Elder Bradshaw were held at 11:00 on Saturday, September 13, 2014 at New Colony Baptist Church by his pastor, Elder C. C. Morris and family friend, J. W. Crow.

Submitted in loving memory
by Paran Church.
Joyce Pittman, Church Clerk

FRANK E. QUESENBERRY

We at Valley View Primitive Baptist Church are saddened by the passing of our dear Brother, Frank Edward Quesenberry, from his earthly home May 12, 2015. Frank was born on June 21, 1931. He lived a remarkable life, his unwavering devotion to the Lord, loving husband, father, grandfather and proudly serving his country in the Korean War. As a very active member of Valley View Primitive Baptist Church, when he was able and he saw something needing work, he did it. He was a farmer and he loved spending time in the fields with his son and their cattle. Also his career of a long haul truck driver enabled him to explore the country. He and his wife, Sister Linda Quesenberry, joined the church in December, 1986 and they were baptized by Elder Raymond Goad on April 17, 1987.

Preceded in death by his parents, Harley and Lula Quesenberry; wife, Shirley Chafin Quesenberry; son, Michael Edward Quesenberry; sisters, Thelma Taylor, Alma Gae Walker and Delois Quesenberry and brother, Ellis Quesenberry.

He is survived by his wife, Linda Goodwin Quesenberry; daughter, Deborah (Scott) Segrest; stepdaughter, Dawn (Tim) Newland; sister, Carrie Lou (Ray) Smith and his grandchildren, Emily (Lee) Tucker, Allison Segrest, Chloe and Alexis Harless and great-granddaughter, Abigail Kate Tucker. He also shared many adventures with his life-long friend, Rudolph Smith.

His family received friends on Thursday, May 14, 2015 at the Horne Funeral Home. The funeral service was held at 2 pm on Friday, May 15, 2015 at Horne Funeral Home by Elder Raymond Goad, his pastor. His body was buried with military honors at Roselawn Memorial Gardens. Our loss is his eternal gain.

Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
Lena Duncan, Clerk
Written by Lena Duncan
Approved by Valley View
on 08/16/2015

POLLY FRANCES SIZEMORE

Our dear, loving Sister in the faith, Polly Frances Sizemore, after a long illness, passed away in her sleep Monday June 8, 2015, at the Wyoming County Nursing and Rehab Center in New Richmond, WV. She was 86 years old. Sister Polly was the daughter of the late Ralph Lester and Rebecca Mitchem Lester and was born at Bud, WV on March 26, 1929.

Sister Polly was a member of the Newfound Primitive Baptist Church for about 40 years and was blessed to kindly and graciously entertain the brethren in her home. She visited other states in her travels among those in her beloved fellowship, and served as assistant clerk for many years. She was full of love for her earthly family and for her heavenly family.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband of 65 years, Millard Frank Sizemore; a daughter, Wanda Sizemore Stafford; Son-in-law, George E. Stafford, III; Daughters-In-Law, Peggy Jean Sizemore; Ashley and Patricia Sizemore; Brothers: Elzie, Jimmie, Jesse and Lacy Lester; Sisters: Vada Wiles, Viola Dickerson, Susie Miller, Mary Lester and Letha Sizemore.

Survivors include her daughters: Connie White and her husband, John; Janice Smith and her husband, Terry; Mary Morgan and her husband, James; and a son, Jesse Sizemore; and a brother, Luther Lester and his wife, Nancy. Also, eight grandchildren: Sherri Bland and husband, Tommy; Carla Cook and fiance', Reece Carter; Joni Struckman and husband, Eric; Tina Smith; Amanda Goins and husband, Donnie; James Morgan, Jr.; Jason Sizemore; Jessica Adkins and husband, Jason, and nine great-grandchildren: Thomas and Michael Bland; Hailee Belcher; Terry Dakota Simons; Gracie Goins; Terry Levi Smith; Addison and Lauryn Walker; and Luke Struckman.

The funeral service was attended by many brethren, family and friends. It was begun at the Calfee Funeral Service Chapel in Pineville, WV and concluded at Palm Memorial Gardens in Matheny, WV. The service was officiated by Elder J.B. Farmer, her pastor for many years.

Sister Polly is greatly missed by all who knew her. We can no more see her loving face here, except in our memory. But we trust she is now, in the Spirit, beholding her heavenly Father's face in glory. For, the promise to all who believe in God in truth is this, as given by the Holy Spirit through the Apostle Paul: "We are confident, I *say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." And the Psalmist was given to say, "Precious in the sight of the Lord *is* the death of his saints."

This was written, as requested by the Newfound Primitive Baptist Church in conference on July 19, 2015, by one who loved her, I trust, in Christ.

Elder J.B. Farmer, Moderator
Sister Sue Reed, Clerk

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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HYMN

Approach, my soul, the mercy seat,
Where Jesus answers prayer;
There humbly fall before his feet,
For none can perish there.

Thy promise is my only plea;
With this I venture nigh:
Thou callest burdened souls to thee,
And such, O Lord, am I.

Bowed down beneath a load of sin;
By Satan sorely pressed;
By wars without and fears within,
I come to thee for rest.

Be thou my shield and hiding place,
That, sheltered near thy side,
I may my fierce accuser face,
And tell him, Jesus died.

O wondrous love! To bleed and die,
To bear the cross and shame,
That guilty sinners, such as I,
Might plead thy gracious name.

Poor, tempest-tossed soul, be still;
My promised grace receive;
'Tis Jesus speaks! I must, I will,
I can, I do believe.

Newton.

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EDITORIAL

THE WOMAN SITTING UPON THE BEAST REVELATION CHAPTER 17

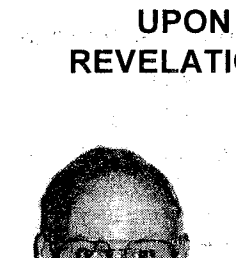
Elder Cleo D. Robertson

If not deceived, I believe that we saw this woman recently in all her abominations and blasphemy. The angel told John that the seven heads of the beast on which the woman sitteth are seven mountains. The city of Rome, Italy, in which the Vatican is located, is surrounded by seven famous hills or mountains. According to the World Book Encyclopedia under Rome, these seven hills or mountains are the ones on which ancient Rome was built.

The angel told John that the woman sitteth upon many waters and that the waters are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. This woman is in most, if not all, countries of the earth. We saw on the media all the multitudes of various peoples, nations and tongues as the Catholic Church (the woman) was in the person of the Pope.

Millions of people around the world follow and worship this one called Pope. As the scripture says, "the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication."

The angel told John that the kings (rulers) of the earth have committed fornication with her. This is spiritual fornication as they commit idolatry by worshipping idols and images of people. They pray to Mary, the mother of Jesus. They lay with her in all her blasphemy and abominations. They give her money and she has great wealth. They bow to the Pope and kiss his ring. They call him "your holiness," "holy father" and the office of Pope is called "holy see." The Pope is considered infallible in doctrine, faith, morals, and decrees. He tells his followers what to believe. He and his priests claim to forgive sins. To the Catholic Church, the Pope stands in the stead of Christ. This is indeed blasphemy because there is none holy but God. Christ as the son of man was holy because the fulness of the Godhead dwelled in Him bodily. There is none of the descendents of Adam holy. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the

world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Christ said in Matthew 23:9, **"And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven."** Spiritually you have one Father which is God.

The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls. All of this seems to relate to the strange woman in Proverbs 7th Chapter. She said she had decked her bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt and perfumed her bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. All her riches of the world seem an effort to elevate her status in the world and to project an image of grandeur and success. This is designed to entice others to join and follow her as she has much influence in the world. We saw the Pope arrayed in white for the purpose of trying to show purity and righteousness.

John saw this woman drunken with the blood of saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. Over the centuries she has killed many who opposed her. In recent times, she has molested and abused many young boys. Proverbs 7:25-27, **"Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths. For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death."**

The Pope claims to be the successor of Peter. First of all, Peter had no successor and neither did any of the apostles. There were twelve apostles who were chosen, called, qualified and ordained by Christ. The Lord gave the apostles special gifts and more spiritual understanding than anyone else. They set forth the doctrine and order of Christ for the church of Christ. They were blest to expound the scriptures as no one else. There have never been any apostles since and there never will be. Peter writes that he was an apostle of Christ and also an elder.

The word "Pope" is not in the scriptures. Peter was not the first Pope and the church was not built upon him. Acts 10:25-26, **"And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him; and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man."** If the church was built upon Peter, it would not stand. This would be as the foolish man who built his house upon the sand. "And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it." But Christ built His church upon Himself, the Rock. He is the wise man who built his house upon a rock. "And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock." He is the foundation and the chief cornerstone. All through the scriptures, He is set forth as the Rock, the only rock. His elect are lively stones, but not the rock.

The Catholic Church goes through many formalities in its services, but the worship of God is not in formalities. The worship of God is of the heart. Christ said in John 4:23-24, **"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the TRUE worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him MUST worship him in spirit and in truth."** Therefore the carnal mind of the natural, fleshly man cannot worship God. The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God. The Spirit of God must be in you for you to worship Him. Only the elect of God are blest to worship Him. Isaiah 43:21 says, **"This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise."**

The angel told John that the ten kings, set forth by the ten horns on the beast, "shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire for God hath put in their hearts to fulfill His will." Revelation 17:14, **"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful."** Revelation 19:1, **"And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Allelula: Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God."**

Humbly submitted,
Elder Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brother Horton,

Our thanks and blessings for the wonderful writings and endless time you each are blessed to contribute to publishing this inspiring writing.

Our Love and Fellowship,
Calvin and Juanita Plybon

Dear Brother Horton,

Renew my subscription to signs for 2 more years. I enjoy every issue very much. I am grateful for the work that all of you do to get the signs out. Use the balance as you need.

Thank you,
Arleen Giles

PSALM 98:4-5.

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.

Sing unto the Lord with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm.

VOICES OF THE PAST

Elder V. B. Linn died September 23, 2014 and his obituary appeared in the December, 2014 issue of the Signs. The following are some of his writings.

Editor

Another writing of Velden Linn's can be found in the "Minutes" of the One Hundred Seventieth Annual Session of the Tygart Valley River Old School Primitive Baptist Association held with Leading Creek Church, 1974. This particular piece is instrumental in his life because it represents a closure of an era of time, the termination of the existence of the Tygart Valley River Association. As stated by V. B. Linn in his "Corresponding Letter", "Now that the curtain of time has closed on an era, silencing the voice of the Tygart Valley River Association, let us bow in humble submission to His holy will with thanksgiving in our hearts for the many years of peaceful communion in the blessed Spirit of our God, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind."

CIRCULAR LETTER

To the Tygart Valley River Old School or Primitive Baptist Association in session with the Leading Creek Church; Friday, Saturday, and Sunday; August 23, 24, 25, 1974; and to the Associations with whom we correspond.

Dear Kindred in Christ,

Another year is past and gone and a few of God's creation are gathered one more time with a desire to worship our God after the primitive order in spirit and in truth.

With the close of this Session we will mark the end of an era in this time world, because with the closing of this Session we will terminate the existence of the Tygart Valley River Association that by the grace of God existed for one hundred and seventy years. The fixed point of time from which this series of years is reckoned, was determined, decreed and ordained by a sovereign and eternal God. May we with thanksgiving in our hearts bow in submission to His holy will.

The first Session of this Association in the name of Tygart Valley River was held with the Valley Church, Randolph County, Virginia, (West Virginia had not yet become a state) September 6, 7, 8, 1839. Elder H. Cool served as Moderator and Elder Henry Thompson served as their Clerk.

Five churches were represented by letters and Messengers They were the Valley, Mount Olive, Little Bethel, Amnon, and Edon Churches. These churches formerly were a part of the Union Association of regular Baptists, which was organized by churches from the Red Stone Association, August 24, 1804. The Red Stone Association was organized in the year of our Lord, 1776. This, my brethren was the year of the signing of the Declaration of Independence of this great country of ours. So it

could be stated by historic recording, we have existed in an associate capacity of churches as long as these United States of America have existed.

The five churches which organized the Tygart Valley River Association withdrew from the Union Association according to the Minutes of their first association because the said Union Association had departed from her Constitution, by patronizing the institutions of the day and missionary operations.

These were new things at that time and these churches not believing in new things withdrew in order to keep the unity of the spirit in bonds of peace, and maintain their original Constitution. This, my precious Brethren, was the stand our forefathers took in the organization of this Association, and it is on this same foundation we stand today. We at this last session hold the same Constitution and Rules of Decorum that were originally held by the Red Stone Association, setting forth the doctrine of election, predestination, and salvation by grace and the final perseverance of the saints. These churches have continued in the same faith and order to the present time.

At the second Session of this Association there were four more churches added to her number. Since that time this Association has passed through many conflicts. Some churches have been added and some dropped from her number, and while we never have been many, we are now reduced to one church. In my time I have witnessed the going down of four churches. These churches have been removed by reason of the death of their membership.

It is sorrowful to think that we no longer can have a yearly gathering as a group of churches represented by those Messengers who were appointed to report and voice for their church and were qualified to carry out of the business of the Association. However, we must remember that before the year of 1776 and during the years of our organization of churches, the church body stood sovereign. The Association by their organization had no power to lord it over God's heritage, nor had it power over the churches. So it stands yet today. The Leading Creek Church is not weakened in her power or standing. She will stand in the bidding of our God so long as it is His will.

Just so long as we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation will we continue in the Apostle's doctrine and order.

The first Baptist church was regularly and thoroughly set up in Jerusalem. The day of Pentecost was fully come. They were all with one accord in one place. They were filled with the Holy Ghost, spake with tongues when the multitude came together. The Apostles declared the wonderful works of God. Three thousand were quickened into divine life by the Spirit of God. They gladly received the Word and were baptized. "And they continued steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers." Here my brethren is where the first Baptist church was organized. "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." He will continue in His own time and way to add to the church, such

as should be saved.

Brethren, we can lay claim to the original church today, not in name only but in belief and practice. It is the belief, practice and doctrine that identify the true church of God. Her membership is made up of heartfelt experimental revealed religion that causes His children to worship Him in spirit and in truth.

The original church preached the doctrine of election, predestination, salvation alone by the grace of God, and the final perseverance of the saints through grace to glory. They preached the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust, the everlasting happiness of the just and the eternal punishment of the wicked.

It was the order of the Apostolic Church to choose and set apart as their ministering servants those whom God had called and qualified for the work of the ministry. We have no record in the scriptures of those ministers having gone to any theological school to prepare themselves for the ministry. Many of them were poor and illiterate, but they spoke the truth as it is in Christ Jesus and ministered with the ability that the Spirit of God giveth. "Salvation is of the Lord," was taught while in the belly of Hell. And so it was in all generations. Is it not still the same today?

Dear precious brethren, we do not claim perfection; but with the many considerations inscribed upon the pages of God's written word, we are bound to say that the Primitive Baptists stand in the identity of the true Gospel Church. God has not changed; neither have His laws or decrees. And thanks to His holy name, He had not changed in His loving care and redeeming pity to usward.

Even though we now stand alone as an independent church, take fresh courage and press on to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus and earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. Hold fast to that which is right. Pray without ceasing, ever looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith.

And may the love of God be shed abroad in your hearts and may He elevate your thoughts and affections above the corrupt and fading shadows of this world to the pure and enduring realities of Heaven; and may He create within us a desire to identify ourselves with His afflicted, lowly, despised and persecuted church and people; and enable us by His spirit to adorn the doctrine of God our Savior by loving obedience to all His holy commandments, and be prepared by the grace of God for a blissful communion with Himself in that eternal assembly on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance. Amen.

Elder V. B. Linn

In a sweet hope,
By V. B. Linn
September 23, 1995
Dedicated to the Hopewell Church,
Cross Lanes, WV

Distilling Dew

Deuteronomy 32 S.M.

Give ear ye heavens below
And hear the word I speak,

Hear ye O earth words of my mouth
Rise up and taste the sweet.

My doctrine pure and true
Shall drop down as the rain,
My speech shall distill as the dew
And take away your pain.

A smile from heaven above
Shall cause the gloom to pass,
Small rain upon the tender herb
As showers upon the grass.

Come all ye chosen race
Publish His name and then
Ascribe ye greatness unto God
And feel relief within.

Declare His perfect work
As you are blessed to see,
A God of truth embracing you,
Without iniquity.

His choice was from of old,
Yes, just and right is He,
While standing on the walls of Zion
You view eternity.

Remember days of old,
Consider all the years
Of many generations where
They sought Him with their tears,

O foolish and unwise,
He's standing by the well,
Then ask your Father, He will shew
The elders, they will tell.

My friend, He is the Rock,
His work is perfect still,
And all His ways are judgment yet,
'Tis written in His will.

Dedicated to the Sarah Church
Prayerfully submitted,
By V. B. Linn
March 1996

His Soul Satisfied

Hab. 2:11 C.M.

Our works can never gain a crown,
Or lead us to our home;
'Twas finished by the Son of God,
Who bled and died alone.

He trod the winepress by Himself,
There was no helping hand;
Not one to render to His pain,
No comfort came from man.

It pleased the Father there to bruise
His Son is rebels' land;
We mourn when we are blessed to view
The nail prints in His hands.

He was forsaken on the cross,
As He poured out His all;
To cleanse His brethren from their sins,
And satisfied the law.

He answered vengeance as He died,
When from the wall He cried;
The beam did answer to the stone,
His soul was satisfied.

Dedicated to Oak Grove Church,
North Carolina
It was sung for the first time at Oak

Grove, and a copy is in their books.
Prayerfully submitted,
By V. B. Linn
March 30, 1996

The Pilgrim's Plea

L. M.

Oh Lord! Grant us a peaceful place
Where we can sing "Amazing Grace,"
Where we can feel the smile of love
That comes to us from heaven above.

Where pilgrims rest while on their way
To that bright shore by heaven's bay,
Where we can wash our brothers' feet
And rest beneath the mercy seat.

Oh! Grant us, Lord, a little ray
Of understanding on our way,
Where praises rise from faith within
When Jesus lifts our weight of sin.

Our Saviour makes us free indeed
And tenders to our every need.
He calms the sea for those of choice;
The tempest yields unto His voice.

No power can move against His rod
Or separate us from our God.
The battle fought, the victory won,
For as he spake, the work was done.

Chorus
Oh! That great love, that matchless love,
That comes to us from heaven above.

Member of the Hopewell Church,
Cross Lanes, WV
She lived in Boone County, WV.
By V. B. Linn
(Used at various funerals with a change of name)

In Memory of Sister Helen Stickler

L. M.

Oh! Come my friends and let me tell
You of a friend we loved so well.
Her beauty was contained within;
The inward heart so free from sin.

God's spirit led her on her way
And placed her feet from day to day.
His spirit did the work perform
And guided her through every storm.

She claimed salvation as she trod
As finished by the Son of God;
And when convictions came her way,
God was her strength, He was her stay.

A joy within glowed from her face,
Reflections of amazing grace.
Free from destruction in the fall,
Her Lord and Master did it all.

1843 - THE CHURCH OF GOD IS THE FAMILY OF HIS CHILDREN.

Harrisburg, Fayette Co., Ia.,
April 5, 1843.

Brother Beebe:- I have long been a reader of your paper, and have found much in it to approve, nay, to admire; and some things to deplore. The hard shooting of brother against brother, is always a matter of regret to me: yet a zealous adherence to the Truth of the Gospel is always commendable. I have long preached and believed that there are both Truth and error on the earth, and Truth is mighty and will prevail. The Saviour is the Truth, and the devil a liar and the father of it. These two heads have their mystical bodies in this world. Christ has sent out His Apostles, and the devil has sent out his: and the body of Christ do well when they try those who say they are apostles and are not; and prove them to be liars who are of the synagogue of Satan, or his ministers. The whole Gospel is Christ and Him crucified - He is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. Everything else that is preached as merit, means, conditions, or terms of salvation and eternal life, is but a lie of the devil, and proves its preachers to be the ministers of Satan; and those who love or make such lies have no place assigned them in the Gospel Church, but their place without its walls is with dogs, &c.

I have believed and declared my full conviction that there are but two great principles on the subject of religion in this wide world: - One is grace alone; the other is works alone.- These can never be blended, for if we are saved on the condition of some good works done, or foreseen to be done by us, the reward is not reckoned of grace, but of debt; and, if it is of debt, then it is no more grace. So there is no grace in that religion, for grace is a favor to the unworthy: but if we must first fulfill some specified condition or terms, in order thereupon to claim and receive the favor or blessing, we receive it as being entitled to it by services specified as the terms, and rendered by us as such; and so the favor is obtained on the ground of worthiness, and grace is quite excluded altogether. So we must still agree, that if it is of grace, then it is no more of works; but, if it is of works, then it is no more of grace; - for the two plans will not blend together, for the one excludes the other.

I may be asked, Why do so many denominations, all in conflict with each other, exist, if they all belong to one great body as the synagogue of Satan? I answer, They do not differ with each other on the great principle, but all agree, without a dissenting voice, that we have our part to do, or work to do. Every heathen temple and every Antichristian denomination sustain this great cardinal doctrine. Why then do they so greatly differ? They only differ about what it is we have to do, but they all agree that we have got something to do, and only differ concerning what that something is.

The Hindu says we must go to the temple of Juggernaut to worship; the Jew says we must be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses; the Mahometan (Moslem) must believe and obey the

prophet; the Shaker must believe in Ann Lee and give up his marriage vows and property; the Mormon must receive the new revelations of Joseph Smith; the Catholic must receive the sign of the cross of Talmuz, count his beads, and confess to his priest; the Campbellite must believe, repent, confess, and be baptized in order to receive remission of sins; the Methodist of various grades, and United Brethren, &c., must come to the altar, join their society, attend class-meetings, pay quarterage, &c., or do some good works as they call them. Now apply the rule to all parties, heathen, Jews, Mahometans and Arminians of every grade, and they all have their work to do. They must believe in the use of means, must attend to and use the "means of grace," so called. Now who cannot see that these all agree in one great conditional plan of salvation, either in time or eternity, or both, and differ only in detail - about what the work is which will fulfill the terms and entitle the performer to the blessing? They all equally exclude grace and make some doing or other the terms of obtaining the favor, which makes the reward reckoned of debt, and not of grace. Some use the "term" grace for freedom of will. If you have it, you can exercise it to your gain, or not, according to your wishes. I therefore, in reference to the true faith of Christ, can make no preference of one denomination above another, while they all alike exclude Christ and the finished work of Christ; and when I hear that the most popular of them, such as New School Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, &c., are all uniting, I believe they act in perfect consistency.

The Old School Baptist church stands solitary and alone, as it always has stood:- "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; but it is the gift of God: not of works lest any man should boast." "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but of His own mercy He saved us." "Who hath saved us and called us, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given us IN Christ before the foundation of the world." From these texts we are positively told that we were not saved by our works, of our works, nor according to our works. Thus heaven has vetoed the whole plan of the Arminians, and they may divide no more about its details. The inheritance is of faith that it may be by grace that the promise may be sure to all the seed, - not to all conditions! But is "well ordered in all things and sure."

My dear brother, the Church of God is the family of His children, and Jesus is the Elder Brother; He was God's Elect as heir of all things, as Mediator [not Executor] of His Father's will, and Surety for the indemnity of all the minor heirs. These were all the children of God which the Father gave to Christ as their Mediator, Surety, Guardian and Saviour. They as individuals are the sons of God and brethren of Christ; and as a body collectively they are His Church. Hence He says, "Behold I and the children which God has given Me! I will confess Thy name among My brethren: in the midst of the Church will I sing unto Thee." "He that sanctifieth [sitteth apart] and they who are sanctified are all of One

[Father,] for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." These sons of God and brethren of Christ are the "many" sons whom in bringing to glory the Captain of their salvation hath made perfect through suffering. These were chosen as heirs IN God their Father's will before the foundation of the world, and in that will were predestinated to the adoption of sons and to an inheritance as heirs of this will, which Christ was Mediator and Surety of, in whom, as such, they were blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, according to this early choice before the world; and God worketh all things after the counsel of this will. The immutability of His counsel He has confirmed with an oath to these heirs, that they might have strong consolation. This Will, New Testament, or covenant, is the will of the Father which Christ came into the world to perform or fulfill and execute. He left nothing imperfect, but finished the whole work and became the Author of eternal salvation, and in Him all the promises are yea, and amen to the glory of God by us; for our Gospel is not yea, yea, and nay, nay, but yea and amen.

This is salvation by grace, - no hard conditions to goad the necks of the disciples; no boasting that we have made ourselves to differ from others; no neglect of Christ to trust in ourselves; no looking to the law or humanly devised plans of salvation, works or our own righteousness to the neglect of the righteousness of Christ. This system is all of free grace only. Grace was given us in Christ before the world began! Salvation was wrought out by Christ in fulfilling His Father's will when He came; so we were chosen as heirs of God's will IN Christ, in whom we were accordingly blessed with all spiritual blessings. In the fullness of time, Christ came to this world to do or execute His Father's will in behalf of all the heirs, and settle all demands which could be legally brought against any or all of them, and did finish all this work perfectly; and so by His one sacrifice, He hath perfected forever them that were sanctified [set apart as heirs in the will He came to execute,] - all this was grace, - "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich yet for your sakes He because poor, that ye through His poverty might be made rich." So the work of conversion, faith, peace, hope and joy is called "great grace" which was upon the churches. The Gospel proclamation of Christ and Him crucified, is called "the grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men, [nations] which hath appeared, teaching US [the heirs in all nations,] that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, that we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world." The renewed soul in this plan can never attribute any good in him, done by him, or which he now anticipates or has heretofore enjoyed, to himself or his works; but is still bound to say, "By the grace of God I am what I am." In all the trials of this state of pilgrimage and warfare, we can have no confidence in the flesh; but renouncing all hope in human aid, either our own or others, we are sure that every heir will finally and certainly possess the full portion of his Father's will, for that Father

says, "My grace is sufficient for thee." This grace is all suited to the unworthy — it saved the lost — it sounds salvation full and free to the helpless — strengthen to the weak — life to the dead — and eternal beauty and glory to the sin-deformed and polluted.

The Spirit of this grace has been displaying its quickening energies in a number of churches in this State during the last eight or ten months; large additions have been made to a number of the churches. The saints have been greatly refreshed. The ministers have been unusually active and arduous in their labors, and especially where the good work was going on. Their work has not been directed to frighten or convert souls: this is the exclusive work of the Spirit; but they have labored to teach the renewed mind, and hold out Christ and Him crucified to them that were seeking for the good old way. I thank my God that my family and the Lick Creek church, with many around have copiously shared in this blessing.

I have been leading willing subjects into the baptismal water, more or less, every month since last August, and they have all professed the faith. Different sister churches in several associations have been partakers in these blessings, and the cold and ice of the past winter have not prevented the young soldiers of Christ from being buried with Him in baptism. This is no anxious seat revival; it is no missionary or Arminian excitement; it is no noise and hustle, but solemn, deep, and of the old school order; a rending of hearts and not of garments. There are none of the freaks of nonsense, and I hope there never shall be in any of our churches.

"By these trials I daily pass through
I am taught my own weakness to know;
I am taught what my Shepherd can do,
And how much to His mercy I owe.

While I dwell in an enemy's land
Can I hope to be always in peace?
'Tis enough that my Shepherd's at hand,
And now shortly this warfare will cease.

Yours in the Gospel of Christ,
Elder Wilson Thompson,
April 5, 1843.

THE CITIES OF REFUGE

The assertion that the New Testament is concealed in the old and that the Old Testament is revealed in the new is strikingly and comfortingly true when we examine the twentieth chapter of Joshua, which is our subject for consideration in this article. This has to do with the six cities of refuge appointed by the Lord, when he spake to Moses, as recorded in the thirty-fifth chapter of Numbers, which made provision for these cities with all their spiritual significance. It was not, however, until the time of Joshua that these cities; were built

when the Israelites came into possession of the promised land. By reference, allusion, comparison or contrast the types and figures of the Old Testament are rich with prophetic and experimental food for the believer of the gospel dispensation. Let us examine the chapter under consideration and meditate upon the beautiful typology involved.

There were six cities of refuge known at Kedesh, Shechem, Hebron, Bezer, Ramoth and Golan, each of which applies in type to Christ as the great and sure refuge of the regenerated sinner, and secondarily relating to the church of God itself. The church is the body of Christ, and so in a spiritual sense cannot be regarded as apart from him. Each of these six cities was provided for the manslayer who had without intent slain any person. They were expressly provided for the children of Israel and for the stranger that sojourned among them. We see in the word, stranger, the foreshadowing of the Gentile believer who by spiritual circumcision in the gospel dispensation enters into the commonwealth of Israel that is spiritual, and is therefore no longer a stranger or a foreigner from the covenant of promise as declared by Paul in Ephesians. The whole church of God is graciously provided for in type in regard to the cities of refuge by specific appointment of the Lord, who hath appointed salvation for walls and bulwarks.

We note that the Lord spake unto the children of Israel by the hand of Moses. The law with all its exactions and penalties is referred to in the expression, "the hand of Moses", for the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ that we might be justified by faith. The law as embraced in the Decalogue, though holy, just and good, manifests the ugly and deadly wound of sin, while the ceremonial law as included in the sacrifices and ceremonies of the Levitical priesthood point to, but cannot apply the remedy, thus the law is a ministration of death. The law expressly provided that if the manslayer were apprehended by the avenger of blood before he could flee to and reach one of the cities of refuge, he was to be slain. But if he reached one of these cities of refuge in successful flight from the avenger of blood, he was to declare his cause in the ears of the elders of the city at the gate, who were to take the fugitive into the city unto them and give him a place that he might dwell among them, and not be surrendered unto the avenger of blood who might pursue him even unto the gate of the city. He was to stand before the congregation of the city for judgment and was to dwell therein until the death of the high priest. If he survived the high priest, he was to be allowed to return unto his own city and be free from apprehension or punishment.

With appealing force the case of one fleeing from the avenger of blood represents a poor sinner who has been apprehended by the Holy Spirit and made of a broken and a contrite heart. It is such that the Lord will not despise. By one man, Adam, death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. The whole human race sinned in Adam, yet unknowingly and unwittingly, and in that sense slew themselves and came under

the sentence of death, subject to its just penalty, and without escape as far as they themselves are concerned. But provision is made for the church of God, that is all believers, through Jesus Christ who is the refuge of all who by faith lay hold upon the precious promises and flee from the wrath to come, from the avenger of blood, the inexorable and changeless judgment of a thrice holy God, for justice and judgment inhabit his throne, though mercy and truth go before his face in the refuge provided in Christ Jesus, the anti-type of each city of refuge when justice has been satisfied and judgment rendered unto God, in the sacrifice of the dear Lamb of God.

Burdened by a load of sin, tormented by a guilty conscience, and feeling the sentence of death in himself, the brokenhearted sinner, lest divine justice should strike him down because of his transgressions, flees from the wrath to come, being drawn by the invisible cords of a deathless love shed abroad in his heart by God himself. He flees for protection to the sanctuary of the anti-typical city of refuge. Satan pursues but cannot overtake the one who flees to this sanctuary. The Israelite of old did not flee to a city of refuge until he became aware that he was guilty of manslaughter. The sinner does not flee to Jesus until he has become aware of the vengeance of Almighty God for the offense of sin, treason against God, and ever on his journey experimentally, he feels that if justice had its course with him he would never know salvation.

As the church is the mystical body of Christ, there is comfort in the thought that the manslayer of old stood at the gate of the city and declared his cause into the ears of the elders of the city, who represented Israel. So he who confesses his sins before God and the church is given a place in the city, the church, the new Jerusalem that John saw coming down from God out of heaven. **"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven."** Matt. 10:32. As it was expressly provided that under the old dispensation, the manslayer who reached the city was to be guaranteed safety, so he under the new dispensation, who feels his sins and confesses them is accepted of God. Now this is important: under the law there were signs pointing to each city of refuge and each city was to be set on a hill and not more than a half day's travel from any point in the land of Israel. The church of God is like a city set on a hill, and the sign posts pointing to it are the offerings and sacrifices of the ceremonial law. No offering of a bullock, lamb, goat or pigeon could take away sin. It requires the divine virtue of the blood of the Son of God to cleanse sin. It required all the power of the Godhead bodily, therefore his blood was the blood of the son of God and had eternal efficacy so that the children of God are given eternal life.

The unregenerate sinner does not flee to the anti-typical city of refuge. He is not aware of the enormity of his offense against God or the nature and effect of the sin that he has committed nor of the sentence of death in himself. His carnal mind is enmity against the law of

God and is not subject to it and cannot be.

The church receives the sinner whose confession satisfies them and he is given a place among them. We should remark here that it is not necessary for a sinner to belong to the visible church in order to be saved. It is stated in scripture that six is the number of man, and there were six cities of refuge provided for under the law. We must remember that every sinner saved by grace is guilty of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, for all our sins are laid on him. The nearness of a city to every part of Israel shows the nearness of the Lord Jesus to every poor and needy sinner, who realizes that the commandment has come, sin has revived, and that he has died, for it is written, "The word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart," that is, the word of faith. There, then, must be the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart before the fugitive is aware of his condition. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Safety depended not on the fugitive, but upon the city itself, in the provision for the safety of the one who sought its protection. Jesus has not only atoned for the nature of sin in the believer, but for the very sins that the believer has committed. We see this in the meaning of the sin offering and of the trespass offering.

The names of the different cities of refuge have a sweet meaning for him who flees from the wrath to come. Kedesh, one of the cities appointed, means holiness and was situated in Naphtali. Since Jesus is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, and since we are justified by his blood and by his righteousness is imputed unto us and our sins laid on him. In resurrection life we are as holy as the son of God, but Kedesh was in Naphtali, which means wrestling. Jesus overcame all the powers of darkness, death, sin, hell, and the grave for us who are the called of God. Also each one in his experience wrestles with the old man, his carnal nature, and never in this time state is free from this adversary. He does not experience this wrestling until he is born again.

Another city, Shechem, mentioned as a place of refuge, means shoulder. The government of the church to be upon the shoulder of Christ, and is, for he is our king and he rules in the army of heaven and among the children of men. None can stay his hand. Now Shechem was in Ephraim, which means fruitfulness. Through Jesus we have the fruits of the spirit, love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, etc.

One of the six cities of refuge was Hebron, which means fellowship and friendship. In the church whether visible or invisible through Christ we come into fellowship with God. Jesus met the requirements of God's justice and satisfied the law in every jot and tittle and thus fulfilled it, becoming thereby the meeting place of God and man. He rendered obedience to God and brought salvation to man: Bezer, another city of refuge, signifies a fortification. The divine person of Christ in his sinless life, in his sufferings and death and in his resurrection, as well as by his Melchisedec priesthood, fortifies his people against

all the powers of Satan and secures for them eternal redemption. A mighty fortress is our God, secure against all the powers of darkness. Ramoth was a city of refuge and denotes heights and so may point to the exaltation of Christ and his people in him. Golan, the sixth city of refuge, is said to mean joy or exultation. It was the joy of Jesus to suffer for and redeem his bride and to take her sin and her shame upon himself. The people of God "glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope : And hope maketh not ashamed ; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." They that joy in God through Christ patiently await the coming of Christ for his people, who as a body are perfected.

We should remark here that the manslayer of the old dispensation was to abide in the city until the death of the high priest which should be in those days, before he could leave the city in safety. The high priest represents, Jesus, and after the death of Christ the believer has a freedom which gives him lawful liberty to go and come in his work and activities in the gospel dispensation, as he is in the world but not of the world. Until Jesus died, the believer under the old dispensation did not enjoy the blessings of the new, for he embraced the promises that are fulfilled in the New Testament though he did not enter into nor receive them, even though he died in faith.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS
West Hurley, N. Y.
February, 1946.

ROMANS 8:4-5.

That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

WHY DARKNESS BEFORE LIGHT

A great variety of questions and numerous requests find their way to the Editor's desk, and it is not always easy to answer or comply with them. In attempting to answer the foregoing question sent in by brother W. J. Kimbro, of Woodward, Iowa, we shall undertake to show that this is the order in which God has planned it, and his purpose in so doing evidently was to cause us to properly evaluate things in this world of sin and sorrow. God has in his infinite and all wise purpose set one thing over against another. Therefore we have the negative versus the positive, darkness and light, death and life, evil and good, cold and heat, adversity and prosperity, sorrow and happiness, hate and love. We could continue with many such examples, but these should suffice for our readers to understand our trend of thought. Jesus said, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." "Blessed are they which do hun-

ger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled." The reason the world was praying and yearning for peace was because it had been experiencing the horrors and hell of war, which were the very opposite of peace. With regard to the natural creation we read in the record of divine truth that "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep." The secret of God's creation was hid in the bosom of darkness. It was concealed from all mankind so Job could not answer God when he asked him where he was when the foundations of the earth were laid. It should also be remembered that "Secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children." After God created the heaven and the earth, had darkness remained utter confusion would have prevailed, but in order that his wisdom and power might be made manifest he said, "Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night." Light revealed that which God had created or made. It is in the darkness of the womb that the great mystery of conception and formation of life takes place, but the birth brings into outward manifestation that which God created in darkness. It is in the bosom of death, so to speak, that nature germinates and life springs forth into being. David said; "night unto night showeth knowledge," but it is the day that uttereth speech and declares that "There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." John said, "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light; and in him is no darkness at all." The Psalmist declared "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom." When we are given to see the handywork of his hand. We can in truth proclaim that it all declares the glory of God. God not only created the heaven and the earth, but he made all things that in them is, for we are told that "all things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." Therefore "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." We may sometimes undertake to classify and separate what seems to us the good from the bad, but we read that when God had finished his work of creation he "saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." We understand this to mean that everything that he had made was good for the purpose for which he made it and, therefore, we firmly believe that the ultimate end of all things will be to glorify God and to lift the name of Jesus on high. Both the Old and the New Testament writers agree in substance **"That at the name Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."**

Phil. 2:10-11. Of necessity this must be true, otherwise God's sovereignty would become a farce, and Jesus, his Son, would no longer be, Lord of lords, and King of kings. The words of the prophet Isaiah must forever remain true, for it was God who was speaking by and through him when he said: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it. I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." Again we quote him: I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things." The Lord also said by the mouth of this same prophet, "Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy." The very next verse, however, gives comforting assurance to the hearts of true Israel, for it declares that "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shall condemn." God is indeed the refuge and strength, and a very present help in trouble to his people.

The great artist who first paints a dark background for the portrait which he attempts to make as realistic as life itself, must have a touch of the Divine who first created Adam who by transgression became the man of sin, which has encompassed the world in darkness with all manner of evil, but who also at the same time determined to display in the person of his Son the embodiment of all that is righteous, holy and good. The first man is declared to be of the earth, earthy; while the second man is the Lord from heaven. From a spiritual point of view, the first man is without form and void and darkness covers the face of the deep, for we are told that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." In writing to the church at Rome, Paul told them "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." And he concludes by saying, "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." This man of flesh is so completely in darkness that it is said, "the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." He cannot see or have any perception at all of the kingdom of God until he is born of the Spirit and thereby is made a new creature in Christ Jesus, and becomes a partaker of the divine nature. We read "in him (the Word) was life; and the life was the light of men." And this is the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the

world." It is written "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." While this may apply in a special sense to the Gentile nations, we believe it is particularly applicable, experimentally, to every one of God's children who are quickened by his mighty power and made to walk in newness of life. When they begin to tell or the dealings of the Lord with them, it is like it was with Jacob, who said, "He found him in a desert land and in the waste howling wilderness: he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." Peter in writing to the "strangers scattered throughout" various points, who were the "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father," told them among other things that they were "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." If we have ever been blest to sing "Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!) That saved a wretch like me" It was because we felt God had wrought a wondrous change in us and had opened our blind eyes and made us to see that salvation was not by works of righteousness which we could do, "For by grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." It was to such characters as these to whom Paul wrote, saying, "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." He goes on to say, "But we have this treasure (and what a wonderful treasure it is) in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." He says further for our comfort and consolation, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." These are wonderful things to us and we believe they point the way of life as it is in Christ Jesus. At this point we feel to quote Hymn 1296, Beebe's Collection:

"A child of Jehovah, a subject of grace;
I'm of the seed royal - a dignified race;
An heir of salvation, redeemed with blood,
I'll own my relation, my Father is God!

He loved me of old, - and he loveth me still;
Before the creation he gave me by will,
A portion worth more than the Indies

of gold,
Which cannot be wasted, nor mortgaged, nor sold.

He gave me a Surety, a covenant Head,
To live in my name, and to die in my stead;
He gave me a righteousness wholly divine,
And viewed all the merits of Jesus as mine.

He gave a Preceptor infallibly wise,
And treasures of grace to be sent in supplies;
Yea, all that I ask for, my Father hath given
To help me on earth, and to crown me in heaven.

He gave me a will to accept what he gave,
Though I was averse to his purpose to save;
He wrote in his will my repentance and faith,
And all my enjoyments for life and for death.

My trials and sorrows, my conflicts and cares,
The spirit of pray'r and the answer of pray'rs,
The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will.

My cross and my crown are both will'd by my God,
He swore to his will, and then sealed it with blood;
'Tis proved by the Spirit the witness within,
'Tis mine to inherit, I'll glory begin."

Many, many years ago when our eyes had been opened to see God's glorious truth, we had presented to us a booklet containing a sermon by the late J. C. Philpot, of London England, under the caption of "Winter Afore Harvest," and we shall long remember what a feast of fat things it was to our hungry soul. We had passed through the coldness of winter, with all of its privations and discomforts, but the heavens appeared to open and, lo, the winter was past, the rain was over and gone. The flowers appeared on the earth: the time of the singing of birds had come, and we were enabled to rejoice with joy exceeding and full of glory to God and to praise him for his wonderful works to the children of men. It was not by chance that the Legal (dark) Dispensation came first, but rather according to divine appointment. The law called by Moses and its object was to manifest the awfulness of sin. It was a plumb to show how crooked and perverse human nature was. In its scales humanity was to be weighed and found wanting and there was none that did good according to its standards. Therefore when "the Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God," He found that; they are all gone astray, they are altogether become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one," Paul says.

"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. "He goes on to say further, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." The law condemned; it showed the necessity for Christ to come, and John tells us that "of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Never was such a picture presented as that of God manifest in the flesh. There was no efficacy in the blood which for centuries was offered under the law; it only had a shadow of good things to come. Those sacrifices could never put away sin, but they pointed to Christ, of whom it is said, "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." The law is our schoolmaster unto Christ, and what a wonderful and blessed privilege it is to know him whom to know is life eternal. Only by a new birth can this be brought about, for Jesus said to Nichodemus, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." If we know nothing of the slavery and fear of sin, neither shall we know anything of the freedom and joy that is found only in Christ. If we are not deceived, we know something of that darkness which is of the flesh, which is full of envy, strife and jealousy, which in turn is said to be as cruel as the grave. John said, "If we say that we have fellowship with him (Jesus Christ), and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." He also says, **"Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth. He the saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes."** 1 John 2:7-11. If the light that is in us be darkness, behold how great is that darkness. How sad it is to see the true light obscured by the darkness of men, to see good brethren yield to the whims of the flesh. Perhaps when they are converted from the error of their way they will see the true light in all of his effulgent glory and beauty and will be ashamed of their ways. It is said that men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are

evil, and while we cannot understand the whys and wherefores, it is enough for us to be still and know that he is God, **"For the scripture saith unto Pharoah, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth."** Rom. 9:17. If the ultimate end of all darkness and evil is to glorify God in its destruction, whose holy and divine presence will illuminate the eternal city and whose righteousness will cover the earth, it will be enough, and may God be praised, both now and forevermore, world without end. Amen.

Elder R.L. Dodson

MEETINGS

LOWER MAYO 5TH SUNDAY MEETING

The next 5th Sunday Meeting will be held, The Lord Willing, Sunday, November 29, 2015. Thomas' Grove Church will host the meeting. The Meeting House is located at 1390 Morning Dew Lane, Floyd, VA 24091. From VA 8, turn north on Blue Ridge Parkway at Tuggles Gap. Go about 1.7 miles. Turn right at Soapstone Hill sign. Immediately turn left on Morning Dew Lane (no sign) go 200 yards to church on left.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to meet with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

SKEWARKEY UNION (Eastern Kehukee Association)

Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarky Union on the fifth Sunday of November 29, 2015. The church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albemarle Avenue in Tarboro, NC. Preaching services begin at 10:30 a.m.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

Dan River Primitive Baptist Church will host the fifth Sunday meeting on November 29, 2015. Singing will begin at 10:00 a.m. and preaching service at 10:30 a.m. Dan River Church is located on Hwy 700 between Eden, N.C. and Danville, VA.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Elder Thomas Solomon, Moderator
R. Allen Carroll, Clerk
336-939-7893

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 2015

Marcus Vickers, FL 10.00
Lowell Hopkins, VA 15.00
Oscar Pickral, VA 5.00

Elder W. L. Gardner, GA 25.00

Loy Rodgers, AR 5.00

David Pittman, VA 25.00

Arleen Giles, VA 5.00

OBITUARIES

ERMA WRIGHT GARDNER

July 2, 1920-April 11, 2015

Erma Wright Gardner, 94 formerly of Stoneville, NC., died Saturday, April 11, 2015, at Morehead Memorial Hospital in Eden, NC.

The funeral service was held at 2 pm. Monday, April 13, 2015 at Colonial Funeral Home in Madison, NC. Elders David Minter and Lowell Hopkins officiating. Interment followed in Sardis Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery.

Mrs. Gardner was born July 2, 1920, in Patrick County, VA; her parents were the late Walter Lester and Ethel Huff Wright. She was of the Primitive Baptist faith and a past employee of Eanes Manufacturing Co.

In addition to her parents, Mrs. Gardner was preceded in death by her husband, Elder James Greer Gardner; brothers, Henry, Wilburn and Arlis Wright; sisters, Myrtle Rakes and Peggy Martin; and son-in-law, Edward Gray.

Survivors include her daughters, Elsie G. Gray and Faye G. Shelton (Bob), both of Stoneville; one grandson and two great-grandsons.

On February 10, 1940, she married Elder James Gardner. They were married 43 years. Elder Gardner was Moderator of the Lower Mayo Association for many years and served Sardis Primitive Baptist Church over 25 years. During their years of marriage, they attended churches far and near and Associations in several states. Their home was filled with church members and friends during the Lower Mayo Association. While working her job, she prepared all the meals and took care of their overnight guests.

She loved her family and friends. She was always by Elder Gardner's side attending churches and during his illness. There was always a big smile, a loving hug and kind words for everyone.

Mrs. Gardner looked forward to going to church, as this was her life. She was able to attend up until a few months before her passing. Her two loving daughters was always by her side, taking her to church, to visit friends, doctor visits and anything else she needed.

At the funeral service, the large chapel in the funeral home was full. This showed that she was highly regarded and loved very much.

Mrs. Gardner will be greatly missed among the Primitive Baptist folks, friends and especially her two daughters she loved so much.

It is therefore, resolved that a copy of this resolution be sent to her family, one to the Signs of the Times for publication and one be recorded in our church record.

Elder David Minter - Moderator
Julia Minter - Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

As on the cross the Saviour hung,
And wept, and bled, and died,
He poured salvation on a wretch
That languished at his side.

His crimes, with inward grief and shame,
The penitent confessed;
Then turned his dying eyes to Christ,
And thus his prayer addressed:

Jesus, thou Son and heir of heaven!
Thou spotless Lamb of God!
I see thee bathed in sweat and tears,
And weltering in thy blood.

Yet quickly, from these scenes of wo,
In triumph thou shalt rise,
Burst through the gloomy shades of death,
And shine above the skies.

Amid the glories of that world,
Dear Saviour, think on me,
And in the victories of thy death
Let me a sharer be.

His prayer the dying Jesus hears
And instantly replies:
"To-day thy parting soul shall be
With me in Paradise."

Stennett

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EDITORIAL

"...And David sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to wife. And when the servants of David were come to Abigail to Carmel, they spake unto her, saying, David sent us unto thee, to take thee to him to wife. And she arose, and bowed herself on *her* face to the earth, and said, Behold, *let* thine handmaid *be* a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord. And Abigail hasted, and arose, and rode upon an ass, with five damsels of her's that went after her; and she went after the messengers of David, and became his wife." 1 Samuel 25:39-42.

Elder Jerry B. Farmer

Jesus said, "Search ye the scriptures for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they that testify of me." It appears that the holy scriptures are much more than they appear to be on the surface. On the surface all may read of historical events with a natural understanding. Many take the scriptures altogether literally and see nothing other than that which is immediately apparent. But hidden in the scriptures is the wonderful truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Lord. This secret truth is only revealed to the little babes that He has bought with the price of His own blood. It is hidden from all others. Why? Because it seemeth good in His sight.

The story of Abigail's life is recorded for our comfort, instruction and edification. According to the scriptures, Abigail was married to a man of Belial, which means a man of *wickedness*. His name was Nabal, which means *folly*. Taken together, the names indicate that he was a *foolish and wicked man*. The name Abigail means *Source of Joy*. And she was appropriately named, for she caused much joy to David and to the people of Israel, as was brought forth in the scriptures. She was also described as a woman of good understanding and of a beautiful countenance. I am made to believe that she stands for the church, which has been given a good understanding of the truth, and is called the perfection of beauty, because of the imputed righteousness of Christ.

At that time in history David was being pursued by king Saul. Saul had been rejected from being king because of his disobedience unto God and would soon die. David had been anointed to be king in the place of Saul, but Saul sought to kill David to try to prevent David from ruling as king. Saul chased David into the wilderness, and David said that there was but a step between himself and death. It appears that David stands for Jesus Christ, who was continually hounded by the authorities of His day. Herod sought to kill Him, the Jewish leaders also attempted to take His life, and finally the government of Rome crucified Him, according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. And Saul, I am made to believe, stands in this instance for those who hate God and his people.

David was in the wilderness with his men that had been gathered to him. It appears that the wilderness stands for the world, which is not the home of God's children. His children are pilgrims and strangers there. It has ever been so from the beginning until now. The woman (church) was given two wings of a great eagle to fly into the wilderness where she was nourished for a time, times and half a time, which appears to stand for the entire time of banishment of the children of God by the world. The men who had been gathered with David were also outcast. It is said that they were in distress, in debt, and discontented. Is this not the case of all the children of God? They were distressed because of their sinfulness and their inability to do anything about it. They were in debt because they had sold themselves into bondage and had nothing with which to redeem themselves. And they were discontented because they had no righteousness of their own. Because of these things they were drawn to their captain David, even as we are drawn to the Captain of our salvation.

In this part of the wilderness, David and his men kept order and peace. They were a wall of protection to the shepherds and their flocks by day and by night. The children of God are the salt of the earth and the light of the world according to Jesus. They alone preserve the earth and give off light in a dark and sinful place. Because of their presence, the world is not destroyed by the wrath of God. When Jesus comes and they are taken out of the world at the resurrection, the world will be consumed and will dissolve with the fervent heat of the wrath and presence of God, according to the scriptures.

It was just and right for David's men to be nourished by those they had kept and protected. But when David sent his men to the great wealthy man Nabal to request provisions, he insulted them and sent them away empty. We are made to see that there is nothing the world will give in return for the mercies of God. They are blinded to the goodness and mercy of God's providence and render no praise or honor to Him, the Giver of every good gift and every perfect gift. They think, as Nebuchadnezzar and we once did, that they have gained all they have by their own wisdom and strength, and owe nothing to anyone. Nabal requited evil to David for good.

The wrath of David was kindled, so he commanded that every man gird on his sword, and David also girded on his sword. It seemed that the wrath of the king was about to fall upon the foolish wicked man Nabal and everyone in his house. We see similarities to Sodom and Gomorrah, and to Jericho and to other places where the wrath of God was about to be poured out on wickedness. But in these places were found the children of God. Destruction could not fall until the beloved of God were delivered into safety. It was even so with Abigail and we hope this also will be our lot at the coming of Christ.

When Abigail was informed about the things Nabal had said and done to David's men, and she realized that destruction seemed eminent, she made haste and took loaves and wine and sheep and corn and raisins and figs and brought them to David. "And when Abigail saw David, she hasted and lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground." Has not this been the case with all who ever came to Jesus for help and deliverance? All pride was taken away from them, and they were humbled down by the mighty hand of God. Abigail was made to see him as lord, as the one who held the power of life and death. She was made to plead her case before him, as all of God's little ones are made to do—to admit their unworthiness and to beg for mercy.

Abigail was blessed to say, **"I pray thee, forgive the trespass of thine hand maid: for the Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house; because my lord fighteth the battles of the Lord, and evil hath not been found in thee *all* thy days."** 1 Samuel 25:28. The blessed of God are given to look unto Jesus as Lord and Savior. They are made to look unto Him as being a sure house, which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. They are made to view Him as the One who has fought their battles and has given them the victory. They are made to see Him as altogether righteous and worthy of praise. And David showed mercy unto Abigail, even as Christ has shown mercy unto all that were given to Him of the Father, even to all he loved with an everlasting love.

Nabal's heart died within him when he learned what Abigail had done. It is written that he became as a stone, and in about ten days the Lord smote Nabal, that he died. The wicked cannot bear righteousness. It is death unto them. They hate the light and the Truth. They will not and cannot come unto it, because it shows that their deeds are evil. Nabal could not stand the thought that his substance was given to another whom he hated.

When David heard that Nabal was dead, he sent and communed with Abigail to take her to him to wife. We know that at one time we were married to this wicked and foolish world, even as Abigail was married to Nabal. It was our home for a season. We found natural comfort and joy in it, and were glad to be joined unto it. We happy and alive naturally in the vanities of our flesh and of our mind. But when our first husband died, we were freed from the law of our

husband. He is dead to us. And we are married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead even — as Abigail was married unto David.

"And when the servants of David were come to Abigail to Carmel, they spake unto her, saying, David sent us unto thee, to take thee to him to wife. And she arose, and bowed herself on *her* face to the earth, and said, Behold, *let* thine handmaid *be* a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord. And Abigail hasted, and arose, and rode upon an ass, with five damsels of her's that went after her; and she went after the messengers of David, and became his wife." 1 Samuel 25:40-42. It is a blessed gift to us that these things have been recorded and preserved for the household of faith. What a beautiful thought is presented that the one chosen and drawn to the king should be given the humility of mind to say that she would be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of her lord. Is this not the true spirit of love given to the saints? One place it is written, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus..." Jesus came to serve and to lay His life down for His friends. **"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man should lay down His life for his friends." "Hereby perceive we the love *of* God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren."** The children of God are given the mind of Christ, which causes them to desire the lowest places and to minister to their brethren, rather than be ministered unto. "And she went after the messengers of David and became His wife."

Written in love, I hope,
Elder Jerry B. Farmer.

PSALM 37:39.

But the salvation of the righteous *is* of the Lord: *he is* their strength in the time of trouble.

CORRESPONDENCE

Signs of the Times
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, VA 24343

Dear Editor,
RE; FRANCES FLEMING KNIGHT

We respectfully request that the obituary of Frances Fleming Knight be Published in your Signs of the Times. Mrs. Knight visited the churches in SC; NC; VA for many years and known by many of your readers. I am enclosing a copy of the minutes of Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church of 13 September 2015 authorizing this submission.

Bryant Huff, Clerk
83 Will Smith Rd.,
Broxton, Ga 31519
(912-359-5628)

Bro. Cleo,

I have enclosed a sweet letter Elder Wray had Sister Renae write to us. We were told you would like a copy. I'm sorry to be so tardy in getting the letter in the mail to you.

May God continue to bless you in your ministry and working on the Signs. We enjoy the Signs so much.

In love and fellowship,
Elton and Phyllis

Dear Sister Phyllis & Elton,

I hope you find both of you healthy and with the blessings of God. When I got your card and read it, I couldn't help but think of a scripture in the Bible. And the word says, What manner of love is this? When I saw the names of those who signed it, I saw very vivid that this is that manna of God. That he feeds his people with and share with and that manna of his love God is still giving it in feeding his people. And they all can sing the same song, Amazing Grace, How sweet the sound. I believe with all my heart that the ones that Jesus saved in heaven will feast on the same manna of love. With one voice, one spirit, one faith, one hope. And all will be fashioned like Him. I have asked Sister Renae Denny to write this letter for me. I appreaciate her taking time out of her schedule to do this for me.

Renae Denny – I love you dear brothers and sisters. Thank you & God for everyone's love and signatures.

Elder Wray was deeply touched by your love and kindness!

In the love of God,
May God bless you all,
Thank you,
Haywood Wray
Renae Denny

VOICES OF THE PAST

BRUNSWICK, Maine, March 11, 1879.

Brethren Editors: - Inclosed you will find a manuscript written by a member of the Woburn Old School Baptist Church, in Mass. She would like to have it published in our family paper, the SIGNS, if in your judgment it is worthy of a place.

About thirty-five or forty years ago she, together with thirty others, left the church to which they stood connected on account or what they considered a departure from the truth, and formed a church by themselves, and ever since have contended earnestly for the truths which are held by all the Old School Baptists at the present time. It was sometime after they came out of Babylon before they knew there was a people anywhere who saw and understood as they did. But when they learned that there were strangers scattered throughout the United States who believed the truth, and heard of Eld. Beebe and the SIGNS, their hearts were filled with joy and gladness.

Your brother in hope,
Elder Hiram Campbell

I have long wanted to write what I hope the Lord has done for me, a poor, undone creature, without God and without hope. I loved sin and hated holiness, and it was unpleasant to me to hear my good mother talk on the subject of religion. I knew she was a christian, and that I was not. I was not more than nine years old at that time. While out at play, it seemed that something said to me, You are a sinner against God. I felt it as I had never before, for I knew it was true. What to do I did not know. I went in to ask my mother, but there was company there, and I did not say anything about it. Time passed on, and my trouble would come upon me at times with such power that I could not get away from it although I tried hard. I went into young company, and was the liveliest of them all, and would think my trouble was gone; but when I came to lay upon my bed, something would seem to say, You are a lost sinner, under the curse of God's law, and I would be in great distress for a time.

Thus the time passed until I was fifteen years old, when there was a great revival in our neighborhood, and I went with others to the meeting. My mother said to me one day, "I hope you will get some good." It aroused all the enmity there was within me, and I replied, "I am as good as they are, and you will not see me crying around as they do, you may be sure." I went to meeting, determined not to feel nor show sorrow for sin. I never knew what made me so hard, I did not like to have them talk to me, and I meant they should see how I disliked it, and so stop talking to me. There was a man who came and asked me if I was a christian, and I said, "No, I am not." He asked me if did not want to be one, and I told him that I did not know as I did. He then told me what my situation was; that I would be banished from God forever, unless he had mercy on me. I did not like that, for I intended, when I should become ready, to get religion. The folks told me that I could do so, and I meant to be in earnest about it by-and-by. From that time I had no peace. I was in distress more or less all the time for three months, until I was almost in despair. I trembled before my righteous Judge. My sins were so great that I could see no hope for me. Some told me to go to my chamber and kneel down and pray, and be determined not to rise till I received a hope. I went and knelt down, and the first thing I knew I was prostrate on my face, in such agony that it seemed to me I could not live long. I then lost all confidence in man. I thought my case was beyond hope; but I still cried for mercy.

I went to meeting one night alone. It was very dark, but I had no fear. I thought there could not be any one as wicked as I was. I sat down, thinking I must soon die, for I could not live in such distress much longer. I could neither eat nor sleep much. While in this distress, it seemed to me that I saw my Savior and his angels, and he turned his glorious face to me and smiled. My load was gone, I never knew where, and my heart was full of joy. I did not know where I was, nor that anyone else was there. I saw none but my precious Savior, and knew nothing but love and joy, such as pen nor

tongue can describe. I was full to overflowing. Death had not one terror. I wanted to go right home. It seemed that I could see the path all the way. My Savior had done it all, and my heart praised him with fullness of joy. I knew it was a free gift, all of mercy from first to last. I knew I had done nothing to get it, but had grown worse and worse all the time. I could not drive it from me when I would, nor get it when I would have given all I possessed for it. I knew it was from God, for none but my precious Savior could cleanse me so. I now loved with all my heart what I hated before. Everything seemed to praise God; even the little chickens at the door seemed to be praising him. And it seemed at times that I could die without any fear, the way looked so bright. Death had lost its sting. O will it be so when my time of departure comes? I do not know.

But that joy did not remain very long, for something seemed to say to me, You are deceived; and as you have told others, what will they think of you? Then I tried to get my burden back, but could not find it. I would go to the throne of grace, and beg for mercy, and sometimes my heart would be comforted; and if not, I was left to despair.

I united with the Baptist Church, but did not feel that comfort that I hoped for. I was in trouble. I know my case was not like theirs, for my hope came to me when I had given up work; and I worked as long as I could, till all was gone. Then I saw it was all of mercy, from first to last. They told what they had done to get religion; they had sought the Savior, and given their hearts to him; but I had done nothing but sin against him. I thought I must be wrong, for they seemed so happy, while I was begging for mercy, I was so wicked. I tried to give up my hope, but it held me. At times I would have given worlds, if I had possessed them, rather than lose it. The years went by, yet I could not think as they did. I thought they grew worse and worse. Finally a number of us left the church. We went to the church meeting and asked to be dismissed from the church. The minister said he wanted to know why we wished to go — if it was because we did not like our minister. One of our brethren arose and said he would tell them then and there, or they might come to his house, or he would go to theirs. No one asked him to tell, and they dismissed us. We went out, we knew not where. We did not know what we were. We did not know of any that thought as we did. We had never heard of Elder Beebe, nor the SIGNS. We had all paid something towards the meeting-house, but we went out gladly. We could not stay. We could not believe in the "do and live" doctrine. I heard one of their deacons say, "We can believe in election, but we will round the corners some, so as to get more in to hear the gospel." I believe it was God that led us out, and he has never left us. We met in a schoolhouse, but we had the truth, and it was good. We formed ourselves into a church. This took place many years ago. We have been called by hard names, and much has been said about us; but this does not hurt us. I am glad to be one of that little number. I thank God daily that he brought us out from among them. Al-

though a poor and very much despised people, still we are a happy little church, and live in peace and love.

During all these years I have not been left alone in sickness. God has comforted me. When my loved ones died, he supported me. My heart goes out in praise for so many mercies. One time when returning from the store, the sidewalk was full of men, and at almost every step I could hear God's name profaned. From my heart I thanked God that be had kept me from that sin. But for his grace I might have been as bad as they. There came warm breath over me, and my heart was filled with joy, and my eyes with tears of thankfulness. I often have a crumb by the way. Sometimes I walk in darkness, feeling along, trying to find some promise, something to cling to, when there don't seem to be much for me. But my hope is never clean gone; my blessed hope saves me from despair. At times I can say, I know that my Redeemer lives.

Our little church meets to try to worship God, and not man; nor his inventions, such as fairs, lotteries and tea-parties; but to worship God in purity, as far as our wicked nature is held in subjection. I cannot express the love I have for this little body. It seems to be the dearest thing on earth to me. I have felt for months the one continual prayer that the Lord would bless us, and not suffer us to die out, or have none left to meet as a church. I will trust him, for he brought us out, and has kept us, and never left us. None but God could have done this, for we are in the midst of all the isms there are. O how my heart thanks him for such great blessings. He has given us a minister that preaches his truth without fear, and my heart rejoices. It seems to me at times that I can almost see the way to that home above. And when Elder Campbell is preaching, it is so plain, so clear, so true, that I long to be there, where I can praise him, without sin, and in fullness of joy.

It lacks but a few days of being fifty-two years since the Lord gave me this hope, and in all that time how unprofitable a servant I have been. Often in the dark, or in the wrong way, trying to find an easier path to walk in. But blessed be my precious Savior, he brings me back to his feet, sometimes with stripes and tears; but it turns into thanksgiving and praise for his mercy, that he did not leave me to myself, but kept me by his grace, which is my earnest prayer to him to do, while life lasts, and then receive me into his heavenly kingdom, and the praise and glory shall all be his, from first to last.

This I leave to my dear relatives and friends, that they may know, when I am gone, what I believe, and what made me an Old School Baptist.

E. L.

ISAIAH 30:18.

And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the Lord *is* a God of judgment: blessed *are* all they that wait for him.

For the Signs of the Times.
March 11, 1836

The instructions of our Lord to the twelve when he sent them out to preach — his admonitions to them afterwards — the resolution of the Apostles to give themselves to the ministry of the word and prayer — the address of Paul to the Elders of Ephesus — the epistles to Timothy and Titus; with the exhortation of Peter to the Elders, and many divine lessons, scattered thru the N. Testament, draw the line of ministerial conduct and usefulness; beyond what any man or set of men can devise. To this rule, preachers should take heed as unto a light that shines in a dark place; for if they speak not according to the word, they have no light in them.

The faith and practice of the saints at large, is delineated in the Bible in a clear manner, yet the Lord sends forth preachers to explain and impress what is revealed on the mind, of the saints, that they may have those things in remembrance, and be ready for every good work. So also, preachers may be helpers to each other; each one communicating to others his best views on what God has revealed. Paul publicly blasted Peter for duplicity — exposed Barnabas, for disimilation — set a mark on Demas — reprobated the concision — rejected Hymenes, Philetus, Alexander and highly commended Timothy and many others for their purity and steadfastness of faith. Peter, James, John and Jude did likewise. When the Lord sent out his Apostles, he perfectly knew every circumstance that ever they would be in; but he did not reveal the whole unto them; but told them to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. According to the wisdom given unto them, they said and did many things which incidently fell in the way, which things were not expressly commanded in their commission. The Convention at Jerusalem and conference — the sending messengers to Antioch and Samaria — their accommodating their address to the circumstances and capacities of the people — their watching and improving the openings of providence &c. were incidental to the great work of their commission, which was to preach repentance and remission of sins, in the name of Jesus — to baptize those who believed and to teach them.

The rule which God has given to men and to preachers is perfect; but there has never been but one man — but one preacher; since Adam's fall, whose words and actions were equal to the rule. This was realized in Christ, who was the faithful and true witness. Every word of his mouth was pure. But he had many things to say which his disciples were not able to bear while he was on earth; but after he ascended to his glory, he sent the Holy Ghost which endowed them with power, inasmuch that when they were under the divine influence (like the holy prophets) they spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Signs, wonders, divers miracles and gifts of the Holy-Ghost which the Apostles had attending them, for the confirmation of the salvation, have ceased. If preachers of the present day were endowed like the Apostles, they

could decide, with certainty what doctrine was true and what mode of worship was required; but this is not the case. They have, however, the sure word of prophecy (the Holy Scriptures) which is a light to their feet and a lamp to their path; but such is the limitation of the human mind, and so strong the force of tradition; that men, who equally believe in the divinity of the bible, and acknowledge it as the only and complete rule of faith and practice; do, nevertheless, differ in many things. The question is often asked, What kind of preaching, and what measures of proceeding are most likely to make the ministry useful? An answer to this question is summarily given in the first section of this essay; but as events and circumstances, are always changing, some little comment (without placing it on a level with the text) may be profitable.

The doctrine that all have sinned — fallen into guilt, pollution and weakness; are children of wrath and dead in trespasses and sins; is abundantly confirmed by the scriptures — by the conduct of sinners and by the experience of the saints. By these three witnesses the doctrine is supported; and should be boldly preached.

The doctrine of redemption from the curse of the law by the blood of Christ — of repentence towards God and faith towards the Lord Jesus — of the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost — of self-denial and good works — of the resurrection from the dead and eternal judgment. These doctrines, with their connections and ramifications, may all be summed up in two words, Ruin and Recovery; or in other two, Duty and Grace, and if preaching of them is not calculated to make the ministry useful, I am at a loss to know what kind of preaching would. Some preachers have deeper penetration and stronger logical powers than others; by which they dig so deep, reason so close and fly so high that they keep out of sight of most of their hearers. In the spirit they speak mysteries, but those who occupy the room of the unlearned are not edified. They speak wisdom to them that are perfect; but it is rare that any stupid sinner ever gets turned to righteousness by such preaching. That preaching which is plain and familiar; which awakens the sinners attention and arrests his conscience; which shows him his danger and points him to the remedy; which beats down his false hopes and strips him of his own righteousness, likely to be the most useful. The minister who wishes to be useful must take heed to himself, as well as to his doctrine. A life of godliness and honesty is essential. A more hateful character cannot be seen than the preacher who indulges himself in riot, intemperace, fraud, falsehood and other foolish and sinful vices. If he preaches good doctrine and his life does not correspond with it, his hearers will take no conviction, but reply 'Physician heal yourself.' Whatever natural talents the preacher may possess for husbandry, mechanism, merchandize, science, law or physick all must be subordinate to devotion, and not entangle him in ministry.

It is of primary importance that the preacher should be cloathed with the

garment of salvation — that he should be filled with a sense of the immense worth of the truth — the guilt depravity and danger man is in — the unsearchable love of Christ in the bloody purchase, and his ability and willingness to save redeemed penitents. Without this robe he will preach a distant Jesus by an unfelt gospel, and with an unhallowed tongue. And all the self-made zeal, pretended pity, loud voice, hypocritical tears and agonizing gesticulations that he may assume, will not supply the lack.

Elder John Leland.

THE CLOUD LIKE A MAN'S HAND
1 Kings 18:41-46

To the unregenerate eating and drinking is important, to the generation of Jesus Christ there is nothing to do but just let them alone at it. Ahab thought it amounted to a good deal and it would seem that Elijah encouraged him in it. Ahab's eating and drinking does not concern us at this time but, if heaven directs, we are interested in Elijah.

At this time I would like to ask where he got his knowledge that it was going to rain? Ahab may indulge in eating and drinking to his heart's content because it is going to rain and produce some more. How did Elijah know? The cloud had not appeared, nor the wind had not risen, yet this prophet knew that rain was coming. How? One answer and one alone will suffice. God made it known to him. But a certain amount of movement in the kingdom has been ordered. Elijah told his servant to go down to the sea. Suppose that he had not gone? But, my dear brethren, we are not able to tell what would have been, we are not dealing in suppositions but in the certainty of God. Personally, I much prefer to say that all God's children hear and obey when the unction is from above. Be that as it may, the servant went. That is the all-important thing. Let us remember the length of this dry spell with its intense heat and searing of all in the place where it occurred. It is a type and it is highly figurative of the experience and travel of the Lord's humble poor. A dry time is a barren time. Oh my precious kindred, do you feel barren and destitute of fruit unto his name's honor and glory? As sure as you have been born from above you have these times. Sometimes it seems that the Lord has gone forever and forgotten his covenant. Oh, the searching and looking for relief. Go to the sea, Elijah commanded his servant. No questioning his authority but going. At first when he returned there was nothing to be seen, no relief in sight, no good news from my God, no token that he was still kept and sheltered by the Lord Almighty. Oh the times when my readers remember with me when we sought for him, but look where we would we saw nothing. Let us not rush away but tarry a little while longer. Will you listen to that? Go back until seven times, go back to the sea. Deliverance will come, it always has come, and it always will come. Suffering comes but it cannot change anything for that that is committed into his

hands is perfectly safe. (2 Tim. 1:12). Sometimes we get sorely discouraged and our soul becomes so dry within. No gentle rains, no distilling dew, but a continuation of the same scaring dryness felt through and through. But keep going; go until you are completely exhausted; go until the world and the fullness thereof passes away; go seven times. Ah, see him as he comes back on that seventh trip. He is coming from meeting with a great King, he is walking in the light of his countenance and it is showing in his weary face. Relief is in sight. "Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand." Did you get that, weary one? Notice again that little cloud. Remember that little babe born in Bethlehem; remember that when we first see him he is not comely, but this little cloud was like a man's hand. It had shape to it, it could be discerned as to its formation. Let us note the fact that it ariseth from the sea. Many times the sea is made synonymous with the trials and afflictions of God's people. They can do no more than the determination of God appoints to them. Here comes the cloud like unto a man's hand. This is the hand of him that controls the sea, the mighty raging deep. This cloud gives the rain, all the rain, none comes from any other source. Not only is this cloud a token of good to come from it, but it shows forth the Man of Galilee and his ruling, providential care. This man is loved by his Father; he loved him so well that he put all things into his hands. How long had this glorious Father loved his equally glorious Son? Fearlessly we say always and always. Then whenever it was that God loved his Son, then and there, once and forever, he put all things into his hand. All of what things? Who said anything about what things? Did inspiration? No it did not. Who did say anything about what things? Well, the gainsayers have always been quite busy explaining what things. I do not know what God would do without gainsayers to keep him from getting in ridiculous positions, but they are one of the all things in his hand. They are not any bother to the church at all. Sometimes the good way gets too straight and narrow and they borrow tools and go out to build for themselves, but the church goes on and on, believing that all things are in his hand. You cannot preach (and if you did they would not receive it) to them that God created, anything but that he had a purpose in it worthy of himself. In the purpose and wisdom of God all things were in the Son's hand before those things were actually in existence in creation. If God failed to create or bring into manifestation something that he had placed in purpose in his Son's hand it certainly would have showed discord in the very outset in the Trinity. Suppose he had. Let us grant just a little here and God had, in purpose, when he first loved his Son placed all things into his hand, but is the dawning of creation he did not create or make manifest just one of those things. What discord it brings to view to even hint, what things.

The gospel is good news. Anything that does not cause joy, peace and happiness is not nor cannot be the gospel. It is not good news that God created one thing at random. If it is not, then it is good

news to preach that everything he created was in complete harmony with his purpose, and with the all things placed in the Son's hand. It is not good news that anything God created has gone contrary to his purpose. Such as that is the worst kind of news. How dreadful to think that one thing was not under divine control. I have two (all I have) precious boys in this awful conflict of carnage and devastation. If I could be made to believe that one train, ship, man, gun, bullet or anything else was not under divine control I do not think I could rest day or night. If that is not good news then it is to declare that now, at this time, out yonder on the bloody battlefield, on the raging waters all things are in his hand. When the redeemed have all been brought into the fold and the disposition of all things come, then, most of all, it would not be good news that just one thing was not disposed of by him.

I hope that I have kept it before me how unworthy I am, and what a vile wretched sinner I am, but at the same time I beg my Father, my God and my Brother to enable me, while I stay here, to preach this doctrine. I am sure there is nothing wrong with it. It belongs to every poor child of God that has to go seven times looking for a little cloud like a man's hand. In conclusion, all this hand holds belongs to God's children. None of these all things are primarily for any but the Lord's anointed. Paul tells the church that all things are yours. Oh, weary pilgrim, God has given them all to you. They belong to you, but not one of them can come to you except through and from the man's hand. Life is yours and all that life is made up of belongs to you. Death is yours; dying on the breast of Jesus belongs to you; leaving behind all these trials and afflictions is yours; the world is yours; in a sense you may never own a foot of it, even the six by three mound your body rests in may be in the potter's field, but with God it is yours; things present and things to come all belong to you; they are all in his hand.

At this time I would like to see each of you and clasp your hand and raise our lisping, stammering voice in hymns of adoration to this Hand. It is beckoning us on and upward, and everything is working in perfect harmony and consistency to bring us all home more than conquerors over it all. There, safe from raging wars and all other earthly things, we shall see Him, be like Him and be satisfied.

Elder W. D. Griffin
February, 1946

MATTHEW 5: 3-6.

Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed *are* the are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

A BRAND FROM THE BURNING.

To the Editors of the
Gospel Standard 1837

Dear Sirs, — The following are a few of the things which, I trust, my soul has been led to experience; and should any of God's family be enabled to give me encouragement, or to receive encouragement, may God have the praise.

I was trained up to the church of England, and remained there till I was forced to leave her corruptions; for when the Lord led me to see a little into those discriminating truths which are so abominably hated, though so clearly revealed in the word of God, I soon found that they were not preached where I went, but that it was all "deceit and lies;" and although it was a hard task for me to learn to submit to the justice of God in saving some and leaving the rest to perish, yet I have a harder task to learn than that, namely, am I one of that number which God has purposed to save? When God first laid eternal things upon my mind, I felt determined to have nothing to do with them, and was still for going on in sin and wickedness; but God soon hedged up my way with thorns and briars, so that I could have no pleasure in the things I had before loved, but was forced to give up my drunkenness, and many other abominations. Then I began to think it was high time to turn righteous, for eternal matters pressed heavily upon me. At this time I was totally ignorant of the righteousness of Christ; and so to working I went. I was something like the children of Israel, who, when Moses was gone up into the mount, and delayed to come down, said unto Aaron, "Make up gods which shall go before us." So, in like manner, I was for having something of my own making to go before me. But as the Lord sent Moses, and as Moses took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and strewed it upon the water, and then made the children of Israel drink of it; so, in the same way, when I had done all I could to bring myself out of Egypt, the law, with its killing power, came and burnt up all, and made me drink it by painful and bitter experience. Still I thought it was my own fault, not having yet learnt what the poet says,

"I was as destitute of will, As now I am of power."

I began to think that God had shown me these things, because I had been such an enemy to God and truth; for I had sworn many a time that if ever I could believe God's election to be a truth, I would live in all manner of sin and wickedness. But I had now learned a different lesson to that; for my sins came in battle array against me, and I soon found that whether God could be just or not in saving some and leaving others to perish, he would assuredly be just if he left me to perish; and so far from living in sin, I was made to hate it, and had a desire to live holy, and grieved to find myself such a mass of sin and iniquity. I needed no one to tell me I was vile, for I felt it; and I was forced to give up all, and say "O wretched man that I am! If I am saved, it must indeed be God's free mercy; and if I am lost, I justly deserve

it." Let anyone who says God would be unjust if he did not give all men a chance of being saved, only be brought here, — be brought to feel what he is as a sinner in the sight of a heart-searching and rein-trying God, and then he will say, "How can God be just and save me?" His cry will not be about other people, but himself. He wants something more than free will or duty-faith. He wants that faith which is alone of the operation of God the Holy Ghost, to pierce through his dark clouds, that he may be lift up our of such an horrible pit. While I was in this state, I knew not what to do. I could not believe that it was work of grace, for I could find no rest nor comfort; but while engaged in prayer on one occasion, these words, "To you that are troubled," came with great force to my mind, and my soul was immediately comforted, for it seemed as though the words were written for me. But this soon passed away, and I began to think I was deluded; for all manner of abominations rose up in my mind, that I was ready to conclude, God could not dwell there. I was something like Gideon, when he was to go to battle against the Midianites, who, after the Lord had shown him, by the dew on the fleece, that he would save Israel, questioned the reality of it, and wanted the Lord to show him some other sign. So, in like manner, I wanted the Lord to appear in a more conspicuous manner, for I had sunk into such a dark state of mind, that I thought I was surely deceived, either by satan or my own carnal and wicked heart.

About this time I was directed to a place where the truth of God was preached, and the minister proved my character so clearly, that I thought I never should doubt again. But I am so changeable, that I have had many liftings up and castings down since then, and many times am almost ready to say I shall be lost after all. But what a mercy it is that God changeth not, that having loved his own, he loveth them unto the end.

Rosendale GIDEON

GOSPEL STANDARD
ALL THINGS YOURS
From J. C. Philpot on
1 Corinthians 3.21-23 (DATE)

And "the world" was that theirs too? What! the world? May a child of God stand upon London Bridge and say, "All the ships in the river are mine"? May he go to the Bank of England and say, "All the bullion in the cellars is mine"? May he stand upon St. Michael's tower in this town and say, "All Stamford is mine"?

Not in a worldly sense. But if he feels that his soul is worth a thousand worlds, and that it is saved in Christ with an everlasting salvation, then he stand upon London Bridge and say, "O ye mighty ships that crowd the stream laden with all the world's wealth, what are ye compared to my soul? O ye cellars, full to overflowing with millions of yellow gold, what is the value of all compared with that eternity to which I am fast hastening? O Stamford, with all the houses and all the property and all the people in it, could you purchase a drop of water to

cool the tongue of a miserable soul in hell? And is not my soul to me worth you all?"

So though he cannot lay a temporal claim to all the world, yet when he feels that his soul in his bosom is worth a thousand worlds, that that soul has been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and will live in a happy and glorious eternity when earth and all its works under his feet will lie buried in the ashes of the general conflagration, the world is his because he is the master of it. He can put his foot upon it and say, "O earth. I only want enough of thee to take me safely and honourably through life; enough of thy bread to feed me; enough of thy wool and flax to clothe me; enough of thy stones to shelter me; enough of thy timber to make my coffin; enough of thy ground to give me a grave. I would not have thee for my portion, my master, or my idol." When in faith and feeling he can thus speak, is not the world his? for faith makes him master of that which is master of all. It is true he is not here often in feeling but fact remains when feeling fails.

Nay, more, the Lord makes "the world" to serve him, and thus makes it his. Nobody can harm him but by God's permission. and this very permitted harm works for his good. God can make the world lie at his very feet so that not a dog shall move his tongue against him (Exod. 11. 7); the ravens shall feed him and he shall eat the riches of the Gentiles. For the gold and the silver are the Lord's, and the cattle upon a thousand hills; and He can give waters in the wilderness and rivers in the desert to His people, His chosen (Isa. 43. 20).

When, too, you can look around you upon the fields and meadows, trees and rivers, and meekly say, "My Father made them all," they are all yours because they are your heavenly Father's. I often walk in the beautiful park adjoining this town, and I have sometimes thought I enjoy it more than its noble owner, for I have had many a secret prayer and sweet meditation there, and I have the additional pleasure of admiring its beauties without the anxiety of proprietorship. Is not the park, then, mine — the trees, the avenues, the lake and the walks, all my own?

ROMANS 1:18-21.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them.

For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse;

Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

"For I *am* the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Malachi 3:6

I have been away from home much of late and on my return found my reading and correspondence quite piled up. I have read quite a bit that seemed to have a tinge of conditionalism. It may be that I did not understand. I trust, however, the writers did not so mean it. My mind seemed to keep inquiring if anything could happen, or may be better said come to pass, against God's will. I noted that some in writing said, "God permitted," etc. If God willed to permit he could have willed not to permit. It looks to me that it is God's will any way you fix it. My mind kept running along in this way until one night after I had retired the above text came into my mind and cost me quite a bit of sleep. **"The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed,** *so* **shall it stand."** Isa. 14:24. I fear we look too much on the surface which in many instances is very dark, instead of looking underneath to see the purpose of God work out. In the face of it, or from the natural point of view, the crucifixion was the blackest and most heinous crime on record, but the purpose of God was underneath and must in the end shine out to the glory of God and redemption of his people. God purposed it before the morning of time. It must so be. Could we not then say the perpetrators of the crucifixion did the will of God?

Isaac purposed to give the blessing to Esau. If we have it right it was the law of the land in that day to give the blessing to the eldest. God purposed that the blessing should go to Jacob. The purpose of Isaac or the purpose of God must go down in defeat. It is as impossible to defeat the purpose of God as it would be for me to take this old mundane sphere in my hands and shake it. The three falsehoods Jacob told his father to get the blessing look dark, but the purpose of God was underneath. A chain is no stronger than its weakest link: a fence is no safer than its rotten rail. These three falseheads are links in the chain of predestination. They had to be. The perpetrators of the crucifixion had to do it. The Lord of hosts had sworn it and there is no higher authority than the Lord of hosts. He can swear by no other than by himself. Our mind seems to be grasping so many things until we get too lengthy, but these thoughts have just come to our mind.

The Bible abounds in the story of the failure of man. Away with what is commonly called conditional time salvation. I heard an Elder in south Georgia say, "There is only one salvation, But if there were forty they would all be of the Lord and by Grace." God stored grace in Christ Jesus and a purpose to save his people before the world began. It was not according to our works. If Adam had not failed God would have had grace which he could never use and a purpose that could never be carried out. God knew that Adam would eat the fruit. Not only so, but he set the stage for it. The serpent was there to see that Adam disobeyed the commandment. God put the serpent there or else he slipped in with-

out God knowing it. "I am the Lord. I change not therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

The promise was given to Abraham, verified in Isaac, and fulfilled in Jacob. Jacob is, therefore, the outstanding type of the Lord's people. Jacob did not find the Lord but the Lord found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness. All flesh is grass. The grass cannot reach up to the cow. In Abraham, Isaac and Jacob we seem to have the type of the Trinity. God the Creator and former, Christ the Redeemer, the Holy Ghost the revealer. It was the fixed and unchangeableness of God to give his people to Christ. **"But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled."** Acts 3:18. "I am the Lord, I change not." Then we hear Jesus saying. "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." John 17:4. And be sure your sin will find you out" was in the old order: how glorious that in the new order, "but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Rom. 5:20. Nathan said unto David, "The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die." 2 Samuel 12:13. Grace had found him out. Then we hear David saying, "Have mercy upon me, O God according to thy loving kindness." Psalms 51:1.

My dearly beloved, my hope is anchored that one bright Sunday morning in September 1894 grace found this poor sinner. It was a happy period. This thought has just come to our mind (it may or may not be right) that the sins of David are of the flesh, the depravity of our nature. Are we, in our flesh or wicked nature, any better than David? God hath a fixed plan and he changes not. We recently visited nine Associations. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in Unity!" "It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." Psalms 133. Without offering any comment I feel like the entire nine Associations were endowed with the sentiment of this Psalm. Again may we say that we could see manifestations that the odors of Mary's ointment kept every house full. (John 12:3) We did so much enjoy these visits to see our kinspeople. "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God! Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried." Ruth 1:16-17. We feel like applying this sentiment to ourself. It was glorious to be among the beloved of the Lord. We were happy all the time. Dearly beloved, we enjoyed your hospitality and sweet fellowship to the fullest extent. In a sweet hope.

(Elder) C. H. BYRD
Rt. 2, Box 80,
Panama City, Fla.
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THE MINISTRY. - No. IV
(Extract of a Letter.)

To my dearly-beloved flock, — Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you, from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the day for our church meeting, and the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and I shall not be there; but though I be absent in body, yet am I present in mind with you. I thought you would like to hear from me, and how the Lord has dealt with me under my afflictions. I thought at the first, my work in the ministry was done, that my race was run, and that I was going to be called to give and account of my stewardship. I hope I was enabled to commit you into the hands of the great Head of the church, who could provide for you a far better minister, if he thought good; but it hath pleased the Lord to remove the disorder, that I hope I am now getting better. Though he has thus afflicted me, every stroke has been mixed with mercy. The rod is in the hand of a covenant God. He knew that there was a deal of pride and rebellion with me, and I think that passage in Isaiah is in some measure fulfilled in me, where he says, "And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin." I have thought much about that passage in Mal. iii. 3: **"And he shall sit *as* a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purify them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness."** I feel thankful to God, that amidst my affliction he has granted me sweet visits. I hope I can say that I have laid at the foot of the cross, and by faith beheld the crimson stream that flowed from an atoning Saviour's side. I hope I can say, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his." My soul has been blessed with a sense of his divine love, that tears of gratitude have flowed from my eyes. If kind friends who have communicated to my necessities are indications of God's providential goodness, then I share greatly in it; for ye did minister again and again to my needs. May the great Head of the church grant you an hundred-fold; and may my God and your God supply all your needs out of the riches of his grace. Do not forget me at the throne of grace, who desires ever to remember you; and may the eternal God which chose you, and God the Son which redeemed you, and God the Spirit which called and is, I hope, meeting you, bless you with every new covenant blessing, is the sincere prayer of your unworthy but affectionate pastor.

J. S.

ISAIAH 45:8.

Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the Lord have created it.

HEBREWS X. 26.

We understand that this admonition, like that in Hebrews vi. 4-6, was addressed to the saints, which were recognized by the inspired writer of the epistle, as "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling." As he had told them in chapter sixth, that if they should fall away, it would be impossible to renew them again so repentance, according to the manner of the Levitical priesthood, seeing that such a renewal would require Christ to be again sacrificed, so he tells them again in this text, "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." When the priest under the law made atonement for the children of Israel, and the Israelites again sinned, there remained farther sacrifices for their sins; the sacrifice was to be repeated continually; but Christ has made one offering for sin, and but one, and there remains no more. But to the professed disciple of Christ, who has sinned willfully, after that he has received a knowledge of the truth, there remains a certain looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour — what, the saints? No, the saints can never be devoured, for Christ has by one offering perfected them forever, and he has given his word for it, "They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." What then shall be devoured by the "judgment and fiery indignation," which the willful offender is fearfully looking for? "The adversaries." The adversaries of the cause of God and truth shall truly be devoured; but says the apostle, "We are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak." And again, in the close of this chapter, he says, "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." If a professed disciple of Christ, willfully transgresses the laws of the kingdom, is it strange that he should fear that he is only an adversary? And even if he is not, he feels afraid that he is, and looks for that judgment which awaits the adversaries.

This whole subject is an admonition to the saints. Moses' law could not be transgressed by an Israelite with impunity. The offender died without mercy, for the law of Moses knew no mercy for its transgressors. But as Moses was but a servant, and Christ is a Son over his own house, the offender who hath dishonored Christ, trodden underfoot the Son of God, by despising his law, counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace, he hath committed far greater offense, and is worthy of a sorer punishment, and if judged by the law of Moses, would be subjected to a sorer punishment. But he is, if a christian, under law to Christ, and a copy of that law is written in his heart, and it reads thus, notwithstanding the offender's deserts, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more." It is certain, however, that he will visit their transgression with a rod, and their iniquities with stripes, and they shall know that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

May we listen to the admonition of our subject, and may God grant us grace whereby we may serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.,
Nov. 1, 1855.

PSALM 123.

Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens.

Behold, as the eyes of servants *look* unto the hand of their masters, *and* as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes *wait* upon the Lord our God, until that he have mercy upon us.

Have mercy upon us: for we are exceedingly filled with contempt.

Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, *and* with the contempt of proud.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

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IS 12 / 2015

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John Schulz, WY	1000.00

CORINTHIANS 13: 9-13.

For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these *is* charity.

OBITUARIES

MILDRED SPANGLER GRAHAM

Our precious Sister Mildred Spangler Graham was called from our midst on November 14, 2014. She was born on October 9, 1920 to Elder David V. Spangler and Sister Nannie Turpin Spangler. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Arnold Graham, and her sister and brother-in-law, Eleanor and Ed Hodnett. Left to mourn her are her son, Richard Graham and wife Mary Ann of Blacksburg, Virginia; her daughter, Sandra Zuersher and husband Ron of Sarasota, Florida; her sister, Rebecca Smith of Sarasota, Florida; her brother, David Spangler of Danville, Virginia; three grandsons, Scott Graham, Keith Harrison (Joni) and Russell Harrison; and seven special nieces and nephews in addition to many brethren and sisters in Christ.

Her body was laid to rest in the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery to await the resurrection morn. A memorial service was held on November 29, 2014 at the Church with Elder Jerry Farmer, Elder Thomas Solomon, and Elder Mark Terry taking part in the service.

Sister Millie, as she was affectionately known to the writer, asked for a home with Dan River on June 23, 1957. She was baptized by her dad, Elder David Spangler. The Lord blessed her to be a faithful, loving member for 57 years. She and Arnold had entertained many of the Lord's people in their home and she was blessed to continue to do that after his death for as long as she was able. The welfare of her brethren was always of the utmost importance to her. When she reached the point that she was not able to attend church as often, she always wanted to hear about the church service every Sunday night. The writer was blessed with many Sunday night talks with this lovely one. She was truly a wonderful blessing in my life. Although more than 30 years separated us in age, we were drawn together by the cords of a most loving God to walk together, to rejoice together, and sometimes to sorrow together.

The last year or so of her life were difficult ones as her natural mind started to slip some and her health failed her. On October 9, 2014 her ninety fourth birthday, the writer was blessed to visit with her. She wasn't feeling well that day and was in some pain. We listened to a tape of a singing at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church from some years ago. Though she wasn't able to really talk to me much, she immediately recognized Brother Burnell William's voice. She smiled as she listened to the tape and said, "Listen to that music, listen to that music." Often she would say that she didn't have a good voice and couldn't sing. This day, though, she would sing a line or two of the hymns and seemed to rejoice at the sound of her brethren singing those dear old hymns which she had heard from the time she was a baby in her mother's arms. She said to me, "I'm not worthy of this." The

humility, love, gentleness, and kindness, with which the Lord had so richly blessed her, showed forth praise and honor to His most holy name and thus so beautifully fulfilled the scripture, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." As I left her that day, I said, "I love you" and she replied, "Not as much as I love you." I knew I would not see her again and I wept for my loss as I drive home that day and yet rejoiced that she soon would be released from her suffering and that lovely spirit within her would be with Christ in paradise to await that day most beautifully described by the hymn writer:

> When that illustrious day shall rise,
> And all thy armies shine
> In robes of victory through the skies,
> The glory shall be thine.

She was the dearest of friends, a precious Sister in Christ, and a beloved Mother in Israel and this poorer sinner will remain immensely grateful to a most gracious God for the blessing of her

Love and fellowship and the joy of being drawn together on those many Sunday nights. May her family and all of us, who loved her and miss her so very much, be blessed to say with Job. "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." In all things may all glory and all honor ascribed unto His great and holy name.

Written by one
who loved her greatly,
Mary Hawkins

FRANCES FLEMING KNIGHT

With deep sadness, we mark the passing of our dear Sister in Christ, Frances Fleming Knight. Sister Frances was born September 18, 1923 to the union of Austin Loyd and Lucy Vercelle Fleming. Her earthly pilgrimage was a mixture of trials and hardships mingled with great joy. With steady resolve, hard work, and faith in her God, she provided for herself and three children instilling in them the same character that she exemplified in her life. The substance of her life was her work, her children, and her Church. Sister Frances loved the doctrine of sovereign grace and traveled many miles to gather with God's children and hear the preaching of her Lord's Gospel. She faithfully attended the services at Mt. Zion Church in Athens, Georgia until infirmities of age prevented. In her final years she resided in her daughter's home where she was lovingly cared for by her children. She departed this life December 25, 2014 to take her place in that heavenly tabernacle wherein there is no more death, neither sorrow nor pain, and where finally and forever, God Himself has wiped all tears from her eyes.

Written by order of Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church while in conference September 13, 2015.

Elder Kenneth Adams, Moderator
Brother Bryant Huff, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS"

The existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah - the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistable, and in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers - that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

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EDITORIAL

"For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he *who was* the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman *was* by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, *thou* barren that barest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him *that was born* after the Spirit, even so *it is* now. Neverthless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free." Galatians 4:22-31

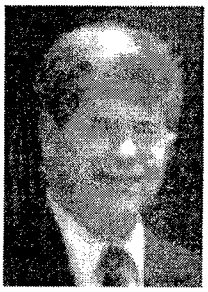
Elder Jerry B. Farmer

In these few words, the inspired apostle Paul opened up a great mystery that had been hidden from the beginning. These things cannot be received and understood by the carnal mind, because they are spiritual. According to scripture, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them,* for they are spiritually discerned." Happy are you, if you are given a mind and heart to receive these things. They are hidden from the wise and prudent, but are revealed unto babes. May the Lord guide our thoughts and may we be given eyes to see, ears to hear and a heart of understanding.

The apostle was wonderfully blessed to explain this hidden truth pertaining to election, and to the plight of God's people in the world. It identifies

all men who ever had or shall have an existence in this world. They are separated into two groups: those born after the flesh, and those born after the Spirit. One's understanding of the doctrine of sovereign election affects the way he sees himself and all others. It affects the way he understands the scriptures. It affects the way he thinks of God. The two opposing views about election and God's sovereign love in the choice of His people in election, seems to divide the thinking of the carnal and spiritual minds of all men upon the earth. One view is according to the Spirit, and the other according to natural understanding.

God, in His written word, manifests this difference in the account of Sarai and Hagar. Since Abram and Sarai were well stricken in age and had no son of their own, Sarah, thought she could never have children. She, in a natural mind, thought she might obtain children by her handmaid. So she gave her handmaid, Hagar the Egyptian, to Abraham. When Hagar saw that she had conceived, her mistress Sarai was despised in her eyes. (Abram was 86 years old when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram and Sarai was 76.) We see here the beginning of the hatred of one people for another — the hatred of the bondwoman for the freewoman.

When Abram was 99 years old the Lord appeared to him. And the Lord made an everlasting covenant with Abram and his seed. The Lord told Abram that he would be a father of many nations, that his name would no more be called Abram but rather Abraham, that He would give him the land of Caanan, that Abraham and his seed should keep God's covenant of circumcision, that Sarai would now be called Sarah, that Sarah should bear Abraham a son called Isaac, and that He would establish an everlasting covenant with Isaac and his seed.

The Lord at this time also made a covenant with Ishmael. He declared that He had blessed him, and would make him fruitful, and multiply him exceedingly. The Lord also declared that Ishmael should beget twelve princes, and that He would make him a great nation.

We see that God here made two distinct covenants. One was an everlasting covenant involving Abraham, Sarah the freewoman, Isaac the child of promise, and his spiritual seed after him. I am made to believe that this covenant represents a figure of spiritual things. The other was a covenant involving Hagar the bondwoman, Ishmael the child born after the flesh, and his natural seed after him. I am made to believe that this covenant manifests a figure of natural things. The blessed apostle was given to describe the bondwoman Hagar as the Jerusalem which now is and is in bondage with her children. I am made to believe that this manifest the whole fleshly family of unbelief. And he was blessed to describe Sarah as the freewoman, the Jerusalem which is above and is the mother of us all. I am made to believe that this indicates the whole spiritual family of God.

The apostle said by inspiration, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." This is our hope

and trust, that we are the elect of God, chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. We hope and trust that we are included in the everlasting covenant of grace, which secured eternal life for all the saints by virtue of the finished work and righteousness of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Our hope and trust is that we are not the children of the flesh, held in the natural covenant of Hagar and Ishmael, that walk after the flesh, whose end shall be misery and destruction.

The apostle, by the Holy Spirit declared, "But as then he *that was born* after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so *it is* now." From the beginning to this day, and down until the end of time, the one born of the flesh has persecuted and shall persecute the one born after the Spirit. The Lord made it plain that if they hated Him, they would also hate you. But He said, "Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when all *men* shall revile you and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." He also said that if you were of the world, the world would love you. And He said, "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! For so did their fathers to the false prophets." But we hope and trust that we are not loved by the world.

Isaac was born, and after eight days was circumcised. And after Isaac was weaned, Abraham made a great feast. "And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking. Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, *even* with Isaac." Here we see evidence of the hatred of the son of the bondwoman for the son of the freewoman. And the Lord caused Abraham to hearken to the voice of Sarah, even though it was grievous in his sight, and after giving them bread and water, he sent them away. But God saved Hagar and Ishmael from death in the desert, and Ishmael became a great nation according to the covenant of God.

The seed of the bondwoman has continued to persecute the seed of the freewoman even to this day. In the last book of the Bible, the book of Revelation, there are two women described in figurative language. They are a great wonder and a great mystery. The one woman described in Revelation 12 is clothed with the sun, and the moon is under her feet, and has a crown of twelve stars upon her head. The other woman described is in Revelation 17. John saw her sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abomi-

nations of the Earth. And John saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

I am made to believe that Sarah, the Jerusalem which is above and free, is represented by the woman clothed with the sun, having the moon under her feet. And I am made to believe that Hagar, the bondwoman, is represented by the other one that John saw sit upon the scarlet colored beast. The one is altogether lovely, holy and blessed. The other is full of abominations and filthiness. The one is of the everlasting covenant of grace. The other is of the covenant of death and destruction. The one is persecuted by the great red dragon, which is the devil. The other sits upon the great red dragon and is part of the persecution. The one was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. By the hindering mercies of God, the hateful woman is kept from carrying out her evil intent to destroy the freewoman.

It is impossible that the son of the bondwoman, that was born after the flesh, could ever be heir with the son of the freewoman, that was born after the spirit. The son of the freewoman was loved with an everlasting love, chosen in the covenant of grace, foreknown of God, predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, called, justified and glorified in the sight of God before the world was. The son of the bondwoman was never loved of God, but was a vessel of wrath fitted for destruction. He was a vessel created of God for a purpose — to be used to bring a fiery trial of faith to try the children of God. After the purpose of God is finished for that vessel of dishonor, that vessel shall be taken and destroyed.

After explaining the wondrous and mysterious workings of almighty God down through the ages, the inspired apostle gives much assurance to the children of God and says, "So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free." None deserve to be counted as children of the freewoman, for it is all of grace. The only way one could be a child of the freewoman is by birth, by being born of the Spirit. And we know that no one has any part in his birth process. It is altogether passive. So, if you have been given a hope of salvation based upon the kindness and goodness of God our Savior, Who came and suffered and died for your sins (and I hope and trust mine also), and Who by the power of God took up His life again, you are not a child of the bondwoman, but of the free. You have been born from above, and are an heir of the promise of eternal life in Christ Jesus, the Lord. Praise, honor, and glory are due unto our God forever, Who alone is worthy.

I trust that this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder Jerry B. Farmer

NOTICE

Just a reminder that all the issues of the Signs of the Times from 1832 through 2014 are digitized on disks and flash drives. The cost for the disks is $53.00 and for the flash drives is $40.00. Requests may be submitted to Brother Tony Horton, Circulation Manager and Treasurer, 1429 Howlett Street, Hillsville, VA 24343. Please be sure to include your complete mailing address.

Editor

VOICES OF THE PAST

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Psalms 133: 1.

What a great blessing God has given his people in ages past to have a dwelling place (spiritually). To have a place where we are told his name shall be there. Under the law Israel was promised a place, when they had passed over Jordan, where they would bring all their burnt-offerings, tithes, sacrifices and choice vows. How merciful was God to them, that after their wanderings in the wilderness, hungering and thirsting, they were to reach a place where his name would be there; where he was to manifest to them his goodness in giving them a place to dwell; a place where they could gather and offer their sacrifices to him as one people. Israel was promised that this was to be a place of rejoicing; one where their services were to be in the name of their God, because he caused his name to dwell there — God's appointed place. They were commanded not to offer these sacrifices in every place they saw, but in the place where God would appoint. It is well for us to remember these things; to be mindful of his word that the pearls are not to be cast before swine; not to be running to and fro following strange gods; offering with every one who says Lord, Lord, but with those who see eye to eye and speak the same things; whose God is a living God, Lord of heaven and earth; to offer in God's dwelling place where his mercies are recounted.

As one looks back over the pilgrimage here, they are often made to say, surely the Lord's mercy endures forever. Then they mention his loving kindness, then they confess to one another that they are poor sinners but God has been gracious. His name dwells there which means there is where his power and grace is made manifest. His word commands them to have no other God before them, it is his dwelling place, he is a jealous God, he does not give his glory to another. When these are fully revealed by faith in the soul, and each so drawn, then they dwell together in unity. These Israelites were a type of the church of God, whom God had set his love upon, the fewest of all people who were looking for a city whose builder and maker is God. Though they have been transgressors of his law, rebellious, stiffnecked, hardhearted, murmurers, complainers and often unmindful of his

tender mercies yet he forsakes them not. He lovingly manifests from time to time that he is their God. Nothing causes a poor sinner to desire to dwell in the house of the Lord more than the knowledge of his goodness, forbearance and enduring love for them. Though these things were under the law they had a shadow of good things to come; they pointed to the spiritual dwelling places in the gospel where they would offer their vows, praises, supplications and the fruits of their lips unto Him who is before all things and by whom all things consist. The blessed things of the gospel were pointed to, where his people would sit down in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

All things that are pleasant are not good, neither are all things that are good, pleasant. People might dwell together in the same house as a family and yet have no unity among themselves. Sometimes there is striving over words to no profit, things that amount to very little; they fail to see alike, their differences are magnified; each one is seeking his own and not the things of another; little things cause them to be bitter toward one another. Though this condition exists among only part of the household, it causes pain to the other occupants of the family; bitterness springs up because each is judging another and magnifying the faults of others, not considering himself. The only time there is a dwelling together in unity of God's humble poor, when things are both good and pleasant, is when their eyes are beholding the King in his beauty (the Lord Jesus as our only salvation); when by faith we know we have nothing except that which we have received; when one feels sensibly his own unworthiness, not of God's love to him, but the love and fellowship of his brethren. Then nothing is like the beauty of Zion, the joy of the whole earth. They look upon her, a quiet habitation, a cord of which shall never be broken a stake of which shall never be removed. Then are they glad when it is, said. "Let us go into the house of the Lord." Why? Because his name is there. Then they can sing:

> "Mid scenes of confusion and creature complaints,
> How sweet to my soul is communion with saints!
> To find at the banquet of mercy there's room,
> And feel in the presence of Jesus at home."

I cannot close this without mentioning some of the things that affect unity of these beloved people, and in doing so it is not to point the finger at others, but to say, may God give us all grace to consider. Where there is the spirit of self-justification, backbiting, envying, striving over words of no profit; when disorderly walks are passed by lightly (calling it forgiveness when no repentance has been manifested for the deed); when men become followers of men rather than God, worshipping the creature more than the Creator; if the rule of men is esteemed above the word of God; when there is a failing to withdraw from every one that walks disorderly as the word of God commands; jealousy; fail-

ing to take heed to ourselves and to the doctrine, continuing in them thereby saving ourselves and them that hear us; some saying they are of Paul, others of Apollos or of Cephas and others of Christ, no real dwelling together only as these clouds pass away and we see no man save Jesus only.

On the other hand we are told that "greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." If you find in your poor heart the hating of your own life (the fleshly life), the longing for something better, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, looking for the dwelling together in unity, surely we know something of it and are made to desire for that which will enable us to be "giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and, to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." Dear reader, does your heart long for this good and pleasant dwelling place where there is unity; where God's grace flows like the ointment on Aaron's beard that went down to the skirts of his garment, that you may glorify God in your body and spirit which are his?

This will be the last paper for this year. I cannot say to you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, but may our dear Savior be our guide. Grant that his Spirit may set our affections on things that are above, that we may walk worthy of the vocation where with we are called, knowing no man after the flesh, but determined to know nothing among men save Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Elder David V. Spangler
December, 1946

"And they shall know that I am the Lord." "And they shall know that I am the Lord their God."- Ezek. xxviii. 23, 26.

It is remarkable how, throughout the whole of Ezekiel, this great end of acknowledging the Lord is ever kept close in view; it is given as the reason for every blessing and for every curse, for the destruction of the heathen, the chatisement of the Jews, and for the sparing and the restoring again of the people of God. Even the wicked are forced, by the punishments inflicted upon them, to know the Lord; and thus in some measure, though contrary to their wills, they show forth the glory of the Lord, they acknowledge him as God, and they tremble at the truth they are obliged to admit. But they cannot love the truth, although they believe it; though they acknowledge the Lord, they know him not as their God. But the house of Israel know him as their God, who has cleansed them from all uncleanness, who has renewed their stony hearts within

them, put his Spirit into their hearts, adopted them as his children, who, through his Son, has redeemed them, justified and sanctified them, separated them unto himself to show forth his praises.

This aim that God has ever in view, of making his name known, of setting forth his glory, and of working for his name's sake, is one of the sureties *or* our safety; he will ever regard the honour of his name, to sanctify it amidst the heathen, even where we have polluted it. I say that it is the grand object that he has ever in view, to cause all creatures to know that he is the Lord. His wisdom, his might, so order all things as to rend this acknowledgment from all. But to his saints he is, in a particular manner, careful to appear so as to be known as their God, by raising them from death unto life, by bringing them from darkness into his marvellous light, by preserving them, strengthening and comforting them, when all strength of the creature faileth; when they had neither will nor power to help themselves, then he helped them, that they might know that he is the Lord. It is when most cast down in self-abasement, when least dependent on ourselves and looking unto Jesus for all we need, that we most eminently acknowledge him as the Lord our God, in whom we have put our trust.

He is faithful for his name's sake. Wherever he has begun a good work, it is incumbent upon him to finish it for his name's sake, that he may be acknowledged as the Lord. If he began and left off, and altered or changed his mind, as the Arminians represent him doing, I am sure, for one, that I should not know him to be God; but, blessed be his name, it is not so. The desires he has implanted he will supply; the grace be has imparted he will strengthen; the sins that are hated shall soon be removed; the soul that loves Christ shall soon be in his embrace for ever; however vile he may have been, and may now feel himself to be, it shall be so, that he shall know the Lord.

In these latter days, the Lord has made himself more manifestly known than of old, having declared unto us the Trinity of Father, Son, and Spirit, and in each of these Persons he causes the awakened sinner to know the Lord and his omnipotence, — the Spirit in quickening the soul and teaching it to call upon the Lord, bringing in the light and thereby making darkness manifest, and in that light showing the things of God, so as to make the soul despise the things of time and sense and covet earnestly the best things; and in that light the horrid nature of sin is so disclosed as to make the soul to loathe itself; and this will ever be the case, for the increase of light and of grace will only discover the more hidden recesses of the heart, where wickedness lurks that we thought not of when commencing our pilgrimage. The Son will cause himself to be known as the Lord God in redeeming us. Sins, for which we must ever have been tortured, he bore on the accursed tree. He, who knew no sin, became sin for us, and by one offering of himself, put away sin for ever; so that there is now no condemnation for the elect, for it is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen

again, and sitteth at the right hand of God, to make intersession for us. Considering, then, the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, who will not acknowledge him as the Lord our God? The Father maketh himself known as the source of all things connected with the scheme of redemption. He elected, chose, loved, and accepted us in the person of Christ, long before the world was; and he, having the dominion in all things and exercising justice to all, having accepted payment for us in Christ, is bound to loose us from the penalty of sin, and to put us into the possession of the place that Christ has gone to prepare for us.

Thus Father, Son, and Spirit, each make themselves known as the Lord, and may we ever acknowledge them as such, and aim, through grace, to love and serve God as we ought.

VERICULTOR.

For the Signs of the Times,
Wells, Maine., Jan. 22, 1855.

BROTHER BEEBE:-As I have been reading the experiences and communications of so many Old School Baptists, published in the Signs of the Times; I feel inclined to try to write some of my experience. When I was eighteen years old, there was a revival of religion where I lived, and some souls I believe were born again; and I hope and trust that at that time I was brought to see in some degree, that I was a sinner against God. While others were made to rejoice in God, I seemed to get no better. I saw no way for me to become a child of God, only by being born again, which produces true repentance for sin, and to be cleansed by the blood of Christ; for I was a sinner by nature and by practice, and as I felt that I was destitute of every thing that would recommend me to God; I wanted to be alone, sometimes I was afraid to see any one, for fear that they would see the condition that I was in; so I got along in this way for some months and then I went some distance from home to work; but still I continued about the same, only at times I was so taken up with the things of this world, that it seemed as though I never did see myself a sinner, in the glass of God's law. I then would read the bible to see if I could determine what I was; but it was all dark to me. I also continued about in that way until last July, at which time I hope and trust, that God showed me more clearly the depravity of my heart. It was one night in July, that I dreamed I saw a field of corn fully ripe for the harvest, and never shall I forget how beautiful it looked to me, and then it appeared to me that the corn is ripe for harvest, and my soul is not saved yet. When I awoke it followed me, let me go where I would. I then at times would try to pray, but no relief could I find, my prayers would not go higher than my head, and it appeared to me that I must sink, and that to rise no more. One day I thought I would go out into the pasture to work, and see if that would make me feel any better; but when I saw the birds and the cattle in the pasture, they

seemed to be all better off than me, and I said, What shall I do? This being about the middle of the day, I returned to the house feeling worse than before, and as my wife as not at home, I took the bible and read 2nd Cor. iv. 14. "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present *us* with you." But all of that seemed to be for others, and not for me. I saw as to getting religion, it was all out of the question. I also saw by that chapter, that it was not by any works that we could do, that would cause God to save us. Therefore I was wholly dependent upon God's mercy; but I had such a view of God's law, and I saw that it was so holy, and I so wicked, that I thought I must go down to my grave in my sins, and if God should send my soul to hell, his law would approve it. I at times would talk with my mother, and she would speak of the promises, which at times seemed to encourage me a little. I then dreamed one night that I was baptized; but when I awoke I felt no better, but worse than before, and remained in that state of mind but a short time, when I saw that all things were in the hands of God. Christians looked to me like angels, and I seemed to have a love for them that I can never describe. It did appear to me before I was aware of it, that old things had passed away, and all things had become new; for the things I once loved, I then hated. I soon after this told my feelings to Eld. Wm. Quint, and he advised me to go to the church, and tell them what God had done for me, and I did; and on the 3rd of September 1854 was received by them, (which was the Old School Baptist church of North Berwick,) and was baptized the same day, by Elder Wm. Quint.

I will close by saying that I am glad that Salvation is of the Lord.

SAMUEL GETCHELL.

Election.

Election is a glorious truth,
To one so vile as me;
There's bliss immortal in the sound,
And life and liberty.

Election flows alone from God,
Through matchless, sovereign grace,
And every one that's chose in Christ,
Shall see the Savior's face.

Election is the choice of God,
Which fills my soul with joy;
In it I'm safe, forever safe,
For nought can me destroy.

Electing grace can't leave a soul
Redeem'd by Jesus' blood;
'Twill bring them safe thro' every storm,
To reign with Christ their God.

God, in his rich, electing love
Made me his special care;
That I, in Jesus' righteousness,
Most righteous might appear.

W. P. Cook.

Chili Centre, N. Y., Oct. 8, 1856.

For the Signs of the Times,
Union Co., Ia. Feb. 25, 1854.

BROTHER BEEBE: —Myself and family are in good health in body as usual, which is truly a blessing, and I believe we have use of our mental powers. May it be well with you and yours in all respects. There are now in our vicinity two persons who are entirely deranged. Of all distresses to which mortals are subjected let loss of reason be farthest from me; for I fear my nature is such that I would curse God; and it has been my desire and prayer for years past that the Lord could so rule me that if I were past knowing what I did or said, my talk and actions would all be in conformity to the profession I have made as a subject of the kingdom of heaven.

I have a mind to write for publication some of the workings of my mind. If a door could be opened to me to utter knowledge clearly, I believe I could say something for the testimony of Jesus; and there could be no lack of a subject to dwell upon so long as the name of Jesus is presented. In this name there is so much brought to view at once that I know not what to say at first; and I am sure I shall fail to tell to the end of it. It presents many appellations, as the son of God, King, Daysman, the second Adam, Shepherd, and many more that I will not attempt to name at present; all of which apply to the same object. Jesus, as a Savior implies there is something to be saved. He shall save his people from their sins, according to scripture. Then he had a people when first he was called Jesus; for it was said "Thine they were and thou gavest them me," they were his by gift, the redemption price was paid. If they had not been the word redeem would not apply in any way. It is insisted upon by a large portion of the human family that all Adam's race are alike the people of God and they have all an equal right to claim him as their Father, and that when the redemption price was paid, all were profited thereby and stood as though man had never sinned.

But it was not said, He shall save his people from Adam's sins, but from their sins. They had not only sinned and come short of the glory of God, but were ten thousand talents in debt with nothing to pay, and as to their standing in Adam as their first head and representative, they had no more ability to free themselves from that debt than Adam had to reach forth his hand and take of the tree of life.

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the Life. I come that ye might have life and that ye might have it more abundantly. I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. This was said concerning a chosen people, elect according to the foreknowledge of God. For one proof of a people being seperated from among people, see Leviticus xx. 24 & 26. When John came preaching repentance saying "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," there came of those who were ignorant of repentance and demanded of him baptism, but they being a generation of vipers, were rejected as not having been warned to flee from the wrath to come; therefore fruit meet for repentance was

demanded of them, as fruit was a prerequisite to baptism, and designated those to whom the kingdom of heaven was preaching. On another occasion Jesus said, "Depart from me ye that work iniquity, I never knew you." All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me," They are a peculiar people surely. I heard a man say, if he believed as the Old Baptists do, he would take his fill of sin: if he had been acquainted with repentance and remission of sins, I think he would have said that he had had his fill of sin already. Our Lord and Savior, and Shepherd, gave his life for the sheep; and bought them back from going astray. There is one fold, and one Shepherd; and in giving his servants charge concerning them, one was charged twice to feed his lambs, and once to feed his sheep. I believe in my heart that the lambs require to be fed twice as often as the sheep. Feed the lambs first, and feed them last, and give them twice the care. Feed the flock of God, — of Christ, which he hath purchased with his own blood. The tender lambs, when they feel overpowered by the lusting of the flesh against the spirit, are ready to conclude, surely they must perish; because they find their old corrupt nature, or the old man remaining corrupt with his deeds, they need strengthening that they may be strong in the Lord. O, brother Beebe, how I have been strengthened when viewing a law in my mind delighting in the law of God, and which was so opposed to the law of sin and death, which is in my members. It is a witness to me that I am born again. Having this witness within, I wait patiently till my change comes. I must close, as I have scarcely left room enough for the business part of the letter.

Yours in fellowship,
Israel Hill.

PROVINCE OF ONTARIO, Oct. 23, 1870.

Dear Elder Beebe: — I am living in a place where the truth is not preached, and as I cannot countenance error and rejoice in humanly devized schemes of our day, I choose rather to stay at home when those around me go to their places of worship. On this account I am a wonder unto many, and on coming into my room on Sunday morning I found the following lines left, written upon my table. I wrote the reply which follows them and left it where it could be seen. I send them both to you, and if you think them worth publishing, they may be of some use to some one of the "little flock," the good pleasure of whose Father it was to give them the kingdom.

Why make yourself so lonely?
Why don't you friendly be?
Why don't you go to church, where you
May other good folks see?

Why are you always by yourself?
No reason can I tell.
Unless it is because you think
There's no one like yourself.
Am I right?

REPLY.

You think I am lonely, but no, not at all.
For Jesus is with me, who saved from the fall;
When walking the broad way, when wandering to hell,
He sought me, he found me, deigned me to dwell.

You think me unfriendly because I don't go
To some place of worship, as other folks do;
Though the charge of unfriendliness thus do you bring,
Yet I must remember the law of my King.

Cease, my son, says that law, the instruction to hear,
From the words of true knowledge that causeth to err. (Prov. xix. 27.)
Come out from among them, and stand not within,
And be not partaker with them of their sin. (2 Cor. vi. 17.)

When to church I go, I hear a great deal
Of poor, lost man's merit, and human free-will;
Both notes are detested by me, who must own,
That saved I am by God's free grace alone.

Why so much by myself you cannot conceive,
If it is not because that I fully believe
No one to be like me, nor no one so good,
That is not the cause why I love solitude.

For in me (in my flesh) no good thing does dwell,
All my good is from Jesus, of him I will tell:
In myself a poor sinner, do the best thing I can,
With Paul I must cry, Oh poor, wretched man. (Rom. vii. 24.)

Perhaps you still wonder, and yet do not know,
Why a pilgrim and stranger through life I should go;
Let me tell you, and oh may I tell you in love,
"Twould all be quite plain were you "born from above." (John iii. 7.)

JOHN A. McKELLAR.

[The forgoing letter was written years ago by the late John A. McKellar, a very worthy member of the Covenanted Baptist Church, and is printed at the request of brother John McFarlane, who is now in his ninety-seventh year. — Elder George Ruston]

ISAIAH 40:11.

He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry *them* **in his bosom,** *and* **shall gently lead those that are with young.**

SPIRITUAL BAPTISM

We have a request from one who says he is "no denominationalist" to write on the above heading. He wants to know "what is the necessary baptism," and states that his mother "was an Old Baptist by faith and order" and that his father "was of the same belief, not being in order or belonging under literal water baptism." He also states that his father was uneducated, but that his mother read to him. He then asks that we open up to him the Holy Scriptures, the saving power for his father and his mother. While our friend may not be a member of the visible church, his letter indicates that he has some knowledge and understanding of the truth, and as he specifically says he is not seeking a carnal argument, but wants "a sermon on baptism" as it may also be of help to others, we are disposed to give favorable consideration to his request and hope the Lord will direct our pen. It should be clearly understood by all who read, that neither we nor any other mortal man is now, ever has been or ever will be able to "open up the Holy Scriptures and make known their saving power" to the children of men. The Lord alone is able to do these things, and wherever there is any evidence of the opening up of the Holy Scriptures and their saving power felt in the heart, it gives unmistakable proof of the fact that God has begun his work of grace in a poor sinner's heart, and let him take courage and be assured that God will perform, or carry it on till the day of Jesus Christ. Jesus said to one, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." According to our understanding spiritual baptism, or baptism by the Holy Ghost is essentially the all-important thing; without it nothing else will avail any thing. John the Baptist in his preaching in the wilderness of Judaea not only said to those who came to him, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," but he also said to them, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Mat. 3:11-12. We believe this being baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire will utterly consume, or destroy, all the hope a poor sinner ever had for salvation by creature works, and until this has been thoroughly accomplished he is not a fit subject for water baptism into the true church of God. The church should never cease to require of one desiring to be numbered with her that they "bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." According to the apostle Peter those in whose hearts the Lord God has been sanctified should "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh of you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear," and wherever this cannot be done, water baptism, which is the door through which one enters into the fellowship of the church, should be closed to them. We are persuaded that the one who has been bap-

tized with the Holy Ghost and with fire will have no confidence in the works of sinful flesh as a means for gaining entrance into the presence of Him who is holy and undefiled, for he will be taught that it is all of His grace.

This baptism will kill the creature to all trust in any righteousness of his own that he may have ever had, which will be made to appear as filthy rags, and will open his eyes to the absolute need of the true righteousness of Christ, with which he will have to be clothed if he is ever to appear with God in glory. When he becomes possessed of this knowledge he will be a new creature in Christ Jesus, old things will have passed away, and all things will have become new, and he will see that all the work which brought about this change, from beginning to end, was of God, and therefore he will desire to praise God from whom all blessings flow. Baptism by water typifies death, burial and resurrection. If one is riot dead to sin by the body of Christ, he is not ready for burial. The law of our land forbids burying people alive, and one should not be buried in the liquid grave as a follower of our Lord until it is clearly evident that he hates sin with a perfect hatred, and that he loves righteousness. The law of our land further requires that one shall be buried a certain depth in order to constitute burial, and the church should likewise be certain of sufficient water for one to go down into it and come up out of it, else he has not been baptized in like manner as his Lord. Sprinkling is no more adequate for this purpose than it would be to sprinkle sand or dirt in the face of a corpse and call it burial. Not only does baptism signify death and burial, but it also shows a coming forth into new life, wherewith we should show forth the praises of him who loved us and gave himself for us. Paul in his writing to the church at Colosse said unto them, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above; where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."

While we believe that it is absolutely essential for all who receive water baptism at the hand of a proper administrator to have first been baptized by the Holy Ghost and with fire, by no means do we believe that water baptism is essential to eternal salvation. Peter after speaking of the sufferings of Christ for our sins and the quickening by the Spirit, says, "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." For some reason, we know not why, it appears that only a remnant, or small percentage, of the Lord's people are manifestly separated from the world by uniting with the church, and while we cannot understand why so many, like our friend's father, remain outside the pales of the visible church, we are persuaded that their eternal salvation is as certain and sure as those who walk through the fires and persecutions of this world, because of their affiliation with the visible church. We are persuaded that every one who is baptized with the Holy Ghost

and with fire is a member of the mystical body of Christ, and in due time they will all be glad to acknowledge that "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through you all, and in you all." There are many so called faiths in the world to-day, but there is only one true faith, and that is the faith of God's elect, and it matters not whether one is a member of the Old School Baptists, or any other denomination, or no denomination or order of any kind whatsoever, if his name was written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundations of the earth were laid, he will most certainly sing God's praise in that world which will have no end, and Christ will be his song. We like to meditate upon the scripture which says: "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." There can be no question whatsoever but that the Lord knows them that are his, and he will save them with an everlasting salvation. It is also said, however, in this connection: "And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." We are indeed glad that eternal salvation does not depend upon one uniting with the visible church. In the days of our Lord's earthly sojourn ten lepers were cleansed by him, but only one returned to glorify God. The percentage of those who come out from the world to-day and acknowledge before men what God has wrought for their souls is undoubtedly small, comparatively speaking, but nevertheless not a single one of those for whom Christ shed his precious blood will ever fail to reach the climes of eternal glory. We would like to encourage as much as possible those who by grace divine have been enabled to know Jesus in the pardon of their sins to put on the whole armour of God, by asking a home with the church, to be baptized into the fellowship of the visible church and walk in newness of life, believing as we do that it is the only haven of rest for poor sinners in this sin polluted world, but the Scriptures speak of children who came to the birth and had not sufficient strength to be born, so the matter has to be left in the hands of the Lord. They are, however, safe in the everlasting arms of Jesus, regardless of whether they ever enjoy the fellowship of the saints in a church relation or not, and nothing shall ever be able to pluck them out of the hands of their great Shepherd. In our judgment, therefore, in that life which is beyond they will enjoy the same heavenly bliss and there will be no difference. Before leaving this part of our subject we would like to lay stress upon the words: "And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." The Scriptures abound with admonitions to right living on the part of those who profess a hope in God's mercy, and those who have been called to the high and holy calling of feeding the flock of God whether by mouth or pen, or both, should not become so enwrapped with presenting some one or more points of doctrine as to neglect stressing what Jesus said to his disciples: "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot

be hid." "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Again, "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under the foot of men," And Paul said, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." There should be no place in the Old Baptist church for a man or woman who will take refuge behind the cloak of predestination for the evil they commit, and those who attempt it should not be countenanced by sound and orderly brethren. Membership in an Old School Baptist church should carry with it a code of the highest possible standard of honor and right living to those without as well as to those within the fold, otherwise the cause of Christ will suffer untold shame and disgrace.

Concerning himself, our friend says, "As I understand, Christ paid the debt for me, arid it doesn't subject me to go under the law to pay for it myself." He also says, "If Christ did not abolish in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace, I don't know how I can do it." We are in accord with him in these statements, which should resolve into the fact that his only hope of salvation is in Jesus Christ and his righteousness. The record says, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Also, Paul says, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." John said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." We have no desire to present to poor sinners any other way of salvation than by, and through and in Jesus Christ. Jesus himself said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." The prophet Isaiah truly foretold of him when he said, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Poets have joined others in, trying to tell of the wonders of his love, and what he means to those who have hope in his mercy, as the following lines will show —

"Sweetest note in seraph song,
Sweetest name on mortal tongue:
Sweetest carol ever sung
Jesus, blessed Jesus."

"How sweet the name of Jesus

In a believer's ear!
It sooths his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear

It makes the wounded spirit whole,
And calms the troubled breast;

'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary rest."

Alas, how feeble are the efforts of mortals to render adequate praise to his great and adorable name. The "fairest among women" in answer to the question, "What is thy beloved more than another beloved," replied, "He is the chiefest among ten thousand, ***yea, he is altogether lovely." The Psalmist said, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."

These precious and blessed truths can only be witnessed to by those who have received the gift of the Holy Ghost, and if our reader is one who hopes he can by faith lay claim to having some knowledge and understanding of these glorious things, he knows something of spiritual baptism.

Elder R. L. Dodson
December, 1946

PSALM 66:16-18.

Come *and* **hear hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.**

I cried unto him with my mouth, and he was extolled with my tongue.

If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear *me*;

But **verily God hath heard** *me*; **he hath attended to the voice of my prayer.**

Blessed *be* **God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.**

POETRY

For the Signs of the Times.

The church built upon Christ.

"Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Matt. xvi. 18.

Christ, the one foundation stone,
Tried, precious and elect,
God hath built his church upon,
Though men this stone reject.
Rock of ages! Rightly named!
Living stone to Zion placed!
Believers shall not be ashamed,
Nor shall they yet make haste.

Nothing can this stone remove,
Against it nought prevail;
Fix'd by everlasting love,
In vain its foes assail.
Here the house of God is placed,
By our great Zerubbabel,
And on the Rock of mercy based,
Defies the gates of hell.

Laid with pleasant stones we view,
The superstructure rise;
Polished stones of gorgeous hue,
To feast our wondering eyes;
Lively stones with colors fair,
Sapphires of a price unknown;
The lofty gates carbuncles are,
The windows agate stone.

Prophets of the olden time,
Apostles of the new;
Men of every age and clime,
The Gentile and the Jew;

On the same foundation laid,
Are a building fitly framed,
For God a habitation made,
His holy temple named.

A. E.

Southampton, Pa., May 19, 1848.

(GOSPEL STANDARD1837- P. 141) AN INQUIRY

Messrs. Editors, - having seen in one of your numbers a piece entitled "Mournful Thoughts," &c., sent by a friend, but written by me, with a remark prefixed that you believe the writer has been brought into sweet gospel liberty, I beg to say, that it is not correct, as I am far from that, having little or no access to God or sweet communion with him. The accompanying lines are a true description of the farthest stage of experience I can at present assert I am presently acquainted with. Yours, &c.

Lord, what am I? I cannot tell;
An heir of heaven, or heir of hell?
Am I of life possest,
Or am I a dead formalist?
Or, have I but a name to live,
And do I yet myself deceive?
Or am I quickened by thy grace,
And taught by thee to seek thy face?
Or am I yet quite dead in sin,
Without one spark of life within?
Although my heart is hard as steel,
Yet do I never, never feel
Some powerful touch of grace divine,
That softens this heart of mine,
In deep abasement lays my soul,
And my most powerful lusts control.
Have I within no strong desire
Beyond what Nature could inspire?
Or can I yet contented rest
With what is by the world possest?
Or have I not an aching mind
That cannot sweet contentment find?
Or do I never, in despair,
Find hope revive in secret prayer?
Or do I never, when distrest,
On his sure word of promise rest?
However wretched, sinful, weak,
Do I not his presence seek?
Or do I ne'er before his throne
Make all my wants and wishes known?
Or have I never, never felt
The joys of those who there have knelt?
Am I ne'er favoured with a view
Of what Almighty grace can do;
How God's eternal sov'reign love
Did his elect in Christ approve,
And how he never will reject
The souls by sov'reign love elect?
Or do I ne'er admire the plan
Of grace, to sinful, wretched man;
And sometimes hope that grace so free,
May save a sinner vile like me?
Or am I ne'er indulged to prove
Sweet tokens of his special love?
Or in experience never trace
Marks of his sov'reign, saving grace?
Yes, surely I sometimes believe
God did my soul to Jesus give,
And therefore I can never die
Whilst Jesus lives to justify;
But that his never-varying love
Will surely raise my soul above;

Though guilt and fear my soul annoy,
That nothing can my soul destroy;
But that his ever-watchful care
Will safe preserve from every snare;
That he will love me to the end,
And will 'gainst every foe defend;
That in his own appointed way,
He brings my soul on day by day,
Until at length he'll bring me home,
Where sin and sorrow never come;
Where souls made perfect all employ
Their grateful tongues in songs of joy.

---

1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-3.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 01 / 2016

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

1 PETER III. 21.

"The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God.) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

Baptism, according to this text, has a figurative import, and as a figure of our salvation, Peter classifies it with the figure of the temporal salvation of Noah and his family in the ark; the former figure is like the latter figure. Hence we understand that both figures refer to and set forth a spiritual reality in reference to the manner of the everlasting salvation of the church of God. The Spirit of Christ was in Noah as in other patriarchs and prophets of the Lord. And Noah, as a patriarch, a preacher of righteousness, the representative of a family and progeny to be saved from the deluge, and as a builder of the ark which was to contain all that God had ordained to that temporal salvation, was an eminent type of Christ. Christ is the builder of the spiritual ark, the church, which contains all that God has from the beginning chosen to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. He is also their spiritual progenitor, and they are accounted to him for a generation. And with him, in the church, they shall outride all the storms and floods, which shall sweep away the ungodly, and rest forever on the mount of God. Salvation by grace was clearly set forth in the figure of Noah's deliverance. And as also is the ordinance of

Christian baptism an expressive figure of the same salvation of the people of God. It is not, like the Jewish purifications, designed for the putting away the filth of the flesh, but it is the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Christian baptism, as instituted by our Lord, and practiced by the primitive saints, sets forth a death, burial and resurrection, and is applicable to, first, the death, burial and resurrection of Christ; second, to the experience of saints, who are slain by the law, and raised up from condemnation and wrath by the application of the blood and righteousness of the now risen and glorified Redeemer; and third, it sets forth the dissolution, burial and ultimate resurrection of the bodies of all the saints of God.

1. The death, burial and resurrection of Christ is called a baptism. "I have," said he, "a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" The sons of Zebedee were to be baptized also with that baptism wherewith Christ was to be baptized. Paul says the saints addressed in his epistle to the Romans, were also buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so they should walk in newness of life. Hence it is our understanding that the whole church of God was represented in Christ, as to her spiritual identity, when he died on the cross, slumbered in the tomb, and when he arose from the dead, and ascended up on high. When he died for all, then were all dead, and they were quickened together with him, raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. In this baptism we are truly saved. **"The law has dominion over a man as long he liveth." Romans viii. 1.** Christ as the embodiment of the church, takes our law place, and that lawfully, not making void the law, but establishing it; for in him the law finds the church, and makes its stern demand. He asks for no abatement of the demand, but promptly meets and completely cancels it. The sword awakes against the fellow of the Lord of Hosts. Deep waters come into his soul, and all the billows pass over him. Immersed in death, the law can ask no more; the dreadful debt is paid. The yawning grave receives the slaughtered body, and closes its doors upon him, recognizing in his person all for whom he died. This is baptism, but it is not all. His flesh must see no corruption. The pains of death cannot hold him long. As in baptism the body is immersed but also raised up to make the figure complete, so Christ must arise from the dead, and bring immortality into light in his resurrection. Under the law he dies, but quickened by the Spirit he rises, and brings up from the dead all his sheaves with him. As except a corn of wheat falleth into the earth and dieth, it abideth alone, and the germ of its production remaineth undeveloped, but if it die it will bring forth much fruit, simply by developing that which was in it, so in the death and resurrection of Christ, his people are buried with him by baptism into death wherein the extreme penalty of the law being executed, the law can henceforth have no more dominion over them. Now,

quickened by the Spirit, they arise, not to a legal bondage state again, but they arise to walk in newness of life, and are married to, and become one with him who is raised from the dead, and are no more under the law, but under grace. **"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law, by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." — Romans vii. 4.**

2. Christian baptism sets forth the experience of the saints. When the commandment comes, sin revives, and they die. They are slain, and all their legal hopes are cast off, and they are buried from their former element, and raised up from the horrible pit, and out of the miry clay, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Dead to, and buried from, the rudiments of the law, and the beggarly elements of the world, they are crucified to the world, and the world is crucified to them; they are raised up to participate in all the privileges of them; they are raised up to participate in all the privileges of the church of God.

3. The ultimate, resurrection of our bodies from their graves, and ascension to glory, is also embraced in the figurative import of gospel baptism. One of the strong arguments of Paul, in proving the final resurrection of the bodies of the saints, is presented in these words: **"Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?" — 1 Cor. xv. 29.** Baptism was evidently designed to signify a resurrection, and would be divested of its doctrinal import if there is to be no final resurrection of the bodies of the saints from the dead.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y., April 1, 1856.

PROVERBS 2: 6-8.

For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth *cometh* **knowledge and understanding.**

He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: *he is* **a buckler to them that walk uprightly.**

He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of the saints.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 2015

Mrs. Bodie Lankford, LA	5.00
Shelby Stratton, MS	25.00
Mrs. Brandon Lane, VA	5.00
George Hyslip, TN	5.00
Don Norman, NC	25.00
Glenna Link, TN	10.00
Steve Terry, VA	25.00
Garlon Vick, NC	25.00
Arlie Thompson, VA	5.00

MEETINGS

SKEWARKEY UNION
(Eastern Kehukee Association)

Hancocks Church will host the next session of the Skewarky Union on the fifth Sunday of January 31, 2016. The church is located on Ayden Golf Club Road, near Ayden, North Carolina. Preaching services begin at 10:30 a.m.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

LOWER MAYO
5TH SUNDAY MEETING

The next 5th Sunday Meeting will be held, The Lord Willing, Sunday, January 31, 2016. Mount Pleasant Church will Host the meeting. The Meeting House is located at 82 Browntown Church Road, Bishopville, SC 29010 From Bishopville, SC, take US 15 South 1 mile, turn west on Browntown Road. Go 2 miles and tum left on Browntown Church Road. Go 200 yards to church on left.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to meet with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union will be held at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church located on Malmaison Rd., Blairs, VA in Pittsylvania County. Saturday before the fifth Sunday in January 2016 the song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton
Clerk Staunton River
Primitive Baptist Association

WEST COUNTRY LINE
UNION MEETING

The West Country line Union meeting will be held the fifth Sunday, January 31, 2016 at Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church, located at corner of Tate and Carr Streets in Greensboro, NC. Song service begins at 10:30 A.M.

We welcome and invite the ministers of our faith and order as well as our brethren and friends to be with us.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Mod.
Brother Wayne Edwards, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

VOL. 184 HILLSVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY 2016 NO. 2

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

By the poor widow's oil and meal
Elijah was sustained;
Though small the stock, it lasted well,
For God the store maintained.

It seemed as if from day to day,
They were to eat and die;
But still, though in a secret way,
He sent a fresh supply.

Thus to his poor he still will give
Just for the present hour:
But for to-morrow they must live
Upon his word and power.

No barn or store-house they possess,
On which they can depend;
Yet have no cause to fear distress,
For Jesus is their Friend.

Then let no doubt your mind assail;
Remember God has said,
"The cruise and barrel shall not fail;
My people shall be fed."

And thus, though faint, it often seems,
He keeps their grace alive;
Supplied by his refreshing streams,
Their dying hopes revive.

Newton.

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Mrs. Vokes
Elder H. J. Bird

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EDITORIAL

ADOPTION

For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only *they,* but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit,* the redemption of our body." Romans 8:22-23.

Elder Jerry B. Farmer

We are taught that **"All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:16-17.** (I believe that the word "perfect" means complete.) Also, that "...no prophesy of scripture is of any private interpretation." 2 Pet. 1:20. And the inspired apostle Paul admonished Timothy to **"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Tim. 2:15.** (I believe the word "study" means to be diligent.)

These principles and admonitions come down to us today. By the wisdom of God and by His great mercy and the power of the Spirit, His little ones believe His words, and from a pure heart obey His commandments. We are also made to believe that those God has called to preach the gospel and to teach His doctrine will be given to rightly divide, or give the proper sense of, the word of truth. All have made mistakes from time to time because of the weakness of the flesh, but thanks be to God, He is well able to correct them so that His people are not blown about by every wind of doctrine. He causes them to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints and will keep them in it. May the God of heaven and earth give us wisdom that His truth might be set forth aright, to the praise of the glory

of His grace and to the comfort and edification of His dear suffering saints.

We are taught that God's little ones are **"born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." 1 Pet. 1:23.** That they **"were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:13.** Now, if God's people were born of that incorruptible seed, and they were, in what sense shall they be adopted?

We know that there are several references in the scripture, which relate to the word "adoption." They are Romans 8:15, 8:23 and 9:4 and Galatians 4:5 and Ephesians 1:5. In each instance the word adoption was translated from the same root word and each case it means the same thing. The most literal meaning of the root word is "son placement." To give the sense of the meaning requires some explanation.

It was the custom in the days of the apostles and before, for a natural son, after being taught and governed, and upon reaching a certain age and at the appointed time of his father, for him to receive the part of the inheritance which fell to him. This was the placement of the son, or the act of bringing him into the full possession of his inheritance. At this point he would acquire the full stature of an adult.

To view this spiritually, the word adoption, related to in the scriptures, to me, means to bring a heaven born son into the full possession of his spiritual inheritance. This will be accomplished with no less than the redemption or quickening of the mortal body and the raising up of it as a spiritual, incorruptible, powerful, glorified body. Then will be brought to fulfillment the scripture, **"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and** *I pray God* **your whole spirit and soul and body be presented blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thes. 5:23.**

Let's look at each scripture reference to adoption and pray that the God of all understanding and knowledge will make His things plain to us. The first one is found in **Romans 8:15. "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba Father."** God's people have not been brought back under the bondage and terrors of the law, which is the ministration of death, but rather, have been brought into the hope of the resurrection and of eternal life. They have been brought to **"...mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." Heb. 12:22-24.**

Romans 8:23, at the head of the article, specifically identifies the adoption as "the redemption of our body". Does this not clearly refer to the resur-

rection of life where all of God's children will be placed or established as adult sons and be brought into the full possession of their inheritance?

And in Romans 9:4, the apostle was inspired to say **"Who are Israelites; to whom** *pertaineth* **the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service** *of God,* **and the promises."** Does not this show beyond a doubt that spiritual Israel is the one to whom all the things of God are worked together for good, even the adoption or the redemption of his body?

In Galations 4:5, we read, **"To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."** This is speaking of Jesus who fulfilled the law to the jot and tittle by giving Himself up to God as the perfect sacrifice for sin in order to redeem His people from the curse of the law. By this one offering He has perfected them forever who are sanctified. The purpose of the holy sacrifice was to bring many sons to glory, or in other words, that they might receive the adoption.

In Ephesians 1:5, is found, **"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will."** The same ones that God has chosen in Him (Christ) before the foundation of the world are the same ones that He has predestinated to place in glory, even to raise them up at the last day and conform them to the image of His Son. Yes, they will all be brought into the full possession of that incorruptible inheritance laid up in heaven for them. They will all receive the crown of life.

If we are His, at the appointed day we will hear the long hoped for words, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Then the sons of God will be manifest before all. When the Lord shall appear with the shout of the archangel and the trump of God, His own will be raised and changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Their mortal bodies will be made immortal. They will see Him as He is and they will be made like Him and they will ever be with the Lord. Then the adoption or the son placement will be complete. Then will the little ones receive the promised inheritance with nothing lacking, to the eternal praise of Him who only is worthy.

Written in love, I hope.
Elder Jerry B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

November 8, 2015

Signs of the Times, Inc.
Tony R. Horton
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

Dear Brother Horton,

Enclosed please find a check to renew my subscription for two additional years.

In view of medical issues here at home and thus being less active than ever I find myself looking forward more so to each publication. I particularly enjoy reading the sermons delivered many

years ago and to witness the same related inspired messages continuing today.

Thanks for all that you and others do in publishing the old as well as the new messages, and current events.

God's blessing upon you,

Don H. Middleton
1157 Simpson Road
Stokesdale, N. C. 27357-8217

Brother Tony R. Horton
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
Signs of the Times

11/30/2015

Dear Brother Horton

Please renew my subscription for the "Signs of The Times" for the coming year. I am enclosing a check for $30.00 - $15.00 for the subscription and $15.00 for a contribution.

I continue to believe that God has blessed you and given you the desire, ability, and willingness to put forth the effort and dedication that is required to continue the publishing of the Signs.

I continue to look forward each month for The Signs, and enjoy reading it. I believe that it is through this means of communication that we are made to realize the experiences of the authors and their beliefs, along with the discussions of others we can relate to since some of our own experiences are similar to theirs.

Again I wish to say as I once told Brother Hale Terry, that time has not changed the doctrine that we contend for and nothing has changed with God. As I continue to read the Signs I am made to realize that it does not matter when the editorials and articles were written in time, whether it be one hundred years or just a month ago, we can read, relate to, and enjoy them regardless of when they were written.

A brother in hope,
George W. Hyslip

John Singleton
363 CO RD 62, Apt. 07
Prattville, AL 36067
(205) 532-4028

November 23, 2015
The Signs of the Times. Inc.
1429 Howlett St.
Hillsville, VA 24343

Dear Sir,

I am a recent release from an Alabama Prison and I am hoping you will place me on your subscriber list. For several years I learned from your publication from a fellow inmate Thomas Poole. Currently I am living in a half-way house, still unemployed despite many applications, and it seems like forgiveness of one's past only exists with our LORD and SAVIOR. I ask for your prayers and for any grace you can extend me and my continuing education.

Sincerely,
John Singleton

Dear Brother,

I'm sending my subscription for another year.

James A. Lambert
P.O. Box 113
Ideal, Ga 31041

If you have any funds for the poor please send to my afflicted cousin I'll try to send 15 extra thru the year he washed dishes at Ruby Tuesday's but can't hardly make it as he has a large wife to feed that took her seat on him and won't work and eats so hardy he can't hardly make it.

His name is:

Jame Pearson Robella
42 Center St.
Ellington, GA 30540

He would take me to meeting when we had him, any time I wanted to go.

PSALM 19:1-2.

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

VOICES OF THE PAST

Gospel Standard - 1837

My dear Friend, — I am very much obliged to you for your kind invitation, which I am obliged to decline at present. I can enter into your various exercises of mind, for I am generally very hard hearted, and unbelieving, wondering at times however I have continued until this day making a profession of truth. If we met with no difficulties, we should need no encouraging promises, and we should not find it uphill work to heaven. If we had all sunshine, and no clouds, we should then fear whether we were not deluded with a false faith, because it endured no trials; and well·we might. I believe it is God's children's lot to have many things within and without to harass and perplex them, so that they may not settle on their lees. We are continually desiring ease and peace, but we are not favoured with them for a long time together. The devil, our own hearts, professor and profane, will make us from time to time know that this is not our rest. We frequently think if we had a better experience in divine things, how glad we should be. It is my opinion we are deceived with such thoughts; for a good experience is got in the path of tribulation, and must be kept alive there also, or we soon return to our own place of doubting, fearing, and complaining, and of barrenness of soul. Most of the Lord's children are in a dark state in the present day, for I think

that there are very few on the mount, who have lawfully and rightly got there by climbing. Very few know anything about the strong workings of a corrupt heart, and sovereign grace bringing it into subjection, and causing faith to be active in the soul laying hold of the blessed promises of the eternal Gospel. I seem to wonder the Lord does not make better ministers, for very few seem to speak from the heart, and are well exercised with upliftings and castings down. The old ministers, if ever they were sharp thrashing instruments, they seem now as if they wanted their teeth well filing; and the young ministers are young and ignorant, and need teaching themselves. There is but little sifting, separating, and thrashing; things seem going on smoothly both in town and country, and many love to have it so, and no one more than Satan himself. There is much false light and false faith spreading around, and many are endorsing it as if it were real; but I believe that it will never pass current in the courts of heaven. If the holdings of the doctrine of grace, with a little working of conscience, and a little morality, will stand in the great day, there are many ministers and very many Christians. Alas! many are awfully deceived with such a vain show of religion, which certainly is no kingdom of God built up in the soul, for a show of that kind brings no glory to God the Holy Ghost. Professors may palm it upon him, but he will not own it, and they will know so some day, and woe be to them if they do not know it before they die. I know but very little of the Lord's teaching, and I deeply fear at times I know nothing at all; but I know thus far at times. I trust there is something powerful and humbling in divine teaching; how it brings the soul into the dust of self-abasement, and exalts the riches of God's grace and his undeserved mercies. My sins and iniquities witness against me, and I am sure God would be just if be sent a wretch like me to hell. I am constrained to contend for salvation through grace from my own heart-felt experience of it, for nothing but his mercy can give my soul any real hope. I am dissatisfied with my own state, for I feel so ignorant to be a minister, and so unfit for the pulpit, being so dark and dead. The Lord at times encourages me, or I should give up the work. I am ready to say. Let him hasten the work that I may see it. If false religion is learnt fast, I think true religion is learnt slow. We wander about, and seem to get no nearer to divine things; and as for myself, I find myself very often on the banks of the Red Sea, but wish to be on the banks *of* Jordan at times and at times, care nothing about it, I am so dead, hard-hearted, and unbelieving. I am more brutish than any man.

Your's, very sincerely, for Christ's sake.

Ezekiel 11:5.

And the spirit of the Lord fell upon me, and said unto me, Speak; Thus saith the Lord; Thus have ye said, O house of Israel: for I know the things that come into your mind, *every one of* **them.**

1 KINGS 14:1-18.

One of our ministering brethren has asked that we give our understanding of this portion of the written word. Paul tells us that **"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:16.** This being true, the scripture under consideration must of necessity be for the benefit of the household of faith. It will .undoubtedly be helpful to our readers, and give them a better understanding of what we shall endeavor to present for their consideration, if they will turn to the fourteenth chapter of 1 Kings and carefully read the first eighteen verses. We will quote the fifth and sixth verses to use as a foundation to build on.
They read as follow:

"And the Lord said unto Ahijah, Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee for her son; for he is sick; thus and thus shalt thou say unto her: for it shall be, when she cometh in, that she shall feign herself to be another woman. And it was so, when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, that he said, Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself to be another? for I am sent to thee with heavy tidings."

Before treating particularly upon the subject matter in the fourteenth chapter, we would like to review briefly the historical background of Jeroboam, and how he came to king over Israel. In the forty-third verse of chapter eleven of this book we are told that "Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father: and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead." A further unfolding of events is set forth in the twelfth chapter from which we quote, as follows: "And Rehoboam went to Shechem: for all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king. And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who was yet in Egypt, heard of it, (for he was fled from the presence of king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt;) That they went and called him. And Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto Rehoboam, saying, Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee." We are fearful that this type of negotiator or bargainer is not altogether extinct in our land today. Therefore we should give all diligence to the lesson to be learned in order to profit thereby. King Rehoboam took three days to consider and answer him. In the meantime he consulted with his advisers, both old and young. He forsook the counsel of the older and wiser heads and yielded to that given by the young men of his day. As a consequence there was strife and divisions, and even bloodshed in Israel, and the king himself had to flee to Jerusalem. "So Israel rebelled against the house of David." It was under the

conditions that Jeroboam was made king over Israel, and we are told that only the tribe of Judah faithfully clung to and followed the house of David, or in the old paths, Jeroboam, having won the vast majority of the Israelites, took counsel and had made and set up two calves of gold for them to worship, which made it made easier for them than having to go to Jerusalem. Alas! there are too many even to-day who want to go to heaven on flowery beds of ease, which others have to fight and sail through bloody seas. Jeroboam held his feasts like unto those in Judah, and he offered upon the altar in Bethel, "Sacrificing unto the calves that he had made: and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made." Let it be noted that these priests were those which he and not God had made. (Man made priests or ministers are no good even in our day.) At this juncture we are told that "there came a man of God out of Judah (the faithful tribe) by the word of the Lord unto Bethel: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. And he cried against the altar in the word of the Lord, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee. And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which the Lord hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out." These words of the true prophet of God displeased Jeroboam to such an extent that he put forth his hand to lay upon him, but God smote it and dried it up. After being thus afflicted, he desired the prophet to intreat the Lord to restore his withered hand, significant of his ruling power, to him again. When this was done, Jeroboam then wanted to reward the man of God who, having been instructed of the Lord said to the king, "If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place." Notwithstanding his firm resolve at first to adhere to God's word, he finally succumbed to the pleading of an old prophet, who lied to him, to turn back and partake of that which God had expressly forbidden. Because of this unfaithfulness, when God's true prophet went on his way he was met by a lion, which slew him. His carcase was not buried for a considerable time, but was left on exhibition as an example to those who passed by to see. Is it not a great warning even unto this day and time to the servant of God who is disobedient to his heavenly calling? We are told that the old prophet later repented and went after the carcase of the one slain by the lion whom he had influenced to do that which was wrong, and took him and buried him in his own grave, and mourned over him, saying, "Alas, my brother!" "And it came to pass, after he had buried him, that he spake to his sons, saying, When I am dead, then bury me in the sepulchre wherein the man of God is buried; lay my bones besides his bones: For the saying which he cried by the word of the Lord against the altar in Bethel, and against all the houses of the

high places which are in the cities of Samaria, shall surely come to pass." This old prophet saw the error of his way and endeavored to make amends by emphasizing that all that God had spoken against Jeroboam's wickedness should surely come to pass, but much harm had already come to Israel because of it. Notwithstanding the prophet's reaffirmation of all that the Lord had spoken against Jeroboam, it is said, "After this thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil way, but made again of the lowest of the people priests of the high places: whosoever would, he consecrated him, and he became one of the priests of the high places. (The church should be careful and ordain to the ministry only those who clearly manifest a gift to preach the gospel of the Son of God.) And this thing became sin unto the house of Jeroboam, even to cut it off, and to destroy it from off the face of the earth." We believe we have known of leaders in our time similar to Jeroboam in many respects, who have persisted in their evil courses. Jeroboam tried to get his wife to disguise herself and go to the prophet at Shiloh, a sacred place to those of pure minds, and deceive him in order to ascertain, if possible, whether or not his son and potential successor to the throne, who was ill, would recover and carry on his evil system of ruling. It does seem to us that from time to time there are clear manifestations of the fact that God is above the Devil, and here is one instance of it. Even though the eyes of Ahijah, the prophet, were set because of advanced age and he could not see, the record says that "the Lord said unto Ahijah, Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee for her son; for he is sick: thus and thus shalt thou say unto her: for it shall be when she cometh in, that she shall feign herself to be another woman." We cannot put into words our pleasure and delight over the blessed assurance this gives of the fact that our God, who discerns the thought and intent of even the hearts of wicked men is ever mindful of his own, to prevent the trickery and deceitfulness of Satan and all his hellish hosts from success in their attempts to circumvent the fulfillment of God's promises to his people. God will protect and shield his own from the wiles of scheming men and devils, and of this we can rest well assured. They cannot be compared to the Lord, before whom all the wisdom of this vain world is but foolishness. God had so informed the old blind prophet and prepared him against being deceived, that when he heard the sound of her feet, as she came in the door, that he said, "Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself to be another? for I am sent to thee with heavy tidings." It would be difficult for one to imagine her surprise, yea, her, amazement, at this salutation by the blind prophet whom they had planned to deceive. She must have been altogether at a loss for words with which to reply, or what to say to God's prophet. She was dumbfounded and speechless, so the prophet continued by saying, "I am sent to thee with heavy tidings." The message which the prophet sent to her husband, king Jeroboam was hard and heavy indeed. Unlike the gospel to the

poor and needy, it was just the opposite to glad tidings and good news. He said, "Go, tell Jeroboam, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee prince over my people Israel, And rent the kingdom way from the house of David, and gave it thee: and yet thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in mine eyes; But hast done evil above all that were before thee: for thou hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, to provoke me to anger, and hast cast me behind thy back." The Lord, by whose providence he became king was holding him to an account, declared he would bring evil upon his house, and would cut off from his house all male children, and him that is shut up and left in Israel, "and will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as man taketh away dung, till it be all gone." This indicated clearly that the Lord God of Israel was displeased at Jeroboam to such an extent that he was determined to tear up every vestige of his household, root and branch, so that there would be abso lutely nothing left of it, and with no hope of any revival of it at any future time. The prophet went on to say, "Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat; for the Lord hath spoken it. Arise thou therefore, get thee to thine own house: and when thy feet enter into the city, the child shall die." This showed the utter contempt which God had for his acts, and we repeat that this was sad or heavy news or tidings, but we are told that the wages of sin is death, and the soul that sinneth, it shall die. God's word which declares it, shall not fail. Following this it says, "And all Israel shall mourn for him, and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam." Abijah being the one and only on of Jeroboam, and potential heir to the throne, Israel no doubt hoped that in him was the seed and promise, or hope, of better things, when his wicked father would be removed and go the way of all the earth, but the child's death put an end to all their hopes, and they were left to mourn over their condition. At such times the Lord's people may feel he has utterly cast them off and forsaken them, but they must be made to know that he is better to them than all their fears. Sometimes God removes the undershepherd of the flock, and the flock goes mourning all their days, until God makes them look unto him as the only one who can supply their needs. The word of the Lord to Israel in that sad hour was, "Moreover the Lord shall raise him up a king over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam that day: but what? even now." Israel was made to see the hand of the Lord raising up another king, of his own choosing, who would oppose and cut off the house, or destroy the modes of worship under Jeroboam. Nevertheless, it is said, "the Lord shall smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water, and he shall root up Israel out of this good land, which he gave to their

fathers, and shall scatter them beyond the river, because they have made their groves (assembly places), provoking the Lord to anger." It does seem to us that there is a great deal of food for thought and meditation for the church in this age set forth in these scriptures. All are accountable unto God, and when he comes searching Jerusalem with candles, as he surely will from time to time, he will not hold any guiltless, but will judge every man according as his work shall be. There are great responsibilities devolving upon each and every member of the church, which is his body, and there should be a taking heed unto themselves; a watching, waiting and praying for God's guidance in all things. No member is so small or insignificant that his responsibility is not felt when it is shirked. **"Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." Isa. 52:1.** Jesus said to his disciples, **"And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell." Mat. 5:29.** It is said that God gave Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, who did sin, and who made Israel to sin. It most certainly behooves God's servants to take heed unto themselves, and also unto the doctrine, lest having preached to others they themselves become castaways; and it also behooves the flock to watch over their under shepherds, or leaders, taking heed unto the doctrine and the order of God's house lest they be led astray and become partakers of their sins. We can but feel the solemnity of these sacred things as we attempt to give the true import of this portion of the word. Until our brother asked for our views on them, we do not recall ever giving these particular words any serious consideration, but now they seem to loom up before us with such outstanding importance for the church in this age that we are at is loss for words that will bring forth their significance sufficiently to emphasize them as we would like. Of a truth these and other scriptures were written for our learning. Paul said in his epistle to the Romans, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might hope." In a measure we feel condemned for not searching the Scriptures more diligently and for not being more familiar with the letter of the word at least, for from time to time our attention is called to such wonderful portions of the word that we either had never seen, or forgotten about as not to know that they were even in the Bible that we are made ashamed of ourself and all our ways. While realizing full well that we come far short of measuring up to the standards of an Editor of such a paper as the Signs of the Times, we can but feel that God is blessing us by causing our readers to ask such questions as are often presented to us concerning the precious things to be found in his store-

house, which stirs up what we hope is our pure mind and causes us to dig deep at the throne of grace for that wisdom and knowledge which will enable us to go in and out before so great a people as are the people of the living God.

We will attempt to conclude these remarks by calling attention to the seventeenth and eighteenth verses, which are the last inquired about. It says in verse seventeen that, "Jeroboam's wife arose, and departed, and came to Tirzah: and when she came to the threshold of the door, the child died." This confirmed the heavy tidings referred to by the prophet, and everything came to pass "according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by the hand of his servant Ahijah the prophet." These sayings should tend to stablish us unequivocally in the doctrine and belief of God's faithfulness in the performance and fulfilment of his word. Jesus said, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Let us all firmly resolve to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, despite all the opposition we may encounter, for if God be for us, who can be against us? We hope these thoughts may be profitable to the saints and of some satisfaction to our yoke fellow who made the request.

Elder R. L. Dodson

March 25, 1836
Published in the 1836 "Signs."

Experience of Elder J. Hart, Eng.

Come hither, ye that fear the Lord,
Diciples of God's suff'ring Son;
Let me relate, and you record,
What he for my poor soul has done.

The way of truth I quickly miss'd,
And further stray'd and ferther still:
Expected to be sav'd by Christ;
But to be holy had no will.

The road of Death with rash career
I ran; and gloried in my shame;
Abus'd his grace; dispis'd his fear;
And others taught to do the same.

Far, far from home on husks I fed,
Puft up with each fantastic whim.
With swine a beastly life I led:
And serv'd God's foe instead of him.

A forward fool, a willing drudge,
I acted for the Prince of hell:
Did all he bade without a grudge;
And boasted, I could sin so well.

Bold blasphemies employ'd my tongue,
I heeded not my heart unclean;
Lost all regard of right or wrong,
In thought, in word, in act, obscene.

My body was with lust defil'd,
My soul I pamper'd up in pride:
Could sit and hear the Lord revil'd,
The Saviour of mankind deny'd.

I strove to make my flesh decay
With foul disease, and wasting pain.
I strove to fling my life away,
And damn my soul—but strove in vain.

The Lord from whom I long backslid,
First check'd me with some gentle stings;
Turn'd on me, look'd,and softly chid;
And bid me hope for greater things.

Soon to his bar he made me come
Arreign'd, convicted, cast, I stood,
Expecting from his mouth the doom
Of those, who trample on his blood,

Pangs of remorse my conscience tore.
Hell open'd hideous to my view.
And what I only heard before,
I found by sad experiences true.

Oh! What a dismal state was this;
What horrors shook my feeble frame!
But, Brethren, surely you can guess:
For you, perhaps, have felt the same.

But O the goodness of our God!
What pity melts his tender heart!
He saw me welt'ring in my blood:
And came and eas'd me of my smart.

While I was yet a great way off,
He ran, and on my neck he fell.
My short distress he judg'd enough;
And snatch'd me from the brink of hell.

What an amazing change was here!
I look'd for hell; he brought me heaven.
Cheer up, and he; dismiss thy fear;
Cheer up, thy sins are all forgiv'n.

I would object; but faster much
He answer'd peace. What me? — Yes Thee!
But my enormous crimes are such —
I give thee pardon full and free!

But for the future, Lord — I am
Thy great salvation — perfect, whole.
Behold! Thy bad works shall not damn,
Nor can thy good works save thy soul.

Renouces them both, Myself alone
Will for thee work, and in thee too.
Henceforth I make thy cause my own;
And undertake to to bring thee thro';

He said, I took my full release,
The Lord hath sign'd it with his blood,
My horrors fled; and perfect peace.
And joy unspeakable ensu'd.

I only begg'd one humble boon;
(Nor did the Lord offended seem)
Some service might by me be done
To souls that truly trust in him.

Thus I, who lately had been cast,
And fear'd a just but heavy doom,
Receiv'd a pardon for the past,
A promise for the time to come.

This promise oft I call to mind,
As thro' some painful paths I go;
And secret consolation find,
And strength to fight with every foe.

And oft-times, when the tempter sly
Affirms it fancied, forg'd or vain,
Jesus appears; disproves the lie;
And kindly makes it o'er.

I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life,
— John xi. 6.

I am, saith Christ, THE WAY,
Now, if we credit HIM,
All other paths must lead astray,
How fair so'er they seem.

I am, saith Christ, THE TRUTH,
Then all that lacks this test,
Proceed it from an angel's mouth,
Is but a lie at best.

I am, saith Christ, THE LIFE.
Let this be seen by faith,
It follows without further strife,
That all besides is death.

If what those words aver,
The Holy Ghost apply;
The simplest Christian shall not err,
Nor be DECEIVED, nor DIE.

Hart

"If any man speak, *let him speak* **as the oracles of God: if any man minister,** *let him do it* **as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." 1 Peter 4:11.**

No man taketh the honor unto himself to speak as the oracles or God, but such as were called, as was Aaron. The ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ are men called, qualified and sent of God. Jesus said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." The men that were chosen out of the world to preach the everlasting gospel of the Son of God, were men out of the average walks of life. Peter and John were spoken of as ignorant and unlearned, yet the people noted that they had been with Jesus which was the important thing.

These men going into the temple, found a man lame from his birth. Peter speaks to him, telling him to arise and walk which he did, leaping and praising God. Peter took no honor for the healing of the man, but made it plain that it was in the name of Jesus that this man was made whole. This ministry, as well as all other like experiences, was of the ability God giveth. When the gospel is preached it is with authority. It has a certain sound as the silver trumpet. Regardless of what portion of the Word we may use as a text, Jesus will be the key note if the gospel is preached.

God teaches his servants the doctrine they proclaim if they speak as the oracles of God. As ministers of these things they must first experience in their own heart the things they preach. How well is this truth set forth by the apostle John when he says, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;... That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, (now we are reminded why it is this way) that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ." Though the ministry today has not seen the Savior with the natural eye, or handled him with their hands, yet they must see him by faith,

handle him and hear him with heavenly ears if they speak to the comfort of his people. These things are revealed from faith to faith. The apostle makes it very clear that he received not these things from men, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Then his preaching was not with excellency of speech or enticing words, but in demonstration of the Spirit.

We should read and familiarize ourselves with the written word; "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." It is unbecoming in any of us to say we do not need the Bible in our preaching, or we can preach as well without as with it, yet the reading alone does not qualify us to speak as the oracles of God. Though one has an understanding of the principles of the doctrine of grace, the preaching of the gospel is as the Spirit give them utterance. There must be a waiting upon the Lord for understanding of each portion of his word.

When one speaks as the oracles of God (as God has revealed the things he speaks as to him personally) the works of the flesh are revealed, the heart is searched and often warmed by stirring up the pure mind by way of remembrance of the goodness of God to them as a poor sinner, unworthy of the least of his mercies. When such is the case there is no conflict between the doctrine of predestination and exhortation. The doctrine of Predestination is the doctrine of the Old School Baptist Church. The only doctrine consistent with the doctrine of election? The effectual call of every vessel of God's mercy to a knowledge of God's mercy to a knowledge of the Truth, their preservation and final glorification in God's own time and way. To try to separate it from the preaching of the Word, which is Jesus, is not speaking as the oracles of God, for the command is to preach the Word that is made flesh. As each one is led by the Spirit to believe that all things work together for good to them that love God, by reviewing their pathway, they are made to see that God has led them through many dangers, seen and unseen by them. Many times their sorrows have been turned into joy, and the hand of a loving God has been seen as their deliverer. Their own weakness has been made known to them, and they have been brought low before God's throne. The hand that has brought them through these things has taught them that God rules, heaven is his throne, the earth his footstool. Not a sparrow falls without him.

Surely this doctrine is precious to his people: That the devil's bounds are set; that life, death, hell and worlds unknown hang on his firm decree; our cross and our crown are both willed by our God; our times are in his hand, and each event at his command. Nothing is impossible with him even the winds and sea obey him. The wrath of man praises him and the remainder he restrains. These things have to do with the salva-

tion of his chosen people, and they comfort and strengthen them causing praises to his holy name. This doctrine, as taught them by experience, never causes them to excuse themselves in wickedness, or speak lightly of their sins: never leads them to adopt a can't help it attitude, or hide behind these things as a cloak for their sins. I am persuaded the apostle Peter could later see the purpose of God in his denial of the Savior, because it taught him his own weakness, but he wept bitterly when the suffering Savior looked at him. So do all the truly taught of God today.

So likewise the doctrine of exhortation. Does it conflict with predestination? No. Is it conditional to exhort the church of God in the things taught in his holy Word? No. The same God who has declared the end from the beginning has decreed that these things be taught to his glory and to the praise of his grace. The man that is thus led to speak these things will suffer persecution. "Yea, and all that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Jesus was persecuted because he rebuked the unrighteousness, and taught a doctrine that left no place for the Glorying of men. The servant is no greater then his master. To the humbled of God these things will eventually lead to peaceable fruits of righteousness.

For one to decide of themselves, out of a carnal mind, that many portions of the word of God are being neglected, that it is their duty to proclaim these things. It will be death in the pot. If led and directed by the Spirit, through and by the unerring love of God and his cause to proclaim these things, then no man shall set on him to hurt him. God has a set time for his work. If some of the brethren are led to speak of these things how thankful we should be. I do not feel to have this gift, if I indeed have one at all, but I desire that God will lead others to speak of these things, also myself if it is his will. So long as these are not set forth as conditions that are optional with us, they should not be lightly spoken of. May God lead us to think on these things, that the preaching of Jesus be our theme, whether it be in exhorting the brethren or speaking of his all wise decrees. It is good for us to examine ourselves whether we be in the faith or not. Try the spirits whether they be of God or men; take heed unto ourselves, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Elder David V. Spangler
August, 1947

ROMANS 4:16.

Therefore *it is* **of faith, that** *it might be* **by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all.**

North Berwick, ME. Jan. 9, 1852

Brother Beebe: — I send you the copy of a letter from Sister Mary H. Lawson, addressed to the church at this place, of which she is a member. Her residence being about one hundred miles distant from the church, she has not the privilege of meeting with us, and as many of the members also live at a great distance from the church, and as they take your paper, we desire on their account, as well as others, that you would publish it for their perusal.

WM. QUINT

Augusta, Maine Dec. 28, 1852.

To the old school Predestinarian Baptist church is North Berwick.

Dear Brethren and Sisters: — Permit me again to address a few lines to you concerning the dealings of the Lord with me from time to time, during the past year. I have abundant reason for gratitude to the Author and giver of every perfect gift for the bestowal of innumerable blessings, and above all, for the hope which, through grace, I am permitted to indulge, of the pardon of my sins. But, notwithstanding all the goodness, tender mercies, and forbearance of God manifested to me, I find that I am continually going astray and disobeying the commands of my divine Master. My mind is too much engrossed with the vain and delusive things of earth, none of which afford any lasting enjoyment, but all leave an aching void, which the world cannot fill. O, the vanity of all worldly pleasures! I find true happiness can only be derived from him who is the Author and finisher of our salvation. He can supply that peace which the world can neither give nor take away.

I desire to be thankful that the Lord does as I trust, at times, give me some assurance I am of that happy number whose God is the Lord, that I shall be cleansed from all sin and permitted to enjoy that rest that remains for the people of God. How good it is to trust in the Lord, to cast all our care on him who careth for his children, in all their trials and afflictions, to carry them safely through this vail of tears; and at last to bring them off conquerors through him that hath died for them. Yes blessed be God, he is always with his people and ready to own and bless them. His watchful care is ever over them, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. He is their sure defense and their refuge in every time of trial. The Christian's lot is indeed a happy one having the promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. The Lord may at times see fit to withdraw from them the light of his countenance, thereby causing doubts and darkness to hover around them, and they feel as though there was no hope, then they are led to cry, "Will the Lord cast off forever! Will he be favorable no more!

But the Lord does not leave the Christian here. He appears for his relief and dispels all his doubts and fears, and speaks peace to his troubled soul. Then can he adopt the language of the Psalmist and say, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully

with thee." The Lord knoweth them that are his; he will not suffer one of them to perish, for he will save them with an everlasting salvation. How immutable and glorious are the ways of God! With him there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. He is the Lord, and changeth not, therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed. I am still deprived of the privilege of hearing the gospel preached in its purity. I dwell among a people that have a religion which is better calculated to please the carnal nature of mankind than the religion which Christ and his apostles held forth when here on earth. The do and live system is the medium through which they profess to obtain salvation. But, brethren and sisters, we have not so learned Christ, Jesus has said, "I am the way, the truth and the Life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me," I have no fellowship with arminianiam which is so popular in this (falsely called) enlightened day. I choose rather to be numbered with a people who have been enabled to come out and be separate from the errors and traditions of men, and trust alone in the grace of God for salvation. I consider it a privilege in this time of great delusion and departure from the truth to have a standing with a people who are willing to endure sound doctrine, and that contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. I can say as did Ruth to Naomi. Thy people shall be my people, and thy God, my God. What reason we have to rejoice that the Lord has reserved a people, though few in number, in various parts of the earth, who have not conformed to the traditions of men, but still adhere firmly to the truth of the gospel. And that among them we find faithful ministers of the cross, who do not shun to declare the whole counsel of God, whether men will hear or forbear, and who are not ashamed to preach Christ, and him crucified who are willing to stand as bold advocates for the truth, regardless of what men may say. May the Lord bless all those whom he has called to labor publicly in his vineyard, with a double portion of his presence, and sustain them in the performance of their arduous duties which devolve on them? And while they are feeding the flock of Christ, may they be enabled with all boldness, to magnify Christ is their body whither it be life or death. May the Lord bless you all as a church, and cause his work to prosper among you. Pray for me, that I may be kept and directed by the Lord at all times.

Yours is Christian love.
Mary H. Lawson.

ISAIAH 26:3-4.

Thou wilt keep *him* **in perfect peace,** *whose* **mind** *is* **stayed** *on thee:* **because he trusteth in thee.**

Trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strenth;

For he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city, he layeth it low; he layeth it low, *even* **to the ground; he bringeth it** *even* **to the dust.**

TO A MINISTER

"The Lord will go before you." (Isa. 52. 12)

Ye messengers of Christ,
His sovereign voice obey;
Arise! and follow where He leads,
And peace attend your way.

The Master whom you serve
Will needful strength bestow;
Depending on His promised aid,
With sacred courage go.

Mountains shall sink to plains,
And hell in vain oppose;
The cause is God's and must prevail,
In spite of all His foes.

Go, spread a Saviour's fame,
And tell His matchless grace
To the most guilty and depraved
Of Adam's numerous race!

We wish you in His name,
The most divine success;
Assured that He who sends you forth
Will your endeavours bless.

Mrs. Vokes

Several hymns signed "Mrs Vokes" appeared in various hymnbooks from 1797 onwards. Nothing is known about her.

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these *is* **charity."** 1 Cor. 13:13. **"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." 1 Cor. 12:27.** Please read the entire chapters, 12 and 13, of 1 Cor. **"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of** *his* **government and peace** *there shall be* **no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."** Isa. 9: 6,7. **"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."** Mat. 16:18·19 **"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh** *but* **in vain."** Psalms 127:1.

The above quotations of scriptures are adequate to establish the origin, building, keeping, safety and government of the church of God; but in order that I be more fully understood, let

me here say that the Scriptures authorize the humble, childlike acknowledgement, that Christ Jesus the Lord is the glorious husband and head of the church which is his body, the fulness of him who filleth all in all.

Now as to the subject before me, let me here say that I realize it is a subject that in itself is inexhaustible. A subject on which able pens have been wielded through the ages past, in an humble endeavor to bring forth the light of divine truth on the matter; a subject in the which, without divine guidance, without divine revelation all our best efforts would be in vain. We now confess our human frailty and weakness, our utter insignificance, our helplessness and our entire dependence Israel's God, on him whose thunders shake creation. He who bids the planets roll, around him are ten thousand angels, and his scepter sways the whole. And, too, I wish to say that I do not feel to be any authority on the subject at hand; neither do I wish to present my views for the sake or desire for argument, or to intrude or encroach upon the premises of others, but for some cause I have felt the burden or weight of desire to present some of my weak views or meditations, first on what the church is, her sovereignty, government etc.

It seems perfectly evident to me from my own feeble searching of the Scriptures, and from what my God has given me to taste by divine revelation, that the church of God is portrayed in the Scriptures in various types, figures, and may we say pen pictures, both relative to her state as we might express it, her militant state or her state of existence in time and finally her glorified state as the church triumphant. It is hardly necessary to say here, that to us the scriptures abound with holy authority that the church is builded upon the Rock (Christ or experimental revelation or living faith in Christ) which alone is wrought of God in the hearts of his trembling and undeserving children, and is the direct work of the Holy Spirit of God, without and independent of creature help; hence this, the church, being builded upon this eternal Rock of Ages is the direct work of the Master Builder, even Jesus. We believe, according to the Scriptures, that the church in time is made up of baptized believers, baptized upon a profession of faith in Christ; and the church now in this dark and cloudy day has been so miraculously preserved by her husband and head until it can yet be said of her that her line or chain of existence dates back to the days of Christ and the apostles in a direct line of existence. Enough has been said to establish my position on this point, although perhaps I have only made this point in the letter.

Now I wish to notice very hurriedly some scriptural figures of the church in time, clothed in humanity, or that is, with the visible marks of sin and imperfection. The first one to ask you to ponder is that figure of Eve and her susceptibility to hearken to the beguiling of the serpent. (Gen. 3:13) Then go with me to Isaac's wife, Rebekah. Notice she took a veil and covered herself when she saw Isaac in the field at eventide; the veil portraying the veil of the flesh (imperfections in the flesh) (Gen. 24: 62-65).

Again notice with me the wife of Job, how that she recommended the remedy to end the suffering of Job, all of which when viewed in the light of divine revelation, is a beautiful figure of the church encumbered with the flesh. Again in Ezekial 16:1-14 you find the church portrayed in filth, polluted in her own blood, her birth and nativity described. Remember the Samaritan woman at the well, connected with the saying of Jesus, it needs be that I go through Samaria; the woman brought before Jesus, taken in the very act of adultery; the Lord's parables of the kingdom of heaven (the church); the ten virgins, five wise and five foolish; of the cleansing of the ten lepers, only one of which returned to give glory to God. Space forbids me to mention more of the gracious figures of the Lord's chosen people in their time state, neither could I venture to take up any given one of which I have here mentioned to endeavor to express what I humbly hope that through grace I have been given to view as to their beauty and true application.

I have mentioned the above figures and parables with a desire to set forth in truth, the fact that the only perfection the church has is in Christ, her ever living Head. Outside of him all is confusion, all is corruption, all is guilt, all is sin. Truly the church in her standing in Christ is presented as all fair as in Solomon's Songs: again as having the moon under her feet (the law), clothed with the sun (the perfection and righteousness of Christ); a crown of twelve stars upon her head (the testimony of the twelve apostles of the Lamb) So as to her standing in Christ there is no fault in her, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." As to the constituted, visible, (yet hidden) church in time, in her militant state of existence, we view her as the remnant according to the election of grace, as being made up of many or several organized bodies of baptized believers, and each group or body is sovereign or independent in so far as to its own internal affairs, freely allowing that this sovereignty is positively subservient to (in all cases) with the rule and law (which law is a law of love, a law with charity in it) of her blessed lawgiver, husband and head, the blessed King of Saints. This sovereignty of the organized body, or church, could never be interpreted in the face of the scripture, as ever affording license to trample under unhallowed feet, the rule of the New Testament. A church body that violates the rule of the New Testament does not do so in lieu of her sovereignty, but in utter disregard of her sovereignty, and is clearly manifesting that she is in a decadent state of existence, diseased, and is but manifesting that she is carnal sold under sin, and that she has left her first love; and unless God who is rich in mercy brings again the spirit of repentance, and purges off the dross, her candlestick will utterly be removed and there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Just a little more in relation to the government of the church of God. We believe personally that the government is upon his (Jesus) shoulder, and, too, that he, Jesus, is the judge of the quick and dead (dead in carnal security). So then we must affirm that all true and

genuine order in the house of God must be wrought by the Spirit of God, for truly there is no other sense wherein the rule of the New Testament could possibly be applied. Just shortly before Jesus was offered as the sin bearing victim on Golgotha's is rugged brow, bearing the sins of all the chosen race in his own body, putting away all the vast magnitude of their sins by the sacrifice of himself, he said to his own, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another." So then whatever difficulty arises in the church of God, true genuine gospel order must of necessity be the fruit of love. It is not optional with an individual member, or an organized church body, as to whether they heed the rule of the New Testament, without the love of God shed abroad in their hearts that brings them to a sense of their own guilt, and thus brings them to a common level with the offender, and in its wake roots out all that holier than thou spirit, makes them realize they are ten thousand talents in debt and not a farthing to pay. In this way and this only could the rule of the New Testament be heeded for the spirit is the only source of charity and love. Otherwise all such would be exacting to the last mite; like the servant with his fellow-servant (brother) in the Lord's parable set forth. No doubt, until the Lords gracious return, that all such exacting ones would loudly be hailing their cruel work as gospel order. I believe all unbiased readers will readily agree that all the people of God are vile sinners in their standing in Adam, and as flesh they have a carnal or fleshly mind, which mind is death; and, too, this element or nature in them is enmity against God, not subject to his law (rule) neither indeed can be. So then with this mind (carnal) there could be no such thing as adhering to the rule of the New Testament. Without doubt many times in church difficulty it is this fleshly element and nature in the one reckoned as the offender, that brings the offence, and in the one offended the same element is aroused and he in turn is made mad and seeks vengeance and retaliation. Is this course order? I believe according to the Scriptures that in the flesh the children of God are fallible, and hence are not just liable to err but sure to err, except only as they are led of him who is meek and lowly of heart. I cannot feel to believe that a church body made up of such characters as I have humbly tried to describe in the foregoing is in themselves infallible, any more so than one individual is, nor is it any more of an impossibility for a church body to err than it is for an individual member to do so. We believe that true gospel order is the fruit of love, that is, a manifest desire to save the erring one, and on the other hand about as clear a manifestation of gross disorder is a manifest desire to kill or destroy the offending one on the slightest pretext. I fear, alas, the latter named is more often what we have and see that is loudly hailed as good order. Neither do I believe the well being of the church of God is vested in the strong or self appointed, would be leaders. The strong and the weak are all clay in the hands of the Lord. In my humble opinion there is no greater delusion among us than for any poor earthworm to presume that the

church is dependent upon any one individual for her well being. God will perpetuate his cause despite all the evil forces turned loose against her.

Truly this is a dark and cloudy day, but let me say here that not one of us will strengthen one of the cords of the church of God, nor shall we by any supposed virtue of ours hold her in the storm. Her safety, keeping, well being and government is in Christ. He will scourge and purge as he sees fit for his fan (the wicked) is in his hand. He will avenge his saints. Oh! How our heart does bleed for the slain in Israel, but he, Jesus, will come and will not tarry. He heareth the cry of the oppressed and downtrodden of his people, and unto you that fear his name shall he appear the glorious sun of righteousness with healing in his wings. I have only hinted along, here and there. Any one of the scriptures or subjects mentioned are full of substance until the half could never be told. I have written the above thoughts I hope in love for the cause of Christ. Much more could be said to edification. From one confessing that I only see, know and prophesy in part, and the part I see as through a glass darkly. In tribulation and in hope.

Elder H. J. Bird
Signs of the Times
May, 1946

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PROVERBS 3:12-14.

For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son *in whom* he delighteth.

Happy *is* the man *that* findeth wisdom, and the man *that* getteth understanding.

For the merchandise of it *is* better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof fine gold.

Signs of the Times

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HYMN

Children of the heav'nly King,
As you journey, sweetly sing;
Sing your Saviour's worthy praise,
Glorious in his works and ways.
They are happy now, and ye
Soon their happiness shall see.
Ye are trav'ling home to God,
In the way the fathers trod;

O, ye banished seed, be glad!
Christ our Advocate is made;
Us, to save, our flesh assumes,
Brother to our souls becomes.
Shout, ye little flock, and blest!
You on Jesus' throne shall rest;
There your seat is now prepared
There your kingdom and reward.

Fear not, brethren, joyful stand
On the borders of your land;
Christ, your Father's elder Son,
Bids you undismayed go on.
Lord! submissive make us go,
Gladly leaving all below;
Only thou our Leader be,
And we still will follow thee.

Cennick.

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EDITORIAL

THE CROSS OF CHRIST

1 Corinthians 1:18, **"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."**

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

When the cross is thought of or spoken of, it is usually in reference to the wooden cross on which Jesus was nailed. For on the wooden cross, He did suffer and shed His blood and die. On that wooden cross, He was made a curse for us to redeem us from the curse of the law according to the Apostle Paul in Galatians 3:13. But is that truly the cross of Christ? The two thieves and Jesus were all nailed to wooden crosses made by the Romans. The only difference was the man hanging between the two thieves. His cross could not be seen by the natural eye nor understood by the carnal mind.

The sinless body that hung on that wooden cross veiled that which was inside His body of flesh. For the fulness of the Godhead dwelled in that body. He was God in a body of flesh. He was holy and righteous. That was the vertical part of His cross signifying that He came down from Heaven and would return to it.

He had no sin and Peter wrote "who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." He took the sins of every elect child of grace in that sinless body to pay the debt His people owed and could not pay. He redeemed those that are His from the curse of the law and from their sins and satisfied every demand of the law. This was the horizontal bar of the cross that He bare and those sins were covered and put away by the blood of Christ. The sin debt of His bride, the church, was paid in full and He declared His work complete and finished.

But, consider the cross that only He could bare. He was righteous, holy and in every way perfect. He who knew no sin was made to be sin for us that we

might be made the righteousness of God in Him. This is according to the Apostle Paul in II Corinthians 5:21. This was indeed the cross of Christ and manifested the great love that He had for His people. He willingly laid down His life for His elect.

In the Garden of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives, our Lord kneeled down and prayed. Gethsemane means "olive press." I am made to believe that He felt a great press of soul as the Son of man. He began to be sorrowful and very heavy. He says "My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death." He went a stone's cast farther than His disciples could go. According to the law given by Moses, Transgressors were to be stoned to death. So He had to go a stone's cast farther signifying that He would go unto death for the sins of His people. O, what He must have experienced there in the garden as He knew exactly what He had to suffer and endure and the exact time that it would take place. He was verily God and He knew all things. As the Son of man, He prayed "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will; but as thou wilt." As the Son of man, He could dread the suffering, death and baring the sins of all His elect in His sinless body. Yet for the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross despising the shame. Can you behold the lowly, meek Saviour as He fell prostrate on the ground? The Apostle Paul writes in **Hebrews 4:15, "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as** *we are, yet* **without sin."** There was never any doubt that He would drink this cup, but He must experience the dread to comfort His little ones." He prays again, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." Haven't you also experienced hard, very difficult situations in which you have cried, Lord if I must drink of this cup thy will be done. Please be my strength, my comfort, my peace. Reconcile me to whatever thy will is.

An angel appeared unto Him from heaven, strengthening Him. He was in an agony and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood. This suffering was pointing to the cross that He must bare in His body as well as on the wooden cross. I am persuaded that during the three hours of darkness that covered the earth as He hung on the wooden cross, Christ bare the sins of every child of grace from the beginning of time to the end of time. Not a bone of his body was broken signifying that not one of His elect was lost. For He said "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

On the wooden crosses, Christ hung in the middle between two thieves. I do not believe this was by accident or chance. I am made to believe this was the purpose of God to set forth why Christ was on the cross. Both thieves were sinners and by nature were children of wrath. One thief mocked Christ

saying, "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." I am persuaded that this one was on the left side of Christ. The other thief rebuked the first one saying "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we received the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." "And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." This one was a little child of God who was on the right hand of Jesus. As Jesus said in **Matthew 25:31-34, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."** To those on the left, He will say "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Matthew 25:41. The two thieves on the cross represent two people. As Jesus hung on the cross, He divided them as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. This was pointing to His making a separation between those he chose before the foundation of the world and those who are not His.

This is foolishness to them that perish because they are not God's elect and cannot experience in a measure this cross of Christ. But to you, the children of the heavenly King, you have in a measure the cross of Christ in you. The horizontal part is the sinful flesh, the carnal mind which is enmity against God and not subject to His law. The vertical is the spiritual, Christ in you the Hope of glory. To be a cross there must be two opposites contrary to one another. This causes a warfare in the Lord's people. Only they bare this cross and to them it is the power of God.

May the Lord be with each of you with His comfort and peace as you complete your journey.

Elder Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

December 29, 2015

Dear Tony Horton,

Please renew my subscription for 4 more years. I pray God will keep this paper coming for as long as there is a world. It has brought so much joy and peace to me and to so many. I know is a labor but I thank God that he keeps giving someone the love to keep it going. We are in a changing world. But I thank you that the paper has never changed.

God bless and keep you,
Gracy Goodman

PRAYER
Psalm lxxxviii. 2.

Weary of life, and care, and sin,
Dear Lord, where can I flee?
Thou alone dost a refuge prove,
I long to rest in thee.

The world and all its lauded charms
Can never give me rest;
I long alone to feel thy love,
And then I will be blest.

Give me some token of thy love,
Some word my soul to cheer;
No eye but thine can see my need,
Thou hearest my heart-felt prayer.

I beg for mercy, in the name
Of thy beloved Son;
His righteousness my only plea,
For I myself have none.

When thou dost give a heart to pray,
Wilt thou not heed my moan?
I wait on thee — renew my strength,
The praise shall be thine own.

Flossie I. Faulkner

OCTOBER 1929 POETRY.
THE BRIGHT STAR OF HOPE.

When torn by such grief as I never had known,
And every relief which I sought for, had flown;
Full of guilt and despair, were the hot tears I shed
In loneliness, where I had pillowed my head.

My sins like a mountain, rose up to my view;
I could not cross over, I could not pass through;
The gloom which inclosed me was darker than night,
In weakness and trembling, I prayed for the light.

And out of that darkness, where I could not grope,
A light had arisen, the bright star of hope;
Brought joy out of mourning, turned gloom into cheer,
Once blind I could see, and once deaf I could hear.

My fears had departed, my doubts now were gone,
That star which had risen, was leading me on.
"Till I on a mountain of ecstacy stood,
Which the soft light of peace had bathed in its flood.

And now filled with joy was my once troubled breast,
So free from alloy was that heavenly rest,
That I felt that I never again should despair,
Since all things to me were so beauteous and fair.

The paths I once traversed where thistles had grown
Were fragrant with lilles, their pale faces shown;
And though they toiled not, nor yet did they spin,

They were bright with the glory which God clothed them in.

The doctrine I hungered for, dropped as the rain,
And I felt that I never should hunger again,
Where weeds once entangled, fair flowers now grew
Refreshed by his speech, which distilled as the dew.

The milk and the honey no sweeter could be
Than that hope which my Savior had give to me;
And though in the valley I oft wander far,
I am kept by the light of that glorious star.

Alfred E. Titus
Trenton, New Jersey.

VOICES OF THE PAST

For the Signs of the Times.
Burdett, Jan. 28, 1836

Brother Beebe: It is said by the popular religionists of the day, that the "exigencies of the the times demand a thoroughly; educated Ministry, and without such a ministry we have not an efficient one. Perhaps I do not know what they mean by the exigencies of the times, but I have supposed that they meant that the present generation is so much more enlighted than the past one, that a minister cannot be useful without a liberal or theological education, but a minister of the past generation could be useful in his day, without a theological education, because that generation were not so well informed, I cannot see why a minister of the present enlightened generation cannot be useful; for certainly he is as capable of teaching now as the minister of the past generation was. The illiterate fishermen of Galilee were sufficient to teach the learned Rabbies of Jerusalem; when they went in Christ's name; and indeed the success of the minister of Christ never did, nor never will depend upon his learning.

I recollect a few years ago, when the ministry was not quite so corrupt as it is now, that the missionary board of this state acknowledged in their report, that the returns of those missionaries who had not been educated, were more favorable than those of their learned missionaries; and the reason is obvious: those who have learned how to preach can get along without Christ to help them; but the children are not fed like those who got under the ministry of those who could not preach except their Lord was with them to help them. I am aware that the popular clergy at the day speak very light of ministers who go in Christ's name — depending on him to give them a text, and enabling them by the influence of his spirit to preach from it. They have told me that they would not go to meeting so, but that they would know before they went what text they were to preach from, and have it well studied; but such a minister is a curse to any church in my judgment. I know not why Christ should promise to be with his min-

isters unto the end of the world, if he would not so much as direct their minds to the text that he knows is most suitable to the occasion, and grant them the influences of his spirit to enable then so to deliver it, that the sheep and lambs can be fed, and the sinner warned of his danger.

I have thought that another thing included in the exigencies of the times is, that it is a time when false doctrine, error and delusion abounds to a very great degree, and we need minsters that are thoroughly educated in order to overcome it. I judge so because I hear them talk so, and I read it in their publications; which proves that they do not depend on Christ to build up his church, but think they shall accomplish the work by might and by power, and not by his spirit; that the race is to the swift and the battle to the strong. But I ask, where has the flood of error come from if not from the learned clergy? Certainly they have been the propagators of the greatest share of it. Who were the false teachers in primitive times but the learned doctors and Judaizing teachers? Where has the Catholick heresy, and the error which is propagated among the Baptists come from? I say with boldness, from learned ministers. It was from learned ministers that I first heard it said, that that sinner had natural ability to repent and perform evangelical obedience to God, if he had a mind to, and that without the agency of the Holy Spirit — that a sinner had as much ability to come to Christ and believe on him, as a natural child had to come to his father when he called him; and it was a learned minister who said that there was no hope for Pennsylvania, other than thro' an educated ministery — and these were Baptist Ministers too. I ask, where has infant sprinkling come from but from the learned. There is not a particle of Scripture for it! And where have all the other anti-scriptural institutions come from, whose constitutions or articles give membership for money instead of grace? From the wise men of this world, whom we have reason to fear do not possess much of that wisdom which is from above; for if they did, they would not tell us as they now do, that a church can have a reformation whenever they have a mind to.

Another reason why the New School folks think we need an educated ministry is, they profess to be much engaged in spreading the gospel to all nations within a short time, and it is but reasonable to suppose, at least to carnal reasoners, that those who are prepared for the ministry, as it is called, would be more likely to be ready at a minutes warning, and go with greater speed than those who are not thus prepared. But experience and observation has taught us better. I have known several instances, and heard of others, where educated ministers have been called upon to preach, but could not because their notice was so short that they could not be prepared; but I never knew or heard of one the Old School ministers refusing to preach on that account; they are ready in season and out of season — a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto them; but the theologians of the day want time to study and write their sermons, and commit them

to memory, or at least the heads of them, or placed so that they may read them. From all this the children of God get but little, if any good; for such sermons are not only dry, but many of them false; so that I cannot see that there is anything gained from theological schools. I have lately visited a protracted meeting, and while there heard several sermons and addresses, but all of them seemed to run in the same channel; and if I should express an opinion relative to what I heard, it would be, that they preached as tho' there was no Holy Ghost — or at least as if they had not heard that there was any — but that all depended on the power and ingenuity of their own arguments. I could not learn that anything was gained by their discourses, unless a few individuals perhaps discovered something more of the corruptions of the times, and others became more deluded than they were before, and more opposed to the doctrine of Sovereign Grace. This is the general effect of such meetings, so far as I have been acquainted.

I have noticed in the writings of the new order, that those only who have a theological education are considered efficient ministers. Efficient signifies causing effects, this properly belongs to Christ, who only is efficient; and Paul says: "Our sufficiency is of God, (not of the Seminary,) who hath made us able ministers of the New Testament." However, I will grant that the learned clergy of the day, as before observed, have caused an effect; — yes, and a lamentable one too! They have been the means of corrupting the churches — racking them to the very centre, and separating chief friends — and guilty of charging it upon those who wish to continue in the good old way, and maintain the primitive order of the house of God.

Much is said of the benefits of an education, and that the more learning a minister has, the more useful he can be. It is strange that God should not be wise enough to know it — that he should have called such into the ministry, instead of choosing the "foolish to confound the wise, and the weak to confound the mighty!" Certainly if his thoughts had been like the thoughts of the wise clergy of this day, he would not have sent such characters as he did to preach to the citizens of Jerusalem; for we see by their preaching "that they were ignorant and unlearned men" Acts 4:15. Why did he not send efficient ministers – men who could have had some influence on the popular characters of that place, and not have had so many of them reject the counsel of God against themselves? Why did not Paul take advantage of his learning when he preached to the citizens of Corinth? He tells us why and it was, "that their faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." 1 Cor. ii. 4,5.

But much stress is laid on the passage in 2nd Tim. ii. 15. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth," as tho' a man in order to answer that requirement, must study in a seminary. But when I apply it to myself, I think there must be an application of my mind to the Book of God, and be satisfied 1st, that I have passed

from death unto life; 2nd, that I am called to preach the gospel; 3rd, that I go in his name; and 4th, that my eye is single to his glory. And if I rightly divide the word of truth, I shall divide law from gospel — grace from works — children's meat from dog's &c; and I shall not shun to declare all the counsel of God. But if to obey the above text I must obtain a theological education, I have not obeyed it; or if it means that I should know what text I shall preach from a day or two beforehand, that I may have it written and committed to memory, and so deliver it to the congregation; I confess that I have been altogether disobedient. Yet I have had sore trials on the subject; I have never suffered much for Christ's sake, but have suffered much from the wickedness of my own heart. When my mind was first impressed with the duty of preaching, I thought that it could not be from God; I thought that he would never call such a creature as I was to preach. I saw in some degree not only my unfitness, but my unworthiness to be in such a station. I also saw the awful responsibility of those who stood between the living and the dead, and concluded that I was not sufficient for these things, and that I would never preach if I could possibly avoid it. In this situation I lived many months; the heavens were sealed up; I could have no correspondence with him who is the portion of his people; and I could say with Jonah, "out of the belly of hell cried I." No mortal knew my trials as I developed them to no one; the teachers of theological schools knew not that I wanted to prepare for the Ministry! No, the grave was chosen in preference to the pulpit. But I could not die; and when I could no longer secret myself, because the word of the Lord was like fire shut up in my bones, I spake in his name, But in the former part of my ministry I would frequently resolve after I had been trying to preach that I would never try again; but necessity was laid upon me, and woe was unto me if I not only preached not, but if I preached not the gospel.

I have passed through many trials on account of my illiteracy. The pride of my heart being such, I did, in the early part of my ministerial labours, make some attempt to study and fix upon something beforehand, in order to be a little more correct; and perhaps half a dozen times in the course of my life I tried to use notes, or rather to depend on something that I had committed to memory; but I could compare myself to nothing better than a fettered ox treading out the corn. Since I have gone so far, I will inform you how I have finally got along in reference to studying my sermons, and also what I consider to be my duty; which is not only as a minister but as a Christian: to live to God, and strive to enjoy a correspondence with heaven; searched the scriptures carefully, prayerfully and perseveringly — endeavoring to understand them, and to have the system of the gospel well riveted in my understanding — and when I have an appointment to preach, where I do not know the state of society, to submit the case altogether to God to direct my mind to a subject suitable for the occasion and if any text is in my mind, meditate upon it — endeavor to understand it; and if it continue with me until the time of meet-

ing, preach from it. But if my appointment is where I am acquainted with the situation of the people, I endeavor to consider what will be the most suitable for them; and, as in the former case, make it subject of prayer to God to give me a suitable subject. He often gives me the privilege of preaching from a text that I have had in mind for several days, and sometimes he does not; yet I have suffered no loss by studying on the text I did not preach; from it good may come another time; at any rate it is good to study the Scripture. But I never know what text I shall preach from until I read it to the assembly; for it is common with me to have the text that I have meditated upon, taken from me after I get into the deal and another given me that perhaps I have not thought of for a week or a month; and I am willing that it should be so. Often after I rise from my seat to record my text, I give out the one I did not expect to when I rose, and the sermon as likely to be numbered by my brethren about my best discourses, as any other.

I have sometimes lamented that I had not the ability, either natural or acquired, that I could preach when Christ did not help me; and other times I think that I have been thankful that I could not, for such preaching would be of no use either to saint or sinner. I am not settled in a place which is much like one that I have formerly lived in; where there are but few who love to have the whole counsel of God declared unto them; and I sometimes feel, if I am not deceived, as Paul did when he said, "None of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify of the gospel of the grace of God.

Reed Burritt

THANKSGIVING FOR THE CHURCH

I thank Thee O Lord, for the dear Savior's birth,
And thanks for the kingdom He set up on the earth;
Thanks for the Comforter that comes to us here,
And assures us so truly that He holds us dear.

Thanks for the sanctuary found here below,
For loving Thy kingdom, and learning to know
Of that rest that remaineth to Thy weary saints,
Who are sinful, rebellious and filled with complaints.

I thank Thee, O God, for the church I adore,
And ask of Thee Lord that I serve it more;
She is clear as the sun and as fair as the moon,
Her light far outshines the brightness of noon.

A fountain of gardens, of living waters a well,
And streams of Lebanon — hear Solomon tell

Of her graces and beauties — the kingdom of heaven
Set here by our Savior, to us freely given.

I thank Thee dear Lord, for my spiritual home,
That gave me glad welcome when I ceased to roam;
Received me and loved me, my sins did not see,
Imputed my unworthiness, Lord to Thee.

A home Thou prepared us, wherein we could meet
And take bread and wine, and wash the saint's feet;
For Thy kingdom on earth, I thank Thee O Lord,
"Tis surely recorded in Thy Holy Word.

Effie Parke
Castle Rock, Wash.

Route 1, Box 104, St. Albans, W. Va.

Mr. Benton D. Murphy, My Dear Brother In A Precious Hope: I am mindful again and again of your request which you made some two years ago for me to try and write to you and relate by the medium of pen and paper what I hope has been the dealings of the Lord with me. I now tremblingly venture knowing that the Word says, **"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." 1 Peter 3:15.** I hope I realize fully that I can of myself do nothing. Hence I venture with an inward breathing that the unerring Spirit might guide my pen if it be the will of my gracious heavenly Master. I have waited since your request came for a frame or feeling of mind when I would feel more equal to the undertaking, but alas I find this morning that I am still possessed with the same destitute, barren, unfruitful mind, that is most commonly mine. I am no more equal to the task this morning than I have formerly been. So I can truthfully affirm "that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong." "Not by night, nor by power (of the creature), out by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

Dear brother, in trying to heed your request I desire above all things to be truthful, if I know this poor heart of mine. While I do not desire to be tedious, yet I desire to be minute enough that you might be able to judge for yourself whether or not it has been the Lord's hand with me. I wish to say in the outset that I do not even hope to state these conditions that have been lived, that have been experienced, that have been felt within in a way that would be even said to my own satisfaction, much less to the satisfaction of my kindred in Christ.

In turning back the pages of my past life, much of which seems to be sealed and enshrouded in mystery even to my own self, the depth of which I cannot seem to penetrate. I do not expect to be able to tell you whether this or that (of the many trials and sorrows, conflicts and troubles through which I have passed) has been wrought of the Lord, this is

more than I can hope to do. I leave this matter to the fair and unbiased minds and judgment of my kindred, my brethren.

I was born Aug. 22, 1899. I am the youngest living child of a large family of children. My parents were both consistent members of the Old School Baptist church. So from my earliest recollection I had thrown about me the parental love and affection of kind and generous parents, and although my parents were poor in this world's goods, they were industrious and energetic, and by the smiles of a kind Providence were blessed to make a good living on their farm to the end that their children lacked not, neither went in want for the things of this natural life. My parents never tried to teach religion, knowing this was alone through and by the free and unmerited grace of God and through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet they were blessed both by example and word to advocate morals and honest living, their household being governed by the law of love.

Now in my early natural existence, I being encircled and enclosed by all of the above mentioned things and conditions which make for peace and happiness, my quiet, my peace and my happiness became disturbed. I cannot tell you just how old I was when this first awakening took place with me, but just a mere lad, possibly not over six or eight years of age. Neither did I then know what was wrong with me, but a great wave or cloud of insurmountable trouble settled down upon me, with an awakened consciousness of guilt and condemnation before God in such forceful might and measure that I was made to know that I was a wretch undone. Even though a child I was made to feel that hell was my portion and doom. Oftentimes in the most bitter trouble it would seem that my guilt was so great that even the earth was almost ready to swallow me up. I became afraid of night, of literal darkness, many times did I roll a restless bed and shed tears, yea bitter tears of sorrow and grief, feeling that I would die ere the night was over, with a full conviction that if I should die I would open my eyes in hell. So full was the force of this trouble upon me that I was soon made to know the justice of God in my condemnation.

At that time in my life I had no more thought that this was the hand of the Lord upon me, making known my dread and horrible condition, yea my lost ruined state unto me in mercy, for my good, for my correction, nay I feel sure now that could human creatures have known fully my horrible condition that they never could have persuaded me to believe that this was for my good. I felt sure that the righteous wrath of God was about to be meted out to me. This season of trouble that I have here been hinting at went on for weeks and months and years; not all the time with the same intensity. Sometimes when in company with my childhood and youthful associates I would seemingly become temporarily unconscious of my troubles, and would engage in youthful mirth, or at other times try to appear gay, or at still other times be given to indulge in youthful sin or folly, or be given to an outbreak of temper, or

do some outward act of wrong. I was very soon, after the indulgence of the above mentioned things, brought to a renewed sense of my guilt before God, only to have added groans and tears for each new outbreak. There seemed to be some force that shut me out from crying out unto God. I feel now that I then felt that God was too pure and holy to hear a wretch like me. I had not then learned that Jesus was the way of life. I felt to be forsaken of God and almost forsaken of man. Sometimes when my troubles were so great because of some new outbreak or engagement in wrong, I would go to my mother, feeling that she alone would have a measure of pity for her wayward and hell deserving son, and to her I would acknowledge my guilt, seemingly with a desire for her to tell me whether there was hope for a wretch like me. I felt, not only by nature, but by practice as well to be the worst of all God's creation. It would be impossible for human tongue to tell what awful conflict I endured through all these years. I know now that by reason of my outward actions, (caused doubtless by my trouble) that my parents became uneasy about me, because of my troubles at night I would even be afraid for my parents to go to sleep. (I slept in the same room with them.) I would resort to the most foolish means to keep them awake, feeling that if they went to sleep that darkness would swallow me up, yea even eternal darkness. Sometimes my father, not knowing my condition, would chide me in a kind way for disturbing them from their rest. All this would only aggravate my woe. My parents I realized now watched me. Reason had almost flown. So sure was I that hell was my doom that I became afraid of literal fire. Dear readers, however foolish this may appear to be, this is as it were but pages torn from my past life, and is but the glimmering of the opening of my inmost groans, and my inmost self. Is but the making bare and wringing out the secrets of is heart of mine.

In my early trials I was possessed with a fear of the Devil. I would have dread scenes of the horrible hideousness of his form. I did not then know that he was a chained monster, but after awhile this fear I hope was supplanted by a fear of the Lord. During this time I was often bothered with a feeling that end of time was near at hand. I had a dream of the end of time which I will not here give space to relate. Suffice it say that this dream is yet painted in my memory. I had many harassing dreams which only added to my pain. There are many things which I would love to relate but space forbids. Things moved on until in my fourteenth year of life (and I still a companion of trouble) my father was taken with that dread disease, typhoid fever and soon passed away in death. Oh, the dark wretched hours that were now mine, bereft of a kind father's love and indulgence, a gulf trouble that seemed almost unbearable. I felt the sweet confidence to believe that my father was now at rest, but oh, the dark hours for me. I had, ere I sustained this great loss, been made to feel that the Old School Baptists were the people of God. I had been made to embrace the thought that God had a chosen people,

but surely I was lost, my case was an outside one. My sins were so great surely there was no mercy for such as I. During these years sometimes I read the Bible but only to read condemnation to the guilty. Also during this period I started to read the Bible through only to end in confusion before I had finished my undertaking.

I too, came to the place where I thought by being a better boy that things might be better for me, so I went about to do good, making resolution after resolution only to end each and every time in utter failure. Dearly beloved, I believe I tried every inch of the ground to do good, do better, only to learn that I could nothing do. I worked myself, as it were, strictly out of timber only to fall at the feet of sovereign mercy. I do believe that if ever a poor boy tried to be a good boy that I tried, but only with each trial to feel to be worse.

Dear kindred, I now come to the place where I must say that not even now do I know whether I have ever experienced deliverance or not. If so be that I have it has been gradual with me. Although there have been many experiences of mind that I have had to pass over because of space, yet I would now desire to be honest enough to say that I cannot refer you to a certain time when I experienced the rapture of joy that so many of the dear kindred have experienced; but I truly hope that I may say that some things stand out vividly clear in my memory which I hope in the mercy of God may be a ground of hope. Once I remember this language was given with a ray of sweetness and rapture, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." This great burden which I had carried so many years gradually seemed to give way, and sweetly, yea, very sweetly I was given to hope in his mercy; I was given to read the Scriptures in a new light; I was now given to grasp his precious promises as mine; where I had hitherto read condemnation I now could read mercy, pity, pardon, forgiveness. Oh, how great is his mercy, his tender compassion, his everlasting love, plenteous in mercy, so long suffering to usward. Praise his name, O my soul: all that is within me praise his holy name. I now, after I hope I had experienced peace and pardon in Jesus' blood, was filled with a great love for the Old School Baptists, and desired to above everything to ask for a home among them, and to be buried with Christ in baptism. Yet, feeling unworthy, and feeling too, that should I ask for a home among such good people as I felt them to be that they could not receive me. I now feared I was deceived and feared that I had nothing to the church, although when the brethren told their experiences they could tell my feelings better than I could. Still I feared because my parents and many of my people were Old School Baptists that possibly I had only learned these things of them, and that after all it was not real with me. My cries, my begging now was if I am deceived undeceive me, although much of the time while the awful sense of guilt and condemnation was laid upon me (of which I have already written at considerable length) especially as the years went by, my very groans, my daily begging, (yet much of

the time I was afraid to get on these knees of mine) was with the plaintive cry of the poor publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Lord save or I perish. Often-times in secret pleading would I implore my God for his pity, for his mercy, but now that this burden had passed and I was given a hope in his mercy I was made to fear that this hope was not grounded. I now I feared that I might be a deceiver to the people of God if I should ever ask a home with them. I carried this desire for a home with the people of God for quite a time, sometimes going to meeting with such great desire that when the door of the church was published open I could hardly stay away. In October 1918 I was united in marriage to Bessie Wade of Virginia with a feeling I would settle down in life and I then would feel more fit to ask for a home with these good people, but alas I found to the contrary that felt sense of unfitness lingered with me and only grew worse until finally I resolved that I would never bring shame and reproach to this people by asking for a home with them. On Saturday before the fourth Sunday in July 1920 I went to old Providence Church to meeting with this very resolve in my bosom, and after preaching by the late Elder J. W. Mc Clanahan and Elder W. I. Wade the door of the church was published open and after two sisters in the flesh and one brother-in-law had gone before the church my strong resolution was forgotten, I. found myself before this people trying to relate my troubles to the church. This was indeed a time of love. My wife united the following day with another dear cousin in the flesh. Accordingly the six of us on the fourth Sunday in August following were led down into the liquid grave and buried beneath the yielding wave by Elder W. I. Wade and raised to walk in newness of life. Now a lull of peace settled down upon me. I seemed to reach the place of living at ease, all seemed for awhile to go on smoothly but not for long.

O dear kindred, all unexpectedly to me I felt now that I was turned over to the tempter and led captive of Satan at his will. I passed through the most horrible condition, the most indescribable, my very inmost uprisings of mind were the basest of blasphemy, such were those evil uprisings of mind so horrible, so base, I would freely have given the world had it been mine to give, just to have been freed from this awful condition. I had never fully known before the awful depravity of my nature. This storm was so fierce that try with all my force to resist it I could not. Many times while this fierce storm raged within I was prostrated in the very dust, with my face in the dust and made to cry Lord have mercy! Lord save I perish! O Lord, deliver me! Truly now did I know that none but Israel's God could deliver from the very belly of hell, and now by reason of mine affliction cried I unto the Lord. I can now affirm that salvation is of the Lord first last and all the time. I do know that my own strength (creature effort) was of no avail. After this fierce conflict I now felt sure I was deceived and a deceiver. So heavy now was my trouble that I often groaned aloud, and when my nephew, who worked with me in the field, would ask me what was wrong I would

lie to him until through fear I was made to acknowledge to him that it was trouble, not divulging the kind of trouble. This troubled state went on until I felt sure I had never known the mercy of God. One day while in the field trying to husk corn, with this language sounding in my ears, grating my very inmost being, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" I truly felt to be the ungodly and sinner. Oh how dreadful did my lot appear as I fell beneath his frowns. I tried to toil on in this manner for some time, feeling that deserved wrath was about to be meted out to me, for oh what had I done but deceived God's people. Surely the wrath of God was my due, but thanks be to his blessed and holy name, the answer came like this, "In due time Christ died for the ungodly." I could take you to the spot where this occurred with me. I now soon became concerned about publishing the worth of Jesus, but with these impressions to try to speak in his blessed name, and testify of his goodness to the children of men so great was my surprise, knowing I was so unfit, even ignorant that I determined that this was a secret that would die with me, not even harboring the thought that it had even entered the minds of the brethren that I had such exercises of mind. All unexpectedly to me the brethren began to question me as to whether I had been so impressed, and before I was hardly aware of it I had told of this very secret. I had many dreams that I feel have a place in my call to the ministry, if indeed I have a calling. I cannot here rehearse them, I fear this is already tedious, but I can hardly refrain from relating an experience of mind which came as a surprise to me. One night after I had retired, I feel sure I was as wide awake as I am now, all at once, unexpectedly too, for I was not even thinking about trying to preach, I saw myself before the people of God, declaring the goodness of God and felt this stammering tongue of mine loosed in the praise of my God, felt a feeling of liberty of utterance, the like of which I hope I have since felt.

The fightings against these impressions were hard until at length I was made through suffering willing to yield. The whispering had been felt within, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Why is his yoke easy, and his burden light? Even so for the Elder Brother even Jesus bears the heavy end of the yoke. My oldest daughter was now stricken, brought to death's door seemingly. I was made to feel that my gracious, heavenly Father was now visiting my rebellion with the rod of his wrath. I now was made willing to go. I was made to feel that could he in mercy spare the object of my love, and restore my child again unto me that I was willing to resign my all to his most holy hand. So at our regular church meeting in September 1929 the Providence Church granted me liberty to speak in public, and during our Association in September 1930 the hands of the Presbytery were laid upon my sinful head, your father being one of the Elders that constituted the Presbytery.

Since that time I have had many trials and straits to encounter and undergo

with an occasional ray of light. I have many times proved that God is gracious, that he is plenteous in mercy. I have now tried to heed your request. I have been forced to leave much out that I would love to voice in order not to take too much space. May you be given that sweet forbearing spirit of charity to pass by all amiss, and lay all shortcomings to this sinful creature. Surely I am a living monument of his mercy. In love to all the household of faith. From the least of all if one at all.

(Elder) HARVEY J. BIRD

PSALM133.

Behold, how good and how pleasantit is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

It is **like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard,** *even* **Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;**

As the dew of Hermon *and as the dew* **that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing,** *even* **life for evermore.**

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 03 / 2016 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

GOD OUR PRAISE

"He is thy praise." — Deut. X. 21.

The withering laurel and fading bey may please the worldling for a time, but cannot ever satisfy him, for vanity of vanity is stamped upon all that the world calls good or great. All sublunary honours are vile trash, with which Satan puffs up the mind of his votaries, to make them exalt themselves above all that is called by the name of God. I grieve to say that still my soul cleaves in this dust, that I still am in any degree under the sway of this love of worldly honour, that would ever exalt itself in the place of Christ. This forms part of my daily warfare and constant strife. I see the vanity, foolishness,and abominable wickedness of these things. I mourn over it, strive against it, and should rejoice to feel it extirpated. Still, grace prevents its obtaining the predomigancy, in some measure keeping it under. O how I need daily salvation from myself, for the iniquities of my heels encompass me about. Surely if my praise were to come of myself, I should sit in the dust for ever; but God is the praise of His Israel.

For God to become our praise, every possible blessing must be ours; law and justice must be satisfied, our iniquities removed from us, and the righteousness of Christ made over to us; for unless we are holy even as he is holy, God can have no delight in us, much less can he become our praise. Christ has made himself and his fulness over to the church, and become her praise, as does the husband of the wife. His church partakes of all his honours and his glory, and

is the joy of him in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

He is our praise in the work of redemption. When he made atonement for the sins of the whole elect world, when he suffered the just for the unjust and reconciled us unto God by his own blood, when he satisfied the just demands of the law, when he magnified it by his obedience, suffering, and death, and became the end of it for righteousness to them that believe on his name; he accomplished a work worthy of a God, and which none but the God-Man could have accomplished. Here he destroyed the strong holds of the devil, broke asunder the icy bands of death, and rose triumphant from the grave, that he might also bring us to a lively hope of the resurrection from the dead. This is so glorious, that even angels desire to look into it, and wonder at the love which Jesus bears to man. But how is the admiration heightened when we look upon it as done for us, when we view the benefits accruing to us from it, and feel the unctuous power of the Spirit applying it to our own souls.

He is also our praise in heaven, where he carries on his mediatorial reign, where all the host of heaven surround his throne, and sing, "Glory to the Lamb that once was slain," and where his blood is ever fresh in the courts of justice, to silence the demands of the law. There our persons are beheld in him, and are beautiful in his apparel; his righteousness makes us all glorious within, and fit to worship in the presence of an infinitely holy God. There he is and ever will be all our praise. No works of righteousness that we have done can ever claim praise before God; Christ must become our praise and make us acceptable there.

Here on earth he is now our praise in the work his Holy Spirit carries on within us, leading us in a right way, guiding our feet, supporting our steps, and establishing our going out and coming in, leading us to see, feel, and mourn over the dreadful depravity of our hearts, to see our condemnation just, and hell our desert, and then to reveal Christ the hope of glory to the soul. O, how welcome is this after a dark night! and does he not then become our praise indeed? He is our chief among ten thousand, the altogether lovely and the longed-after of our souls. How little do we then care for other praise; earth loses its hold, and Christ becomes our all in all; for it ever happens that he who enjoys much of Christ will want but very little of this world's goods, for the glory of his presence casts a dimness on every thing else, throws them so into the shade that they are neither seen nor cared for while he is present with us; but, alas! So soon as the sun withdraws, the reptiles creep out again.

The ambitious man will spend and hazard his life to make a little noise among his fellow-dust, and count no toil too great to get a little quickly-dying fame; but our praise is all worked in us. The work is done, the crown is wrought, and glory is prepared for us from before the foundation of the world; yea, further, Christ is formed within us the hope of glory, and he is our praise.

And this praise will last for ever and

ever, being linked with the existence of the eternal God, and established by the Son of the Most High, who shall sit upon the throne of David forever, and of whose kingdom there shall be no end, and we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. We shall be in him and he in us, even as he is in the Father, and the Father in him, and we shall be all one. O, glorious union! Who can conceive of it? God has revealed it, faith has received it, the Spirit has sealed it, and we have enjoyed it in part. Surely he who has done such great things for us should be our praise, and he alone.

London, May, 1837

Vericultor.

RECONCILIATION

The nature of a man is at enmity with God. The man as a creature cannot be reconciled to God, his Creator. This state of rebellion began in the garden of Eden and has continued until now, but for the grace of God, it will continue as long as man lasts: This sad state of affairs does not give man any spiritual grief until the Lord makes known unto him his fallen and ruined condition. It is true that men in nature are often-times thwarted in their purpose, but even when they are their sorrow is not the kind of sorrow that the child of God experiences in his rebellion towards God. Furthermore, men that have had their lives completely wrecked have, in the absence of God's grace, still contended that they could do better. Their satisfaction and reconciliation is not in God. It is in themselves and even if they do not accomplish what they start out to do, they still maintain that they could do it. Of course their God is of their own creation. He exists in their mind. But for the grace of God there would not be any spiritual service rendered. All the religion in the world, except the pure and undefiled kind, is serving self. Thinking so much of self, a man, in the absence of the knowledge of God and the joy in (not from) serving him, will serve his own lusts, but God made the world and all things else including man for his glory. Every provision for God being glorified in the salvation of the elect was treasured in Jesus Christ before the world or anything else was created. At the proper time in the unfolding of God's eternal love to his children it was made manifest to each of them. Every man or woman has the peace, joy and reconciliation of the natural mind until this work of grace is started by the Lord. It may be a short time or it may be nearly the whole of our lives as natural creatures, but as soon as one is made alive in Jesus Christ something begins that, try as we may, we can never get rid of.

This morning was the time for me to go to my regular appointment at Macedonia Church. By the grace and providence of God I have missed but few services there since they called for my ordination ten years ago. I hope I love them for Jesus' sake and I did so much want to go. My car is in the shop but I had arrangements made with a friend to take me. The weather yesterday was severe and I was in it attending the fu-

neral of a strong believer and friend of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. I told my friend that if the weather continued today I would not go. This morning it is still rough outside and he did not come, but I am not satisfied. I have found myself filling my mouth with arguments to the Lord as to the why of things. I am ashamed of the life that I lead in this way. Day by day it is shown to me, that as a preacher. I am a failure from the first to the last. This past year I have sent out many missives to our many papers. For some reason well known to God he must have guided my pen to comfort many of the down-cast little children of God, not only among my immediate brethren, but among all factions of our people. God has moved them to write many precious words of encouragement by telling me about their travels and what sinners they were; how far astray they were from the household of faith: what warring they felt daily in their bosoms, and how unworthy they were and unfit for membership in the church: clearly making such a case against themselves that if the church knew them as they knew themselves they could no longer fellowship them. Ah! dear precious reader, may I live with you? Your question of unfitness strikes just such accord and harmony that perhaps, unworthy though, I be, we may go on together, gathering the clusters of rich things as they come from the hand of God. I do not desire to lay any claims to being worthy of comparison with the apostle Paul, yet I do feel a desire to go to my churches and to reach the countless readers among us, and that we each might be established. and comforted in that mutual faith (Rom. 1:11-12) that belongs to the children of God. I think I would be lacking in gratitude to God, and in courtesy to you if I did not say I was glad to hear from you and that I appreciate your encouragement. But I also think that it would be unfaithful in me if I left you thinking that we who come to your pulpits and into your homes on the printed page, do not have the same things to confront us that you do. Sometimes I am tempted to lay my pen aside; sometimes I am ready to say that, as long as I feel as I do now, I shall preach no more; sometimes I am blessed to look back and the road is so crooked and so many times I have turned to the right and the left, that I am made to say surely I have not been called as was Aaron; sometimes I am blessed to look within and just a fleeting glance at this heart and mind make me to shudder at going among God's children again; sometimes my ways are higher than God's and I find I am as far from being in harmony with the Lord as can be. No one can know the heaving bosom that I have felt so many times on entering the pulpit, except those that have likewise been exercised. No one can have any patience, sympathy or fellowship for this poor undone sinner when I tell you that sometimes I feel that I preach reconciliation by Jesus Christ on Sunday and spend the balance of the week reconciled to nothing. Sometimes I am blessed, as I hope, to preach the

care of God and the blessing of God to and for his children at all times and spend the other time proving that he does not!

We are unable to be thankful to God in nature, but may it be his holy will to give us thankful hearts. We cannot be reconciled except by Jesus Christ. Then may the Lord bless us to thank him and to be reconciled to whatever comes our way.

Elder W. D. Griffin
April, 1947

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come." --- John xvi. 13.

There are two grand lessons to be learnt in the school of Christ, and all divine teaching is comprehended and summed up in them. One is, to learn, by the Spirit's teaching, what we are by nature; so as to see and feel the utter ruin and thorough wreck of self, and the complete beggary, weakness, and helplessness of the creature in the things of God. This is the first grand branch of divine teaching. And we have to learn this lesson day by day, "line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little." Through this branch of divine teaching we have almost daily to wade, and sometimes to sink into very painful depths under a sense of our depraved nature. And the other grand branch of divine teaching is, "To know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent." To know who Jesus is, and to know what he is; to know the efficacy of his atoning blood to purge the guilty conscience, the power of his justifying righteousness to acquit and absolve from all sin; the mystery of his dying love to break down the hardness of heart, and raise up a measure of love towards him; and to see, by the eye of faith, his holy walk and suffering image, so as to be in some measure conformed to him, and have his likeness in some measure stamped upon our souls.

J. C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 2016

Michael Willis, VA	5.00
Ronald Rudd, NC	5.00
Jerry Somers, VA	5.00
B.L. Abernathy, NC	5.00
Peggy Phillips, VA	5.00
Glenna Link, TN	5.00
James Knight, NC	25.00
Patsy Mitchell, TX	5.00

OBITUARIES

ELDER HAYWOOD WARD WRAY

As it pleased God, shortly before midnight on Tuesday, October 20, 2015, a dear brother and friend to many was called away from this low ground of sin and sorrow after 93 years to await, as he so wonderfully hoped, an awakening on that glorious resurrection day to be found in the presence of his Lord. Elder Wray was born in Rockingham County on March 8, 1922 to the late Oliver Judson and Mary Elizabeth Smith Wray. He lived most of his life in the Reidsville community and was retired from the American Tobacco Company. Brother Wray was liberated to speak by his home church, Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church in May of 1953. On November 3, 1956 he was ordained to the full work of the ministry. The presbytery that day was composed of his pastor, Elder J.W. Gilliam, Elder P.E. Ingram and Elder J. Harvey Smith. In January of 1962 the Pleasantville Church called him as their pastor, and he was blessed to faithfully serve them until his passing. In addition to serving Pleasantville, he also served the Danville Church and Old Mountain Church in the Staunton River Association and made annual visits to visit Elder George Ruston and others at the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada as well as churches in Baltimore and Pennsylvania. He was preceded in death by his wife, Sister Rachel Pyrtle Wray; a daughter, Marjorie Martin; four brothers, Elder Burch Wray, Elder O.J. Wray, Elder Hugh Wray, and Louis Wray. He is survived by his son, Philip Wray and wife, Vicki of Tampa, Florida; a daughter, Linda Jordan of Burlington, N.C.; a brother, Wilmor Wray of Columbia, S.C.; and seven grandchildren, 13 great grandchildren, and one great greatgrandson.

Elder Wray's funeral was conducted at 1:00 PM Saturday, October 24, 2015 at Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church with Elders Cleo Robertson and Jimmy Gray officiating. Burial followed in the Church cemetery where he was laid to rest beside his dear wife of 68 years.

Elder Wray, when a young lad, began to feel, what he recognized later in life, were the effects of the Lord's initial dealings within his breast, spiritually. He didn't understand this strife at the time but knew that his interests and activities were different than others his age. At a young age, visitors to the home, including relatives, would comment to him that he was going to preach.

They often called him "preacher" and he would often run and hide when he saw them coming. Yet, he felt and recognized at that time that "something was different."

In a sermon preached at Pleasantville on September 2, 2007, he spoke from Isaiah 2:4 concerning the beating of their swords into plowshares, etc. He beautifully pointed out that "the sword" is man's defense, while captive of the "first heaven" one's carnal nature, to fight against any workings of the Lord in our breast. As he stated that Sunday, "I'm

telling you about my own experience in this. When the Lord began dealing with me, there was nothing I wanted any less to do with than the place I'm in now...and I used my own sword, my way. I was later brought to the end of my strength naturally, and was made to understand that you cannot trust your own carnality in things pertaining to the salvation of God and the great wonders of God."

When the Pleasantville Church called for his ordination, he initially felt reconciled to the mind of the brethren. However, before the ordination, he began to doubt and feel that surely the Lord had made a mistake in this matter. He was made to feel so sinful that he considered telling the brethren that they had made a mistake. He begged that if this calling was of the Lord, that he be given a sign before his ordination was complete. During the ordination, when the third and last minister, Elder Harvey Smith, laid his hand on his head, he experienced, what felt to be warm oil flowing from the crown of his head down to his feet. He thanked God for what he felt was the answer to his prayer.

Over the course of his ministry, Brother Wray has recounted so many beautiful experiences. He has endured many trials and tribulations including an inability to walk without crutches for over ten years. One day he saw a bright light coming through his kitchen window brighter than any light he had ever seen. He told his wife what he had experienced and stated that he felt this to be a sign that he would either die soon or begin to improve. Within a short time, his legs became stronger and he no longer needed the aid of crutches. It was during this period of disability that he immersed himself in his woodworking endeavors. He was blessed naturally as a craftsman both in design and functionality. His handmade clocks and cabinets fabricated from wood were the topic of many conversations and the blessing of his innate skills and abilities in this arena continue to be held in awe! His little shop has been the scene of many lovely visits with those who came seeking to speak with him of spiritual matters and the Bible was always there.

Over the years there have been many who have been blessed to visit with him in his home. He rejoiced in having them come and talk on the scriptures. These visits meant so much to him especially in the years since Sister Rachel's passing. In these recent years, Elder Wray began to host, on a monthly basis, those whom he affectionately termed his "Band of Brothers" and "Band of Sisters". The day of this event became so special to all concerned as it was a day set aside for lunch with an afternoon devoted exclusively to discussing scripture. This writer knows firsthand how these "special days" spent with the brethren affected his conversation for days following the event. He often commented that truly the Lord is present where two of three are gathered together in His name.

Except for the last three and one half months, Elder Wray was blessed to live independently at his home thanks in large part to the flexible work schedule and voluminous tasks performed by his devoted and loving caregiver, Sis-

ter Renae Denny. He stated often that "no where in this world could God have chosen a more suitable individual to help him so completely with kindness and trustworthiness as was the case with Sister Renae." After entering the Penn Nursing Center, Elder Wray commented to one of the writers that words could never express his feelings relative to leaving the privacy and independence of his home at his age to begin an institutional type living experience. One cannot fully appreciate the intensity of his feelings relative to this life change without seeing his face and hearing his voice as this statement was made. Yet, in this trial of his life, as in all others, his Lord was with him and blessed him to hold fast to the faith once delivered to the saints.

When blessed to think on the many lovely sermons the Lord blessed him to preach and the many beautiful experiences he was blessed to have, the words of the hymn writer seem to best portray the theme of his preaching and the life he was so richly blessed to live in Christ:

"Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song,
The joy of my heart and the boast of my tongue;
Thy free grace alone, from the first to the last,
Hath won my affections, and bound my soul fast.....

Thy mercy in Jesus exempts me from hell;
Its glories I'll sing, and its wonders I'll tell:
'Twas Jesus my friend, when he hung on the tree,
Who opened the channel of mercy for me."

On the day of his ordination, he was blessed to preach from Ephesians 1:1-9, and the Lord blessed him to continue to hold fast to and to preach that doctrine for 62 years. He opened the service that day with the hymn, "Prepare me gracious God to stand before thy face! Thy Spirit must the work perform for it is all of grace." He often called for this hymn throughout the years. It exemplifies what he had been made to believe. We feel that our precious Brother Wray was blessed to spiritually witness with the Apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 4:7-8, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only but unto all them also that love his appearing."

We shall all miss our dear brother but must, if blessed of God to do so, bow in humble submission to His will and thank him for sharing this blessed gift with so many of us for so many years. May all who mourn his passing both naturally and spiritually be blessed with the comfort that can only come from the Giver of every good and every perfect gift. In all things may the Lord be praised!

Be it resolved that a copy of this be sent to the family, to the Signs of the Times, and one placed in the Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church records.

Humbly submitted by two who loved him dearly,

Bob Collie

Mary Hawkins

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
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HYMN

Come, thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing thy grace!
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet,
Sung by flaming tongues above:
Praise the mount! O fix me on it!
Mount of God's unchanging love.

Here I raise my Ebenezer;
Hither by thy help I'm come;
And I hope, by thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me, when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God;
He, to save my soul from danger,
Interposed his precious blood!

O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be:
Let thy grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it!
Prone to leave the God I love!
Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it;
Seal it for thy courts above!

Robinson.

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EDITORIAL

"Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I *was* no prophet, neither *way* I a prophet' s son; but I *was* an herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit: And the LORD took me as I followed the flock, and the LORD said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel." Amos 7:14-15.

Elder J. B. Farmer

Sometimes a scripture appears which takes hold of my mind and causes me to stop and take notice. We do not know if it is of the Lord or not, but it seems to have such power and meaning that assurance is given that it surely must be from above. Sometimes the scripture appears to be in such agreement with our experience, that we rejoice in thinking that we may have tasted of those things that the saints of old were blessed to have experienced. Jesus told His disciples to rejoice because they would partake of the same things that the prophets did. He said, **"Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you,* and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."**

Amos was an ordinary person. He was not a religious man, as many think of religion. In his day there were many who called themselves prophets, and they had followers that were called sons of the prophets. I think the things of that day must have been similar to the things going on in the Lord's day, and to the things we see today. There have been and are religious organizations, where religious men train other men to be religious as they are. They teach them just how to interpret their scriptures, and how to behave themselves in order to command the respect of others. And they are taught how to attract crowds, and how to get their financial support. They are taught just what to say and do and think. They have a certain way of dressing, and a certain way of speaking, and a certain way of deceiving the simple. But

they are convinced that they are right. Nevertheless, they cannot even examine themselves and ask, "Do I have a lie in my right hand?"

In the day of the Lord Jesus, some of the men who did such things were called scribes and Pharisees. He said to them, **"But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in** *yourselves,* **neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves."** In this day they are called free-will or works Christians, Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, etc. They all have an outward religion with certain carnal rules and ways - all based upon the works of the flesh.

Amos was not this sort of a person. He was minding his own business, and earning a living as a herdman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit. Evidently he had noticed the so-called prophets and sons of prophets of his day because he separated himself from them. He said, **"I** *was* **no prophet, neither** *was* **I a prophet's son; but I** *was* **an herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit:"** He made it plain that he was not one of them. And while he was attending to his regular occupation of following the flock, the Lord took him.

At this point we begin to see the parallels to our own experience. We were regular people doing regular things, when the Lord came to us. It has ever been this way. Think of Adam in the garden, when the LORD God came to him and spoke to him after he had transgressed the commandment. Think of Noah, when God came to him and commanded him to build an ark to the saving of his house. Consider Abram, to whom the Lord came and said unto him, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee." Think of Moses on the backside of the desert, when the Lord came to him and spoke to him from the burning bush to reveal unto him His purpose. Think of Jacob whom the Lord found in a waste howling wilderness, and whom he led about and instructed, and kept him as the apple of His eye. The list of those humbled saints who the Lord found, called, led and taught goes on and on.

Amos said, "The Lord took me." We are assured that the Lord made all things for Himself, and that He owns all things, but in His time He takes possession of His things in a particular way, and uses them in a particular way. The Lord took possession of Amos. And the Lord Jesus Christ took possession of His disciples, and He took possession of you, and I hope and trust He took possession of me. He came unto us and found us before we ever called upon His name. We would not even have known to call upon Him if He had not made Himself

known unto us. He called his own out of darkness into His marvelous light. He called us to be a separate people, to come out of Babylon, and to touch not the unclean thing that we might be His people and He might be our God. There is no going back. What the Lord has done is done forever.

Amos said, "The Lord took me as I followed the flock." The Lord's people are found following the flock. How was it with you when the Lord came unto you and took possession of you? I can remember many, many years ago, before I ever knew anything of the old Baptists, someone made mention of a group of backward, ignorant, people that were so poor they only had one song book. And one had to read a verse, and then the others would sing it. This was said to mock them and to diminish them, but my heart went out to them, and a great desire was given me to know them. Was I following the flock in my heart and feelings when the Lord took me - even before I knew them? Was not the love of God spread abroad in your heart for the Lord's people when the Lord took you, and set you upon a way that you knew not? This is the Lord's work and not man's. His ways are not our ways and His thoughts are not our thoughts. His ways and His thoughts are as high above ours as the heaven is above the earth.

The Lord said unto Amos. "Go, prophesy unto my people Israel." What a great shock it must have been for Amos to think he must go and speak in the name of the Lord to the Lord's people. How impossible it must have appeared unto him to go and do this thing he had never done, and to do this thing for which he felt to be totally unqualified and unworthy. I am made to think of Moses, and what he said, and what the Lord said, when Moses was commanded to go and speak to Pharaoh. "And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say."

And when the Lord came to Jeremiah and revealed unto him that he was foreknown of God, sanctified and ordained a prophet, Jeremiah tried to escape. He said, "Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, Say not I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord." So it has always been with those called of God. They feel to be little children, unprepared, unqualified, and unworthy. But no matter how one tries to avoid the calling, there is no other way than to go. God has purposed it, He has ordained it, and it must come forth as He has already seen it. "For he spake and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." And His people are made to be a willing people in the day of His power. When Isaiah was called, he was blessed to say, "Here am I, send me."

Moses went, Abram went, Amos went, Jeremiah went, Isaiah went, the disciples and apostles went, and so will you go when the Lord calls you and sends you. Some may think that the calling is just for prophets or for apostles or for ministers of the gospel, but all of the Lord's people are called to serve Him, and to show forth His praise. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say unto these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" His calling is powerful, irresistible and sure. He does His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. It is not up to puny man to fulfill His will and purpose. The Lord God's own almighty arm has brought salvation. All praise honor and glory is due unto Him who alone is worthy.

I trust this was written in love and in hope of eternal life. Elder J.B. Farmer

---

2 JOHN 1:2-3.

For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever.

Grace be with you, mercy, *and* **peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.**

CORRESPONDENCE

Jan. 25, 2016

Dear Bro. Horton:

As it is now time for me to renew my subscription, I feel to thank God for "The Signs of the Times." May the God of all grace continue to uphold and sustain His Little Ones is my prayer.

Elder Ralph Dale
Concord, N.C.

February 8, 2016

Dear Brother Horton,

Enclosed is a check for $15.00 to renew my subscription to the Signs for another year.

I enjoy reading the Signs and look forward to each issue. It's wonderful to find comfort and experience reading what God does for his people. We always seem to receive it when most needed. He is our all in all and only hope of eternal life. God bless you all for holding to what I believe to be the truth. Thanks for the good work you do.

A Sister in Hope,
Gloria B. Reese

File: Violet M. Barton 3-16

2-22-2016
P. O. Box 787
Gretna, Va 24551

Dear Brother Horton,

Would you please accept my late payment and my apology. Please renew my subscription for another year.

I really enjoy the editorials by Brother Farmer. I think he has a real good understanding of the scriptures.

I also enjoy the old editorials. It is so good to see that the doctrine remains the same.

Thank all of you for all the hard work.

A sister in hope,
Carol R. Lansaw

8:21 P.M. 1-31-16

Dear Brother Horton,
Elder Robertson, Elder Farmer,

I never know where or how to start. I've been given to see that my subscription is almost ready to expire. We have been made to know where all things come from. You all are true gifts to us all, sent to us from God on high. The gift we receive each month, is sent to us from God through you. I don't claim to know anything, but concerning the times we are living in seems that the coming of the Lord is nigh at hand. In 1st Thessalonians 5th Chapter 3rd verse, "for when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them." That seems to be that is all we hear these days. In Isaiah 4th Chapter 1st verse, "In that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, we will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." I believe that has a natural meaning as well as a spiritual meaning. There seems to be a worldly church on every corner. There is only one true church of the Living God.

That church is made up of God's chosen vessels. Christ is the head of that church; his people are the body the bride. In that day they will take good for evil, and evil for good. Please forgive my rambling on. Hope not to have bothered any of you. I have been so blessed to have been brought to know so many wonderful Brothers and Sisters; I don't feel worthy to even be in their company. I don't know why the good Lord has been so good to one who is so unworthy. He has certainly laid out our steps before us, man cannot do that. All things work together to good to those who are the called according to his wonderful purpose. To those who Love God. I can only hope to be one of those chosen few. I'm certainly not worthy. Thank you again for all that you continue to do. Please renew my subscription for 2 yrs. Use the other as you see fit. Remember this poor wretch when at the throne of Grace. An unworthy Brother, if one at all.

In bonds of love,
James Knight

2-1-2016

Dear Brother Cleo,

Included is an obituary of Sister Edrie Terry Clifton to be considered for publication in the Signs of the Times. It is very lengthy. You may choose to shorten it if necessary. I will leave that up to you. Hope all is well with you this winter. Looking forward to seeing you soon.

In Christian Love,
James L. Shelor
Clerk, New Dan River
Primitive Baptist Church

Vol. 99
Middletown, N.Y.
The Signs of the Times
October, 1931

POETRY

TRUE RICHES.

The gracious Lord in mercy led me
To a small and humble place,
Where adornment of the building
Is the riches of his grace.

There's no organ in the corner,
And no carpet on the stair,
For the beauty of this meeting
Is because, "The Lord is there."

There is worship in the singing,
Understanding in the prayer,
And the sound of gospel trumpet
Tells of Jesus loud and clear.

"There's salvation in no other,"
So the gospel trumpet cries;
And there's none can tell the story,
Only whom the Lord makes wise.

Christ, the Son of God, came hither,
Not to seek, as some would say,
But he saved his elect people.
And their sins he washed away.

See the stream of mercy flowing
Through the channel of God's Son,
Giving grace and truth to sinners,
All whose hopes on him are hung.

Oh! there's sweetness in the story,
Like to honey in the comb;
For to find the Lord our refuge
Is indeed to find a home.

How the faces shine with gladness,
There are teardrops in some eyes,
For to them who hear the message
Worldly wealth is no great prize.

Though each member feels unworthy,
In themselves the least of all;
Still, God's grace is all-sufficient,
It will serve, as did Paul.

Let the world despise, forsake them,
They are princes in disguise,
For they're heirs of God's dear kingdom,
And their wealth—a secret lies.

Flossie L. Faulkner

POEM

God, in the riches of his grace,
Hath made for me a hiding place,
And though from Him I'm bound to roam,
This hiding place is still my home.

Now I've been searching far and wide,
For earthly pleasures H'ed provide,
But these will ne'er reveal His face,
Nor lead me to that hiding place.

No, I must grief and sorrow know,
My head be bent, my step be slow,
For Jesus long since hath set the pace,
That leads me to this hiding place.

For we don't find it on mountain high,
Nor in the valley, though we try.
For God alone, my cares erase,
And Jesus is my hiding place.

Then Lord, submissive make me go,
Caring not for things below ---
Oh, lead me, keep me by Thy grace,
To dwell in Christ, my hiding place.

Written by my aunt, Mary Eckard, while living on the ranch in Chewlah, Wash. during the late 40's and or early 50's....

I think she was in her mid 30's when she wrote this. She did indeed go through many deep waters and much sorrow, but the dear Lord walked with her every step of the way....

Much love in the tie that binds to my dear friends of like faith and hope,

Caroline Martin
Spokane, Wa.

VOICES OF THE PAST

1837 - The Gospel Standard.

EXPERIMENTAL ELECTION.

Messrs. Editors, --- The doctrine of election, as you well know, is by many professors abhored and cast aside; and not much wonder, for they have never had their pride humbled, their imaginary ability destroyed nor their souls feelingly in the belly of hell. And again, I am persuaded there are many who profess to own this doctrine, who have never been taught it by the Holy Ghost, for they are proud and unseemly, and the spots in their conduct are not the spots of God's children: Therefore, in the hope that it may be made a comfort to God's children. I will show how I was taught it.

When I began to grow up to man's estate, my conscience often reproved me for the things I had done, and I frequently promised to amend my conduct and follow that which was good; but I was sure, in some way or other, either outwardly or inwardly, to be drawn aside; until at last my ability totally failed, and I found it impossible to keep my promises. Then God began to work more conspicuously, by giving me strong desires to be a real Christian; and these desires faded not away, but grew stronger and stronger; till I was led to hear a man who preached the gospel of God's free grace; and the word came with power unto my soul, giving me a sweet lift, that I really thought I was a child of God. I went

frequently to hear this minister, and sometimes I enjoyed sweet moments, but at others I felt nothing but sin and barrenness, which made me think I was nothing but a stony ground hearer, and I trembled for fear I should be a castaway. In this manner I went on for some time, but had still deeper and deeper convictions of sin; till I found that they would certainly send me to hell in spite of all I could do to conciliate the law; and all I could say was, "God be merciful to me a sinner." In this state I continued for some time, till God graciously led me to a comment on these words, **"In me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." (Rom. vii. 18.)** While I read this, it pleased the Lord to reveal Jesus unto my soul, as the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world; and I am sure he then took mine from my conscience, and I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to his banquetting house, and his banner over me was love. O, the happy change, the glorious alteration! It was a time never to be forgotten by thee, O my soul! For bondage, thou hadst liberty; for trouble, thou hadst peace; for an angry Judge, thou hadst a smiling Father; in a word, for hell, thou hadst heaven. And O, my soul, what humility, what weeping over thy dying Saviour! what submission to his providential will! what a sense of thy unworthiness! what gratitude to a covenant God for all his blessings conferred on thee! And O, what pleasure in hearing or reading his word, what delight in singing his praises, and how sweetly thou couldst with the poet say,

"My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this,
And sit and sing herself away
To everlasting bliss."

Before this, I had been an enemy to electing love. I had spurned the doctrine, and said I never would believe it. But now I saw, that if I had not committed murder with my hands, if I had not been an actual thief, and if I had not been a beastly drunkard, or an adulterer, it was not because I had it not in me, but because the Lord had graciously preserved me, and kept my wickedness from breaking forth. Here, then, I had with wonder to exclaim, "Who maketh thee to differ from another?" and I could find no answer but the contained in **2 Thess. ii. 13: "Because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."** Here is the spot for learning the value of the doctrine of election. Before this, I could only find it stated in two or three parts of the word of God, but now I could find it from Genesis to Revelations; yea, I could see it daily before my eyes, and a great comfort it has been many times to me; for I saw it a sovereign act of Jehovah, independently of anything wrought in me, or done by me; therefore, when I have been led to feel my weakness and the corruptions of my heart, and to experience the blasphemies of Satan in my soul, being ready to give up for lost, thinking I had been deceiving myself and others, I have been shown by the Holy Spirit that my strength and holiness are in Christ. I have been led to him as a well-spring of life,

and have been enabled to say, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. viii. 36, 37.)

Messrs. Editors, --- To your hands I submit this rustic performance, and you may do as you think proper with it.

May 10, 1837. UNWORTHY.

MY LABOR IN THE MASTER'S VINEYARD

I received it not of man; neither was I taught it of man. It came not by the will of the flesh; not by the will of blood, but by the Holy Ghost. My own will was averse to it. My fleshly will still stands averse to it. This is my labor in the Master's vineyard. It matters not how feeble my labor is in the ministry; to the extent that I am blessed to preach Christ, the whole is wrought of the Holy Spirit, to the ultimate praise of His grace. I am not responsible to any man for what I am blessed to preach. I am no man pleaser. I owe not any man as pertains to the gospel of Christ.

I am wholly, altogether, and continually, dependent on the Holy Ghost for life, for wisdom, for liberty of utterance. I received my diploma in whale college, and in the lowest hell; I learned that salvation is of the Lord, first, last, and all the time.

If in truth I have a calling of this holy heavenly nature, then I am the Lord's servant, a drafted man, a sworn man, and I have sworn allegiance to none other than the king of Zion, king of Salem, Prince of peace; even the blessed and only Potentate, Lord of Lords, and King of Kings. Him, and Him only do I desire to honor and serve, and being servant only, I therefore am not boss nor lord over the heritage, or Church of God. The true calling of the ministry of God is to feed the flock of God, not for filthy lucre sake but of a ready mind. It is to preach the gospel of peace to the poor and needy; preach deliverance to the lawful captive, the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable day of the Lord, even the year of jubilee.

"Comfort ye, comfort ye. My people saith the Lord; speak ye comfortably unto Jerusalem, cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; that she hath received at the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

"Go ye into all the world (experimentally where all the children go in their travail), and preach My gospel as a witness to every creature (a witness to what they the children have already experienced). He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned." This is the work of God that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent. That is to, say the preaching of the gospel is only a witness to what the unerring Spirit of God has wrought or stamped in the hearts of poor sinners, and their belief is the fruit of the direct work of God, and in this they taste the joy of His salvation. Those who are not thus wrought upon, are damned in the blindness of unbelief; the preaching of

the gospel alone will not open the blind eyes, or unstop the deaf ears.

Nay, this is sovereignly the work of God. The lot is cast in His lap, and the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.

May His Spirit lead us into truth. Yours to serve, for His sake,

Elder H. J. Bird

ALEXANDRIA, D. C.
February 15, 1840.

By new religious inventions, we have special allusion to those modern innovations upon the faith and practice of the Baptist Church, by those who profess to be missionists, benevolent, &c., in distinction from the old-fashioned order of Baptists. These consist, in part, of Missionary, Bible, Tract, Education, (Theological) and other kindred Societies; the doctrine of indefinite atonement, the obligation and ability of sinners to repent, believe, and comply with what they denominate the requisitions of the gospel; together with the modern practice of protracted meetings, anxious benches, magic lanterns, national and state conventions, &c., &c. In testimony that these are approved of God, we are frequently told of their astonishing success, the multitudes converted to their views; and in further confirmation that they enjoy the smiles of heaven, we are referred to the zeal, activity, and liberality of their converts. But all this testimony is urged in the absence of any direct authority found in the scriptures of truth to sustain them. This fact has been frequently admitted by the advocates of these new things; the Convention of Western Baptists, some years since, reported that we might search the bible in vain, for direct authority; such authority was not there; and they have also assured us, that the bible was never designed to embrace a precept for everything which was obligatory on christians. And although some have pretended to assert the abundance of scriptural authority with which they say the bible abounds, yet they have invariably failed to produce any; and the more candid among them frankly acknowledge, with their western brethren, that they find none. They are necessarily driven, therefore, to hinge all their arguments on the ground of what they consider indications of divine approbation. The most prominent indication which they bring forward, is that of the great increase of their number, and the apparent success which has attended their efforts. This argument standing first, and being, for aught we know, as plausible as any they have ever produced, claims our first consideration.

We readily admit that prior to the introduction of these things among them, the Baptists were by no means what they now are. A retrospect of the Baptist Church for eighteen hundred years, will present them as a poor and afflicted people, trusting in the name of the Lord; persecuted, despised, illiterate, embracing the poorest and most ignoble of the earth; her branches are few and far between; her ministers, from necessity, driving the plough, smiting the anvil, making tents, or in some similar employment, to minister to the necessities of

themselves, and such as were with them; not because the churches were unwilling to relieve them from the distracting cares of this life, but because they were generally unable. The high arch of the heavens was, in many instances, the roof of their meeting-houses, the rugged ledges of Piedmont and elsewhere, were the cushions of their pews, the priestly robes of their ministers were composed of the cheapest materials, their mode of conveyance was on foot, their incentives to speed were persecution behind, and the hope of enjoying the sweet privilege of feeding and comforting the dear people of God before them; their salaries were often paid off at the whipping-post, but sometimes at the stake. They were not then thought suitable society for the affluent, the polite, the learned, or the noble. There was then very little among them to invite hypocrites to a connection with them. If we confine our observations within the boundaries of our own country, and only to the last century, while other denominations of professed christians were supported by legal patronage, the poor Baptists were compelled to pay tribute to them. Read the history of a Roger Williams, a Moss, a Warren, and a thousand more, of whom the world was not worthy, who have scaled the loftiest mountains, penetrated the wildest forests, stemmed the most appalling discouragements, have traveled thousands and thousands of miles bare-footed, and destitute of comfortable apparel or food to satisfy the cravings of nature, and have baptized among the poor of such as God by his grace had brought to a knowledge of the truth, the constituent members of all our early churches. In those times, the Baptists had no organs in their meeting-houses, no fiddles to worship with, no velvet cushions in their pulpits or pews.

None will presume to say the Baptists are now what once they were. In point of respectability, how have they improved! In the exulting language of Andrew Fuller, may it not be said, that prior to the introduction of his new system, the Baptists were "a mere dung-hill in society?" But as fine feathers make fine birds, the Baptists have changed their plumage, and now appear among the peacocks of the age. Now the Baptists have their Doctors of Divinity, their Colleges, their National and State Conventions; their churches occupy stately mansions with sounding bells and towering domes. Their clergy (a name unknown among the saints of God before) equipped in all the trappings of fashion and extravigance, dash on in their carriages, and make a show not to be eclipsed by the gay sons of Lucifer. No longer are they willing to wait for the Lord to build them up, to convert sinners, or to give them ministers to go in and out among them. They have acquired the art of getting up revivals, of preparing men for the ministry, of making converts to their faith and accessions to their number. The Baptists a name despised among men, because it once designated a sect which were every where spoken against, are now courted by those very daughters of old Rome which used to whip, imprison, and sometimes even put to death the Baptists of former

ages.

But we set out to consider the weight of argument brought forward by the New School Baptists. It has been more than once asserted through their prints, that the Old School or Anti-mission Baptists are losing ground, dwindling away, and will in another generation become extinct, or, as Waller says, "be annihilated;" while the Missionary Baptists are gaining, that the increase of some one or two of their associations in one year, will out number all that are baptized by all the Old School in the same time. And why do they make this boast? Surely, to prove that God has manifested his approbation of their new inventions, and his displeasure in the Old Anti-missionary Baptists.

But let us soberly consider, in the light of divine revelat tion and in the fear of God, to what extent this argument may avail them. If it holds good in reference to New School Baptists, will it not prove quite as much for the Methodists, who have only now reached the first hundred years of their existence; if they in one brief century have accumulated almost as great a number of members as the Baptists have in almost eighteen, would not the argument prove more for them than for the New School Baptists? What is to hinder the Mormons from urging the same testimony? Their rapid increase in number during the few years of their existence has perhaps outstripped all other orders. Read the following scrap, from the New School Baptist organ at Philadelphia: "The Mormons. --- This fanatic sect have established regular meetings in our city. We have heard of late, of several unstable professors from our churches, who are being deluded by their ruinous errors, which in this enlightened age must astonish every reflecting mind. It is scarcely to be believed that they have crowded audiences every time they hold forth; many, we dare to say, go for the love of novelty; but the greater number are led there through ignorance, and become their followers. This singular people profess to have the power of working miracles and declare that they have received a new revelation from God. Joe Smith, a raving, ignorant fanatic, is their leader; and he it is who pretends to have received the message from on high. It would be well if our churches would look up the straying sheep of their folds, lest they wander into forbidden paths." --- Philadelphia Baptist Register.

The Mormons of Philadelphia, we are told, are making and baptizing nearly as many disciples as are the Baptists; and many of the front bench, converts from the Baptists, have recanted and gone over to the Mormons. Mark the lamentations of the former, expressed in the above extract. If indeed this argument weighs any thing, in point of demonstrating the divine approbation, certainly that sect, whether Jews, Pagans, Christians or Mormons, which can produce the greatest number, gains the point. We, the Old School Baptists, cannot, therefore, yield, on this argument, to the New School, who have assumed our name; for, if their argument proves any thing, it proves too much for their purpose.

Again. The New School often bring forward their zeal in the missionary cause, as an evidence of their piety: but will not the same argument hold equally good in reference to the Jews, the Mahometans, the Catholics, and the Mormons? The Jews compassed sea and land to make proselytes; the Mahometans sent their missionaries into far countries, with great success; the Catholics also had their Jesuits in all parts of the world; and now we learn from the New School papers, that the Mormons have their domestic missionaries in all the principal cities of our country; and that they have recently sent twelve of their apostles to England. Should not the New School Baptists give the right hand of fellowship to their Mormon Missionary brethren? If zeal in the mission cause is of God, this witness of divine approbation speaks more for the Mormons than for the Baptists; for the former have greater impediments to encounter, and therefore display a much warmer zeal, and a greater degree of industry, than the former.

The success which has attended the distribution of Tracts, and Sunday Schools, &c., is also a main pillar in sustaining the New School Baptists. In our last number, we copied an article from the S. S. Journal, showing that the indefatigable Owen, and his brotherhood of Fanny Wright men, were zealously engaged in the same business. "In some places," says the article alluded to," Sunday and Infant Schools have been established, for the inculcating of infidel principles. A Tract Society has been formed, and six Tracts issued; " and they are very active in the distribution of these, among those whom they deem heretics. "There is a regular organized Central Board," says the Journal "with a President, VicePresident and Secretary, and a great number of salaried emmisaries, whose whole time is devoted to the advancement of Socialism." Shocking! What right have Infidels to have Sunday, or Infant Schools, or Presidents, or, above all, to pay salaries? But we suppose they have the presumption to think, *"Quod dem, onstrat vobis, demonstrat nobis."* And as the New School Baptists have acknowledged that the plan of disseminating doctrine by the use of Tracts, originated with the Infidels in France, and as Mr. Owen's party make no more pretention to scriptural authority for their Sunday and Infant Schools, and flattering titles for men, than the New School Baptists do, we presume they think they have about as much right to practice these anti-christian inventions, as though they acted under the cover of a christian profession. Another complaint urged against Mr. Owen's party is, that they are patronized by the nobles of Europe, and by the liberality of the affluent—They are filling England with their magnificent temples, &c. But after all, as we inquired in our last what is there in all their improvements, that would not pass off as pure divinity, if done under the name of religion? Is it said that Owen rejects the bible as a rule? This is grant ed; and so do the New School Baptists. Do Owen and his patrons promulgate damnable heresie and doctrines of devils? So do the New School Baptists; and as we have before said, so we again

say, and believe we can abundantly prove, that the very elements of which Deism and Socialism are composed, may be found among the New School Baptists.

Another argument sometimes used to prove the modern doctrines and practices of New Schoolism to be correct, is the liberality of those converted to it; witness, for instance, the late eulogiums lavished on the Baltimore and Albany converts, who gave one thousand dollars each, for missionary purposes. This was cried up through the papers, as the genuine fruits of repentance; and the editor of the N. Y. Baptist Register, is of the opinion that the system he advocates, if fully carried out, would produce so many such instances, that they would be passed by as common affairs. Now we cannot discover that it needs supernatural light to see that Owen's system produces the very same kinds of fruits, and in greater abundance; than that of Mr. Knapp. And finally, we challenge the New School Baptists to produce one solitary argument in support of their new order, that we cannot show, proves as much for Mormons and Infidels, as it can for them.

They are of late greatly occupied in controversy with their dear Pedo-Baptist brethren, on the subject of Baptism; and we have more than once felt disposed to say to them, "Sirs, ye are brethren; why strive ye one with the other?" But the Baptists say their anti-christian brethren have no scripture for sprinkling. True, they have not; nor have they any for christian baptism; that sacred ordinance belongs exclusively to the family of God. But let us ask, Have not the Pedo-Baptists the same authority for rantism, that the Baptists have for New Schoolism? The former plead that they have a right to rantize, and save souls in that way, because it is not forbidden; and the latter admit there is no direct authority for their New School craft; but plead their right to it, upon the same ground as do the others for sprinkling.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

HEBREWS 9:22-28.

And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

It *was* **therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices that these.**

For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* **the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:**

Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

PREDESTINATION INSEPARABLY CONNECTED WITH DIVINE ELECTION.

By William Smoot, October, 1903

"For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son"- Romans 8:29.

We do not believe that Baptists who deny the biblical doctrine of the Eternal, Unconditional, and personal Election of the Church in Christ, can clearly comprehend the doctrine of Absolute Predestination. To have a view of the doctrine of Absolute Predestination one must comprehend the end that predestination is designed to consummate. And to look to the end we must have a view of the beginning, or the eternal choice in Christ.

This is but the scaffolding that stands round the building. For time with all its varying incidents, and circumstances was brought into existence for the lifting on high of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the manifestation of His glory in the Church "which is His body the fullness of Him that filleth all in all." This testimony shines upon every page of the Divine Record. It opens with the beginning when the earth "was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep."

It brings forth form and order from apparent chaos, and ever points with unerring precision to the one grand objective point in creation, "the coming of Christ, and the glory that should follow;" the arena upon which this bright display was to be made in the world in which we live, with its time clouds of gloom and sorrow; yea, with all the mighty fabric of its creatures and events. To say that each and all was predestinated to its accurate end, with its shadows and its lights, all defined precisely in each and every varying hue, is most surely correct; but as we have already stated, this is but part of what is comprehended in the glorious, God-honoring doctrine of the "Absolute Predestination of all things whatsoever cometh to pass." Assuredly it is an important part from which we would not, in the least, detract; but there is another part to which we wish to call attention.

The apostle in our text has given us the testimony of this blessed and precious doctrine: "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son." "Foreknowledge" itself is but another name for Predestination. For God to foreknow, is but to eternally, accurately, and absolutely prearrange, or predetermine, as embracing the beginning and all the accomplishment, and of course covering all that lies between. It is an eternal purview of time and eternity and from all eternity as well: and it is yet more, as absolutely ordaining to an irrevocable accomplishment.

To this agrees the declaration in the verse preceding our text, which must be denied to limit predestination. That is, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." "All things were predeter-

mined thus to bend, to work together," link-in-link, cause and effect, eternally, unchangeably, absolutely and without fail to the grand design named in the text. To deny absoluteness of predestination, one would be forced to deny that God works all things together to any great end, or accomplishment of His eternal purpose in predestination's grand design named in the text.

The apostle says" "For whom He did foreknow." Here we have an eternal opening, the manifestation of an eternal purpose purposed in the Lord Jesus Christ, toward His chosen people. This people are the people which He had "formed for Himself." They were the "unperfect" (undeveloped, in Psalm 139:16) substance "made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." Foreknown as having been fore-chosen: foreknown as actually and eternally existing in Him who is the Book of Life in which all these members "were written" --- Psalm 139:15-16. Foreknown in this eternal choice, as being one with Him who is one with the Father from everlasting to everlasting, and in the glory which He had with the Father before the world was --- John 17:5.

"Them He also did predestinate." This eternal (Spiritual) substance was predestinated to a glorious (personal) development. The purpose for which they were called, and for which all time is brought into being is here brought to view. Predestination not only provides the amphitheater in which this grand scene is enacted, but also makes the bright and dazzling display; not only builds the scaffolding, but brings to development with shoutings of grace the heavenly building around which the earthly network stands, and all to the glory of God in the Lord Jesus Christ.

"To be conformed to the image of His Son." Here we have the legitimate end, the crowning work, the grand consummation of the doctrine of Predestination. The "many brethren" must be like Him who is the Firstborn. Predestination insures and accomplishes this glorious end. The apostle points out the successive steps to this bright consummation when he says, "Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified."

When Jesus arose a mighty Conqueror over death, and hell and ascended upon high, far above all principality and power, His people represented in Him and being in Him shared in this wonderful triumph, they were glorified in His glory, for they were and ever were, and ever will be, one with Him, as being one in Him. For "who shall separate us from the love of Christ?". "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor heights, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

> "In heaven the Head, the members here,
> Ten thousand thousands yet but one."

But the heavenly testimony completes this glorious conformation in the brightness of immortality. "Brethren, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is" --- 1 John 3:2.

This then is the doctrine of Predestination, and this its use in the Divine economy. How important! How precious to the child of God? No wonder that he contends earnestly for it; that he suffers strife, misrepresentation and exclusion for it.

It is the Divine assurance that he shall be made like unto the Son of God. He sees through it the final goal of all his sufferings here, as conformed to the image of his suffering Jesus, he enters forever the portals of rest. He sees through it the Divine working of all things together, and good evolving from the dark way of suffering and sorrow to the glory of God, and bliss unending. "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord."

Well might the apostle say, **"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been His counsellor? Or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto Him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him,** are **all things: to whom** be **glory for ever. Amen" Romans 11:33-36.**

"For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's — 1 Corinthians 3:21-23.

Elder William Smoot

A REVIEW

Elder P. D. GOLD, Dear Brother in Christ: Yours of the 4th came duly to hand, and afforded some satisfaction to learn you still regarded me as a brother in Christ. Yet I feel that if you could see me as I feel myself to be, you could not have fellowship for me, and yet unworthy as I feel I cannot keep from loving and fellowshipping the Baptists as the true church of Jesus Christ which has purchased with his own precious blood.

If I know my own heart I sympathize with you and sister Gold in your affliction, yet I know that God knows and does all things for the best; and I trust and believe you both are prepared by grace to say "thine and not my will be done, O Lord." None but those who have the trial can fully enter into the sympathy of those who have the partner of their comforts and sorrows smitten down by disease. My own dear wife will never be well again in this life I fear. She is not able to stand alone and cannot walk a step without crutches, and is so reduced in flesh that she only weighs about seventy-five

pounds. I carried her out to the buggy the last first Sunday, and took her up to the meeting-house about six hundred yards, where she communed with the saints and joined in washing feet probably for the last time on earth. But while her poor body is so much afflicted she is strong in the faith. Oh that I could be as much resigned to will of the Lord as she is. Not a murmur escapes her lips; she knows in whom she has believed. You ask me how I feel about my labor in the ministry, both as to the doctrine I have preached and to the manner of my preaching it. As to the labor, I can only say it has been in great weakness and in much fear and trembling and under many and great disadvantages that I have gone. Poverty has kept me from laboring as much as I probably should have done. I have had some evidences that my labor is not altogether in vain, and sometimes I feel that I have been a failure and that I ran before I was sent, and was never called to labor in God's vineyard. As to the doctrine that I have preached, I can say of a truth before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, that I would not have it altered, no, not for my right arm. I feel that I have not gone forth with a lie in my right hand. I have not a doubt about the doctrine. I would that I could have preached it with more power and more extensively when I started out in great weakness forty-four years ago lacking five days. It was with much fear and many misgivings, poor, illiterate and comparatively unknown and uncared for, yet feeling that I must go or suffer death. I started as I trust having no confidence in the flesh, relying alone upon the almighty arm of God, and now in the 68th year of my life and, as above said, in the 44th year of my ministry, with all solemnity declare that the doctrine of grace reigning through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ has been my theme, and I have no doubt about its correctness. About eighteen months ago I was brought nigh unto death as I thought by disease, and the doctrine which I preached was clearly presented to my mind, and closely and I hope prayerfully considered, and God gave me most graciously to see that it would do, and that it was accepted by him, and of a truth if it had been his will I could gladly have laid my armor by, and it is truth and no lie. I would not have had the doctrine altered for this world. I called my dear wife to the bed and told her I am satisfied to go if it is the Lord's will, and am satisified with the doctrine I have preached and would not have it altered. It comforts me now. I only regret that I could not have done more. Tell my brethren to stand fast in the doctrine of the sovereignty of God salvation by grace and grace alone. I am confident, it will do to die with and will stand in judgment. As to the manner of my preaching all that have heard me are witnesses that it has been in great weakness, yet I can truthfully say with humble boldness I have preached. The praise of men I have not sought. The fear of man has not deterred me. To honor God has been my desire. I have coveted no man's gold, silver, or apparel, have never been able to put a price upon my ministry; believing it to be of the Lord I thought it priceless. Therefore have gone trusting to God alone to

open up the way for me. Brethren and friends have often without solicitation from me contributed to my temporal needs, so that I have had food and raiment. Sometimes the prospects looked gloomy, but having an industrious wife, one that loved and feared God, and with dutiful children, I have continued to this day, witnessing and testifying of the grace of God. There has been but little complaining among the brotherhood about me that has come to my ears. If any brother has spoken hard or disrespectfully of me they have never come to my face to do so, so that I with joy say, Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and I hope to dwell in the house of the Lord forever. **"One *thing* have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." Psalms 27:4.**

I will give you a short synopsis of the doctrine I have endeavored to teach, so that you can judge of its soundness and comment on it as you may think proper. I have thought that there is but one true and living God, and that in the godhead there are three persons, the Father, the word or Son, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one in power, essence and glory. That the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testaments are the written work of God and are the only complete and unerring rule of faith and practice. That God has always pursued his infinitely wise plan in all his works and ways and that he will ever continue to do so, and that all things brought to pass by him are but the result of his holy, wise and determinate council from eternity. That Adam was created upright, but he transgressed and thereby became a fallen and totally depraved creature, and all mankind with him, and that regeneration, sanctification, justification and salvation are by virtue of the birth, life, death, resurrection and mediation of Jesus Christ, and in no other way, and that all those graces of the Spirit are referable to the church of God which he has purchased with his own blood. That all the saints were predestinated unto the adoption of children, elected to eternal salvation according to the foreknowledge of God, and that they will all be called with an holy calling, and the righteousness of Christ be actually imputed to them by the effectual working of the Holy Ghost, and that none of the heirs of promise will be finally lost, and that all of the elect of God were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. That baptism by immersion upon profession of faith in the name of the Sacred Trinity and that by one duly authorized by the church to administer ordinances in gospel baptism, and that only, and that all such persons who shall continue to walk circumspectly have a right to the Lords supper and no others. I have taught and yet teach that the church of Christ is a body corporate, possessed of full power to govern herself, her only rule being the

written word of God, and that she, the church, is therefore independent needing no boards, synods, conventions or conferences to regulate and make laws for her. That the church needs none of the modern, humanly devised institutions of men to add to her comforts, peace, prosperity or beauty, and that she would disgrace the head were she to patronize or fellowship them. Hope you will be able to read this and understand my meanings as to what I have written,

Yours in gospel bonds.
(The late Elder) J. C. Hall

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 2016

Livie Thompson, VA	5.00
Estelle Thompson, VA	5.00
Wilma Dalton, VA	20.00
Bruce Smith, VA	25.00
Banks Conner, VA	25.00
Elder Mark Terry, VA	5.00
Carol Lansaw, VA	10.00
Nancy Siner, VA	10.00
Elder Gene Lupton, NC	5.00
Gregory Webb, IL	50.00
Ardith Harris, FL	15.00

OBITUARIES

EDRIE RUTH TERRY CLIFTON

It has fallen my lot to write a fitting tribute to my loving aunt and precious Sister in Christ, Edrie Ruth Terry Clifton. I feel so inadequate and weak in spirit to attempt this task. I pray to God that He will guide my mind to write about her life in a way that will glorify His name by the way that she lived her life, by His grace.

Edrie Ruth Terry Clifton was born November 12, 1914, in Carroll County, Va., to George Burrell and Ruth McGrady Terry. She was the ninth child and the youngest daughter in a family of ten. She passed from this life after a short illness on January 2, 2014, making her stay on earth 101 years, 1 month and 21 days. She was predeceased by her parents, her husband Elder Bennie N. Clifton, daughter Betty Clifton Terry; sisters-Delphia Terry Shelor, Elva Terry Semones, and Ina Terry Gray; brothers-Herbert, Elder Sam, Joe, Roy, Hugh and Mack Terry; son-in-law Melvin Cruise. Surviving are daughters Rebecca (Douglas) Turman; Judy (Bill) Poindexter; Carole Cruise; son-in-law Oscar Terry; sister-in-laws Willa Dean Terry; Juanita Gilbert, Nettie Turman; and Iva Dell Clifton; ten grandchildren; thirteen great-grandchildren and nine great-great-grandchildren.

Her parents were members of the Primitive Baptist church and her father had been ordained a Deacon before she

was born. In those days people would gather in homes and sing hymns. They entertained many of church members and friends in their home. She enjoyed their conversations of how the Lord had brought them under conviction for their sins and then by His mercy had shown them that their sins were forgiven.

Compared to today, times then were very hard. Everyone had chores to do before and after school. On weekends the family walked or rode a horse and wagon several miles to church. She was a sensitive and caring person, always putting others first. At night her parents read from the scriptures. One was the story of Joseph and his dreams. After hearing this she wept aloud.

She had a fear of dying and not being carried to heaven. Later in life, at God's time she was given a great hope. Throughout her life she was given many dreams and the interpretation as to what they meant. She was a talented seamstress and quilter, learning from her mother and sisters.

On June 2, 1934, she was married to Bennie Neal Clifton, at her parent's home, by Elder David V. Spangler, whom they remained close friends throughout their lives. In the early years of their marriage, times were hard and they were poor, but they enjoyed going to the Primitive Baptist church when they could. They lived in Cascade, Va.; her husband worked in the cotton mill and farmed. She worked at home caring for their children. They lived near the Spangler's and often visited there with other church members and friends, enjoying the conversations of the goodness and mercies of the Lord.

In September 1939, they moved back to their parent's home near New Dan River Church. On the fourth Saturday Bennie asked for a home with the church and was received and baptized on Sunday by Elder N. B. Gilbert. She felt to be alone, wanting to go with him but it seemed she felt she wouldn't be accepted if she offered.

In April 1944 her husband left to serve in the United States Navy. She was left to care for their four young children and herself on their small farm. She feared for Brother Bennie's safety in the war, but she had been given a feeling that he would have to preach the gospel. He called her from New York saying he was leaving aboard ship for the war zone. She begged God to spare his life and send him back home. A calm feeling came over her and she heard a voice say, "He will baptize you in My name before you leave this world". She had been given the assurance she had begged for.

There were many struggles during the fourteen months he was away in England. She cared and provided for her children the best she could on their small farm with a garden, a few chickens, three cows and a horse.

When the war was over and he came home, her heart was overjoyed the day she and the children saw him get off the bus near their home. They had one of the best meals they ever ate that night after he had returned thanks to God for sparing his life, taking care of everyone and bringing them together again.

In April of 1952 Brother Bennie was given liberty to preach. Again she felt

alone, feeling she had nothing to bring before the church. She wanted so much to be a part of them but was afraid it would never be possible. But the Lord works all things according to His will in His own time. Shortly after he was ordained, she was given another dream in which she saw a beautiful woman dressed in a robe of spotless white, lying on a velvet couch in complete rest. Brother Bennie was on his knees in front of the woman, looking up at her in complete adoration and love. The woman was looking at him with the same love on her face. Sister Edrie wondered what it all meant, when a voice spoke to her saying, "This woman you see is the church. Your husband is her servant. She will always be first in his life." Sister Edrie was made to know and accept it as the way it was and to count it one of the greatest blessings that could be bestowed on a woman, to be the wife of one of God's called ministers. To take part in his joys as well as his many sufferings.

On the fourth Sunday in June 1960, she asked for a home at New Dan River Church, where her husband was pastor. His text that day was Acts, Ch. 8, 37th verse, "and Phillip said if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest"(be baptized). At that moment the church seemed filled with a beautiful white cloud, so that she could see no one. She saw that she was only clay in the Potter's (Jesus) hand, in that as He so desired, she would be molded. Of her own self she could do nothing good, even have a good thought, unless He gave it to her. She knew if He willed it she would be saved in the eternal climes of glory, and if not one of His, hell would be her doom. Then she felt His dear presence so much she could have shouted praises to Him. When the door was opened for membership she could tell them nothing except to express her great love for them and her unworthiness. To her joy she was received and asked to be baptized one month later by her husband.

She was baptized the fourth Sunday in July 1960, in the beautiful stream that ran in front of their home in Vesta. I was witness to this scene and have never forgotten the beauty of it and the love that was manifested there.

For the next few days she could see God's handiwork in everything. Her Primitive Baptist parents, the doctrine they loved and the fellowship of their company. She had never told anyone what she felt the Lord had said to her sixteen years before about her baptism. When she told Brother Bennie about it they had a great time rejoicing together.

She worked in the Pannell knitting plant in Stuart and Brother Bennie worked in construction. She lived the life of a God called ministers wife, fully supporting him, in all of his duties, as he served sometimes four churches. They traveled many miles to meetings and associations in several states. They entertained visiting brothers and sisters in their home and occasionally held singing sessions, some that was recorded professionally. Sister Edrie had a beautiful voice for singing and she knew most of the songs by memory, having sung them from childhood.

She was beside him through the

difficulties that arose in the churches and associations. They celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary in June of 1984. This was attended by a great host of family and friends, including Elder David Spangler and his wife. She was very strong in her faith of salvation by grace, election and predestination. Sister Edrie was a great inspiration to many people inside and outside of the church.

Later that year, Elder Clifton became sick and had to be hospitalized for cancer. She lovingly cared for him during this trying time, being by his side as much as possible. After his death in May of 1985, she was saddened by her loss, but she was made reconciled to God's will, that He giveth and He taketh away, He recalls His own.

In 1994 she wrote a book titled "As the Days of a Tree", in which she was blessed to share the journey of her and her husband's lives, and the way that the Lord led them through it all. She was given a dream that describes their lives as a tree, and the effects of the many storms of life upon that tree. This dream came to her after a severe storm and the loss of power. The words to the poem came to her with such force that she could hardly write them down as fast as they came to her. A lot of what I have written in this obituary came from her book.

Sister Edrie was blessed to live at home and care for herself up to the last few years, then was content to live the remainder of her allotted time at the Landmark Center in Stuart, Va. She always had a desire to attend the church services and commune with Brothers and Sisters of like precious faith. Her daughters and son-in-laws made sure she was provided a way to go, even up to the Sunday before her death.

Her funeral was conducted at New Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in Vesta, Va., on January 5, 2016, by Elders Alan Terry, Carl Terry, and Mark Terry, before a large crowd of family and friends. Before her death, she selected the following hymns from the Goble book to be sung during her funeral; "O Land of rest for thee I sigh", "O Beautiful Hills of Galilee"; "Long have I tried terrestrial joys" and "Amazing Grace".

After the funeral, her body was laid to rest beside her husband, to wait the resurrection of the body of the Saints of God. She will be greatly missed by the church and all who knew her. We hope to be made reconciled to God's will, in that our loss is her eternal gain. Written by one who loved and admired her, unworthy though I be,

James L. Shelor.
January 30, 2016

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Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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HYMN

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love!
The fellowship of the kindred minds
Is like to that above.

Before our Father's throne
We pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
Our comforts and our cares.

We share our mutual woes;
Our mutual burdens bear:
And often for each others flows
The sympathizing tear.

When we asunder part,
It gives us inward pain;
But we shall still be joined in heart,
And hope to meet again.

This glorious hope revives
Our courage by the way;
While each in expectation lives,
And longs to see the day.

From sorrow, toil, and pain,
And sin we shall be free;
And perfect love and friendship reign
Through all eternity.

Fawcett

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EDITORIAL

"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee." Titus 2: 14-15.

Elder J. B. Farmer

In order to speak these things, and to exhort the brethren to walk in these things, and to rebuke the hidden things of darkness, as the apostle Paul admonished faithful Titus, one must have been blessed from above. A man in nature will apologize for those who bring in false doctrine, and will respect men's persons that he might escape the persecution of the cross. But the apostle Paul was blessed to say, "Henceforth, I know no man after the flesh." And in another place he said, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh."

No one in his right mind wants to be evil spoken of, or to be classed as a trouble maker. But this is where the apostles and the faithful brethren found themselves time after time. And this is where God's faithful children, even in this day, are found when the trial comes. When one is blessed to stand against the wiles of the devil, and when division follows, the one blessed to stand is accused of being the one who caused the problem. This is the way the devil works. Jesus said, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad for great is your reward in heaven: for so they persecuted the prophets which were before you."

The Lord is constantly purifying His church. When one brings in a false doctrine, and it is recognized as such by the faithful brethren, it must be rejected. When one begins to speak perverse things in order to draw away disciples after himself, as the apostle warned, that one too must be rejected. We are commanded, "To mark the one who causes divisions and to keep no company with him that he may be ashamed." If anyone should continue to walk with that one, he

would be found to encourage that one in his wicked ways. The apostle said, "the heretic, after the first and second admonition to reject."

It has been said many times over the years that divisions are unnecessary, or that the problem was not over doctrine, but was caused by preacher jealousy. But the Lord said that, "It must needs be that offenses come, but woe be to the one by whom they come." The apostle said that, "There must be heresies among you that those may be manifest that are approved of God." There must be a fiery trial of the faith of the people of God. From time to time there must be a purifying and a purging that the church may stand as holy and undefiled before God. The trial must come that the faith of God's elect should be shown to be true and not false. This is why the three Hebrew children were cast into the fiery furnace. This is why the church is troubled at certain times in our lifetime.

There is a true doctrine. The apostle said that, "ff any man preach unto you any other doctrine other than that which I preached unto you, let that man be accursed." And then he repeated it. It is a serious thing to bring in some other doctrine. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. What is the doctrine which you first heard, when you were blessed to believe? Has it changed? No. The true doctrine is unchangeable as God Himself. If one comes with something different, he is the one to be blamed when division comes, not the one who is given to stand for the truth, in which the faithful have been kept.

There is a true order. The apostle said that he was joying, and beholding your order. And he said that all things are to be done in decency and in order. If there is no order, there is only disorder. Some think that order is the work of man and not of God. They think that every man has a right to his own opinion and that we should continue together with our differences in doctrine and order and throw a cloak of love over the whole thing, and just get along. This is not what the apostle, the one given to lay down the faith and order of the church, said. He said to speak the same things. And he said that we are to labor together until we come to the unity of the faith. For there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of us all.

The Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself for us for a reason. The stated reason is that He should redeem us from all iniquity, —and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. He came to separate His people from the dark and sinful world, by purchasing them to Himself. He redeemed them, not with silver and gold, but with His own precious life's blood. He gave His life a ransom for many. He purged all their sin; and imputed His righteousness unto them. He called His people out from darkness unto His marvelous light. His people have been purified. They are different from all others in the world.

He purified His people unto Himself. He is the head of the church, and you are the body. He is the Husband, and you are the bride. He is in you, you arc in Him. You are of His spiritual flesh, and his spiritual bones. As the husband

and the wife are one, so are you in Christ. As the bride of Christ is without wrinkle, spot or blemish, so are you in Christ. Your sins have been removed from you as far as tlie east is from the west. Your sins are sealed up in a bag and cast into the sea; (Micah 7:19 and Job 14:17) ever to be remembered against you forever. You are purified.

You are a peculiar people. Not that you are in some way strange or odd, rather you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people. You are peculiar in that the Lord set His love upon you and chose you above all the people of the world. You are peculiar because you are His seed, His children by birth into the spiritual kingdom. It is the Lord, God who has made you to differ from all others. You are a peculiar people because just any doctrine is not acceptable with you. It must be the doctrine of God our Savior.

You are a people that are zealous of good works. His people are made to be a willing people in the day of His power. You have been given a heart of love toward God and toward His little ones. You have been given a desire to please Him who has taken away your sin and your guilt, and has replaced them with a good hope through grace. You are made to praise Him who has lifted you up out the pit of miry clay, where there is no water, and who has set your feet upon the rock, which is Christ, and has put a new song in your mouth, even praise unto His name.

These good works, which the Lord's people are zealous of, are not things which you have devised in your own mind, and which you have performed by your own will. These good works were before ordained by the God of heaven and earth that you should walk in them These good works are wrought by God in His marvelous power, and are carried out according to His will and purpose. It is written, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of His good pleasure." The children of God perform those good works with zeal and spiritual pleasure.

By this same zeal, the children of God are made to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. By this same zeal, the children of God are blessed to remain faithful with death that they might receive the crown of life. By this same zeal they are blessed to run their race with patience, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith. This zeal is not their zeal but God's. It is written, "The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform it."

May the Lord Jesus Christ be praised world without end for His goodness unto the sons of men. I trust that this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer

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CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brother Tony,

How are you. I'm sending you $30.00 for one more year.

I enjoy reading the Signs of the Times very much.

Truly yours,
Glenna Link

Mr Horton,

Please renew our subscription to the Signs of the Times for 2 more years.

We enjoy reading the articles.

May God Bless,

May and Rhonda Nichols
159 Andrea Lane
Merryville, La. 70653

EPHESIANS 1: 4-5.

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

ARTICLES

Signs of the Times
March 15, 2016

I am writing today because I have had a few fellow brothers and sisters inquire that I write my experiences in the signs. As I try to relate some of my experiences think not that I speak with self-exaltation. For without the good Lord I would have been given no hope, because he has control of all things.

I can remember about the age of ten of being so fearful of God. I grew so troubled that he would speak an audible voice into my very being. I soon fell into a deep depression and I am not all that sure if my parents knew about it or not. After some time, I eventually forgot about this depression and was able to get past it. Later on, my thoughts started to come for me once again. My mind began to doubt the very being of God and I soon began to wonder if I was doomed to hell. I thought with so little faith I could never inherit such a kingdom. I would often think, "Oh how such a sinner was I, to even question such a powerful God."

After these thoughts, I resolved this issue by using all my strength and energy to stay perfect and blameless. If I stayed this way forever until death I would surely have a home in heaven, because I could not be convicted of any sin. I thought this was the way to please God and be considered more worthy than those around me. Many years later, I feel the Lord eventually showed me that

I was a sinner by nature and that I could not keep the law. I eventually found truth in the gospel **"Romans 5:8, But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."**

As I got older I had attended many different churches, along with many other denominations. During these times I never found any comfort. I hardly ever understood the sermons. Even when they made sense to my carnal mind, it did not always seem like they offered me any substance. I could not sense any sort of spiritual bond between the brethren in these churches. Even if there was a type of bond, I felt I had no place in their fellowship. I also started to doubt what their sermons were saying. I felt their teachings were usually wrong. I couldn't always tell you what was wrong with what they were saying, but I felt agitated in my heart about what was said during the sermon.

After some time I met Elder Robertson for the first time. My earthly father had been in the hospital for treatment and Elder Robertson came to the hospital to visit. I already knew who he was before he walked into the room. Without ever meeting him, I asked my dad, "Is that Key's replacement?" When I was no older than seven or eight, I had remembered going to a Primitive Baptist church and hearing Elder Key preach. I was correct and Elder Robertson told me of how they conducted their meetings. Elder Robertson and my dad talked on a few key points of doctrine. This was the same doctrine I had often heard my dad speak of growing up.

I was delighted to hear I could attend the meetings and also hear more of how they believed. I had such a curiosity to understand their way of believing. I had thought about Primitive Baptist faith while attending the other churches, but I thought for sure I wouldn't agree with PB faith either. My thinking was that if one seems wrong, then they're probably all wrong. Nonetheless, I was so excited to go to the same church my Great Grandpa Anchor attended along with a few other family members. I cannot remember the exact date, but shortly after attending a few meetings I feel the Lord came to me in a dream. I will do my best to put earthly words to such a spiritual dream: I can remember vividly seeing a dead crow/raven lying on our backyard deck. Suddenly, I was laying below this bird. I began to look towards the sky and a beautiful white dove descended barely above my breast (never touching anything just hovered for a few seconds). Suddenly, he ascended back into the sky and I remember hearing his wings and feeling more love than I have ever felt in my life. As soon as he ascended back into the sky, I started elevating only a few inches upward, with my chest area rising highest. This was a love I have never felt while inhabiting this earth. As I lay there I could hear sobbing, I looked over to my left and there was a lady crying. All I could see was her crying with a smile on her face. She seemed to have such a joy that I cannot explain.

My only interpretation was that the dead raven/crow meant I was dead in my sins but the white dove was a form

of Christ. The woman crying was the church. After this I felt like I was a completely different person internally. I felt so alive and so precious in the sight of the Lord.

These feelings were so great I thought I could live the rest of my life feeling like this. It wasn't long and my sinful mind came after me once again. About two months later, I was talking to an old friend about the things we had done awhile back. These things were all sinful and still weigh me down from time to time. I had a dream that night that my soul was lifting towards a light in the sky. The only thing I was focused on was that light. Around me was lightning strikes and darkness all around me. My soul stopped and started shaking more than I have ever been shaken before. The only interpretation for this I can think of was the good Lord was separating myself from things of the flesh.

On Monday, April 27th 2015, I attended Pleasant Hill Church and afterwards I conversed with a member from that church. He talked about the love everyone had for me there and he could sense a love that I had felt for everyone as well. He also commented that he felt I had been marked. As I went to sleep that night I woke up at about 2 A.M and could not fall back asleep. Somewhere around two hours later, I almost drifted back to sleep and then my whole body went numb. I could not move or talk, I was completely helpless for some time. Finally, I was released from this state and was fearful. I decided to turn my television on and I had previously had on the bluegrass song-station. The subtitle for this song was, "1 Corinthians 1:18" and the music was all acoustical. I tried to ignore it, but I was finally curious to turn to that verse in my bible. The verse reads, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." I decided to read a little further, "For the Jews require a sign and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness."

The next Sunday came and I usually went to Greensboro church, but because of sickness I could not attend service. The second Sunday in May 2015, I felt better and attended Big Meadows PB church. The first thing Elder Robertson said was literally "1 Corinthians 1:18" and he cited the scripture I had been shown. I could not control my emotions and felt this to be a commandment by God to ask for a home. I was received for baptism on May 10th, 2015.

After a short time had passed, I decided to go to the Pigg River Association. I have never heard such great singing in my life and cannot begin to tell the reader how much I enjoyed being with the brethren. The preaching I heard that day was something I will never forget. A week or so before this meeting, I felt that the Lord was with me yet again in a dream. I dreamed that I was at my pond with some of my old friends and we were having a good time. One of my friends looked at me and said "Zach, deep down inside we truly hate you." The dream then ceased and I started to wonder what this meant.

When I went to the Pigg River association the following weekend, three fellow church members looked me in the eye, face-to-face, and simply said, "Zach, I love you. "One member even said he felt a strange desire to tell me this. That evening, Elder Farmer's whole sermon felt like the Lord was explaining my dream. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you."

I feel that this, along with many other experiences and dreams, has led me to the Lord's calling. I confess that I am an unworthy sinner and if saved, saved by grace. May you all continue to feel the Lord's presence.

Your unworthy brother in Christ, I hope.

Zach Byrd

(Brother Zach is a licentiate whose membership is at Big Meadows Primitive Baptist Church in the West Country Line Union. This article does not include all of his experience and dreams, but I believe it does provide sufficient evidence of the Lord's work with him.)

Editor.

PROVERBS 3: 5-6.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

VOICES OF THE PAST

HE CARETH

" WHAT can it mean? is it aught to Him
That the nights are long and the days are dim?
Can He be touched by the grief I bear,
Which saddens the heart and whitens the hair?
About His throne are eternal calms.
And the strong, glad music of happy psalms,
And bliss unruffled by any strife;
How can He care for my little life?

And yet I want Him to care for me,
While I live in this world where sorrows be;
When the lights die down from the path I take,
When strength is feeble and friends forsake,
When love and music that once did bless,
Have left me to silence and loneliness,
And my life song changes to sobbing prayers,
Then my heart cries out for a God Who cares.

O wonderful story of deathless love,
Each child is dear to that heart above;
He fights for me when I cannot fight,
He comforts me in the gloom of night,
He stills the sigh and awakes the song;
The sorrow that bows me down He bears,
And loves and pardons because He cares.

Let all who are sad take heart again;
We are not alone in our hours of pain,
Our Father stoops from His throne above
To soothe and quiet us with His love;
He leaves us not when the storm is high,
And we have safety, for He is nigh.
Can it be trouble which He doth share?
O rest in peace,for the Lord does care.

Elder David Bartley... August 9th —1905
Taken from the Signs of the Times--12-1-1905

Hymn by Samuel Rodigast (1676).

Whate'er my God ordains is right
His holy will abideth;
I will be still whate'er he doth;
And follow where he guideth.
He is my God: though dark my road.
He holds me that I shall not fall.
And so to him I leave it all,
He holds me that I shall not fall.

Whate'er my God ordains is right
He never will deceive me.
He leads me by the proper path;
I know he will not leave me.
I take, content, what he hath sent.
His hand can turn my griefs away,
And patiently I wait his day,
His hand can turn my griefs away.

Whate'er my God ordains is right,
Though now this cup, in drinking,
May bitter seem to my faint heart,
I take it all, unshrinking.
My God is true; each morn anew.
Sweet comfort yet shall fill my heart,
And pain and sorrow shall depart,
Sweet comfort yet shall fill my heart.

Whate'er my God ordains is right.
Here shall my stand be taken.
Though sorrow, need, or death be mine,
Yet am I not forsaken.
My Father's care is round me there.
He holds me that I shall not fall,
And so to him I leave it all,
He holds me that I shall not fall.

CHANGES

TO THE EDITORS OF THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

Sirs — I often think of the many conflicts that the children of God have, and as myself if can claim a share with them on this ground, seeing the ins and outs of my mind; one day realizing, as I think, the precious love of Christ, by faith in him, and the next sunk into all the wretchedness of distrust, and despair, and hardness of heart. The word, when read or heard, is as an unsavoury and dry as possible, unbelief rushes into the mind, and if I try to look at God's word, and point with the finger to some passage which I think God has some time before, when under peculiar circumstances, made precious to my soul, such as Luke xii. 25-31, there seems to be no sweetness now. What to do I cannot tell, strangled almost-betwixt hope and

despair. To trust God with my future, or even my present good, seems more than I can manage: and which way to take cannot conclude. If I look at myself, I am all darkness, and not one soft feeling is to be found. I stand still, and try to muster up all the evidences that I thought I had before; but nothing is to be found, and I am ready to conclude I never had any, that I have been deceived myself and have deceived others. Satan advises me to give it up, and give it up I think I will; but something keeps my feet from falling. I try to pray, but the heavens seem as brass. I experience no melting down; all is as hard as ever. All that I do seems as a formal and tiresome task; and when I attempt to pray before my family, I have to tell the same tale again and again, and wonder how I dare venture to speak at all. My past sins, of heart, lip, and life, especially those since I made a profession of religion, are tauntingly thrown in my face by the enemy, and my heart has to say Amen to them, knowing the charges are correct, and feeling them too. I am sensible of my state, and am ready to say, "I shall one day fall by the hands of my enemies, within or without." Lord, what is man!

"Regard, great God, my mournful prayer,
Make my poor trembling soul thy care;
For me in pity undertake;
O, save me, for thy mercies' sake!"

Darwen, April, 1837. A PETER.

Route 1, St. Albans, W. Va.

ELDER G. B. BIRD, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: The words of the poet:

"Self righteous souls on works rely,
And boast their moral dignity:
But if I lisp a song of praise,
Each note shall echo grace, free grace."

These words have been on my mind much of the time today especially in the forenoon. Please read the hymn number 201 Goble's and note the third verse. While going about my many cares this morning portions or fragments of this hymn and thoughts of you interchangeably were my portion. I know not how to put into words my feelings and thoughts. I have been so very low in straits many, knowing not which way to turn, hedged in, buffeted, cast down, maybe I read some articles wrong, written by my brethren, maybe I do not understand some of their expressions, but as for me I do not nor cannot place much credence in the ability of the creature to perform, that is, I do not think I can watch except only when my gracious Lord clothes me in the spirit of watchfulness, I cannot pray except only when he breathes within by his spirit. However, I believe to his own chosen ones all these sacred injunctions are living commands when breathed within by his spirit (not optional with the individual whether they do or do not obey). To me there is no obedience but him, neither does our inability to perform exonerate the creature, but to the contrary it causes us to cry, our leanness, our leanness, and does paint us dust and ashes before him. The

traditional tracing of belief among Old Baptists that by persistent and continual effort we may accomplish the matter, keep our skirts clean, weed out, cull out, build up the church, strengthen her cords of our own effort is to me strictly Arminian. I do not believe there is the indispensable man in the church of God (human I mean) on whom the well being of the cause is hinged. The very truth that God in his infinite wisdom calls from time the ablest, the most gifted of his servants as seemeth good unto him and when he wills, and continues to perpetuate his cause by raising up of his own choice others whom he has made to be recipients of his grace, seems to me to be proof positive that the cause is his, the work is his and must prevail, and the whole in its minute entirety is contingent upon him, the Lord, Master, King of kings and Lord of lords. As an example I will quote two portions which have been mine to mediate upon much of late, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak and again "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations." Is it not a fact that the weak are apt, yea prone to feel strong as Goliath? And is not this one of the manifest infirmities? And on the other hand is not the strong sure to feel himself to be very weak? And is not this feeling a blessing from the Holy One which enables him to bear the infirmities of the weak? I do not know why I have hinted along like this to you in a field which may be strange to you, except it be to unload it off my mind hoping you may understand. At our last meeting at Huntington I tried to use language strange to me as a text, and the trend or lead of mind as to the application equally strange to me, but I do feel at that time I was not presenting the views of others, since to my knowledge I never heard any one present their views, and as I quote in brief, I would be glad for you if you have a mind to comment on the latter clause of the quotation as this portion is where I felt the exercise of mind.

Here is the text, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." This language is found in Psalms and in Matthew. I cannot answer your good letters, I am too little, but I hope you can understand I do appreciate them, and I want you to always feel free to express yourself freely to me. I hope you and yours are much better than when I heard from you last. We are very well. In love and hope.

(Elder) H. J. BIRD.
May, 1945

ROMANS 8: 27-28.

And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of* God.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

"Although my house *be* not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all *things,* and sure: for *this is* all my salvation, and all *my* desire, although he make *it* not to grow." II Samuel 23:5.

In the first verse of this chapter it is said that "these be the last words of David," who was also declared to be "the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel." The last words of a man are usually considered to be of great importance. When a man makes his last Will and Testament, for instance, he almost without exception prefaces it by declaring that all previous wills and testaments are revoked and made null and void. This is done in order to give emphasis to and make certain of the fact that regardless of what he may have done and said previously, it is to be disregarded entirely, and only his last disposition is to be of value and effect and regarded as final and binding. David said, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." The standard set up for those who ruled over Israel in the days of Moses was that they should be "able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness." Ex. 18:21. David had not measured up to these standards, for he had coveted Uriah's wife, and in order that he might have her he became a man of blood by sending Uriah to the front of the battle, that he might be killed. Later when David wanted to build an house for God, he was forbidden, and God said to him. "When thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom forever." This house, or temple, was reserved unto Solomon to build, and what a temple it was! The like of it was never before nor since known on earth, and when the Queen of Sheba beheld it she exclaimed, "The half was not told me." As wonderful as it was, however, it could not begin to compare with the wonder and grandeur of that spiritual workmanship of God, the true church, of which it was only a type, and which God created in Christ Jesus before the foundations of the earth were laid.

"The God of Israel" having said, "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God," David had to confess that his house, or life, was not so with God. This strikes at the very heart of the matter for all of us. for we have all come short of the glory of God and like sheep have gone astray. But let us weigh carefully David's words and see if we cannot find some basis for hope. "Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure." How wonderful to contemplate that while he had no standing before God in his own right, by and through the mercy and grace of God in his Head, (Christ Jesus), an everlasting covenant had been made which embraced all things and was absolutely sure and certain of fulfillment in

every detail. As a member of the mystical body of Christ, therefore, he stood safe and secure; and there was no possibility for him to utterly fall away. He whose wisdom comprehended the end from the beginning, provided for all things whatsoever cometh to pass and, therefore, there was nothing insecure or uncertain about his infinite plan.

With the help of God we shall endeaver to trace out for our readers something more of the mysteries of Him who doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or need ask, what or why doest thou? One of God's inspired prophets, centuries before the advent of Christ into the world in the flesh, was enabled to set forth his coming and to portray in type his sufferings and death, and the glory that would follow, in the following words: "Thus saith the Lord God: I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent: In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell." Ezek. 17:22-23. As we understand it, the highest branch of the high cedar represents David as the king of Israel, who sprang from the tribe of Judah, the most faithful of all the tribes of Israel and, therefore, it was the high cedar. God said he would "set it," or fix and order it so nothing would interfere or cause it to go amiss. God also said he would crop from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and would "plant it upon an high mountain, and eminent." These young twigs evidently typified the house of David, and God's plan, in the fulness of time, was to crop a tender one, which signified Jesus, who was declared to be the offspring of David, according to the flesh. God was to deliver up his only begotten Son, Jesus, to be crucified in ignomy and shame for the sins of his people. In this everlasting covenant, entered into between God the Father and God the Son, in the counsels of eternity, all things where ordered and sure. Nothing was unaccounted for or left out. The Son of God was wise and had determined all the cost before coming into world, and God had determined before coming into the world, and God had determined before hand not to leave his soul in hell, or to suffer his Holy One to see corruption; therefore he could not be holden of death, but would arise in splendor and power and great glory, in justification of his people. Thus was he planted "upon an high mountain and emiment." He was indeed exalted "in the mountain of the height of Israel," and it was he who brought forth boughs and bore fruit. He was truly a goodly cedar and under his of shadow dwells fowl of every wing, his people in every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue. What a safe place in which to dwell. The Psalmist also said, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

Let us trace still further God's myterious purposes in his dealings with

his servant David. If we will turn to the first chapter of Matthew and read "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ," we will find that he came into the world through the lineage of David and Solomon, whom David begat of that had been the wife of Uriah. Surely no one will contend that so great and important an event was left to mere chance, but rather that it was determined upon and that every link in the chain was forged and welded according to the predestinated purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, that no part of whole could fail to fulfill its part, since no chain can be any stronger than its weakest link; therefore the wisdom and power of Almighty God was at stake and nothing could come short of fulfilling all that was embraced in his purpose. As the Sovereign Creator of heaven and earth, and all that in them is, had determined before hand that the ultimate end of all things should be for his own glory, and for the lifting of the name of Jesus on high, it illy becomes any of his creatures to call in question his wisdom, or to reflect in any way whatsoever upon what he has done. Our late brethren in England declared concerning God's decree that "God hath decreed in himself from all eternity by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever come to pass; yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin, nor hath fellowship with any there in; nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor yet is the liberty of contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established, in which appears His wisdom in disposing all things, and power and faithfulness in accomplishing His decree." It would appear that David himself was in full accord with this for he made no attempt whatever to blame God for his sin, but confessed freely his own guilt, saying, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest." Psalm 51:4 He realized full well how vile he was, for he continued his wailing by saying, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." The experience of the Lord's people is also clearly set forth by David in the 139th Psalm, where he says, "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." With the burden of condemnation resting heavily upon him, he continues by saying, "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me; and thy right hand shall hold me." We believe this language expresses the in-

nermost feelings of those whom God has led into a right understanding of his precious truth; therefore they not have fellowship with those who walk in darkness and take refuge in the doctrine of predestination as a cloak for their sins. God held Adam accountable for the violation of his law and we may rest assured that God's people will have to give account unto him for the deeds done in the body. John says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Let us, therefore, come boldly to the throne of grace, acknowledging our guilt before God, and rejoice that mercy is meted out by and through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

In conclusion, we wish to emphasize the fact that in this "everlasting covenant"' all things were ordered, and sure and nothing can take place contrary to the will of Him who declared, "Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass: and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." The faith of our fathers must needs have been tried, tested and proven, in order that it might come down to us as the unfeigned faith of God's elect, and the more it is tried in the furnace of affliction the more precious it will become to us. We see in the all things which were ordered, and sure, in this everlasting covenant, predestination, election, resurrection, final preservation of the Saints in glory, and all that pertains to them. All that had any thing to do with Israel's going down into Egypt, and remaining in servitude and bondage for four hundred years, was embraced in the mysterious purpose of God, but when they were brought up by an high and mighty hand and delivered at the Red Sea, God was glorified. While Joseph's brethern intended evil against him, God meant it for good and his overruling providence brought all things in subjection to him. Jesus said concerning himself, "The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born." While the prophets of old foretold the sufferings and death of Jesus, they likewise spoke of his resurrection and the glory that should follow. If we will carefully examine the genealogy of our Lord, according to the flesh, as recorded by Matthew, we will discover that blood of every hue flowed through his veins, which enabled him to shed that blood, or lay down his life, for Jew and Gentile alike, representing sinners in every kindred, tribe and tongue. Not a single one of his was left out, but all were embraced in that everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure. And we like to think that the God of our own little individual life has appointed all things therein, and that we shall in due time be brought forth more than conquerors, through him that loved us and gave himself for us. Therefore death nor any other creature or thing shall ever be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. David said, "for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." This is all embracing, with nothing to be added to it, and neither can anything be taken from it; it is so full and complete that there is not

even anything more to be desired. It is good indeed when we can walk about Zion and see this perfection, beholding her towers and marking well her bulwarks. We can then look upon her solemnities and "thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ships pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us." All we can do is to hint at the significance of our text, and we are glad it has been said that "a word to the wise is sufficient." God's children have been made to see and feel the great mystery of these precious things, which have been hid from the wise and prudent of this world and revealed unto babes. Moses called upon heaven and earth to witness to the matchless glory of God, and then said, "ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." Paul with all his command of various languages could not put it into words, for he said, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." May we be given to see and behold that in Him all fulness dwells!

Elder R. L. Dodson

YES, GOD TRULY IS SOVEREIGN

A few days ago a friend handed me a little four page pamphlet called "The Baptist Examiner" in which the editor had a brief article devoted exclusively to vilifying Old Baptists, berating them and accusing them of heresies untold for their position on the doctrine of the Sovereignty of God. The editor of this pamphlet poses as a believer in the Sovereignty of God himself, but is he? Hear him speak: "Hardshells are heretical on this great bible doctrine in that they preach only a half truth — the very heart of the bible teaching on the Sovereignty of God is that he must be obeyed in things. Hardshellism is heretical fatally heretical, on the doctrine of the Sovereignty of God because they cut the heart out of the great commission and willfully and wickedly disobey Christ's sovereign command to preach the gospel to every creature." This article took me somewhat by surprise, for I was made to wonder why we poor old, helpless, insignificant "hardshells" could ever have been worthy to receive even the attention of this great (?) man, who came so nearly boasting of believing so implicitly in the Sovereignty of God. It is not so much my intention to pen an answer to the vilifying article of the accuser of our brethren, my only desire is to write briefly on this subject for the consideration of Old Baptists, and for the comfort of all who sincerely love the truth as given by divine inspiration in the word of God. First, let me ask of you, one and, all, what would you think of a sovereign trying so hard to have his will done and failing?

And what would you think of a sovereign commanding his subjects to do a thing and just cannot get them to obey at all? Would such an one be a sovereign? Or would he be just like we Old Baptists, desiring to do things and to have things done and failing sadly? The author of our article, in which he accuses us of so many heresies, seems to think God has found the "hardshells" very hard to deal with. Such an one only betrays a great ignorance of the subject, under consideration, and a pitiful ignorance of the faith of Old Baptists as well. O yes, Old Baptists, more than all people do most assuredly believe that God is the only great and absolute sovereign, the Creator and upholder of all things, visible and invisible, both in heaven and earth, and that, "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Our God never tries to do a thing, he is such a sovereign that he only speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. In truth he hath already done whatsoever it hath pleased him. He consults no one, neither is he dependent on any one, does nothing of necessity, but does all things freely of his own sovereign will, and in him all creatures live, move and have their being. Even the wind and the waves were made to obey his will when he was pleased to speak "peace be still". He holdeth the lightning in his fist and commands it at his pleasure. Moreover, "He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing." And shall not he who is able to do all these things be able to cause that even "Old Hardshells" shall do his will? I fear that our antagonists are not so much concerned about us doing the will of God as they are to have us do their own wills. I feel sure that if it was the will of God for us to establish mission-boards in various places to hire men to preach, he could certainly have us do so for there is nothing too hard for him. I also believe if we used such methods to induce men to preach we would have plenty of applicants for the job, and probably some to spare, but our sovereign God never calls too many preachers. Neither does he have too few at any time but just enough at all times. He never has any trouble getting them to preach either for he has a whale college to train them in, and in this college it does not take a four years course to qualify one to preach, sometimes three days and nights are sufficient, and when one gets through this college he does not wait to be employed to preach by a board or any other organization and you do not have to stipulate a salary for him. No, he is simply going to preach and you need not doubt it for one moment for our Sovereign knows just how to make him willing to do it. And when this man thus qualified goes out to preach with the spirit and power of God sent down from heaven, just so certainly he preaches the gospel, not the law. He brings to God's little children a message of comfort and love and heavenly bliss. He tells them what the Lord has done for them, not what they must do for him. He tells them as depraved creatures by nature, that all the righteousness they ever had

or ever will have is not their own but the imputed righteousness of Christ. He simply preaches the gospel; when he preached at all, not the law. The law tells unbelievers what they should do but confers no ability to do it. The gospel tells believers what the Lord hath done for them and continues to do in them. The unbeliever glories in what he is doing for the Lord and is demanding of others to do. The believer glories in what the Lord hath done for him. The unbeliever preaches that his god wills to save every one but cannot. The believer preaches that his God willed to save his elect and he saved them, that his God is a sovereign, that he doeth his will always and there is nothing too hard for him. The Lord's preacher that has been taught and qualified of the Lord, when preaching in the Spirit of God, never tells his congregation that the Lord is trying to get them to do a thing and they will not obey, for he has been taught that his God is truly a sovereign, and it would be crossing his doctrine to say that he is unable to have his subjects do his will. It would also be inconsistent with the doctrine of sovereignty to say that God is demanding a thing of his creatures as if they have strength of their own to meet demands. Such preaching of commands and demand is as far distant from the gospel of Christ as heaven is above the earth. It is law, nothing but law, which never did comfort a child of God and never will. There is much of it being preached nowadays, far more than in the days of our Lord when he warned his followers that "Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him." No, a sovereign God makes no demands whatsoever of his subjects, but instead works both faith and obedience in them, and they are not ignorant of his workings. God himself is "the author and finisher of our faith". He hath given us "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" and what more do we need? The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus which hath made us free from the law of sin and death certainly does not authorize a preacher to make demands of God's people, and bind heavy burdens upon them which he himself will not touch with so much as his little finger. It is the human spirit operating under law that does such things, a spirit of ambition and greed, but if we have not the Spirit of Christ we are none of his. Each and every regenerate soul certainly does have the Spirit of Christ, and this same Spirit teaches him just what the will of the Lord is concerning him, and such heaven born souls needeth not that any man should teach them concerning the will of their Father for God alone can reveal his will to such as have life spiritually. The Bible is truly the, inspired word of God, but even God's children cannot understand it except as the Holy Spirit is pleased to reveal it. This is why every preacher (so called) instructed by men, preach a yea and nay gospel (or rather law), and instead of preaching that God is a sovereign and able to do his own will and to have it done, they make him a servant and have him bowing to the majesty and supremacy of man's supposedly free and lordly will. There are many rude and unscriptural expressions made by preachers (?) in

these modern times, and such words as are used in these expressions are never found in the vocabularies of God's true children taught of the Spirit, such as, "God wants to save but you will not let him," "God is trying to do this or that," God demands obedience but you will not obey." What! a sovereign God wants to do things and cannot? Wants to make alive and cannot because the dead man is unwilling? Wants his subjects to obey and just cannot get them to do so? Then such a God truly is to be pitied for his weakness and incapabilities, but I could not call such an one a Sovereign. I am persuaded the Lord's children are not so easily duped into this sort of belief. "It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God," and every one so taught of God knows the truth concerning his salvation and his duty, and this to truth has made him free. Free from the laws demands, free from its condemnation, yea, entirely free from the law of sin and death, for Jesus Christ who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, hath forever put an end to its condemning power. It was an act of sovereignty on the part of the Son of God to so honor the law, meeting all of its just demands which none of his people were ever able to do. True, that Jews received it by the disposition of angels, but did not and could not keep it. God gave it to a chosen people who were on trial under it for a period of many centuries just to show his spiritual children that there is nothing to be gained from the law except the knowledge of sin and condemnation. Right now may I say in passing, that we Old Baptists too, may be guilty of preaching a little law once in awhile. We seem to forget sometimes that our God is a sovereign, working all things after the counsel of his own will, and we are prone to forget the fact that he never slumbers nor sleeps; we may act as if we thought he is not alert, and we may feel to take the reins in our own hands, consequently we do the wrong thing. This is always when our Sovereign is pleased to allow the human in us to become dominant, and when he does this it is a good sign he is just about to teach us something that we need to know more fully, or to be reminded of, and that something is — that we are nothing, yea, less than nothing and vanity, and that he is our all and in all, a great Sovereign having no necessity whatever, but capable of working in us true humility, faith and good works and a super-abounding love for the brotherhood. He never works jealousy in us, nor hatred, nor ambition for leadership. Never causes us to try to be dominant over our brethren, nor to lord it over God's heritage. No, all these things are already in us, and if the Lord leaves us to ourselves for awhile they are sure to show up, and when such things are present with us we may be sure God has left us to ourselves. Only when he is working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure, only when we are humbled and made to feel his presence do we fully recognize his sovereignty. Only at such times can we preach a full and pure gospel. All other times we are prone to find ourselves preaching fragments of law, setting up standards for our brethren, the

churches and associations, demanding of thein to conform to our wishes. We too often forget that "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Jesus Christ came into the world as the anointed one "to preach good tidings unto the meek;" "to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound," and "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." So let us not try to bind God's little ones with law, neither that of Moses, nor one of our own make. I trust it may please our heavenly Father to make us more liberal, more tolerant, more loving toward each other, and he can do it if he so wills for our God truly, is sovereign.

Elder J.S. Hunnicutt
May, 1945

HEBREWS II. 15.

We confess that we have no special light upon the text proposed. From the context, however, it will be seen that the text relates to the object of incarnation and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. He did not visit our guilty world, and suffer on the cross, without having an object to accomplish, and that object was, to deliver those who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. In order to do this, he took on him the seed of Abraham. Not the children of the flesh, for Paul says, Romans ix. 7, 8, "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called: that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of promise are counted for the seed." **"Therefore** *it is* **of faith, that** *it might be* **by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all. As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations." — Romans iv. 16, 17.** "And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

The seed of Abraham therefore, thus defined, were taken on the Redeemer when he came in the flesh, and for them he suffered on the cross. They are spoken of in the connection of our text, as his "many sons," which he was to bring to glory, and for whom, "by the grace of God he tasted death." And they are also in this connection called "the children," and "his brethren." These were subject to bondage through fear of death. For the wages of sin is death, and they had all sinned, and had just cause to fear the execution of the sentence which was against them. The object of Christ's coming and suffering, was to save them from their sins, to bear their sins in his own body on the tree, and to put them away by the sacrifice of himself, by tasting death for every one of them. And thus was he, through death, to destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

In this work of redemption and delieverance, he hath triumphed gloriously; and upon this ground they receive the spirit, not of bondage, again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father. And they are exhorted to **"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." — Gal. v. 1.** The perfect love of God commended in the gift of his dear Son, and communicated to the saints by regeneration, casteth out fear. Fear hath torment, but the perfect love of God shed abroad in his children, overcomes it, and casts it out. The object therefore of Christ's life in the flesh, and the the law, and of his death and suffering in the flesh, is attained. The great trumpet is blown; the jubilee proclaimed; the prison doors are opened, and the prisioners are brought out of their prison houses. And there is therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Rom. viii.)

"Jehovah has triumphed, his people are free!"

"Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." And we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the free woman. (Gal. v. 28.) "Loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion." — Isa. iii. 2.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y., Nov. 1, 1855.

MEETINGS

LOWER MAYO 5TH SUNDAY MEETING

The next 5th Sunday Meeting will be held, The Lord Willing, Sunday, May 29, 2016. Roaring River Church will Host the meeting. The Meeting House is located at 10060 Austin-Trap Hill Road, Trap Hill, NC 28685. From I-77, Exit #93/west on Zepher Rd. Go about 3 miles and turn right on Mt. Park Rd. Go through 4 way stop at Mt. Park. Go to next stop sign and turn left on Thurman Rd. Go about 200 yards to stop sign and turn right on Roaring Gap Church Rd. Go to stop sign and turn right on Austin-Trap Hill Rd. Go 1.5 miles to Church on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to meet with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

SKEWARKEY UNION (Eastern Kehukee Association)

Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of May 29, 2016. The church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albemarle

Avenue in Tarboro, NC. Preaching services begin at 10:30 a.m.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

1067 Spearsville Rd.
Spearsville, LA. 71277
March 1, 2016

Dear Elder Robertson,

Would you please print the following notice in the April Signs.

Thanks,
Ned Barron

The Union meeting of the South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, at New Hope Church located at Spearsville, Louisiana on May 28 & 29, 2016. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
318-778-4217

10725 Mt. Crossroad
Danville, VA 24540
April 11, 2016

Elder Cleo Robertson,

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union meeting will be held at Canaan Primitive Baptist Church located on Mt. Crossroad (Route 844)in Pittssylvania County, VA on Saturday before the 5th Sunday in May. Singing will begin at 10:00 and preaching at 10:30.

We invite our correspondence and visitors to the meeting.

Elder Mark Terry, Moderator
Fred Murphy, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will meet, Lord willing, on the 5th Sunday in May 29, 2016. This meeting will be held at Moons Creek Church the church is located one mile east of highway 86, between Danville and Yanceyville, on Park Springs Rd. Singing will begin at 10:00 a.m and service at 10:30 a.m.

Elder Jimmy Gray, Moderator

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 2016

John Schulz, WV 1000.00
Banks Conner, VA 25.00
Margaret Glenna Link, TN 15.00
Maxey Delp, VA 10.00
Esther Griffin, NC 25.00
Graham & Betty Lovitte, NC 5.00

Hewatt Fleming, GA 5.00
Charlie Alston, NC 5.00
Bernard Cox, VA 5.00
J.D. Nealy, AR 2.00
Marjorie Cook, TN 5.00
Flora Vest, VA 10.00
In memory of Brother Jesse and Sister Emma Somers (As requested by Mary S. Lee) Sent in by:
Mary Hawkins, NC 100.00

OBITUARIES

VIOLA HOLLEY DAVIS

May 26, 1916 - September 26, 2014

Viola Holley Davis faithfully attended Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church and the other Primitive Baptist Churches in the area. She was born May 26, 1916, and died at age 98 on September 26, 2014. Although she never formally joined the church, for many years she faithfully attended with her husband Alonza. When he became ill with Alzheimers, without complaint she took care of him for many years. Viola returned to regular attendance when Alonza died. Often one of her nieces, Rachel Wimmer, Nancy King, Shelby Shelton or Gladys "Boots" Elliot, took her to Malmaison or other churches.

Viola and Alonza were never blessed with children of their own, but they were a wonderful aunt and uncle to many nieces and nephews, and to many of the children in the church, they were like an aunt and uncle. Viola was a wonderfulcook. She and her sisters Inez and Gladys made the best chocolate meringue pie! Viola and Alonza loved to entertain in their home, and every room in her house was beautifully decorated and always spotless. Her brother Irvin was married to Alonza's sister Annie, and the two couples lived side by side and were inseparable.

Viola worked for Dan River Mills for 45 years. Viola was preceded in death by three sisters, Gladys Stegall, Inez Hollie and Mabel Wilson, and three brothers, Irvin Holley, Posey Holley and Russell Holley. Her parents were Charlie Lester Holley and Susan Brumfield Holley. She lived in Pittsylvania County her entire life.

Elder Mark Terry and Elder Jimmy Gray conducted her funeral on September 29, 2014 at Norris Funeral Home in Danville. She was buried in Highland Memorial Burial Park. Viola Davis is missed by everyone in her family and her church family.

By Martha Jenkins

AUDREY WALKER GLIDEWELL

Sister Audrey Glidewell, age 98, of Greensboro, N.C. passed from this life on March 27, 2015. Funeral services were held on Monday, March 30, at Forbis and Dick Guilford Chapel and conducted by her pastor, Elder Cleo Robertson. Burial followed at Westminister Gardens Cemetery in Greensboro.

Mrs. Glidewell, the daughter of Bennie and Evelyn Walker, was born and reared in Caswell County, N.C. In 1966, she united with the Greenboro Primitive Baptist Church and was an active, faithful, and beloved member for her remaining days. She was always ready and willing to do any task that was requested of her or to offer her assistance when needed.

Sister Glidewell is predeceased by her husband of more than 60 years, Caleb Edward (Ed) Glidewell, her parents, and eight siblings.

Audrey is survived by one sister, Margaret Smothers. She also leaves one daughter Carmen Abernathy (Benny) and one son, Terry Glidewell (Mary Virginia). Other surviving family members include five grandchildren, ten great-grandchildren and one great-grandson. She will be greatly missed by her church, family and many friends.

Herbert Edwards

CLONITIA MARTIN THOMPSON

It is with sadness I attempt to write the obituary of our beloved sister-in-Christ. Although we mourn our loss, we bow in humble submission to God's will.

Sister Clonitia was born May 7, 1923 and passed away suddenly November 29, 2015, at the age of 92.

She was a believer in salvation by grace and enjoyed attending church as often as possible. She suffered many afflictions along the way. May we take comfort in Psalms 34:19, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth her out of them all." No more sickness, pain and suffering! She is now at rest, asleep in Jesus awaiting his second coming.

Sister Clonitia's beautiful funeral service was held at Salem (Head of the River) Primitive Baptist Church, December 2, 2015 by her pastor, Elder Carl Terry and Elder Larry Hollandsworth. Interment was in Restvale Cemetery.

She was blessed with a loving and close family. The light of her life was her husband of 73 years, Brother Arlie Thompson. Other survivors are her five children, Dale Thompson and wife, Liz, Brenda Thompson Weeks, R.J. Thompson and wife Karene, Diane Thompson Midkiff and husband, Randal and Danny Thompson and wife Martha. 7 grandchildren, 12 great grandchildren, 2 step grandchildren, 3 step great grandchildren, a sister Mavin Steel and husband Jack, also a sister-in-law Corrine Martin, and a host of friends.

We will miss her sweet smile as she greeted her brethren. We feel she was one of God's precious jewels, a Mother in Israel and our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by: Mary Janney, as requested by the church

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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HYMN

If I must sing, I'll sing of grace
Which raised me from the fall,
And led me to a hiding-place,
Jesus, my Lord, my all.

'Twas grace that brought my roving feet
From sin's destructive road,
And pointed out a sure retreat,
Jesus my blest abode.

Grace also first my soul inclined
At wisdom's door to wait,
And then assured me I should find
A Saviour good and great.

Grace likewise urged my soul to cry,
With fervency and zeal,
To God, who would not pass me by,
But would my pardon seal.

And when I've sank exceeding low,
Just ready to give up,
This grace hath raised my soul unto
A comfortable hope.

Of grace, I'll therefore loudly sing,
As long as I have breath;
Nor will I fear the dreadful sting,
That arms the monster, Death.

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EDITORIAL

"For Mordecai the Jew *was* next unto king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed." Esther 10:3.

Elder J. B. Farmer

It has long been my persuasion that the Old Testament scriptures have imbedded in them great and wonderful mysteries that are not apparent on the surface. They have a natural meaning, and also have a spiritual sense. Those things found there which seem obvious concerning natural events and the history of Israel and the nations of the world may be readily understood by anyone with a reasonable mind. But the hidden things belong to God, and shall never be known by anyone except those little ones which He has blessed with eyes to see, ears to hear and a heart to understand. Even if the deep things are explained to the others, they will not and cannot believe them. Jesus said unto His disciples, "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." God has hidden His mysteries from the wise and prudent of this world and has revealed them unto babes. He has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.

This account of real people and real events, found in the book of Esther, is amazing in that the whole story of redemption is contained in it by way of types and shadows. It was written thousands of years ago and the prophesy in it is still meaningful to the saints. The Lord God is not mentioned, which serves to hide the spiritual meaning from the world even more. It is amazing in that it tells our individual story of salvation by grace. How many times have you thought you might perish in the things which you were compelled to do by the grace of God? It speaks of the Lord Jesus Christ, and perfectly lays out His love and concern for His little ones. The defeat of Satan is set forth in much detail. And it is amazing that Mordecai, who

was scheduled to die, was exalted and made great and second only to the king Ahaseurus. So was Jesus exalted and given a name above every name. Because Jesus laid down His life for His chosen people, God has commanded that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

The great king Ahasuerus made a feast and called his fair queen, Vashti, to come and present herself there in order to show her beauty to the people and to the princes. Vashti refused the king's command, and he was wroth. So, she was put away to never come before the king again, and her royal estate was removed from her to be given to another that is better than she, according to the scriptures.

The king sought, from all parts of the kingdom, a beautiful maiden to replace his disobedient and rebellious queen. The Jewish maiden, Esther, lived with her uncle, Mordecai, who had reared her as his own beloved daughter after her parents died. Esther was taken from her home with him and brought into the palace of the king where, among many fair maidens, she became his favorite, and was made queen.

As Mordecai sat in the king's gate, he kept in constant contact with Esther through one of the king's servants, Hatach. While there Mordecai overheard a plot to kill the king by two of the king's chamberlains. Mordecai made this known unto Esther, and she made the matter known unto the king in Mordecai's name. The king made inquisition and found the matter out, and caused the two men to be hanged on a tree. Mordecai was then forgotten by the king.

The king had a powerful but wicked servant, Haman, who sought to destroy the whole house of Israel because they would not bow down to him. They had only one God, the God of heaven and earth, and refused to bow to any other, even though their lives were threatened. Haman especially hated Mordecai because he was highly esteemed among the Jews, and would not bow down and reverence him. Haman caused a law to be written that on a certain day, the people of the land were to come against the Jews, and were to destroy every man, woman and child of them.

Mordecai made this bitter law known unto Esther, and she was compelled to lay her life down in order to try to save the lives of her kinsmen. She must go unbidden into the presence of the king to plead for the lives of her people. She knew that when she went there without being called, according to the law, she would be put to death; unless the king stretched toward her his golden scepter. Nevertheless, she went saying, "If I perish, I perish." But the king loved her, and he showed mercy to her by stretching the golden scepter toward her, and promised to give her anything she requested up to half of his kingdom.

Esther requested for the king to come to her banquet that day accompanied by Haman, which they did. At the banquet Esther further requested that

the king and Haman come to her banquet the following day. So Haman went home joyfully, thinking he was being promoted in honor with the king and queen. But when he thought of Mordecai, he was downcast because Mordecai would not submit to him. Haman's wife suggested that he prepare a gallows fifty cubits (75 feet) high to use for the murder of Mordecai, which Haman proceeded to do.

That night, the king could not sleep, and he commanded the book of records of the chronicles to be brought, and to be read. When the king realized that Mordecai was the one who revealed the plot of the king's chamberlains against him, he said, "What honor and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this? Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, There is nothing done for him."

Shortly after this Haman came before the king to speak with him about hanging Mordecai on the gallows he had prepared. But the king said to Haman, "What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honor? Now Haman thought in his heart, To whom would the king delight to honor more than to myself? And Haman answered the king, For the man whom the king delighteth to honor, let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, and the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head: and let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man withal whom the king delighteth to honor. Then the king said to Haman, Make haste, and take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth in the king's gate: let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken. Then took Haman the apparel and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and brought him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor." Haman realized that he had begun to fall before Mordecai.

After bringing Mordecai through the city on horseback and proclaiming before him, Haman was brought to the banquet which Esther had prepared for the king. And the king asked the queen to make known her petition and her request. Esther pled for her life and for the life of her people. She revealed to the king that the wicked Haman was the adversary and enemy that had sought to destroy her and all her people, the Jews including Mordecai. Being made aware of this, the king commanded that Haman be hanged upon the gallows that Haman had prepared for Mordecai, which was done. Esther also requested that the evil law of Haman be reversed so that rather than being destroyed on that certain day that had been set, her people could defend themselves, and could slay any who sought to do them harm, which the king granted. Esther further requested that the ten sons of Haman also be hanged upon the gallows, which was done. And Mordecai became great in the king's house, and his fame went throughout all the provinces: for this man Mordecai waxed

greater and greater.

If not deceived, the Lord has revealed to His people the deep and hidden spiritual meanings of the people, things and events contained in the book of Esther, to His praise and honor and glory. Ahasuerus the mighty king that reigned from India to Ethiopia over an hundred and twenty-seven provinces appears to stand as a figure of the God of heaven and earth. That great kingdom appears to be a figure of the kingdom of God, where He reigns with absolute power and authority. His beautiful but disobedient and rebellious queen, Vashti, appears to be a figure of the Jews under the law, who refused to obey their heavenly King, and were put away. Esther appears to be a type of the church, and of the child of God who goes begging before the throne of God, even if she thinks she might perish there. Haman appears to be the type of Satan, who demands the reverence of the people toward himself. Mordecai appears to be a shadow of Jesus, who would not bow down and reverence Satan, and who became second only to the King to seek the welfare and peace of His people. Hatach, the go-between for Esther and Mordecai, appears to stand for the Holy Spirit who carries the messages back and forth between the Lord and His people. The gallows seems to be a type of the tree upon which Jesus was hanged. The hanging and death of Haman on the gallows appears to indicate the utter defeat of Satan at Calvary, in that Jesus, by His death destroyed him who has the power of death, who is the devil. The fact that Mordecai was condemned to die on the gallows, yet was found alive after the man-appointed time of his death, seems to speak of the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

There are many other types and shadows that must be briefly mentioned: The first queen under the law, and her royal estate being given to another better than herself, speaking of the law and grace; Esther having been an orphan, as all God's children are destitute in this world; the second queen, Esther, being the perfection of beauty, speaking of the bride of Christ; Mordecai's refusal to bow before Haman being similar to Christ refusing to serve the devil on the mount; the desire of Haman to take the king's garments and possessions to himself, like the devil declaring that he is god; Mordecai being honored upon the horse, and being led through the city with proclamations, like Christ riding on the foal of an ass; The king's ring of power being taken from Haman and given to Mordecai, as Jesus was given all power in heaven and in earth; the royal apparel of blue and white and a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple given to Mordecai, speaking of the majesty of Jesus in heaven; The Jews being given light, and gladness and joy and honor, as all God's little ones begin to understand they have the victory in Christ here on earth and that it shall continue into eternity; and the final destruction of Haman and all his sons, indicating that all the wicked shall be turned into hell.

"For Mordecai the Jew was next unto king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude

of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace unto all his seed." In this final verse of the book of Esther, is it not abundantly apparent that it is not only speaking of Mordecai, but that it is also declaring who Jesus is, and what He is doing on behalf of His people, His spiritual seed? You must be the judge. The things written here only hint at the many wonderful things contained in the book of Esther. Please read it for yourselves, and meditate upon it if you are blessed to that end. What a wonderful account we have been given to hold in memory and consider from time to time. May the Lord God be praised, world without end.

Trusting that this was written in faithfulness, love and in hope of eternal life, while greatly aware of my many shortcomings.

Elder J.B. Farmer

PSALMS 93.

The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, *wherewith* **he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.**

Thy throne *is* **established of old: thou** *art* **from everlasting.**

The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.

The Lord on high *is* **mightier than the noise of many waters,** *yea, than* **the mighty waves of the sea.**

Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever.

CORRESPONDENCE

Kristina T. Abbott
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Mr. Tony R. Horton
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Dear Mr. Horton

I would like to renew my subscription to The Signs of the Times for two more years. Please use the remaining amount as a contribution towards your efforts. We are so blessed to be able to read these old truths and to share them with our loved ones. It is a comfort to see, in this publication, the folks from all over the country that share the old Baptist belief, particularly when it seems the numbers dwindle year by year. I pray you can continue to shed a light in the dark with this work.

In Fellowship,
Kristina Abbott

4-9-2016

Mr. Tony Horton

Please renew my subscription to the Times for another year—use the rest of check as needed.

I pray the Good Lord's Blessing on all who have a hand in getting the times out each month. I would never want to miss an issue.

Sincerely,

Roland G. Allen
4235 3rd. Ave.
Columbus, GA 31904
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GOOD SHEPHERD

And from the rising of the morn
Until the stars appear,
The Shepherd looks toward His sheep,
His voice alone they hear.

His flock is like a family
Of whom He is the head.
A hiding place when tempests rage
And clouds are overspread.

He leads them in a path made plain
And keeps them lest they stray.
The Word: a lamp before their feet;
The Light upon the way.

Green pastures are before them laid,
His touch they come to know,
And they will be led forth in peace
Where living waters flow.

Sherry Farmer

VOICES OF THE PAST

CHANGES.

TO THE EDITORS OF
THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

Sirs, I often think of the many conflicts that the children of God have, and ask myself if I can claim a share with them on this ground, seeing the ins and outs of my mind; one day realizing, as I think, the precious love of Christ, by faith in him, and the next sunk into all the wretchedness of distrust, despair, and hardness of heart. The word, when read or heard, is as unsavory and dry as possible, unbelief rushes into the mind, and if I to look at God's word, and point with the finger to some passage which I think God has some time before when under peculiar circumstances, made precious to my soul, such as Luke xii. 25-31, there seems to be no sweetness now. What to do I cannot tell, strangled almost betwixt hope and despair. To trust God with my future, or even my present good, seems more than I can manage: and which way to take cannot conclude. If I look at myself, I am all darkness, and not one soft feeling is to be found. I stand still, and try to muster up all the evidences that I thought I had before; but nothing is to be found, and I am ready to conclude I never had any, that I have been deceived myself and have deceived others. Satan advises me to give it up, and give it up I

think I will; but something keeps my feet from falling. I try to pray, but the heavens seem as brass. I experience no melting down; all is as hard as ever. All that I do seems as a formal and tiresome task; and when I attempt to pray before my family, I have to tell the same tale again and again, and wonder how I dare venture to speak at all. My past sins, of heart, lip, and life, especially those since I made a profession of religion, are tauntingly thrown in my face by the enemy, and my heart has to say Amen to them, knowing the charges are correct, and feeling them too. I am sensible of my state, and am ready to say, "I shall one day fall by the hands of my enemies, within or without." Lord, what is man!

"Regard, great God, my mournful prayer
Make my poor trembling soul thy care;
For me in pity undertake;
O, save me, for thy mercies' sake!"

Darwed, April, 1837. A PETER.

SOCIALISM PREVAILING.

AS SHOWN BY AUTHENTIC STATISTICS GIVEN IN AN ARTICLE COPIED FROM THE S.S. Journal.
(See "Signs of the Times," Vol. viii. Page 23.)

Of the progress of infidel principles, under the name of Socialism, we see some melancholy notices in our late English papers. In one it is said:

There are now upwards of sixty Branch Societies in the principle towns in the kingdom, in which there are places of meeting for lectures on Infidelity and Socialism. The Sabbath is occupied in the delivery of seditious and blasphemous addresses, tea parties, profane singing, music, &c., &c. In some places, Sunday and Infant-schools have been established for the inculcating of Infidel principles. A Tract Society has been formed, and six tracts issued; these are frequently distributed under the Wesleyan and church tract covers. A most blasphemous periodical is circulated, at the rate of 40,000 per week. There is a regular organized central board, with President, Vice-President and Secretary, and a great number of salaried emissaries, whose whole time is devoted to the advancement of Socialism. Additional impetus has been given to their proceedings by the disgraceful presentation of their founder, Robert Owen, to the Queen.

At a late meeting in Cheltenham, a clergyman of Manchester called the attention of the meeting to the increase and the baneful influence of publications devoted to the dissemination of infidelity and atheism in their darkest forms. Perhaps some of them had heard of a paper called the *Star in the East.* In the north hey had also a paper called the *Northern Star,* which had a very wide circulation, and which, though not openly broaching the principles of Infidelity, endeavored to foist on the people principles which, if carried out, would quickly put an end to the monarchy, the constitution, our liberties, comforts, and lives.

That paper had a circulation so great that it could not be conveyed to Manchester except by means of a vehicle for that purpose. The paper was published on Saturday, and on the day of publication the shop-keeper had at his shop a greater number of applications for infidel and atheistical trash than all the booksellers in the town had for books containing what was sound and wholesome food for the mind and for the spirit. The reverend gentleman then adverted to another ominous sign of the times. At Manchester the week before last, with great pomp and ceremony, and amid an assembly of thousands, many of whom afterwards had their dinners at a public hotel, the stone had been laid for the erection of a vast hall, consecrated to infidelity in one of its direct forms, under the misapplied name of Socialism. Four men — for we could not call them gentlemen, though we regret to say they were Englishmen — four men of sufficient property were found to become guarantee to the builder of the edifice for £5,000. Similar halls are now in the course of erection at Huddersfield, Bradford, Leeds, and Sheffield. Amidst all out-breaks and irregularities, we never had before in this country, temples dedicated to atheism, rising over the face of the land. To the foregoing he would add another dark feature. He alluded to the circumstance of a member of parliament and a minister of the crown having introduced the high priest of Socialism at the court." — *S. S. Journal.*

REMARKS.

ALEXANDRIA, D. C., February 1, 1840.

Is this the dawn of that millennial glory which the advocates of the new religious inventions of our day have been so long engaged in ushering in? Is this the impress by which we are gravely told, heaven has stamped her approbation on the modern system of religious mendicancy? Has it been for the birth of such a day that millions on millions have been heaped for the diffusion of light, and for the dissemination of the gospel? Alas! what better fruit could reasonably have been expected from such a deadly tree? How frequently are we greeted with flattering pictures of the progress of the new order in converting the heathen and evangelizing the world! How often are we told of the thousands converted to christianity by the modern machinery of the age! and so much credit is given to those luring statements, that the new inventions in religion are lauded to the skies, and the ancient platform of our faith and practice is considered quite below the spirit of the age. But with the above statement before the reader's eye, we would ask, Has not infidelity in its undisguised form, kept an even pace with human improvements on the divine plan of saving sinners! We do not accuse the modern misguided missionists of being directly confederate with Owen, Fanny Wright, & Co., but we do say, and most firmly believe that the very elements of which deism and socialism are composed, are furnished by the New School Baptists and their

extensive Ishmaelitish brotherhood of other denominations. In confirmation of this position, mark the following particulars as developed in both systems: 1st. The New School reject the scriptures as their only rule of practice and standard of doctrine — Infidels also reject the Bible. 2d. The New School appeal to the light of science, theological schools, &c., to point out the way of happiness and glory-Infidels derive their strongest arguments from the same source. 3d. The New School depend on tracts, temples and direct appeals to the mental faculties of the human family, for the dissemination of their doctrines — these are also the strongholds of Infidelity. 4th. The New School require large funds to carry on their inventions — so do the Infidels. 5th. Both systems alike require the efforts of men (not the grace of God) to sustain them. Besides all this, when we consider the bearing which the numerous tricks and projects for amassing money, popularity and power; their persecuting disposition; men of good natural intellects, but destitute of grace, are led to conclude that all the corruptions of New Schoolism among protestants, and all the bloodshed of Catholics is justly attributable to Christianity; they are therefore led to renounce a name, which by its abuse, is rendered odious to them. We are circumscribed as to limits, but will resume this subject again soon.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

MEPHIBOSHETH AND DAVID

(2 Samuel ix.)

After David had become fully established upon the throne of Israel he said, "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" Thus he remembered his covenant of love made with Jonathan to which he swear twice, (1 Sam. xx. 17,) that he would show the kindness of the Lord to his seed. And thus is shown in a figure, the covenant of love and mercy made by the dear Savior, the Son of David, with his people, and declared unto them by the prophets under that old dispensation, which was to be fulfilled "after those days" unto their children. This is that covenant which was confirmed unto the heirs of promise by the oath and promise of God, that they might have that strong consolation which they shall so much need. (Heb. vi. 18.) After David was exalted upon the throne he could shew mercy. Jesus was exalted for that very purpose, that he might have mercy upon the heirs of promise. (Isa. xxx. 18; Acts v. 31.)

Jonathan was the son of a king, and himself, to all human appearance, the heir of the kingdom. He was undoubtedly of a kingly character and appearance, and David compared him to a lion for strength, and to an eagle for swiftness. Now when a search is made for his descendants what kind of men shall we expect to find? Certainly those of like kingly appearance, those who shall shew their noble descent. But no, this is not to be the case. When the son of Jonathan

is discovered we see a poor man, destitute, lame on both his feet, helpless, living upon bounty, who describes himself with apparent fitness as "a dead dog" when he comes into the presence of David. His name has in it an element which signifies shame, but also shows that there is a contention against that shameful condition. He is found in the house of Machir, which signifies sold, or brought to ruin, and yet the name of Machir's father Ammiel intimates a kinship to God. The name of the place where he is found is Lodebar, which means "no pasture."

When Jesus, exalted upon the throne of his kingdom, remembers his covenant, "to perform the mercy promised unto our fathers," (Luke i. 72,) and calls for the heirs of promise, this is the way and manner of their appearance. Though of kinship to God, as every quickened sinner is, there is nothing in their appearance to indicate it. They are found in ruin, "sold under sin," in a desolate, pastureless land, and lame on both their feet. They have not only lost all of their former riches of righteousness, but they are in a helpless condition, so that they can never do any work to earn any more. When they are brought into the presence of the King they are lost in astonishment that he should look upon such as they, much more that he should shew such unexpected kindness. "What is thy servant, that thou shouldst look upon such a dead dog as I am?" This suits the feelings of a poor sinner well when the strange, surprising grace and mercy of the Lord are made known to him.

Let us consider this lameness. "He was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan out of Jezreel, and his nurse took him up, and fled: and it came to pass, as she made haste to flee, that he fell, and became lame." — 2 Sam. iv. 4. All of the Lord's people become lame. This is one thing by which they are designated. The accident to the child, Mephilbosheth, may well be regarded as one of the figurative presentations in the Old Testament of that lameness and its cause. Jacob became lame while wrestling with the angel of God's presence in the law, by the angel's touch. He must become lame before he can receive the blessing. Mephibosheth became lame while fleeing in the arms of his nurse, when news came that the last battle was lost, and his father and grandfather were dead. If Mephibosheth represents the Lord's people as they are brought to Jesus, he well shows in this how early in their experience of divine life they become lame on their feet, finding their utter inability to contend with the power of the law, or to flee from the destruction and desolation that must come upon all who are under its curse. It is always while under the care of the legal nurse that they become lame. The lameness is not partial, but complete. Whenever they undertake to stand on their feet, and to walk in their own strength, this lameness is manifested. He was lame on both his feet.

This is the condition of each one of the redeemed family when the covenant of promise is manifested to him, that he may be a witness that the salvation of God is not because of any works of righ-

teousness which we have done, but all of his mercy and grace. Because of the everlasting covenant of grace they are now remembered in love, and are given a seat at the table of the King, there to eat bread all the days of their life.

Here are the gospel characters, and the gospel blessings. To sit continually at the King's table eating bread would seem to the natural view somewhat monotonous and tiresome, and especially to be compelled to sit there all the time because of that lameness. But the spiritual mind is instructed to regard this position as representing the child of God not only in the enjoyment of gospel promises, but in all the labors, cares, trials and afflictions of the gospel. Although seated at the table of the Lord's bounteous provisions of grace, it is not to represent him as idle, or as merely gratifying a carnal appetite, but as depending alone upon the grace and bounty of the Lord, being helpless in himself. It is only at this gospel table that any one can count afflictions a joy and trials most nourishing food. It is only here that the child of God feels that it is his meat and his drink to do the will of the Father. This table is not one where surfeiting and selfish ease and encouraged. While at this table every spiritual "Mephibosheth," though unable to take one step, or even to stand a moment on his feet in his own strength and righteousness, is walking in the order and ordinances of the gospel, and running in the gospel race. It is here we find the lame man who has been made by the grace of God to "leap like the hart," though still remaining lame. It is here that he who has a measure of Hezekiah's deep afflictions of soul can say with Hezakiah, "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit. — Isa. xxxviii. 16. Here the children of God learn the healing and nourishing value of "the bread of tears," (Psalm lxxx. 5,) and experience the sweet and wholesome effect of "sorrowful meat." (Job vi. 7.) Here they are fed with the Lord's rod, and greatly comforted by the fruit of the vineyards given them from the wilderness of trouble. (Micah vii. 14; Hosea ii. 15.) On this table of our King are all the duties and privileges of the gospel, and these poor, lame Mephilbosheths are eating most excellent food when walking in them. Not only the promises and privileges are food, but the exhortations and reproofs also. Not only the Pascal Lamb is to be eaten, but with it always the bitter herbs.

While Mephibosheth was told that he should eat meat continually at David's table all the days of his life, the King also told him that all of the land of Saul his father should be restored unto him. In pursuance of this promise David put Ziba, Saul's servant, in charge of all that pertained to Saul and to all his house, and commanded him, with his fifteen sons and twenty servants, to till the land for Mephibosheth, "and bring in the fruits, that thy master's son may have food to eat: but Mephibosheth, thy master's son, shall eat bread alway at my table."

What can be the need of this latter promise while the former is in force? If the lame man is to eat always at David's table, why command the fruits of Saul's land to be brought to him that he may

have food to eat? The gospel only shows the meaning of this, and makes it clear that the two promises are not in conflict with each other. The Lord's promise to his people not only covers the ground of all their spiritual needs, but also secures to them the supply for all their temporal needs as well, while they shall remain in the flesh. To them who are called into the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ it is said, "All things are yours;" and again, Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? Or Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (Matt. vi. 25-34; 1 Cor. iii. 21.)

How clearly and sweetly does the promise of David to Mephibosheth, and his command to Ziba, set forth the abundant fullness and absolute sufficiency of the Lord's provisions for his people, in both temporal and spiritual things. No indolence or lack of care in regard to our worldly duties, and the responsibilities of our earthly relationships, are taught or encouraged; but the absolute trust in and reliance upon our God, which he enjoins upon those who are called by grace. It is not taught them that they shall neglect their houses or lands or wives or children, but that when the Lord calls them into his kingdom they are to learn of him, and not from the world, their duties in these respects, and that when he calls them to any work in his kingdom nothing is to stand in the way of that work. They are to go forward in the work to which he has called them, trusting and knowing that he will supply all the lack which their absence occasions; he, and not they, being the Judge, and "will supply all their need, according to his riches in glory, by Christ Jesus." It means that they are henceforth to live, not unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again. (2 Cor. v.) It means that while engaged in the work whereunto God has called one, he has no need to take thought for the things of to-morrow to the hindrance of his work, but may rest in the promise of God that all that he needs of temporal things will be given him. While one is walking in the ordinances and commandments of God, the fruits of the earth are his to the extent of his need, and cannot be withheld.

Mephibosheth and Ziba afterward had some kind of a contention about the inheritance, in which the former was probably to blame in thinking too much about the inheritance of Saul, and became slack in his ways during David's absence, on account of Absalom's rebellion. Ziba also appeared to be very zealous for David. When the king questioned Mephibosheth about his apparent backwardness, he tried to explain, but evidently was complaining of Ziba's conduct, and wanting something arranged differently. Then the king said, "Why speakest thou any more of thy matters? I have said, Thou and Ziba divide the land." — 2 Sam. xix. 29. Then Mephibosheth seems to remember himself, and is willing that Ziba shall take all the land, "Forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace to his own house."

Too much anxiety about our worldly inheritance, houses and lands, and money, which is apt to come over us in the absence of our dear Lord, makes us trouble, but it brings us to see that that kind of inheritance we share with the world, and the tenants whom the Lord has appointed to work the land for his servants who sit at his table and eat bread there continually, will be sure to come off best in any conflict they may have with them. If we begin to try to collect the rents ourselves, and call upon Ziba for the fruits, we shall fail, and fall short, and get into trouble. Better let the Lord do the collecting for us. It is a good deal better than the result of our own undertaking, for that is merely that we and Ziba divide the land, and then our part of the land must remain uncultivated.

But when the Lord again returns, we can easily give up trying to make provisions for the flesh, but do what our hands find to do, being diligent in business, but seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. So again we sit in humility and contentment at the table of our King, eating our bread with gladness, and trusting in him for everything. "So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: for he did eat continually at the king's table; and was lame on both his feet."

So that is the sad but sweet story to the last, "lame on both his feet." By faith he has leaped for joy, and has run victoriously in the gospel race, but lame he is still; still held down by infirmities. By faith he has gone forth in joy, and been led forth in peace, while the trees clapped their hands before him, and has joined with the great multitude of the redeemed in songs of praise; but he is still in the bondage of corruption, longing to be delivered, unable to do the good that he would, because lame on both his feet. But how sweet it is when he remembers that thus he is kept at this table, unable to get away from it, as he would do if his lame feet were whole; also how sweet to remember that thus he is made to keep in view the wonderful works of his King, who has done all for him, and prepared all blessings for him, and has placed him where he shall ever have in view those wonderful works, and feast upon the precious things "which God has prepared for all them that love him."

Elder Silas H. Durand
September, 1899.

CHRIST THE LEADER OF HIS PEOPLE

By Robert Moxon (1840—1906)

Preached at Bethel Chapel, Robertsbridge, October 13, 1897

"And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation"- Psalm 107:7.

It is very plain, is it not? If any of you do not understand it, I will read it again and again: "He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation." It is very evident from these words that there must have been a leader. No disputing that, is there? And it is very evident from this text that there must have been leading, and

this leader had to do with these leadings. And it is very evident there must have been somebody in particular that was led. To talk about a leader and having no people to lead is a nonentity; to talk about a king and no subjects is ridiculous; to talk about a shepherd and no sheep seems to me most preposterous. They are all linked together, and we have no right to separate a link from this chain.

Now, my dear friends, I hope you were able to pray for me this afternoon, that the Lord might help me to speak of those things that are embodied in this text, and that I may speak of them in such a way that they may commend themselves to you. I should be very sorry if, when I have been preaching, it should stir up enmity in your heart; if I should bring enmity and malice against those things that I speak about. O that you may pray that the Lord may assist me to speak, and you to hear!

We know very well from the word of God that there never was such a preacher as Jesus, and yet on one occasion we read they took him to the brow of the hill whereon their city was built that they might cast him down headlong. That showed, you see, that the gospel, the real gospel, the true gospel, the everlasting gospel, had no place in their hearts. And now, friends, in the day in which we live, there are but few who love the gospel of Jesus Christ, — of grace, of free grace, of rich grace, — the gospel of a finished salvation, a free salvation without money, and without price, and without works, and without worthiness. They cannot love this simply because they have not been shown what they are by the teachings of the Holy Ghost. O, it is just the same now, and if you have not, you will not receive him. I feel sure of that.

Now let us, in the first place, look at this Leader. Who is it, my friends? I suppose you are Bible readers, and that this is not a strange text to you, but that you have read it many times; and now I should like to know what you think about this Leader. I think, friends, it is God — the everlasting God, the eternal Creator of the ends of the earth; he who is from eternity to eternity, from everlasting to everlasting, whose power is unlimitable. None can stay his hand, and say unto him, "What doest thou?" — that God who can lay straight the most crooked things. It is the three-one-God-Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. I believe in a Trinity, and I preach a Trinity in the person of the eternal Jehovah — the eternal Father, and the eternal Son, and the eternal Spirit — co-equal Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Here is a Leader, a worthy Leader, and able Leader, one who undertakes to lead. The devil cannot hinder you, and the world cannot hinder you if he takes you in hand. He will not let you go. He will not let the devil or the world riddle you out of his hand. This he makes clear. He said while here, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand," and he said they shall not "pluck them out of my Father's hand" (John 10:28-29). No, my dear friends, no plucking out of the hand of God, the inimitable hand of God-that arm "that rolls the stars along," will not be defeated

by anything that is made.

He leads his people. He led them in the days of his flesh. He called them effectually by his word, and kept them by his grace, and they are safe with him. I say, they are with him in glory. Paul tells us, "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6). He will perform it; he will perform it! He never makes a failure of it!

You will remember when he was here upon earth, he spake a parable, and in it he made them understand that no man should go to war without counting how it would come off, — he must reckon things up. And so the Lord Jesus Christ had counted the cost. He knew the things that were against us, and he said more are they that are for us than all that are against us. So you see the Lord knows all about your pathway, all about your difficulties. There is nothing hidden from his all-searching eye. Job said, "When he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23:10). And so I say the apostle is right when he said, "he will perform it." The Psalmist said, "The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me." What concerns you? If you are Christians this concerns you — to end right, to be landed over Jordan. These are essentials with you. It is everything that is of deep concern with my soul that he will do for me what I cannot do for myself. You know having loved his own that are in the world, he will love them unto the end. There is no change in his heart, in his affections. He is just the same Jesus - the same yesterday, today, and forever. When you get up in the morning, full of care, let me tell you there is no change in him. He abides in his love. It is an ocean; and it has no bottom, brim or shore. Hence, I say, it is ever full and ever flowing. His mercies are everlasting, and great is his faithfulness.

Now, if in anything I had to do with a mission, or an appointment, or a leader, I should want a competent one that had got power and affection, and would take care; for if I were going to take a journey, a way that I did not know, and there were a number of persons going, I say, if I had anything to do with it; I should want that man for my leader who knew the way, one that had some zeal, some care. What should we do if we were about to be lost if the leader did not know anything more about it than we did? Then it would be fulfilled what the Lord said, "the blind lead the blind."

O how important it is that in taking a journey we should have a right leader! Some are led by one, and some by another; but what does the Lord say, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm" (Jeremiah 17:5). Where is your trust this afternoon, my dear friends? In whom is your confidence placed? — in this man, in that man? in this thing, in that thing? If we had a skillful man to lead us who knew the way and had been every inch in the way, and who had some sympathy if we fell ill, or by any means were sickly or faint and could not get on any further, would it not be a great blessing to have a leader who had a little sympathy for our infirmities? I say this Leader is just that one who can meet us in all our diffi-

culties and in all our trials.

"And he led them." This is a brother that is born for adversities. He knows hospital work best of anything — none have such a sympathizing heart. None can help a poor sinner along as Jesus can. He has said, "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench" (Isaiah 42:3). And this is God. And now for the poor helpless things,— those who think they are helpless indeed, but the poor do not despise them, and God's people are among the poor, the poor in spirit; they feel Spiritual poverty every day of their life; they feel there is nothing but what they are very poor in. If they think of faith, their feeling is, "My faith is so poor, so weak." If they think of prayer, their feeling is, "I am not worthy of the notice of my God." If they hear of great manifestations and evidences, these poor, weak things think, "Ah! I have no portion or lot in the matter; my evidences are dim." Thus I tell you the people of God are verily poor-poor in every effort, and that they want a precious, loving, bearing, and forbearing leader. This is just what the gospel abounds with-telling us the heart, mind, and feeling of the Lord Jesus Christ toward his people. Now let us try for a minute or two to turn to the leadings.

"And he led them forth,"— the leadings. Well, my dear friends, it always seems to me as if we need, before we touch upon this, to look at the context, lest we put the balm where there is no sore, or over the sore. Let us then, just for a moment, look at the context. Let us look at the people who are led in the next place. It is very specific in this point.

First, then, you must observe they are a people that are "gathered". They are "gathered from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south." Notice again, my dear friends, they are a people that were "wandering in the wilderness;" in a waste-howling wilderness, for they had lost their way. They had wandered, and wandered, till they were "hungry and thirsty," and "their soul fainted in them."

Now I want, if I can, to draw your attention to this great fact — every man, and every woman, by nature, is in a state of wandering-wandering, I say from God, from his Maker, has no desire for God, for Christ, or holiness, or heaven; has no love to the name of Jesus, for the things concerning Jesus, but is an alien to God, a stranger to the covenant of promise, to himself. Now, friends, I want you to think of these things, and if there is one here in that condition this afternoon, I do really sympathize with you, for you do not know what you are; and yet you might be in a profession of religion. You may be a respectable man or woman, and looked upon as such, and yet be as far from God as the east is from the west; as far as a sheep can run from the fold of God. We are aliens, I say, from the fold of God, running away, but never going nigh. And in that state every son and daughter of Adam would remain were it not for this blessed Leader.

The Lord Jesus Christ steps in, and he finds out his rambling and wandering people, wherever they have strayed. So you see some had got into the east,

and west, and north, and south. All wandered, and all went astray. I have often thought of that description given of them in the words, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way" (Isaiah 53:6). Not to God's way, — O, no — everyone turned to his own way. Yours might lead to one way, and another's to another. One is pleased with books, and another with science; one is wrapped up in prosperity, and some carried away with drunkenness, and some with licentiousness. But whether it is morality or not that you are wrapped up in, it just amounts to one thing, — there is nothing of Christ in it, nothing of salvation in it from beginning to end.

Well then, I want you to understand this, that the Lord, this Leader, knows where his people are, and he goes and searches them out. He finds them out, and he calls them. He calls them Spiritually; he calls them powerfully, and he makes them willing in the day of his power. He puts another feeling in your heart; he puts immortal strength into your heart. He deadens, and makes you feel you cannot take pleasure in the things you once did; he makes you feel the emptiness of these things, and makes you long for something better than you have ever thirsted for in all your life before. This is what he means where he says, "He found them in a desert land." Ah! in a desert land, even in a waste, howling wilderness. Yes, that is where he found them; he led him and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of his eye. That is what God does; he comes, to find him out. Hence I say, there is power in this gracious, heavenly Leader. See him in the days of his flesh, he sees one and another mending their nets, and he says, "Follow me". And there is a magnetic influence in the heart, and then down goes the fishing and the nets. He who speaks the promises is the same voice that rolls the stars along.

Now then, the Lord has found out his people; he leads them about. In this text it says, "He led them forth by the right way,"-"by the right way." Now I want you to notice, and that particularly, for I cannot enter fully, into this subject, that the Lord leads his people providentially, that he leads his people graciously, that he leads his people eternally; that he leads them in doctrine, that he leads them in every particular; that all their life long he leads them. It is a "carrying over" by your Lord and Master. Let me tell you, you are not your own. He manages everything for you, and the more you look, and the more you see of his hand, the sweeter it is for you to reflect, and for you to remember. And I say this is one part of the Christian's path that is sweet, when he sees the good hand and leading of God in all — God in the whole of his life.

Now, I say, friends, where could we begin if we were to try to expand upon any or all of those branches that we have enumerated? I say, God leads in providence. By that I mean to say God's hand is over his people; and his hand is over his people in their everyday life, in looking over them before they are Spiritual born. I say he is leading you in fixing your habitation, in fixing your companion, in fixing your wife or husband, and the

place where you are to attend, and the place where you are to go, and the place where you are to visit, and the different things, which are thrown in your way. It is said at the end of the Psalm — and it is very essential for us to look at these things — "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the LORD." Is there one who looks back with pleasure? Looking back twenty or forty years, cannot you say providentially, "Thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart" (Deuteronomy 8:2). And then, I say, friends, has it not been a good providence? Yes, what blessings has he strewn in my path. I think when I look amidst the crosses, the afflictions, and the bitters, O, what a mingling of good things, of blessed things, so that I have had to say many and many a time, "The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage" (Psalm 16:6) -"a goodly heritage."

And then again, you know the Lord has such a wonderful way of blending grace and providence together that you cannot separate them, as the rays of the rainbow. So in his providential leadings, and his gracious leadings, have you not found something of your blessed Lord? Ah, which one cannot tell his own tale. If I were to tell my tale some would say, "You are preaching nothing but yourself," and it is sometimes blessed to do that. I like a man that can tell a little of what the Lord has done for him, and if he cannot do it, I have not much hope or confidence in him.

But when I look, friends, at the leadings of the Lord Spiritually, I feel amazed — I really do; and when I have felt "It is the Lord", and when I think of how the Lord discovered to me the presence of Jesus, showed me the divine, the glorious, the complexity of the person of Jesus — it has made me love him, made me worship him and feel — "I could from all things parted be, But never, never Lord, from Thee."

And that he is the bright and morning star to my soul, I feel I am highly honoured. I should have been as some are —

"Too proud to seek a hiding-place."

And therefore, I put it all down to my precious Lord and Master; and then when he enables me to see the mysteries of salvation, while others despise these things, I feel from morning to night to bless and praise his name. He is to them "a rock of offence", and yet to me is the hope of my foundation, the blessed Rock of Ages to my never-dying soul, and I feel, as the Psalmist says, "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto (my) God," (Psalm 40:2-3).

Ah! friends, but you know we may pause a little, and we may turn the scales a little, and look at our trials, — those family trials, those personal trials,

those temptations. O, when we look at that side of things, when we look at our weakness and our darkness, oh, then we begin to be tried about it, and feel "Can this be of God? can these be his leadings?" Then we have to search, and we are like the man that Elijah sent toward the sea to go and see if there were any sign of rain; and he said, "There is nothing," and we can see nothing. Everything seems lost, and we feel like Job who said, "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there, and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him; he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him" (Job 23:8-9). It is all gone. I have been there many a time, and I should have been glad if I had known that the Lord were leading me there, but I have feared he had left off leading. O what changes there are! How you get turned from light into darkness, and from summertime to winter times, and you are ready to think you are altogether deceived! Well, just let me tell you, friends, that all these things are of God. Yes, they are of God, and they are good — I am sure they are. They are good; they are right; every affliction is a blessing. Yes, depend upon it, he is-

"Good, when He gives, supremely good,
Nor less when He denies;
E'en crosses from His sovereign hand
Are blessings in disguise."

They are, friends; you may take this for granted-they, are absolutely necessary or the Lord would not suffer them. What God does is right. Yes, and let me also say this, if you could see it as he sees it, you would say it is right. We do not know what this hedge is for, and that wall is for; it is because of the ditch on the other side. It is mercy that keeps us back. And God does it by afflictions and by losses, to cut down, to make us lean upon his blessed arm. There is no telling where we should go if he were to leave us.

And then, you know, he says, — "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the LORD." You could not think this is God's way, but it is. He led them by the right way. And now, just before I conclude, let me tell you this, friends — the ultimatum-the right way is God, is Christ. Yes — "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6). O, to be led, and led, and tutored, and tutored, and schooled, and schooled, and emptied, and emptied, and shown thy weakness, — these things are preparatory to fit thee for Christ, for his spotless righteousness, for his salvation. These are the very persons that prize a free salvation, and a free Christ, and when they have got into this right way, all that he puts into it he leads on and on to Christ-Christ in his person, Christ in his fitness, Christ in everything.

"And he led them forth by the right way that they might go to a city of habitation," — which is heaven, which is glory, a blessed kingdom. That is what is to be the end. May God bring us there, and lead us there, whatever we have to pass through here, that we may go "to a city of habitation!" Amen!

Thus far my God has led me on,
And made His truth and mercy known;
My hopes and fears alternate rise,
And comforts mingle with my sighs.

Through this wide wilderness I roam,
Far distant from my blissful home;
Lord, let Thy presence be my stay,
And guard me in this dangerous way.

Temptations everywhere annoy,
And sins and snares oft make me sigh;
My earthly joys are from me torn,
And oft an absent God I mourn.

My soul, with various tempests tossed,
Her hopes o'ertumed, her projects crossed,
Sees every day new straits attend,
And wonders where the scene will end.

Is this, dear Lord, that thorny road
Which leads us to the mount of God?
Are these the toils Thy people know,
While in this wilderness below?

'Tis even so; Thy faithful love
Does all Thy children's graces prove;
'Tis thus our pride and self must fall
That Jesus may be all in all.

— John Fawcett

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 06 / 2016 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

FOR THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

***Bowdoin, Maine, April* 14, 1845.**

Brother Beebe: In reading the "Signs of the Times" my mind has been led to write: in this my mind has been led to exclaim, Signs of what Times? spiritual, or temporal, or both? When I take into consideration the temporal signs, as I have observed them these few years past, and in comparing them with what the word of God says of such times, I am led to think that we are near some great end; either a dissolution of our United States, or some great calamity, or blessing, or the end of the world; which I believe will come in God's own time, and as he has the times and seasons in his own power, he will bring them about in his own time, and his wisdom being the wisdom of God, human wisdom cannot calculate it any nearer than it can the day of one's death: and as man's life is in the hand of *God, so* is the world; but as the revelation of God gives us some signs, so they that are found watching in the way that Christ has commanded will not fail to observe some *of* them. So when I hear of earthquakes in divers places, and famine and pestilence, and such an excitement in politics and party spirit arising, and steam works going so high, and men even flying, &c., we may know that something is near, for in reading history we shall observe that after those things there have been great overturns. So there seems to be natural signs that foretel the works of God.

Spiritual signs — a departure from the true doctrine of Christ by them that

profess to be God's people and how do they depart? by taking steam, which runs them into the doctrines of men, and that leads men into all the popular religion of the day, which is fashions and inventions of men, and their religion is founded on eternal salvation, and being left to men's choice, which religion will deny the doctrine of God's word, and lead to the mist of darkness forever; and this kind of religion filling the world at this time, makes it dark indeed; and there being so few that are established in the sovereign choice of God in saving his people, that it is only here and there that we see a star, or rather, the moon seems to be eclipsed by the clouds of false doctrine, for it is only here and there that the church breaks through these clouds to give any light; and this gives the children of God perplexity, and men's hearts are filled with fear for those things that are coming on the earth. Truly the words of the Redeemer seem to be fulfilling very fast, and as there has been a great trimming up of professors' lamps, so now we may look for a time of trial to see whose lamps will burn and whose will go out: and I think if we examine closely we shall find some of that disposition already, so when ye see these things come to pass, then look up, for your redemption draweth nigh. So we find that the true church of Christ has no reason to fear from what is now going on in the world, but rather to rejoice that they see the word of God prove so true, and his promises so sure, that all the steam works of men with all their inventions cannot frustrate one of them, and so the true believers will be led to comfort one another with these words, the very words of Christ and his Apostles, revealed unto us by his Spirit, which gives us an assurance that his promises are yea and amen, to the glory of God.

Yours, &c.,
J. Brown

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will be held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church located at the intersection of Music Street and Weatherford Drive, Gretna, VA in Pittsylvania County the second Sunday and Saturday before in July, 2016. The song service will begin at 9:30 a.m. with service at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton
Clerk Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 2016

Kristina Abbott, VA 25.00
Roland Allen, GA 5.00
Alvis Shelton, VA 15.00
Raymond Joyce, VA 25.00
Gary Whaling, WV 5.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER MARY COX MARSHALL

We at Old Union Primitive Baptist Church are deeply saddened by the passing of our beloved Sister in Christ, Sister Mary Cox Marshall. She was born November 25, 1927 and passed from this life January 16, 2016, making her stay on this earth 88 years. She asked for a home with Old Union Primitive Baptist Church on the 4th Sunday in April, 1963 and was baptized by Elder B. O. Thompson on the 3rd Sunday in May, 1963. Sister Mary was preceded in death by her loving husband James Marshall and a son Randy Marshall.She leaves to mourn her passing, her son Donald Marshall, Grandchildren, James, Mallory, Jessica, Thomas, and Katherine, her only living Sister, Darcie Cox Semones, many nieces and nephews, and a host of friends, including her church family as well. Sister Mary was very faithful to attend her meetings at Old Union Primitive Baptist church as well as the other churches in our correspondence, for as long as her health permitted her to do so. Sister Mary believed in Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. She suffered many sorrows and tribulations throughout her life here on this earth,but through it all she was blessed to look to her Lord for all her help and strength. Sister Mary will be sadly missed by all who knew and loved her. We hope the Lord will make us reconciled that our loss is her eternal gain. Sister Mary's funeral was conducted by Elder Larry Hollandsworth, her Pastor, at the Horne Funeral Home Chapel in Christiansburg, Virginia on Saturday, January 23, 2016 at 1:00 pm. She was laid to rest in the Roselawn Memorial Gardens in Christiansburg, Virginia, to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. May God have all the Honor, Praise and Glory forever Done by order of the Church in conference on March 27, 2016, one copy to be sent to the family, one for the Signs of the Times for publication and one copy for our church records.

Elder Larry Hollandsworth, Moderator
Sandra Hollandsworth, Clerk

ELDER RALPH GAINES

We, the members of the Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church, desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father. In His infinite wisdom, He saw fit to remove from our midst our Brother in Christ, Elder Ralph Gaines. On Sunday morning, March 13, 2016, Elder Gaines was relieved of a long, trying illness. With his loving family by his side, he drew his last peaceful breath.

Elder Gaines served in the National Guard Reserves and was employed by Western and Southern Insurance Company until he became disabled. He was

born on December 21,1935, to Thelma Gaines Stutts and Charlie Gaines. For 59 years, he was married to Sister Carolyn Cochran Gaines. Along with Sister Carolyn, he is survived by daughters: Martha Rudisill and Sheila Anderson, son: Keith Gaines, nine grandchildren and six great-grandchildren; sisters: Mildred Hart, Blanche Birchett, and Virginia Birchett.

In 1968, Elder Gaines asked for a home and was received as a member of Gaines Grove Primitive Baptist Church, Goldston, NC. Shortly thereafter, he was ordained as a deacon and in 1970 was ordained as a minister. He served Rock Hill Primitive Baptist Church in Asheboro, NC, for 40 years and moved his membership there. Among other churches he served were Gaines Grove in Goldston, NC, Flat Top in Dobson, NC, and Tom's Creek in Denton, NC. He was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace. It is our belief that he preached the true Word of God, and he did it with an aura of sweetness. He often used personal experiences to give credence to his belief. On April 2, 2015, upon the closing of Rock Hill, he and Sister Carolyn moved their membership to Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church.

The long illness of Elder Gaines began at age 55. He was intermittently in the care of a nursing facility. Strokes and falls seemed to be constant companions. The last fall was so severe that he never recovered. All the while, he kept his faith; and his loving wife, Sister Carolyn, was by his side. Through all his adversity, he was blessed to preach his last sermon at Big Meadows Primitive Baptist Church. From his wheel chair, he delivered words of faith, hope, and his love for the Church. We believe he could witness with Paul as he wrote in II Timothy 4:7-8:

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

Elder Gaines' sweet funeral was conducted at Pugh Funeral Home, Asheboro, NC, by Elders Cleo Robertson and Jimmy Gray both of whom delivered kind and consoling words interwoven with the Gospel as preached by Christ. With military honors, he was laid to rest at Randolph Memorial Park.

We desire that the family and friends be reconciled to God's will and cherish the love he had for them. May the words of a song from our Hymn and Tune book be especially consoling to Sister Carolyn:

When I in heaven with God appear,
There shall I him adore;
Destroyed shall be my sin and fear,
And I cast down no more.

"God is our refuge and strength,a very present help in trouble." Psalms 46:1

Written in love by Sarah Sidbury

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

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HYMN

In songs of sublime adoration and praise,
Ye pilgrims for Zion who press,
Break forth, and extol the great Ancient of Days,
His rich and distinguishing grace.

His love, from eternity fixed upon you,
Broke forth and discovered its flame,
When each with the cords of his kindness he drew,
And brought you to love his great name.

O had he not pitied the state you were in,
Your bosoms his love had ne'er felt;
You all would have lived, would have died too in sin,
And sunk with the load of your guilt.

What was there in you that could merit esteem,
Or give the Creator delight?
'Twas "even so, Father!" you ever must sing,
"Because it seemed good in thy sight."

Twas all of thy grace we were brought to obey,
While others were suffered to go
The road which by nature we chose as our way,
Which leads to the regions of wo.

Then give all the glory to his holy name,
To him all the glory belongs;
Be yours the high joy still to sound forth his fame,
And crown him in each of your songs.

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EDITORIAL

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." Ephesians 6: 10-11.

Elder J. B. Farmer

At the outset, I must acknowledge that for a proper understanding of the scriptures, one must be given revelation from above. No amount of study of commentaries, or even of the original language; no amount of searching out the context, or of compiling other seemingly agreeable scriptures on the subject will result in the knowledge of the truth. Those are the methods taken by the natural mind to attempt to understand God's word, but they will not suffice for the Lord's people; for God has hidden His things from the wise and prudent and has revealed them to babes. God has said that they (the worldly minded people) are ever learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Nevertheless, all of God's children are blessed to meditate on God's word, and to beg Him for wisdom and understanding. And the Lord is merciful to gather truly agreeable scriptures together and to present them for the comfort and edification of His little ones. In all this, the Lord God is glorified, and not man, which is just as it should be. God will not give His glory to another. He that glorieth, let Him glory in the Lord. All true knowledge is the gift of God. "Every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down from above, from the Father of lights in whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

It appears that another scripture is perfectly on the same subject with the one at the head. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strongholds, the casting down of imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God; bringing every thought into captivity, unto the obedience of Christ." This scripture is so powerful, and so other worldly, and so contrary to human understanding that it cannot be believed apart from the grace of God. May it please the Creator

of heaven and earth to open a little of the meaning of His word unto us.

In the visible kingdom, where there are wars and rumors of wars, men use huge and powerful machines and explosives to pull down walls, and to remove the defenses of the enemy in order to defeat them. They use force to impose their philosophy or way of thinking upon others who disagree with them. They use strong persuasion, propaganda and intimidation to convince others that their way is best. And to finish their work, they jail or eliminate those who will not submit to them and their ways. Hatred is their motivating principle. By doing all these things they are deceived to think they are making a better world, not realizing that they are actually doing the devil's bidding.

Our battle is not a natural conflict, but a spiritual one. Our enemy is not a natural man, but is Satan, the devil. He is the adversary of all of God's elect. He is the one going up and down in the earth as a ravening lion seeking whom he may devour. He is the accuser of the brethren. He is the tempter, and the unpersuaded one. He is that great deceiver of men. The warfare of the Lord's people is in an entirely different arena from that of the world, and is against an entirely different enemy. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places."*

The implements of the warfare of God's children are spiritual, which means that they are not of the visible kingdom seen with natural eyes, but are of the invisible kingdom which is only seen by grace. It is written, "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which the Lord has prepared for them who love him. But he hath revealed them unto us by his spirit." The natural man has never seen, heard, nor understood anything of the warfare of the child of God, neither of the weapons that God has given to him that he might stand. Those spiritual weapons prepared for those who love God are revealed to be the whole armour of God. They are truth, righteousness, the preparation of the gospel of peace, faith, salvation and the word of God. Every child of God is so equipped, and is not lacking anything for the warfare in which he must be engaged. First of all, his loins have been girt about with truth. What is this truth which girds about God's little ones and so strengthens them for battle? Jesus said, "I am the way the truth and the life." He is our strength and truth. It is written, "Thy word is truth."

What is the breastplate of righteousness which has been put upon us to protect our life and soul from the enemy? The apostle was blessed to say, "He (Jesus) of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." We have no righteousness. We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. All we like sheep have gone astray. Jesus is our righteousness. He never sinned, and He imputed His righteousness unto us, and took upon Himself our sin and, "He who knew no sin, was made to be sin for us

that we should be made the righteousness of God in Him."

What does it mean to have your feet shod with the preparation gospel of peace? The children of God are commanded to be always ready to give an answer to every man who asks of you the reason of your hope. Every little one has an experience of grace, and has a testimony to the experience of being translated from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of His dear Son. God has prepared the tongue of His little ones to speak of His goodness to them, and to show forth His praise. Everywhere you walk, your feet are upheld in the gospel of Christ who is our Peace. He is your hope, and He will give you a word in season. Jesus commanded the healed Gadarene to, "Go home and tell your friends how great things the Lord has done for you."

What is the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked? Faith is the gift of God. It is not our faith, it is His faith which He has given to us. Our faith is in Him. He is our faith. He has taken all the fiery darts of the wicked. It is Christ who took the stripes that healed His people. It is Christ that took all the mocking and cursing and spitting. It is Him who bore all things in order to protect us from them. It was Jesus that was crucified for our sins. He quenched all the fiery darts of the wicked in His flesh.

What is the helmet of salvation? Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in whom all the Godhead dwells bodily is our salvation. He fulfilled the law on our behalf. He fulfilled the prophesy that went before Him. He satisfied the justice of God on our behalf, which one said, "must have sunk a world to hell." He endured the wrath of God in our place. He finished all the work of salvation perfectly and completely.

The sword of the Spirit is the word of God. The Word of God is God Himself. "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God." The prophet spoke of Jesus saying, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace..." He is all and all to His people. He is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Jesus is our truth, our righteousness, our good news, our faith, our salvation and our God. We are in Him and He is in us. In Him we live and move and have our being. He is over us, around us, under us, and in us. If God be for us who can be against us? Seeing this is true, we are commanded to stand against the wiles of the devil, which we must do; by the grace and power of God.

We are not told to chase Satan down and attack him, but to stand against him and his wickedness when he comes. And come he must. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happeneth to you." "It must needs be that offenses come, but woe be to that one by whom they come." "There must be heresies among you that they which are approved of God should be manifest." "Wherefore, take unto you

the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand."

We are taught that our trials are a necessary part of our experience. Our faith must be tested to show that it is real faith and not counterfeit. Many profess to believe, but when the test comes, the hireling flees. But by the grace of God and by the power of God, and to the glory of God, His little ones shall be blessed to stand. They are lights in the world and the salt of the earth. They will be blessed to be faithful until death that they might receive the crown of life. The scripture is true, "We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

May the Lord God be praised in all things.

Elder J. B. Farmer

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE MINISTRY. — No. VI.

(Extract of a Letter.)

Dear Sister in Christ Jesus,the Saviour of poor, lost, needy sinners, - May the infinite and everlastling love of God the Father, the mercy and grace of God the Son, and the blessed influence and comforting indwelling of God the Holy Spirit, be with you and your dear partner in life. Amen. Agreeably to your request. I have procured Mr. Herbert's Hymns, and may God the Spirit bless the reading of them, and enlighten you to juice in the doctrinal and experimental truths they contain. I can say of a truth, they have been made a blessing to me, in establishing my faith and love in those great and glorious truths they contain. I have no doubt but you are still at war at the great enemy of souls, and with his allies, which are the inbred corruptions of depraved nature; these things being contrary to our best designs and best pursuits, furnishes us with a daily cross, which the ever-blessed Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, tells us to take up daily, and follow him; and, blessed be his name, he gives us strength, and faith, and hope, according to our day; for as a good man once observed, we believe in God with his own faith, we hope in his mercy with his own hope, we love him with his own love, we fear him with his own fear, and worship him with his own Spirit, and his own truth; and all these things come down from him, all to return to him again, in confessions, in prayers, in praises, and in thanksgivings. Thus, my dear friend, the Lord is pleased to make known his power and love to His dear blood-bought family; and, no doubt but the spouse was in such a happy frame of soul when she sat down under his shadow, and his fruit was sweet to her taste, and his banner over her was love; and when we are thus favoured and fed with spiritual food, our souls are revived, and we grow in knowledge of our interest clear in the Lord Jesus, and love to his precious name, and we view him as our all in all, that is, all our delight, all our happiness, all our dependence, all our peace, and all our soul's salvation. Blessed forever be his dear name, he is so to all needy sinners

who trust in him. And now may the saving grace of a dear and precious Redeemer be with you and your family, and all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Thus prays your unworthy, though sincere and affectionate friend in the bonds of Gospel charity,
November 10th, 1813. B.F.

Editorial - New Vernon, New York, June 15, 1845.

WHERE IS THE CHURCH

An inspired writer has said, "As the lilly among thorns, so is my love among the daughters," None who are born of God and taught by his Spirit can doubt that this figure is intended to describe the condition as well as the superior excellence of the church above the daughters. She is called the "Love, Dove, and Undefiled" of her Beloved. The figure of a Lilly not only describes the modest beauty of the church, but shows, according to the instructions of our Lord, that her exceeding glory although surpassing that of the regal splendor of Solomon, is not the result of her own labor. She toils not to procure it, she spins nothing that would answer for warp or for what her life is derived from an invisible Root, and her head is bowed under the genial rays of the Sun. But she is not only like the lilly as that flower stands gracefully in the field, or among other beautiful flowers, but she is like the lilly among thorns. How truly does the church of Christ answer to the figure in all its fullness of illustration! God has chosen her in a furnace of affliction, and she has ever, in her militant state, been among the rude briars and thorns. The earth, groaning under the curse of the righteous Creator, is destined to produce thorns and thistles, and while this world remains the temporary abode of the church she must encounter them. One of her most prominent sons prayed no less than three times that the thorn might be removed, but was referred to the sufficiency of the grace of God to sustain him and bear him through all the buffetings of Satan. To those who have discernment in spiritual things how admirably does the church contrast with that by which she is surrounded. —All that the lilly is of itself is merely grass of the field which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, but God has so clothed her as to challenge comparison with the most exalted glory of the earth. All flesh is as grass, and all the goodliness thereof [that is produced by human power, or the flesh, for all that is born of the flesh, whether physical or mental, is flesh] is as the flower of the grass; the grass withereth, the flower thereof fadeth away, but the Word of the Lord abideth forever. While the flower thereof, that is, the goodliness of the flesh, or grass, may adorn the meadow, but, in common with the grass with which it is connected, it cannot survive the dissolution of the flesh or grass; but God so clothes it (the church) in the garments of salvation as to secure the glory as an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and cannot fade away.

"Defiled and loathsome as we are,

He makes us white and calls us fair,
Adorns us with that heavenly dress;
His grace, and his righteousness.

Consequently the church is enabled through grace to sing, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God, for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." (Isa. lxi. 10.) She "is all glorious within, her clothing is of wrought gold, she shall be brought unto the King in garments of fine needle work. (Psalms xlv. 13.) All human beauty and creature excellency, compared with the church of the living God, which is the ground and pillar of the truth, are but as thorns. Zion is pronounced in the language of inspiration the perfection of beauty; it cannot therefore be improved. Earth has no colors nor has creation charms to lend which would not obscure her beauty. And although her peculiar excellency appears not to the eyes of an adulterous generation, for except a man be born again he cannot see her, because the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned; still all her attractions are clearly apprehended by those unto whom the Spirit of God reveals her. To them she appears as the New Jerusalem, descending from God out of heaven adorned as a bride for her husband. She looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. Understanding these to be some of the general characteristics of the church of God, may we not inquire, Where may she be found at this day? — We cannot consistently believe that Christ has no church on earth at the present day; and if he has a church now upon the earth she must bear the lineaments which are drawn in the New Testament. We shall not find her at the corners of the streets, in harlots attire, seeking for lovers; from her lips will not be heard the silly boast, "I have peace offerings with me, this day have I paid my vows." — (Prov. vii. 14.) She cannot be recognized in any other dress than the garments of salvation which her Lord has given her. The daughters spoken of, Isa. iii. 16-26, with their haughty carriage, stretched forth necks, wanton eyes, and mincing walk, making a tinkling with their feet, with their cauls, and their round-tires like the moon, their chains, and bracelets, and the mufflers, the bonnets and the ornaments, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the ear rings, and the rings, and nose jewels, changeable suits of apparel, mantles, and wimples, and crisping pins, glasses, fine linen, hoods, and veils, are only the thorns by which the lilly of the vallies is surrounded. "There are threescore queens and fourscore concubines and virgins without number; my dove, my undefiled is but one, she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bear her." — (Cant. vi. 8 & 9.)

In order to demonstrate the existence of the church of Christ on earth at the present day, we must find a community of saints corresponding to the primi-

tive pattern, of eighteen hundred years ago — a people whose only beauty consists in the comeliness which Christ has put upon them — a people saved by the Lord who is the shield of their help and the sword of their excellency, and whose enemies are found liars unto them — (Deut. xxxiii. 29) — A people dwelling alone and not reckoned among the nations with no governmental patronage from the powers of the world — a kingdom that is not of this world, nor visible to the world because they are the sons of God; the world because they are the sons of God; the world knoweth them not because it knew him not — A poor and afflicted people trusting in the name of the Lord — a persecuted people, for if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus he shall suffer persecution. Their names shall be cast out of men, and they shall be hated of all men for Christ's name's sake. They are regarded as the off scouring of all things, accused and slandered in like manner as their divine Lord and Master was; for if these things were done in the green tree they shall be repeated in dry, if they called the Master of the house Beelzebub they will also call them of his household so.

These are only some of the outlines of the church of Christ. She is also characterized by her one Lord, one faith, and one baptism." — Her faith is as radically different from that of every other professing people on earth as are her Lord and her baptism. Of her faith Jesus is the Author and Finisher; but that of all other religious bodies either originates with themselves or is derived from the doctrines, traditions, and instruction of men. But blessed is she, for flesh and blood hath not revealed these things to her, but her heavenly Father has taught her by his Holy Spirit. She is the opposite of all other sects in regard to her food, her appetite, and the source from which all her supplies are received. Others can and do eat their own bread and wear their own apparel; but she must eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus. Nothing short of the true Bread which came down from heaven, that kind which Moses never gave, can satisfy her; but her neighbors, or the thorns among which she is situated do not see why the bread that Moses gave is not good enough.

Christ's church is a peculiar people, in all respects essentially different from the-religionists of this world. She comprises a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation, and shows forth the praises of him who hath called her out of darkness and translated her into the kingdom of his dear Son. The doctrine which her faith takes hold of is that which cannot possibly suit any body else under heaven. And, if there be any who have not passed from death unto life, who fancy that that they can understand and love the doctrine by which the church of God is distinguished, they are deluded. As none knoweth the things of man but by the spirit of a man that is in him, (for the spirit of man being taken from any man but a dead and unconscious corpse remains,) neither knoweth any man the things of the Spirit but by the Spirit. And unless we be born of the Spirit and that Spirit abide in us, we are as dead to all spiritual things as

the human body is to natural life after the animal spirit has departed. It is therefore quite as practicable to teach the tenants of the tombs of the English grammar, or any science, as to teach the things of the Spirit of God to unregenerate men. The church of God, if found at all, will be found in possession of doctrine which cannot be taught by every or any man to his neighbor saying, know the Lord; it cannot be taught nor learned in Sabbath schools or what are called theological schools; nor can it be derived from reading the Bible or hearing it expounded, even if Paul himself were the expounder, for the natural man cannot receive it, it is spiritually discerned. Every organized body of professors of religion who hold a doctrine which they can teach their unregenerate fellow men is a branch of anti-christ; and the nature and attainableness of their faith proves that they have not the faith of God's elect, and that their faith stands in the wisdom of men and not in the power of God. See 1 Cor. ii. 5. The primitive church acknowledged Christ as the only spiritual King, the true and only Potentate who only hath immortality dwelling in the light which no man can attain unto. That church cannot now be identified where Christ is not so regarded; nor is he so regarded by any church, sect, or people who hold that there is spiritual life anywhere else, or that the light in which he dwelleth can be approached. To approach is to make some advance towards the object; but this no man can do, as the members of the church of Christ know right well. The true church now, as in her primitive days, depends on God to raise up, qualify, send forth, and sustain the ministers of gospel. Those who heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears are not the church of Christ. To him who ascended up on high, who led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, they look for all the gifts which the church can need, — to him who reigns, being exalted a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins, and to him alone they look to bring sinners to repentance and to cause the redeemed of the Lord to return with singing to Zion and everlasting joy upon their heads. To him who opened the doors of death, and rose triumphantly from the grave, who conquered sin and hell, they look for support, comfort, deliverance, and victory.

Finally, the church of our Redeemer is the circumcision who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

ROMANS 8: 1-4.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh; but after the Spirit.

Meditations on
THE BOOK OF RUTH
by Elder T. Floyd Adams
January, 1945

We are taught in the Scriptures that "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Rom. 15:4. Again the apostle, Paul, tells us that "The law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things." Heb. 10:1. There are only four chapters in the book of Ruth, and to my mind the four chapters beautifully portray Jesus, the church under the law and, also, the church in the gospel dispensation. There are principal characters whose names are mentioned in this book, namely: Elimelech, Naomi (his wife), Mahlon and Chilion (their sons), Orpah, Ruth, Boaz (a mighty man of wealth) and the little son of Boaz and Ruth whose name was Obed. The other characters were the reapers and maidens of Boaz. Naomi said, "I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty: why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the Lord hath testified against me?" Ruth. 1:21. Now Naomi, her husband and their two sons dwelt in Bethlehem Judah, and there was a famine in the land, and they went to the country of Moab and continued there. Is not the famine in the soul the reason a convicted sinner moves out of his former state in search of comfort and rest? After they arrived in the country of Moab, the Lord sent further afflictions on Naomi by taking her husband from her. Mahlon and Chilion "took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years." Mahlon and Chilion died; the tender cords of earthly ties were severed; gloom and despair sank deep into her soul. Her husband (the law) was dead, her two sons were dead and all her all her earthly possessions were gone. What a dark and gloomy picture! Dear reader, could you witness with Naomi when you came to the end of the law with no hope of heaven? I can hardly refrain from shedding tears as I contemplate the scene. But, suddenly Naomi heard a little good news, how the Lord had visited his people in Bethlehem Judah in giving them bread. So she arose with her two daughters-in-law and resolved to make the journey back. The prodigal son said, "I will arise and go to my father." Luke 15:18. Just, how far they went before Naomi introduced her subject to them, the Scriptures are silent. Would I do violence to the Scriptures if I say that they came to the border line of Bethlehem Judah and Moab? Naomi said, "Go, return each to her mother's house — are there yet any more sons in my womb?" She brought out the impossible, and said, "for I am too old to have an husband," meaning that she was too old to bear children and that if it were possible for her to bear any more sons, Orpah and Ruth would be too old for them and her sons would be too young for Orpah and Ruth. It may appear from the words of Naomi that she had turned the cold shoulder to her daughters-in-law. Ah! but not so. She was testing the love, zeal

and affection they had for her; for she well knew that unless they dearly loved her they would not be willing to face hunger and starvation. It has been said by our critics that we offer very little or no inducement for people to unite or join with us, and that we manifest but little concern for those who are on the outside of the church, but this is not true. Dear child of God, if you love us, we love you. But like Naomi, we have no worldly attractions to offer nor earthly amusements for entertainment. We would also like to know if you feel as Moses of old, "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Heb. 11:25. "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." Acts 14:22: "And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me?" At this point, Orpah kissed her mother-in-law and went back to her people, "but Ruth clave unto her." The law rolls back but the gospel moves on. The forceful expression which has found a responsive cord in the hearts of those who are born of God were uttered by Ruth, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go: and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God, my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried." Naomi "left speaking unto her." When you, dear brother or sister, see such manifestations of the love of God in the hearts of his dear saints, are you not ready to embrace them into the fellowship of the church and say to them as Laban said to Abraham's servant, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without?" Gen. 24:31. What a wonderful manifestation of the love of God, exhibited in the life of Ruth. She turned her back on her earthly parents and kindred in the country of Moab. How beautifully her life compares with the language of Jesus, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." Luke 14:26. We are not told, but we would assume that her parents could have provided her with an adequate apartment at the death of her husband and given her the earthly comforts of life, but this does not satisfy the hungry soul. She, like Naomi, was in search of that bread (Jesus) which her mother-in-law heard that the Lord had given to his people after the famine in Bethlehem Judah. Note, they have not as yet received this bread, but are in search of it, and Naomi has some hopes of receiving it at the hand of her near kinsman, Boaz, "a mighty man of wealth," (Jesus). Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt. Ruth was a young woman and a widow also, and humanly speaking, she could have stepped out far ahead of her mother-in-law who was old and decrepit. But she seemed content to travel along with Naomi and share her sorrows through all of this long and lonely journey from, the country of Moab to Beth-lehem Judah. Just how far this distance is we are not told, but in the experience of the unworthy writer, it was a lonely travel of twenty-one years. At last, they reached the city. Note the change in the appear-

ance of Naomi. The people could hardly believe this was she. "All the city was moved about them, and they said, Is this Naomi?" But she said, "Call me not Naomi, call me Mara." The word Naomi means sweet; the word Mara means bitter. She said, "the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me." She is no more that sweet and lovable character in her own estimation. The Lord has emptied her of self-works and beauty. For she said. "I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty." Notice that she did not say, he sent me, but "the Lord hath brought me home;" like David who said, "He brought me to the banqueting house." Also, the man who fell among thieves was carried to the inn by the good Samaritan, and Abraham's servant said, "I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." Could the servant have failed to reach the house of his mas-ter's brethren, since he was in the "way?" And Jesus says, "I am the way." And Ruth and Naomi "came to Bethlehem in the beginning of the barley harvest."

Beginning with the second chapter of Ruth, first verse, we read as follows: "And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz. And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter." We will notice first that Ruth desires to have the full consent of her mother-in-law to go and glean in the field of Boaz. Is it not true, dear reader, that you desire to have the approbation of the church in all of your travels? Not only did she ask permission, to go and glean in the field, she asked the servant of Boaz if she might glean after the reapers. This shows that she did not care to be an intruder. Having obtained permission, she gleaned from morning until evening and beat out that which she had gleaned and took it to her in mother-in-law, for Naomi was only interested in the good grain. Is this not a type of the gospel field? She left the chaff and straw behind. The church is only interested in the good grain (Jesus). It appears that Ruth had gleaned several days when Boaz made his appearance in the field and the first thing he said unto the reapers was, "The Lord be with you. And they answered him, The Lord bless thee." What is the salvation for? Boaz is acknowledging the hand of God in their temporal blessings. The Lord had withheld the first and latter rain for several years, and there was a famine in the land. But now he smiles upon them and they are favored with a bountiful crop. Is this not a true sign of the gospel church today? She will acknowledge the hand of God in her temporal blessings, as well as spiritual. How true is the type; when the rain falls, it must first come through the roots in order for the plant to grow. The Lord said, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." So the heavenly rain must first come through the root, Jesus, for he is the root and the offspring of David, and Paul said, "Thou hearest not the root, but

the root thee." So all of our suffering, trials and sorrows, as well as our joys must first come through Jesus, for he was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." What a joy it must have brought to the reapers for Boaz to make his appearance in the field and give directions and instructions. Dear servant of God, do you not ofttimes feel to be at your wit's end, and do you not long for the Master to come and give you renewed evidence of your call to the ministry and supply you with words that are fitly spoken, which Solomon says are "like apples of gold in pictures of silver," that they may be for the edification of the saints and in honor and praise to our precious and heavenly Master? In verse five, we see that Boaz takes notice of Ruth, and after the servant gives him a full explanation of her coming, he says unto her, "Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens." What kind and sympathetic words from this "mighty man of wealth" (Jesus) to a poor, helpless widow and stranger. How unworthy she felt for one so high and lofty to condescend and take notice of her. Read her own words in verse ten: "Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?" In Solomon's humble petition to God in the dedication of the Holy Temple, he fervently asked the Lord to remember the stranger that "is come from a far country." Chron. 6:32. In the book of Leviticus 19:33-36 we read where the Lord made provision for strangers. If this script should catch the eye of some poor and tempestuously tossed traveler who so often feels like the unworthy writer, a stranger, remember that our God has made ample provision for strangers. In verse nine he says, "When thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn." How favorably these words compare with the words of the Savior, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Is not this vessel a type of this old earthen vessel in which, Paul says, we have this treasure in an earthen vessel? Jesus said to the woman at the well of Samaria, the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Is not this young man, Jesus, formed in you the hope of glory? Are we not blessed at times to drink from this vessel? Sometimes when we meet for worship, other times when traveling alone? And often when we wake up in the dark hours of night and when this living water flows so sweetly into our souls, can we not witness with David of old, "My cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever?" And again we can say with the poet, "I need not go abroad for joy, I have a feast at home." At meal time, Boaz said, come hither and cat bread. This is what Ruth and Naomi had longed for when they left the country of Moab, for Naomi said she heard that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread and now they were partakers of it.

Ruth eats and takes home to her mother-in-law. When the Lord so wonderfully favors us with a little of this

bread, does he not also give us some to take to the church? He also said, dip thy morsel in the vinegar. We have no special light as to the spiritual significance of the expression, "dip thy morsel in the vinegar," we do know that vinegar makes many foods more palatable. He reached her some parched corn. Would it be well to say that this corn represents Jesus? Before corn is parched, it must be brought through the fire. So Jesus was brought through the furnace of afflictions and trod the winepress of the wrath of God alone, and of all the people there was none to help. Note, he did not say that no one was present but "there was none to help." Mine own arm hath brought salvation, and long before his crucifixion. Nebuchadnezzar saw him in a the fiery furnace when he put the three Hebrew children in and heated the furnace seven times hotter than was wont to be. The king said, "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." When David's brothers were in battle against the Philistines, he had a great desire to take them some parched corn. How well we know that God's humble poor are in a great warfare today, "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh," and we so often feel that the flesh will ultimately win the victory and sink us into despair. The writer has at times all but given up. I have often said to my wife when I would start out to church, "I haven't any subject for today." There are times when I walk into the pulpit and a silent voice will say, "The brethren are ashamed of you. Your life is far below the standard for a minister of the gospel, and the reason they don't tell you to stop is because they hate to tell you so." And I must confess that at such times when I feel so depressed, tired, hungry and faint, I am unable to tell whether it is the voice of the Lord or the voice of Satan. But I am more inclined at such times to believe it is the voice of God. But, ah! when I begin to partake of this "parched corn", it seems to penetrate through my whole being and suddenly gives me such renewed courage and strength, that I can say with the apostle of old, I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes. When I have such an experience as just recorded (which are few now and far between), I can turn to Satan and say, "get thee behind me; I will never adhere to your suggestions any more." But, ah! I have to be taught this lesson over and over again. Well did the apostle say that some are ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Such has been my experience. Boaz said to the reapers, "and let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not." Boaz, in his love and affection as will be seen from the narrative, is drawn out to Ruth, and Ruth is drawn out to Boaz. He shares his wealth with her, as will be seen from the words of Naomi in verse nineteen. "And where wroughtest thou?" It wasn't that she did not know, for she had given Ruth permission to go. But Ruth had

brought home so much more barley than usual through the kindness of Boaz that Naomi was anxious for her to tell the whole story, and there is no doubt in my mind that it was an interesting one. How true today, when we see the love of God manifested in the life of the dear little saints, we know that handfuls of purpose have been scattered around in the gospel field and they are partakers, but do we not like to hear them tell their experience in their own manner and way? Naomi now introduces the subject by telling Ruth: "The man is near of kin unto us." Ruth did not know this before. What would you say? If a child of God should relate the dealings of the Lord with him and you could see that he had been wonderfully favored, as Naomi could see from the words as well as the gift from Boaz, would you not say that Jesus is near of kin to us? Naomi brings the "us" in because both of them share in the blessings alike. Then she adds, "one of our next kinsmen." Verse twenty. Notice she did not say the man is our "nearest kinsman, but, "our next kinsman" or "near of kin to us". Boaz introduces the subject to Ruth concerning the "nearest" kinsman in the next chapter, which I hope to treat on in my next article if the Lord is willing."

After the barley harvest and wheat harvest had been completed, Naomi proceeded to give Ruth further instructions as will be seen in the third chapter and first four verses. She again reminds her of the fact that Boaz is "our kindred", and in as much as the barley harvest has been completed, the "winnowing is to take place that night in the threshing floor. Now, dear reader, do you not remember something about this threshing in the night time in your experience! You may have said, while standing in the field (or under the law) and the wind and storms beating upon you, "Oh, Lord, this is dreadful; I cannot hear any more," but at last we come through the threshing machine, then winnowed. Through this process, the precious is taken from the vile or the wheat is taken from the chaff. We have an example of this in Peter's denial of his Master the night the Savior was crucified. He went out and wept bitterly, and the Lord turned and looked upon Peter and said, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." He did not say that Peter's self-confidence would not fail but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not. Peter had said before, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison and to death. How graciously did the Master say, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me." Again he said, "before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice." Now comes the test. The little damsel said, "thou art a Galilean." Poor Peter is now scared and is now put into the Lord's sifter which is a part of his threshing machine, and it is operated by Satan, in order to remove in Peter his self-confidence from faith, hope and charity, which always remain in the sieve. There "abideth faith, hope, charity, these three."

Peter must learn again not to trust in self and must learn also the truth of what Jesus said, "without me ye can do

nothing." How often we have to be brought through this experience! So Naomi said to Ruth, "Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor." According to her instructions, she went down to the threshing floor. "When Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn." Ruth came softly and uncovered his feet and lay down. What a striking figure! Mary sat at the feet of Jesus and heard his words. She washed his feet and wiped them with the hairs (her glory) of her head. Is this not the feeling of every humble sinner to lie at the feet of Jesus and hear his gracious words as Ruth heard them from the lips of this "mighty man of wealth", Boaz? She now desires more of his loving kindness. This, she signifies by saying, "spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid." Now she relates to him what Naomi has acquainted her with before, "for thou art a near kinsman." Boaz tells her that she is a virtuous woman and he assigns the reason as being that she followed "not young man, whether poor rich." Solomon said, "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all." Prov. 31:29. The eye of Boaz is fastened upon Ruth. His heart and affection go out to her as if to say, "Thou art an fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." Cant. 4:7. Boaz now replies to Ruth regarding her kinship to him, and he introduces the subject by saying, "Now it is true that I am thy near kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I." I ask the patience of my readers while I endeavor to explain, by the help of God, this wonderful mystery. To my mind, this "nearest" kinsman does not apply to our nearest kin in earthly ties, but the first right in matrimony is invested in the elder by reason of God's law which was given to Moses as will be seen by the words of Laban to Jacob: "It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn. Fulfill her week, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years." Now Leah was tender eyed (or nearsighted). Is she not a type of the law? While "Rachel was beautiful and well favored," and to my mind is a type of the gospel. Paul said, "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another?" Paul did not say that the law was dead, but "ye also are become dead to the law." He expresses it in this way to show that the law has no power to give eternal life and happiness, for he goes on and says further that if there had been a law given that could have given life, verily, righteousness should have been by the law. Now after we have learned by our own experience that the law is a failure, and having come to the end, we are now prepared to receive the following words: "Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me), to do thy will, O God." Heb. 10:7. "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." Now when the day dawns, Ruth takes the six measures of barley which she received at the hand of Boaz and hurriedly goes back to her mother-in-law and tells her how graciously, kindly and wonder-

fully she has been favored at the hand of this "mighty man". Let us take special notice that in all her gleanings and gifts, she always went home and shared her blessings with her mother-in-law. How beautifully this agrees with the language of our Master, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee." As we read the eighteenth verse, again, our minds are attracted by the wonderful words of Naomi, "Sit still my daughter." Is it not good to sit still sometimes and see what the Lord will do? Moses said to the children of Israel, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." Naomi said also "For the man will not be in rest, until we have finished the thing this day." As proof of this statement, Boaz went up to the gate of Bethlehem Judah in search of this nearest kinsman and he "came by". He did not call his name, but said, "Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here." While it is on my mind, I would like to again reiterate as previously stated in a former article that Naomi is a type of the church under the law dispensation, and all the instruction that she was giving to Ruth was making her better acquainted and bringing her to Boaz. The law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. These words do not signify that you can come to Christ, but they simply mean that you have completed your school under the law and are now prepared for the reception of Christ. Just as a schoolboy, when he finishes the grammar grades, is ready for high school. As Laban said to Jacob. "Fulfill her week" (Leah, the laws, then it was legal according to the law of Moses for him to take Rachel also. Let it be fully understood that the nearer kinsman, Boaz, does not have a legal right to marry Ruth until he obtains it from the court of Israel. This he proceeded to do by taking "ten men of the elders of the city" of Bethlehem Judah, also "all the people that were in the gate" to bear testimony to all that was said between him and the nearest kinsman. The ten elders of the city, to my mind, represent the ten commandments of the law, while those that were in the gate represent the gospel. Remember, dear reader, that both sides must hear all the evidence and be witnesses to every word and to the whole transaction that is made between Boaz and the nearest kinsman. It takes two witnesses in court to establish a thing beyond a reasonable doubt. So it takes the law and the gospel to establish the act that Jesus proved his right as the legal possessor of His bride. How beautifully this agrees with the inspired prophet of old: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20. Boaz said unto the kinsman, Naomi that is come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land, which was our brother Elimelech's. He also acquainted him with the fact that he, the nearest kinsman (or law), has the first right to redeem it. So the nearest kinsman said, "I will redeem it." Then said Boaz, "What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance." Who can this dead signify except dead sinners? You

hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and in sin. So through this marriage of Boaz and Ruth, the name of Mahlon was raised up. As the type, so is the reality. Through this conception of Jesus and the church, these dead sinners are raised up. I now return to the nearest kinsman. When Boaz explained the full requirements and the things that were necessary to be done in order to obtain this field, the nearest kinsman said, "I cannot redeem it." "Redeem thou my right to thyself." This expression is positive proof and a full acknowledgment that he is a failure. And he further proves this by taking off his shoe. How agreeable are the words of the apostle, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh." Now Paul did not say the law was weak, but it was "weak through the flesh," for he said that, "the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin." But not so with Jesus, notwithstanding the fact that "It behooved him to be made like unto his brethren." "Yet without sin" there was no weakness in him. He met the requirements of God's just and holy law, satisfied its full demands and kept it to a jot or tittle."

Elder T. Floyd Adams

Continued next issue.

PROVERBS 22:1-2.

A GOOD name *is* rather to be chosen than great riches, *and* loving favour rather than silver and gold.

The rich and poor meet together: the Lord *is* the maker of them all.

PLEA FOR NEW INVENTIONS.

THE EVIDENCES URGED IN SUPPORT OF THE NEW RELIGIOUS INVENTIONS OF THE DAY, BRIEFLY CONSIDERED.
ALEXANDRIA, D. C., February 15, 1840.

By new religious inventions, we have special allusion to those modern innovations upon the faith and practice of the Baptist Church, by those who profess to be missionists, benevolent, &c., in distinction from the old-fashioned order of Baptists. These consist, in part, of Missionary, Bible, Tract, Education, (Theological) and other kindred Societies; the doctrine of indefinite atonement, the obligation and ability of sinners to repent, believe, and comply with what they denominate the requisitions of the gospel; together with the modern practice of protracted meetings, anxious-benches, magic lanterns, national and state conventions, &c., &c. In testimony that these are approved of God, we are frequently told of their astonishing success, the multitudes converted to their views; and in further confirmation that they enjoy the smiles of heaven, we are referred to the zeal, activity, and liberality of their concerts. But all this testimony is urged in the absence of any direct authority found in the scriptures of truth to sustain them. This fact has been frequently admitted by the advocates of these new things; the Convention of Western Baptists, some years since, reported that we might search the bible in vain, for direct authority; such authority was not there; and they have also assured us, that the bible was never de-

signed to embrace a precept for every thing which was obligatory on christians. And although some have pretended to assert the abundance of scriptural authority with which they say the bible abounds, yet they have invariably failed to produce any; and the more candid among them frankly acknowledge, with their western brethren, that they find none. They are necessarily driven, therefore, to hinge all their arguments on the ground of what they consider indications of' divine approbation. The most prominent indication which they bring forward, is that of the great increase of their number, and the apparent success which has attended their efforts. This argument standing first, and being, for aught we know, as plausible as any they have ever produced, claims our first consideration.

We readily admit that prior to the introduction of these things among them, the Baptists were by no means what they now are. A retrospect of the Baptist Church for eighteen hundred years, will present them as a poor and afflicted people, trusting in the name of the Lord; persecuted, despised, illiterate, embracing the poorest and most ignoble of the earth; her branches are few and far between; her ministers, from necessity, driving the plough, smiting the anvil. making tents, or in some similar employment, to minister to the necessities of themselves, and such as were with them; not because the churches were unwilling to relieve them from the distracting cares of this life, but because they were generally unable. The high arch of the heavens was, in many instances, the roof of their meeting-houses, the rugged ledges of Piedmont and elsewhere, were the cushions of their pews, the priestly robes of their ministers were composed of the cheapest materials, their mode of conveyance was on foot, their incentives to speed were persecution behind, and the hope of enjoying the sweet privilege of feeding and comforting the dear people of God before them; their salaries were often paid off at the whipping-post, but sometimes at the stake. They were not then thought suitable society for the affluent, the polite, the learned, or the noble. There was then very little among them to invite hypocrites to a connection with them. If we confine our observations within the boundaries of our own country, and only to the last century, while other denominations of professed christians were supported by legal patronage, the poor Baptists were compelled to pay tribute to them. Read the history of a Roger Williams, a Moss, a Warren, and a thousand more, of whom the world was not worthy, who have seated the loftiest mountains, penetrated the wildest forests, stemmed the most appalling discouragements, have traveled thousands and thousands of miles bare-footed, and destitute of comfortable apparel or food to satisfy the cravings of nature, and have baptized among the poor of such as God by his grace had brought to a knowledge of the truth, the constituent members of all our early churches. In those times, the Baptists had no organs in their meeting-houses, no fiddles to worship with, no velvet cushions in their pulpits or pews.

None will presume to say the Bap-

tists are now what once they were. In point of respectability, how have they improved! In the exulting language of Andrew Fuller, may it not be said, that prior to the introduction of his new system, the Baptists were "a mere dunghill in society." But as fine feathers make fine birds, the Baptists have changed their plumage, and now appear among the peacocks of the age. Now the Baptists have their Doctors of Divinity, their Colleges, their National and State Conventions; their churches occupy stately mansions with sounding bells and towering domes. Their clergy (a name unknown among the saints of God before) equipped in all the trappings of fashion and extravagance, dash on in their carriages, and make a show not to be eclipsed by the gay sons of Lucifer. No longer are they willing to wait for the Lord to build them up, to convert sinners, or to give them ministers to go in and out among them. They have acquired the art of getting up revivals, of preparing men for the ministry, of making converts to their faith and accessions to their number. The Baptists — a name despised among men, because it once designated a sect which were every where spoken against, are now courted by those very daughters of old Rome which used to whip, imprison, and sometimes even put to death the Baptists of former ages.

But we set out to consider the weight of argument brought forward by the New School Baptists. It has been more than once asserted through their prints, that the Old School or Anti-mission Baptists are losing ground, dwindling away, and will in another generation become extinct, or, as Waller says, "be annihilated;" while the Missionary Baptists are gaining, that the increase of some one or two of their associations in the year, will out number all that are baptized by all the Old School in the same time. And why do they make this boast! Surely, to prove that God has manifested his approbation of their new inventions, and his displeasure in the Old Anti-missionary Baptists.

But let us soberly consider, in the light of divine revelation and in the fear of God, to what extent this argument may avail them. If it holds good in reference to New School Baptists, will it not prove quite as much for the Methodists, who have only now reached the first hundred years of their existence; if they in one brief century have accumulated almost as great a number of members as the Baptists have in almost eighteen, would not the argument prove more for them than for the New School Baptists, What is to hinder the Mormons from urging the same testimony! their rapid increase in number during the few years of their existence, has perhaps outstripped all other orders, Read the following scrap, from the New School Baptist organ at Philadelphia "THE Mormons. — This fanatic sect have established regular meetings in our city. We have heard of late, of several unstable professors from our churches, who are being deluded by their ruinous errors, which in this enlightened age must astonish every reflecting mind. It is scarcely to be believed that they have crowded audiences every time they hold forth;

many, we dare to say, go for the love of novelty; but the greater number are led there through ignorance, and become their followers. This singular people profess to have the power of working miracles and declare that they have received a new revelation from God. Joe Smith, a raving, ignorant fanatic, is their leader; and he it is who pretends to have received the message from on high. It would be well if our churches would look up the straying sheep of their folds, lest they wander into forbidden paths."—Philadelphia Baptist Registry.

The Mormons of Philadelphia, we are told, are making and baptizing nearly as many disciples as are the Baptists; and many of the front bench converts from the Baptists, have recanted and gone over to the Mormons. Mark the lamentations of the former, expressed in the above extract. If indeed this argument weighs any thing, in point of demonstrating the divine approbation, certainly that sect, whether Jews, Pagans, Christians or Mormons, which can produce the greatest number, gains the point. We, the Old School Baptists, cannot, therefore, yield, on this argument, to the New School, who have assumed our name; for, if their argument proves any thing, it proves too much for their purpose.

Again. The New School often bring forward their zeal in the missionary cause, as an evidence of their piety: but will not the same argument hold equally good in reference to the Jews, the Mahometans, the Catholics, and the Mormons! The Jews compassed sea and land to make proselytes; the Mahometans sent their missionaries into far countries, with great success; the Catholics also had their Jesuits in all parts of the world; and now we learn from the New School papers, that the Mormons have their domestic missionaries in all the principal cities of our country; and that they have recently sent twelve of their apostles to England. Should not the New School Baptists give the right hand of fellowship to their Mormon Missionary brethren. If zeal in the mission cause is of God, this witness of divine approbation speaks more for the Mormons than for the Baptist; for the former have greater impediments to encounter, and therefore display a much warmer zeal, and a greater degree of industry, than the former.

The success which has attended the distribution of Tracts, and Sunday Schools, &c., is also a main pillar in sustaining the New School Baptists. In our last number, we copied an article from the S. S. Journal, showing that the indefatigable Owen, and his brotherhood of Fanny Wright men, were zealously engaged in the same business. "In some places," says the article alluded to, "Sunday and Infant Schools have been established, for the inculcating of infidel principles. A Tract Society has been formed, and six Tracts issued;" and they are very active in the distribution of these, among those whom they deem heretics. "There is a regular organized Central Board," says the Journal, "with a President, Vice President and Secretary, and a great number of salaried emissaries, whose whole time is devoted to the advancement of So-

cialism." Shocking, What right have Infidels to have Sunday, or Infant Schools, or Presidents, or, above all, to pay salaries? But we suppose they have the presumption to think, "Quod dem onstrat vobis, demonstrat nobis." And as the New School Baptists have acknowledged that the plan of disseminating doctrine by the use of Tracts, originated with the Infidels in France, and as Mr. Owen's party make no more pretention to scriptural authority for their Sunday and Infant Schools, and flattering titles for men, than the New School Baptists do, we presume they think they have about as much right to practice these anti-christian inventions, as though they acted under the cover of a christian profession. Another complaint urged against Mr. Owen's party is, that they are patronized by the nobles of Europe, and by the liberality of the affluent — They are filling England with their magnificent temples, &c. But after all, as we inquired in our last what is there in all their improvements, that would not pass off as pure divinity, if done under the name of religion? Is it said that Owen rejects the bible as a rule? This is granted; and so do the New School Baptists. Do Owen and his patrons promulgate damnable heresies and doctrines of devils? So do the New School Baptists; and as we have before said, so we again say, and believe we can abundantly prove, that the very elements of which Deism and Socialism are composed, may be found among the New School Baptists.

Another argument sometimes used to prove the modern doctrines and practices of New Schoolism to be correct, is the liberality of those converted to it; witness, for instance, the late eulogiums lavished on the Baltimore and Albany converts, who gave one thousand dollars each, for missionary purposes. This was cried up through the papers, as the genuine fruits of repentance; and the editor of the N. Y. Baptist Register, is of the opinion that the system he advocates, if fully carried out, would produce so many such instances, that they would be passed by as common affairs. Now we cannot discover that it needs supernatural light to see that Owen's system produces the very same kinds of fruits, and in greater abundance than that of Mr. Knapp. And finally, we challenge the New School Baptists to produce one solitary argument in support of their new order, that we cannot show, proves as much for Mormons and Infidels, as it can for them.

They are of late greatly occupied in controversy with their dear Pedo-Baptist brethren, on the subject of Baptism; and we have more than once felt disposed to say to them, "Sirs, ye are brethren; why strive ye one with the other!" But the Baptists say their anti-christian brethren have no scripture for sprinkling. True, they have not; nor have they any for christian baptism; that sacred ordinance belongs exclusively to the family of God. But let us ask, Have not the Pedo-Baptists the same authority for rantism, that the Baptists have for New Schoolism? The former plead that they have a right to rantize, and save souls in that way, because it is not forbidden; and the latter admit there is no direct authority for their

New School craft; but plead their right to it, upon the same ground as do the others for sprinkling.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 2016

Betty Walker, VA 5.00
Edna Graves, AL 5.00
Glenna Link, TN 5.00
Larry Byrd, NC 5.00
M. L. Richardson, FL 5.00

MEETINGS

LOWER MAYO 5TH SUNDAY MEETING

The next 5th Sunday Meeting will be held, The Lord Willing, Sunday, July 31, 2016.

Russell Creek Church will Host the meeting. The Meeting House is located at 242 Moorefield Store Rd., Stuart, VA 24171. Coming North or South on VA #8, tum East on Ayers Orchard Rd., #653. Go 1 mile to Moorefield Store Rd. #631, tum right, go 1/4 mile to church on right. Coming East or West on US #58, tum South on Southfork Farm Loop, #827 to Ayers Orchard Rd., #653. Go 3 miles to Moorefield Store Rd., #631. Turn left, go 1/4 mile to church on right. Coming West on NC #704, turn North on VA-Line Rd., #1730. Go 1 mile and turn left on Moorefield Store Rd., #631. Go 2 1/2 miles to church on left.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to meet with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

PIGG RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Pigg River Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Rocky Mount Church, the host church. To Commence on Friday Aug. 5, 2016 and two days following, Sat. Aug. 6, 2016 and Aug. 7, 2016. On Ground of Chestnut Church.

Starting Friday, August 5, Singing 10:30 and preaching 11:00.

Saturday, August 6, Singing 9:30, and preaching 10:00.

Sunday, August 7, Singing 9:30, and preaching 10:00.

Directions to the church going North on Route 220, about 13 miles past Bassett, turn right on to route 724

(Goose Dam Road) about 2 1/2 miles to church.

Going South on Route 220, past Rocky Mount, turn left at first stop light on Route 619, go 3.7 miles, turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Rd.) 1 mile to church.

Elder Thomas Solomon - Clerk

SKEWARKEY UNION
(Eastern Kehukee Association)

Hancocks Church will host the next session of the Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of July 31, 2016. The church is located on Ayden Golf Club Road, near Ayden, North Carolina. Preaching services begin at 10:30am.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 7 / 2016 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

Big Meadows Primitive Baptist Church will host the fifth Sunday meeting on July 31, 2016. Singing begins at 10:00 AM and preaching ser vice at 10:30 AM.

From 1-40, take Hwy 87 South at Graham towards Pittsboro. Go 14.8 miles and cross Cane Creek. Turn right onto first road past Cane Creek which is Greenhill Road. Go 3.7 miles and turn left on Old Switchboard Road. Church is 1.3 miles on right.

From Hwy 64, take Hwy 87 North about 7 miles and turn left on Castle Rock Road. Church is about 5 miles on left.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Joann Self, Clerk

PSALM 41:1-2.

Blessed *is* he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.

The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; *and* he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

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HYMN

Grace tis a charming sound!
Harmonious to the ear;
Heav'n with the echo shall resound,
And all the saints shall hear.

Grace first ordained the way
To save rebellious man,
And all the steps that grace display,
Which drew the wondrous plan!

Grace first inscribed my name
In God's eternal book;
'Twas grace that gave me to the Lamb,
Who all my sorrows took.

Grace taught my soul to pray,
And pardoning love to know;
'Twas grace that kept me to this day
And will not let me go.

Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days:
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise.

Doddridge.

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EDITORIAL

"And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. And the LORD said, Behold, *there is* a place by me, and thou shall stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen." Exodus 33:18-23.

Elder J. B. Farmer

How deep and mysterious and wonderful is the written word of God. What a mercy it is that the God of heaven and earth should cause His word to be written and preserved for His beloved people; even though they abide in earthen vessels in which He has placed His treasure. How poverty stricken we would be without this mercy. The Lord not only gave His word unto us, but He also has opened it up to His little ones that they might understand it, and profit from it, and rejoice in it, and praise Him for it. God is good.

"All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." The scripture quoted at the beginning is full of doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness, as is all scripture. It proclaims the glory, power, election, love, mercy, protection and goodness of our God. It sets forth the experience of the Lord's children showing their hopes, fears, and the trust and confidence they are given in the Lord.

The Lord had blessed Moses to bring up the children of Israel out from their bondage in Egypt by His mighty hand. The Lord had given him the commandments on tables of stone on Mount Sinai, and while Moses was there the

children of Israel made a golden calf and worshipped it. When Moses came down from the mount, the children of Israel were chastened for their sin, and Moses went back up unto the Lord to make atonement for their sin. After this, Moses came down and pitched, or set up, the tabernacle outside the camp, and entered into it. "And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood *at* the door of the tabernacle, and *the LORD* talked with Moses."

After all these things Moses sought assurance from the Lord that he indeed had found grace in His sight, and that these people were indeed the Lord's people. He said, "Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people." Have we not been brought into this condition from time to time, seeking assurance that we are not deceived in our calling, and that these children with whom we are walking are the children of God in truth? It seems plain that only the Lord's people ever have these concerns. The whole world of carnal religion believes it is in the right way, and cannot even ask if it has a lie in its right hand — they are ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. But the Lord's people are blessed to continually seek evidence, that they might not be ashamed at the Lord's appearing. They are made to try the spirits, whether they are of God. They are made to continually examine themselves, whether they are in the faith.

The Lord was merciful unto Moses and said unto him, "My presence shall go *with thee,* and I will give thee rest." The Lord Jesus Christ said to our great comfort and peace, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." And He also said, "Lo, I will go with you even unto the end of the world." And He also said, "Come unto me, all *ye* that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light." What a blessing it is when we are given to meditate upon His words and to believe them for ourselves and also on behalf of those we have been given to love in truth. This gives us courage to press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. This perfect love of God casts out our fears and makes us unafraid of what man, might do to us. It causes us to go forth in faith, not knowing the future, but believing that God is able to keep that which we have committed unto Him against that day.

And Moses said unto God, "If thy presence go not *with me*, carry us not up hence." Have you ever been brought to this place, to say I do not want to go on if the Lord is not with me? Have you not thought that you would rather be taken out of this world rather to bring reproach upon the Lord, His doctrine, or His people? I believe all of the Lord's people have been brought there, and would rather die than to run in vain, and be found in the end to have been deceived and to have been a deceiver. Some treat the Lord's things lightly, but

they are life and death to the family of God. Consider Ananias and Sapphira, as recorded in the book of Acts, who fell down dead when they were found to have lied unto God. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

The Lord again assured Moses that he indeed had found grace in His sight; and that the Lord knew him by name. "The foundation of the Lord standeth sure, the Lord knoweth them that are his. And let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity." The Lord is not a man as we are, but He is the great I AM. He made all things for Himself, He purposed all things, He controls all things, He knows all things. He declared the end from the beginning. He spake, and it was *done*. He commanded, and it stood fast, He doeth His will in the army of heaven and *among* the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, what doest thou? He loved His people with an everlasting love, and gave them grace in Christ Jesus before the world was. These things are contrary to the carnal mind but are greatly loved by the household of faith.

Again, Moses sought evidence from God that he was not deceived and said, "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory." What a request from a worm of the dust. But is this not our desire, that we may have a little glimpse of the glory of God, as strong evidence that we are His and that we are not deceived? God was merciful to grant unto Moses his request, as He also does for all His little ones.

"And be said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy." The Lord makes all His goodness to pass before us in all His works and ways. He makes us to know that He is the King of kings and Lord of lords. He makes us to know that His grace and mercy is extended to His people, and not to those who hate him and who make a lie.

But the Lord reveals Himself in a very particular way, which He has purposed for His glory and honor and for our good. "And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. And the LORD said, Behold, *there* is a place by me, and thou shall stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen." Since our God is a consuming fire, and none can behold Him in our nature, He has made a safe way for us to view His glory in this life without being destroyed. He has caused us to stand upon a rock, which is Christ, and has placed us in a clift of the rock, which is in the heart of Christ; and has covered us with His hand to shield us while His glory passes by. Then He takes away His hand so we can see His back parts, but not His face.

What does it mean to see His back parts? Does it not mean to see where the Lord has been and what He has done? "For the invisible things of him

from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead." When we are blessed to look about us and see the wonderful creation of God --- the earth, the seas, the heavens and the innumerable host of all His works --- we have seen His back parts --- where He has been, and what He has done. When we are blessed to see His people and His churches walking in love and truth and in decency and order, we are seeing what He has done. When we are blessed to sing one of our spiritual hymns from the heart and are given to praise Him for His goodness and mercy, we are seeing where He has been in inspiring the writers of old with His truth in song. When we hear the preaching of the blessed gospel of grace without the works of men, we are beholding the glory of God in what he has done in His ministers and for His hearing people. When He speaks peace to our souls, and we feel and know that great love toward Him and our brethren, we are basking in the light of His presence because of what He has done for us. And when we are given a view of the Lord Jesus Christ, the perfect Lamb of God, suffering and dying for our sins, we are seeing the perfect image of what God has done for those He loves, to take away their sin and to remove it away from them as far as the east is from the west. And when we are blessed to see Jesus high and lifted up at the right hand of God, raised from the grave, and given the victory over death, hell, the grave and the devil, we are given to see into the place that God has already prepared for those who love Him in truth --- a home in heaven.

We cannot now see His face, but on the appointed day we shall see Him as He is in His full glory, according to His mercy and grace. On that day we shall be made like Him. These vile bodies shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. And we shall be caught up in the clouds together with all saints to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall ever be with the Lord. And may we be blessed to believe and to say with David, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."

Trusting that this was written in love and in hope of eternal life, I am your unworthy servant.

Elder J.B. Farmer

FROM THE CHARLESTON EVENING POST.

Eastern Argus
Portland, Maine - June 5, 1816

If any man sin, we have an advocate with the father Jesus Christ the righteous. – I John, 2. 1. – Wherefore, lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees. – Heb. xii. 12.

Blessed be God for Jesus Christ that unspeakable gift, without which we must have perished forever – Tho' we have destroyed ourselves by sin, and deserve eternal death, yet on Christ there is hope, for it hath pleased

God to lay help upon one that is mighty and able to fave to the uttermost and who come unto God by help. Examine thyself and see whether thou hast any part in his death: if thou hast, thou wilt also in his resurrection. Hast thou been convinced of the evil nature and tendency of sin, and been led to hate it? Has the blood of Christ been applied to thy conscience? Hast thou experienced the pangs of the new birth? Dost thou find thy heart burn with love to Christ, for what he hath done for thee? If so, happy art thou: go on, and thy end wilt be peace and eternal life. Thy advocate is now pleading thy cause with the father, for he ever liveth to make intercession for his saints.

Come Holy Dove inspire my soul,
And ail my fears remove
Let all my powers in praises roll
And sing redeeming love.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Farmer,

We hope this imperfect writing will be of some interesting facts of the Pigg River Association to you. I could have written more but I am such a poor writer. We hope you and Sister Sherry are well and able to be about.

We are well as can be expected. Judy and I send you and Sherry our love. We hope to see you soon.

With Love!
Bill and Judy Poindexter

The Pigg River Association was constituted in 1825 at Little Creek meeting house in Franklin County, Va. The churches that formed the association were lettered out of the Strawberry Association. The Pigg River churches were mostly in Franklin, County on south side of Staunton River. The churches of the Strawberry Association were on the north side of the Staunton River. The Strawberry Association was constituted in 1776 at Strawberry meeting house in Pittsylvania County, Va. The reason for this division seems to have been merely for the sake of convenience. The Pigg River and Strawberry Associations seem to have been in fellowship till 1832. The Foreign Mission board was founded in 1813. A letter was sent to the Strawberry Association by the foreign mission board shortly afterward. The Strawberry minutes show Elder Joseph Pedigo was chosen to answer this letter. Elder Pedigo was moderator of the Strawberry and had served her as such for 20 years. The Strawberry minutes plainly state Elder Pedigo was "anti-missionary."

In 1832 a resolution was passed in either Town Creek Church or Reed Creek church to declare non-fellowship for the institutions of the day. Elkanah Turner was one of the messengers that carried the resolution to the association in 1832. The Pigg River declared non-fellowship for these new things. Elder Elkanah Turner was latter moderator of

the Pigg River Association and his son Elder Taylor Turner was clerk till his death in 1911.

Churches dismissed in 1825 by letter to form Pigg River Association were Leatherwood, Pigg River, Blackwater, Gills Creek, Snow Creek, Bethel, Back Creek, Linville, Reek Creek, Town Creek and Little Creek.

In 1860 Elder Gilbert Beebe and Elder R. C. Leachman of Va. Corresponding Meeting went to Elder Elknah Turner's home on Reed Creek and preached to the Pigg River Association. Elder Leachman tried in Norther Va. and for his sympathy for the confederacy has his home burned by the Union Array. He fled to Tarboro, N.C. and returned to Virginia after Lee surrendered. He died in 1869.

In 1910 the association was held at North Fork Church. The minutes show a membership of approximately 1000 members with Bethel the largest church with 165 members.

The first minutes I picked up was the 1959 minutes. The association was held at Riverview Church and the association had 16 elders and 700 members. The Pigg River Association has been blessed with very able ministers and many were elected to state and local boards through the years. Some of these men were Elkanah Turner, John Martin, A. B. Philpot, John C. Hall, Peter Corn, and Taylor Turner.

PROVERBS 3:12.

For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son *in whom* **he delighteth.**

May 30, 2016

Dear Elder Robertson,

Enclosed is my renewal for one year. Please us the rest as you see fit. I would like to share a poem I was given to write a few years ago if you feel it is fit for publication.

Years ago in the middle of my sickness I was carried to a beautiful garden with the sweetest fragrance. I was made a child and curled up at the feet of my Savior and rested my head on His knees as He stroked my head. Such comfort can never be told. I begged Him to never send me back but my time on earth was not done. God is everywhere present and no where absent. He needs no help and provides all His children's needs. How firm a foundation is a beautiful hymn inspired by God Almighty and is precious to a believer's ear. I have a dear friend who once told me "I may be wrong about everything but I will go down believing." What a foundation for her belief in God. May we always be blessed to look one another over for good and not evil as the scriptures tell us to. God has never left one of His alone in this barren land and never will as long as time stands. His promises are eternal. May God bless and keep you.

Janet Snider Taylor

August 6, 2013

When gathered round that blissful throne
His will be gathered no more to roam
No more to shed a parting tear
Have nothing to dread and nothing to fear

Where nothing is wrong and all is right
For God is love beyond what we know
And someday soon we all will go
To live forever by His side for God did make it so
Earth has no power to keep us here
When God calls His loved ones dear
For God did make all things right
And there will be no coming night
Where all is peace, joy and love
What a great gift is Heaven above
And tho we doubt and fear and pine
God did declare that these are mine
From the beginning He sealed it tight
That they be led by His guiding light
That they must suffer to be a part
And take abode in their heart
That they might live and look to Him
When life gets hard and things look dim
Oh He knows well their travels here
And promised to never leave His loved ones dear
And tho we do not always see
He is always there where need may be
He finished His work and declared it good
For all things good must come from good
Of ourselves we cannot do
He gave freely His own son and loved Him true
He was pure as pure can be
And only His will ever see
That all He gave cost not a cent
Twas not the way our Savior went
He suffered much His time on earth
For God had determined before His birth
For He knew His Father reigned above
High above was His great love
He knew it all before he came
That He would heal the sick and lame
And to this day He is the only way
That His will ever see a brighter day
For of ourselves we can never do
He is all that is good and true
For this world will take you down
And cause one to wear a many a frown
But when God does come all is peace
And one does marvel at the sweet release
This world will come and this world will go
The world knows nothing of His great love
And can never be drawn to Heaven above
Troubles and trials this world does breed
But He did promise to take the lead
To dry the tears and heavenly comforts send
Calm the storms of life and subdue the wind
The wind that blows His to and fro
Was sent to teach that God they must know
He set a time to come their way
And nothing can change that glorious day
None can hinder and none can stay
He chose His own and set their way
Despite all that we might do
God is faithful, forgiving and true
For ourselves we cannot keep

And many a time causes one to weep
And our tears we cannot dry
Our loudest cries can't bring Him nigh
For He did set the highs and lows
For His purpose and God does know
He does know their grief and sorrow
But He did promise a better tomorrow
For he will come on scheduled time
And declare to all that these are mine
These are the ones I chose in me
And of this world they not be
For they came from Heaven on high
Their treasures were laid where money can't buy
And someday soon His will hear His call
And be carried Home in spite of it all
For this earth can never afford them a home
And often times they feel so alone
Tis fear that causes one to pine
And fear they are no longer Thine
The longing comes from deep within
From deep within a plea does begin
A plea that He will extend His hand
And rise one above this lowly land
A land where one feels forgotten and cannot stand
For needy and poor His people are
And seek Him both near and far
They long to feel His presence so dear
And no more shed the smarting tear
And when He comes we are bound in His love
What great mercy is showered from above
For we are His next of kin
And our God will always win
He calms the sea and stills the wind
A helping hand He does lend
Oh but could we but forever dwell by His side
And someday cross that river so wide
Where sin and sorrow cannot some
And see for ourselves where we came from.

By Janet Snider Taylor

ROMANS 8: 1-7.

There *is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

For to be carnally minded *is* death; but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace.

Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

VOICES OF THE PAST

Meditations on the Book of Ruth (continued from previous issue.)

After dwelling at some length in my previous article upon the Nearest Kinsman and "Near Kinsman" we will pass on to the marriage of Boaz and Ruth. "So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife" and Then he went in unto her, the Lord gave her conception, and she bare a son. The joy and happiness that came to Naomi and Ruth by the birth of this little son, will never be fully expressed by mortal tongues. Let us go back just a little and review the scene when they left the country of Moab. They were destitute of this world's goods, husbands dead, sons dead and all their earthly possessions gone. Only one little ray of hope, she heard that the Lord had visited his people in Bethlehem Judah in giving them bread. What a long and lonely journey this must have been. Can you not, dear reader, trace out some of the landmarks in your experience? How fitting are the words of the poet:

"Perhaps he may admit my plea,
Perhaps will hear my prayer;
But if I perish, I will pray,
And perish only there.

I can but perish if I go;
I am resolved to try;
For if I stay away I know
I must forever die."

At last the dayspring from on high has visited them. A little son is born. Who can this little son typify but Christ formed in you the hope of glory? His name is Obed; Obed, means serving and how beautifully this agrees with the life of Jesus, who "took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." Phil. 2:7. Our mind is also led to the language of the prophet of old who said, **"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace ---" Isaiah 9:6.** Who are the people that will call his name wonderful? Are they not the ones unto whom this child is born? Surely, they will call his name Wonderful. Is it not a great wonder of wonders to you, that this meek and lowly Jesus would condescend from his high and lofty state of heaven and take up his abode in you? Surely, you will call his name Wonderful. How wonderful are the words of Mary. **"My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior." Luke 1:46-47. "He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent away empty." Luke 1:53.** Is it not true that the same one unto whom this child is born, is the same one that this son is given? His name shall be called Counsellor. Dear child of God, have you not learned the truth of the prophet of old, "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord." And Jesus himself refers to this prophecy and says, "It is written in the prophets, and they shall

be all taught of God." John 6:45. Notice the number of names he has: "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Is there any peace outside of Jesus? "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." John 14:27. How agreeable are the words of Simeon of old. "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Luke 2 :29-30. Is it not true that we find peace every time we are enabled by the spirit of God to embrace this little son (Jesus)? It is then we can behold him in his beauty and holiness. We will now return to the law, which Paul says is "a shadow of good in things to come."' Remember, dear reader, that a shadow is not the reality of anything, but if you will follow it you will come to the substance. May I again quote the words in the fourth chapter and 13th verse, "So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife." How beautifully Ruth portrays the church in the gospel dispensation. She is now married to another, this "near kinsman", "a mighty man of wealth." Even Boaz. This little son is born, who is the legal heir of all this vast estate that his father possessed in Bethlehem Judah, which I believe is a faint type of heaven, and all that he purchased in the country of Moab which is a type of the earth. So this Son, Jesus, became their heir to all that his Father possessed. Heaven is his throne, the earth his footstool and the cattle upon a thousand hills are his. When this little son was born, the women of the city invoked their blessings upon him, "that his name may be famous in Israel." Can we conceive of any name that will compare with the name of Jesus, except the church? "And this is his name whereby he shall be called, the Lord our righteousness." "And this is the name whereby she shall be called, the Lord our righteousness." Inasmuch as the bride takes the name of the bridegroom, just so the church takes the name of her husband. And inasmuch as Naomi and Ruth looked to his son, Obed, for their natural sustenance, do we not look to Jesus for the joy of our salvation? How true are the words of Peter, "For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. And the apostle Paul in his epistle to the Philippian brethren said, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name," (Phil. 2:9) that in all we do in word or deed, do in the name of Jesus. The women of the city also said to Naomi, "And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life." To find the true meaning of these words, we will only look back in our experience and see that we are not restored back to our former state, for that was a life of toil and labor, as we have before pointed out in the life of Naomi, in her journey from the country of Moab to Bethlehem Judah. But she is now a partaker of that bread on which she has bestowed no labor. See how this word restore compares with the experience of David. "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." David did not ask for salvation, but he wanted the joy of it again. He, Obed, shall be a "nourisher of thine old age." That is, Naomi and Ruth have the full assurance

that this little son will unquestionably, out of the abundance of his vast amount of wealth, supply them with all the necessities and comforts of life. What a consoling thought, notwithstanding the fact that she is old and decrepit and going down the steps of old age, she has something to look forward to. This little son will care for me. "Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom." May I repeat the words "And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age." How beautifully this son typifies the son of God, and listen to his own words: "(For the Lord thy God is a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them." Deut. 4:31. She has now ceased from her labors and entered into rest. How does this compare with your experience, when Jesus Christ was formed in you the hope of glory, and spake peace to your troubled soul in a feeling sense in words and said, thy sins which are many are all forgiven thee, go and sin no more? Now you are no more under the law, but under grace, for the law of the spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus has made you free from the law of sin and death. In bringing this to a close, may I quote the language of the apostle Paul, "For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Heb. 13:5. Again Paul said, "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Phil. 4:19. The apostle did not say he shall supply all your needs, but he shall supply all your need. When we are clothed and in our right mind, how fully we realize that we need Him every moment and every hour.

(Elder) T. FLOYD ADAMS.
Willow Springs, N. C.

The common teaching of the day or night is that every one is a child of God. But we hold that God is the God of the Hebrews, or of Israel in a sense he is not the God of the heathen as he is the God of Israel. See Ex. 22 and 23, "And thou shalt say unto Pharoah, thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my first born, and I say unto thee, let my son go, that he may serve me." The Lord told Moses that he is the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob. He is the God of the living, and not of the dead. God is the creator of all flesh, for He hath made everything that was made. He hath made all things for himself, yea even the wicked for the day of evil. He makes the wrath of man to praise him, and restrains the remainder of wrath.

But Israel is his peculiar treasure. In the gospel day or the last dispensation, Gentiles are made nigh by the blood of Jesus; for Japheth shall dwell in the tents of Shem, The middle wall of separation shall be removed, and God makes of one blood a people redeemed out of every nation, kindred and tongue under heaven. Where there is neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free, but all

born of incorruptible seed by the word of God are one in Christ Jesus, the whole family of God; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. For flesh and blood do not inherit incorruption. Except a man be born again be cannot see the Kingdom of God. It is the revelation of Jesus Christ the spiritual, heavenly man that gives one entrance into the kingdom of heaven. Such only are the Sons of God. If we are believers in Jesus then are we the seed of Abraham, and are manifested as the children of promise. By the faith of Jesus we are the children of God. So they who are of faith are children of Abraham.

Now God is the Father of these as he is not the Father of those not born of incorruptible seed. Nor does he know the children of the flesh as be knows the children of God. It is in this blessed sense that God knows only his own people. His own people he foreknows. Whom he did foreknow them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son, See Rom. 8:29. There is a relationship in which God is revealed in covenant standing to his people as his children. Naturally parents are related to their children, and as such they correct their own children that disobey them as they do not the children of other people. If ye be without chastisement then are ye bastards and not sons. We have had fathers of our flesh that corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not rather be in subjection to the Father of Spirits and live?

If a natural child has parents intelligent and wise that give proper instruction to their children, but their children give not heed to his wholesome instruction, will it not disgrace these children?

Now, the people of the Lord are instructed as none others are, and are sufferers in disobedience as none can be that are not under the blessed obligation of children. So God says to Israel in their transgression you only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for your iniquities.

Israel was redeemed from the house of bondage in Egypt as no other people ever were delivered. So the Lord chastised Israel as he never did any other people. Behold how their house is left unto them desolate until this date: They are wanderers without a government, or home, or temple, or priesthood, downtrodden of the Gentiles, as no other people have ever been scattered.

So in the churches of the saints under the latter dispensation --- under the latter reign, if they leave their first love, and do not hold fast that which God has given them, but worship idols, and follow strange gods, the candlestick is removed, their harps hang on the willow, and so often do we remember the good days of old, but they do not return. We remember our transgressions, and know that it is an evil and a bitter thing to sin against our Father.

Elder P.D. Gold
Zion's Landmark
January 15, 1915

1907 - HE THAT ENDURETH TO THE END

Written by William M. Smoot,
June, 1907

"But he that endureth to the end shall be saved."- Matthew x, 22. "Blessed *is* the man that endureth temptations."- James i. 12. "Him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, *which is* new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from My God: and I *will write upon him* My new name."- Revelation iii, 12.

The same testimony runs through these several passages of Scripture, and is more fully brought out in the last of the three. The inspired apostle in 2 Thessalonians ii, 2, 3. tells us; "That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letters from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." We have here evidence upon what might be termed the positive and negative side of the testimony. Jude adds: "There are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

We see the Truth of these Scriptures repeatedly made manifest in the present age. There is a continual falling away among those whom we once thought steadfast in the faith, or who were, at least, considered friends of Gospel Truth, who have shown that they lack the vital, enduring substance.

First, we have presented here the enduring nature of that grace of life eternal. It goes beyond saying that eternal life is "eternal," although few think so. It is the substance that endures, and that endures through all opposition, and difficulty to the end. There must be a falling away, but it is not the falling away of that which has in it the inherent life which comes from above, "hid in Christ in God," developed "to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."- Ephesians iv. 13. These are the faithful witnesses who endure.

On the other hand nothing short of such an exhibition of heavenly and sovereign grace will endure to the end, everything else falls by the way, shall wilt, wither, and come short of the glory of God. The apostle on the day of Pentecost (Acts ii, 40) exhorted his hearers to "Save yourselves from this untoward generation." It may be that the word "salvation" in the first quoted text at the head of this article, has a somewhat similar meaning to the word as used by the apostle. "Take heed unto thyself," says Paul to Timothy, "and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."--- 1 Timothy iv. 16. To be "saved" from the errors, delusions, the

fads and fancies, gimmicks, programs, the abominable wickedness of the religious world, is an infinite blessing.

To this happy condition evidently the dear Master calls our attention in the first quoted text above. Nor must we turn away from the manner in which He introduces the testimony. "And ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake." John says: "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you."- 1 John iii, 13. James says: "Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."- iv. 4. Surely in the face of such an array of Scripture children of light should be disappointed if they receive anything else from this religious world but persecution, misrepresentation, deception, falsehood, bitter strife and sarcastic labels.

But the man that endureth this temptation, James says, is "blessed," for "when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him." The peaceful enjoyment of the Divine presence, the end of triumphant faith, is the revelation of the crown of life, more pleasant than any that can grace a monarch's brow. "Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work this man shall be blessed in his deed." --- James i. 25.

But in the last of the three passages of Scripture which we have quoted at the head of this article, the reason is assigned for the character and glory of this triumph, and the crowning revelation of its power. "Him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of My God." Assuredly no one could be regarded as "a pillar," without ability to rise above the obstacles, compromises, and withstand the temptations of the way. That there always have been, are now, and always will be living witnesses of Truth eternal, is evident from Scripture testimony. They are chosen, or "elected" to this end, consecrated to this very purpose, as were the apostles; "Ye have not chosen Me," says the Redeemer, "but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." John xv, 16. Certainly is this an high and exalted calling, and the child of grace in whom it is revealed soars above the "beggarly elements" of this world, realizing the heavenly nature of the path which he treads. He is in the temple of God, and he is there to stay --- a pillar, "he shall go no more out."

> "Here does he find a settled rest,
> While others go and come;
> No more a stranger or a guest,
> But like a child at home."

Says the Lord by the prophet; "Even unto them will I give in Mine house and within My walls, a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off." --- Isaiah lvi, 5. And why all this? Why does this holy religion endure when all else fails? Why is this changeless, fadeless, and undying, when everything below these earthly skies, the religions of the world with everything else in it, is as false, blatantly fickle, as changeable -- ever evolving --

as the mortal atmosphere in which it moves, and has its short-lived existence? Why, we ask? The answer is found in the closing clauses of the Scripture which we have quoted from Revelation. "I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from My - God: and I will write upon him, My new name."

The Truth of God is a substance, not a shadow; a reality, not a form; an active and actual, not a latent power. Its life is in itself, as all other living things. In Matthew xiii, 43, we are told that the righteous shall shine forth as the sun "in the Kingdom of their Father." The sun shines with neither a borrowed or reflected light, its light is in itself; and so the clear shining of the children of light. "In the midst," says Paul in Philippians ii. 15, "of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world." The enduring life of heaven is made manifest, "I will write upon him the name of My God." "In Thy book all My members were written."- Psalm cxxxix, 16. This is the development of the unperfect (not, imperfect) substance "curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth."- Psalm cxxxix, 15, 16.

These holy members are made manifest in this development. Each heaven-born child is a declaration (Isaiah liii, 8) of the "generation of Jesus Christ," begotten in the image of the Elder Brother, and thus the Father's name is written upon him; not on the outward form, but a living substance, for if "the Root be holy, so are the branches."--- Romans xi, 16. They are like Him, as bearing the same character of life, begotten in the same begetting; for in the begetting of the Head the whole body were begotten, and thus the Father's name is written upon the members of the body of Christ; who shall triumph over all enemies, endure all temptations and afflictions in the triumphant and enduring life of Christ, the living or vital Head.

But the apostle yet more fully brings forth the eternal principle upon which these children alone endure. He says that the Lord will write upon them "the name of the city of My God, which is New Jerusalem which cometh down out of heaven from My God." Again, "And He carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." Revelation xxi, 10. "Born of God" "born from above, is the way the testimony is confirmed. And this life which comes from above is the only life that rises above the difficulties of the way, that endures the temptations which is the trial of faith. Each child of God comes from where Jesus did, comes from above, "comes down from God out of heaven."--- verse 2d. It is disgusting to a spiritually-taught mind to listen to the absurdity of a sinner being born over again, and becoming the child of God, after such a birth. Such an idea is a burlesque upon the Divine testimony and Divine character, and arises from ignorance of the teaching of the Word. It has an incorruptible seed producing a corruptible flesh; or a corruptible flesh homogenizing with an incorruptible Being. There can be no such development

from a life in which there is no seed existence, or parentage, because "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." Upon this, and upon no other principle, the children of God rise above the things of time; "For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world"- 1 John v, 4 — not become a part of it! "Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world."- 1 John iv, 4. In the connection of our subject, and to these children of the regeneration the Divine assurance is given: "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Blessed promise! Precious inheritance! Of the faithful and tried witnesses of Truth eternal, kept from the temptations to the humanly principles of means, measures, and freewillism that engulfed the earth. It was said of these on a different occasion: "And they that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament."--- Daniel xii, 3. "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly."- Daniel xii, 10. Job says, "My witness is in heaven, and my record is on high." Here then is the name of the holy city written upon, inwrought in the eternal --- eternal --- life of the heavenly witness. And as coming down from God out of heaven his life necessarily is above the law, sordid, selfish, vile, corruptible and wicked things of time. By faith, and not by sight, he walks the path of the just, the path "which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen." Job xxviii, 7. The path which "is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." --- Proverbs iv, 18. He "endureth to the end."

"And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."--- Psalms i, 3. "The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon."- Psalm xcii, 12. Here are they that endure temptation, here are they "who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." --- 1 Peter i, 5. Here is the "remnant according to the election of grace."- Romans xi, 5. Here is the salt of the earth --- Matthew v, 13, for which this world is preserved.

"And I will write upon him My new name." We may make mistakes in our judgment of faithfulness in the church. We may be deceived in regard to the stability of a member, but not so the God of heaven whose good pleasure is thus made manifest. "I will write," He says. Not with an earthly pen, though it be a diamond, not in a decree designed to be obliterated in the oblivion of time; but written in the seed-substance of the heaven-born child, that it may grow with His growth, increase with His strength, live in His life. No floods can drown it, time cannot erase it, mortality cannot obliterate it, flames cannot consume it; but it shall be "as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light."--- Luke xi, 36.

These children of God "shall be called holy, even every one that is writ-

ten among the living in Jerusalem." Isaiah iv, 3. They are alive to the importance of Truth and faithfulness with steadfastness to it; they are conscious of the abominable wickedness in the religious world around them. They "give place to such things, no not for a moment." They cannot be driven, bought, enticed, or allured from the path of Truth, for their sanctification of the Spirit and belief thereof separates them noticeably from all will worship. There is not enough gold in the treasure-houses of earth to buy them, all hell cannot drive them; they are unterrified, unshaken, and immovable, because God Himself is their life, "therefore they will not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea."

Such holy children are not found in the secret, oath-bound orders of compromising earth, reveling in the mire and fifth; they are not found with any of the world's damnable spots upon them; they are not found running "greedily after the error of Balaam for reward" as hireling preachers; they are not found "running with the hare, and holding with the hound," conceding, compromising, perverting: but they stand firm, and unyielding for Truth and for Gospel order, regardless of either the frowns, and courting not the smiles of the ungodly.

But let us notice for a moment in conclusion the "new name." "I will write upon him My new name." In the charge to the church in Pergamos, it is said, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it."- Revelation ii, 17. "And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new."- Revelation xxi, 5. "And given Him a name which is above every name."- Philippians ii, 9.

"There is but one page in the book of fame,
And on that page a single name!"

In the clear, upper sky of the new and everlasting covenant this name shines triumphant over all obstacles, the synonym of salvation; and written upon or made manifest in the life of the child of grace, it insures his triumphant salvation from every foe, that He shall endure to the end. "His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night."

Priceless inheritance! Precious assurance! Heavenly promise! "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." --- Jeremiah xvii, 7, 8. June, 1907.

PROVERBS 4:18.

But the path of the just *is* as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

MATTHEW VI. 7.

"But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking."

Prayer is a solemn but blessed privilege to the saints of God. It is solemn, when we duly consider the infinite disparity between the trembling petitioner, and the supreme God before whom he bows down to worship. No flesh can stand in his presence, for all flesh is corrupted, and all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; and as God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, we cannot approach him without being consumed, only as we are permitted to draw nigh by that new and living way which he has consecrated through the flesh of him who was made flesh and dwelt among us, and from whose fullness, as the only begotten of the Father, we, who have passed from death unto life, have received, and grace for grace. It is a blessed privilege, because none can pray unto God acceptably unless they are quickened by the Spirit of the Lord, for God is a Spirit, and they who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth; and as all spiritual blessings were given to the children of God, according as they were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, the indispensable qualification to pray acceptably to God is a spiritual blessing. And in the enjoyment of this privilege, the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, and maketh intercession for us. Those who are born of God are born of the Spirit, and become spiritual worshipers; not in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the Spirit. This includes all who are of the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, or in any of the powers of the flesh, physical or mental, all their confidence is in him by whom, and through whom alone, they have access by the Spirit unto God.

As the flesh profiteth nothing, and no flesh can approach unto God, prayer and all other worship of the true God being purely spiritual, they are sadly mistaken who think they are to be heard for their much speaking, or for any other fleshly exercises of their organs of speech, or the passions of their carnal nature.

"The heathen think they shall be heard for their much speaking." The term heathen applies not alone to pagans, or the barbarous tribes of mankind, but to all who are strangers to God, ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, whether they be Jews, Papists or Protestants. All who are not born of God and taught by the Spirit, are in heathen darkness, so far as the light of knowledge of the glory of God is concerned, and they invariably think there is some virtue in their uttering solemn sounds from their unhallowed tongues. The carnal Jews

relied on their long prayers, and frequent repetitions of them, and in that error they disfigured their faces, prayed often, loud and long, in corners of the streets and at the market places.

Papists and Protestants teach their unregenerated children to use vain repetitions of this kind; to repeat what is called the Lord's Prayer. A prayer which Christ taught his disciples to use, and which can be used acceptably only by the children of God, who can in spirit and in truth say, "Our Father which art in heaven." None can call Jesus, Lord, but by the Holy Ghost, and none can come unto the Father but by him. Written and printed forms of prayer are prepared for vain repetition, to be read by the parsons and vainly repeated by their deluded hearers, after the same manner that masses are said, heads counted by Papists, or senseless mutterings are uttered by pagans who bow down to stocks or stones, and by all of them unto the delusive hope that there is some merit or virtue in their performance, to please the gods before whom they bow. Without faith it is impossible to please God. Yet men who are dead in sin, and consequently destitute of the faith of the Son of God, are taught to rely upon their vain repetition of prayers and invocations to commend them to the divine favor. This is what the Scriptures pronounce impossible.

But the saints themselves are liable to err sometimes on this subject, or the admonition of our text would be inapplicable to them. Paul says, We ask and receive not, because we ask amiss; and he further testifies that we know not how to pray as we ought; we are dependent on the Spirit to make intercession for us in language which our tongues can neither utter nor repeat. If, then, the christian cannot pray acceptably to God only as the spirit of grace and of supplication is given to help his infirmites, how preposterous to contend that unregenerated men, totally destitute of spiritual life, and totally ignorant of the Spirit and of the things of the Spirit, which things are foolishness unto them, can worship God in spirit and in truth. He that cometh unto God must believe that he is, and to believe in God is a work of faith, and consequently they who have no faith cannot pray only in hypocritical forms and vain repetitions.

Christians should avoid ostentatious display in prayer, or flowery language, fluent speech or affections, to be admired of men. But as the Spirit indites the desires, so let the child of grace breathe them forth in the simplicity of the heart, knowing that the God to whom we pray knows all our necessities, and needs not to be informed of anything by us. And the

"Painted hypocrites are known,
Through the disguise they wear."

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y.
May 15, 1857.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 2016

Posey Potter, VA 5.00
Bryant Huff, GA 15.00
Janet Taylor, NC 85.00
Gladys Shelton, NM 35.00
Elder Junior Conner, VA 5.00
Carole Cruise, VA 15.00

PSALM 23.
A Psalm of David.

The Lord *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

MEETINGS

LITTLE VINE OLDE ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the thirty-ninth session of the Little Vine Olde Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association will be held at the Newfound Primitive Baptist Church meeting house, located on Brier Creek Road in Wyoming County, West Virginia, about twelve miles southwest of Pineville, West Virginia, on the fourth Sunday in August and the Saturday before. The dates are August 27 and 28, 2016.

Singing is scheduled to begin at 10:30 and preaching at 11:00 A.M. each day. It is our hope and trust that the Lord will gather together faithful ministers, brethren and friends to worship Him in Spirit and in truth, and to show forth His praise. If anyone needs more particular directions or information about lodging, please phone 606-474-4327.

Sherry A. Farmer, Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION
160th ANNUAL SESSION
SEPTEMBER 2, 3, 4, 2016

The 160th annual session of the Smith River Association will be Held, the Lord willing, at Old Center Church.

Direction to Old Center Church in Henry county, Virginia. Those going west on route 57 A in Bassett, turn left at the stoplight on to route. 698 (Blackberry Rd.) Go about 3 miles to the stop sign and take a right on route. 687 (Stones Dairy Rd.) Go about 1 1/2 miles to the Church on the right. Those going east on route 57 from Patrick county, go about 1 mile after crossing the Henry County line and take a right on route 687 (Stones Dairy Rd.) Go about 3 miles to the church on the left.

The church is beside Howells garage. We invite our Brothers, Sisters, Elders and Friends to be with us.

Tony R. Horton
Association Clerk

OBITUARIES

DONALD "DONNIE" RAY ARRINGTON

Pleasant Hill Church lost a faithful brother when God saw Brother Donnie's work finished here on earth. He called him home February 29, 2016 at the age of 83. He was the son of the late Joseph Carter Arrington and Cleo Arrington Barnes.

Brother Donnie leaves behind to cherish his memory his wife of 65 years, Yvonne Alford Arrington, who remained by his side throughout his illness, a son Mark and fiance' Julie Brooks, four grandchildren, and two great grandchildren. He is also survived by a sister, JoAnn English (Mack). Preceding Brother Donnie in death were siblings: Fred, Wallace, Ernest, James, Leroy, Shirley A. Debow and Betty A. Robins.

Brother Donnie asked for a home with Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church on May 12, 1979. He was baptized by Elder Henry Jones and later ordained as a deacon.

Brother Donnie "Donnie" expressed his love for the church by doing many chores and using his "know how" to keep things in shape that lead to very pleasant meetings.

A graveside service was held on March 3rd at Rocky Mount Pineview Cemetery by his pastor, Elder Cleo Robertson and Elder Harold Pittman.

We at Pleasant Hill Church have and will continue to miss him.

Written by
J. Carroll Williams

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 8 / 2016 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

JUANITA MINTER LAW

Our Heavenly Father has called from our midst another precious member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. It is with much sadness and humility that I attempt to write a memorial for Sister Juanita Law.

Sister Juanita was born October 3, 1926 in Henry County, Virginia. She was the only child of Gold and Lottie Riddle Minter. She was educated in Henry County, Virginia and Rockingham County, North Carolina. After graduating from high school she attended McClung Business School in Greensboro, North Carolina. Upon completing business school Sister Juanita worked at the Pentagon while waiting for her husband- to- be to return from World War II. On January 3, 1946 she married George Sterling Law, the love of her life. They lived in Danville, Virginia before moving to Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Juanita was employed by Winston-Salem Savings and Loan. She became manager of the Thruway branch until she retired in 1988. Juanita enjoyed spending quality time with her mother, daughter, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was a loving daughter, mother, wife, and grandmother.

Early in life Sister Juanita came under conviction of her sins and became concerned about her salvation. She received a precious hope and was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace. It was several years before she asked for a home at Dan River Church. On Saturday night, July 27, 1957 she went before the church and asked for a home. She was baptized on Sunday July 28, 1957 along with Sister Mildred Spangler Graham by their pastor Elder D.V. Spangler. Sister Juanita loved her church and supported it in every way. She attended services regularly as long as she was physically able. She enjoyed visiting many churches and associations. Even when she wasn't able to attend, she continued to have the welfare of the church in her heart and mind. Sister Juanita was a faithful, loving member who will be greatly missed. She always greeted you with a loving smile and warm embrace.

Sister Juanita had many talents. She enjoyed knitting and made many beautiful sweaters for her family. Also she was very artistic in arranging flowers. On special occasions she brought greenery and made gorgeous arrangements for our church.

Sister Juanita died March 1, 2016. Her funeral was held March 5, 2016 at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Cleo Robertson. She was buried beside her husband in the church cemetery. Sister Juanita was preceded in death by her beloved husband, George Sterling Law, her parents Deacon Gold and Sister Lottie Riddle Minter. She is survived by her daughter Delores Sanders and husband Robert, two grandchildren Kirk (Ashley) Sanders and Caroline (Davis) Turner. Also surviving are four great-grandchildren.

May our Heavenly Father comfort all who mourn the loss of our dear sister. We feel she is now resting in that perfect peace awaiting the second coming

of our Lord and Savior when we shall meet him in the air, be like him and be eternally satisfied.

Written in love,
Phyllis Stroud.

ELDER JAMES MOODY
October 10, 1922 - June 28, 2015

Elder James Hubert (Jim) Moody age 92, formerly of Robbins Street, Lexington, NC died June 28 2015 at Stanly Manor in Albemarle.

A funeral was held at 2:00 PM Thursday, July 2, 2015 at Briggs Funeral Home Memorial Chapel conducted by Elder Carlton Brown and Elder Lowell Hopkins. Burial with Military Honors was at Tom's Creek Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder Moody was born October 10, 1922 in Caldwell County to Ransom Moody and Lona Link Moody. He had worked as a deputy sheriff with the Davidson County Sheriff's Department and a police officer with the Denton Police Department and later worked with Thomasville Furniture Industries. He was an ordained Elder in the Primitive Baptist Faith and had served as Pastor of Tom's Creek Primitive Baptist Church. He was an avid Bible reader and enjoyed visiting people in Nursing Homes and fishing. His favorite past time was woodworking and restoring pump organs. He was an Army veteran of World War II and a member of the AMVETS Post, the American Legion, and the VFW. He was a caregiver for his granddaughter Jamie when she was small. He was preceded in death by 1 brother and 3 sisters.

He is survived by his wife, Mary Ruth Fulk Moody; sons, Robert Gray Moody and wife Terry Lynn of Keller, Texas, and David Henderson Moody and wife Belinda of Lexington; daughter Linda Albright and husband Charles of Badin Lake, New London; 6 grandchildren, Jamie, Jason, Kevin, Wendi, Kailey and Joshua; and 4 great grandchildren, Ashton, Hailey, Christian and Alisha.

Mary Ruth Fulp Moody

ROMANS 5:1-4.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

And not only *so*, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

And patience, experience; and experience hope.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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HYMN

Rejoice, the Lord is King;
Your God and King adore;
Mortals, give thanks and sing,
And triumph ever more!
Lift up the heart, lift up the voice,
Rejoice aloud, ye saints, rejoice.

Rejoice, the Saviour reigns,
The God of truth and love;
When he had purged our stains,
He took his seat above:
Lift up the heart, lift up the voice,
Rejoice aloud, ye saints, rejoice.

His kingdom cannot fail;
He rules o'er earth and heaven;
The keys of death and hell
Are to our Jesus given:
Lift up the heart, lift up the voice,
Rejoice aloud, ye saints, rejoice.

He all his foes shall quell;
Shall all our sins destroy;
And every bosom swell
With pure seraphic joy:
Lift up the heart, lift up the voice,
Rejoice aloud, ye saints, rejoice.

Rejoice in glorious hope,
Jesus the Judge shall come,
And take his servants up
To their eternal home:
We soon shall hear the Archangel's voice;.
The trump of God shall sound, Rejoice.

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EDITORIAL

Reprint from July, 2008

I HAVE COMMANDED THE RAVENS TO FEED THEE

1 Kings 17:4 reads, **"And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there."**

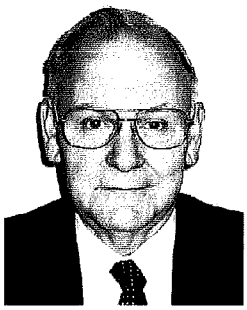
Elder Cleo D. Robertson

In the days of Elijah, Ahab was king over the ten tribes of Israel and was more evil than any king before him. He married Jezebel who was the daughter of the king of Zidon which was a nation that worshiped Baal. So Ahab built an altar to Baal and worshiped the idol as well as setting up other idols and images in the land.

God sent Elijah to Ahab to tell him that there would be no dew nor rain these years. James 5:17 tells us that it was for a period of three years and six months. Then the Lord told Elijah to hide himself by the brook Cherith as Ahab and Jezebel sought to find Elijah to kill him. Cherith means "to cut off or separate." Elijah was cut off or separated from King Ahab and according to 1 Kings 18:10, Ahab sought Elijah in every nation and kingdom but could not find him. They could not because what God has hidden, no man can find. In all his searching, Ahab could not locate Elijah. God raised up Elijah as His prophet for the times. The Lord always raises up His servants and qualifies them for the work for which He has purposed. How alone Elijah must have felt as he was being hunted to be killed! God had called him to confront the king of this nation with all the evil and worship of false gods. One man against a king and his army, but God was with Elijah and neither the king nor his army could touch Elijah. The Lord does not forsake His little ones in times of trouble and afflictions. He feeds them with grace and truth that is comforting and strengthening.

The Lord told Elijah he would drink of the brook and that He had commanded the ravens to feed him with bread and flesh in the morning and in the evening. Ravens by nature would not bring food to anyone. They are scavengers that feed on dead or decaying mat-

ter and prey on small defenseless things such as worms, crickets and even young birds. They are black in color and in Leviticus 11:15 and Deuteronomy 14:14 were said to be unclean and an abomination. To me, the ravens set forth God's ministers in their fleshly or carnal nature. The natural man is a sinner and as black as the raven. To be carnally minded is death because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Therefore, those in the flesh cannot please God. In their carnal nature, men could not bring spiritual food to anyone as they feed upon the dead things of natural man as the ravens do. In my own experience, I never had any thought of bringing any food of the gospel to any of the Lord's people. I had other plans and desires that did not include the Lord or His people. But, the Lord commands and it stands fast, speaks and it's done. I am made to feel so weak and unworthy and to feel surely one such as I am cannot be one of the Lord's ministers. Yet, there is great comfort in the Lord's words to the Apostle Paul, *"My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."*

In his raven nature, King Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, captured the city, destroyed the temple and took many vessels of the temple as well as many of the Jews to Babylon. He worshiped other gods and boasted of his power and majesty in building a magnificent kingdom. In Jeremiah 43:10, God calls Nebuchadnezzar His servant. Therefore, at God's appointed time, He took Nebuchadnezzar out of his palace and into the wilderness where he was shown that he was nothing and had no power of his own. Again, at God's appointed time when Nebuchadnezzar had been throughly taught, he said he lifted up his eyes unto heaven and came forth praising God proclaiming that God's dominion *"is an everlasting dominion and His kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him what doest thou?"* Nebuchadnezzar was blessed to set forth his experience of grace in the book of Daniel. Daniel 4:1-2 reads, *"Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. I thought it good to show the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me."* Daniel 4:37 further reads, *"Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the king of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase."* The Lord had commanded the raven (Nebuchadnezzar) to feed His little ones with bread and flesh.

As with the Apostle Paul before his conversion, his raven nature was persecuting the Lord's people and binding them and putting them in prison. He even consented to the gnashing of teeth and stoning of Stephen. But, then, on the way to Damascus, the Lord brought him down and showed him the blackness of his earthly nature. The apostle experi-

enced that which he was blessed to write in Ephesians 2: 1-3, *"And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."* There on that road he also experienced what the psalmist wrote in Psalm 107:1-2, *"O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endured for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy."* Paul could proclaim that by grace you are saved and that grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. The raven (Saul of Tarsus) was commanded to feed the Lord's elect with bread and flesh.

Noah sent the raven out of the ark first and it did not return because it found its desires of death and decay in the natural world. The dove was sent out afterward which was a type of the spiritual and it found no rest in the world and returned to the ark. I Corinthians 15:46 states, *"Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual."* God chose His ministers as He did all His people from the foundation of the world, brought them into an understanding of the truth at His appointed time, and made them willing in the day of His power. He commanded the ravens to feed His prophet and they did. Christ commanded Peter to *"feed my lambs. Feed my sheep."*

The scripture says that the ravens brought Elijah bread and flesh in the morning and in the evening. I believe that this event actually took place, but I also believe this is setting forth God's ministers preaching the gospel of Christ. Elijah could not provide any food for himself. He was in a helpless condition and totally dependent upon the Lord. John 6:33 states, *"For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." Jesus said, "I am the bread of life."* The food that the ravens brought to Elijah was not raven's food. They did not make it nor prepare it. God made and prepared the bread and flesh and gave it to the ravens to bring to Elijah. It was nourishing and strengthening to him. It was life to Elijah. So is the gospel to every little child of grace. John 6:51 reads, *"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."* The world that Jesus refers to is not this natural world, but the world of believers, His elect people. This bread and flesh that the ravens brought to Elijah sets forth that which was to come, namely, Christ in the flesh. It speaks of His suffering and death and the redemption of His people from their sins by the giving of His flesh or body on the cross and the shedding of His blood. When Jesus fed the five thousand with five loaves and two fish, He was setting forth Himself as the bread and

flesh. I believe the five loaves are five manifestations of the one bread. Jesus is manifested to His people as Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace: five manifestations of the one bread. The two fish set forth grace and truth that came by Jesus Christ. Every little heir of promise feeds upon this bread and flesh. Every God-called minister preaches this bread and flesh. To eat of His flesh is to experience in a measure the suffering of Christ. Christ told His disciples in the upper room to *"take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me."* The Apostle Paul writes in II Timothy 2:12, *"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him"* and in Romans 8:17, *"And if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."* When the apostles were brought before the Sanhedrin, which was the highest Jewish council, for preaching Jesus, they were beaten and told not to do it any more. But, the apostles departed rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for His name. As the psalmist wrote, *"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep."* O, dear people, haven't you feasted upon this bread and flesh? What joy you experienced! Yet, how humble and small you were made to feel with the precious hope that you were included in His suffering, death and resurrection. His resurrection was the first resurrection; and all that hath part in that resurrection, on such the second death hath no power.

The water of the brook which Elijah was commanded to drink was setting forth the Holy Spirit. As natural water is essential for natural life, so the Spirit is essential for spiritual life. As Christ said in John 3:6, *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."* The Spirit was manifested to Elijah as it kept him safe and provided for him. As David experienced and wrote, *"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters."* In the green pastures of His grace, his little ones are given rest and feed upon the green grass of the gospel. No works of the flesh are involved. They are led beside and drink of the still waters of His Spirit, that pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, that flows from the throne of God. But, at God's appointed time, the brook dried up. God did not leave nor forsake His prophet, but the appointed time for Elijah to leave this place had come. The Lord commanded Elijah to go to a certain village to a certain widow woman whom God had commanded to sustain him and the Spirit was manifested in the barrel of meal that wasted not and the cruise of oil that failed not as well as the miracle of raising her son from the dead.

How marvelous are His works and His ways past finding out! May the Lord of all grace be with each of you and feed you with this bread and flesh and bless you with comfort and peace.

In bonds of love,
Elder Cleo Robertson

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE MINISTRY.-No. VII (1837)
(Extract of a Letter.)

Dear Sister in the Most Holy Relationship, — It is most certainly true that as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the children of God. We have known the time when we were dead in trespasses and sins, caring not for God, nor for the truths of the Gospel; then the persons whom now we love were hated — the doctrines which now we prize we were ignorant of. You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. We were begotten of God by the word of truth, and lay in the womb of the covenant of grace, until the quickening power of God was felt in our hearts, and in due time we were brought forth into the liberty of the people of God. We hung for a season at the breasts of Zion, and as new-born babes, we fed upon the sincere milk of the word, and grew thereby.

Afterwards we were weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts; under Divine teaching we began to use our feet in the ways of wisdom, and we found them to be pleasantness, and all her paths paths of peace. Ever since that time we have been led by the Spirit of God; in our mental exercises we have been led to see our hearts as vile as the Scriptures declare them to be, and have been fully assured of the truth of Holy writ, that he who trusteth his own heart is a fool. We have been led into greater discoveries of the amazing nature of divine atonement, in proportion as we have seen the depths of depravity within. None but those who are led by the Spirit of God cordially hate and loathe the sinfulness of their natures before God, and fly to the dear wounds of Jesus, to plead his great atoning sacrifice. We have been led by the Spirit of God to see the gins, traps, devices, and crafty maneuvers of Satan. We look back sometimes and wonder how we have escaped; we look forward, gaze on his schemes, and fear that we shall fall into them through our own hearts' treachery and his temptations. Sanctified affliction, how art thou hallowed to the Christian in ten thousand wise ways to prevent him from falling into the net of the fowler! O, it is a mercy that God will keep the feet of his saints. Through him, my soul, thou hast trodden down strength.

We are led by the Spirit of God into a right way. All things go wrong with us when we walk in forbidden paths; when God makes us to go in the path of his commandments, it is well with us. Our natures are so proud and rebellious, that, without divine power, we cannot go in this path. We are led by the Spirit of God into it, much after the way in which patients just recovering from sickness are led into a garden. O, when our Beloved leads us into his garden, and causes the north wind to blow and temper the cold breezes of the north; then how sweetly do the spices smell; all our garments smell of the field which the Lord hath blessed. How blessed it is to be led about by the Holy Spirit, and to be instructed, which we lean on him as

our leader. We are led by the Spirit through the depths of vexation, care, disappointment, trouble and grief. Observe, we are led through, not led into, and left there, to get out by ourselves; no, blessed be God, whatever he leads us into that is painful, he will lead us through the same that we may be joyful. The Holy Spirit leads us on safely, so that we are not consumed with slavish fear. Safety attends all his lending. Only let us be assured that the Spirit leads, we may safely venture under His guidance, without fear about consequences. He knows all the causes and places of danger, and we may boldly trust in him. He leadeth us into divine mysteries. Without his holy guidance, we should be lost in the mystery of godliness, and the mystery of iniquity, even as many of our fellow-creatures are around us. It requires the faith of God's elect to receive the doctrine of the Trinity. Comprehend it we never shall. The assumption of our nature and our sins by the Son of God is a great mystery, which can only be received as it ought by this true faith. The Holy Spirit must lead us into them, and teach us when we are led there. The mystery of iniquity is a great deep. It seems unaccountable to the most experienced Christian, how grace and corruption can dwell in one body. The discoveries that the Holy Spirit is pleased to make of the depravity of our hearts would overwhelm us in despair, were they not counteracted by deeper discoveries of the cleansing virtue of the blood of Christ. Once we thought that by how much the more we obtained and grace from God, by so much the more we should be freed from the in-being of sin; but now we know that sin must dwell in our mortal body until death; but it does not sit regent there, grace fills the throne of the heart. Almighty love draws the affections, infinite wisdom protects and informs the judgment, sovereign mercy purges the conscience, and, though deep calleth into deep,

"With Christ in the vessel,
I smile at the storm."

Peace be with you.
Yours in Christ,
C. D.

Hartford, Ala.

FAITH, HOPE, CHARITY

The above three words I shall use as a text to address you in the name of the Lord. These words are found in I Cor. 13:13. To more fully get the essence of the text we will begin at the first verse of the chapter. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass; or a tinkling cymbal." From those expressions we are led into this thought, that is, the insignificance of all things else speaking in the absence of charity. Speaking in the tongues of men and of angels is great, but void of charity it is empty speaking and worthless. This is one of the reasons Old Baptists do not educate their ministers. A man can be educated to speak but you cannot teach him charity; and without charity his speech would be comfortless to God's children. Although

the speaker might be a possessor of charity, the hearer being void of it the accomplishment on the part of the hearer would be worthless. So we gather up and get an insight and see the beauty, and smell the fragrance of both speaker and hearer being possessors of charity. In the second verse we read, "And though. I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." We note here the apostle embodies faith, prophecy and knowledge as important, As these three factors or principles are of importance, allow me to say here that without faith it is impossible to please God. He that cometh to God must believe that he is. Is what? Is God and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Not a rewarder of those that go to him (or say they do) with a fond expectation of being rewarded upon their arrival, but the very fact that they seek him evidences within itself they are rewarded. They seek not in order to be rewarded, but because of the fact they are rewarded they are possessors not professors. In other words you have the cash in hand before you start on the job which makes it easy to seek the Lord. Therefore, I say seek him while he may be found for this is the medium through which he is sought, and the medium through which his children are rewarded, and the only medium, and in the absence of charity all of this rewarding and seeking is void. Verse three, "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." This, my friends, is the limit. For a man to make disposition of all his goods to a worthy cause, and if given to feed the poor is not a worthy cause I do not know one, do you? But that is not all, then give his body to be burned. What more, O what more could be asked or expected? But all this sacrifice in the absence of charity is profitless. Faith is a wonderful factor, hope being an anchor of the soul (not to the soul) both sure and steadfast, "and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered." But these two prime factors, or principles, are each void within themselves in the absence of charity. Well, what of charity you ask? Read on commencing with verse four. "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth. " Before I proceed with my elaborations upon this all important factor, or principle as you may please to call it, allow me, dear reader, to pause just here and look within and be blessed of God to search and see if I can find the least trace of charity in my own heart. Will you, as you read this, please do the same? "Charity vaunteh not itself." I find the spirit of vaunting in my heart. "Charity envieth not." I find envy in my heart. "Charity suffereth long." I fall

short: here, I am lacking in patience, my endurances are weak, O so weak. "Charity seeketh not her own." I am so prone for possession, I want, I work, I wish for things of my own, have built many, many air castles and never lived in any of them, but I am still building. "Charity is not easily provoked." I am, are you? "Charity doth not behave itself unseemly." I do act so unseemly, my behaviour is far below par. "Charity thinketh no evil." I do, do you? Dear reader, my thoughts are vain and often, very often gone astray, and so on I go, but "Charity never faileth." Never is a long time, tongues fail, prophecies fail, knowledge vanisheth, talents and gifts cease, faith and hope go down into the grace with us and are no more. I hate the thought of the day when my Bible and hymn book will be laid away to be molested by me no more. They are now my constant companions. But with the blessed hope of charity that never faileth standing as a sentinel on guard while I sleep the sleep of death until the coming of my blessed Lord, then shall I awake in his likeness and be satisfied. Yes, I agree with Paul, "the greatest of these is charity," the pure love of God, it never faileth. Give me of thy love, O God, that I may all trials and tribulations meet; doubts and fears surpass; despondency restrain: gloom surmount and patiently wait and be qualified of sweet charity to say, let me die the death of the righteous, let my last end be like her. A trembling sinner, yet I hope.

(Elder) F. A. COLLINS.
September. 1944.

"I will go in the strength of the Lord God; I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only." Psalms 71:16.

In the Scriptures it is said that David was a man after God's own heart. "I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will." Acts 13:22. It is also said that he never turned aside from following any of the commandments of the Lord save in the matter of Uriah the Hittite, but this falling by the way was sufficient to teach him that he had neither strength nor righteousness of his own. We all know of the sad incident which left a dark stain upon the record of David's life, and of Nathan, the prophet of God, whom the Lord had sent to tell David of his great sin which he had committed. We note also the attitude of David toward the man who had done this great evil, as Nathan puts forth the parable of the poor man whose only possession was one little ewe lamb which the poor man loved as his bosom friend, etc., and also the words of the king, "As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die." But hear the words of Nathan, the prophet, *"Thou art the man."* These words brought a sense of guilt and a feeling of condemnation into the heart of David, and he was made to acknowledge his great sin, and to implore the Lord for mercy and pardon. (Psalm 51). It is noteworthy that such a sad episode has marked the history of the life, not only of David, but also many others of both the Old and New Testament times as well as in these, our days.

According to the divine record, men of God who knew him experimentally and apparently strong in character have in a moment's time fallen into the very depths of iniquity, and this fact should cause us no little concern, for how are we, as ministers of the Lord, to reconcile these cold facts with our doctrine of salvation for time and eternity alone by sovereign grace? And how are we to reconcile such cold facts with the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things? We are well aware that men in nature cannot comprehend the, truth which Old Baptists have been made able to rejoice in so long. We also maintain that even the Lord's people are not able to understand and love these great truths until it is given to them of the Lord to do so, and because of this fact, that none of us can know the truth apart from a revelation from God, it would appear evident that the Scriptures are a sealed book to all without enlightenment from the Holy Spirit, and are full of seeming contradictions. It is an undeniable fact that all men by nature are Arminians (conditionalists) and this explains the reason why there are so many different churches (so called) in the world to-day, and so many spurious beliefs differing so widely. Men are reading the Scriptures merely as history and trying to understand them with the carnal mind which is enmity against God. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: - neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned." Consequently we are getting no truth from the natural mind of any man, not even from Old Baptists, and one would be compelled to say, from the variety of opinions that exist among us, that we are all more or less guilty, in some respects at least, of trying to interpret the Scriptures with the aid of carnal reasoning. How common it is to hear men discussing the Scriptures and saying, I do not see that point just as you do, when in fact he, did not see it at all, and maybe neither of them could see the truth as it is in Jesus.

Now beloved, this is not meant for criticism. We are simply relating the facts as to the various opinions prevalent among us, but of course on points of doctrine of minor importance, but they are with us, a variety of opinions, and for this very reason we should be both careful and considerate before condemning our brethren who cannot readily assent to our own views. However, we do love sound doctrine when speaking of the cardinal principles of our belief, and on these principles the Baptists are pretty well agreed. We know that no one ever believed with the carnal mind that God is an absolute sovereign; nor did any one ever believe with the carnal mind that whatever came to pass here in time was predestinated of God; and certainly no carnal mind ever believed that God can and does make all the evil of this world work for the good of his people. The Scriptures teach us "that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," and also that God "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." We must accept these Scriptures as divinely inspired, and unless we wish to turn Arminian and

limit the "all things" here to "all good things," as many would have it, we are obliged to say that the all things include David's sin and all the rest of the falls which God's people have been guilty of here in this world. It is generally accepted among the Baptists, and I, too, most certainly believe, that God takes, care of his own here in this life. "Kept by the power of God," and being kept by the power of God none could possibly fall into such heinous evils as David was over taken with until God withdraws his hand which is holding them up. That God does sometimes temporarily withdraw or hide himself from his children, leaving them to themselves, is a truth we cannot ignore. When the Spirit's keeping power is withdrawn, man can do but one thing, and that is to follow the bent of his human nature which is always sinful. But the question arises why does the Lord so hide himself from his people, knowing that they have no strength at all of their own to pursue a right course, and can do nothing without him but drift with the current of evil? This question has not often been answered, and we do not have the slightest idea that our answer will be satisfactory to many, nevertheless, it has been a solace to us, and we are made to rejoice in the understanding we hope the Lord has given us concerning this deep mystery, and we trust it may be a help to some humble soul who is burdened and asking to know the truth. The Lord's people have neither strength nor righteousness of their own; neither do they have any spiritual knowledge of their own; it is too high for them, they cannot attain unto it. Since it is purely an act of sovereign grace in revealing the strength and righteousness of God to his people, so it is sovereign grace in the experience of God's people which gives to them the "light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." We must all be taught of the Lord that we have neither strength nor righteousness, and that we do not even possess a knowledge that we are entirely without strength, until shown by the Lord by being subjected to severe trials and fearful falls. David, as king and prophet of the Lord, might have imagined that he had at least a little strength, but the Lord showed him that when left to himself he was nothing more than a worm of the dust. And so with Peter who no doubt felt he was able to carry out his boast--- "I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death," but a little girl could scare him into bitter cursing and swearing and denying his Lord three times in intercession. Do we still ask why does the Lord hide himself, withdraw his hand and leave his people to fall into such gross evils? Could David have said, "I will go in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only" if the Lord had not shown him that he had neither strength nor righteousness of his own by allowing him to fall into terrible sins? Could Peter have known that the Lord's people "are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" if the Lord, had not shown him that he was a coward and had not sufficient strength to acknowledge the truth in the presence of a damsel? Now beloved, if we are

inclined to doubt that the fall of David and Peter were in the purposes of God and among the all things that work together for good to them that love God, and who are the called according to his purpose, then let us ask, was it good for David and Peter for the Lord to teach them that he was their strength and righteousness? If so, then their falls must have been included among the all things which God purposed, and works together for good to them that love him, for it was through their falls that God taught them that they were without strength, and the Lord is still teaching his little children that they have no ability tending toward any spiritual good by leaving them to themselves occasionally that Satan may even sift them as wheat. The wheat, as we all know, needs to be sifted and cleaned before it is fit to be made into food for man's use, and in like manner the Lord's people often need to be cleansed and made free from pride and haughty spirit which goeth before a fall, in order that they may know and teach others that their strength is of the Lord. God may often leave his people amidst the evils of this world in order to do them good, and so our Lord taught us to pray--- "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." It is therefore, evident that some good must come to all of the Lord's people for all the evils which are allowed to come upon them, and, dearly beloved, let us not doubt for a moment that our gracious Lord can and does work all things for our good. This was the very doctrine that Paul was preaching when his pharisee enemies brought a false accusation against him, affirming that he preached, "Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation (the apostle said) is just." We have no other idea but that the worldly minded and carnal bigot will bring the same accusation against this article should they read it, but we are writing for the Lord's people who are inquiring for truth, and we trust the Lord may make them to rejoice with us in these revelations. Beloved, let us not condemn our brethren for their weaknesses and shortcomings, nor gloat over our strength to do big things and refrain from the evil. To do so indicates that God has already sent leanness into our souls, and we may need to be taught, as David and Peter were, that our strength is of the Lord, and that we can do good only as he works in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.

Elder J.S. Hunnicutt
September, 1944

PSALM 134.

Behold, bless ye the Lord, all *ye* **servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord.**

Lift up your hands *in* **the sanctuary, and bless the Lord.**

The Lord that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion.

JACOB

We enjoy the things that are applicable to us. Photographers tell us that few people can resist looking for themselves in a picture. This is true in a spiritual sense. "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Prov 25:11. Our Savior has brought many lovely pictures to us by his fitly spoken words. Oft times we have dark, lonely and despairing paths to tread. Many times sin seems to overcome, our anxiety mounts up and we fear our having a part in the "first resurrection." But a word is fitly spoken and becomes a wonderful picture to us, and we begin to seek comfort therein and to look for our likeness. Jacob is a won derful character. He alone represents the entire family of God. The guilt, deception, struggles and misgivings that he had, belong to each one of God's humble poor. "The Lord's portion is his people: Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." Jacob was never heard to fight nor complain about the providential care of his Maker. Esau found fault with it, but not Jacob. "Portion" and "lot" is not the whole, they are part of the whole. It seems that "portion" and "lot", "Jacob" and "people" are synonyms. Now the whole was to be divided. Some of the spoil must go to the great (see Isaiah 53:12) or strong. God loved Jacob in such a wonderful way that in all eternity he had been given to the Lamb, but that is not the full extent of God's love for Jacob. The choice and the approval of Jacob was fixed, and the balance of the whole had such a limit and bound set to them that it could not interfere. After telling us that Jacob is the lot of the inheritance of the Lord we find out how he is dealt with. None will dare deny that Jacob was a rebellious sinner. As far as the practice of the two boys Esau was the better of the two. Jacob was a sinner by nature and a sinner by practice. Does that describe you, dear reader? A sinner by nature, practice, omission, commission and every other way! He found him in a desert land and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth then on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange God with him." Deut. 32:10-12. Let us notice this language, but before we notice it let us qualify the little word "us". None of Adam's folks can read this language with understanding except those the Savior mentions in Mark 4:11. Except to those that have been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, they cannot understand God's way of speaking. Those that have not been born again have only carnality to look to for ability to read. Every gift is in themselves. To them all that God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost has done is void unless they cooperate with him — and they must begin the work! But to those given to know, they do not look within for ability to do anything, they look to Jesus Christ as the Savior. In him they see the Scriptures in

the light and in a new language. Looking into a glass causes written words to read forward instead of backward. In nature's darkness and carnality it all reads backward, but we think it is forward. In the glass (Jesus Christ) it reads forward and we think and wonder and are amazed that it does not read backward to and for us.

To these characters they look through a glass darkly. For a long time I thought that Paul said, we looked through a dark glass, but we look through a glass darkly, yet we see all things clearly. Here is a paradox and it cannot be understood but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. 13:12; Rev. 15:2) Speaking of a paradox brings us back to Jacob. Have you noticed where the Lord found him? Have you noticed that God, the Lord from heaven, the quickening spirit, is the one performing all the work? Have you noticed that Jacob is on the receiving end of God's work? Did you notice that the order never, was changed? Jacob never did get in front, but always the Lord was ahead. Unless God has reversed the order, he still leads and Jacob follows. I do not think that Jacob was dead in sin when this finding took place. It seems to me there must have been a conception of this. The dead know not anything but those made alive see and realize that they are in a wilderness. The popular idea is that we must come out of sin and perform certain conditions (work awhile) before we become accepted by him, but the Lord found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness and in a desert land. Oh, what paradox! To inhabit two places at once and they as opposite as the poles. There comes a time to every one of God's people that they know this condition, living in a wilderness and a desert land at the same time. How long would Jacob have wandered in the wilderness before he extricated himself from it? To be hopelessly and helplessly lost produces such a confused state of mind that traveling in circles always follows. What a state of mind this produces none can tell save those who have experienced it. Have you ever noticed the children of God bringing to remembrance the way they have been led? Their memory is vivid here and they cannot fall out about it. To one who has not been in this wilderness it is an idle tale, a foreign language. A wilderness is a place where things grow in wildest confusion. Rottening vegetation, mingled with the stench of dead animals brought about by the vehement heat, produces a horrible place of existence. I must say that my experience, and I believe that of my dear kindred in Christ, is that this wilderness is boundless to us. No place of exit has ever been found to anyone of God's children. Empty, miserable comforters say it is easy to find Jesus. They preached that to Job. He was in this place too and he could not get out. Some preachers told him how pleasant things would be if he would acquaint himself with God. (Job 22:21). He gives us a clear picture of trying to get out. Oh, how my poor soul responds to the cry of this dear servant. How bitter is the complaint (23:1) of every elect vessel of mercy. Does it touch a responsive chord in your heart and soul and mind? If so, you are

a blessed character in a wilderness land, enjoying the sweet voice of your Head and Husband and walking in the light of his countenance and doing his commandments. (Psalms 89:15; John 10:27; Rev. 22:14). Job exerted himself to find the Lord. He had such a burning desire to see this King in his beauty that he laments his inability to find him. He does not know how nor where to find him. Oh, how little does Jacob know! The world, in her pomp and splendor, knows so much, they know they are saved; they know they are called to do God's will: they know the way they take and know that heaven is theirs at last. But how different is the way of the "lot of his inheritance." They go, not knowing where they go: they have a visitation from heaven and they are not aware of it: they seek him whom their soul loves and know not how nor where to find him; they desire to live right but how to do it they just do not know, and to make it worse, they cannot find out. If Job could not find him in front, can we? At one time, before coming into the wilderness, we could look forward and see him in the future. There, at a distant date of our own choice, we expected to contact him, but the scene, has changed. We look forward and he is not to be found. We have nothing to bring him to us, and on and on we may still look and never shall possess power to find him. Backward there is nothing but shame and disgrace. Instead of wanting people to know what we have done for the Lord, we find sin, degradation and shame as ours. We cannot find him there.

On the left he is at work but our work of sin is before us and he does not and will not pass that by, it must be removed out of the way. Again we are cut off but surely we can find him on the right! No, no, not that. On the right he hides from us. Once he is not there; twice we cannot see him; once he hides from us. By this time we have come to the end of our strength. This wilderness has got us completely in its power. What darkness we endure; what loud thunder echoes in the dark and hidden recesses of this exhaustless wilderness; what vile reptiles lurk in every secluded spot; what poisonous vapors arise from the muck and slime to cause us to faint away. But reader this is not all. As awful as this is to a babe in Christ it is not all. Every vestige of power must go; every single thought of self must be removed; every fruitful limb must become withered so at the same time that all of this dwelling in wilderness occurs we are in a desert land. We are not in one for awhile and then have a change of scenery, but we are in them both at the same time. How far removed is a desert land from a wilderness? And yet when Christ found Jacob he was hopelessly lost in both. In this wilderness one thing is found and in this desert there is another. In one no water at all, in the other floods; in one it looks like we have plenty of strength to sin, but in the other no strength at all for righteousness; in one dark and loathsome caves, and in the other no shade but the hot sun (law) continually beating upon us. No wonder that David had such a varied experience. Do you suppose that this modern religious world knows this? They know nothing of being an owl

in the desert, or a pelican of the wilderness, but Jacob has found this out. It always causes a bitter complaint. (Psalms 102:6) Now after being found I suppose the Lord's work ends. Here (so I am told) is where man takes up the work, but not so, dear little children.

Elder W. D. Griffin
October, 1944

CIRCULAR LETTER

October, 1944

To the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Forest Grove Church, Greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN: --- Another year has now passed since we last met in an associated capacity. Many changes have taken place during this year. War rages over the earth. Many beloved are now on the battlefields. Others have left these mortal shores. The sword of God is over the earth. Yet there are times when each one whose trust is in him can say, He is a gracious God. In times of distress, trials, conflicts of soul and seeking the face of the Lord, certain principles of doctrine become more precious to one. I am reminded this morning of the word in Isaiah 52:7. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" How often this doctrine is heard in the gospel of the Son of God: Thy God reigneth. What a comfort to the tempest-tossed during anxious moments, to be given to know that our God is Lord of hosts, the hosts of heaven, the hosts of earth and the hosts of hell. God does not try to reign, for be spake, and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast. Even Jesus speaks of the Father as Lord of heaven, and of earth. He upholdeth all things by the word of his power, doing his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? God is a sovereign. The all-wise disposer of all events. Heaven is his throne, the earth his footstool. His dominion is from the sea to the ends of the earth; his power unlimited. Working all things according to the counsel of his own will, so that all things work together for good to them that love him, and to his own glory. The wrath of man praises him, and the remainder he restrains.

They that rule on earth often change their minds, their plans vary from day to day. That which they purpose they are often unable to perform; they are subject to err; whatever power they have is limited, as there is no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God. Not so with the God of the whole earth: He is in one mind, and who can turn him? And what his soul desireth, that he doeth. He is the Father of lights: with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. In the reign of this God he often slays his own people. Though he slay me, yet will I trust him, says one of old. He kills, and makes alive; wounds, and makes whole. They that

trust in him shall be as Mount Zion, that can never be removed. Assurances are given them from time to time that the eternal God is their refuge, and underneath are the everlating arms. The sparrow cannot fall without him, and the very hairs of our heads are all numbered.

May it be the will of God that your ministers speak as the oracles of God, walking upon the mountains; that their feet will be beautiful, publishing salva tion, and the weak, helpless and trem bling hear the word, Thy God reigneth.

In hope,
Elder D. V. Spangler.
Elder H. M. Bennett, Moderator.
George F. Adkins, Clerk.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD
November 10, 1813.

POETRY
NO LEAVING BEHIND.

"There shall not an hoof be left behind." — Exod. X. 26.

When Moses claim'd, at Pharoah's hand,
Deliverance for Israel's band,
He bid the monarch bear in mind,
He would not leave an hoof behind.

So stands the covenant of our God,
As seal'd to us in Jesus' blood,
To show, tho'Satan doth them bind,
He will not leave an hoof behind.

With dangers thick on every hand,
They have to pass this desert land;
Yet, by the way they often find,
That not an hoof is left behind.

Ofttimes their sins awake the rod,
And Abba proves an chastising God;
But still he bears upon his mind,
He will not leave an hoof behind.

Ye pilgrims, then, while on the way,
Rejoice in him, rejoice, I say:
While every step doth you remind,
He will not leave an hoof behind.

O, thou that led thy people through,
To us afresh thy power renew,
Bring forth the dead, the lame, the blind,
And leave, O leave no hoof behind.

Lebbues

ZION.

"And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the Highest himself shall establish her." — Ps. Lxxxvii 5.

While sons of pride, with haughty scorn,
Boast of the lands where they were born,
Tell to what parents they belong,
And let their greatness form their song;

The child of God, with holy fear,
Is taught to triumph only here,
That with the saints, in Zion's bound,
His heavenly birth-place may be found,

"There," said the Holy Ghost of old,
"this and that sheep of Jesus' fold,
Shall be new-born and nourish'd well,
In spite of all the rage of hell."

Born with new eyes, new feet, new hands,
The child of grace with wonder stands;
While 'gainst this new creation rise,
All arts that Satan can devise.

But mark the Father's watchful eye,
Sees all his foes, and will supply
His soul with all-sufficient grace,
To conquer in each trying case.

Each new created power shall find
Full exercise within his mind,
Grace will oppose the powers of sin,
And keep a constant war within.

Sometimes the babe is filled with fear,
Lest he should fail to persevere;
For by the Spirit's opening light,
He views himself as black as night.

But still his soul for mercy pants,
A full salvation now he wants,
And when the Lord his love reveals,
Most blessed joy and peace he feels.

By faith in Jesus crucified,
He lives—nor fears what may betide,
Thro' his dear blood he feels forgiven,
And longs to sing his praise in heaven.

While thus indulged with heavenly cheer,
He bids adieu to grief and fear,
And thinks the sweets of this repeat,
Throughout his life will surely last.

But ah! He little knows the foes,
That every Zionite oppose;
Some lust that he supposed was dead,
Ere long, begins to show its head.

Pride sometimes secretly will rise,
Presenting self before his eyes;
He thinks he must be something now,
Since God has deign'd to bless him so.

Thus, from the fountain to the stream,
He wanders in his airy dream,
Till of the Saviour losing sight.
He sinks in shades of thickest night.

Now all the savage beasts of prey,
That hid themselves in shining day,
Appear again with ten-fold power,
And threaten wholly to devour.

The soul thus harass'd and perplex'd,
With strong temptations sorely vex'd,
Fears he shall now enjoy no more
The comforts he has felt before.

Humbled & weak, he cries, "Dear Lord,
My only hope is in thy word;
O cast a gracious look on me,
And once more set my spirit free."

Thus Zion's sons are taught to know,
They of themselves can nothing do;
And thus established by the Lord,
They live by faith upon his word.

Founded on Christ, their precious Friend,
Salvation's walls their souls defend;
Christ is their all, through time, and he
Their everlasting song shall be.

Sarah.

COME NEAR TO ME.
Gen. xiv. 4.

Poor Jacob's sons astonish'd heard,
Nor could they say a single word;
When Joseph said, "Come near, I pray,
I'm he, indeed, you sent away."

And thus it is when Jesus stands,
With gifts of pardon in his hands;
And says to saints in accents free,
"I'm Jesus, now come near to me."

Such pure regard, such dying love,
Doth draw the mind and heart above;
And Satan doth before it flee,
"When Jesus says, now come near to me."

Ye chosen saints, oft fill'd with woe,
Have not you often found it so?
Did not you bow the humble knee,
When Jesus said, "Come near to me."

No friend like this, you will repeat,
His precious sayings are most sweet:
Your souls will praise the great One-Three,
When Jesus says, "Come near to me."

You forward press on Zion's road,
And love the saints redeem'd by blood;
And with them you will then agree
When Jesus says, "Come near to me."

Blest with his smiles we cannot stray,
And serve our lusts as come would say;
Oh, no! this surely cannot be,
When Jesus says, "Come near to me."

All crooked things are then made straight,
Whilst at the house of God we wait;
Made glad to hear of many free,
When Jesus says, "Come near to me."

But when he veils his lovely face,
We long again for his embrace;
Nor can we rest contented here
"Till he again our spirits cheer.

Great Wakering Essex.
Wm. Westhorp.

HOSEA VI:1.

"Come and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up."

The language of Ephraim and Judah in the text, implies a confession that they had departed from the Lord, and had gone into idolatry, and that the Lord in covenant faithfulness had humbled them by sore chastisement. As he had said in chapter v. 14. **"For I** *will be* **unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah; I,** *even* **I, will tear and go away; I will take away, and none shall rescue** *him.*" These fearful judgments had been felt, and being thus abased before the Lord, their language is, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord." They acknowledge that the hand of the Lord had been upon them, and that he alone could heal them. In the prophetic import of the subject, Judah and Ephraim appear to represent the church of God in her gospel

organization, who, like the type, manifests a strong inclination to run into idolatry, by departing from the Lord in doctrine, in practice and in the discipline and order of his house. In all such cases, God is faithful to the provisions of his covenant. He will, and he does, visit the transgressions of his children with a rod, and their iniquities with many stripes, until they feel suitably humbled, feel a contrition of heart for their follies, and a desire to return to the order of the gospel. Then their language will be like that of Judah and Ephraim, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord." They understand that afflictions have not arisen up out of the dust, nor their troubles come upon them by chance. The Lord has torn them, and he alone can heal the breach. When churches forsake the laws and ordinances of the gospel, depart from the simplicity of the doctrine and practice which he has laid down and enjoined, they soon become torn, divided and scattered, they lose that heavenly love and unity, so far as the sensible enjoyment of it is considered, and they are made to feel the folly of their course. With deep repentance they are then heard to say, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord," for it is his hand that is upon us, and he alone can heal us. An assurance springs up in their heart; faith in them revived, lays hold of the new covenant promise that he will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities he will remember no more.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y., Jan. 1, 1855.

II PETER 3: 6-9.

Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will convene with North River Primitive Baptist Church in Otway, NC (Carteret County) on October 8-9, 2016. The Church is located on Gillikin Road, the first road on the right as you enter Otway on US 70.

We welcome and invite all who love the truth to come and worship with us.

Elder Gene Lupton
Association Clerk
252-229-0366

EASTERN KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The 2016 session of the Eastern Kehukee Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Hancocks Church located near Ayden, North Carolina. The meeting will be held on Saturday, October 1 and Sunday, October 2, 2016. Preaching services will begin each day at 10:30am.

From Raleigh take US 64 East. Then take the US 264 East exit to Greenville. When you get to Greenville, take Hwy 11 South to Ayden. Turn left on Hwy 102 East. Travel through Ayden and about two miles from the town turn on the first paved road to the left. This will be Ayden Golf Club Road. Go about 1 1/2 miles and the church will be on the left.

We invite our ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

Naomi Coker Association Clerk
252-823-0786

II TIMOTHY 3:16-17.

All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Holly Springs Primitive Baptist Church, Montalba, Texas looked out among the church and saw a brother David Robertson filled with the spirit and feel he is called to the work of a deacon. They asked for a presbytery to be called to examine this brother. On 3-27-16 a presbytery was organized by appointing Elder George Paul as Moderator, Elder Lowell Hopkins as Clerk, Brother Edward Gallaway as the church spokesman.

Elder Gwynn Byrd was appointed to question the church spokesman, Elder Carlton Brown was appointed to examine the candidate, Elder Gwynn Byrd was appointed to pray the ordination prayer, Elder Lowell Hopkins was appointed to deliver the charge. After questioning the spokesman for the church and finding the church in agreement, the brother was delivered unto the presbytery. Brother David Robertson was found worthy of ordination to the office of deacon. He was then set a part by prayer and the laying on of hands by the presbytery. After receiving the charge, Deacon David Robertson was delivered back to the church. We, the undersigned, recommend him to all churches of our faith and order.

Witness our hands this day 3-27-16
Elder George Paul, Moderator
Elder Lowell Hopkins, Clerk

Ordained Brethren Present Elders:

Elder George Paul
Elder Carlton Brown
Elder Gwynn Byrd
Elder Lowell Hopkins

NEW RIVER ASSOCIATION

The two hundred and twenty second annual session of the New River Association will convene, the Lord willing at the (P.B.) Indian Creek Church, located in Floyd County, Va.

This session will be entertained by Flower Gap (P.B.) Church located in Carroll Co., but will be held at Indian Creek (P.B.) Church located in Indian Valley, Va.

The association will be held on Saturday before the fourth Sunday on dates being September 24th and 25th, 2016 Lord willing.

Indian Creek Church is located on Highway (787) in Indian Valley, Va. Those coming by route (221) or route (8) or route (52) come to Willis, Va. Then turn on on highway (787) go approximately (7) miles to church on left.

We invite all ministers of like faith and order, also Brothers, Sisters, and Friends to come be with us.

Thomas Pegram, Mod.
J.B. Mitchell, Jr.

G.P.S. address:
4192 Indian Valley Rd. N.W.
Willis, Va 24380

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 2016

Vivian Underwood, VA 5.00
Lula Holley, VA 5.00
Amy Lane, VA 25.00
Ned Barron, LA 5.00
Gene Howard, AL 5.00
Inda Wingate, NC 15.00

In the May issue a donation by John Schultz was listed incorrectly.

I mis-typed and listed him as being from WV and it should have read WY.

John Schultz, WY 1000.00

I apologize for the mistake and hope it did not cause any confusion.

OBITUARIES

OBITUARY OF SISTER LUCILLE SHELTON GOAD

With much sadness and empty hearts, we will try to write a few words about our dear mother, grandmother, sister, and friend. The Lord has blessed our family to share many wonderful years with our dearly departed one. During our lives, she surrounded us with much love and happiness. She always made us feel loved, comforted us when we were sick, and listened when we needed to talk. She loved us unconditionally. Though she had little money,

she was one of the most giving of her time, energy, and whatever money she could spare. Her door was always opened to family, friends, neighbors, and visitors with a welcomed smile. You never entered her home without a warm hug and an offer of food. She was not well-educated, but taught us many important lessons over the years. She made Christmas morning a festive occasion when the family gathered to enjoy her delicious breakfast.

She loved to grow a garden and many varieties of flowers. Many of her hours were spent making beautiful quilts. Our family has many great memories of the times we shared together. We hope that the Lord will give us strength to get through the difficult times ahead and rejoice in the wonderful memories she left behind.

Sister Goad asked for a home with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on July 24, 1949 and was baptized on August 28, 1949; she was a strong believer in salvation by grace. She attended her church meetings regularly as long as her health allowed. She enjoyed the fellowship among the Old Baptist and lived according to her belief. One of her pleasures was preparing food for the church meetings especially the Associations.

Our dear one was born in Pittsylvania County on January 2, 1916, the daughter of the late Charlie Morgan Shelton and Sallie Plymale Shelton. At the age of 16, she married Russell Lewis Goad on September 10, 1932, and to that union four children were born. She also leaves eight grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild.

She was predeceased by her husband, Russell Lewis Goad; seven brothers, Robert Shelton, Harry Shelton, David Shelton, Howard Shelton, Willie Shelton, Roy Shelton, and James Shelton, Sr.; four sisters, Ethel Shelton, Bertha Short, Laura Parker, and Hilda Hines; and a daughter-in-law, Phyllis Goad.

She is survived by two sons, Elder Raymond Goad and wife Ann, and Edward Goad; two daughters Mabel Hedrick and husband John, and Diane Scott and husband William "Butch"; grandchildren Sandra Dalton, Pam Betterton, Kim Adams, Stephanie Dawson, Ed Goad, Jr., David Hedrick, Greta Selden, and Megan Spofford. Great-grandchildren Kaye Ellen Dalton, Jeremy Dalton, Lauren Dawson Keesee, Brent Dawson, Katherine Adams, William Selden, Landon Selden, George Spofford, Claire Spofford, and one great-great-grandchild, Madison Dalton.

Her funeral was held on April 2, 2016 at 2:00 p.m. at Weatherford Primitive Baptist church by Elder Raymond Goad and Elder Marvin Brumfield Her body was laid to rest beneath an array of beautiful flowers in the church cemetery next to her husband of 56 years to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

During her stay at Gretna Health and Rehab Center, she loved each visit from family, friends, or acquaintances. She was appreciative of every act of kindness shown her. Our family visited and assisted with her care to the best of our ability, in addition to continuous

care by the staff.

She fought a good fight, finished her course, kept the faith and was made reconciled to her condition. Her journey here on earth is complete according to God's will, and she was taken from this world of sin and sorrow on March 31, 2016. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

Written by her daughter and granddaughter who miss her greatly,

Sister Diane Scott
Sister Sandra Dalton

SISTER LAURA RICHARDS

Members of Saints Rest Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas, and our brethren and friends in the faith, were saddened at the loss of Sister Laura Richards in a tragic automobile wreck on March 25, 2016.

Sister Laura was born on August 1, 1941. She departed from this life on March 29, 2016.

Sister Laura was a kind and devoted member of our church, deeply loving her Lord and His children. Through the years she participated in our meetings as much as possible when not otherwise hindered. She was deeply interested in the Scriptures and their importance in her life.

She always helped and cooked for our special meetings and often gave thoughtful gifts to others. She is deeply missed, having left a vacancy in our little church that can never be filled.

After her funeral, her mortal bodily remains were transported to Louisiana and buried near her beloved parents, there to await the resurrection at the return of her Lord.

For over 51 years Sister Laura was the wife of Brother Frank Richards, who is our church's Treasurer and Clerk. He also manages the funds for *The Remnant Publications.* He has graciously asked that in lieu of flowers, please make donations to *The Remnant* in Sister Laura's name.

RESOLVED that three copies of this memorial of Sister Laura Richards be prepared: One copy to be sent to *The Signs of the Times* for publication, one for Sister Laura's family, and one to be retained in the records of Saints Rest Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church.

Unworthily,

Elder C. C. Morris, Pastor
Deacon Frank Richards, Clerk

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 9 / 2016
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

The good old way that leads to God,
Which saints in every age have trod,
Was Christ alone, they saw his day,
And him pursued, the good old way.

When Adam sunk his unborn race
In ruin, guilt, and deep disgrace,
The promise, with celestial ray,
To Jesus points, the good old way.

Th' apostles all proclaimed him thus,
Jesus the Lord, or God with us,
Who did by death our ransom pay,
The truth, the life, the good old way.

'Tis true, there's one exceeding broad,
Cast up-by men, a dangerous road,
Where thousands to destruction stray,
Who never found this good old way.

Cheer up, believer, courage take;
Why should thy heart with sorrow break?
Eternal joys shall soon repay,
The sorrows of the good old way.

Should foes and fears on every hand,
Thick as the leaves in autumn stand,
Still forward press, the day is yours;
The good old way the crown secures.

Kent.

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EDITORIAL

"For it became him, for whom *are* all things, and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Hebrews 2:10.

"Though he were a Son, yet he learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. Hebrews 5:8-9.

Elder J. B. Farmer

Have you ever stumbled over these verses, thinking how is it possible for Jesus, in whom dwells the fullness of the Godhead (Divinity) bodily to have been less than perfect in any way? Jesus is the sinless, spotless Lamb of God, who was the perfect sacrifice, which was able and sufficient to satisfy the justice of Almighty God forever in behalf of His beloved children who had sinned. "By one offering he perfected forever them that are sanctified."He never sinned, although He was tempted in all points as we are. He never misspoke, and never failed to give a true saying in its season. He never respected any man's person, and never coveted anything of this world. He became poor that we might be made rich.

We are assured that there is no error with God or with His blessed word. We are also assured that if we seem to stumble at his word, the problem is with us and our lack of understanding and not with Him. All we can do is to beg God for wisdom and understanding, because He has given us the promise that He will supply our need. He said by the apostle, **"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."**James 1:5.

The actual meaning of the word *perfect* seems to be that which is needful to be understood. In some contexts *perfect* means to be without any flaws or imperfections. In other situations it

means to be complete or finished in every aspect. We have been made confident that Jesus' person was without flaw or imperfection. Therefore, the phrases *to make perfect* or *to be made perfect,* as they relate to Him, must mean that some things must have been lacking in His experience; not in His being. There were some things He had not yet endured. For example, early in His life He had not suffered mocking and scourging and being put to death. In His suffering of these things, He fulfilled the law and the prophets and finished that great salvation of His beloved people. His mighty work of salvation was completed, finished and perfected. He came and accomplished that which His Father sent Him to do, which is to save His people from their sins.

That which was imperfect, which was made perfect is His beloved bride. She has been presented faultless to the Father, without spot, wrinkle, or any blemish, having His impeccable righteousness imputed unto her. He, who knew no sin, took all her sins upon Himself and was made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

How wonderful it is to be given assurance that Christ came to save sinners. How wonderful it is when we, feeling to be too sinful and corrupt to approach unto Him, find Him approaching us, and showing us that He came for the very purpose to save and redeem sinners such as us to Himself. How wonderful it is when we think of all the vile things we have thought and said and done, which are unfixable by us, have been remedied by Him. How wonderful it is to have our guilt and dread and fears replaced by a blessed Hope in the Redeemer, who is life eternal.

No wonder we delight in speaking and singing His praises, even knowing our great weakness in ourselves. But His strength is made perfect in weakness. And He has chosen the weak things of this world to confound the mighty. **"Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him** *be* **glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."**

Written in love and in hope of eternal life, I trust.

Elder J.B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

July 30, 2016

Dear Brother Tony,

Enclosed is $25.00 for two years subscription renewal.

I seem to be at a loss for words, but I hope to be thankful for a sound doctrine publication as "Signs of the Times." May it continue as long as the Lord sees fit.

In hope,
Steve Everett
Forest, Va.

THE SONG

Have mercy Lord and help me please,
I fear that I may fail,
As sure as walls of house will fall
Without the needful nail.

My arm appears to have no strength,
My lips are cold and dry.
Without a proper song to sing,
Hope trembles with a sigh.

With mercy for His little ones,
God knows their feeble frame.
And He with pity hears each word
When they call on His name.

Though weakened by the weighted care,
God's people know ere long,
He will provide the strength they need
And then, with time, the song.

Sherry Farmer

The Kite or Pride Must Have a Fall. A Poem from the November Signs, 1958 — Vol. 126 — # 11

My waking dreams are best concealed
Much folly, little good they yield.
But now and then, I gain while sleeping.
A friendly hint that's worth the keeping.

Lately I dream't of one who cried.
"Beware of self, Beware of Pride.
When you are prone to build a Babel,
Recall to mind this little fable."

"Once on a time a paper kite,
Was mounted to a wondrous height,
Where, giddy with it's elevation,
It thus expressed self admiration:"

"See how yon crowds of gazing people
Admire my flight above the steeple.
How they would wonder if they knew,
All that a kite like me can do!
Were I but free I''d take a flight
And pierce the clouds beyond their sight.
But ah, like a poor prisoner bound,
My string confines me to the ground-
I'd brave the eagles towering wing,
Might I but fly with out a string...!"

It tugged and pulled, while thus it spoke,
To break the string at last it broke.
Deprived at once, of all it's stay.
In vain it tried to soar away.

Unable it's own weight to bear,
It fluttered downward through the air;
Unable it's own course to guide,
The winds soon plunged it in the tide.
Ah, foolish kite, thou hads't no wing,
How coulds't thou fly without a string?
My heart replied: Oh, Lord I see,
How much this kite resembles me.
Forgetful that by Thee I stand.
Impatient of Thy ruling hand,

How oft I've wished to break the lines
Thy wisdom for my lot assigns.
And, but for grace and love divine,
A fall thus dreadful had been mine"

Note: Sent by Caroline Martin to Arlene Hole who forwarded it to the Signs.

Note: This hymn was sent by Caroline Martin. It has three verses that are not in the Hymn and Tune Books by Elders Durand and Lester.

These verses are 4, 6, and 7. Some other books have verses 6 and 7 but it seems only Goble and perhaps one other has all 7 verses.

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds,
In a believer's ear I
It soothes his sorrows, heels his wounds,
And drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole,
And calms the troubled breast;
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary rest.

Dear name! the rock on which I build,
My shield and hiding place;
My never-failing treasury, filled
With boundless stores of grace.

By thee my prayers acceptance gain,
Although with sin defiled;
Satan accuses me in vain,
And I am owned a child.

Jesus! my Shepherd, Husband, Friend,
My Prophet, Priest, and King,
My Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,
Accept the praise I bring

Weak is the effort of my heart,
And cold my warmest thought ;
But when I see thee as thou art,
I'll praise thee as I ought.

Till then I would thy love proclaim,
With ev'ry fleeting breath;
And may the music of thy name
Refresh my soul in death.

Newton.

THE COVERT OF HIS WINGS

Brought low in those uncertain hours;
God hears the cry of one whose heart
Grows faint in need of His powers
Against the cruel oppressor's dart.

For when we're fearful, God is there
With mercy, love, and truth He brings
Defense against each worldly care
Within the covert of His Wings.

The one who seeks the Word of God
Has promise to forever live,
He comforts them by staff and rod
With blessings only He can give.

Upon the way, head bowed to pray,
Our praises rise to only One
Whose loving kindness marks the day;
His song by night when day is done.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 10 / 2016 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

VOICES OF THE PAST

Island City, Oregon

To my seven children, Greetings in the Lord: I know that I must soon quit these mortal scenes and go the way of all the generations before me, and you and your children will be the only witnesses that I ever lived in this world after the little estate, the Lord blessed me to accumulate, shall have been distributed and merged into your own earthly possessions. When I think of giving up the course of life I have pursued for over three quarters of a century, I am not sad but desirous that you, the pride and joy of my life, shall know a secret which has been ever present with me in all the tribulations and joys of these past years, and as I venture across the dark river of death it points the way to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for me. In life I tried to set an example of honesty, thrift and industry which all of you are wisely following, but these only build for you the temporal blessing of worldly independence which tribulation and age cannot ward off. First of all I commend to you the Bible, the sacred Scriptures, not as the various religious sects interpret them, but as God himself applies them to his saints. He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and holds the destiny of everything in his hands. In his Son, Jesus Christ, he has chosen all his saints to be heirs of salvation and through the power of his Holy Spirit he makes this known and no heart is too hard for his power to penetrate and bring to repentance. The knowledge we have of him, and his mercy and grace bestowed upon us are his teaching, and not some thing we have thought up ourselves or that some person has taught us. The greatest falsehood of the many religious preachers and teachers of the so-called churches today, is that God is waiting, pleading and drawing mankind, but it all depends on his acceptance and choice whether he is to be an heir of salvation. That is not the God that I worship. My God speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. He rules on the throne of heaven, and his power reaches to all the ends of the earth. He doeth his will at all times and no one can stay his hand or say unto him, "What doest thou?" This has been my faith for over fifty years and your mother stands rooted and grounded in this same faith. We have walked together for fifty years rejoicing in the same truths and worshiping the same God, and we rejoice today that all of our children stand free of the popular heresy of the worldly religions of these times. We trust that you know something of the truth which God alone teaches his children, and that in your life duties the light of his truth may shine out to the glory of our heavenly Father and Jesus Christ who is our Redeemer and Elder Brother. I feel a desire to admonish you in many things but space will not permit. As a reminder of these desires I am ordering the Signs of the Times, our doctrinal church paper, sent to each of you. Your mother and I

have never missed a copy of this in our home for the fifty years of our married life, and we hope you will consider it a sort of heirloom and find comfort and consolation in reading it. The Bible should be your chief counselor. Let no preacher mislead you by false interpretation or application of its teaching. The Signs has stood for over one hundred years as an interpreter of its teaching, and is the safest counselor I can point you to outside of the Bible itself.

I especially commend to you the teaching of the twelfth chapter of Ecclesiastes. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." Read the whole chapter which towards the close reads, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." To God I commend you in the hope of a blissful immortality, the wish and blessing of your father.

Elder C.W. BOND
January, 1945

PSALM 5: 11-12.

But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.

For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as *with* a shield.

Freestone, Texas.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: As I approach the subject of what I hope is my call to the ministry, I do so with fear and trembling, realizing that without God's divine presence I can no more tell the true story of my call to the ministry than I can preach without his divine presence. I have learned by experience that without him we can do nothing. When I was a raised from the water at the time of my baptism into the fellowship of the church there was a peace and calm that seemed to pervade my whole being but this lasted a very short time. A new trouble set up. There was a very strong impression that I would have to preach or witness God's eternal truth, and it came with force. I cried out, O Lord, I cannot. I began to plead my ignorance and tried to ask God to relieve me of this foolish impression. My feelings no one can know but one who has had the experience. Day and night I suffered. I thought that any one on earth was better qualified than I to speak in his name. I must feed the family of God and I did not have the food so I went to work to try to get rid of the impression. I tried to hide from the Old Baptists and would have dreams at night. Some times I would be speaking to a good sized audience and would forget myself and all worldly things. I was so lifted up I would be shedding tears of joy, and I could see tears of joy running down the cheeks of the people. Then in my dream I was happy, but when I awoke I was still in trouble. These dreams continued and sometimes I would be speaking with

sweet liberty and all at once would be shut up in darkness, then I would waken and it seemed that could see more clearly that I could not possibly go. I must put it from me forever. My dreams continued, my troubles grew heavier. Then one time I thought I had my trouble nearly beaten. I came to a clear pool of water. I was standing on one side of the pool and as I looked there was a man in bright clothing sitting in a pulpit on the other side. I looked down at the water and there was a narrow walk just wide enough for one person to walk across. The man was looking down at a book. He did not speak to me but it seemed there was an invisible force that drew me to him so I went slowly to where the man was sitting. He was in the stand and I standing by. He held a little book in his hand and all at once there was a little book placed in my hand just like the book he held in his hand. He began turning the leaves in his book and I turned the leaves in the book that was given me until we had turned the last leaf. There was one word at the top of each page in each book and it was written in Hebrew. I did not know what the word was but the man said to me, you have the right book, go ahead, and later it was shown to me that tile book was the Bible and the Hebrew word was Jesus. Then I was commanded to preach Jesus but I could not, I was too weak too unworthy. Surely there must be some good in a minister of the gospel but none in me. So I fought on and in a vision I was called to the army and was taken prisoner with two others. Our clothes were very poor, they were not creditable. We were sitting there waiting to see what the outcome would be thinking we were going to be executed. Three men came in dressed exactly alike in uniform. They carried the two men, who were prisoners with me, out and executed them. I did not see the executions but my impression was that they were executed. The three with the bright clothing on returned to the prison where I was alone. I was seemingly perfectly reconciled and asked them if they were going to execute me, when one of them spoke, saying, no, we are going to send you back to feed that family, haven't you a family of twelve? I answered yes. The one on my right laid his right hand on my right shoulder and said, make this man witness. The one in the center raised his right hand. I was passive, my right hand went up without any effort on my part, the one in the center administered the oath, the third sanctioned it. I then looked at myself and I was clothed in the same garments that they were, the righteousness of Jesus Christ whom I was to preach. My impression in the vision was the trinity in the Godhead — Father, Son and Holy Ghost. It was the Holy Ghost that laid his hand on me, Jesus Christ administered the oath, the great God sanctioned the work. I still did not want to go, but went away still in trouble until one Friday night in my trouble I went to the old church and they had a resting place for me, more beautiful than an earthly resting place. I got on it and it seemed to me that I had the sweetest rest that I had in my life. The next morning I arose with a desire to go, even run, to the old church and be God's little anything. I went to the church, the

pastor was not there. They called on me to talk. I made a feeble effort. What I said was almost nothing but it gave me the sweetest rest that I had had in many long years. I have been trying to declare God's counsel ever since, but I am just as passive in God's hand today as I was at the very beginning.

Your unworthy brother in gospel bonds.

(Elder) W. O. Beene
February, 1945

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." Eph. 1:4.

The doctrine of the eternal, unconditional election of God's people to salvation has been a trophy of the Baptists from their very beginning. True, many others also have held this glorious old doctrine dear to their hearts during a few centuries succeeding the crucifixion of on Lord. The venerable Angustine and Calvin, though very ardent advocates of this docrine, were by no means its author. No man is the author of this doctrine. Man has always repudiated it, heaped reproach upon its advocates and continues to do so until this day. No one in nature ever will or can receive this doctrine as truth, because the ability to comprehend it comes as a revelation from God, and God reveals nothing of a spiritual order to a man in nature, hence the necessity of being born from above in order to understand and appropriate divine truth. This doctrine of election is eternal. It was before the foundation of the world that God chose his people to salvation and immortal glory, and if they were viewed when chosen as fallen creatures by nature, they were also viewed as redeemed by sovereign grace, and according to election they were beloved for the Father's sake. They were chosen unconditionally. God, did not elect his people to salvation because of any foreseen merits on their part; not because he f oresaw their repentance and faith and holiness of life, for as depraved creatures in nature none could possess these graces of the Spirit until they were given them from above. Then God did not elect his people because of a foreseen repentance and faith of which he, himself, is the author and which must be wrought in them by regenerating grace. No, he did not choose them on conditions of any sort, but solely because they were his, and his electing love prompted him to save them. "Chosen in him," and here the idea of an eternal union between Christ and his people looms up in our minds. Note the text does not say chosen into him, as if they, some way had a prior existence apart from him. No they never existed apart from him until the creation of Adam and the fall of his race, but the election of his people was anterior to our being as an Adam man, and therefore does not refer to a choice being made among the sons of Adam. They were chosen in him, not merely through him as their federal head or representative only, who stepped in as a substitute in order to avert a catastrophe, but chosen in him their living head, that is, they were in him when chosen,

and this is to say, the union and election existed simultaneously from eternity. They were chosen, not in order to become his people, but because they were his people. Their existence in him was as the fruit in the germ, spiritually speaking, just like we all had a natural existence in Adam as the fruit of his loins. And since all of his people became totally depraved, ruined and helpless in Adam, and our union to Christ became severed temporarily on our part, though on God's behalf they were still his elect for Christ, the head of his church, assumed the guilt of the body (his own body, the church), and was made to be sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He paid the ransom price with his own blood, and bought back his own who were sold for naught. My beloved brethren, let us remember that the whole family of God is already redeemed (bought with a price), and was it not a matter of justice on the part of our heavenly Father to give to his beloved Son just what he had bought and paid for with his own blood? And does not this fact stand as a guarantee to us that the union between Christ and his people shall again become vital here in time in the Spirit's quickening of every redeemed soul for whom he paid the ransom price, and who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world? Yes, they shall be, every one of them. created anew in Christ Jesus, being born again not of corruptible seed, but of an incorruptible by the word of God (Christ) which liveth and abideth forever. Our heavenly Father has never at any time lost sight of his dear children, having chosen them in Christ before the foundation of the world. He also predestinated them to the adoption of sons by Jesus Christ to himself. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" And for this cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, since they are all children of God. In conclusion I wish to say that I have merely touched on this great theme of election and eternal union. There is still plenty of room for preaching and writing on these vital subjects. May the Lord open our minds for a better understanding of divine truth.

Elder J.S. Hunnicutt
January, 1945

January, 1945

The year which has just come to a close can well be termed "The Year of Horrors." It was quite early in the year when we learned of the indescribable torture, which was inflicted upon many of our soldiers who were taken prisoners by the Japanese on Bataan and Corregidor, nearly two years before. Later we were told of the Germans bleeding Russian boys and girls to death in order to supply their own blood-banks. Then came that never-to-be-forgotten D-Day, June 6th, with some of the most harrowing and gruesom experience that mortal man ever had to face. Literally,

tens of thousands of the world's finest youths were mowed down and slaughtered as though they had been wild beasts. Following this came the atrocious account of the "death factory" in Lublin, Poland, where the Nazis outdid themselves in surpassing their own hitherto maniacal ruthlessness by concentrating thousands of civilians in camps and liquidating them in a most shameful manner. Their beastly natures still hungering for crime, they loosed their robot bomb offensive upon helpless men, women and children in London.

In the latter part of September we received a graphic report from one of the best war correspondents covering what he chose to term "10 days in Arnhem hell," which almost caused one's blood to curdle to read it. In October came the death struggle for that ancient city, Anchen, where it is claimed thirty-seven German Emperors have been crowned in past centuries, but here the Germans received in kind the treatment they have heretofore given to others. They shall most likely receive much more of the same for their future generations to read about, with profit we hope. During the month of November, for the first time in fifteen centuries, the fortress of Metz which had been considered invulnerable by the Germans, succumbed to the Allied frontal attack.

In this brief account we have had to by-pass many bloody and notable battles in Russia, Italy, the vast Pacific and other places, all of which are terrible to contemplate. Our own son wrote from "Somewhere in Italy" on July 28th saying, "many places are so ruined by the ravages of war that it is truly pitiful. I certainly wish that the people at home could actually see just what war does, not only to the face of the earth, but to the people who survive its rush across the earth." Little did our boy know that at the very time he was writing that letter his own life-long friend had been killed in action the day before in the Southwest Pacific, some ten to fifteen thousand miles away. It was a severe blow to us for we had come to regard the young man almost as a second son in our family.

(The poem in the November issue of the Signs was composed by the Staff Sergeant in our son's company, who sent it to us.) War's terrors are not truly felt until their blows strike home. Then we are so stunned and dazed that all we can do is to wonder and wonder and then wonder again why such things should be.

There never was a time in the history of the world when it needed wise leadership more than it does to-day. There are immense possibilities for statesmanship of the right kind, and we truly hope our own great nation will rise to the occasion and take its rightful place by measuring up fully to all that will be required of it. The Good Book says, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," and this applies to nations as well as to individuals. We truly hope the New Year will not be far spent before there is a dawning of a new and better day for the peoples of the whole world.

Turning now to the spiritual side of our greeting, here again, we regret to say, everything throughout the year was

not all that could have been desired. During the forepart of the year there appeared on the horizon of the church something which caused deep anxiety to many who hold the welfare of our beloved Zion closely to heart. We refer to the proposal that a certain Confession of Faith be published for the purpose of rallying those who favored it, and then having "those who endorse it refused to lay hands in ordination on any one who will not verbally subscribe to it." The Editor of the paper in which this proposal was published wrote us saying that he would like to have our thoughts on the matter. We replied to the effect that we were most strongly opposed to substituting for the infallible word of God any document formulated by men regardless of how sound it might appear to be. In this connection, we would like to recommend to our readers a careful re-reading of an article written by one of our Associate Editors, Elder J. S. Hunnicutt, which appeared in the June issue of the Signs. After the reaction of the brethren in different parts of the country began to make itself manifest, it was evidently realized by both the author of the proposal and the publisher of the paper in which it appeared that a serious mistake had been made, for they both undertook to make amends. From a ten-point explanation by the author which appeared about the middle of the year, we quote as follows: "No confession of any man's faith is to be regarded as standard only insofar as it complies with the Scriptures." In the same issue of the paper appeared the following from the pen of the publisher: "We regret that anyone should have inferred the thought that this Confession or any other was to be used as an infallible standard." We haven't anything but praise for the two brethren in question for taking steps to rectify the damage which had been done to the cause of truth, for we have long felt that it was a sign of greatness for a man to acknowledge his error, and we were truly glad to read their latest statements. Speaking for ourself, the present Editor of the Signs of the Times is very definitely set for the defense of that fundamental of our faith which is contained in the ninth article of Elder Gilbert Beebes original prospectus of the Signs, which reads as follows: "The Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God." We stand firmly back of this, not because Elder Gilbert Beebe believed it, but because it is God's eternal truth. The Scriptures thoroughly furnish the people of God unto all good works, and we would strongly urge all of our good brethren to cling to them tenaciously. In our opinion, there has been entirely too much bickering among the Old Baptists in recent years, and there is no question but what it has been largely due to their either following tradition or man-made rules and regulations instead of strictly adhering to the word of God. For some years we have been convinced of the fact, that one of the worst sources of trouble among our people has been caused by traveling or visiting ministers, who pry into people's affairs and then go into other sections of the country spreading trouble and magnifying differences between ministers in

particular. We would not stand for one intruding into the privacy of our homes and stirring up strife among the various members of our family, and faithful brethren would do well to suggest to "trouble makers" that they go home and stay there until they know how to "take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine." Ministers causing trouble is no new thing. We find the word of the Lord was sent unto Ezekiel, saying, **"Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks?"** Ezek. 34:2. We greatly fear that too many of our ministers are endeavoring to feed their own vanities in one way or another, and in so doing they are really scattering the flocks and driving them back into the wilderness. Let us hear Paul regarding the conditions of his day: **"Now I beseech you, brethren by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye shall all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."** 1 Cor. 1:10. The people were saying in those days, "I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ." That sounds as though it was written especially for our time. Well could Paul ask: "Is Christ divided?" He desired that no man follow him beyond that which he followed Christ. If we could but have that mind in our day our troubles would be a great deal less. Let us also consider here what Paul said to his Roman brethren: **"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but, righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another."** Rom. 14:17-19.

Sometime ago we received a letter from one who has been an esteemed minister for over fifty years, and we wish to quote from his letter. He says, among other things, "I am burdened to see the cold and indifferent state of our churches, and the petty quarrels and divisions so often magnified by misguided ministers, and even taken up and scattered broadcast by some of our papers throughout their sphere of influence. I seek for some prevenitive to these troubles." He continued by saying, "Most of our publishers touch upon this occasionally, but such suggestions are generally viewed by others as of secret design, so they get no where. I respect you as a brother of the highest calling, and the Signs as a standard publication of our faith and doctrine; and knowing that only the truth will prevail, I suggest that you give us through the Signs your opinion of the cause of the present state of the churches and the duty of all, publishers, ministers and brethren, to restore the ideal peace, tranquility and glory of our Zion."

We are grateful for the confidence which our dear brother has imposed in us, and wish very much that we might

measure up fully to the necessities of the case. At the risk of being accused of having some "secret designs" and a personal ax to grind, being both a publisher and a minister, we shall attempt to supplement what we have already said in this article with some still further thoughts and suggestions. Most of us will doubtless agree that "the cause of the present state of the church" is the utter weakness of our flesh. The flesh desires its own, and will seek to exalt and glorify itself at all times and under all circumstances and occasions, regardless of consequences, unless it is brought into subjection by the in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit. We cannot even hope to find perfection in the flesh and must of necessity, it seems to us, experience the depths of its corruption and pollution if we are to be made to truly yearn after righteousness and true holiness. The messages which the "Alpha and Omega" commanded John to write unto the seven churches of Asia show that none of them were perfect. They also reflect, no doubt, many of the faults to be found with our present day churches, and we would do well to search the Scriptures for the purpose of determining wherein we come short. Some may be content to concluding that we are living in the Laodicean age and let it go at them, but we would beseech all such to earnestly desire of the Lord to know their condition, that they are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked," and then buy of him gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. It is to all such that Jesus said, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to Him, and will sup with him, and he with me." This should encourage us to hope that even though we are cold and indifferent to the truth our Lord has not altogether forsaken us. The remedy, as much as it lies within may be found in fulfillment of the command to the church at Ephesus, which had left her first love, as follows: "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works." If we could return to the days of our first love, many of our difficulties would dissolve and disappear. At this point we would like to recall for our readers two personal experiences. Some twenty-odd years ago we were invited to attend a meeting which was held in the late spring of the year. There had been considerable rain and practically no plowing had been done in the country. On the first day of the meeting, which was also the first day the land permitted of plowing, we found that a brother and his wife and nine year old daughter walked a total of twenty-five miles to meeting and back, because he had only one horse and rather than remain at home he got a neighbor to plow for him and all three walked to meeting. We shall never forget the feeling that came over us when we learned of the circumstance. This brother was certainly not in a lukewarm state. A more recent experience

is that of a young lady who traveled upwards of two thousand miles, within about a month's time, to attend three one-day meetings at different times. When we made some inquiry of her about such a long trip, for only one-day meetings, and the attendant expenses, etc., she made light of it, notwithstanding she walks for her living. This same young lady wrote us not very long ago that her mind was as completely taken up with spiritual things that she was actually fearful of neglecting her daily routine work. There are not many of us who have this kind of worry. The church at Sardis was commended for having a few names which had not defiled their garments, and we are truly thankful that there are still a few, one here and there, who continually think upon the name of the Lord and meditate upon his word day and night. We are deeply grateful to God for the fact that the churches we try to serve are in peace and were so highly favored by him during the past year. The December Signs sets forth in part the manifold goodness of God to us, for which we humbly desire to praise his most holy name.

The diligence with which Roman Catholics attend their meetings is something which Old School Baptists might do well to consider and emulate. Too many of our brethren are inclined to let matters of little importance interfere with their meetings. Sometimes we fear they actually push the ox into the mire in order to have a plausible excuse to stay away from meeting. The brethren would not like it if the minister remained at home on some flimsy excuse. There may be some justification for one absenting himself from meeting where the minister spends the time that should be rightfully devoted to solenm and sacred worship in ranting and villifying some fellow minister with whom he disagrees. If the brethren, after laboring with such an one, cannot prevail upon him to refrain from such things, perhaps it would be good for his poor soul to have him go to meeting a few times and find only vacant seats before him. In most instances, we believe that God has placed gifts in the church who are able to discern between the flesh and the spirit, and when they see that a minister, even though he be the pastor, is motivated by a fleshly spirit, they should be faithful to their charge and do all within their power to discourage him in his course. Perhaps they may be able to save a soul from death, his usefulness to the church, while if they shut their eyes and neglect their duty the whole body, or church, may be cast into hell fire, or the candlestick removed altogether. The world to-day is in the depth of despond and misery because of bad leadership, and the church should beware of those undershepherds who appear to have so little regard for the peace and welfare of Zion.

We do not feel that the condition of our churches on the whole is as bad as some would have us believe. From time to time we are receiving encouraging reports from various sections of our country. One brother writes as follows: "We are having some wonderful meet-

ings with some of our churches in this association. It seems the Lord, as he has promised, is visiting Zion again. A good many little ones are coming home to their friends, asking for a home." We truly hope that God will make us mindful of the manifold blessings which we are constantly receiving from his hand, and that he will at the same time be pleased to awaken us anew to a full realization of the fact that without him we can do nothing, thereby causing us to cry mightily and fervently unto him for that peace and tranquility for which Zion daily mourns. Of a truth, there is salvation in none other than the God of spiritual Israel. We rejoice that it is written, **"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea: Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah," Psalm 46:1-3.**

Finally, dear readers, not only for the ensuing year, but throughout all the years to come, may "the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Elder Lester Dodson

Hampton. Ark.

DEAR SISTER KENNEDY: I received your good letter and was glad to hear from you. Dessie Mae had just written you. We planned to go to meeting at Rehobeth yesterday but the buses were snow-bound and we did not get to go. We have not been since last third Sunday and I am very anxious to attend again. Sister Kennedy, I will be very glad to send in your remittance to the Signs of the Times for you and I will do it as soon as I can get to it. I have been so busy lately that I have not had time for any corresponding. I like my work very well but I have to work night and day and then it seems I never catch up. I am teaching science, but the trouble is that when I am preparing for class I am thinking of the only true Scientist, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times, the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and will do all my pleasure." It was he who fixed the earth, stars, sun, moon, and everything else so that all things move precisely in their predestined paths. The minds and environment of all human beings, as well as animals, are so fixed that everything, act and thought, comes into reality just as God has fixed it. He has so arranged all this so that everything works together for good to those whom God has chosen in Christ before the foundation of the earth. I am teaching arithmetic, but the trouble is that when I am preparing for he next class am thinking of how God enabled

his little children to add to their faith, virtue, and to virtue, knowledge, etc., etc. I think of Paul's words that were addressed to Timothy when he said: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." I think of how that God will multiply the peace and grace of his children. I think of how that he will take away their sins, and will remember no more their transgressions. I am teaching typing, but the trouble is when I am preparing for an assignment I am thinking of the types and shadows of the Old Testament. I think of the Typist who makes no typographical errors, but who reveals the true meaning of these types to his servants whom he has qualified and sent out for the purpose of making plain these things to his children. I am teaching bookkeeping but the trouble is when I am preparing for the next class, I am thinking of a partnership of Christ and the church where all the assets are in Christ Jesus and the liabilities are in the people but the liabilities all sink into oblivion through the proprietorship of God, the Father; Christ, the Son; the Holy Ghost; dissolved into the church. We have no merits to list as assets. All we have is debts which were well disposed of when Jesus' obedience of the law was credited to our account. I am teaching history, but the trouble is. when of I am preparing for the next lesson. I am in thinking of the history of the world and church. I think of Adam, the first man, of Abraham. Isaac, Jacob, Noah, David, Solomon, the flood. the old covenant, the new covenant, Jesus, the great Ambassador from the Father. I am also made to meditate upon the terrible chaotic condition of this sinful, warring world. Were it not for the confidence I have in the Upholder and Disposer of all things, I feel that I would sink by the wayside. I am made to be comforted with the thought that God controls every bullet, bomb, cannon and all destroyers. He controls all generals, kings, governors and presidents, as well as, each and every soldier, marine, sailor, wave, waac, and even the hairs of the heads of each and every one who is engaged in this terrible and awful war. I believe God has a grand and noble purpose in each and every battle, and that he will take care of all his children and nothing can befall them beyond his determinate counsel. I believe God's people will be brought closer to their Maker, and be made to depend entirely upon him for all things. I believe the nations will all be made to bow to His Majesty. Now, sister Kennedy, I realize that I have written far more than I felt that I could when I started, but I hope that you have not been too wearied reading this. I realize that it is very imperfect, but I hope you will at least forgive me for relieving my mind. It is late now so I will let Dessie Mae finish the letter. Let me say, however, that it is always a pleasure to read a letter from you.

(Elder) E. J. Lambert
February, 1945

Box 185, Weslaco, Texas.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON, if one so unworthy as I feel to be should be allowed to address you as brother: While attending a meeting at Dallas, Texas last week, some five hundred miles from here, two of the Lord's little ones asked me to send in their subscriptions for the Signs of the Times. I have been reading the Signs for about forty-eight years, and still look forward to its coming. O, how the Lord has blessed it all these years, to hold up for an Almighty God, an all wise God, and a God that purposed all things and has power to bring them all to pass. Yes, dear brother, he never tries anything to see if it will work, there are no doubts in his mind. It is one eternal now with him. The same to-day, yesterday and and forever. The Prince of Peace, the mighty God. He is the first cause of all causes; and everything bows in submission to his will, and at the right time in order to bring about his decrees and purposes. When he begins a good work in your heart he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. I remember back when I was just a boy, how I would hide the Signs in my shirt and slip off to the woods on Sunday and read it, trying to find some comfort for my poor soul, and when I would get home with my eyes red from crying, my father would scold me be for staying in the river too long. I would take the scolding and not tell him I had not been near the river. Sometimes I hope when reading those experiences back there I could shed tears for joy for God's little ones when they would tell about the Lord speaking peace to their troubled souls. I longed for some bright evidence like theirs, and am still hoping for more and more evidence all the time. We are never satisfied. The Lord works in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform, and sometimes we get a blessing from the least expected source. Some time back I was going to my appointment two hundred fifty miles from home, and as I drove along the highway I got into a depressed condition of doubts and fears that it was all a mistake, my going so far to meeting. It seemed that I ought to stay at home. I was just fooling the people, an old hypocrite and it was all of the flesh. While in this condition I was tempted several times to turn back and not go on. O, if I had just the least bit of evidence from heaven that God was in the matter it would be alright. Meeting passed off as usual, and as we left the church a friend got into the car with me. As we drove up in front of the home of his mother-in-law he put his arm around me and began crying, saying, he did not know why he kept going to these Old Baptist meetings, that the Lord showed him over 30 years ago his place was in hell. Then he said last week while he was plowing in the field he said to himself, why did Eugene bring all those good people and come to my place before the meeting? Then he said a voice spoke to him saying, he did not do it, he was sent. Then I broke down and cried for that was the unexpected. comfort I was longing for, just to know I was sent and that it was not of myself. That did my poor soul so much good, and ever since it is a sweet memory to think about. How

blue I was and on the same trip so wonderously blessed through a friend that did not even belong to the church. Last September will be a long remembered month with me. I baptized two into the church here and two into the church at Stockdale and attended an Association about eight hundred miles from home. All was peace and harmony. Brothers and sisters were there from Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas. Surely the Lord has a remnant yet in this part of the world that is declaring for the same old doctrine that Jesus set forth some two thousand years ago. These are perilous times and transportation is a serious problem, but if any of the readers of the Signs are coming south for the winter we want them to come see us. We are only five miles from the Mexican border in the center of the Rio Grande Valley. A poor dependent sinner, saved by grace if saved at all.

(Elder) E. B. AULT.
February, 1945

ROMANS 8: 27-28.

And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of* **God.**

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* **purpose.**

ISAIAH XXVI. 19.

"Thy dead *men* **shall live,** *together with* **my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."**

We have understood this passage to express a glorious promise given in prophecy, to the church of God, assuring her that her dead men should be quickened simultaneously with the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some of our brethren however, have taken a different view of the subject. We do not claim to be wiser, or more infallible that they, but whether this text be applicable to the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and the life of his church in him or not, the apostles by inspiration have established the certainty that the church are risen with Christ, and that God who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he hath loved us, hath quickened us together with Christ, and has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus. We do not, however, understand that this, or any other passage, implies that the resurrection of the bodies of the saints should be simultaneous with the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, for the inspired apostles have, since the resurrection of Christ from the dead, assured us of a resurrection at the last day, when these mortals shall put on immortality, and these corruptibles, incorruption, and the saying shall be brought to

pass, That death is swallowed up in victory. Then shall the last enemy be destroyed, which is death, and the kingdom of Christ, in all its fullness and glory, shall be delivered to God, even the Father. But in the subject which we understand to be contemplated in our text, and in parallel texts, the Mediatorial union of Christ and his church is strongly implied. As Christ has carried and borne his members all the days of old so he carried and bore them when he poured out his soul unto death, when his body slumbered in the grave, and when he burst the bars of death and triumphed over the grave. It was our death which he died, as it is his life which we live. Zion's dead men were quickened together with Christ, and they were raised up together, and sit together in heavenly places.

Omitting the italicized words used in this text, by the translators, it will read, "Thy dead men shall live, my dead body shall they arise," &c. If this be the correct rendering of the text, the promise which it contains would seem to us to apply either to the regeneration and ingathering of the saints as the members of his mystical body, and the bringing them into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man; to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, or to the final resurrection of the bodies of his redeemed people. Which of the three applications is correct, if any, we leave to our readers generally to judge, as in any or all of them the doctrine is established by the plain Scriptures. Therefore, "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust." God's people while here in the flesh, dwell in the dust, for their mortal bodies are of the earth, earthy, even as the Lord said to Adam, "For dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." And Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh [or the dust], I live by the faith of the Son of God," &c. In this sense God's quickened children, while in the house of their pilgrimage, dwell in the dust, and are called on to awake and sing. But there is another sense in which the words are sometimes, and perhaps more generally used in the Scriptures, as signifying a low condition, captivity and worldly afflictions, and this seems to harmonize with the state of the church as set forth in the chapter of which our text is a part. All their own efforts for deliverance had proved abortive, and they are represented as discouraged, but the word of the Lord comes to them in their lowly condition with consolation, turning their mourning into joy, saying, Awake and sing, thou that dwellest in the dust. As in Isaiah lii. 1, 2, "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion: put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city *** shake thyself from the dust; arise and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion." As her day of joy and gladness dawns upon her, she is called upon to arise and sing. Let her tears be dried, and let the bands of her captivity be removed from her neck, let her put on her

beautiful apparel, and be clothed with her strength. "For thy dew is as the dew of herbs." The doctrine of God our Savior is compared to dew. Deut. xxxii. 2, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew." The doctrine expressed in the speech of our Lord, has the reviving effect on the disconsolate saints, that rain has upon grass, and dew upon the tender herb. It revives, quickens, invigorates the saints, as the rain and dew causes the earth to develop its vegetation. When the precious seed is buried in the earth, it remains there concealed, until the earth is moistened by the showers of rain, or refreshed by the gentle dew. Under the influence of the heaven inspired doctrine of Christ, the saints arise from the dust, they awake and sing, they arise and shine, the lame man leaps like the hart, the tongue of the stammerer speaks plainly, and the dumb shout for joy. "And the earth shall cast out the dead." As the parched ground which contains the precious seed, when cheered by the dew, casts out the tender blade, and finally the full corn in the ear, so shall the earth cast out, make manifest and fully develop the sons of Zion, when the seasons of refreshing came from the presence of our God. And so the fruits of the Spirit are made to appear in the saints who dwell in the dust, when the doctrine of our God descends on them, and their fruit is unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y., Dec. 1, 1855.

HOSEA VI: I.

"Come and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up."

The language of Ephraim and Judah in the text, implies a confession that they had departed from the Lord, and had gone into idolatry, and that the Lord in covenant faithfulness had humbled them by sore chastisement. As he had said in chapter v. 14, **"For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah; I, even I, will tear and go away; I will take away, and none will rescue him."** These fearful judgments had been felt, and being thus abased before the Lord, their language is, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord." They acknowledge that the hand of the Lord had been upon them, and that he alone could heal them. In the prophetic import of the subject, Judah and Ephraim appear to represent the church of God in her gospel organization, who, like the type, manifests a strong inclination to run into idolatry, by departing from the Lord in doctrine, in practice and in the discipline and order of his house. In all such cases, God is faithful to the provisions of his covenant. He will, and he does, visit the transgressions of his children with a rod, and their iniquities with many stripes, until they feel suitably humbled, feel a contrition of heart for their follies, and a desire to return to the order of the gospel. Then their language will be like that of Judah and Ephraim, "Come, and let

us return unto the Lord." They understand that afflictions have not arisen up out of the dust, nor their troubles come upon them by chance. The Lord has torn them, and he alone can heal the breach. When churches forsake the laws and ordinances of the gospel, depart from the simplicity of the doctrine and practice which he has laid down and enjoined, they soon become torn, divided and scattered, they lose that heavenly love and unity, so far as the sensible enjoyment of it is considered, and they are made to feel the folly of their course. With deep repentance they are then heard to say, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord," for it is his hand that is upon us, and he alone can heal us. An assurance springs up in their heart; faith in them revived, lays hold of the new covenant promise that he will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities he will remember no more.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y., Jan. 1, 1855.

MATTHEW 11: 28-30.

Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.

MEETINGS

LOWER MAYO 5TH SUNDAY MEETING

The next 5th Sunday Meeting will be held, The Lord Willing, Sunday, October 30, 2016. Simpson Creek Church will Host the meeting. The Meeting House is located at 3821 Daisy Rd., Loris, SC 29569. Take US 701 to downtown Loris, SC. Turn East on Business #9. Go 4 miles to Goretown and turn right on road # 348. Go 2 1/2 miles and turn right on Daisy Road. Go 1/4 mile to church on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to meet with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

SKEWARKEY UNION (Eastern Kehukee Association)

Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of October 30, 2016. The church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albemarle Avenue in Tarboro, NC. Preaching services begin at 10:30am.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, October 29 & 30, 2016.

Union Church, located about 5 miles Southeast of Marion, Louisiana will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Ned Barron, Association Clerk
(318) 778-4217

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

Please print the following in the next issue of the Signs Of The Times.

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union will be held at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church located on Main Street, Gretna, VA in Pittsylvania County Saturday before the fifth Sunday in October 2016. The song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton, Clerk
Staunton River
Primitive Baptist Association.

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

Dan River Primitive Baptist Church will host the fifth Sunday meeting on October 30, 2016. Singing begins at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30 a.m.

The church is located on Highway 700 between Eden, NC, and Danville, VA.

We extend an invitation to ministers, brethren, sisters, and friends.

Elder Thomas Solomon, Moderator
R. Allen Carroll, Clerk
336-939-7893

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Gwynn Byrd, AL	5.00
Rose Dunn, NC	5.00
Garland Stanley, NC	25.00
Bertha Smith, FL	25.00
Donald Agee, VA	5.00
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Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
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HYMN

FATHER, we bow before thy throne
With hearts oppress'd with grief
Our pastor's gone; we're left alone;
Where shall we find relief?

Thy word he faithfully proclaimed,
His doctrines from it drew;
Regardless whether praised or blamed,
So he thy will might do.

Nor did he merely preach alone;
Obedience marked his way;
His holy life, as well as tongue,
Inclined to endless day.

We feel the loss of such a guide;
And now, before thy throne,
We pray his loss may be supplied,
Supplied by thee alone.

Give us a pastor in his room,
To wipe our falling tears;
And guide and guard us safely on
From all our rising fears.

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EDITORIAL

"But the path of the just *is* as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Proverbs 4:18.

Elder J. B. Farmer

This scripture was brought to my attention and made precious to me some years ago and it still is precious. We had started from home before daylight, in thick darkness, on our way to a Church meeting in Virginia. Traveling mostly eastward, after a while we began to see a faint glow of light in the distance before us. As we traveled, the light became brighter and brighter very slowly until the sun finally arose to completely dispel the darkness. This scripture, which I had read many times, came to mind, and it appeared to be an indication or a figure of the journey of God's little children here in this world.

I have thought of this scripture many times since, and have mentioned it from the stand occasionally. But here recently it became the central thought in my mind while standing to speak. I don't know if any of the things that appeared to me there will come to mind again as I sit down to write. Or if they do, I wonder whether they will appear with the same sweetness and power as they did then. I am persuaded of this: anything spoken or written, that is a comfort to the Lord's people, is a gift and it must be revealed from above. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." The blessed apostle said that he was not taught the gospel of men and did not learn it from them, but that it came by the revelation of Jesus Christ. The one who speaks or writes must be inspired of God and the one who hears or reads must be inspired also for there to be any real profit.

All of the sheep of God's pasture come into the world as sheep. And before the birth, each little one was shut up in complete darkness. But when that one is brought to the birth, he is delivered into the light where he begins to

see and hear and feel things he never experienced before. In the beginning he only knows how to cry when in distress, whether it be because of physical discomfort, or hunger, or fear or any other thing that troubles him. The Lord is the Good Shepherd and He cares for His sheep. And His eye is upon each little one in mercy and compassion. He gently supplies the needs and wants of each one of His precious flock according to His abundant mercy and grace all the days of its life.

Jacob, at the commandment of God, returned from his father-in-law Laban to his homeland with his family and flocks. After many fears and dreads he met his estranged brother Esau and was reconciled to him. Esau told Jacob that he would go before him and would lead the way back. Jacob said unto him,

"My lord knoweth that the children *are* tender, and the flocks and herds with young *are* with me: and if men would overdrive them one day, all the flock will die. Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant: and I will lead on softly, according as the cattle that goeth before me and the children be able to endure, until I come unto my lord unto Seir." Genesis 33:13-14. Is this not a beautiful example of how the Lord ministers unto His little ones? He will not suffer them to be overdriven one day, lest they all die. But He leads on softly as they are able to endure the difficulties of the way. How sweet it is to be made to remember the promise of God to His little ones. He said, "Like as a father pitieth *his* children, *so* the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame and remembereth that we, *are* dust." And the apostle, by revelation, said, "God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it.*" And in another place it is written, "Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne *by me* from the belly, which are carried from the womb: and *even* to *your* old age I *am* he; and even to horry hairs will I carry *you*: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver *you.*" He provides all our needs and considers us to be as little lambs, even when the gray hairs adorn our heads and even to death — and beyond.

The Lord teaches his people precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little. And when He teaches one a portion of His truth, that truth remains. When one is established in a point of doctrine, all the demons of the kingdom of the devil are not able to move him from it or it from him. What God has done is done forever, and no one can add anything to it or take anything from it. But it is not all given at once. The little ones are taught as they are able to receive it. David said, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." As God reveals His word to one, the path begins to be illuminated. And as the little one is blessed to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, his way is made brighter and brighter. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh un-

to the Father, but by me." On our life's journey, we are traveling along the way home to God our Father. The Lord is with us all the way, and shall be revealed in all His glory at the end of our course. As we are blessed to follow on after the Lord, and as we are taught, and as we are given to trust Him, we have no doubt His word is true. The Holy Spirit said through Solomon, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." And David said by the Holy Spirit, "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." And he also said, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

When Stephen came down to the end of his journey, as he preached the gospel, the unbelievers hated what they heard and hated him. They gnashed upon him with their teeth and began to stone him to death. He was given grace not to condemn them, but to pray that this sin not be laid to their charge. But an amazing thing is recorded in this event. As Stephen was dying, the heavens were opened unto him and he was blessed to see the glory of God and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. "But the path of the just *is* as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." I cannot help believing that this account of this revelation to Stephen was preserved for and given to us that we might understand that the journey's end of each little child of grace is to see Jesus in His glory. I am made to believe that when we shut our eyes in death here, they are opened to the beauties and wonders of heaven and immortal glory. When we die, the body returns to the dust according to the scripture. But the spirit returns to God who gave it.

I do not believe in the teaching of soul sleep. But I do believe the doctrine of the soul that returns to God with the spirit at the death of the body. I believe that the Lord gives us just enough knowledge to assure us of the estate of the just and the unjust after death. He gave us the story of the rich man and Lazarus — and I do not believe it is a parable, but an actual event because Lazarus is named. I cannot think of a single parable where a person is named. The rich man died and was buried, and in hell lift up his eyes being in torments. But when Lazareth died, he was carried by the angels into the bosom of Abraham (the name Abraham means Father) where he was comforted. For one to be comforted he must be aware. The apostle said, "To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord." I cannot help believing that the part of man that sleeps in death is our bodies that return to the dust. And I must also believe the spirit and soul are alive and awake with God in glory immediately after death. Some might say, why then is there a need for the resurrection, if the children of God are already with Him? I believe they are with Him in Spirit as observers only. When the body shall be raised and made spiritual, and the body, soul and spirit are united, the child of God shall be a complete spiritual man (body, soul and spirit) and a full partici-

pant in heaven and heavenly things forever.

The child of God is referred to as the just. To be just is to be justified, or made free from sin by the sacrifice and blood of Christ. The child of God, or the just, is brought from darkness into His marvelous light. That light shines on his path and gets gradually brighter and brighter along the way, and shines even more as the end of his journey draws near. And as the Sun rises in its full glory at sunrise, so shall the Lord appear when we lay our heads down in death. And in the fullness of the glory of the Lord shall all the little lambs of God dwell in the house of the Lord forever. "But the path of the just *is* as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." This is my hope and my trust.

Elder J. B. Farmer

ROMANS 7:22-25.

For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

If I Knew

If I knew how to thank Him
For my very breath of life
And for His care keeping me
From a world full of strife

If I knew how to thank Him
For my first and second birth
That taught me very early
His merits and His worth

If I knew how to thank Him
For fellowship with His sheep
The joy of Churches visited
And His Blessing our faith to keep

If I knew how to thank Him
For His son and precious blood
The full expression of His love
That binds us safe to God

If I knew how to thank Him
For a hope so pure and strong
For tender mercies and handfuls of purpose
I have reached as I humbly press along

If I knew how to thank Him
For His suffering on the cross
For His tears, persecution and death
That I would suffer no loss

If I knew how to thank Him
For His life after He died
Fulfilling a will when all things end
We shall with Him in Glory abide

If I knew how to thank Him
For but just a few of these
Or more of His Blessings my heart knows
I would be forever on my knees

Elder C.B . Davis , Jr .
September, 1989

VOICES OF THE PAST

Dear Ones In Christ,

I have been asked by several to write what I see in a few verses of The Word. I will attempt to do so with fear. I shall not be able to convey the fullness of beauty and therefore come short of my endeavors and be open for much criticism.

In the 24th Chapter of Genesis the third and fourth verses read - **"And I will make thee swear by the Lord, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell. But thou shalt go unto my country and to my kindred and take a wife unto my son Isaac."** This was the command of Abraham to his oldest servant. We might note here that Isaac was born to Sarah when she felt she was beyond age for such. Sarah laughed when the Lord told her she would bring forth a son, thus the name Isaac in the Hebrew tongue means "laughter." Let us here remember that the Lord told another that she would bear a son and she (Mary) also thought it impossible for she said "she knew no man."

I feel this servant is typical of God's ministers who are not told to go to the world (Canaanites) to seek The Bride but to go to His people. I'm sure this servant began in great fear the journey set before him as we (if I might include myself) go with much fear and as he, with a prayer in our hearts. We must consider he was going to a place that he had not gone before and to visit a people he didn't know.

The prayer in the heart of this servant was that when he reached a certain well he would rest and seek water for himself and his camels. We note there were ten camels thus seeing the ten laws that in essence were conveying him (and us today) through Christ. For we each know the command of the master is perfect and just. He desired of God that a damsel would meet him at the well and give him water and also his camels (this water typical of communion embodies the law as well as the servant and bride). He saw his prayers answered in the person of Rebekah meaning flattering or to please and gratify.

Rebekah went down and drew water and gave the servant drink and also his camels. How often do we receive of the church something that refreshes us along the way? He asked her who she was and she replied she was the daughter of Nahor, brother of Abraham. She surely typifies the church who is truly related to Christ through His blood for it is His blood that makes us all relatives in spirit.

The servant relates to Rebekah his business (as we do also) to the church, and she told him there was room in the house of her family and also room and provender for his camels. We find always when the will of God is manifest that our prayers are answered and there is room and sustenance.

The servant and Rebekah leave the well and go to meet her people. This

servant states his business to her family and tells them of his prayer and how he surely feels it is answered. There is no doubt or fear now (as it was in the beginning) for he sees the journey has prospered. God's true ministers can feel the journey has been worth it all when they can feel for a few moments that truly there is communication between them and the House of Faith.

Let us now behold what it is all about. This servant states that his master (God) is rich (verses 35 & 36) and hath given his all to his son Isaac (Christ) and he must have Rebekah return with him to be wife to Isaac. We as servants cannot carry you to Christ but we can indeed tell you where He dwells and that He is rich, in mercy, love, compassion, any and all things needed by the church (bride).

We note that Rebekah is a virgin and as Mary, said she had known no man. The church cannot be adulterated because it is preserved in the blood of Christ. It knows no man (worldly) as its designer and are we not glad this is truth? We know that she (the church) is virgin because she has the love of and love for He who rules all. She has not and cannot be polluted by the cunningness of the mind of man. Thanks be to God she shall remain virgin until the wedding is performed before the Throne of God.

Rebekah's family is concerned about her going and asks that she remain ten days at least. We see again the ten laws which must be gone beyond in order for the Master and Bride to come together; thus Christ fulfilled such that we may meet him some day. Her family is told so and that they must leave as soon as possible. We say to you of God's love that Christ waits today for the coming of the Bride and the same feeling of longing to go, fills the heart of the Bride.

The servant and Rebekah make their journey together. God's ministers and the Bride are truly traveling together going to a home the Bride hath not seen. I feel that sometimes ministers see through a glass darkly that home and encourage the Bride along the way. The journey is often hot (Satan is along) and dry (thus we thirst) and there are storms that except for God's grace would cause us to flee and seek shelter. We have been taught, however, that we already are sheltered underneath His wings.

They now approach home and Rebekah sees walking in a field a man and asks of the servant who he is. We know who He is for as we have seen Him (spiritually) walking the fields of Grace with handfuls of purpose we feel sure we shall see Him walking the fields of Salvation and Deliverance. The servant tells her it is the husband to be and with joy she alights from the camel (the law) and leaves worldly goods and the servant to meet this man face to face. My dear ones we shall leave everything here before we approach the One whom our souls lovest even the body of flesh that has carried the spirit all the way until death.

We as mortal beings cannot comprehend the joy and ecstasy Rebekah surely felt as she ran to meet her husband to be. It is my prayer that we who

are on a journey like unto this one (with which we can relate) will surely see our Savior in the realms of Glory and there know Him as the true Son to whom the Master (God) gave the wealth of salvation. He now in being the Husband, hath given wealth as inheritance and a home of glory where we shall dwell forever.

Now my dear readers if you find there is merit in my thoughts give the Master all the praise for I am but a lowly servant. If you find fault and do not agree then blame me for it is because of my weakness and not the Master's.

Elder C. B. Davis, Jr.
September, 1989

SOLOMON'S SONG 8:1

"O that thou *wert* as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother! *When* I should find thee without, I would kiss thee; yea, I should not be despised."

"O that thou wert as my brother."

This is a desire on the part of the church, the bride, for a closer and more intimate relationship with Christ. It is the longing expressed by the elect of God all through the Old Testament for the coming of their Redeemer in the flesh, that he might become as one of themselves, incarnated in the flesh for the purpose of redeeming his people from sin and death, and corruption into the kingdom of God. As our Elder Brother, Christ, was born of a woman, was made under the law to redeem them that are under the law. Inasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also likewise himself took part of the same that he through death might, destroy him that had the power of death and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life time subject to bondage. The eternal Son of God became Son of Man, he became a member of the human family with his people, thus manifesting himself as the Elder Brother of those he came to save. Throughout the former dispensations, this was the desire and longing on the part of those, who by faith, hoped for the coming of the Lord who, coming in the flesh without sin, should deliver his waiting ones from the bondage of sin and corruption. This hope, Abel confessed when he offered the slain lamb in anticipation of the coming, centuries hence, of the Lamb of God who should take away the sin of the world of his elect. Likewise, Noah when he builded an ark to the saving of his house, and Abraham when he left his nativity and became a stranger and sojourner in hope of the promised Seed in whom all the families of the earth were to be blessed. Also, old Simeon, when he came into the temple and taking the Christ child in his arms, rejoiced thus: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people." However, the meaning in this text looks farther than the longing of the elect of God under the legal and prophetical dispensations, for the first coming of Christ

when he came to accomplish redemption for his people; it also expresses the hope and longing of God's people in this present age for his second coming, at which coming his people raised from the dead completely, and glorified in the image of Christ their Head and Husband, shall go with him into the marriage supper of the Lamb to enjoy a fuller and more complete intimacy with this Elder Brother than ever has been theirs on earth, a blessed and blissful communion which shall know no end. To be sure, the saints of God enjoy through the sweet offices of the Holy Spirit, seasons of communion with this Brother of ours who occupies the throne in heaven. A veil shuts him from our sight, but then the veil shall be done away, we shall see him as he is and be like him. This is the hope that supports us under life's trials and temptations, the blessed hope that we shall behold him for ourselves and not for another. But let us pass on to he next phrase of our subject.

"That sucked the breasts of my mother"

That is, that Jesus and his people should be nourished at the same source. Primarily, the church in view in this text is the church as it was under the law, which church was then enclosed in the Jewish economy, and Jesus, himself, came as a Jew He said: "Salvation is of the Jews" meaning that himself, the bringer of salvation, was a Jew. The Jewish church was at that time under the legal covenant, that covenant which Moses was the mediator, he having received that legal covenant for Israel from the hand of God and having delivered it unto them. Under this covenant, not only in the letter but in the spirit of it, Christ came. Hence, the word "mother" would indicate the "covenant." But not merely so. Christ was the minister of a better covenant than that which stood in meats and drinks and holy days, although he in himself fulfilled every type and shadow pictured forth in the blood of bulls and goats which, of themselves, could not remove guilt. The law was a transcript of the revealed will of God, and this will Jesus delighted to do, it was his meat and drink. Hence, not merely the legal covenant which was the expressed will of God, but the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure which was contracted in the council of eternity with the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, was the breast from which the Son of Man drew his sustenance as well as did those he came to save. Both church and Savior are nourished at the breast of the same everlasting covenant. All the blessings which any and all believers enjoy either in time or in eternity, flow out of this everlasting covenant. The same may be said of Jesus, not as he was the eternal Son of God, but as he was our Elder Brother who took our human nature on him to come! where his people were under curse and condemnation, that he might deliver them. According to that everlasting covenant, the Father promised to support the Son, to uphold him, to be his strength, to deliver him from his enemies, to not suffer him to see corruption, to show him the path of life and to prolong his days in resurrection. Hence, from this breasted everlasting covenant, every true believer draws

the milk of his consolations and his hope, and so did our Elder Brother in his incarnation from the same fountain draw his sufficiency for all he had to undergo. For while as the eternal, Son of God, he needed no per fecting outside of his own perfect Diety, yet as One' with his people in their trials and temptations, he needed to be succored even as they. While he was made perfect as the captain of our salvation, he himself needed no perfecting as regards his Godhead. But as captain, he is the forerunner for his people, and so ahead of them suffered, all things for them. He was often hungry, weak, weary, sorrowful and in agony even unto death. In all these things, we see his perfect humanity sorely tried, not for himself but for his people. The secret of his human ability to stand all this, was that intimacy between the Father and the Son by which the Son drew his consolation from the will and promise of his Father according to the everlasting covenant between them entered into in the ancient of eternity.

"When I should find thee without"

That is, that word "without" means "outside." The bodies of those beasts which were made a sacrifice for sin, were burned without, or outside, the camp. "Wherefore, Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." And there the church goes forth unto him. In her salvation, she finds him outside Judaism, outside self-help, outside any merit or strength or goodness of her own. She will never find him until she is brought without the camp unto him. Jesus came to a defunct and an apostate Judaism and led His OWN SHEEP out of it. He called them by name and they left all and went after him. Matthew left his tax-collecting, Peter and Andrew their boats, others left houses and lands and natural relationships and found him outside all these. No sinner ever finds the Savior on their own bed, not in the place where they have been at ease: they must pass beyond all that, then they find him. How many who read this, know this by experience? No man, of himself searching, can find out God; yet there is a blessed seeking and a knocking that does find him, to which the Lord graciously opens. No beggar yet was ever turned empty away from the door of mercy. If we come in idle curiosity, we find the door shut and barred; but if we are blessed to come with hungry hearts and longing souls, as perishing sinners, we find an open door, and Jesus is that door by which if any man enter in he shall be saved and shall go in and out and find pasture. Dear reader, is there a crumb for you in all this? "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." The "ends of the earth" are not a matter of geography, they cannot be located on any atlas of the world. The "ends of the earth" are spiritual. These "ends" are those Who have come to the end of themselves, to the end of all self-right eousness. The soul has, in despair, come to the end of a dead-end street. It had thought this to be the way of life, it now sees that way to end in death. There must be a turning around. Isaiah heard the voice behind him saying: "This is the way, walk ye in it." And, O blessed truth,

Jesus is exalted at the right hand of God a Prince and Savior, to grant this repentance, this "turning around", to those who come to him by faith. For he that cometh unto him, Jesus will not cast out; and those coming to him are drawn of the Father. Verily the church, the bride, find her Beloved "without" or "outside" the camp of Judaism. As the offal of the. slain beasts was taken outside the camp and burned, so our blessed Jesus was led forth through the north gate outside Jerusalem to be crucified, and there also his people find him as they too pass outside all that an apostate and wicked and self-centered Jerusalem signified. He was counted as the off-scouring of all things, as mere dung and offal; and so his people pass out to him in a kindred experience in fellowship with him. And this brings us to the next:

"I would kiss thee"

The "kiss" is significant of love, of fellowship, of holy intimacy and com munion. In proportion as we are led into the fellowship of Christ's sufferings and are experimentally conformed to his death, do we "kiss" him, have fellowship with him. Above we spoke of passing outside an apostate Judaism in order to find salvation, but are we not today living within a period which witnesses an alarming decay of Christianity? Does not Christianity today stand in about the same relationship to Christ as Judaism did at his first coming? There is very much, yes very much, today in Christendom that one must be outside of if one truly desires fellowship with Christ. A defunct Judaism crucified our Lord, and an apostate Christianity would today crucify him if he were to return and submit himself to it. The word of command for us who believe is; "Be not conformed to this world". The friendship of the world worketh death. "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." Those are burning words, words such as search the hearts and minds of those professing to be followers of Christ. There is very much spiritual adultery in the lives and professions of those who hold on to the world with one hand while they try to serve God with the other. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "No man can serve two masters." God will not accept divided or half-hearted loyalty. Ye shall love the Lord, thy God, with all thy and and heart and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself. Christ did not come to void this commandment but to make it effectual in the lives of his people. The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. At the time of the protestant reformation, there were many who passed out of a Christdenying God-dishonoring Roman Catholicism and stood outside all that Rome signified, in order to have sweet fellowship and communion with the God of their salvation. They found they could not stay inside Roman Catholicism and have any "kiss" of their Beloved. The word of command was given them: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons

and daughters, saith the Lord. Almighty." Plainly showing that there must be a going forth unto Christ outside the camp, not only of Judaism but also of Catholicism and of Protestantism, if there is to be any "kiss" or communion with him. The Laodicean church was about to be rejected by our Lord because she was altogether worldy, rich and self-sufficient, not needing anything. The bulk of Chris tian profession is like that to-day. I am today blessed to be acquainted with some precious and choice souls who are living outside all church affiliations because of the fact they cannot fellowship teachings and practises "inside the camp." These who are thus aloof from all they believe to be false and disloyal to Christ, do not feel themselves to be above their brethren or better than their brethren, but for conscience sake they must dwell outside the camp or else compromise their faith which they cannot do. These "outside" cases are enjoying some sweet "kisses" and some precious communion with their Beloved. Can we not bring this matter nearer to our own hearts? Ought we not ask ourselves if we are honest in these things? Have we left all for Christ? or do we hang on to the treasures of self and of the world, having great posessions, while yet hypocritically professing to have kept the whole law, that is to have done all that is commanded us, as his followers, to do. Are not we Old School Baptists too loath to give up secret societies and all other worldly affiliations in order to live with Christ? Are we not too prone to harbor prejudices, envy and even malice and anger, against those whom we should esteem as brethren? Are we not biting and devouring one another and thus being destroyed one of another? And dare we expect the "kiss" of our beloved unless we pass outside all this and eschew it entirely? Dear reader, we each need to examine our own hearts in these things and not seek to remove the mote from another's eye unless the beam is out of our own.

"Yea, I should not be despised"

She, the bride, cares nothing that she is despised in the eyes of men and of this present evil world, she counts that an honor for Christ's sake. But the rejoicing to which she voices here, is that she is not despised in the sight of God and of all the holy angels. Christ having come in the flesh as her Elder Brother to redeem her from all iniquity, he and she having been nourished at the breasts of the same mother-covenant, he has found her and led her into communion and fellowship outside the camp of all false profession and teaching, has brought her unto himself, having purified her unto himself as being a people zealous of good works, she is no longer a condemned sinner under the curse of a holy God, but is purified and made white in the atoning blood of Christ, hence she says: "I should not be despised." God despised her not, he accepts her in his Beloved. The angels despise her not, they rejoice each time one of her members which was lost is found. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" Will God himself do it? No, for it is God who justifies her through the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ. "Who is he that condemneth?" Will

Christ condemn her? No, for it is he that died for her and who is risen again for her justification and it is he who, at the right hand of God, now makes intercession for her. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Those things which of themselves might, if they could, separate us from him, such as tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword, all these are made to be our helpers to forward our passage from earth to heaven, so that we are more than conquerors through all these things. Those blessed words, "I shall not be despised," sing out from the lips of the Bride, the Church, welling up out of her thank-joyful heart as a paean of victory. She shall shortly tread under her feet her old arch-enemy, Satan, triumphing in Christ who hath led even captivity captive, having abolished death and brought life and immortality to our knowledge and understanding through the gospel. At the forthcoming future appearing of Christ, at the time of the resurrection of the just for which we hope, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, then shall the glorious Bride be admired in all that believe in that day. Then shall her Redeemer, her nearest of kin, the Elder Brother, vindicate her cause before an assembled universe, for she shall be seen to be perfect in his holiness without, spot or blemish before God himself and in the sight of all dominions, principalities and powers. For it is written, Ephesians 3:10, that unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, by means of the redeemed, justified, risen and glorified Church of God, the manifold wisdom of God is to be known in the ages to come when all things both in heaven and in earth shall be gathered together one in Christ. Indeed, the elect of God shall not be despised in that day. She shall be owned and honored in that day.

Dear brother Simpkins, I submit this to you for your reading and consideration. It is yours to dispose of as your judgment decides. I have been so long complying with your request because not until this morning did I feel I could write. Our love and fellowship in the truth, which rejoices both our hearts, is a great comfort to me. Your presence in our midst has often refreshed my spirit. May the Lord graciously be pleased to continue you and me, with his people, in the one bundle of life in vital union with the Lord our God until the time of his coming for which we hope, and toward which we press with fervent desire to see him as he is and be like him. Yours in covenant bonds.

Elder Horace H. Lefferts
July, 1947

ST. MATTHEW 11: 28-30.

Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.

Dear Brother and Sister Barrow,

As I sat here in my hospital room this morning, my mind was called to remember you dear sweet people who believe in salvation by Grace and Grace alone. How few we are that believe that God does all the saving and we do all of the sinning. But we know that God said only a few would be saved according to the election of Grace. Dear one, how I long to be with you this weekend but it is not in the arrangement of the Great God who rules all things. I do hope and pray that you will have a sweet association in peace and love. Hoping the elders will be used to the maximum of their gift, knowing that if they are, then Jesus Christ will be preached and the believers will be comforted. What a blessing it is to hear Jesus Christ preached as the saviour of those given Him by the Father, also, what a joy it is to poor wayfaring strangers. If I had the strength, my desire would be to shout His blessed name from the housetop for what He has done for poor undone sinners which I am chief. How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believers ear.

Dear one, pray not for my natural sickness but pray that God will have mercy on this poor sinner and will lift his mind up above this low ground of sin and sorrow. My natural condition is not good but God moves in a mysterious way His will to perform. What ever happens it is for the good of God's people and He will not put more on us than we are able to bear. What is death but the door way to heaven for them that love God. How sweet it is when we are made satisfied to God's will even if in the time of death. Only the children given to Sweet Jesus are ever satisfied with anything in this life. How glad we are that God has done everything for our salvation!

Be not concerned as those without hope but be comforted in what God does because He does everything well. Fear not for this one, for as the Apostle Paul had yet to preach the Gospel at Rome, so does this one if not deceived because of sin that dwells in me. That's the surety that God has given me concerning my natural condition. Yes, this morning (5 a.m.) as I write to you my thoughts are how much sweeter it would be to be with Jesus than to stay on this earth. Yet, how sweet and what peace I feel this morning just as if sweet Jesus had visited me and lifted me up from my trouble and sorrow. I feel just like Paul did, I hope, when he was lifted up into the third Heaven. I cannot tell the comfort and peace that I feel this morning. How I long for that feeling to last the rest of my life but knowing it will soon fade away as we cannot live on the mountain all our life but must go again to the valley. Then, we must suffer again because of our sinful nature.

The best the doctors know now that I am not getting enough blood to my heart which means that some of the arteries are closing up. This can be fixed by taking medicine if the arteries are not too bad. If too bad, then an operation will be required. The doctors are going to run several more tests before they will know what to do.

I hope this finds you feeling as well as usual. I know that you all are happy to

have Sister Mary with you at this association time. She is so sweet and so much help. Forgive the writing and spelling and remember this sinner when at the throne of Grace.

In love,
Elder G. D. Shipman
September, 1976

Canada, Ky

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, MY DEAR BROTHER:

I think the enclosed letter would be of interest to many of God's humble poor, and while I do not have the consent of the writer yet I think I know that Elder Hunnicutt would not object to having his letter published in the *Signs* if in your judgment you think it worthy. Elder Hunnicutt is a brother I esteem very highly, whose manner in preaching and writing is so smooth and inoffensive, yet so pointed and clear. His is indeed one of the rare gifts of our God. He has come by the rough way and I would enjoy seeing his experience in the *Signs* at an early date; telling how the Lord has led him both into and out of Babylon. May the blessings of the Lord continue with the *Signs,* its God given Editor and Associate Editors, together with all who write for its precious columns, and even those who are made to believe and love the living truths of a living God published therein. Yours in bonds of love.

(Elder) G. B. BIRD
Webbville, Ky.

ELDER G. B. BIRD, DEAR BROTHER BIRD:

Your letter came to-day and I have read it more than once with deep interest. It gives me great pleasure to know you cherish a memory of us. I could never tell you how much we all enjoyed having you and sister Bird with us in our humble, home. Also Elders Staten, Chapman, H. J. Bird, Tilly and Elder Hammonds and all the rest whom the Lord had made humble enough to put up with the fare.

We enjoyed having them all and my humble prayer is that our gracious Lord may be pleased to send you all back to us again. You ask for the definition of the Greek word translated "lust" in the King James version. Well, my dear brother, the Lord forbid that I should set myself up to try to teach a man like you. I am not able for that, nevertheless, I will give you the Greek word and its original definition which you will see is about the same as given in our English dictionaries. The definition as given in Thayer's Greek Lexicon is as follows: "A desire, craving or longing for what is forbidden." Now brother Bird, I wish to make just a few statements. Not because I think you need my little, puny, frivolous thoughts but I beg you bear with me for a few moments just once. The definition I have given here is correct, and it has been a club in the hands of the better educated Arminians from time immemorial. They are still using it and will continue to do so as long as their foolish hearts are darkened. They have ever used it to knock grace baptists and all others who ever trusted grace alone for salvation. They themselves, of course, deny that

they have a lust for what is forbidden, and so they use this definition to condemn genuine old grace baptists who alone are willing to acknowledge to the truth. Now we go to the context, James, 1st chapter. To begin my remarks allow me to say, the Holy Spirit did not inspire James to write this glorious chapter just to inform us that the whole world is full of lust, as the Arminians including the soft limited or nonpredestinarian baptists would have us believe. All would know that anyway, but he wrote to tell us, God's dear children, just what we have all experienced, that we are all full of lust by nature, having a desire, craving or longing for what is forbidden. It is humiliating to acknowledge this, and no one will ever do it until given that experience of grace which brings us low at His feet, and conquers our carnal pride and ambition. Not until the last shred of carnal hope is vanishd will any one acknowledge to this truth. But in our experience (if we have had an experience) we are taught for the first time in life just what we are by nature, that we are born, not only full of lust, but also go forth speaking lies, seeking for those things for which we have a desire or craving. "We have seen not only shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin, but sin has been so completely finished in us that it brought forth death, and nature is still dead in us, (God's children) . It is not just an enemy of God's, but "enmity (itself) against God." In God's children "the natural man receiveth not things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." So all men by nature are in a bad predicament as we learn from our own experiences and the Scriptures. James 1:12 says, **"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation."** So if we have had a fair degree of success combatting lust, let us not gloat over it, it is only because we have been blessed of the Lord to do so or we would have failed and fallen by the way. It is certain we have received no help from nature (old Adam) to stand up under temptation, and put up a fight against sin. This is just what James says he does not want us to err about, verses 16-17. Here he tells us that all the ability we have to combat the desires, cravings or longings of our nature comes down from above, not up from beneath.

God's people all know just what we got from Adam. We got his shameful, sinful, lustful, depraved image, and must carry it about for the duration of our allotted time here on earth. We got trouble as surely as the sparks go upward. We got sickness, sorrow and death, then down to dust with him. Contrast to what we got in Christ "Predestinated us unto the adoption of children;" "Chosen us in him before the foundation of the world;" "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound;" Freely justified from all things which includes the lusts of our nature; "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." That is here and now. The weak kneed baptists say we must take care of our own time sal-

vation, but the Bible knows nothing of any such time salvation as they refer to. There is just one salvation, and it is eternal and all of grace. Grace predestinated us, elected us, inscribed our names in His eternal book. Grace quickens our dead souls into life, gives us faith in our redeemer, all the repentance we have or need, gives us power to combat the lusts and sinfulness of our natures, though often allows us to fall into it for reasons best known to himself. Grace restrains sin in the lives of his children, and when not restrained he gives us the assurance that he works it for their eternal good. It is found to be one of the all things that work together for good to them that love God. Grace takes care of us in the hour of death and wafts our souls on high. As our old corruptible body is sown in dishonor with Adam, we shall be raised in glory with Christ. Having borne the image of the earthly, which certainly includes all of his (Adam's) characteristics, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly (Christ) which just as certainly includes all of his characteristics, and all because of the grace which was given us in Christ, Jesus before the world was.

Now, brother Bird, I did not think of writing so much when I began, and I do not think you need what I have written, but just felt I wanted to say it this way. Write me any time you have a mind. I am yours in a precious hope.

(Elder) J. S. HUNNICUTT

PSALM 127:1

"Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh *but* in vain."

As our text is divided into two parts we will endeavor to treat upon it in the same manner: (1) We wish to present some thoughts upon the building of the house and (2) upon the keeping of the city. In both instances we believe the church of the true and living God is under consideration. In the Scriptures are presented different similies of the church, and in this instance the figure of an house is used to typify God's building. In I Kings 6:7 the following is said concerning the temple which Solomon built: **"And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready, before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building."** In the fifth chapter, verse six, we read: **"Now therefore command thou that they hew me cedar trees out of Lebanon; and my servants shall be with thy servants: and unto thee will I give hire for thy servants according to all that thou shalt appoint: for thou knowest that *there is* not among us any that can skill to hew timber like unto the Sidonians."** This last quotation appears to be the message which Solomon sent to Hiram, king of Tyre. The Tyrians were friends of Israel and in type they may represent the great

host of friends of the Old School Baptist Church throughout the country who, for some reason or another, are not identified with the visible church. Solomon, who in type represents our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in whose hands God delivered all power, both in heaven and in earth, in the building of the temple built it according to the wisdom which God gave him. His word was absolute and his will sovereign in all that pertained to the building of it.

All of those who had any part in the matter, not only of the Israelites but also the subjects of Hiram's kingdom, were made willing in the day of God's power, and as Solomon compensated the Tyrians for their labours, even so does God in this day and time compensate or reward those who follow after the cause of truth by feeding their kids by the Shepherd's tents. As they hunger and thirst for the bread of heaven and for the pure water of the river of life, which alone can satisfy their longings, crumbs of mercy fall from the Master's table and streams flow out to those who are in desert places until their souls are fed and they can want no more. We may be assured that more than the natural ties of relatives and friends bind their hearts in christian love and fellowship for the visible church, which causes them to do as much, and in some cases more, for the cause by way of attending meeting and ministering to the needs of God's people by lending a helping hand in entertaining, where that is necessary and desirable. We only meant to touch upon this in passing.

To come back to I Kings 6:7 and 5:6 we note that "the stone was made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building." How truly and beautifully this sets forth the work of God in the hearts of poor sinners, independently of the help of man. Paul in the tenth verse of the second chapter of Ephesians says: **"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."** This workmanship consists of living, or lively stones, manifested here in the world as sons and daughters of Adam, but at the same time chosen of God and precious in his sight. This material is first prepared, or made ready, before it is brought together to be assembled in the niche or place which God in his infinite wisdom hath designed. Please note that Solomon commanded that "cedar trees out of Lebanon" be hewed, or cut down, so that they could no longer receive nourishment from the earth, or the arm of flesh. The "cedar trees of Lebanon" signify God's forest where only evergreens, or characters who have received eternal life, grow. Before these are brought into the church they have to be hewn by God's workmen, and that times no doubt he is pleased to use his gospel ministers through the preached word to bring this about, or it may be his pleasure to send forth trials and afflictions, for the smith and the coals are instruments in his hands, to fashion and to consume them before

they are qualified to serve wheresoever and in whatever capacity he has purposed. The workmen who were employed in the building of Solomon's temple were the most skilled obtainable, in every branch or phase of the work, and of a truth there are none today so well skilled in the preaching of the gospel as those whom God calls and qualifies. With these labourers there is no such things as "strikes" for higher wages, for all who labour in God's vineyard receive the same pay, their penny a day, whether they come in at the first or the eleventh hour; they all receive grace sufficient for their needs regardless of whether they serve one year or an hundred. It is written that "the house, when it was in building, was built of stone and made ready before it was brought thither," and it is also said that there was "neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building." Again, let us quote from Paul's epistle to the Ephesians. He says to those who are a part and parcel of the workmanship which he declared to be God's, **"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."** Eph. 2:19-22. While we understand we were chosen in Christ before the world was, or that all of our names were written in the Lamb's book of life before time began, being unper-fect, in these last, or gospel times, we are manifested as being the children of God and members of the mystical body of Christ. During this gospel dispensation the Lord is carrying on his work of grace and his children are being prepared and brought together by the working of his mighty power, that they might be assembled or fitly framed together unto an holy temple in the Lord. It is through the workings of his Holy Spirit that they are builded together for an habitation of the Lord. Such characters are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. No one except the chosen ones know anything of this work and they can testify that while it is in the building there is no sound of a hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron, which are implements that men use; these shall not be used in the building of the house, the church of the true and living God, where it is well known that salvation is all of grace, for the inhabitants of Mount Zion know that nothing can be added to or taken from the perfect work of God in the house which he builds, and they know further that "Except the Lord build the house they labour in vain that build it." There may be some Marthas who feel the creature still has some chores to perform in order to share fully in the benefits of salvation, but all the Marys will be found to have ceased from their labours and to have entered into gospel rest, or in the

house where all sit at the feet of their Lord, adoring and worshipping the Saviour of sinners. We like to think of Mary as typifying those who are truly prepared and set apart in a church capacity to worship God in spirit and in truth and have no confidence in the flesh. At the most we can but touch upon our subject, so we will have to pass along and content ourself by, saying as did the Queen of Sheba, "The half was not told me," for Zion in all of her beauty and grandeur cannot be fully described.

We have endeavored to present in some measure our thoughts concerning the vain labour that is spent by those who attempt to aid God in his work of building his house, and we hope that there are no real Old School Baptists who disagree with what we have said, but when we come to the second part of our text, if we are to judge by the actions of some, even though they be ministers of many years standing, we are made to wonder whether they really think that God, who unquestionably builds his house alone, needs their assistance in keeping the city. We most certainly do not believe that God Almighty has delegated to any one or more individuals the task of keeping his city, or church, and any watchman, whosoever he may be, who appropriates this job unto himself will sooner or later discover that he is not sufficient for it and that he waketh but in vain. God needs no man to aid him in steadying the ark even if, as some appear to think, it is shaking. This may be at least one of the times when we who speak and write should take heed unto ourselves and unto the doctrine, lest having preached to others we ourselves become castaways. While God's ministers should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints they should do so in love and in a manner that is "apt to teach."

Among the things which Paul says a bishop must not be is "no striker." A true minister of God is a servant or under-shepherd of the church and should not under any circumstances undertake to lord his ideas over God's heritage. We have seen the evil, we believe, of this fact being lost sight of. While we like to see a minister, in whatever capacity he may serve, esteemed for the truth's sake, if we are not deceived we have known of cases where the minister was put upon a pedestal and to some extent at least worshipped. Such things ought not to be. When we first began to exercise our gift publicly, if we really have one, we were backward in many respects and had to be encourged to stand before the people. On one occasion we were admonished by our pastor, who said in substance that we should be in subjection to the wishes of the brethren in these things, and the question has some times arisen in our mind, is the only time that a minister should be in subjection to his brethren, when he is young and inexperienced? Not so long ago one of our able ministers said in substance in a letter to us, that the churches having ministers among their memberships should watch over them, and when they stray too far, either in word

or in deed, call them to account. We are thoroughly in accord with this idea, not with standing so far as we know it is seldom done now-a-days. Churches in far too many instances, in our humble opinion, have been negligent and entirely too lenient concerning those of their memberships, and this may also include the lay members as well as the various gifts that the Lord has placed in their midst. Just one saying from the mouth of Jesus will suffice to set forth our meaning. In Matthew 5:29 we find his words recorded as follows **"And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell."** We have Scriptural authority for the brethren taking even a minister in hand and instructing him more perfectly. In Acts 18:24-28 we read: **"And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace: for he mightly convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ."** If that was necessary and profitable concerning one as important and gifted as was Apollos, is it too much to ask of the churches today that they watch over for the good of the cause their members, regardless of the position they may occupy in the church?

As Jesus said, if it be a right eye that offends, pluck it out and cast it from thee, if need be. How vain is man when he feels that he can aid the Lord either in the building of the church or keeping it. The Psalmist not only said, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it," but he also said, and with equal force, "Except the Lord keep the city, the watch rose waketh but in rain." We are convinced that do all we may and the very best we can we shall have to confess that we are unprofitable servants, and we shall be made to know by better experiences perhaps, that it is only through the workings of God's Holy Spirit that we can and do mortify the deeds of the body, or flesh, and keep the old man under. We earnestly hope that we may be found to be among those referred to by Peter, "who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." If, indeed and in truth, we belong to the spiritual family of God, we are persuaded that nothing will ever be able to separate us from his love permanently. We take comfort at times in the

declaration of the apostle where he said: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:"

The doctrine of the final preservation or perseverance of the saints by and with God, to dwell with him in eternal glory is sublime and beyond language to describe and we should cling to it through all the shifting scenes of time and the vissitudes of this life. Our subject is inexhaustible and full of glory but all we can do is to drop a few hints to the wise and leave them to be pondered over and meditated upon with such wonder, amazement and understanding as God may, according to the riches of his grace, as it is in Christ Jesus, be pleased to grant unto us, and whether it be little or much, we desire that his name shall have all the praise.

Elder R. L. Dodson
March, 1944

PSALM 41: 1-4.

Blessed *is* he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.

The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; *and* he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.

The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing; thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.

I said, Lord, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee.

HEBREWS 2:15.

We confess that we have no special light upon the text proposed. From the context, however, it will be seen that the text relates to the object of the incarnation and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. He did not visit our guilty world, and suffer on the cross, without having an object to accomplish, and that object was, to deliver those who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. In order to do this, he took on him the seed of Abraham. Not the children of flesh, for Paul says, Romans ix. 7, 8, Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called: that is, they which are the children of flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all. As it it written, I have made thee a father of many nations. — Romans iv. 16, 17. And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

The seed of Abraham therefore, thus defined, were taken on the Redeemer when he came in the flesh, and for them he suffered on the cross. They are spoken of in the connection of our text, as his many sons, which he was to bring to

glory, and for whom, by the grace of God he tasted death. And they are also in this connection called the children, and his brethren. These were subject to bondage through fear of death. For the wages of sin is death, and they had all sinned, and had just cause to fear the execution of the sentence which was against them. The object of Christ's coming and suffering, was to save them from their sins, to bear their sins in his own body on the tree, and to put them away by the sacrifice of himself, by tasting death for every one of them. And thus was he, through death, to destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

In this work of redemption and deliverance, he hath triumphed gloriously; and upon this ground they receive the spirit, not of bondage, again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father. And they are exhorted to stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and be not again entangled with the yoke of bondage.— Gal. v. 1. The perfect love of God commended in the gift of his dear Son, and communicated to the saints by regeneration, casteth out fear. Fear hath torment, but the perfect love of God shed abroad in his children, overcomes it, and casts it out. The object therefore of Christ's life in the flesh, and under law, and of his death and suffering in the flesh, is attained. The great trumpet is blown; the jubilee proclaimed; the prison doors are opened, and the prisoners are brought out of their prison houses. And there is therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Rom. viii.)

Jehovah has triumphed, his people are free! **"Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."** And we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the free woman. (Gal. 4:26.) **"Loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion."** — Isa. 52:2

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y., Nov. 1, 1855

CONTRIBUTIONS

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Victor Terry, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

IN REMEMBRANCE
Ruby Pauline Queen

Our dearly beloved friend and fellow believer passed away this year at age 91, the day before we met together for the Little Vine Olde Association. She was well known and loved by all who knew her among our fellowship. She was faithful in attendance with the Lost Creek Church for the past thirty some years and was always a willing helper in all the things in which the church was involved. She entertained the brethren in her home along with her beloved husband Byron while he lived, who was also a faithful believer, and she continued to receive the brethren as long as her health permitted. She made dinners and invited and received the brethren in her home for church meetings. She travelled to other states for Old Baptist Church meetings, which she greatly enjoyed. She is indelibly written in our memory because of her humility and kindness toward her family and her dear friends of the faith. Ruby had two daughters and two granddaughters who were greatly loved by her and us. She loved to read the scriptures, and from time to time would quote verses that were precious to her. In her was the evidence of a child of God. She bore the fruit of the Spirit which is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. She was always a proper lady and conducted herself with honor by the grace of God.

Ruby is already missed in our meetings and among our fellowship. We will no longer see her face, but her precious memory is with us. We have been given the strong assurance that for the Lord's children to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. In His presence is light, eternal life, and joy unspeakable. She has ceased from her labors, sorrows, and pains, and we believe is basking in the light of God's love forevermore. It is our hope and trust that our hearts may be comforted toward her since she has fought a good fight, finished her course and kept the faith and henceforth is laid up for her a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give to her, and not unto her only, but unto all who love His appearing. This was written by one who loved her, I trust in truth.

Elder J. B. Farmer.

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Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
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HYMN

A crumb of mercy, Lord,
I crave, Unworthy to be fed
With dainties such as angels have,
Or with the children's bread.

Have pity on my needy soul;
Thy peace and pardon give;
Thy love can make the wounded whole,
And bid the dying live.

Behold me prostrate at thy gate;
Do not my suit deny;
With longing eyes for thee I wait;
O, help me, or I die!

When thou dost give a heart to pray,
Thou wilt incline thine ear;
From me turn not thy face away,
But my petition hear.

So shall my joyful soul adore
The riches of thy grace;
No sinner needed mercy more,
That ever sought thy face.

Fawcett.

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EDITORIAL

"We are confident, I *say,* and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord." 2 Corinthians 5:8.

Elder J. B. Farmer

For some time now my mind has been occupied with thoughts about what it means to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. This is a profound subject about which there are many opinions. But opinions will not suffice for the children of God. I am made to believe that they can only be satisfied with the truth, and that by the grace and mercy of God they shall reject all error. The carnal mind is strong in its thinking and will resist and oppose the truth until the end. According to the scriptures it is "enmity against God." So, for one to receive the truth, the carnal mind must be subdued and revelation must be given from above. This is altogether the powerful work of God, and will result in His praise and glory. I greatly desire that the wisdom from above will be given to me and to His children who read this, and that I might be blessed to set forth the truth as it is in Christ, and be kept from misrepresenting any point of doctrine to the praise of His grace.

It seems that as age advances we become more concerned about what lies ahead. We know that a natural man cannot live forever. We see our dear friends passing from this life, and we see our bodies becoming weaker and wearing out. These things make us consider the fact that we also are approaching the end of our journey here on earth. We know that God has said through His prophet, **"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." Ecclesiastes 12:7.** We have much evidence to show what becomes of a natural creature after death. It returns to the earth, and if left long enough becomes indistinguishable from its surroundings. But the pressing question to me is --- what shall be the state of the spirit of the child of God when it returns to God? The answer is a great mystery, but God has been merciful to reveal some of His

mysteries unto His saints for His glory and for their comfort and edification. We hope He will show us mercy in these things.

Some think the spirit, at the death of the body, will be absorbed into some universal unknowable space and become, for all practical purposes, nothing. Some think that for one's spirit to return to God is the same thing as being resurrected from the dead, and that there is no need for the resurrection of the body. Some think that when a believer dies his spirit falls asleep and continues in a peaceful rest until the resurrection of the bodies of the saints. Some think that the spirits of the saints are in heaven and are looking down on those below, and have an interest in their activities. Some think there is an intermediate place between heaven and earth where all are taken and held until the resurrection of the dead. These ideas or some combination of them all appear to me to be false.

Others believe that the spirits of all saints are awake and aware of heavenly things after death, and that the spirit never dies or sleeps. They also believe in the future resurrection of the bodies of those who die before the second coming of Christ. And they believe that those who are alive at His coming shall be instantly changed and made altogether spiritual — body, soul and spirit. And they believe that all these shall be caught up together unto the Lord, and they shall ever be with the Lord. I am made to believe that those who are given to perceive these things have been blessed with a good understanding, and will not be disappointed when they pass from this life to their eternal home.

What is the earnest expectation of His saints? I believe their earnest expectation is that they might some day see Him as He is and be made like Him in glory. God said through His apostle, "The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." When a saint dies, I believe he (his spirit) shall be immediately carried, by the angels, to the bosom of Abraham, (the name Abraham means father) where he shall be comforted, as was Lazarus, according to the Lord. For one to be comforted he must be aware of his situation and feelings, or else he could know nothing of comfort. Stephen, just before he was stoned to death, was given to see Jesus, the Son of man, standing on the right hand of God. What a great comfort for the children of God to have on record that the Lord appeared to Stephen in his great time of need. And I must believe that the Lord shall show similar mercies to each of His little ones in their time of need as death approaches. I not only believe that He appears to them, but that He is also in charge of them being ushered fully awake into the eternal heavenly kingdom where they shall at last be blessed to look upon His face.

The spirit that returns to God — is it earthy or is it heavenly? If it is heavenly, which I believe it must be to exist in the presence of God, it must be eternal as God is. God is the eternal Spirit and He neither slumbers nor sleeps. This is part of the character of God. The spirit of God's children is also heavenly, there-

fore I believe that their spirit is eternal and cannot die, neither can it slumber nor sleep. What then is meant when we hear or read that the saints die in the Lord, or that they fall asleep in Christ. Since the spirit cannot die or sleep, what is it then that dies or falls asleep except the body? The body falls asleep and becomes sleeping dust, to be awakened and to be raised in the likeness of the Lord's glorious body at His appearing. David said, "I shall be sa-tisfied when I shall awake in thy likeness." God said about the body of the saints through the apostle, "It is sown in corruption: it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." And he was also blessed to say, "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

Since the spirit that returns to God is awake and aware, it must be seeing, hearing, feeling and knowing heavenly things there, but being without the body it must be only a passive observer and not an active participant in the heavenly realm. To my understanding, the reason the body must be resurrected is so that the child of God might be made a whole spiritual man—body, soul, and spirit. And being a whole spiritual man he may be fully active in heavenly spiritual things.

We read of the prophets and the apostles, while here on earth, being caught up in the spirit from time to time to observe heavenly things in dreams and visions. Isaiah wrote, "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* the Lord of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory."

And John, when he was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, also saw and heard many glorious things. He saw one like unto the Son of man in all His glory. He saw a throne set in heaven and the One who sat on it. He saw the four and twenty elders sitting on seats round about the throne. He saw the four beasts with each one having six wings. He was blessed to see many wonderful things in the vision. I am made to believe that these experiences were much the same as what one must see after departing this life and after his spirit is carried to heaven. But after one dies and is brought into heaven in the spirit, what he sees shall not come to an end, as the visions of the prophets and apostles did. His vision will be eternal. All his attention shall be continually upon heavenly things, and there will be no remembrance of former things, according to the scriptures. All sorrow, pain, fear, disappointment, sin or anything that troubles or defiles shall not appear there. All shall be peace and joy forever.

The scriptures are available to almost all religious people. Many think that by accumulating scriptures on a certain subject and comparing them and then reasoning about the probable meaning of them, the truth may be discerned.

However, the truth cannot be discovered in this way. God has fixed things so that no one can by taking thought find out any of His mysteries. This is why there are so many different religions. Strong-minded men and women have hit upon special theories, and have promoted their ideas to draw away following after themselves for their own glory. But God reveals His truth only to His little ones, and hides it from the wise and prudent. It is a good thing to search the scriptures as God gives the mind and strength. But we must acknowledge that only God is able to shed light on them for our learning and edification. God must be glorified in all, or else it shall prove to be a futile endeavor to attempt to know the truth. The wicked are, "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

There is only one truth. There is only one doctrine. "*There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye, are, in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all." And the elect children of God are above all the families of the earth in that they, although knowing they are unworthy, are given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven --- and the rest are blinded. The children of the kingdom are not only given to know the mysteries of it, but are also given to know the Father, as the Son graciously reveals Him to them. And to know Him is eternal life. The apostle John, by the Spirit said, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

Elder J.B. Farmer

1CORINTHIANS 3:1-7.

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, *even* **as unto babes in Christ.**

I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able *to bear it,* **neither yet now are ye able.**

For ye are yet carnal: for whereas *there is* **among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?**

For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I *am* **of Apollos; are ye not carnal?**

Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 12 / 2016 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

VOICES OF THE PAST

1517 N. Topeka, Wichita, Kans.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

Enclosed is a copy of an article written by Elder L. L. Schenck, Williamstown, Kans. It was read to our people and I asked his consent to send it to the Signs to which he assented. We should be pleased to see it published. Yours in hope,

H. F. CATE.
Williamstown, Kansas.

"Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers, of the word; It seemed good unto me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus." It is not mine to make the same claim of a perfect understanding in all things as our beloved brother Luke made, and rightly too; but I hope I am given that same desire to set forth in order those things which are most surely believed among us. When I was young I had no thought that the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead would ever become an issue among the Baptists, but time has developed that very thing. Some who either by design or through ignorance have raised the question foreseen and foretold by the apostle to wit: "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" In the days of the apostles there were two men, Hymenaeus and Philetus who preached the resurrection was past already and overthrew the faith of some. I hope there will be no such tragic culmination of this current controversy now going the rounds. If I might be indulged for a few moments I would like to try by the help of the Lord, to set forth (in order) my own views on the resurrection of the dead; and I mean "The resurrection of the dead." That which the apostle is pleased to designate as the first resurrection we trust the people of God have all experienced and for that reason it seems less difficult to write upon a subject which is clearly set forth, not only in the written word but also by the witness within us. The first resurrection blended so sweetly with the doctrine of salvation by grace. As it is written "By grace ye are saved; and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ." I think the definition of the word resurrection cannot be successfully disputed. It means a raising up and in the scriptural terms it means the raising up of the dead. Thus in the first resurrection it no doubt refers to those who are dead to the law by the body of Christ. "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead." This gracious truth also inspires us with a blessed assurance that if this same one who died for all be risen again, then those for whom he died are also raised up together with him. Raised up from under the curse of

the law and made to sit together in heavenly places with him. "Not under the law, but under grace."

This to my mind is the first resurrection and blessed and holy are they who have part in the first resurrection, upon such the second death hath no power. We read in the scripture of the first resurrection and of the second death. Now if there be a second death there must of necessity be a first, but I don't think we are justified in saying the first and second resurrection but rather the first and the last. For Christ is indeed the resurrection and the life. He is "Alpha and Omega" "the first and the last." Now as concerning the last resurrection we have not yet experienced that. But Christ and the apostles and prophets have dealt very elaborately upon the subject. The apostle has said we believe in the resurrection of the dead both of the just and the unjust and this is one of the things most surely believed among us. The potter has power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. Then "what if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory," "not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?" This is the Lord's work and it is marvelous in our eyes. All made of one lump, all alike must die and all must be raised from the dead. Those that have done good to the resurrection of eternal life and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation. Because some were afore prepared unto glory there is no power in heaven nor in hell nor in the earth beneath can hinder one of these from entering into that glory for which they are prepared. They are the "vessels of mercy otherwise called "earthen vessels, the natural man, the man which must die, the man which is not quickened except it die; which being quickened he is raised a spiritual body. The vessels of wrath fitted to destruction must also come forth from the grave to receive their inevitable doom for to that end they were fitted. To have it otherwise would be to frustrate the grace of God which, the apostle says, we do not do. Who would deny the adoption of God's people to which they were predestinated, the redemption of the purchased possession, or who would deny the quickening of our mortal bodies which must and will be accomplished by the same power and the same spirit that raised up Christ from the dead? Whom he raised not up if so be that the dead rise not. Yet some man will say, "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" Here the apostle interjects: "Thou fool, that which thou sowest, is not quickened, except it die: And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain." In the case under consideration it chances to be, not wheat but some other. Even our mortal bodies and God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him. The fruit springing from it is multiplied a thousand fold. None of us will contend that we sow a

spiritual body but we sow a natural body and the devine record tells us it is raised a spiritual body. Let those dispute this who will. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead? Did he not form man of the dust of the ground and breathe into his nostrils the breath of life? Is it a thing incredible with you that he call forth our sleeping dust and form it anew? Each transaction involves nothing short of a miracle but there is nothing impossible with God. It is a matter of apostolic preference that they have often referred to death as a sleep. Christ and the prophets also referred to it as the same. Then the psalmist proclaimed, when I awake in his likeness then shall I be satisfied. The apostle declared Christ was seen after his resurrection by about five hundred brethren at once of whom the greater part remain unto this present but some are fallen asleep. Upon this basis he argues the resurrection of the dead and the changing of those who are alive when that great and notable day shall come. "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." And here is the change. "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality," No subtle theorizing can change the meaning of that. And when this unspeakable feat shall have been accomplished then will be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory." Where is the comfort in the thought that the saints shall enjoy no victory over death. Our Captain, having gone before, having himself died and rose again a mighty conqueror over death and the grave, this is a guarantee that every child of grace must follow him in victory or else Christ shall have died in vain. How could we point in triumph to the cross of Christ and say: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" The sting of death, even sin, was washed away in the blood of Christ, and the victory, of the grave is only temporary to say the most for it. Our captor, the grave will be not only defeated but utterly destroyed, for God hath spoken it "O grave, I will be thy destruction." "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." We cannot too strongly stress the purpose of God concerning these vessels of mercy which he hath afore prepared unto glory. To say that one of these shall fail to attain unto that glory for which they were prepared and which is also prepared for them, I say to deny this is to deny the ability of God Almighty to realize upon his eternal designs, and the adoption, to wit: the redemption of our body. To deny this is to not only deny the power of God's predestination, but to preclude the realization of God's eternal purpose toward every child of promise. Being sealed with the holy spirit of promise they must be redeemed from the grave or else the promise of God is rendered quite impotent and the seal of God is proven to be no guarantee to a perfect salvation.

All the promises of God in him are yea and in him Amen unto the glory of God by us. Pause and consider some

of the promises of God to us. In the Psalms it is written "Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling. But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah." This is in sweet ac cord with the promise of Jesus. I will raise him up again at the last day. This, again, would signify that those who come unto him have experienced the: first resurrection and they now stand in a blessed anticipation of the last. How very striking is the language of the apostle. Drawing upon the storehouse of inspiration he makes this comparison: "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon and another glory of the stars: for (one) star differeth from (another) star in glory." I hope whoever may read this will not overlook the fact these two words inclosed in parenthesis are supplied words and to my mind destroy the meaning of the original text. The saints of God no doubt are denominated as the stars, as for instance Job said "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Thus to contend that one saint shall differ from another saint in glory seems absurd to me for this is the promise, "We shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." I anticipate no difference among the saints in glory. If they shall be like him they will have attained absolute perfection. I do not criticize the wording of the scripture, however, the translators were not inspired but were men the same as we and it is quite possible they may have erred in some of their interpretations, but we must commend their honesty in putting all supplied words in italics. Hence to read this text omitting those supplied words we have "For star differeth from star in glory." So also is the resurrection of the dead. The star or saint on earth differs from that same star in glory. The difference is quite apparent. "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." The difference would baffle all human imagination but so is the resurrection of the dead. It is a most glorious and unspeakable transition that we hold in anticipation and it doth not yet appear what we shall be but we know that when Christ who is our life shall appear then shall we also appear with him in glory. And we have his gracious promise that he will doubtless come again with rejoicing bringing his sheaves with him. When he ascended unto his Father it is providential that his angel tarried long enough to assure us saying "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same, Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." When Christ was here in person he taught his disciples some very extraordinary lessons. "Verily, verily," said he, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." This no doubt refers to those dead to the law by the body of Christ. These have part in the first res-

urrection. "The hour is coming, and now is." They hear his voice — they live.

The second death hath no power over them. The blood of Christ has sealed their ultimate salvation. It was a stupendous achievement. Yet the Master says "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Here is apparent the glory of the sun and the glory of the moon; The moon, the law, has faded into obscurity while the Sun of righteousness has arisen with healing in his wings. His glory can never be dimmed and he will gather his elect from the four corners of the earth. The sea shall give up the dead that is in it, and death and hell shall deliver up the dead that were in them. Hence to conclude: "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep, For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

All hail the day, when, Christ shall say
Awake! ye sleeping nation;
Come view the place where sovereign grace
First ordered your salvation.
Then will our sleeping bodies rise,
In tender love he'll seize us;
And we shall mount the upper skies,
Safe in the arms of Jesus.

(Elder) L. L. SCHENCK
March, 1944

PSALM 67

God be merciful unto us, and bless us; *and* **cause his face to shine upon us; Selah.**

That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.

Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

O let the nations be glad and sing for joy; for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth, Selah.

Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

Then **shall the earth yield her increase;** *and* **God,** *even* **our own God, shall bless us.**

God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Phil. 2:12-13.

Noting a request from Elder J. J. Musgrove that someone give their views through our family paper, the Signs, I will endeavor to give some thoughts regarding it, hoping to be guided by that unerring Spirit. The apostle addressed this admonition to obedient people, whom he speaks of as beloved. In the first of this epistle we note the letter addressed to all the saints in Jesus Christ which are at Philippi with the bishops and deacons. The church at Philippi was commended more than one time by the writer for their obedience, but in his absence he knew there would be certain things they would have to work out for themselves, their own salvation. The salvation under consideration could not have been salvation from sin, as something dead sinners could work out, because they were obedient people. Neither could it have been what is sometimes called, conditional time salvation, if so God would only have worked in them the will, and the matter of doing would have been left to them. The church is reminded that whatever is worked out by them, it is God who worketh in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. The working out of one's salvation with fear and trembling is more or less comparable to one working out a problem to find the sum. Something must be provided to work with and that something is the various experiences wrought in the life of a child of God, by the power of God, bringing them to one acknowledgment, that salvation is of the Lord. Without going into the mighty deep, being swallowed by a great fish and learning that he was beyond the help of man, Jonah would not have confessed that salvation is of the Lord. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." One may talk much of God's grace and the way of salvation, but if he has not learned this in some way except hearing others tell it, the matter will never be worked by him with fear and trembling, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation," but by revelation. The life consists not in what men behold in the outward man. The real life is in his prayer, praises, groans, sighs, hopes, fears, and trembling. "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. It is by these things men live. No amount of listening to another tell of his weakness, his doubts and fears, his unworthiness, crying unto God for the joy of salvation, or any other christian experience, will convince one that this is all a part of salvation. He must learn these things for himself before he has that fellowship for others of like experience. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." No wonder the hymn says, "'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear; and grace my fears relieved." No one could have

convinced the apostle Peter that he could not walk on the water, except the Savior. His avowal that he would never forsake the Savior, though all others did, was only to teach him how weak he was, yet in each new experience two things are learned — the weakness of men and the power of God. The power of God is never known, until the weakness of man has been manifested. The cross and the crown are both willed by my God. That is what brings about that love and sweet fellowship among God's poor people today as in all ages of the world. The walking together in the things of God's spirit. Surely, "all thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee." It is as if the apostle is saying unto them, in my absence you will be surrounded by many adversaries; there will be temptations, without and within; many things will befall you that you never expected, temptations that you never thought would be yours. You will find out for yourselves how weak you are, yet by these things you also learn that God is the only deliverer of his people, that he knows your downsittings as well as your uprisings. All our times are in his hand. Deep calls unto deep, thy "tears are thy meat. In all these things there is a working out one's salvation with fear and trembling, learning that it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure, that no flesh should glory in his presence.

"Though storms his face obscure,
And dangers threaten loud,
Jehovah's covenant is sure,
His bow is in the cloud."

This makes the children of God so dear unto one another. Often when they meet in the house of God, clasp the hand of one another in sweet fellowship, it is with that knowledge that the Salvation of another has been worked out like their own, with fear and trembling.

Elder D. V. Spangler

MILLENNIUM

So many of God's children are disturbed at this time regarding world con ditions that I desire to write a short article using that as my subject. Many Old Baptists have listened to the radio and newspaper type of preachers until they have imbibed the modern doctrine that there is to be a return of Jesus to the earth to reign here as a king for a thousand years. In connection with this is the equally fantastic doctrine that the Jews are to return to Jerusalem about this time, become Christians, and receive Jesus to rule in the flesh over them, together with the Gentiles. Let me say that I find but just one kingdom spoken of in the Scriptures. I have never believed nor do I now believe that that kingdom comes by observation. It comes alone by faith to every subject of that kingdom. The eyes of the worldling never has nor ever will see this kingdom any more than the wisdom of this world has or can understand it. "When Daniel was given to see the setting up, breaking in pieces and standing forever of this kingdom, I do not have the least idea that he was speaking of a kingdom by any name that came by ob-

servation. As far as the literal fulfillment of the prophecy is concerned, there has not been a single event or era that could be referred to as such. Even the triumphant work of Jesus cannot be used as proof because his own people, the Jews, did not believe by and because of it, although they were looking for a literal, worldly king. To me, the kingdom is set up in the hearts of God's children. I do not have any way of telling who has had that work done for them. The Old Baptists have some foolish traditions about this. I have heard some say they could pick them out in a large crowd. Some have said they could tell them by their walk, and some say that they were the ugliest of all people. None of these things do I believe. Some of the homliest people in my town are anything but Old Baptists. Some that have nice, clear cut features belong to them. I want to emphasize the fact the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ is a spiritual kingdom, and that the work done for a sinner is a work in the heart. Some greatly fear the future and what it holds, some are afraid of this thing and some of that, but there is not a thing to be afraid of now any more than the time of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Personally, I have always believed that God's children were clear of everything. Not only are their sins and iniquities covered by the blood, but everything is subject to Him now. To me, the devil has not had any power except that which was delegated to him. Apart from the power of God he would have become a nonentity. If the devil ever was able to be self-existent, I am sure that he would have exercised that power on the Son of God. The riches of this world were in his hand. Did that prove effectual in harming Christ or his people? It certainly did not!

I am sure that the riches of this globe are not in Satan's hands. But suppose they were, since he was in sufficient control of them to use them as a temptation to Jesus and failed, is there any room to believe that he ever could do any better? Since Christ received all of the evil treatment of Herod, Pilate, the Jews and the Gentiles and came out of the grave victorious over it all, how can anyone look for him to lose his power? Who is it to be lost to? Not to the devil, not death, not the grave, not the world. Well, let but, he skeptics say what they will! I just believe that Christ finished the work that he came to do. I do not think that he has any governments enlisted in furthering his kingdom. This idea that the christian (?) nations, and the anti-christian are to meet in conflict just does not ring true. Even if such a fantastic thing was taught in the Scriptures, things must have a terrible readjustment, because the world has not a single christian nation on the horizon now. But, dear brethren and sisters let us not look for any such. The kingdom of Jesus Christ is not maintained by bullets, tanks and other equipment of war. If Jesus conquered the howling mob, the cross, the grave, death, hell and every other devilish trick, was he not then and there a reigning king? Just when will he have more than all power? How can the children of God have any more than they have now? If God takes that which he hates and makes it work for the good of his chil-

dren, and all of their needs are supplied according to the liches of his grace, does it not sound fantastic to suppose that his kingdom, and the heirs of that kingdom have yet a great battle to fight with such things as money, guns, tanks and aeroplanes, and there is yet an era for that kingdom and the heirs of it, to enjoy more than plenty, fullness, completeness!

Elder W.D. Griffin
December, 1944

(We believe the following article written by the late Elder Silas H. Durand and published in the Signs January 1, 1887 will be of special interest to our readers — R: L. D.)

CONTROVERSY

To a certain extent there is controversy in the presentation of any religious sentiment, for all opposing sentiments are controverted by it. The truth on any subject cannot be declared without controverting every erroneous view. In the discussion of subjects by brethren there must necessarily be controversy whenever different views are entertained, as there will be on many subjects while we are in the flesh. I cannot see any harm, but often much good, in controversy, so long as those engaged in it are directed by the right spirit. It is the sharpness and bitterness of personal allusions that worry and distress the tender spiritual mind, and came many to regard controversy among brethren with dread. It is, perhaps, in our nature to resent any opposition to sentiments that we entertain; and when not under the control of the meek and gentle Spirit of Christ, one is very apt to think it necessary to sternly rebuke those who hold views contrary to his own. When we are in that state of mind we ought not to write, but wait till we can feel sure that a kindly and loving spirit is prompting us, before we undertake to correct what we deem to be errors in the sentiments of a brother. The apostle uses the expression, **"Speaking the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15)**; and I think, when the Lord calls one to speak or write upon these heavenly things, he gives; him the spirit of love to control him. "The love of Christ constraineth us," says the apostle. We may feel very backward about claiming for ourselves such an exalted and holy motive, yet I am sure that if we cannot have some evidence. that we me speaking or writing in love, we are out of place in attempting to discuss such sacred things.

It does not seem to me necessary that one should say offensive things to or of another, in giving a different understanding of a subject from that which he has expressed, only so far as the very fact of holding and expressing a different view may itself be deemed an offense. The object of one in any controversy should not be merely to defend his own view, and sustain his character as a correct thinker and a clear and deep writer or speaker, but to present the truth that has been made precious to his soul, with a humble desire to glorify God and

comfort his dear children.

If it is really the truth one is contending for the real meaning of the Holy Spirit in the portion of Scripture under contemplation, there will be more than a mere array of proof texts in presenting and confirming that truth. It will have come unto the one who is speaking of it, "Not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance;" and that power will be witnessed by those who have been taught in their experience the same truth, as they hear it from him, and the speaking of such truth will be a comfort to such, although, it may be the first they have ever heard it. The "form of sound words" which we heard from the inspired writers is to be held fast, and no experience can be regarded as genuine which is not in accordance with the letter of the word.

But we are to remember that it is in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus, that the Lord's people hold fast the form of sound words to their profit and comfort, and not in the carnal mind. The mere arraying of proof texts in defense of a point of doctrine is dry reading for one who is hungering and thirsting after righteousness. One who knows nothing of grace, may take great delight in bringing forward the strong and clear declarations of Scripture concerning any point of doctrine, and may exhibit great skill and zeal in defending the doctrine; but his discussions will not feed the sheep. Although he may speak or write strictly in the letter of the truth, his words will not come into the hearts of the living family of God with the comforting, trumpet sound of the gospel. I have known a number of such, and I would have to say of them what a dear brother once said to me with reference to a sermon we had just listened to, "Well, if he said anything that was not true, I was too dull to see it; but he did not speak as though he felt it, and I did not feel it." The doctrine is not merely important, it is everything; but it is doctrine that has life in it to us; doctrine that is felt in the heart, not merely held in the mind. In salvation, the doctrine and experience cannot be separated. The doctrine is the foundation; it is also the house that is built upon the foundation. But what can we know of the foundation, unless we have been favored to rest upon it? What can we know of the house, if it has never given us the comfort of its shelter and protection? The doctrine is the rock; but what is the rock to us, unless it has poured out to us the water of salvation? unless we have been blessed to suck honey and oil out of it? If the doctrine is the honeycomb, the experience is the honey; and when the Bridegroom comes into his garden, which is his sister, his spouse, he says, "I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey." In salvation, the honey is never separated from the comb but they are eaten together. "When either is exhibited separately, it may possibly be counterfeited; but when a piece of comb filled with honey is shown us, we know it is real. When the doctrine comes to us from God, every word is filled with sweet experience of love, and peace, and joy. We do not want one merely to tell us what the Bible says. That is not necessarily preaching the gospel. An infidel can do that as well as one of the Lord's ser-

vants. But when we are before the Lord, as Cornelius and his household were, we want to hear from the Lord's servant what is commanded him of God. We want to hear the word of the Lord that has come to him, and which is in him as a fire shut up in his bones, so that he is weary with refraining, and cannot stay. "Preach the word," writes the apostle to Timothy; but that word which he is to preach, is what he has seen with his eyes, and looked upon, and handled, of the word of life. — 1 John 1-3. Preaching is more than merely giving one's views. When the gospel is preached, there is power, authority, in it; for "it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." I remember once at an association, when a dear brother who had never been there before, and whom a very few present had ever heard preach, took a text that led at once into a subject upon which there were very different sentiments held by different ones present, and concerning which there had been much fruitless discussion. This brother, in the simplicity and power of true gospel preaching, went right through the controverted ground; preaching the word out of his own heart, and in humble confidence opening the Scriptures, and declaring the doctrine of Christ; and all the brethren met together at once in the truth he proclaimed so boldly, humbly, and sweetly. All with one accord said, "That is the truth." They recognized and felt the authority of the word preached, and their differences of views were for the time so far below them as to be lost sight of. His text was, **1 John 3:9, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."**

On the day of pentecost, the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one mind. But that one mind was the mind of Christ, the understanding of which the Son of God gives his people. That one heart was the new heart which is given them. In that divine life the saints are one. By one Spirit they are all baptized into one body. But they are as diverse in the flesh as they ever were. They all have yet a carnal mind, in which they are no more one than they were before being born again. It is from this source that differences arise among the saints, bringing wars and contentions. This carnal mind strives to impose itself upon them as that mind in which all the saints are, or ought to be, one. It is because of this that the apostle more than once exhorts them to be of one mind and of the same judgment. It is not only not wrong, but it is their duty, to strive to bring all their differences of view, in regard to divine things, to the infallible test of the Scriptures, seeking in solemn humility and brotherly love to discover and holdfast only that which is truth. That which is of the flesh is easily known by many remarks, if we are only made willing to acknowledge them. All the various passions and evil propensities, as anger, envy, wrath, levity, hatred, covetousness, and the like, are of the carnal mind, and that position in defense of which they are enlisted is very apt to prove the wrong one. The power of the

truth and of the love of God felt in the heart holds these fleshly propensities for the time in subjection, as the power of light causes darkness to disappear. The true weapons of our warfare are then at our service, which "are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations in our own minds, or in the reasoning of others, and every high thing that a exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into subjection every thought to the obedience of Christ."- **2 Cor. 10- 4. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."** With this blessed privilege of access at the only source of true wisdom, it would appear that the dear saints might easily be of one mind. In order to endeavor to be of the same mind and judgment in regard to the things of the kingdom of God, it is necessary that the saints should, as often as may be, speak one with another of these things, and not only present to each other that in which they do see alike, but that also in which their views are of any difference, in order to see if the Lord will show them which is of the flesh and which of the Spirit. This is controversy.

But it really seems as though there is no need that there should be bitterness in it, or striving for the mastery, or angry, sharp or reproving words. Why should not brotherly love continue perfectly while each expresses simply and freely what he understands as the truth of the subject, setting forth such testimony as the Lord has, in his estimation, given him, and while each gives kind and careful attention to the views presented in opposition to his, ready and glad to acknowledge candidly anything that appears well supported in those views? This is striving together for the faith of the gospel; striving to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace: striving to be of one mind. It should be our anxious desire that this one mind, when we find ourselves agreed, should be the mind of Christ, rather than the mind of any one of us.

While many dear saints have been much troubled by controversy, because they fear that the asperities so liable to be indulged in by the parties disputing, will tend to interrupt brotherly kindness, and because any expressed differences among the dear saints hurt them deeply, others seems to be opposed to controversy because they are not willing that any position which they hold as correct should be disputed. Sometimes one will present his views very elaborately and positively, and then declare it as his opinion that controversy is not good, but rather detrimental to the cause; implying that the presentation of an view opposing this would be controversy. Such an one forgets that he who presents a point concerning which there is a difference of opinion among brethren, himself has begun the controversy, and would be doing injustice to himself, as a fair minded man and christian, to wish to suppress such reasons as a brother might be able to present in favor of an

opposite view. If he is absolutely sure that he is in the Spirit, and therefore right, he need have no fear; for whatever could be urged against the truth, would but set it more clearly on the minds of those in whom God has shined, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. If he should happen to be wrong, it would be good to have the error shown.

If I should venture to give any advice to an editor of a journal of truth, which I would do with great hesitation, it would be to allow candid expressions of the views of brethren of good standing in the churches to be published, but never to allow one single word expressing reproof to one for holding different views from the writer, nor one acrimonious expression or unkind personal reflection to appear. Everything calculated to give personal offense, everything that intimated a desire to have dominion over the faith of a brother, I would have rigidly expunged, One cannot always see what manner of spirit he is of while writing, but the reader can see very clearly; and almost any one, when in his right mind, would be thankful to the editor who should with a stroke of the pen prevent him from appearing before the multitude of readers with anger, contempt, jealously, hatred, plainly expressed, as they most surely will be when they are rankling within him while he writes.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND

208 Mountain Trust, Building,
Roanoke, Va.

Elder R. Lester Dodson,
Dear Brother in Christ:

Enclosed you will find a copy of the writing of Elder G. A. Reid which was published in "Landmark" in 1929. There have been many Old Baptists requesting me to have this copied and sent you to have published in the Signs of the Times. Now for the purpose of satisfying some Old Baptists in this community that you are not biased in publishing each one's thoughts concerning the Resurrection, will you please publish this as early as you can? Hoping that you and yours are well and enjoying all good things of the Lord. Yours in tribulation as well as in hope of eternal life. B.V. Helms

For sometime I have been impressed to present some of my thoughts and meditations on the subject of the resurrection of the bodies of the saints and will use for a subject the 26th chapter and 19th verse of the prophet Isaiah, which reads: **"Thy dead** *men* **shall live,** *together with* **my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew** *is as* **the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."** This is a subject the brethren do not all seem to understand the same way, and I would not desire to write in a way that would lead to controversy, but simply to present my views as I understand them according to the Scriptures.

I am nearing the close of my seventieth year and as I grow older I am more

impressed with the future realities that await us just beyond. "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face." How the mind searches to comprehend the things between the now and then, but God has chosen not to reveal to me, and also to you no doubt, many things we think we would like to know. But remember, we live by hope and walk by faith. It is said by the apostle Paul **"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." 1 Cor. 15:19.**

If I know anything of the doctrine of God our Saviour, I am a predestinarian Baptist, believing fully that he is a God of purpose, a God of love and mercy, who has all power; and that his eternal wisdom and foreknowledge comprehended all things from eternity, that all things were, and ever have been present and visible with him; and that nothing at any time has or ever will take place that his divine wisdom and foreknowledge had not seen and known before time, for there is nothing new or old with him. He created all things and I conclude he has a special purpose in all created things; and as he has a purpose in all his creation, he most assuredly rules it all; for he does his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth; and so overrules all things, that he causes them to work together for good to them that love him, to them who are the called, according to his purpose. So in the beginning God created heaven and the earth. Let us not lose sight of his purpose. The heaven is God's throne, the earth his footstool. The earth is the dwelling place of all God's earthly creation. The earth is where man lives and where man dies and where man is buried. Man lives of the earth, because he is of the earth, an earthly man, bearing the image of his Creator in his form or fashion. To my mind the man was passive in his creation. He took no part, asked no questions, gave no advice, he was dead. He was but clay in the hands of the potter; but God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (not life, but the breath of life) and man became a living soul.

"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning." But to proceed with the subject above quoted, we believe the prophet Isaiah was inspired of God to use the language, and as "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." It is not to the man of the world, because it is foolishness to him.

Inspiration is to the living man, one who has been quickened and made alive. The dead in trespasses and in sins are carnally minded, and "to be carnally minded is death," and the carnal mind can not discern spiritual things, neither can it know them because they are spiri tually discerned. If we have not the spirit of Christ, we are none of his; but if we have the spirit of Christ, or Christ is in us the hope of glory, we have that life, or spiritual mind, by which we know, or discern spiritual things. But the children of God are not of the world; Jesus says "ye are not of the world, (even as I am not of the world,) but I have chosen you

out of the world." So the redeemed family of God have their citizenship in heaven, from whence they look for the Saviour. Then they "are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people." As their citizenship is in heaven their heart is there, their treasure is there; for wheresoever the treasure is there will the heart be also, and they were waiting the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their body. We know our body is mortal, we know also the body must die. We fully realize that sin is the transgression of the law, and by the transgression of the law, the sentence of death was pronounced, for since by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead; so by the disobedience of one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned, (not the sentence of death only) but death passed upon all men; for as in Adam all die. The entire human family all died in Adam, from Cain to the last one that ever will breathe the breath of life of Adam's posterity, dead in trespasses and in sins. There is another sentence passed upon Adam and his entire posterity, dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return. The dead in trespasses and in sins are made alive only by the hearing of the voice of the Son of God. For the hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth."

This is the resurrection of the corporeally dead, which we have under consideration. The creature was made subject to vanity, susceptible to sin, of the earth earthy. He was mortal, not immortal. If he had been immortal he could not have sinned, but being mortal having flesh and blood he could not inherit the kingdom of God and having a body of flesh, which is corrupt, or corruptible, it is also said neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

Then the death, dying, the process by which the body returns to dust, as prescribed by Job takes place. **"For I know** *that* **my redeemer liveth, and** *that* **he shall stand at the latter** *day* **upon the earth: And** *though* **after my skin** *worms* **destroy this** *body*, **yet in my flesh shall I see God; Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another;** *though* **my reins be consumed with in me." Job 19:25-27.**

As God created the heaven for his throne, John says in Revelation 21:27, **"And there shall in no wise enter into anything that defileth, neither** *whatsoever* **worketh abomination, or** *maketh* **a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."** Earth is a death bed. It is a place of change, it is where all nature changes; all natural life ends here. Job further says; **"If a man die, shall he live** *again*?" **Job 14:14.** We answer yes, the proof is too positive to doubt: but what it is that is resurrected from the dead, is what men differ upon in their opinions; and why are we writing this article, not to try to force our views on any one; but to give our views as we see and understand them,

according to the Scriptures.

The apostle Paul in 1st Corinthians 15th chapter, gives a clear and concise analysis and he speaks according to the Scriptures and affirms that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried; and that he arose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve, after that he was seen of five hundred brethren at once; and the greater part of them remained at the time of Paul's writing. After that he was seen of James, then of all the apostles; last of all says Paul he was seen of me. All eye witnesses to Jesus resurrection from the grave. Christ became the first fruit of them that slept.

Christ is the head, the church is his body, and if the first fruit be holy, the entire lump is holy. If the head be holy, so also is the body. Jesus said I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me, and this is the will of the Father which sent me, that of all he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. This raising up again has reference to the resurrection of the saints.

There must be a sacrifice for sin. Sin must be put away, must be atoned for. The offerings under the law could not take away sin, the law could not give life there must be a perfect offering, an offering without spot to God. So Christ was made a little lower than the angels by the suffering of death. He put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself. So then Christ hath redeemed us unto God by the blood of the everlasting covenant; which was ordered in all things and sure. No failure about it. Ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God and when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. No wonder Isaiah could say: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." I said the earth was a death bed. It is the place where man has always dwelt. The scenes enacted by man have been many and varied, but the most far reaching to my mind, was the transgression of God's law, with the penalty of death, which has involved all mankind. It was man that was created of the dust of the earth. It was man that breathed the breath of life. It was man that received the commandment to not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; it was the man that disobeyed, that sinned. It was the man that sinned that died. It is the man that dies that is buried, and if it is not the buried man that is resurrected, pray tell me what it is. Paul says if the dead rise not, then is our preaching vain, and your hope is vain, and we are yet in our sins. 1st Corinthians 15. But Paul further says, **"But now is Christ risen from the dead,** *and* **become the firstfruits of them that slept."** And the apostle Peter says, **"Blessed** *be* **the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven**

for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Peter 1:3-5. It is the doctrine of the surety and undeniable resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, that begets within us a lively, or living hope, that we, though we go into the grave shall not forever remain there; but as Jesus is both the resurrection and the life, our hope is of a blessed immortality beyond the grave. The sea gives up the dead which are in it, and death and delivered up the dead which were in them. Rev. 20:13. What is it that is buried in the sea? What is it that goes down into the grave? Is it the body of man? Is it the spirit of man? Is it the life? Is it some principle of man without form or shape? What is it, if it is not the man that was born of flesh? Man that is born of woman, of which it is said dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return. What part of Christ was crucified, was it the body, the humanity? What rose from Joseph's tomb, if it was not the same body that Joseph of Arimathea took down from the cross, wrapped in linen and laid in the sepulchre? In what form did he appear to his disciples? In what form did he ascend into heaven, was it without the body? What did the angel say? **"Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:11.** We also have as proof of the resurrection of the body, in connection with the crucifixion of Christ the following scripture, "And the **graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." Mat. 27:52-53.** Also read Ezekiel 37:1st to 15th inclusive. I have long believed in the resurrection of the body. This has been my hope and the doctrine I have preached for many years; and if it is not this way, I am a poor deceived mortal and if the mortal body is not changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ, (not exchanged but changed) then the doctrine of the resurrection has lost all its sweetness to me. But Paul so fully established this view, that we feel safe in our position; for he says "the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." 1 Cor. 15:52. Changed yes, I remember no scripture that teaches or has any reference to being exchanged. Changed how? This our mortal body is sown in corruption, in dishonor, in weakness and a natural body. It, the same body, is raised in incorruption, in glory, in power and a spiritual body. 1 Cor. 15:38 to 45 inclusive. "We inherit our mortal, dying, corruptible, changeable bodies, from the first man Adam and bear his image. So in the resurrection our mortal bodies are changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ the second Adam the Lord from heaven and bear his image; for as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly: we shall see him and be like him, for we shall see him as he is. For when we awake in his likeness we shall be

satisfied, blessed thought. For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality, so when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." The end will be attained for which we have been seeking and the victory will be given us by our God, for thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Humbly submitted for your consideration.

Elder G. A. Reid
April, 1944.

"All thy children *shall be* **taught of the Lord." — Isaiah liv. 13.**

The teaching of God can only be known and realized by those who have seen an end of all creature perfection, and who are completely and experimentally destitute of all wisdom in the flesh. And God's teaching does not leave a man where it found him, dead, stupified, worldly, unfeeling, and carnal. If he is in distress, it does not leave him in distress; if he feels guilty, it does not leave him guilty; if he is in darkness, it does not leave him in darkness; but it lifts him out of these evils. Thus God's people are continually led to come unto him for his instruction, because they feel that without his special teaching they can know nothing as they ought to know. Nay, the more they have, the more they want to have; for no sooner is the light withdrawn, than the darkness is more sensibly felt. If any text of Scripture has been opened up to them, it makes them want to have others made known in a similar way; if they have had any consolation, and it is taken away, it makes them want it again. So that the more wise and spiritual God's people become, the more foolish and carnal they appear in their own eyes; the stronger they are in the Lord and in the power of his might, the more sensibly do they feel the weakness of their flesh; and the more they are enabled to walk closely with the Lord, the more they discover the wretched wanderings of their base and sinful hearts.

J. C. Philpot

ROMANS 15:13-15.

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God.

OBITUARIES

ORA VEST KING

It has pleased our God of heaven to remove another lovely sister from this life. Sister Ora passed away July 3, 2016. She was born September 22, 1909, making her stay on earth 106 years.

She was preceded in death by her husband Charles King and a son Joe Pete King. Sister Ora is survived by her daughters Phyllis Rumble and husband John and Linda Campbell. Grandchildren John Campbell, Heather Alpert and husband Bob. Great grandchildren Derric Campbell, Iris Kase, Isabel Kase and Zack Alpert.

Her graveside service was held at Restvale Cemetary July 9, 2016 by her Pastor, Elder Carl Terry.

Sister Ora was a member of Salem "Head of the River" Primitive Baptist Church for 25 years. She attended church as long as she could, her last few years was spent in a nursing home in Georgia, close to one of her daughters.

Sister Ora was a believer in salvation by grace. We believe she is now resting in that peaceful sleep, waiting for the call of our great Shepherd, who calls his sheep by name, and on the morning of the resurrection awake in His likeness and be eternally satisfied. May the Lord grant us grace to accept His will.

Written by request of Salem Church,
By: Mary Janney

SISTER FAY HOLLANDWORTH QUESENBERRY

It is with a sad heart as I write this obituary for my dear cousin and sister in the church, Fay Quesenberry. Fay, was born on March 23, 1931 to Major Hollandsworth and Ollie Slaughter Hollandsworth. She was married on October 27, 1949 to J.C. Quesenberry. To this union were born two sons, James Dale and Anthony, and one daughter Rebecca. Fay had ten grandchildren, sixteen great grandchildren, four step great grandchildren, four special nieces, and two special nephews.

J.C. was a loving husband and he took loving care of Fay during her long illness. Fay was a strong believer in salvation by the grace of God and lived her life as such.

She united with the Old Union Church in Indian Valley, Virginia and was baptized on October 23, 1977 by Elder Hale Terry. Fay was a loyal member of her church.

Fay passed away on August 5, 2016. Her funeral service was held at Mayberry Funeral Home in Floyd, Virginia at 2:00, P.M. on Monday August 8, 2016 with Elder Larry Hollandsworth officiating. Fay was laid to rest in the Turman Cemetery in Floyd County.

Written in love by,
Sister Lora Gunter

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

God shall alone the refuge be,
And comfort of my mind;
Too wise to be mistaken, He,
Too good to be unkind.

In all his holy, sovereign will,
He is, I daily find,
Too wise to be mistaken, still,
Too good to be unkind.

When I the tempter's rage endure
Tis God supports my mind;
Too wise to be mistaken, sure,
Too good to be unkind.

What though I can't his goings see,
Nor all his footsteps find,
Too wise to be mistaken, He,
Too good to be unkind.

Medley.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 01 / 2017

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

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EDITORIAL

"Behold, the days shall come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find *it.* In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst." Amos 8:11-13.

We understand that this scripture applies naturally to the Jews under the law, but what has been its spiritual meaning to the family of God through the ages? And now, what does it mean to us? We must enquire of the Lord and wait until the answer is given. God's children believe in revelation. The word of truth is given among men but not by men, but by every word which proceeds out of the mouth of God. The inspired apostle Paul said "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." And the apostle Peter was blessed to say, "If any man speak [according to the Spirit of truth], *let him speak* [he must speak] as the oracles [utterance] of God." The apostle Paul also said in another place, "For I neither received it [the gospel] of man, neither was I taught *it,* but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Therefore, we are made to see that no one is able to write or to speak or to understand anything of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, except by revelation from God.

We have seen, within our fellowship over many years, many church members and friends aging and dying, with but few being added to the number. We have seen that a large number of the elders have passed away, with but few to follow in their footsteps. We have seen the churches closing as the members have become infirm, and not able to continue as before. Nevertheless, we have seen the remaining churches still being provided with enabled ministers, and being kept in love; and faith, and order. God

has not forgotten His people, and has promised to never leave them nor forsake them, but that He would be with them even until the end of the world. David was blessed to say, "Once I was young, and now I am old, and I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor thy seed begging bread."

When the Lord told of that great tribulation which should come at the end of the world, He said of those days, that if they were not shortened, no flesh would be saved. And He said that those days would be shortened for the elect's sake. We are made to see from this that some of the elect shall continue here until the end of the world. Also the inspired apostle said that those saints who were alive and remained at the Lord's coming would be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and would be caught up together with all saints to meet the Lord in the air, where they shall ever be with the Lord. The Lord shall not be left without a witness. Some of God's faithful witnesses shall be kept here upon the earth until the end of time, and His word proves it.

In the world around us, we cannot find the word of the Lord. It cannot be found in any of the places claiming to be Christian, nor in any other religion or philosophy of the world. It cannot be found on the radio, or on the TV, or in any other worldly media. It cannot be found in the schools, or in the government, or in any other worldly institution. There is a famine in the land, and the Lord has sent it. This world is a wilderness and a desert land, a place where there is no food or water to sustain the spiritual life of God's children. But the Lord said He found Jacob in a desert land, and in a waste howling wilderness, and that He led him about and instructed him and kept him as the apple of His eye. And He said that there was found no strange god with him. The word of the Lord may only be found in the oasis within the desert wilderness by those babes to whom it is revealed. It is hidden from the wise and prudent of this world of woe.

In the midst of this desert wilderness is an oasis prepared of God for His people, where they shall be kept and nourished all their days. This oasis is Christ. In the book of Revelation, the account is given of a certain woman who was about to deliver a child. And there was a great red dragon there ready to devour the child as soon as it was born. But the child was caught up to God, and to His throne. The dragon persecuted the woman, and she was given two wings of a great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place which was prepared of God, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

I have been made to believe that the woman referred to here, stands for the church, and that the child stands for Christ who was crucified and rose again and ascended into heaven to the throne

of God. The dragon is the devil who hates the Lord and the Lord's people. I am made to believe that the two wings stand for the power of God, and the great eagle represents the Holy Spirit. The wilderness is the world where the church abides. But the place where the woman is nourished is the oasis in Christ, in whom she is kept and nourished for a time, times and half a time. This flood of water from his mouth is the false doctrine of the devil, and the earth which swallows up the flood is the wicked which shall believe a lie and be damned. I am made to believe the time, times and half a time represents the whole time the church is given to live in this world.

A time appears to represent one year; times, two years; and half a time, half a year. The total is three and a half years. The only place I know where three and a half years are mentioned in the Old Testament is the scripture concerning Elijah, and the great drought and famine of three and a half years which was sent during his lifetime. In the time of this famine, the Lord sent him to a widow woman who had just a little meal and a little oil. She had planned to prepare what she had for her son and herself as a last meal before they would starve to death. When Elijah came to her, he told her to prepare the cakes for himself. What a great act of faith for her to give all she had to another, thinking that she and her son were sure to die if she did so She was blessed to give that to the Lord's prophet, and she was, no doubt, amazed to find that the meal and the oil did not fail for her household through the whole time of the famine. There she was in the wilderness, without prospect of any nourishment, and was miraculously provided the things she and those with her needed to survive. I am made to believe this is a figure of the church being kept by Christ in the desert wilderness through the ages.

How now does the three and a half years of famine apply to us in our wilderness? Fasting is a time of hunger, and a strong feeling of want and weakness from not eating. Christ was asked by the disciples of John and those of the Pharisees to give a reason that His disciples did not fast as they and the Pharisees did. Jesus told them that His disciples could not fast while the bridegroom was present with them, but when the bridegroom would be taken away from them, then, they would fast. While Jesus was bodily present with them, they were safe in His care, and they had all they needed. They were joyful in His presence, because they were blessed to know that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. When Christ was taken up from them, and ascended into heaven, they were afraid, and mourned, and knew not what to do, nor where to turn. But He did not forsake them. He promised to send them the Holy Spirit to dwell with them and in them, to teach and comfort them until His return. They were commanded by the Lord to not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father. Jesus said, "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." On the day of Pen-

tecost, the Holy Spirit was given to the saints in great power according to the Lord's promise.

The span of time between the day when the Lord was taken up from His disciples until the day He shall come again in great power and glory, appears to me to be the time of drought and famine for His disciples. It is a famine of the blessed bodily presence of the Lord Himself. While we are in the flesh, we are absent from the Lord. But when He comes again it will be the time of refreshing in His presence; it will be as the life-giving rain to the dry ground; the time when all things will be brought to completion. The drought and famine will end, and the sons of God will be changed, raised up in His likeness, and blessed to see Him as He is in glory and caught up together with all saints to be with Him and be forever satisfied.

Sometimes we think we shall perish in this wilderness. Sometimes we think we may have been left to die here in pain and sorrow. Sometimes we think that every creature help has failed us, and we will surely faint. So, it was with poor Job. His possessions were taken away, his family and friends were removed, his health and strength fled away, but he was blessed to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." And he was blessed to say again in faith, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." And so it is with us. Because, underneath are the everlasting arms.

The blessed prophet Isaiah was given these powerful words for the family of God; to encourage them through the days of famine while they are in the wilderness of this world. "Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, *that* the everlasting God, the LORD, the creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? *There is* no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to *them that have* no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; *and* they shall walk, and not faint."

"His strength is made perfect in weakness." We do not know the day nor the hour of the Lord's return, but must be blessed to patiently wait for His appearing. Nevertheless, we say with heartfelt desire, Even so, Lord, come quickly. At His coming may we be given wings as eagles to mount up, and to meet the Lord in the air and to be with Him forever in glory.

I trust this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer 11-7-2016.

ROMANS 8:27.

And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of* God.

THE NEED FOR, THE PROSPECTUS, AND THE OBJECT OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Feeling deeply the need of a medium of correspondence, and excluded from the columns of the so called Baptist papers, after much deliberation it was concluded to attempt to make ourselves heard by our brethren scattered abroad, by publishing a paper devoted to the cause of truth, and through which we could enter our solemn protest against all the innovations, new theories and new institutions which, under the name of Baptist, had so greatly prevailed. With these objects in view, in the year 1832, we issued the following prospectus, viz:

Proposal for publishing a semi-monthly paper, to be called the "Signs of the Times," devoted exclusively to the Baptist cause, maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal perfections of the Great Jehovah- the Revelation which God has given of himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These Three are One." - 1 John 5:8.

2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.

3. Eternal, Unconditional Election.

4. The Total Depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the Elect only.

6. The Sovereign, Irresistible, and in all cases, Effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in Regenerating and Quickening the Elect of God.

7. The final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

8. The Resurrection of the dead, and Eternal Judgment.

9. That the Church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers --- that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament, that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God.

10. That there is no connection between Church and State, and as touching the proposition for a marriage between them, the Hon. R.M. Johnson, in his report on the Sabbath Question, has expressed our faith.

The "Signs of the Times" will be decidedly opposed to Bible Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath Schools, &c., &c., making war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of institutions.

Our brethren of the Old School of Christ will bear in mind that this humble sheet is devoted to the Baptist cause, as we believe the Baptist cause to be the cause of God and that its columns are designed to be used as a medium for the circulation of bible doctrine and general information.

The dear people of God who remain steadfast and unshaken in the apostles' doctrine are at this day greatly scattered through the country, and in many instances where one or more of them are

found they are supposed to be the only ones remaining of the same faith and order. Indeed, they are often themselves driven to the conclusion of Elijah: "They have digged down thine altars and killed thy prophets, and I am left alone and they seek my life." In their scattered situation it affords them peculiar pleasure to hear from one another. "As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country." Prov. Xxv. 25.

It is certainly good news to the scattered pilgrims to hear of the numbers in different parts of the land who still adhere to the doctrine and practice of the primitive church. In the days of old, "they that feared the Lord spake often to one another;" and the exhortation of the apostle is, that we "exhort one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching."

From a conviction in our own mind that well written discussions, in a spirit of kindness, on various subjects, will contribute to the interest and usefulness of the 'Signs', we have concluded to ask the indulgence of such of our brethren as do not see with us the propriety of such a course, while we will promise, on our part, to reject all such communications on controverted points as are written in an ill natured or unbecoming spirit or style. Why should we be afraid to discuss what we hold to be the truth? Nothing but error can suffer from investigation; the more closely the truth is scrutinized, the more brilliantly it will shine.

Elder G. Beebe

SIGNS OF TIIE TIMES HISTORY (Preliminary-Revised 2-10-2013)

The Publishers and their dates are presented first in this brief history. Then is given the lists of the Editors, Associate Editors, Contributing Editors, Circulating Office Managers & Editors along with their dates of service. (A chart is furnished to help visually relate the various times of service of the Publishers and Editors to one another.) This history is concluded with a short biography of each Editor. The biographies were taken primarily from the "Biographical History of Primitive or Old School Baptist Ministers", and from obituaries of the Ministers.

The first Publisher of the "Signs of the Times" was the founder, owner and operator, Elder Gilbert Beebe. He served faithfully from 1832 until his death in 1881 - almost fifty years. Elder Beebe's Sons were the owners and operators from 1881 until 1904. J.E. Beebe & Co. was the owner and operator from 1904 until 1942. Elder R.L. Dodson purchased the "Signs" in 1942 and published it until his death in 1951. It was incorporated in 1949, and given to the Old School Baptists, and operates under the name "Signs of the Times, Inc."

Elder Gilbert Beebe, the founder of the "Signs of the Times," was the sole Editor from its establishment in 1832 until his death in 1881. His sons, B.L. Beebe and Elder W. L. Beebe were the Co Editors from 1881 until 1896. Brother B. L. Beebe continued until 1904. Elder F. A. Chick became Co Edi-

tor in 1894 with Elder B. Jenkins (who served until his death in 1897), Brother B.L. Beebe (who served until his death in 1904), and Elder H.C. Ker (who served from 1906 until his death in 1922). Elder Chick continued to serve as Co-Editor with Elder Ker until Elder Chick's death in 1914. Elder H.H. Lefferts began to serve as Co-Editor in 1914 and served with Elder Ker until Elder Ker's death in 1922. Then Elder Lefferts served as Editor until 1936. Elders: R.L. Dodson, G. Ruston, C.W. Vaughn and D.V. Spangler served as Associate Editors with elder Lefferts beginning in 1923. In 1936 Elder R.L. Dodson became the Editor and in 1942 he purchased the "Signs" and served as the sole Editor from then until his death in 1951. Elders G. Ruston, C.W. Vaughn, and D.V. Spangler served with Elder Dodson as Associate Editors at various times during his term as Editor. Elder D.V. Spangler became Co-Editor in 1951 and served until 1983. Elder J.D. Wood served with him as Co-Editor from 1951 until 1975. Elder J.F. Poole also served with Elder Spangler as a Co-Editor from 1977 to 1983. Elders W.D. Griffin, E.J. Lambert, H.O. Nash, D.A. McColl, J.S. McColl, R.H. Campbell and J.L. Hamrick served as Associate Editors at various times from 1951 until 1983. Elder Kenneth R. Key was appointed Editor in 1983 and served until his death in 2011. Elder J.R. Williams served as co-editor from 1984 until his death in 2002. And Elder Wm. Hale Terry served as co-editor from 2003 until his death in 2007. He served with the following Associate Editors during his term: Elders W.D. Griffin, R.H. Campbell, D.B. Stokes, J.L. Hamrick, C.C. Wilbanks, C.B. Davis, J.B. Farmer and Cleo Robertson. Elder Cleo Robertson was appointed Editor in 2011 and serves until the present (2017) with Associate Editor Elder J.B. Farmer.

The following is a list of Elders who were Associate Editors along with their dates of service: R.L. Dodson (1923-1936); G. Ruston (1923-1943 & 1957-1973); C.W. Vaughn (1923-1949); D.V. Spangler (1936-1951); W.D. Griffin (1943-1989); J.S. Hunnicutt (1944-1945); E. J. Lambert (1946-1980); H.O. Nash (1950-1957); D.A. McColl (1975-1979); J.S. McColl (1975-1979); R.H. Campbell (1980-2010); D.B. Stokes (1983-1986); J.L. Hamrick (1980-1987); C.C. Wilbanks (1989-2004); C.B. Davis (1990-2010); J.B. Farmer (2001-present 2017); and Cleo Robertson (2005-2011).

Elder J.D. Wood (1979-1984) and Elder D.V. Spangler (1984-1985) served as Contributing Editors. Elder D. Smith (1977-1979), Elder J.R. Williams (1979-2001), Elder W.H. Terry (2001-2007), and Brother T. Horton (2007-present 2017) served as Circulating Office Managers and Editors.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
November 25, 1800 to May 2, 1881

Gilbert Beebe was born in Norwich, Connecticut. In his eleventh year he was united with the Baptist Church in Norwich, Connecticut and was baptized by Elder John Sterry; He was licensed to preach in his eighteenth year and was

soon called to the service of several churches. During his ministry he faithfully served the following Baptist churches: the church in Norwich; Ebenezer, Ramopo,. New Vernon and Middletown and Wallkill in New York; the Third Baptist Church in Baltimore; Upper Broad Run in Virginia; and Shiloh-in Washington, D.C.

The division or separation of the Missionary Baptists from the Old Order took place in 1832 during the ministry of Elder Beebe. In this year he began to publish the periodical called the "Signs of the Times." He served as the editor for about fifty years until the Lord removed him from service by death. He was a kind, sound and faithful minister of the Gospel, and suffered much at the hands of many who opposed him and the truth he was so wonderfully blessed to defend. He showed himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Elder William L. Beebe
October 3, 1829 to March 28, 1901

William Beebe, the son of Elder Gilbert Beebe was baptized, at the age of twelve, by his father into the fellowship of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church of New York. At about the age of twenty he began to exercise his gift of preaching. He moved to the state of Georgia in 1852, and for many years preached in churches there, and also published and edited the "Southern Baptist Messenger," a periodical devoted to the Old School Baptist cause. He was compelled to cease publication in 1862, during the Civil War after he was captured by the Union Army, and held as a prisoner of war for nine months. In 1865 he was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry by the Hollis Spring Church in Newton Co., GA. In 1881 he moved to Middletown, NY where he, in connection with his brother Benton L. Beebe, edited and published the "Signs of the Times" from about 1881 until 1896. Elder Benton Jenkins also served as Co-Editor with Elder W. L. Beebe from 1894-1896. Elder Beebe served Eben-ezer, Warwick Shoal Creek, Hollis Springs and other churches: He was a devoted husband, loving father and kind friend, and a faithful minister and servant of God.

Luke 21:28-33.

And when these things begin to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees;

When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now night at hand.

So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.

Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.

Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

CORRESPONDENCE

Oct. 14, 2016

Dear Mr. Horton,

Enclosed is a check for renewal to The Signs for another two years. What a blessing they have been, and I really do enjoy the good editorials by Elder Farmer and Elder Robertson, as well as the very good articles from "Voices of the Past."

May God continue to bless and be with all who endeavor to keep this dear magazine in publication - it is a source of "glad tidings" to the Lord's people - wherever they may be - My hope is that I will be found among them on the day He calls them home.

One of the least, if one at all.
In hope, Caroline Martin

October 27, 2016

Dear Brothers,

I want to say how much I look forward to reading the Signs each month. I have done so for over 40 years now. My pastor, Elder Grady Dearman introduced me to it then, if memory serves.

He was a faithful minister of Christ for over 50 years. He passed from this life on April 17, 2016. I learned so much from him over the years. He studied the Scriptures and other edifying sources unceasingly. He is sorely missed.

I commend you, brothers, for the work that you do to get the Signs out each month. I also want to mention the wives that stand beside you. They also serve. I have observed their sacrifices over the years in supporting their husband's ministry.

Please renew my subscription for two more years, my check is enclosed.

In hope,
Vera (Nell) Potter

PSALM 110.

The said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.

Thy people *shall be* **willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.**

The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou *art* **a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.**

The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in day of his wrath.

He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill *the places* **with the dead bodies; he shall would the heads over many countries.**

He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head.

ARTICLES

Elder Cleo Robertson,

If this article meets your approval, you may print it in the Signs of the Times.

When I am blessed to go back in my book of remembrance, I see many experiences and travels that bring peace and joy to my unworthy being. This is one such experience. At an Old Baptist Association in Georgia, several years ago, I heard a dear brother recall this, and it stuck in my memory. I hope I have not forgotten details that would detract from this.

SOLDIERS OF THE CROSS

At an Old Baptist meeting, somewhere in Western Kentucky or Tennessee, an Old Baptist Elder from a state north of here was called upon to speak to the congregation. I know not the year nor the location. When he arose before the church, he stated that being here brings back memories to mind. He told them that he was a soldier in the Union Army during the war between the states. They were camped near here and he was given the order to clear a bridge that they were to cross the next day. As he approached the bridge, he saw a lone confederate soldier, marching sentry on the bridge. As he started to creep up closer to get a shot, He heard the soldier singing an old familiar hymn, number 231 in our little Goble Hymn Book, "Jesus, Lover of My Soul." He remembered singing this hymn in the churches back home. When he got close enough to get a shot at him, he was singing the second verse, "Cover My Defenseless Head with the shadow of thy wing." And God did cover Him with His Wing. He was melted down with Love, and knew that although this man was wearing an enemy uniform, he was a brother in Christ, and he could not shoot him.

When the Elder finished his discourse, another Elder arose with tears streaming down his face, embraced Him and said "I was that soldier marching sentry that day." Oh, what a reunion that must have been. God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform.

I have a couple requests for the readers of the Signs of the Times. First, if anyone knows the details of this experience, such as dates, names, places or corrections to my errors, please write them down and pass them on to the editor of the Signs of the Times, so others may read and enjoy the amazing grace of our God, bestowed upon the these soldiers of the cross. Second, if you have witnessed like experiences, or have heard or read of experiences that will edify the church, send them to the Signs of the Times, so we can all enjoy them.

I seek not recognition, only that our God be praised.

In bonds of love,
A Stranger Here Below.
(Sent in by Elder Lowell Hopkins)

VOICES OF THE PAST

BROTHERLY KINDNESS
2 PETER 1:4-15

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* **neither** *be* **barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know** *them*, **and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting** *you* **in remembrance; Knowing that shortly I must put off** *this* **my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. Moreover I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance."**

We are not left in doubt as to whom this epistle is addressed. To them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Let us note that this faith mentioned is obtained one way, through the righteousness of Christ; the fruit of the Spirit; the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen; the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast. Without faith it is impossible to please God. Before any one can perform any work that will please God he must first be given faith. Works do not produce faith, but faith will produce good works. Nothing we do pleases God except it be mixed with the faith that was once delivered to the saints. One must have something to add to before there is an increase. The adding and multiplying of these things comes through the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ our Lord. The more one is given to comprehend that ye are complete in him; that in him all fullness dwells, of his fullness have ye received and grace for grace; that he is Christ, head over all things to the church, "how shall he not with him also freely give us all things." God has blessed his people with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.

So there is no question as to the power by which all the things mentioned by the apostle in the fifth, sixth and seventh verses is performed, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue. There can be no question as to who it is that adds these things. They who have been born again, children of God, the living in Christ, not dead sinners. Neither can there be any question as to how they perform such things - according to his divine power. "And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity." Brotherly kindness! What a wonderful thing it is. In all our conduct one toward another, at no time is the meek and lowly one manifest more than in brotherly kindness. One may be as bold as a lion in defense of some point of doctrine; he may speak fluently; understand mysteries; contend earnestly for the matter, but unless brotherly kindness is manifest in so doing it profits him nothing. If we are favored with this thing we will watch over one another for good and not for evil; will not make a brother an offender for a word when he is overtaken in a fault. He will be restored in the spirit of meekness, considering ourselves. Oh, may we be given to be wise as serpents (not like serpents) and harmless as doves, that we may adorn our profession with an orderly walk and a godly conversation, be kind one toward another, forgiving one another even as Christ has forgiven us.

As to points of doctrine may we hold forth the faithful Word, adhere to the teachings of the Scriptures. Especially where there is a difference of opinion, it is important that we go no further in a matter than the word of God goes. I remember several years ago hearing one brother say of another, he is a limited predestinarian. Why! I said I thought he believed in the predestination of all things. No, he said that brother in all his preaching is preaching and proving the predestination of wicked acts of men, and not that ALL things work together for good to them that love God. The thought I want to present is this: the brother under consideration was preaching the truth as far as he went with the matter, yet many things pertaining to this doctrine were ignored. So when any of us use certain Scriptures seeking to prove a point, yet at the same time are ignoring other Scriptures pertaining to the same thing, we are not holding forth the faithful Word. Some will ask the question: Are we to ignore the preaching of false doctrine and questionable conduct on the part of the brethren and call it brotherly kindness? I say no, rather to the contrary. A labor of brotherly love should be bestowed upon him to save him. In all our contending for doctrine or practice may one thing above all others be manifest brotherly kindness, and to this add charity. In looking back over articles of many of our able ministers who have been discharged from the battlefield I note that they were not always agreed on everything, there was a brotherly difference, and in all their writings that spirit was manifest. They all agreed that all the salvation that sinners receive was of God, that salvation was all of

grace, that it is sinners that are saved. How beautiful was the spirit of their writing, how kind and tender toward one another. Each one said, I am weak, I know so little, I am unworthy of God's mercies. Each esteemed the other better than themselves. How sad to-day to behold in some of the periodicals a spirit contrary to the things manifest in these brethren that are gone. The tendency in some to lay down the rule and say, if you do not subscribe to this you are not an Old School Baptist. When I was asked to join the editorial staff of the SIGNS by our beloved brother Dodson, the first question I asked was, will matters of controversy be in the SIGNS? Will local differences of brethren be aired through the pages of the paper? I was given to understand that these things would not be. What I meant by these questions was whether there would be allowed to go into the paper articles contentious: and harmful to the peace of Zion. To-day it has weathered the storms of one hundred and ten years, being the oldest Old School Baptist paper in the United States. Since its publication started many others have come and gone, and when a carnal sword is used we may expect to fall also. May he who suffers not a sparrow to fall without him, grant us grace to steadfastly contend for the faith, bearing one another's burdens, being a comfort to one another and so fulfill the law of Christ. "For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."

"Jesus the great, the mighty God,
A man of grief became;
In paths of meekness here he trod,
And bore the sinner's shame.

O may his meekness be my guide,
The pattern I pursue;
How can I bear revenge or pride,
With Jesus in my view?"

By one who is continually in need of the tender mercies of God.

Elder D. V. Spangler
August, 1943

ECCLESIASTES 3:14-15

"I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth *it*, that *men* should fear before him. That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been: and God requireth that which is past."

Sister Etta J. Norton, Rt. 1, Crewe, Virginia, has asked that we give our views through the *Signs* on the above scripture. We wish to preface such thoughts as we may offer with what Solomon said when he was made king of Israel. God appeared to him in a dream and said, "Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said, Thou hast

shewed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. And now, O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?" We are given to understand that God was pleased with this desire for wisdom on the part of Solomon, which he granted and also blessed him otherwise. We are persuaded that no man, of himself, is sufficient for these things, and that he needs that wisdom which comes down from above in order to rightly interpret or divide the word of truth. In order to interpret the words or sayings of a wise man, one must of necessity be a partaker of the same wisdom, which can come from only one source, for Israel's God is one God, the same yesterday, today and for ever, and besides him there is no Savior. Our first thought is that to "know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever," is wonderful knowledge, indeed. The natural man does not know this, and neither can he accept the doctrine which is set forth in the text. Only the godly wise understand what Solomon declared, and they are made to rejoice in it. Moses was in thorough accord with Solomon, for he said, "Ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect." Deut. 32:3-4. To know that "whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever," is to have an understanding of the perfect work of God: so perfect in fact that "nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it." David would say, "Selah," which means that all has been said that can be said, and that it is full and complete in every sense of the word. John was in accord with this when he wrote: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in book Rev. 22:18-19. We further understand that the sovereign, eternal God has a purpose in all that he does and he will be inquired of, feared, loved and worshipped; therefore it is said that "God doeth it, that men should fear before him." The true Christian serves the God he loves, and loves the God he knows, and when he makes himself known unto his children, which is by revelation, they will worship and adore him for his wonderful works among the children of men and they will rejoice in him, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he sent into the world to seek and to save that which was lost. The ones under consideration here are those who were chosen in Christ

before ever the world was, but in time were manifested in Adam and became lost, or separated from God, through transgression, which necessitated the coming of their Redeemer to pay the redemption price and set them free.

When God is pleased to draw aside the veil and permit us to get a glimpse of that which for ages he has hid from the wise and prudent of this world and revealed unto babes, then it is we comprehend something of the infinite wisdom which drew the wondrous plan of salvation and rejoice in the fact that our God "is in one mind and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." Isaiah tells us that he declared "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." Isa. 46:10-11. We would understand from this that is sovereignty extends to all creatures, clean and unclean, and over all worlds, principalities and powers, visible or invisible. Even the wicked king Nebuchadnezzar had to confess, "he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"

"The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying: Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass: and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Believing this, as we most certainly do, we must also believe that "that which hath been is now." Of a truth, known unto God are all his works from the beginning, and Jeremiah asked the question, **"Who is he *that* saith, and it cometh to pass, *when* the Lord commandeth *it* not?" Lam. 3:37.** If nothing comes to pass except that which God commanded, we must believe, and to us there is comfort in believing it, that all that is transpiring in the world to-day is according to the all-wise purpose and plan which inscrutable wisdom foresaw and designed in the counsels of eternity, and let us take courage in the fact that not only the beginning but all that intervenes even unto the end is ordered and sure and cannot fail. He who has purposed to try us and refine us, has also purposed to save us with an everlasting salvation by and through his blessed Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Therefore, whatever storms we may have to encounter as we journey along life's highway, each step will but bring us nearer to our desired haven of eternal rest and nothing, absolutely nothing, shall ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. He "who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance," hath foreknown and determined all things, and what his eternal mind has decreed must be accomplished, and there is nothing new with him. There is no much thing as past and future with God, but one eternal now and not only is it true that "that which hath been is now," but

also "that which is to be hath already been." Nothing can altered or changed in any particular whatsoever so far as God is concerned. Time is only turning the pages in God's book and bringing into manifestation, and to our view the things which God has ordered and fixed. "And God requireth that which is past." When we, as Isaiah says "Remember the former things," and see how God's word has been fulfilled in every jot and tittle, how all that the pro- phets foretold concerning Christ came to pass in the finished work of Jesus while here in the world, can we any longer doubt that He is God, and there is none else; that he is God, and there is none like him? And since he brought; to pass that which his holy prophets of old were moved by the Holy Spirit to write beforehand concerning his only begotten Son, will he of whom it is said. "Great is thy faithfulness," be any less faithful in bringing us forth more than conquerors, through him that loved us and gave himself for us? Surely, God requires of us the same faith and trust in him that he did in Israel of old. Let us, therefore, as much as is in us keep the first and great commandment, which is, to "love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."

Solomon, the Preacher, in the first part of the chapter containing our text says: "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heavens: A time to be born, and a time to die: a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted. A time to kill and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak. A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace." This is so complete and all-embracing as to permit of no omission whatever. Solomon also said, "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the sun." With him who is the I AM THAT I AM there can be nothing new, nothing different from what it always has been in his mind and purpose. He is perfect in all of his attributes, and nothing can be added to or taken from the work of his hand. We would that we might all be given to grasp and believe this. If so, we could join wholeheartedly with the Psalmist in saying, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." How truly these things set forth the sovereignty and perfection of our God. When in reality we contemplate the works of God and the purpose for which every thing was made that was made, we can declare unreservedly, "All thy work shall praise thee; oh, Lord." Not only does the light or day in which they are revealed shew forth his glory, but the darkness, or night in which they are con-

cealed "sheweth knowledge." As vegetation gets its main growth in the night time, so do the souls that trust in him behold his wonders in the deep as they go down to the sea in ships and do business in great waters.

"When our finite minds are enabled to grasp even in part some of the wonderful works of God in nature, and we are made to realize that they are at best but imperfect figures, or types and shadows of that which is to come, we can but anticipate with amazement and wonder what it will be to be caught up with the Lord in the air, to behold him in his fullness and to go out from his presence no more for ever.

Elder R. L. Dodson
July, 1944

PSALMS 67.

God be merciful unto us, and bless us; *and* **cause his face to shine upon us; Selah.**

That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.

Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.

Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

Then **shall the earth yield her increase;** *and* **God,** *even* **our own God, shall bless us.**

God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.

1857 - CHILDREN OF GOD AND ANTI-CHRIST

Connersville, Indiana, December 16, 1857.

"Hereby know ye the spirit of God; every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God. And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that *spirit* **of anti-christ whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."- 1 John iv: 2,3.**

Brother Beebe: - By request of sister Charlotte Herrick, in the *SIGNS* of the 15th of November last, I am induced to give my views on the text above. This subject is copious, and opens up a wide field for remarks. John is here writing to the children of God whom he addresses as *"little children."* Little children are the most helpless and dependent of all the animal creation, and therefore the most suitable to illustrate the condition of the children of God, of any, and so they are often called. John, being an old man, and an old preacher, and a teacher of babes, may with great propriety, also claim them as his little children, for whose benefit, information, learning and comfort, he was laboring. To them, he says, "Beloved, believe not every spirit but try the spirits whether they be of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." The many false prophets being prompted by the spirit of error to oppose Christ in various ways and in many

things, and by many false prophets and teachers, I suppose is the sense in which it is called many spirits. All the different operations and diversity of systems invented by this spirit and propagated by all the false prophets influenced by it, diverse as the may seem, yet they are all against Christ. They are all in the world and of the world, and many of them, from time to time, have for a season had a name in the church; but the church is not their home. They "have gone out into the world." The little children would very naturally enquire, How shall we clearly know these two spirits, and be prepared to clearly distinguish between them, so as, in all cases, to know the spirit of Truth from the spirit of error?

John promptly and in plain words answers this enquiry - "Hereby know ye the spirit of God; every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God;" and on the other hand, "every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God." This rule is short and easy to apply, and every way suitable to the capacity of little children who are born of the Spirit of God. The spirit that prompts the teacher or prophet will show of what sort it is, by the teaching of the prophet or teacher. Therefore, every teacher or prophet that does not, in his doctrine confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God. "And this is that spirit of anti-Christ whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world." The world is its place, it is of that world, and the world will hear and love that which is its own.

Now a few points are presented for our special remark. First, What Jesus Christ is, which has come in the flesh? Second, What is that antichrist whereof they have heard, &c.? And, thirdly, How are the little children to know and overcome the world and this spirit of error, which even now is in the world?

First, Let us ascertain correctly who, or what that Jesus Christ which is come in the flesh, is? "Jesus" signifies a Savior, and this name was, by the Angel, given to the babe of Bethlehem, because He should save His people from their sins. The name "Christ" signifies the Anointed, the sent, the appointed One. The Messiah of the Old Testament is the same as the Christ of the new Testament, and both contemplates a character subordinate to God, in one sense, as the "Anointed," the appointed, the sent, the cut off, &c., yet fully, properly and equally God, as the Father. This character or personage, was not the flesh, but it was that Jesus Christ that is come in the flesh. This Jesus Christ dwelt in the bosom of the Father, before He came to earth and was born of Mary. He was brought forth before the mountains were, or ever the earth was. His goings forth were from of old, even from everlasting. He often appeared in personal form and was visible, as man, to the fathers, to the prophets and saints, and was by them called a "man," a "messenger" or an "angel," and He recognized the truth of the name. This was the "man of God's right hand," even the "Son of man," whom God had made strong for Himself - Psalm lxxx. 17. This is the man

that spake the promise to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. This man appeared to Manoah and Manoah's wife; and this man, as the Captain of the Lord's host, stood before Joshua with a drawn sword in His hand. Against this man the sword was commanded to awake, and smite, (not God,) but "the man that is My fellow, saith the Lord of hosts." Who stood then, as now, legally the Shepherd of the sheep? In this heavenly man, the second Adam, it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell, and He is properly the Head over all things to His children; as man, but not as flesh, and bones, and blood, but as man, pure, sinless, undefiled; man in essence or nature, the whole fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily in Him, and for this heavenly man a body was prepared, as a victim for His offering; and when this man came in His flesh, or body, which God had prepared Him, God was manifest in this flesh which this man, Christ Jesus, came in. The Jews denied that the promised Messiah had come in the flesh, and were antichrist; that is, they were against Christ. So atheists, deists, and all who teach that Christ was an imposter, or He was not the Son of God, all are against Christ.

The world of the ungodly, who know not God and who obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, are all against Christ; but the text seems, more especially to refer to such as makes a profession and claim to be a church, or churches of Christ, or such as individually claim to be believers of the Gospel, and still do not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. Some of these will confess that the flesh and bones and body of the son of Mary, is the Jesus Christ in whom they believe, and whom they preach; and they teach that Jesus Christ, as such, never had any actual existence until He was conceived and born of Mary. Here they start the actual existence of the Mediator, the man Christ Jesus, and claim that flesh alone, as their only Christ Jesus, and do not confess that the Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, ever came in the flesh; but the flesh is all the Jesus Christ that they will or do confess existing between God and man. They say that He never existed until He was conceived and born of Mary; therefore they do not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. They contend that He was the flesh, and not that He came in the flesh. But the Spirit that is of God teaches that "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He, (Jesus Christ) also Himself likewise took part of the same, or in like manner took part of the same. The spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God. Others again, with most of those already described, deny that Jesus Christ was ever either in heaven or the flesh, or any where else. They apply the name to a mere phantom of their imagination that the Scriptures know nothing of, either in heaven or earth, in the flesh or out of it; a Jesus Christ who tries to save all of Adam's race, and fails to save even the half of them; and of Himself alone fails to save any, and the salvation of one and all must forever fail, after all that He has ever done or ever will do, unless the sinner

himself secures his own salvation by some mighty works of his own. This phantom, the false prophets call "Jesus Christ," and they say that it is the Son of God, and that the Father is equally as impotent and dependent as the Son, and quite as liable to fail, unless man will lay to the helping hand. This is really denying the true God, and the true Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent. Of course, these do not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This spirit is not of God; this is that spirit of antichrist, of which ye have heard that it should come, and is even now in the world; in the wisdom, learning, speculations and institutions of the religious world.

Second. We are to enquire who, or what this antichrist is, of whom ye have already heard that it should come, and is even now in the world. Ye have heard of the coming and working of this spirit of antichrist, this man of sin, or son of perdition, this mystery of iniquity, by the old prophets and by the apostle Paul, and by the other apostles who had written to these little children, before John wrote this letter. And some say that this letter was not written until after John had written the book of Revelation, in which the coming and reign of antichrist is so fully discussed. At all events, these little children had heard that such a spirit of opposition should come, and that it was now in the world, and would be more fully developed by an host of false prophets or teachers who should compass both sea and land to make proselytes. All expositors are apt to look to Rome, and when they have found this antichrist so fully displayed in the Papal See, they have seemed to have almost forgotten that the same spirit of error that prompted the Romish clergy to all their ambitions and bloody opposition against Christ, in His doctrine, in His government, His ordinances, His people, and His coming in the flesh, and all worldly pomp, power, wealth, learning and pretended benevolence; the various schools, missions, and means of money, &c. All this is as fully exhibited now by the Protestant antichrist, as ever it was in Rome, wherever the law will give them the power, and when that stays the hand of violence and blood, deception, fraud, slander, gimmicks and lying in wait to deceive, is resorted to. All this is the multiform working of the same spirit of antichrist, or against Him, against His Eternal Godhead at one time and place, and against His existence at any time previous to His conception and birth by Mary. Against His being absolute and unconditionally a Savior - Against the justification and cleansing virtue of His blood; for they say that all depends at last on conditions performed by men. This is again against Christ. Their doctrine, ordinances, discipline, and their worldly combinations and amalgamations with the world, show that they are in the world and of the world, and the world loves and hears them, because they are its own. All these are not only against Christ, but they prove themselves to be antichrist, according to the test that John gave to the children of God in our text. In the world they are heard, loved, received, approved and sustained, and like the world, they confess not that the true and Scriptural Jesus

Christ is come in the flesh. They preach "another Jesus," "receive another spirit," and "another Gospel," which is not another, but a perversion of it.

Some may ask, Are not some of God's little children deceived by these false teachers? This is not for me to decide; if they are, the Lord is saying to them, "Come out of her, My people." A plain test is given in the text: and they should try the spirits and obey the Lord. But be this as it may, it makes neither the spirit nor the false prophets or teachers prompted by it, any the better; but if some, even of the children have, for a season, been deceived by its fair speeches, feigned humility and will-worship, and by its intrusion, surely the balance of the little children should, the more promptly and constantly consider and apply the test which is given them in the text, which is short and easily applied.

Thirdly. A few words as to how the little children are to know this spirit and overcome the world, and this spirit which is in the world. On this momentous subject John says, in the verse following the text, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world." If God, who is love, is in these little children; if His Spirit of Truth is in them; if Christ is in them the hope of glory, surely God will keep them by His power - the Spirit of light and Truth will lead them into all necessary Truth; and Christ, their Shepherd, Husband, Prophet, Priest and King; their Way, their Life, their Shield, their Righteousness and their Salvation - surely thus furnished, even the little children who are of God, have in days past, do at this time, and will finally overcome all the spirits of anti-Christ, that are now, ever have been, or ever will be in the world with the world to help them. Not by any motive, power of their own do they persevere or overcome, but because greater is He that is in them than he that is in the world!

Now, my sister Herrick, and your husband and daughter, both of whom I baptized at the last meeting at which I ever saw of you, as I had baptized you many years before, I have given you some of my views on the text which you selected; and I present them for the consideration of all God's little children. While you, and all of them, in your widely scattered situation — far from your former homes, and your old brethren and sisters, ministers and places of worship, feel lonely, like the little children weaned from the breasts and thrown among strangers, and in such an inhospitable region, you hear the howling of the spirit of anti-Christ, crying, "Lo here! Lo there!" you have often heard of this opposing spirits being in the world. Yes, you have often witnessed that these false prophets did not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh; and you have often applied the test in the text. But back then you knew your friends with whom you could mingle in mutual faith, hope and love; where you could hear the Truth, and

join in the songs of Zion. If sorrows, manifold temptations, darkness, doubts, fears, or unbelief gather over you, and as a thick cloud, hid the smiles of the Savior from your view for a season, still you were among your brethren and sisters, whose company and edifying conversation, and familiarity with such trials, would often comfort and encourage you on your dubious and dreary way. But now, far, far away from those old and long-tried friends, cast among strangers, knowing not who will really confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh --the howl of the prophets of Baal and of the Groves around you, yea, and no known, tried, confidential brother or sister to confer with, it is then you think of bygone days. But still when, by the strength of Him that is in you, and with you, the clouds are again dispersed and your way is made plain, you find that you are not alone: still you have a Comforter, even when all earthly comforts have failed. My brother and sister, you, like many others of the little children, have constant need to apply the test which is in the text, to all you hear: for in one way or another, every spirit of error and every false prophet and false teacher will preach and teach against Christ, and labor to whittle down His power, His dignity, or His grace, and to exalt man's power, free agency and works, and they confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. But the true ministers, who are separated to the work by the Holy Spirit of Truth, will come to you with Christ's test, and Christ as All in all, and such will be determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. This Gospel of His sovereign grace, of His Kingdom, and your salvation, is sweet to the taste of the little children; therefore, "Eat, O friends; yea, drink abundantly, O beloved."

Yours in Christ,
Elder Wilson Thompson,
December 16, 1857.

MEETINGS

LOWER MAYO 5TH SUNDAY MEETING

The next 5th Sunday Meeting will be held, The Lord Willing, Sunday, January 29, 2017. Thomas' Grove Church will host the meeting. The meeting house is located at 1390 Morning Dew Lane, Floyd, Va 24091. From VA 8, turn north on Blue Ridge Parkway at Tuggles Gap. Go about 1.75 miles. Turn right at Soapstone Hill sign. Immediately turn left on Morning Dew Lane (no sign) go 200 yards to church on left.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to meet with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

SKEWARKEY UNION
(Eastern Kehukee Association)

Hancocks Church will host the next session of the Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of January 29, 2017. The church is located on Ayden Golf Club Road, near Ayden, North Carolina. Preaching services begin at 10:30 am.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union will be held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church located on corner of Weatherford Drive and Music St., Gretna, Va in Pittsylvania County. Saturday before the fifth Sunday in January 2017 the song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton,
Clerk Staunton River
Primitive Baptist Association

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held the fifth Sunday, January 29, 2017 at Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church, located at corner of Tate and Carr Streets in Greensboro, NC. Song service begins at 10:30 a.m.

We welcome and invite the ministers of our faith and order as well as our brethren and friends to be with us.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Mod.
Brother Wayne Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 2016

Allen Carroll, NC	5.00
Caroline Martin, WA	5.00
Algie Martin, VA	5.00
Della Perkins, AL	5.00
Earl Thurman, VA	15.00
Flora Stutts, TX	5.00
Lon Moon, AL	5.00
Billie Speir, LA	60.00
Jerry Somers, VA	5.00
Vera Potter, MS	15.00
Ada Beeghly, VA	5.00

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

Hail, sovereign Grace, that first began
The scheme to rescue fallen man!
Hail, matchless, free, eternal grace,
That gave my soul a hiding-place!

Against the God who rules the sky
I fought with hands uplifted high;
Despised the mansions of his grace,
Too proud to seek a hiding-place!

But thus the Eternal Counsel ran,
"Almighty Love, arrest the man!"
I felt the arrows of distress,
And found I had no hiding-place!

Indignant, Justice stood in view;
To Sinai's fiery mount I flew;
But Justice cried, with frowning face,
This mountain is no hiding-place!

Ere long a heavenly voice I heard,
And Mercy's angel-form appeared:
She led me on, with placid pace!
To Jesus, as my hiding-place!

Should storms of seven-fold thunder roll,
And shake the globe from pole to pole,
No thunder-bolt shall daunt my face.
For Jesus is my hiding-place.

On him almighty vengeance fell,
That must have sunk a world to hell:
He bore it for his chosen race,
And thus became their hiding-place.

A few more rolling suns at most,
Will land me on the heavenly coast,
Where I shall sing the song of grace,
And see my glorious hiding-place.

Brewer.

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EDITORIAL

II Timothy 3:1-5, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent (uncontrolled), fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God: having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."

The Apostle further says in **1 Corinthians 6:9-11, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."**

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

As we look back over this past year, we see all of the above taking place in our country and communities and indeed throughout the world. We are in the last days

and have been since Christ came and suffered, shed His blood, died and rose again. The Apostle Paul wrote in Hebrews 1:1-2, **"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."** The Apostle John also wrote in 1 John 2:18, **"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrist; whereby we know that it is the last time."** Peter writes in 1 Peter 1:19-20, **"But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."**

We are truly in the last days as we see all the things spoken of by the Apostles taking place before our very eyes. These are indeed perilous times. As in the days of Noah when people began to multiply and "the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually," so is the world in our day. As Christ said "But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Also as Christ said, "When these things begin to come to pass, them look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

There is no peace in the world for a child of grace and there cannot be. But, the Lord's people have a peace that the world knows not. Christ is our peace for He says "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye shall have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." When the angel and a multitude of the heavenly host appeared to the shepherds praising of God and saying "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men," they were proclaiming that the peace of the Lord's people had come to earth.

There is but a remnant that has been blest to believe by faith that the Lord is in control of all things. There are those who claim to believe in Christ, but they also believe that man has some control to accept or reject Him. They believe that salvation is in the control of man. They are those who have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof. From such turn away.

As Moses told Israel, "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the Lord loved you." The love of God is eternal as God is eternal for God is love. Therefore, the love of God had no beginning and it has no end. Those he loves, He foreknew in love before the foundation of the world and predestinated them to be conformed (changed) to the image of His son. These were by nature the children of wrath even as others. But, they are loved, foreknown and chosen in Christ before the world was ever spoken into existence. Being predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ, they experienced a change that they had

no control over. These He also called out of nature's darkness of unbelief and the love of the world into the marvelous light of understanding and truth which is Christ. To these the Lord has given the gifts of faith, hope and the love of God and His people. There is nothing that can separate you from the love of God. Because of the great love that He has for you, He came down from heaven to this world to redeem you from your sins and the condemnation of the law. He did that and on the cross declared it finished.

May the Lord of all grace and mercy be with each of you as we finish the course that has been set for us.

With love to each of you,
Elder Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Tony,

I'm sending you $30.00 for two years. I hope this finds you all well.

I enjoy reading the Signs of the Times.

Yours Truly,
Glenna Link

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 02 / 2017
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

ARTICLES

I would like to continue upon the writings I wrote for the signs many months back. I feel that I should share more of my experiences that I feel has led me to stand before God's people.

In my previous writings, I wrote my experiences that led me to join the church. Though I was tentative to share my experience, it seemed the whole time I had a deeper burden; even while being in the midst of the Lord's people, at times I still felt all alone. It felt as if I was caught in a valley and I could find no rest. There were many nights I tossed and turned while my mind raced. Always feeling I was not qualified to bring my feelings to Elder Cleo or any other church persons. You see, I had a burden to preach, but never felt I had received a sufficient calling. So I endeavored to fight this burden for some time.

I can remember finally telling Elder Cleo that I would attempt to speak at Big Meadows. After wrestling with the feeling for so long, I thought I could work up the courage to say a few words. The week before I studied the scripture I had everything I planned to say in my mind. So, that morning, I stood on the floor and attempted to speak. This, my dear readers, was one of the worst feelings I have had in some time. It seemed that everything I said came straight from my prepared mind. I felt no comfort by the spirit. I felt that I was deceiving the Lord's people and was such a sinner. I only spoke for around five minutes, but dur-

ing that time, I have never felt so alone. I then told Elder Cleo to never call on me again and that I would never speak again. I also asked him not to call on me to close service in the future.

The next few months was some of the most lonesome and confusing times in my life. I knew I could never preach, but I still had this burden. I was hoping I could just be in the presence of the Lord's people and forget about the burden. In my carnality, I felt that since I had tried to speak once and failed, I proved I did not have a calling. So during these months of solitude, my mind would ease. When I thought I had finally terminated this burden, I felt the fear of the Lord very powerfully.

I would like to now relate one of my experiences. One night, while sleeping in my dorm at school, I began to fear. My body was turned towards the wall beside me and I could not turn my head to look behind. I became powerless and my body began to shake violently. This shaking was so violent, my bed started bouncing against the floor and wall. I was then made to cry out in my being, "Lord save me or I perish." The shaking did not stop and I truly felt I was going to die. That is when a light came from my back and I could not look directly at it but I could see it shining all around me. I knew then that the Lord was with me. Not long after I saw this light, audible words came through my mouth that said, "I will preach the gospel to your people wherever they may be."As soon as those words burst through. everything ceased, and there was a great calm.

The next morning, I arose and asked my roommate if he had heard anything that night; keep in mind, these dorms at school are extremely small and his bed was about five feet from mine. He replied and said he had not heard any noise. It's amazing to me to think on the verse, "thou has hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes:" As powerful as I felt the Lord's presence, he was just as powerful to hide it from my roommate.

Not long after, I called Elder Cleo and asked if it would be okay to attempt to speak again. As I spoke from the floor that day, it seemed to flow a little better than the previous time. I still did not feel I would ever be able to preach effectively, or preach for a long amount of time.

While speaking at the various places, I feel to have been extremely discouraged and also encouraged. My mind constantly tells me that when the brethren tell me that they "enjoyed my sermon" it is only because I am young and they want to keep my spirits high; not because there was any substance in my words.

I still have wonders if I am supposed to stand before God's people. Even so, I still have a great fear of not standing before his people. It seems to me we are made willing to do whatsoever he commands in the day he reveals his power.

Zack Byrd
November 23, 2016

VOICES OF THE PAST

Route 1, Hammond, W. Va.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS WITH ELDER PETER JONES:

When I saw his request in the Signs I thought I would not write as I had no light on the subject, but afterward this scripture came to me, **"The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son."** Mat. 22:2. In Rev. 19:9 we read, **"Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb."** Let us first notice who these are spoken of in Revelations. They are first of all blessed, and they are called, and that calling is the holy effectual calling which penetrates into the heart for he said unto me, "These are true sayings of God," while in Matthew the call was to "them that were bidden." The law was given to the children of Israel as a nation and they were bidden to keep that law, but that law could not give life to the dead sinner, they were not that blessed seed that shall serve him. They went a different way, did not come to the wedding supper of the king's son, and even the king himself declared that not one of them shall taste my supper for they are not worthy. Notice these were not worthy, no they were not blessed with the garment of salvation and with the spirit to come. Matthew 22:9 reads, **"Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage."** Notice the bid to the marriage, "And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment." This address is made and is applied to the kingdom of heaven and is like to a certain king who made the supper. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away." Yes in the militant church here on earth there was a certain man: Judas! Who only was chosen to take a part in the work of the ministry, and who by transgression fell and was a castaway, the son of perdition, went to his own place. It left a vacant place which the church could not fill by casting their lots, but the Lord supplied them with one who was blessed to fill the place of Judas. There is a difference between the kingdom of heaven, the militant church here on earth, and the invisible church of God. I mean the kingdom of God, it is within you. You cannot enter into the kingdom of God but you can creep into the church on earth. None of those in Matthew were worthy to taste of the supper, but in Revelations those called unto the marriage supper, (not just bidden or called at to come) came for (these are the true sayings of God) they were blessed to come, yes compelled. They were found in different places not just among the Jewish nation alone, but in all the nations thy seed shall be blessed. This is that holy seed, the blessed seed

that shall serve him. Let us examine these scriptures in the true light. "And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her," that is the invisible church of God. They come into her by birth being born of the Spirit of God and these are the children of God. Then as I have stated, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind," while the kingdom of God is within you. There is where he writes his laws in the heart and imprints his laws in their inward parts. Let us notice this scripture which Elder Jones wanted written on going back to Rev. 19:7. **"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."** God works both to will and to do in her of his own good pleasure so she is already clothed in the garments of salvation, in the righteousness of Christ, her husband. In the eighth verse we read, "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." This being granted to her it is no wonder she was ready. "The marriage of the Lamb is come" all things are ready. She did not make any excuse, but like the five wise virgins was ready to enter in with the bridegroom while the door was open. None but God can open the door and none but he can shut it. Then comes in the text, "Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb" as I have already stated called with an holy effectual calling which cannot be resisted nor turned away until it completes its purpose. Come, all things are ready, "'Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: She hath killed her beasts." Eat and drink O friends at my table here and in eternity, it is my supper, one feast, one supper. He that eateth and drinketh of my flesh and blood hath eternal life and is filled and shall never hunger nor thirst again. Under the law the children of Israel were to serve and keep his commandments, but they refused and went after other gods and other things until the kingdom was taken from them. As it was the law kingdom, which was only our schoolmaster, it waxed old like a garment ready to decay and vanish away for the new covenant to come in. The law no more written on tables of stone which Moses threw down and brake, but this new law which is the spiritual law is written in the heart. The foolish virgins had no oil and could not enter in. Note their excuse, gone to buy when the bridegroom came. The wise who were blessed with vessels and with oil in their vessels with their lamps were ready while the foolish virgins only had their lamps and their lamps were gone out. Yes, the candle of the wicked shall be put out while the lamp of the righteous is as a lamp that burneth, it goeth not out. Blessed are they who are called. The blessing comes first. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Before Jesus' crucifixion when he took the bread and wine as that supper, it was done in remembrance of him to show his death till he

come again. Then he said, "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." It is there in my Father's kingdom there is a new order, not after the same order as it is here. "I am the vine, ye are the branches." It is not natural bread and wine you eat and drink there. The ordinance shadows and types you have here, but there it will be the substance itself. "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." See the marriage supper of the Lamb, his marriage is come, then the supper is ready. The types and shadows were figures and patterns of better things to come in the future. "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb," not called at them to come, but who are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. It is the Lamb of God. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." It seems to me there is a turning point in this matter after the marriage supper of the Lamb came and the last supper spoken of here. In the seventeenth and eighteenth verses, "Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, etc." I cannot write on this at this time so let some having light on it write. This angel was standing in the sun, the greater light which was made to rule the day, while the lesser light, the moon, was made to rule the night. This angel standing in the sun was given light to see what was going to take place, that seems to take place here in time for in eternity there is no war against Christ our Lord. I cannot say but some of that war must be now. Look at kings and mighty men falling, and being deprived of their power which was given to them, which was ordained of God for all power in heaven and in earth was ordained of God, and they, like Pilate, could do nothing except it be given to them from above. He did not have the power to release Christ nor to crucify him except it be given to him from above. How could he release Christ when he was born for that hour and for that purpose, born for that end? The issue of life and death is in the hands of the great God Almighty. I hope I have not darkened counsel. In the multitude of counsel there is safety. Let some one else write on this scripture. I want to say to Elder Jones that he is like me in a way. I would like for some one to write on their views on some points of scripture because what a small part we know of God, it is indeed a small portion. We may think we know something when we do not for there is a way that seemeth right unto a man when his way is unto death. Like Paul, he verily thought he was right in making havoc of the church. Elder Jones, if this article is published write and tell me if you get any comfort from my writing. The kingdom of heaven is like a net cast into the sea, but the kingdom of God does not gather of all kinds because it is within you. Write my laws in your heart and it shall be said of this man and that man that they were born in her, and in union it shall be said that no more the uncircumcision shall be found in her nor the hypocrite, but they

are in the militant church. They creep in among the bran-ches of the vine, but they are not of the vine and they must be purged out. They cannot stand the fire for our God is a consuming fire. It is the gold that is good that will stand the fire. Like Daniel and the Hebrew children. They stood the fire. There are some places where the kingdom of heaven is referred to as the militant church while in other places I think it is referred to as the kingdom of God so let us not get them mixed.

Elder James W. Linn

MATTHEW 17:1-5.

"And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with them. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."

In his account of the transfiguration Mark tells us that the raiment of Jesus, was white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them. Luke says that Moses and Elias appeared in glory and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. There is no doubt about Jesus having a definite purpose in taking these three disciples into this mountain to be transfigured before them, and what they beheld they were instructed to tell to no man until after he was risen again from the dead. In the preceding chapter Jesus had asked his disciples who men thought he was. Some had thought he was John the Baptist, others Elias or one of the prophets. Then he asked them: "But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ; the Son of the living God." The apostle was told that flesh and blood had not revealed this to him, but his Father in heaven. So we see that though Jesus now walked about in the body that God had prepared him, some seeing him as a prophet, some one person, others another, the only ones that knew him as the Son of the living God were the ones who received this knowledge (not by flesh and blood) by revelation. In coming into the world, Jesus came down from heaven not to do his own will but the will of him that sent him. He was with the Father before the world began. He is the Word spoken of as being in the beginning with God. In his coming into the world the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. "He took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." "As the children are partak-

ers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." Now we are told why he came this way: "That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." He was the perfect sacrifice. His body was prepared for him by his Father. We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Up until now the three had beheld him in the body prepared as a sacrifice. They were looking forward to his reigning over them as King over Israel. They knew nothing of his suffering. He now prepares them for things they are later to remember. At the time of the transfiguration Jesus had not yet entered into his suffering. There had been no resurrection from the dead. The grave was unconquered. Three witnesses were selected to behold it, Peter, James and John. In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established. What a wonderful sight they now behold: His raiment is white as the light, and his countenance shines as the sun. They look upon the King of kings and Lord of lords. They are to remember these things on the Day of Pentecost, when Peter declares that God has highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name. The Exalted One now appears, and Moses, and Elias appear with him. Moses represents the law, Elias (or Elijah) the prophets and Jesus as the fulfillment of what the law shadowed forth and the prophets promised. It was decided by the three apostles to build three tabernacles, one for Moses, one for Jesus and one for Elias, but the glory of the prophets, or the law, is never to be compared with the glory of the Only Begotten. While they yet spake a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice out of the cloud said: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." God now places the stamp of approval on the work of his Son, the one glorified before them. He said the same at his baptism. When the cloud had passed away, Moses and Elias were gone, and they saw no man save Jesus only. Whether it be in the glorious gospel, or beholding Christ by an eye of faith, seated in heaven, crowned with honor and glory all others fade into insignificance when his glory appears. Moses and Elias were recognized by Peter, James and John, yet it was not recognition like we see one that we have known before. The apostles had never seen these two while they lived. They knew Moses, and they knew Elias. This was a revealed knowledge, and was not the heavenly recognition some think and talk about. There had been no resurrection of the dead. Christ had not yet died and risen. The natural bodies of the people of God were in the graves, none had risen. Moses had died about fourteen hundred years before this, and God had buried him. Elijah had been carried to heaven in a whirlwind nearly nine hundred years before. Now both appear; this is not a myth, they retain their identity as the prophet and the lawgiver.

Elder D. V. Spangler
April, 1943

IN RIGHTEOUSNESS SHALT THOU BE ESTABLISHED

Remembering former days, when some of my letters found their way into the columns of the Landmark, and your recent invitation to write again, I have a mind to submit for the consideration of your readers some thoughts on the latter portion of the 54th chapter of Isaiah. The 11th to the 18th verses, inclusive, read as follows: "O thou afflicted, tossed, with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee. Behold, they shall surely gather to gether, but not by me: whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake. Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." To my mind, the prophet in the eleventh verse has reference to the Church under the Law. As such, she is, indeed, "afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted." The demand of the Law strips her of everything and she is made to realize her nakedness before a just and holy God. Her affliction with sin and her utter inability to perform a single act that will commend her unto God makes her feel cut off, and without hope in the world. In that condition she is tossed about with tempests; all of the Lord's billows are encompassing her and comfort is nowhere to be found. When she is made to give up in despair, the Lord speaks to her, saying, "Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires." When Jacob journeyed alone to Padanaram and night overtook him, he lighted upon a certain spot — there God gave him a vision of the only way by which sinners could ascend into heaven. The ladder which reached from heaven to earth signified the coming of the only begotten and blessed Son of God into this sin-cursed world to open the channel through which mercy should run. Jacob later regarded that place, or experience, as none other than the very gate of heaven, and he took the stones of that place and made for himself a pillow and lay down and slept. God's revelation to and his communion with him was a foundation upon which he could truly rest. The stones in our text can well signify the experiences of the Lord's people — the times when he brings them by a way they knew not and makes known his goodness and mercy to them. "Tis a heaven below, the Redeemer to know," and when he shows his smiling face to a poor sinner, the occasion is never forgotten. Stones endure, perhaps, as

nothing else the elements of the ages, and the subject of grace, once he is shown the way of life as it is in Christ Jesus, will cling to that hope as long as life shall last. Such an experience is an Ebenezer to which the child of God will often return in meditation and wish that it was with him as in the days that are past. Such leadings forth are of the Lord, therefore, it is said, "I will lay thy stones in fair colors." How good to realize as we journey along through life that an all-wise and omnipotent God is at the helm. He also says he will "lay thy foundations with sapphires." Sapphires are of different colors: blue, green, yellow, etc., and can truthfully denote the attributes of our Lord as set forth in the Scriptures. Blue is significant of truth; green of life, and yellow of pure gold tried in the fire. Paul told the Ephesian brethren, who by nature were afar off from God, but who being brought nigh by the blood of Christ, and therefore were no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, that they were "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." The doctrine of faith and hope as set forth by the prophets and apostles; of love and mercy of God as embodied in his Son, Jesus Christ, together with the leading forth of the soul by the Holy Spirit into these things, comprises the very foundation upon which the Christian's hope rests for peace with God in time and for eternity. Continuing, the text says, "And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones." An agate is a stone in which a great variety of colors appear, and the windows in the Church are those characters who discern and see and understand the doctrine of God our Saviour and the order of his house, with the various gifts who minister of the things of God to the flock. Carbuncles are blood-red; therefore, the gates being of carbuncles signify that none shall enter into the celestial city except by the blood of a crucified Saviour. "And all thy borders of pleasant stones." How wonderful when the Church can see and feel that she is a garden enclosed! It is declared that God shall be a wall of fire round about Zion, and when experience that sense of security which exists only in the Lord, and enjoying that peace which surpasses all understanding, how pleasant are our borders. These were precious stones and they set forth precious things. Then, it is declared, "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." This is good Old Baptist doctrine and it seems to set at naught all the works and machinery of the so-called religious world in its efforts to bring souls to Christ. It is also evidence of the Old School Baptist Church being the true Church. Men have prophesied for centuries that the Church built upon the faith of the Old School Baptist would soon crumble away and become extinct for lack of nourishment afforded through such mediums as the Sunday School, Theological Seminaries, etc., for educating and bringing in the young, as well as maintaining the ministry. Notwithstanding there are no such nurseries or institu-

tions to aid the Lord in His work in our ranks, the Church has stood for all ages and. will withstand all the assaults in the ages that are to come, for the head of the church has declared that it is built upon the rock of revelation and that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The Lord spake by the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah. saying, "Behold, the days come saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." He takes away the first, or Legal Covenant, that he might establish the second, or Covenant of grace, under which covenant he writes his law in the inward parts and in their hearts, and thus he teaches them. What is the result of this teaching of the Lord? "And great shall be the peace of thy children." Words cannot be found to adequately express that peace which comes by and through our Lord Jesus Christ. Again let us ask, what are some of the results that follow this teaching of the Lord: "In righteousness shalt thou be established." This can only refer to his righteousness. That which the creature once thought to be righteousness has now become as filthy rags. The one taught of the Lord, then, is established in the fact that "Salvation is of the Lord," and he cannot be easily shaken. "Thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror, for thou shall not come near thee." Can it be possible that this is spoken to the same character that was before said to be "afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted?" Yes, it is the same character, but under entirely different conditions. The character has now been taught of the Lord and enabled to behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. He is now established in the way of righteousness; he is no longer oppressed by the Law, for Christ has made him free from the law of sin and death, neither does he fear or stand in terror of the Law, because the truth has made him free and he is free, indeed. There is none that is able to lay any thing to the charge of God's elect now, for Christ has died, yea, rather is risen again and is now set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, forever to make intercession for his people. Justice has been satisfied. This does not mean, however, that the children of God shall live in this world of sin and sorrow free from distress. Rather the opposite is true. In the world ye shall have tribulation, said the Master, and our text goes on to say "Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me:

whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake." As long as the world shall stand, men and devils will combine in their assaults to overthrow the faith of the elect family of God and to destroy them from off the face of the earth, but vile infernals, they can't pre vail, for the text says they "shall fall." The next verse declares that the Lord has created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work, and that he has created the waster to destroy. The work of the smith that bloweth the coals is necessary. The materials that go into the building of God must be tried, though as by fire, to be shapen or fit them for his use. He knows what is necessary for each individual, and he must teach and instruct them in the things which are needful. This he does, nor does he leave it to others to do. He has made the waster to destroy, nor does this apply only to our enemies that are without, but to those that are within, which, after all, are our worst enemies. There is much dross, or flesh, about the most of us which has to be consumed, before we are made to walk softly and humbly before him. Truly, his judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out. In the last verse, we are told, in effect, that nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, for he says, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper: and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Could the servants of God desire a richer or greater heritage than this? The God of heaven and earth, and all that in them is, is for them and with them, and, if God be for them, who can be against them? How consoling to those who are tried as was Job, to be assured that no weapon that is formed against them shall prosper, and that every tongue that shall rise against them in judgment, they shall condemn. The children of God, truly, have meat to eat that the world knows not of, and without exception, "their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." May the God of all grace and comfort give each one to experience and understand these things for himself, that he may be rooted and grounded in the truth and established in the doctrine of him who is our Saviour, and not easily shaken and blown about by the winds of doctrine of men, is the prayer of one who hopes he realizes that all his righteousness is of the Lord.

Elder R. L. Dodson
May, 1943.

HEBREWS X. 26.

We understand that this admonition, like that in Hebrews vi. 4-6, was addressed to the saints, which were recognized by the inspired writer of the epistle, as "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling." As he had told them in chapter sixth, that if they should fall away, it would be impossible to renew them again to repentance, ac-

cording to the manner of the Levitical priesthood, seeing that such a renewal would require Christ to be again sacrificed, so he tells them again in this text, "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." When the priest under the law made atonement for the children of Israel, and the Israelites again sinned, there remained farther sacrifices for their sins; the sacrifice was to be repeated continually; but Christ has made one offering for sin, and but one, and there remains no more. But to the professed disciple of Christ, who has sinned willfully, after that he has received a knowledge of the truth, there remains a certain looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour — what, the saints? No, the saints can never be devoured, for Christ has by one offering perfected them forever, and he has given his word for it, "They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." What then shall be devoured by the "judgment and fiery indignation," which the willful offender is fearfully looking for? "The adversaries." The adversaries of the cause of God and truth shall truly be devoured; but says the apostle, "We are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak." And again, in the close of this chapter, he says, "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." If a professed disciple of Christ, willfully transgresses the laws of the kingdom, is it strange that he should fear that he is only an adversary? And even if he is not, he feels afraid that he is, and looks for that judgment which awaits the adversaries.

This whole subject is an admonition to the saints. Moses' law could not be transgressed by an Israelite with impunity. The offender died without mercy, for the law of Moses knew no mercy for its transgressors. But as Moses was but a servant, and Christ is a Son over his own house, the offender who hath dishonored Christ, trodden underfoot the Son of God, by despising his law, counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace, he hath committed far greater offense, and is worthy of a sorer punishment, and if judged by the law of Moses, would be subjected to a sorer punishment. But he is, if a christian, under law to Christ, and a copy of that law is written in his heart, and it reads thus, notwithstanding the offender's deserts, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more." It is certain, however, that he will visit their transgression with a rod, and their iniquities with strips, and they shall know that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

May we listen to the admonition of our subject, and may God grant us grace whereby we may serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y., Nov. 1, 1855

Roxboro, N. **C.**

DEAR BROTHER HAWKINS: I feel glad that at last I have found a brother who has traveled the same rugged road I have and thank God for it. I enjoyed our talk to-day. One statement you made stands out. "God pity the poor woman who is married to a man that has to preach." Brother Hawkins that is true beyond all possible doubt for it means much suffering for her, but let me say right there that the church and this calling is all that is able to cause me to leave home and go. The Old Primitive Baptists are the only people on earth that I love greatly enough to cause me turn my back upon my family and be with the church. Elder Roy M: Flinchum of Draper, N. C. told me of father, Elder Billy Flinchum, who was a preacher years ago, that when old brother Flinchum would be sitting in his buggy ready to go to the churches he served, his wife and children would gather around him crying as though grieving for dead.

If you remember, somewhere in the Old Testament it tells of the enemies of Israel who took away the ark of the covenant from Israel in battle, and God began slaying this enemy by the hundreds, the result being they became frightened and agreed to put this ark on a cart, and take cattle with calves, fasten the calves up in stalls, hitch the cattle to the cart on which the ark was and if it was God's will for Israel to have the ark back these cattle would carry it though it meant going away from their calves. This was done, the cattle went toward the camp of the Israelites, looking back and lowing but going forward just the same. See the type here of the poor burdened preacher? Cattle, beast of burden, patient, typifying a servant of God turning away from natural ties of love, going among the camps of Israel, the churches, bearing the ark, the ark of the new covenant of grace, ordered in all things and sure. See the picture represented? I am sure you do.

Brother Hawkins I have thought of that last supper of Jesus and his disciples held in an upper room, or chamber, typifying that to-day when we feast together with Him we must be lifted up in Spirit above the perishable, vain and dying things of this world. Judas being present also, shows forth the camp-followers, unbelievers, among us to-day who profess but do not possess. The enemy (Satan) came by night and sowed tares among the wheat. See? I am often fearful that I am one of the tares. Are you not? But when Jesus told them that one among that number seated there should betray him, each one became fearful and doubtful of himself asking, "Lord, is it I?" Oh! to think we have the same experience today, knowing the Scriptures of truth declare that the church is built and founded on a sure foundation, the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone. And to think our experience harmonizes with theirs! Surely we must be children of the same heavenly Father as they, taught by the same mighty teacher in the same school, the school of divine grace. Taught by Jesus by divine revelation, by his Spirit, to know the meaning of these things by

experienced (Often have I said the Scriptures are written in two places — the Book and the hearts of God's people.) Surely I say then, that regardless of the fiery darts of Satan, the doubts and fears hulled through the channel of the natural mind, when we are shut up in the prison of nature's darkness, regardless of casuality, regardless of all casual reasoning, still we must be children of God. Else how could those old writers tell our experience so plainly when they told theirs? Sometimes our faith is active to the axtent that: "We can our fierce accuser face, And tell him Christ has died." Again we feel that no one cares for us, that we do not have a friend on earth, nor one in heaven, alone and forsaken. Wonder how Jesus felt in the garden of Gethsemane? And when he was taken by the multitude to be crucified all his disciples forsook him and fled? Do you not think we have to experience these things in a faint measure, and suffer with him in order to have fellowship for him? I feel we do for it is not only given us to reign with him hereafter, but to suffer with him here by appointment or predestination of God. I am absolutely certain of this, being true for the Scriptures declared that, "I have chosen thee (not on flowery beds of ease, but) in the furnace of affliction." Again Jesus said, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation." Words that contain our whole life's experience after being "quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sin." Eph. 2:1.

Through all these various experiences runs us the golden thread of hope. Many times feeling cast down, but not destroyed; as poor, yet rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things; nothing in or of self, it is all in Christ, as afflicted, tossed with tempest. Through all these things our hope holds me secure, and we feel bound to say with the poet sometimes: "Tis grace has kept me to this day, and will not let me go." Many times when pressed down, we find:

"From every stormy wind that blows,
From every swelling tide of woes;
There is a calm, a sure retreat---
'Tis found beneath the mercy seat."

I have heard it said that Abraham Lincoln once said, "I have often been driven to my knees by the knowledge I had no where else to go." Is not that our experience sometimes? Oh! how we would live, were it possible! Live obedient to the inward teachings which the Spirit doth reveal. Sweet, indeed, would it be then, but where then could this scripture be written in our hearts by experience; "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other," and the result, therefore, (for that reason then) "ye cannot do the things that ye would." Many years ago a poet penned these lines, I believe, by divine inspiration. See if your heart says, Amen.

" 'Tis seldom I can ever see
Myself as I would wish to be;
What I desire (live holy), I can't attain;
From what I hate (sin) I can't refrain."

Oh! what gracious words are these written in the song, "I am a stranger here below, by hands now long gone back to dust, yet to prove it was written by divine inspiration these words are vitally alive in the poor, storm-tossed lives of the little children of God to-day. Just as true, just as much our experience to-day, as it was to the poor soul who wrote it, whose Spirit no doubt is resting in the Paradise of God to-day. The lines quoted above even describe the life and experience of the apostle Paul for did he not experience it according to his own inspired writings when he said, "What I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that I do******For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not," and this warfare raged so fiercely Paul was made to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death." Then he plainly told the name of his deliverer, the Lord.

Somewhere in the Scriptures we find they "were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Then we know that the apostle Paul was one of God's heaven-born children, and plainly declaring the church is built and founded on (the doctrine and experience of) the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone. Do we not have the right to hope we also are his little children, for our experience is harmoniously in accord and agreement with theirs? It seems plain then, that despite all the powers of hell united; despite all of our doubts and fears we must be children of God. How often would we gladly reach back down span of hundreds of years, and take the right hand of fellowship with those old writers who wrote the Scriptures, in tears, in love, in gratitude to God for so plainly penning our experience hundreds of years before we ever even saw the light of day on earth. Sometimes it becomes so plain it almost cries our name aloud, as in these few words in Isaiah 54: "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted." Dear child of God, does this not describe you. It matters not how fierce the warfare, the doubts and fears. So then we travel on in hope, marching with bowed heads, bleeding hearts, broken spirits and tear dimmed eyes, but marching just the of same through this low valley of sorrows, beneath the blood-stained banner of the Lord Jesus Christ, pressing ever onward and upward towards the mark of the prize of the high calling as it is in Jesus, away from this world of anguish and pain up to that bright celestial city that lieth foursquare, whose builder and maker is God. Amen. Bearing the armor of God, the breastplate of faith, the shield of righteousness of our Lord Jesus imputed to us, traveling not in our own strength but in His, being "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." So we cannot fail to arrive at our final destination, being we humbly hope and trust heaven eternal. Oh, for ten thousand tongues and voices to praise such a God as this for so glorious a hope, so wondrous a salvation!

"Jesus, my All, to heaven is gone,
He whom I fix my hopes upon!
His track I see, and I'll pursue
The narrow way, till him I view."

Humbly your brother in hope,
Elder Layton Wingfield
November, 1946.

For several years past we have prefaced our New Year's Greeting with somewhat of a resume of world events. It is our mind at this time to leave this field of comment for those far better qualified than ourself to explore. We shall, therefore, enter immediately upon the consideration of those things which we believe are of vital interest to our readers. As a starting point we will quote for a text the sixteenth verse of the sixth chapter of Jeremiah:

"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein."

As those who are endeavoring to maintain a strict adherence to the principles of doctrine and order of the church as originally built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, we most certainly could not do better, as we stand upon the threshold of this New Year, than to firmly resolve that whatsoever we shall hereafter teach, preach and accept shall have the unqualified support of a "Thus saith the Lord." The Psalmist said, 'The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." Therefore we, as his humble and faithful followers, should strive at all times and at all costs to maintain the honor of his cause and thus fulfill his word. The phrase, "Thus saith the Lord" is to be found a very considerable number of times in Holy Writ and volumes could be written upon it, but at this time we only wish to stress and emphasize the fact that the things contained in our text have no less an authority for them than the Lord himself, and it behooves us to give them our most diligent and earnest heed.

Daniel in prophesying of earthly rulers and kings said, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." The Lord's portion is his people and he has and always will care for them and give them whatever instruction may be necessary to guide and direct in the way they should go. They should therefore search the Scriptures and follow their teaching, rather than be led away from the paths of truth by uninspired men and false teachers. They should also beware of the false teaching of God's servants who, while they may preach the gospel does not guarantee that all that they preach is the gospel. How true and applicable to this modernistic world is the language of our text! We are most certainly standing in the ways, plural, of men, and there are innumerable lo-heres and lo-theres, but we should go not after them. We should try them and test them out, "and see" what

they are and where they will lead to if we follow them. God has given us the plumb line in his precious word by which they can be measured and weighed, and all that we read and hear should be subjected to this standard, regardless of the source from whence it may come, in order to determine its genuineness. Isaiah said, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Paul said, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." How we need to ponder the full meaning and significance of this as it applies to doctrine, to the ordinances of God's house, to the order and practice of reproving, correcting and instructing in righteousness, to the end that all things which pertains to the church of God may be done decently and in order and to the glory of his precious name.

Some of the fundamental points of doctrine, for which the Signs has contended, might be enumerated in the following order: (1) The sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfection of the Three-in-One God; (2) His purpose and predestination in all things; (3) His eternal and unconditional election; (4): The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man; (5) That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only; (6) The sovereign and irresistible work of the Holy Spirit in regenerating and quickening the elect of God; (7) The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace; (8) The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment; (9) That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers - that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament, and that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saint of God; (10) That there is no connection between the Church and the State. If any of these are brought into question. we should accept and abide by whatever the word of God says about them.

With regard to the ordinances of the church, such as baptism, the Lord's Supper, the setting apart of Elders and Deacons to the work which the Spirit has assigned them, the greeting of one another with an holy kiss, the washing of the saints feet, etc. should we not seek to know and follow the mind, of the Spirit in all of these ordinances? Personally, we do not wish to sit in judgment or decide these matters for others, except that we want to see the Old School Baptist church kept as free from creature works and the ways of men, as possible. We do not feel that we should undertake to settle any differences by the use of carnal weapons and warfare, but wherever there is error or falsehood, like David, we should come in the name and strength of the Lord, leaning upon the staff of faith and employing only a "Thus saith the Lord," or the word of God, which was signified by the five smooth pebbles David took from the brook. Only by faith in God and through the proper use of his holy word

can we even hope to triumph over those who oppose his glorious truth. And wherever reproof, rebuke, correction or instruction in righteousness is necessary, let us remember that the Scriptures thoroughly furnish the man of God unto every good work. Therefore, as we stand in the ways, and see, may God give us to ask him to show us the old paths, and where is the good way, that we may walk therein. In our searching of the Scriptures, if we are to understand them aright, God must shed forth his light upon them and reveal unto us their hidden meaning, otherwise we will not be able to find the old paths or the good way to walk in them. Israel of old often went a crooked way, for was a stiff-necked and rebellious people, but God in his own inimitable way and time made crooked things straight, often by the use of great trials and afflictions and suffering on the part of his people. We can profit a great deal by searching out God's dealings with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the household of faith down through the ages. Both the Old and the New Testament scriptures testify of Jesus, and if we want to know "where is the good way," we should inquire of those who by God's own testimony were inspired to write, and we may be sure that invariably their arrows will point to the one and only"good way." It should be noted that the singular tense is used here. This very definitely means that there is but one true way of salvation from sin, and that is by and through the atoning blood of the blessed Lamb of God, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus. Where this way is found and walked in, and our text admonishes us to "walk therein," there is life and joy and peace in the Holy Ghost. There can be no or peace for the soul, except in a walk, or life in Christ Jesus, who is the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. God who in the counsel of eternity chose his people and gave them life in, this way, has determined that they shall be exercised in it. In his dealings with them, in due time, they are made to labor and find themselves heavy laden with the burdens of sin, and when their load becomes so heavy and unbearable as to sink them into utter despair, they are made to hear this voice saying unto them, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

How wonderful it would be if, as some seem to think, we could keep ourselves in the fear and love of God. In all sincerity we would ask, is there a single one among our readers who would not wish to live closer and closer to God day by day, but why is it they often find themselves mourning and groaning because of sin? Is it not because they cannot do the things they would, and the things they would not, they do? They are thus made to know of a truth that no good thing dwells in their flesh. Like the great apostle, they can truly say they delight in the law of God after the inward man, but by bitter experience they discover another law in their members, which

wars against their mind and bring them into captivity to the law which is in their members. Such an experience causes them to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" There is only one way of escape and that is by and through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Our text also says that Israel replied to God, saying, "We will not walk therein." In our meditations upon God's dealings with Israel in Egypt, where he watched over and kept them as the apple of his eye and finally delivered them in so miraculous a manner at the Red Sea, we have sometimes wondered how they could have been so unmindful of his goodness and mercy to them all the days of their life as to require Aaron to make them a golden calf to worship before Moses could even come down from the mount of God; We are ready to accuse them of being ungrateful to the extreme. But, how about ourselves? Are we any better than they? Are we not all like sheep, prone to go astray and search for false gods? Here again, we find that through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, we have hope, for while the record shows that although God often uses the rod to correct his people for their stiffneckedness and rebellion, at the same time he has been merciful and longsuffering, not willing that any should perish. When left to ourselves we are as prone to err us the sparks are to fly upward, and if we are not kept, day by day, by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, we most certainly will fall by the wayside. We are made to feel continually that it is by the grace of God, that we are what we are so far as our service to him is concerned, and we are made to desire to render unto him undivided praise, not only in this world, but in that which is to come.

According to nature we realize full well that we have not the will or desire even to follow in the precepts of our Lord, or to keep his commandments, but we are made to hope that by reason of a new birth we do hunger and thirst after righteousness, and that in due time we shall be filled and have all of our soul's yearnings satisfied in Christ Jesus. That will not be, however, until we shall see him as he is and be like him. Then we shall praise him, world without end.

In the meantime, if it be his will, may God grant grace sufficient throughout both the New Year and all the years that are to come that will enable us to bear the kind of fruit that will prove that the tree has been made good, and may he constantly watch over and keep us from all harm and danger, and finally bring us forth more than conquerors over death, through him that loved us and gave himself for us, to the honor and glory of his own name and the praise of his matchless grace. Amen.

Elder R. L. Dodson
January, 1947

ORDINATION

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God, Valley View Primitive Baptist Church looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift. They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed October 30, 2016 at 2:00 PM at Valley View Primitive Baptist Church, Riner, Va, for the purpose of examination of this gift, brother Anthony Quesenberry, and if found qualified to be ordained to the full work and service as deacon.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together. The meeting was opened by prayer by Elder Junior Conner. Elder Raymond Goad was elected as moderator and Brother Tony Horton to serve as clerk.

Brother Donald Agee, acting as spokesman for the church, delivered brother Anthony Quesenberry to the presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon was read as set forth in scriptures 1st Timothy Chap. 3, Verse 8-13 by Elder Alan Terry. Examinations followed by Elders Alan Terry, Junior Conner, and Larry Hollandsworth. The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of this candidate proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder Larry Hollandsworth. The charge was delivered to brother Antony Quesenberry by Elder Junior Conner. He was then delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted, a copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication and a copy to be given to Brother Anthony Quesenberry along with a certificate of ordination.

Presbytery was dismissed by Elder Alan Terry.

Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
Brother Tony R. Horton, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 2016

Faye Brown, NC 25.00
Nancy Wilson, GA 5.00
Tommy Wall, VA 5.00
Margaret Glenna Link, TN 5.00
Doris Giles, VA 5.00
Vance & Lena Duncan, VA 5.00
Charles Alders, TX 50.00
Margie Pettis Ray, LA 10.00
"In Memory of Geneya Pettis"

OBITUARIES

Elwood Samuel Tinker, Sr.
March 6, 1926- May 10, 2016
Vonnie Smith Tinker
August 6, 1930 - May 21, 2016

Jesus said to his disciples, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." "I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen..."

Brother Elwood and Sister Vonnie adhered strictly to the doctrine of the Old Primitive Baptist Churches. They were former members of North Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Belhaven, NC before asking and receiving a home at Hancocks Primitive Baptist Church, Ayden, NC on August 16, 2008. They were faithful in their attendance as long as their health permitted. Their children graciously carried them when they were unable to drive.

Brother and Deacon Elwood and Sister Vonnie departed this life of sin and sorrow 11 days apart shortly before celebrating 69 years together having been joined in marriage June 8, 1947.

Elwood departed his earthly home May 10, 2016 at Vidant Medical Center, Greenville, NC, and Vonnie departed her earthly home May 21, 2016 at Vidant Beaufort, Washington, NC. Burials were in the Smithton Cemetery, Belhaven, NC officiated for both by their grandson, Scott Askew and Elder Jimmy Gray. They both had a strong hope of eternal rest and would advise those who mourn "to sorrow not, even as others which have no hope."

They are survived by their children Sammy Tinker and wife Sue of Pantego, NC, Donna Askew of Plymouth, NC and Margie Tucker and husband Virgil of Belhaven, NC, four grandsons, two step grandchildren, six great grandchildren, three step great grandchildren and many nieces and nephews. They were preceded in death by a son in law, Hassell Askew and a grandson, Terry Tinker.

Elwood was born in St. Louis, MO, March 1926 to the late Fred and Bertha Tinker. He is survived by a brother Euel Tinker and wife Wanda of St. Louis, MO. He was preceded in death by a brother, Leonard Tinker of Belhaven, NC.

Vonnie was born in Belhaven, NC, August 6, 1930 to the late Clemon W. Smith, Sr. and Margorie M. Smith. She is survived by a sister, Sallie Winstead and husband Kenneth of Kennewick, WA; and sister in law Janie Smith of Belhaven, NC. She was preceded in death by a sister, Thelma Tinker and brothers C.W. Smith, Jr. and Jimmy Smith.

Their children and spouses and their grandchildren were the light of their life. They loved visiting and just spending time with them. They were blessed with all the care and attention given by their children and were very proud of each one.

Their family miss them, their Church miss them and all of us who knew them miss them but they had that glorious hope that Jesus shall come and take his children to their eternal home.

Written by their cousin who missed them very much.

Sylvia S. Dixon

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

VOL. 185 HILLSVILLE, VA., MARCH 2017 NO. 3

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer, to thee,
E'en though it be a cross,
That raiseth me;
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee,

Though like a wanderer,
The sun gone down,
Darkness be over me,
My rest a stone;
Yet in my dreams I'd be
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee.

There let the way appear
Steps unto heaven;
All that thou sendest me
In mercy given;
Angels to beckon me
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee.

Then, with my waking thoughts,
Bright with thy praise,
Out of my stony griefs,
Bethels I'll raise;
So by my woes to be

Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee.

Or if on joyful wing,
Cleaving the sky,
Sun, moon, and stars forgot,
Upward I fly;
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee.

S. F. Adams.

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EDITORIAL

"And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. Revelation 3:1-6

Elder Jerry B. Farmer

The children of God through the ages, after having been delivered from the power of darkness into His marvelous light, have been given a desire to know where they stood in the great scheme of things. They have de-

sired evidence that they were truly in the faith of the living God, and were not deceived in the things they could not help believing. They have been made to examine the scriptures, to try the spirits whether they are of God, and even to examine themselves whether they were in the true faith. They have had questions about the consummation of all things and about the coming of the Lord in great power and glory. And they were given confidence that only the Lord has the answers. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

They could not trust in men's opinions, or even in their own thoughts and reasons. They must have all things they are blessed to believe confirmed in and by the power of God, which opens the eyes, ears, and hearts and establishes the truth. This eternal truth cannot be resisted or twisted to mean something else. The work of God is perfect, and is forever. The truth established by the Lord in the hearts of His people is unchangeable. No one, not even the devil, can add one thing or take away anything that the Lord has given His little ones to believe. "The Lord spake and it was done. He commanded and it stood fast."

The Lord Jesus Christ came into the world, was made of a woman, and was born of a virgin according to the prophesy which went before Him. He lived the perfect life, offered Himself up without spot unto God as the perfect Lamb of God, which atoned for the sins of all of God's elect. "For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctioned." He called His twelve apostles and sent them into all the world to preach the Gospel, and to establish the churches of the living God, which they did. He blessed the apostles to write the scriptures, which were preserved and given to instruct and guide all true believers in the way of truth for as long as the world shall stand.

The Lord has called messengers, since the days of the apostles, to stand before the churches and proclaim the truth in the Spirit and power of God. The apostle John was caught up in the Spirit, on the Lord's day, and was given wonderful revelations concerning heaven and earth, the things which must shortly come to pass, and the final consummation of all things. The Lord commanded John to write to the angels (messengers or ministers) of the seven churches of Asia, which he did. The word angels means messengers.

The seven churches of Asia, I am made to believe, were existing true churches in John's day, and stand as examples of the true churches of God in every age since the churches were first established. If any of the Lord's people in any generation were given understanding, they would have been blessed to recognize the church or churches with which they have to do. The blessed words of the Lord, concerning the situation and condition of each church, were faithfully recorded by the apostle. Each church in every age and condition, since these words were recorded, would be admonished and edified by these words of the Lord.

The church in Sardis appears to

typify many, if not all, of the true churches which we have knowledge of in this day. Since this seems so appropriate to the true churches today, I would love to examine what the Lord told John to write to the angel (messenger) of the church in Sardis, if the Lord wills.

God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty. He has mainly called the weakest, most ignorant creatures in nature to stand before the churches as His holy messengers, proclaiming things that are too high and wide and deep to be understood by themselves or others except by the revelation from on high. All the called ministers are made to understand that they can do nothing of themselves, and that all their strength in all things comes directly from the Lord. He said, "My strength is made perfect in weakness." Boasting is excluded, and all praise, honor and glory is rendered to Him who alone is worthy.

The Lord commanded John to write unto the angel (messenger) of the church in Sardis, "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." How is it possible to have a name that one is alive, but yet is dead? This statement seems to be contradictory, and is nonsense to the carnal mind. The blessed apostle Paul said in one place, "You are dead, but your life is hid with Christ in God." Rightly divided, there is no contradiction. The children of God are dead, having been killed to all self-righteousness, and having been killed to the world and all its enticements. But they are alive to the kingdom of God and His righteousness and good works. They are dead according to nature, but are alive in the faith and hope that the Lord has given them, and they are taught that this world is not their home, but that they are strangers and pilgrims here in a wilderness.

The Lord commanded, "Be watchful." This means to stay awake. Remember when the Lord was in the garden and He told the disciples to watch with Him while He went forth to pray, and when He returned they were all asleep. They were no doubt stressed and exhausted in their nature, and could not stay awake. This is how we find ourselves many times. We have no strength to endure, except the Lord comes and awakens us. This is left on record for us to consider.

The Lord commanded, "strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die." We see all around us churches with only a few members, and churches which have closed their doors, and many which must surely close in the near future. This is no time to despair or to give up, but the time to strengthen and encourage those who remain to continue in love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance, which is the fruit of the Spirit. This means that you are to be faithful unto death that you might receive the crown of life, by the grace of God.

The Lord continued by saying, "For I have not found thy works perfect before God." I have heard it said that the works indicated here were imperfect, as though they were faulty somehow. Nevertheless, the word perfect here means to have been fulfilled or completed. In the original it reads, "For I have not found

thy works having been fulfilled before God." What this says is, "you are not done yet, some things remain to be done before you die." All of God's children have good works in which to walk all their days, until their last breath, that were before ordained of God.

The Lord further commands, "Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent." How did you receive and hear the word of God? It was the same way the apostle Paul received it. He said, "For I neither received of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." It is God who has given us faith to receive His word, and has given us ears to hear it. How do we hold fast? The apostle said, "I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." It is like a little child that holds the father's finger with its little hand, while the father's large hand surrounds the whole of the child's hand. Even if the child trips and loses its grasp, it is still upheld by its father's strong hand. We hold fast because the Lord holds us. "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

The Lord commands, "repent." Repent means to mind change. All along our journey, we sometimes think we are altogether in nature, and actually know nothing of the kingdom of God. And worse, sometimes we think we might be deceived, and even worse than that, that we may be deceivers. The devil puts these thoughts in our minds, but thanks be unto God, He pulls down the devil's stronghold, and casts down those imaginations, and brings every thought unto the obedience of Christ. We must be given grace for repentance. It is grace for grace. We are helpless in ourselves to do anything good, even to change our minds.

The Lord continues saying, "If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come upon thee as a thief, thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." This has been given a negative meaning by some, to mean, "If you do not do your duty, the Lord will come upon you to punish you in some way." But the truth is that the Lord loves His church and His called ministers. He always does that which is good for those He loves, as a loving father does for his children. I have been made to believe the true meaning of His words is this: If you should fall asleep, through great weariness, the loving Lord shall come unto you silently, in order to awaken you for needful purposes, as He did to His disciples in the garden. There are no negatives with God regarding His children. "For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen."

The Lord again comforts His little ones by affirming their blessed estate with Him by saying, "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments." The elect of God are a very small remnant They are spoken of as a little city, little flock and the fewest of all people. Even though the members of the churches in this day are just a few, and seem to be getting fewer, this is the way the Lord has purposed it to be. He saw this day and spoke of it saying, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." They have not de-

filed their white robes of righteousness which were given to them, because they have been kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last day.

Jesus said, "and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy." We are taught that there in none good, no not one. And the Patriarch Jacob said by faith and by the Spirit, "I am not worthy of the least of the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant." We are taught that the only worthiness we have is in Christ. All of God's children have been made worthy by the shed blood of the Lord Jesus, which has washed away their sins and made them righteous and holy in Him. Jesus taught His disciples, that after they had done all that was commanded them, to say, we are unprofitable servants.

Jesus said, "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." All those chosen of God shall overcome this world, the devil, sin and in even death through Christ their mighty Savior. He has seen to it. He has already seen them in glory. All the vessels of honor which He made of clay shall be changed to fit in glory. And it is to His praise, honor and glory that He is powerful to save, and that no one or nothing is able to separate His church from Him. Jesus said, "Upon this rock (meaning Himself) I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The children of God overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they love not their lives unto the death.

Finally, the Lord said, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches." It is the Lord that has made the hearing ear, and it is He that has given it to His saints. By this gift of God, the saints must hear what the Lord has spoken unto them.

"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Do not grieve upon seeing the church's little gatherings which seem to be getting smaller as we go. One of the old elders once said that when a man builds a house, he gathers the materials of construction and places them in a pile near the construction site. As the materials are placed in the building, the pile becomes smaller and smaller. When the last member is placed in the building the building is completed, and the pile is gone. When the last members of the Lord's family are taken home and placed in the heavenly house, there will be no need for this world that we now sojourn in. Rejoice to know that the Lord's building is near completion.

According to the scriptures, when the Lord comes again in the flaming fire of His glory, the dead in Christ shall be raised first, and those that are alive and remain at His coming shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and they shall all be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air, where they shall ever be with the Lord. The flaming fire of the glory of God shall destroy, with an everlasting destruction, all those who obey not the gospel of Christ. The earth and all in it shall be burnt up, and the el-

ements shall melt with a fervent heat.

All those who look for a "savior" to come and set up a kingdom on this earth shall be disappointed. Even though most of the religions of this world, from the Jews, to the Muslims, to the Asian religions, to many who have taken the name of Christ, look for a worldwide kingdom to be set up here in this world, it cannot be. Jesus said that His kingdom does not come by observation. He said that His kingdom is not of this world. He said that there would be many false christs, and warned His little ones not to look for any in this world who claim to be Him. He said that when He comes, he shall come in the clouds and that every eye should behold Him. Be not deceived.

It appears that it may not be long before the Lord appears - how long we know not. But the apostle Paul said there must first be a falling away, and that the man of sin must be revealed before the Lord comes. It appears that the falling away is upon us, and it remains for the man of sin to be revealed. Jesus called this man the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet. The Apostle Paul called him the son of perdition; who opposeth and exaltheth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. When we see these things come to pass, look up, for redemption draweth nigh.

I trust that this was written in love and in faithfulness and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer 1-18-2017

ORDINATION

NOTICE OF ORDINATION
Licentiate Zach Byrd

Big Meadows Primitive Baptist Church, feeling they are blessed with the gift of an Elder among them, has called for a presbytery to be formed for the purpose of examination of this gift and to be ordained, if found qualified, to the full work of the Gospel ministry. The time and date set is Saturday, April 8, 2017 at 11:00 AM. It will be held at Big Meadows Church and lunch will be catered.

The address is: 4439 Castle Rock Road, Pittsboro, N.C.

Directions are: I-40 to Hwy 87 at Graham. Exit onto Hwy 87 South toward Pittsboro. Go 14.8 miles and cross Cane Creek Exit right onto Greenhill Road. Go 3.7 miles and exit left onto Old Switchboard Road. Go 1.3 miles, church is on the right.

From Hwy 64, exit onto Hwy 87 North. Go about 7 miles and exit left onto Castle Rock Farm Road. Go about 5 miles, church on left.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Sister Joann Self, Clerk

CORRESPONDENCE

January 21, 2017

Dear Brother Horton,

Enclosed is a check $15.00 for renewal to The Signs for another year. What a blessing they have been, here at home and being less active I find myself looking forward more so to each publication.

May God continue to bless you and be with all for the work and dedication to keep this dear magazine coming to those who are blessed and fed by the dear Lord through its pages.

Thank all of you for your dedicated work and services.

A Sister in Hope,
Gloria B. Reese
File: Violet M. Barton 3-17

Dear Elder Cleo,

Please publish this obituary in the "Signs".

Thank you and the others for your devotion and hard work. It means so much to so many.

Love and sweet fellowship,
Peggy Wells

Jan. 10, 2017

Dear Brother Tony,

Enclosed please find a check to renew my Signs for two years. Use the remainder as you see fit.

I enjoy my Signs so much and look forward to each edition.

Especially, I enjoy the writings of the older ministers who have passed away.

May God continue to bless the Editors for the wonderful work you do in publishing the Signs monthly.

In love & fellowship,
Phyllis H. Stroud

January 21, 2017

Elder Robertson,

Indeed it was a joy to read the history of the "Signs of the Times" and the highlights of the lives of Elders Gilbert Beebe and his son, William, in the "Signs of the Times" of January 2017.

Enclosed are two photographs you are welcome to publish if you see fit that continue the theme of Primitive Baptist history.

Thank you my dear brother.
In love and hope,
Steve Everett
1052 Middle View Dr.
Forest, Va 24551

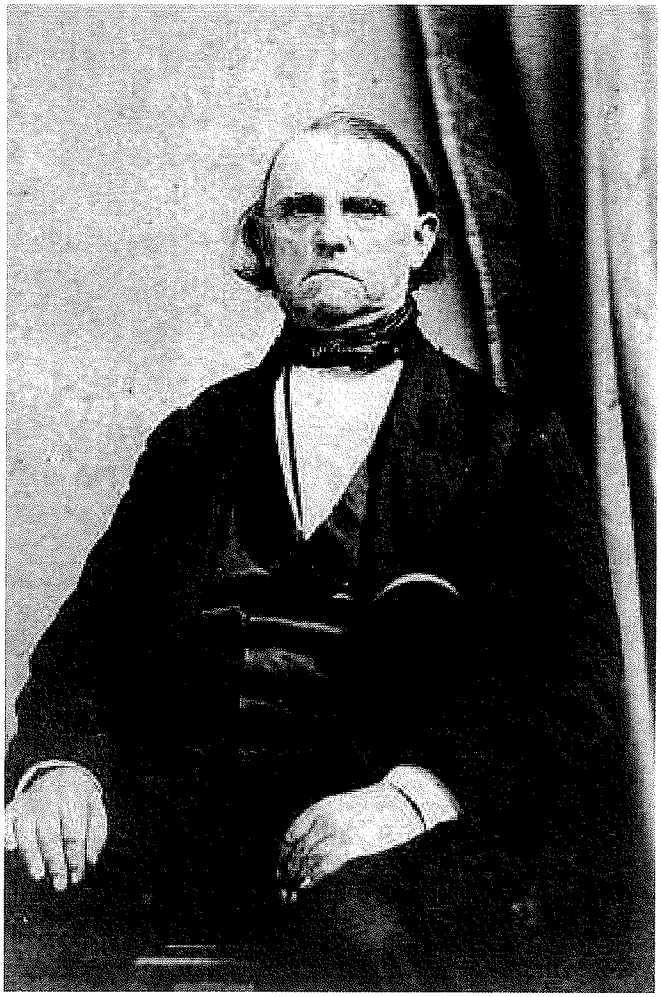

ELDER GILBERT BEEBE

Elder Beebe, beloved founder and editor of the "Signs of the Times." He was born Nov. 25, 1800 in Norwich, Conn. At age of eighteen, Elder Beebe was liscensed to preach the gospel and later ordained in 1823. For thirty-five years he served Mount Vernon Primitive Baptist Church while also successfully operating his own printing and publishing business.

Strong in the faith, Beebe's countless editorials, sermons and literary works are still greatly revered by Primitive Baptists today.

His death occurred May 2, 1881 in Middletown, New York.

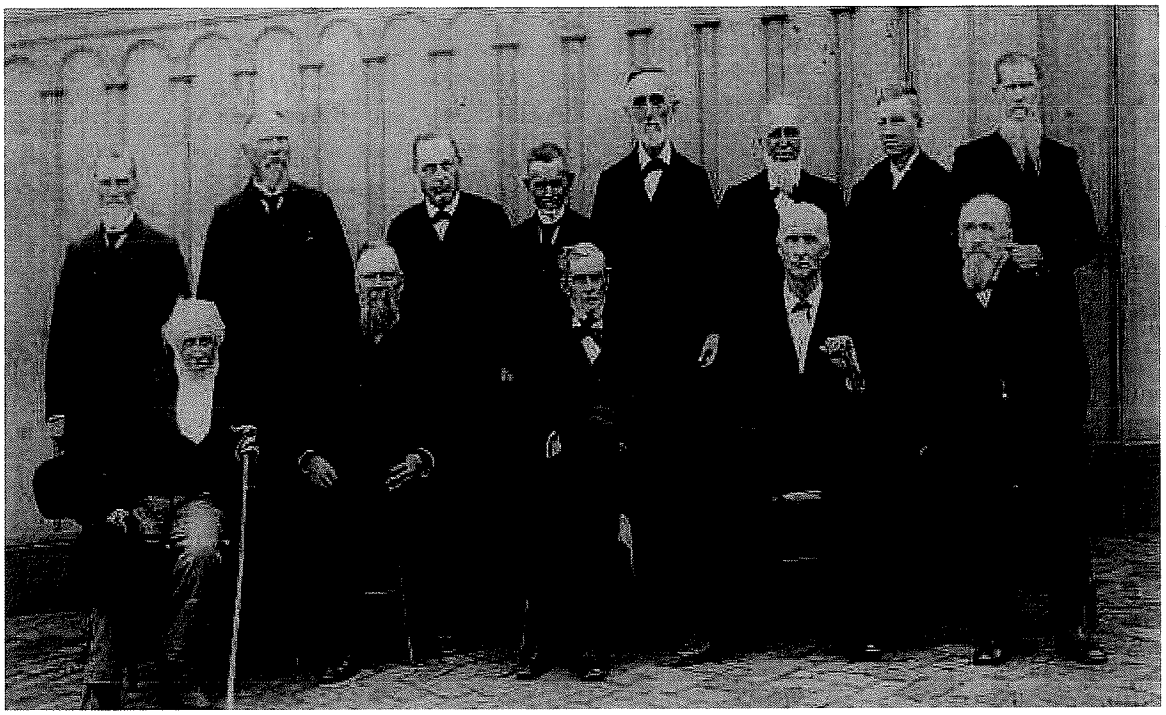

PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ELDERS
Date and place of photo is prior to 1902.

Standing from left:
Elder T. M. Povison of Massey, Va
Elder A. B. Francis of Delmar, Delaware, Moderator of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association (Maryland)
Elder F. A. Chick of Hopewell, New Jersey one of the early editors of the "Signs of the Times"
Elder John Thorn
Elder William L. Beebe, Elder Gilbert Beebe's son
Elder D. M. Vail or Waverly, Pennsylvania
Elder Jenkins
Elder?

Seated from left:
Elder W. B. Williams
Elder J. G. Eubanks pastor of the Old Welsh Tract Church and Moderator of Delaware Old School Baptist Association
Elder Ephriam Rittenhouse of Wilmington, Delaware
Elder P. D. Gold of Wilson, N.C. Moderator of Black Creek Association and Editor of Zion's Landmark.
Elder Badger or possibly Elder L. H. Hardy

January 15, 2017

Dear Elder Cleo Robertson,

I read Elder Lowell Hopkins article about the Soldiers of the Cross. He asked if anyone had witnessed like experiences, if so to send it to the Signs of the Times. I am writing you about an experience I had while I was serving in the army in Koreas in 1967. If the article meets your approval you may print it in the Signs of the Times.

I was sent into the DMZ (demilitarized zone) conflict in November 1966, separating North and South Korea. I drove a M114A1 armored vehicle on the DMZ. I was involved in over 40 missions that took me into the DMZ. The M114A1armored vehicle had a three man crew. Driver, TC Sergeant and back gunner. In March 1967 I was driving on a mission when the right track broke which left the left track pulling that would have pulled us into the mine field. I thought to myself "we are going to be blown up". Then a voice said to me "Know that I am God and control all things". At that time the vehicle lunged down on the right sprocket where the track had broken throwing the vehicle into a bank on the opposite side from the mine field. The Sergeant said to me a greater power saved us today.

I believe God looks after us at all times.

Sincerely,
Elder David Minter

VOICES OF THE PAST

EXPERIENCES
By Elder Frederick W. Keene, 1936

There are experiences known by the called of Jesus Christ which they but little understand. Christ is FELT to be their Saviour and Friend, their only consolation, but at times so variable are their frames and feelings in these matters. There are little seasons when in simplicity, in nearness they are with Jesus; at other times in their soul's apprehensions they are at such a distance; and, falling into unbelief, into bondage of spirit, they feel to be sundered from Him, and, in this suspension of intimacy with the dear Saviour, feel almost as though there had never been real nearness and dearness of union to Him. And in our changed estate, in our unbelief, our ignorance, thoughts arise that Jesus Christ, the Saviour, the immutable Lover of His Church Himself has changed; that His love has waxed cold, that He is indifferent, that the Lord has wearied of us, no more cares for us. Oh how sinful, how shameful are all such imagination! We become wretched, we are in confusion of spirit, we are cast down. Surely the children of God need to be taught of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost all their days. We have need of the Interpreter, the One among ten thousand, the Messenger of the covenant, (Job 33:23; Mal. 3:1), to show to us the signification, the causes, and what is to be the outcome, the fruit of all the vicissitudes that we

undergo in the house of our pilgrimage.

Oh, how gracious in our faith our God is! He is ever mindful of His covenant, and though we are so changeable, helpless, worthless, in ourselves considered, yet thus He speaks, **"O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of Me" (Isa. 44:21).**

While we are in the house of our pilgrimage we are instructed and drawn to follow on to know the Lord, and unto us in all new covenant graciousness His goings forth in our behalf are prepared as the morning. He comes unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain upon the earth (Hos. 6:3). And who are we whom He in such riches of mercy deals with? We are sinful mortals upon the earth; we travel through the wilderness; there we find scorpions, and fiery flying serpents. Our sins, our iniquities, inward vilenesses, we are made to know our own the plague of our heart (I Kings 8:38). Ah, this is the sore and grief of Israel (II Chron. 6:29). And blessed are we when we are inclined to spread forth our hands and to look unto the God of our mercy with all entreaty for that mercy and grace that come alone from the throne of God and the Lamb. There are many self-sufficient professors of Christ's name and they are ever self-satisfied. They can well supply themselves with all they need who are never poor and needy, emptied and empty, feeble and sore broken. They know no weakness, they never fall down in the dry parched land, and find none to help. But the true child of God, the wayfaring man, Zion's pilgrims, find the way at times is in rough places. Our souls are much discouraged because of the way (Numbers 21:4).

We faint in the day of our adversities and find to our dismay that we have to confess our strength is small (Prov. 24:10). How shall such weak, such sinful, sin plagued, yes, and shamefully plagued with an evil heart of unbelief, how shall such unworthy creatures pursue their way to heaven, triumph over the hindrances, vanquish our foes, the world, the flesh and the devil? "In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us." Oh let me sing with the Apostle, **"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:28-29).**

O ye beloved ones in our precious Christ, do we not learn in every manner of the way that we are feeble and that it is not with us to make the wilderness to rejoice therein with joy and singing? But our Redeemer is strong, and in all graciousness he comes into the wilderness, shows Himself our Saviour and Friend, gives us again to taste the riches of His grace, tells to hearts the divine consoling mystery of His cross, and again as in the days of our youth we sing in the wilderness the grace and triumphs of our Emmanuel over our sins.

Not withstanding all the vicissitudes of my soul this abides a divine mystery. Christ in my heart, the hope of glory! We are called unto eternal glory by Christ

Jesus as vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory. God hath predestinated His chosen to be conformed to the image of His Son, and when He shall appear and descend from heaven we shall ultimately be like Him for we shall see Him exactly as He is. Oh, how blessed to have this hope in us, and thus in our hope to be found in earnest expectation of glorious liberty of the children of God. "Looking for that blessed hope, and glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Faithful is He who hath called us unto this predestinated glory, who also will accomplish it. Now we are in hope of righteousness, in hope of the resurrection of the dead, in earnest expectation of the glorious liberty of the sons of God - waiting for our adoption - to wit: the redemption of the body. How consoling! How sweet! How blessed! Is the hope of the resurrection of the just to immortality and incorruption. This mortal shall put on immortality and this corruption shall put on incorruption. **"We look for our Lord Jesus Christ from heaven who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself (Phil 3:21).** Then we shall be satisfied for we shall be conformed to the image of our dear Redeemer, and dwell forever with Him in immortal bliss. Oh! what an unspeakable mercy for a poor vile transgressor to be blessed with such a glorious hope!

-Sovereign Grace & Pilgrim, 1936.

Strikersville, Pennsylvania, August 22, 1827.

Having been the subject of numerous disappointments during my life, I have thought of giving a short account of some of them. In common with all mankind, I was born in sin, in the service of which I lived till upwards of twenty years.

At that time I belonged to a debating society in Baltimore, and being full of the talking spirit, I proposed forming one in the neighborhood I was then in, the proposal met with the consent of all present, and we immediately commenced operations. The question proposed for discussion, was to test the relative merits of the miser and the libertine.

I took the side favorable to the miser, contending that the conduct of the other was productive of positive evils to society, among other evils resulting from dissipation. I was led to expatiate on the wounds inflicted by the dissipation of a son on the heart of upright parents, and particularly on that of a kind and tender mother. Little did I think that while treating on the subject of dissipation, my own conduct was so soon to be brought home to me, that my career in that course was that night to terminate. My only surviving parent was a mother, an-

swering the above description, and whose heart had been deeply wounded by my own conduct; and while. on this part of my subject, I saw her with the eyes of my imagination, as plain as I ever saw her with literal eyes.

She appeared seated on a chair before me, with eyes fixed intensely on me, exhibiting the strongest expression of affection; the big tear rolling down her furrowed cheek, while her whole countenance exhibited the strongest symptoms of deep despair.

And here I am perfectly at a loss to describe the effects that followed: I can only say, that it seemed that all the sins I had ever committed, came rushing into my mind like an overwhelming torrent, and in a moment I felt myself one of the most miserable wretches out of hell.

Such was the effect of this sudden change of things in my mind as to produce a partial derangement, and though the night was dark, and raining, I immediately left the house, and that without my hat. But instead of taking the road I intended, I took the opposite, and after pursuing it for some miles, I left it and took to the woods; but in the morning found myself in a house by the side of a fire, to which I had been led more by instinct than reason. By this time, however, reason had resumed her throne, but it was to act as a witness against me. For a few days my mind was more particularly directed to my outward sins, but it was not long before a sense of heart sin reduced my outward sin to mere insignificance. I felt indeed that my heart was a cage of unclean birds, a den of every hateful thing.

But though I soon found that I had no positive claim on Divine favor, having never performed a good act in all my life, yet I attempted to set up a negative claim --- that was, that I had not been quite as bad as some others; and as an example I caught at Saul of Tarsus, but that prop soon gave way.

I soon found a balance in his favor, for though I had not persecuted the saints, yet I had far exceeded him in wickedness. In persecuting the saints, he acted from principle, and verily thought he was doing God service: while pursuing my course of sin, my conscience instead of approving of my conduct, often reproved me severely; and what I thought then I think still, that on the ground of excuses, Paul had the advantage of me, and I am sure that I shall have at least an equal right with him or any other to sing the song of free and sovereign grace to all eternity, and this is a right I cannot surrender to any one. As to the claim of superior zeal and usefulness in the cause of God and Truth I am willing to surrender that to my brethren, I believe them entitled to it; but to surrender to any one of the redeemed of the Lamb a greater right than myself to adore the riches of sovereign grace, I cannot. But I must proceed and just state that the whole process of conviction was so different to the notion I had formed on the subject, that I soon gave up all hope of its being a work of grace on my poor soul, and concluded that it was only the prelude to the eternal vengeance in reserve for me.

Herein consisted the first disappointment in my life worth noticing; and

this arose from my ignorance in attempting to fore-stall the work of the Spirit. I have stated above, that instead of being under a work of grace, I concluded that I was only realizing a prelude to my just and eternal damnation. Despair had taken hold of me - as David, "the fear of hell got hold on me," - I had given up the idea of prayer entirely, not that I had become willing to be banished from God, nor was it from a sullenness of spirit or obduracy of heart, of these things I had cured before this, but I thought it presumption in me to wish Him to depart from a fixed determination to make me a monument of His just vengeance to all eternity. Having come to this conclusion, I continued for some time under a state of most awful suspense; during which time I ventured to make but one request, which was, that when arraigned before His bar, He would make my sentence as light as could be consistently with His justice. I am now approaching a point in my experience that I shall never forget in this world, nor that to come if reason and memory prevail beyond the tomb. I refer to the night in which I was given a hope in Christ; on retiring this night, my distress (If possible) was greater than at any former period, I concluded that my state of suspense would soon terminate, and that in a short time I should realize to the fullest extent, the apprehension I then so severely labored under.

Indeed I felt as if that night would finish the respite given me, and that before morning I should be in hell. By well convinced that the sentence I apprehended would be just, that I could but say, "Amen." But while in this desperate state of mind, to my astonishment I received a proclamation of pardon to my guilty soul. Jesus appeared to the eyes of faith as my Mediator. I was enabled to run into His name as into a strong tower and find safety; I was carried from Mount Sinai, where I stood trembling amidst its thundering and lightnings to Mount Zion to gaze with unspeakable delight on a bleeding Saviour, and to realize my personal interest in His atoning sacrifice --- I say personal interest, for nothing short of this could meet my case; I must have a personal interest in the blood of Jesus or I am undone. I cannot pretend to mention any particular promise that came to me, for it seemed that all I had ever read come rolling into my mind: as fast as I reviewed them, my soul was filled to overflowing, I felt what it was to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. And here I can but exclaim with Paul; "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out."

Thomas Barton
August 22, 1827

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 03 / 2017 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

1882 - CITY OF HABITATION

Elder Wm. M. Smoot, Occoquan, Va., May 15, 1882

"They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, *and* He delivered them out of their distresses. And He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation."- Psalm cvii. 4-7.

Differing radically from all systems of worship based upon the reasonings of the carnal heart, the worship of the true and living God is an ascription of thanksgiving and adoration to the Most High for His goodness and mercy to His own redeemed generation. The psalmist, in the opening verse of this 107th Psalm, strikes the key-note of this wonderful and heavenly song: **"O give thanks,"** says he, **"unto the Lord, for He is good: for His mercy endureth forever."** He does not desire that thanks should be given to men, for they should never be objects of reverence. "Cease ye from man," the Lord by the prophet distinctly commands, "whose breath is in his nostrils." **"And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day."- Isaiah ii. 17.** But wrapped in holy joy in view of the great goodness and mercy of God, he exclaims, "O give thanks unto the Lord." The tender mercy and unbounded goodness of the Lord calls for the most sacred exclamations of thanksgiving from his heart. "Let the redeemed of the Lord," says the psalmist, "say so." Let them thank the Lord for His goodness, for none others can reach those heavenly notes, and sing this heavenly song. All others are found sacrificing "unto their net," and burning incense "unto their drag," worshiping at the shrine of creature effort and ability, and, in their blind zeal, honoring and exalting the creature more than the Creator. But the redeemed have been divinely qualified to bow in humble reverence before the awful throne of God, and render ceaseless praise to him who holds their destiny in His hand, and who has already redeemed them unto Himself from "all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues."

This divine qualification to praise and revere the Most High, is learned in the bitter lessons of trial and affliction through which the saints are called to pass. In the text, the psalmist presents them to our view as lonely wanderers "in the wilderness in a solitary way." Hungry, thirsty and faint, they cry unto the Lord "in their trouble." I am assured that many readers of "our family paper" know by a precious experience something of this wilderness and solitary way. The individual may be surrounded by kind and cheerful friends, yet feel isolated from all friends, a lonely pilgrim upon the barren shores of time. It is distressing indeed to wander in the wilderness, but how much worse to be there alone. No kind friends to minister to our comfort, no glad voices to cheer our lonesome way. The individual feels to be worse than all

others, a helpless and undone sinner. He anxiously searches for the footprints of the flock, and his heart exclaims, in the language of the "Song of songs," "Tell me, O Thou whom my soul loveth, where Thou feedest, where Thou makest Thy flock to rest at noon." His own evil thoughts and ways, like the beasts of the forest, creep forth to annoy and frighten him with their hideous cries, to disturb his peace and mar his joy. I think that there is also particular reference to our experience in the expression, "they wandered." The lonely pilgrim cannot feel at rest. As Mary at the sepulcher, he is searching for his Lord; "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." His wandering thoughts find no city to dwell in.

"Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them." There is represented here an hungering and thirsting for something which the world cannot possibly supply. The desires of the quickened sinner turn heavenward from the most brilliant honors and the brightest enjoyments that gladden the shores of time. He desires something beyond it all.

> "To heaven his restless heart aspires."
> "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks,
> So panteth my soul after thee, O God."

It is for some evidence of the goodness and mercy of God that he is hungering, some manifestations of that love "which passeth knowledge," and to be "filled with all the fullness of God." For this he longs with a sincere and earnest hungering and thirsting. In the text, his tongue seems to have failed for thirst, and his soul faints in him. This certainly represents an individual without strength.

"Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He delivered them out of their distresses." It was in a time of trouble that this cry arose unto the only source from whence help could come. The heartfelt need of the troubled and tempted one, is in itself a cry, and faith turns to the Lord as the only source of assistance. The trembling sinner falls at the foot of the blessed Tree, and,

> "..... Such news shall ne'er be told in Zion's street,
> That some poor soul fell in despair,
> And died at Jesus' feet."

The Lord "delivered them out of their distresses." The Lord, not man, "delivered them." They may see no way out themselves. They may stand trembling like Israel upon the banks of the Red Sea, and look for certain destruction. But "the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation." And when He makes bare His holy arm in their deliverance, their enemies fall back affrighted before His awful approach. A new-made way appears to their enraptured sight. Through their experience as lonely "wanderers in the wilderness in a solitary way," they are brought to know their inability to find the way out of such a horrible place, and hence hail the new-found way of escape as the "way of the Lord." How glorious is His appearing,

as the sunlight of His presence falls upon their darkened path. In the wilderness "waters break out, and streams in the desert." "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God." They have found the "fields of the wood," and now lie down "in green pastures," and are led "beside the still waters." In this experience is fulfilled the closing verse of our text:

"And He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation." Whatever may be the trials in this way of the Lord, it is the Lord's "right way" to lead this tempted one to the city of refuge. True, it may be full of keen temptations, and bitter, sorrowing trials, but the Lord is leading and guiding them forth. They are brought by a way that they "knew not," darkness is made light for them, and crooked things straight. The Lord leads them. They are not found going before and legislating for Him, but they "follow the Lamb." Their condition represents them to us as without strength. A lonely pilgrim, hungering and faint in the great wilderness of sin. It is here that the Lord finds them. Speaking of Jacob, and of the redeemed through him as a type, Moses says, "The Lord found him is a desert land, and in the waste, howling wilderness; He led him about, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye." The tempted saint is led to see his lost condition as a sinner, his proneness to err, and the depravity of his nature in the flesh. The Lord graciously leads him forth in these wilderness places, and it is always the "right way" to that "city of habitation;" for through this way he is brought to feel his need of this place of refuge, and of a strong arm to guard him to its sheltering portals.

I wish that I could now describe in fitting language this "city of habitation," this resting place of the Christian pilgrim in the wilderness of sin and trial. It is the habitation of the redeemed family only; the place Jesus went "to prepare a place for you," their resting place, and of their songs of rejoicing with the holy angels before His throne. Here their Redeemer dwells all over glorious, and the light of His countenance is their perpetual feast. This city, which is the throne of the living God, presents an ample sufficiency to supply all the spiritual desires of the heavenly family. Its exquisite beauty, its holy company, its heavenly pleasures, entrance their soul with heaven born joy, and gladdens their hearts upon the pathway of time. "Walk about Zion," says the psalmist, "and go round about her: tell (count) the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generations following." "The foundations of the wall of the city," says John, "were garnished with all manner of precious stones," and at its gates were graven the names "of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel." "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the

glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof"

It is a city set on a hill, and the streams from its portals the light of Gospel Truth encourages and strengthens the lonely pilgrim in his mortal journey. He rejoices "in hope of the glory of God." In the city he finds an abiding rest. Earthly homes may be swept away, with the family circles that gather there, but this abides forever. The joys of the righteous are eternal. The holy incense of praise unto God is offered upon an altar purified by the blood of Jesus, and from a people redeemed unto the Lord in His earthly advent. The family circle that gathers around the throne and abides within this holy city, cannot be broken. The work of God endures. He has prepared them for eternal enjoyments. And when all earthly things are over, in the holy joy of the eternal city they shall bask forever in the light of His countenance. We rest in the Gospel Church as an oasis upon the great desert of time; but when we reach the end of this mortal journey, we reach the eternal fruition. To this great and final home of the blessed family of God we are rapidly hurrying. Poor and needy sinners, yet clothed with the robes of eternal heavens. Unworthy of the least of God's mercies, yet inheriting a righteousness that can alone meet the demands of infinite justice and purity.

As one of the poorest of the poor, yet, I hope, earnestly desiring a divine interest in these glorious things, I remain yours in fellowship,

Elder W. M. Smoot, Occoquan, Va., May 15, 1882.

Route 1, Hammond, W. Va.

DEAR EDITORS AND READERS OF THE SIGNS:

I will try to write you all another letter if the good Lord wills, but I have no subject yet to write on and what must I do. How can I write without a subject? Well, the Lord God carried Ezekiel out and set him down in the valley full of dry bones. I was not thinking of this scripture when I said, "what shall I write on," it just came to me and I put my thoughts on paper.

It is true he was carried out and set down in the valley full of dry bones, and they were very dry. God said to Ezekiel, "Son of man, can these bones live?" These bones were the whole house of Israel and that took Ezekiel in. The house of Israel was once called Jacob and Jacob have I loved. He had a brother by nature and his name was Esau. Were not Esau and Jacob brothers? Yes, but Jacob was loved and Esau hated. "Why? Because God purposed to save a people already given to his beloved Son. Yes, they are chosen in him, elected from all other people. The election is already over, the choice made before the earth was created. Solomon says, (Prov. 8) "Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight,

rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and, my delights were with the sons of men." I (God) created the heaven and the earth the first day, it was mine and my delight and my Son was in the habitable part of it. Jacob whom I loved and named Israel is the habitable part of the earth. Man was created out of the dust of the ground and is of the earth earthy. He was called man and Adam was his name. This man Adam was male and female in their creation and their name was Adam, one flesh one blood, and they brought forth Cain and Abel. Notice the habitable part of his earth, his part was Abel and not Cain because he inhabited Abel and put his law in him; that is the same law for Abel brought forth the firstlings of his flock, a lamb that pointed to the Lamb of God who in God's purpose was slain from the formation of the world. This law is written in the heart. It is the law of love, called a spiritual law. Adam and Eve sinned in breaking the law given to Adam and he was driven out of the garden of Eden to till the ground which he was created for. God said there is not a man to till the ground so it is all in harmony with God's purpose, his decree, foreknowledge and plan of salvation. As I have purposed so: shall it be, for I will do all my pleasure. It is my Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. It is my Father's good pleasure to hide these things from the wise and prudent and reveal them unto babes because it seemed good in his sight.

So the Lord said unto Ezekiel, can these bones live? Ezekiel did not say, yes, if only they will accept to live. He was no lo here or lo there, nor was he one of those that claims to know for he said, "O Lord God, thou knowest." Then he told him what he must do; "Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord." I will put life in them, these dry bones are the whole house of Israel, and Israel is my household of faith. I am their life and as I live so shall they live. Yes, see them shaking, like Jacob see them trembling. He put life in them, breath, flesh and sinews, all that was needful. As I have purposed and ordered it, that is my way of bringing my people and they shall know that I am the Lord thy God. I have all power in heaven and earth and none can stay my hand. All I have to do I to speak and it is done, command and it stands fast. I fail not, I will and ye shall. I will be your God, and ye shall be my people, thus saith the Lord thy God. His name shall be called Emmanuel and also called Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins; and called Emmanuel, God with us, for the Word was God and the Word was made flesh and dwelt with us. God with them, the house of Israel, who once was Jacob whom God loved with an everlasting love, while he hated Esau whose name was called Edom. God's indignation was against the Edomites, and nothing can change that for what the Lord hath done is done forever.

The son of man sowed the good seed, yes, the wheat, but while men slept his enemy, the devil, sowed the tares and sowed the tares among the wheat. It is no wonder that God hath

cried out "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Then they began to discern the tares and the wheat both together in the field and wondered how they were there together, but Jesus explained it to them why the tares were with the wheat for the devil sowed them and went his way, the way to destruction for his head was bruised and his works were destroyed. So all things work together for good to them that love God, for God first loved us and his love caused us to love him, yes caused Jacob and Israel to love God. So now listen, dear little children of God scattered abroad upon the face, of the earth, He will gather his outcasts from all nations into one fold for there is but one Shepherd, and then there will be one fold, and they shall be no more reckoned among the nations for they are my sheep and I know them and they shall know me because my sheep shall hear my voice. Well do I remember when I heard his voice. It was so penetrating it entered in and said, be careful for what you do or rather in what you do, "Feed my lambs***Feed my sheep," and I know nothing will feed them but the bread of life which comes from heaven—the broken body and shed blood of Jesus Christ which cleanseth us from all sin. It gives life to the dead sinner and causes him to love God and his people, for they are the house of Israel after the Spirit, being born again by the Spirit operating in them. It carried Ezekiel out and set him down there in the valley, there to prophesy what God purposed for him to do, and say like Jonah he was to preach the preaching God bid him. Jonah was carried over into Nineveh in the whale's belly. Yes, went to Nineveh the route that God had ordained and prepared for him in the whale's belly, for God prepared the fish and sent the storm just at the right time to meet the whale and the ship. No failure in the sign of Christ's death, burial and resurrection. It is a perfect work. The whale obeyed God's command, brought Jonah over to Nineveh from the raging sea and storm, placed him on dry land and he began to preach what God bid him and they (the Ninevites) listened and heard him and turned to God. O, house of Israel I will save thee because I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and with loving kindness have I drawn thee.

Jonah must go and preach the preaching that God commanded him for he giveth repentance to the whole house of faith, the whole house of Israel who are the children of God by the new birth, being born again of the Spirit for these are the children of God and the rest are the tares. "Edom saith, we are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the Lord of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down." He shall serve Jacob, but Jacob got the birthright and the spiritual blessing so Jacob have I loved. They were ordained to eternal life. Yes, the whole house of Israel were, whether Jew or Gentile for other sheep I have which are not of this fold (the Jewish fold). They being of the Gentile fold yet my other sheep I also must bring them for there is one shepherd and one fold. They are called by my name, yes, and I have

called them all my sheep. They are sheep not goats, not tares but my sheep. Now let them grow together in the field (the world) and at the harvest they shall be separated. What is the chaff to the wheat? The chaff protects the wheat until the wheat is matured, then the chaff is fanned away, the wheat put in the garner. It need not be protected any longer by the chaff. God knows best and all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called to Jacob's seed, yes, to Israel's house, the household of faith. Yours in the hope of the resurrection.

Elder James Linn
November, 1946

"From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the rock *that* is higher than I." — Psalm lxi.2.

There is something in this expression in our text, "rock" which seems, to my mind, to throw a sweet and blessed light upon what Jesus is to the poor and needy. The rock must go down to the bottom of the deep waters, as well as rise out of them, to be a sufficient place of refuge for the shipwrecked mariner! If the rock did not go to the bottom of the deep, it would not be firm; it would be but a quicksand. Is not this agreeable to the Spirit's testimony concerning the humanity of Christ? How deep that went into all our sorrows, into all our sufferings, into all our sins, into all our shame! However deep the waters may be, the rock is deeper than all; however deep the sufferings, sins, and sorrows of "Immanuel," God with us, were infinitely deeper. But the waves and billows beat in vain against the rock; they cannot move it from its place. So it is with the rock, Jesus. All the sins, temptations, sufferings, and sorrows of the elect, with the wrath of God, and the fury of hell, beat against that rock, but they never moved it from its place. But this rock is spoken of in our text as "higher than I." There we have the Godhead. For if Jesus were not God as well as man, the God-man, what support could he be to the sinking soul? What efficacy could there be in his atoning blood? What power and glory in his justifying righteousness? What suitability in him as a Saviour to the utterly lost? But being God as well as man, yea, the God-man, the great and glorious Immanuel, he could descend in his human nature into the very depths of the fall, and rise up in his divine nature to the throne of the most High; and thus, like Jacob's ladder, the bottom of it was upon the earth, but the top exalted to the clouds. Then will not, must not, this be ever, as the Lord is please to raise it up, the cry of our soul, "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I?" No salvation anywhere else; no peace anywhere else; no consolation anywhere else. Buffeted by the waves, and well-nigh drowned by the billows, away from that rock; but if led there, brought there, kept there by the blessed Spirit, finding it a safe and sure standing for eternity. And what else but such a rock can save our souls, or what else but such a Saviour and such a salvation, without money and without price, can suit such ruined wretches.

J.C. Philpot

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Nellie Dalton, VA 5.00

Jerald Hatchett, OK 75.00

Ernestine Sharp, LA 25.00

Loy Rodgers, CA 5.00

John M. Smith, FL 25.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER DORCIE SEMONES

We at Old Union Primitive Baptist church humbly submit to the Lords will In the passing of our dear Sister, Dorcle Cox Semones. She was blessed to live 96 years on this earth. Sister Dorcie was born November 19, 1919 and passed from this life on September 21, 2016. Brother Grover and Sister Darcie were married for 61 years. They were blessed with four children, Darell Semones, Melvin Semones, Larry Semones and one daughter Sue Mc Daniel. Ten grandchildren, and 22 great-grandchildren. Sister Dorcie was baptized in 1977 by Elder Hale Terry, and she served us faithfully for many years as our clerk. Her love for her Lord was manifested with loving kindness and her humble gentle ways. She had a great love for her family and the loving care they gave her was very special. We will all miss her sweet smile, but have those precious memories to comfort us. May the Lord reconcile us to His will. Sister Dorcie's funeral service was conducted at the Mayberry Funeral Home in Floyd County, VA, by her Pastor Elder Larry Hollandsworth. She was laid to rest in the Big Sand Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord to be carried to her eternal home.

Written In loving memory by, Elder Larry Hollandsworth, her Pastor

Done by order of the church in conference on Sunday October 23, 2016. One copy to be sent to the family, one for the Signs of The Times for publication, and one for our church records.

Elder Larry Hollandsworth,
Moderator
Sandra Hollandsworth, Clerk

BURNELL BUTCHER WILLIAMS

It is with sad hearts that we bow in humble submission to God's will in removing from our midst, our dear Brother Burnell Williams. To quote Elder Kenneth Key at Elder Julian Williams funeral "A great tree has fallen." Well now another "Great tree has fallen." At age 93, he had been blessed to attend his meetings, except the last one before he passed away. He was also blessed with wisdom to be a leader. He was a person we always went to for advice. We have walked together in sweet fellowship for almost 60 years with our dear Brother and his precious wife, Sister Mary Frances.

So many seats at Malmaison are now empty of those the Lord has called home and those that are unable to attend. He passed away October 16, 2016 at his residence. He was born May 26, 1923 to the late Sister Mattie Williams and the late Brother Floyd Williams. He was survived by his loving wife of 64 years, Mary Frances Stanfield Williams. In addition to his wife, he was survived by his daughters, Martha Jenkins and her husband Ed of Chapel Hill, NC; Susan Pritchard and her husband David of Blairs, VA; his sisters Thelma Hunt and Sister Naomi Houser, both of Danville, VA; his brother Wendell Williams of Athens, GA; his grandchildren, Jessie Decker and her husband Michael, Kimberly Jenkins, Mary Nell Jenkins and great-grandson, Levi Benjamin Decker. In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by his brothers, Elder Julian Williams, Leland and Garland Williams.

Brother Williams attended Virginia Tech where he was a member of the Cadet Corps. He proudly served his country in the National Guard. He worked as a sales supervisor with Smith Douglas Fertilizer, farmed tobacco, and raised cattle for many years prior to retirement. He served as clerk of the Staunton River Association. He also was a member of the Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church, where he served as a deacon and led the singing with his beautiful tenor voice.

Funeral services were held at 2:00 p.m., Wednesday, October 19, 2016 at Norris Funeral Services, Mount Hermon Chapel, with Elders Jimmy Gray and Mark Terry officiating. Interment followed at Highland Burial Park, in Danville.

We believe our dear brother fought a good fight, finished his course and kept the faith and henceforth is laid up for him a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give to him and not unto him only, but unto all who love His appearing. May God reconcile us to His will.

Written by one that loved him, I trust for Christ sake,

Peggy Wells

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." -- I John v. 7.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

Keep silence, all created things,
And wait your Maker's nod!
My soul stands trembling while she sings
The honors of her God.

Life, death, and hell, and worlds unknown
Hang on his firm decree;
He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be.

Chained to his throne, a volume lies,
With all the fates of men,
With every angel's form and size,
Drawn by th' Eternal pen.

His providence unfolds the book,
And makes his counsels shine;
Each opening leaf, and every stroke
Fulfils some deep design.

Here he exalts neglected worms
To sceptres and a crown;
And there the following page he turns,
And treads the monarch down.

Not Gabriel asks the reason why,
Nor God the reason gives;
Nor dares the favorite angel pry
Between the folded leaves.

My God, I would not long to see
My fate with curious eyes,
What gloomy lines are writ for me,
Or what bright scenes may rise;

In thy fair book of life and grace,
O may I find my name
Recorded in some humble place,
Beneath my Lord the Lamb!

Watts.

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EDITORIAL

Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I *was* no prophet, neither *was* I a prophet's son; but I *was* an herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit: And the LORD took me as I followed the flock; and the LORD said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel." Amos 7:14-15.

Elder Jerry B. Farmer

Sometimes a scripture appears which takes hold of my mind and causes me to stop and take notice. We do not know if it is of the Lord or not, but it seems to have such power and meaning that assurance is given that it surely must be from above. Sometimes the scripture appears to be in such agreement with our experience, that we rejoice in thinking that we may have tasted of those things that the saints of old were blessed to have experienced. Jesus told His disciples to rejoice because they would partake of the same things that the prophets did. He said, **"Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed *are* ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."**

Amos was an ordinary person. He was not a religious man, as many think of religion. In his day there were many who called themselves prophets, and they had followers that were called sons of the prophets. I think the things of that day must have been similar to the things going on in the Lord's day, and to the things we see today. There have been and are religious organizations, where religious men train other men to be religious as they are. They teach them just how to interpret their scriptures, and how to behave themselves in order to command the respect of others. And they are taught how to attract crowds, and how to get their financial support. They are taught just what to say and do and think. They have a certain way of dressing, and a certain way of speaking, and a certain way of deceiving the simple. But they are convinced that they are right. Nevertheless, they cannot even examine themselves and ask, "Do I have a lie in my right hand?"

In the day of the Lord Jesus, some of the men who did such things were called scribes and Pharisees. He said to them, **"But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in** *yourselves,* **neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves."** In this day they are called free-will or works Christians, Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, etc. They all have an outward religion with certain carnal rules and ways --- all based upon the works of the flesh.

Amos was not this sort of a person. He was minding his own business, and earning a living as a herdman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit. Evidently he had noticed the so-called prophets and sons of prophets of his day because he separated himself from them. He said, **"I** *was* **no prophet, neither** *was* **I a prophet's son; but I** *was* **an herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit:"** He made it plain that he was not one of them. And while he was attending to his regular occupation of following the flock, the Lord took him.

At this point we begin to see the parallels to our own experience. We were regular people doing regular things, when the Lord came to us. It has ever been this way. Think of Adam in the garden, when the LORD God came to him and spoke to him after he had transgressed the commandment. Think of Noah, when God came to him and commanded him to build an ark to the saving of his house. Consider Abram, to whom the Lord came and said unto him, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee." Think of Moses on the backside of the desert, when the Lord came to him and spoke to him from the burning bush to reveal

unto him His purpose. Think of Jacob whom the Lord found in a waste howling wilderness, and whom he led about and instructed, and kept him as the apple of His eye. The list of those humbled saints, who the Lord found, called, led and taught goes on and on.

Amos said, **"The Lord took me."** We are assured that the Lord made all things for Himself, and that He owns all things, but in His time He takes possession of His things in a particular way, and uses them in a particular way. The Lord took possession of Amos. And the Lord Jesus Christ took possession of His disciples, and He took possession of you, and I hope and trust He took possession of me. He came unto us and found us before we ever called upon His name. We would not even have known to call upon Him if He had not made Himself known unto us. He called his own out of darkness into His marvelous light. He called us to be a separate people, to come out of Babylon, and to touch not the unclean thing that we might be His people and He might be our God. There is no going back. What the Lord has done is done forever.

Amos said, **"The Lord took me as I followed the flock."** The Lord's people are found following the flock. How was it with you when the Lord came unto you and took possession of you? I can remember many, many years ago, before I ever knew anything of the old Baptists, someone made mention of a group of backward, ignorant, people that were so poor they only had one song book. And one had to read a verse, and then the others would sing it. This was said to mock them and to diminish them, but my heart went out to them, and a great desire was given me to know them. Was I following the flock in my heart and feelings when the Lord took me --- even before I knew them? Was not the love of God spread abroad in your heart for the Lord's people when the Lord took you, and set you upon a way that you knew not? This is the Lord's work and not man's. His ways are not our ways and His thoughts are not our thoughts. His ways and His thoughts are as high above ours as the heaven is above the earth.

The Lord said unto Amos. **"Go, prophesy unto my people Israel."** What a great shock it must have been for Amos to think he must go and speak in the name of the Lord to the Lord's people. How impossible it must have appeared unto him to go and do this thing he had never done, and to do this thing for which he felt to be totally unqualified and unworthy. I am made to think of Moses, and what he said, and what the Lord said, when Moses was commanded to go and speak to Pharaoh. **"And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I *am* not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou has spoken unto thy servant: but I *am* slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say."**

And when the Lord came to Jeremiah and revealed unto him that he was foreknown of God, sanctified and ordained a prophet, Jeremiah tried to escape. He said **"Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I** *am* **a child. But the Lord said unto me, Say not I** *am* **a child: for thou shalt go to all that I send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I** *am* **with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord."** So it has always been with those called of God. They feel to be little children, unprepared, unqualified, and unworthy. But no matter how one tries to avoid the calling, there is no other way than to go. God has purposed it, He has ordained it, and it must come forth as He has already seen it. "For he spake and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." And His people are made to be a willing people in the day of His power. When Isaiah was called, he was blessed to say, "Here am I, send me."

Moses went, Abram went, Amos went, Jeremiah went, Isaiah went, the disciples and apostles went, and so will you go when the Lord calls you and sends you. Some may think that the calling is just for prophets or for apostles or for ministers of the gospel, but all of the Lord's people are called to serve Him, and to show forth His praise. **"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate** *to be* **conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God** ***be*** **for us, who** *can be* **against us?"** His calling is powerful, irresistible and sure. He does His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. It is not up to puny man to fulfill His will and purpose. The Lord God's own almighty arm has brought salvation. All praise, honor and glory is due unto Him who alone is worthy.

I trust this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J. B. Farmer
8-7-2012

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Mr. Horton,

Enclosed is a check for renewal to The Signs. May the Lord continue His blessing upon all who endeavor to keep the Signs of the Times in publication.

Yours in hope,
Ralph Dale

9-2-13

Oh happy day when Christ shall come from on high
To gather His children and they shall fly
Far away to that glorious land
And be joined with the angel band

To sing forever His praise from on high
One sweet day no more to sigh
For here we sigh and long for home
In a strange land we do roam

Tis strange because tis not where we belong
For God did put in our hearts a song
He is the music that we do sing
And it has a heavenly ring

For when we meet we know our kin
And great love does then begin
How we love our kindred dear
Have nothing to dread and nothing to fear

Like a sweet flower that begins to bloom
His sweet fragrance scatters the gloom
Oh but could we forever be
Live our life on bended knee

There is great comfort beneath His feet
A great taste of love so sweet
Where we all are the same
For we know our Savior's name

What He did He did complete
There is no power can ever delete
For man will hate and try to destroy
But God don't play and we are not a toy

For His are kept by mighty hands
And none can break His mighty bands
For each of His is bound from birth
And protected well while here on earth

No matter what may come our way
He did set a rescue day
When He will come and banish the night
He is forever our guiding light

For this world would throw us away
Turn their head and walk away
But God did declare that He is God
And on my people the world would shod

Oh He did promise that He does rule
And would teach them well in His own school
He is the Master from which we learn
He set a time for our feet to turn

For to follow Him is a great gift
And from the valleys only He can lift
No matter what the case may be
The heaviest burden He does see

His love is eternal and has no end
And by far He is our very best friend
May His name be praised above all other
Besides Him there is no other

May we be thankful and blessed to pray
May we seek Him every day
May our feet walk the straight and narrow way
May we love one another along the way.

Janet Snider Taylor

VOICES OF THE PAST

DEAR READERS: To write for the comfort and welfare of Zion is a great task, for in viewing these matters we are reminded of the language of the apostles, and knowing our own imperfections we shrink from the task, but we hope to be directed by the spirit of humility and love that our words may be seasoned by refreshing from on high.

In writing to Timothy, second epistle first chapter, thirteenth verse Paul says, **"Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."** We take from Paul's language that we should be mindful of our expressions, and formulate sentences to express the faith of the house of God, which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, but with patience we wait for it, and we have faith given us by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now let us note how we are given faith. First the sinner must be quickened by the Son of God. Quickened means made alive from the dead which is the death in trespasses and sin that man became enthralled in by the transgression of God's law given to Adam, **"For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen. 2:17.** When the sinner is quickened he manifests life, not more action of the first Adam, but the life of the second Adam which is mysterious to the first Adam, and he cannot understand just the condition he is in. A great burden of sin and condemnation is resting upon him, and he flees to one thing and another until all have failed. Then comes the final cry, God be merciful to me, a sinner. It is then that, He that quickened and has been leading this poor sinner about and showed him all the weakness of the flesh, comes with power, and delivers him from this suffering for sin, woe and condemnation, and gives peace to his soul. After one has passed through these conditions what would be expected to come from his heart? The answer, Salvation is of the Lord, and this individual does not feel that in his flesh dwells any good thing, and all his righteousness is as filthy rags so he has nothing to do or think of himself that would merit esteem or glorify God.

Now one will ask, how then can they come to the church and be baptized? We must examine this thought and give expressions in the form of sound words in faith and love. The sinner has faith wrought in him by the power of God revealed, and he knows without Him he cannot have any righteousness in him, so he cannot hold up works of righteousness and is made to look unto the Lord from whence all his strength must come, and he is exercised in his heart which cries out, Lord keep me! direct my steps! That love is for all of like teaching, which is the love for the brethren. That love for the brethren will constrain him to desire their association and that they have fellowship one for the other because they are of the same spirit. This bringing together is the loving kindness of the Lord Jesus drawing them, and this child of God doeth not feel he, as a crea-

ture, has duties to perform in the church of God to glorify God, but just the opposite, that felt sense of unworthiness of the least of the riches of the house of God. The Spirit will not leave him in that wilderness, but draws him in the way to the house of God, where he will testify of his love to the brethren, and also acquaint them of his unworthiness, and what wondrous love has been shed abroad in his heart, that he could ask God to bless his enemies. This same spirit that has brought him to the church and made him confess that salvation is of the Lord teaches him, "that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world." So it is **"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord." Zech. 4:6.** If these things be in our hearts and we are moved by the power of love for the brethren to visit them, and associate with them in sweet fellowship, we can say, **"By the grace of God I am what I am,"** and when our elders begin telling the sinner he has duties to perform unto the Lord he is not using words of sound speech or as Paul wrote to Titus, **"Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine." Titus 2:1.**

Brethren, you note we have spoken of the child of God having duties to per form unto the Lord. Let us examine this matter and see if it is words that will hold good in the form of sound words. We know for us to say to one professing to have a hope; go and relate your feelings and experience to the church and through our exhortation he goes, performs the act in a physical way and is received by the church, and is baptized, and he has no answer of a good conscience given, and feel condemned he would have less confidence in our teachings than before. On the other hand we contact one that feels constrained to go to the church, and tell the brethren how great things the Lord has done, this one is directed by the Spirit, while the other one would be looking upon the acts of the creature as serving the Lord and to give him the answer of a good conscience. That which is born of the flesh is flesh. The difference between the two characters, to our understanding is, that one is laboring and is heavy laden, and the other is just waiting for a better hope, and not concerned about church association, and would rather live with the world than come to the church.

We feel to say to all our readers let us take heed unto ourselves, and our faith and love. Do we find these things were brought to us by obeying exhortations of brethren to unite with the church and be baptized? Are we resting with satisfaction in these things, and have we attained unto the desires of our hearts, caught at the substance and only caught the shadow? On the other hand if one is constrained in his heart to tell of the love of God bestowed upon him, he will come pleading his unworthiness and glorifying God, and all his life he will express his unprofitableness and feel to be only an unprofitable servant. We feel the apostle had these feelings when he said, "In me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." "O wretched man that I

am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" All the words uttered by man called prayer has no intercession to God unless the Spirit of Christ Jesus is interceding in their hearts and glorifying God, and constraining them to thus speak. The gospel is preached by the precious indwelling of the power of God from above in the heart by which the mouth speaketh. Paul endorsed this thought when he said, **"And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." 1 Cor. 2:4-5. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." 1 John 3:1.** How was it bestowed? By our doing those things which are spoken of in the New Testament, to those constrained by the love of God, or by having those things pointed out to us as a duty we owed to the Lord. If they were an act of the sinner's duty, it is of the flesh and cannot attain unto the righteousness of God. If enacted by the constraining power of the love of God, it is a righteous act, and is becoming of all such to fulfill those things which the Holy Ghost hath revealed to them. All that truly love the church of God will have a desire in their hearts for peace and welfare, and not a snare would they cast in the way of one of God's little ones, but they are willing to comfort and encourage them in the truth. We will close with this admonition: May we hold fast the form of sound words, which we have received through the inspired word of truth as given by the apostles, and not think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think.

Submitted in love.
Elder C. W. Vaughn
November, 1946

SONG OF SOLOMON

"I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys." S. S. 2:1.

Many deep fathomless mysteries are in the Book. Things that are hard to be understood (2 Peter 3:16) are found from the first to the last. I suppose that if it was not for the influence the flesh has in our judgments we would see clearly, but we have that to contend with from the days of our youth (Eccl. 12:1) even down to old age (Deut. 28:50). This being true we have much writing and preaching that must be given the scriptural test before it is fit for nutriment to the church (1 John 4:1; Gal 1:8). This is why things are a mystery to us and will continue to be as long as time lasts. A rose and a lily are not alike. One of them grows in one place and the other in a different kind of place. We must remember that this is one person talking. The marks of the rose and the marks of the lily belong to them. Some have ascribed this beautiful language to the church. With this thought I cannot concur. The church does not say such sublime things about herself. The Son of God has the right to speak thus of himself, and also

to speak with such endearing terms to his bride, but for her to take such liberty—never! When she speaks concerning herself it is an acknowledgment of her many shortcomings. (S.S. 1:6: Mat. 3:14; Mat. 26:75: Rom. 7:15-25).

"I am the rose of Sharon." This is spoken by the Head of the church, and the only one in and of the church that has the prerogative to say, "I am." Not any such foolish expressions as "I want to be," or even that "I will be," but this speaker has the power and right to speak of future things as already so, and of things and times of the past, present and future as taking place now. If this had been the church speaking she would not, and, moreover, could not have taken unto herself, the authority belonging only to her Beloved. A rose is a flower of great beauty and is known over the country·of Sharon. Not that He is a rose, but the rose. There is only one Savior. There is only one name that has power to save, (Isa. 43:11; 46:21; Acts 4:12) and he was, and is, and evermore shall be the only one that saves. (Heb. 13:8). Sharon is a country of plains and the word means that. Jesus is the plain that his brethren must come to. Things are not in common when some are on the mountain and some in the valley, but it is here on this Plain (Sharon) that the Lord's people all find him as everything they need. (Act 2:44-47). It is here that people of every nationality in the world can meet together, and feel at home. "What a lovely flower! What a calm, easy resting place! On this plain with the sweet fragrance of this Rose all wars cease; it is here that divisions never come; it is on this common level that fault-finding, backbiting, bickering and strife does not come; it is here and here alone, that the rich and poor, bond and free, young and old, high and low meet in peace and prosperity in a church capacity. It was on this plain (Isa. 40:4) surrounded by salvation (Isa. 26:1; 60:18) with the Rose of a Sharon in her midst (Psalms 46:5), that the church came through the Civil War in 1861-65. Although it may seem a digression, let me say here, that there is not a place on this globe that can have said about it what can be said both from a scriptural and a profane historical standpoint, about the Old Baptists. The late Civil War did not divide them. The Missionary Baptists, Methodist and Presbyterians did divide. They were not an equal, North and South; they did not esteem each other better than self; they did not have all things in common. But look at the church. There was not a Northern and Southern Primitive Baptist body. When our brethren from down South were in the Northern prisons they were ministered to by our brethren up there, and it was the same with our Northern brethren in the South. You young readers remember this and you old ones take new courage.

On the plain of Sharon where fruit abounds, the rose has become the plant of renown. Only on this plain does Christ have all pre-eminence: only on this plain are the inhabitants in complete unity seeing each other as better than self. "I am the lily of the valleys." Only one lily and many valleys. This word "valleys" means a different place. People talk

about conditional salvation, but how absurd to speak of volunteering to enter a difficult place! Yet the children of God must go there. It is a blighting thought to think that the time must come when we must go into the valleys. We so much dread the going down because we have been over the route going up. Going up we have heard the rich, strong voice of the Shepherd as he led and called us onward and upward, but when we could no longer see to follow him we soon were on the hazardous, circuitous route down and we felt that we did not have any guiding hand and voice. There is not any stopping going up or down. We must go all the way up in deliverance: our baptism in water and in tribulations is down into the water and completely submerged in the trials and afflictions of the Christian's life; our dying in Adam was all the way down into death but up by the resurrecting power of Jesus Christ. Dear readers, we must go all the way down into these valleys. How dark and cheerless they seem; how our memory goes back to former days when our zeal was likely and we were so interested in talking of the blessed One; ah, how black and rolling the tempest-laden clouds; what despair and gloom seized our tortured souls; ah, dear pilgrim, how dark and foreboding the caverns of evil we found there. The questioning and the groaning of our soul was for another glimpse of light, but the dark, heavy clouds had darkened the sun so that we could scarcely hope for it again. We had sunk so low that we wondered how that we ever had hoped in the Lord. In such an extremity and in our anxiety and ordeal of soul we began to see again ourselves.

Are we the person that has gone before the church of Jesus Christ and asked for a home? Are we, the one that has set in the assembly of the saints? Ah, what a deceiver we have found ourselves to be. In this dismal, low and gloomy valley the waters of destruction come. How we struggle to keep going but we cannot. Hope seems to be going. David, along with all of God's children, knew all this. "Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me." Psalms 69:1-2. Paul experienced dying daily as does all the family of God. (1 Cor. 15: 31; 2 Cor. 4:10-12). "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Psalms 116:15. Many times we refer to the corporeal death when we speak of this scripture, but I think it is applicable to this daily dying. If so, then this is a precious sight to him who is the lily of the valleys. Remember dear reader, that salvation is of the Lord. It is here in these valleys, shut in by mountains of sin and dark clouds overhead, that we get to the ends of the earth. It is here that Jesus, the lily of the valleys, comes up from out of the mire and flooding waters to rescue every perishing lamb. We were not looking for him in a place like this; we had been taught by men that he was God of the light places: they had taught us that he came to them that sought him; some had told us that our condition was because of our conduct, but every idea and opinion and

doctrine of men must be drowned in these surging waters; all powers of mortal man must be brought under subjection, and he must come to the end of his resources — to the end of all the earth. There, out of ground that he thought could not produce, the lily comes up; he finds that not only is God the God of the light, but that he is the ruler in the dark (Psalms 139:12); he finds that he cannot go to Christ, but that Christ comes to the poor, lost and ruined sinner; that the dark clouds were not dark at all, but only his vision was bad. (1 Cor. 13-12). What a precious sight to see the coming up of this lily. What a sight for the dear children of God to behold this beautiful lily in it purity, innocence and glory. The mind is unable to express the adoration and praise due this glorious One, but the time of singing has come because he has left the ninety and nine and gone into the mountains seeking the poor sinner that has become lost there. (Mat. 18:12). He takes him out of the horrible place of mire and places him on a rock, establishes his goings, giving him a new song.

Elder W.D. Griffin
November, 1946

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 04 / 2017 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

WHY DO CHILDREN OF GOD SUFFER

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." 2 Tim. 2:12.

It is evident in all the experiences of the children of God as recorded in the Bible, that they all suffered in many ways. It is also evident in the experiences related by God's children in this age that suffering is yet common. They are all experimentally acquainted with grief, temptations, persecutions, tribulations and all manner of suffering. Job was afflicted in body and had all earthly possessions taken from him. All the Israelites suffered under Egyptian bondage. David was sorely oppressed and conscious of his great sins. Paul was beaten with many stripes and was made to exclaim, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Yes this suffering is necessary, but why?

We do not suffer in order to merit a home in heaven, because Jesus fulfilled the law to a jot and tittle for us. Therefore, it is solely upon his merits that we shall inhabit that place prepared for his saints in after life. He has merited our salvation in heaven by his obedience.

We do not suffer in order to merit blessings in time for these were included in the "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" that was given to us by the Father through the merits of Jesus. These blessings that we enjoy in time are not merited by us as Paul says, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that (faith) not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should

boast."

We do not suffer to satisfy justice; nor to merit any blessing in time; nor to gain a home in heaven. We suffer because it was appointed unto us to suffer; God appointed to us this suffering just as he appointed Paul to suffer as an apostle, a preacher and teacher of the Gentiles. (1 Tim. 1:11-12). In 1st Thessalonians 3:3 we read, **"That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto."** So then, this suffering comes by the appointment of God.

It was also appointed unto Jesus to suffer and as it was necessary for him to have suffered so it is necessary that we suffer. Paul reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered. (Acts 17:3) It was not only necessary that Jesus suffer because of our sins, but it was also necessary in order to learn obedience. Paul wrote to the Hebrews concerning Jesus, **"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." Heb. 5:8.** So Jesus was taught obedience through suffering. We learn obedience by the things we suffer.

Paul told the Philippian brethren, **"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Phil. 1:29.** Even the suffering of God's children is a gift. It is a valuable gift for it teaches obedience. We are made obedient through suffering. Paul did not preach the gospel for filthy lucre's sake nor for any glory for he said, **"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" 1 Cor. 9:16.** The sufferings that Paul experienced drove him to obedience. God is a perfect teacher and will make his children obedient as it is said in Psalms 110:3. **"Thy people SHALL BE WILLING in the day of thy power."**

How could we have believed that Jesus was the Christ had we never suffered? It took the suffering of trials, heartaches, disappointments, vexation of our natural spirits, and failures in all our undertakings to teach us that we were not capable of saving ourselves and to make us to cry to some power other than ourselves to save us. Thus, by this suffering our God given faith was manifested. How could we believe in an allwise sovereign God had we not suffered so many disappointments to teach us that we are at best but vanity and foolish, and to teach us that "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps?" By these experiences God teaches us that there is a power that is sovereign and worketh all things after the counsel of his own will and no power is able to withstand him.

It takes the sufferings that we experience to teach us daily that we are nothing --- yea, less than nothing and vanity. This suffering is necessary to keep us humble and dependent upon the grace of God. This suffering makes us to be constant in prayer to the God of Israel for his mercies. We cry unto him daily for his continued mercies, realizing that we do not merit anything but his hot

wrath. If justice was meted out to us according to that we deserve, hell would be our doom.

Now we are comforted with this thought, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." Oh, blessed thought! Paul reckoned in his letter to the Roman brethren. **"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Rom. 8:18.** Now we experience sufferings; then, we shall experience glory. Now we experience death; then, we shall experience life. Now we experience sin; then, we shall experience holiness. Now we experience foolishness; then, we shall experience wisdom. Now we experience hope; then, we shall experience reality.

No other people suffer as the children of God suffer. No other people has experienced that pure heart that teaches that the best of man's righteousness is but filthy rags in God's sight. No other people are convinced that without him we can do nothing. Other people conclude that they have some power vested in them upon the volition of their own will. They think that they can, at least, accept or reject. We would be of the same opinion were it not for the sufferings that we experience that teaches us otherwise. This lesson is learned through suffering. May God be praised for blessing us with suffering to keep us humble and submissive to his will and at each others feet.

Elder E. J. Lambert
January, 1947

Elder R. L. Dodson, Dear Brother In Christ: I have been impressed for some time to write you a letter. I must make the effort so that my mind may be relieved.

First of all I want to thank you for printing the articles in that wonderful October 1945 issue of the Signs of the Times. In my opinion it is one of the best issues, from cover to cover, that I have ever read. It is filled with the sweet spirit of Christ, and his love to poor, sinful creatures as I feel myself to be. I have read and re-read it, feeding upon the sweet spiritual food combined therein. Your editorial, "Why darkness before Light," is a marvelous piece. It explains so beautifully the wonderful purposes and plans of God, the why and how these plans have been made manifest at the right time --- the appointed time. I enjoy all your writings on the subjects of Election and Predestination. They fill my poor heart with that hidden manna that comes down from above; and is dispensed to God's little ones through his faithful servants. I feel that you are wonderfully blessed in the understanding of that sweet doctrine which is so precious to me.

In his editorial, "The Risen Christ," Elder Griffin has expressed feelings and hopes far better than I could express them myself. He has expressed his position plainly, with which I agree. He has shown love and charity for those who may not share his opinion, which I hope I have for them.

Brother Dodson I want to commend you for your sweet spirit of charity toward those who may not see things as you do.

"Faith, hope, charity, these, three; but the greatest of these is charity." Much has been said about our faith in God. It would take volumes to contain the sweet experiences of grace which have been written, expressing that precious hope in Christ, that has been received by poor, sinful creatures here below, yet little has been said or written about the greatest of the three - charity.

It is only mentioned in the New Testament. Many think of it only as almsgiving; others think of it as love but to me it is the application to our lives of our faith in God, and our hope in Christ. It is the manifestation to those about us, that we possess the other two. It is the spirit of love, one to another, which binds God's children together, and keeps them ever at the feet of their brethren, anxious to serve and not dictate to them. It is the essence of Christianity without which we cannot live, yet why has it been so neglected? Paul explained it in 1 Cor. 13. He said, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the rift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." Surely charity is important.

CHARITY

The foregoing is a portion of a letter we received from a sister in Texas. It shows that she feels the subject of charity has been neglected. We agree that but little, comparatively speaking, has been said on this all-important and inexhaustible subject. While attending the Lower Country Line Association near Durham, N. C. in the early part of July, we used the words she quotes: "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity," as a text. We dwelt more on faith and hope than we did on charity, partly perhaps because we did not wish to trespass upon the time of those who were to follow us in speaking. We stated at the outset of our remarks that we were going to talk about the three greatest things in all the world to the spiritually minded, which we designated faith, hope and charity. We tried to show among other things that since the days of Abraham, faith, hope and charity had abided with the people of God and how glad we are that this is still true to-day. Without them how could we endure the burdens and crosses of this life. Faith and hope pertain only to this life, but when this pilgrimage journey ends, faith shall become sight, for we shall then see Him as he is and be like him, and shall be satisfied; and that which we have hoped for here we shall come into possession of, but charity, or love, which we have a little foretaste of here, shall have hardly begun, for it will still abide with us and continue on and on in a never ending eternity. We have thought of charity as the manifested love of God. God was not content to only proclaim his love for his people, but he actually manifested it in the gift of his only begotten Son, who came into this world of sin and sorrow and suffered ignomy and shame in order that he might ransom and redeem

from the powers of Satan those who were given him in the counsels of eternity. Through their transgression in Adam they became involved in sin and ruin, and were of themselves entirely incapable of extricating themselves from so horrible a pit, but according to that covenant ordered in all things and sure, in the fulness of time God rent the heavens and came down in the person of his Son, destroyed him that had the power of death, and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends," is the testimony of Jesus, and he also said, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." In laying down his life for it is people, he met the demands of the law in every jot and title, and he took up his life again that he might justify them and present them unto his Father without spot, wrinkle or any such thing; therefore there is none who can lay anything to their charge or condemn them before God, for the apostle says, "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Having conquered death, and having destroyed him that had the power of death, death is no more a frightful foe, and in declaring that he was persuaded that nothing shall ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, Paul puts death at the head of the list of those things which are all-embracing. This is why charity is the greatest of all. It will endure when, all time things shall have been swept away and forgotten. As the poet has well said, "When we've been there ten thousand years, Bright shining as the sun, We've no less days to sing God's praise, Than when we first begun."

If God's manifested love for us was so great as to bring forth from the climes of eternal glory his blessed Son, to-suffer and die in our stead, what ought to be the attitude of the recipients of all of God's benefits as a token of their gratitude and appreciation to him? It is easy to profess by word of mouth our love for God and his people, but many of us fall far short when it comes to putting our words into practice. Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." The acid test is beautifully set forth in the thirteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians, where Paul states in these words: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." He then proceeds to tell us what charity (manifested love) really is. He says, "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things,

believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth."

The children of the heavenly King should manifest their love one for another, and this embraces, in our opinion, administering to the carnal needs of our brethren where they are without the necessities of this life. The beloved apostle, John, says, "But whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." Be it said to the shame of some of us that we close our eyes and turn away from the poor and needy of the flock, so far as the things of this world are concerned. Have any of us anything that we did not receive? "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein." Whatsoever then we may possess even of this world's goods has been entrusted to us by an all-merciful God, and in reality it is not ours, but his and we should be good stewards and use it as unto the Lord. We agree that we should not confuse the meaning of natural charity with the love of God, but this does not say that we should not be practical about the things of God. Let the fruit of the tree show that it is a good tree. We should not be backward in showing our faith by our works. Some of our brethren seem to be fearful of laying stress on living what we profess for fear of being criticized about believing in creature works. The apostle James said, "Shew me thy faith without the works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." Let us not be hearers only, but let us also be doers of the things which pertain to God and His kingdom, that others may see our good works and glorify our Father which is in heaven.

Elder R. L. Dodson
November, 1946

For the Signs of the Times,
Buffalo, April 26, 1836.

Brother Beebe: Once more I have the pleasure of writing to you for a few No's of the Signs. I have often thought of the situation of the Old School Baptist Church, when you first proposed publishing a paper devoted exclusively to the Old School Baptist cause. We then knew of but few, except the Warwick Association; and even there they were divided — one after another falling in with the New School plans. Again when you came out in your first number against the Rev. A. Judson's letter to the American females, as almost everyone thought he was a good man, and would not write or do anything wrong. I well know that the learned clergy with all their papers would make an united attack, and almost concluded you must fall before them; yet after all my fears, taking into consideration the flood of error that was spreading over the land and deceiving many, and being strengthened by the promises in the Bible, that "On this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it;" and again, "There shall arise false teachers and shall deceive many, and if it were

possible, deceive the very Elect, & c., I made up my mind to advise you to go on, and promised to be one who would stand or fall with you, and to aid and assist you.

According to my expectations, soon after the Signs was put in circulation, the learned clergy with all their presses came out most violently against it; but when "the Sword of the Lord and of Gideon" was unsheathed, they fell like Goliath before David's smooth stone from his sling. Oh how my heart has been made glad again and again, when I have read in your paper, letters from churches, and individual members scattered in different parts of the United States, that was almost ready to say with one of the prophets of old, "I am left alone and they seek my life." How rejoiced was that prophet when the Lord told him he had reserved more than seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to the Image of Baal.

I will now tell you a little about this place; last winter the New School of all sorts held a protracted, or rather a distracted meeting; every art was put in motion to get people on the anxious-seats ; women; old and young were sent out, some with tracts and others to abuse and slander those that would not go; young women have induced young men to go to meeting with them, and after getting them before a house full of people, began to urge them to go on to the anxious seats, and to cry out, What will become of your souls if you do not; and if they could not succeed take the first opportunity to abuse them & c. At length some of the old professors became alarmed, and began to enquire for the good old way. I took some pains to scatter the Signs amongst them; and after a while the learned reader for the New School Baptist became alarmed and publicly warned his friends against reading a paper that was attempted to be put in circulation, falsely called religions, also to beware of those that circulated them, &c. I was glad to hear of that, for I concluded something was the matter. Since that time I have had the pleasure of meeting with a number that have determined to walk no longer with them. We have appointed meetings in a school-house where we meet together to sing and pray and have a coloured man, who was licensed in the State of Virginia, to preach for us. We think the time not far distant when an Old School Baptist Church will be formed in this City. If any of the Old School Baptist preachers should be passing this way, they are affectionately invited to call on us. They will find me on the corner of Franklin and Chippewa streets.

Yours in Gospel Bonds,
Amos Holmes

PSALM 8:1-2.

O Lord our Lord, how excellent *is* **thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.**

Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

GOSPEL STANDARD 1837
To the editors of the Gospel Standard

Sirs, — Having from time to time read several pieces in your work, sometimes, when my soul has been cast down, and I have been sinking in the mire and the filth of internal corruption, I have, under the power and unction of God the Holy Ghost, had a lift by the way, and have received a few drops from that ocean which, I trust, I shall shortly swim in through the countless ages of a never-ending eternity, I mean the ocean of God the Father's everlasting love, flowing in streams through the mediation of Jesus Christ, and flowing into the souls of all the election of grace, by the sovereign power and will of the Holy Ghost.

On reading chap. xvii. of the Acts of the Apostles, I find there was the same opposition to gospel truths at that period of time as there is at the present day. There are but two sects on earth; the one is called the righteous, and the other the wicked; the one sheep and the other goats; the one the children of God, and the other the children of the devil; the one are, or will be, regenerated by the power of the Holy Ghost, and they either know it, or desire to know it, and the other are sitting in darkness and the shadow of death, being blinded by the god of this world. And between these two sects there is a great gulf fixed by God's eternal degree, so that the one cannot pass to the other, neither in time nor to all eternity.

We are informed, that when Paul was called and fitted by the Holy Ghost for the work of the ministry, in his travels he came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews, and, as his manner was, he went in unto them, and three Sabbath Days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead, and said, "This Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ." We find that Paul was permitted to speak in the synagogue, a privilege which is granted but to very few of God's sent servants in this our day. A man may preach up free will and human merit in almost any place, but pulling down the creature, and exalting Christ as head over all things to the spiritual church, is what cannot be borne, only by few. However, there were certain lewd fellows, of the baser sort, gathered a company and set all the city of an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people, crying, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." And just so it is now; yet notwithstanding, God's sent ministers do and will declare the word of God, pulling down the creature and exalting Christ, declaring that he is the only King in Zion, and that he rules and reigns in the hearts of the election of grace; and also showing that the children of God must pass through much tribulation, internal and external, on their way to the kingdom of glory, and that they must wade through hot fires and deep waters. Sometimes the poor soul goes down to the bottom of the mountains and the earth, with his bars about him, according to his apprehension, for ever; and whatever he has known and felt in

days that are past, when the candle of the Lord shined upon him, he is now brought to conclude that it will never more be day with him, and he is brought with David to cry, that be "sits in darkness, and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and Iron." He sees the prison walls and the fetters that bind him, but he cannot see how he is to be set at liberty, and there are very few who can tell him where he it. The cry of the bondmen of the day is, "There is no need for you to be in this situation only believe and liberty is yours; exercise your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and all will be well." But these dumb dogs know nothing about it; for they have never been spiritually shut up in darkness, because they have never entered into the spiritual world. It must be the voice of Christ speaking with power to the soul, before that poor soul can leap like an hart, and a man must know something of the path himself, before he can teach God's family to profit. What does any one know of cold, if he has never been frost-bitten? or what does any one know of the effects of fire, if he has never felt its warmth? A schoolboy may sit at his desk, with maps and charts before him, and imagine he can navigate a ship across the Atlantic, but this is only head knowledge, which is useful as far as it goes; but let such an one stand at the helm, when the sea rolls mountains high, and he will find a difference between being there and sitting at his desk by the fireside. The one is learnt from books, the other is experience.

And thus it is with all the letter-taught, man-made parsons and their hearers. They can talk for an hour of what they know about the work of God in the letter, and ask a thousand questions as to what is the meaning of this passage of Scripture and the other, all at a distance; but it is one thing to talk of Christ in the land of Judea, and another to know that he is formed in the heart the hope of glory, being made a partaker of the divine nature, born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. But before any of God's children can come to this stage of experience, they must be plunged again and again into the ditch, by God himself, until their own clothes abhor them.

They may wash themselves with snow water, and make the outside clean, but the leprosy is within, and all the waters of Abana and Pharpar will be of no avail. No; the Syrian must dip seven times in the river Jordan, and then he shall be clean. (2 Kings v.) So it is with all those who feel their souls polluted by sin. They may try all the rounds and forms that have ever been invented by mortal man, and they will not be one whit the better. Nothing short of the blood of Christ, God's dear Son, can cleanse them from their sin; and this must be applied to the conscience by the blessed Spirit, before peace and rest can be obtained.

Every man on earth is as clay in the hands of the heavenly potter. They are moths, worms, and grasshoppers. The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich. He bringeth down and lifteth up. He raiseth the poor out of the dust of earth, and

lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit thrones of glory; for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them. How contrary is the language of God's word to the preaching of the present day. Man is to perform everything, and if he cannot make a good finish of the work of salvation, then Jesus Christ is to help him out. Whereas the word of God declares that Jehovah is a Sovereign in all his works and ways. "The deceived and the deceiver are his. He shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening. With him is strength and wisdom." (Job xii. 9-25.) But though a child of God may see these things in the word of God as clear as the sun at noon-day, yet unless they are brought to his soul with power, he cannot rely on them. I have heard ministers say, "Apply the promises to your souls, and take comfort from them." But let a poor child of God be brought into trying circumstances, through affliction in his family, want of employment, or otherwise; he tries all in his power that he may live uprightly; he may rise up early, and sit up late, and eat the bread of carefulness, and notwithstanding be baffled in all his designs; and sometimes, perhaps, he may be kept in this situation for years, God, at the same time, withdrawing from him his sensible presence, and then what comfort can he get from the promises? He may read that "God hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," but this in the letter will not set him at liberty, either in spirituals or temporals. I have passed through the length and breadth of this land again and again; but I know all these things are to stain the cursed pride of many of God's family, and bring them to the foot of the cross, that Christ may have all the glory.

The souls' welfare of God's family is not in the hands of mortal man, for God's counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure; but many weaklings are carried away with the wind of false doctrine; so that one comes with a, "Lo, here is Christ," and another, "Lo, there is Christ," till the poor soul's judgment gets entangled, and at times he hardly knows who to believe or what to believe; but blessed be the dear name of our Jesus, every son and daughter in his family is fixed upon that rock which the gates of hell shall never prevail against, and eventually they are brought to see it. Sure I am it is a great blessing to sit under a sound doctrinal, experimental minister; for if any one has gone far on the way to Zion he knows what it is to have his soul shut up in darkness, and then the beasts of prey come forth from their dens; the lust of the flesh and the pride of life, yea, wrath and malice in every shape. Beset by the world, by external professors, and sometimes by even the regenerated family of God, and, in particular, by the temptations of the devil, the poor soul reels to and fro, and staggers like a drunken man, and is at his wits' end. Then he cries unto the Lord, and the Lord, at his own set time, delivers him out of his distresses. And this is often done under the ministry of the word; therefore I say again those are highly favoured who can sit under the sound of the gospel of God's dear Son,

from one who has been long in the way to Zion, who has been brought from bondage to liberty, from Sinai to Zion, from his own ragged righteousness to be clothed in the righteousness of Christ; one who knows what it is to have a view of his own situation in the Adam-fall, and what it is to leave the old world in all its ruins, and, by the faith of the Son of God, to enter into the New Jerusalem, the city of the great King in Zion, and there sit under his sway in the land of liberty, having the royal laws of faith and love, and a manifestation of all sins forgiven, past, present, and to come. This is what the blood-bought family of God wish to enjoy, and a man who has experienced these things knows something of the bulwarks of Zion, and of the strong holds of sin, of the devices of the devil and the agents he employs. Sometimes the mighty train comes in like a flood, and seems to deluge all before it; and sometimes in a smooth, deceitful way, dressed as an angel of light; but let it be either way, and end is the same, to sap, if possible, the very foundations of Zion. But God is the God of his people, and he will be their guide even unto death.

Nottingham. A POOR OUTCAST.

PROVERBS 4:1-2.

Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.

For I gave you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law.

CONTRIBUTIONS

JANUARY 2017

Milton Houston, NC 5.00

Phyllis Stroud, VA 10.00

Marcus Terry, TX 5.00

Jane Mabe, NC 5.00

Jane Myrick, FL 15.00

Arlie Thompson, VA 5.00

Ted McDaniel, VA 100.00

Patsy Mitchell, TX 5.00

FOR FEBRUARY 2017

Bernard Cox, VA 5.00

Dan Delp, VA 10.00

John W. Schultz, WY 500.00

PSALM 95: 1-7.

O Come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

For the Lord *is* a great God, and a great King above all gods.

In his hand *are* the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.

The sea *is* his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry *land*.

O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker.

For he *is* our God; and we *are* the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice.

MEETINGS

LOWER MAYO
5th Sunday Meeting

The next 5th Sunday Meeting will be held, The Lord Willing, Sunday, April 30, 2017. Flower Gap Church will Host the meeting. The Meeting House is located at 3841 Flower Gap Rd.,Cana, Va. 24317. From US 52, turn west about 5 miles north of Mt. Airy, NC, on Flower Gap Rd. #691, at foot of Fancy Gap Mountain. Go 3.5 miles to church on left.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to meet with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

SKEWARKEY UNION
(Eastern Kehukee Association)

Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of April 30, 2017. The church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albemarle Avenue in Tarboro, N.C. Preaching services begin at 10:30 a.m.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union will be held at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church located on Malmaison Rd. / Blairs, VA in Pittsylvania County. Saturday before the fifth Sunday in April 2017 the song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton
Clerk Staunton River
Primitive Baptist Association

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held, The fifth Sunday in April 30, 2017 at Moons Creek Primitive Baptist Church. The Service will start at 10:30 AM. The Church is located one mile off Hwy 86 between Yanceyville, N.C. and Danville Va. on Park Springs road toward Providence N. C. We invite and welcome all Minsters and Brethren, Sisters and Friends of our Faith and order to come and be with us.

Elder Jimmy Gray, Moderator
Brother Wayne Edwards, Clerk

OBITUARIES

LINDA GOODWIN QUESENBERRY

November 6, 1944 - August 14, 2016

May God give me the words to write about our dear Sister. We at Valley View Primitive Baptist Church are saddened by the passing of our loving Sister Linda Goodwin Quesenberry from her earthly home on August 14, 2016. Linda was born November 6, 1944. She joined the church in December, 1986 with her husband, Brother Frank and they were baptized by Elder Raymond Goad on a beautiful Sunday, April 17, 1987.

Sister Linda was a very active member of Valley View Church as long as she was able. She had a lot of serious illnesses and she handled all of her sickness with such grace and faith. The Lord blessed her to take care of Brother Frank in his final illness.

Preceded in death by her loving husband, Frank E. Quesenberry; her parents, Ray Walter and Mildred Hazel (Pierce) Goodwin; three brothers, John, Jim and Ronnie; and two sisters, Patsy and Mary Lou.

She is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, Dawn and Tim Newland; granddaughters, Chloe and Lexi Harless; sisters, Kay Shipley, Carolyn (Rob) Morris, June (Ashley) Weaver and Nancy McNally; brother, Robby (Jackie) Goodwin; sister-in-law, Carrie Lou (Ray) Smith; step-daughter, Deborah (Scott) Segrest; grandchildren; Emily (Lee) Tucker, Allison Segrest and great-granddaughter, Abigail Kate Tucker; and several nieces and nephews.

Grave side services were held at 11:00 a.m., Wednesday, August 17, 2016 by her Pastor, Elder Raymond Goad.

Read and approved by Valley View Primitive Baptist Church on February 19, 2017

Copies to be sent to the Signs of the Times and family.

Moderator, Elder Raymond Goad
Clerk, Lena Duncan
Asst. Clerk, Naomi Agee

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

VOL. 185 HILLSVILLE, VA., MAY 2017 NO. 5

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
When those who love the Lord
In one another's peace delight,
And thus fulfil his word:

When each can feel his brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part;
When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart:

When free from envy, scorn, and pride,
Our wishes all above,
Each can his brother's failings hide,
And show a brother's love:

When love in one delightful stream
Through every bosom flows;
And union sweet, and dear esteem,
In every action glows!

Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love.

Swain.

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PSALM 93

The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, *wherewith* **he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.**

Thy throne *is* **established of old: thou** *art* **from everlasting.**

The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.

The Lord on high *is* **mightier than the noise of many waters,** *yea, than* **the mighty waves of the sea.**

Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever.

EDITORIAL

"I am the good shepherd, and know my *sheep,* **and am known of mine." John 10:14.**

Elder Jerry B. Farmer

When one in a carnal mind attempts to describe the life's journey of the child of God, the pilgrim's efforts and choices are always emphasized, rather than the saving grace and watch-care of the One that constantly delivers him from all danger and harm. It is my desire, the Lord willing, to be blessed with a spiritual mind in order to write down something of the true experience of God's elect, manifesting God's goodness and mercy, and giving Him all praise, honor and glory, which is His due.

The sheep is the best example I know, of any creature according to its nature, that depicts the life and needs of a child of God. And the sheep has been referred to many times in the scriptures for that very purpose. I desire to set down a few observations of the way a shepherd and his sheep get along.

It is almost defenseless against its predators, and is in constant need of watch-care by the shepherd. If left by itself it would soon perish --- if not by a ravenous beast, then surely by hunger and thirst, or by disease. So, it is necessary to have a wise and strong shepherd in order for the weak and depen-

dent sheep to prosper and survive.

The sheep is a very special creature indeed. It has many characteristics similar to those of a person. It is basically gregarious, and does not do well when isolated. It does best when surrounded by the flock. Nevertheless, it does sometimes wander off by itself. It is capable of love, trust, fear, anger, and even presumption. These attributes are quite noticeable upon pondering their day-to-day activities.

Little lambs are helpless when they are born, and totally depend upon their mothers for all their needs. After they grow a little, and notice others of their own age, their main desire and greatest pleasure is to romp and play with them.

Sheep naturally fear strangers. They will not approach anyone they do not know. And if a stranger should call to them, they will ignore the call, and if they feel threatened will run the other way. But the shepherd has been proven to be harmless to the sheep, and has earned their trust over time. Because they trust him, they will follow him. Jesus said, **"And when he** (the shepherd) **putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers."**

When a sheep is subdued, it gives up without a fight. Its only recourse is for the shepherd to come and rescue it. Many hireling shepherds allow the sheep under their charge to be separated from the flock and to be destroyed. But the Watchful Shepherd never permits even one of His own to be ultimately lost, because He has the power and wisdom to keep it. And above all, He loves it more than His own life.

Sheep come in several colors such as brown, black or white, or some combination of these colors. But many goats are colored much like sheep. So, a sheep can never be differentiated from a goat strictly on the basis of its color. Other features or characteristics must be taken into account to discern a sheep.

A sheep may become irritated and show it by butting, but never by biting. It may injure a person or another animal, but it does not set out to destroy. They may vent their anger, or seek to prove their dominance, but they do not rip and tear. Even though they sometimes get rambunctious, the wise shepherd knows just how to humble each one.

At a very young age the sheep know nothing of the shepherd, but after they mature a little they begin to notice him. Being constantly with him, the sheep learn to trust his kind presence and tender mercies. They begin to know his gentle voice and respond to its sound. When being thoroughly examined for, and cured of, any parasites, skin diseases, or cuts and abrasions, they learn not to fear his touch. And when he carefully shears from them their dirty, hot and heavy wool, how refreshing it is to be relieved of this burden in its season. When needful, they are gently tapped to keep them traveling in the narrow way.

The sheep actually learn to love the shepherd — because he first loved them.

They watch for him, and listen for his voice, and do not shun his touch, for they have been taught from long experience that the shepherd only seeks their good. The sheep follow him, wherever he leads. They know not the way to the good pasture or to the still waters. But the shepherd knows the way, and they trust him to bring them there and to keep them safe at all times.

The sheep are named, and the shepherd knows exactly how many are in his flock. If one wanders off, the shepherd, without fail, goes to find it and brings it home again. And the shepherd puts his sheep up at night in a secure fold, away from all harm and danger. The shepherd is the door of the sheepfold. And if an enemy of the sheep should leap over the wall in order to tear and destroy, the shepherd will promptly drive it away or kill it. All the sheep are kept secure under his protective care.

While considering the ways of a good shepherd with his flock, and the nature of the sheep, it has caused me to remember some details of my own travels. It is my hope and trust that you will also be given to see yourself in some of these things. I desire, if it is the Lord's will, to be blessed to set down a brief narrative of the life and experience of a sheep from its birth to death --- particularly one that is loved by a gentle shepherd.

The lamb is born into the world knowing nothing except to hunger, to cry for help, and to trust its mother. It looks to her for all its needs. But it knows nothing of the shepherd, who keeps it and also keeps its mother. It begins to see the wonderful world with all its enticements and pleasures. And little by little it launches out in wider and wider circles from its mother. It finds other little lambs with which to run, jump, bump, and climb upon any high place. It sees no danger or harm, even when it climbs very high or bumps its playmate much too hard. The other suffers, but the offender goes on, not feeling any pain. It bounces along looking for another one to crash into, or for another rock pile to climb.

The lamb grows and becomes stronger, and no longer depends upon its mother. Now, it eats solid food and has no desire for milk. At this time, it knows not the need of the shepherd, although it does recognize his voice. It presumes that it can fend for itself. While greedily looking toward the ground for more and better feed, it gradually wanders farther and farther away from the safety of the flock. Then slowly, almost imperceptibly, night settles in. The young sheep finally realizes it is completely alone. There are no more familiar sounds of the bleating sheep, or of the kind shepherd's voice. Now, silence, darkness and fear begin to reign. The shepherd is unseen, but is already on the way to reclaim his sheep.

Then unfamiliar sounds begin to reach the ears of the little lost sheep. They are those of the vicious and pitiless wolves. At first they are distant howls on the wind. After a time, low muffled growls are heard growing closer. Fear fully sets in, and the terrified sheep runs swiftly away as fast and as far as its strength will take it. But the wolves quickly close in. The little sheep

finds itself surrounded by the snarling wolves with teeth bared as they move in for the kill (much like our sins, when they find us out). Death and fearful destruction seems to be certain to the young sheep.

As the wolves attack and begin to tear, the helpless young sheep cries out in deepest distress. Then it hears the voice of the seeking shepherd calling its name. What a wonderful sound. Hope springs up, and the strong shepherd directly appears, and he is mighty to save. He quickly dispatches the cowardly but destructive wolves with the rod in his powerful hand, and carefully takes the little injured sheep in his arms. The shepherd gently carries it back to the sheepfold where the other sheep are safely kept. He patiently and lovingly cleanses it and binds up its wounds. He watches over it and nourishes it with every needful thing until it becomes strong again.

After this life changing experience, the wounded little sheep has a newfound love and trust for the shepherd. Its desire now is to be constantly near him and to hear his comforting voice and to feel his loving touch. The recovered sheep is now content to follow the shepherd, and is careful to abide peaceably within the flock. If any sheep should push or shove another, the wise shepherd quickly and quietly settles any disturbance in the flock. The trusting sheep now keeps an eye and an ear continuously toward the shepherd, and considers its safe place in the flock.

The Good Shepherd cares for the sheep all the days of its life, even down to old age. In its final days, when the sheep is too weak to keep up with the flock, the Shepherd picks it up and carries it like a lamb in his bosom. And its journey through the wilderness peacefully ends there as it began --- under the watch-care and tender love of the Good Shepherd. And during its whole life, even when unaware --- underneath were the everlasting arms. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

This was written in love, I trust, and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer 11-23-2008

CORRESPONDENCE

Lon D. Moon
2821 North Road
Gardendale, AL 35071

March 21, 2017

Elder Cleo Robertson
111 Livingstone Drive
Cary, NC 27513

RE: Claude Casey Hand Obituary

Dear Elder Robertson, Editor:

I do submit the enclosed obituary of Elder Claude Casey Hand for your consideration for publication in the

"Signs of the Times" if space is available.

Thank you very much.
Sincerely yours,
Lon D. Moon

Oak Grove Primitive Baptist Church of Jesus Christ
at Churchland, North Carolina
(Address: 8808 South NC Hwy 150, Linwood, NC 27299)
(Clerk Mailing Address: 1378 N Franklin Rd, Mt. Airy, NC 27030)
For assistance call Paul Hopkins at 336-987-7232

Circular Letter

The Church at Oak Grove sends our love and fellowship to all those of like precious faith throughout the country, and we trust as the Apostle Paul, that your soul prospers. For one's soul to prosper is not like the world to amass fortune or fame. It is more like the songwriter who penned a song "Lord, don't spare me anything that will draw me closer to thee." As one is drawn closer to the Lord, he or she may go through many sufferings, heartaches, trials, sorrows, griefs, and pain. Certainly, the opposite of what the world would think, but as Job and so many other of the writers throughout the scriptures realized, these experiences only caused them to see and understand the great mercies of a God who owns all things and controls all things and who was willing to leave the climes of Glory and come here and suffer far worse than anything we will ever experience, for the love of His bride, the Church. Having had these experiences draws one on bended knees to cry "Abba, Father!" and to truly say "Blessed be our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ." The world will never know the depth and sweetness of a "Lively Hope."

The Church at Oak Grove is Old School or Primitive in practice, believing in particular redemption of those chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. We are independent in our services, not willing to lord over any of God's heritage, always wanting to be at each other's feet and we welcome any of like precious faith to fellowship with us.

The Church at Oak Grove has for many years held an annual meeting the last weekend of March, and this year it falls on the fourth weekend, (25th and 26th) Past meetings have had visitors from West Virginia, Virginia, Texas, Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, Kentucky, Ohio, California, the Carolinas, and other places. We extend a cordial welcome to all who can come and visit us.

The Church at Oak Grove is located on NC Highway 150 near the community of Churchland, NC. Physical address (for GPS) is above. We are approximately three (3) miles north on NC Hwy 150 from exit 84 on Interstate 85. Those coming from the south will cross the Yadkin river and take exit-84 to NC 150. Those coming from the north may continue on NC Hwy 52 south around Lexington bearing into Interstate 85 and then to exit 84 (before the river) to NC

150.

Visitors from a distance usually come into the Quality Inn hotel, 101 Plaza Parkway, at Lexington, NC (Phone 336-243-2929). Some rooms have been set aside for the Oak Grove meeting at a discounted rate. You may call for reservations, or ask the clerk on arrival.

Several of the brothers, sisters and friends gather to meet, greet and fellowship at the hotel on Friday evening, and then, Lord willing, our services will begin on Saturday morning with singing at 9:30 AM and preaching at 10:00 AM. Many go back to the hotel on Saturday evening for singing and fellowship, and then on Sunday, singing at 9:30 AM and preaching at 10:00 AM. Lunch will be provided on both days and anyone wanting to bring a dish is welcome but not expected.

Your brothers and sisters in hope,
Elder Paul Hopkins
(Editor received too late for March or April issues).

ROMANS 8: 8-17.

So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

And if Christ *be* **in you, the body** *is* **dead because of sin; but the Spirit** *is* **life because of righteousness.**

But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

VOICES OF THE PAST

MATTHEW 24:27-28.

"For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together."

Under the caption of "Views Wanted", we published in the June, 1942 issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the request of sister Frank Loden, Quinlan, Texas, for some one to

explain the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew. To be more specific, she asked, "Does it mean the final end of all things, or is it the end of Legal Jerusalem that is under consideration." Thus far there has not been any compliance with her request published. Perhaps the magnitude of the task has deterred others, and while we realize in advance what an undertaking it will be for us to attempt to adequately cover the subject. Since our mind has reverted to it several times during the past year, we shall present such views as we have regarding it. The position which we shall take is that the language in this chapter very definitely and very clearly shows that it has to do with the end of Legal Jerusalem, and not the end of this natural world. What we shall say will, therefore, be for the purpose of substantiating this point of view. We have selected the twenty-seventh and twenty eighth verses as a text for the reason that we feel they, more than any other verses in the chapter, lead us to the crux of the matter. Let us here get before us again the words of the text, in order that they may be fresh in our minds: "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together." Whatever our Lord had in mind, there was to be nothing half way or incomplete about it, for his reference to the lightning coming out of the east and shining unto the west most certainly signified that it would be complete, far-reaching and all-embracing in its effects, and he used this illustration to show that, also, or in like manner and degree, would the coming of the Son of man be. Again we say, whatever it was Jesus had under consideration, it was to be accompanied by death and destruction, for he said, "Wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together." Had he meant the destruction of this literal world he would hardly have followed it up with any such statement as the eagles gathering around the carcase, for when this natural world is destroyed there will be no eagles or anything else left to gather together.

Let us now make a brief review of some of the things contained in the chapter. In the first verse it is said, "Jesus went out, and departed from the temple." The wonderful building or group of buildings which constituted the temple, which were constructed of huge and choice stones and requiring forty and six years to assemble or put them together at Jerusalem, were symbolical of the form of worship under the law, under which Jesus came as priest, and the very fact of his taking his departure from the temple indicated that the end of that world, or age, was fast approaching. In the second verse, Jesus said that not one stone would be left remaining upon another, so complete would be its overthrow. In the third verse his disciples asked when those things which he had referred to would be accomplished, and what would be the sign of his coming, and the end of the (that particular) world. He answered them first with a caution that they, "Take heed that no man deceive you" for, he said, many would come in his name, claiming to be the

Christ, and would deceive many. He then proceeded to enumerate the things which would take place before the actual destruction of the city of Jerusalem, or what it typified. He said there would be wars and rumors of wars; that nation would rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and that there would be famines, pestilences and earthquakes, in divers places, all of which would be only the beginning of sorrow. He continued by telling them that they would be delivered up to be afflicted and killed, and would be hated of all nations for his sake; that many of them would be offended, betraying and hating one another; that false prophets would arise and that iniquity would abound, etc., and he concluded this by saying: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Those who are familiar with the history of the Jews will undoubtedly agree that all of the things Jesus referred to actually came to pass, including the desolation prophesied of by Daniel, and the things spoken of in verses sixteen to twenty-four inclusive. If any one should question this let him read Josephus' works covering what the Roman Army did to the Jews. Jesus then said, "Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers, believe it not." And then follows our text. In this we are told (1) what the coming of the Son of man would be like --- the lightning which illuminates the whole world instantly and reveals the things of darkness. This had particular reference to the time when Jesus would occupy his mediatorial throne as King of kings, and Lord of lords in the gospel kingdom, and when that time came the ceremonial law with all that went with it was to be at an end. Therefore when the kingdom of our Lord was fully established here in the world the Jewish system was dead, and as it existed at that time has been dead ever since and will forever remain dead, for sacrifices are no longer offered in the manner that they were before Jesus came and set up his kingdom here in the world. We understand that the Romans had on their banners and standards the emblem of an eagle. To the Jews the eagle was an unclean bird, and vulture-like did the Romans at the time of destroying their city of Jerusalem prey upon them, their wives and their children. The temple was so completely torn down that not one stone remained upon another, as Jesus had said, and what the Romans did to the Jews symbolized what Jesus had foretold his disciples would be the end of that world. The Romans were the eagles that gathered together around that dead carcass of the Jewish dispensation.

Jesus having told them of the utter destruction of the Jewish economy, etc., then began he to tell them what would follow. He said, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth

mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Mat. 24:29-30. We do not understand that he was referring to the natural sun, moon, stars and powers of the heavens, but that he was speaking figuratively (1) of the total abolishment of the rites and ordinances of the Jewish heavens, and (2) of his appearing as the Son of man, coming in the clouds of the gospel heavens with power and great glory. Then be would send forth his angels, or gospel ministers, with the great sound of a trumpet (the gospel) and gather together his elect from the four winds of heaven. This is a portion of the work he is carrying on here in the world today.

Now, please listen, kind reader, for Jesus is still speaking and as usual when he speaks it is important, and this is what he says: "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." Those things were actually fulfilled before the passing of that generation, and there were those, John for one, who might be called as a witness, but Jesus' own words should seal it forever. He followed those declarations with these words: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Mat. 24:35.

The balance of the chapter is, to us, in the form of an admonition to those whom he calls and qualifies to follow and represent him here in this age in which we now live. As the Jews could not tell just what was the first or the last thing that began or ended the dealings of the Lord with them in that experience, neither do we know the exact beginning of God's dealings with us, nor can we foresee or conjecture what our end here in this life will be. Therefore it behooves us not to sleep, as others do, but to be on the alert, and do as our Lord told his disciples, "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many."

We have honestly endeavored to give the right interpretation of this portion of the written word; however, we make no claim to infallibility and, therefore, we recommend to our sister, and to all of our other readers as well, that they carefully compare what we have here written with the word of God and accept or reject, any or all of what we have said by that standard. Our desire is that God should forbid that we should intentionally attempt to deceive his people, but we may be deceived ourself, and if so we are in the dark and cannot shed any light on this subject. We are persuaded, however, that what we have presented here concerning this Scripture is the truth. We will leave the matter with our readers to ponder over, earnestly hoping that they will prayerfully read their Bible in order to see what it teaches.

Elder R. L. Dodson
April, 1943

A BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF THE LIFE AND EXPERIENCE OF THE AUTHOR

Elder John F. Johnson
Lawrenceburg, Ky., August 1, 1876

Our family record shows that I was born in Culpepper Co., Va., on the 7th Day of November, 1800, after which event my parents, John and Margaret Johnson, (formerly Margaret Sale), resided in that and in Fauquier County for About three years, and then removed to Monongalia (now Marion) County, W. Va. There were one brother and two sisters older, and two brothers and one sister younger than myself. Our names were consecutively Anthony S., Agnes A., Rebecca, John F., Nathaniel, Charles S. and Lucinda. All have passed away except myself and youngest brother, who now resides in Compton, California. The years of my minority were spent partly in labor and partly in acquiring an education and teaching school. When about twenty-one years old my father advised me to engage in the study of the medical science, which I did, and prosecuted it for about five years. On the first day of March, 1827, I was married to Catharine C. Mellet, and was principally engaged in building and preparing for a living until May 18, 1828, when my first son, Joseph Alva Johnson, was born, who is now somewhat extensively known in the United States and Canada as an Old School Baptist minister. I was somewhat engaged in the practice of medicine until October, 1829, when we moved to Henry County, Indiana. There I might have been called a pioneer, though the country was rapidly settled soon after my arrival there. The country was much addicted to chills, fevers and other maladies, and I was soon, engaged in a heavy practice of medicine. Long before this I had given the subject of religion some attention, and thought I succeeded pretty well in laying in a stock of what the apostle calls "our religion", but subsequently had been frequently alarmed at the sight of my native sinfulness. But about this time my fears were fearfully intensified. In my first convictions, being unmarried, I was determined not to yield to this state of moodiness, but would drive it away. It would ruin my enjoyment with my youthful associates, which I highly appreciated, being naturally of a cheerful, lively temperament. In order to banish those forebodings, if possible, I became a worse man practically than I ever had been. I had been taught and my pride impelled me to maintain an honorable moral character, and perhaps had succeeded as well as the most of young men. But to let it be publicly known that I was becoming religious would never do, would dash with vinegar the cup of enjoyment with my young companions. I therefore attended frolics, dancing parties and other places of vain amusement, always endeavoring to evade the watchfulness of my parents, who were accused of making me a pet or favorite, and who I always wished to venerate. But now there was no way of shaking off this intolerable burden. I had vainly thought before, when conscious that the eye of God was upon me, that I could appease his wrath by doing better when I got

ready; but now that subterfuge was gone. How clearly I now see that had the compassionate Lord been as ready to let me go as I was to wander from him, my doom would have been terrible indeed. But in the early part of the year 1830 he made me see, yes, feel that his arrows of conviction were not to be resisted.

"I felt the arrows of distress,
And found I had no hiding place."

The fearful catalogue of crimes that had polluted my whole former life was indeed a fearful sight to look upon. What I once thought to be little sins now appeared to be mountains. But what was I to do now? The Lord had warned me of my danger, but I had spurned his admonitions. A fearful cloud seemed to be gathering over my guilty head, ominous of a speedy and dreadful destruction. My wailing, my prayers, my entreaties were all unavailing. A wrathful and vindictive God had hidden himself behind the cloud that my prayers could not pass through. The lone desert seemed the most suitable place for me, for I desired not to see or converse with anyone. It was not the fear of hell that so terribly affrighted, but an awful view of my doleful, sinful nature. Sin indeed had become exceeding sinful, and God had forsaken, given me up, as I verily believed. Never can I forget one dreary, gloomy night, when restless, sleepless, mourning, despairing, I lay upon my bed, and thought that I could as well sleep upon a bed of thorns as there. My dear companion asked what was the matter. I told her that I was a poor, miserable, condemned sinner. She then asked me if I thought that the Lord would be just in condemning me. I told her that I could not see that he could be just in doing otherwise. Then she said she did not think I would feel so much longer. I then said I feared I should forever. She had passed through a similar scene not long before.

I lay thus restless until about one o'clock, when falling into a doze or stupor, (could not tell which; have often wished I had remained wide awake, perhaps I would then have known about the matter), all at once I was aroused by the sound of my name, not upon my natural organs of hearing, but upon my very heart. I was amazed, and wondered what it meant. One of my patients at the time was an elderly Baptist preacher. Had a messenger from him really called me? All this was momentary; but the voice went on, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee," in the same feeling sensation upon my heart. My trouble and distress were all gone, I knew not how or where. I felt calm and pleasant. I did not know the words were scripture language.

I asked my wife if there was a candle convenient. She asked what I wanted with it. I wanted to see the Bible. "O," said she, "lie still and go to sleep, 'twill not be long till day," I did remain, and had a refreshing sleep, for I had slept but little for several nights. Soon as it was light enough I arose, took the Bible, opened and read, but it was new book to me. The seals appeared to be opened, and it spoke in the sweetest accents. The promises were to me, and every line was fraught with consolation,

and I could not conjecture why it was so, but wondered why I had never seen it so before. I read it till perhaps half an hour by sun, when my wife asked me to drive up the cows. I went, and while driving them through a beautiful sugar grove, I saw my Savior; not with my natural eyes, for my head was down and he was above, it seemed, at an angle of about forty-five degrees, the loveliest object that mortal ever beheld, and I raised my head, expecting to see him with my natural eyes; but no. Yet the most beautiful scenery met my eyes that I had ever beheld. That beautiful grove through which the sun was brightly shining with all his morning glory, seeming to gild every leaf with a supernatural luster. Had all the leaves been hung with the richest jewels they could not have been more beautiful. The very heavens seemed to declare the glory of God and the firmament to show his handiwork. Overwhelmed and overcome with the sublime and majestic scene, I fell upon my knees and poured out my petitions to my great Deliverer.

For a week or ten days all was bright; my mind was carried back into eternity, and there I saw the way of salvation complete in Jesus, and exactly suited to my case. I believed, too, that what he had done for me was his own work, and that he never would suffer it to be undone.

We went to the next church meeting, and five of us, including my wife and self, related our experiences to the church and were received and baptized on the fourth Sunday in June, 1830.

I think the glorious view of my dear Savior had engrossed my whole attention and diverted my mind entirely from my sinful self, causing me to think my sins were all gone and I should be troubled with them no more. But after continuing for awhile in that happy state of mind I was made to look back at my depraved nature, and there I saw to my sad surprise that I was still in my nature a polluted sinner. Now the startling question was propounded, Am I deceived? Is it all a delusion at last? This set me to searching the scriptures, and I was much relieved in finding that the ancient saints complained of their sinfulness. Paul said he was the chief of sinners near the end of his days. I soon found that my way was not pleasant as I had anticipated. Many times since I have found this verified. Still new trials awaited me. The church increased until another deacon was thought to be needed. This was named at one meeting to be taken under consideration, and choose a deacon at the next. Between the meetings I learned that it had been whispered that I would be a suitable one and was startled at the idea. I set my mind upon another, and busily went around among the members recommending him. While thus engaged an old brother observed that he thought brother Johnson would make a good deacon. I begged of him not to harbor such a thought, pleading the short time I had been a member and my unfitness. The church was convened, voted by ballot, and the Moderator reported me chosen. It was a severe shock. I plead to be excused, but all in vain. I yet think that the choice was premature. I tried to content myself by con-

cluding that I belonged to the church and ought to be subject to her order.

But ere long a still heavier trial awaited me, and I have often feared that it originated in my own imagination. But be that as it may, the thought was impressed upon my mind that I must preach the gospel. But O, who was I? The most unfit, unworthy, unqualified in every respect. I tried to banish the thought from my mind, but in vain. There it lay like a dismal incubus. What a fool I was to harbor such thoughts. But there they were, a continual burden. But I determined not to let anyone know that I ever indulged such thoughts, but would keep them to myself. I could not, however, at all times drive the gloom from my countenance, and from that circumstance, or some other cause, the brethren suspected and would sometimes question me about it; but still I resolved to keep it concealed. One brother unwittingly drew from me an answer to a question that he propounded, which I discovered; begged of him not to say anything about it to anyone, but it was all in vain; it went out and was a general subject of conversation in the neighborhood, and soon in everybody's mouth. I was sent a messenger to a corresonding association. The meeting commenced on Friday and continued until Sunday afternoon. I started home on Saturday after the business and preaching ended, and wending my way along the dismal and gloomy looking road, feeling very miserable indeed, I promised the Lord that if he would spare me until the church meeting, I would lay my case before the church and abide her decision. But when the time came I could not take courage to do so. After the meeting was over I was shocked on reflecting that I had lied to God, and it was terrible to think of. On riding along the road with the pastor of the church, with trembling I ventured to ask him the question, "Is it not hard for a man to undertake to do a thing that he knows he cannot do?" He broke out into a hearty laugh. I cannot describe my feelings at that time, for I felt solemn as death. "Now," said he, "you are thinking about preaching." After some conversation on the subject he told me that he had said the day he baptized me that I would have To preach. I told him that I wanted him to advise me what to do. He replied, I shan't do it, only to tell you to go before the church next Saturday, and tell them what you have told me and take their advice." Here I was in a fix again; could I presume to do so? The day arrived, and after preliminary business of the church was attended to, the Moderator observed, "If anyone has anything to say to the church, say on." I sat behind him dumb, (was the Clerk of the church at the time), But could not venture to speak. He turned to me, and speaking low, asked me if he should name my case to the church. I made no reply. He then told the church that He had had some conversation with me about preaching; and turning to me again, Said, "Get up and tell the church how your mind has been exercised." I thought I Had to obey, arose, and spoke perhaps ten minutes, so full that I could scarcely find utterance, and then resumed my seat. While speaking I cast my eye over the audience, and could not see one eye

that was not shedding tears.

After talking the matter over, liberty was given me to exercise my gift, and then the question came up as to the bounds that should be allowed me. One named the church, another the association, when the old deacon arose and said, "Send it to the ends of the earth"; and so the church decided, giving me liberty to exercise my gift wherever God in his providence might cast my lot. This had not been customary with the churches, and still causes me to think the church reposed an undue confidence in me. After the business was done the pastor, without consulting me, made an appointment at the church that night for me, telling the brethren to come out and hear me.

Brethren, can you imagine what my feelings were at that time? I had never even attempted to utter a prayer in public. I had once tried to prepare myself for that emergency, for I expected to be called on. Being at home entirely alone one Sunday, I got my pen, ink and paper, with the view of writing out the nicest prayer that I could, then commit it to memory for use when needed. I went to work, and I think wrote four or five lines across the sheet, when I became so confused in my mind I could not think of another word to write, and the more I tried to collect my thoughts the more they seemed to be scattered, until I suppose that my mind was as much confounded as was the language of the Babel builders on the plains of Shinar. I tore off the slip of paper on which I had been writing, (for no one must see it) thinking I would walk out and commit it to memory, and then return and write more. But it is true that I never could, nor ever did commit those few lines to memory, and perhaps know as little today as to their contents as any who may read this. I could commit hymns, songs, scripture and other writings perhaps as readily as the most of persons, but this was too much for me.

Was I not in a pretty fix to get up before an audience, open meeting by singing and prayer, then preach? But I got through somehow, but the how I know not. An old brother remarked, "It can't be beat"; meaning, however, that it was true, and the truth could not be beat. After the church started me to work they kept me at it, would generally have appointments for me once, twice, and sometimes three times a week. I believe there were at one time five preachers in the church, (if I could be called one), and yet I was sent to do nearly all the distant traveling, and sometimes to labor under serious difficulties. Having a numerous family of small children, it often required all my diligence to keep them along; but in the dispensation of a kind providence I was enabled to maintain, raise and educate them in a respectable manner, and have now nine living in Indiana, Illinois, Missouri and Kentucky.

In the first few years of my ministerial labors I was in the habit of speaking entirely too fast, thereby exhausting my lungs considerably at times, especially when attending meetings for several consecutive days, speaking twice a day frequently, and sometimes even three times in a day. At times I would unconsciously place my hand to my breast as

a support, and frequently on retiring to bed would suffer much from pain in my breast, so that some of my friends (not Baptist) advised me to quit preaching, telling me it would bring on consumption. My answer was, if it did, I could not die in a better cause. I determined, however, to overcome the habit if possible, convinced as I was, and still am, that fast, loud speaking is very injurious to the lungs; while I am as thoroughly convinced that public speaking, even if it be loud, will improve the lungs, provided time is given them to recuperate the air-cells to fill up between sentences.

I make these remarks for the benefit of young speakers, and even some older ones, and think I speak advisably when I say that I am a living witness of the benefit of this precaution, having tried and proved it to my entire satisfaction.

After overcoming the habit of speaking too fast, I recollect passing through Ohio, having appointments published for fifteen days, and in that time spoke twenty-nine times, and my lungs were as free and more clear than when I commenced, for I was a little hoarse at the commencement from a slight cold; but after speaking a few times it passed off, and I felt no more of it. But perhaps I have said enough on this subject, and will proceed with my narrative.

I have now been engaged in proclaiming the gospel of my Master's kingdom for about forty years, and at times found it to be the most comfortable employment that I ever pursued; and at other times the most trying, perplexing and humiliating.

How joy-inspiring to the church maintaining the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace", with love and fellowship abounding amongst them, and then to feel the presence of the dear Redeemer; the light beaming from his lovely countenance, opening the scriptures to our understanding; to feel the emotions of love to him, to his cause and to his people, and then to find him filling our mouth when we open it to proclaim the animating strains, the heart-soothing messages of the gospel of the blessed God, to be a partaker with the dear saints of the sustaining, refreshing and solacing fruit of the Spirit, consisting of that love that expands the heart with a fullness more than it can contain, and which "runneth over", and spreads like a shoreless ocean, and peace that flows like a river, meandering the streets of the New Jerusalem, and driving from her enchanted precincts the cruel god of war, disdaining all carnal weapons, beating swords into plow-shares and spears into pruning-hooks, with which to cultivate the garden of God, then follows long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, driving from the residence of the family circle of the lowly saints the cruel demons of hatred, variance, wrath, strife, etc., leaving the family in the full possession of the above named fruit, to feast and rejoice in hope of the glory of God, while these beatitudes are participated among and reciprocated by the Saints, and while faith feeds for the present, and anticipates the exhaustless fullness of the inheritance of the saints in light. How cheering and how delightful to publish the tidings

of salvation under such circumstances.

But on the other hand, to have the sable curtains of night enshrouding us, and spreading a solemn, mournful gloominess over the entire household, no cheering ray to penetrate the doleful darkness, no pleasant fruit or cooling draught to reach the craving appetite, to cool the tongue or quench the thirst of the hungry, craving, thirsty sinner, while the lovely Lamb with his meat and drink and ample fullness seems to be hidden behind the cloud that our prayers cannot pass through; and withal, those demons of war, hatred, wrath, etc., lusting against the Spirit, and blasting like a withering mildew its precious fruit --- no gladdening streams of love or charming strains of music to break the solemn gloominess; and if we attempt to raise a song our harps hang silent upon the willows, and should we attempt to strike a cord it sounds more like a formal requiem than an animating strain.

"In vain we tune our formal songs,
In vain we strive to rise;
Hosannas languish on our tongues,
And our devotion dies."

Under such circumstances, to attempt to preach the gospel is toilsome work indeed; and we can as soon bring up the sun at midnight, as we can command and cause one ray of light to rise out of and penetrate this chaos of darkness; of which I have had many testimonials, and will here name one or two instances, as samples of the many that have thronged my ministerial pathway.

Not long after my commencement in that solemn and momentous work, I think it was on Monday, a most lovely text of scripture occurred to my mind. It appeared to contain all that was necessary to fill out an ample and complete gospel sermon, and I commenced laying up a store for my appointment on the following Sunday, and continued to lay up all the week. On one occasion I started to get the Bible to read, but turned away, fearing I might see something that would divert my mind from my good text. On Sunday I reached the place of meeting and found the house well filled; my text, however, not looking quite so clear and full as it had done; nevertheless I thought to gather up my store as I passed along. After opening the services and reading my text a dark pall seemed to have fallen over me; I wearied along for perhaps five or ten minutes and sat down, covered with shame and blushing with confusion. Another minister had come to my meeting, and preached to the people. I think now, it was a necessary chastisement.

On another occasion I set out early Sunday morning for meeting, where two of us, both rather new beginners, had an appointment at a private residence, and another good text occurred to me. I commenced preaching on it immediately, (in my mind), and was as merrily engaged at my work as were the birds that sang around me, and really thought that I was doing quite well, rather finely. A sentence entered my mind something like this: Now, if you could do as well when you get there as you do now, you might feel exalted. Well, I tried to pray earnestly to the Lord that I might never feel puffed up over anything that I had done. When I reached the place I found my brother

preacher there, and he, generally preferring to speak first, went on. After he was through, I commenced, my text not looking quite so full as it had. I concluded, however, that I would not give it up as I had done before, knowing that there was much contained in the text, and I would find it if possible. I stammered, stumbled and blundered along for an hour perhaps, or more, and finally quit, worse mortified than before, for I had more fully exposed my ignorance, disgraced myself and the cause that I hoped I loved, and had not only done nothing, but much that was worse than nothing. I went immediately to my horse to go home, and, as I then thought, to stay there. The lady of the house came to the door and asked me what I was doing. I replied "Getting my horse." Let that horse be, until he is fed, and come back and get your dinner, said she. "I don't want any dinner", I replied. "But you are not to go one step till you get your dinner." "I don't want any dinner, sister", I again said. She kept on almost scolding, and ordering me to come back, but I paid no further attention to her, but mounted my horse and started for home, as miserable as a condemned criminal. I prayed to the Lord for a little relief until I could get home, determined never to make another appointment to preach; but I had not proceeded far until the latter clause of the fifth verse of the twelfth chapter of Hebrews, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord," etc., came to my relief. I quoted on to the close of the eighth verse, and when I was through felt perfectly satisfied and fully resigned. I thought then, and think yet, that if the Lord ever answered a prayer of mine, it was the one that I offered on my way to the meeting, not to be exalted. But it was not answered as I wished it to be, for I wanted to make a fine preach, and then not feel exalted; but the Lord knows best how to humble us. I was reminded of the language of the poet when he said,

> " 'Twas he who taught me thus to pray,
> And he, I trust, has answered prayer;
> But it has been in such a way,
> As almost drove me to despair."

These cases are presented as specimens of the depressing trials that have besieged me along a large portion of my toilsome pathway, and that have been so discouraging at times that I think I must have given out long ago had I not "obtained help of God." It has often been my lot to walk through darkness and have no light; still I have been enabled to hope that,

> "He that hath helped me hitherto,
> Will help me all my journey through."

I have at other times thought that the word of the Lord has been "a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path"; and then would be ready to "mount up on wings as eagles, to run and not be weary, to walk and not faint". At times I was disposed to complain of my lot. As before observed, I was sent to do most of the distant traveling, had given up the practice of medicine, did not like it, and did not think that a man could make a

good doctor and a good Old School Baptist preacher at the same time, (am not yet certain that he can) besides, it kept me so much from my family and farm. We had settled in a new and heavily timbered country. In clearing out the farm and raising produce and stock for the support of the family, we were closely engaged. My labor was my principal dependence. I do not think that the churches helped me to the amount of ten dollars in the first five years of my labors, nor did I wish or expect it, for they, too, were in a new country, and had to encounter many hardships. I think that in those five years I was out on my professional work very nearly, if not quite, one-half of the laboring time; but we got along surprisingly. My sons were getting up so as to be considerable help. Joseph A. commenced plowing before he was eight years old, and the two next at about the same age. The land, though, was quite level, clear of rock, and very productive. After a few years we got our farm cleared of timber, and made our money principally by raising and selling hogs. I commenced in Indiana with a capitol of two hundred and seventy dollars, and when we left that country for Kentucky, sold property to the amount of twelve thousand dollars; I have always had enough to live upon, and such as was better than I deserved, and have no doubt but that I always shall have enough, hoping that I have the "promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." But the goodness and mercy of the Lord have been truly wonderful to me, in view of all my unworthiness. Of later years my brethren have helped me more, and for the last twenty years I have traveled quite extensively, and in the last passed forty years I feel well assured that I have traveled a distance that would reach more than three, and perhaps four times around the globe on which we live; but with all my troubles, and what I thought to be hardships, I have had some delightful scenes, and, as I hoped, seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and have had satisfactory evidence that it takes but a short enjoyment of heaven's beatitudes, communicated directly from the Lord, to compensate for all the ills that flesh is heir to. To meet the saints in company to worship, to find them all keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, to hear them with melodious voices hymning the high praises of their God and Savior, then to hear the glorious gospel of the blessed God proclaimed in all its rich fullness, and joyfully received with all in its divine benignity, emotions of love swelling every heart and beaming in every feature, one hour in such employ inspires more real joy than all the world can give.

"To spend one day with thee on earth,
Exceeds a thousand days of mirth."

And "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." But it is,

"By glimmering hopes and gloomy fears,
We trace the sacred road;
Through dismal deeps and dangerous snares,
We make our way to God."

However, the toils and trials of this mortal life are but momentary, and its boasted wealth and honor visionary and evanescent, while the prospect of a "better country" bears up the depressed spirit of the way-worn pilgrim, and we are enabled to unite in the solemn ditty of the poet,

"Are darkness and distress my share,
Give me to trust thy guardian care;
Enough for me, if love divine,
At length through every cloud shall shine."

Your brother in hope of a better country,

J. F. JOHNSON.

INTRODUCTORY LETTER
Castle, Henry Co., Ind.,
March 18,1846

Brother Beebe:

I for some time past have occasionally read your paper, and believing that you contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, I now, together with some of my brethren, wish to become a subscriber. You are unacquainted with me, and I will therefore endeavor to give you a few sketches of my former life.

I was a sinner from my very birth, and most of my days have been spent in a way calculated to destroy myself, and dishonor that beneficent Being whose liberal bounty sustained me, and whose matchless goodness and power preserved me. Indeed, I have been made to conclude that it was a signal display of his forbearance and mercy that such a rebel was suffered to live, and participate in the common blessings of this life. I was under the restraint of pious parents, and particualarly a mother, who lived many years and died a member of the old regular Baptist Church, who took great pains in teaching me many moral lessons; and I cannot say that I did not present to the world what men generally term a fair character. But the mischief was within, for there was a heart deceitful and desperately wicked above all things; and I did not, neither could I, know it. I often went to meeting, and heard, I suppose, almost all sorts of preaching. Sometimes I heard of the joys of heaven, and sometimes of the pains of hell. Heaven presented no joys to me; but often when meditating upon a frightful place of endless torment my natural fears were aroused, and I at length resolved to become religious, that I might escape punishment. I had heretofore thought this a considerable task, but found it (as the Arminians say) to be as easy as to turn my hand over; for I made, as I thought, wonderful progress in religious matters, but did not make a formal profession for fear of being less thought of by some of my young companions, (religion not being quite so fashionable then as at present), but postponed the time of making it public until I should change my manner of living, yet continued at some times to hold my religion very sacred, and at other times I would make such blunders as would almost cause me to conclude that I had

fallen from grace, and again I would set hard at work to regain the ground that I had lost. At length I took to myself a companion, but the business that necessarily followed had a tendency to wear out my religion, rather than cause me to make a public, profession of it, and I therefore lost it.

This is a short account of my religious career, and what was it that prompted me to it? The fears of torment. What did it consist in? self-righteousness, and consequently self-applause. How did I get it? By my works. How did I keep it? By my works. How did I lose it? By my works. And so it was all works and no grace; my deceitful, wicked heart was untouched by the love of God, I was deaf to the sound of salvation through a Redeemer crucified, blind to the beauty and excellency of a Savior, for he appeared to me as a root out of dry ground. I was destitute of an understanding of that eternal, unchangeable and sure plan of salvation that is exhibited in the covenant of grace; and such religion as I first had I fear constitutes a great part of that which is so much talked about and boasted of in the present day.

But to return to my story. I removed from Virginia to Indiana in the fall of 1829, and in the spring of 1830 I hope the Lord was pleased to dispel, by the light of his Spirit some of the gross darkness that enshrouded my mind, and enable me to realize in some degree my true character. But O! The malignity of my heart and the turpitude of my nature were awful to behold; and while he portrayed to me my miserably defiled character, he seemed to give me an exhibition of his own infallible purity. But how great the contrast! Uncontaminated by any of the crimes that blackened mine, he appeared indeed undefiled and full of glory! His righteous law appeared to be uttering awful accents against me, while vindictive justice, with stern grasp, seemed to hold his uplifted sword to slay the culprit; and what I had formerly thought to be my good works, and of which I had so much boasted, now appeared as filthy rags. And were dashed to the shades at once. I could now plead for mercy, but justice appeared to have cut off all its avenues. Then in my miserable condition I could only cry, "Lord, save, I perish", while an intolerable load of guilt seemed to be pressing me down, and under which I groaned, being burdened. It appears to me that if ever there was a soul that stood in need of sovereign, free, distinguishing and saving grace at any time, I did at that time; and those who have passed through a similar scene, and may see this, can probably better judge of my feelings than I can express them, upon hearing the soul-cheering words, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee," and upon feeling a bosom that had been so long filled with darkness, and a mind that had been so grievously tormented and writhing under a burden of guilt and distress, at once relieved of it all.

Never can I forgot the beautiful morning in the month of June, when the heavens appeared to open to my view, and present the loveliest object that a poor, lost sinner ever beheld. That bosom, which a little while before had felt as if it must burst with grief, now ap-

peared to be expanded with the love of God. The beautiful grove that overshadowed me, and which the morning sun was just tinging with its beautiful hue, appeared to wave with exquisite beauty, and bow with profound reverence to its all-glorious Author, while all creation seemed to reiterate the praise of that "Word" that had spoken her into existence. The evidence that I then seemed to have of my many, and aggravated crimes greatly humbled me, and the sight of the Lovely One that had borne my sins in his own body on the tree appeared to fill me with joy unspeakable and full of glory. When I opened and perused the revealed will of my heavenly Father and Benefactor, it was a most precious theme to me, but never had been before; hence I am made to conclude that the gospel was designed to give food, comfort and instruction to the living, and not life to the dead. I fondly, but vainly anticipated continual joy through my following days, but O, how sadly I have been mistaken in this, for I find still belonging to me a nature averse to all that is good; and I have been experimentally taught that it is through much tribulation that we must enter the kingdom.

I was baptized in June, 1830, with my companion and three others. It seemed to be a time of much rejoicing with the little church (Lebanon) with which we united, and with whom I have had many comfortable seasons, and some sorrowful ones mingled with them. I was called to labor in my Master's vineyard in 1837, and as I had been thoroughly convinced of his sovereignty in the dispensation of his grace and mercy, both in his word and by my own experience, I have been constrained to contend for it. Surely his love is sovereign, for he has loved his elect with everlasting love, and when they were dead in sins. His choice is sovereign, for they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. His grace is sovereign, for it was given us in him before the world began. His mercy is sovereign, for he will have mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thus he exhibits to us in his word an unalterable and eternal way of salvation by grace, and grace only, one which Satan nor sin has ever been able to overthrow or effect the least change in. Such a way as this is well adapted to the situation of his children, who by nature are children of wrath, and dead in, trespasses and sins, and calculated, too, to wrest the honor from the hands of man, and place the laurels and palms of victory upon the head of the Redeemer, who is worthy of all honor, glory, dignity and majesty forever. I have therefore had many trying scenes to pass through, not only in mind, but my body has not escaped violence.

But I forbear to say any more at present upon this unpleasant part of my subject. Suffice it to say, that the people who are trying to steal the name of Baptists, and who boast loudly of their great works in "the furtherance of the Gospel," appear to be the most inveterate enemies of the truth. I have found many

such in Indiana, Ohio and Virginia, where I have traveled; many who are called Baptists, but comparatively few who appear to be chosen Baptists. But I must not complain, for with those few I have had many comfortable seasons, for which I should continually thank my great Benefactor and Preserver; and not only for these, but for the manifestation of his kind, supporting hand in my much weakness and under all my trials, for "surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life."

Yours in the bonds of love,
Elder J. F. Johnson.

THE SOULS CONFESSION AND REQUEST.

"Behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns." — Hoa. ii 6.

The way I take most gracious Lord,
When not directed by thy word,
Then, I, from my experience say,
The Lord, in love, has hedged my way,

It's right he should, the word, says so;
If not, O Lord, where should I go?
To hell! I think, so truly say,
The Lord, to love, has hedged my way.

For thorns, indeed, to flesh unkind,
Oppose my steps, and pain my mind;
I must be so; the Lord does say,
"Behold, I will hedge up thy way."

Oh! what rich mercy, gracious God,
Is manifested by thy rod;
For every stroke to me does say;
It is thy Lord who hedged thy way,

And now, dear Lord, assuage my grief;
Cause thy sweet word to yield relief;
Grace give, that I go not astray,
Or still, my Lord, hedge up my way,

Do thou restore salvation's joys,
And then in praise, lift up my voice,
To thee, who, when I went astray,
Fulfill'd thy word, and hedged my way.

The Gospel Standard
Rusticus
Jan. 15, 1837

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MARCH 2017

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James Jones, LA	5.00
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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 05 / 2017
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

OBITUARIES

ELDER CLAUDE CASEY HAND

God, at His appointed time, has called from our midst a dear friend and Elder, Claude Casey Hand. He was born on April 4, 1923, and died on February 14, 2017, at 93 years of age. He was preceeded in death by his parents, a brother and a sister. He is survived by his wife of 69 years, Irene Hudson Hand, two sons, two grandsons, one granddaughter, one great-granddaughter and one great-grandson.

Elder Hand proudly served in the United States Army during World War II, as private first-class. He also worked for Alabama Power Company for 25 years and retired at the age of 55. His early retirement enabled him to be available to officiate a vast number of funerals.

He was called to minister and was ordained as an Elder in 1963. He served for 54 years. He served the churches of Hopewell in Fayette, Alabama; New Prospect in Sulligent, Alabama; Old Union in Winfield, Alabama; Harmony in Belk, Alabama; and Mt. Zion in Birmingham, Alabama. He also served Little Hope in Vernon, Alabama; Dorsey Creek in Bremen, Alabama; and Harmony in Hiram, Georgia near Atlanta, to the entire satisfaction of all. He was a great friend, a blessing, an advisor and an inspiration to many and was widely known and respected from Texas to Georgia, North Carolina, West Virginia to Canada.

Elder Hand was blessed to speak his last sermon on the first Sunday in December of 2016 at Old Union in Winfield, Alabama. As he began to get weaker with his illness, his God given gift was not exercised in the congregation of God's people again. He was perfectly resigned to the will of Him whom he had tried to serve for so many years.

Always vigilant and watchful and being ever ready and forward in the discharge of his ministry. He was ever mindful to entertain strangers and his house was at all times a home for his brethren and friends. He was a kind and affectionate husband, dad and granddad. He was highly esteemed by all who knew him. He was uncompromising in the faith and the doctrine of the Old School Baptist.

Thus, the bereaved family will mourn the loss of a husband, dad and granddad; the community a worthy citizen; and the church a beloved brother and Elder. However, we mourn not as those without hope. We of the churches he served, family and friends will miss him. His long pilgrimage is now ended. We hope to be submissive to the will of our Heavenly Father. May the Lord heal the breach by His grace.

Written by one with a like precious hope.

Lon D. Moon

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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HYMN

I know that my Redeemer lives;
What comfort this sweet sentence gives
He lives, he lives, who once was dead,
He lives, my ever-living head.

He lives to bless me with his love,
He lives to plead for me above;
He lives my hungry soul to feed,
He lives to help in time of need.

He lives to grant me fresh supply,
He lives to guide me with his eye;
He ives to comfort me when faint,
He lives to hear my soul's complaint.

He lives to silence all my fears,
He lives to stoop and wipe my tears;
He lives to calm my troubled heart,
He lives all blessings to impart.

He lives, my kind,wise, heavenly Friend,
He lives and loves me to the end;
He lives, and while he lives I'll sing,
He lives, my Prophet, Priest and King.

He lives, all glory to his name!
He lives eternally the same;
O! the sweet joy this sentence gives,
I know that my Redeemer lives.

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EDITORIAL

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all of one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Acts 2:1-4.

Elder Jerry B. Farmer

Jesus had led the perfect life without sin. He had spoken the words of life that no other man had ever spoken, and yet had been hated, mocked, and scourged. He then was cruelly nailed to a tree and left there to die the death of a base criminal, yet he had done nothing amiss. Nevertheless, no man took His life from Him, but He laid it down of Himself to redeem those He loved. He took His life up again on the third day according to the scriptures, and appeared to His apostles and disciples for forty days. He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. About one hundred twenty of them were gathered together in an upper room in Jerusalem and continued with one accord in prayer and supplication. They, by grace, were patiently waiting for the promise of God that they should receive power after the Holy Ghost should come upon them, and that they would be witnesses unto Jesus in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

This was to be a special time in the history of the church when the prophesies of God should be fulfilled. It was to be the particular manifestation of God showing His power in and upon his people as the church was about to be established visibly. When this manifestation came, Peter said, "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit

upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions and your old men shall see dreams... " The true believers had been gathered from all parts of the world to experience this outpouring of the Spirit and to be sent back to their native places where the churches were to be established. These things they saw and heard, and they were empowered for the purposes of God to be accomplished in and through them.

We are given a true account of the things that transpired there. The question in my mind is this: does this account only give a report of the history of that day, or are there things hidden in it that are relevant and meaningful in our experience today? Only God is able to give us the true answer, which would be to His glory and to our comfort and edification. No man can do anything of himself. Everything about the heavenly kingdom is in a mystery that is too high and wide and broad and deep for us to know apart from the Holy Spirit. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." May the Lord open to us the hidden treasures of knowledge and understanding according to His will and purpose?

On the day of Pentecost, it was manifest that there were true believers gathered together in one place and in one accord in obedience to the Lord's commands. I am made to believe that this was an example given for the church to follow today. By the grace of God, His people gladly obey the Lord's command to forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is. By grace, they also seek peace and ensue it. They are blessed to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Their minds and hearts are knit together in love and truth. The Spirit of God in them causes them to bear the fruit of the Spirit, which is: love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance against which there is no law. We see, in all the true churches that we have been blessed to know, that the children of God are given to walk in the light and to be in one accord. And they are given to speak the truth in love by the Holy Spirit that is in them.

It is a grief to mention, but there are many people who gather together in many places who are not doing so in obedience to the Lord's commands. They take hold of His name but deny His word. Jesus said, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" The prophet of old said, "And in that day seven women shall take hold on one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." So it appears today. Many take His name to hide their wickedness, but eat their own bread (have their own doctrine) and wear their own apparel (have their own righteousness). There are many today who hate the doctrine of Christ. My family and I experienced it firsthand. Many years ago, when I was given to teach the doctrine election among them, they rose up against my family and me and hatefully cast us out

from their midst. They vigorously deny election, true order, and the sovereignty of God. There are many who say that all men have faith contrary to the scripture. There are many who say that God wants to save everyone, and that salvation is according to the choice of individuals, and that salvation is not altogether by grace. But these things must be in the world.

All in the upper room in Jerusalem were waiting upon Him to fulfill His promise. They were powerless in themselves to cause anything to come about. Likewise, when we are brought together in meeting, it is mutually agreed, in the inward man, that we are weak and can do nothing of ourselves, and that we must wait upon the Lord. God's people have been taught to know that the preacher cannot preach without that power which comes down from above. All that are taught of God know that there are no 'able preachers' but rather 'enabled preachers', and that is only by the grace of God. They know that none can see, hear or understand anything unless their eyes are opened, their ears are unstopped, and their hearts made soft and tender to the things of the Spirit. They know that they must sit and wait upon the Lord for all things. I am made to believe it is much like the day when the Lord gave the loaves and the fishes to the disciples to distribute to the multitudes. The people who had nothing to eat were made to sit in groups and wait. The disciples had nothing to give to them except what the Lord blessed and broke and gave unto them to hand out. And they were commanded to take up the fragments after the people had eaten, and they took up twelve baskets. I am made to believe this was for the apostles' nourishment. It appears that the same is true of the preaching of the gospel. All must wait upon the Lord, for it all comes from Him. And the preachers are also nourished by the gospel that they are given to preach.

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all of one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language." As they were waiting, a great miracle occurred in their midst. They heard and saw and experienced things they had never known before. They heard the sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind. They saw cloven tongues like as of fire that sat upon each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. And every man heard them speak in his own language.

I cannot help believing that we have experienced a measure of this same grace of God from time to time. Can you

not remember sitting and waiting upon the Lord in your meetings, longing and yearning for the blessed experience of feeling and knowing the Lord's presence and power? Can you not remember feeling such a great love for your brethren and friends in the faith that you felt to be altogether in one accord with them, having nothing against any one of them? Can you not remember times when your ministers were brought before you in such weakness and humility that you knew the Lord was near? Can you not remember times when you felt that your ministers were made to be a flaming fire in their preaching, and you believed surely the power of God in the Spirit was upon them? Can you not remember when your heart burned with the glowing fire of love for Jesus who gave His life for you and suffered for you in sorrow and grief unspeakable according to the gospel? Can you not remember times when you were made to believe and feel that He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, and that the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and that every stripe He received was for our healing? Can you remember times when you felt that the preaching was just for you, in the very language that you understood and that fit your experience and condition?

Was it not at times such as these that you were made to know the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom? Was it not at such times that you rejoiced to believe that Jesus is the Word of God and that the Word was with God and the Word was God, and in Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily? Was it not then when you looked upon the great creation seeing that all was the handiwork of God made for His glory and our good? Was it not at these times that you joyfully acknowledged that God loved His people with an everlasting love, that He saved them and called them with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world was? Was it not then that you were made glad to rejoice in the gospel of grace, which says that He foreknew His people in love, predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son, called them out of darkness into His marvelous light, justified them from all sin, and glorified them?

I cannot help believing that when we are made to acknowledge the truth of the doctrine of God, it is because that fire is upon us and we are speaking in other tongues. A tongue is a language - not the gibberish of the false religions of the world. The Lord's people speak a pure language that the world cannot learn. They sing a new song in that language that only the redeemed of the Lord may sing. It is the language of grace without works. It is the language of a powerless people and an all-powerful God, whose strength is made perfect in weakness. The world hates it and tries to destroy it. This language shines the light on all the false doctrine, pride, hypocrisy, and the works of the flesh, and exposes those things for what they are. They hated Jesus for His words, and it is no surprise that they should hate you for yours. No matter what their circumstances, when

the Spirit of God rests upon any of His people, much as the Holy Spirit did back there in the day of Pentecost, they cannot help but hear, love, rejoice, believe, trust, obey, hope, give thanks, and sing that new song of grace in other tongues as the Spirit gives them utterance. This is our portion here in this world of sin, persecution, and sorrow - and it is enough.

I trust this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer.
4-19-2010

CORRESPONDENCE

4-18-17

Mr. Tony Horton,

Please renew my subscription for another year. I enjoy each issue very much --- some articles I read many times over. I enjoyed the recent article "Soldier of the Cross" very much. Use balance of enclosed check as needed.

May the Good Lord continue to bless the Signs and all who help get it out each month.

Sincerely,
Roland G. Allen
4235 3rd Ave.
Columbia, Ga. 31904
706-320-9336

Dear Brother Horton,

Enclosed is my check for two more years of the Signs.

Please use the rest as you see fit.

Thank you and all of the rest who work so hard to publish Signs, a fine paper. We get such a blessing from it.

Philip and Mary Janney
P.O. Box 728
Jefferson, TX 75657

ST. MATTHEW 19:19.

Honour thy father and *thy* **mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.**

MY PRAYER

Dear Lord:

Help me this day
Walk in this way
Of truth, by light
Of your love.

Help me to see
Beyond the 'me'
With gift of light
From above.

Sister Sherry Farmer

VOICES OF THE PAST

"AND HIS BANNER OVER ME *WAS* LOVE"- SONG OF SOLOMON 2:4.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

That portion of the Scriptures which is so appropriately called "The Song of Songs", abounds with a rich variety of the most clear and striking figures for the instruction, comfort and edification of all who hath an ear to hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. While from the carnal mind of man the spirituality of this inspired and inspiring sound is altogether concealed, to the saints of the Most High, when opened and appropriated by the heavenly Comforter, it discloses much of the marrow and fatness of the gospel of God our Savior. The manner of the love of God bestowed on the saints, whereby they are called his sons, and the vital an indissoluble union of Christ and his church, are presented in the strongest! possible terms. In the conjugal relationship of the Beloved and the spouse, the fitness and force of the song is most pleasingly appropriate. The spouse, whose noblest theme has always been to declare what her Lord has done for her, in the immediate connection of our text, proclaims to all the daughters of Jerusalem, that as an apple tree, he had offered her a shadow from the burning heat of noon, and supplied her with the rich fruit which he bears for her comfort and support. "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." While he had stayed or supported her with flagons, he had comforted her with apples, for the words of his mouth, the consolations of his words had been to her as apples of gold in pictures of silver. But he had not only seated her under his shadow, and made her to partake of the delicious fruits of the Tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God, but he had made for her a glorious entertainment, a cheering banquet, and had brought her to it. He had not merely made the provision for a banquet and sent her an invitation to attend, or offered her a chance upon condition of her willing or doing some thing, but she declares, "He brought me to the banqueting house," and thus she joyfully gives him all the praise. In connection with these testimonials of his sovereign goodness and distinguishing love to her, she adds, "And his banner over me was love".

Every regular army, every state and civilized nation, has its peculiar banner or standard, and distinguished from all others by some peculiar device or color, by which it may be readily known by those whose honor, interest or protection, it represents. As the church of Christ is a peculiar people, she requires a peculiar banner, distinct from every other banner; as a holy nation she requires a national standard, and as a marshaled host she must be identified by the unmistakable peculiarities of her flowing ensign. Hence the inspired psalmist says, **"Thou hast given a banner to them that feared thee, that it may be displayed because of the**

Truth" — Psalm 44:4, and in Psalm 20:5, he says, **"We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners."** Thus shall the church of God appear in distinction from, and defiance of all her enemies, "Terrible as an army with banners" — Songs 6:4. Four important considerations are presented for our instruction and comfort in the contemplation of the banner which our God has given us.

First. The distinct character and militant state of the church of God as she exists in the world.

Second. The identity and peculiarity of her banner.

Third. That it is to be displayed, and for what cause.

Fourth. That all her battles must be fought, and all her conquests achieved under it.

1.That the church of God is a distinct and separate people from all the rest of mankind, is abundantly testified throughout the Scriptures, and if this were not the case, she would not require a separate or distinct ensign or banner. To rally under any other than the legitimate banner of the government to which the citizens of any nation belongs, is treason, and subjects the offender not only to a forfeiture of the protection of such government, but to the dishonor and retribution in such cases provided for traitors. God has ordained that his church, or Israel, shall dwell safely alone, and that she shall not be reckoned with other nations; and the Captain of our salvation has declared, that his kingdom is not of this world, and by the mouth of his apostle hath told us that flesh and blood cannot inherit it. He said to a ruler of the Jews, Except a man be born again, he cannot see it, and except a man be born of the water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into it. The Holy Ghost, by the prophet Daniel, declares this kingdom differs from all other kingdoms, and that it shall break them in pieces, and consume them, and it shall stand forever. And that this kingdom is in a militant state, that she is in a state of warfare, is equally certain from the record of truth. Her members are chosen in a furnace of affliction, and they are called to be soldiers of the cross, to fight the good fight, until her course shall be finished, all her conflicts over, the last of which to be subdued is death. The marshaled host of sin, and death, and hell, are in the field against her; the world, the flesh and the devil are to be encountered and although ultimate triumph awaits her, and more than conquering laurels are already treasured up for her, in Christ her Lord, her conflicts, so far as relate to the personal experience of her members, which are here in the flesh, will not cease until the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout and the voice of the Archangel shall announce their triumph, and their ransomed bodies rise in the image of Christ's glorious and immortal body. Now she is, "As the lily among thorns". Like the bush in the devouring element, and yet unconcerned, and like the Hebrew children in the fiery furnace. Until the war is ended, until the clash of arms, the smoke and carnage of the war shall cease, her banner must continue to wave, and all her valiant men to rally round it, having on the whole armor of

God.

2. The identity and peculiarity of the banner is expressed in the word of our text. It is, "Love." This is his banner, and it differs from all other banners. No human force was ever marshaled for a deadly conflict under such an ensign as this. Hatred, which is the very opposite to this banner, is displayed in all the hostile movements of the sons of men. Hatred, instead of love, brought Cain into the field to slay his righteous brother; and hatred, instead of love, has characterized all scenes of slaughter which have drenched the earth with human gore, from the days of Cain to the present day. Hatred, instead of love, makes the feet of men swift to shed blood, because there is no fear of God before their eyes, and the way of peace they have not known. How striking then is the contrast between the banner of Christ, which waves in righteousness over the Lord's host, and that of the enemies of the Lord. All the opposition of men and devils against God and truth, and against his people, is instigated by hatred to God, to holiness, to truth and righteousness, and therefore the banner over the church is the more clearly identified, and the more readily known by those unto whom it is given, and over whom it is unfurled. His banner over them is love.

3. This banner must be displayed. It is not to be concealed, furled, or laid aside. None but pirates on the high seas, or lawless banditti upon the land, will fight without displaying the banner under which they fight. It must be displayed, because God has authorized and commanded it; therefore we cannot, without disobeying him, conceal it. It must be displayed, because the armies of Israel can neither be identified by friends or foes, unless they display the love of God, which is over them, as well in the field of conflict, as in the banqueting festivities of the bride, the Lamb's wife. How is an individual to be recognized as a child of God, and an heir of glory, if he gives no evidence that the love of God dwells in him, being shed abroad in his heart, as influencing his walk and conversation? How, in the absence of the love of God, which centers in Christ, fixes upon his doctrine, ordinances and the order and provisions of his house, to be distinguished from the world? How shall it be said of them, Behold how they love one another, if they display not this banner? How can they love one another with a pure heart fervently, if love, which is the banner, be unseen among them? It must be displayed because of the truth. Only by this banner can we show our relish for, or attachment to, the truth as it is in Jesus. This being his banner, or his love, it differs from the carnal passions of the flesh, human affections are fickle, wavering and transient, God's love is immutable, eternal, and he rests in it. The creature's love has its element in this world, and if it predominates in us, the love of the Father dwells not in us. His banner, or his love, has its origin in God, it is the banner he has given, the love which he has bestowed, the greater love wherewith he has loved us, and as it came from God, so it will center in him, and it will rest on the same objects on which it rested before it was communi-

cated to us, it will, in us continue to "love the thing our Father loves, and hate the work he hates." We cannnt possess it and hate God, his people, his doctrine, his authority or his government, for love is of God, and he that loveth is born of God.

4. Under the banner of his love we are to fight the good fight, finish our course, and keep the faith. Paul says, **"And if a man also strives for masteries, yet he is not crowned, except he strive lawfully"** - 2 Tim. 2:5. Although the saints are not to strive for mastery over each other, or to be lords over God's heritage, yet they are to strive against sin, and for mastery over all the lusts of their flesh, and to keep their bodies under, and to contend earnestly for the faith and order of the gospel. In all this strife they are required not only to strive, but to strive lawfully, or they fight as one that beateth the air - 1 Cor. 9:26. The law of the kingdom to which we belong, as the disciples of our Redeemer, is written, not on tables of stone, but on the tables of the heart, and in the inward parts of his subjects, and this law directs that all our fightings shall be performed under his banner, which is love. We have already hinted that to fight in any case, without a display of the love of God in and over us, is piracy, consequently unlawful and ineffectual. If called to resist unto blood, striving against sin, let it be clearly seen that the love of God, of truth and righteousness, instead of vain ambition, or the gratification of our carnal lusts, is what stimulates us. They who hold the truth in unrighteousness, may feel a vain ambition to carry their points, when their own fame and selfish pride, rather than a zeal for the honor of God, and a regard for the banner of his love, predominates in them. The truth of God requires no unlawful defense; better by far, that the ark of the Lord jostle on the new cart, than that we attempt to steady it by unlawful interference. When the disciples proposed to call for the fire from heaven to consume their enemies, Jesus rebuked them. Their impatience and contemplated vengeance, made no display of the banner of God's love. And when Peter proposed to shield his Lord from the assaults of his enemies, by the use of carnal weapons, he savored of the things which be of men, and not the things which be of God and he was sharply rebuked, and informed that he that shall resort to the force of arms, even in defense of Christ and his cause, shall perish by the sword. When we stand up to preach Christ, and him crucified, all our orthodoxy, eloquence and zeal, will be ineffectual, if the banner of the love of God be not displayed as that which moves us to action. A selfish ambition to carry our points, that we may exult over a vanquished opposer, that we may be regarded as the more expert or talented, is an unworthy and unlawful motive, and offers an insult to our glorious banner. Love, which is the lawful standard, worketh no ill to our neighbors, hence we cannot, under the banner of love, call for fire to burn them, nor for fines, or imprisonments to punish them for their assaults on us, or on the cause; for vengeance belongs to God, and not to us; he will administer it at the proper time and in a righteous manner.

Proscription, persecution, the infliction of personal injuries, are the armor of the powers of darkness but they cannot be under the banner of God's love. The love of God will constrain all the soldiers of the cross to fight manfully, and to die rather than sacrifice one principle of truth, or make any liege with the common enemy; but it will never lead us to fight for personal renown, or self – aggrandizement. It being then unlawful for us to fight the powers of earth and hell, from any other impulse than that inspired by the banner of love, how much more unbecoming for us to contend with our brethren, who are of the household of God. Can we love God supremely, and hate our brother? What if we have seen in our brother, defection, infirmity or departure from the gospel, should this enkindle our wrath, or be made a pretext for violence? Truly we are called on to protest against this sin, and to strive to reclaim him, but it must be in love, or it cannot display our banner. If we can know what spirit we are of, it will be easy to determine whether we are prompted by the love of God, or by some fleshly feeling, when we labor with an offending brother or sister. When they offend, or trespass against us, if we ourselves be under the banner of his love, we shall be grieved, and feel disposed to labor to restore the offender, in the spirit of meekness; but if not actuated by love, our carnal passions will be aroused, the old man offended, or made angry, and we shall feel inclined to deal in retribution, for the injury which we suppose we have received. In our pilgrimage of more than forty years, we have witnessed cases where brethren have labored most perseveringly to prove the guilt of an offending brother, and with a seeming diligence to fortify themselves with scriptural authority for every movement, and yet instead of displaying the banner of love, in a kind brotherly desire for the recovery of the brother, a settled determination to head him off at every point, and to lower him in the estimation of all his brethren, and finally to have him excluded from the fellowship and society of the church, is far more prominently displayed, than is the banner of God's love. Can this be strivingly lawful? Can such as strive in this manner, be crowned? Brethren in the ministry have sometimes become disaffected towards each other, sometimes having a just cause, and sometimes from jealousy, or envy, and instead of displaying the banner of love, a disposition to bite and devour has been betrayed. Carnal nature has shown its teeth, and claws; hard speeches, sly hints, cruel and ungenerous insinuations, have been thrown out, the brother's character assailed, his reputation stained, much private and confidential whispering, but not to the accused, and with great seeming cautiousness, for the ostensible object of having counsel and advice on the subject, but in reality to get brethren committed, while a settled determination is fixed, to make the suffering brother appear in the worst possible light. His words are scrutinized, perverted, and made to imply what we all know he never intended, and all this to gratify some carnal propensity, or passion of the old man. How dwells the love of God in such,

while thus proceeding? Where is the banner of divine love under which they have enlisted? The banner under which the great Captain of salvation grappled with the powers of darkness, encountered sin, death and hell, for our redemption, was the banner of his love. Are we his followers? Does his love dwell in our hearts, and wave over our heads? Then let us display this banner in all our conflicts. The little personal injuries we sustain, are but for a short season, the storm will soon be over, and they shall only ripen us for that glory which God has laid up in heaven for us, and for that crown which the righteous Judge shall put upon us in that day. Unto us it is given, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. If then we be reviled, let us remember that we are not to revile again. If we would win the misguided brother, who has injured us in our persons, property, reputation or feelings, let us display to him the banner of love. If anything will reclaim him; if anything is calculated to subdue his heart, and lead him to reflect profitably on the error of his cause, it will be a sight of the banner; a conviction that his blows are leveled against one who sincerely and tenderly loves him. If under this banner we cannot reclaim him by a first, and second step, of faithful labor, we must tell the matter to the church, and submit quietly to its righteous decision.

Having considered the love of God, as the true banner under which the saints are to rally for the defense of the truth, under which all their battles must be fought, and by which they are destined to triumph over all the powers of the darkness of this world, the corruptions of the flesh, and the temptations of Satan, and the certainty of victory through him that had loved them, and spread this glorious banner over them, and also of the delightful privilege allowed them, while in their militant state, from time to time, of banqueting with their Lord under the protection of this banner of love, we will now offer a few remarks by way of admonition to the children of God, to beware of all other standards, especially of the counterfeits of this banner of our Redeemer.

It is important that soldiers should be well acquainted with their own banner, in order that they may easily distinguish it from all others; otherwise in the time of battle, they may haply be found fighting against their brethren, and weakening the hands of those whom they in reality love, and in whose defense they would cheerfully lay down their lives. One of the wily tricks of the adversary, has often been to decoy the inexperienced soldier of the cross, by exhibiting a counterfeit banner of love; which, although easily detected by the practiced eye of the veteran soldier, who is not ignorant of Satan's devices, is calculated to deceive some of the new recruits; for, although the false standard is composed of love, yet it is not the love of God. How often have even christians been temporarily deceived by a display of human, instead of divine love. The Captain of salvation has pointed out to his soldiers the difference; and to his admonitions we would do well to take heed, lest at any time we should let them slip. "He that loveth the world, the love of the

Father is not in him." The affections, as well as all the other lusts of the old man, are to be crucified; for we cannot possibly retain them, and enjoy the love of God dwelling in us.

Men who profess to be ministers of Jesus, and soldiers of the cross, often tell how much they love souls; how ardently they desire the salvation of every body. They love all the various orders, sects and denominations of religionists, with perhaps the single exception of that sect and which is everywhere spoken against. They love all kinds of doctrine that will gain proselytes, and produce excitement of the natural or fleshly passions of the multitude; they love all the humanly invented religious societies of the age, and consider them eminently calculated to save sinners; and they love the wages of unrighteousness, and, like Balaam, they run greedily after it. A banner of this kind of love has strong attractions, not only to the unregenerated of mankind, but the carnal sympathies of the flesh in christians are strongly attracted by it. They are too prone to forget that the love of the creature is only a stream from a corrupt fountain, which is poisoned with the corruption of the fountain from which it proceeds; while the love of God is pure and holy, and as far transcending all earthly love, as the heavens are higher than the earth. A standard, or banner, composed of human love, may be slendidly painted, with very many attractive devices; and such is truly the case with all false ensigns, which the enemy has set up for signs; but through all their coloring, those who are taught of God, will be enabled to see that they savor of the things which be of men, and not the things which be of God. Not only in the general conflict with the consolidated powers of darkness, are the children of God called to guard against this universal charity, but also in their intercourse with those who are of the household of faith, and even in their communion with their own hearts. The fellowship of the saints, one with another, is not to be regulated by carnal feelings of personal attachment; but by the infallible rule laid down for their government in the New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ. If under the banner of our Savior, whatever may be our fleshly predilection in favor of brethren, we will not suffer sin to rest on them. The influence of that banner on us will inspire faithfulness in laboring according to the rule, to reclaim offenders, in the spirit of meekness; and if not sucessful from every brother that walketh disorderly, it will dictate to us to turn away. But if we set about the work while we are ourselves under the wrong banner, we shall make wretched work. We would be poorly qualified to pull the mote from a brother's eye, while a beam is in our own eye. If we are not governed by the love of God dwelling in, and waving over us, all our efforts at discipline will be worse than nothing. If in our labor to reclaim our offending brother, we are influenced by the banner of God's love, the honor of God, the peace and purity of the church, and the good of the brother with whom we are called to labor, will predominate in our hearts. But if under a banner of fleshly feelings, we will be apt to lose sight of these incentives, and strive for the mastery with vain

ambition to secure some credit to ourselves, or at least to lay our plans so as to carry them out, and head off the brother at every point. Or, on the other hand, if swayed by an undue fleshly attachment to the offending party, we may flatter ourselves that we are exercising a christian virtue, by saying to our Lord's debtor, who owes an hundred measures of oil, take the bill and write fourscore. A fleshly feeling in us predominating, disqualifies us for the faithful discharge of our duty to our brethren it will either lead us to exact more, or to be satisfied with less, than the word dictates. Our brother is made an offender for a word; that is, for not using the same word or form of expression to express a similar idea, when there is no essential difference involved, and another is held in fellowship, who has departed from the faith and order of the gospel of Christ, because of some personal attachment.

In communion with our own hearts, let us not be deceived. We have within us, as it were the company of two armies. Each of these has its own banner; the one has the banner of God's love, the other the vile affections and lusts of the flesh, which war against the spirit. And these are contrary the one to the other. Hence we are admonished to deny ourselves, and take our cross and follow our Lord and Master. Human love is always on the alert to supplant the new man. The old man becomes wounded, and we think the new man is grieved. The old man meditates revenge, and we mistake it for christian diligence in contending against sin. Thus we sometimes think the new man is grieved, when only the old man is mad.

The minister of the gospel of the Lord Jesus, is in trouble, his mind is shrouded in darkness, he is called to preach; an assembly is before him; but he has no subject; he feels depressed and in bitterness. He worries, frets and murmurs. He says, "My Lord is requiring me to preach without affording his presence, gathers where he has not strewed, and reaps where he has not sown." He concludes like Jonah, that he does well to be angry even unto death. What is the matter now? Poor man, his carnal pride and vain ambition is on the rack, and must be crucified with its affections and lusts, and in the end he is astonished to find that his deep anxiety to preach well, was more for the gratification of his own fleshly ambition, than from a desire to glorify God, and edify the saints. We essay to bow in prayer before the throne of God, and we have certain desires which we wish to present in prayer and supplication; but by what spirit are these desires inspired within us? If they are fleshly desires, we may detect something selfish in them, inclining us to ask for something to consume upon our carnal lusts. How gracious is our God in withholding these things from us. But when his banner over us is love, the preacher is as ready to stand in silence before his congregation, if God wills it, as to speak with the tongues of men or of angels; and the humble christian in his closet, inspired by the flowing banner of his Redeemer's love, is all submission to the will of God. His language is copied from his Savior's lips, "Not my will, but thy will be done."

Finally, may it be our happy privilege to fight all our battles under the triumphant banner of the love of God, and may it be spread over us when we are permitted to enjoy our banqueting seasons with the King. And may he preserve us by his grace, from dishonoring, deserting, or failing to display the banner of his love, in all our walk and conversation. Then shall we look forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.

Middletown, N.Y., March 1, 1855
Beebe Editorials, Book #3,
Pages 170 - 181

ELECTION

Among the many things held to be true, and, therefore, a part of the doc trine of the Church, is the Election of Grace. This highly important subject is denied in fact, if not by admission, by much of the so called Christian world. Rational minds immediately become foundered when trying to give a plausible exegesis of the subject; so much so, that they usually explain away the truth of the matter to such an extent that this part of their doctrine should be given a more appropriate name. This is because the inception of election was before the world began and, therefore, can only be understood and believed by faith. Since faith is the gift of God, all of us are dependent upon him for an understanding of truth.

The word ELECT, used as a verb, means "to choose out", and, of course, as a noun, means "one who is chosen out". In its doctrinal sense it means, "one who is chosen of God to salvation." The following, therefore, is the true meaning according to our understanding: The sovereign act of God in choosing a people, peculiarly and particularly loved by him, out of the posterity of Adam, upon whom he would bestow sufficient grace in the person of his Son, Jesus Christ, to cleanse them from all sin and iniquity; thus preparing them, after all the work of grace is wrought in them, for an eternal habitation with him in heaven.

The term Election in any sense in which it may be used, always presupposes that the elected are chosen by others and they are not able to choose themselves. In considering the subject further, let us lay our foundation on safe and sure footing of proper depths by calling to mind what the inspired Scriptures say in part about it. First, who did the choosing? Isaiah wrote in the 45th chapter, "For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name, I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me." Mark, in the 13th chapter says, "And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days." In the 11th chapter of Romans Paul wrote, "But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace". Paul also says in the first chapter of Ephe-

sians that we are blessed "with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him", etc. In the 2nd letter, to the Thessalonians, 2nd chapter, we find, "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." It is written in the 15th chapter of John, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." The above lay the foundation that God did the electing or choosing.

Second, when did the choosing take place? Above was quoted Paul from 2nd Thessalonians, that, "—God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation", etc. Finishing the quotation above from the 1st chapter of Ephesians, "Accord ing as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love". Paul further says in 2nd Timothy, "Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began". These quotations lay the foundation that the choice was made from the beginning or before the world began.

Third, what was the moving cause of the choosing? As already quoted from Timothy, "—but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

In the 9th chapter of Romans, Paul says, "(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth); It was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Jeremiah in the 31st chapter —says, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." We find in the 1st chapter of Ephesians, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." These lay the foundation that the choosing was according to God's purpose and love for his people.

Fourth, was the choice made because of any merit or work of the chosen? As quoted above from 2nd Timothy, "Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace," etc. Before was quoted, "For the children, being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." In the same 9th chapter of Romans we find, "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." Then, in the 15th chapter of John, we read, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and

bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain," etc. These show that it was not because of merit or works on the part of those chosen.

From all these references to the Scriptures, and many more, this, then, is the sum of the evidence on the doctrine of Election:

That it was part of God's purpose, before he brought anything into existence, that is, before the world began, to choose or elect a people as his own, out of the family of Adam; (who should also according to the same purpose be. brought into existence). These people were to be redeemed from under the curse of their fall in sin, (for it was also a part of God's purpose, however dis tasteful to carnal thought, that they should fall), by a redeemer who was given them at the same time they were chosen. Therefore it is said they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. This redeemer was the Son of God, Jesus, the Christ.

At the proper time Jesus made his appearance into the world and, since there could be no remission of sins with out the shedding of blood, he died upon the cross, bearing their sins in his own body, being made sin for us, who knew no sin. Thus, being a perfect offering given of God, dying for the sins of his people, he forever satisfied the wrath of God which stood against them. Indeed, such a wonderful saviour was he, when he arose from the dead he even justified them in the sight of God. So all that Jesus died for—all who were chosen in him—are made perfect, so much so that in their standing before God in Jesus, they are as perfectly clean as they would be if they had never fallen in sin and condemnation. Nevertheless, both the sin and the redemption were necessary before they were prepared for their inheritance.

However, this state of perfection is not realized so long as His people remain in their natural life. Death is inevitable and is necessary for there must be a resurrection from the dead before they are brought "Unto the measure of the nature of the fullness of Christ." In the resurrection they are "Fashioned like unto his glorious body" and shall "Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." When all of this work of grace is completed in them then shall they be in possession of that unto which they were chosen.

That a person is chosen of God is manifested to them in a pecular way—unmistakable way. Whoever has been made to feel the "exceeding sinfulness of sin" and to realize he is justly condemned, and knows that all of his own efforts have availed him nothing, and who has been made to beg for mercy and has felt the relief from the awful burden of sin and made to rejoice in the hope that Jesus died for him, is surely of the chosen and redeemed family. No other people have this experience. No other people feel the weight of sin. No other people know the calmness and joy and peace that Jesus only can give.

Elder John D. Wood
Roanoke, Va.
August, 1942

Dear Brother Beebe — Through the kindness of our Heavenly Father, I have recently been permitted to visit some of our Father's family who are scattered through this eastern section of country, and more particularly in Maine. The brethren had cherished fond anticipations that they should be permitted to see brother Beebe at their meetings, and sad indeed was the disappointment they experienced. Many who saw you on your visit some years since were anxious once more to grasp your hand and to see your face on the shores of time, and to hear again from your lips a declaration of the gospel and the unsearchable riches of Christ. Though denied this privilege at our meetings, we still hope to enjoy it, should we be permitted to live until they recur again.

The Maine Predestinarian Baptist Conference was held with the church at North Berwick, York county, Maine, on the 5th, 6th and 7th insts. Here it was my happiness to meet with Elders Steward, Badgar and Quint, the latter of whom is the pastor of the church at N. B. This meeting was one of peculiar interest to me, as it had not been my lot to listen to any Old School Baptist preaching since our meeting a year ago. The meetings were all very fully attended, especially that on Sunday, when it was estimated that not much more than half the number of people assembled could gain admission into the house, but were assembled around the windows and doors. I think I never attended a more interesting meeting, or one where there was more decided evidence of a desire to hear and readiness to receive the word of life. The church at North Berwick has received signal manifestations of divine care and favor, and though standing alone, at great distance from any other church of our order, is yet enabled to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. I felt, while among these brethren, that there is still a remnant according to the election of grace, and that these might be seven thousand of God's hidden ones who had not bowed the knee to Baal. Elder Steward, whom you will remember to have seen, and who for many long years has been a valient soldier for the truth, is still able to meet occasionally with his brethren, though by reason of the infirmities of age he now seldom preaches. Deacons Perkins and Staples are still at their posts, while younger brethren are being raised up to occupy the places of some who have passed before us. Thanks be to God, the rock upon which his church is built is one against which the gates of hell can never prevail. Deacons Purington and Merrill, from the East, in company with Elder Badger, were also present at this meeting, and bear witness of their attachment to principles and doctrine of sovereign and discriminating grace.

Parting with deep regret from the brethren at North Berwick, I next arrived at the town of Richmond, on the bank of the Kennebec, was soon comfortably seated in the home of deacon Hezekiah Purington, where it was my privilege to meet with Elder J. L. Purington, his son, who had just arrived from Lexington, N. York. The day following, in company with Elder Badger and other brethren, we

started for the town of Whitefield, where the meeting of the Association had been appointed. The churches composing this Association we found to be both few and feeble. It was our privilege here to meet with Elder Whitehouse, whose health is feeble, but who still stands firmly upon the ground of the Old Baptists; and whose words from 1st Timothy iii, 16, were well calculated to strengthen and comfort the tried and afflicted people of God. This sermon, as well as one by brother Badger, from the words, "We love Him because He first loved us," were precious sermons to me. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth." The meetings were well attended, especially on Sunday. Throughout this section of country there appear to be some indication of good and a very general disposition to hear what these Old Baptist say.

In some places the Signs are being circulated and read by many who do not profess to be Old School Baptists. Confusion in some instances seems to have entered the ranks of anti-Christ, and many seem to be conscious of sad and grievous departures from the simplicity and beauty of apostolic faith and practice. What these things portend is best known to Him who orders all things after the counsel of his own will, and in whose hands the interests of his church and people are safe.

The harmony and fellowship which prevailed during the meeting was most delightful to witness, and to one, at least, the occasion will be one long to be remembered. The closing sermon was preached by Elder J. L. Purington, from Heb. iii, 6, to a large and attentive congregation. It is a dark and trying time with the brethren in this Eastern section of country. Some dearly beloved brethren have been called from the family on earth to that above, among others deacon Peaselee, who was a staunch friend of truth, and Elder Bailey, who, for fifty years or upwards, held forth the doctrine of sovereign grace. Others have seemed to be turned away from the truth to fables, while some younger brethren, whom God seems to have called to the work of the ministry, have been sent to other fields of labor in the South or West. But known but unto God are all his works, and though he brings the blind by a way they know not, and leads them in paths they have not known, he has promised to make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight; these things will be do unto them and not forsake them.

These things have I written to you, brother Beebe, that brethren in other sections of the country might be reminded of our lonely and tried, situation, and when it is well with them that they might remember the scattered few whose lot is cast here at the East. There is, so far as I know, but one Old School Baptist Church in Massachusetts; that is in Woburn, and the nearest one to us is that at North Berwick, some eighty or ninety miles distant, and they were separated by a long distance from their brethren further east. But God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew;

and all the lot and circumstances of his children he orders as he knows is best. John, doultless, no less than his brethren, mourned when he was taken from them and banished to the isle of Patmos, but glorious revelations were there made to him, and which have been most comforting to the saints of God ever since. The family of God, whether in heaven or wherever scattered on earth, is one family, share in the same Father's love, have the same house, feast at the same table, and are comforted by the same precious hope and faith. To know that I am a member of this family is my most earnest desire.

Leonard Cox, Jr.
Cambridgeport, Mass.,
Sept. 20, 1856.

GOSPEL STANDARD 1837

"Run, run and work, the law commands,
But finds me niether feet nor hands;
The gospel teacheth better things—
It bids me fly, and lends me wings."

That the Lord my bless these few scattered remarks, for his own glory and the profit of the reader, is the desire and prayer of

A PENSIONER.

"That I may see the good of thy chosen." Psalm cvi. 5.

Did you ever see any good in God's chosen? Oh! "how goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!" Did you ever see what good God has blessed his people with, and how good it is to be one of them? All God's people see that there is a "good" in God's chosen family, peculiar to them, and that they sigh and long for. But some will say, Had David never seen it when he penned this psalm? Aye, surely; he had seen it. But did he not want to see it again? Yes; he had lost the sight of it, the sweet vision of it had retired, the old veil had come back, his eyes were dim, he wanted fresh "eye-salve." So with us; we have seen, we trust, at times "the good of God's chosen," have felt our affections drawn towards them, and drawn up towards God, and have said, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." That was to enjoy the sweet foretastes of heaven. But all these sweet foretastes became clouded; fogs and mists rested upon them, and hid them from our eye. Fresh sin brought fresh guilt, and darkness and deadness and doubts and temptations and fears and besetments came on of various kinds; and all these beclouded our sight. But we cannot forget the past, we cannot forget the solemn moments when we walked with God and talked with God, nor the sweet feelings that his presence

enkindled. However dark, however dead, however disconsolate, however tried, harassed, and tempted, we cannot forget that. And having "seen the good of God's chosen," we want to see again the good sight, to taste again that heavenly banquet. "That I may see the good of thy chosen."

J. C. Philpot

PSALM 105: 1-2.

O Give thanks unto the Lord; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people.

Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works.

MEETINGS

BIG MEADOWS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

The Big Meadows Primitive Baptist Church, Pittsboro, N.C., feeling they were blessed and honored with the gift of an Elder among them, called for a presbytery to be formed Saturday morning at 11:00 am, April 8, 2017 for the purpose of examination of this gift, brother Zach Byrd, and to be ordained, if found qualified, to the full work of the Gospel Ministry.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together. The presbytery was composed of the following Elders: Cleo Robertson, Mark Terry, Alan Terry, Jimmy Gray, Raymond Goad, Larry Hollandsworth.

The meeting was opened with prayer by Elder Alan Terry, Elder Cleo Robertson was elected to serve as moderator and Deacon Tony Horton to serve as clerk. Brother Ronnie Byrd of Big Meadows Church, acting as spokesman for the church, delivered the candidate to the presbytery.

The qualifications for an Elder were read from 1st Peter Ch. 5, and 1st Timothy Ch. 3 by Elder Mark Terry.

Examination followed by Elder Raymond Goad.

The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualification of the candidate, proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder Jimmy Gray. The charge was delivered by Elder Larry Hollandsworth. After the right hand of fellowship was extended by the presbytery, brother Byrd was delivered back to the church as an ordained minister.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. A copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication and a copy to be given to brother Byrd along with a Certificate of Ordination.

The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Raymond Goad.

Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Tony R. Horton, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will be held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church located at the intersection of Music St. and Weatherford Drive, Gretna, Va in Pittsylvania County. The second Sunday and Saturday before in July 2017 the song service will begin at 9:30 a.m. with service at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton, Clerk

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 06 / 2017
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

CONTRIBUTIONS

APRIL 2017

Anonymous 20.00

Arlie Thompson, VA 5.00

George Paul, SC 5.00

Marilyn Shaw, VA 5.00

Greg Wells, NC 10.00

Roland Allen, GA 5.00

Charlie Fox, AR 5.00

Janet Taylor, NC 85.00

Lena Gray, VA 25.00

Mary Janney, VA 5.00

Elder Louie Hornsby, GA 5.00

Elder Jimmy Gray, NC 25.00

Wayne Oxley, WV 6.25

OBITUARIES

WARREN G. HALE

By request of Salem (Head of the River) Primitive Baptist Church, I will attempt to write the obituary of our brother in Christ, brother Warren Hale.

Brother Warren passed peacefully from this life November 18, 2016. He was 95 years old. He was preceded in death by his parents, George and Emma Kansas Hale, his son Gary Hale and 15 brothers and sisters.

Brother Warren was a retired home builder and farmer, and proudly served his country with many honors in World War II.

He is survived by his wife of 70 years, Pauline Lawrence Hale, two loving and caring daughters and son-in-

laws; Sandra and Gerry Shank, and Carol and Bennie Ellis and daughter-in-law Debra Hale. Five grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

His funeral service was held at Oakies East Chapel in Roanoke, by Elder Allan Terry, with burial in Rest Vale Cemetery in Floyd County, with full military honors conducted by Floyd VFW #267 and American Legion# 5499.

Brother Warren had a precious hope in his breast and believed in Salvation by the Grace of God. May all that mourn his passing, be comforted by the memories he left behind, and that he is resting in a peaceful sleep with God. Our loss is his eternal gain.

In request of the church
By Mary Janney

BROTHER BOBBY R. PICKRAL

It is with a sad heart I attempt to write the obituary of one who was loved dearly thru natural and spiritual ties.

Brother Bobby R. Pickral Sr. was born July 19, 1942 the son of late Harry Edgar Pickral Sr. and Margaret Mills Pickral. He passed from this life January 18, 2017. Brother Bobby was predeceased by Harry Edgar Pickral Jr., Judson B. Pickral, and a infant baby boy.

Brother Bobby was a faithful member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. He was received by experience and baptism September 10, 1989. He was ordained a deacon November 12, 2010, and also served as treasurer. He was a firm believer in the doctrine salvation by the grace of God. He was not ashamed to tell people what he believed, and attended services as long as his health permitted.

Brother Bobby retired from Klopman Mills Inc. in 2006 after 43 years of service.

Brother Bobby's funeral was conducted Saturday, January 26, 2017 by Elder Marvin Brumfield and Elder Troy Simpson. Services were conducted at Colbert Moran chapel. His body was laid to rest in the Carl O. Moran Memorial Garden.

Those left to mourn him are his wife of 52 years Patsy Worley Pickral, two sons Bobby R. (Randy) Pickral Jr and his wife Carolyn, and Michael K. Pickral all of Chatham. Four brothers, Oscar Pickral and wife Nellie, Gerald Pickral and wife Nancy, Reuben and wife Jackie, and Charlie. Three sisters, Betty Pickral Rowles and husband Larry, Shirley Pickral Shelton and husband Jack, and Rebecca Pickral Shelton, all of Gretna. Also, many nieces, nephews, and in-laws.

Brother Bobby will be sadly missed by all who loved him, We feel our loss is his eternal gain. We pray the Lord will reconcile all to his will.

Written in love and hope
Carol R. Lansaw

Elder Marvin Brumfield, Moderator
Oscar Pickral, Clerk

MARY CONNER POFF

At the request of Salem (Head of the River) Primitive Baptist Church, I will attempt to write a memorial tribute to our dear sister in Christ, Sister Mary Poff.

I hope the Lord will guide my mind and hand to write some things about her life that will be to her honor and to the praise of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Sister Mary was born February 9, 1931 to brother Tiras and sister Irene Conner. She departed this life December 2, 2016, at the age of 85. She was preceded in death by her beloved husband, brother Wade Poff, and son-in-law Charles Creasy.

Left to cherish her memory is her precious family, whom we have come to love over the years. Five daughters and sons-in-law. Judy Ravan and C.J., Cathy Holdren and Elwood, Vickie Childress and Stewart, Cindy Sutphin and Wayne and Candy Creasy. Two sisters, Mae Vest and husband, Alvin, June Conner and husband, Dean, sister-in-law Sylvia Whitlow. Eleven grandchildren, three step grandchildren, four great grandchildren, and one great, great step grandchild, several nieces and nephews and many friends.

Her beautiful funeral service was held at Salem Church December 6, 2016 by her Pastor Elder Carl Terry and Elder Allan Terry. The church was filled with brethren and friends, a testimony of the love they held for this dear sister. She was laid to rest in Rest Vale Cemetery in Floyd County.

Sister Mary was a member of Salem Primitive Baptist Church for 51 years, and our clerk for more than 30 years. She was a wonderful clerk and always knew what our church needed, and saw that it was done, not out of duty, but out of love for the church. Sister Mary loved God, and believed in Salvation by grace. She was very dedicated to attending church.

She and her late husband traveled many miles to other churches to visit with members of our faith. They also welcomed and entertained members from other churches in their home.

In Psalms, chapter 116 verse 15, you find "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." We will miss her sweet smiles and warm hugs, but believe she has entered in to that peaceful rest, without pain and sorrow, awaiting the second coming of our Lord and Savior. May the Lord comfort all that mourn our loss and be reconciled to God's righteous and Holy will.

Humbly written by:
Mary Janney

ST. MATTHEW 19:14-15.

But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

And he laid *his* hands on them, and departed thence.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

Ah! when with saints, where Jesus reigns,
My soul hath found a place,
I'll sing in loud exalted strains,
A song of boundless grace.

Nor will my pleasure, peace, and joy,
In that eternal noon,
Become extinct, decay, or cloy,
But e'er maintain their bloom.

I there will, also, raise a note
Of praise to Christ my King,
Which I shall with my warbling throat
Through endless ages sing.

There darksome clouds are never seen
To veil the happy mind;
But all is light, and all serene,
And God profusely kind.

Not plagued, and vexed with sin and care,
As is the case below;
But undisturbed, when seated there,
And naught but pleasure know.

With joyful lips I there shall own
God just in all his ways,
And bow to him who fills the throne,
And give him lasting praise.

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EDITORIAL

" ... we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Romans 5:3-5.

Elder Jerry B. Farmer

Once again, at the outset, I must acknowledge my great fear because of the weakness and inability of my flesh to perform anything good. If anything worthwhile is to be written, it must be by the grace and mercy of God. I am made to believe that writing spiritual things is much like preaching. One must wait upon the Lord until power comes down from above, and only then may any spiritual preaching or writing be done. God has fixed it this way so that no man is able to take God's glory to himself. Any one attempting to write or to speak apart from the power of God will always err from the truth and manifest his own carnality. Is it any wonder that we fear and tremble at the prospect of coming before God and His people in the way of writing or of preaching the gospel? Without Him, we can do nothing.

It is altogether against nature to willingly enter into troubles or tribulations. We flee from them as one would run away from a raging fire or from a wild beast. But the things of God are opposite to the things of nature. Jesus said, "Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you,* and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted the

prophets which were before you." There is a wonderful blessedness in partaking of a measure of the sufferings of Christ.

Who, in a natural mind, wants to be persecuted and reviled and lied against? It appears that none do. But the blessed apostle said that he gloried in tribulations. He must have been out of his natural mind to say such a thing - and no doubt he was. I believe he was caught up above this world in a spiritual mind which is contrary to nature. Instead of hating the troubles which he endured, he was made to embrace them and even to glory in them. The apostle has not been alone in these things. The Lord's people all through the ages, even until now have suffered for the truth's sake and have been made to rejoice in the blessedness of it.

God mercifully made known through the apostles that tribulations are necessary in order that the faith of each little one must be tried. And when that little one is tried, by the mercy, grace and power of God, he is brought forth as gold, purified by the fire, to the glory of God. The apostle Peter said, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. But rejoice, inasmuch ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you..." It is a needful part of our experience for us to suffer with Him if we are to reign with Him.

There is a golden chain of events that is in store for each of the children of God each time one is tried. The links are tribulation, patience, experience, hope, and love. The tribulation that shakes to pieces the world of the believer leaves him in fear and trembling at the end of his wits, and at the end of his strength. He is brought to the place of the publican, who had no place to go or to look except unto God. He was in great tribulation because he was made to see his corruption and his inability to do anything about it. He thought he must surely perish unless God should intervene for him. He was like the disciples in the little ship in the great tempest in the sea, who said, "Lord save us: we perish." Daniel found himself in that case in the den of lions. The three Hebrew children also had to cast all their cares upon Him, since they could not deliver themselves from the fiery furnace. And this is where we sometimes find ourselves, if we are His.

Instead of running from the trial of faith, the child of God is made to endure it for Christ's sake. This is the patience, or long suffering or endurance of the saints, which is part of the fruit of the Spirit. By being given grace to endure the trial, and seeing the manifestation of patience in his life, each of God's children is given some of the experience of a child of grace. Without God given patience there would be no experience.

But God's little ones are given grace to wait upon the Lord and to trust in Him.

When one is brought through a difficult and trying experience, he is given to compare his journey to that of the saints who went before him. And when one is blessed to see and identify his experience with those that God loved and protected and delivered through the ages, he begins to have hope that he may be among the family of God that has been misunderstood and abused by the world. Without this experience there would be no reason even to think one might have a part with God's people. But this experience causes one to hope, even though he feels so unworthy of the least of the mercies of God.

And this hope makes not ashamed. The child of God who has suffered for the sake of Christ and the gospel, and has patiently endured it, and has been given the experience of grace, and has been made to hope he is a part of the finished work of Christ: this one shall not be made ashamed or disappointed at His appearing. The disciples, when they had forsaken all and had followed Jesus, asked what they should receive in return. Jesus told them that if they had forsaken father, mother, brother, sister, houses and lands, that they would be given in this life, fathers and mothers and brothers and sisters and houses and lands an hundred fold, and in the world to come, eternal life. God's little ones find that when they have been made to turn away from the world and its false doctrine and to suffer reproach with God's children, they are given the abundant life here with the elect family of God, and are given the promise of eternal life in glory. These are the sure mercies of David. David was blessed to say, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." This is our hope and our trust.

This hope is Christ in you the hope of glory. And God's little ones have no place to run, except to Him, for help in time of need. The world is not our home, and it has nothing to give us in the way of spiritual help. All our help must come from Him. In the book of Hebrews we are reminded of those, "... who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." This is the Hope that will not let you go. He is the anchor of the soul, which holds the ship fast against all storms and danger. And all within that ship shall be preserved unto the day of Jesus Christ. He is the secure anchor; He is the strong threefold cord or cable (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) that is not quickly broken, or snapped; and He is the ark or ship in whom the family of God is kept safe. He is all in all to His people.

What is it that affirms all this? What is it that gives assurance to God's little ones that they are truly being kept in the true Hope, and are not deceived? How may we have assurance that we are born of God and have passed from death unto life? How do we know that we have really suffered tribulations with patience,

and had some of the experience of God's children, and have a true hope of eternal life, and that we will not be ashamed or disappointed when the Lord comes to separate the sheep from the goats? The inspired apostle Paul said, "•••because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." And the blessed apostle John, by the Holy Spirit of God tells us, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." The love of God, which He shed abroad in the hearts of His people, is sufficient to assure them of their part in the kingdom, to keep and to carry them to the end of their journey in faith and hope, and to deliver them beyond this life into heaven and immortal glory.

Thanks be unto God for the unspeakable gift of His Son by Whom we are saved. Thanks be unto God, Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Thanks be unto God, Who has promised that He would never leave us or forsake us but that He would be with us unto the end of the world. He has loved us with an everlasting love, which cannot fail. Everlasting praise be unto God from Whom all blessings flow. I trust that this was written in love and in hope of eternal life, unworthy as I am.

Elder J. B. Farmer
3/27/08

ARTICLES

May 7, 2017

Dearest Ones in Christ Jesus,

Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hates you, "It hated me before it hated you." We find this in 1st John 3:13, and John 15:18. Also John 17, beginning in verse 9-16, here Jesus, was speaking to his Father saying I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. vs. 10. "And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them," vs. 11 "And now I am no more in the world, these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name, those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" vs. 12, "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition: that the scripture might be fulfilled" vs. 13, "And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves."vs. 14, "I have given them thy word: and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." vs. 15, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." vs. 16, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." The scriptures that I have quoted above, is truly the word

of God: of whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. And that there is surely a time and a day not far off when this world shall end as we know it now, and be no more, though we know not when it shall be. None know except the Lord our God. The Lord is our shepherd, Prophet, Priest, and King. This world is not my home, but we seek one not made with hands, eternal and in the heavens, whose builder and maker is God. I believe that the dear Lord did fix all things, places and events, in this world that has been, is now, or ever shall be in this time world. Yes all that shall ever be housed in heaven, and immortal glory was all eternally fixed by God the Father through his dear Son Jesus Christ. He adds to the church daily, such as should be saved, even from the beginning to the end of this time world. The Lord God said, I am the first and the last, the beginning and the end. Man cannot add one to this heavenly number; For it is the body of our dear Lord and Savior. Jesus Christ, nor can he take one away, All that our Lord savior Jesus Christ died to redeem by the shedding of his precious blood. He is the good Shepherd. He paid the redemptive price, in full, with his own precious blood, therefore he is the good seed. He is the good shepherd. He does the planting, and the harvesting of the same. Man's planting is of no value, and shall be rooted up and burned.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Great God and savior Jesus Christ: Who hath blessed us, and hath made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, as we journey on through this world of sorrow and grief, and have been given a sweet hope by God the Father through his dear Son, Jesus Christ: which is an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God. May the Lord keep me humble in my walk here, among the brethren, and may I be kept at the feet of the brethren, and to take the low seat in the meeting house, lest I take liberties that are not mine to have. Let me not be a burden to those, the dear household of faith. O that I may be allowed to just follow on in the footsteps of the little flock, until the day come, that I shall join those that have gone on to their rest to walk the shores of time no more. In this beloved Psalm of David, 17:15, "As for me I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." If this be too much trouble, or not sound in doctrine, please cast aside and all will be well with me. Love to the household of faith in truth as it is in Christ Jesus: I hope.

C. Fox
709 Griffith
El Dorado, AR. 71730

ROMANS 8:28.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

VOICES OF THE PAST

CHURCHES I HAVE SERVED
BY
O.K. TENCH

FORWARD

It won't be too long that my voice will be silent and my service shall end. Not for any glory that's due me, for by the grace of God, I am what I am. If in my life or ministry, someone has felt to have been benefited . . . Give God the praise. Perhaps, after I am gone, someone might like to know what I believed and where I served.

I was born January 23, 1911. My parents were Isham F. Tench and Sallie L. "Campbell" Tench. I was the third of seven children. My life was like most poor boys. I went to school until I was thirteen years old, barely finished the seventh grade. In 1926, my parents sent me to Ferrum Training School which was very religious at that time. The first night I was there, we were told to go to our rooms and pray and if our roommates refused to report to the authorities and they would take care of them. At that time, I thought everybody there but me was a Christian. I felt to be such a sinner that I was afraid to try to pray.

On Sunday, the only Sunday I was here, we had to go to church. It has been fifty eight years ago, yet I can close my eyes and see that scene. The president sitting inside of the round railing during the service and a group of students kneeling around the outside. This service I witnessed there caused me to want to leave the place more than any other thing. I felt that I would be forced to engage in this worship. So after six days, I came back home. My mother was very disappointed. As time past, I still have serious feelings about my soul. At a revival meeting, the old minister said, if we would give him our hand or join the church, the things that caused us to sin or our unworthy feelings would be taken away. So I went up with others that were joining. I remember one lady saying to me... Kinsey, I am glad you have joined the church, you have always been a good boy. Down in my heart, I knew it wasn't true. The next day I was miserable, now I had become a hypocrite.

I thought maybe when I was baptized, maybe I would feel better, but this also failed to give me relief. Then I thought when I take communion, I'll feel better. After the one time, I was so condemned... I never took it again. One of the members said to me, you must have done something wrong, yet he would get drunk and still take it. I still went there, but took no part in the service. I started to dance, but never really learned how. But then I began to be miserable on the dance floor.

One Sunday, on the outside of the church a boy said that the Bible said, "Jacob have I loved" and "Esau have I hated" and I disputed it but he told me where to find it. I found the scripture and

began to read and had never read before. I found that the bible taught election, but I wasn't in it. There became a great conflict in my life. It seemed that there were two of me — one was against the other. I began to talk of the bible to anyone who would listen. I really didn't know who believed this doctrine. But when I went among the Old Baptist, I could detect a difference in their preaching and others. In my mind, I could see each of them building as if it were a house of logs. The difference was he Old Baptist finished it and topped it off, while the others always left it unfinished, as if I had to finish it. I could find no comfort in this doctrine. Also, when I began to talk on the scripture, someone would say, if they didn't believe it, "That's Old Baptist Doctrine." Others who believe it would say, "You are going to preach." I began going down to Old Chapel Church to hear Elder Stegall and I found comfort in the gospel of grace. But I became afraid if I kept going, I was going to join. One Saturday afternoon when they had services down there I had a great conflict of mind. I decided to take the mule and plow that afternoon. I got about half way to the field when something caused me to rush the old mule back to the farm and get ready as quickly as I could and go to church.

In the year of 1930, something very drastic happened to me. I think for a few days, I was very disturbed in mind. I left home on a T-Model Ford car and went to Roanoke. As I think of those days, I have a very hazed memory. I found myself staying just a few doors from the Old Baptist Church. On a Sunday, I went to their service. It seemed I had just found a home. However, I did not join that day. But since that day, I have never doubted that the Old Baptist is the true church. These were the depression days, but I got a very poor paying job and worked there a few months. I was satisfied just to go to church for awhile. But one day, Elder J. P. Helms was preaching about the shepherds hearing the angels, saying glory to God in the highest, peace on earth and good will to men. I couldn't keep my seat, I went up and was received in the church. I didn't know anyone there and they didn't know me. They asked me about being baptized and I told them I had been baptized. They said, they didn't accept that, so I left then and came home. After a few weeks I became anxious about it and asked Elder Stegall to baptize me. One cool morning in May, he baptized me, and something was left there that hasn't bothered me since.

I had my membership at Old Chapel. Then I became impressed to preach, and Elder Stegall encouraged me. I went with him to meetings. We went to Town Creek Church and stayed all night at Dock Davis' home. They had a service at someone's home that night and we went. Several preachers preached and I couldn't hold back any longer, so I got up and tried to talk a few minutes. I really don't remember what I said. Elder Stegall was very kind to me under this burden. At times at Old Chapel and Bethel where I was known, I tried to preach without much liberty, until one Saturday afternoon at Old Chapel. It seemed to me as I began to talk, the words

flowed to me and the most pleasant sensation I had ever had. The members rejoiced with me. And me a fool, thought... Now I have learned how and it is so pleasant and easy. In my folly, I thought now that I had learned how — I'll dress up tomorrow and come here and really preach.

I believe now the Lord had a lesson for me. The next day it rained so hard nobody went, and it was six months before I had liberty anymore. Now after 50 years, I know that I can't preach, unless it's given to me at the time. In the year of 1937, I was ordained. That year I was called to Union Church. I went the first time on the first Sunday in October 1937. I had married on Friday before.

In the year of 1938, I was called to Weatherford, which I am still serving. After six years, I gave up Union Church because of the lack of interest of the members. I had concluded that the Lord had not called me there. In the year of 1946, I was called to Chapel Church, where I am still serving. In 1947, I was called to Springfield, where I am also still serving. In 1952, I was called to Malmaison Church and am still serving there. I think sometimes I am greatly blessed to have these churches.

I was quite a bit younger in the year of 1937, and I would like to recall some of the pleasant memories of the past when I started to Weatherford. There was a little boy named Raymond Goad, just three years old who came with his parents and often sat with his grand father. I saw him grow up to manhood. In the meantime, I baptized his grandfather and his mother. After he had sown his wild oats, I baptized he and his wife, Phyllis, and his sisters Mabel and Dianne. I shall never forget going with Raymond and Phyllis home one day for lunch. We sat down to eat and I felt impressed to encourage them to join the church, they both began to shed tears. The next month, they were received. After a few years, Raymond was burdened to preach. We think he has a great gift. Most of the old members who were there at Weatherford in 1938 have passed on. We now have about 50 or 60. One Sunday, I baptized 12. Some of them went to Springfield, some went to Malmaison and some to Weatherford. We have good attendance. A lot of young people, boys and girls bring their friends, which we appreciate.

In the year of 1946, after I had served Chapel Church several years as the Pastor. Elder Stegall had been absent serving Roanoke Church. After he resigned, they called me to serve. We now have 18 members, as the older ones pass on, others come in. I baptized 5 on one Sunday. We have good attendance.

In 1947, I was called to serve Springfield. Elder Stegall's health had failed. Several years ago, Elder Denver Simpson felt impressed to preach, and is now serving as co-pastor. Under his leadership, the building has had many improvements such as new pews, and an addition with tables and bathrooms. I couldn't name all the members I have pleasant memories of. I think often of brother Louis Willis, a deacon who I baptized — the most spiritual man I ever knew. Sometimes, it seems I can hear him say "Amen" when a preacher says

something that he loved. Another member, Raymond Dalton, a deacon who carried mail until retirement. Before we had telephone service up here, when I needed to conduct a funeral at Gretna, many a night have I heard a car drive up to my yard, and maybe I had already gone to bed, but I'd come to the upstairs window and he'd call brother Tench... They want you to hold a funeral service many of them I didn't know. I wonder how many funerals I have had, and tried to remember them a few years ago, but after 4 or 5 hundred, I knew I couldn't remember them all. I baptized a young man named Melvin Shelton at Springfield, who was impressed to preach. After a period of time, he went to another church and now he is their pastor.

In the year of 1952, I was discharged from Roanoke Church where I'd been supplying.

Upon receiving a letter from Malmaison Church, I went and have been going since. I have many pleasant memories of things that have happened there. Years ago, a lady came to me and said, I am a member of the Methodist Church — they are good friends of mine, but I am not happy there, and I want to join Malmaison. I advised her to go there and tell them just how she felt and then to come back. I thought if she was sincere, she'd be back. She took my advice and came back with the blessings of her former friends. I baptized her and she became a faithful member until she died.

Time and space will not permit me to mention all the members and memories. But sister Kate Dodd, who passed away two years ago, was a person to someone who knew her, you just couldn't forget. She was clerk at Malmaison for many years. She had her place to sit and she said what she thought. She attended long after her body told her she wasn't able to. If one tried to help her, she would say, "Get out of my way." I can still close my eyes and look to the left of the pulpit and see her sitting there looking like she was asleep, but she wasn't.

Sister Mattie Williams who passed away several years ago, had her place that she always sat. When we built the new church, she found the same geographical location in the new church that she had in the old one and sat there. She was facing from the pulpit about the center of the left row of pews about the third pew from the front. She was very kind to me and faithful to the church. It has been a pleasure to baptize two of her sons, Julian and Burnell and the daughter, Naomi. After brother Julian joined the church, he'd write me rich letters. I asked him if he was impressed to preach, he denied it. But it was like fire shut up in his bones, he couldn't resist it. He is now co-pastor at Malmaison and is serving other churches. Brother Burnell Williams is a deacon at Malmaison and song leader one of the best that I know.

I regret that there isn't space enough to mention all the members of these churches we've tried to serve. But I'd like to mention the deacons who have taken much of the load and responsibility off of me and are such a blessing to the churches. As an overseer which an elder is called to have faithful deacons to council with is a great blessing. The deacons at Malmaison are Burnell Williams

and Richard Stegall. At Springfield, Homie Dalton and Walter Hamlett. At Weatherford, Stafford Houston and Marvin Brumfield. At Chapel, Clay Brown and Fred Murphy.

I don't know how long I'll live or how much longer I'll be needed at these churches, but I have no ambition other than to finish my course in the service that I feel to be called to.

The following is a circular letter I wrote to the Association.

TO THE MESSENGERS AND ELDERS THAT COMPOSE THE PIGG RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION AND TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS ---

Greetings:

According to the law of averages, this will be the last circular letter, I shall ever write. So we might call it a farewell address.

I implore you that we might make this a time to associate, rather than to legislate and all that is within us seek to keep peace. May this association never attempt to Lord over the churches that it is composed of. May it not interfere with the internal affairs of our Sisters' Associations. Above all, let us remember that we too are frail.

Let the beautiful words of the Bible — grace, patience, long suffering, forbearance, forgiveness and charity, which is the love of God rule in our hearts. When we add all the good sermons, all the sweet fellowship, all the good meetings, and the precious memories of days gone by, and subtract peace from it, we have nothing left.

The time is soon coming when our voices will be silent. The earth will claim our bodies. The mourners go about the streets, because man goeth to his long home. (Ecclesiastes 12:5).

"Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to thee which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." (Colossians 3:15).

O.K. Tench
December 1984

HEBREWS 13:2

I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again.

Fear and trembling takes hold on me as I come into your presence by way of the written page. For some months I have been in the "Slough of Despond" with Bunyan, and at times have so despaired of ever being lifted out that it has caused me to seriously doubt that I have ever known anything of the Lord's graciousness to me, a poor, rebellious wretch, full of sin, and vile, polluted, cankerous sores. But at the same time I have been so deeply in the dark, that my life (if indeed I have any spiritual life) has been despaired of. I have not lost some little impression to write and speak in the name of Him who fills heaven and earth. My pen has been still for some time, and I have not done as much speaking, being compelled to work on Saturday and, to honestly confess to the truth, because I have had such

little liberty that I have been afraid of the pulpit. Ah! brethren how I hate my ways. How vile I am when, as I hope, the Lord gives me grace and light of the Holy Spirit to look into the dark recesses of my soul or self-righteous self. But there is a strange peculiarity about all this. I cannot teach it to any man, I cannot explain to them why I cannot. Here is something that, if we know anything about it, we must be taught it from above by the teaching of the Holy Spirit. Here is a mystery. The wise and prudent know nothing of it. It is completely hid from them by him who rules heaven and earth. As a whole, the noble, the wise, and the mighty cannot fathom its mysterious depths, but the poor, the afflicted, the despised know it. Heaven reveals it to them. It seems good in the sight of the Lord to do this. My readers know this, the mercy of the Lord has taught it to them. How hateful they appear to themselves; how lean, barren and destitute they are; how poor, afflicted and wretched have they become; how hungry, thirsty and empty they are; how polluted, sinful and wretched they are; how weary, footsore and ragged they are; how sick of sin, of worldliness (in themselves) and the flesh they are; how they would quit sinning if they could; how close to Jesus and his followers they would live if they could; and Oh, dear brethren, how strange they are; how little can they understand themselves; how different they have become. Once all their goods were in peace; their way was smooth and easy; they had gotten religion and were feasting on the riches of arm-of-flesh God. But now, Ah yes, now; their goods, they have none; their way, it has become rough, hard, stony and thorny; their religion, it has been taken from them, and their feasts have gourds in them; and how the children of God hate all this. How they do wish and long and hope to measure up to the standard of those that know the Lord. But (and here is the mystery, the characteristics of strangers and the peculiarity) as much as they hate and abominate themselves they love those that are like them.

Now let us see how Peter would talk about this matter. **"Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is within you, with meekness and fear." 1 Peter 3:15.** I have my doubts about the children of God being under any obligation, or having any admonition given them to entertain and care for every stranger (in the flesh) that comes along. If that were true, some of us who live on the main thoroughfares would have to turn out some of our own at times in order to do it. I cannot see how the Lord's people can take literally what the Bible says. Let me give you some examples of what I mean. **"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Prov. 22:6.** I think this is to and concerning the church. I cannot believe for an instant that I can, by training, instill into my two boys morality and good citizenship to where they will not depart from it. To so understand the above text would mean that by good parents the depravity of the human race might be overcome. In the sixth chapter of Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus he gives

some admonitions to children, parents, servants and masters. Brethren, I cannot take that literally. I do not think it is written to parents, children, etc. after the flesh. To me it spoils the Bible. It is a flat contradition of Old Baptist doctrine. There are fathers in Israel, in fact, Paul called himself Timothy's father and Timothy, his son. There are the children, those that are young, that still speak as a child. They are admonished to obey their parents. After the flesh? No, sir; not that, the law teaches that, and it is a good law, and it is nice to see people with regulation and system and obedience in the family although they are not acquainted with grace, but their parents in the Lord. The parents in this chapter, and the children, are each the Lord's handiwork. One has grown in grace, the other is a new arrival in the church. I think I have given sufficient hint to show what I mean. Now under this taking of the Scriptures does not our text take on new meaning? The chapter starts out with brotherly love continuing. We are told to let it continue. What kind of love? Continue to love (in the Spirit) those that show by their talk and walk that they know nothing of the travel of a heaven born soul? No, continue to love the brethren. Now what kind of a character is a brother? Go back a few paragraphs and read a description of a child of God, or read Paul's experience in the seventh chapter of Romans. A man with this kind of complexness is a stranger to himself and to one another, and yet, well acquainted. This man is told to give answer to his hope. When strangers in the flesh stop for entertainment speak to them of their hope. If they tell you what, Paul tells you about his then take them in, they are strangers indeed and in truth. If they do not I do not think the admonition has you bound. In the entertainment of these strangers sometimes we have lodged and succored to the needs of angels. An angel is a messenger or agent (not free) of the Lord. It does not necessarily mean a preacher, although that might be the primary meaning. I feel that many times the Lord has sent some poor, afflicted child of God my way. They had a message for me. A message from afar, a message from heaven, a message that was as cold water to my thirsty soul, a message that enabled me to rejoice in the fact that I am a stranger and far from home, that I have no abiding city here but that I seek one not made with hands.

Yours cast down, yet in hope.

Elder W. D. Griffin

JOHN 4:16-18

"Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly."

Brother S. L. Roberson, of Haile, Louisiana, has asked that we present our views through the Signs of the Times on the above portion of Scrip-

ture. This incident of our Lord and the woman at the well should undoubtedly be considered as being intimately associated with the miracles at the marriage at Cana of Galilee, the healing of the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, and others, all of which have a material bearing upon the dispensations of law and grace. The numbers five and six are both legal numbers. The law which God gave to Moses consisted of five books. The legal or work period of time is six, for we are told in Genesis that God created the heavens and the earth and all that in them is in six days, and that "he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made."

There are some things to which we wish to call attention in the record which John gives us of the Saviour and the miracle he performed in converting the water into wine. First, we are told that this took place on the third day, which is significant of the last or gospel day, and, second, that there was a need for more wine at the marriage feast. John says there were set there six waterpots of stone, and when Jesus' hour was come, or the time for him to manifest his power, he commanded the servants to, "Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim." Then he said unto them, "Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast." And "When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bride groom, and saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunken then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now." John:9-10. The six waterpots were used under the law in connection with the puriation of the Jews, and as there could no justification or cleansing of a sinner in the sight of a just and holy God except the law be perfectly fulfilled, the waterpots were of necessity filled to be brim, thus denoting in type that all the demands of the law were absolutely let in full when Jesus shed his blood for his people. When the servants drew of from the pots the wine was pronounced to be the best wine. All of the blood that was shed on Jewish altars could not atone for the sin of a single sinner, but the blood which Jesus shed on Calvary's cross could and did make full and complete at-one-ment for all of his people throughout all ages of the world — those who dwelt upon the earth, before he came into the world as well as those who were to follow after him. This wine was therefore the best wine and signified the blood of the gospel dispensation, without which there could be no mission of sin. This miracle then set forth the fulfilling of the law and the ringing in of righteousness by Jesus Christ.

In the fifth chapter of John we are told that "There is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches," and that "In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water." This was legal Jerusalem, and to be sure a great multitude of sheep, or the Lord's people, lay there in

these five porches, being held for ransom until the law's demands could be met. How pitiful was their condition! Some were impotent, or absolutely helpless and unable to do anything for themselves; some were blind, and some were halt, and some were withered. It would be difficult to picture a more pathetic scene. But in the providence of God there was this pool called Bethesda, which means, "House of Mercy." Wonder of wonders it is to the dear child of God that "Justice and Mercy" have met together and kissed each other in the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, he could say to the impotent man, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." It is said that, "immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the Sabbath." Truly, never man spake like Jesus, and when he speaks it is done, and when he commands, it stands fast. When he heals, or delivers, it is invariably the Sabbath, or the day of rest with the sin burdened soul.

In connection with the text under consideration, it is said, "He (Jesus) must needs go through Samaria." There was a necessity for all that Jesus did, and nothing that he did was in vain. Jesus did not go through Samaria by chance, but according to the providence of God, who orders all things after the counsel of his own will. In the purpose of Almighty God this poor Samaritan woman was to come to Jacob's well and there find one whom she would be astonished to have take any notice of her. Neither was it by chance that his disciples were not to be present at the time, for Jesus must needs converse with her alone. He who discerneth the thought and intent of the heart of man, who knoweth all the secrets thereof, and from whom naught can be concealed or nothing hid, he communes with the sinner in the solitary aces and, independent of all human aid, when he speaks, his words carry force and conviction.

This Samaritan woman was accustomed to drawing water from Jacob's well, where she had to come again and again, for it was only a shadow or type that living water which Jesus had to give. When he said unto her, "Give me to drink," she was surprised that he should condescend to look upon her since, as she said, "the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." Jesus then told her if she had known the gift of God and who it was that spake unto her, she would have asked of him and he would have given her living water. Seeing that he had nothing visible to draw with, and the well being deep, according to her natural powers she could not perceive how he could give her living water. She was soon to learn that she stood in the very presence of him who was indeed far greater than Jacob, who gave the well from which she had come to draw water. Jesus first told her of natural things, that "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again," which he well knew to be the case, and then he said unto her, "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Here was something different from anything she had

ever heard of before. She I would not have to draw water from this well day after day, and year after year, for the lack of which she would thirst again, but this water would indeed be living water, and it would constantly be springing up into everlasting life. She, therefore, thirsted for this water, and said unto Jesus, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." She was thus made to experience that salvation was not by works of righteousness which the creature can perform, but that it is "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Having learned this and having ceased from her labors and entered into gospel rest, Jesus said unto her, "Go, call thy husband, and come hither." Surely, no one will doubt that Jesus knew the inner most desires of her soul, and needed not to be told by her that she had no husband, even though she had had five husbands, but it was for her sake and our sakes that he said this to her. She typifies the Church of the first born who has come to the end of the law and must con fess before men the wonderful works of our God. When she said she had no husband, Jesus commended her by saying, "Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly."

Our understanding is that she had done all she could to comply with the demands of the law, but had utterly failed in every point and had become guilty before God. The law condemned, and she was miserable and wretched and poor and could receive no comfort or consolation from it. Being brought to the end of the law, she realized it was her schoolmaster unto Christ, and there he was revealed and she perceived of a truth that he was some wonderful one. After Jesus had instructed her more perfectly regarding the true worship of God, he said unto her, "God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Thereupon came his disciples, and the woman left her waterpot and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, "Come, see a man which told me all things, that ever I did; is not this the Christ?"

It is after this manner that God brings his children from nature's darkness into the marvelous light.of his glorious gospel, teaching them that his blessed son is the end of the law for righteousness sake. Then it is they know the difference between law and grace, and once they have been truly taught it, it is all of grace forever afterwards, for they can never believe anything else, and they should not live in adultery by pretending to be married to another by partaking of the works of the law. Let them come out from among Babylon and be separate and not partake of her sin, returning to give glory and honor unto him who hath loved them and gave himself for them.

We trust our thoughts will prove satisfying to our brother and all who may read them, and if so may everlasting praise be rendered to him to whom everlasting praise is due.

Elder R. Lester Dodson
March, 1943

LONELY I AM NOT
John A. McKellar

PROVINCE OF ONTARIO
October 23, 1870

Dear Elder Beebe:

I am living in a place where the truth is not preached, and as I cannot countenance error and rejoice in humanly devised schemes of our day, I choose rather to stay at home when those around me go to their places of worship. On this account, I am a wonder unto many, and on coming into my room on Sunday morning I found the following lines left, written upon my table. I wrote the reply which follows them and left it where it could be seen. I send them both to you, and if you think them worth publishing, they may be of some use to some one of the "little flock," the good pleasure of whose Father it was to give them the kingdom.

Why make yourself so lonely?
Why don't you friendly be?
Why don't you go to church,
where you
May other good folks see?

Why are you always by yourself?
No reason can I tell,
Unless It is because you think
There's no one like yourself.
Am I right?

REPLY

You think I am lonely, but no not at all,
For Jesus is with me, who saved from the fall:
When walking the broad way, when wandering to hell,
He sought me, he found me, deigned me to dwell.

You think me unfriendly because I don't go
To some place of worship, as other folks do:
Though the charge of unfriendliness thus do you bring,
Yet I must remember the law of the King.

Cease, my son, says that law, the instruction to hear,
From the words of true knowledge that causeth to err. (Prov. 19:27)
Come out from among them, and stand not within,
And be not partaker with them of their sin. (2 Cor. 6:17)

When to church I go, I hear a great deal
Of poor, lost man's merit, and human free-will:
Both notes are detested by me, who must own,
That saved I am by God's free grace alone.

Why so much by myself you cannot conceive,
If it is not because that I fully believe
No one to be like me, nor no one so good,
That is not the cause why I love solitude.

For in me (in my flesh) no good thing does dwell,
All my good is from Jesus, of Him I will tell:
In myself a poor sinner, do the best thing I can,
With Paul I must cry, Oh poor, wretched man. (Rom. 7:24)

Perhaps you still wonder, and yet do not know,
Why a pilgrim and stranger through life I should go;
Let me tell you, and oh may I tell you in love,
'Twould all be quite plain were you "born from above." (John 3:7)

John A. McKellar

[The foregoing letter was written years ago by the late John A. McKellar, a very worthy member of the Covenanted Baptist Church, and is again printed at the request of brother Johne McFarlane, who is now in his ninety-seventh year.]

Elder George Ruston

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES THE CHURCH BUILT UPON CHRIST

"Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Matthew 16:-18.

Christ, the one foundation stone,
Tried, precious and elect,
God hath built His church upon,
Though men this stone's reject.

Rock of ages! rightly named!
Living stone in Zion placed!
Believers shall not be ashamed,
Nor shall they yet make haste.

Nothing can this stone remove,
Against it nought prevail;
Fix'd by everlasting love,
In vain its foes assail.

Here the house of God is placed,
By our great Zerubbabel,
And on the Rock of mercy based,
Defies the gates of hell.

Laid with pleasant stones we view,
The superstructure rise;
Polished stones of gorgeous hue,
To feast our wondering eyes;

Lively stones with colors fair,
Sapphires of a price unknown;
The lofty gates carbuncles are,
The windows agate stone.

Prophets of the olden time,
Apostles of the new;

Men of every age and clime,
The Gentile and the Jew;

On the same foundation laid,
Are a building fitly framed.
For God a habitation made,
His holy temple named

A. E.
Southhampton Pa., May 12, 1848

IT BECOMETH US

Today as many are brought into serious thinking about the conditions of the world in general, and especially the Church of God, the pillar and ground of the truth, in our meditations we are wondering what relation there is between the world events and the elect of God.

When wars, famines, earthquakes, pestilences and divers things of this kind are sent upon the earth, the country is usually filled with men who use certain Scriptures to try to point out by them present existing conditions. Often prophesy that has no relation to the present time is used to excite people. The question with many of us is where do we fit into this picture, that is unfolding over the world today? The only way anyone understands these things is by revelation, and we should all take heed that the things we lay hold of are not imagination, instead of revelation. The Church of Christ is a chosen generation, a royal priesthood that shows forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. Of Christ's fullness have they received, and regardless of what happens his word says that all things work together for good to them it love God, to those who are the called according to his purpose. Nothing has, or will happen but what will be for their good and his glory. Even wrath of man shall praise him, and remainder he will restrain. He is King of kings, and Lord of lords; the one-eternal, immortal, invisible, the all wise God.

As far as I know the Old School Baptists are agreed among themselves that salvation is wholly of the Lord, by grace, through faith, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works lest any man should boast. There is now even as there has been through the ages some differences of opinion on some points of doctrine. Preaching and believing the doctrine of the sovereignty of God, election, the necessity of a new birth, before one sees the kingdom of heaven, the perseverance, preservation and resurrection unto eternal glory, for all whom Christ died are the things that separate us from all the people upon the face of the earth. Moses asked God that if he had found favor with him, then separate him and his people from all of the peoples of the earth.

Are we adorning the doctrine we preach? As faith without works is dead, even so the preaching of doctrines that we do not lay hold of with the heart, as well as the head, is a dead thing. Paul commanded Timothy, his son in the ministry, to take heed unto himself, and unto the doctrine; and continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself

and them that hear thee.

The things which are in accord with Holy Writ that are wrought in us by his Spirit, such as an orderly walk, and a godly conversation, become God's people, as they by his sovereign grace are suited to these things. I want to mention here some of the things that become us. Are we following the word in practice? Do we search the Scriptures as did the Bereans, to see if the things we hear are in the word? Do we lay aside all traditions and traditional practices? How easy it is to accept some point of doctrine because it has been generally believed. Let us hold fast the form of sound words. Sometimes when a point of doctrine has been accepted for years the tendency is to ignore other Scriptures that often have some bearing on the same matter, but because these Scriptures cannot be harmonized with the opinion that has been held on the subject these other Scriptures are ignored.

The subject of the resurrection is one which I thought when I united with the Church that all Old School Baptists believed alike on this important question. For many years I thought that, but in later years I heard it remarked that some among us did not believe in the resurrection at all. I wondered then what those who were accused of not believing in the resurrection did believe, I have talked with a number on both sides of the question, and I have not found any who did not believe in the resurrection. There seems to be a difference as to when it is, and the kind of body we will have, if indeed we are so favored by his grace to awake in his likeness. In my humble opinion these things should cause no strife or confusion. It doth not yet appear what we shall be, and as brethren it becometh us to be charitable towards one another on this subject. We would all do well, even though we are settled in our minds about the matter, to try the spirits and see if the attitude towards the brethren who differ is right, and whether we receive the word with meekness. Surely, a frank discussion of these things might be profitable, if we adhere to the word and take heed unto ourselves and unto the doctrine.

Where are we in Church matters? Are we exhorting one another, confessing our faults one to another? Do we do things without partiality? When a brother is overtaken in a fault, do we restore such in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted? Do we manifest a respect to persons? There is often a carelessness about attending church meetings. In coming in to the church one agrees to abide by the rules of the church, by the help of God. When possible, we should always attend services. You may think you won't be missed if you don't go, but you will. Suppose all felt that way and stayed at home, the meeting houses would soon be closed. We are bound unto the Lord and unto one another in ties far greater than earthly bonds, and it becometh us to adhere to these things.

We are told not to receive an accusation against an Elder except before two or three witnesses. So if any should accuse an Elder of something, we are commanded to have witnesses present before we should listen to them. Jeal-

ousy and malice sometimes causes one to try to destroy the usefulness of an Elder, and, it certainly becomes us to first find out for ourselves about the matter before it is repeated. This also applies to our criticising brethren behind their backs, and, often things that belong to the church and should be kept within the bounds of the church are broadcasted. These things ought not to be.

We are commanded by the King of kings and Lord of lords to love one another fervently, to be tender one toward another, forgiving one another; to be of one mind one toward another; to avoid old wives' fables and striving over words to no profit, but to edify one another. I think the entire matter is summed up when we are told to add to our faith, virtue, and to virtue, knowledge, and to knowledge, temperance, and to temperance, patience, and to patience, godliness, and to godliness, brotherly-kindness. and to brotherly-kindness, charity. For if these things be in you and abound they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his own sins. Wherefore brethren give diligence to make your calling and election sure, for if ye do these things ye shall never fail.

The pure mind is to be stirred up by way of remembrance of these things, and we do not tell you these things because ye do not know them, but because ye do know them.

One reason we have written as we have is because we fall short of attaining unto these things and, yet, having the welfare of Zion at heart, we trust. We desire very much to see the doctrine adorned and to live as becometh the followers of Him. If anyone knows that we cannot do these things in and of our selves it is the writer. There are a number of things that become the ones who preach and believe the doctrine of salvation by grace more than they would become any other people, such as following the Lord in being baptized, manifesting our love one toward another, mentioning the loving kindness of the Lord, and many other things, and greatest of all ascribing all the praise unto the Lord.

Elder D. V. Spangler
April, 1942

DIVINITY AND HUMANITY OF OUR LORD

Friend Beebe: Will you please give your views through the Signs, on the divinity and humanity of Christ? Should you comply with my request, you will oblige,

AN INQUIRER AFTER TRUTH.
Indiana Creek, Iowa, Sept. 9, 1856.

The terms divinity, and humanity, which are in much use among theologians, are not used in reference to Christ, by the inspired writers; we must therefore, take them in the theological sense in which they are commonly used. By the divinity of Christ, so far as we can learn, is generally intended his independent, eternal Godhead, and

by his humanity, that body of flesh and blood in which he became incarnate, which was made of a woman, made under the law, &c. We have been engaged for many years in trying to exhibit our views of the blessed Redeemer, in reference to his Godhead, his manhood, and also in his mediatorial identity as the Head and Life of his body, the church. But after all that has been said and written on the subject, we have yet to say, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh," &c. So absolutely is he God, that all the angels are commanded to worship him, and so truly was he man, that he could be born of a virgin, cradled in a manger, grow in stature to manhood, hunger, thirst, be weary, and his soul could be exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death; could feel the infirmities of his people, groan in spirit, and sweat, as it were, great drops of blood; yea, he could die upon the cross, and be buried, and finally be raised again from the dead, by the glory of the Father, and ascend up into heaven. As God, he is one with the Father, independent, self-existent and almighty. By him all things were made that were made, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. As man, he could be tempted in all points like his brethren, and yet remain uncontaminated by sin. None can deny his essential, eternal and unbegotten Godhead, and consistently hold that he is a Savior, for he says by the prophet, "I am God, and beside me there is not Savior." If, then, he is a Savior, he is also God. In his incarnation he took part of the same flesh and blood that his children are partakers of. The propriety of calling his Godhead, divinity, or his manhood, humanity, we will leave others to decide; we prefer, when treating on a subject so awfully sacred, to use only such adjectives as the Scriptures furnish. Peter speaks of the divine nature, but as he also speaks of the saints being partakers of it, we have supposed that the mediatorial fullness of which John also speaks (John i. 14, 16,) was intended. Brethren must read and judge for themselves, but we do not feel prepared to say that the life and immortality, which Christ gives to his saints, is anything short of divine nature, while the Scriptures plainly teach that the essential attributes of eternal Godhead are peculiar to the Godhead, and incommunicable to any inferior beings. On the other hand, we dare not say that that perfect, mystical body, or stature, which comprehends the Head and body of the church, was only human.

We may not have comprehended the design of "An Inquirer After Truth," but we have briefly stated some of our views on the subject, according to the very limited light we have of that Savior whom we desire to worship, adore and trust as the God of our salvation, who came in the flesh, and was found in fashion as a man, but we do most heartily say,

"Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on thee:
Leave, ah leave me not alone,
All my help must come from thee."

No couplet in the celebrated stanzas of Watts has ever afforded more sweetness to us than these,

"Jesus my God, I know his name.
His name is all my trust."

We have neither the time nor space to extend our remarks at this time. May the subject be opened gloriously by the Holy Spirit, to the understanding, joy and rejoicing of all the saints, for the Redeemer's sake.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.,
September 15, 1856.

---

1 JOHN V. 7.

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one."

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 07 / 2017

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 2017

Mary Hawkins, NC 50.00
"In memory of Elder Hale Terry"
Anthony Quesenberry, VA 5.00
Elder Jimmy Gray, NC..... 5.00
Wayne Oxley, WV 6.25
James Lambert, GA 5.00
Dorothy Dodson, VA..... 5.00
Arlene Hole, NC 5.00
Edna Graves, AL 5.00

MEETINGS

LOWER MAYO
5TH SUNDAY MEETING

The next 5th Sunday Meeting will be held, The Lord Willing, Sunday, July 30, 2017. Tom's Creek Church will Host the meeting. The Meeting House is located at 417 Tom's Creek Church Rd., Denton, N C 27239. From NC 109, tum East about I mile north of Denton, NC on Tom's Creek Church Rd. Go 1/4 mile to church on left.
We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to meet with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

MIDDLE CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Middle Creek Primitive Baptist Church, 7009 Rock Service Station Road, Raleigh, NC 27500.

"I hope you can come to our August meeting. We will meet at 10:00 am. Services will start at 11:00 am Saturday and Sunday August 13 and 14, 2017. Lunch will be catered both days. A brother in hope of life everlasting.

Elder Danny Carroll

PIGG RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Pigg River Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Reed Creek Church, the host church. To commence on Friday Aug. 4, 2017 and one day following, Sat. Aug. 5, 2017, on ground of Chestnut Church.

Starting Time

Friday, August 4, Singing 10:30 and Preaching 11:00.

Saturday, August 5, Singing 9:30, and Preaching 10:00.

Directions to church ground

Going North on Route 220, about 13 miles past Bassett, turn right on to Route 724 (Goose Dam Road) about 2 ½ miles to church.

Elder Thomas Solomon - Clerk

SKEWARKEY UNION (Eastern Kehukee Association)

Hancocks Church will host the next session of the Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of July 30, 2017. The church is located on Ayden Golf Club Road, near Ayden, North Carolina. Preaching services begin at 10:30 am.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

Big Meadows Primitive Baptist Church will host fifth Sunday meeting on July 30, 2017. Singing begins at 10:00AM and preaching service at 10:30AM.

From 1-40, take Hwy 87 South at Graham towards Pittsboro. Go 14.8 miles and cross Cane Creek. Turn right onto first road past Cane Creek which is Greenhill Road. Go 3.7 miles and turn left on Old Switchboard Road. Church is 1.3 miles on right.

From Hwy 64, take Hwy 87 North about 7 miles and turn left on Castle Rock Farm Road. Church is about 5 miles on left.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Joann Self, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN - Phil. 1:21.

DEATH is no more a frightful foe;
Since I with Christ shall reign,
With joy I leave this world of wo:
For me to die is gain.

To darkness, doubts and fears adieu,
Adieu, thou world so vain!
Then shall I know no more of you:
For me to die is gain.

No more shall Satan tempt my soul;
Corruption shall be slain;
And tides of pleasure o'er me roll:
For me to die is gain.

Nor shall I know a Father's frown,
But ever with him reign,
And wear an everlasting crown:
For me to die is gain.

Sorrow for joy I shall exchange,
For ever freed from pain;
And in the heavenly regions range:
For me to die is gain.

Fain would my raptured soul depart,
Nor longer here remain,
But dwell, dear Jesus, where thou art:
For me to die is gain.

Horne.

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EDITORIAL

"Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Hebrews 12:14. "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the *righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 5:20. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matthew 5:48. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Hebrews 10:14. "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." John 17:19.

Elder Jerry B. Farmer

The longer I live, the less I seem to know, and the more wretched my case seems to be. The blessed apostle was given to say, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." It seems that the letter and the location of the scriptures escape me more and more, even though the essential meaning seems to remain in my mind and heart. It seems that even though I have been kept from many hurtful things by the mercy of God, there is still an inward sense of sinfulness that is most often with me. The greatest enjoyment and peace I experience is when my mind is caught up in spiritual things — sometimes when with the brethren, and sometimes when alone. And these seasons come and go as the good Lord has seen fit to bring them and to take them away. Job, when brought down to the earth in sorrow and great loss said, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." We are taught to cast all our cares upon Him, for He cares for us. He is our hope and strength.

My mind is being exercised upon the subject of sanctification, which is but

one aspect of the doctrine of Christ. We are taught that there is only one true doctrine, and that this doctrine has many facets that fit perfectly together into one glorious teaching of the sovereign grace of the God of heaven and earth. We know that there are many doctrines in the world, but they are the doctrines of men and of devils, and are contrary to the truth. Every doctrine outside of Christ shall be burned up and destroyed, but the truth is eternal and shall abide forever. May God be merciful and keep us in the truth for His praise and for our comfort and edification.

The word sanctification and its many derivatives are found throughout the scriptures. If not deceived, to be sanctified means to be made holy. To be made holy is to be set apart, cleansed, and prepared to serve the purpose of God. To be set apart is to be chosen of God in eternity, and to be separated from the world in this life. To be cleansed is to be purged of every sin by the blood of Christ and to be made righteous in Him. To be prepared to serve the purpose of God in holiness is to be given the Holy Spirit. From His Spirit faith, hope and love toward God and His children comes forth. Very early in the scriptures, we see all things pertaining to the Tabernacle and the Temple of God being set apart, being cleansed by washing with pure water, and being sanctified by the sprinkling of the blood of animals upon them. If natural things were set apart, cleansed, and made holy for use in the natural Temple by natural things, how much more shall be the children of God spiritually sanctified or made holy by the Spirit, word, and blood of Christ? By the grace and mercy of God, we must "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

Many come exhorting men to live holy lives by their own choices and voluntary obedience. They seem not to perceive that that would be impossible since the carnal mind is enmity or opposite to the things of God. They seem not to know that God chose a particular people before He made the world in order to show forth His praises, and to be holy and without blame before Him in love. They seem not to understand that voluntary obedience, such as that of Cain and of Saul in the Old Testament, was rejected of God. For the things that are approved of men are abomination in the sight of God. Only those chosen of God, given His Spirit, and given a spiritual love for Him and His children can ever do anything that is approved of God — and those things are done altogether by the grace of God through faith. Only those whom God has made holy have any part in His holiness.

For one to be sanctified or to be made holy, he must be without spot or blemish of sin. He must be altogether righteous. But how can a sinful man be righteous before the holy God? Jesus said, "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven." The scribes and Pharisees did all in their power to strive for righteousness by attempting to keep the law of God perfectly. They failed miser-

ably and became self-righteous, religious hypocrites, thinking they had done better than others in their pursuit of righteousness. But only perfect righteousness is acceptable unto the perfect God. Jesus commanded, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Of course this is impossible with men, but all things are possible with God. The perfect righteousness and obedience of Jesus was imputed to His saints, while their sins were imputed to Him. By doing this unsearchable work of mercy and grace, God made Jesus, who knew no sin, to become sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

According to the eternal, sovereign will of God, Jesus offered Himself up without spot unto God as the sinless Lamb of God, a sacrifice pleasing to the Father. His blood was shed that it might be sprinkled upon the elect children of God to sanctify them and make them holy, and to atone for their sins, and make them fitting for His service. So, before one of God's little ones ever drew a breath, Christ stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. They were loved with an everlasting love. Their names were written in the Lamb's book of life. They were chosen in Him and given grace in Him before the foundation of the world. They were vessels sanctified — cleansed, and made holy — prepared for the Master's use. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." God made provision for those He loved. Those chosen in Christ were perfected forever by His one offering of Himself. No sin shall ever be counted against any one of them. They are as righteous in Him as He is righteous. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

We also know that no man is without sin. According to the inspired apostle, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." But if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous. According to the inspired apostle, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." So, we see that God's little ones are being continually upheld by the perfect work of Christ, and that nothing may ever be brought against them — but they do sin. This is a great mystery. However, the children of God are taught that in the sight of God, according to the Spirit, they are perfect, while according to the flesh they are imperfect. "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity." God's children are a blessed people. They are in the world but are not of the world. They are pilgrims and strangers here, and go forth groaning until they shall be altogether delivered from their burdens they bear here.

The saints had been sanctified or set apart and made holy in the sight of God before they ever knew anything of the kingdom of God. When they were brought out of darkness into His marvelous light, as newborn babes, they began to be exercised in the things of the Lord. They began to fear and to cry. They began to hunger for the milk of the word.

They realized their weakness and helplessness. They began to be taught the language of grace, and began to know and love their Father and Mother. As little children, they often stumbled and fell, and often came into trouble because of curiosity and stubbornness. While in the world they are being taught line upon line and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. They are little children growing in grace and the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. They are being led about and instructed and kept as the apple of God's eye while in the wilderness, as was Jacob. And even now they are being set apart from the world, and are being manifest to be the children of light. They are being cared for and instructed and nourished until they grow into adults, at which time they shall be given to strengthen their brethren, as was Peter when he was converted.

The saints are continually being sanctified or being set apart from the world and the things in it. As they are taught of God, they are made to see how unprofitable the things of the world are. For all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. The world is passing away and the lust thereof. The chosen of God are continually being washed and cleansed of all unrighteousness, as they are made to confess their sins and are forgiven of them. They are taught how great a price Christ paid, with His life's blood, to redeem them from all iniquity and from the curse of the law. As they view Him suffering upon the cross, they are made to hate the sins that He died to redeem them from, and to love Him for His goodness and mercy. They are not getting better and better as they are being sanctified, as some suppose; but rather see themselves worse and worse as the hidden corruptions of the heart are revealed to them. The change in God's children because of their sanctification in this life is in their heart. They are made tender in their feelings toward Christ and for their brethren and friends in Christ. They are made to hate the sins that cause them to mourn, and are given to know that this world is not their home — that they are only passing through as strangers and pilgrims.

It is by the truth that the saints are set apart. The word of God abides within each one and by this word they are being sanctified. Jesus said, "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." And He said, "You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." The Truth shall set you apart and free you from the bondage of sin, from the fear of death, from the terrors of hell, from the curse of the law, from the love of the world, and the things in it. And as Christ sanctified or set apart himself from the world and to heaven and immortal glory so shall all saints be set apart by the truth. They are chosen vessels, made to fit in glory. They are vessels made up unto honor and unto eternal life. And all shall be brought to glory without the loss of one, for our God is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck one from His hand. God's children were all sanctified before the world was and were made holy unto God. And even now they

are being sanctified. And all of God's children, in this perfect holiness wrought of God, shall see the Lord.

This was written in love and in hope of eternal life, I trust.

Elder J.B. Farmer
12-10-2008

THE GOSPEL STANDARD
June , 2017
"Abide with us"

"Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." (Luke 24:29.)

Abide with me, O gracious Lord,
For evening cometh on;
Be Thou my Helper, Guide and Guard,
O keep me near Thy throne!

My day of life may far be spent---
O then with me abide!
And lest I stray in evil paths,
O keep me near Thy side!

Abide for me, for troubles oft,
Like heavy clouds, arise;
Thick mists they spread around my path,
And darken all my skies.

Abide with me, for unbelief
Oft hides Thee from my sight,
And e'en at midday makes me grope
As though 'twere darkest night.

Abide with me, leave not my soul
In Satan's cruel power;
But fix my heart and eyes on Thee
In every trying hour.

Abide with me, O leave me not
To journey on alone;
If Thou forsake, I am a wretch,
Most helpless, lost, undone.

Abide with me while life shall last,
And when my change shall come,
Glad I'll resign my soul to Thee,
My body to the tomb.

Ann Abbott

PROVERBS CH. 27:1-6.

Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth: a stranger, and not thine own lips.

A stone *is* heavy, and the sand weighty; but a fool's wrath *is* heavier than them both.

Wrath *is* cruel, and anger *is* outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?

Open rebuke *is* better than secret love.

Faithful *are* the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy *are* deceitful.

CORRESPONDENCE

1-28-2017

Dear Elder Robertson,

Many times I've pondered the mysteries of God
Many times I've tried to change the road I trod
Often times my feet were tired and sore
Many times I searched and searched for His door

A lonely pilgrim just trying to make it home
In crowds of people one can feel so alone
I've told many my family lies in the cemetery
The ones who so loved me live in the cemetery

My tears have fallen and they still do
One can miss their family and I do cause mine were true
Their words of comfort ring true to this day
God never lies and His love is the only love thats true

Precious memories is a beautiful hymn, inspired by God Almighty
The beautiful words were inspired by the God Almighty
Jesus Christ did walk this earth
His days were numbered that He walked on earth
He was no stranger to pain and grief from His birth
He came to save the ones His Father gave Him
I've been blessed to know a few His Father gave Him
A helping hand along life's way is a great gift
A smile or a tear can give the heart a great lift

I watched His work on all my loved ones
They suffered much but were God's chosen ones
Family don't always make one kin
No matter how one tries they are not kin

God never made a mistake and His word is true
The mountains are high and have a heavenly view
The valleys are low and one feels no place to go
God is the same in the highs and lows

His presence disperses all gloom and doubt
When He smiles on one from prison they are out
May He reign and reign from way on high
May His joy forever remain from on high

My mom passed away held in His arms
Joy sprang up in my heart as I held her in my arms
A river of tears of joy from my eyes did flow
Oh thank my God from this world she did go
Only God can carry one home,
Everyone on earth is just a loan

They are not gone they are just away
Far away with Jesus till the home coming day

If I could I would but fly away too
But I must stay till He calls me too
Try as I might I cannot excape this vale of tears
God has seen fit to give me many years

A wandering pilgrim who desires a helping hand along life's way
Just give me strength as I greet each day
Prison walls may around me stand
But I know somewhere there is a glorious land

I know somewhere my Savior does dwell
I know because He has taught me so well
Patience is a virtue one cannot attain
Unless given by God from His gracious hand

Every day of my life I am mindful of my Lord
He has blessed me much and I love my Lord
The darkest days are but a memory when He comes
The sun shines once more in my heart when he does come

May we all be blessed to seek His face
May He always come first as we run our race
May we be mindful to love one another
Be forgiving and true and always help one another
When its all said and done He is all we have
In times of plenty and times of lean He is all we have
His glory does outshine the sun
God's greatest gift was His Son.

Janet Snider Taylor

David Minter
P.O. Box 3091
Martinsville, VA. 24115

Dear Robertson,

I am sending a copy of my late wife's funeral publication about us being in a rainbow together. Many years later Tommy Middleton would tell me the day she joined the church he sat down in the seat she would set in. A voice, spoke in him saying get up from that seat that the Lord was going to visit that seat that day so he moved to another seat and she sat in that seat when she asked for a home at Sardis. If you find it fitting print this and funeral publication.

A brother in Christ,
Elder David Minter

Elder Cleo Robertson,

The New River Association has been blessed with (2) ordinations for the work of Deacon in the past couple of months. If possible we would like to see them published by the Signs of the Times.

The first one was at Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church in Floyd Co. on April 1st, 2017. Brother Andrew Quesenberry was found qualified by the Presbytery to serve as a Deacon for said church.

Elder Thomas Pegram, Moderator
J. B. Mitchell, Jr., Clerk

Flower Gap Primitive Baptist Church on June 3rd, 2017. Larry Dean Payne was found qualified by the Presbytery to serve as a Deacon for said church.

Elder Carlton Brown, Moderator
Bonnie Hawks, Clerk

June 6, 2017

Dear Elder Robertson,

With the enclosed check, please renew my subscription and use the remainder as needed.

The articles printed in the Signs are always eagerly anticipated and re-read many times.

On occasion, I am able to find comfort in reading of someone's similar experience in Voices of the Past, and I receive a small measure of hope that I may be counted among the remnant.

Humbly,
Nancy Pollack

Dear Brother Tony,

Please renew my subscription for 1 year. Use the balance as needed.

Thank all of you brethren for the hard and faithful work you do to get the Signs out each month. I enjoy every copy.

A sister in hope,
Carol R. Lansaw

ARTICLES

Dearest ones in Christ Jesus: Blessed be the name of the Lord: A dream of great trees, that I had several months past. I hope the Lord will bless me if it be his will, to write a little concerning the great trees of the garden of the Lord. I would like to tell of a dream that I had several months back. This dream concerns a garden that looked to be freshly plowed, and made into rows, and two well known elders that I knew and they were well known the country wide. And as I approached this garden, there was a man standing alone at the far end of the garden, and as I got closer to him, I knew who he was though he was facing in the opposite direction. It was Elder Wayman Chapel, and I knew that he was deceased, and as I got closer to him, I called his name twice. There was no answer. And as I started to leave I noticed that he was leaning to the left. His left hand and his arm was stretched out away from his body, and pointing to

the earth, as if to say I must return to the dust of the earth, and at this point I went down out of the garden, and there I called for help, did not call any name. Elder Graydon Smith came. I saw the headlights of the car when he drove up. I went back up in the garden.There I saw Elder Smith, and knew that it was him. I told him that I was concerned that Elder Chapel was going to fall down. And he said, well we will lay him down. I leveled a place between two rows at the beginning of the garden, and there they laid him down, and after this they went away. I say they because there seems to have been a dark figure at the upper end of the body that I did not know. Elder Smith was at the feet.

This dream was sometime after Elder Chapel had passed away. And as I looked at Elder Smith he was not in an earthly body. I can not explain just what he looked like, but it was so plain he was in a body not of this world. I have told this dream just as I dreamed it. I cherish this dream, because I believe that it has some meaning concerning the great trees of the garden. I believe that those two highly esteemed Elders of the gospel preached every sermon that the Lord God put in their hearts and mouth to preach. And not only these but all of the dear elders that the Lord hath set aside for the work of the gospel ministry, for they are all taught of God. I am speaking of those of the old school Primitive Baptist faith and order that is loved by the children of God raised in the garden They are all taught by the same Lord that this world knows nothing about. The Lord does the planting, the growing, and the gathering of the same. Dear ones, is there anything impossible with our great God and savior Jesus Christ? The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away. He wounds and he heals, he kills, and he makes alive. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

These men have fought a good fight. They have finished the race that was set before them to run and are now at rest in the paradise of God waiting the second and glorious return of Jesus Christ the king as is all of God's little children. I submit this writing for the consideration of the editors of the Signs of the Times to do with this as he may see fit, and all will be well with me.

C. Fox
709 Griffith
El Dorado, AR 71730

PREDESTINATION

If God has from eternity purposed a certain event to come to pass, has He not also eternally purposed and therefore made certain every link in the chain of events by which the end is to be accomplished?

Does any one of those things that make up the chain of events come to pass by chance? If any one of those events comes to pass by anything else other than by God's eternal decree and purpose, then fate or chance must receive at least some praise for the fulfillment of the event. A chain is only as strong as its weakest link. There are no weak links in the chain of the fulfilling of

God's eternal purpose, no not with Him who declared the end from the beginning. Did Joseph's brethren commit an evil act by selling him to the Midianites? Their evil deed against Joseph was a link in the chain of events which led to the fulfillment of the eternal purpose of God to preserve the children of Israel (Gen. 37-50). All was predestinated by God and it involved the sinful acts of men.

Lot committed incest with his daughter but did not Ruth come from that line, and she was the great grandmother of David through whose line Christ came. We all would admit that the adultery of David and Bathsheba was sinful, but out of this union came both Solomon and Nathan, and from these two lines Matthew and Luke give us the lineal descent of our Lord, according to the flesh. These sinful acts are in the chain of events by which the predestinated end is to be fulfilled, that is, the coming of Christ into the world. But God could have purposed some other way to fulfill His promise concerning the coming of Christ, some will say. If so, then what became of God's "some other" purposed way when these things came about the way they did? Was the purpose of God set at naught or frustrated? We think not. What God has purposed, He will also do it.

Was the crucifixion of our Lord predestinated or not? An inspired apostle of Christ said that this came about by the "determinate counsel and foreknowledge (predestination) of God" (Acts 2:23). He also said to the men of Israel concerning Jesus, "ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain". These men with wicked hands took Jesus and crucified Him. In so doing, they transgressed the law of God. But in so doing they also fulfilled the eternal counsel of God wherein He predestinated that Jesus, the Word made flesh, should suffer and die. The sin and wickedness of the murderers of Jesus is presented to be altogether in harmony with the eternal and immutable decree of God to deliver the Lord Jesus into the hands of men to be crucified.

The inspired Apostle Paul wrote: "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?"(Rom.9:21). Any one who assumes to question God's right to "make one vessel to honour and another unto dishonour" is replying against God (Rom. 9: 20). I pray that I am not one of that number.

Elder Ralph Dale

PSALM 92:1-4.

It is a good thing **to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High:**

To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night.

Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound.

For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands.

VOICES OF THE PAST

GOSPEL STANDARD 1837 OBITUARY

Messrs. Editors, — The report of the triumphant departure out of time into eternity, of a valuable friend of mine, having reached the ear of several friends, they are very desirous of having a copy of what she uttered, from me; but having too many applications, I was resolved to write one, and send it to you for publication, if you think proper, that the persons anxious to see the contents, may fly to your valuable publication, and not only hear of the triumphs of her that died rejoicing in a crucified Redeemer, but hear what is to be chosen before gold, that is, the truth as it is in Jesus. If you think these few lines worthy of a place in your Gospel Standard, please to attend to them as soon as possible, for several lovers of the truth are anxious to read them; and others, unknown to me, love to hear of the goodness of the Lord to his chosen family. At the time of death, she was a lover of the truth, and therefore a lover of your publication. The distinguished truths of the gospel she loved, and the faithful ministry of the word of life she admired. Highly she was favoured during her afflictions, which lasted about nine months, but more particularly immediately before her departure. She lay for some time meditating, and apparently noticing no one, when all upon a sudden, she called her mother to her, who is a member of the same chapel as she was, and said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth; I know that my Redeemer liveth," twice over, and several other things with great delight before I reached her, and the first thing she said to me was, "What! Have you come to praise the Lord with me once more?" Praise the Lord, O my soul! O bless his precious name! O what a friend he is to me! O can't you praise his name with me! Come, sing a hymn. I asked her what hymn she would like us to sing; and she said, with great fervour,

> "I'm not ashamed to own my Lord,
> Nor to defend his cause."

I likewise asked her whether it would hurt her for us to sing. She said, "O no! What! Hurt me to sing my Lord's praise? O praise him with me." I looked for the hymn, and read it; and when I came to the second verse —-

> "Jesus, my Lord, I know his name,
> His name is all my trust;
> He will not put my soul to shame,
> Nor let my hope be lost;"

I thought she surely must have quitted her tabernacle, for her soul was full of glory and joy unspeakable. We sung the hymn, and truly her heart was in tune to praise the Lord. She stretched out her poor withered hands, and her whole frame was in motion. Her countenance looked delightful, and most assurely, in her heart, she sung the loudest of us all; and when we had finished she said, "I shall soon praise him, I shall soon praise him. O that I could now adore him, like the heavenly hosts above!" She said she

should like me to engage in prayer, which I accordingly did, and we then sung part of another hymn,

"Sons we are, through God's election."

The third verse was a favorite with her in health, and so it was at this time. Shortly after this, being spent, she dosed for about twenty minutes, and her conversation was evidently in heaven, for her lips kept moving, and her hands were lifted up, and when she awoke she called me by name, and said, "O can't you praise the Lord? Can't you hear that beautiful singing? Can't you see them angels? O how they are singing!" (Should any be disposed to call this enthusiasm, let them remember the case of Stephen, who saw the heavens opened, &c.) "O that a wretch like me should be clothed in a robe of righteousness! I shall soon be at the fountainhead! What a friend has Jesus been to me in this wilderness! I have not had one trouble too many! O death, where is thy sting? Thou art no monster to me, for my Jesus has taken thy sting away!

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Softer than downy pillow are."

O that I had breath to praise the Lord! What a clog this body is to me, but I shall soon be freed from it!" Being wearied out again, she again dosed for a short time. Her hands were clasped together, her lips again moved, and a sweet smile was on her countenance. When she awoke, she said loudly, "O precious blood, precious blood! O what Christ has done for me! I shall soon see him as he is, and I shall be like him, and then I shall be satisfied! I can pity princes on their thrones, now I can call thee mine!" And so she finished!

Dear Sirs, — Had you beheld her half an hour before she spoke out her joys, you would have thought she could not have uttered a word.

May the Lord grant that the perusal of these few words may be as sweet to the reader as the hearing of them was to the writer.

Woodhurst, Huntingdonshire A Traveller.

The Gospel Standard
THE HIGHWAY OF OUR GOD.

"Prepare ye the way of the Lord" — Isaiah xi. 3.

We who dwell in a civilized land can form but little idea of the task which the ancients had to perform in the constructing of their ways. It was a performance which even a conqueror at the head of his army thought not beneath his notice. They had, as Isaiah declares, to pull down mountains and fill up valleys, — the former dreadful from their inclemency, the latter from their unhealthiness, and both infested with barbarians and beasts of prey, who molested the works and put the lives of the workmen in danger.

And is it not thus in our souls? Could a mountain summit be more frightful in its snows of barrenness and its adamantine rocks? Could a valley be more pregnant with noxious vapours than our souls are with the pestilential effluvia that arise

from the waters of sin and corruption? And do not our worldly cares form a thick forest wood impervious to the rays of light? Need I go on to enumerate the dragons that dwell there? We all know them too well, and want our trees felling, our waters drying up, and our vapours dispelling by the wholesome blowing of the wind of the Spirit.

It is through this valley that King Jesus has formed his highway. He hath all things under his command, even our corrupt hearts. He could have purged us thoroughly at once, but be chose to display his conduct in conducting us safely through them, and then he will free us from them, and take us home to be like him and with him.

When he maketh his way through the valley, he exalteth it. *In him* we rise to a sense of the forgiveness of sin. *In him* we rise to have a sweet communion with God. *In him* we learn at times to be content in every state wherein he has placed us. *In him* we are exalted to sit together in heavenly places; and *in him* we shall rise to glory at the last. Thus all our exaltation is in him who is alone our way; and while we are thus raised above self in him our way, if we look at self on either hand we shall find reason enough to put our hand on our mouth and our face in the dust, and cry, "Unclean." This will produce that humility of heart which is genuine.

A mountain appears a more serious obstacle to overcome; but all things are easy to the Lord our God and his Spirit. Our rebellion and unbelief, our pride and presumption, are cast down before him; yea, they flee as chaff before the wind at his rebuke, and the place where they stood is scarcely to be found, and we think for a time we shall see them no more. But ah! we soon find our arch fiend at work again, and to our shame he succeeds too well again. He tells us the Bible is false, our experience false, our belief vain, and vain our hope; or at any rate, that our experience is not the experience of a child of God, that our prayers are mere form, and that God never will regard us. But what are all these? They are but the mountains which the Lord will cast down before him, and instead of gazing at them in dread dismay, we had better, like good Hezekiah, spread the whole matter before the Lord, tell him how the heathen have blasphemed his name, and beseech him to protect his own inheritance; and so sure as we are led to do this, he will interpose in our behalf, and save us from the hand of the enemy.

The Lord also makes the crooked places straight. We were at enmity with his holy law, declining from his rectitude. We walked in a zigzag path of our own inventions, but be sent his word and healed us, and taught us the truth as it is in Jesus. Then we gladly acknowledged his word; we loved its precepts, walked in its ordinances, and sucked in the sweetness of its promises, through the divine influence of the Holy Spirit. O that we could more and more, through the selfsame Spirit, mortify the deeds of the flesh, and, counting ourselves dead to sin, be indeed alive to righteousness, by virtue of the death and resurrection of our blessed Redeemer, and be holy even as he is holy.

The word of the Lord is as a guide post, to direct us in this way. It is full of exhortation, direction, and comfort. We come to no place of difficulty, but we find some memorial of one who has been there before, and a relation how the Lord delivered him out of his trouble, and set his feet in a safe place; and we have moreover the voice of the Spirit making the means effectual as he will, and saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it," which, as my paper is already full, if the Lord will, I will consider at some future opportunity.

VERICULTOR.

QUERIES OF D. EGBERT, AND REPLY.

LAWRENCEBURG, Ky., June 16, 1838.

G. BEEBE — Sir: — I read some time last year, in one of your papers, a statement, showing the difference of belief between the Old and New School Baptists; and if I understand the Old School, they contend for the doctrine that God from all eternity, or before the universe, or man was created, did predestinate and foreordain a part of the human family of our progenitor Adam, as his own children, such as he determined should be saved and that he sent his Son Jesus Christ into the world to die, that they might be saved. Now I cannot see how this can be attributed to a God of justice; but a God of justice he must be, if a God at all. Permit me, therefore, to ask you a few questions, which I hope you will not hesitate to answer, in relation to this matter.

1st. If God be the creator of all men, why did he so arrange it in eternity, before the beginning of time, in his decrees, so as to save some, and not all!

2nd. If he has made such an arrangement, is he not an unjust, and an impartial God?

3d. If he determined to save this number elected, why did he send his Son into the world to die for them, that they might be saved, when they were to be saved any how?

4th. Why did Peter say, he, God, is no respecter of persons; but in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him,

5th. Why does he command "all men, every where, to repent," when repentance will do them no good, if they do not belong to the elect? And what good will it do them?

6th. Why is it said, He came to his own, and his own received him not; but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, when they were sons already, and had been from all eternity; and what need had they for power to be given them to become the sons of God, if they were sons? (In the mind of God, as your brethren say)

7th. Why is it that all men are not created upon equal footing, as it respects salvation, which is to be attained through the medium of the gospel of the same God, which is to be believed and obeyed?

8th. Why was it that he directed his gospel to be preached to every crea-

ture, and he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned, if every creature to whom it was, and is preached, had, and have not, a chance to be saved?

If you will answer these questions, and show the justice of God, you will greatly astonish me, and perhaps thousands of others; and besides, you will greatly accommodate your humble servant and well wisher,

De Lancey Egbert.

REPLY.

ALEXANDRIA, D. C., September 7, 1838.

1st. That God is the creator of all men, is clearly revealed in the scriptures; nor is it any less certain from the same authority, that by an eternal arrangement in the divine counsel, he has decreed the salvation of some, but not of all mankind. Why God has revealed his sovereign grace to some, and hidden these things from others, is because, "So it seemed good in his sight." Luke x. 21.

2nd. He has made just such an arrangement; yet he is not unjust, but he is impartial.

3d. Because he had determined eternally to save his people from their sins, he, in the fullness of time, sent his Son to redeem them from sin, death and hell; to all of which they stood exposed as the sons of an earthly Adam, in whom they had all sinned; they were to be saved only according to the purpose and grace given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. Tim. ii. 9, Eph. iv. 4. Which purpose and grace provided tor them all that was necessary to cleanse from sin, to constitute them "holy and without blame before him in love."

4th. Peter made this declaration, because it was, and is the truth. Peter, as well as other Jews, had once thought God would have respect to their persons, as Jews, and personal relationship with Abraham, and personal righteousness, as doers of the law of Moses; but now being taught by the Holy Ghost, in his vision on the house-top of Simon the tanner, that God had cleansed all that the sheet (or covenant of grace) contained; and as a consequence (not cause) of their being cleansed, they would invariably fear God, and work righteousness, irrespective of the notions from which they were called by grace. All such are accepted (already) with him.

When he as their legal representative arose justified, and by the blood of the everlasting covenant entered, and was received into the holy place made without hands, &c., even then his reward was with him. They were crucified with him representatively; together with his dead body they arose from the dead; and as he rising from the dead became the first fruits of them that slept, he of course represented (according to this figure, borrowed from the ceremonial law) the entire harvest of his people; so that his being accepted, they were of course accepted with him; for they could be accepted at no other time or place, nor in any other way. And the only way Peter, or any of the children of God, can know who were, and are thus accepted

with Christ, is by such evidences as Cornelius gave to Peter, viz: He feared God, (was not found presumptuously calling Jehovah to account to him for his eternal purpose, or divine decisions. and everlasting decrees; "they that fear the Lord, tremble at his word") and worked righteousness. God had given Peter abundant evidence that Cornelius was cleansed, and that he was of that chosen number in whom God worketh, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

5th. God commandeth all men every where to repent; because all men every where have sinned; and it is proper and right that they should repent, or, in the sense of the apostle at Athens, that they should cease their worship of idols; and those in Kentucky should also renounce their idols, and cease to look for salvation through the works of their own hands.

6th. He came to his own; i.e. his kindred according to his birth, the Jews, his nation; and in a ceremonial relation, the Jews were the people of God, to the exclusion of the Gentiles; but the Jews as a nation rejected him, being disobedient, whereunto they also were appointed. 1 Peter ii. 7. That God gave his people power to become the sons of God, shows that men have no power of themselves to become such. As to the difficulty in the mind of Mr. Egbert, why they should need power to become the sons from everlasting, as some of our brethren in Kentucky say; can Mr. E. comprehend the idea of all the human family being actually created in Adam, and existing in him as his sons before they were born? And notwithstanding their existence in him as such, God has given us power at the time appointed, by our natural birth to become the sons, by blood and birth, of Adam; for we have no more power to regenerate than we had to generate ourselves. As in this respect the earthly Adam represented all the human race, so his anti-type, the Lord from heaven, represented all the spiritual race; and because they are sons, God has sent forth the spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying Abba Father. This number is precisely as many as receive him; for as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed; and as many as he gives this power to, shall receive him, and no more. "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and he that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." "No man can come unto me, except my Father who hath sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day."

7th. In one sense, all men are on equal footing, in regard to the matter of salvation; that is, all are, as men, totally depraved, lost, helpless, and justly condemned, and must be saved by sovereign grace, or sink down under the curse of the righteous law of God. But we presume our correspondent wishes us to tell him why God has not made the same provisions of grace for all, that he has for some of the human family. We can only say, as we have virtually said before, so it did not seem good in his sight. We are not at liberty to question the will of God; but if Mr. E. will inform us why all the animal creation were not made rational intelligences, why beasts were

not men, why men were not angels, why angels were not gods, perhaps he might let in such a flood of light on this subject, as to enable us to assign some other reason than the sovereign will of God, in answer to the seventh statement of his queries. Salvation is not to be attained through the preaching of the gospel; the gospel will bring home the glad tidings with great joy to the elect of God, in due time; not as something to be attained, but of eternal life secured, hid with Christ in God, for them who are kept by the power of God, &c.

8th. Christ commissioned his apostles to preach his gospel to every creature, for a witness to all nations. Matt. Xxiv. 14. "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Hence, as many as believe, (with that faith which cometh from God, which is the fruit of the Spirit, not of themselves, but it is the gift of God) are ordained to eternal life, and shall be saved accordingly; and the standard by which the apostles were to determine whether their faith was genuine or spurious, was by their obedience; genuine faith will lead those on whom it is bestowed to connect themselves with the Old School Baptists; and this will require that they be baptized; not as a cause or condition, but as an effect resulting from the work of the Spirit in their hearts. For unto them it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. Phil. i. 29. We know nothing of a chance salvation. The covenant of God with our spiritual David, and through him, with his spiritual house, is ordered in all things and sure. Hence we see a good and sufficient reason why the gospel should be preached; not as a proclamation of uncertainties, chances, contingencies, means, proffers, conditions, yeas, and nays, free will and human powers, but a declaration of the sure mercies of David, abounding with God's immutable wills and shalls, to the declarative glory of his great name, and the triumph of all his dear children.

Our querist requires of us, not only that we answer his questions, but that we show him the justice of God, and that too, in a manner which shall greatly astonish him, and perhaps thousands beside him — and what then? Why, in that case we will greatly oblige him. Willing, as we certainly are, to accomodate our friend Egbert, we candidly confess that it is not our province to display the divine attributes of Deity to the understanding of those who have never been made experimentally acquainted with them, through the quickening operation of the Holy Ghost. No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

Yet on this subject we would say to our friend Egbert, and to the thousands he thinks may feel interested in this matter, that we have seen the day (and now we tremble when we call it to mind) when we could also challenge the justice of God, when we set bounds for our Maker, and concluded that if he exceeded them, he must be unjust. And strange as it may seem, we knew no other, thought of no other, cared for no other standard of Judgment than that of our own carnal reason, which is enmity against God. Yet we expected an equi-

table and just decision from such a judge, even carnal reason. But, O Egbert! had not the Sovereign Lord displayed his naked arm in our salvation—had he not stopped us in our mad career — had he not prostrated this hellish opposition to his goverment, and given us a new heart, and a new spirit, we should have lived and died, and sunk down to hell, raging and blaspheming against him, as we then did; but forever blessed be his holy name, if we are not altogether deceived; he has taught us that all that he does is just and holy, simply because he does it; and we have been permitted with his ransomed children to sing, "It is even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

In conclusion, suffer us to say, that unless you are brought by that sovereign, omnipotant grace of God, to be reconciled to his government, to see, understand, love, and rejoice in his absolute, sovereign decrees, in another and a dreadful world, you will find your last question more than answered. His justice will break forth on you, and on all who die in sin and unbelief, in a manner which will need no further explanation. From which awful state we pray God may save you, and the thousands of whom you speak, if in accordance with his all wise purpose and decree. Amen.

"Then shall he make his justice known,
And the whole world, before his throne,
With joy or terror shall confess,
The glory of his righteousness."

Elder Gilbert Beebe

THE HIGH ROCK.

Convinced as a sinner to Jesus I come,
(Informed by his gospel for such there is room,)
O'erwhelmed with sorrow for sin did I cry,
Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I.

But tempted by satan my Saviour to leave,
Who sets forth religion as meant to deceive,
I claim my relation to Jesus on high,
The Rock of Salvation that's higher than I.

When sorely afflicted and ready to faint,
Before my Redeemer I'll spread my complaint:
Midst storms and afflictions my soul shall rely
On Jesus, the Rock that is higher than I.

When I my poor feelings with others compare,
And learn from reflection, what mercy I share,
My backsliding heart is constrained to reply,
Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I.

When judgments, O Lord, are abroad in the land,
And merited veangeance descend from thy hand,
O'erwhelmed at the sight for protection I fly,
To hide in the Rock that is higher than I.

When God from my soul doth his presence remove,
To try by his absence the strength of my love,
I'll rest on the promise of Jesus, and try
The force of that Rock that is higher than I.

When summon'd by death before God to appear,
Through free grace appointed I'll yield without fear,
Most gladly to venture with Jesus on high;
The Rock of Salvation that's higher than I.

Tis there with the chosen of Jesus I long
To dwell, and eternally join in their song,
In praising and blessing with angels on high,
Christ Jesus the Rock that is higher than I.

E. G. Taber
Nelson Co., Ky., May 31, 1836

PSALM 91:1.

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

MEETINGS

BIG MEADOWS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Minutes of the Presbytery

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God, Big Meadows looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift. They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed June 11, 2017 at 10:30 at Big Meadows Primitive Baptist Church, Pittsboro, N.C., for the purpose of examination of this gift, brother Ronnie Byrd and if found qualified be ordained to the full work and service of deacon.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together. The meeting was opened by prayer by Elder Zach Byrd.

Elder Cleo Robertson was elected as moderator and Deacon Larry Byrd to serve as clerk. Brother Wayne Edwards acting as spokesman for the church delivered brother Ronnie Byrd to the presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon was read as set forth in scriptures 6th Chapter of Acts and 1st Timothy, Chap. 3 by Elder Zach Byrd. Examinations followed by Elder Cleo Robertson. The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of this candidate proceeded with the

laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder Zach Byrd. The charge was delivered to brother Ronnie Byrd by Elder Cleo Robertson. He was then delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. A copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication and a copy to be given to Brother Ronnie Byrd along with a certificate of ordination.

Presbytery was dismissed by prayer by Elder Cleo Robertson.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Deacon Larry Byrd, Clerk

CC: Signs of the Times
Church Records

PRESBYTERY
INDIAN CREEK CHURCH

The Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Floyd County, Route 2, Willis, Virginia, feeling that Brother Andrew W. Quesenberry has been called to the work of a deacon, called a Presbytery to examine the aforesaid brother.

On April 1, 2017, a Presbytery was organized by appointing Elder Thomas C. Pegram as Moderator, J. B. Mitchell, Jr. as Clerk, and Elder Thomas C. Pegram to examine the candidate.

For the Ordination Prayer, Elder Eugene Gunter, and to deliver the charge Elder Lowell Hopkins and Church Spokesman was Bro. Harold Hollandsworth.

Then the aforesaid brother was delivered unto the Presbytery by the spokesman of the Church, whereby Brother Andrew W. Quesenberry was found worthy of Ordination to Deacon. He was then set apart by fasting and Prayer and the laying of the hands by the Presbytery, whereby the said Brother Andrew W. Quesenberry was Ordained to the full work of Deacon. After receiving the charge, he was delivered back to the Church.

Witness our hands on this day April 1, 2017.

Elder Thomas C. Pegram, Moderator
J. B. Mitchell, Jr., Clerk

The following ordained brethren present:

Elders:
Danny R. Carroll
Carlton Brown
Thomas C. Pegram, Jr.
Eugene M. Gunter
George M. Paul, Jr.
John E. Lyon
Z. Lowell Hopkins

Deacons:
Grason Fender
Fred Morgan
Billy Nichols
Harold Hollandsworth
T. C. Pegram, Sr.
J. B. Mitchell, Jr.

PRESBYTERY FLOWER GAP CHURCH

The Flower Gap Primitive Baptist Church, Carroll County, Virginia, feeling that Brother Larry Dean Payne has been called to the work of a deacon, called a Presbytery to examine the aforesaid brother.

On June 3, 2017, a Presbytery was organized by appointing Elder Carlton Brown as Moderator, J. B. Mitchell as Clerk, and Elder Danny Carroll to examine the candidate.

For the Ordination Prayer, Elder Eugene Gunter, and to deliver the charge Church Spokesman: Billy Nichols.

Then the aforesaid brother was delivered unto the Presbytery by the spokesman of the Church, whereby Brother Larry Dean Payne was examined and found worthy of Ordination to the office of Deacon. He was then set apart by fasting and Prayer and the laying of the hands by the Presbytery, whereby the said Brother Larry Dean Payne was Ordained to the full work of the office of Deacon. After receiving the charge, he was delivered back to the Church.

Witness our hands on this day June 3, 2017.

Elder Carlton Brown, Moderator
Bonnie Hawks, Clerk

The following ordained brethren present:

Elders:
Thomas C. Pegram, Jr.
Danny R. Carroll
George M. Paul, Jr.
John Lyon
Carlton Brown
Eugene H. Gunter
Z. Lowell Hopkins

Deacons:
J. B. Mitchell, Jr.
Grason Fender
Harold Hollandsworth
Fred Morgan
Andrew Quesenberry
William (Billy) Dee Nichols

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 08 / 2017

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

LITTLE VINE OLDE ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Fortieth Session of the Little Vine Olde Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association will be held at the Newfound Primitive Baptist Church meeting house, located on Brier Creek Road in Wyoming County, West Virginia, about twelve miles southwest of Pineville, West Virginia, on the fourth Sunday in August and the Saturday before. The dates are August 26 and 27, 2017.

Singing is scheduled to begin at 10:30 and preaching at 11:00 A.M. each day. It is our hope and trust that the Lord will gather together faithful ministers, brethren and friends to worship Him in Spirit and in truth, and to show forth His praise. If anyone needs more particular directions or information about lodging, please phone 606-474-4327.

Sherry Farmer, Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION 2017

The Smith River Association will convene the Lord willing at New Bell Spur church the first Sunday in September, Friday and Saturday before - September 1, 2, 3, with singing to start at 10:30 and service at 11:00 on Friday. Service will start at 10:00on Saturday.

The Church is located at 3771 Terry's Mill Road in Carroll County, Virginia. Those traveling the Blue Ridge Parkway exit the parkway at mile post 184 and take Terry's Mill road (rt 610) to the church on right.

Those traveling us 58 turn on Terry's Mill Rd Rt. 610 near the Carroll County line and go approximately three miles to the church on left.

We invite the Ministers of our faith and order, our Brethren and friends to be with us.

Tony R. Horton
Association Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 2017

Odetta Terry, VA 10.00
Gene Ambrose, VA 5.00
Nancy Pollack, NC 75.00
John Schulz, MT 200.00
Rachel Gore, NC 5.00
Robert Newsom, FL 10.00
Shelby Stratton, MS 35.00
Elder Lowell Hopkins, VA 5.00
Sarah Sidberry, NC 5.00
Anonymous, VA 50.00
"In memory of Elder Hale Terry"

OBITUARIES

SHELBY MINTER

The members of Sardis Primitive Baptist Church bow in humbleness in the passing of our dear sister, Shelby Minter. "A precious one from us is gone, a votes we loved is still: a place is vacant in the Church which no one else can fill."

Sister Shelby was born February 27, 1945, and departed this life January 27, 1987, making her stay here 41 years and 11 months. She leaves be-

hind to mourn her passing her dear companion, Elder David Minter, who is our dear pastor; her mother, Sister Bertha Clark, a grandmother, Mattie Kendricks, a stepson. David P. Minter III of Martinsville, Virginia, and a host of friends.

In the last few months of her life, she had many afflictions, but she was always faithful to attend church with her companion as she had always done for the 16 years they were together. "God works in a mysterious way." She was given a dream in which she saw Sardis Church and the beautiful colors of the rainbow — God's blessed covenant to His people. Shortly after the dream and after attending church, she and her companion drove through a storm after which appeared a beautiful rainbow that followed them for a distance and then shined into their car and on them. Her remarks were, "Have you ever felt like this? I feel as I never felt before." After reaching home, she retired and began to cry, saying to her companion, "I know I'm not fit to join the church, but I do want to join worse than anything I've ever done." At this time, the telephone rang. It was a man and his wife who were friends from the New River Association. The friend stated to Brother Minter that he dreamed Sister Shelby was going to offer to the Church the next day, which was the fourth Sunday in September, 1986. It came to pass that they came from the New River Association and did witness her asking for a home at Sardis Church, near Madison, Rockingham County, N.C.

On the day that she asked for a home in the church, it seemed her soul was full of joy and she remarked to her companion, "I thought you'd never get to me. She was baptized the next month which was the fourth Sunday in October, 1986, being led into the water by her pastor and dear companion, Elder David Minter, assisted by Brother Allen McBride and Brother Arthur Martin of Matrimony Church. After the singing of the hymn, "Beside the Gospel Pool," she was so beautiful standing there dressed in white. The previous full night's rain did not mar her beauty. Lunch was served at church that day, and after lunch, she remarked "Next time I'm here, it will be my body."

She was given another dream of a big snow — so deep the people had trouble traveling, but she made the road so smooth and reached home safely. At the time of her death, January 27, 1987, there was a big snow. Several people shoveled paths through the roads and through the cemetery.

Sister Shelby's funeral service which was attended by a host of brethren, sisters and friends from far and near, was held at Sardis Church on January 31, 1987. The service was conducted by Elders Jack Hawkins and George Flippin. Her body was laid to rest to await the resurrection when Jesus will call for the jewels of His mercy together to live with Him where there will be no more tears or sorrow and there to be like Him and be forever satisfied.

It is, therefore, resolved that three copies of this obituary notice be made, one for the family, one for the church record, and one to be sent to the Zion's Landmark for publication.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

VOL. 185 HILLSVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER 2017 NO. 9

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All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Tony R. Horton, 1429 Howlett Street, Hillsville, Va. 24343. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Cleo Robertson, 111 Livingstone Drive Cary, NC 27513.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign,
Inifinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.

There everlasting spring abides,
And never-withering flowers;
Death, like a narrow sea, divides
This heavenly land from ours.

Sweet fields, beyond the swelling flood,
Stand dressed in living green;
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
While Jordan rolled between.

But timorous mortals start and shrink
To cross this narrow sea,
And linger, shivering, on the brink,
And fear to launch away.

O! could we make our doubts remove,
Those gloomy doubts that rise,
And see the Canaan that we love,
With unbeclouded eyes:

Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er;
Not Jordan's stream nor death's cold flood
Should fright us from the shore.

Watts.

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EDITORIAL

"And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, *or* to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people *shall be* my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, *if aught* but death part thee and me." Ruth 1:16-17.

Elder Jerry B. Farmer

These are some of the sweetest words recorded in all of scripture to me. I wonder, what makes it so? Is it that these words are the words of my own heart? Is it that I have had a part in the feelings, desires, and hopes of one of the Lord's saints who lived so long ago? Is it that I have been given a deep and abiding love for the church, the people of God? I dare not claim any of these things for myself, other than to say I have a hope that it could be true. For I know that I am not worthy of any of all of the mercies, or any of all of the truth that God has revealed to His people. Nevertheless, I have been given a great desire to follow along after the children of grace wherever they are led - to rejoice with them and to suffer with them all the days of my life.

We see Ruth, the Moabite, in a situation where all her earthly plans and natural desires of a home with her husband and family had been dashed. Her husband, the son of the widow Naomi, had died and Ruth was childless. Her mother-in-law, that she loved so much, had heard that the Lord had visited His people in giving them bread, and was going forth from Moab to return to her home in Bethlehem. Naomi told Ruth and her sister-in-law Orpah to return to their people and their gods. We see Ruth torn between her natural love for her own natural family and her spiritual love for Naomi. In her father's house she would find acceptance and her natural

needs met. But with Naomi, she had no certain dwelling place, and no promise of anything she would need. By grace, and against nature, Ruth chose to follow along after Naomi. We see her made destitute of the world's goods, and of the world's protection, and altogether at the mercy of the God of heaven and earth. Nevertheless, she followed Naomi by faith and not by sight.

Ruth's sister in law, Orpah, whose husband had likewise died, at first said she also would cleave to Naomi. But when it was explained to her that there was nothing for her if she should follow Naomi, she returned to her father's house and her gods. I cannot help believing that she is typical of the worldly-minded persons. They seem to have a love for the true church, but when persecutions come, or when there is no hope for gain there, the natural mind prevails and they turn away to follow after the flesh. There is nothing in the true church that will satisfy the natural mind.

Ruth's experience makes me think of Moses when he was come to years, how he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh, but chose rather to suffer affliction with the children of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. He also by grace went against nature. It also makes me think of what the Lord said to His disciples. "If any *man* come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and even his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." I am made to believe that this is the true experience of grace for each of God's chosen people. This world is not their home, because they are strangers and pilgrims here. They are blessed to seek a city, not made with hands, whose builder and maker is God. And they by faith, which works by love, follow on after the Lord.

Ruth, being a creature made subject to vanity, as we are, could not see the future, or the great things that were laid up in store for her. She must have, by grace, pressed on by faith from day to day to find what was ahead, to the glory of God. Ruth and Naomi were brought safely along the way and came to the little town of Bethlehem. It was the beginning of the barley harvest. None of these things were by chance. The timing of the death of Naomi's husband, Elimelech, and the timing of the death of her sons were of the Lord. The timing of their departure from Moab and arrival at Bethlehem in the beginning of the barley harvest was perfect. And Ruth's hap to light on the part of the field belonging to Boaz, of the kindred of Elimelech was no accident. Everything came to be in such a way that the children of God through the ages would understand, without a doubt, that God had worked the whole matter for the good of Ruth and to His glory. We are taught that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose." And so it is, and so it is evident in the travels of this little one.

And it was no happenstance that Boaz came to his field and noticed the damsel, Ruth, as she gleaned there. I am made to believe that Boaz was blessed with a great love for Ruth before he ever saw her face. I trust I have

been brought along a little in this way of experience. I can remember, about forty years ago, when I first heard of the old Baptists and of their humble, honest and loving ways, how my heart burned with love for them. And I thought within myself, (but I hope and trust the Lord heard me) if only I could meet and know these people. Nevertheless, listen to the words of Boaz. "And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and *how* thou has left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust." I am made to believe that this is the true experience of grace. The Lord's people are given grace for grace. By grace, they are given faith to walk in the light, and by grace they are given to speak the truth in love. And by grace they are rewarded in their good works, as was Ruth. "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: *it is* not in man that walketh to direct his steps." The children of God are not blessed for their good works, but blessed in their good works, which are of Him. "For all the promises of God are in him yea, and in him, Amen, unto the glory of God by us." There are no negatives in the gospel of grace.

I believe that Boaz was given a great love for Ruth that passes natural understanding. That love for Ruth was proven by the many manifestations of his care for her. He made her dwelling place sure. Boaz told her to glean in no other field, but to abide there fast by his maidens. He put his protection over her. He commanded the young men not to touch her. He made provision for her. Boaz commanded his young men to "let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not; and let fall also *some* of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave *them*, that she may glean *them*, and reproach her not." I must believe that the Lord has blessed and will bless His people exceedingly abundantly above all that they are able to ask or to think, as He did to Ruth.

Because of the love Boaz had for Ruth, he desired to take her for his wife. In that day, upon a man's death, his possessions could be redeemed or claimed by a near kinsman. Naomi, the widow of Elimelech, and her daughter-in-law Ruth were eligible to be redeemed by the near kinsman in the family. To receive Ruth for a wife meant that Boaz had to redeem the possessions of Elimelech, which included Naomi and all that pertained to her deceased husband. There was an obstacle for Boaz to overcome if he should marry Ruth. The nearest kinsman had first rights for the redemption, and Boaz was not the nearest. So Boaz met the nearest kinsman in the gate of the city, and took ten elders of the city for witnesses. Boaz made it plain before all that the nearest kinsman had first rights of redemption, but that Ruth, the Moabitess was part of the purchase. Boaz said that if the nearest kinsman would not redeem it, he would. Upon learning that Ruth was a Moabitess, the

nearest kinsman refused to purchase the possession. Because to take her, since she was a Gentile, would mar his inheritance.

I believe there is a wonderful teaching here for the Lord's people. It appears that the nearest kinsman represents the law. Under Jewish law it was forbidden for a Jew to marry a Gentile. If one should do so, he would take a blemish to himself and be subject to reproach from the devout Jews. The Gentile was considered a sinner, who should not be touched, much less married. So, the nearest kinsman could not do his part. No flesh is saved or redeemed by the law, neither can it be. The law was not given to save, but rather to be the ministration of condemnation and death. But salvation is by grace. Jesus came to save sinners. He looked past national and cultural boundaries and saw the vessels of mercy that God had loved with an everlasting love. He loved them, sought them out, came unto them, gave Himself for them, made provision for them, redeemed them and took their reproach to Himself. He purchased His people from the curse of the law with His blood, and forever removed their sin from them, never to be remembered against them forever.

Ruth, who was despised by some because of her nativity, but beloved of others because of her faith, became the mother of Obed, the father of Jesse, the father of David. And we know that they were all in the lineage of the Lord Jesus Christ. We see that God, in His great wisdom has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty. He has done this so that no flesh should glory in His presence. It is written, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

This, I trust was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer
10-24-2010.

The Lord willing, I will mention a little experience I was given, that stayed with me for days until sitting down to write this. I was filling the bird feeder and became concerned about the birds that are ground feeders (mostly doves) that cannot get onto the feeder itself, but must gather the little that falls to the ground while the other birds are feeding. Because of this, I dropped some handfuls purposely on the ground for the doves so they might find more when they came to feed. Then the scripture appeared concerning Boaz's instruction to let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for Ruth, who was gleaning in his field.

PROVERBS 1:1-4.

The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel;

To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;

To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;

To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Cleo Roberton,

My name is Ralph A. Hocutt, Jr. son of Ralph A. Hocutt, Sr. and Agnes Utleg Hocutt and grandson of Elder Walter Roe Utley and Bama Utley. All of my grandparents and parents are deceased. I am 79, soon to be 80 in Jan. 2018. Please advise when I am to start paying!!! I have included the address label of the July issue of the Signs and the two past due stamps concern me. Allow me to defer and give some background on the Utley family. All were Primitive Baptists except one of the 3 boys, then 3 girls of my grandparents. One, Aunt Viva Dean Utley married Howard Poe, a member of the Church of God. All four of their children, grandchildren are Church of God. When Howard Poe died, Aunt Viva Dean returned to the Primitive Baptist.

My mother always took a camera to church and took pictures of Elders and their wives. I have the photos of 45, but do not have a picture of Elder Lambert of Memphis, Tenn. My late first cousin Sara Utley Stone worked in Elder Lambert's bookstore in Memphis before she passed with Multiple Sclerosis and Parkinson's disease. According to her husband, Bill Stone, she is buried approximately 20 yards from Elder Lambert in same cemetary. I went to Sara's funeral. Elder Lambert passed later. One of the 45 pictures supposely is of an Elder John D. Wood in his office at Signs of the Times in Manasses, Va. According to my mothers notes, he was publisher of the Signs. I personally did not know about the truth of this. My parents were there.

One of the P. B. Ministers lived in a swampy area of Florida and had a pet dog/wolf. Elder J. Y. McCormick was his name. When dad passed in 1991, mom called him to come to Tuscaloosa and handle Dad's funeral. I called him in 1998 to come to Tuscaloosa, Ala. and handle mom's funeral.

I have truly been blessed. From age 16 in 1954, I have driven my late parents to churches/associations from Texas, Mississippi, within Alabama, Georgia, Tennesee and North Carolina. At age 21, I married a young lady Beverly Clay, of Atlanta, Ga in East Atlanta Primitive Baptist Church with Elder Huff crying during the ceremony. Beverly was raised as a Primitive Baptist. I first met her when she was 13 at Shady Grove Primitive Baptist Church near Hanceville, Ala. Her parents and Bill Ivey drove over from Atlanta for the association. Also Elder Biggs of Madison, Tenn. was one of the preachers. Beverly's parents wanted her to meet Elder Biggs' son Kenneth. However she must have been impressed with me as Beverly and I were married June 20, 1959 in Atlanta. She was 18 and I was 21.

At an association in Tennessee at Elder Bigg's church, he had a red barn that he installed a shower. All the males slept on sheet/quilt covered hay, show-

ered and shave. I was not shaving much then. After our marriage, Beverly accompanied my parents and I to associations. Currently we attended Bethel Primitive Baptist Church in Doerun, Ga. Elder Louie Hornsby, a retired high school prinicipal in Albany, Ga and Elder Dexter Brooks preached at Bethel. Elder Brooks passed away Dec. 24, 2011. Now 92 year old Elder Hornsby lives in Corton, Ga near his son. His son and wife Maggie have passed away. He now makes the 5 hour 200 mile one way trip on 4th Sunday only. Occasionally Elder Hasley Hale of Huntsville, Ala. comes to Bethel Church in Doerun. (My mother wrote the paperwork required for his ordination.) And his Father in Law also–Elder R. O. Semmeons.

Yes I have been blessed. Had a light stroke Nov. 24, 2012. Had family at our house from Pennsacola, Fl. and Savannah, Ga. And asked to be signed out to spend Thanksgiving. All three doctors that saw me in hospital were shocked that my heart had no scar tissue and if they didn't see me in hospital, they wouldn't know I had a stroke. Yes, God looks out for me. Must have other plans for me. It and everything else is in his heart and mind. I accept it with thanks,

Sorry this is so long. Enjoyed all the associations and dinners on the tables, Primitive Baptist ladies are great cooks. Forgot to cover Elder H.C. Moon of Cullman, Ala. Elder Moon had been on crutches for years due to a car accident. He was preaching at his home church in Cullman when he stopped. Said "I believe God has cured me," called his wife and walked out, leaving crutches in church.

Respectively,
Ralph A. Hocutt

P.S. I know I am getting old when I've heard many of the preachers reflected in "Voices of the Past" in the Signs. Elder W. D. Griffin of Fayette, Ala. always looked I thought at me when talking of sin. Yes I've heard many, but not Elder Beebe. My mother had the entire collection of Elder Beebe's sermons. Also have an 1880 Signs wherein my grandfather Wm. Jackson Hocutt sent $3.00 to Signs. Have 1st cousin June Utley, sent funds to Signs.

VOICES OF THE PAST

1 COR. VI. 13; HEB. XII. 1;
1 JOHN III. 9.
New Vernon, N. Y., Oct. 15, 1842.

The text 1 Cor. vi. 13. The apostle makes use of what seems to have been used in his day as an adage, by which he illustrates the transitory character of natural things, and by a striking contrast sets forth the redemption of the body, which is applicable to the church as the mystical body of Christ or the individual bodies of the saints. Neither the church as a body, nor the individual bodies of the saints, being redeemed from

corruption, are to be polluted by unlawful connection with the world. The Corinthian brethren had probably been guilty of applying to the secular powers to adjust matters of aggrivance between them, which, according to the law of Christ, ought to have been settled in the church; and although as a citizen of the world, "All things were lawful," for Paul that were lawful for other citizens of the same commonwealth, "Yet all things were not expedient;" and in his estimation it were better to forego one's privilege than to carry our matters before the unjust for their decision. If as a body the church be married to Christ, it is a breach of chastity for her to appeal to any other Lord: "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit;" and this separation from the world in our church or religious capacity, is as imperiously demanded as constancy is enjoined by the counubial bands.

Heb. xii. 1. The "cloud of witnesses" in this text, we understand to be the same spoken of by the prophet," Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain, so the Lord shall make bright clouds." — Zech. x. 1. In illustrating the nature and the power of faith, the apostle has cited a cloud of testimony in the preceding chapter; in addition to which time would fail him to speak of Gideon, Barak, Sampson, Jepthah, of David also, and of all the prophets. This cloud, like that which once overshadowed Christ and the two disciples, embodies the law, the prophets and the apostles, with their entire testimony centering in our Lord Jesus Christ, and all producing but the one sound, the voice that came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son, hear ye him. By this same cloud the gospel church is still encompassed about, and upon this glorious reality the apostle predicates his exhortation: "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." Many speculations have been offered in regard to the weights and besetting sin mentioned in this text; but to our mind the figure taken from the Olympic races is intended to show that under the gospel dispensation the saints are called to run a spiritual race, in order to which it becomes us to cast aside every weight calculated to impede our progress. Coming out from Judaism, these brethren were much encumbered with Jewish traditions and legal ordinances which belonged to the worldly sanctuary of the old covenant; these would be great hinderances to gospel saints, as we see from the account given of the churches at Antioch and Galatia. Of the latter Paul says: "Ye did run well, who did hinder you?" The weights by which they were hindered, evidently were those legal rites and ceremonies which belonged to the former dispensation, and which were now abolished and blotted out with the hand-writing of ordinances, which were nailed with the Redeemer to his cross. The apostle says, "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years;" these observances he pronounces "beggarly elements," whereunto they desired again to be in bondage.

In being stripped therefore for their spiritual race, the Christian church was

required to lay aside every particle of Jewish rites, to touch not, taste not, and handle them not; for as the true substance of what these former ordinances were but the elements or shadows had come, there was no longer any need of the shadows. These Jewish rites could no longer point forward to a Messiah to come, nor to a spiritual kingdom to be revealed; and as a continued observance of them would imply a still looking for the coming of Messiah and fulfillment of the former promises of his coming, it would of course involve a denial that he had already come. And if Christ had not already come, and become the end of the law for righteousness to all that believe, they were running in vain in regard to gospel ordinances, "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Hence we see the necessity of laying aside the law as a rule of life, being lawfully delivered from its dominion and its curse through the redemption of our Lord Jesus Christ; as the apostle testifies, that if under it at all are bound to continue there, and as to continue in one place would prevent our running a race, we are altogether disqualified for the christian course if loaded down with legal weights and impediments. These weights are spoken of by the inspired apostle as a yoke of bondage, and as a yoke which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear; and the apostles considered that it could be tempting God for them to lay that yoke upon the necks of the gospel saints.

It is frequently urged by arminian speakers and writers that we should, as christians, take all these weights along with us; for, say they, if we are not under the law as a rule of life we are at liberty to sin. But they betray a lamentable ignorance both of the law and of the gospel. While the apostle commands that we lay these weights all aside, he commands that we should run the race set before us, (the gospel course) "Looking unto Jesus (not Moses) as the Author and Finisher of our faith." Our Lord also admonishes his disciples on this subject: "He that putteth his hand to the plough, and looking back, is not fit for the kingdom." Should we run the christian race, looking to Moses or his law, we would have to run backwards, and that would disqualify us for the kingdom of the Redeemer.

If a man in ploughing should place his back to the plough, and look back instead of looking forward, he would be likely to make very crooked furrows; so in running the christian race or following the gospel plough, we must look forward unto Jesus as the Author and Finisher of our faith. Jesus has gone on before his people, and has commanded his people to follow him; and except they follow him they cannot be his disciples. Who then shall dare to say that in following Jesus we shall be liable to sin? Or that the heaven-born souls, looking unto Jesus and pressing towards the mark for the prize of their high calling, will need Moses with his flaming sword to urge them onward in a different course from any ever taught by him?

When these United States were

colonies under the British Government, our citizens could not enjoy a republican form of government, and at the same time maintain a loyalty to the British crown; but when redeemed from the British yoke by the blood of our revolutionary patriots, we as free and independent states had an indisputable right to form our constitution and enjoy our own distinct form of government. So when we were under the law of Moses we were not allowed to claim allegiance to Christ as our King, but were bound to continue or remain in all things written in the book of the law under which we were held in bondage; but when by the obedience and blood of Christ we were delivered from the yoke of bondage, we could, without the charge of rebellion or treason to the old law, bow down to the sceptre of Christ and claim him as our Sovereign and King. In receiving him as our King we receive him as our Law maker, our sole Legislator, and we are, in this relation to him, to regard his law, now written, not on tables of stone, but on the fleshly tables of our hearts, as the only and infallible rule of our faith and practice. The sin that so easily beset the Hebrew disciples is undoubtedly the sin which doth also easily beset the disciples of Christ at this day. There was with them a lamentable want of faith and confidence in Christ, and a strong propensity to be again in bondage to the law. The apostle marveled that the Galatian brethren, before whose eyes Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth crucified among them, were so soon or so easily beset or bewitched with this legal heresy. In order that we then as christians should make good progress in the divine life, we must be stripped for the race, we must lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and look unto Jesus as the Author and Finisher of our faith.

The other and last passage proposed by A Stranger, is 1 John iii. 9. **"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."**

This passage is in perfect harmony with those on which we have just offered our opinion. The contrast is most strikingly drawn between the condition of those under the law, and those who are born of God. Those Israelites to whom pertained the giving of the law, were Israelites by a corruptible seed, a carnal or fleshly relationship to Abraham's family, being born in his house, &c. and this seed was not to remain but for a limited period. When the Pharisees came to John's baptism, pleading that Abraham was their father, they were informed that that seed was no longer valid — that it was corruptible and perishable. And our Lord declared most positively to a ruler of the Jews, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." "Marvel not that I said unto you, Ye must be born again." That seed and birth which brought them into Abraham 's house did not qualify them for membership in a Baptist church, neither did it secure them from sin, death and hell; for by grace publicans and harlots were to be brought to the spiritual kingdom,

and of these stones God was able to raise up children to Abraham, while the children of the kingdom, the natural seed of Abraham, were to be cast out. The children of the flesh were not counted for the spiritual seed; but "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." The principal difficulty in understanding this text is the declaration that "whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." This has led many to doubt their own experimental knowledge of the new birth; they find so much corruption, depravity and sin in their nature that forbid the thought that they, of all men, are exempt from sin. But let such remember that neither their nature nor their natural bodies are yet born of God. Their bodies are indeed destined to be, when the Spirit of him that brought again from the dead the body of our Lord Jesus, shall also quicken their mortal bodies in the resurrection, then shall they be free from sin in body as well as spirit.

Sin is the transgression of the law, (see verse 4th, same chapter) but whosoever is born of God is redeemed from the law of sin and death. They are not under the law, but under grace. There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit; for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made them free from the law of sin and death. Being therefore no longer under its dominion, they can no longer transgress the law, and consequently they cannot commit sin in that sense. Although they can and do transgress the law of the kingdom to which they now belong, they cannot be convicted of guilt or sin by the law from which they are delivered; nor is it necessary, seeing that the law of Christ provides that for the transgression of its precepts the offender shall be beaten with many stripes, and this chastisement shall be administered in love for their good, but not in wrath, as sin is punished by the law of sin and death.

It is by the implantation of that seed which remaineth that we have the evidence that we are the sons of God; and this seed is life, it is Christ in you the hope of glory; and this principle of life in us is called the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, and of which the Lord has said, Thou art all fair, my love, I will behold, no spot in thee. Although the apostle Paul possessed this abiding seed in him, yet he was constrained to acknowledge that in his flesh dwelt no good thing. He found, as all who are born of God do find, a law in his members warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin that remained in his carnal members. Hence we hear him saying, "But ourselves also, which have received the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." --- Rom. iii. 23

Elder Gilbert Beebe
October 15, 1842

Elder William M. Smoot, May, 1905

"My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." Exodus xxxiii, 14.

What a precious and assuring promise is this! And how full of deep interest and unspeakable comfort the connections in which it stand!

The apparently insurmountable difficulties pathway, loomed up before the sorely tried Moses, the man of Divine appointment, and in the work to which the God of Israel had most surely sent him. The consciousness of his own weakness pressed heavily upon him; and the idolatry, murmuring, bickering, unthankfulness, perverseness and wickedness of the Israel which he was to lead through the terrible wilderness filled him with alarm.

He had already evidence of their unbelief and idolatry, their murmurings against him, and the difficulties which thronged the pathway over which he was to go. He could not rely upon them, for some of the worst enemies to confront him was to rise up out of their midst. He must look alone to the God who had sent him, to give him ability to withstand the enemies within and without the camp, and his own evil spirit as well.

Truly was there need to look no where else, for a fullness of wisdom, strength, and every needed grace was there. No power short of Divine could prepare him for his work, as no power short of this can qualify the ministry of today; "our sufficiency is of God."

He was conscious of his own inability to successfully encounter the trials of the way, and hence he must bring his case to Him who had most surely called said to this great and exalted work. "And Moses the Lord, ...Now therefore, I pray Thee, if I have found grace in Thy sight, shew me now Thy way, that I may know Thee, that I may find grace in Thy sight." Verse 13.

What a wonderful prayer! How distrustful of self! How needful of that supporting grace that could alone lead and keep him in the long, laborious way over which he was now to pass. No power but that of God could sustain him, no wisdom but of God could direct him.

To the cloudy pillar by day he must look, the flaming fire by night, as his Guide and Protector. He must look away from all human help, for he had been taught its utter vanity, and look to God alone. Hence he could well say, "If Thy Presence go not with me, carry us not up hence," verse 15. True indeed did he know that he with him were doomed to fall by the way without Divine Protection. Hence in fervent prayer he calls to God, and Oh! What an assuring answer! "My presence shall go with thee." What boundless comfort this precious assurance! No doubts or congencies are in the promise. "My presence shall." Already he must see by faith the flowing fields of Canaan, the goal of the long the Divine victory in every conflict, and triumph over every obstacle. And what, dear saints, of this to us? As ministers of Gospel grace we have similar assuring testimony: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." - Matthew xxviii, 20. What blessed power in this assurance as it comes direct from the heavenly throne, as it is spoken in our hearts, as we feel its magic and di-

vine Presence, for "the chariots of God are twenty-thousand, even thousands of angels" The Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place."- Psalm lxvii, 17.

When worn and weary, hard pressed by foes without and within, when sore trials press upon us, and the billows roll in upon our soul, then do we find Him "a very present Help in trouble."- Psalm xlvi, 1.

"While the raging billows roll, While the tempest still is night."

And when we are fast reaching the end of our mortal pilgrimage, and the waves of death tower high shutting us out every earthly object from our sight then does this blessed Presence dispel the awful gloom of death, and open before us the pearly gates of our immortal home, for the text continues, "I will give thee rest. It is probable that more especial reference is here made to the rest given Moses in the toil and trial through which he was to pass, but this could not be the full meaning of the promise, and the connection in which it stands indicates a far more glorious sequel. 'Tis a blessed thing to rest here in our labor and toil as children of grace to experience the truth of the testimony, "I will give you rest. . . . For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light, Matthew xi, 28-30. To rest in the arms of God, to bask in His smiles; dreary, desolate beyond expression would the world be without such "heavenly places;" for

"Beneath His smiles my heart has lived,
And part of heaven possessed."

It has been perhaps near thirty years now since our attention was first directed to these words. It was on the threshold of a long and laboring journey of near a thousand, beset with difficulties from which our flesh shrank. Again we desired once more to ask the Lord for His divine guidance and protection, the cry had been in our heart for days in anticipation of the journey, but the morning for the start had now arrived, and deepening in our heart arose the cry, similar we trust to that of Moses: "If Thy Presence go not with me, carry us (me) not up hence." Our mind turns back over the waste of years, and as vivid as on that eventful morning we hear again the wondrous words, and our heart feels anew the thrilling power of that blessed assurance; "My Presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." We went out from the chamber of prayer to face the dreaded journey. It was bright and beautiful day. The sun shone high in the heavens; the earth was full of His praise, while our whole being was filled with an unspeakable calmness, a quiet resting in the arms of our God.

Yea, and all through the long and tedious travel the power of this assurance filled our heart making it a most delightful journey. Here indeed was rest we trust, in the Presence of God. But there is a fullness of rest beyond all these changing scenes of time, and of which this is a delightful foretaste. "I will give thee rest." It is not then dependent upon earthly obligations, it comes as the gift of God.

It comes from His boundless mercy despite our rebellious, vile, carnal complainings and murmuring, our wanderings and perverseness, our sins and

iniquities, "if we believe not, yet He abideth faithful: he cannot deny Himself."- 2 Timothy ii, 13. In the same school where Moses learned the lesson of patient waiting upon God and the enduring and supporting nature of His Presence, so do the ministers of Christ learn to look unto Him who has promised to be with them "always, even unto the end of the world." In this severe school they are tried "as by fire." It was said of Joseph, "the archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him. But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob."- Genesis xlix, 23, 24.

The subjects of their ministration are prepared through similar scenes to receive the word of truth, to appreciate and rejoice in the Gospel, and the ministration thereof. "Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee; In whose heart are the ways of them, ... They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God."- Psalm lxxxiv, 5, 7. It is the Divine Presence alone that sustains the children of Gospel grace in their pathway through time.

It is the promise of rest unending that dispels the gloom of the grave, that overtakes its dark portals in rays of light eternal. "I will give thee rest." Surely such a rest in its fullness can never be found upon mortal shores. Well indeed may it be said with reference to all this, as was declared to Israel in days of old; "Arise ye, and depart for this is not your rest: because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction." There is no rest to children of grace in houses and lands, in wealth and or in fame, in mortal relationship, or in any thing that bears the impress of time or mortality. Away from all these we look by faith to climes unclouded by mortal woe, undimmed by earthly night, untainted by mortal pollution, and forever free from sin and death.

"Oh sacred rest for thee we groan,
And bid the wheels of time roll on,
To bring that hour, when we shall rise
To join the chorus of the skies."

It was said of Israel "In all their afflictions He was afflicted, and the angel of His Presence saved them: in His love and in His pity He redeemed them, and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old." Isaiah lxiii, 9. It is this blessed Presence of God that upholds, protects, defends, and sustains the children of grace here, and until faith stretches her pinions for the immortal flight; "For this God is our God forever and ever: He will be our Guide even unto death."- Psalm xlviii, 14. "Nevertheless I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel and afterward receive me to glory."

Then of what we have written this is the sum that the guiding, sustaining Presence of God shall be made manifest in all the pilgrimage of saints here, and open before them the portals of endless rest hereafter:

"For grace shall guide and glory crown, The happy objects of His care."

"My flesh and my heart faileth; but

God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever."- lxxiii, 26. "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast Thou ordained strength because of Thine enemies, that Thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger."- viii, 2. "As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness." Psalm xvii, 15. May, 1905.

Of God: the Holy Trinity

Truth, in all ages of the world, has been unpopular, but probably never more so than in the present age; and in no part of the world more so, than in America. I cannot therefore flatter myself, with the pleasing hope of gaining much applause from the public voice of my readers, nor do I aim to court the smiles, or fear the frowns of men; but to take the word of God alone for my criterion. To it I make my appeal, by it I wish my doctrine tried, and if anything should appear in the following work repugnant thereto, myself alone is accountable.

When I think of the very important work in which I am about to engage, and know my own imperfections, both as to talents and literature and the general taste for criticism that is almost predominant, I am ready to decline, but when I see the errors, and delusions that are spreading over our land, and the infatuated multitudes, that are floating down this complicated torrent, to the whirlpool of endless ruin, I am again resolved to prosecute my purpose, and if but one be profited thereby, I shall be well rewarded, and my God and Saviour shall have all the praise.

As one of the most important subjects in Theology is God and the Holy Trinity; I shall here invite the attention of my serious reader, to a dispassionate and Scriptural elucidation of this momentous article of the Christian religion. May God lead my mind to write the Truth, and my readers to understand it.

OF GOD AND THE HOLY TRINITY

That there is one indivisible God, who is unbegotten, absolutely of Himself and without beginning, is a doctrine well supported from Scripture. **Psa. 45:6, "Thy throne Oh God, is forever and ever." Psa. 90:2, "Even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."** This Truth may also be proven from the things that are seen which declare His eternal power and Godhead, from our own existence, from the existence of all things around us and from His impressions on the minds of men. I think it unnecessary to consume time in offering any arguments in support of the Being, and Unity of God; for who but an Atheist ever denied His Being? Or who that professes the Christian name, will deny His Unity? My present object is, to illustrate the doctrine of the Trinity, or show in what sense God is triune.

No article in Theology is more generally subscribed to than the unity, and indivisibility of the Divine Essence. Yet while the Christian world is so generally agreed to the unity of the divine essence, various are the conjectures, and diversified are the conclusions drawn from

the same premises. The Arian, the Socinian, the Sabellian, and the Trinitarian all agree to the unity of the divine essence; but when these different sects undertake to explain the mode of His existence in this essence, they are at once divided. One infers from personal pronouns, plural nouns, etc., that there are three distinct persons existing in the one essence of God; while another infers from the indivisibility of the divine essence that Jesus Christ was not divine except by delegation. Warm have been the disputes, and fiery the zeal of each of those parties; and many are the cruelties which have betrayed the malignity of these partisans. This should admonish us to be satisfied with what the Scriptures reveal and not go farther than we have a positive "thus saith the Lord," for then we know we are right. Is it not sinful to attempt to comprehend the mode of existence in the divine essence farther than God has revealed it? If so, let us retract and like humble disciples, throw off our loads and clogs of tradition, and come as learners to the Bible for instruction. Let us not be wise above what is written.

The first thing for our consideration is, can we comprehend God? No, we cannot, see Job 11:7-9. "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? Deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea." Job 37:5, 23. "Great things doth He, which we cannot comprehend; touching the Almighty, we cannot find Him out." See also. Psa. 77:19, Isa. 40:28, Rom. 11:33-34. From the above passages we are taught that man cannot comprehend God. What folly then! What presumptuous folly to attempt to comprehend the very mode of His existence; but vain man would be wise. Now it is no way mysterious, that the first cause of all things should be incomprehensible; but it is very unreasonable for man, a creature of a day, a child of mortality, a finite and fallen being, to presume to comprehend the mode of existence of His infinite Creator. The next thing to which we shall invite the attention of the reader is the unity of God as an object of worship. Exod. 34:14. "Thou shalt worship no other God" 1 Cor. 8:4, 6. "There is none other God but one; to us there is but one God." See Psalm 83:18, Isa. 40:8, Isa. 45:21-22. This God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship in spirit. As I presume all professing Christians will agree to the unity and indivisibility of God, or the divine essence, I shall pass to the main object of this chapter, which is: the Holy Trinity.

This subject is of very great importance, and requires much attention, not only on account of its sublimity and worth; but on account of the spurious philosophy and sophism in which this doctrine has been long shrouded. That we may not err in this article, we come at once to the Scriptures, to hear there what God the Lord has revealed. That God is revealed in a triune manner, is evident from 1 John 5:7, "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." We have been

often told that these three are persons, each divine, and one in essence; but does the Scripture say so? If not, it is only conjecture; and not revelation. Neither has it any foundation in good reason, for reason forbids the idea of three distinct persons, each one truly and properly God, considered by itself, distinct from the other two, and yet but one God. If the first, second and third person, each one distinct form the other two be a God, there is no reason in saying there is but one God; but if there be but one God, there is no reason in saying that there are three persons and each one distinctly considered, truly and properly God.

Nevertheless, if God has revealed this, we must believe the fact; but I challenge the Christian world, to present one solitary text in the Old or New Testament, that says anything much or little about there being three divine persons in the Godhead, or about three distinct persons being one in the unity of the divine essence. If this be a truth, it is not a Bible Truth A word on the Trinity; 1 John 5:7. "There are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." The apostle is here adducing several evidences, by which the people of God are distinguished, such as faith, love and obedience. At the 5th verse he asks: "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" verse 6. "This is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness because the Spirit is truth." Here are three, the water, the blood, and the Spirit, that bear witness that Christ has come. Shall we call them persons? If so there are three persons in every man for all men have water, spirit, and blood. – verse 7 – "There are three that bear record in heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." The eleventh verse informs us what this record is: "This is the record: that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son." – verse 8 – "There are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and water, and the blood; and these three agree in one." See verse 10. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." Now it is plain; the earth that the water, spirit and blood, bear witness in is the believer; for, "he that believeth hath the witness in himself." So the heaven in which the Father, Word, and Holy Ghost bear record is the church; for "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son." Then eternal life given to us in the Son of God is the record borne in heaven [that is, in the church called the kingdom of heaven] and the Scriptures contain the record; hence "in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they, which testify" of Jesus Christ the Son of God, and of that life which God hath given us in Him. The word record, and the word witness are synonymous terms, see Rom. 10:2 -"For I bear them record" - that is, I bear them witness. The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, bear record in heaven, [the Church, or Kingdom of heaven] and the Scriptures contain the record, which testify that God

hath given us [the subjects of this heavenly kingdom] eternal life, and this life is in His Son. These three are one, that is one God, or one Testifier. God was manifest in the flesh, God was in Christ who came by water and blood, and the Spirit beareth witness because the Spirit is truth. "The Word was made flesh. "John 1:14. The Father was in Him. John 10:38 "The Father is in Me, and I in Him." The Spirit was upon Him. Isa. 61:1. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me." These three are one. Christ says, "I and My Father are one." John 10:30. Thus from positive Scripture language we see, that when the Word was made flesh the Father was in Him, and the Spirit of the Lord God upon Him; here are the three that bear record in heaven in Jesus Christ - who came by water and blood, to which the Spirit beareth witness. By water He was manifested to Israel, see John 1:31. "That He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore I am come baptizing with water." When Jesus was baptized, the Spirit in the form of a dove, and the voice or testimony of the Father was given in saying, "this is My beloved Son." Matt. 3-17. Here the Father that was in Him, and the Spirit that was upon Him; bear record to the senses of John, that this was the Messiah, and John "saw and bear record that this is the Son of God." (John 1:31-34 inclusive.) Here are the three that bear record in heaven, in the one person of Jesus Christ; who was manifested to Israel by water in baptism; by blood He redeemed His church, and the Spirit beareth witness in the church. So in earth, that is, in every believer, the water, the Spirit, and the blood bear witness . The water in washing, see Heb. 10:22. "Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water;" 1 Cor. 6: 11 - the blood in witnessing to our pardon and justification [1 Pet. 1:1-2] and the Spirit in quickening the man and applying to him, both the cleansing water, and atoning blood; so these three agree in one. Of what we have said, this is the sum. The three that bear record in heaven are all in Jesus Christ, who established His kingdom on earth, and delivered this record to it in His word. He was the everlasting Father, Isa. 9:6. He was a quickening Spirit, see 1 Cor. 15:45 -"The last Adam was made a quickening spirit." He was the Word. John 1:14. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us." Now these three are one; that is, God the Father, or first cause, is a Holy Spirit, or a most pure Spirit, as says our confession, and this God was manifested in the flesh, or man Christ Jesus, or the Word, which was the Son of God. The kingdom of Heaven which Christ came to establish on earth is the heaven in which the record is borne, and the Scriptures are the record book, or in which the record is registered. The three that bear witness in earth, are the water to wash His subjects, the Spirit to quicken them, and the blood to justify them, and their earthly body is the earth in which they bear witness, for the comfort of the soul; and these three agree in one God-man, whose divine Spirit quickens them, washes them with water by the word, and justifies them by His blood. So we

see nothing favoring the tri-personal scheme of Athanasius in this passage; but we find that the whole Trinity was in one person, and the man Christ Jesus, whose divine nature was the Triune God, and whose humanity, or person, was the Mediator, according, to I Tim. 2:5. "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." Although this text has been so often called, or rather forced into, the tri-personal service, yet it says not one word about persons more or less, therefore it can prove nothing for them, more or less.

Objection: May we not fairly infer three persons, as there are three that bear record and bearing record is a personal act? Answer: We are no better supported in inferring persons from the three that bear record in heaven, than we should be in inferring three persons from the three that bear witness in earth, for bearing witness, is as much a personal act, as bearing record, and as no man ever will attempt to infer persons in the latter case, in any other than a figure of speech, personifying that which is not a person, there is no more justice in the former case, than in the latter. Since God is a Spirit, it would fair better to say there are "three spirits that bear record in heaven," but the text does not allow this either.

Premises must be settled by positive testimony, and then, we may infer with some safety; but inferential witnesses will not do to settle premises upon. If I read the account of three thousand souls being added to the church in one day; as recorded in Acts 2:41, and then infer that all, or some of them were infants; I am equally as well supported in drawing this inference, as when I infer persons in the other case. If it be objected on the ground that infants are not mentioned in the latter case; I answer, neither are persons mentioned in the latter case; I answer neither are persons mentioned in the former case, and if I may infer persons, from the three that bear record in heaven, then with equal propriety, I may infer infants, from the three thousand that were added to the church in a day. Then I may as fairly infer infant baptism and infant church membership in this case; as three distinct divine persons in the Godhead, in the other case.

Elder Wilson Thompson, 1825

PSALM 87.

His foundation *is* in the holy mountains.

The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

Glorious things are spoke of thee, O city of God. Selah.

I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me: behold Philistia, and Tyre with Ethiopia; this *man* was born there.

And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her.

The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, *that* this *man* was born there. Selah.

As well the singers as the players on instruments *shall be there*: all my springs *are* in thee.

The Gospel Standard ON THE PASTORIAL OFFICE.

Messrs. Editors,---To know and clearly see the truth of the gospel of the Lord Jesus in its genuine harmony and unalloyed purity, is very important and momentous, but to be enabled to claim our own personal interest in it, and to call its sweet promises and invitations ours, is infinitely more important, at least for the present comfort of the soul, The former I have been enabled for some time past to realize, but the latter. I verily believe I have never yet been able to come at, but I have often thought my experience was like nobody's else. I can hear some tell with what condemning force and terrifying horrors the law has come home to their conscience, and what deep insufferable convictions they felt when the Lord first began with them, and that they can tell the time and place when he did begin with them, and I am far from saying this is not the way the Lord is pleased to bring some of his children; but if ever the Lord has begun with me, this is not the way I have been led. I cannot tell any particular place, time, or even means by which I was first convinced of my sins, only I remember (it is some years since) I began to feel I was not fit to die, and that I was an unholy creature before God; and I thought some change must take place in me, some way or other, or I could not go to heaven. With these feelings I firmly resolved to be better and holier. Accordingly, I set to praying, as I thought, more fervently and sincerely, and reading my Bible regularly, attended preaching, and attempted to remember all the preacher said, and was determined to practice it. For some time I followed this course, striving hard to keep up to this standard, but often falling far short, which always gave me great anguish of soul, but would again make fresh resolutions and fresh attempts to be good and holy, and would watch and guard my thoughts and words; but the more holy I strived to get, the oftener I came short, and, consequently, felt distressed and grieved in my soul, In this way, striving and doing, I went on about eighteen months or two years, without one particle of gospel hope or peace. I had no more knowledge of the gospel way of salvation, and of Christ as a complete free grace saving Redeemer to poor helpless sinners, than a ranting Arminian has, though at this time I was among independents, and with a view that I might get holier.

I joined their church; but I was only the more miserable, for I thought they should feel very holy and pious when they received the Lord's supper, and I felt myself really a vile wretched sinner before a heart-searching God, and could not be persuaded but I was an unworthy receiver. I passed amongst them as a very pious young man; whereas, I felt wearied and sick of my filthy corrupt heart; and was burdened and grieved because I could not, feel holier and better, according to the preacher's doctrine. Thus it is, if ever the Lord convinced me of my sins it was in this gradual way. Still I am persuaded, if the Holy Ghost ever did convince me, it was in a moment of time, though I knew it not.

Some can not only tell the exact time when they were quickened and convinced of sin, but they can tell equally as exactly the time and spot where and when the Lord set their soul at liberty; when they felt justified, pardoned, and accepted of God. Now whether this cut me off as being a Christian or not, solemnly in the sight of a heart-searching God, I can no more tell this than the former; and if none have a right to be called Christians but those who can thus set their seal to their adoption, I frankly confess I have no right to be considered one. When I was in the very height of labouring for inward holiness to fit me for heaven, consequently miserable in my very soul, (because I could not feel I got any better before God,) I met with a friend who held the doctrines of grace, I believe, in their purity. He laid them before me very plainly and simply, and I was enabled, without much hesitation or opposition to them, to see them very clearly, and by and bye, with some persuasion, I began to preach them, and have continued so to do ever since, as the Lord has enabled me, (if indeed he has sent me,) and since then I have often rejoiced to know the doctrines of sovereign grace. My heart has leaped within me to know there are such glorious truths for poor, helpless sinners, and a dear sight of the harmony of grace sets my soul on wheels up to this time; but mind you, I do not thus rejoice in the truth because I see it for myself, and can claim my interest in it. O, no; for I believe I never was solidly able thus to see it. I rejoice simply in the knowledge of the truth itself, and I do love the truth, to hear and see it; but I cannot tell you for why, for I really cannot see my interest in it. When I have been in the pulpit at times, I have said, "I know I am interested in Christ and his finished work," but almost as soon as I have said it, I have keenly questioned whether I was not lying, and afterwards I have thought I said it more by way of bravado in the face of Satan, than from an assurance of the fact. At times I have thought I had a little resting hope on Christ as mine, and just about to cast my soul upon him, and rest with a full assurance in him, when a gust of doubts and fears has come like a whirlwind and blown all away, — and left me in misery. This is just as much as I can say respecting my knowledge of my interest in Christ and his gospel. I am indeed very far from being able to tell the time or place when I felt justified, pardoned, and my soul set at liberty. I cannot say any such thing without making myself a lying hypocrite. Indeed, I cannot say I ever felt my soul thus set at liberty. As I have said before, I feel a pleasure and delight in seeing and knowing the truth, and I feel Christ precious for the sake of his work, but not because I know my interest in that work, for I do not; only I have a longing hope to know it to be mine.

Such has been my conviction of sin, and such is the knowledge I have of the truth for myself; and in this stage of matters I have to preach, or try to preach, Christ crucified.

Now, Messrs. Editors, I have told you as plainly and honestly as I possibly can, a little of my past and present experience, God be my witness, whom

from my very heart I solemnly wish to be judged by, for man in general I am afraid of. Still I could wish you, or some of your experienced correspondents, to answer me, and tell me the genuine proofs of a man's being sent to preach the gospel; whether it be, as some say, that a man has no right to preach until he knows Christ assuredly for himself, by the Spirit of adoption, and be able to say," I am his and he is mine," and to realize his own interest in the gospel; or if feeling preaching heavily impressed on his mind be a proof; or if the Lord owning and blessing his own word by him, with unction and power, to the hearts of his poor broken-hearted children be a proof; or whatever" else may be the real proof, to state it. For me to preach, if I thought the Lord had not called me to it, I think I could almost rather suffer death, for false preachers I know are so abominable in God's sight, so hurtful to the church of Christ, and so abundant at this day, Which ever of you answer me, I hope the Lord will enable you to be faithful, and speak on the subject scripturally, impartially, and plainly; for these are solemn realities, not to be played with; and may the God of never ending mercies be the comfort and consolation of poor mourning souls.

Sept. 22, 1837. Yours., &c.
WORSE THAN NOTHING.

PSALM 14:2.

The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, *and* **seek God.**

ROMANS V. 3-5.

Agreeable to a desire of sister Peck, we offer a few remarks in regard to the working of the tribulation, &c., in harmony with all other things, for the special good of God's people, and the glory own great name. The inquiry is made, "How does tribulation work patience, and patience experience, and experience hope that maketh not ashamed?" In reply, suffer us to ask, What could christians know about the grace or the action of patience, if we had not trials or tribulation? Suppose that we were placed in circumstances of perpetual joy and ease, we should know something of gratification, but in that condition we could never become acquainted with patience. Nothing short of tribulation can call forth into exercise the principle and grace of patience, and it is on that account the apostle says, "Tribulation worketh patience," and in the same connection, of one of the graces of the Spirit working in harmony with all the other graces, that "patience worketh experience." This was illustrated in the case of poor old Job. The apostle says, "You have heard of the patience of Job, and seen the end of the Lord." The end, or design of the Lord, in Job's tribulation, was that in the final issue, Job might have occasion to record his experience of the dealing of the Lord with him, thoroughout that dreadful conflict. "I have heard of thee, by the hearings of the ear; but now mind eye seeth thee." This is the difference between theory and experience. He had heard before, but now he had actual experience. And it is so with

us; our patience in tribulation stores our mind with rich experience of the divine goodness. Jeremiah also had tasted the wormwood and the gall, and had, like David, waited patiently for the Lord, and this had given him experience which strengthened his hope. My soul, said he, hath them still in remembrance, therefore, I have hope. Thus his tribulation worked patience, and patience experience, hope. But what kind of a hope would we have if we were destitute of experience? We remember our experience, and all the way the Lord our God has led us, and our hope is revived, and we say with the poet,

> "His love in times past, forbids me to think
> He'll leave me at last, in trouble to sink;
> Each sweet Ebenezer still rising to view,
> Confirms his good pleasure to help me quite through."

This hope being well grounded, and supported by actual experience of the loving-kindness of our covenant God, will never fail, or make us ashamed. The makers of idols shall be ashamed, and they shall all go to confusion together. But they that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion. They shall not be ashamed nor confounded, world without end.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y.,
September 1, 1856.

MEETINGS

EASTERN KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The 2017 Eastern Kehukee Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Tarboro Church located in Tarboro, North Carolina. The meeting will be held on Saturday, September 30 and Sunday, October 1, 2017. Preaching services will begin each day at 10:30am.

Tarboro Church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albemarle Ave (301 St. James Street). From Raleigh, take US 64 East. Stay on the bypass until you get to Exit 485. Take this exit and turn left at the stop sign. Go over the overhead bridge and turn right at the second stoplight. This will be St. James Street. Go about one mile and the church will be on the right, next to the railroad tracks.

We invite the ministers and lovers of the truth to meet with us.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

ECCLESIASTES 3:11.

He hath made every *thing* beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.

NEW RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Hundred and twenty-third session of the New River Association will convene, the Lord willing at (P.B.) Indian Creek Church located in Floyd County, Va.

This session will be entertained by Indian Creek (P.B.) Church located in Indian Valley, Va.

The association will be held on Saturday before the fourth Sunday on dates being Sept. 23 & 24, 2017 Lord willing.

Indian Creek Church is located on Highway (787) in Indian Valley, Va. Those coming by Route (221) or Route (8) or Route (52) come to Willis, Va turn on Highway (787) go approx. 7 miles to church on left. We invite all ministers of like Faith and Order. Also Brothers and Sisters & Friends to be with us.

Thomas Pegram - Mod.
J. B. Mitchell - Clerk

G.P.S. - 4192 Indian Valley Rd., N.W.
Willis, Va.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 09 / 2017

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

1067 Spearsville Rd.
Spearsville, LA. 71277-3509
August 1, 2017

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, October 28 & 29, 2017.

New Hope Church, located at Spearsville, Louisians will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
(318) 778-4217

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 2017

Ruby Davidson, LA 50.00
Gary Whaling, WV 5.00
Carol Brinson, NC 25.00
Vicki Knight, NC 10.00

ROMANS 9:11.

(For *the children* **being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not or works, but of him that calleth;)**

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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HYMN

There is a fountain, fill'd with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains,

The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
O may I there, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away.

Dear, dying Lamb! thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved, to sin no more

E'er since, by faith, I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.

Then in a nobler, sweeter song,
I'll sing thy power to save,
When this poor, lispering, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave.

Cowper.

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EDITORIAL

Republished by Request

Isaiah 43:1&2, "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called *thee* by thy name; thou *art* mine. When thou passest through the waters, I *will be* with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shall not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

This chapter is very beautiful and very comforting. The Lord speaks through his prophet Isaiah concerning His work of grace. Jacob sets forth the fleshly or natural man and Israel sets forth the spiritual. When Jacob wrestled with a man all during the dark night, it was the spiritual manifestation of God applying the law to Jacob. For Jacob could say "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." The Lord touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh and it was out of joint. Jacob would no longer walk as he once did relying on his own strength. But, the Lord was his staff that he would lean on and be his strength and help. As the light of day began to break, Jacob asked to be blessed. The Lord said unto Jacob "What is thy name?" Jacob had to confess my name is Jacob. I am a sinner. I am a deceiver. I am a supplanter. Then the Lord said, "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." The nighttime of the law had past and the light of the day of grace, the gospel day, shined forth. The Lord blessed Jacob there.

How comforting the word of the Lord to His little children of grace, "Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." O how wonderful that with God there is no uncertainty, no chance, no leaving salvation to the fleshly man. With the Father of lights, there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning, for the founda-

tion of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His." By His shedding of blood, death and resurrection, He redeemed His elect from their sins. They are His. He knows their name and calls them out of nature's darkness into His marvelous light. He said that of all the Father gave Him, He should lose none but should raise it up at the last day. He said He was the good shepherd and knows His sheep and am known of them.

"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee." The waters set forth the trials, troubles and tribulations that His people must go through in this life. He doesn't say "if" thou passest through the waters, but "when." He has promised you tribulations as He said "In the world ye shall have tribulations: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Though you will experience many trials, troubles, tribulations and sorrows in this world, He, who cannot lie, promised to be with you. He did not promise to take you out of the tribulation, but to be with you through it. The Apostle Paul besought the Lord three times to remove the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan that was buffeting him. This experience of Paul was purposed by God to keep him humble and meek lest he should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations. So the Lord did not remove it, but He told the Apostle "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Through your trials you are made to look unto the Lord and beg for His strength, mercy, love and grace.

"And through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee." Do you ever feel that the rivers of false doctrines, lies from high places, persecutions and all the calamites of the world spewing forth from the mouth of the serpent are about to overflow and destroy you! The Lord speaks to you in that small, still voice, "Fear not, they shall not overflow thee." As David said in **Psalm 27:5, "For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion: in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me; He shall set me up upon a rock."** David also said, **"He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock** *and* **established my goings."** You, my dear people, have been set on the foundation which is Christ and you cannot be washed away or destroyed. How do you think Stephen felt when he was being stoned and gnashed on with teeth because he set forth the truth in Christ and those non-believers were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake. So they accused him of speaking blasphemous words against Moses and against God. These stirred up the people, the elders and the scribes against him. The Lord filled him with the Holy Ghost and he, through an eye of faith, looked up into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. Stephen saw Jesus as the Son of man who had suffered more than he was suffering; who had shed His blood, died and rose again. What great comfort! Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints. Stephen, called upon God, say-

ing, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." And then "he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep." I believe the Lord gave Stephen such peace and comfort that it was as though he just went to sleep. With his eye of faith beholding Jesus, I do not believe he was even aware of what was happening to him. You cannot see Jesus and the world at the same time.

"When thou walkest through the fire, thou shall not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." Peter said, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings: that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." **Isaiah 48:10 says, "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction."** As gold is tried in the furnace of fire, so you must be tried by fire. The more gold is tried by fire the brighter it shines. So with you, the more you are tried by the trials, troubles, tribulations, sorrows, afflictions and persecutions the manifest is the fruit of the Spirit which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. The three Jewish men who refused to worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar set up were cast into a furnace of fire that was heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated. The flame of the fire slew those men who took up the three men of God. But these three were completely clothed from head to feet. So the Lord clothes His people with the whole armour of God before they ever experience the fiery furnace. Therefore, you shall not be burned and neither shall the flame kindle against you. Your loins are girt about with truth. You have on the breastplate of righteousness. Your feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. You have the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God. You go praying with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit. The three Jews were not harmed in the fiery furnace and there was a fourth like the Son of God walking with them. So with a child of grace tried by fire, the very image of Christ is manifested.

Isaiah 43:13, "Yea, before the day *was* **I** *am* **he; and** *there is* **none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?"**

Isaiah 43:21, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise."

May the Lord be with each of you and bless you with peace and comfort.

A little one in hope,
Elder Cleo Robertson

PSALM 75:1-2.

Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks, *unto thee* **do we give thanks: for** *that* **thy name is near thy wondrous works declare.**

VOICES OF THE PAST

AS THE DAYS OF A TREE

In a beautiful little valley, at the foot of a mountain, a little seedling burst through the earth and began to grow up toward the warm sunlight. The root began to grow downward in the rich soil. The little tree waved its tiny branches in the gentle breezes and the rains kept its bright green leaves all clean and shining.

The little tree kept growing until, one day, it was transplanted to a field on the mountain top. There it started to grow, and the root began to take firm hold in the soil. But one day a storm came and the little tree was rocked to and fro in the mighty wind that blew upon it. It was bowed over almost to the ground. But the root held firm and the tree kept growing, though it never stood as straight and proud as before. Some of its leaves had been stripped off.

Nevertheless, the tree stood firm and as tall as it could with the storms still coming. When the sun shined and the gentle rains fell the tree kept growing, waving its branches, ever stretching up toward the beautiful sky above.

In a few years another tree was transplanted near the first tree. As its root took firm hold in the earth its branches grew taller, ever reaching up toward the heaven and the bright sunlight.

The two trees mingled their branches together and when the storms came, they were both waved to and fro by the strong winds and snow and hail that beat upon them, breaking their branches and bending the trees so they did not stand as straight and tall as before; but the roots held firm and the two trees kept growing, ever reaching their branches toward the sky.

Many seasons passed and many storms blew upon them, but the root still held fast. With each severe storm the two trees were a little more scarred, some of the limbs broken off, their bark became scarred and broken.

For almost three quarters of a century the trees stood (one-half century side by side) and weathered many storms together. But the root of the first tree began to loosen its firm hold in the earth. It began to weaken and tremble in the wind. Finally a storm came, more terrible than any before and the root let go its last hold in the earth. The tree came crashing down, shaking and bending the other tree whose branches had, over the years, closely intermingled with the first tree until they were almost as one.

There the first tree lay, waiting to be dissolved back into the mother earth from which it sprang.

Now the second tree stands alone, not proud, straight and tall as before, but bowed over, its limbs broken and scarred from the many storms which had broken upon it. But the root is still holding, perhaps not so firm as before. It has stood for fourscore years, still with its scarred branches stretching upward toward the sky, waiting for the root to loose its hold in the mother earth. Then it will fall there beside the first tree, their

branches still touching each other, just waiting ---

EXPERIENCE OF EDRIE T. CLIFTON
June 10, 1994

One night recently, as I was preparing to retire, a storm came up, with vivid lightning flashes and loud peals of thunder. I wanted something to read before retiring, so I picked up a back issue of Signs of the Times. It was dated September, 1992. I went into my bedroom, sat down and opened to the Editorial. I read the text which was this:

"They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." (Isaiah 65:22)

Just as I finished reading the text, the lightning came and the room was in total darkness. I lay down upon my bed and my mind began to meditate upon the words I had just read. How true that our days are as the days of a tree! My mind was carried back over the lives of my dear companion and myself. How plainly I could see that each storm of life we had endured had stripped us of our self works, had made us see the folly of the things we had once engaged in and, storm by storm, had bowed our heads a little more. But for the Root which had held firmly, we would have long been gone the way of the world. But that Root (the offspring of David) had held strong and secure. Each storm stripped off a little more pride and self works. As we grew older and less able to bear the storms, it seemed they became more severe, until a mighty storm came upon my companion, the last trial he was to endure in this life. Pain ravished his mortal body until he suffered the last one. The Root let loose its earthly hold and his spirit was carried up to the heavenly home where the Root was anchored.

Now I am here, just waiting, knowing that God doeth all things right and when my time comes to go, may I be carried to that celestial city where I hope my Root is anchored, safe and secure.

The lights came back on before midnight. I finished reading the article and in my feelings, I reached across the miles and years and clasped the dear precious sister (who had written the article) in my arms. As I lay there, rejoicing in the beautiful meditations she had given, sleep closed my weary eyes.

From "As the Days of a Tree"
By Sister Edrie Clifton

PSALM 131:1-3.

Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me.

Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul *is* even as a weaned child.

Let Israel hope in the Lord from henceforth and for ever.

EXPERIENCE
JANUARY, 1949

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us."—1 John 1:3

On this beginning of a new year we are mindful to meditate upon the things which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled out of the word of life. We have a desire to review the Lord's dealings with us, giving diligence to make our calling and election sure. We are writing this epistle to the household of faith beseeching you to note the waymarks along the path we have traveled. If it so be that you recognize the markers along the way as being the path you have traveled, then you have fellowship with us; if they be strange to you, then you can class us as a stranger to the household of faith.

It has been so long since we have written you that we feel some kind of explanation would be appropriate. A few months ago we were employed by a concern that required our services from eleven to seventeen hours a day for six to seven days each week. We were content to pursue this with the vain thought that at an opportune time we could again take up our communion with brethren and meditations upon the Scriptures. We held this position three months and upon its termination tried fervently for one month to renew our relationship with brethren and lay hold on the Spirit of God. It pleased God to cut us off and to make us know that our trials were vain.

When we had given up all hope and were persuaded that we had been a deceiver and that our lot was with the wicked, the Lord graciously came to our rescue, renewing our interest and relationship with Him and our brethren. Prior to this wonderful renewing of the Spirit we tried many times to pray, meditate, write and sing, but it was so cold and formal that it made us shudder. As in the case of John we had to be shown again that Jesus was the Christ. Do you ever go down into the valley so low that you forget your dependence upon the grace of God and strive in vain to deliver yourself? Are your strivings and seeming zeal ever so formal and cold that you are condemned as a hypocrite?

Now I would like to go back in my meditations, the Lord willing, and briefly state to you some of the highlights along the pathway that I have traveled. I was born September 28, 1906 in Amity, Arkansas. I was brought up under the tutorship of religious parents of high moral character who taught that a home in heaven was gained by good works done by individuals here. I was taught that I was capable of performing these good works upon my own volition. I grew up as a regular attendant in Sunday School and church, and zealously studied the Bible from my earliest recollections. I began to speak in public before I was ten years old and was given the position as Sunday School teacher in my early teens. When I was fifteen I became a member of the Kelly Division of the Missionary Baptist Church, and on the

next night gave a prepared lecture on John 3:16. I was often called upon to speak in the absence of ordained ministers, and while yet in my teens was ordained to the full work of ministry in that denomination. I had a bad case of "I-itus" feeling myself to be worthy of imitation and classing myself as being the most influential speaker in that section of the country. I was very zealous in revival meetings trying to show sinners that they were treading the path that leads to hell and urging them to turn, do right and be saved.

During this period of my career I think God taught me my first lesson. An ordained minister from Hot Springs, Arkansas had been selected to conduct a revival in the community where I was teaching school. Night after night he vehemently warned sinners to flee the wrath to come. He had labored hard to move them to action but not one had come to the "mourner's bench." The night before the meeting was scheduled to close he came to me and told me that he had done all that he could do and had gotten no results, requesting me to take charge the next night and see what I could do. I agreed to do this as I saw that it was an opportunity for me to make a greater reputation.

I carried my Bible and notebook with me to school the next day and on my return stopped beside a brook and outlined a sermon on the theme, "Sinners in the hands of an angry God," using as a text, "Thou shalt be cut off and that without remedy."

I was anxious for the meeting to begin that night. I was blessed with oratorical eloquence to such an extent that hell was pictured so awful, and God as being so angry at their unconcernedness that when the altar call was made, many people flocked to the altar. I have never forgotten the anxious expression of fear amidst the tears on the face of the first one who extended her hand toward me at that time. Neither shall I forget the awful tones of the voice of Almighty God when He spake to me just before I took her hand in mine. This voice thundered, "Who are you, that you should invite?" My fears were made more terrible when that same voice convinced me that I was a sinner, a hypocrite and a liar. This was the first time that I had ever realized myself as a sinner. The blackest, vile person that I had thought of before seemed then to be my superior.

While I was in this awful frame of mind people tried to tell me how proud I should be to be able to move the people in such a way. Their intended flowers were as thorns that condemned me more. I slipped out of the house as soon as possible and tried to flee from that terrible condition. I tried to get myself right with God. The things that I had gloried in before were as filthy rags. For months and months I moped about as a condemned sinner finding no comfort or consolation in anything. I finally had given up the idea of making myself right with God when it pleased Him to teach me another lesson.

Circumstances over which I had no control placed me in a community far distant from my home where they had heard of me as being a preacher and had arranged for me to preach one Sun-

day night there. I was given this information only one hour before the service was to begin. My pleadings would not convince them that I had quit appearing before the public as a preacher. Being caught in such circumstances, I was finally persuaded that I could act the hypocrite at least one more time. I thought I could pick up one of my old themes and lecture to them, but I could not think of anything other than that I was a sinner.

Up to this time I had never heard of anyone posing as a preacher who would be so disgraceful as to confess himself to be a sinner. I went before a big audience unprepared, with a blank mind concerning the Scriptures. My foremost thought was that I was a sinner. I was so upset that I did not go into the form of prayer, but groaned within myself, "God, have mercy on me." "I have never known whether I read any scripture or not, but I was given to feast upon the power, wisdom and holiness of God. God revealed Himself to me that night as having all power in heaven and earth, who spoke and it was done; who commands and it stands fast. I saw Him as being so wise that He could consecrate the acts of men and devils to His own praise and glory. He appeared as being so holy that He had a wonderful and righteous purpose in everything. When I came to realize where I was that night, I closed the services, yet feasting upon the characteristics of God. I continued to enjoy these thoughts enroute home that night in my car alone. When about midway home, my thoughts were reversed from thinking upon God to thinking of myself. I saw a great gulf between God's power and my inability; God's wisdom and my foolishness; God's holiness and my sinfulness. I tried again in vain for months to span this gulf and get myself right with God. When I had given up all hope it pleased God to teach me another lesson.

Several months later I was teaching in this little town where I had this last related experience, when a member of the school board especially requested me to attend with him a Wednesday night service in the home of one J. H. Langston. Elder A. D. Wall, who then lived in Arkansas, was scheduled to preach. Up to this time I had never associated with Primitive Baptists and did not know anything about them. I had heard that there was an ignorant people who lived in remote places who were called "Hardshells" whom I was taught to fear and ignore. I was informed that they justified themselves in the many devilish acts that they performed and charged all their meanness to God. I had heard that Uncle Henry Langston was a "Hardshell" and I quickly informed this man that I did not care to attend the service with him, giving him my reason. He immediately told me that he was surprised at my attitude and further added, "If I have ever heard a Primitive Baptist sermon you preached it here in this town." I told him that I would go with him for curiosity's sake as I had always wondered what I said that night, and that had yearned for such experience again.

I went and Elder Wall was blessed to take up every question that had bothered my mind and answered it with the Bible to my entire satisfaction. Before

he was through speaking that night I was blessed to view a character that I had never seen before. I saw Jesus who was very God and very man span the gulf that was between me and my God. I saw that dual character loom up before me with one foot upon the earth, and the other upon the throne of. God in heaven. I saw Him stoop lower than the angels, yes lower than men. I saw Him as He reached down into the miry slime of the slough of sin, and even reach low enough to reach vile me. I saw Him as He picked me up and washed me whiter than snow with His blood, and presented me without blemish, spot or wrinkle carrying me across the gulf and presenting me in the holiest of holies in the presence of Almighty God as a fit subject for that eternal city.

Such mercy and amazing grace I had never been able to behold before. I was made to cry out praises to His adorable name. I thought I had confessed Jesus as my Savior but found I had known nothing about Him before. I found myself speaking in a strange language that all my former associates knew nothing about and they concluded I was crazy I began attending Primitive Baptist churches and to my surprise found that the ministers were telling my experience and thoughts far better than I could express them.

In the year 1930, all my earthly possessions were taken from me; my first wife died; my body was afflicted and my parents turned a cold shoulder to me feeling that I had disgraced their good name. In the midst of all this, and my feeling of unworthiness, I became a member of the church that same year and was liberated to speak in the name of Christ. I was ordained in the year 1934 and married a Primitive Baptist girl whom the Lord has blessed to be a sweet companion to me. She understands my infirmities, and overlooks my many faults and patiently shares with me the heartaches and tribulations attached to the career of a minister of the gospel. I have traveled among this people in the different sections of the country and find such unity in belief that I am persuaded that all are taught by the same Teacher. I am determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. He is our salvation both for time and eternity.

God has taught me in His wonderful dealings with me the doctrine of salvation solely upon the merits of Jesus Christ to such extent that any other doctrine is strange to my ears. I believe Jesus accomplished the law to a jot and a tittle, and His accomplishments were accredited to the account of the people who were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. His blood covered all the sins that God's people have ever committed, are committing now or ever shall commit. This is not proclaimed because of any theory advanced by anyone, but because of the things that I have experienced.

Elder E. J. Lambert

BAPTISM
FEBRUARY, 1951

The subject of baptism has been a subject of great controversy throughout the centuries. Many false and erroneous theories have been advocated which have tended to confuse the minds of God's little children. This is due to the fact that theologians have attempted to supplant a theological meaning of the term that is foreign to the classical meaning in order to prop up their false theories in trying to hinge salvation on the volition and work of the creature. This has narrowed the conception of the term, baptism, to that ceremonial use of water to admit members into an organized body here upon earth termed the church. I do not believe the term is so narrow in its scope. When I think of baptism I like to meditate upon the classical meaning instead of the theological use of the term.

To baptize is to immerse, submerge, envelope, overwhelm or sink; to dip, wash, or drench; to consecrate; to completely subdue. This is the essence of the classical meaning. Even theologians who advocate sprinkling as the proper mode of baptism admit this. I think that baptism in literal water is figurative and typical of the baptism that is essential unto salvation. No man is able, empowered or authorized to do that. This is the work of God.

I want to call your attention to one Scripture that will conclusively prove that water baptism is not meant every time the term is used in the Scriptures. Jesus said as recorded in **Luke 12:50, "But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished."** The word straitened means pained. He was undoubtedly speaking of His baptism in death. He was speaking of the time when death would envelop Him, when He would be overwhelmed with suffering and submerged into death. This statement was made approximately two years after His baptism in Jordan. (I think His baptism in Jordan was pointing to, and figurative of, His baptism in death.)

Now, let us consider Romans 6:3. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" Paul did not say or hint at water in this expression. If Paul had said, know ye not that as many of us as were baptized in water were baptized in Jesus Christ and into His death; then, the modern theorists would have something to base their arguments upon. Since he did not say this, let us take for granted that he said what he meant and meant what he said. He said, "were baptized into Jesus Christ." Can any man immerse one into Jesus Christ? We may baptize in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost but man cannot baptize into Jesus Christ. I believe that God chose His people in Christ in the annals of eternity before time ever began. **"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4). "Whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son" (Rom. 8:29).** The entire family of God was baptized into the body of Christ by

God, our Father. **"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body: so is Christ. For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body" (Cor. 12:12, 13). "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:10).** If we were chosen in Him, created in Him, and baptized in Him, we were mysteriously in Him being bone of His bone as He accomplished the law to a jot and tittle while He sojourned in this world of sin and sorrow. I believe that as Jesus performed the law to a jot and tittle, Jehovah could see the entire family of God performing it as they were members of His body, being baptized in Him. The one baptism spoken of in Ephesians 4:5 is that performed by God, the Father in the Son through the operation of the Spirit upon His children. This baptism is essential unto salvation but cannot be performed by man.

Yes, God's children were "baptized into His death." They went down with Him into death because they were chosen, created, and baptized in Him. If we be children of God we paid the penalty of death in Him! This being true, justice is completely satisfied in Him for each and every child of God. Nothing can be charged to them.

We have touched upon the subject of baptism relative to all the family of God being baptized at once together into Jesus Christ and into His death. Now, we want to meditate upon the experimental phase of baptism. We want to consider the individual, personal baptism that is experienced by each and every child of God. This experimental phase of baptism is progressive in its application as we shall see, the Lord willing. It begins in regeneration and ends in the immortalization of the body. John preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins as recorded in Mark 1:4. All those who made manifest that they were in possession of this baptism by confessing their sins he baptized in the river Jordan, (Mark 1:5) which was an outward manifestation of being in this condition. The rule is according to the words of Jesus as recorded in Mark 16:16, **"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."** The form of the verb used shows that it is not water baptism that is under consideration. The present tense of the verb shows that it is a condition they are now in. They are overwhelmed, immersed, or enveloped now. Are they now enveloped in water by the administrator? No, they are now enveloped in repentance by the Holy Ghost! This being submerged in repentance affects the cry for deliverance or salvation from their sins. This salvation is promised in this statement by Jesus. The hope of each child of God, who is so baptized in repentance by the Holy Ghost, is salvation from their sins through the merit of a God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. When one is baptized in water he outwardly manifests this condition and hope through the grace of the Father, the merits of the Son, and guidance, operation and revelation of the Holy Spirit.

"John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to un-

loose; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire" (St. Luke 3:16). The effect of the Holy Spirit baptism is regeneration. The souls of God's people are baptized into death and resurrected unto life here in time; and, the bodies of God's people shall be baptized into death and resurrected unto life immortal into the great beyond - the end of this sphere of time. This is that for which we patiently wait and hope.

The natural soul trusts in natural man being inspired by the natural carnal spirit. This is the soul that sins. It shall die (Ezek. 18:4). All people are born naturally in this condition. When it pleases God to baptize the soul of one of His people by the Holy Spirit, He kills and makes spiritually alive the soul. Yes, the soul is over whelmed, immersed, and submerged into death and resurrected into a new life. The soul that has been so wrought upon by the Holy Spirit shall never die. It is a new creature . According to Psalms 107 the experience of the redeemed is, "Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their troubles and he delivered them out of their distresses." This is brought about by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We read in **Luke 3:3, "And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."** This does not say baptism of water but of repentance. This means that you must be overwhelmed, submerged, and immersed with repentance. It is a godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of (2 Cor. 7:10). When you are overwhelmed with repentance you abhor yourself; you repent in dust and ashes. When you abhor yourself you die to the love of self. You sink into despair; you are immersed in trouble and distresses. As He did not leave Christ in the grave He does not leave your soul in despair but raises it up a new soul. This is verified in Psalms 23:3, "He restoreth my soul." You are then a new creature motivated by a spiritual soul. The mortal soul which is subject to death, has been baptized with immortality. This makes the soul immortal. Now, you are an immortal soul dwelling in a mortal body. This body has not yet been baptized with immortality. That will be the crowning work of the Holy Spirit.

Paul says in Romans 7:24, "Oh wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Paul realized the sinfulness and mortality of his body. All God's children are possessed with the thorn in the flesh and infirmities of the flesh. Our bodies are subject to weaken and die. We cannot do the things we would because of the evil that is present in our fast decaying bodies. The body becomes lame and tottery with age. Our bodies become weak because of disease. Our natural eyes become dim and our natural ears deafen. Our memory fails and our ability to comprehend is affected. Our natural minds fail to function as they once did. I feel that as we experience these things we become more and more desirous of the immortalization of the bodies. "Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. (Rom. 8:23). Yes, the bodies of the saints shall

be baptized into death and shall be completely submerged, enveloped, swallowed up, or baptized with immortality. **"So, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory"** (1 Cor. 15:54). This will be the answer to the prayer as recorded in 1 Thes. 5:23, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The baptism in water is figurative of this baptism that is essential unto salvation. This is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God: which is a figure of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. See 1st Peter 3:21. There are two kinds of conscience. There is a natural conscience and there is a Holy Spirit conscience. A good conscience is a Holy Spirit conscience. I believe that God's people are wrought upon by His Spirit and are made anxious to follow Jesus in baptism. They are desirous to outwardly manifest this faith in the Father baptizing them in the Son by the Spirit by submitting themselves to baptism in water in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. As the candidate for baptism is passive in the hands of the administrator in the act of baptism in water, so he manifests that he is passive in the hand of God in Holy Spirit baptism which is essential unto salvation. He manifests his faith in being in Christ as He went down into the grave and came up out of the grave. As baptism into Jesus Christ and into His death is the door of entrance into the Church which is the one invisible body including all the children of God, so baptism in water is the door of entrance into the church in its organized form upon earth.

John required those whom he baptized to bring forth fruit worthy of repentance. I believe such characters are the only ones worthy to be received into the organized Church. When one comes confessing his sins, and considering himself as the chief of sinners and less than the least of all saints, speaking of his unworthiness, my heart goes out to him and I am given to fellowship him. When such an one comes testifying that his hopes for salvation from sins is solely based on the grace of God and the merits of the Lord Jesus, I consider him as a proper subject for baptism in water into the fellowship of the organized Church. None but those who have been baptized with repentance would come bringing such testimony from the heart desiring a home with God's people. The Church receives such into their fellowship and one properly ordained will gladly administer the ordinance to that character.

I realize that I have just hinted upon this grand subject. These thoughts are my earnest and conscientious convictions. If they be true, may God be praised. If they be false, charge them to my ignorance and vain imaginations. May God bless this to your comfort and edification, if it be His will, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Elder E. J. Lambert

CHAPTER III
EXERCISES ABOUT PREACHING

On the 14th of August I heard a man preach in the Presbyterian Church where my membership had been. The congregation was large. I wanted to get up and tell the people not to believe what he said, that if they knew the truth concerning that text it would comfort them. I thought if they felt as I had felt before my hope came he was distressing them greatly. I could hardly keep my seat. I went home with my head down. As I entered my room I spoke aloud, as though another had spoken in me, "I must preach." Then I was startled. I wanted to go to the ends of the earth to tell everybody that salvation was by grace, and that what that man preached was not true. But the word "preach" was too great a word for me.

Soon after that I wrote to Elder Beebe, telling him of that wonderful experience, and asking what it meant. In his reply he said the brethren had thought I had a work to do in the church, and were waiting till the Lord should let me know it, and that they had appointed a certain night, September 4th, for me to exercise my gift. Then I was afraid. It did not seem possible that I could preach; and I could not yet think it possible for me to leave my business. This caused me great anxiety and some distress of mind. I find in my diary of August 14th, the evening when I had first had the thought that I must preach, this sentence: "I am certain I must engage in another work than the law."

A few days after this, a large coal operator came to my office and asked me to take charge of the legal work connected with his business. I looked it over, and took time to think of it. All that day I worked hard and enjoyed the work. Much business was brought to me, and during the day I hardly thought of anything but the work. During the past winter I had done but little, having been much with my two brothers, one in Washington and one at my father's home, both very sick. Since my baptism I had not cared much for legal work, only to do my duty. And this was really the first day in many weeks that I had been devotedly engaged in work. All other things were put out of my mind, and the thought of preaching was gone, so far as I can remember. I had during all of my practice been preparing for the line of work which appeared now to be coming to me in such measure as to animate me much. I must, however, have remembered my thoughts about preaching, for I told the coal operator that possibly I might not stay there, and if I arranged to go away I would turn the business over to a friend, H. W. Palmer. He said that man would be his next choice.

That night I went into my room with very peculiar feelings. I had spent evening after evening there with the Bible, the hymn book and the "Signs," in unspeakable comfort. Now, as I entered the room, I realized that something was lacking. I looked around and the room seemed empty. I took the Bible, but there was nothing for me. I was not at rest. I sat down but instantly rose again. Unrest! It was terrible, distressing. It seemed al-

most as though I were going to die. All at once I thought of the day just closed, and the work I had done, and the enjoyment of it. Then I said to myself; "On Sunday night you felt that you must go to the ends of the earth and tell the glad tidings of salvation by grace, and what have you been doing today?" Then I said, whether aloud or only in thought I cannot tell; "If I were sure of making fifty thousand dollars by the end of this year I could not and I would not stay." Oh, what a sweet peace and rest and a feeling of holy solemnity came into my soul. From that day to this, nearly forty-four years, there has been no going back in my mind from that decision. I have still had times when it seemed impossible for me to preach; one so unworthy, so poor in spirit, so ignorant. Qualification has seemed utterly lacking, but the thought of business and money has never since been a hindrance to me. It seemed the words were sweetly been a hindrance to me. It seemed the words were sweetly given to me by the dear Saviour: "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." From that day to this my needs have been all supplied, and I am sure they will be to the end, but not all my wants.

One night about this time these words were in my mind all night: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." All night the meaning of them kept unfolding in my soul and the inexpressible sweetness of them was tested in my spirit. Whether I slept I do not know. I did not need to sleep. I had a more satisfying rest than sleep could give. Not long after this I was at a conference meeting at Vaughan Hill, perhaps Sunday, August 18th. On that day my next older brother James was baptized by Elder Schoonover. My next younger brother Warren had been baptized in July, when I was not present. Both had been extremely ill during the past year, and both had received a hope, each in a most wonderful manner. At the conference referred to I spoke concerning the words of the dear Saviour which had been so blessed to me during one whole night. After this they seemed to pass away from my mind in a manner, though not by any means forgotten.

Now I began to think with trembling to try to prepare myself for the trial of my gift at Middletown at the meeting appointed for the evening of Sunday, September 4th. I thought if I could preach at all I could preach from those words: "Come unto me, etc." So I carefully laid them up in my mind for that occasion, occasionally thinking them over, and arranging my thoughts concerning them. The Sunday came and I was present at the Wallkill Meeting House in the morning. It rained and few were out. Elder Beebe said I must preach. I was in consternation. I had but one text and that was for the meeting in Middletown at night. Elder Beebe and all the rest insisted that I must go forward. Just then I remembered the peculiar language of Isa. 29:11, 12 and 18 about the book which the learned could not read because it was sealed, and the one that was not learned because he was not learned, but the deaf shall hear the words of the book, etc. I spoke a little

about that, and one of the deacons, an old man, said he was edified by what I said. I looked at him sadly for I thought he had said what was not true in order to encourage and comfort me. I knew it could not be that what I had said could have been of any benefit. But perhaps at night I might preach. Elder Beebe was called from the morning meeting to attend a funeral and told me I must preach at the afternoon meeting in Middletown. I urged and begged to be let off from that; said I could not do it. The thought of trying to preach in the afternoon was frightful, and especially as I had only the one text, and that I must use at night. When I found it was inevitable, I looked around in my mind and finally thought of the text used by the Presbyterian preacher the night I felt such a strong desire to contradict him, and when afterward I, for the first time, thought I must preach: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." But to use that I must speak upon the subject of the resurrection, and I knew that one prominent person would be present who had told me she did not believe in the resurrection of the body "in the same way that some of us did and I feared I would offend her. My mind was in a tumult. However, the time came and I tried to tell what I thought of the text and declared the resurrection of the body. Though I will say here that I did not then, and do not now, believe that the body, which is sown a natural body, is raised a natural body and then changed into a spiritual body; but "it is raised a spiritual body." Well, I got through the afternoon, and was spoken to very kindly by the one referred to, as well as by the rest of the friends. I did not, however, in my own mind, call it preaching. But if I could preach at all (which I began to doubt very much) I thought I could do it at night. My text I had kept laid away, and neither in the morning nor afternoon had I interfered with it.

At night there came together a large congregation, and I took my text. But what work I made. I talked, it is true, for near forty minutes, but I felt as though I had my hands full of dead, dry leaves, rattling them. There was no life or light or feeling, except a feeling of self-abasement, helplessness and distress. One followed me, the one I have already referred to, who afterward left us, and said some surface things in a smooth, cold manner, with no help or interest to me. I had tried to get down into the depth and sweetness of the text. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," and I could not. I felt that I had absolutely said nothing, and worse than nothing. The church gave me license to preach, but I am convinced they could not have seen any gift in what I said that night. If it had not been for the morning and afternoon meetings, and what they had heard before, they could not have thought I had a gift.

The night was a distressing one to me. I tossed sleeplessly till morning, writing bitter things against myself, feeling sure that I had made the church mourn on my account; that I had no gift, and that I ought never to have allowed them to have an appointment for me. How my soul cried unto the Lord for mercy, that he would direct me and uphold me in the

right way. Toward morning I became somewhat quiet, and promised myself that if the Lord ever had anything for me to say I would try to say it if he would give me ability, but that I would never lay up a text again, nor try to arrange beforehand what I should say. I had been humiliated greatly and my pride had been broken down, and now I did feel humble. But I have not kept my promise. Many a time I have tried to arrange a sermon for a future occasion, and have as often been shut up, and three or four times during the first year I had to stop and sit down.

The next week I went in company with several brethren to the Lexington Association, and enjoyed the meetings and the preaching very much. I was called upon to speak, and felt very much at liberty in my soul. It seemed to me then that preaching the gospel was an easy and most delightful work, but I soon found that it was so only when the Lord filled my soul with the comfort of his love and gave me to feel at the time the power of his word. But when left to myself to depend upon the power of my own mind, preaching is the hardest work I ever did.

When my sister Bessie received a hope ten years before I was brought into the church, she received in her own mind an assurance that I would have to preach. When I wrote her that I had united with the Presbyterian Church, she was so deeply affected that for a time she almost lost her power to breathe. Soon, however, the remembrance of the power with which that assurance had come to her that I must preach quieted her, and she rested. I knew nothing of this until the church had liberated me to preach.

I still have times of soul searching, and of crying unto God as a little child, that he will lead me and guide me in the path of duty, and uphold me by His spirit, and I must acknowledge with humble gratitude and thanksgiving that the dear Lord has not been unmindful of my petitions. And I would love, if enabled by his grace, to recount some of his blessings, and tell of his goodness to me. I can say with the Apostle, "Having obtained help of the Lord, I continue unto this present, trying to preach as with the ability that God giveth, the unsearchable riches of Christ."

The terrible afflictions of soul I cannot describe. I cannot tell of the sorrows on account of sin in thought and word and deed, of the going down into the depths, when deep has called unto deep in my soul, when I have felt that "the bars of the earth were about me forever."But so far the Lord has showed me his delivering power and grace, and out of every one of these deep and heavy afflictions the Lord has brought me into some deeper and more glorious understanding of his goodness.

Elder Silas Durand

ROMANS 8:28

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

ANECDOTE.

New Vernon, N. Y., April 1, 1842.

At a great meeting held some years before the general separation took place between the Arminian and Predestinarian Baptists, one of the advocates of the former doctrine had been expatiating upon the creature exalting doctrine of chance, and having concluded, an old veteran of the cross arose with a very solemn air, and addressed the audience in something like the following words:

"Men and brethren: As I happened to be sitting and listening to what our brother happened to say about what happens to come to pass, I happened to think of an old man who happened to live a great while ago. This man happened to be a prophet, but he did not happen to possess a very patient or happy disposition. It so happened that the Lord spake to this prophet, and bade him go to a city called Nineveh, which happened to be very wicked, and to prophecy 'Yet forty days, and Nineveh should be overthrown!' Now Jonah did not happen to feel inclined to go, and as there happened to be a ship just ready to sail, which happened to be going to Tarsus, the prophet took passage in her, that he might run away from the Lord. On the passage, however, there happened to arise a terrible tempest, and the ship did not happen to be sufficient to eudure the gale with safety, and the crew happened to be superstitious idolaters, and they cast lots to see on whose account this disaster had happened; and the lot happened to fall on Jonah, who happened to be fast asleep at the time these things happened. As none of the gods of the mariners were able to control the winds of heaven, or make the seas obey them, they awoke Jonah and bade him call on his God, if peradventure he might happen to be able to be able to save them. But Jonah happening at this moment to perceive that this catastrophy had all taken place because he happened to be on board, it was determined that Jonah should be thrown overboard; and when the men threw Jonah into the sea, a monstrous fish happened to dash along at that very moment, and his mouth happened to be wide open, and Jonah happened to fall right into the mouth of the fish, which happened to start directly towards the shore; and the fish happened to become very sick, and even happened to vomit Jonah out just as he happened to reach the shore, so that Jonah happened to land on the dry earth; and it so happened finally that Jonah went to Nineveh and there preached the preaching that the Lord bade him.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

PSALM 150:1

Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power.

DIVINITY AND HUMANITY OF OUR LORD.

Friend Beebe: Will you please give your views through the Signs, on the divinity and humanity of Christ? Should you comply with my request, you will oblige.

AN INQUIRER AFTER TRUTH.
Indiana Creek, Iowa, Sept. 9, 1856.

The terms divinity, and humanity, which are in much use among theologians, are not used in reference to Christ, by the inspired writers; we must therefore, take them in the theological sense in which they are commonly used. By the divinity of Christ, so far as we can learn, is gernally intended his independent, eternal Godhead, and by his humanity, that body of flesh and blood in which he became incarnate, which was made of a woman, made under the law, &c. We have been engaged for many years in trying to exhibit our views of the blessed Redeemer, in reference to his Godhead, his manhood, and also in his mediatorial identity as the Head and Life of his body, the church. But after all that has been said and written on the subject, we have yet to say, "Without controvesy, great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh," &c. So absolutely is he God, that all the angels are commanded to worship him, and so truly was he man, that he could be born of a virgin, cradled in a manger, grow in stature to manhood, hunger, thirst, be weary, and his soul could be exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death; could feel the infirmities of his people, groan in spirit, and sweat, as it were, great drops of blood; yea, he could die upon the cross, and be buried, and finally be raised again from the dead, by the glory of the Father, and ascend up into heaven. As God, he is one with the Father, independent, self-existent and almighty. By him all things were made that were made, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. As man, he could be tempted in all points like his brethren, and yet remain uncontaminated by sin. None can deny his essential, eternal and unbegotten Godhead, and consistently hold that he is a Savior, for he says by the prophet, "I am God, and beside me there is no Savior." If, then, he is a Savior, he is also God. In his incarnation he took part of the same flesh and blood that his children are partakers of. The propriety of calling his Godhead, divinity, or his manhood, humanity, we will leave others to decide; we prefer, when treating on a subject so awfully sacred, to use only such adjectives as the Scriptures furnish. Peter speaks of the divine nature, but as he also speaks of the saints being partakers of it, we have supposed that the mediatorial fullness of which John also speaks (John i. 14, 16,) was intended. Brethren must read and judge for themselves, but we do not feel prepared to say that the life and immortality, which Christ gives to His saints, is anything short of divine nature, while the Scriptures plainly teach that the

essential attributes of eternal Godhead are peculiar to the Godhead, and the incommunicable to any inferior beings. On the other hand, we dare not say that that perfect, mystical body, or stature, which comprehends the Head and body of the church, was only human.

We may not have comprehended the design of "An Inquirer After Truth," but we have briefly stated some of our views on the subject, according to the very limited light we have of that Savior whom we desire to worship, adore and trust as the God of our salvation, who came in the flesh, and was found in fashion as a man, but we do most heartily say,

"Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on thee:
Leave, ah leave me not alone,
All my help must come from thee."

No couplet in the celebrated stanzas of Watts has ever afforded more sweetness to us than these,

"Jesus, my God, I know his name.
His name is all my trust."

We have neither the time nor space to extend our remarks at this time. May the subject be opened gloriously by the Holy Spirit, to the understanding, joy and rejoicing of all the saints, for the Redeemer's sake.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.,
September 15, 1856.

"Through the tender mercies of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us. — Luke i. 78.

By "day-spring" is meanth the day-dawn, the hearld of the rising sun, the change from darkness to light, the first approach of morn, in a word, the spring of the day. But what is this "day-spring" spiritually? It is the intimation of the rising of the Sun of righteousness. It is not the same thing as the Sun of righteousness; but it is the herald of his approach; the beams which the rising sun cast upon the benighted world, announcing the coming of Jesus, "The King in his beauty." This expression was singularly applicable in the mouth of Zacharias. The Lord of life and glory had not then appeared; he was still in the womb of the Virgin Mary. But his forerunner, John, had appeared as the precursor, the herald of his approach, and was sent to announce that the Sun of righteousness was about to arise. "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light" (John i. 6-8). All nations at that time lay in darkness. "Darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people." But when the Lord of life and glory was about to appear upon earth, when he had already taken the body which was prepared for him, the very

flesh and blood of the children, which he was to offer as a propitiation for sin, "the day-spring from on high" had begun to dawn. God's mercy, in the face of his dear Son, was just visiting the benighted world.

But there is another, an experimental meaning, connected with these words. "The day-spring from on high" is not to be confined to the approach of the Son of God in the flesh; but it may be extended to signify the appearance of the Son of God in the heart. I cannot be benefited by the appearing of Jesus in the flesh eighteen hundred years ago, unless he come and dwell in my soul. "The day-spring from on high" which visited the benighted Jewish church will not profit us except that same day-spring visits our benighted heart. "The day-spring from on high" is the manifestation of God's mercy in the face of the Savior. And when this "day-spring from on high" visits the soul, it is the first intimation, the dawning rays of the Sun of righteousness in the heart.

J.C. Philpot

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 10 / 2017 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

We shall try again as we've been asked, to write some of our thoughts on a following scripture, not by our knowledge but by faith some thought will be to some one's comfort.

First may we list a scripture found in Matt. 10:18-20 **"And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles, But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."**

This very attempt to write seems to me to trust not in the ability of the creature, but try our faith in God. Do we lack faith as we go speaking? Do we prepare a sermon? I, at least, go most of my time in fear, what have I to present, and we know before hand, nothing. I've been amazed to speak thoughts I never had until that time lie standing and again having different thoughts after sitting down. Maybe this isn't the way of one called God. I've never been sure of this, this one thing I think I know, my path leads me in a way I knew not before. While I could beg for a smoother path, I can't ask for it to change, can you?

Such has the Lord's people gone in every generation I believe, wanting to know what's ahead. We ministers, if indeed, I am in that number, go seeking

and searching as we stand before a God fearing people, afraid many times to go, feeling to have nothing, yet fearful not to attempt when asked. We never know the mind of God. He has declared that His thoughts and His ways are as far above our thoughts and our ways, as the heavens are above the earth. Isn't this, if the above text was given in a natural sense, also in a spiritual way to all that fear His name, you are only a mouth piece for God.

Men in their speaking as well as writing would like to know what's ahead, what man might say about it, think about it longer, research etc., that is man's way. If the thoughts or words or writing is directed of God, can it be wrong?"For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."

Some elder once asked me to write some. I answered I couldn't, He said, don't say no if you've never tried, you don't know. We may take notes or memorize a long sermon or article and still be of no value to those that are searching for that God instilled truth. Those apostles had to be inspired, what food they carried for the sheep was from God, and so it still is today. The minister or under-shepherd is only the carrier. Let us all be blessed not to try to add natural food to spiritual manna, it won't mix, if so it would spoil that of the spirit by pollution. He said we'll be hated of the world if we be His. Are we drawing closer to the world in our manner, or closer to the commandment of God. "Think not what ye shall speak." May His grace abide.

Elder J. R. Williams
December, 1995

---

1 JOHN 5:7.

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Contentnea Association will convene the Lord willing at North Creek Primitive Baptist Church on Saturday before the second Sunday in October for a one day meeting.

The date is October 7, 2017 with singing to start at 10:30 and service at 11:00.

The Church is located in Beaufort County at 7728 NC Highway 99 approximately 8 miles south of Belhaven.

We invite all our Brethren and friends to be with us.

Elder Gene Lupton,
Association Clerk
252-229-0366

LOWER MAYO 5TH SUNDAY MEETING

The next 5th Sunday Meeting will be held, The Lord Willing, Sunday, October 29, 2017.

Haynes Creek Church will Host the meeting. The Meeting House is located at 3995 Rosebud Rd., Loganville, GA 30052. From 1-85, Exit on GA 20 South. Go through Lawrenceville to outskirts of Grayson. Turn right on Rosebud Rd. When Rosebud Rd. crosses Hwy. 78 continue for 1.5 miles to church on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to meet with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

SKEWARKEY UNION (EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION)

Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of October 29, 2017. The church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albemarle Avenue in Tarboro, NC. Preaching services begin at 10:30am.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

Dan River Primitive Baptist Church will host the West Country Line Union Meeting the fifth Sunday, October 29, 2017. Singing begins at 10:30 and service at 11:00. The church is located on NC 700 between Eden, NC and US 29.

We invite and welcome all Ministers, Brethren, Sisters, and friends of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Elder Thomas Solomon, Moderator
Brother Allen Carroll, Clerk
Brother Jerry Somers, Asst. Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 2017

John Hepler, AZ	15.00
Ralph Dale, NC	15.00
James Holder, AL	5.00
Margaret Link, TN	5.00
Lowell Hopkins, VA	5.00
Elder James Howard, AL	5.00
Marcus Vickers, FL	20.00
Oscar Pickral, VA	5.00
Hazel Garland, MD	25.00
Kristina Abbott, VA	5.00
Annabeth Arne, SD	250.00

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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HYMN

And am I blessed with Jesus' love,
And shall I dwell with him above,
And will the joyful period come
When I shall call the heav'ns my home?

Think, O my soul! what must it be
A world of glorious minds to see,
Drink at the fountain-head of peace,
And bathe in everlasting bliss!

To hear them all at once proclaim
Eternal glories to the Lamb,
And join with joyful heart and tongue
That new, that never-ending song!

And does the happy hour draw near
When Christ will in the clouds appear,
And I without a vail shall see
The Man, the Christ, who bled for me?

If in my soul such joys abound
While weeping faith explores his wound,
How glorious will those scars appear
When perfect love forbids a tear!

Think, O my soul, if 'tis so sweet
On earth to sit at Jesus' feet,
What must it be to wear a crown
And sit with Jesus on the throne I

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EDITORIAL

"For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he *who was* of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman *was* by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, *thou* barren that barest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he *that was born* after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so *it is* now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free." Galatians 4:22-31

Elder Jerry B. Farmer

In these few words, the inspired apostle Paul opened up a great mystery that had been hidden from the beginning. These things cannot be received and understood by the carnal mind, because they are spiritual. According to scripture, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them,* for they are spiritually discerned." Happy are you, if you are given a mind and heart to receive these things. They are hidden from the wise and prudent, but are revealed unto babes. May the Lord guide our thoughts and may we be given eyes to see, ears to hear and a heart of understanding.

The apostle was wonderfully blessed to explain this hidden truth pertain-

ing to election, and to the plight of God's people in the world. It identifies all men who ever had or shall have an existence in this world. They are separated into two groups: those born after the flesh, and those born after the Spirit. One' s understanding of the doctrine of sovereign election affects the way he sees himself and all others. It affects the way he understands the scriptures. It affects the way he thinks of God. The two opposing views about election and God's sovereign love in the choice of His people in election, seems to divide the thinking of the carnal and spiritual minds of all men upon the earth. One view is according to the Spirit, and the other according to natural understanding.

God, in His written word, manifests this difference in the account of Sarai and Hagar. Since Abram and Sarai were well stricken in age had no son of their own, Sarah, thought she could never have children. She, in a natural mind, thought she might obtain children by her handmaid. So she gave her handmaid, Hagar the Egyptian to Abraham. When Hagar saw that she had conceived, her mistress Sarai was despised in her eyes. (Abram was 86 years old when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram and Sarai was 76.) We see here the beginning of the hatred of one people for another --- the hatred of the bondwoman for the freewoman.

When Abram was 99 years old the Lord appeared to him. And the Lord made an everlasting covenant with Abram and his seed. The Lord told Abram that he would be a father of many nations, that his name would no more be called Abram but rather Abraham, that He would give him the land of Canaan, that Abraham and his seed should keep God's covenant of circumcision, that Sarai would now be called Sarah, that Sarah should bear Abraham a son called Isaac, and that He would establish an everlasting covenant with Isaac and his seed.

The Lord at this time also made a covenant with Ishmael. He declared that He had blessed him, and would make him fruitful, and multiply him exceedingly. The Lord also declared that Ishmael should beget twelve princes, and that He would make him a great nation.

We see that God here made two distinct covenants. One was an everlasting covenant involving Abraham, Sarah the freewoman, Isaac the child of promise, and his spiritual seed after him. I am made to believe that this covenant represents a figure of spiritual things. The other was a covenant involving Hagar the bondwoman, Ishmael the child born after the flesh, and his natural seed after him. I am made to believe that this covenant manifests a figure of natural things. The blessed apostle was given to describe the bondwoman Hagar as the Jerusalem which now is and is in bondage with her children. I am made to believe that this manifests the whole fleshly family of unbelief. And he was blessed to describe Sarah as the freewoman, the Jerusalem which is above and is the mother of us all. I am made to believe that this indicates the whole spiritual family of God.

The apostle said by inspiration, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the

children of promise." This is our hope and trust, that we are the elect of God, chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. We hope and trust that we are included in the everlasting covenant of grace, which secured eternal life for all the saints by virtue of the finished work and righteousness of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Our hope and trust is that we are not the children of the flesh, held in the natural covenant of Hagar and Ishmael, that walk after the flesh, whose end shall be misery and destruction.

The apostle, by the Holy Spirit declared, "But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." From the beginning to this day, and down until the end of time, the one born of the flesh has persecuted and shall persecute the one born after the Spirit. The Lord made it plain that if they hated Him, they would also hate you. But He said, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when all men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." He also said that if you were of the world, the world would love you. And He said, "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! For so did their fathers to the false prophets." But we hope and trust that we are not loved by the world.

Isaac was born, and after eight days was circumcised. And after Isaac was weaned, Abraham made a great feast. "And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking. Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac." Here we see evidence of the hatred of the son of the bondwoman for the son of the freewoman. And the Lord caused Abraham to hearken to the voice of Sarah, even though it was grievous in his sight, and after giving them bread and water, he sent them away. But God saved Hagar and Ishmael from death in the desert, and Ishmael became a great nation according to the covenant of God.

The seed of the bondwoman has continued to persecute the seed of the freewoman even to this day. In the last book of the Bible, the book of Revelation, there are two women described in figurative language. They are a great wonder and a great mystery. The one woman described in Revelation 12 is clothed with the sun, and the moon is under her feet, and has a crown of twelve stars upon her head. The other woman described is in Revelation 17. John saw her sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abomi-

nations of the Earth. And John saw the woman drunken with the blood of saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

I am made to believe that Sarah, the Jerusalem which is above and free, is represented by the woman clothed with the sun, having the moon under her feet. And I am made to believe that Hagar, the bondwoman, is represented by the other one that John saw sit upon the scarlet colored beast. The one is altogether lovely, holy and blessed. The other is full of abominations and filthiness. The one is of the everlasting covenant of grace. The other is of the covenant of death and destruction. The one is persecuted by the great red dragon, which is the devil. The other sits upon the great red dragon and is part of the persecution. The one was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. By the hindering mercies of God, the hateful woman is kept from carrying out her evil intent to destroy the freewoman.

It is impossible that the son of the bondwoman, that was born after the flesh, could ever be heir with the son of the freewoman, that was born after the spirit. The son of the freewoman was loved with an everlasting love, chosen in the covenant of grace, foreknown of God, predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, called, justified and glorified in the sight of God before the world was. The son of the bondwoman was never loved of God, but was a vessel of wrath fitted for destruction. He was a vessel created of God for a purpose --- to be used to bring a fiery trial of faith to try the children of God. After the purpose of God is finished for that vessel of dishonor, that vessel shall be taken and destroyed.

After explaining the wondrous and mysterious workings of almighty God down through the ages, the inspired apostle gives much assurance to the children of God and says, "So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free." None deserve to be counted as children of the freewoman, for it is all of grace. The only way one could be a child of the freewoman is by birth, by being born of the Spirit. And we know that no one has any part in his birth process. It is altogether passive. So, if you have been given a hope of salvation based upon the kindness and goodness of God our Savior, Who came and suffered and died for your sins (and I hope and trust mine also), and Who by the power of God took up His life again, you are not a child of the bondwoman, but of the free. You have been born from above, and are an heir of the promise of eternal life in Christ Jesus, the Lord. Praise, honor, and glory are due unto our God forever, Who alone is worthy.

I trust that this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer,
10-26-2008

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Tony,

I am sending you $30.00 for two years.

I hope this finds you all well.

I enjoy reading the Signs of the Times.

Yours Truly,
Glenna Link

Dear Mr. Horton,

Writing to renew my subscription for two more years and pay for the months I am behind as you have so kindly continued to send the Signs anyway. Thank you so much. Please use the remainder as you see fit.

Thank you all so much for the faithful work that you continue to do. It is like a cool drink of water in the furnace of this world.

In hope of love,
Kristi Abbott

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 11 / 2017 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

Oct. 1973 – Zion's Landmark

How weary and how worthless this life at times appears.
What days of heavy sadness, what hours of bitter tears.
How dark the storm cloud gathers along the wintry skies.
How desolate and cheerless the path before me lies.

And yet those days of sadness are sent us from above.
They do not come in anger, but in faithfulness and love.
They come to teach us lessons which bright ones could not yield,
And leave us blest and thankful when their purpose is fulfilled.

They come to draw us nearer our Father and our Lord.
More earnestly to seek His face and lean upon His word.
And to feel if now around us a desert land we see:
Without the star of promise, what would the darkness be.

They come to lay us lowly and humbly in the dust.
All self deception swept away, all creature hope and trust.
Our helplessness, our vileness, our guiltiness to own;
And flee for help and refuge to Christ, and Christ alone.

They come to break the fetters that here detain us fast,
And force our long reluctant hearts to rise to heaven at last.

And brighten every prospect of that eternal home,
Where grief and disappointment and fear can never come.

Then turn not in despondence, poor weary heart away,
But meekly journey on through the dark and cloudy day.
Even now the bow of promise is above thee, painted bright;
And a glorious morning shall dissipate the night.

Thy God hath not forgot thee, but when He sees it best
Will lead thee into sunshine and give thee longed for rest.
And all thy pain and sorrow shall be forever o'er:
Shall end in heavenly blessedness and life forevermore.

(This poem was sent to me by dear Sister Mary Ellison a number of years ago. Lillie Fridel)

CHURCHES OF OUR FAITH

The following was sent in by Brother Steve Everett.

Elder Thomas Parker Dudley was born in Fayette County, Kentucky on May 31, 1792.

Elder Dudley's father was Elder Ambrose Dudley who came to Lexington, Kentucky in 1786 to serve as pastor of Bryans Church of Fayette County, Kentucky where he continued to serve until his death in 1825 at the age of 75.

Thomas Parker Dudley succeeded his father and became pastor of four Kentucky Primitive Baptist churches. They were as follows: Georgetown, Mount Carmel in Clark County, Elizabeth in Bourbon County and Bryans Station in Fayette County. Elder Dudley continued to serve these churches until his death in 1886 at age 95.

He was one of the most famous and respected Primitive Baptist ministers west of the Appalachian mountains. He is also known for his published circular on the Christian warfare.

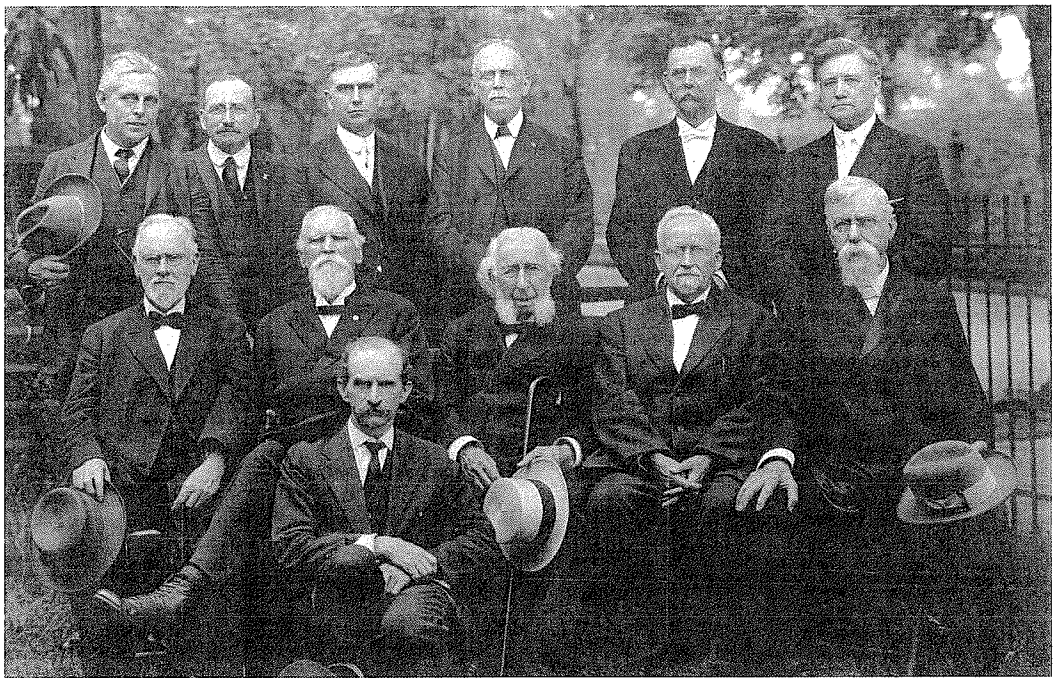

Wilmington Delaware Church

This photo was taken in Hopewell,New Jersey at the Delaware River Association around the time period 1912-1916.

Front Row sitting
Elders
J.G. Eubanks, pastor of Welsh Tract Church, A.B. Francis of Delmar, Delaware, Silas H.Durand of Southampton, PA, L.H. Hardy of Reidsville, NC, B.F. Coulter, a medical doctor from Philadelphia, PA.

Sitting on the ground ?Shaw

Back Row standing
Elders
J.M.Fenton, Alexander?, C.W. Vaughan, John McConnell, Joshua T. Rowe of Baltimore, MD, H. Claude Ker of Middletown, NY.

The late Elder J.M. Mewborn of Coats, NC assisted Steve Everett identifying the Elders in the photo.

Perhaps one of the most highly respected and revered Primitive Baptist elders of eastern North Carolina was Elder Abner Beryl "A.B" Ayers of Bear Grass, NC. Ayers is pictured with his wife and helpmate Clara Lavinia Jones Ayers to whom he was wed April 24,1910, a marriage which spanned 47 years.Family members and friends still recall today what a loving and hospitable home the Ayers couple displayed,always a gathering place for Primitive Baptist brethren.

Elder Ayers faithfully served the Kehukee Association to which he had been ordained August 19,1934. His pastorates included Bear Grass of Martin County,NC and Briery Swamp of Pitt County, NC, Flaty Creek of Weeksville, NC and Singleton of Washington,NC.His ministry however was not limited to his native area as he and his wife traveled extensively throughout the eastern United States and even into Canada where his message was always the sound doctrine of "salvation by grace,and grace alone". In addition, Ayers was a long time clerk and moderator of the Kehukee Association,a position he filled faithfully and lovingly until his death.His love and compassion for his fellowman was boundless. The late Sam Rayburn, Speaker of the National House of Representatives in Washington, DC, who was also of the Primitive Baptist faith and a friend to Elder Ayers, called upon him to deliver a prayer at a political rally where Rayburn was speaking in Greenville, NC.

Elder Ayers departed this life on March 30, 1962. He is buried alongside his wife in the Woodlawn Cemetery in Williamston (Martin County) NC. Truly "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE ONE STONE
Sermon preached by Elder John E. Hazelton (1853-1924)

TEXT: "For behold the Stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one Stone *shall be* seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day (Zech. 3:9).

God's servant and prophet Zechariah has been well called the prophet of glory. In his prophecy, in common with the unfulfilled prophecies of all the host of Old Testament prophets, there is much which to us is still dark and mysterious, but which will become plainer as the time draws nigh for the fulfillment of the events predicted herein. But in this prophecy in an especial manner we have beautiful and glorious truth displayed concerning the kingdom and the glory, the Person and the office, and the high priestly work of the Son of God. Here in this prophecy we have the price given for which our blessed Lord was to be betrayed. Here we have the prediction of the effusion of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, the calling of the Gentiles, the spiritual privileges of the church of God, and the final victory which our most blessed Redeemer will have over all the foes of Himself and of His people.

Zechariah's name takes us at once to covenant realities and covenant truth: "The Lord remembers." We have a very blessed instance of this in first chapter, where the Lord is described as speaking to the angel concerning His people, "good words comfortable words." There was inwrought in the soul of God's servant Zechariah, amidst much that was distressing to him, the blessed and glorious truth that Jehovah remembers, that He "hateth putting away," that whilst a woman may forget her child our God will not forget one poor sinner whose hope is a precious Christ, and who is looking to the Lord alone for mercy and salvation.

The whole prophecy is full of grace. I dislike more than I can tell you what I sometimes read in works upon the prophets, that "the style of this book is very noble," and that the style of the other is "broken and disconnected. It is nothing of the kind. That is simply the utterance of carnal men. Every book in God's Word is in perfect order and whilst to the untutored eye the heavens may appear without plan, each orb has its own place.

And so we have in the prophecy of Zechariah, from beginning to end, our precious, glorious Christ as the substance and the light of the book. We have set forth here those truths which, applied by the Spirit, confirm the soul, satisfy the hunger and longing of the human heart, and give to us meat to eat which the world knoweth not of.

The older I grow, the more I feel that Bible is practically the only book worth the attention of men and women. Not that

I wish you to suppose that I neglect the reading of other books, but I trust I can say this Book appears to grow more wonderful and precious. Dear John Newton in one of his letters says, "I have many books that I cannot sit down to read: books that are sound, but books that are like halfpence, and there go a great many halfpence to represent a small amount. Then there are silver books, and a few golden books, but I have one that outweighs them all, and that is the Bible, the charter of my hopes and the declaration of my God to me."

Now we see here in Zechariah, Haggai, Joshua and Zerubbabel, four men who the Lord says are "men wondered at." Those around could not understand them; they listened to them urging the people to go on in the erection of the second temple, and they could not understand it. And so down all the ages, the church of the living God, the children of God scattered here and there, have been, and are, men and women that are wondered at. A friend of mine was talking to me the other day. He is a gracious man, but at home he has no sympathy whatever; his wife and children look upon him as an eccentric person, and only that day they had said, "We wonder that a man of your education and ability can go to such insignificant places, and believe in such strange things." "Men wondered at," but how great the mercy to be taught and blessed of our Lord.

In this prophecy we have everything pointing for its great and glorious fulfillment to the manifestation of Christ the Branch; from beginning to end we have here the manifestation of a precious Christ. I love that word that Stephen Marshall, the author of The Gospel Mystery of Sanctification, spoke when he was upon a bed of sickness which proved to be the bed of death. Someone came to see him and began to speak about a well spent life, and that therefore it would be all right with him in Jordan. And Stephen Marshall replied, "I cannot say as you do, that I have so lived that I should not be afraid to die, but this I can say, that I have so learned Christ that I am not afraid to die." There is the secret of it all, dear friends - not a well-spent life, not usefulness, and so on; but O what a mercy so to know Christ under the teaching of the blessed Spirit, and through the manifestation of His grace and glory to the heart, as not to be afraid to die!

> "My hope is built on nothing less
> Than Jesus' blood and righteous
> ness.
>
> I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
> But wholly lean on Jesus' name.
> On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand,
> All other ground is sinking sand."

Now let us, in looking at our text this morning, speak first of the STONE: secondly, of the EYES; and thirdly, of the GRAVING. The Stone, the eyes, and the graving.

It is the Head Stone, the Christ Stone, the Stone—the word "one" means

the particular and special Stone, to which all others stones in type and prophecy pointed --- the Stone, the "one Stone."

Jacob is dying, and he says to his son Joseph in the blessing which he pronounces upon him, "The Shepherd, the Stone of Israel, has been my blessing!" The stability of Jacob's faith amidst deepest trial rested upon Him who is the Stone of Israel. We see the Stone again that Samuel set up- Ebenezer --- "Hitherto hast the Lord helped us," the Stone of Israel and the Stone of help. We see the Stone again in the prophecy of Daniel. The Stone cut out of mountain without hands completely overthrows the fourth empire, and after that it fills the whole world with peace and blessing.

We see the Stone again in Matthew 16. Turning to poor inconstant Peter, the Lord said, "Thou art Petros, but upon this Stone (Petra) --- thy confession of Me as the Christ, the Son of the living God --- I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

We see the Stone in Isaiah 28, where God says He will lay in Zion a precious Corner Stone, a tried Stone for the help and succour of His people. We find the Stone mentioned again in 1 Peter 2, where Peter, moved by the Holy Ghost, speaks of this blessed and precious Corner Stone. Again we have it in Ephesians 2, where we see the living Stone and the lively stones being built up upon Him, growing into a holy temple in the Lord. The Stone, a precious and glorious Christ, who alone can sustain the weight of my soul, the weight of myself with all my troubles, the Stone that is laid in Zion, the Stone that is precious in God's sight, the Stone of a precious, living, glorious Christ, to whom the Stone of Bethel, the Stone of Israel, and all the other stones to which I have referred very blessedly point.

Now we must remember in connection with this Stone the peculiar position in which Joshua stood. He was the high priest of the Jewish people at the time of the rebuilding of the temple (the second). The Stone which in this figure was laid before Joshua partakes of a twofold character. Zerubbabel had laid the foundation of the temple. The foundation stone is then here referred to. The hands of Zerubbabel laid the foundation, and he was also to complete it. But as Joshua stood before the Lord, his mind must have been filled with visions of those wonderful stones which glittered in the breastplate of the high priests of old, and of the onyx stones upon the shoulders.

Now we cannot rightly understand the reference here without first looking at Joshua as the ecclestical head, the high priest of Israel: and then as representing all poor sinners, stripped of self-righteousness and brought to trust in a great and glorious and blessed Redeemer.

Joshua is there, but where are the garments of glory and beauty that Aaron and his successors were clothed with? The second temple has been completed, and when the old men who had seen the glory of the first temple beheld the second, they wept and mourned because it was such a mean building in comparison with that which was "exceedingly magnifical." There stood

Joshua, a dejected high priest, called to minister in a temple which was, as it were, but a shadow in greatness and glory to that which Solomon built and opened. Then when Joshua looked at his raiment, it is described as "filthy:" the garments of glory and beauty were missing, and Satan stood at this right hand to resist him. He said in effect, "You are a fine high priest; this is a poor, wretched place that you call your temple, and where are the garments of glory and of beauty, and the anointing oil? You are deficient." And so Joshua felt a dejected and broken man, and Satan was in this respect furnished with a pretext to resist the exercise of his high priestly office by Joshua.

There were five things missing in the second temple which had a place in the first. In the second temple there was no ark, no holy fire, no Shekinah cloud, no Spirit of prophecy on the priest, no Urim and Thummim by which oracles of God, the mind and will of God, were made known. There was a priest without an ephod, without a breastplate, without the shoulder pieces which upheld the breastplate. Well might Joshua be dejected! The word might be read: "Behold the Stone which I have set before Joshua." Joshua, be not discouraged as to thy garments! The word went forth, "Take, away the filthy garments from him. And unto him He said, Behold, I have caused thine Iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." Joshua, not that the garments of glory and of beauty, which thy predecessors before the captivity wore, have vanished; mourn not that the ark of the covenant and the mercy-seat have disappeared. Here is the reality. The Lord had set before Joshua a Stone, and upon that Stone there were seven eyes.

Now for the gospel of all this. We stand before the Lord in our filthiness. A thousand things there are within and without to deject us. We ask ourselves, Where is the glory of the past days? We feel ourselves to be mean and weak and worn indeed. We can understand some of the exercises of the heart of Joshua, but there was "set," to be removed no more for ever, there was "set," not as a shadow but as a reality, the Stone that was laid before Joshua. What did the Lord say to Joshua? What in effect our beautiful hymn expresses, for it contains the very marrow and fatness of the gospel:

"Of my soul, what means this sadness?
Wherefore art thou thus cast down?
Let thy grief be turned to gladness,
Bid thy restless fears begone.
Look to Jesus,
And rejoice in His dear name."

He is the Stone, the Foundation Stone, on which there are the seven eyes: that precious Corner Stone upon which no poor sinner has ever trusted and has perished, or been cast out at the last. "Set" before Joshua, "set" before the dejected and tried of His servants, "set" before the poor sinner feeling that his own righteousness is but as filthy rags. The Stone set there to be removed no more for ever.

"Now I have found the ground wherein.
Sure my soul's anchor may remain;
The wounds of Jesus for my sin,
Before the world's foundation slain."

Here, then, is the reality. In the first place, the person of Joshua is accepted; in the second place, his person being accepted, his sacrifice and a service are well pleasing unto God.

"A debtor to mercy alone,
Of covenant mercy sing,
Nor fear, with Thy righteousness on,

My person and offering to bring.
The terrors of law and of God
with me can have nothing to do:
My Saviour's obedience and blood,
Hide all my transgressions from view."

Here is the Stone, the precious Stone, the tried Stone. Here is the Foundation upon which a poor sinner' is brought to rest. Here is the "foundation opened for sin and for, uncleanness." Here is the "righteousness which is unto all and upon all them that believe." Joshua here does not say a word. He stands, before the Lord a dumb man, but he has an Advocate. There is One who stands before Joshua; the Lord rebukes Satan. And we have "an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous"– one Stone with a glory that excelleth; one Stone laid before Joshua --- one Stone, the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ in His mediatorial character and work. This one Stone is ever there, for "if the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" But the Foundation can never, never be destroyed. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid" the Stone laid before Joshua, even Jesus Christ our Lord.

In the 3rd chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians the apostle says, "I have laid the Foundation, and another buildeth thereon." What does that mean? Ministerially and delaratively he had laid the Foundation. All the prophets of Old Testament and the apostles of the New alike testified to the Stone, the one Stone, the precious Corner Stone. O what a mercy it is to be shut up to Christ, to be cut off and cut out of all hope of everybody and everything but the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

We are to understand in Zechariah the head Stone to be not chiefly the top Stone, but the chief, the principal Stone. We are told the word rendered "head" in Hebrew means the "indispensable" Stone, the Stone without which all would fall into confusion. And Christ our Lord is the first Stone; first in the dignity of His Person; first in choice, for He is God's Elect in whom His soul delighteth. He is first in suffering, first in resurrection and in power. "Behold," says the Lord to Joshua, "behold the Stone that I have laid before Joshua."

The "law made nothing perfect," and Joshua had found that out. The "law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did." The poor sinner in filthy garments stands before the Lord, and he looks up and sees nothing but the justice of a holy God. He looks

at the law, and sees nothing but wrath and bondage and misery and condemnation. He looks Into his own heart and sees a mass of unbelief, a sink of corruption of one kind or another, and he Is dumb. "Behold, Joshua, I have laid the Stone that exactly meets thy case; I have set the one Stone that exactly meets and satisfies thy necessities. Justice and the law condemn thee; thine own heart can yield no spring of peace or satisfaction, but the Stone that I have laid before thee is the Stone that has satisfied justice, fulfilled the law, and yields that wondrous medicine and balm and supply which entering into the heart, like the branch that was cut down and cast Into Marah's waters, turns their bitterness into sweetness." A precious Stone, a glorious Lord, was laid before Joshua, and as Joshua heard those words and was favoured with a sight of a precious and glorious Christ, his faith was drawn forth, his doubts and fears vanished, and he stood before the Lord a reconciled child, cleansed from his filthiness, and clothed with the robe of a Saviour's Imputed righteousness.

Secondly, the eyes. Behold the Stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one Stone shall be seven eyes. Now you will remember that the Urim and Thummim was something in the breastplate of the high, priest of Israel which no one exactly understands. By means of them the high priest, under the blessing of God, was enabled to know God's mind and will. The words mean "light" and "perfection" respectively. Seven eyes are upon this Stone. No figure in and of itself can completely set forth the glories and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Think for a moment or two of the human eye. What is the human eye? It is the expression of the soul. the human eye is the window out of which the soul looks, so that when a soul is in sorrow the eye bears witness to it; when glad, the eye sparkles; when you have had bad news your eyes tell the story, and when you have had that news which gladdens your heart your eyes show it, so that we know a little of the language of the beaming eye. Intelligence looks out of the eye. Love looks out of the eye. Watchfulness looks out of the eye, and power looks out of the eye. Those who have noticed some of the world's great men have noticed the wonderful power in their eyes. I have not seen many of them, but one or two especially I remember; there was no mistaking the power of the man with that penetrating eye. It is, as it were, the oracle of life.

Now on this Stone there is the perfection of vision represented by the seven eyes. This is a Stone which in its fulness and glory says, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go; I will guide thee with Mine eye." A Saviour who is the Foundation Stone bears my spirit up; a living Saviour, a Saviour whose eyes of love, grace and compassion rest upon every Joshua of His; upon every tried, seeking sinner, upon all His tried and exercised people.

Upon one Stone shall be seven eyes." Does not this speak to you about the vision in the Apocalypsa — the Lamb with the seven eyes? What does that mean? It means that Christ our saviour,

as the Lamb of God slain, from the foundation of the world in God's purpose, raising to die no more, in the heavens of eternal bliss is the Lamb with the seven eyes, the perfection of vision, and that His eyes rest upon every poor, trembling child of God here below. His eyes look upon the unnumbered myriads in the glory. His eyes rests upon every poor sinner who is saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner": upon you who say, "Can ever God or good dwell here?" His eyes rest upon you, dejected in service, and cast down by this and that around and within you; upon you who are exercised in your family or in your business. In other words, the Saviour upon whom your soul has sunk, the Saviour whose everlasting arms are underneath you, is the Saviour with the seven-fold vision, and the Saviour of perfection of intelligence, compassion and watchfulness, and of power.

Our blessed Saviour, Christ, the eternal Son of the Father, manifest in human nature as the Mediator, as the incarnate Son, has the fulness of the Spirit. O what a mercy that everything pertaining to our salvation has the fulness of the Godhead in it! In Christ Jesus there is the fulness of the Father. In Christ Jesus there is His own fulness as the eternal Son of the Father. In Christ Jesus there is the fulness of the Spirit. We have this sevenfold anointing of the Spirit, the sevenfold vision of the Mediator through the power of the Spirit resting upon Him, set forth in Isaiah 11. There we have it in connection with the Branch, and there is a remarkable parallelism between this 11th chapter of Isaiah and that which we have before us: "will bring forth My Servant the Branch."

Now what are the seven eyes but the sevenfold anointing of the Spirit? I will just enumerate the seven described in Isaiah 11: **"Spirit of wisdom, the Spirit of understanding, the Spirit of counsel, the Spirit of might, the Spirit of knowledge, the Spirit of fear of the Lord, the Spirit of quick understanding."** The Man Christ Jesus in His divine nature, the Son Eternal, the Man Christ Jesus bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh, anointed by the Holy Spirit, filled by the Holy Spirit with wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, the fear of the Lord and of quick understanding. The very Saviour I want, the Saviour of quick understanding. We say concerning one another, "I did not quite understand what you meant," and there we often make sad blunders, and wound where we mean to heal, because we are so stupid and slow, because we cannot put ourselves in the place of someone else. But here our blessed One is of Quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, knowing the desire of my heart before it is expressed, knowing me altogether. Joshua, behold the Stone, the one Stone upon which are seven eyes.

He thus contains every qualification as Redeemer. One word from Him makes darkness light. The eye of His love and sympathy is a blessing indeed to us.

> One look from that dear Lord,
> Whose brow compassion wears,
> Will much of heavenly bliss afford.
> E'en in this vale of tears."

Lastly, "Behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity, of that land in one day" --- the affirmation of Jehovah of hosts, that is very beautiful -- the affirmation of Him who cannot lie, the affirmation, of Jehovah of hosts! Poor Joshua must have felt awfully lonely as he stood there. The enemies were all about him jeering, sneering; there he was with his companions, "men wondered at, "but Jehovah of hosts, who does as He pleases "in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth," has affirmed that the Stone shall never be removed, that He has graven upon that living Stone with the graving thereof that which shall cheer and bless and draw and direct poor, sinners. The graving, an inscription on a foundation stone.

Yes, the graving of an inscription upon a precious stone. Take the two together. You see right through the whole of this chapter the stones in the breastplate of the high priest, considered here as the one Stone, representing the heart of love of our dear Lord. Behold, I will engrave the graving thereof in the Lamb's book of life and upon the heart of love. Look at the lapidary. All his attention is given to his work. The work as it proceeds appears marred, but when it is finished there is complete beauty and value. Now look at the Stone, the tried Stone that has been graven with the graving thereof. "It pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief." I will engrave the graving thereof." "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow." "I will engrave the graving thereof." Graven in Gethsemane's Garden; graven at Calvary's cross: graven with those deep lines - all tell us of a law honoured and fulfilled. Graven with the inscription that declares that God's justice has been satisfied, sinners have been pardoned and righteously saved. "Behold, I have set, I have laid, this Stone which my own hands have graven," says Jehovah of hosts, Jehovah the Father. Behold the whole church of God, before every seeking sinner, before every one here today who has a hope or a desire in his soul for the mercy of God in Christ. "In all our afflictions He was afflicted." "I have graven the graving thereof."

Apply this to Scripture. Think of our dear Lord who said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." "I have engraven the graving thereof." "All the promises are yea and amen in Him." Jehovah of hosts hath affirmed this, and as dear George Doudney somewhere sings:

Come, troubled child, with fears oppressed,
By sin defiled, by guilt distressed:
The fountain open stands for thee,
Of priceless power both full and free."

And as the poor sinner draws near, and is favoured with a sight of a precious Christ, he is enabled from time to time to say, "He loved me, and gave Himself for me." The apostle to the Galatians says, "When It pleased God to reveal His Son in me." Then he goes on to speak of the blessedness that sprang up in his

heart: "He loved me, and gave Himself for me." Here is the tried believer's strength and power. Here is our peace. Christ our Lord removed the iniquity of His church in one day. Whatever reference this has to the future of the Jews, it will be gloriously fulfilled; but I have sought to set before you the glory and the grace and beauty of the everlasting gospel, which sometimes fills our souls with music now, and which shall "bear our spirits up" in the hour and the article of death.

Elder John E. Hazelton
Signs of the Times,
December, 1995

By Elder William Smoot, September, 1905

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed" --- Daniel 2:44.

In these days of gross ignorance and perversion of Gospel Truth among the professed followers of free grace, and while the world around us is full of prophecy concerning the downfall and extinction of the chosen few whose God is the Lord, and who alone are enabled by the Spirit to heed the teachings of the Sacred Oracles, and to maintain the Truth and Order of the Gospel, it is wise that we should pause and examine the Holy Testimony upon such an important, and vital question.

We need not refer to the connection, showing that the God of heaven definitely rules and controls all worldly governments, that He marks the rise and fall of earthly kingdoms with direct reference to the good of His chosen people; for **"When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according, to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance" Deuteronomy 32:8.**

The bounds of nations, of kingdoms, and races were absolutely determined with reference to the chosen people of God --- His portion, and the manifestation of that visible people, as surely as other events and circumstances were ordained to that end, and to work together for their good, and the glory of their eternal God; nations are as absolutely in God's bands as atoms and motes.

Kingdom after kingdom rises in the vision of Daniel; each succeeding the other, and all paving the way for the "days of these kings" in which the God of heaven should set up a kingdom, which should never be destroyed, and should "not be left to other people." That is, the very same character of people who were set up in it, shall continue to inhabit it. It shall not be left to strangers, foreigners, and aliens, destitute of its life, and ignorant of its teachings - the doctrine of free grace. For **"of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the Highest Himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when He writeth up the people, that this man was born there" (Psalms**

87:5,6). This chosen generation of Jesus Christ then shall inhabit the kingdom, which is but the outward development of its organic and eternal life.

The days of these kings" had come and the prepared material for this kingdom was at hand. And what a wonderful preparation! They came through scenes of sorrow and suffering, a poor and an afflicted people. Their haunts were among the lowly, in the vale of poverty and distress; the blind, the lame, the lepers, the deaf; **"the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them" (Matthew 11:4-6).**

They came to their appointed places in this kingdom through the purifying flames of deep affliction; a sorely tried people, and with the deep conscious knowledge of the vain deceptive, unreal nature of all earthly power, and fancied earthly good.

The kingdom is not of this world, "a stone cut out of the mountain without hands" -- **"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).**

Jesus says in **Luke 17:21, "Behold, the kingdom of God is within you."** He was Himself the very embodiment of the kingdom; **"the root and the offspring" (Revelation 22:16),** of the house of David; the seed from which the whole development should come. And just as certain as He was not of this world, as "coming down from God out of heaven," so every one of this development, each and every child of the kingdom comes down from God out of heaven also, taking up his abode in a mortal temple or tabernacle. Necessarily then the kingdom must be indestructible as composed of indestructible subjects, **"born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:13).**

We trace the Church from age to age through the doctrine and order which she maintains. It is said that the Church when first set up "continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship." Can we find the doctrine of the Apostles, as set forth in their teaching and writing, among us today? Can we trace the clear line shining like a sunbeam, from the teachings of the dear Master, and of the men raised up and divinely inspired to succeed Him? Can we trace this Divine testimony in the doctrine and order held so sacred among us, dear brethren and friends of Truth, today? Assuredly do we answer, Yes!

The doctrine of the Absolute Predestination of God Himself without reference to men, means, or instrumentalities, or the works of men or devils; without reference to whether these things be good, bad, or indifferent, whether they be large or small, temporal or eternal, all absolutely, emphatically, and accurately ALL, were ordained of God to come to pass, exactly as they do or did so occur, without changing a note, or swerving a hair-breadth from what God did from all eternity, and before all time predestinate should come to pass.

The doctrine of the eternal choice of the Church in Christ in which each individual child of God was chosen in

Christ, personally, eternally, and actually existing in Him from all eternity; the body (Church) being set up in the Head **"from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was" (Proverbs 8:23).** The entire, separate, exclusive travel of the Church aside from all worldly religious organization, secret orders, worldly vanities, and man-made auxiliaries are all vanities.

We ask, Who holds these things as plainly taught in the Sacred Oracles as the Sun is seen in a cloudless sky at noon? Who holds them consistently? Why no people in these United States today but the Anti-Means, Anti-Secret Order, Old School Predestinarian Baptists.

The life-throbbing power of the doctrine and Biblical order of the Gospel is manifested wherever saints meet in holy worship. The love of God is felt among them, the impulse and power of the love of His sacred and eternal Truth is felt, as the tide throbs through the bosom of the sea; the love of God flowing from heart to heart, written in the organic life of these dear people, for **"by this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35)**

This is not for the world socially, religiously, or politically, to know anything whatever about They neither know the doctrine nor yet the people who maintain it; **"The world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not" (1 John 3:1).** But rather, **"Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you." (1 John 3:13). "If the world hate you,"** says Jesus, **"ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (John 15:18-19).**

But we return to the promise that this kingdom "Shall never be destroyed." This promise has been verified through each succeeding age from the apostolic days down to the present; there ever has been and ever will be a people who "shall shew forth the praise of God."

The Church of God is His throne. He says by Ezekiel, **"the place of My throne, and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever, and My holy name, shall the house of Israel no more defile" (Ezek. 43:7).** Can the throne of God be set aside? Can it be corrupted by the corroding influence of time? Can His Holy Church become so changed as to lose her identity? There are two ways in which an organization may become entirely extinct. One way is to entirely lose its visibility. The other that its order may be so perverted as to entirely change its character. An Old School Baptist Church may once have claimed to hold the principles of Truth, but if such principles have been perverted; instead of holding to the doctrine of an eternal election, if they hold to a perversion of that doctrine, for instance, instead of holding to the eternal and personal election of the Church in Christ, they hold to an election in the life of Christ, which is communicated to an Adam sinner, by such a sinner in himself being born again. Such perversion

of the testimony especially when continued to other points of doctrine, and backed up by looseness of order, absolutely marks the end of such as a Gospel church, and that the candlestick has been removed from their midst. The Lord has withdrawn His presence in such a case. As the once flourishing visible churches in Galatia, at Ephesus, and in adjoining parts have been removed; as the churches on the Atlantic Coast of the United States once strong and able in their ministry and membership, have ceased longer to exist as Gospel churches, through perversion and opposition to the doctrine they once maintained, and turn to gross disorder, so the Lord may continue to remove the candlestick from this or that locality. But this does not do violence to the Truth that so long as time exists there shall be a visible church, whose unperverted doctrine, clear-cut order, separating her entirely, religiously speaking, from the world, shall bring down upon such church the malignant opposition of every worldly influence. She will suffer persecution.

Our God knows where such Church shall be planted. Jesus says, "Every plant, which My heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." 'Tis true that the primal application of this testimony was made to something somewhat different, yet it has an indirect bearing upon what we are writing. These churches are **"Trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified" (Isaiah 61:3).** And as long as time endures so long shall the visible Church of God exist as a witness to the Truth; the doctrine shall be held unperverted and the order unpolluted in His holy Sanctuary. The Church shall outlive worldly governments, and earthly orders. The promise is "it shall stand forever." No such promise has ever been made in regard to any worldly nation; nations strong and mighty in worldly power, whose armies have spread consternation and terror wherever they have marched. Nations presided over by man wise in state-craft, and able to rule, one after another such worldly nations have passed as a night vision, but there is today, as there ever has been and ever will be a church, small it is true in numbers compared to the horde, the wild rabble of anti-Christ, yet strong and aggressive as trusting in the living God who controls and directs all things.

All worldly empire must sooner or later come to an end, but this Church can never die. **"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the scepter of Thy kingdom is a right scepter" (Psalm 45:6).**

We can rest assured that there will ever be, as there has ever been, and is now, located exactly where the God of heaven designs them to be, a people who hold His Truth, while earth and hell oppose.

No earthly means are used to sustain them; earthly elements do not enter into their being or support. **"And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47).**

May we be kept from the attempt of adding to our numbers, by leaving it where it is, entirely in the Lord's hands. He will give His Church ministers, **"And no man taketh this honor unto him-**

self, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron" (Hebrews 5:4). We must not put forth our hand to steady the ark of the Lord (I Chron. 13) for the hand of God will securely hold His Church, adding to her numbers and giving her ministers at His own will. The light of Truth shall steadily fall from off her holy altar. And ye, dear children of the regeneration, are witnesses of these things. **"Ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord, and My servant whom I have chosen" (Isaiah 53:10).** For, **"Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace" (Romans 11:5). "Now unto Him that is able to keep you** (and us) **from falling, and to present you** (and us) **faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen" (Jude 24-25).**

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 2017

David Pittman, VA 25.00
Steven Terry, VA 10.00

1 John v. 7

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one."

OBITUARIES

AGNES TURNAGE PENNINGTON

Sister Agnes was born in Greene Co. N.C. on July 24, 1928 and departed this life on March 20, 2017, in Pitt Co. N.C., at the age of 88 years. Her parents were John Roland and Williamenia Whitted Turnage. She was married to Edward Miles Pennington, who preceded her in death. To this union was born one daughter, Anne Pennington Whitehurst. Along with her daughter, Sister Agnes leaves her son-in-law, two grandchildren, one sister, the Church and many friends to mourn the loss of her, yet we believe that our loss is her eternal gain.

Sister Agnes came before the Church at Mewborn's Meeting House and expressed her love for the Church and said she desired a home with those of the same faith and order as her forebears. She was received into the fellowship of the Church and on Saturday before the second Sunday in June 1992, Sister Agnes was baptized, along with Sister Mary D. Kearney, in the Church's baptismal pool. The sacred ordinance was administered by our late Pastor, Elder J.M. Mewborn. He was also her first cousin. Sister Agnes was a great-great granddaughter of Elder Parrot Mewborn II, in whose honor our Church was named.

The Lord blest Sister Agnes with an humble spirit. A kind and loving smile always graced her countenance. Her daily walk in this life reflected Soloman's description of the Church when he said **"Her ways** *are* **ways of pleasantness, and all Her paths** *are* **peace." Pro. 3:17.** She was faithful to regularly attend her meetings and fill her seat until she was no longer able due to suffering from memory loss. She lived in full fellowship with the Church until she was called from this life.

Sister Agnes's body was laid to rest in the Mewborn Family Cemetery, Green N.C., while we believe her soul is resting in the Paradise of God. We feel that we can witness with the Apostle Paul, when he said **"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." 1 Cor. 15:19.** But our lively hope does not end here, for our hope is in the resurrection of these our vile bodies. **"For since by man** *came* **death, by man** *came* **also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." 1 Cor. 15:21-22.** We are comforted by these words that the Apostle Paul spoke to the Corinthians, "for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"Job said, **"Thou shall call, and I will answer thee" Job 14:15.** We believe that Sister Agnes will be among that number that shall hear that call from on high and will answer Him.

In the Hope of the Gospel,
W. William Edwards

Read and approved in June Conference 2017

Elder Ernest Duncan, Moderator
W. William Edwards, Clerk

HEBREWS 5: 9-14

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."

Called of God on high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.

For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which *be* **the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.**

For every one that useth milk *is* **unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.**

But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* **those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.**

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Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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HYMN

When I survey the wonderous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my Lord;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.

See from his head, his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet?
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

His dying crimson like a robe
Spreads o'er his body on the tree,
Then I am dead to all the globe,
And all the globe is dead to me.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

Watts.

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EDITORIAL

"For all the promises of God in him *are* yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." 2 Corinthians 1:20.

Elder Jerry B. Farmer

The called and sent apostle Paul, on his journey to Judea, was minded to come again to the church in Corinth. He had many things to say unto them, and before he arrived, he wrote to them some of the things he had in mind. We are made to be thankful that the Lord worked with him in this way in order that these scriptures were written down and preserved, that the Corinthian church and the faithful generations to come might have the benefit of what the apostle was blessed to teach.

The apostle Paul wrote, as he was moved by the Holy Spirit, "When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? Or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay? For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." The apostle was grave, but loving as he taught and admonished the saints in the true and narrow way that leads to life.

The things of God are life and death to the saints. In the Holy Spirit there is no lightness or foolishness. They who go on with such things are in a carnal mind. The worldly religion conducted by those walking after the flesh, must entertain their congregations to keep their attention. The true doctrine is too hard and too demanding to be received by those they lead about in their easy religion. They teach that God begins the work of Grace, but man must finish it by making the proper choices. The apostle taught no such thing. He said, "Having begun

in the Spirit, are you now made perfect by the flesh?" Of course, the answer is, No. The apostle said, "He that hath begun a good work in you shall perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ." God began the work, and He shall finish it. He is the Author and Finisher of our faith. He is the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

The gospel of Jesus Christ that the apostle and his faithful ministering brethren preached was the true good news of God to the saints. It was all positive with no negatives. It was yea and Amen. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came into the world by way of a miraculous, virgin birth according to the prophesies that were given of Him many hundreds of years before they were fulfilled. He lived the perfect life with no guile in His mouth, neither had any sin in His person. He was the spotless, sinless Lamb of God, who only was worthy to offer Himself up to God as that holy sacrifice that satisfied the justice of God and fulfilled His righteous law to the jot and the tittle. He loved His own with an everlasting love. He chose them in Himself and gave them grace in Him before the world was. He stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. He took the sins of all the saints upon Himself and nailed them to the tree. He imputed His righteousness to His beloved people, so there is now no spot in them. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." The gospel is altogether good news to those who love Him and look for Him to come again.

Jesus came into the world, and the world hated Him without a cause. Why? Because He spoke the truth, and the truth shinned light upon all the wickedness and hypocrisy of wicked men, even those deeply religious men. They no longer had a cloak to cover their works of darkness and selfishness. Their solution, since they loved darkness rather than the light, was to try to extinguish the light. They set about to kill Jesus, but they could not lay hands upon Him until He yielded Himself to them. Then they beat Him, and scourged Him, and mocked and spit upon Him, and crucified Him according to the prophesy.

Jesus accomplished that which His Father gave Him to do and He prospered in the thing whereunto He was sent. He accomplished the warfare of the saints, and finished their salvation. He was sent to seek and to save that which was lost, and this He did. He said, "I came not to do my own will, but to do the will of Him that sent me. And this is the will of the Father, that of all that the Father gave me I should lose nothing but should raise it up in the last day." Every last saint was covered in that one offering of Himself that Jesus made unto God. We are taught, "By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." He gave His life a ransom for many. He redeemed every little child of God to Himself. He was buried, and after three days, He was raised from the dead, and appeared to His disciples, and to more than 500 at one time. He ascended into heaven where He sits at the right hand of God where He ever liveth to make intercession for the saints

according to the will of God. He shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation, when He shall raise the dead in Christ and shall change, in the twinkling of an eye, those that are alive and remain at His coming. He shall gather together all the saints in their glorified bodies to Himself from the four winds of heaven. There they shall ever be with the Lord.

In the worldly religions, their false gospel is yea and nay. They say that God is sovereign and almighty, just the same as we do. But then they deny it by saying that God will not violate a man's free will, and that God can do nothing unless one lets Him. They say it is up to the man to obey God, or else he will miss a blessing, and receive a curse. By saying these things, they are saying yea and nay. But it is not so with the true servants of the living God. They are blessed to preach the true sovereign, almighty God that does all of His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. None can stay His hand or say unto Him, What doest thou? The true ministers preach the God that made the world for Himself, and that He does with it what He will. Of one lump he made vessels unto honor and vessels unto dishonor. He made some that would fit in glory and others that would fit into destruction. The worldly wise man says, How then can God find fault? The apostle replied, "Who art thou o man that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" This cannot be. The Lord said, before either had done good or evil, "Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated."

God has established His little ones in the teaching of grace without the works of men. They cannot be satisfied with anything less. "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of ourselves, not of works lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus, unto good works, which God before ordained that we should walk in them." It is not yea and nay, but yea and Amen. It is grace for grace. To those that God loved with an everlasting love, He gave grace in Christ Jesus before the world was. To those that He gave grace in Christ for eternal salvation, He also gave grace to obey the gospel. He made and brought His little ones into the world to show forth His praise. Shall the God of all creation be frustrated and not do all His will? Shall His people not walk in those good works that God has before ordained that they should walk in them? This cannot be. It is impossible. They shall show forth His praise, because God has declared it.

God's little ones are not only established in grace, but they are also anointed of God according to the scriptures. This anointing is their being sealed by the earnest of the Holy Spirit in their hearts. This seal is an impression made upon and within every vessel of honor, showing the ownership of God. This is what sets them apart from the wicked of the world. This seal is the earnest, or that which is given to secure

the agreement that God has made on behalf of His people. His agreement, or promise to them, is for Him to return and fully possess His beloved people to Himself forever.

Conversely, the wicked are marked with the mark of the beast, which is the spirit of wickedness, showing the ownership of the devil. This is a hard saying. Who can receive it? Only those blessed with an ear to hear and an eye to see and a heart to understand. The wicked have a purpose also. God has chosen to use them as a rod in His hand, and as those who bring fiery trials to the faith of His saints, to His own glory and honor as he brings them forth as gold refined in the furnace of affliction.

Consider Pharaoh, and his powerful army, and how they held in captivity the children of Israel for 430 years. Consider how the Lord brought His people out from bondage with a powerful hand. Remember how He went before his people in a pillar of smoke by day and a pillar of fire by night to give shade from the scorching sun by day and light by night. Remember when Pharaoh came behind the people of God to destroy them and there seemed to be no way of escape. Remember how God caused the east wind to blow and how he caused the waters of the Red Sea to be parted and stand as a heap. Remember how the pillar of fire went from before Israel to the rear to stand between them and Pharaoh.

And remember how every last one of the children of Israel crossed over on dry land, and how Pharaoh and his host were destroyed when the Lord brought the waters upon them. Why was this all done? "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."

God must receive all honor, praise and glory, because He only is worthy. In all His mighty acts, the Lord has had His saints in view. He has given them His Holy Spirit, which keeps them through every trial and affliction. God sees to it that every trouble works for their good. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose." "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."

Here is one more thought before I close. The word 'Amen' means 'so be it'. "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," God has spoken good to and for the household of faith. So be it. Amen and Amen.

I trust that this was written in love and in hope of eternal life, unworthy as I am.

Elder Jerry B. Farmer
8-11- 2013

Reprinted from April 1, 1885 edition of Zion's Landmark

Experience of Elder D. A. Poindexter

When I asleep in sin did lie
My god awakened me;
And I in unbelief did cry
That I might saved be.

I felt my sins a heavy load, -
'Twas more than I could bear;
I wept and cried unto the Lord
That he would hear my prayer.

But God abhors the sacrifice
Where not the heart is found;
He bade me trust in His free grace,
That I should wear a crown.

I bowed myself before the Lord
Lay prostrate on the ground;
I sought Him in His holy word,
But no deliverance found.

It seemed to me the time had passed,
The day of grace was gone;
And God had given me up at last,
And I was sinking down.

I laid my hands across my breast
As though laid down to die;
Till God was pleased my soul to bless
And raised my hopes on high.

Had I all language at command,
All human tongues employed;
'Twould be to speak my Saviour's praise,
Who has my sins destroyed.

My heart dissolved in thankfulness,
In humble praise to God, -
That Christ should stoop my soul to bless,
And move that heavy load.

But soon my fears returned again,
And plunged me in despair,
And my Saviour me again relieved
And bid me not to fear.

And from that hour I did believe,
And to the present day.
That through the merits of His blood
My sins were washed away.

I prayed to God both night and day,
If I should be baptized
I might be plainly shown the way,
And not in a disguise.

Five different times thus shown to me
That if I would be wise
To follow Christ who died for me -
He was Himself baptized.

The 26th of the fourth month
In eighteen and twenty nine;
I was baptized as Jesus was: -
Four more at the same time.

And then to take the sacrament
I awfully did fear.
I prayed to God with heart intent,
He still my course would steer.

He bade me take the sacrament
And it to others give;
To such as serve with heart intent,
And unto Him to live.

Now since my Saviour is so kind,
His mercies are so free;
I hope to serve him whilst in time,
And to eternity.

Then I shall bathe my happy soul
In seas of heavenly rest;
And not a wave of trouble role
Across my peaceful breast.

I hope to meet my Saviour there
In that bright world above;
With all the saints their bliss to share,
Where perfected is love.

With all the ransomed of the Lord
To ever live and sing;
An endless anthem to the praise
Of Jesus Christ our King:

Where all is one eternal day,
That ne'er shall have an end
Now if you wish to go with me
Come, follow Christ your friend

Up to the courts of heavenly bliss
To reign with Him in love;
And always live where Jesus is
To sing His praise above.

Sent in by
Brother Bill Poindexter

VOICES OF THE PAST

EXCERPT FROM ELDER A.P. MEWBORN'S EXPERIENCE

Before we go any further with this, we look back at the poor beginning, and will try to give some background of my being here. You see, I had a long hard road to travel, heartaches to suffer, sickness and sorrows to endure, love to share, lessons to learn, school to attend and a family to share before the beginning of trying to preach publicly. In school I managed to get along with my class mates, get good grades and get along with those who were in authority. Still I was shy and retiring in some ways, I would not speak before class or render my lessons orally, I stuttered and felt so insignificant that I would forfeit a grade rather than speak before the class or the teacher.

I was born of good parents, some would say "Godly", but they were earthly too, and I loved them dearly, and respected and obeyed them both with all the ability God gave me until He took them away on that trip that is required of "all the earth". Both were given a good hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, and loved and cared for the Church in a beautiful way. I believe this way was given them by their saviour. They lived to see two sons baptized into the fellowship of the saints, and to see one of them ordained a deacon to serve the Church with his daddy, and the other to try to serve the church as pastor. They were faithful

messengers of the Meadow Church and were known and loved by the brethren in all the surrounding Churches and Associations. They lived long and useful lives in the Church and fully believed that they could serve God, only as they could serve their brethren, their children and their neighbor. I am glad they were mine and I could live with them and hopefully serve with them. As I remember the beautiful life we shared, I can only describe it as a "Joy unspeakable and full of Glory, and the Lord Praised."

As a boy I was different from the rest of the boys in the neighborhood and the mothers would often say, "Ap is a good boy, he isn't into everything and not as mean as the other boys." Lord knows I loved to hear this, I didn't believe it, but I loved to hear it. You see the real truth was, I was sick and not able to be actively disobedient, as the others were. I tried to hide this fact and soon my egotism had grown so much that I truly felt I was just as good as anybody and a little better than most. I believed in God, but it was not the same God I hope to believe in now. I believed in a God that was endeavoring to save the whole world, all the people, and I knew that as good as I believed I was, that any time I chose I could bring about the "blessed assurance" that I heard so often about. There was a faint feeling in me, my soul?, my heart?, my spirit?, I still don't know which that salvation did not come as the neighborhood religious fathers said it did, this faint and still small voice kept saying, "God is not poor, He doesn't need your money, He doesn't need your works, He doesn't need anything you have but will supply your every need. This gnawing voice caused me, and still does a great deal of concern, you see I wanted to listen to the people of the neighborhood, who spoke so highly of me, and they taught that God would do anything you wanted Him to do, If you would just let Him. As I look back I wonder why they didn't do better. I was told by the Arminians that this gnawing voice that was beginning to give me so much trouble would cease and go away, that it was sent to me from God to cause me to make up my mind, and if I would just join the Church, and really apply myself to the work and support that was necessary then all my troubles would vanish and be no more. This gnawing, still small voice did not let up, it was continually there, always accusing me of the sinful deeds of my flesh, and the evil thoughts that possessed me, until I was so much in despair, that I was willing to try anything; I set about to do better. I was not going to do anything wrong, or have sinful or evil thoughts anymore, and I was going to join the Arminian Church that promised so much to poor sinners, but still I had not seen these promises fulfilled, still this was the only hope I had; the only hope I had been given, and with all the doubts that possessed me, I had to try. About this time my best friend came to see me and he wanted to discuss salvation. He felt to be condemned to death, and was told that he must attend revival, "so called", being held next week and obey the voice of the preacher, and that he must ask me to attend with him, so we both could be saved and begin to feel good again about our lives.

Well I agreed to go, first for my friend's sake, so he could feel he had done his duty, and also because I was so miserable, I thought perhaps this might help. I still had not approached my Father and Mother about my condition, because I was so mortally afraid that they would agree with that still small voice that had not let up at all, but was still gnawing at me. I went to the revival hoping that at last I could feel some relief and get rid of the sinful condition that I had lived with so long. But alas, this "noted" Evangelist preached only to those who were saved, and his sermon did not offer the local heathens, or the unregenerate, or the unsaved any hope of salvation at all. His text was the 40th Psalm, first verse, and for the life of me, then, and even now, I cannot see that this would do much for those who knew no troubles as I felt one who was saved would be. When the invitation was issued my friend and I, who were sitting side by side, arose to go up and be saved, but when we reached the aisle, and he went to meet the minister, I weeping bitterly went out the door. The tremendous crowd, which were present, were my neighbors, my friends and my people, but when they filed out of the meeting house, and saw me leaning against a tree weeping out loud, they all went by except one real old man, a friend of my Grandfather and family, he came and embraced me and said, "Son, another time, another place," and God only knows how much that beautiful message has comforted me time after time when I have been made to return to that old tree. But my troubles were still present, no relief at all had been given me, so I concluded there was no more any need for me to attend Church services, for to me the hymns has lost their melody and message and the sermons only reiterated the sinful condition and terrible plight I was in.

It was summer time and instead of going to the meetings with my Mother and Daddy, I went swimming. There was a hurt look in their faces when they asked If I were going to Church, but they never told me I aught to go. Peter went fishing and I went swimming. I felt that with the boys I would not hear praying, or preaching, or anything to remind me of what a wretched, and hell deserving sinner I was and am. But even this would not work for me. One Sunday morning one of the boys, who was accustomed to attending Sunday School and Church, said he felt condemned, that he should be in Sunday School and Church. My older brother, Joe, was present and promptly told him, that while he did not believe In Sunday School, we could have singing and prayer at the swimming place. He then began to sing Amazing Grace, and nearly all the others joined in. Upon the conclusion of the hymn, Joe asked me to lead them in prayer, and I could not refuse, I tried to pray, to pray for sinners, and to pray that God would continue to supply the needs of His people, and show them the way.

On the next Sunday, when Joe asked me to pray, he asked me to also speak, if I would speak of the things that were troubling me and the others of the Lord's people. I was afraid to try to speak, but more afraid of not trying to, and I felt that if I failed no one would know

about it but just the boys who were present. I began to try to speak, I don't know what I said, but this should not be strange, because I don't know what I said last Sunday, but I do know that when I had tried to dismiss the group, I felt some relief for the first time in many months. This was a regular appointment for us for the remainder of the summer and extended into the next when the weather permitted. We went swimming and had our meeting. Word of our attempted worship service soon spread in the neighborhood, but I did not know it, and my Father, being so much against mockery or anything sacrilegious, and was so afraid that this was what was going on at the swimming hole, until he stayed home from Church one Sunday morning, and carefully hid himself that he might see and hear the worship services he had heard about, unobserved. I knew nothing about this until many years later when my Mother told me about it. She said, "Your Pa name from the swamp weeping, and told me that whatever was said and done that morning was what he hoped to believe, and that it edified him and did praise to the name of our Heavenly Father, and Jesus who He has sent."

He never went back to my knowledge, and never mentioned his going at all to brother Joe or me.

Oh, that I could return to this time of my youth, when I was blessed to worship our Lord, and not know of any trouble that could mar it's beauty. I know this trouble must come, see John 16, 33. "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me you might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

But alas, we cannot recapture, or even capture, anything, and cannot even remember the beautiful things except our Lord recalls them for us. Even now he recalls for me the fact that I have written seven pages in the book and have not even identified myself. Even today as I think of the sweet promises of God to his children, I am just a child and my prayer is that He will ever keep me as a child.

I, Albert Parrott Mewborn, was born in Greene County, Carrs Township, May 26, 1919. My father is Levi Andrew Mewborn and my mother Nancy Jane (Mewborn) Mewborn. They have both "gone the way of all the earth, 'but I cannot say' they were", they are my Father and Mother today. My Grandfather's Dad was Elder Parrott Mewborn, my Father's Grandfather and my Mother's Great Grandfather. He was a Primitive Baptist Minister, and had three sons in the ministry. The best known of the sons in the ministry was my Grandfather, Elder D.A. Mewborn. This is becoming most confusing to me, I am definitely not a genealogist, but the best conclusion I can come to is that I am my own third cousin.

Elder A. P. Mewborn

1827 – Experience of Elder Thomas Barton

Strikersville, Pennsylvania, August 22, 1827.

Having been the subject of numerous disappointments during my life, I have thought of giving a short account of some of them. In common with all mankind, I was born in sin, in the service of which I lived till upwards of twenty years.

At that time I belonged to a debating society in Baltimore, and being full of the talking spirit, I proposed forming one in the neighborhood I was then in, the proposal met with the consent of all present, and we immediately commenced operations. The question proposed for discussion, was to test the relative merits of the miser and the libertine.

I took the side favorable to the miser, contending that the conduct of the other was productive of positive evils to society, among other evils resulting from dissipation. I was led to expatiate on the wounds inflicted by the dissipation of a son on the heart of upright parents, and particularly on that of a kind and tender mother. Little did I think that while treating on the subject of dissipation, my own conduct was so soon to be brought home to me, that my career in that course was that night to terminate. My only surviving parent was a mother, answering the above description, and whose heart had been deeply wounded by my own conduct; and while on this part of my subject, I saw her with the eyes of my imagination, as plain as I ever saw her with literal eyes.

She appeared seated on a chair before me, with eyes fixed intensely on me, exhibiting the strongest expression of affection; the big tear rolling down her furrowed cheek, while her whole countenance exhibited the strongest symptoms of deep despair.

And here I am perfectly at a loss to describe the effects that followed: I can only say, that it seemed that all the sins I had ever committed, came rushing into my mind like an over-whelming torrent, and in a moment I felt myself one of the most miserable wretches out of hell.

Such was the effect of this sudden change of things in my mind as to produce a partial derangement, and though the night was dark, and raining, I immediately left the house, and that without my hat. But instead of taking the road I intended, I took the opposite, and after pursuing it for some miles, I left it and took to the woods; but in the morning found myself in a house by the side of a fire, to which I had been led more by instinct than reason. By this time, however, reason had resumed her throne, but it was to act as a witness against me. For a few days my mind was more particularly directed to my outward sins, but it was not long before a sense of heart sin reduced my outward sin to mere insignificance. I felt indeed that my heart was a cage of unclean birds, a den of every hateful thing.

But though I soon found that I had no positive claim on Divine favor, having never performed a good act in all my life, yet I attempted to set up a negative claim — that was, that I had not been quite as bad as some others; and as an

example I caught at Saul of Tarsus, but that prop soon gave way.

I soon found a balance in his favor, for though I had not persecuted the saints, yet I had far exceeded him in wickedness. In persecuting the saints, he acted from principle, and verily thought he was doing God service: while pursuing my course of sin, my conscience instead of approving of my conduct, often reproved me severely; and what I thought then I think still, that on the ground of excuses, Paul had the advantage of me, and I am sure that I shall have at least an equal right with him or any other to sing the song of free and sovereign grace to all eternity, and this is a right I cannot surrender to any one. As to the claim of superior zeal and usefulness in the cause of God and Truth I am willing to surrender that to my brethren, I believe them entitled to it; but to surrender to any one of the redeemed of the Lamb a greater right than myself to adore the riches of sovereign grace, I cannot. But I must proceed and just state that the whole process of conviction was so different to the notion I had formed on the subject, that I soon gave up all hope of its being a work of grace on my poor soul, and concluded that it was only the prelude to the eternal vengeance in reserve for me.

Herein consisted the first disappointment in my life worth noticing; and this arose from my ignorance in attempting to fore-stall the work of the Spirit. I have stated above, that instead of being under a work of grace, I concluded that I was only realizing a prelude to my just and eternal damnation. Despair had taken hold of me — as David, "the fear of hell gat hold on me," — I had given up the idea of prayer entirely, not that I had become willing to be banished from God, nor was it from a sullenness of spirit or obduracy of heart, of these things I had cured before this, but I thought it presumption in me to wish Him to depart from a fixed determination to make me a monument of His just vengeance to all eternity. Having come to this conclusion, I continued for some time under a state of most awful suspense; during which time I ventured to make but one request, which was, that when arraigned before His bar, He would make my sentence as light as could be consistently with His justice. I am now approaching a point in my experience that I shall never forget in this world, nor that to come if reason and memory prevail beyond the tomb. I refer to the night in which I was given a hope in Christ; on retiring this night, my distress (If possible) was greater than at any former period, I concluded that my state of suspense would soon terminate, and that in a short time I should realize to the fullest extent, the apprehension I then so severely labored under.

Indeed I felt as if that night would finish the respite given me, and that before morning I should be in hell. By well convinced that the sentence I apprehended would be just, that I could but say, "Amen." But while in this desperate state of mind, to my astonishment I received a proclamation of pardon to my guilty soul. Jesus appeared to the eyes of faith as my Mediator. I was enabled to run into His name as into a strong

tower and find safety; I was carried from Mount Sinai, where I stood trembling amidst its thundering and lightnings to Mount Zion to gaze with unspeakable delight on a bleeding Saviour, and to realize my personal interest in His atoning sacrifice — I say personal interest, for nothing short of this could meet my case; I must have a personal interest in the blood of Jesus or I am undone. I cannot pretend to mention any particular promise that came to me, for it seemed that all I had ever read come rolling into my mind: as fast as I reviewed them, my soul was filled to overflowing, I felt what it was to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. And here I can but exclaim with Paul; "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out." - Thomas Barton. August 22, 1827.

"Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew." Matthew 26:74.

The apostles of our Lord, though called and sent of God to preach his everlasting gospel, were men of passion and subject to error. There had lingered in the minds of the Jews the belief that Jesus would reign as a natural king over them, and restore the kingdom of Israel when he came. This thought was often in the minds of his disciples. The language of the prophets, though foretelling of his coming and pointing out many things connected with his death, was such as to leave the impression that his would be an earthly kingdom. This was God's way of hiding these things until the time was ripe to show that his kingdom was not of this world. Christ was spoken of by the prophets as the king. A king shall reign in righteousness, etc. After the resurrection of Christ, before his ascension when he was with his disciples the last time before being received up into glory, he was asked if he would at that time restore the kingdom of Israel. So we see that during his life, and even after his resurrection, before his ascension there was with his own chosen an earthly hope of being restored to power again as a nation upon the earth. When one took the sword and cut off the ear of the high priests servant, Jesus rebuked him saying, "My kingdom is not of this world." At the conclusion of eating the passover after Jesus and the apostles had sung a hymn and went out into the Mount of Olives, Jesus said unto them, "All ye shall be offended because of me this night" having reference to his being delivered into the hands of them that would crucify him. Peter said unto him, "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." Jesus said unto him, "Verily I say unto thee, that this night before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice." In the face of these words Peter yet insisted that he would die with him before he would deny him. So said they all. How little the disciples knew of what was to follow. The earthly kingdom and earthly hopes was in their minds. Here we see something of self

confidence about something that they knew nothing about. How emphatic Peter was in his assertion that he would never be offended because of Jesus. How weak we all are when left to ourselves. Our vows fail, our resolutions are broken. Jesus had told Peter, "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." Jesus did not pray that he would not deny, but that he would have that which would bring him through this terrible ordeal through which he was to pass, "And when thou art converted strengthen thy brethren." How necessary it was that he be sifted, that self-confidence be pulled down. Not only was it so with Peter, but it is necessary today that our props be taken from beneath us from time to time and so learn that we are kept by the power of God. One can never strengthen his brethren as long as his confidence is in himself, and he is boasting of what he has or can do himself. The time that Peter was to deny his Lord had been set. It was not a year from then, neither was it a month, it was tonight. This very night, how close it was at hand, how positive Peter was. The number of times he would deny was determined. Not once only but thrice. Nothing could prevent him from doing this the number of times Jesus had said. All things were determined of God in the matter. After the denial thrice the cock was to crow, not before. How can any who believe the Bible question the all-prevailing power of God over all worlds and events when we find the mouths of lions have been stopped; the dumb ass has been made to speak with a man's voice, rebuking a man; the fish delivers Jonah on time to preach to Ninevah; the raven fed a prophet daily; and the cock crows on time; all because of God's power. Sometimes the thought is advanced that after one has been born into the kingdom of God he can live in such a manner that he will never receive the chastisement of God, that in the new birth he is given this ability. The word teaches, "But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." The chastening by the Lord of one of his people is an evidence of son ship. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." It was a small thing for the word of Peter to fail. Not so with Jesus. He upholdeth things by the word his power. When Jesus was taken into the judgment hall Peter followed. He had already learned that he could not watch one hour. In the judgment hall Peter as to learn a lesson he would never forget. The sifting now begins. Satan's bounds are set. He can go no farther than God allows. The sifting will be no more or less than Jesus has purposed. At times it is a great comfort to believe with all our heart that not a dart of Satan can hit, except the God of heaven sees fit. All that is necessary to cause one to forget the tender mercies of our God is for God to forsake us in a manifest sense, and when left to ourselves we are prone to wander, Lord we feel it. He now questioned, and accused of a being a disciple of Jesus. His speech is betraying him. If one is a follower of Jesus, there will be some manifestation of it.

Peter, professing not to know what

they are talking about, pleads ignorance. Another approaches affirming that he was a follower of Jesus. This time he could no longer claim he did not know what they were talking about, he says he does not know the man. Twice will not do, the sifting is not over. Three times he must be questioned, and the same number of times deny his Lord. Why? Because Christ has said, he would deny him thrice. The ones who questioned the apostle knew not what the Lord had said. They knew nothing of the purpose of God in the matter. The cock could not crow until the third denial, neither could the questioning stop until the word of the Lord was fulfilled. The last time this tempest tossed one is approached he begins to curse and swear saying, I know not the man and immediately the cock crew. It could not wait. The apostle must be reminded of the word of his master. The time for weeping is at hand for a proof that the faith has not failed. What a blessing it is that God causes us to weep. All things are in the hand of him with whom we have to do. He can use anything to remind us of his word, whether it be a promise or a chastening. Peter remembers the word of Jesus. What a terrible thing he had done. Not only denied knowing his Master, but cursing and swearing about it. How enduring is the love of Jesus for his people. No natural love would endure such a test. To have one who had been so graciously blessed deny any knowledge of Jesus when he was being tried for his life, and every accusation brought against him was false so that finally a sentence is passed like this; crucify him I find no fault in him. How peculiar are His ways in revealing unto his people their weakness, and then enabling them to know something of his everlasting love, and feel beneath the everlasting arms. Jesus now looks on him, he remembers the word of the Lord. Weeping begins, what bitter weeping. Only those that have had a like experience know. The knowledge of what he had done being now brought home to him. The weeping was evidence his faith yet abided, that self confidence was overthrown, and he is not his own keeper. Weeping never goes with self works we and self confidence. It is evidence of life, only the living naturally weep. How true also is this spiritually. Do we not at times even groan because we cannot weep? Child of God is this not your experience? Though one knows the purpose of God embraced the entire matter, and that God for his own glory, and the good of his chosen ones, often leaves them to the designs of their wicked hearts, thereby causing them to learn how frail they are, yet they weep over such things, and are made through these experiences to say over and over-Lord lead me, Lord undertake for me. They cannot excuse themselves, hate their own lives, and are brought to say with the poet:

> O that the Lord would guide my ways
> To keep his statutes still!
> O that my God would grant me grace
> To know and do his will!

By these things men live, and the life we live in the flesh, (that honors

God) we live by the faith of the son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us. Peter can now strengthen his brethren by declaring unto them the all-prevailing love and grace of God. That they are kept by the power of God, through faith, ready to be revealed at the last time. That all flesh is as grass, all the glory of man as the flower of grass, each passing shortly away, but the word of the Lord endureth forever.

Elder D. V. Spangler
August, 1942

1836 - SONSHIP OF ALL THE SAINTS
Circular Letter, White Water Regular Baptist Association of Indiana

The Regular Baptist Association, called White Water, convened with the Church on Pleasant Run Creek, to the Churches composing our body, sendeth this epistle of love:

Dearly Beloved Brethren in the Common Faith: - So many subjects have been presented as the basis of our former Circulars, and so narrow are the limits assigned us, that we do but little more than touch the theme, and leave it for your improvement. In this brief way, we shall now invite the churches of our body and all the members of them, with all who hope for immortality, to a few thoughts on the SONSHIP OF ALL THE SAINTS. This is an all absorbing subject — in every way suitable for contemplation and gratitude, and we hope that all the children of our Heavenly Father may derive great strength and comfort from a true and sensible knowledge and enjoyment of this filial relation.

Jesus Christ is declared in Scripture to be "the only begotten Son of God, in whom the Father is well pleased." This declaration excludes all others, for He is the only begotten; or as in eternity, the lone, or solely begotten of the Father; yet all saints are owned of God as His children as being found in Him, and and are taught to invoke Him in the endearing relation of Father. Christ, as Mediator, being brought forth from everlasting ere the earth was, and the elect church with all its members, and graces set up, chosen, and given in Him, as their Covenant Head, or Executor of their Father's testament or will. The purpose, covenant or will of the Father, ordained Christ the Mediator, Surety, and only Performer in fulfilling all the stipulations and terms of this will or testament. He stood bound in this relation to meet every demand, pay every debt, and sustain the whole cost that might accrue in executing the Will or Testament of God. Hence, in Him every heir was chosen, in Him every grace was given, to Him every promise was made, in Him they were all "yea and amen to the glory of God," on Him the law had its full power, and Justice claimed its whole demand; for He was appointed of God to execute His Will in behalf of all the heirs.

This covenant relation between the Mediator of the Will of God, and the chosen heirs in this Will, constituted all His legal acts in their behalf valid and binding, and so was a lawful and final acquittal in their behalf of all demands. But in addition to this Testamentary relation,

Jesus was born of a woman, became man, was made under the law and took on Him, not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham. This seed of Abraham was all the members of the elect church — all the heirs of the Will of God— all the children which God had given Him— all the sons He was appointed to bring to glory. In this relation He is One with them, one Son, one Seed, one heir, one Life, one Man, one Head with its proper bodies and members. Here is not the doctrine "of seeds, as of many," but as the promise runs to One, "and Thy seed which is Christ." Now if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." In this relation all the seed are one body in Christ, and members one of another. He was the only begotten Son of the Father, and they have their son-ship in Him; He is the Son of God, the seed of Abraham, the Heir of all things, and He is formed in them, "the hope of glory," the incorruptible seed by which they are born again. They have their son-ship, their portion, their life, their light in Him. The Holy Ghost overshadowed Mary, therefore that Holy thing which was born of her, should be called the Son of God. This holy child being formed in each saint, and they receiving His Spirit, His image, His nature and fullness, are distinguished as the "sons of God" by Christ. As He was set up from everlasting in this relation to them, and they were all chosen in Him, ordained and foreknown IN Him, so He was the image into which they were predestinated to be conformed, and this conformity is effected by the Holy Spirit which forms the image of Christ in them, which is the pledge, token and seal of their sonship. He is, therefore, the only begotten Son, and they have their sonship in Him, and His Spirit in them is the Testimony, pledge and seal of this filial relation. Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts crying "Abba Father."

Now, as they were predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ, so they were also predestinated to the adoption of children by Christ, and the Spirit of Christ is the "spirit of this adoption." So their son-ship is in Him, and He, as the only begotten Son of God, dwells in their hearts richly by His Spirit, which is the spirit of their sonship or adoption, by which they cry (the Spirit cries) "Abba Father," Father, for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God, and if sons then heirs - heirs of God and joint heirs with Him.

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, hath richly and gloriously made known His will, revealed His grace and Truth in the person and gift of His only begotten Son, and proclaimed it to all nations in the Gospel of their salvation. In this Will or Testament, the eternal purpose, appointment, council and knowledge of God, which were all purposed in Himself, hid in Christ, and ordained to the glory of the Church, are now made known by the appearing of Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. This Will was immutable and eternal with God, well ordered in all things and sure in Christ the Mediator; and the

promise and oath of the Eternal confirmed the immutability of this council, for the strong consolation of the heirs of promise. This promise is made sure to all the seed, and this immutable will with all the stipulations, conditions, terms, heirs, guarantees and blessings in it, were all purposed in Himself before the foundation of the world; they were all IN Christ, in whom the heirs were chosen from eternity, the blessings given, the inheritance bequeathed, and the son-ship confirmed. He was verily ordained before the foundation of the world as Heir of all things; He was to fulfill all things required in the Will, and unfold it to all the heirs of promise. He was manifested in these last times for this purpose. He who came to do the will of God — He to whom all its promises were made — He in whom all its heirs were chosen and blessed with all spiritual blessings — He is the rich Fountain of sovereign grace and glory in whom they find their filial relation to God and all their heavenly portion. This Will or Testament, fulfilled in the blood of Christ its Mediator, and published in the form of Testament or Covenant, is the Gospel of the grace of God. The glad tidings of God's Will is herein revealed, its conditions fulfilled, its guarantees confirmed, its heirs saved, its blessings flowing, its Mediator reigning, its promises free and absolute, its inheritance sure and eternal. The Gospel is the proclamation of the Will of God to the heirs, and by it they are encouraged to come and enjoy all the blessings it reveals, and feast eternally on the rich bounties it bestows without money and without price. Grace is here bestowed to the unworthy, mercy is flowing to the suffering, life is given to the dying, pardon to the guilty, living water for the polluted and thirsty, food for the hungry, rest for the weary laborer, and salvation for the lost.

The Spirit of the only begotten Son of God is sent into the heart of the heirs of promise, and begets in them a filial longing for God, and a godly sorrow for sin; they pant for the living water, they hunger and thirst after righteousness, they confess their sins, renounce their own righteousness, die to the law, are crucified to the world, and come as bankrupt and guilty petitioners to God. They are encouraged thus to come by the Gospel which shows them Christ the Way, opens His fullness to supply all their needs, sets before them the rich bounties of a feast, and says, "eat, O friend, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." This Gospel proclamation of Christ having perfectly fulfilled the Will of God as the appointed Mediator, Surety and Sacrifice, is the Word of faith or of the message to be received by all the heirs. The Spirit of Christ forms His image and nature in their hearts, reveals to them their son-ship in Him, or reveals the son of God in them, and seals them as the heirs of the grace of Life. The Gospel furnishes them with all needful instruction, encouragement and testimony. Faith is a fruit of the Spirit of Christ which, enlisting all the power of the soul of the heirs, enables it to take hold of Christ and His righteousness; and the Gospel is a sufficient warrant to the most unworthy sinner to come to, and trust in Him. This faith wrought in Christ when He ful-

filled the law and bore the curse, when He died to sin and rose to God; and now this "faith of Christ" works in His members and brings them to Him, and in them claims His obedience in their behalf, and a portion in the Will of His and their Father. As this "faith of Christ" wrought in Christ in their behalf, it is the substance of things hoped for, and as it. testifies in them and brings them to Him, it is the evidence of things not seen. — Faith is the Spirit's evidence which it bears in the soul of us being an heir of New Testament, by which the heir comes to Christ the Mediator, and claims its portion in the Will of God. In this view of our son-ship, we see Jesus exalted as "Head over all things to His church, that in all things He might have the preeminence." He is our elder brother, our Mediator and Surety, our Righteousness and Life; in Him we have our son-ship as the children of God, — in Him we are acknowledged as the heirs in His Will— in Him we receive our portion and our crown; by the faith of the Son of God we live, for He liveth in us, and in us and for us He overcomes the world, and gives us the victory.

Now, dear brethren, while such rich grace is so freely bestowed on such unworthy sinners as we are, how humble and thankful we should feel! Why was I made to be an heir of such immortal bliss? O, let all our hearts be dissolved into contrition, and love; let every tongue be vocal in His praise; let every eye be looking to Jesus, and every foot be running the race set before us; let holy devotion, like a hallowed flame, burn on the altar of every renewed heart, and a deep sense of the unparalleled riches of saving grace, call up every ransomed power of our soul to praise the God of love. This is the work we are called to do, not to save ourselves, or to make ourselves heirs of life, nor to fulfill the conditions of our acceptance, but to serve, adore, and praise "Him who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began." In this Gospel, the poor, the naked, the helpless, the lost, the guilty, vile and polluted, may take encouragement to come to the Savior with all their crimson sins and guilty stains, and claim the promise of His grace and pardoning mercy; for the Gospel is a sufficient warrant to the most ungodly sinner to come and trust in Christ; and only as such, can any sinner come with acceptance. Our limits forbid us to proceed further.

May we all contemplate this amazing and love inspiring theme, till the heart of the mourner is filled with joy, the feet of the lame leap as an hart, Zion's pilgrims become inspired with heavenly zeal in their journey, until the tongue of the dumb sing, till the ears of the deaf are charmed into attention; and all the sons of God rejoice in hope of His glory, till the vestment of a glorious immortality adorn the mystic body of Christ, and celestial glories expand every redeemed power to swell the creed of the heavenly throng — "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto Thee be the glory for ever and ever." Amen.

Elder Wilson Thompson, 1836.

HEBREWS II. 15.

We confess that we have not special light upon the text proposed. From the context, however, it will be seen that the text relates to the object of the incarnation and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. He did not visit our guilty world, and suffer on the cross, without having an object to accomplish, and that object was, to deliver those who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. In order to do this, he took on him the seed of Abraham. Not the children of the flesh, for Paul says, Romans ix. 7, 8, "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called: that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all. As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations." — Romans iv. 16, 17. "And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

The seed of Abraham therefore, thus defined, were taken on the Redeemer when he came in the flesh, and for them he suffered on the cross. They are spoken of in the connection of our text, as his "many sons," which he was to bring to glory, and for whom, "by the grace of God he tasted death." And they are also in this connection called "the children," and "his brethren." These were subject to bondage through fear of death. For the wages of sin is death, and they had all sinned, and had just cause to fear the execution of the sentence which was against them. The object of Christ's coming and suffering, was to save them from their sins, to bear their sins in his own body on the tree, and to put them away by the sacrifice of himself, by tasting death for every one of them. And thus was he, through death, to destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

In this work of redemption and deliverance, he hath triumphed gloriously; and upon this ground they receive the spirit, not of bondage, again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father. And they are exhorted to **"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." — Gal. v. 1.** The perfect love of God commended in the gift of his dear Son, and communicated to the saints by regeneration, casteth out fear. Fear hath torment, but the perfect love of God shed abroad in his children, overcomes it, and casts it out. The ob-

ject therefore of Christ's life in the flesh, and under the law, and of his death and suffering in the flesh, is attained. The great trumpet is blown; the jubilee proclaimed; the prison doors are opened, and the prisoners are brought out of their prison houses. And there is therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after flesh, but after the Spirit. (Rom. viii.) "Jehovah has triumphed, his people are free!"

"Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." And we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the free woman. (Gal. v. 28.) "Loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion." — Isa. iii. 2.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y., Nov. 1, 1855

"And ye shall seek me, and find *me*, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. — Jeremiah xxix. 13.

After the Lord has quickened our souls, for a time we often go, shall I say, blundering on, not knowing there is a Jesus. We thinks that the way of life is to keep God's commandments, obey the law, cleanse ourselves from sin, reform our lives, and cultivate universal holiness in thought, word, and action; and so we go, blundering and stumbling forward. But when the Lord has suffered us to weary ourselves to find the door, and let us sink lower and lower into the pit of guilt and ruin, from feeling that all our attempts to extricate ourselves have only plunged us deeper and deeper, and the Spirit of God opens up to the understanding and brings into the soul some spiritual discovery of Jesus and thus makes known that there is a Saviour, a Mediator, and a way of escape — this is the grand turning-point in our lives, the first opening in the valley of Achor of the door of hope. And when the soul has once seen that there is a Jesus, and once felt a measure of the power of his resurrection, it never goes to any other quarter for pardon, justification, and salvation. When the Spirit of God begins to open up with power in his conscience that there is a Jesus, that he is the only Mediator, that the Son of God has come down and taken a holy human nature into union with himself, and is now at the right hand of the Father, it is the first break of day, the first dawn of hope; and upon that bright spot does the shipwrecked soul fix his longing eyes till the Sun of righteousness arises upon it with healing in his wings. It is a great step in a man's experience to be turned wholly and solely to the Lord, and renounce all creature righteousness, all forms and ceremonies as a way of salvation. It is a great mercy to be turned away from them, as the shipwrecked mariner turns away from his sinking ship, and looks to the rising sun to shew him some way of escape, and thus afford him some gleam of hope.

J. C. Philpot

MEETINGS

LOWER MAYO 5TH SUNDAY MEETING

The next 5th Sunday Meeting will be held, The Lord Willing, Sunday, December 31, 2017. Lamm's Grove Church will Host the meeting. The Meeting House is located at 1172 Lamm's Grove Church Road., Carthage, NC 28327. From Sanford, NC take US# 1 to US 15 & 501. Go about 5 miles to Lamm's Grove Church Road on left. Go 200 yards to church on left. From Carthage, NC, take US 15 & 501 about 6 miles to Lamm' s Grove Church Road on right. Go 200 yards to church on left.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to meet with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

ST. MATTHEW 18:20.

For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

SKEWARKEY UNION (Eastern Kehukee Association)

Hancocks Church will host the next session of the Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of December 31, 2017. The church is located on Ayden Golf Club Road, near Ayden, North Carolina. Preaching services begin at 10:30am.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union will be held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church located corner of Music St. and Weatherford Drive, Gretna, VA in Pittsylvania County. Saturday before the fifth Sunday in December 2017. The song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton, Clerk
Staunton River Primitive
Baptist Association

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held the fifth Sunday, December 31, 2017 at Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church, located at corner of Tate and Carr Streets in Greensboro, NC. Song service begins at 10:30 a.m.

We welcome and invite the minis ters of our faith and order as well as our brethren and friends to be with us.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Mod.
Brother Wayne Edwards, Clerk

REVELATION 21:1-3

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* **with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them,** *and be* **their God.**

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 2017

Earl Thurman, VA 5.00
Wilton Sutphin, VA 5.00
Jerry Somers, NC 5.00
Margaret Link, TN 20.00
Flay Mordecai, AL 5.00
John Schulz, WY 1000.00
Nancy Signer, VA 25.00
In Memory of Clifton Pegram

OBITUARIES

JENNYE ALYCE "PEGGY" OSBORNE

Our beloved Sister Peggy Osborne of Westminster, Maryland was called from our midst on August 24, 2016. She was born on January 9, 1923 in Catonsville, Maryland to Deacon Quincy A. and Sister Alice E. Caines Gladding of the Baltimore Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church. In addition to her parents she was preceded in death by her husband of 58 years, Brother Eugene F. Osborne Sr., and two brothers, Henry and Melvin Gladding. Left to mourn her are her daughter, Janet L. Brooks and husband Allan of Huntingdon, Pennsylvania; her son, Eugene F. Osborne, Jr. and wife Cindy; grandchildren, Gwen-

dolyn (Sean) Culbertson, Jessica Pellam, David Pellam, Allison Osborne, Amber (Sean) Seibel; and great-grandchildren Russell and Emma Culbertson.

Her funeral service was held at Myers-Durboraw Funeral Home in Westminster after which her body was laid to rest alongside Brother Gene in Emmanuel Baust Cemetery on a high hill overlooking the countryside and little villages below of Tyrone, Maryland. Her hope was that some sweet day she would arise in the likeness of her dear Saviour and hear those precious words, "Come ye blessed of my Father and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Sister Peggy was blessed with many natural talents. She was employed as a secretary at Western Maryland College. She enjoyed gardening, crocheting, sewing, traveling, camping, and being outdoors. She loved to sing and play the organ and to spend time with her family, especially with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

On February 26, 1984 Sister Peggy was received into membership of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on confession of faith. She and Brother Gene were loving, faithful members. Despite the many miles they had to travel, they attended our meetings until health problems would no longer allow them to do so. The Lord so richly blessed our dear Sister with the unfeigned love of the brethren. There was always a beautiful, loving smile on her face and a warm embrace for those of like precious faith. Her presence in our congregation has been and will forever be missed. She loved her God, her church, and her family with all that was within her.

May the Lord bless her family and those of us, who were so wonderfully blessed to walk with her in hope and sweet fellowship for 32 years, to feel with the hymn writer:

> "By thy hands the boon was given,
> Thou hast taken but thine own;
> Lord of earth and God of heaven,
> Evermore, thy will be done."

In all things may Christ have the preeminence and may we all be blessed to praise His great and holy name and bow in humble submission to His most holy will.

Humbly submitted by one who loved her,

Mary Hawkins

COLOSSIANS 1:3-6.

We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,

Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love *which ye have* **to all the saints,**

For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;

Which is come unto you, as *it is* **in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it** *doth* **also in you, since the day ye heard** *of it*, **and knew the grace of God in truth.**

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
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HYMN

There is a house not made with hands,
Eternal and on high;
And here my spirit waiting stands,
Till God shall bid it fly.

Shortly this prison of my clay
Must be dissolved and fall,
Then, O my soul, with joy obey
Thy heavenly Father's call.

'Tis he, by his almighty grace,
That forms thee fit for heaven,
And as an earnest of the place,
Has his own Spirit given.

We walk by faith of joys to come,
Faith lives upon his word;
But while the body is our home
We're absent from the Lord.

'Tis pleasant to believe thy grace,
But we had rather see;
We would be absent from the flesh,
And present, Lord, with thee.

Watts.

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EDITORIAL

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

The Signs of the Times was established in 1832 by Elder Gilbert Beebe after the division with the missionaries. The purpose of this paper was to be "devoted to the cause of truth, and through which we could enter our solemn protest against all the innovations, new theories, and new institutions which, under the name of Baptist, had so greatly prevailed." It is "to be used as a medium for the circulation of bible doctrine and general information."

We hear from various ones around the country as to how much the "Signs" means to them. These are precious believers whom we have never met and do not know personally. Some are in nursing homes, assisted living facilities or live alone. They have no church near them nor any way to hear preaching. Receipt of the "Signs" each month is their preaching service. The Lord has provided for them.

The "Signs" is not just for a particular faction of Primitive Baptist, but is "good news to the scattered pilgrims in different parts of the land who still adhere to the doctrine and practice of the primitive church." We publish notices of various meetings from many that we do not know. Therefore, we make no recommendations. Anyone can attend these meetings and judge for themselves. **John 4:1 "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."** We publish articles only if the articles are sound in doctrine and order as set forth by the apostles and expounded upon by Elder Beebe and other God-called ministers.

As the "Signs" begins a new year, we are including some writings of Elder Beebe to give you some idea and feeling of the need for this paper, the prospectus of the paper and the object of this paper. Also it is to give you some perspective of the times, conditions and challenges faced by the "Signs" and its founder.

We sincerely appreciate our subscribers and contributors. May the Lord

of all grace bless you with the riches of His love and mercy.

Elder Cleo Robertson

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE NEED FOR THE PROSPECTUS, AND THE OBJECT OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Feeling deeply the need of a medium of correspondence, and excluded from the columns of the so called Baptist papers, after much deliberation it was concluded to attempt to make ourselves heard by our brethren scattered abroad, by publishing a paper devoted to the cause of truth, and through which we could enter our solemn protest against all the innovations, new theories and new institutions which, under the name of Baptist, had so greatly prevailed. With these objects in view, in the year 1832, we issued the following prospectus, viz:

Proposal for publishing a semi-monthly paper, to be called the "Signs of the Times," devoted exclusively to the Baptist cause, maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal perfections of the Great Jehovah-- the Revelation which God has given of himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These Three. are One." - 1 John 5:8.

2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.

3. Eternal, Unconditional Election.

4. The Total Depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the Elect only.

6. The Sovereign, Irresistible, and in all cases, Effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in Regenerating and Quickening the Elect of God.

7. The final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

8. The Resurrection of the dead, and Eternal Judgment

9. That the Church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers - that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament, that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God.

10. That there is no connection between Church and State, and as touching the proposition for a marriage between them, the Hon. R.M. Johnson, in his report on the Sabbath Question, has expressed our faith.

The "Signs of the Times" will be decidedly opposed to Bible Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath Schools, &c., &c., making war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of institutions.

Our brethren of the Old School of Christ will bear in mind that this humble sheet is devoted to the Baptist cause,

as we believe the Baptist cause to be the cause of God and that its columns are designed to be used as a medium for the circulation of bible doctrine and general information.

The dear people of God who remain steadfast and unshaken in the apostles' doctrine are at this day greatly scattered through the country, and in many instances where one or more of them are found they are supposed to be the only ones remaining of the same faith and order. Indeed, they are often themselves driven to the conclusion of Elijah: "They have digged down thine altars and killed thy prophets, and I am left alone and they seek my life." In their scattered situation it affords them peculiar pleasure to hear from one another. "As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country." Prov. Xxv. 25.

It is certainly good news to the scattered pilgrims to hear of the numbers in different parts of the land who still adhere to the doctrine and practice of the primitive church. In the days of old, "they that feared the Lord spake often to one another;" and the exhortation of the apostle is, that we "exhort one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching."

Elder G. Beebe

PSALM 71:14.

But I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more.

NEW YEAR'S GREETING 1943

The rapid passing of time has brought us once more to the beginning of another New Year, and while we would like to blot out of memory the horror, destruction, suffering and death of the past year, it will avail us nothing to close our eyes to the facts. So far as our own country is concerned, the worst is doubtless yet to come, and we might as well steel ourselves for what is ahead. To many, it must appear as though we are standing upon a great and high precipice, peering off into the unknown future, wondering what 1943 will bring forth. With unfeigned faith in our God, let us face it with indomitable courage and hope for good news before another New Year is ushered in. We are well aware of the fact that with millions of our fellow-countrymen there will be great anxiety of soul, because of loved ones who may be scattered throughout the world, we know not where, or how it will be with them, but it behooves us to stand in our lot and carry on to the best of our ability until they return; and if they never return, we shall refuge in the knowledge that they are in God's hands. There will, also, be innumerable hardships and privations for us who remain behind at our posts to endure, but we, too, must prove ourselves to be good soldiers. It is such times as these that try the hearts and test the souls of men, and it is wonderful, indeed, to those of us who have been given a good hope through grace in the mercy of God to stand still and see his salvation. That hope was given us "as an anchor of the soul, both sure and

stedfast," and to be sure it enters **"into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered,** *even* **Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Heb. 6:19-20.** It is the Lord of hosts who hath charted the sea of life upon which we are sailing, and he is the pilot who is at the helm and will finally bring us to the port of our desired haven of rest. The needle in the compass of faith which he has given us will ever point to him, and he that trusteth in the Lord shall never be put to shame. As much as in us is, therefore, let us trust him whatever betides. Isaiah said, **"Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength: for he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city, he layeth it low; he layeth it low,** *even* **to the ground; he bringeth it** *even* **to the dust." Isa. 26:4-5.** In the words of the poet,

> The Lord has promised good to me,
> His word my hope secures;
> He will my shield and portion be
> As long as life endures.

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2 Peter 3:9. If the culmination of what is transpiring throughout the world today will be to bring all the nations of the earth down upon their knees, before their God and Creator, it will be well worth the price they are paying. So far as the Lord's people are concerned, we have the assurance in his blessed word that he will not suffer them to be tempted above that they are able to bear, but that he will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that they may be able to bear it.

With regard to the world, notwithstanding the terrible condition in which it finds itself today, we can but believe that we already see arising out of the wreck and ruin of much of the best that science and art has given us in the past — a great deal of which can never be replaced — a better and brighter world for those who shall follow us to live in. In the days of Noah the world that then was had waxed wicked and needed to be destroyed; even so, our world, before this war, had grown corrupt and much of mankind was full of haughty pride, its heart and soul being fixed upon the things which perish with the using. Greed for wealth and lust for power were things which were craved above all else by ambitious and designing men, and nothing stood in the way of those who sought it. Men and nations lost their prospective of the better things even of this life, such as honor, justice, liberty and freedom. They were steam-rollering, so to speak, and crushing to earth much of that which makes this life worth while. There is a certain law of life which works inexorably and sooner or later the sins of individuals or peoples will find them out, and whatsoever they sow they are sure to reap. The harvest only proves what was sown, and after the harvest there is a winnowing to separate the chaff from the wheat; the chaff, or that which is useless and vile must be burned

with unquenchable fire, while the wheat or that which is of real value will be preserved in the storehouse. As we view it, out of this awful carnage and conflagration, there will come forth much that will be for the advancement and betterment of the human race. Unquestionably a new era is ahead, and war, terrible as it is, is only hastening its coming. Necessity, which is said to be the mother of invention, has laid much upon us, and we have already begun to get a glimpse of some of the miraculous things which are being brought forth. Sciences of all kinds are being greatly advanced; the inventive genius of men's minds is being worked overtime, and the miracle of production is abroad in our land; and in the crucible with our world Allies we shall come to know and understand them better. These things will undoubtedly bear fruit for the good of mankind, and if along with them a World Charter can be produced which will give to all nations alike, freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want and freedom from fear, great progress will have been made. These things are more precious than life itself to the human race.

While we have been writing above after the manner of men and concerning the things of this world, with which we can but be vitally interested in to some extent, we would not have our readers get the impression that we believe the millennium age is upon us, or that we are facing a Eutopian period. Humanity is corrupt at best and will ever remain so, but it has its depths and its heights and will continue to rise and fall until time shall be no more. There will be wars and rumors of wars till the end shall come, but we have the feeling that after this storm is over there will be a long lull and that during the cessational period that will follow the hell of war, the human race will enjoy as it has never before enjoyed the things which pertain to this life. We would be gloomy, indeed, if we thought all of that through which the world is passing would be for naught. We only hope that it may be the will of our God to grant wisdom to those in authority to see the errors of the past and cause them to build more solidly and securely for the future, and lay a foundation for a more lasting and enduring peace. Unless we misread the handwriting on the wall, after the great conflict is over, there is going to be far more toleration, sympathy and consideration shown to all classes of people, and especially towards the lower or less fortunate groups, than the world has hitherto witnessed.

Having devoted considerable space to the things of time, we will now turn again to the things which shall survive all time, to the things which are eternal. There is no such thing as time with God. All things are present with him. With us here there is time, but it is comparatively such a fleeting moment as to call forth from the noted apostle the following declaration: **"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding** *and* **eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which** *are* **seen** *are* **temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." 2 Cor. 4:17-**

18. When Jesus came into the world to suffer ignomy and shame, he was looking beyond the things which were seen. We are told that it was **"for the joy that was set before him"** that he **"endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Heb. 12:2.** The joy that was set before him was that through his sufferings, death and resurrection, his bride, the church, would be joined together in everlasting wedlock throughout all eternity. He verily saw of the travail of his soul and was satisfied, and it is by his knowledge that he justified many, for he bore their iniquities. It is because of this that Paul admonishes us to "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." "The race that is set before us," and which we cannot alter or change in any way whatsoever, is one that will bring us into contact with many and varied conflicts and obstacles, but with patience, which means endurance, we must run it, and how wonderful it is that we have that faith by which we look to Jesus. The true church in all ages of the world has looked to Jesus. Every sacrifice and offering, made by faith during the legal dispensation was a look to Jesus, to the Lamb of God that would take away the sin of the world of the elect. He was that King whom Isaiah said would "reign in righteousness;" he was that man who was to be, **"an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Isa. 32:1-2.** In the forty-sixth Psalm we read, "God is our refuge and, strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the, waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah." What wonderful assurance is given us here! In the Scriptures the sea is often used to signify the people, while the mountains and hills signify the high places, or the rulers of the earth. It would seem as though some of the literal significance of the foregoing Psalm is being unfolded before our very eyes, for kings, emperors and those who rule the kingdoms of the world are being overthrown and their kingdoms swept away; their governments will go back to the people, and out of them will arise others to rule over them. Seeing, as we believe we do, the hand of God in it all, we shall not fear, but will wait and stay upon our God, who we are persuaded will work all things after the counsel of his own will.

In the Psalm referred to, the writer says, "Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." We must first see what desolations are wrought in the earth before we stand still and know that he is God; then it is we are taught that he is our ref-

uge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Brethren and friends, in this year one thousand nine hundred and forty-three of our Lord, let us not faint or be discouraged, but rather let us take courage in the Lord; let us believe and plead his Holy Word, being assured that none shall seek his face in vain. If we know him in whom we have believed, we are persuaded that he is able to keep that which we have committed unto him against that day, and let us hold fast the form of sound words, which we have heard of him, in faith and love which is in Jesus Christ. While the SIGNS OF THE TIMES enters upon the twelfth decade its career in the midst of perilous times, our sincere desire and prayer to God is that above the din of battle shall be heard the triumphant shout in every soul, "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

Elder R. L. Dodson
January, 1943

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 1 / 2018

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

INTRODUCTORY PREFACE.

From the early settlement of our country by the Puritans in New England, and the Church of England in the Southern colonies, whose religious supremacy was established by law in their several localities, the Baptists, and indeed all other dissenting orders, suffered great opposition by proscription and oppression from the dominant parties. The Baptists, perhaps, more than any other, were violently treated, and suffered the most cruel persecution. Disfranchisement as citizens, fines; confiscation of property, incarceration in prisons, and banishment for nonconformity, to which was added corporal punishments, public whippings at the stocks, cropping of ears, boring their tongues through with hot irons, tying their heads and feet together, and torturing them in the most barbarous manner for days and nights, and in many cases they were put to death for their persistent and inflexible adherence to the faith and order of the gospel by which they were distinguished from all other orders. In those days of trial there were no worldly inducements offered to attract the worldly-minded to connect themselves with our churches, and there was harmony of sentiment and uniformity of practice among the Baptist churches throughout the whole breadth of our country.

It is true that in those trying times, the general principles of the doctrine of the gospel were not so clearly and fully preached and understood as at earlier and later periods in the history of Apostolic Baptists. As the bible doctrine and

order of baptism held by them was the most objectionable to their adversaries, there were constantly called to defend the truth in relation to that ordinance against the assaults of their opponents. And when the violence of persecution began to abate, and by the interposition of the British Crown, and subsequently by the prevalence of more liberal views which were entertained by the patriots the Revolution, the powers of the Puritans in the East, and of the Episcopalians in the South were so far curtailed as to prevent farther corporal Severities; still for many years after the establishment of our federal and state governments, the Puritans of the New England States were patronized by their state legislatures, and allowed to collect their parish taxes from all within their parish limits. Afterwards dissenters, by procuring certificates from religious denominations to which they belonged, certifying that they were paying to their own respective orders, were released from the burden of the parish taxes, and finally the whole legal distinction in favor of the Puritans was abolished. Under all the trials and persecutions thus far experienced, the Baptists were a humble, meek, loving and harmoniously-united people throughout our country. But as soon as this oppressive yoke was broken, Satan was ready with other elements of discord to bring trouble and divisions into our churches.

No sooner were the Baptists of America relieved from the galling yoke of Puritanic and Episcopalian priestcraft than the doctrines of Andrew Fuller were introduced, with the professed design to raise up the Baptists from the dung-hill, to rank respectably with other religious denominations. All who were inclined to the doctrine of Arminianism, with many others who had been led but sparingly into an understanding of the cardinal doctrine of salvation alone by grace, were ready to embrace the plausible and deceptive views of Fuller, and became at once ambitious for the promised elevation.

At this period, which is still fresh in the recollection of the editor of the "Signs of the Times," there was not know among the Baptists of America a single organized institution in connection with, or under the patronage of the Baptists. Theological seminaries, on a very small scale, then began to be talked of, and a small school of this kind was started in Philadelphia, under the direction of Dr. Staughton, to give some grammar lessons to a few of our illiterate young preachers, and soon a college was founded in Washington City, and another educational and theological institution at Hamilton, N. Y., and similar schools began to spring up in various directions. Simultaneously with these, missionary enterprises were set on foot, both domestic and foreign, and Sabbath-schools and Sabbath-school unions, in which various anti-christian denominations were recognized as hand and glove with Baptists in building up these unscriptural nurseries for the church, as they were modestly called. Then followed Bible Societies, to give a semblance of piety to the whole system of religious machinery, followed in turn by Tract Societies, Temperence Societ-

ies, Mite Societies, Magdaline Societies, Dorcas Societies, and a host of other equally unscriptural institutions under the name of Benevolence and Religion, until, to bring up the rear, the Abolition Society, which had for a time been struggling into life and power under the patronage of a few New England fanatics, was with due ceremony let in and adopted as a pet institution.

While these innovations were being made upon the faith and order of the Baptists, true enough, the Baptists began to rise, according to the prediction of Andrew Fuller, and soon came to be regarded as unsound and as respectable as any other of the worldly churches of this degenerate age. The Baptists were now no longer obliged to pray the Lord of the harvest to furnish preachers; they could supply themselves with a more refined and educated class from their own schools. Converts could now be made to order, and the churches supplied with members from their nurseries and other institutions. Their machinery was now so complete that grace was no longer needed to make their members orderly; for they were supplied with societies to keep them sober and benevolent; and if perchance many of them should lose their piety, their machinery was so ingeniously geared that they could be run through again, and re-converted and re-constructed as often as might be thought advisable.

It was during the prevalence of these abominations that the "Signs of the Times" was commenced. The new order of Baptists had many religious newspapers in the field, which without an exception advocated the institutions named in the foregoing, and the general impression was entertained that there were no churches or preachers left that had not enlisted in this new enterprise for worldly popularity and respectability. A few were found here and there, isolated and despised, who sighed and groaned on account of the prevailing abominations. Yet few as we were, and far between, we were denounced violently as illiberal, inert, slothful, behind the spirit of a progressive age, and enemies to the spread of the gospel, and opposed to all that is good.

Feeling deeply the need of a medium of correspondence, and excluded from the columns of the so-called Baptist papers, after much deliberation it was concluded to attempt to make ourselves heard by our brethren scattered abroad, by publishing a paper devoted to the cause of truth, and through which we could enter our solemn protest against all the innovations, new theories and new institutions which, under the name of Baptists, had so greatly prevailed. With these objects in view, in the year 1832, we issued the following prospectus, viz:

Proposals for publishing a semimonth) paper, to be called the "Signs of the Times," devoted exclusively to the Baptist cause, maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfections of the Great Jehovah — the Revelation which God has given of himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. These Three are One."-1 John v. 8.

2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.

3. Eternal, unconditional Election.

4. The Total Depravity and just condenmation of fallen man.

5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the Elect only.

6. The Sovereign, Irresistible, and in all cases, Effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in Regenerating and Quickening; the Elect of God.

7. The Final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God, by Grace.

8. The Resurrection of the dead, and Eternal Judgment.

9. That the Church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers — that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God.

10. That there is no connection between Church and State, and as touching the proposition for a marriage between them, the Hon. R. M. Johnson, in his Report on the Sabbath Question, has expressed our faith.

The "Signs of the Times" will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath Schools, &c., &c., making war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of Institutions.

The violent opposition manifested by the New Order of Baptists, when our Prospectus appeared, was overruled to our advantage. Immediately on its appearing, the batteries of our components were opened against us, through both the pulpit and the press. The papers of the New School sounded the alarm and warned the people to beware of the forthcoming paper; and in the Minutes of many Associations the churches were warned to withhold their support and countenance from us. In the ardor of their zeal portions of our Prospectus were copied to show that we were hostile to their newly-invented institutions; and by this means, instead of retarding, as they designed, their efforts were of great service in letting those who were imprisoned among them know that such a paper was about to be published. The response to our Prospectus from all directions was liberal, so that we were able to proceed with our work. Thirty-five years have since elapsed, and thirty-five volumes of our paper have been published, and still the publication is sustained, and we are now enabled to greatly enlarge and improve it.

The publisher of the "Signs of the Times" has been, from time to time, charged with vacillation, changing his views, or departing from the principles formerly held. Let the readers compare the articles here re-published with the platform laid in the Prospectus, and judge for themselves, if there has been any departure from the principles first announced.

One important object in the compilation of this book is to present, in as condensed a form as may be, the most important Editorial articles which have been published from the commencement, in 1832, whereby to show what has been sustained by the entire Old

School or Primitive order of Baptists for so many years, and incidentally to embody such historical reminiscences as may be useful, not only to the present, but to succeeding generations. Many of the articles which we shall reproduce will necessarily allude to what the Old School Baptists have held, the manner in which they have asserted and defended their faith, and what they have encountered of reproach and persecution, and the divine support by which they have been sustained.

It is not claimed that all the supporters of the "Signs of the Times" are pledged to endorse all the articles which have been published, and are herein republished, for such is not the fact. Some of the articles may set forth the peculiar views of but a minority of the Baptists of our faith and order, and for whatever of error any of them contain, only the Editor is responsible. But inasmuch as the "Signs of the Times" was the first periodical paper devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause, and the only one of some twenty periodicals which have subsequently been started that has been sustained by the Baptists of our order, it must be inferred that it has faithfully reflected the general sentiments of that people, to the support of whose cause it has been humbly devoted.

We do not propose a reproduction of all that has appeared under the Editorial head of the "Signs of the Times," for there are many items of a local interest, bearing on what has long ceased to be of general interest. And some articles on the same subjects, which would appear tautologous and uncalled for. Still it is our intention, so far as possible, to condense, in such cases, the substance of the several articles on the same subject, so as to preserve all that is deemed of sufficient importance to be preserved.

GILBERT BEEBE

DOCTRINE TO WHICH WE ARE PLEDGED IN OUR PROSPECTUS,

NEW VERNON, N.Y., January 2, 1833.

In our prospectus we are pledged to maintain inviolably the several scriptural sentiments embraced in the respective items which were named. We intend to notice them severally in the order in which they were presented.

The first that comes under consideration is "the Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfection of the Great Jehovah — the revelation which God has given of himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost." "These three are one."-1 John v. 8.

That God exists, we need no further demonstration than what is presented to our view in creation and in providence. In the former "the heavens declare his glory, and the firmament showeth forth his handy work." In the latter, "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge."

The well established laws of summer and winter, of seed time and harvest, the waxing and waning of the moon, the revolutions of the earth and the planets, all proclaim the existence of the Great First Cause of all causes —

a supernatural power; and we are taught by divine revelation that that first cause, that supernatural power, is God. But as the existence of God is seldom denied, we will pass on, and with the most profound reverence consider some of his perfections.

God is a Sovereign.

By the term sovereign, as it applies to God, we are not to understand an arbitrary or tyrannical being, but quite the reverse; an all-wise disposer of all events, an independent, self-existent, and omniscient God; one who holds the eternal destiny of his creatures in his own almighty grasp, working all things after the counsel of his own will, even as he has ordained all things for his own glory; and being independent of and superior to all beings in heaven or on earth, has an incontestable right to do his pleasure in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; having a right to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor; to have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will to harden; to reveal his gospel unto "babes and sucklings," and to hide the same from the "wise and prudent;" to love Jacob and to hate Esau, to save his people with an everlasting salvation, and to turn the wicked into hell, with all the nations that forget God.

In view of the sublime doctrine of the divine sovereignty, the inspired writer inquires, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being his counsellor, hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed unto him the way of understanding? Isaiah xl. 13, 14. The full display of this attribute of the deity would require a development of all his perfections, but particularly that of his independence and omnipotence, of which we shall have something to say hereafter. But first we will consider his right to dispose of all events according to the pleasure of his own will. And who is prepared to dispute this right? "Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"

"Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! *Let* **the potsherds** *strive* **with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say unto him that fashioneth it, What maketh thou? or thy work, He hath no hands? Woe unto him that saith unto** *his* **father, What begettest thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth?" — Isa. xlv. 9, 10.** If then we admit that it was God's sovereign right to create a world, we must acknowledge that it was his right to determine what kind of a world to create, and for what end it should be created, or else we must conclude that he was not absolutely independent; and to form such a conclusion would certainly be a great derogation from his divine perfections. If while we gaze with admiration and delight upon the beauties of creation, we should believe that God was bound by some law or power independent of and superior to himself, to create all things in the exact order in which they are and were created, we could no longer enjoy the delightful reflection that our God is the Most High. We must therefore conclude that

it is his sovereign and eternal right to do his pleasure in heaven and on earth, or we must say with the fool, "There is no God." But the more resplendent is the manifestation of the righteousness of God, when we contemplate him in connection with his independence. "He is before all things, and by him all things consist." Thus, for instance, in imagination, strike from the scale of existence every created object, and what would remain? Nothing but God alone, and inasmuch as he existed before all things, he must have existed independently of all things, and we must deny his immutability, or admit that he continues to be the same independent God now that he was before the highest parts of the habitable world were made. He is self-existent and self-sufficient. He speaks the word and it stands fast, he commands and it is done.

The extent of God's sovereignty is commensurate with his infinity. It is displayed in all his works of creation, providence and grace. In creation serpents as well as doves were made — some men and some angels — all were not made alike, nor for the same end. In providence, we see the beggar raised from the dung-hill to the throne, and the proud monarch hurled from his royal seat down to the most abject state of wretchedness and misery. To some men God has given riches, and to others poverty, to one sickness, and to another health. "There were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah," in the time of severe famine, &c. "But unto none of them was Elijah sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow."

To make known to the king of Babylon this divine sovereignty, the Lord drove him from his palace and from the society of men, to range with the beasts of the field till seven times were passed over, until in providence he should learn that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, and as a sovereign giveth the kingdoms of this world unto whomsoever he pleaseth. The display of divine sovereignty in the kingdom of grace is most striking. The election of his people in Christ Jesus before the world began, unmoved by any regard to their virtues or good works. — **"Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."-2 Tim. ii. 9.** And in further testimony of God's sovereignty, we hear an inspired apostle say, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." **"Unto you therefore which believe** *he is* **precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence,** *even to them* **which stumble at the word, being disobedient; where unto also they were appointed."-1 Peter ii. 7, 8.** "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will? Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter

power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour and another unto dishonour?"

God is immutable.

"For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore, ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." - Mal. iii. 6. "But he *is* in one *mind*, and who can turn him? and *what* his soul desireth, even *that* he doeth."- Job xxiii. 13. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." - Heb. xiii. 8. "The Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." - James i. 17. Further testimony to establish the doctrine of God's immutability seems to be quite unnecessary; were we for a moment to suppose God to be a mutable being, like unto ourselves, we might then say with the fool, "There is no God." In giving up the immutability of God we would give up all; for if it could be proved that God ever changed it would prove the forfeiture of his truth. He says, "I change not;" and could his truth fail, his holiness could not remain unimpaired, his wisdom would stand impeached, and his glory forever be eclipsed. Again, if God has changed, or ever should change, that change must be either for the better or for the worse; if for the better, he was once imperfect, and if for the worse, he is now imperfect. The awful absurdity and blasphemy of the doctrine is enough to make one tremble.

God is Omnipotent.

By the Omnipotence of Jehovah we understand that universal and almighty power which is essential to his being as God, and that this power is an attribute peculiar to himself. This divine perfection of the Godhead was manifested in the creation of the world. He said, "Let there be light," and there was light; And also in providence, as exemplified in the entire history of the children of Israel, in their elevation above all other nations under heaven, in their redemption from Egyptian captivity, in their passage through the Red Sea, in the miraculous manner in which they were fed with manna, and supplied with water, and in the signal victories given them over their enemies. Nor is the manifestation of omni potent power confined to any particular event, or train of events. It shone in dreadful majesty from Sinai's flaming top, nor with less grandeur from Mount Calvary, when the meridian sun was dressed in sackcloth, the rocks were rent, the dead were raised, the vail of the temple was rent asunder, and the most holy place exposed to view, while frighted nature, as with a voice of mighty thunder, proclaimed the doctrine of God's omnipotence. If a further illustration or demonstration of the almighty power of God were necessary, we might advert to the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, when "God went up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet."

In the economy of salvation, too, God has made ample display of his omnipotence. The fulfillment of the holy law, the perfect satisfaction rendered to divine justice, the opening of the prison doors to them that were bound, and the emancipation of the prisoners, the conquest of our beloved Lord over death, hell and sin, the destruction of death, and him that had the power of

death, which is the devil, the regeneration and quickening of his elect, together with their preservation in grace unto eternal glory, the resurrection of their bodies in the likeness of his own glorious body, and the consummation of their everlasting happiness in the world to come. The man must surely be a stranger in Israel who can not trace the power and Godhead throughout the whole work of salvation, from the foundation to the top stone.

The perfections of God are eternal.

It cannot reasonably be expected of finite beings that they should be able to comprehend the eternity or infinity of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" We are therefore able only to contemplate the divine perfections of Jehovah, as far as they are revealed to us by his word and Spirit, and if through the abundant revelation made we could vie with the brightest prophets and inspired men of God in our conceptions of the Holy One, or with the tongues of men or angels, could set forth our views of God, we would be with them constrained to say, "Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him; but the thunder of his power, who can understand?" That God is a being of infinite and eternal perfection, but few in our age are bold enough, in so many words, to deny. But yet while many will admit this truth in general terms, they will deny it in all its particular bearings on the redemption and salvation of sinners. Many very zealous professors of religion will form in their own imagination a standard of right and wrong, and then say, if God should vary from their standard he would be unequal, unjust or imperfect. But we know of no higher standard of perfection than God himself, hence all that is done or decreed by him is perfect, because, it is done or decreed in accordance with his own mind and, will, and must therefore be compatable with his nature. It cannot be the prerogative of creatures of yesterday, whose breath is in their nostrils, set up a standard of human wisdom by which to scan the perfections of their Maker. If it be admitted then that God is perfect, it needs no more than the admission of his immutability to establish the doctrine of the eternity of his perfections. As far as God has been graciously pleased to reveal himself unto us, we have been constrained to pray that he would conform us to his will, and by his sovereign grace, which is treasured up in Christ Jesus our Lord, conform us to the image of him: who is the "brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person."·The above brief statement of our views of the "existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah," &c., are sentiments which we hold dear to our heart, and such as we stand solemnly pledged to inviolably maintain in this paper. The doctrine is neither strange nor new to the Baptists of the school of Christ.

In the revelation of Father; Son, and Holy Ghost." These three are One."-1

John i. 5, 8. On this important point of doctrine our views are happily expressed in the above scripture, quoted from the apostle John, while all human language utterly fails in setting forth the mode of God's existence. We rejoice that the record which he has been pleased to give of himself in the bible contains all necessary information on the subject; at present we shall for want of room omit giving our views at large on this point; we will only say that we shall cautiously avoid all such doctrines as do either deny or refuse to acknowledge the eternal power and Godhead of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

"This God is the God we adore,
Our faithful, unchangeable friend;
Whose love is as great as his power,
And knows neither measure nor end."

Elder Gilbert Beebe

PROSPECTUS FOR VOLUME 36.

As the thirty-fifth year of our publication is now closing upon us, it is time to announce to our readers what are our prospects and designs for another year. With humble gratitude to the Sovereign Ruler of all events, we desire to record his goodness and mercy which have followed us all our days; and especially on this occasion would we render a tribute of praise and thanksgiving for his manifold favors to us in our connection with this periodical. With fear and trembling we commenced our editorial and publishing labors just as we were entering the prime and vigor of man hood, under very many discouraging circumstances, and in the face of most violent opposition, as the first, and for many years the only paper devoted to the Old School, or Primitive Baptist cause. Since we commenced our labors just one-half of the three score years and ten which are allotted to man have passed away, and in their rapid flight they have borne away by far the greater portion of those who were our companions and contemporaries at that time. A long list of the names of those who encouraged us in the beginning are now, alas! inscribed upon their tomb stones, and their mortal remains now slumber with the silent dead; and why we are spared while so many have been called hence is only known to God; but whatever has been his purpose, we know that our unfeigned love and gratitude is due to him. But while we look around us in vain for those who were companions of our earlier days, to the praise of God be it acknowledged we are not left without true and faithful friends, and loving brethren who have never failed to show themselves in our most trying straits. Today we have a greater number of able and devoted brethren and sisters, scattered throughout all the states and territories of our wide spread country, ready to contribute able communications to fill up and enrich our columns, than we have ever before had at any one time. The violent opposition we have encountered from time to time from avowed enemies, and still more annoying from professed friends, has been more than balanced by the true friendship, fellowship and

cooperation of thousands, the faces of many of whom we have never seen in the flesh.

The circulation of our paper was seriously restricted, and its continuance imperiled by the late dreadful scenes of carnage in which our country has been involved, but for the last two years the way has been opened for a circulation in the Southern States, and we are now constantly receiving accessions to our subscription list from all quarters.

In view of our increasing circulation, and the increasing demands for enlarged facilities for a general correspondence, extending to all parts of our country and the Canadas, we propose to add four pages to each number of the "Signs" for the next year, beginning with the first day of January next. The paper to be the same form and size as at present, each number to contain twelve instead of eight pages; without any addition to the subscription price, and the postage, being by weight, will be no more than now. Not more than one page will be occupied with standing advertisements.

This new arrangement will add 50 percent to the amount of printed matter, and afford space for many valuable communications which have heretofore been excluded for want of room. And we flatter ourselves that our additional expense will be met by our increased subscription. As it will involve an expense to us of a large amount, may we not hope our brethren and all who are friends to the paper will use their influence to procure new subscribers, and forward their orders and remittances with out delay.

Should our circulation during the year 1868 reach ten thousand, we will, if spared, at the commencement of 1869, issue the "Signs of the Times" weekly.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y.
November 15, 1867.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

One hundred years ago there was not a single white man in Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, or Illinois territories. Then what is now the most flourishing part of America was as little known as the country around the mountains of the Moon. It was not until 1769 that the hunter of Kentucky, the gallant and adventurous Boone, left his home in North Carolina to become the first settler of Kentucky. The first pioneer of Ohio did not settle until twenty years after that time.

An hundred years ago Canada belonged to France, and the whole population of the United States did not exceed a million and a half people.

An hundred years ago the great Frederick of Prussia was performing those great exploits which have made him immortal in military annals, and with his little monarchy was sustaining a single handed contest with Russia, Austria, and France, the three great powers of Europe combined.

An hundred years ago the United States were the most loyal of the British Empire, and on the political horizon no speck indicated the struggles which in a score of years thereafter established the great Republic of the world.

An hundred years ago there were but four newspapers in America — with a combined circulation not exceeding three thousand; steam engines or cylinder presses had not been imagined, and railroads and telegraphs had not entered into the remotest conceptions of man. When we come to look back at it thru the vista of history, we find that to the century which has passed has been allotted more important events in their bearing upon the happiness of the world than almost any other era that has happened since the creation. A hundred years hence — who can foretell our developments.

Middletown, N.Y.,
December 15, 1861.

THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR, 1861

This number of the Signs of the Times completes our twenty ninth volume, and the incessant labor of its present and only publisher, proprietor and editor, for the last twenty-nine years. During our connection with this publication, according to the course of nature, one generation has passed away, and very many of our present patrons were unborn when our labors commenced. Yet there are a few upon our list of subscribers who have sustained us from the beginning; but thousands of those who witnessed our commencement have finished their course, and left these mortal shores to return to earth no more. We who survive have great reason to acknowledge, with humble gratitude, the goodness and mercy of God in sustaining us unto the present time. Because He changes not, we are not consumed. Surely His mercy endureth forever, and it has followed us all our days.

Should we recount all the trials, perplexities, conflicts and discouraging circumstances through which the Lord has brought us, the record would fill a volume; and we must say with David, "They are more than we can number." O, that we could render suitable acknowledgements and thanksgiving to the Lord! The year now closing has been the most prolific in startling events of any which we have witnessed. Although the season has been crowned with abundant crops to reward the labors of the husbandman, and to furnish subsistence in abundance for both man and beast, and in many other respects God has showered temporal blessings upon us with a profuse hand, yet we are overshadowed with an appalling cloud, which throws a gloom over every family and household in our country. The seeds of dissension which have been sowed broadcast over our beloved country for many years have ripened into a civil conflict of fearful dimensions. The ties of fraternity which were cemented with the patriotic blood of our revolutionary fathers, and which have formerly bound the citizens of our widespread country in a consolidated commonwealth, surpassing all other nations in prosperity, peace, and independence, have failed to secure us from strife and internecine war. The causes which have led to this lamentable state of discord and bloodshed, it may not be proper for us to discuss. But as we feel the scourge may we not, in the language of the scrip-

tures, enquire, "Is there evil in the city (or country) and the Lord hath not done it?" We must acknowledge that God holds the destiny of nations, as He holds the destiny of men, in His own hands, and if favored with peace and prosperity, all admit that we are bound to give thanks to God, as the giver of every good and perfect gift. And if it be His sovereign pleasure to withhold those inestimable blessings and to send His awful judgments abroad, it becomes us equally to acknowledge His hand and humbly bow before Him, confessing our sins which have provoked His wrath. "Shall we receive good from His hand, and not evil?" was the inquiry of Job in his deep afflictions. God is certainly just and righteous in all His ways; and it becomes us to "Be still and know that He is God!" And while we feel His rod we shall confess our sins and repent in dust and ashes. The consequence of the present war has thus far fallen very heavily upon the Old School Baptists, and especially soon our publication. As a church the Old School Baptists, who have had no hand in producing the existing animosity which now threatens the perpetuity of our civil institutions, are, for the present, deprived of the social intercourse which has formerly been so pleasant and profitable to us; and the interchange of epistolary correspondence, through our paper, is, to a large extent, cut off by the conflict in which sister States are involved. Under these circumstances the question, Shall the publication of the Signs of the Times be allowed to stop? has assumed a grave importance. To continue its publication on the part of such of its friends as are still able to reach forth a helping hand. At least one half of its former patrons must be, for the present, and during the suspension of the mails and the continuance of the war, dropped from our list and our circulation restricted to those States where the mails are still conveyed. Many of those in our Northam States where mailing facilities are still continued, by prostration of their business and other causes incidental to the war, are compelled to retrench their expenses to bring them within their limited means; and some have already ordered a discontinuance of their subscriptions because of the hardness of the times. But while we all admit that common prudence requires retrenchment of our expenses, would it not be well for us carefully to consider whether we can afford to dispense with the Signs of the Times as a medium for christian correspondence, and thereby of its spiritual consolation? The comparatively trifling expense of one dollar a year would make but little difference, while, perhaps, there are many other places where a retrenchment of the same amount would not deprive us of any religious privilege. Many of our subscribers have assured us they would sooner dispense with one meal a day, or any other strictly worldly comfort, than the privilege of hearing from the scattered flock of the Redeemer, through the periodical visits of the Signs of the Times.

Never since we began the publication has its circulation been needed more than at the present time. While all around us seems tempetuous and

stormy; when many other sources of comfort are cut off, do we not need still more the comforting, edifying and cheering communications of those whom we dearly love in the Lord?

Brethren, friends, and patrons of the Signs of the Times, let us hear from you, and those who feel resolved to renew their subscription, please make an effort to procure other names, and send in clubs, if possible. Remember that five dollars sent in advance will pay for six copies for one year.

As we are cut off from all correspondence with the publisher of the Southern Baptist Messenger, remittance for that paper should no longer be sent to us. For the present we receive payments for no other publication but the Signs of the Times.

Middletown, N.Y.,
December 15, 1861.

THE NEW YEAR, AND THE NEW VOLUME

The wheels of nature with untiring motion have brought us to the beginning of a New Year, and we again greet our readers with the customary compliments of the season, and wish them all a Happy New Year. Truly if our happiness consisted only in worldly pleasure and temporal prosperity, our prospects for a happy new year would be dark and gloomy. Our skies are shadowed with a lowering cloud portentous of continued strife and bitter discord among those who have been wont to regard each other as friends and fellow-citizens of one great sisterhood of confederated States. But alas! how changed is the picture from what was presented in former years of our national history. What is to be the result, or when the bloody strife shall cease, the wisest of our statesmen cannot predict with any degree of certainty. He alone who holds the destiny of all things in his own hands can know when, if ever, peace shall again spread her balmy wings over our once happy but now greatly agitated country. But while the booming of cannon, the clashing of swords, resound with battles of the warrior, and much of the best blood of our citizens is flowing, towns and cities are being laid waste, and men are engaged in the fearful conflict; christians may still find peace and happiness in that kingdom which is not of this world. Whatever tumults may distract the earth, the Zion of our God shall forever remain a peaceable abode for all the sons of peace. Upon her towering walls of salvation waves the banner of love and the Prince of Peace presides in power and majesty over all her favored inhabitants. Blessed truly are they whose privilege it is to enter in through her gates, and who have a right to the tree of life. The saints who desire a happy new year are forbidden to look for happiness on earth. In the world they shall have tribulation, but in Jesus they shall have peace. Let them heed the admonition of the apostle and set not their affections on the things of this world, but things which are above where Christ sitteth on the right hand of the majesty on high. And let us all remember that

they only are truly happy who love God, and are reconciled to his government. But the way of the transgressor is hard.

As we are entering upon the new year it becomes us to review the way in which the Lord our God has brought us. His mercies endure forever, and therefore we are not consumed. How it becomes us to prostrate ourselves at his feet with thanksgiving and praise for his loving kindness and tender mercy already bestowed on us, and to implore his grace to incline our hearts to love and serve him, and to enable us to walk worthy of our high and holy vocation. Holiness becomes his house forever, and without holiness no man shall see the Lord.

It is reasonable to suppose that our readers will expect to hear from us in regard to our prospects, position, and arrangements for the new Volume. One year ago we began the preceding Volume with a circulation of between six and seven thousand subscribers, extending throughout almost every State and Territory of the United States, and some in the Canadas. This Volume is commenced with less than one half of that number. The principal cause of this reduction, as our readers are aware, is the discontinuance of mailing facilities into the seceded States where the Baptists of our order are far more numerous than they are in the Northern States. But we have not only suffered the loss of our Southern subscribers in consequence of the Civil War, but confusion and derangement of business in the Northern States have circumscribed the ability of very many of our old patrons, so that they have withdrawn their support from us. We are not, however, discouraged. Believing as we do that the Lord has directed our publication for the edification and comfort of his scattered people, and hitherto has afforded us his sustaining power and grace, with humble reliance on him for a continuance of his support, we are resolved to continue our labors as long as we can enjoy the sensible evidence of his divine approval. And we confidently hope and believe he will incline our brethren and friends to render all the encouragement and aid in their power. There probably never was a time when the scattered flock of Jesus needed a medium of correspondence like this more than at the present time. They have much to discourage, dishearten and perplex them, and as cold water is to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country. It becomes them to speak the word of encouragement, of love, and fellowship to each other, and through our columns they may at once address, in the same epistle, thousands of their kindred in Christ Jesus. How long we may be favored with the privilege of this kind of correspondence, we do not know, but while we are so favored, let us not fail to appreciate it.

Our position is too well known to those who have long had the opportunity of reading our paper to require any new pledge from us. But as God shall afford us strength with the best ability we have, so long as we live, we shall publish what we honestly believe to be sustained by the scriptures of divine truth, though men or devils may oppose. We shall carefully avoid meddling with politics; but at the

same time give our views unreservedly on every subject contained in the Bible, and only ask all who read our views to compare them faithfully with the word, and to accredit them no farther than they shall find them sustained by what God has said.

As to our arrangements for the present Volume, we shall have our printing this year under our own supervision, and devote our personal attention to every department of the publication. We have already expended over two thousand dollars in making improvements in our office, and we flatter our self that the present Volume — though it may not reimburse our expenses — shall excel all the preceding Volumes. Our correspondence, though greatly curtailed by the loss, for the present at least, of our Southern writers, will be sufficient to make the reading matter interesting and profitable. No pains or reasonable expenses shall be spared to make this volume what it should be.

Our connection with the Southern Baptist Messenger is for the present suspended; as we have no means of corresponding with our son, the publisher of that journal, his residence and address being Covington, Newton County, Georgia.

The publication of the Banner of Liberty also being for the present suspended, we have no clubbing arrangements with any other paper. Our agents will only send orders for the Signs of the Times, at least until further notice.

Our terms will be as formerly, viz: One dollar and fifty cents per year for a single subscriber; but if paid in advance, but one dollar per year. Five dollars sent at one time in advance will secure six copies for one year.

United States Treasury notes will be received in payment, or current notes on any New York Banks, or on banks of and in the States east of New York, or on banks of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, Ohio, or Indiana, or Canada — or if gold can be procured, it will suit us still better. For all odd amounts of less than one dollar, U.S. Postage stamps will be received at par.

All monies sent us by mail, if carefully put up and properly mailed to us, will be at our risk. All orders, remittances and other communications for the Signs must be addressed to Elder Gilbert Beebe, Middletown, Orange Co., N.Y.

Middletown, N.Y.,
January 1, 1862.

ROMANS 8:28-30.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

VOL. 1. NEW VERNON, N. Y., NOV. 28, 1832. NO. 1.

Our subscribers have a right to expect from us an apology for the long but unavoidable delay of our paper; but we assure them that it has been kept back by circumstances beyond our control. We have had many difficulties to encounter, and much opposition to surmount; but truly we can say, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us; for the very opposition of our foes has been overruled for our good. We are encouraged to venture on with the utmost confidence, firmly believing that the cause for which this paper is designed to contend, is the cause of God and truth. The violent opposition raised against it, and against those who took an interest in its publication, even while it remained in embryo, is but too plain an indication of the importance and necessity of its going on. Our correspondence with distant brethren of the Old School, assures us that it will be sustained, notwithstanding the gratuitous attacks made upon us by the N. Y. Baptist Repository and the Philadelphia Chrisian Index. Our object is to diffuse light and truth, and to oppose whatever exalteth itself above all that is called God. If we succeed, none have reason to fear but the children of darkness and falsehood; they may expect to be exposed to the broad glare of the truth; "but he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God." "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 2017

Dan Delp, VA	5.00
Lon D. Moon, AL	5.00
Billie Speir, LA	75.00
James Lambert, GA	5.00
Don Norman, NC	25.00
The Williams Family Foundation, VA	250.00

PROVERBS 3:1-8.

My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:

For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.

Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:

So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil.

It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

VOL. 186 HILLSVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY 2018 NO. 2

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

FROM every stormy wind that blows,
From every swelling tide of woes,
There is a calm, a sure retreat;
'Tis found beneath the mercy-seat.

There is a place where Jesus sheds
The oil of gladness on our heads,—
A place of all on earth most sweet;
It is the gracious mercy-seat.

There is a place where spirits blend,
Where friend holds fellowship with friend;
Though sundered far, by faith they meet
round one common mercy-seat.

Ah! whither could I flee for aid
When tempted, desolate, dismayed?
Or how the hosts of hell defeat,
Had suffering saints no mercy-seat?

There, there, on eagle's wings to soar,
And sin and sense molest no more;
And heaven comes down our souls to greet,
And glory crowns the mercy-seat.

Stowell.

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Howard E. Parham

EDITORIAL

"Then he said unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: and sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready." Luke 14:16-17.

Elder Jerry B. Farmer

How blind are our eyes when it comes to seeing into the scriptures, unless sight is given. How hard are our hearts and incapable of being softened, unless they are worked upon by the Spirit and made tender with love toward God and the brethren. How deaf are our ears from hearing the gospel, unless they are unstopped by a miracle of Christ. How lame are our feet to walk in the truth, and how withered are our hands to do anything good apart from the mercy, grace and power of God. It seems to be too much to think that anything should ever be done for such an unworthy creature such as I see myself to be. Nevertheless, I beg for mercy.

Also, since the scriptures may be understood only with a spiritual understanding, it is impossible that they should be pried into or unraveled by our natural mind. Even the things that seem so obvious on the surface, cannot really be understood with any depth of knowledge apart from the gift of God. So we are made to commit ourselves unto Him for keeping us in the faith and for the things required to understand and rightly divide the word of truth. May He open up our understanding of this parable and make us to rejoice in truth and in hope of eternal life.

In this parable, Jesus presented a man who made a great supper and invited his acquaintances to have a part in it with him. He sent his servant out to tell them that the supper was ready and to bid them to come. Each one gave a reason not to attend and begged to have himself excused. One said he had bought a field and needed to go and see it; one said he had bought a yoke of oxen, and that he went to prove them; and another said he had married a wife and could not come. Their own cares had taken the attention of each one, and their desires were not for the supper.

In my young days, among those of another belief, I heard this parable set forth in an endeavor to prove that men, of their own supposed free will had refused the invitation of God to have a part in His kingdom. Back then, that seemed to me to be a logical interpretation. But after much anguish of mind, over a long period of time, I trust that I was taught that the Lord, God of heaven and earth does all of his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. I was shown that man does not have a free will, as they assert, but is subject to the sovereign will of God. Their natural and false interpretation of the scriptures, no longer was of any use to me.

I am now made to believe that the truth of the matter is that God rules and reigns. As those men made excuse because they had no interest in the supper, so also the world has no interest in the things of God. Those in nature have never tasted of that kingdom to know that the Lord is gracious. The healthful food of the doctrine of Christ is an abomination to them. The company of those who enjoy spiritual things is not desired by them, and the love abounding among the guests is not shared by them.

So the servant returned and showed his lord these things. The master was angry and told the servant to go quickly into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in the poor and the maimed and the halt and the blind. And the lord told his servant to go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in, that his house may be full. And the lord said to his servant that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of his supper.

In the worldly religions, they use this parable to teach that they, themselves are to go out and aggressively win others to Christ by forceful methods. They teach that if they do not pursue and win others, they will be forever lost and end up in hell. What a futile and frustrating religion it must be which says the things of God may be accomplished by the works of the flesh. But Jesus made it plain about such works of men. He, speaking of those who desire to make disciples to themselves said, "They compass land and sea to make one proselyte, and when they have made him, he is twofold more the child of hell as they are themselves."

The truth, if not deceived, is that the servant in the parable represents the Holy Spirit, which is sent out of God to His children, the poor, the maimed, the halt and the blind. The Holy Spirit finds the poor in spirit, those who have been maimed by the world's religions, those that cannot walk in their own strength, and those that are blind of themselves to see anything of the Spirit. These are compelled to come into the kingdom, which they do in the power and wisdom of God according to His purpose and grace. The Spirit searches out every one and brings him in, and so the Lord's house is full and complete. Not one of God's little ones has ever been overlooked or lost.

Concerning the ones to be called to supper, Jesus said, "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kins-

men, nor thy rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame and the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

I have wondered about this saying of Jesus for years. I always thought that I was doing just what Jesus said not to do. Any time we made a feast at home, it seemed that we always called our church friends or relatives together. But it seems that I had looked upon this only with natural eyes and a hard heart. I was judging by nature what is actually spiritual. It appears now that the dinner or supper or feast that Jesus spoke of is spiritual — that it is the spiritual church meeting of God's little ones. Who is it we desire to be with in meeting? Are they not the saints, who are the poor and maimed and lame and blind spiritually? Who are they, who cannot repay the kindnesses that are extended to them, except those that are the destitute and crippled in this world; the ones who are misunderstood, mistreated, shunned because of their weaknesses; the ones who are pilgrims and strangers here, that have no certain dwelling place because the world is not their home? Is it not the family of God?

Along the same lines, Jesus spoke of a king which made a wedding feast for his son. Jesus said, "And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen."

We understand that those who are called into a wedding feast are those that are brought together to celebrate the upcoming marriage of the bridegroom to the bride. In the days of old, it appears that the guests were clothed with particular garments proving that they were the ones chosen to attend the feast. Anyone found without that certain kind of garment was uninvited, unwelcome, and was expelled.

This may seem cruel to those of the worldly religions, since they invite all without discrimination. The wedding garment is to them of no consequence. But it is essential to the King of Kings, that all who attend the wedding feast He prepared for His Son are clothed with the white robe of imputed righteousness of Christ washed in the blood of the Lamb. Those who come any other way than by the shed blood of Christ and in His righteousness are uninvited impostors. Those who come boasting of what they have done have on their own polluted garments. They shall be dealt with without mercy, because they showed no mercy in their lifetimes.

The ways of God and His thoughts are as high above ours as are the heavens above the earth. His ways are not our ways and His thoughts are not our thoughts. It is no wonder that the things of God are all in a mystery, so that no

one is able to intrude into the things of God. God confounds the wise and prudent of this world and brings their best and worst purposes to naught. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: and the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." May He be praised in all things world without end.

This was written in love, I trust, and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J. B. Farmer 2-7-2007

PSALM 86:1-2.

Bow down thine ear, O Lord, hear me: for I *am* poor and needy.

Preserve my soul; for I *am* holy: O thou my God, save thy servant that trusteth in thee.

CORRESPONDENCE

Brother Horton,

Enclosed is our check for renewing the Signs of the Times for 2 more years. We appreciate all that each of you Dear Brethren do to get this inspirational and informative writing to us. We always look forward to receiving it.

Our Love and Fellowship
Unworthy ones in hope
Calvin and Juanita Plybon

SIGNS OF THE TIMES
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, VA 24343

I am writing as the Clerk of Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, Athens, Georgia.... requesting that the enclosed obtituary of former member Howard Parham be published in Signs of the Times. Brother Howard, over the years, visited many of the "Old Baptist" churches in VA, NC, and SC.

Bryant Huff, Clerk of Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church

WYLIE FULTON
111 Robin Hood Dr.
Forest City NC 28043
November 29, 2017

SIGNS OF THE TIMES
Eld. Cleo Robertson
111 Livingston Dr.
Cary, NC 27513

Dear Elder Robertson,

At this time I want to send you two older obituary notices from our little Philadelphia Primitive Baptist Church, Ellenboro NC. (A day or so ago, I sent the obituary notice for Bro. Claude McKinney).

I hope maybe you could find space for these two also: Bro. Robert McDaniel and Sister Doris McKinney Edwards.

Thank you for your consideration of these announcements, as many of our people and distant friends love and read the dear old Signs, as we do also.

In Gospel Hope,
Wylie Fulton

December 30, 2017
Dearest Brother Cleo,

Enclosed is a sermon preached by Elder Spangler on fourth Sunday, June 25, 1972 at Dan River. It was recorded on a CD that my beloved Sister Jean Moran made for me before she was taken from our midst in 2010. That same CD had on it the recording of my baptism which took place on the fourth Sunday in July of 1972. I am sending you the sermon as I felt that the readers of the Signs might find comfort in reading it.

I wish I had words to express to you what this sermon meant to me. It expresses so beautifully the experience of a little child of grace as he is brought from under the condemnation of the law into the glorious liberty of Christ as the only way of salvation. What a blessed moment when one is blessed to feel the comfort and power of those words, "Let there be light, and there was light." And, to feel that after months of darkness and despair finally, there was a morning without clouds bringing to light a glorious view of the finished work of Christ.

Listening to this sermon after all those years brought back so many memories of those early days. I can remember in my teens reading the Bible and feeling that it unquestionably supported the belief in election and predestination of my grandparents and all those lovely old saints of that day. But, I also felt I knew something about the feeling that "this is a hard doctrine, who can hear it?" I felt that surely I had no part in this salvation by grace that I had heard from childhood on. What a wonderful blessing it was that day to hear this sermon and to feel that surely the Lord had blessed me with a morning without clouds! I believe I had always felt a love for those people, but I just felt there was no hope that I might be included with them. Although I was unable to ask for a home with the church that day, thanks be unto a merciful God that He blessed me to be baptized the following fourth Sunday. As I look back and remember the immense unworthiness that I felt that day, I find it is no different today. One of the most humbling aspects of my life has been the love of my brethren. I marvel, even now, that He would be so gracious and so kind to me as worthless and as undone as I seem to be most of my time. As time goes on, meeting with those of like precious faith becomes more and more precious to me and the wretchedness of my nature more keen.

You know, I believe that if indeed and in truth I have an experience of grace, it began with a grave concern about the hereafter and a dreadful fear of hell. But, I trust I was made to see that if hell was to be my home, His righteous law approved it well. Now, the dread of hell is not my greatest fear because I

know it's what I deserve. My greatest fear is that when I breathe my last breath, I won't feel the Lord there with me. To be banished from His presence would be the most dreadful of all occurrences. What a wonderful blessing it has been in my life to be gathered together with a portion of the Lord's people and to see Him in their contenances and to feel His sweet presence from time to time and to hear His voice in the many lovely sermons over the years.

May the Lord continue to bless you, Brother Farmer, Brother Tony, and all who work so diligently to publish the Signs. It has been a blessing to me for many years.

In bonds of love and fellowship,
Mary Hawkins

CHURCHES OF OUR FAITH

ZION'S LANDMARK

January - February, 1998

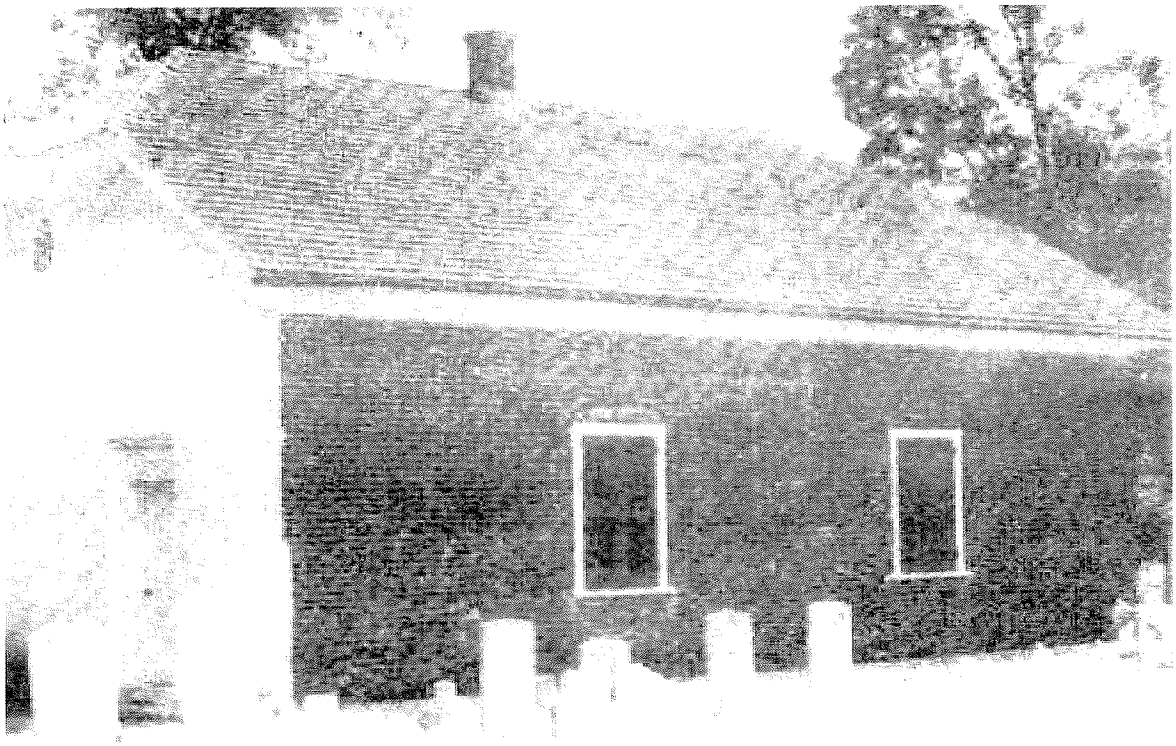

The building is the oldest of Primitive Baptists to have been built in the United States of America. The bricks, made in England, were brought by ship to Pennsylvania (now Delaware), and were brought to this site on mule-back, the mules being led by the sisters (women members) of the church.

WHICH IS THE OLDEST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH IN OUR COUNTRY, THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, AND WHERE IS IT LOCATED?

Dear Elder Mewborn,

Do you know which is the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in our country, the United States of America, and where is it located? I would like to know the answer to my question, and any information that you can give me about this church which I shall appreciate very much.

My grandmother, Sara Rebecca Hewett, united with the Simpson Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Horry County, South Carolina, in the year 1887. This church, Simpson Creek, is still standing today, and is a member of the Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Association. It is where my family and forebears worshipped in years past and gone, and has never wavered from the foundation upon which it was originally founded 150 years ago.

May I say that I enjoy reading your paper, Zion's Landmark, very much, and look forward to receiving each issue.

Sincerely, I trust, Lorraine Taylor
Charleston, South Carolina
October 28, 1997

REPLY TO THE ABOVE QUESTION

Quoting from Hassell's Church History (HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF GOD FROM THE CREATION TO A.D. 1885), pages 554-555 will be found the answer to our friend's, Ms. Lorraine Taylor's, question. We shall let the pages of this volume, Hassell's Church History, answer her question as follows:

THE WELSH TRACT CHURCH

"THE WELSH TRACT CHURCH, whose meetinghouse is two miles from Newark, in New Castle County, Delaware, is the oldest Old School or Primitive Baptist Church in the United States of America, and the only American Baptist Church that was regularly organized in Europe before emigrating to this country. It was first constituted in the spring of 1701 by sixteen Baptists in the counties of Pembroke and Carmarthen, in South Wales, England, with Thomas Griffith, one of their number, as their pastor.

"A "Church Emigrant," they embarked at Milford Haven in June, 1701, and landed at Philadelphia, Pa., September 8th, 1701. They first settled about Pennypack, near Philadelphia,

NAME PLATE MARKER IN FRONT GABLE OF BUILDING
"BM" standing for
"Baptist Meeting House" - 1746

where they continued about a year and a half, and where their membership increased to thirty-seven. Then they procured land in Northern Delaware from Messers, Evans, Davis and Willis, who had purchased upwards of 30,000 acres from William Penn, a Quaker, called the "Welsh Tract," and in 1703, they removed to that location, and built, near Iron Hill, a small log meeting-house, which stood until 1746, and was then succeeded by the present substantial brick house of worship.

"In the yard around this building rest the bodies of many of the pastors and members who, during almost two centuries, have met and joined here in the service of God.

"The Welsh Tract Church was one of the five original churches that, in 1707, formed the Philadelphia Baptist Association (the oldest Baptist Association in America), and for many years it was the most influential member of that body of churches.

"Until 1732, the Church Book was kept in the Welsh language; and for about seventy years the pastors (all) were of Welsh extraction. The Welsh are the most conservative people in Europe, their language and customs having undergone no radical changes for some twenty centuries. Mr. David Benedict, a 19th century historian, spoke in strong terms of "the order, intelligence, and stability of the Welsh Baptist Churches in America, and their sound, salutary and efficient principles," in that day and timein which he lived from the first pastor, beginning in Wales."

INTERESTING FACTS ARE TOLD, AS FOLLOWS, ABOUT THE LIFE AND HISTORY OF WELSH TRACT PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH.

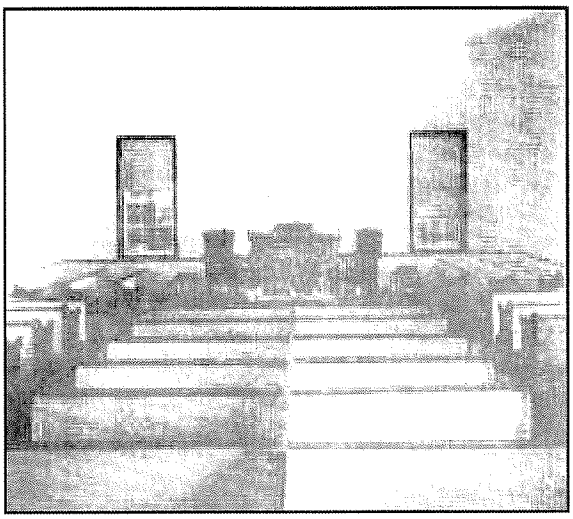

INTERIOR OF WELSH TRACT MEETING HOUSE

Photograph shows two aisles with typical "Amen Corners" for the seating of male members on one side of pulpit and female (sisters) on the other side of the pulpit, a Welsh tradition and mark of the early Baptist Church in England and Europe.

OLD WELSH TRACT, THE PATRIARCHATE CHURCH OF MANY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE U.S.A.

For the past twenty-five years that I have endeavored to publish the Zion's Landmark, questions, occasionally, concerning the history of the Primitive Baptist Church have been asked and we have always tried to answer them to the best of our ability. Since the question of

Ms. Lorraine Taylor concerns one of important history about the Primitive Baptist Church in America in identifying our oldest church, one that we feel, perhaps, will interest many of our subscribers and readers, we will devote some of the space of this issue to comply with her request, because of the rich heritage left to us by the Welsh Baptist brethren.

EARLY FOUNDING OF CHURCH IN WALES IN 1701
WOULD HAVE INFLUENCE IN FOUNDING OF MANY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCHES IN AMERICA
IN 18TH & 19TH CENTURIES

Hassell's Church History has answered her question, as we have published above, that the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, is our oldest one. It is interesting to note, although Ms. Taylor may not be aware, that both the spiritual and natural roots of her grandmother's, Sister Sara Rebecca Hewett's, church, Simpson Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Horry County, South Carolina, are traced to Welsh Tract Primitive Baptist Church that was organized in Wales, (England), in the year 1701, and settled permanently later in the year 1703, in New Castle County, State of Delaware. We hope to bring out some of the historical data of the ties of Welsh Tract Church with some of our churches in this day where we have visited many times in both North Carolina and South Carolina, in our lifetimes.

While I am aware that church history, as a rule, is dull and uninteresting to many people, yet there are some, as Ms. Taylor, who are interested in this vital subject concerning the existance of the militant church of Christ, as it has stood here in the world in the past, and also relates to us today. To those of us who are not interested, we ask that you forebear with us who are interested in this instance.

In reviewing this interesting history of the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in the United States of America, it becomes us to remember and pay a tribute of love and respect to the memory of those firm, uncompromising and unrelenting Welsh Baptists who courageously plied the briney, deep waters of the Atlantic Ocean, 3,466 miles away from our shore, three centuries ago, to blaze the virgin forests on American frontier soil that contained in those days savage Indians, an abundance of poisonous snakes, festy insects and wild animals in the uncleared wilderness swamps, plains and woodlands of the new world via Indian trails and log barges on streams and rivers in their endeavor to find a peaceful home to worship their God.

HARD RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION IN WALES AND ENGLAND FORCES THEM TO LOOK FOR NEW HOMES IN AMERICA

Why did these rugged people come to America over three hundred years ago, and more specifically, what was the real reason? There will be found only one true answer to this question. ANSWER: Their coming here was an attempt to escape religious persecution from the power of ruthless, earthly kings, queens, emperors, rulers, and dictators

because they would not fall down, as Shadrack, Meshack and Abednego, the three Hebrew boys, in the days of Daniel of old, to worship an image, as it had been set up by the Babylonian King, Nebuchadnezzar. Many of them suffered great pain and distress, even the loss of their own lives, because they would refuse for conscience' sake, and not succumb to the order to worship that which is false from their European kings, rulers and lawmakers.

The desire in the innermost parts of the hearts of these Welshmen was for the Godgiven privilege, to be able to "worship God, every man safely under his own vine and fig tree," none daring to molest or make afraid, according to the dictates of his own conscience. (Reference is had to 1st Kings 4:25 and Micah 4:4.)

This true, God-given desire of these Welsh Baptists was diametrically opposed to the forced worship of those earthly Kings and Queens of England in the Anglican Church in those days, better known today as the Church of England, also a daughter of Roman Catholicism. Interestingly enough, it is a matter of record today that these same Welsh Baptists were the first people in the State of South Carolina to initiate the disestablishment of that Anglican Church (Church of England) in that locality, as the one officially recognized by the Crown (King) of England in that colony 250 years ago. You worshipped their way, or else, prior to the American Revolution, 1776-1781. If you did not conform, you paid the consequences of the Royal law.

WELSH TRACT

Official North Carolina State Department of Archives and History marker, located on U.S. Highway 117, north of Burgaw, Pender County, N.C., identifying Welsh Tract Settlers in that area in the 1730's.

MARKS OF DEVOUT FAITHFULNESS TO THE CAUSE OF GOD AND HIS TRUTH CHARACTERIZE THEIR WALK IN THE EARLY DAYS OF OUR COUNTRY

Such devout faithfulness of those God-fearing Welsh pilgrims (immigrants from a troubled, foreign country) can be found in the history of the Welsh Tract Primitive or Old School Baptist Church, when the present (brick) structure was built in the year 1746 to replace the earlier log building of 1703 on the same location. This devoutness was made manifest when the bricks were made and purchased in England brought across the ocean on ships to Delaware, and were carried by mule-back from Newcastle, Delaware to the present lo-

cation, these mules being led by sisters (the women members) of the church.

During a raging battle of the American Revolution on September 3, 1777, Welsh members and soldiers during a hot battle were forced back from the British Army and took their last stand for refuge under the shelter of this old meeting-house, when a cannon ball passed through one of the walls of it from the artillery of their persecutors from England.

Where can we find more faithfulness today when men under heavy fire are forced to retreat to the walls of their own home to defend themselves from a devouring enemy, whether the home be natural or spiritual, rather than to surrender and succumb to its dreadful power and consequences? Where can we find more faithfulness today when the wives of husbands are willing to actually labor with their own hands to build the family's dwelling place by literal labour? Such love for the truth reminds me of the saying concerning the women in the scriptures"they were the last at the, cross, and the first at the tomb." Only the true love of God, shed abroad in the heart, accounts for such faithfulness in these two instances when it comes from the the church and the living God.

THEY UPHELD THE TRUE DOCTRINE OF THE SCRIPTURES AND BORE NO TRAITS OF UNSOUND DOCTRINE IN THEIR PRACTICE

These sturdy, staunch Welsh Baptists were strong believers in the doctrine of unlimited predestination, the free, unconditional election of the Church of God in the everlasting covenent by His free grace before the foundation of the world, and they rejected infant baptism. At the time when they came to America in 1701, their worship included the practice of "the laying on of hands" on all church members, as an ordinance when received into the fellowship of the church, along with the other two required church ordinances of baptism (total immersion) and communion or the Lord's Supper. They were unbending and unflexable at first with the deletion of the practice of "laying on of hands" on all church members, when received into the fellowship of the church, with other differing local Baptists already in the area, but gradually ceased from this practice over a period of time when they saw from the scriptures that "laying on of hands" applied only to the ordination of Elders and Deacons in the Church of God.

EARLY MIGRATIONS FROM PENNSYLVANIA AND DELAWARE LED TO ESTABLISHMENT OF CHURCHES IN BOTH NORTH CAROLINA AND SOUTH CAROLINA

There were three different migrations of these Welsh Baptists to the south in the years 1736, 1737 & 1741, from their colony at Welsh Tract in the State of Delaware. Two of them migrated to Welsh Neck (near Society Hill, Darlington County, South Carolina), to form the second oldest Baptist Church on the Great Pee Dee River in that state. Out of these two settlements indirectly

came four Primitive Baptist Churches, (Little) Pee Dee Church, located near Conway, Horry County, South Carolina (which disbanded about ten years ago), Simpson Creek Church, near Loris, Horry County, South Carolina, Mount Pleasant Church, Bishopville, Lee County, South Carolina, and Mill Branch Church, near Tabor City, Columbus County, North Carolina, as well as more in those areas.

One of these three Welsh Tract Baptist Church immigrant groups of the years 1736, 1737, & 1741, settled between the Northeast Cape Fear River and the main North Carolina Cape Fear River in what is today Pender County, North Carolina, as the N.C. Highway Historical Marker, situate just off Interstate 40, northwest from Wilmington, near Burgaw, on US Hwy. 117, substantiates by illustration as herein shown. The early Welsh pioneer families of Jones, Edwards, Williams, James, and Davis, were some of the founding family roots in Pender, Duplin, New Hanover and Onslow Counties, North Carolina, whose descendents were the constituting members of such churches as Muddy Creek, Duplin County, N.C., (1790), Limestone Church, Duplin County, N.C., (1780), Southwest Church, Onslow County, N.C., (1801), Wilmington Church, North Carolina, (1795), Riley's Creek, Slocumb's Creek, Cypress Creek, Duplin County NC (1820) and many others.

I often reflect back and think of those ministers and elders in the church in those days as Elder Jacob Williams, Elder Aaron Davis, Elder Job Thigpen, Elder James Cavanaugh, Elder Jabez Weeks, and others, all of Welsh extraction, who led in the organization of these churches from Welsh Tract influence, as verified by the North Carolina (State) Historical marker as pictured herein by illustration in this issue of Zion's Landmark.

Many were the times, when I was just a young boy, later a teenager, and finally a young man, over fifty years ago, of visiting in the homes of Elder Louis Williams and his brother, Brother Jerry Williams, pastor and deacon of Cypress Creek Church, who were descendents of Elder Jacob Williams, an early Welsh minister of almost 200 years ago. Also, Brother Tracey C. Edwards, a deacon of Muddy Creek Church, all of whom were firm in their convictions of the Gospel of everlasting truth.

THE WELSH JAMES FAMILY IN PENDER AND NEW HANOVER COUNTIES, NORTH CAROLINA

It is of particular significance that we note and record the place that the Welsh James Family played in the record and history of the Primitive Baptist Church, as well as the State of North Carolina. Charles Kuralt, the nationally recognized television journalist of CBS, who died May, 1997, was a great nephew of Sister India Morton Gurganus and her husband, Elder Ranson W. Gurganus, who resided at Jacksonville, North Carolina. No two staunch members of the Primitive Baptist Church ever lived who were any more faithful than

these two people. Sister Gurganus' family was of the Welsh James family of that area, who settled in that area from Welsh Tract in Pennsylvania and Delaware in the 1730's. (Please see historical illustration (marker) in this issue.)

In Charles Kuralt's book titled North Carolina is my Home, he left on record these words about his roots and anscestors: "The Baptists, Primitive Baptists, Separate Baptists ... preaching the gospel from any rough platform or tree stump, brought religion home to every crossroads." "And the red gullies of the Piedmont echosed the WELSH CHANTS." Interestingly enough, we cannot overlook the fact that Hinton James, a member of this same Welsh family, was the first student of the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill who walked all the way fromm Pender and New Hanover Counties, a one-way distance of approximately 160 miles, to become the first student of that renowned institution on February 12, 1795. The University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C., is the oldest state chartered university in the United States of America, and Hinton James was its first student on this date who waited two weeks before other students joined him.

PLAINNESS & SIMPLICITY MARK THEIR MANNERISMS IN THEIR WAY OF LIFE AND WORSHIP OF GOD

One genuine mark, trait or characteristic of these Welsh Baptists can be seen today throughout our land and country in the pattern, makeup and construction of our meeting or church houses. First, the exterior is always very plain with most of them having two front entrance doors, two aisles leading down to the pulpit area with both "Amen" corners always occupied by the male membership on one side and the female (sisters) membership occupying the opposite side. (See pictorial photograph herein of building.) The exact seating of the men and women on each side varies from church to church, but I have been told that the original setting included always in Wales with the men seated on the right side and the women seated on the left side of the pulpit.

Throughout the United States today especially on the eastern seaboard of those meeting houses yet standing, you will find these authentic marks & characteristics of the old Welsh Baptist Church, reaching all the way back to 1746, to 1701, and then for twenty centuries history of the British isles in the history of the Church of the Living God. Their meeting houses were always very plain, possessing only those things that are needed, and not possessing those things that are not needed. You may be sure that you will never find a choir loft behind any pulpit, nor a steeple perched atop any of these buildings, nor anything of worldly attrition.

In the division or separation of the Baptist Church in the year 1832 with the New School (or Missionary Baptists), these Welsh Baptists stood firmly, faithfully, & solidly in the cause of their Maker when they threw out the window the ministerial title of "Reverend", and agreed to retain the simple title of the scriptures

"elder" for the God-called minister or preacher. They retained, as in the construction of meeting houses, the simplicity of their worship services with the singing only of hymns, prayer and preaching (in that manner or order of worship) in their midst. This same mark continues today among true Primitive Baptists, anywhere and everywhere.

The practice of churches holding "Yearly" or "Annual" Communion meetings, which I have observed all of my life, originated and came directly from this group of Welsh Baptists, who were in Europe for at least 2,000 years before the discovery and founding of America, reaching back to the time of Christ and His apostles. This fact is proven in the 200th Anniversary address of Elder B.F. Coulter, (M.D.) that will be published in a subsequent issue of Zion's Landmark. They were very flexable in correcting errors in their midst, when shown by the Holy Ghost, as the practice of the "laying on of hands", as an ordinance for all members of the church which they discontinued as this church record points out.

WELSH TRACT CHURCH STOOD FAITHFULLY IN THE CAUSE OF GOD & TRUTH FOR TWO AND ONE-HALF CENTURIES

The old Welsh Tract Church of the Philadelphia Baptist Association of which it was an organizing member in 1707, to the year 1795, when it became an organizing member of the Delaware Old School Baptist Association, bore pure marks of the Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ. The Delaware Old School Baptist Association ceased to exist in the middle 1950's and for this period of time, 1707 to (abt.) 1955, a period of almost 250 years, Welsh Tract was a bright and shining light to the faithful of God, "a city that was set on a hill that could not be hid." Matthew 5:14.

In the year 1951 or 1952, it was my unworthy privilege to attend one of these last sessions of the Delaware Association that was held with Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, where I met Brother Charles Osborne, Quarryville, Pa., a deacon of this church, Brother T.C. Koch of Salem Church, Philadelphia, Pa., and Brother Charles H. Jarman, deacon of Welsh Tract Church. Never will I forget the able sermon I heard that day from Elder Arnold H. Bellows, West Hurley, New York, on the parable of the Pearl of Great Price, as found in Matthew 13:46. It was truly a sermon on the mount, and was one of the ablest sermons I have ever heard from any pulpit anywhere. My home church, Mewborn's Primitive Baptist Church, Greene County, North Carolina, was in fellowship with Welsh Tract Church and these brethren in those days.

WILLIAM PENN, AN ENGLISH QUAKER, WAS AN INSTRUMENT IN THE HAND OF GOD TO BLESS THE WELSH BAPTISTS IN AMERICA

It was by no accident, but rather in the divine providence of our merciful God, that William Penn (1644 – 1718),

an English Quaker, who was severely persecuted for his religious beliefs in England, as the Welsh Baptists, sold them a tract of 30,000 acres of land (then Pennsylvania, now Delaware). King Charles II owed William Penn's father an unpaid debt of $80,000, and paid it off by giving him wilderness land in America, which is today the State of Pennsylvania. With the sale of that 30,000 acres to the Welsh Tract Baptists by William Penn created a movement in the United States of America from which every Old Baptist today has a living part of an everlasting inheritance, and owes a lasting debt of gratitude.

Many have been the times, as I passed the Philadelphia City Hall, downtown Philadelphia, Broad Street, that I did not fail to gaze at his statue on top, recalling him as an instrument in the Hand of God to benefit and bless "His afflicted and poor people." Zephaniah 3:12.

Elder J.M. Mewborn
March 3, 1998

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 2 / 2018 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

VOICES OF THE PAST

Sermon by Elder David Spangler At Dan River Primitive Baptist Church June 25, 1972

"Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." The tenth and eleventh verses of the 1st chapter of 1st Peter.

By listening to our dear brother speak on one of the favorite scriptures of mine and of the morning without clouds, my thoughts went about like this, how many of us have seen in our life a morning without clouds, spiritually? There is such a thing, that men and women have known in their life, not the literal morning but a heavenly morning, a time when the darkness had passed and a joy that the Psalmist said cometh in the morning with a spiritual and a heavenly view of Christ the Lord. I believe that many, who listen to me this morning, have seen that morning. Some may not have seen the brightness of the Son as others, but to those who know the truth, there has been a morning in their life without clouds. When was that morning? It was the time, my friends,

when Christ appeared as your salvation; when you saw that His blood paid your debt for sin; when you saw that His righteousness would answer as your righteousness in heaven. When you saw that there was a justification in the blood of Christ, it was a morning without clouds. No one, who trusts in the doctrine of works, the doctrine of creature righteousness, the doctrine of human zeal, can ever know that morning for they will never know the night that precedes it. For, there must be an evening before there is a morning. There is in God's creation the evening was first and then the morning throughout the days of creation. No one, who believes in their own zeal or righteousness, can know the morning we are talking about — that our Brother has set forth. If we offend in one point of God's law, we are guilty of all of it. There is not a just person on the earth. If he trusted in his own works and had 99 percent of them and lacked one, the result would be the same. So, the only clear morning is in Christ.

Yesterday evening I spoke a short time on the fulfilling of the scriptures how that God from the very beginning had presented the promise of a Saviour to the people, how that these promises were renewed from time to time by an immutable God. Scripture is clear that wherever searching there was in the hearts of the prophets it was searching diligently for the things that would bring Christ into view. It was the spirit of Christ in them; it was the spirit of Christ in the prophets that prophesied of Christ. That's why the Apostle Peter said "searching what or what manner of time the spirit of Christ which was in them." This signified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.

Christ said to the people, while He was here, search the scriptures. I believe the Jewish people were readers of the scriptures and searched them. Yet with the searching and the reading of the law to them, they could not see Christ in it until He is revealed. "In them ye think ye have eternal life." No doubt the people thought eternal life was to be found in the scriptures, in the observing of various ordinances, in the times and the seasons — that there was eternal life, but He said "they are they that testify of me."

If we were blessed to really view the first chapter of the Bible, we could see, as we might say, the picture of salvation as God would unfold it in time. And in the unfolding of it would be the unfolding of the work of Christ in salvation. When God created the world, we are told, it was without form and void. That would be hard for us to comprehend in natural things, wouldn't it — something without form and void? The word "void", we would say, is something that doesn't exist, but in the clearness, the bringing out of that, which was that in creation, there was nothing yet clear — darkness covered the face of the earth — a mass of the darkness. Who knows how many thousands of years there was from the first day of creation until the seventh day. Nobody knows. There may have been thousands and thousands of years from the first day of creation until the second as far as we know. But, there was a time that the earth was without form and void.

I believe that time has been in the lives of people when there was a time that there was nothing clear with them. They desired salvation and felt probably it wasn't for them. They turned to the law and found that if they offend in one point they were guilty of all of them. They seek, as a man drowning, for something or to escape from death. Why — because nothing clear has appeared. Everything, as far as they are concerned is without form. No visible way of salvation do they see. And yet in that dark state of creation, something moved. Something moved and what was it? The first work of the Holy Ghost is brought to view, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. I believe, personally, that happens in the lives of people. I believe that somewhere in our life the Holy Spirit dispels that world of darkness, that world of confusion, that world where we had nowhere to turn. It dispels it and God said, "Let there be light". God speaks and there was light. Where was it — where all had been in darkness. How many of you, who listen to me this morning, can witness to a personal experience of the grace of God? If we don't have it, all of our reading, all of our singing, all of our praying, all of our efforts in religion are worthless if we don't have a personal experience of the grace of God in our soul. But, there is such a thing, my hearers, as the power of the Holy Spirit reaching a world that is in darkness, a world that is grasping for light, a place where there is no light, and God said, "Let there be light". If I'm not a deceived mortal, I remember that time in my own life. I remember when the darkness began to dispel. I remember when I began to see the work of Christ and my soul said, It'll save a hell deserving sinner like you are. And something began to take place where darkness existed. What had happened? God had said "Let there be light and there was light."

In all the creation of God I like to think, my hearers, that the God we read about in creation, the God that placed man in a garden, that the Son of God himself must go back and redeem His people in a garden. Why — because, he must go to where they fell. He must go beneath them. He must deliver them from hell. And the Spirit of Christ in all the prophets testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. If we were to think of the elements that compose this world, I would think of everything involved, where we turn, as God promising something spiritually. He divided the waters that were above and the waters that were beneath. Why and how? He placed a firmament there — that's how it was done. It speaks of Christ that divides the ungodly from the godly; the peoples in the earth that Christ himself has separated that He said I didn't come to bring peace but a sword and so forth. And then in that creation after a while the dry land appeared. After everything had been covered with water the dry land shows up. What it is — it's a promise of a resurrection of all that are buried in some time and some place. And the tree that was in the midst of the garden — I like that word midst. If you were to take that word midst and follow it in the Bible, you would find Christ. You know when He was cru-

cified, there were two thieves but it said "and Jesus in their midst." When David was anointed king over Israel, his brethren stood around him and he was a type of Christ and it said "and David in their midst". And all the things that we find, the tree of life was in the midst of the garden. The tree of life wasn't on the east side or the west side or the south side or the north side, it was in the midst of the garden. What does that show? It shows that Christ came right between the law and the gospel, brought in everlasting righteousness, and set up that salvation could never come to us by types and shadows. And it was the Spirit of Christ in the prophets that signified the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.

There is so much of this. The Bible is so full of it from the very first chapter to the last tracing Christ, tracing His work, tracing out His accomplishments. Somebody said well tell us a few of them — tell us a few of them. How did the scriptures foretell things? Who indited in the hearts of the prophets — the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit was Christ. It was the spirit of Christ in them and in signifying the sufferings and glory of Christ, what all did it pinpoint? It pinpointed the place of His birth. It said that now in Bethlehem Judah are not the least among the princes in Judah for out of thee shall come a governor that shall rule my people Israel. It pinpointed where he would go when he was born. It pinpointed where Joseph would go in to certain places that the Scriptures might be fulfilled — that out of Egypt have I called my son. It pinpointed the work of Christ. Scripture says, "He shall not fail or be discouraged until my righteous servant shall send forth judgment unto victory." Christ himself knew something about this that nobody else knew. He never revealed it to people and he knew and you know when the hour of the dying of Christ approached, He recognized it as one hour. He said, "Father the hour is come". Nobody else knew that hour but Christ. God knew it and the Father and the Son knew that hour. And when the hour was arriving it wasn't a hour — he said the hour is come, glorify thy son that thy son may also glorify thee. What else did he say? He said "for this hour was I born and for this purpose came I into the world". So there were some things that Christ didn't show his people in connection with his suffering and his death and his resurrection — that they had to wait to see. That in all this it was the spirit of Christ in the prophets pinpointing the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.

You know there are such certain things that we get into in the Bible that just gets larger and larger and larger and larger that we feel that we are almost lost. And I think of that of the portrayal of Christ in the old Bible — that the things of nature — God took the things of nature to show His Son. "He shall be," He said, "as the tree planted by the waters whose leaf shall not wither" and so forth in the first Psalm "and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." "He shall be like a vine." Christ shall be like a vine. The Bible said "Joseph is a fruitful bough by a well whose branches ran over the wall". What's he talking about — the

prophesying of Christ and the gospel going from the Jews to the Gentles running over the wall. And the archer sorely wounded him — that's a picture of Christ in nature. He is set forth in there also as a rock, a rock "Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone and he that believeth on him shall not be ashamed and shall not make haste." He is set forth as a tree in the Bible that was cast into the waters when the waters were bitter. And if you haven't experienced it, that will only be an account of part of the old Bible to you. But, if there have been bitter trials to you in this world, God has brought you low before Him and Christ has sweetened those trials and those crosses in your life, then the tree has been made sweet and the waters have been made sweet in your life. These are just a few, my friends, they are innumerable.

The Sun speaks of Christ and the prophet Malachi in closing the old Bible, after all that has been said in the old Bible about Christ, then, he brings it home to the people and what it means to them. And he said, "Unto you who fear his name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings."

Wasn't it a great day in the world, when He who came to dispel the darkness of the earth, that He could on the mount say to them, "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven". Are you glad, my friends this morning, that He said these things? Are you glad that your heart has been made acceptable to these things? "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled. "If your soul has hungered and thirsted for righteousness, just that sure it shall be filled. It's like a rising out of a dark night — Christ coming to a sinner. It's like a man coming out of a wilderness, coming out of a wilderness and the more he gets out of the wilderness, the more he realizes there is nothing behind but a wilderness. And the more he sees of Christ the more he will say to the Lord, show me more of Him. The Spirit of Christ signified the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. The whole New Testament is embodied with these two thoughts and its in all the Bible.

The moon — somebody says where does the moon come in? The moon is a type of the law and it was placed for a purpose to give light by night. But you know nothing can be seen clearly by moonlight. You know what's happened to me a time or two — I've been fool enough to think the moon was so bright that I could drive the car by moonlight— cut my lights off. That's sounds silly, doesn't it? But, it showed me I couldn't make my way by moonlight, but I cut them off just to see anyway. And, I found out, right quick that it wasn't as bright as I thought it was. What's the thought there? Now, no one under the doctrine of the law can see anything clearly. No one that trusts in their own works and righteousness can see salvation clear. It's like the moonlight. And you know, the woman in Revelations, she was clothed with the sun, and the moon was under her feet showing that Christ has fulfilled the law to a jot and a tittle for His people. To a jot and to a tittle and the moon was under her feet and a crown of twelve stars was upon her head. The twelve

stars were the doctrine of the twelve apostles. People tell you there have been more of them, but there haven't been more than twelve. And the stars portray the children of God, too. The Bible says as one star exceeds another star so is the resurrection of the dead. What does it mean? Does it mean John will have a high seat in heaven and Mary a low seat? Oh no! Oh no, it doesn't mean that. I know that is a sweet thought to the flesh that somebody is going to have a higher seat over there and somebody is going to have a lower seat but they'll be there just the same. That's not what the scriptures teach. It shows that as one star differs from another in glory so is the resurrection of the dead. But this mortal body that stands before you, if I'm one of the people of God, that there will be such a difference in that day, it'll be like the exceeding of one star of another in glory. It won't be two stars, but our vile bodies that stand here, and they are vile bodies. Who knows it? I know it and you know it. Dying bodies — they're dying every day — approaching death every hour. Every minute of our life we're approaching death. What will be the outcome? That's a solemn question, my friends, what will be the outcome? "When thou my righteous judge shall come to fetch thy ransomed people home, shall I among them stand? Shall such a worthless worm as I?" How many of God's people have felt they were nothing but a worthless worm before God? "Who sometimes am afraid to die, be found at thy right hand?" No wonder Lady Huntington of England, who was of the royalty of England, said, who composed that hymn, and she said, "Prevent, Prevent it by thy grace. Be thou, dear Lord, my hiding place in that most solemn day. Then loudest of the crowd I'll sing while heaven's resounding mansions ring with shouts of sovereign grace." My friends, we'll be changed — we'll be changed from natural. Paul said that which is first is not spiritual but that which is natural and afterwards that which is spiritual. And, as we have born the image of the earthly we shall so bear the image of the heavenly. My beloved brethren this morning, someday in the fullest extent the people of God shall bear the image of Christ. They'll have spiritual bodies. They'll awake some morning. They'll awake some morning. I've woke many times with terrible pain. I've woke a number of times and thought this is the end. But that will be a day, my friends, when the people of God will awake in the likeness of Christ to change our vile bodies and they'll be fashioned like the glorious body of Christ. I know I haven't followed the text. My mind has been so stirred in these things.

Elder David Spangler
Sent in by Mary Hawkins

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 2017

John W. Schulz, WY	500.00
Garlon Vick, NC	25.00
Nellie Dalton, VA	15.00
Peggy Phillips, VA	5.00
Mrs. Bodie Lankford, LA	35.00

OBITUARIES

DORRIS McKINNEY EDWARDS
(1917 - 2017)
Age 100, 1 month and 1 day

Dorris McKinney Edwards was a dear sister and a faithful friend to all who knew her. She grew up going to Philadelphia Primitive Baptist Church of Ellenboro NC, and after she was married to Heath Edwards continued faithfully all her life. Dorris and Heath did many things for the church and the community that would probably be too numerous to include here.

Born in Ellenboro on June *5,* 1917, she lived to become a Centenarian and passed away following an extended illness on July 6, 2017 - a month following her 100th birthday! She was the last survivor of the 10 children born to the late John Alexander and Johnnie Price McKinney. Dorris lived most of her adult life in Charlotte where she worked as a corporative secretary for Belk Stores, Inc. for 40 years. Following retirement, she and her husband returned to Rutherford County, building a house in the Philadelphia Church area, and continued attending the church they loved.

In addition to her siblings, Dorris was preceded in death by her husband of 61 years, Walter Heath Edwards, who died in 2008. Survivors included a niece and several nephews, as well as a number of great-nieces and great-nephews who were very special to her.

She loved the "old paths" of the "faith once delivered unto the saints," and some of her last wishes were that the dear little Philadelphia might continue and once again prosper as a fellowship of like-minded dear pilgrims of Zion in our community.

Written by one who loved her,
Wylie Fulton

ROBERT "BOBBY," McDANIEL

The Lord has seen fit, in His infinite wisdom, to call Home from this world of sin and sorrow, a dear friend and lover of the truth of God's sovereign grace and absolute predestination --- Brother Robert Oliver "Bobby" McDaniel.

Bobby was born July 20, 1934 in Ellenboro NC. His parents were William Van and Caroline Wilson McDaniel. They were owners and operators of the Colfax Gin, a very prominent business in Ellenboro. Bobby and his brothers followed in the family business which included growing many hundreds of acres in cotton each year. Our dear friend graduated from old Ellenboro High School, Class of 1952. He joined the Army and became an MP, serving mostly in New Mexico -- but after completion of his tour of duty, Bobby was anxious to return home to the fields and the gin, where he remained the rest of his life.

Although never married, Bobby is survived by his brother Joe McDaniel (and wife Betty), and a sister Mary McDaniel Lewis, both of Ellenboro, and

additionally two nieces and two great-nephews, in whose love he delighted. He was pre deceased by his parents, and also by his brother Sammy McDaniel and sister Caroline McDaniel Jones. Bobby passed away after a brief illness on February 5, 2017, and is greatly missed by all of us.

Our dear friend grew up around Old Baptists and no doubt attended Philadelphia Primitive Baptist Church as a youngster with his parents. For years he stayed away from the church, only attending occasionally, but we gladly report that he returned several years ago and, while he never joined, was very faithful in attendance and helping in every possible way to serve the brethren and friends. He loved the Gospel of Christ as preached by Elder Ralph Dale, and told me that this preaching meant more to him than anything he had ever heard. Bro. Dale conducted his funeral service on February 7th at the Padgett & King Funeral Chapel in Forest City NC.

I know not whether Bobby was a regular reader of the Signs of the Times, but he knew and loved the truth and felt himself to be a poor unworthy sinner trusting in free grace alone. He knew the truth and walked in love toward the dear family of God – and our hope is that the Lord has taken him HOME to be in that eternal fellowship of the "church of the firstborn who are written in Heaven." We bow in submission to the holy will of God in this, as in all things.

Reported by one who loved him,
Wylie W. Fulton, Forest City NC

CLAUDE M. McKINNEY

On September 22nd, it pleased our Lord to call Home a dear Old School Baptist, a rare and sincere lover of the truth as it is in Jesus, Brother Claude M. McKinney of Ellenboro NC. Brother Claude was, for a number of years, a faithful member of Philadelphia Primitive Baptist Church -- we are a very small band of believers in the Grace of God down here where there are very few churches of truth in this entire area.

Claude Max McKinney was born June 19, 1935 and passed away after a few months' illness on September 22, 2017. He was a humble brother who delighted to walk in the "old paths," and was never afraid to stand out for the truth of God. He united with the church some years ago and from the human standpoint did much to help in the furtherance of a place of truth in this community - even when the church was very small and faint and seemed ready to die. I know this to be the truth, because he encouraged me in definite ways, and we loved each other in Christ and in the Old School faith. He was a longtime reader of the Signs of the Times and a few other Primitive papers, and felt he knew many of the brethren and sisters who, though at some distance removed from him, were nevertheless walking in the path of Truth and order as set up by Christ in the New Testament. And, though he felt in himself to be a poor unworthy sinner, we feel that he has left us a noble example that we should walk therein.

Funeral services were conducted on Sunday, September 24th, at the

Padgett and King Funeral chapel in Forest City NC. The welcome and Scripture comments were given by Elder Ralph E. Dale, assisted by two local ministers, Chris Hensley and Scott Huffman. Burial was in the Bethel Church cemetery in Ellenboro.

Our beloved brother is survived by his wife of 50 years, Genell Parker McKinney, and two sons, Scott McKinney, and wife Sarah, and Greg McKinney; one brother William McKinney and his wife Mary Elizabeth, a granddaughter Alexandra McKinney, three stepchildren and several nieces and nephews. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."

Submitted by one who loved him dearly,

Wylie W. Fulton

HOWARD E. PARHAM

We, members of Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, of Athens, Georgia, bow in submission to the Lord's calling home of our Brother, Howard E. Parham, on June 22, 2017.

Born May 12, 1920, our brother was a long time member of our church in fellowship one with another. Brother Howard expressed his knowledge of the truth of the scriptures as he was given to know from an early age, always confessing and acknowledging that it was a gift given to him by his Lord and Savior. Brother Howard joined the Lystra Primitive Baptist Church on 26 August 1951. A Faithful Member, and long after there were no longer enough members to sustain the church, Brother Howard maintained the building and grounds for many years.

Born in Comer, Georgia, his lifetime residence, he served his country honorably overseas during World War II... a farmer, mechanic and master of all trades he was known far and wide for his honesty and fair dealings with all. Brother Howard attended as a member of Mount Zion Primitive Baptist Church until his health no longer permitted.

Funeral services were held June 25, 2017, at the Lord and Stephens, Madison Chapel, with his pastor, Elder Kenneth Adams, officiating with interment at the Meadow Cemetery.

Read, and Ordered entered into the Minutes of our church records this 8th day of October 2017.... Let a copy of this be delivered to his children.

So Ordered:
Kenneth Adams, Pastor
Hewatt Fleming, Deacon
Bryant Huff, Clerk

A true copy on file of minutes Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, Athens, GA

Bryant Huff, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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HYMN

A few more days on earth to spend,
And all my toils and cares shall end,
And I shall see my God and friend,
And praise his name on high:
No more to sigh or shed a tear,
No more to suffer pain or fear,
But God, and Christ, and heaven appear
Unto the raptured eye.

Then, O my soul, despond no more,
The storm of life will soon be o'er,
And I shall find the peaceful shore
Of everlasting rest.
O happy day! O joyful hour!
When freed from earth my soul shall tower,
Beyond the reach of Satan's power,
To be for ever blessed.

My soul anticipates the day;
I'll joyfully the call obey
Which comes to summon me away
To seats prepared above:
There I shall see my Saviour's face,
And dwell in his beloved embrace,
And taste the fulness of his grace,
And sing redeeming love.

Adieu, ye scenes of noise and show,
And all this region here below,
Where naught but disappointments grow;
A better world's in view.
My Saviour calls, I haste away;
I would not here for ever stay;
Hail! ye bright realms of endless day;
Vain world, once more, adieu.

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EDITORIAL

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in **their affliction, *and* to keep himself unspotted from the world."** James 1:27

Elder Jerry B. Farmer

There are many things in the world that are called religions. In some so-called pagan religions, the sun and moon and stars have been worshipped. Some have taken up the worship of the natural world in general. Some have looked to so-called "prophets" of the past for wisdom and for paths to right living. Some have made idols of wood or stone or precious metals and precious stones and have fallen down before them and have called upon them for guidance and deliverance. Some have even taken to themselves the name of God the Father or of His Son Jesus the Christ, but go about denying the true faith in words and deeds. Out of the innumerable multitudes of people upon the earth, only a very small remnant composed exclusively of God's elect has been given wisdom to serve the true and living God in that pure, undefiled religion in Spirit and in truth, by the grace and mercy and power of God.

There is a great difference between the false religions of the world and the pure religion of God. All the false religions have several things in common. They all have at their heart the teaching of the "free will of man." They all say that it is up to the individual to make the proper choices and prosper, or to make the improper choices and suffer the consequences. They all teach that their god can only work in a person's life to the extent that a person will allow it. They all teach that if the "good" deeds of an individual outweigh the "bad" ones, that individual will have a good outcome when his life is completed. They also teach the reverse — too many "bad" deeds will result in a bad outcome. They all subscribe to a certain code of behavior, which, if obeyed, they think will result in a kind of salvation. To sum it up, every false religion is a works religion that denies the grace and power of God.

They have no perceived need of the Savior. On the other hand, the pure and undefiled religion is grounded in the grace, love, wisdom and power of the God of heaven and earth.

The pure religion of God is altogether hidden from the person in a carnal mind. He, spiritually, has neither the eyes to see it, nor the ears to hear it, nor the heart for the understanding of it. It is written, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." It also seems plain from the scriptures that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." It matters not how diligently the things of the spiritual kingdom are inquired into, they are always hidden from the one in nature. It matters not how carefully a spiritual thing is explained — even in truth the carnal mind cannot comprehend it. The simplest thing, of which a little babe in Christ is given an understanding, is a mystery, world without end, to the wise and prudent of this present evil world.

Since the pure religion of God is altogether hidden to the world, how then may anyone know anything about it? Since the things of God are in a mystery past finding out by the natural man, who may know any of them? And who is it that even has an interest in these things? These seem to me to be key questions. Since we are helpless in ourselves to know the things of the kingdom of God, it seems beyond a doubt in my mind that the things of God may only be known by revelation. God said that He hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes. Now, the babes must be the children of God, who are born from above. They are the only ones given a perfect interest in the things of the spiritual kingdom. If we are His children, born into the kingdom of God, we are given to desire to know the things of the kingdom. But we cannot just reach out and take them --- all we are enabled to do is to ask for wisdom and then to wait upon the mercies of God. It is written one place, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." Consessing our lack of wisdom, we beg that God would condescend to show us what is the pure religion and undefiled before God the Father, and what it is to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

The apostle James, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, describes the pure and undefiled religion. He says that it is "to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." But we know that this pure religion and this keeping cannot be what it seems to be, as understood by the carnal mind, else revelation would not be required to know it. The world of false religion takes this literally and sets out to do a supposed good work by visiting and providing for natural orphans and natural widows. We also see them urging people to keep themselves by the works of the flesh. We see them as they go around the world, finding people in distress and begging for money to help relieve their misery. This might seem to

be a worthy natural endeavor, but do we really know where the money goes? Do we really know what sort of people these are that put on a religious face? Do we really know what lifestyles they lead on the money they take in? Do we really know the depths of the false doctrine they teach to those they seem to be helping? Is providing naturally for indiscriminate people of the world really what James was indicating as pure religion and undefiled before God the Father? I am fully persuaded that the answer to each of the questions is, no.

Then what was James writing about? Who are the fatherless and who are the widows? And what does it mean to keep oneself unspotted from the world? I am made to believe that the fatherless and the widows refer to those who are destitute and helpless in this world according to the Spirit. They are those who are of a broken heart and a crushed spirit because of sin --- those who are deeply in debt spiritually with no way to pay what they owe. They are those who are pilgrims in a desert land - a strange land where no man has pity – a wilderness where there is no food or water to sustain their life. They are those who are totally dependent upon the grace of God for survival and deliverance. They are the children of God. And we are taught by experience that it is impossible to keep oneself unspotted from the world. Because, when we would do good, evil is present with us. How to perform that which is good we find not. So, those who keep themselves unspotted from the world, no doubt to me, are those who have committed their keeping to Him that is able to do all things. The apostle said, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day."

May we take a brief look at what God did in Elijah's day? The scriptural account is found in the first book of Kings, chapters 17 and 18. God caused Elijah to pray that it rain not upon the earth. And a great drought came upon the land, which lasted for a period of three and a half years (a time and times and half a time). Near the beginning of the drought, Elijah was sent to a certain widow of Zarephath that was to sustain him during that time. When he came to the gate of the city, there was a widow woman gathering sticks. She and her fatherless son were destitute and were thinking to die shortly because there was not enough food to sustain them. She was gathering sticks in order to dress a little cake for her son and herself, which she thought would be their last meal upon earth. Elijah asked her for a drink of water, which she gave him. Then he asked for a little bread to eat. She told him she only had a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse. And she said she meant to prepare that for her son and herself that they may eat it and die. Elijah then asked a hard thing. He asked her to make a cake for him first and to bring it to him, and after to make for herself and her son. All the substance of the widow and of her son was required. And she gave it in faith. But she and her son were not left to die. "And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the

word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah." Does this make you think of the widow that Jesus saw casting her two mites into the treasury? She had given all she had, even all her living. Jesus commended her and said that she had given more than the others, since the others gave out of their abundance and she gave out of her want. I cannot imagine that she was left to die, but rather I am made to believe that she was sustained all her days by the mercies of God, as have been all of God's little ones in this barren land.

There, to me, is the picture of the fatherless ones and the widows that James wrote about. They are the children of God, who by the gift of faith in God, are made to present their bodies a living sacrifice, which is their reasonable service, which is wholly acceptable unto God. These are the ones who are made to lay down their lives for their brethren. They are the ones who Jesus will set on His right hand when He comes in glory. He said that they had given Him meat and drink when He was hungry and thirsty. And they had clothed Him when He was naked, and had come unto Him when He was sick and in prison. They are the ones who didn't even realize that they had done a good work. These are the children of God. They are made to commit all unto God and shall never be disappointed because He keeps His own. He promised that He would never leave you nor forsake you. And He cannot lie or fail in a promise.

This also makes me think of the woman spoken of in Revelation chapter 12. If not deceived, this woman represents the church of the living God. She was persecuted by the dragon, who is the devil. It is written, "And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." The wilderness is where the church is found, even where Jacob was found. Of God and Jacob it was written, "He found him in a desert land, and in a waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." The church, or the assembly of God's children, is carried by God into a desert land where it is nourished for a time and times and half a time, even as the widow and her son were preserved long ago. I am made to believe that this period of time is the same as the length of the drought in the days of Elijah, and that it stands for the total time from the beginning of the church until the coming of Christ to receive her to Himself. This, to me, is the same as the thousand years reign of Christ in his people, the church. It is the total time of the drought in the desert land where the church is placed and nourished, or the time when Jesus is not bodily with His people. It is also the span of time when He is with them in the Spirit prior to His coming bodily in great power and glory. It is evident that the drought is in the land, not in the church, because the church is nourished and sustained there.

In conclusion I must say that the pure religion that is undefiled before God the Father is the only true religion. It is alto-

gether of grace and none of works. All other religions are false and counterfeit and worthless before God, like the religion of Cain. Only the little children of God ever have a part in the pure religion that is undefiled before God the Father, as did Abel. They are the only ones that are given to know the identity of the widows and the fatherless. Only they are enabled to understand the extent of the afflictions and persecutions of God's children as they travel in this world of wickedness. Only they are enabled to comfort and strengthen and encourage one another in the gospel of the grace of our Lord Jesus the Christ, as they travel together along the way. To them only is it revealed, from faith to faith, what the children of God must suffer. Only they are taught by experience of the hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and what it is to be poor and miserable and naked and blind spiritually. Only they have been given knowledge of what it is to be sin sick and in prison and under the bondage of Satan. Only those who have been generated of God are enabled to see and to enter into the spiritual kingdom and to embrace one another in it. Only God's little ones have the experience of passing from death to life, and being made to truly love their brethren. Only they are blessed to lay down their lives for one another, and to cast themselves upon the mercy and grace of God for their keeping. They are the only ones that "are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

May The God of heaven and earth give us a spiritual understanding of these things. May God be praised in all things, world without end. This was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J. B. Farmer
9-7-2005

CORRESPONDENCE

January 14, 2018

Elder Cleo Robertson
111 Livingstone Dr.
Cary, NC 27513

Dear Elder Robertson

Elder Lowell Hopkins said you would put our meetings into The Signs of The Times, I am enclosing the meetings by month.

I would also like to purchase a subscription, please advise the cost and I will send you a check.

I am a member of the Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association, membership at Goldsboro Church.

I look forward to receiving my first copy of The Signs of The Times.

Yours truly,
Martha Grady
506 Forest Hill Dr.
Goldsboro, NC 27534
252-245-0993

1/23/18

Dear "Signs of the Times,"

Please find enclosed a check for $25.00 to renew our subscription for 2 years. The sermons / articles that we read mean so much to us.

Love,
Tony & Leah Brewer

January 14, 2018

Dear Brother Horton,

Enclosed is a check for $15.00 to renew my subscription to the Signs for another year.

I want to say how much I look forward to reading the Signs each month, finding the same comfort for over 40 years. My parents introduced me to it, if memory serves.

May God continue to bless you and be with all for the work and dedication to keep this dear magazine coming to those who are blessed and fed by the dear Lord through its pages. Thank all of you, it means so much to so many.

A Sister in Hope,
Gloria B. Reese

COLOSSIAN 2:6

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* walk ye in him." Col. ii. 6.

ARTICLES

David prayed **"Show me a token for good"** (Psalm 86:17). The Lord's people, as David, desire and pray that the Lord may show them a token for good that will strengthen and revive their hope in the Lord. They are often cast down in spirit with fears and doubts and made to wonder as the poet:

"Tis a point I long to know;
Oft, it causes anxious thought
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not"

God's children often feel that they are deceived in their hope of eternal life. They see not in themselves the evidences of grace, no "tokens for good." But one should not think that because he sees not his tokens, he therefore has none. These tokens or evidences are often hidden from God's people for the trying of their faith. When the Lord is pleased to exercise the faith and hope in a child of grace, his heart is stirred to humbly cry unto the Lord his God to show him a token for good. The Lord always answers the prayers that He causes His children to pray, but not always in the manner or way they think. John Newton expressed this in a hymn:

"I asked the Lord that I might grow
In faith, love, and every grace; Might more of his salvation know,

And seek more earnestly his face.
Twas he who taught me thus to pray;
And he, I trust, has answered prayer;
But it has been in such a way
As almost drove me to despair."

Dear child of God, do you feel that if a saint, you are the least of all and the chief of sinners? Have you been made to cry "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Do you feel your vileness and the exceeding sinfulness of your sins? Do you hunger and thirst after righteousness? If so then you are blessed of the Lord. These are tokens for good. Is it your desire to be brought near unto the Lord, to rejoice in Him, and to feel His abiding presence?

God is nearest to His children when He seems far away. "The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." Is not a broken and contrite spirit an infallible token for good? As the angel troubled the water of the pool Bethesda which cured the first that stepped in, so the Lord troubles the souls of His people first and then comes unto them with healing in His wings.

The Lord does give unto His children tokens for good as needed to encourage them as they travel in this wilderness world. We do feel to give thanks unto the Lord for all His tender mercies.

In Hope,
Elder Ralph Dale

CHURCHES OF OUR FAITH

SPRING GREEN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Spring Green Primitive Baptist Church, located between Robersonville and Hamilton (Martin County North Carolina) recently received historic designation placing the structure on Martin County's Historic Church Trail. This recognition was made possible through the Martin County Tourism Development Association which is paying tribute by placing a historical marker on ten churches throughout the county who have made significant contributions to the religious and cultural history of the area.

Although the Spring Green Primitive Baptist Church (Kehukee Association) discontinued holding meetings in the early 1980's, the church and adjoining cemetery continue to be maintained thanks to the ongoing efforts of a preservation group. The Spring Green Preservation Fund. The church property is owned by descendants of the late Elder W.E. Grimes whose ministerial services spanned 1936-1968. The Grimes family along with numerous other individuals with ties to the church have worked diligently to upkeep and maintain the property.

Spring Green Primitive Baptist Church was constituted in the year of our Lord 1811 with a group of seventeen members. They called Elder William Hyman to be the church's first pastor. According to records the first church building was a log structure which had a dirt floor. The building was enlarged around the year 1851 but later was destroyed by fire. It was after this tragic loss that on Dec 14, 1878 Brother Franklin and Sister Ida Taylor deeded five acres of land to the church for the construction of a new house of worship.

It is thought that the present building was built on the site where the first church burned and ultimately the congregation moved across the road and built the present day structure. Church records indicate the building was completely erected in a three week time span. At one time the church was considered the largest Primitive Baptist Church in the state of North Carolina. In 1885 the membership of the church was 100. The Kehukee Association of which Spring Green was a part once consisted of 41 churches, none of which are in existence today except in the minds and hearts of many old Baptist brethren.

Among numerous Elders fondly recalled who once served Spring Green are Elder George D. Roberson, who is also buried in the nearby cemetery. As an example of what a great impact the church had upon the religious and spiritual life of the community it was not unusual for the Kehukee Association's annual meeting attendance to exceed 5,000 people.

In more recent years the church was served by Elders Ephraim C. Harrison and W.E. Grimes.

Written by Steve Everett

POEM FROM AS THE DAYS OF A TREE

By Sister Edrie Clifton

GROWING OLD

They call it "going down the hill"
when we are growing old,
They speak with mournful accents
when our tale is nearly told.
They sigh when talking of the past,
the days that used to be,
As if the future were not bright
with immortality.

But it is not going down,
'tis climbing high and higher
Until we almost see the mountains
that our souls desire.
For if the natural eye grows dim,
it is but dim to earth,
While the eye of faith grows keener
to discern the Saviour's worth.

Who would exchange the shooting blade,
for the waving golden grain?
Or if the corn was fully ripe,
would wish it green again?
And who would wish the hoary head,
found in the way of truth,
To be again encircled
with the sunny locks of youth?

AS THE DAYS OF A TREE

For though in truth the outward man
must perish and decay
The inward man shall be renewed
by grace from day to day.
Those who are planted by the Lord
unshaken in the root,
Shall in their old age flourish
and bring forth this choicest fruit.

It is not years that make us old,
the spirit may be young,
Though fully threescore years and ten
the wheels of life have run.
God hath Himself recorded
in the blessed words of truth
That they who wait upon the Lord
Shall e'er renew their youth.

And earth dimmed eyes shall open clear
to see the Heavenly King,
And ears now dull with age shall hear
the song the angels sing;
And when the hoary head shall wear the
more than crown of gold,
Then shall we know the holier joys
of never growing old.

(Selected from:
The Gospel Messenger
Dated October, 1897)

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE ATONEMENT.

NEW VERNON, N. Y., August 28, 1833.

PERHAPS among all the rich displays of the adorable God head which shine forth with refulgent brightness in the works of creation, providence and grace, none can be found to out shine in splendor, or outweigh in importance, that which develops the purpose and grace of God in causing his sword to awake against the Man that is his Fellow, and which sets forth the atonement made by our Lord Jesus Christ for his people.

No human talent can express, nor human wisdom comprehend, the fulness of this delightful doctrine; in the contemplation of which, the rich association of considerations flowing into the mind of the saints, are such as to absorb the mind in wonder and admiration. In our feeble efforts to declare what we have been taught by the word and Spirit of God on this subject, we know not where to begin, how to pursue, or where to leave off. The atonement has God for its author, Jesus Christ for its victim, or sacrifice, the salvation of the elect of God for its object, eternal truth for its security, and almighty power for its execution. In the atonement all the attributes of Deity are displayed glowing inexpressible beauty and grandeur.

In the eleventh number of this volume, we gave a summary view of the doctrine of the total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man, in which we traced his history from primeval rectitude and innocency, through his unhappy fall, and by an application of divine truth showed that he, in his fallen state, is" dead in trespasses and sins, "justly condemned by the righteous and inflexible law of God, and under its tremendous curse; without an eye to pity, or an arm to administer relief. There we left him, promising that in the present article we would treat upon the only possible way of salvation, brought to light through the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, which we promised to prove by the scriptures to be special and particular.

Notwithstanding the frequent occurrence of the word atonement in the Old Testament, we find it used but once in the New Testament, viz: Romans v., where it is brought forward by the apostle as the ground of the justification of the church of God, and of reconciliation to God. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." In the light of this scripture we clearly discover that the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ was definite. Definite first, in reference to the purpose of God. The specific objects ascribed to God by the apostle are the commendation of his love toward those

who are with himself included in the pronoun us, and in connection with this divine exhibition, their justification by his blood, and ultimate salvation through him. Second, the characters for whom the atonement was made are definitely pointed out, viz: they are those who do eventually rejoice in God, through Christ Jesus, and by him receive the atonement.

Third, the vicarious nature of the atonement is definitely expressed in the connection, "Who was delivered for our offences, (agreeing with the prophet Daniel, that Messiah should be cut off, but not for himself,) and raised again for our justification." For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commended his love, &c, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Here we discover that the people for whom Christ was made an offering were sinners, without strength, &c., and as sinners they were condemned and under sentence of death by the law. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." The irrevocable decree has passed! Heaven and earth should pass away, but not one jot or tittle of the law should fail until it should be completely fulfilled. But while this was our deplorable situation," in due time Christ died for us." But how for us? Most certainly in our room. For if he had not borne the curse for us, we certainly must have borne it, and sunk down forever under its weight. We cannot conceive how this substitution can destroy the relation which Christ as a spiritual Head bears to his church, but rather, in our view of the subject, it opens the way to make a fair display of that unity and oneness which has ever existed between them in a spiritual sense. "And he is the head of the body, the church, &c., and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven." "And you, that were some time alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled." — Col. i. 18-21.

"When in the contemplation of the atonement and redemption of our Lord Jesus Christ, the" man in Christ" is caught up to the third heaven, and is there made acquainted with, those divine mysteries which cannot be expressed by human tongues; and amidst the glorious scenery of that bright world, his eye is fixed on one who was as "A Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," he is led to inquire, "Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth the winefat?" "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on. him the iniquity of us all." — Isaiah liii.

The design of the atonement was that he might redeem us from all iniq-

uity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." — Titus ii. 14.

The extent of the atonement is to all the elect. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect" It is God that justifieth — who is he that condemneth! It is Christ that died," &c.— Rom. viii. 33, 34. "I am the good Shepherd. The good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep." — John x. 11. To all the seed of our Lord. "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied. By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death, and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." Isaiah liii. 10-12.

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself;" &c. — Eph. v. 24-27.

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins should live unto righteousness." — 1 Peter ii. 24. "This is my blood in the New Testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins." — Matt. xxvi. 28. "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."— Gal. ii. 20. By the above, together with many other portions of the word of God, it is evident that God had a specific object in view in the pouring out of the soul of his Son unto death, which special object was the redemption and ultimate salvation of his elect.

The efficacy of the atonement. "By one offering he has forever perfected them that are sanctified." Heb. x. 14. —

"Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall (not may) return, and come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." — Isaiah li. 11; xxxv 10. "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their head; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." And he voice of the Father is heard in Zion proclaiming, "As for thee, also, by the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water." — Zech. ix. 11. "For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." — Rom. v. 10. "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquity." — Isa. liii. 11. "By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." — Heb. ix. 12. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." — Col. i. 14. "Feed the church of God.

which he hath purchased with his own blood." - Acts xx. 28. "Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."— Rev. v. 9.

We have not room here to meet and rebut the arguments generally adduced in favor of a general or universal atone ment; we shall however resume the subject at our earliest leisure. We intend in our next number to present our views on the doctrine embraced in the sixth item of our prospectus, viz: the sovereign, irresistible, and in all cases effectual work of the Holy Ghost, in quickening the elect of God.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

HISTORICAL

In the July 1,1972, issue of Zion's Landmark,an account was given on the life of Elder John Tanner by a man named Dawson of Windsor,N.C. Dawson had previously threatened the life of any minister who baptized his wife.This attempt was made in the year 1777 after Elder Tanner had administered the ordinance of baptism to Sister Dawson.Elder Tanner was seriously wounded.Through the mercy of God,he recovered from gunshot wounds after a period of several week's confinement.

In that article, a portion of the Editor's footnote reads as follows, "Psalms 76:10 reads, **"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."** In the above instance, it was not the will of God to restrain the wrath of man. If the Lord will we hope to publish another instance of similar circumstance where the Lord restrained the wrath of man. This instance, the Lord will, shall appear in another issue of the Landmark" The latter instance occured during the lifetime and ministry of Elder Wilson Thompson. It is taken from pages 189-196 of his autobiography as follows:

A small Bible, Rippin's Hymn-book, and Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress constituted my library, and, up to the time I was thirty years old,I had never read any other books, notes, or comments on the scripture. My reading was always very slow. I had to stop frequently, and read it over and over again, so as to be sure I understood the writers meaning;and then I would carefully persue his arguments and illustrations, always trying to study but one subject at a time. This has always been my way of reading. Whenever asked for my opinion on any text and could not at the time call up the connection where it stood, I have always refused to give an explanation, at least any further than a probable meaning. But when I had the whole connection and thread of the subject on my mind, I would give my explanations with confidence. On the general doctrines, professed and advocated by the Baptists, I have no doubts of their correctness and truth; nor have I doubted for over half a century, If I was as sure that I was savingly embraced in that system of grace, as I am that it is the only system in which any sinner of Adam's fallen race can ever be saved, then I should never doubt at all.

The good work, before spoken of, continued about eighteen months. I can only give some special sketches that occurred while I remained in that territory. During the services I baptized four or five hundred subjects, some old and some young, and some white and some black; but all professed to be sinners, and to trust in Christ as their Saviour. They renounced all hope and confidence in any work of their own, or ability to fulfill any conditions by which they could ever be saved. Their trust was placed in Christ, male and female, black and white, and all were joined together and animated by one spirit,having been called in "one hope of their calling,"and having "one Lord, one faith, and one baptism."

The country was new and but thinly settled, but the congregations were immense, day and night. I will here relate one event: Judge Green, a wealthy man, had a number of negroes as his servants,and who was a very respectable citizen, but was an avowed infidel who kept racehorses and was a great sportsman, had one servant whose name was Dick. Dick's business was to attend to the stock and race horses, and especially to wait upon his young mistresse when they rode out. The judge's daughters had attended my singing school, and appeared to be inclined in my favor, and would frequently attend my meeting. Dick was always with them, and was so attentive and polite they thought very much of him. At one of our church meetings Dick came forward and related an experience that no one could dispute, and he was received for baptism. The church proposed to send a committee to ask the judge's consent for Dick to be baptized. I told them I should not oppose the Church,but it was a course of conferring with flesh and blood that I could not find in my book; and I did not believe it was proper for us to ask an unbeliever, whether a believer might serve and obey his Lord or not. If Judge Green or any other master, father, guardian, or husband came forward and offered an objection, the Church ought then to consider it, and act as duty should dictate under the circumstances; but for a Church to go hunting for objections in the world, it would be rather strange if they did not find them. I, for one did not feel willing to have anything to do in any such course. If objections were made I was then willing to give them all the consideration they merited, and would labor to remove them. However a committee was appointed, and they went to see the Judge. They reported on their return, that he said Dick was his property, and he made them his witnesses to tell me that if I laid my hands on his property to throw it into the water, he would push the law upon me to its utmost extent. When the report was made I observed to the Church: "So much for consulting with the world and hunting for their objections. I should not have feared the laws of this free government, even here in a territory, where ten years ago the liberty of conscience was not allowed. But now, the Judge has full testimony that I was forbid to lay hands on his property, or to put it in the water. Now if I should trespass I will be liable to the law."

The next Sunday, when the others

were baptized, poor Dick was not allowed to attend the meeting, nor for two or three months afterward. One Sunday,when I was about to dismiss the meeting, I heard a call behind me. Looking out at the window, back of the pulpit, I saw Dick holding up a bundle of clothes in his hand. Said he:" I want to be baptized." I told him to walk around and come in at the door. He did so, and I met him before the pulpit. Said I: "Dick what do you want?" Said he:" I want to be baptized,sir." "Has your master given you liberty?" "No,sir." "Do you wish to disobey your master? The good book says: "Servants, obey your masters." "I got two masters, sir; one is greater than the other. My great Master says to me, 'be baptized'; but my other master (Green) says; 'you shall not be baptized.' Now sir, I can not obey both; and I wish to obey my greatest Master, and also to obey master Green in all things when his commands do not forbid the commands of my greater Master," "Dick, do you not expect that your Master Green will whip you if you are baptized?" "Yes, sir, but my great Master says, "Fear not him; that can kill the body, but fear him that can destroy both soul and body in hell" "have you concluded, Dick, to lay your back bare to your master's lash, rather that disobey your Master in heaven?" "Yes, sir; Master green will not even kill the body; and I love my Master in heaven, and I want to obey him." "Well Dick, the Church has received you for baptism; so, if you are not afraid of your master Green's whip, I am not afraid of his law, and I will baptize you." All of this was said aloud, so as to be distinctly heard by all that were in the house. Though the house was crowded, all were as still as death. Dicks two mistresses were present, and heard it all. I turned round and said: "Can anyone forbid water, that this man shall not be baptized?" Some of the brethren said, very low to me: "We fear you are running a great risk. I replied:" I am not afraid, for I believe the Lord has ordered this matter,and I have nothing to fear. 'The wrath of man shall praise Him,and the remainder of wrath He will restrain' "I took up my hymn-book and said:" We will now repair to the water for baptism."

The water was near the house; and I took Dick by the hand and started the song: "Am I a soldier of the cross?" All the congregation followed, and many voices joined in the song; and then, with the usual ceremonies, baptized him. As we came up out of the water, I gave him the right hand of fellowship, in behalf of the Church as a full member; and the brethren and sisters crowded in and gave him their hands as a brother.His young mistresses went to the water and saw it all. The scene was so solemn and deeply affecting. The young Misses green waited for Dick to change his clothes, and to get their horses. On their way home they began to conjecture, as I afterward heard, how and what they should do in this matter. Said they: "we respect Mr. Thompson, and do not want father to trouble him; and Dick is so ready at all times to serve us, we do not want him whipped." They, finally, concluded not to say anything about it, and thought, perhaps no one else would, and so their father would not know of it, at least for sometime. All passed off qui-

etly for several weeks, when one evening the Judge came home, apparently in a fine humor. He began speaking in very high terms of Dick, as servant, saying "Dick has always been one of my best servants, but for some weeks past he has been better than usual, The horses shine from his rubbung and attending them, late and early and he keeps things in the very best of order. The girls concluded that this was the time to tell him about Dick. One of them said: "Father, we can tell you what has made Dick so much better of late." "What has done it?" said he. "Why, Father, a few weeks ago we were at Bethel, at meeting,and Mr. Thompson baptized Dick; and they all had such a nice time, and Dick seemed so very happy when they all gave him their hand and called him brother." "Did you see Mr Thompson baptize him?" "Yes sir,we saw it all." "Well," said the Judge, "I wish to God he would baptize all my negroes, if it would make them all as good as Dick." Here ended the lawsuit, the whipping, and all complaints about the dipping. Dick was again allowed to go to meeting whenever he pleased. His master provided him with good clothes, and all that was necessary for his comfort; also a horse to ride,and allowed him to go and come when he chose, and to work when he pleased. When Dick's master was about to die, he put him under the guardianship of his son who was to amply provide for all his needs. Dick remained the same obedient servant, but never failed to attend meeting. I saw him many years afterward, when on a visit to Missouri. He was then getting old,was well dressed, had his horse to ride to meetings and seemed to enjoy himself well, even better than if he had been set free for he had all the liberties of a free man.

Dick lived long a beloved brother in the Church, and an honored servant in his master's house, and respected by all who knew him. Obedience is the path for the Christian, who should leave all consequences with God, for then he will have nothing to fear. "To obey is better than sacrifice: "but to take counsel of any enemy brings a snare." Truly a rich experience!

Elder Wilson Thompson
Copied from ZION"S LANDMARK,
September 1, 1972

THANKSGIVING

We desire to be thankful for all the blessings both natural and spiritual we have enjoyed since we first learned by experience that all good and perfect gifts come "down from the Father of Lights in whom there is no variableness nor a shadow of turning." We especially are thankful for a home, country and a God — a country where we are not afraid to lie down and can sleep, where we can meet and worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience, where there is none to molest or make us afraid. The prophets wrote and spoke of that day. Early Christians never saw that day. When Constantine reversed the order of former Emperors of Rome and made Christianity the state

religion, the true church took wings and flew away to the wilderness to the Piedmont regions only to be followed by the Emperor Constantine and hunted down and slaughtered, their property destroyed and their land laid waste, for no other reason than because they refused to worship God according to the rules prescribed by this church hierarchy which claimed to be Christ on earth.

Religious freedom was never known until the words of prophecy which said "They shall worship God under their own vine and fig tree,"was written in the constitution of this great country of ours. Until printing was discovered the common people remained in ignorance. Bibles were few and kept by those who purposed to keep the people in ignorance, especially of the holy scriptures.

After the discovery of printing, books became cheaper and more plentiful, but the scriptures were of no use to the common people as they were printed in Greek or Latin and the people could not read them.

John Wycliffe, of England, is styled the "morning star of the Reformation," for he translated the Bible out of the original Greek into the English language so that the people could read and know what they taught and not have to get others to interpret them. The discovery of printing and the translation of the Bible led the people to think for themselves, and they questioned the divine right of kings to rule them as they saw fit,and they refused to allow priests and other high dignitaries to write their articles of faith for them. This was the beginning of the Reformation, which was to deluge the continent of Europe in blood, as the hierarchy was in no mood to allow the common people the great blessing of religious freedom. In due time America had been discovered embracing fifteen million square miles of the earth's surface and was barren of human beings except a few thousand Indians who lived mostly on the natural products of the earth.

We learn that after the floods when the partitioning of the continents took place that Asia was largely given to Shem, Africa largely given to Ham and Europe largely to Japheth; but when Noah had aroused from his drunken stuper and found out what his youngest son had been doing to him, he said, "Cursed be Canaan for he shall be a servant of servants unto his brethren: God shall enlarge Japheth, he shall dwell in the tents of Shem and Canaan shall be his servant."

Japheth received Europe, the smallest of the continents, but God enlarged him and the descendent of Japheth received the two new continents so lately discovered, and he came to dwell in the tents of Shem (the Indians) and Canaan (The negro) became his servants.

The people of God, of whom the world was not worthy, who were so horribly persecuted, killed, and mangled in the most horrible manner for no crime they had done except their struggle for the freedom of conscience, left their homes in the various countries of Europe and, after spending two to three months on the ocean in their tiny ships, landed on the shores of a new world,

where they built log chapels to worship God in their own way.

They endured all manner of hardships patiently without ever thinking of going back to the land that had cast them out. They toiled, they built, cut down the forest, fought Indians and reared up a structure that has ever been the wonder and admiration of the world.

They reversed the order of the land from whence they came. They closed their offices for servants to the individuals, states and the nations, while the common people reserved to themselves the right to rule; they jealously guarded their liberties in their constitution, excluded the tyrant, but gave full liberty of speech and a free press;giving all the right to worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience and left the conscience of every one free.

By the grace of God this is what they did, and left us a glorious heritage which I sometimes think we are not worthy of. It is a most sacred duty of every person to be strictly loyal to their God and their country.

B.S.Cowin.
Copied from Zion's Landmark,
December 15, 1940.

AN INTERESTING BIT OF HISTORY

Elder Charles W. Vaughn, pastor of Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, recently read to his congregation an interesting bit of history concerning the baptism of George Washington. It was from "The Witness of Spirits, "by James W. Zackery, in part as follows: "George Washington, the father of our country, was reared an Episcopalian, but had learned the way of the Lord more perfectly, and when he saw Elder Gano, his chaplain, who was holding a meeting with soldiers, and taking candidates to the river to baptize them, he exclaimed, I have never been scripturally baptized, and demanded immersion at the hands of his chaplain. Elder John Gano immersed George Washington in the Potomac River in the presence of about forty persons."

Elder John Gano was born in Hopewell, N.J., July 22, 1727. He was of French descent, and received his education at Hopewell Academy. He was ordained to the ministry in Hopewell Church May 26, 1754.

From there he moved to Morristown, and after two years to Yadkin, N.C., where he succeeded in establishing a large church, which was discontinued during the war of 1756. Elder Gano then returned north with his family, owing to the ravage of the Indians. Mrs Mary Gano, ninety-nine years old, the great grandmother of former Secretary of State William J. Bryan, is a granddaughter of Elder Gano.

Copied from Old Faith Contender,
August 15, 1947.

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

Following are extracts from a history of the Bicentenial Celebration of the Church October 19, 1903. With characteristic Welsh determination, these saints of God,in time of war and danger, worshiped in this building with stacked arms, seeking God in humility, yet with brave hearts, ready for all that awaited them in the providence of their God. And now, their prosperity is a living witness of the power of their faith. For the past seventy-one years [1903] since the memorable meeting which convened at Black Rock, Md., (Sept. 28, 1832,) this church, with many others, has been designated as "Old School or Primitive Baptists." They have been hated and persecuted because they "continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine,"and went(Not)in the way of Cain"and "ran (Not)greedily after the error of Balaam for reward"... In the spring of 1701, sixteen Baptists, in the counties of Pembroke and Carmarthen, South Wales, resolved to go to America. They formed themselves into a church with Thomas Griffith one of their number, as Pastor. They embarked at Milford Haven in June, 1701, arriving in Philadelphia Sept. 8, the same year... In the cemetery surrounding this building sleep the successive generations which have in their time and turn worshipped in this place. The present meeting-house is of brick, brought from Wales, and conveyed from the boat at New Castle to this place on pack mules.

In the order of their succession, the names of the Pastors are as follows: Thomas Griffith, Elisha Thomas, Enoch Morgan, Owen Thomas, David Davis, John Suttan, John Boggs, Gideon Farrell, Samuel Trott, W. K. Robinson, Thomas Barton, George W. Staton, John C. Sawin, Joseph L. Staton, William Grafton, John G. Eubanks, and now served by Elder H.H. Lefforts, J.B. Miller, Church Clerk.

And now we feel that the highest tribute we can pay to this old Welsh Tract Church, and its sister churches, is that they "continue steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine." And as the generations multiply that go in and out at this place, may God continue to be glorified, and His name be exalted and have all the praise.

Note the time Elder Samuel Trott was Pastor in 1863, (resident in Fairfax, Va.) was arrested in '63 or '64, and during a parole given him at the time, from Washington, he visited our yearly mee ting in October,and was moderator of the Salisbury Assn. which follows our meeting the next week. Oh for such giants as those old writers and preachers in days gone by. While we have a few yet with us, and good ones, but far between.

Welsh Tract Church entertained the Delaware River Assn. May 19th, Baltimore 25th, 26th, and Delaware River 29th and 30th. I attended Black Rock all day meeting which follows Baltimore, Sunday June 2nd. Elders H. H. Lefforts and D. L. Topping, Pastor were the only preachers, but that was sufficient, as they both preached the unsearchable riches of Christ to the edification of many present. Hopewell celebrated their 230th

Anniversary April 23rd, 1940, Elder A. H. Bellows, H. H. Lefforts and C. W. Vaughn, Pastor present.

Yours in hope of mercy,
J.B.Miller

Copied from
OLD FAITH CONTENDER,
June 1940

GOSPEL STANDARD
JANUARY 1838

MY GOD.

"I trusted in thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my God." --- Ps. xxxi. 14

O Lord! And art thou not my God?
Though Satan dares suggest,
That I've no claim,
My hopes are vain,
And I am sore oppress'd?

O Lord! and art thou not my God?
Though sin and hell agreed,
Thy work deny,
My faith defy,
And gloomy doubts succeed?

O Lord! and art thou not my God?
Though guilty fears arise;
And unbelief.
That cursed thief,
The sacred bond denies!

O Lord! and art thou not my God?
Though darkness intervene,
To hide the grace
Of that dear face
Which I have sometimes seen?

O Lord! and art thou not my God?
E'en though I cannot see
My int'rest clear,
And often fear,
Thou hast not loved me?

O Lord! If thou art not my God,
Why should I grieve and sigh
If thou depart,
Or raise my heart
With joy, when thou art nigh?

O Lord! If thou art not my God,
How came this heart to love?
No love but thine
Could kindle mine,
Or raise my soul above.

O Lord! I've said, Thou art my God!
I'll worship at thy throne;
Till thou deny,
My hopes rely
On thee, my God alone.

O Lord! I've said, Thou art my God!
My Father thee I call;
And thee I'll own,
My God alone,
My everlasting All.

J.C.
Somers Town,
Nov. 1st, 1837.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD. JANUARY 1838

Messrs. Editors, — I have reason to bless God for placing within my reach your little work, entitled the Gospel Standard; when it first fell into my hands I welcomed it as good news from a far country, for I was then labouring under very great anxiety of soul, and believing my case to be singular (for I had not heard of any one who had been exercised with such horrid feelings as I was the subject of,) as such I did not venture to divulge the state of my mind; but upon reading your little work, I rejoiced to find there were some whose experience somewhat coincided with my own, who were deemed by more advanced Christians to be vessels of mercy. This seemed to be the day-dawn of hope to my soul; peradventure, said I, the Lord may yet deliver me; and these words came powerfully to my mind, "Search the scriptures, for they testify of me." I did so, and I feel constrained to believe that God the Holy Ghost has, by such means, taught me to profit. The doctrine of election, which I had fought so much against, and from which I would fain have dissuaded both myself and others, I was led to embrace.

I recently heard a sermon from the 16th of Ezekiel, and the 6th verse, which induced me to peruse the chapter, and I was led to exclaim with Thomas, "My Lord and my God!"

The following lines were written at this time; should they be deemed by you worthy of publication, perhaps you will give them a place.

THE BRIDEGROOM AND BRIDE.

Ye poor and ye needy, whoever you be,
Who have just light enough your darkness to see,
Have knowledge enough your sad state to deplore;
But cannot at present true wisdom explore!
'Tis not yea and nay, as some preachers have said,
But yea and amen in Christ Jesus your Head:
If tried and condemn'd though not yet set free,
Despair not! for Jesus says, Look unto me.
Talk not of your fitness, he knows all you've done;
The amount of your sins, he sees the large sum;
It is nought you can do, nor aught you can say,
'Tis believe and be sav'd, yea this is the way!
Mount Sinai's loud thunder which does thee alarm,
Mount Zion shall quiet and hush to a calm:
"God blows with his north wind to bring in the south,
By and by you shall have the sweet kiss of his mouth.
When Jesus pass'd by, I was wounded to death;
Hannah, what aileth thee? I am Jesus, he saith,
I am thy near kinsman, believe me 'tis truth!
Then he spread his skirt o'er me, as Boaz did Ruth.
Now for better or worse, whate'er shall betide,
He said, I'll protect thee, and for thee provide;
A most faithful husband I ever will be;

Thou wast in eternity married to me.
Then fear not, heartbroken, disconsolate soul;
Christ's bride must be wounded before she's made whole,
When she's quite insolvent, both great debts and small,
This glorious bridegroom will answer them all!
He's Alpha, Omega, beginning and end;
He's the first and the last, the sinner's best Friend;
He's a refuge, a rock, a foundation stone;
He's all and in all, sufficient alone

Prittlewell, Essex. Hannah Harridge

MEETINGS

NOTICE OF MEETINGS

Contentnea Church
Quarterly Meeting .....April 15, 2018

Goldsboro Church
Union Meeting.....April 29, 2018

Creech's Church
Quarterly Meeting.....May 6, 2018

Goldsboro Church
Quarterly Meeting.....May 13, 2018

Martha Grady
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Goldsboro, NC 27534
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FOR JANUARY 2018

Elder Gene Lupton, NC 5.00
Dora Bennett, VA 5.00
Arleen Giles, VA 5.00
Merrill Mabe, NC 10.00
Ronald Rudd, NC 10.00
John Schulz, MT 100.00

OBITUARIES

GERLINE WORLEY WEATHERFORD

Once again we at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church bow in humble submission to the will of a gracious Lord in removing from our midst our dear precious Sister Gerline Weatherford on May 11, 2017 and thank Him for the 43 years we were blessed with her love and fellowship.

She was born in Sycamore, Virginia on August 28, 1928 to the late Claude Worley and Fannie Dalton Worley. On September 17, 1947 she was married to William (Billy) T. Weatherford who was called from this world on December 6, 1998. They were blessed with 51 years of marriage and

a daughter, Cynthia Kiger and a son, David Weatherford (Dianne) who survive her. She was also predeceased by three sisters; Vera Brumfield, Freda Metz, and Virginia Talley. In addition to her daughter and son, those left to mourn her include five grandchildren, Kristy Nash (Jeff), Susan Brown (Chris), Adam Weatherford (Amanda), Bean Weatherford (Kitty), Tricia Gammon (Brent); seven great grandchildren; her sister Audrey Slaughter, her brother J.B. Worley; her sister-in-law, Sister Delores Weatherford and many brethren and sisters in her church family.

Sister Gerline asked for a home with Dan River Church on May 25, 1974 and was joyfully received. She was baptized by Elder David Spangler. Although her husband, Billy, was never blessed to ask for a home with the church, Elder C.B. Davis wrote of him that he felt too unworthy. He built the Anniversary Building at Dan River and faithfully attended services with Sister Gerline not only at Dan River but also at many sister churches and associations. They both were blessed to rejoice in a Saviour's love and to walk humbly and softly among our people. In these latter years Sister Gerline was part of what we all affectionately called the Weatherford sisters. It was she, Ms. Frances Weatherford, and Sister Dolores Weatherford of which only Sister Dolores remains. Although they were not related naturally and had married brothers, they were bound together spiritually and continued to travel together to church even after all of their husbands had passed away. We miss so much seeing the three of them come into church.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Jimmy Gray at Dan River on May 13, 2017. He was blessed to speak beautifully of what she believed and how the Lord blessed her with His mercy and grace. The lovely Spirit within her, we believe, returned unto the Lord who gave it and her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery by her husband to await those long awaited words of the Heavenly Master, "Come ye blessed of my Father and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Though we miss her immensely, we believe that the kind, gracious Master has taken but his own. May the Lord bless her family and those of us, so wonderfully blessed to walk with her in the love and fellowship of Christ, with the comfort that only He can give. In all things may all honor and glory be ascribed unto His great and holy name.

Humbly submitted by one who loved her dearly,

Mary Hawkins

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 3 / 2018

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God!
He whose word cannot be broken,
With salvation's walls surrounded,
Form'd thee for his abode:
On the rock of ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
Thy may'st smile at all thy foes.

See! the streams of living waters,
Springing from eternal love,
Well supply thy sons and daughters,
And all fear of want remove.
Who can faint, while such a river
Ever flows their thirst t' assuage?
Grace, which, like the Lord, the giver,
Never fails from age to age.

Round each habitation hovering,
See the cloud and fire appear,
For a glory and a covering,
Showing that the Lord is near.
Thus deriving from their banner,
Light by night, and shade by day,
Safe they feed upon the manna
Which he gives them by the way.

Blessed inhabitants of Zion,
Washed in the Redeemer's blood!

Jesus, whom their souls rely on,
Makes them kings and priests to God:
'Tis his love his people raises
Over self to reign as kings;
And as priests, his solemn praises
Each for a thank-offering brings.

Newton.

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HEBREWS 8:1.

Now of the things which we have spoken *this is* **the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.**

EDITORIAL

Matthews 12:31-32, "Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy *against* **the** *Holy* **Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but, whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the** *world* **to come."**

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

As with all scripture, the Lord must reveal the meaning to us or we have no understanding of it. There have been many different thoughts expressed on the meaning of this scripture. It is my prayer and hope that the Lord will give us understanding to set forth the truth.

First of all we must understand to whom the Lord is speaking for He said "I say unto you." Who is the "you"? The scripture in Matthews 12:22-25 makes it clear that He was speaking to the Jews and specifically to the Pharisees. It reads as follows: **"Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and He healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David?**

But when the Pharisees heard *it*, **they said, this** *fellow* **doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the** devils." All the people (Jews) who said "Is not this the son of David" did not blaspheme the Holy Ghost, but the Pharisees and Scribes who accused Him of having a devil did blaspheme the Holy Ghost. Mark writes in Chapter 3:30 that Jesus said what He said because they said He had an unclean spirit.

Secondly, since these Pharisees and Scribes were under the commandments and ordinances of the law, we read in Leviticus 24:13-16: **"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp; and let all that heard** *him* **lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him. And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin. And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name** *of the Lord*, **shall be put to death."** There was no forgiveness. Jesus tells them **"O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."** He also replied to them **"How can Satan cast out Satan?"**

In the 10th chapter of John verse 24, the Jews were round about Jesus and said unto Him "How long doest thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly." Jesus said He had told them and they believed not. He told them that they believe not because they were not of His sheep. He said He knows His sheep and they know His voice. They follow Him and He gives them eternal life.

Under the covenant of Grace, His elect experiences a condemnation for their sins and a death to the things of the world. By the law is the knowledge of sin. The law of sin and death is applied to the hearts of His people and sin abounds to them. For the first time they see themselves as lost and hell-deserving sinners. This is the Lord's work and man cannot do it. They are made to cry "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then, where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. Now "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Grace) hath made me free from the law of sin and death." "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." You who were baptized (spiritually) into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death. Therefore you are buried with him by baptism into death. As Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, so you shall walk in newness of life. You have experienced a death to the things of the world and a resurrection to a newness of life.

As the Apostle wrote **"Therefore if any man** *be* **in Christ,** *he is* **a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."** These are His sheep.

May the Lord bless you with comfort, strength and peace.

A little one in hope,
Elder Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

3-5-18

Dear Brother Tony, Elder Robertson, Elder Farmer. I feel so very helpless to pen anything down. The Lord said that he would never leave or forsake his own. Whether I'm one of his I don't know. One thing I have been given to know that is that I am a sinner, the chief of sinners. I often wonder why I have done some of the things that I have done. It had to be to let me know what I am a sinner by nature, and by practice. We are born in sin, shapen in iniquity. I don't know why the good Lord has been so good to a poor sinner that I am, and why I have been so blessed to have been brought to know so many wonderful people. I'm not worthy to even be among them. I am the last surviving member, at Hillsdale Primitive Baptist Church, which was established in 1784. I would like to extend an invitation to all who have been given a desire to meet with us. Our service is held the second Sunday each month, beginning at 10:30 A.M. The good Lord has a way of drawing his people together. Not anyway; the way. The world cannot see this. He said it was hidden from the wise, and the prudent, but revealed unto babes. A babe is completely helpless to do anything for themselves, either naturally, or spiritually. Please forgive my rambling, and so many mistakes. Thank you for putting up with me. I have been so blessed to have been brought to know you all, and am not worthy to even be among any of you.

I want to renew my subscription for two years. Use what is left for whatever you see fit. I can't name all of the free gifts I have received in each of you, but hope to be thankful for each of you. My God given prayer is that we may be brought even closer together through Christ. Hope to see you real soon.

Remember this poor wretch, when at the throne of Grace, An unworthy brother, if one at all.

In bonds of love,
James Knight

12-7-17

Dear Elder Robertson,

Enclosed is an experience I feel to share if you find it fitting.
Hope you and yours are well.

May God bless and keep you,
Janet Snider Taylor

OAK GROVE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST

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(Address: 8808 South NC Hwy 150,
Linwood, NC 27299)
(Clerk Mailing Address: Sylvia Snider,
1378 N Franklin Rd, Mt. Airy, NC
27030)
You may also contact Paul Hopkins at
336-987-7232

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Church at Oak Grove sends our love and fellowship to all those of like precious faith throughout the country, and we trust this letter will be received as a warm welcome from our little flock to yours. We desire to nurture the friendship and fellowship of those little ones we believe to be true followers of the Lord Jesus Christ as they sojourn here in this world, seeking for a house "not made with hands," and looking for a city "whose builder and maker is God, our Saviour." We believe Jesus Christ *is* the Son of the Living God, and that He created a world wherein He chose to have a peculiar people (a chaste bride) for Himself, and at His own appointed time would come into this world, suffer, bleed and die to pay the complete price of redemption for them; His blood being the only pure and acceptable sacrifice to Almighty God, His Father, for their sins and iniquities. His words on the cross, "It is finished" and His resurrection is our confirmation that He indeed accomplished the will of His Father and that His sacrifice was accepted. Therefore, there is now no condemnation to those who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit, and that sacrifice causes His elect to bow down on bended knees, wanting to be filled with thanksgiving, desiring to live an upright life, and ever giving Him ALL the praise, honor, and glory.

The Church at Oak Grove is Old School or Primitive in practice, believing in particular redemption of those chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. We are independent in our services, not willing to lord over any of God's heritage, always wanting to be at each other's feet and we welcome any of like precious faith to fellowship with us. Our regular services are held on the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 A.M. Our communion service is in September.

The Church at Oak Grove has for many years held an annual meeting the last weekend of March, and this year it falls on the fourth weekend, (24th and 25th) Past meetings have had visitors from West Virginia, Virginia, Texas, Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, Kentucky, Ohio, California, the Carolinas, and other places. We extend a cordial welcome to all who can come and visit us.

The Church at Oak Grove is located on NC Highway 150 near the community of Churchland, NC. Physical address (for GPS) is above. We are approximately three (3) miles north on NC Hwy 150 from exit 84 on Interstate 85. Those coming from the south will cross the Yadkin river and take exit 84 to NC 150. Those coming from the north may continue on NC Hwy 52 south around Lexington bearing into Interstate 85 and then to exit 84 (before the Yadkin river) to NC 150.

Visitors from a distance usually come into the Quality Inn hotel, 101 Plaza Parkway, at Lexington, NC (Phone 336-243-2929) Some rooms have been set aside for the Oak Grove meeting at a discounted rate. You may call for reservations, or ask the clerk on arrival.

Several of the brothers, sisters and friends gather to meet, greet and fellow-

ship at the hotel on Friday evening, and then, Lord willing, our services will begin on Saturday morning with singing at 9:30 AM and preaching at 10:00 AM. Many go back to the hotel on Saturday evening for singing and fellowship, and then on Sunday, singing at 9:30 AM and preaching at 10:00 AM Lunch will be provided on both days and anyone wanting to bring a dish is welcome but not expected.

Your brothers and sisters in hope.

Editors Note: We did not receive this letter until March 7 and therefore could not put it in the March issue. The March issue had already gone to the printers.

VOICES OF THE PAST

TO THE EDITORS OF THE GOSPEL STANDARD

Dear Brethren, — I lately received a letter from a valued brother in the Lord, a tried and faithful Baptist minister in Suffolk; and being unwilling to feast alone on so rich a display of sound doctrine and experience, I have herewith sent you an extract, and, remain, dear brethren, Yours in the Lord.

Liverpool, 4th Nov. 1837.
William Rushton, Jun.

"The furnace of affliction is, no doubt, wisely appointed for us, and we shall remain in it no longer than it will be beneficial to us. I have sometimes struggled to be taken from it, but am happy that I am resigned, and feel it my privilege to rejoice in tribulation, rather than to be discharged from it. I can say with you that I do not realize that fulness of joy which I desire, but I trust in the promise of life by Christ Jesus. For a few weeks past the Lord has been speaking sweetly and graciously to me by his word, and living by faith has been easy and delightful; easy because: the truth and authority of the divine testimony have been demonstrated to me by the Spirit of Jesus, without my labour or effect; delightful because my soul has rested in God and his salvation. This is the sum and essence of my happiness. I have indeed suffered many conflicts within, and groaned in anguish of heart, because of my innate depravity; yet Jesus, I know, is the fountain of sanctity to me, and while I rely on him as my justifying righteousness, I cherish the persuasion that he will eventually perfect me in holiness, and present me, with his glorious church, without spot before the throne of his glory with exceeding joy.

"Two things encourage me to ask in faith for every spiritual blessing I need. First, the well ordered and everlasting covenant, as containing all my salvation and all that I desire. The second is, the fact that Christ has ascended on high, and received gifts for men, even the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell amongst them. These, my dear sir, are substantial and immutable grounds of hope and joy. May you and I rest upon them daily, and when the tide of enjoy-

ment turns, may we remember the sweet truth that though we believe not, yet our God is faithful, and will not alter the thing that has gone out of his mouth.

"My health has materially improved within the last few weeks; and from the prayers of my dear friends. I have been impressed with the persuasion that my life is to be continued for the church's sake, that the truth of the gospel may remain in this place. I think no more of myself than as one who has obtained mercy, but as I stand alone in this place to bear witness to Jesus, and to make known his unsearchable riches, he may yet see fit to add to the number of my days, and employ me for his glory. For any other purpose I have no desire to live."

LXVII. LONGING TO BE WITH CHRIST.

To Jesus, the Crown of my hope,
My soul is in haste to be gone:
O bear me, ye cherubim, up,
And waft me away to his throne!

My Saviour, whom absent I love,
Whom, not having seen, I adore;
Whose name is exalted above
All glory, dominion, and power;

Dissolve thou these bonds, that detain
My soul from her portion in thee:
Ah! strike off this adamant chain
And make me eternally free.

When that happy era begins,
When array'd in thy glories I shine,
Nor grieve any more, by my sins,
The bosom on which I recline:

Oh, then shall the veil be removed,
And round me thy brightness be pour'd;
I shall meet him whom absent I loved,
I shall see whom unseen I adored.

And then, never more shall the fears,
The trials, temptations, and woes,
Which darken this valley of tears,
Intrude on my blissful repose.

Or, if yet remember'd above,
Remembrance no sadness shall raise;
They will be but new signs of thy love,
New themes for my wonder and praise.

Thus the strokes which from sin and from pain
Shall set me eternally free,
Will but strengthen and rivet the chain
Which binds me, my Saviour, to thee.

LXVIII. LIGHT SHINING OUT OF DARKNESS.

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace:
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,'
And scan his work in vain:
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

1 John xiill. 7.- Published in Aug. 1836 issue of the Signs. Book of poetry by William Cowper.

AS AN EAGLE
JANUARY, 1950

"As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him."- Deut. 32:11, 12

Elder Williams of Decatur, Mississippi, has requested views on this scripture. May God bless us with light of thought and liberty of expression to comfort God's little children with some thoughts on the wonderful care God exercises upon His own. We enter into the discussion of this Scripture with a deep felt sense of inability. We fully realize our dependence upon God to stir us up at this time to properly meditate upon this Scripture.

Jacob, who is the "lot of his inheritance" is the object of these expressions. As God dealt with Jacob, He deals with each and every one of His children. Read the context and you will find that Jacob was passive in the hands of a merciful God. It was God who found him; it was God who led him about; it was God who instructed him; it was God who kept him; and it was God who made him ride on the high places of the earth. Jacob could not claim any credit for anything, but must bow to God and realize that it was by God's mercies that he was so wonderfully delivered.

In this text God is likened to an eagle in some of His dealings. The kings of Assyria, Egypt and Babylon were likened unto eagles for their power and dominion. The Chaldean armies were likened unto eagles because of their swiftness. The Edomites exalted themselves and made their nests high as the eagles. It is said that the eagle builds its nest in high places in the tops of the rocks — in the highest rocks which no man can reach. Of course the outer part of the nest is constructed with rough, jagged and thorny material. The innermost part is lined with, smooth, soft matter that affords the eaglets a place of sweet repose. This is certainly a comfortable place of refuge until the nest is stirred up. The soft down that interlines the eagle's nest typifies the seeming righteousness of the flesh and the confidence that the unregenerated child of God has in his own cleanness and ability. He is content with himself and with his place of abode. He is at ease and does not care to venture from this sweet place of self-righteousness and carnal affections. "All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes."

As the eagle stirs up this soft nest and makes it a bed of thorns to the eaglets, so the Lord stirs up the souls of His people, and makes bare the thorn in the flesh so that their place of sweet repose becomes a miserable place of abode. When God begins His work there is a stirring in the soul that nothing can still, silence, quench or quell this begins with you, you become very greatly alarmed and anxious. This anxiety becomes so miserable that you try to rid yourself of this condition by your own activity. You become just as restless as the eaglets with the same re-

sults— the thorns prick you more every turn you make. You are pricked in the heart as those spoken of in Acts 2:37. As the God of Israel stirred up the spirits of the kings of Assyria and prompted them to action, He awakens and disturbs you and causes you to become much concerned over your miserable condition.

Have you ever been awakened to the fact that you are a sinner. Have you made resolutions to better that condition? Have you tried to deliver yourself and found that all your trials availed nothing? Have you been shown that all your righteousness is as filthy rags in God's sight? Have you lost confidence in your own self ? Has there been times that your soul fainted in you and you had no hope in this world or that to come? If you can answer the above questions in the affirmative, (I am persuaded) God has stirred up your nest and has fluttered over you. You have been shaken from that nest and you are falling toward the abyss below. What a fear accompanies this fall! You have nothing to rely upon! You fear the consequences of the jagged rocks and the abyss below which surely means sudden destruction to you! I experienced this falling for many miserable months. I could see nothing before me but this blackness of darkness forever. I was afraid to live and afraid to die. I cried in anguish of soul, "Woe is me! for I am undone!" As the eagle watches the young eaglet as it falls toward the abyss below, I trust that God was watching me. As the eagle swoops down beneath the falling eaglet, "Spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings," I feel that God so dealt with me. What a glad surprise when He came to my rescue!

The thought that God watches us and protects us before regeneration brings to mind that He was the God of Jacob. Jacob is the unregenerate name of Israel. Who is this God of Jacob? The God that gave him the blessing of the birthright though he was a junior; the God that delivered him from the murderous hand of his brother in the day of trouble; the God that protected him and manifested Him self to him; his covenant God. God sometimes says, I am the God of Jacob. This means I am your God before regeneration, as well as after when you attempt to supplant me with proud free will and blunt my sovereignty with your rebellion; when you took my covenant name in a covenant character, I am your God still.

Yes, it was a day of rejoicing when God came to your rescue to prevent you from being utterly destroyed by the jagged rocks and the abyss beneath. He rescued you on His wings of love. He whispered to you, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." He informed you that He was a merciful and gracious God. He restored your soul. Jesus informed you that He had fulfilled the law to a jot and tittle for you. He told you that He had taken your sins upon His own shoulder and had paid the penalty, satisfied justice by shedding His own blood for the remission of sins and had died in your stead. He spoke sweet peace to your soul that He had wrought out eternal salvation for you. He put a

new song in your mouth that praised God and confessed Jesus as your Savior. You are resting in the sweet embrace of His love. Your soul is absorbed in this experience. You are blessed to exclaim," The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." You can say with one of old, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." You feel that your worries and fears are in the past and that you will ride forever upon His wings. You can see the Father, Son and Holy Ghost enacting, determining and covenanting for, and mutually swearing each to each for the accomplishment of your salvation. Did this sweet experience continue? No, if your experience coincides with my experience, it did not continue. It was of short duration.

After the eagle rescues the young and bears them comfortably upon her wings for awhile, she tilts her wings and permits them to fall again toward the abyss below. Did God deal with you as the eagle deals with her young? While you were riding joyfully, upon His everlasting love and sweet promises, all was well with your soul. You said, "my God reigneth," and "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Then, all at once, you realized that you were again falling toward destruction. The sweet embrace of that love was gone. Your former experience taught you that there was One who did rescue you, but, would He rescue again? You looked for Him but you could not find Him. You sincerely asked, "Will the Lord cast off forever? and will He be favorable no more? Is His mercy clean gone forever? Doth His promise fail forevermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies? (Psalms 77:7-9.) You are falling down, down, down! You yet have a faint hope that almost vanishes away. Just before you would die in despair, God rescues you again from destruction. The wings of God's mercy and love comes underneath you and raises you up, and soars high above the cares and troubles of this world, and you again rejoice because of His amazing grace that can descend low enough to prevent you from dashing your head against a stone. It is our lot to be shaken many times from the wings of God's manifest love and mercy, but He yet cares for us and carefully watches over us.

It is necessary that we be taught again and again of our infirmities and weakness in the flesh and our total dependence upon Him. We are made to cry out so often to Him to be merciful to our unrighteousness. We shall have tribulations and suffer trials and afflictions here in this world, and to realize that, "here have we no continuing city." These joyful experiences are not continuous but are mixtures of joy and sorrow.

We trust that the grace of God enables us to "Press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:14). At the time when He shall take us upon His wings it will be forever. All will be joyful forevermore. No more trials and tribulations. No more heartaches nor fear of falling into utter destruction. When He takes us upon His wings and carries us into the

Holiest of Holies where Jesus dwells we shall forever be satisfied.

Elder E. J. Lambert

HISTORICAL ELDER RALPH (FREE MAN) OR FREEMAN

To those who love and are familiar with the history of the Primitive (or Old School)Baptist Church and people of the United State of America, the name Ralph Freeman will live forever in their hearts, as well as the history and many hallmarks of the church. We wish to bring to memory one of them now.

Ralph Freeman was an early lay member in the antebellum period of the history of our country in Rocky River Church, Anson County, North Carolina, a white church, 5O years before the Civil War. The significance of the identity of this man lies in the fact that the true Gospel of the Son of God, the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is color blind in the power of the Holy Ghost when it comes to the recognition of this divine truth in the heart of an individual or believer. The power of this Spirit and the Love knows no bounds or limitations when revealed from heart to heart and breast to breast to those that know the joyful sound. Like the unlimited power of God, this true Love is also unlimited on an involuntary basis in its quality and nature, since both know no bounds. They have the same qualities in substance.

In the little town of Ansonville, Anson County, State of North Carolina, (about twenty miles east of Charlotte N.C.) in the edge of the Bethlehem Cemetery of the black or colored portion is the grave of "Ralph." A small pink granite marker is engraved with "Ralph" on top. The simple epitaph or legend on the front of the stone is that he "Died about 1838." It continues, "He was a primitive Baptist preacher of much force and usefulness. His freedom was purchased by Bear Creek Association. Erected 1907,"

From the history of the Sandy Creek Association, dated 1859, "Ralph was a colored man," the volume states, "and at first a slave belonging to a man in Anson, since the Old Sandy Creek Church in those early days was the mother church under the ministry of Shubeal Stearns, the first pastor. This fact made his name well known far afield because of this affiliation. However, in the early 183O's, when the division or separation occurred within the ranks of Baptists Churches everywhere in the United States of America over the question of foreign missions, the majority of the churches in the Old Sandy Creek Association endorsed the "new things of the day, while the minority withdrew and organized the "Bear Creek Association" and the "Abbott's Creek Association" held to the primitive faith and order. It is to be noted and pointed out at this juncture, as the History of the Sandy Creek Baptist Association records, "When the anti-mission party was formed, we have been told that Ralph became an ANTI-MISSIONARY." Hence, Elder Ralph was bound to have been an Old Hardshell Primitive Baptist. (See page 329, Sandy Creek Baptist Church History,) In those

days of separation and division in the church, "Ralph took his stand with the Primitive or Old School Baptist people of those old brethren in the Bear Creek association. There must have been a great mutual love of great power in which their hearts were united for the truth's sake for them to have purchased his natural freedom, ordain him to the gospel ministry, and erect and pay for his grave marker.

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Romans 8:1, 2. Those ancient brethren in the Bear Creek Association recognized the gift and calling of "Ralph: and that the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus had made or set him free from the law of sin and death. Christ had given him his Spiritual freedom, and God gave them mind and with to give him his natural freedom. What an unusual combination of blessings, one without precedent to our knowledge.

There was a Spiritual Love so greatly felt among these brethren for this man in a mutual sense that we are made to see the meaning of the Apostle Paul's language in Romans 8:35,"who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril or sword?" "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." They must have felt this strongly! Hence, there is no separation or division in the Holy Spirit of God of those things which are of a divine nature, nor of the Holy Ghost who reveals them.

This writer noted the fact about three or four years ago, I cannot remember if it was 1993, or 1994, but in any case the Southern Baptist Convention of Missionary Baptists, meeting in either Dallas, Texas or Atlanta, Georgia apologized to the black people of the United States of America for their part in upholding the institution of slavery in those days of the history of our country, the United States of America, prior to the Civil War. It suddenly came to my mind that the Old School or Primitive Baptist people did not have to wait 128 years after the Emancipation Proclamation to do this since they had already performed the operation about 35 or 40 years earlier or beforehand. That was one time for sure, when the Primitives were ahead of the Missionaries, but the depth of the meaning of this operation was much deeper.

The Sandy Creek Baptist Church History volume states that Elder Ralph was "of common size, was perfectly black, with a smiling countenance or face, especially in the pulpit. He was very humble, very polite in appearance, especially during worship services. He was held in great respect by his peers and those that knew him.

Elder Ralph traveled and preached often in Randolph, Montgomery, Moore, Davidson, and Anson Counties. As an elder he frequently attended business

sessions (conferences) in the Sandy Creek Association. He was at Unity Meeting House, Randolph County N.C. attending the annual session of the Sandy Creek Association on October 24, 1807, as a messenger from Rocky River Church, Anson County. The record states that the delegates were "William Durgan and Ralph." In 1807, he was apparently still a slave, although he was a member of the church since he had not been given the surname Free man or Freeman, as proven by this record.

Elder Joseph Magee (Mc Gee), a Baptist minister, became his close friend. The history points out, "Such was their attachment for each other, that they agreed that the surviving one should preach the funeral service of the one that died first. Elder Magee (McGee) moved to the west, and died first. Upon his deathbed, he bequeathed to Ralph his horse, coat, Bible, and $50.00 in cash (a large sun in these days), and requested his family to send for Ralph to come and preach his funeral.

"In the company with a white brother of the church, Ralph went to the West and preached the funeral discourse from a text that the deceased white brother had selected," the history records.

There is a great deal more to the personage of "Ralph Freeman" and perhaps, history will someday out, but one particular footnote not to be forgotten is that after the Civil War (1861-1865), when the N.C. State Legislature passed a law prohibiting men of color from preaching to mixed (black and white congregations), Elder Ralph was greatly mortified, and he had the sympathy of many of his Baptist brethren.

"Ralph was, no doubt a truly pious Soldier of the Cross, having the confidence and esteem of thousands, and he died in the triumph of faith and in the hope of full assurance of blessed immortality," his contemporaries have said of him. This was the indomitable spirit of "Ralph Freeman."

"And they sung a new song, saying Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood OUT OF EVERY KINDRED, AND TONGUE, AND PEOPLE, AND NATION: and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." Revelations 5:9, &10. Ralph Freeman must have been one of them.

So the name of Elder Ralph Freeman will never be forgotten among the true Baptists of the history of time. We are publishing below the exact record (or account) of the life of this man, as it appears in the old history of the Sandy Creek Baptist Association pages 328 & 329. What a privilege and blessing it would have been if we could have known Ralph Freeman in this world. The account of him is the last thing that appears in the book, but it is not the least important by any means in all the pages of all history of all time.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free,"

"If the son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." John 8:32 & 36. The Lord Jesus Christ gave "Ralph "a gift of the truth, gave him the understanding of it, and then gave him the gift to preach and proclaim it. In the

process He freed him in two ways, naturally and spiritually, but his spiritual freedom came first because he had been "FREE BORN" from and before the foundation of the world (See Acts 22:28). Christ completely fulfilled to him His ancient promise to His blessed people, and "YE SHALL BE FREE INDEED" John 8:36. All of this was one of God's miracles!

Elder J. M. Mewborn
October 30, 1995

ELDER RALPH FREEMAN

Elder Ralph was a colored man, and at first a slave belonging to a man in Anson County, N.C. Soon after making a profession of religion and being baptized.it was discovered that he had impressions to preach; he was licensed by the church of which he was a member. His owner proposed to sell him, and the brethren bought and gave him his freedom. Soon after this, he was ordained to the full work of the ministry. He traveled and preached a great deal in the counties of Anson, Montgomery, Moore, Randolph, and Davidson, North Carolina. He became a good reader, and was well read in the scriptures. He was considered an able preacher, was frequently called upon to preach on funeral occasions, was appointed to preach on the Sabbath at the association, and frequently administered the ordinance of baptism and the Lord's Supper. He was of common size, was perfectly black, with a smiling countenance, especially in the pulpit while speaking. He was very humble in his appearance at all times, and especially when conducting religious services. Great personal respect was always shown by the brethren whom he visited in his preaching excursions. Elder Joseph Magee, a Primitive Baptist minister, became his warm friend, and traveled and preached with him. Such was their attachment for each other, that they agreed that the surviving one should preach the funeral of the one who died first. Upon his deathbed, he bequeathed to Ralph his horse, coat, Bible, and $50.00 in cash, and requested his family to send for Ralph to come and preach his funeral. In company with a white brother, Ralph went to the West and preached the funeral sermon from a text the deceased had selected. The brother that went with Ralph stated to Elder N. Richardson that he never before saw so large a congregation. At the conclusion of the sermon, Elder Magee's brother stated to the congregation what provision his deceased brother had made for Ralph, and added, if any of you would like to give him any amount, it would be thankfully received. The congregation soon made up fifty dollars, which was given to him. While this contribution was being made, a Methodist came up and handed to Ralph one dollar. A Presbyterian, who observed it, said to him, "You ought not to give Ralph anything." Why not, said the Methodist. "Because," said the Presbyterian, "he has torn your system all to pieces." The Methodist replied, "I believe he has preached the truth, and I will give him the dollar."

Ralph was able in illustrating and unfolding the true doctrine of grace. Elder N. Richardson (to whom we are indebted for this biographical sketch) has baptized a number of persons who dated their convictions to the preaching of Ralph.

When the anti-mission party was later formed, we have been told that Ralph became an anti-missionary.

When the legislature passed the law prohibiting black and colored men from preaching, Ralph was greatly mortified, and had the sympathy of many brethren. Ralph was, no doubt, a truly pious and humble Christian, having the confidence and esteem of thousands, and died in the full assurance of a blessed immortality.

(From the history of the Sandy Creek Baptist Association, pages 328 & 329) (Note: From reading the above description of "Ralph Free Man," he must have been a fire ball. The Methodist must have believed the truth, and the Presbyterian knew it. (J. M. M.)

Copied from ZION'S LANDMARK.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 4 / 2018

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER WELBORN

I was born 31st July, 1859, in extreme poverty. My father's house was of that rank that is meanest and most despised of all the families around in this part of North Carolina; Wherefore I have nothing to boast of as others have, neither do I desire it; but instead thereof, I glory in my infirmitives and low state according to the flesh, that I may the more abundantly exalt my God. I was born and reared in about eight miles of where I now live, in the most obscure part of Surry County, N.C. I was the oldest child of my father's family. My next brother was nearly two years younger than myself, and was dumb and perfectly helpless, and he lived to be about fourteen years old and died. I have two other brothers, the next in birth, and they are about grown young men, and are very wicked and many times have I bowed in prayer for them; and O, may all who read this unite in prayer with me for them. The fifth child of my father is a girl, now nearly grown, and is my only sister, and is yet out of the Ark of Safety. O that God may bring her tender soul in. The sixth and last child was my infant brother who died in infancy, and is therefore better off than any of us yet living in time. My dear mother died when I was at the tender age of ten years, and left an old log cabin nearly full of little children, none of whom at that time were able to do any labor but myself; for all were too small to do anything, except my oldest brother, and he

was helpless, and my father was a weakly man, being diseased from a child. I had been brought up, until this period, without any education, or any knowledge of religion; for my parents had never had any thought for religion, as it seemed, for they never went to any kind of meeting; neither did they seem to have any thought for reading, as they had no Bible or any other kind of a book in their possession.

I was reared in perfect obscurity; for I lived until I was about eighteen years old and had never been at any public gathering, never been to school, nor heard any one speak in public. As I have said, mother died and left me at the age of ten years to take care of a pitiful and helpless family; but my little infant brother in a few weeks followed his mother. My dear reader, I cannot tell the trouble, turmoil I have undergone since the death of my dear mother; and if I were to write for days and days I could not tell half of the many hardships and trials I have had in this world of sin and sorrow. I had to work out of doors in the day time in summer, to try to make something to eat; and also had to prepare our meals three times a day, and had to carry those little children with me to the field. I also had to chew everything my little helpless brother ate, and had to strip him three times a day, and many times oftener. I had to wash and patch for them (my three little brothers, father and one little sister) of nights; for my father was gone from home the most of his time. O, the lonesome hours I saw; for no one came to see us, though there were two dwellings just across the small stream where we lived, both in sight; and after I had become a grown man, I visited those houses and they did not know who I was. Even those people who lived in sight of where I was raised did not know me when I went to their houses, for they had never seen me, only at a distance, since I was a little fellow and nobody ever came to see whether we were dead or alive. Now the general excuse that they (the people in the neighborhood in which I was raised) put up for not visiting us was that my father was such a wicked and sorry man; but my notion is different from that; I think that the excuse was they lacked charity.

Now, dearly beloved in the Lord, I cannot describe what I have suffered during those cold and stormy winters; for I never wore a coat or vest, nor anything else, save a shirt and pantaloons of domestics until after I was eighteen years old. How piercing those sharp winds felt to my thinly dressed body when I had to leave my little brothers and sister and sometimes father, and go to the woods for wood to burn to keep them from freezing! When I would return with my load of wood on my shoulder, I would be so cold that I would be benumbed all over. When I look back on my rugged road, I am made to wonder that I am still alive. But my wonder ceases when I consider that the omnipotent hand of a loving father has led me through this terrible desert and preserved me from its numberless dangers. O, was not the loving hand of Jehovah that kept a poor blind (spiritually blind) boy from having childish ways and from the carelessness common to children. For if I had been of the dispo-

sition common to children, I would not have striven to maintain my father and his helpless family, but to the reverse. I have often thought if it had not been for God's kind providence we would all have been burned up together in our little old log cabin years ago. But thanks to his Holy name he watched over us and brought me to manhood without any help of man, and without any of the luxuries of earth. Then does he not work all things after the council of his own will, and out of the sight of poor finite mortals?

After my helpless brother had died my labor was not so severe. Well do I recollect when he died. It was one evening during a thunderstorm. I was sitting by his side, rocking him in his cradle when the thunders were rolling and sharp lightning were flashing, and it was almost as dark as night. I looked my little brother in the face and saw the hand of death there. His eyes were turned into death. How awful I felt! While looking on him the tears rolled down my cheeks, and I called to my father, for I could not endure to gaze upon that dying boy. Time moved on with me and still I knew but little and thought less, of a Supreme Being. I knew God only by these names, "The Good Man", and the "Lord". This was all I could learn of God by my father. When I would ask him what caused the thunder, etc., he would say that it was the "Good Man" that thundered. When I was a little boy I remembered that my mother told me the same, and that He (the good man) would destroy all that stole, told lies, etc., in a pit of fire. So sometimes I would be much afraid of these things, and dreaded frightful dreams. But my disposition was dreadfully wicked. I will mention a few of my many wicked thoughts and intentions while in a state of death. I had heard of the many pleasant (to me then) sinful practices of mankind from my father telling me of them. So I thought that I would work very hard and lay up, and when I became a man I would buy a suit of clothing and fix up and go out into the world and take my pleasure in all the sins common to all young men; for I thought as I had always been a subject of obscurity and sorrowful privations, that when I became a man I would see some pleasure. But all my expectations were cut short by the hand of Omnipotence; for I became greatly burdened, and my troubles were very great, for I felt my self to be the greatest sinner on earth. O, how wretched I felt! I was ashamed of myself. There were some black people who lived near us, and I was ashamed of them, so that when they came about I would hide from them. O, how wicked I did feel! I often went and tried to pray, though I knew little about what men or women did when at prayer; what position they occupied, or what words they used, for I had never heard anyone pray. So when I went out to pray I would sometimes, and most of the time, fall on my face. So finally I concluded that I was going to die and sink down into a lake of fire unquenchable and everlasting, and that because of my sinfulness. I viewed myself as nothing but a great mass of corrupted wickedness, and that the Good Man, as I knew, was going to sink me into irretrievable woe and mis-

ery on account of my sin. Then I began to examine myself to see why it was that I must sink down into hell, and why it was that I was the worst being on earth, and could not solve the mystery; for I had never been as wicked as I had heard of some being. I had never acted the thief, neither had I been a liar, nor had I been guilty of any big crime. Then what is the matter? I could not tell why I was so guilty. But when I had viewed sin in all its deformity, then I could solve the mystery; for I then saw that it was that original guilt and my total depravity in nature that condemned me. But all my reasoning about not having been guilty of any great crime did me no good; and finally sleep fled from me; and one evening I watched the sun go down, and as he sank below the horison I bade him farewell, and never expected to see the sun rise again. O, how dreadful I felt! for I thought I would soon be dead, and no sooner dead than damned. When night came on and all my father's family were asleep, I arose softly and went out and going a considerable distance from the house, I fell down upon my face to pray. I thought I must now sink into eternal woe and misery, for what hope have I ?I had never heard anything of such a being as Christ Jesus, or Saviour; neither did I know anything of the New Testament at that time; but just at the moment when I thought I was gone, I saw Jesus as it was a bright star descend from heaven and the next I saw to that superior bright star was a little infant lying in a very shabby looking stable, and I thought, or it was revealed to me, that this shining light left heaven to become a way for my redemption from death and hell, and became an infant to that end. I then had a view of the whole life of Christ, even to his crucifixion. I then saw Jesus suspended between the heavens and the earth, as an outcast of both. He was hanging, I thought, about half way between the heavens and the earth. His feet were crossed a large iron about the size of a forty penny nail pierced through them both, his hands were pierced with smaller irons, and His side was pierced open, and a great stream of bloody water was pouring or gushing out of it; and I saw that his whole blessed body was streaming in blood, every part being bathed, and the blood streamed unto the earth. Then I heard a voice say, Fear no longer, for this will overcooled and overspread you from all harm, from the thunderstorms, etc. This voice was sweetest melody to me; my whole being was filled with sweet and holy melody, and I felt as innocent as a little new-born infant; for all my load of sin and guilt was gone. Now it was right here I saw, or it was revealed to me, just how Jesus came into the world; for I viewed that he lived for me a perfect life of obedience in the flesh, and that he died for me, or died in my stead, and arose for me a victorious conqueror over death, hell and the grave; and then ascended to heaven for me. I also had the same view in regard to the whole Church in her triumphant state. Now this heavenly view and divine revelation was so great to me that in after years when I had gotten in possession of the New Testament and began to read it, it seemed as though I had always been acquainted with its readings.

Now I have never gone to school but about two months in all my life, and that during the winter of 1878, and during this same winter I borrowed some clothing and went to Rock Springs meeting house and heard Elder B. E. Caudle preach, which was the first sermon I ever heard preached in my life. So time passed on with me in many ups and downs, doubts and fears, until the 18th of May, 1878, when I went to the church and told some of the great things which I hoped the Lord had done for me.

In June following I borrowed clothing of Brother C. W. York to be baptized in, and walked to Mitchell's River meeting house, about eighteen miles, and was baptized by Elder B. E. Caudle. Now I had never heard anyone tell an experience, or join the church, nor had seen anyone baptized until after I was baptized myself. I moved on in poverty's vale in many severe trials, and was favored with many rich blessings of God's grace, as I sometimes hope, until the second Sunday in August, 1878, when I contemplated trying to preach. When I commenced trying to preach I did not know a tune of any song in the world; neither could I give out a song correctly, for I could scarcely read. So I passed on in my trials, having to toil yet very hard for my father, and he was all the time opposed to my religious exercises; but I would beg him often to let me go and try to preach, which he would sometimes consent to. So I would go in my rags and walk for many miles to preach to the people. Yes, I would go through the dark as well as the daytime; going through wet and dry, cold and heat preaching to the poorer sort of people.

On the 25th of August, 1880, I was married to miss A. L. Moody, a beautiful girl seventeen years old. She was a very poor girl, for she had nothing but her clothing. We leased a piece of land in the woods and built a little log cabin and moved in it, and we got shingles for a sustenance during the fall and winter, working day and night; for I would some nights dress or draw three hundred shingles after supper. But when summer was come we rented stock and land and made a crop, and have been doing that way ever since. The first meal we ever ate in our little log cabin was in one teacup and saucer. I ate out of the saucer and my wife out of the cup and she had one old knife, made in the shop to eat with, while I used my pocket knife. We had to go in debt the first year we were married for bedding and other household and kitchen necessaries, and we paid out the next fall, but had to go in debt again. I have had a powerful hard struggle to barely keep something to eat and wear, and many times both myself and family have suffered for food and raiment, and are in need even now. I have tried to go and preach Jesus as often as I possibly could, and have always had to walk. For the Primitive Baptists are very few in this country, and are very poor and widely scattered, therefore I have never had a helping hand from any mortal in this part. My family consists at present of my wife and three little children. I was set apart and ordained to the gospel ministry by Elders Joshua Long and Wm. Hall on the 3rd

Saturday in May 1882, and have been trying to fill that calling ever since, but have labored under so many disadvantages that it seems there was never given for me any ease or satisfaction in this world. Yes, it seems that I was born unto trouble, tribulations and disappointments, for my days have been as prone to trouble as the sparks are to fly upwards. And there are but two things that make me want to stay here in Time's many distempers, and that is my poor little poverty-stricken family and the poor little saints who are scattered here in this mountain country. They are but few in number and poor in this world, and yet I am knit to them in love.

Brother Respess, I submit this to your kindness, hoping it may find grace in your sight. I am your poor little unworthy brother in hope of the resurrection of life eternal.

State Road, N.C.
Elder William R. Welborn.

P.S. Dear Brother Respess:

It is at the request of several of your readers that I have written this short sketch of my life and experience for your precious paper, THE GOSPEL MESSENGER. Please give it a corner in your precious paper.

Copied from the Signs of the Times, January 2006

COVER MY DEFENCELESS HEAD WITH THE SHADOW OF THY WING.

A party of northern tourists formed part of a large company gathered on the deck of an excursion steamer that was moving slowly down the historic Potomac one beautiful evening in the summer of 1881.

A gentleman who has since gained a national reputation as an evangelist of song had been delighting the party with the happy rendering of many familiar hymns, the last being the sweet petition so dear to every Christian, beginning, "Jesus lover of my soul." The singer gave the first two verses with much feeling, and a peculiar emphasis upon the concluding lines, that thrilled every heart. A hush had fallen upon the listeners that was not broken for several seconds after the musical notes had died away. Then a gentleman made his way from the outskirts of the crowd to the side of the singer and accosted him with, "Beg your pardon, stranger, but were you actively engaged in the late war?"

"Yes, sir", the man of song answered courteously," I fought under General Grant."

"Well," the first speaker continued, with something like a sigh, "I did my fighting on the other side, and think, indeed am quite sure, I was very near you one bright night, eighteen years ago this very month. It was much such a night as this. If I am not very much mistaken you were on guard duty. We of the south had sharp business on hand, and you were one of the enemy. I crept near your post of duty, my murderous weapon in my

hand; the shadows hid me. As you paced back and forth, you were humming the tune of the hymn you have just sung. I raised my gun and aimed at your heart. I had been selected by our commander for the work, because I was a sure shot. Then upon the night rang the words:

"Cover my defenseless head
With the shadow of thy wing."

Your prayer was answered. I could not fire after that. And there was no attack made upon your camp that night. You were the man whose life I was spared from taking."

The singer grasped the hand of the Southerner, and said with much emotion, "I remember the night very well, and distinctly the feeling of depression and loneliness with which I went forth to my duty. I knew my post was one of great danger, and I was more dejected than I remember to have been at any other time during the service. I paced my lonely beat, thinking of home and friends, and all that life holds dear. Then the thought of God's care for all that he has created came to me with peculiar force. If he so cared for the sparrows, how much more for man created in his own image; and I sang the prayer of my heart and ceased to feel alone.

How the prayer was answered I never knew until this evening. My heavenly Father thought best to keep the knowledge from me for eighteen years. How much of his goodness to us we shall be ignorant of until it is revealed by the light of eternity! Jesus, lover of my soul, has been a favorite hymn; now it will be inexpressibly dear."

THE AMERICAN
(Copied from the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, September, 1969)

NATURAL WAYWARDNESS.

The Bible has a great deal to say about sheep, and because of this continued reference, people often get the idea that sheep are lovely, docile and intelligent creatures. The truth is that they are very stupid, dirty, and particularly given to straying away. Hard as it is to comfort, these characteristics make sheep a particularly fitting symbol of the weak and erring children of God.

Shepherds tell us that sheep have to be carefully herded be cause if they once spy a path, they will start down that path and sometimes trot along for miles, just because it is a path. Behind this reality lies the parable of the lost sheep. That particular sheep found itself in a pathway and kept on going.

The Bible declares that "all we like sheep have gone astray." In the case of both sheep and humans, the disposition is to get into a pathway and follow it, simply because it is a pathway.

The neighbors make a pathway, or the fashion designers, or the smart set at the country club, or Hollywood and down that pathway rush millions of people, from bobby-sockers to grandmothers, from toddlers to industrial executives, little lambs to old sheep running along the pathway just because it

is a pathway.

"All we, like sheep." The Bible emphasizes the need for a shepherd and the watchful ear of one who regards our waywardness with understanding and love. Selected from Frederick (Md) Post. (Maryland).

(Re-copied from Signs of the Times, August, 1955.)

GOSPEL STANDARD JANUARY 1837

A contrite heart alone can speak feelingly of contrition, a believer of faith, a pilgrim of a wilderness, a tried soul of temptation, a captive of bondage, or a soldier of wounds. Thus we want for our periodical, not pretty notions, but genuine experience; not merely explanations of hard texts, but the unravelling of the mysteries of vital godliness; not eloquent language, but soul feeling; not cut and dried phrases out of the dictionary, but a simple statement of the Lord's dealings within. We want not scurrility and vulgar, personal abuse, but meekness of wisdom; not great swelling words of vanity, to bolster up an ungodly system, but sound speech, so as to edify the church of God. And, therefore, we would invite those of our correspondents on whose communications a blessing has rested, to favour us with more such papers, and would ask also others of the Lord's family, who have not yet sent us anything, to make the attempt. We want not fine language, nor well-turned periods, nor what is called good writing. We want unction and power, something to move and melt the soul's of God's people. We want some depths of the heart turned up to view, and some of the secrets of the Lord with them that fear him laid open. And let our correspondents bear in mind the real wants of the Lord's family. They need not so much your opinions as your experience; not so much your views of a text, as an account of the Lord's dealings with your soul; not a heap of fine words that amount to nothing, but gracious feelings brought up from the bottom of your heart. Pour no rosewater, then, over your language; soften down no rough expression; polish off no strong phrase, if it convey the genuine feelings of your soul. You are not writing for gentlemen and ladies, but for mechanics and artizans, the poor in this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom. And if there be any better educated feeling readers of your communications, grace will have taught them to look for unction, and not for eloquence.

PSALM 19:1-2.

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

GOSPEL STANDARD JANUARY 1837

We have been favoured with several numbers of a semi-monthly periodical, published in New York, by Mr. Gilbert Beebe, entitled "The Signs of the Times." We hope and trust that our unknown friend will be enabled to fight manfully the good fight of faith; that he will spare no enemies of the gospel and cross of Christ, let them appear in what shape or garb they may, whether as fiends of darkness or angels of light; whether in open profanity, in rotten creature-merit mongery, in dead, dry formality, or, which we believe is as soul-damning as anything ever yet promulgated by the devil, in slave-mongery. Our prayer, we trust, is, that he may be led instrumentally to pull down, yea, to throw down the strong holds of Satan, and, by insisting upon the power of religion in the soul by the blessed Spirit, and exhibiting Christ and his finished work to poor broken-hearted sinners, that he may remove the stumbling-blocks out of the way, and be the means of setting at liberty many of God's dear elect, who are held in bondage under Hagar's seed. We perceive that several communications from our work have been inserted in "The Signs of the Times," and this affords us fresh encouragement to go on, as we doubt not but that our brethren, not only here, but across the Atlantic, will, in some sweet measure, be led to reap the benefit of our labours.

PSALM 21: 1-3.

The king shall joy in thy strength, O Lord; and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!

Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips. Selah.

For thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness: thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head.

MEETINGS

LOWER MAYO 5TH SUNDAY MEETING

The next 5th Sunday meeting will be held, the Lord willing, Sunday, April 29, 2018. Mount Pleasant Church will host the meeting. The meeting house is located at 82 Browntown Church Road, Bishopville, SC 29010. From Bishopville, SC, take US 15 South 1 mile, turn west on Browntown Road. Go 2 miles and turn left on Browntown Church Road. Go 200 yards to church on left.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to meet with us during the meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

SKEWARKEY UNION
(Eastern Kehukee Association)

Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarky Union on the fifth Sunday of April 29, 2018. The church is located at the corner of 301 W. St. James Street and Albemarle Avenue in Tarboro, NC. Preaching services begin at 10:30 am.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union will be held at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church located on Main Street in the town of Gretna in Pittsylvania County. Saturday before the fifth Sunday in April 2018, the song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton, Clerk
Staunton River Primitive
Baptist Association

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held, the fifth Sunday in April 29, 2018 at Moons Creek Primitive Baptist Church. The song service will begin at 10:30 a.m. and preaching service will start at 11:00 a.m. The Church is located one mile off Hwy 86 between Yanceyville, N.C. and Danville, Va. on Park Springs road toward Providence, N.C. We invite and welcome all Ministers, Brethren, Sisters and Friends of our Faith and order to come and be with us.

Elder Jimmy Gray, Moderator
Brother Wayne Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 2018

Judy Ravan, VA 25.00
Carmen Abernathy, NC 5.00
Patsy Mitchell, TX..... 5.00
Jim Carr, VA..... 30.00
Elder Mark Terry, VA..... 5.00
Bruce Smith, VA 25.00
James Knight, NC 25.00

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

VOL. 186 HILLSVILLE, VA., MAY 2018 NO. 5

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

Jesus lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly,
While the raging billows roll,
While the tempest still is nigh!
Hide me, O my Saviour! hide
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide;
Oh, receive my soul at last.

Other refuge have I none;
Hangs my helpless soul on thee;
Leave, ah! leave me not alone;
Still support and comfort me.
All my trust on thee is stayed;
All my help from thee I bring:
Cover my defenseless head
With the shadow of thy wing.

Thou, O Christ, art all I want;
More than all in thee I find;
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,
Heal the sick, and lead the blind
Just and holy is thy name,
I am all unrighteousness;
Vile and full of sin I am;
Thou art full of truth and grace.

Plenteous grace with thee is found —
Grace to pardon all my sin:
Let the healing streams abound;
Make and keep me pure within:
Thou of Life the fountain art!
Freely let me take of thee;
Spring thou up within my heart;
Rise to all eternity! C. Wesley.

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EDITORIAL

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

What do you believe? What have you been made to love and to believe? If someone were to ask you, could you tell them? The Apostle Peter writes in 1 Peter 3:15, "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." Each of you that possesses that hope in you have been blest of the Lord to experience the work of Christ in your heart and the comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, has revealed the truth to you. Christ said "I am the truth." So you have the truth in you. You are the temple of God and the kingdom of God is within you. You have been made to feel your unworthiness so acutely that you have no desire to engage in an argument or to speak in a disrespectful manner. But you are blest to give a reason for the precious hope that you have with meekness and fear. Not fear of the one who asked you but fear that you may not be one of the Lord's elect.

The Apostle Paul writes in Ephesians 1:4 that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ "hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world." Before He created the world and the things in it including man, He chose (elected) a people in Christ. He loved a people before there was a people in the world. Every elect of God was in the mind and purpose of God before they were ever born into the world. As Moses told Israel in Deuteronomy 7:7&8, **"The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye** *were* **the fewest of all people: But because the Lord loved you..."** Therefore the doctrine of election was established before the foundation of the world. It was confirmed by the Apostle Paul in Romans 9:11-13, **"(For** *the children* **being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth;) It was said unto**

her, the elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Some would deny the scripture and say that would make God unkind and unrighteous. But God forbid. For He said to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy."

"For whom He will foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren." He foreknew His people in love before the foundation of the world. His elect by nature were the children of wrath even as others. They could not change themselves. But, God so loved them that He predestinated (predetermined) them to change. At His appointed time He brought this change about and called them out of the darkness of unbelief into His marvelous light of understanding. "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

Some would ask, if God loved and chose a certain people before the foundation of the world, why was it necessary for the Lord Jesus Christ to come into this world to suffer and die. The Apostle Paul answered that when he wrote, "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Adam transgressed the law and therefore, all his posterity come into the world as sinners. Judgement was rendered against all mankind including the Lord's elect. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." "As it is written, there is none righteous, No, not one." "They are all gone out of the way, they one together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." The Apostle writes "for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin." The judgement is that all mankind is guilty.

Therefore, the Lord's elect that He chose in Christ before the foundation of the world must be redeemed from their sins and the curse of the law. To do so required a sacrifice that was just as holy as the law in order to balance the scale of God's justice and fulfill the law to a jot and tittle. So God, in the person of His Son, must come to earth under the same law that His elect were under. As the angel said unto Joseph concerning Mary, who was a virgin, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." Matthew further explains, "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoke of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." He had a body of flesh as other men but without sin. The fulness of the Godhead (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) dwelleth in Him bodily. All fulness dwelleth in Him. In the flesh He could experience all things that His elect experience except sin. After Jesus was

baptized, He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. He was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin. As Luke records, Jesus said to Satan "Get behind me." When Jesus put Satan behind Him, He put Satan behind the church. For the church is the body of Christ. The seed of the woman (Christ) bruised the head of the serpent. The seed of the serpent (Satan) could only bruise the heel of the seed of the woman by tempting. The bounds of Satan were set. He could tempt the Lord's elect but he could not lead them away or destroy them.

So He came to save His people from their sins. To do so He must suffer, die and shed His blood on the cross. As Christ said in John 10:17&18, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." On the cross He blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that were against us and contrary to us and took it out of my way, mailing it to His cross.

On the cross He was made "to be sin for us." On the cross He "bare our sins in his own body." The Apostle writes that the Gentiles at that time "were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." He is our peace. He broke down the middle wall of partition between His elect of Jews and Gentiles and made both one. He has one fold, one church. Ephesians 4:4-6, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." He purchased the Church of God with His own blood. Her debt is paid in full. The guilty judgement against her is satisfied.

The 9th hour is the hour of prayer. At the 9th hour on the cross, He cried with a loud voice, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" In the past He had always said "Father." But in order for Him to die, the fulness of the Godhead must leave that body. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are one and cannot be separated. John relates that Jesus declared "It is finished." The work that the Father gave Him to do was finished. He was on the cross for six hours which sets forth a period of time of work. God created all things in six days which were not days as we know days. The holy law of God had been fulfilled to a jot and tittle. His chosen people redeemed from their sins. A complete and finished work that left nothing for man to do. He was raised again for their justification. Therefore, "who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is god that justifieth." There is nothing that can separate you from the love of Christ. He has freely given every little child of grace three gifts: Faith, Hope and Love.

His elect will not stand before God in the end of time to be judged out of those things written in the books (law), according to their works. The elect shall

hear the King say "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

In love,
Elder Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

Brother Horton,

Thank you for all you do for the Signs. I am unable to get out anymore. I appreciate everyone's prayers.

Mary Frances Stanfield Williams

PSALM 9:1-2.

I will praise *thee*, O Lord, with my whole heart: I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.

I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 5 / 2018 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

VOICES OF THE PAST

ELDER HENRY C. JONES

Dear Brother Burnell:

Tonight as I sit here in my home, this 25th day of July, 1988, I am thinking of you and your family, Sister Mary Frances and the girls. I have told you in times past about my desire to write to you concerning some of my experiences. I don't know whether God will bless me to do this or not, but if it would be His will, I shall try.

I would desire to write to you concerning my experience in the Lord Jesus Christ. This experience I am talking about has been given me by the Lord. I believe this from the depths of my heart and soul. Because of the many conversations we have had in days and nights past I believe you can witness with me in what I am saying. Do you remember the night I was so burdened and weighted down with a weight I felt I could not remove? This weight I could not take away, because I had not placed it there. We had been to services at Creeches Meeting House that night, and when the meeting was over, you and myself were standing in front of the building talking. I began to talk to you about my feelings and the way I felt concerning the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I knew I did not know how and could not do it of myself. I knew you, nor any other man, could not help me do it. For it must come from Jesus Christ or it's not preaching. I

have not learned this out of any book or learned it from any man. If I know anything about this, it has been by the revelations of Jesus Christ. Every since I was about eight years old, I have had many down settings, disappointments and heartaches. I remember being in the yard one day doing some work for my Mother. I felt something come over me, but I did not know where it came from. I have never forgotten it. I now feel it was the Lord Jesus Christ dealing with me, but at that time He did not show me where it was coming from or who was giving it. I was not brought up in the church nor told about the Lord by my parents. It was the Lord Jesus Christ who dealt with me in the past. I have had many experiences since the night you and I talked in front of Creeches Meeting House. I dreamed one night I stood before the people and preached the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ as it was given to me.

Not me or any other man, but the Lord Jesus Christ was the one over all of it. He was the one that gave me the words to say to feed the flock. Yes, I believe from the depths of my heart and soul that time after time I would have these experiences even before I offered and was received into the church. Long before I was ordained to preach the gospel, I dreamed I was standing in the pulpit behind the book board. The meeting was over and I came down out of the pulpit. The people came and hugged me and embraced me and told me how much they enjoyed what the Lord had blessed me to say. Well, it cut me down very much, but it also lifted me up in one way, to feel that the Lord had used me as His mouthpiece. Today, as well as times past He uses men (and I hope myself) as His mouthpiece to stand before the flock of God and preach to them. I don't believe one can preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, to an unbeliever. One must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and the only way they can believe in Jesus Christ is to be born of the spirit of God. They must be born and brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Him. They must be given grace and grace alone, because it takes grace to have the love and it takes the love to have the grace.

I believe both of us have experienced that love and that grace and not only us, but all of the children of God wherever they are met at. How much I love you and Sister Mary Frances, as well as, both of the girls, through and by the grace of God. We have seen the girls grow up from little girls to grown women, and I hope I love them for Christ sake. I love God's people wherever they are. It matters not where we meet, but if we can only be blessed to talk about the Lord Jesus Christ and what he has done for us. If we can tell the experiences of grace that He has blessed us with from on high. The many times our souls have been fed with the bread that flows from the throne of grace. Not anything have we ever done to inherit any of it, for it is a free unmerited favor that is given by Christ Jesus, the Saviour of sinners. He came to save the sinners, not the righteous. I know I am a sinner. I have been all of my life and will be the balance of my life that I live here in this world. But

thanks to my God, He has given me a promise of a better place than on this earth. I don't know that I will be carried there, I only have a hope that I will wake up in that final home where the whole family will be there all together lovely and be singing the hymns of praise forever. A place that never ceases to be and where there is no darkness, only light. It will be lit up with the glory of Almighty God, so we can see and feel the joy of Thy salvation that we have a hope in now.

I believe both you and I, as well as our companions, all have a hope. I believe the Lord has taught us something that is beyond the teachings of man. People go off to seminaries to learn to preach the gospel, but the one I went to I trust I was carried by the Lord Jesus Christ and did not go on my own. If I know anything He is the one that has taught me. I did not learn it from any man nor did I learn it from any book. If I know anything about it, it is through and by the revelations of Jesus Christ. I have had many down settings in my life, but how wonderful it is to be down in the valley and then lifted up on the mountain top that we can rejoice in a Saviour's love and in the Holy Spirit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. One that has looked down upon us and has called us with a holy calling. One who has brought us out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God. Oh, what a light this is. It is so bright, yet it will not blind you. The brightness of the natural sun will bring tears to your eyes. The light of Jesus Christ shining in you will make you cry, but it will be tears of joy and not for sorrow. Oh, how many times have I ever cried for the joy of the Lord Jesus Christ has given me. Dealt with me in that way, in that manner, that I could praise Him. The only true and living God that I have to look to tonight for living grace that will never die. That grace that will live now and forevermore and that great and holy love that is given us by Him, the only one that shall stand. This natural love that we have for one another here is going to cease some day, but that love that God has loved us with, and the love that we are bidded to love one another with shall never die. It will live in this world with us and in that yonder world if we are only blessed to be carried there.

This is a true and lively hope that I believe God has given me. A hope that no one can take away. A hope that no man had anything to do with me receiving it. In due time God showed me what I am by nature and what I must be by the grace of God. It didn't come none too early and none too late, because there is a time and season to all things. It comes times that He gives to me these things that I believe, these things that I'm telling you tonight. I believe each one of us has heard preaching from time to time on the mountain tops, on the sea shores, and in the valleys. Oh, how beautiful it is to be lifted up and to be carried to a place that looks and is beautiful. We want more of it, but we can't have any more than what God would give us to have. What we will have in this life and in the world to come is all stored up in His storehouse of mercy. How we would desire to praise our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ for the many bless-

ings that He has bestowed upon us all the days of our lives, even when we knew it not.

My mind is carried back from time to time to my Mother. She had no girls, only boys. When I was about eight years old, I was doing some work for her. I did not know then, but I trust I know now, where the mind came from to help my Mother. The Lord Jesus Christ gave me that mind to do the things that I did for her. I would sweep the yard and do things like that and rejoice in it. The reason I rejoiced in it was because the Lord was in the matter. The Lord was showing me, but yet it did not please Him to show me where it was coming from. It did not please Him to show me where all of the goodness and mercy that was in my soul as a little lad was coming from. Years later it pleased Him to reveal to me where these things come from. He came into my heart and soul and condemned me of this world and the worldly things that I was dwelling in. He turned me from one place to another that was far better than the place I was going into. Oh, yes I'm still in this world, but I'm not of the world. I can truthfully say that I'm not of this world. This world has no charms for me anymore. The only charm I have, the only Joy I get in this world, is when I can feel the presence of my God into my heart and soul. He lifts me up from the vain and perishable things of this world where I can feel the joy of His salvation right into my heart and soul, making me to praise Him from whom all my blessings have come from.

I need the blessings of my God to bless me to keep pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. I don't know of any other way that I desire to go but in the way that leads to life everlasting. Straight is the way and narrow the gate and but a few will enter therein. I hope with all my heart and soul that I'm one of those that has been called in that way, that has been called to go in that straight and narrow way that leads to life everlasting. In other words, that highway of holiness that leads to heaven and immortal glory where there is only one way you can get on that highway. That is straight in and through Jesus Christ. He is the only way one will ever walk on that highway of holiness. It is through and by the leading power of the Almighty God that we believe in. The Almighty God has kept us out of that broad was and that broad gate. He has narrowed the way down so narrow that we are not able to walk by ourselves, but He is able to lead us in it and enable us to walk in that way through and by the power of Him. It is not by the power of our doing not the power of any man. It must come from the love and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, what a wonderful grace that is. It is sufficient for every child of God that is on the face of this earth. That grace will sustain them through every trial and every trouble and every affliction they ever meet up with in this world. It will be right there with them and it will bring them through all of these things.

I know He has been with me through

all my trials and troubles. Just like the experience I had in a dream. I dreamed I was driven up to the Red Sea, just like the Israelites were. The enemy was behind them. They couldn't turn back, nor turn to the right or left and they didn't see anyway straight ahead because the Red Sea was in front of them. I want you to know in my experiences I've been carried to that same place. Brother Burnell, I want to tell you the waters were rolled back for me and I was carried across on dry ground just like the Israelites were. And that water, I can see it now, how the Lord Jesus Christ rolled it back for me to go across. I didn't go on my own, He is the one that carried me. He is the one that rolled the waters back. He is the one that made the straight and narrow way for me to go. He can do the very same thing now as He did then. He does these things day by day and night by night and no one has ever told me anything to make me believe these things. It is through and by the Lord Jesus Christ that has made me to believe it. It is a true and living God that has watched over me every moment of my life, not just a part of it, but every day I live, every breath I breathe in this world here.

I want to tell you about your association of 1988. How much I really enjoyed that meeting. I had been away for three years. I had been sick and in the hospital part of the time it was going on, but my mind was with you all. What a feast you were having there and what a feast I was having in the hospital also. The same God that was with me was with you at the association. This year, 1988, I was blessed to go after missing three associations in a row. Oh, how much those brethren who are down on the face of this earth. They will be ready to give a reason of their hope.

We are told to be ready to give a reason of our hope, and Brother Burnell, I don't know whether you've ever been asked that question or not, but I have. One day I was asked to give a reason for why I was among the Old Baptists to start with. I told the man if he had a few minutes to listen I would tell him why I am among the Old Baptists. I talked to the man, who was my employer, for about fifteen minutes. He then told me anytime I wanted to go to my meetings to go ahead. He didn't want me to work when I actually wanted to be at my meetings. The Lord blessed me in that way to never be hindered from being able to go to Church when I was well, but I have been sick and couldn't go. I couldn't go this past meeting, the fourth weekend in July. I had to stay in bed both Saturday and Sunday, because I was sick. My heart was beating too slow and I could not go, but thanks to my God, He has blessed me to have a mind to look to him and write these things down on paper. To put them down and send them to you for you to read for yourself. May God bless you, your companion, and the girls. May the Lord be praised for this writing. May God be praised for everything. I would desire to be a little brother in hope, if one at all.

Elder Henry C. Jones (Copied from the SIGNS OF THE TIMES July, 2003).

GENESIS 32:27

"And he said, What is thy name? and he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince thou hast power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."

This Scripture, like all others, shows the mercy of God to poor, unworthy sinners. Jacob had twice sinned against his brother in taking undue advantage of him. Esau was so enraged at the second offence that Jacob fled to his kindred in another land. Esau said, "He is rightly named Jacob for he has supplanted me these two times." His name therefore signifies his true character, to which he confesses in his struggle with the man that wrestled with him.

In his first offence he took advantage of his brother at a time when he was least able to resist him. Esau was ready to faint with hunger, and he said, "If I should die what good would this birthright do me?" and for one mess of pottage he got the birthright. Jacob here shows his evil nature in this undue advantage of his suffering brother, but we hear no complaint from Esau about this. He sold out to him, but by and by, when Esau had gone for venison for his father, Jacob brought him meat, and when questioned by his blind father, he said, "I am thy very son Esau;" and lied not only in word, but also in actions, for he covered his hands and neck with the skin of the kid that his father might take him for Esau. I once heard the idea that Jacob did not lie, because in a law sense he was Esau, since he had obtained the birthright. This might answer to the law, but not his father, for he said, "Art thou my very son Esau?" and he said, "I am." In truth he was no more Esau after he had obtained the birthright than before, and he knew that his father would not recognize him, and his arrangement to appear as Esau, and deceive his father, who could only judge by feeling, for Esau was a hairy man. Jacob obtained the blessing, and Isaac said, "He shall be blessed."

Esau was now enraged, and he comforted himself saying, "When my father is dead then will I kill Jacob." So Jacob fled as stated above; and notwithstanding the fact that he had so grievously sinned the Lord showed him mercy in the land to which he went, and protected him against Laban, who changed his wages ten times, seeking the advantage of him each time. The Lord turned the intended curse into a blessing to Jacob.

Here we see some of the great mercy of God who has said of his people, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and will remember their sins no more forever." How true that the ways of our God are past finding out. Why such mercy to a sinner? Here Jacob prospered and increased in goods. His family also; for it is here that God began to fulfill his promise to Abraham that his seed should be as the stars of heaven for multitude. But the Lord's time came for Jacob to return to the land from whence he came, and he told him to return, and it should be well

with him. At God's bidding Jacob returns; (for his word must be obeyed). But he was afraid of Esau, although God has said, "It shall be well with thee." This shows that the poor sinner not only needs the promise, but its fulfillment in order that he may feel safe and rest from his labor. Is it any wonder that Jacob should be afraid of Esau? He well knew that he had greatly wronged him, and he felt that it would be no more than he deserved if Esau should meet and destroy him and all he had. This gives us fellowship for Jacob, for we too well know that God would be just should he turn us away forever; and who is it, seeing he can claim nothing on his own merit, that is not afraid to meet him against whom he had sinned? Is it strange that Jacob would conceive the idea of appeasing the wrath of his brother with a present? Do we not try this time and again, vainly hoping by some good work of our own to obtain the favor of God?

Although Jacob has the present made up, and on its way to meet Esau, he is not at rest, for he has heard that Esau is coming, and four hundred men with him. He now realizes that Esau is prepared to destroy him and all that pertains to him, and he can see no reason why he should not feel like doing so. Is not this our experience, dear brethren? This is because of sin — a fearful looking for of judgment, and the suspense is awful and now Jacob sends all before him, and tarries behind, all alone. How like the humble, sin-sick soul; no one like me, no one so great a sinner; but he remembers the promise of God that it should be well, and he calls up the fact as though he would remind the Lord; but he makes no claim upon him; but says, "I am not worthy of thy mercy which thou hast shown thy servant." How like you my brother and sister, asking protection purely upon the principle of mercy, acknowledging that he is afraid of Esau.

O how dark the night, and how full of gloomy forebodings to Jacob, who had so greatly sinned, and now felt his guilt and shame. And there wrestled a man with him, and this man was Jesus, for he says, "Before Abraham was I am," the root and the offspring of David. And he prevailed not until the breaking of day he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh, and his thigh was out of joint as he wrestled with the man. Now Jacob is helpless, for no man can wrestle with his thigh out of joint; and the man said, "Let me go, for the day breaketh." But Jacob said, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." This does not argue that Jacob could hold the man, or that the sinner of today can hold Jesus when he desires to go, but shows that the sinner who realizes his own helpless condition will not cease to cry to God, who alone can save him from that of which he is afraid. And the man said, "What is thy name?" and he said "Jacob." (a supplanter — a sinner). These are my people, children that will not lie. It has been a characteristic of the people of God in all ages to confess their sins; so Jacob confessed, I am a sinner, unworthy and without strength, all alone with no one to call upon but he against whom he had struggled all night.

So with us, we have no one to look to for mercy but the blessed Jesus

against whom we have sinned all our days. Justice would say, "I know you are an unworthy sinner, and I will put an end to you right here." But mercy says, "Thy name shall no more be called Jacob, but Israel. For as a prince thou hast power with God and with men and hast prevailed." As Jacob he has done nothing but sin; he could not overcome the fear that he felt, for he knew that he deserved death.

It is only then as a prince or son of God, chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began, that he has power to prevail. Because of their being chosen in him, Jesus has given to poor sinners eternal life, and this life is power, and by it Jacob and all the chosen prevail. But notwithstanding he has prevailed, he goes halting the remainder of his life. Any wonder? His thigh is out of joint, his greatest strength is gone, and all of God's children are poor and halting, because their great strength is taken away; for the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God. So they go halting because their own strength is in sufficient for them, and they need the staff of God's promise to lean upon, all this alone holds them up. When Jacob meets Esau he finds that his present does not appease his wrath. It is already appeased, and he says of the present, "I do not need it. I have enough." So the Lord says of sacrifice, "I am full of these things, and have no pleasure in them." His wrath against the poor sinner is already appeased through the precious blood of Jesus. Esau accepted Jacob's sacrifice only as a token of his joy in meeting him in peace, and so the Lord does not need our works to appease his wrath, but accepts them as a thanks offering which we render in the blessed hope that we have met the Lord, and he was pleased with us.

Now Jacob's sufferings was in the fearful looking for of that which he felt was justly due according to his deeds; but he found it better than he feared. And is not this our experience, dear ones? Have we not been blessed above merit and beyond what we could expect? The awful judgments and fiery indignation for which we have often looked have not come, but mercy instead, thanks to his holy name.

I once heard a comment upon the saying of Paul. That if we sin willfully after we receive the knowledge of the truth there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries, in which the party said that the blood of Jesus washed away all our sins up to the time we receive the knowledge of the truth, and that the sins committed afterwards were remitted through our sufferings, the judgments and fiery indignations which the Lord sends upon us because of our sin. This cannot be true, as we are not partners with Jesus in the work of salvation, for he trod the winepress alone. Of the people there was none to help, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his son, cleanseth us from all sin, and salvation is wholly by the grace of God.

Jacob was not accepted by his elder brother because of his good works, or his suffering the night before, and so our elder brother does not accept us

because of goodness in us, or because of our suffering the just penalty of our sin; but because of his everlasting love wherewith he hath loved us before the foundation of the world, and the salvation of the sinner from first to last is entirely by the grace of God through Jesus Christ. That which we merit we may justly claim; but Jacob, with all of God's humble poor, confesses that he is not worthy of all the blessings which thou hast shown thy servant. Thou hast not dealt with us according to our iniquities.

May I now say something about Jacob and Israel, for the man who wrestled with him said that his name should no more be called Jacob but Israel. Why? Because as a prince he has power with God, etc., and God afterwards said to him, "Thy name shall be no more Jacob, but Israel shall thy name be." But later on we find that when he was on his way to Egypt to meet Joseph, God appeared to him (Israel), and he said, "Jacob, Jacob," and he answered to his old name, saying, "Here am I."

Now, what shall I say, for I find that he is spoken of and spoken to as Jacob, after it is said that his name shall be no more Jacob, but Israel. The thought comes to me this way. The man said his name is Israel because as a prince he has power with God and with men and has prevailed. I notice that when spoken to or spoken of in times of trouble or distress he is called Jacob, but when he has power to overcome he is called Israel. See for instance when his sons return from Egypt, and tell him that Joseph, his beloved son, is yet alive, and governor over all the land of Egypt, Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not. But when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to take him home to himself, the evidence was assuring, and the spirit of Jacob revived and now he is a strong prince, and Israel said, "It is enough; Joseph, my son, is yet alive. I will go and see him before I die."

I want to say just here that he is not another man since the change of his name, neither is he two men, but one and the selfsame, having another name only because of his power as a prince, or son of God. Neither are the Lord's people today another, or two, but the same as one in nature, and different only they have the power of a prince, or the presence of the spirit of God, by which alone they can overcome the evil of their nature.

I remember that the apostle Paul speaks of the old man and the new man, but he means only the two natures or spirits that are now in the one man; and the old man is the fleshly nature, and this is weak and sinful, and therefore always Jacob, and can never overcome. The new man is the spirit or life of Jesus, and therefore is a prince having power, and when revived says, It is enough, it is alright, the evidence is sufficient, and I will go in response to the call of Joseph, or the loving Jesus, who hath said, Come to me and I will feed and give you rest. Jacob seemed to forget his age and weakness in the joy of seeing Joseph. The destitution in his own land, the plenty in the land of Egypt, coupled with his greatest of all desires to see Joseph, sweetly forced him, not in any sense against his will, but with joy and gladness of heart; and not in his own strength

or means, for Joseph sent all the means necessary to his coming to him. And when he met Joseph his desires were fully satisfied, and he said, "Let me die since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive," showing that the poor sinner finds his whole desire satisfied in Jesus who so richly provides for him of whom Joseph is a figure.

But I remember that this Israel is called the spirit of Jacob. The spirit of Jacob revived and Israel said, "It is enough." How will this hold with the idea that the name Jacob represents the fleshly nature? It is the sons and daughters of Adam that are saved. It is the sinner to whom Jesus gives eternal life. This gift of God is the life or spirit of the sinner (Jacob) because God gave it to him, and when exercised by the power of this life he forgets his weakness and fear of going down to the grave in sorrow, and is now a strong prince believing the things of God in his heart, and confessing them with his mouth before men. And prevails, having power with God and with men; and through this spirit of Jesus which is also the spirit of the man (Jacob) or sinner (for Jesus prayed that they may be one in us, as thou Father and I are one) they are able to endure hardness, suffering, and persecution that is a marvel to the world, many sealing their faith with their blood, and today being counted as the offscouring of all things, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season, showing that the man of God can do that which is impossible to the world; but all by the power of the spiritual life which Jesus has given. Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," and his abundant labor in the vineyard of the Lord was by the grace of God which was with him, and this I feel sure is the faith of all well established children of God, but I wish to impress the fact that it was Jacob who sinned, it was he who fled from the wrath due to his sin, it was he who received mercy instead of justice, it is he who mourned for his absent son, it is he who is hungry because of the famine, it is he who faints for lack of faith in the words of those who like himself are sinners, and does not believe until he sees the evidence sent by him against whom they sinned, it was revived by this undeniable evidence, it was he who met and rejoiced in the presence of Joseph, it was he for whom Joseph cared so long as he lived, it was he upon whose eyes Joseph laid his hand when dead, and it was he whom Joseph carried and buried in his own land. He now sleeps with his fathers notwithstanding his acknowledged unworthiness, and this proves to you afflicted and poor ones that all that Jesus did is for you.

The same man who is a sinner by nature, is a saint by the grace of God, that he who mourns in afflictions shall rejoice in health, that he who is weak in himself is strong in the Lord, that he who is poor in spirit is rich in the gifts of God, that he who faints because of unbelief shall be revived by the sweet evidence of salvation from hunger and thirst. He cares for you while you live. By Jesus the governor of all the land he will close your eyes to all that is mortal and vain,

bury you with your faithful fathers, and wake you up in that beautiful city that needs neither the stars, moon nor sun to light it, but in which the Lord God is the everlasting light; and the days of your mourning shall be ended, and so the saints shall be ever with the Lord; and to his gracious name be all the praise both now and forever.

Your brother in this precious hope,
(Elder) J. T. Rowe
Baltimore, Maryland

(In Landmark, June 1, 1903)

FOR THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Anson, Somerset Co., Maine Oct. 17, 1842.

Dear Brother Beebe: — I for the first time take my pen in hand to inform you that I have been for six years a reader of the Signs of the Times, and as I have been much delighted with its contents, and also hearing how the Old School Baptists scattered over the United States get along, I have thought of giving you a little sketch of my traveling this world of trouble, and also the state of Zion in this vicinity. And now to commence with my travel, I was conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity, and to do good I had no knowledge, and to do evil I was bent, and that continually; and was with all mankind in a state of nature dead in trespasses and in sins. I took light for darkness, and darkness for light; for I thought if ever I got to heaven it must be by my good works: but when I arrived at the age of seventeen, I was one evening at a meeting, and after the meeting was closed as I stood on the floor, suddenly I, for the first time, saw that I was a condemned sinner in the sight of God. I returned home, but knew not what to do; I spent a restless night but got no relief; and I spent one year in this way. The preaching I heard all this time, was that in order to became a christian we must be willing to let the whole world know it, and make resolutions that we will take up the cross (that is) kneel down on an anxious seat, and be determined that we will have religion. But all this time I would not have had any one to know what was on my mind for all this world: I dared not so much as to take the Bible in my hand before any persons for fear that they would mistrust what was on my mind. I thought it told truth, but I was a poor helpless sinner justly condemned, and dared not look to heaven but cried God be merciful to me a sinner. And one day when I was almost in despair, after I had done my work I retired to the woods but could not pray for myself, and returned to the house and went to rest, and as I lay thinking on my sad condition, all at once my load of guilt removed, and I thought I could see Jesus with the eyes of my understanding on the cross, with his arms extended my soul to receive. I had a happy season all alone. The next morning I found myself calm and so remained for a few days, but told no one how my mind was; but when I went to meeting again and heard the do and live system, I threw myself away and

thought I was deceived, and so I got along under this arminian yoke of bondage three years longer; and then I broke my mind and told how I had got along, and by searching the Bible, and having a severe combat with my old system, I was obliged to give up; and was established in the doctrine of the Bible, and was baptized and joined the Baptists. And I have spent eight years more viewing myself the greatest-sinner on earth, but still have a hope in the mercy of God. Now to commence with the state of Zion in this vicinity. I must tell you rather a lamentable story, and yet a good one too, for while the multitude are talking the same in substance as the old Pharisees, that is, that they were born holy, and when they came to years of understanding they had two spirits good and bad, one equal to the other; and it is just as easy to follow, one as the other; and therefore never were in bondage to any man. Yet there are a few that appear have been converted and become as little children, that is, they were by nature children of wrath even as others, dead in trespasses and in sins, and their own strength is perfect weakness, for when they would do good evil is present with them, and they are made to cry out, oh! wretched man that I am and therefore have to trust wholly in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. There is a small church of such here in this place that three years ago took a stand aloof from the doctrine and societies of men, and covenanted to take the Bible for our rule of faith and practice. Our whole number then was twelve, we have added five from the New School and two by baptism. We are very much scattered, but when we can meet together we find that we are united in the doctrine of the Bible.

But I come to a close by giving you a little sketch of the Eastern Old School Baptist Yearly meeting that met with us on the 16th and 17th or September, 1842: chose Elder Daniel Whitehouse ruling elder, brother William Quint, Jr., clerk. We had a very interesting meeting. The brethren appeared to be all of one heart and of one mind. And as one of our number, John. A. Badger, was a licentiate, by, our request he related his experience and call into the ministry, and the brethren unanimously agreed to proceed to ordination. The Sunday following met accordingly. We had a very crowded assembly. Elder P. Hastwell, of North Berwick, preached the ordination sermon from John xxi. 16: "Feed my sheep." Prayer by Eld. J. Bailey. Charge by Eld. J. Macumber.

Right hand of fellowship by Elder D. Whitehouse. Closing prayer by brother J. L. Purrington, licentiate. We then repaired to the water side, where one sister followed her Lord in the ordinance of baptism. We had a solemn and yet a delightful season.

William Quint, Jr.

PSALM 118:1-2.

O Give thanks unto the Lord; for *he is* **good: because his mercy** *endureth* **for ever.**

Let Israel now say, that his mercy *endureth* **for ever.**

EXPERIENCE AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY

Elder D.A. O'Bryant

For some two or three years I have had a mind to try to write a portion of what I feel the Lord has done for me. I realize that if the Lord does not bless me with a fruitful mind I will be unable to pen down the many sad thoughts and feelings I have had, together with a few moments of rejoicing I have been blessed to enjoy. But I trust if it is the Lord's will to direct my mind that I may sketch the path through which I feel I have been driven and led along for the last twenty-two or three years. Going back to childhood, I feel the Lord commenced a great work with me, teaching me I was a sinner and that I had a soul and it was lost, and I must die for my sins. When those thoughts began to come into my mind the matter became very serious with me at all times. At those times I wanted to steal away and try to pray to the Lord and tell him that I would do better, but instead of doing better I seemed to do worse. But the thought of dying would come and I would find myself again begging God to take care of me. I felt that he was able to if he would. I went along with a continuation of like experience for a number of years, with a great fear of judgement; that is, the last day, when God shall pour out his wrath upon them that dwell upon the face of the earth. Seemingly I felt deep down in my very being that I would have to suffer the great torment of those irresistible flames, and those thoughts and feelings were almost more than I could bear. They were so great with me that I could hardly keep from screaming. When I would see the smoke rising from the nearby farms, when the neighbors were burning brush, in my thoughts and imagination I could see the great agonizing flames coming in streaks, consuming everything, and I could not see any way for hell deserving me to escape from those torments. Oh! those miserable feelings are yet untold. I was carried along in that way for several years, but part of the time it did not bother me. I kept all of this from my people, and when I reached the age of sixteen to twenty I was not bothered very much about the matter, so I set out to enjoy as much of this life as I could. At the age of nineteen I left my father, with the thought that I would see what was in this old world. I got as far as Florida and my journey was ended, there something got hold of me again that changed my mind to some extent. I met my wife on my journey to Florida, and after staying there four months my mind was to go back home, so I did, and three or four months later my wife and I were married. I settled down then to try and make a living for us. Soon after I came back from Florida, I went to Hillsdale to preaching and there I met a great many of my schoolmates and friends. We were sitting in the rear of the congregation together and Elder Purdyle preaches into my feelings that day and I shed tears while listening to him. After preaching had closed one of my boy friends said to me that I had left home and gone off and got good. That came near ruining me, for I could not stand his talking to me that way. I thought the best way to

convince him was to curse and deny it, which I did. I cursed bitterly and denied it, and that gave me much trouble, but I got some consolation from the thought that even the apostle Peter cursed and denied the blessed Savior, and said he never knew the man. I felt to be the most wretched and undone sinner that ever lived. I could not feel that there was any mercy for me, so I went on in this condition for six or eight months, begging God for mercy. Easter Sunday night, in the year 1931, if not deceived, the blessed Savior came to me and blessed me to see him as he arose from the dead. I will try to write the dream, or vision. It seemed to me that I was away from home, and was traveling with two of my brothers, and I was cursing and swearing and acting very badly, when I heard a voice call me, that voice sounded like no other voice I had ever heard. I was condemned in my feelings and a fear came over me such as I had never before experienced. It seemed to me I had to go to some very sacred place, and it made me tremble, but I went on, as I was seemingly led, until I reached the place. When I arrived there and stepped inside the door I saw a room in which were a number of folks standing, all were clothed in white robes, and there was a corpse in the room, and it was on a table. The lid of the coffin was off and the body was in it. The coffin was filled with the whitest biscuits I ever saw, and those people went to the coffin and took the bread and ate it, and then the coffin disappeared and the body was on the floor in front of me. It began to move, and I told those people, This man is not dead, but is alive. So I would like to say right here that this Man is not dead, but is alive, and is seated at the right hand of God, making intercession for his children. He arose and came to me, and as he started to his feet his face began to shine, and the nearer he came the brighter it shined. When he got within hands-reach of me I thanked the Lord and began to sing, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me." I then awoke with a confused mind, and with no understanding of what I had seen. I then undertook trying to reason it out in my own way. The more I reasoned the further away I got and the more trouble I got in. So in my trouble I found out that God's way is past reasoning and his thoughts past the understanding of man. So I went in great trouble, until I reached the place where I could neither eat nor sleep as much as I needed in order to be able to do my work. I continued to go on in this way until it seemed I could live no longer. One day I sat down at the table, but could not sit but a little and soon left and went and laid down on my bed, with my face down to keep my wife from seeing me in tears. At that time this thought came into my mind, go and see Elder Trent and tell him the dream and he will interpret it to the extent that you can rest. I went the next day to see him and told him the dream, and this man of God began to tell me some of the things I hope the Lord has done for me, and advised me to go to the church and be baptized. I did not feel that part was right, but was relieved to the extent that I could eat and sleep normally again, and seemed to be recon-

ciled to my condition, yet was expecting some great calamity, but was reconciled to it. One night, about a month later, I came in from my work and ate my supper, then sat down to rest a few minutes before lying down, and the thought came to my mind that something was going to take place with me that night. It seemed to me it might be I was going to die, and I thought that if I did it would be all right, for there was nothing I could do about it. I had been brought to the place to know my weakness, and to know God was all-powerful and did his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, nor say, Jehovah, why or what doest thou?

Sometime during the night I got in some kind of a condition that I will never be able to explain. It seemed that I was vanishing from the presence of everything, and I could not move any member of my body, neither could I speak. When I got to where I could speak I said, Lord have mercy on me, and it seemed to me that I could see and feel an arm like unto a strong man's arm reach down under me and raise me, and I was delivered from that condition. Then my tongue was loosened, to the praise of my God. I had a mind to join the church then, and began to wonder if they would have me. I felt that if they refused me it would be all right, for I was not fit to be numbered with them, yet I had a longing desire to have a home with these folks. I did not feel that I would add anything to them, but felt they would mean very much to me. Several times I went to the church to join with them, but had to wait for God's time. He adds to the church such as he would have to be saved. The day I joined I could not talk to the brethren. They received me on very few words. I went home and began to worry about not telling the brethren much of anything and got in trouble about that, and thought that I would yet tell them. It went on for some time and I began to have some kind of an impression to preach, with the feeling that I would have to tell the brethren what God had done for me, and what he had done for his people. Now this impression seemed to me to be out of all reason. It seemed to me it was an impossibility for me to undertake to preach to people I looked upon as being much wiser than I was. I thought that would never do. But with all my thoughts and with all the experiences I trust God has been pleased to bring me through there is but one reason that I have been going to and fro for the last ten or twelve years endeavoring to preach Christ to his humble people as the way, the truth and the life, and that it was his divine will and purpose, and was from all eternity. If I am not a deceived mortal, time after time God has shown me my depravity and my utter dependance upon him for everything I have or do. For it is in him we live and move and have our continual being. So it is in the great providence of God that things are as they are. The great and eternal wisdom of the great eternal God embraced and comprehended everything that has ever existed or will exist in time or eternity, both visible and invisible, and in that eternal thought and with his unlimited power he declared the end from the beginning, and from an-

cient time saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. I believe that he is unalterable, and I trust that he has given me a sweet hope in his Son and I together with the whole household of faith, will ultimately inhabit the glory world, and sing the glorious doctrine that I have endeavored to preach here to poor sinners who have been taught of God and have been made to realize that there is salvation in no other save Christ, and that is the doctrine of God's sovereign and electing grace, which is so sweet to me. We, as the children of God, have meat to eat that the world knows not of. God in his grace was pleased in eternity to preserve this food in his son for his children, and the storehouse was so secure that eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man the things that God hat prepared for them that love him. The reason that we love him is that he first loved us and gave himself for us. I am not uneasy that there is anything coming up at any time that will hinder the children from eating every meal God has stored away in that great storehouse, and that Christ will prepare for them, or has prepared. They are fed as they get hungry and weak enough. God keeps them just strong enough to walk in his ways, and to know his judgements and to do them. God has made the difference. He forms the light and creates darkness. He makes good and he creates evil. Esau was blessed too, but in no sense as Jacob. God made the difference. He hated Esau, yet he had just as much purpose in Esau as he had in Jacob. Although he hated Esau, yet he must be blessed. God's purpose must be fulfilled in the wicked as much as in the righteous. He must be glorified. His work must praise him, and he shall be glorified in the damnation of these reprobates. In his eternal thought he embraced them, and he had a purpose in them. He will continue the rain on them as well as on the elect. They must go along together. It takes both of them for him to carry out and fulfill his eternal purpose in perfection and it must be perfected, because he is the God of perfection, having even that he desireth. He is God and there is none else. He is God and there is none like him, inhabiting eternity, standing upon the circle of the earth, speaking to the mighty wind and it ceases to manifest its strength, causing the troubled waters to become calm. Who can be likened unto him? I am that I am, I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

In contending for these principles I meet much opposition, but by the grace of God, I hope I have contended for them, and I trust that by his grace I will continue to preach nothing among the children of God but the doctrine of his electing grace. I do not think there is anything else that will satisfy the longing soul of a poor wayworn traveler who is seeking rest from a worn-out life of sin. The thought of the immutability of God fills my very soul, sometimes to the very brim. It is wonderful to have a hope in God that is unchangeable. When we have the evidence that he loves us and gave himself for us we hear him saying that he died that we might live. Behold what manner of love is this, that we

should be called the sons of God, Brethren, it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when we shall see him we shall be like him and be satisfied, and that will be enough.

I have just sketched a portion of what I trust this wonderful God has done for me, and a few thoughts concerning these great principles I feel he has shown me and which are more to me than life. My hope is that God will keep me by his grace to the end, that I will never depart from these principles, and that I may hold out faithful unto the end.

An unworthy brother, saved by the grace of God, if saved at all.

Elder D. A. O'BRYANT
July 1938

Manassa, Va. Nov. 19, 1867.

Dear Brother Beebe: — I have been a reader of the "Signs of the Times" for thirty years, and I do not remember that I ever read anything in them that inspired the same degree of pleasure as the communication of Elder J. F. Johnson in the 22nd number of the 35th volume. Not that he presented any new truth, or because he presented the old in any new dress; but it seemed to be presented with such force and beauty as to carry conviction at once to the mind of the reader that it was the truth and nothing but the truth. I have not the vanity to suppose myself capable of adding anything to either its force or beauty, nor is this communication designed for any such purpose. But as the doctrine as expressed by Brother Johnson has encountered considerable opposition, I thought perhaps it would afford him some considerable gratification if even I should endorse the doctrine, as I fully and emphatically do.

Old School Baptists have ever been distinguished for the pertincity with which they have insisted upon the necessity of the new birth. But alas for many, when their views of what constitutes the new birth are investigated, they are found to be certain vague and ill-defined ideas about the operations of the Spirit of God upon the human soul, changing it from natural to spiritual, or a birth without pre-existence or regeneration.

If there is a spiritual birth without pre-existent spiritual existence, why should not that birth as often develop a devil as a saint? It is only because every seed produces its like; that "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." If that which is born did pre-exist, it was either self-existent or it was begotten. If the latter, it follows as necessarily that there must be a progenitor as a progeny, or in other words, that this spiritual seed must have a spiritual life and head on necessarily as that the natural seed must have one. Some plants and vines may be propagated by cuttings, but however much they may be multiplied by this process, all may be traced to an original seed, and the fruit will ever show the original kind. Hence we have the two Adams. "The first was made a living soul; the second a quickening spirit." It

is no more marvelous that the whole spiritual family existed in Christ than it is that the whole natural family, including his wife existed in Adam before any of them born, or than that two nations should be in the womb of Rebekah.

Those (so-called) Old School Baptists who believe in making a spiritual man out of a natural one, only differ from their christian friends of other denominations as to what is necessary to be done in order to effect this change. Both virtually repudiate the new birth, and both contradict the apostle, who declares, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. If the natural man can receive the things of the Spirit of God, with what consistency can any man oppose any or all of the systems that are employed for educating, scaring, or otherwise imparting such conception? or whence arises any necessity for his being born again? If it be necessary that a man should be born again in order to his seeing the kingdom of God, it must be because nature, or the fleshly birth, furnishes no faculties, no matter how highly they may be improved; or how diligently applied, that can comprehend or receive the things of the Spirit of God. The new birth must therefore be a development and bringing forth of other faculties, and these of a higher order, else nothing is gained by being born again.

Brother Johnson has shown so clearly that everything that is born must first exist, that it would look like plagiarism for me to attempt to argue the subject farther. He has also shown with equal clearness that the term "regenerate" refers to their first begetting, and not to being born or bringing forth. I have often felt a curiosity to know how those persons who believe regeneration and the new birth are synonymous expressions and that when it is effected the natural man is changed into a spiritual man or at least that the soul, which is the life and ruling principle, is so changed, get along when they find any remains of carnality, or any propensity to evil. It seems to me they ought at once to abandon either their hope or their doctrine. I cannot see how they can still maintain both. The bible view of the doctrine, however, teaches how one may be a sinner and yet a saint — how he may exhibit the fruits of the flesh and the fruits of the spirit, and how he may die and yet live. All truth is calculated to strengthen and encourage the hopes of the believer, and the only effect of error is to confuse and to confound. The same spirit that indicted the effusions of prophets and apostles writes that same truth in the hearts of God's children. Hence whenever the truth is proclaimed it finds a ready response in the experience of the christian; and whenever doubts and fears arise, it is always from a misapprehension of what the truth is. Thus "I see so much evil and indwelling corruption in my nature I fear that I have not been born again," is a conclusion that could only be reached by supposing that the new birth eradicates all this corruption, and makes the person holy. But if the truth teaches that in the new birth there is imparted and brought forth a new principle, that is at

variance with all the workings of nature, without destroying or changing a single one of all the affections, passions, or lusts that belong to nature, and the christian, like the apostle Paul, finds a new law in his members warring against the law of the mind, or "the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh?" This fact, while it may make him often cry, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?" yet is a sure guarantee that he is the subject of this spiritual birth, for so the gospel teaches.

But I will not pursue this subject farther at this time.

Yours, very truly,
Elder R. C. Leachman

HEBREWS X. 26.

We understand that this admonition, like that in Hebrews vi. 4-6, was addressed to the saints, which were recognized by the inspired writer of the epistle, as "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling." As he had told them in chapter sixth, that if they should fall away, it would be impossible to renew them again to repentance, according to the manner of the Levitical priesthood, seeing that such a renewal would require Christ to be again sacrificed, so he tells them again in this text, "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." When the priest under the law made atonement for the children of Israel, and the Israelites again sinned, there remained farther sacrifices for their sins; the sacrifice was to be repeated continually; but Christ has made one offering for sin, and but one, and there remains no more. But to the professed disciple of Christ, who has sinned willfully, after that he has received a knowledge of the truth, there remains a certain looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour — what, the saints? No, the saints can never be devoured, for Christ has by one offering perfected them forever, and he has given his word for it, "They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." What then shall be devoured by the "judgment and fiery indignation," which the willful offender is fearfully looking for? "The adversaries." The adversaries of the cause of God and truth shall truly be devoured; but says the apostle, "We are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak." And again, in the close of this chapter, he says, "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." If a professed disciple of Christ, willfully transgresses the laws of the kingdom, is it strange that he should fear that he is only an adversary? And even if he is not, he feels afraid that he is, and looks for that judgment which awaits the adversaries.

This whole subject is an admonition to the saints. Moses' law could not be transgressed by an Israelite with impunity. The offender died without mercy, for the law of Moses knew no mercy for its transgressors. But as Moses was but a servant, and Christ is a Son over his own house, the offender who hath dishonored Christ, trodden underfoot the son of God, by despising his law, counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace, he hath comitted far greater offense, and is worthy of a sorer punishment, and if judged by the law of Moses, would be subjected to a sorer punishment, and if judged by the law of Moses, would be subjected to a sorer punishment. But he is, if a christian, under law to Christ, and a copy of that law is written in his heart, and it read thus, notwithstanding the offender's deserts, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their inquities I will remember no more." It is a certain, however, that he will visit their transgression with a rod, and their iniquities with stripes, and they shall know that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

May we listen to the admonition of our subject, and may God grant us grace whereby we may serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y., Nov. 1, 1855

PSALM 70.

Make haste, **O God, to deliver me; make haste to help me, O Lord.**

Let then be ashamed and confounded that seek after my soul: let them be turned backward, and put to confusion, that desire my hurt.

Let them be turned back for a reward of their shame that say, Aha, Aha.

Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation say continually, Let God be magnified.

But I *am* **poor and needy: make haste unto me, O God: thou** *art* **my help and my deliverer; O Lord, make no tarrying.**

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HYMN

Give to our God immortal praise;
Mercy and truth are all his ways;
Wonders of grace to God belong;
Repeat his mercies in your song.

Give to the Lord of lords renown,
The King of kings with glory crown;
His mercies ever shall endure,
When lords and kings are known no more.

He built the earth, he spread the sky,
And fixed the starry lights on high;
Wonders of grace to God belong;
Repeat his mercies in your song.

He fills the sun with morning light;
He bids the moon direct the night;
His mercies ever shall endure,
When suns and moons shall shine no more.

The Jews he freed from Pharoah's hand,
And brought them to the promised land;
Wonders of grace to God belong;
Repeat his mercies in your song.

He saw his people dead in sin,
But still he loved and pitied them;

His mercies ever shall endure,
When death and sin shall reign no more.

He sent his Son with power to save
From guilt, and darkness, and the grave;
Wonders of grace to God belong;
Repeat his mercies in your song.

Through this vain world he guides our feet,
And leads us to his heavenly seat;
His mercies ever shall endure,
When this vain world shall be no more.

Watts

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EDITORIAL

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." John 5:24.

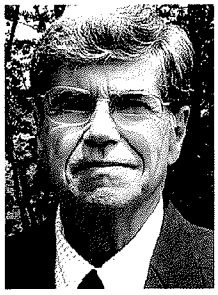
Elder J. B. Farmer

The Lord of glory, the Creator of heaven and earth, the One in whom the fullness of the Godhead dwells, cannot lie or fail in a promise. He spoke as no other man ever spoke. He speaks and it is done. He commands and it stands fast. He spoke the heavens and the earth into existence, with all the things that fill them. Through His word and by His Spirit, He has made known plainly the things of His kingdom that had been hidden from the beginning of the world. He caused His doctrine to be recorded in His scriptures for the learning and comfort of the family He loved with an everlasting love. But He hid His kingdom from the wise and prudent of this world that loved the present world and trusted in themselves for righteousness.

No one would ever have known the mind of God if He had not condescended to reveal it to His little ones. No one would have ever realized that he himself was a sinner, condemned to death by the righteous and holy law of God,

and that he was in need of a Savior, had not God enlightened his heart. No one could have imagined, in the carnal mind, the remedy for sin, which God manifested in His great salvation, which He ordained before He made the world. The natural mind could not attain to the heavenly way of mercy and grace, which God alone had made. It is impossible that one should think in his nature that God, Himself would come down to earth and take upon Himself the form of a man; and as a man, even God in the flesh, should fulfill the righteous law of God on behalf of His people; and that He should take upon Himself the sin of His people; and that He Who knew no sin should be made to be sin for us, that we should be made the righteousness of God in Him. No one could have understood, of themselves, that Jesus should impute his righteousness unto those He loved. No one could have thought, in the loftiest of human reasoning, that Christ could die and be raised from the dead as the firstborn of many brethren, justifying and giving hope of eternal life to the little ones who were blessed to believe in Him and to hope in His finished salvation. No one could have ever calculated in the natural mind that God would send His Holy Spirit into the hearts of His little ones to keep them from the evil of this world and bring them safely to the end of their journey. Neither could one have imagined that Jesus Christ should appear in all His glory at the end of the world in flaming fire bringing vengeance upon all that know not God and obey not His gospel. No one would ever have known that God would destroy the world, raise the dead, and carry the changed, resurrected saints home to be with Him forever, if God had not shown these things unto His own. The scriptures were given unto God's children and were revealed to them by the Holy Spirit that they might understand, know, and be comforted by these things.

None of these things could ever have been understood if Jesus, the living Word of God, had not written them in the hearts and minds of His people. The things we are blessed to believe are sometimes referred to as the faith of the Son of God, or the doctrine of Christ. How then is one brought to believe this faith or doctrine? The apostle was blessed of the Spirit to say that "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." So we are made to understand that to believe a thing, one must first hear it. Now, we know that in order to hear, one must have an ear with which to hear. Jesus said, "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit sayeth unto the churches." Some, indeed have been given this ear of hearing spiritual things. But truly, everyone has not an ear to hear. We notice how the Lord, in His great wisdom made the serpent. The serpent, unlike most other creatures which God created, has no ears. It cannot hear anything at all. All its communication with its surroundings must come by sight, smell, feeling vibrations, heat etc. It is no wonder that the devil, Satan, is referred to as the unpersuaded one. He, nor his seed, the wicked have ever heard with understanding one word concerning the spiritual kingdom of God. The devil and his

followers have never understood the doctrine of Christ, for they have no means of knowing it. They have not an ear to hear and Jesus said that His word has no place in them. Jesus said unto those who hated Him, "Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."

But God's little ones — weak as they are in nature, like sheep are weak— have all been given a hearing spiritual ear. The hearing of spiritual things comes only by the living Word of God. All men have not faith, but faith is the gift of God unto those He loved. So, by the Holy Spirit indwelling God's children, they are all given the gift of faith, by which they hear the word of God. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one."

It seems that I am always desiring more evidence that I am in the way of Christ and not deceived. When I look within my nature, all I see is selfishness, corruption and pride. I see no evidence there that I have part in God's kingdom. The apostle was blessed to say, "I know that within me, that is in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing." And we know that sin abides in the flesh. So, our assurance comes not from the flesh, but rather from the Word of God. The apostle was blessed to say, "He has sent His Spirit into our hearts crying Abba Father." And Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." The question then is this. Do we hear His word, and do we believe on Him (God the Father) that sent Him (Christ the Son)? Do you love to hear the words of Jesus, even when they seem to be contrary to everything in the world? Jesus said, "Except you eat my flesh and drink my blood, you have no life in you." When he said this, many, taking the words literally, were repulsed and turned away and walked no more with Him, saying, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" But when Jesus said, "Will you also go away?" Peter said, "Where shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." If we believe that Jesus is the Christ and that He gave His flesh an offering for sin, and that He poured out His life's blood unto death for the atonement of our sins, we are eating His flesh and drinking His blood spiritually. To believe these things is to receive them. And the doctrine of Christ is our meat and drink.

Do you believe that the sovereign God, of one lump of clay (all mankind) made vessels of honor and vessels of dishonor? Do you believe the vessels of honor were made up for glory, and that the vessels of dishonor were made for destruction? This teaching is according to the scripture and according to the doctrine of Christ. The world rejects it and cannot believe it, saying that it would be unjust for God to do such a thing.

They say today, as they said in the apostle's day, If these things are true, how can God find fault? The apostle was rightly given to say, "Who art thou,0 man that repliest against God?" One cannot bring the God of heaven and earth to account for His works. The carnal mind, which is enmity against God, always resists the truth. But God's little ones, by the Spirit, hear His word and believe it and rejoice in it, regardless of how contrary it seems to the natural mind.

And if one desires more evidence that he has a part in the kingdom of God, God has given it. He said through His apostle, "Hereby ye may know that you have passed from death unto life, because you love the brethren." Now, here is a big question. Do we indeed and in truth love the brethren? Have we heard His commandment that above all things, we have fervent charity one to another? Anyone saying that he loves the brethren, but does not continually seek their good is deceiving himself. One walking after the flesh and in a carnal mind stirs up strife by bearing tales. He seeks to cause divisions and separate chief friends by introducing doubts about one to another. He makes one the object of a joke or of some foolishness and tries to excuse himself by saying he was only kidding. He boasts in the flesh and exalts himself above others. He tries to humiliate them and rule over them. He holds grudges and will not be reconciled to another, who he thinks may have offended him. He respects men's persons and hold them in high esteem because of wealth, natural learning, position, family, or some other natural thing. He despises others because they seem to lack these worldly things. He meddles in the affairs of others and does not faithfully see to his own things. If one hates his brother he abides in death.

We know that we are all subject to do such fleshly things and surely have done them and would continue in that way of death unless we were brought out of it and kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. The blessed apostle said, "Love not in word, but in deed and in truth." True love seeks to walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh. It seeks the good of his neighbor; it holds its tongue about rumors, accusations and opinions until every word is established. Love puts away foolishness and pride and arrogance; it humbles one and causes him to be sober and compassionate. Love is kind and forgiving and desires peace with honor. Love seeks no ill to its neighbor and to be faithful in all things. Love respects no man's person. It makes him condescend to men of low estate. We are called to examine ourselves, whether we are in the faith. The children of God are tried every moment and go about begging for mercy. They go seeking wisdom and mercy and grace. They find themselves saying, "Lord save or I perish."

The Lord has assured us that those who hear His word, and who believe in God the Father, who sent His Son into the world to save His people, already have everlasting life. And He promised that they shall not come into condemnation - that they should not perish. He also made it plain that His little believing, lov-

ing, trusting ones have passed from death unto life. This means that there is no going back into that death. If one has passed from death into everlasting spiritual life, he will never die. Jesus said, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Jesus also said, "Verily, verily I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall bear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given the Son to have life in himself." The Lord speaks to each of His little ones. He gives life to them that they may live and hear. And He gives them the gift of faith to believe not only upon the Father, but also upon the Son. Then He gives grace and love to them in order that they should take up their cross daily and follow Him down to the end of their journey here on earth.

The Lord has also assured us that there is coming a day at the end of the world when He shall come to receive His own to Himself, that they should see Him as He is in glory, and should be like Him in a glorious spiritual body. For this to take place there must be a change made for those that are living at His appearing, and a resurrection from the dead for all who have died previous to His coming. Jesus explained it like this. He said, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." And the Lord spoke through the apostle saying, "The dead in Christ shall be raised first, and those that are alive and remain at his coming shall be changed in a moment in a twinkling of an eye." Those that had been blessed of God to walk after the spirit, both those that were alive at His coming and those dead in Christ, shall be changed and raised in His likeness, and shall be received into glory. Those who have walked after the flesh and hated God, His Son, His people, His commandments and all that is good, both those living at his coming and those dead, shall be made to stand before Him and enter into damnation. The ones that are taken to glory are those vessels of honor, made up to glory. The ones that enter into damnation are those vessels made to dishonor and destruction. God is both merciful and just. He said He would have mercy upon whom He would have mercy, and that He would harden whom He willed. This is a hard saying to most, but it is the gospel of the salvation of the sovereign God that does all His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

If His word is precious to our hearing; if our heart overflows with love toward God the Father, His Son and His poor and despised remnant of people; we may have great assurance that we have everlasting life; that we shall not come into condemnation; that we shall never perish; because we are in His hand and have passed from death unto life; and that we shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever with all saints. May His glorious name be praised, world without end.

Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love.

This was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer
12-19-2007

CORRESPONDENCE

4-8-18

Dear Elder Robertson,

Enclosed are obtituaries for Brothers Adam Witt and Thomas Pegram, Sr.

They have been approved in conference by the members at Thomas Grove. Please print them in your publication at your convenience.

Thank you for your time.

Thomas C. Pegram, Jr.

4-25-18

Hi Tony Horton,

Enclosed is our renewal for two years. We enjoy receiving the Signs of the Times and the many messages within.

We pray God will continue to bless each of you involved in the publishing of the Signs.

Love in Christ,
Max & Rhonda Nichols
Maryville, LA

4-23-2018

Mr. Tony Horton,

Please renew my subscription to the Times for one year. Enclosed is check for same with a little extra.

May our Heavenly Father continue to bless the Times and all who labor to get it out each month.

Sincerely,
Rowland G. Allen
4235 Third Ave.
Columbia, GA 31904

PSALM 135:1-5.

Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the name of the Lord; praise *him*, O ye servants of the Lord.

Ye that stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God.

Praise the Lord; for the Lord *is* good: sing praises unto his name; for *it is* pleasant.

For the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, *and* Israel for his peculiar treasure.

For I know that the Lord *is* great, and *that* our Lord *is* above all gods.

CHURCHES OF OUR FAITH

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

Pictured are a group of Elders who attended the Pigg River Association held at Basham Primitive Baptist Church located in Stewartsville (Bedford County, VA). The Association met August 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1934.

First row: Elders: John W. Wood, Frazier Sowers, Lonnie Cummings, J. P. Helms, Randolph Perdue, H. S. Williams, Emmett Stone, Emory Burgess.

Second Row: Elders: Samuel Moran, Bill Stadler, John Gilliam, Fred Keene, B. V. Jessie, Henry Valentine Cole, J. W. Wyatt, Roy Smith,
J. T. Goode, John R. Smith, Upsie Young, Landon Harris, Ed Blankenship, Posie Plyborn, Jim Stegall, Joe Brooks, B. O. Thompson.

ARTICLES

11-26-17

Dearly beloved ones in Christ:

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Isaiah, 40:1.

What beautiful words that are written in this scripture to a poor tempest tossed child of God. It is food for the soul. It warms the heart, and calms the troubled breast in one who has been tried in the furnace of affliction time and time again. And have learned, and have been taught by our dear Lord and Savior, that there is no other way save by the cross of Christ, that we are nothing and can do nothing without our maker leader, and savior, our Lord. We have to be taught over, and over again where our strength comes from. That all things were accomplished even from before this time world was put into existence, that there is nothing lacking when it comes to the salvation of the Lord's people. The warfare, spoken of in the above scripture, is between the spirit and the flesh, the old man of sin and the new man, which is spiritual, the one against the other, it seems never to go away. O when shall it cease and be all over, and I can go home and be at rest, if that be my lot in the end. Only the Lord knows how it shall be with me. I believe that the warfare mentioned above will be with us as long as we live on this earth, the flesh against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. The apostle Paul, put it in this manner, in this fleshly body which is of the earth, earthly body, there dwelleth no good thing, and when I would do good, evil is present. So it is day by day, that we have to go through these troubling things. Troubles, and sorrows, I daily do pass through. It causes us to mourn. But if I be one of his, we shall be comforted, in the end.

May the Lord bless those who mourn in Zion, his love and mercy endures forever. There is a New Jerusalem City; the city of our God, the one that John was blessed to see coming down from God out of Heaven, that is found in the 21st Ch. Rev. 1-2. **"And I saw a new heaven, and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."** What the Lord hath prepared for those of his people, that love his appearing, shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation. It shall be an everlasting kingdom, that shall stand forever; and ever, world without end. A kingdom not made with hands, eternal and in the heavens. What a great God He is.

I would like to mention here that if I know anything about the truth I believe that we surely heard it there at the South

Ouachita Associational meeting. It was good news from a far country. What love and sweet fellowship we had there with the dear Brethren, and Sisters, from far and near, that was blessed to be there. I believe that the table was set there from of old, that it was set with holy drippings from the master's table. Manna from heaven, for every one that was given ears to hear what the spirit saith to the churches. Not in praise of men, but all praise and honor be unto almighty God; the Father; for such wonderful gifts that he gave to his beloved ministers that were blessed to be there. How beautiful are the feet of those that preach the gospel of glad tidings and great joy to the meek, and the humble of the Lord's little children. May it be the Lord's will that we will be blessed to attend those wonderful meetings for however long it be his will. Humbly in hope.

C. Fox

ELDER JOHN TANNER

Dear Elder Mewborn:

Following is a short article on Elder John Tanner, a minister of the Gospel that I tried to trace through his ministry. For some reason many years ago, my curiosity was aroused about him while reading the Autobiography of Elder Wilson Thompson. He was one of the ministers who composed the presbytery that ordained Elder Thompson. He was also one of the ministers who constituted Rocky Swamp Church, located in Halifax County, North Carolina on July 11, 1774 according to Elder Hassell, and a member of the Kehukee Association. I am not able to tell whether at this time he was a resident of Virginia or North Carolina. However, he managed to run afoul of the legal authorities in Virginia. I know that you are well aware that before the Revolutionary War, Virginia was a crown colony and the Anglican or Established Church was established by the law and was the only church allowed to exit. On May 15, 1773 he and Elder John Weatherford were apprehended by a warrant in Chesterfield County, Virginia issued by a Col. Archibald Cary. It's interesting to note that Elder John Weatherford is the man whom Weatherford Church in the Staunton River Association is named for. On June 4, 1773, Elders Tanner and Weatherford were tried by seven "Gentlemen Justices." The Court order book says, "Where upon ordered that they give Surety for their Good Behavior and keeping the peace for one year each in the penalty of 50 pounds with two sureties of 25 pounds each and be committed to Goal (jail) till they do so."

The warrant says that they, "not being qualified by law do so." This means preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I am quite sure that you know that Baptist preachers were handled quite roughly in Virginia by Colonial authorities.

The next record I find of him is that in June of 1777 he was shot by a man named Dawson at Norfleets Ferry on the Roanoke River. Elder Tanner had an appointment at Sandy Run meeting house and was on his way there. He was accompanied by Elder Dargan. Dawson shot him with a large horse pistol loaded

with what seems to have been buckshot. Dawson was a violent man who was angry at Elder Tanner for baptizing his wife some months earlier. Elder Tanner's life was despaired of and was in critical condition for some time but did recover. Elder Tanner did not prosecute Dawson "but submitted to it patiently as persecution for Christ's sake."

Sometime around 1784 he removed to Kentucky and settled on the Kentucky side of the Ohio opposite the mouth of the Big Miami River. It was here that he had a son also named John who was about nine years old at the time. This boy was kidnapped by the Shawnee Indians and spent practically his entire life among the Shawnees. He was eventually united with his family.

He labored in Kentucky for several years and was thought to be one of the ministers who constituted the Tates Creek Church in Kentucky.

He later removed to Missouri and settled near New Madrid. It was here that in 1811 and early 1812 the severe earthquake occurred known as the "New Madrid" earthquake. This is thought to be the most severe earthquake to occur in the United States.

From this point Elder Thompson, in his autobiography, gives us an interesting account of Elder Tanner and his part in Elder Thompson's ordination. Elder Tanner died in 1812.

I found Elder Tanner to have evidently been a faithful minister of the gospel who did not faint at the trials and tribulations he passed through.

Bill Poindexter

VOICES OF THE PAST

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER JOE SAWYER

I hope the Lord willing, I can tell some of the things that brought me to the Old Baptist Church and what I say may be to the praise and honor of God, who has paid the price for His people. I was born in Pitt County, North Carolina, the oldest of four children. I had three sisters. We were raised on a tobacco farm. We didn't have a lot of the natural things of this world, but we lived well in that day. I didn't go to church when I was young. I remember going once with my grandfather, Elder Tillman Sawyer. My parents and oldest sister were members of the Primitive Baptist Church. One sister loved our doctrine and the other two loved the doctrine of salvation by works. Two of my sisters and my parents are now deceased. While living on the farm, the Lord blessed us to have the things we needed.

My experience of being brought to the Primitive Baptist Church would take a long time to tell. Many things have taken place in my life. I stayed home and played when I was a little boy and didn't go to church. After Doris and I got married, I became concerned about what was going to happen to me. Things just caved in more or less, and I went and joined an Armenian Church. I didn't go there long because I felt it wasn't right. I continued to fight against the Old Bap-

tist and read the scriptures to condemn what they believed. I just couldn't believe that God loved one and hated the other. God made me know along the way that I didn't choose to go among the Old Baptist and I certainly didn't choose to become a preacher. I hope God is the One who brought me to the Old Baptist Church. I tried a long time to prove to my daddy that salvation is by works, not grace. I left the church I first joined and went to Greenville.

Experience has been a great part of my life. I couldn't talk before a crowd. I was shy and wouldn't say anything. I wanted to farm with my mama and daddy more than anything else, but things didn't work out. I had to leave the farm and go to the city and get a job as a salesman. I had a wife and three children to support, so I learned to talk to make a living. I didn't know this was working for my good. I thought it was the worst thing to happen in my life, but I had it to do. I learned how to talk and to meet people. It was a great experience.

I was still down on the Old Baptist. I didn't think they were right, but my daddy did. He always believed it, but I thought they were wrong. On the fifth Sunday in March 1958, my parents and my wife's parents invited us to go to Hancocks Church to a union. I had been in a world of trouble and didn't know what was wrong. I had been taught I was a sinner. I knew I had to stand before God's people. I begged Him not to choose me for I was not qualified. I was nothing. I couldn't speak to the Lord's people who I felt were the wisest people in the world. I felt to be a poor sinner and could not speak to His children. I had taught Sunday school that morning, but I told my wife I would go. I continued to criticize that they had the ugliest singing and they thought they were the only people in the world who were saved and everyone else is wrong. When we got to the church, preaching was over and they were singing hymn 322 in the Lloyd's Hymn Book, "Glorious things of thee are spoken". As I sat on the back seat a voice spoke to me and said, "This is My church, this is My people". I want to tell you something brethren, when that voice spoke it brought tears to my eyes. I thought they were the prettiest people I had ever seen in my life and I wanted to be a part of them. I had thought they were wrong, I had fought so hard not to be a part of it. God opened my eyes and He showed me this was His people. He didn't tell me I was a part of His people, but He told me that this is "My church and My people". When God shows you something, you will never forget it. It is just as plain to me today as it was that day. I assure you the things God brings about in your life you won't need encouragement from man, He will make you willing. God will bring His people in His way and time, not ours. God brought me in this way to show me just what I was by nature and what I must be by the Grace of God. I was blind and couldn't see until He opened my eyes. I fought as hard as I could not to be a part of the Primitive Baptist, but when He showed me that they were a beautiful people; I wanted to be a part of them, if they would have me. I thought, above everything else, that these people must be right.

They believed salvation is by the grace of God, it is free and something man can't give you. This comes only from God. You can't get any help for it. None of my children, nor my wife, belongs to the Primitive Baptist Church. I've never encouraged any of them, although some of them believe it. I never told my wife she should join, although I feel she believes this truth. God must persuade them, not me.

In my experiences over the years, if I have had any, the lord has showed me just how helpless I am. I don't know if I'm a preacher or not, but I sure fought not to become one. I'm not sure if I have ever said anything to praise God, but when it's my time to stand before the church, I always try to beg Him to put something in my mouth to praise Him and if not, to just sit me down. We didn't have a car when we first got married and we didn't have a whole lot when I joined the church, but there was a great change in my life from that day forward. I went back to the church I had been a member of and told them to take my name off for I had joined another church. They wanted to know where I had joined and I told them I had joined a Primitive Baptist Church. They said that was the nearest nothing they had ever heard of. I told them I would tell them some of my experience why I went to the Old Baptist, but I didn't feel they would understand. I asked my name be removed and I never went back. I believe the Lord's people are a separate people and I don't believe they uphold the things that are not right. If we do, we are going to have to pay for it down the road.

All things work together for good to them who are the called according to His purpose. We think sometimes It is working against us, but it is working for our good. I was a route salesman for Frito-Lay for about 15 years. On one occasion I was asked to be a district manager. This position would allow me to have better benefits and my retirement would be better also. I didn't know what to do. I went to Greensboro to talk with the regional manager and the sales manager. I walked into the office that day and told them I hoped to be a Primitive Baptist minister and would that have any effect on me having the job. I asked if either one knew anything about the Primitive Baptist and Tommy Thompson the regional manager from around Goldsboro said, "That I do Joe. All my family belong to the Primitive Baptist Church, except me, and I belong to the Presbyterian Church." The sales manager said he didn't think much of "jack leg" preachers, they won't work. Tommy told him, "Yes they will work. Old Baptist do what they say they are going to do." So the Lord took care of me there. He has taken care of me all the days of my life. He has watched over me and kept me. I have had some beautiful dreams and experiences and I believe God will continue to give His people more experiences as they live here in this life. Without those bethel spots in my life, I wouldn't even have a hope. Sometimes I get down low, real low, and I'm like David when he said, "is his mercy clear gone forever?"

Having to leave the farm and getting a public job was all working for my

good and I didn't even know it. I dreaded the change. I would read the bible to prove to Daddy that he was wrong. I felt the letter would prove him wrong. I would read the bible until two or three o'clock in the morning and learned to quote the scriptures. I thought I could prove the Primitive Baptist to be wrong, but instead I was showed they are the right people. That's why I'm in the Old Baptist Church today, because. I trust He brought me. I told God to get anybody to preach but me, I wasn't qualified. God can make you willing to do anything. This is something between you and your God. As far as preaching in the church of the living God, that's the most sacred thing in the world. To walk among God's people, a people that He has loved and separated and made different is most sacred. We are different by His grace and by His goodness.

My daddy and I were baptized together. I joined at Farmville Church and he joined at the water. It was a rejoicing day. Elder A. P. Mewborn baptized both of us. Elder Mewborn never said anything to me about becoming a preacher. I'm a lot like that. I don't think you should encourage people to be anything in the church. If they are not believers, you will just have a world of trouble. Daddy was a deacon at Hancocks Church and my grandfather was an elder. This is not the reason I became a minister. It has been said that some people only join the Primitive Baptist because their parents were, but t don't believe that. We believe the doctrine because God has given us the faith to believe it and that's why we love it. One of the first experiences I ever had before joining the church was in a vision or dream. I thought the Lord or someone had placed me on the straightest highway I had ever seen in my life. I was in a cart like you used to hitch a mule to and I couldn't get out. I had no control of where I was going. On the dirt walked a black man; he didn't walk on the highway. All of a sudden I was carried into this deep pit of water. I fought with all the energy I had to keep from dying. I finally gave up and said that I'm going to die and there is no way I can get out of this place. There were high walls and I couldn't get out. I was trying to cling to little pieces of driftwood to hold me up, but that wasn't helping. That was my works and works won't hold you up. An arm and hand reached down and lifted me out of the water and dried me off. I believe it was the arm of Jesus that lifted me out. I was doomed to die and there was nothing I could do about it. I was helpless and we do become helpless when we become God's children and He reveals the truth to us. We have always been His children; we just didn't know it. I asked someone what the dream meant and they couldn't tell me. Over the years I believe the Lord has showed me what it meant. I was depending upon my own works and I was going to die. God lifted me out and gave me the faith to believe that His works would stand and mine would never stand in that world to come.

All the things that have taken place in my life has been a great mystery to me. God has blessed me beyond measure in so many ways. He has left many little purposes along the way for me.

There has been some of joy, some of happiness and some of heartache. There have been a lot of trials and tribulations. I think about what the apostle said, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." Pharaoh will always try to destroy the Lord's people if he can. He is still trying to destroy them today, but God will protect His children. I often think about the scripture, "If God be for you, who can be against you?" I didn't volunteer to become a minister. I used to fall down on my knees in the cornfield and beg the Lord not to choose me. I wasn't qualified to be anything, but I didn't have a choice. The apostle said, "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel." I want to tell you, He brings you down and makes you willing to be anything in His church.

I asked a home with the church at Hancocks, the second Sunday in May 1958. In August of 1959, I began to speak on the floor at my home church for about a year. I was liberated and spoke among the associations for about 3 years. In August of 1963, I was ordained as a minister. Back then we had a lot of ministers. I never thought I would see it as it is today. We don't know what the future holds. God is able to fill up all the Old Baptist Churches again. It has to come from Him, for anything we bring into the church wouldn't be anything in the first place. I believe all the persuasion we ever need, will come from God. In my experience and calling as an elder, if I am one, it is by the grace of God. He has spoken to me on many occasions. I can't tell you all that has taken place with me since He first spoke to me at Hancock's Church that day. I know that voice. It will make you afraid and to fear Him. The one I seek to please is God, not man. That is vanity and altogether nothing. If He has called me to be an elder, I'm just a servant to Him and to the churches in which I've been chosen as pastor. I didn't choose to be a pastor, He did the choosing. He gives the church a mind to elect whom He has chosen to be there. I believe the pastor will be given something to say and it will be to praise and glorify God.

This is a little bit of the experiences I have had. I've had a lot more, but it would take too long to tell everything that has taken place with me over the years. I want to say I hope I love the Lord, I love His people and I love the things He has put into the hearts of His people. He has written His laws into their hearts and printed them in their minds and they don't need anybody to tell them what to do, but God. He is the leader and teacher. He is everything and He does His own choosing. If I had a choice, I wouldn't have united with the Primitive Baptist Church; I would have gone somewhere else. I certainly wouldn't have chosen to become a minister. Flesh likes to be someone, to be looked up to, and the Lord's people are just plain and simple. I hope by the grace of God, I have been made to love the church and to love the things it stands for. I believe these things will stand in that world to come. So may God bless you and I hope He will take me one day to a better place. I don't deserve it by anything I've done. I've done all the sin-

ning and He has done all the saving, but I just hope He loves me.

Joe Sawyer
3186 Speight Seed Farm Road
Winterville, North Carolina 28590
June 24, 2003

For the Signs of the Times.

AN EDUCATED MINISTRY.

The question, whether a classical education is necessary to a gospel minister, has elicited much disputation in what is called the christian world. The assumption that neither a classical education nor the want of it is a disqualification, is abundantly evident from facts. The right of calling and qualifying for the ministry belongs exclusively to the Head of the Church, who in calling the first preachers of the gospel, chose whom he would; and the prerogative then asserted by him has never been surrendered to another. When it pleases him so to do, he calls men of learning; but then it is not to make a display of their learning, but to preach the simple gospel of truth. Indeed some of the plainest preachers and writers in the world have been among the most profound scholars; and if there is any real advantage in learning, it is to enable a preacher to simplify his language so as to reach the understanding of his most simple hearers. When we find a man in the pulpit aiming to make a display of his learning, we may safely conclude that he is a pedant, or a poor scholar; and when I hear men crowding their sermons with big words, I am always reminded of the following stanza:

"Such labour nothing in so strange a style,
Amuse the unlearned and make the learned smile."

But tho' God has been pleased at times to call the learned to the ministry, yet it is evident that a large majority of the first set of gospel preachers were not such; and it is equally evident that in all subsequent ages he has persued the same plan. Whoever he may see fit to call to the important work, he will qualify for it, so that when we find a man aiming to display his learning or on the other hand, one unable to communicate his ideas so as to convey instruction or edification to the minds of his hearers, have a right to question the call of either to the work; for to suppose that God would call to the ministry without qualifying for it, would be to reflect on his wisdom and goodness. Few men we presume, are prepared to dispute that the primitive ministers were unlearned men, i. e. in the wisdom of this world, and those that are, may be convinced by consulting Acts iv. 13; and if this and a host of corroborating passages will not convince them, we shall have to give them up as impenetrable.

But the advocates for an exclusively learned ministry, (who are forced to admit the above fact) have drawn an argument from the comparative ignorance of

the world at that time to what it is now. They tell us that the great mental improvement that has taken place in the world, calls for a different ministry; and yet, strange to say, that not withstanding this boasted improvement, these very men hold up Virgil, Cicero, and other ancient authors as models of literary perfection, and insist that an acquaintance with these authors is indispensable to a classical education.

Now is it not passing strange that the learned of this age of intellectual improvement, would look back to that crude and ignorant age of the world when the Kingdom of Christ was established; and his first preachers chosen for models of literary perfection? for it will be recollected that it is not for historical information that they are consulted, but for elegancy of style, and fine, and beauty of diction. And when the learned of this day shall have their Virgil, Cicero, and other ancient authors out of their literary institutions and substituted modern authors in their place, we shall begin to think them serious when they boast of the mental superiority of the present over the apostolic age. But perhaps these learned gentlemen of the pulpit are not aware that they are playing into the hands of infidels, with whom it is quite common to speak of the ignorance of the apostolic age in support of their objections against the religion of Christ. With them it is an important object to destroy the truth of miracle; and to effect this, they tell us that the extreme ignorance of the world at the age of miracles, afforded Christ and his apostles a favorable opportunity to impose upon it by ficticious miracles.

And as those learned gentlemen insist it that a classical education is necessary to enable us to I meet and rebut infidel objections, I wonder how they would go about to refute the above. They could not do as did an able defender of the truth once in England; who is refuting it in the presence of a club of infidels, observed, that every school-boy, with Virgil in his hand, could rise up and prove the scoundrel, wretch and liar, but Infidels have as much right to resort to a lie to answer their purposes as professed gospel preachers have. I can see no difference between a pious and impious fraud.

It is a well known fact, that both Virgil and Cibero flourished but a short time before Christ. The birth of Christ occurred during the reign of Augustus Ceasar, who in forming the second triumvirate in Rome with Antony and Lepedus, to conciliate the feelings of Antony, sacrificied Cicero to his resentment. Virgil being a favorite of Augustus, and the circumstance of having received some peculiar favours from the Emperor, gave rise to some of his most elegant productions. I merely mention these facts to shew that the learned would acknowledge themselves indebted to men who were nearly contemporary with Christ and his Apostles, for the most perfect models of human production; indeed among the learned these men stand unrivalled. When will men be consistent?

But the above argument is altogether gratuitous, and without foundation in truth or fact. The reason why God

chose an iliterate ministry is given by the Holy Ghost; and "let God be true and every man a liar." The reason will the found in 1 Cor. 1:27-29: "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence. By connecting the latter clause of the 28th verse of this chap. with the 1st verse of the 2nd chap., it will appear evident that Paul had a primary allusion to the ministry. "And I brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God." We are not to conclude from this that Paul's language was rude or that it wanted true wisdom; but that it was not with worldly wisdom. He did not aim to make, a display of human literature, but conveyed his ideas in a plain simple style, so that the weak and unlearned might understand him, while the learned were not left ignorant of what he said. The Apostle here mentions his own method of preaching as an exemplification of what he had said before in reference to the general character of the ministry, in point of human learning; and to shew that it was not on account of his learning that God had called him, but in fact God had unlearncd him, i. e.- stripped him of his human learning and made a simple gospel minister of him; and the fact that God did strip Paul of his human learning, and reduce him to a level with his unlearned brethren in point of style, was as strong an evidence that he did not need learned men to preach his gospel, as that of calling unlearned men to the work. So that the fact that Paul was a learned man, so far from proving that God needed learned men, as such to preach his gospel, furnishes a strong evidence to the contrary; for if he wanted him as a learned man why strip him of his learning, or send him forth in as simple a dress as those who had not been learned as he was at the feet of Gamaliel?

There is no fact more clearly established than that a majority of primitive ministers of Christ were destitute of the common blandishment of human learning; and it is equally clear that the reason why God called such, was not because of the ignorance the world at the time but to stem the pride of men; to confound the wise and prudent of this world; and thereby maintain his sovereign independence by telling the great and learned of the world known, that he needs not their services to carry into effect his eternal purpose in the salvation of the Elect. Let those then, who dare attempt to wrest the prerogative of making preachers from the hand of God, answer their arrogant presumption to him if they can; for both these who dare to introduce into the world a different ministry to that which God has appointed, and those who are thus imposed upon, the world will have to answer the appalling interrogatory, Who hath required this at your hands, that ye should tread my courts?

The design of God to confound the wise and mighty of this world by choosing an illiterate ministry, was admirably exemplified in the Apostolic age. The boldness with which they faced opposition — the clearness and force with which they exhibited the sublime truths of the gospel — connected with that unparalleled success the which their ministry was attended; filled their enemies with dismay, and the learned with overwhelming astonishment. And not only was this the case in this age, but in all subsequent ages of the church; and no doubt but it will be the case in an unprecedented degree, when God shall turn again the captivity of his spiritual union when the knowledge of God shall cover the earth the waters cover the sea. It being evident that one prominent motive in God for choosing an iliterate ministry, was to confound the wise of this world; then admitting that all that vast improvement has taken place which the !earned of the clay declare to be the fact, there is nothing in it to weaken that motive or to furnish any just cause for a change but would furnish an additional reason why the same course should be persued. The stronger the enemy conquered, the greater the honour due the conqueror; and as one great object God had in view in choosing an unlearned ministry was to confound the wisdom of this world, the more of that sort of wisdom there is, the greater will be the honour due to him in confounding it.

The fact is that men have ever been labouring to undo what God has been doing, to pull down what he has been building up; and what renders their wickedness the more aggravated is, that all this they are doing in his own name. And thus we are told that God has put it into their hearts to erect theological schools, and that he has authorized them to send out agents to collect funds for this purpose, and these agents have the affrontery to tell the churches that the demand thus made is a call from heaven, and that they are bound under the most solemn obligations to obey it. And yet when asked for their authority they are as much confounded as was Ahimaaze when asked by David after the fate of Absolom; but if when asked for their authority by a poor worm of the dust, they are thus confounded what must be their dreadful dismay and confusion when asked the same question by Him whose awful name they have counterfeited to answer their unhallowed purposes.

I remain, yours, as ever,
Thomas Barton.
Strickersville, Pa., July 1836

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 6 / 2018
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

EXHORT WITH ALL LONG SUFFERING

I charge thee, therefore, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom: Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. 2nd Tim. 4th chap. verses one and two.

We notice the word "therefore" in the first sentence of this quotation which refers to an especial reason for the solemn charge which Paul is giving Timothy. And this reason is found in the 3rd chapter. Men shall be lovers of their own selves without natural affection. Traitors, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. Creep into houses and lead captive silly women, etc. Now, when such men are in the church and are going around not only in public but in private houses propagating their theories and leading the Lord's dear ones from the simplicity of the gospel of God as it is taught in His holy word, is it not time for earnest Godly exhortation? Are not such men the cause of the present divided and subdivided condition of the Lord's people? Let us think of the august presence before whom Paul takes Timothy to deliver to him this solemn charge: God and the Lord Jesus Christ, the Judge of the quick and the dead, the living as well as the dead.

God who has given His orders as to how He will have things done; for see, saith He to Moses, that thou make all things according to the pattern shown thee on the mount. So God, through Jesus and His apostles has set forth in the New Testament the doctrine His ministers should preach, and the ordinances that all believers should walk in, and no one has the right to depart from either in the slightest degree. Christ and His apostles used words that were chosen by the Holy Ghost and they cannot be improved upon, and no one has the right to coin words and phrases be improved upon, and no one has the right to coin words and phrases and set them up as teaching the doctrine or manner of practice of the Lord's people. The scriptures are plain. Let us quote them as they read, expound them as the Lord may give an understanding without adding to or taking from them. Notice the charge is to preach the word, also to reprove, rebuke and exhort. We cannot divide it up. The charge is just as binding to reprove, rebuke and exhort as to preach the word, and the servant who fails in any of these things fails to glorify God as Moses and Aaron did in striking the rock instead of speaking to it as the Lord told them. Preach the word. Jesus is the living word and is set forth in all the scriptures. Paul tells us in the closing verses of the third chapter that all scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. If we say that reproof and rebuke does no good we differ with Paul. He said it is profitable for the man of God. Then if there are men and women whom reproof, rebuke and exhortation does no good, they are not for God, for our apostle by divine authority tells us that these things are good for

the man of God. We profess in our articles of faith to acknowledge the scripture as our rule of faith and practice. We should, therefore, be sticklers for the word of God, which we believe the scripture to be. It is the sure word of prophecy to which the followers of Christ should bow in humble reverence. It does not matter what I think or how I feel. What does the Bible teach should be our diligent search and constant guide.

J. T. R.
Zion's Landmark
September 1, 1934

GOSPEL STANDARD
January, 1837

A contrite heart alone can speak feelingly of contrition, a believer of faith, a pilgrim of a wilderness, a tried soul of temptation, a captive of bondage, or a soldier of wounds. Thus we want for our periodical, not pretty notions, but genuine experience; not merely explanations of hard texts, but the unravelling of the mysteries of vital godliness; not eloquent language, but soul feeling; not cut and dried phrases out of the dictionary, but a simple statement of the Lord's dealings within. We want not scurrility and vulgar, personal abuse, but meekness of wisdom; not great swelling words of vanity, to bolster up an ungodly system, but sound speech so as to edify the church of God. And, therefore, we would invite those of our correspondents on whose communications a blessing has rested, to favour us with more such papers and would ask also others of the Lord's family, who have not yet sent us anything, to make the attempt. We want not fine language, nor well-turned periods, nor what is called good writing. We want unction and power, something to move and melt the souls of God's people. We want some depths of the heart turned up to view, and some of the secrets of the Lord with them that fear him laid open. And let our correspondents bear in mind the real wants of the Lord's family. They need not so much your opinions as your experience; not so much your views of a text, as an account of the Lord's dealings with your soul; not a heap of fine words that amount to nothing, but gracious feelings brought up from the bottom of your heart. Pour no rosewater, then, over your language; soften down no rough expression; polish off no strong phrase, if it convey the genuine feelings of your soul. You are not writing for gentlemen and ladies, but for mechanics and artizans, the poor in this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom. And if there be any better educated feeling readers of your communications, grace will have taught them to look for unction, and not for eloquence.

The Gospel Standard
January, 1837.

PSALM 67:1-7.

God be merciful unto us, and bless us; *and* cause his face to shine upon us; Selah.

That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.

Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.

Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

Then **shall the earth yield her increase; *and* God, *even* our own god, shall bless us.**

God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 2018

Flora Vest, VA 5.00
John Schulz, MI 100.00
Rowland Allen, GA 5.00
Patsy Mitchell, TX 5.00
Bernard Cox, VA 5.00

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will be held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church located at the intersection of Music St. and Weatherford Drive, Gretna, VA in Pittsylvania County. The second Sunday and Saturday before in July 2018. The song service will begin on 9:30 a.m. with service at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton, Clerk
Staunton River Primitive
Baptist Association

JUNE 2018

Upper Black Creek
Lunch Served 6/24/18

JULY 2018

Contentnea Church
Quarterly Meeting 7/29/18

Upper Black Creek
Union Meeting 7/29/18

OBITUARIES

THOMAS CLIFTON PEGRAM, SR.
1940-2017

Thomas Clifton Pegram, Sr. departed this world October 24, 2017. He is married to Brenda Byrd Pegram, still of their residence in Horsepasture, Virginia. His two children, my sister, Patricia Brockway, and myself still remain to mourn his passing. He also has 6 grandchildren and three great grandchildren. His one sibling, Ronnie Pegram, departed two weeks before him.

He was a good man, "as far as good goes" (these words spoken by his daddy, Elder Frank Pegram, just prior to his departure in June 1993). Like Cornelius, he would help individuals and his community when his steps were so led. He served as a deacon at Thomas Grove Primitive Baptist Church from 2002 until his departure. By the revelation of God, he felt called and content with his station there. While he was, what we would in conversation say, "a good man", he was still with faults and shortcomings. About 20 years ago, he would tell me of an awakening moment he experienced while on his solo trip to a meeting at Indian Creek Church in Indian Valley. He suddenly realized that it was he who was "the chief of sinners" and his sins in part sent Jesus to the cross and he desperately needed a savior. This makes me think of what Jesus said when he told Nicodemus "Ye must be born again". From that day on, I believe God chipped away his pride until there was only the occasional glimpse. The temper that bothered him during his early years was replaced with love and understanding by the Comforter, The Holy Spirit, I know this is not a standard obituary, but this is not a standard situation. This is me, his boy, trying to write a few words about my brother in Christ, my friend, and my faithful daddy. What is making this extremely difficult for me is that I feel so beneath him, and that me doing this really does not make sense. Please bear with me a little longer.

Based on our many conversations, his most powerful experience with the Holy Spirit went on for a couple of weeks before and after his baptism. I would be afraid to attempt to talk of the details of this time for fear I would leave something out, but suffice to say from what I saw, he was experiencing that sweet communion with the Holy Spirit. The day of his baptism and the day after he felt completely satisfied that "all was well". As everyone who has ever been blessed to know that all is well, knows it brings with it the peace of Christ that is indeed beyond all things natural. I could tell he desired to share that feeling with me, but as we know, the Holy Spirit is like a wind. It cannot be controlled by man or bought with filthy lucre. Although I could not join him at that time in his sweet communion, I was thankful that he was able to rest a while.

Sometimes we get so tired and to be blessed to rest a while is worth more than all the gold in the world. His experience caused him to identify with the Ethiopian eunuch until his departure on

October 24, 2017, when he "went on his way rejoicing". Whenever an elder during his preaching would quote that phrase, he would, he would respond with tears or an "Amen".

Brother Pegram is not dead, but he is resting with all the other saints of God who have fulfilled their time here. I hope I will join them all one sweet day.

It is, therefore, resolved that a copy of this resolution be sent to his family, one to the Signs of the Times for publication, and one be recorded in our church records.

Thomas Clifton Pegram, Jr. - Moderator

ADAM BYRD WITT 1928-2016

Adam Byrd Witt, 88, of Bassett, was called home by our LORD on Wednesday, December 21st, 2016. The funeral service was held at Collins-McKee Funeral Home. He was born, September 3rd , 1928 in Henry County, Virginia to Henry Witt and Minnie Via Witt, both deceased. In addition to his parents, he is preceded in death by two sisters; Christine Walker, and Carlene Gilley, and his brother Burton Witt. He is survived by the love of his life for 67 years, Irene Agnew Witt; sister-in-law, Clemon Agnew Rorrer, and many nieces and nephews. Byrd was an avid gardener and shared much of his crop with his friends, neighbors, and family. He had a deep love for the church and church friends at Thomas Grove Primitive Baptist Church. He was always faithful with the care of the local churches and was highly loved and respected by all who knew him. Brother Byrd had a wonderful sense of humor and was blessed to bring laughter to his brothers and sisters in Christ.

Over the years, Brother Byrd Witt and his wife visited many different meeting houses nestled throughout southern Virginia. They would also travel out of state to meet with God's Children. After many years, Brother Byrd was blessed to cast his lot with the little flock at Thomas Grove Primitive Baptist Church in Floyd, Virginia. He was highly favored to come before the people with his wife and then together they followed the Lord in baptism, The Lord's Supper, and foot washing services. He is missed by many, but brother Byrd is yet alive and is forever separated by all things evil.

I remember just before his baptism he had to tell me that he wanted me to know he was not perfect, and that he sometimes had thoughts he wished he had not. I told him that being perfect is not required to follow the Lord in His ordinances, but that you believe in your heart that Jesus is both LORD and Master. He said he did believe but that he wished he could do better. So, brother Byrd was blessed in all these thoughts and clearly a better person that I will ever be.

It is, therefore, resolved that a copy of this resolution be sent to his family, one to the Signs of the Times for publication, and one be recorded in our church record.

Elder Thomas Clifton Pegram, Jr.- Moderator

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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O' FOR A FAITH.

O' for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by every foe;
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe;

That will not murmur or complain,
Beneath the chastening rod,
But in the hour of grief or pain
Will lean upon it's God;

A faith that shines more bright and clear
When tempests rage without.
That when in danger, knows no fear,
In darkness knows no doubt.

That bears unmoved, the worlds dread frown;
Nor heeds it's scornful smile,
That seas of trouble cannot drown,
Nor Satan's art's beguile;

A faith that keeps the narrow way,
Till life's last hour is fled,
And with a pure and heavenly ray,
Ilumes a dying bed;

Lord give us such a faith as this,
And then what e're may come,
We'll taste e'en here, the hallowed bliss,
Of an eternal home.....

I found this written by hand and in pieces as well...? It was in an old hymn book which I believe was Goble, though it may have been an old Lloyds....the initials C.M. were at the top by the title, which I take it to mean Common Meter.... I felt it well worth sharing ....love, Caroline.

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EDITORIAL

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come." Romans 5: 12-14.

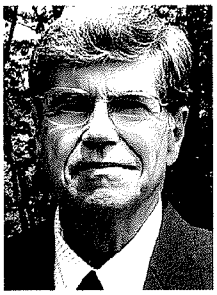
Elder J. B. Farmer

This scripture is being considered with much fear, knowing that so many different things have been said and written about it - and knowing that all men are subject to error, including myself. Nevertheless, this fear has been overwhelmed by the felt need, I trust from love, to set down in order certain thoughts that continue to stir up my mind. Please compare anything that may be written here with your experience and understanding of the scriptures, and reject anything if it does not agree with the true gospel of grace. The right view of this scripture seems to be necessary to the proper understanding of who Adam was; of our relation to Adam before God, in experience; and of the manner in which all things shall be brought to conclusion at the end of the age. What others have said or what we

may think must be no substitute for the truth of revelation, which only God is able to supply. We are commanded to rightly divide the word of truth, but we know that is impossible for men in nature. May we be led into the truth and held back from the error of fleshly thinking.

God, in His word, testified that He formed Adam, the last of His creation, of the dust of the ground, and created him in His image and after His likeness. And God said that all His creation, including Adam, was very good. And God said that He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. The first question that arises is this. What kind of being was Adam? This, to me, is not just a passing interest or a curiosity, but is essential to know. If we misjudge at this point, and are left to our own reasoning, we would be led into many false assumptions that will necessarily result in confusion and false doctrine about Adam, ourselves, and the consummation of all things.

I doubt that many would deny that to be formed of the dust of the ground is to be made to partake of an earthly existence in a body of flesh. This means that Adam was of the earth earthy, and if taken from the earth, to the earth he must return. For we are taught that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. But it is obvious that a man is more than just earth, or even just flesh and blood. A man also has life and has a mind. This indicates that Adam and all men, because they are his offspring, must have consisted of body, soul, and spirit.

But in what sense was Adam made in the image and likeness of God. We know that some take this to extreme and say Adam was a god, or an angel, or a perfect being in the beginning. And some say when Adam sinned, he was reduced from his perfect first estate to something different. I heard one, who was speaking the belief of many, say that in the beginning Adam consisted of three parts: body, soul, and spirit; and after he fell he consisted of only two parts: a body and a soul. This says that the spirit was taken from him. Those who hold this view also maintain that men now might be perfect again by willfully receiving the Spirit of God. According to this view, they would once again be body, soul and spirit. This teaching is false, to me, because it indicates that a man may lose his salvation and then gain it again - all according to his own supposed free will. This truly is impossible because what God has done is forever and eternal.

If Adam was not a god, or an angel, or a perfect being in the beginning, what was he? I am made to believe that he was just like you and me, except he had not yet been made to know that his actions were sinful before God. He was living a life of ignorant bliss, not realizing he was doing things that were displeasing to God. How can anyone say such a thing? The apostle said by revelation, "For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law." Sin is not imputed or charged, when there is no commandment to disobey. Sin was in the world but it was not imputed, since the commandment was not yet given. A child cannot be justly re-

buked for wandering from the yard, if it has never been commanded to stay in the yard. But once the commandment is given, the child is chargeable. Adam, as long as he was under no commandment, was free from condemnation for sin. His actions were not chargeable to him. But when the commandment came, and Adam disobeyed, he came under judgment. It is no wonder the apostle said by the Spirit concerning his own experience and the experience of all saints, "I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died." Here is the principle revealed in great simplicity.

If then Adam was just like you and me, what does it mean to be made in the image and likeness of God? I am made to believe to be made in His image and likeness is to be made to have similar characteristics to God himself. It is to be made with much more knowledge and with many more capabilities than any of the other creation. Man has been given a sense of right and wrong. He has been given an ability to think about things past and to speculate about the future. He has been given the ability to contemplate heaven and hell. He has been given the ability to think that all things have a purpose and have a Creator. Man even is taught to know that he is mortal and to reflect upon eternity. Even though man is much superior to the other creation, he still is greatly inferior to the One that made him.

What does it mean to say that God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and that man became a living soul? Did God's breath of life impart natural or spiritual life? Some have taken this to mean spiritual life. But then all men would be spiritual if this were true. But we know that all men have not the spirit of God. But Adam was the father of all living, and of this one lump was made up vessels of glory and honor, and also vessels made to dishonor and for the purpose of destruction. So the life of Adam that is common to all that should come after him is natural life. And no other can duplicate this natural life that God imparted. God also spoke of this breath of life being in the animals. God said, "And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die." In the creation of earthy Adam, I am made to believe that the breath of life was natural. To those created in Christ Jesus, I believe that the breath of life given to Adam is also a figure of spiritual life given to the saints.

What then does it mean to become a living soul? In the case of Adam, I am made to believe that it simply indicates that Adam became a living person. Many times in the scriptures, the word soul simply means person. Before the breath of life was give, he was a lifeless and mindless earthly formation. After the breath of life was breathed into Adam, he became a living person that consisted of a natural body, a natural life or soul, and a natural spirit or mind. And all his posterity, being Adam multiplied, were made the same way. To the saints, Adam becoming a living soul is figurative of the children of God being given eternal life. These things are in a great mystery, and many things cannot be ex-

plained by us, but we trust that we will be given to hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

The blessed apostle said, "...death reigned from Adam to Moses..." What is significant about the period of time between Adam and Moses? Is this not speaking of the time between the sin of Adam, which brought death into the world, and the giving of the law unto Moses, written on tables of stone? Is this not referring to the fact that men died during that period even though the law of commandments was not given on stone? If death came by sin, and if sin is not imputed without the commandment being given, how could they have died? I believe that the truth is that the law was given to Adam in the tender heart of flesh, and that law was continually passed down to all his seed. Actually, the law must have been in force before the commandments were written on stone, or men could not have died.

Some say that at the end of the world or the age, the world shall be purged of wickedness and shall once again be as it was in the days of Adam before sin and death entered the world. They apparently think that this is where the saints shall reign with Christ on the Earth. It seems that this view is held, in part, because of the erroneous understanding of Adam and the Garden of Eden, before sin and death entered. Of course I may be wrong in my understanding. I may be deceived, and would not know it if I were. So, this makes me very hesitant and careful to say others are wrong. However, I believe the truth must be maintained for glory of God and for the edification of the household of faith. I am made to believe the antichrist shall come at the end of this age, claiming to be God, and will gather many after himself saying he is about to set up an eternal kingdom on the earth. Many will believe a lie and be damned with him. But Christ shall come in the clouds and every eye shall behold Him. "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore, comfort one another with these words."

Elder J.B. Farmer 3-9-2009

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Bro. and Elder Cleo Robertson,

I am sending an obituary of Sis. Murphy to print in the Signs of the Times. If time and space permit. Please overlook my many mistakes.

Humbly I hope, Charlie Fox

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 7 / 2018

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

CHURCHES OF OUR FAITH

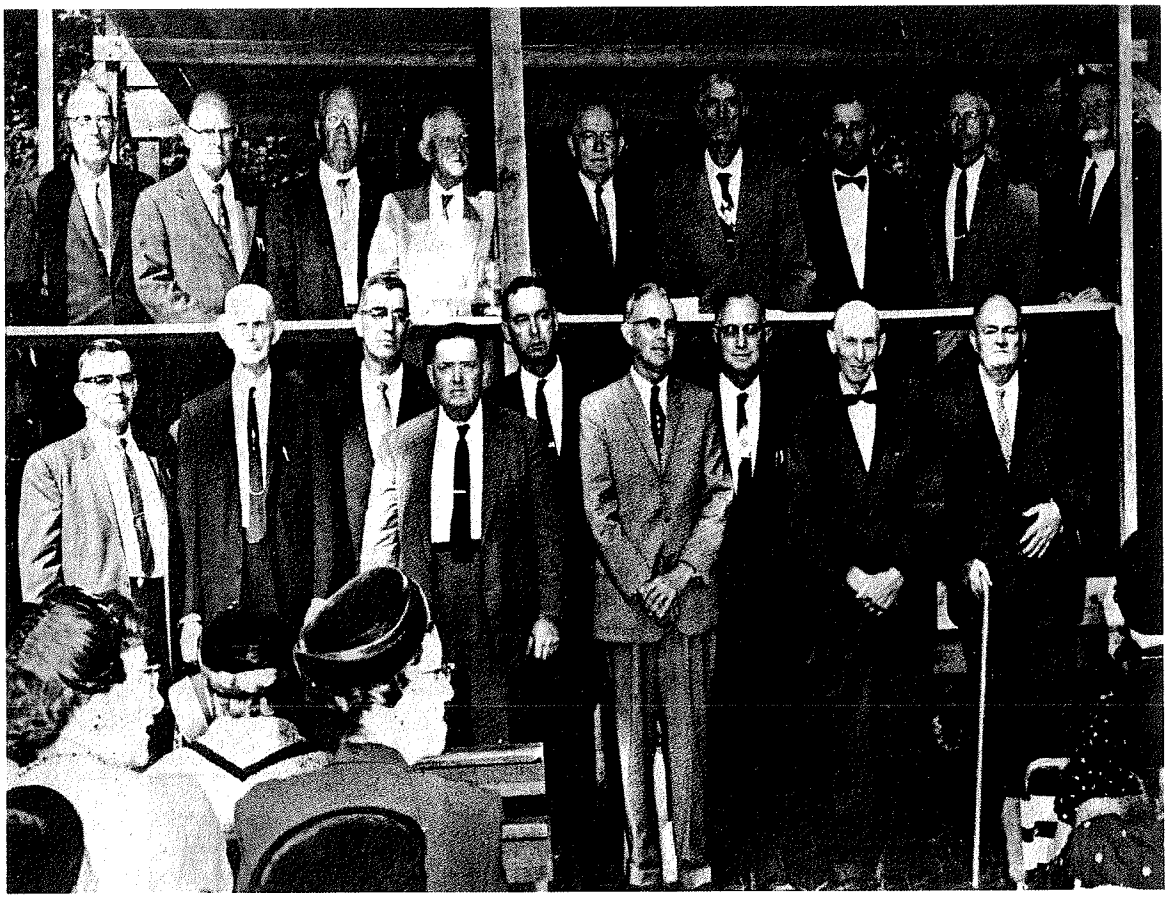

KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

EIGHTEEN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH ELDERS AT 1960 MEETING --- Assembled for a picture by the late Eugene Rice in October 1960, are the 18 elders attending the Kehukee Association at Smithwick Creek Primitive Baptist Church. The Enterprise is indebted to Elder E. C. Harrison of Bear Grass for the identification of the men, some of whom are now deceased. Left to right, on platform, Elder J.W. Gillam, S. R. Boykin, W. B. Barnes, G. G. Trevathan, A. B. Ayers, Sr., J. G. Gaskill, W. D. Godwin, E. C. Harrison, W. C. Edwards; front row, standing on ground I. S. Conner, W. E. Grimes, M. E. Garner, Ernest Oakley, C. L. Coker, J. R. Lane, B. D. Handy, P. E. Getsinger and E. C. Stevenson.

VOICES OF THE PAST

GOD'S CARE FOR HIS PEOPLE

"For thus saith the LORD God of Israel. The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day *that* the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth." -1 Kings 17:14.

At the beginning of the chapter Elijah told Ahab that "as the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." The reason for this judgment of the Lord upon Israel is seen at the close of the preceeding chapter: "And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him." As soon as the punishment of the disobedient Israelites was commanded, the Lord turned to his faithful servant Elijah to provide for him. He was commanded to go eastward and to hide by the brook Cherith that is before Jordan. And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there."

According to all the laws of nature, and to the natural reason and understanding of man, the prospect was anything but cheerful. The brook would dry up. So far as receiving sustenance from the filthy ravens was concerned, it would seem that anything eatable coming in their way would be instantly devoured by them. If Elijah had the least doubt as to his safety (which I doubt) there is no record of it. His faith told him that there was nothing too hard for the Lord. Like Abraham, his faith told him what the Lord promised he was able to perform. (Romans 4:21). And then he abode by the brook Cherith, fed bread and flesh morning and evening by the ravens, and drinking of the water of the brook. The record does not tell how long Elijah lived by the brook, but says that after a while the brook dried up. Now the water of the brook did not day up all at once, but little by little, day by day there was less water, until a day came when there was no water. Here was another trial of the faith of Elijah, but that God-given faith did not desert him. "And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. So he arose, and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks." There she was, the one who was to feed him, the first person he saw by the gate, and he called to her to bring him water and also a morsel of bread in her hand. The answer he got was, "As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son that we may eat it, and die." There is her desperate plight: one scant meal and then starvation. But Elijah's faith was unshaken. He told her to "go and do as thou has said: but make

me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and thy son." Then came the promise at the head of this article: "For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth." The widow believed in Elijah's God, for, mark you, she said to him, As the Lord thy God liveth. She believed in a living God, and faith was given her to take this stranger in and feed him and believe that it would be as Elijah told her: "The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail."

There always has been, there is today, and there will be so long as time lasts a "remnant according to the election of grace" who know that God's tender mercy and loving care for his people will never fail. The barrel of meal represents the material necessities of this life, and the cruse of oil the unfailing grace of the eternal God. All those who believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, have that faith, without which it is impossible to please God.

But to return to Elijah. There was still another sore trial for that poor widow woman. Her child sickened and died in her arms. "And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?" She was perplexed. She could not understand why this great bereavement had come upon her. It is quite probable that in taking Elijah in she felt that she was doing a great service unto the Lord, and that she was looking for an ultimate reward, and when this blow fell her eyes were turned within, and, like all true believers, she saw her nothingness in God's sight. The narrative goes on to relate how Elijah took the child to his room and ultimately returned him to his mother's arms. Then the widow's doubts and unbelief were all swept away, and she was made to declare, "I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." We do not in these "last days" see miracles performed as in the above narrative, or as in the days of Christ on earth, yet the same Spirit of truth works in the hearts of God's people today as was manifested then. The God of all grace is the same yesterday, today and forever.

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Therefore God's loving-kindness changes not. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." — Romans 1:16-17. That faith tells them that as their days so shall their strength be. "The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail." Oh no, the all-seeing eye is ever upon his people.

"The steps that I take,
And the station I fill,

My Father determined,
And wrote in His will."

David wrote, **"For thou, Lord,** *art* **good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon Thee."- Psalm 86:5.** *There is* **none like unto the God of Jeshurun,** *who* **rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God** *is thy* **refuge, and underneath** *are* **the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy** *them."*— **Deut. 33:26-27.**

JAMES E. HUBBARD
Randolph, Maine

GRACE

The poet says:

"If I must sing I'll sing of grace,
Which raised me from the fall,
And led me to a hiding place,
Jesus, my Lord, my all."

There is much said in the Bible about grace and perhaps there is no word in it that is not shamefully abused. I have never heard anyone say that they did not believe that salvation was by grace. But according to their belief, certain things must be done by the sinner in order to be saved by grace. This destroys the meaning of the word as grace is free favor, therefore anything given or done for it is a price and hence it is not free. The idea of salvation partly of grace and partly of works is very clearly disputed by our apostle Paul in Romans 11:5-6. He says, **"Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then** *is it* **no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if** *it be* **of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."** This forever settles the question and proves that the salvation of the sinner does not depend even in part on his own works but as Paul says in the 2nd Chapter of Ephesians, "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast." Notice he says, by grace are ye saved. The gospel of Christ is always in the present, and hence applies to the child of God in his every day experience. He is a sinner by nature and so finds himself in darkness because of sin. He realizes fleshly weakness and feels the temptations of Satan who as a roaring lion is walking about seeking whom he may devour. Then like Samson he needs the Spirit of the Lord mightily and he cries unto the Lord and He delivers him from his mighty foe. This also is salvation for which the delivered one praises the Lord. Jesus said to His disciples that "Without me ye can do nothing." John 15:5. This has been and ever will be true in the experience of the Lord's humble poor. Christ was evidently talking to His disciples about their works in His vineyard, the

church. That nothing can be done here acceptable to God except by Jesus Christ whose strength is made perfect in weakness. In the flesh they sin, and this is not by Jesus Christ who hates and punished sin. Had Peter had Christ in him at the time of his trial before Pilot as he had Him on the day of Pentecost he would not have denied him. What a wonderful manifestation of life and display of the grace of God. When he who awhile ago denied Christ when accused by a little maid of being one of His disciples can now stand up before people of all nations and boldly say to His killers that with wicked hands ye did it. Could anything but grace have saved Peter from his error and given him comfort and pleasure in proclaiming His name? Peter loved Jesus all that time. So His children now love Him. We have the mind of Christ, says the apostle, and yet we sometimes yield to the flesh and do things we ought not and suffer shame and regret and need to feel again the pardoning love and gracious mercy of our ever indulgent Saviour, and do not claim the honor of any deliverance, but praise God from whom all blessings flow. Paul was an apostle of Jesus Christ; he also felt to be the chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints, and said, "By the grace of God, I am what I am." .Jesus made him His apostle and it was by His grace that Paul knew how small he was, and that it was Christ who gave him the strength so necessary to the service of Christ and His dear people.

Jesus is always with those who are born again and hence they are not dead for He is their life and He said "I will never leave nor forsake thee", but He does not always allow them to see Him. Note those disciples with whom He walked and talked and their eyes were holden that they should not know Him. O how tedious and tasteless the hours when Jesus no longer I see. But there is life and hence prayer for the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. And an acknowledgment of our sin and the justice of His judgments upon us for walking in a way we should not, and now we know that regeneration and the pardon of sin from first to last is the free and unmerited favour of God, given us through Jesus Christ, His eternal and everlasting Son, and therefore we sing not unto us but to Thy name give glory now and forever. Amen.

Your brother in the hope of the blessings of Jesus.

J.T.R.
Zion's Landmark
October 15, 1934

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER SAMUEL L. DARK

I have many times been requested to write a sketch of my life, together with my christian experience, but a sense of my deep sinfulness and of a life far from what it should be, has made me doubt if any good could come of it. But my life is now about done, and hav-

ing spent many years of my life testifying to the goodness and mercy of God in the salvation of sinners, I now wish to leave to my brethren who shall live after me a statement of part of the incidents that have led me to trust in a Saviour's power to save poor wretched sinners.

I was born in Chatham Co., N.C., within ten miles of the county seat in the year 1808. My father and mother united with the Baptist in 1802. In about the year 1809 they moved to Wilson Co.,Tenn., my father taking a letter in full fellowship, but mother being favorable to open communion, would not have a letter. When they reached Tennesee, father would not put his letter in because he could not believe with the Baptists on the subject of eternal and and personal election; mother united with the Methodists, but not agreeing with them on matters pertaining to church government, left them and finally came back to the communion of the Primitive Baptists and died in that faith. I had many evidences of a supreme power overruling all things, but grew up wild, thoughtless and wicked. In December 1829 I left the scenes of my childhood and emigrated to Schuyler Co., Ill. stopping awhile in Kentucky, reaching my destination, in company with my parents and others, in April 1830. Here I took charge of a school near Rushville, in the then backwoods settlement, and after teaching six months, commenced another term; but I discontinued it at the call for volunteers for the Black Hawk war.

My parents were much opposed to my going on account of my being crippled, near sighted and being the youngest son. I had but two days to get ready, and having to buy a horse and a gun, I resorted to swearing to keep them from interfering with my preparations. I argued with them that I had agreed to go, and that I would not desert, nor dishonor my word. During my preparations, I laid down some notes on a table and took my father's gun telling him that I intended taking it if he did not kill me to prevent it. Until this day, a wicked act touches my heart. I turned and saw tears in my old father's eyes, but he offered no further opposition to my taking the gun. This act I will regret as long as life lasts.

The company being organized, and the time having arrived for leaving, as we marched past my father's house the company fired a salute. My dear old mother came to the gate and beckoned for me to come to her, which I did. On my approaching her, she said, "My son, from what I learn from the papers, there is a strong probability that you will have to fight every band of Indians between here and Canada, and some think this is the beginning of another British war. You are exposed to death in ten thousand ways; you may be killed by accident, slain in battle, thrown from your horse or drowned; so I may never see you again. And if I never see you again, what evidence shall I have that you are not in hell?" Knowing that this proceeded from a kind mother's heart, I could but answer her respectfully, and this I did by saying, in order to evade a long and serious conversation. "What can I do?" her answer was; "Pray." Wishing to cut the conversation short, my reply was

"You pray for me."At this she turned her back to me, and raised her right hand heavenward, and seemingly with entense earnestness, screamed out this prayer; "Go my son, and the Lord be with you." This parting from a dear mother under such solemn circumstances, had its influence, and I did not curse and swear for several days. But my propensity for wickedness and levity proved that my goodness was like Ephraim's of old, which like the morning cloud and the early dew, soon passed away, and I plunged into my former course of levity and profanity with a degree seemingly unparaleled I became so noted that I gained the title of "Schuyler fool killer" and to this day I tremble to think that the honor of my God and the glorious gospel of peace, was so trivial in my estimation that I trampled on them and everything sacred to make mirth for my fellow soldiers. It was not many days until I was so distingushed for these things that I was well known, personally as the commander in chief. While going on in this career, it is said that I preached the funeral of an old horse that had died.

Near the time when we were to be mustered out, I thought I ought to get on good terms with my messmate, whom I had so abused with my ungodly career that we had come near fighting. I had no real enmity towards him, however, but had been simply gratifying my disposition for my own amusement. I found him in conversation with an old man who had outdone him in ruffiamism and blasphemy. I thought here was an opportunity to get into the good graces of my messmate by bringing this old man to shame. I feigned to be a young minister, and to be greatly shocked by his profane language. I turned upon him the accusations that I thought best calculated to bring him to confess his error and, possibly, to bring out a promise of reformation. I was successful. I said to him, "My old father, if I may call you by that endearing name, I must confess that when I see a man of such natural talent, by his pernicious influence and example, dragging down to hell so many youths of the land who have enlisted to defend the rights of their country, and at the same time drawing down the vengeance on his own gray head,! am made to shudder."

I continued on in this strain, but my eyes were turned within to see the character of my own poor soul, and I saw that all I said was the truth in regard to myself, and every evil thought and act of my life was as though it had been written page after page. I seemed drawing right into the very mouth of perdition, yet I could not stop talking until I had uttered these words; It is with such men as Dr. Young said, with the talent of an angel, a man may be a fool, On uttering this, it was as though a bolt of light had pierced through my soul, which came near throwing me to the ground. I staggered, but recovered myself, and turned expecting to see the ground open and swallow me up, and felt that I should sink down to hell.

Notwithstanding all this, I kept to my purpose of degrading the old man, and made my true character known to him by a foul remark, and was introduced to him as the "Scuyler fool killer." He cursed

me bitterly and threatened to kill me. I soon retired to my tent, spent nearly the whole night in horror and sleeplessness, getting a little sleep just before day. On awakening next morning, a great change seemed to have overspread creation. I had read in the word of God that the earth was cursed for man's sake. The earth assumed an aspect that I had never seen before. The earth and the heavens seemed drawn together and a curse seemed to rest on all that I saw. The army of 4,000 men was camped in a hollow square and everything that I could see looked grimly unnatural. And, strange as it may seem to some, I could not bear with any degree of patience to hear their shocking oaths and blasphemies. They seemed to pierce my heart as with a spear; so I left the camp some two or three hundred yards. My seclusion seemed to avail me nothing, for the sins of my life that had heretofore been forgotten seemed to loom up before me as so many fiery balls; and sufficient they seemed, to set heaven and earth ablaze. My soul trembles to think of the horror that I felt. I seemed to stand on the crust of a volcano over the mouth of a burning crater. I fancied that the weight of my sins would break it through and that the hottest hell would soon be mine.

In this condition, I asked myself if anyone had told me that I was in this doleful and distressed condition. My mind turned then to the ministers of the M.E. church, who had always been my favorite preachers, in connection with Cumberland Presbyterians and others who held Arminian tenets. I had formerly looked on these as being heralds of truth. Many of their representations as to men having a good and an evil spirit in him came to my mind. But, alas, my poor soul was morally a barren heath with nothing good, I was wholly sinful. After thinking of many, my mind wandered to an old Baptist preacher named Presley Lester. I had listened to him for many hours while he seemed to be deploring the utter depravity of the whole human race. I had formerly listened, disbelieving all that he said in regard to man's inability to deliver himself from sin and misery. Many parts of his sermons seemed to roll through my mind, though I had not heard him for two years and was six hundred miles away from him. Now, I saw that the mistake was on my part, touching myself and my condition. He had only partly described my utter pollution and hopeless condition; and I now realized that morally speaking, the whole head was sick and the heart faint, and that I was full of putrefying sores from the soles of the feet to the head. There was no soundness there. Four or five of the same order came into mind, and they all seemed to have borne testimony to the same awful truth, and notwithstanding I had formerly considered them as simpletons or bigots, who loved to differ with good preachers. I now discovered that they had come near the truth in my case. To my mind they seemed to go side by side neither turning to the right nor to the left, but to go straight forward declaring the everlasting gospel; and I felt that most of the Old Baptist was right (afterwards I embraced it all.)

In May, 1831, we were discharged and returned home, but the tumult in my

bosom for four and a half months. During this time I did everything that I could to drive these feelings away. I cursed, danced, went in rough company, but it all did no good. All that I could do was only heaping up wrath against myself. On the third Sunday in September I attended an association. From what occurred there the Baptists were somewhat mixed up with a preacher that spoke from his learning and other men's works; as one preacher who was appointed to preach on Sunday used a part of one of Blair's lectures, a British devine. Returning from the meeting that evening with a young lady and two other couples, I jocosely referred to the sermon of Brother Allen (as I called him); and I repeated fully half of it, as I had learned it when a boy. The young lady that I was with afterwards became my wife. I had long contemplated paying my attention to her, and was very glad of this opportunity, and only regretted that this dull and heavy feeling rendered me less entertaining than I desired to be. I had never been at her father's house before, though it was near my father's. In order to rid myself of these serious impressions, I left the company of the other young people, and went to the west end of the house where there were some hewed logs lying close together, and on them I tried dancing once more. But the Kings dart stuck so deep in the center of my soul, that instead of relieving me it only made me feel worse. The very sky above me seemed like brass and the earth like iron. I felt to be a poor abandoned creature, and felt that my death sickness was on me, and that I should die soon. I walked into the room, and notwithstanding I was almost an entire stranger to them. I threw myself on a bed in despair, exclaiming, "I am sick." The girls playfully feigned to administer to my case with medicinal skill, but all their efforts were like tearing my heart-strings, and I said to them, "For God's sake, girls, leave me; you don't know what is the matter with me." Their reply was, "O yes sir, we can cure you, we can cure you."

We soon started to meeting, and O, what melancholy feelings I had in regard to my poor soul! and I longed for a call from God, believing that the invitations of Arminians were such calls. I took my seat in a porch, while the minister stood in the house; and I listened to him as best I could. The preacher was a plain old farmer, a man of honest integrity, whose body lies three miles west of Canton, and by whose grave I have passed many times to preach to his relatives. His text was "Of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself or some other man?" In his illustration of the text, by way of showing the condition of mind that the Eunuch was then in. I really thought he aimed his remarks for me, personally, as I saw Elder John Logan and others present who had been fellow soldiers with me in the army, and who knew my character. He seemed to lay my darkest sins bare and bring out the very secret thoughts of my heart, and tell all about my notions of a saving religion, and hold them in utter derision before the people to that extent that I thought that my character was ruined forever. I could but acknowledge that I was guilty of every crime that he charged me with, and he held them out

to public gaze so vividly that I expected every moment that he would call me out by name, thinking that he obtained the facts from those who were acquainted with me. I could not conceive how a christian could delight in exposing a poor lost being to the extent that he did, knowing that I was doomed to utter destruction. However, after giving a description of my character and just condemnation, he made the inquiry publicly, Is there any poor soul here in this condition? My thoughts were, If I should say yes, his reply could be nothing else than something like this-"Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels, but instead of persuing that course, he remarked, "If there is, I have glorious intelligence for you; God has intention of mercy towards you."

I discredited that statement, somewhat, but he had told the truth so clearly that I came to this conclusion "Am I yet out of hell, after so much dreadful apprehension? And is there yet mercy with God for such a lifetime enemy to God as I have been and am? If there is mercy I will seek it. And then for six weeks I made constant supplication night and day, when awake, for forgiveness of my sins. Before this I had never thought of praying to God, for I thought that to insult him by praying to him, would end in plunging me to hell. I had a book in my possession entitled "Imitation of Christ." In it were a great many forms of prayer that I thought very beautiful and applicable to my case. I would occasionally read one a few times and then retire to offer it in secret on my behalf. But poor headway was made in this way, however for after a few weeks my case became so desperate that I would forget my prayer before I could get out of the schoolhouse.

Finally I came to the conclusion that, according to the word of God there was such a thing as a conditional salvation, and that the part I had to do was to offer a perfect prayer to God. I thought at the time that I was able to do it, and that if I did not perform it, and God should send me to hell, I should try to acquesce in my condemnation; and that in the event I did offer it and God did not save me in answer to my prayer, and sent me to hell, I would point from its dark caverns and tell him that he had said, "Every one that seeketh, findeth, and knock and it shall be opened to you." After calling on everything, animate and inanimate, to witness the sincerity of my heart, and the fulfillment of the condition on my part, I retired to a dense clump of underbrush and dropped on my knees in order to offer this perfect prayer. I stayed on my knees several minutes, and if it had been to have saved a thousand worlds I could not have uttered a word. So I stood there on my knees con demned.The sky looked dark and lowering, and I expected God's vengen-ance to break forth upon me; and as fast as I could I made my way to the house. While going to the house,this thought came to me; "You have never yet believed in a scriptural sense." That thought was followed by a declaration from Paul that without faith it was impossible to please God, and whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Now I saw that all my prayers were

only the cries of an unbelieving heart and I had been building all my hopes on a false foundation, my prayers being Sinful and vile in the sight of God. I here died to legal hope, for I saw that my prayers had been employed by me as a means to put myself where God could reach me. The wickedness of my best prayers seemed to contain enough sin to damn ten thousand worlds if they had been imputed to them.

I went into the schoolhouse, thinking that I would never ask God to have mercy anymore. Seeing a New Testament lying on a bench, the thought occurred to me, "I will read condemnation in you once more, "as though I was addressing it personally. I opened it to the last part of the gospel of Matthew and there read the trial, maltreatment and crucifixion of my blessed Lord. My sympathy was excited, exceedingly, for the innocent sufferer. I looked on him as a fellow sufferer, with this difference, I should suffer eternally for my sins, while he had done nothing worthy of punishment or maltreatment. My sympathy was so excited in his behalf that I thought I would have risked my life or have delivered him from his enemies. Poor blind heart! Little did I think - "Twas you, my sins, my cruel sins, His chief tormentors were, each of my crimes became a nail, and unbelief the spear."

By some unaccountable means, every word became very interesting and I thought to read the words over again. Never before had I seen such beauty in God's word. But instead of rereading, some thing urged me to read on. When I came near the close of the 27th chapter, I felt to regret that I was so nearly done this wonderful recital. I read on to the 6th verse of the 28th chapter with my back to the school, standing with my face to the window, which was simply a log cut out to let in the light, and read, "He is not here; for he is risen as he said. Come see the place where the Lord lay." I felt a touch in my shoulder, and supposing it to be one of my pupils, raised my head to turn around. But what was my surprise, to see before me, as I looked through the window, a man, seemingly composed of richest blood. I did not see it with my natural vision, for a young man, named Henry Wright, was just at my left hand and in position to see all that I could see. But nevertheless, I saw him suspended in air, lying prone with his head upon his arms, and ten thousand times ten thousand bolts of lightning striking the quivering form in every direction.

I was moved to pity the object of such wrath. The passage of scripture that I had just read connected itself with the object of my wonder, and I exclaimed in my mind, "There he is; he is indeed risen. "But there seemed no connection between all this and myself, more than sympathy for the suffering form which was the meekest object that mortal mind ever contemplated. But a few drops of blood leave the quivering form, and flying straight, strike my breast. A happy sense of relief flowed like a deluge over my soul. The blood was for me, and it's efficacy had been felt. I threw the book from me, thinking that I should need it no more.

The blood flew everywhere, and was over everything, and by it's efficacy

all was made to glorify God. I turned to look at my school but what a transformation had taken place! Their faces all seemed glorified, and the homeliest was beautiful. I thought that I would go out to the place where I was accustomed to pray and see if it too had changed. I left the schoolroom and found all nature glistening the reflected rays of the sun, as though everything was covered with gold and silver. I reached the place, was convinced, and exclaimed, "It is enough." There was nothing between me and heaven. Not a single thing could stand as an obstacle, since Christ had done everything that was to be done. He had put away my sins and so purified my heart that I should never sin any more. There was but one thing to cause me any trouble, and that was there had been no way provided for me to show my gratitude. Christ had done everything, and left me absolutely nothing to do that fitly express my love. If I had been called on to die at the stake, I would gladly have untied the martrys hands, have taken his place and offered up my life to show my love. There were no songs that were grand enough in thought and words, to express my love and estimation of the God who had so wonderfully wrought a great deliverance for my soul.

It could not be expressed, and I was left to contemplate it in silence because it could not be spoken. While these thoughts were prevailing in my mind, the words of Paul came to me -"O wretched man that I am. Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I could not believe that Paul was a representative Christian. He certainly had never felt what I had felt. Miserable man that he was, he had never realized such a wonderful deliverance as I had witnessed in my case. Likewise the words of David caused me to feel pity for him. For had he not said, "The pains of hell had well nigh got hold on me." I thought if he had felt the glory of the celestial world as I had done, he could never have such feelings as that. O, the glory of that salvation! I could have easily made a world as I could describe its heavenly beauties.

At night, after this, while in this state of mind, I looked up toward the heavens and saw a truth, that_

E'endown to old age, all my people shall prove My soverign, eternal unchangeable love;

And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be bourne.

My locks have whitened for the tomb, but the God of heaven has not forsaken me. I spent that night in joyful exaltation of soul. The extacy of sins forgiven softened my bed so that I seemed to rest on air. A few nights after this I attended a prayer meeting and went there expecting to hear them rejoicing in a Saviour's love. But what was my disappointment when they began confessing themselves sinners in the sight of God, and praying for his forgiveness. O, I thought, if they had been in my condition, with their sins entirely removed from them, they would have no need for confession.

I was glad that I was not one of them. But how horror struck was I to hear

with the ear of my understanding, the words- "I thank thee, Lord God of heaven and earth, that I am not as other men,nor even this poor publican." I began sinking into a horrible pit,and down I went until I rested upon this text -"I know in whom I have believed,"etc. 2 Timothy 1:12. This did not raise me up, but it kept me from getting lower down. The preacher came around and asked me how I got along I answered: Tolerably well, "But", said he, "I meant spiritual things." I did not know what to say, my mind was in gloom, but I could not say that I knew nothing about it for this text came into my mind-" He that denieth me before men, him will I deny before my Father and his holy angels." I answered him, I do not know what you call religion, but I know that I have an interest in the blood of the atonement. Something seemed to say to me, "Now you have done it; you are now what you have always despised-nothing but a hypocrite." I went home in company with other young people, but I took no interest in their conversation.

When we got nearly home I heard my old father and mother crying, my sisters having preceeded us and told the news. When we went in, as soon as mother could command her voice, she said to me, "My son, they tell me that you have made a profession, and so many of my children have gone back, you must tell it." I said, "Mother it is true." I then proceeded to relate what I had seen and felt, feeling that no one else had ever realized what I had, and so could not believe that anyone could credit what I said. To my joy, my mother told me her experience, and it seemed more wonderful than my own. This gave me great encouragement, for if no one else had any confidence in me my mother would fellowship me. The following Sunday, I attended a camp meeting, but could gather nothing from what was said that was in harmony with my feelings; but the Saturday following, I attended Crane Creek Church and heard Elder Dale, of Kentucky, preach. After preaching, Elder John Logan announced an open door to any who might desire to unite with the church. It seemed that no physical force could have kept me from going forward. I was heartily received by the brethren, was baptized, and so commenced the campaign with the Militant kingdom of the God of heaven, and -

"For her my tears shall fall,
For her my prayers ascend;
To her my toils and care be given,
Till toils and cares shall end.

Beyond my highest joy,
I prize her heavenly ways,
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
Her hymns of love and praise."

In just about one year after I joined the church, she rid herself of the missionary innovation in all of its branches. Finding that money and not grace, gave a standing in these societies, and measured the degree of acceptability among those engaged in them to the extent of my ability, feeling to yield my life in defence of the principles of grace and the law which God had delivered to his

church; and had I sixty years more to engage in the service of my king, I should devote them to a defence of the same glorious truth.

In about six months after I joined the church, I began to be impressed with passages of scripture, and notwithstanding I strove against the impressions. In about one year I began to speak publicly from texts, and in seven or eight years more I was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry on September 22nd, 1846, by a presbytery composed of Elders Charles Vandeveer, Thomas H. Owen, John Harper, Jacob Castlebury, and John Driskill. For a time I served from three to four churches monthly, but owing to my being afflicted with neuralgia I left off attending any but the one where my membership was.

I shall now give some account of my home life. In the year 1834, I was married to Miss Matilda Evelyn Moore, of Schuyler Co., Ill. She was a worthy member of the Primitive Baptist church at the time of our marriage. She had that fatal disease, however, consumption, and departed this life September 22, 1836, in the full hope of a blessed immortality. She left me an infant daughter eighteen months old, which my dear old mother took charge of. This only pledge of our mutual affection was taken from me when nearly four years of age. I continued preaching and teaching school, and in the year 1841, was united in marriage to miss Christina Waymack, of Mc. Donough co.,Ill. I lived in harmony and great enjoyment with her until her decease, July 6th, 1863. She was a member of the church at the time of our marriage. We were blessed with eleven children, three sons and eight daughters, I desire to say of my departed companions that they were very suitable for an afflicted way-worn minister of Christ. They frequently urged me to attend my appointments notwithstanding their affliction, and the temporial wants of our family. December 6th I was married to Mrs. Nancy Morris, widow of Isaiah Morris, late of Fulton Co.,Ill. She had two daughters and one son while eight of my children remained at home, making eleven in all, and we enjoyed as much harmony and peace as any family of like size within my knowledge.

By reason of blindness and the many infirmities that attend old age I was forced to rent my farm in Scuyler County, and remove to Macomb, Illinois, where we expect to spend our remaining days. We take great pleasure in visiting the dear children of the kingdom in different localities and feel thankful to God that we can hear the "Sons of consolation" set forth in a lucid and forcible manner the glorious gospel of our salvation. My whole life has been hindered and hedged about with imperfections and weaknesses, and if I have comforted any of the Lord's poor, or have in any way helped to strengthen the church, all praise should be given to him who through his love and mercy has suffered me to live and comforted me by his holy spirit, and given me the high privilege of associating with those who trust in his name.

I regret exceedingly that I have not

lived nearer the cross of my blessed Redeemer. I am ashamed to have neglected his entreaties and violated his commands, and feel that it is only because of his mercy and goodness that I have a hope that I shall yet realize the fulfillment of all the promises made to the heirs of grace. I am now in my 84th year, and soon shall pass away;and I entreat all the church, stand firm on the doctrine of grace, letting love abound in their hearts and bringing forth the fruits thereof to the honor and glory of our God. "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

"May Zion's sons in peace abound,
And put their foes to flight;
While I am sleeping underground,
May they in love unite."

ELDER SAMUEL L. DARK.

GOSPEL STANDARD JAN., 1837

A contrite heart alone can speak feelingly of contrition, a believer of faith, a pilgrim of a wilderness, a tried soul of temptation, a captive of bondage, or a soldier of wounds. Thus we want for our periodical, not pretty notions, but genuine experience; not merely explanations of hard texts, but the unravelling of the mysteries of vital godliness; not eloquent language, but soul feeling; not cut and dried phrases out of the dictionary, but a simple statement of the Lords dealings within. We want not scurrility and vulgar, personal abuse, but meekness of wisdom; not great swelling words of vanity, to bolster up an ungodly system, but sound speech so as to edify the church of God. And, therefore, we would invite those of our correspondents on whose communications a blessing has rested, to favour us with more such papers and would ask also others of the Lord's family, who have not yet sent us anything, to make the attempt. We want not fine language, nor well-turned periods, nor what is call good writing. We want unction and power, something to move and melt the souls of God's people. We want some depths of the heart turned up to view, and some of the secrets of the Lord with them that fear him laid open. And let our correspondents bear in mind the real wants of the Lord's family. They need not so much your opinions as your experience; not so much your views of a text, as an account of the Lord's dealings with your soul; not a heap of fine words that amount to nothing, but gracious feelings brought up from the bottom of your heart. Pour no rosewater, then, over your language; soften down no rough expression; polish off no strong phrase, if it convey the genuine feelings of your soul. You are not writing for gentlemen and ladies, but for mechanics and artizans, the poor in this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom. And if there be any better educated feeling readers of your communications, grace will have taught them to look for unction, and not for eloquence.

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

Big Meadows Primitive Baptist Church will host 5th Sunday meeting, on July 29, 2018 singing begins at 10:30 am and preaching service begins at 11:00 am.

From I-40, take hwy 87 south at Graham towards Pittsboro. Go 14.8 miles and cross Cane Creek. Turn right onto first road past Cane Creek which is Greenhill Road. Go 3.7 miles and turn left on Old Switchboard Road. Church is 1.3 miles on right.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Ronnie Byrd, Clerk

LOWER MAYO 5TH SUNDAY MEETING

The next 5th Sunday Meeting will be held, The Lord Willing, Sunday, July 29, 2018. Roaring River Church will Host the meeting. The Meeting House is located at 10060 Austin Trap Hill Road, Trap Hill NC 28685. From I77, Exit # 93 /west on Zepher Rd. Go about 3 miles and turn right on Mt. Park Rd. Go through 4 way stop at Mt. Park. Go to next stop sign and turn left on Thurman Rd. Go about 200 yards to stop sign and turn right on US 21. Go 4 miles to Trap-Hill Rd. Turn left for about 200 yards and turn left on Roaring Gap Church Rd. Go to stop sign and turn right on Austin-Trap Hill Rd. Go 1.5 miles to Church on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to meet with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

2018

ONE HUNDRED NINETY THIRD ANNUAL SESSION OF THE PIGG RIVER DISTRICT PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION TO BE HELD WITH TOWN CREEK CHURCH ON CHESTNUT CHURCH GROUND.

Motion was made and second that our association only have two days, in the future.

Starting time on Friday, August 3rd, 2018 singing 10:30 and 11:00 preaching.

Starting time on Saturday, August 4th, 2018 singing 9:30 and 10:00 preaching.

Commencing on Friday before the first Sunday in August, 2018.

We invite all Elders & Brethren of our Faith and Order, and all churches that we are associated with, come and be with us.

NOTES

Pigg River churches and location Pigg River Association shelter on grounds of Chestnut Church.

Going north on Route 220, about 13 miles past Bassett, turn right on to Route 724 (Goose Dam Road) about 2 1/2 mile to church. Going south on Route 220, past Rocky Mount, turn left at first stop light on Route 619, Go 3.7 miles, turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Road) 1 mile to church to church.

SKEWARKEY UNION (EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION)

Hancocks Church will host the next session of the Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of July 29, 2018. The church is located on Ayden Golf Club Road, near Ayden, North Carolina. Preaching services begin at 10:30am.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 2018

Edna Graves, AL 15.00
Tim Barron, LA 10.00
Tommy Middleton, NC 10.00
Linda Albright, NC 50.00
Alvis Shelton, VA 15.00

OBITUARIES

MARY RUTH FULK MOODY

Sister Mary Ruth Fulk Moody, age 98 formerly of Robbins St., Lexington, NC died Monday, January 15 at Randolph Hospice House in Asheboro.

A funeral service was held at 2:00 pm Saturday, January 20 at Briggs Funeral Home Memorial Chapel conducted by Elder Carlton Brown and Elder Lowell Hopkins. Burial followed at Tom's Creek Primitive Baptist. Church Cemetery.

Sister Moody was born November 14, 1919 in Surry County to Sidney Henderson Fulk and Ethel Frances Barnes Fulk. She was a member of Tom's Creek Primitive Baptist Church and had worked as a teachers assistant at Denton Elementary School. She retired as a Librarian assistant at Pilot School. She had also worked at Mallory Battery Company. She was in the Ladies Auxiliary and worked with the Amvets and American Legion. Her favorite pastime was working in the garden. She was married to Elder James Hubert Moody who died June 28, 2015. She was also preceded in death by sisters, Ada Hill and Cora Beasley and by brothers Herbert, David, George, Claude and Gray. She was an avid Bible reader and enjoyed visiting Nursing Homes and working wither flowers. She

also loved talking to her friends at home and in the mountains.

She is survived by sons, Robert Gray Moody and wife Terry Lynn of Keller, Texas and David Henderson Moody and wife Belinda of Lexington; daughter, Linda Albright and husband Charles of Badin Lake, New London; grandchildren, Kevin, Wendi, Kailey and husband Zak, Joshua, Jamie, Jason and wife April; great grand-children, Christian, Alisha, Ashton and Hailey.

Memorials may be made to Tom's Creek Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery Fund c/o Kent Snider, 712 Sexton Road, as Denton, NC 27239.

The family would like to thank Mountain Vista Health Park in Denton for all the love and care they gave Mrs. Moody, and also Stanly Manor in Albemarle for the years of care they gave her.

OBITUARY OF HELEN FRANCES COUCH MURPHY

It has pleased the dear Lord to remove from our midst our dear sister in Christ: Helen Frances Couch Murphy; She passed away, on March 29, 2018 at the Medical Center of South Arkansas in El Dorado Arkansas. She was a long time Member, and friend, of Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church. She loved the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God; and was a true and faithful friend, of the Primitive Baptist churches in this area, and other places, as long as she was able to attend. She is gone, but not forgotten, her memory lives on with us. She has finished her course here, we believe that she is at rest in the paradise of God to await the second and glorious coming of Christ the Lord; and will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

Sis Murphy was born August 28, 1922 in Delight, AR to the union of Rubin Harper Couch, and Roma Hill Couch.

She was preceded in death by her parents, her husband Doyle O. Murphy, two sons John Buck Gathright; David Carroll Gathright, five brothers and one sister.

Survivors include one daughter Vickie Sweet and husband Randall, one son Grady Cordell and wife Gisela Gathright, daughter in-law Phala Tolin, two sisters Ruth Wells and husband Bob and Lois Bolts and husband Johnny, one brother Charlie Couch and wife Margaret, numerous grandchildren, great grandchildren, and two great great grandchildren.

Graveside services, was held on Monday April 2, 2018 at the Rehobeth Cemetery with Bro. Ernest McAdams officiating.

In loving memory of Sis.Helen Murphy, I cherish the times that we have

spent together in love and sweet fellowship here. I write this memorial in her memory. I am the least, and the last member of this church.

Charlie Fox

OBITUARY OF BROTHER NELSON N. NESTER

Nelson N. Nester, age 85 departed this life on earth Sunday, February 25, 2018 at the Lewis Gale Medical Center. He as born in Carroll County on June 27, 1932 to the late John C. Nester and the late Nina Webb Nester. He was also preceded in death by six sisters and two brothers.

Brother Nelson married Miss Alice Marie Turner on November 21, 1951. They were married for 66 years when Brother Nelson was called home, to suffer no more on this earth. Brother Nelson was a simple hard working man that would sit quietly taking all things in, but he stood strong in his faith.

He was the father of Gary Nester, Sharon Nester Harris and Grandfather of 3 grandchildren and 1 great grandchild. He is survived by his loving and devoted wife, children, grandchildren and one brother, Andrew Nester.

On Saturday March 1, 1986 Brother Nelson, Sister Marie and Brother Gary ask for a home with the church at Long Branch. They were received and Baptized on Sunday March 2, 1986 by Elder Amos Hash. Brother Nelson was ordained Deacon on April 4, 1987 by a presbytery consisting of Elders Amos Hash, O.K. Tench, Lane Carter, William Holland, Larry Hollandsworth and Hale Terry. He was chosen to serve as Assistant Clerk from July 4, 1987 till November 6, 1999.

Brother Nelson was a quiet, humble soul. He loved the fellowship with God's little children especially in songs of praise to our Lord. He had a special Love for hymn number 189 Jesus, thou art the sinner's friend, as such I look to thee: Now in the bowels of thy love, 0 Lord, remember me.

When I was reflecting on Brother Nelson's humble spirit these verses stood out to me.

Proverbs 16:17-20 "The highway of the upright is to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul.[1] Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.[20] He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good: and whoso trusteth in the LORD, happy is he.

Funeral services were held for Brother Nelson N. Nester Wednesday, February 28, 2018 at Bassett Funeral Home by Elder Mark Terry.

Humbly summited in love by Sister Betty Walker at the request of Long Branch Primitive Baptist Church.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

VOL. 186 HILLSVILLE, VA., AUGUST 2018 NO. 8

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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HYMN

WHAT think ye of Christ? is the test
To try both your state and your scheme;
You cannot be right in the rest,
Unless you think rightly of him.

As Jesus appears in your view,
As he is beloved or not,
So God is disposed toward you,
And mercy or wrath is your lot.

Some take him a creature to be,
A man, or an angel at most;
Sure these have not feelings like me,
Nor know themselves wretched and lost:

So guilty, so helpless am I,
I durst not confide in his blood,
Or on his protection rely,
Unless I were sure he is God.

If asked, what of Jesus I think,
Though still my best thoughts are but
I say, he's my meat and my drink, [poor,
My life, and my strength, and my store,

My Shepherd, my husband, my friend,
My Saviour from sin and from thrall,
My hope from beginning to end,
My portion, my Lord, and my all.

Newton.

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PSALM 119. 1-6.

Blessed *are* **the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord.**

Blessed *are* **they that keep his testimonies,** *and that* **seek him with the whole heart.**

They also do no iniquity; they walk in his ways.

Thou hast commanded *us* **to keep thy precepts diligently.**

O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!

Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments.

EDITORIAL

"And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This *is* **now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."** Genesis 2:21-23.

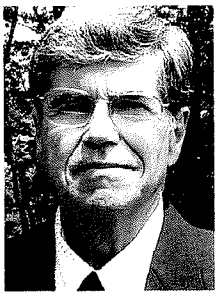
Elder J. B. Farmer

Here is the account of God making, or creating, Eve, the mother of all living, whom He gave to be the bride and wife of Adam. This account, no doubt, was given by inspiration to the writer and written and preserved for the benefit of those who are given a heart of understanding. As with all scripture, it is of no private interpretation or is not to be understood with the carnal mind. We believe that no one has the ability in himself to rightly divide this or any other mystery, which belongs to God. Rather, we must wait upon God, Who only dwells in the light, hoping that He may be gracious to reveal some of His things unto us.

We are made to believe that this is the true record of the natural formation of the second person ever to breathe the breath of life. Also, that this is a true fig-

ure, showing the way which God brought the church, the bride of Christ, into being. From the holy record, it seems apparent that He accomplished this before He made the world. We are taught that the church, or body of Christ, with all her members, was foreknown of God and predestinated unto the adoption of children. Also, that each member's name was written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world. She was chosen in Him and given grace in Him before the world was, according to the scriptures. Also, that she was loved with an everlasting love and was created in Christ Jesus unto good works. It seems plain that all this was done before the church ever was manifest in the world.

It appears that Eve's life was the life of Adam, and that his life was her life, since she was made of his very substance. She was bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh naturally. Her life was totally dependent upon his life, even as the life of the church is totally dependent on the life of Christ. Before Eve was made, her dwelling place was in Adam, just as the church dwelt in Christ before she was created. It appears that the church stood in the same relation to Christ spiritually as Eve did unto Adam naturally. "We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones," spiritually, if we are His, according to the inspired apostle. This being the case, it is no wonder that we are told that, "In Him we live, and move, and have our being." In another place we are assured with these words, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations." Psalm 90:1.

The inspired psalmist said, "Tl eyes did see my substance, yet b unperfect; and in thy book all my m bers were written, which in continua were fashioned, when as yet there none of them." Psalm 139:16. I bel that God saw and knew Eve before brought her forth from Adam, as He and knew His people before He e created them in Christ Jesus. God k and loved His people before He e made them. "Known unto God are al works from the beginning of the wo Acts 15:18. Is this not what it mear be foreknown of God? He saw th knew them, loved them and determi to keep them as the apple of His and purposed finally to redeem ther Christ and bring them to glory. All was done before they were genera of Him and before He made the wo

"Before the mountains w brought forth, or ever thou hadst forr the earth and the world, even from e lasting, thou art God." Our God is e nal. He had no beginning of days or of life. But the church had a beginn Was not her beginning when she created in Christ Jesus before the fo dation of the world? Some have spo of God's people being eternal child and this may be true, in one sens properly understood. But we are tau that only God is eternal. However, if church is spiritual, which I believe is, she must have an eternal aspect there is no beginning or ending of lif that Eternal Spirit. Then what is it th eternal about the church? It appear me, that the church, being formed of

body of Christ, has an eternal aspect by virtue of her eternal union with Him. In other words, the church dwelt in the Eternal Son prior to her being created. She is one with Him and will ever be one with Him by virtue of His life being her life. The church was formed of His living spiritual body and she is His living spiritual bride. Christ and the church are one flesh spiritually as Adam and Eve were one flesh naturally.

Another thing in the heading scripture seems precious. It shows from which part of Adam's body the rib was taken to form his help meet. It was located in his chest, near his heart, the seat of love. Does not this indicate the relationship of the true Bridegroom and His bride? Was not His every thought and action toward His bride in true love and affection and concern for her welfare? And because He first loved her, does not her love return to him in kind? Because of His great love for her, He was willing to lay down His life that she might live and not die. He, who had no sin, was willing to become sin that His bride might be made the righteousness of God in Him. He cleansed her with His own blood that she not have any spot or blemish or wrinkle or any such thing. She is made to be altogether pure and lovely in His sight. He has won the victory over all her foes, even sin, Satan, death, hell and the grave. At the appointed time of the Father, He will come and receive her to Himself for that great wedding feast. Then all will be love, peace and joy unspeakable, even forever.

How wonderful is the picture of the unity of Christ, the mighty Savior and His beloved bride. How safe for her to be continually in Him and under the protection of Him, to whom was given all power in heaven and earth. What boundless love is manifest between the two through all eternity. What a glorious and sure promise of eternal life has been given to His beloved. And what a great and earnest expectation does His pure and holy bride experience as she awaits and anticipates His coming in the fullness of His majesty and power. He is her life, her joy and her strength. He is her love, her hope and her salvation. He is her all in all. **"But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."** 1 Corinthians 1:30-31.

Written in love, I hope.
Elder J. B. Farmer 2-5-2001

CORRESPONDENCE

6-5-2018

Dear Mr. Tony,

Please renew my subscription for one year. Use the remainder as needed. I enjoy reading, "Signs of the Times." Very much, every month? I just want to Thank you all so much for getting it to me every month.

Thank you,
Gladys Shelton
2210 Mabry Dr. Apt. #2
Clovis, NM 88101

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

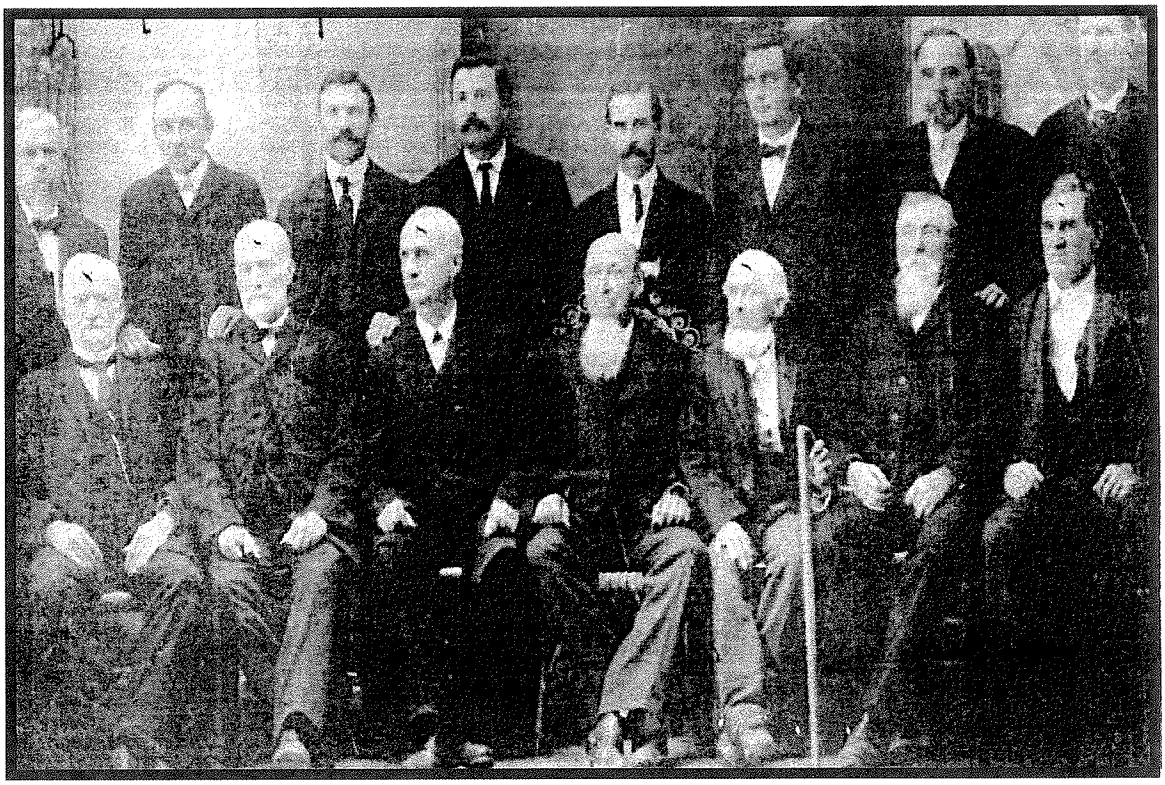

GROUP OF ELDERLY ELDERS

The above picture shows a group of elderly Primitive Baptist elders, taken possibly about 68 years ago either at Flat Swamp over in Pitt County or at Spring Green in this county. Only one can be definitely identified, and he is Elder George Roberson, second from right in the first row. It is believed the picture was made at an annual association of the faith. The one third from right in the front row is believed to be Elder P. D. Gold of Wilson. The gentleman third from left in the front row could be Elder Sylvester Hassell of Williamston.

VOICES OF THE PAST

ELDER TIMOTHY W. STALLINGS 1863

Belton, Bell Co., Texas

Dear Brother Beebe, Enclosed I send you the christian experience of Elder T.W. Stallings, which was written to Elder W.M. Mitchell of Alabama.

June 9,1875 Sarah E. Davis

Elder W. M. Mitchell, Dear Brother in Christ: After a long time, I undertake to comply with my promise in trying to write you a few things. I have thought, ever since we were together, that I would at some time let you know more fully the reason of the hope that I have in Jesus; and since it is your request, I cannot feel satisfied without telling you more than I have already, although I feel unworthy to address one I so highly esteem; for this reason I have been putting it off. But with the desire that God may direct me, I will commence, and try to let you know how I was, as I hope, brought into manifestation.

I first felt interested about my soul's welfare in January, 1863, while in the army in the state of Virginia. I never had up to that time, felt any uneasiness about the salvation of my soul. My thoughts had been, prior to this, that when I got older I would turn from my ways and serve the Lord. I had no doubt but what I could get into favor with God at any time. I used to go to the Methodist meetings in our neighborhood, to see and be seen as many young folks do, and heard then tell the people that they could turn to th Lord if they would; and I fully believe their doctrine.

One morning, while in the army, was detailed and sent off with seve other men to work, (I do not now remem ber what day) and while at work that da I became uneasy. I cannot remembe any thing that I had done, heard a c thought of, that caused the uneasines to arise in my mind, but it now seems t me that in less than a half hour I had clear view of everything that I ever did. had been a fiddler, horse-racer, an gambler, and many other vile practices from a boy up to that time, and I de lighted in those things even up to tha day. Now they all came up before m as though it were yesterday that I ha passed through those things. I have since then thought of the Man that tol me all things that ever I did, and if I ar not deceived, that Man was the Chris At the same time, I think I had a view c the holy God, who cannot look upon si with any degree of allowance. I was com pelled to leave the men I was with, an hunt some secret place where I coul bow down before God, for the first tim in my life, and try to implore His merc but it seemed like my efforts were a useless. I returned to my companions as I thought I dared not stay from ther and my duty; and when I did return, I fe so bad that I could not work. It appeare to me that such a wicked sinner as I wa could not be allowed to live long upo the earth. I know not how to describe m feelings better than to compare myse to a man lost in a desert. I could not fin

the way home. I then and there felt that I was lost. But the trouble of my soul would not allow me to stop. I could not read for myself a single word of the Bible, though it was now my great desire to hear it read. Yet I was afraid to ask any one to read it for me knowing as I did that my companions knew so much about my past life. I did not want them to know that I ever had a serious thought. But finally I met with the opportunity of hearing Mr. McMurry (one of my regiment) read in the book of Ezekiel. He read but a short time before he came to these words, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." If he had been reading a letter from my home, and had read that my home was burned, and that my wife and children were all dead, I could not have felt any worse. Immediately I left the camp, went where no one could see me, and laid down upon the ground, and felt like I knew that the sentence of death was passed against me. I felt that I would surely be the next man that would die or get killed in General Lee's army; but I had to confess that it would be just in God if He should take me from time to eternity even where the fire is not quenched. There were some Primitive Baptists in our company, and I heard them talk of their hopes and fears. Their talk, as well as the Bible, seemed to condemn me. I have since thought, my Brother, that I was arraigned at the bar of God, to be judged according to the law, and my whole life in a waste howling wilderness was brought to judgement. And if I could have seen you then, Brother Mitchell, and you had been enabled to preach to me all the comforts of the gospel,! do not think it would have done me any good; for I could not see a Mediator between me and the offended God. As such, I viewed my case a hopeless one. I can say to you that I was like a man sick unto death. I grew worse and weaker every day. I was then moved in my feelings to try some of the "Doctors of Divinity". They told me that all I had to do was to pray, and exercise faith, and God would certainly smile upon me. I have since thought, my Brother, that I could as easily have made the sun rise at the hour of midnight, and make darkness flee away, as I could have done either. Time and space will not allow me to make mention of everything that I witnessed in not allow me to make mention of everything that I witnessed in this great struggle; I must only hint at them and pass on.

I will now come to that memorable day when our army had been engaged in battle several days, and I was hourly looking for the summons of death. On Sunday evening,(said to be the 4th of May, 1863) I saw our men in front of me forming a line of battle, and as they formed they commenced firing. It now came forcibly to my mind that this would be my last day upon earth. I then thought of brethren Ansel Parish and E. J. Williams, two dear old Primitive Baptist preachers of our country, who are, in the providence of God, yet spared and permitted to stand upon the walls of Zion, and cry aloud, and whom I now, unworthy as I feel to be, can claim as my yokefellows, who preached for our regiment while stationed at Savannah, Georgia, at the commencement of the war. O how I now lamented my carelessness and

hardness of heart; for at that time I cared not for them, nor for their preaching, but could look upon them as being good men. My mind was directed back to Georgia with a view of all the good men that I had ever known. I would have given all the wealth of this globe, had it been mine, to have been with and like one of those men that I once took such delight in persecuting, and looked upon as being such fools. O, language is too weak; I never can employ language sufficient to express my feelings at that time. I fully believed that I should be the first man that would fall. I felt now that I was forbidden to ask God for His mercies. I engaged in that bloody conflict about two and a half hours, with twenty-seven other men of my own company. At dark the battle ended with us. Only myself and four other men came out unhurt, out of twenty-seven. When I came out, I went down to a ravine and drank some water, when it was suggested to my mind, Why is it that I have escaped unhurt, while so many of my dear comrades many of them far better men, in my estimation, than I, are gone, some lying cold and lifeless on the battlefield, and some wounded and weltering in their own blood? And the answer came to my mind, that God had heard my prayers. Instantly the heavy chains of trouble fell off me, and I was permitted to look up and see Jesus, Who had suffered the just for the unjust, and satisfied God's violated law for me; and I do believe, my Brother, that my joy at that moment would be as hard to describe, as would be my troubles that I had felt only a few hours previously. Aye, my joy was unspeakable and full of glory. But this undisturbed peace did not last long. In a little while I became fearful that I was not delivered, though the heavy weight of my trouble was gone; yet it seemed that my evidence of being pardoned was not sufficient. At the time of my great joy I would have been willing to tell every man in the army my feelings; but at this time I did not think that I should ever attempt to tell them to anyone, though in the course of eight or nine days I was moved in my feelings to tell the Chaplain of our regiment some things I hoped I had witnessed. He asked me if I desired to be baptized. I told him I did, and he baptized me. I did not then know the difference, as I hope I do now, between the different denominations. I never had read a word in the Bible up to that time. In the evening after I was formally baptized, I began to desire to read the Bible more than ever, for I greatly desired to know what the Lord would have me to do, though I knew I could not read, neither did I ever expect to; for confinement to study was one thing I never could bear. I will here state that I never had advanced in a spelling book as far as words of two syllables, but in justice to my parents I will here state that it was not their fault, for they tried hard to educate their children, and succeeded in giving them all a liberal education, except me, but, as before stated, the confinement to the study of books was the greatest punishment I ever had to endure, in fact, it seemed like more than I could bear, and when my parents would send me to school with my brothers and sisters, I would run away from them, and

lie in the swamp all day, until they returned, when I would rejoin their company and go home. Sometimes my parents would punish me, and continue to send me off to school, but I persisted in my wicked course, and thereby failed to get my share of that great temporal blessing, an education, though numbers of people have said, since that time, that I had a good education; but what I here state I know to be true, and I know that God knows it. I would not, my Brother, make this statement, if it were not true.

Seven days after the man baptized me, I dreamed that I could read, and well recollect the words that I read in the dream, which I have since found in the scriptures — the fourth chapter of Isaiah. I dreamed three nights in succession that I could read the scriptures, and in the morning after the third night I asked one of my fellow-soldiers (who is yet living, and not more than thirty miles from my house) for his Testament. I opened it, and the first that my eyes fastened upon was the eighth chapter of Romans. I read it as easily as I ever had since, and I never have found any difficulty since then in reading, though I had read but few words before I became fearful that I was asleep, and that it was a dream, and I went out to see whether or not I could see the sun. When I saw the sun shining, and knew that I was awake, and could read, the joy of my soul was more than I can express; and I have since thought that if I had never read any scripture besides the eighth chapter of Romans, I had found enough to give me a clear description of the character of God and His people embodied in Christ; and inasmuch as the law holds nothing against Him, it holds nothing against His people. So I consider that witness, to wit, the apostle Paul, one of the princes that rule in judgement, rightly deciding in my case what I hope I was prepared in my heart to believe, enough of the scriptures to make me wise unto salvation, if a living child of God. I think, Brother Mitchell, I received great instruction from the chapter above mentioned. I continued to read the scriptures almost every hour that I was awake, and had the time to do so; but as I was in the army, I was nearly always watching, or on some other duty, and as such I had but little time to read.

On the 19th of October, 1864, I was wounded, being shot through the elbow, and the joint slivered. This was in the valley of Virginia, seventy-four miles above Staunton. I was captured, and carried four miles, and made my escape. I then walked two days and one night and reached Staunton. I had no assistance till I got there, neither had anything been done for my wound, which was by this time in an awful condition, and my sufferings great. The doctor made an attempt to amputate my arm, but I was so weak from fasting and loss of blood that I could not bear the operation; therefore my arm was spared, and to all human appearance it was impossible for me to recover, my sufferings were so great. Notwithstanding my sufferings were so great, my soul rejoiced. Though my body was racked with distressing pain, and I had but little to eat, yet I felt that my Saviour was with me. After a long time of intense suffering,

both of body and mind, I started for home, and by the kind providence of God I was permitted to reach there. Right here could be written a volume, but I must pass on. I only make mention of these things to try to give you some idea of the trouble I had to pass through. Up to this time I had not heard an Old School Baptist preach, since I Hope, I had an ear to hear. All that I had heard were the preachers we had in the army, and they preached altogether about what men could do, and what they ought to do; for I am certain I never heard them declare the Lord's doings. I did my best to eat and live on what they furnished, but it was no food for me, and I did not know at that time but what that was the best I ever would get. But at length it was pleasing to my heavenly Master for me to reach my home, in Brooks County, Georgia. I was yet suffering intense pain with my arm. I was then moved to the house of my Wife's mother, who was an Old School Baptist. Now I greatly desired to hear preaching. The meeting time came, but I was not able to go. I asked my mother-in-law to invite the preacher home with her. So he appointed preaching at her house that night, which was Saturday. The preacher was Elder H.C. Tucker, an old consistent minister of the Primitive Baptist order, one that I had in youth, and even up to the time of my going into the army, looked upon as the most awkward and ignorant man of all God's creation. I had spared no pains in persecuting, mocking, and ridiculing him. I thought that he preached the most foolishness of anybody I ever heard. But when he began preaching that night, it seemed to me that there was the most music in his voice of anything I ever heard, and every word was to my soul as apples of gold in pictures of silver. He did not preach Jesus as a co-worker with man, but as He is described in the 17th chapter of John, as having power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as His Father has given Him. O what a feast it was to my poor soul! He told me what I had felt. O, the joy of my soul at that time was more than I shall ever be able to describe. My Brother, I do believe tonight that every child of God who is in a strange land, or in other words who may be in Babylon, could they hear what I did upon that occasion, must have come to the same conclusion that I did; for before Brother Tucker got through his sermon, I could adopt the language of Ruth, "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Nearly all the church (Bethel) was assembled at my mother-in-law's house, on that occasion. When Brother Tucker got through, and had sat down, he said he thought I had something to tell the church, if I would. I was so moved in my feelings that I could not refrain. I commenced talking, and directly forgot myself. I tried to tell them how I was found in a desert, and a waste howling wilderness, and at the same time expressed my desire to be with, and live with the Old Baptists. Brother Tucker arose and said that he wanted to give me his hand; and as the church was nearly all present,he said to the brethren that if they felt like he did they would manifest their fellowship for me by giving me their hand. They came forward everyone of

them, and joyfully received me into the fellowship of the church; and as a sister had also been received, I was to be baptised with her the next morning. I went with them to the water, where we met the balance of the church, and they all seemed to rejoice at my reception, and gave me the right hand of fellowship. I was baptized by Brother Tucker, and went up to the meeting house and took my seat among the brethren. I felt like I had come through great tribulation and much distress, but felt like I had got home to my friends. The words of David were continually in my mind, "Bless the Lord, O my soul." I believed then, and do yet, that if I was a proper gospel subject, I was then, and not until then, admitted into Christ's kingdom. No minister can be a lawful administrator, except his qualifications are of God. After it was my privilege to hear an Old Baptist preach, it was an easy matter for me to decide that I had been in the wrong place. If the baptism of the Missionary Baptists is valid, so is their doctrine, and if God does not direct their preaching, He does not direct their baptism, "whatsoever is not of faith, is sin." The declaration of non-fellowship declared years ago by the Primitive Baptists cannot be in the way of any who are as hungry as I was. For I must believe that those who come through the fire are refined as silver is refined, and tried as gold is tried, and are driven in their distress to call upon the Lord; and after they are refined, He evidences to them that He has heard them. The children of our heavenly Father must all come through one process; they are then every way prepared to understand the difference between the trumpet that is in Zion, and the many uncertain sounds that are blown to imitate the true gospel trumpet.

Dear Brother Mitchell, I have been fully reconciled, ever since the year 1865, to believe that I am among the children of the Most High God, and my trouble is my fear of not being a fit subject to have a name among that peculiar people. At times the trouble of my mind is so great that it seems like I cannot march on any further, still I have a desire to say, "Let thy mercies come unto me, even thy salvation."

Dear Brother Mitchell, I shall have to close for fear I have written enough to weary your patience, yet the half is not told. I would like to say something to you about why it is that I have to preach; but as I cannot write myself, it would be taxing my wife heavier than I am willing to do; therefore I desist.

My dear Brother, I am sorry to hear that you are suffering so much, yet I hope that you may be spared a long time to comfort the children of our God. I would be glad if you could visit our country again. I desire to see you more than ever. I think, if I live long, and you do also, I will visit your state and spend some time with you and the brethren of your churches. May the Lord bless you in your afflictions.

I remain your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life.

Timothy W. Stallings
January 1, 1876

Copied from THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Lanesville, IA, Nov. 22, 1867.

Beloved Brother Beebe: — The last two numbers of the "Signs" are so interesting and precious to me, I am constrained to take up my pen and write something, though very imperfectly, upon the delightful theme which the angels desire to look into, and upon which the brethren have dwelt so interestingly. The wonders and beauties of salvation are ever unfolding to the saved in the Lord, feasting them upon new delights, and teaching them more perfectly the way of the Lord. This is in fulfillment of that for which the apostle prayed: "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." — Eph. i. 17, 18. The crowning excellence of all this rich and glorious grace is love — love unto all the saints. United with this love is faith in the Lord Jesus. Let us mention another hope — a good hope through grace. These fruits and graces of the Spirit are abiding in the saints. How remarkable do they appear through the Spirit-breathing columns of our family paper, as brother Durand has fitly called the "Signs of the Times," What sweet confirming evidences it brings me, that this is a heaven born and Spirit taught family — the righteous family which keepeth the truth.

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sents much of the beauty and excellence in regard to its laws and order. This should claim the attention of all the subjects of this spiritual kingdom; and these ordinations and traditions should be kept in this kingdom as they have been delivered to us; for they are of equal authority and importance with the other oracles of God, and especially essentially to the peace of Zion. "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." —Gal. vi. 16. But when and where the rule is departed from, there confusion takes the place of peace, while the cause of truth suffers accordingly. We may compare this wisely designed and beautifully appointed order to a casket, in which the truth and all they who walk in truth are safely kept. Of these priceless jewels many dear brethren and sisters have written many precious things; all of whom are beloved for the truth's sake; but in the last two numbers of your paper especially, you, and brother Johnson, and brother Durand have written of them in a deeply interesting and instructing way, as the Lord hath give to you and them. For the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.— 1 Cor. xii. 7. And how glad we are all made to feel when we realize that we are sharers in these spiritual things, and partakers of this abundant grace. These are our Father's gifts and blessings, and they belong to all the children. What a favored family is this! How lovely to see and hear its teachers joyously pointing our to the children the riches their Father hath given them in Christ, and with brotherly sympathy faithfully accounting for the conflicts and darkness that meets them on the way. But yet we must experience these spiritual lessons before we can truly know them, and it is only thus that we grow in the knowledge of the Lord. Brother Durand's last letter brings fresh to my mind the time in my christian life when I verily, thought and earnestly contended that the mind and heart were changed, from carnal to spiritual when the sinner was quickened by the Spirit. Sorrowful experience afterwards taught me that in my case it was not so; and gradually my darkness gave way, until the light of truth revealed me to myself as born again. I can never express half the beauty and delight I then saw and felt in this new found truth. For the first time, I clearly understood that "that which is born of the flesh is flesh;" and "that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit." And though I still believed myself a quickened and saved sinner, I saw that all my quickened sensations and desires after holiness, all the new and happy change in me, sprang from the incorruptible seed, the Spirit born spirit, of which I was the happy posessor, and not from the changed powers of my old nature; for past painful experience taught me that this was not changed in its nature; but still corrupt as before. I found, not that my former self was made new, but that I was a new creature in Christ and that the life of Christ was made manifest in my mortal flesh. I clearly discovered that my delight in the law of God was after the inner man; which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness; and I as plainly, saw that the old man is

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that all the work of redemption and salvation is done for and in the sinner. But this misconception of the brethren's views of the doctrine of the "warfare" arises, I think from the brethren who object separating in their own minds the heaven-born spirit, "the new man," from the sinner; as if there was no connection between them; or as if the sinner was not equally related to, affected by and interested in both the new as well as the old man, Now the failing to discover this equal relation of the believing sinner to both, these natures, as the subject of two essentially different births, is owing, perhaps, to the priority of the fleshly birth. In this birth a man is born into the world, and hence the mind labors with the idea, that whatever the sinner did not receive in this birth cannot really be any part of himself. It is then assumed from this false premise that to be born again, implies that some part of the man who is born of the flesh must be born over, and by this process changed from flesh to Spirit. Hence comes the idea that the soul of the sinner is regenerated. But this would only be a change and reformation of the old man who is born of flesh, and conflicts with the word of the Lord which says, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." Ezekiel xxxvi. 26. When this is done for the redeemed sinner, then he is born again. And he now walks in newness of life and serves in newness of Spirit. This is unspeakably more done for the sinner than a mere change in his old nature. And though Nicodemus may ask, "How can these things be?" yet we rejoice that the sinner who was born of the flesh is also born of the Spirit. John the Baptist was born of the Spirit before he was born of the flesh. Then, surely that which was born of the Spirit was as absolutely a part of his being as that which was born of the flesh: and this is as absolutely true of all who are born again.

I would gladly say more upon this absorbing branch of the doctrine of Christ, but the length of this admonishes me to close. May we all know the truth, which makes us free. With unabating love to all the dear brethren,

Elder David Bartley

ANTI-CHRISTIAN.

New Vernon, N. *Y.,* February 6, 1833.

We copy the following article from the N. Y., Baptist Repository, it was copied by them from the S.S. Journal, and appears to be intended by both of those periodicals, as an illustration of the title with which it begins.

"ANTI-CHRISTIAN. - At a meeting of a religious representative body in Crawfordsville, Indiana, a few weeks since, a vote was passed, of seven to two, disapproving of Temperance, Missionary, Bible, and Tract Societies, and Sabbath Schools, and it was determined that the patronage of any of these institutions ought to subject the offenders to ecclesiastical discipline. The argument that carried this point was used in opposition to the introduction of a new vegetable into Scotland not many centuries ago -" Potatoes are not mentioned in the Bible." - *S. S. Journal."*

The church of God was early warned of the spirit of anti-christ which was in the world in the apostles' days; and lest they should be deceived by it, its most prominant features were depicted by the apostle John. Let us briefly compare the testimony given by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, with that given in the article above." And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God, and is that spirit of anti-christ, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God little children, and have overcome them; because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God, he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error."-1 John iv. 3, 4, 5, 6. The characteristics of anti-christ, according to the apostle, are, first; a failure to acknowledge that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, i.e. as the head over all things to his Church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all ; as God's King, set upon his holy hill Zion, to reign unrivaled as the only wise God, our Savior as the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, on whose shoulder is the government of Zion. In short, to acknowledge that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, embraces all that his name implies, viz: Jesus, "for he shall save his people from their sins." Christ the annointed of the Father, anointed as Prophet to teach his children, " as never man taught." Anointed Priest, to bear their sins in his own body on the tree, and "by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Anointed King, to be their only Lawmaker or Law-giver. To deny this, or any part of it, is anti-christian, either directly, by disputing his right to legislate over the church, or indirectly, by attempting to amend his laws, or add to them, even by the introduction (into Zion) of potatoes, or anything else to feed the flock of God upon, which Jesus the King has not provided. See Nehemiah, xiii. 15, 16. "I testified against them in the day wherein they sold vituals. There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the Sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem." Again the apostle further describes the spirit of anti-christ, as being, first, "of the world;" secondly, "they speak of the world;" thirdly, "they are heard by the world;" fourthly, "they are for the world;" and lastly, "they hear not the apostles."

Such is the description of anti-christ given by the infallible word of God. Candid reader, where do you find these characteristics? Can you discover them in the conduct of those brethren who refuse to recognize those institutions which are unauthorized by the King's book, and are brought in by the merchants of Tyre! Or are they to be found in those societies which teach for doctrines the commandments of men! Have the brethren complained of in Indiana, denied that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, either by refusing to obey what he has commanded, or by consenting to do what he has not commanded? Are they

of the world? Do the world hear them? Do they speak the language of the world? Or are they for the world, coveting other men's gold and silver, or are they denounced for refusing to do this? Ah, here lies the offence of the cross. "With such arguments as would prohibit the introduction of potatoes, where they could not be introduced scripturally, they have passed a vote, disapproving of temperance, Missionary, Bible and Tract Societies, and Sabbath Schools. Nay more, they have concluded that such departures from the law of king Jesus, ought to subject the offenders to the discipline of the church." We truly rejoice to learn that God has reserved to himself a remnant, according to the election of grace, in the state of Indiana, who have not bowed to the image of Baal.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

THE ETERNAL GOD

God (good), the eternal, self-existent One, whom Moses says created the heavens and the earth, can we poor weak imperfect mortals glance a thought halfway to a Being who has power to say let the heavens and the earth be, and where nothing was, they appear? His word also separated the land from the waters and caused the trees and all vegetation to grow out of the earth, each bearing seed after its kind. The beast of field, the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air all are the result of His command. He said let there be light, and immediately the sun that lights this earth today was in the heavens giving light and heat to all creatures in all parts of God's creation. Last of all he created man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul. And God said it is not good for man to be alone, and among all the other creatures there was not one suited to be the companion of man. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon man and He, God, took a rib from the man's side and made of it a woman, brought her to the man and she was his wife, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. To these He said be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth. The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden and caused to grow all manner of fruits necessary for man, and placed him there, forbidding him to eat of only one tree. But through the temptation of the serpent both the woman and the man ate of the fruit of this forbidden tree and are cast out of this pleasant garden to till the ground from which they had been taken, and the earth the Lord said, should bring forth thorns and thistles unto them. But the Lord God made coats of skins and covered them. In view of all these things, who could help saying great and marvelous are Thy works Lord God Almighty. Who would dare limit His wisdom or His power or question the fact that there is nothing impossible with God? Now man is a sinner for he has transgressed the law of his God, and sin is the transgression of the law. Man is justly condemned, separated from his God and there is no way possible to him by which he may return. But God before the foundation of

the world had chosen in his eternal Son, Jesus Christ, a people for himself out of this race of this now fallen man, and so He will not be outdone by Satan but will Himself provide a ransom whereby His banished should not be expelled from Him. So He sent His beloved Son. In a most wonderful way he caused a virgin to conceive and bear a son, who was God as well as man, in whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

Hence help is laid upon One who is mighty to save all that come to God by Him. He was made of a woman, made under the law, and all the sins of all His people were imputed to Him and He fulfilled all the requirements of the law for them, the just for the unjust, and sacrificed Himself on the tree of the cross, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God. He laid in the earth three days and three nights and then, O wonder of wonders, He burst the bars of death and came forth a triumphant conqueror over all the powers of darkness. How amazing must the events have been to all the dwellers at Jerusalem. He had told them that He had the power to lay down His life and power to take it again and that after three days He would arise. His enemies did not believe it, and His friends did not understand it. What consternation seized His enemies and what lying they resorted to, to keep the people from believing it; but exultant joy filled the hearts and souls of His friends; how they hurried about to tell each other the most glorious news their ears had ever listened to. How wonderful must have been the signs when the angel whose countenance was like lightning and his raiment white as snow descended and rolled away the stone and sat upon it; and that same body born of Mary, that died upon the cross came out of that grave an all conquering King. Who could but say again, great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are Thy ways Thou King of saints. This risen Jesus walked and talked with His disciples for-forty days comforting them and establishing them in their faith in Him, and instructing them in the things of His earthly kingdom, charging them what and how they should preach as His servants, and also servants of His people, telling them that He would never leave them nor forsake them, and then in their full view ascended to His Father who sent Him. What an awe-inspiring scene it must have been to see a body of flesh and bones go up and up through the air with no seen power carrying it. What unspeakable joy must have filled their hearts when the two in white standing by said, "This same Jesus which ye see go away shall so come again in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." And this is the crowning glory of the Christian hope, Jesus, the beloved Son of God, the Saviour and Comforter of His people is coming again without sin unto salvation Paul says we are waiting for the adoption, to-wit: the redemption of our body. Paul in the 4th chapter of first Thes. 16th verse, says: "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of

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EDITORIAL

"And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servants said unto him, Alas, my master! How shall we do? And he answered, Fear not: for they that *be* with us *are* more than they that *be* with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain *was* full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." II Kings 6:15-17.

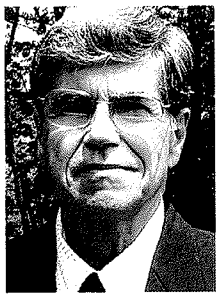

Did you ever wonder about the angels of God, especially those angels who protect and preserve the elect children of God? We see pictures of what some think angels must look like. And we read of and hear of angels described as some kind of human-like beings with large white wings. Many times they are depicted in the female form. But do those images really describe the angels of God, or are those kinds of thoughts purely fanciful? We desire that God should be merciful and show us the truth of the matter, that we should not be led about with every wind of doctrine and that we should be kept from error. May the Lord help us to see and to understand the truth to the praise of God's mercy and grace, and for our comfort and strength.

Elisha and his servant dwelt in a city, which was compassed about by the Syrian army --- a host of seemingly invincible military men with horses and chariots. They had come to conquer and to destroy that city. The servant of Elisha, upon seeing the host, greatly feared for his life and looked to Elisha for comfort and instruction about what they should do. When we are overwhelmed, our nature tells us to do something, and do it quick. We are told by the carnal mind either to stand and fight, or to flee for our lives. But the Spirit, in that small, still voice tells us, "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." The Spirit calms us down and gives us a vision that we could not see on our own.

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ing? Where are you going? "I must go," was all I could say. And I went. And when I got to that little patch of woods I had to fall right on my face and I believe the Lord answered my prayer. And always in the communion service at other times I had felt something, that this is not all of it — this is not all of it. This being set apart for the office of Deacon is a very special thing, to be one that serves the Lord's people and to commune with them. Not only that but so many others things are wondrous - a precious office and station to fill. But yet I believe there was a burden on me also that I couldn't hide. I tried everything I could to keep from it.

But I was on the job at work and I had a quite busy day that particular day putting a roof on in construction. The man looking after the job was Elder Frank Pegram's grandson. We were putting plywood up on a roof and we had stacks set up in various places and we would move the ladder around in various places to hand the material up. Daddy was bringing the sheets of plywood over and I would pass them up on the ladder, walking them up the ladder. I'd carried about three sheets I guess up the ladder one at the time and I was going on probably my third or fourth sheet. When I was going up the ladder, where the extension ladder changes from one rung to two rungs, I slipped and I missed my footing and I felt myself falling. I was falling backwards, going backwards. At that instance a hand shoved me, not lightly but forcibly shoved me, back onto that ladder, my feet on the ladder. I still had the piece of plywood in my hand and I regained my balance. I turned my head to the right and I said, "Thanks." I thought my Daddy did it. But I looked and there was no one there. And my feet were about four feet, four or five feet off the ground at that time. So he wouldn't even if he had been there, he would not have been able to reach my back, I mean to tell you....(turned tape)... nailed it in place. I didn't say a word to them. When I came down off the ladder I looked at Daddy and I said, "Is there anybody around? Was there anybody around?" I looked around the house and there was no body around. I said, "I fell off the ladder and someone pushed me back onto the ladder." We were both overwhelmed to realize what had just happened. It wasn't any man that did that. I believe it was an angel from God. I can't believe anything else. That is what it was that saved me from no doubt being seriously injured if not death. There was a rough terrain coming off the ladder. No doubt I would have landed right across my chest or my stomach.

Along that time that all these things were happening there was this feeling that something was laid upon me, the Lord. I felt many things and there were a lot of disturbances going on at that time and a lot of tribulations, things in the church that disturbed me so much. I had not been a member all that long, but yet it seemed like everything was just falling apart. It wasn't long after that, it came to the place where I had to leave Bell Spur, but there are no ill feelings to this day at all, not with anyone there that I know about. Looking back on it, it had to be. I had to leave and I went to Long

Branch. But there was a purpose there for me. Even though I didn't understand it at the time at all. The people were saying things about me. That they saw things in me that I tried to deny, I tried to hide. But yet I don't believe God just works on one end. I believe when He calls one to preach the everlasting gospel of the Son of God, he will show others as well — show others before. Many people were telling me that I was going to have to preach, that they believed that I was going to have to.

But there was a time and a season that it had to be. They had the Eastern Kehukee Association to meet, it was '98. Anyway several of the brethren were going down so I left. I asked if it would be okay if I went and they said, "Sure." I made my journey and went alone. A month before that, prior to that, at the Smith River Association, we had a meeting at the Parson's schoolhouse. Elder Goad and Elder Brumfield were there and they all spoke. They asked me if I had anything to say. I looked at them and I said a few words. I don't know what I said, but the next day some people came up to me and said they were so happy for me, that they heard that I had spoken and they knew that it was coming, that that day was coming. I just didn't know how to react. I didn't know how to respond to what they were saying to me. But the next month when the first weekend came, I was glad to go to the Eastern Kehukee Association, so I did. I got down almost to the interstate, past Elon College and my truck quit. It just died suddenly. It was running real good and all of a sudden it just came to a dead stop. I got it out of the road and called for a wrecker. I had to wait several hours and I called Daddy to come and get me because they were going to have to keep it a few days. The fuel pump had burned up. So you know what thoughts ran through my mind when that truck quit. That I had bought my ticket and that yet I could not escape. I had thought I could get on that ship like Jonah did and escape the call, because I feared they were going to call on me to speak if I didn't go. That wasn't the only reason I went, but that was a feeling in the back of my mind that they would call on me if I went and that would be my excuse and maybe if they put it off, they would forget about it. Maybe they would let it slide. But yet I know that was a preparation right there. I couldn't escape it. I had to go the way the Lord sent me, if I am sent at all. I am still filled with many doubts and fears. But they did, that weekend, they called upon me to speak and I already felt like that I had denied Him many times and I know that that scripture says that "if thou denyeth me before men, I will deny thee before my Father." That always did send great fear unto me, but who was I? Who was I? You cannot take any self-pride in this thing. If the Lord has called one to speak comfortingly to His little children to preach to them Jesus and Him crucified, being the way, the truth and the life and He is the only way to salvation — the only way that brought that salvation to His little children. Who was I, but just one who had to be led, guided and directed and it was not in me. It was not in myself to even begin to understand the things that must

be, that the Lord has prepared. That He will open rivers in high places and fountains in mountains in the midst of valleys that that Gospel will be preached until He cometh again. It must be and there will be those vessels of mercy there to receive it. They will receive it because it was prepared for them. So a man that is called to preach that gospel, He will fill his mouth with the good news from a far country.

It seems like what I say is all cluttered. This is just a little. Just a little. It is hard to say everything. I didn't really go into a lot of the condemnation that I felt and still feel. There are some things that I wouldn't trade for anything, but yet I just feel fearful, a fearful thing to realize. I am afraid a lot of times when I tell something that people might be offended by what you say, and if they ever did like me, they won't like me anymore. But I hear others talk that they went along the same lines. If you hear one saying that they enjoyed the worldly pleasures, I was right there with them. I am ashamed - ashamed of it. Still that was my lot. I have to say, "I paid that which I vowed, Salvation is of the Lord." A lot of people would say about Jonah, "Oh, if he had just obeyed the Lord,...

(Inserted by Elder Carl Terry) ... things would have been so much better for him. But if he had went on and obeyed the Lord at the beginning, when he got down to Ninevah, what would he have told them people? He wouldn't have had anything to tell them, would he?

VOICES OF THE PAST

"VOICE FROM THE PAST" EXPERIENCE OF ELDER J.A. FAGG

I feel I want to write a part of my experience, hoping it will be of some benefit to someone and to my children when I am gone. When very young, I had fears of being lost, and afterwards went to the lonesome grove to pray. My burden continued to increase from time to time. At times I thought it was more than I could bear, and at other times it was not so bad. Finally I gave it all up for loss, but the very breathing of my soul was, "Lord, Have Mercy On Me A Sinner."

My father was a deacon of Piney Grove Church, and mother was a member of the same church. One Sunday they asked me to go with them to church. I obeyed, and while trodding along behind them, I prayed all the way for mercy. While Elder H.D. Mickey was preaching, I saw my mother sitting with sisters and my father sitting over on the other side with the brethren. I sat there thinking when they are going, they will go where the singing of angels are, when I am gone, it will be where there is neither eye to pity nor hand to deliver. I felt if I was sent to hell it would be just, and I wanted to beg Him for mercy. Suddenly it seemed to me the Heavens were opened and I saw from whence every blessing that I will ever need, comes from. I think I was permitted to drink of the water John spoke of, as clear as

crystal. My burden was gone, and I said, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, let everything praise His name." On my way home I said, "Bless the Lord." In the meantime I had married and tried to live satisfied, but love sprang up for the church and I had a desire to be baptized but felt too unworthy to ask those good people for a home with them. Through much affliction, I was made willing to go and ask for a home with them. The weather was very cold when I was baptized, but when Elder J.A. Ashburn laid me beneath the wave and brought me up out of the water, I realized what Christ meant when he said, "My yoke is easy, my burden is light." I found this to be true; gathered into the fold to live and to die.

For twenty-seven years I have been a member of the church and my love for them has not grown cold, but still feel like saying with Ruth of old, "Where you live, let me live; where you go, let me go,I want your God to be my God." Before I joined the church, I had a desire to preach. One sister told me that I would preach sometime, because she saw me flying in the air and saw an angel come and give me a trumpet to blow. This gave me a great deal of trouble, because I did not feel fit for this place. I begged the Lord to call my neighbor, a school teacher (O.M. Bennet, a man that is worthy, as I felt) Later I had the pleasure to baptize that good man, his wife and his mother.

Finally everything that I turned my hands to was a failure, and feeling woe is me if I preach not the gospel. I had no rest day or night. The church met one Saturday night at my father's old home. One of the deacons asked if they had a right to invite me to take part in the service. Elders F.P. Stone, clerk of the Fishers River, and L.I. Gilbert from the Smith River stated that I had the right. This is when I made my first attempt in public. Every word I said was like taking a burden from my breast. The next day I went to Piney Grove Church and spoke three or four minutes. While I was speaking, one of the saints shouted, and said, "Bless the Lord." The same has been much comfort to me. The words seemed to me like apples of gold in pictures of silver. Let me say here that many preachers have hurt themselves by trying to stand too long.

I cannot include in this letter all the places I have met with disappointments, but I have my doubts and fears. I was soon invited from church to church, and attended with great pleasure. I never asked for liberty to speak; my church felt it. I never asked to be ordained; churches wanted my services. Frequently people requested me to baptize them. My church called for my ordination, and I was ordained by Elders J.A.Ashburn, E.M. Barnard, Paul Priddy and possibly others. Then my wife said if she had known that I was going to be a preacher, perhaps, we would not have been married. She wanted me to stay with her and the children. So I prayed to the Lord if He had called me to preach the gospel to make her willing for me to leave her and the children and go in His great name. One night she awoke me and said,: Jimmie, I have dreamed a dream and I am troubled almost to death. I saw

you married to the prettiest woman I have ever seen. Are you going to forsake me and the little children?" She said that I was traveling in the air in a large circle with the woman. She asked me the meaning of her dream. I explained to her that it was the church that she had seen,and my dear brethren. I hope I am traveling with her. My wife was made willing for me to go; bless the good Lord.

Later, I had the priviledge of baptizing my wife, one of my sisters and my grandmother at the same time. Oh, how good the Lord has been to me. I have been trying to preach for about twenty-seven years and I feel the Lord has blessed my labours. My church is in peace and I have had the care of churches ever since my ordination. I had the priviledge of baptizing Elders Watt Tuttle, S.H. Reid, W. J. Brown, and G. W. Hill. I feel thankful for the priviledges of baptizing these worthy servants. I hope the Lord may continue to bless them to preach the gospel of peace.

Brethren, let us labor for the things that make for peace, and leave extreme views and hobbies off, for they do not edify the church of God. Things that bring strife and confusion to our minds and hearts are not of the Lord.

Elder J.A. Fagg
ZIONS LANDMARK
Submitted by Brother Keith Hiatt,
Reidsville, N.C.

(Copied from GOSPEL APPEAL
August, 2OO2)

LETTER OF ELDER RUSTON TO HIS SISTER IN ENGLAND

New York City 1914

My dear sister Tilly:

There is a matter that has been troubling me for some time, and I think I should write home about it. I certainly should be glad if I were able to talk with father on the subject.

When I was admitted into the church fellowship by baptism a little more than a year ago, there were those who expressed a desire for me to speak sometimes in the meetings,(after having heard me speak in prayer to their comfort.)

The pastor called on me several times, and when I remonstrated he told me it was the desire of the members to hear me speak. I spoke in my feeble way, hoping I should not be asked again; but later our pastor was asked to speak at other churches, and told me that when he baptized me he believed he was baptizing a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ; that I had been a comfort to him and a help, and hoped I would speak when he was away with the ability that God gives. I spoke, though with much trembling, yet I was told by many that they believed I had been helped. This occurred several times. Recently Elder Durand, the oldest minister of our kind in the U.S.A., was here for the day, and I was asked to speak then. He gave me some words of encouragement and said he believed I was called to preach. Two Sundays ago our pastor was to preach at Philadelphia, and the people there asked that

he bring me with him. I went, and was asked to speak morning and evening.

With my speaking I have sometimes had comfort, but generally I have a feeling that I have no ability and would much rather be a listener. I was hoping that my visit to Philadelphia would finish the matter; instead of that, to my surprise, after service last Sunday there was a meeting and our pastor said that it had been the request of the members that George Rustin be liberated by the church to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ according to the gift that God had bestowed upon him, wherever a door might be open. I was asked to relate my exercise of mind on the matter. I requested that the matter should be dropped indefinitely as it was a surprise, although I had feared it; that I was so young in the church I was sometimes afraid I should go wrong or express myself wrongly on the Scriptures. They would not take my advice in that and after I related my exercise of mind, they voted on the matter unanimously.

In joining the church which I love as the church of Christ, I am subject to them; and I desire to be. I say solemnly that I never sought this, and feel the seriousness of it; but I cannot help but confess that God has been my help and comfort in the past, and I hope he will be my stay in the future, whatever is before me. I have had many expressions of comfort at times from what I have said, but I desire God's commendation. The thoughts of preaching have troubled me for years, and I might have spoken to others of the trial of mind I was under but for that constant fear that I would only bring closer the time I dreaded.

Once while in the Royal College of Art in London, after having been called upon to speak at a student's meeting where I had to condemn the religion of today, and to speak of what I believed to be the truth,! was troubled and hoping to banish the thought from me. I turned to my Bible, and right before me was. "Son of man,! have made thee a watchman," etc.(Ezekiel 3:17)! closed the book in disgust, thinking I would avoid reading the Bible and read other books dealing in art. I saw the professor and asked him what I should read. To my surprise he said, "Read the Bible." He did not care about the Bible, and why should he say that unless there was a deeper cause?

When I returned to America it was a very rough voyage, and my mind was on Psalm 107 for some time. In my cabin there were three young men, who, seeing I was religious I suppose, suggested that I ought to go to the service. I said I would if they agreed to do the same. When we got there there were about ninety people, and no one to take the service. The young men in my berth immediately said I could take the service. I told them I had never done any preaching, and that what I might say might not suit them. They insisted; so I spoke from Psalm 107, praying that God would help me. The words were, "They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end,"etc. I spoke for

three quarters of an hour, but don't know if any were profited or understood what I said. I did not talk on these things here, wishing rather to hide them.

The day I was baptized the pastor spoke from, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few," etc. While I received much comfort from the preaching,! was very worried to think that he should have taken that text; and that Sunday evening I took the Bible to read, and before I knew it, I was reading the chapter from Ezekiel, "Son of man,"etc. (chapter three)I have tried to avoid the is matter. I know the seriousness of it, I have tried to interest myself in art, and forget that; but I cannot. I know in keeping of God's commandments there is great reward, but I know it is a hard road. Any who have had a father like we have had know it is not an easy path.

Oh, Tilly, it is difficult to go before people with nothing prepared, but simply cry that God will pity me. At Philadelphia at the evening service, the thought that there were four preachers present came to my mind and embarrassed me for a moment, but I am thankful that I was able to continue. To liberate or license a man to speak, means that he is subject to the church that sends him out, and they can withdraw that license if he should be unsound, He does not administer baptism or communion until he has given proof of his gift, and is ordained. I am but a child and feel helpless, but I do love my God and his people wherever they are.

With love from your affectionate brother,

George.

(Copied from the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, May,1970.)

A SHORT SERMON ON WINE.

"DRINK no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities." Paul to Timothy.

NEW VERNON, N. Y., June 1, 1840.

Unpopular as this text may appear in this day of religious reform, in which the scriptures have fallen so far behind the spirit of the age, we having nothing of popularity at stake, may venture a few remarks upon it without the fear of losing the favor of the reformers of the day.

Paul, the writer of the text, was an inspired apostle, and wrote as he was directed by the Holy Ghost. Timothy was a minister of the gospel, and a bishop or elder of the church of Christ at Ephesus. It was therefore proper that Paul, as one of the twelve judges of the twelve spiritual tribes, should instruct Timothy bow he ought to behave himself in the house of God.

From the text we learn that Timothy was a man of frequent infirmity, and from the fact infer that although gospel ministers are required to be sound in the faith and practice of the gospel, they are men of bodily infirmity like all the rest of mankind.

Timothy could not be temperate in all things, unless he discontinued the use of water and used a little wine. We do not know that Paul required a tetotal abstinence from water: but he evidently believed that water was more injurious to the health of Timothy than wine would be; he therefore directed a discontinuance of the former and the use of a little of the latter.

Paul did not in this case, or in any other case, direct the use of much wine; but elsewhere forbids that the saints should be drunken with wine, wherein there is excess.

From the above considerations we infer that there is a very wide difference between the views of Paul and those of the modern false apostles of our age, as the latter hold that the use of intoxicating drinks, to any extent, is a moral sin; that they are not to be used in any case, to any extent whatever, without involving guilt and sin on the part of the person or persons using it. Paul, however, held with his Lord, that the use, not abuse, of all things was lawful and expedient, and an things were to be received and used by the saints with thanksgiving. Had our Lord regarded the use of intoxicating liquors as a sin, is it consistent to believe that he would have given Israel wine as a blessing, or directed the children of Israel to buy wine and strong drink; or would our Savior have changed the pure element of water into such wicked stuff as wine, and then, after the people had already well drank, caused the better wine to be served to the governor and the feast? Had our Lord approved of the doctrine of modern tetotal abstinence, would he have been called a wine-bibber or wine drinker. Again we infer, that the modern theory is not only without a divine warrant in the sacred pages, but is absolutely in opposition to the revealed laws of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Any person, therefore, connected with the church of God, who shall violate the laws of Christ, by uniting in modern societies which are hostile to his laws, are guilty of disorder, and should be labored with as offenders; and if not reclaimed, excluded, as in all other cases of walking disorderly.

In rejecting the inventions of men on this subject, and adhering strictly to the bible, let no one suppose us to advocate excessive, or even habitual use of wine, or other intoxicating drinks; such is not the fact, either in theory or in our practice. But we do believe, and maintain, that the bible is a full, perfect and infallible guide for the children of God.

They no where countenance the excessive use of wine or strong drink, or of anything else; but they direct that we should use all things bestowed upon us by a bountiful providence, as not abusing them. It is a reflection on the wisdom and goodness of God, for men to attempt an improvement of the divine rule. The church is required to withhold her fellowship from drunkards; and if any in our connection be come intemperate in eating, or drinking, or otherwise, they are to be put away, if they cannot be reclaimed by gospel measures. It is disgraceful, and abominably wicked, for christians to indulge in an unbecoming use, or we would rather say, abuse, of

what God has given us. Any person who cannot be reclaimed from intemperate habits, by gospel discipline, from a sense of their allegiance to their heavenly King, by the love of God dwelling in their hearts, by a sense of gospel order, by a desire to walk circumspectly, ought to be put away from the communion and fellowship of the church of Christ. To sustain them in the church by any other constraint than that found in the New Testament, is a perversion of the laws of Christ, and involves the sin of retaining in church connection, such as the laws of Zion have commanded us to put away. We care not for the slang of the enemy, in slanderously reporting us as wine-bibbers, gluttons, &c.; for so they accused our Lord; but when any of the household of faith give occasion to the enemy, to reproach them on this ground, it is trying indeed; therefore, suffer the word of exhortation.

Dear brethren, let us abstain from all appearance of evil; let us live soberly, righteously and godly in the present world. And although we are not at liberty to allow any man to judge us in meats, or in drinks, or in regard to a holy day, let us, as children of the light, as the followers of the Lamb, as the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, deny ourselves of all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and endeavor to show an ungodly generation that we, by the laws of Christ alone, are taught to walk worthy of the high vocation wherewith we are called. If our infirmities (we don't mean depraved appetites) require strong drink, there is no more harm in using it moderately, than milk or bread; providing we use it law fully; and it is as great a sin for us to refuse it when, like Timothy, our sickness, or natural infirmity requires it, as to refuse any other temporal blessing that God has given us. It is not in drinking a little wine that the evil lies; but in carnal indulgence, which inculcates an appetite for still greater indulgence, and so leads on to actual intemperance. In the use of wine and other strong drink, there is perhaps a much greater danger of cherishing an immoderate thirst, than in the use of many other things; we are therefore to be the more guarded-to use it with the greater caution; and if we cannot use it without exciting an inclination to use it excessively, it is our duty, as christians, to abandon the use of it altogether. By the same rule which required Timothy to discontinue the use of water, because it was detrimental to his health, we are required to abstain from wine and strong drink, when our infirmities require water instead of wine.

PSALM 92: 1-4.

It is **a good** *thing* **to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High:**

To shew forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night.

Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound.

For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands.

MAN ARMED.

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"- Luke xi. 21, 22.**

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day sun, and Paul heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" The strong man was immediately bound, and we shortly find Paul preaching the faith which before this manifestation of Jesus' power to overcome the stoutest rebel against his grace, he had hated. This faith Paul labored with all his might and main to destroy he afterward preached; Jesus, the only name given under heaven whereby we must be saved. King Nebuchadnezzar is another case where the strong man armed kept his palace until God deprived him of his reason, and he wandered for seven years with the beasts of the field, until he knew that the Most High ruled in the kingdom of men and gave it to whomsoever he would. (Daniel iv. 32.) At the end of seven years the Lord restored to the king his reason, and he broke forth in the following wonderful language: "I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me; and I blessed the Most High; and I praised and honored him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" And the king further said, "I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able

to abase." Daniel iv. 37. So we find that there is no power today but Jesus, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, that is able to bind the strong man in any of the fallen sons and daughters of Adam, for Jesus alone has the words of eternal life, and he gives eternal life and he gives eternal life to all of his people, even all who are included in the covenant of grace, for the works of the glorious new covenant are, "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." — Heb. viii. 10-12. How well suited is this to the needs of every quickened sinner, for Jesus bestows every grace, and they stand justified, clothed in his righteousness. May we ever extol the stem of Jesse's rod, and crown him Lord of all. We may well exclaim with the psalmist, "I will sing praises unto my God while I have my being." Jesus will divide a portion with the strong, and not one of his portion will he lose, for the Lord's portion is his people.

Dear brethren in Christ, do with this as you think best. I would like to get some subscribers for the Signs, but this town is full of Babel builders, who have turned their ears to fables, and therefore will not have the truth.

In hope,
Wm. F. Sloan
Lexington, KY., December, 1910.

THE COMMUNION RING

How many people today remember the communion ring? Some of my memories center around that sacred occasion.

On "Communion Day" my family would be up early to get ready. The chores had to be done and the lunch must be prepared. All of the children had to lend a hand.

When we arrived at the church, Papa would tie the horses under a shade tree off to one side. We all went into the house and singing was begun: It sounded so beautiful, all the different voices mingling together. I remember so well, my Mother's high tenor voice, which could be heard blending so beautifully with the other voices, the soprano, bass and alto. There was no need for musical instruments. There was music there that only those with a "hearing ear and heart" could understand. The hymns were in praise to God. No whispering and laughing was heard. It seemed like all the congregation felt the sacredness of the occasion.

After singing for a while the ministers went into the pulpit and the service began with a short hymn and prayer by one of the ministers.

After the preaching service ended, there was a short intermission. The people went outside and the men began carrying the church pews out in the yard. They placed them in a large circle, with a smaller circle inside. A table was placed in the center of the ring and the bread and wine was placed on it with

glasses and plates.

I knew about the bread and wine. I had seen it prepared with great care by my Mother. I knew there was something very special about it.

The deacons sat on the benches in the inner circle and the rest of the members, together with the visiting members, sat in the outer circle. It was a very solemn occasion. I, as a small child, stood outside the circle right behind Mama. The silence could almost be felt. I watched as the bread was broken and wondered how the bread could be the Body of Jesus Christ when I had seen Mama bake it. At that time, I didn't know what the word, "Emblem," meant. I hope that it was later revealed to me the sacredness of the scene I had stood and watched. I could feel, even then, that there was something very precious taking place. Many of the people were in tears, all very attentive and quiet.

The deacons passed the bread around the circle with the same quietness which I saw in the congregation.

The wine was served with the same solemnity as with the bread. In my childish mind, I wondered about what I was seeing and wished I could be a part of it.

Now I have a Hope in my breast that I have had a small part, unworthy as I feel to be. I don't know if I have taken the communion unworthily, but at times I have been given a joy that cannot be described. I wouldn't trade the precious privilege of communing with the dear saints for all the wealth this world has to offer. That joy can't be bought nor sold, neither can it be described. It must be felt in the heart. My hope is that I am not mistaken in the whole matter and in the end be a cast-away. If so it will be just, for I know there's nothing good in me. I desire to praise this God who never makes a mistake. To Him be honor, glory and dominion forever.

Edrie Ruth Clifton

PSALM 127.

Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh *but* **in vain.**

It is **vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows:** *for* **so he giveth his beloved sleep.**

Lo, children *are* **an heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb** *is his* **reward.**

As arrows *are* **in the had of a mighty man; so** *are* **children of the youth.**

Happy *is* **the man that hath his quiver full of them; they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.**

SAVED BY A SPIDER'S WEB

You have seen the spider weave his web in the summer sunshine. How fragile it looks! A breath of wind would almost break it, yet that weak thing of gossamer was once used by God to save a servant of His from the cruel hands of those who sought to kill him.

In the quiet village of Stambourne

there lived, in the year 1662, a godly preacher of the Gospel named Henry Havers. There was a great persecution at that time, and this earnest man was hunted from place to place by the soldiers who were sent out to take him a prisoner. He was preaching one day in the country to a number of eager listeners who delighted to hear the simple Gospel of God's salvation from the aged preacher's lips, when an alarm was given that a party of officers was on the way to arrest him.

There was no time to mount his horse to escape; he ran into an old house close by, and crept into an empty kiln, where he lay silently praying that God would save him from his enemies. No sooner had he entered his strange hiding place than a spider lowered himself across the mouth of the kiln and began to weave his web. Forgetting his perilous position, the man of God watched the busy spider complete his web, which reached from side to side of the narrow opening. Presently voices were heard, and he could hear the tramp of feet passing the kiln in which he lay. Right up to the kiln's mouth they came, searching for their prey.

"It's no use looking in the kiln," said one officer to another. "The old villain can't be in there. Don't you see a spider's web across the mouth of it? He could never have gotten in there without breaking it."

So off they went, leaving the man of God safe in the place which God had made a sure refuge to him, by means of a fragile spider's web. When all was quiet, he crept from his hiding place, and looking on the feeble thing which God had used as a shield to protect him, he exclaimed, "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes."

—Immanuel Missionary
April, 1989

MEMORIES IN THE NIGHT

How precious the memory that God gives us
That brightened my life for awhile
Their love and prayers sustained me
Through the times of affliction and trial.

The dear face often comes in the night time
Many dark and lonely hour they cheer
How sweet and tender memories
Steal o'er the lonely heart, lingering here.

How wonderful is His love and mercy
Expressed by His Saints here below
Such love through his lonesome journey
Causing light through the darkness glow.

Some dear ones who are in Heaven
Are kept in memories Sacred place
I must look with sweet anticipation
To see them there face to face.

I would offer to our Lord praise and honor
For the memory of their comfort and cheer

He sends me love by His sweet Angels
As I walk the lonely road down here.

Through the gloomy days of life they linger
They warm the heart with their love
In memory they are in the chest of treasures
With joy, I hope to meet them there above.

Together there I hope to behold Him
Who loved me so much He died
To give me a bright Home in Heaven
There forever to rest by His precious Side.

R.B.H.
8-21-02
Rlee Houchins

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA UNION MEETING

Contentnea Church Union Meeting 9-30-18.

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will convene the Lord willing with the Church at Stump Sound, Holly Ridge, NC on Saturday 13 October 2018.

The meeting house is located at 172 Stump Sound Church Road. The hymn service to begin at 10:30 and preaching at 11:00 AM.

We invite all believers in Salvation by Grace to meet with us during this meeting.

Elder Gene Lupton, Clerk
(252) 229-0366

EASTERN KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The 2018 session of the Eastern Kehukee Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Hancocks Church located near Ayden, North Carolina. The meeting will be held on Saturday, October 6 and Sunday, October 7, 2018. Preaching services will begin each day at 10:30 a.m.

From Raleigh take US 64 East. Then take the US 264 East exit to Greenville. When you get to Greenville, take Hwy 11 South to Ayden. Turn left on Hwy 102 East. Travel through Ayden and about two miles from the town turn on the first paved road to the left. This will be Ayden Golf Club Road. Go about 1 ½ miles and the church will be on the left.

We invite our ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

Naomi Coker
Association Clerk
252-823-0786

GOLDSBORO CHURCH MEETING

Goldsboro Church – Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association – October 12th and 13th.

LOWER MAYO 5th SUNDAY MEETING

The next 5th Sunday Meeting will be held, The Lord Willing, Sunday, September 30, 2018. Russell Creek Church will Host the meeting. The Meeting House is located on 242 Moorefield Store Rd., Stuart, VA 24171. Coming North or South on VA #8, turn East on Ayers Orchard Rd., #653. Go 1 mile to Moorefield Store Rd. #631, turn right, go ¼ mile to church on right. Coming East or West on US #58, turn South on Southfork Farm Loop, #827 to Ayers Orchard Rd., #653. Go 3 miles to Moorefield Store Rd., #631. Turn left, go ¼ mile to church on the right. Coming West on NC #704, turn North on VA-Line Rd., #1730. Go 1 mile and turn left on Moorefield Store Rd., #631. Go 2 ½ miles to church on left.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to meet with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

NEW RIVER ASSOCIATION

The hundred and twenty fourth Session of the New River Association will convene, Lord willing at the (P.B.) Indian Creek Church. Located in Floyd Co., VA.

The session will be entertained by (Flower Gap) Church located in Cana, VA, But will be held at Indian Creek (P.B.) Church. The dates being Sept. (22nd & 23rd) 2018.

Indian Creek Church is located on Highway (787) in Indian Valley, VA. Those coming by Route (221) or Route (8) or Route (52) go to (Willis VA) Turn on Highway (787) then go approx. (7) miles to church on left. We invite all members of like Faith and Order Ministers, Bro's and Sis's also Friends to be with us.

Thomas Pegram (Mod.)
J. B. Mitchell (Clerk)
G.P.S. – 1492 Indian Valley Rd.
N.W. Willis, VA.

SKEWARKEY UNION (Eastern Kehukee Association)

Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of September 30, 2018. The church is located at the corner of 301 W. St. James Street and Albemarle Avenue in Tarboro, NC. Preaching services begin at 10:30 a.m.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

SOUTH QUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, Sept 29 & 30, 2018.

Union Church, located near Marion, Louisiana will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and meet with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
318-778-4217

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union will be held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church located corner of Music St. and Weatherford Drive, Gretna, VA in Pittsylvania County. Saturday before the fifth Sunday 2018 the song services will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especiallty all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton
Clerk Staunton River
Primitive Baptist Association

PSALM 91:1.

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

Dan River Primitive Baptist Church will host the West Country Line Union Meeting the fifth Sunday, September 30, 2018. Singing begins at 10:30 and service begins at 11:00. The church is located on NC 700 between Eden, NC and US 29.

We invite and welcome all Ministers, Brethren, Sisters and friends of our faith and order to come and be will us.

Elder Thomas Solomon, Moderator
Brother Allen Carroll, Clerk
Brother Jerry Somers, Asst. Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 2018

Gene Howard, AL	5.00
William Edwards, NC	15.00
James Shelor, VA	5.00
Amy Lane, VA	25.00
Carroll Williams, NC	175.00
Jerald Hatchett, OK	300.00
Carole Cruise, VA	10.00
Posey Potter, VA	5.00
F. W. Murphy, VA	25.00
George Paul, Jr.	15.00

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EDITORIAL

"And Elisha came again to Gilgal: and *there was* **a dearth in the land; and the sons of the prophets** *were* **sitting before him: and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets. And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full, and came and shred** *them* **into the pot of pottage: for they knew** *them* **not. So they poured out for the men to eat. And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, O** *thou* **man of God,** *there is* **death in the pot. And they could not eat** *there of.* **But he said, Then bring meal. And he cast** *it* **into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was no harm in the pot."** II Kings 4:38-41

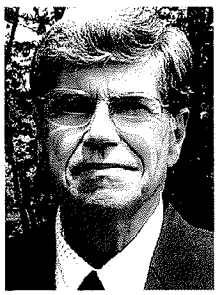
Elder J. B. Farmer

As with all scripture, for there to be any understanding by any of His little ones, first, revelation must be given. If none is given, they can only see the natural side of things. Spiritual things are only spiritually understood. " The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." May we be given that revelation to comfort our poor souls.

According to the inspired apostle, Paul, we are taught, "Be not carried about with diverse and strange doctrines. For *it is* a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein." God's people are taught as they are enabled to receive it. "The word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little *and* there a little" It appears that the first thing they are taught is the fear of God. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." The next thing they seem to be made to see and acknowledge is the sovereignty of God. Being made to see that He made all things for Himself, the heavens and the earth and all things in them, and that He sustains and controls all things,

they are made to believe and to confess that salvation is altogether of the Lord by grace. They are made to confess their weaknesses and His power. They can claim no credit for anything good. The blessed apostle said that the will to do good was with him, but how to perform that which is good, he found not. He said, "By the grace of God I am what I am." And he said that, "it is of faith, that *it might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed."

Being taught these things, and having their hearts established with grace, they are delivered from all sorts of false doctrines and teachings of men. The things, which sweep away the world, have no power to move one of God's little ones from the foundation rock upon which they are built. When any teachings are presented, they are made to judge them by the Spirit, which is given to them. They are made to hold to that which is good and to reject that which is evil. If they hear a false doctrine, it does not harm them, but passes harmlessly away from them. The Lord said, "if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them." The false teachings are death to them that are not taught of God. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death." They cannot even question whether they have a lie in their right hand.

I am made to believe that the account of the wild gourds, given in II Kings, is given by God for the learning and for the edification of His little ones. First we are told that there was a dearth in the land. Do we not see, even in this

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formed against them shall prosper. They are taught that there is nothing in heaven or earth that is able to separate them from the love of God which is in Christ, Jesus. They have been fully persuaded that they have the victory in Him. And they are given the hope that they shall not die, but shall live. They are given a hope of eternal life, which shall not be disappointed.

Even though men may cast death into the pot, God's people shall not come to harm. Because the meal, or the Bread of Life, Jesus, has been given to soak up the poison, to take unto Himself the curse, and to take away that curse. And by doing so, He has forever preserved them that He loved with an everlasting love. In hope of eternal life,

Elder J.B. Farmer
11-15-02

ANNOUNCEMENT

We are pleased to announce that the Board of Trustees has appointed Elder Zach Byrd as an Associate Editor and he has accepted.

The Lord has raised him up and blest him with a wonderful gift. We look forward to the Lord blessing him to write editorials that praise and honor the Lord and that edifiy and comfort our readers.

Editor

CORRESP

Dear Elder Ro

If you will perm
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Signs of the Times
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widely circulated
there are still some
in the picture but
Else may be able t
info.

Seated left to right:
Elder L.H.Har
dentified, Elder P. D
Elder William"Billy
NC), Elder W. B."
City, NC), Elder G
(Robersonville, NC
(Maple Hill, NC)

Standing left t
Elder E. C. Oakes
Ward, unidentified
Elder W. A. Simp
unidentifid, Eld
(Goldsboro, NC)

Thank you for
to feature these p
tive Baptist heritag

VOICES OF THE PAST

LINCOLN REARED AS A HARDSHELL BAPTIST

Rolling back the midsts of a cen tury and offering the deerskir bound records of Little Pigeon Baptis Church, near Lincoln City, Ind., as the missing link of Abraham Lincoln's reli gion, Thomas B. McGregor, assistan attorney general of the state of Kentucky has given to an appreciative Americ substantial evidence that Abraham Lin coln was reared in the simple faith of the "Hardshell" Baptist Church. There is no record of Abraham Lincoln's affiliatio with any church denomonation, but Mr McGregor's story of Thomas Lincoln moderator and pillar of the little Baptis church, proves conclusively, Mr McGregor says, that the Lincoln famil were Baptists. "The parents of Abrahan Lincoln deserve a fairer estimate tha has been allotted them by most of the biographers of Lincoln," said Mr McGregor, "and the story, as told by the records that are still to be found in the archives of Little Pigeon Church, nea Lincoln, City, Spencer Co., Ind., of the devotion paid by the parents of Lincol to him who guided the lad of Pigeo Creek in the hour of the nation's travai goes far to give them their true estimate In fact, they were well to do pioneers o their day, of sturdy ancestral stock

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June 7th, 1823.

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ELDER F. L. OAKLEY VERY DEAR FRIEND

You asked me, the 3rd Sunday in July to tell you my experience, but I felt so much like I had nothing to tell, and felt so cold every way, I thought I would not fool any more of God's people, for. I felt like I had deceived myself and others too, and would keep my little hope to myself. For it is bad enough for one to be deceived, much more so to deceive others who feels so dear to him.

With the help of God, I'll try, in a brief way to tell you what I hope the Lord has done for me. At the age of ten or eleven years I began to have serious impressions about my soul's future destiny. My father called us around the· family altar, and told us we had a sister who had seen her lost and ruined condition, and she felt she was going to hell. I began to think of my soul's welfare that night. I thought if I should die my soul would be lost. Oh! such thoughts as I had about going to hell to-burn forever and ever. I said to myself, "I'll try to live better, I'll do all the good I can." So I commenced to try to pray to God to make me a better boy, to live more up to my duty, and to keep me from sinning, etc. And many times when I was in the field at work I would try to ask God to have mercy on me. I went on in this way several years. But I couldn't see, as I was getting worse and worse every day. So. I was too young anyway, and I would wait till I got grown, then I would get religion. I thought I would go on and have as much pleasure as I wished, while I was young.

When I got grown it would be time enough to think on such·things. I commenced to go to dances and play cards for fun, (I didn't bet) till I commenced going to school at Gilliam's Academy.

My conscience would whip me for it, but I was determined to conquer. So I kept on till the Lord, as I believe, commenced a work in me. I remember the time so well. I was in the parlor at Mrs. Gilliam's, with a crowd of young folks, joking and and making merriment, when in a moment, I was seized with the worst trouble I ever had. I immediately went down in Mr. Gilliam's room and thought I would read the LANDMARK some to drown my troubles. That was my custom when I got lonesome and felt bad. But I soon found I couldn't do that. I went to my room and that didn't do any good. O! I had so much trouble I didn't know what to do. I felt like I didn't have a friend on earth. My best friends seemed to be enemies to me. They seemed to make light of my ways and actions. I wanted to be alone for I couldn't enjoy any one's company. Right here I want to use a little scripture that suited my case, and I believe suits every one when they are under conviction, whether I was in that condition or not. "She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks. Among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her. All her friends have dealt treacherously with her. They are become her enemies." Lam. 1: 2. That explains how I felt. Among all my lovers I had none to comfort, and all my friends seemed treacherous, and seemed to be my enemies. A person cannot be comforted while in this condition. Though one may tell them it is conviction (which ought to

comfort), they will not believe it. They feel they must die and hell will be fheir potion, and justly so. I am digressing. I thought I was going to die and that very soon, and the worst of it all was I felt like I was going to hell; but I knew it would be just. For I felt to be the worst, the vilest of sinners. I lost my appetite. I couldn't sleep but very little, and it was impossible for me to study. Many, many times have I stole out of the schoolroom to go off about one mile on a high hill, unmolested by any one, and there I would weep and try to ask God to have mercy on me a sinner. Many times when I would get to my secret place-I couldn't pray to save my life. Some worldly thing would set on my mind in spite of me. O, such feelings as I had, no one knows anything about it but the ones that have passed over. This was in the winter and spring of '91, I remained in this condition two or three months. It gradually wore away and I don't know when my troubles left me. That is one reason, Mr. Oakley, I in so slow to tell people the reason of my hope. For I hear others say they felt the happiest when their burden left, and if they had ten thousand tongues they couldn' t praise God enough. I seem to be different from anyone else. I commenced making promises and as often as I made then I would break them. I tried to live better, but I finally concluded I was mistaken about it·all, and I would go on in my old paths again. I thought if that had been conviction I would have known it.

And, Mr. Onkley, you said yesterday in your sermon made me think how I felt. You said you had felt this year like you wanted to put an end to your existence. When I was in my deepest troubles I felt like I wanted to do the same. But back to my subject. I soon found myself going to parties again, and doing other things that I had done. But my conscience would whip me every time, still I thought I will have my way, and I kept on, and while I was on the floor dancing I was taken sick, oh, so sick I had to leave. I promised the Lord that night if He would spare me and let me get well I would not dance any more. Next morning I was well, but I felt so mean. I am not certain, but I believe I went to one more party after that, but God has taken all such desires from me now. I have no desire whatever to participate in any more such sports.

Last 3rd Sunday in May a year ago I was made to feel the happiest I had ever been in my life. It was while Mr. Burch was preaching. It seemed he touched on all the points that I felt so justly accused. I felt like God had shown himself to me the second time.

I love the Primitive Baptists. so much, and I want to be with them, but I know I am too vile and sinful to offer myself. I have been groping my way about ever since. Sometimes I think I have a hope, and then I think I am mistaken about it all. If I wouldn't be so easy to get mad, and would be better every way then I might have some reason to hope. I think I have prayed, or tried so, much if I was deceived to undeceive me. For if I am wrong in everything else I want to be right on that. I could tell you many other things but guess I have told you more now than I ought; I feel like if I just

could be good enough to live with the Baptists I would be the happiest man on earth. My will is to be right if I miss it. But when I would do good evil is always present. There is no good thing that dwells in the flesh, and where no good dwells, how can we expect to reap any good. When it goes well with you think of me. But that is the time we don't think of any one but self. If I had asked you to remember me when you get in trouble, you would be more apt to do it. Joseph told the Butler that, but he didn't do it. He didn't think of him till the king had a dream that no one could interpret. Then the Butler said, I do this day remember my faults.

I have written you only a part of what I have passed through. Have you, please tell me, had any such trials as these. If so, it will be a comfort to me to know it for I believe you are a christian. I have had impressions to join the church for sometime, but unworthiness keeps me back, I have felt it was a duty, but I have not performed I it, and I believe sickness has been sent on me to make me willing.

I had a lot of sickness in the spring, and I thought to myself "If I would join the church I would get well." I tried in my feeble way to ask God to give me back my health and if I felt impressed to join the church, I would try to do so by next meeting. Immediately I got better, and I felt so happy I praised the Lord, and I was willing then to join, but when I got to the church on Saturday after, somehow I could not go up. I must desist. Sometime, if it's the Lord's will, I'll tell you more about my impressions. Oh! I feet so bad to-day I wish I could tell you all.

Elder T. A. STANFIELD.
Lenox Castle, N. C.

Joseph Hart, penning poetry on pride in his skilful and descriptive way, says:

"Against its influence pray,
It mingles with the prayer;
Against it preach, it prompts the speech;
Be silent, still 'tis there.

"In every outward act,
In every thought within,
The heart it draws to seek applause,
And mixes all with sin.

"Thou meek and lowly Lamb,
This haughty tyrant kill,
That wounded Thee,
though Thou wast free,
And grieves Thy Spirit still.

"Our condescending God,
(To whom else shall we go?)
Remove our pride, whate'er betide,
And lay and keep us low.

"Thy garden is the place
Where pride cannot intrude;
For should it dare to enter there,
'Twould soon be drowned in blood."

May the Lord so mercifully bring us down to His dear feet that we may be favoured to know that all our unthankfulness, pride and sin is washed away in the blood of the Lord Jesus.

EXPERIENCE AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY OF THE LATE ELDER ANDREW N. HALL

Elder P. D. Gold, Dear Brother :

I have concluded, after passing through a great many troubles, tribulations, trials and afflictions, to send you some of my experience and impressions to preach in order that, when I am gone, my family, brethren, sisters, friends, and my foes, may know some of the dealings of my blessed Redeemer with me while here in the state of mortality.

I have had two experiences in my past life, one in the flesh, the other, I hope and trust, in the Spirit of God; one of the law, the other of the Gospel of the Son of God.

I was born of the flesh May 8th, 1816. I was the fourth child that my mother and father raised.My father's name was Durham Hall, and my mother's maiden name was Nancy Brown. Both of them were born and raised in Wake County, North Carolina, and both were Primitive Baptists. My father was a preacher for many years, and was absent from home a great deal of the time. I was raised to work on the farm in the week, and sporting in various ways on the Sabbath day was a habit that I looked forward to at the end of the week. I rolled sin as a sweet morsel under my tongue, believing I could get religion at my own time and desire. Whenever I would do my part, I thought, God would do His, and, thereby I could become a christian according to my own volition and free will. The choice was mine and it was all up to me, when I was ready.

About the time I was 15 or 16 years old, there came a preacher to my father's and he preached there in the neighborhood several weeks. He told the people about the punishment of the damned in hell and how we could all get religion and not go to that bad place that he talked so much about. I commenced the work, as I thought I would fast and pray, but did not know what a great sinner I was, for I had never truly been made to see myself and and the sin that lay in my flesh.

I went on for one week, trying hard to get religion. I thought I was getting on very well. I went to preaching on Sunday, took my seat near the preacher, and paid strict attention. After preaching I got in company with my playmates, and left off seeking religion. I thought when I was grown and settled, I would then seek religion. I would put this off for the time being.

I went on in this way until I was about 22 years old. About that time there came a camp meeting in the neighborhood which caused a great excitement among the people. I attended the meeting. There were a great many mourners, some singing, some praying, some shouting, and some talking to the mourners. All of this caused me to feel very solemn indeed. I took my seat some distance from the straw-pen altar. One of the preachers came to me. He told me my father was going to Heaven, but I would go to hell if I did not repent. He told me to go into the altar and get reli-

gion. I went. There he talked to me a great deal.

He said if I did not repent, I would certainly go down to hell. That aroused my feelings so much that I cried freely. I remained there until intermission. Then, they all went out to dinner, but I went to the woods to pray. I remained there (in the woods) until the evening sermon came on. The preacher cried out to the hearers, "Come into the altar and get religion." So I went again, I could cry freely. I remained there until sun-down. Then, there seemed to be a good feeling going over me, and I could not cry any more. I did not know whether that was religion or not. One of the preachers came to me, asked me several questions, but I gave him no answer at first. He told me he was my friend, and I ought to answer his questions. He asked me if I felt as bad as I had. I told him I did not. He told me to get up, that I had religion. I got up and it was soon reported in the congregation that Andrew Hall had professed religion. They drew down my name as one they had saved and as one of their converts. I remained there all night with them.

The next morning I went home and stayed two days, but I could not feel as I thought a christian felt; so I went back to the meeting again. About the first man I met after my arrival on the grounds was the preacher who told me I had religion. When I met him I burst into tears, I told him I had no religion. He told me that all doubted their religion at first. My reply to him was that I did not think I ever had any. He told me to back to the altar again and start all over as a mourner, that I would eventually get it.

Now it was reported all over the campground that I had come back, doubting my religion. Several then came around me, instructing me how and what to do. They said when they commenced singing, I must join them, and if anyone got happy, I must take hold of them, and that would cause me to feel happy. I was willing to receive their instructions, as I believed at the time that all preachers knew everything about the scriptures and what it took to constitute a christian.

Several months after all of this took place, I offered to the Baptist Church at Eno, Orange (now 1889 Durham) County. When I related my experience, they did not ask me any questions, but received me into fellowship. I was baptized the next Sunday, which was the third Sunday in October, 1838. I remained very well satisfied the most of my time until the next June, following.

One day, while thinking of my condition and how happy I knew I would be when I died, something seemed to say within me in an inward Voice, "No flesh can be justified that occupies the ground you do." There instantaneously was a touch in my heart which I had never felt before, for it was my first time I truly felt condemned before the Lord. It was so much like the poor publican, that I could not even look up toward Heaven.

I went on from Wednesday until Sunday, feeling more wretched and guilty before the Lord. I went to meeting on Sunday, but felt like I was such a sinner before the Lord that I wanted to go off to myself alone to try to pray. When the people went into the church (Meeting) house, I went down the road, then turned

aside through the field in order to get out of their sight that I might pray to the Lord to have mercy on me a poor, lost, ruined, and hell deserving sinner.

When I finally stopped, I cannot tell whether I knelt or fell down, there was A POWER came over me that I had no more strength to resist than the shining of the sun, and there was a light which seemed to shine from heaven. In that light I saw the Lord. He seemed to be 25 or 30 feet from the earth. And in the same light I saw the judgement seat. I saw the dead stand before the Lord. His power seemed to draw a line of discrimination between the righteous and the wicked. and I saw but few on the right hand, only a remnant according to the election of Grace. But on His left hand I saw a large multitude with myself. I saw a large Book opened, and in that Book I saw my sins recorded. And the Lord seemed to look down on me in wrath and indignation for my sins. I tried to hide my face from His presence, but could not. I saw that I was destitute of the wedding garment, that Robe of His Righteousness. I saw that I had never had any religion whatsoever, but had been a poor deceived, destitute soul, and all that I had ever done in a religious way was absolutely nothing but sin and abomination in His sight. I thought that I heard the King say, "Bind him hand and foot and cast him into outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."I verily thought that I was bound hand and foot, and I saw it just and right in the Lord to send me to eternal hell.

About the time I thought He was going to cast me down to Satan to be tormented forever,! said,"Lord,it is just!" After I saw and felt these things, the Lord seemed to withdraw Himself from me, and I got up and stood on my feet. I was dismayed with great astonishment for these things that I had seen and felt. I knew that I was in deep trouble.

All of this took place on the second Sunday in June, in the year 1839. I was about one mile from home, and when I got so I could walk, I went there, for I did not want to see anyone. I went up into the grainery loft of the barn and remained there until nearly night, thinking about these things I had seen and felt that day, also while trying to read the scriptures to see if there was any way for me to escape the wrath to come. I tried to beg the dear Lord to spare me until I could repent for I was such a sinner I was afraid He would kill me and send me to hell.

I went on in this way trying to repent. One night I thought I should die before day. I felt that all my days had been spent in sinning before God. I had professed religion and thought I was a christian. I saw that I was only a poor beguiled soul that had suffered myself to be deceived by such false teachers and leaders, that I had not taken the warning which the Lord had given me, when He said, "Take heed that no man deceive you." (Matthew 24:4) And I was without excuse.

And O, dear reader, my tongue can never express, nor pen describe the awful feelings and views I had of myself. It seemed that I felt the very pains of hell get hold of me and I was just on the brink of endless woe; that I felt those pains of hell in my breast. I expected to soon be

with the rich man in hell. I was so much distressed that I could not rest anywhere. I walked the yard and even wished that I was a dog for I knew he had no soul to be lost or saved, and I did.

After some time in this way, I went in the house and felt some better. I lay down and went to sleep. I went on trying hard to keep the law. I would read the conditional promises in the old covenant and I tried diligently to keep them for I could see no other way by which I could be saved.

Thus, I went on doing all I could to keep the whole law, trying to do good and be good, as I thought, but failed in every point. I saw that the law is perfect, just and holy, and that it required perfect obedience in me, while I myself was all sin defiled in every part. My whole head was sick, my whole heart faint, from the crown of my head to the sole of my foot, even unto my head there was no soundness, and I was full of wounds, bruises and peutrifying sores. I saw that I was altogether an unclean thing and that all my righteousness was as filthy rags. I had read in the Scriptures these words, but we all are as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags.(Isaiah 64:6.)This troubled me the more.

It seemed to me that I was under the very power and dominion of unbreakable sin and that it was a sin for me to even eat or drink. All that I said, thought, or did in every way was sin. I was afraid that I had commited the unpardonable sin. I would try to find out what it was, but could not. I wanted to be convicted, and I did not take that for conviction, but thought it was the foreboding of what I must suffer after death. And O, the thought of being banished from God's peaceful presence and from His glorious power eternally forever. All of it seemed to me that it was more than I could bear. I thought I was like Cain, that my portion was more than I could bear. Sometimes I could not work, but run into the woods, cry and pray, roll and tumble there upon the ground, wringing my hands and wishing I had never been born.

Sometimes I would see the little birds in the trees and wished I was one of them. I thought I was one of the most miserable beings on God's earth. I saw I was a sinner by nature, as well as by practice; that my depraved nature constituted wrath fitted for destruction. Sometimes I was afraid that God would open the earth, as He did for Korab and his company, when He swallowed all of them in a pit-(read Numbers 16:30) I saw that every imagination of my heart was evil. Oh! how I hated and abhorred my poor deceitful heart. Sometimes it would seem to be as hard as a rock, and again I could shed tears freely. I cried to the Lord to have mercy on me a poor, condemned hell-deserving sinner. I saw that the Ethiopian could as easily change his skin and the leopard his spots, as I could change my condition before God. I saw that unless the Lord Jesus saved me, I should be gone forever. I saw that there was salvation in none other; that there was none other name under Heaven given among men, whereby I must be saved. "I would cry

and pray to Him to have mercy on poor me. But it seemed to me that He would not hear me. One day while trying to pray to Him to have mercy on me, I thought I heard Him say, "Depart from Me, Ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels". (Matthews 25:41). I thought I heard all the saints say "AMEN" to my sure damnation which I felt to be just and true.

Dear Brethren, my mortal tongue can never express my feelings at that time. While lying there prostrate on the earth, I verily thought that my damnation was sealed. I expected in a few moments to be in eternal hell to mingle my groans with the damned forever. But, there was a resolution in my heart to pray as long as I had breath, and thus I went on completely in despair and no hope. Some people who saw me at the time said I was deranged and going crazy and no doubt, I appeared so to them at the time for I was so much distressed that I did not know where to go nor what to do. Sometimes, I was tempted to destroy myself, but I feared to do this for I knew if I did, that hell would be my eternal portion. And O! how afraid I was of that place! I was so afraid at that time that God would suffer the devil to take me off this earth alive for I believed and knew of a certainty that I was the greatest sinner upon the face of this earth. I clearly saw the justice of God in my just damnation. His justice did shine as bright as a star. I saw no way by which I could escape the punishment due my sins.

One day, while I was lying face downward upon the earth, weeping and mourning over my condition, these words of strengthening scripture entered my mind and soul. **"THEREFORE, BEING JUSTIFIED BY FAITH,WE HAVE PEACE WITH GOD THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST."**(Romans 5 :1.) My heavy burden of sin was instantaneously all gone. I rosed from the ground and felt calm and serene. It seemed that I viewed Christ on the cross, and through His mediation and intercession, I had peace with God. I felt like I was justified from all things, which the law of Moses could not do for me. Yet, I did not take this for religion at that time. I did not feel happy enough to shout. I only felt calm and easy-only having a hope for a hope, believing the Lord would bless me.

All these things took place on Wednesday before the 3rd Sunday in July, in the year of 184O, about 12:OO.That night I went to sleep. The next morning everything everywhere seemed to have a different aspect from what it did before I lost my burden of guilt. Then, I went on for several days, not knowing where I was, nor what I was. I could not feel I was a christian because I had such foolish and vain thoughts. I believed that a christian was perfect in both soul and body. I said to myself that I was not perfect in the flesh. I wanted my burden back again, but could not get it. And one day, being in so much trouble on account of myself, I went to the woods to try for my burden again. But, while prostrated on the ground, the Lord revealed His love to me again. I saw then and there that IT IS THE SOUL OF MAN THAT IS BORN AGAIN OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD and not the flesh. (At the new

birth I was shown that it is the total corruption of the flesh that is revealed and subdued. I then believed it was religion).

So I went for sometime very well satisfied. But one day I was tempted to curse the cross of Christ, and the temptation had come with such power in my heart it seemed it would overpower me, and that I would be bound to curse His cross in spite of everything that I could do. And I would not have been guilty of such a thing for all this world. I would shut my mouth and put my hand over it to keep from cursing it. It seemed to me it was more than I could bear, for it seemed like my very heart would burst, for I did not believe that anyone could be a child of God and have such a temptation. This temptation continued to last for two-or three days. I thought of Christ's temptation when His father let the devil tempt Him three times in the wilderness, after He had fasted those 40 days.

One day I was in so much trouble and distress I had to leave my work and go off to myself to try to pray to the Lord to have mercy on me a poor tempted soul and while I was prostrated on the earth with my whole heart poured out in prayer to God to have mercy on me, it seemed I heard a still, small Voice say, "You have eternal life abiding in You". That banished all that temptation from my heart, and for the first time I believe I felt the love of God shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost. I had read in the scripture prior to this time, "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us". (Romans 5 :5) I believed I realized the truth of the scripture where it said Jesus was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin, and He is able to succor them that are tempted.(See Hebrews 4:15 and 2:18.) I felt like the Lord had loved me with an everlasting love,(See Jeremiah 31:3.) For a short time I felt as clean of sin and temptation as if I had never been troubled with such things. I thought that all of my doubts and fears were gone; for I felt that perfect Love casteth out fear. I loved my Saviour God because He first loved me. I was then and there,if not deceived, for the first time, felt to be established in my faith and hope in Christ seeing and believing from the scriptures and my own experience that there are so many people deceived today in religion by such false teachers and preachers as I had been.

And for the love that I had been given for Christ and for the benefit of souls there was constrained upon me irresistably that I must attempt or try to preach the gospel to the people(this was no choice of my own)and warn them against these false teachers. When God convinced Saul of Tarsus that he was wrong, He convinced him that the Jew's religion was wrong; for that was the kind of religion he had at the time. He said, "I profited in the Jew's religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. I persecuted the church of God and wasted it".

Just so when God convinced me that I had no religion that could save at my first profession, He also convinced and showed me that the Arminian system of works was completely wrong. For I was just as well convinced of my own

sin for professing that kind of religion as any other sin that I had been guilty of. And, if it could be the Lord's will, I hoped He would bless me to show others of their error as He did me, realizing there is an appointed time to be shown the truth, using me only as an instrument in His hand to them, according to His purpose, for I cannot of myself. It is the Spirit of the Lord alone that convicts, reveals and saves His people from their sins.(John 26.) So I was led to try to talk to the people.

But I was young, had but little education and with all I stammered. I would go to meeting and hear other gifted men preach, and I thought they were fulfilling their call, but the Lord required something at my hands, and His Word would come in my hear with such light and power when I would go to the woods and preach to the trees. I kept my leading of mind as long as I could to myself. If I ever was led to preach the gospel to believers, I was also compelled to warn the wicked for the Lord said to Ezekiel, "For they are impudent children and stiff hearted. I do send thee unto them. And they, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear, for they are a rebellious House etc.(Ezekiel 2:4,5.)

The first person to whom I revealed the weight of my burden was Brother George Latta, a member of the same church with me, who had been having meetings in the homes in the neighborhood during the week. I asked him if he would make an appointment at our church on the fifth day of January,1843, I would take a part with him in the meeting. He made the appointment for me, and when I got there, the most of the members of the church had come. I tried to talk to them the best I could, but made a bad out. As soon as I closed my remarks, Brother George Coggin, a member of the same church with me, to wit: Mt. Lebanon, arose from his seat and endorsed what I had said. He recommended it to the brethren, and said that he also had been under the burden(or weight)of speaking for eight years previous to the time, had fought it with all his might and could withstand it no longer. Then and there the both of us agreed to have an appointment the next Sunday if the Lord was willing.

So we both went out together, and he was an able minister of the New Testament. At my first attempt I could not even express a few of the things, I trust, the dear Lord had revealed or shown me, Sometimes I would have fair liberty, a little maybe, when I would feel some better. So the brethren at Camp Creek Church requested Brother Coggin and myself to give them an appointment at their church.

We went together on our appointment and I got my text a week before the appointment came on. "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in Him". (Nahum 1:7.) I thought I had it just right so I could deliver it without any trouble; so we met on Sunday as prearranged. I went first and when I read my text, I could not see anything whatsoever in it. All I had studied up was completely gone from me and I was left there in complete darkness, so I sat down. Brother Coggin arose and was blessed to preach an

excellent sermon. When he dismissed the congregation, I felt so ashamed and mean I immediately left the place as soon as I could get away without telling anyone farewell.

This taught me never again to memorize another sermon. I went home and remained in that mind for a few weeks. I had said to myself that I would never try another sermon or make the attempt. Then my leadings of mind returned on me with such power and weight, and I felt the Lord required more of me than I was able to perform, for I stammered so badly that I could not even express what little, I hope He had revealed to me. And I felt that some of the people would say, that fool Hall had better quit trying to preach for somebody else was called, but he answered. He can't preach and never will and he knows it. Now such was my trial.

Now all these things were against me, and I was in such great trouble,not knowing what to do.I thought the Lord ought to exempt me from this burden or weight, for I had not made my mouth nor my tongue. I could not help from stammering. I felt of myself that had no wisdom nor ability to preach the gospel of the Son of God.So I went out one night to try to pray to the Lord and beg him to excuse me and while I was on my knees, this scripture came to me like a still small Voice,"WITH STAMMERING LIPS AND ANOTHER TONGUE WILL HE SPEAK TO HIS PEOPLE TO WHOM HE SAID, THIS IS THE REST WHERE WITH YE MAY CAUSE THE WEARY TO REST AND THIS IS THE REFRESHING". I did not know at the time where this scripture was, but found it later as recorded in Isaiah, 28:11. Then and there I was brought to believe that if I would go on and do the best I could that the Lord would ultimately enable me to speak so that the dear people could understand what I meant. So, I went on trying to preach Christ and the resurrection for at least two years or more. Sometimes, I was given to enjoy myself very well, but at other times,was very much cast down.

In the year of 1845 I married and went in debt for land.I then thought I would preach on Sundays and labor and work in the week.So I went on in that way for some four years or more, and I became very worldly minded.I was brought to believe that I was not doing right.I was in debt and a poor man with a family to support.I was now in a great strait,as I thought, not knowing what to do,Yet,a feeling came over me in this way, "Woe is unto me,if I preach not the gospel!"(1st Corinthians 9:16.)

I was in so much trouble that my family nor anything I had in my possession was any satisfaction to me. Thus I went on from day to day until I was made willing to forsake all that I had in my feelings for the sake of Christ, His blessed Gospel and His Sacred Cause. And one night while I was on my knees in secret prayer, I promised the dear Lord I would try to preach more. I told my dear wife that I would have to travel and preach more than I had been doing and she said to me, "If you do, what will become of me and the children?" I said to her, "I am led with the mind to try and preach more, and if my leadings of mind

are from the Lord, and I am blessed to follow them, as that weight was upon me, that she and the children would have sufficient food and raiment." And I told her, "that if the time should ever come when they should not have it, I would then stay home and quit preaching". That has been around 40 years ago, and we have been blessed with sufficient food and raiment to the present time. So, I followed my leadings and impressions of mind in trying to preach.

I was soon called to the care of four churches, and I attempted to preach on the account of death a great deal. I was made satisfied to attend my churches and conduct funerals. But in the date of 1859, I dreamed that I was preaching and thought I was very happy. And that I was preaching the language of the Heavenly Host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men." (Luke 12:14.) And I awake, and just as I had dreamed, so I was, for I was so happy and I thought I could not remain in the state of mortality long-for I was so happy that I became cold and speechless for a short time. I thought that some of the old saints that I believed their souls had been carried on to Heaven. And I felt like I would soon be with them. For it seemed to me that I was as nearly gone from this world as a man could be, not to go. But, after a short time, I revived again and went on praising the Lord; for it seemed to me that all the powers of my soul were blessing and praising the Lord. "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, Bless His Holy Name".(Psalms 103:1)

And I went on after this, having sinking and reviving feelings from ten o'clock at night until about 3 o'clock the following morning. My wife sent for the doctor and neighbors to come for she thought I was going to die. They came and examined me and said there was nothing the matter with my system. He never gave me anything. I told him I was in no pain, but I felt cold. I never slept any more that night.

The next day I felt like I was going to die and be saved. When I was under conviction of sin,I felt like I should die and be lost, but now I felt like I should die and be saved. I sent out for two of my neighbors to come and make my will. They came and wrote my will. I gave my wife instructions how to have me buried for I believed that I should soon depart from this world. Although I was in no pain, I believe that I felt the powers of the world to come. I nearly lost my appetite for earthly food. I remained at home for one week. I then left home to fill some appointments with Elder John Stadler. We met at the Arbor Church in Caswell County, North Carolina, and after I was through trying to preach, Elder Stadler and the congregation sang a good hymn. It overpowered me for some short time. I was not able to stand on my feet. He got some camphor and rubbed my head with it. I revived and went home with him. He lived nearby. After we laid down J. J. Scoggin being in bed with me, that same cold feeling returned to me. He got up, went out and informed Elder Stadler of my condition. He came in and examined me and said I was as cold as clay. I told Elder Stadler that if I

died, I wanted him to send me home to my family. I remained in that condition until late that night. Then I got warm, but never slept any more that night.

Next morning Elder Stadler came in and advised me to return home. I told him I did not feel able to go on with him to our appointments for I felt so feeble. I would try to return home to my family. I was about 35 miles from my home. So, I went on to Prospect Hill, and from there I went on down to Brother John Fuller's. And as I was on the way,It seemed to me that the shortness of time and the length of eternity, the worth of souls, and the fulness of the power of Christ to save His people from their sins, were all presented to my understanding at the same time. My tongue can never express, nor my pen describe my views and feelings concerning these things. For they were as plain to my view as the sun that shines on the ground, I was impressed and led to travel and preach more than I had ever done, and truly I felt I was full of power by the Spirit of the Lord.("I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgement, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin," Micah 3:8, so much so that I was ready to preach at anytime. And the impediment (stammering) of my tongue was partially taken away from me. "The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge and the tongue of THE STAMMERER shall be ready to speak plainly."(Isaiah 32:4) I saw this as a miracle from God.

I could not hold my peace day nor night, when I had the opportunity of speaking to his people. The Lord has said "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence". (Isaiah 62:6.) And I believe I was given to realize the truth of that scripture in my own case, for it seemed to me that what I saw and felt was enough to make the very stones cry out. Jesus said, "I tell you that if these should hold their peace, THE STONES would immediately cry out". (Luke 19:40) For I saw that the Church of Christ was complete in Him without spot, wrinkle or any such thing.(See Ephesians 5)

This revelation that I had of Christ and His fulness in the complete Salvation of His people stayed with me for several months. And I verily thought that preaching would never be any more cross to me, as it had been. I had the care of four Churches at this time, and there was a refreshing time with some of these churches. I was blest to baptize 25 candidates at one church within 12 months. But I was no longer satisfied to confine myself to a few churches, for when I saw the complete victory of God through His Son the Lord Jesus Christ over all His enemies, including sin, death, hell, the grave and Satan, my very spirit was stirred within me. And I felt like I wanted to proclaim it to the ends of the earth.

So I went on trying to preach the most of the time until my throat became ulcerated. The doctors said I had the clergyman's sore throat. I also was plagued with neuralgia very much and since that time I have not been able to travel and preach as I did before. One

of the doctors advised me to stop preaching. I told him there was no discharge in this war until death, and that I wanted to die preaching Christ the Saviour of His people, and His resurrection from the dead. Dear brethren, I have been trying to preach the doctrine of Salvation by the Grace and Mercy of God about 40 years, and I am now 72 years of age. And when I die, I hope to be saved by the free unmerited Grace of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, from first to last.

Elder A. N. Hall.
Copied from Zion's Landmark,
September-October 2003.

SERVING CHURCHES
Elder D. V. Spangler

While serving churches on the eastern shore of Maryland I was brought in contact with a man by the name of Elmer Hastings, who attended my services, often. He manifested a great interest in the doctrine and fellowship of the church. He had a winter home in Florida, and would often travel by train from Florida to Wilmington, Delaware, from there he would drive his car to wherever our services was for that day, even before going to his home.

After the death of his first wife, Brother Hastings married Miss Olive Miller, who was of the Mennononite Faith.

Soon after this marriage they started attending my services at the churches I served in the area.

I perceived her reaction to the preaching, and it appeared to me that she was struggling against something, and I could not detect what the problem was. To me she appeared to be fighting against accepting the doctrine she was hearing.

As time went on I noted a change in her attitude, and instead of being in conflict with what she was hearing, she was accepting it, and soon she was drinking this doctrine as one who was very thirsty. It was a great blessing to me to watch the hand on the Lord in the matter. And on one occasion to my wife while returning from one of the meetings there that, she was not far from the church. Later on we were visiting in the home of Deacon Harry Ward, deacon of the Snow Hill Church, and during the service Deacon Frank Holland's wife united with the church.

The next night we gathered in the home of Deacon Bill Davis Sr. home for a spiritual gathering, and after the service, while talking with Brother Hastings, they informed me that they did not sleep much the night before, and if God so willed the matter, they expected to offer, the Snow Hill Church, at the regular service, Saturday nite, which they did. How strange are the ways of providence.

VISIT TO NORTHERN VIRGINIA IN 1934

In coming to you, my dear readers, with some record of my experiences with the ministers of the North and especially Elder George Ruston of the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, especially do I want

to refer to my forty fears of association with Elder George Ruston and his wife. In the year of 1934 I was invited by Elder Lefferts to visit the Virginia Corresponding meeting in Northern Virginia. I had never visited any of the Northern meetings. There I met with Elder George Ruston and many other ministers of the North including Elder Topping, Elder Bellows, Elder Charles Vaughn and Elder Lefferts, together with others.

Vividly in my mind I especially remember my association at this meeting with Elder Ruston. Elder Ruston used the text in Romans 8:31, "What shall we then say to these things. If God be for us who can be against us?" When called upon I used the text, "And the priest that bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan and all Israelites passed over on dry ground until all the people were passed clean over Jordan. I also announced the hymn

"Tis my happiness below
Not to live without the cross;
But the Saviour's power to know:
Sanctifying every loss."

Forty-five years later I visited the church at New Valley where I first visited in 1934, and held services with Elder John D. Wood, the Pastor, and used the same text that I used in 1934 and as far as I know, no service has been held there since. I did refer in this meeting to my association through all the years of Elder Ruston.

At the close of this Virginia Corresponding Meeting, the hymn was announced on Page 26 Hymn 65, composed by Charles Wesley. The hymn was raised, as I remember, by Grace Asten, a sister of Elder George Ruston's wife. The hymn reads as follows:

"Blested be the dear uniting love
That will not let us part.
Our bodies may far off remove
But we are joined in heart.

Joined in one spirit to one Head
We wait His will to know;
That we in His right steps may tread;
And follow Him below.

Oh, may we ever walk in Him
And nothing know beside
Nothing desire, nor ought esteem
But Jesus crucified.

Closer and closer let us cleave
To His beloved embrace;
Expect His fulness to receive
And grace to answer grace."

In my mind today I can see that lovely congregation and the love felt throughout that meetinghouse. How small and insignificant I felt to be among these great ministers and I am thankful until today that I have lived in their fellowship while they lived.

In 1937 I was invited to visit the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada and accepted the invitation. It was an enjoyable occasion with the house on Sunday overflowing with people and I believe at that time there was without 60 members of the church there. Elder Ruston informed me that the

church did not allow the use of the Old School Baptist Hymnal in their meetings but preferred a hymnal composed of paraphrases and the Psalms in meter form, Which I have learned from a Presbyterian minister is a product of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, I have been informed I did not object and Elder Ruston informed me that this arrangement was not in harmony with his own feelings. Later I have learned, or heard, this rule had been abolished. That did not affect my love for them because that belonged to their church.

In the early 40's Elder Ruston resigned as an Associate Editor of the "Signs" giving his reasons for his resignation. In the 1950's he returned as an Associate Editor. As far as I know, neither time did he involve his church. He did, as I said, give a reason for his resignation. He returned as an Associate Editor without comment.

I was present in the meeting of the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada when Elder Alec McColl was received into the fellowship of the church. I was requested to return to Canada about a year after for his ordination.

In 1949 Elder Dodson incorported the "Signs of the Times" as a non-profit corporation and made a gift of it to the Old School Baptist. He also left in his will $2,000 and I have heard the New York Church furnished half of this money. I cannot vouch for this report.

PSALM 57:1-3.

Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto to me: for my soul trustest in thee: Yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until *these* calamities be overpast.

I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth *all things* for me.

He shall send from heaven, and save me *from* the reproach of him that would swallow me up. Selah. God shall send forth his mercy and truth.

MEETINGS

CREECH'S CHURCH

Creech's Church, Quartly Meeting 11-4-18., Goldsboro Church, Quartly. Meeting, 11-11-18.

SONG SERVICE

A monthly song service is held on first Sunday afternoons at 3:00 P.M. at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church which is located at 8684 NC Hwy 700, Ruffin, N.C. We welcome those, who are given a mind to come, to join us and as blessed to do so, sing songs of praise to the King of kings and Lord or lords.

Allen Carroll, Clerk 336-939-7893
Jerry Somers, Assistant Clerk
276-956-5318

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 2018

Cecil Jenrette, NC 5.00

Elder Raymond Goad, VA 5.00

Exie Vanvactor, KY 10.00

James White, AL 50.00

Jim Campbell, CO 5.00

OBITUARIES

BROTHER BERNARD COX

Bernard James Cox entered into his rest on June 21, 2018, at the age of 92. He was baptized in 1991 as a member of Old Union Church by his Pastor, Elder Hale Terry. He was a special member of the church, his love and care for the welfare and improvements of our meeting house were remarkable. He always took much pride and love for the upgrading of our facilities and the grounds of our church. Brother Bernard was so faithful to attend church meetings even though he struggled to get there, he missed very few meetings. He manifested a great love for the members of his church and others that attended. His greatest love was for his Lord and Saviour. The doctrine of Predestination and Grace was his meat and drink. He loved to sing and was blessed to hear good singing at the meetings. Brother Bernard was married to Sister Bessie Mae (Hollandsworth) Cox for 69 years. Unto this Union was born four children, Brenda Johnson, Sandra Rorrer, Donald Cox and Wayne Cox. They were blessed with 14 grandchildren, 3 step-grandchildren, 39 great-grand children and 1 great-great grandchild. Brother Bernard served his country faithfully in the Army during WWII and was wounded in combat. His funeral was conducted at Valley View Primitive Baptist Church on June 23, 2018, by Elder Larry Hollandsworth and Elder Raymond Goad. He was laid to rest in the Cox Family Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord. May God reconcile us all to His holy will.

Written in love by,
Elder Larry Hollandsworth
Assisted by Sandra Hollandsworth

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

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Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon "

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

Come, thou Almighty King,
Help us thy name to sing,
  Help us to praise:
Father all-glorious,
O'er all victorious,
Come, and reign over us,
  Ancient of Days!

Jesus, our Lord, arise,
Scatter our enemies,
  And make them fall!
Let thy almighty aid
Our sure defense be made,
Our souls on thee be stayed:
  Lord, hear our call!

Come, thou incarnate Word,
Gird on thy mighty sword;
  Our prayers attend:
Come, and thy people bless,
And give thy word success;
Spirit of holiness,
  On us descend!

Come, holy Comforter!
Thy sacred witness bear,
  In this glad hour:
Thou, who almighty art,
Now rule in every heart,
And ne'er from us depart,
  Spirit of power!

C. Wesley

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EDITORIAL

Matthew 1:21 **"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shall call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."**

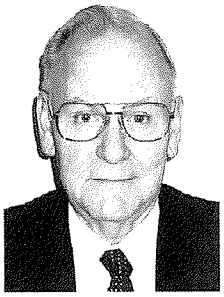
Elder Cleo D. Robertson

The name of this child was not left to Mary, Joseph or any other person. The angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him that thou shall call his name Jesus. Jesus means Savior. His name also includes the word "US" which sets forth that His people are in His name and that they are in Him. The Apostle Paul writes in Ephesians 1: 3-6, **"Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed US with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ; According as he hath chosen US in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; Having predestinated US unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made US accepted in the beloved."** All of the elect or God are included in the US. These were already His and He had loved them and chosen them in Him before He created the world. But "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." So He came into this low ground of sin and sorrow to save His US from their sins. To do so means that He took upon Himself a body of flesh as we have except without sin. He was perfect and holy. He came under the same law as His US were under in order to fulfill and satisfy the law of sin and death for US. Therefore, "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made you (US) free from the law of sin and death. Now there is no condemnation to them (US) which are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." He satisfied and cancelled the judgement of guilty that was against the US by His own suffering, death and shedding of His blood. He bore the sins of US in His own body on the tree and purchased and redeemed the US by His blood. As Isaiah prophesied that "unto US a child is born, unto US a son is given." Isaiah uses the present tense because it was sure and certain to take place and it covered each one of the US from the beginning of time to the end of time.

The US is the spiritual church of Christ which is His body and includes

the elect of Jews and gentiles. Of the Jews He said He called His own sheep by name and leadeth them out - John 10:3. This did not include all natural Jews, but only His elect among them. For the Apostle Paul writes that "he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, but he is a Jew which is one inwardly." Also, "they are not all Israel, which are of Israel." In John 10:16, Christ says, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." These are the gentiles. One fold, one church, one body in Christ, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all. Ephesians 2:11-18, **"Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is call the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands: that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."**

So the Gentiles were brought in and there is one fold. Christ said that the Father's will was that of all He had given Him He should lose none. So the promise that Jesus shall save His people from their sins was fulfilled.

May the precious Lord bless you with comfort and peace.

Humbly submitted
Elder Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

Call to the Ministry and Beliefs of Elder Marvin Brumfield

Told to Elder Jerry & Sherry Farmer, Elder Waymon Chapel, Elder James & Sylvia Howard, Elder Theron & Bobbye Jones, Elder Truman & Geraldine Bradshaw, Jamie & Frances Cooper, Randolph & Peggy Wells, Gene & Libby Howard, Gladston & Jottie Newman, George Hyslip, Rebecca Brumfield, and Bill & Judy Poindexter

On Saturday night during the sitting of the Little Vine Association August 25, 2001

I had a dream 17 years before I made my first attempt. In the first dream I had (or vision or whatever it was). Some of you may not believe in dreams or visions. This was a dream or a vision that I had of my home church. I dreamed that I was called upon and I could see it and I can see it today as plain as it was back many years ago. I was called upon, I got up and I opened the Bible. But I cannot tell you what the scripture was that I turned to. It seemed like I read what I turned to and it was the easiest thing I had ever done. But about

three or four months later I had another dream exactly like the first one. Same place. I opened the Bible. I can't tell you where it was. It is just as plain today as it was then. I read something and was shut completely up. I couldn't even have a comment on it. What did it mean? Now I can see (if I am not mistaken) with the experiences I have had - you brethren who stand in the pulpit know - sometimes it feels like it is the easiest thing you have ever done. Sometimes you feel like you have been blessed. I feel like that was the first dream I had. Sometimes you go and you find you don't have a bit of feeling. Completely shut up. Now, Brethren, if that is not showing you something, telling you something, I don't know what it was. I have found it to be that way. I have seen in that thing, that one is just as important as the other. It just don't make me feel as good. But I am thankful to my Lord that I can see this thing and understand it and realize one is just as good as the other.

As I said I went many years. Sometimes it would get much stronger. Sometimes it would get to the place, I couldn't see how I could stand it any longer. Then is would kindly drift away and I would think, "It's gone, maybe you are completely out of it. Maybe you are okay now." Then later on it would come back again a little bit tighter. I would go for a few weeks wondering what is going to happen. What is going to take place? Here I would go again. I would have another series. I would feel like, maybe it is all gone, maybe it is something you just thought of or maybe it is something you made up for yourself. I don't know about you fellows, but during this time I was trying to work. My wife was trying to work. Later on, it seemed like I was going to die anyway. Maybe it would have been better if I had. I started going to doctors in Lynchburg and there at home. I finally ended up down in Duke Hospital with my wife trying to work and coming to see about me. Still, she didn't know what was wrong and I didn't know what was wrong. I just kept on with one thing and another and finally they run all the tests they could run on me and finally they just sent me home. I reckon I was just as bad when I got back as I was when I went from that standpoint, because I don't think the doctors have any medication for one who is called to stand before a portion people that we feel now that they must be the wisest people on earth. They know, I believe you know - you can say you know, they know the truth. The ones that have been brought into this thing by His love. You can say, they know the truth when they hear it. I can say one thing, I believe they are a people that have this new birth or born again, (if you want to use the word, born again). They don't have to go to the Bible to know when they hear the truth. If they hear the unsound, they know it. They don't have to go to the Bible to know these things. Why? Because they have been given something that the world does not have. That is knowledge, truth and a great love. This love will go with you through this world and the world to come.

But let's go back once again. The thing got so tight it seemed like I would knot be able to bear it. One week, along towards the end of the week, I said to my wife, "Let's go down to Elder Prescott's." He has been someone I could lean on but he's gone on now. I said, "Let's go

down there and see them." But she still didn't know these things. So we went down there and spent the weekend. We went with them to church and Elder Prescott kind of felt what was going on. He could see it. He couldn't ask me to say anything down there but he asked me to return thanks at the table, so I did and I felt a little easier. So we came on back home Sunday afternoon and I still hadn't said anything to my pastor about it. So I said to my wife, "Let's go over to Elder Goad's." So we went over there and I told them what was upon my mind. So we all cried and talked about it. Elder Goad asked what had took place down there and I told him I had the blessing and he said, "Did you feel relief?" I said I felt a little. Sister Phyllis said, "Well, it is going to be a hard road. Nobody knows how it is unless they walk in these shoes." But these things have to be, whether we like it or whether we don't. These things take place in our lives and there is a purpose in it whether we will be able to understand them or not. His purpose will be fulfilled. So I talked to Elder Tench and he said, "Next weekend we will let you try." So I guess I made a try and I still try. But I told some of them the other night, I have had a good life. The Lord has been good to me although the road has been rough. It has not been easy for the last few years, but it has been the sweetest part. I told my wife, since I have come into the church with those I love, I hope, those that I hope I can live with, those that I hope I can sing with, those that I hope I can talk with, those that I hope I can share my burdens, troubles and tribulations and my good times with. I think about maybe that is the way Ruth felt when she said, "Entreat me not to leave thee. Where you lodge, I want to lodge. Where you are buried, I want to be buried." I hope I can live with you. My greatest desire, Brethren, is (I know I can't do it of myself) that I can be kept in such a way to be kept small enough (you cannot do this if you are not kept) to be as a little child and not to cause any trouble. But I hope, by the Grace of God, to be kept so low that I can always look up to my brethren and not down on them.

We have just had our 50th Anniversary and I gave a little speech before we started. I said when we got married, we didn't have much. We just had a little. I think I had $50 when we got married. I didn't have enough to buy Rebecca a ring. By the Grace of God over these years we have - not myself, we have - accumulated enough to buy her a ring. By the Grace of God I am what I am by the Grace of God. And I hope and pray that I will be kept and led in such a way that I can say with a true heart that I love you. You know we a have a little song:

Love is the sweetest bud that blows.
Its beauty never dies

We love our families but this is a love that reaches beyond this world. You know, I believe this love of God will carry you through these things that are coming. We have to face them. For the last few years - We hate to give our children up; we hate to give our grandchildren up. If you haven't experienced it, you will. And you won't know how it is until you walk in those shoes. But the greatest part, the most precious thing that I can think of, that I can see that this had to be. Losing our grandchild, this had to be. I am glad that the Lord has blessed me to believe that. It had to be exactly

like the Lord had foreordained it to be. There was a purpose in it, a reason for it and I told the children, the family, this is the way it had to be. There is a reason and purpose in it and we might not ever see the reason for it or the purpose in it, but if we go back to what we believe, it had to be. And, Brethren, we have got to walk in that path the Lord has foreordained us to walk in whether we like it or whether we don't like it. We still have got to go down it. That path is laid out for every one of us, whether we believe it or not. He has laid our that walk and we have to walk in it.

The only way you are a believer is by the revelation of Jesus Christ and if it is not pleasing to Him to reveal this to you, you will never understand it and you will never see it. Because I have said this just recently, you might read the Bible from lid to lid a dozen times or as many times as you want to read it, and if it not pleasing to God to reveal it to you, it won't mean anything to you.

I have sit here tonight thinking about it, what we belive. Was it pre-determined in the mind and purpose of God for every one of us to be sitting here tonight exactly like this or was it just a haphazard thing. I was thinking about this thing sitting right over there. If we believe we can do even one little thing, just one little thing, we cease to honor Him and call Him a sovereign and almighty and all-wise and all-knowing God. If we believe we can do one thing to inherit the kingdom of God, we see Him as just another man. In the Book of Isaiah, He says, *I am God. I am God! No one like me.*

It is a wonderful thing.

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE RESURRECTION

Christ in most of His parables
Likened Spiritual to natural things
Did this in such a manner
That His Chosen might know and cling

To the things set forth in His teachings
Such as Faith and Charity and Love
Only they could know of these things
For They're taught by the Spirit from above.

He compares the Resurrections
to a lowly little grain.
Except it be put in the earth and die
It cannot rise again.

God's people, like the little grain,
Cannot be raised up 'cept they die
Then they're made perfect like the Savior
And be with Him in the sky.

The good that Christ has instilled in His people
Will be taken with the soul from this clay
When death overtakes this old body -
But they will be re-united some day.

Those that are part of the First Resurrection
The second death shall have no sting
For Christ has borne their burdens
And will gather them under His wing.

I believe that Christ's is the First Resurrection
The second death is to be eternally damned
Both ordained for His glory
Both know and originally planned.

None can know of God's wisdom
Unless the Spirit makes known
For carnal reasoning cannot learn
Nor the natural mind be shown.

But the Holy Spirit visits us
Then how we praise and sing
And give all Honor and Glory
To Jesus Christ, our King.

On that final Judgement morning
He'll come for those for who He died
And take them home to Heaven
Where they'll be like Him and be satisfied.

Elder Reeves O. Smith
Pinetown, North Carolina
November 7, 1974

Sketch of the Life of Elder Levi Rogerson

By request of the church at Smithwick's Creek, we will attempt to write a sketch of the life of Bro. Elder Levi Rogerson, our pastor. He was born in Martin County, NC around 1819 (according to best authority) and was the son of John and Dicie Rogerson. He grew to man-hood without any advantages of the world. According to his own statement he attended school only three days and only learned the alphabet. He was very wild in moral character caring but little for either Heaven or Hell. But the Lord as we believe in His Divine Mercy and good will towards sinners saw fit to send afflictions upon him which were so severe that his eyes were blinded, that he could not see the light of the sun by day or the light of the fire by night. However from these afflictions he was released and sight and health were restored by the all powerful God.

From this tenable experience he thought, "Suppose I had died, what would be my destiny? I will reform or repent my course of life. This blinding disease may again come in such form and with such severity as to cause death." Forming such a resolution he begins the work and continues it until he in his view could see but one thing that hindered his being as good as any man that ever stood on two shanks. While in this elated opinion, he visited a Methodist friend and he, leaving him, took of his religion and it's conditions and agreeing so well with his understanding of Christ and His mission that he said he would join the Methodist Church if it had been too inconvenient. After this, another disease came upon him and entered into his heart, breaking the mighty seal of self-conceit, and surely he said he thought this would immediately kill him. He then examined his condition to see where he would stand if brought before the bar of judgement and his eyes were opened to see not only the one thing needful but all things he ever did arose like mountains before him. Even his own prayers condemned him. While trying to pray it was forcefully impressed upon his mind "See what your prayers have done for you" and he resolved to pray no more. About this time the strong arm in which he had been trusting was severed from his body. He had no resolution to do any work, to him death appeared near at hand and he without the mantle of God or the Hope of Glory. While in this lowly condition, his wife said to him "Please go out and get me some broom straw as you are doing nothing. She said I took the reap hook and went to the place, on

arriving, before beginning the work, it appeared best that I again try to pray before dying, and kneeling down near the path, the thought that suppose someone was to come along, they would ask what are you doing there? Rising up I took the hook and cut three bunches of straw, and to my surprise and understanding came a voice saying "I have called thee three times." Looking about to ascertain from whence came the sound, I could see no one, but at that time saw the plan of salvation. According to my view at the time it appeared as a narrow furrow made by a plow. At this time, the dreadful disease was cured and he was well and full of joy and praise. His whole heart was drawn out in thanksgiving and being filled with the love of God. He could say in the language of David, "Oh! that man would praise the Lord for His goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of man."

Brother Rogerson joined the church at Smithwick's Creek on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in January 1853 and was baptized the following day by Elder William Whitaker. He remained a member in full fellowship until his death, July 3, 1894.

His Call to the Ministry - When the impression was placed in his mind to speak for the cause of Christ, his education was so limited if a word had more than three letters he could not read it. In his call we afterwards heard him say that a passage of the scripture came to his mind and with that, other passages would connect and it was so impressed upon him day after day until his was to tell it to the Brethren that they might be rejoiced as he was. One of his favorite texts and one which seemed to give him great comfort was "Awake thou that Sleepeth, arise from the bed, thy God shall give thee light." This was impressed upon him while at work in the woods. He sat down and a long train of thoughts visited his mind concerning the Infinite Powers and boundless mercies of God.

Prayer meetings were at this time, held in the neighborhood of Smithwicks Creek. Brother Rogerson attended these meetings and participated in their deliberations very acceptable. This was in 1858. In June 1860 he was liberated by his church to exercise his gifts in the ministry within the bounds of his own church.

He was licensed to preach within the bounds of the Kehukee Association in Sept. 1860. Brother Rogerson was ordained to administer all the ordinances of the Church of Christ in March 1864 by Elders C.B. Hassell and William B. Perry. His preaching was a demonstration of the spirit and power and to the satisfaction of the brethren wherever he went. He was, with Brother Peele, chosen to the Pastorial care of the Church at Smithwicks Creek in Dec, 1874. The church at Bear Grass also chose him as their pastor in the same month and year, which positions he acceptably filled until the time of his death, which occurred at his house, July 3,1894 after a protracted illness. Elder Rogerson was twice married. About the year 1847 he married Mary A. Revels, who bore unto him nine children. His second marriage was to Patsy Corey in 1870. She bore unto him five children, two sons and two daughters.

Elder Rogerson was a hard working man always living by the sweat of his brow. He was very kind and neighborly and leaves many friends to mourn his loss.

His funeral was largely attended and services were held by Elder John N. Rogerson who talked from Second Timothy the fourth chapter, verses seven and eight.

Brother Rogerson's career on earth was long and mingled with many sorrows and some oppressions, but we feel tat he has gone beyond these chilling winds and gloomy skies. Beyond death's portals to a land where beauty never dies, where becomes immortal.

Henry Peel
William H. Daniel

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A SERMON PREACHED
BY WILLIAM BROWN,
AT THE PAVILION CHAPEL,
BRIGHTON APRIL 14, 1867

"My times [are] in thy HAND." Psalm 31:15

What a quieting and comforting thought this is, if we really believe it and are enabled, amidst all the changing scenes of life, to look up and say with David, "But I trusted in thee, O Lord; I said, Thou art my God. My times are in thy hand!" Let us look for a moment at God, as the God of providence, as the God of all things. Think how he formed this world, and all the best of heaven. Has anything been left to chance? Is not all in the most perfect order, and everything arranged - the sun, the moon, the stars, all moving in order, and in those movements, timed to a moment, like that beautiful eclipse we saw the other day. Who ordered it to happen just at that very instant? It was the Creator of all things, He who holdeth the waters in the hollow of his hand.

Let us look at God's purposes of the world, every event ordered from the creation of Adam till Christ shall come again the second time; all appointed, every human being who has lived or shall live; every event that has taken place in the lives of each, all has been appointed and that to a moment; everything great or small from the birth of Solomon, to the falling of a sparrow. Look at the first chapter of Matthew, at the genealogy there traced out, how exact it is; and then it says from Abraham to David are 11 generations, and from David till the carrying away into Babylon are 14 generations, and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are 14 generations. All fixed, all lined out. The railway time is fixed, and when you go to a certain station you expect the time to be as stated, but here we see the weakness of man. We know not what event may occur to frustrate man's promise; but God makes no mistakes. HE sees the end from the beginning, HE knows the events of each future day.

"Not a single shaft can hit,
Till the God of love see fit."

What a comforting thought to a child of God, to know that though he may be tried like Job, God is sitting by as the refiner! If our eyes were but open to see it as at Dothan, when the prophet prayed, "Lord, open the eyes of this young man," and they were opened; and what did he see? O, he saw the city sur-

rounded with chariots and horses of fire. And if our eyes too were anointed, what should we see? We should behold the angels of God encamping round about us, as a guard, and a wall of fire, and the promise is, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

Let us for a moment think of David. It is said in the Chronicles, "Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer, with all his reign and his might, and the times that went over him, and over Israel, and over all the kingdoms of the countries." How much there is in this verse! The God of David and the God of Israel, purposed and ordered all these times, and to poor David what times they were. God is the special God of Israel, but he is also the God of the whole earth. Not even the sparrow can alight upon the ground without your heavenly Father. We do not half realize this truth; if we did, what peace it would bring. God is directing all. Like the coachman with the reins, guiding all, holding in his hand even the enemy, and the even the devil cannot go beyond God's permission. Like Bunyan's lions, they are chained. They may frighten poor Christian, but they can do him no harm. The word is, "hitherto thou shalt go, but no farther." It is said, "The times that went over him;" so may we say of yea, poor child of God, it may be that now it is a time of grief with you. Is it not often so with the believer? "Many are the afflictions of the righteous;" but they and all that concerns them are in the hand of God, the great Physician, and he, like the skilful doctor, knows how to combine all the ingredients in the cup, and to make them work together for good. Poor dear child of God, have you a bitter cup to drink? It is mixed by God himself. The good Physician has mixed it with his own hand, and he knows every drop in the cup. When He was on earth, He appeared in this very character; and it was so good, he refused none; so skilful, that He never failed. In our hospitals some are found to be incurable, and they are sent away; but our blessed Lord loves to deal with such. And does not that just describe our ease?

"Loathed incurables we stand,"

And as poor lepers we cry out, "Unclean, unclean!" But how various are our afflictions, how diversified the "times that go over us!" Sometimes the enemy seems as if he would swallow us up, coming with his dreadful temptations; but he cannot put upon us more than our gracious God allows; he is chained, and though he may afflict, he shall not devour. When he came amongst the sons of God, and accused Job, the command was, "Save his Life" and your life, poor tempted one, is safe. The devil has no power over it, God has planted a hedge around you, and you are safe. The cloud that troubled the Egyptians helped and comforted the Israelites; and what you know not now you will know hereafter, and you will see that you have been led by the right way and the best way to the city of Habitation.

Whatever your trial, how much worse it might have been, or you might have been where hope never come! "Ah!" but you perhaps say, "If God had not deserted me, should not I be delivered?" That is no proof. There is a time and a set time to be delivered. God does not say

when, only that it will be in the right time, he will help "right early." "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them ALL." NONE shall swallow thee up. The good Shepherd will save his poor sheep, though it be so far gone that, as the prophet says, there may be only a leg or a piece of an ear. To all thy trials and temptations there is a limit, there is an end, and thine expectation shall not be cut off. The time will come when the spirit of heaviness shall be exchanged for the garment of praise. "Weeping may endure for a night; but JOY cometh in the morning." As the earth rolls round, as day and night follow each other, so it is with the child of God. The light will break in again. Perhaps thou art now in the dark, and saying, "When shall it be morning?" Wait. Remember, thy times are in his HAND.

Perhaps, poor soul, you may be tried and tempted to think there is no God, or that He has forgotten you. Well! You are not alone even here. Look at the footprints of the saints of old - at Joseph in the pit. What must have been his feelings? Don't you think the enemy would whisper in his ear, "Is there a God? Can he see me? If he did, would he allow me to be cast in here and left to perish?" O how he felt? His brethren called it the "anguish of his soul." Look at him again in Egypt, cast into prison, unjustly accused, and kept there for two long years. Was not this a trial! Of faith? How he must have felt as if he was left and forsaken of God! But what a PROVIDENCE in all these things, all to bring about the good of Joseph and the sustaining of the house of Israel, and the people of God. ALL was well ordered, and well timed, and Joseph saw it to be so in the end, and was well satisfied with "the times that had gone over him." But what joy when his deliverance came! Could not Joseph have preached a sermon from our text? I am sure he could. He knew it by experience, and that is the way to understand the word.

What histories we read of the Old Testament saints! David was at one time the young shepherd, looking after his sheep, then called of God to stand forth as the champion for Israel, and slaying, by the power of God, the giant who dared to defy that God. Then see him fleeing for his life for fear of Saul, and begging a few loaves of bread from the hand of a priest. Then behold him raised to the throne, and the Lord blessing him in all his ways. See him again, under the power of temptation, falling into the grievous sin which gave him broken bones for the rest of his life. Though God forgave him, and put away his sin, we are sure poor David never forgave himself.

We might go on with David's long history, and tell of the times that went over him; but what did he say at last, after all his trials and sore conflicts? "HE hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure."

Let us look for a moment at Daniel and the times that went over him. At one time in the den of lions, at another time clothed with scarlet and made third ruler in the kingdom. And after all the solemn visions that he saw, what was the word addressed to him by the angels? "Thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."

Look at another picture - the three Hebrews in the fire; hear their blessed testimony of God. See them bound and thrown into the burning fiery furnace.

What a time was this to pass over them! But look at them again, and see another with them, even the Son of God. O, my dear friends, this is the life of a child of God; it is the life of faith - trials and deliverances both appointed, and both to the moment.

Look at the New Testament saints - at the disciples, when their dear Lord and Master was dead. What a time of Grief and desolation it was, and their faith so low they could only say, "We trusted it had been HE which should have redeemed Israel!" But O the joy when HE rose, when Mary clasped his dear feet and cried, "My Lord and my God"; and when the two going to Emmaus found the dear Stranger who had walked and talked with them, to find He was their dear and blessed Master! O what a time of joy to go over them! How they went back to Jerusalem to tell the joyful news to their brethren and sisters that they had seen the Lord. How little they would mind the long walk and the dark night; their feet would hardly feel the ground, and they knew where to go. They would not go to their worldly relatives or friends to tell the joyful news. No, it was to their brethren: "We have seen the Lord." O what joy! And that is just what we want again and again. And then the dear Lord did come, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and so he comes to us now and then, and turns our night into Day, and says to us, "Peace be unto you." And his promise is, "I will see you again." And did a covenant God ever break his word? Or can one promise fail? O no, our comforts may fail and darkness may come on, but light will break in again; for "our times are in His hand."

Some poor dear children of God cannot read their title clear to all these blessings. Many cannot. They cannot see they are the characters described. Their language is, "But am I a child?" The Lord suffers this for wise ends. It is one of the times that pass over you. Some are more subject to this than others. They are Little Faiths; and some remain so almost to the very last. Little Faiths, ready to halt, such is their character. We must not lay down a line for God, he DEALETH with his people as he will. Each has a case of his own, and each is led by the Lord, and ordered in the way he should go and in this the Lord is a Sovereign, and does as he will. Some pass through nitwit darkness, others less, having a smoother path, but those who have great faith generally have great trials; but the measure is, "As thy day, thy strength shall be." Let not the strong look down upon the weak and despise them, and let not the weak envy the strong or condemn them. These things ought not to be. The apostle would war against this evil. He speaks of God giving to every one "severally as HE will". The apostles were not all alike; they had different gifts; and the language of Paul, who might be called the greatest of them all, was, by the grace of God, "I am what I am." And this word fits us all. Let a poor child of God be in ever such darkness, if, like Paul on his voyage, neither sun nor stars for many days appeared, yet they shall not sink. Light will dawn again, for it is said, "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart." It is living light, living seed that is sown. Like David, we may say, "Many there are which say unto my soul, Who will show us any good? Lord, lift Thou up the light of they countenance upon us". That is the good as child of God wants. When in

our right mind we see and feel the emptiness of every worldly thing. But these seasons of darkness, as well as seasons of light, are among the "times that go over us."

This wilderness state is a state of warfare; we have many enemies to grapple with; we are called to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and to put on the whole armour of God. What for? We don't want a buckler and sword in time of peace and security, but to defend us from our foes.

How exactly God times everything! At the set time, to a day and an hour, Noah was brought out of the ark. Must he not have had his trial of faith, and his many exercises when shut up and riding upon the waters? Don't you think he had his fears and misgivings? And would not the devil be there, tempting them that God had forgotten them? But no. Every day and every night they were watched over by a covenant GOD and Father. Each living creature there, a type of the church, was fed and sustained, and at the right time set free. So shall it be with every living child of mercy; and God has no dead children. They may feel lifeless, but there is the life, for it is hid with Christ in God. Dear child of God, you may feel in prison, but there is a door of deliverance for you, though you may not be able to see it; and the same hand that shut the door can open it. "My Times are in HIS HAND."

Sometimes the Lord appears in a most unexpected way. It may be in the midst of a conflict we are having with the enemy, when our great Saviour and Redeemer appears, and He not only vanquishes the devil, but as David says, HE prepares a table for us in the presence of our enemies." Berridge says,

"I think my foes all dead."

No, not so, they are alive. It is said, after the forty days of temptation of the dear Lord in the wilderness when on earth, that the devil departed from him "for a season." These seasons are in the hand of the Father; "My times are in his hands." It is as he pleases. Our dearest friends can do nothing for us, only as God will have it. How ready we should be to cut the knots of providence! But it must not be so. We must wait and look to a God of providence, and His grace for us. We can not expedite or frustrate these things. "My times are in his hands." Noah nor his sons might try to open the door of the ark, but it was shut by Almighty power, and when he shuts, none can open.

Are we in some great affliction passing through the furnace? Our friends try to comfort us, and sympathy is sweet and precious; but how little can the creature do, even the kindest and the best; but one word of heavenly peace and joy dropping on the heart, and how is the scene changed "My times are in thy hand." Dear Lord, I bless thee that they are. I would not have them in my own power if I might. God's tender care and watchful providence extends to everything. Where do I dwell? God knows, for he has fixed the very bounds of my habitation. Is it not a blessed and a quieting thought? How often, when I live in the country, I have looked at a little thatched cottage, where a dear old believer dwelt, and thought it one of the dwellings of the righteous, and angels watching over it, that no harm happen to that dear old lame woman now in GLORY.

Then, again, what is our employment? How do we get our bread? That, too, is ordered. GOD knows our daily life it may be our daily cross. The poor mother washing the clothes or dusting the house is still under the gracious eye of God. "Her times are in his hand."

To some GOD gives riches, to some he gives poverty. Some of his dear people can hardly get a mouthful of meat, and they may be tempted to think, "How can this be, when all is in my Father's hand?" Well, poor dear children of God, we don't know how it is, only we know this that "HE doeth all things WELL," and that what we know not now we shall know hereafter. Many are tried with ill health, and none can enter into that but those who have experienced it. Many of the family of God are on beds of languishing and pain; and whatever be our trials, our language is like David's, "how long, O Lord?" How long? Not the ten thousandth part of a second beyond the appointed time - beyond your Father's time; for your "times are in his hand;" and there would I leave them. Amen.

SOVEREIGN RULER of the skies
Ever gracious, ever wise;
All my times are in thy hand,
All events at thy command.

His decree who formed the earth
Fixed my first and second birth;
Parents, native place, and time;
All appointed were by him.

He that formed me in the womb,
He shall guide me to the tomb;
All my times shall ever be
Ordered by his wise decree.

Times of sickness, times of health;
Times of penury and wealth;
Times of trial and of grief;
Times of Triumph and relief;

Times the tempter's power to prove;
Times to taste the Saviour's love;
All must come and last and end,
As shall please my heavenly Friend.

Plagues and deaths around me fly;
Till he bids, I cannot die;
Not a single shaft can hit,
Till the God of love sees fit.

- John Ryland

There are dear brethren who have thought that when Paul said, "And we know that all things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," he meant only "all good things." I have always thought that he meant all the things that are connected with their experience of grace, from first to last, bitter as well as sweet, evil as well as good, as we distinguish the different things in our life and exercises, call the afflicting sense of sin, evil, and the pleasant emotions of love and hope, good. I have thought he included "the sufferings of this present time," and the vanity to which the new creature was made subject, not willingly, and "the bondage of corruption," under which we groan within ourselves, and the infirmities which cause our supplications, the intercessions of the Spirit within us, to be "with groanings which cannot be uttered," as well as the pleasant things that are given us by the way.

But let any candid man undertake to draw a line between those events,

works, exercises, emotions, which he would name "good things," and those that he would call evil or wicked things. Then let him name those things which are on the dark side of the line, which are wicked, and which therefore he regards as outside of the purpose and predestination of God, and those things which are on the bright side, being good things, which do work together for good to them that love God. Well, does the division answer his mind? Look over the dark list. Is there no good at all mixed up with the evil in any of those wicked works? Joseph's brethren showed some good traits. Are they and their works all put on the dark side? They were kind to their father and to Benjamin, and when Joseph spoke roughly to them they felt sorry for what they had done to their brother, who was dead, as they thought. Besides, the very things in which they meant evil against Joseph, God meant unto good. Then that wicked thing worked for good, to save much people alive. Do you know just how to divide up those things so as to place them right? All through the Old Testament we find some very evil and wrong doings, which resulted in the opening of the eyes of others to the truth, and in bringing the doer of them down into depths, where he experienced true repentance and godly sorrow. Then the wicked men who with wicked hands crucified the dear Savior, who was delivered unto them by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, did "what God's hand and counsel determined before to be done." Those who have been made alive unto God hate and abhor wickedness in themselves and others. But would we dare to undertake to put this terribly wicked deed, and that of Joseph's brethren, and that of Cyrus, "the ravenous bird from the east," with many others, on that side of the line where those things are supposed to be which God did not predestinate? But some things seem to have just a little spice of wickedness in them, which is mixed up with a good deal of kindness and generosity and self-sacrifice. We would hardly know how to take forth the good from the evil in them. Sometimes the two are so mixed up and interwoven together that we cannot tell how to divide justly; we have to leave that to the Word.

But look on the good side, have we got that all right and sure? You have placed one of my works there, for you have been very kind to me, and so all the brethren have, far more so than I deserve. But if you knew how many evil thoughts I had when I was doing that work which you have placed among the good things, you would change it, I am sure. That time I was enabled to preach so that your soul was refreshed and comforted, you did not know how much of vanity, unbelief, doubt, evil thoughts, there was in my heart. The work was good in itself, and was a work of obedience and of faith. The sermon was the truth, and I believe it was by the Spirit I was enabled to preach it. But what a tangle of briers and thorns in my own heart I had to encounter and go through while preaching that truth to which the carnal mind is enmity. But you have put these things, and the kind act I did for that poor man, and the refraining from the utterance of the anger I felt once when reviled, all on the right side, and it really makes me tremble to see them there. You cannot sift the evil out of them, but I

hope the blood of Jesus, that precious blood washed them and me clean before God. I am afraid after all that you have placed a smaller proportion of your own works on the good side, among the good things, than you have of any of your brethren.

We cannot divide between soul and Spirit, only as the Lord gives us that sharp, dividing word in our souls. We cannot take forth the precious from the vile, only as the Spirit makes us speak as God's mouth. Then we are always astonished to see so many things counted precious which we had thought were vile, and so many things which had appeared to us as pretty, and sweet, and good, now shown to be vile. When the King's "reign in righteousness" is felt in our hearts, then we no more call the vile person liberal, nor the churl bountiful, but we see things as they are in the sight of God. (Isa.xxxii. 1-7)

One thing we know, that all good is from God. He gives us every good gift and every perfect gift, and with him is no variableness nor shadow of turning. (James i. 17.) He works the good pleasure of his goodness in us, if it is ever there. We know also that there would have been no evil or wicked thing in the world if God had purposed that there should not be. His purpose must have embraced whatever transpires. We believe, also, and know, that in the end of all things his wisdom and power will have been justified, the highest good for his people will have been accomplished, and the most exalted glory of his name attained. Does any christian doubt this?

-Elder Silas H. Durand

One says, "If the advocates of the theory of unlimited predestination object to the application of their theory to all the acts and movements of beasts, birds and creeping things, as well as the acts of all men, as working together for good to Them who love God, they should cease to misapply Scripture to brace up their dangerous doctrine." That doctrine which is founded on the Rock does not need bracing up. But does the brother forget the many instances recorded in the Scriptures, in which the acts and movements of beasts and birds and creeping things, as well as the acts of wicked men, were especially directed by the Lord to the fulfillment of his wise purposes? Does he forget that there is a special covenant made for his people in the gospel day "with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground?" (Hosea ii. 18) What is there worthy of ridicule in the belief that even the mote which flies in the sunbeam, as well as the sparrow in the sky, is directed by the Lord? The frogs and insects were important in the execution of God's judgments upon Egypt. The frogs and flies and caterpillars filled the land of Eygpt, but their movements were so directed and controlled that not one not even one of the lice, could pass over the line that divided Egypt from Goshem. The Lord sent fiery serpents to punish Israel, raven to feed Elijah, and two bears (only two) to vindicate the character of Elisha as a prophet. The lion must slay the disobedient prophet, but could not tear his body not hurt the ass; yet he must wait quietly by until the other prophet should arrive to witness the fulfillment of God's word by him. (1 Kings xiii. 14.) Also in other cases it is recorded that lions were directed and controlled by the Lord.

(1 Kings xx. 36; 2 Kings xvii. 25; Daniel vi. 20.) It was not by chance that Herod was eaten by worms; the angel of the Lord was sent to smite him with that fearful judgment. Also the viper was directed to fasten upon Paul's arm, that the barbarians might know that he was an honest man. (Acts xxviii. 3-6.) The dove was returned by the Lord to Noah with the olive leaf, and the flight and time of every sparrow is so bounded and controlled that "one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father." - Matt. x. 29.

To me this is a most precious doctrine, It is glorious to know that in all events, and over all things, "the Lord God omnipotent doth reign." As in the case of Job, so in the case of all the Lord's people, he designs all their trials, and the cause and manner of them, and no enemy can go beyond the limits of God's purpose in his power to afflict, and all the wicked designs of men and devils shall result in the final good of the Lord's people, and in his own declarative glory. Jesus said to Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." So Job recognizes only God's good hand in all the evil that came upto him through the devices of Satan, saying, "Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not also receive evil?" So Joseph said to his brethren, "But as for you, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, as it is this day, to save much people alive." "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God" How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." "For of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen."

-Elder Silas H. Durand

SUFFICIENT GRACE

(By W. I. Carnell)

"And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee." - 2 Cor 12:9. No words are more divinely sweet to me, no theme more grand and glorious; blessed is the man who receives such a message as this form the mouth of the Lord. No wonder the angel of the Lord said to the fearful shepherds on that eventful night: "Fear not, for behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy," when He had such tidings as this to tell those who dwell on the earth. This message, like all the blessed story of the gospel, is received with joy and gladness only by such of the sons of men as are taught of God to know their need of it, and their dependence upon it. When Saul of Tarsus was a vile persecutor of the saints, he would have found no comfort in such words; because he, at that time, knew nothing of the need of grace, and had no interest in its sufficiency. But before delivering this message God had prepared him to receive it and to trust and rejoice in it. "My grace is sufficient for thee." I confess that I have been very slow to learn this lesson, and I have been so forgetful that it has been necessary for me to learn it over again. Let us notice the circumstances under which Paul received this message, and if the Lord will, we will profit by the lesson. In the first part of this chapter, Paul tells us of the wonderful way in which the Lord had lifted him up, even unto the third heaven and into Paradise, and how he had heard unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter. And then to show that he, as well as we, was yet imperfect and subject to temptation and exaltation in the flesh, he said, "Lest

I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations there was given to me a thorn in the flesh and the messenger of satan to buffet me." The revelations to Paul had been so abundant and so wonderful that if left to himself he would naturally be exalted over them and lifted up with pride and self confidence, which would have placed him entirely above his poor weak doubting brethren. And would have rendered him unfit to preach to them and minister to their comfort. So to avert this great evil, and to keep him in fellowship with His Saviour, who was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, and in fellowship with His brethren, who must through great tribulation enter the kingdom of heaven, God mercifully gave to Paul a thorn in the flesh, and the messenger of Satan to buffet him. If this does not teach that God used the messenger of Satan to accomplish His righteous purpose in keeping Paul from being exalted above measure, I confess that I do not know the meaning of language, and would be pleased if some one would tell me what it does mean. And if God did this in His dealings with Paul, may He not do the same in His dealings with you and me? When Paul felt the piercing of that thorn in his flesh and was sorely vexed and annoyed with the buffetings of the messenger of Satan, he was greatly troubled and distressed about it, and like you and me, desired to be free from such tormenting and distracting afflictions. He could not see how it could work any good for him, or yield in him any of the peaceable fruits of righteousness, but thought it would be better for him if those things were removed, so he besought the Lord thrice that it might depart form him. But like the mother of James and John, and like it often is with your and me, "He knew not what he asked," and it was well for him that God did not grant his request, for if he had, Paul would have become exalted above measure, and would have lost the fellowship of his brethren, and worst of all he would not have tasted any more the fellowship of the suffering Christ, and would have been denied the consolation of his own words which say, "If we suffer with Him, we shall also be glorified with Him."

So instead of taking away the thorn and the messenger of Satan as Paul so much desired Him to do, the Lord said unto him "My grace is sufficient for thee."

How much better this was for Paul, and how much better for us who have, since that time, believed through grace. After this Paul spoke from experience when he said, "For we know not what to pray for as we ought." But God's answer to him was enough. It matters not how sorely you may be pierced by the thorn, nor how threatening and terrible may be the buffetings of Satan, "My grace is sufficient for thee," even if sin does reign unto death, grace will reign through righteousness unto eternal life. Grace is equal to every emergency. It is sufficient for you in all your trials and conflicts in life; there are no depths from which it cannot raise you, and no foe from whose hand it cannot deliver you. O, wondrous grace! If you are hungry, it is a boundless store of heavenly manna which is feely given without money and without price. If you are thirsty, it flows to you in a mighty river of living water. If you are naked, it will clothe you with the garment of salvation and with a robe of righteousness. If you are weak, it affords everlasting strength.

If you are rebellious, it is able to subdue all your rebellion and sweetly bring you to loving and faithful obedience. If you are poor, it abounds with the riches of heaven. If you are sick, it is the balm of Gilead and the oil of healing and gladness. If you stray, it brings you back to the fold. If you fall, it will raise you up, and when at last you go down into the dark valley and shadow of death, it will raise you from the dead and by its wonderful saving power you shall be caught up together with Jesus to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall you ever be with the Lord. Grace is sufficient for the old and the young, the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the wise and the simple. It is perfectly adapted to the needs of all ages, all classes and all conditions of human life in every nation, kindred, tongue and people. It saves the infant as it saves the adult. It saves the heirs of promise in heathen lands just as it saves them in gospel lands. It saved Abel and Moses, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, David and Solomon, and all the prophets of God. And all of God's elect, in the past ages, just as it saves them now. "It is of faith that it might be by grace to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." - Rom. 4:16. "For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." - Acts 2:39. "My grace is sufficient for thee." It will never lose a single one of its subjects, but from every land and from every nation, kindred and tongue its trophies shall arise and come forth, singing a new song, saying "Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation."

ELECTION

(By W. I. Carnell)

"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" - Rom. 8:33.

That God has an elect people is a fact that must be admitted by all who profess to believe the scriptures. And yet the Bible doctrine of election seems to be little understood and generally ignored, despised and rejected by those professing the Christian religion. And the most satisfactory and effectual way devised by the wisdom of this world to conceal and evade this doctrine is to resort to the fallacious position that God has chosen an elect ground or character so that when a man steps over onto this elect ground or puts on this elect character he becomes one of the elect. But this, like every other Arminian scheme, leaves the work of God out of the matter and substitutes the work of man instead, for if a man can constitute himself an elect by stepping over on elect ground or putting on an elect character, then he thereby elects himself, so that he is his own elect instead of God's elect. And could he find salvation in such election then verily he would be his own savior. Just as the doctrine of men teach in every part of the economy of salvation. But it is God's elect and not man's elect mentioned in our text, and in all the holy scriptures. But to cover up the deformity of their false theology and deceive the hearts of the simple, those deceivers will admit that God did the choosing but contend that he chose character and that His election was not personal. But if election is not personal, and men and women are persons, then it follows that men and

women are not chosen. So if men and women are not elected, what interest have we in election? It is true that all those who believe in Christ are embraced in God's election, and it is also true that all those who shall hereafter believe in Him are embraced in God's election, and have been embraced in it and in God's eternal purpose of redemption and salvation from the ages eternal, even before the world began. So to the Ephesians the great Paul said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spirtual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love" - Eph 1:3-4. This is God's choice; it was made before man was created, before he had done either good or evil, hence it is unconditional. The pronoun "us" in this text is a personal pronoun and refers to persons, hence it was persons and not character that God chose. But deceivers tell us that this choice included none but the apostles and that the choice was unto the apostleship and not unto salvation. But Paul was not writing to apostles nor about apostles; he was writing to the saints at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ generally. Neither does he leave us to guess as to what end they were chosen unto but he tells us plainly that it was "that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." If election was not mentioned in any other scripture, this one text furnishes positive proof of the doctrine of personal unconditional election, unto salvation. But to make it unquestionably plain, Paul said to the Thessalonian brethren: "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sancification of the spirit and belief of the truth." - 2 Thess. 2:13. Here the apostle makes it so plain that we cannot fail to get his meaning. How sweet and comforting that message must have been to those brethren coming to them as it did by devine inspiration. Oh, could I hear such a message spoken to me with the assurance that the mouth of the Lord had spoken it. My unbelief would give way, my doubts and fears depart, and then I could say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Then I would rejoice in God my Savior and triumph in the glorious election of His grace. God is immutable. He makes no mistake and no failures. If He has chosen a man to salvation that man will be saved. There are no uncertainties about it. The doctrine of election embracing men in unbelief is a doctrine peculiar to the church of Christ, but it is true just the same or else men must have believed before the foundation of the world, for we know, if the Bible is true, they were chosen before the foundation of the world. Truly we cannot know God's elect from others until He quickens them and thus begins a good work in them, which He will perform unto the day of Jesus Christ. When God sends forth His spirit into their hearts crying Abba Father, then they begin to cry, as new born babes in nature cry, so new born babies in Christ cry, mourn and repent, but as the children of men do not cry until they are born, even so the elect of God do not cry unto God until they are born of Him; then they cry day and night unto Him. "And shall not God avenge His own elect which cry day and night unto Him." - Luke 18:7. When Paul preached at Antioch, "As many as

were ordained to eternal life believed" - Acts 13:48. But we have no account of any others believing except those who were ordained to eternal life, so it is to this day, whenever and wherever the gospel is preached. It is a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Greeks, but to them that are called both Jews and Greeks it is the power of God and the wisdom of God. All the dealings of God with men in their experience and the preaching of the gospel to them does not add one to the number of God's elect, but these things mark, call out, identify, instruct and comfort God's elect and none other.

The name sheep as applied to the people of God in the scriptures is of the same import as the word elect, representing the chosen people of God in every stage and condition of their being, and also signifies a peculiar relation to Jesus the great shepherd as the object of His peculiar care, while the rest of the human are represented as goats. Jesus came unto this world, suffered and died as a shepherd in the interest of His sheep. He said, "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth His life for the sheep." - John 10:11. These were his sheep when He came; not that they had given themselves to Him, but because His Father had given them to Him. So He said of them: "My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" - John 10:27-29. There is no difference by which we can distinguish the sheep from the goats, the elect from the non-elect, until the spirit of God enters into His chosen sheep and calls them out and separates them from the rest of mankind by a strange, mysterious experience in which the goodness of God leads them to repentance and causes them to believe. According to the working of His mighty power whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself, these were all the sheep of Christ by gift of His Father in the covenant and purpose of His grace. When He laid down His life for them on the cross, He represented them as their shepherd, mediator and redeemer, and He bore all their sins in his own body, met and satisfied the demands of justice and fulfilled the law for them and freed them from the curse of the law so that they are without charge. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" "It is God that justifieth." Justifieth whom? The elect, of course. These are the people of whom Paul is speaking. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; died for whom? The elect, the sheep for whom He said, "I give my life." These shall all be saved, not one of them shall fail. The number of God's elect is unknown to mortals. But God knows them, every one. Jesus said: "I know my sheep," and Paul said: "Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, 'the Lord knoweth them that are His.'" - 2 Tim. 2:19. While we cannot know the number of God's elect, it is evidently very great, beyond our calculations. The inspired John, after speaking of the 144,000 which were sealed from the twelve tribes of Israel, said: "After this I beheld and lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white

robes and palms in their hands." Rev.7:9

Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?

Taken from the Signs of the Times December 1953

AGREEMENT BETWEEN ELDER JOHN LELAND AND JAMES MADISON COMMEMORATED

An interesting and important event in American history was recalled on October 4, 1953, when the Leland-Madison Monumental Park was dedicated near Orange, Virginia. The site of the park marks the place where Elder John Leland and James Madison met to discuss their differences pertaining to the ratification of the Constitution of the United States. This was in 1788.

The Constitution, as it was drawn up by the Convention in Philadelphia in 1787, did not contain a guarantee of religious liberties and free speech. Elder Leland, and those he represented, opposed the ratification by Virginia unless such provisions were included. This was a large and influential group of citizens, and it was not likely that the Constitution would be ratified without their support.

The following is quoted from an article in a Washington newspaper by Dr. Joseph M. Dawson:

"Authorities agree that Leland was a key man in obtaining Virginia's ratification of the Federal Constitution. Without Virginia's favorable action, in all probability the Constitution would never have been ratified."

"The Rev. John Leland though a native of Massachusetts, owes his place in history to his activities in Virginia from the time he went to Culpepper in 1775 to his return to Massachusetts in 1791. In that 16-year period, he proved to be a statesman as well as a flaming evangelist. Elected to the Virginia Assembly, he collaborated with Washington, Jefferson, Madison and Mason in behalf of religious liberty. He also baptized more than 700 converts in the region between the Ketockton Mountains and the York River. He was affectionately called Parson."

"While Leland enjoyed the friendship of the leaders mentioned above, he opposed Madison's election to the Virginia Ratification Assembly because Madison's document lacked a Bill of Rights. At a picnic near Orange, the two men composed their differences and agreed on an amendment. Then Leland pledged his support, with the result that Madison was seated and Virginia ratified the Federal Constitution as amended."

"In the meantime Leland, on behalf of the Baptists, had written George Washington, saying, "when the Constitution first made its appearance in Virginia, we, as a society, feared that the liberty of conscience, dearer to us than property or life, was not sufficiently secured...Under the regal government mobs, fines, bonds and prisons were our frequent repast.'"

"Although Washington belonged to the Established Church of Virginia, he sympathized deeply, as evidenced by his reply" "If I have entertained the slightest apprehension that the Constitution formed by the conventions where I had the honor to preside might possibly endager the rights of any ecclesiactical society, certainly I would have never place my signature to it; and if I now could conveive that the general Govern-

ment might ever be so administered as to render the libery of conscience insecure, I beg you will be persuaded that no one would be more zealous than myself to establish effectual barriers against the horrors of spiritual tyranny and every species of religious persecution."

The first amendment to the Constitution, referred to above, reads as follows. "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press; or the right of the people peacefully to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

There is little mention in secular history of the part our religious fore-fathers took in securing this freedom for us, but we should be most grateful that in the purpose of God, He gave us men of courage to fight for and secure our priceless heritage.

Elder J. D. Wood

Baltimore, Md., Jan. 18, 1910.

Ray Kauffman - Dear Brother in Christ: - I promised you some time ago to write you at some time something of my early experience in the things of the kindom of God. In the spring of 1875 I became much troubled on account of my being a sinner in the sight of God, and I felt so grieved that my boyish pleasures and companions were no longer a joy to me. Sometimes the trouble would pass off for a while, only to return with more force than before. In the fall of the same year I became so distressed that I felt that there was no mercy for me, I thought that I must die and go to the place of eternal punishment, and the awful suffering of my soul I can never describe; I could not help begging for mercy, and yet felt that there was none for me. This continued until February, 1876, when it passed off, but I had no evidence that I could claim that Jesus loved me. I went on in that condition, wondering what my condition really was, until Monday after the second Sunday in May, 1876. In the afternoon, while at work on my father's farm, in Beaufort Co., N.C. I was thinking about my strange condition, when suddenly there came over me the most glorious and peaceful feeling I had ever experienced. I felt so sure that Jesus was my Savior that I stood there in the field and clapped my hands for joy. Then and there I had a peculiar view of the Primitive Baptist Church as the church of Jesus Christ, and I loved her, and felt that I wanted to live with that dear people of God. So on Saturday before the first Sunday in June, 1876 I went before the Sandy Grove Church of Primitive or Old School Baptists, near my father's home, and where my parents were both members, and told them of my desire, and they so kindly received me and tenderly cared for me that I could but feel sure that they loved me. Most of all of them are gone now to their eternal home, but I love their memory. How kind they were. For about one month and a half I had sweet and peaceful rest in the things of the blessed kingdom, then one day, very suddenly, as if some one had spoken to me, I heard, as I believe, the voice of my Savior, saying, You have got to preach. The thought pierced my soul to its very depths, and I sank down in sorrow, for I knew my inability to do such a wonderful thing as preach the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ. What I suffered under

that impression I cannot tell you; it is beyond expression. I believed that the Lord was able, but O I was so weak and unworthy. But the first Sunday in September, 1876, being persuaded by others, I made the attempt to speak in the blessed name of Jesus, and have been at it until now, and as I write these things the tender love and sympathy of those dear old saints come into my memory and afford me comfort. They made appointments for me, and called for my services here and there, so I began to circulate among the churches away from home, and through the mercy of God have continued to this time, witnessing both to small and great of the eternal salvation of poor, helpless sinners through Jesus Christ and him crucified. I wonder sometimes at the kind consideration that I receive at the hands of the Lord's dear people. It is the mercy of God to me, and so I feel, as he gives me ability, to continue to publish the holy name of the Lord.

Now, dear brother, I appreciate your standing in the church; I, too, was very young when I was baptized, but the God of our salvation is sufficient for all things. I pray that he will keep you safely to the end. We are in usual health and hope that you are well. Hoping to see you next Sunday I will close. Write me soon.

Your loving brother and pastor,

Elder Joshua T. Rowe

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 10 / 2018 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

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Elder Alan Terry, VA 5.00

Ann Martin, VA 5.00

Donald Agee, VA 5.00

Garland R. Stanley, NC. 25.00

John Schultz, MT 100.00

Algie Martin, VA 5.00

John 1: 1-9

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The same was in the beginning with God.

All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

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HYMN

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
He rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And his will make it plain.

W. Cowper

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EDITORIAL

"I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil; I the Lord do all these things." Isaiah 45:7

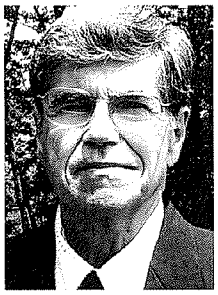
Elder J. B. Farmer

This is a profound statement uttered by the God of all creation. It is over and above our natural thinking and understanding, as high as the heaven is above the earth. I am made to believe that we will never understand this or any other scripture, unless God is merciful to open it up to us and to make it plain. The natural, logical, reasoning mind of man is totally incapable of rightly dividing the work of truth. He has hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes. Believing and knowing this, it is my desire that wisdom and understanding would be given in writing and in reading these things to the praise, honor and glory of God.

The sound Old Baptists, over the years, have been falsely accused of saying that "God is the author of sin" by some who do not understand what they believe. Since these Old School Primitive Baptists have been blessed to believe that God, in His wisdom and foreknowledge, predestinated all things, some of their detractors have jumped to the conclusion that they believe God is the author of sin. I do not know of anyone in our fellowship who believes that God is the cause of the sinful actions of men. Amazingly, there have been some, and even now there are some who call themselves Primitive Baptists who boldly proclaim that their god is the author of sin. They consider others who do not agree with them to be weak in the faith. Sadly, this false doctrine appears to be a device which has been used to try to excuse wickedness by saying that God predestinated it, so man could not keep from doing it.

To show this false accusation and false doctrine for what they are, we must understand what the word 'predestination' actually means. It literally means 'to have been before-horizoned.' It means that God saw all things as they would unfold before they ever came into existence. He saw it, declared it, and therefore fixed it forever. He declared the end from the beginning. **"For he spake and it was *done*; he commanded, and it stood fast."** Psalm 33:9 **"That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and**

God requireth that which is past." Ecclesiastes 3:15. God has made things this way that men should fear before Him. God's predestination did not cause events, but rather fixed them in time. Events cannot be other than what God saw from the beginning.

We also must declare what sin is. Sin is the transgression of the law. It is not possible that God could transgress His holy law. The law is holy and just and good. It was given as the ministration of condemnation and as the ministration of death to a world of guilty sinners. And it was given to be a school-master to bring His elect to Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness unto all who have been given the gift of faith to believe in Him.

Our dear deceased brother and faithful Elder, W.P. O'Neal made it very plain why it was impossible for God to cause sin. He said that since there is no sin in God, no sin can come from Him. We know from the scriptures that the God of righteousness cannot even look upon iniquity. There is no unrighteousness in Him, according to the scriptures. **"*He is* the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways *are* judgment; a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right *is* he."** Deuteronomy 32:4. Sin must therefore come from a source other than God. The source is man.

What is man, but a creature of God's formation? He was formed of the dust of the ground, and was made an earthen vessel. This creation was declared to be good and very good by his Creator. How may a thing formed and declared to be good, then turn and do evil? Some erroneously say that God made the man to sin, and therefore God is chargeable for man's sin. The truth is that God made man, knowing that he would sin, but that man is justly chargeable for his own sin. Before God destroyed the world with the flood, He declared that all flesh had corrupted itself. **"The earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth,"** Genesis 6:11-12. Man corrupted himself - not God. God is clear in the matter.

It is written, **"The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."** Romans 8:20-21. The conclusion from this is that God made man good, but made him subject to vanity, and man fell according to his own lust. The apostle James said by inspiration, **"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man; but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust has conceived, it bringeth forth sin and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Do not err, my beloved brethren."** James 1:13-16.

Since God cannot sin, and since God has never caused, and shall never cause man to sin, what is His relation to sin? We are told in the scriptures that God hates sin and punishes sin. Nevertheless, He makes use of it when it furthers His will and purpose. The prophet said by inspiration, **"The wrath of man shall praise thee, and the remainder of**

wrath shalt thou restrain." Psalm 76:10. That which works together for God's praise and for the good of His people, He allows. And that which would go beyond His will and purpose, He restrains. Consider Joseph, and how his brothers hated him and purposed to kill him. They were restrained by the Lord in their purpose to kill Joseph, that he might go before them into Egypt to preserve life. There are many, many other wonderful examples given in the scriptures where the purposes of wicked men have been frustrated, and glory and honor has been rendered to God, who alone is worthy to be praised.

Then, with all these things in mind, what does the scripture at the head of this article mean? God said, **"I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil."** What is the 'light' that He formed? I am made to believe that the 'light' here represents His people. Jesus said, **"Ye are the light of the world."** Matthew 5:14. They are children of the day. What is the 'darkness' which He created? I am made to believe that the 'darkness; here represents the wicked. Solomon said by inspiration, **"The way of the wicked *is* as darkness: they know not at what they stumble."** Proverbs 4:19. They are children of the night. It is apparent that God made both the 'light' and the 'darkness.' He made the 'light' to show forth His praise, and He made the 'darkness' for the day of evil. **"The Lord hath made all *things* for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."** Proverbs 16:4.

As 'light' and 'darkness' are opposites, I am made to believe that 'peace' and 'evil' are also opposites as represented in this scripture. To my understanding, to be in 'peace' means to be in a safe place of quietness and comfort and rest. God gives His people a 'peace' that passes understanding while in this life. He gives them 'peace' in the middle of the storm as Christ did with His disciples. He is their 'peace.' They are made to place their complete confidence and trust in Him, who cannot fail. The Lord Jesus made 'peace' with God the Father in behalf of the saints by presenting to the Father, His body, a living sacrifice, which atoned for all their sin. And the final end of His children shall be eternal 'peace' with Him in glory according to the working of His mighty power.

'Peace' is the opposite of 'evil.' To be in 'evil' is to be in turmoil, to be terrified with noise, to be in fear of certain destruction, and finally to be in the pain of eternal death. Ultimately, it would be for one to suffer in the place where the worm dies not and the fire is not quenched. According to the scriptures, this is what is in store for the wicked. God created this 'evil' for all those that hate Him and hate his people, and who are deceived to believe a lie and be damned. **"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."** Revelation 20:15.

Considering all these things, I am made to believe that the meaning of the word 'evil,' stated in this scripture, cannot possibly be 'wickedness' or 'sin,' as some contend, but rather must be the opposite of 'peace,' which is 'tribulation,' 'anguish' and 'eternal destruction.' 'Peace' is the eternal state of the saints. 'Evil' is the eternal state of the wicked. **"To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and**

immortality, eternal life; but unto them who are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: for there is no respect of persons with God." Romans 2:7-11.

I trust that this was written in love, and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer
10-24-2018

NOTICE

It is with much sadness that we announce the death of Sister Anita Trollinger. Sister Anita is the daughter of Deacon Wayne and Sister Bonnie Edwards of Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church. She was baptized into the fellowship of the church September 1, 1989. She served as typist, as well as formating the Signs of the Times for 29 years. She was a major part of preparing the "Signs" each month and she will be missed.

MALACHI 4:2

But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Household of Faith:

Dear Ones in Christ: I feel a need, to try to write a little concerning my time in this world of sin and troubles, and sorrows, which seems to follow me, every where I go. Not that I am a fit writer which I am surely not. But that I have a desire to write a few lines, not knowing what to call it, but I will try, the Lord willing to tell something about the way that I have been led along the way. I am an uneducated one, as far as the schools of this world, is concerned. Yet I feel to be much blessed, of the Dear Lord for the things, he has blessed me with, naturally as well as Spiritually, I hope, in this life. Not that I feel the least bit worthy, of the least one, for I don't. If I have any worth it surely is not this worthless one, for sin is mixed in all that I do, my time in this life has been filled with many downs, and a few ups, troubles and sorrows seems to have been my lot, for most of my life. I have wondered many times, did I deceive those Dear people when I beggared a home with them? I believe the year was 1981. Or yet, am I deceived in the whole matter? And, have I deceived, the people of God into thinking that I am something that I am not? That would be an awful note, if I have. I feel to fall short, in so many ways, that I can hardly stand what in myself I see. As far back as my memory extends, I have been a very timid and strange person, with a feeling of not really belonging anywhere. And

as I journey on toward the finish line, I must say that I am not one whit better now, than I was from the beginning of my worthless life, the only difference is back then I didn't know that I was such an awful sinner as I am. Even my very name, I abhor, I must confess to all, my journey, has been one of many failings and shortcomings, that I am made to wonder where do, I go, from here. Only the Lord knows, I feel to be the least of all, if one of the Lord's little ones. I desire the prayers of the dear ones, if that is not asking too much. I would not live always, I ask not to stay, fair well all. Job said in 14:1-2, man that is born of a woman, is of a few days and full of trouble, he cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth as a shadow, and continueth not. Also in the book of Job 5:6-7 although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doeth trouble spring out of the ground; yet man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward. It is my hope, that I have not hurt any of the Lord's little children, if I have, may it be charged to me, that I may know how sorry, I am, in the matter. I feel that I have wrote too much, and will leave this to the Dear Ones, in charge, to do, with this as they think best. With Godly love, and fear, I hope, in a precious savior, Jesus Christ: the Son; of the Living God: Amen.

Charlie Fox
September 5, 2018

MATTHEW 1:21

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.

10-24-18

Dear Tony Horton,

Enclosed please find my check for one year's renewal to the Signs of the Times.

Its a dear magazine which I look forward to receiving each month, and I'm so thankful. The dear Lord continues to enable those who write for its pages and contribute to its publication, upholding the doctrine of Election and Salvation by God's grace alone!

In hope,
Caroline Martin

10-25-18

120 Gunn Road
Reidsville, NC 27320

Dear Bro. Tony,

I have been blessed to reach 92 years of age. Also I have been blessed to be a member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church for 67 years. It has truly been good to have the love and fellowship of Brothers and Sisters and friends.

I truly enjoy the Signs, thanks to all that has a part in getting this paper out each month.

I am sending a check to renew for two years. Please use the rest as needed. It was good to see you and family at Dan River a short while back. Come again soon.

Love and Fellowship,
R. Allen Carroll

10-31-18

Brother Horton,

Please find my check for two more years to the Signs. I have been receiving the Signs for over 40 years. I look forward to seeing it every month. I especially enjoy the experiences of the saints more than anything, but the other articles are edifying also.

Thanks for the hard work.

In hope,
Vera Potter

VOICES OF THE PAST

CHRISTMAS

"Yule" was the old name for Christmas, and is from the same Anglo-Saxon root (geola) as the word jolly, and was the Pagan festival of the Winter Solstice. The Bible makes no mention of Christmas; and it does not tell us in what year, month or day Christ was born. And history says. "Not even the exact year, much less the exact month or day when Christ was born is known by mortals. The sixth of January was in the second and third centuries thought to have been the day; but it was decided by the Catholics in the fourth and fifth centuries that the 25 day of December was the day. As Rome, the centre of paganism, was made the centre of Catholicism, so the Pagan festivities of the Saturnalia, Sigillaria, Juvenalia and Brumalia, which occurred in December, were very conveniently and hilariously transmuted by a wordly Christianity into the festival of Christmas.

The Christmas holiday is very notable as a day of wordly myrth, drunkenness, blasphemy, murder and every other crime that is known or practiced by men and women. When Christmas day approaches many people seem to grow wild, so much so that the hearts of true Christians are filled with almost unbearable sorrow. Christmas parties, plays and dances are called for in the night where evil takes delight, and where our sons are enticed into drunkenness and vice, and our daughters are made a reproach to all for having been at a drunken party, dance or associating with drunken men, whose mouths are full of vulgarity and slander.

We do not object to the young people meeting in the daytime at the house of a friend, where drinking is not tolerated, for social enjoyment, singing, conversation and civil pastime. We commend this for both the old and the young, because it encourages and cultivates a taste for better things than vice and folly.

Parents, young men and young women, will you remember this kind and timely admonition from one who is very much interested in your welfare? Parents, rule over your children in love. Children, obey your parents, for this is right.

Elder F. P. Branscome

MATTHEW 2:1

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem.

The late James Cash "J.C." Penney Jr., who resided in New York city, the founder of the nationwide J.C. Penney stores, penned down the following biographical sketches of his paternal grandfather and his father, who were both Primitive Baptist Elders of days gone by.

My grandfather, Elder Eli Penney, was born on April 6, 1799, near Lawrenceburg, in what is today known as Anderson County, Kentucky. Records in my family would indicate that he was probably baptized on December 9, 1811. About 1829, he was licensed and later ordained into the ministry, and in a short time became well known in the Long Run Association in Kentucky. He was instrumental in the organization of the Lawrenceburg Baptist Church in 1834, and in July of the same year was ordained as a deacon. He was also a trustee of this church and served as Moderator for many years. In 1839, he, along with his wife and their five children moved to northwest Missouri. In 1841, he purchased a farm near Mirabile, Caldwell County, Missouri where he and his family settled and lived for more than twenty-five years. It was in Caldwell County that he established a small church known as Old Log Creek Primitive Baptist Church, and he became the church's first pastor, serving there for nearly thirty years. In 1868, he sold his farm in Caldwell County and moved to Hamilton, Missouri. He died there on May 31, 1871.

My father, Elder James Cash Penney, Sr. was born on December 29 1841, near Mirabile, Caldwell County, Missouri. At the age of nineteen he united with the Old School Baptist Church in Missouri. In 1861, when rumors of the Civil War became great, he was called upon to escort his Kentucky cousin, Mary Frances Paxton, back to her home in Kentucky, following her extended visit with relatives in Missouri. A romance developed between the two and he decided not to return to Missouri. They were married within a few weeks in Kentucky. He subsequently enlisted for service in the Civil War.

Family records indicate he was baptized and received into the fellowship of the Baptist Church in Lawrenceburg, Kentucky on August 16, 1863 when he was 22 years old. At the close of the war, he moved back to Missouri with his family. It was about this time that he felt the calling to become a minister and farmer. His pastoral charge was the Primitive Baptist Church at Log Creek, located about twelve miles from Hamilton, Missouri, where he preached for more than twenty years. I don't have an exact record of the date he may have been ordained into the church. He died on March 22, 1895 in Hamilton, Missouri at the age of fifty-three years. This is all the information that I have available to give you.

I appreciate your interest in my family and wish you every success in your endeavor.

Sincerely,

J.C. Penney

The foregoing correspondence was sent to the late Miss Emma Mahulda West of New Cambria, Missouri, who compiled an extensive book highlighting the lives of Primitive Baptist Elders of the past.

EXPERIENCE OF THE LATE ELDER S.O. PLYBON

Rocky Mount, VA

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood;

A brother sent me a copy of the June 1905 Landmark with my father's experience in it. Will you please print it in the SIGNS of the TIMES? He was born December 11, 1850 and died December 3, 1932. He was a Primitive Baptist minister fifty four years.

In bonds of love,
Posey L. Plybon

Elders Gold and Lester;

I have been requested to write my experience. I will try to tell in a short way what I hope the Lord has done for me.

In my youthful days my father and mother were both members of the Primitive Baptists, and would tell me there was a place of eternal punishment for the wicked, and there was eternal rest for the good people. I thought that since I had never sworn an oath and never was allowed to hunt and fish on Sunday, I was better than boys that did such things. My father died when I was fourteen years old, and it seemed he died so happy. I wanted to die happy too. I told him I would try to meet him in heaven.

One day mother sent me to the mill, and while I was riding along thinking of my condition, I saw myself a poor sinner. With tears in my eyes I cried, "Lord have mercy on me a lost sinner." I went on to the mill; and the miller asked me what was the matter. I told him nothing. When I got home, mother said, "Silas, are you sick?" I told her I was not, and she said that I looked very bad. I could not talk for crying.

I went on this way for about thirteen months. Sometimes I would go to the barn and try to pray, but it seemed that I got worse all the time, and I wished I had never been born into this troublesome world. There was a Methodist meeting about five miles away and I went to it. I thought I would see if I could get a word of comfort; but when I got there, the thought came to me that if I went into the house, I would go to crying. I did not want anyone to know anything about it. The preacher stood in the door and preached, but not a word for me. I went back the next day and took the back seat, and promised myself I would not shed a tear. They sang "Come ye sinner poor and needy, weak and wounded, sick and sore. Jesus stands ready to save you, full of pity, love and power."

I wept, brethren and sisters, for I could not see how He could save me - I was the vilest of the vile. I went home and sat down at the table. Mother asked, "Silas, what kind of a meeting did you have?" I said, "Right smart meeting, I reckon." And she wanted to know how many mourners were there, and I said, "Five I reckon." "Who were they?" I could not eat and got up and went into the house, picked up the Bible and sat down to read. My little brother and sisters came in; Mother called and told them to come out of there. I though she knew how mean and sinful I was, and did not want them to come in where

I was. I thought she would not countenance me, and what will I do? I went to the barn and got on my knees and tried to pray; but I still grew worse and worse.

Thursday morning I went to the meeting again, and at the intermission I went out and sat down by the house. My aunt came out and took me by the hand, told me I would be sick if I did not eat something. She gave me a piece of cake with honey on it. I dropped it and went to the spring. Then I went back to the house, went in and sat down. No one was in there. This was August 16, 1866. I remember two men coming in and talked with me. The next thing I remember, I was on my feet praising the Lord. I thought I would never see any more trouble, and felt I loved all of Adam's posterity. Mother would ask me if I wanted to join the church. I would tell her that I was afraid I was not fit to join the church. I would go to hear the Baptists, and would think O, if I was just fit to be with them. I thought it would be a sin to offer myself to that good people.

In about two years I joined the Methodist Church, but was not satisfied there. On Saturday before the fourth Sunday in May, 1876, I went to Lynville and offered to the church, and was received and baptized by Elder Zechariah Angel. On the 23rd of September 1878 I made the attempt to preach; and have been trying ever since.

I desire the prayers of all the people of God.

Elder S.O. Plybon

Jesus wept. - John 11:35

WILLIAM COWPER, HYMN WRITER

from John Gadsby's
Memoirs of Hymn-Writers and Compilers

Cowper (William) was born at Berkhampstead, Hertfordshire, Nov. 15, 1731. In his autobiography he says, "I cannot recollect that, until I was in my 32nd year, I had ever any serious impressions of a religious kind, or at all bethought myself of the things of my salvation, except in two or three instances." At 10 years old he was sent to the Westminster School, where, he says, he learnt Latin and Greek at the expense of knowledge much more important. "That I may do justice to the place of my education, I must relate one mark of religious discipline, which, in my time, was observed at Westminster. I mean the pains which Dr. Nicholls took to prepare us for confirmation. The old man acquitted himself of this duty like one who had a deep sense of its importance; and I believe most of us were struck by his manner and affected by his exhortation. Then, for the first time, I attempted to pray in secret; but, being little accustomed to that exercise of the heart and having very childish notions of religion I found it a difficult and painful task, and was even then frightened at my own insensibility. This difficulty, though it did not subdue my good purposes till the ceremony of confirmation was passed, soon after entirely conquered them. I relapsed into a total forgetfulness of God, with all the disadvantages of being the more hardened, for being softened to no purpose. At 12 or 13 I was seized with the smallpox. I mention this only to show that, at that early age, my heart was become

proof against the ordinary means a gracious God employs for our chastisement. Though I was severely handled by this disease, and in imminent danger, yet, neither in the course of it, nor during my recovery, had I any sentiments of contrition, any thought of God or eternity. On the contrary, I was scarcely raised from the bed of pain and sickness before the emotions of sin became more violent than ever, and the devil seemed rather to have gained than lost an advantage over me; so readily did I admit his suggestions, and so passive was I under them. By this time I became such an adept in the infernal art of lying, that I was seldom guilty of a fault for which I could not invent an apology capable of deceiving the wisest. These, I know, are called schoolboys' tricks; but a total depravity of principle, and the work of the father of lies, are universally at the bottom of them. At the age of 18, being tolerably well furnished with grammatical knowledge, but as ignorant of all kinds of religion as the satchel at my back, I was taken from Westminster; and, having spent about nine months at home, was sent to acquire the practice of the law with an attorney." — At 21, he took possession of a set of chambers in the Temple; but, soon after his settlement there, was struck with such a dejection of spirits that none but those who have felt the same can have the least conception of. Day and night he was upon the rack, lying down in horror and rising up in despair. He soon lost all relish for those studies to which he had before been so much attached; they had now no longer any charms for him. He had need of something more salutary than amusement, but had no one to direct him where to find it. At length he met with Herbert's Poems, and though he did not find in them what he wanted - a cure for his malady, yet his mind never seemed so much relieved as while he was reading them. In this state he continued for nearly a year, when, having experienced the inefficacy of all human means, he was at length driven to God in prayer. "Such," says he, "is the rank our Redeemer hold in our esteem, that we never resort to him but in the last instance, when all creatures have failed to succor us. My hard heart was at length softened and my stubborn knees taught to bow." He went with some friends to Southampton, where he spent several months. Soon after their arrival, they walked about two miles from the town, and sat down upon an eminence, when, on a sudden, it was as if another sun had been kindled in the heavens on purpose to despel his sorrow. The weight of his misery was taken off, and his heart became light and joyful in a moment. He could have wept with transport had he been alone. But Satan and his wicked heart soon persuaded him that he was indebted for his deliverance to nothing but a change of season and scene. "By this means the blessing was turned into a poison, teaching me to conclude that nothing but a continued circle of diversion and indulgence of appetite could secure me from a relapse." Upon this hellish principle, away went all thoughts of religion and of dependence upon God. Having spent about 12 years in the Temple, in an uninterrupted course of sinful indulgence, he obtained at length so complete a victory over his conscience, that all remonstrances from *that* quarter were in vain. Though at this time little

better than an infidel, yet, when half intoxicated, he was often employed in vindicating the truth of Scripture, while in the very act of rebellion against its dictates. At one time he went so far as to assert he would willingly have his right hand cut off, so that he might but be enabled to live according to the gospel. This inconsistency of his was visible to others as well as to himself, insomuch that a deistical friend of his cut short the matter by alleging that, if what he said were true, he was certainly damned by his own choosing. At length he appears to have spent nearly all his money, and begun to be apprehensive of want. Through the influence of a relative, he was appointed Clerk of the Journals of the House of Lords. He acknowledges that he was totally unfit for the office, and yet he labored hard to make himself master of the duties. But God had designed other things for him. "To this dilemma," he says, "was I reduced, either to keep possession of the office to the last extremity, and by so doing expose myself to a public rejection for inefficiency, or else to fling it up at once, and by this means to run the hazard of ruining my benefactor's right of appointment, by bringing his discretion into question. In this situation, such a fit of passion has sometimes seized me that I have cried out aloud, and cursed the hour of my birth, lifting up my eyes to heaven at the same time, not as a suppliant, but in the hellish spirit of rancorous reproach and blasphemy against my Maker. I made one effort of the devotional kind; for, having found a prayer or two in that repository of self-righteousness and pharisaical lumber, 'The Whole Duty of Man,' I said them a few nights, but soon laid them aside." He now began to look upon madness as the only chance remaining, and earnestly wished for it, that he might be excused from appearing at the Bar of the House of Lords. The day of decision drew near, and then came the great temptation - the dark and hellish purpose of self-murder. He thought perhaps there was no God; or the Scriptures might be false, and if so, God had nowhere forbidden suicide. At any rate, his misery, even in hell itself, he thought, would be more supportable. Accordingly, in Nov., 1763 he purchased half an ounce of laudanum, resolving to use it as soon as he was convinced there was no other way of escape. He went into the fields, to find a house or a ditch in which to die; but his mind was changed. He thought drowning would be better. He took a coach to the Tower Wharf, intending to throw himself into the Thames from the Custom-house Quay, but the water was low, and there was a porter seated upon some goods. He returned to the coach, and put up the shutters. Twenty times had he the vial to his mouth, distracted between the desire of death and the dread of it, and even at the time it seemed as if an invisible hand swayed the bottle downwards. A convulsive agitation seemed to deprive him of the use of his limbs. He reached the Temple, and prepared himself for the last scene. He poured the laudanum into a small basin, set it on a chair by the bedside, half undressed himself, lay down between the blankets, and, shuddering with horror, reached forth his hands towards the basin, when the fingers of both his hands became so closely contracted, as if bound with a cord, that they became entirely useless. He could

indeed have guided the basin to his mouth with his hands, as his arms were not at all affected, but the circumstance struck him with wonder, and he lay down to muse upon it, when he heard his laundress's husband coming in, which frustrated his design for that time. The next morning was to place him at the Bar of the House, and he was determined not to see it. He went to bed and slept till 3 o'clock, when, taking his penknife, he endeavored to force it into his heart, but it would not penetrate. The clock struck 7, and instantly it occurred to him that there was no time to be lost. He took his garter, and, forming a noose, fixed it about his neck, but twice did the iron and framework of the bed break under his weight. The third effort was more likely to succeed. He fastened the garter to the top of the door, which was a very high one, and, pushing away the chair, hung at his whole length. While he hung, he heard a voice say distinctly, "'Tis over!" but it did not at all alarm him nor affect his resolution. He hung so long, that he lost all sense and consciousness of existence. When he came to himself again, he thought himself in hell. The sound of his own groans was all that he heard. The garter had broken, and he was lying on his face. The stagnation of blood under one eye, and a red circle round his neck, showed plainly that he had been on the brink of eternity. His laundress must have passed the door while he was hanging on it, as she was in the adjoining room. On hearing him fall, she went into his bedroom to ask him if he were not well, and said she feared he had been in a fit. He sent for his relative, and related to him the whole affair. His words were, My dear Mr. Cowper, you terrify me. To be sure, you cannot hold the office at this rate." And thus ended his connection with the Parliament Office. "To this moment," he says, "I had felt no concern of a spiritual kind. Ignorant of original sin, and insensible of the guilt of actual transgression, I understood neither the law nor the gospel. I was as much unacquainted with Christ in all his saving offices as if his blessed name had never reached me. But now a new scene opened upon me. Conviction of sin took place, especially of that just committed. The meanness of it, and its atrocious nature, were exhibited to me in colors so inconceivably strong, that I despised myself with a contempt not to be imagined or expressed, for having attempted it. This sense of it secured me from the repetition of a crime which I could not now reflect on without abhorrence. Before I arose from bed, it was suggested to me that there was nothing wanted but murder to fill up the measure of my iniquities; and that, though I had failed in my design, yet I had all the guilt of that crime to answer to. A sense of God's wrath, and a deep despair of escaping it, instantly succeeded. The fear of death became much more prevalent in me now than even the desire of death had been. My sins were now set in array before me. I began to see and feel that I had lived without God in the world. As I walked to and fro in my chambers, I said within myself, 'There was never so abandoned a wretch - so great a sinner!' All my worldly sorrows seemed now as if they had never been; the terrors of my mind, which succeeded them, seemed so great, and so much more afflicting. One moment I thought myself shut out from

mercy by one chapter, and the next by another. The sword of the Spirit seemed to guard the tree of life from my touch, and to flame against me in every avenue by which I attempted to approach it." If for a moment a book or a companion turned away his attention from himself, a flash from hell seemed to be thrown into his mind, and he said within himself, "What are these things to me who am damned?" He feared he had committed the unpardonable sin, and no argument that could be used in extenuation of his guilt could gain a moment's admission. Life appeared more desirable than death, only because it was a barrier between him and everlasting burnings. He took his Prayer Book and endeavored to pray out of it, but immediately experienced the impossibility of drawing nigh to God unless God first drew nigh to him; and, with the most rooted conviction, he gave himself up to despair. "I felt a sense of burning in my heart, like that of real fire, and concluded it was an earnest of those eternal flames which would soon receive me. I laid myself down, howling with horror, while my knees smote against each other. In this condition my brother found me, and the first words I spoke were, 'O brother, I am damned! Think of eternity, and think what it is to be damned!'" At length he was visited by Martin Madan, who spoke to him of sin and salvation, which seemed to cause hope to spring up. But he says, "What I had experienced was but the beginning of sorrows, and a long train of still greater terrors was at hand. I slept usual three hours well, and then awoke with ten times stronger an alienation from God than ever. Satan plied me close with horrible visions, and more horrible voices. My ears rang with the sound of torments that seemed to await me. Then did 'the pains of hell get hold of me,' and before daybreak the very 'sorrows of death encompassed me.' A numbness seized the extremities of my body, and life seemed to retreat before it. My hands and feet became cold and stiff; a cold sweat stood upon my forehead; my heart seemed at every pulse to beat its last, and my soul to cling to my lips as on the very brink of departure. No convicted criminal ever feared death more or was more assured of dying. At 11 o'clock my brother called upon me, and in about an hour after his arrival, that distemper of mind I had wished for so ardently actually seized me. While I traversed the apartment in the most horrible dismay of soul, expecting every moment that the earth would open and swallow me up, my conscience scaring me, the avenger of blood pursuing me, and the city of refuge out of reach and out of sight, a strange and horrible darkness fell upon me. If it were possible that a heavy blow could light upon the brain with-out touching the skull, such was the sensation I felt. I clapped my hand to my forehead, and cried aloud through the pain it gave me. At every stroke my thoughts and expressions became more wild and indistinct; all that remained to me clear was the sense of sin and the expectation of punishment." - It was now found necessary to confine him in a lunatic asylum, where he remained for about eight months. "All that passed," he says, "during these eight months, was conviction of sin and despair of mercy." At one time he seemed even to regret that he had not given every scope to his wicked

appetite, and even envied those who, being departed, had the consolation to reflect that they had well earned their miserable inheritance. Soon after his confinement, he threw aside his Bible, as a book in which he had no interest or portion. But now the happy period which was to shake off his fetters had arrived. He flung himself into a chair, and, seeing a Bible, ventured to open it. The first verse he saw was Rom. iii.25. The full beams of the Sun of Righteousness immediately shone upon him. He saw the sufficiency of Christ's atonement, and his pardon sealed in his blood. He thought he must have died with gratitude and joy. His eyes were filled with tears, and his voice was choked with transport. For many succeeding weeks tears were ready to flow if he did but speak of the gospel, or mention the name of Jesus. Rejoicing day and night was his employment. He was too happy to sleep much, and thought it was lost time that was spent in slumber. "My doctor," he says, "ever watchful and apprehensive for my welfare, was now alarmed, lest the sudden transition from despair to joy should terminate in a fatal phrensy. But the Lord 'was my strength and my song,' and was 'become my salvation.' I said, 'I shall not die, but live and declare the works of the Lord; he has chastened me, but not given me over unto death.' 'O give thanks unto the Lord, for his mercy endureth for ever.' In a short time Dr. Cotton became satisfied, and acquiesced with the soundness of my cure; and much sweet communion I had with him concerning the things of our salvation. He visited me every morning while I staid with him, which was twelve months after my recovery. The gospel was the delightful theme of our conversation. No trial has befallen me since, but what might be expected in a state of warfare. Satan indeed has changed his battery. Before my conversion, sensual gratification was the warfare with which he sought to destroy me. Being of a naturally easy, quiet disposition, I was seldom tempted to anger, yet that passion it is which now gives me the most disturbance, and occasions the sharpest conflicts. But Jesus being my strength, I fight against it; and if I am not conqueror, I am not overcome." In 1765 he removed to Huntingdon, and in 1767 to Olney, where he contracted a close friendship with John Newton. Here it was that the Hymns by Newton and Cowper, called Olney Hymns, were written. When Newton removed to London, Cowper wrote, "The vicarage-house became a melancholy object as soon as Mrs. Newton had left it; when you left it, it became more melancholy; now it is actually occupied by another family, I cannot even look at it without being shocked. As I walked in the garden last evening, I saw the smoke issue from the study chimney, and said to myself, 'That used to be a sign that Mr. Newton was there; but it is so no longer. The walls of the house know nothing of the change that has taken place; the bolt of the chamber door sounds just as it used to do; and when Mr. P - goes up stairs, for aught I now or ever shall know, the fall of his foot can hardly perhaps be distinguished from that of Mr. Newton. But Mr. Newton's foot will never be heard upon that staircase again.' These reflections, and such as these, occurred to me on this occasion. If I were in a condition to leave Olney, I certainly would not stay in it. It is no attachment to the place that

binds me here, but an unfitness for every other. I lived in it once, but now I am buried in it, and have no business in the world outside my sepulchre. My appearance would startle them, and theirs would be shocking to me."

Cowper subsequently endured many severe trials, but he entered into his rest April 25, 1800. Early in the Friday morning a decided alteration for the worse was perceived to have taken place. A deadly change appeared in his countenance. In this insensible state he remained till a few minutes before five in the afternoon, when he gently, and without the slightest apparent pain, ceased to breathe, and his happy spirit escaped from that body in which, amidst the thickest gloom of darkness, it had so long been imprisoned, and took its flight to the regions of perfect purity and bliss. In a manner so mild and gentle did death make its approach, that though his kinsman, his medical attendant, and three others were standing at the foot of the bed, with their eyes fixed upon his dying countenance, neither of them could determine the precise moment of his departure. A short time previously the king, George III., had granted him a pension of £300 a year, but it came too late. Maunder, in his "Biographical Treasury," the most bigoted biographical work I ever read says, "Cowper fell into a terrible state of nervous and mental debility, but was restored by the skill and humanity of Dr. Cotton." How different is this from Cowper's own account, as given above! — It does not appear that Cowper ever stood up to preach. He says, "I have had many anxious thoughts about taking orders, and I believe every new convert is apt to think himself called upon for that purpose; but it has pleased God, by means which there is no need to particularise, to give me full satisfaction as to the propriety of declining it; indeed, they who have the least ideas of what I have suffered from the dread of public exhibitions, will readily excuse my never attempting them hereafter. In the mean time, if it please the almighty, I may be an instrument of turning many to the truth, in a private way, and hope that my endeavors, in this way have not been entirely unsuccessful. Had I the zeal of a Moses, I should want an Aaron to be my spokesman."

The following may not be altogether without interest or use. It is extracted from one of Cowper's letters:

"You never said a better thing than when you assured Mr.__ of the expedience of a gift of bedding to the poor of Olney. There is no one article of this world's comfort with which they are more unprovided. When a poor woman, and an honest one, whom we know, carried home two pairs of blankets, a pair for herself and husband, and a pair for six children, as soon as the children saw them, they jumped out of their straw, caught them in their arms, kissed and blessed them, and danced for joy. An old woman, a very old one, the first night she found herself so comfortably covered, could not sleep a wink, being kept awake by the contrary emotions of transport on the one hand, and fear of not being thankful enough on the other."

Cowper's hymns are well known. The hymn commencing, "*breathe from the gently south, O Lord!*"has been usually ascribed to Newton; but Southey, in his edition of Cowper's works, says,

"This hymn is here restored to him (Cowper) on the authority of Mrs. Johnson, the widow of his excellent kinsman." And I believe there is no doubt that it is Cowper's, though at one time I doubted it. The omission of the "C." must have been an error of the printer's. The hymn commencing, "*God moves in a mysterious way,*" is, perhaps, one of Cowper's best. Some say it was written while taking a solitary walk in a field, feeling depression coming upon him; and others say it was written one night when he had ordered a man to drive him to a certain place by a river that he might drown himself; but as the man could not find the spot, though he had always been well acquainted with it, Cowper saw the Lord's hand in it, and the snare was broken. I believe the former to be the true version.

COLLECTION OF HYMNS BY COWPER

HYMN OF REDEMPTION
Zech. 13:1; 1 John 1:7

There is a fountain, fill'd with blood
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
O may I there, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away

Dear, dying Lamb! thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved, to sin no more.

E'er since, by faith, I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my them,
And shall be till I die.

Then in a nobler, sweeter song,
I'll sing they power to save,
When this poor, lisping, stamm'ring tongue
Lies silent in the grave

Gen. 5:24

O for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heav'nly frame;
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb!

Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I saw the Lord?
Where is the soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus, and his word?

What peaceful hours I then enjoyed!
How sweet their memory still!
But now I find an aching void

The world can never fill.
Return, O holy Dove! return,
Sweet messenger of rest!
I hate the sins that made thee mourn,
And drove these from my breast.

The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from they throne,
And worship only thee.

So shall my walk be close with God,
Calm and serene my frame;
So purer light shall mark the road
That leads me to the Lamb.

HYMN OF CONFLICTS AND DELIVERANCES

1 Pet. 1:6,7

'Tis my happiness below,
Not to live without the Cross;
But the Savior's power to know,
Sanctifying every loss.

Trials must and will befall;
But with humble faith to see
Love inscribed upon them all,
This is happiness to me.

Trials make the promise sweet;
Trials give new life to prayer;
Trials bring me to his feet,
Lay me low, and keep me there.

Did I meet no trials here,
No chastisement by the way,
Might I not with reason fear,
I should be a cast away?

Bastards may escape the rod,
Sunk in earthly, vain delight;
But the true-born child of God
Must not, would not if he might.

HYMN OF THE CHRISTIAN

I thirst, but not as once I did,
The vain delights of earth to share;
Thy wounds, Emmanuel, all forbid
That I should seek my pleasures there.

It was the sight of thy dear cross,
First weaned my soul from earthly things;
And taught me to esteem as dross
The mirth of fools and pomp of kings.

I want that grace that springs from thee;
That quickens all things where it flows;
And makes a wretched thorn like me,
Bloom as the myrtle, or the rose.

Dear fountain of delight unknown!
No longer sink below the brim;
But overflow, and pour me down
A living and life-giving stream!

For sure, of all the plants that share
The notice of thy Father's eye,
None proves less grateful to his care,
Or yields him meaner fruit than I.

Luke 1:37

For with God nothing shall be impossible.

HYMN OF PRAISE
Isaiah 12

I will priase thee every day,
Now thine anger's turned away!
Comfortable thoughts arise
From the bleeding sacrifice.
Here, in the fair gospel field,
Wells of free salvation yield
Streams of life a plenteous store,
And my soul shall thirst no more.

Jesus is become at length
My salvation and my strength;
And his praises shall prolong,
While I live, my pleasant song.
Praise ye, then, his glorious name;
Publish his exalted fame!
Still his worth your praise exceeds;
Excellent are all his deeds.

HYMN OF THE CHURCH
Isa. 60:18-20

Hear what God the Lord hath spoken
O my people faint and few;
Comfortless, afflicted, broken,
Fair abodes I build for you.
Scenes of heartfelt tribulation,
Shall no more perplex your ways;
You shall name your walls, salvation,
And your gates shall all be praise.

There, like streams that feed the garden,
Pleasures without end shall flow;
For the Lord your faith regarding,
All his bounty shall bestow:
Still in undisturb'd possession,
Peace, and righteousness shall reign;
Never shall you feel oppression,
Or the noise of war again.

Ye no more your suns descending,
Waning moons no more shall see;
But your griefs for ever ending,
Find eternal noon in me;
God shall rise, and shining o'er you,
Change to day the gloom of night;
He the Lord shall be your glory,
God your everlasting light.

HYMNS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

His master taken from his head,
Elisha saw him go,
And in desponding accents said,
"Ah! what must Israel do?"

But he forgot the Lord who lifts
The beggar to the throne;
Nor knew that all Elijah's gifts
Would soon be made his own.

What! when a Paul has run his course,
Or when Apollos dies,
Is Israel left without resource?
And have we no supplies?

Yes! while the dear Redeemer lives,
We have a boundless store,
And shall be fed with what he gives,
Who lives for evermore.

John 21:16

Hark, my soul! it is the Lord;
'Tis thy Saviour, hear his word;
Jesus speaks, and speaks to thee,
"Say, poor sinner, lov'st thou me?"

"I delivered thee when bound,
And, when wounded, healed thy wound;
Sought thee wandering, set thee right,
Turned thy darkness into light."

"Can a woman's tender care
Cease towards the child she bare?
Yes, she may forgetful be,
Yet will I remember thee."

"Mine is an unchanging love,
Higher than the heights above;
Deeper than the depths beneath;
Free and faithful, strong as death."

"Thou shalt see my glory soon,
When the work of grace is done;
Partner of my throne shalt be!
Say, poor sinner, lov'st thou me?"

Lord, it is my chief complaint,
That my love is weak and faint;
Yet I love thee and adore:
O, for grace to love thee more!

When darkness long has vailed my mind,
And smiling day once more appears;
Then, my Redeemer, then I find
The folly of my doubts and fears.

I chide my unbelieving heart,
And blush that I should ever be
Thus prone to act so base a part,
Or harbor one hard thought of thee!

O! let me then at length be taught
(What I am still so slow to learn)
That God is love, and changes not,
Nor knows the shadow of a turn.

Sweet truth, and easy to repeat!
But when my faith is sharply tried
I find myself a learner yet,
Unskillful, weak, and apt to slide.

But O my Lord, one look from thee
Subdues the disobedient will;
Drives doubt and discontent away,
And thy rebellious worm is still.

Thou art as ready to forgive,
As I am ready to repine;
Thou, therefore, all the praise receive;
Be shame, and self-abhorrence, mine.

HYMN OF TRUST
Mark 4:39

The billows swell, the winds are high
Clouds overcast my wintry sky;
Out of the depths to thee I call,
My fears are great, my strength is small.

O Lord, the pilot's part perform,
And guide and guard me thro' the storm;
Defend me from each threatening ill,
Control the waves, say, "peace, be still."

Amidst the roaring of the sea,
My soul still hangs its hope on thee;
Thy constant love, thy faithful care,
Is all that saves me from despair.

Dangers of every shape and name,
Attend the followers of the Lamb,
Who leave the world's deceitful shore,
And leave it to return no more.

HYMN OF PEACE AND JOY

Sometimes a light surprises
The Christian while he sings;
It is the Lord who rises
With healing in His wings;
When comforts are declining,
He grants the soul again
A season of clear shining,
To cheer it after rain.

In holy contemplation
We sweetly then pursue
The theme of God's salvation,
And find it ever new;
Set free from present sorrow,
We cheerfully can say—
E'en let the unknown morrow
Bring with it what it may.

It can bring with it nothing,
But He will bear us through;
Who gives the lilies clothing,
Will clothe His people too:
Beneath the spreading heavens
No creature but is fed;
And He, who feeds the ravens,
Will give His children bread.

Though vine nor fig tree neither
Their wonted fruit shall bear;
Though all the field should wither
Nor flocks nor herds be there;
Yet God the same abiding,
His praise shall tune my voice,
For, while in Him confiding,
I cannot but rejoice.

Far from the world, O Lord, I flee,
From strife and tumult far;
From scenes where Satan wages still
His most successful war.

The calm retreat, the silent shade,
With prayer and praise agree;
And seem, by Thy sweet bounty made,
For those who follow Thee.

There, if Thy Spirit touch the soul,
And grace her mean abode,
Oh, with what peace, and joy, and love,
She communes with her God!

Author and Guardian of my life,
Sweet source of light Divine,
And (all harmonious names in one)
My Saviour, Thou art mine.

What thanks I owe Thee, and what love,
A boundless, endless store,
Shall echo through the realms above,
When time shall be no more.

HYMN OF RESIGNATION

O Lord, my best desires fulfil,
And help me to resign
Life, health, and comfort to Thy will,
And make Thy pleasure mine.

Why Should I shrink at Thy command,
Whose love forbids my fears?
Or tremble at the gracious hand
That wipes away my tears?

No, rather let me freely yield
What most I prize to Thee;
Who never hast a good withheld,
Or wilt withhold, from me.

Thy favor, all my journey through,
Thou art engaged to grant;
What else I want, or think I do,
'Tis better still to want.

But ah! my inward spirit cries,
Still bind me to Thy sway;
Else the next cloud that veils my skies
Drives all these thoughts away.

Luke 2:13-14

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

HYMN OF REPENTANCE

The Lord will happiness divine
On contrite hearts bestow:
Then tell me, gracious God, is mine
A contrite heart or no?

I hear, but seem to hear in vain,
Insensible as steel;
If aught is felt, 'tis only pain,
To find I cannot feel.

I sometimes think myself inclined
To love Thee, if I could;
But often feel another mind,
Averse to all that's good.

My best desires are faint and few,
I fain would strive for more;
But when I cry, "My strength renew"
Seem weaker than before.

Thy saints are comforted, I know,
And love Thy house of prayer;
I therefore go where others go,
But find no comfort there.

O make this heart rejoice, or ache;
Decide this doubt for me;
And, if it be not broken, break,
And heal it, if it be.

HYMN OF FAITH

Sin enslaved me many years,
And led me bound and blind,
'Till at length a thousand fears
Came swarming o'er my mind;
Where I said in deep distress
Will these sinful pleasures end?
How shall I secure my peace,
And make the Lord my friend?

Friends and minsters said much,
The gospel to enforce;
But my blindness still was such,
I chose a legal course;
Much I fasted, watched, and strove,
Scarce would show my face abroad,
Feared almost, to speak or move,
A stranger still to God.

Thus afraid to trust his grace,
Long time did I rebel;
'Till despairing of my case,
Down at his feet I fell;
Then my stubborn heart he broke,
And subdued me to his sway
By a simple word he spoke,
"Thy sins are done away."

Gen. 12:14

The saints should never be dismayed,
Nor sink in hopeless fear;
For when they least expect his aid,
The Savior will appear.

This Abra'm found, he raised the knife,
GOD saw and said, "Forbear;"
Yon ram shall yield his meaner life,
Behold the victim there.

When Jonah sunk beneath the wave
He thought to rise no more;
But God prepared a fish to save,
And bear him to the shore.

Blessed proofs of power and grace divine,
That meet us in his word!
May every deep-felt care of mine
Be trusted with the Lord.

Wait for his seasonable aid,
And though it tarry, wait:
The promise may be long-delayed,
But cannot come too late.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 12 / 2018 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

Of all the gifts thine hand bestows,
Thou Giver of all good!
Not heav'n itself a richer knows,
Than my Redeemer's blood.

Faith too, the blood receiving grace,
From the same hand we gain;
Else sweetly, as it suits our case,
That gift had been in vain.

Till thou thy teaching power apply,
Our hearts refuse to see,
And weak, as a distempered eye,
Shut out the view of thee.

Blind to the merits of thy Son,
What mis'ry we endure!
Yet fly that hand, from which alone,
We could expect a cure.

We praise thee, and would praise thee more,
To thee our all we owe;
The precious Saviour, and the power
That makes him precious, too.

HYMN OF GRACE

Almighty King! Whose wondrous hand
Supports the weight of sea and land;
Whose grace is such a boundless store,
No heart shall break that sighs for more.

Thy providence supplies my food,
And 'tis Thy blessing makes it good;
My soul is nourished by Thy word:
Let soul and body praise the Lord!

My streams of outward comfort came
From Him who built this earthly frame;
Whate'er I want His bounty gives,
By Whom my soul forever lives.

Either His hand preserves from pain,
Or, if I feel it, heals again;
From Satan's malice shields my breast,
Or overrules it for the best.

Forgive the song that falls so low
Beneath the gratitude I owe;
It means Thy praise, however poor;
An angel's song can do no more.

HYMN OF REVELATION

The Spirit breathes upon the Word,
And brings the truth to sight;
Precepts and promises afford
A sanctifying light.

A glory gilds the sacred page,
Majestic, like the sun:
It gives a light to every age;
It gives, but borrows none.

Let everlasting thanks be thine
For such a bright display
As makes a world of darkness shine
With beams of heavenly day.

My soul rejoices to pursue
The steps of him I love.
Till glory break upon my view
In brighter worlds above.

PSALM 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

MEETINGS

LOWER MAYO 5TH SUNDAY MEETING

The next 5th Sunday Meeting will be held, the Lord willing, Sunday, December 30, 2018. Simpson Creek Church will host the meeting. The Meeting House is located at 3821 Daisy Rd., Loris, SC 29569. Take US 701 to downtown Loris, SC. Turn East on Business #9. Go 4 miles to Goretown and turn right on road #348. Go 2 1/2 miles and turn right on Daisy Road. Go 1/4 mile to church on Right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to meet with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
276-952-2098

SKEWARKEY UNION (EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION)

Hancocks Church will host the next session of the Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of December 30, 2018. The church is located on Ayden Golf Club Road, near Ayden, North Carolina. Preaching services begin at 10:30 a.m.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethen and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

CREECH CHURCH

Creech Church - Union Meeting
December 30, 2018

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The West Country Line Meeting will be held the fifth Sunday, December 30, 2018 at Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church, located at the corner of Tate and Carr Streets in Greensboro, NC. Song Service begins at 10:30 a.m.

We welcome and invite the ministers of our faith and order as well as our brethern and friends to be with us.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Mod.
Brother Wayne Edwards, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

There will be no Saturday Union Meeting the fifth weekend in December 2018.

Sister Pam Betterton

SONG SERVICE

A monthly song service is held on first Sunday afternoons at 3:00 P.M. at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church which is located at 8684 NC Hwy 700, Ruffin, N.C. We welcome those, who are given a mind to come, to join us and as blessed to do so, sing songs of praise to the King of kings and Lord or lords.

Allen Carroll, Clerk 336-939-5318
Jerry Somer, Assistant Clerk
276-956-5318

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 2018

Karen Link - VA 5.00
Lula Holley - VA 5.00
Caroline Martin - WA 5.00
Allen Carroll - NC 15.00
Craig Olive - NC 5.00
Dalton Burgess- VA 5.00
Lon D. Moon - AL 5.00
Vera Potter - MS 15.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER PAULINE LAWRENCE HALE

With humble submission, we at Salem (Head of the River) Primitive Baptist Church acknowledge the passing of our sister in Christ, sister Pauline Hale.

Sister Pauline passed from this life April 6, 2018 at the age of 93. She was preceded in death by her husband, Warren Hale; son, Gary Hale; parents, Earnest and Rita Lawrence and two brothers, James and Fred Lawrence.

Surviving are her loving and caring daughters and sons-in-law, Sandra and Gerry Shank, Carol and Bennie Ellis and daughter-in-law Debra Hale. Grandchildren, Missy Shank, Jennifer Shank, Angie Ellis, Amber and Kenny Bailey and Randall Hale. A brother, Bill Lawrence and wife Doris, along with two great grandchildren.

Her funeral was held at Oakey's East Chapel in Roanoke by Elder Allan Terry with interment at Restvale Cemetary in Floyd County.

Sister Pauline lived her life believing in Salvation by the grace of God and a precious hope in her breast. We believe she is resting in that perfect peace God grants His little children. She will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved her. We feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by Mary Janney
as requested by the church